TILBURG ◆ UNIVERSITY

Tilburg University

The international crime victims survey and complementary measures of corruption and organised crime

van Dijk, J.J.M.

Published in:
Surveying crime in the 21st century

Publication date:
2007

Citation for published version (APA):
van Dijk, J. J. M. (2007). The international crime victims survey and complementary measures of corruption and organised crime. In M. Hough, & M. Maxfield (Eds.), *Surveying crime in the 21st century* (pp. 125-144). Willan Publishing. http://www.willanpublishing.co.uk/cgi-bin/indexer?product=9781881798750

The International Crime Victims Survey and Complementary Measures of Corruption and Organised Crime

by

Jan van Dijk
International Victimology Institute
University of Tilburg

Abstract: *Although household victimization surveys such as the ICVS are a proven tool to put levels of victimization by common crime in a global perspective, they cannot be used readily to measure victimization by emerging or global crimes such as grand corruption and organised crime. The strategy of looking at the impact of crimes upon vulnerable groups may be promising in other areas as well. In this chapter, data on the perceptions of business executives of the extent of racketeering are combined with perceptional data on grand corruption and money laundering as well as with rates of unsolved murders. By integrating data on such varied markers of mafia-related activity, a composite index is constructed of organised crime. Country and regional scores on the index can be used for analyses of the macro causes of organized crime and its impact upon society. It is argued that criminology should seek to supplement the results of crime victim surveys with results of new, imaginative ways of measuring emerging forms of global crime.*

THE INTERNATIONAL CRIME VICTIMS SURVEY

In 1987, a group of European criminologists involved in national crime surveys took the initiative to launch a fully standardized survey in order to further comparative criminological research. In 1989, the first International Crime Victims Survey (ICVS) was carried out in 13 countries, mainly from Western Europe and North America (van Dijk, Mayhew, & Killias, 1990). In collaboration with the United Nations Interregional Crime and Justice Research Institute, the ICVS was later conducted in a broad selection of countries from all world regions. Results were published in the United Nations Global Report on Crime (Newman, 1999) and in several other publications.

The fifth survey was carried out in 2005 in more than 30 countries. Surveys in 18 European countries were cofunded by the Directorate General for Research of the European Commission (under the acronym EU/ICS). Reports on the EU and on global results are forthcoming (van Dijk, Manchin, & Van Kesteren, 2007; van Dijk, 2007). Since 1989, surveys have been carried out at least once in around 30 industrialized countries and in 50 major cities in developing countries and countries in transition. More than 320,000 citizens have been interviewed to date in the course of the ICVS.

In this chapter, there will be a brief summary of the key findings of the last rounds of the ICVS, also touching upon some of the methodological concerns often raised concerning the ICVS. In the second part of the chapter, we will discuss the need to supplement results of conventional surveys on common crimes with measures of emerging types of crimes such as corruption and organized crime. For such supplementary data on crime, other methodologies than sample surveys among the general public must be harnessed. Some results of exploratory work on the development of such measures will be presented.

Levels and Correlates of Volume Crime

The ICVS interviews samples of households about their recent experiences with the most frequently occurring types of conventional crime (volume crime). National samples include at least 2,000 respondents who are generally interviewed with the CATI (Computer Assisted Telephone Interview) technique. In the countries where this method is not applicable because of insufficient distribution of telephones, face-to-face interviews are conducted in the main cities, generally with samples of 1,000-1,500 respondents.

The ICVS provides an overall measure of victimization in the previous year by any of the eleven "conventional" crimes included in the questionnaire. A first group of crimes deals with the vehicles owned by the respondent or respondent's household; a second group refers to breaking and entering (burglaries); and a third group of crimes refers to victimization experienced by the respondent personally, including robbery, pickpocketing, assault, and sexual offences.

To increase comparability of victimization rates across the world, analyses at the global level are based on the subset of data from respondents living in cities of more than 100,000 inhabitants. The results of the ICVS 2000 show that on average 28% of citizens living in urban areas of 100.000 inhabitants or more suffered at least one form of victimization over the twelve months preceding the interview. Victimization rates are highest for city dwellers in Latin America (46%) and Africa (35%). Victimization rates are moderately high in Oceania (Australia only) and Western and Central Europe. Victimization rates below the global average are found in North America, Eastern Europe, and Asia.

The countries with the highest prevalence rates for conventional crime are mainly from Latin America or sub-Saharan Africa, with the exception of Mongolia, Cambodia, and Estonia. A high prevalence rate was also found in Papua New Guinea.

Countries of Europe and North America are almost without exception situated in the middle category. Contrary to common perception, overall rates of volume crime – such as burglary, robbery, and assault/threats – are not higher in the United States than in most parts of Western Europe. In fact, U.S. rates are significantly lower than those, for example, of England and Wales (Van Kesteren, Mayhew, & Nieuwbeerta, 2000). The overall rate of Canada is somewhat below the mean of the European Union and that of the United States.

Countries with the lowest rates form a fairly mixed group with a strong representation of Eastern European and Asian countries, including affluent Asian countries (Japan, South Korea) and poorer ones (China, Philippines, Indonesia). Switzerland, although less so than in the first rounds of the ICVS, still emerges as one of the safest countries in Western Europe.

It is noteworthy that the variation in regional rates does not fully conform to the commonly held notion that levels of crime are driven by poverty. The low victimization rates in Asia (e.g., India, Indonesia, and Cambodia) are clearly at odds with this notion and so are the relatively

high rates of countries such as Australia, England and Wales, and The Netherlands. The rate of the Eastern European countries such as Bulgaria below that of Central and Western Europe also belies easy generalizations about the relationships between poverty and crime. As discussed elsewhere, levels of property crime seem to some extent determined by the availability of suitable targets of theft (van Dijk, 1994). This factor can help to explain comparatively high levels of common crime in many of the most affluent countries.

Regional victimization rates per types of crime show huge variation. Robbery in Latin America was 8 times higher than in Western Europe, North America, and Australia.

The data in respect of robbery confirm the specific problems with urban violence of several main cities in Latin America and Africa, including South Africa (Shaw, van Dijk, & Rhomberg, 2003). Contributing factors seem to be extreme poverty and socioeconomic inequality, postconflict instability, and widespread gun-ownership (van Dijk, 2007).

The crime category of assault and threat is defined in the ICVS as personal attacks or threats by either a stranger or a relative or friend, without the purpose of stealing. Analyses have shown fairly strong links between alcohol consumption rates and levels of threats/assaults (van Dijk, 2007).

Assaults on women are more likely to be domestic in nature than are assaults on men. In a third of the cases of violence against women, the offender was known at least by name to the victim. In one of five cases, the crime was committed in the victim's own house. The level of violence against women is inversely related to the position of women in society, with most developing countries showing much higher rates (Alvazzi del Frate & Patrignani, 1995).

Trends of Volume Crime

The preliminary results of the ICVS 2005 allow a comparison of the 2004/ 2005 rates with rates recorded in previous rounds of the ICVS for 30 developed countries Available trend data confirm the continued downward trend in victimization by common crime across developed countries since 2000. This universal drop in volume crime also has been observed in national crime surveys in the U.S., Great Britain, and The Netherlands (van Dijk, Manchin, & Van Kesteren, 2007).

Nearly all developed countries, including the U.S., Australia, Canada, and 18 EU member states show a curved trend of volume crime since the

mid 1980s, with all-time peaks situated between 1995 and 2000 and steep declines of up to 50% thereafter. The only difference between American and European crime trends is that the drop in crime in the U.S. started 5 years earlier than in Europe. These strikingly uniform curvilinear crime trends suggest that a similar set of factors has been pushing up crime till 1995-2000 and pulling it down afterwards across the Western world.

American crime trends have been ascribed to the crack epidemic, quadrupling of prison population, and fluctuations in police deployment (Blumstein & Walman, 2006; Levitt & Dubner, 2004). These factors, however, show huge variation across Western countries showing the same curvilinear trends. For example, most European countries have never experienced a crack epidemic of any sort and prison populations in countries such as Finland, France, and Poland have fluctuated rather than gone up since the early 1990s (European Sourcebook, 2006). None of the factors highlighted in American analyses can explain convincingly the universal curvilinear trends in volume crime.

The issue of what mainly has caused the crime drop will have to be revisited from an international perspective. A possible explanation for curvilinear crime trends is that crime across countries has been driven by the availability of criminal opportunities (Felson, 1997). Opportunities of crime are likely to have undergone a curvilinear trend over the past three decades. Opportunities expanded with the economy since the 1970s across the Western world and have subsequently shrunk due to improved self-protection of households and businesses in response to increased losses from crime (van Dijk, 1994). The ICVS provides some empirical support for this alternative interpretation by showing that the use of self-protection measures by households has increased consistently and universally across Western countries since 1986 (van Dijk, 2007). This alternative explanation accounts for the curvilinear crime trends but also for the advanced position of the U.S. where economic recovery after the Second World War came sooner than in European countries.

Methodological Concerns

The proposal for the first round of the ICVS was based on the argument that cost-saving modern techniques of data collection such as random digit dialling and CATI would justify periodic comparative surveys that could complement the well-established, nation-specific surveys of countries like the U.S., The Netherlands, Finland, Switzerland, the U.K., and Canada.

From the outset, the ICVS was designed with the objective to make broad comparisons across countries. This philosophy explains the use of relatively modest sample sizes (2,000 per country in developed countries). The two decades of experience of the ICVS has borne out that such sample sizes allow the identification of statistically significant differences across both countries and years. Larger samples are used in countries such as Poland and Argentina, where the ICVS is implemented to arrive at more precise estimates of national or regional levels of crime.

The results of the five rounds of the ICVS have empirically demonstrated that, notwithstanding trends noted above, the victimization rates of countries have remained remarkably stable over the years. The results also show that the trend of national rates mirror those of national crimes surveys using much larger samples.

Overviews of key methodological issues concerning the ICVS can be found in various reports (e.g., Mayhew & van Dijk, 1997; Van Kesteren, Mayhew, & Nieuwbeertaa, 2000). Most of the concerns relate to the quality of data collection methods and techniques employed and the extent of standardization achieved. According to Lynch (2006) nation-specific surveys produce higher-quality data on individual nations but ICVS provides, as intended, more comparable data across countries. Problems that have arisen with the extent of standardization flow mostly from the need to persuade all participating partners to follow jointly set guidelines. One of the recurrent challenges of the ICVS is the concentration of all fieldwork in the early months of the year, but due to the funding arrangements some variation has always been inevitable.[1]

A cause of concern about crime surveys is the under- or overrepresentation of subgroups in the sample. Considering the objective of the ICVS to obtain a rough profile of victimization by volume crime in comparative perspective, the sensitivity of sample surveys to sampling bias may be less than often is assumed. This can be illustrated with the theoretical example of a subgroup that makes up 5% of the population and experiences victimization rates that are *twice* as high as the average (e.g., 10% rather than 5%). If such subgroup would be completely absent in the sample, this omission would only marginally influence the national rate (namely, by +0.25).

In the latest sweep, response rates have declined compared to the second and subsequent sweeps, in line with general trends in population surveys. It is uncertain whether this fluctuation has affected victimization rates. In the fifth ICVS, respondents were recalled up to seven times.

Gallup/Europe has carried out experiments with the number of recalls showing that the number of recalls had no effect on the number of victimization incidents reported. Persons reached after many recalls did not show other response patterns on victimization or other crucial issues than those contacted sooner (van Dijk, Van Kesteren, & Manchin, 2007). This finding goes some way in allaying concerns that reduced response rates may have resulted in biased samples in terms of victimization experiences, for example, by oversampling those "eager to talk" about recent experiences.

In recent years, the increase of the proportion of mobile-only phone users in several countries has raised concerns about the representativeness of samples of landline phone numbers such as those used in the ICVS. Results of a special pilot study among mobile-only users conducted in Finland in the framework of the EU/ICS 2005 showed that mobile-only users differ significantly from the general population but not to the extent that victimization rates cannot be estimated reliably by reweighting data that are exclusively landline-based. In other words, the inclusion in the Finnish dataset of data collected among mobile-only users did not result in different victimization rates for Finland than those found before (van Dijk, Van Kesteren, & Manchin, 2007).

The conduct of international crime surveys will continue to face the ever changing methodological challenges facing survey research generally, including the increased use of mobiles. The biggest challenge for the ICVS seems the continued need to forge workable "coalitions of the willing" of partners agreeing to a minimum of standardization of their self-funded surveys. In this context, ongoing efforts to standardize crime surveys in the framework of the European Union may jeopardize the unique asset of the ICVS of providing globally comparable crime data.

Victimization as a Narrow Concept

In our view, the most fundamental limitation of the ICVS is that it focuses exclusively, as all conventional crime surveys do, on victims of traditional crimes that affect individuals and households. This limitation is becoming more and more problematic with the gradual shift of attention away from volume crime to emerging crime threats against the background of globalization. In recent years, the United Nations has adopted international treaties to address nonvolume crimes such as transnational organized crime (UNTOC, 2000) and corruption (UNCAC, 2004). These developments engender an urgent need of comparable statistics on new types of crime

to establish benchmarks for internationally agreed-upon criminal policies against global crime.

Strenuous efforts are currently being made by involved international organizations such as the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) and Europol to harmonize administrative data of police and courts on transnational organized crime and corruption. It seems doubtful that such data will ever be useful as indicators of the extent of these types of crime. In a global context, police-based information on organized crime and corruption – such as rates of arrest or convictions concerning such offences – is likely to be even more distorted by filtering processes than those on ordinary crime. In countries where organized crime is most prevalent, investigations into such crimes will be hampered by rampant corruption and political interference and fewer of such investigations will be initiated or successfully completed. Low rates of court cases on corruption or organised crime in a country may point to high rather than low prevalence of such types of crime. High numbers of arrests or convictions for corruption may similarly indicate a comparatively low prevalence of such crimes due to better policing (Lambsdorff, 2006). In the field of complex crimes, statistics of police-recorded or court-recorded crimes are a source of disinformation. The case of measuring levels of crime independently of the police is even stronger regarding organized crime and corruption than regarding volume crime.

Although victimization surveys are a proven tool to put levels of victimization by volume crime in a global perspective, they cannot be used readily to measure victimization by emerging or global crimes. Victimization surveys by definition collect information on crimes that directly victimize individual persons or households physically or economically. Many types of global crime – such as drug trafficking, subsidy or tax fraud, international corruption, money laundering, or environmental pollution – harm collective interests but few people will feel individually damaged by them.

A second major shortcoming of traditional victimization surveys is their use of samples from general populations. Even if individual respondents are able to report on experiences with emerging crimes, samples from general residential populations will be unable to pick up sufficient cases of such crimes. Few ordinary citizens ever will be confronted with cases of high-level corruption. The interviewing of household-based samples also means that no information is collected on the victimization experiences of nonresidents. Surveys among samples of residential women,

for example, will fail to collect information on the victimization experiences of sexually exploited women who have been repatriated. Thus, new approaches must be found to collect information on the newly emerging global crime threats.

To arrive at estimates of the prevalence of global criminal victimizations, researchers are called upon to develop alternative methods of crime measurement. One approach is the systematic collection of information from public sources other than police records, such as reports of parliamentary rapporteurs, ombudsman, nongovernmental organizations, international organizations, and credible media. Groundbreaking efforts have been made by the RAND corporation with its database on terrorist incidents (http://www.mipt.org/terrorismdefined.html) and UNODC with its database on incidents and victims of trafficking in persons (UNODC, 2006). Using its database, UNODC has reported on countries most frequently cited as countries of origin, transit, or destination for human trafficking.

In cases in which little or no public source information is available, criminologists could look for the extent of social traces of crimes like corruption and organized crime. A promising research strategy would be to determine which special groups in society are most likely to be exposed to such crimes. This would mean measuring the extent of crime by looking at its impact on vulnerable parts of society, which mirrors the victimological strategy introduced by the crime victim surveys. The impact of emerging crimes on vulnerable groups will be measurable sometimes through survey research into the experiences and perceptions of groups such as business executives in the case of corruption. Such victim-centred information then can be combined with measures of the extent of other social traces of the criminal phenomena at issue. Examples of both types of social markers of complex crime will be presented next.

Corruption Indicators: Perceptions and Experiences

Corruption can be defined broadly as the abuse of public power for private gain. A distinction is often made between grand corruption and petty or street-level corruption. Grand corruption refers to corrupt practices that pervade the highest levels of government (local, regional, or national). Petty corruption involves the payment by individuals or companies of relatively small sums to gain preferential treatment from a public official in the conduct of their professional tasks (Langseth, 2006). One of the

most common forms of corruption is bribery, the bestowing of (financial) benefits in order to influence unduly an action or decision.

The most commonly cited statistical indicator of nonconventional crimes is the Corruption Perceptions Index (CPI), designed and maintained by the Berlin-based Transparency International, generally known as TI (Transparency International, 2004). The CPI is a composite index of the perceived extent of both grand and petty corrupt practices in countries, drawing on more than a dozen different surveys. Recent versions of the CPI are based largely on results of surveys among business people and ratings made by country risks analysts (Lamsdorff, 2005, 2006). Although the CPI has had significant political impact, its methodology is increasingly criticized. One common criticism is that the sources used differ significantly across countries and years, thus compromising the comparability of the results (Galtung, 2006). Another criticism is that perceptions of business leaders and experts influence each other, and that high rankings could therefore be based on the mere echoing of unfounded, media-led beliefs. Perhaps the most salient criticism is that as an index measuring a broad range of perceptions of vaguely defined corruption problems, CPI does not accurately register changes in the actual extent of specific forms of corruptions in a country. In Bulgaria, for example, ICVS-type surveys among the public about victimization experiences with bribery have shown significant decreases in the level of street corruption. This drop in corruption was not reflected in CPI-type perceptions-based measures (Center for the Study of Democracy, 2006).

The International Crime Victims Survey (ICVS) includes a question on the respondent's actual experiences with street level corruption in the previous year. ("During the past year, has any government official such as a customs officer, police officer or inspector asked you or expected you to pay a bribe?") In older versions of the CPI, the ICVS country rates of victimization by corruption were incorporated (TI, 2004). The ICVS data on actual victimization by corruption seem one of the best available sources of reliable comparative information on petty corruption prevalence.

In 2004, TI contracted Gallup to conduct a public opinion survey (to be called the Global Corruption Barometer) in 64 countries among a total of 50,000 people to assess not just perceptions of corruption but also experiences (TI, 2004). The question used to measure actual victimization experiences reads as follows: "In the past 12 months, have you or anyone in your household paid a bribe in any form?" The question resembles the one used in the ICVS but, unfortunately, is not identical because it focuses

on the actual payment rather than on solicitation ("have you paid?" rather than "were you asked or expected to pay?").

The analysis of the relationship between the prevalence rates of countries found in the ICVS 2000 and in the TI corruption barometer of 2004 revealed a high degree of agreement. The two measures of victimization by petty corruption were found to be strongly correlated ($r = 0.75$). On average, ICVS data are 9.9% higher than the Transparency International data, as was to be expected considering the wider scope of the question used in the ICVS.

In order to increase the coverage of the two studies and enhance the significance of the results, we have integrated the two datasets with an adjustment of the TI data to match ICVS data better (TI scores were multiplied by 109.9%). Through this operation we were able to calculate corruption victimization rates for 92 countries (van Dijk, 2007).

Countries with the highest scores are developing countries from across the world, with Eastern Europe, sub-Saharan Africa, and Latin America all containing several countries with the highest rates. Several Asian countries, such as India and Indonesia, also show comparatively high rates. Information on victimization by bribe-taking provides an important complement to the maps of ordinary crimes based on other ICVS results. One major difference is that several Asian countries with low rates of victimization by ordinary theft and violence show high levels of corruption. Corruption appears to be related more strongly to levels of development than ordinary crime.

Conventional wisdom says that corruption starts at the top and spreads downwards among lower-level officials. If this assumption is correct, the prevalence of street-level corruption could be used as a marker of grand or high-level corruption. In this special case, conventional crime surveys such as the ICVS among the general public can be used to collect useful information on complex crimes such as grand corruption that are seemingly victimless.

Diagnosing Organised Crime With the Use of Statistical Markers

An important source of information on specific types of transnational organized crime are victimization surveys among business executives about racketeering and extortion, one of the most important manifestations of organized crime in many countries (Alvazzi del Frate, 2004; Aromaa &

Lehti, 1996). Since 1997, the World Economic Forum has carried out surveys among CEOs of larger companies to identify obstacles to businesses in an increasing number of countries. From the onset, one of the questions in these executive opinion surveys asked about the prevalence in the country of "mafia-oriented racketeering, extortion (imposes or not serious costs on businesses)". The widespread perception among key persons that such activities are rampant in a country provides by itself no proof that this is actually the case, but it can be regarded as a statistical marker of organised crime.

The mean scores of mafia prevalence as perceived by business executives were found to be strongly correlated to the assessments of organized crime prevalence of an international risk-assessment group based in the U.K. called MIG ($r = .63$, $n = 102$, $p < 0.000$). In order to facilitate further statistical exploration, a composite index was constructed based on the averaged rankings of countries on the WEF surveys of 1997 to 2003 and these assessments. This so-called Organized Crime Perception Index (OCPI) refers to the level of different types of organized crime activities such as extortion and drugs and arms and human trafficking as perceived by potential victim groups and experts.

According to common definitions of organized crime in criminological literature and law enforcement practice (Levi, 2002), instrumental violence, corruption of public officials, and money laundering are regarded as universal secondary characteristics of organized crime. A fourth defining feature of mafia-infested countries is a bloated black economy. It is hard to imagine a high level of organized crime in a country without a significant amount of these systemic mafia-related phenomena.

Statistical indicators were selected for the prevalence of each of these four defining systemic characteristics of organized crime activity in countries: instrumental violence, high-level corruption, money laundering, and extent of the black economy (van Dijk, Shaw, & Buscaglia, 2002).

In an attempt to develop a proxy or stand-in measure of "mob-related violence," rates were calculated of the number of police-recorded homicides per country minus the number of convictions for homicide. Both types of data were drawn from the crime and criminal justice surveys of the United Nations. The resulting rates of "unsolved homicides" was used as proxy indicator of "mob-related homicide." The Organised Crime Perception Index, just mentioned, was found to be moderately strongly related to the indicator of mob-related violence ($r = .48$, $n = 51$, $p < 0.05$). Similarly, a proxy indicator of "high-level corruption" was derived from

studies of the World Bank Institute and indicators of money laundering and the extent of the black economy were taken from the World Economic Forum reports (2003, 2004).

The moderately strong to very strong statistical relationships between the organized crime perception index and four other indicators of secondary manifestations of organized crime activity support the construction of a composite organized crime index combining the five interrelated indicators. An important strategic advantage of the composite index is the incorporation of at least one *objective* measure of organized crime activity: the rate of unsolved homicides according to official administrations. Scores on this composite index cannot be dismissed by governments as being based just on "perceptions." The scores are corroborated by the official "dead body counts" of their own police authorities as reported to the United Nations through the Crime Survey.

Table 1 depicts the regional distribution on the Composite Organized Crime Index (COCI), based on data from world regions. For diagnostic purposes, the picture presents both the ranked scores on the composite index and the rank orders for the five source indicators used. Higher scores and lower ranks indicate more corruption.

The regional scores and rank numbers of the composite index and those on its five constituting indicators show a high degree of consistency. Deviations from the overall pattern are relatively high rank numbers on informal sector and money laundering of the low-crime region of Central America. Among the high-crime regions, West and Central Africa shows relatively low rank number on homicides. This result could point to a shortcoming in the available statistics – for example, homicide statistics for Nigeria are missing – or to the different nature of organized crime in the region. Such blatant deviations at any rate suggest the need of focussed additional research.

Country Scores

The combination of data from different sources allows the calculation of scores for a large number of countries. To assess the organized crime situation of countries, both the scale values on the COCI and on the constituting indicators/markers should be taken into account. The rank numbers for different indicators are mostly in the same range as the COCI rank but significant deviations occur. Deviations of single indicators from the COCI rank can point to specific features of organized crime in the

Table 1: Regional Mean Scores on Composite Organized Crime Index (COCI) and Data on Source Indicators: Perceived Organized Crime Prevalence, Grand Corruption, Money Laundering, Extent of Shadow Economy and the Rates of Unsolved Murders per 100,000 Population

	Average of the Composite Organized Crime Index	Organized Crime Perception (rank)	Informal Sector (rank)	Un-solved Homi-cides (rank)	High-Level Corrup-tion (rank)	Money Laun-dering (rank)
Oceania	33	1	1	1	2	1
West and Central Europe	35	2	2	2	4	3
North America	44	4	4	4	6	4
East and South East Asia	45	5	3	7	3	6
Central America	50	4	13	3	8	13
Near and Middle East	50	7	6	11	1	2
World	*54*					
South Asia	54	14	8	8	7	11
North Africa	55	6	5	6		5
East Africa	55	12	9		11	9
Southern Africa	56	10	12	5	12	10
South America	58	11	14	10	13	12
Southeast Europe	58	15	10	12	9	14
West and Central Africa	60	13	11	15	5	8
East Europe	70	17	16	14	14	16
Central Asia and Transcaucasian	70	16		13	15	
Caribbean	70	9	15		16	15

Items and sources: Organized crime perception (World Economic Forum, 2003, 2004; Merchant International Group, 2004); Money laundering and informal sector (World Economic Forum, 2004); high-level corruption (Kaufmann et al., 2003); unsolved homicides (see UN Survey on Crime and Justice, 2002: www.UNODC.org).

country or, alternatively, to deficiencies in the data. At this stage of development, country scores should be interpreted with caution.

Within Europe, organized crime prevalence increases diagonally from the northwest to the southeast, with levels being low in England, Germany, and Scandinavia, higher in Spain and Italy, and by far the highest in Russia, Albania, Bulgaria, and Ukraine. In Asia, rates are the worst in parts of South Asia (Pakistan, Bangladesh). But China and India also are rated comparatively high on this composite index (higher than Italy). More research on the role of the organized-crime corruption in these two emerging superpowers countries seems warranted.

In Africa, Nigeria, Angola, and Mozambique stand out with the highest scores. Nigerian organized crime activity in both the country and the region has been well documented (Shaw et al., 2003; UNODC, 2006). A detailed account of how organized crime threatens to penetrate state and businesses in Southern Africa, notably in Mozambique, is given in Gastrow (2003). In Latin America, Haiti, Paraguay, Guatemala, Venezuela, and Colombia show the highest scores. High scores are also observed in Jamaica in the Caribbean.

The primary utility of the index lies in the possibility to carry out analyses of the macro-correlates of organized crime. Levels of organised crime are inversely correlated with measures of rule of law and of economic development (van Dijk, 2007).

Relationships Between Indicators of Types of Crime

Both for theoretical and for measurement purposes, it would seem crucially important to know more about the statistical relations between the level of victimization by volume crime and the extent of nonconventional crimes such as corruption and organised crime.

Figure 1 shows a scatterplot of country values on the ICVS 1992–2000 and the comprehensive organized crime index just discussed. The world map of organized crime emerging from this index differs fundamentally from that of conventional crimes. The perceived prevalence of organized crime and the overall ICVS rates of victimization by volume crime was found to be unrelated ($r = 0.001$, n.s.).

As shown in Figure 1, the level of volume crime in a country says very little about the level of organized crime. This result suggests that levels of volume crime and of organized crime are determined by different factors at the macrolevel (van Dijk & Nevala, 2002). As discussed, volume

Figure 1: Country scores on ICVS for overall victimization by volume crime (low to high) and on Comprehensive Organized Crime Index (low scores indicating high levels).
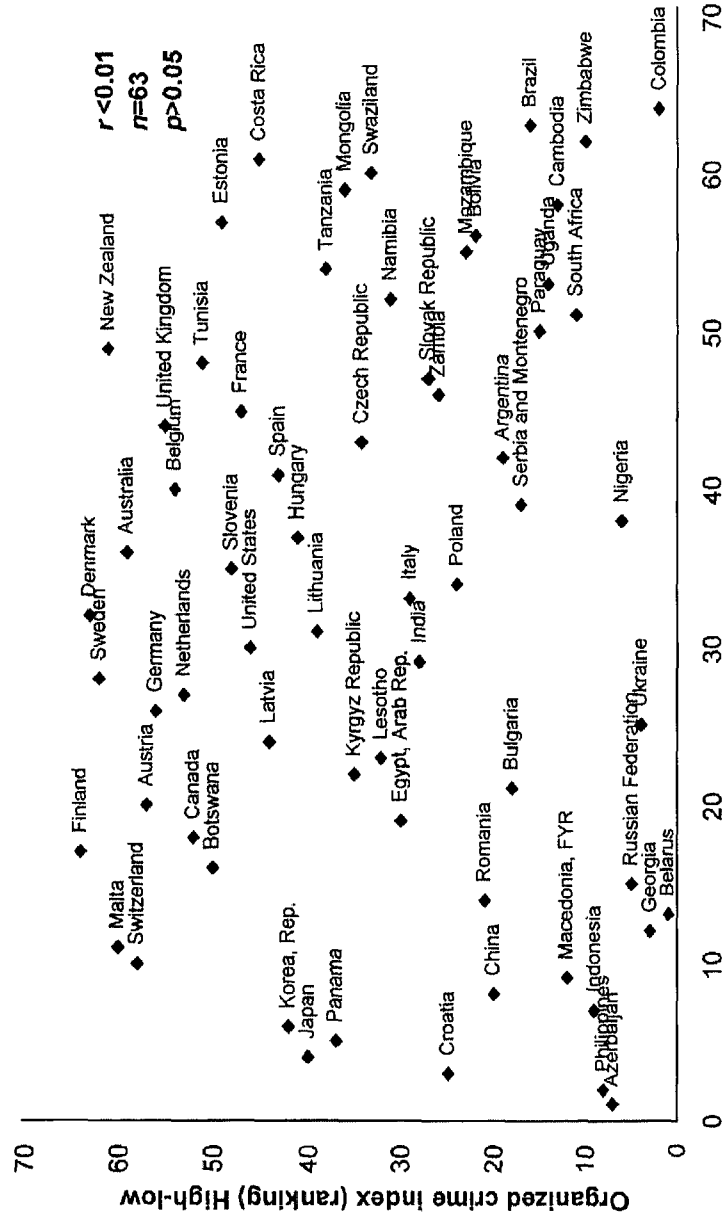
crime shows a clear downward trend in Western countries. There are no indications of similar declines in the level of organised crime or corruption (Lamsdorf, 2005). Complex crimes should be analysed separately from volume crime. This finding confirms the need of developing separate indicators of complex crimes that can complement the results of the ICVS.

CONCLUSION

Those convinced of the utility of collecting and analyzing comparative crime statistics for political and academic reasons find themselves in a quandary. Because of the intrinsic opposition of many national governments to air their dirty laundry in public, the production of international crime and justice statistics is historically underdeveloped. Few countries nowadays go as far as communist countries that regarded crimes statistics as state secrets, but most are still inclined to see international benchmarking of their crime situation as a threat to their sovereignty. Funding for the development of such statistics is difficult to obtain. As a result, the case for such statistics must be made on the basis of fragmentary, dated, and in some respects imperfect statistics. In this situation, many experts are inclined to stay on the scientifically safe side. If international crime statistics are discussed, it is to underline their intrinsic methodological weaknesses rather than to find ways to improve them and thereby enhance their potential to inform policy making at the macrolevel.

From a scientific perspective such a cautious approach might be commendable. But as Aebi, Killias, and Tavares (2003) as well as Kaufmann and colleagues (2003) have pointed out, it plays into the hands of those who – for particular political reasons – prefer such information not to be, or ever become, available. It means capitulating to political forces that would prefer comparative criminology to remain statistically challenged forever. In the current era of ongoing globalization, crime problems are increasingly transnational, with local crime problems spilling over to other countries and continents in many ways. The traditional position of governments that crime problems essentially are domestic affairs seems less and less tenable.

In our opinion, the time has come to break the politically imposed *omerta* of criminologists on comparative crime and justice statistics. A new generation of criminologists is well travelled and increasingly internationally oriented in its interests. It is to be hoped that they will revolt against the conspicuous absence of credible international statistics in their chosen

field of study. The time has come to exploit fully the potential of survey research and growing availability of proxy indicators to arrive at indicators of both volume and complex crimes and to combine these with improved statistics on manpower and performance of law enforcement and justice. With the help of such a comprehensive set of international metrics on crime and justice, criminology will be able to break away from country-specific interpretations of (trends of) crime. Through such long-overdue internationalisation, it will increase the scope, validity, and policy impact of its products.

Finally, this chapter has demonstrated that traditional measures of volume crime from household-based samples tell a small part of the crime story. If transnational crime is breaking down national borders, corruption is undermining the integrity of government officials, and the victims of crime become harder to find, count, or even conceptualize, criminologists must become more creative in measurement.

$\blacklozenge$

Address correspondence to: Jan.vanDijk@uvt.nl

NOTE

1. In the fifth round of the ICVS, fieldwork in some countries of the Continent took place much later than in the United Kingdom due to the delayed signing of contracts. In the report, an analysis is made of the possible impact of this variation with the conclusion that no major distortions seem to have taken place (van Dijk, Van Kesteren, & Manchin, 2006; Hideg & Manchin, 2006; see also www.Gallup-Europe.be/EUICS).

REFERENCES

Aebi, M. F., Killias, M., & Tavares, C. (2003). Comparing crime rates: Confronting the ICVS, the European sourcebook of crime and criminal justice statistics and Interpol statistics. In H. Kury (Ed.), *International comparison of crime and victimization: The ICVS, International Studies in Social Science*, special issue of the *International Journal of Comparative Criminology*, 2(1), 21–37.

Alvazzi del Frate, A. (2004). The international crime business survey: Findings from nine central eastern European cities. *European Journal on Criminal Policy and Research*, *10*, 2–3, 137–161.

Alvazzi del Frate, A., & Patrignani, A. (1995). Women's victimisation in developing countries. *Issues & Report*, No. 5, UNICRI Series.

Aromaa, K., & Lehti, M. (1996). *Foreign companies and crime in Eastern Europe*. Helsinki, Finland: National Research Institute of Legal Policy, Publication no. 135.

Blumstein, A., & Wallman, J. (2006). *The crime drop in America*. New York: Cambridge University Press.

Buscaglia, E., & van Dijk, J. (2003). Controlling organized crime and corruption in the public sector. *Forum on crime and society*, Vol. 3, No. 1 and 2. United Nations Publication.

Center for the Study of Democracy. (2006). *On the eve of EU accession: Anticorruption reforms in Bulgaria*. Sofia, Bulgaria: CSD.

European Sourcebook of Crime and Criminal Justice Statistics – 2006. (2006). The Hague, Netherlands: Ministry of Justice, WODC.

Felson, M. (1997). *Crime and everyday life* (2nd ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA: Pine Forge Press/Sage.

Hideg, G., & Manchin, R. (2006). *Telescoping effect in EU ICS*. (Working paper). Gallup/EU.

Galtung, F. (2006). Measuring the immeasurable: Boundaries and functions of (macro) corruption indices. In A. Shacklock et al. (Eds.), *Measuring corruption*. Aldershot, England: Ashgate.

Gastrow, P. (ed.). (2003). *Penetrating state & business – Organized crime in Southern Africa*, Vol. 2. Tshwane (Pretoria), South Africa: Institute for Security Studies. Monograph #89 in the Monographs for the African Human Secuirty Initiative series.

Kaufmann, D., Kraay, A., & Mastruzzi, M. (2003). *Governance matters III: Governance indicators for 1996-2002*. (Policy Research Working Paper 3106. Washington, DC: World Bank. Available at http://www.worldbank.org/wbi/governance/pubs/govmatters3.html

Lambsdorff, J. (2005). Corruption perception index 2004. Transparency International. *Global corruption report 2005*. England: Yeomans Press.

Lambsdorff, J. (2006), Measuring corruption – The validity and precision of subjective indicators (CPI). In A. Shacklock et al. (Eds.), *Measuring corruption*. Aldershot, England: Ashgate.

Levi, M. (2002). The organization of serious crime. In M. Maguire, R. Morgan, & R. Reiner (Eds.), *Oxford handbook of criminology*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Levitt, S., & Dubner, J. (2004). *Freakonomics*. London: Penguin Books.

Lynch, J. P. (2006). Problems and promise of victimization surveys for cross-national research. *Crime and justice*, Vol. 34. Chicago: University of Chicago.

Mayhew, P., & van Dijk, J. J. M. (1997). *Criminal victimisation in eleven industrialised countries: Key findings from the 1996 International Crime Victims Survey*. The Hague, Netherlands: WODC, Ministry of Justice. Onderzoek en beleid, no. 162.

Merchant International Group Limited. (2004). *Grey area dynamics, organised crime figures 2004*. (Unpublished report to UNICRI).

Newman, G. (1999). *Global report on crime and justice*. United Nations Office for Drug Control and Crime Prevention, Centre for International Crime Prevention. New York: Oxford University Press.

Shaw, M., van Dijk, J., & Rhomberg, W. (2003). Determining global trends in crime and justice: An overview of results from the United Nations surveys of crime trends and operations of criminal justice systems. *Forum on Crime and Society, 3*, No. 1 & 2.

Transparency International. (2003). *The coalition against corruption. Annual Report*. (www.transparency.org).

Transparency International. (2004). *Report on the global corruption barometer 2004*. (www.transparency.org).

United Nations Convention against Corruption (UNCAC). (2004). (untreaty.un. org).

United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime (UNTOC). (2000). (untreaty.un.org).

United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC). (2006). *Trafficking in persons; global patterns*. Vienna:

van Dijk, J. J. M. (1994). Understanding crime rates; on the interactions between the rational choices of victims and offenders. *British Journal on Criminology, 34*(2), 105-121.

van Dijk, J. J. M. (2007). *World atlas of crime*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

van Dijk, J. J. M., Manchin, R., & Van Kesteren, J. (2006). *The burden of crime in the EU: Key findings of the EU/international crime victim survey 2005*. Brussels, Belgium, and Tilburg, The Netherlands: UNICRI/Gallup/Europe/Intervict.

van Dijk, J. J. M., Mayhew, P., & Killias, M. (1990). *Experiences of crime across the world*. Key findings from the 1989 international crime survey. Deventer, Netherlands: Kluwer Law and Taxation.

van Dijk, J. J. M., & Nevala, S. (2002). Intercorrelations of crime. In P. Nieuwbeerta (Ed.), *Crime victimization in international perspective*. The Hague, Netherlands: Boom Legal Publishers.

van Dijk, J. J. M., Shaw, M., & Buscaglia, E. (2002). The TOC convention and the need for comparative research: Some illustrations from the work of the UN Centre for International Crime Prevention. In H-J. Albrecht & C. Fijnaut (Eds.), *The containment of transnational organized crime. Comments on the UN convention of December 2000*. Freiburg, Germany: Max Planck Institut fur auslandisches und internationals Strafrecht.

Van Kesteren, J. N., Mayhew, P., & Nieuwbeerta, P. (2000). *Criminal victimisation in seventeen industrialized countries: Key findings from the 2000 international crime victims survey*. Onderzoek en beleid, No. 187. The Hague, Netherlands: Ministry of Justice, WODC.

World Economic Forum. (2003). *The global competitiveness report 2002-2003*. New York: Oxford University Press.

World Economic Forum. (2004). *The global competitiveness report 2003-2004*. New York: Oxford University Press.