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## **HUMAN TRAFFICKING IN UKRAINE ACCORDING TO POLICE STATISTICS (JANUARY 2006 — MAY 2023)**

### *Abstract*

This paper aims to present crime trends in Ukraine from January 2013 to May 2023. The focus lies on the impact of the 2022 Russian military aggression against Ukraine on human trafficking and ‘satellite’ crimes

The authors consider the occupation of the Eastern Ukrainian territories and the Autonomous Republic of Crimea in 2014. They also refer to statistics of refugee waves from Ukraine after February 2022. The decrease in registered crimes can be attributed to the reduction of statistical indicators. Police statistics are significantly impacted by the 2014 Russian invasion of Ukraine when the police «lost» data from the occupied territories.

The authors analyse the trends of human trafficking and ‘satellite’ crimes in Ukraine. While the number of registered trafficking cases is small, the dark figure seems quite high. But no estimates about the extent of human trafficking in Ukraine are currently possible. Moreover, it is difficult to outline precisely how the war affected human trafficking. One must await the further development in 2023 in order to analyse police and court statistics.



Crime trends in Ukraine for the last ten years are a good example to prove the common social nature of THB crimes, ‘satellite’ crimes and smuggling of goods, timber and drugs (especially since 2019). As the police statistics show, trends of all the mentioned crimes have been changing in a similar way.

A rapid increase in crimes of pimping or engaging a person in prostitution illustrate the control activities in this crime sector by the police. The authors suspect that crimes of pimping or engaging a person in prostitution will significantly increase in 2023, parallel to the increase of human trafficking.

**Keywords:** crime prevention policy, crime trends, police statistics, the 2022 War against Ukraine, the police, policing, law enforcement agencies, THB, human trafficking, victims of human trafficking, prostitution, organised crime, Ukraine, State border, smuggling.

### *Introduction*

The authors research crime trends in Ukraine for an observation period of a decade (January 2013 – May 2023) focussing the impact of the 2022 Russian military aggression against Ukraine (the War) on human trafficking and ‘satellite’ crimes.

This paper serves as an integral part of the authors’ complex research analysing the police and the court statistics on human trafficking and satellite crimes in Ukraine [1; 2; 3; 4].

The authors assume Ukrainian criminology and crime statistics are mostly based on stories in the media about ‘an ideal victim’ of human trafficking [1, p. 5]. The stereotypical ‘ideal victim’ is innocent, helpless, not complicit in the offence and has no personal direct or indirect connections to the crime or its perpetrators. As developed by Nils Christie, the stereotype has the following six attributes: the victim is (1) weak (female, sick, old or young); (2) reputable; (3) blameless; (4) controlled by an evil perpetrator; (5) not acquainted with nor related to perpetrator; and (6) self-identified as a victim. In sum, the ideal victim needs to be innocent and as vulnerable as possible [5; 6; 7; 8].

As the beginning of the Russian invasion was a tremendous turning point for the state and the society of Ukraine, the authors consider the occupation of the Eastern Ukrainian territories, as well as the occupation of the Autonomous Republic of Crimea in 2014. It is obvious that the police statistics have been impacted by the 2014 Russian invasion of Ukraine when the police «lost» data from the occupied territories. The authors also refer to statistics on refugee waves from Ukraine after February 2022 based on the UNHCR records of more than 8 million refugees from Ukraine and more than 5 million refugees who have registered for temporary protection in Europe. Therefore, the conclusions reflect a decrease in registered crimes due to the reduction of statistical indicators.

To analyse crime trends, the authors took data from the police statistics accumulated by the Office of the General Prosecutor (hereafter—the police

statistics). The police statistics incorporate the highest number of offences, which lessens during the whole criminal proceedings. Due to the assumed huge dark figure, the data does not reflect the reality of human trafficking. Nevertheless, the data gives a glimpse of human trafficking and its satellite crimes in Ukraine and shows the workload of the police.

### *Research methods and terminology*

Human trafficking is criminalised in Article 149 of the Ukrainian Criminal Code and comprises recruitment, transportation, harbouring, transfer, or receipt of a person for the purpose of exploitation; the perpetrators use coercion, abduction, fraud, blackmail, material or other dependence of the victim, her/his vulnerable condition or bribery of a third party controlling the victim to obtain consent for her/his exploitation.

Pursuant to Article 276 of the Ukrainian Code of Criminal Procedure, three cases constitute a notification of suspicion: 1) apprehension of an individual at the scene of a criminal offence or immediately after the commission of a criminal offence; 2) enforcement of a measure of restraint against an individual as prescribed by this Code; 3) availability of sufficient evidence to suspect a person of having committed a criminal offence.

The current crime trends in Ukraine are founded on two main indicators of the Ukrainian criminal justice system: 1) the general number of criminal proceedings ('criminal cases') opened and registered by the Ukrainian law enforcement agencies and 2) the number of criminal proceedings ('criminal cases') with concrete suspects who received notifications (notes) of suspicion. The term 'notifications' covers the number of criminal proceedings with suspects (the number of notifications of suspicion).

'Satellite' crimes are understood as a hidden form of human trafficking or more precisely as the basis for further THB-related crimes (creating or running brothels and procuring, pimping or engaging a person in prostitution, engaging minors in criminal activity etc. ).

### *Crime rates under the Impact of the War*

According to the police statistics in 2022, the Ukrainian law enforcement agencies (hereafter – LEA) registered 362636 crimes with corresponding criminal proceedings; these numbers include criminal proceedings with suspects and so-called 'factual' criminal proceedings (without suspects). The number of crimes committed in Ukraine in 2022 exceeded the number of crimes committed in 2021 (321443 crimes) and in 2020 (360662 crimes) (these remarks are comprised, more detailed in Yagunov et al (2023)).

The number of criminal proceedings with suspects dropped 1,3 times compared with 2021. This drop serves as an indicator of the decreasing effectiveness of the national criminal justice system during the War.

As far as the five months from January to May 2023 are concerned, a total of 217325 factual crime proceedings as well as a total of 75440 related criminal proceedings with suspects were already registered. If the numbers continue to rise at this rate, they will exceed the numbers of 2022.

The above-mentioned numbers seem to give evidence for the general presumption that numerous negative social and economic consequences of the War would lead to increasing crime trends in Ukraine.

The first five months of 2023 have demonstrated one of the highest ratios between registered criminal proceedings and notifications. In 2022, the ratio between the general numbers of registered criminal proceedings (crimes) and the numbers of criminal proceedings with suspects reached the point of 2,74. However, during the first five months of 2023, the ratio increased more and reached the point of 2,88, which means the second-highest ratio after 2016. This development could also be seen as evidence that the effectiveness of the criminal justice system reduces during the War.

#### *Human Trafficking in Ukraine*

Concerning the recent development of human trafficking in Ukraine the Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine officially recognized that «as a result of the armed aggression of the Russian Federation against Ukraine, which started in 2014, and the full-scale invasion of Ukraine on 24 February 2022, the number of crimes related to human trafficking in Ukraine has increased» [9].

As far as known, Ukraine has been both a country of transit and a country of origin of human trafficking. In «V.C.L. and A.N. v. the United Kingdom», the European Court of Human Rights emphasized the similar routes of trafficking victims to the United Kingdom. The Court understood Ukraine as a transit country to Poland, the Czech Republic, Germany, and France (parts are more detailed presented in Yagunov et al (2023)) [10].

According to the 2018 GRETA Report, Ukraine is primarily a country of origin of trafficking victims who are exploited not only abroad but also within the country [11].

As Ukraine is conveniently situated from a geographical perspective and lacks effective instruments against illegal migration and human trafficking, the country provides significant opportunities for human trafficking which probably flourish hidden from LEA [12, p. 196].

In 2022 13 million Ukrainian people were displaced within and outside the country [13]. Lower numbers were recorded after the occupation in 2014; the peak of 16000 was in 2015 [13].

Already this displacement after 2014 resulted in an increase of trafficking victims in Western and Central Europe [13]. Therefore, the numbers recorded from 2007 to 2020 were an important measure in a statistical model to suggest the number of trafficked victims during the War [13]. Due to the enormous number

of displaced people in and outside Ukraine, the statistical model proposed more than 100000 Ukrainian trafficking victims in Europe [13].

Anecdotal evidence is derived from the authors' personal sources. According to individuals and representatives of several NGOs, who launched purely humanistic initiatives to bring Ukrainian refugees to new homes or at least to safe places in the EU states were halted because persons, who can be arguably suspected to engage in human trafficking proposed new 'opportunities' of sheltering [2; 3; 4].

The increase in trafficking of Ukrainian female victims is also stressed by officials from the OSCE and other European international organisations: «Since the beginning of the War, Internet searches for sexual services and pornographic images of Ukrainian women and children have increased by 600%. Trafficking in pregnant women has also increased significantly since the beginning of the War» [14].

However, new waves of human trafficking are not limited to trafficking of Ukrainian women and children. Even during the War with its border restrictions, traffickers 'succeeded' in transferring male victims to EU states. In May 2023, the Finnish LEA charged a criminal group; the investigation was conducted jointly with the Estonian police. The Finnish LEA suspect that construction workers from Latvia, Estonia and Ukraine became victims of human trafficking by a group of eleven perpetrators. According to the Finnish LEA, the criminal group managed to make a profit of EUR 2.3 million from its diverse illegal activities. The prosecutor's office accuses them of aggravated human trafficking, pension contribution fraud and firearms offences [15].

As already mentioned before, the Ukrainian criminology and LEA seem to rely on stories in the media or traditional stereotypes about 'an ideal victim' of human trafficking. However, the imagination about 'an ideal victim' of human trafficking is more than arguable [8, p. 55]. The War has probably moved the concept of 'an ideal victim' of human trafficking more far from reality due to closed borders and other wartime restrictions when 'classic' human trafficking became more dangerous for perpetrators and when they started looking for alternative methods to 'deliver' people abroad [1].

According to general assumption, human trafficking is a well-organized criminal activity which demands different forms of deep 'cooperation' among perpetrators, 'brokers' and other actors in different border states [16]. With the beginning of the War, the Ukrainian Government attempted to control the mass flight to neighbouring countries by closing the border to men of draft age. For trafficking offenders at this age, these restrictions meant impeding or stopping cross-border trafficking. But they were able to develop alternatives to continue their criminal activities.

*Police Data on Human Trafficking*

Police statistics demonstrate that the period from 2013 to 2016 was stable regarding numbers of registered crimes of human trafficking (hereafter THB crimes) as well as numbers of suspects in related criminal proceedings (131 crimes in 2013, 118 crimes in 2014, 110 crimes in 2015, 115 crimes in 2016) (these remarks are comprised, more detailed in Yagunov et al (2023)).

In 2017, there was a rapid increase in human trafficking crimes and also the peak of the observed period (342 criminal proceedings). Thereafter, the numbers moved between 206 and 320 cases in 2019 until 2021.

The War year 2022 records a low level (133 crimes); the number of THB crimes was similar to 2013 – 2016.

However, only for the first five months of 2023, 76 THB crimes were registered in Ukraine. In the light of the War and the increasing ratio between crimes (criminal proceedings) and notes of suspicion, we dare to predict that the Ukrainian criminal justice system will not be effective enough to prevent THB and ‘satellite’ crimes. Consequently, the number of THB crimes could reach the pre-war indicators and even overwhelm these indicators, if the numbers continue to develop in line with the first five months of 2023.

We also assume a factual increase in THB cases (both in Ukraine and the EU states), considering that more than 8 million Ukrainians left the country and ‘created’ new illegal ‘opportunities’ for human traffickers abroad [17; 18].

Currently, it is difficult to define precisely to which extent human trafficking was affected by the War. On the one hand, the number of registered THB crimes decreased to the zero point immediately after the Russian invaders crossed the Ukrainian border in February 2022. On the other hand, serious concerns arise that THB cases continue to be registered in the light of seemingly totally closed state borders, police checks, curfews and hundreds of military and police roadblocks.

It is obvious that the War caused many problems for human traffickers. At the same time, the War created new illegal opportunities for them, which cannot be detected in the Ukrainian police statistics.

133 THB crimes in 2022 and 76 THB crime in five months of 2023 seem to be more than insufficient regarding 8 million Ukrainian refugees. This leads to the assumption that something is obviously wrong within police intelligence in the area of THB prevention as well as within supervision of the border service at the state borders. Therefore, THB crimes might be more latent ones than the LEA officers declare. Moreover, many THB crimes with Ukrainian victims cannot be registered because they happen outside Ukraine.

Analysing the police statistics from January to May during the period of 2018 – 2023, we find hints concerning the impact of the War on THB crimes. Generally, the number of THB crimes committed in January-May 2018 (158 crimes), 2019 (200 crimes), 2020 (125 crimes), 2021 (118 crimes) was two times

bigger in 2018 and 2019 and even a lot in 2020 and 2021 as compared with the number of THB crimes committed in January-May 2022 (68 crimes) and 2023 (76 crimes).

Even more interesting is that the number of THB crimes committed in January – May 2022 is nearly the same as in the same period in 2023 (68 crimes in five months of 2022, 76 crimes in five months of 2023). The total closing of the Ukrainian borders in February 2022 seems to be resulted neither in detecting more THB crimes nor in minimizing the number of criminal attempts of perpetrators.

However, considering the significant reduce of THB crimes as compared to 2020 and 2021 (more than 40%), it could be stated that closing the borders in February 2022 had a partial positive impact on the prevention of THB crimes.

#### Police Data on Satellite Crimes

Due to the wartime restrictions, we assume that closing the state borders resulted in reshaping of the illegal THB market – from victims' supply to foreign states to transforming of human trafficking into 'domestic' 'satellite' crimes (these remarks are comprised, more detailed in Yagunov et al (2023)).

In the year of 2022, 61 crimes of creating or running brothels and procuring were registered.

Moreover, within the first 5 months of 2022, 41 crimes of creating or running brothels and procuring were registered in Ukraine; the same period of 2023 exhibits an increase in 66% (68 crimes).

As far as criminal proceedings with suspects from January to May 2023 are concerned, an 93% increase happened as compared with the same period in 2022 (30 criminal proceedings with suspects in five months of 2022, 58 criminal proceedings with suspects in five months of 2023).

Our thesis concerning the transformation of human trafficking into 'domestic' 'satellite' crimes cannot be proved due to a lack of reliable data and the small numbers. Nevertheless, a remarkable increase concerning pimping or engaging a person in prostitution can be observed in the police statistics during the first five months of 2023 compared to the whole year of 2022.

Already 184 crimes of this type were registered, although a total of 195 crimes were registered in the whole year of 2022.

Therefore, in 2023, the number of crimes of pimping or engaging a person in prostitution could reach the highest point in the whole history of independent Ukraine. The number of these crimes from January to May 2023 increased three times as compared with the same period in 2022 (184 versus 60).

At a first glance, such a trend could sound strange in the light of wartime restrictions and the priorities of the wartime society. Nevertheless, such a trend – if ongoing – is additional evidence of the reshaping of human trafficking to internal markets.

This assumption is confirmed by the Global Initiative Against Transnational Organized Crime (GI-TOC). In its research of organised crime in Ukraine, the GI-TOC concluded that sexual exploitation as a form of human trafficking has continued with little interruption after the War started [16]. The GI-TOC also presumed that sexual exploitation as a form of human trafficking «may have even expanded, although the curfew may have forced brothels and other sites of exploitation to alter their hours of operation» [16].

Therefore, there are indicators that crimes of pimping or engaging a person in prostitution will significantly increase in 2023 parallel to the increase of 'classic' human trafficking.

The monthly police statistics show an extraordinary rise of pimping or engaging a person in prostitution in January 2023 which cannot be explained. In general, 16 crimes of pimping or engaging a person in prostitution were registered every month in 2022. As far as 2023 is concerned, the numbers reached the level of 27 crimes without the outlier in January 2023. One has to await the further development.

Pimping or engaging a person in prostitution is a typical police-controlled crime. As the victims usually do not report the crime to the police, the numbers are dependent on the control activities by the police (e. g., police raids) and belong to the everyday police routine in Ukraine. The beginning of the War probably influenced the control activity by the police in this crime area negatively. Sometimes the police are involved in such offences such as the following example illustrates when the Deputy Head of the Migration Police of Ukraine was arrested and given a notice of suspicion under three articles of the Criminal Code of Ukraine: Article 255 (creation, management of a criminal community or criminal organization); Article 302 (creating or running brothels and procuring); Article 303 (pimping or engaging a person in prostitution) for recruiting women to provide sex services for money, including for 'escorts' [1].

Part of the 'satellite' crimes is also engaging minors in criminal activity.

The police statistics for 5 months of 2023 show a dualistic trend during the War years: – in the period of 2022 (a whole year), there was a 50% reduce in crimes of engaging minors in criminal activity as compared with 2021 (79 crimes in 2022 against 122 crimes in 2021); – in the period of January – May 2023, there was a 28% increase in crimes of engaging minors in criminal activity as compared with the same period in 2022 (37 crimes in the period of 5 months of 2023 against 29 crimes in the period of 5 months of 2022).

The continuous decline over the observation period is striking. The question therefore arises as to the reasons for this. Nevertheless, these statistics should be considered for further research of 'satellite' crimes in Ukraine.

As in the previous example, the numbers are smaller when it comes to the use of a minor for begging; 41 such crimes were registered in 2013 and 53 crimes in 2014. However, further trends show a rapid decrease in such crimes; from

2015 to 2022 only a total of 59 crimes was registered (in general, 7 crimes per year). Only 2 crimes were registered in the first five months of 2023 (1 person was given a note of suspicion). However, these statistics should also be considered for further research of 'satellite' crimes.

Similar as before, the numbers for the exploitation of children are extraordinarily low in the police statistics. One criminal proceeding was open in 2022 and no criminal proceedings were open in five months of 2023. Even considering zero numbers of crimes of exploitation of children, they be observed. It sounds strange that in a big country like Ukraine zero crimes of exploitation of children occur, especially during the biggest war in Europe since 1945.

#### Common Social Nature of Human Trafficking and 'Satellite' Crimes

The UNODS stresses that the forms of trafficking that refugees from Ukraine are at risk of include sexual exploitation, forced labour, illegal adoption and surrogacy, forced begging, and forced criminality (these remarks are comprised, more detailed in Yagunov et al (2023)) [19].

The authors go further and state that 'satellite' criminal activities take place in Ukraine, which can be understood as a form of hidden human trafficking [1].

Crime trends in Ukraine for the last ten years are a good example to prove the common social nature of THB crimes and 'satellite' crimes (transportation, logistics, passing the borders of the State or at least borders of regions within the State, giving bribes to the police and to other law-enforcement bodies officers etc. ).

Due to the fact that the common feature of all the mentioned crime trends is changing. But already after 2018, there is a decrease in these crimes.

The War indicates an increase of THB crimes and satellite crimes during the first five months of 2023. Moreover, one might expect even an increase in such crimes in the future.

A brief look again at the police statistics of THB crimes shows: 232 crimes in 2021, 133 crimes in 2022, 76 crimes in five months of 2023.

The rapid decrease in THB crimes in 2022 is explained by closed borders that means a sharp shock for traffickers, who lost or at least had frozen previous channels for illegal delivery of people to neighbour states. However, one might expect an increase of THB crimes in 2023 to the pre-war indicators.

The same could be said about creating or running brothels and procuring: 136 crimes in 2021, 61 crimes in 2022, but 68 crimes only for the period of five months of 2023.

Crimes of pimping or engaging a person in prostitution have the same trend: 269 crimes in 2021, 195 crimes in 2022, but 184 crimes only within the first five months of 2023.



The same could be said relating to the numbers of criminal proceedings (registered criminal cases) with suspects relating to all three mentioned types of crime.

### *Smuggling and its Parallels to Human Trafficking*

Crimes of smuggling are interesting cases for researching the impact of the War as they reflect the state of border protection of Ukraine, which, in its turn, reflects the general potential of the State to keep its territory safe (these remarks are comprised, more detailed in Yagunov et al (2023)).

Here, it should be noted that in 2018, the Criminal Code of Ukraine was supplemented with Article 201–1, which has stated a criminal liability for smuggling of timber. Therefore, data for 2020 – 2023 also reflect the numbers of both crimes of smuggling – the ‘classic’ one and the smuggling of timber.

As victimless crimes, smuggling of human beings and goods is also a classical police- and border guard-controlled activity. The number of registered smuggling cases is the result of the extent of police and border guard controls.

According to the police statistics, in the period of 2016 – 2021, there has been an increase in detected crimes of smuggling, with its highest point of 151 crimes in 2021. However, this uprising trend might have been interrupted in 2022 by the War.

In 2022, the number of crimes of smuggling dropped significantly in February – March 2022 with further increase to the pre-war numbers during the first five months of 2023.

Comparative analysis of crimes of smuggling for twelve months of 2022 shows that the number of detected crimes decreased 2,1 times as compared with the same period in 2021 (151 against 71).

Correspondingly, the number of suspects in smuggling for the same period decreased more than 3,2 times (61 criminal proceedings with suspects in 2021, 19 criminal proceedings with suspects in 2022).

On the other hand, the sharp shock caused by the War seems to have disappeared soon, considering the rapid increase in detected crime of smuggling in 2022 and 2023. While 33 criminal proceedings on smugglings were registered in five months of 2022 (5 criminal proceedings with suspects), 72 criminal proceedings on smugglings were registered in five months of 2023 (16 criminal proceedings with suspects).

Additionally, it seems to be important to look at the ratio between all detected crimes of smuggling (including factual cases) and criminal proceedings with suspects in a broader context of Ukrainian criminality. For the period of 2013–2021, the average ratio was 2,25. In 2022, the ratio increased to 3,74 (that is 1,7 times higher). In five months 2023, the ratio increased to 4,5.

Crimes of smuggling are often concerned with concrete persons who are crossing the border with smuggled good. Therefore, reasonable questions concerning the effectiveness of the LEA come up. Moreover, during the wartime

when all LEA operate in a state of a heightened alertness, this gap between detected crimes and criminal proceedings with suspects seems to be of an artificial nature.

We also analyse crimes of smuggling of drugs, where both crimes – smuggling and smuggling of drugs – are discussed together in a broader context of immovability of the state's borders of Ukraine during the War.

A comparative analysis of crimes of smuggling of drugs in 2021 and 2022 shows a decrease 1,6 times. Correspondingly, the number of criminal proceedings with suspects for the same period decreased 2 times. According to the police statistics, the number of detected crimes of smuggling of drugs decreased considerably (183 criminal proceedings in 2021, 115 criminal proceedings in 2022) though there has been a decreasing trend since 2020.

The rapid drop in registered crimes of smuggling of drugs in March 2022 changed with the increase in drug crimes. At the same time, the police statistics show a big demand for drugs by internal users. Therefore, it might be assumed that the internal market has a high demand in Ukraine, especially among soldiers.

As far as the period of the first five months of 2021 is concerned, 92 criminal proceedings were registered in Ukraine (40 criminal proceedings with suspects).

At the same time, 54 criminal proceedings were registered in the first five months of 2022 (20 criminal proceedings with suspects). One reason is the impact of the Russian invasion in February 2022.

58 registered criminal proceedings in the first five months of 2023 (26 criminal proceedings with suspects) seem to be alarming because the increase hints to an adaption to wartime restrictions by drug smugglers and drug dealers who were able to develop new alternatives of drug supply.

Similar smuggling, the average ratio between detected crimes (so called 'factual') and criminal proceedings with concrete suspects was 1,55 in the period of 2013–2021. In 2022, the same indicator increased to 2,05. During the first five months of 2022, the same indicator increased to 2,23.

#### *Human Trafficking, Satellite Crimes, Smuggling and Organised Crime*

The police statistics for the first five months of 2023 hint to a non-organised character of human trafficking. This is already apparent from the authors' previous article regarding court statistics.

Hereafter, court statistics do not reflect a transnational and organised nature of human trafficking, satellite crimes and smuggling. Moreover, court statistics from 2008 to 2022 indicate that human trafficking in Ukraine is the domain of individual perpetrators or criminal groups (not even organised) (these remarks are comprised, more detailed in Yagunov et al (2023)).

Despite this, it is worth noting that the police statistics have no information on the number of crimes committed by criminal organisations:

there exists only one table on crimes committed by groups. Since this table does not provide information on ties to organized crime to the crimes of interest here, no references to organized crime can be made from police statistics.

This is illustrated by the registered offences of human trafficking, satellite crimes, and smuggling in the first five months von 2023: from 76 THB crimes registered, only 22 were declared as committed by groups, not by criminal organisations.

68 crimes of creating or running brothels and procuring were registered but only 4 of them were declared as committed by groups; from 184 crimes of pimping or engaging a person in prostitution, only 18 crimes were registered as committed by groups; the same could be said about crimes of engaging minors in criminal activity: only one crime of 37 was committed by a group, the rest (36) were committed by individual perpetrators.

Considering smuggling in the general context of securing the state's borders, only one crime of smuggling from 72 registered crimes and zero crimes of drug smuggling from 58 registered crimes were committed by criminal groups.

The police statistics declare that in the first five months of 2023 no criminal organisations were involved in human trafficking as well as for the whole period of 2022.

### *Conclusions*

Summarising the above developments presented, the trends of human trafficking and 'satellite' crimes in Ukraine are limited to a small number of registered criminal cases. The dark figure seems to be quite high, no estimates about the extent of human trafficking in Ukraine are possible at this time (these remarks are comprised, more detailed in Yagunov at al (2023)).

What is more important, it is difficult to outline precisely how human trafficking was affected by the War. One has to await the further development and to analyse police statistics. Moreover, one must also consider the court statistics, since it will reflect criminal cases opened and tried during the War as well as legal and social characteristics of victims and perpetrators, sentencing policy, issues of civil reimbursements for THB victims, etc.

However, it can be concluded that, on the one hand, in February and March 2022, the number of registered THB crimes decreased to zero point immediately after the Russian invaders crossed the Ukrainian border. On the other one, serious concerns arise because THB cases continue to be registered in the light of seemingly totally closed borders, police checks, curfews and hundreds of military and police roadblocks. Furthermore, 133 THB crimes in 2022 and 76 THB crimes in the first five months of 2023 seem to be more than insufficient regarding 8 million Ukrainian refugees. This leads to the assumption that something is obviously wrong within police intelligence in the area of THB

prevention, as well as within supervision of the border service at the state borders.

Crime trends in Ukraine for the last decade are a good example to prove the common social nature of THB crimes, ‘satellite’ crimes and smuggling of goods, timber and drugs (especially since 2019). As the police statistics show, trends of all the mentioned crimes have been changing almost the same way.

A rapid increase in crimes of pimping or engaging a person in prostitution can serve as additional evidence to which extent this type of criminality is under the direct control of the police. The mention above is not a presumption; it is a part of everyday police routine in Ukraine. Crimes of pimping or engaging a person in prostitution might significantly increase in 2023, parallel to the increase of ‘classic’ human trafficking.

In general, all crimes concerned with human trafficking, sexual exploitation, violation of the State’s borders, and smuggling have similar decreasing trends after 2017 which became more obvious after 2019.

As the data for 2023 only considers the period of January – May 2023, we predict an 40% increase in all mentioned above crimes for the whole year compared with 2022.

Finally, police statistics can hardly provide academics and policymakers with correct numbers of THB crimes, ‘satellite’ crimes and smuggling. This factor seems to have a significant negative impact on prevention of the mentioned above crimes.

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**ТОРГІВЛЯ ЛЮДЬМИ В УКРАЇНІ У СВІТЛІ  
ПОЛІЦЕЙСЬКОЇ СТАТИСТИКИ (СІЧЕНЬ 2006  
РОКУ — ТРАВЕНЬ 2023 РОКУ)**

*Резюме*

Метою цієї статті є дослідження тенденцій злочинності в Україні у період з січня 2013 року по травень 2023 року, з акцентом на вплив військової агресії Росії проти України у 2022 році на торгівлю людьми та сателітні злочини. Ця стаття є складовою частиною комплексного авторського дослідження, присвяченого аналізу поліцейської та судової статистики торгівлі людьми та сателітних злочинів в Україні.

У роботі автори повністю враховують окупацію східних українських територій, а також окупацію Автономної Республіки Крим у 2014 році. Автори також повністю враховують статистику хвиль біженців з України після лютого 2022 року. Крім того, висновки авторів повною мірою враховують зменшення кількості зареєстрованих злочинів через зменшення статистичних показників. Є очевидним, наскільки на поліцейську статистику вплинуло російське вторгнення в Україну в 2014 році, коли Національна поліція України втратила статистичні дані з окупованих територій.

Автори аналізують тенденції торгівлі людьми та сателітних злочинів в Україні, які обмежуються відносно невеликою кількістю зареєстрованих випадків. «Темні» показники видаються досить високими, а тому оцінити масштаби торгівлі людьми в Україні повністю наразі неможливо. Що є більш важливим, надзвичайно важко точно окреслити, як саме війна вплинула на торгівлю людьми. Потрібно дочекатися подальшого розвитку подій та проаналізувати поліцейську статистику принаймні за 6 місяців 2023 року. Крім того, слід також враховувати судову статистику за перші шість місяців, оскільки саме судова статистика відображатиме кримінальні справи, відкриті та розглянуті під час війни.

Тенденції злочинності в Україні за останні десять років є наочним прикладом, що доводить спільну соціальну природу торгівлі людьми, сателітних злочинів та контрабанди товарів, деревини та наркотиків (особливо з 2019 року). Як свідчить поліцейська статистика, тенденції всіх згаданих злочинів змінюються майже однаково.

Стрімке зростання злочинів, пов'язаних із сутенерством або втягненням особи у заняття проституцією, може служити додатковим свідченням того, наскільки цей вид злочинності перебуває під безпосереднім контролем поліції. Авторі висловлюють думку, що злочини, пов'язані з сутенерством або втягненням особи у заняття проституцією, значно зростуть у 2023 році — паралельно зі зростанням «класичної» торгівлі людьми.

**Ключові слова:** політика запобігання злочинності, тенденції злочинності, поліцейська статистика, війна проти України 2022, поліція, поліція, правоохоронні органи, торгівля людьми, жертви торгівлі людьми, проституція, організована злочинність, Україна, державний кордон, контрабанда.

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