

Opinion poll regarding community safety and the expectations of the population from the Police activity (synthesis)

With the aim to identifying criminality issues occurring within the community, the level of community safety, as well as the citizens' expectations regarding Police activity, opinion polls were conducted on representative samples of the non-institutionalized adult population in sizeable urban centers.

This application method was the one selected due to the fact that the selected cities are characterized by high population density, by increased frequency and visibility of crime, while, as far as police intervention is concerned, the highest number of measures can be taken here due to the greater amount of human and material resources.

Results of the opinion polls:

- The main issues regarded by the interviewed citizens as occurring with high frequency are:
 - *Inappropriate behavior in traffic*
 - *Mendicancy*
 - *Excessive alcohol consumption*

Moreover, *pick-pocketing (stealing from pockets, purses etc.), thefts from inside cars, robberies, burglaries, vandalisms, the presence of gangs and youth crime are further problematic issues* affecting the level of citizen safety.

There are also aspects which, in the opinion of most of the interviewed people, have a relatively low-frequency occurrence in localities, such as: *drug dealing/ consumption, use of bladed and fire weapons, conflicts between groups of criminals and household violence.*

- The question whether they happen **to be afraid of or to avoid certain actions** for the sake of their safety was to a great extent answered by the inquired citizens as follows:
 - *avoid to open the door to unknown people*
 - *avoid the use of public transportation when carrying large sums of money/valuable objects*
 - *avoid to walk in the streets while carrying large sums of money or valuables*

Mainly, the fear of being subjected to crimes is indicated by a significant share of the subjects. The most marked perception of the risk of victimization relates to **pick-pocketing** (money, documents, mobile phones etc.). Additionally, citizens consider as being quite high the risk of becoming victims of *thefts from inside cars* and *burglaries*.

- In terms of *self-assessed level of victimization*, a percentage ranging between **7.1-23%** of the population of urban localities subject of the investigation was found to have been victims of a previous criminal action, while **most of the individuals subjected to criminal actions called the police.**

- The questioned persons expressed the opinion that the main aspects of Police efforts should be:
 - *To maintain a higher profile in the community*
 - *To increase the number of car or pedestrian patrols*
 - *To increase safety on public roads* by means of checking speeding, supervising the traffic around schools
- Closely connected with the duties towards which the police should particularly aim their efforts at are the places in which the citizens prefer to see more policemen:
 - *In the streets, patrolling*
 - *At nighttime, in the area around bars, dancing clubs etc.*
 - *In the proximity of educational institutions*
- *The necessity of increasing the number of policemen* in the localities is highlighted by over **74%** of the interviewed persons, and an even higher percentage of them stated that „ *police are not provided with the technical implements required for efficiently combating criminal actions*”.
- The main **measures** which should be taken with a view to increase safety in localities are:
 - *Adopt more severe punishments for law-breakers*
 - *Increase the authority of Police*
 - *Improve the cooperation between citizens and police.*