Crime threat in the independent countries of Oceania

Andrzej Borowski
University of Social Sciences, Lodz, The Faculty non-local in Szczecinek
47-49 Kosciuszki Str., 78-400 Szczecinek, Poland
E-mail address: aubor@poczta.onet.pl

ABSTRACT

The functioning of the independent countries of Oceania is a constant struggle with the heritage of colonial era, contemporary economic conditions and the increasing influence of geopolitics and attempts to dominate by culture of the Western world (Westernisation). Different countries are coping with these challenges in a different way. Some of them have a bearing on the type of and level of crime. In addition to traditional reference points (Australia), the culture of former colonial countries (Great Britain, France, also the USA) still has a significant impact, and also China with its growing influence in this region.

Keywords: crime, Oceania, island, Westernisation, independence

1. INTRODUCTION

The independent states of Oceania comprise 13 insular societies, the majority of which gained the status of an independent state in the second half of the 20th century. Most of them function mainly as places of increased tourist traffic, drawing a large part of the income from it. These countries rarely draw attention of great powers.

They achieved their independence peacefully, mainly on the part of the United Kingdom, and generally function now as democratic societies. However, some Pacific countries face difficulties with political, institutional and economic legacy as the colonisation heritage.
Tensions between the domestic norms and practices and the expectations of the increasingly pressing Western model of society led to crises. In two island states (Fiji and the Solomon Islands), there were political or military upheavals. In these two countries, indigenous people proposed reforms to the cultural and legal models inherited from the colonial period. Despite this, the influence of the so-called Westernisation of the indigenous elites is still significant. Most of the Oceania region consists of small island states intertwined with vast sections of ocean waters, isolated from the global centres of power. With one exception, there are no land borders. Most island states are small in terms of population and area, but they claim ownership of huge marine resources. In recent years, the perception of the South Pacific has changed – from a weak, but generally mild region, to the one that is currently characterised by an “arch of instability”, that includes potentially “weak” states. For example, armed conflicts on the eastern island of Papua New Guinea in Bougainville and neighbouring Solomon Islands have already claimed thousands of victims over the past dozen or so years.

Source: Google maps

Reports of physical and sexual violence, including children, continue to appear in Australian refugee detention centres in Papua New Guinea and Nauru. There are also allegations that Australian authorities pay people smugglers to take asylum seekers’ boats as
far as possible from Australian territorial waters. While in the case of Asia and Africa the destination is the European Union – especially its western countries, Australia is becoming the destination for the Oceania countries.

2. PRESENTATION OF THE INDEPENDENT COUNTRIES OF OCEANIA

1.1. Fiji – is located about 2,800 km east of Australia and about 2,000 km north of New Zealand. It is located on more than 332 islands and 500 islets of volcanic origin, surrounded by coral reefs. About 110 isles are uninhabited.

The two largest islands are Viti Levu and Vanua Levu. Viti Levu is half of Fiji's area, the capital of the state is located on it. The first inhabitants of Fiji were visitors from Southeast Asia long before the discovery of the islands by Europeans in the 17th century. The first European who arrived here was Abel Tasman in 1643. Then in 1774 the islands were examined by James Cook. In 1854, in the western part, a kingdom was established, the capital of which was located on Bau Island.

![Source: Google maps](image_url)

The islands became a British colony in 1874. In the years 1879-1917 there was an inflow of Hindu people to work on plantations. In 1966, Fiji gained internal autonomy as part of the British Commonwealth of Nations. It achieved independence in 1970. Since 1987, Fiji is a
Democratic governments were interrupted by two military coups. Both were caused by anxieties between ethnic Fijians and the Hindu population constituting the majority. The 1990 constitution guaranteed the ethnic Fijians control over Fiji, which led to the emigration of Hindus. This again caused economic hardship, but it caused the Melanesians to become the majority. The amendments adopted in 1997 made the constitution fairer. The free and peaceful election in 1999 ended with the creation of a government by the Hindus. After a year, it was removed by the attack carried out by the nationalist George Speight. Democracy was restored in late 2000, when a provisional government was formed with Prime Minister Laisenia Qarase, who remained in this position. At the end of 2006, a military coup took place. After this event, on 8 December 2006, Fiji’s membership in the Commonwealth was suspended. Fiji has extremely efficient armed forces and is an important UN collaborator. It takes part in peacekeeping missions in various parts of the world.

1.2. Republic of Kiribati – an island state in the Pacific Ocean. The country with an area of 811 km² consists of 33 coral islands, scattered over 3,800 km around the equator. These are the islands of three archipelagos of Micronesia and Polynesia: Gilbert Islands (16 islands), Phoenix Islands (8) and Line Islands (8) and Banaba Island (also known as Ocean Island). 21 of the 33 islands are inhabited.

![Map of Kiribati](image-url)
The name Kiribati (pronounced kiribas) is the English name of the main group of islands – the Gilbert Islands, distorted by the local Micronesian language. The first people (I-Kiribati) appeared on these islands between 1000 and 1300. Successive invasions of the Fijians and Tongans introduced many Polynesian elements into the Micronesian culture. However, many mixed marriages have made the culture, traditions and appearance of the residents fairly homogeneous. The first contacts with Europeans took place in the 16th century, but their apogee took place in the 19th century, when whalers, slavers and merchant ships appeared here. Their appearance brought only problems to the local population, including lethal diseases. The forgotten local tribal conflicts also revived. In order to calm the situation, Great Britain was allowed to form a protectorate here in 1892, which was a British colony of Gilbert and Ellice Islands from 1916. The Ocean Island (Banaba Island) was annexed in 1900 after the discovery of rich guano deposits. The Line and Phoenix Islands were incorporated piece by piece in the next 20 years. The islands were occupied by Japan during World War II, forming part of the Japanese defence line on the Pacific islands. In November 1943, the Allies managed to break the Japanese positions on the Tarawa Atoll after a long and bloody fight. The battle for the Gilbert Islands was considered a turning point in the Allied campaign in this area. The British allowed the extension of the island's self-governance in the 1960s. In 1975, the Ellice Islands separated from the colony and formed the independent state of Tuvalu in 1978. The Gilbert Islands gained their own government in 1977, and the sovereignty officially on 12 July 1979, taking the name Kiribati. After achieving the independence, Ieremia Tabai (Tabwai) became the first president of Kiribati, who ruled the country in 1979-1991.

1.3. Micronesia, Federated States of Micronesia (Micronesia) – a state in the Pacific Ocean, covering the greater part of the islands of Micronesia.

![Map of Micronesia](Source: Google maps)
The Federation of Micronesia is also used incorrectly. In the past, Micronesia was the Trust Territory of Pacific Islands – an area entrusted by the United Nations administration of the United States. In 1979, Micronesia adopted the constitution, and in 1986, under the Compact of Free Association, achieved independence. Micronesia consists of 607 islands extending over 2,000 km along the Caroline Archipelago east of the Philippines. The four groups of component islands are: Yap, Chuuk (Truk until January 1990), Pohnpei (Ponape until November 1984) and Kosrae. The capital of the country is Palikir, situated on Pohnpei Island. The coastline is 6112 km long and the highest point is Mount Nanlaud, 782 m above sea level. In the last decade, the growing importance of China has significantly changed the geopolitical status quo in Micronesia. The potential loss of Micronesia to the zone of influence of China would be a significant blow to America's strategic position in the Asia-Pacific region and would be deeply detrimental to American interests.

1.4. Nauru, officially the Republic of Nauru, formerly knows as Pleasant Island – an island state located in the western part of the Pacific Ocean, in Micronesia, about 42 km south of the equator. It is currently the smallest republic in the world, both in terms of size (21.3 square kilometres) and population (around 9400 inhabitants) and the third smallest country in the world, after Monaco and the Vatican. The size of the exclusive economic zone is 308,480 km², while the area of territorial waters is 41 km². Settled by the peoples of Micronesia and Polynesia, Nauru was annexed by the German Empire in 1888 and remained its colony until 1914 when it was occupied by Australian troops. After the First World War, Nauru became the mandate territory of the C category of the League of Nations, administered by the United Kingdom.

Source: Google maps
During World War II, Nauru was occupied by Japanese troops. After the end of the war, Nauru was transformed into a UN trust territory and was the only one administered by the three countries: Australia, New Zealand and the United Kingdom. The state declared its independence on 31 January 1968. Nauru is a small (21.3 km²), oval island located in the western part of the Pacific Ocean, about 42 kilometres south of the equator. The length of its shoreline is about 19 kilometres. The closest island is Banaba Island, 306 kilometres away from Nauru. The presence of the reef makes it impossible to build a port, but 16 artificial channels for small boats were created. The greater part of the island is occupied by an internal plateau (known among the inhabitants of the country as Topside), falling steeply towards the coasts. Its highest point is Command Ridge that rises 71 m above sea level. Nauru had one of the largest phosphate rock deposits in the world (similar to Banaba and Makatea Islands). Long-term mining of the raw material adversely affected the environment of the island, leaving the barren area with peaks (coral pinnacle), reaching 15 meters in the central part of the plateau. Extraction of phosphorites led to the destruction of 80-90% of the island's surface. Damaged areas were not restored. At the end of the 20th century, about 80% of the island's surface resembled a lunar landscape.

1.5. New Zealand – an island state located in the Southwest Pacific and consisting of two main islands (North Island and South Island) and a number of smaller islands, including Stewart Island and the Chatham Islands. New Zealand (more specifically the New Zealand affiliated kingdom, connected by a personal union with Great Britain and other affiliated kingdoms) also includes territories affiliated with New Zealand or dependent on it: Cook Islands and Niue, which are self-governing, and Tokelau and Ross Dependency. Until around 1280, New Zealand was deserted, and Maori began to come and settle from the Oceania islands. First, they settled the South Island, and then the next lands. The European explorer of the islands was a Dutch traveler Abel Tasman, who when attempting to put ashore his crew of 18 people (some sources give 19) on December 1642 in the northern part of the South Island was attacked by natives, which resulted in the death of four people. After this event he sailed away, and called the place of an unsuccessful landing the Murderers’ Bay (in Dutch: Moordenaarsbaai), now known as Golden Bay.

Colonisation began after 127 years, when in 1769 the land was again discovered by a British explorer and discoverer James Cook. The first settlers were mainly sealers and whalers from Australia, and one of the first inhabited places was a camp near the Dusky Sound fiord situated in the westernmost point of the South Island (1890s). The first few decades are the time of conflicts between Maori and British colonisers (mainly consisting of thieves, murderers and rapists sent from prisons in Great Britain). The bloodiest one took place in 1809 after the Maori chief Te Ara serving as a sailor on the English ship Boyd was whipped for disobedience. A few days after disembarking in Whangaro, Boyd's crew (about 70 people) was almost completely murdered and eaten by the tribesmen of revenge-seeking Te Ara. On news of the massacre and burning the ship, the Europeans living in New Zealand attacked the residents of the Rangihou village mistakenly accused of slaughtering the English, killing from 16 to 60 of them. As a result of these events, the trip to New Zealand was discontinued for the next few years. It was not until 6 February 1840 that an agreement was signed between the 500 leaders of Maori tribes and the representation of the British crown. It was the “Treaty of Waitangi”, considered by historians as a document creating New Zealand. In memory of this event, every year, on 6 February, the national holiday “Waitangi Day” is celebrated. However, the signing of the
agreement did not end disputes between Maoris and Europeans and there were many skirmishes. These skirmishes in the second half of the 19th century evolved into two bloody wars lost by Maoris. From 1856, New Zealand has its own government as part of the British colony. In 1907, it acquired the status of dominium, and in 1947 became a fully independent state.

Recent studies have found that over 2.5 million crimes related to property and persons were committed in New Zealand. Attacks accounted for about 26 percent of all offences, and half of the attacks resulted in minor or major personal injuries. Penal threats accounted for slightly more than 22 percent of all crimes. Vandalism was another major category of crime, covering 13 percent of all crimes. Burglary accounted for 12 percent of all crimes. Seven percent of all crimes are sex offences. Thirty-two percent of all identified crimes were reported
to the police. In the case of crimes against property, such as burglary and vehicle-related offences, a moderate increase was recorded in the first decade of the 21st century. Groups most at risk of victimisation were similar in all categories of crimes under investigation. People most at risk of victimisation are young, lonely persons, in a difficult economic, social and ethnic situation (Maoris and refugees from Oceania). The risk of victimisation also increased due to the age of 60 years or more, childless couples, people living in rural areas and those who had their own home.

1.6. Palau, Republic of Palau – a self-governing inland state, associated with the United States, located in the Pacific Ocean, in Oceania and Micronesia, approx. 1160 km south of Guam, approx. 800 km east of the Philippines and 3200 km south of Tokyo. It includes the western part of the Caroline Archipelago and 4 individual coral islands (Sonsorol, Merir, Pulo Anna and Tobi) and the Helen Reef Atoll (a total of more than 250 islands).
The islands were discovered in 1543 by R. López de Villalobos. From the end of the 17th century to 1899, as part of the Caroline Islands, they were a Spanish property, and then they were sold to the Germans, which started mining bauxite (aluminium ore) and other resources on the islands. In 1914, the islands were taken over by the Japanese. Six years later, the Japanese administration was introduced on behalf of the League of Nations. During World War II in 1944, the islands were occupied by the United States after the Battle of Peleliu. After the war, in 1947-1994, the UN trust territory under the administration of the United States (until 1990 as part of the Trust Territory of Pacific Islands). In 1978, Palau became a separate state and adopted the name Belau (after the administrative division of the US Pacific Islands). In 1979, the people of Palau rejected the offer to join the Federated States of Micronesia. In 1981, the state adopted the Palau constitution. In the same year, the internal autonomy of the country was also introduced. In 1982, state authorities concluded the Compact of Free Association with the United States. It was ratified in 1993. On 1 October 1994, Palau achieved independence as an associated country with the USA. The state maintains economic ties with the US, Japan and Taiwan (financial assistance). On 15 December 1994, it became a member of the United Nations and several other international organisations.

1.7. Papua New Guinea – a state in Oceania, in Melanesia, located mostly on the island of New Guinea. Papua New Guinea borders Indonesia (820 km). The area of the state is 462.8 thousand km². In 2017, 6,909,701 people lived in Papua New Guinea. The official language is English, but Pidgin-English is also in use. The capital of the state is Port Moresby. The currency is kina. Papua New Guinea achieved independence on 16 September 1975. Europeans appeared in the present-day Papua New Guinea in the 16th century. In 1884, the islands were proclaimed as German and Great Britain protectorates (northern part - German New Guinea, and southern part - British New Guinea, respectively). In 1906, Australia took over the administration in the British part (named Papua Territory), and in 1914, after the outbreak of World War I, also in the German one. In 1942, the island was taken by Japan. In September 1945, the Allies drove the last Japanese army out of the islands. In 1946, the territory of New Guinea was declared a trust territory of the United Nations, which administered by Australia. In 1949, Australia merged the two parts into a unified union overseas territory called Papua New Guinea. In 1951, the transfer of internal affairs to local authorities began.

The Legislative Council was established, which in 1964 was replaced by the Assembly Chamber elected by the inhabitants of the islands. In December 1973, Papua New Guinea achieved full internal autonomy, and on 16 September 1975 declared independence, adopted a constitution and became a member of the United Nations and the British Commonwealth. The first Prime Minister of Papua New Guinea was Michael Somare, who was also the main initiator of independence. In 1980, Julius Chan became the prime minister. In the 1980s, there was a conflict with neighbouring Indonesia through a mass inflow of Papuans from the Indonesian part of New Guinea. At the end of the 1980s, separatist efforts on Bougainville Island appeared. After the introduction of the state of emergency in 1989, a civil war broke out on the island. As a result of the war, about 20,000 people died, and the economy of Papua New Guinea suffered greatly (among other things, after the closure of the copper mine in Panguna). In 1997, Silas Atopare became the governor general. After the ceasefire in 1998, a transitional administrative authority of the island was established – the Bougainville People's Congress. In 2001, the Bougainville People's Congress negotiated with the government to gradually increase the autonomy of the island and to hold an independence referendum by 2020.
For the society, as well as from the perspective of the crime rate in New Guinea, the “bastard” style is characteristic, interpreted as a strategy of striving for the prestige and appropriation of goods for the gift economy. Instead of perceiving racism as a product of poverty and unemployment generated by the processes of development or underdevelopment, it is analytically useful to consider it as a matter of a problematic meeting of the cash economy with a stable and solid, because rooted in cultural tradition, gift-based economy.

The image of a “man with arms” is ubiquitous in Papua New Guinea and is associated not only with the ability of the state to use force, but also with the ability of people to resist and undermine state control. At the same time, the relationship between beer and marijuana with modernity and violent masculine behaviours provides context, justification and forms of actions related to violence. Weapons and beer are tools of violence and power for both police, tribal warriors and criminals, as well as a means by which people gain access to various forms of power. Acts considered as criminal are done by both individual perpetrators and entire gangs. Therefore, the level of crime is here the highest, and that of security the lowest, among all of the Oceania's islands.

1.8. Samoa (full official name: Independent State of Samoa) – a country in Oceania, covering the western part of the Samoa Islands (the remaining ones constitute the territory of the United States as American Samoa). Until 1997, it was known as Western Samoa. Samoa Archipelago
was settled around 1000 BC by Polynesian people from the Tonga Islands. The islands were discovered for Europe in 1606, when the Spaniard Pedro Fernández de Quirós, but they were forgotten, and their discovery was made again in 1722. In 1768, the participants of the Bougainville expedition made further studies on the islands, naming them the Navigator Islands. From 1838, an inflow of European and American colonists and merchants stared who settled around the city of Apia on the island of Upolu. The main party interested in the colonisation of the archipelago was Germany, the United Kingdom and the United States. In 1889, the archipelago was divided into the western part, today's Samoa state, which Germany received, and the eastern part, today's American Samoa, which the United States got. The United Kingdom received Tonga, Niue and Solomon Islands in exchange for waiving claims for the archipelago. After the First World War, German Samoa was taken over by Great Britain in 1919 as a war damages, which then surrendered this territory to New Zealand. Under the Treaty of Versailles of 1919, a former German colony (known now as Western Samoa) was handed over to New Zealand as the mandate territory of the League of Nations. After World War II, from 1946, Western Samoa, as a UN trust territory, remained in the administration of New Zealand. In 1961, a referendum on the proclamation of the independence of the country was held, under which Western Samoa became a fully independent state in 1962. In 1997, the name of the state was changed from Western Samoa to Samoa. In 2009, a change in road traffic took place from the right-sided to left-sided to facilitate the road movement of cars imported from Australia and New Zealand. In 2011, the time zone was changed by omitting the date of December 30. In this way, Samoa was on the western side of the dateline. The aim of this change was to facilitate cooperation with Australia and New Zealand. The change took place by removing the date 30 December 2011 from the calendar, with December 31 occurring after December 29. The previous change took place in 1892 in order to bring the date to time in California; the inhabitants of Samoa thus experienced the date of July 4 twice.

Politicians in the Samoa Islands are regularly accused of corruption, yet, paradoxically, they seem to be the loudest public commentators when incidents of misconduct occur and accusations are part of political theatre.

Source: Google maps
1.9. Tonga, officially the Kingdom of Tonga – a country on the archipelago of the same name, in Polynesia in the South Pacific, located on one third of the road between New Zealand and Hawaii, south of Samoa, east of Fiji.

Archaeological findings show that the first settlers in Tonga appeared around 6000 years ago. There were probably the oldest human settlements in Polynesia. About the 12th century, Tongans formed a strong and significant civilisation in the Pacific, described by some historians as the “Tongan Empire”. In the 15th century, and later in the 17th century, civil wars lasted on Tonga. At this time, the first Europeans arrived on the islands – Dutch travellers Willem Schouten and Jacob Le Maire in 1616, followed by James Cook in 1773, 1774 and 1777, missionaries from London in 1794 and a Methodist Church missionary Walter Lawrey in 1822. In 1845, Tonga it was united in the Kingdom of Polynesia by the leader Taufa’ahau, who was baptised and took the name George. In 1875, he proclaimed Tonga a constitutional monarchy, introducing the legal code, emancipation of women, land ownership, freedom of the press and
limiting the freedom of local chiefs. In the face of the attempt to overthrow the second king by European colonisers and local caciques, under the Treaty of Friendship of 18 May 1900, Tonga became a British protectorate. This status changed in 1970, when Tonga achieved independence and joined the Commonwealth. In 1999, it joined the countries associated in the UN. However, corporal punishment of children is ubiquitous throughout the country of Tonga both as a means of upbringing and as a punishment.

1.10. **Tuvalu** (formerly: Ellice Islands) – a country located in the Pacific Ocean in Western Polynesia (north of Fiji), Tuvalu creates an archipelago called Tuvalu Islands or Lagoon (Ellice) Islands. The Ellice Islands were settled in the 5th century AD. For the first time they discovered by Europeans in 1568 (Spaniard Alvaro Mendana de Neyra). They were discovered again in 1764 by British John Byron. From 1877, they were under the management of the British High Commission of the Western Pacific. From 1892, they were first part of the protectorate, and then from 1916 part of the colony called Gilbert and Lagoon (Ellice) Islands. In the years 1942-1943, they were occupied by Japan, then occupied by the US army. In 1975, the Ellice Islands separated as an independent colony (after the referendum in 1974), and three years later (1 October 1978) declared their independence from the United Kingdom and changed their name to Tuvalu. Tuvalu has become a member of the British Commonwealth of Nations. They are a member of the UN since 2000.

![Source: Google maps](image)

1.11. **Vanuatu**, officially the Republic of Vanuatu – a country in Oceania. It is located on the 83 islands of the New Hebrides (two of them – the Matthew Island and the Hunter Island –
belong to New Caledonia, an overseas territory of France), 65 of which are inhabited. It is located about 800 km northwest of Fiji and northeast of New Caledonia. Formerly, the territory of the country was a Franco-British condominium known as the New Hebrides. The first people arrived in today's Vanuatu about 3,000 years ago. The found fragments of ceramics are dated from 1300-1100 BC.

The first contact of local residents with Europeans took place in 1606, when Pedro Fernández de Quirós came to the largest island (he named them Terra Australia del Espiritu Santo), and then Luis Antoine de Bougainville in 1768. In 1774, James Cook compiled a map
of these islands and named them New Hebrides. At the beginning of the 19th century, the first Christian missions were created, and in the late 19th century, French and British colonists began to flow. The Joint Maritime Commission embraced the archipelago with the British-French administration in 1887, and 19 years later the islands became the British-French condominium. During World War II, the islands hosted the Allied military base. In 1977, at a conference in Paris, it was decided to grant Vanuatu independence, which was officially announced on 30 July 1980. A number of dramatic events took place in Vanuatu at the end of 2015, including the conviction of 15 deputies for corruption, then alleged pardon from the acting president and widely questioned dissolution of the parliament. These events were unprecedented and unique in terms of the history of Vanuatu. Obviously, the trial and conviction of almost 30 percent of Vanuatu's parliament sets a new standard not only for Vanuatu and the rest of this part of the Pacific.

1.12. Marshall Islands (Republic of the Marshall Islands) – an island state in the Pacific Ocean, located north of Nauru and Kiribati, east of Micronesia and south of the American island of Wake. Although the islands of Micronesia were already settled in the second millennium BC, little is known about their early history. The first European who came to the Marshall Islands was the Spanish explorer Álvaro de Saavedra Cerón in 1529. Later the islands were forgotten for several centuries.

In 1788, English captain John Marshall landed here, after whom they took their name. In 1885, a German trading post was opened on the islands. Thus, they became part of the
protectorate of New German Guinea. Japan took them during World War I and administered them as the mandate territory of the League of Nations. During World War II, the islands, as part of the Operation Flintlock (Fight for Marshall Islands), were occupied in 1944 by the United States and incorporated into the Trust Territory of Pacific Islands. Immediately after the war, the United States began tests on nuclear weapons at Bikini and Enewetak atolls, which lasted until the 1960s. Many residents of the Marshall Islands suffer from radiation sickness today. The problem of compensation for damage caused by Americans is still the subject of bilateral talks. In 1979, the Republic of Marshall Islands signed a compact of free association with the American government, which came into force in 1986. Since then, the Marshall Islands are an independent state associated with the USA. Since 1991, they have been a member of the United Nations.

1.13. Solomon Islands – an island state in southeastern Oceania, east of New Guinea, a member of the Commonwealth of Nations. The Solomon Islands State covers the eastern part of the archipelago of the same name. It includes the Rennell and Ontong Java Atolls and the Santa Cruz, Duff and Reef Islands and other.

The islands were discovered in 1568 by the Spanish sailor Alvaro Mendaña de Neyra. Solomon Islands were divided between Germany (northern islands, from 1885) and Great Britain (southern islands, 1893). Some of the islands were transferred to Great Britain by Germany in 1898-1900, which established a protectorate over the islands. The islands remaining in the hands of Germany, i.e. Bougainville and Buka Islands, became part of the German protectorate of German New Guinea. During the Second World War (in 1942), they
were under Japanese occupation. Some of the most fierce battles in the Pacific were fought on the Islands (including the Guadalcanal Campaign). In 1943/1944, the Japanese were driven out of most of the archipelago by American troops. In 1976, the Islands received internal autonomy, and on 7 July 1978, they achieved independence. However, they remained in the British Commonwealth. As a sovereign state, the Solomon Islands were in serious trouble caused by widespread corruption and a growing budget deficit. The outbreak of social unrest caused the breakdown of the normal functioning of the country. In July 2003, the Governor General of the Solomon Islands asked for international assistance. A month later, 2,200 policemen from more than 20 Pacific countries led by Australia and New Zealand landed on the Islands. On 1 April 2007, the Islands were hit by a double earthquake and tsunami.

3. CONCLUSIONS

Most of the analysed independent countries of Oceania present a crime threat at a similar level. Its highest level is Papua New Guinea, and the lowest is Vanuatu. High rates in this first country result from the specific use of the so-called bastard style by representatives of authorities as well as ordinary citizens (Table 1).

The varied level of crimes against property in the studied countries depends to a large extent on the intensity of tourist traffic. The coming years, as in Europe, will be associated with problems related to uncontrolled migrations of refugees from individual islands to the Australian continent and to a lesser extent to the Asian continent.

**Table 1. Crime levels in the countries of Oceania based on selected examples (2015)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country</th>
<th>Burglary</th>
<th>Car theft</th>
<th>Theft of property</th>
<th>Drug offences</th>
<th>Robbery</th>
<th>Battery</th>
<th>Insults</th>
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Crime rates:
– very low 0-29
– low 30-49
– moderate 50-60
– high 61-70

References


