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# Fear of Crime in Urban Neighbourhoods: A Comparative Analysis of Six Capitals

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## **Purpose:**

The purpose of this article is to present general findings of a survey on fear of crime in a sample of 2,377 respondents in the capitals of the republics and one autonomous region of the Former Yugoslavia in 2009.

## **Design/Methods/Approach:**

A survey was conducted in households by trained interviewers. Statistical methods utilized are factor and regression analysis. Statistical tests show that the model used is valid and reliable and the sampling method was adequate as well.

## **Findings:**

The main findings are consistent with other Western European and American studies on fear of crime. The results imply that fear of crime depends on weak social networks in a neighbourhood, worry about crime, probability of victimization in the next 12 months, severity of consequences of victimization, low ability of self-defence, impact of victimization on one's life, preventative measures (precaution), gender (women), education, low position in a labour market, and the influence of recent victimization on one's fear of crime intensity.

## **Research Implications:**

The research results have implications for policy making in the fields of crime control and crime prevention, and imply social and situational preventative measures to be undertaken.

## **Practical Implications:**

The article is also useful for community policing in practice, especially in dealing with the elderly, women and the socially and economically marginalized.

## **Originality/Value:**

The research presented in this article is the first comparative research using socio-demographic and social psychological model in the region of South Eastern Europe. Nevertheless, it is also a replication and test of models used for fear of crime research in Western Europe.

**UDC: 343.9(497)**

**Keywords:** fear of crime, victimology, comparative research, former Yugoslavia

## **Strah pred kriminaliteto v mestnih soseskah: primerjalna analiza šestih glavnih mest**

### **Namen prispevka:**

Namen prispevka je predstaviti splošne ugotovitve ankete o strahu pred kriminaliteto na vzorcu 2377 izpraševancev v glavnih mestih republik in avtonomne pokrajine nekdanje Jugoslavije v letu 2009.

### **Metode:**

Zbiranje podatkov je bilo opravljeno z intervjuji v gospodinjstvih. Intervjuje so izvedli usposobljeni anketarji. Uporabljeni statistični metodi sta bili faktorska in regresijska analiza. Statistični testi kažejo, da je uporabljen model veljaven in zanesljiv, prav tako je bilo ustrezno tudi vzorčenje.

### **Ugotovitve:**

Glavne ugotovitve so podobne kot pri drugih zahodnoevropskih in ameriških študijah o strahu pred kriminaliteto. Rezultati kažejo, da je strah pred kriminaliteto odvisen od šibkih socialnih mrež v soseski, zaskrbljenosti zaradi kriminalitete, verjetnosti viktimizacije v naslednjih 12 mesecih, resnosti posledic viktimizacije, nizki sposobnosti samoobrambe pred napadalcem, vpliva viktimizacije na posameznikovo življenje, preventivnih ukrepov (previdnost), spola (ženske), izobrazbe, nizkega položaja na trgu dela in vpliva nedavne viktimizacije na intenzivnost strahu pred kriminaliteto pri posamezniku.

### **Omejitve/uporabnost raziskave:**

Rezultati raziskave so uporabni pri oblikovanju politike na področju omejevanja in preprečevanja kriminalitete in še posebej opozarjajo na uporabo socialnih in situacijskih preventivnih ukrepov za njeno zmanjševanje.

### **Praktična uporabnost:**

Članek je uporaben tudi za izvajalce policijskega dela v skupnosti, še zlasti glede starejših ljudi, žensk in socialno in ekonomsko marginaliziranih posameznikov.

### **Izvirnost/pomembnost prispevka:**

Raziskovalni projekt predstavljen v tem članku je prva primerjalna raziskava z uporabo sociodemografskega in socialnopsihološkega modela na območju Jugovzhodne Evrope. Kljub temu pa je raziskava tudi replikacija in preizkus že uporabljenih modelov za raziskovanje strahu pred kriminaliteto v Zahodni Evropi.

**UDK: 343.9(497)**

**Ključne besede:** strah pred kriminaliteto, viktimologija, primerjalna raziskava, nekdanja Jugoslavija

## 1 INTRODUCTION

Fear of crime, or measures of people's perceptions of insecurity, is not a simple phenomenon that follows a linear path (Bilsky & Wetzels, 1997). Many criminologists have argued that the discourse on crime and fear of crime is more of a problem in people's everyday lives than actual crime itself (Ewald, 2000). It is a multi-dimensional issue that has been divided into categories of fear, anxiety, vulnerability, risk assessment, concerns, and perceptions of safety/insecurity (see Ferraro & LaGrange, 1987; Gibson, Zhao, Lovrich, & Gaffney, 2002; Hollway & Jefferson, 2000). Fear of crime is also a very complex and not clearly defined concept. What we measure with instruments regarding fear of crime is a combination of different "fears"; only one part might be fear of crime (Sessar, 2010; Kury, Lichtblau, Neumaier, & Obergfell-Fuchs, 2004). Fear of crime as measured by standardised instruments, usually questionnaires, is more fear of social change than fear of crime. Crime surveys have expanded rapidly since the late 1960s in the United States of America and also the United Kingdom, shed some light on attitudes toward policing, victimization, perceptions of risk, and people's fear of crime. A plethora of studies have concluded that fear of crime impinges upon the wellbeing of a large proportion of the population. Some have even gone as far as to suggest that the fear of crime is now a larger problem than crime itself (Warr, 1984; Bennett, 1990; Hale, 1992; Hale, 1996; Beckett & Sasson, 2004). Especially in the United States, the problem of fear of crime found in victim surveys started a debate of this problem on a political level. Politicians discovered that crime and especially fear of crime can be a means to win elections (Lee, 2001). Longitudinal Surveys in Germany show clearly that since the beginnings of the 1990s fear of crime became less important than fears of unemployment, money shortage to pay everyday costs or having incompetent governments to solve economic problems (Kury & Obergfell-Fuchs, 2008). As Beckett and Sasson (2004: 47) point out, "the construction of the crime issue as a consequence of excessive permissiveness has been extraordinarily useful to conservative opponents of civil rights and the welfare state".

Chambers and Tombs (1984), in reviewing the 1982 British Crime Survey (Scotland), reported that "more than half of the respondents (58%) said that at some time in the past, they had been concerned about the possibility of being a victim of crime". A consistent finding in research on fear of crime and perceptions of insecurity is that women fear crime more than men (Lira & Andradepalos, 1993; Carcach, Frampton, Thomas, & Cranich, 1995; Bilsky & Wetzels, 1997; Mesch, 2000; Pantazis, 2000; Saltijeral, Lira, & Hernandez, 1996). A second important and consistent factor found to affect people's perceptions of insecurity and/or fear of crime is age (Carcach et al., 1995; Pain, 1995; Pantazis, 2000; Zedner, 2002), and a third variable that is regularly found to be associated with fear of crime and lack of security is social class (Vold, Bernard, & Snipes, 2002).

Crime surveys are conducted not only in Western European countries but also the countries of Central and Eastern Europe (Zvekić, 1998; Hatalak, del Frate, & Zvekić, 1998; Kury, 2001; Umek, 2004). Research in Western Europe, and Central and Eastern Europe, does not show major differences in fear of crime based on

demographic, sociological, and/or social psychological factors. Across the region, results show higher-level fear of crime in women, people who perceive themselves as not being physically fit, the unemployed, those who expose themselves by walking alone in the dark, and those who perceive streets and woods as sources of danger (Meško, Petrovec, Areh, Muratbegović, & Rep, 2006). In addition, higher-levels fear of crime can be attributed to respondents who consider themselves potential victims due to the jealousy of others or as being attractive to a potential criminal in other ways, incapable of chasing off a potential assailant, and perceiving places as dangerous (Meško, Fallshore, Muratbegović, & Fields, 2008).

Fear of crime is not only drawing attention at the empirical level of study, as many have also attempted to explain it theoretically. These efforts tend to be dominated by researchers influenced by social psychological insights (Umek, 2004), though models of explaining fear of crime have recently been expanded with social-psychological and psychological factors (Van der Wurff, Stringer, & Timmer, 1988; Van der Wurff, Staalduinen, & Stringer, 1989; Meško & Farrall, 1999; Farrall, Bannister, Ditton, & Gilchrist, 2000; Meško, Areh, & Kury, 2004; Kury, 2008; Meško, Hirtenlehner, & Vošnjak, 2009). In this way, processes occurring at the individual level are taken into account. Van der Wurff et al., (1989) and Farrall, Bannister, Ditton, and Gilchrist (1997, 2000) developed a model to attempt to explain fear of crime on an individual level. However, individual-level explanations do not take into account factors that can influence social and psychological factors. Research in Western Europe, and Central and Eastern Europe, show quite similar results of factors of fear of crime (Meško & Farrall, 1999; Meško et al., 2006; Meško, Kovčič, Vukadin, & Muratbegović, 2008). The studies imply that the use of socio-demographic and social psychological models explain up to 50% of variance of fear of crime.

The links between perceived neighbourhood social disorder and attitudes toward reporting fear of crime are positively related to levels of social integration in a community setting (Rountree & Land, 1996; Gibson et al., 2002; Lee & Earnest, 2003) and also to involvement in formal and informal organizations (Austin, Woolever, & Baba, 1994; Walklate, 1998).

The neighbourhood disorder perspective broadens the scope of the social integration model by incorporating the social and physical characteristics of the neighbourhood. Social factors include drunken people, rowdy teenagers, incivilities and drug users (Kanan & Pruitt, 2002; McGarrell, Giacomazzi, & Thurman, 1997; Ross & Mirowsky, 1999; Kaal, Vanderveen, & van Oeveren, 2008). Physical factors include the visible features of these neighbourhoods such as vandalism, rubbish and litter, and graffiti (Ross & Jang, 2000; Ross & Mirowsky, 1999; Ross, Mirowsky, & Pribesh, 2001). Both social and physical signs of disorder have been shown to be negatively related to levels of security among residents who live in disorganized neighbourhoods (Ross & Mirowsky, 1999; Kanan & Pruitt, 2002).

Disadvantage and disorder in neighbourhoods has been linked to the lack of social control in the community (Taylor & Shumaker, 1990; Perkins, Meeks, & Taylor, 1992; Sampson & Raudenbush, 1999; Ross & Jang, 2000). Social disorder refers to people and can be exemplified by the presence of people engaged in drug dealing, fighting on street corners, crime, the physical environment and local demography

or other activities that create a sense of danger that are perceived by residents as signs of the breakdown of social control (Skogan & Maxfield, 1981; Wilson & Kelling, 1982; Taylor & Shumaker, 1990; Ross & Jang, 2000; Ross & Mirowsky, 2001; Hirtenlehner, 2008). As Ross et al. (2001) found, perceived neighbourhood disorder, common in disadvantaged neighbourhoods, influences mistrust by increasing residents' perceptions of powerlessness. Therefore, the willingness to get involved in other residents' lives or to intervene in neighbourhood problems may be affected by the levels of mistrust. Residents may also fear retaliation if they intervene in neighbourhood problems (Bursik & Grasmick, 1993).

Finally, as research from social disorganization theory suggests, crime and disorder lead to fear, which weakens neighbourhood cohesion and facilitates more crime and disorder (Markowitz, Bellair, Liska, & Liu, 2001). Due to the reduced use of public places, informal social control crime loses its power in such spaces. Some criminologists wrote about problems related to the conceptualization of collective efficacy (Sampson, Raudenbush, & Earls, 1997; Sampson & Raudenbush, 1999). In their conceptualization of collective efficacy, Sampson et al. (1997) link residents' perceptions of their communities with their tendency to intervene in problems and supervise residents to maintain public order. These neighbourhood conditions may negatively influence attitudes to intervene and, as a consequence, attitudes toward reporting crime. As they suggest, one is unlikely to take action in a neighbourhood context where people mistrust one another, and where neighbourhood residents share a sense of powerlessness, it is difficult to bring about collective action. From this perspective, attitudes toward reporting fear of crime or insecurity would also be affected by community-level factors such as neighbourhood social disorder, diminished collective efficacy, and low social control in the community (Garcia & Herrero, 2007). Wealthy people move from such communities to "gated" communities which increases the underlying problem and brings the effect of physically separated social classes.

Empirical studies show different results regarding the relationship between individual criminal victimization and fear of crime. In a survey on fear of crime conducted in urban and rural communities in Slovenia, respondents show that the fear of crime is negatively correlated to victimization. Those who have been victimized previously, express less fear of crime. This finding is statistically significant only for respondents in urban areas, and the authors of this survey concluded that the respondents from urban neighbourhoods were mainly victims of petty crimes (Meško, Šifrer, & Vošnjak, 2012).

## **2 ABOUT SIX CAPITALS**

### **2.1 Ljubljana - Slovenia**

Ljubljana is the capital of Slovenia and its largest city (Statistical Office of the RS, 2010). It is the centre of the City Municipality of Ljubljana, and is located in the centre of the country in the Ljubljana Basin. Throughout its history, it has been influenced by its geographic position at the crossroads of the Slavic world with

the Germanic and Latin cultures. As of January 1 2011, Ljubljana had 280,140 inhabitants (Mestna občina Ljubljana, 2011c) and 38,650 students in 2009/2010 (ibid.). The 2002 census reported that 39.2% of Ljubljana residents were Roman Catholic; 30.4% were believers who did not belong to a particular religion, unknown or did not reply; 19.2% were atheist; 5.5% were Eastern Orthodox; 5.0% were Muslim; and the remaining 0.7% were Protestant or belonged to other religions (Statistical office of the RS, 2002). Approximately 84% of the population speaks Slovene as their native language; the second most-spoken language is Bosnian, with Serbian holding third place (ibid.). Industry remains the city's most important employer, notably in the pharmaceutical, petrochemical and food processing industries. Other fields include banking, finance, transport, construction, skilled trades and services and tourism. The public sector provides jobs in education, culture, health care, state and local administration. The number of unemployed in July 2011 was 13,765 (Mestna občina Ljubljana, 2011a) and the average net salary in June 2011 was € 1,119.57 (Statistical Office of the RS, 2011). Ljubljana and Slovenia do not have a high crime rate. With approximately 45,000 recorded criminal offences in 2007, the Police Directorate Ljubljana alone accounts for over 50% of the country's crimes (Ministry of the Interior, Police, 2007). Reported crime in Slovenia (450/10,000) and Ljubljana (1,600/10,000) show that Ljubljana is far above the Slovenian average. Slovenia and in particular Ljubljana have a quiet and secure reputation (Mestna občina Ljubljana, 2011b). In 2010, the GDP per capita was 17,602 EUR (Ljubljanski univerzitetni inkubator, 2012).

## **2.2 Zagreb - Croatia**

Zagreb is the capital of the Republic of Croatia, and is in the northwest part of the country, along the Sava river, at the southern slopes of Medvednica mountain. Zagreb lies at an elevation of approximately 122 m (400 ft) above sea level. According to the last official census, Zagreb's city population in 2011 was 686,568 (Croatian Bureau of Statistics, 2011) while its municipal population was 792,875 (ibid.). According to the same census, the wider Zagreb metropolitan area, which includes the City of Zagreb and Zagreb County (also known as the 'Zagreb ring'), has a population of 1,110,517 people and is the only metropolitan area in Croatia with a population of over one million (ibid.). The majority of its citizens are Croats, which make up 92% of the city's population (ibid.). The same census records 60,066 residents belonging to ethnic minorities comprise: 18,811 Serbs (2.41%), 6,204 Bosniaks (0.80%), 8,030 Muslims by nationality (1.02%), 6,389 Albanians (0.83%), 3,225 Slovenes (0.41%), 3,946 Roma (0.55%), 2,131 Montenegrins (0.27%), 2,315 Macedonians (0.27%), together with other smaller minor ethnic communities, especially the historically present Germans (Ibid). The most important industries are: production of electric machines and devices, chemical, pharmaceutical, textile, food and drink processing. Zagreb is international trade and business centre, and the transport crossroad of Central Europe (Službene stranice grada Zagreba, 2012). The GDP in 2010 was \$17,500 (Regional Secretariat for Parliamentary Cooperation

in South-East Europe, 2012). The crime rate in 2009 was 251.5/10,000 (NationMaster, 2012).

### **2.3 Sarajevo - Bosnia and Herzegovina**

Sarajevo is the capital and largest city of Bosnia and Herzegovina, with an estimated population of over 311,161 people within its administrative limits. It is also the capital of the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina entity, as well as the centre of the Sarajevo Canton, which has a population of 440,744 (Saopćenje, priopćenje, 2012). Sarajevo is located in the Sarajevo valley of Bosnia, surrounded by the mountains (Igman, Bjelašnica, Jahorina, Trebević, Romanija, Treskavica) and situated along the Miljacka River in the heart of Southeastern Europe and the Balkans. Sarajevo is the leading business and cultural centre of Bosnia and Herzegovina, and its influences on politics, education, entertainment, media, fashion, science, and the arts contribute to its status as Bosnia and Herzegovina's major economic centre (City of Sarajevo, 2012). The city is historically famous for its traditional religious diversity, with adherents of Islam, Orthodoxy, Catholicism and Judaism coexisting there for centuries (Malcolm, 1996). Due to this long and rich history of religious diversity, Sarajevo is often called the "Jerusalem of Europe" (In Europe's Jerusalem, 2002) or "Jerusalem of the Balkans" (ibid.). In 1914, it was the site of the assassination of the Archduke of Austria that sparked World War I. Seventy years later, it hosted the 1984 Winter Olympics. For nearly four years, from 1992–1996, the city was under siege during the Bosnian War for independence. Sarajevo industries now include tobacco products, furniture, hosiery, automobiles, and communication equipment (Tianjin Sister-City Council for the Promotion of Enterprises, 2012). The GDP per capita in 2010 in Bosnia and Herzegovina was 6,600 USD (USDA, Foreign Agricultural Service, 2011). The overall crime rate in Bosnia-Herzegovina (BIH) remains high, with the greatest concentration of incidents in Sarajevo (189.2/10,000) and other urban areas. Crime statistics for 2009 indicate that there were 8,015 criminal offenses reported in Sarajevo, which is 9.2% less than in 2008 (United State department of State Bureau of Diplomatic Security, 2010).

### **2.4 Belgrade - Serbia**

Belgrade is the capital and largest city of Serbia, and is located at the confluence of the Sava and Danube rivers, where the Pannonian Plain meets the Balkans (Beograd, 2012). The city proper has a population of 1.2 million, while the official metropolitan area has about 1.7 million, and is one of the largest cities in Southeastern Europe. In English it translates to White city. Belgrade has a special administrative status within Serbia (ibid.), and its metropolitan territory is divided into 17 municipalities, each with its own local council (ibid.). It covers 3.6% of Serbia's territory, and 22.5% of the country's population lives in the city (ibid.). Belgrade was the capital of Yugoslavia from 1918 to 1989, and, according to the 2002 census, the major population groups according to nationality in Belgrade

are: Serbs (1,417,187), Yugoslavs (22,161), Montenegrins (21,190), Roma (19,191), Croats (10,381), Macedonians (8,372), and Muslims by nationality (4,617) (ibid.). Belgrade is the financial centre of Serbia, and is home to the country's National Bank, and New Belgrade is the main business district in the city. As of 2009, over 40% of Serbia's GDP is generated by the city, which also has 31.4% of Serbia's employed population (Ibid). In December 2010, the average monthly net salary in Belgrade was 50,000 RSD (€490, \$680) (Abramović, 2011). Serbia-wide figures showed 100,401 recorded offences in 2010 in comparison to 101,514 in 2009. Within Belgrade, there were 33,764 recorded offences in comparison to 34,051 in 2009 (United State department of State Bureau of diplomatic Security, 2011).

### 2.5 Skopje – Macedonia

Skopje or Skoplje (1994 pop. 444,760), the capital of Macedonia, lies on the banks of the Vardar River, and is an important transportation and trade centre as well as an industrial hub where chemicals, cement, machinery, and diverse light manufactured goods are produced. The city is also the seat of an Orthodox Eastern archbishop and a Macedonian university (founded 1949) (Skopje, 2012). It is the country's political, cultural, economic, and academic centre, and was known in the Roman period under the name Scupi. The total budget of Skopje in 2010 was 4,143,357,000 denars, or about € 67 million. Of these 4 billion denars, about 2 billion were from direct taxes and 1 billion was in the form of an endowment from the state. The remainder came from indirect taxes or transfers and various donations (Blackhat, 2012). Although Skopje had hosted economic plans since the nineteenth century, the Yugoslav communist regime allowed the transformation of the city into a major industrial centre. It has been the largest economic and industrial centre of Macedonia (Official portal of city of Skopje, 2011). Skopje has many factories, and the most important activities are the processing of metals, chemicals, textiles, printing and others. Skopje is the most populous Macedonian city and according to the 2002 census, the population of was 506,926. According to a more recent official estimate from 2006, it has 668,518 inhabitants (State Statistical Office, 2002). FYR Macedonia GDP - per capita: \$9,700 (2010 est.) (Nation Branding & Investment, 2010). The City of Skopje's GDP per Capita in 2008 was 5,077 € (Idom Consulting, 2011). Over one half of criminal offences registered in FYROM in the first half of 2009 took place in Skopje municipal area. Crime rate in Skopje was 230/10,000 (Skopje with highest crime rate, 2009).

### 2.6 Pristine - Kosovo

Pristine is the capital and the largest city of Kosovo, which including its suburbs, has a total population of over 400,000. It is the administrative, economic, and cultural centre of Kosovo. The area of Pristine has a long history; in its vicinity archaeological discoveries have been found which date back to the early neolithic area. The city has a majority Albanian population, with smaller communities



including Bosniaks, Roma and others. It is the administrative, educational, and cultural centre of Kosovo. Pristine is the most significant higher education centre of Kosovo, and the University of Pristine, founded in 1970, is located here with its 13 faculties (colleges). Pristine is also home to the Academy of Arts and Sciences of Kosovo (Zysman & Hoxha, 2011), which gathers Kosovo's most prominent intellectuals, the Institute of Albanology, and the Institute of History. Kosovo GDP per capita: 2594 Eur (Annual report on Donnor Activities, 2011). In the Pristine Municipality around 13,306 businesses are operating, with the largest number of these businesses oriented towards commercial activity. Based on data from the Ministry of Trade and Industry, about 54% of businesses engaged in commerce and tourism, transport 15%, 8% real estate and only 4% with processing activities (European Centre for Minority Issues Kosovo, 2012).

Crime rates in Kosovo are similar to the rest of Europe; urban Mitrovica has more than its share of offences, the rural municipalities much less (Kern, 2011). Kosovo is very safe for international visitors, and while it always pays to take care of your belongings, street crime and petty theft in Kosovo are low and violent crime rates are much lower than in many Western cities. Most internationals, especially women, not only are very safe but also feel very safe in Kosovo (Warrander & Knaus, 2008).

### **3 METHOD**

#### **3.1 Instrument**

For the purpose of this study, a 106 item questionnaire was used. The original questionnaire was in German (Hirtenlehner, Meško, & Vošnjak, 2009), and the questionnaire was translated to the native languages and for the improved accuracy, translated back into German. Researchers from the participating universities also thoroughly compared the translated questionnaire regarding denotative and connotative meanings of questions and statements. The questionnaire consisted of questions and statements about fear of crime, neighbourly relations, perception of the quality of life in the city among citizens of the studied capitals, as well as questions about their social networks and their trust for the people who live in their neighbourhood. In order to obtain a more complete answer about subjective feelings such as fear, we also asked respondents how they would feel if they were to become victims of different sorts of crime, that is, what measures they are taking to prevent becoming a victim of crime.

#### **3.2 Data Collection**

Interviews were conducted in the households of the interviewees, with the population consisting of the adult (18 years old and older) inhabitants of urban areas of Ljubljana, Zagreb, Sarajevo, Belgrade, Skopje and Pristine – capitals of five republics (Slovenia, Croatia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Serbia, Macedonia) and

one autonomous region (Kosovo) of former Yugoslavia. The exercised sampling procedure was a multi-stage random probability method and was carried out through four stages.

In the first stage, primary sampling units were defined as city areas (neighbourhoods) in which the research would be conducted, and as all capitals are urban and suburban, we focused on urban neighbourhoods only. When the map of primary sampling units was constructed, the proportionate participation of each segment in the sample was defined. The second step in designing the sample consisted of precisely defining the sampling points, i.e. the streets or parts of the streets inside the primary sampling units in which the polls would be conducted. Each sampling point was defined as a path with a specific starting point and given the direction of the pollsters' movement. In that way, we obtained a list of 40 precisely defined paths for each city (from point A towards point B) where the pollsters would move and in such designed areas find their interviewees. Inside each sampling point, 10 interviews were conducted. The next step involved specifying the procedure for finding of convenient households in which the poll or interview would be conducted. The selection of households was carried out using the random-route technique, and the disposition of households was defined according to the city size and the type of settlement. The pollsters were instructed to walk on the left hand side of the street. The final step in sample design consisted of defining the procedure for the choice of the interviewees inside the previously correctly chosen household. The selection of one respondent per household was on the 'next birthday' selection-key. The procedure prescribed that the pollster should knock on the door of the correctly chosen household, state his/her name and ask for cooperation in the survey, asking how many members of that household are adults (18 years or older), and then pick one whose birthday falls next (chronologically). Changing such designated respondents was allowed only if after three attempts (one initial visit and two call-backs), the pollster could not conduct the interview. In case it was impossible to find the correctly chosen interviewee or if he refused to participate in the poll, the pollsters continued the interviewing according to the plan of movement in that sampling point.

The polling was conducted in April - June 2009 by the trained students under the supervision of senior researchers from the University of Maribor<sup>1</sup>, University of Zagreb<sup>2</sup>, University of Sarajevo<sup>3</sup>, University of Belgrade<sup>4</sup>, University of Ohrid<sup>5</sup>, and AAB University in Pristine<sup>6</sup>, who had received precise instructions about the procedure for polling and keeping the research documentation. The interviewing process was supervised by senior researchers and research assistants from the participating universities. Apart from the permanent supervision of the interviewing process by the staff of the universities, and in accordance with international research

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4 Faculty of Security, University of Belgrade, Serbia.

5 Faculty of Security, University St. Kliment Ohridski, Bitola, Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia.

6 Faculty of Criminal Justice and Security, AAB-Riinest University, Prishtine, Kosovo.

	N		%		Ljubljana		Zagreb		Sarajevo		Belgrade		Skopje		Pristine	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Age	18-29	795	33.69	105	26.58	87	23.32	162	40.50	91	22.75	132	33.67	218	54.50	
	30-39	340	14.41	65	16.46	60	16.09	37	9.25	51	12.75	39	9.95	88	22.00	
	40-49	284	12.03	46	11.65	54	14.48	57	14.25	55	13.75	46	11.73	26	6.50	
	50-59	321	13.60	46	11.65	47	12.60	51	12.75	76	19.00	62	15.82	39	9.75	
	60-69	320	13.56	60	15.19	64	17.16	49	12.25	71	17.75	57	14.54	19	4.75	
	70 +	300	12.71	73	18.48	61	16.35	44	11.00	56	14.00	56	14.29	10	2.50	
	Gender	Male	1048	44.44	149	38.60	159	41.95	204	51.00	165	41.25	202	51.40	169	42.25
	Female	1310	55.56	237	61.40	220	58.05	196	49.00	235	58.75	191	48.60	231	57.75	
Marital status	Single	769	32.49	103	26.08	102	26.98	162	40.50	107	26.75	134	34.01	161	40.25	
	Married	1111	46.94	152	38.48	186	49.21	184	46.00	185	46.25	200	50.76	204	51.00	
	Cohabitation	150	6.34	69	17.47	25	6.61	10	2.50	19	4.75	8	2.03	19	4.75	
	Divorced	118	4.99	25	6.33	15	3.97	14	3.50	39	9.75	12	3.05	13	3.25	
	Widowed	219	9.25	46	11.65	50	13.23	30	7.50	50	12.50	40	10.15	3	0.75	
Level of education	Incomplete primary school	35	1.48	2	0.51	6	1.58	6	1.50	3	0.75	3	0.76	15	3.75	
	Primary school	132	5.57	27	6.82	24	6.33	29	7.25	17	4.25	15	3.81	20	5.00	
	Vocational school (3yrs)	284	11.99	46	11.62	52	13.72	52	13.00	59	14.75	40	10.15	35	8.75	
	High school (4 yrs)	924	39.00	164	41.41	137	36.15	175	43.75	138	34.50	173	43.91	137	34.25	
	Diploma degree (2yrs)	276	11.65	42	10.61	51	13.46	38	9.50	69	17.25	21	5.33	55	13.75	
	University degree	644	27.18	93	23.48	97	25.59	95	23.75	98	24.50	130	32.99	131	32.75	
	Graduate degree	74	3.12	22	5.56	12	3.17	5	1.25	16	4.00	12	3.05	7	1.75	

Table 1:  
Sample  
description  
(N = 2,377)

**Table 1:**  
**(Cont.)**  
**Sample**  
**description**  
(N = 2,377)

	N	%	Ljubljana		Zagreb		Sarajevo		Belgrade		Skopje		Pristine	
			N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Employment	732	31.48	131	33.68	151	40.70	70	17.50	120	31.33	118	30.89	142	35.50
	178	7.66	25	6.43	27	7.28	47	11.75	17	4.44	31	8.12	31	7.75
	415	17.85	63	16.20	47	12.67	96	24.00	54	14.10	71	18.59	84	21.00
	299	12.86	15	3.86	20	5.39	68	17.00	43	11.23	51	13.35	102	25.50
	63	2.71	2	0.51	3	0.81	22	5.50	2	0.52	11	2.88	23	5.75
	638	27.44	153	39.33	123	33.15	97	24.25	147	38.38	100	26.18	18	4.50
Financial situation	1733	73.18	336	84.85	306	80.74	276	69.00	263	65.75	267	67.94	285	71.25
	635	26.82	60	15.15	73	19.26	124	31.00	137	34.25	126	32.06	115	28.75
Victim of crime in the past 5 years	377	15.86	101	25.25	55	14.51	64	16.00	54	13.50	47	11.81	56	14.00
	2000	84.14	299	74.75	324	85.49	336	84.00	346	86.50	351	88.19	344	86.00
Victim of crime	678	28.58	168	42.11	119	31.40	98	24.50	119	29.75	81	20.56	93	23.25
	1694	71.42	231	57.89	260	68.60	302	75.50	281	70.25	313	79.44	307	76.75

Percentage is based on the number of answered questions.

standards, a check of at least 15% of the effective interviews was performed in each city using some of the back/checks options (direct supervision during the interview, visit of the supervisor to the interviewed households, or check by phone calls to the interviewed households). Demographic information for a stratified random sample of total 2,377 respondents is presented in Table 1.

## **4 RESULTS**

The results of this study are presented in the following manner: First, factor analysis for the 'fear of crime' variable is presented and compared with the previous studies, and subsequently, the results of factor analyses for other factors will be presented. Third, the results of regression analysis (fear of crime as a dependent variable and other independent variables) will be presented as well as comparisons of statistically significant variables.

### **4.1 Factor analysis**

The purpose of factor analysis is to test the questionnaire for factor validity. In factor analysis, maximum likelihood extraction with eigenvalues greater than one was conducted on sections of the questionnaire (see Tables below). In cases of multiple factors, direct oblimin rotation was performed.

#### **4.1.1 Fear of crime**

Fear of crime consisted of six vignettes that enable measurement of complex social situations, in which respondents can imagine and relate to crime situations. The previous fear of crime surveys have shown that these vignettes are quite powerful in measuring fear of crime of people in urban neighbourhoods (Meško & Farrall, 1999; Vošnjak et al., 2011).

The factor 'fear of crime' explains 45.3% of the variance. Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin's (KMO) measure (0.85) and Cronbach Alpha reliability coefficient (0.76) show substantial amounts of data adequacy and reliability for further analysis. The respondents' answers were on the scale 1-very unsafe to 5-very safe. In Table 2, the lowest mean 2.29 has vignette 'A party in the neighbourhood' showing the most unsafe feeling among the respondents and the highest mean 3.16 has the vignette 'A doorbell'. We can compare results to the previous studies of fear of crime in Scotland, the Netherlands and in Slovenia, where Meško and his colleagues continuously used this model in a 10 year period in several surveys of fear of crime. The mean values in table 3 show that the importance of the fear of crime factors in the population of Slovenia do not change significantly within 10 years (Meško & Farrall, 1999; Vošnjak, Šifrer, & Meško, 2011). The results of the previous surveys show that the respondents feel a great sense of insecurity about "A party in the neighbourhood" and they feel safer in all other situations, particularly in the situation "A doorbell". In the present study, standard deviations are slightly higher than in the previous studies.

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**Table 2:**  
Fear of crime

Vignettes		Factor loading	Mean	Standard deviation
F0: Fear of crime (45.3 % var.); KMO=0.85; $\alpha$ =0.76			2.78	0.79
A parked car	One evening you go to take out the garbage. On the street you see two men walking around a parked car. When they see you looking at them, they begin to walk toward you.	0.71	2.40	1.01
A bus stop	One afternoon, you are standing at a bus stop when a group of 15 or 16-year-olds comes along. They begin kicking the bus stop and daubing graffiti on the bus shelter.	0.69	2.79	1.14
A party in the neighbourhood	You have been invited to a party in a neighbourhood you do not really know. Early that evening you set out by bus. When you get off you still have some way to walk. Suddenly you notice that you have lost your way. A group of youths is following you and are giving unpleasant remarks at you.	0.69	2.29	1.03
A telephone	You are going out one evening. You are ready and just about to leave when the phone rings. You answer, giving your name. But at the other end you hear only irregular breathing. You ask who is there. They hang up.	0.67	3.07	1.15
A doorbell	One evening you are at home on your own. It is late. The doorbell rings, but you are not expecting anyone.	0.65	3.16	1.10
A bar <sup>7</sup>	You are in a part of town where you have never been before. You go into a bar and inside there is a group of loud speaking local males.	0.63	3.01	1.05

**Table 3:**  
Results of the previous surveys on fear of crime in Slovenia

	Ljubljana and the suburbs, 1999			Slovenia, 1999			Slovenia, 2001		
	N=443			N=741			N=1760		
Situation	F.L.	M	SD	F.L.	M	SD	F.L.	M	SD
Doorbell	0.77	3.31	1.01	0.76	3.14	0.80	0.71	3.12	1.01
Car	0.76	2.41	0.92	0.73	2.45	0.91	0.71	2.44	0.92
To a party	0.69	2.05	0.86	0.64	2.11	0.80	0.68	2.21	0.86
Bus stop	0.71	2.76	0.86	0.63	2.60	0.83	0.69	2.66	0.86
Telephone	0.71	3.27	1.01	0.64	3.18	0.70	0.68	3.29	1.01
Café	0.67	3.24	0.95	0.59	3.01	0.91	0.61	2.48	0.95

<sup>7</sup> This item has been changed from the original which consists of a situation with motorbike riders.

	Ljubljana, 2006			Ljubljana, 2008		
	N=758			N=480		
Situation	F.L.	M	SD	F.L.	M	SD
Doorbell	0.66	3.43	0.98	0.64	3.25	0.94
Car	0.73	2.59	0.96	0.73	2.52	0.85
To a party	0.68	2.39	0.96	0.68	2.19	0.86
Bus stop	0.64	3.00	1.00	0.63	2.83	0.97
Telephone	0.64	3.16	1.10	0.64	3.02	0.99
Café	0.57	3.63	0.91	0.55	3.58	0.89

**Table 3:**  
(Cont.)  
Results of the previous surveys on fear of crime in Slovenia

#### 4.1.2 Other fear of crime related variables

In the following analysis, sections of the questionnaire were processed with factor analysis in the same manner as factor analysis of fear of crime items. Each new factor was used in the regression analysis. Results of factor analysis are presented in Table 4.

Other variables		Factor loading	Mean	Standard deviation
F1: Social networks in neighbourhood (46.68 % var.); KMO=0.73; $\alpha$ =0.76				
V2	People in our neighbourhood can be trusted.	0.81	2.35	0.80
V3	I have many friends in our neighbourhood.	0.80	2.29	0.82
V4	There are many reliable people in our neighbourhood.	0.57	2.06	0.76
V5	When going shopping or for a walk, I meet many acquaintances.	0.49	2.01	0.83
F2: Disorder in neighbourhoods (48.47 % var.); KMO=0.86; $\alpha$ =0.85				
V11	Vandalism	0.79	2.64	1.09
V10	Drunk people in the street	0.76	2.76	1.05
V9	Groups of loitering youngsters	0.75	2.49	1.09
V13	Homeless people	0.74	3.02	1.07
V12	Street begging	0.69	2.69	1.11
V8	Collapsing / demolished buildings	0.65	2.74	1.04
V7	Graffiti	0.57	2.93	0.98
V6	Poor hygiene conditions in public areas	0.57	2.30	1.02
F3: Trust in public institutions (56.14 % var.); KMO=0.64; $\alpha$ =0.61				
V13e	Police	0.76	2.47	1.27
V13f	Judiciary	0.75	3.31	1.30
V13b	Government	0.74	3.39	1.35
F4: Worry about crime (51.50 % var.); KMO=0.87; $\alpha$ =0.86				
V18	Theft	0.80	1.90	1.10
V17	Physical assault / scuffle	0.77	1.84	1.21
V15	Street robbery	0.74	2.07	1.19

**Table 4:**  
Factor analysis of other variables

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**Table 4:**  
Factor analysis  
of other  
variables

V16	Fraud	0.74	2.31	1.19
V20	House burglary	0.67	1.59	1.05
V19	Aggressive street behaviour (talk)	0.55	2.68	1.37
F5: Probability of victimization in the next 12 months (50.30 % var.); KMO=0.87; $\alpha$ =0.85				
V25	Theft	0.84	2.81	1.18
V22	Street robbery	0.80	3.09	1.19
V24	Physical assault / scuffle	0.70	3.36	1.15
V27	House burglary	0.69	3.08	1.22
V23	Fraud	0.66	3.06	1.19
V26	Aggressive street behaviour (talk)	0.52	2.59	1.30
F6: Consequences of victimization (51.12 % var.); KMO=0.86; $\alpha$ =0.85				
V31	Theft	0.83	2.07	1.05
V29	Fraud	0.81	2.50	1.13
V28	Street robbery	0.77	2.22	1.10
V30	Physical assault / scuffle	0.66	1.79	1.04
V33	House burglary	0.61	1.62	0.93
V32	Aggressive street behaviour (talk)	0.59	3.17	1.40
F7: Ability of Self-defence (26.77 % var.); KMO=0.61; $\alpha$ =0.70				
V46	Avert the attacker with a self-confident approach	0.77	3.26	1.23
V43	Defend yourself successfully	0.74	3.18	1.19
V44	Run away	0.68	3.19	1.20
V45	Pacify the attacker with talking	0.68	3.31	1.21
F8: Impact of victimization on one's life (54.74 % var.); KMO=0.88; $\alpha$ =0.87				
V57	Theft	0.82	2.16	1.03
V54	Street robbery	0.80	2.28	1.06
V55	Fraud	0.76	2.47	1.05
V56	Physical assault / scuffle	0.72	1.80	0.97
V58	Aggressive street behaviour (talk)	0.67	2.87	1.27
V59	House burglary	0.65	1.68	0.91
F9: Prevention/Precaution (21.57 % var.); KMO=0.77; $\alpha$ =0.74				
V85	I try to avoid strangers at night.	0.80	2.50	1.34
V84	I avoid certain streets, areas and parks.	0.78	2.70	1.36
V88	At night, I only leave my flat if absolutely necessary.	0,58	2.82	1.53
V86	At nights, I avoid using public means of transport.	0.54	3.35	1.51
V87	I avoid carrying large amounts of money.	0.40	2.26	1.40

Factor analysis, Principal components method, eigenvalue greater than 1. All single factors.

The results of factor analyses show that all factors met the criteria for further analysis.



### 4.1.3 Regression analysis

Regression analysis was utilised for the entire sample and each capital separately. Regression analysis of factors and selected demographic variables in Table 5 shows that weak social networks in a neighbourhood, worry about crime, probability of victimization in the next 12 months, severity of consequences of victimization, low ability of self-defence, impact of victimization on one's life, preventative measures (precaution), gender (women), higher education, low position in a labour market, and recent victimization influence one's fear of crime intensity. Results for the capital cities differ. In Ljubljana, disorder in a neighbourhood, worry about crime, consequences of victimization, low ability of self-defence, impact of victimization on one's life and precaution influence one's fear of crime. None of the demographic variables was found to be significant. In Zagreb, weak social networks in a neighbourhood, low ability of self-defence, impact of victimization on one's life, precaution, gender (women), position in a labour market and financial situation predict fear of crime. In Sarajevo, worry about crime, low ability of self-defence, impact of victimization on one's life, and precaution influence fear of crime. In Belgrade, consequences of victimization, low ability of self-defence, impact of victimization on one's life, precaution, education, and low financial status of households are related to fear of crime. In Skopje, worry about crime, low ability of self-defence, precaution, gender (women), education and weak position in a labour market relate to fear of crime. In Pristine, probability of victimization in the next 12 months, precaution, gender (women), a weak position in a labour market and criminal victimization influence levels of fear of crime. Trust in public institutions (government, police, criminal justice, military, political parties, church) and age were not found to have an impact on fear of crime in any of the capital cities studied.

**Table 5:**  
Regression analysis – socio-demographic and social psychological model

Independent variables	Total (n=2377)	Ljubljana (n=400)	Zagreb (n=379)	Sarajevo (n=400)	Belgrade (n=400)	Skopje (n=398)	Pristine (n=400)
	Beta/sig.	Beta/sig.	Beta/sig.	Beta/sig.	Beta/sig.	Beta/sig.	Beta/sig.
F1 Social networks in neighbourhood	-.04/*	/	/	-.12/*	/	/	/
F2 Disorder in neighbourhood	/	.09/*	/	/	/	/	/
F3 Trust in public institutions	/	/	/	/	/	/	/
F4 Worry about crime	.06/*	.14/**	/	.12/*	/	.12/*	/
F5 Probability of vict. in next 12 m	.10/****	/	/	/	/	/	.31/****
F6 Consequences of victimization	.11/****	.14/*	/	/	.24/****	/	/
F7 Self-defence	-.16/****	-.13/**	-.11/*	-.24/****	-.16/****	-.19/****	/
F8 Impact of vict. on one's life	.10/****	.20/**	.19/**	.12/*	.14/*	/	/
F9 Prevention/Precaution	.24/****	.28/****	.16/**	.30/****	.25/****	.31/****	.11/*
V91 Age	/	/	/	/	/	/	/
V92 Gender	-.09/****	/	-.16/**	/	/	-.11/*	-.26/****
V95 Education	.08/****	/	/	/	.08/*	.17/****	/
V96 Position in labour market	-.09/****	/	-.13/**	/	/	-.16/**	-.09/*
V97 Financial situation	/	/	.10/**	/	/	/	/
V98 Expenditures of household	/	/	/	/	-.14/**	/	/
V70 Victimization	-.050/*	/	/	/	/	/	-.22/****
	R <sup>2</sup> =.35	R <sup>2</sup> =.47	R <sup>2</sup> =.40	R <sup>2</sup> =.45	R <sup>2</sup> =.42	R <sup>2</sup> =.39	R <sup>2</sup> =.32

Dependent variable: Fear of Crime

Significance \*\*\* 0.001 \*\*0.01 \* 0.05

## 5 DISCUSSION

This article presents results from a comparative study on fear of crime in the capitals of the former Yugoslav republics. Sampling procedures and data collection were conducted in the same manner in all the cities being studied, and factor analysis and reliability analysis (Cronbach alphas) show that the studies variables meet the criteria for in-depth statistical analyses. Therefore, we saved factors for regression analysis and tested influence of independent variables on fear of crime in a complete sample as well as in separate samples of the capitals. R squares are all over 0.322 which is comparable with other similar tests of socio-demographic and social psychological models in the past (Meško & Farrall, 1999). The results of the comparative study imply results of previous studies where influence of previous victimization on fear of crime was found but we also found out that in the majority of capitals previous victimization did not have any impact on fear of crime. Another important finding is that trust to public institutions does not influence fear of crime. This finding implies that the police and judiciary should pay more attention to victims of crime as well as present their preventative activities in the neighbourhoods. Quite diverse findings require further analyses of the results. Nevertheless, we can conclude that fear of crime depends on weak social networks. This finding requires more attention and effort of the governments to increase social capital and social cohesion in their communities. In addition, an individual's perception of possible victimization (also worry about crime) in the next twelve months can be related to their belief that crime is widespread and everyone is a potential victim. Severity of consequences of victimization and consequences of victimization on one's life is related to one's recuperation (be it physical, psychological or financial) after victimization. Victim support schemes should be introduced to general population as well as preventative measures (be it social or/and situational). The results also show that women and physically weaker people who believe that are unable to defend themselves express more fear of crime. Finally, general findings show that previous victimization has impact on one's fear of crime which is not generalizable on all sub-samples where in the majority of the capitals these findings cannot be confirmed.

This introductory article presents a general impression on fear of crime and related variables and is followed by detailed analyses and reflections about fear of crime in the capitals of the republics and one autonomous region of former Yugoslavia.

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