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The International Classification of Crime for Statistical Purposes, a cornerstone to improve national and international crime statistics?

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An overview

- Why a classification of crime is needed
- The rationale of the ICCS
- Some results from the testing
- The process
- Implementation challenges



Challenges in using crime statistics

- Three main factors affect interpretability of crime statistics (i.e. what to account for when making sense of figures on crimes):
 - Proportion of crime that is reported/detected
 - The way crime is defined and classified
 - The way crime is recorded and counted

... and the
ICCS?



Improve measurability and analysis of crime

The ICCS: a definitional framework that groups and organizes criminal offences meaningfully and systematically

It will allow to:

- Build a comprehensive stat. framework on all criminal offences to facilitate analysis of crime
- Improve comparability across countries and through time
- Improve data consistency within countries:
 - across entities in federal states
 - across data produced by successive stages of criminal justice process
 - across sources (admin. data and surveys)



Building the classification

- Object of the classification: the primary unit of classification is the act or event which constitutes a criminal offence
- The description of criminal acts is based on behaviours/events, not on legal provisions or terms
- Sometimes, contextual elements are also taken into account to define crimes: state of mind of perpetrator, individual characteristics of persons concerned, context, etc.



Principles for the ICCS

- **Exhaustiveness** – events generally known to constitute offences in a significant number of countries
- **Structure** – organised hierarchically, with manageable and balanced numbers of categories at successive levels
- **Mutual exclusivity** – any crime assigned to one and only one category
- **Description** – as precise as possible description of each criminal act and category



The current structure of ICCS

11 top-level categories, mainly based on policy relevance:

1. Acts leading to death or intending to cause death
2. Acts causing harm or intending to cause harm to the person
3. Injurious acts of a sexual nature
4. Acts against property involving violence against a person
5. Acts against property only
6. Acts involving controlled psycho-active substances or other drugs
7. Acts involving fraud, deception or corruption
8. Acts against public order or authority
9. Acts against public safety and state security
10. Acts against natural environment
11. Other criminal acts not elsewhere classified



Additional attributes

To increase its analytical capacity, the ICCS also requires additional information on selected variables associated to the offence:

- Event description: organisational context, type of weapon used, location of crime, attempted/completed, motivation, cybercrime related,...
- Victim descriptions: age, sex, age status, citizenship, intoxication status,...
- Perpetrator descriptions: age, sex, age status, victim-perpetrator relationship, citizenship, intoxication status,...



A special case: intentional homicide

- Definition of intentional homicide: unlawful death inflicted upon a person with the intent to cause death or serious injury.
- Accompanied by a list of inclusions and exclusions: honour killing, femicide, dowry death, killings result of terrorist activities, extrajudicial killings, killings caused by excessive use of force by law enforcement, etc.
- Discussion on the treatment of killings in blurred contexts of civil unrest/armed conflict (internal or international)



A special case: intentional homicide (cont.)

Classification of intentional homicide by 'type':

1. Homicide related to crime
 - organized crime
 - related to other crime (such as robbery)
2. Interpersonal homicide
 - by intimate partner/family member
 - community related
3. Socio-political homicide



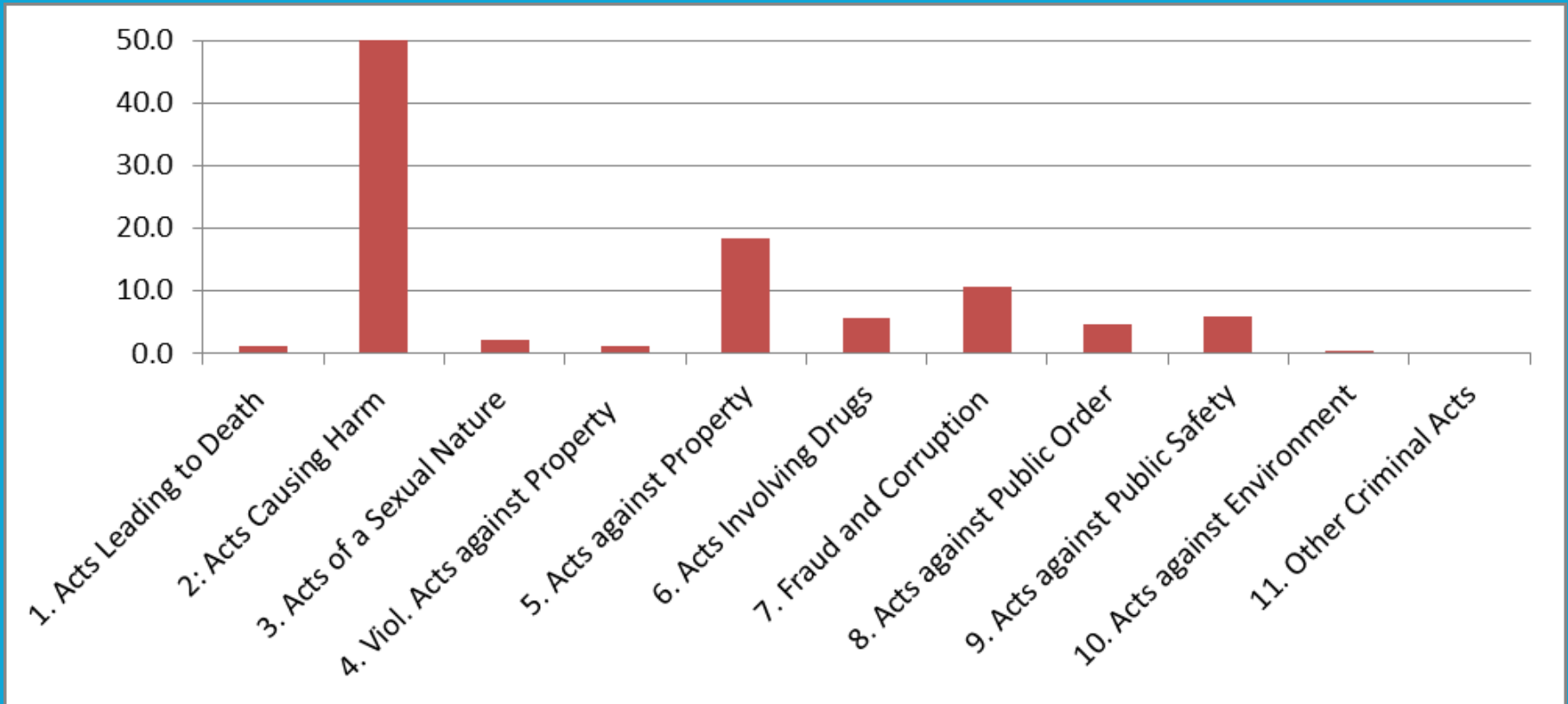
Some results of the testing

The last testing conducted in Feb-May 2014

- Three questionnaires (Testing of ICCS, testing of int. Homicide, accessibility of data)
- 41 countries provided data and other information (out of a group of 60 countries)
- Africa: 6 countries
- America: 7 countries
- Asia: 7 countries
- Europe: 19 countries
- Oceania: 2 countries

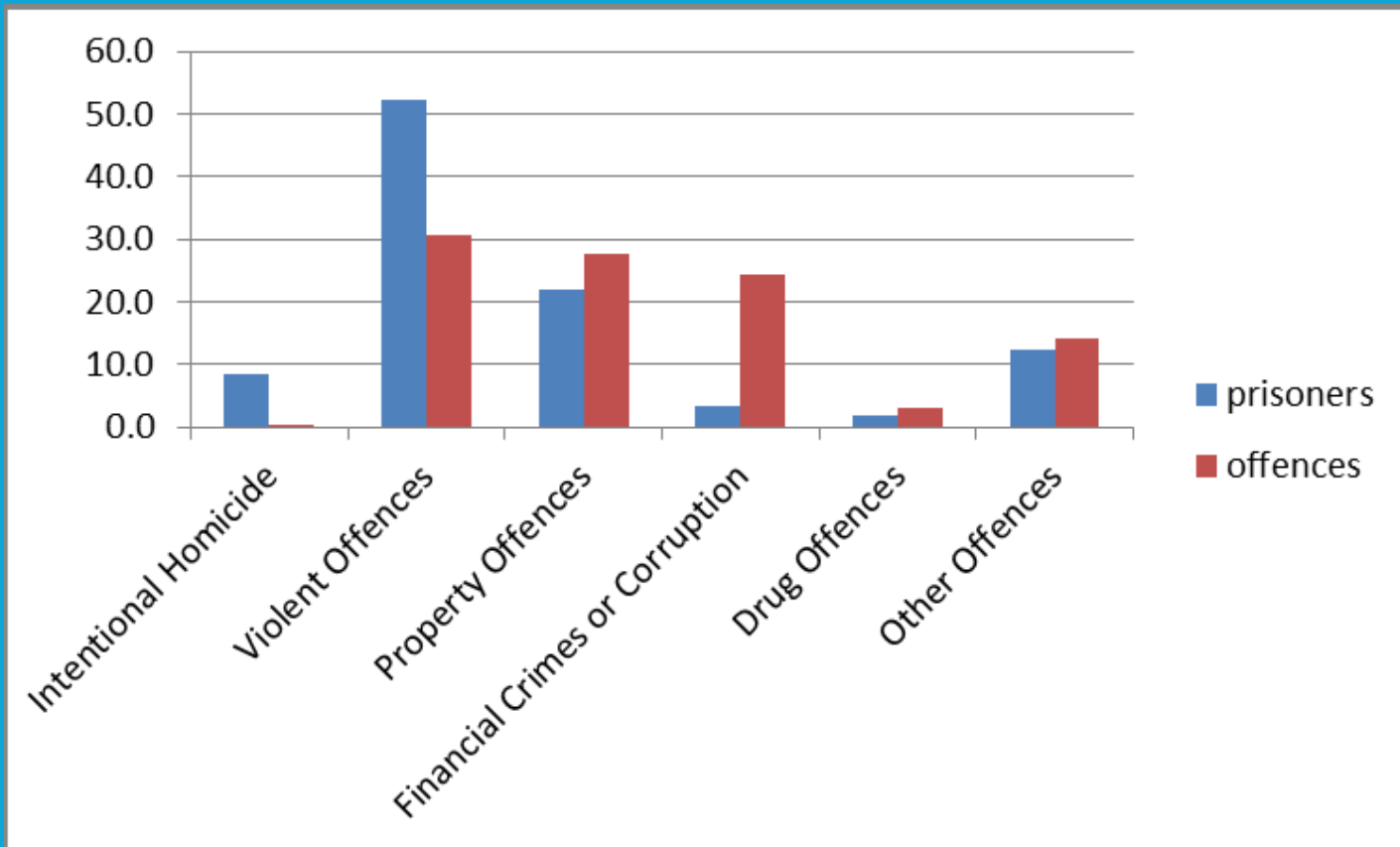
Some results of the testing

Percentage distribution of crime recorded by the police by type (level 1), 6 countries



Some results of the testing (cont.)

Percentage distribution of recorded crime and of prison population by type of offences, in a given country (2012)



Some results of the testing (cont.)

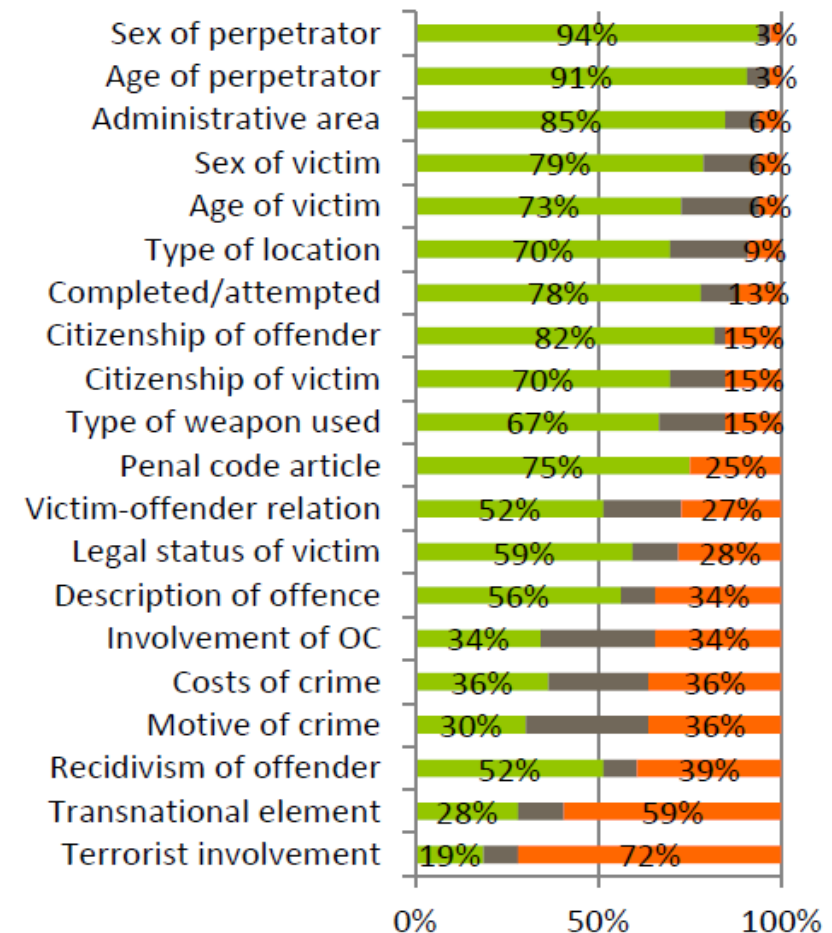
Information on storage and accessibility of crime data

Central repository of crime data exist in:

- 9/10 of countries for police
- 3/4 of countries for prosecution
- 9/10 of countries for courts
- 8/10 of countries for prison

On average, 2/3 of cases is electronic repository

Figure 1: Percentage of countries able to derive information from individual records in the central repository on...





Milestones of current work on ICCS

- 2009: joint UNODC/UNECE Task Force on crime classification set up by the Conference of European Statisticians (CES)
- 2012: CES approved the International Crime Classification Framework (ICCF)
- 2013: UN Statistical Commission and UN Crime and Criminal Justice Commission endorsed the plan to develop a full crime classification for statistical purposes
- 2012-2014: three Expert Group Meetings and 2 rounds of testing of the ICCS among volunteer countries (more than 40 countries completed the last testing)



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Next steps

- July-September 2014: advanced draft sent for country consultation
- November 2014: final version submitted to UN Statistical Commission and to UN Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice



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Future challenges

- Manual for implementation of ICCS
- Coding system of criminal offences
- Technical support to countries
- Established mechanism to advise countries, to maintain and to update the ICCS