



Reana Bezić

Juvenile Delinquency in the Balkans

A Regional Comparative Analysis Based on the ISRD3 Study Findings

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Juveniles represent the most important human capital on which societies have to rely in order to achieve sustainable progress and social change. Their delinquency is a complex phenomenon and one of the most challenging criminological and social problems. Throughout the 20th century, criminology has produced numerous studies focusing on aetiological factors and phenomenological characteristics of juvenile delinquency. However, juvenile crime research in the Balkans has remained scarce, with only few empirical studies having been carried out thus far. Such an 'empirical black hole' makes cross-national and comparative criminological research on juvenile crime in the Balkans far overdue.

This volume provides a first comprehensive account of the prevalence and incidence of juvenile crime in the Balkans, based on self-reports in youth populations of five countries of the region: Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, Kosovo, North Macedonia, and Serbia. The analyses focus on differences and common characteristics among the five country samples, involving a total of 8,460 respondents. Based on these findings, further analyses are centered on indicators that might impact the development of juvenile crime. In general, this study is focused on theory-testing and the search for mechanisms that explain juvenile crime in the region. The main theory that was tested is the social control theory.

The study presents important empirical evidence for establishing, developing and evaluating prevention programmes, which are an important component of rational, evidence-based crime policies in the Balkans.

Most modern criminological theories are based on self-reported delinquency studies conducted mainly in the United States of America. Reana Bezić changes the scene with this study that applies the same technique in the Balkans and shows the strengths and weaknesses of some classic theoretical explanations when applied in Europe.

Prof. Dr. Marcelo Aebi, University of Lausanne

The book at hand is not only one of the most important monographs within the Balkan Criminology publication series, but likewise a solid foundation for further empirical research into juvenile delinquency in the Balkans. The insightful analyses provided by Reana Bezić highlight the importance of interdisciplinarity in criminological research, as much as they clearly demonstrate the necessity of regional and local knowledge and expertise for accurate crime data contextualisation and its interpretation. The book is without question one of the main points of reference – an essential reader – for anyone interested in juvenile delinquency in this part of Europe.

Assoc. Prof. Dr. Anna-Maria Getoš Kalac, LL.M., University of Zagreb



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