

Summary

ECOLOGY OF CRIME AND SPATIAL PATTERNS OF CRIME IN NIŠ, SERBIA

Humans, the society, and law have strived to control crime throughout our history. One of the ways to complete that aim is to consider the space of crime, its characteristics, zones, and areas where crime occurs the most. Large walls around the cities and castles in the Old Age and the Middle Ages were invented to prevent enemies and robbers, and street lighting is produced in the New Century as a way to prevent and protect from the victimization. Ecology perspective was introduced with the cartographic school at the beginning of criminology science. Ecology theory of crime developed in the city of Chicago and it is followed by the routine activity theory, crime pattern theory, and rational choice theory. The impact of the ecological theory in research of crime is noticeable in today's papers as well. Modern scientists, researchers, and practitioners are studying crime using the geographic information system, mapping crime, using statistical and geostatistical methods which are presented in the paper. The next part of the paper is an empirical research of the poverty and violent criminal acts committed in the City of Niš during 2008, 2013 and 2018. Firstly, all the crimes are geocoded into spatial units that represent urban and suburban areas in Niš. A descriptive statistic is used to identify hotspots of crime and areas where crime happens the most. This confirmed the hypothesis that crime is concentrated in the center of the city, main streets and squares with big bus stops, markets, shopping malls, pubs, taverns, casinos and other hot spots of crime. Finally, the Spatial Point Pattern Test is used to check the hypothesis that spatial crime pattern is stable over time. This hypothesis is not confirmed and it is found that crime move from the center of the city towards cities' urban and suburban settlements. The conclusion is that the ecology perspective of crime, its surrounding and the characteristics of space are important for the research, science and practical issues. The results from the empirical research, as well as other results of the research of the ecology of crime can be used in practice. It can be used when creating security strategies and policies to prevent crime by the police, decision-makers, and others.

Keywords: *ecology of crime, spatial distribution, crime concentration, urban and suburban space, Niš, Serbia.*