
MODERN TRENDS IN FEMALE CRIMINALITY IN THE REPUBLIC OF KAZAKHSTAN FROM A GENDER PERSPECTIVE

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Abstract

The changes in the socioeconomic role of women provoke an increase in female crime as well as an increase in the proportion of convicted women. In the Republic of Kazakhstan, the trend of convergence of gender and social roles leads to the lessening of the gap between female and male crime. To

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address the growing numbers of female crime in Kazakhstan, measures are being taken to humanize criminal legislation. However, the official statistics of the Prosecutor General's Office show that along with a decrease in the number of women's criminal cases, there is an increase in administrative offenses committed by women. Thus, the analysis of the quantitative and qualitative characteristics of modern female crime in the context of a gender approach allowed the authors to identify modern trends and propose measures to combat female crime in the Republic of Kazakhstan.

Key Words

Women's crime; gender gap; feminist criminology; humanization of legislation.

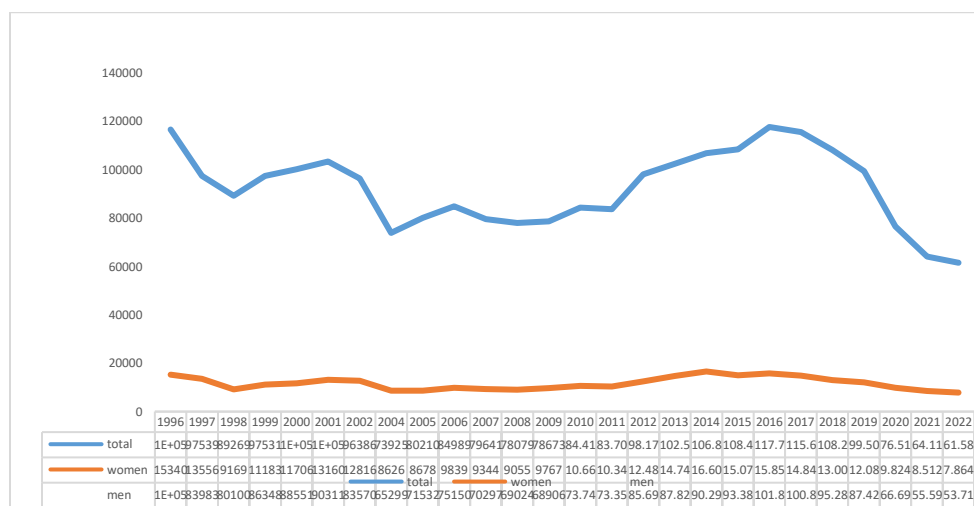
INTRODUCTION

Modern realities of social life demonstrate the vulnerability of women in comparison with men due to their greater work and home load, fear of losing their jobs, low wages, and weak social protections or support of motherhood. There remains an ever-increasing need for better socioeconomic conditions, which cannot be met because of the discrepancies in the status of women in the social structure. As a result of socioeconomic differentiation, tensions are increasing, which often leads to deviations among women such as domestic drunkenness, alcoholism, drug addiction, and prostitution. All of the above, along with the change in the social role of women in society, encourages more and more women to commit crimes.

Official statistics from the Committee on Legal Statistics and Special Accounts of the Office of the Prosecutor General of the Republic of Kazakhstan show swinging trends in the dynamics of both general crime and female and male crime. Female crime peaked in 1996 (15,340 crimes) and 2014 (16,608 crimes); the highest rates of crimes committed by men in 1996 were 101,327, in 2016 – 101,887.

From the end of the 2000s to 2014, there has been an increase in female crime, and since 2014, women and men have had a steady downward trend in overall crime (see Figure 1).

Figure 1: Number of crimes committed by women and men in the Republic of Kazakhstan



Note: Compiled by the authors based on "Statistical Indicators of the Committee on Legal Statistics and Special Accounts of the General Prosecutor's Office of the Republic of Kazakhstan" (<https://qamqor.gov.kz/crimestat/statistics>). In the public domain.

In general, over the past 25 years, there has been a stable gender gap in crime in Kazakhstan, characterized by a much lower level of female crime compared to male.

Despite the general trends in the development of crime among both sexes, each of them has its own distinctive features, factors, and quantitative and qualitative differences.

The analysis of crimes committed by women makes it possible for the State to respond by changing legislation in a timely manner. In addition, the study of the quantitative and qualitative characteristics of female crime in the context of the gender perspective helps to develop better targeted preventive measures to reduce such crimes.

LITERATURE REVIEW

The problem of female delinquency in the context of gender approach started to receive its due attention only in the 1980s in foreign Anglo-American literature.

One of the first scholarly works is the monograph "Women, Crime and Criminology" by C. Smart, first published in 1977. The author emphasizes that the lack of interest in women's crimes is explained by its insignificant scale compared to men's crimes (Smart, 1977).

At the same time, the scholarly paper of the American researcher Adler Freda "Sisters in Crime: The Rise of the New Female Criminal" was published. The author divided crimes into male and female, rejecting the theory of a gender-passive female criminal. Using crimes such as prostitution and violent crimes, the researcher proved that the increase in female crime is explained by the expansion of women's empowerment. So, for example, if a woman has a body that can be sold, she can become a

prostitute... if a woman works as a clerk in a bank, this leads to her becoming able to commit bank fraud. By this, a woman who commits crimes is under the constraints of socioeconomic factors (Adler, 1975).

This position was similar to that of Rita James Simon, who, in her monograph "The Contemporary Women and Crime", suggested that "as women become freer from domestic work, they are more engaged in work and are more likely to engage in the types of crime for which the profession offers them the greatest opportunity." Rita James Simon cited statistics showing that in 1972 the most common types of crimes among women in the United States were forgery, fraud, and embezzlement (Simon, 1975), which, in conjunction with the theory of possibilities, confirmed her hypothesis.

Since the 1970s, Carlen has been researching the problem of women inmates in the UK. In her monograph "Women's Imprisonment. A Study in Social Control" the researcher emphasized that the 65% increase in the number of imprisoned women over the past 12 years had also brought up problems associated with their detention (Carlen, 1983). Later, P. Carlen in 2000, while continuing to study the English prison system based on the prison statistics of the Home Office of England and Wales, showed that between 1990 and 1998 the number of women in prisons doubled: from 1,767 to 3,110, which was 4.9% of the total number of prisoners. The researcher concluded that female prisoners are different from males, therefore, this should be reflected both in prison regimes and in policies aimed at reducing each type of crime (Carlen, 1999/2000).

The issue of gender in judicial decision-making was the subject of a collective study by Darrell Steffensmeier, John Kramer, and Cathy Streifel "Gender and Imprisonment Decisions". In their article, the researchers conclude that gender inequality is characteristic of the length of imprisonment: gender influences the decision on the length of imprisonment (Steffensmeier et al., 1993).

In the 1980s and 1990s, almost all criminologists abroad recognized the significance of feminist criminology. Heidensohn Frances emphasized the development and importance of research on women offenders, women as victims of crime, and as participants in social control (Frances, 1995).

At the beginning of the 20th century, the gender approach in criminology took on more active development, and new aspects of the problem of female crime were revealed. Scholars compared patterns of female and male delinquency, identifying gender differences in the context of the nature of offenses (Steffensmeier, Allan, 2003).

Campaniello N., a researcher at the University of Essex (UK), supports the theory of possibilities and comes to two conclusions that are important for us. First, over the past 50 years, parallel with the increase in women's participation in the labor market, female crime has been growing. Secondly, men are more responsive to changes in illegal earnings: the study showed that doubling the expected illicit income increases the crime rate among men by 36% and women by 23%. At the same time, the author established that there were no gender differences in response to changes in the probability

of arrest – the expected probability of arrest reduces the crime rate by 14% for both sexes (Campaniello, 2019).

In the context of our research, the study by Steffensmeier, D., Schwartz, J., Slepicka, J., & Zhong, H. is of special interest. The authors identify current trends in youth crime in the United States over the past 20 years from the perspective of a gender approach. They reach the following important conclusions: first, the rates of violence among male adolescents are significantly higher than among female adolescents, both historically and currently. Secondly, since 2010 there has been a downward trend in levels of violence among young people, both among men and women. Third, juvenile court data showed a narrowing gender gap among juveniles for simple assault but not for the other violent offenses (Steffensmeier, Schwartz, Slepicka, & Zhong, 2023).

At the same time, as noted by Puzzanchera, Charles, Hockenberry, Sarah, and Sickmund, Melissa, there is a tendency for the relative decline in male arrests to outpace the decline for females. For example, drug arrests involving males fell 58% between 2010 and 2019, compared with a 24% decline for females (Puzzanchera, Hockenberry, Sickmund, 2022).

Thus, the gender approach allowed Anglo-American researchers to formulate and substantiate new theories of female criminality that explain the causes of female criminal behavior. It marked the beginning of the development of feminist criminology. Based on the identified causes, scholars can forecast the dynamics of crime development and also influence decision-making by state authorities in the area of development and improvement of legislation, as well as development of conceptual documents aimed at combating and reducing the level of crime.

Over the past twenty years legal scholars and criminologists of post-Soviet schools of law have significantly expanded and deepened research on female crime and its aspects beyond the achievements of Soviet and foreign criminology.

In the context of our research problem, of particular interest is the study by N.M. Romanova (Romanova, 2009), devoted to the consideration of the causes of women's crimes through the prism of the gender approach. Another researcher, Kupriyanova A.V. (Kupriyanova, 2008) used the scholarly and theoretical achievements of Soviet and foreign criminology in formulating the concept of "gender criminology". The author also substantiated the need to use the gender approach in the study of female crime, as well as juvenile delinquency.

Special consideration should be given to the scholarly article by M.A. Kachaeva and V.V. Rusina "Gender Aspects of the Features of Aggressive Crimes Committed by Women". The authors identify the features of female criminality, which are closely related to the historically determined place of women in the system of social relations, their social roles (gender), as well as biological and psychological features. (Kachaeva, Rusina, 2010).

Our special attention was focused on the monograph of criminologists A.E. Nabatova and T.P. Afonchenko "Gender Criminology: Concept, Structure, Content" (Nabatova, Afonchenko, 2020). Based on empirical data, criminologists distinguish an independent branch of criminology – gender

criminology, which is aimed at studying the causes, factors, and conditions of female crime, as well as its prevention.

For the purpose of comparative analysis, the authors found valuable the official statistical indicators of the composition of female crime in the Russian Federation, analyzed in the research works of S.A. Styazhkina. The most common crimes committed by women the Russian Federation are crimes against property: theft (27%), fraud (4.8%), misappropriation and embezzlement (3.16%); non-payment of funds for child support (13.4%), crimes in the field of illicit trafficking in narcotic drugs and psychotropic substances (3.18%) (Styazhkina, 2021). Koveshnikova A. also offers recommendations regarding comprehensive measures to prevent crimes of various types committed by women (Koveshnikova, 2024).

Despite the rather diverse aspects of the study of female crime, no one has done the criminological analysis of the female crime in the context of the gender approach in the Republic of Kazakhstan, which gives our study relevance and novelty.

The purpose of this study is to identify current trends based on quantitative and qualitative characteristics and propose measures to combat female crime in the Republic of Kazakhstan in the context of a gender approach.

The main part of the article is devoted to the study of the crime rate among women in Kazakhstan based on official statistical data, and the analysis of the reasons for the gender gap in crime. The authors also examine the influence of socio-economic factors, changes in gender roles and women's employment, and analyze changes in legislation and their consequences. Comparative data on crime among women in Kazakhstan and foreign countries are provided and measures are proposed to reduce female crime.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The dialectical and material methodological basis of the study allows us to comprehensively research the problem of female crime, determine its share in the overall structure of crimes, and identify the causes of female crime. Through general scholarly research methods of synthesis, analysis, and data processing, the authors will propose the most effective measures aimed at combating this illegal phenomenon.

The empirical basis of the article is represented by the (1) Statistical Indicators of the Committee on Legal Statistics and Special Accounts of the General Prosecutor's Office of the Republic of Kazakhstan on the condition and dynamics of female crime; (2) statistical compilations submitted by the Bureau of National Statistics of the Agency for Strategic Planning and Reforms of the Republic of Kazakhstan; (3) official data from the World Bank, the International Labor Organization; (4) data published in scholarly sources on women's crime in foreign countries.

DISCUSSION

In the Republic of Kazakhstan, as in many other countries, the crime rate among women is traditionally lower than among men, although women outnumber men in the general population. The latter is confirmed by the main indicators of gender statistics provided by the Bureau of National Statistics of the Agency for Strategic Planning and Reforms of the Republic of Kazakhstan (see Table 1). In terms of averages, the percentage of women in the total population of Kazakhstan is 51.7%, and men - 48.3%.

Table 1: Main indicators of gender statistics

	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010
Population, thousand people, at the end of the year	14865,6	14851,1	14 866,8	14951,2	15074,8	15219,3	15396,9	15571,5	15982,4	16203,3	16 440,5
Female	7 705,9	7 697,6	7 706,6	7 752,2	7 817,9	7 894,5	7 987,6	8 079,9	8 283,5	8 395,3	8 515,5
Male	7 159,7	7 153,5	7 160,2	7 199,0	7 256,9	7 324,8	7 409,3	7 491,6	7 698,9	7 808,0	7 925,0

	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021
Population, thousand people, at the end of the year	16673,9	16910,2	17160,9	17 415,7	17669,9	17918,2	18157,3	18395,6	18631,8	18879,5	19122,4
Female	8 632,2	8 751,3	8 876,3	9 002,6	9 128,1	9 249,7	9 366,0	9 482,4	9 597,6	9 719,1	9 835,6
Male	8 041,8	8 158,9	8 284,6	8 413,1	8 541,8	8 668,5	8 791,3	8 913,2	9 034,1	9 160,4	9 286,8

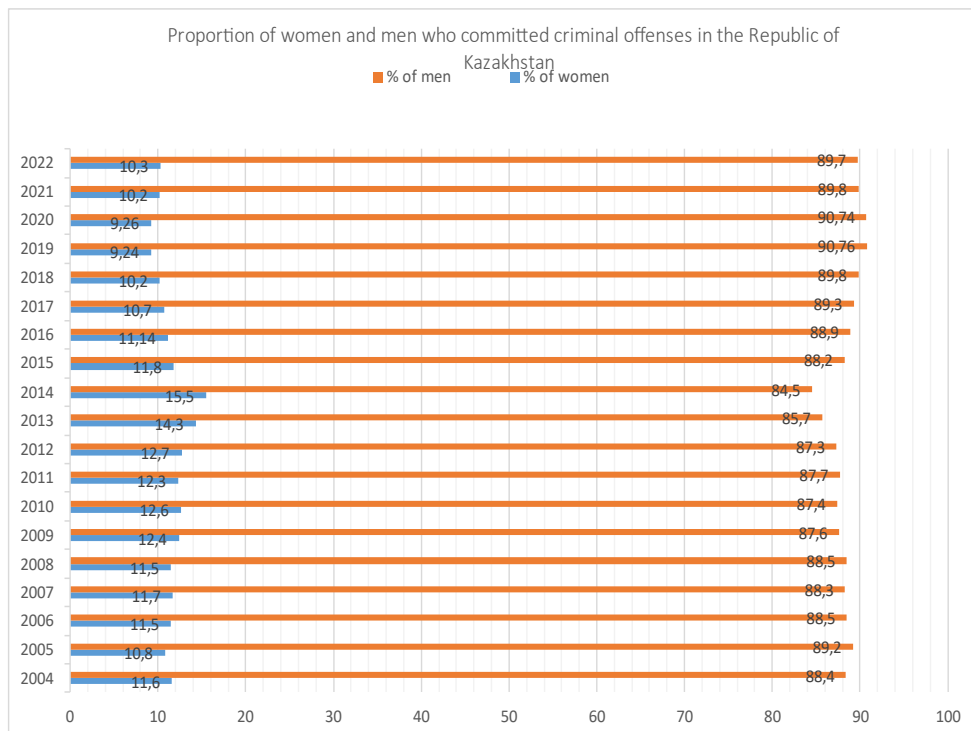
Note: From “Women and men of Kazakhstan 2017-2021” by Statistical Collection Astana, 2022, 87.

The consensus among criminologists is that the gender gap in crime is universal: women are less likely to commit crimes than men in all countries, according to Pennsylvania researchers of gender and crime Darrell Steffensmeier and Emilie Allan. They partially explain this by women's lower susceptibility to focus on material success, minimal influence on women by delinquent peers, and the manifestation of stronger social ties in women, contributing to greater social control and supervision (Steffensmeier, Allan, 2003). However, statistical indicators of the proportion of female criminals in countries vary from 10% to 25%: in the United States - 24.5%, in Germany - 21.4%, Sweden - 18.2%, South Korea - 18.0%, Japan - 17.4%, France - 15.6%. (Alekseeva, 2020). In the Russian Federation, from 1990 to 2012, the share of crime ranged from 10 to 16%, and over the past decade it has been 15 to 16%. (Vakulenko, 2021).

In other words, in every country today there is a so-called gender gap in crime. The gender gap as explained by researchers Campaniello N. and Gavrilova E., is demonstrated by the proportion of the female crimes, as well as by the percentage of women in prisons (Campaniello, Gavrilova, 2018).

In our country, according to the statistical indicators of the Committee on Legal Statistics and Special Accounts of the Prosecutor General's Office of the Republic of Kazakhstan (CLS&SA GP of RK) in the past twenty years, the average proportion of crimes committed by men is 88.5 percent, while the proportion of women who commit crimes averages 11.5 percent of the total crime rate (see Figure 2), i.e., 2 times lower than in the USA, Germany, Sweden.

Figure 2: The proportion of women and men who committed criminal offences in the Republic of Kazakhstan



Note: Compiled by the authors based on "Statistical Indicators of the Committee on Legal Statistics and Special Accounts of the General Prosecutor's Office of the Republic of Kazakhstan" (<https://qamgor.gov.kz/crimestat/statistics>). In the public domain.

From 2004 to 2014, official statistics show a slight but steady upward trend in the proportion of crimes committed by women, while the same indicators decreased among men. During this period, the number of crimes committed by women increased most sharply in 2009 and 2010, then decreased slightly in 2011, but increased again from 2012 to 2014. In 2014, the maximum proportion of crimes committed by women was 15.5 percent, compared to 11.6 percent in 2004.

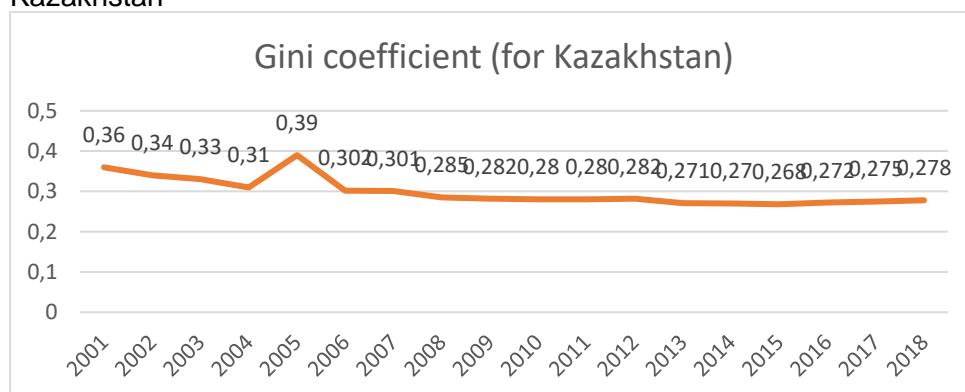
This period of growth in female crime in Kazakhstan can be partly explained by the increase in women's participation in the labor market, which is confirmed by official ILO data, visualized in Figure 3 "Employment-to-population ratio, 15+, % (ILO estimate)". At the same time, not only statistical indicators but also the theory of possibilities, mentioned in the Literature Review, demonstrate a correlation between the increase in crimes committed by women and their increased participation in the labor market.

Additionally, the quantitative gap in crime is explained by scholars as related to gender roles. The traditional gender role, which focuses on such socio-cultural indicators as motherhood, marriage, beauty, and sexuality, were factors that hindered female delinquency. (Romanova, 2009).

Consequently, in modern Kazakh society, with the change in gender roles and increased number of women joining the labor force, the reverse negative effect is manifested – an increase in their representation in criminal activities. Some criminologists (Gilinsky, 2005, Kalashnikov, 2019, Skifsky, 2007, Yuzikhanova, 2005), as well as economists (Fedotov, 2019), who identify crime factors, use the Gini coefficient to determine the impact of population inequality indicators. The Gini coefficient reflects the degree of impact of socioeconomic stratification of society on the crime rate.

Based on the World Bank's data on the Gini coefficient in the Republic of Kazakhstan (data for Kazakhstan are publicly available only for the period from 2001 to 2018, see Figure 4), as well as visualized indicators of the Committee on Legal Statistics and Special Accounts of the Prosecutor General's Office of the Republic of Kazakhstan Figure 1. "Number of crimes committed by women and men in the Republic of Kazakhstan" (Figure 1 above), it is possible to visually confirm the hypothesis that social inequality directly impacts the crime rate in the Republic of Kazakhstan. More sophisticated research would be necessary to make definite conclusion, but it should be taken into account that when the state develops measures aimed at combating female crime, it is necessary to conduct serious research related to the degree of influence of socioeconomic inequality on the crime rate and to take measures aimed at reducing inequality.

Figure 3: World Bank data on the Gini coefficient in the Republic of Kazakhstan



There are many other causes and factors of female delinquency, which are identified by criminologists, psychologists, sociologists, political scientists, and economists. However, for each type of criminal act committed by women, there will be individual reasons and factors. Therefore, to determine them, serious independent comprehensive research is needed in the context of quantitative and qualitative characteristics inherent in each type of criminal act. Moreover, if we conduct a retrospective analysis of female crime, we can notice a change in the causes of criminal behavior depending on the transformation of historical conditions. The scope of our study allows us only to identify the general qualitative and quantitative

indicators of female crime in Kazakhstan, on which we will continue to focus our attention further.

From 2015 to the present day, the data "Proportion of women and men who committed criminal offenses in the Republic of Kazakhstan" demonstrate a swinging but generally downward trend in the share of female crime in Kazakhstan.

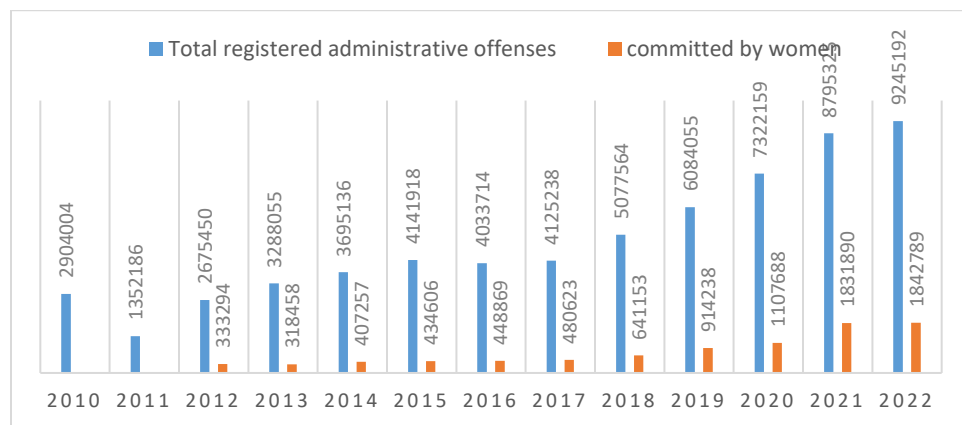
One of the reasons for the decline in female crime is the adoption of the new Criminal Code of 2014 (Criminal Code of the Republic of Kazakhstan, Code of the Republic of Kazakhstan dated July 3, 2014, No. 226-V ZRK), which, along with other codes, has become the basis for a new stage in the improvement of criminal law, criminal procedure, criminal executive, and administrative legal relations. (Sartaeva, 2016). One of the main principles of the Criminal Code of the Republic of Kazakhstan of 2014 was the principle of humanization of criminal legislation, which is manifested in many institutions of criminal law, including the norms governing exemption from criminal liability. Many types of exemption from criminal liability, according to the Kazakh professor S. Rakhmetov, allow our law enforcement agencies and courts not to bring the case to punishment... (Rakhmetov, 2015). In this case, we are talking about the introduction to the Criminal Code of the Republic of Kazakhstan of 2014 of paragraph 2 of Article 68 of the Criminal Code of the Republic of Kazakhstan "Exemption from criminal liability in connection with reconciliation", which provides that "minors, pregnant women, women with young children, men raising young children alone, women aged fifty-eight and over, men aged sixty-three and over, first-time offenders who have committed a serious crime that does not involve causing death or grievous bodily harm may be released from criminal liability if they have reconciled with the victim or applicant, including through mediation, and have made amends for the harm caused...." (Criminal Code of the Republic of Kazakhstan, 2014).

In this context, the position of Campaniello N. is relevant, emphasizing that, under equal conditions, the treatment of women accused of committing a crime, compared to men, is most lenient in favor of the female... (Campaniello, 2019).

Furthermore, after the adoption of the new Criminal Code of the Republic of Kazakhstan, there was a decrease in the number of crimes committed by women in subsequent years from 16,608 in 2014 to 7,864 in 2022.

However, the statistics of administrative offenses committed by women show the opposite growth dynamics. Official statistics reported for the last 10 years (Official statistics in the context of gender have been presented by the CLS&SA of GP of RK only since 2012; see Figure 5), show a growth trend in women's offenses by 5.5 times, against the background of an increase in the total number of administrative offenses by 3.4 times.

Figure 4: Number of administrative offenses in the Republic of Kazakhstan for the period from 2010 to 2022



Moreover, the ongoing process of humanization of the criminal legislation of the Republic of Kazakhstan continued when in 2017 the articles "Intentional Infliction of Minor Bodily Harm" and "Battery" were moved from the Criminal Code of the Republic of Kazakhstan to the Code of Administrative Offenses of the Republic of Kazakhstan. According to the statistics below (see Table 2), the number of administrative offenses related to intentional infliction of minor bodily harm committed by women almost tripled from 2017 to 2022, and the number of cases of battery inflicted by women doubled from 2018 to 2022.

Table 2. Number of registered administrative offenses

	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022
Total administrative offenses registered in the reporting period	4 125 238	5 077 564	6 084 055	7 322 159	8 795 325	9 245 192
Administrative offenses committed by women	480 623	641 153	914 238	1 107 688	25 339	184 2789
Article 73. Unlawful Acts in the Sphere of Family and Domestic Relations (Committed by Women)	1 076	1 064	1 181	1 147	1 417	1 253
Article 73-1. Intentional infliction of minor bodily harm (committed by women)	1 514	3 005	3 116	2 850	3 624	4 144
Article 73-2. Battery (Committed by women)	0	879	1 038	1 068	1 563	1 706

Article	73-3.	Defamation	0	0	0	90	277	315
(committed by women)								

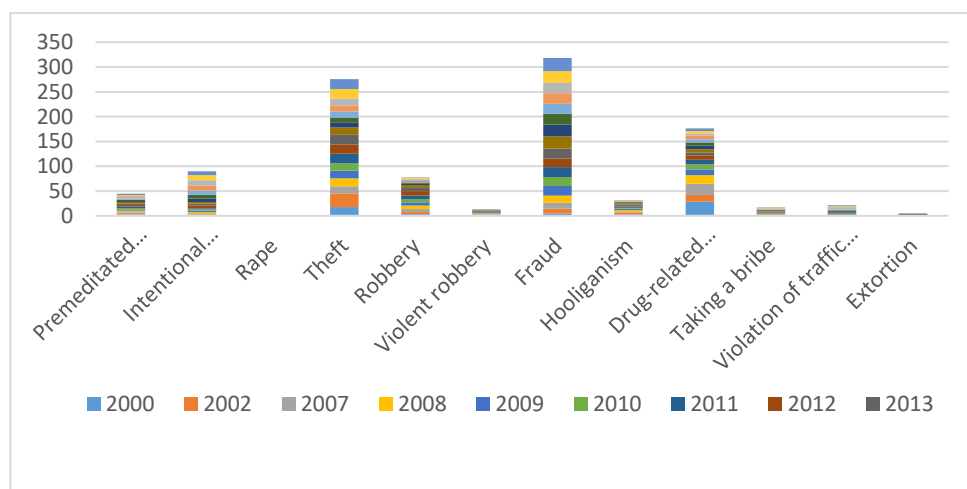
Note: Compiled by the authors based on "Statistical Indicators of the Committee on Legal Statistics and Special Accounts of the General Prosecutor's Office of the Republic of Kazakhstan" (<https://qamqor.gov.kz/crimestat/statistics>). In the public domain.

The overall picture of female delinquency consists of two interrelated components: quantitative and qualitative characteristics. In turn, according to the authoritative Kazakh criminologist E.O. Alaukhanov, it is "the analysis of qualitative signs over a long period that helps to reveal real trends and patterns of crime" (Alaukhanov, 2004). The qualitative analysis of crime is revealed through the analysis of the composition (proportions of various types of crimes) and the nature of criminal acts (the degree of public danger).

So, let us determine the percentage of different types of crimes for which women are most often convicted. An analysis of the official statistical indicators of convicted women in the Republic of Kazakhstan gives an idea of the most frequently committed crimes by women for the period from 2000 to 2021.

Table 3 "Number of convicted women by the most frequently committed types of crimes in the Republic of Kazakhstan" and Figure 6 "Ranking of convicted women by type of crime in the Republic of Kazakhstan", compiled by the author based on data from the CLS&SA GP RK, show that women are most often convicted of fraud, theft, as well as drug-related crimes.

Figure 5: Ranking of convicted women by type of crime in the Republic of Kazakhstan



Note: Compiled by the authors based on "Statistical Indicators of the Committee on Legal Statistics and Special Accounts of the General Prosecutor's Office of the Republic of Kazakhstan" (<https://qamqor.gov.kz/crimestat/statistics>). In the public domain.

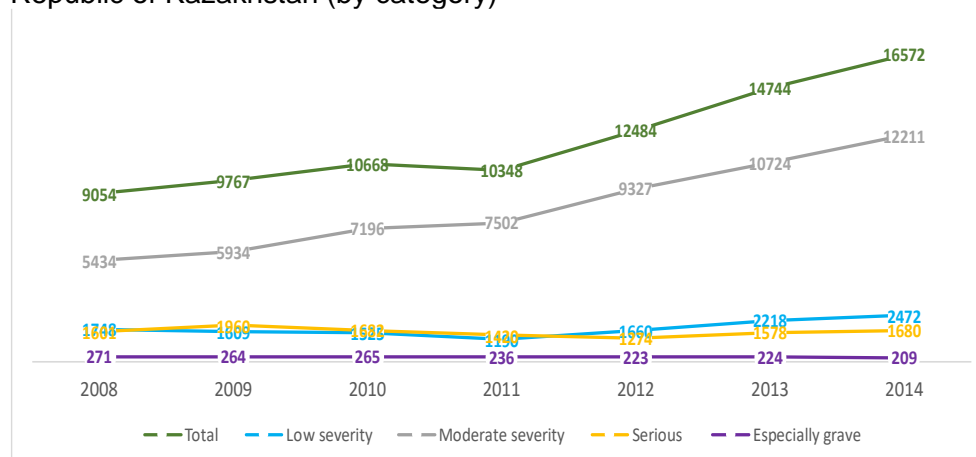
Similarly, most common types of crime, such as theft, fraud, and drug-related crimes, are also committed by women in the United States, England, Wales, and Italy (Campaniello, 2019).

Before turning to the analysis of the main types of crimes for which women are most often convicted in Kazakhstan, it should be noted that from 2000 to 2021, against the background of an overall decrease in the number of convicted women, there is a 6.5-fold increase in the number of women convicted for intentional infliction of grievous bodily harm, a 3-fold increase in the number of women convicted for taking a bribe, and the number of women convicted for premeditated murder and attempted murder increased by 1.3 times. This indicates an increase in the social danger of women's crimes.

Let us also refer to the statistical data related to the categories of crimes committed by women and men, in particular, to the visualized statistical indicators given in Figure 6 and in Figure 7. An analysis of the number of women who have committed criminal offenses in the Republic of Kazakhstan, depending on the degree of public danger, shows an increase in serious crimes, while the number of similar crimes committed by men tends to decrease.

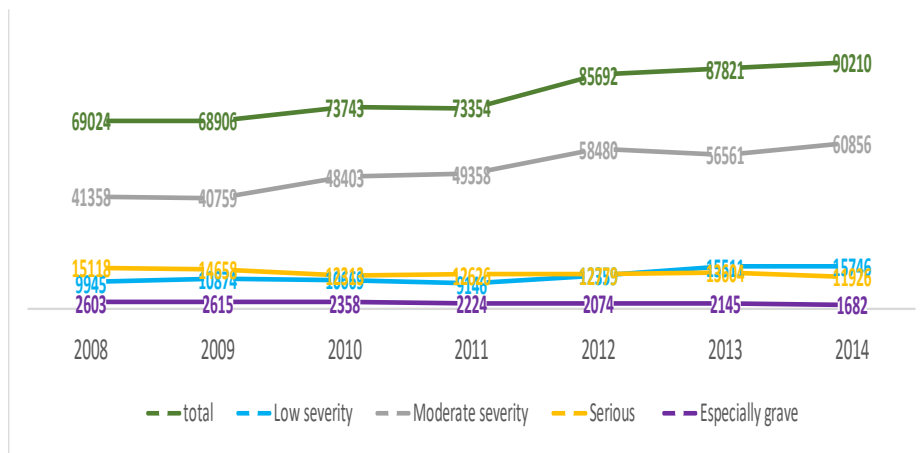
On the whole, other categories of crimes indicate that the dynamics of female crime repeat the vector of development of crime in Kazakhstan as a whole: most often both women and men commit crimes of medium and minor gravity, which tend to increase, while particularly serious crimes tend to decrease among both men and women.

Figure 6: Number of women who committed criminal offenses in the Republic of Kazakhstan (by category)



Note: Compiled by the authors based on “Statistical Indicators of the Committee on Legal Statistics and Special Accounts of the General Prosecutor’s Office of the Republic of Kazakhstan” (<https://qamqor.gov.kz/crimestat/statistics>). In the public domain.

Figure 7: Number of men who committed criminal offenses in the Republic of Kazakhstan (by category)

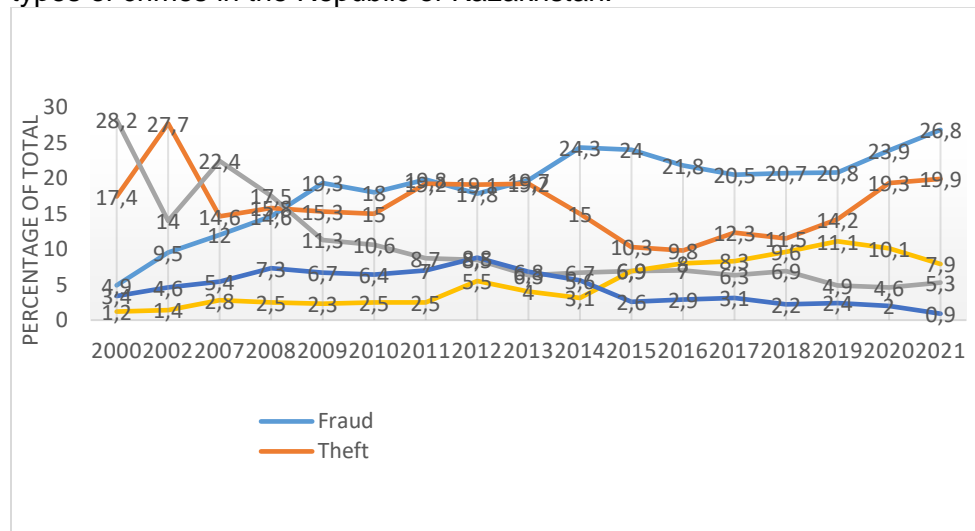


Note: Compiled by the authors based on “Statistical Indicators of the Committee on Legal Statistics and Special Accounts of the General Prosecutor’s Office of the Republic of Kazakhstan” (<https://qamqor.gov.kz/crimestat/statistics>). In the public domain.

Next, we will dwell in more detail on crimes against property committed by women in the Republic of Kazakhstan (using the example of fraud and theft) and propose measures aimed at combating these illegal acts.

Fraud is the most common type of crime among women in the Republic of Kazakhstan. From 2000 to 2021, there was a steady increase in the number of women convicted of fraud in the Republic of Kazakhstan by 5.4 times (see Figure 8).

Figure 8: The number of women convicted for the most frequently committed types of crimes in the Republic of Kazakhstan.



Note: Compiled by the authors based on “Statistical Indicators of the Committee on Legal Statistics and Special Accounts of the General Prosecutor’s Office of the Republic of Kazakhstan” (<https://qamqor.gov.kz/crimestat/statistics>). In the public domain.

The peak in the number of women convicted of fraud was reached in 2021, amounting to 26.8% of the total number of crimes committed by women, compared to 4.9% in 2000.

The example of Adler's position that if a woman works as a clerk in a bank, this can lead to the commission of bank fraud (Adler, 1975), confirms, as does the theory of possibilities, that an increase in women's participation in the labor market leads to an increase in criminal acts committed by women. This is evidenced by the official data on "Employment-to-population ratio, 15+, % (ILO estimate) » (see Figure 3 above) showing the increase in women's employment, and the statistics presented in Table 3. "Number of convicted women by the most frequently committed types of crimes in the Republic of Kazakhstan", confirming the increase in the number of women convicted of fraud.

Thus, in Kazakhstan, at least until 2019 (the period of the pandemic), it is possible to trace a correlation between the increase in women's participation in the labor market and the increase in female fraud.

However, during the COVID-19 period, labor market indicators show a decline in women's employment, with a further increase in women convicted of fraud. Moreover, over the past five years, there has been a sharp increase in this relatively new type of Internet fraud in the overall category of fraud. According to criminologists Bezborodov D.A., Gilinsky Y.I., Zarubin A.Y., Kravchenko R.M., Kraev D.Yu., Lyubavin M.A., Popov A.N., Fedyshev P.V., this is explained by the fact that the "consumption society" demands a continuous increase in spending on various types of purchases. Since not everyone manages to make money legally, and while theft or robbery on the streets is risky and not very effective, illegal "earning" with the help of a computer is both convenient and profitable. According to some reports, the total damage from cybercrime in the world exceeds 120 billion US dollars per year. Thus, significant changes in the dynamics and structure of crime will inevitably continue in our unfamiliar new world, which should be the subject of the most thorough scholarly research.

American researchers Pratt, Holtfreter, and Reisig, using a representative sample of 922 adults, conducted a survey in Florida, U.S. that proved that the results of regression models are consistent with previous studies, specifically that sociodemographic characteristics shape everyday online activities (e.g., spending time on the Internet and making online purchases). Moreover, researchers demonstrated that indicators of routine online activity predict the influence of socio-demographic characteristics on the likelihood of becoming a victim of online fraud (Pratt, Holtfreter, Reisig, 2010).

Today, in Western criminology, several theories have been developed to explain the increase in crime, which are relevant to COVID-19. One theory partially explains the situation with the increase in female fraud both during and after the pandemic. This is the *routine activities theory*, according to which "COVID-19 restrictions are reducing crime in public places... Mobility is also decreasing, while the use of online communications is increasing, leading to an increase in online crime and a decrease in offline crime (Hoeboer, Kitselaar, Henrich, 2023).

Thus, the positions of researchers of various schools of criminological thought confirm the inevitable trend of the growth of Internet fraud based on the theory of routine (everyday) activities, which in the context of the pandemic is becoming even more relevant.

The second most common type of crime among women is theft, which, like fraud, is a crime against property.

The proportion of women convicted of theft fluctuates slightly over the years (17.4% in 2000 and 19.9% in 2021), but generally remains within relatively stable limits. This is contrasted by the proportion of women convicted of fraud, which has increased by 5.5 times over 20 years.

At the same time, over the past six years, the total number of theft crimes committed by women has decreased by almost 2.5 times (see Table 4).

Table 4: Information on the number of women who have committed theft.

	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022
Theft (Article 188 of the Criminal Code of the Republic of Kazakhstan)	6573	5723	5517	3875	3006	2666

Note: Compiled by the authors based on “Statistical Indicators of the Committee on Legal Statistics and Special Accounts of the General Prosecutor’s Office of the Republic of Kazakhstan” (<https://qamqor.gov.kz/crimestat/statistics>). In the public domain.

However, neither the number of women who have committed theft nor the number of women convicted of theft gives a complete picture of the extent of the crime.

According to an international survey of victimization in Kazakhstan (Assessment of the Level of Public Safety and Trust in Law Enforcement Agencies, 2018), only 66% of victims reported theft of a vehicle, only 32% of theft of items from a vehicle or parts of a vehicle, 56% of motorcycle theft, 30% of bicycle theft, 49% of cattle theft, 53% of burglary, and 26% of theft of personal property, which confirms the high latency of this type of crime (see Table 5). The situation is aggravated by the fact that the victims of theft themselves do not take proper measures to preserve their property.

Table 5: The proportion of crime victims in Kazakhstan and two major cities who reported the latest incident to the police

	Kazakhstan	Astana	Almaty
All crime	21	28	27
Car theft	66	54	78
Theft from the car or car parts outside	32	40	31

Motorcycle theft	56	100	84
Bicycle theft	30	44	38
Cattle theft	49	54	21

Note: From "Assessment of the level of public security and trust in law enforcement agencies", Astana, 2018, 66.

At the same time, the compensation of damages rate averages 43% (32 billion tenge out of 57 billion tenge over 5 years), which creates reasons for the population to express dissatisfaction with the work of the police (Project. Concept of Public Safety in Partnership with Society for 2024 – 2028, 2023). The same conclusion is confirmed by the data of an international survey assessing the level of security in Kazakhstan, according to which 44% of the surveyed victims of crimes, who reported them to the police, were very dissatisfied with the actions of the police.

Table 6: Level of satisfaction with police actions among victims of crimes who reported them to the police

	Completely satisfied	rather satisfied	rather dissatisfied	very dissatisfied	don't know/don't remember
All crime	20	12	21	44	3
Car theft					
Theft from the car or car parts outside	35	25	21	17	1
Motorcycle theft	13	13	18	54	1
Bicycle theft	59	17	3	21	0
Cattle theft	38	6	25	29	1
Break-in	9	21	9	55	6

Note: From "Assessment of the level of public security and trust in law enforcement agencies", Astana, 2018, 66.

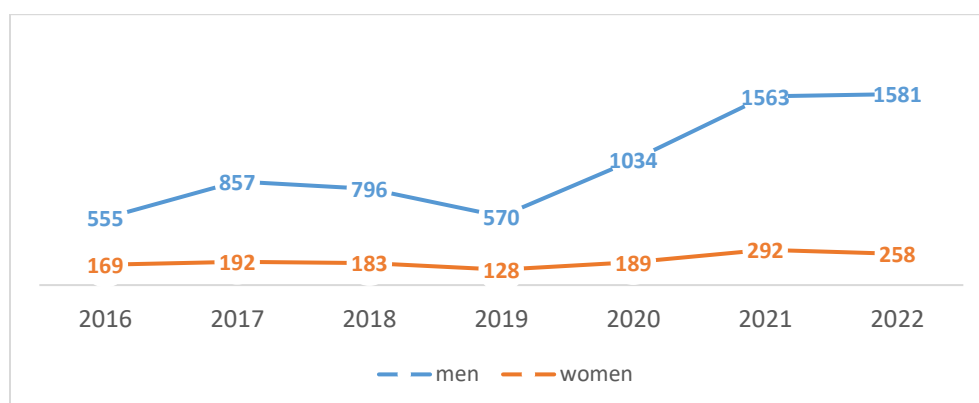
Accordingly, the state needs to take measures aimed at combating the latency of crimes, as well as increasing the level of public confidence in law enforcement agencies by improving the quality of their work.

In presenting the criminological characteristics of crime, it is important to assess not only the quantitative and qualitative indicators of the crimes of

the type under consideration, but also of the persons who committed these crimes.

Another measure aimed at both preventing and combating female crime is the compilation of a profile of a typical female offender. Having information on the average age of a female offender, the state should take comprehensive measures aimed at working with women in this age bracket. The analysis of the report on the composition of convicts who committed criminal offenses, provided by the Criminology Service and Analysis Service of the Prosecutor General's Office of the Republic of Kazakhstan, made it possible to determine the typical statistical profile of a person who committed theft in the Republic of Kazakhstan. Age: between 21 and 39 years old; education: secondary; the primary occupation of the offender at the time of committing the criminal offenses: unemployed and not a student. Even though men commit theft more often than women, the factors leading to the commission of the crime are practically the same (see Figure 9).

Figure 9: Composition of convicts who committed theft (Article 188, Part 1 of the Criminal Code of the Republic of Kazakhstan)



Note: Compiled by the authors based on "Statistical Indicators of the Committee on Legal Statistics and Special Accounts of the General Prosecutor's Office of the Republic of Kazakhstan" (<https://qamgor.gov.kz/crimestat/statistics>). In the public domain.

Therefore, the typical profile of a person who has committed a theft would be common for women and men. The general nature of this profile is also confirmed by the analytical data on the categories of crimes given above. Overall, having a typical profile of a person who commits a theft can help develop strategies to prevent and investigate theft and other crimes. However, for a more detailed typical description of a person who commits a particular type of crime, we would offer the following elements detailing his or her overall description:

- socio-demographic characteristics: gender, age, place of residence, education, marital status, employment status;
- criminal and legal characteristics: criminal record, type of offense, aggravating factors, reasons for committing the offense;

- psychological characteristics: sanity, intellectual qualities, temperament, etc.

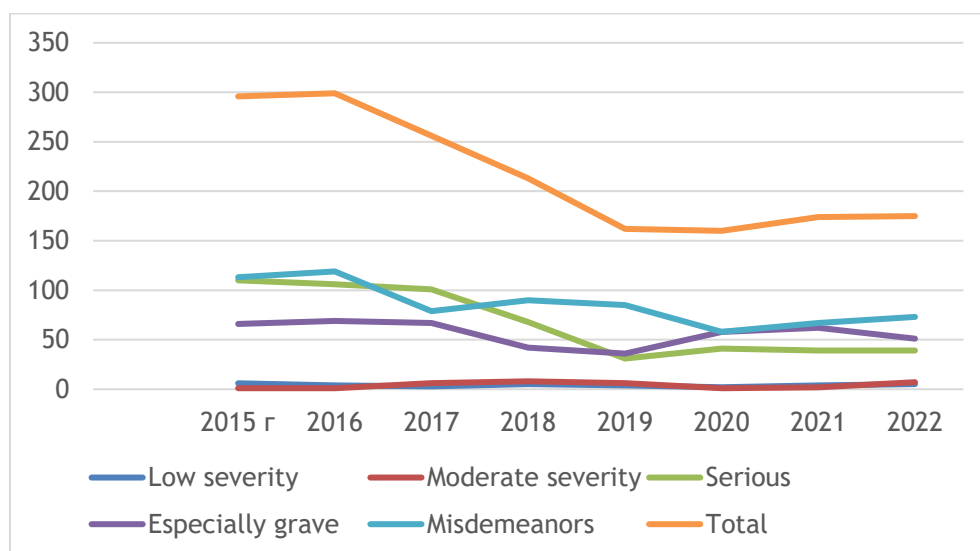
Thus, it is necessary to improve the quality of official legal statistics in order to help solve not only the problem of the increased number of theft crimes but also to prevent other types of crimes committed by women in Kazakhstan.

Drug-related offenses are the third most common committed crime among women in the Republic of Kazakhstan.

From 2000 to 2021, there has been a significant decrease in the proportion of women convicted for drug-related crimes in the Republic of Kazakhstan.

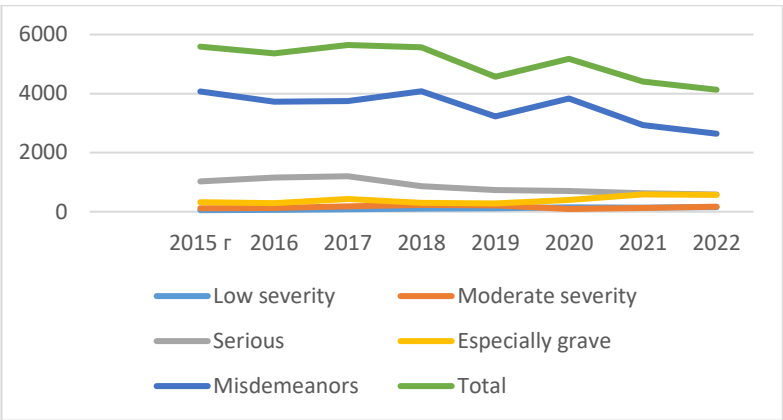
In terms of the severity of drug-related offenses, misdemeanors, and serious crimes are the most common offenses committed by men and women (see Figures 10, 11).

Figure 10: Information on the number of women who have committed criminal offenses related to illicit trafficking in narcotic drugs, psychotropic or poisonous substances, their analogs, and precursors



Note: Compiled by the authors based on “Statistical Indicators of the Committee on Legal Statistics and Special Accounts of the General Prosecutor’s Office of the Republic of Kazakhstan” (<https://qamqor.gov.kz/crimestat/statistics>). In the public domain.

Figure 11: Information on the number of men who have committed criminal offenses related to illicit trafficking in narcotic drugs, psychotropic or poisonous substances, their analogs, and precursors



Note: Compiled by the authors based on “Statistical Indicators of the Committee on Legal Statistics and Special Accounts of the General Prosecutor’s Office of the Republic of Kazakhstan” (<https://qamqor.gov.kz/crimestat/statistics>). In the public domain.

In recent years, there has been a downward trend in the number of women who have committed criminal offenses while under the influence of narcotic drugs, psychotropic toxicants, and their analogs (see Table 7).

Table 7: Information on persons who committed criminal offenses under the influence narcotic drugs, psychotropic toxicants, and their analogs, precursors who were registered with the internal affairs bodies

	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022
1 Total offenses committed under the influence of drugs and toxic substances	1630	1708	1570	1347	1356	1120	764
2 Of these, committed by women	45	53	31	33	18	26	22
3 Total diagnosed with drug addiction	341	294	201	166	159	147	132
4 Of these, women	40	31	15	15	11	16	19

Note: Compiled by the authors based on “Statistical Indicators of the Committee on Legal Statistics and Special Accounts of the General Prosecutor’s Office of the Republic of Kazakhstan” (<https://qamqor.gov.kz/crimestat/statistics>). In the public domain.

Official statistics show positive changes in the fight against drug addiction and the impact of institutional and legal measures aimed at preventing such crimes among women.

To date, the Criminal Code of the Republic of Kazakhstan has fourteen articles aimed at combating drug offenses (articles: 218, 262, 263, 264, 265, 286, 296, 297, 298, 299, 300, 301, 302, 303 of the Criminal Code of the

Republic of Kazakhstan). Since 1998, the Law "On Narcotic Drugs, Psychotropic Substances, Their Analogs and Precursors and Measures to Counteract Their Illicit Trafficking and Abuse" has been in force in Kazakhstan. In addition to the Act, such policy documents as Presidential Decree No. 394 of 16 May 2000 "On the Strategy for Combating Drug Addiction and Drug Trafficking in the Republic of Kazakhstan for 2001-2005" were adopted. It was repealed by the Decree of the President of the Republic of Kazakhstan dated June 18, 2009 No. 829 and replaced by the Decree on "On the Strategy for Combating Drug Addiction and Drug Trafficking in the Republic of Kazakhstan for 2006-2014", and supported by the Program for Combating Drug Addiction and Drug Dealing in the Republic of Kazakhstan for 2009-2011, the Sectoral Program for Combating Drug Addiction and Drug Dealing in the Republic of Kazakhstan for 2012-2016, the Decree of the President of the Republic of Kazakhstan dated November 29, 2010 No. 1113 "On Approval of the State Healthcare Development Program of the Republic of Kazakhstan "Salamatty Kazakhstan" for 2011 – 2015".

Since 2016, there have been no new sectoral state programs to combat the mentioned crimes but measures were taken to give the Government control over all dangerous types of synthetic substances and their analogs, and in 2021, "synthetics" were classified as hard drugs, the criminal liability for possession of which begins from 1 gram.

However, since 2021, there has been an increase in offenses related to narcotic substances. In 2023, the Government again adopts the document of the secondary legislation level "Comprehensive Plan for Combating Drug Addiction and Drug Dealing in the Republic of Kazakhstan for 2023-2025" (Decree of the Government of the Republic of Kazakhstan dated June 29, 2023 No. 508), which provides for the allocation of 53.1 billion tenge from the budget. The budget also provided almost 367 million tenge to the State State-Owned Enterprise "Center for Forensic Examinations" of the Ministry of Justice of the Republic of Kazakhstan.

In the context of our research, it should be noted that the practice of developing and implementing medium-term anti-drug state programs has a positive influence, as it reduces the level of this type of crime in Kazakhstan among both women and men. In this regard, the *theory of social control over crime (in particular, drug-related crime)* applied by the state is justified, according to Professor Y.I. Gilinsky. The theory would be applied in a narrow sense, as a set of legal means and methods aimed at influencing unlawful behavior to prevent, minimize, reduce or eliminate it (Gilinsky, 2015). In other words, the successful state policy of combating drug addiction in the Republic of Kazakhstan is based on the concept of social control over drug crime.

In the research literature, this type of control is also called legal control, or control over crime, which includes such components as the content of crime, the establishment of responsibility for the crime, the creation of state bodies and granting them special authority to combat crime, prevent and reduce crime, the mechanisms of non-state control over crime and the establishment of cooperation of non-governmental agents with state authorities to strengthen the social prevention mechanisms, etc.. Shopina

I.N., Mulyavka D.G., Grechanyuk S.K., and Fedchishina V.V. formulate the main tasks of transforming the existing models of social control as the prevention of crime. They also emphasize the importance of national and regional crime prevention programs, which, along with the main legislative framework, present the regulatory foundation for social control over crime (Shopina et al., 2019).

Once again emphasizing the importance of the measures taken by state bodies in this direction, it is necessary to focus on their shortcomings:

- The measures are legally punitive but not preventive;
- The public and non-governmental organizations are poorly involved in the prevention of drug abuse;
- There is no program for the compulsory treatment of drug addicts;
- We can also agree with the position of Y.L. Kazarinov, who proposed to intensify the fight "not only against the illegal production of narcotic drugs and their trade, but also against certain negative phenomena that nourish and support such criminal activity" (Kazarinov, 2000).

CONCLUSION

Quantitative and qualitative analysis of female crime in the Republic of Kazakhstan in the context of a gender approach allowed us to identify the following trends:

1. First, the presented statistical data indicate a relative consistency in the share of female crime in the overall composition of crime, which confirms the existence of a gender gap. The convergence of gender and social roles leads to the narrowing of the gap between female and male crime, which has been especially true over the past five years.
2. Secondly, before the adoption of the new Criminal Code of the Republic of Kazakhstan in 2014, for fifteen years there was a continuous increase of female crimes. During this period, the change dynamics of female crime, depending on the degree of public danger, is close to male crime dynamics, which is confirmed by the increase of the most frequent types of crime of medium and minor gravity and a decrease in more serious crimes among both genders. However, over the past 20 years, there has been an increase in women convicted for intentionally causing grievous bodily harm, for premeditated murder and attempted murder, which indicates a growing trend in the social danger of female crime. After the adoption of the new Criminal Code of the Republic of Kazakhstan, there has been a sharp decrease in the number of female crimes, with a simultaneous increase in administrative offenses committed by women.
3. Thirdly, over the past 20 years, women in Kazakhstan have most often been convicted of crimes against property (fraud, theft), as well as drug-related crimes. Against the backdrop of a decrease in the total number

of female crimes, the dynamics of steady growth of these three types of crimes committed by women can be traced;

4. Fourth, detailed description of female fraud demonstrates its significant increase, especially during the COVID-19 period, as well as the emergence of new types of fraud.
5. Fifth, analysis of thefts committed by women indicates the latency of this type of crime. The typical profile of the person who commits the theft has no particular gender difference: with age between 21 and 39 years old; education level – secondary; main occupation: unemployed and not a student.
6. Sixth, over the past 20 years in the Republic of Kazakhstan there has been a significant decrease in the proportion of women convicted of drug-related crimes, which parallels an identical trend among men. The severity of drug crimes is also similar, with misdemeanors and felonies most likely to be committed by both men and women.

The trends we identified allowed us to gain an understanding of the current state of female crime, its dynamics, characteristic features and to propose the following measures to combat female crime:

- identifying vulnerable groups of women who are at greatest risk of committing crimes will make it possible to direct resources and efforts to crime prevention specifically among these groups;
- based on trends, it is possible to develop targeted programs and strategies that will be most effective in combating specific types of crimes committed by women. Trends can serve as the basis for changing current legislation and developing new regulations aimed at reducing the level of female crime. This will make it possible to more rationally distribute resources aimed at combating female crime and avoid unnecessary costs. Of particular relevance is the development and implementation of social programs that support women in employment, education and entrepreneurship;
- in addition, trend analysis allows law enforcement agencies to better understand the nature and extent of female crime, which can contribute to the development of more effective methods of investigating and preventing crimes.

Thus, identifying trends in female crime is an important tool for creating a comprehensive and effective strategy to combat crime in the Republic of Kazakhstan.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This article was prepared within the framework of the grant funding project of the Science Committee of the Ministry of Science and Higher Education

of the Republic of Kazakhstan (grant AP19680677 "Economic and demographic development of Kazakhstan: gender aspect").

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