

## COUNTRY SURVEY

# Crime, Criminal Justice and Criminology in Greece

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### ABSTRACT

The article describes the political and social reaction to crime and the response of the criminal justice system. Between 1980 and 1999, there was only a modest increase (of around 27 percent) in all recorded crimes in Greece, although there was a five-fold increase in the most serious crimes (felonies), which however accounted for a very small proportion of the total (1.4 percent in 1999). In formal terms, the sentences of the courts are often severe, but in practice most of these sentences are not carried out: lenient rules, adopted to control prison overcrowding, mean that many prison sentences are converted to fines, and those who are sent to prison are usually released early. Law and order politics, which previously focused on political 'extremists', has recently achieved more general legitimacy in Greece. Nevertheless, new laws providing for severe sentences mostly derive from Greece's international and European commitments. A review of the varied writings of Greek criminologists in recent years suggests that criminology in Greece is at an early stage in attempting to engage systematically and productively with political and public discourse on crime and criminal justice.

### KEY WORDS

Change in Quality of Crime / Crime Policy / Drift from State to Mass Media  
Criminology / Rise in Prison Population / Small-scale Research.

## Introduction

Crime had never been an issue of public debate in Greece until recently, whereas corrections have always attracted the interest of politicians and specialists. Both groups have focused on prisoners' living conditions,

rehabilitation programmes (work, training, education) and legislative improvements. Corrections offer broad scope for the symbolic politics that have often been deployed by Greek governments. This is expressed in frequent and unhelpful legislative innovations, with large elements always in the pipeline. Frequent amendments and revisions in the field create the impression of activity and political interest, but changes tend to lack substance because of the high costs of fundamental reform and because of the inertia and resistance of the whole criminal justice mechanism.

Although criminal justice policy has always been characterized by leniency, both in the law itself and in law enforcement, in recent years there has been some drift from moderation towards severity. Patterns of crime and the methods and organization of offenders are changing. Offences such as serious armed robberies, aggravated thefts and kidnapping – which were virtually unheard of a few years ago – have become more common, and there has been an increase in crimes committed by offenders working in groups.

In the context of this increase in serious and organized crime, there has been movement towards rigorous law enforcement, which is either fostered or assisted by the media and by politicians and specialists, but not as yet by ordinary citizens, who are the last bastion in the defence of a traditionally lenient policy. The role of experts or specialists in these developments will prove critical. Up to now, their interventions have been isolated and generally limited. In what follows, these changes in crime and criminal justice in Greece will be described in more detail, bearing in mind the serious limitations of the statistical and other material available. The infrastructure of criminology in Greece will be described, and the major writings of criminologists will be briefly reviewed. This should give an indication of the ways in which criminologists may in future be able to contribute to explanations of trends in crime and criminal justice in Greece and to political debate about the policy response.

## **Background and context**

### **Some useful data**

Greece achieved its independence from the Ottoman empire in 1829. During the second half of the 19th century and the first half of the 20th century, Greece gradually acquired neighbouring islands and territories with Greek-speaking populations, mostly of the Christian orthodox religion, that had been occupied by Turkey, Bulgaria and Italy.

Greece joined the European Community, as it then was, in 1981. It has a strategic location dominating the Aegean Sea and the southern

approach to the Turkish straits; it is a peninsular country, possessing an archipelago of about 2,000 islands and more than 14,880 kilometres of coastline. It is characterized by high urbanization, which started during the civil war of the late 1940s and reached its peak in the 1970s, by which time almost half of the population lived in urban areas (NSSG, 2003: Table Ib). Major cities are Athens, the capital, which has a population of 745,514 in the city itself and 3.7 million in Greater Athens; Thessaloniki (1,057,825); Piraeus (175,697, and with Greater Piraeus 880,529); Patras (170,452); Larissa (113,090); and Iraklion (132,117). In governance, it is a highly centralized state. The earlier system of government established by the Turkish administration had devolved many functions to local communities. Seeing this as a sign and consequence of 'underdevelopment', the first governments after liberation sought to establish strong central control, and later ones reinforced this structure. The country is divided into 13 regional districts (peripheries) and 51 prefectures (*nomi*). In 2000, gross domestic product (GDP) per inhabitant was €14,950 in Greece, compared with €22,660 across the 15 countries of the European Union (EU) before the recent enlargement (Eurostat 2004: 118).<sup>1</sup>

The Greek parliament is unicameral and has 300 seats; its members are elected by direct popular vote to serve four-year terms. Voting rights, which are universal, begin at 18 years of age; voting is in formal terms compulsory for parliamentary and local elections.

The triple pillars of the criminal justice system are the constitution, the Penal Code and the Penal Procedure Code. The new constitution after the restoration of democracy in June 1974 following the last dictatorship was amended in March 1986 and again in April 2001. The judiciary is divided into civil, criminal and administrative courts (Spinellis and Spinellis 1999). The highest judicial authorities are the five special courts: the Supreme Judicial Court and the Special Supreme Tribunal, along with three courts for administrative, financial and criminal issues. The President of the Republic appoints all judges for life after consultation with a judicial council.

The Penal Code was enacted in 1950 (Law 1492/1950) and has been amended several times since then. A range of other activities, such as drug offences, contraband, illicit traffic in antiquities, traffic offences, public health, fraud and money laundering, are covered by special criminal laws, which are expanding more and more. There is a separate Penal Procedure Code, also issued in 1950, which like the Penal Code has been amended and reformed many times. The organization of the prison system is based on the constitution, international conventions, the Correctional Code (also

<sup>1</sup> In purchasing power standards.

known as Prison Law), the Penal Code and the Penal Procedure Code, along with numerous ministerial and presidential decrees. The Correctional Code has a long history of amendments and reforms (in 1967, 1989 and 1999).

The authorities responsible for crime control in Greece are the police (responsible to the Ministry of Public Order), the coastguard (Ministry of Mercantile Marine), the Customs Service (Ministry of Finance) and the Financial and Economic Crimes Office (Ministry of Finance). The administrative duties of the police are the maintenance of order and the investigation of criminal offences. In their crime investigation role, the police are supervised and guided by the public prosecutor.

Before 1822, eminent citizens in Greece exercised police authority. The first National Assembly in Epidaurus on 9 January 1822 established a dual public police system (state and municipal). After many changes to this system and after the 60-year division of the police into judicial and administrative, the Gendarmerie took over complete authority for policing the country in 1906. In 1921, a new corps, the Metropolitan Police, was established in the four major cities of the country (Athens, Piraeus, Patras and Corfu) in line with the British system. In 1984, the Metropolitan Police force was combined with the Gendarmerie to form the Hellenic Police (EL.AS). Since this unification some partial reforms have occurred. The first attempt at reorganization was initiated by the Panhellenic Association of Police Personnel in conjunction with the Ministry of Public Order in 2000, without success. No structural innovation or other change has taken place.

The Greek police force is a centralized, hierarchical organization, managed in military style. However, the special police groups or squads are decentralized and autonomous at an operational level. In September 2001, the number of police stood at 44,148 officers, of whom 3,776 (8.5 percent) were women, corresponding to 402 police personnel per 100,000 inhabitants for a total population of 10.9 million (de facto population). During the 1990s, the number of police per 100,000 resident population had increased from 370 to 425. Police numbers further increased between 2001 and 2004, during the build-up to the Olympic Games, to 48,000 or about 460 per 100,000 population.

### **Teaching and research**

In order to have a complete overview of research and policy-making in the country and of the course of criminology, it will be helpful to trace the relations between the development of criminology and the broader socio-economic and political context.

Criminology was established in Greece in the 1930s. Although its initial development was promising (Nakos 1915), theoretical and empirical research (see further Courakis 2000; Troianos 2000: 11–12) during subsequent decades fluctuated somewhat for various reasons related to the political situation in the country, which affected the social sciences in general. Initially, Greek criminologists followed legal and medical approaches in the European tradition. Up to the 1980s legal studies in Greece were regarded as a science that offered a broad education, supported ‘free-thinking’ and opened up opportunities to practise a number of professions (Lambiri-Dimaki 1987).

When democracy was restored in 1974 after more than half a century punctuated by regional wars and political turbulence, criminological research was virtually non-existent and the little that did exist was quite rudimentary. It was only in 1985/86 that the separate sociology section instituted at Panteion University (previously the School of Social and Political Sciences) one year before, established a criminology section, right after its transformation into a Department of Sociology; the section remains unique in the country and belongs to the sociology department. Until then sociology as well as criminology had been a one-year introductory course in most law schools, so students’ education in sociological and especially in criminological theory and research methods was sketchy. Yet sociology and criminology remained two ‘worlds apart’.

In the 1980s, there began an expansion in criminology teaching, although not in research, and this expansion continued more intensively into the 1990s. A lack of funds and conservative attitudes on the part of state functionaries and entrenched professional interests resistant to the social sciences in general and to criminology in particular were, nevertheless, significant barriers to the development of the discipline. Moreover, the fact that Greece was not characterized by high crime rates made criminology seem superfluous and meant that it did not develop as a scientific discipline but served mostly as an adjunct to criminal law. Systematic research was carried out for a time at the National Centre for Social Research under the supervision of Elias Daskalakis, a criminology professor at the Panteios School of Social and Political Sciences. At the time of his death in 1986, and following the enactment of a new law (1514/1985) regulating the ‘development of scientific and technological research’, the criminology group was dispersed and its members were redeployed at the Centre’s four institutes, focusing on other topics. Some of them have occasionally participated in research programmes in the area of criminology; in recent years, there has been involvement in certain EU programmes, mainly those examining social exclusion issues (e.g. racism, and the reintegration of released female prisoners).

Following a general increase in recorded crime and especially in more serious crimes in the 1990s (Lambropoulou 2001: 34–49), a growing demand for criminologists has emerged among state institutions. Criminologists have slowly started to participate in various governmental committees and in groups preparing new legislation, along with other professionals, such as criminal law professors, judges and lawyers, who had been dominating the field. Their competent handling of certain problems such as prison policy and juvenile delinquency (Spinellis 1997: 78), usually in the context of preparing legislative proposals, and their effectiveness in responding to requests for information from policy makers, promoted their 'legitimation' (Panoussis 2000) and enabled some to gain access to the media.

Small research centres or laboratories, practical training and post-graduate studies with a specialization in criminology now exist in all three law schools that teach criminology. The largest concentration of teaching and research in criminology is to be found in the Department of Sociology at Panteion University. PhD theses cover a broad range of themes; many are based on self-contained research projects, for example on criminal careers, sexual abuse, correctional institutions and illegal gambling. In general, criminological research has been more intensive during recent years. Personal or group research independent of centres, institutions and political requests has become more common, owing to the greater involvement of Greek criminologists in international discussion. The studies are concerned with topics such as criminal justice, drugs, police, corrections, fraud, social exclusion and social and crime control. Yet they remain fragmentary and unambitious. First and foremost, this can be attributed to a lack of resources, which in turn arises from limited state awareness of the usefulness of criminological studies, funding and support. Inadequate backing for criminology by the state is accompanied by indifference to research in the social sciences within the private sector. Until recently, the reluctance of public sector organizations to cooperate with the universities and the lack of interest in cooperation between the universities themselves have been contributing factors.

Undergraduate courses in criminology or criminal justice are generally offered as options for students studying for certain degrees (e.g. psychology at Panteion University, mass media and communication at the University of Athens). However, introductory courses in criminology, penology corrections and crime policy are compulsory for students of law and of social administration at the University of Thrace, and criminology is compulsory for students at Panteion University. Since these courses are obligatory and undertaken during the first semester of the undergraduate

course, many students attend them; numbers can rise to 300, depending on the admissions quota of the relevant faculty each year.

The curricula cover a wide range of topics, especially at Panteion University, where courses unnecessarily overlap and duplicate each other. In broad terms, the courses offered by Greek universities can be grouped into three categories: (1) crime and deviance – aetiology, forms (e.g. economic, organized, juvenile delinquency), history, research; (2) reaction – informal, formal, criminal justice (e.g. prison law, juvenile criminal law), alternatives to punishment; and (3) various more specialized topics, such as victimology, criminological and forensic psychology and psychiatry, and topics related to the EU.

Workshops and meetings initiated by criminologists to reflect contemporary issues, such as policing, insecurity or terrorism, are virtually non-existent. There are no awards for distinguished work. From time to time, the Society of Criminology (300 members) and the Society of Victimology (216 members) organize lectures and other events, which have an informative character but no dynamic for exchanging ideas and dialogue on a regular basis. The problems of criminology are also apparent in the huge difficulties confronting the regular publication of the two almost defunct journals.

## Trends in crime and punishment

### Sources

Field researchers usually derive their information from justice and police records as presented in the *European Sourcebook of Crime and Criminal Justice Statistics* (1999, 2003) and the Council of Europe's *Penological Information Bulletin* (1999–2002). To my knowledge, there is no other reliable source of data; there is no time series of victimization or of self-report surveys based on a representative sample of the population. Systematic research on victimization has not been carried out except for some based on medical reports on children (Marangos 1987, cited in Spinellis 1997: 208–9; Agathonos-Georgopoulou 2001; Stavrianos and Metska 2002). Other social groups such as women and the elderly have occasionally been investigated (see further Spinellis 1997: 209–11). The only large-scale victimization study of the general population is one carried out as a substitute for Greece's absence from the first sweep of the International Crime Victim Survey (ICVS) (Spinellis et al. 1991; Spinellis 1997: [209–11] 212–22). In general, the majority of Greek criminologists use quantitative methods, and qualitative studies are rare.

### **An overview on crime and punishment**

This section is based on data generated by the police and criminal justice system, including police-recorded crimes and arrests, offences brought before the courts, convictions, sentences, and numbers in prison and released from prison. An important source is the reports of the General Division of the Ministry of Justice, which feed into the *Penological Information Bulletin* of the Council of Europe. The numbers of offences brought to the notice of the prosecution services have not been published and are not available electronically, but I have collated these statistics from the internal papers of the Prosecution Service for the eight-year period ending 2002.

Table 1 shows statistics on recorded crime and convictions in Greece for the period 1980 to 1999. Total recorded crimes are divided into the more serious felonies (14 percent of all recorded crimes in 1999) and misdemeanours (the remaining 86 percent). Between 1980 and 1999 there was a significant increase in the absolute number of recorded crimes, but this has to be seen in the context of a substantial increase in the population too. The rate of recorded crime per 100,000 resident population increased only slightly over the 20-year period. There were, however, significant fluctuations in the total number of recorded crimes from year to year. There was a rise in the early 1980s to a peak in 1983, then a sudden decline to a plateau in the later 1980s, followed by another rise to a peak in 1992, a fall up to 1995, and a further rise to a high plateau between 1997 and 1999. Nevertheless, the highest number of recorded crimes in the 1990s was lower than the peak that had been reached in 1983. In terms of the rate per 100,000 population, the recorded crime rate was considerably lower in 1999 (3587) than at the peak in 1983 (4440).

Trends for the more serious felonies were, nevertheless, entirely different from those for misdemeanours or for recorded crime in total. In terms of numbers, there were about 1000 recorded felonies in 1980, compared with over 5000 in 1999; the highest number of felonies recorded was 8244 in 1995, an eightfold increase on the 1980 figure. In terms of the rate per 100,000 population, felonies increased about sevenfold between 1980 and 1995, before dropping back in 1999 to a rate four times the 1980 rate.

To summarize these findings, there has been a significant increase in the number of recorded crimes over a 20-year period ending in 1999, with a complex pattern of ups and downs over the intervening period, although the rate of recorded crime per head of population has increased only slightly. On the other hand, there has been a much more striking increase in the more serious recorded crimes (felonies) both in terms of absolute

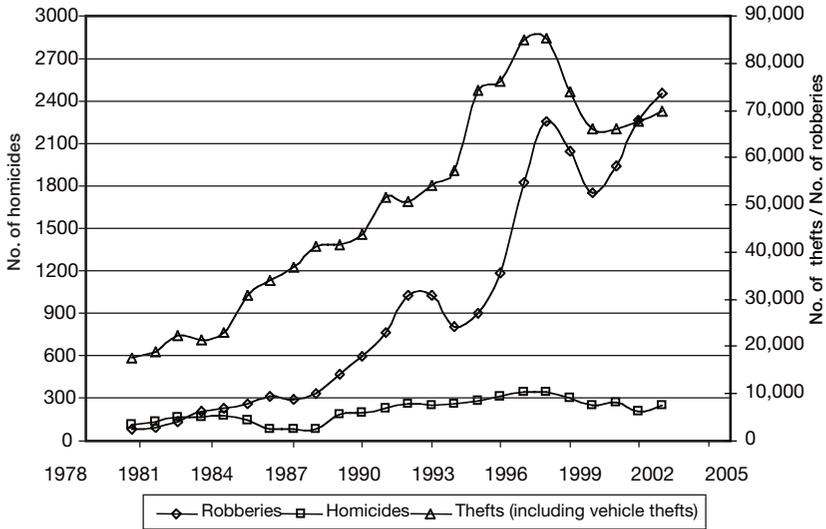
**Table 1** Crimes and convictions, 1980–99

Year	Total no. of crimes	No. per 100,000 inhabitants	Felonies <sup>a</sup>		Misdemeanours <sup>b</sup>		No. of convicted persons (incl. juveniles)	No. per 100,000 inhabitants
			Total no.	No. per 100,000 inhabitants	Total no.	No. per 100,000 inhabitants		
1980	295,353	3,416	1,043	12	294,310	3,404	122,828	1,421
1981	309,267	3,541	986	11	308,281	3,530	137,576	1,575
1982	335,170	3,787	1,391	16	333,779	3,771	139,433	1,574
1983	393,506	4,440	1,306	15	392,200	4,425	120,991	1,367
1984	352,488	3,948	1,505	16	350,983	3,931	113,988	1,276
1985	291,355	3,241	2,560	28	288,795	3,213	108,011	1,201
1986	294,300	3,253	2,886	31	291,414	3,221	123,958	1,370
1987	303,182	3,330	3,332	32	299,850	3,294	140,403	1,542
1988	311,179	3,397	4,455	49	306,724	3,348	132,925	1,451
1989	287,177	3,113	4,624	50	282,553	3,063	108,983	1,181
1990	330,803	3,555	4,692	51	326,111	3,505	109,190	1,174
1991	358,998	3,802	6,551	69	352,447	3,733	112,203	1,189
1992	379,652	3,967	6,510	68	373,142	3,899	107,564	1,124
1993	358,503	3,732	6,348	66	352,155	3,666	92,427	962
1994	303,311	3,132	5,811	60	297,500	3,072	83,818	866
1995	329,110	3,386	8,244	85	320,866	3,308	91,966	946
1996	349,476	3,583	6,531	67	342,945	3,516	86,892	891
1997	377,871	3,863	5,467	56	372,404	3,807	–	–
1998	385,681	3,934	5,340	55	380,341	3,879	–	–
1999	373,680	3,587	5,340	48	367,966	3,532	–	–

Sources: 1980–96: NSSG (1980–96a: Table I); 1997–9: data are based on the *Statistical Bulletin of the Greek Police*.

<sup>a</sup> Crime punishable by a prison sentence of 5–20 years or by a life sentence (GPC, Art. 52). Alternatively, some misdemeanours can incur a fine (specific reference in GPC).

<sup>b</sup> Crime punishable by a prison sentence of 10 days to 5 years (GPC, Art. 53).



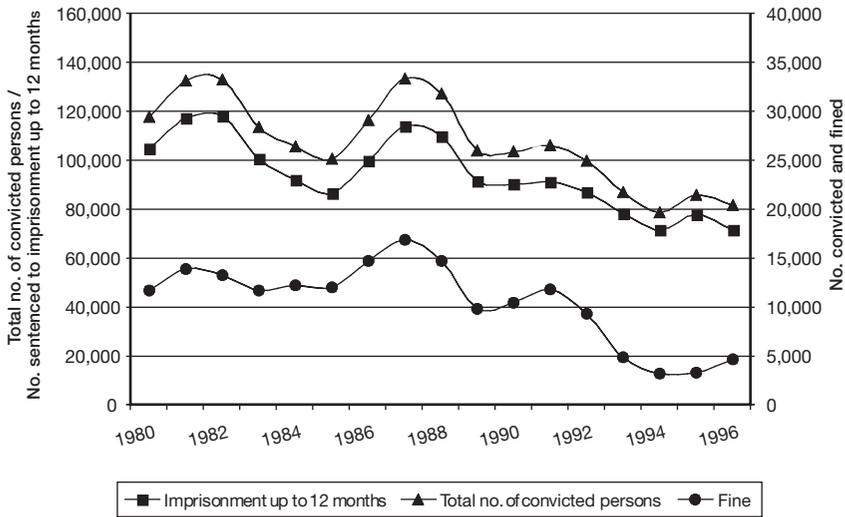
**Figure 1** Homicides, thefts and robberies, 1980–2003.

Sources: NSSG (1980–96a: Table B2); *Statistical bulletin of the Greek police* (1997–9), Tables 3, 9; URL: [www.ydt.gr](http://www.ydt.gr) (2000–3).

numbers and in terms of rate per head of population. Crimes that have substantially increased in number are thefts, robberies and homicides (see Figure 1), as well as serious and violent offences involving drugs, arms, trafficking in women, and counterfeiting; these offences are linked to sociopolitical and economic changes in the neighbouring Balkan countries.

By contrast with the upward trend in recorded crime, and especially in serious crime, there was a substantial downward trend in convictions over the period 1980–96 (statistics are not yet available for 1997–99). There were at the same time substantial fluctuations in the number of convictions from year to year. At the beginning of the period, in 1980, there were 122,828 recorded convictions, which had dropped to 86,892 by 1996, the last year for which data are available. The highest number of convictions was reached in 1987 (a year when recorded crimes were rather low); there was a rapid decline over the next two years, a plateau for four years, then a steady downward trend from 1992 (see Figure 2). Expressed as a rate per head of population, convictions dropped off still more sharply over the 16-year period (Table 1).

Taking the above into account, I studied trends in charges since 1991 in order to find out if the decrease in convictions could be associated with the overloading of the Prosecution Service. I established that charges filed with



**Figure 2** Number of convicted persons according to sentence imposed: Fine or imprisonment up to 12 months, 1980–96.

Source: NSSG (1980–96a: Table B4).

the Athens Prosecution Service (covering 2.6 million inhabitants, or about 25 percent of the national population) increased from 132,433 in 1991–3 to 183,224 in 1999–2000).<sup>2</sup> This marked increase in the number of charges combined with a significant decline in the number of convictions implies that there was a still sharper decline in the proportion of charges that ended in a conviction. A possible explanation is that, as the Prosecution Service has brought a rising number of charges, its resources have been spread more thinly; this would lead to an increasing proportion of cases where the evidence was insufficient at the trial stage, resulting in more and more defendants being acquitted. The findings generally support the results of earlier research in Germany (Blankenburg et al. 1978), the USA (White 1993) and Greece (Daskalakis et al. 1983) on prosecutors' strategies for coping with case overload. Comparing the present data with those of Daskalakis et al.'s earlier research (1983: 54, Table 13) it is clear that by 1991, the beginning of the period examined here, the number of charges in

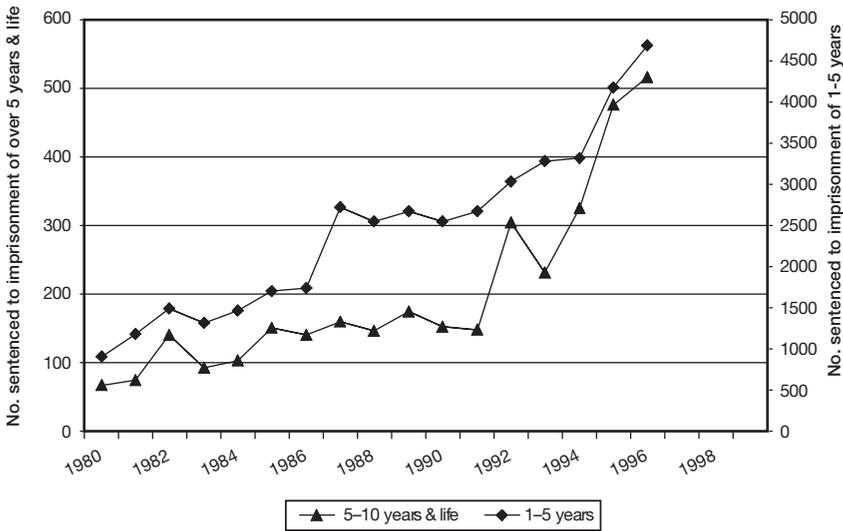
<sup>2</sup> During 1991–3, the number of charges was 132,433 per year (about 363 per day) whereas between 1994 and 1998, it was 161,515 (442 charges per day) and between 1999 and 2000 it was 183,224 (502 charges per day). Thus there was an increase of 22 percent over the period 1994–8 compared with the previous four-year period; for 1999–2000 the increase was 13.4 percent over 1994–8. These figures do not include charges relating to dishonoured cheques, violations of the labour welfare legislation (insurance and pension funds) and offences committed by juveniles.

Athens had already risen well above that found in 1971–5, and continued to rise over the following 10 years. These increases in charges may be explained partly by the rise in serious crime, but also in part by the enactment of new legislation that criminalized more activities. This could ultimately result in more offences, charges and arrests. At the same time, the *European Sourcebook of Crime and Criminal Justice Statistics* (2003: para. 2.1.7) found a negative correlation between the workload of prosecuting authorities (disposed cases per 100,000 population) and the rate of cases brought before a court, ‘suggesting that the criminal justice system tends to balance itself out’ (pp. 90–2). In the longer term this is likely to mean that, without a massive injection of new resources into the Greek Prosecution Service, the number of charges will eventually level off and then decline.

Over the period 1980–96, the great majority of defendants found guilty (between 87 and 90 percent) received a prison sentence convertible to a fine (Figure 2). Under the Greek Penal Code (GPC), short prison sentences are convertible to fines (GPC, Art. 82). The conversion of a prison sentence into a fine, commonly attached to more petty crimes, has a long tradition in the Greek criminal justice system. It has traded under different legal terms such as ‘special prescription’ or ‘special statute barring’ in the past. Although until 1990 fines, as the sentence originally handed out, represented 10 percent of all sentences, this proportion has since decreased to about 5 percent of all sentences (5.7 percent in 1996). Short terms of imprisonment of up to 3 months, as the sentence originally handed out, also accounted for a declining, although still very large, proportion (83.6 percent in 1980 compared with 71.6 percent in 1996). At the same time, there was a threefold increase (from 1.9 to 6.3 percent) in longer imprisonment of 6–12 months, which is still within the range where conversion to a fine is possible. Since the middle of the 1980s, the length of a prison sentence convertible to a fine has been extended several times. In parallel, longer prison sentences of 1–5 years and of over 5 years (up to life) for ‘serious’ crimes such as aggravated assault, robbery, homicide and drug-related offences (see also Spinellis and Spinellis 1999: 13, 36) have also increased substantially, although the absolute numbers for the second group are very low (Figure 3).

Nevertheless, suspended sentences doubled from 10.3 percent in 1990 to 18.3 percent in 1996 owing to more ‘liberal’ legislation introduced during the 1990s (Law 1941/1991, Arts 3 and 5; Law 2207/1994, Art. 1(2)), outstripping the rates of the 1980s, which ranged between 11.0 and 15.2 percent. Furthermore, the courts have made increasing use of ‘discretionary suspension’ (Arts 99 and 100(1) GPC, Law 2479/1997, Art. 2(3)).

Notwithstanding the high use of prison sentences by judges and magistrates, only a small proportion (6–7 percent) of offenders were finally



**Figure 3** Number of convicted persons according to sentence imposed: Imprisonment of 1–5 years or over 5 years to life, 1980–96.

Source: NSSG (1980–96a: Table B4).

admitted to prison in the 1980s, whereas after 1990 this rate doubled to 13 percent. Moreover, the increase in youth offenders at ‘training schools’<sup>3</sup> in the 1990s is remarkable (1990: 160; 1996: 254; 2002: 572).<sup>4</sup> This increase in imprisonment of adults and confinement of juveniles in secure institutions is associated with the increasing proportion of foreign nationals among convicted youths and adults. According to official statistics for the period 1997–2003, approximately 46 percent of the total prison population consisted of non-Greek nationals, and 40–45 percent of these were on remand.<sup>5</sup>

<sup>3</sup> The age of full adult criminal responsibility is 17 years (GPC, Arts 121, 126). Up to that age the court applies either educational or therapeutic measures (GPC, Arts 122, 123); it decides whether the crime warrants a prison sentence to be served in a training school, only if the adolescent is aged 13–17 and after undergoing educational and psychological examination (GPC, Arts 121, 126, 127). Young adults aged 17–21 will usually be sentenced under ‘mitigated punishment’ and any ‘prison’ sentence is usually served at a ‘juvenile reformatory’ (GPC, Art. 133).

<sup>4</sup> Sources: Ministry of Justice, General Division of Correctional Policy, Athens, data for 1999–2002, unpublished; see also NSSG (1980–96b: Table C2).

<sup>5</sup> Sources: Ministry of Justice, General Division of Correctional Policy, Athens, unpublished data; available at URL: [www.ministryofjustice.gr](http://www.ministryofjustice.gr) (in Greek); for the prison population in the country as a whole, see also URL: [www.kcl.ac.uk/depsta/rel/icps/worldbrief/europe\\_records.php](http://www.kcl.ac.uk/depsta/rel/icps/worldbrief/europe_records.php).

A more detailed breakdown according to nationality is available only from 1997 and most of the data have not yet been published. With some reservations about the quality of the data currently available, Albanians seem to be the largest foreign group in the criminal justice system, accounting for about 42 percent of prisoners, followed by nationals of the other Balkan countries, with disproportionate numbers from Romania, as well as Turks and citizens from the former Soviet Union.<sup>6</sup>

The general upward trend in the number of prisoners is related to an increase in the number of prisoners on remand (see Table 2). This arises for several reasons. First, as we have seen, there has been an increase in the number of serious crimes, for which remand of the suspect is mandatory. Second, because of its rising workload in recent years, the Prosecution Service does not have time to examine cases carefully, and therefore prefers to order the remand of suspects to ensure their appearance at trial.<sup>7</sup> Third, due to the increasing the number of foreign suspects, the majority of whom are held on charges of theft, drug trafficking and illegal entry into the country (see also Courakis 1998: 242, fn. 13).

The proportion of convicted offenders who are given fine-convertible sentences remains quite high (between 22 and 38 percent). Additionally, there has been a large increase since 1994 in the releases on parole ('conditional release'); at the same time, a substantial proportion of prisoners have their remaining sentence converted to a fine after serving part of the prison sentence. Despite these efforts to reduce the number of people sent to prison, the population in corrections has increased considerably since the mid-1980s (see Table 2): it followed a downward trend from 8186 in 1980 to 6198 in 1985, then increased to a high of 9883 in 1994. Ten years later, in January to April 2004, the prison population remained broadly similar although a little lower, at somewhere between 8726 and 8798. This implies considerable overcrowding, since the nominal prison capacity is 5284. As already referred to, one reason for the long-term increase in the prison population is the growth in the number of suspects remanded in custody (Table 2). This number increased from 3269 in 1980 to a high of 5593 in 1992, but by 1994 it had decreased to around 4500. The statistics on the prison population confirm those on sentences

<sup>6</sup> Ibid.

<sup>7</sup> Remand is ordered during the preliminary proceedings if serious evidence of guilt surfaces and the person is accused of a felony. Likewise, it is ordered if the accused persons do not have a known residence in the country or have made preparatory efforts to facilitate their escape, if they have been an absconder or fugitive, or if it is decided by the prosecutor or the court council that, if released, escape is highly probable, and finally, taking into account special events of their earlier life or special characteristics of the crime at hand, it is possible they may commit another crime(s) (Greek Penal Procedure Code, Art. 282, para. 3).

**Table 2** Prisoners according to sentences being served, 1980–96

Year	Total no. of prisoners <sup>c</sup>	Detention up to 1 month (%)	Imprisonment (%) <sup>a</sup>			Confinement <sup>b</sup>		No. of remand prisoners	No. of prisoners per 100,000 inhabitants
			1–12 months	1–3 years	3–5 years	5–20 years	Life		
1980	8,186	0.2	57.0	19.6	10.4	10.6	2.0	3,269	95
1981	7,200	0.3	51.0	20.2	12.2	12.0	2.2	3,106	82
1982	6,417	0.3	45.4	24.0	14.0	13.7	2.5	3,185	72
1983	7,043	0.1	45.3	26.2	11.7	14.0	2.6	3,067	79
1984	7,214	0.1	40.1	27.1	13.4	16.4	2.8	2,868	81
1985	6,198	0.3	36.9	26.0	14.5	18.6	3.5	2,916	69
1986	6,420	0.4	34.1	27.8	13.8	20.2	3.6	3,398	71
1987	6,970	0.9	35.3	30.6	10.6	19.2	3.3	3,566	77
1988	6,921	1.0	32.2	27.2	13.8	22.4	3.4	3,501	76
1989	6,748	0.3	32.4	27.5	13.2	23.0	3.5	4,015	74
1990	7,588	0.2	30.9	36.1	8.5	21.5	2.7	4,247	82
1991	7,992	0.0	31.8	29.4	12.4	22.5	4.0	4,603	85
1992	8,649	0.2	34.6	23.8	13.3	24.0	3.9	5,593	91
1993	9,866	0.1	29.6	25.3	14.0	26.8	4.1	4,981	103
1994	9,883	0.0	27.1	22.8	16.5	27.6	5.9	4,507	102
1995	9,377	0.0	29.9	21.0	15.4	27.7	6.0	4,567	97
1996 <sup>d</sup>	8,887	0.0	28.0	19.3	15.0	30.6	7.1	4,495	85

Source: NSSG (1980–96b: Table C1).

<sup>a</sup> Prison sentence up to 5 years.

<sup>b</sup> Prison sentence over 5 years.

<sup>c</sup> Juveniles serving their sentence in training schools and adults serving security measures are not included. In the first case the sentence is not convertible and cannot be suspended, and in the second the offence is not registered. So neither group can be compared with the rest and the different numbers might cause confusion to the reader.

<sup>d</sup> Between 1 January and 1 April 2004 the number of prisoners ranged from 8,726 to 8,798 (Ministry of Justice, General Division of Correctional Policy, unpublished data).

given at conviction in showing an increase in longer sentences and a decrease in shorter sentences; these trends are exaggerated when looking at the prison population, because those given longer sentences are more likely to form part of the prison population on the day of the count (NSSG 1980–96b: Table I). The proportion of prisoners serving short sentences of up to one year decreased from 57 percent in 1980 to 28 percent in 1996, whereas those serving longer sentences doubled and the proportion serving life sentences tripled. At the same time, statistics on those released from prison each year (see Table 3) show that more and more were released early or had part of their sentence converted. Consequently, there was a remarkable and steady decline in the proportion of released prisoners who had served their maximum sentence, from 31 percent in 1980 to 11 percent in 1996.

Summing up, during the 1980s a general decrease in the rate of imprisonment occurred, corresponding to the spirit of de-institutionalization efforts in Europe. In the 1990s, longer sentences were followed by more lenient sentencing legislation. This practice has mainly been implemented to take the edge off prison overcrowding (see also Spinellis 1998; Panoussis 1999). But, in spite of such seemingly liberal measures, the country's prison population has declined only slightly from its high plateau in 1993–6 (Figures 2 and 3 and Table 2). This outcome is attributable to the courts' imposition of longer prison sentences in conjunction with the increased severity of crimes committed. It is interesting that the criminal courts have taken it upon themselves to change longer sentences either by fine conversions or by imposing suspended sentences for common crimes.

## Review of key publications

### Schools of thought

Criminology in Greece has developed empirically, without 'guiding insights and intellectual ideas animating it' (see Savelsberg and Sampson 2002: 100), thus appearing to lag behind the science of criminal law (Yiotopoulou-Marangopoulou 1984). During the 1960s and 1970s, Greek criminologists mainly followed a conservative early positivist way of thinking. Over the past 30 years, the situation has changed; although it is difficult to categorize them, three major schools have emerged:

- 1 Liberal juristic criminology, which groups criminology with 'non-normative penal sciences' – penology, forensic psychiatry, investigative techniques – in analysing 'real' crime as 'human action that is dangerously antisocial' (Alexiadis 2004: 9, 35–6, 42–3).
- 2 Liberal positivistic criminology (Farsedakis 1984; Spinellis 1985).

**Table 3** Prisoners released, 1980–96

Year	Total no. released	Release rate (%)	Maximum sentence served (%)	Reasons for release (%)				
				Conversion of sentence	Conditional release	Early release because of work	Other reasons <sup>a</sup>	Escape/death
1980	5,701	69.6	31.0	34.3	6.7	11.7	16.2	0.2
1981	4,919	68.3	28.0	33.1	9.2	12.7	17.0	0.4
1982	4,224	65.8	24.5	28.3	6.8	11.6	18.8	0.7
1983	4,363	61.9	13.9	34.0	9.6	10.9	21.6	0.6
1984	4,611	63.9	19.4	40.3	7.8	12.8	19.7	0.5
1985	3,796	61.2	16.0	38.9	13.1	12.6	19.3	0.7
1986	3,661	52.5	18.3	39.6	9.0	12.0	21.2	0.7
1987	4,157	59.6	23.1	42.4	7.3	8.7	18.4	0.5
1988	3,905	56.4	18.4	42.6	9.6	10.0	19.2	0.6
1989	3,682	55.9	18.3	43.0	12.2	10.0	16.6	0.8
1990	4,021	53.0	19.8	39.7	15.0	8.8	16.7	0.7
1991	4,541	56.8	17.2	41.4	9.7	14.7	17.0	1.1
1992	4,497	52.0	19.0	46.8	7.3	10.3	16.5	1.4
1993	4,983	50.5	18.1	48.8	6.8	9.5	16.6	2.0
1994	5,797	58.7	13.0	40.6	28.1	3.9	14.4	2.3
1995	5,438	58.0	12.5	42.5	21.7	3.0	20.2	1.2
1996	5,194	59.1	11.1	31.2	33.6	5.0	19.1	1.5

Source: NSSG (1980–96b: Table II).

<sup>a</sup> Releases because of acquittal by the appellate court, merging and conversion of sentences, as well as the rescinding of the court's decision or cessation of the sentence because of serious illness or irreparable damage to prisoner's health.

- 3 Critical criminology (Daskalakis 1985), which has remained unchanged from the mould of the late 1970s or combined with other tendencies.

In general, studies in the second category are the most common, along with some in the third.

### Topics of publications and research

The issues on which the research interests of criminologists have concentrated during the past two decades have been crime prevention policy, especially sentencing viewed as a tool for preventing crime, corrections, drug policy, juvenile delinquency, and, occasionally, fear of crime, victimization and the police.

#### *Crime policy, corrections and drugs*

Crime policy is mostly discussed in relation to corrections and recidivism, as set out below (see Alexiadis et al. 1993). Case studies concerning specific forms of illegal activities are very few (Tsouramanis 1992; Kranidioti 1995). Only recently has the emphasis shifted to security issues, following worldwide trends. At the macro level, criminologists tend to be reluctant to support globalized security politics or are openly critical of them. Paradoxically, at the micro level they tend to have positive views about efforts to improve local security.

On the first point, Greek criminologists usually oppose the 'repressive politics' developed in the unified Europe to deal with the consequences of the abolition of internal borders, and they tend to be very sceptical about the Schengen conventions because of their arguably inadequate protection of civil liberties compared with the level of protection provided by the European Convention for Human Rights in the general context of *Rechtsstaat* (rule of law) (Nikolopoulos 2002).

On the second point, Greek criminologists tend to support the development of *public security* and especially of policies designed to confront everyday crime and disorder, such as community policing, local crime prevention councils and partnerships (Papatheodorou 2002). They have advocated a *National Plan for Safer Cities* on the pattern of the one adopted some years ago in the UK, along with the French model of *police de proximité*, and have promoted a multi-agency approach as a method of implementing local crime prevention schemes. Recent relevant publications on community crime prevention, on its concept and implementation in the USA and elsewhere in Europe tend to be informative and instructive in character (Panoussis and Vidali 2001; Zarafonitou 2003).

The impact of punishment and its deterrent effect (both general and

specific), favourite issues during the 1980s in Europe, are represented in the empirical research of Spinellis, the most active researcher in empirical criminology among the second generation of Greek criminologists (Spinellis, 1982). She measured the attitudes of the public, police officers and prisoners towards punishment and law enforcement, and tried to distinguish between the influence of the perceived severity and the certainty of sanctions. According to her results, the effectiveness of deterrence was dubious for the most critical group surveyed, namely prisoners.

As already mentioned, since the beginning of the 1980s corrections and punishment have been a preferred issue in the research of Greek criminologists. Prisoners' riots and the general political climate have contributed to focusing attention on these topics. Numerous publications – articles, books and commentaries on legislative issues, as well as memoirs of prisoners, including political prisoners, after release – have referred to incarceration, the history of punishment and imprisonment, the human rights of prisoners, as well as the functions and role of prison in society (Alexiadis 1990; Courakis 1997; Dimopoulos 2002). However, fewer publications have extended to a study of the relationship between punishment or prison culture and citizens' attitudes; research has been restricted either to an account based on official data or to a description of legislative reforms in the area (Panoussis et al. 1994; Spinellis and Courakis 2001) and of international conventions and treaties (Pitsela 2003). There are, of course, thorough and detailed reviews that are not based on primary research on contemporary Greek society. These have examined many issues in corrections such as the theory and history of the deprivation of liberty, alternatives to imprisonment and their international practice, models and experience in several countries, their heyday in Greece at the beginning of the 20th century and their subsequent decline (Archimandritou 2000).

Nevertheless, as early as the 1960s, one of the founding fathers of criminology in Greece, Constantinos Gardikas, was referring to prison subculture, prisonization and prisoner types in Greek institutions. More than 20 years later, the first research by Elias Daskalakis took place (Daskalakis et al. 1983) and in 1986 the field study by the Greek American Jennifer Panagopoulos in the women's prison of Korydallos was published, almost unknown to Greek specialists.

In any case, primary research on corrections is hard to carry out and requires very active participation by the authorities. Given the unwillingness of the Ministry of Justice to play a role in any kind of empirical study before 1990, combined with a lack of cooperation and mutual support among academic research teams, the dearth in this field is understandable. Only in the 1990s did research become more systematic, but the field continues to be *terra incognita* for many criminologists, not to mention the

majority of responsible ministers and other politicians (see Koulouris 1990). The first such study, which was part of a larger project, was carried out in the two training schools for minors and was exploratory in character. The research group (Courakis, Milioni et al. 1995) examined the factors that influence a criminal career and, in particular, the attitudes of the juvenile inmates ( $N = 156$ ) towards their punishment, confinement, drugs and drug use, school and training, and examined their expectations and aspirations, their perspectives and their fears about the future. In addition, the socioeconomic background of these young people was examined, together with their criminal record and prison files. The results of a follow-up study that was planned in the late 1990s have not yet been published.

The results showed that the majority of the sample found the penalty fair, but around one-third felt 'angry' with justice and society. Over one-third continued to use drugs on a regular basis. The majority wished for a new start after their release and hoped to forget the past; a smaller but substantial proportion expected and feared that they would be arrested and convicted again. The most interesting finding is the link between prior convictions and imprisonment and a criminal career: 38 percent of the sample had prior experience of imprisonment, of whom 97 percent had committed a crime incurring a two-year suspended sentence. This research is important because it is one of the very few projects carried out in juvenile institutions or adult prisons in Greece since the late 1970s. It confirms the maxim that 'the best predictor of a new recorded contact is an earlier recorded contact' (Junger-Tas 1988: 196).

Two other studies from the National Research Centre examined the opportunities for reintegration for adult male and female offenders on release from prison, and for juvenile offenders (Thanopoulou et al. 1997; Thanopoulou and Moshovou 1998). Both enquiries attempted to evaluate the training programmes provided for these groups. The first study examined the difficulties encountered in integrating or reintegrating women into work, pending their release (Thanopoulou et al. 1997). It found that the problems of integration into the world of work had started long before imprisonment, and that deprivation of liberty intensified these problems and made them more acute. The authors then examined the 16 institutions charged with the education and training of released prisoners by interviewing representatives from each of the organizations. This study emphasized the importance of aftercare treatment and the need for further support programmes as well. The second study related to the programmes funded in 1996 by the Ministry of Education (Adult Education Division) in partnership with the EU. It followed 56 adults and 11 juveniles, who had taken part in one of four occupational training programmes, after their

release from prison. Only 6 of the adults and 1 of the juveniles were female (Thanopoulou and Moshovou 1998). The majority of both groups were working after release in the same sector as before their confinement, usually in unskilled or temporary jobs. This implies that their training had played no role. Therefore, the authors emphasized the need for better programme planning and aftercare.

The two surveys confirmed that the expressed state interest in helping prisoners to reintegrate into society is not associated with effective measures for their support either in correctional facilities or after release. Particularly during the 1990s, the number of specialized personnel in prisons fell, and education and training programmes did not operate permanently as did the previous workshops, which have been reduced; at the same time, farming 'half-way houses' for offenders were abandoned. Moreover, assistance from state institutions offering social relief to vulnerable population groups, such as societies for the aftercare of prisoners or for the protection of juveniles, has declined. At the same time, there is a tendency for areas of responsibility to be transferred to private organizations; these are generally subsidized in part by local authorities, as in the case of the local councils for crime prevention (Law 2713/1999, Art. 16), or by societies for released prisoners. These societies were envisaged for 63 regions of Greece, under the auspices of Courts of First Instance. They were originally the responsibility of the Ministry of Justice, but in 1997 (Law 2503) they were transferred to local authorities. Up to that time, only 33 of them had submitted annual budgets and presented reports (of varying degrees of usefulness) and 30 had been totally inactive. The new Prison Law 2776/1999 (Correctional Code, Art. 81, para. 2, 3) envisages a combination of the previous systems, involving back-up by local authorities and control by the Ministry of Justice. In 2004 the law on aftercare changed again and a new institution called *EPANODOS* ('*Re-Entry*') has been set up (PD 300/2003).

A recent primary study based on a well-developed theoretical analysis examined the management of time by lifers and long-serving prisoners (Mavris 2003). The research showed that time relates not only to the duration of the prison term but also to a person's perceived experience on a particular occasion or over a period, which arranges and rearranges his or her adjustment and behaviour in the institution. The work could be regarded as a prisonization study, although it does not place any emphasis on group socialization.

In relation to the above issue, an unpublished dissertation refers to an area hardly ever examined by Greek criminologists, to wit, suicides in prisons (Themeli 2002). The study is based on data from the records of the Ministry of Justice. It was found that during the 20-year research period

(1977–97), 20.3 percent (93) of the total number of deaths (457) was registered as suicides, corresponding to an average 1.1 per 1000 inmates. The rate is much higher than that of the general population, just below 4 per 100,000 inhabitants. In any case, deaths and not suicides seem to be related with overcrowding.

Numerous publications are devoted to drugs, an acute problem for younger people and a very sensitive one for politicians and others in authority. Some of these publications are official releases by inter-ministerial and governmental bodies, as well as by semi- or non-governmental organizations. Official reports are published at least once a year portraying drug control policies through law enforcement, with the aim of reducing supply (for example by the Anti-Drug Coordination Unit and the Financial and Economic Crimes Unit), and also drug prevention policies, with the aims of demand reduction, harm reduction, and treatment. Some of these reports simply describe trends in drug use and the development of treatment programmes (EKTEPN/UMHRI 1996–2002; Kokkevi et al. 1996); others describe the results of coordinated services in the fields of prevention, treatment and the reintegration of drug addicts.<sup>8</sup> However, the prevention organizations do not promote interdisciplinary cooperation, such as research on drugs and crime; therefore there are minimal chances for more elaborate work going beyond a description of policies, practices and trends.

Studies by criminologists in the field of drugs have been very few; they have been descriptive, consisting of the presentation of statistics and details of the legislation, which is rather labyrinthine, together with some information about detoxification programmes. Some legal scholars and practitioners (judges and lawyers) have written about drugs as well (Karambelas 1988). The jurists usually follow a moderate critical line on successive legislative efforts in Greece (Paraskevopoulos 1997). In their commentaries they set out legislative changes, make comparisons with previous laws, decrees and regulations, and pinpoint problems of enforcement, also distilled from experience in other states, and outline methods of overcoming them. These publications are useful and practical (Farsedakis and Sylikos 1996). In addition, physicians (mostly psychiatrists) have published and researched a lot in the area (see more in URLs of EKTEPN and OKANA). Their studies concerning drug policies are either literary essays or accounts of the author's personal experience in treatment and detoxification centres (Matsa 2001) or well-argued contributions on the decriminalization of drug use and demystification of drugs, along with the politics of

<sup>8</sup> OKANA (Organization against Drugs), Law 1729/1987 amended and completed by 2161/1993; URL: [www.okana.gr](http://www.okana.gr).

prevention. These studies are not confined to medical issues, but also have historical, political, economic, sociological and penal dimensions and relate to topics of international debate (Grivas 1995, 1997).

Recently, research in the field has referred to the strategies and practices developed in EU member states to control expanding drug use, and presents Greek data (deaths, age of first use, arrests, convictions, imprisonment for drug-related crimes, etc.) in the context of policies implemented (Lambropoulou 2003b). Legislation and law enforcement strategies adopted by Greek governments to control drugs are analysed in the light of the researcher's assessment of the addiction problem (Tsiganou 2003). All studies are based on official data and there is a striking lack of qualitative research.

### *Police and policing*

There are some studies of the police, written mostly by police officers in earlier decades, but there has been no in-depth research on police and policing as we know it in the USA and the UK. A survey of police officers covering their perceptions of crime, their profession and their work was not completed, so we cannot present its provisional findings (Tsalikoglou et al. 1994). Although it is easier to approach the police than the judiciary for information, it seems that a thorough study of the police can still be carried out only by insiders.

Two surveys undertaken by police officers followed different styles and methodologies. The first (a doctoral study by a high-ranking police officer) describes the state of the Greek police after 1974 (Stergioulis 2001). It sets out the organization of the Gendarmerie and Metropolitan Police prior to their unification in the Hellenic Police in 1984 and subsequently. The author spells out legislative reforms affecting the police and systematically describes the normative context that regulates police activities. The original contribution of the study consists mainly in data on the social profile of police officers: place of origin, educational level and economic status. The author presents information about the police officers' division of time, their working hours, circulars concerning their behaviour and duties, and their impact. The study also includes data on prosecutions of police officers for illegal violence (fatal in some cases), abuse of detainees, corruption, disciplinary proceedings and penalties for disciplinary offences. The author uses police statistics, information from other relevant sources such as the press, and research from other countries to cover gaps in local studies. Hence this research is only partially a primary study of policing in Greece.

A second study by another police officer focuses on the politics and ideology of the police from a social psychology perspective (Papakonstandis 2003). This work is both more ambitious and more politicized than Stergioulis's study, no doubt because the writer had been involved in reform efforts within the police force. The theoretical framework of the study is a neo-Marxist approach, which regards the police as one of the most repressive instruments of the state (an exceptional view, to say the least, for a high-ranking police officer). Moreover, the author sets out to use the Weberian concept of bureaucracy to justify the hierarchical organization of the corps and its relation to political authority and the wider society. The study is based on a review of the literature and the author's personal experience over 20 years. He undertook a small number of interviews (11) and two case studies to illustrate the relationship between failures of policing and failed reforms.

The author argues, first, that political ideology shapes the activities and politics of the police force much more than rational decision-making, which implies that the police are vulnerable to politics. Second, he contends that police organization and administration counteract serious reform efforts. According to his findings, the Greek police are moving from the professional-bureaucratic and semi-military organizational model to a more professional model, although he does not provide sufficient material to support his assertions. The author also claims that the socioeconomic background of the police officers during the previous 30 years had influenced their conservative ideology and self-image. Furthermore, he emphasizes that the police have not been able to formulate performance measurement criteria and he suggests community policing as a very important method of democratizing the police structure and ideology. The study is clear, bold and distinctive; yet its theoretical model is not rigorously adhered to and the findings are contentious.

Both works, though valuable, would need a stronger empirical base in order to be more helpful. Less well-known publications also provide some useful information about police development (Rigakos and Papanicolaou 2003), organizational changes, police accountability, new investigation techniques and their effectiveness, the growth of private sector security providers, and new trends in police management (e.g. Lambropoulou 2002, 2004).

#### *Victim studies, fear of crime and human trafficking*

Because of a lack of funds, Greece is among the few European states that have not participated in any of the three rounds of the International Crime and Victimization Survey (ICVS) in 1989, 1992 and 1996/97. In 1990,

after Greece had been left out of the first ICVS sweep in 1989, a study of a sample of 800 households was carried out with the financial support of the University of Athens and Panteion University. The research continued until 1991 but in the end could not fully comply with the requirements of the ICVS (Spinellis et al. 1991). Much earlier, in 1972, the first book on victimology had been published by a jurist, Emmanuel Andrianakis (1972/2001), who is still active in the field. He also established the Greek Society of Victimology and generally put victimology on the map in Greece.

In the mid-1990s, several specialists concentrated their interest on child abuse (Maganas 1996), sexual assault and other related topics (Artinopoulou 1995; Artinopoulou and Maganas 1996; Tsingris 1996). More recently, two studies have been published on the fear of crime. The first of these examined fear of crime and the experience of victimization in the Greater Athens area among different demographic and socioeconomic groups (Zarafonitou and Tseloni 2002). The results were generally consistent with evidence in the USA, the UK and elsewhere in Europe that women, older people, long-term residents of urban or inner-city areas and those affected by indirect victimization (that is, hearing about crime from friends and relatives) are more likely than others to fear crime. In summary, the study is well structured and has clear targets. Yet more sophisticated research is needed in the area, whereby variables such as the increase in unemployment, self-efficacy expectation in crime prevention, poor housing, job segregation, citizens environmental concerns etc. would be taken into serious account in measuring fear.

The second study in this field was carried out by the National Centre of Social Research (EKKE/NCSR 2003) as a part of the European Social Survey (ESS), which is designed to chart and explain the interaction between Europe's changing institutions and the attitudes, beliefs and behaviour patterns of its diverse populations. The results of the first round were presented in November 2003.<sup>9</sup> The survey covers 19 nations and issues such as political alienation, trust in politics and in state institutions; fear of crime and feelings of insecurity; media use; governance and efficacy; moral, political and social values; social exclusion; national, ethnic and religious allegiances; well-being and health. According to the results, 17.3 percent of the Greek sample had been victims of robbery at least once during the previous five years, and 31.6 percent of the national sample had feelings of insecurity (21.5 percent unsafe; 10.1 percent highly unsafe).

Human trafficking, a topic of much of the current debate in Greece, has begun to be a focus for research. Because of its geographical position,

<sup>9</sup> URL: [www.ess.nsd.uib.no](http://www.ess.nsd.uib.no).

Greece has been one of the centres of trafficking into Europe. Lazos, who has been studying the area of prostitution for many years, has acquired unique research experience of the field and is now a principal on the Task Force for Combating Human Trafficking, which has been operating within the Ministry of Public Order since 2001.

Lazos' studies (2002) provide information about the countries of origin of the women, their number, the annual turnover, the business style of traffickers, violence used, networks, and numbers of customers, on the basis of vague or unreferenced sources and a plethora of statistics and anecdotal examples. His books are nevertheless attractive; he himself places his lengthy research in the category of multi-site, multi-method surveys. He also sets out the legislative context of prostitution regulation in the 19th and 20th centuries in Greece, although he offers no practical solutions for curbing the sex trade.

On the larger issue of illegal markets and organized criminal activities, numerous articles have been published, mainly analysing national and international regulations and legislation (see Courakis 1999; Lambropoulou 2003a). The lack of empirical studies is covered to some extent by official releases by law enforcement authorities, such as the annual reports on organized crime of the Ministry of Public Order or the reports of the Competent Committee on Money Laundering (Law 2331/1995, Art. 7). However, these are not published because they are either for the internal use of the services in charge or necessary for their cooperation with other EU country members.

#### *Youth violence and subcultures*

A fascinating area is youth and deviant subcultures, which have been little investigated but much discussed by the mass media (Troianou-Loula 1997). In this field belongs the older and unique criminological research by Courakis (2002) and Tsouramanis (1988) among the population of football fans and hooligans. Because of a lack of funds, this ambitious research was not able to achieve all its targets. The study started before the disaster at the Heysel Stadium in Brussels in 1986 and lasted for 2½ years (1985–7). The group observed 97 games in total – 84 football matches (54 from the first national league and 30 from the second) and 13 basketball matches (1 cup final and 12 championship games). It also reviewed 72 court files dating back to 1980, and carried out extensive questionnaire surveys among 229 referees from the first, second and third national division football teams, 162 first division football players, 332 police officers and members of special police teams who are responsible for security and order

at sports grounds, and 142 sports editors in the general and specialized sports press (Courakis 2002).

The theoretical background was the 'value added' approach of Neil J. Smelser (1962) to collective behaviour. The research group found that isolated factors, such as the existence of motive, the final score and insufficient policing, as well as combinations of these three factors, can cause clashes that may be predicted. In the end, they formulated some policy measures for the prevention of violence at sporting events (Tsouramanis 2002) but with limited outcome. This interesting and useful study needs to be repeated under present conditions in order to show whether the same factors continue to operate and to demonstrate their interdependence.

In the area of youth subcultures there are a few other interesting studies. The first research to be mentioned here was undertaken in the mid-1980s (Astrinakis 1991). It examined the links between deviance, subculture, juvenile delinquency and the expressive social movements of youths. It analysed the deviant subcultures of working-class juveniles using the British approach to theory. The author carried out his own field research in the western suburbs of Greater Athens, a traditional and representative working-class area. He ascertained the existence of two original modern subcultures (punk and rockabilly), according to his criteria, each with its own outlook and styles, both adopting subterranean values and disapproving of retreatism, and both stigmatized to the point of marginalization. He also noted conflicts between other groups that were not characterized as original (skinheads, hooligans, heavy metal), and described the reactions of the community and police intervention. This enquiry was replicated in the 1990s with the participation of more researchers working in the same area on various topics (school: I. Karatza; rockabilly: J. Siamou; hooligans: S. Rizakos and S. Papathanasopoulos). They examined the evolution of styles and (sub)cultures from the 1980s to the 1990s. The field study investigated not only lifestyles, outlook and music preferences, but also the sports culture, with its fans or hooligans, subcultural groups within secondary education, the role of the school and the family, juvenile delinquency as a collective (re)action, and the mechanisms of formal social control (Astrinakis and Stylianoudi 1996).

There have been several other interesting studies by academics, practitioners, researchers and postgraduate students, but these were not based on primary research and there is no space to summarize them here. All of this activity demonstrates the high level of interest in the field. Nevertheless, research and discourse remain rudimentary, fragmentary and often without a strong conceptual basis, partly because much time has been lost in comparison with other European countries. So far, the available

research lags far behind the needs of the country, although the human resources required to strengthen the research base do exist.

## Political debate, group interests and law enforcement

Considerable financial and social changes in the neighbouring Balkan states have contributed to the rise in the overall Greek crime rate. The country's vulnerability to 'foreign' crime, such as organized drug or people smuggling, along with the increase in common offences (thefts, robberies, forgeries and counterfeiting), has heightened the sense of public insecurity, which, however, is strongly sensationalized by the media. Insecurity appears among the country's top 10 problems, together with the economic situation and unemployment.<sup>10</sup> Whether and how these top concerns are interrelated demands careful examination.

The change in the nature of crime is also mentioned by foreign organizations. The Financial Action Task Force on Money Laundering, for example, reported an increase in money laundering in Greece (FATF 1998: 22 [89]) as closely connected to a substantial increase in illegal immigration from the Balkan countries, largely from Albania;<sup>11</sup> the money source has been linked to the Albanian para-bank scandals in 1996 and 1997 (FATF 2001: 58–9, Annex 2; also *Parliamentary Proceedings*, 20 February 1998; Competent Committee on Money Laundering 2000: 2).

Governments have responded to rising crime, first, by increasing police numbers or creating new police units – the pressure to do this intensified because of the Olympic Games in 2004; and, secondly, by hiring more correctional officers and starting to build new prisons. It is worth mentioning that crime and security did not appear on the agendas of the two main rival parties until the run-up to the parliamentary elections in April 2000; they were again issues in the campaigns for the municipal and prefectural elections of October 2002. These issues were not especially emphasized during the general election of March 2004, which concentrated on the economy, social policy and European affairs.

Criminal legislation involving harsh sentencing laws over the past decade in the main concerns money laundering, stock market fraud (e.g.

<sup>10</sup> See URL: [Metronanalysis.gr/gr/polls/pub3401.html](http://Metronanalysis.gr/gr/polls/pub3401.html), July 1999 ( $n = 805$ ), and [V-prc.gr/2/koinonia\\_gr.html](http://V-prc.gr/2/koinonia_gr.html), March 1998; see also the results of the survey of public opinion on corruption, January 2002, at the same site.

<sup>11</sup> According to the registered number of deportations in the 1990s, around 1.2 million Albanians crossed Greek borders during a six-year period; this corresponded to an average of 192,000 per year or 523 illegal immigrants each day. Between January and September 2001, approximately 205,000 undocumented migrants, mainly Afghans and Kurds from Iraq, were arrested for illegal entry and residence in Greece. See Amnesty International (2002).

corruption and bribery), organized crime (e.g. human trafficking, drug trafficking), terrorism and maritime smuggling (Laws 2331/1995, 2928/2001, 2943/2001) or other offences resulting from Greece's EU and international commitments. Furthermore, there has been a high level of activity in anticorruption legislation and the creation of special anti-corruption authorities.<sup>12</sup> In addition, criminal law has been extended in such areas as employment, urban planning and commercial law.

In the past, 'law and order politics' almost never received the approval of the judiciary or state as a general policy, but was on occasion used to target specific social groups for political reasons. Recently, however, it has become a legitimate topic of debate. Politicians, members of the government, the judiciary and senior police officers have started calling for tougher measures and more severe sentencing, although not to excess. These concerns are reflected in the media where crime, the police and, to a lesser extent, the justice system have become major news items. 'Sensationalist' reports have often focused on the ineffectiveness of the police in handling critical situations. These have abated for the time being with the arrests in 2002 and 2003 of members of political terrorists groups, the 17th November and ELA. Furthermore, spectacular escapes from prisons, displaying the weakness of prison administration, have also been highlighted by the media; what is more, they are used by politicians and some local authorities to heighten awareness of crime and to justify their policies. The mass media have begun to have a powerful impact on the shaping of policy, and 'politics' has become more closely concerned with the police and crime control authorities.

For various reasons the police did not enjoy public respect after the establishment of the new Greek state. They were viewed as having protected a mostly hostile state. Only in the 1980s did this change and the main discussion turned to the legitimacy of police actions. By the end of the 1990s, the focus was on their proximity to citizens and on nurturing trust. In the general context of an emphasis on the quality of services provided by the public sector, private marketing and public opinion research companies have been recruited in an endeavour to improve the image of the police (see also Garland 2001: 122–4).

Under these circumstances, the police have reintroduced street patrols after a gap of over 20 years. Meanwhile, official data have not only attempted to reassure the public that the problem of crime can be brought

<sup>12</sup> For example the Inspectors' Control Board in the Ministry of Interior and Public Administration (since 1997); the Service of Internal Affairs in the Ministry of Public Order (since 1999); the Prosecution Service for Illegal Transactions within Correctional Institutions, along with the Inspectors' Control Board of Correctional Institutions in the Ministry of Justice (both since 2002); the Professional Sports Association in the Ministry of Culture (since 2003).

under control but also showed a reduction in crime rates that cannot be verified. Furthermore, in September 1999, Law 2713/1999 (para. 16) introduced local councils for crime prevention. Some academics and police officers tried to motivate inhabitants to participate in them, without much success initially. This has led to intensive local crime prevention efforts, still without effect.

Unlike the governments of a number of European countries such as the UK and Germany, successive governments in Greece have not responded with tougher legislation for 'ordinary' crimes. Whether this moderate attitude will last is rather doubtful, not only because of the tenor of the times, but also because this would require self-confidence and sufficient knowledge about the costs and benefits of different options. The transfer and imitation of situations, measures and viewpoints from abroad is unavoidable and happens everywhere, but in Greece there is less effort to take account of distinctive local conditions, where they exist. Politicians overemphasize the need to fight xenophobia and discrimination, to promote equal opportunities and to combat racism. As a result, a large part of the population feels a sense of persecution without having grounds for these feelings, which are cited in several studies or disseminated by the media (see Aydin 2001; BMI 2004; also Van Ostrive and Robert 1999). This concern to avoid injustice is also expressed in political programmes for the legalization of immigrants after a period in the country and after the application of adequate controls. Nevertheless, the political class has never shown this sensitivity towards other social groups in Greek society, such as women or Roma. The rhetorical overreaction is due to distorted local interpretations, together with the impact of EU research and press releases (see Eurobarometer 1997). In this debate, the influence of some intellectuals and academics has been substantial.

### **Conclusions: 'Où en est la criminologie grecque?'**

Serious impediments exist to the realization of extended research that compares different time periods and advances theoretical discussion. The European programmes accomplished in recent years have not contributed much to our understanding of the significant issues that still demand research, since they had other objectives. Politicians who in the past neglected to take research results seriously when planning or implementing crime policy now selectively request and promote empirical studies in asserting their priorities.

Criminologists have largely failed to make common cause in order to overcome these difficulties. Their interventions are isolated and generally

limited, consisting mainly in greater participation in governmental and ministerial committees, consultative groups and other organizations. No doubt they should engage more actively with policy, anticipating the needs of the country and their science, not just reflecting political demands. However, because science is increasingly regarded as a supermarket, politicians can go and buy whatever they want, and specialists are far more exchangeable than previously and are reasonably priced. Moreover, because academics have a marginal role in Greek society and their energy is dissipated in small-scale studies, it is hard for them to intervene effectively, and often they are not heard. On issues such as crime and deviance on which everybody has a viewpoint, criminologists cannot offer the distinctive contribution needed to make a crucial difference. Although discourse is virtually non-existent and funding for research is meagre, perseverance has occasionally achieved results. However, little interest is shown in plans not sympathetic to those of politicians, so that care and awareness are needed to find an opening for the application of criminological knowledge. Criminology continues to be regarded by public opinion and by many social scientists, particularly in the legal profession, as dealing more with the criminal mind or the criminal personality, and less with crime as a social phenomenon, whereas sociological models are regarded with understanding.

Sometimes it seems that even criminologists themselves doubt their instruments, handling them as though they are dealing with an issue of ideology rather than solid academic work. Moreover, a number of criminologists, if unintentionally, have contributed to the propagation of models of the criminal underdog, with the media playing a significant role. Legal viewpoints, biological approaches and person-centred interpretations have not yet been seriously disputed in public and scientific debates, as they have been in other countries in a similar context. These outdated viewpoints have not undergone systematic critical examination; criminologists have not turned instead to the historical analysis of the formal and informal reaction to crime and delinquency or to analysis of trends in penal legislation by reference to the financial and social condition of the country. Ideas about forms of crime, xenophobia, racism, 'organized' crime or policing methods are usually received from abroad without adequate examination. Such exchange and interaction occur in all countries, but in Greece there is a lack of attention to the local context and a lack of reflection on and careful examination of the issues arising from that context. This tends to reduce criminology to distorted national interpretations or to a general critique and trivial arguments without reference to specific local conditions. For example, there has been no discussion among the experts about the current prison construction boom in Greece

or about recent events in local and international terrorism, and no questioning voice has been raised about government policies on these issues. Until recently, with criminologists fighting for their existence, this might have been justified, but not any more. Research into the country's problems within a European context, although not easy, is now more necessary than ever before.

Summing up, the growing participation of criminologists on committees and in work groups of ministries and other institutions is noteworthy. It is also encouraging that the positions of criminologists in higher education are not being reduced, as is happening in some other European countries. But this is not enough. Continuous and systematic efforts are needed on the part of criminologists in order to intervene as a scientific community with their distinctive arguments and perspectives, in cooperation with other social sciences. Otherwise, criminology runs the risk of developing into a state criminology promoting preventive action targeting 'career criminals, threatening outcasts or disadvantaged persons' (Savelsberg and Sampson 2002: 102), alongside a mass media criminology that arouses popular fears and hostilities, in this way advancing support for state punishment (Garland 2001: 137–8). Beyond this, there is an even greater requirement for intradisciplinary discourse and determination of goals if criminology is to make timely contributions to meeting the needs of the country (see Barak 1998).

Calliope Spinellis, referring to the late 1970s, wrote that criminology in Greece was at a crossroads (1997: 80). One wonders whether Greece is still there, or should we ask a variation on Leon Radzinowicz's (1965) question: 'Où en est la criminologie grecque?'

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