

PERCEPTION OF DRUG ADDICTION AND NARCOTICS BASED CRIME IN THE
GENERAL POPULATION IN SERBIA AND AMONG STUDENTS OF THE ACADEMY
OF CRIMINALISTICS AND POLICE STUDIES

Oliver Lajić

Academy of Criminalistic and Police Studies, Belgrade

Summary: It is obvious that drug addiction and drug crime are the phenomena of the past, the present and the future. Any serious intentions to fight these phenomena assume serious research in order to observe the possible directions for future action of a wide range of entities involved in the fight against these social evils. In this sense, this paper presents the data from surveys completed in early 2015, on a sample of 413 respondents, related to the perception of threat of drug addiction and drug-crime to the society in Serbia. The authors of the research dealt with the respondents' views regarding the causes of drug abuse, the factors that may affect its reduction, as well as the causes of drug trafficking, the current trends and important factors for its control, with special reference to the police as an active participant in this process. The studied sample included, among others, 82 students of the Academy of Criminalistics and Police Studies based in Belgrade, in order to compare possible differences in attitudes within the general population and those who have been chosen to become police officers in the future. They used descriptive statistics and method of correlation. The research results showed that the students of the ACPS can be allocated as a separate entity, given that their views differ from the views of others respondents in the general sample, as well as the other respondents of the younger population. Specifically, the students of the ACPS have a more positive attitude when it comes to the perception of threat of drug addiction and the drug trafficking to the Serbian society, with more expressed critical attitude towards the educational system and the media, and followed by higher expectations from family in general in order to combat this social evils. Also, they are characterized by slightly favoring the role of police in fighting drug trafficking, with more accented perceptions of drug trafficking growth in the previous period of time compared to other respondents.