1. Research objective. Scientific aim of the grant. The aim of the project is to create a description and explain the phenomenon of criminal careers of so called white collars, reveal the characteristic trait of these careers and the similarities and differences between them, and to compare the criminal careers of offenders from this category with the criminal careers of common offenders. As part of studying white collar criminal careers, such issues as: turning points in the lives of the perpetrators, risk factors initiating illegal behaviours, and factors protecting against crime, as well as the shaping of so called crime curve will also be investigated.

The main research objective is expressed in the following question: what sociodemographical traits do offenders belonging to the white collar crime category have, and what are the conditions and courses of their criminal careers? Concerning the course of the criminal career, it is interesting to determine the background and genesis of the career, the frequency and structure of the crimes committed by the studied individuals, any occurrence of pauses in their criminal activity, or changes in the profile of their activity, as well as the causes and circumstances of temporary or permanent discontinuation of crime. The project will also have the result of creating a typology of "white collars".

2. Significance of the project. The life course perspective, despite the relatively short time this paradigm has been in use in studies of crime and criminality (focus on developmental trajectories instead of specific criminal behaviours), has provided a significant expansion of knowledge related to criminal careers (life course criminology). Its importance to the development of criminology is undeniable (Thornberry Krohn 2003). Such studies are being conducted by the scientific centres most important for this discipline (e.g. Maryland, Cincinnati). Despite this, analyses concerning the special, in terms of subject and object criteria, group of crimes that is white collar crime, remain few both in Europe and worldwide (Piquero Benson 2004, DeLisi Piquero 2011). Most studies focus on juvenile crime and common offences. The grant proposal shown will therefore contribute to expanding the existing knowledge base (theoretical and empirical debate) with the mechanisms of formation and development, risk factors and criminal career trajectories (e.g.: late offence, related to the accumulation of knowledge and experience, reaching a specific professional or social position). It enables studying offender with a different opportunity structure, situational dependency, neutralisation techniques and motivations. It also enables showing this phenomenon in light of other criminological theories of importance, e.g. developmental research (Moffitt 1993, Sampson Laub 1993, Hagan 1997, Moffitt Caspi Rutter Silva 2001), self-control theory (Simpson Piquero 2002), informal social control of criminal lifestyle (Walters Geyer 2004), rational choice, agency, or the general theory of crime (Gottfredson Hirschi 1990).

3. Outline of the work plan. The project is envisioned for a duration of 36 months. In the initial phase, quantitative studies in accordance with the principles shown in subsections 3 and 4 will be conducted. Concurrently, qualitative analyses based on an original in-depth retrospective life history interview will be carried out. In the third phase, the collected data set will be subjected to data exploration.

During the last stage, the obtained results will be disseminated and internationalised. During the study, varied research methods and techniques will be used, such as: analysis of existing data, analysis of convictions in the National Penal Register, analysis of penal case files, analysis of penitentiary files, statistical analysis of the collected data set and in-depth individual retrospective life course interview.

4. Specific research goals. The adopted mixed study method will enable gaining new important insight into formation and development mechanisms (verification of theses 1, 2, 3, 9, 11), risk factors (t. 2, 3, 5), protective factors (t. 5), dynamics (t. 7, 9), frequency (t. 2, 3, 7), turning points (t. 8), neutralisation techniques (t. 6) and criminal career trajectories (t. 4). Criminal career types will be developed. The effects of social and economic factors on the careers will be analysed. All results will be shown against a broader background of historical analyses and the latest international data (international criminology, comparative criminology) concerning the issue of criminal career shaping