

**DELINQUENCY AMONG BULGARIA'S MINORS AND JUVENILES SINCE 1990: TRENDS,
CONDITIONS, FACTORS, AND ITS IMPACT ON HUMAN CAPITAL**

Author:

Lubomir Stoytchev

Supervisor:

Assoc. Prof. Dr. Maria Belcheva

Summary

Delinquency and deviant behaviour have always been topical issues. Nowadays, it's hard to find media that have excluded crime from their content or people who are not interested and rate the issue as not important. Human capital is less known in terms of popularity but its importance has been steadily growing. There are plenty of reasons for that but probably the most important ones are the increased interest towards education and work experience and qualification in terms of their capacity to generate economic growth and development in the so called knowledge based economies and information society.

This doctoral research is aimed at investigating the relationship between underage delinquency and human capital – an interdisciplinary problem that requires a specific approach as economic and sociological fields of research are intertwining. In addition, it has attempted to construct the social, economic and criminal context in which the abovementioned relationship is supposed to exist and function. Testing and analysing the relationship hypotheses and constructing the context are the major objectives of the doctoral thesis.

The dissertation's structure and contents reflect in chronological order the operationalised objectives of the study. Chapter I provides a detailed discussion on the terms used throughout the whole text as interdisciplinarity predetermines the use of terminology from different fields of study such as economics, sociology, education, criminal law, etc. Chapter II is dedicated to present all major ideas and research concerning the relationships between human capital (or some of its key indicators such as education, work, unemployment, etc.) and underage criminal and deviant behaviour. Bulgaria's economic and social context of the so called transitional period is constructed in chapter III. The post-communist period which started after the political changes in 1989 has deeply transformed Bulgaria's economy and society in the past twenty-five years. It is demonstrated how economy struggled in the 1990s and before it recovered how the

turns of economy affected people in terms of inflation and labour market. Furthermore, this chapter covers the major trends concerning poverty and inequality. It is shown how poverty appeared in Bulgaria and how the impoverished parts of the population have strongly increased. It is also shown how the economic changes and poverty produced inequality which led Bulgaria among the top three EU nations in terms of income polarisation today. Chapter IV reveals the tendencies and structure of Bulgaria's registered crime, i.e. the criminal context of the situation is constructed. Chapter V provided a generalised profile of underage offenders accomplishing the author's idea to construct an abstract image of theirs without preconceptions and stereotypes. Chapter VI is dedicated to the presentation of results of the statistical analysis of the relationship between human capital's leading indicators and underage criminal activity. Statistical evidence is presented and interpreted. Chapter VII discusses what has been done so far so the situation of underage offenders in the country can improve. The results of the analysis show that alternatives should be searched for. Victim-offender mediation is presented as an option which has the potential to contribute to the better of deviant children, incl. from the human capital point of view.