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## The Social Costs of Crime and Crime Control

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### ABSTRACT

There is currently no generally accepted method of estimating the costs of crime. After presenting the most commonly used methods of estimating crime, the authors attempt to explore the situation in Hungary. Taking 2009 as a base year, they recon the crime-related social expenditure accounts. The authors, with the help of other Hungarian research data and databases, have also taken into account the costs of the secondary social effects. The results of the calculations depend on the applied approach to crime and the interpretations of the social impacts of the delinquency. According to the authors calculations the social cost caused by crime was about 2.17 billion USA dollar: (\$) (1.6 billion euro (EUR) in 2009. The authors deduct the sum that was drawn by the offenders as a benefit/profit from committing crime; therefore the crime caused 1.17 billion \$ as a net social damage in 2009 in Hungary. The amount of 1.63 billion \$ was spent on the crime control (e.g. law enforcement, judiciary, prison and crime prevention) in 2009. The results show that delinquency caused a total of 3.8 billion \$ as a damage, or as an expenditure spent by the government in 2009. The cost of crime control was about 500 million \$ higher (1.63 billion \$) than the amount of damage caused by crime (1.17 billion \$). The offenders benefit/profit from committing crime (= 1 billion \$) was only 15% less than the damage they caused to the state and to the citizens (= 1.17 billion \$). In other words, the half of the criminal damage shall never be repaid: it will remain at the criminals!

### KEYWORDS

Cost of Crime, Victimization Costs, Methodology

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