TRUSTED CRIMINALS – UNDERSTANDING WHITE-COLLAR CRIME

Dr. Éva INZELT
Lecturer
Department of Criminology (ELTE)

The aim of the course
Albeit the term of white-collar crime has been introduced by Edwin H. Sutherland in 1939 as „a crime committed by a person of respectability and high social status in the course of his occupation” (Sutherland 1949: 9), we can state that this type of crime has been existing since the establishment of the first societies. The nature of white-collar crime depends on the actual state (health) of the society which is related to the culture and the political system of a given country, as well as to the international environment via effects of political and economic relations.

The aim of the course is to answer basic criminological questions about the nature, the prevalence, offender profiles, the victimization, the causation, the prevention and the deterrence of white collar crime. During the course typical (American and European) white-collar crime cases will be analysed. Typical examples of this type of crime occurred in Hungary during the last two decades will be discussed.

In criminology, several concepts have been developed to grasp forms of crime committed in the context of organizations, such as white-collar crime, corporate crime, state crime, occupational crime, governmental crime, state-corporate crime and finance crime. Studies on these forms of crime have pointed at the significance of the fact that the crimes are committed by people who enjoy a relatively high level of trust and respectability and who are operating in the context of organizations. While it is generally acknowledged that such white-collar crime is very harmful to society.

Textbook

Examination and grading
Students could choose either to give a presentation (on an agreed topic) or to write an at least 18’000 characters paper on the topic of the course (agreed in advance with the teacher).