



## Psychiatry & Behavioral Sciences Section – 2003

### **16 The Rate of Morbidity and Suicide Among Police Officers and Military in Lithuania**

*Gediminas Zukauskas\*, Law University of Lithuania, Institute of Forensic Medicine, Verkiu 7-110, 2042 Vilnius, Lithuania; Kastytis Dapsys, Republican Vilnius Psychiatric Hospital, Parko 15, 2048 Vilnius, Lithuania; and Jurate Normantiene, Republican Hospital of Internal Affairs, Zygimantu 8, 2000 Vilnius, Lithuania*

There are a lot of problems concerning psychic and somatic health both among police officers and military. The situation concerning suicides among the population is very complicated. In Lithuania last year the number of suicides reached 45/100,000 inhabitants. Suicides among nearly 20,000 of police officers included 12/year, i.e., more than 60/100,000.

Every year there are 2-3 suicides among soldiers (the total number of soldiers in the Lithuanian army is about 6,000 persons). Such high rates of suicides among the Lithuanian police officers and soldiers prompted a check of the medical work as new policemen and soldiers entered this new work. The focus was on the following: how many police officers and new soldiers were not fit for their job. The investigated persons were divided into four groups: soldiers entering the War Academy, young persons intending to study at the Police Academy or Police faculty at the University of Law, new persons beginning work as police officers, and police officers annually undergoing medical testing. From 1989-2000 there were 63,583 police officers, recruits, and/or students examined. From 1995-2000, 2,726 recruits were studied.

The main focus was on somatic and psychiatric situations and other issues, such as: how many persons were dismissed from the police and/or what were the reasons applicants for positions in the police or army were denied. Somatic reasons were investigated: muscle-bone system, gastrointestinal tract, cardio-vascular (c-v) system, central nervous system (CNS) and analysators, infectious diseases, poisoning, and traumatism.

About 80% of those who applying to the War Academy were denied for medical reasons while approximately 50% were denied due to psychiatric health. About 50% under investigation could not enter the Police Academy because of CNS and analysators problems, but in almost all cases no problems were found with the c-v system. However, every year about 12-13% are dismissed from police work and more than 50% of demonstrate problems in the c-v system

The study enables the authors to make the following conclusions: there are a lot of problems concerning psychiatric and somatic health among policemen, soldiers, and the population and only a complex solution of these problems can reduce the suicide rate among Lithuanian people, as well as among policemen and the military.

**Suicide, Police, Military**