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**Everyday Life of the Home Front: Crime and Law Enforcement Measures in
Uzhhorod between 1916 and 1918**

Róbert Varga,

PhD, senior lecturer at the Department of History and Social Sciences,
Ferenc Rákóczi II Transcarpathian Hungarian University,
Berehove, Ukraine, <https://orcid.org/0009-0008-1425-6230>

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Abstract. *The study examines the state of public security and crime in the city of Uzhhorod during the years of the First World War, with special attention to the measures implemented by the police and local administration. The period between 1916 and 1918 marked the peak of economic and social crises within the Austro–Hungarian Monarchy. Various economic restrictions (such as the rationing system and meatless days) and general instability led to a nationwide increase in crime rates. This process also affected relatively smaller cities such as Uzhhorod. Contemporary police sources indicate a sharp rise in criminal activity within the city.* **Objective.** *The paper investigates how wartime conditions influenced the evolution of crime, social relations, and other aspects of everyday urban life amid the military conflict. It also presents the responses and strategies employed by the Uzhhorod police to curb criminal activity. The main aim is to reveal how wartime economic and social tensions impacted public security, what new forms of criminal behaviour emerged, and how the local law enforcement apparatus reacted to these developments. Special attention is given to the citizen's survival strategies and the*



characteristics of cooperation between the police and local administration.

Methods. *The study is based on contemporary archival sources preserved in the Berehove Branch of the State Archives of the Transcarpathian Region. Of particular relevance is Fond No. 7, containing the records of the Uzhhorod City Council's Mayor's Office. These primary sources enable a detailed reconstruction of crime trends, policing practices, and social responses, as well as their statistical analysis.*

Results. *The findings indicate that during the war years the structure and intensity of crime underwent significant changes. Economic hardships led to a rise in property crimes, various forms of black-market activity appeared, and women became increasingly involved in criminal practices. While the police often acted in an ad hoc manner, their efforts nevertheless contributed to maintaining social order and the functioning capacity of the local administration.* **Conclusions.** *The case of Uzhhorod demonstrates that in the wartime hinterland, administrative and policing measures were aimed not only at suppressing crime but also at maintaining social stability. The interactions between the urban community and the authorities prove that local law enforcement played a key role in ensuring the everyday functioning of wartime society.* **Contribution Statement.** *This article contributes to the historiography of wartime urban policing by introducing a micro-level analysis of archival crime records from Uzhhorod.*

Keywords: *war, Uzhhorod, crime, police, gendarmerie, black market, price gouging, rationing system, economy.*

Повсякденне життя тилу: злочинність та заходи правоохоронних органів в Ужгороді у 1916–1918 роках

Варга Роберт,

доктор філософії, старший викладач кафедри історії та суспільних
дисциплін Закарпатського угорського університету ім. Ференца Ракоці II,
Берегове, Україна, <https://orcid.org/0009-0008-1425-6230>



Анотація. У дослідженні розглядається стан громадської безпеки та злочинності в місті Ужгород у роки Першої світової війни з особливою увагою до заходів, які впроваджували поліція та місцева адміністрація. Період 1916–1918 років ознаменувався піком економічної та соціальної кризи в Австро-Угорській монархії. Різноманітні економічні обмеження (зокрема система нормування та «дні без м'яса») та загальна нестабільність призвели до зростання рівня злочинності по всій країні. Цей процес торкнувся й відносно невеликих міст, таких як Ужгород. Сучасні поліцейські джерела фіксують різке зростання кримінальної активності в місті. **Мета дослідження.** Стаття досліджує, як воєнні умови вплинули на розвиток злочинності, соціальних відносин та інших аспектів повсякденного міського життя в умовах військового конфлікту. Також подано огляд реакцій і стратегій ужгородської поліції, спрямованих на обмеження злочинної діяльності. Головна мета — показати, як воєнні економічні та соціальні напруження впливали на стан громадської безпеки, які нові форми злочинної поведінки з'явилися та як місцевий правоохоронний апарат реагував на ці виклики. Особлива увага приділяється стратегіям виживання населення та особливостям співпраці між поліцією та місцевою адміністрацією. **Методи.** Дослідження базується на сучасних архівних джерелах, що зберігаються у Берегівському відділі Державного архіву Закарпатської області. Особливо цінним є фонд № 7, який містить документи магістрату Ужгородської міської управи. Ці першоджерела дають змогу детально реконструювати динаміку злочинності, поліцейські практики та соціальні реакції, а також здійснити їх статистичний аналіз. **Результати.** Отримані дані свідчать, що у роки війни структура та інтенсивність злочинності зазнали суттєвих змін. Економічні труднощі спричинили зростання майнових злочинів, з'явилися різні форми діяльності «чорного ринку», до злочинної практики дедалі активніше залучалися жінки. Хоча дії поліції часто мали ситуативний характер, її

зусилля все ж сприяли підтриманню громадського порядку та функціонування місцевої адміністрації. **Висновки.** Приклад Ужгорода показує, що в умовах воєнного тилу адміністративні та поліцейські заходи були спрямовані не лише на придушення злочинності, а й на збереження соціальної стабільності. Взаємодія між міською спільнотою та владою засвідчує, що місцеві правоохоронні органи відігравали ключову роль у забезпеченні повсякденного функціонування суспільства в роки війни. **Заява про внесок.** Ця стаття робить внесок у історіографію воєнного міського поліцейського управління, представляючи мікрорівневий аналіз архівних кримінальних матеріалів з Ужгорода.

Ключові слова: війна, Ужгород, злочинність, поліція, жандармерія, чорний ринок, спекуляція, система нормування, економіка.

Problem Statement. The years of the First World War brought not only economic and social tensions to the hinterland of the monarchy but also significant changes in the structure of crime and the daily practices of law enforcement. While events at the front have been at the centre of historiography, the home front – especially smaller regional centres such as Uzhhorod – has received far less scholarly attention. As a result, the evolution of criminal activity, police measures, and social responses has remained a largely neglected topic. In Uzhhorod, the local administration and the police were forced to develop specific responses to forms of crime that stemmed from food shortages, inflation, and everyday survival difficulties. The root of the problem lies in the fact that the survival strategies of wartime society and the practical consequences of state regulations often diverged from nationwide norms. The sources revealed that property crimes, black-market activities, and various infractions became common social problems, whose management generated ongoing conflicts between authorities and citizens. The study relies on previously unexplored contemporary archival sources, particularly



on materials from Fond No. 7, i.e., the records of the Uzhhorod City Council's Mayor's Office. These archival inventories contain primary data that shed light on lesser-known aspects of local criminality. The extracted data provide an excellent basis for detailed statistical analyses – quantifying the types, frequency, and social contexts of criminal activities – which, in turn, helps to make the criminal issues faced by Uzhhorod between 1916 and 1918 more comprehensible and transparent.

Identifying Previously Unresolved Aspects of the Broader Problem. One of the key issues addressed by this study is that data related to crime in the city of Uzhhorod have so far remained unexplored. Although several works have been written on the history of law enforcement in Uzhhorod, they have not provided detailed statistical or contextual historical analyses of criminal activity. The aim of this research is to fill this gap. By systematically processing contemporary primary sources, the study seeks to offer a new perspective on understanding Uzhhorod's crime-related problems during the First World War. Special emphasis is placed on the presentation of organised statistical information. The significance of the topic lies in the fact that it explores an aspect of Transcarpathia's First World War history that focuses not on military or political events, but on social and criminal phenomena, thereby opening up a new field of research. The study examines criminal data rooted in the wartime motivations of local inhabitants and sheds light on certain investigative cases handled by the police. The combination of the source base and research focus gives this work its gap-filling character. The scientific novelty of this research lies in its reliance on previously unexplored archival sources. In addition, the study offers readers insight into an understudied aspect of Transcarpathia's First World War history — the evolution of crime and the struggles of law enforcement during this turbulent period.

Analysis of Recent Research and Publications. The impact of the First World War was significant not only from political and military perspectives but also on social, cultural, and civilisational levels. Within this context, Oleksandr Reient



wrote *The First World War (1914–1918) and Ukraine* [1] and *The Great War (1914–1918) and Ukraine* [2]. In these works, the author analysed the strategic importance of Ukrainian lands in the military conflict. He interpreted the war as a civilisational crisis, emphasising that the decisions of the political elite and the reactions of national movements profoundly shaped Ukrainian society during the war years. The local, social, and cultural dimensions of the military conflict are discussed in detail by Oleksandr Havrosh in *Our First World War (1914–1918). An Anthology of Ukrainian Prose* [3]. Through this anthology, the author presents wartime experiences as reflected in contemporary Transcarpathian literature and personal testimonies, enabling the study of the war's direct effects on everyday life and the development of Ukrainian identity. From a cultural perspective, special emphasis is placed on wartime trauma and the strengthening of national consciousness, processes that significantly shaped social awareness during the conflict.

Since the research area (Ung County) is closely tied to Hungarian historiography as well, it is necessary to present Hungarian publications that focus on the First World War. In Hungarian historical research, *The Last Great War of Old Hungary* by Tibor Hajdú and Ferenc Pollmann serves as a fundamental scholarly study [4]. It examines the political, military, and social dimensions of the war within the context of the Austro–Hungarian Monarchy. The authors provide detailed analyses of the army's organisation, military operations at the front, and the war's domestic political and social consequences in Hungarian territories. Separate sections cover the military operations and battles that took place in today's Transcarpathia. In contrast, Vilmos Mészáros's *My Memories of the First World War* [5] is a personal recollection that depicts the everyday experiences of the war, individual destinies, and military life. This memoir provides insight into the human stories behind historical events.

In recent decades, the First World War history of Transcarpathia has increasingly attracted the attention of both Ukrainian and Hungarian historians.

Research on the region aims to analyse military, social, political, and cultural dimensions together, emphasising the interaction between local communities and state power during the war period. Yuriy Fatula, in his work *About the First World War* [6], examines the wartime experiences of the Ukrainian population with particular focus on ethnopolitical aspects and the development of national consciousness. Scholars highlight that as a peripheral region of the Habsburg Empire, Transcarpathia was directly affected by frontline events and political changes, while local communities developed their own strategies for survival and coping with wartime challenges.

Krisztián Pap's *Lions in the Carpathians 1914–1915* [7] is also worth mentioning. The author discusses military engagements in the territory of present-day Transcarpathia, providing detailed accounts of strategic planning and execution of operations. Several heroic military commanders emerged from these local battles, leaving their mark on the history of Ung County. One such figure was Baron Sándor Szurmay of Uzhok, under whose command Austro–Hungarian forces successfully halted the advance of the Tsarist army at the Uzhok Pass. He later described these turbulent times in his memoir *The Hungarian Soldier in the Carpathians* [8].

Ádám Suslik, in his study *The First World War and Our Region (1914–1918)* [9], provides a comprehensive overview of the wartime events that affected today's Transcarpathia. An important element of Ung County's history was the 66th Imperial and Royal Infantry Regiment. This military unit of the monarchy was stationed in the county during peacetime and fought throughout the northeastern front during the First World War. Yuriy Fatula's book "*I Thought I Would Farm, but I Had to Fight...*" *The Combat Path of the 66th Uzhhorod Infantry Regiment of the Austro–Hungarian Army (1914–1918)* [10] presents locations, battles, and losses related to this regiment.

For the purposes of this study, it is important to outline the law enforcement agencies active in Uzhhorod during the war and their roles. Relevant information



can be found in Róbert Varga's studies *Contributions to the History of Law Enforcement in Uzhhorod (1890–1914)* [11] and *The Gendarmerie of Ung County (1881–1914)* [12]. In these works, the author describes the general policing tasks, as well as the structural and organisational development of two contemporary law enforcement bodies operating in both Ung County and Uzhhorod.

During the First World War, strict measures were taken against any individuals or groups who threatened the war effort of the Austro–Hungarian Monarchy. Authorities feared that espionage activities could destabilise the entire country or individual provinces. Counter-espionage operations were active in present-day Transcarpathia as well. Róbert Varga's study *Spies and Suspected Spies in the Operational Area of Ung County* [13] introduces readers to investigative cases conducted by local authorities – and later the military – against individuals and groups suspected of espionage, using archival sources. Ádám Suslik's *Church and State Power: Police Abuse or Tightened Procedure?* [14] also addresses issues related to espionage, examining the legitimacy of state actions against the local Greek Catholic community.

For contextual understanding, it is relevant to outline the social and political situation of the period. László Braun's *The History of Northeastern Hungary from 1790 to 1914: The Social and Economic Conditions of the Dualist Era* [15] helps explain the collapse of the local peacetime economy during the war.

Finally, since the geographical focus of the study is Uzhhorod, it is important to highlight works related to the city's history. Ludwig Philip's *Ungvár–Užhorod–Ужгород. My Native City* [16] provides a comprehensive history of Uzhhorod, with separate chapters on the periods before and after World War I. In contrast, Tetiana Literati's work [17] takes the form of a historical city walk, acquainting readers with Uzhhorod's buildings, streets, families, and cultural heritage. Regarding Uzhhorod's wartime daily life, Róbert Varga's study *Political and Law Enforcement Transformations in Uzhhorod in 1916* [18] is also of particular relevance.



Formulation of the Article's Aims. In my study, I intend to analyze and interpret crime and law enforcement measures in the city of Uzhhorod between 1916 and 1918. Among other things, the research seeks to answer the following questions:

1. How many cases did the Uzhhorod City Police and the Royal Hungarian Gendarmerie deal with between 1916 and 1918?
2. What statistical data were produced by the Uzhhorod City Police and the Royal Hungarian Gendarmerie?
3. What negative economic trends emerged in the city and the county?
4. What were the characteristics and forms of crime in the city of Uzhhorod?
5. What do contemporary archival sources reveal about the functioning of local law enforcement and the city's population?

The analysis focuses on contemporary archival and press sources, which together provide an insight into the everyday life of Uzhhorod's citizens and the functioning of law enforcement agencies. Archival records – official reports and municipal administrative documents – serve as authentic primary sources for reconstructing the types and frequency of criminal activities as well as police interventions. These enable us to uncover criminal trends and the number of criminal cases through quantifiable data. In addition to statistical data, the police and gendarmerie reports provide insight into the investigative mechanisms of certain crimes.

Presentation of the Main Research Material. September 1914 brought numerous defeats for the Austro–Hungarian Monarchy's military [19] command on the Eastern Front. Russian troops advanced rapidly on the Galician battlefield, resulting in hundreds of refugees heading toward the safer hinterland. Some of them migrated to Ung County and temporarily settled in one of the districts or in the city of Uzhhorod. The situation was further aggravated when units of the Tsarist army broke through the Uzhok Pass and were repelled by the Monarchy's army only at

the cost of heavy casualties. Although the military situation stabilised by the end of 1915, a new and more dangerous struggle began in the country. In this battle, local law enforcement authorities confronted both newly arrived and local criminals. The Royal Hungarian Gendarmerie had to wage its fight in the countryside, while in Uzhhorod the City Police were responsible for taking action against lawbreakers. The examined archival sources contain a strikingly high number of crimes committed between 1916 and 1918. This suggests that police and gendarmerie activity during this period was significantly higher than in the early stages of the war. The reason for this was the worsening economic situation and the strengthening of a criminal stratum seeking to profit from it. Using contemporary documents, the size and types of crimes and the distribution of imposed penalties among the county's population were examined.

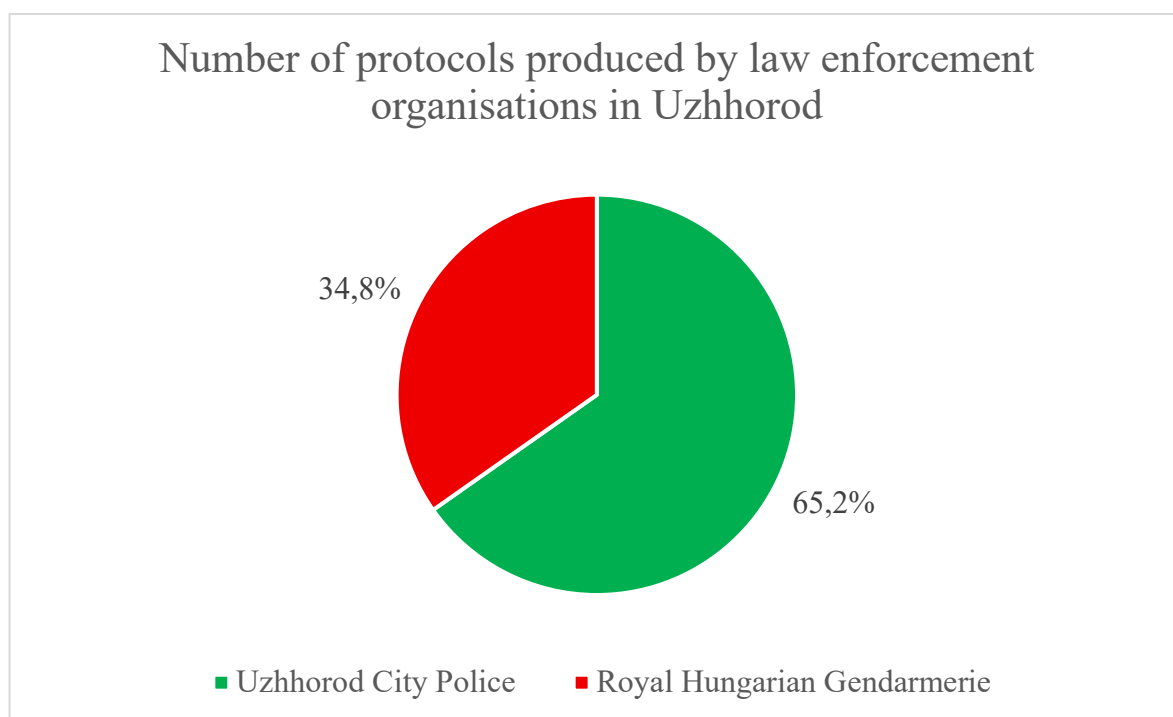


Figure 1. Number of protocols produced by the Uzhhorod City Police and the Royal Hungarian Gendarmerie (1916–1918) [20]



The figure above clearly shows how the number of complaints filed by the population was distributed proportionally between Ung County's two law enforcement agencies. Since there were two law enforcement bodies operating in the county (one in the countryside and one in the city), comparing their activity is necessary to get a clear picture of whether the gendarmerie or the city police handled the greater share of the work. For this comparison, the protocols prepared by the two institutions were used. These precisely documented the cases they investigated. It turned out that between the examined chronological limits, the two bodies produced a total of 141 protocols. After collecting and processing the sources, an interesting percentage ratio was obtained: during this period, the city police handled a total of 92 cases, while their rural counterparts dealt with only 49. The difference between these figures is striking, especially considering that 90% of the county's population lived in rural areas, while only the remaining 10% resided in cities. Based on the 1910 population data, it would be logical to assume that the proportion of crimes and investigations would be higher in villages. [21] However, contemporary sources painted a completely different picture of the county's crime map. Two factors may have caused this situation. At the outbreak of the war, many gendarmes from the county were conscripted into military service. This reduction in personnel naturally influenced the number of cases they could handle: fewer gendarmes meant less work capacity. Additionally, information was found in the documents indicating that small patrol contingents from the rural gendarmerie were reassigned to Uzhhorod. This further reduced rural law enforcement capacity, leaving too few personnel to deal with administrative matters. It is therefore possible that a number of crimes went undocumented. This assumption is supported by the fact that, from 1915 onwards, the number of sources containing gendarmerie protocols gradually declined. [22]

The gendarmes assigned to the county seat were placed under the authority of the city police chief, which meant they were obliged to carry out all instructions issued by István Berzeviczy. Their service activities were aligned with the



regulations and decrees applicable to the police force. [23] The two most active new “policemen” were Vince Balogh and József Pusehoer. According to the records, they arrested individuals engaged in price gouging and usury on several occasions. Their largest joint operation took place on 3 March 1916. While patrolling, they noticed that several unknown women entered a shop on Árpád Vezér Street simultaneously. This struck the two gendarmes as suspicious, so they decided to investigate and find out the reason for the unusual activity. Upon entering the shop, they found that, apart from the owner, there were five women inside. When asked by the officers why they were holding a gathering, the women did not respond, so the officers were forced to threaten them with arrest. This prompted Mrs. Szabó to admit that they had all come from the countryside and wanted to sell their goods (onions, potatoes, and eggs) at the city market. [24]

It turned out that while they were trading next to each other at the market, they were approached by Mrs. Ignácz, the shop owner, who made them an offer to buy all their goods – not at the market, but at her shop. She gave them her address and told them to come at noon. They agreed, and at the appointed time Mrs. Szabó, Mrs. Pancsonszki, Mrs. Stefkó, Mrs. Nagy, and Róza Fekete arrived with their products. They were about to conclude the transaction when the two gendarmes entered the shop. After listening to their story, Gendarme Vince Balogh began the rapid interrogation of Mrs. Ignácz. The shop owner, now under suspicion, admitted that she had wanted to buy several kilograms of onions and potatoes from the women and then resell them a few months later at a higher price to the city’s inhabitants. As she was planning to buy in bulk, Balogh asked where and how she intended to store the vegetables. After some evasive answers, Mrs. Ignácz led the officers to a hidden storeroom, where a tub covered with dirty rags was found. She was ordered to open it immediately. Not wanting to get into further trouble, she complied. Inside the tub were several kilograms of carefully packed vegetables. Armed with evidence and confessions, the gendarmes escorted all the women involved to the city police



headquarters. The vegetables were confiscated, and Mrs. Ignác's shop was closed indefinitely. This case clearly illustrated that the rural law enforcement officers assigned to Uzhhorod carried out their duties with the same honesty and determination as they did in their original workplace. [25]

To successfully wage the military conflict, sacrifices were required from all social groups. It became an expectation that upper-class young women would give up part of their accustomed lifestyle and contribute directly in some form to the war effort. [26] As a result, fundraising charity balls gradually appeared, with proceeds donated to the armed forces or to the families of men who had died in military service. Women living in the countryside, especially in villages, followed a completely different path. Their husbands were conscripted after mobilisation, leaving them with the responsibility of caring for their families. [27] This meant that women had to secure the financial means to support their households. However, this was difficult, since women were generally not physically able to perform the same heavy agricultural labour as men, such as day labour in the fields. [28] It soon became apparent that alternative solutions had to be found to avoid watching their children starve. This moral dilemma led women first to commit minor offences and then, gradually, more serious crimes. Archival sources reveal that this process was also observable in Ung County, where women became increasingly represented among offenders. [29]

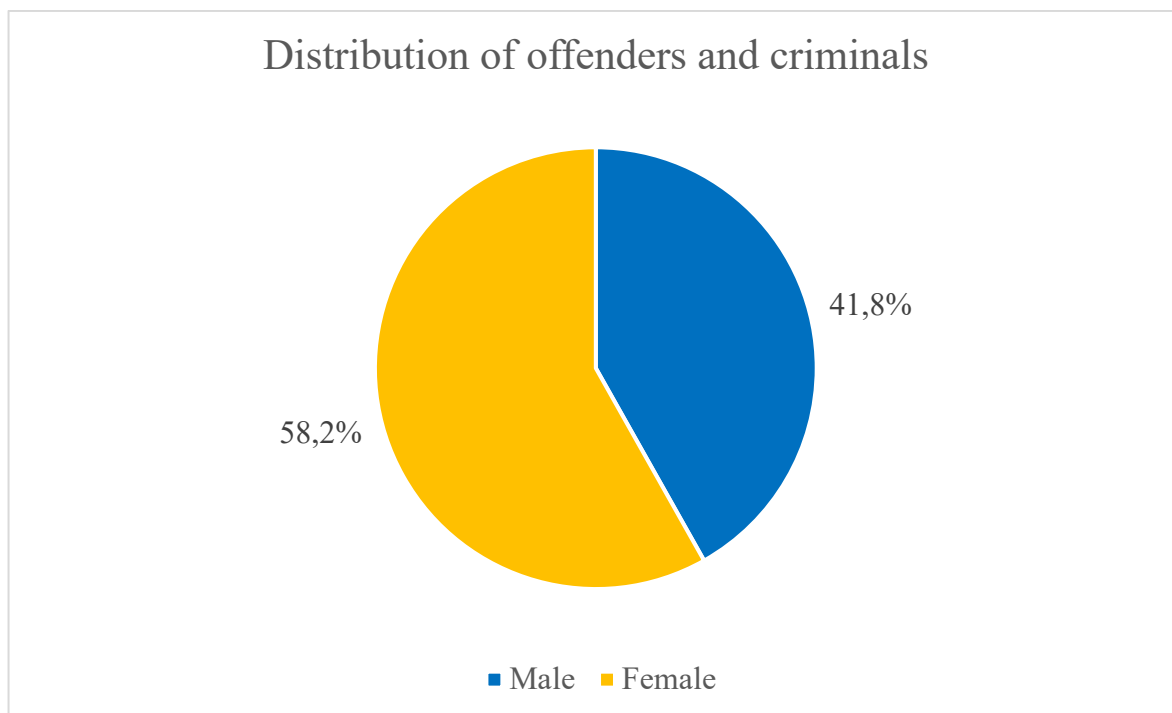


Figure 2. Gender distribution of offenders and criminals [30]

According to statistical data compiled from police and gendarmerie records, of 141 complaints filed, women were the offenders in 82 cases (58.2%), while men were responsible in 59 (41.8%). There is a connection between the conscription of men from the county into military service and the decline in male criminality. Women's situation was further complicated by limited employment opportunities in the county and by urban speculators who wanted to buy their products cheaply. As a result, women employed increasingly bold money-making methods, often in violation of local laws. The records indicate that women's ingenuity operated on a broader scale than men's. [31]

A good example of this is the case of Mrs. Glainstein and Betti Róth, who sold pastries in front of the Uzhhorod military barracks hospital to wounded soldiers. They offered their pastries at 20 pennies apiece from a basket carefully covered with a white cloth. Officers Gábor Kiss and Vince Balogh, who were patrolling the hospital area, noticed the two women. [32] Upon checking their papers, it was revealed that their residence was listed as the village of Téglás. When asked by the



police why they had come to Uzhhorod and whether they were expecting anyone, the women gave no answer, so the officers took them to the police station. Before interrogation, their personal belongings were searched, and 12 pastries were found hidden in their basket. [33] With no other option, the women confessed. Róth explained that they had baked several batches of pastries at her house and intended to sell them at the city market. When demand proved low, they decided to try selling to wounded soldiers, thinking sales would be better there. Their calculation failed – they did not manage to sell a single pastry. [34] On 14 December 1916, Police Chief Dr. Pál Bóna delivered a verdict, declaring the women guilty of a regulatory offence: attempting to sell their goods outside the designated commercial zone. He condemned their attempt to profit from soldiers who were wounded in defence of the homeland as shameful. As punishment, the two women were fined 30 crowns each and sentenced to two days in custody. [35]

Borbála Kovács chose a much more radical way to earn money. She was arrested by officers Sándor Janik and Ferenc Török together with two soldiers for behaving indecently in public and disturbing public order. [36] At the station, she explained that she had met the soldiers in a city general store. They struck up a conversation, during which she told them she was struggling to feed her three children and provide daily necessities. [37] The soldiers offered help but in exchange asked for “a little kindness”. With no other options, Borbála agreed to the “deal”. After a few glasses of wine, she overcame her shame and went with the men to their lodging. Not accustomed to drinking, she quickly became intoxicated and started speaking and dancing loudly in the street. At this point, the two policemen noticed and arrested them. Borbála Kovács was sentenced to three days of detention, while the two soldiers were handed over to the local military command. [38]

In addition to examining the gender distribution of criminals, it is also important to determine which areas of Ung County were considered “hotbeds” of criminal activity. [39] In terms of its territorial size, we are dealing with a relatively

small county that did not possess significant industrial capacity. The vast majority of its population earned their livelihood from agriculture and forestry, the latter being the main source of work for those living in the mountainous regions. [40]

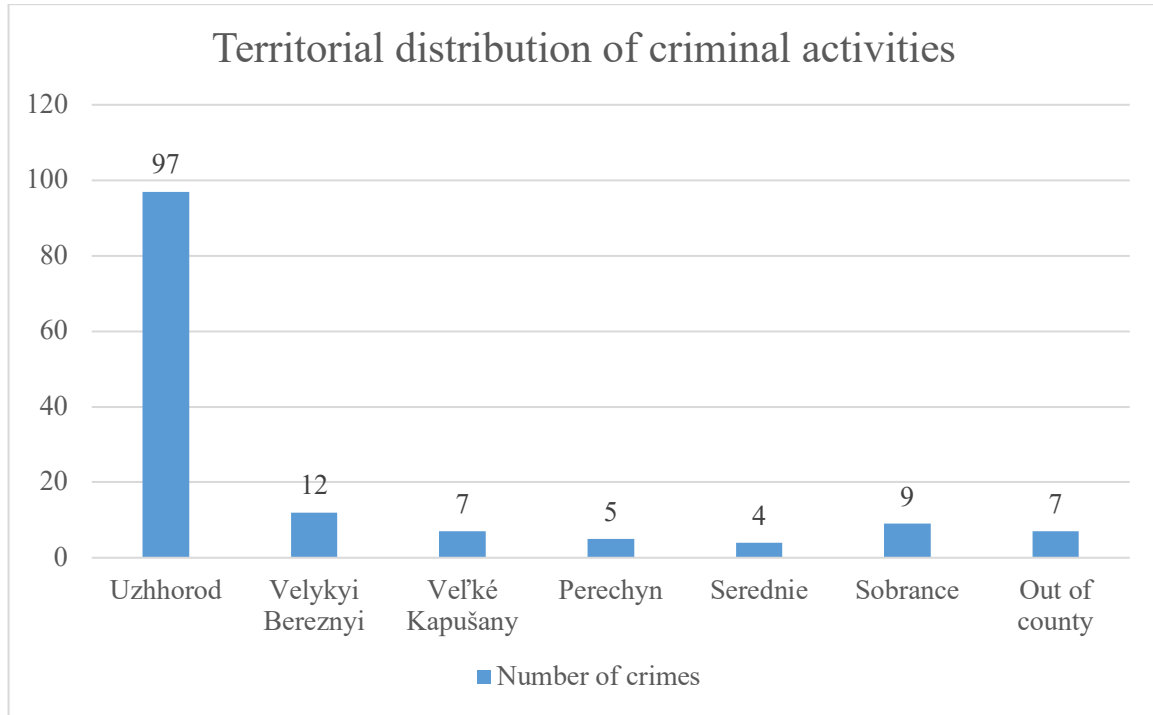


Figure 3. The territorial distribution of crime in Ung County by district [41]

The figure above illustrates the distribution of crime across the various districts of Ung County. Before examining the data in more detail, it is necessary to understand how the administrative system of the county was structured. There were six districts, ranked by size as follows: Velykyi Bereznyi, Sobrance, Perechyn, Uzhhorod, Vel'ké Kapušany, and Serednie. This order changes when we look at population figures, since the size of the districts did not correspond proportionally to the population distribution. Based on demographic considerations, the ranking was as follows: Velykyi Bereznyi, Vel'ké Kapušany, Sobrance, Uzhhorod, Perechyn, and Serednie. One might assume that the level of criminal activity would correlate with the size and population of a given area. In this case, however, such an assumption would be mistaken, because the records of criminal cases and offences



reveal that the place of residence of offenders did not necessarily coincide with the place of arrest. [42]

The police and gendarmerie were most active in the Uzhhorod district: between 1916 and 1918, they launched proceedings against offenders in 97 cases. By contrast, in Velykyi Bereznyi – which had a larger population — the gendarmerie initiated only 12 cases. This significant difference can be explained by two factors.

First, during the first two years of the war, a large number of refugees arrived in the Uzhhorod district, particularly in the city of Uzhhorod itself. The local police and gendarmerie had no information about these outsiders. When the authorities did manage to carry out identity checks, the refugees either lacked any identification documents or provided false information. It should also be emphasised that the vast majority of these refugees had fled from the Galician territories as a result of Russian attacks. These people had limited financial resources, and if they were unable to find work, they quickly turned to crime. According to data from the Uzhhorod police, several foreign families moved into the city during this time. [43]

The second reason for the high level of criminal activity in Uzhhorod was that many people from the surrounding districts preferred to sell their agricultural products (potatoes, corn, meat, etc.) and luxury goods (cigarettes, cigars, etc.) in the county capital. A large number of these individuals attempted to sell their goods illegally, bypassing the official price regulations. A comparison of police sources and archival data makes it clear that the focal point of criminal activity in the county was the city of Uzhhorod. [44]

Another surprising fact is that among the offenders in Ung County, there were individuals with addresses outside the county, in addition to Galician refugees. Police records reveal that on 28 August 1917, Mrs. Róth was arrested. According to her personal data, she had been born in Debrecen, and her official residence was also registered there. She was taken into custody because she attempted to trade in cotton goods in Uzhhorod without official authorisation. Thanks to the operational work of

the gendarmerie, Herman Farkas was also arrested; his documents listed his permanent address as the town of Khust. According to the investigation materials, he was arrested in the town of Chop because he attempted to sell soap at prices higher than the official rates. [45]

In addition to the gender distribution of offenders, it is also interesting to examine the age distribution of those who committed offences. The sources for this segment of the investigation were also provided by official records.

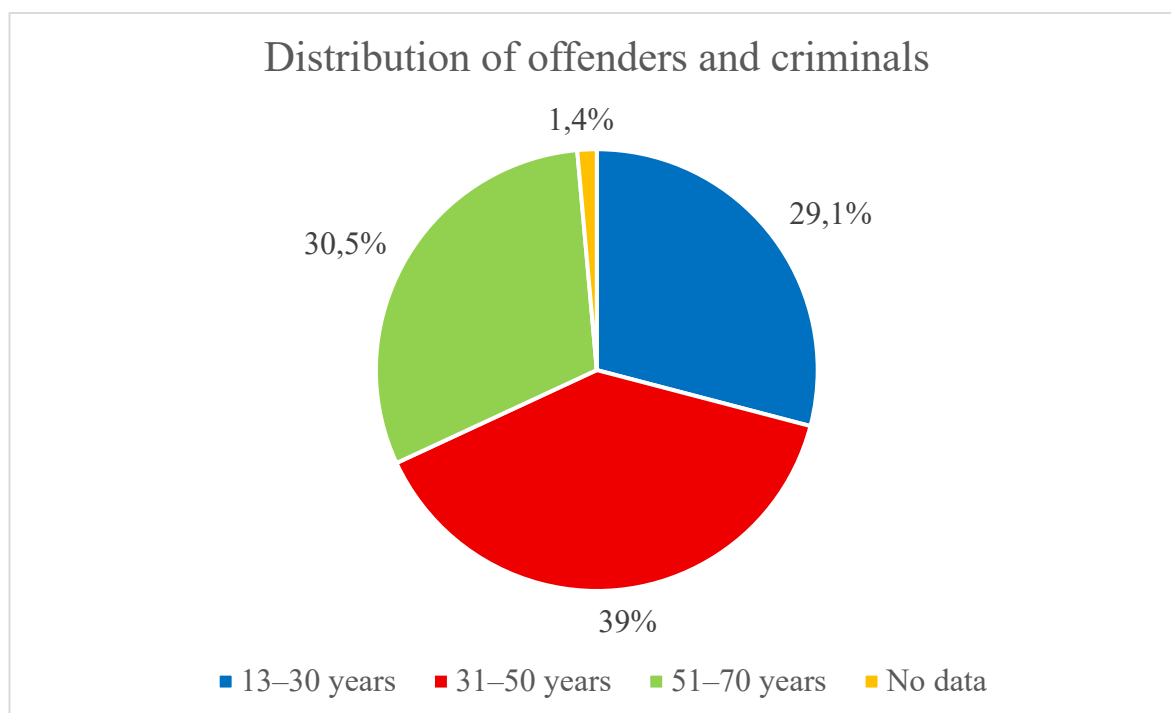


Figure 4. Age distribution of offenders and criminals [46]

Based on the recorded ages, three groups could be established. The first group consisted of individuals between the ages of 13 and 30, representing the younger generation. The second group was made up of middle-aged men and women between 31 and 50 years old. The third group represented the older generation, consisting of individuals aged 51 to 70. The “no data” category included those whose age was not indicated in the investigative sources. [47]

According to the data in the diagram above, 41 offenders (29.1%) belonged to the younger generation. A closer examination of this group reveals that 68.3% of the offenders were women, while only 31.7% were men. The youngest person arrested was Pál Macelka, who was only thirteen years old. He was followed by Lajos Blum, aged fifteen, and Jakab Effenber, who had just turned sixteen before his arrest. The strong presence of women is also observable in the middle-aged group, where 58.2% of investigations were initiated against women, compared to 41.8% against men. [48]



Figure 5. Gender and age distribution of offenders and criminals [49]

It is not particularly surprising that men held a leading role only in the older age group (65.1%), as men of this age were no longer conscripted into the army. This group largely consisted of merchants and owners of pubs, cafés, and restaurants in the city. The oldest individuals under police investigation were 68 years old, including Jakab Nimberger, József Rippay, and Vilmos Hermán. According to official reports, Nimberger was charged with price gouging, Rippay with providing

false information to the authorities, and Hermán with violations of pre-emption regulations. [50]

It is also intriguing to examine the religious affiliation of offenders, as this reveals which religious communities produced the highest number of criminals in the county. Ung County was religiously diverse, with eight religious denominations present. The largest groups were Roman Catholics and Greek Catholics, who together made up 77% of the county's population. Reformed (Calvinists) accounted for 12%, while Israelites (Jews) made up only 11%. In addition to these four, there were also smaller groups such as Orthodox, Unitarian, and Lutheran communities, but their numbers were very low. A similar distribution can be observed in the county capital: the two Catholic churches dominated (59% of the population), followed by the Israelite (33%) and Reformed (8%) communities. Based on these numbers, one might expect that the majority of offenders in the county would have belonged to the Roman or Greek Catholic denominations. However, police records and official reports reveal the opposite. [51]

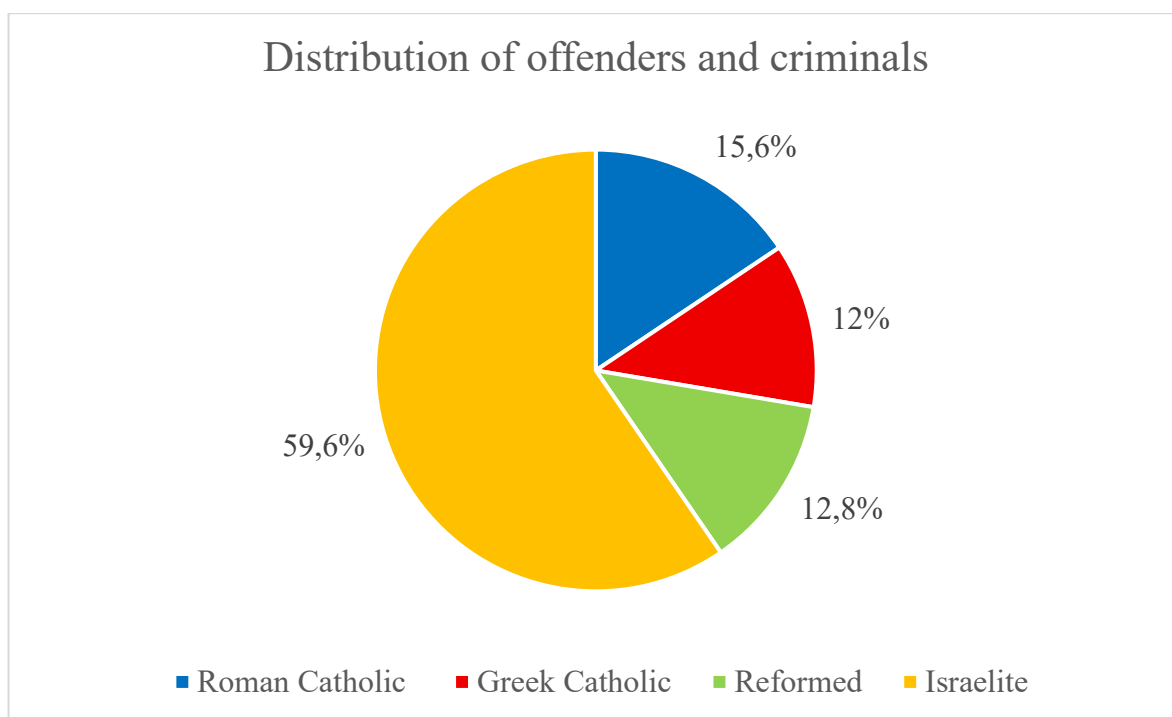


Figure 6. Religious distribution of offenders and criminals [52]



With the help of the available sources, the figure above shows the percentage breakdown of the religious affiliations of individuals arrested by the gendarmerie and police. According to this distribution, the majority of cases involved individuals of the Israelite faith. Interestingly, this was not the largest religious community in the county, yet they were disproportionately represented in the criminal statistics. Our hypothesis is that this was primarily due to economic factors. An examination of the sources shows that the arrested Jewish men and women in Ung County and Uzhhorod generally owned some type of property or business, particularly hospitality establishments such as hotels, restaurants, cafés, and pubs. From the outbreak of the war, these venues were in constant conflict with local law enforcement. Residents frequently reported price gouging and usury in shops, and pubs regularly violated opening hour regulations. A good example of the former is the case of Herman Berger and his restaurant, which was reported by one of his guests. Although the identity of the complainant is unknown, their grievance is well documented. At the Uzhhorod police headquarters, the complainant stated that they had been charged significantly more than the official prices for their dinner. According to their statement, the bill included 7 crowns for jellied goose leg, 30 pennies for two slices of bread, and 60 pennies for a cup of tea. The complainant voiced their dissatisfaction on the spot but achieved no meaningful result. Outraged, they visited other restaurants to compare prices for the same meal, which revealed that, on average, jellied goose leg cost 5 crowns, two slices of bread 10 pennies, and a cup of tea 30 pennies elsewhere. [53]

Continuing along the religious line, it turned out that the crimes committed by Catholics and Protestants were of a more everyday nature. According to the records, these were mainly conflicts between neighbours, most of which escalated into police cases. Patrol officer Mihály Varga also had to intervene in such a situation when a disagreement between Vilmos Balogh and his neighbour Miklós Kovács turned violent. The argument broke out when Balogh repeatedly complained to the owner

of the house across the street about the unbearable stench coming from his property and urged him to do something about it. Miklós Kovács, despite repeated requests, did not eliminate the source of the smell, which resulted in the two men getting into a fight. Because of the intensity of the outburst, Officer Varga had to restore order between the neighbours. His first step was to visit the yard from which the unbearable smell originated. He was shocked to find that the stench came from the decomposing carcass of a calf, which dogs had already begun to tear apart. After overcoming his initial shock, the police representative took action. He ordered that the animal's carcass be removed immediately; otherwise, he would arrest the property owner on charges of negligent endangerment of public health. [54]

The work of a law enforcement organisation can be measured not only by the number of people arrested and cases investigated but also by the number of fines imposed. After investigations, the amount of the imposed fines indicated the seriousness of each case. Between 1916 and 1918, the gendarmerie and police of Ung County investigated 141 cases and imposed fines in 101 of them. After the verdicts were announced, only 8 individuals chose imprisonment instead of paying the fine. Interestingly, in 40 cases the files contained no information on whether a financial or custodial sentence had been imposed. [55]

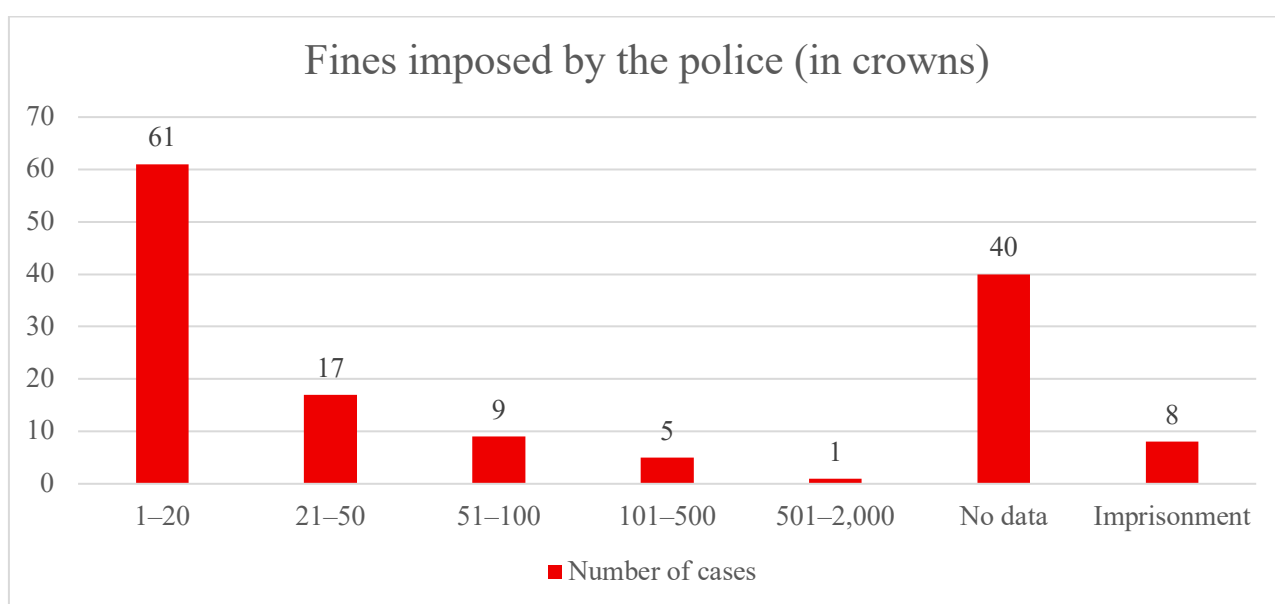


Figure 7. Fines imposed by the police (in crowns) [56]



Based on the examined sources, there were two types of penalties: financial fines and imprisonment. The figure above shows the distribution of financial penalties and the proportion of people arrested. In percentage terms, the number of cases resulting in small fines was remarkably high (61 occasions; 43.3%). The fines imposed by the law enforcement bodies of the county covered a wide range. According to the records, the lowest fine was imposed on Cirill Horváth, a 33-year-old man with no local ties to Ung. The records do not reveal his address or the purpose of his visit to Uzhhorod. His file shows only that he was arrested for vagrancy on 25 April 1917. In a brief procedure, he was fined two crowns. The documentation does not specify whether he – being a vagrant – actually paid this amount or chose imprisonment instead. If he chose the latter, he would also have had to pay for the food provided to him during his imprisonment. [57]

The largest fine was imposed on 26 July 1917, also in the county seat. Through a covert investigation, gendarmes uncovered the illegal activities of local merchant Jakab Effenberg. He was accused of selling food in his shop above the maximum official price. Based on witness testimonies and evidence, the chief of the Uzhhorod City Police fined him 2,000 crowns, to be paid to the treasury within three days. This sentence seems excessive considering that the previous year, János Burg had been fined only 30 crowns for a similar offence. The authorities' tough stance can be explained by the worsening economic situation in Ung County (and the country as a whole) by 1917, which led to a gradual food shortage. Aware of this, law enforcement had to eliminate individuals and groups who sought to profit from people's deprivation. [58]

No clear system could be discerned between the crimes committed and the fines imposed. In many cases, the fines for the same type of offence varied widely. A good example of this is the case of two milk adulterers, Mrs. Tarkósi and Mrs. Zombory. The first was fined 40 crowns by the Uzhhorod City Police on 26 March 1916 for milk adulteration, while the second was fined only 20 crowns on 7 April



1915. Investigation of the case files revealed that in both instances, five litres of milk were involved and the dilution with water was roughly the same. The judgement could have taken into account the offenders' prior records, whether they had previously faced legal proceedings or had criminal records, but according to the sources, neither woman had had prior issues with the law. [59]

The second category of punishment consisted of custodial sentences, which were not so frequent (8 occasions; 5.7%). Based on the findings, this was a deliberate practice by the police and gendarmerie, as they had to provide for the arrested individuals. Prisoners were to receive three meals a day, have access to hygiene facilities, and receive medical examinations if necessary. Although the costs of their upkeep were later to be reimbursed by the prisoners, if 10–15 people were “enjoying the hospitality of the police”, this would have represented a significant financial burden for the law enforcement agencies. [60]

In addition to fines and imprisonment, a significant number (40 occasions; 28.4%) of cases lacked a recorded official sentence. This means that the type, severity, and scope of punishment are completely unknown. All the details of these cases were recorded, except for the judgement. This may have been because the complainant and the offender reached some kind of compensation agreement during the legal procedure, making further investigation and prosecution unnecessary. [61]

Conclusions. The study examined crime rates in the city of Uzhhorod between 1916 and 1918 as shaped by its economic situation. The central research question was how wartime economic and social tensions influenced the structure of crime, as well as the functioning of the police and local administration. Based on archival sources (mainly documents from Fund 7 of the Berehove Branch of the State Archives of the Transcarpathian Region), it was shown that with the worsening of economic difficulties (rationing, inflation, food shortages), the rate of property crimes and black-market activities increased. The deterioration of public security was especially noticeable in Uzhhorod, where the city police handled the majority

of cases. The sources indicate that the proportion of female offenders grew significantly, which can be linked to men's military service and women's wartime survival strategies. Most crimes consisted of minor offences, price gouging, and illegal trade; more serious crimes such as homicide were not recorded. The purpose of law enforcement measures was not only to curb crime but also to maintain social order and stability. Cooperation between rural gendarmes stationed in the city and the local police ensured the functioning of public administration, though their actions were often ad hoc. The study concludes that Uzhhorod's example clearly shows that in the wartime hinterland, the work of law enforcement was indispensable for the maintenance of everyday life. The research also fills a gap, as local crime and policing practices during this period have received little scholarly attention so far. In the future, an important objective of my research is to conduct similar studies focusing on the cities located near Uzhhorod (Berehove, Mukachevo, and Vynohradiv). Subsequently, through a comparative analysis, it will be possible to gain a deeper understanding of how the First World War affected crime patterns in our region.

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a quantity of police case documents that it was possible to prepare a meaningful statistical report based on them.

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