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CRIME IN MODERN-DAY GREECE. AN OVERVIEW*

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I. Analysing criminality

1. Certain aspects of the evaluation of the *quantitative evolution* of crime in Greece in recent years and particularly since 1989 are complex and involved. Generally, the total number of criminal cases (felonies and misdemeanours) reported to the police and other prosecution authorities (*reported total criminality*) has remained fairly constant, with a slight upward trend noted however.

295.353 such offenses were reported in 1980, 352.488 in 1984, 311.179 in 1988, 287.177 in 1989, 330.803 in 1990, 358.998 in 1991 and 379.652 in 1992. Hence the average rate per 100.000 inhabitants is approximately 3.500 offenses.

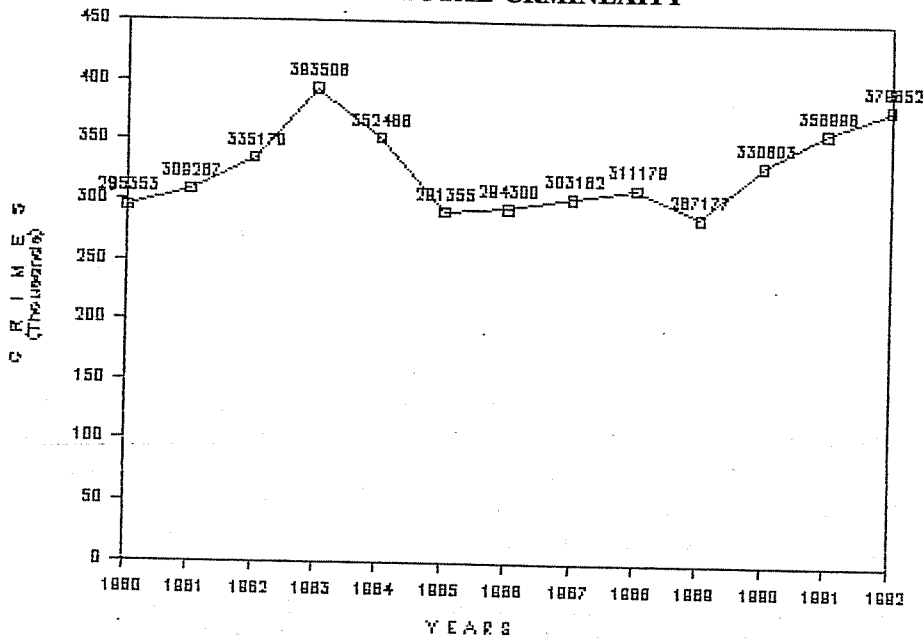
According to Interpol, and for the sake of comparison the same rate for the years 1990 and 1991 respectively in Italy was 4.358 and 4.613 cases, in France 6.169 and 6.581, in Germany 7.108 and 6.649 and finally in Portugal 805 and 922.

One could surmise that the level of total reported crime is rather low in Greece. This conclusion however does not represent a true picture.

The crime rate could well be estimated as being much higher than that which the above numbers indicate if we were to take into consideration (a) the number of offenses which are not reported by the victims, (b) the number of offenses which are not detected by authorities in charge, depending for example on the

* Slightly amended national report, which was originally presented by the author on April 5 1993 in Strasbourg, to the members of the Project Group "Europe in a Time of Change: Crime Policy and Criminal Law", functioning within the framework of the Council of Europe (European Committee on Crime Problems). The text is structured according to the order of the questions included in the questionnaire which was sent to the country-members of the Project Group.

**DIAGRAM No 1
REPORTED TOTAL CRIMINALITY**



**DIAGRAM No 2
REPORTED FELONIES**

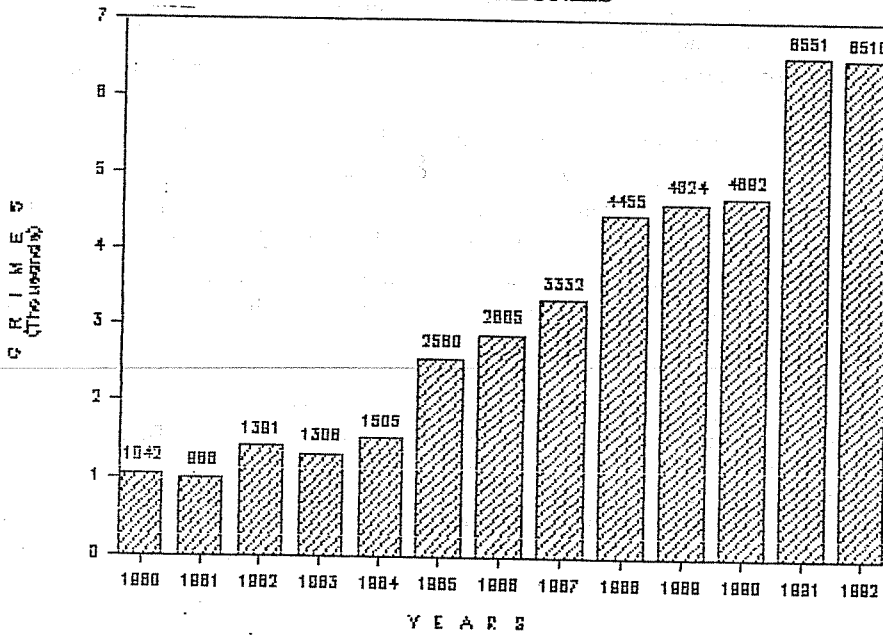
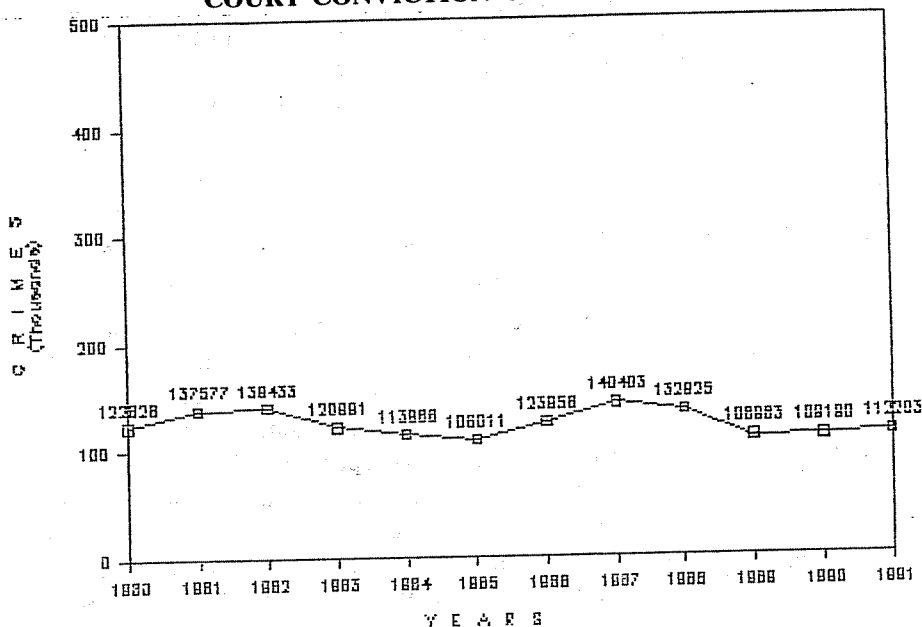


DIAGRAM No 3
COURT CONVICTION CRIMINALITY



degree of intensity with which the prosecuting authorities apply the law at different times.

Specifically, as far as the reported felonies are concerned, the situation appears to be totally different: *Serious crime* seems to be increasing rapidly. The number of reported felonies rose indeed from 1042 cases in 1980 to 1505 in 1984, 4.455 in 1988, 4.624 in 1989, 4.692 in 1990 and to 6.551 (an increase of 39,6%) in 1991, but it remained stable (6.510 cases) in 1992. In addition, it is noteworthy that whereas in 1980 about 91,1% of the felony cases were solved in relation to the offenders, in 1992 this percentage dropped to only 49,0% after reaching the margin of 41,4% in 1991. This dramatic increase cannot be explained only in terms of a population increase (1,1% per year) nor in terms of a more rigorous legislation introduced for some crimes in Greece during the last years. Nevertheless, there was one such criminalisation which must be considered as influential for our analysis, i.e. the transformation in 1984 from misdemeanour into a felony (equal to robbery) of the theft of a handbag on a vehicle ("purse snatching"). It must be noted that more than one-third of the reported robberies are distinguished by this particular modus operandi.

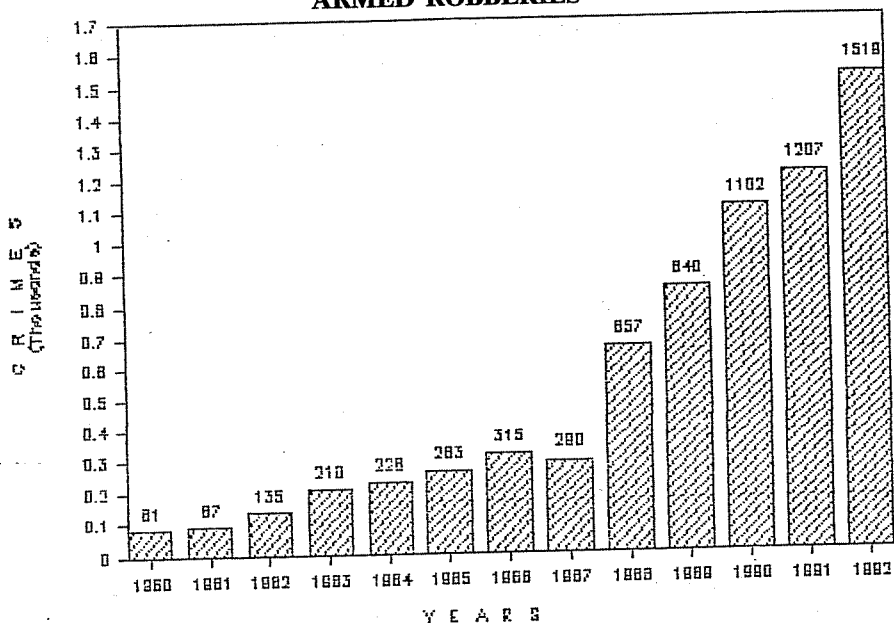
From another point of view, the number of crimes which led to a final conviction of persons prosecuted (*court conviction criminality*) is rather stable or even decreasing: From 122.828 persons finally convicted in 1980, the number increased to 140.403 cases in 1987, but it dropped to 132.925 cases in 1988, 108.983 in 1989, 109.190 in 1990 and 112.203 in 1991. However, no reliable conclusion can be drawn from these data, given the fact that during the last few years (since 1988) on several occasions the courts of justice had to interrupt their normal functioning due to legislative elections (the judges have to supervise them), lawyers' strikes and other similar situations.

2. Concerning the *qualitative development* of crime (felonies and misdemeanours) in Greece, a first observation to be made is that as in most other countries, the majority of the reported and tried offenses are only of minor importance: about 70-75% of the penalties imposed in cases of conviction are for penalties of less than one month and concern mainly the non payment of insurance taxes, traffic offenses and market-inspection offenses. Even in cases of more serious offenses, a large number of them are not characterized by an element of *violence*: e.g. in 1992 there were, 50.626 reported cases of theft, but "only" 1.519 cases of armed robbery and 261 cases of intentional homicide. However, there are some interesting aspects of this development which cannot be disregarded and which are rather alarming:

a) The number of reported *armed robberies* rose from 81 in 1980 to 290 in 1987, 657 in 1988, 840 in 1989, 1.102 in 1990, 1.207 in 1991 and 1.519 in 1992, hence within 12 years the number increased almost by 19 times and there are on average more than 4 robberies per day. In addition, in 1980 for each armed robbery there were a corresponding 219 thefts, whereas in 1992 this rate decreased to only 1:33. Most of the armed robbers in the last few years have acted against banks, security vehicles which transport bank money, or supermarkets and do not hesitate to kill or hurt other people without serious reason.

b) There has also been a dramatic increase in *drug related offenses*. In 1980 there were 400 such reported offenses and 11 years later, in 1992 they (officially) quintupled, reaching 2.024 cases. In reality the number must be much greater: Indeed, we cannot be sure whether in Greece as in most other EC-countries almost half of the people arrested by the police commit offenses directly or indirectly related to drugs (this was, anyway, a crucial observation of the Report on the results the "Committee of Inquiry into the Drugs problem in the Member States of the Community" (Rapporteur: Sir Jack Stewart-Clark), Sept. 1986, Greek edition, p. 13). Yet, we are in a position to know that more than 1/3 (approximately: 37%) of the persons (accused and convicted) who

DIAGRAM No 4
ARMED ROBBERIES



are detained in Greek prisons presumably have committed crimes related to drugs. Besides, it has been estimated that among the persons accused of crimes related to drugs, about 63% of them (1987 data) are simple drug-users and minor dealers.

However, it is well-known that drug users and even more so drug-addicted persons are eager to commit whatever crime (e.g. robbery, theft especially of handbags on a vehicle, prostitution, forgery of medical prescriptions etc.), simply in order to satiate their passion and to avoid the so-called withdrawal syndrome.

3. Furthermore, there is a certain increase in the numbers of reported crimes such as *forgeries* (from 41 in 1981 to 303 in 1988, 393 in 1989, 365 in 1990, 397 in 1991, 405 in 1992 - the total being almost ten times as many in the period between 1981 and 1992), *frauds* or other offenses against property interests (from 443 in 1980 to 902 in 1988, 827 in 1989, 807 in 1990, 1.166 in 1991 and 1.489 in 1992 - the total 3,4 times as many), *thefts* (from 17.750 in 1980 to 41.142 in 1988, 41.630 in 1989, 43.623 in 1990, 51.591 in 1991 and 50.626 in

1992 - the total 2,9 times as many), *insults** (from 2.537 cases in 1980 to 5.576 in 1988, 5.648 in 1989, 5.531 in 1990, 5.888 in 1991 and 5.745 in 1992 - the total 2,3 times as many), *rapes* (from 98 in 1980 to 240 in 1988, 191 in 1989 and 1990, 243 in 1991 and 276 in 1992 - the total 2,8 times as many), *self-adjudications*** (from 180 in 1980 to 753 in 1988, 899 in 1989, 865 in 1990, 961 in 1991 and 1.108 in 1992 - the total 6,2 times as many), *intentional homicides* (from 117 in 1980 to 176 in 1988, 184 in 1989, 204 in 1990, 231 in 1991 and 261 in 1992 - the total 2,2 times as many), *intentional bodily harm* (from 4.208 in 1980 to 6.688 in 1988, 6.559 in 1989, 6.610 in 1990, 6.938 in 1991 and 6.817 in 1992 - the total 1,6 times as many).

From these data, combined with the data already given about armed robberies, one could make the following observations:

a) There is a clear increase in the numbers of *crimes against property* (theft, armed robbery) and of crimes which are usually committed for purposes of enrichment (forgery). Similarly, the common economic crimes such as fraud, have shown an upward trend.

b) Crimes which have an element of *violence*, such as intentional bodily harm and intentional homicides, rapes and self-adjudications, cannot be considered as significant in Greece neither from a quantitative point of view (apart from bodily harm), nor even from the point of view of proportional annual increase during this period of twelve years (apart from armed robberies and self-adjudications).

c) Also some routine crimes, such as insult, are of rather minor relevance as concerns their increase during the period under examination.

As far as the period since 1988 is concerned, there has been an important increase in the numbers of armed robberies, thefts, frauds, self-adjudications and intentional homicides.

However, the above-mentioned observations are based on the statistical evidence of reported criminality and do not take into account some factors which can alter the general picture, such as the dark figures for some of the crimes (like rape or drug abuse) and the judicial course of each reported case from the possible arrest of the alleged offender up to his definitive conviction or acquittal (let it be noted here that the ratio of the reported offenses in comparison to the convicted persons is generally 2,2 to 1).

* According to art. 361 of the Greek Penal Code, an insult is committed by a person "who by words or by deeds or by any other means injures another's reputation".

** According to art 331 of the Greek Penal Code, a self-adjudication is committed by a person "who adjudicates a claim under a right which he in fact possesses or secretly appropriates".

DIAGRAM No 5
DRUG RELATED OFFENCES

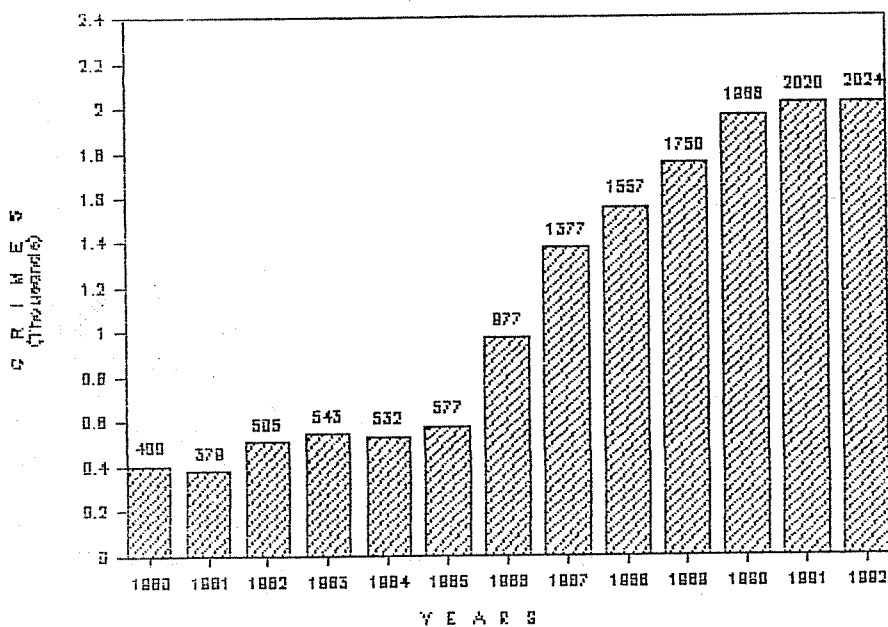
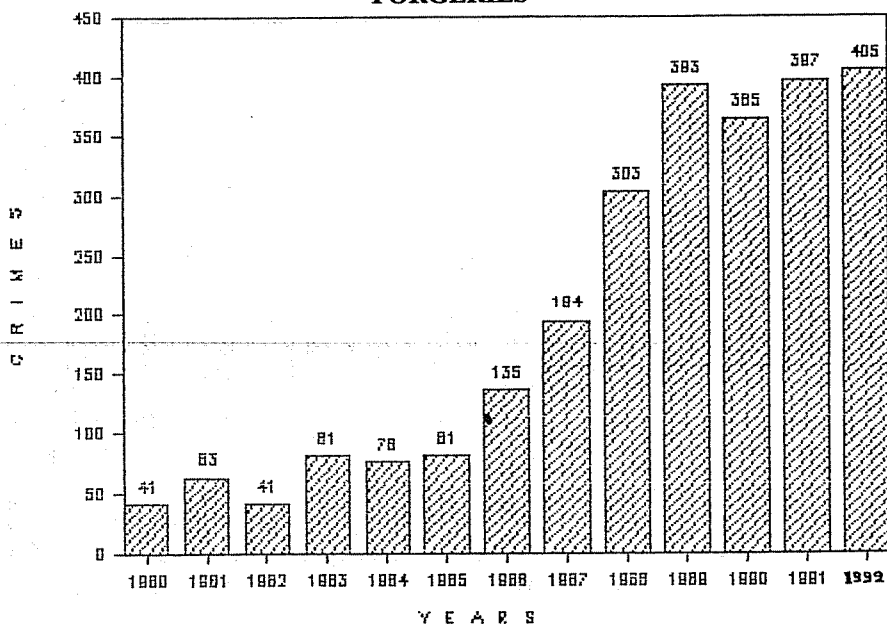
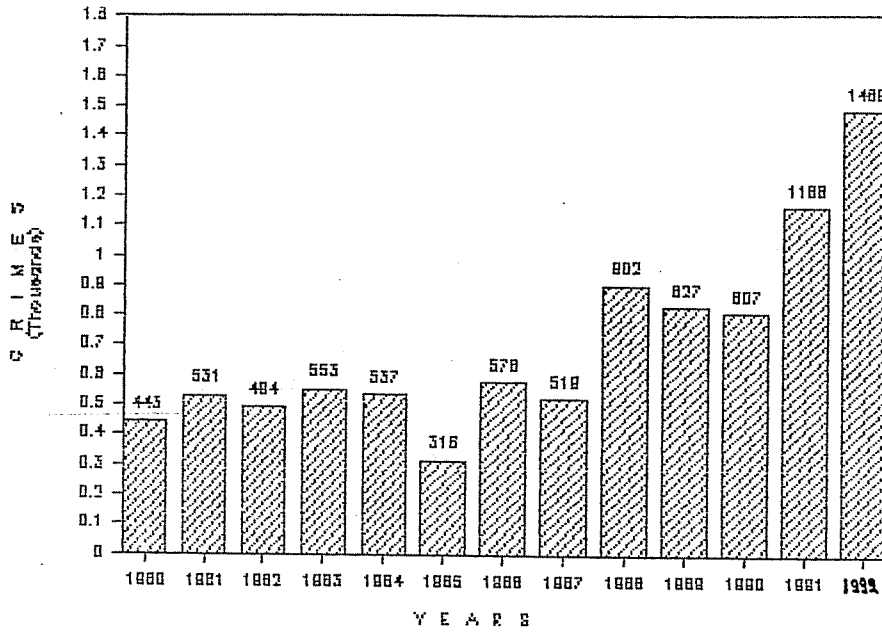


DIAGRAM No 6
FORGERIES



**DIAGRAM No 7
FRAUDS**



**DIAGRAM No 8
THEFTS**

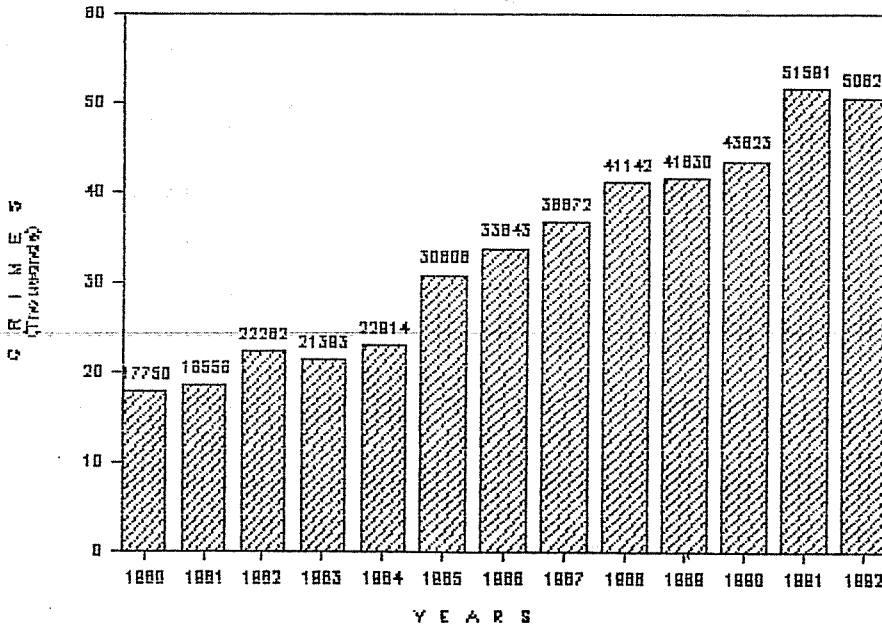


DIAGRAM No 9
INSULTS

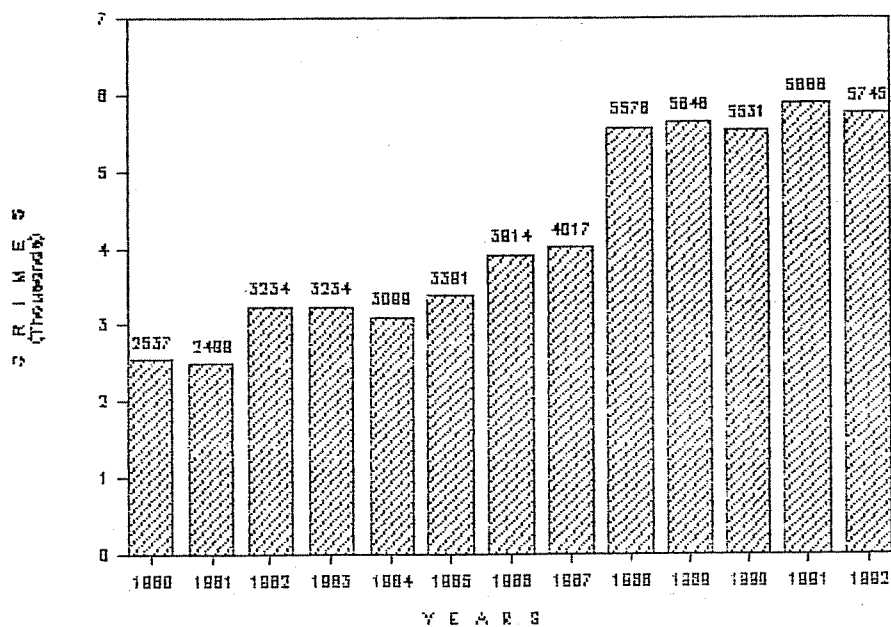
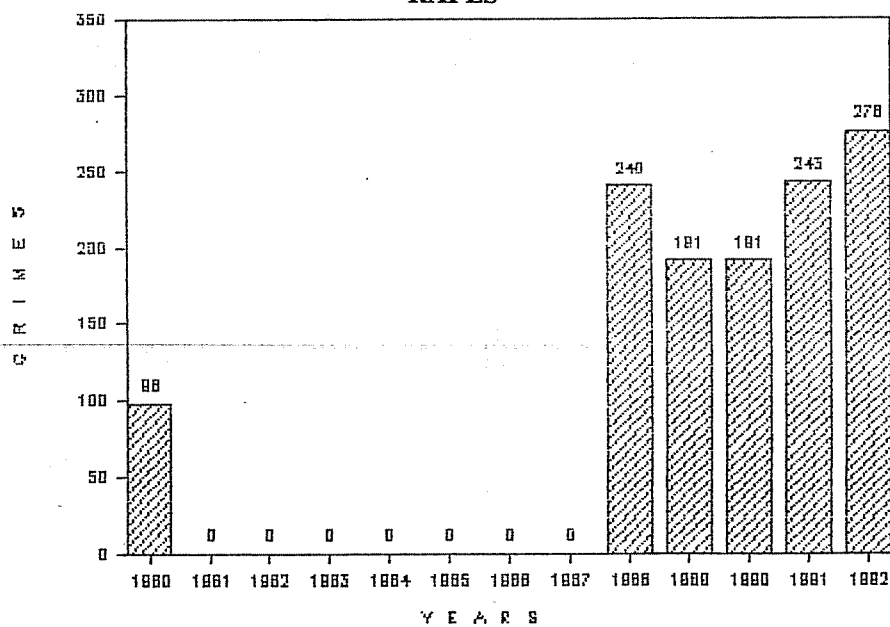
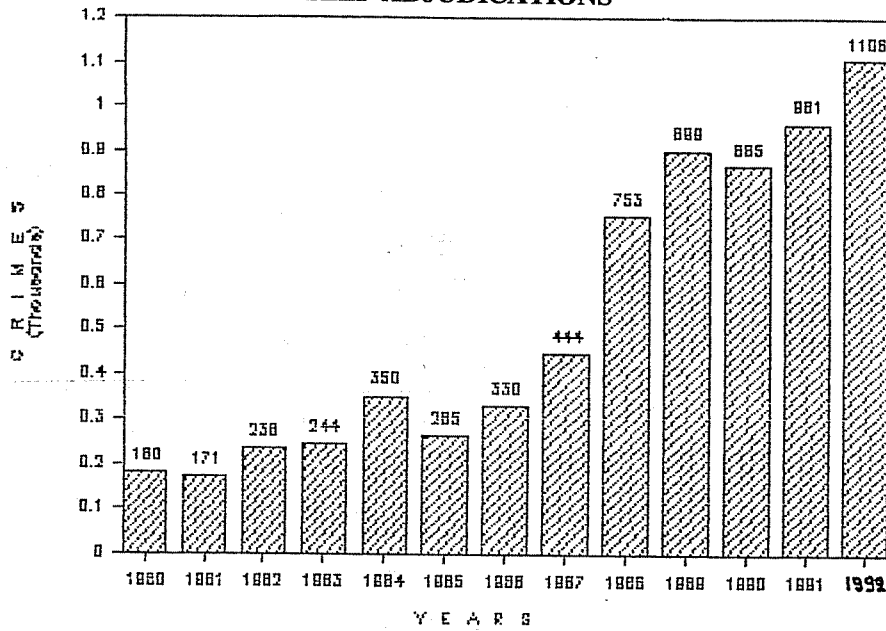


DIAGRAM No 10
RAPES



**DIAGRAM No 11
SELF-ADJUDICATIONS**



**DIAGRAM No 12
INTENTIONAL HOMICIDES**

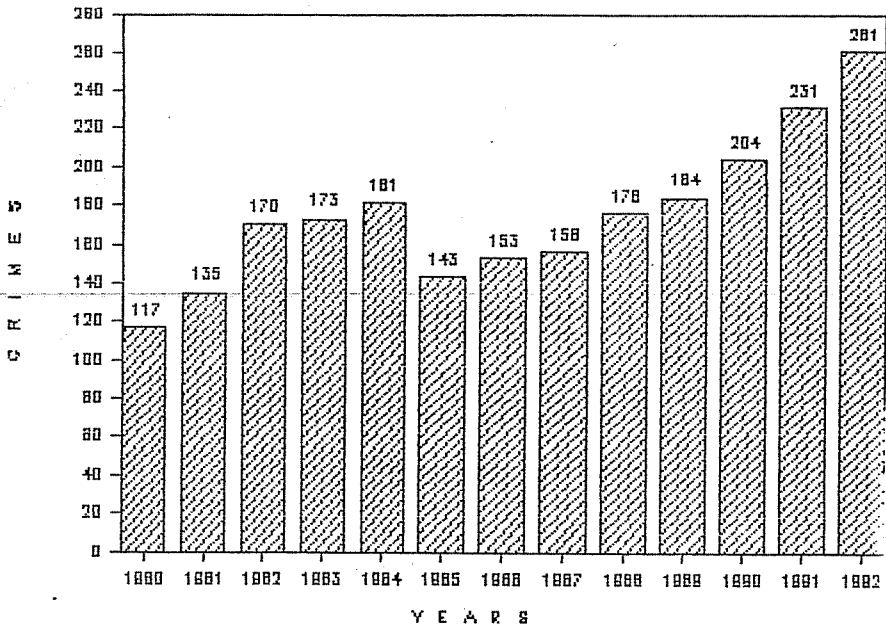
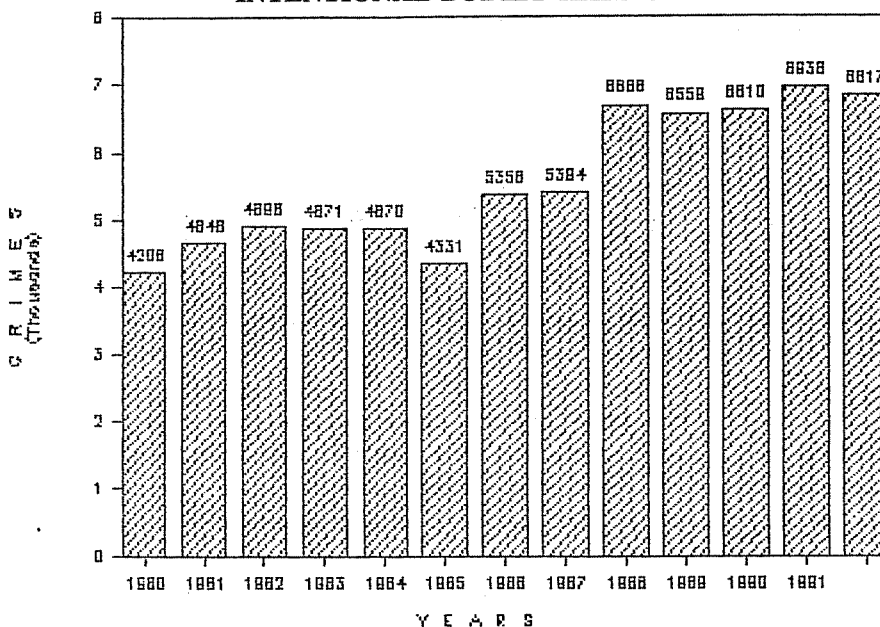


DIAGRAM No 13
INTENTIONAL BODILY HARMS



4. Another interesting aspect of the issue under examination is that concerning the *characteristics of the offenders* (age, nationality, educational level), especially after 1988. On a general level, the following observations can be made:

(2) There is a marked increase in the *age* of young offenders (reported crimes) (13-29 years): In 1980 their percentage in comparison to the total number of offenders was 35,5%, in 1985 it reached the level of 42,7%, then it dropped constantly (up to 1989: 38,5%) and then suddenly it increased again in 1990 to 41,4%, in 1991 to 43,0% and in 1992 to 42,8%. All these years, the percentage of the offenders between the ages 30-34 years remained rather constant (around 18%) and the percentage of the older offenders (35 years and above) fluctuated inversely to that of the younger offenders.

5. Furthermore, there has also been an increase in the number of *aliens* who have committed (or participated in) reported crimes during the last years. More particularly, in 1988 there were 1.734 such cases of foreigners committing crimes, in 1989 the number remained almost stable (1.843), but in 1990 it reach-

ed 3.451 cases, in 1991 4.253 cases and in 1992 5.098 cases. In reality, this is a rather small percentage (in the last three years, between 1,1% and 1,4%) in comparison to the total number of offenders who became known to the police authorities (310.569 in 1990, 332.349 in 1981 and 358.238 in 1992). The percentage becomes even less impressive if we take into account the estimated population of foreigners in Greece, which reportedly is around 400.000 persons (mainly Albanians, Ethiopians, Philipinos etc). However, there are some crimes, for which the percentage of foreigners committing crimes has become much higher (mainly crimes against property, like theft and armed robbery: 3,6% in 1990, 7,8% in 1991 and 8,4% in 1992).

6. Finally as far as the *educational level* of the offenders is concerned, it must be noted that (although slowly and with fluctuations), more and more persons from all cultural strata (mainly from the middle ones) of Greek society are committing crimes. The existing data concern criminals brought to trial (hence they refer to the number of convicted persons) and extend up to the year 1991. It can be seen then, that whereas in 1980 about 2% of the offenders had a higher educational level and another 10,6% were classified as having a secondary or intermediate educational level, in 1987 the first figure remained rather stable (1,6%) and the second one rose to 19,7%, in 1988 the respective percentages were 1,5% and 22,7%, in 1989: 1,8% and 19,7%, in 1990: 1,5% and 15,2% and in 1991: 1,4% and 12,9%.

Similar, but not clearly traced trends are noted with regard to particular crimes, as e.g. fraud and other offenses against property interests: In 1980 the offenders who had a higher educational level were 3,1% and those who had secondary or intermediate educational level were 16,7%. In 1987 the respective figures were 2,1% and 17,9%, in 1988: 2,5% and 19,4% in 1989: 4,4% and 13,1%, in 1990: 1,9% and 17,7% and in 1991: 1,8% and 11,0%.

7. Some particular remarks must be made in connection with *organized crime*. Undoubtedly there have been in last few years bands and groups of offenders who commit armed robberies, or, on one occasion, intentional homicide of old people whose testament was beforehand manipulated to the offenders' benefit (a case which was brought before the Criminal Court in 1987). On a more "sophisticated" level, there are bands of "godfathers" who sometimes offer their "protection" (of course, for a high price) and put under constant pressure the proprietors of gambling clubs, bars, night clubs or other places of the underworld, but also the owners of car-selling enterprises etc. In addition, there are gangs of offenders who steal cars and afterwards blackmail the owner of the car to get ransom money (in 1991 about 5.587

reported thefts of cars, of which 3.481 were then "found" in one way or another; to compare: 3.154 car thefts in 1985, 3.392 in 1986, 3.977 in 1987, 4.312 in 1988, 5.065 in 1989 and 5.405 in 1990). Furthermore, there are cases of "stricto sensu" organized criminals, with a structured hierarchical organization and liaisons with international criminal centers, making strong efforts to approach persons in high position in the state structure. Basically, these criminals develop an activity extending from money laundering in Greek banks upto drug trafficking, the arms' trade and the procuring of prostitutes from abroad or home. However, the existing data on these activities concern mainly drug trafficking from Turkey to Greece and through Greece to the rest of Europe, which has developed very rapidly since the beginning of the '80s. Finally, besides organized crime there are two or more terrorist organizations, mainly the organization "17th November" which remain, up to this time, unapprehended and which have been operating in a pervasively effective way since 1975. They strike mainly political, judicial and economic targets such as members of Parliament, judges, press-editors, businessmen, policemen or even fiscal departments, EC-offices etc.

8. In regard to *economic crime*, it has already been stated that from a quantitative point of view in recent years there has been no substantial increase in reported number of offenses like fraud etc. However, the tendency of these offenses seems to be increasing. Besides, there have been in these years some "causes célèbres" of economic crimes related to the abusive utilization of huge bank assets by bank owners (esp. the "Koskotas case"), the unlawful encashment of EC-grants or public grants for alleged importing or exporting of products (esp. the "maize case") and the fictitious transfer of money to subsidiaries abroad for reasons of tax-evasion. Furthermore, on many occasions there have been accusations or pronounced convictions against organized bands of persons who appropriated for themselves and/or exploited for their own profit forestal areas, archaeological findings and other state property. Similarly there have been stated cases of computer crimes within the framework of banks or corporations and cases of industrial espionage or of environmental delinquency. It is noteworthy that the respective legislative prescriptions in these fields of economic crime were recently amended through Law Nr. 1805/1988 (computer crime) and Laws Nr. 1512/1985, 1650/1986 (environmental delinquency), but there are structural deficiencies which still prevent the effective application of this legislation. There is also a new legislation concerning the consumers' protection (Law Nr. 1961/1991), which harmonizes the Greek law to the EC-Recommendations and Directives on this matter.

However, the Greek law doesn't recognize the possibility of criminal procedure and penalties against a legal person.

9. In Greece it cannot be said that there exists, at least for the time being, any serious manifestations of *ethnic, religious or racial violence*. There are some factors, indeed, which could have created such a psychological prejudice against foreigners: The difficult current economic situation on the way to a stronger economy, the constant provocations on the part of a neighbouring northern state and the uncontrolled "flow" of refugees and immigrants from Albania and other countries after 1989. However, these factors have not sufficed to engender any hysteria towards foreigners, firstly because of the traditionally tolerant nature of Greeks and the friendly spirit with which they treat foreigners and secondly because the foreigners themselves who come to Greece have shown up to now a remarkable ability to adapt themselves to Greek society (many of them speak Greek or learn it) and have avoided in most cases creating trouble or committing offences here.

II. Exploring and explaining criminality

10. As already mentioned above (No 3), in Greece there are some forms of crime (esp. serious crime and, from another point of view, crime against property), which have presented a particular increase in recent years. Besides, in some cases the offenders have shown an unscrupulous and/or expert way of acting, which was indeed unknown in previous years. The publicity given by the mass media to such criminal events like armed robberies, has created on certain occasions among potential *victims* a very loaded climate against criminals and an anxiety among the public whether they can deal with them successfully. In 1986 according to the results of a poll (newspaper "To Vima", 26.1.1986, p. 27-29), 9 out of 10 of the questioned persons believed that crime has increased and that burglaries and thefts represent the No 1 personal threat to everybody. Similarly in 1990, as a result of a research by a periodical ("Tachydromos" of 22.3.1990, p. 66), it was ascertained that only 54% of the questioned persons would be willing to assist during the night a car-driver calling for help at the edge of a road and that about 49% of these persons "have changed their way of life (e.g. by avoiding to be alone in the street)" as a result of the incidents of violence occurring in the last few years. Certainly these attitudes of anxiety, as indicated above, are only partially justified by the facts and constitute rather the result of exaggerated news-bulletins by the mass media.

11. In our opinion, a major but remote *reason for crime increase* is related to the structure and the way in which the Greek population has been distributed between big cities, towns and villages during the last years. Indeed, a strong wave of urbanization has marked this development, esp. in the '60s and later.

Nowadays, according to data of the general census of population in 1991, more than 1/3 of the total number of Greeks have crowded in Athens and neighbouring district areas (37,04%). At the same time, the Greek capital has become the main axis of every administrative, cultural and socio-economic activity. Due to this excessive centralization and overcrowding: a) the economic condition of the inhabitants has become worse as a result of increasing difficulties in getting a job under such competitive conditions; unemployment has evidently caused an increase in property crime; b) the frustration created by the competitive and almost suffocating conditions of living has led to a respective increase in violent crime and to a more general loosening of traditional social values based on solidarity and restraint from criminal "passage à l'acte", such as the values of respect for the other's personality, opinion or property, regular family life and systematic work, shame in the face of other's reprobation etc.; c) the opportunities available of deciding and committing a crime in general have increased due to the anonymity of potential offenders, running no high risk in being traced and arrested by others and to the indifference of the public towards incidents of crime.

These developments, combined with the drug-problem which appeared in Greece during the 80s, have pushed serious criminality to an unforeseen surge. However, the phenomenon of increased serious crime, as it was suggested above (No 3), is not connected directly, up to now, with the social and economic changes in Europe after 1989 and especially with the flow of foreigners. Such a correlation can only be traced in an indirect way, as a potential result of the unemployment caused by the lower salaries given to the aliens. On the other hand, the criminals have improved their methods and their ways of escaping abroad.

III. Coping with criminality

12. The official state structure has sometimes not been very flexible and quick enough to confront the new situation and the citizens have remained, in most of the cases, rather indifferent. Hence, a lot of serious criminal acts remain unsolved, the legislative measures were sometimes taken very late and without adequate preparation for their materialization (take the example of Law Nr. 1729/1987 about drugs), the courts were not in a position to judge

so many penal cases thoroughly and in time and in the prisons there was no practical possibility to organize any effective resocialization-program for so many prisoners. Especially in recent years, the prison population has exploded from 3.478 detainees in January 1986, to 3.843 in 1987, 3.938 in 1988, 4.274 in 1989, 4.582 in 1990, 5.255 in 1991 and 5.275 in 1992, whereas the respective capacity in the prisons remained around 3.900 places. These deficiencies in the way that the official state has responded to the increase in criminality have finally led to a vicious circle, in the sense that more and more potential offenders are eager to become criminals and transgress the law when they notice that by doing this they run no high risk in being arrested.

Consequently, and in view of the rather uneradicable nature of the problems which engender criminality (mainly the urbanization trend and the suffocating urban conditions in Athens), the perspectives for coping with criminality in the future are not positive. Yet, the matter, of *domestic responses to crime* needs more clarification:

13. Regarding the *legislative work*, some forms of behavior have indeed been decriminalized, like adultery (abolished by means of art. 6 Law Nr. 1272/1982) and abortion (modified in a more liberalized form by means of Law Nr. 1609/1986), but others —the majority— have on the contrary been penalized in a more systematic and, eventually, severe way. The relevant cases of protection of the environment and of protection against computer crime in the years 1985, 1986 and 1988 have already been mentioned above (No 8). There are other similar cases of criminalization or penalization of hooliganism and sport violence (Law Nr. 1646/1986), the broadening of the meaning of state-functionary as perpetrator of certain “*delicta propria*” against the state property (Law Nr. 1738/1987 which modified i.a. Law Nr. 1608/1950 and the art. 263a of the Penal Code), the expulsion of aliens (Laws Nr. 1941/1991 and 1975/1991), the money laundering (art. 5 and 6 Law Nr. 2145/1993: new art. 394A of the Criminal Code) etc.

Generally speaking, the legislative structure of Greece is a relatively sufficient one and the courts have no particular difficulties in coping with new forms of criminal behaviour.

Special mention should be made here of law Nr. 1916/1990 “aiming at the protection of society against *organized crime*”. Severe punishment (mainly custodial penalties of 5-20 years or life term) are foreseen to be imposed, according to this law, to those who constitute an organization or group of two or more persons or participate in it in order to commit in a continued or cumulated way such offences as homicide, hijacking, arson, drug trafficking, abduction

or unlawful detention of persons as hostages with intent of compelling the authorities to perform an act or omission, crime committed by the use of bombs if danger to other's person or property may result from the act, etc. However, this law was totally abolished by virtue of art. 35 Law Nr. 2172/1993.

14. As far as the *prevention* of (new forms of) crime is concerned, one has to distinguish between social prevention and situational prevention. In the field of *social prevention* the measures to be taken which are connected mainly with the State's social, economic, educational etc. policy are promoted correspondingly for each case of crime by the competent Ministries, in collaboration with the Ministry of Justice; e.g. an interministerial Committee was formed under the guidance of Professor C.D. Spinellis and worked in the years 1990 and 1991 to propose preventative measures with regard to the drug problem. Another Committee was established in the years 1986-1989 under the auspices of the Ministry of Culture and under the guidance of Professor N.-C. Courakis in order to research the problem of hooliganism in Greece and to propose measures (the report of this Committee was presented to the 13th informal Meeting of the Ministers of Sport of the Council of Europe, on 31.5-2.6.1988). There have also been working parties which have conducted scientific research and have come up with interesting proposals on subjects like the prevention of child abuse and the abuse of elderly people and women. However, an effort which was undertaken in 1987 (by virtue of Law Nr. 1738/1987) to create a central and permanent body (a "Council") for the Prevention of Crime now remains only in the books, due to dysfunctionalities in its structure. All in all, it must be admitted that in Greece prevention tends to be exercised more through ad hoc research of specific items to be exercised more through ad hoc research of specific items and their legislative handling (which is considered as rapid, effective and almost costless), than through long term control strategies of criminality in general. As a matter of fact, emphasis is put on the *situational prevention*. It is characteristic of this trend that even the above-mentioned Council for the Prevention of Crime, during its brief period of functioning, was mainly occupied with concrete problems of criminality, like the prevention of pharmacy burglaries, purse snatching and hold-ups, and did not focus its attention on the examination of the crime problem as a whole.

15. Furthermore, priority has been given in the last few years to *new strategies of punishment* or other post delictum measures of a non-institutional or non-penal nature. First, many minor offenses (e.g. tax offenses) are punished by administrative sanctions. Secondly, the majority of offenses which are tried before penal courts result in a simple fine or term of imprisonment which

can be converted to a fine. Only 3% of the convicted persons each year are committed to prison and more than half of them remain there simply because they do not have the funds to pay off their fine. By virtue of recent laws (art. 61 of the Law Nr. 1851/1989 and art. 2 of the Law. Nr. 1941/1991), even these underprivileged people can avoid prison confinement if they agree to work for the community. Moreover, for persons sentenced to a term of imprisonment between 2-3 years, the possibility exists to serve their sentence outside prison, under probationary supervision (art. 4 of the Law-Nr. 1941/1991). Thirdly, due to prison overcrowding and to a broader spirit of humanitarian rationalism, which characterizes penal law enforcement in modern-day Greece, there is an extensive application of measures such as suspension of sentences for first offenders according to art 99 f.f. of the Criminal Code (an average rate of 13% of the total number of convicted persons) and for offenders whose case has not been finally or irrevocably tried, according to art. 471,497 and 507 of the Code of Criminal Procedure.

There are equally medico-social and educational measures, respectively, for mentally or physically sick detainees (art. 38 ff. and 6g ff. of the Criminal Code and art. 80, 348, 555, 557 of the Code of Criminal Procedure) and for young offenders (mainly art. 121 ff. of the Criminal Code). The techniques of mediation have also attracted the attention of criminologists and authorities in Greece (cf. art. 25.4.a of the Rules of the Court - Law Nr. 1756/1988), but the way in which Greek penal justice is structured and the prevalence of the principle of legality do not leave a lot of room for such procedures. However, in many cases of offenders who are prosecuted after a victim's complaint, the courts do sometimes postpone the day of trial upon request of the parties, in order to give them time to reach a conciliation (e.g. in case of occupation by students of empty houses, whose proprietor asks for their eviction).

16. As far as the *criminal justice system* is concerned, interesting initiatives have been undertaken in the last few years in the light of better training and specialization of personnel in computer technology. There is also a provision in art. 74 of the Rules of the Court (Law Nr. 1756/1988) providing for specialization courses for judges within the framework of a "Center of Judicial Studies". In addition, the Code of Criminal Procedure has been amended recently (Law Nr. 1941/1991) in many of its provisions so that the criminal procedure operates in a more simplified way and without serious delays. However, the volume of cases which make up the input in the Greek penal system still remains out of control in comparison to the cases tried by the courts, so that there is always a great overloading of the courts. It has been estimated

that cases of misdemeanour (e.g. theft) are tried initially 24½ months after the act was committed or solved (average rate) and on appeal 50 months after the trial! Apart from the a.m. effort of simplification and acceleration of procedures, the rest of the penal system has not been seriously modified.

17. The problem of overloading also exists to an alarming degree in the field of the *police activity*. This means that whereas the cases of crime (esp. those of serious crime) have rapidly increased in the last few years, the number of policemen has remained virtually unchanged. In addition, in many cases the policemen are assigned to or perform duties which are not directly related to fighting crime (e.g. delivery of judicial documents), they are not sufficiently trained to confront criminals and they do not possess adequate modern equipment to perform their duty. However, their methods of researching and analysing crime (e.g. investigation of false documents in case of forgery) are satisfactory and the rate of solving cases is also good (about 88% in 1992 for the total of reported misdemeanors and felonies; nevertheless, as far as felonies alone are concerned, the rate in the same year was only 51%).

18. The new forms of crime have certainly been an object of research and of legislative activity in recent years. Some statistical and other data have already been given above in relation to the development of new types of crime, like economic crimes, or computer crimes (Nos 3 and 8). Mention has also been made of the legislative measures which were taken against them (No 13). It would be interesting to indicate some *scientific researches* on these matters:

- *St. Alexiadis*, The contribution of the criminal law to the protection of environment, under publication in the Greek review "Chronika"/"Chroniques" du Laboratoire de Criminologie et de Psychiatrie Légale, Faculté de Droit de l'Université de Thrace, No 5/1993.
- *N.-C. Courakis*, Economic Crimes (in Greek), Athens: Sakkoulas, 1982.
- *N.C. Courakis* and others, Report on the Incidence of Violence at Greek Sports Stadiums, Athens 1988.
- *Ch. Dimopoulos*, The criminological problems of modern economic offenses (in Greek), Athens: Sakkoulas, 1988.
- *Ant. Manganas*, Sexual abuse of children in Canada (in Greek), in: Studies in memoriam of Professor Elias Daskalakis, Athens: Panteion University, 1991, 455-464.
- *Chr. Mylonopoulos*, Computers and Criminal Law (in Greek), Athens: Sakkoulas, 1991.
- *Chr. Mylonopoulos*, The influence of EC-Law on Greek Criminal Law (in Greek), in the Greek review "Hyperaspissi", 1991, 1061-1077.

- *J. Panoussis*, Attitudes towards sport violence (in Greek), in: by the same author, *Criminological Researches* (in Greek), Athens: Sakkoulas, 1991, 159-235.
- *P. Papadatos*, *Le terrorisme*, Athenes: Sakkoulas, 1989.
- *C.D. Spinellis*, Victimization of Women within the Greek Family, in: "Nomos", *Studies in Honor of Professor Ioannis Deliyannis*, Thessaloniki 1991, 3, 425-443.
- *C.D. Spinellis*, Elder Abuse in Greece: A descriptive Study, in: G. Kaiser/H. Kury/H.-J. Albrecht (eds.), *Victims and Criminal Justice*, 1, Freiburg 1991, 311-338.
- *Chr. Tsouramanis*, Robbery, a criminological and sociological analysis (in Greek), Athens: Sakkoulas, 1992.
- *C. Vouyoukas*, Approach of the problem of criminal law within the framework of the European Community (in Greek), in the Greek review "Elliniki Epitheorissi Evropaikou Dikaëou", 1991, 333-369.
- *C. Vouyoukas*, Constatations et reflexions sur les problèmes actuels de le criminalité organisée et du terrorisme, in "Nomos", *Studies in Honor of Professor Ioannis Deliyannis*, Thessaloniki 1991, 1, 463-486.

19. In matters of *international cooperation*, Greece has in the last few years ratified many agreements concerning crimes of an international dimension (e.g. convention of the Council of Europe, Strasbourg 1977 against terrorist actions [Law Nr. 1789/1988] and convention of the United Nations, Vienna 1988 against drug trafficking [Law Nr. 1990/1991], as well as agreements which facilitate the transfer of convicted persons between country members of the Council of Europe (Convention of the Council of Europe: Strasbourg 1983, ratified by Law Nr. 1708/1987), or which regulate the procedure of granting asylum (Convention of the EC-State Members: Dublin 1990, based on the Schengen Agreement of 1985 and ratified by Law Nr. 1996/1991).

A lot of things can be realized in this field, especially in three directions: a) co-ordinating the European criminal and penal legislation, using as a basis the numerous recommendations (more than 80) and the respective conventions or protocols on penal matters, which have been promoted by the Council of Europe; b) establishing a more efficient protection against acts which affront EC-interests; and c) organizing a better network of scientific and police information among European Countries.