



INSTITUTE FOR DEMOCRACY AND MEDIATION
Center for European and Security Affairs (CESA)

C R I M E

T R E N D S

in Albania

2 0 1 2

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I. INTRODUCTION

In September 2012, the Institute for Democracy and Mediation (IDM) published a report on crime trends in Albania for 2008-2011 in the framework of the core and institutional support from the OSI Think Tank Fund, Budapest. The research and analysis were conducted on official data provided by the State Police for this 4-year period.

This IDM study aimed to trigger deserved attention among the public at large, government agencies and institutions, policymakers, and decision makers on the situation of public safety in the country as well as to push for improvement of policies and institutional measures in response to the alarmingly increasing crime rate.

While great interest in the study and its findings was shown in the public debate and by specialized circles of expertise during the first three months after the publication of the data and while there is a need to provide continuous concrete data in the framework of institutional discourse on the strengthening of capacities and rule of law in the country, IDM resumed this initiative for year 2013 by analyzing the official data provided by the State Police on crime during the previous year (2012).

The 'Crime Trends in Albania 2012' Report employs the same methodological approach and focus utilized in the 'Foretold Insecurity: Crime Trends in Albania 2008-2011' Report published by IDM in September 2012, analyzing the crime trends during 2012 and comparing the results with an extensive database of 2008-2012, based on the categorization used by State Police for registered criminal offenses.

The Institute for Democracy and Mediation would like to thank the General Directorate of the State Police for its cooperation in this research and for the readiness it demonstrated to consider and reflect on the findings and recommendations proposed by IDM's team of experts.

IDM will continue to encourage informed discourse on policies and will provide its contribution to the country's institutional reforms on the consolidation of the public safety and the rule of law through research and alternatives for institutional reforms and policies.



II.

MAIN FINDINGS

In year 2012, some 14,030 criminal offenses have been evidenced, most of which (about 96%) include various burglaries, life threatening, illegal possession of weapons, body injuries, and criminal offenses against property. In average, a crime occurred every 40 minutes during year 2012. In concrete terms, the State Police reports:



- Burglary every 90 minutes
- Intentional bodily injury every 6 hours
- Home burglary every 7 hours
- Shoplifting every 8 hours
- Other intentional damages every 8 hours
- Intimidation in every 8.5 hours
- Illegal possession of weapons every 9.5 hours
- Car theft every 13 hours
- Crimes against human life every 24 hours
- Violent or armed burglary every 27 hours
- Attempted murder every 36 hours
- Homicide every 72 hours

The State Police have identified the offenders of about 2/3 (76.8%) of the criminal offenses recorded last year. According to the official data, the lowest detection rate (varying from 26% to 52%) is noted in the case of burglaries and property harm.

The highest rate of crimes against human life is recorded mainly in the third quarter of the year (June-September). Crimes against human life include criminal offenses such as homicide, murder of negligence, attempted murder, crime against human health, intimidation, light intentional bodily injury, and other injuries. The crimes against property and various thefts mark their peak in the first quarter of the year (January-March). These crimes include business theft, home burglary, shoplifting, violent burglary, and armed robbery.

The rate of crimes against human life, homicide, murder of negligence, and attempted murder, has increased since year 2010. These felonies have reached a figure of 354 criminal offenses in the last year. The crimes against human life reached the highest peak per quarter in the last five years, with 111 criminal offenses during July-September 2012. Criminal offenses of 'attempted murder' and 'homicide' take up the largest share in this category.

II. MAIN FINDINGS

Out of 1,027 cases of threatening and intimidation registered last year, 1,025 have been classified as ‘life threatening’ offenses and only two cases were categorized as ‘serious threatening for revenge or blood feud’ misdemeanors for which the Criminal Code stipulates severe punishments.

Various thefts constitute about 40% of the total of criminal offenses reported to the State Police during year 2012 and, at the same time, represent the lowest detection rate (varying from 26% to 52% of the cases). ‘Home burglary’ and ‘car theft’ mark an increase of 26% and 11% respectively compared to the last year’s (2011) figures.

In addition, ‘armed robbery’ and ‘violent burglary’ have intensified over the last five years. Besides the increasing trend of these criminal offenses, another fact of high concern is their low detection rate. In real figures, the State Police has identified the authors of about 50% of the cases of armed robbery and violent burglary.

III. CRIME TRENDS IN ALBANIA IN 2012

According to official data of the State Police, 14,030 criminal offenses have occurred in year 2012. This means that a crime happened every 40 minutes during last year. Most of these offenses (about 96% of them) are incidents related to various thefts, life threatening, illegal possession of weapons, bodily injuries, and other misdemeanors against property.

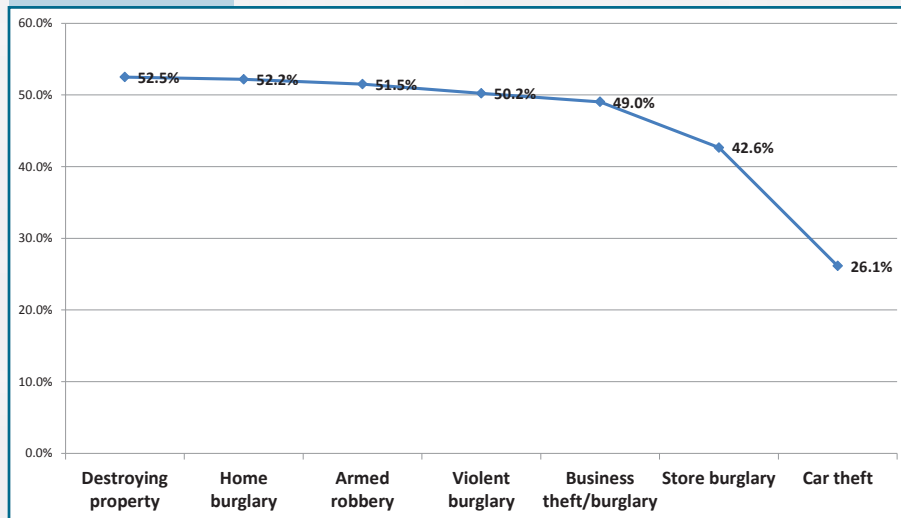
III.1. Crime Detection Rate

The State Police have identified offenders of about 2/3 (76.8%) of the criminal offenses recorded last year. This data, however, should be further analyzed and compared with the data of the judicial institutions to substantiate the accuracy of discoverability of crimes by the police and punishability by the judiciary. According to this data, crime detection rate is high (about 93%) for the crimes against human life. Police has identified the offenders of about 53% of the crimes against property.

Official data of the State Police report a detection rate of 100% of the criminal offenses (62 in total) for felonies such as murder of negligence (10 cases), crime against freedom of person (2 cases), bank robbery (3 cases), homicides committed in other specific circumstances (1 case), sexual crimes (44 cases), prostitution (10 cases) and serious threat for revenge or blood feud (2 cases).

According to the official data, the lowest detection rate (varying from 26% to 52%) is noted in the case of burglaries and property harm. See Graphic No. 1.

Graphic No. 1: Lowest detection rate of criminal offenses



Source: Official data of the General Directorate of the State Police (2012)

III. CRIME TRENDS IN ALBANIA IN 2012

III.2. When Do Crimes Occur?

Data analysis reveals another interesting trend of crimes with regard to the time of their occurrence.¹ The State Police has registered the highest number of crimes against human life mainly in the third quarter of the year (July-September). These offenses include homicide, murder of negligence, attempted murder, crimes against human health, threatening, light intentional bodily injury, and other intentional harms.

On the other hand, the crimes against property and various thefts mark their peak in the first quarter of the year (January-March). These crimes include business theft, home burglary, shoplifting, violent burglary, and armed robbery. The criminal offenses of cultivation of narcotic plants and car theft that are connected to specific circumstances (such as the increasing number of vehicles upon the return of immigrants) rose to the highest peak in the third quarter of year 2012. The figure below presents trends for some of these offenses.

January - March	April - June	July - September	October - December
Bank robbery	Other burglary	Homicide	Murder of negligence
Violent burglary	Opposing police officers	Attempted murder	Sexual crimes
Armed robbery		Crime against health	Prostitution
Business theft/ burglary		Theft resulting in death	Other
Home burglary		Destroying property	
Shoplifting		Car theft	
Illegal possession of weapon		Intimidation	
		Light intentional bodily injury	
		Other intentional harm	

Source: Official data of the General Directorate of the State Police (2012)

1. The analysis refers to the number of criminal offenses for each quarter, which is higher than the annual average per quarter for that criminal offense

III.

CRIME TRENDS IN ALBANIA IN 2012

III.3. Crimes against Human Life

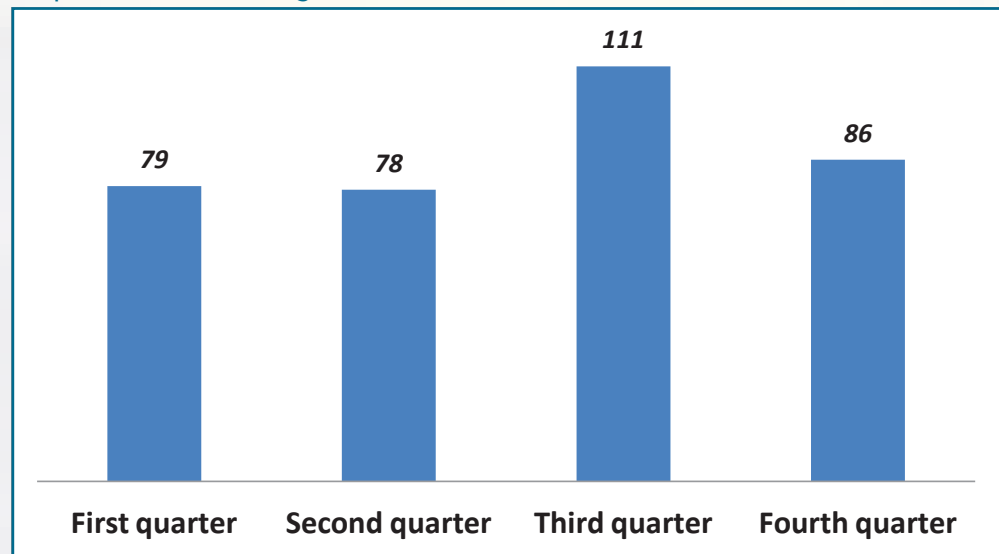


During year 2012:

- Crime against human life every 24 hours
- Homicide every 72 hours
- Attempted murder every 36 hours
- Illegal possession of weapons every 9.5 hours
- Threatening every 8.5 hours
- Other international injury every 8 hours
- Intentional bodily injury every 6 hours

The crimes against human life include homicide, murder of negligence, and attempted murder. These felonies have reached a figure of 354 criminal offenses in the last year, almost one crime per day. During July-September 2012, the crimes against human life reached the highest peak per quarter in the last five years, with 111 criminal offenses. The following graphs present the number of these criminal offenses by quarter for year 2012 as well as the quarterly average for the last five years.

Graphic No. 3: Crimes against Human Life in 2010



Source: Official data of the General Directorate of the State Police (2012)

III. CRIME TRENDS IN ALBANIA IN 2012

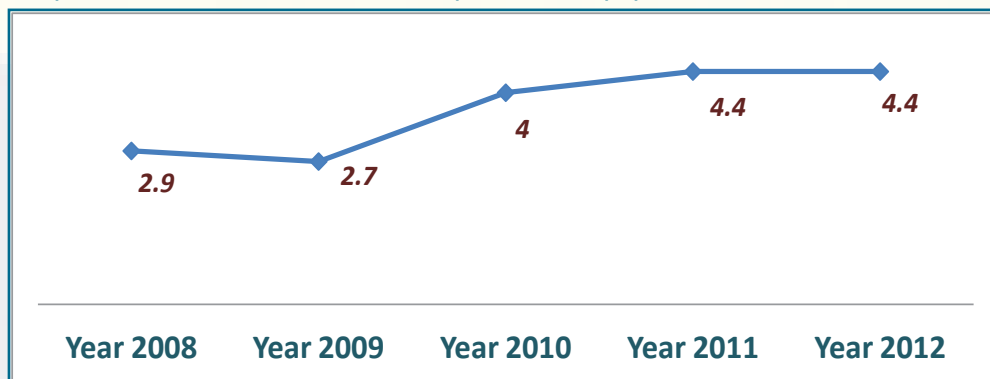
Graphic No. 4: Crimes against human life during 2008-2012



Source: Official data of the General Directorate of the State Police (2012). The category of crimes against human life includes criminal offenses of homicide, murder of negligence, and attempted murder

The criminal offenses of ‘attempted murder’ (220 cases or an average of one incident per 36 hours) and ‘homicide’ (125 murders or one case in every three days) take up the largest share in this category. In general, the discoverability rate of crimes against human life for year 2012 was 91%. Police has identified the offenders for 85% of the cases of homicide.²

Graphic No. 5: Number of homicides per 100,000 population



Source: Official data of the General Directorate of the State Police (2012)

2. The official data of the State Police refers to the criminal offense of homicide and not to the number of victims.

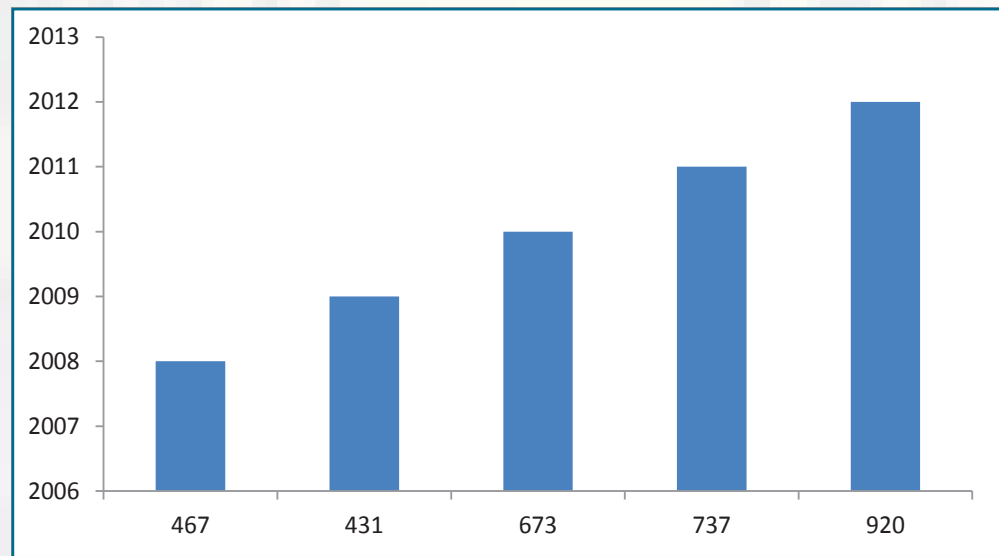
III.

CRIME TRENDS IN ALBANIA IN 2012

During year 2012, the criminal offense of homicide has kept the same high rate of the previous year, with an average of 31 felonies per quarter. From year 2010 and on, Albania has the highest figures of this offense in the region, culminating in 4.4 criminal offenses of homicide per 100,000 population in the last two years.³

The number of cases of prosecution of offenders for illegal possession of weapons is also increasing. According to the police data, the discoverability rate for this criminal offense is 92%, while it would require a comparison with the database of the judiciary (final rulings on these criminal offenses) to identify crime punishment and its overall effects in the prevention of this offense. The following graphic presents the trend of criminal offense of illegal possession of weapons in the last five years.

Graphic No. 6: Illegal possession of weapons in 2008 - 2012



Source: Official data of the General Directorate of the State Police (2012)

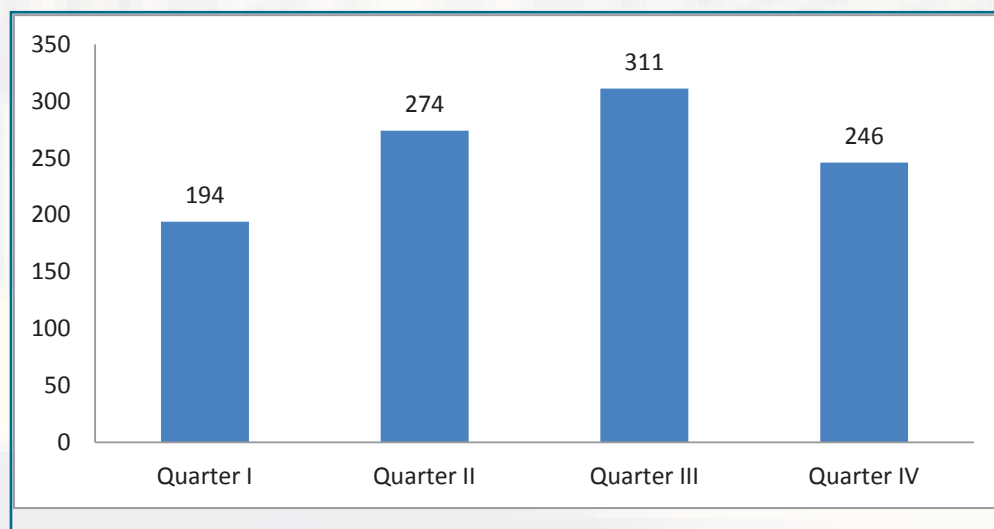
3. Calculated on the basis of the Population and Housing Census of 2011, according to which the number of population living in Albania is 2.821.977 inhabitants. See INSTAT source available at: <http://www.instat.gov.al/al/themes/popullsia.aspx>

III. CRIME TRENDS IN ALBANIA IN 2012

III.4. Intimidation, Wounding, and Other Intentional Injuries

The police data on threatening and intimidation as reported during year 2012 reveals a particular element with regard to the categorization of this criminal offense. In concrete numbers, out of 1,027 cases of threatening and intimidation registered last year, 1,025 have been classified as ‘life threatening’ offenses and only two cases were categorized as ‘serious threatening for revenge or blood feud’ misdemeanors for which the Criminal Code foresees severe punishments. An average of 256 incidents of threats per quarter has been identified during 2012, in which the third quarter scored the highest number (311 cases).

Graphic No. 7: Cases of threatening by quarters during 2012



Source: Official data of the General Directorate of the State Police (2012)

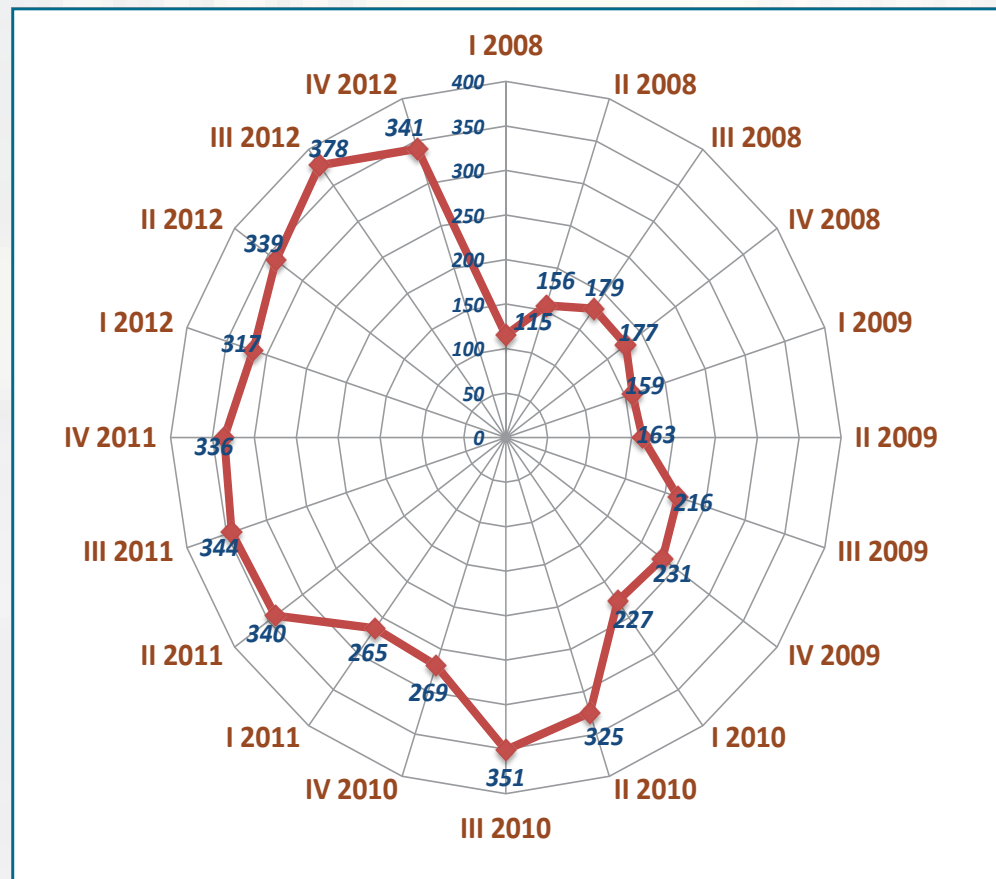
The above data (presented in Graphic 7) shows that during the last year a citizen is intimidated / threatened at an average of every 8.5 hours. The same rate applies to the criminal offense of other intentional injuries, for which, according to the State Police data, a total number of 1,061 cases or an average of 265 offenses per quarter have been reported.

III.

CRIME TRENDS IN ALBANIA IN 2012

The trend of the criminal offense of ‘non-serious intentional bodily injury’ gets more aggravated in the last three years. According to the official data for year 2012, every six hours at least one person has been a victim of non-serious intentional bodily injury. A reference to the IDM’s ‘Foretold Insecurity: Crime Trends in Albania (published in September 2012) on the official crime data, this criminal offense continues to keep up the increasing trend reaching, during the last year, the highest peak ever scored in the last five years - 1,375 identified cases. The following graphic gives a visualization of this trend over the last five years.

Graphic No. 8: Non-serious intentional bodily injuries in five years.



Source: Official data of the General Directorate of the State Police (2012)

III. CRIME TRENDS IN ALBANIA IN 2012

III.5. Thefts

Various thefts constitute about 40% of the total of criminal offenses reported to the State Police during year 2012 and, at the same time, represent the lowest detection rate (varying from 26% to 52% of the cases). In concrete numbers, about 5,500 cases of business theft, home burglary, car theft, shoplifting and other burglaries have been reported last year, indicating that during 2012 one incident of theft or burglary has been reported to the police at an average interval of every 90 minutes.

During year 2012:

- One theft is reported every 90 minutes
 - Home burglary occurs every 7 hours
 - Shoplifting is reported every 8 hours
 - A car is stolen every 13 hours
 - Armed robbery or violent burglary occurs every 27 hours
- * 55% is the detection rate of these crimes

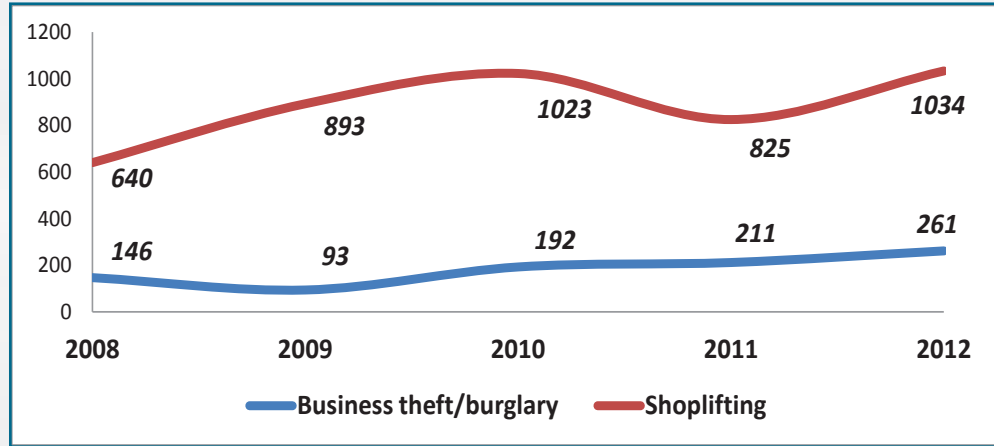
The greatest number of thefts is recorded in the first quarter of the year (January-March). In the case of 'business theft/burglary' and 'shoplifting', the last quarter, October-December is also problematic besides the first quarter. It is reported that about 60% of these offenses occur in these two quarters. Similar to the 2008-2011 period, the criminal offense of 'store burglary' marked a drop in the second and third quarter.⁴ The increasing trend of this criminal offense is reasserted even in the previous year. During year 2012 a total of 1.034 cases, or 25% more than in 2011, have been reported. The police have identified 261 cases of business theft/burglary during 2012.

4. See 'Foretold Insecurity: Crime Trends in Albania 2008-2011' Report published by IDM in September 2012

III.

CRIME TRENDS IN ALBANIA IN 2012

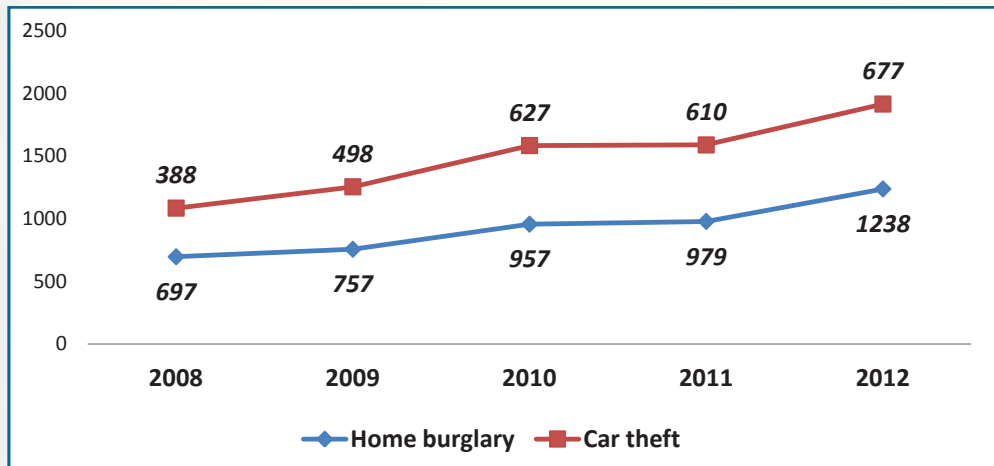
Graphic No. 9: The criminal offense of ‘business theft/burglary’ and ‘shoplifting’ during 2008 - 2012



Source: Official data of the General Directorate of the State Police (2012)

Two types of criminal offenses that show an almost identical curb in the last five years are home burglary and car theft. As indicated in the following graphic, home burglary and car theft mark an increase of 26% and 11% respectively when compared with the last year’s (2011) figures.

Graphic No. 10: The 5-year trend of ‘home burglary’ and ‘car theft’



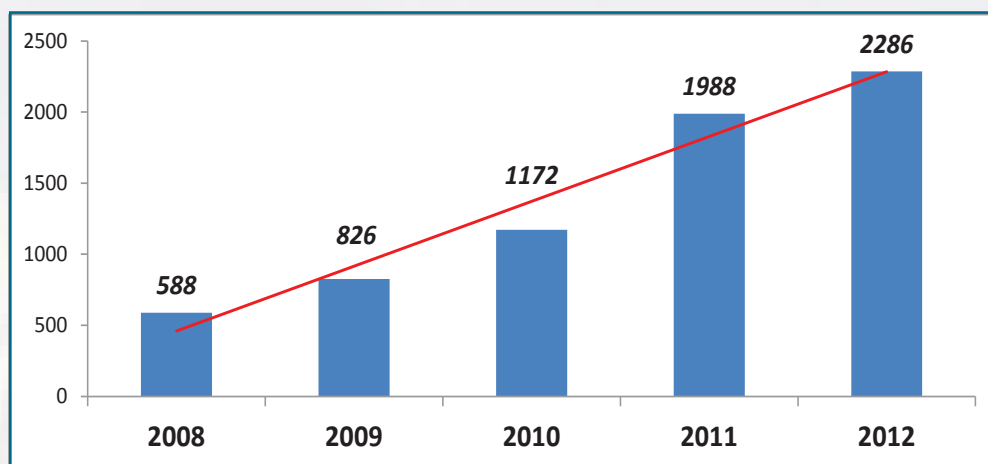
Source: Official data of the General Directorate of the State Police (2012)

As already demonstrated a year ago in the IDM’s ‘Foretold Insecurity: Crime Trends in Albania 2008-2011’ Report, the category of other

III. CRIME TRENDS IN ALBANIA IN 2012

burglary continues to experience an increasing trend (as shown by the red line in the following graphic). During the last year, the State Police recorded 298 more incidents of this category than in year 2011.

Graphic No. 11: Number of 'other burglary' criminal offenses during 2008 - 2012



Source: Official data of the General Directorate of the State Police (2012)

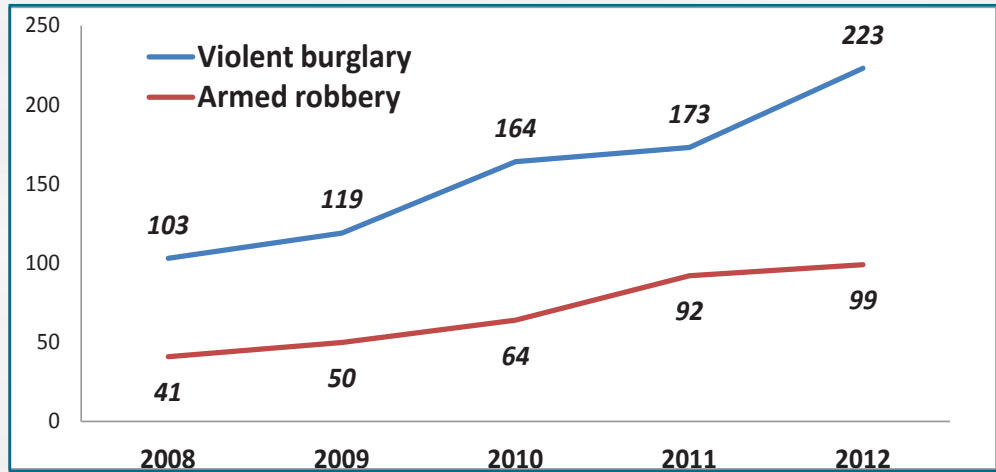
III.6. Violence of Burglaries

Armed robbery and violent burglary are two other categories of criminal offenses with an uninterrupted increase over the last 5 years. The number of cases of 'theft resulting in death' has not changed during year 2012, with a total of 4 incidents. Besides the increasing trend of the first two categories of the criminal offenses, another fact of concern is the low discoverability rate. In real figures, the State Police has identified the authors of about 50% of the cases of armed robbery and violent burglary during year 2012. Graphic No. 12 offers a visualization of these two offenses, which doubled during 2012 when compared with the data of the last five years.

III.

CRIME TRENDS IN ALBANIA IN 2012

Graphic No. 12: 'Armed robbery' and 'violent burglary' during 2008 - 2012



Source: Official data of the General Directorate of the State Police (2012)