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**THE CHILD CRIME PHENOMENON IN  
REPUBLIC OF MACEDONIA: 2006-2015**

Abstract

Since children represent a young age category, they should be treated in a special way both from the society and from the state institutions when it comes to combating crime, in order to reach the sole aim of their (re)socialization and (re)integration.

This research paper will analyze the phenomenology of the juvenile delinquency (its structure, dynamics and volume) in the Republic of Macedonia during the time period of 2006-2015. The analysis concludes that on the top of the list of crime mostly committed by children are the property crimes. Therefore, children are more prone to commit theft, petty theft, pickpocketing, stealing from vehicles and other forms of theft. This is followed by offenses against public order; as well as crimes against life and body committed by juveniles, such as murder, participation in beatings and other forms of violence, etc.

The research also reflects the the real picture of the convicted children based on gender, ethnic belonging, the level of education, family status, and the location where the offense has taken place.

**Keywords:** Criminal phenomenology; types of offenses; convicted children.

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## INTRODUCTION

Since criminality of children represents a significant part of the research in the field of criminal law, mainly because its perpetrators are distinguished by specific features, starting from their critical age which according to the positive law of our country includes age groups from 14 to 18 years, it is exactly the age of these offenders which distinguishes them throughout the criminal justice treatment from the adult offenders.

In the legal-scientific literature we can often encounter the term “*juvenile delinquency*” or “*delinquency of children*” with the purpose of avoiding the term “*criminality of children*” with the excuse that this category of persons has softer treatment in the criminal law in its broad sense.

The criminality of children, which in different literature comes across as juvenile delinquency or delinquency of children, represents the antisocial and illegal behavior of minors. (R.Halili, 2008:224) The main characteristic of juvenile delinquency, in the contemporary society, is its manifestations in very dangerous forms which it currently one of the biggest concerns of all communities and states.

The main research questions in this paper is: How much is the juvenile delinquency present in our country? This question will be treated with the official data provided from the Official State Statistical office of Macedonia, about the number of the reported, accused and convicted children in Macedonia during 2006-2015, and by analyzing some concretely indicators, such as: the gender, the level of education, the ethnic composition of these children.

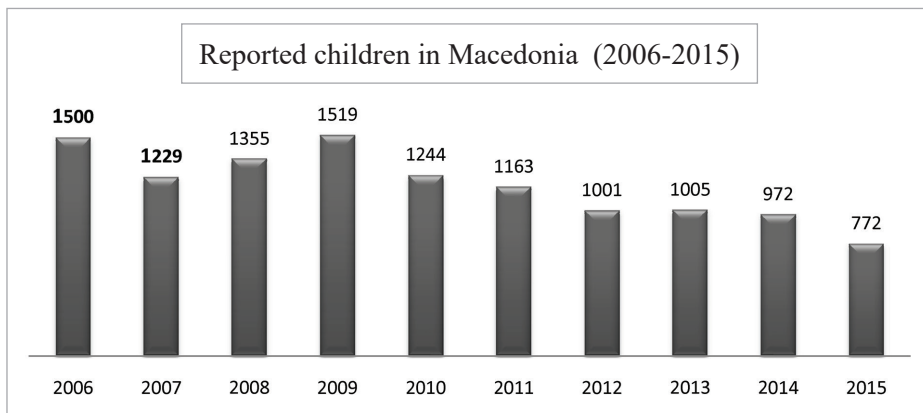
### HOW MUCH IS THIS PHENOMENON MANIFESTED IN THE REPUBLIC OF MACEDONIA?

When it comes to the volume, dynamics, characteristics, types and forms of criminality in one location, usually criminal statistics, be they national or international, serve as indicators of these characteristics. (R.Halili, *Kriminologija*, 2008, p.116). Criminological research related to the phenomenon of property crime, particularly to the perpetrators, show that these perpetrators are in most cases young persons and juveniles. (R.Halili, 2008:209). Their participation is higher among the common robbery crimes, petty theft, burglary in stores, automobile theft, all of which reaches up to 50%. (R.Halili, 2008:209)

Thus, among the offenses that are carried out by the minors, except those related to property, are also the criminal acts against life and body (inflicted grievous bodily harm, light bodily injury, participation in beatings, endangerment of safety, sexual

offenses, etc.). In the continuation of the paper there are presented the data on the number of children denounced, charged and convicted, grouped according to the type of the offense, for the time period 2006-2015, based on the data published by the State Statistical Office of the Republic of Macedonia.

*The number of reported children in Republic of Macedonia during the period of 2006-2015*



**Figure 1.** (Perpetrators of criminal offences in 2015, Skopje, 2016, Statistical review / State statistical office of the Republic of Macedonia, Population and social statistics, 2.4.16.08 (854), Table 24)

Figure 1 contains data on the number of children criminally reported during the period 2006-2015 on the national level. These data published by the State Statistical Office show that during 2006 we have had a total of 1500 children reported as suspects for criminal acts, during 2007 a total of 1229, during 2008 a total of 1355, during 2009 a total of 1519, during 2010 a total of 1244, during 2011 a total of 1163, during 2012 a total of 1001, during 2013 a total of 1005, during 2014 a total of 972 and during 2015 a total of 771. Although in 2009 we have the highest number of reported children, from 2010 and on we see a tendency of a decrease of this number, especially in 2015, the year with the lowest number of reported children for criminal acts for the ten year span that these research investigates. This is a positive indicator for the emergence of the child delinquency phenomenon in the recent years in the country, from which we can see a decline of almost 50% in 2015 as compared to 2006 and 2009!

*Number of convicted children in the Republic of Macedonia during the period of 2006-2015 and the number of convicted female children during the same period*

Total	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015
	844	676	715	748	547	722	556	473	461	348
Females	<sup>-1</sup>	24	38	49	20	22	9	24	16	22

**Table 1.** (Perpetrators of criminal offences in 2014, Skopje, 2015, Statistical review / State statistical office of the Republic of Macedonia, Population and social statistics, 2.4.16.08)

In Table n. 1, the number of convicted children in the Republic of Macedonia for the duration of the time period specified in the research is shown, while specifying the number of the total number of the convicted children for each year as well as the number of female children that have been convicted during this time period.

In 2006 we have 844 convicted children, in 2007 a total of 676 convicted children, in 2008 a total of 715 convicted children, in 2009 a total of 748 convicted children, in 2010 a total of 547 convicted children, in 2011 a total of 722 convicted children, in 2012 a total of 556 convicted children, in 2013 a total of 473 convicted children, in 2014 a total of 461 convicted children, and in 2015 a total of 348 convicted children. Something that can be noticed immediately in this table is the fact that there is a tendency of decline in the numbers of convicted children in our country, during the last few years, especially if we make a comparison between the first years that this research covers and the last years, where we see that the number of convicted children has decreased by 50%.

Another indicator in Table n.2 reflects the number of female children that have been convicted, compared to the total number of convicted children. In this case as well it is hardly impossible to notice the relation of the children from both genders, in the context of their inclination to committing criminal acts. We can see a very small number of female children convicted along the ten year period that the research covers compared to that of male children. Namely, for 2006 from a total of 844 convicted children, there are no published data in the State Statistical Office of the Republic of Macedonia for the number of convicted female children; In 2007 from a total of 676 convicted children only 24 are female children (Perpetrators

<sup>1</sup> There is no specific publication that reflects the number of crimes up until 2006 in the website of the State Statistical Office of R. of Macedonia. Meanwhile in the publications for the period 2007-2015 no data is available on the number of convicted female in 2006!

od criminal offences in 2007, Skopje, 2008, Statistical review / State statistical office of the Republic of Macedonia, Population and social statistics, 2.4.08.07 (594), p.123); In 2008 from a total of 715 only 38 female children are convicted for criminal offences (Perpetrators od criminal offences in 2008, Skopje, 2009, Statistical review / State statistical office of the Republic of Macedonia, Population and social statistics,2.4.09.11 (631),p. 121); During 2009 from a total of 748 only 49 female children are convicted (Perpetrators od criminal offences in 2009, Skopje, 2010, Statistical review / State statistical office of the Republic of Macedonia, Population and social statistics, 2.4.10.012 (665),p.128); During 2010 from a total of 547 convicted children only 20 were females (Perpetrators od criminal offences in 2010, Skopje, 2011, Statistical review / State statistical office of the Republic of Macedonia, Population and social statistics,2.4.11.15 (698), p.123); During 2011 from a total of 722 convicted children only 22 were females (Perpetrators od criminal offences in 2011, Skopje, 2012, Statistical review / State statistical office of the Republic of Macedonia, Population and social statistics, 2.4.12.09 (724), p.119); During 2012 from a total of 556 convicted children only 9 females (Perpetrators od criminal offences in 2012, Skopje, 2013, Statistical review / State statistical office of the Republic of Macedonia, Population and social statistics, 2.4.13.11 p.119); In 2013 from a total of 473 convicted children only 24 are females (Perpetrators od criminal offences in 2013, Skopje, 2014, Statistical review / State statistical office of the Republic of Macedonia, Population and social statistics, 2.4.14.11 (789) p.117); In 2014 from a total of 461 convicted children only 16 were females (Perpetrators od criminal offences in 2014, Skopje, 2015, Statistical review / State statistical office of the Republic of Macedonia, Population and social statistics, 2.4.15.12 (823) p.115) and in 2015 from a total of 348 convicted children only 22 of them were females (Perpetrators od criminal offences in 2015, Skopje, 2016, Statistical review / State statistical office of the Republic of Macedonia, Population and social statistics, 2.4.16.08 (8544), p.115). Thus, from these numbers we can conclude that the female minors, namely the children belonging to the female gender, are less included compared to the male children to commit criminal act, and this can be seen in the very small percentage of convicted female children during the period of 2007-2015. Also, if we can say that the overall number of convicted children has positively decreased in the last years, the same cannot be said specifically for the number of convicted female children, because as we can see in the table this number has e relativley stable state with an average that fluctuates between 20 to 40 female children convicted during the year.

This tendency of decline of the number of the convicted children from 2012-2013 and onwards, can be related to some dilemmas, or solutions, like for example priority in pronounciation by competent authorities and in enforcement of non-

criminal measures against children - assistance and protection measures, which might have contributed to the decrease of the number of convicted children, given that these non-criminal measures were imposed on them. Thus, it is possible that the number of convictions has decreased rather than the criminal phenomenon of children in the country. This question can be somewhat cleared up if we analyze the number of reported children, namely children towards whom criminal charges were raised during the years of research in table. 1. However, we can normally analyze other factors that might have influenced the decrease of the number of convicted children, such as the preventive measures on child crime, which might have actually yielded success in decreasing the criminality of children these past years!

*Number of convicted children according to the category of the criminal act in the period of 2006-2015*

<b>Table 2.</b>	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015
<b>Total</b>	844	676	715	748	547	722	556	473	461	348
<b>Criminal acts against life and body</b>	54	49	44	49	59	79	43	39	47	43
<b>Criminal acts against freedom, and human and civil rights</b>	1	-	2	4	1	5	1	5	-	2
<b>Criminal acts against honor and authority</b>	1	-	-	1	-	2	-	-	-	1
<b>Criminal acts against freedom and gender morality</b>	13	11	16	14	7	12	8	5	14	13
<b>Criminal acts against human health</b>	9	5	5	6	7	15	7	12	4	7
<b>Criminal acts against marriage, family and youth</b>	1	2	-	-	1	1	-	1	1	-
<b>Criminal acts against public finances, payment operations and the economy</b>	5	9	6	4	13	7	9	3	3	5

<b>Criminal acts against property</b>	672	537	529	547	403	513	409	353	267	198
<b>Criminal acts against general security of people and property</b>	4	7	7	2	1	6	4	4	6	2
<b>Criminal acts against public traffic safety</b>	35	22	50	46	35	39	26	24	14	28
<b>Criminal acts against justice</b>	5	5	37	20	1	1	1	-	-	1
<b>Criminal acts against public order</b>	40	24	16	45	16	35	43	25	100	42
<b>Others</b>	4	5	3	10	3	7	5	2	5	6

**Table 2.** (Perpetrators of criminal offences in 2015, Skopje, 2016, Statistical review / State statistical office of the Republic of Macedonia, Population and social statistics, 2.4.16.08 (8544), p.119)

Table n. 2 shows the number of children convicted during the time period of 2006-2015 according to the type of the criminal act. According to these data for all the years that this research analyzes, the highest ranked are the convicted children for criminal acts towards property. Second highest are those convicted for criminal acts against the body and life, followed by the criminal acts against the public traffic safety and the criminal acts against the public order. A smaller number of children seem to have committed criminal acts against the freedom and the human and civil rights; criminal acts against the honour and authority; criminal acts against freedom and gender morality; criminal acts against human health; criminal acts against public finance, payment operations and economy; criminal acts against general security of people and property; criminal acts against justice, etc. Since until now we have presented the number of reported, accused and convicted children during the time period of 2006-2015 and managed to emphasize that there is a decline in the number of children reported to number of children accused, which then further more declines when compared to the number of those convicted, it is worth presenting a comparative illustration of the number of children based on these three indicators for all the years covered in this research, as the table n. 3 below shows:

*The number of reported, accused and convicted children during the period of 2006-2015*

Table 3. Year	Reported	Accused	Convicted
2006	1500	987	844
2007	1229	839	676
2008	1355	981	715
2009	1519	1030	748
2010	1244	750	547
2011	1163	1002	722
2012	1001	778	556
2013	1005	657	473
2014	972	712	461
2015	772	465	348

**Table 3**

In Table n. 3 we can see the number of reported children, those accused and those convicted for each year, from which we can clearly see the difference in numbers of criminal acts from one phase of criminal procedure to another, thus showing that not every single criminal case that is initiated with criminal charges in the preliminary stage will reach the accusatory stage; and also not every issue prefixed with charges will reach the judicial review, namely will be concluded by a sentencing decision/court verdict! And this fact is especially taken into account when it comes to a suspect, an accused or a defendant who is a child, taking into consideration the special and privileged treatment that children have throughout the criminal-legal system, with the sole purpose - protection of the child's interest!

*Convicted children during 2014 according to the location where the criminal act has been committed*

Table 4. Total	461
<b>Gazi Baba</b>	50
<b>Gjorçe Petrov</b>	2
<b>Karposh</b>	48
<b>Kisela Voda</b>	52
<b>Center</b>	40
<b>Çair</b>	37
<b>Aerodrom</b>	12

Kavadarci	23
<b>Gradsko</b>	5
<b>Delçevo</b>	6
<b>Zhelino</b>	1
<b>Zrnovce</b>	1
<b>Negotino</b>	8
<b>Novo Sello</b>	1
<b>Ohrid</b>	4



<b>Butel</b>	5	<b>Probishtip</b>	14
<b>Berovo</b>	4	<b>Radovish</b>	11
<b>Manastir</b>	4	<b>Sveti Nikole</b>	7
<b>Bogdanci</b>	1	<b>Strumica</b>	17
<b>Bogovine</b>	2	<b>Studenica</b>	1
<b>Vallandovo</b>	1	<b>Tetovo</b>	40
<b>Vasilevo</b>	1	<b>Çashka</b>	5
<b>Veles</b>	22	<b>Çeshino</b>	1
<b>Vinica</b>	1	<b>Shtip</b>	15
<b>Gevgelija</b>	4	<b>Abroad</b>	3

**Table 4.** (Perpetrators of criminal offences in 2014, Skopje, 2015, Statistical review / State statistical office of the Republic of Macedonia, Population and social statistics, 2.4.15.12 (823), p.126)

Table n. 4 presents the data for 2014 on the number of convicted children according to the location of the criminal act. In this case we can see that most of the criminal acts have been committed by children in the municipality of Kisella Voda with 52 convicted children, followed by Gazi Baba with 50 and Kapros with 48 convicted children. Next in line are the municipality Center and Tetovo with 40, and Cair with 37 convicted children. The most common forms of the criminal acts committed during that year, in all the locations in Macedonia are against property and public order.

*Convicted minors during 2014 according to ethnic belonging*

Table 5	Total	Macedonian	Albanian	Turkish	Roma	Aromenians	Serbian	Bosnian	Others	Unknown
Total	461	206	121	26	85	-	-	11	3	9

**Table 5.** (Perpetrators of criminal offences in 2014, Skopje, 2015, Statistical review / State statistical office of the Republic of Macedonia, Population and social statistics, 2.4.15.12 (823))

The statistical data from the table n. 5 show that during 2014 in the Republic of Macedonia 206 minors of Macedonian ethnic group were convicted, while almost

half that number is from Albanian ethnic group, 121 convicted Albanian minors. The third ethnic group in the list of convicted minors are the Roma children with 85 convicted children, a number that represents quite a large group in proportion to the the population of Roma in the country, and also if we compare it with the other two mentioned ethnic groups. There are also reported convicted minors from the Turkish ethnic group (26) and the bosnian one (11).

*Convicted minors during 2014 according to family status*

<b>Total</b>	<b>461</b>
<b>Lives with parents</b>	<b>408</b>
<b>With both parents</b>	<b>357</b>
<b>With one parent</b>	<b>51</b>
<b>Does not live with parents</b>	<b>53</b>
<b>Lives with a spouse</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>Lives with relatives</b>	<b>15</b>
<b>Lives with other people</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Lives with another family</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>Lives in an entity for education and improvement</b>	<b>27</b>
<b>Jeton alone</b>	<b>2</b>

**Table 6.** (Perpetrators of criminal offences in 2014, Skopje, 2015, Statistical review / State statistical office of the Republic of Macedonia, Population and social statistics, **2.4.15.12 (823)**)

Table n. 6 shows the family status of the convicted minors during 2014 in the Republic of Macedonia. What we can notice is the fact that 408 minors, a significant number, over 70% live with parents. The rest either live with one parent (51) or lives without parents at all (53). These indicators foster interest for future research, which would be more detailed on this point in order to see what role does the family play in the education / lack of proper education to minors who have a clash with the law. The family as a social community represents the most important factor in the formation and development of the human personality. ( I.Zejneli, *Delikuenca e të miturve në Republikën e Maqedonisë*, 2008, p. 91) The family as the highest instrument of social control is able to consistently care for children and young people, to strengthen their psychological stability and develop in them a sense of responsibility. (V.Latifi, *Politika kriminale*, Prishtina, 1998, p.187). Maybe we have to stop here and study the so-called “problematic” families, in order to see where

does the real cause of the inefficiency of the real function of the family towards minors stand!

Table 7. The level of acquired education of the convicted minors during 2014 in the Republic of Macedonia

The school system, immediately after the family, is the most powerful institution in the formation and orientation of children and youth. (R.Halili, Prishtinë, 2008:283) Weaknesses expressed in educational work, the obsolete programs, the workload with unattractive content, the segregation and the favoring of children of different social strata have contributed significantly to the manifestation of some negative phenomena and delinquent behavior of children and juveniles during the time they were in the education process. ( R.Halili, Prishtina, 2008, p.284).

*Convicted minors according to their educational background in 2014*

	Total	The level of school attending				Year - Grade						Does not attend school
		Primary	High School	Higher education	Unknown.	Grade 1-4	5-8	1 <sup>st</sup> and 2 <sup>nd</sup> year high school	3 <sup>rd</sup> and 4 <sup>th</sup> year high school	Higher education	Unknown.	
<b>Total</b>	<b>461</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>315</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>170</b>	<b>143</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>115</b>

**Table 7.** (Perpetrators of criminal offences in 2014, Skopje, 2015, Statistical review / State statistical office of the Republic of Macedonia, Population and social statistics, 2.4.15.12 (823)

Table 7. shows the level of acquired education of the convicted minors during 2014 in the Republic of Macedonia. These data show that from a total of 461 minors, a majority of them are high school students, while 1/3 of them do not attend school at all. A very small portion continues attending primary school. This situation can be linked to the fact that the data from the judicial practice, especially from different types of criminological research on juvenile delinquency and young criminals, says that a lot of these children start their delinquent and criminal career as early as primary or high school. (R. Halili, 2008, p.284)

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## CONCLUSION

The study of child delinquency phenomenology in Republic of Macedonia during the period 2006-2015, brought some real and empirical results of this phenomenon in our country. From the analyses of the statistical data from State Statistical Office of Republic of Macedonia, we gained concrete knowledge from which we notice a trend of gradual reduction of the number of crime committed by juveniles in the period 2006-2015. Although the results presented in the tables of the paper show a considerable number of juveniles convicted.

According to the analysis about the form of manifestation of delinquent actions done by juveniles, we see that on top of this list are the crimes against property. Juveniles in Macedonia mostly are prone to commit burglaries, petty, pocket, automobiles theft and other forms of theft. Second in the list are the criminal acts against public order. In the third place are criminal acts against life and body committed by juveniles, such as murder, participation in battering and other forms of violence. This is followed by committed acts against public traffic safety, criminal acts against freedom and gender morality, where sexual abuse is one of the most common forms of acts of this group. In addition to these data it appears a small number of juveniles convicted of criminal acts against human health; criminal acts against general safety of people and property; criminal acts against freedoms and human rights.

In this research once again it is proven that females are much less likely to commit criminal acts than males. This fact is backed by the number of juvenile females convicted of criminal acts for the period set in this study. Detailed review of the data according to the place of acts enables us to get acquainted with the dynamics of juvenile delinquency in all municipalities of the Republic of Macedonia.

The number of juveniles convicted during 2014 based on ethnicity shows that half of the total number of delinquencies are done by juveniles of Macedonian ethnicity, followed by juveniles of Albanians, Roma, Turkish and Bosnian ethnicity.

From data analysis concerning the family situation of convicted juveniles in Republic of Macedonia during 2014, we come across an interesting and perhaps challenging indicator for future research. That's because the majority of convicted juveniles live with both parents, whereas a very small number of them live with only one parent or none, respectively with relatives, another family, educational entity etc.

Having in mind the family model and its key role as the first institution of society in educating juveniles, such statistical data indicate a failure or inefficiency of educational function of the family towards juveniles.

The last characteristic of the analysis in this paper is the achieved level of education of convicted juveniles in Republic of Macedonia in 2014. This characteristic tells us that most of juveniles attend high or secondary school. However, worrisome are the indicators that considerable numbers of convicted juveniles do not attend school at all.

Knowing first and foremost the educational role of school, and the function of the school and educational institutions in the prevention of delinquency occurrence among juveniles, we think that at this point state authorities have the obligation to intervene so that every juvenile will be able to finish high or secondary school!

To combat and prevent juvenile delinquency in Republic of Macedonia, we think that a detailed analysis of the occurrence of this phenomenon and the typical forms that are mostly carried out by juveniles is needed.

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