Chapter 2
Trends in Types and Amount of Crimes Committed by the Elderly in Europe

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Introduction

After World War II, the economic growth of most countries of Europe was at a very low level, and the amount of reported crime was also low. Europe had suffered tremendously as a result of the War. Since their governments and economies were in ruins, these countries would have been easy pickings for the development of a "black market," corruption, and other forms of crime. However, with the support of the US government's Marshall Plan, the defeated countries, especially Germany and Austria, were able to recover rather quickly, and a rapid growth in the economies of these countries occurred in the l950s and 1960s. Germany and Austria experienced a *Wirtschaftswunder* (economic wonder). Although the complete infrastructure was destroyed during the war, the hardworking Germans and Austrians were successful in quickly rebuilding all fields of the economy, including industry, employment, private housing, as well as the government and the social structure, and the damage caused by the war was diminished. The development of the economy and the stabilization of the government were no doubt the primary reasons why the crime in these countries was under control.

A partnership of European countries based on their economic development, referred to as the Treaty of Rome, was founded in 1957. Industrial nations of Europe, including Belgium, France, Germany, Luxembourg, Italy, and The Netherlands, the main producers in Europe at that time, joined the economic partnership. The treaty came into power in January 1, 1958. On November 1, 1993, the European Union was founded in Maastricht. The original countries were Germany, Italy, France, and Luxembourg. Today the European Union (EU) has 28 member countries and 510

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million people who live in an area of 4381.324 km. In 2018, the United Kingdom will drop out of the European Union.

Until the fall of the "Iron Curtain" in 1989, Europe was a rather secure continent compared to America, Africa, or Asia. The approximately 300 million people who lived in the countries of Europe were not experiencing dramatically high rates of crime. There were differences in the quality and quantity of crime from country to country and the challenges of organized crime existed, but generally most people had a good "quality of life"; the economies, governments, and social structures were stable; and crime was not a day to day concern. When the Soviet Union of Russia was dismantled, the situation changed dramatically. Now Europe had a population of about 500 million people, and the economies of many of the countries that had been under the Soviet Bloc were significantly lower than those of the more developed countries. The former Communist-Bloc countries had a much lower economic level than the rest of Europe, and the people of the formerly communist countries were experiencing a rather poor standard of living. When the national borders were opened, the peoples of the Eastern European countries soon learned how much better life was in the Western part of Europe, and many of them tried to move from their home countries to the Western European countries. The "push-pull" theory suggests that people are more or less pushed out of their country of residence for such reasons as political persecution, war, and internal civil strive, a lack of opportunity to enjoy a decent standard of living, and natural disasters that plague the country. The pull factors might include political freedom, economic opportunities, and a chance to start a new life. This theory is applicable to the European situation during the immediate time period after the national borders were opened, and peoples of the various countries had an opportunity to move from country to country without having to fear the authorities. On the one side, *pull* factors such as the Western industrial leaders and other establishments of the Western European nations were eager to have a source of workers coming from the East who were willing to work at some of the more menial jobs and to be paid less than those in the current work force, while on the other side, people from the East tried to improve their quality of life and were ready to move from their home countries to the Western European countries. Although this vast movement of peoples from Eastern Europe to Western Europe appeared to be mutually satisfactory for both the East and the West as with any change in the social and economic structure, there were consequences that would not be felt until a later period.

Another important factor that influenced life in Europe significantly was the foundation of the European Union. The economic partnership of several European countries starting in the 1950s eventually expanded to the European Union with 28 member countries in cooperation at the present time. When the Eastern European Block broke from the Soviet Union and the countries became independent, they wanted to become members of the European Union. Not all of them were accepted, but many of them became members. Being a member of the EU meant they were to enjoy the four basic freedoms of the European Union.

They are:

- Freedom of settlement of people
- Freedom of movement of money
- Freedom of movement of goods
- Freedom of movement of services

The four-freedom idea was based on the vision that, after two World Wars, Europe should become a continent that enjoys peace and freedom. This idea is still alive at the present time, even though Europe has had several conflicts that threatened the era of peace and freedom that was established after World War II ended in 1945. However, at the present time, the solidarity of the European Union and a promise of economic security for all of the people included under the Union's umbrella are being threatened by the changes in the economic situation of Europe and the leaders of various countries who want to return to the pre- European Union status. The United Kingdom will drop out of the European Union, and in some countries including France, Austria, The Netherlands, and Poland, right-wing parties have become more powerful. The leaders of these parties promise to leave the European Union, if they come into power in their countries. There is a deep feeling of dissatisfaction among many of the people, because the European Union was developed as an organization that supported closing the gap between the "poor" and the "rich," and the Union was not closing this gap or was ignoring the issues. The majority of the people wished to live in an area of social equality, and this wish was not fulfilled by the political work in the European Union.

The Effect of the European Union on the Elderly

The excellent development of the economic frame conditions in Europe assured that elderly people would have an adequate standard of living, enjoy their old age, and not have to worry about such things as costly medical and healthcare bills that would threaten their standard of living. However, not all of the elderly have this worry-free life. Expected opportunities did not materialize, and many never emerged from the poverty level. In fact, the gap between the rich and the poor has continued to increase, and there are an increasing number of elderly people that stay poor.

Many European countries offered excellent healthcare service, especially for elderly people. Due to increasing costs, these healthcare services that were affordable for a long period of time have been cut back by governments in Europe in order to reduce the expenses. Elderly, who trusted in a retirement without worry, are now confronted with insecurity and wonder if their healthcare costs will be covered by the insurance plans.

There also is a recognition of the development of increasing problems for extremely young people. Many of them are not well educated and therefore have little chance to be integrated in the work force. Similar problems arise with elderly people who dropped out of or were pushed out of the work force. They lost their jobs because their salaries proved too expensive for their firms or because their firms closed down.

To start again and to get a job very often are nearly impossible for them. This creates the danger that their retirement income can be cut extremely, because they do not have enough years of active work to be granted regular retirement payments.

All these problems arose because of the changing frame conditions in Europe. The economic growth of Europe in the 1950s and 1960s gave hope for a brighter future for all generations. There was an excellent check and balance between the generations, and there was a belief that the economic development and social security could be delivered for everybody.

At the present time, the economic development is very vulnerable. Europe is confronted with enormous migration problems, unemployment of young and elder people, and inability to provide social security for all as was expected. As political crises emerge, there is a tendency to elect more and more right-wing party leaders, and more people are willing to follow their ideas. Even the idea of a unified Europe is no longer accepted by all, and more and many people doubt if Europe will have a positive future.

The Relationship of Political and Economic Changes to Crime

Generally it is difficult to compare crime situations of the different regions of Europe because there exist a broad variety of systems of reporting crime and the ways of identifying and measuring crime in the different systems are not always coparable. The European Union headquarters in Brussels (http://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/statistic-explained/index.php?title=Crime_statistics/deoldid+292637) tried to set up a ranking of crime in the European countries. The measurement instruments started with questions on how many cases of robbery, theft, violence, and sexual offenses happened in a period of time. This survey started for the first time in 2007. Approximately, 35,000 people were selected from 15 traditional European countries, and later the countries of Poland, Hungary, and Estonia were added to this questionnaire. German professional researchers, using such instruments as Gallup polls and the Max Planck Institute, questioned 2000 Germans about their crime experiences.

The European Crime and Safety Survey (EU ICS)4 included crimes which were not reported by the victims to the police authorities. The questionnaire showed a ranking of dangerous countries, starting with the most dangerous country, followed by the most dangerous cities of Europe. The most dangerous countries were:

1. Ireland
2. The United Kingdom
3. Estonia
4. The Netherlands
5. Denmark

6. Belgium
7. Sweden
8. Poland
9. Germany
10. Finland, Luxembourg

The most dangerous cities ranked in the survey are presented below.

Ranking of Dangerous Cities[a]

1. London	11. Paris
2. Tallinn	12. Istanbul
3. Amsterdam	13. Wien
4. Belfast	14. Edinburgh
5. Dublin	15. Helsinki
6. Copenhagen	16. Madrid
7. New York	17. Athens
8. Stockholm	18. Budapest
9. Brussels	19. Zagreb
10. Berlin	20. Lisbon

[a]This listed ranking follows the source of www.spiegel.de/panorama/justiz/kriminalitaets-ranking-die-gefaehrlichsten-laender-in-der-eu-a-464595.html which was checked on April 23, 2017Another source of information on crime statistics can be found on the website http://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/statistic-explained/index.php?title=Crime_statistics/de&oIdid=292637. It was accessed by the author on April 23, 2017.
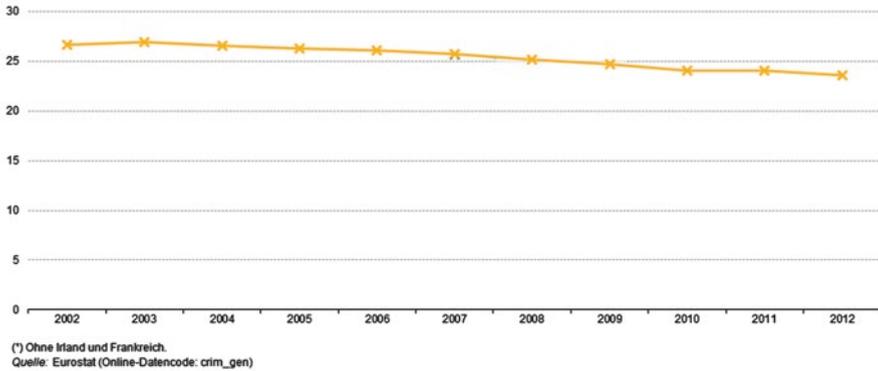
The report records the dates of all police-registered crimes in 28 European countries concentrating only on crimes defined by the criminal codes of the 28 countries. Since 2003, the rate of offenses is decreasing. In 2012, about 12% fewer crimes were registered in Europe than were recorded in 2003. The following graph shows the trend of crime in the 28 countries surveyed (Fig. 2.1).

5: See Note 3, same source (http://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/statistic-explained/index.php?title=Crime_statistics/deoldid=292637)

The Euro crime statistics do not include Ireland and France.

The European Crime and Safety Survey

The European Crime and Safety Survey reports all crimes, even crimes that are not reported by the victims to the police forces. In Europe, all kinds of crimes decreased between 2003 and 2012. There are no statistics available for 2012–2016, but from the point of view of an police expert, it may be presumed that this tendency was continued up to the present time.

(*) Ohne Irland und Frankreich.
Quelle: Eurostat (Online-Datencode: crim_gen)

Fig. 2.1 Trends of crime in selected European countries

The survey shows that Ireland and Great Britain are the most dangerous countries of the European Union. More than 20% of people living in Ireland or Great Britain reported being victimized in a period of time of 1 year. London seems to be the most dangerous capital in that 30% of the people reported having been victimized at least one time in a period of 1 year. Crime reports include the so-called major crimes, consisting of murder, robbery, burglary, theft of cars, economic crime, and cybercrime.

The United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) Global Crime Study

An UNODC Global Study of 20126 reports that all over the world each year, nearly half a million people (437,000) lose their lives by violence. The proportion of deaths by homicide is highest in North America, Middle America, and South America, with 36% of the total occurring in these continents, 31% occurring in Africa, and 28% occurring in Asia. The information presented in this report would tend to indicate that Europe is a relatively safe continent in regard to violent deaths, since only 5% of all murder cases were recorded as occurring in Europe. However, the statistics may be misleading, because they do not take into consideration the vast differences in the size of the populations of the different continents. A more detailed presentation of the number of deaths occurring in separate countries gives a better indication of the dangerousness of a specific country or a city within the country. Table 2.1 provides statistics for 2012. It reports the following countries and cities as the most dangerous:

One might ask how this information on the most dangerous countries and most dangerous cities relate to crimes by the elderly. The surveys mentioned above do not present information on the ages of those arrested for various crimes; one can only speculate the relationship between the aging population of a country and the crime trends of that country. It is also difficult to ascertain what effect the fall of the Soviet

Table 2.1 Ranking of most dangerous countries and cities for killings[a]

Countries			
1. Nigeria	33.817 killings	8. Germany	662 killings
2. South Africa	16.259 killings	9. Italy	530 killings
3. USA	14.827 killings	10. Poland	449 killings
4. China	13.410 killings	11. Portugal	122 killings
5. Russia	13.120 killings	12. Austria	77 killings
6. Turkey	1.866 killings	13. Monaco	0 killings
7. France	665 killings	14. Liechtenstein	0 killings
Cities			
1. Caracas	2.550		
2. Cape Town	2.018		
3. Sao Paulo	1.621		
4. Bogota	1.281		
5. Guatemala	1.253		
6. Honduras	1.175		

[a]Yury Fedotov is the acting executive director of the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime by the elderly in Europe

Generally, in Europe, murder, robbery, burglary, and theft of cars are on decrease. But this tendency is not recognized in the field of economic crimes and cybercrimes. They increased all over the world

Bloc and the opening up the borders of the Western European countries to the people of the liberated Eastern countries had on the amount and types of crime that occurred in Western European countries after the downfall of the Soviet Bloc. Although exact statistics are not available, it is safe to assume that the large majority of the new immigrants were poor, probably not skilled laborers, and most likely young in age. Their main motivation for coming to the new country was to find employment and to have a better standard of living than that enjoyed in their previous home. Although some of the new immigrants were specifically interested in engaging in criminal activity (Edelbacher & Kratcoski, 2010), it is unlikely that it was the majority. Some of the new immigrants, and particularly their children, who came from countries in which the customs and values were significantly different than those of the country they emigrated from, had problems of adjustment in the communities and, for the children, in the schools. However, there is no evidence to indicate that they contributed to a significant increase in the amount of crime in the countries to which they immigrated. In fact, based on research on immigration (throw in a study or two), the new immigrants who were predominately from Eastern European countries and perhaps Turkey were likely to try to adhere to the customs, traditions, and values of their old country if at all possible. It is the younger population that will throw off the old country values and become integrated into the new country.

A review of the trends in crime for selected countries of the European Union shows that the crime has steadily declined during the period 2000–2012, when the large influx of peoples from Eastern Europe were moving to Western European countries. Rather than increasing the amount of crime, the new immigrants may have had an effect of the reduction of crime.

In the European Union survey of most dangerous countries, only Estonia, ranking third, and Poland, ranking eighth, were countries from the former Soviet Bloc and located in Eastern Europe. The same survey showed that Poland was the only country from Eastern Europe that ranked in the top 20 most dangerous cities for killings. This survey, as was the case with the others, did not keep information on the ages of those involved in the murders, but, based on the information available, it is safe to say that they were predominately young or middle age.

In all of the criminal codes of the European nations, crimes against life and body are leveled as a top priority for law enforcement and law enforcement agencies, and the justice systems of all the countries place great emphasis on preventing and controlling these kinds of crimes. For example, in Austria, the minister of the Interior and the president of police in Vienna exerted enormous pressure on the police agencies to solve the murder or robbery crime cases, which troubled the people and created fear of crime. These crime cases were reported frequently by the media, and the public interest stayed focused on the crimes of murder, robbery, and other violent crimes. Everybody wanted to know what police could do and had done to stop such crimes, thus exerting pressure on the police to solve such crimes and find ways to prevent such serious crimes.

Property Crimes in Europe

The largest number of crimes in Europe, as well as all countries of the world, is categorized as property crimes, consisting of theft, burglary, and crimes that have been labeled as white collar and economic and financial, such as price-fixing, bribery, embezzlement, tax evasion, and cybercrimes.

In almost every country, property crimes dominate the numbers of all offense. Almost 70–80% of all crimes reported in a country are property crimes. For example, in Austria each year, about 540,000–570,000 offenses are recorded, and in Germany, a country with a population ten times larger than Austria, there are about 5 million offenses registered each year. Recent statistics for Austria show in 2016 violent crime cases (43,098) increased by 7%, burglary cases (12,975) dropped by 16%, theft of cars (2994) dropped by 10%, economic crime and financial crime (53,905) increased by 11%, and cybercrime cases (13,103) increased by 31%. The clearance quote for all crimes recorded increased from 44% in 2015 to 45.9% in 2016.

The above statistics suggest several possibilities in regard to crime trends in Austria. Although property crimes still constitute the majority of crimes reported, the types of property crimes committed are becoming more concentrated in the areas of the so-called white-collar crimes, such as fraud, internet theft, and other economic crimes.

In regard to the ages of the perpetrators of the white-collar crimes, the statistics on those that have been cleared by an arrest give no indication of the age distribution. It would be interesting to determine if the elderly are significantly involved in such crimes related to financial crime, corporate crime, and cybercrime.

Drug Trafficking and Drug Dealing

The trafficking of drugs and drug dealing are an important crime problem for countries all over the world. North America and Europe are main destinations of the drug cartels predominately based in Asia and South America. Opium production in Asia and cocaine production in South America are mainly oriented on the market in North America and Europe. These illegal drugs are transported by the traditional routes of transporting goods from South America to Europe by ship or from Asia via the Silk Road to Europe. Over decades, the amounts of opium and cocaine are stable.

The European Drug Report of 2015 is available on the Internet (European Central Drug Office, 2016). The European Drug Surveillance Agency is based in Lisbon, Portugal, and was founded in 1993. Since 1995, the Agency has reported each year to the European Union authorities that the number one in Europe still is cannabis. In 2013, about 671,000 products of cannabis were confiscated; opium and heroin seem to be on the decrease. The report tells that about 1.3 million people are so-called problematic consumers because they use injections for a longer period of time, consuming opiates, cocaine, and amphetamine. In 2013, about 175,000 consumers accepted therapy in Europe. The number of drug-addicted people, especially those addicted to opium, has dropped by more than 50% between 2007 and 2013, from about 59,000 to about 23,000 persons. Cocaine is the second most consumed drug in Europe. About 4.6% of the Europeans report to have consumed cocaine at least one time in their life. In 2013 about 63 tons of cocaine were confiscated. On the increase is the consumption of synthetic drugs in Europe. MDMA (3,4-methylene-dioxymethamphetamine) was consumed by 3.5% of all Europeans a minimum of one time per year. The amphetamines used in Europe are mainly produced in Europe. Germany reported in 2012 about 4.8 tons of cannabis, 1.3 tons of cocaine, and 270 kg of heroine were confiscated. The German report informs that 23.1% of German in the age between 15 and 64 years have consumed cannabis once a time in their life, 3.4% have consumed cocaine, and in Austria about 14.2% consumed cannabis, and 2.2% consumed cocaine once a time in their life (UNODC, 2015).

Challenges of Organized Crime and Terrorism

The income sources of the organized criminal groups in Europe today are mainly based on drug trafficking and smuggling of human beings. However there are other sources of illegal activity used by organized crime groups to generate revenue. After the "fall of the Iron Curtain," Europe was confronted much more intensively with transnational, international organized crime. Organized crime existed of course all the time. Groups of the Italian Mafia were not only active in Italy, the members spread all over Europe and are settled in all countries. Beside the Italians, activities of a lot of different other groups could be recognized by police organizations. Groups from the Balkan area, from Bulgaria and Romania, were identified, but even in Germany and Austria, a lot of gang activities were discovered. For example, Austria was confronted

since the 1950s with criminals organizing illegal gambling and prostitution. When the "Iron Curtain" fell in the 1980s, there was an immediate jointing of some of the criminal groups of the former Eastern Bloc groups and the Western criminal groups.

The police were confronted not only with an increase of quantity of crime but also with an enormous increase of the quality of crime. The organized crime and transnational, international crime groups cooperated with the experienced groups of all European areas. As previously mentioned, smuggling of human beings, property crime, and smuggling of arts objects and drugs are the basic income sources, but white-collar crime, economic crime, fraud, money laundering, and counterfeiting of money and documents became more and more important issues and are used steadily by the criminal groups and entrepreneurs.

Islamic Terror in Europe

Attacks by the Al-Kaida and Islamic terrorist organization threaten the whole world. Since 2001, after 9/11, Europe was confronted with a number of attacks, and the peace and freedom of the people are endangered. The Religion of Peace Organization provides the public with a list of attacks from 2002 (see https://www.therelgionofpeace. com/europe-attacks.aspx.). Some attacks that occurred in 2017 were in Reunion, Paris; Malgobek, Russia; Stockholm; Astrakhan, Russia; Paris; St. Petersburg, Russia; London; Foggia, Italy, Paris, Paris; Oberhausen, Germany; Vöcklamarkt, Austria; and Berlin. The perpetrators of these attacks were predominately young in age. They seemed to have become radicalized through the propaganda of a militant terrorist organization. In some cases, there is a question of the mental stability of the perpetrator. The fact that those who carried out the acts were young in age does not rule out the possibility that the leaders and organizers are of an older age.

Types and Amount of Crimes Committed by the Elderly in Europe

Based on demographic development, the elderly are more and more in the focus of interest of research studies and practical experiences. Research (Kratcoski and Edelbacher, 2016) reveals that the developed industrial nations of the world are expected to have a population in the near future in which as many as 20% will be in the age category of 65 and older. In the United States, in a report by Economic Policy Committee and the European Commission (Eurostat, 2012), it was predicted that the population of the European Union would decrease by 16% from 2010 to 2050, but the elderly population would increase by more than 75%.

The older generation is an important economic factor, and they play an important role in all kinds of social life in our societies. In the past, police organizations were confronted with the problems of victimization of the elderly. Policing agencies devoted considerable resources responding to the problem of elderly persons becoming victims of crime. The

police established crime prevention centers and community policing activities to try to provide the help and support the elderly who were victimized needed. As a police chief in Vienna, the capital of Austria with about 1.9 million people, I was responsible for the largest district of the city with about 200,000 inhabitants, and I was confronted with many requests from organizations for the elderly, managers of elderly homes, and managers of hospitals or public institutions who wanted advice on how to reduce the risk for elderly endangered to become victims of crime. (Personal experience of author)

At the present time, the elderly are still the targets of many types of criminal victimization. However, the police now must also respond to a significant number of situations in which the criminal offenders are older persons, often in their twilight years. Although

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Box 2.1[1]

"Instead of Playing Golf, the World's Elderly Are Staging Heists and Robbing Banks":

this article was written by Carol Matlack and published on May 28, 2015; see https://www.bloomberg.com/news/articles/2015-05-28/worldwide-elderly-crime-rates-increase.

British tabloids were abuzz after a dramatic recent heist in London's Hatton Garden diamond district, as thieves made off with more than 10 million pounds (15.5 US$ million) in cash and gems from a heavily secured vault. According to one theory, the gang used a contortionist who slithered into vault. Others held that a 30-something criminal genius known as the "King of Diamonds" had masterminded the caper.

When the police arrested nine suspects, the most striking thing about the crew wasn't physical dexterity or villainous brilliance. It was the age. The youngest suspect in the case is 42, and most are much older, including two men in their mid-1970s. At a preliminary hearing on May 21, a 74-year-old suspect said he couldn't understand a clerk's questions because he was hard of hearing. A second suspect, 59 years old, walked with a pronounced limp.[2]

The perpetrators of the London jewel heist, though, were neither isolated nor impoverished. Prosecutors say the thieves disabled an elevator and climbed down the shaft and then used a high-powered drill to cut into the vault. Once inside, they removed valuables from 72 safe deposit boxes, hauling them away in bags and bins and loading them into a waiting van. Although their faces were obscured by hardhats and other headgears, the tabloids gave each thief a nickname based on distinctive characteristics seen on the camera.

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[1] http://www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/crime/hatton-garden-jewellery-burglary-details-of-the-chaotic-scene-inside-the-vault-revealed-by-officers10164221html.

[2] http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-london-32799703.

> **Box 2.1** (continued)
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> Two of them, dubbed the Tall Man and Old Man, "struggle to move a bin before they drag it outside" in its analysis of the security footage. The Old Man leans on the bin, struggling for breath, the Mirror reported – see http://www.mirror.co.uk/news/uk-news/hatton-garden-heist-cctv-proves-5498421.
>
> Most of the nine men charged in the case appeared to be ordinary blokes. The hard-of-hearing 74-year-old was described by his London neighbors as an affable retiree who loves dogs; the 59-year-old with a limp was said to be a former truck driver. Another defendant runs a plumbing business in the London suburbs. All nine are being held in custody on charges of conspiracy to commit burglary; they haven't entered pleas.

the crimes of older persons are predominately concentrated in property crimes, older persons have been arrested for all types of crimes, including murder, rape, and robbery. The following case is an example of the activities of an older group of robbers.

Sociological Explanations of Elder Crime

Richard Hobbs (2016), a sociologist at the University of Essex who studies crime in Britain, says the country's criminal underworld has changed dramatically in recent years. Rather than congregating in pubs or on street corners, many criminals now live seemingly ordinary lives, raising families and running legitimate businesses. They still participate in crime but only with trusted associates. "They don't see themselves as criminals, they see themselves as businessmen."

That makes it easier for elderly criminals to stay in the game. Older criminals often have extensive networks to draw on for needed expertise. And some essential skills, such as money laundering, don't require physical vigor. Hobbs says, "Still, geriatric crime poses special challenges." During the trial of the German "Grandpa Gang," the gang members described how their 74-year-old co-defendant, Rudolf R., almost botched a 2003 bank heist by slipping on a patch of ice, forcing them to take extra time to help him into the getaway car. The 74-year-old had another problem; co-defendant A. told the court: "We had to stop constantly so he could pee!"

Young men still commit a disproportionate share of crimes in most countries, but crime rates among the elderly are rising in Britain and other European and Asian nations, adding a worrisome new dimension to the problem of aging populations.

"Elderly people in developed countries tend to be more assertive, less submissive, and more focused on individual social and economic needs than earlier generations were," says Bas van Alphen (2014, page 1), a psychology professor at the Free University of Brussels, who has studied criminal behavior among the elderly. When they see in their peer group that someone has much more money than they do, they

are eager to get that. He says older people may also commit crimes because they feel isolated. "I had one patient who stole candies to handle the hours of loneliness every day," says van Alphen, who describes such behavior as "novelty seeking."

Rising poverty rates among the elderly are being blamed for elderly crime in some countries. That is the case in South Korea, where 45% of people over 65 live below the poverty line, the highest rate among the 30 developed countries belonging to the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development. The government should make an all-out effort to expand the social safety net. "The 74-year had provide jobs and dwellings for elderly" (van Alphen, 2014, Page 1).

Examples of Elderly Crime from Austria and Germany

Bank Robber Because of Love

On December 16, 2004, a 74-year-old man from Vienna dressed nicely and decided to rob a bank in the city of Vienna. He chose a bank next to the St. Stephen's Cathedral, a top destination for tourists in Vienna. Shortly before lunchtime, he robbed the bank using a gun. He did not get much money. Police were informed in time, and the bank robber had to flee and run into a house next to the crime scene. There the police could arrest him. Police officers were very much astonished, when they recognized the bank robber. He was a well-known old criminal of 74 years – when he was arrested, he said: "Cèst la vie" (that's life). When he was interrogated, he confessed to having committed the robbery because he has fallen in love with a very young girl. He wanted to buy her a nice gift. (Edelbacher, M. personal experience as a police officer)

Old Burglar Cannot Stop

Ernst, who lives in Vienna, is about 75 years old. More than half time of his life he was imprisoned because of burglary. When he came out in 2009, he published a book with the title *I am the King of Burglars*. He was invited to the Vienna University, Institute of Sociology, to tell the students why he became a burglar. He said that after the end of the Second World War, he was sent by his mother to steal food, so they could stay alive. When he was successful, his mother was happy.

There are several theories of deviant behavior that would help explain why the person became a criminal and continued his criminal behavior throughout most of his life. They include socialization, learning, routine activities, opportunity, exchange, a culture of poverty, and others. These theories help to explain why he became a criminal and why he continued his life of crime into his senior years. His life of crime was abruptly stopped when he met a young woman and wanted to make her happy, but he broke into a kindergarten, stole a laptop, and sold it. His criminal act was videotaped, and he soon was arrested. (Edelbacher, M. personal experience as a police officer)

Opa Bande[3]

In Germany, the "Opa Bande" (Grandpa Gang) consisting of three men in their 1960s and 1970s were convicted because of robbing more than one million Euros from 12 banks. When they testified at their trials, they claimed they were trying to top their pension benefits. One defendant, Wilfried A., said he used his share to buy a farm where he could live because he was afraid of being put in a retirement home.

Conclusion and Future Aspects

The elderly are currently in the focus of the civil society. On the one side, they represent an enormous economic factor, while on the other side, they confront us with a lot of new challenges. Best practices are discussed on international and national levels as to how to deal with challenges of the older generations.

The trend in demographic development does create an atmosphere of optimism because in the future, especially in America, Asia, and Europe, younger generations will have to handle the burden of helping to support an increasing number of elder people. That means that all social models have to be reconsidered and perhaps rebuilt. The high standard of retirement security cannot be kept in the next decades. There are a lot of questions that cannot be answered just now. They are:

What has to be done and which solutions are possible?

Shall elder people work much longer, and is the retirement age to be postponed?

How do we handle the problem of healthcare and retirement homes?

How do we treat elderly persons who commit crimes?

How do we protect elderly in a better way not be victimized?

Hopefully, the material in this chapter and that in other chapters of the book will provide some answers to these questions. The solutions will require a multidisciplinary dialog of all different fields of science, including philosophy, sociology, medicine, law, political sciences, and others.

Discussion Questions

1. What are some of the reasons for the increase in the elderly population in most of the countries in Europe?
2. What are some of the major reasons why the amount of crimes by the elderly population has increased in most countries of Europe in recent years?

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[3] see http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/europe/4510365.stm.

3. Discuss the reasons why some countries are ranked as dangerous.
4. What are some of the major reasons why a country will have a low rate of crime.
5. What are the major reasons for a city to have a high rate of violent crime?
6. London is ranked as the most dangerous city in the world. Discuss the reasons why London is ranked as a dangerous city.
7. What is the relationship between the development of the Internet and the amount of crime committed by the older population?
8. Discuss the types of situational factors that must be considered in any research on the causes of violent crime committed by the elderly.
9. Discuss the types of situational factors to consider when researching causes of property crimes committed by the elderly.
10. Discuss the difference between a career (habitual) criminal and a situational criminal. Give examples of types of career and situational criminals that might be found among elderly offenders.

Notes

1. See https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/European_Union.
2. This ranking of dangerous countries was retrieved from www.spiegel.de/pan-orama/just/kriminalitacts-ranking-die-gefaebrlichsten-laender-in-der-eu-a-464595.html(Crime-ranking-the-most-dangerous-countries-in-the-eu). Retrieved 4/23/2017
3. Another source of information on crime statistics can be found on the website http://ec.euopa.eu/eurostat/statistic-explaind/index.php?titleCrime_statistics/de&oldid=292617. Retrieved 4/23/2017
4. http://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/statistic-explained/index.php?itleCrime_statistic/de&oldid=292617. Retrieved 4/23/2017
5. http://ec.europa.eu/eu/eurostat/statistic-explained/index.php?titleCrime_statistic/de&old=292617. Retrieved 4/23/2017
6. See https://de.wikiipedia.org-UNODC. It is the United Nations Office on Drugs and crime based in Vienna. It is responsible for the prevention and repression measures against terrorism, organized crime, drugs, and corruption.
7. See https://www.unodc.org-UNODC. It publishes a report on the global crime situation each year.

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