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# The Concept of Criminal Profiling in Contemporary Crime Suppression Policies

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## Article Information\*

Review Article • UDC: 343.982/.32

Volume: 21, Issue: 2, pages: 44–75

Received: May 17, 2024 • Accepted: June 20, 2024

<https://doi.org/10.51738/Kpolisa2024.21.2r.44b>

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I have no known conflict of interest to disclose.

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\* Cite (APA): Bjelajac, Ž. (2024). The Concept of Criminal Profiling in Contemporary Crime Suppression Policies. *Kultura polisa*, 21(2), 44–75, <https://doi.org/10.51738/Kpolisa2024.21.2r.44b>



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### **Abstract**

Crime, as a constant accompanying phenomenon in the development of every society, is taking on increasingly serious proportions in modern times. The expansion of violent and serious crimes contributes to growing insecurity and concern within the international community. Current crime trends, in addition to their transnational nature, indicate increasing mobility, inventiveness, sophistication, and a certain ruthlessness. This negative social phenomenon not only obstructs the social, economic, political, and cultural development of the community but also represents one of the greatest threats to human security. Therefore, contemporary crime prevention policies must provide effective responses to the dynamic nature of crime, primarily through setting high criteria for the selection of police officers, criminal investigators, judges, and prosecutors, alongside mandatory periodic education and evaluation. This process includes knowledge and enhancement of the concept of criminal profiling, as an important component of criminal investigation that is inseparable and functionally connected with crime prevention policies. This coincidence also reflects the aim of this work.

*Key words:* crime, criminal profiling, crime prevention policy, criminal investigation, human security

## **The Concept of Criminal Profiling in Contemporary Crime Suppression Policies**

### **Introduction**

Today, more than ever since the establishment of civilization as a higher stage in the development of human society, humanity faces numerous security challenges, risks, and threats. Environmental devastation, poverty, unemployment, and pervasive destitution threaten the survival of humans as biological beings. Health, peace, and prosperity, as civilizational goals we strive to establish in democratic societies, remain a list of beautiful wishes and "dead letters."

Globalization and dynamic technological advancement, projected to serve the prosperity of humanity, have caused unforeseen side effects. Simultaneously, disease, poverty, and violence have become part of our bleak everyday reality. In such a depressing and pessimistic environment, a new empire grows, develops, and spreads its sinister tentacles: the empire of evil – organized crime. The rise of global crime becomes a permanent threat to the rule of law, without which there can be no sustainable world development. Criminal groups now "cruise" around the globe, trading in drugs, women, children, human organs, toxic waste, weapons, artworks, natural resources, and parts of protected animals, engaging in all criminal activities that bring profit (Bjelajac, 2015a:31). The increase in violent crimes and murders is present in many regions of the world, and for criminals, race, nationality, and skin color pose no barrier to mutual cooperation. Furthermore, the governments of many countries, prone to high-level corruption (Bjelajac, 2015b & Bjelajac, 2008), encourage criminals and become safe havens for their refuge. A broad array of social factors must be included to explain these phenomena.

For all these reasons, the international community is trying to find effective strategies and solutions in a feasible and efficient manner. Modern crime prevention policies are based on crime prevention models that are not unified but instead contain various programs. Many perceive crime solely as evil, where criminals are dealt with in a repressive manner, implemented through extreme state sanctions such

as imprisonment, and sometimes even the death penalty. This approach is specific because it emphasizes the general deterrent effect of harsh sanctions, which should be sufficient to "convince" others not to engage in criminal activities (Bjelajac, 2015a:32). However, such viewpoints are not well-founded because they contradict prevention.

Crime prevention involves well-designed measures and strategies that aim to prevent crime and its harmful impacts on society and individuals. This approach prevents crime and victimization, achieving sustainable development goals by reducing violence, crime, and injustice to a level that is tolerable for society. Effective crime prevention is a specific challenge that certainly yields adequate long-term results. It is known that early interventions through educational programs aimed at children, starting from preschool age, contribute to strengthening self-control, reducing externalizing behaviors, decreasing the likelihood of involvement in criminal activities later in life, and fostering the building of a stable social community. This approach simply promotes purposeful investment in future generations. When people "invest wisely" in this way, they are not necessarily seeking quick results but rather those that will have long-term, sustainable, and practical benefits.

It is understood that crime prevention, as a key part of crime control policies, encompasses all actions that participate in stopping or reducing crime as a social phenomenon, ultimately to a level that is tolerable for society. The primary agents of preventive roles must be entities for crime suppression (law enforcement agencies and the judicial system) and non-criminal entities of crime control policies (family, school, social services, media, NGOs, researchers, and scientists). Crime prevention logically requires a multidisciplinary approach reflected through the synergy of multiple initiatives and the practices of "community policing." In this regard, it is crucial to distinguish between conceptual models oriented toward victims and/or offenders. Crime prevention concerning victims includes common standards: armored doors, alarm systems, video surveillance, physical and technical security, and overall design that serves to deter criminal activities. Crime prevention aimed at potential and actual offenders includes educational programs in schools, addiction treatment, psychological and psychiatric support, and other measures provided by the criminal justice system.

If crime prevention is a crucial part of crime control policies, then we could rightfully assert that psychological/criminal profiling is a fundamental part of crime prevention. The foundations of criminal profiling were actually built by psychiatrists and psychologists who attempted to decipher the behavior of individuals who threaten human safety to assist law enforcement agencies in investigating serious violent crimes. Their work seems most accurately represented in the American television series "Mindhunter," which depicts behavioral analysts engaged in the FBI's Behavioral Science Unit within the Training Division at the FBI Academy in Quantico, Virginia, on a project of interviewing convicted serial killers to gain insights into their criminal minds with the tendency to apply these findings to solve ongoing cases. Their work, previously based on personal experience and gathered knowledge, is now enhanced with analysis techniques supported by computer and information technologies with programs for predicting certain traits of perpetrators of serious crimes. Thus, psychological/criminal profiling, besides having an important role in the context of reconstructing the crime scene, detecting, fixing, securing, and interpreting traces, including identifying and finding the perpetrator, can also have a proactive role (early signs for detecting potential perpetrators - before the crime occurs) in determining specific profiles of potential violent or "latent" criminals. For preventive action, it would be useful for not only police officers, security agency officers, and criminal investigation agencies, prosecutors, and judges but also parents, teachers, social workers, and others to be familiar with basic profiling techniques.

## **Methodology**

In conducting descriptive research, we formulated research questions in an adequate and concise manner to examine the concept of criminal profiling in contemporary crime prevention policies. We utilized qualitative research methods to perform a deeper analysis and provide more detailed explanations, offering a comprehensive and broader view of the rise and diversity of crime and the suppression of this negative and socially dangerous phenomenon, aiming to answer questions related to the objective of this work. Through the method of

comparative analysis, we discovered the potential application of the concept of criminal profiling in modern crime prevention policies.

We demonstrated that there are significant possibilities for psychological profiling as a tool not only for effectively processing all available information about the crime, crime scene, and victim to "create" the profile of the perpetrator but also in the context of protective factors as positive influences that, as preventive measures, can improve individuals' lives and the safety of the living environment.

### **Crime suppression policy**

From a historical perspective, traces pointing to the need for societal reactions to crime can be found from ancient times. Enlightenment thinkers such as Montesquieu (fr. Charles-Louis de Secondat Montesquieu) emphasized the tendency to build a legislative framework that would suppress crime and guarantee basic individual rights. Naturally, with the development of communities, perceptions of crime prevention policies evolved in line with societal perceptions, influenced by varying degrees of development. However, the essence has remained the same even today. Thus, the common feature or general goal of "all crime prevention policies" pertains to reducing crime and increasing the security of citizens and their property (Bjelajac, 2015a:182).

The term "crime prevention policy" was first used by Paul Johann Anselm Ritter von Feuerbach, a renowned German legal theorist and founder of the classical school of criminal law (1804). He used this term to denote "legislative and state wisdom in the function of achieving the purpose of criminal law solutions" (Horvatić & Cvitanović, 1999:3). Marc Ancel stated that crime prevention policy is both a science and an art, or rather a skill in opposing crime (Ancel, 1975). From a theoretical perspective, criminal policy in the fight against crime involves "how and by what means society, in accordance with its socio-political system and with respect for social, material, and spiritual development, can most effectively combat crime" (Petrović & Dobovšek, 2007:109).

The fight against organized crime fundamentally involves not just criminal policy but also prosecution policies, penal policies, and sanction policies, requiring broader engagement of all societal actors, not just certain state structures (police, courts, etc.). Analysis of professional and scientific literature and the opinions of certain authors (Bošković, 2004:203) indicate that countering organized crime entails undertaking preventive and repressive measures. When defining the policy for combating organized crime, it is necessary to distinguish it from classic crime due to several different factors that characterize organized crime as opposed to unorganized crime (Smajić, 2010).

The characteristics and essential features of organized crime include the existence of a criminal group or organization; structure; hierarchy and subordination; organized activities; the non-ideological nature of the group; a specific subculture; discipline; loyalty to the criminal association; responsibility; secrecy in procedures and operations; a wide range of illegal activities; territory, mobility, and transnational character; functioning over an unlimited or extended period; adaptability; connections with state organs, the judicial system, and criminal investigation agencies; violence and corruption; selectivity and limitation in membership acceptance; monopoly; specialization; professionalism; financial power; specificity of activities and methods of operation; and an authentic name of the criminal association.

**Figure 1.** Characteristics and essential features of organized crime

<b>Characteristics of organized crime</b>	<b>Important features</b>
Formal organization	Criminal organization, hierarchy, criminal structure
Organized structure in the contextual sense	Planned, continuous, perpetual criminal activity
Acquisition and increase of economic profit, monopoly and power	Acquisition of economic profit, illegal enrichment, investment in legal businesses, etc.
Exerting influence on state institutions, individuals and other social control entities	Corruption, extortion, use of force or threats, instilling fear, etc.

(Šikman,2009)

It is known that in the early stages of state formation, as a primary means of combating crime, primitive forms of repressive measures were applied, characterized by punishing individuals with brutal physical and psychological methods of coercion. In later periods, especially after the French bourgeois revolution, there was a humanization of criminal sanctions and the development of criminal justice systems. However, even then, the policy of combating crime relied on laws and punishment as its basic instruments, directed towards the individual perpetrator of the crime.

In today's modern era, the policy of combating crime moves away from its repressive characteristics and focuses on social prevention, promoting more humane approaches and treatments, especially regarding the severity and type of sanctions. Effective means for combating crime include comprehensive implementation of prevention measures and resocialization (reintegration into society). At the same time, contemporary crime policy faces numerous challenges due to new trends in criminal behavior and the globalization of crime (Bjelajac, 2015a:185).

Therefore, the use of modern methods to combat organized crime requires specific personnel and organizational changes. In addition, the application of specialized investigative actions has proven to be an effective method, considering that traditional methods of collecting and proving criminal offenses related to organized crime often had negative outcomes. The implementation of these methods requires educational and specialist measures for police and judicial personnel. This fact indicates that modern criminal organizations use the achievements of modern science and technology in committing serious criminal offenses.

Nevertheless, the ongoing fight against organized crime involves both preventive and repressive measures. Preventive measures aim to eliminate the causes and completely eradicate organized crime, while repressive measures are implemented through legal norms and laws, with the action of specific specialized law enforcement agencies aiming to secure and prove criminal offenses. Such measures require long-term planning and the use of modern achievements in humanistic, legal,

sociological, and social sciences to reduce general fear of organized crime and bring it to the level of social control (Smajić, 2010).

All democratic societies practice social control (social action aimed at affirming socially acceptable/adapted behaviors) and respect for social norms, with appropriate sanctions provided for their enforcement. Sanctions can be positive (rewards given for adhering to norms) and negative (punishments for violating norms) and play a crucial role in social control. They can be formal or informal. Spitting on the street, blowing nose contents or throwing cigarette butts on the street can result in informal sanctions usually through disapproval in face-to-face social interactions. On the other hand, for example, helping elderly people or children safely cross the street can earn positive informal reactions. Formal sanctions reflect ways to identify and acknowledge maladaptive behaviors, or violations of specific norms, resulting in certain penalties. Someone who displays violent behavior may be arrested or imprisoned.

Criminal policy consists of criminal law measures against crime and delinquency, as well as crime and delinquency prevention, reflecting that criminal law repression does not yield adequate results. A country's criminal policy is influenced in a certain way by demographic, economic, national, historical, cultural, political, psychological, and other characteristics specific to that country (Milutinović, 1986:14). In other words, criminal policy encompasses a planned and coordinated system of social activities, which are diverse in content and involve various subjects as their bearers, unified by a common goal. Thus, the division of criminal policy into prevention measures and repression measures can be accepted. The former are said to be applied ante delictum, aiming to eliminate the causes and conditions that provoke criminal behavior, while the latter are applied post delictum with the aim of influencing the criminal to avoid committing new criminal acts (Lazarević, 1988:8). The policy of combating crime certainly surpasses the level of political and legal elaboration and encompasses various multidisciplinary fields and mechanisms. In addition to police officers, agencies for conducting criminal investigations, prosecution, criminal justice, numerous state bodies, the NGO sector, the education system (preschool, elementary,

secondary, and higher education), and above all, the family as a fundamental social group play a significant psychological, educational, and socialization role. Complementary action by these entities can create a healthy environment based on fostering a culture of peace and non-violence, ensuring citizens have the prerequisites for a peaceful and secure life in an organized environment. Therefore, from the above, it is observed that the policy of combating crime is based on two fundamental orientations: repression and prevention.

Repression (Latin: *repressio*) refers to prevention, suppression, stifling, curbing, and restraint. In the context of criminal law, this term implies the suppression of behaviors classified as criminal acts. However, in a broader sense, criminal law repression encompasses not only the application of punishment or other criminal sanctions but also the threat of punishment. The generalized perception that repression is taken after the commission of a criminal act has become irrelevant in recent times. Namely, repression as a permanent societal reaction is not merely oriented towards the past but to some extent towards the future, aiming to prevent the commission of unauthorized behaviors (Bjelajac, 2015a:188).

Security challenges, risks, and threats faced by modern society call into question its presumed function and role in improving all spheres of contemporary human life and work. Based on these circumstances, there is a general consensus that an exclusive and aggressive application of repressive measures cannot lead to an effective and sustainable crime prevention policy. Instead, the primary orientation in modern crime prevention policy is firmly rooted in preventive action, supported by the results of numerous theoretical and practical studies.

Prevention, derived from the Latin word "*praevenire*," can be narrowly translated as anticipation or prevention, or more broadly as preventing a disease, disorderly behavior, or an occurrence that leaves consequences for individuals, groups, or society (Bjelajac, 2015a:191). One possible definition of prevention measures is provided by the European Crime Prevention Network (EUCPN): "These are measures aimed at reducing or otherwise contributing to the quantitative and qualitative reduction of crime and the feeling of insecurity among

citizens, either through direct deterrence from criminal activities or through policies and interventions designed to reduce the potential for crime and its contributing factors. This includes the work of the government, competent authorities, criminal justice institutions, local authorities, professional associations, private, voluntary, and civil sectors, scientists, and the broader media public" (Jović, et al., 2009).

Preventive measures can be categorized into general, specific, and individual prevention. General prevention encompasses all social activities of a social, economic, health, educational, cultural, ideological, and other nature, which influence the elimination or mitigation of general social criminogenic factors contributing to the commission of crimes. Specific prevention includes the same measures as general prevention but differs in its more direct action aimed at eliminating specific criminogenic factors in certain areas of social life. Individual prevention relates to specific situations where there is a risk of committing a criminal offense (Jović, et al., 2009).

According to some perspectives, contemporary trends in prevention also address the so-called pre-delinquent behaviors (especially in the treatment of juveniles), which fall within the domain of sociopathological behaviors in a society. Its fundamental contents and basic characteristics can be described as follows: prevention of punishable behaviors as part of a broader social policy or system of social regulation (control) and guidance; prevention equally directed towards delinquent and non-delinquent populations, i.e., towards those who have been punished at any time in the past, as well as those who have never committed a criminal offense; primarily (to the greatest extent) achieved through action on pre-delinquent behaviors (pre-delinquent prevention); prevention achieved through action on complex criminogenic factors, taking into account the phenomenology and etiology of criminal behaviors; prevention represents a unified and global activity according to its intention and purpose, while its content depends on the measures and instruments applied; organized, planned, and primarily prognostic-oriented approach to preventive activities is an essential component of contemporary crime prevention (Horvatić & Cvitanović, 1999:182).

For these reasons, crime prevention policy should focus on the crucial area concerning juvenile delinquency, as this type of

delinquency hampers and disrupts the prosperity of every society. Moreover, it is widely believed that the position of youth is of crucial importance for social progress. In this regard, the UN Guidelines on the Prevention of Juvenile Delinquency – Riyadh Guidelines (Basic Principles 1 and 5a) state: "Preventing juvenile delinquency is a key part of crime prevention in society. Young people can develop non-criminal attitudes in legally regulated, socially beneficial activities, and by adopting a humanistic orientation towards society and a humanistic view of life... Advanced preventive policy should include the creation of educational opportunities that meet the diverse needs of young people and serve as a mechanism to support the development of their personalities, especially those who are clearly at risk or exposed to social risks and require special care and protection."

**Figure 2.** Crime prevention is conducted through three levels

<b>Primary</b>	Its aim is to reduce all identified factors at the level of family, community, institutions that contribute to the development of crime, and it is implemented through the educational and informational system, cultural institutions, assistance and work with families, social protection institutions, non-governmental sector, especially youth organizations, and other means..
<b>Secondary</b>	It is carried out through specific programs in various areas targeting phenomena, groups, and individuals at higher risk of engaging in criminal activities.
<b>Tertiary</b>	It is focused on actions when crime has already occurred, as well as preventing recidivism and the commission of serious criminal offenses. All preventive efforts are fundamentally directed towards: the situation (creating an environment unfavorable for committing crimes), the social environment (family, school, peers, cultural institutions, etc.) of potential offenders and offenders (behavioral control and change), potential victims (reducing the likelihood of becoming victims of crime), and collaboration with citizens to respond to criminal occurrences.

(Jović, et al. 2009).

**Primary prevention** involves activities aimed at addressing a wide range of at-risk groups who could potentially become perpetrators or victims of crime. State structures are directed to pay attention to underlying causes such as poverty, unemployment, domestic violence, and others, since criminals often come from various social spheres, reflecting economic, political, familial, and other community relationships. Furthermore, states are encouraged to take measures such as research, informational and media campaigns aimed at raising awareness and education, along with intensifying social and economic initiatives for primary crime prevention (Bjelajac, 2015a:195). Primary prevention (focused on the public and the environment in general) is achieved through improving general social conditions, specifically by addressing the root causes of crime. Its manifestation is most pronounced through activities like social integration, removing social barriers, and reducing various structures that foster criminal environments. It is primarily implemented targeting minors, unemployed individuals, maladjusted groups, etc. (Northoff & Stroth, 1996). This type of crime prevention represents a widely spread activity and includes: environmental design (appropriate architectural solutions, public lighting, access control to buildings or spaces), neighborhood watch, engagement of security agencies, and educating citizens for self-protection. All these aims are fully intended to eliminate the causes of crime occurrence and objectively enhance individuals' subjective (in)security within the community (Meško, 2002:57).

**Secondary prevention** typically focuses on law enforcement agencies. This type of activity (programs) involves identifying areas within local communities with varying levels of crime rates. The focus of interest lies in the causes of crime (etiology), aiming to suppress or reduce specific types of prohibited behavior by individuals or groups. General prevention programs mostly include monitoring, monitoring crime within local communities, patrol activities, and the development of programs primarily focused on specific criminal acts, etc. This primarily refers to property crimes such as robbery, motor vehicle theft, shoplifting, burglary in homes, cars, or business premises, domestic violence, school violence, drug abuse (Kratcoski, et al.,

2000). Today, the emphasis is particularly on the fact that secondary prevention enhances situational and interactive aspects of certain criminal acts, thus attempting to reduce opportunities for committing such crimes. This activity is implemented in various ways, notably: security-technical measures (construction, electronic, optical, etc.), measures for optimal security of homes and private houses, measures involving direct or indirect police presence, working with potential victims to reduce opportunities for successful commission of crimes (Northoff & Stroth, 1996). As observed, secondary prevention intervenes towards potential offenders in a manner that prevents them from committing criminal acts. This form of prevention aims to prevent the deepening or spread of criminal behavior by early identification of young people who may be considered at risk due to their tendencies towards potential involvement in criminal activities.

The **tertiary area of crime prevention** is focused on individuals who have been convicted of criminal offenses and still pose a significant threat to society (criminal potential). It applies treatment measures aimed at preventing them from committing further crimes in the future (Hiss, et al., 2009:59). Tertiary prevention programs represent the most concrete and specific part of crime prevention. These programs are directed towards individuals and involve various measures such as increased surveillance and control of recidivists (reporting obligations to police stations, monitoring movements, specific police sector measures, and involving citizens in monitoring recidivists). Recently, there has been a global focus on the use of technical surveillance and tracking devices, such as modern electronic systems with radio transmitters and computer monitoring (Muratbegović, 2006:48).

In addition to these measures, there are interesting approaches that use socio-psychological and psycho-sociotherapeutic treatments for certain categories of recidivists, such as perpetrators of sexual offenses, where psychological treatment is conducted in parallel with medication therapy (Albrecht, 1999). Thus, tertiary prevention is applied in phases of victimization and traumatization to mitigate the psychophysical violence consequences and provide psychosocial

assistance and protection. From the perspective of tertiary prevention, it is also necessary to adjust sentencing policies so that penalties for criminals are proportionate to the crimes committed. Moreover, it is crucial that activities and interventions within this type of prevention program help individuals deviate from criminal behavior and prevent them from committing crimes in the future.

Ultimately, the affirmation of crime prevention policy correlates with the engagement of crime suppression entities, particularly the functioning of the police and its role in combating crime. Modern policing strategies, police preventive activities, repressive police activities, police functionality, and the overall problem-solving strategies have limited results without collaboration with the local community. Within these frameworks, this collaboration can also extend to prosecution, criminal justice, criminal sanction execution systems, and the scopes of non-criminal subjects of crime prevention policy, notably families, schools, and media.

In crime prevention policy, particularly in preventive activities, it is essential to emphasize the understanding of the origins of criminal behavior and subsequently the application of criminal profiling as part of developmental potentials that inspire strategies and measures aimed at achieving desired effects through timely interventions to minimize the likelihood of crime escalation and multiple harmful effects on individuals and society, where fear predominates as the primary emotion, intensely manifesting due to perception of imagined, real, or serious threats.

### **Origin of criminal behavior as an introduction to criminal profiling**

Recently, in an effort to more clearly identify the etiology of criminal behavior and channel activities towards a proactive approach, akin to preventive problem-solving, a matrix approach has been adopted, similar to that used in the medical community. For example, in assessing the risk of diabetes, a disease influenced by genetic factors, lifestyle habits, or environmental factors, doctors procedurally gather patient health history data, including family history, lifestyle,

diet, obesity, blood pressure, stress, etc., to measure risks to their health. After assessing risks, doctors propose ways for patients to neutralize or reduce them. This mechanism can be effective in determining the type of intervention that suits the needs of young people, especially those exposed to specific risk factors for delinquency (Bjelajac, 2023:88).

Thus, the perception of the origins of criminal behavior can serve as a good prelude or tool for criminal profiling. Parents, educators, teachers, and particularly psychological and pedagogical services in schools, should be educated in basic techniques for profiling minors and recognizing early signs to detect tendencies towards criminal behavior. Such a proactive approach is actually a "pledge" for their future and healthy upbringing.

There is noted interaction among multiple risk factors - predictors for delinquency and behavioral disorders, which explain the nature and persistence patterns in criminal behavior. Risk factors in the social environment (socioeconomic status, preschool experiences, educational failure and truancy, quality of after-school care, peer rejection, association with antisocial peers, etc.) can be strong predictors of general delinquency. Risk factors associated with parents and family (dysfunctional family dynamics, broken home, parenting styles and practices, parental supervision, alcohol and substance abuse by parents, influence of siblings, parental psychopathology, neglect and abuse, etc.) highlight the crucial role of these factors in predicting criminal behavior. It is assumed that family problems not only predict criminal behavior but also play a significant role as potential causes of later persistence in criminal acts (Bjelajac, 2024).

The role of psychological factors in predisposing to criminal behavior is consistent and pronounced. These factors include personality traits, comorbid psychiatric conditions, value judgments and cognitions, affective components, and motivation. Their interactive effects produce various levels of antisocial conditions and problematic behaviors. Attachment disorder is a condition that affects mood or behavior and hinders people from forming and maintaining relationships with others. Risk factors for this disorder may include

caregivers with poor parenting skills, neglect by parents, emotional, physical, or sexual abuse, parental anger, parents with psychiatric conditions, prenatal exposure to alcohol or drugs. Exposed children may suffer from conduct disorders, lack or absence of empathy, which is the ability to understand and share feelings with others. They may also have other disorders such as cognitive-communication disorders, attention-deficit/hyperactivity disorder, oppositional defiant disorder, and so on (Bjelajac, 2024).

Of course, the risk factor catalog is incomplete without considering biological factors/relationships with criminal behavior, primarily in the domains of genetics and antisocial behavior, psychophysiological factors (temperament), environmental risk factors (neurotoxins), exposure to nicotine, alcohol, and drugs, traumatic brain injuries, brain developmental abnormalities, brain plasticity (neuroplasticity), hormones and neurotransmitters, including neuropsychological factors.

Additionally, the origins of criminal behavior must be viewed within the framework of learning and situational factors. Among other approaches, we can mention the behavioral approach to criminal behavior; operant learning and criminal behavior; social learning and criminal behavior; expectancy theory; imitation aspects of social learning in the context of criminal model imitation; differential association-reinforcement theory of criminal behavior; the role of frustration in criminal behavior; and situational determinants of criminal behavior.

Lastly, numerous psychiatric disorders and neuropsychological conditions can be associated with criminal behavior, aggression, and violence. Therefore, it is crucial to consider psychopathy, mental disorders, and criminal behavior. Psychopathy, in particular, deserves attention due to its high prevalence in the population and its various interactions with persistent and continuous patterns of aggressive and violent behavior (Bjelajac, 2023:221). As explained by Reid Meloy, author of "The Psychopathic Mind: Origins, Dynamics, and Treatment," psychopathic serial killers are emotionally detached from their actions and therefore indifferent to the suffering of their victims. Their ability

to emotionally detach from their actions and their denial of responsibility effectively neutralizes any guilt or remorse that others might feel in similar circumstances. Their lack of affect makes them almost invisible to detection (Meloy, 1988).

The question of what constitutes a mental disorder is crucial and forms the foundation of psychiatric philosophy, with significant practical implications for clinicians and patients alike. Moreover, there is a real possibility that different types of social deviations or variations in behavior may be misclassified as disorders when better conceptualized using other categories, such as non-pathological individual differences, lifestyle choices, or crime (Stein, et al., 2021 & DSM-I. Washington, 1952). The link between most individuals diagnosed with mental disorders and criminal behavior is not consistent. However, for certain mental disorders, it can be highlighted that they generate risk factors for certain criminal acts. Individuals with schizophrenia (especially in the paranoid form), bipolar disorder, if they have comorbid alcohol and substance abuse, often exhibit explosive affect, making them prone to violence and increasing the risk of aggressive and/or criminal behavior (Bjelajac, 2023:251). Therefore, criminal behavior is a complex phenomenon influenced by numerous factors. Certain mental health issues are not necessarily triggers for criminal behavior, but it cannot be ruled out a priori that specific conditions may increase the likelihood that individuals will engage in serious criminal acts.

Considering the sequence of risk factors for the development of criminal behavior, we cannot overlook the influence of mass media, especially the internet, which constitutes a new subculture and has a suggestive effect on modern individuals (Bjelajac & Filipović, 2020). They affect, among other things, the creation of different people's attitudes. The destruction of mass media, which is very often superior to responsibility, introduces us into the latent world of immorality, perversion, hatred, lies, divisions, while giving us a picture of the lavish life and power of criminals, suggesting to the gullible viewer that criminal behavior can be profitable. In this way, the phenomenon of alienation and dehumanization is affirmed in contemporary society, thus openly promoting feelings of alienation and lack of empathy that

can lead to various social problems and deviations, exacerbating psychosomatic disorders, and ultimately implying criminal behavior.

### **Criminal profiling as a protective factor and prediction of risk factors**

The origin of criminal behavior is, in fact, an introduction or precursor to criminal profiling. Questions about how to penetrate the criminal mind have always aroused curiosity and fascination. By delving into the mind of a criminal, we can observe characteristic patterns of antisocial behavior, deviant thoughts and actions, impulsivity, disloyalty, selfishness, lack of empathy. We can understand and detect signs of criminal intent and use them in crime prevention. We can also dare to assume the risk factors that led individuals to engage in criminal activities. Therefore, the concept of profiling, as a protective factor, has the potential to be an important countermeasure to risk factors (Bjelajac, 2023:88). Thus, through practical application of criminal profiling in detecting and preventing crimes, a close and natural connection is established between the origin of criminal behavior (described and listed risk factors) and the modus operandi of behavioral analysts.

"The most important thing to know about profiling is that in and of itself, there's nothing inherently wrong with it. Generally, profiling is not illegal. It's not inappropriate. It's actually something that we all do every day. If you're married or dating someone, you've profiled that person before you got involved with them. If you've gotten a dog from a humane society or an animal shelter, you've even profiled that dog. You had an idea of the kind of dog you wanted when you walked in there. Then you looked at the dogs in front of you, looked at their characteristics, studied them, tried to see if some of their characteristics matched the characteristics you thought you liked. That's profiling. Everyone profiles every day, so do police officers. Law enforcement officers make a living at profiling. If you enjoy watching the BBC's Sherlock or CBS's Criminal Minds, then you enjoy a show that's about people who make a living looking at characteristics, clustering characteristics, and suggesting that person A is more likely than person

B to act a certain way based on certain characteristics they have in common with a whole bunch of other people who have those characteristics and who are known to have done those acts" (Weaver, n.d.). "A profiler is a person who possesses certain psychological methods thanks to which he manages to predict the behavior of a person in this or that situation. Based on seemingly basic things, such as characteristics, appearance, verbal and non-verbal behavior, the profiler sees the interlocutor from the inside. In his work, the profiler uses the technology of reading body language, facial expressions, and reading between the lines. For example, there is a suspect who wants to cover up the case of committing a terrorist act. Of course, when the same is examined, the examiner follows his speech and tries to control his behavior. But when a criminal investigator asks about luggage left at the station, the eyes of the suspect are filled with a light alarm, he practically imperceptibly strains his arm – an experienced specialist should notice that" (Profiler – Šta je to?, n.d.). "The art of identifying the smallest details in another person's behavior requires the profiler to have a lot of knowledge and professional skills. It is essential to clearly understand what exactly needs attention and what can be pushed into the background. Often in his work, the profiler (verifier) uses a dictaphone or a video camera to record a conversation or video of the situation as a whole. This method works effectively because when you have personal contact, you can miss seemingly insignificant details, and the recording fixes everything. After the conversation, you can simply turn on the recording and listen to it/view it and carry out a certain analysis. The verifier observes facial expressions, gestures, behavioral characteristics, examines psycholinguistic speech patterns, paralinguistic signs of verbal production" (Profiler – What Is It?, n.d.). This is actually an approach that is an alternative to the polygraph, a device widely used for lie detection, which monitors physiological changes in the body of the person being examined. The level of excitement, anxiety, pulse, blood pressure, breathing, represent physiological responses that are associated with lies. Skilled criminal profilers are living lie detectors, as opposed to favored artificial intelligence, which is increasingly used to recognize emotions and a violent mentality.

While the polygraph is widely used in the work of criminal enforcement agencies and other environments as a tool for detecting deception, its scientific validity and reliability are widely debated. The accuracy of the polygraph has been questioned by research showing that people can learn to manipulate their physiological responses and that the device can produce false positives or false negatives (Saxe, et al., 1985). Profilers, as part of law enforcement teams, use their knowledge, intuition, and experience to reconstruct the crime from start to finish and create psychological profiles of potential suspects. Through analysis of behavior and physical evidence surrounding the crime, they gather information that points them toward the most realistic scenario. This significantly narrows the search for law enforcement agencies and directs efforts solely toward individuals who meet the criteria for flagged criteria (Bjelajac, 2022). Therefore, the skill of a profiler is based on creating a portrait of criminals that is identical or nearly identical to their actual appearance. The key mission of a profiler is to clearly define the boundaries between lies and truth. However simple it may seem, that by listening to a person whose dialogue is characterized by illogicality, confusion, contemplation over answers, nervousness, etc., you can conclude that they are a perpetrator or accomplice in a criminal act, practice shows that premature reasoning can be deceptive. Profiler tasks are not simple. Observing people who commit crimes or have such inclinations, predicting their activities, real intentions, and actions requires more than mental strain" (Bjelajac, 2023:90-91). Understanding the complex human character traits, recognizing lies through body language, expressions, and other signals, sometimes is difficult for detection due to the complexity of human nature. As lies and deception are common human behaviors, the ability to separate lies from truth is a crucial element in criminal investigations. However, lying in comparison to telling the truth entails psychological pressure. If added to greater cognitive complexity, the signals of lying and suspicious behavior may be symptomatic.

Many scientists and researchers dedicated their work on this topic, and one of the most renowned scientists with greatest results in

this field is Paul Ekman. Dr. Ekman is a psychologist known for his work on emotions and facial expressions, and he has also contributed significantly to the field of lie detection. Ekman's research on facial expressions and nonverbal behavior has informed his approach to lie detection, which is based on the idea that certain facial expressions and other nonverbal cues can reveal when someone is lying. Ekman and his colleagues developed a method of lie detection based on the Facial Action Coding System (FACS), which is a standardized system for describing facial expressions. According to Ekman's approach, when people try to conceal their emotions or lie, their facial expressions may reveal "microexpressions" or brief, involuntary expressions that contradict their verbal statements (Ekman & Friesen, 1974). Ekman's method involves observing the subject's facial expressions and nonverbal behavior while they are being questioned, and looking for signs of deception such as microexpressions, changes in vocal tone, or other subtle cues. He has also developed training programs to help people improve their ability to detect deception by recognizing these cues. While Ekman's approach to lie detection has been controversial and is not universally accepted, it has had a significant impact on the field and has contributed to our understanding of the relationship between emotions, facial expressions, and deception. Additionally, Ekman has developed training programs to help people improve their ability to detect deception by recognizing these cues (Bjelajac & Filipović, 2023). Despite conflicting opinions on how effective profiling can be in preventing crime, proponents of criminal profiling rightly argue that profiling can help prevent criminal behavior by providing police insight into the psychological makeup of offenders, which can help predict and prevent future crimes. For example, a profiler could identify specific behaviors or patterns indicative of a particular type of offender, such as a serial killer or sexual predator, which can assist police in focusing their investigations and increasing the likelihood of apprehending criminals before they commit further crimes (Canter & Alison, 1999). By analyzing evidence from crime scenes and identifying common characteristics among offenders, profilers can provide law enforcement agencies with information about potential future offenders

and the types of crimes most likely to be committed in specific areas (Canter & Alison, 1999). It is wrong to assume that the primary function of criminal profiling is the detection and apprehension of perpetrators. While the knowledge that criminals will be caught and deprived of their freedom is generally a good preventive measure, which serves to deter potential criminals from committing crimes, we must have a broader understanding of this profession.

Given the broad applicability of this specialty, it would be appropriate for parents or guardians, educators in preschools, teachers, professors in secondary and higher education, pediatricians, psychologists, educators, social workers, police officers, and all others who work with children, to learn basic skills in detecting early signs of bullies, individuals with maladjusted behaviors, and sociopaths. It is unnecessary to expect them to be on the same level as people whose professions are closely related to profiling: psychiatrist, psychologist, criminal investigator, polygraph examiner. In addition to having higher or incomplete higher education, a profiler must possess certain personal qualities, such as empathy, honesty, stress resistance, emotional stability, perseverance, caring, and willingness to help others, etc. (Bjelajac, 2022). We must understand that education for this specialty is not unattainable and demanding. Of course, to master certain skills, in addition to education playing a crucial role, other prerequisites such as will and dedication are necessary. The mission to contribute to a safer community life is a good reason to consider the concept of profiling as a protective factor and a countermeasure to risk factors for the development of criminal behavior.

Parents and teachers should "take small steps" to apply basic knowledge of profiling so that they can react effectively and prevent early cases of maladjusted behaviors from ever developing into more serious ones. For example, changes in mood, behavior, appearance, hygiene, psychophysical health, can be a reason to suspect that a child is using drugs. Signs of drug use can be easily sought through breath, hair odor, clothing, eye changes (redness, heavy eyelids, narrowed pupils). Prevention measures and early actions can begin with checking common places where the child sleeps and stays. Do not neglect the

mobile phone and other digital devices that may indicate suspicious contacts and actions. Getting to know your child's friends and peers and being involved in their lives is the right reaction. Lastly, do not hesitate to occasionally test your child for substances. By the way, remember that a new expensive iPhone in the hands of a high school student, which she says she received as a gift from a friend, can be an early sign that someone is sexually exploiting the child. Sometimes neglect and lack of attention to a child having new clothes, makeup, and other items without a real explanation of how they acquired them, can be an introduction to a classic scenario related to prostitution.

## **Discussion**

If we promote the tendency to engage in proactive action in the context of crime prevention and the concept of criminal profiling as a protective factor, we cannot ignore the fact that Serbia was shaken by two cases of senseless violence and mass murder in May 2023, resulting in dozens dead and injured in two separate incidents. The first mass crime occurred at an elite elementary school in Belgrade on May 3, 2023, and we will give special attention to it in our discussion in an analytical, substantive, and content-oriented sense, because the perpetrator was a juvenile, K.K., and the crime was accompanied by numerous controversies.

The second mass crime occurred on May 4, 2023, in Mladenovac, a town less than 50 km south of Belgrade. It was committed by a 21-year-old, U.B., who used firearms to kill 8 people and injure 14 others, one of whom later died. During a search of the suspect's weekend house, the police found a considerable amount of weapons, ammunition, and explosives. The Mladenovac killer was already known to the police. According to his neighbors, he had killed their pets around the village. He had been arrested for theft, possession of weapons, and physical assault on a police officer. There was an obvious failure in the response of the police, the criminal justice system, and the entire community safety system, with a lack of subjective and objective accountability. In both cases, there is a

significant parental responsibility for serious crimes against public safety, preceded by neglect and tolerance towards antisocial behavior.

**Figure 3.** The case of mass shooting in elementary school Vladislav Ribnikar in Belgrade, Serbia

Basic information	The profile of underage perpetrator	Family /School/ Environment
<p><b>Crime Scene:</b> The Model Elementary School Vladislav Ribnikar is an elite educational institution with tradition and quality. It is located in Vračar, Belgrade.</p> <p><b>Crime Description:</b> On May 3, 2023, in the morning hours, K.K. (13), a seventh-grade student, entered the school with firearms (two of his father's pistols) and homemade Molotov cocktails, committing a horrific crime. He killed eight students and a security guard, while a severely injured girl passed away twelve days later. He also wounded six other students and a teacher.</p> <p><b>After the Crime:</b> After the massacre, he calmly called the police and surrendered. According to police reports, he said, "I killed them because I am a sociopath." The weapons used in the crime were found, along with four Molotov cocktails. A list of children who were "priority targets" for K.K. was discovered, along with a sketch of the school's entrance and exit and the layout of classrooms and the classes they held. The motive for the murders has not yet been determined, although it is suspected. According to the</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• It is evident, from the analysis of available information, that the minor K.K. exhibited behavioral problems conditioned by individual risk factors: poor conflict management skills; low social skills; access to weapons; external attribution model; experiences of humiliation or rejection; victim of abuse or neglect (physical, emotional, sexual); poor relationships, isolation (Justicia, et al., 2006).</li> <li>• Difficult and unpredictable temperament (innate tendencies or natural ways we express emotions and behaviors).</li> <li>• Demonstrated patterns of frustration (emotional reactions to stress, a condition that arises from the inability to satisfy our needs under the burden of some barrier).</li> <li>• Pressure from ambitious parents who demanded flawless performance in school and excessive extracurricular activities.</li> <li>• Competitive nature contributed to occasional conflicts with children who may have been better than him in a particular class.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Family:</b> Maladjusted parental activities; ineffective parenting styles and practices; low supervision or control; pronounced or latent family conflicts and misunderstandings; low emotional support; inconsistent discipline.</p> <p><b>School:</b> Peer rejection; ineffective responses from teachers; poor coordination between parents or guardians and educators, teachers, psychological and pedagogical services.</p> <p><b>Epilogue:</b> The Public Prosecutor's Office in Belgrade has filed charges against the boy's father and mother, as well as the owner and instructor of the shooting range. The boy's father is charged with a serious offense against public safety for training his son to handle firearms and airguns a year before the mass murder at "Vladislav Ribnikar" Elementary School and taking him to the shooting range. The prosecution has requested the maximum sentence of 12 years in prison for him. The boy's mother, whose DNA was found on one of the discharged bullet casings in the history classroom, has been charged for her involvement,</p>

police report, he had been planning the crime for a month. More details will be known after psychiatric evaluation. As reported by the media, he remorselessly stated that he regretted not having killed all the children on his list. "I regret not killing them all. I wanted to go back and kill them, but I dropped my backpack with Molotov cocktails in the schoolyard and couldn't do it," the boy told social workers after the shooting.

- Some described him as depressive, quiet, withdrawn, and lonely, with little communication with peers. Consequently, he was not accepted in his new class, where he was transferred.
- Maladjusted behavior, lack of empathy, and motives to develop social feelings or adapt to social relationships resulted in rejection by most peers. Odsustvo krivice i kajanja su važne informacije koje stručna lica upućuju da dečak ubica iz nekog razloga nema formiranu važnu komponentu ličnosti, takozvani superego.
- The boy killer is in psychiatric clinic isolation and shows no remorse. He is cold and calm, has not sought to contact anyone, nor does he show interest in his parents. His only inquiries are encapsulated in two questions: "When do I get out?" and "What impact did what I did have?"

(Author's research, 2024)

According to Sigmund Freud's theory, the founder of psychoanalysis, the superego is the ethical component of a person's personality that provides moral standards based on which the individual behaves. The superego primarily develops during the first five years of a child's life in response to parental rewards and punishments. The child absorbs moral standards from their parents, family traditions, and the society in which they grow up, forming the superego that controls aggression and other socially undesirable impulses. When a child has a well-developed superego, they feel guilt or anxiety when they violate ethical standards set by their superego and have a need to make

amends for their mistakes. In the case of the boy killer, none of this exists. He does not feel guilt and, in fact, eagerly awaits the moment when he will be released from the clinic, convinced that it should happen any moment. He is not given sedatives because he is completely calm (Jevtić, 2023). The presented case highlights the importance of profiling juveniles by the psychological-pedagogical service (PPS), teachers, and parents. Juvenile K.K. exhibited clear signs of maladjusted behavior, and there were numerous opportunities for proactive measures to prevent a negative and tragic outcome, especially through the actions of parents, PPS, and teachers. These actions could have included assessments, engaging in conversations, and providing support. However, unfortunately, the mentioned services and individuals showed irresponsibility, lack of awareness, or disinterest in recognizing early signs of antisocial behavior (Bjelajac & Filipović, 2023). Such neglect, negligence in work, disregard, irresponsibility, or ignorance cannot be justified, as such an approach is highly unacceptable given the seriousness of the situation.

## **Conclusion**

We understand the importance of safety in the hierarchy of human needs, yet in facing crimes, pervasive violence, and their consequences, the system built to ensure community safety fails to align with the demands of social trends. Instead of focusing on primary prevention aimed at reducing all identified risk factors at the family and community levels through educational and informational systems, or secondary prevention targeting particularly vulnerable groups and individuals prone to delinquent behavior, there is a reliance on tertiary prevention aimed at addressing situations where crime has already occurred. The two mentioned cases of mass murders underscore how proactive action is crucial in recognizing risk factors for the development of criminal behavior.

One of the key factors in primary prevention rightly involves criminal/psychological profiling. Had teachers, school psychologists, and educators recognized the maladjusted behavior of the boy K.K. and his traits indicating a lack of empathy, and had they incidentally

discovered that the child was exposed by his father to behavior unsuitable for his emotional development, including training in a shooting range, they would have provided necessary psychological support for the boy, potentially influencing the avoidance of this tragic outcome. If someone had recognized the animal abuse and killings by the young man U.B. as a precursor to more serious crimes (most serial killers in childhood/youth have a history of animal abuse and killings), perhaps the tragedy could have been averted.

In short, understanding the origins of criminal behavior and recognizing early signals to detect potential perpetrators should not be seen as an option but as a necessity to be embraced in the daily work of teachers, educators, psychologists, security personnel, police officers, social workers, and above all, parents or guardians.

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## **Koncept kriminalističkog profilisanja u savremenoj politici suzbijanja kriminaliteta**

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### **Sažetak**

Kriminalitet kao permanentna prateća pojava u razvoju svakog društva u današnje vreme poprima sve ozbiljnije razmere. Ekspanzija nasilnih i teških zločina doprinosi sve većoj nesigurnosti i zabrinutosti međunarodne zajednice. Aktuelni trendovi kriminala, pored transnacionalnog karaktera, ukazuju na sve veću mobilnost, inventivnost, sofisticiranost, ali i svojevrsnu beskrupuloznost. Ova negativna društvena pojava, pored toga što opstruira društveni, ekonomski, politički i kulturni razvoj društvene zajednice, predstavlja jednu od najvećih pretnji za ljudsku bezbednost. Stoga savremena politika suzbijanja kriminaliteta mora da pruži delotvorne odgovore na dinamičnu prirodu kriminaliteta, prevashodno kroz postavljanje visokih kriterijuma za izbor policajaca, kriminalističkih istražitelja, sudija, tužilaca uz sprovođenja obavezne periodične edukacije i evaluacije. Ovaj proces uključuje poznavanje i usavršavanje koncepta kriminalističkog profilisanja, kao važne komponente kriminalističkog istraživanja koje je neodvojivo i funkcionalno povezano sa politikom suzbijanja kriminaliteta. Ta koincidiranost odražava i cilj ovoga rada.

*Ključne reči:* kriminalitet, kriminalističko profilisanje, politika suzbijanja kriminaliteta, kriminalističko istraživanje, ljudska bezbednost