

# Realities of Crime, Society and Landuse in the Mediterranean

**JANUS I**

*Realtà del Crimine, Società e Uso del Territorio nel Mediterraneo*



**Edited by**

Saviour Formosa, Sandra Scicluna and Jacqueline Azzopardi



UNIVERSITY OF MALTA  
L-Università ta' Malta

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To all those persons who contributed  
to this book's creation

*A tutti coloro che hanno contribuito  
alla creazione di questo libro*

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### **TRANSLATIONS**

The translations of the books from English to Italian were made by Floriana Vita.

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**Andrew Willis** è stato in precedenza Direttore del Dipartimento , di Criminologia , Università di Leicester , con una ampia professionalità in materia di istruzione e formazione relativa agli agenti di polizia di livello senior , operatori sociali, ufciali giudiziari , agenti penitenziari e operatori di sicurezza e giustizia, nazionale e internazionale ( nel Regno Unito e in oltre 80 paesi in tutto il mondo). Il professor Willis ritiene che dove il rigore accademico sia combinato con successo alla formazione professionale la somma delle due parti sia significativamente maggiore di ciascun componente singolo. Egli vede questa combinazione come una parte importante del ruolo del criminologo contemporaneo. I suoi interessi di ricerca includono: la giustizia riparatrice, sistemi di correzione, politiche penali, carceri, detenuti e riforma carceraria , libertà vigilata e gestione del rischio , mediazione vittima - reo; cooperazione multisettoriale tra le agenzie di giustizia penale, riforma del settore della sicurezza nella società del post-conflitto; relazioni tra la polizia pubblica e programmi di polizia, sicurezza e gestione dei rischi; mutevole equilibrio tra disposizioni pubbliche e private nel dipartimento carcerario e polizia , l'immigrazione illegale e la criminalità. Questi interessi si riflettono nei contratti di ricerca e nelle pubblicazioni a livello internazionale, con particolare enfasi sulla giustizia penale e l'erogazione di servizi ai criminali a Malta.

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## CHAPTER ONE

# Introduction to JANUS

SANDRA SCICLUNA

This project is partly financed by the ISEC Programme 2009 Action Grants “PREVENTION OF AND FIGHT AGAINST CRIME.” The application form was submitted on the 31<sup>st</sup> July 2009 and the project was awarded on the 15<sup>th</sup> December 2010. The duration of this project was of 36 months, starting from the 15<sup>th</sup> December 2010 and ending on the 14<sup>th</sup> December 2013. The project has two main partners – the Institute of Criminology (today the Department of Criminology) within the University of Malta and Associazione Nazionale Famiglie Emigranti: Delegazione Regionale Sicilia. In the original application there was also an associated partner – The Provincia Regionale di Trapani. This partner later retreated from the project due to administrative changes in the divisions of the regions in Sicily.

The **Department of Criminology**, within the Faculty for Social Wellbeing in the University of Malta is the leading partner in this project. This Department offers courses and research in criminology and criminal justice studies. It also acts as a resource centre for the Maltese criminal justice system. The University is a member of a number of European University associations such as the Association of Commonwealth Universities and the European Access Network. The Department itself has bilateral agreements with other EU universities and organisations. The Department offers Bachelor and Master degrees. It also trains police inspectors and probation officers. Members of its staff regularly participate in EU projects, both as leading partners or as partners. Projects include research on spatial analysis, prisons, probation, domestic violence, bullying and migration. There are also numerous on-going researches going on in the field of criminal justice.

The *Associazione Nazionale Famiglie Emigranti* [**National Association for Emigrant Families**] is an NGO, established in 1947 to assist Italian migrants around the world. It has a main office in Rome (IT), with subsidiary offices around the world. Today ANFE's role has grown to include training and research. It also houses (together with other institutions) the on-line university – Unitelma Sapienza. In this project the University of Malta worked mainly with the Sicilian Delegation, more specifically the Marsala Centre. The ANFE – Sicilian Delegation is a training agency accredited by the Sicilian Government. Each year it offers numerous courses financed through the European Social

Fund. ANFE has a Regional Coordination Centre and 25 offices accredited in each Sicilian province, where training, vocational and social-economic integration activities take place. Moreover ANFE manages nine multifunctional offices distributed in the region territories and hosted by other local Sicilian institutions, such as job-agencies, government offices, schools and prisons in the various cities and provinces. ANFE's contacts made it an ideal partner to gain access to the various agencies who were the data gatekeepers.

The idea of the JANUS project was born out of the conclusions of a PhD research conducted by Dr Saviour Formosa and his creation of the CRISOLA Model. CRISOLA stands for the interaction between crime, social and landuse constructs. The initial concept was to try to compare other islands with Malta. However this soon proved to be too great a project, necessitating a reduction of the areas under study. At the end it was decided that the best way forward was to assess the situation in Malta and in Sicily, particularly the region of Trapani. Trapani was chosen because its population was similar to the Maltese one although spread on a larger territory.

The aim of this chapter is to give an overview of the project as well as to portray the positive and negative points that were encountered in the project actuation. It is not the aim of the chapter to criticize or praise parties; rather it is an attempt to give a faithful narrative of three years work with the ups and downs any project faces.

### **What did the project set out to do?**

The specific priority that the project addressed was the prevention of crime through horizontal approaches, particularly the two themes of crime prevention and criminology as well as law enforcement. In order to address these themes two objectives were chosen. These were:

- to stimulate, promote and develop horizontal methods and tools necessary for strategically preventing and fighting crime and guaranteeing security and public order; and
- to promote and develop coordination, cooperation and mutual understanding among law enforcement agencies, other national authorities and related European Union bodies.

These objectives were further broken up into workable parts. The first stage of the project consisted in a review and assessment of existing information, legislation and operational activities. The impact and effectiveness in preventing crime was also assessed. It was anticipated that this would then lead to specific recommendations at a NUTS3 level on the potential for reduction of crime through the use of the social and landuse parameters that are rarely tackled in policy-making at local or regional levels.

Furthermore the project aimed at creating tools and aids such as GIS (Geographical

Information System) datasets as well as a set of indicators for on-going analytical processing leading to the setting up of a network of experts who will enable the sustaining of the project's outputs. The results obtained will enable analytical outputs and will eventually also enable impact assessments of policy changes emanating from the project recommendations. The regional-targeted outputs will also enable other regions to compare results.

So as to address these objectives the project team planned to work with work packages each of which would be explained further on. These work packages included a variety of activities from operational cooperation and coordination to analytical, monitoring and evaluation activities; from the development and transfer of technology and methodology to the development and creation of a network. The project also included awareness raising and some dissemination activities.

### **The Project Conceptual development**

The concept was developed through an evaluation of a PhD spatio-temporal research (Formosa, 2007) on crime in Malta (environmental criminology) reviewing the theory of social disorganisation, as based on the concept of human urban ecology (Maguire et al., 1997; 308). Urban ecology theorizes that there is a positive correlation between crime, social issues and landuse (Entorf et al., 2000). Such studies emphasise the vitality of social landscapes and how they impinge on or are impacted by the physical landscapes. On the other hand Felson and Clark (1998), inspiring themselves from Opportunity Theory, studied the way urban structures and landscapes offered opportunities for crime while Routine Activities Theory postulates that each offender and victim follow repeatable paths or routines that are delineated by the space they live in over time (Ekblom, 2001).

The above theories all fit in with environmental criminology theory in that the fundamental issue at stake is space. Urban planning clusters offence targets in specific areas, through increasing or reducing accessibility for opportunities. As against opportunities in rural areas where a person is more conspicuous, urban areas become attractive to offenders especially where an area becomes prosperous (Entorf et al., 2000). Criminological research into the physical landscape enables researchers to analyse and evaluate the areas under study, identify those characteristics that yield criminal activity and help to predict future criminal activities. In turn the analysis of the social interactionism in an area enables successful implementation of crime preventive strategies (Chainey and Ratcliffe, 2005; Schnieder and Kitchen, 2007).

### **Innovation and Implementation**

The project's innovative aspect takes across thematic approach to crime prevention strategies using high-end technologies and established analytical processes in order to understand the dynamics that influence and/or cause crime.

Taking up environmental criminology practices at NUTS3 i.e. at province level is



new to the European region as NUTS 5 (specific city/town) and national rates are usually investigated. Bringing in the social and landuse partners and the agencies involved in mitigating crime was seen as helpful in identifying the best practices that ensures legislative and operational changes to ensure a safer society. The two islands were initially identified on the study of insularity and the cause/effect of crime on, as well as by the social and urban structures. However, this methodology can be employed at any EU regional levels as it creates a new method of analysis and relationship identification. The project is also innovative as it employs triangulation between the different research and implementation parties.

The implementation of the project was done in two parts. This project is based on different methodologies which build on each other's results. During the first part the partners designed a survey, analysed data and produced this report. This process entailed:

- a GI data-cycle and desk surveys;
- a review of legislation and operational entities; country experts carrying out fieldwork and partners analysing the results;
- a creation of analytical tools and indicators, and
- a workshop in Sicily to discuss indicator and survey issues, and to propose proactive measures to tackle enhance crime prevention.

In addition, recommendations for effective monitoring and enforcement are proposed. The process entailed: the recommendations to upgrade legislation and practices; the establishment of indicators covering annual monitoring process to sustain project results; and the network set-up based in the Department of Criminology in Malta tasked with ensuring indicators maintenance.

### **Work Packages**

For ease of work the project was divided into five work packages. Work Package 1 was about producing a policy-oriented document based on proposals for crime prevention changes in legislative, policy and operational procedures, at NUTS3 level. It also included an assessment of the diversity of the existing legislation and of operational entities in fighting crime and identifying its social and landuse correlations.

Work Package 2 was about producing a spatial information system on crime, social and landuse parameters as well as creating visual and analytical data aids, mapping tool and information bases. Work Package 3 identified examples of best practice on crime-prevention and developed a series of metadata and indicators on crime prevention. While Work Package 4 set out to create the setting up of a NUTS3 regions crime prevention network to maintain the research. Finally, Work Package 5 was about dissemination; which includes the creation of an interactive cd, website, webmaps, newsletters and academic publications.

### **The Project Results**

By the end of the project a number of outputs were achieved. The first is a legislative and operative review where the state of affairs of crime-prevention legislation was overviewed (Chapter 3) as per Work Package 1; a number of GI maps and spatial statistical outcomes as well as the tools created are shown in Chapter 7, as postulated by Work Package 2. A series of indicators related to legislation and operations are presented in Chapter 6 to respect the aims to Work Package 3.

The second output is more factual. It is resultant in this publication on the results of the project with recommendations on how to: tackle the future of NUTS3-level crime prevention strategies; identify future directions for legislation; and set up effective crime-social-landuse change at the operational level (including the required changes to modify and/or upgrade the existing legislation in order to mitigate effective change) (Work Package 3). In this book one also finds an indicator document listing the annual monitoring process required to sustain the results of this project and the setting up of the network as specified in Work Package 4. Furthermore the publication of the project's outputs was electronically put on the website and in digital format as specified in Work Package 5.

### **A brief overview of the working of the Partnership**

The setting up of this partnership was a result of previous projects, where researchers from the Department of Criminology met and discussed various issues with professionals working at ANFE. Over the years a collaborative work experience developed to the extent that trying to bid for an EU project on a subject, which interested both entities, seemed natural. When the CRISOLA model was presented informally to law enforcement and corrections personnel, there seemed to be a lot of interest in the tool. It was therefore, decided to go ahead and present a project along these lines.

Once the project was approved, the first meeting took place in Malta. An overview of the project was presented to the researchers from both countries and a road map was planned. It was decided that it would be interesting to conduct interviews on two levels: the professionals working in the field, and local government. In the case of Sicily it was decided to split the local government into two - the local council and the provincial government. However, only the local councils of the province of Trapani were interviewed. The other interviews were limited to the provinces, with the exception of Palermo and Catania, which felt to merit particular attention due to the fact that they had high population levels.

After the end of the meeting, Malta had to design the questionnaire. The Italian partners translated it. As they felt that some questions would not yield the expected results in Italy they modified certain questions so as to address the subject matter in a way that

would enable them to elicit the required results. The questionnaire is found in Appendix A and its results are presented in Chapters 4 and 5.

In parallel with these questionnaires the partnership was also busy trying to obtain and plot the data on CRime, SOcial problems and LAnduse (CRISOLA). This was not an easy task and there were some problems in obtaining certain data. The main problems were that data was not always available at local level or not available in the format needed, sometimes the data existed but it was not available (e.g. census data is still being processed) or it existed but there was a laborious task involved in obtaining it. However at the end, the partners managed to overcome most obstacles and the data was inputted into a mapping software so that maps could be generated. The results can be seen in Book 2 which is dedicated to this data.

Due to the territory that had to be covered in Sicily, the Maltese partners spent two weeks investigating the Sicilian territory and inputting data in handheld spatial devices. This exercise proved interesting as it gave all an opportunity to work together and learn from each other's mistakes.

Six months prior to the end of the project a workshop was conducted in Sicily in order to gain feedback on the indicators that the Maltese partners had created. The workshop was well attended by various professionals and the feedback obtained enabled us to modify some indicators to better reflect reality. Although they seemed workable on paper, while trying to fill in the indicators, which will act as a baseline for the observatory in the future, operational issues were identified. For example, one of the indicators asks for success rates in treatment of offenders. This in itself proved problematic in Malta where there are a handful of treatment centres and these institutions do not have the same cut off point for success. This problem is multiplied on the Sicilian territory where the numbers of rehabilitation centres are much more. It is not impossible to fill this indicator, however more work needs to be done and needs more allotted time to be undertaken scientifically and would be one of the post-project activities to be tackled by the observatory.

The final conference was held in Sicily. Surely the observatory setting-up will enable future co-operation in this field. The partners will continue cooperating in order to sustain this outcome, enlarge the database and include other countries in order to be able to create a more effective tool for crime prevention.

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## CHAPTER TWO

# Conceptualising the CRISOLA Model

Saviour Formosa

### **The Conceptual Model**

Why create a conceptual model? Such a question lingered through the reviews of the environmental criminology literature, the GIS literature and the 2007 Maltese scenario readings. The reviews, together with an understanding of the complex Maltese data availability situation, highlighted the need to bring together each aspect and build a mindmap that helps set out a process to depict a basic and generic model on how crime, social and landuse issues interact together.

The review process also identified techniques and datasets that can be used in the identification and understanding of crime. The use of these datasets is best explained through a conceptual model that is relevant to CRIME and to the SOCIAL and LANDUSE aspects, herein embedded as the acronym CRISOLA.

The model took shape through a tiered 3-phase process, with each iterative phase building up from an abstract level (Phase 1) through the identification of the main datasets (Phase 2) to a final individual attribute listing (Phase 3). The model is not exhaustive as it covers potential datasets that yet need to be created/surveyed, statistical measures identified as well as inclusion of other crime relevant theories. The model can be evolved in future studies as it attempts to highlight areas of study that will not be tackled in this research and which may/may not be found to be significant, entailing further change.

### **The three CRISOLA radials: Crime, Social and Landuse**

Initially the conceptual Model catered for the crime aspect in isolation, but crime does not stand alone: it interacts within a wider and more complex environment. The mindmap exercise soon sought the inclusion of social and landuse parameters within the model aimed at streamlining the process to facilitate the analysis. The result brings together the three CRISOLA disciplines and attempts to identify theoretical links between the different datasets.

The decision to model crime together with the sociological and landuse disciplines is based on an understanding of the interactivity between the three as identified in the

literature. The model attempts to understand criminal activity within the social and physical structures it operates in. The main area of study is the interaction between:

- i. the crime characteristics through an analysis of offender and offence composition and the interactivity between them,
- ii. the social characteristics of an area through an analysis of its poverty/deprivation,
- iii. the physical characteristics of an area, particularly its landuse, structural and zoning parameters.

The social characteristics of a human society are linked to the physical surroundings it operates in, which two characteristics are directly caused by or affect crime. Offender analysis requires an understanding of the social construct that the offender operates in, such as affluence and poverty. Offence analysis requires an understanding of the landuse structure crime occurs in; the opportunities offered, the mode of travel, and the activities that may lead to the occurrence of crime, amongst others.

### **Phase 1 – The Abstract Level**

Table 3.1 outlines the Phase 1 thought process needed to reach an initial structure within which to analyse any relationships between the three disciplines. It is a high-level abstract model that attempts to look at parallel processes between the three disciplines and how an understanding of the processes can be achieved. It develops the concept through a series of five linear steps that can be tackled in order to facilitate later cross-thematic crime studies. It is aimed at an analysis of the thematic structure, focusing on the main parameter in the themes that affect change, identifying the spatial construct within the theme, highlighting the impact on capital and cohesion and finally leading to a change phase.

The latter phase can only be tackled through longitudinal studies that would draw a better long-term picture of what constitutes change. Although the current study looks at crime over a period of time, this model needs to be revisited with longer-term data if one needs to analyse sturdier change processes. This is needed particularly in the final phase that covers change for each of the CRISOLA themes.

Table 2.1: Phase 1 - Conceptual Model Logical Matrix

<b>Social</b>	<b>Crime</b>	<b>Urban</b>
Analysis of the Social structure of the area under study	Analysis of crime in the area under study through offences and the behaviour of offenders	Analysis of spatial constructs through a study of landuse zoning, spatial aggregates and physical structures
↓	↓	↓
Focuses on socio-economic and socio-cultural parameters towards an understanding of poverty and deprivation as a surrogate for social and community health	Focuses on offences as a measure of attractiveness of an area and focuses on offender data as a measure of social disorganization	Focuses on landuse zoning as a measure of affluence, leading to an understanding of opportunity structures
↓	↓	↓
Identifies the social-spatial constitution of the areas, leading to a social-zoning structure	Identifies the criminal-spatial constitution of the areas leading to a crime-zoning structure	Identifies the physical constitution of the areas leading to a landuse-zoning structure
↓	↓	↓
Impact on social capital – social cohesion	Impact on security and safety	Impact on spatial capital
↓	↓	↓
Social change	Crime change	Landuse change

**Phase 2 – Identifying the linkages**

Whilst, the high-level Phase 1 Model enables a generic focus on the study in question, a more detailed second level model was required which helped point at and identify the interactivity between the three parameters. This is accomplished preferably through the identification of datasets that may be used for analysis. Being a mindmap model, Phase 2 (Figure 2.1) sought to identify those literature related issues and integrate them within the model. It also sought to bring together the different Theories, Datasets, Spatio-Temporal Aspects, predictors and the main tenets that can be used in such a study on crime. These



include such parameters as age and density, which have been described in the literature review chapter.

The deeper one moves into the model (towards the bottom part of each section and where the predictors are highlighted) the more research is needed to identify the real relationships and how each parameter can be predicted. The model does not attempt to solve these issues in this study but depicts the potential future studies that can be attempted.

The following walkthrough of the Model in Figure 2.1 shows the three distinct social, crime and landuse sections. Each section has a series of data boxes each depicting a specific theme, index or concept. The following section describes one such databox.

### ***A Social section walkthrough: Taking the proximity databox as an example***

*Refer to the Phase 2 data model and identify the proximity index databox within the Social section.*

*The proximity index attempts to elicit an understanding of each area in Malta through its location in relation to proximity to a number of factors. These are split in two:*

- i. the proximity to the community centre (identified by the number 3, which number also refers to the relative Phase 3 data-box) and*
- ii. structures identifiers split into four themes,*
  - a. two related to building state such as vacancy (4) and dilapidation (5) (indicates broken windows tipping) and*
  - b. the other two related to densities – population (6) and dwelling (7).*

*The latter four would together be developed into a structural poverty index (8) that would be integrated with the proximity to the community centre theme. These two constructs would enable the creation of a spatial poverty index (9) that introduces a concept which identifies that poverty is not essentially an economic construct but is also related to access to the community construct. Taking the model further, integrating the socio-economic poverty index (10) created through a separate integration process, with the spatial poverty index (9) would result in a deprivation index (11). This process is followed by a statistical measure that would eventually result in the identification of a categorisation of different social zones (12).*

It is at this stage that the first cross-discipline links are highlighted: those of the identification of a possible link between social zones (12) as identified through the process described above and the potential relationship (brown link) to the offender location (37) that looks at the social zoning pertaining to convicted offenders. This link can be further analysed through statistical measures. Other potential cross-discipline relations are identified through the link between the social (poverty) zones (12) and the landuse social and community-related zones (15). This link could better describe the relationship

between the 'poor' areas and their location in the landuse designated for social use as against industrial and recreational use. It may identify 'poor' areas that are situated outside of the social zones as well as concentrations within specific areas of the social zones. Other lower-level links between the different themes would relate to the linkages between the final level of each theme and the potential impact on each resulting in a change in the other. The social zoning (12) to landuse (27) link is such a potential link (red line) where one could predict changes in deprivation through changes in the landuse construct and vice versa.

The other sections follow the same logical process and each successive branch highlights its particular theme, theory base and dataset pertaining to it. The best way to follow this is within the model is to once again look at the proximity index example in Figure 2.1. The level 2 model in Figure 2.1 is accompanied by a description and spatial levels key (Figure 2.2). The key describes the different spatial data aggregates available from national to regional to enumeration areas, which data layers can be employed for most datasets listed. The description section, however lists the different datasets available (D), the theories (T), the main data tenets (M) as well as other relevant information.

Once again, taking the proximity index as an example, the proximity-to-centre data-box (3) is tagged with 3 codes, amongst them D2A. The D2A refers to the key: Data (D) is available at (2A) Address-point spatial detail. Similarly the vacancy (4) data-box is tagged with T3A and D2I, where as an example T3A refers to social disorganisation theory and potential to analyse the data based on concentric rings and broken windows concepts.

Other model issues include the identification of a potential to integrate a dark figure of crime, once this is carried out. To date this has not been covered in Maltese crime studies, except for a study carried out by the author where the sample return was too small to prove reliable.

The coloured data-boxes indicate some kind of major studies that were not found in the literature review but are deemed essential to understanding crime, such as the analysis of spatial-temporal-prediction-fragmentation (31) which attempts to understand the spatial aggregate (ex: council, enumeration area, street) at which predictability starts to deteriorate over time and which would allow researchers to know how far to predict at each level in order to remain statistically significant. Such a model would help crime understanding for operational and tactical levels.

### **Phase 3 – Identifying the datasets and attributes**

Taking the model one step further to Level 3, a series of statistical measures are listed for the variables within each dataset identified for model integration. This level is theoretical

as each link needs to have a theoretical construct attached to it with the relevant research studies carried out which would validate that such a model can work.

The Phase 3 is highly detailed where it looks at each data-box, identifies the relative dataset as indicated in Phase 2, lists the attributes within that dataset and then attempts to identify statistical measures for each level within the process. In most cases, the statistical measures call for further research into the potential measures to be employed. Also, at this stage new indexes were inputted such as insurance, sentencing practice and recidivism, each of which was identified as vital to a particular complex index.

As in the Phase 2 case, the best way to understand Phase 3 would be through an example, that pertaining to the proximity-to-community-centre data-box (3). In Phase 3, a statistical measure is listed as distance-to-centre which is further explained through the use of a distance ranking index based on GI buffering techniques employing 100m intervals.

New indexes are also identified in Phase 3, which indexes help to clarify how a more complex index is created. The following example is based on the welfare index (2) that is split into two component indexes (persons-at-risk and structural-dependency). Each of these is composed of three data complexes (ex: pensions, social assistance, widows' survivors), where each complex is composed of the sum ( $\Sigma$ ) of a number of welfare benefits pertaining to that category (attributes within the welfare index dataset). For example, widows' survivors is composed of Widows pensions (NM and NMWP), Survivors pension (SRP and ESRP). The results are then integrated with other categories as in the Phase 2 process described earlier.

### **Conceptual Model Summary**

In summary, the main aim of producing these three Phases was primarily targeted at understanding the potential relationships between the CRISOLA constructs. These relationships operate within a human environment that is intrinsically dynamic, where any change in one sector would affect the other two, positively or negatively. The model will be used post-research to further refine the theories and carry out in-depth studies in each of the sectors and linkages.

The conceptual model was drafted to enable the author to focus the direction this study would take though the identification of some of these areas that can be analysed, whether data exist to support such studies and also to identify further areas of research. It also helped to list the relevant theories, the data availability, the spatial and temporal aspects and the potential relations between the different CRISOLA constructs.

Once the conceptual model was drafted, the next stage of the study concentrated on the drafting of the research questions.

Figure 2.1: Conceptual Model Phase 2 – Linkages – Themes - Key

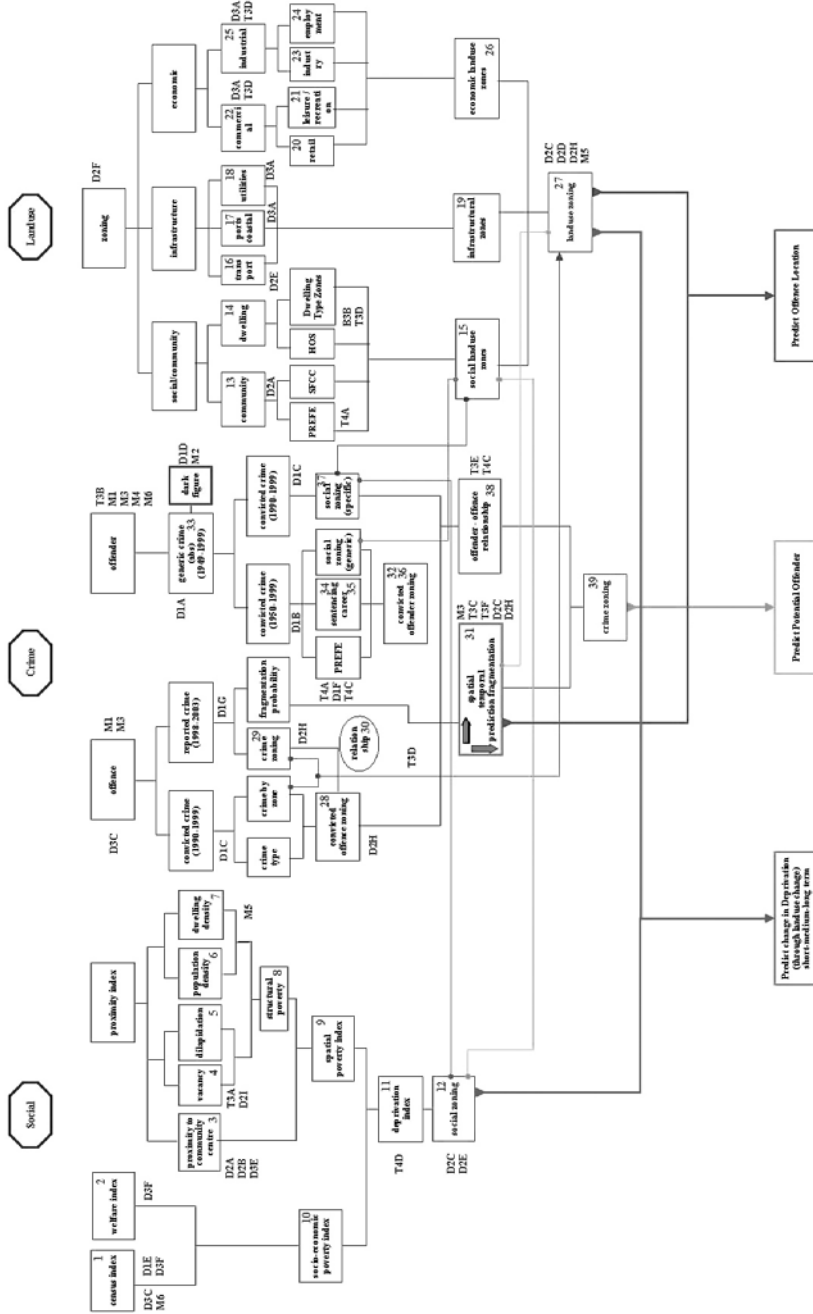
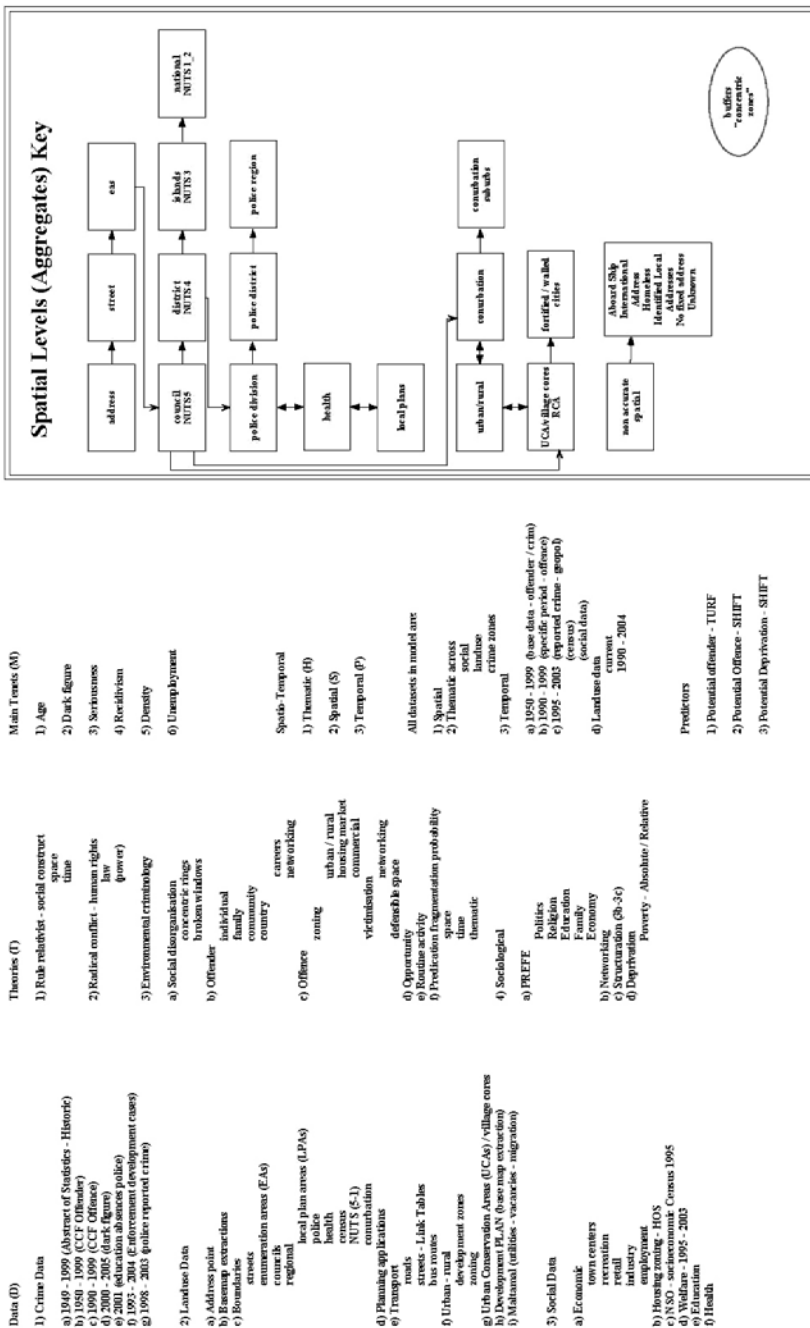


Figure 2.2: Conceptual Model Phase 2 – Linkages – Themes – Key



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## CHAPTER THREE

# Legislative Issues - Maltese and Italian legislation

Jacqueline Azzopardi

The aim of this chapter is to give a very short summary (in table format of the Maltese and Italian Legislation that were indicated or could be of interest to anyone doing research on crime, landuse and social constructs that could lead to crime. The chapter does not attempt to present an exhaustive legal list, rather the list is aimed at helping the reader better understand the legal framework that impinges on this area.

Table 3.1 is a summary of the most salient and relevant Maltese legislation. It presents these laws (and what they are about) starting with Chapter 9 – The Criminal Code. These constitute crimes and contraventions (harming people and property). The legal notice on betting (on football matches results and within the Malta Racing Club precincts) falls under this category. Chapter 10 is referred to as the Code of Police Laws and regulates public order. Under this legislation, besides other public order laws, one finds laws that regulate general cleanliness, public entertainment and alcohol consumption by minors. Chapter 33 is the Explosives Ordinance and, as the name implies, it not only controls the use of explosives in the construction industry but it also regulates the fireworks industry. This law controls the location of fireworks factories, the use of fireworks and the transport of any explosives (including fireworks). Public Gardens are regulated by the Ordinance found in Chapter 32 (the Public Gardens Ordinance). It is this Ordinance that regulates the opening/closing times of public gardens and their use on certain days of the year. One must bear in mind that local councils might be responsible for the administration of certain public gardens. The Customs Ordinance (Chapter 37) regulates imports and exports and deals with associated crimes. Interestingly, there is an Ordinance dedicated to the cultivation of potatoes (the Potato Ordinance). Clearly, the cultivation and exportation of potatoes is considered as a very important aspect of Maltese agriculture. Thus, the need was felt to guarantee (by law) its proper cultivation, the prohibition of the importation of potato seeds and the prohibition of fixing brokerage rates. Naturally, this agricultural law is an echo of World War II legislation. Chapter 65 constitutes the Traffic Regulations Ordinance and, as the name implies, it is a collection of traffic laws and related legal notices. Public meetings are regulated by Chapter 68 (Public Meetings Ordinance) and anyone/



any entity organizing a public meeting/gathering must apply for a permit in accordance to this law. This legislation still falls within the remit of the Malta Police Force (not of local councils) since maintaining public order is one of the main police responsibilities.

Chapter 70 is the Public Lotto Ordinance. This legislation regulates different types of lotto games as well as the very location of lotto booths. This aspect (the location of lotto booths) of the law might be of interest to local councils and the police for crime prevention purposes. However, anything to do with lotto is regulated by the local Lotto Department. The Portes de Bombes Area (Preservation) Act (Chapter 74) was enacted in 1933 in response to the illegal development that was mushrooming in the area. This law is clearly of interest to the Floriana local council (planning legislation). In Chapter 78, one finds the Racecourse Betting Ordinance, which regulates racecourses and makes further provisions with regards to betting. It is of interest to the Marsa and Qormi Local Councils. Chapter 89 deals with methylated spirits, called the “Methylated Spirits Ordinance”. It was enacted during World War II to control the import and production of methylated spirits. It is still in force. Chapter 97 is the Cattle Breeding Ordinance. Besides other controls, the licensing of bulls falls under this chapter. It is another example of agricultural law that carries with it hefty penalties. Since agriculture was the main local industry right after the construction industry, one finds several legislation pieces that regulate it, even meticulously. Chapter 101 is the Dangerous Drugs Ordinance. This controls the importation, manufacturing and commercializing of dangerous drugs. The Insanitary Areas Ordinance falls under Chapter 103. This chapter deals with the clearance of areas lacking sanitation (this happened in particular in the post-war constructions). This law renders it obligatory to clear such areas. Chapter 106 controls who grows tobacco and where it is grown. It is the Tobacco Growing Ordinance – which prohibits the growth of tobacco in Malta. In seemingly direct opposition to Chapter 74, Chapter 119 is the Porte des Bombes (Exemption) Act. This law declares that sites near Spencer Hill (near Marsa and Hamrun) are to be exempted from Chapter 74. Clearly, this law is of importance to the Marsa and Hamrun Local Councils. Local sand and shingle is protected by Chapter 127: The Sands Preservation Act. This legislation stipulates that one needs a permit to carry sand and/or shingle from local beaches. Chapter 164 constitutes the Police Act – which clearly regulates local police service. It is this law that obliges the police to meet with local councils at least once a month, over public order and crime issues. Chapter 200 is the Clean Air Act. This regulates pollution in the Inner Harbour Area and, as such, is primarily targeted at ships and chimneys. At the very end of the list in the table, one finds Chapter 206, The Litter Regulations (these include a legal notice on dustbin size). This Act was intended to be repealed and replaced by other regulations under other laws.

Table 2 is a summary of the most salient and relevant Italian laws. It starts with Chapter 416/bis, which is the Criminal Code. This mainly deals with organized crime offences

Table 3.1: Summary of Maltese legislation

<b>Chapter</b>	<b>Title</b>	<b>Topic</b>	<b>Remarks</b>
9	Criminal Code	Crimes and contraventions – main division: crimes against the person and against property	Legal notice on betting of football matches results and of betting within the Malta Racing Club precincts
10	Code of Police Laws	Public Order	General cleanliness (prior to existence of current laws – code was written in 1850s), aqueducts, fountains, pitkali brokers, shoe smiths, harbours and wharves (taking animals into sea, holding of regattas, pollution of seawater), public theatres regulations, wild thyme protection, conifer trees protection, regulations of places of entertainment, alcohol consumption
33	Explosives Ordinance	Control of use of explosives in the construction industry, fireworks etc.	Firework factory locations and misuse of fireworks, transport of such explosives
34	Public Gardens (Closing) Ordinance	Regulates times of closure and use on certain days of the year	Local councils might have administration of certain public gardens
37	Customs Ordinance	Regulates imports and exports	Associated crimes
64	Potato (Cultivation) Ordinance	Regulates proper cultivation, prohibition of importation of seeds and of fixing brokerage rates	WWII remnant – another agricultural law

<b>Chapter</b>	<b>Title</b>	<b>Topic</b>	<b>Remarks</b>
65	Traffic Regulation Ordinance	Collection of traffic law regulations. This act has a number of legal notices attached to it	All traffic offence contraventions in Legal Notices and crimes in the main act – together with the Criminal Code
68	Public Meetings Ordinance	Regulates applications for such public meetings	Still within the remit of the police, not of the local councils, due to public order
70	Public Lotto Ordinance	Regulation of different types of Lotto games	Location of lotto booths might be of interest Local Council and the police for crime prevention purposes – regulated by the Lotto Department
74	Portes Des Bombes Area (Preservation) Act	Area outside of Portes des Bombes – Regulation of illegal development (1933 law)	Of interest to the Floriana Local Council for planning legislation
78	Racecourse Betting Ordinance	To legalise the use of totalisators on certain racecourses and to make further provisions with regards to betting	Of interest to the Marsa and Qormi area
89	Methylated Spirits Ordinance	Control of import and production of such	A WWII legislation still in force
97	Cattle Breeding Ordinance	Licensing of Bulls	Another example of agricultural law that carries with it hefty penalties. Since agriculture was the main local industry after construction, one finds several such pieces of legislation

<b>Chapter</b>	<b>Title</b>	<b>Topic</b>	<b>Remarks</b>
101	Dangerous Drugs Ordinance	Regulation of importation, manufacture etc. of dangerous drugs	Drugs are also regulated by Chapter 31, also by specifications on dealing/trafficking near schools, places of rehabilitation and where young persons meet
103	Insanitary Areas Ordinance	Clearance of areas lacking sanitation in the aftermath of the postwar reconstruction	Makes it obligatory to clear such areas lacking air
106	Tobacco Growing (Control Of) Ordinance	Controls who grows and where tobacco is grown	Regulations prohibit the growth of tobacco on the Maltese Islands
119	Porte De Bombes (Exemption) Act	Site near Spencer Hill to be exempted from Chapter 74	Might be of interest to the Marsa and Hamrun local councils as it controls building rather than offences of public order
127	Sand Preservation Act	Preservation of sand and shingle	Need a permit to carry sand and shingle from beaches
164	Police Act	Regulating the police service	Obligatory meeting with the local councils once a month over public order and crime issues
200	Clean Air Act	Regulates pollution in the Inner Harbour Area	Pollution from ships and chimneys
206	Litter Act	Litter regulations	Legal Notice on dustbin size – the act was intended to be repealed and replaced by other regulations under other laws

and sets out the general principles of mafia-type association. Chapter 266 constitutes the Criminal Procedure Code and regulates surveillance policies. Under this law, wire-tapping may be authorized only for a “legal proceeding” – with the exception of terrorism and related investigations. Chapter 6 is the Law on Territorial Privacy (Act 4.23. 2009). As the previous law, this legislates surveillance policies, for example, allowing municipalities to employ video surveillance to guarantee “urban security”. Chapter 49, Article 4 is referred to as Law 02.21.2006 which regulates drugs and alcohol. This legislation changes rules on penalties and administrative penalty for drug-abuse. Abusers of soft and hard drugs are now treated the same by the Italian law. Chapter 309 constitutes Law 10.9.1998. This legislation also deals with drugs and alcohol, however in it, there are provisions for the prevention of substance abuse, the treatment and the rehabilitation of drug addicts. In Chapter 125, one finds Law 03.30.2001 which is another substance-abuse-related piece of legislation used to combat alcohol-related problems.

Chapter 113 (Leg. Degree 04.13.1999) deals with immigration. The immigration policy process in Italy established internal regulations for the holding centres. Like Chapter 113, Chapters 39, 40, 189 and Article 38/39 deal with immigration. Chapter 39 introduces a quota system with inter-ministerial decrees, embracing a regularization process that is based on a lower level of selectivity. Chapter 40 focuses on the removal of obstacles toward the full integration of immigrants through a social integration policy. This law stipulates that, once a year, quotas for legal immigration to Italy are established by means of a decree by the Prime Minister. As citizens, legal immigrants have the right to medical treatment and the rejoining of their families, while illegal immigrants can be driven out from the country. For the first time, this law provides a centre of temporary permanence for all illegal immigrants. Chapter 189 authorizes the police to take suspected illegal migrants to specific centres controlled by the police. The authorities then have 60 days to discover the identity of these migrants. If these migrants are found to be illegal, they are ordered to leave Italy within five days. Subsequently, if they return to Italy, they will be arrested and tried by the courts. This piece of legislation introduced a novel principle: the introduction of the work permit contract which binds migrant workers to their employers. Articles 38/39 actually define the issue of the study of immigrants.

Chapter 94 is the Security Package Act of 07.15.2009 which regulates public safety. This legislation introduces the relatively new crime of “illegal entry and sojourn in the territory of the State” and regulates groups of volunteers who oversee the territory. Law D.M. 2/08/1977 is called: Organization of Border Police Service and, like previous laws, regularized surveillance policies. This law set up a new system of public safety border surveillance. Chapter 55, Act 03.19.1990, again counteracts organized crime offences. It establishes new rules for the prevention of mafia and other serious types of social danger. Chapter 7 is referred to as Regional Law 01.12.2012 and deals with fiscal crime. It

presents provisions related to the accounting and the stability pact regional. Chapter 257, Act 03.27.1992 deals with the environment, specifically waste disposal and the cessation of the use of asbestos. Chapter 73 is the Ministerial Circular of 2.7.1994 which focuses on human rights. This piece of legislation presents the rules to regulate an intercultural dialogue and democratic coexistence in schools. Chapter 328 (Act of 11.8.2000) is about social care, presenting the regulatory framework needed to promote an integrated system of social service. Chapter 26 is the Regional Law of 05.15.86 on Security. It regulates public safety by presenting regional measures in favour of local policies for the safety of Sicilian communities. Chapter 216 (Regional Law of 07.19.1991) returns to promote social care (as was done by Chapter 328) by presenting: regional measures for the prevention of minor criminality, care-programmes/incentives for at-risk, socially disadvantaged children/youths and assisting victims of crime.

Chapter 125 (Act 07.24.2008) and Chapter 269 deal with public safety. The former chapter confers functions and tasks of control to the local authorities in charge of public order and safety. The latter chapter presents provisions against the exploitation of prostitution, pornography, sex tourism involving children and other new forms of enslavement. Both Chapters 3 and 152 focus on the environment. Chapter 3 regulates the removal of dead animals (farm animals or otherwise). Chapter 152 approves the Code on the Environment, which sets out the legislative framework applicable to all matters concerning environmental protection. Law 12.03.12 is referred to as the Directive of the European Parliament and of the Council and constitutes a response to organized crime offences. It regulates the freezing and confiscation of proceeds of crime in the European Union, making it easier for member states to confiscate and recover the profits that criminals make from serious, cross-border and organized crime. Chapter 155 (Act of 07.31.2005) also focuses on organized crime. It presents urgent measures to give more strength to the fight against and the prevention of international terrorism. This Act extensively expands law enforcement powers in anti-terrorism investigations. Art.30 is the Convention on the Rights of the Child and falls under the category - Human Rights. This legislation declares that a child belonging to such a minority or who is indigenous shall not be denied the right to enjoy his/her own culture, to profess and practise his/her own religion, or to use his/her own language.

In summary, these laws tell the story of a Mediterranean people, a story fraught with problems, invaders and the fight for liberty. The Maltese laws depict the story of its people, which laws describe an ambitious nation that: is religiously fervent, believes in fate/destiny and cherishes every occasion to congregate and share joy. Naturally, this translates into activities and behaviours that need to be controlled/checked for the sake of order maintenance and rule of law.

Even a cursory view, of the topics covered by those considered as the most salient and

Table 2: Summary of the Italian Legislation

Chapter	Title	Topic	Remarks
416/bis	Criminal Code	Organised Crime Offences	Set out the general principles of mafia type association
266	Criminal Procedure Code	Surveillance policies	Wiretapping may be authorised only for a “legal proceeding,” except in the case of terrorism related investigations
6	Law on territorial privacy Act 4.23.2009	Surveillance policies	Allows municipalities to employ video surveillance in order to guarantee “urban security
49 Art. 4-ter.	Law 02.21.2006	Drugs and alcohol	It changes rules on penalties and administrative penalty of drugs. Soft and hard drugs now are the same for the law which result in harsher penalties when it comes to hashish and marijuana
309	Law 10. 9.1998	Drugs and alcohol	Consolidated Law on narcotic drugs and psychotropic substances, prevention, treatment and rehabilitation of drug addiction
125	Law 03.30. 2001	Drugs and alcohol	Regulatory framework to fight alcohol-related problems
113	Leg. Decree 04.13.1999	Immigration	The immigration policy process in Italy established internal regulations for the holding centres
39	Law 02.28.1990	Immigration	Introduce: a quota system with inter-ministerial decrees regularization based on a lower level of selectivity

<b>Chapter</b>	<b>Title</b>	<b>Topic</b>	<b>Remarks</b>
40	Law 03.06.1998	Immigration	The removal of obstacles to the full integration of immigrants through a social integration policy. Once a year, quotas for legal immigration to Italy are established by means of a decree from the Prime Minister. As citizens, legal immigrants have right to medical treatment and familial reunion, while illegal immigrants are driven out from the country. For the first time the law provides a centre of temporary permanence for all illegal immigrants
189	Law 07.30. 2002	Immigration	Suspected illegal immigrants stopped by the police will be taken to specific centres controlled by the police. The authorities will try to discover their identity during the following 60 days. If they are found to be illegal immigrants, they will be ordered to leave the country within five days (a period they must spend in the centre). If illegal immigrants return to Italy, they will be arrested and tried by the courts. It introduces the “work permit contract” which binds migrant workers to their employers (work permits are valid only for the duration of job contracts).
94	Security package Act of 07.15.,2009	Public safety	It introduce the new crime of “illegal entry and sojourn in the territory of the State”. Groups of volunteers to oversee the territory
Artt 38/39	Leg. decree n. 286 07.25.98 on Immigration	Immigration	Defines the issue of the study for immigrants
	Schengen Agreement	European community	The treaty sought to abolish border controls for private and commercial traffic



<b>Chapter</b>	<b>Title</b>	<b>Topic</b>	<b>Remarks</b>
D.M 2/08/1977	Organization of border police service	Surveillance policies	It set up a new system of Public safety Border surveillance
55	Act 03.19.1990	Organised Crime Offences	New rules for the prevention of mafia and other serious forms of manifestation of social danger
7	Regional law 01.12. 2012	Fiscal	Provisions relating to accounting and the Regional Stability Pact
257	Act 03.27.1992	Environment	Waste disposal: Rules concerning the abolition of the use of asbestos
73	Ministerial Circular of 2.7.1994	Human right	Rules for an Intercultural dialogue and democratic coexistence in the school
328	Act of 11.8.2000	Social care	Regulatory framework to promote an integrated system of social service
26	Regional law of 05.15 86 on security	Public safety	Regional measures in favour of local policies for the safety of Sicilian community
216	Regional law of 07.19.1991	Social care	Regional measures for the prevention of lesser criminality: incentives for prevention of social disadvantaged children, education law, assistance to victims of crime
125	Act 07.24.2008	Public safety	Confer functions and tasks of control to the local authorities related to public order and public safety.
269	Act 08.03.1998	Public safety	Provisions against the exploitation of prostitution, pornography, sex tourism involving children, such as new forms of enslavement.
3	Regional Law 03.09 .2005	Environment	Interventions for the removal of dead animals on farms.

<b>Chapter</b>	<b>Title</b>	<b>Topic</b>	<b>Remarks</b>
12.03.12	Directive of the European Parliament and of the Council	Organised Crime Offences	About the freezing and confiscation of proceeds of crime in the European Union to make it easier for Member States' authorities to confiscate and recover the profits that criminals make from cross-border serious and organised crime.
art 30	Convention on the Rights of the Child	Human right	A child belonging to such a minority group or who is indigenous shall not be denied the right to stay in the same community with other members of his or her group, to enjoy his or her own culture, to profess and practise his or her own religion, or to use his or her own language.
155	Act of 07/31/2005	Organised Crime Offences	Urgent measures to enhance the prevention of and fight against international terrorism. The Act greatly expands law enforcement powers in anti-terrorism investigations.
152	Leg. Decree 04.03.2006	Environment	It approves the Code on the Environment, which sets out the legislative framework applicable to all matters concerning environmental protection.

relevant Italian laws, draws a picture of Italy and Sicily that could be very close to reality. The emphasis on immigration laws could be interpreted as Italy's reactions that results from the need to protect its shores from recurrent waves of distraught and distressed boat people from Africa but also from the need to protect life, to safeguard and promote human rights – thus the social integration policy, promoting the full integration of immigrants. However, irregular migration is not the only cause for concern. From the emphasis placed on the prevention and the combat of organized crime, one infers the impression that mafia days are far from being over. The mafia might have changed tactics, but it could still be looming over the innocent in Italy and Sicily. Thus the need for protection from Mafiosi and their operations, which could involve drug trafficking and fiscal abuse. Yet, the strategic position of Italy and Sicily could also represent an ideal vantage point, not only for the mafia but also for terrorists – thus the attention given to surveillance policies. Besides the adverse effects of the cultural inheritance of the Mediterranean mentality of honour and shame, which to a certain extent accepts, if not promotes, violence, when it is considered as being called for and justified (as in cases when the honour of the family is perceived to have been violated, putting the family to shame), Mediterranean culture is imbued with the positive values of family and solidarity – thus the emphasis on human rights, social care, substance-abuse prevention and the environment.

## CHAPTER FOUR (PART A)

# Operational Aspects I - NUTS Perspectives - Malta

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### **Introduction**

This chapter presents the results obtained from the interviews conducted with the 64 local councils in Malta. Interviews were either conducted with the major or with the executive officer of the local council. For the purpose of analysis the Maltese Islands were analysed according to the six districts at NUTS 4 level. Malta is divided into five districts - the Southern Harbour district, the Northern Harbour district, the South-East district, the Western district and the Northern district, while the islands of Gozo and Comino make up the sixth district. The Southern Harbour district consists of Birgu, Bormla, Fgura, Floriana, Isla, Kalkara, Luqa, Marsa, Paola, Santa Luċija, Tarxien, Valletta, Xgħajra and Żabbar. The Northern Harbour district is made up of B'Kara, Gżira, Hamrun, Msida, Pembroke, Pietà, Qormi, San Ġwann, Santa Venera, Sliema, St. Julian's, Swieqi and Ta'Xbiex. While the South-East District comprises: Birżebbuġa, Ghaxaq, Gudja, Kirkop, Marsaskala, Marsaxlokk, Mqabba, Qrendi, Safi, Żejtun and Żurrieq. The Western district consists of Attard, Balzan, Dingle, Lija, Iklin, Mdina, Mtarfa, Siġġiewi and Żebbuġ. The fifth and final Maltese district is the Northern district comprising Għargħur, Mellieħa, Mgarr, Mosta, Naxxar and St Paul's Bay. Gozo together with Comino make up the sixth and final district of the Maltese Islands. The summary of the research conducted with members of the local councils will be presented here. They are presented as if someone is conducting a tour of the Maltese Islands, explaining a little bit of history, describing the landscape, as well as explaining social and crime problems. After a presentation of the first five districts a point form summary of Malta is given, after which Gozo will be presented. This chapter ends with a summary of the findings, according to the perceptions of the local authorities about the locality which they administer. Their perceptions are reviewed in conjunction with the data analysis presented in Chapters 7 and 8. This does not mean that they were stating non-facts, rather it shows that their reality could be clouded by other factors such as the amounts of reports/complaints they receive on certain areas. It is important to keep in mind that this chapter is presenting what the administrators said

about their locality which could be a far cry from reality. We will not continually repeat that it is the administrator's perception, but one should keep this in mind when reading this chapter.

### **The Southern Harbour District**

District 1 comprises the following localities:

- Birgu
- Bormla
- Fgura
- Floriana
- Isla
- Kalkara
- Luqa
- Marsa
- Paola
- Santa Luċija
- Tarxien
- Valletta
- Xgħajra
- Żabbar

Birgu, Bormla and Isla, are commonly referred to as “The Three Cities”, together with Kalkara they make up what is called “Cottonera”. These three cities span around a deep harbour, which used to be home to the dockyard industry, (before it was closed down) and which has now been transformed in a thriving marina. This marina is now often frequented by super-yachts particularly, on Birgu's shore, which is also home to the exclusive Casino di Venezia (housed by a restored historic building), close to the Maritime museum on one side and the majestic fort St Angelo (now, part of it is used as the Knights' headquarters) on the other. Birgu's historical, harbour-side, old village has other gems, including the Inquisitor's palace, churches, quaint old houses, narrow, decorated roads, restaurants and wine bars. In Birgu, one also finds spectacular bastions and a playing field. In front of Birgu, across the harbour, one finds Isla, with its splendid bastion-garden (known as il-Gardjola) that regales breath-taking views of the grand harbour, Valletta (on one side), Birgu and Kalkara on the other (across the harbour). Isla is frequently visited by pilgrims that flock to its parish church to pray in front of the statue of Jesus the Redeemer – claimed to be miraculous. Like Birgu, Isla is spanned by old, quaint houses, narrow roads, with a few restaurants and pubs, particularly on the shore. Bormla is situated on the inner side of the harbour, right between Birgu and Isla. It has a majestic parish church,

perched on a flight of steps....steps being a characteristic of this quaint, old, harbour-side village. In fact, many side streets are actually flights of steps, with houses spanning on both sides. There are also government (social) housing estates.

The Three Cities or Cottonera are very rich in history and culture. In fact, culture-wise and class-wise, it once rivaled Mdina (where most aristocrats resided). The golden days of Cottonera might have started when the Knights landed in Birgu in 1530, building imposing premises and fortifications before they built and moved to Valletta. Like Mdina, Cottonera became home to the nobility and to high-class individuals. This trend might have gone on until the Second World War, when the zone was heavily bombarded by the Axis and those who could afford to seek refuge, fled to, what is considered, the north of Malta. Consequently, most of those who stayed in the Three Cities were the poor, the disadvantaged and those that worked at the dockyard....the people that sociologists would have referred to as the lower classes. After the Second World War, this area was in shambles....and the cost of property here became low...attracting even more the financially and socially disadvantaged. Consequently, in the Cottonera region, poverty and social hardships became the order of the day. Today, with the exceptions of some restored old residences (which are now owned by the affluent) and the harbour-facing luxury apartments, despite the efforts that were made and the drastic face-lift that was given to the zone, Cottonera remains home to a concentration of disadvantaged people, constantly facing social problems like: financial insecurity, family break-ups, substance-abuse and usury. Once one leaves Birgu, on one's way to Fgura, one can make a sharp turn on the right, heading yet again to the coast....to the boat-port, quaint, old village of Kalkara, with its road-level parish church practically reflecting in the sea water, surrounded by the old houses. Socially, the residents of Kalkara are comparable to those of the three cities.

- In the city of **Isla** (Senglea), the level of crime is not alarming. In fact, it is claimed that, perhaps thanks to the installation of some CCTV cameras (in the Gardjola and the football ground area), Isla seems to be one of the localities with the lowest crime rates. Also, there do not seem to be any ex-offenders living there. The bastion garden (il-Gardjola) is a hotspot for nuisance and vandalism. On a positive note, it is claimed that drug-abuse is on the decline in this locality. Although allegedly few, victims of crime seem to fall in the 25-40 years old bracket. Financial insecurity and poverty seems to reign. Proof of this is the fact that utility bills tend to be paid by instalments. It is felt that the proximity of Isla to the Casino di Venezia might exacerbate the situation, since the poor of the area might be more tempted to gamble the basics they already have...and it could have been made easier, for those with the gambling vice, to risk the livelihood of their impoverished families. CCTV cameras have been installed in the Gardjola (bastion garden) area and football ground area. In addition, the bring-in sites are being monitored. However, there is no neighbourhood watch scheme. Although

the police station is often closed, there is regular police foot and car patrol. Yet, the residents seem to feel more confident to report offences to the local council rather than the police.

- Ironically, in **Bormla** (Cospicua), it is claimed that the main hotspot is right next door to the Bormla police station. This spot is known for blatant and continuous drug-abuse. There seems to be quite a number of ex-offenders living in Bormla. Fear of crime is tangible, especially among the elderly who, are perceived as the main victims in this locality. Every social housing area in Bormla is considered a crime hotspot. Unfortunately, it seems that, residents of Bormla tend to be stereotyped and labelled. Consequently, this stigma tends to be carried by most of the children of Bormla. As regards health and safety, it is claimed that the unfinished infrastructural works being done to Bacir Number 1, pose a danger. Although police presence is evident (there is also a police station, which also acts as the police district headquarters), its affects are hardly felt. Like Isla residents, Bormla residents seem to feel more confident to report offences to the local council rather than the police.
- In **Birgu** (Vittoriosa), the level of crime is not as high as might be perceived. Although one finds offenders as young as 14, thefts from cars and vandalism has decreased over the past years. Drug-abuse is rampant and worsens the already precarious financial situation many residents might already be experiencing. Gambling seems to also be a problem and it is exacerbated by the presence of the Casino di Venezia (on the Birgu waterfront). Places like il-Foss (beneath the bastions) and the playing field seem to be fertile grounds for offences – due to lack of monitoring/supervision. Victims of crime tend to be the elderly and teenagers, especially the 14-year-olds, who are at a vulnerable and susceptible age. Police presence, it seems, is hardly felt and is desired, particularly by the elderly and the waterfront businesses. Like Isla and Bormla residents, Birgu residents seem to feel more confident to report offences to the local council rather than the police.
- In **Kalkara**, the level of crime is directly linked to the rampant drug-abuse. The local council is actually aware of two or three drug-pushers and of families of offenders that reside in Kalkara. It is alleged that sometimes, these cause nuisance and contribute to the residents' elevated fear of crime. Drug-abuse-related crime includes theft from cars and vandalism. There does not seem to be fixed crime spots. Crime and criminals move from one area to a perceived safer (for them) area – perhaps with lower visibility and lack of supervision. Victims of crime do not seem to be visible. In fact, it is claimed that not even the elderly experience fear of crime. It is held that a sense of learned helplessness and resignation has taken over. In face of crime, the villagers seem to remain passive. The village core is covered by CCTV cameras which serve as a deterrent. Neighbourhood watch was never supported by the residents, so

it was not feasible. Police presence is not satisfactory. In fact, it is claimed that, the police station is not always open and police patrols are not enough. However, if one refers to the regular police-council meetings, communication with the police could be considered as good but not as effective as expected.

Leaving the Cottonera area one encounters Fgura, Paola and the Addolorata cemetery, which is the largest cemetery in Malta, having its four sides touching Santa Luċija and Luqa (at the far end side), Marsa (the industrial zone – where one finds the entrance of the cemetery) and Tarxien (up the hill, across a round-about). So, if one drives up the hill, opposite the Addolorata cemetery and turns left, one arrives in Tarxien – home to prehistoric temples and the underground hypogeum. These are found in the midst of old, quaint town-houses and churches. The main road that cuts through Tarxien is also spanned by shops. After driving through Tarxien, one arrives at Paola, at a large square, opposite the majestic parish church. If one turns far left, one passes in front of Corradino Correctional Facility (the only prison in Malta). However, once at the square, proceeding straight ahead, one ends up in Fgura. In the main road, one finds a considerable number of shops, including a small shopping mall and cinema. In Fgura, there is a mixture of types of residences: quaint, old town-houses, terraced houses, maisonettes and apartments (particularly in the relatively modern housing estates). However, if one keeps driving straight ahead and eventually turns right (after Marsaskala), one arrives in Żabbar. Żabbar is another old village, with churches, quaint old houses, a private hospital and a few shops. Once one drives through Żabbar towards the coast, one ends up in Xgħajra – a picturesque quaint village by the sea, where one can enjoy a sea-side stroll on a panoramic promenade. Socially, the people living in this area (Tarxien, Paola, Fgura, Żabbar and Xgħajra) can be considered as mainly lower and working class. Although social problems here are the ones reflected by Maltese society in general (namely, broken-families, single-parenting, teenage/early pregnancies, substance abuse and usury), they tend to get magnified in this zone, inhabited mainly by the socially and economically disadvantaged.

- **Fgura:** Although the perception is that the crime rate is normal, with a few cases of domestic violence, theft from vehicles and vandalism, it seems that drug abuse and trafficking are the main offences, especially in the area of Wied Blandun (shared with Paola), which can be considered a hotspot. Another definite hotspot is the bar that is adjacent to the bocci (Maltese bowls) pitch, which is raided on a regular basis by the police drug squad. Since this hotspot is right next to the playground, the local council is planning on having the premises removed and gating the playground. The new ATM, referred to as the Tip Top (a shop in the main road of Fgura) bus stop, is being lit. The darkness and geographical shape (tunnel-like) of this area renders it ideal for crime. In fact, at least once (this was reported) it even became stage to a rape.



Since the crime rate is considered as low, officially at least, there are few victims of crime. There are two sets of CCTV cameras, one near the bring-in site and the other for traffic reasons. A third CCTV camera is to be installed in the square behind the parish church – in Pjazza Reggie Miller, where nuisance and vandalism are a regular occurrence. Officially, there is no neighbourhood watch, but it is claimed that residents keep a watchful eye and help deter crime. The local council has a very good relationship with the district police and, it is claimed, Fgura is adequately covered by patrols and back-up. The residents report crimes and do so to the police, rather than to the local council. Being a thoroughfare, Fgura residents complain from traffic congestion and lack of parking spaces.

- **Paola:** Crime is extremely high in Paola not because of the locality being bad in itself, but because of its centrality. In fact, due to the polyclinic, about 90,000 syringes are distributed every year and most of these end up being dumped in Paola itself. Other forms of offences that are common are: vandalism, littering, thefts from houses, gambling and drug-abuse. The main abuse, rather than crime, hotspot is located in the Wied Blandun area, and near the Addolorata cemetery, especially the hind part where it is not lit in the evenings. It is notorious for loitering/prostitution and drug-abuse. There are several offenders living in Paola. The victims in the locality are undoubtedly the elderly. There were failed attempts at setting up a neighbourhood watch and police absence is felt to the extent that it has become a major issue for the local council. There are CCTV cameras installed at the local council premises as well as at the police station, however the police seem to either take a long time to react or even refrain from taking any action when law-breaking gets recorded on camera. Pollution and heavy traffic pose a major threat to the health and safety of the Paola residents.
- **Tarxien:** The crime rate here is kept quite high because of drug-abuse. This abuse leads to theft (from residences and cars) and vandalism. Sometimes, offenders use garage entrances to abuse drugs or cause a nuisance. Joanna Gardens (also frequented by outsiders) are also a nuisance area and a littering spot. There are a number of offenders living in Tarxien. Victims of crime have different social backgrounds so it is not easy to generalize who they are. Tarxien could be considered as a thoroughfare and the open spaces it has serve as congregation points, particularly for youths. Since society tends to fear youngsters – even law-abiders, let alone trouble-makers – it is weary of their presence. In response to this, the Tarxien local council has adopted a somewhat controversial strategy: the installation of a mosquito alarm in areas frequented by youngsters. The alarm gets triggered whenever the nuisance levels become too disruptive and the signal it emits irritates young ears so much, that their only option is to move away. All of Tarxien is covered by neighbourhood watch and it is considered successful (there is a councillor devoted to public order issues). The police are based in

Paola and cover Tarxien with patrols. In addition, police authorities regularly meet the local council. As in the Cottonera area, Tarxien residents seem to feel more confident to report offences to the local council rather than the police.

- **Żabbar:** Crime, in this locality, is predominantly drug-abuse-related and narcotic abuse is rampant. In fact, the playing field, found right behind the police station, is regularly littered with used syringes. A private security guard was once employed in an effort to tackle this problem, however, the lack of police powers, rendered him ineffective and consequently, out of a job. Together with other drug-abuse-related crime, theft and vandalism abound in this locality. The areas known as Biccieni and tal-Misrah are notorious for squabbles and nuisances. Gambling also seems to be a problem and this might have been exacerbated by the installation of gambling machines in some Żabbar bars. Several ex-offenders live in Żabbar. Victims of crime are, mainly the uneducated and poor youngsters who become addicted to narcotics. Fear of crime is tangible, particularly amongst the elderly. There is no neighbourhood watch, although there was a failed attempt to set up a similar initiative, intended, not to simply monitor the area and point out any troublemakers, but to reach out, especially to troubled youths. This was led by the parish priest in the area known as Sant' Andrija. A commission was actually set up but it died out. CCTV equipment is installed in the playing field and another is planned for the housing estate and St Peter's. The local council holds monthly meetings with the police, so communication wise, the local council cannot grumble. Yet, residents seem to feel helpless in face of the extent of drug-abuse and drug-abuse-related crime that goes on in Żabbar, especially since, not even having at least three very high-ranked police officials residing there, helped reduce it. Police presence only increases during the village feast season. It is claimed that the Żabbar residents have lost all faith in the police and they just do not trust them. To make matters worse, it is held that, not a single police-community activity was organized in Żabbar by the police, in the past twenty years. The local council feels that it is not its job to point out to the police where their action is needed. People do report crimes/offences, but they rather go to the local council than to the police because the police oblige the person filing the report to take the witness stand in court.
- **Xghajra:** Xghajra does not have an alarming crime rate and the offences committed are usually drug-abuse-related: theft (including from rural and open areas), substance abuse and illegal dumping/littering (particularly of used syringes in the locality's peripheries and even in vacant buildings). Dangerous driving also poses a problem. It is even claimed that some public transport drivers as well as police patrols race down the Xghajra roads. It seems that the elderly are more prone to becoming victims of crime. These include owners of fields that are distant and not under surveillance and those who are robbed by their own relatives (and thus find it hard to report their

victimisation). When it comes to unruly behaviour, fingers seem to be pointed at short-let, transitory residents. There is no neighbourhood watch and CCTV cameras are not yet installed, however they are planned for the new playground area. Police presence is very much desired but, with the exception of the summer months (when police foot patrols become frequent) it has dwindled drastically. There used to be police foot patrols and police on horseback as well as the contribution of the police canine section. These have been stopped. The local council does not know why this happened but supposes that police attention has been now focused on Marsaskala (where the prime minister lives) and on Żabbar (where the police commissioner lives). Residents seem afraid to report to the police and evidently, feel more comfortable reporting to the local council because only the local council can guarantee anonymity.

The Addolorata touches Santa Luċija and Luqa – at the far end side and Marsa (the industrial zone) – at the lower end side (the entrance to the cemetery). So, if one drives up the hill, opposite the Addolorata cemetery and turns right, one is in Santa Luċija. This is considered a relatively modern residential zone, mainly comprised of villas, terraced houses, maisonettes, apartments and a modern-style parish church. There is also a government housing estate. On the hind side of this zone, next to a secondary school, one finds a small but picturesque Chinese garden. With the exception, perhaps, of most of those living in the government flats, the residents of Santa Luċija could be considered as mainly middle and upper class. Family problems are found everywhere, but again, maybe because those most financially vulnerable feel the brunt more, one expects problems to be bigger in the area of the government flats.

If one exits Santa Luċija, turns left and proceeds straight (behind the Addolorata cemetery), one eventually ends up in Luqa. This is an old village, having traditional town houses around the parish church. There is also some agricultural land and farmhouses. With the exception of the restored farmhouses (generally owned by the wealthy), most Luqa residents could be considered as lower middle and working class. The village core in particular, is populated by the elderly.

If one drives through the village of Luqa, one passes near the Marsa Sports Ground, the old Turkish cemetery, and on one of the busiest, multi-lane thoroughfares in Malta. Driving in the direction of Valletta (straight ahead), one eventually can turn right, over a bridge, into the core of Marsa. Marsa is known as an industrial zone touching a bit of the grand harbour (known as il-Menqa) – where tug-boats and cargo vessels dock in very murky sea water. The sea water...and the air of Marsa...is heavily polluted with the Marsa power station (that runs on coal). In this area, one finds the Open Centre for irregular migrants (right in front of the harbour ....il-Menqa). In fact, migrants populate the roads close by, particularly a round-about in the vicinity, from where, it is held, they are picked

by prospective *ad-hoc* employers who, it seems, employ them abusively, on a daily, if not hourly, basis. Marsa has two main churches (one of which is the parish church dedicated to the Holy Trinity...the other is dedicated to Maria Regina. Ironically, this creates rivalry between the residents of these two main residential areas of Marsa). In Marsa, one finds a primary school, old town houses and a number of flats and maisonettes, particularly in the government housing estates. Most of the residents of Marsa can be considered as lower/working class people. Broken families, single parenting, early pregnancies, financial problems might render Marsa a breeding ground for trouble. Marsa touches Hamrun.

In fact, when one drives out of Marsa and turns right, one is on the main road of Hamrun, a road that leads to Floriana and Valletta. Once out of Hamrun, one drives through the Port de Bombs (an old, historical archway), through Floriana – particularly famous for the Granaries (where wheat and corn used to be stored underground, by the Knights of Malta) and its parish church (overlooking the granaries) dedicated to St Publius, the first Maltese bishop, directly ordained and appointed, it is held, by St Paul himself. In the main road of Floriana, one finds a number of shops, clubs and bars. Floriana also hosts a number of foreign embassies. In the back streets, there are old town houses and apartments, as well as government flats (known as *kerrejja*). Broken families, single parenting, early pregnancies, financial and social problems might render the government housing areas in Floriana, fertile ground for trouble. Also in the backstreets, one finds the police headquarters (which used to be a hospital in times gone by) and, right across the road, one finds the Curia (the main office of the Church in Malta).

The main road of Floriana leads to Valletta – the capital city of Malta. Known for its breath-taking views of the Grand Harbour (particularly from the Upper Barrakka Gardens) – where massive cruise liners dock, regularly populating the streets with tourists...and *karozzini* (the traditional, Maltese horse-driven carriages). Valletta – a peninsula – is famous for its historical buildings, particularly, the Fort of St Elmo, the Hospital of the Knights (now the Mediterranean Conference Centre), the Palace, St John's Co-Cathedral, the Museum for Archaeology, the number of churches and chapels, the different auberges of the Knights, the National Archives, and the Court House. There are mansions, offices (including the Prime Minister's), ministries, shops and boutiques, pubs, clubs, pizzerias, fast food outlets, shopping malls, a cinema, restaurants and a few residential, quaint, old houses. At the far end of Valletta, right opposite Fort St Elmo – all the way round the Valletta peninsula, facing Sliema (this zone is called *Marsamxett*) – one finds government housing estates (blocks of flats), including a notorious one, found in a place referred to as *il-Mandragg*. Whereas, about fifty years ago, high class people sought Valletta when it came to buying a house, buildings in the city are now mainly, either commercial or used as offices. The relatively few people that actually reside in Valletta tend to populate the government housing estates and may be considered as socially disadvantaged and

economically challenged...where broken families, teenage/premature pregnancies and single parenting may exacerbate the situation. These hardships may lead to poverty and poor supervision of children and youths living in this area, possibly resulting in delinquency and gang activity.

- **Santa Luċija:** The drug-abuse problem that was so prevalent in Santa Luċija, especially during the 1990s, has been drastically reduced. The murder of an elderly couple in their flat in Santa Luċija, about a decade ago, is still fresh in the residents' minds, consequently, it is difficult to control and reduce fear of crime in this locality. However, on the whole, there does not seem to be an alarming crime problem in Santa Luċija. It is more nuisances that prevail, like for example: over-speeding, noise (particularly in summer) and vandalism. There does not seem to be any ex-offenders living in Santa Luċija. There is no neighbourhood watch scheme nor is there any gating. However a number of CCTV cameras have been installed in the Chinese Garden. But there is no surveillance other than this. Police presence has improved (police patrols – by both the drug squad and the mobile squad – are frequent), even though the police station tends to remain closed. The residents tend to report a lot, but to the local council first, and then, perhaps, to the police.
- **Luqa:** In Luqa, the crime rate is not high. It is contraventions, such as vandalism (particularly in Hal-Farrug) and over-speeding (especially by taxis in New Street or near the airport), as well as littering and illegal dumping that abound. It is the elderly that are most prone to being victimised – especially those living in the rural areas. These often incur thefts from their fields (of agricultural produce and tools) and also suffer vandalism. CCTV cameras (managed by the local council) are installed near the Bank of Valletta. The playing field is not gated and sometimes nuisance arises. Although there is a police station in the main square, more police presence is needed. It is felt that, the badly-lit industrial estate poses a major threat to the security of the residents as it is fertile ground for different forms of abuse.
- **Marsa:** In Marsa, drug-abuse is rampant – as attested by the number of used syringes found in public gardens. Few thefts are reported to the police. Since the ex-trade school is now being used as an open-centre for irregular/illegal migrants, residents complain that this area, particularly the Albert Town area, has been taken over by them. Offences associated with these irregular migrants are: hate crime (inflicted by the Maltese upon them, and/or amongst themselves), loitering, heavy drinking and unacceptable behaviour in public gardens. It is claimed that the strong rivalry that used to be there between the devotees/supporters of the two major village feasts (the Holy Trinity church, which is the parish and the church dedicated to Maria Regina) – that which led to squabbles and disorder (and that sometimes compelled the Church authorities to cancel the outside feasts) has somewhat subsided. There is no neighbourhood

watch scheme (possibly due to the strong sense of belonging that faded away over the decades) but the local council is planning to install CCTV cameras in the garden areas. Communication with the police has been described as excellent, and since Marsa is becoming a district, police presence is expected to increase. The pollution emanating from the power station and the industrial zones are considered as major threats to the health and safety of the Marsa residents.

- **Floriana:** Drug-abuse constitutes a big problem, particularly among the Floriana youths. The illegal disposal of used syringes is even a bigger problem (these are found in the playground, near the health centre, behind the Capucchin Friars' church and in the subways). The Floriana health centre is responsible for the free distribution of syringes consequently, a number of drug abusers from different localities converge at Floriana to collect their free syringes. Theft from cars is quite predominant here. This is expected, considering the number of car parks found in Floriana. However, there were very few reported cases of theft from houses and shops. Vandalism and littering/illegal dumping (the Phoenicia area, Christ the King area, Mall Gardens and the area next to the local council office as well as that near the National Library) are two other problems. The playground entrance is equipped with a CCTV camera, however this needs to be tuned as no one is bothered to watch long hours of videotapes. All the embassies and Triq Santa Anna, leading to tal-Bombi area are equipped with CCTV cameras. There is no neighbourhood watch. The local council is requesting more police presence, especially during the night. However, the situation has improved in the last four years, as more police presence is being felt. The council even launched the award "Police Officer of the Year" – however, their nomination must be first approved by the police authorities. The local council claims that council-police communication channels are open but results are another matter. Lack of parking and the use of the Granaries for a lot of national activities are a cause of stress for Floriana residents.
- **Valetta:** It is claimed that, Valetta residents are suffering from stereotyping. They are being made to carry a stigma they inherited from some unruly residents of the rough areas of Valetta (the area of 'il-Mandragg', for an example). In fact, it is argued that, offenders tend to migrate to Valetta after they commit their crime. Statistics show a decrease in reported crimes (in Valetta) – a decrease of a third in 2010 when compared to 2009. Most crimes tend to be petty, such as theft from cars. It is claimed that, particularly, in the recent past, youth gangs (not Valetta residents) hung around the terminus area, causing 'trouble', targeting and intimidating people. Vandalism and illegal dumping are also a problem (especially in the Due Balli and Marsamxett area). It is claimed that shop owners are not doing their fair share (since they are not interested in installing CCTV cameras). Only Republic Street is equipped with CCTV cameras. The police were described as very efficient, reacting promptly. They were

only criticised for focusing on the commercial, rather than the residential, zone. So much so that the council has to pay for extra police duty so they can also give due attention to the residential part of Valletta. On a positive note, the introduction of police-on-Segways (two-wheeled self-balancing personal transport) has improved safety and security in Valletta.

### **District One: General Crime/Social Problems**

- With the exception of Paola, Żabbar and Bormla, the level of crime is not alarming.
- Thefts from cars and vandalism has decreased over the past years but drug-abuse/trafficking seems rampant and worsens the already precarious financial situation many residents might already be experiencing. Ironically, it is claimed that, in Bormla, the main hotspot is right next door to the police station. This spot is known for blatant and continuous drug-abuse.
- Gambling seems to also be a problem and it is exacerbated by the proximity of the Casino di Venezia (on the Birgu waterfront) and the availability of gambling machines in some of the district's bars.
- In this district, one also could witness loitering/prostitution.
- Domestic violence (and rape) also emerges.
- Nuisances, squabbles/fights, an extent of gang activity, vandalism, littering and illegal dumping are also problems.
- Dangerous driving also poses a problem.
- Since the Marsa ex-trade school is now being used as an open-centre for irregular/illegal migrants, residents complain that this area, particularly the Albert Town area, has been taken over by them. Offences associated with these irregular migrants are: hate crime (inflicted by the Maltese upon them, and/or amongst themselves) loitering, heavy drinking and unacceptable behaviour in public gardens.
- Fear of crime is tangible, especially among the elderly.
- One finds offenders as young as 14.
- The elderly are perceived as the main potential or actual victims of crime.
- Teenagers are also considered as potentially at risk from crime/criminals (mainly the uneducated and poor youngsters who become easy prey to criminals and addicted to narcotics).
- The installation of some CCTV cameras might have helped reduce crime.
- Financial insecurity and poverty seems to reign.
- There are no official neighbourhood watch schemes.
- Every social housing area is a probable crime and social problems' hotspot.
- As regards health and safety in this district, it is claimed that: unfinished infrastructural works (example, those being done to 'Bacir Numru 1' at Bormla), pose a danger; heavy

traffic, lack of parking spaces and traffic pollution pose a major threat to the health and safety of the residents; The pollution emanating from the Marsa power station and the industrial zones are also considered as hazardous to the health and safety of the residents.

- With the exception of Fgura, Floriana and Valletta, in general, police performance in this district is considered as unsatisfactory, particularly in Paola (Police absence in Paola is felt to the extent that it has become a major issue for the local council. There are CCTV cameras installed at the local council premises as well as at the police station, however the police seem to either take a long time to react or even refrain from taking any action when law-breaking gets recorded on camera), Żabbar (Żabbar residents seem to have lost faith and confidence in the police) and Bormla (it is claimed that drug-abuse is practised blatantly in the area next to the police station). However, if one refers to the regular police-council meetings, communication with the police could be considered as good but not as effective as expected. In fact, police communication channels are open, but the results from this study state otherwise. Residents seem to feel more confident to report offences to the local council rather than the police. They evidently, seem to feel more comfortable reporting to the local council because, it is claimed, only the local council can guarantee anonymity.
- It is held that a sense of learned helplessness, resignation and apathy has taken over this district.



### The Northern Harbour District

District two consists of the following localities in Malta:

- Birkirkara (B'Kara)
- Gżira
- Ħamrun
- Msida
- Pembroke
- Pietà
- Qormi
- San Ġwann
- Santa Venera
- Sliema
- St Julian's
- Swieqi
- Ta' Xbiex

Geographically, B'Kara Ħamrun, Qormi, San Ġwann and Santa Venera are found in central, in-land Malta and can thus be considered as very similar. They are urban, commercial and densely-populated, particularly at their cores. The village cores are surrounded by residential buildings. Although problems worsen during: rush hours, schooldays and Christmas time, nuisances and inconveniences created by the commercial core are not seasonal. From a sociological standpoint, it would seem that the more affluent have moved to zones that, although not remote, are considered quieter and more associated with middle/upper-class people. In fact, even commercially, it would seem that the shops in these localities target customers of modest income.

What follows is a brief overview of the social and crime problems in B'Kara, Ħamrun, Qormi, San Ġwann and Santa Venera:

- **B'Kara:** There is relatively not much crime whilst theft from houses and cars tend to be drug-abuse related. Thus, there is an extent of drug-abuse. There is no neighbourhood watch and the only CCTV cameras installed, monitor a public garden. Communication with the police is very good and there seems to be considerable police presence in B'Kara.
- **Ħamrun:** Here it seems that very few, if any migrants reside. The rate of legally separated people is in line with the national rate. Vandalism and drug abuse (mostly in public toilets) is rampant. In addition, illegal gambling (in the square, in front of the police station) is common-place. There are no CCTV cameras and the neighbourhood watch scheme has not been adopted. However, thefts from shops seem to be minimal as most shops are equipped with CCTV cameras. Communication with the police is satisfactory.

- **Qormi:** Social poverty seems to be rooted here with a steady increase in teenage pregnancies, separations and drug use (particularly in the playing field area), exacerbated by the residents' low level of education. Thefts are common-place, although there is a tangible reluctance to report. There are no CCTV cameras and the neighbourhood watch scheme has not been adopted. Communication with the police is satisfactory, although more police presence is needed.
- **San Ġwann:** This locality seems to be mainly populated by low income families. There seems to be very few or no migrants. Crime, including vandalism, is very low. There is no neighbourhood watch scheme or CCTV cameras. However, communication with the police is good.
- **Santa Venera:** Social poverty seems to be raising its head in this locality. It seems that the Housing Estate can be considered a crime hotspot since it seems to have become a breeding ground for delinquency (mainly by deviant youths) and violence. There also seems to be an influx of migrants. Communication with the police is good, yet more police cooperation is expected by the local council. There are some CCTV cameras in a few streets, however the local council fears that not enough is being done, security-wise.

The localities of Gżira, Msida, Pietà, and Ta' Xbiex are connected to each other and have, what one might consider, as the geographical advantage of being in proximity of the sea. However, the geographic constitution of this area and the quality of the sea water here, only allows for a harbour ambience – a yacht marina. Although, people do swim in this area, particularly locals, and there are some popular pubs and restaurants, as well as shops, the zone in these localities cannot be considered as a well-sought, bathers' paradise, entertainment zone or commercial hub. Historically, during the Second World War (Malta was a British colony – a fortress colony, to be exact), since it was so close to the harbour district/to Valletta – the capital city of Malta (only a boat ride from this zone to Marsamxett harbour, Valletta), this zone became very popular with the British army and navy officers. And as the law of economics dictates: their demand created supply... that of pubs and prostitutes. Although the shore is lined with some beautiful, harbour/Valletta-view villas (now most of them are official residences of dignitaries) and a number of popular wine bars, entertainment spots and good restaurants, the zone is associated with people of modest income and backgrounds.

- **Gżira:** This locality experiences petty thefts and drug abuse, but the situation is not alarming. Communication with the police is satisfactory and there is enough police presence. The re-opening of the police station in this locality was considered as very beneficial. There is no neighbourhood watch scheme and a CCTV camera has been installed on the strand area, but only for traffic reasons.

- **Msida:** This locality is considered as somewhat cosmopolitan with particular crime-related issues, such as drug abuse, vandalism and the rampant loitering (particularly in the areas close to Gżira and Ta' Xbiex). Some migrants live in this area, and quite a number have been caught driving without a license. Msida seems to be a hub for refugees. Social poverty is felt, especially in housing estates. Single parents and separated parents are on the increase, leading to a diminishing quality of life and poor child-supervision. Communication with the police is satisfactory but there is no neighbourhood watch scheme.
- **Pietà :** Here, social poverty is evident with single parents and separated parents on the increase. A few migrants reside in Pietà. There is also an aging population (residents are mostly over 60 years of age). Crime seems to be on the decrease. Theft from houses and shops is sporadic (most of which takes place while residents – mostly elderly – attend the 7am mass). However vandalism does constitute a problem, particularly in the playing field, which today is gated and the Marina gardens (mostly, it is claimed, at the hands of youths/students who attend the Junior College at Msida. There is no neighbourhood watch scheme and although contact with police is satisfactory, the fact that Pietà has no police station, poses a problem.
- **Ta' Xbiex:** This locality mainly experiences thefts from shops and cars. A particular area (known as the Guzeppa Cali area) is monitored by CCTV cameras, mainly to deter loitering and prostitution. Loitering and prostitution remain a problem in this area. Communication with the police is satisfactory however, it is felt that police presence is lacking.

The localities of Pembroke, Sliema, St Julian's and Swieqi are somewhat different. Ta' Xbiex leads to Sliema, which, in turn leads to St Julian's and Pembroke. All these localities can be reached by boat as they face the enticing, crystal-clear, blue sea. Swieqi can be considered as the residential zone touching St Julian's and Pembroke, but having no direct access to the sea. Sliema (although not in its entirety...in fact, there is a particular area in back-street Sliema that is associated with the lower-class and the underclass) is commonly associated with the high-class and the affluent, particularly with successful business people. It is spanned by a breath-taking promenade, at the foot of block upon block of very expensive, sea-facing apartments. Sliema is popular with young families as it offers: a long sea-side promenade; playing fields, ice-cream parlours, sea-side lidos, fine restaurants, hotels, cafes and wine bars... not to mention the spectacular rock beaches that are ideal for swimming. Understandably, it is also very popular with tourists. Walking up from Ta' Xbiex, through Sliema and onwards (on the coast), one would eventually reach St Julian's. In times gone by, this area used to be a small fishing village. Nowadays, although the little port still harbours some residue, traditional fishing boats, St Julian's is renowned as

a night-spot...the entertainment hotspot. There are some shops, but there are much more pubs, night-clubs, restaurants and hotels. There are also two casinos, gentlemen's bars, a bowling hall, discotheques and, what is considered, an extensive cinema place housing 16 cinema theatres. St Julian's is particularly popular with the party-lovers: adolescents, the young and the young-at-heart. Especially in summer, it gets crowded by groups of young foreign students who come to Malta to study English. Sociologically-speaking, St Julian's can be considered as the meeting ground for the majority of Maltese (and Gozitan) youth who seem to flock to this area (especially during weekends) from all walks of life and from all backgrounds. This is where cultures breed and clash.

Our walk on the sea-front would eventually land us in Pembroke – just after leaving four large hotels and the Institute for Tourism Studies (where prospective hoteliers, chefs and any other prospective professional in the tourism industry follows practical and academic courses). The English used Pembroke as a residential zone when Malta was still a colony (1800-1964). Once the very last English officials were out of Malta (1979), Pembroke became clusters of government housing estates which were allotted to those whose applications were accepted and subsequently selected. Thus, although most of the houses (the majority of which are terraced houses), in this residential zone, benefit from breathtaking seaviews, since the area is associated with the lower classes, it tends not to be sought-after by the affluent and the higher classes.

After walking through the housing estates of Pembroke and crossing the main road, one arrives in Swieqi. Swieqi is also connected to St Julian's, but from the back-streets. In fact, it has no direct access to the sea. Swieqi is a residential zone. Since it is not associated with government housing schemes and since it is considered as a good location (close to the sea, close to the entertainment zone, and close to the shops), it is popular with the middle and upper class home-owners. Most of the houses here are terraced houses.

- **Sliema:** Sliema seems to experience quite a volume of petty crime, especially theft, particularly in summer. Pick-pocketing and theft from beaches seem to constitute a problem in summer. In fact, beaches become crime hotspots during summer. As regards CCTV cameras: most shops have their own. There is no neighbourhood watch. Communication with the police is good but Sliema needs greater police presence.
- **St Julian's:** Vandalism is rampant in St Julian's, particularly in the village core where, it is claimed, cars get targeted by foreign students who come to Malta to study English. Vandalism is also evident around the coast: on trees, plants and lighting equipment. This also peaks in summer. Like Sliema, theft from beaches is common. However, the frequent occurrence of fights is a problem, particularly in bars. There are neither neighbourhood watch schemes nor CCTV cameras. However, most houses have their own alarms and security cameras. It is held that, especially during summer, more police surveillance is needed.

- **Swieqi:** Since Swieqi is connected to St Julian's vandalism is a problem rampant particularly in summer when cars in this area are targetted by students who come to Malta to study English. Another crime involving these students is indecent exposure. It seems they (especially the Spanish students) have made a habit out of running around in the nude, in the middle of the night. Few thefts. Drug users (particularly in a dilapidated building site). No neighbourhood watch, ONE CCTV camera (traffic related), no police station, not enough police presence (police concentrate on Paceville) are some of the problems mentioned. However contact with the police is OK.
- **Pembroke:** Although in Pembroke, crime is a round-the-year problem, it escalates in summer. Vandalism is rampant and most delinquents seem to be youth. One might thus conclude that this attests: a low level of education, lack of police support as well as lack of discipline. Residents do not communicate much between themselves and the locality lacks a sense of belonging. Thefts occur on a daily basis but tend to go unreported. A lot of visitors (considered as strangers) visit the area daily for different reasons (for example for work or for romantic relationships). The locality lacks a sense of territoriality and belonging. On average, five cases of rape are reported every summer and there are other rape cases that are not officially reported. A lot of foreign students reside and hang around Pembroke during summer and, most teenagers seem to be sexually promiscuous. There is no neighbourhood watch and there are no CCTV cameras. Dirt can be seen lying around, like empty alcohol bottles dumped in streets. It is claimed that there is not enough police presence as the police concentrates on St Julian's. However, communication with the police is satisfactory and the mobile squad responds immediately when called.

**District 2: General Crime/Social Problems**

- Crime in general seems to be on the decrease. However, although theft from houses and shops is sporadic (most of which takes place while residents – mostly elderly – attend the 7 am mass), it occurs.
- Vandalism constitutes a problem all over the district.
- Thefts are common-place, although there is a tangible reluctance to report.
- Theft from houses and cars tend to be drug-abuse related.
- Theft from beaches.
- Pick pocketing occurs.
- Thefts from shops seem to be kept to a minimum as most shops are equipped with CCTV cameras.
- There is an extent of drug-abuse.
- It seems that the housing estates can be considered as a potential crime hotspots since, in some cases, they seem to have become a breeding ground for delinquency (mainly, it is claimed, by deviant youths) and violence.
- There seems to be a steady increase in teenage pregnancies, separations and drug abuse (particularly in playing fields and public toilets).
- The level of crime is exacerbated by the general mediocre level of education.
- Vandalism is rampant.
- Illegal gambling (particularly in Ħamrun, in the square in front of the police station) is common-place.
- A number of people have been caught driving without a license.
- Single parents and separated parents are on the increase, leading to a diminished quality of life and poor child-supervision.
- Loitering and prostitution remain a problem in this district.
- The frequent occurrence of fights is a problem, particularly in bars.
- Indecent exposure in residential areas, in the middle of the night.
- Cases of rape are reported every summer and there are other rape cases that go unreported.
- Dirt can be seen lying around, like empty alcohol bottles dumped in streets.
- There is no neighbourhood watch and the installation of CCTV cameras (for security, not traffic reasons) is minimal.
- On the whole, communication with the police is very good but most zones require more police presence.

### **The South-East District**

The third district comprises the following localities:

- Birżebbuġa
- Ghaxaq
- Gudja
- Kirkop
- Marsaskala
- Marsaxlokk
- Mqabba
- Qrendi
- Safi
- Żejtun
- Żurrieq

Kirkop, Mqabba, Qrendi, Safi and Żurrieq, are situated very close to the airport (Gudja). In fact, once one drives out of the airport, turns left and drives on for about five minutes, one finds herself in the Kirkop, Mqabba,, Qrendi, Safi and Żurrieq area. These villages are practically connected and are thus very similar, physically: small, quaint (particularly in the village cores with, relatively modern housing estates on the fringes), residential, agricultural, encompassing industrial zones (part of the airport, factories and quarries). However, although the village of Żurrieq is very similar to Kirkop, Mqabba, Qrendi and Safi, once one leaves the actual village and starts driving towards the sea (this part of the island is the cliff-side facing the very small, uninhabited island of Filfla), one reaches the very small fishing village of Żurrieq, from where one could take a boat trip to the famous Blue Grotto. So clearly, unlike Kirkop, Mqabba, Qrendi and Safi, this part of Żurrieq is extremely popular with the tourists. Although Qrendi also has a tourist attraction called “Il-Maqluba” (where a sizeable piece of land (found next to a country chapel) caved in and is now virtually a big gaping hole, harbouring unique green ecosystems), however, this site is not as popular with tourists as the Blue Grotto.

From a sociological standpoint, the rate of marital separations and single parenthoods is significant but comparable to the national one. Poverty is felt in some zones in Kirkop, Mqabba and Qrendi, mainly due to lack of education, marital separations and/or sudden redundancy. It seems that there is a trend for school children to abandon their studies early and opt to try and find a job, rather than further their education. However, this trend does not seem to apply to Safi and Żurrieq where the educational standard of residents seems to be on the increase. The little village of Safi can actually boast of having seven medical doctors and a lawyer amongst its locals...something that was unheard of thirty years ago!

**Crime/Social Problems:**

- **Kirkop:** Few offenders live in Kirkop, however it is claimed that, due to the proximity of the village to the airport, a number of known drug barons from the Cottonera area live here for convenience. The main offence is theft of money and gold from residences and drug abuse. Vandalism was also a great issue, but the neighbourhood watch scheme, that now covers all Kirkop, reduced it. CCTV cameras have been installed in response to a number of thefts, targeting the elderly. It is claimed that Kirkop has the highest number of wardens on the beat and, it is believed, that this helped reduce further crime. There seems to be lack of confidence in the police (it is held that this is the consequence of police inaction) and the consequential *omertà*. It seems that residents find it easier and more natural to report crimes to the local council, rather than to the police. Residents' fears of insecurity are augmented by their proximity to the airport and two fireworks factories which did explode in the past.
- **Mqabba:** Only three residents are serving a prison sentence. Thefts are rare however, there are some drug abuse hotspots, where youths convene. In addition, it is a known fact that under-aged youths/children drive around without a license. Conveniently, the local council office is housed by the same building that houses the police station. There is no neighbourhood watch scheme and no CCTV cameras have been installed. It is claimed that there is not enough police (on-the-beat) presence.
- **Qrendi:** There is not a lot of crime in Qrendi however, judging by the amount of syringes found in the area, albeit not alarming, drug abuse, could be an issue. There is no neighbourhood watch as, it is claimed, the high level of *omertà* in the area would render this scheme ineffective. Communication with the police is satisfactory.
- **Safi:** It is claimed that the elderly of Safi have been repeatedly targeted and suffered theft with violence in their own homes in the 1990s. In fact, it was reported that, some of the victims were even tied up and beaten up by the criminals. Although this victimisation was incurred in the 1990s, their fear of crime lives on and the victimisation of the Safi elderly continues, psychologically. There were reports of drug abuse. In fact, there were people from Safi who overdosed on it. Otherwise, there is not much crime in this locality and neither is it inhabited by any known offenders. All of Safi is covered by neighbourhood watch and there are some CCTV cameras around, including those owned by property owners. Although the police station is not always open, police presence is felt as regular patrols are noted. However, as in Kirkop and Żurrieq, it seems that residents find it easier to report crimes to the local council, rather than to the police.
- **Żurrieq:** Although crime in this locality is on the decrease, domestic abuse and drug abuse seems to be quite widespread. Vandalism and littering also seem to constitute a problem. Other nuisances include: illegal parking, over-speeding and noise. These are



generally blamed on youths. CCTV cameras have been installed and police presence is satisfactory (it is held that the police station is always open and patrols are frequent). As in Kirkop and Safi, it seems that residents find it easier to report crimes to the local council, rather than to the police. There is no neighbourhood watch scheme.

Birżebbuġa, Ġhaxaq, Gudja, Marsaskala, Marsaxlokk and Żejtun, are also situated very close to the airport (Gudja). However, once one drives out of the airport, one has to keep going round the round-about and turn far right. After driving on for about five minutes, one arrives in Gudja (the airport is situated on the outskirts of Gudja). If one turns again to the right, one enters Ġhaxaq. Gudja and Ġhaxaq are practically connected.

Physically, Ġhaxaq and Gudja are very similar. They are quaint, old, small villages. In the village core, one finds old houses, on the fringes there are found housing estates (mainly terraced houses) whilst the borders (mainly agricultural) are dotted by restored farmhouses. If one continues driving through Ġhaxaq, crosses at the round-about and keeps going straight, one reaches Żejtun. Żejtun is quaint and old and has similar residences as Ġhaxaq or Gudja, but is quite big, compared to these two villages. If one drives back, out of Żejtun, turns left and carries on, past another village called “Bir id-Deheb” and then turns left again, one enters Marsaxlokk – the fishing village. Marsaxlokk has the advantage of being right next to the sea...a fishing port, really... dotted by the colourful, traditional Maltese boats. Marsaxlokk is a small, quaint, old village by the sea, where one can enjoy a stroll on the promenade and meet the old fishermen, who would probably be mending their fishing nets and tackle. Marsaxlokk hosts the famous, traditional Sunday market (by the sea) which is crowded by hawkers (selling anything from souvenirs, clothes, soft furnishings, Maltese culinary products and fresh fish) and buyers – locals and tourists.

From Marsaxlokk, one could either keep driving inwards, to the right and eventually end up in Marsascala or turn left, drive through Marsaxlokk and eventually end up in Birżebbuġia. Marsascala is another sea-side village, popular, to a certain extent, with tourists because of its long, panoramic, sea-side promenade, hotels, holiday flats, pubs, take-aways, ice-cream parlours, restaurants (including Chinese and Sicilian), cafes and a playing field. There are buildings that are old, but on the whole, buildings are relatively modern, particularly the luxury apartments, and the modest but aesthetically pleasant flats near “Taz-Zonqor” area. On the other side of Marsascala, one mainly finds relatively modern terraced houses, some villas, a hotel and restored farmhouses on the very edge of this sea-side village. Marsascala has a water-polo pitch but consists mainly of a small-boat-harbour. However, Marsascala tends to be popular, particularly with the locals, for swimming.

If, while in Marsaxlokk, one decided to drive through this village, one would eventually end up in Birżebbuġia. This is yet another sea-side village which is bigger

than Marsaxlokk. It is mainly a small boat harbour, however it boasts of a sizeable sandy beach, which became bigger after the sea currents were altered as a consequence of the construction of the Free-Port. The Free-Port is a sizeable harbour for cargo-ships that use Malta as a transit point for the containers they carry. Birzebbugia is quaint, particularly in the village core where one finds mostly old, traditional Maltese houses. However, there are flats, apartments, maisonettes, terraced houses, particularly in the housing estates. There are also some villas and restored farmhouses, especially in the agricultural area. On the coast of Birzebbugia, one finds a monument to commemorate the signing of the document that ended the cold war. Presidents Gorbachev and Bush were supposed to sign this document on a vessel far out at sea, but the area was hit by a violent storm and they asked for shelter in Malta. Even in Birzebbugia, one finds a long, panoramic, sea-side promenade, and a considerable number of pubs, (a discotheque even), hotels, holiday flats, pubs, take-aways, ice-cream parlours, restaurants and cafes. Right next to the beach there is a sizeable playing field which also houses areas for playing ball games. Again, this area is frequented by tourists, but is mainly popular with locals.

#### **Crime/Social Problems:**

- **Birzebbuġa:** Crime seems to be seasonal. Theft from beaches and cars increases in summer. Drug-abuse is widespread and, it is claimed, drug-trafficking goes on, undisturbed in uninhabited places. A considerable amount of syringes are found in the playground that is adjacent to the primary school. There is no neighbourhood watch scheme (although the local council tried setting it up) and the only CCTV cameras were installed on the local council's premises. In an effort to prevent crime and abuse, barbecues were banned from the beaches. The elderly tend to be the main victims of crime, consequently, they suffer a high level of fear of crime. As in Kirkop, Safi, and Żurrieq, it seems that Birzebbuġa residents find it easier to report crimes to the local council, rather than to the police. And they only approach the local council with reports usually after deep reflection and with hesitation. It is claimed that the Delimara power station and the Freeport industrial zone poses a threat to the safety and security of residents. Strangely, the age-old gas-distribution-plant was not mentioned. Communication with the police is satisfactory but the residents avoid involving the police.
- **Għaxaq:** The crime rate is perceived as low, with law breaking being limited to traffic contraventions (especially speeding in the Għaxaq bypass). However, the tangible village feast rivalry (ironically between the followers of St Mary and those of St Joseph) constitutes a threat to the tranquillity and security of this little village. The playing field seems to be the main crime hotspot, especially in summer when young people gather, causing what is considered as nuisance by the residents. Vandalism and littering,

particularly in the housing estate garden, is an issue. In fact, CCTV cameras were installed in this area. There is no neighbourhood watch. There is a police station in the heart of Ghaxaq, but it is not always open. Wardens do most of the foot-patrols, but these officials only tackle contraventions. As in Birzebbugia, Kirkop, Safi and Żurrieq, it seems that Ghaxaq residents find it easier to report crimes to the local council, rather than to the police.

- **Gudja:** Overall, the crime rate is perceived as low (theft is rare and when it occurs, it is mainly petty theft, probably to sustain drug abuse), however drug-abuse is considered a problem, although since syringes are usually found on the outskirts of Gudja (the football ground where youths convene), it is claimed that the abusers could easily be outsiders. It is claimed that, since Gudja is a thoroughfare, outsiders use it to illegally dump their rubbish (including used syringes). It seems that the victims of crime in Gudja tend to be the elderly, consequently, they suffer a high level fear of crime. Typical, village feast related offences (rowdy, unruly behaviour, fights and possibly indecent exposure) are committed during the feast-periods: both (*tac-Cintura* and *tar-Ruzarju*) in October. In comparison, St Mary (in August) is quiet. There is no neighbourhood watch scheme in operation – nor are there any CCTV cameras. The Gudja police station is not always open, however the area is covered by frequent police car patrols.
- **Marsaskala:** Crime seems to be on the decrease, although there have been reports of vandalism, theft from cars and theft from beaches. The playing field near the church and the area near *Il-Maghluq* (in this zone there are some nightclubs that lure the younger generations to convene) are considered crime/nuisance hotspots. There is no neighbourhood watch scheme. This was largely blamed on the weak sense of belonging. The only CCTV cameras were installed by the banks (to monitor their premises). The recent provision of a police station in Marsaskala was welcomed by the residents.
- **Marsaxlokk:** The perception is that crime is low... except for drug-abuse which, is claimed to be a big problem. This seems to occur frequently in vacant buildings. Next in line is vandalism. Very few ex-offenders live here. It seems that the elderly frequently fall prey to criminals in Marsaxlokk as well. Pleasure boats that pass from the port of Marsaxlokk, are considered as being a source of loud noise and consequently are blamed for constituting a threat to the safety, security and tranquillity of Marsaxlokk. There does not seem to be any crime hotspots. There are no CCTV cameras installed and there is no neighbourhood watch scheme (this was blamed on the apparent apathy of the residents). Police presence is acceptable and there are police patrols during the evenings, conducted by the Birzebbuġa police.
- **Żejtun:** Overall, the crime rate is not considered high however there seems to be a drug-abuse problem which seems to take place particularly in public gardens. It seems that, in Żejtun, the victims of crime tend to be the elderly consequently they suffer

a high level fear of crime. It is claimed that it is outsiders that cause problems since they lack a sense of belonging. Over speeding is considered as one of the problems of Żejtun, particularly in the arterial roads and the outskirts. There are law offenders living in Żejtun (some of which regularly visit the local police station to sign). There is a neighbourhood watch scheme behind the Żejtun parish church, especially tailored for the elderly that live there. The local council complains that, although regular meetings are held with the police, the police are not proactive: they are not present and they do not interact with the residents of Żejtun.

### **District 3: General Crime/Social Problems**

- The main offences seem to be: theft, drug-abuse, domestic violence, driving without a license, over speeding plus other traffic contraventions, offences related to village feasts (getting drunk, disturbing the peace, urinating in public, indecent exposure and fighting) littering plus illegal dumping and vandalism.
- The young are considered as potential trouble-makers/criminals and thus a threat.
- The elderly have been victimised by criminals in the past and thus are generally afflicted by an acute fear of crime.
- There is a neighbourhood watch scheme that covers all Kirkop but this seems to be an exception. The other villages do not have a similar scheme.
- Although few and far apart, some CCTV cameras have been installed in this district.
- Although, as a whole, communication with the police is satisfactory, there seems to be a general lack of confidence in the police and *omertà* is tangible. In fact, it seems that residents find it easier and more natural to report crimes to the local council, rather than to the police.
- The residents that live close to the airport, (this district is close to the airport) feel somewhat at risk precisely because of their proximity to the airport and fireworks factories which did explode in the past. It is claimed that the *Delimara* power station and the Freeport industrial zone (found in this district) pose a threat to the safety and security of residents that live close by.

### **The Western District**

District four comprises the following localities:

- Attard
- Balzan
- Dingli
- Lija
- Iklin
- Mdina
- Mtarfa
- Siġġiewi
- Żebbuġ

Attard, Balzan and Lija are commonly referred to as the three villages. Geographically, they are central, inland, situated in an area famous for its citrus fruit. Attard, Balzan, and Lija are very popular with home buyers. They are mainly residential, with a few shops, particularly in the village cores. Balzan is the first village one finds as soon as one drives out of Birkirkara, driving in the direction of Dingli (via Attard). It is a quaint, old, picturesque village, having narrow roads and consisting mainly of old houses/mansions, some villas, churches, chapels and convents (including that of the Good Shepherd which hosts irregular migrants, besides other disadvantaged/marginalized/needful persons). There are also wine bars, coffee shops and restaurants. In the modern part of Balzan, one also finds apartments and maisonettes. Socially, Balzan residents seem high on the ladder – belonging predominantly to the upper middle class with the exception of the irregular migrants/refugees (as well as other Maltese protégés) residing at the Good Shepherd convent. Unemployment is very low and there is no social housing in Balzan. Balzan is characterised by an ageing population. The elderly tend to live alone and thus are potential targets of thieves (theft from residences).

Driving out of Balzan, passing from in front of San Anton Gardens/the Palace of the President, past a five-star hotel, one arrives in Attard. With the exception of the old village core, which, like Lija, has narrow roads and old, quaint houses and restored farm houses, right next to the old parish church, the outer sections of Attard are relatively new. Up till the early nineties, Attard was known for its villas and high-class terraced houses, some of which even had pools. Now, the trend is for developers to demolish these family buildings and replace them with blocks of high-rise apartments. In fact, from a tranquil village and residential zone, Attard is gradually, but steadily being transformed into a hectic thoroughfare where traffic congests (particularly in the rush hours) and parking is problematic. There are also two residential homes for the elderly as well as some coffee shops/bars/pizzerias. Social problems might be present (especially in the social housing

area) but are not that evident. Most of the elderly reside in the village core around the parish church, and the population of Attard is characterised by young couples migrating to Attard from different localities since, besides being central and convenient, property in Attard is considered as up-market. So, socially, residents are a mixture of middle/upper middle class and lower class (especially from the social housing estate).

Right behind San Anton Gardens, sandwiched between part of Attard and Balzan, is the third village, called Lija. Lija is a residential area however there are factories and a small industrial zone in its outskirts. Lija is a typical Maltese village which has developed at a very fast rate. One finds the old village core around the parish church and the new buildings date back to about 25 years ago. There were open areas/fields in the proximity of the village core however most of these have now been built. One example is the University of Malta residence. Lija boasts of villas with a particular history, such as Villa Francia, Villa Depiro Gourgon, Villa Preziosi (Lord Strickland lived here), Villa Depiro and Villa Ganado. So it comes as no surprise that a considerable number of wealthy people built their villas in Lija (village core and country-side). However, there is also a social housing estate. According to old documents, San Anton Gardens were once part of Lija. Socially, Lija is a mixture of upper and lower class people (especially in the social housing estate). Lija has an aging population. Although not part of the three villages, Iklin is very close to Lija.

When one drives out of Lija and turns left onto the main road, drives for about two minutes, then turns right (across the main road), one ends up in Iklin. Iklin is a residential area, spanned by well-kept terraced houses, some villas, apartments and maisonettes. It is considered as a relatively tranquil area, however a considerable amount of traffic passes through it every day, particularly since the Birkirkara bypass is so close to it. The rate of broken families (separated people) reflects that of the national one, and social problems are not evident. As in Attard, Balzan, and Lija, the education level seems to be quite elevated as most youths seem to join university and unemployment is low.

- **Attard:** This town seems to be plagued by vandalism. Its public gardens, public toilets and even the local council premises are regularly targeted by vandals. A number of thefts from houses have been reported and used syringes are often found in public gardens and central strips (evidence of drug abuse). There was a neighbourhood watch system, however this did not work and consequently, it was abandoned. Public gardens and the local council premises are monitored by CCTV cameras. In addition, some residences have their own CCTV cameras and alarms while the new modern complexes have their own private roads monitored and secured by alarms and CCTV cameras. It is felt that there is not enough police presence in Attard and often, the Attard police station is found closed. Thus, residents are forced to call at the B'Kara station when they find the Attard police station closed. However, the communication between the local council and the police is good.

- **Balzan:** In Balzan there are about three extended families that commit crime and are repeated offenders. Vandalism and drug abuse prove to be recurring problems. These problems spill over from three villages (i.e Attard and Lija) as well as Iklin and the neighbouring B'Kara. In cases of vandalism committed by youths, the local council did intervene by implementing voluntary community service so as to avoid taking the young culprits to court. There is also a trend that youths run around on bikes, dreaming up dares and petty deviant acts. A neighbourhood watch scheme was launched however, it was claimed that, it created more problems than it solved. So, this initiative was abandoned. In addition, CCTV cameras were removed, as they were deemed as not financially viable. However, some residences have their own CCTV cameras. The council plans to install CCTV cameras in the playing field and public toilets facility in response to recurring acts of vandalism. The council has a good relationship with neighbouring villages and with the police. Regular meetings are held with the police and, since 2011, the Balzan police station has been opening regularly and an inspector has been posted here (perhaps due to the fact that Balzan has now become the main centre of the three villages).
- **Lija:** It is claimed that there are no real crime-related issues in Lija and thus, the need to set up a neighbourhood watch system was never felt. However, the Lija local council was recently targeted: someone stole €150 from its premises. The elderly feel they are potential targets of criminals. Their fear of crime has been fueled by incidents of theft from houses as well as snatch and grab. There are no CCTV cameras installed and run but the local council but some residences have their own CCTV cameras. The Lija local council has a good relationship with the police, however, there is no police station in Lija.
- **Iklin:** In Iklin, the incidence of crime is considered as rare and minimal. In fact, only a few sporadic thefts are reported. However, vandalism and foul language do stand out particularly in the playground area, especially at night. Another problem is the illegal dumping of spray cans which youths sniff in the playground. Used syringes are illegally dumped in the nearby by-pass (situated between Iklin and B'Kara), however this is not a problem linked to Iklin. There is no neighbourhood watch programme. The only CCTV camera installed by the local council is a traffic-control device. Some residents (mostly the villas) have their own CCTV cameras. In addition, the area is very well lit during the night. Contacts between the police and the Iklin local council are regular. In fact, the local council even meets up with the representatives of different police squads, like, for example that of the police drug squad. This networking is considered as being very helpful. The police mobile squad patrol Iklin frequently and regularly.

Driving out of Attard, uphill, heading north-west, up a main road flanked by trees on both sides (Attard Road), in the direction of Rabat, one is greeted by the picturesque sight of Mdina – the old capital of Malta, also referred to as “The Silent City”. It was built by the Arabs to safeguard Malta. In fact, Mdina is a small fortified, very old city, perched on bastions, overlooking the rolling fields of Rabat and Mtarfa as well as a good part of Malta. Mdina is associated with the old Maltese aristocracy (most of whom either resided here or still do) and is very rich in culture, tradition and history. It has very narrow roads and is rich with magnificent old houses, mansions and palazzos. In Mdina one finds the Malta Cathedral and the official residence of the Archbishop of Malta (as well as the impressive Cathedral Museum). There are convents (such as that of the cloistered nuns) and chapels all around Mdina. In Mdina, one finds tourist shops, thematic tourist features, coffee shops, pizzerias, exclusive restaurants (even a five star hotel) and a traditional gilder. Only residents can drive through and/or park their cars here. Mdina is a residential and touristic place, however most tourism boils down to one-day visits. Mdina has about 300 residents: there are no known social issues (no poverty, unemployment or migrants). It is characterised by an aging population, since the young prefer to move out of Mdina. Socially, one would only expect the upper classes and the affluent to reside in Mdina. If there are any family problems, they tend to be well-hidden.

When you walk out of Mdina via the back (not the main) entrance, and then drive up a tunnelled hill, unto a round-about (near the historic Roman Villa – which was actually a Roman Townhouse), one enters Rabat. Rabat is a combination of residential, agricultural, touristic and commercial areas. It is perched on the same hill that holds Mdina high. In fact, during Roman times, Mdina and Rabat were one city. In the core centre of Rabat, one finds churches, chapels, the old casino, the National Archives (once a hospital called “Santu Spirtu”), homes for the elderly, convents, tourist attractions and museums (like the Wignacourt Museum, the St Agatha’s Catacombs and Museum as well as the St Paul’s Catacombs and Grotto), as well as wine bars, clubs, bars, restaurants and shops. A flea market is also organized every Sunday in the centre of Rabat. The core village is very quaint, characterised by narrow roads and old houses. Rabat shares Mdina’s rich history. During World War II, a considerable amount of people from the south of Malta sought refuge (from the heavy bombardments) within Rabat, with the Rabat families. Rabat is also characterised by an aging population (especially in the village core). Socially, the lower classes seem to mainly reside in and around the government housing estates of Hal Qajjet and Hal Bajjada. The middle and higher classes seem to tend to prefer living in the Tal-Virtu area. Here, one finds terraced houses and villas. Family/social problems appear to reflect the national ones, although a number of battered/victimized women regularly call at the local council for help and the elderly tend to lead a substandard life due to their home-stairs and humid households. It has been reported that poverty is on the increase



as attested by illegal gambling. Yet drug abuse is minimal. The low level of education predominant in Rabat may lead its residents to have different priorities. This could be a different form of poverty.

Again, walking out of Mdina's back entrance, out of the tunnel and taking a sharp right, down a narrow country road, (driving past where the old and only train used to stop), and straight ahead, across the Mtarfa by-pass, and into a hill-top village, one would have arrived at Mtarfa. Mtarfa is where the British army had its hospital and where the British resided. The local council has been busy promoting Mtarfa's historical military heritage through, for example, the annual event called "Military Mtarfa". Besides other military building, Mtarfa boasts the tower clock and the old military hospital. After the British Navy's departure, most of Mtarfa became home to many Maltese families under government housing schemes. In fact, Mtarfa is a highly dense residential area thanks to the number of housing estates that has crowded this locality since the late nineties. There is also a home for the elderly however most of its residents come from neighbouring villages. In addition, there are two centres that cater for the needs of people with disability, namely: The Adult Training Centre (government owned) and the Dar il-Kaptan (privately owned). From a social perspective, poverty tends to be hidden however the number of separations is quite high. There are only around 60 elderly people residing in Mtarfa out of a population of around 2,500. The level of education and employment is quite satisfactory. Only ten migrants seem to live in Mtarfa.

Once out of Mtarfa, via Rabat, heading North-West, one finds the picturesque, country-side village of Dingli – made famous by its cliffs. Although geographically close to Rabat, Dingli is quite remote. The traditional village core (the parish church, dedicated to St Mary, found on the highest point – surrounded by old houses, which are mainly inhabited by the elderly and a few shops) is surrounded by relatively new government housing estates (mainly terraced houses) which are, in turn, surrounded by the countryside – cultivated and non-cultivated fields. In Dingli, one finds two political clubs, a band club (also used as a music school for band members) and a football club (Dingli Swallows). In between two government housing estates, one finds the football ground and a public garden. Another public garden is found nearer to the cliffs. Dingli is, in itself, a tourist attraction, however, it also boasts of war-time shelters and the recently restored "Ghajjn tal-Hasselin" – where the village women used to convene to wash clothes together. Besides the parish church, chapels, residences, shops and clubs, one also finds wine bars and restaurants. Socially, it is mainly working class and lower middle class. Although poverty has been described as minimal, it is claimed that educational levels tend to be low. This may be attested by manifested attitudes and literacy issues (as was recorded in parish statistics).

A drive along the panoramic Dingli cliffs, heading south, eventually lands one in Siggiewi – another quaint, countryside village, surrounded by fields. Siggiewi is a

combination of agricultural and residential zones. As with other traditional villages, the Siggiewi village core has, at its heart, the parish church (dedicated to St Nicholas) which is surrounded by old houses. This area is, in turn surrounded by government housing estates – mainly terraced houses. In turn, these housing estates are surrounded by countryside and fields: cultivated or otherwise. In Siggiewi, besides the parish church and residences, one finds several shops, bars and clubs, as well as three main tourist attractions/places of interest (“The Malta Limestone Heritage”, “The Birds of Prey Centre” and the “Tal-Girgenti” Open Chapel, where allegedly, the Holy Mary used to appear to a saintly elderly woman). Socially, the residents of Siggiewi tend to be predominantly working class and lower middle class. There is a number of single parents. The housing estates are hotspots for poverty but one cannot claim that poverty is a characteristic. The level of education and employment is considered satisfactory.

Żebbuġ practically neighbours Siggiewi. So a drive through Siggiewi could easily land one in Żebbuġ. As with other traditional Maltese villages, Żebbuġ has, at its centre, the parish church (dedicated to St Philip). This is surrounded by old, traditional houses, flanking narrow roads. The village core is quite big and stretches out. On the outskirts of Żebbuġ, one finds clusters of relatively modern terraced houses. Żebbuġ (one of the oldest towns on the island) is, mainly a residential area with a history of rural economy. The Ghar-Ram and Hal Mula areas host micro-firms which operate on a light industrial scale. Żebbuġ boasts of two houses of particular historical importance: Dun Mikiel Scerri’s and Dun Karm Preca’s. Other landmarks include: the Rohan Gate, Villa San Filep, the Palazz Baruni Azzopardi and the Hunting Lodge of grandmaster de Vilhena. Socially, the Żebbuġ residents tend to be mainly working class and lower middle class. Reflecting the national trend, marital separations in Żebbuġ are on the increase. With regards to the educational level of Żebbuġ residents, there seems to be a mixture of people with postgraduate education, average education and poor education. Cases of poverty can be found around Żebbuġ. Most elderly persons live by themselves and the need is felt for the provision of a home for the elderly in Żebbuġ. It is claimed that, street littering is evidence that the Żebbuġ residence lack civic pride.

- **Dingli:** It is held that crime is low in Dingli, yet drug abuse on the cliffs (not necessarily committed by Dingli residents) is a cause for concern. In summer, vandalism features a lot, particularly in the public gardens. Excessive speeding, especially in the main roads, constitutes another problem. Public gardens and the local council premises are monitored by CCTV cameras – however, CCTV cameras were removed from the main square. Contact with the police is considered as satisfactory however, it is claimed, more police presence is needed.
- **Mdina:** Crime seems to be non-existent in Mdina. This could be the result of Mdina being inhabited by a small close-knit community. In addition, Mdina has restricted

entrances: two – and these are monitored by CCTV cameras on a 24/7 basis by the police. There are also three other CCTV cameras around Mdina, consequently, the area is monitored all day and all year round. Also – all shops have alarms and/or CCTV cameras. To further enhance security in Mdina, it also has a police station.

- **Mtarfa:** Vandalism is rampant and widespread in Mtarfa. It is claimed that this vandalism is mostly carried out by teenage gang groups, who tend to hang around, inventing trouble, like for example: destroying lamp posts, cars' mirrors, notices and lights. Two other pressing problems are: the theft of gas cylinders (those left unattended, outside residences, for the gas-distributors) and the burning of skips. There is no neighbourhood watch system and neither are there CCTV cameras. Ironically, the reason for this lack of CCTV camera surveillance is that, the ones there were before, were either broken or stolen. The Mtarfa police station is regularly closed and consequently, there is not much police presence in the area. However, contact with the police is considered as satisfactory.
- **Rabat:** Theft from cars, houses and fields is sporadic in Rabat. The zone where the flats are, used to be a target but the local council intervened by setting up an intercom system as a security measure. Offenders, held not to be from Rabat, target particular areas, especially zones situated in the outskirts. Crime in the centre is believed to be minimal, perhaps due to the fact that, since it is constantly busy, the centre is constantly unofficially monitored by locals. There is no neighbourhood watch scheme and only private residences have CCTV cameras. Police presence is felt to be lacking and it was pointed out that, it seems that, frequently, the Rabat police do not even have a car available.
- **Sigġiewi:** Few thefts are reported in Sigġiewi but drug abuse and vandalism seem to be very common in the housing estates. According to reports, most vandalism is committed by minors. Heated arguments are a common occurrence in the village core. Usually, tempers flare over parking-related issues. Apparently, there are few ex-convicts living in Sigġiewi. There is no neighbourhood watch system but a number of residences have their own alarms and CCTV cameras. Contact with the police is considered as satisfactory, however often the Sigġiewi police station is left closed, the reason being that Sigġiewi is considered as a very quiet and tranquil locality.
- **Żebbuġ:** A number of thefts are reported annually but it is not an alarming situation. On the other hand, the constant illegal dumping of dead animals in the Żebbuġ valleys and the illegal dumping of waste on the outskirts is a cause for concern. There have been reports of isolated vandalism cases. This happens on particular days, for example, when the lights are out for hours. There is no neighbourhood watch system and there are no CCTV cameras installed (since the latter were found to be economically unfeasible). Contact with the police was described as very good. It was also claimed

that police presence has been enhanced by the posting of a new police inspector at the Żebbuġ police station.

**District Four: General Crime/Social Problems**

- Thefts from houses, cars and fields as well as snatch and grab cases have been reported.
- Drug abuse has been reported.
- Vandalism has been incurred.
- Illegal dumping is a problem – especially that of used syringes and of spray cans which, it has been alleged, youths sniff as well as that of dead animals and waste.
- Over speeding seems to also be a problem.
- Heated arguments could be a common occurrence in the village cores particularly over parking spots.
- The use of foul language seems to be a common occurrence.
- There is also a trend that youths run around on bikes, dreaming up dares and petty deviant acts.
- There seems to be the perception that neighbourhood watch systems create more problems than they solve.
- The elderly feel they are potential targets of criminals and thus fear crime.

### **The Northern District**

District five comprises the following localities:

- Ghargħur
- Mellicha
- Mgarr
- Mosta
- Naxxar
- St Paul's Bay

Ghargħur, Mosta and Naxxar are three central, neighbouring villages. Driving in a straight line out of San Gwann, towards the north, one eventually finds a round-about. Turning right and right again would land you in the picturesque, quaint, old, quiet, small village of Ghargħur. Perched on a hill, overlooking a spectacular valley that, on one side leads inwards into the Maltese countryside and on the other side, leads to the Coast Road (or Bahar ic-Cagħaq). The village core is comprised of a church, surrounded by charming, old-fashioned, traditional Maltese houses. In Ghargħur, one finds a few shops, clubs, at least two restaurants and wine bars as well as a primary school. Most town houses on the outskirts of Ghargħur were demolished and replaced by flats. There are also a number of farmhouses scattered in the nearby fields. Ghargħur could be considered as a rural village as it is surrounded by lush countryside. Socially, when it comes to employment and wealth, the people of Ghargħur seem blessed. However, family break-ups and separations are also evident here and, it seems that the majority of middle-aged and elderly residents of Ghargħur did not complete their formal schooling and could be classified as early school dropouts. It could be that, since most Ghargħur families seem to own fields, the young could have been encouraged to skip school to work in the fields and help their families. On the positive side, although this could have been common practice in times gone by, nowadays only a few youngsters seem to be quitting school to work the fields. A considerable number of elderly people live in Ghargħur and, it seems, the younger generations choose to keep living in Ghargħur even after settling in with their own partner. Outsiders note that newcomers, "strangers", as they are referred to, are not made immediately welcome as they tend to be regarded with suspicion. The population of Ghargħur increased considerably in the past few years, since there seems to be an influx of young couples who took up residence in the modern flats.

Once out of Ghargħur, back at the round-about, if one proceeds towards the right, one finds herself in the neighbouring village of Naxxar. Another traditional village, similar to Ghargħur, but bigger and not as quiet. In the village core, at the centre, one finds the parish church, surrounded by residences (now mainly flats that have replaced town houses), Palazzo Parisio (a palace that is, in part, the residence of a Maltese noble family, and in

part, open to the public as a tourist attraction/place of cultural interest), restaurants, wine bars, clubs, shops, a bank and a petrol station. Of course, especially close to the parish church, one finds traditional, old Maltese town houses and further in, one finds at least three schools: a primary school, a secondary school and a post-secondary school. Thus, Naxxar is frequented by quite a number of adolescents and young adults. Another point of interest is, perhaps the old windmill next to the schools. On the outskirts of Naxxar (and Gharghur), one finds impressive villas and modern terraced houses. Like its neighbour Gharghur, Naxxar is perched on a hill, on one side overlooking Attard and Mosta, on the other side, overlooking Bumarrad, St Paul's Bay and a part of the Coast Road (Bahar ic-Caghaq). Like Gharghur, but to a lesser extent, it is surrounded by fields. Socially, Naxxar residents seem to be at an acceptable level. There is neither poverty nor migrant issues. This could be expected since the cost of either buying or renting a residence in Naxxar is on the high side. It is claimed that those who are unemployed fall under the category of "not wanting employment". When it comes to single-parenthood and marital separations, Naxxar reflects the national trend, which seems to be quite high anyways. In Naxxar, there is a considerable number of elderly persons. These elderly residents seem to suffer from loneliness. The local council tries to address this problem by the provision of services at the Family Day Care Centre. In addition, there are homes for the elderly, administered by the private sector ("Holy Family Home" and "Loyal House"). Needy Naxxar residents tend to resort to the parish priest more readily than they would seek help from the local council. The Naxxar local council does its part by providing as much information about the existent services as possible.

As one drives around the Naxxar parish church, towards its front door and down the hill (which is flanked by trees on both sides), one finds the main road, at a round-about. Turning right and heading straight, one enters Mosta. In the centre of Mosta, one finds the awe-inspiring Mosta Dome (or Rotunda) – the parish church dedicated to the Assumption of Our Lady (St Mary), the church that was made famous by the World War II bomb that fell through its ceiling (two others bounced off), ending up in the church that was full of people and did not explode. This was considered a miracle. Quite a lot of traffic passes particularly through central Mosta, where one finds several shops, restaurants, two banks, wine bars, clubs, take-aways, the police station, civic centre and the district health centre. Of course, especially in central Mosta, one finds traditional Maltese houses, however, further out, one finds apartments and maisonettes, then on the fringes of Mosta (touching Naxxar), one finds villas and modern terraced houses. There are also a number of housing estates (St Joseph Street, Santa Margherita, Tad-Dieb, Ta' Mliet and the 'Blata Gholja' housing estates). Mosta is also famous for its valley, called Wied il-Ghasel and the chapel one finds herein. Legend has it, that during a Turk invasion, a shepherd-girl sought refuge in a cave. As the Turks advanced, combing fields, she hid and prayed to the Virgin Mary,

asking her to deliver her from the Turks. When the Turks approached the cave entrance where she hid, they decided not to bother searching the cave because its entrance had been miraculously sealed by a spider's web. When one stops and looks from the edge of Mosta, touching Naxxar and overlooking Burmarrad, St Paul's Bay and part of the Coast Road, one can also see the gaping quarries below Mosta, parts of the Victoria Lines, the garden that is called 'Il-Gnien tal-Gharusa tal-Mosta', 'tat-Targa Battery', 'Ta' Bistra Catacombs' and the Mosta Fort. With all these landmarks, besides being residential and commercial, Mosta is also a touristic zone. Socially, most Mosta residents, seem to enjoy a satisfactory standard of living. A considerable number of Mosta youths attend University. Marital separation seems to be on the increase, but this phenomenon is comparable to the national level. Once separated, people seem to move out of Mosta, since housing here tends to be expensive. For this reason, and since residence is cheaper in St Paul's Bay, separated people tend to move from Mosta to St Paul's Bay. Mosta is a close-knit community and the church seems to have a strong influence on Mosta residents. In fact, a considerable number of Mosta residents provide voluntary services to the church. The Mosta local council does its part to, especially when it comes to youth-care. In fact, it has employed a youth worker to provide services to Mosta youths. The 'Gnien l-Gharusa' has been identified as the potential site for the development of an area dedicated to youths. The village core is home to a lot of elderly persons, who tend to live alone. There are four residential homes for the elderly in Mosta (a government one, Casa Arkati – which is private-owned, Central Home, which is also private-owned, and a home for the elderly run by the Franciscans) and the local council Day Care Centre for the Elderly. The Mosta Civic Centre provides health and social services to all Mosta residents, (the new District Clinic actually provides services to the whole district around Mosta).

- **Gharghur:** Few crimes get reported in Gharghur. However, there is a particular zone, referred to as "Top of the World", which lacks lighting and attracts drug abusers from other localities. An added, adverse consequence of this abuse, is the illegal disposal of syringes. This village has a police station and benefits from satisfactory police foot-patrol. There are no CCTV cameras, no banks and no ATM machines. The locals are worried about the potential setting up of a juvenile detention centre in Gharghur. This, it is claimed, could render the Gharghur area a crime hot spot.
- **Naxxar:** The Naxxar housing estate of 'Binja Hamrija' is characterised by vandalism and children loitering. Other vandalism hotspots (even in the form of arson) include the public gardens, residence doors and the playground. This, it is claimed, is performed by youth gangs (15 to 20 youths in a gang) who are non-Naxxar-residents. They come from neighbouring areas. These acts of vandalism usually take place after 7:30pm. The perception of the residents seems to be that there is rampant drug abuse and trafficking in Naxxar. There is not much police presence in Naxxar. Contact with

the police is satisfactory. Meetings with the police are held bi-monthly and whenever the need arises. There is no neighbourhood watch scheme and the only CCTV camera (administered by the local council) that had been placed in the square, was removed because, it is held, created more problems than it solved. Most villas in the area have anti-theft/burglary systems (alarms and/or CCTV cameras).

- **Mosta:** Vandalism is rampant, especially in the open space and particularly during the summer months. Vandals seem to target the area behind the police station, areas that are not well lit and the pedestrian zone. Acts of vandalism include the breaking of cars' mirrors and damage to road signs. Moreover, the residents of the housing estate are complaining that their gas cylinders are being stolen. Incredibly but true, even billboards have been stolen. There is no neighbourhood watch. Most villas have their own CCTV systems. The Civic Centre is monitored by CCTV. Contact with the police is satisfactory but it has been noted that there are not enough police on the beat, especially in the areas known as vandalism hotspots.

Once one drives out from the fringes of Mosta, across the bridge over the valley (Wied il-Ghasel), one ends up at a round-about. If one proceeds in a straight line, one finds another round-about, turn right and head straight, and you will eventually arrive in Mġarr. This is one of the smallest villages on the island. At the centre of the village core, one finds the parish church (dedicated to St Mary), which is surrounded by quaint houses, a number of clubs and restaurants. Mġarr is famous for rabbit. In fact, many Maltese flock to Mġarr, not only for the annual strawberry-fair, but regularly, to feast on rabbit – a traditional Maltese specialty. Mġarr is predominantly agricultural but has quite a number of residences, some old houses, some apartments/maisonettes, but mostly relatively-modern terraced houses. However, like Mosta, Mġarr is also frequented by tourists, not only for its parish church (the building of which was financed by the farmers' income from the selling of eggs....hence the egg-shape form of the parish church) and vicinity to the scenic 'Gnejna' (meaning little garden) beach, but also, and especially, thanks to its restaurants that specialize in traditional Maltese food. Socially, in Mġarr there does seem to be some disadvantaged residents. Marital separations feature highly, particularly in the government housing estate. An extent of poverty can be felt, especially in the rented government flats. The parish administers the distribution of food stuffs funded by the European Union. In this residential zone, the housing authority allocated a number of units to people with mental health issues, thus creating an inconvenience to neighbouring residents. An extended family lifestyle features in Mġarr. Consequently, most elderly residents seem to live with their children. However, this cannot be said of those elderly people whose children have settled abroad. The elderly who need care and nursing, live in residential homes for the elderly.



Back to the fringes of Mosta, overlooking the quarries and St Paul's Bay, one could decide to descend a steep hill, referred to as the hill of "God and his Mother" (it-telgha ta' Alla u Ommu). Once at the foot of the hill (facing the salt pans), turning left into the main road (the last part of the Coast Road), through Kennedy Grove (a family park which is very popular with Maltese families for picnics), then right, one arrives at Qawra (a sea-side, relatively modern village, which used to be considered mainly as a summer resort/touristic area). Driving through the Qawra main/coast road – which is flanked on the right, by a wide promenade, overlooking the sea and the Coast Road (Bahar ic-Caghaq and Maghtab) – one sees high-rising apartments/flats, bars, a small number of shops, restaurants and hotels. Qawra is mainly residential and although it was originally considered mainly as a summer resort, (where the Maltese who owned a second home would pass their summer holidays in) and touristic area, it seems, has become home to several Maltese families. Qawra could be considered as the first zone that belongs to St Paul's Bay.

As one drives on and turns slightly left round the bend (known as Ta' Fra Ben – now home to the National Aquarium), one will eventually arrive in the area known as Bugibba – another part of St Paul's Bay. If one stops and looks out from the promenade, across the sea, one would notice a small, uninhabited island with the statue of St Paul on it (and a fish farm in front of it). It is held that, after Saint Paul was arrested by the Romans and was on his way to Rome (to be tried there as a Roman citizen), the ship he was on got shipwrecked right there – on that island. It is believed that it was St Paul who brought the Roman Catholic faith to Malta because, while he was in Malta, he preached to and converted the Maltese. One of the most popular stories related to St Paul (even documented in the Holy Bible) narrates how, after being saved from drowning and while the islanders were providing a commendable level of hospitality (in fact, this Maltese characteristic is also emphasized in the Holy Bible)...as he was warming himself in front of the fire, a viper sprung out, bit St Paul's hand, but miraculously left him unharmed. At first, the Maltese expected him to drop dead and mumbled amongst themselves that, St Paul must have been an evil man, since the gods had delivered him from drowning, yet sent a viper to kill him. When he did not die, they quickly claimed that he was a god. It is claimed that St Paul's preaching left an indelible mark on Maltese culture. Like Qawra, until a few years ago, Bugibba was considered mainly as a tourist zone and a place where locals had their summer home. Nowadays, things have changed. Perhaps because property here costs somewhat less than property in central Malta, like Qawra, Bugibba is fast becoming home to many, but particularly to disadvantaged families. Although along the coast of Qawra and Bugibba, one does find a few villas, residences in this area are mainly high-rise apartments. As one would expect, like Qawra, Bugibba boasts of several bars, restaurants, hotels and shops (particularly at the centre).

As one drives on, one eventually reaches St Paul's Bay ...in the area humorously known as "the lazy area" (Tal-Ghazzenin). Here one finds the water-polo pitch, where the popular water-polo team, "The Neptunes", practice. This is also a lido, where, in summer, families convene to have a snack and swim. Driving past this lido/water-polo pitch...past the old watch tower (built by the Knights)...looking down, one sees the shimmering, blue sea and whitish rocks. On this side of St Paul's Bay, one finds the sailing-boat club and the St Paul's Bay primary school. This part of St Paul's Bay is the oldest part. In fact, one finds the old parish church (on the main road), curiously flanked, one on each side, by clubs of the two main political parties in Malta (the Labour Party and the Nationalist Party). As happens in other old villages, the parish church is surrounded by old, town houses. However, even in this part of St Paul's Bay, one finds quite a number of high-rise apartments, bars, restaurants and shops.

As one leaves this area and drives down a hill (called tal-Vecca), one finds, in the very last part of St Paul's Bay, Xemxija. This is a small boat port. On one side, there is the open sea and the island of St Paul. On the other side, spectacular Maltese countryside – the Pwales valley. As one drives round the bay and up the hill, the last land-mark of St Paul's Bay is the hill-top church. This had to be rebuilt, because, due to a fault in its foundations, the former church was gradually sinking into the ground. Like the other areas of St Paul's Bay, Xemxija used to be considered primarily a touristic/summer-resort area. Nowadays, it is fast becoming home to many people. In Xemxija, one finds a few old, traditional houses, but mainly, one finds apartments. There are also a few shops, bars and restaurants...and at least two sizeable hotels.

Several problematic issues are evident in St Paul's Bay. These include: mental health problems, school-related behavioural problems, single parenting, the fast-developing multi-ethnic community, the black economy, unemployment, non-registered migrants, marital separations and illiteracy (particularly in Bugibba and Qawra where social problems seem to be rampant). Identity crisis features highly amongst children of foreigners whilst poverty tends to remain hidden within these households. The St Paul's local council refers several people in need of counseling, to Agenzija Appogg. In addition, the local council provides community work in Qawra via Agenzija Access. Residents tend to migrate internally from one flat to another, in the same area. This is a consequence of the fact that land-owners ask for reasonably low rents and offer short-let options. As a result, these flats now constitute hotspots for social problems.

- **Mġarr:** Crime problems in Mġarr emerge in the form of violence, exhibitionism and theft. Violence and exhibitionism might stem from mental health issues, not criminal tendencies however, they still constitute crimes. There are no crime hotspots but the playground seems to be regularly targeted by vandals. Few thefts are reported – either because a few thefts get committed or because, it is claimed, the residents do not have

a lot of confidence in the police. Yet, the Mġarr local council has a good relationship with the police and contact is satisfactory. There is no neighbourhood scheme and neither is there any CCTV systems installed, except for the one at the local council premises. Some shops do have anti-theft or burglary systems.

- **St. Paul's Bay:** Apparently, crime is a daily occurrence in St Paul's Bay. This includes cases of: vandalism, theft, hold-ups, fights (particularly behind the Qawra Palace and the Suncrest hotels), drug abuse, child abuse, prostitution and a few cases of incest. There are two police stations in St Paul's Bay: one in Qawra and another one in the area called "Of the Lazy" (Tal-Ghazzenin). Contact with the police is good, however it is held that police presence in St Paul's Bay is lacking. There are no CCTV systems installed in the streets and neither is there a neighbourhood watch scheme.

Once one leaves St Paul's Bay and proceeds further north, past the areas called "Mistra" and "Ta' Selmun", one eventually reaches a sizeable, quaint, old village, perched on a hill, overlooking Malta's biggest sandy beach, "Ghadira" (meaning "Pool"). This village is called "Mellieħa" (meaning "Salty"). At the heart of this village, one finds a majestic parish church, dedicated to Our Lady. Right next to it, one finds St Mary's Sanctuary and the old war shelters. A walk down-hill, across the main road, would land a person in St Mary's Grotto...a place considered holy, where prayers are allegedly answered by Our Lady, as can be attested by the many testimonials (of miracles received - pictures/casts/newspaper cutting - on the wall. Behind the parish church, one finds a small cemetery. Right next to this cemetery, is a small playing field for children and a small snack-bar, which enjoys the breath-taking view of "Ghadira" beach, the Red Tower (a fort built by the Knights), the island of Comino and part of the sister island, Gozo. In the core of Mellieħa, one finds traditional, old Maltese houses, shops, restaurants, a home for the elderly, schools and at least two hotels. Further out from the core, one finds flats (particularly in "Ghadira") and villas (especially in the areas known as "Santa Maria Estate" and "Qortin"). The village core of Mellieħa was always predominantly residential. Not the same can be said of Ghadira, Santa Maria Estate and Qortin. However, it could be that today, necessity is compelling some families to set up base even as far as Ghadira....and some, even in the boat-houses (which, in reality, are sea-front garages that have been made into make-shift homes). Socially, Mellieħa seems to be quite healthy. Residents appear to be industrious and busy, mostly working in Mellieħa. In fact, unemployment rates in Mellieħa are amongst the lowest on the islands. Most Mellieħa women either work part-time or full-time. Thus, there are no poverty issues. There seem to be no drug and/or theft problems either. Thefts mostly occur in summer, from the beaches. However, having said that, these thefts seem to be on the decrease. The needs of the elderly, youths and persons with disability are met in one complex ("Dar Madonna tal-Mellieħa"). In this building, one finds: a Day Centre

for the Elderly (where they are taught how to use computers/mobiles and are offered craft courses and where they can benefit from the services of a podologist and a hairdresser); a gymnasium (where coaches attend regularly, at least once a week); a night dormitory/ respite for 8 persons and a health clinic (medical service is provided for free, twice a week). Most Employment and Training Centre (ETC) courses are run within this complex and thus, the residents do not need to travel to ETC, at Hal-Far (which is quite a distance away – on the other side of the island) to receive their employment training.

- **Mellieħa:** Although thefts from Mellieħa houses seem to be very rare, thefts from the Mellieħa beaches appear to be quite common. Drug abuse seems to be minimal and mostly appears to happen on the beaches. It is held that the abusers are mostly youths, coming from other places around the island. Vandalism is rampant in public gardens. To date, there are two functional neighbourhood watch schemes, however another three are planned. There are only a few CCTV cameras installed. Contact with the police has been described as ‘very good’. In fact, besides the monthly meetings with the district inspector, a number of meetings are held regularly with different members of the police force.

#### **District Five: General Crime/Social Problems**

- As marital separations and family break-ups are fast becoming the trend on the island, the adverse consequences of this phenomenon seem to also be on the increase. These consequences include: violence, fights, mental issues and children left roaming the streets unsupervised. St Paul’s Bay seems to be the worst hit, socially and crime-wise.
- The cases of exhibitionism reported (in Mgarr) might stem from mental health issues, not criminal tendencies however, it still constitutes a crime.
- Vandalism seems to be rampant in this district.
- Apparently, drug abuse/trafficking and the illegal disposal of syringes constitutes a grave problem in district five.
- Child abuse seems to be a common occurrence.
- Cases of prostitution have also been reported in this district.
- Theft and hold-ups have also been reported.

#### **General Crime/Social Problems in Malta**

- In Malta, the crime rate is not perceived as alarming. However, financial insecurity and poverty seems to reign in areas considered as industrial and working/lower class. Here, a sense of learned helplessness, resignation and apathy has taken over and residents, particularly the young who are not academically successfully and are unemployed, tend to resort to escapisms such as substance abuse.

- As, it appears, marital separations and family break-ups are fast becoming the trend in Malta, the adverse consequences of this phenomenon seem to also be on the increase. These consequences include: violence, fights, mental issues and children left roaming the streets unsupervised.
- It seems that the housing estates can be considered as potential crime hotspots since, in some cases, they seem to have become a breeding ground for delinquency (mainly, it is claimed, by deviant youths) and violence.
- The frequent occurrence of nuisances, squabbles/fights is a problem, particularly amongst neighbours and in bars/entertainment zones.
- The use of foul language seems to be a common occurrence.
- All over Malta, there seems to be a steady increase in teenage pregnancies, single parenting and marital separations, leading to a diminished quality of life and poor child-supervision.
- Crime in general seems to be on the decrease. However, although theft from houses and shops is sporadic (most of which takes place while residents – mostly elderly – attend mass), it occurs. In fact, thefts from houses, hold-ups, theft from cars, theft of bicycles/vehicles/boats, theft from fields, theft from beaches, pick-pocketing as well as snatch and grab cases have been reported.
- The main offences seem to be: theft, drug-abuse, domestic violence (even child abuse and incest), traffic contraventions (dangerous driving, driving without license, abusive parking, not wearing seatbelts and using mobiles while driving), offences-related-to-village-feasts/carnival (getting drunk, disturbing the peace, urinating in public, indecent exposure and fighting) littering and vandalism.
- Illegal dumping is a problem – especially that of used syringes and of spray cans which, it has been alleged, youths sniff as well as that of dead animals and waste.
- Illegal gambling is an issue in Malta.
- The age-old loitering and prostitution still goes on in Malta.
- There have been cases of indecent exposure in residential areas, in the middle of the night.
- A number of rape cases are reported, particularly during summer and there are other rape cases that go unreported.
- An extent of gang activity has also been registered.
- The young are considered as potential trouble-makers/criminals...and thus a threat. It is claimed that one finds offenders as young as 14.
- It is claimed that it is common for youths to run around on bikes, dreaming up dares and petty deviant acts.
- However, teenagers are also considered as potentially at risk from crime/criminals (mainly the uneducated and poor youngsters who become easy prey to criminals and addicted to narcotics).

- The elderly are perceived as the main potential or actual victims of crime.
- The elderly have been victimised by criminals in the past and thus are generally afflicted by an acute fear of crime.
- Irregular/illegal migrants seem to be viewed with suspicion and resentment. They have been, in fact, associated with offences such as: hate crime (inflicted by the Maltese upon them, and/or amongst themselves) loitering, heavy drinking and unacceptable behaviour in public gardens.
- Neighbourhood watch schemes are rarely operative. There seems to be the general perception that neighbourhood watch systems create more problems than they solves.
- The installation of CCTV cameras (for security, not traffic reasons) is minimal despite the fact that, there seems to be the perception that, the installation of some CCTV cameras might have helped reduce crime.
- Although, on the whole, communication with the police is satisfactory, there seems to be a general lack of confidence in the police and *omertà* (the typical Mediterranean code of silence, whereby everyone is expected to mind his/her own business) is tangible. In fact, it seems that the Maltese find it easier and more natural to report crimes to the local council, rather than to the police (because, it is claimed, only the local council can guarantee anonymity). Evidently, it is felt that most zones require more police presence and improved police performance. This is especially felt in industrial, lower/working class areas where it is felt that, the authorities have given up and criminals have taken over.

### **District Six - Gozo and Comino**

Gozo (or Ghawdex in Maltese), is the sister island of Malta. Compared to Malta, Gozo is considered as more rural (less developed) and is known for its many hills, spectacular, rolling fields, quaint villages and breath-taking sea views. It could be claimed that Gozo enjoys a somewhat mystical and mysterious allure. In fact, legend has it, that it was home to the nymph Calypso – the witch that allegedly cast a spell over the literary (or legendary) Homer – as narrated in the *Odyssey*. The story narrates how Homer was kept under a spell by Calypso until she finally freed him so he could proceed homewards, to his wife, Penelope.

Gozo is famous for its pre-historic, megalithic temple, *Ħaġar Qim* (in *Xagħra*) and the *Ta' Pinu* Sanctuary (in *Għarb*) – the magnificent church erected on the site where *Our Lady* allegedly appeared repeatedly to a peasant mystic called *Karmni Grima*. To date, it is held that 'Our Lady of *Ta' Pinu*' intercedes and grants miracles to her devotees, as attested by the many artefacts found in an adjacent rooms – proofs of graces received thanks to her intervention. In addition, in the *Għarb* village core one finds, what was once home to *Frenc* – a mystic and very religious man, known as a healer.... active and effective even after death, as is believed by many. If religion is considered as very important by the Maltese, it evidently takes the major role in Gozo, In fact, although Gozo is a small island, it has forty-six, beautifully and artistically adorned churches.

When it comes to natural beauty, Gozo is a gem. For example, the *Azure Window*, found in *Dwejra* (down *San Lawrenz*), could very well be one of the most spectacular features of the Island of Gozo. It is a natural arch over the sea, formed millions of years ago, when a limestone cave collapsed. This place is so awe-inspiring, that it has caught the attention of international cinema directors and has served as back-drop to a number of films, such as: the original "Clash of the Titans", "Homer's *Odyssey*" and "Troy". Gozo boasts of several rocky and sandy beaches, such as *Marsalforn*, the *Red Beach* (*Ir-Ramla l-Hamra*), *Qbajjar*, *Hondoq ir-Rummien*, *Imgarr ix-Xini*, *San Blas*, *Dahlet Qorrot* and *Dwejra*.

The population of Gozo is of about 31,000 persons as of 2005, comparable to the combined population size of two of the largest towns in Malta: *Birkirkara* and *Attard*. It is held that, Gozo has been wiped clean of its inhabitants on several occasions, particularly at the hands of Turkish invaders. The relative remoteness of the island of Gozo is a double-edged sword: on the one hand, it has helped preserve the natural beauty of the island, but on the other hand, it has robbed the islanders of the more comfortable life enjoyed by most Maltese people. Lured by the prospect of a better future, especially in the 60s, many *Gozitans* decided to try their luck abroad and emigrated (mainly to the US or Australia). Some of them returned after saving enough money to guarantee a good life in Gozo. Proof of this is the fact that several houses are called: "God Bless Australia" and "God Bless America".

Since the young Gozitan generation tends to prefer living in Malta (perhaps because the main university campus is in Malta and perhaps because young Gozitans tend to be lured to Malta by job prospects), the Gozitan population seems to be an ageing one. In Gozo everybody seems to know everyone, so one would expect the inhabitants to live by the code of *omertà*, binding Gozitans to mind their own business and treat outsiders with suspicion. Consequently, one cannot expect conducting research on social problems and crime issues in Gozo to be easy.

**District six (Gozo and Comino) comprises the following localities:**

- Fontana
- Ghajnsielem (the island of Comino is administered by Ghajnsielem)
- Għarb
- Għasri
- Kerċem
- Munxar
- Nadur
- Qala
- Rabat
- San Lawrenz
- Sannat
- Xagħra
- Xewkija
- Żebbuġ

A cursory view of the map of Gozo shows that, to proceed smoothly from one village to the next, one would be wise to always drive via the centre of Gozo – Rabat (or Victoria, as the English renamed it). So, **Rabat** (Victoria) is the capital city of Gozo. This locality has a population of around 7, 500 people. There are no hamlets/ local community committees.

Rabat is essentially residential, commercial and touristic. It is subdivided into Taċ-Ċawla area, Kappučċini/Bellija, Ta' Gedrin (on the way to Ta' Pinu), Ta' Kana and Ta' Pompei. The upkeep by the residents is satisfactory and the local council has initiated projects that have upgraded the playground area, introducing turf in the pitch area and pavements. There are no known areas of dilapidation. The housing estate (Taċ-Ċawla) is well kept. It is the social stigma attached to living there that has an impact on the residents.

The perception is that the main social issues are concentrated in Taċ-Ċawla, since people needing social housing were allocated there some 40/50 years ago. There are a number of broken families or married couples that have separated, and a high percentage of single mothers. Again this is due to the concentration of people with social needs that live in this



area. Taċ-Ċawla used to be a 'no-go' zone, since it was even associated with drug trafficking. However, with education, the stigma is being slowly removed. So much so that, a number of Tac-Cawla residents have taken up tertiary education. In fact, the mayor believes that the Taċ-Ċawla subculture can largely be addressed through education. However, the general level of education is still below the national average. As one would expect, since most Tac-Cawla residents are officially on welfare benefits, unemployment is high. But, as regards the whole locality (Rabat/Victoria), there is a very high percentage of self-employed people – even more than in Malta. This could very well be the result of historical, geographical and cultural factors.

Generally, in Rabat, one gets the impression that there is a large number of families whose children have emigrated. This gets increasingly evident at Christmas time, when a considerable number of elderly residents join in the Christmas activities (even carol singing). The population of Rabat is already an aging population, but this seems to be getting higher. This may be due to the fact that the residents' children may choose to live outside of Rabat or even to work and settle in Malta. There are a number of NGOs (non-governmental organizations) lending their support with the socially-deprived, such as: Oasi for drugs and for awareness on over-spending, Alcoholics Anonymous, Ċentru Moviment Azzjoni Soċjali (MAS), Friends of the Sick and Elderly, Fondazzjoni Arka together with Caritas (Gozo) and the Knights of St John, who cater for the sick. The Church has a very important role to play in catering for social issues, and the Ċentru Ragħaj it-Tajjeb (The Good Shepherd) is doing sterling work. The local council organizes parenting skills courses (has also targeted Taċ-Ċawla area), computers, educational and craft courses. The elderly have activities organized for them, both in the locality and outside, even cultural visits to Malta. The local council likes to focus on those elderly residents who are not very mobile and who spend a lot of their time at home. These mostly reside in the village core. There is inter-council migration since a lot of the main services are located in Rabat, such as: the courts, schools (MCast and Sixth Form), government departments, as well as services provided by the private sector and the Church.

### **Crime**

Like the rest of Gozo, there seems to be a certain level of fear of crime which seems to be particularly felt by the elderly. This fear of crime is fuelled by reports of theft from elderly people's homes, which, is claimed to have been perpetrated by people from 'outside the locality'. These thefts have stopped for the past two years. The main concern is drug abuse, as it is claimed to be quite obvious as the abuse seems to be practiced blatantly. The CCTV that was installed for traffic and enforcement in Pjazza San Franġisk served indirectly to eliminate (or at least reduce) the drug trafficking that was allegedly taking place there. In fact, thanks to this, two traffickers were actually arraigned in court.

The offenders (who do not fit into any particular stereotype) living in Rabat are mostly linked to drug abuse, although the most notorious offender of all was Totò Riina (the Sicilian mafia boss who actually took residence in Rabat, Gozo). They tend to be quite sociable and civilized, thus one would not readily label them as offenders. The main crime hotspot seems to be the playground – which lacks lighting. This zone is particularly popular with vandals. The area is being embellished by the local council.

Taċ-Ċawla earned the reputation of crime hotspot because here, neighbours are always bickering amongst themselves. There was a temporary hotspot in the pedestrianized area of Rabat, where, it is alleged, youths would meet in the evenings in two bars and create nuisance in the area. However, with the help of the police, this problem was solved. The extent of police presence leaves much to be desired. The police seem to be more occupied with patrolling the rest of Gozo rather than focusing on the locality of Rabat. Now, with the roads project, they are also involved in traffic management and are therefore kept quite busy. There are closed circuit televisions (CCTVs) in Pjazza San Ġorġ. There are no neighbourhood watch schemes. Fear of crime largely affects the elderly, who panic over a street light bulb that needs changing. Residents fear reporting to the police and, in the few instances in which they do report, they prefer going to the local council first. Residents know how to protect themselves and their property but they still need to learn more. For example, some Rabat residents still have this habit of leaving the key in the front door, or disclosing that they would be going abroad on internet, (their Facebook wall). Since Rabat has a number of nightclubs, and nightclubbing seems to be the activity that has the greatest negative impact on the safety and security of the Rabat residents, this now constitutes an issue, together with traffic and parking problems, which is to be expected, since, if one is to reach villages without complications, one tends to always drive through Rabat.

**Munxar** is a Sannat hamlet, found on the southern side of Rabat and is frequently considered in conjunction with the neighbouring **Xlendi** bay. Xlendi is a valley which runs down to a sandy beach and the open sea. It is characterized by breath-taking views of cliffs, deep blue sea and countryside. Xlendi is a well-known swimming/diving/fishing/summer resort. In Xlendi one finds bars, restaurants, hotels and other holiday accommodation. The parish church of Munxar is dedicated to St. Paul. Once past the parish church, one could choose whether to take the road to ‘Ras il-Bajjada’ or to Xlendi Bay. Munxar is popular for relaxing walks, particularly because of the spectacular panoramas it offers of the Mediterranean sea. Munxar has a population of around 1000 residents in contrast with Xlendi’s 200 (naturally, this number does not include tourists/holiday-makers). The Munxar population is largely made up of families with children under 18 years of age. Conversely, Xlendi, has more elderly than young residents.

Munxar and Xlendi are essentially residential, agricultural, and touristic – especially

Xlendi. The residents keep their locality as clean as possible, except for the few vacant houses that might need maintenance in Munxar and a few vacant flats in Xlendi.

In Munxar and Xlendi there seems to be a handful of broken families/separated couples (3 or less) and they are mostly located in the new housing area. Actual unemployment seems to be negligible. The number of university graduates from Munxar is steadily increasing, but Xlendi's modest education levels bring down the educational level of the area to average. The Munxar elderly do not reside in a particular area but are an integral part of the Munxar community. They hardly live alone, not only because of Munxar's close-knit family system, but also due to the frequent social and cultural activities organised for them by the local council. The church in Munxar actually provides outreach services to the elderly in particular – but not exclusively.

### **Crime**

Like the rest of Gozo, there seems to be a certain level of fear of crime, particularly felt by the elderly residents. This anguish emerged after a series of thefts suffered by the Munxar elderly in their homes. This crime, which has subsided in the past two years, is alleged to have been perpetrated by people from outside the locality. Otherwise, there only seem to be contraventions – mainly traffic-related.

There are a few offenders that reside permanently and others who reside temporarily – and they all seem to live in Xlendi, perhaps due to the availability of apartments. These consist of murderers and drug traffickers. Allegedly, drug trafficking occurs in Xlendi, perhaps due to the close proximity of 'the Grotta' discotheque. In fact, a drug trafficker was apprehended in the main square of Munxar. Syringes used during drug-abuse are frequently found in both Munxar and Xlendi. In fact, the authorities have taken to raking the Xlendi sand to prevent the injury of those who frequent the beach.

The extent of police presence leaves much to be desired. Despite patrols from the Rabat police, fear of crime has been escalating, largely due to the Grotta discotheque activity. Besides being a crime hotspot, the Grotta discotheque represents a nuisance to residents because of the rowdy revellers who frequent it and who speed up and down the roads of Munxar and Xlendi after closing time. This has led the Munxar local council to choose to have the Xlendi police station open more than the one in Munxar, especially in summer. There are CCTV cameras on the bring-in site. When this report was being compiled, the Munxar local council was considering installing more close circuit television cameras (CCTVs) on its own premises in an effort to monitor the main square and curb the nightly nuisance caused by the Grotta revellers.

Vandalism also abounds when the revellers get bored and turn to destroying property. A neighbourhood watch scheme never existed in the locality (Munxar/Xlendi) because the local council did not find the indispensable cooperation of the residents. Throughout

the year, the playing field seems to be the main crime/delinquency hotspot, with typical nuisance generated by the youngsters that frequent the area. The residents are extremely reluctant to report crime to the police and even to the local council. As for victims, apart from the elderly, there exists bullying among schoolchildren of any school age. There might also be cases of domestic violence, but there does not seem to be alcoholism. There also is drug trafficking, however, this does not necessarily implicate Munxar residents. It seems that Xlendi offers the greatest challenge to Munxar's safety and security.

**Sannat:** near Xlendi and Munxar, one finds **Sannat** – or, more precisely, Ta' Sannat. This locality is found at the south of Gozo. It is popular for its characteristic high cliffs and, consequent, breathtaking views of the Mediterranean sea and the island of Malta. There are 4 subdivisions: 'Tal-in-Wara', behind the school (Main Street), tal-Pjazza, Ta' Seguna, and Ta' Ċenċ. There are other landmarks – the Hotel, the Imramma temple, plus cart ruts, dolmens, Bidni Park and id-Dahla taċ-Ċnus. The village core consists largely of Main Street. Interestingly, in 1951, England's queen Elizabeth II visited "The Lace House", found in the Sannat square called "Tax-Xelina".

Sannat is essentially residential and touristic due to the Hotel Ta' Ċenċ, the temple and cart ruts. This locality is well-kept and there do not seem to be any dilapidated zones. Abuses, such as littering, are mostly performed by people passing through Sannat and misusing the bring-in site.

The researcher was given the impression that Sannat family problems were only shared with the parish priest of Sannat. In fact, the Sannat local council could not provide any information regarding this issue. A rise in unemployment was registered lately and the level of education, in Sannat, seems to be below the national average. In effect, literacy is perceived to be quite low, consequently, the local council organises literacy courses. The Sannat local council likes to organise Notte Scarlata, since red is the colour of Sannat, of its football club and of St Margaret (the patron saint). Every year there is a different cultural theme for Notte Scarlata.

Sannat has a population of around 2,300 residents. Out of these, about 800 are elderly persons who tend to live in Main Street. For this reason, Main Street is considered as a top priority for the local council's social initiatives. In fact, the local council has asked for more police patrols, in this area where the elderly live, also increasing street lighting in this zone.

### **Crime**

Like the rest of Gozo, fear of crime seems to be particularly experienced by the elderly, due to actual thefts that have been incurred by the elderly in their homes. These crimes, which have stopped for the past two years, have allegedly been perpetrated by people from 'outside the locality'. Yet, amazingly, residents keep leaving their keys in the front door and their cars open, with the keys in the ignition.

Apart from littering in uninhabited areas, there seems to be widespread drug abuse and property-vandalism. For example, the destruction of the large traffic mirrors installed to ease the traffic flow in blind spots. Residents are extremely reluctant to report crime, and when they finally do, they evidently find it easier to call the local council rather than the police.

It is common to find used syringes (left by drug-abusers) in the area known as id-Daħla taċ-Ċnus. The playing field seems to be the main crime hotspot since residents constantly complain about the nuisance that, is alleged, is regularly caused by young people. The extent of police presence is certainly not satisfactory. It is claimed that the Sannat police station gets so cold in winter that police officers prefer to stay in their cars, rather than in it, as their cars tend to be warmer.

There do not seem to be any crime offenders living in Sannat. The victims of crime tend to be: the elderly people, drug users and youngsters aged 15 to 18 who suffer from peer pressure and bullying. There aren't any industries or activities that impact negatively on the safety and security of Ta' Sannat.

**Fontana** is a Rabat suburb, found on the road between Rabat and Xlendi. Fontana is known for its lush-green, fertile Lunzjata Valley and the famous water stream that flows out of a spring in this valley. The locality is essentially residential, agricultural, and touristic (the Loggia/ natural water springs, and cottage industry are tourist attractions). It has three main areas: the village core, Ta' Randu and Ta' Mulejja (which includes the Jesuits' retreat home called Dar Manresa). The locality is well-kept although, there are a considerable number of vacant houses due to inheritance issues that are falling into disrepair and looking dilapidated. These are mostly concentrated round the church area.

Although the Fontana local council is involved in a lot of environmentally-friendly projects related to EkoGħawdex, according to the Malta Environment and Planning Authority (MEPA), Fontana has one of the highest rates of traffic pollution. The junction between Triq tal-Għajn, Triq Vajring and Pjazza Santu Wistin is a major traffic node that might well contribute to this pollution. So although Fontana is one of the smallest and greenest villages in Gozo (its valley even has a population of the protected, sweet-water, endemic, crab), its residents are still plagued by dense traffic and the consequent car and noise pollution.

Fontana has a population of around 850 residents – about 40 of whom are elderly. Thirty of these elderly people live completely on their own so, the Fontana local councils makes it a point to keep constant contact with them, even by offering the midday meal on special days of the year. There do not seem to be more than four broken families/ separated married couples. Unemployment is negligible and the education standard seems to conform to the national average. There were a number of professionals that left

Fontana to find work elsewhere or were married outside of the locality. There is not much land left that can be developed by local residents and so Fontana people tend to move out permanently.

### **Crime**

In Fontana, the crime rate seems to be extremely low – with the occasional theft. But Fontana residents still leave their keys in the front door and in their cars. There are two residents who are convicted offenders. The most common offences are traffic contraventions, mostly over-speeding. It was claimed that, the authorities refuse to install any speed cameras, even though 3 persons died in the area in the past 10 years as a result of over-speeding in Triq il-Għajn.

The researcher was told that police presence in Fontana is almost negligible. Evidently, there is an over-reliance on the Rabat police station. When compelled to seek help, the Fontana residents prefer turning to the local council rather than to the police. CCTVs are located near the spring and there are no neighbourhood watch schemes. The noise pollution that emanates from the Grotta discotheque (in the Xlendi/Munxar zone) negatively affects Fontana. In fact, the noise can be heard from as far as Dar Manresa which is located on the other end of Fontana. The frequent car races and engine-revving, in the dead of the night, greatly disturbs residents. In fact, the Grotta discotheque is the activity that greatly and adversely affects the safety and security of the locality.

It is the Fontana elderly that suffer most from the negative effects of the fear of crime. News, especially bad news, travels rapidly in Gozo, and the stories about other elderly people getting robbed in broad daylight, traumatizes the Fontana elderly. As for drug-abuse: there are the occasional syringes found along the sides of the arterial road (Triq il-Għajn) that might belong to the revelers of the Grotta discotheque or people going through Fontana. Another issue that afflicts Fontana are the huge quarry trucks that use the arterial road. It is held that these huge trucks can also create structural damages to houses due to the vibration caused by the vehicles. Consequently, besides suffering the dirt, noise and diesel pollution created by these trucks, Fontana residents endure the anxiety of possible structural damage to their homes.

**Nadur** is perched on a hill, on the east side of Gozo. It's location rendered it an ideal look-out place for the protectors of the island and in fact, traditionally, this has been the role of Nadur. The Locality is divided into six main areas: Ta' Hida, Tal-Ħali, San Blas, Ta' Kenuna, Tad-Duru and Ta' Grinju. Although most Nadur residents live in the village core, residences spread from the centre into the countryside, overlooking spectacular valleys and the coast, particularly the breath-taking bays of San Blas, Dahlet Qorrot and Ramla

(under the famous Calypso Cave). Nadur is mainly residential and agricultural. There are Armed Forces of Malta (AFM) barracks at Ta' Soppu and a series of quarries on the Qala side. Nadur has no dilapidated areas and there is a high level of upkeep and cleanliness by the residents. Nadur is very much sought for its 29<sup>th</sup> of June parish feast (Imnarja) – the feast of St Peter and St Paul and for its famous carnival.

There seems to be a small number of broken families/separated married couples. In Nadur, unemployment seems to be negligible but jobs in Gozo are few and getting fewer, consequently, Gozitans need to go to Malta permanently to find work. The level of education here seems to be above the national average. Nadur has a population of around 4,800, of which about 1,920 are elderly residents. The elderly are concentrated in the older parts of the six areas. The Nadur local council tends to these residents by frequently organizing cultural visits and social events, specifically with the elderly in mind. There seems to be a younger family cohort in the Tal-Ħali housing estate, and for this reason, one would expect the Nadur population to be composed of a good number of children and young people. The population of Nadur tends to grow during summer, when immigrants return from abroad to visit. People with social problems tend to approach the church rather than the local council, so the interviewee was not very knowledgeable about social problems in Nadur.

### **Crime**

It seems that the elevated fear of crime experienced by the Nadur elderly, reflects the level of fear of crime suffered by the rest of Gozo. This fear was powered by the thefts incurred by the elderly, in their homes. Although this type of crime spree, allegedly driven and engaged in by people from 'outside the locality' has stopped occurring in the past two years, its residue negative effects are still evident. Otherwise, the only crime-related issues faced by Nadur people seem to be, in actual fact, merely traffic contraventions. Residents still leave their keys in the main door or/and in their cars.

Police presence is considered satisfactory. However, it is felt that, although there are regular police patrols, these are not enough, especially during the carnival season (Nadur is famous for its carnival festivities – to which, people from all over the Maltese islands flock), when fear of crime evidently raises its ugly head. It is ironic that, during the carnival festivities organized in Nadur, Nadur residents are known to stay indoors and to worry excessively that their property is going to be vandalised. And sometimes, Nadur property gets damaged/vandalized by the carnival revelers, mostly by those who get drunk. Nadur residents, it seems, suffer the effects of the rowdiness and general disrespectful of the people who visit Nadur for carnival (mostly Maltese). The Nadur carnival festivities are spread over five days. Moral panic gets fueled, particular during the days that precede the opening of the Nadur carnival festivities. This panic manifests itself through: the barrage

of complaints and recommendations that reach the Nadur local council – mainly to take crime-prevention measures (for example, by fixing broken/non-functioning street lamps); and the residents' frantic efforts to protect their property. The carnival activity in Nadur peaks on Saturday, but between Monday and Tuesday it calms down. The locality never had neighbourhood watch schemes and has no closed circuit televisions (CCTVs).

The main, not crime, but rowdy hotspot in Nadur, is the playground at Tal-Ħali, at Ġnien il-Kunsill. It seems to be taken over by rowdy young people who disturb residents. However, their rowdiness gets displaced elsewhere when the police turn up. The Nadur residents prefer reporting crime to the local council first, before contacting the police. The same cannot be said of the foreign (European) residents, of whom there is an increasing number living in Nadur.

In Nadur, there are also known offenders living. When it comes to victims of crime, being considered vulnerable, it is the elderly that get labelled as potential crime victims. With the exception of the carnival activities, in Nadur, there are no particular industries or activities that affect the safety and security of the area.

**Ta' Kerċem**, a village with a population of around 1,905 residents, is found close to the south-west of Rabat, between the Lunzjata Valley (limits of Fontana), the lush hills of Tal-Mixta, Ghal Ilma and Ta' Dbiegi, rolling up to the Pond of San Rafflu and Xlendi cliffs. Out of the estimated 1,905 residents, around 500 are under 18 years of age; circa 100 are foreigners; and another 100 are Maltese people with a registered Gozitan ID card (who most probably live in Malta most of the year). **Santa Luċija** is considered as a Ta' Kerċem hamlet, with its own, bucolic church square where its residents (mainly farmers) meet before and after mass at their old chapel, dedicated to St Lucy. The Ta' Kerċem local council also administers the Santa Luċija hamlet, which is too small to be divided into smaller administrative areas. Ta' Kerċem and Santa Luċija are essentially residential and agricultural. Like most of Gozo, the area is very well kept by residents, with very few vacant houses that look slightly rundown due to lack of maintenance. There is an issue with large trucks carrying quarry material that pass through the tiny village, damaging roads with their weight and causing noise pollution.

In Ta' Kerċem and Santa Luċija there only seems to be a handful of broken families/separated married couples. Unemployment is negligible. There seems to be a balanced distribution between people holding menial jobs and those considered as having a profession. Agriculture, which used to be the main job-area in post-war Gozo, now claims only a fraction of the employment range. There are no issues regarding immigration. The level of education reflects the national average. The social fabric has been affected by the building of a new housing estate in the last 20 years. This housing estate injected Ta' Kerċem with new young families and thus altered the balance of an ageing population.



The elderly residents are not concentrated in any particular area but are evenly distributed around the locality.

### **Crime**

Apparently, the elevated fear of crime experienced by the Ta' Kerċem/Santa Luċija elderly, reflects the level of fear of crime suffered by the rest of Gozo. This is the consequence of a number of thefts suffered by the elderly, in their homes, allegedly perpetrated by outsiders, but which has stopped for the past two years. Otherwise, only contraventions (mainly traffic-related) seem to be occurring, not crimes. As regards drug trafficking, the Ta' Kerċem local council only got to know of one used syringe that was found in the main square about eight years ago. The general idea is that: the locality is secure; there are no offenders residing in Ta' Kerċem/Santa Luċija; there are no crime victims, except maybe the elderly who fear crime because they feel vulnerable and targeted. The locality is sufficiently patrolled by the Rabat police (the police station in Ta' Kerċem is almost always closed). The community is willing to file reports with the local council, rather than the police, however these do not concern crime. There are no by-laws, neighbourhood watch schemes, gating or identified crime hotspots. A closed circuit camera has been installed in the bring-in site.

**Għajnsielem** is the first village encountered as one drives out of the Mġarr harbour (where the ferry docks). The locality has a population of around 3,260 residents, of whom around 200 are non-Maltese who live there, permanently. There was a time when Għajnsielem was considered part of Nadur. Għajnsielem is famous for its Christmas/Nativity-village, erected almost yearly by enthusiasts and volunteers as part of the annual, December Għajnsielem Fest activities. This endeavour is undoubtedly inspired by the twinning Għajnsielem has with Bethlehem (a Memorandum of Understanding was signed between the two localities, in relation to religious tourism). The island of Comino is administered by the Għajnsielem Local Council. Comino has only three permanent residents, but it has a strong tourism influx during the summer months.

Għajnsielem is mainly residential, agricultural (farms at Ta' Kordina), commercial and touristic (Grand Hotel, Mġarr Harbour, Chambray, remains of Calypso and other wrecks in Xatt l-Aħmar, fougasse and has Neolithic remains at Borġ Gharib, tal-Qieghan, and tal-Imrejżbiet; there is also the Torri Mġarr ix-Xini and Kappella Santa Ċeċilja, which is the oldest chapel in Gozo and a large WWII shelter). Għajnsielem is divided into three areas: Tal-Gudja, ta' ġol-Kaxxa and Ta' Kordina.

When it comes to the general upkeep of the village, it can be considered as high standard. However, due to complications, the Church and the community now cannot benefit from a European Union grant to embellish the area leading to its entrance, and

so, this has been left in need of maintenance work. Since it is the first thing that impacts visitors, this has given the centre of Ghajnsielem a dilapidated look. In addition, there are a number of vacant dwellings that are not maintained by the owners due to inheritance issues. These might also give the impression of dilapidation. Geographically Ghajnsielem is blessed with natural water springs. In fact, there was a time when, a former minister (The Hon Mr Lorry Sant) planned to export natural water from Ghajnsielem to Malta.

In Ghajnsielem there only appear to be a handful of broken families/separated married couples, and hardly any unemployment. The population is not an ageing one, as perhaps people might assume. Evidence of this is the large number of families with young children. The elderly are largely concentrated in the village core area. The level of education is on the rise, although one expects Ghajnsielem people with professions to settle in Malta – where there are more job opportunities for them. Dar Ġużeppa Debono houses single pregnant mothers, who sometimes come from Malta to give birth in Gozo. Ghajnsielem also houses Gozo's Respite Centre for adults and there is another for children, as well as the Day Care Centre for the elderly (which is used by all Gozitan local councils). Ghajnsielem also houses: the Education Ministry's Arts Centre (which caters for all of Gozo); a private English language school; and a youth hostel for foreigners run by the Church at Dar San Ġużepp. Ghajnsielem Fest is held every December and its Nativity village attracts a lot of people from all over the Maltese islands. There is in-migration especially by Maltese and foreigners, but there is no out-migration from the locality, except for residents working in Malta.

### **Crime**

Like the rest of Gozo, the people of Ghajnsielem, particularly the elderly, experience fear of crime. This came about after a series of thefts incurred by the elderly in their own homes. Ghajnsielem has a reputation of being the place where the largest amount of alcohol is consumed in Gozo and this can be traced back to when the British were stationed in Fort Chambray. The main hotspot seems to be the dilapidated main square, which attracts nuisance such as the rowdiness of young people gathering there late at night. In addition, it is alleged that these youngsters are, frequently, also the authors of vandalism and littering. This nuisance seems to be allowed to persist, since the police station remains closed most of the time.

The interviewee was not aware of any offenders living in Ghajnsielem and the general perception on crime is that it occurs very rarely. Drugs are abused, largely in the area around the football club and there is a major traffic problem in Triq l-Imġarr, since it is a major thoroughfare for all of Gozo. In fact, it is believed that many accidents occur on that road. This could be the direct cause of the traffic exiting the Gozo ferry. There is also a littering problem behind the cemetery, largely due to building contractors dumping material there.

Comino also suffers from littering, particularly that left after barbeques. In Ghajnsielem there are no neighbourhood watch schemes due to lack of public participation. Bullying was cited as the main form of victimization and its victims' ages vary from young school children to adolescents to adults and the elderly. The main activity that influences the safety and security of Ghajnsielem is largely the Gozo ferry traffic.

**Qala:** If you happen to be enjoying a glass of wine in one of the many wine bars in the **Qala** church square, you are in the village that is furthest away from Rabat. Of course, instead you could be enjoying its unobstructed, breath-taking views of its coastline (particularly of Hondoq ir-Rummien's bay) and the island of Comino. With the largest surface area (spanning from Mgarr to Dahlet Qorrot), Qala has a population of around 2,500 residents, of whom about 500 are non-locals. There are about 250 foreigners and another 150 Maltese who have their ID registered in Qala.

The locality is mainly residential and agricultural, having some industrial activity in terms of quarrying. There are no housing estates and the younger people seem to be moving out of Qala. Qala is not divided into sections. It is claimed that more than half of its roads are new and that the rural roads (in existence since the 1970s) desperately need resurfacing. Qala is well-kept. There are a lot of vacant buildings due to inheritance issues, especially around the village core. There are three major projects that have taken place recently: the setting up of a Folklore Museum, the restoration of Fort Sant'Antnin, and the setting up of the heritage trail and picnic area at the entrance of Qala, near the football ground.

It seems that Qala only has a few broken families/separated married couples and that the level of unemployment reflects the national average. The educational standard of the people of Qala seems to be on the rise. About a third of the residents are elderly people – who mainly live in the village core. It is claimed that those who live on their own are the ones who most suffer fear of crime and loneliness.

### **Crime**

The crime rate seems to be low in Qala, the predominant crime being drug-abuse among young people. There is the occasional house break-in, or theft, or vandalism. There are offenders living in Qala and some of them are serving prison sentences, too. There are no particular hotspots to point out. There are closed circuit cameras installed in the playing field, the school and the folklore museum areas. In Qala, there were never any neighbourhood watch schemes set up. The police station is generally open, but more foot patrols in the square are needed to possibly prevent the irregular parking that occurs constantly, possibly because of the patrons of the five restaurants/wine-bars in the main square.

There seems to be two main categories of victims of crime: the elderly (who fear crime)

and the young people/students (drug-addicts). There are also cases of child abuse that the local council has come to know of and has passed on to the police. The residents prefer reporting to the local council rather than to the police because, in that way, anonymity is guaranteed. The main activity that disrupts the safety and security of Qala is the heavy quarry trucks going through the locality from the quarries on the outskirts.

**Xagħra** (or, more correctly, **ix-Xagħra**) is considered as the place where the first inhabitants of Gozo probably lived. In fact, it is in Xagħra that one finds the well-preserved, mystical, prehistoric Ggantija Temples. However, these temples are not the only tourist-magnet in Xagħra. In their proximity, one can visit the traditional Ta' Kola's windmill. In addition, also in Xagħra, one can enjoy fascinating, underground, geographical features at Xerri's Grotto and Ninu's Cave. Xagħra is also home to one of Gozo's most popular hotels. Yet Xagħra retained its quaint, village features. It has a population of around 5,000 residents of whom, about 800 are registered as living in Xagħra (Maltese people with Gozitan identity cards) but who clearly live elsewhere – probably in Malta.

Xagħra is mainly residential, touristic, commercial (there are a number of shops, pubs and restaurants) and agricultural. The locality is well-kept and clean. There are five predominant areas: Pjazza, Sant'Anton, Tan-Nazzarenu, taç-Ċimiterju (including Triq tas-Sruġ and Triq tal-Kortoll) and Bullara (the hotel area). Tan-Nazzarenu is like a separate village. It is believed to have housed one of the earlier settlements of Xagħra and yet, anthropologically, the people from the Pjazza area seem to look down at the ones from Tan-Nazzarenu. This could be because Xagħra has a larger parish and greater funds than the Tan-Nazzarenu church.

The interviewer acquired the perception that, there is so much drug abuse in Xagħra, that if a strong wind were to blow, the people in and around the locality would get high on cocaine. This affects the social stability of Xagħra since, unfortunately, drug addiction does not seem to have spared young couples and families. This leads to a level of latent poverty. With the exception of these young couples/families, Xagħra seems to have an increasingly aging population caused by the steady exodus of young people who are compelled to leave Xagħra/Gozo to go to Malta to either work or study. The interviewee claimed that in Xagħra, one 'stops being a parent' when the children reach 16 years of age. This is when most children leave the family homes and the parents remain alone. The elderly residents are largely concentrated in San Anton and Tan-Nazzarenu areas.

### **Crime**

Like the rest of Gozo, the people of Xagħra, particularly the elderly, experience fear of crime. This came about after a series of thefts incurred by the elderly in their own homes;

it is claimed, at the hands of outsiders, but which have stopped for the past two years. Since drug abuse seems to be so predominant in Xaghra, and drugs do not come cheap, the community's fear of crime seems to be fuelled by the awareness of this drug problem. There are a number of offenders living in Xaghra, but they do not seem to generate fear of crime – instead, it is claimed, they just create nuisances.

There are no crime hotspots or neighbourhood watch schemes. Police presence is negligible even though, it is claimed, drug traffickers are seen operating in broad daylight, in the main square. The interviewee insisted that drug traffickers are not even disturbed by the police. There are closed circuit cameras near bring-in sites and playing fields. The elderly are considered as victims of crime, since they are afflicted by fear of crime. In addition, drug addicts/abusers are another category of victims, especially in cases where minors are involved. However, incredibly, keys are still left in main doors and in cars. The interviewee explained that car keys are left in vehicles, because, he claimed: 'if one had to steal a car, where could he/she go?' This implies that the diminutive size of Gozo offers a sense of security, albeit that could be a false sense of security. There is no industry or activity that impacts the safety/security of the area in a negative way.

**Għarb** is a traditional, quaint, centuries-old village, which started as a hamlet. It is found at the westernmost part of Gozo. Għarb is well-known for its interesting folklore museum and Ta' Dbiegi crafts village however, it is its mystic characteristics that probably attracts most local and foreign tourists. The late Karmni Grima and Frenc Tal-Għarb are two famous Għarb residents. It is believed that the Blessed Virgin Mary made herself known to Karmni Grima – and this led to the erection of the awe-inspiring Ta' Pinu Basilica. Frenc Tal-Għarb is known as a saintly, humble man and a healer – claimed to be still in action, after his death. Għarb has a population of around 1,300 residents, of whom 120 are of primary school age. The population almost doubles in the summer months especially July/ August, due to tourism.

Għarb is mainly residential, agricultural and touristic. It consists of four areas: Tat-Trux, Birbuba, Santu Pietru and the new part - Il-Parti l-Ġdida. The upkeep of Għarb can be described as excellent. Għarb residents tend to their property and keep the locality clean. This optimal level of upkeep decreases steadily in the areas between Għarb and San Lawrenz, known as tal-Wileġ.

The perception is that: there are hardly any social problems (not more than two separated married couples); negligible unemployment; no evidence of poverty; and the level of education is above the national average. There is an influx of immigrants who work in an ETC-funded agricultural scheme related to tomato picking. Otherwise, there is no inter-council migration of any sort. The population is an ageing one. The elderly residents tend to be concentrated largely round the areas of San Pietru and Birbuba.

## Crime

Like the rest of Gozo, the people of Għarb, particularly the elderly, experience fear of crime. This came about after a series of thefts incurred by the elderly in their own homes; as previously claimed by other local councils, at the hands of outsiders, but which have stopped for the past two years. The elderly used to be targeted for theft in the 70s and 80s but this has substantially subsided. During that time, the fear of crime was considerable. But, paradoxically, the habit of leaving the key in the front door survived the ages. In Għarb there are no neighbourhood watch schemes, no closed circuit cameras and no bye-laws related to crime prevention. Although there are mobile patrols in the evenings, police presence in Għarb tends to be sporadic. The interviewee claimed that there might actually be a level of theft that goes unreported. There do not seem to be any drug-abuse-related problems and the main contraventions seem to be nuisance-related. There might be one convicted offender living in the locality. As for victims of crime, in Għarb there does not seem to be a profile of the typical victim. In fact, the interviewee claimed that residents with different demographic characteristics fall victim to crimes such as theft. The activity/industry that has an impact on the safety/security of the locality is the Ta' Dbiegi crafts village.

**Xewkija** – considered the oldest village of Gozo – is found between the village of Ghajnsielem and Rabat. On entering Xewkija from the main road, one can observe the ruins of a mill which was built in the era of Grand Master Ramon Perellos. This mill is considered to be a particular one, since it has points that indicate the eight main wind directions. Xewkija is renowned for its parish church: The Rotunda, dedicated to St John the Baptist. This is where the Knights of St John used to convene, in Gozo. It is also famous for, what is referred to as, the marble slab of Majmuna: carved in this slab is an Arabic inscription, commemorating the death of an Arab girl called Sarah. In Xewkija today, one finds: the University of Malta annex; the Employment and Training Corporation offices; the Gozo stadium; the government farm; St Mary's cemetery; Xewkija cemetery; and an industrial estate. Xewkija has a population of around 3,000 residents. It is considered as the fourth largest village in Gozo. In fact, its escalating population required the development of housing estates in the Tal-Barmil, Ta' Gokk and Tal-Hamrija zones and the Tal-Barmil housing estate which is actually considered a hamlet.

Xewkija is mainly residential and agricultural however, there is a sizeable industrial estate within its confines. Almost all of Xewkija is an urban conservation area, except for Tal-Barmil and the industrial estate. Xewkija is divided into: the Tal-Barmil hamlet, Tal-Ħniena area (near the Chapel by the same name), il-Parti l-Qadima (surrounding the main Church), there's an area to the south known as Tal-Ħanzira on the limits with Munxar, the housing estate known as tal-Ħamrija (near the Industrial Estate), ta' Xhajma

on the way to Xagħra which is agricultural and incorporates the racecourse, and Ta' Ġokk area, which lies between the old part and Ta' Ħanżira.

In Xewkija there are only a few broken families/separated couples and hardly any unemployment. Education seems to be well catered for by the presence of MCAST in Xewkija, but a lot of young people still go to Malta to attend University and to work. The industrial zone pollution is known to affect children in the area, who suffer from asthma. There are around 800 elderly residents – and their residences are not concentrated in any area. The parish church has a strong influence on the social aspect of the community and provides outreach services to people with social problems.

### **Crime**

Like the rest of Gozo, the people of Xewkija, particularly the elderly, experience fear of crime. There are no known offenders living in Xewkija, and police presence is satisfactory, with the refurbished police station being open most of the time and police patrols covering the streets during the evenings. The main hotspot is Triq il-Ħorob, near the MCAST playing field, where nuisances abound (particularly vandalism). There are no neighbourhood watch schemes and the only known closed circuit cameras were installed in: the local council premises, MCAST, and the schools in the locality. The elderly of Xewkija consider themselves as crime victims. The interviewee claims that the Xewkija community needs sessions in crime prevention awareness. The main activity, that is affecting the safety and security of Xewkija at the moment, is the extensive road building project.

**Għasri** is found in the west of Gozo. Although it covers an extensive area, Għasri has the smallest population of residents in Gozo: 521 residents – of whom, half are elderly. These are not concentrated in one residential area. This situation is further exacerbated by the exodus of locals who are choosing to live outside the village. Għasri is spread between Żebbuġ and Għammar. Għasri is known for its tal-Gordan Lighthouse, which overlooks lush fields and the deep, blue Mediterranean Sea. Għasri is also famous for its picturesque Wied il-Għasri – the valley which runs through fields and down into the sea. Għasri is mainly residential and agricultural. There are four areas: Ta' Għammar, tal-Fanal, iċ-Ċentru, and Wied Sara. The locality is very well-kept by both the local council and the residents.

The perception is that social problems are minimal. It is claimed that only those who do not want to work, do not find employment. There are three levels of education: the very high (tertiary), the average (normal schooling) and the illiterate – the small number who earn their livelihood from the fields. There are no immigrants although there is an in-migration due to the letting of farmhouses and flats to local and foreign tourists.

## Crime

Like the rest of Gozo, the people of Ghasri, particularly the elderly, experience fear of crime. This came about after a series of thefts incurred on the elderly in their own homes – while attending church. Drug abuse – as well as other related crimes, might be occurring in the outskirts where there is lack of guardianship.

Police presence can be improved. There are no neighbourhood watch schemes, no closed circuit cameras or bye-laws related to crime prevention. The only hotspot is the bring-in site but, even this zone becomes so, only in summer, when tourists (staying in rented accommodations) do not abide by the rules. This is the most common form of nuisance that occurs, apart from the noise that sometimes emanates from rented farmhouses such as Ta' Frenč Complex. It is the elderly that are considered as potential or actual victims of crime.

**San Lawrenz:** the quaint, traditional village of **San Lawrenz** is found on a plateau which is flanked by three hills, namely: Ghammar, Gelmus and Ta' Dbiegi. Although the village in itself is picturesque, San Lawrenz is world renowned for its Dwejra bay. As one drives down the winding road, admiring the panorama of cliffs, shimmering, deep blue Mediterranean sea, rolling fields and the valley on one side of the road, one can admire three special rock-features: The Azure Window and Fungus Rock on one side and the Inland Sea on the other. Although described as a natural arch, the Azure Window looks more like a tall, rock table – a dolmen – rather than an arch. The Azure ... or blue ... Window creates a spectacle, both when the sea, below it, is calm and when the sea is rough and foaming white. This natural, marine beauty spot (particularly what is referred to as the Blue Hole) is very popular with divers. As mentioned earlier, this zone is also popular with cinema directors. In fact, it provided the back-drop for films like: “Clash of the Titans”, “The Count of Monte Cristo” and “The Odyssey”. Fungus Rock looks like a huge rock-pillar. This mammoth limestone rock emerges from the deep, dark, Dwejra lagoon – on the left side as one drives down to Dwejra. From the Azure Window parking area, one can drive further down, on the right, towards the sea – and park, on the pebbles, near the boat-houses. Once out of the car, one can walk to the small quay that protrudes into a miniature, shallow, greenish lagoon that is fed by the open sea, through the cave-like hole in the cliff-wall that rises out from the depths, in front of this little pebbly bay – thus creating an inland sea ... or big pool, really. This is from where tourists go on boat-trips, out of the Inland Sea, through the hole in the cliff-wall, out in the open sea... where they can admire the awe-inspiring cliffs, the water-level and under water caves below the cliffs ... their coral ... and the Azure Window.

San Lawrenz has a population of around 550 residents – and, it seems, an increasing number of Maltese people who now have a Gozitan identity card and are registered as



living there, but who, in actual fact, still live in Malta. San Lawrenz – whose core practically comprises the entire village – is too small to be divided into smaller administrative areas. This locality is mainly residential and agricultural, with Dwejra and the Kempinski Resort being a tourist magnet. San Lawrenz is very well kept and clean. Not even the considerable number of vacant buildings are in a dilapidated state.

The perception is that there are no social problems, and negligible unemployment – with the exception of those who do not want to work. The San Lawrenz population is considered as an ageing one. The elderly residents are not concentrated in one specific area. Unfortunately, the breath-taking views push the property prices up and consequently, the locals find it hard to buy their own property and to settle in San Lawrenz. In addition, young people have to move out of San Lawrenz to seek employment. The level of education seems to match the national average.

### **Crime**

Like the rest of Gozo, the people of San Lawrenz, particularly the elderly, experience fear of crime. Otherwise, only contraventions (mostly traffic-related – particularly failing to wear seat-belts) seem to be committed, not crimes. San Lawrenz people still leave their keys in the front doors of their houses. They also feel safe leaving their cars open, with the key inside. Although the police station has been restored, police presence is not considered as satisfactory. In fact, it is claimed that more patrols by the Rabat police are needed. There have never been any neighbourhood watch schemes. Apparently, the main hotspot is Dwejra. This may be due to its desolation – people do not live there. The interviewee described it as a ‘no man’s land’. This lack of informal supervision facilitates the theft of road signs and vandalism. The interviewee claims that people suspect that contraband is received here, too – and this would constitute crime. Closed circuit cameras monitor the main San Lawrenz square. Drug trafficking and drug abuse do not seem to constitute a problem in this locality. However, bicycles get frequently stolen from San Lawrenz. The elderly have their routine, weekly cultural visits and social events but otherwise, the local council does not have a social intervention programme of any sort. Unlike what happens in other villages, San Lawrenz residents (mostly those above 40 years of age) resort to the police before reporting anything to the local council. There are maybe one or two offenders living in San Lawrenz and crime victimization seems to be associated with the elderly.

**Żebbuġ**, (or **Iż-Żebbuġ**) is a village found in the northwest of Gozo, adjacent to Gharb and Marsalforn. It is perched on a hilltop, enjoying spectacular views of the countryside, rolling down to the rocky coast of Qbajjar – where one finds patchworks of traditional salt-pans that adorn the white rocks that drop sharply into the open, deep, blue Mediterranean Sea. This village is renowned for its olives and olive oil but it is also famous

for its lace. It is claimed that people have lived in Żebbuġ since antiquity. In fact, Żebbuġ also boasts of Bronze Age sites. The locality has a population of around 1,400 residents and another 1,300 people who reside in **Marsalforn** (possibly the most popular tourist/summer resort in Gozo). Besides having a spectacular coast – rocky and sandy in places – a panoramic walking area and a playing field for children, it is dotted with wine bars, pubs, restaurants, holiday accommodations and hotels. The beaches of Qbajjar and Xwejni also fall within Żebbuġ's local council jurisdiction.

Żebbuġ is mainly residential, commercial (there are small industries, such as: construction contractors and salt pans) and agricultural. Apart from being residential and commercial, Marsalforn is touristic. Żebbuġ is divided into two zones, aptly named according to the geographical shape of the locality: il-Ponta (which translated means, The Point – found behind the parish church) and ix-Xagħra l-Kbira (which translated means, The Big Square – the area one enters Żebbuġ from, as one drives to Żebbuġ from Għasri. It is claimed that, especially due to rainwater flowing down to low-lying places and damaging rubble walls in winter, maintenance is perpetually on-going.

The perception is that the poverty level matches that of the national average. There are a few broken families and unemployment reflects the national average. The interviewee feels that the level of education is on the increase. Apart from Żebbuġ itself, there is migration into Marsalforn from other areas of Gozo, as well as by Maltese people who might also reside in Marsalforn, especially during the weekends (there are more flats than farmhouses for rent). An estimated two out of five Żebbuġ residents are elderly and their residences are not concentrated in a particular area of Żebbuġ or Marsalforn.

### **Crime**

Like the rest of Gozo, the people of San Lawrenz, particularly the elderly, experience fear of crime. In fact, the mayor's own parents' house was broken into, two weeks before being interviewed for this research, and, it is claimed, it took the police forensic team very long to reach Gozo. There were an estimate 12 break-ins in a three year period and there are no patterns that can be identified to assist the authorities predict the next targets. This could suggest that the crimes committed could fall under the category of crimes of opportunity, although, it was pointed out that the victims' routines were observed and studied beforehand.

There are known offenders living in Żebbuġ (drug-traffickers) and there are others who are transient and live in Marsalforn. Victims of crime are, virtually, of all ages and constitute those whose houses have been broken into. The local council is aware of syringes used in drug abuse that are often found in fields (there is no particular hotspot).

It is claimed that police presence is hardly noticeable. Salt is thrown in the proverbial wound when a retired member of the judiciary is provided with a fixed point (an officer

guarding his house), whenever he goes to stay at his holiday residence (be it summer, over long holidays or over weekends) – when it is the whole of Żebbuġ that requires police presence. It seems that the police prefer to affect mobile patrols in the evenings, however this is not enough.

Like what happens in San Lawrenz, the people of Żebbuġ report more to the police than to the local council. As for contraventions, nuisances abound. The Żebbuġ Garden (Ġnien Tlett Għoljiet, found on the way to ix-Xagħra) is often vandalised. There is a closed circuit camera installed near the bring-in site adjacent to the cemetery – on the outskirts of Żebbuġ. As for Marsalforn: the police station there is often open. There were 8 break-ins in Marsalforn in the 6 months prior to the research interview. In these break-ins, gold was mostly stolen. Vandalism also abounds. Two murders occurred in Marsalforn. Burglar alarms seem to be the preferred crime prevention measure by residents. All in all, it seems that all the residents, irrespective of age, suffer from fear of crime. This has been fueled by the break-ins incurred by Marsalforn residents while they attended mass.

#### **District 6: General Crime/Social Problems**

- It seems that there are not a lot of broken families/separated married couples in Gozo.
- The level of unemployment in Gozo reflects the national average.
- The educational standard of the Gozitans reflects the national one, and it seems to be on the rise.
- Gozo's population seems to be an aging one.
- Gozitans appear to experience fear of crime which seems to be particularly felt by the elderly.
- Interestingly, the interviewees always claimed that crimes are perpetrated by outsiders.
- Youths tend to get the blame for any nuisances and/or crime.
- Although the Gozo crime rate is considered as low, it does not mean that crimes, such as murders, do not occur in Gozo. Examples of killings are the two murders that took place in Marsalforn.
- Drug trafficking and drug abuse appear to be pressing problems in Gozo. In fact used syringes (left by drug-abusers) are frequently found lying around, even in public places.
- Alcoholism may also be a cause for concern.
- There do not seem to be a considerable number of offenders/ex-inmates living in Gozo ... although the notorious offender Totò Riina (the Sicilian mafia boss) actually took residence in Rabat, Gozo, before being apprehended.
- Contraventions, particularly those related to traffic (especially dangerous driving), public peace (mainly neighbours squabbling) and littering, appear to be quite common occurrences.
- Vandalism also abounds. For example, the destruction of street furniture.

- In Gozo, crime victimization is mainly associated with the elderly, however, it is claimed that there exists bullying among schoolchildren of any school age. In addition, there might also be cases of domestic violence (including child abuse).
- The extent of police presence in Gozo leaves much to be desired.
- In Gozo, there is limited use of closed circuit televisions (CCTVs).
- There are no neighbourhood watch schemes in Gozo.
- Gozitans fear reporting to the police and, in the few instances in which they do report, most Gozitans prefer going to the local council first (with the exception of San Lawrenz and Żebbuġ where residents tend to report more to the police rather than to the local council).
- Gozitans seem to know how to protect themselves and their property but would still benefit from awareness campaigns.
- There are still Gozitans with the habits of: leaving the key in the front door; leaving the car key in their open vehicle; and/or disclosing that they would be going abroad on internet (their Facebook wall) – a habit that does not seem to be restricted to Gozo.
- Besides traffic congestion, over-speeding, heavy trucks damaging residences and the roads, pollution and parking problems, clubbing and revelling seem to be the activities that have the greatest negative impact on the safety and security of Gozitans.

## Conclusion

When one takes a cursory look at the findings one can conclude that crime problems are perceived as minimal by the local councils, with the island of Gozo being perceived as relatively crime free and when crime occurs is blamed on outsiders. In Gozo people still leave their keys hanging outside their doors. The major preoccupation was shown vis-à-vis the number of family breakdown and family problems such as teenage pregnancies and single parent families. The problems mentioned were those of drug and alcohol abuse, domestic violence, prostitution and the young as potential trouble makers – morally based crimes, indicating that society feels safe. There is the mention of the elderly feeling unsafe, this being mainly due to the fact that often times the elderly are targeted by criminals. Although there is good co-operation with the police by the local council, a number of councils said that people prefer to report crimes to them rather than go to the police. This was found in both Malta and Gozo. This feeling of *omertà* is typical in the Mediterranean islands, indicating that the Maltese islands are still a closed knit society where the neighbours are more to be trusted than outsiders.



## CHAPTER FOUR (PART B)

# Operational Aspects I - NUTS Perspectives - Sicily

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### **Introduction**

Historically, the region of Sicily has been divided into 9 provinces: Agrigento, Caltanissetta, Catania, Enna, Messina, Palermo, Ragusa, Siracusa and Trapani; each one of the surrounding provinces has its proper administrative and governmental autonomy (in the process of a reform in the administrative reorganisation of the same).

The distribution of residents shows a great concentration in the metropolitan provinces of Palermo, Catania, Messina and in the coastal areas in general, while areas in the hinterland, typically mountainous and/or hilly, have a low demographic density and huge numbers of elderly people.

The economy is still sustained by agriculture (traditional sector strongly in crisis) and by the tertiary level, progressing strongly for the past twenty years. The development of the industrial and entrepreneurial sector is weak, concentrated for the most part in Catania, Syracuse (Priolo), Palermo (Termini Imerese) and Gela provinces. All the coastal territory, even if in a diversified manner, contributes especially to the development of the tourism sector (this sector is well established around Taormina).

The economic crisis can be felt all over the regional territory, although some provinces have felt it less, like the province of Ragusa which represents an oasis for living conditions (level of unemployment extremely contained and an income pro-capita amongst the highest in Sicily) while the poorest area, lacking many commodities, is that between Agrigento, Caltanissetta and Enna.

In the past years, the Sicilian population has experienced a slight drop due to a strong migration abroad, above all amongst youths and due also to the reduction of family nuclei.

The demographic decrease is partly counterbalanced by a foreign presence in the territory, coming from East European countries and Mediterranean Africa, which is concentrated in specific areas: the cities of Palermo, Catania, Messina, the area around Mazara Del Vallo in the province of Trapani (where these workers are used in the fishing industry) and the province of Ragusa, particularly Vittoria.

The majority of the male population is involved in the primary sector, while most women are employed in the caring services sector. Many immigrants live in desolate areas, abandoned by Italian residents. These immigrants cannot rely on a solid assistance network and thus remain outside the perimeter of legality. Even the actual legislation on immigration and the rights of citizenship is not able to effectively spread the culture of integration and acceptance. The high level of unemployment, which particularly concerns a socio-economic sector that already lacks certain structures and productivity, mostly affects females and youths. Unemployment also concerns those with high levels of education, who are finding it difficult to find a place in the local market. Statistics, moreover, are indicatively erroneous due to high levels of the hidden economy which in certain areas, such as Agrigento, tends to reach even the fifty per cent level.

Another problem emergent from accidents at worksites, seems to be continuously on the rise. This indicates an increased disinterest in the workers' health and safety, domains that tend to be considered superficially.

Institution representatives and the general public seem to agree that social emargination coincides with a poor social status; the bad environment is strongly linked to a poor socio-cultural status: precarious work, diffused unemployment and illegalities. All these factors trigger criminality.

The most vulnerable are youngsters, particularly those from broken families, living without any cultural stimuli: a forgotten category, ready to transform itself into petty theft gangs or violent ones (bullying and vandalism).

Minors are simultaneously perpetrators and victims, as evidenced by crimes of sexual and domestic violence against adolescents and minors. The levels of these crimes are alarming.

Levels of education are mostly low and high levels of truancy are registered, particularly in post-secondary schools. Many students do not conclude their scholastic programme because they prefer to start working and earning their own living. The results brought about by social inclusion programmes introduced by the Region and Educational Institutions have left little impact (delayed projects, disorganisation, absence of a logical and a common aim).

Generally, one can confirm that there is a rise in criminality among minors, as the age of the perpetrators diminishes, especially in the provinces of Messina and Palermo, where high levels of criminality are registered.

This socio-economic crime picture is certainly a sad one, in which criminal organisations, present on the territory under different forms (Cosa Nostra and Stidda) tend to influence economic and productive sectors, thus affecting strongly the local political life, attracting the sympathy of a large part of the population (the link between civil society, mafia, politics and economy has assumed preoccupying levels particularly in certain zones such as near Trapani). Fraud committed against the State and the European

Economic Community is high. Mismanagement of public funds seems to be frequent to the detriment of the common good.

Recently, in zones where mafia control has eased, a strong micro criminality has raised its ugly head. Thefts, hold-ups, drug trafficking and prostitution (especially foreign oriented) are fast on the rise all over the territory, generating high levels of anxiety and fear among the population which, traditionally, finds it hard to see the institutions as a source of justice and protection.

A symbol of the present general impoverishment is the misuse of domestic services (for which a specific office has been set up in Palermo province) and abusive use of mines and quarries (metals) which are resold illegally or the theft of agricultural products in rural areas (many farmers have to go on nocturnal patrols to defend their properties).

On the whole, the Police Force and Social Services cannot adequately protect the territory due to a decrease in public expenditure, thus negatively affecting human and material resources in certain localities and institutions (such as difficult conditions in prisons and courts of justice). Associations and voluntary groups are mushrooming in support of the citizens, particularly where public service is lacking. Even these support groups tend to be isolated and fail to establish themselves in certain cultures.

Undoubtedly, a valid contribution has been given by the funds of the "Pon" security, which has helped to develop, amongst others, video surveillance projects in order to control and maintain legality throughout the territory.

Even the protocols of legality, intended to clearly define the management of public works, are an instrument used often to prevent the mafia from filtering in civil society.

The Sicilian reality is, undoubtedly complex, undergoing a strong marginality, typical of southern peripheral areas, accentuated as well by the fact that Sicily is an island: a context in which, notwithstanding the numerous natural and human resources, the lack of certain infrastructures does not permit Sicilians to reap the opportunities offered by the territory. To make matters worse, the management and preventive measures are often inefficient, if not even inadequate.

### **Province of Trapani**

The province of Trapani, which is situated in the western part of Sicily, covers an area of more than 2,400 km sq. and has a population exceeding 400,000 inhabitants.

The 24 districts of the Trapani province are characterised by a very unhomogenous distribution of the population, with a huge concentration in the big urban centres of Alcamo, Castelvetro, Erice, Marsala, Mazara Del Vallo and Trapani. Many of these urban zones are in the proximity of the coastline, with some scarcely inhabited areas in the hinterland districts.

The territory is mostly made up of hills and plains where over half of the inhabitants



live, but scarcely populated in mountainous areas. The majority of the inhabited centres do not exceed 21,000 inhabitants with a population concentration inferior to the regional average.

The extreme northwest part of Trapani province is made up of communities around the provincial capital (Paceco, Custonaci, Erice, Valderice and Buseto Palizzolo) and can be subdivided into 2 distinct parts: the Commune of Custonaci stands in the higher part and the Northern part of the territory of Erice, Valderice and Buseto Palizzolo, an area strongly linked to activity carried out in one of the biggest marble industries in Sicily; the southern practically characterised by traditional primary activities embracing fully the community of Paceco, the Trapani hinterland and the southern parts of Erice, Valderice and Buseto.

Apart from these two areas, one finds the coastal zone surrounding the capital of the Province: in the southern part one finds the salt industries linked to Trapani, Paceco and Marsala, whilst to the North one finds the coastline dedicated to tourism and bathing, which extends to the beach of San Vito Lo Capo and the old suburb of Castellammare Del Golfo.

The southern part of Trapani province is made up of the coastal city of Mazaro Del Vallo and the urban and commercial agglomerate of Castelvetro.

The Trapani hinterland comprises part of the territory in the Belice valley, which was severely damaged by the earthquake in 1968. Here one finds the communities of Salemi, Calatafimi, Gibellina, Partanna, Poggioreale, Salaparuta and Santa Ninfa.

This area still has visible damage, especially in zones close to the epicentre. There are many abandoned buildings in the countryside and urban centres. There are many newly concrete-based housing zones, developed to replace the temporary lodgings set up post the 1968 earthquake.

The Belice experience represents, in a symbolic way, the failure in rebuilding and reintegrating the territory, undertaken by the State.

Many historic buildings, only partly hit by the earthquake, were totally demolished for "security" reasons. In many cases the use of public funds triggered controversies (many used the funds received to build the second and third home) which brought about the decrease in number of central nuclei of the population. Untraditional urban models were used, thus giving way to excessive spreading out over large areas of the inhabited parts, hindering local entities in the management and maintenance of such a vast urban area. This brought about the phenomenon of using these dwellings for other purposes other than those social uses for which they were destined (such as 6 of the social and civic centres became local administrative offices, with the exception of Salaparuta which social centre was handed over to a Cultural Association). Even the demolition of the barracks, built using huge amounts of asbestos, posed numerous problems to the communities

when it came to destroying such dangerous material due to huge financial costs.

Even the political programmes for economic development proved inadequate. Most of the industrial and commercial areas, which should have been given a boost due to the rise in constructing a new infrastructure, were never developed. The motorway network, which should have linked Mazara Del Vallo to Marsala has not yet been completed. Some smaller centres live in isolated conditions due to an inadequate transport system in some parts.

Even the agricultural sector, partly put aside, has undergone important changes. There has been a slow conversion to the use of specialised machinery in the production of cereals, cultivation of vineyards and olive groves. The upgrading of the Belice territory came about after years of stagnation. This was due to the industrial changes in animal husbandry techniques related to the milk cheese industry thus developing the enogastronomic sector and rural tourism.

The entire provincial territory is at high risk, hydro-geologically and environmentally speaking, due principally to flooding of rivers and destabilisation of the ground and rocky sides. Conditions are often strained through the use of non suitable tools, excessive habitable use of the territory and lack of prevention and maintenance.

The hydro-geological risk also affects the road infrastructure. In fact, many major roads experience collapse of the road surface. In other cases, the carriageways, during the winter months, are covered by mud and debris carried by heavy rainfall.

Although many communities have civil protection officers and operate communal centres (structures intended to coordinate and set up a local civil protection system for emergency purposes) in many localities these prevention plans do not exist and where they do exist, are outdated. Another critical aspect, in terms of safeguarding the environmental heritage, is represented by fires which destroy Trapani territory every year. The causes are numerous: high temperatures, activities by pyromaniacs, leaving rubbish in areas surrounding farming grounds and the scarce supervision or absence of upkeep of burnt areas. In certain cases one tends to suspect that the fires are caused by occupational activities linked to the woodcutting industries or lack of control throughout the territory (in fact a law has been approved in virtue of which it is not possible to build or set up infrastructures for civil use and productive activities for at least 10 years, on the burnt territory. Moreover after this period their use cannot be changed for at least 15 years).

In order to minimise the problem, one cannot think only of structural interventions (although important) for the upgrading and safety of areas at risk but one needs to take action, by means of informative awareness strategies regarding the prevention of dislocation of the ground with the Administrative Councils (who often act in extraordinary emergency cases) and the civilians. It is necessary to set up strategies built on a precise analysis and mapping of the natural and constructed heritage present in areas at risk.

Research of the labour market throughout the provincial territory puts in evidence that most of the population is employed in public administration and there is a clear predominance of the agricultural sector in respect to other economic sectors.

In fact, this amounts to over 40 per cent of the entire entrepreneurial system, assigning a proper record to the province with regards to other areas in Sicily. Many parts of the nearby hills, marginally addressed to the production of cereals are cultivated as vineyards (famous is the production of “zibibbo” and “passito” of Marsala) and olive groves.

Nevertheless one has to underline the fact that the agricultural sector is experiencing a great crisis, caused by low levels of prices at origin, inside a strongly competitive market, which do not make it possible to cover production costs, by an outdated infrastructural system, by lack of vehicles to transform agricultural products (past years through public funds, even through European Union), an inadequate structure to pack and commercialise local products, by the scarce appeal of the primary sector to young people.

These factors influence the decrease of market value. Consequently producers are proceeding to cut down many vineyards, in turn creating an environmental problem. Farmers are enticed to destroy vineyards through development financial measures intended to diminish the productive potential and consent a market balance.

Of particular interest to the Trapanese economy is the fishing sector and the related industries. This involves coastal areas in the capital of the province, especially in the Mazara Del Vallo region. These are small medium activities, family run, with low levels of technological specialisation and vehicles.

If one analyses the entrepreneurial sector in all its components, one can see clearly a major involvement of artisan entities specialised in manufacturing activities and in the construction industry (the so-called artisan production, negatively hit due to the lack of investment in the past years) around Marsala and in the town of Trapani.

The Egadi archipelago facing Trapani harbour and the medieval city of Erice, situated on the promontory, enrich an invaluable environmental heritage made up of numerous protected areas, such as the Natural Reserve of the Zingaro, the Natural Reserve of the river Belice, the area of the Stagnone islands and various other special areas such as the artificial lake Baita, the Lago di Venere at Pantelleria, and the Colombiana and Lanterna maritime islands.

The natural environmental heritage around Trapani indicates a possible economic development from the touristic point of view; a sector that has not yet been fully resourced and tapped.

The economy, in crisis in other sectors, seems always more driven by the positively growing touristic influx, linked to important infrastructures related to air and sea traffic: a well-equipped harbour that is becoming a reference point for cruise liners and the

refurbishment of the military airport of Birgi which has intensified routes towards the big European capitals and the national territory through agreements with low cost airline companies.

In the past years a plurality of activities linked to the hospitality sector have been developed: tourist accommodation, hotels, private dwellings, campsites, tourist villages, holiday houses and agritourism. Moreover, one can find hundreds of restaurants spread out between the coastal localities and the hinterland, as well as some reception/banqueting halls around Marsala, Trapani and Castellammare del Golfo.

Tourism is a sector which is in continuous development, although the services are still far from reaching national and regional standards. Statistics of tourist presence depict very short stays which do not exceed 2 or 3 days, which indicates a very local and strongly seasonal tourism situation.

Notwithstanding an adequate road, sea and air network, the territory is characterised by big loopholes in the local road network (scarce maintenance and bad roads) and the railroad reaching Trapani and the communes in the district is absolutely inadequate, due to lack of railway lines maintenance. Even public transport is insufficient vis-à-vis the exigencies of the community.

Among various proposals put forward to solve the problem of connections between the smallest centres and those more urbanised, one suggests the transformation of the traditional railway system into the underground railway system.

As regards the labour market, one can see a negative trend in the fully employed, determined above all by the decrease in the construction and services sectors. This has concerned both genders; although one has to point out that the province has one of the lowest rates of female unemployment.

The labour market is not that flexible and favours precarious work. Indefinite contracts have diminished, giving way to irregular contracts. One can notice much irregular work and illegal work conditions (particularly in the construction and agricultural sectors). Discrepancies also exist between the exigencies of the labour market and the actual workforce due to lack of formative structures (this has given way to a strong nucleus of a non specialised workforce) and a socio cultural system oriented towards highly qualified professionals in sectors which have little impact on local economy.

That is why, by time, one has seen an increase in small companies linked to traditional artisan activities (shoemakers, carpenters, tailors) and employment of foreign workers in activities related to the primary sector (a phenomenon which involves indiscriminately both small centres and the more urbanised ones).

Such critical situations push a growing number of workers, mainly young graduates, to move to the North and abroad, in search of a new occupation and better living conditions.

The crisis has deeply influenced family budgets which have an income pro capita which

is amongst the lowest in the peninsula, consequently reducing consumption expenditure. The drastic fall of internal consumption has been partly counter balanced by commercial exchanges abroad thanks to renewed marketing policies and territorial development.

From the social point of view, there are two elements that characterise the provincial panorama; the progressive ageing of the population (with an index of elderly people higher than the regional one) in line with national standards and a decrease in birth rate thus diminishing family nuclei.

The Province is registering a slight demographic increase partly due to an increase in immigrants, consistently present in Pantelleria and the commune of Mazara Del Vallo.

The highest number of foreigners comes from Romania, followed by North African countries. There is also a large Chinese community which has invested in commercial activities and restaurateurs throughout the territory.

According to research in the area, the percentage of minors is very much inferior to the number of elderly people and there are high levels of school truancy (considering that successful completion of compulsory education is under 20 per cent, even the percentage of graduates is inferior to the regional average). Taking this into consideration, access to public schools (which work hand in hand with the territory) is absolutely indispensable. However, whilst the presence of compulsory education is assured in all communities, the situation regarding higher educational institutions is different because they are present only in bigger urban centres.

This involves particularly students on the smaller islands, forced to continuous travelling, often affected by climatic conditions that, especially in winter, bring the means of transport to a halt.

In terms of social assistance policies, although along the years a plurality of policies has been promoted towards different social groups even in liaison with private entities, infrastructures regarding the disabled, migrants and centres for the prevention of violence inflicted on women are lacking. A real mapping of the territorial needs does not exist as regards social emergencies in areas where assistance centres, semi residential and day care are lacking.

Moreover, lodging facilities in the community for minors are also lacking, especially in the districts of Castelvetro and Mazara. The inadequacies also regard the semi residential and day care centres.

The restructuring in the health sector, determined by exigencies of rationalisation of public resources, has moreover contributed to lack of resources in the hinterland and smaller centres, which population is often forced to move travel in order to make use of specialised services. There is no coordination between administrators and workers, thus failing to provide a high level personalised assistance.

Levels of security in the province of Trapani are quite close to the regional average, but

this is highly influenced by the characteristics of local organised crime, which is totally apart from the economic and political network thus making it difficult for the authorities to suppress and even influence the level of security perceived by the inhabitants.

The ability to exercise a decisive control of the territory and the economic entrepreneurial vocation make up the strength of this organisation, capable of largely influencing the social, economic and institutional reality, so much so that it was deemed necessary to set up a specialised working group against crimes related to economic criminality.

Mafia gangs, headed by Castelvetro boss Messina Danaro, are mostly engaged in money laundering of sums of money derived from drug trafficking, which is in turn subsequently invested in illegal front operating through legal activities run by persons who operate in different sections of the economic system.

This has been proven by certain activities of mafia gangs in the assignment of public tenders linked to construction and health. Numerous economic crimes are also connected to false contracts and fraud.

Particular interest was shown by criminal organisations in power plants for the production of alternative energy, which, as is known, benefit from certain forms of subsidised public financing. In fact, many wind farms on the territory are under investigation by judicial authorities.

Therefore the attempt by criminal organisations to reach business agreements with public service employees through corruption and blackmail (one remembers that many local administrators have been under investigations to make certain of practices of clientelism).

Proof of this are the various court proceedings concluded in the past years for favouring mafia gangs, which in a short period of time brought down the local, councils of Salemi and Campobello Mazara due to mafia infiltration.

Even extortion rackets are deeply rooted in the province, whereby money is paid either to secure certain services or for protection. Today it is one of the principal activities of criminal organisations of this province which avail themselves of blackmailing businessmen, thus assuming control and management of the entrepreneurial sector.

This criminal phenomenon can be seen also in the recycling of waste products and in the management of abusive landfills (which often involve the various quarries spread all over the territory).

From the environmental point of view, although many court proceedings are underway against local administrators for assumed irregularities in the management of public landfills, one has to state that this phenomenon is strengthened by inappropriate behaviour of private entities (individuals but also businessmen who work in the marble and construction sectors) who have transformed some areas in abusive spaces to recycle waste products.

The strategy chosen by local gangs, after years of mafia attacks (which have strongly upset public opinion and brought about the militarisation of many areas) is that of keeping a low profile, based on intimidatory ways other than armaments (so to say more “soft”), such as incendiary attacks; a strategy which helps to escape the attention of the police force and which is firmly rooted in the territory, transforming itself in total silence (there is in fact a minimum number of reports regarding intimidatory acts, so it is evident that there exist large numbers of unreported cases).

The presence of mafia organisations on local territory is due to the failure of state politics carried out in the past years by the central government. The mafia has used this to the full in order to gain power and enrich itself resulting from the problems and aspirations of an area characterised by an ever spreading social discomfort.

The actual precarious economic situation, the difficulty of credit access by banks, have moreover aggravated the phenomenon of usury, intrinsically tied to gaming and betting environments, both legal or illegal, which are establishing themselves even in small communities.

Usury is still quite a hidden reality, not easily reported in Trapani province and which has apparently developed without the involvement of mafia organisations. This phenomenon strikes above all businessmen and small medium business entities.

In an attempt to minimise the problem, some Administrations resorted to the promotion of campaigns and exhibitions so as to raise awareness for support of subjects at risk. A dedicated phone service has been set up to receive reports regarding these crimes.

The unlimited struggle by Public Security Forces has tried, on one side, to capture the wanted criminals and on the other side to weaken criminal organisations, by means of investigations directed to combat the principal criminal activities by mafia clans. Moreover, the presence of a Carabinieri or Municipal Police section is guaranteed in all communes. These investigations also target the confiscation of illicit properties and their reutilisation for social purposes, by which the State affirms its strength on the territory.

The mafia knows the cultural value of the confiscation of properties, so much so that there is a certain stepping back from intimidation (often social cooperatives) which is entrusted with the management of this heritage; contemporarily there is an attempt to regain the confiscated properties, part of which put up for auction after reacquiring them.

Moreover a micro criminality specialised in crimes against public administration and heritage is present in the territory.

In order to ensure adequate security levels to the population (even considering the reduction of certain workgroups), one has tried to rationalise the presence of the Police Force on the territory by means of road blocks and prevention services.

Thanks to European contributions, most of the bigger Communes, have adopted video

surveillance apparatus placed in areas at major risk.

An important instrument in controlling mafia infiltration is constituted by the activation of legality protocols that is voluntary agreements to carry out specific conditions between local entities, police stations and private entities which have obtained tenders for public works or management of services.

It is of the utmost importance to lay out intervention plans among different entities and administrations along with the Police Force, both in the prevention of forms of social emargination and suppression of illicit behaviour.

As regards environmental crimes, reports regarding violations and abuse in the construction sector have increased (especially in coastal zones); such behaviour is often rendered more acute through the allowance of subsidies and exemptions during construction of buildings. One can note that reports are directed solely towards land owners; one way to seriously hinder this phenomenon could be in addition to the land owners, to focus on the targetting of building developers.

The major problems related to the numerous abusive buildings, are to be found in coastal areas. Such buildings, often acquired by communal entities, should be demolished. Only the Commune of Marsala, following the adoption of some twenty ordinances to clear the occupancy of abusive property, has activated the procedure through the setting up the necessary acts to gain tenders for the removal of furnishings and demolition works.

This has been many times monitored by the provincial Authority of public order and security as this implies social and public order matters. If the presence of abusive dwellings truly leaves a huge impact on the habitat of the territory with disastrous effects on the ecosystem, one cannot deny on the other hand, that the demolition of these properties is often accompanied by the violent protests of the owners who do not readily accept the decisions of the judicial authorities.

As regards immigration, there seems to be a slowdown after the present norms have been modified. These were considered incompatible with European Union legislations. The law envisaged originally a detention period for irregular immigrant who ignored the expulsion order without justified reasons. The modifications to the legislation introduced a financial payment as punishment.

The problem regarding management of migrants' arrivals remains, particularly clandestine arrivals along the coasts of Pantelleria and Trapani, especially during the summer months.

Although there was a slowdown thanks to international interventions and agreements with the countries of origin for the control of coastal areas, the situation is still critical.

Firstly, security forces specialised in immigrants' arrivals do not exist which means that these have to be deployed from elsewhere in the territory.

Secondly, the strategy of criminal clans in immigrants trafficking has undergone



profound changes, instead of using big boats suitable for hundreds of people, easily intercepted, there is a clear preference to modestly sized boats harder to intercept, without counting arrivals via land.

Another critical aspect is the procedure for the expulsion and repatriation of migrants; if on one side there is an excessive bureaucracy which delays the procedure, on the other hand even the means of repatriation are difficult to apply due to scarce financial resources (which means that the immigrant remains in detention centres or let free till proceedings are finalised). There is the problem of intercultural dialogue, the centres (two in the territory) are often transformed in true and proper segregation structures where continuous protests and evasions take place. Adequate communication programmes do not exist except for a few single associations and initiatives for migrants to be employed in the labour market thus passing whole days in total inertia.

The presence of an elevated number of non-European union citizens in the province has had, in certain circumstances, repercussions on public order and safety with reference to types of crimes such as drug trafficking, theft and domestic violence. Moreover this foreign working force is often subject to exploitation and illicit activities (cd. Caporalato)

Up till now no emergencies regarding racial intolerance behaviour have been recorded, although one cannot speak of a true and proper integration; in this sense the most representative city is Mazara Del Vallo, where the presence of Tunisian citizens established mainly in the fishing sector, is strong.

Among initiatives adopted, at provincial level, as regards road safety and drug abuse, there is the project "Safe Entertainment" which has seen the involvement of the Municipal Police, Traffic Police, Carabinieri, Guardia di Finanza and health institutions to control the territory as regards suppression and prevention of accidents due to alcohol or drug consumption. These initiatives are carried out by an Interforce group joined by medical personnel from the local Health Assistance section present on the spot; initiatives regarding prevention and awareness are promoted by educational institutions. In reality, the analysis of socio assistance services shows a certain inadequacy in contrasting the phenomenon felt as a true and proper plague difficult to break down at local level.

Around Trapani, there are different prison structures both for adults and minors, which are in a difficult situation due to overpopulation.

Considering this dramatic increase in prison population, the major problems regard the difficulty, in respect to limited financial resources and personnel, of having to predispose the most appropriate and suitable measures so as to guarantee to all detainees these services of a socio cultural and psychological nature; in this sense the opening of an outside executive office to motivate the use of alternative detention measures.

To this regard regarding the Pact of Security for Trapani province, a convention together with Erice, has been set up in order to activate a video surveillance system in public areas

surrounding the correctional facility of Trapani, with the objective of recuperating Police prison wardens, employed in services of external vigilance.

The absence of norms, the fragmentation of social network, the desegregation of family nuclei instigated violent episodes against weaker subjects (minors and women) which seems to involve not only family groups but also public employees assigned to vigilance and prevention duties (between June 2011 and June 2012 there were around 50 court proceedings for sexual violence, pedophilia and some thirty others for stalking).

The number of cases of child violence denounced to the Judicial Authority represents only a small part of abuses committed against children and refers to those episodes, so evident, that they cannot be tolerated or misunderstood. Many reports are put forward by employees, who, due to their functions, cannot set aside their precise legal obligations.

It seems evident, then, that the socio territorial context of the Province is quite problematic. There is a growing discomfort among citizens who live in a precarious situation, not only financially, but also socially. The exodus phenomenon from Communes in the hinterland, the work crisis, the logics of nepotism which regulate the labour market, the sense of helplessness are linked to a certain acceptance of the impossibility to change. A number of problems intersect each other thus involving choices done by the institutions during the last years. There is a sense of profound mistrust against a state which is not succeeding in guaranteeing sufficient security and is not able to offer alternatives for adequate development.

In short, there are key characteristics to all the territory in question:

- A huge historical, artistic and environmental heritage
- A diffused sense of associations
- Strong presence of gastronomic and folkloristic traditions
- Outdating of the economy system in the territory (an enormous diffusion of the public sector and a scarce entrepreneurial capacity)
- Priority of agricultural sector vis-à-vis other entrepreneurial sectors
- Infrastructure inefficient to cater for touristic development of higher levels
- Presence of mafia criminal organisations linked to the political class and social entities
- Micro criminality dedicated to theft and crimes against heritage partly due to difficult economic conditions
- Scarce ventures of communication and integration among various levels of public administration and private associations regarding security, prevention and social politics
- Quite poor cultural ventures
- High levels of school truancy
- Exodus phenomena involving communes in the hinterland which are experiencing a huge stagnation of economical activities
- Undersizing security forces

**Proposed Solutions:**

- Better mobility by constructing a functional railway system and transforming railway lines into underground rail lines
- Re-qualification of hinterland, enhancement of, local resources and incentives for eco-gastronomic tourism
- Bigger industries for the manufacture of fish products and empowerment of entities set up to transform and commercialise agricultural products
- Creation of inter institutional groups to face the phenomenon of social discomfort
- Initiatives for the promotion of culture, awareness and diffusion of legality that involves local citizens
- Increase of social expenditure to reinforce the Security personnel, invest in territory control and crime prevention.

**Communities in Belice Valley**

Gibellina, Calatafimi, Segesta, Campobello di Mazara, Castelvetro, Salinunte, Partanna, Poggioreale, Salemi, Salaparuta, Santa Ninfa, Vito.

**Gibellina**

The commune of Gibellina constitutes one of the centres nearest to the epicentre of the earthquake of 1968, was totally destroyed and rebuilt on plain territory belonging to Santa Ninfa and near to the principal transport links (the motorway Palermo/Mazara del Vallo and the railway track)

The local administration, then intent to make the Commune the symbol of cultural and social rebirth of Belice Valley, invited architects of national and international fame to participate in the reconstruction. Gibellina has become the experimental laboratory of contemporary art.

The urban map, seen from above, resembles a butterfly; in the centre “spread out” we find public services around which there are private dwellings, for the most part, small villas in rows, with 2 floors, a garage and a small garden.

All the neighbourhoods, surrounded by main and /or secondary roads with a clear distinction between pedestrian and trafficked roads lead to squares and green spaces which should have served as a meeting place for inhabitants; parallel to the railroad are the popular government dwellings and artisan areas.

The reconstruction was long and subject to numerous modifications. When the urban part was being constructed one noticed spaces totally void of dwellings and the projection of a system of squares was predisposed. This should have unified the two parts which remained isolated.

Notwithstanding, Gibellina, unique in the Italian panorama, both from the urbanist

point of view and from its singular history that has rendered it an open air museum, has a number of problems common as well to other towns in Belice Valley.

The social network, of rural origin, found it difficult to integrate in the new modern surroundings. Many works are still incomplete, others, recently constructed, show evident signs of degrading (the Chiesa Madre) built in the highest part of the city has already been restored), others are still inadequate for the social purposes for which they were constructed.

The urban space is not enough, some public buildings have been refurbished for new uses, the artisan and construction entities which were fruitful in the reconstruction years, hit by recession, have seen their activity reduced drastically.

A number of projects for the completion of some works are under way (such as social centre and covered market) but also maintenance and re-qualification of popular dwellings.

The Commune, although favourably situated geopolitically and notwithstanding the presence of the Civic Museum of Modern Art and numerous works of art along the roads, is only partly appealing to tourists (niche of cultural tourism), is excluded from the renowned tourist circuits which favour well known destinations and an easily appreciated architectural heritage, such as Erice and Marsala. The absence of this tourist route is due to a series of problems such as absence of hotels and similar structures adequate for a larger capacity of people.

The cultural part is enriched by associations operating in the territory. One well known is the Orestaidi Foundation, located in an old farmhouse, damaged and reconstructed by the Commune, today home to cultural and university institutions.

Since quite a number of years, the Foundation promotes the image of Gibellina in the world by means of musical and theatrical shows (held often at the "Cretto", a monumental building built on the ruins of the old centre).

The Commune has a primary school and a secondary school of fashion. Sport facilities are adequate (7-a-side football grounds, boules, tennis, football and pool) while health centres are non-existent so inhabitants have to go to the polyclinic of Salemi or hospitals of Castelvetro and Mazara Del Vallo.

The economy is still based on agriculture. In fact, there are important manufacturing plants for the production of wine and olive oil products, but there are also small cattle raising industries producing milk and cheese products. The opening of street markets tried to boost the local economy.

The town has a slightly demographic density in relation to other similar communes, even if far from the provincial average. During the last 10 years the population was on the decrease due to family size and migration towards Northern cities.

Social degradation is present in the outskirts (while in the old historic centre many examples of environmental degradation). The main problems are unemployment, illegal

work and the low levels of education.

The Commune is considered quite safe. The zones subject to criminality are on the outskirts and the most common crimes are theft and drug trafficking even if this crime has little effect as the provision of drugs incoming from other communes.

Reported crimes are low in number (under 40 per cent). Crimes are mostly committed by subjects with a low standard of education who live in violent surroundings or by immigrants. The victims are elderly women with, low standards of education.

For the future, video surveillance measures have been laid out to raise security levels in the territory (particularly in the city centre), although public and political representatives of the Commune think that the major involvement of every citizen and the national Government is necessary to fight criminality. Drug dependency and unemployment problems are too big to be handled at local level.

### **Calatafimi - Segesta**

Situated on a hill, the territory of Calatafimi – Segesta has a historic centre only partially damaged by the earthquake of 1968. Many of the inhabitants live here and one can find also all business activities and main public services.

To the west, in the Sasi zone, there are both residential social housing and industrial ones, built later, distant about 3 kilometres from the central residential area and is next to the industrial area of Alcamo.

The road network leading to bigger towns and the provincial capital is quite satisfactory, thanks to the nearby motorway exit; more difficult is the mobility towards the hinterland of Salemi due to frequent rainfall during winter, the provincial roads are often hit by landslides.

Being an agricultural area (vineyards and olive groves surround the hill of (Calatfimi) a sector undergoing a period of crisis forced many farmers to abandon their fields.

Even the construction sector, which has had a strong impact in the eighties due to public finances for the reconstruction of the town, is undergoing a stagnation phase.

Notwithstanding the presence of the ancient archaeological park of Segesta, which, in its open theatre hosts dramatic spectacles renowned all over the world and which, during summer, is a destination form highly cultural tourism, is only, minimally affected by this flow of tourists.

Calatafimi has also a strong folkloristic tradition linked to the religious devotion towards the Crucified Christ, but notwithstanding the presence of numerous cultural and environmental resources, the territory has not fully developed the tourism industry due to various reasons: quality of the services offered is poor, the lack of adequate hotels and tourist accommodation and the inefficacy of marketing policies in practice.

Ten years ago, the setting up of a mystic park was projected comprising territory which

goes from Kaggera to the provincial; road, and which should have promoted religious tourism.

First the catastrophic earthquake, then the recession, have brought about an increase in migration in the following years. So much so that many houses result uninhabited and in a derelict state.

Particularly in the area which goes from Via Tenente Li Bassi to Via Elia, a number of buildings were acquired by the administration, after they were abandoned by owners, who preferred to utilise the finances obtained to rebuild in farther areas.

The population, mostly elderly people of medium to low socio cultural standards, is made up of farmers, pensioners and public service employees, social discomfort is due to unemployment and illegal economy.

The Commune offers scholastic services (kindergarten and secondary schools, situated on the outskirts and some technical institutes *c/da Sasi*) frequented mainly by students coming from lower social strata. However, there was a drastic reduction of classes and consequently, youths wishing to continue their studies, were obliged to attend institutions near Trapani, Castellammare del Golfo and Alcamo.

Extra scholastic services are scarce, although the Commune had in mind the setting up of a sports structure in *C/da Sasi*.

The popular zone appears like an anonymous agglomerate, widely spread out, lacking meeting points (except for a parish church inside the previous scholastic gymnasium), basic services are inexistent, such as pharmacies and post offices. Residents have to go to the old part of town for their daily needs.

In this part of the region, maintenance and refurbishment of public buildings has begun and for the future one hopes to complete primary and secondary urban necessities where small artisan entities will find their place.

Degradation can also be seen in agricultural zones, some of which have been changed into abusive landfills (showing lack of civic education by citizen

Security standards by the authorities render the territory quite safe, although there is a certain reiteration by inhabitants to file reports.

Drug trafficking and theft are minimal, but delinquency is clearly related to unemployment, especially among youths and lower classes.

Victims are, for the most part, elderly women living on the outskirts, on the border with agricultural grounds, thus isolated.

Territory control is secured by road blocks and patrols in zones at risk or major traffic roads (Via A. De Gasperi). The Commune is preparing the installation of video surveillance to increase levels of security.

An opinion shared by many is that the fight against criminality is not carried out only by the Police Force but also and above all in conjunction with legal sectors, typical of a poor cultural mentality and identity.

In this sense, associations such as “Libera” are determined at regional level to spread the culture of legality and free the territory from the mafia, by means of organisations of events, shows and activities that make the citizens feel they are part of a larger community.

### **Campobello di Mazara**

The Commune of Campobello di Mazara, with about ten thousand inhabitants, has a town centre, surrounded by a wide rural area, as well as by residential areas extending to the coastal villages of Torretta Granitola and Tre Fontane.

The original centre developed around an ancient castle (successively transformed into a noble palace). It was made up of two long built up rows adjacent to the actual Via Garibaldi and Viale Risorgimento (areas with little business activities and part of public services), around which recently built up residences can be seen.

Dwellings, in which most of the population resides, are found in rows on the road borders, residences mainly for one family with two or maximum three floors.

The recent urbanist development has marginalised the old nucleus which has investments historical and architectural evidences (the Palazzo Ducale and the Church) a comprehensive scholastic institute, communal and banking services. In order to render the area more central, a museum of farm history has been set up; in an ancient noble palace.

Major maintenance and restoration works have been carried out, first in Via delle Rose to repair the water system and secondly in the communal palace.

The regulatory plan of the Commune to rationalise spaces, envisages the reallocation of productive activities which are still in the town centre to two new areas: the first one at the entrance to the Northeastern part of the city (between Via Vittorio Emanuele and the east ring road) for agricultural activities: the second one near the railway station to the west of the city for productive artisan and industrial activities, with annexed areas for expositions and business activities.

The plan also envisages investments for the expansion of popular dwellings in the zone Erbe Bianche, where other similar dwellings already exist.

The suburb of Torretta Granitola is a small seaside town dating to the first half of 1800, seat to a disused ancient tuna industry and to a still functioning lighthouse, few kilometres away from Campobello centre; the suburb has now become an enviable holiday location among residents of the neighbourhood communes due to its tranquillity.

In this area there is a socio assistance centre for the disabled, some bars and restaurants, not far away a residential tourist village; there is a lack of public spaces and an adequate road system.

A plan has been set up for this zone in order to refurbish the town by restoring quality to some buildings (in particular most external parts) viability standards and the necessary means for better living conditions.

Tre Fontane can be considered as a beach village: a sandy coast surrounded by a vast number of agglomerates, mostly abusive, which during the summer season sees a population of 70,000 inhabitants. Besides the absence of public structures, many urban areas are still incomplete and for which a building re-qualification has been activated. The zone has many seaside establishments mostly in the central area. At the extreme end of the territory, sailing activities and aquatic sports have developed (a waterpark has been built in the eastern part) bordering with the suburb of Triscina.

Campobello hosts an archaeological site of particular value nearly ten kilometres to the West. It is the zone of the so called Quarries of Cusa from which, in the past, building material was extracted. The site has been restored and is used on and off for events and spectacles.

Since Campobello is situated near Castelvetrano, the link between the two inhabited centres is particularly strong. This favours the citizens of Campobello for their daily use of services, offered in the bigger centre (note that in the border zone there are areas to be expanded hence two inhabited areas); and also for the common interests related to infrastructure (link of coastal suburbs), environmental protection and for common economic interests in tourism and agri-elementary field considering that the Commune remains a big agricultural centre, dedicated for the cultivation of olive trees and vines, characterised as well, by flourishing artisan activities.

The economic crisis, the very low income obtained from the manufacture of agricultural products, have determined in the last 20 years, the total abandonment of the agricultural entrepreneurship by young people. These look for a permanent job to guarantee good living conditions. For this reason, agricultural activity has now been entrusted to a few entrepreneurs from Campobello. These employ seasonal workforce mainly immigrants.

The migration of families has brought about a high decrease in school population. This is partly balanced by the consistent number of foreign students, coming from Tunisia and Morocco, others of the second and third generation whose families have lived in the surroundings for many years.

The large influx of immigrants in Campobello is a phenomenon which has greatly influenced society. On one hand, it substituted young Italian manpower, and in doing so, kept alive the agricultural tradition which continues under the direction of small local entrepreneurs. On the other hand, there is a process of social integration which is far from being complete (numerous are the limited situations especially in the period of major need, such as the harvest, during which entire zones close to the town border are occupied by abusive tent villages where these agricultural work hands live, in these periods there is an increase in robberies and damages to buildings in seaside establishments and others).

Notwithstanding economic difficulties and an austerity period, betting points and halls equipped for online gaming are on the rise.



The economic situation of the residents is very uneven, although it is possible to confirm that the social class most representative of the territory is medium to low standard, mainly employees and pensioners, employees in the public and private tertiary sector, small entrepreneurs and workers in the construction and agricultural sector, illegal work concerns mainly the agricultural workforce.

Quite a consistent number of families live on the social borderline, with financial problems and extreme cultural degradation. Most of the nuclei are found in zone Erbe Bianche, a recently constructed area, lacking every type of commodity, which is found on the border of the provincial road connecting Campobello di Mazara to the seaside locality of Tre Fontane.

There is a high environmental, cultural and social risk, both from the emargination point of view and school truancy, and from legality and macro-criminality.

Police Forces intervene often in popular zones (Erbe Bianche) which have tried to eradicate the mafia, drug trafficking and illicit activities, amongst which the abusive collection of waste products (iron and copper)

The history of Campobello is intrinsically linked to the mafia; the territory is retained by judicial authorities as one of the strongholds of boss Matteo Messina Denaro with links to well known local representatives and public administrators. For this reason the Commune has been under surveillance for the past 20 years as mafia infiltrated into the local council. Many investigations led to the confiscation of entities and goods deriving from illicit activities.

The recent arrest of the mayor and consequently the release of all political authority of the council not only left the population without a political guide and a period of impasse, but has directly or, indirectly left the political class of the town and residents feeling abandoned and suspicious of the political and judicial institutions in general.

Mafia families practically control all the territory, therefore micro-criminality is almost inexistent except for petty thefts from residences in the seaside suburb of Tre Fontane and the border zones during the winter months; drug trafficking and illegal work.

Although the inhabitants are aware of the lack of security in their territory, these seem to have learnt to live with this phenomenon as there is a low percentage rate of reported crimes to the authorities.

The smallest crimes are committed by poor migrants, living in emarginalised zones. Victims are the elderly, mainly women, and persons with low standards of education. As regard activities, the most vulnerable are businesses and restaurants. When analysing crimes, it is evident that offenders recur to zones far away from the inhabited areas (plausibly because in the historic centre there is video surveillance to prevent delinquency).

The authorities insist on the importance of a major involvement of the population to limit criminal activities and on the need to treat, with a sense of collegiality, social

problems such as unemployment, illicit work which dimension is today too big to be handled on a communal level.

### **Castelvetrano- Selinunte**

The commune of Castelvetrano has a population of around 30,000 inhabitants. It is situated on a plain, rich in vegetation, at the south western tip of the province. Castelvetrano represents the principal economic centre in the Belice hinterland.

The town is reached by the motorway and numerous access roads to provincial highways that provide a fast link between the town and the nearest provinces of Agrigento and Palermo. The town has a railway station which has always served as an important link in the Belice valley and western Sicily, but today it is not used. The garages, the sheds, the stores and other large and small buildings destined for various uses have been not used for years and are almost derelict.

The local council, which always deemed it necessary to link the old town centre to the new development area towards the motorway, agreed upon a plan for urban regarding enhancement so that the area may become a point where the old town and the developing one meet.

This project should also refurbish the railway road of Marinella di Selinunte (Archaeological Park), the entrance to the Belice Valley, thus promoting the area to tourism.

If the principal economy activity is still represented by the agricultural sector, due to olive tree and vine cultivations, this sector is feeling the economic crisis together with the social problem of youths abandoning the agricultural industry.

Its proximity to the motorway exit A29 in zone Stratatto, has rendered this Commune a strategic commercial point for all the provincial area. In the past ten years an important business and artisan area has developed (although in reality not all planned infrastructures ave been completed), characterised by entities which operate in the clothing and food industries (to underline a vast presence of the Chinese community in these sectors).

Instead of the historical, traditional business activities, there is the opening of many betting companies and “buy gold”. These show a social discomfort due to new work opportunities.

Opposite to the commercial area, there is a popular housing estate (Belvedere zone). It is in fact, a road extending from Via Campobello to the Northeast.

The pre-urban and part of urban centre are characterised by recently constructed dwellings, mainly for one family with a maximum of two or three floors.

The historic centre was subject to refurbishment in order to increase sustainability of road traffic as well as to enhance the local historical heritage. This refurbishment involved the system of squares (three squares adjacent to each other form the historic centre), point of reference and meeting place for residents.

New car parks have been set up in the town centre. Works for the completion of restoration of buildings belonging to the community are underway in Via Quattro Novembre, to be used as a centre for the prevention of social emargination, in order to promote a better standard of living. The refurbishment of the ex Convent San Francesco di Paola in Escriva' Square, which will become a multi functional cultural centre for communications, a museum, a library, an IT hall, classrooms, laboratories, congress centre and offices.

To the north of the town centre, there is a private residential area, inhabited by middle class people employed in the tertiary sector.

At Castelvetro, one can find indispensable services offered as well to other communes on the border: post offices, various shops (many of the more prestigious activities are found in the most ancient part of town), banks, public gardens, a theatre, a public library, a hospital and a detention centre.

Some parish churches, spread out around the town, are a strong point of reference to children, adolescents and young people; another precious resource are the numerous gymnasiums, sports and cultural associations, AIAS, Caritas, classical and modern dance schools which interact in the formative years with the school present in all the territory, by offering obligatory educational services and higher institutes (reference point for border communes in the hinterland)

Castelvetro has two suburbs: Marinella di Selinunte with one of the largest archaeological parks in Italy and numerous accommodation units and restaurants; Triscina is known for its seaside beach resort.

These two suburbs are very distinct in structure: the habitat of Selinunte began at the end of 1800 and from a seaside suburb it became a seaside touristic locality (restaurants and small boutiques in the main road, while hotels and residences are found in the surrounding areas), with in contaminated beaches, a clear sea which only marginally experienced the phenomenon of abuse, since strict urbanist rules have been adopted from the beginning (around the archaeological park only one public building – a summer residence for children); Triscina, however, does not have an organised urban setting as there are mainly abusive buildings which have only been partly legalised through exemptions (around 5000 houses of which 800 are illegal), one family houses with one or maximum two floors, modestly built; the few commercial activities are found in the main road and are of a seasonal nature.

The Castelvetro social status is quite heterogeneous: in some zones there are economic and social problems (low income, precarious work, unemployment) which are evident in popular areas built in the Seventies at Belvedere and Rione Amari, where family problems tend to influence strongly the scholastic formative years of children (area registers high levels of truancy).

The residents voluntarily organised a zone committee to try to offer useful solutions to resolve the most urgent problems. This zone is known to the authorities for the high level of criminality, particularly drug trafficking.

The Belvedere has attracted various public investments for the rehabilitation of the area which should lead to the construction of a social multifunctional centre and to the refurbishment of some popular housing estates; by means of a zone contract, co-financed by the State, the Region, and entity for the management of popular housing and the Commune.

Moreover, the area has been declared a tax free urban zone (that is tax subsidies to facilitate the setting up of small medium artisan activities), in the hope that the presence of commercial activities would guarantee a better surveillance and an increase in the security standards.

Castelvetrano problems are closely interconnected to the mafia and vicissitudes of mafia boss Denaro, considered by the Authorities the most influent existing mafia boss.

Investigations have established strong infiltrations in the economic and political sectors (frequent is the confiscation of goods of local entrepreneurs to which the mafia reacts by burning down structures) and a general co-habitation with organised crime so much so that local entities promote awareness towards the culture of legality amongst youths,

In their effort to contain the mafia phenomenon, the institutions carry out a capillary control of the territory so that it seems safe for the community. In reality, the presence of the police forces seems weak, especially with micro-criminality which is afflicting the town and its surroundings (hold ups, theft, damage to public and private entities) even the video surveillance system often is out of use due to lack of maintenance.

One has to point out that the seaside suburbs of Selinunte and Triscina, which benefit from a seasonal tourism, particularly in summer, are almost totally deserted in winter therefore constitutes targets for numerous thefts and other offences.

In order to satisfy the growing demand by citizens for more urban security, especially in the evening during some weekdays due to the presence of inhabitants and youths coming from border communities, the administration has decided to adopt extraordinary measures aimed at contrasting every form of illegality, to ensure citizen security standards, enforcing evening patrols.

In conclusion, this research indicates that Castelvetrano presents a level of criminality directly linked to its history and to economical activities of existing productive sectors and above all due to the mafia phenomenon and political crisis. For this reason, the authorities tend to see the territory as tranquil, since only recently have the frequent episodes of micro criminality dramatically impacted the community.

### **Partanna**

Situated between the Modione valley to the West and Belice valley to the East, Partanna is an agricultural centre, 80 kilometres from the provincial capital Trapani.

Its city centre, where there are the principal administrative services, the police station and business activities, is situated around an ancient castle. After the earthquake, many buildings were damaged, like the Chiesa Madre. Others were completely destroyed. In the immediate vicinity, among the restored buildings and the historic ones, there are still faults in certain damaged buildings.

Following the earthquake, a new zone was built in the Camarro area, which is at a lower level than the town centre and is inhabited by more than half the population. Having many scholastic institutions, this area is mainly characterised by residential buildings and open spaces destined for public green areas that are for the most part abandoned or are in a state of degradation due to acts of vandalism (to note cleaning up of some areas by volunteers).

To the right side of the road, which connects the centre to the ring road, there is a vast area of popular dwellings which, in part, resembles the urban model of houses with gardens in Gibellina; some zones were subject to refurbishment by means of the construction of primary and secondary urbanisation works and public embellishment.

Some kilometres east of the inhabited area, in zone Stratto, there is a huge archaeological area dating back to the Neolithic period (rendered accessible to visitors thanks to funds by regional plan) and even in the heart of the town centre, not far from the Chiesa Madre of Partanna, there is a prehistoric site;. These sites were brought to light thanks to excavation campaigns and voluntary work groups organised by the Secretariat for Cultural and Archaeological Heritage of Trapani, by the Local Council of Partanna, in collaboration with local cultural associations and Italian and European universities.

The Commune has, moreover, undertaken numerous projects to reset and refurbish the urban part of the territory: for example, the Grifeo Castle, following a long restoration period, has become the seat of a poly-museum which holds spectacles and events of interest also to bordering communities. Given the phenomenon of the abandonment of the territory, the administrators themselves admit a certain difficulty in identifying future projects in order to revive the socio economic network.

Problems associated with a low level of education exist marginally, but the most serious social discomfort is due to unemployment and illegal work, besides the diffusion of drug abuse above all, among youths. On a much lower level, there are problems linked to the breaking up of family groups.

The commune of Partanna seems to enjoy a medium to high standard of living. The employed class makes up more than 50 per cent of residents; families consist of one nucleus made up of an average of 4 persons, income is derived from public employment, from

agricultural activities; other minor activities are construction, artisan works and business.

There are neither active cultural centres nor cinema halls, but there are quite a number of public and private sports centres (which enable youngsters to practise tennis and football), numerous cultural associations, musical and theatrical groups, voluntary associations for the assistance of the elderly and the disabled who have also a day centre service.

Partanna, a town that in the past witnessed feuds between mafia clans, has seen the sacrifice of a young justice collaborator (coming from a mafia family) who, distrusted after the massacres of Falcone and Borsellino, committed suicide.

The community remained quite indifferent; her grave (destroyed by her own mother as a sign of shunning) has been damaged many times and the villa named in her honour lies in a derelict state.

Nowadays, the town is living a period of apparent tranquillity. The territory is deemed as quite safe by the citizens. Percentages of crimes reported are almost equal to those of bordering towns, even if investigations have revealed commissions between local entrepreneurs and mafia gang; areas with major problems involve, above all, the western tip of the recently constructed zone, while the town centre is often characterised by drug trafficking episodes.

The residential area, bordering agricultural land, is often subject to robberies by unemployed youths. The presence of commercial activities in the territory does not seem to have positive effects on security standards in the zone and the residents of zones at risk feel abandoned. One hopes for a major intervention of the Region and the national Government to contrast criminality and for the re-proposal of politics of development and local promotion in order to put an end to the migration problem from small communes.

### **Poggioreale**

Although the town centre of Poggioreale remained for the most part undamaged, it was declared inaccessible due to the earthquake and the new town centre was transferred to a habitat on the valley slope (chosen since there was no adequate territory in the immediate vicinity of the old town centre and which needed a number of works to make it safe and to replant trees in the area). The Commune developed around circular focal points intersected by areas destined for public commodities around which, according to a graded plan, one finds residential dwellings.

In the first inhabited area to the south, arriving from the Belice valley, the elementary and lower secondary schools were built. Proceeding to a higher altitude towards northeast, there is the kindergarten and not far away a large neoclassical square (attempt to give it a more traditional look and which should have been the place for artisan activities) around which there are the main administrative and public services, the local council, the theatre

(still under completion) the church, the market area, the social centre, the public library (seat to an ethno-anthropological museum dedicated to farming traditions).

Going up the main road, there are banking services. Near the police station and at the far end tip there is a round square crossed by a pedestrian viaduct around which there are residential dwellings.

At the far end of the territory, almost adjacent to agricultural land, one finds the largest social residential buildings, many of which remained uninhabited for a long time and successively were put on sale in order to avoid their degradation.

Extraordinary maintenance was carried out to: resurface the roads, arrange social residences, refurbish some buildings and the introduce security measures on the eastern side. All this was done by local institutions and financed by national and European Union funds.

The territory enjoys transitory tourism interested in areas where one finds archaeological/historical ruins (for which there is a restoration project already carried out in the Cappuccini Convent and the Parish church, in order it within the museum network of the Belice valley).

Poggioreale like Salaparuta, belongs to the intermediate rural areas, characterised by important agricultural activities (permanent cultivations) like for example, the vineyards area and which, potentially, thanks to the vicinity of other territories with major appeal, could integrate these activities with others like those of restaurants and rural tourism which at present do not exist.

The agricultural tradition of the territory is shown not only in the small museum, but even in the spectacles and feasts present and promote the tastes and colours of ancient traditions to the visitor amongst which the feast of the Ricotta and other Cheeses, the feast of the "Muffuletta".

There are no particular degraded zones and the population is quite homogeneous, as there is certain integration between different social groups for which there is a sharp differentiation.

The most serious social, problems are the emigration of many young people towards other cities in search of work; poverty, unemployment (finances are foreseen to reactivate local economies).

The commune of Poggioreale can be defined as quite secure, even if the criminal phenomenon is possibly underestimated due to a refractory behaviour by the citizens and the authorities themselves; only 30 per cent of crimes are reported; the zones at risk are on the outskirts of town, on the border between the inhabited town centre and the agricultural zone.

Criminality is linked to illegal workforce, drug trafficking and abuse. Crimes are committed mainly by those who live in areas of social residential dwellings, by the poor and by young people.

Given that the development of conditions of legality is sustained not only by territory control (a project has been activated for the installation of security cameras) but also by the promotion of socio cultural action plans, it is retained opportune to start a major activity which involves both the local community and the provincial institutions.

### **Salaparuta**

The urban centre of Salaparuta, of which only some ruins remain, was rebuilt after the earthquake some kilometres away in the Alto Belice valley, according to urban models of the new towns, characterised by wide roads and open spaces, surrounded by green areas which should have been a meeting point for the local community; here, as in nearby Poggioreale, emerge all the problems that the earthquake and then the reconstruction brought with them.

The commune is not well placed in the circuit of provincial and regional mobility (lacking road network and inadequate public transport service), there is moreover an infrastructural problem, since many buildings are in a state of abandonment; dominating is the effect of estrangement in respect of the urban design which did not help the population to reconstruct its proper identity; the economy, characterised mainly by entities which operate in the vine cultivations (some of which affirmed at international level), is in a big crisis determined by a decrease at national level but greatly felt due to the scarce availability of water resources.

Many dwellings are made up of one family houses, consisting of 2 or maximum 3 floors. The social houses (in the areas of Via Trentino and Via Sardegna) were built in the Seventies and, contrary to what happened in other zones, have been well integrated in the urban network.

In reality, many nuclei of public buildings have not been assigned due to lack of demand, reason for which they were abandoned, so much so that it was proposed to reconvert and give them to social objectives (residences for minors and the disabled), project that up till now has not been initiated, but that would have had multiple positive effects impeding degradation of the buildings, a concrete aid to social categories with social problems and the possibility of new occupational prospects.

In order to boost the socio assistance level of citizens risking social emargination, the territory has a residence for single mothers with serious family and personal problems and a home for the elderly, managed by social cooperatives.

In Salaparuta, there is a kindergarten and a secondary school, both dependent administratively on the comprehensive Institute of Santa Ninfa. Moreover there are 2 private institutions (one for infants and the other as a superior technical institute); there are no nursery schools or child care centres, but an open air space situated between Viale Lombardia and Via Matteotti, under completion; the socio cultural and entertainment



aspect is represented by the presence of a library and a sports complex.

There is no particular educational institution adequate for youths, who go to Castelvetro or Santa Ninfa, or to families with very young children, obliged to turn to entities against payment present in bordering towns (to note the future opening of a centre which should admit minors from 0 to 3 years, coming from local families and from the single mother residence).

The social class consists mainly of retired people, adults in farming activities and public service sector. The unemployment rate is very high; families have mainly one income, a medium to low cultural level, child and elderly care often entrusted to women, a category which, like youths, is mainly subject to unemployment.

For many years, the Commune has been undergoing a migration process which changed it slowly into a ghost town; a few business activities, almost inexistent in terms of hospitality, for which one has tried to intervene by civil service projects even for the socio working status of youths.

The economic crisis has raised levels of criminality and the community is worried about the increase of petty thefts and fraud victims of which are mainly persons who live alone. Control by the police force has prevented crimes against public heritage (numerous damages to electric power plants in order to steal copper which is then resold to illegal markets).

In order to guarantee urban security and public order, the local administrators of Salaparuta, are trying to develop a video surveillance project which should cover the artisan area in the zone between Via Garibaldi and Via Mazzini, and some streets in the new town centre.

### **Salemi**

Situated in the Sicilian hinterland, few kilometres away from the motorway exit "Mazara-Palermo", Salemi is surrounded by cultivated hills, mainly vineyards and is one of the vastest territories of the Trapani province.

The town, very much populated in the past, has lately undergone an exodus phenomenon (determined partly by the earthquake which struck the population of Belice Valley in 1968 and in recent years by the economic crisis which hit small entities present in the territory).

The town centre, consisting of narrow streets, where there are still basic administrative services and some traditional economic activities, has lately experienced the phenomenon of abandonment partly caused by the institutions themselves and by the mistakes in the reconstruction plans (residents who were receiving contributions for the reconstruction were not obliged in any way to rebuild in the same area, therefore many have invested the received sums of money to rebuild their houses in areas far from the centre).

In order to reinvigorate this part of the territory (where there are spaces closed to the public) an initiative called “houses at 1 euro” was launched, that is buying at convenient prices these almost totally damaged spaces, with the obligation to rebuild them in a given period of time (in reality these seem to be problems linked to concessions and properties in the areas).

At the moment there are many derelict buildings: although in some cases various restoration attempts have been made (ex Jesuits College, the Town Hall and a structure in Piazza Padre Pio), there are many dangerous buildings and areas closed to the public (areas like Via Cappasanta, Gullo, Fontannieri, Vicolo Stella, Anfuso, Bastioni, Alonzo and Santa Armata).

Around the centre, in the high part of the city, there is a modern area made up of independent houses and blocks of flats where there are many commercial activities (many of which have ceased to operate due to the recession).

Further to the south, there is a vast area of social residential dwellings characterised by a socio cultural heterogeneous standard (middle class and more degraded social strata).

Even in areas surrounding Via Mazara and zone Cappuccini, works of refurbishment of public places and safekeeping of buildings is underway in order to ameliorate the urban embellishment of the city.

Very different is the socio economic situation of zone Cuba, a social residential area inhabited by families with serious problems of a social and financial nature. The territory is surrounded by numerous suburbs, some of which are seasonal residential areas (San Ciro, Filci) and others are urban suburbs with basic services, for example the suburb of Ulmi. There is a kindergarten, a parish church, a post office branch, and small business activities.

Although situated in a quite central geographical position equally distant from major inhabited centres, there is a general shortage of public transport services and a high inadequacy of intercommunal road network.

The presence of a motorway exit a few kilometres away, guarantees a good link with coastal area communes and with the regional capital city; the highways linking Salemi to Marsala and Trapani, in quite a disastrous state due to lack of appropriate maintenance works.

The economy is based mainly on agriculture, although most of the cellars present in the zone have been closed down due to absence of development projects. There are still industries for the manufacture of olives, but like other centres, there is the problem of commercialisation of the finished product.

Many private entities, specialised in the construction and manufacturing sector, have seen a drastic decrease in activity due to a conjunctive crisis.

The city is rich in monuments. Piazza Alicia, where one finds an ancient castle, has been declared a UNESCO heritage site. On the adjacent hills there are numerous archaeological

sites, to date very inaccessible. There are many noble houses and villas all over the territory.

Local authorities was unable to make use of the monumental, archaeological and cultural riches which enhance the territory (example, the traditional feast of St Joseph, which in the past, filled the streets with tourists and which now experienced a strong decline). Even the cultural touristic circuit of Belice Valley has not developed adequately, so much so that the sector cannot become a focus point of economical acvtivities.

Present services are inadequate vis-à-vis the exigency of the territory, education is represented by obligatory classes, a technical business institute and a lyceum, cultural aspects are represented by a civi museum hosting many sections, the mafia museum and one of the most well equipped public libraries.

There is a hospital which due to cost-cutting in the health sector, has seen a drastic drop in the services offered, besides which there are three communities for the elderly and minors. There are no state nursery schools and no afternoon recreational services. The cinema has been closed for years, whilst there are few associations (such as sports organisations and religious institutions). Scarce attention has been given to youths and the elderly. However, financial subsidies are now to be given to low income people, and new communities run by the private sector are opening for service.

Local associations tried to remedy where the administration did not. These are trying to involve citizens by means of entertainment and initiatives meant to reinforce the local identity.

The population consists mainly of elderly people and the family structure, although with small changes, is formed by about 3 members in every family.

Levels of poverty and discomfort are medium; social problems are linked mostly to unemployment, illegal work and drug abuse.

The town centre, abandoned by residents, is inhabited by non European Union citizens (North Africans) who occupied houses in an abusive way. These often lack minimum commodities. Many houses have lately been barred to prevent accessibility.

No service exists for immigrants (except for the distribution of food and clothing organised by religious and beneficial associations) and there is no integration with the residents: they are seen in small groups in the main square waiting for someone to offer them a job.

There is quite large minority of people from the East, working in agricultural activities and as house assistants. These people seem to be more integrated in the social life of the Commune.

Criminality levels are medium and the Commune is deemed quite safe, although there has been an increase in crimes, related to social impoverishment which has preoccupied citizens, who, notwithstanding the presence of a police station, complain about lack of attention from the institutions regarding security matters.

If the abandonment of the town centre really exists, generally the presence of economic

activities on the territory, increases standards of wellbeing and security (some years ago shops have benefited from public finances in order to restructure thus ensuring a bigger urban embellishment).

The most common crimes are thefts from residential buildings in the town centre and town zones; fraud, economic crimes and drug trafficking (town centre), in the last months pickpocketing from elderly people in the town centre has been preoccupying citizens.

Poor citizens with low standards of education, individuals who grew up in a violent environment are considered as potentially dangerous; victims are mainly elderly people and individuals with low standards of education, the structures mostly hit by criminals are private dwellings and business activities. Only fifty per cent of crimes are reported to the authorities.

A traditional mafia background seems to move on in time: the local council, presided by the famous political and television personality Vittorio Sgarbi, summoned to rehabilitate the town (among the well known initiatives the inauguration of a mafia multi-media museum) has been liquidated due to mafia infiltrations, and is still so to date; numerous goods have been confiscated from entrepreneurs linked to the market of renewable energy and constructions; the town is moreover known to investigators for the presence of drug traffickers known at international level.

Particularly in the summer months, the territory is subject to arson which has partly devastated the naturalistic and archaeological area of Montagna Grande.

By using European union funds, video surveillance cameras will be set up (12 cameras in strategic points) to increase security levels in the territory (characterised even by sporadic vandalistic episodes on public structures).

According to public sector employees, a solution which contrasts social discomfort could be the investment in activities of cultural promotion and occupational policies which involve more participation from citizens and more agreement with regional committees.

There is also the problem of drug abuse, too vast to be resolved at local level, even though the Commune has tried to intervene sporadically to lessen the phenomenon which is spreading through all strata of the population, particularly young people.

### **Santa Ninfa**

Santa Ninfa is a small community in Trapani province. It has about 5,000 inhabitants. The town, destroyed by the 1968 earthquake, was rebuilt partly on previous ground, and partly in the surrounding area according to the pre-existing urban plan but with greater attention to common spaces and road structure.

Buildings present before the earthquake were completely demolished, except for some ancient buildings and churches which, due to their historic and architectural importance, were restructured.

The new urban area was successively developed towards the far south in the direction of Gibellina, Acquanova and Granozzi.

In this territory, characterised by wide straight roads, there is a church, compulsory schools and kindergarten, civic centre buildings, a public library hosting a museum, a health centre, a sports complex and numerous business and public service entities.

The artisan area adjacent to the inhabited centre is quite outstanding, not far from Belice Valley focal point, which workshops completely finished have been assigned to local entrepreneurs. Inside the artisan zone, there is a centre equipped with structures for shows, markets and seminars.

After the reconstruction, from the 1990s to date, the town economy has been on the decline. In fact, many youths left their native town to seek work and fortune elsewhere, in north Italy or even abroad.

In Santa Ninfa, there have been many voluntary associations for years which quite satisfied the different exigencies of the population and promoted the culture of donation, solidarity and responsibility.

Moreover it is important to have a residence for minors with family problems and discomfort.

Besides obligatory schools there is an institute for professional teachers frequented by all communities of the Belice Valley.

The social class is of medium standard, consisting mainly of pensioners and employees, but there are also those with a low income standard who live in precarious and emarginated social conditions.

Even Santa Ninfa feels the mafia influence of Castelvetro boss Matteo Messina Denaro, even if less than the nearby communities of Campobello di Mazara and Partanna.

The main economic activities are the traditional agricultural and cattle raising entities; however of a certain importance are the industrial and artisan activities linked to construction and electricity supply. Their development has been made easy by the geographical position of the town and an innate entrepreneurship of the inhabitants.

Santa Ninfa is considered by its administrators as a very safe place, with low levels of criminality linked to sporadic predatory episodes often in the countryside localities, allegedly perpetrated by immigrants; the most difficult social problems for the population are the high level of unemployment and illegal work. Locally, income derived from the manufacture and distribution of meat products to the provincial market is important. This resolves partly the employment problem.

Cases of drug trafficking are different. These involve the low income individuals and young people, increasingly dissatisfied, who cannot find work stability or who do not continue their studies and do not have adequate entertainment localities.

It is possible to have a classification of victims according to crimes: young people,

individuals with low standards of education of the female gender are involved in illegal work, while the elderly, in isolated living conditions are theft victims.

Only 30 per cent of crimes are reported to judicial authorities and the social categories at major risk of delinquency are foreign immigrants, gypsies and the poor.

Unemployment is difficult to handle at a communal level, so it is of the utmost importance to involve the civil society to lessen the criminal phenomenon.

### **Vita**

The commune of Vita is situated between Salemi and Calatafimi. It is a small town in the Trapani hinterland, made up of two adjacent zones linked by two main roads, with two flyovers.

The town centre, where a third of the population resides, was only marginally hit by the earthquake in the Belice Valley, while in a valley area to the south, another zone has developed, still under completion, where the rest of the population lives together in a modest artisan area.

The original centre, with communal offices and principal administrative services, is subject to landslides and is in a degraded state with many dangerous buildings. Some years ago, in order to embellish the town, numerous artists were called to paint frescoes, along the streets of the town centre, representing work and traditions of farmers and the religious devotion to Our Lady.

Along the years, there were many interventions by the Commune to prevent the collapse of buildings by means of restoration and maintenance works. An operative centre made up of technicians, has to assess levels of danger in order to provide adequate prevention measures.

The new residential zone is characterised by a modern road network and by small one-family dwellings. In this zone, precisely in the area surrounding Viale Europa, many social buildings have been constructed. A refurbishment project for the zone is in progress, in order to complete urbanisation works and green public areas, to increase better living conditions. A few kilometres away from the inhabited centre, there is an ecological area in the Baronia Woodland.

The economy is essentially agricultural, specialised in vine cultivation and the production of high quality oil. A marginal area for cattle rising and production of milk products. Business entities leave much to be desired.

There is a flourishing industry specialised in the production of construction material with various points of sale not only nationally but also abroad.

Although the population density is notably superior to the provincial average (more than 245 inhabitants per sq.km), the annual rate of growth is declining rapidly. Such numbers are determined by lack of housing estates.

There is a kindergarten and secondary schools. Students who want to frequent higher institutions go to the nearby Salemi or to the provincial capital.

The sports complex is in the new urban centre and the Commune, with the help of European union finances, has launched a project for the construction of a new covered sports centre

The social centre plays an important role when it comes to socio cultural activities. This centre has an auditorium and a multi-use hall, utilised for cultural meetings, conferences, projections, shows, exhibitions, besides entertainment evenings. This structure functions as a meeting place for young and old, by means of various activities and interests in cultural, recreational activities. In the same centre there is the public library, the multi-media one and an office of the association for the promotion of tourism.

As in other realities of the Belice valley, there are no high delinquency levels. The commune is deemed to be quite safe. In reality, there is an alarmingly low percentage of individuals who turn to the authorities to report a crime, a percentage which is unbelievably below the 20 per cent. This is proof of a deeply rooted culture of silence which exhibits little trust in the institutions.

The commonest crimes are drug trafficking and theft. There is also a strong presence of the mafia, especially in the countryside and the surroundings where police forces' operations are frequent and which succeeded in confiscating properties belonging to mafia bosses in the region.

Those persons prone to delinquency, are individuals with a low cultural standard, often young people living in a state of economic and social discomfort.

Another interesting fact, is the impossibility to make an identikit of the victims, since criminality involves all the strata of the population.

A better collaboration and integration is requested between the Regional Government and the Communal Administrations in order to guarantee a bigger presence in the territory so as to tackle the unemployment problem in a synergy.

Locally, the administration is trying to completely refurbish the town centre in view of the Commune being transformed into a "Hotel Town" thus promoting the development of an economy based on tourism which could offer new job opportunities.

Attempts to revive the economy by means of street markets, professional training offered by work scholarships, enforcing and enhancing local traditions, are being carried out.

The International Folklore Festival, presided by the Commune, is one of the most famous manifestations in western Sicily, by means of which, popular culture is promoted through musical activities and representations involving people from all over the world.

## **Trapani and the surrounding communes**

Custonaci, Buseto Palizzolo, Erice, Paceco, Trapani; San Vito Lo Capo, Valderice

### **Custonaci**

Although situated in an unfavourable geographical position, which allows little flow to more urban centres and since not particularly interested by regional mobility, Custonaci is a flourishing economic centre vis-à-vis other hinterland communes.

It is largely touristic (well developed in the coastal zone of Comino and Frassino, solely touristic and residential areas) and also with a large industrial sector related to marble excavation. In fact, it is the most productive regional marble quarry.

Concentration on these quarry activities has partly compromised the historical and environmental identity of certain zones; the strong environmental “antropizzazione” leaves a visibly strong impact intensified by heaps of quarry waste material.

The population is also employed in the traditional primary sector of agriculture and cattle rising.

Custonaci has a vast naturalistic and environmental heritage (thanks to the presence of the Monte Cofano Reserve and Cerriolo Park) and in the surroundings, archaeological ruins of the Prehistoric Age have been found (particularly in the Caves of Miceli and Mangiapane) close to the area of the Ethno-Anthropological Museum, which is also the natural scenario of the Living Crib, visited each year by thousands of people.

This town, like other neighbouring towns, belonged to the Erice territory for half of the last century and it obtained administrative autonomy only in the first half of the last century.

The population resides in the centre and in the plain suburb of Purgatorio, characterised by dwellings in good rural original state.

The urban centre, octagonal in shape, lies around the Sanctuary of Our Lady, where important liturgical and religious celebrations attract visitors and pilgrims every year.

Comino, an ancient seaside village, and local tourism resort, has numerous summer residences and hospitality structures. Although small, this town offers services such as: banks, a pharmacy and various entertainment entities.

Public embellishment works are underway (around Purgatorio area), as are restoration and major maintenance works in town centre by local institutions and private individuals.

There are projects of restoration works, methane gas supply to all the territory and the modernisation of the water supply system (which particularly in the summer months is inadequate).

This seaside resort, market festivals, numerous cultural and eno-gastronomic manifestations have seen the birth of many *Bed and Breakfast* together with the existing hospitality structures, contributing to the increase in tourism.



It is a town with a high level of childbirth and with very low percentages of the average age, proof of a relatively young population. Moreover, in the past decade, the presence of immigrants has increased (especially Romanians and Tunisians).

There are obligatory schools, and a community residence for the mentally disturbed.

The Administration is planning, as part of the European Union project "Happy Town" the inauguration of a centre providing educational, parental, emergency home assistance, coordinated by a team consisting of a psychologist and a social worker.

The Commune is on the whole a tranquil one, with low poverty levels, although there is a slight discomfort related to drug abuse among the young, attributed to absence of adequate cultural stimuli.

Criminality is low, most crimes are committed by youths and immigrants. A strong civic conscience urges the citizens to break the silence and report crimes.

These are mainly fraud and economic crimes linked to mafia infiltrations in the marble excavation industry.

In the past years, crimes against property of small commercial entities have increased, most probably due to the economic crisis - food for thought regarding the developmental strategies by authorities and other interests.

A centre of the Forestry Corps has been set up to fight the problem of fires which have devastated part of the reserves in the Trapani province (zone Cerriolo).

### **Buseto Palizzolo**

Situated on the hills to the east of Trapani, Buseto Palizzolo is a rural town, consisting of many suburbs along the highways and other roads often isolated one from the other. In fact, only Buseto centre, Bruca, Battaglia and Baia resemble an urban centre.

The urban configuration of this area is determined by the fragmentation of the commune of Monte San Giuliano (involving also Valderice, Custonaci and San Vito Lo Capo).

The inhabited area, consisting mainly of one-family traditional houses or small villas, is in a strategic position to access the natural and panoramic reserves of the Trapani province.

To the southeast, a few kilometres away from Buseto Superiore, lies Bosco Scorare, one of the biggest woodland areas of western Sicily, destination to numerous excursions. In the past, this zone witnessed arson episodes that damaged heavily most of the vegetation.

These fires, which cover vast areas every year, seem not only due to particular climatic conditions but also to delays in maintenance, prevention and vigilance duties.

The economy depends on the agricultural sector (vineyards, olive groves and cereal cultivation) made up of small entities, often family-run, operated by adults and the elderly, while there is unemployment among youths who, as in other hinterland towns, tend to leave the territory in search of better working conditions even though the administration

tried to lessen the occupational problem, by means of work scholarships and programmes of socio-working rehabilitation in favour of those in precarious financial conditions.

This is shown in the demographic trend with negative migration signs, a huge reduction of family nuclei and on average an older population vis-à-vis other provincial areas.

Commercial and productive activities (marble, restaurants, and oil production) are still few, although there seem to be signs of development due to the opening of activities connected to the hospitality sector.

The Commune has the basic scholastic services (some of which are minor branches to guarantee right of education) but the residents are obliged to turn to the provincial capital for the main public services - for business activities, bureaucratic and administrative structures that are absent from the Commune.

Extra scholastic activities are offered by some public and private sports complex, whereas socio-health services are given by a family clinic and by child psychiatrists.

With regards to conservation of historic heritage, there is the abandonment of the old "bagli" typical of the rural centre found in the areas surrounding the urban centre. These are in a derelict state and in need of urgent repairs.

In general, as it is a small centre, there is a sense of togetherness and residents lead quite a comfortable life, although one can see weak signs of social discomfort.

Considering that the population is distributed more or less homogeneously throughout the territory, the characteristic articulation of the suburbs contributes to mobility problems where residents need to use certain services, such as pharmacies and post offices found in the central area, which are located six or seven kilometres away from some suburbs.

In this sense, there is a project by the Commune, involving even other towns in the province, to offer transport and accompaniment services free of charge to the weaker classes guaranteeing better, living conditions.

The crisis of certain values, common to present society, greatly affects the young: absence of politics regarding youths, no meeting points, scarce cultural alternatives urge adolescents to behave inappropriately by abusing alcohol. The consumption of alcohol causes disturbance of the public peace, damage to urban property, especially in summer and during evenings or at night.

The local administration has tried to intervene by means of ordinances which prohibit the use of alcohol at night and set up prevention programmes as assistance to parents and minors.

### **Erice**

Erice is an ancient medieval small town situated on the promontory. It is known internationally for its architectural heritage and its cultural and eno-gastronomic traditions.

The most ancient town centre, inhabited by some thousand residents, has lost its residential character since it has witnessed a strong migration of people following the development of an area towards the south which involved the habitat of Casa Santa, adjacent to the city of Trapani, where the major part of the population and public services are concentrated.

To date, thanks to territories in the urban network of the city of Trapani, the Commune has a population of more than 25,000 inhabitants of which more than 80 per cent live in the districts at the end of the valley.

The old town centre which has many religious buildings (many of which have undergone restoration works by the ecclesiastic institutions themselves), destination also of a seasonal residential tourism, is endowed with numerous hospitality dwellings, hotels and small artisan entities specialised in the sale of typical products.

The Commune is trying to refurbish the historical urban buildings and to enhance the territory resources which could recuperate structures and convert them for social purposes. Erice also hosts the centre of scientific culture which, every year, promotes a number of events and international scientific and cultural seminars therefore developing, by time, tourism related to conferences and seminars.

The strong fragmentation of entrepreneurship in Erice, as well as in Trapani, the decline of the agricultural sector and the absence of big industries makes it hard for young people with high standards of education to find work thus, they are forced to emigrate or accept jobs below their ability.

Instead, those residents with less education standards, find jobs mainly in social works and hospitality entities in the province, which have played an important part in the occupational development of the Erice territory.

Due to this important aspect, in the neighbourhood of Casa Santa, in the valley, there is a State Professional Institute for Tourism and Hospitality Studies which is not only frequented by students from the capital city of the province but also by students from the communes of the hinterland. It entails the entire province, from Alcamo to San Vito Lo Capo.

The particular urban and geographical position of Upper Erice has quite some mobility problems. The absence of parking places, the scarce functionality of the road network characterised by sharp bends, the closure of the cable car, create traffic congestion especially during the busiest summer months.

Even the quality and number of sports complex, schools and civic centres is insufficient vis-à-vis the demands by residents, particularly this refers to popular built up areas in the valley.

There are two post-secondary schools which result small in size. Today there is only one communal structure used as a nursery school, in the Casa Santa territory in a previously abandoned building in Via Cosenza, frequented by young children. The open

air playgrounds are absent or in a degraded state, even the most parts of 7 aside grounds and small sports complex, especially in populated zones.

The Commune has started many projects for the setting up of equipped spaces (even covered) for sports activities (football, boules, skating) in emarginated areas (ex Napola or Fontanelle Sud). Moreover, in the popular zone of San Giuliano there is a building, in Baden Powell street, which was destined for a primary school for children residing in the zone, successively abandoned and left in a derelict state, for which refurbishment plans have been set up under the action programmes of the European Union.

In Via Pollina in Erice, on a property confiscated from an entrepreneur linked to the mafia, a Youth Centre documenting legality will be set up, which will enable the study and knowledge of the mafia and its devastating influences on the socio cultural and economic network. Such would make possible projects, initiatives and the promotion of good practices. Furthermore, meetings, debates, discussions and initiatives will be promoted even by the involvement of institutions and civil society representatives.

The San Giuliano zone, located on the outskirts of the northwest residential area, is one of the most degraded areas of the Commune; it is a confused agglomerate, built in the sixties as a solution for the decongestion of the residential area of Trapani. It is inhabited mainly by families who live precariously, with low income and low educational attainment.

Inside this zone, there are even more depressed areas (Via Ciullo d'Alcamo and Via dei Pescatori) where there are high levels of school truancy and unemployment.

Broken families do not always succeed to play their proper educational role. Criminal episodes by minors linked to drug trafficking, vandalism and fights are frequent. Therefore, the help offered by parish institutions is precious. These operate on a territory void of meeting places for young people.

Notwithstanding numerous programmes embarked on by schools to prevent delinquency and truancy, young people do not trust institutions and see them as a barrier to their entrance into the labour market.

S. Giuliano has a strong presence of elderly people who often live with their children and their respective families since, as pensioners, they represent the main source of income.

The disabled are the most penalised by structural and residential inadequacies. Residents complaint about unequipped green spaces, absence of certain infrastructure and social services buildings. There is an urgent need for refurbishment works.

The administration is projecting an urban embellishment along all the coastline of San Giuliano (restructuring of popular dwellings, completion of the zone urbanisation and coastal part). This part of Erice, shall become moreover, a proper "no tax" area for all entities which open their activities here.

The urban habitat, with the exception of the most popular areas (which, as previously

seen, is full of problems) is on the whole quite safe with average criminality levels and a high rate of reported crimes, due to a medium-high social class. The most frequent crimes are those linked to illegal work.

Crimes are committed mainly by those who live in emarginated areas, in a violent ambience and by immigrants. It is not possible to make out definite victims and no incisive interventions have been planned to ameliorate security levels in the territory, except for the activation of short circuit cameras in zone San Giuliano, Via Mokarta and the town centre.

Organised crime is too vast to be managed at local level. There is the need of collaboration with the national government (more severe legal provisions to be issued) and local authorities.

### **Paceco**

Paceco is mainly agricultural with around 11,000 inhabitants, which for a short while, was annexed to the territory of Trapani. It regained its administrative authority after the forties.

The urban part of Paceco is mainly in the communal area of the nearby city of Trapani. Here one finds the suburb of Nubia, known for the production of red garlic and for the Salt Museum, immersed in the panorama dominated by the natural reserve of the salt pans, where one finds small hospitality structure and seasonal touristic residences.

Along the Nubia coast, part of the urban system consists of 2 archaeological areas, one in the territory through which flows the river Baiata and the other converging on the top extremity of Castelluzzo (timpone).

Vast areas in the communal territory are moreover restricted by a hydro-geological zone while, in proximity of the river Baiata, there is a zone at high risk of landslides, particularly during the rainy months.

The Commune is also known for the artisan production of typical sweets (cannoli) in the suburb of Dattilo, a recent residential zone, in the hinterland and developed according to extension plans of the pre-existing habitat, just on the border of the commune.

Dattilo has maintained the typical characteristics of small Sicilian agricultural towns and the population depends on Paceco city for all services. Primary and secondary urban works are painfully lacking.

The underground part is also inadequate due to problems with the water system. This system is very often faulty and coupled with the derelict state of the desalination plant of Nubia, the residents are forced to live continuously with a water supply emergency.

The urban centre, developed around the ancient original 18<sup>th</sup> century nucleus, is crossed by the road network which connects Marsala to Trapani, with serious problems of traffic congestion during rush hours.

There is a comprehensive obligatory school and numerous extra scholastic activities (equipped sports complex), some of which are in a degraded state due to lack of

maintenance, a situation which risks harming the work of numerous associations, intent for years, on promoting an aggregative culture by means of sports activities.

Along the main roads on the outskirts of the inhabited centre, residential areas have developed in a disorderly manner. In part, they have adhered to the town development plan and in part to abusive agglomerates.

In the oldest areas, there is a problem regarding quality of buildings and degradation of historical architecture. Some buildings are abandoned (such as the small kiosk in the Villa comunale) while others were restored.

In view of the refurbishment of historical buildings among the projects of the Commune, one has to reacquire by means of expropriation and acquisition for public use, some buildings which could be used by the community (the area where there are the ruins of Fardella castle with annexed garden could be regarding utilised as museum sites).

Although there is a lack of economic resources, thanks to continuous control against tax evasion and national contributions, the authorities have initiated public embellishment and an extraordinary maintenance centre.

In the future, one expects the completion of some school buildings, primary urban works, refurbishment of peripheric areas (zones Aula, Platamone, Sapone and Cipponeri characterised by abusive dwellings) and restructuring of the ex cinema hall in view of the setting up of a socio-cultural centre.

The zones, at major risk, are in the town centre, where the main part of the population lives (the rest, inferior to 2000 persons, is spread out and distributed mainly in the suburbs of Dattila and Nubia).

The population is quite old. There is no great change in generations. Although this is not particularly positive, the Commune, in past years, has witnessed a growing demography thanks to immigration from bordering communes.

The standard of education of the residents is on the whole average although the elderly have lower levels of literacy. In order to meet the exigencies of an ageing population, residential community centres by private individuals, are present.

Social problems emerge from: drug trafficking, growing unemployment and a hidden economy. This is a complex situation that cannot be resolved locally and thus needs a major involvement of all public entities in order to carry out prevention and adequate development strategies.

The authorities sustain projects aimed at the decrease of behavioural problems in local schools, the sustainment of families with serious socio-economic conditions and with minors of school age who are not inserted in the educational system.

Paceco is a commune of average dimensions, where the inhabitants have strong identity roots, where there is not a high level of delinquency and for the most part, crimes are reported.

According to the authorities, it is quite a safe territory. The most common crimes being those against heritage and crimes of violence. These are allegedly committed by those who live in emarginated zones, by immigrants and youths. This interests all the population.

Entrepreneurial activities are not deemed to have contributed to raise security levels and the most emarginated social classes show a growing preoccupation towards their future.

Although there is a perception of relative security, it cannot be denied that a large part of the territory is controlled by mafia associations with extortion claims in public works sector related to construction and illicit management of public funds destined to the agricultural sector.

### **San Vito Lo Capo**

San Vito Lo Capo is a seaside resort, on the west coast of Sicily, known for its beaches and the surrounding natural environment.

The town centre of San Vito, site of the principal commercial and administrative services, has developed around a Sanctuary, like a chess board in the direction of the coast. It is made up of a series of narrow streets with lots of light-coloured Arabian-styled houses.

In the port and beach areas, there are many swimming zones, hospitality entities, nautical services and sports complex.

The suburbs of Macari and Castelluzzo are on the west coast along the highway connecting Castellammare Del Golfo and San Vito.

Castelluzzo is a small inhabited centre with intact rural characteristics. It is partly effected by the economic development of San Vito (has small restaurants and some agri-tourism facilities), surrounded by huge old olive groves. It is frequently the destination of tourists interested in nature.

The coastal plain of the small suburb is clearly distinguished from the more internal part where the town stands. It has kept, almost deprived of habitation (asphalted roads, buildings) its natural integrity.

Macari is the smallest inhabited agglomerate of the territory of San Vito Lo Capo. It is a small rural and seaside town, populated by a few hundred inhabitants and where there are small hospitality structures.

The two suburbs are close to the Zingaro Reserve, an area extending for over 1,500 acres mainly in the commune of San Vito Lo Capo (the rest falls in the territory of Castellammare del Golfo), devastated by fires, which on certain occasions, almost reached the inhabited centres, creating serious problems for tourists and residents.

The territory is known for fishing traditions, sheep rising, agriculture and marble excavations; activities which nowadays are on the decline due to the development of the tertiary sector, particularly, tourism.

Therefore, nowadays, the prevailing activity is that of a seasonal tourism with services (bars, hotels, campsites, restaurants, transport, cinema, pub etc) open only during the periods of major touristic presence (April-October).

The seasonality of tourism represents a major handicap to this area which has now abandoned the traditional primary activities. This economy, flourishing in the summer months, experiences a big crisis in the winter months.

In the past years, in order to prolong activities linked to tourism, the local administrations, using a flourishing eno-gastronomic tradition, focused on cooking fish-based dishes, invested in new forms of territorial marketing, widening the tourism spectrum by means of folk festivals and cultural manifestations.

Among the most important international manifestations of particular interest was that of "Couscous Fest", a gastronomic show which acts also and above all as a meeting point for people, cultures, and traditions of Mediterranean countries.

The Commune is inserted in the regional territory by means of provincial roads with a low structural profile, which is unable to support the mobility of the summer months. The commune administration has invested a lot in the environmental sustainability of tourism aspects and in the safeguarding of environmental and naturalistic heritage. In the past, a non always coherent use of the concessions by seaside activities, has strongly compromised the utility of vast open spaces destined for public swimming areas; the degradation can be well observed in the coastal area. It is caused mainly by the intense seasonal touristic use which determines congestion and inappropriate transformations of places for the realisation of second houses, but even the hilly and mountainous areas are at risk of degradation due to abandonment of agro-pastoral activities and frequent fires (often set on purpose) which impoverish the natural heritage.

The town centre is closed to traffic during the summer months. Green areas and the coastal area have been refurbished, In order to control the problem of abusive buildings, concessions were managed with more awareness, a better "lottizzazione" of the territory and various inspections led to the confiscation of some seaside dwellings.

Tourism and subsequent development have made the quality of life of the residents of San Vito better but, at the same time, the impact with other models of life has created a discrepancy between the new consumer models and the traditional ones, characterised by strong normative links with a big influence on the social structure. One of the social problems which is strongly undermining traditional values is the breaking up of family nuclei.

San Vito is dependent on other communes for most of the technical administrative services and the sports infrastructures outside school premises. These are considered insufficient, especially with regards to touristic movements.

There are no secondary education institutes and the young students have to go to the province capital city. Their educational needs are not being met and it is necessary to set



up an educational network with the collaboration of extra scholastic agencies which by interchange would help these young people resolve development and academic difficulties. The low educational levels can be partly justified by difficulties cited above.

The many economic activities present on the territory, have on one side contributed to raise security levels but on the other side have attracted the attention of criminal gangs, which have established themselves in all sectors. Economic crimes linked to the management of public funds and public tenders are numerous. This has led to quite a sizeable part of the heritage being managed directly or indirectly by these organisations.

Numerous inspections carried out on construction sites have put in evidence various irregularities. Moreover, safety measures are not according to norm in workplaces and illegal work abounds.

Although the territory is deemed to be quite safe, there is also a diffused criminality linked to robberies involving small commercial activities even hotels and residences on the outskirts.

Territory control, particularly during the high season, is carried out by means of various road blocks, even with the collaboration of the Security Forces coming from the Province Capital, while the Commune has installed a video surveillance system in the town centre and the coastal areas.

## **Trapani**

Trapani is the capital city of the province. It is second in population to the city of Marsala and has numerous beautiful natural zones and a valuable historical heritage.

Situated at the foot of Mount Erice, its coastal territory faces the archipelago of the Egadi Islands. The town centre with sea views from the north and the south is made up of a labyrinth of narrow streets, Arabian style, where there are beautiful historical buildings and the principal religious monuments.

The original nucleus (Casalicchio) is bordered by two main roads, Corso Italia to the south and Via Garibaldi to the north, which are pedestrian zones where there are the main administrative services, restaurants, pubs and other commercial activities.

The old city centre is not particularly vast. It is well maintained (object of many refurbishment and restoration works) and easily crossed on foot or by public transport. Around this old centre, to the western side, one find the main road, Via Fardella, which is flanked by many boutiques and other shops.

During the years there was an exodus from the city centre towards new zones in the Erice territory, part of which is enclosed in the Trapani area. In fact, the absence of border lines between the two communes poses a significant difficulty in the administrative management of shared services.

There are numerous suburbs and districts both along the coastline and in the

hinterland (the latter prevalently agricultural) which for a long time have been abandoned to themselves, with an irregular urbanisation and often suffers the consequences of short sighted choices in territorial development.

Due to the organisation of international sports events, there has been in the past, huge refurbishment works in the town centre towards the areas of Torre di Ligny and Mura di Tramontana (in which there is a wide request coming from foreign investors).

To the northwest of the Province there are huge areas of residential dwellings. Districts such as Palma, Villa Rosina, Cappuccinelli, Fontanelle-Milo, Fontanelle south and San Giuliano (in the Erice territory), need structural maintenance, which is difficult to complete due to scarcity of financial resources.

Many of the dwellings in these zones, are intensive in numbers. The buildings are all equal with little space between a block and another and only recently in Palma there have been refurbishment works of a properly equipped sports area, which had been left in a bad state for a long time.

Among the most populated suburbs of Trapani, there is Fulgatore, a small rural town situated near the motorway exit Palermo-Mazara del Vallo, connected to the town centre by means of city bus service.

Trapani is not yet one of the preferred tourist destinations (still not well known to the foreign public) but is a good point of departure for a holiday in the bordering territory, thanks to its infrastructure (harbour, railway, and international Airport).

A huge operation of local marketing was a great success some years ago with the organisation of the Luis Vuitton Cup and the temporary exhibition of the works of Caravaggio, which gave a more international dimension to the province capital.

Having said that, although there is a good tourist mobility, there still exists a certain inadequacy in hospitality structures and their services. This is the result of an unclear plan and inefficient efforts of embellishing the historical and environmental heritage, and even scarce entrepreneurial management in the territory.

There is quite a number of individual artisan entities, specialised in manufacturing activities; while agricultural production (present above all in the hinterland) has a more marginal role in respect to other Communes in the territory, and is mainly focused on wine production.

There are two industrial areas, the first one near the harbour (in the past with a flourishing shipyard today deeply in crisis) and the second situated to the southwest of the communal territory. Throughout the years, the presence of a harbour has permitted the development of a fishing fleet now decreased in size. After having been restructured, the ancient fish market is being utilised for cultural manifestations and events.

Finally, vast areas of the coastline are destined for salt pans which not only assume a relevant importance on a commercial level but are a naturalistic heritage of invaluable beauty.

In recent years, the tertiary sector which supports the local economy has seen an increase. This indicates that the bordering communes turn to the city of Trapani to access the principal socio-sanitary, administrative and scholastic services.

Besides the hospital, the provincial health department assures the presence of a family clinic and continuous social assistance together with numerous social services even in partnership with the private sector.

The city has numerous educational institutes and a university which hosts a vast number of students coming also from the Communes along the province. There are many museums with important historical and archaeological collections and numerous churches.

Trapani has a large number of sports complexes, different scholastic gymnasiums, multi-equipped sports pavilions, "stadio", go-cart track, skating ring, even if the citizens complain about an inefficient management in some cases (unsafe equipment, limited access due to shortage of staff).

In reality, the transport system is not able to sustain huge flows of traffic, determining a traffic congestion in the hinterland nearer to the city and a major difficulty of interchange with the more internal zones. The road network connecting Trapani to the internal areas of the province is extremely bad due to lack of maintenance works, while the road which connects Trapani to Marsala and Mazara del Vallo is unable to fully meet the exigencies of the traffic due to structural problems.

There is an absence of public nursery schools vis-à-vis the exigencies of the population. The request for places of social meeting points is not met satisfactorily, although there are many abandoned public buildings. These are subject to vandalism and deterioration, which buildings could be converted to be used for socio cultural purposes.

The inhabitants of the territory live with the yearly problem of lack of drinking water, and water and drainage systems are highly inadequate.

The social, cultural and economic reality of the territory is heterogeneous: a small part of the population lives in very bad conditions (particularly those coming from public housing estates) while the remaining part has better standards of living. It has to be noted that the city, after Erice, Trapani, has the highest levels of average income pro-capita and in fact numerous families have an average to high standard of living, determined by a high level of education. Adults are in possession of a superior secondary school leaving certificate, although graduates are still few in number and almost always, both men and women in the family, work.

Poverty levels are average; social problems are linked above all to unemployment and illegal work, phenomena which involve mainly those who reside in the zone of Fontanelle Sud and district Palma.

In these areas, where there are some elementary schools and only some sports areas

(Fontanelle Sud), there are many small broken families, with low financial and cultural levels; some adults have only the lower secondary school certificate, many are unemployed or in search of a permanent occupation.

The presence of associations and parishes is important because they carry out activities to promote dialogue and solidarity, vital elements to construct strategies and useful alternatives for the community.

Upon the arrival of summer, the coastal zones near Trapani, witness the arrival by sea of illegal immigrants with evident repercussions on public order.

In order to face this phenomenon an open community has been set up, managed by a social cooperative in zone Salina Grande, inside the circuit S.P.R.A.R (system protection asylum seekers and refugees, composed of local entities which through collaboration of third parties, create projects for social integration).

The "C.A.R.A" is an open centre for men and women, without police guards at the entrance (even if the armed forces carry out patrols, however not so visible and evident, stationed in a building belonging to the Province).

The residents of the "C.A.R.A" live in conditions of discomfort; cold ambience, bad food (no food halal for the muslims), frequent overpopulation during the summer months, lack of resources and primary services.

Even the employees of the agency live in a certain discomfort due to irregularity in receipt of wages.

The residents of Salina Grande, a suburb of less than a thousand inhabitants, live in an emarginated situation, intensified by the bad urban roads, absence of lighting, and an inadequate public transport which connects the suburb to the city of Trapani and which is insufficient because of traffic increase due to the presence of migrants who move to various work places (among the proposed solutions immediately withdrawn due to arguments, some administrative representatives suggested the possibility of alternative transport routes only for immigrants).

A solution might be to accommodate migrants in smaller structures spread inside the community or to give the immigrants free passes to be used on public transport.

A part of the population (although marginal vis-à-vis the total) complains about the problem of integration aggravated by the presence of petty thefts from private properties and agricultural ones, disturbance of the public peace at night, and acts of vandalism; a situation of insecurity perhaps aggravated by the absence of control policies in the territory and by certain prejudiced individuals.

Some years ago a refurbishment programme was financed for the area with huge signs of hydro-geological instability with frequent floods which in some cases compromised the safety of private dwellings.

In the suburb Milo, at the side of the hills near Erice, near the provincial Station of

the Fire Brigade and the offices of the Italian Space Agency, there is a CIE (Centre for identification and expulsion) instead of the derelict centre of Vulpitta, which functions with reduced personnel after the numerous arguments following the death of six migrants because of a fire.

The CIE, consisting of a male population, lives in a perennial emergency, where windowsills and window bars have been transformed into weapons utilised during the numerous escape attempts (often successful); acts of self-harm are frequent and the recurrence to medication in order to sedate troublesome individuals.

Even the public security authorities protest due to lack of resources, which makes it difficult to manage a too big and quite unsafe structure. In the attempt to stop the revolts one uses all material at hand, even water hydrants, although, according to residents there were episodes of violence and torture in the past. Problems have increased, moreover, because ex-detainees and drug abusers are not separated from the new arrivals.

The average period of time spent in the CIE is of about two months (57 days) and one of the most urgent problems of these centres is represented by the absence of recreational and formative activities involving immigrants, who often find themselves as if parked there waiting for nothing, not to mention the fact that no cult practices structures exist and neither adequate legal assistance programmes.

Within the national operative Programme for security, with the contributions by European Union and national funds, the Commune has projected the construction of a multi-use Centre for immigrants, for work placements and social inclusion, the interested area lies in suburb Cipponelli in a property confiscated from the mafia.

With regards to foreign presence in the territory, the most numerous communities are those arriving from Romania, followed by Macedonia and Morocco.

The Moroccan and African community is mainly entrusted to manual activities, typical of the agricultural sector and characterised by seasonality. The absence of stable work opportunities influences greatly the movement of immigrants in the territory, which is essentially transitory.

The characteristics of migrants coming from Balkan countries are different. The main component (prevalingly female) is occupied in domestic help and is better integrated in society. The situation of the Chinese community is rather different, which is organised in a more autonomous manner and principally carries out commercial activities.

Criminal activity is deemed to be within the regional average but, due to the extension of the area, it is difficult to ensure a capillary control of the territory, reason for which citizens perceive extremely low security levels.

Types of crimes are quite wide-ranging, mainly comprised of economic crimes, irregular work, crimes against heritage (thefts, hold-ups, damage to property, receiving stolen goods, money laundering) and crimes against the person (injuries, extortion,

calumny, threats, sexual violence), crimes strictly related to the trafficking and possession of drugs.

Acts of vandalism against public property, green spaces, waste products bins, and others are numerous; In order to contrast, these actions the authorities have reinforced the surveillance systems by trying to involve citizens by making them aware of the problem of urban degradation and the need to protect the public heritage.

Organised by mafia entities, drugs circulate at a fast pace and always in a more consistent manner however it seems that most abusers have been able to adapt themselves to reduced drug consumption due to the economic crisis. Yet, this has not only lowered the price but also the quality of drugs.

Drug dependency involves all the strata of the population, but while the well-off have the financial possibility to buy drugs, the lower classes, not having a big income, in order to satisfy their addiction, are forced to traffic drugs, steal and commit violent acts even against their own families, in order to sustain their addiction.

Anti-drug squads have performed different raids all over the territory to abolish the drug market even by means of searches in private residences (many such operations in the area of Fontanelle-Sud).

A centre called Sert (service for drug dependency) has been active in the Commune for years, intent to activate projects for the prevention and awareness by the population. The most vulnerable are mainly male individuals on heroin, cocaine and cannabis.

The area with most problems is that of Fontanelle-Sud and San Giuliano and more generally those almost derelict zones, always less populated, whose inhabitants have absence of adequate spaces where to meet and be heard.

Numerous investigations have moreover put in evidence the existence of a still hidden market linked to “meretricio” and prostitution (victims young foreign females attracted to Italy by the promise of a job) which seems to involve the medium-high strata of the population and which in the past led to the arrest of apparent unsuspected personalities.

In the capital Commune, there is a correctional facility, in San Giuliano, often subject of discussions due to lack of resources and overpopulation. In order to guarantee major security for the citizens, a video surveillance system has been set up to supervise the activities of the prisoners.

The prison population has low standards of education, a low socio-economic origin pertaining to the emargination of the popular zones and often originate from broken and low standard families. There is also a section for foreign inmates.

Despite the evident potential of the territory, unemployment appears to be the reason why Trapani occupies the lowest ranking on the quality of life. It is particularly difficult to tackle this problem at local level as it is necessary to implement national development policies which, throughout the years, have always been less in number.

And initiatives undertaken by various competent organisations did not have a satisfying outcome; the scarce integration between the diverse realities present in the territory, the insufficiency of well-formed personnel, absence of structures and inadequacy of funds have permitted organised crime to spread, sometimes in an unobstructed manner, the culture of illegality.

In order to contrast criminal phenomena a major involvement by citizens and national government is needed. Generally, there is a scarce attention to juvenile and adult delinquency, the absence of social inclusion culture, and the prevention of difficult social situations; little efficiency in orientation and work placement policies.

Projects for the social and work inclusion of individuals coming from difficult situations, in collaboration with formative entities, have been financed, through training and work experiences in local entrepreneurial activities.

Road blocks are enforced all over the territory and periodically all security and police forces join together to combat commercial abuse, forgery, and crimes against heritage and drug trafficking.

In recent years video surveillance cameras have been installed in the commercial and administrative area in the town centre and along the north coastline (area Cappuccinelli).

In recent years, there has been a reinforcement of controls against illegal landfills and abusive constructions which often involves coastal areas devastating the panorama (example the area in the direction of Marausa, suburb along the provincial road connecting Trapani to Marsala, area of summer residences and small beach resorts).

### **Valderice**

Valderice, a prevalingly agricultural town, has become, by time, a preferred holiday destination by residents in the Trapani province which is characterised by an urban centre, various districts and some seaside resorts, such as those of Bonagia, Valderice Lido and the Rio Forgia beach.

In order to promote tourism development in the area, the Commune has activated a number of projects for the recovery of the environment along the coastline, reclaiming these zones from those who, in the past, took illegal possession of this land which changed the territorial panorama. Works of primary urbanisation have been carried out in tourist seaside areas in the northwest thanks also to the contribution of some residents.

The suburb of Bonagia, a few kilometres away from the centre, is made up of a small old town, site of a tunny net now in disuse which, following a series of refurbishment works has been converted into a museum (testimony of a marine tradition), a hotel and a restaurant.

Extraordinary maintenance works and green areas are planned for the future, by local institutions and particularly the infrastructural refurbishment of the “Fondo Auteri” (one

of the biggest scout camps in Sicily), where there should be a multi-functional meeting place and a botanic garden. The recovery of the Windmill Excelsior is important, situated in S.Marco district, nowadays used to host cultural events and manifestations.

Some suburbs in the Commune have mainly rural characteristics, linked as they are to traditional agricultural and cattle raising activities. Other areas have been strongly affected by urban and economic development along the territory and present a more organic texture (Paparella, Ragosia, Fico and Bonagia). In the localities of Xhiare, Seggio and ex Avicola Aurora there are productive activities in the construction sector.

Valderice lies at the foot of a woodland area made up of the Misericordia Park close to an ancient Sanctuary and to the San Barnaba pine tree park, where one finds a theatre of the same name in which, every year, numerous manifestations are organised. In some suburbs there are also green areas.

The main part of services and commercial activities are found in the town centre, although in more populated suburbs (Crocevia and Chiesanuova) there are post offices and schools.

If, on one hand, the territorial dislocation is more than adequate vis-à-vis population distribution, on the other hand, the ability to offer highly specialised and personalised services is lacking (due to lack of resources). In fact, there are two structures managed by religious institutions, which help minors in difficulty or with some disability.

Generally it is possible to affirm that Valderice, over time, distinguished itself as an ideal location to live in and the monitoring of social problems by territorial services is given due attention.

The Commune has been involved in numerous projects in support to parents, even by providing child care. There are adequate sports structures, numerous laboratory activities, day centres for the disabled and the elderly, residence and cultural centres.

There are many associations with humanitarian and cultural aims and in the past the city was recognised as a child friendly city.

Actions carried out by the call centre “STOP to violence on women” are important. This involves other communes (Marsala, Alcamo and Buseto Palizzolo), set up to support women who have experienced violent acts.

Levels of poverty and discomfort are average; social problems are linked, above all, to unemployment and illegal work, but even to the rapid increase of families at risk of breaking up.

The Commune provides monetary subsidies to those individuals living in conditions of social emargination. Moreover, many prevention campaigns and the promotion of the territory are in line.

Even criminality levels seem to be near the provincial average and crime seems to be strongly related to the growing socio-economic discomfort which involves all the



population. The most common crimes are fraud, economic crimes and illegal work. Shops and restaurants are victims of extortion rackets. The categories at risk of delinquency are the unemployed young people; immigrants and the illiterate; while the most common victims are young people and individuals with high standards of education.

Road blocks guarantee territory control and the authorities are examining many proposals in order to install short circuit television cameras connected to central police and security forces.

A particularly felt problem is that of the slowness of judicial proceedings, determined by a shortage of personnel, which greatly influences social order because it triggers a “short circuit” in the judicial system.

There are abandoned areas due to the excessive vastness of the territory and the exodus of people moving towards zones nearer to larger urban centres. Those living on the outskirts are in bad conditions since they have the perception of being totally abandoned by the institutions.

### **The System of the Islands**

- Egadi Archipelago and Pantelleria
- Egadi Islands

The Egadi archipelago, faces the city of Trapani. It is made up of the minor islands of Levanzo and Marettimo and two smaller islands (Maraneo and Formica), dependent administratively on the communal territory of the major island Favignana.

The island of Maraneo is a small uninhabited piece of land while Formica, left to its destiny for over ninety years, has been acquired by a religious community and hosts a residential centre for those who are living in bad conditions (prevaingly drug addicts).

On the small island of Formica there is an old tunny net, a windmill, a castle with a lighthouse and one of the most ancient Christian chapels; there is also a small harbour for modestly sized boats; moreover there is a museum dedicated to the tradition of tuna fishing.

The present buildings have been partly reconstructed thanks to works carried out throughout the years by persons in the residence centre, who are also involved in artisan, agricultural and fishing activities, therefore they are self-sufficient.

The archipelago imposes many restrictions on residents/visitors, in order to safeguard naturalistic and archaeological heritage present not only on land but under the ground and on the seabed (rich in archaeological remains).

The landscape of the three bigger islands is quite similar, made up of an ancient urban nucleus, from where a principal road runs along the territory with many paths converging on it thus permitting connections with more peripheral areas.

Eighty per cent of the population of the archipelago resides on the major island and is mainly distributed in the principal urban centre, situated along the western coast (area where there are business activities, public services, small family run hotels, numerous private residences, parishes and a small harbour) while a spread out number of residents live in minor localities such as Quattro Vanelle, Pozzo Ponente, Corso and Balate.

The centre of Marettimo, where the population resides, is situated on the east coast of the island. From here, there is a main road on which converge many small narrow streets which connect it to the surrounding highlands. It is the most extended island after Favignana and during the winter months, there are around a hundred residents who can benefit from a first aid clinic, few restaurants and shops.

The remaining five per cent of the total population resides on the island of Levanzo and also in this case, it is concentrated in the small inhabited centre situated on the southern part of the island. However, hospitality structures are still limited, there are very few commercial activities. There are two maritime agencies for the transport of vehicles and people.

All three islands of the archipelago have a medical clinic but hospitals are absent. Favignana also has two pharmacies and a heliport.

On the island of Favignana there is a detention centre joined to a work centre; a building which hosts condemned criminals and others on maximum security retained as socially dangerous. The lack of distinction between the two categories implies a serious penalisation in terms of prisoners' rights. There is a shortage of socio-assistance personnel and often due to lack of financial resources, it is not possible to ensure rehabilitation activities with the prisoners.

According to demographic data, two phenomena can be evidenced: the exodus of residents and an ageing population.

The number of residents, which has been in constant decline for over forty years, is showing a modest increment, attributed mainly to a positive migratory movement.

Almost half the dwellings located in the territory are unoccupied. Many families leave the minor islands in search of scholastic and work opportunities that offer better continuity and quality guarantees; an exodus which determines the impoverishment of the social network, since only the elderly remain, the least literate, thus the less dynamic part of society (population age is characterised by a very high ageing index).

There is a comprehensive institute (elementary and secondary school) spread out along the three islands of the archipelago.

The standard of education of the population has clearly risen, although it is still inferior to the regional and provincial statistics. Instruction levels are inferior to other communes, determined by the existing differences between the islands of the commune of Favignana and the absence of higher secondary schools.

In order to establish a sense of continuity, the scholastic institute of Favignana has promoted the project School 2.0, based on the experiment of distance learning using new means of technology. Many courses have been organised intended for families of an adult age.

All islands, more or less, possess a valuable archaeological, historical and cultural heritage, a small part of which has been refurbished in order to make it accessible to visitors.

Of major interest on the island of Marettimo is the Castle of Punta Troia, situated on top of a beautiful promontory at the north western tip of the island while on a vast plain close to the inhabited centre, there are the ruins of a huge military building dating back to Roman times.

Among all the architectural heritage of the territory, a good example of refurbishment works is without doubt the Tonnara Florio close to Favignana harbour, where till a few years ago, tuna fish was processed for conservation. Restoration works have re-given dignity to the site, which is nowadays open to the public and used as museum.

The development of touristic activities which has undoubtedly given a new vitality to the economy has been accompanied by a series of problems linked to environmental sustainability associated with the huge seasonal movements of people and the reconversion of traditional activities.

With regards to transport and viability, Favignana benefits from a local public transport service. On Favignana, there are many vehicle hire agencies (bicycles and motorcycles) but there are no bicycle lanes thus posing serious problems to the safety of citizens. To avoid congestion in the town centre, during the summer months, there are pedestrian zones and limited parking areas (which often are not respected). Even the illumination system in peripheral areas is not always adequate.

Some zones are densely inhabited, for example residences built at the foot of disused quarries, houses built near beaches, a mixture of abusive buildings and no established territorial policies (the Commune does not have a regulatory plan) which can change drastically the natural panorama.

Areas, which in the past were destined to the cultivation of seeds and vineyards, have been for the most part abandoned due to structural problems (scarce water resources) and a certain indifference by the young generation (undoubtedly the touristic activities have more appeal).

Finally a socio-cultural problem still remains in relation to the integration of traditional values with more progressive ones. It is above all the older population that shows signs of discomfort and succeeds with difficulty to adapt itself to the huge movements of tourists during the summer months.

There is almost no disturbance of the public order and the archipelago is essentially

tranquil and the few episodes of disturbance are related to the presence of tourists who stay out late at night in the town centre drinking and shouting (the pubs and restaurants are in the inhabited centre). During the summer months there are many controls (of commercial entities) carried out by personnel in order to ensure the absence of illegal work and tax evasion. There is also a refuse-collection system which operates punctually ensuring the cleanliness of the territory.

### **Pantelleria**

The commune of Pantelleria is found on a volcanic island with the same name (the most extended among Sicilian islands), situated halfway between the African coast and Italy. The inhabited centre, where almost half the population lives, lies along the northwest area of the island, around a characteristic bay and the harbour where there are connections via sea with Sicily.

The rest of the population is mainly distributed in the localities of Kamma and Scauri, situated respectively along the east and southwest coast. A small part of the population lives in houses spread throughout the territory. Only the internal areas of the island, that is, those surrounding the natural park of Montagna Grande and the southern zone are uninhabited, since these constitute a natural reserve. Next to the urban centre there is a small airport which offers transport services to people and goods. In the southwestern area (direction Scauri) there are the archaeological sites of Cimilia and Mursia.

Due to its urban settlement which along the years resulted as “spread out”, the island of Pantelleria has developed a quite articulated road network; however a big part of the territory is often connected by non-asphalted roads and without adequate illumination (a similar problem to Favignana) since till now only the main arteries have undergone maintenance and refurbishment works by the administration.

The urban setting of the island is characterised by an original nucleus, partly rebuilt after the damages of the second World War, dominated by modestly sized isolated buildings, with difficult access by heavy vehicles and others in general. There are also some historical zones, which are partly damaged, situated in the areas surrounding Via Manzoni (corresponding to the ancient Casbah), Via Cagliari, along Corso Umberto and in the old fishermen zone between Via Catania and Via Borgo Italia (area with a major inhabited density), subject to refurbishment attempts.

The increment of tourism aspects has seen the progressive decadence of the historical town centre into a residential area, by the construction of new types of settlements in the peripheric zone and along the coastline in the direction of Scauri, where there are new commercial and industrial areas.

The buildings are related to tourist activities and seasonal residences, so much so that the percentage of unoccupied dwellings during winter is very high. Recently constructed

buildings are often multi-storey blocks (inhabited by permanent residents) or buildings destined for tourists, second individual or family houses, small town houses or hotel type residences. Towards the hinterland there are old rural buildings, of Arab origin, denominated "Dammusi" (big part of which have been recovered thanks to private individuals).

Notwithstanding a slightly positive demographic movement, the ratio of elderly people is very high, thus registering a progressive ageing population. Many elderly people live in the most ancient part of the town centre, while on the outskirts (in the direction of the coast) the multi-storey residences are occupied by lower social classes. Every family has an average of three members and the higher level of education is still inferior to the regional average, particularly low as regards university level (a common fact in the province); even the average is not particularly high due to lack of entrepreneurship which does not utilise to the full tourist potentialities.

There is a strong foreign presence, much more than the regional and provincial average; which is the work force of primary activities (agriculture and fishing) in a society characterised by high levels of ageing and a general indifference among young people towards jobs not considered ambitious and not well paid.

The foreign population consists mainly of Romanians and marginally North Africans. Generally, the men work in the agriculture and construction sectors, while the women work as assistants to the elderly; contrary to other territorial realities, according to local administrators, immigrants are not emarginated and seem to have integrated well in local society.

The economic development of the island is linked to the services sector specifically tourism (business, public services, restaurants, hotels, estate agents, transport and car hire) and public administration.

Tourism is obviously seasonal, mainly in summer especially in August, with evident repercussions on local infrastructures well under pressure. Typical problems of smaller urban centres crop up such as management of traffic and the threat to the environment on one side and on the other, the need to boost local economy by means of diversification of tourist presences and policies for better services and hospitality, besides embellishment of the environment.

Before the onset of tourism, Pantelleria gained its income by means of agriculture. Nowadays strongly on the decline; capers and vineyards represent the main cultivations on the island (many vineyards are in proximity of the western coastal zones) and its production of "passito" is known worldwide.

Socially and educationally, there is a private structure for children from 0 to 3 years of age. There are basic school services (elementary and secondary schools) besides a higher secondary school offering various courses (elementary schools are present in all suburbs,

while the secondary and higher secondary schools are situated in the town centre). The Commune has a very contained medical service due to financial restrictions. There are also certain forms of social secretariat, work scholarships, initiatives and meals offered by Caritas. There is also a temporary residence centre for the homeless (now utilised for emergencies linked to clandestine disembarkations). There are no homes for the elderly who live in bad conditions, but the administration has tried to provide alternative measures of assistance and work integration.

The island has the same problems as other Sicilian islands and tourist localities in the Trapani province, namely; the fast economic development, the isolation of being an island, absence of structures for leisure activities (except for a recreation centre for the young and adolescents), places of entertainment and inadequacy of cultural and sports structures. In this sense, there are some small sports grounds in the districts. The Commune is considering building a covered complex and a new equipped area on grounds confiscated from the mafia near the locality of Zubebi and Zito. There are a few open air play areas for children, situated in the town centre often with little maintenance.

Modern urban traditions contrast greatly with local ones thus rendering more problematic drug abuse and alcoholism especially among young people. The breaking up of family nuclei and the absence of certain values are at the base of various acts of juvenile delinquency: from school truancy to vandalism and bullying.

There does not seem to be any organised crime in Pantelleria probably due to the particular geographical position of the island which does not easily permit such settlements. Even abusive buildings which have devastated whole coastal areas of Sicily, are very modest in number. The community has strong grassroots. Everyone knows each other, but nevertheless in the last years, there has been an increase in crimes linked to robberies, fraud and hold-ups on summer residences and business activities.

If some criminal events are connected to the presence of many illegal immigrants on the island (although the phenomenon is well on the decline), more generally, the causes could be due to a period of crisis aggravated by increasing rent rates.

The territory has different security sections such as “carabinieri”, fire brigade, municipal police and “guardia di finanza”.

### **The south western coastal zones and bordering areas**

- Marsala, Mazara Del Vallo and Petrosino
- Marsala

Marsala is the most populated city in the province of Trapani with an extremely dynamic economic position. Moreover, it is characterised by a rich historical, archaeological and naturalistic heritage, factors which enrich the local economy.

The urban setting of the Commune is variegated and peculiar: the old centre, which, contrary to what happened in other communes of the province, has been partly hit by degradation and population decrease (most of the population is concentrated in this zone), it is bordered by ruins of the ancient city walls (partly destroyed in the past, by local Administrations themselves). It is a mainly pedestrian zone, characterised by a principal road with many business activities, around which there are local council offices, banks, postal services, small hotels, bars, wine cellars and some schools. Many of the buildings are in good condition, although some buildings near the principal road are in a bad state due to indifference (in this part of the territory there is a modest number of immigrants).

The harbour area is near the town centre. Besides the Maritime Authority there are two transport companies offering transport service to the Egadi Islands, an area dedicated to shipyard activities, a nautical club, different parking areas and many business activities, some of which are restaurants and cafeterias.

Around the most ancient settlement, there is the more recent urban area, made up mainly of wide avenues and multi-storey blocks of flats alternating with historical smaller buildings, which extend towards the north in the direction of Trapani, to the south on the road to Mazara del Vallo, and to the east on the highway to Salemi.

The territory is occupied by various commercial activities around which there are popular residential areas.

In the past, the areas nearer to the city centre suffered an uncontrolled proliferation of buildings destroying many archaeological sites of which a slight evidence remains.

In the direction of Salemi, near the highway which links the urban territory to the outskirts further away, there is the new hospital which accommodates patients coming from bordering communes.

Finally, a considerable part of Marsala territory is composed of a number of districts (a hundred), which present quite a similar setting, characterised by small settlements distributed along the principal roads. Builtup areas are surrounded by the countryside, which in turn, is dotted with farmhouses and other rural buildings.

Many of the bigger suburbs have primary services, schools, police stations, small artisan and commercial activities.

Strasatti is the most populated centre, situated along highway 115 which connects Marsala to Mazara Del Vallo. Here live a large number of immigrants who find work in the many agricultural industries (vineyards and nurseries) present in the surrounding territory.

Besides the compulsory schools and the Professional Institute of Agriculture, the suburb also has post office services, bank branches, a hotel, some bars and an abandoned sports ground (although the Communal Administration is planning to refurbish the area).

This district has problems regarding the inadequacy of internal mobility (bad state of roads often causing accidents and flooding) and a scarce urban embellishment caused also

by an inefficient refuse collection service.

The entire coastal zone is characterised by irregular settings of archaeological sites and naturalistic areas (only in part under environmental restrictions) and expansion of residential areas. This is accentuated by abusive buildings and the presence of drainage systems that flow directly into the sea. These negative developments seriously jeopardise the equilibrium of the environmental eco-system.

Environment and sustainable development policies adapted in the last years, tried to put a halt to the abnormal growth of the urban territory in the past 30 years, previously made possible by the absence of regulatory norms in the construction sector.

To the north, along the coastline towards Trapani, there is the Via del Sale (the Salt Road), characterised by the presence of the Oriented Reserve of Stagnone which includes the islands of Schola, Santa Maria, Isola Lunga and Mozia. These are sites of numerous archaeological findings and old salt production industries, part of which are still active.

In this area there are many villas, areas for nautical sports, tourist residences and family-run small restaurants, bars or cafeterias.

Along the south coast, in the direction of Mazara Del Vallo, there are several residences, many of which are holiday houses of residents, aquatic sports centres, different medium sized lodgings for tourists and many seaside establishments.

The economy of Marsala is still strongly linked to the agricultural sector, followed by the commercial sector, often medium and small family-run activities which are evident of a low income level.

Due to the importance of the sector, some time ago a course was launched at Marsala, a Degree Course in Viticulture and Enology by the University of Palermo. The hinterland is characterised by important vine cultivations. Marsala, moreover, is seat to famous wine cellars, and many wine bars. The commune is said to be on the tourist-cultural wine road and is flanked by many rural settlements (farmhouses and wooden sheds) many of which are being restored to enhance the territory and local eno-gastronomical traditions, thanks to an initiative mainly by private individuals.

Even if the wine production industry of western Sicily is one of the most famous on a national and international level, this sector has not been immune to the effects of the crisis, exacerbated by the decline of private investments by insufficient commercial infrastructures or speculative choices based on the system of the European Union subsidies for grape-harvesting and elimination of vineyards. All of which have led to the abandonment of some parts of the territory.

That is why it is important to protect the local agricultural system, based on a small production and small property, carrying out protection and valorisation processes both for the wooden huts and the urban vineyards.

The Commune intends to create an industrial area, a few kilometres away from the



inhabited centre, on a piece of land to the east, nowadays used mainly for agricultural purposes. This zone is linked to the principal road and motorway exit by a major road.

Marsala was not able to fully reap the growth of tourist mobility, generated by the airport of Trapani-Birgi. Such difficulties are mainly due to the lack of policies of public communications on tourist resources and hospitality services in the city and partly to a mistaken transport policy.

With regards to the transport system and mobility, Marsala has ease of access to air traffic thanks to the vicinity of Birgi airport and the airport of Palermo-Punta Raisi reachable in about one hour by motorway. More critical are the connections by other transport systems (both passengers and goods); the harbour infrastructure does not permit heavy sea traffic, the railroad is undersized vis-à-vis the exigencies of the population and even the public transport system is inadequate.

The absence of public connection services between airport and city is emblematic but even internal mobility is insufficient (for example connection between the island of MOTHIA and the salt pans). There is also no chauffeur driven car hire and taxi service. There are no services of car or bicycle sharing and only one tourist information point is present in the town centre.

Tourist services in Marsala are quite scarce, even if receptive structures operating in the Commune of Marsala have doubled in 20 years (regarding hotels, mainly of medium-high category). Others provide small properties for rent, bed and breakfast and agri-tourism structures. Even if there are museums, monuments and archaeological attractions, the tourism aspect is lacking especially in basic and collateral services.

Some attractions can be visited on reduced hours or by appointment, others are inaccessible because unequipped and unsafe (this refers specifically to some archaeological areas).

In Marsala, there is a public library inside the historical complex of San Pietro. Here one can admire quite a volume of valuable books as well as visit a historical archive in Piazza Carmine.

The Commune provides basic primary services; the provision of the secondary services, important nowadays due to urban development (cultural aspects, socialisation) is not satisfactory. Such could increase significantly the quality of life of the inhabitants and could set the pace to a new urban design. Education structures are adequate vis-à-vis their territorial dislocation. Students have a complex of scholastic structures – from kindergarten to elementary school, lower and upper secondary schools. These are managed by the Commune and the province.

The quality of the present infrastructures differs from place to place. In some cases, structures do not have the adequate requisites to make them safe for habitation. However, some buildings are ideal, particularly because of their central position that facilitates the

mobility of people, particularly students. Many upper secondary schools are moreover characterised by high levels of truancy (around 20 per cent). The authorities tried to remedy this situation by embarking on projects in collaboration with other schools in the territory, in the hope of creating better quality educational services.

Structures and equipment for cultural, sports and recreational services in the commune of Marsala are a bit lacking in measurement vis-à-vis the population settlement and its role as a territorial and tourist focal point. From this point of view, Marsala can be considered as average.

The city is, at present, endowed with various sports complexes, property of the commune, but many structures are, in fact, scarcely utilised for a number of reasons. The crisis makes it difficult for the survival of local sports associations. In addition, some areas are often inaccessible due to lack of maintenance works.

The sports structure of Villa Damiani in the Oliva district (which previously belonged to a private cooperative and which was successively acquired by the Commune), has always been abandoned until it became the object of devastation and vandalism. So much so that many parts were dismantled; from the covered pool to the gymnasium, sauna baths were completely dismantled and carried away, together with hygienic services; water, electricity and gas pipes and tiles. One also finds a football ground situated in district Terrenove-Bambine, which however lacks maintenance and is subject to vandals who have almost destroyed it.

Finally, as regards infrastructures for socio recreational services, there are two theatres and cinema halls in the city, a private Bowling hall, several pubs, discotheques and bars.

The citizens complain about a low quality city life spread out in some city zones (particularly archaeological areas and popular districts), due to lack of maintenance and civic sense by the residents themselves. Other complaints include the absence of good quality green areas and parks, as well as the scarce knowledge of the enormous cultural and environmental heritage in the territory.

The population in Marsala is increasing, and is characterised by a constant fluctuations in birth rate and a quite stabilised mortality rate; therefore there is a progressive ageing of the population accompanied by a general decrease in the number of families composed of three members.

Socio assistance services in the commune comprise, (besides the hospital in Cardilla district admitting patients from all the bordering territories), a polyclinic, family consultant services, a "Sert", supervision centre for minors and numerous communities for individuals in difficulty (minors, youths and mothers in difficulty, old people, drug addicts and immigrants).

An important role is played by local associations that support and coordinate the services offered by the public administration. The crisis is being alleviated from hard-hit

families by local diocesan structures that give out free meals and are in charge of the distribution of primary necessities.

Despite public and private generosity, the services provided to crisis-afflicted families is extremely fragmented. In fact, there is no local coordination plan that could otherwise facilitate interventions.

In the last years, there was an almost constant increase in the number of foreigners residing in the commune of Marsala where there is a big number of Tunisians and Romanians - a phenomenon strictly related to a work force demand expressed by basic agricultural entities (vine cultivations, nurseries and floriculture) and the mineral extraction sector (volcanic rock quarries "tofo" and salt).

To assist the immigrants residing permanently in the city territory, there is the provision of economic support and apprenticeship to facilitate their inclusion in the work sector and in society, as well as to ensure personal wellbeing and familiar support. Since recently in the Perino district, a community centre which can assist up to 40 individuals has been set up. Nevertheless in a recent zone plan (document which regulates social assistance activities for the community), no specific actions are foreseen.

The authorities tend to underestimate the immigration problem, in the belief that the foreign population residing in Marsala has substantially the same needs as Italian citizens who live in bad conditions, or have problems of an economic nature. Their diverse cultural needs tend to be overlooked. The few initiatives regarding integration are carried out by entities operating in the tertiary sector.

Drug dependency (heroin and cocaine) is a diffused problem all over the territory, mainly involving young adults aged 25-29 years, the unemployed and with low standards of education.

A central role, in providing services in this area, is played by the "Sert" which operates in the territory by means of mobile and static entities both in a pharmacological manner and also in a therapeutic, rehabilitative one.

Moreover, there are activities on prevention, information and awareness of the phenomenon of dependency, particularly to combat the recent diffusion of gaming dependency (even if with the crisis, recently numerous betting centres have opened and even gaming sites online are well on the increase). Investigations have uncovered a criminal association which was distributing equipment to shop managers, which when connected to internet sites, permitted gaming and clandestine betting.

With regards to minors, the different problems encountered are strictly related to different socio educational contexts. In schools, there are difficulties linked to learning and behavioural problems exacerbated by a lack of attention in the form of their own family. This often results in their abandoning their studies and increasing school truancy. The central regional government, every year, disposes of thousands of euros to finance projects for the

decrease in delinquency and truancy by means of a major integration between schools and places of work.

There are a number of community residences exist for minors at risk, some of which take in pregnant or single mothers in difficulty and house a socio recreational centre for children and adolescents. An important step was the opening of a family centre which intervenes to support families with problems. Services such as family mediation, counselling and psychological assistance are provided.

Social classes are prevailingly middle class, and are linked to the tertiary sector, agricultural and tourist activities.

For some years, there has been an increase in requests for financial aid (even by social categories which are not deemed to be on the poverty line) due to both the financial crisis and the fact that the territory sector as a whole does not offer great opportunities for stable jobs, since both the tourist and agricultural activities are of a seasonal nature.

The most vulnerable in this economic scenario are the elderly, often forced to live in isolated conditions and serious economic instability. The commune offers a service of domestic help for elderly people and the service of an Integrated House Assistance in favour of elderly people with limited personal autonomy and /or physical and mental health issues.

There are financial aids for needy families and social centres. Generally, poverty levels are found in the peripheral areas of the city, particularly in the social zones of Amabilina, Sappusi and Via Itria.

Often, these are old settlements without maintenance and in some cases, totally isolated, uninhabited or left to deteriorate in time, many of these often occupied in an abusive manner.

The popular houses of Via Mazara, for example, have never been completed and the area is totally delapidated, which in the past, following an spot check, such blocks were declared inaccessible and thus evacuated. The resident families were lodged in rented private dwellings thanks to the financial support offered by the commune. Even though a project for the recovery and refurbishment of the buildings had been approved, works were never started due to bureaucratic problems to the detriment of these homeless families.

The zones of Amabilina and Sappusi are another story: there are schools and some social centres; there are ghettos, scarce commercial activities and the presence of law enforcement officials. Green areas are almost inexistent, and a few areas are abandoned (on request of the community, the commune carried out cleaning up duties to embellish the urban panorama).

Along the Salinella seafront, at Sappusi, a project is being carried out for the implementation of sports and harbour activities thanks to the creation of a small harbour, vociferously demanded by local entrepreneurs, in order to enhance living conditions.

Police forces render a discreet service, taking into account the vastness of the territory and the fact that their resources are rapidly diminishing.

There is a firestation, traffic police headquarters, the “Carabinieri” and the offices of the “Guardia di Finanza”. The administration has installed a video surveillance system to control urban areas and access to zones of limited traffic (town centre). However, these instruments are not functioning due to lack of maintenance. In time, this system is intended to be installed even in the extra-urban centres.

Marsala has also a branch of the judicial tribunal which deals with crimes in the surroundings of Mazara del Vallo (Partanna, Castelvetrano, etc.).

The most common crimes are thefts from private dwellings in the peripheric areas, bank and post office robberies as well as fraud and economic crimes even from public administration offices. All these crimes are attributed to single individuals although lately, micro-criminality tends to be always more structured, so much so that there is an escalation of more organised crimes (particularly hold-ups).

Prevention measures are being reinforced even by monitoring individuals already known to the authorities for similar crimes.

It is not possible to make a precise classification of victims, although, inevitably, the most vulnerable are the elderly and minors. Crimes are mainly committed by those living in a violent environment, in blue-collar zones and by immigrants.

Crimes of an environmental nature are numerous. In reaction to these crimes, the administration is taking provisions to confiscate and demolish abusive buildings.

However, problems are too vast to be resolved at communal level (unemployment, security, immigration and health) and it would be opportune to organise technical teams of persons presided by public order officers and local entities.

### **Petrosino**

The commune of Petrosino is situated halfway between Mazara del Vallo and Marsala. It only obtained its administrative autonomy from Marsala in the 1980s. It was until then annexed to Marsala and shared with it, the main part of social assistance and communal services such as the water supply, the viability and the urban public transport. Today, shares with Marsala an economy based on agriculture and vine cultivation, a vast heritage of rural architecture (chiani) all over the agricultural land which is closely linked to the urban landscape by small districts and a coastal area along which the population is distributed during the summer months.

There is no definite inhabited nucleus. The urban centre of the Commune, adjacent to the suburb of Strasatti-Marsala, and originally made up of about 7 districts, extends almost along all the territory. In the hinterland to the north, some zones were subject to refurbishment works. Near the railroad there is the ancient suburb of Torreggiano, the most extended and the most densely populated. Here one finds a pharmacy, a railway

station, a superior technical institute and a compulsory school, few business activities and a small bar. The area bordering the territory is virtually uninhabited since it is comprised of agricultural land.

The square “F. De Vita”, where there is the most important church of the village, is the focal point, from where the main roads start. Further on to the south, in the direction of the coast, there are local council offices, the police station, bank services and business activities.

Among the coastal areas, the beach of Torrazza and Capo Feto is of particular importance since it is considered as an ecological area. This part of the coastline enjoys a natural environment that is only partially affected by construction works that are mushrooming all around, such as beach resorts and residences.

The authorities have embarked on initiatives for the the provision of social dwellings, public areas embellishment, primary and secondary urban works by local institutions which have involved above all schools as well as cemeteries (which were in urgent need of repairs and upgrading).

There is a cultural centre, the local granary (area subjected to acts of vandalism) and an equipped boules pitch. There is no sports complex even if there is a plan for a playground with wi-fi points which should be a meeting place for adults and young.

Private entrepreneurs contribute by rehabilitating the rural heritage. Their efforts are aimed at diversifying the economy linked to the tourist hospitality sector. In this sense, it would be fundamental to refurbish the coastline and rehabilitate swimming zones in the Biscione district.

A few kilometres away from the centre, there is an area of artisan and industrial development in which there are agricultural entities (nurseries, herb cultivations, distillery for the production of wines etc.).

The unemployment ratio is superior to the national one and involves, above all, young graduates. The average income of residents is among the lowest of the province, even if the majority of families live in a decent house (mainly quite modest ground floor buildings overlooking the road). Most of the population is occupied in the primary sector, followed by state employees and business activities.

Compulsory schools are divided in various branches, falling under the umbrella of one institute. These schools are spread in the various districts. Most of the inhabitants, (above 40 years of age) are in possession of the compulsory secondary school leaving certificate. Although the basic literacy level is considered as adequate, the situation is different at diploma and degree level (percentages which decrease drastically).

There has been a constant, although slight, demographic growth due to substantial high birth rates and a positive migratory resistance.

Residents consider this area as unstable and insecure. There are high levels of criminality

linked to the presence of a micro-criminality dedicated mainly to crimes against heritage, illegal work and physical crimes.

The most vulnerable are those defined as categories at risk, such as elderly people, women, individuals with low standards of education and those who own/work in small retail outlets. Illegal employment involves mainly ethnic minorities who have found jobs in the agricultural sector (many of whom come from Maghreb countries).

Problems linked to the overuse of the territory and scarce vigilance are evident. Many roads are often unlighted due to a more widespread phenomenon of thefts of copper wires placed on electricity cables. The resultant lack of illumination facilitates thefts from private dwellings. For this purpose, controls by the police force have intensified particularly during the night.

Another striking fact relates to the spread of open-air landfills. Thanks also to monitoring of the territory by environmental associations, many sites have been identified where solid and often highly toxic material has been dumped and abandoned. This is carried out by individuals or entities in order to avoid paying considerable sums of money for their disposal (a possible solution to this problem could be to provide economic incentives for the disposal of waste material).

The massive spread of abusive landfills particularly involves the coastal areas, effected also by the problem of abusive constructions made possible by concessions given by improvised technical offices (recently there was the seizure of some seaside resorts in connection with suspect urban irregularities).

Some zones have video surveillance systems but, if criminality is to be tackled in a more effective way it is necessary for the administration to involve the citizens and the local community.

### **Mazara Del Vallo**

The commune of Mazara Del Vallo is situated on the south western coast of Sicily. Its territory, the most extended of the Province, is very variegated: to the north there is a slightly hilly area characterised by typical rural settlements, surrounded by pieces of land destined for agricultural purposes; in the eastern part there is the industrial area of San Nicola; the south lies in the Mediterranean sea. In the direction of Marsala, there is the district of Ferla which is an agricultural haven.

The town is characterised by the river Mazaro which historically separated the town centre, situated on the left bank, from the ancient outskirts (then characterised by agricultural land) - an area extending even today till the holiday and swimming area. The centre, which embraces the most ancient part of the city, is formed by a quadrilateral made up of streets such as Corso Umberto, corso Vittorio Veneto, corso Aria and by the sea.

The city centre is known for its numerous alleys and courtyards and it was divided in

four districts: to the south, the district of San Giovanni, where there were religious and administrative buildings of which some architectural evidences remain; San Francesco, in the western part, where there is the Casbah, that is the “city” of Arab influence with narrow winding small streets, blind alleys, courtyards with cisterns, arcades in volcanic rock and stone stairs, cold and very small dilapidated houses inhabited usually by numerous families. To the centre north there is the Hebrew district of Giudecca and Xitta while at the eastern extremity there are typical popular housing estates.

The new urban centre is bordered by the river Delia to the south, by the sea to the west and by the motorway to the north east. The outskirts area has wide roads and multi-storey buildings, which were constructed more recently.

The residential zone, to the west of Mazara, is characterised by the presence of buildings, which are in very good condition. The inhabited town centre, at least in the more visible parts, is kept quite well (thanks to refurbishment works in the area). On the other hand, in the peripheric zones there are abandoned or dilapidated buildings.

Beside the inhabited centre, the commune of Mazara comprises other peripheric zones amongst which: the protected area of Capo Feto; the archaeological site of Roccazzo near the provincial road Mazara-Salemi; the coastal suburb of Borgata a small rural settlement of about a few hundred inhabitants, which developed around a now derelict wooden hut “baglio” inside a vaster territory now used for agricultural purposes, mainly vineyards. The territory, moreover, experienced a diffused settlement phenomenon outside the urban centre, mainly along the coastal area (from zone Tonnarella to territory extending along Cape Granitola) which affected also the natural part of the beach with serious consequences on the natural eco-system (mainly abusive holiday houses, for which the local Administration proposed regulatory and recovery plans along the years).

This expansion of the city affected greatly the city centre, which has undergone a progressive demographic and economic decline compensated in part by the settlement of a population coming from Maghreb countries.

The territory is inhabited by the families of workers employed in maritime activities, besides artisans, factory workers, shopkeepers and, on a small scale, entrepreneurs, state employees and self-employed. The primary activities (fishing and agriculture) are a significant focal point in the present development of Mazara, although these have changed systematically.

Agricultural entrepreneurship, focused on vine cultivations and affected by the structural crisis common to all territories of the Sicilian hinterland, has had a decline in the last years.

From the seventies onwards, the fishing sector represented the main vehicle of the town economy, placing the services sector in an inferior position.

The fishing fleet, one of the biggest in Italy, has a vast workforce. In the last years it has



gone through a huge decrease linked to numerous factors amongst which the biological blocking (that is a legal suspension of fishing activities) to tackle the impoverishment of species present in the local marine environment. One of the major problems is represented by the sometimes difficult relations with coastal Mediterranean countries and the absence of a clear bordering line in territorial waters. Often, fishing vessels in search of more fertile waters, enter other territorial waters and consequently are seized by foreign authorities.

The economic change and demographic growth which have influenced the city in the preceding twenty years, has strongly affected the harbour zone of Trasmazaro. The natural harbour, close to the fish market, still has shipyard activities and mechanical workshops. On the river banks, moreover, there are small artisan activities linked to the fishing industry.

The expansion of the fleet, thanks also to financial incentives offered in the past by central governments, has evidenced the inadequacies of the natural harbour thus giving way to the construction of a new port which now hosts the port authorities.

Besides being a fishing vessel port, the harbour of Mazara del Vallo, nowadays represents an important point of reference to commercial sea traffic, and even on a smaller scale, a tourist port (sometimes is a base for cruise liner tourism). Moreover, in this harbour, there are structures for the maintenance of the methane pipeline of the SNAM which connects Algeria to Italy and which has its outlet in the vicinity of Capo Feto.

The will to safeguard this precious architectural heritage has urged the communal administration to evaluate the hypothesis of creating a museum area inside an eminently symbolic place in the town centre still affected by the intense mobility of people and traffic every day.

The Commune has activated a series of maintenance and urban refurbishment works, intended to recover and repair the social zone of Via Sansone, and Trasmazaro, to diminish the dilapidation of social blocks of flats and to create an architectural space destined to become a meeting place for the organisation of events.

The Trasmazaro is a recent zone, which is in continuous expansion. It is the centre of the most important economic activities of the city. These are linked to the production of fish products and other maritime activities. In the zone, there are parish groups, a municipal police station, a lower secondary school, the vegetable/fruit market, the communal granary and other areas administered by private individuals. It seems clear that, the territory lacks public services at every level: public gymnasiums, recreational clubs and green spaces.

The dwellings are almost all recently constructed, many of which are one-family houses, a few blocks of apartments and many villas. In fact, there are also a number of summer residences, therefore during the summer months the population greatly increases in number.

Economically speaking, the zone is of medium-high standard, even if there are also some problematic areas.

Mazara is of fundamental importance even for the history of Norman and Baroque architecture in Sicily; from the cathedral to the precious diocesan Museum and Republic Square. The Commune is characterised by the presence of a number of churches and the natural oasis of Preola Lake as well as the round Gulfs. The tourist flow destined to the city and its territory, remains marginal and mainly seasonal. There is a slight growth in this sense: high level tourist and hotel services and a slight refurbishment of the town centre, have led to the opening of small activities specialised in the entertainment sector. In the rural hinterland, there are some entrepreneurial initiatives.

There seems to be an intention to develop the touristic potential of the zone, if possible even to equal the progress achieved by the agricultural sector (mirroring what is happening in other bordering communes).

In this territory, there are the indispensable services for the city: post offices and bank services, a hospital and some voluntary centres, besides residence centres for the elderly and minors in difficulty. The city, like other bigger urban centres, is characterised by an evident inadequacy of services and social structures and by a scarce presence of cultural centres, (the commune has a museum, an art museum and a public library), theatres or even sports centres (there are private gymnasiums while the only public sports centre is situated in the Affacciata zone and reachable a not always efficient public transport).

The territory has many areas at risk, localised in new peripheric districts, inhabited by non-traditional families whose father figures are often absent or with serious judicial problems.

The district of "Mazara Due", to the north of the motorway network, is experiencing social degradation due to a number of factors, such as poverty, unemployment and illegal work, low standards of education and continuous disruption of services.

It seems like a dormant area, with wide streets and multi-storey blocks of flats, few social meeting places where activities are organised by the nearby parish and the elementary school. Residents complain about the malfunctioning of public illumination (service is often interrupted due to theft of the copper cables), the inadequacy of the public transport service, the dilapidated state of the local kindergarten and the areas surrounding it.

Works regarding better illumination are in line but also finances for urban embellishment and commercial development of the area by means of restructuring works on buildings belonging to the commune destined to small entrepreneurial activities.

Living conditions in popular zones nearer to the centre are very difficult. For example in Via Potenza, there is ample social degradation and micro-criminality. Near this area, characterised mainly by recently constructed high blocks of flats, there is a playground (re-opened recently after years of abandonment), and adjacent to it, there is a kindergarten and an elementary school, the hospital and a modest number of business activities.

A reality is that represented by the ancient Medina in the heart of the town centre and particularly the area between Piazza Regina and Piazza Repubblica which, following the earthquake in the beginning of the 80s (1981), was abandoned by residents. The latter having benefited from financial aid, chose to move to new residential quarters in the zone of Tranamzaro and the north western end of the ancient Casbah.

In the years following the earthquake, this area was occupied mainly by Tunisian and Moroccan families. Notwithstanding this, successively many of the first Tunisian immigrants preferred to move to a peripheric zone and the zone near the railroad (considered more secure) while some streets were inhabited by a more numerous second group of foreigners of Balkan origin.

The resident population is mainly comprised of seamen and individuals working in the maritime sector. Naturally, the effects of the crisis in the fishing sector has influenced the income of these maritime workers thus also the immigrants' lives, many of whom in the last years, have been forced to abandon their houses and seek fortune in the north or return to their countries of origin.

The inclusion of immigrants of Yugoslavian origin is difficult. These seem to represent the most discriminated component on the part of the residents, even if the "rom" phenomenon is from a statistical point of view, of little relevance. They experience a relevant stigma similar if not superior to that experienced by Tunisians.

If along the years the administrators have frequently celebrated the inclusion model represented by the city of Mazara, a more profound analysis seems to put in evidence a number of contradictions and difficulties which seem to characterise the settlement of foreigners in the territory.

The foreign presence in the town centre, perceived by the authorities as fundamental for the revival of the area, in which there are pubs and restaurants, is seen by the great majority of the people of Mazara as an invasion which has increased danger levels and might have urged many traditional shops to move to other zones.

Night brawls, fights, drug trafficking and irregular foreigners are the most common phenomena met by the police forces, who operate daily by means of searches and road blocks.

There is a Tunisian school in the city and some representative centres have been placed at the disposal of Tunisians by the Commune. According to some, there exists a real and constructive intercultural dialogue. However, in reality the Tunisian sector seems to resemble the ambience of a ghetto marked by the total absence of any activity which might link them to the rest of the city.

Many residents of Mazara Del Vallo want more order maintenance by law enforcements official. This need is felt particularly on Saturday evenings, when episodes of violence and criminality, especially thefts, occur regularly. The city appears unliveable due also to an

inadequate surveillance. In fact, video-surveillance cameras are yet to be installed.

It seems that many citizens of Mazara, some of whom live and work in Piazza Regina have experienced crime victimisation through episodes of micro-criminality, such as thefts, hold-ups and harmful acts, which by time have become more frequent.

Other than economic damages, such facts have instilled in shopkeepers and their respective families a sense of helplessness, injustice and insecurity, worsened by the incapacity of public administration to resolve their problems.

Alarm systems, video-surveillance and security measures installed by citizens at their own expense, have not served their purpose. Moreover, the town centre and particularly Piazza Regina has become the centre of drug trafficking.

Working without permit and theft from apartments are among the most common crimes. In an effort to prevent crimes and ensure better urban security standards, the city has installed a short circuit television system.

Crimes are committed by those living in popular zones and with low standards of education; victims are mainly elderly women with low literacy standards while business activities and private dwellings are at risk.

Recently, the police forces have been effective, but their effort is still insufficient to reach optimal results. Controls and services have been intensified in the town centre and in some zones. This has created true and proper “islands” where small criminals try to transform that territory into a no-man’s land where even the State considers itself as an unwelcome invader.

Levels of employment among women and young people reach an average low standard. The number of persons turning to social services and to Caritas for help are increasing.

The very limited permanent job opportunities entice youngsters to engage in financially lucrative, but illegal activities, thus, it is the lack of job opportunities that constitutes one of the major causes of the social duress being experienced in Mazara Del Vallo.

Even Mazara is negatively effected by the mafia phenomenon with numerous infiltrations regarding tendering of works and renewable energy linked to the windmill park in the territory.

A major involvement by citizens is needed together a partnership between local institutions and the government if criminality, particularly problems connected to drug abuse and illegal work, is to be tackled effectively. Moreover, policies for the development of fishing and tourism have to be activated, in order to revive local economy and business activities, especially in emarginated zones. These policies would make it possible to increase security measures through a strong police.

## **The Northern Coast and the Bordering territories**

### Alcamo and Castellammare Del Golfo

#### **Alcamo**

The commune of Alcamo extends over a hilly area at the foot of Mount Bonifato in a territory, which thanks to the nearby motorway and the railroad (which, in the direction of Trapani is not utilised enough) is well connected both to the capital of the province and to Palermo.

Alcamo is not particularly vast, although the city represents one of the most populated centres of the province. Right at the centre of Alcamo, on the hilltop, one can see architectural evidences of historical interest (many of which were recovered and refurbished). Alcamo is bordered to the north by Corso VI Aprile which goes through part of the town centre. There are the principal communal services and various shops. The urban network developed around Corso VI Aprile. Parallel to it there is Viale Europa, characterised by multi-storey residential buildings, of recent construction, and small commercial activities.

The oldest part of Alcamo has benefitted from both restoration and refurbishment works. In the future, due to contributions coming from private individuals, the construction of social housing and refurbishment of buildings intended for use by local institutions, is intended.

Among the many projects carried out by the Commune, there is the area of S.Ippolito, a project for the construction of new social housing and a Town Park in which footpaths join the green areas to the sports grounds.

As part of the global refurbishment of the city, the administration intends to build a citadel for youths, in order to create meeting places away from school premises, by converting communal properties situated in Via Foscolo.

In the direction of Alcamo Marina, a seaside locality bordering Castellammare del Golfo, there is a vast zone of abusive buildings (due to lack of construction regulations which gave way to settlements by the beach and in a high risk hydro-geological zone) while around the urban perimeter there is a vast area of agricultural land.

A vast artisans' area has developed down the valley, which extends to Calatafimi. In the Sasi and Fegotto districts there are numerous commercial consortia composed of established businesses, some of which known internationally. These are specialised in metal-mechanical works and in glass works, in the production of gypsum and marble, furnishings, the recycling of waste products, industrial paints, graphic arts and publicity projects.

There are however, other important entities which operate in the industrial and commercial sectors linked to the use of renewable energy and photovoltaic systems; the

construction industry and production of furnishings, flower nurseries and zoological techniques.

In the last ten years, plots used for the sale of new and used cars flourished. There were various franchises while the small commercial individual entities slowly disappeared due to the difficult economic period.

In Alcamo, agriculture remains an important sector. For the most part, the local production is exported to the national market, even if lately the economic aspects are not satisfactory and this has urged many agricultural entrepreneurs to cease their activity. The local administration has supported the promotion of local products, guaranteeing schemes of financial aid to some artisan industries to enable them to participate in national and international events and manifestations, in the hope of enhancing local products.

Wine production alone contributes to more than half the total local income. The wine of Alcamo is recognised as Denomination of Controlled Origin and there are various (around 30 wine production industries) wine cellars. The Commune has for years, been listed in the network “Cities of Wine” and “Streets of Wine” for the development of a wine-oriented tourism. To confirm the importance of these wine productions, the Regional Enotheque with an annexed Museum of wine and traditions has been instituted at the Castle of the Conti di Modica.

Even oil production is one of the pillars of local economy, with at least ten industries specialising in the production of olive oil. The sweets industry and the production of dried fruit are trying to gain ground, as is the production of the “purceddu” melon of Alcamo, among the most renowned winter melons.

Since a great majority of youths prefer other study and career paths, the agricultural development at Alcamo was possible due to a foreign workforce, without which, many parts of the land would have remained uncultivated. It is a partly residential workforce, mainly immigrants who live in Alcamo, during the grape harvesting period but leave to find new job when the harvest is over.

Alcamo has considerable potential for the development of tourism - a sector that would certainly benefit from the natural characteristics of the area and its historical, cultural heritage (mainly the Castle, College and Church, as well as the numerous typical “bagli” (wooden huts) and noble houses). Alcamo also boasts of the natural Reserve called Bosco d’Alcamo on Mount Bonifato and many entertainment places (pubs, bars and restaurants). Several events are organised by theatrical and musical groups. The most important is the Blues festival. Tourists arrive only in the summer months leaving no particular financial impact. Moreover, the hotel sector is not particularly developed.

Alcamo shares, along with other coastal communes, resources offered by the Gulf of Castellammare, as well as the problems associated with the safeguarding and enhancement of the natural environment with particular reference to the indiscriminate transformation

of agricultural land into abusive toxic waste landfills, abusive constructions in the coastal zones and fires during the summer months which engulf woodland areas.

Undoubtedly, the city, is an attraction to bordering communes, since there are many primary and secondary schools, offices and business activities. In Alcamo, residents are provided with multiple technical, social and cultural services, such as social service and the service of the public multi-media library.

The public and private health sectors are well represented: a day centre for the elderly, a residence centre for the seriously disabled, child care centres, some centres for minors, a hospital and an anti-violence centre for the support of women in difficulty.

There are adequate spaces for leisure activities for children and youths: public sports centres (gymnasium, tennis courts) and private ones (dance schools, gymnasiums, ice-skating rink). In spite of this, there is a serious problem of inadequate public green areas.

Alcamo qualifies as an average economy. Its so-economic and cultural aspects are quite heterogeneous. In fact, all social classes are represented in Alcamo (labourers, farmers, artisans, businessmen, professionals and state employees).

In the last ten years, Alcamo has seen the settlement, in its traditional social network, of families coming from Romania, Africa and East Asia. The former find jobs as personal assistants, the latter ones joined the workforce in agriculture and artisan works. On the other hand, the Chinese component is occupied in commercial activities and tends to lead an autonomous life showing a scarce need to integrate socially.

The social community is made up mainly of 4 membered families, who for the most part, depend on the work of the head of the family. Similar to other realities of the south, some city zones in peripheral areas are characterised by extreme degradation, augmented by the visible increase of unemployment, above all, among young people, who often do not succeed in their studies (high levels of school truancy) worsened by the growing number of broken families due to separations.

The zones, considered to be mainly at risk, are those of the ex-Regional Village, built in the eighties, which is a true and proper ghetto, lacking even hygienic needs beside serious socio-cultural aspects, or the new zones of S. Anna and Tre Santi (in the direction of Via Kennedy where there is a lower Secondary school and a superior Institute).

Although in the past years there have been many interventions in favour of minors experiencing social problems, there still exists a vast section of these minors at risk of deviance and "entrapment" by organised crime groups. In addition, many adolescents are showing preoccupying signs of hardships, expressed sometimes by acts of vandalism, bullying and drug abuse.

The number of neglected minors is painfully noticeable. These are at risk of abuse and psychological violence due to the difficulties suffered by their parents and possibly,

a lack of parental skills. This is even more worrying when adverse familial circumstances are exacerbated by other expressions of desperation like, for example, the prostitution of minors. This fuels a vicious circle, in which minors' personal and social growth is stumped and they are trapped.

Notwithstanding the efforts of the local entities, there is an insufficiency of services for infants and children, an inadequacy of structures and support actions of parenthood and an absence of meeting places for interaction between families and individuals.

A determining role is played by the Salesians group of "Don Bosco" which organises and animates activities which appeal to numerous young people coming from zones at risk.

However, despite its evident potential, Alcamo is afflicted by dangerous types of organised crimes. Naturally, these negative factors do not attract the much needed investment. In an attempt to sensitise the young about the negative effects of crime on their future, Alcamo schools have embarked on projects to make students aware of the sense of legality.

Many still recall the recent emergency caused by acts of arson targeting local entrepreneurs, particularly entities specialised in the construction sector. To make matters worse, the competitiveness of certain entities is moreover strongly compromised by an extensive hidden economy, the lack of a skilled workforce and a lower-paid unskilled immigrant workforce.

Although there are sufficient green areas, citizens complain about a general indifference, increased by acts of vandalism, robberies, pickpocketing, hold-ups, disturbance of the public peace and the lack of respect towards basic civic rules, not only by foreigners but also by the residents themselves.

In the last years, there was a steady revival of micro-criminality in peripheral areas particularly targeting holiday dwellings situated in the countryside and in the coastal zones, as well as in rural buildings where machinery and other equipment is kept. Example include the district of Calatubo (between Alcamo and Balestrate) and the more central zones of Alcamo Marina. It is commonly held that the authorities have under-estimated this phenomenon to avoid alarming residents. However, the police carry out extensive supervision of in the territory.

Given the scarcity of means and personnel, the police do their utmost to ensure territory control. Among these police measures are the inspection of houses inhabited by persons already known to the police or under custody. In addition, road blocks and patrols between the provinces of Palermo and Trapani are held. In spite of this, many citizens are increasingly turning to private security services.

The Commune of Alcamo is planning to install a system of security cameras connected to the central police station (around fifty) spread out through: the town centre, in the main



access roads to the city, in the artisan area of district Sasi and in the seaside locality of Alcamo Marina.

### **Castellammare Del Golfo**

The territory of Castellammare del Golfo extends over a coastal area of around sixty kilometres, at the foot of Mount Inici, bordering the city of Alcamo.

The most ancient settlement is comprised of a fortified citadel built around an ancient castle, which has been transformed into a museum following restoration works. In the 17<sup>th</sup> century a number of residential settlements developed around it.

The town is made up of around 15,000 inhabitants, the majority of which have emigrated. This steady exodus effected the most ancient part of the town centre, where there are many uninhabited dwellings, which are often in a state of dilapidation due to a lack of maintenance by the owners who moved to the peripheral areas.

This state of dilapidation and abandonment is evident in the areas between Via dei Medici and Corso Mattarella, particularly in the blocks bordering the central Via Garibaldi, which together with Via Roma and Via Marconi, host the main economic and administrative activities of the Commune.

The sense of abandonment is made worse by an evident disinterest by the local administration, which has favoured the diffusion of a continuous abusive housing situation. Many houses in the long narrow streets made way for multi-storey buildings or large blocks of flats.

Around the town centre, towards the southern part, there are new areas of urban buildings mainly houses of character. The progressive exodus of business activities continued in Via Segesta, which is a district mainly hosting schools and police stations.

The area of Bocca della Carrubba, situated not far from the centre, is characterised by modern multi-storey blocks of flats, specifically in Via Aldo Moro where there is an economical popular housing estate in a dilapidated state, inhabited by elderly people and families with social and economic problems (maintenance and refurbishment works are in the pipeline).

The district of Fraginesi is a mainly agricultural valley, located in the hinterland at the foot of Mount Inici and Mount Sparagio. Recently, a considerable number of summer residences have mushroom.

The suburb of Balata di Baida some kilometres to the south of the town centre, consists of about a few hundred inhabitants. Many foreigners of Romanian origin, well integrated and occupied in the agricultural and tourist services sectors live here. The small town is famous for the organisation of a living representation of the nativity which attracts many visitors.

This area, traditionally linked to excavation and agricultural activities, hosts: the ruins of an ancient castle, a few commercial activities, a postal service and a medical clinic to

satisfy the minimum demands of the local community. In this zone (District Celso) there are diffused inhabited, artisan/industrial settlements.

Scopello is a suburb with some hundred inhabitants. It developed around an ancient “baglio” (wooden structure) on a high slope. About some ten kilometres from the communal capital there are a number of restaurants, bars, cafeterias and hospitality services.

Down in the valley, near the coast there is a disused tunny net building, a popular destination for tourists and swimmers.

Along the road which connects Scopello and Castellammare, abusive villas have been constructed, some of which near the coastal, seriously endangering the present environmental heritage.

Castellammare is also known for its natural heritage, such as: the Reserve of the Zingaro, the beaches of LaPlaya and Guidaloca and the Thermal Baths of Segesta.

The coast of the Zingaro is one of the few in Sicily that does not have a coastal road. Nowadays, the reserve extends in the western part of the Gulf of Castellammare up to the locality of San Vito Lo Capo. Part of the reserve has been totally devastated by fire.

Guidaloca is a bay halfway between the town and the reserve, in which there is an extensive beach and villas used as summer residences.

Production was traditionally linked to agriculture particularly vine cultivations, of which there are traces in the southern areas of the communal territory. Conversely, tourism and hospitality services are in an embryonic stage of development that was only possible thanks to a plan and in the districts one finds hotels, bed and breakfast, holiday houses and tourist services (diving, restaurants, rent-a-car).

Even the fishing industry and related harbour activities have played an important role in local economy, today much smaller in size and number. In the port and marina, which are being refurbishment, there are numerous parking facilities for boats, restaurants and entertainment. These facilities and businesses occupy a minuscule part of many buildings which area in a state of abandonment.

The level of employment is very low, also due to an almost total absence of industrial type entrepreneurship. There are only a few activities linked to the extraction of materials, construction, woodwork, iron and marble works (which warehouses along the highway connecting the Centre to the hinterland districts, represent a serious danger for the natural environment). Artisan activity is quite limited.

The residents of Castellammare Del Golfo live a low-quality life that is characterised by poverty. Their poor living standards are exacerbated by the precarious work situation (unemployment and irregular work), lack of dwellings, cultural centres, and the absence of basic services.

In the last years, the rise in poverty at Castellammare Del Golfo has even been

acknowledged by the social services and is partly contained by the initiatives of the “Don Pino Puglisi” centre, located on a property confiscated from the mafia (in the Tavolatella district). This centre acts as an entity for the distribution of alimentary goods for needy families. In the last years, thefts from dwellings particularly in the zone of Via Segesta and the countryside areas have increased and were mainly committed by groups from Eastern Europe.

Prostitution is quite common in private dwellings. These mainly involve foreign women. Abuse and uptake of dangerous substances is also diffused (cocaine and light drugs), mainly among the younger population.

This situation is aggravated by the presence of a hidden criminality. An example of this are the annual woodland arson episodes as well as those targeting local entrepreneurs involved in the construction sector, for extortion purposes and to convince the authorities to award tenders to mafia groups. Two anti-racket associations operate in the territory. The Commune has decided to install surveillance apparatus in the streets of the town centre but also in the immediate outskirts and swimming area. Police forces have also placed cameras for the registering of car number plates, in the entrance areas towards the city.

## **The Sicilian Provinces**

### **Province of Agrigento**

The territory of the regional province of Agrigento comprises the southern central area of Sicily. It is made up of 43 communes, which are mainly small. Around 50 per cent of the population is distributed in major centres (Agrigento, Canicatti, Favara, Licata, Palma di Montechiaro, Porto Empedocle, Ribera, Sciacca) with a clear concentration of the population in the coastal areas.

The Agrigento province is mainly hilly. In the northern zone there are the hilly areas of Sicani, characterised by the presence of small centres, dedicated by tradition to zoological techniques and agriculture. In the last years, a number of hospitality services linked to rural tourism and typical products (Bivona, Cammarata, San Giovanni Gemini, Santo Stefano Quisquina, Sambuca and Burgio Casteltermi, Bivona and Alessandria della Rocca) have been developed. Many of these zones suffer from a heavy demographic stagnation and wide-spread unemployment. For example, Canicatti, located in the hinterland is in the middle of a vast agricultural area which, with a renowned wine production, is clearly distinguishable from other agricultural areas linked traditionally to olive oil production and nut cultivation.

Sciacca, Porto Empedocle and Licata are marine centres with a commercial and partially industrial character, while other coastal centres are tourism-oriented (San Leone is amongst the well-known seaside resorts).

Tourism is a sector in rapid growth. Thanks to artistic and cultural attractions, to a natural beauty (the islands of Lampedusa and Linosa belong to this province, besides the reserve of the Iblei Mountains) and the numerous archaeological sites, primarily the Valley of the Temples, was declared as a UNESCO world heritage site. Eraclea Minoa and Realmonte are also interesting, from an archaeological point of view.

The communes of the province are mainly comprised of new settlements. The historical centres of ancient origin, richer in architectural works, are those of Agrigento, Naro and Favara. All exhibit substantial dilapidation (except for restoration works on some more important buildings) and are in a state of abandonment.

The province of Agrigento is considered as one of the most difficult, with regards living conditions and development, in comparison to other Sicilian provinces. The territorial context is characterised: by quality settlements (even new build), by the diffusion of degradation and hydro-geological instability, rendered more acute by abusive buildings, and the inadequacy of primary services such as for example the difficulties experienced in the water supply system (there is a constant rationing of the water supply).

The birth rate is high as is the level of emigration. This has fueled general tendency of the abandonment of the country zones. As regards the standard of education, most obtain a lower secondary school certificate, followed by the upper secondary school diploma and a few graduates. There are quite a consistent number of persons without a school certificate. The province exhibits high rates of school truancy. In addition, it is extremely common for underpaid minors to be employed in unskilled work. There is an absence of socio-cultural meeting places particularly for the young generation. At least, thanks to the Department of Sociology, there is now a call centre for troubled youths inside the scholastic institutions. With the exception of a vast number of the population working as state employees, there is a high level of unemployment among the younger sector. In reality, in most cases, statistics seem to be exasperated by the presence of a strong hidden economy.

The under-development of Agrigento is strictly linked to the socio-economic difficulties of the population, which cannot be remedied quickly. Weaknesses in the system result of poor territorial connections and the bad governance of public administrations. Over time these negative factors have caused the deterioration of the territory.

This already difficult context is aggravated by the increasing presence of mafia criminality, considered among the most active on a regional and international level (Canada and United States of America). This criminal organisation has strong grassroots, particularly in centres like Licata, Palma di Montechiaro, Favara, Ribera, the area of Sciacca Canicatti, Racalmuto, Castrolibero, Agrigento and the urban part of Porto Empedocle. The mafia is an organisation traditionally engaged in crimes such as arson, intimidations - particularly towards business activities, artisan and industrial activities, with extortion purposes. These often involve politicians and public employees. In Agrigento, although

it is becoming infrequent, assassination, as an extreme act of punishment, has not completely vanished.

The scarce participation of citizens in reporting crimes is attributed to the serious economic and occupational crisis which, for decades, afflicted the territory. It is also the reason perceived as having escalated the incidence of diffused criminality. This does not exclusively adhere to the logics of organised crime, but more often unknown individuals are active in thefts from summer residences (uninhabited during the winter months) or theft of copper and violent pickpocketing. There is a noticeable increase in armed robberies, drug trafficking, gambling (carried out in clandestine clubs or in gambling houses by video poker), and the sale of counterfeit goods.

Many immigrants of North African origin who arrive in the territory do not succeed in entering the labour market and possibly, driven by the resultant poverty, resort to delinquency and crime. In the Agrigento territory there have even been isolated episodes of slavery and human trafficking. There are also episodes linked to stalking, and although on a smaller scale, sexual violence acts committed on minors.

In Agrigento, a security plan has been activated. This involved: the strengthening the police forces in all the inhabited centres; numerous initiatives as support to citizens; in collaboration with local scholastic entities; and the enactment of legal protocols to avoid mafia infiltrations in the Public Service. However, despite these measures, the territory remains at risk, even since there is an evident shortage of security personnel, during the spring and summer months, which coincide with the clandestine disembarkations in Lampedusa. Incidentally, this activity was reduced through the resultant national push-back policies.

To make matters worse, there seems to be what is referred to as the Tribunal crisis which is particularly felt in the province capital, Canicatti and Licata.

This has brought a decrease in the control of the territory and conversely an increase in micro-criminality. This necessitates the participation of administrative personnel to patrol and control the territory in uniform, increasing the personnel on foot and by car, as well as utilising a number of district police officers.

Agrigento, on a hill, overlooks the Mediterranean Sea and the very famous underlying Valley of the Temples, surrounded by a vast area dedicated to agricultural cultivations (nut and olive groves).

The central part of the communal territory is characterised by the city centre of the province capital, of medieval origin. The extremity of the hill is rich in historical buildings, many of which are in a state of dilapidation, in need of huge restructuring works. Although benefitting from major infrastructural works, Agrigento is subject to a continuous exodus of the population. The most devastated area is perhaps the most western part of the Santa Croce zone, where, in the second half of the last century, there was a landslide which

forced the residents to abandon their houses and transfer themselves to buildings in the public settlement of Villaggio Peruzzo (to the north of S.Leone) and of Villaseta.

In some areas of the city centre (Via Garibaldi, Via Amendola, Via Empedocle) many buildings have been replaced by multi-storey ones, which in some ways have contributed to increasing the environmental degradation of the zone, upsetting its traditional stability.

The area surrounding Via Atenea is the only zone in a discreet state of conservation, which presents a certain vitality and good level commercial entities. In fact, Via Atenea is the most important street in the town centre, near which recently a certain number of bed and breakfast have been opened, recovering and re-utilising small historical buildings.

The modern area, where more than half of the population lives, has developed in an extremely chaotic way and the residential peripheral zones have grown in a disorderly manner. Residential zones are often distant from the centre, characterised by incomplete works and the absence of basic services, and the mushrooming of illegal buildings (isolated buildings or multi-storey blocks of flats). The poor quality of public works realised in the last decades has contributed to the destruction of the delicate ecosystem and the views of the Agrigento territory.

The construction of the village of Villaseta situated to the south west of the city, where construction was extremely slow. This village suffers from many shortages, such as commercial activities that never prospered. There are conditions of emargination, poverty and degradation, also due to the total absence of maintenance works carried out by the Commune.

To the south east of Agrigento, there is a diffused settlement around Villaggio Mose, which serves as the economic and commercial lung of the city.

The north zone is comprised of the residential districts of Fontanelle and Palmentelle. It is partially urbanised, where the new part of the zone spread over the countryside.

Many public buildings, hosting big numbers of inhabitants are found mainly in this area - in zones with serious problems of accessibility, like in the case of the scholastic campus in district Calcarelle. At present, most of the services provided by the University of Agrigento benefit the industrial zone of S.Michele. This zone is very far away from the urban centre, presenting a fascinating mix of business activities, residential zones, productive and rural activities and a hospital. It is a desolate area, far from the urban centre, which cannot be reached by public transport and lacks adequate parking facilities.

To the north west of the hill of Agrigento, the territory is characterised by a low level of residential settlements, and a prevalent cultivated area. The only settlements present here are constituted by the suburb of Giardina Gallotti and Montaperto, which both developed around rural villages of medieval origin.

The southern part is characterised by the coastal settlement of San Leone (a popular seaside resort, with a small touristic port) and the district Zingarello, a small seasonal

residential settlement made up of abusive multi-storey buildings.

It is evident that the recovery of the coastal area should constitute one of the priorities of a programme aimed at empowering and strengthening the tourism sector, removing abusiveness, recovering the environment and restoring the natural beauty of the area. The hydro-geological risk, aggravated by the lack of adequate policies, has been subject to state and regional restrictions, which the local community has tried, for decades, to contrast with various kinds of expedients.

Abusive buildings do not only concern the coastal areas. One of the areas with a large concentration of abusive buildings is the agglomerate of Villaggio Mose', not to mention a sizeable quota of abusive buildings inside and on the outskirts of the Valley of the Temples.

The socio-economic characteristic of the population of the province capital is not substantially different from that of the surrounding territory, even if there are some differences regarding institutions and cultural events, which in the capital, are given more importance.

The city, constitutes the bureaucratic and administrative centre of the whole province. It houses has different public schools (even for infant years), public libraries managed by institutional bodies (Local Council, Church and private individuals), numerous cultural associations, social cooperatives and many voluntary associations.

Being rich in historic-archaeological heritage, Agrigento hosts five museums forming part of the immense archaeological wealth declared a UNESCO world heritage site.

The Commune of Agrigento has a developed infrastructure and services sector in banking and education. The strong tertiary education and tourism sectors, distinguish Agrigento from the rest of the province, which is mainly (40%) dependent on the primary sector.

Tourism has been on the increase for some years. The big hotels, the six conference halls, and the historical buildings (Hotel Villa Athena etc.) are found, both in the modern part of the city (Via della Vittoria) and in the road behind the settlement of Villaggio Mose'. In addition, average sized hospitality structures are found in San Leone or in the town centre.

In the urban area, there are recreational places, a social centre for minors, a toy museum, a library, a number of swimming pools (one of which is public), gymnasiums, a sports complex, football grounds and tennis courts (two parks for sport, cultural and recreational activities – Parco del Mediterraneo and Parco dell'Addolorata in an abandoned state), three cinema halls, and two theatres. Culture is not adequately catered for. There are few public libraries and gymnasiums. Even the presence of cultural associations is scarce

Traditional culture dictates that the family represents the socialisation agency of primary importance. This conforms to the national trends. However, an evident modification of

traditional family groups can be seen, with the emergence of more mononuclear families; (families with a limited number of children, an increase in separations/divorces), parallel to new forms of enlarged families.

As regards assistance centres, there are some public and private homes for the elderly, rehabilitation centres for the disabled, communities for psychiatric patients with a Day Centre and a community for minors.

It is evidently through the analysis of the general infrastructures (economic and social) present in the territory, that such resources are not enough and inadequate for the needs of the whole population. The ageing population requires socio-health assistance. The increase in foreigners, the diffusion of criminality linked to drug and alcohol dependency, are all phenomena inevitably requiring the catering to different needs and demands from the public system.

Illegal work constitutes a spreading social problem. In fact, the hidden economy involves more than half of the working population.

The geographical position and the close vicinity to the island of Lampedusa renders Agrigento a “frontier” in the Mediterranean Sea, continually forced to face illegal and clandestine immigration. There is a presence of immigrants coming mainly from different countries in North Africa (Morocco and Tunisia).

Most foreign minors (who reside in the territory), regularly attend compulsory school, but a significant percentage (36%) stay out of scholastic institutions.

Inside the city, there is a centre of first residence for foreign citizens. This is directed by the Ministry for Internal Affairs and also acts as an information point set up by the Regional Province of Agrigento in collaboration with private individuals.

Due to this phenomenon, in the last years, the Commune of Agrigento has activated projects intended for foreign citizens requesting asylum.

The most relevant forms of social hardship are registered, within the first and fourth districts of the territory. These are those areas that suffer from major population density (the centre of Agrigento and the areas of Villasetta and Monserrato). Even if social problems are sparsely diffused all over the territory.

This part of the territory is characterised by forms of problems, which could at least be partly attributed to the socio-cultural standards of the population. There are vast areas of urban degradation and social emargination which have rendered this zone as a traditional home to local criminality. Episodes of micro-criminality are frequent, with violent acts (brawls and fights) often breaking out among the young generation.

This situation was exacerbated by the regular increment of internal migration, due to an exodus of people from the most ancient part of the city.

Many of the dilapidated houses in the town centre are inhabited by foreigners, who live in very difficult conditions.



The immigration phenomenon in Agrigento is not only characterised by extreme situations. In fact, there are now many naturalised immigrant families, who are integrated in the local social and economic society, and have a fixed job. So much so, that there are many commercial entities managed by foreigners (especially Chinese) residing in the province.

The suburbs, particularly the area of Fontanelle (second portion) and Villaseta (fifth portion), are characterised by a state of anxiety and demoralisation due to the dilapidated state of the buildings particularly in Villaseta where there are significant numbers of social emargination, deviance and criminality.

In this context, there is a high rate of unemployment, a major incidence of school absences and a significant number of persons with problems of drug dependency.

Conversely, the area of Giardina Gallotti/Montaperti is in clear contrast to the above-mentioned area. In fact, this area seems to be detached from the social dynamics present throughout the city.

This suburb has a typically rural socio-economic origin and family ties are structured according to an accentuated patriarchal culture.

Many projects are embarked upon by the local social services (often coordinated by the Court of Magistrates), are intent to safeguard the well-being of minors (neglect by parents, violence, abuses, conjugal conflicts, etc.) and women (a high rate of domestic violence perpetrated on women and informally reported to social workers).

However, not enough attention is given to these instances of abuse, and violence on women and minors.

The Commune offers a rehabilitation service to minors involved in judicial problems and at risk of deviance. They are lodged in a residential centre of the Community of the Cooperative Casa Amica.

With regards to services in support of drug addicts, these are often of the medical type. However, there are no support services intended for the social inclusion of drug addicts.

With regards to security measures, there are frequent police patrols aimed at preventing robberies and thefts. Plain-clothes members of the State Police patrol the streets every day to prevent/combat street crime (snatch and grabs, beatings, maxi brawls, intimidation of entrepreneurs and businessmen) which has affected the city centre, particularly the areas of Via Garibaldi (due to the presence of a North African population who has occupied some houses abusively).

Crimes such as thefts and robberies involve both the centre and the small town of San Leone.

To some extent, control of the territory is ensured by the presence of a video surveillance system, activated in some zones of the centre (Piazza Marconi, Piazza Cavour) and Piazza Aster at San Leone, considered as a danger zone with regards to public order.

The installation of cameras, even in peripheral zones are planned. A mobile camera is intended to be used in order to discourage littering and illegal dumping.

### **Province of Catania**

The province of Catania has a high population density which has continued to increase in the last twenty years. The population of Catania is not homogeneously distributed. There is a steady increase in population in the centres nearest to Catania, deriving partly from a constant emigration from the province capital (whose population, continues to decrease).

In Catania, the population is mainly young, although the population of elderly people is on the increase, unlike the birth rate which is decreasing. These phenomenon are starting to manifest their consequences particularly in centres further away from the city.

The foreign residents in the province mainly originate from Eastern Europe, followed by North Africa. These find employment particularly in agriculture, manufacturing and care services. In the cities of Catania and Misterbianco there is a high concentration of Asians, mainly Chinese who are involved in business activities.

The positive demographic trend is due to the presence of numerous entities, primarily in the commercial sector, followed by the agricultural, construction and manufacturing sector - even if the province has a gross domestic product inferior to the Sicilian average.

Therefore, the economic aspect is being dominated by the tertiary sector, while year after year, the primary sector is shrinking and the secondary sector is slowly declining.

Although agriculture still represents a solid aspect of the economy, particularly in areas at the foot of the mountains, it is characterised by a strong impasse linked to a resistance to update obsolete systems of the tools of production and a reluctance to take risks on the part of agricultural entrepreneurs who, isolated, are unable to face the challenges offered by the global market.

The weak hospitality sector missed the opportunity of reaping the lucrative benefits of the tourism sector linked to the promotion of the archaeological, architectural (Baroque) and environmental resources as well as those linked to the presence of the volcano Etna.

Although particularly high, the rate of unemployment in the province of Catania, is among the lowest in Sicily. However part of the economy is strongly influenced by illegal work. In the entire province, there is a diffused micro-criminality which involves, above all, the young generation. The activities of "Cosa Nostra" in Catania tend to mingle with local entrepreneurs and politicians, but these activities are extended outside the provincial territory. These include extortions and places utilised for the purpose of laundering "dirty" money. The whole provincial territory of Catania is composed of 58 communes, according to zones laid out by national strategic plans, Catania, is subdivided into three macro-areas similar in geographical, social and economic aspects.

### **Metropolitan Area**

(Catania, Aci Bon Accorsi, Aci Castello, Aci Catena, Acireale, Belpasso, Camporotondo Etneo, Gravina di Catania, Mascalucia, Misterbianco, Motta S.Anastasia, Nicolosi, Paternò, Pedara, Ragalna, San Giovanni La Punta, San Gregorio, San Pietro Clarenza, S.Agata Li Battiati, S.Maria di Licodia, Santa Venerina, Trecastagni, Tremestieri Etneo, Valverde, Viagrande, Zafferana Etnea)

The territory has an average density of 750 inhabitants per square kilometre (with more than 1,500 living in the capital). This proves the strong attraction of the city of Catania and the bordering communes vis-à-vis other towns. This also has an influence on the average income of residents which is above the provincial average. The Metropolitan area consists of 27 small centres (19 of which are dislocated to the east of the commune of Catania).

Catania is characterised by social phenomena and economic contradictions common to other urban areas of the south, exacerbated by extreme structural expansion, overcrowding and a lack of an adequate principal transport systems.

The city is animated by an entrepreneurial spirit. Some years ago it was even one of the principal focal points of the ICT economy (so much so that it gained the nickname of Etna Valley), thanks to incentive policies activated by the authorities.

In the nineties, attracted by the infrastructure, and the presence of cultural services, apparently more adequate than those offered by other cities in the south, big multi-national firms established themselves in the territory.

In the last decade, the sector has experienced a slowdown. This was due to the crisis but also blamed on the inadequate economic plan for the territory and a scarce rationalisation of resources which has urged businesses to move and skilled labourers to migrate, discouraging the birth of small and medium enterprises.

Catania is also considered as a popular tourist destination. The city has a great historical, artistic and environmental heritage (it is listed as a UNESCO world heritage site) together with a well-structured transport system (airport, port, railroad, motorways and link roads with the rest of the region)

The development and enhancement of the city has not always been smooth. In fact, the erratic process has compromised the touristic potential of the city. In fact only in the last years has Catania succeeded in attracting tourists from abroad. The tourist sector is still fragmented, weak and unorganised, making poor use of the artistic cultural heritage. The tourist influx registers periods of full capacity and others of total unoccupancy. The absence of structures for entertainment, leisure and culture do not attract tourists all year round.

The closure of big construction industries in Catania has adversely affected the self-employed and those that provide commercial services to the construction industry. A relatively small number of workers who have lost their jobs have been re-employed by

public administrations on precarious contracts.

The “Etna” capital is extremely heterogeneous, and in some cases fragmentary. There are vast degraded areas, both in the historical zones and in the outskirts. There are huge integration problems and infrastructural inefficiencies. Little is done to preserve the natural environment.

The social fabric of Catania seems to be very fragile. In fact the regular, traditional Sicilian family is fast being replaced by other modern family configurations.

The institution of matrimony is increasingly being undermined, as evidenced by the constant increase of separations and divorces, while new family models are emerging (nuclear family, single parents, recomposed etc.). One negative aspect of this is the emergence of more reduced and isolated family nuclei which find great difficulties in taking care of children, old parents and family members with disabilities.

Indeed modern science and technology have managed to prolong life, however possibly a consequence of this, is the corresponding decrease in the fertility rate in Catania. Statistics reveal that in Catania, like in the rest of the peninsula, numerous families are at major risk of poverty. It seems that poverty most affects families with the greatest number of children.

In general, women tend to encounter big difficulties when it comes to finding employment. This is partly due to limited support services for families and the reduction of welfare policies.

There is an absence of research about the local labour market which seems to be unable to develop alternative economic activities to generate new jobs.

There is a gap between the qualifications required by entities and those found in the profile and experience of first time job seekers or those over forty years of age.

Among the principal reasons for social strife there are great difficulties to access vocational/educational courses for individuals serving a prison/probation sentence; excessive number of requests for social assistance (there is a lack of available emergency housing); a bad state of hygiene in dwellings reserved for foreigners; very high rent and absence of even temporary structures to accommodate illegal immigrants.

In order to deal with social emergencies, the commune has tried to activate support strategies to combat emargination. These include professional programmes, assistance services and consultancy, to look for lodgings and financial aid, aimed at giving a better standard of living in family dwellings. During economic instability, when society seems particularly fragile, it is vital to take actions which involve huge investments in social expenditure. However these are difficult to realise during austere times. Ideally 24 by 7 dormitory facilities and canteens should be made available. Not to mention the need of structures for first emergency accommodation for adults and minors and a service of public registry for persons without a fixed address.

Despite the evident need to guarantee public security, the decrease in public expenditure has also caused a large reduction of law enforcement personnel. However, measures have been taken to deter bullying, illegal disposal of waste products, vandalism (graffiti in the town centre) and prostitution.

The reclaiming of the territory does not only refer to the refurbishment of dilapidated areas but the evacuation of squatters, by “Rom”-gypsies and the homeless, who have occupied residences abusively, by means of forced evacuation (Palazzo Bernini and Fontanarossa).

On the territory there are different abusive unauthorised nomadic settlements, which are deprived of the minimum commodities (water, electricity, sanitary/hygienic services).

Moreover, there are many clandestine immigrants, some of whom are involved in illegal activities. Numerous requests were made for the expulsion of these identified individuals, though the absence of financial resources makes it impossible to enforce the provisions of expulsion, thus rendering the efforts, futile.

The types of known crimes relate above all to road traffic and the environment. In order to prevent abusive landfills, spot searches and inspections are being affected by a specialised group of green wardens.

<b>Crimes</b>	<b>Quantity</b>
Driving without a licence .....	171
Personal harm .....	126
Crimes against urban property.....	111
Dirtying of grounds or buildings .....	86
Omission of assistance.....	54
Theft and aggravated theft.....	36
Driving under influence of alcohol.....	32
Crimes against the environment .....	31
Refusing to give particulars.....	29
Offence towards a public officer .....	25
Resistance to a public officer.....	24
Sale of counterfeit products .....	23
Unobservance of provisions and regulations.....	22
Illegal permanence on the territory .....	20
Omission of custody of a seized vehicle .....	17
False declaration of personal identity and characteristics .....	16
Refuse to produce documents to the authorities .....	14
Violence or threats towards a public officer.....	12
First degree murder.....	12

Receipt of stolen goods .....	11
Damage .....	9
Driving under the effects of drugs .....	7
Interruption of public service .....	4
Robbery .....	4
Substitution of persons .....	3
Violation of rubber stamps/seals .....	3
Obscene acts.....	2
Evasion .....	2
Ideological forgery.....	2
Fighting.....	2
Simulation of a crime.....	2
Counterfeit banknotes .....	2
Fraud .....	2
Violation of domicile .....	2
Sexual violence.....	2
Cloning of number plates.....	1
Malfamations .....	1
Offending one's name or honour.....	1

*Source: Records of Activity of Judicial Police (01/07/2011 – 30/06/2012)*

The city has installed video surveillance systems especially in the principal squares (Piazza Bellini, Piazza dei Martiri, Piazza Borsellino, Piazza Federico di Svevia, Piazza Mazzini, Piazza Europa, Piazza Lincoln, Piazza Verga and Corso delle Province) in order to guarantee a better control of the territory.

The territorial area of Catania is subdivided into ten municipalities (although due to cuts in expenditure, such are becoming lesser in number).

The first three municipalities are those that have a high population density, even if they experienced an exodus determined by various factors (crisis, housing emergency and high rents, degradation). This exodus of residents was partly balanced by an increment in immigration (even clandestine).

The first municipality is made up of the town centre which boasts the monumental area, characterised by an intense night life linked to the presence of leisure and entertainment places. There is also a residential area, which is relatively recent, that exhibits concentrations of offices and dwellings.

Via Etnea, traditionally known for the presence of elegant boutiques, is among the

most frequented by residents (even if the crisis coupled with the opening of commercial centres and other costs have brought about the closure of many activities, and the increase of abusive commercial entities).

There are hospitals, Sert, Mental Health centres, public consultancy services, voluntary associations and a good number of schools of every level and grade. Police posts and Carabinieri stations are all inside the district “Cappuccini”.

This district registers high unemployment, visible ageing process and the contraction of family nuclei. In this area there are a number of employees in the tertiary sector, with relatively high standards of education.

Among the planned and partly activated programmes, there are the financing of small local artisan entities, initiatives for the re-activation of the internal economy, measures against school truancy and urban refurbishment works.

The area of Civita and S.Cristoforo-Angeli Custodi has many old and dilapidated houses, in which reside the lowest social classes who depend exclusively on the hidden economy. The confiscation of properties belonging to the mafia are numerous, as is the refurbishment of works in public places.

S. Cristoforo is mostly composed of business and artisan activities. Women are largely excluded from the labour market. Declared employment and unemployment rates are anomalous, mainly due to the diffusion of illegal work.

There is a significant presence of young people and numerous nuclei of abnormally disadvantaged cultural standards. The zone is occupied by two-thirds of the immigrants resident in the Commune. There is a huge exodus of the population and hence an increased ageing of the population.

Besides the presence of public security authorities, there are various services for immigrants and elderly people.

Episodes of drug trafficking are frequent together with intense mafia involvement; the majority of minors arrested come from this area where the levels of truancy are high.

One has to mention the area of Corso dei Martiri-Liberta’ and San Berillo which hosts an open air zone of huts built using various materials. This has resulted in widespread environmental degradation, problems of drug trafficking and prostitution.

Among the projects intended to increase security levels and urban well-being, there is the refurbishment of such geographical areas.

Moreover, in the town centre, there are many public property buildings in state of abandonment as is the case of Palazzo Bernini, a dilapidated building subject to evacuation enforcements where homeless people have sought shelter.

The zone of Picanello-Ognina (second municipality) appears to be extremely heterogeneous. This zone borders with the renowned residential and commercial area of Corso Italia and a good part of the seafront (with historical buildings and very high rents),

contrasted by the old quarters of Ognina (old small seaside town) and Picanello a popular historical zone characterised by drug trafficking, average middle class areas and degraded roads (in direction of the railway station).

In the area, there is a diffused hardship linked to an environmental problem in the Villaggio Duvet.

In the second municipality there is a high density of inhabitants mainly average middle class and small businessmen, a non-indifferent minority of low wage employees, artisans, and street vendors, unemployed and precarious workers with a minimum income.

In the last years, huge investments have been injected in urban refurbishment and the expansion of basic services; besides the municipal police station, there is a public library, many public offices, sports structures, equipped green spaces, schools of every grade and sanitary services.

In the third municipality (Borgo-Sanzio), there are the areas which comprise historical suburbs of Borgo Sant'Agata and Consolazione and the elegant square of Raffaello Sanzio.

Generally, the zone is characterised by economic and social activity. In fact, by time it has become a centre to many financial and commercial services. Borgo Sant'Agata and Consolazione are almost peripheric in structure (with a vast residential area concentrated along the principal roads).

In the direction of Piazzale Sanzio, there are historical buildings and business and financial activities (with true and proper upper middle class residential quarters). In this zone there is significant non-European immigration.

The fourth municipality coincides with the peripheric areas to the north of the city, where there is the university campus and the residential zones Barriera Del Bosco and Canalicchio.

In the district Barriera there are commercial buildings and public/private socio-assistance services. Generally, it is an extremely diversified zone where buildings of a rural type and recently built buildings co-exist.

The area close to Canalicchio does not exhibit a high population density, although the municipality has a certain appeal to those who move to the Catania territory.

Even if there is a social centre and cultural services, particularly in Canalicchio, the fact that the urban network is well known renders the present public places inadequate as meeting places.

San Giovanni Galermo, the only district of the fifth municipality, is a quasi-autonomous commune, which was successfully annexed to the territory of the capital. It is a tranquil area but at the same time, a strategic point for traffic between bordering communes and the city of Catania.

The district is characterised by a principal road used by light vehicles and by the presence of many abusive buildings (a phenomenon which has influenced the area in the sixties).



Most of the buildings are modest. There is an urgent need to intervene in order to guarantee adequate socialisation spaces and suitable green areas for citizens.

There is no police station and even the municipal police (due to lack of resources) is not able to guarantee full control of the territory.

The urban structure of the sixth municipality (Trappeto-Cibali) is made up of different modern buildings; dwellings and private properties close to Piazza Maria di Gesu'; zones of public dwellings in areas far away from the centre, including abusive buildings successively duly regulated.

The urban setting converging on Piazza Bonadies is occupied by older buildings; the zones of Via Santa Sofia, Cibali and Trappeto Sud (cooperative buildings) have substantially social homogeneous characteristics.

Santa Sofia, is above all, if not exclusively, a residential zone. That of Cibali (where there is the communal football stadium), is inhabited by an average middle class that recurs mainly to local commercial activities for their needs. The setting of Trappeto Nord is completely different with vast areas of social hardships.

The economic activities and the present infrastructures of this area are completely insufficient to cover the needs of resident families.

Socio-cultural services consist of a kindergarten, an elementary school and modern sports structures.

The problem constituted by the absence of primary urban works effects not only the road network (many roads are still under completion) but also the drainage system.

Residents of this zone face another difficult situation, high levels of juvenile criminality which is accompanied by increasing school truancy.

Mount Po-Nesima constitutes the seventh municipality of Catania. The population is extremely heterogenous. Families tend to be more numerous vis-à-vis the average having low cultural standards.

The northern part of Viale M.Rapisardi enjoys a modest commercial activity and small green spaces.

In order to halt commer-related offences, the area is patrolled daily by one or more patrols.

Nesima, a zone constructed about 60 years ago following an initiative to build public buildings, is characterised by narrow streets and squares.

Monte Po, more recently developed, is not still fully integrated with the rest of the city (the methane provision for the territory has been completed recently).

These zones are characterised by wide roads void of urban décor, buildings constructed in cement, the absence of infrastructures and entrepreneurial activities. All these have left a negative image on the territory.

Moreover, on the border of the municipality there are vast uncontaminated spaces mainly destined for agricultural use.

The eighth municipality (SanLeone- Rapisardi) is crossed by Viale Rapisardi and Corso Indipendenza along which by time, small commercial activities, restaurants and bars have been established. Many artisan entities are present in the area of Via Palermo.

It is a medium class and popular residential zone, whose residents are mainly employed in the commercial and tertiary sectors. There is a lack of green spaces and leisure structures.

The ninth municipality is made up of areas of Librino and San Giorgio, which have only recently been developed. This zone has been the object of many abusive buildings.

Librino is considered to be in a bad condition for a number of reasons, amongst which the infrastructural works planned but never completed, resulted in the isolation from the rest of the city, in addition to disgregation, lack of services and urban works, few commercial activities.

The territory has a learning centre and comprehensive scholastic institutes, a health clinic, a social centre and law enforcement entities.

A project for the creation of an artisan area was in the pipeline but in fact it has never materialised, while the urban tax free zone (an area subject to fiscal and contributory subsidies in order to set up new financial activities among small entities and creating new infrastructures), has yet to be set up.

There are many incomplete works like, for example, the Sports City and the Theatre behind Via Moncada, restructured but not functional; public services are completely inadequate and insufficient, given the extension and problems of the territory together with the vastness of the population. These services are often at a shortage of personnel and inadequate places.

Although there are associations that combat social and urban deterioration complaints about the absence of an integrated programme by these institutions tend to be considered as lethargic and complacent. In the last years, there was an attempt was made to upgrade the living conditions of residents by means of a better road network.

Among the proposals forwarded by residents to enhance the territory, one has to ensure the rehabilitation of buildings, the assignment of social housing, the upgrading of areas in dilapidated conditions, the repairing of the electricity system and the construction of streets and fly-overs, the repairing and construction of sports and socio-cultural structures.

The socio-cultural standards of families are low, the rates of unemployment are high and there are also instances of work carried out by minor's particularly male adolescents, while young people do not often proceed to higher education courses because they are employed in domestic work.

Librino is not characterised by a high crime rate, but undoubtedly constitutes the area from where most delinquents come.

San Giovanni Rena - Zia Lisa constitute the tenth municipality. This zone, which is among the least populated, has of a metropolitan nature; there are infrastructures and

common public services (such as Fontana Rossa airport, the fish and vegetable fruit market) and the industrial area of Pantano D'Archi. This includes an area of ecological importance under environmental restrictions (the oasis of Simeto, has however been damaged by illegal buildings) and finally, in the proximity of the sandy coast, there is the vast territory of La Plaja which has sports and leisure structures, which proceeds to the south.

The industrial zone has various settlements, big and average in size, which employ thousands of people. The rather varied industrial panorama is rendered peculiar due to the absolute absence of basic industries and also due to a precise orientation towards light industries, to a higher workforce vis-à-vis capital used.

In contrast to these areas of high economic profile and of great developmental potential, there are residential areas, essentially of a social type, which are poor and degraded. A part of this territory also suffers socio-economic stife.

The most ancient village is that of S.Maria Goretti. It has an elementary school, a church and some small commercial activities. In turn, the Village of S.Agata and that of Zia Lisa were built through a cooperative type housing development. This area is characterised by the presence of Rom settlements.

The viability of the zone has remained incomplete and the areas destined to be developed are those termed as public property but a big part of which are abandoned and extremely degraded. There are also illegal settlements composed of huts (in zone Madonna del Divino Amore near the cemetery).

The bypass around the communes bordering Catania experiences as serious problems of traffic congestion (the territory is often disturbed by structures placed by the administrations, which do not consent other modifications intended to make living conditions better, therefore one should invest in programmes to improve public transport services).

Another negative factor is the diffusion of big commercial centres in bordering areas (the province has the highest concentration of megastores) which, inevitably, determine the progressive disappearance of small commercial family-run activities, which are unable to sustain the competitiveness, and the added value of local products, with serious repercussions on the entire sector.

Another negative element is the saturation of the road network and existing urban spaces which are inadequate for an excessively used area, thus degrading the urban landscape.

Most of the metropolitan communes (due to their vicinity to the Capital) have been interested during the last years, by a huge construction boom and by medium demographic increments.

Originally these were agricultural centres, because they do not have well-rooted

historical, cultural and productive traditions, have not maintained the aspect of small independent towns (except for some small towns like Camporotondo and S.Pietro Clarenza). Consequently, there has been a large downsizing of activities and a move to the tertiary sector. Thus in some cases, this area now serves as “night residences” for workers commuting daily to the capital. Gravina and S.Agata Li Battiati are two centres hosting a high density of inhabitants, which are situated at the entrance to Catania, present great mobility problems. The principal road arteries, which sustain the traffic from and to Catania experience huge congestions during rush hours, since they traverse the central zone where there are basic services, the main residential area and the commercial zone.

In some cases, the construction-industry expansion, linked to a high population density, has been accompanied by instances of abusive activity which have disturbed the traditional territorial settings. This was exacerbated by a general shortage of basic infrastructures. In fact, an absence of integration between the outskirts (of recent construction) and the old town centres is evident.

Notwithstanding the numerous interventions by the administrations (even with the contributions of national and European union funds), to activate rehabilitation works of social housing, and the completion of primary and secondary infrastructures, to date no progress has been achieved. There is no articulated and integrated system of services capable of satisfying the needs of the users, for which the relations between the various urban settlements depend strictly in this sense on the city of Catania.

In this regard, the experience of the commune of Mascaluca, situated a few kilometres away from Catania, is exemplary. It was the commune that most felt the phenomenon of out-migration from the capital. The original structure (characterised by entities operating in the wine production sector) has progressively changed into a populated centre (a phenomenon which first involves the central zone and then proceeded to the outskirts which have developed in a confused and unregulated manner).

To the north, in the direction of Massa Annunziata, (small isolated town), there are numerous equally sized and single dwellings (often second residences used seasonally) which extend till the communes of Nicolosi and Pedara. The territory has a “Carabinieri” station, the law court, compulsory schools and higher Institutes.

Among the socio-territorial services offered, there is a centre for the elderly, a residence community for minors and an assisted therapeutic community.

There are no adequate green areas and developed zones, the territory is over-used and once again there are mobility problems and discomfort. The high levels of school truancy and micro-criminality could be a consequence of social hardship resulting in small thefts.

However, on the positive side, some minor economic centres (such as, Acireale for tourism, Giarre-Riposto, Paternò for agricultural sector) have seen an economic expansion, not directly related to the industrial and socio-demographic aspects of the Catania.

Acireale has a rich baroque architectural heritage. The commune is traditionally agricultural, but diversified its economy over time, increasing the tertiary sector and promoting tourism by recuperating traditions linked to “Pupi” (puppets) and the Carnival. In reality, although many efforts have been made, the commune has not succeeded to enhance fully its resources (example, there is a yearly problem regarding the thermal baths being closed for a long period of time to the public)

There are episodes of macro-criminality: juvenile delinquency, illegal work and unemployment.

The control of the territory is ensured by the local presence of the Carabinieri, the Fire Brigade and the Guardia di Finanza. There is also a correctional facility for minors and schools of every level.

Aci Bonaccorsi is a reality in itself vis-à-vis bordering communes. A passing-by centre (not crossed by the principal arterial roads), the commune forming part of the Association of Virtuous Communes stands out for the quality of the environment, services and amenities offered.

The territory is not particularly extended, and it is not densely inhabited, even in this case there is a difference between the old centre, where there are the main services and primary infrastructures, and the areas of recent construction where there are the commercial activities.

The urban network of Nicolosi has been overcome by residential constructions (villas and summer residences) and by lava flows. The territory for the main part is subject to certain restrictions, as it is situated in the Park of Mount Etna.

The commercial area is found along the two main roads Via Etna and Via Garibaldi, where even the artisan sector is developed (particularly lava stone works).

In the last years, the economy has been strongly linked to winter tourism and the tertiary sector. Income levels are average although there is an occupational crisis among youths with low standards of education.

Paterno' and Belpasso are the most populated communes in the area West of Catania. A territory with different characteristics to other communes near the main city; the urban centres have managed to preserve a major historical territorial identity linked to an agricultural economy. However, one cannot deny the existence of a commercial and artisan expansion, quite inopportune, when compared to the infrastructural characteristics of the zone.

In this sense, the example of Belpasso is emblematic. A town with an agricultural and artisan origin which is transforming into a tertiary sector provider. The construction of huge commercial centres has strongly compromised the living conditions, affecting also the surrounding communes.

The territory of Piano Tavola (near the industrial zone) is the result of an unregulated

urbanisation accompanied by the absence of services. A suburb inhabited by more than 7,000 people, which is situated between Belpasso, Camporotondo Etneo, Misterbianco and Motta Sant'Anastasia and thus characterised by a strong administrative fragmentation.

Paterno' is, by origin, an agricultural centre where the commercial and tertiary sectors have developed. The town, has seen the exodus of people from the town centre towards recently constructed areas such as Ardizzone (mainly social housing, public offices) and Scala linked to some abusive constructions.

Paterno' has one of the lowest rates of employment in the Province and major environmental problems linked to inefficiencies in the disposal of waste products and a scarce sensibility by the citizens who tend to increment the phenomenon of open abusive landfills (some years ago, the Armed Forces had to intervene in order to protect the roads from negligence and rubbish).

The presence of mafia clans is strongly linked to the economic network.

The commune of Misterbianco is also interesting. In the last thirty years, it has seen a strong demographic growth, almost completely independent from the immigration coming from the Capital.

This industrial zone, is a commercial and artisan centre that by time has become a point of reference for many areas in the south, also due to its location near principal roads.

The outskirts are isolated (common to other centres); there are abusive buildings and an inadequate evolution of the urban setting with regards to services, equipped green spaces, meeting places, and scholastic services which are limited to the compulsory lower secondary school.

It is a desolate scenario in which private business interests (sustained by local administrators attracted by the possibility of creating new jobs) have won over the safeguarding policies of the territory and the rationalisation of resources.

The high concentration of inhabitants and construction abuse, common to the metropolitan area, have clearly put in evidence the difficulties, on the part of local administrations, to manage the communal services, such as the water system and disposal of waste products (there are numerous abusive landfills and vandalism acts) and, more generally, a scarce lucidity in policy and restoration plans for the territory.

Another element of social hardship (above all for the future) is represented by integration mechanisms between the local population and immigrants who tend to insert themselves through holding menial and less appealing jobs for young people, jobs that are among the lowest in the labour market. Drug dependency (in decrease the consumption of heroine and on the increase that of cocaine) in these last years has established itself more due to the inability to effect prevention strategies.

According to official data, school truancy is not alarming as it maintains a low percentage (except for isolated cases like that of Mascalucia). Other problems include the

number of minors under judicial provisions, the presence of juvenile deviances linked on one side to the absence of strong socio-normative restrictions and on the other to the inability to promote adequate inclusion measures.

Another alarming increment is that of violence on women (particularly in the area of Catania, Misterbianco and Motta Sant'Anastasia).

In all the area, although to a different extent, there are episodes of micro-criminality and organised crime which, particularly in centres bordering the city seem quite related to the high levels of unemployment due to the current crisis.

In order to guarantee a major control of the territory and increase security levels, the major part of the communes are equipped with or are going to install video-surveillance systems. This was partly made possible through the finances coming from the European Community.

#### **Area at the foot of the Mountains- Ionian Sea**

Adrano, Brancavilla, Bronte, Calatabiano, Castiglione di Sicilia, Fiumefreddo di Sicilia, Giarre, Linguaglossa, Maletto, Maniace, Mascali, Milo, Piedimonte Etneo, Randazzo, Riposto and Sant'Alfio

The area at the foot of the mountains, to the west (Adrano, Brancavilla, Bronte, Maletto, Maniace and Randazzo ), comprises a vast rural area which has complex problems of development as defined by the National Strategic Plan (areas with major unemployment and that are sparsely inhabited).

Many of these centres have also a historical, beautiful vistas and heritage. The west side of Mount Etna has been effected, in a minor way, by lava flows which partly preserves its morphological characteristics. This area is not fully developed due to problems linked to absence of infrastructure.

The agricultural base of these territories, which have been strongly effected by the crisis, has been abandoned for many years and only recently, policies for the re-launching of traditional economy have been activated.

Bronte is renowned for the production and commercialisation of the pistachio nuts. Half of its territory is designated as a nature reserve (Park of Mount Etna and Park of the Nebrodi).

Maletto derives its resources from strawberry cultivations, Maniace from fruits and Randazzo from oil and zoological techniques. The enhancement of, local resources has been tied to an activity of promotion in the wine-gastronomic sector (local feasts, exhibitions and manifestations).

The commune of Arano, the most populated among those mentioned above, distinguishes itself due to an economic reality linked to the tertiary sector, to small family-run entities and to the agricultural sector. In the seventies, the commune activated,

in an experimental way, the first thermo-electric plant in the world. An experiment, that raised many hopes for a better future, but which ended up a failure, when in 2011, ENEL decided to dismantle the thermo-electric plant and install photovoltaic systems that have offered, to some extent, alternative jobs in a depressed area, making profit using minor age workers.

The economic-cultural level can be considered as globally average, with a third of the population is made up of young people waiting for their first job.

There are basic public services and a shortage of public meeting places, however there are many social associations.

In the last years, the territory has been devastated by homicides linked to internal feuds of mafia type crimes for the control of the territory. The pressure exerted by the mafia influences greatly the local economy.

The area to the east, at the foot of the mountains, comprises the communes of Calatabiano, Castiglione di Sicilia, Fiumefreddo, Giarre, Linguaglossa, Mascali, Milo, Piedimonte Etneo, Riposto and Sant'Alfio

This territory is of a hilly morphology, extending till the coastal zone. The communes nearest to Mount Etna are traditionally occupied in wine production. This industry has had a re-launching due to investments by industries operating on a regional and national level.

The local administrations have, moreover, invested huge resources to enhance local resources by means of incentives to industries in the form of micro-credit to widen the hospitality aspect.

After Nicolosi, Linguaglossa represents one of the main departing points for winter sports.

The equipped area has been partially destroyed by the volcano eruptions of 2002. It was reconstructed after ten years because the works were slowed down due to difficulties and bureaucratic impediments. This situation rendered the local economy in a very difficult position.

The population has a medium-low income. There is a low female participation in the labour market. The extortion methods of the mafia towards local entrepreneurs are diffused.

The commune of Castiglione di Sicilia is situated on a hill to the north of Mount Etna and is traditionally agricultural even if it is trying to develop the tourist sector.

There is a hospitality structure oriented towards golf enthusiasts. Many actions have been planned to widen then touristic offer (a regional wine cellar, holiday houses etc.).

Castiglione di Sicilia, has gradually become a centre for summer residences and many areas have historical-architectural protection (the area of the Park of Mount Etna and the natural Reserve of Alcantara).



The social network is extremely homogeneous, characterised both by a high level of emigration and by an elderly population. There are many immigrants coming mainly from the east. There is some social awkwardness among minors and youths.

Giarre is an eminently commercial centre (activities are concentrated along Corso Italia and Via Callipoli) a tertiary sector, artisans, and flori-culture development (a valid alternative to the traditional agricultural activity).

The centre is made up of 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> century buildings; the zone Jungo has schools of every level and a Housing Estate. In the north part of the city, there is one of the biggest wholesale fruit/vegetable markets in Sicily.

There are many immigrants (around 14% of the population). The working population is quite old due to a big generation gap.

The major problems are; hydrological risks and inadequate management of waste products, as well as diffused criminality such as racketeering, usury, thefts and robberies.

The commune has installed video-surveillance systems in the town centre, in schools and in the most frequented roads.

The main problem of the communes in this Eastern area is the shortage of adequate road connections between the communes on the slopes of Mt.Etna and the coastal zones (Fiumefreddo, Mascali, Riposto and Calatabiano).

The coastal areas are touched by a seasonal tourism linked to the popularity of Taormina.

A residential zone has developed in these territories which for years sustained the economy of the surrounding (construction sector) area.

The absence of adequate hospitality structures and entertainment services makes tourists move towards the nearby communes of Messina.

The commune of Calatabiano, classified as an intensive and specialised agricultural area, is dedicated to the cultivation of citrus fruits and vines. The standard of education of families is low, many family groups have one income, and others live in precarious conditions that do not allow parental obligations to be adequately carried out.

A tourist sector is slowly developing due to the presence of the Gole dell'Alcantara and the beach of San Marco, so much so that in the territorial plan there is the hypothesis for the creation of a port to enable access of ships to the harbour.

As in other areas, the territory has serious deficits, with regards to green spaces and scholastic infrastructures. There is a strong presence of an agricultural type mafia, linked to theft of cattle, damages to property and extortions.

The economy of Fiumefreddo is based on the commercialisation of agricultural and floral products and on the tertiary sector, as it is also a strategic point through which tourists pass from and towards Giarre and the coastal zone.

The beaches of the commune, for years rewarded for cleanliness and quality of access,

have become the destination of a consistent seasonal tourism which has brought about a rapid, often unplanned development.

The social status has quite a heterogeneous texture. There is a middle-high class made up of professionals and small businessmen and a wider section of families living in financial and cultural poverty.

### **The Calatina Area**

Caltagirone, Castel di Judica, Grammichele, Licodia Eubea, Mazzarrone, Militello Val di Catania, Mineo, Mirabella Imbaccari, Palagonia, Raddusa, Ramacca, San Cono, San Michele di Ganzaria, Scordia and Vizzini.

The Calatina area covers half the provincial territory but is characterised by a scarce density of inhabitants (about 100 per sq.km.) evidencing the huge migration towards the capital Catania.

The territory, extremely heterogeneous (alternating between hilly and mountainous areas) comprises the South Simeto and embraces 15 communes situated along the road and railroad network, between Catania and Gela.

The urban structure, characterised by isolated towns with problematic connections, caused by an unstable road system and shortage of transport services, renders Caltagirone and more particularly the communes around it, emarginated both territorially and economically with other provincial areas with which there are no big inter-relations.

The communes here are going through a profound crisis; the decline in social expenditure impedes them from activating adequate and efficient planning programmes to enhance the territory.

The Calatina areas have, moreover, a high hydro-geological and seismic risk. Many centres do not have adequate escape routes for the evacuation of the population in case of a calamity.

This, moreover, is accentuated by the presence of abusive constructions and by the insufficiency of ordinary maintenance works which would guarantee, by means of preventive measures, more safety in major unstable zones.

Moreover, in the last months, living conditions got worse, due to the management of waste products.

Generally there is a decline in the economic conditions of families and an increment in unemployment (the validity of the official data results is doubtful, due to the presence of a strong hidden economy and irregular work).

Along the years, there has been an increment of criminal actions: from intimidations to vandalism acts against the representatives of public institutions, from damages and looting in schools to robberies and thefts from farmers.

The need of a major control of the territory by Police Forces is evident at local level.

These communes have common social problems, such as social emargination, discomfort among minors, generation gap problems and decline in birth rates; scarce civic responsibility, diffused criminality, urban degradation (especially in town centres) and a general inadequacy of infrastructures.

Together with the changes produced in the social network by an ageing population (which however on average is inferior to other Sicilian provinces) there are processes, which on the whole involve families, increase of broken families, austerity measures among young and old, economic and/or social fragility which often have repercussions on minors.

The area is experiencing out-migration. This touches marginally the communes characterised by a strong concentration of agricultural entities (Licodia Eubea and Mazzarone, the commune with the lowest average income pro-capita in Italy) in which the presence of clandestine and regular immigration has a significant weight on the composition of the population, that concentrates itself, particularly in the centres of San Michele Gazzaria Vizzini, Militello in Val di Catania, Raddusa and Mirabella Imbaccari.

The problem of the generation gap is found, above all, in some localities such as Mirabella Imbaccari, Mineo and Militello in Val di Catania, in which the quota of the elderly population exceeds abundantly that of young people, while it is less serious in Ramacca and Palagonia (where the number of youths is bigger vis-a-vis the elderly).

The district of Calatino Nord is composed of agricultural communes: Castel di Ludica, Militello in Val di Catania, Mineo, Palagonia, Raddusa, Ramacca, and Scordia.

The primary sector, in reality, serves to satisfy local needs and does not succeed to cross the district borders. There is a problem linked to a traditional mentality, not much inclined to establish networks, minimal coordination abilities, absence of incisive policies aimed at safeguarding local products (even if it cannot be denied that efforts by various administrations have brought the recognition and enhancement of some typical products) and critical points regarding logistics (absence of adequate infrastructures for heavy traffic and insufficiency of stocking areas/warehouses) and finance, all factors which influence greatly competitiveness levels.

Although to a lesser extent than agriculture, there are businesses occupied in the agro-alimentary and construction sectors. These, like the agricultural sector, present major difficulties related to shortage of developed structures and evidenced by fiscal evasion and illegal work.

In order to curb the exodus towards other zones and re-launch the destiny of the local economy (characterised by a scarce industrial development and by a certain backwardness in the agricultural sector). In the past, thanks to public finances, there were interventions to overcome the infrastructural gap and incentive the tourist sector by safeguarding the artistic and naturalistic heritage of some communes, above all the capital of the commune.

Tourist activity, traditionally linked to the head commune and the town of San Michele di Gazzaria, are slowly developing in all the territory, as evidenced by the increment of hospitality activities .

With regards to education, there is a relevant sector of almost illiterate people and more generally with a low socio-cultural level. The situation of the communes of Grammichele and Scordia is particularly worrying because the formative structures are extremely fragmented and a low percentage of people are in possession of a diploma.

In Caltagirone, the population has standards of education, although inferior, quite near to the national average.

The town, some 80 km away from the province capital, has assumed the role of “head” for the bordering communes. Known to the world, thanks to the presence of an artisan tradition specialised in ceramics works, the town has a quite relevant artistic and cultural heritage, so much so that it has been inserted by UNESCO in the list of World Heritage sites.

During the last decade, this area has made use of important financial aids for the realisation of public infrastructures thanks to efficient policies that tapped aids for all activities relating to the agro-alimentary sector.

The historical centre, where refurbishment works were to be carried out is inhabited by families of a medium-low cultural level, with an urban and building degradation, that has seen a progressive exodus of people towards residential zones and housing estates concentrated in the “New Expanding Zone”, counter-distinguished by average and low income families on the outskirts.

The suburbs, although with diversified environmental and socio-economic conditions are mainly dedicated to agriculture.

The commune of Caltagirone, even if densely inhabited, with an absence of green areas and youth centres (which presence is linked to Catholic institutions) offers many public and private services able to satisfy the primary needs of the citizens in the bordering communes.

One can confirm that, although in the last years, significant changes have taken place in urban recovery and the re-evaluation of social and economic functions, there is still a strong lacunae in the quantity and quality of activities and services, as well as environmental and habitat degradation particularly in areas of the old town centre.

There are sections of social hardship linked to the worsening situation of employment conditions and to a high infiltration of organised crime.

CCTV has been planned in some areas such as Scala di Santa Maria Del Monte, in Va Giambattista Nicastro, the parking area in Lago Ballone, in Via Ardito corner with Via Pentolai, the open space facing the Church between Via San Bonaventura and the Largo della Croce, Via Acquanuova at the crossroads with Via Pollicino, the square Innocenzo

Marcino, Via Vittorio Emanuele corner with Via Volta Campanile, the avenue Regina Elena at the crossroads with Via dei Greci (near the Institute of Art), Via Luigi Sturzo corner with Via Moschitta and the Cappuccini parking area.

The Commune of San Michele di Ganzaria is rich in cultural and archaeological treasures (not enough appreciated) and naturalistic resources linked to Mount Ganzaria, characterised by chestnut groves, valuable spontaneous vegetation and different animal species. Together with tourism, the economy is based on agriculture and specifically fruit production.

Militello Val di Catania, which heritage, although quantitatively inferior to that of other communes is also significant, is characterised by many buildings and monuments of the Baroque period, on which, with the technical support of the Department of Cultural Heritage of Catania, restoration and reinforcing works were carried out.

It is true that the nearby communes have to refer to the principal commune for the access to scholastic services, sport and cultural structures, however, there is a progressive diffusion of infrastructures relating to different economic sectors particularly the agricultural one.

In the small commune of Mazzarrone, for example, there is one of the biggest vegetable/fruit markets in the area and in provincial territory.

The agricultural activity with the production, transformation, commercialisation of grapes, represents the only source of income, which, based on official data, is among the lowest in Italy (no statistics are available on the income from the black economy).

The need to resort to a specialised workforce, to refine production and for the promotion of the product in international contexts, has contributed to raise educational standards urging residents to follow advanced and university courses.

The town, in virtue of the productive capacity deriving from agriculture has experienced a strong immigration which provides seasonal even irregular workers (rarely shown in statistics).

Illegal work, which in agriculture represents about 80% of the workforce, is partly related to the fact that public policies for agriculture indemnities make irregular work convenient for certain workers' categories.

Palagonia, which together with Scordia, represents one of the most populated communes after Caltagirone, is situated on a hill and is showing a huge expansion in construction, due to a constant increment of the population.

The commune has a rich archaeological heritage, not adequately utilised, and unknown to most of the younger generation (often those who live on the outskirts admit to never having seen the historical town centre). There is a lack of hospitality structures intended to favour consistent tourist arrivals.

The areas of the quarters of Matrice and Immacolata are those that, notwithstanding

the changes undergone, preserve a medieval urban setting, with alleys and narrow streets, many monuments and historical buildings. Illegal constructions continue to be built by the inhabitants themselves who alter their homes and cover the characteristic stone stairway (local stone) with asphalt.

An outstanding example of abusive buildings is a garage near the façade of St. Joseph's Chapel, situated in Via Duca degli Abruzzi.

For a long time, Palagonia saw its historical-archaeological sites totally abandoned, however, they were partially recovered by the use of public funds.

Only part of the substantial resources were utilised to initiate activities in the tourist sector. The entrusting of management services to the private sector had positive results in the case of the coasts of S. Febronia, where some areas on the site were recovered, making the "natural spring of S. Febronia" fruitful. The situation of the "Hermitage" of S. Febronia is entirely different, where walls are threatened by humidity which has badly damaged the ancient frescoes, while the "Small Basilica of S. Giovanni" is in a bad state of degradation (illumination sources destroyed, vast flowerbeds with only olive trees and dry magnolias).

Palagonia's economy is centred on the cultivation and commercialisation of red oranges, via small business activities (the most effected by the crisis).

The seasonal character, typical of an agricultural economy, has an important weight on the migratory processes and rates of unemployment, contributing to a more serious socio-economic condition.

The social class is predominantly made up of persons belonging to an average low cultural and economic reality, is characterised by a diffused individualistic and fragmented mentality. This is proven by the low presence of associations and a minimum of social conscience which provokes disinterest in the care of existing structures and environmental heritage.

Juvenile delinquency is frequently due to truancy, the increase of drug dependency and delinquency.

There is an absence of recreational spaces, sports equipment, green areas, meeting places and a substantial inadequacy of existing structures.

There are frequent complaints about the city run by criminals, the presence of drug trafficking, the spreading of dangerous deviances (drug consumption and alcoholism), and a sense of contempt towards legality (particularly many traffic accidents caused by inobservance of the highway code and security norms, against which there is hardly any action by the police forces, or if there is, citizens do not collaborate).

Scordia is an eminently agricultural town, characterised by artisan activities and small active industries in the manufacturing sector.

The town centre is surrounded by more modern zones with a heterogeneous setting, extremely confused in the Northwest zone with multi-storey unrefined buildings and

narrow, badly illuminated streets, with a lot of traffic (Chiuseo, Guccione, Montagna, Pinnatazza); more regulated with better living conditions in areas to the South (Barona, Cittadino, Ponticello, Gabella San Rocco).

There are schools, wide green spaces and numerous socio-cultural services; there are many associations which collaborate with socio-territorial services in order to decrease social emargination.

There are many areas spoilt by abusive constructions and uncontrolled cementification (this effects protected areas), together with frequent episodes of micro-criminality, vandalism, intimidations, thefts and drug abuse.

There is a certain inadequacy of policies regarding the arrival of immigrants (some buildings in the peripheric zones have been occupied by regular non-European immigrants, who live in precarious conditions).

Vizzini is a historical panoramic site (Area Valle dei Mulini and Borgodella Cunzaria) whose potential is underutilised (for example the tourist aspect is marginal). The territory, a crossroad to some principal transport arteries, is eminently agricultural.

Around the Castle, one finds the oldest part of the original centre (sparsely populated rural houses and few historical buildings, absence of public services and commercial activities); different is the setting of the zones built after the 1700, home to monumental areas of great value and the economic, social and administrative city centre.

The social class is made up of farmers, cattle-raisers and employees in the tertiary sector.

The stagnation of the economy is accompanied by a diffused abandonment of the territory (which has had a demographic decline, in the last decade, of more than 6%) and the increase of micro-criminality.

At Vizzini, there is a hospital, the carabinieri station and public schools.

### **Caltanissetta Province**

The Province, largely flat country, can be divided in two different areas: the northern tip which comprises beside the Province Capital, the communes of: Acquaviva Platani, Bompensiere, Campofranco, Marianopoli, Milena, Montoro, Mussomeli, Resuttano, San Cataldo, Santa Caterina Villarmosa, Serradifalco, Sutera, Valledlunga Pratameno and Villalba; and a zone more to the south which extends till the coastal city of Gela where one finds the communes of Butera, Delia, Mazzarino Niscemi, Riesi and Sommatino.

The provincial entrepreneurial system is made up primarily of small and medium entities operating in the agricultural and commercial sectors, in conjunction with the tertiary sector.

The territories of the extreme northern part have a strong agricultural tradition with many wine districts (Valledlunga Pratameno, Riesi, Butera, Serradifalco, San Cataldo,

Milena, Sommatino and Delia). The cereal production interests the areas of the province capital Nissemo, while cattle raising techniques at San Cataldo, Marianopoli, Resuttano, Villalba and S. Caterina Villarmosa are developed; renowned also is the production of olive oil and artichokes in the area of Niscemi

The Gela plain is a vast industrial area linked to the presence of petroleum-chemical entities, not very far from the natural reserve of Biviere di Gela.

The development of the industrial sector was initially accompanied by a rise in employment levels and social wellbeing in an area traditionally considered among the poorest in Sicily. In the long term there was a constant decrease in the workforce together with the rapid increase in the cost of living, with the progressive abandonment of agricultural activities and increase in unemployment rates.

Industry, besides in Gela, is present in the Province Capital with small and medium entities operating in the production of artisan objects for smokers and liqueurs (exported all over the world), the production of objects made of cork (Niscemi), the textile industry (Riesi) and a number of entities for the transformation of alimentary products spread all over the territory.

The industrial and productive sector has developed in the last decades. In the area between San Cataldo, Caltanissetta and Serradifalco, the production of excellent honey and salt refining is renowned, coming mainly from the nearby province of Trapani.

Although the Province is crossed by the motorway network which connects Palermo to Catania, the territory is characterised by infrastructural shortages which penalise entrepreneurship.

The most western tip is less populated, the towns are smaller, and there is a substantial number of emigrants. These towns are the most influenced by the phenomenon of ageing of the population.

From a social point of view, there is not yet a great desegregation of family nuclei, although there was a slight contraction in the household size (two, three persons per family).

The province of Caltanissetta, together with that of Enna, is in the last place in female employment; this is due to the absence of adequate work policies. This is an extremely poor province, where there are very high rates of school truancy and alarming thresholds of illiteracy, where many families live in poor conditions and the best solution for a better future is to emigrate.

It is, however, good to remember that behind these very high unemployment levels there are many cases of illegal work, not always conducive to organised crime.

A reality, which is not only linked to Cosa Nostra, but also to an autonomous criminal organisation called "Stidda" (particularly active around Gela and Niscemi, traditionally areas at risk) which operates, sometimes together with Cosa Nostra, in the destruction of public and private heritage (specifically in the assignment of public works tenders to



industries controlled by extortions, taxes to entrepreneurs and protection money).

But in contrast with the past, many businessmen have started to rebel against the imposition of the “pizzo” (protection money), particularly, intent to re-launch the culture of legality in the city of Gela.

Reports and telephone tapping have made it possible to unveil extortions linked to rackets to which the number of reports on acts of usury do not correspond (increase due to unfavourable economic situation and a restrictive policy regarding credit from banks).

The district of Caltanissetta has the sad national record of minors incriminated for mafia crimes; minors carry out robberies and aggravated extortions, damages to property for intimidation purposes and homicides. This phenomenon seems to move, hand in hand, with an often hidden school truancy, which statistically speaking, seems marginal.

Sexual violence and stalking are clearly on the decline. However, these crimes are still diffused due to poor socio-cultural contexts, inside family nuclei or against persons incapable of taking care of themselves, such as minors or the disabled.

There are many crimes against public administration. There has been a slight decrease in crimes against the heritage (however the number of car and apartment thefts and robberies is still alarming) due to efficient prevention and territory control by police forces. Damages are perpetrated by means of arson attempts mainly on business entities, motor vehicles, scooters, and agricultural cultivations (diffused vandalism, used as a means of revenge for futile reasons and sometimes in order to defraud insurance companies).

The territory and bordering zones around Gela stand out for general negligence in the management of public property. There is a perception of fear of crime by the population due to a generally difficult situation accentuated by insufficient police control and the shortage of essential services.

Gela continues to stand out for the trafficking of hashish and cocaine. Normally these are obtained from Catania and Palermo. This illicit activity is often led by groups of young people.

Infractions in the health and safety sector are also numerous (often immigrants are involved). There should be supervisory actions, by means of a coordinated and permanent activity, by the various competent authorities together with a major awareness by the workforce.

With regards to police presence in the territory, the State Police has two main police stations, one at Gela and the other at Niscemi. The Carabinieri, besides a provincial office, are equally distributed on all the territory, while the Guardia di Finanza has a provincial office, a company at Caltanissetta and Gela and a brigade at Mussomeli.

The strenght of the municipal police is inferior to the requirements of all the communes, therefore in order to tackle this problem an ad hoc management consortium has been set up.

The cultural movement in the province is found in the capital. In the last years, thanks also to the restructuring and re-opening of some historical buildings, the city is re-launching itself at a cultural level due to the presence of theatres, cinemas, numerous museums and other cultural places such as the multi-functional cultural centre, the setting up of a literary park and various activities by cultural centres and associations.

The town centre gravitates around Piazza Garibaldi, intersected by the arterial road of Corso Umberto (the other arterial road is Via Vittorio Emanuele), the area where the Local Council and the most important historical architectural heritage and some museums are located.

Many areas in the town centre have been abandoned for a long time, due to out-migration and poverty. In particular, the old Arab quarters of San Domenico, to the east of Piazza Garibaldi, characterised by many houses, most of which are dilapidated and abandoned by residents; rented at high prices to groups of non-European citizens. The quarters are a refuge for neglected individuals and the homeless.

One can confirm that the town centre is losing its prestigious function of an open air commercial centre, due to enclosed commercial centres, situated on the outskirts of the town territory. Many zones have lost their identity; many schools, public offices, professional studios and artisan workshops, have moved to the new expansion zone. Most of the zones in the town centre are inhabited by elderly people.

Santa Flavia is one of the biggest and populated zones. It is divided in two parts: a high part characterised by a very wide street, intersected by short and narrow streets and some small squares, with recently constructed small blocks of flats, of good urban setting. The other lower part at the back of the zone consists of narrow and steep streets, with old houses, some of them ground floor houses, without adequate sanitary services. There are no green, recreational play areas. The only meeting places offered are schools and parish churches.

Here one finds non-European families with school aged children. Activities carried out by inhabitants are various. Besides some professionals and employees, there are many unemployed, labourers, street vendors and some artisans, many are one income families with low cultural levels.

The quarters of Santa Flavia (even Santa Venera), nowadays, have a diffused micro-criminality with gangs of delinquents committing crimes such as snatch and grab, robberies, house thefts, vandalism and different episodes of urban degradation.

The urbanisation of the last decades has favoured, as previously said, the development of the southeast peripheric area, from the areas consisting mainly of cooperatives, high population density and extremely anonymous, void of green areas, where in order to enhance the area and living conditions, there has been an ongoing development of small one family villas.

In the quarters of Pian del Lago, there are sports complex, that include almost all sports disciplines. The societies affiliated to relative federations and agencies for sports promotion, are numerous.

The new expansion zones have seen the settlement of a social class composed of families where the couple is employed in professional and dependent activities.

Paradoxically, even due to emigration towards the North, there is a town centre dominated by dilapidated constructions where numerous family groups live in extreme precarious conditions (there are frequent episodes of evacuation due to dangerous structures), while a big part of the outskirts area is widely under-utilised. In reality, the local administration is carrying out vast refurbishment works for the recovery of some buildings with the aim to reconvert them for social purposes.

Not far from the urban centre, there is the village of Santa Barbara, an ex-village of construction workers, where some buildings have been abandoned and have inadequate public spaces. Attempts for refurbishment are being made in order to recuperate some buildings and the completion of primary urban works, consisting of green areas and a space for a toys/games museum for educational purposes (there is also a school and a parish church in the zone).

To the West of the inhabited centre there is a vast residential, scarcely populated area, where there is the hospital and, in the direction of San Cataldo, many big commercial activities are being set up.

For months, Caltanissetta has been “under attack” by criminality, both local and from other Sicilian cities. This has strongly prejudiced the safety of the citizens, who are more often subject to thefts from apartments, not to speak of robberies from shops and banks.

There are also frauds in obtaining national and European finances with the aim of money laundering.

To sustain and assist victims of rackets, a project is underway for the creation of an assistance, training and counselling centre, to safeguard the local entrepreneurial system.

There is, moreover, scarce environmental sensibility. Many areas, particularly the quarter Angeli in the town centre, have become open air landfills due to illegal disposal of waste products by residents.

Caltanissetta is the Italian city with the highest index of absolute poverty and represents a transit point for the migrant population.

Since the last few years, the movements of people towards the Province of Caltanissetta have greatly diminished. However, those requesting international protection from other Sicilian provinces and zones of the peninsula still remain.

The main nationality of migrants mainly found here is Eritrean, even if for the past year there has been an increment of Afghan nationals. One finds large groups of foreigners who, daily, crowd the streets which connect the south zone to the town centre, or to young

women who, during the evening, act as prostitutes in Via Rochester.

There is also a community centre for refugees in zone Pian del Lago, where in emergencies, extra-communitarian citizens requesting asylum, pass the night in a camp, in tents or simply covered with blankets, in the space in front of the gate of the Community Centre. When they leave the Centre in order to go to the city, they are forced to use a road with very heavy traffic but without pavements or illuminations (a situation which endangers these people's lives and that of the drivers themselves).

In order to enforce territory control, there is a vigilance service employing a coordinated plan to control the regularity of stay of foreigners. There is also the empowerment of control and crime prevention in scholastic Institutes, the prevention of drug abuse, the prevention of damages to scholastic structures, by means of patrol duties by civilians, and for the guarantee of the smooth running of didactic activities. There is also the vigilance and monitoring of parts of the communal roads effected by heavy rainfall and landslides. A better monitoring system by the Central Operations centre utilising video-surveillance cameras.

The other attraction of the province is the town of Gela which has a demographic density superior to that of the commune capital.

Contrary to the first settlement on a hilly area, Gela has developed along a vast coastal area at the extreme south of the island. During the last years, the centre has seen many changes which have influenced the original setting (in many cases, abusive added floors to the old buildings).

The quality of dwellings in the town centre is quite modest. The buildings do not have many floors and the ground floor houses are for commercial use (Corso Vittorio Emanuele).

The residential expansion area is quite different to the west of the city, where originally there was a village which should have accommodated the workers of the refinery.

It is an area with huge blocks of flats, all in a straight line, neutrally coloured with autonomous services, wide streets with vast pedestrian zones and green areas around the southwest part, where there is a commercial centre and a socio-cultural one in which there is a second grade comprehensive school, a multi-functional hall used as cinema-theatre and for manifestations of every kind, various courtyards and equipped sports areas, guaranteeing, all in all, a living environment above the local average in quality.

In recent years, this zone has been progressively included in the urban network which has expanded with popular housing estates.

This area is found near to the zone Caposoprano, characterised by a medium-high socio-economic level and by the presence of family blocks of flats, a zone rich in services, from a hospital to a school, while equipped areas and green public areas are almost inexistent.

To the north towards the hinterland extends the Piana di Gela, separated from the town centre by Via Venezia along which there are many business and administrative offices other than the Carabinieri station (the other offices are in the town centre).

Near the agricultural areas, there is a diffused amount of abusive constructions (Albani Roccella, Setteferine, Margi etc.), where sometimes no primary urbanisation works are found. Families are mainly of a medium-low socio-cultural standard. Few families can rely on a stable, well paid job and few persons have a higher secondary school certificate.

School truancy levels are very high. It is an area where the school or the parish centre is the only meeting place from a socio-cultural point of view.

Only recently, the commune of Gela carried out works intended to recover some zones (zone Santa Lucija, considered as one of the zones with a major criminal density).

The extreme northern part of the coastline is a touristic area, mainly consisting of abusive housing. Here there are many seaside resorts, bars, Pizzeria, pubs, restaurants, eating places, ice cream parlours, cafeterias and others industries provide services for citizens and tourists. At the extreme opposite side there is a vast naturalistic area near which there is an industrial area which has a petroleum-chemical plant and industries specialised in the manufacturing and construction sectors. All around there is a vast agricultural area.

The city has two harbour infrastructures, one of which is found near the petroleum-chemical plant and permits the transit of large merchant ships (although due to a progressive deterioration a big part of the goods in transit had to be moved to the harbour of Licata), while the other is near the city and is the mooring point of smaller boats.

Gela for a long time, was at the centre of feuds for power between different crime families in order to control the territory. The diffused abuse, the strong presence of organised crime, the high environmental pollution related to refinery activities, the occupational crisis determined by the downsizing of industrial activities, make this territory one in which it is less adapted for good living conditions in the region.

In the last years, there have been many arson attempts on cars and doors and intimidations with the aim of extortions against commercial activities. There is also a diffused micro-criminality, mainly among minors, specialised in thefts from dwellings, snatch and grab, pickpocketing and robberies from shops.

The commune, together with various civic associations, is activating projects in order to educate people towards legality and above all, in the fight against organised crime. This has resulted in a notable increment of reports to the police.

There is always the need for major educational collaboration to sustain minors through the collaboration between families, schools, local entities, and the civil society to activate public projects to aid and reinforce legality and to develop incentives leading to the city's upgrading.

### **Province of Enna**

The Province of Enna is situated in a central position in the Sicilian Island. However, the territory has always been quite emarginated vis-à-vis other Provinces.

Most of the twenty Communes have an economy based on agriculture, particularly developed in the area of Leonforte and Agira.

Around Dittaino, there is an area of industrial development and in the zones of Nicosia, Ragalbuto and Valguarnera, there is a diffused system of small and medium artisan activities.

There are two important archaeological areas: the ancient city of Morgantina in the commune of Aidone and the Roman Villa del Casale in Piazza Armerina (second city of the Province).

Agri-tourisms and cattle-raising techniques are developing in the territory.

The demographic distribution is characterised by a strong concentration of the population in the urban centres especially in the central part which is better connected vis-à-vis other areas.

The Province, has recently undergone a true and proper demographic crisis, not even compensated by the foreign population in the territory, whose presence is still marginal (Romanians and Moroccans especially in Enna and Piazza Armerina). Many males of working age emigrated and the way of life of residents is quite modest. Paradoxically, Enna is one of the few provinces where the integration of immigrants, both socially and at work, is superior vis-à-vis that of the local population.

Cultural and recreational structures are relative in number. Telecommunications, mobility towards schools on the outskirts, create quite a gap vis-à-vis the more developed areas, so much so that citizens are obliged to go to Catania or Caltanissetta for many services.

From a social point of view, there are strong identity values, and certain cohesion of family groups is evident.

Primary and secondary education is around the 80% level, particularly in communes where there are scholastic institutes and in the main Centres.

Unemployment is less dramatic than in other areas, thanks to a sustained growth of independent jobs, even though the phenomenon of poverty and a general impoverishment urge many persons to seek help from local diocesan structures.

Enna is the most populated city and the seat of the principal social services and places of public interest. The city centre, of a medieval nature, has many cultural buildings: churches, historical monuments, a public library and various museums. Along Via Roma, one finds a number of boutiques and shops, besides other principal institutions and entities (province office, commune office, police station, theatre, banks and insurance agencies).

The zone of San Pietro, where there is social housing, is one of the oldest zones

of the city and even one of the poorest, from an urban point of view. There are many dilapidated buildings. Together with S.Francesco-Lombardia, the zone will be subject to vast refurbishment works in order to revitalise the entire area.

Among the intended projects, besides the opening of a multi-functional centre, there is the refurbishing of houses, that have been abandoned or are unused, with the intention of assigning them to young couples and students.

The territory is facing an out migration due to the new building zone in the valley. A residential reality where some time ago the basic road structure connections were completed and modern sports complex finished (swimming pool, sports palace, equipped areas). There are also cultural and social buildings, besides a central station for the "Carabinieri" and a hospital.

There are various scholastic institutes, a university and the majority of retail and wholesale shops are present on the territory. Nevertheless, the urban setting of the settlement is still void of a true and proper town centre and the presence of social centres and meeting places is scarce. In district Gentilomo there is an industry of artisan activities.

A few kilometres from the centre, in the proximity of a natural reserve, there is a vast seasonal residential area with many hotels and hospitality structures.

The part of Via Roma which goes from Piazza Balata to Piazza San Tommaso has been subject to numerous acts of vandalism, such as the toppling over of rubbish containers.

In order to avoid vandalism acts, the Commune installed about thirty video cameras and reinforced security patrols in the area.

Among the crimes most frequently reported there are breaches of the law with regard to the disposal or recycling of special and dangerous waste products. A mafia presence, although with a low profile, conditions the economic and social networks. A group of justice collaborators has revealed the existence of a mafia structure in different families, active above all in Enna and Barrafranca (the latter continues to hold the record in the drug trafficking business).

There are limited episodes of extortion and damages perpetrated by organised crime groups, even if these seem few due to lack of reports by businessmen or commercial entities.

Mafia clans exercise a strong control to ensure various financial sources. Often they manage to acquire totally business and entrepreneurial activities. In the last months, mafia interests have turned their attention to business related to the theft of copper extracted from electricity cables.

According to the authorities, extortion by the Mafia could be contrasted by assisting those who report through adopting forms of aided taxation for those who report crimes of racket and usury. In the past these same associations had promoted legality through the creation of one-stop-shops aimed at the prevention of corruption and to offer consultancy

services assistance to the victim, in order to access funds and guarantees from the State.

There is also a diffused micro-criminality operating, above all, in the territory of Leonforte. Recently, there were increasing episodes of thefts from dwellings, crimes against persons, prostitution of minors and crimes against the heritage.

Authorities retain that criminality needs to be contrasted by repression and promotion of the culture of legality in schools, involving even families. One needs to invest in education and culture, which would benefit and gain positive results for the civil community, since where the standard of education is low, the presence of delinquency is high. In this regard, the activation of protocols between police forces and the Ministry of Education address the promotion in schools, by means of various meetings, the value of economic legality, particularly the prevention of fiscal evasion and waste of public funds, forgeries, counterfeiting and not least the use and trafficking of drugs is interesting.

Moreover, one has to guarantee job opportunities for young people so that they do not have to emigrate.

With regards to drug consumption, diffused even among immigrants, there has been an increment in consumption of the so-called light drugs by sixteen to twenty-four year olds.

This dependency seems to be accentuated by strong economic hardship. One need to act by finding jobs for the persons at risk even if in the principal towns there are structures which accommodate these individuals even in day centres.

### **Province of Messina**

The Province, situated in the North-eastern part of Sicily, is mainly made up of the chain of mountains of “Monti Peloritani” and that of the “Nebrodi”.

Messina, the third province in population density, is largely fragmented from an administrative point of view. Although from more than a 100 communes that make up the province, only 20% exceeds the 5000 inhabitants and the population has settled mainly in the Tyrrhenian and Ionian coastal areas, which centres were set up as extensions of the communes in the mountains, there is a huge population density in the territories of Messina, Barcellona and Milazzo.

The conditions of the labour market seem perfectly in line with the average in Sicily. The mountainous characteristic of the Province explains this division in work the force.

The main part of gainfully occupied persons is in the services sector (particularly, public administration, and education, business and tourism), followed by an industrial sector linked to shipyard and energy related activities (Milazzo and the southern area of Messina).

In the hinterland zones and in the citrus-fruit cultivation areas present on the Ionian coastline, there is a marginal agricultural activity linked to hazelnut cultivation.

Vine cultivation (quite modest) is carried out mainly in the communes of Barcellona



Pozzo Del Gotto, Santa Lucija del Mela and Lipari.

However in the last years, the sector has experienced a slow and constant decline due mainly to growing production costs forcing some local entrepreneurs to abandon the territory.

As in other realities of the south, even the province of Messina is affected by a progressive ageing population which has the highest levels in the communes of the hinterland, with less than 2,000 inhabitants (particularly Novara di Sicilia).

The province, in the last years, has been inclined to lose its population in favour of bordering communes or even farther territories, another phenomena of gentrification and the declining birth rate.

If the population has undergone a slight demographic decline due to a negative natural decrease, at Messina there is a major share of resident foreigner's vis-à-vis the regional average, composed of a large Asian, Romanian and Moroccan community. This is greater in the districts of Taormina and the Eolian Islands. Many residents complains about the absence of an integration policy for immigrants.

Women are active as cleaners and care-workers while men often work as labourers in construction and agricultural activities or as street vendors.

The rate of employment is a little higher than the regional average with a slightly inferior average income, the lowest registered in the communes of the "Nebrodi". This confirms the difference between the zones in the hinterland and the coastal ones, differences which also affect the socio-cultural conditons, the infrastructural state and services (undoubtedly inferior in the "Nebrodi" area).

The Tyrrhenian coastline presents a high level of agglomeration, dislocated from the large urban centres. These are often indistinguishable and sometimes separated only by numerous artisan and industrial agglomerates which have a negative effect on local tourism.

The services, concentrated in principal urban centres, are minimal or absent in bordering zones,. Structurally linked to such centres; the principal infrastructures found in the coastal areas, penalise the connections with towns in the hinterland.

With regards to socio-assistance and territorial services, even if in the last years, there has been a re-distribution of resources from the capital to the intermediate centres (Patti, Milazzo, Sant'Agata di Militello, Barcellona and Capo d'Orlando), the internal realities of the territory remain substantially emarginated.

The real stronghold of Messina is the presence of the tertiary sector especially the developed social services section, which is also aided by various associations.

In Messina and surrounding areas, there are big problems of environmental security. Parts of the hinterland and the coastal zones are subject to great hydro-geological risks (many centres have been re-built in valley areas, while others have been, in the past,

seriously hit by landslides). Many seaside zones need recovery works of beaches affected by erosion, besides territorial characteristics. The problem is accentuated by different factors related to the abandonment of agricultural land, the frequency of arson attempts which, for years, have been devastating the area of the “Nebrodi”, the realisation of infrastructures which have profoundly modified the territorial setting and a general disinterest in security policies of zones at risk on the part of local authorities.

As regards crimes, Messina is considered as one of the safest provinces at a regional level, even if authorities investigations have evidenced the existence of a strong relationship between institutional figures and the mafia phenomena (this is proven not only by the judicial investigations but above all through the confiscation of illicit properties and the precious collaboration deriving from those who side with the authorities - the “pentiti”). There has been a percentage increase of the crimes of corruption, abuse of public office and economic crimes.

A tragic situation, which every year leaves many victims, is represented by numerous homicides and serious bodily harm episodes, deriving from the violation of the Highway Code regulations; on the increase are accidents at place of work mainly involving the foreign workforce.

Technological crimes have almost doubled and there is a relevant increase in car and house thefts. To a lesser extent the number of robberies/hold-ups and abusive buildings have increased, although construction speculation has not assumed the exasperated aspect as in the coastal areas of other regional provinces. The territory with major environmental risk is that of the industrial coastal area of the Messina district.

Again, the share of juvenile criminality is superior to the regional average, so the promotion of projects aimed at legality, are brought forward by scholastic institutes in order to render the younger generation more sensible to this aspect.

Sexual violence crimes continue to emerge, notwithstanding awareness actions being conducted by the mass media and local associations.

The province of Messina can be subdivided in some macro-areas which have under certain aspects similar territorial and socio-economic situations.

### **Metropolitan Area**

Ali, Ali Terme, Antillo, Barcellona Pozzo di Gotto, Casalvecchio Siculo, Castelmola, Castoreale, Condro, Fiumedinisi, Forza d'Agro', Furci Siculo, Furnari, Gaggi, Gallodoro, Giardini Naxos, Gualtieri Sicamino', Itala, Leni, Letojanni, Limina, Lipari, Malfa, Mandanici Meri', Messina, Milazzo, Monforte San Giorgio, Mongiuffi' Melia, Nizza di Sicilia, Pace del Mela, Pagliara, Roccaflorita, Roccalumera, Roccavaldina, Rometta, S.Marina di Salina, San Filippo del Mela, San Pier Niceto, Sant'Alessio Siculo, Santa Lucija del Mela, Santa Teresa di Riva, Saponara, Savoca, Scaletta Zanclea, Spadafora, Taormina,

Terme Vigliatore, Torregrotta, Valdina, Venetico, Villafranca Tirrena.

The territory, besides the capital, has around 50 Communes, situated around the Tyrrhenian coastal area from the vicinity of Messina till the town of Falcone, on the opposite side the archipelago of the Aeolian Islands, in the Ionian coastal area and in the hills of the hinterland at the foot of the “Monti Peloritani”.

Demographic statistics show an exodus tendency from the centres in the “Peloritana” area towards the coast. In this context, the most populated centres are, besides the capital, Barcellona Pozzo di Gotto, Milazzo, Taronina and Giardini Naxos.

Messina absorbs around 40% of the province population, even if due to a certain habitat inadequacy there is an internal mobility towards two urban centres, Barcellona and Milazzo, with a resident population superior to 30,000 inhabitants.

Messina is attractive, because of its many social and administrative services (the City is seat to a University campus with one of the biggest university sports complex in Italy, numerous public libraries and hospitals which are used also by the communes in Southern Calabria); the extreme south and the area of Falcata are specialised in industrial activity linked to naval dockyards and military activities. The Port of Messina is the crossroads for traffic and mobility between Sicily and the continent, besides offering tourist oriented activities.

The industrial zones in the southern outskirts of Messina, near the railroad, have not permitted the development of a true industrial specialisation, due to the inadequacy of harbour infrastructures. Such areas seem, today, oriented towards a different use linked to the tertiary sector, particularly commercial activities.

The actual urban network is not the result of an expansion of the old town centre, but an aggregation of centres, united by a strong identity tradition.

The most ancient nucleus is strongly linked to the port, where there are the principal services, but Piazza Cairoli delineates the central point between the old area and the new expansion towards the south. The principal arterial, Viale San Martino, which houses the main shops, starts here.

There has been an increment in private initiative to build seasonal second houses which has, particularly effected the area of the lakes between Ganzirri and Torre Faro.

The southern outskirts and particularly the areas adjacent to the torrents San Filippo and Zaffaria have seen the building of housing estates settlements for the lower social classes, characterised by low levels of urban standards which have accentuated the already lacking services thus creating situations of degradation.

Notwithstanding the recovery work in different urban areas, the urban network of Messina is strongly fragmented, an alternation of residential quarters along the ring road which connects the north zone, with the hut zone built after the earthquake that struck the city at the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. Such is the case of the central Via Cannizzaro

and the surrounding populated area Gravitelli, one of the many areas at risk in Messina.

This area consists of a concentration of educational agencies, university structures and private agencies to centres of interest for the various age groups with a medium-high socio-economic network, to expansion zones affected by a big urban disorder, with down-sized services, huge social problems and low standards of education (zone Giostra and the satellite zone of Santa Lucija sopra le Contesse, Villaggio Adalgisio or Bordonaro to the south of the city).

Bordonaro, an old village, where by time, numerous buildings and residences have changed its physiognomy and where some public structures have been left to degradation and vandalism, while in other areas the dilapidation is linked to open air landfills/dumping sites.

These zones, affected by economic and social changes and by the increase of buildings in cement, have a heterogeneous demographic composition, even if there is a high concentration of families, often single parent families, with employment difficulties. The social policies activated by the commune have put in place some social meeting centres.

However the cultural aspect is still marginal often linked to the presence of religious associations, while with regards to scholastic structures, there are comprehensive or higher institutes spread out in the territory. There is a good presence of police personnel, however the number of business activities is more modest.

In the last years, there were many thefts from apartments, accentuated by the crisis and often perpetrated by improvised gangs, mainly local, but even other European and non-European nationals, while the number of robberies is substantially stationary, thanks to video-surveillance cameras in the territory.

A great job has been done by anti-racket associations in terms of extortion crimes. However, the number of reported cases is still extremely low.

In order to guarantee better security in areas generally frequented by higher social classes in Messina, with particular attention to drug abuse, eventual alcohol abuse and to ameliorate the socio-territorial context in which business entities work, there is a plan to install video-surveillance cameras in the town centre. This will be carried out specifically in areas around Via Garibaldi and Via Vittorio Emanuele where there are new meeting places or in the zone of the natural harbour, where thefts, some drug trafficking, disturbance of public peace and vandalism occur with certain frequency.

Specific controls are carried out, in the weekends, in the town centre and bordering zones by Mobile Squad personnel jointly with the Traffic Police section.

The relations between the capital of the coastal towns and those in the hinterland are frequent, even if in the last years one has tried to promote a certain decentralisation in the major centres of Milazzo, Barcellona and Taormina which have a role of intermediate commercial polarities.

The industrial agglomerates A.S.I. between Milazzo and Villafranca have a notable importance, with the Mediterranean Refinery, the Petroleum group, the Power Station at San Filippo del Mela and the artisan group (ex Pirelli). Agricultural industries are situated mainly between Barcellona Pozzo di Gotto and Santa Lucija del Mela. The fishing sector plays a determining role in the economy of the commune of Milazzo.

Industries are present, mainly, in the east Tyrrhenian coastal area, between Milazzo and Villafranca, characterised by strong man-made interventions of the urban centres, mainly in the city of Messina.

In the city of Milazzo, well inserted in the internal mobility system thanks to the vicinity of the motorway, is a petroleum and energy central point of great relevance. The second harbour zone of the province, is a base for tourist movements towards the Aeolian Islands and also seat to numerous lower and higher scholastic institutions.

Such a zone has serious problems of environmental pollution which affect the bordering valleys of Niceto and Mela, characterised by pollution linked to the unity between agricultural entities (flower nurseries in the first instance and horticulture and agro-pastoral in the rest) and industrial settlements in proximity of the coastal areas. Notwithstanding the number of funds projected, substantial recovery attempts have not yet been affected and the situation appears more aggravated by an uncontrolled rubbish dumping.

It is an area characterised by huge juvenile unemployment, due to the fact that there is no connection between the requested professional profiles and the professional training figures. Moreover, for many, the presence of an industrial zone is seen as an obstacle to that of a natural or tourist oriented zone.

Milazzo and the bordering territories face the same phenomena, some more accentuated around Milazzo, others around Mela and Niceto: unemployment, drugs, disarticulation of popular services, crisis of economic activities, emigration towards the north, school truancy among the lowest social classes, presence of non-EU citizens in serious need, family separations, loss of values and the indifference of the institutions.

With regards to hotel structures, the province occupies the first place in Sicily and a big part of tourism activities are concentrated in the area of Giardini Naxos and the Aeolian Islands.

While the eastern area of the Tyrrhenian coast and the area between Sant'Alessio and Scaletta on the Ionian coast is characterised by insufficient hospitality structures and by a presence of low standard second houses; the situation in the tourist area of Taormina is completely different. Taormina has extended its attractive capacity to the bordering territory of Giardini Naxos and Letojanni, highly urbanised coastal zones where there are many hotels, pubs, bars and seasonal residences.

Giardini Naxos has a small harbour oriented towards tourism, while the seafront at

Letojanni is renowned for the presence of numerous equipped beaches.

The towns in the Ionian zone have an extremely modest dimension, only the commune of Taormina reaches 10,000 inhabitants. The communes are not attractive to residents and so experienced an exodus of the population. Such areas have high standards of education especially among men, employed mainly in the tertiary sector, prevalently in commerce and public service. The Ionian centres gravitate around Taormina and Santa Teresa di Riva for basic socio-territorial services. The private initiative was precious in this regard as it has permitted the development of specific actions with the first being in favour of local entities in problematic areas (disabled, minors at risk, homeless). Economic activity is based on commerce and tourism in the coastal zone and on agriculture in the hinterland.

There is a relevant rate of unemployment linked to seasonality of tourist arrivals which affects mainly the female population (this is true in particular for the territories bordering Taormina). The new phenomena of family separations have also had a negative effect.

Even though this area is considered as an apparently tranquil one, the existence of a number of factors disturbing the public order cannot be denied: from the problem of begging in the streets affecting areas where tourists gather to that of drugs which affects all districts.

The problem of diffused cement constructions and hydro-geological instability crop up every year. This instability has affected very badly the territory of Scaletta and Giampilieri, and in a minor way, the area of Giardini Naxos and the surrounding zones.

Another tourist destination are the Aeolian Islands. From the beginning of the Seventies they have experienced a true and proper economic boom accompanied by forms of construction investment. Services and infrastructures are still scarce. Agriculture is still of great value on the island of Salina but it is in progressive decline on the other islands.

Lipari and Salina are the most central and nearest to each other and also the most populated. This area, marginally suffers some hardship since the way of life of the main part of the population is of a medium-low class due to seasonal work and high dwelling rent rates.

Even the standard of education is not particularly high due to a certain discontinuity of scholastic courses linked to the movement to and fro of teachers (often obliged to remain on the peninsula during the winter months).

Salina and Lipari have a basic scholastic service and in the bigger commune there is a higher technical institute.

Socio-territorial services favour the elderly with the presence of residential and recreational structures. Drug and alcohol dependency among adolescents is preoccupying, due also to the absence of adequate meeting places for the young. Territory control is ensured by the Carabinieri and the Guardia di Finanza (localised at Lipari) but generally speaking it is a tranquil community, disturbed from time to time by irrelevant episodes of minor delinquency.

The more internal centres in the area Peloritana offer a more precious and valuable panorama linked to agriculture.

From a social point of view, there is major cohesion in families and absence of social degradation.

Organised crime in the territory of Messina and the Ionian area are undoubtedly less found than in the Tyrrhenian areas. In a transition phase linked to extortion activities involving mainly businessmen (even small ones), construction industries, drug trafficking which income is often re-utilised as investment in some zones considered tranquil such as Taormina and Giardini Naxos (trafficking is particularly active in the southern area of the capital), to a phase of a major tranquillity linked to recycling and usury.

The characteristics of the area near Barcellona are different, similar in structure to the clans of Palermo, which through the years have assumed a total control of the economy and of the public tenders sector (big public works and tourist hotel settlements), by means of partnerships with political exponents and local entrepreneurs, adopting a terror strategy which does not hesitate to utilise homicide and incendiary intimidations.

Barcellona is a big commercial focal point characterised by small and medium industries prevailingly family-run and of an artisan type. There are a few instances of industrial settlements, while the bordering territories are dedicated to agriculture.

The economy is based on the tertiary sector, as evidenced by the presence of numerous public services, among which, a hospital, a court house, schools of every level, and numerous cultural associations.

The standards of education are superior to the regional average, even if school truancy is growing (however, this regards mainly foreign families).

All the territory lacks adequate structures for aggregation and socialisation. The Commune has sports structures and green spaces but generally the play-recreational cultural services cannot be retained as adequate. In this manner, juvenile delinquency is seen in crimes against the person, against public order and the cultural heritage.

Even drug consumption is greatly diffused. According to the authorities, it seems to be instigated by specific conditions such as destitution and unemployment. In this regard, besides initiatives promoted by the local "Sert", the contribution by schools regarding awareness programmes is useful.

In the last five years, the percentage of foreigners has practically doubled. Besides the Albanese community (families of business activities) there is a strong Moroccan community.

There is a slow diffusion of prostitution and human trafficking which is carried out by criminals, even Italian nationals. This affects women.

The emargination of immigrants is basically linked to lack of jobs, dwellings and access to services.

The fragile parts of the immigrant population is, above all, the last arrivals, often irregular immigrants, unemployed or temporary workers for whom it is more difficult to initiate an inclusion process of social integration. On the other hand, when they settle down and create strong social networks, it is possible to be temporarily socially emarginated.

### **Area of the Nebrodi and bordering territories**

Acque Dolci, Calcara Li Fusi, Basico, Brolo, Capizzi, Capo d'Orlando, Caprileone, Caronia, Castel di Lucio, Castell'Umberto, Cesaro, Ficarra, Floresta, Fondachelli-fantina, Francavilla di Sicilia, Frazzano, Galati-Mamertino, Gioiosa Marea, Granniti, Librizzi, Longi, Malvagna, Mazzarra Sant'Andrea, Militello Rosmarino, Mistretta, Mirto, Moio Alcantara, Montalbano Elicona, Motta Camastra, Motta d'Affermo, Montagna Reale, Naso, Novara di Sicilia, Oliveri, Patti, Pettineo, Piraino, Raccuja, Reitano, Roccella Valdemone, Rodi Milici, S.Agata Militello, S.Angelo di Brolo, S.Fratello, S.Marco d'Alunzio, S.Pietro Patti, S.Teodoro, S.Salvatore di Fitalia, S.Stefano di Camastra, San Teodoro, Santa Domenica Vittoria, Sinagra, Tortorice Tusa and Ucria.

The area is extremely diversified, with a territory which extends from the western Tyrrhenian coast of the province of Messina towards the interior of the Sicilian hinterland. In this zone, there are around nineteen communes subject to naturalistic restrictions, as they are situated in the protected area of the Park of the Nebrodi (Acquedolci, Alcara Li Fusi, Capizzi, Caronia, Cesaro, Floresta, Galati Mamertino, Longi, Militello Rosmarino, Mistretta, Raccuja, Sant'Agata Militello, Santa Domenica Vittoria, San Fratello, San Marco d'Alunzio, Santo Stefano di Camastra, SanTeodoro, Tortorici and Ucria)

The internal areas have remained isolated while the population is better off, economically and socially in the zones of the Tyrrhenian coastline. These are small communes in the mountains, which are experiencing an exodus of the population and which depend on the more populated coastal towns for the main part towns for administrative and scholastic services.

In fact, the coastal zones are subject to population pressure, particularly relevant during the summer months due to the increment of tourist movements in the areas between S.Agata di Militello and Capo d'Orlando.

Notwithstanding the presence of historical centres and monuments, there are few significant actions aimed at highlighting the artistic cultural heritage of the area. There is a lack of planning and management of these areas due to the fact that many communes do not have local urban vehicles and transportation.

The building heritage of this area is to exposed degradation due to abandonment. Some centres have been successively rebuilt in areas in the valley (e.g.. Acquedolci, San Fratello, Santo Stefano di Camastra) due to the phenomenon of landslides. All the hillside communes on the Tyrrhenian coast have serious access and connection deficiencies.



The economy is based essentially on the tertiary and agricultural sector (particularly in the hinterland, hazelnut cultivations and pastoral farming) while industries are concentrated at Capo d'Orlando and Sant'Agata di Militello, specialising in the manufacturing sector, mainly woodwork and metal works. Productive and commercialisation activities in ceramic works are carried out in the commune of S.Stefano di Camastra. Tusa is famous for its archaeological heritage.

On an educational level, there is a contained diffusion of illiteracy but the percentage of diploma holders is relatively good, even if the number of secondary schools (lower and upper) is found in the major centres, forcing students to be continually on the move to and from school.

The coastal territory has the necessities for the whole population, with socio-territorial services which are almost absent in the most internal communes (differently from Mistretta which is amongst the most structured among the towns in the "Nebrodi").

There is a scarce presence of public residential structures for the elderly, compensated by private structures and family solidarity, that is still very strong in these zones. Young people making use of drugs and alcohol are on the increase, this is not helped by the cultural contest especially in the communes situated in the mountains where it is difficult to stop alcohol from being drunk at a young age. The priority that emerges most is the lack of flexible services to promote reconciliation between working hours and family life.

There is a huge presence of irregular immigrants, coming from non-EU countries. There is a need to create meeting places in order to manage well the population on the coastline, favouring socialisation among persons coming from different realities even if on the same territory.

Irregular work at residents' homes is spreading along the district territory and even more in the "Nebrodi" areas.

There is also a quantity of illegal work which interests all productive sectors and persons of all ages.

The poorest zone is that of the commune of the "Nebrodi" on the border of the provinces of Palermo and Enna; a zone with a high mafia density which is clearly influenced by that of Palermo and in which a fundamental role vis-à-vis legality is exercised by the presence of the judicial offices of Mistretta and the relative police forces.

However, it is a social and geographical context characterised by many structural and economic deficits. The zone of Mistretta is, in fact, mountainous, with no adequate connection roads, situated on the border of the province of Messina, Enna and Palermo. It shares the interests of mafia families in these cities: tenders for public works, extortions but also kidnappings and murders with the subsequently hiding of the corpse.

Even if not in a diffused manner, there is the phenomenon of earning a living from prostitution which involves some private structures.

The supervision of different social services has brought out in the public the phenomenon of domestic violence.

The authorities are, moreover, constantly supervising the territory by means of controlling abusive constructions, sexual abuses and adopting preventive measures to protect woodlands from fires which often occur all over the territory.

### **The Province of Siracusa**

The province is at the south-eastern tip of the Island, between Catania and Ragusa. In areas of the hinterland, there are numerous small and medium sized towns, many of which are at the foot of the Iblei Mountains. These towns are characterised by a decrease and ageing population (Buccheri, Buscemi, Canicatti, Bagni, Cassaro, Ferla, Palazzolo Acreide, and Sortino). Towns like Lentini, Carlentini and Francoforte have a flourishing agricultural and cattle-raising industries, and as such they are not facing a decrease in population.

There are some areas of relevant importance from a historical and architectural point of view in the so called valley of Noto, a tourist and cultural path recognised as universal heritage by UNESCO. In recent years, the renewable energy sector is strongly on the increase; in fact, there are many wind farms in the districts; the Province has also a rich coastal territory.

The southern area, between Noto and Pachino, is characterised by a number of settlements of modest dimensions which recently had a significant expansion due to tourist resources linked to small and medium entities around the archaeological zone of Eloro and the seaside resorts of Avola, Noto and the peninsula of the Maddalena (south of Siracusa).

Such a territory has a rich agriculture, based on horticulture products which occupy the coastal area of Pachino and the surrounding zone of the fishing town of Portopalo.

The main problems of these zones derive from an excessive use of the territory linked to the intensive presence of greenhouses, but also linked to abusive constructions.

The process of urbanisation has seen the diffusion of a number of buildings which in recent years, has interested many coastal areas.

Many are second houses, used in summer, which contribute to a deteriorating landscape and environment due to lack of primary urban works.

The coastal area to the North, largely populated, has suburbs of big towns like Augusta and Siracusa. It has industrial settlements (many of which linked to petroleum-chemical sector) in the proximity of Melilli and Priolo, some important archaeological areas like Megara, minor harbour areas and finally new settlements for artisan, commercial and recreational activities, in the recently expanded zone to the north of the city of Siracusa.

In the last years, there has been a construction boom mainly isolated houses, even though there were some structured buildings, such as, the tourist village of Brucoli.

The centres near the coastal zone have a better infrastructural and socio-territorial services, with a major concentration in the commune capital as regards administrative and cultural activities.

The mountainous zones, form the main part of communes in the Sicilian hinterland, seem exposed to abandonment and degradation due to isolation (accentuated by a not always adequate mobility) and to a number of other factors, from the crisis of agricultural economy to problems relative to the hydro-geological stability of the territory.

Titles of study seem substantially homogeneous with regards to their distribution on the territory. There is however a bigger percentage of graduates and diploma holders in the commune capital and a major presence of literate and illiterate people in the internal and southern communes. These communes have medium to low standards of education due to scarce higher and specialised formative courses in the Province. In many communes, higher scholastic institutes are absent, making it problematic for young people who are obliged to make daily trips to these institutes.

With regards to criminality, there is a consistent mafia component, rooted all over the territory (particularly in the capital, near Lentini and in the agricultural zones to the south). The mafia is active especially in drug trafficking but also in the control of the agricultural market (Ispica and Pachino). Extortions are frequent (especially at Lentini), and cases related to usury against small entrepreneurs are on the increase. Micro-criminality is related to thefts (houses and copper) and robberies (banks and post offices) which does not consistency cause for social alarm.

Living on prostitution is partly in the hands of local pimps already known to the police, and not linked to organised crime, and also in the hands of Romanians who are active in female trafficking.

The Commissioner of Police has put forward many preventive measures, with the collaboration of various forces, to ensure a more capillary control of the territory by means of road blocks on the principal highways and provincial roads. Moreover, person on probation are controlled regularly.

The Chamber of Commerce of Siracusa, in order to guarantee better security conditions and prevent thefts, robberies and other illicit acts, is activating economic support strategies to install alarms and video-surveillance cameras near local business activities.

At Siracusa, Augusta and Noto, there are correctional facilities in difficulty, due to overcrowding and shortage of penitentiary personnel.

Siracusa, traditionally linked to cattle-raising and agriculture, along the years, has become very industrialised due to the petroleum-chemical plant at Priolo. There is a vast commercial area to the West and all the territory (particularly the zone of the town centre) is interested by a cultural tourism linked to the Baroque period and invaluable archaeological sites.

The territory of Siracusa is subdivided into zones, each one with some autonomy. These extend from the city and the island of Ortigia which is the most ancient part of the city, and which development has maintained the traditional medieval type of urban setting, characterised by narrow streets, many monuments and archaeological sites. In the northern zone, near to the mainland, there is the principal part of administrative services, with many commercial and hospitality activities, and the satellite campus of the University of Catania. The principal road network is made up of Via Matteotti and Via Roma which separate the western part, mainly touristic, from the eastern part, mainly residential, was less affected by restoration works where a consistent increase in micro-criminality resulted in the implementation of university faculties and cultural manifestations.

The district of Santa Lucija is the second historical zone of Siracusa to the north-west of Ortigia, which has been at the centre of attention due to restoration works carried out, although there has been a progressive decline in population. In this zone, there are still some economic, banking activities, different voluntary associations and scholastic institutes, while there is a shortage of cultural centres.

A large part of families has finished compulsory education and obtained a diploma.

The population is made up of an extremely heterogeneous social class: freelance professionals, employees, artisans, businessmen, but also labourers, low income families, unemployed and non-EU immigrants.

The residents of this zone are really preoccupied about security because of the proliferation of illicit activities and strong social degradation in their way of life.

The residential districts have a higher demographic concentration. These are at the extreme north side of the city. In some of these zones (the area of Mazzarrona to Grottasanta), numerous urban errors have been made. These led to lack of services and commercial activities. In the last years, the administration activated recovery projects aimed at re-launching the territory. They built a school, a public library, a centre for the elderly, and a cylindrical container to measure the quantity of grain. This is a popular peripheral zone known for snatch and grab crimes, delinquency and degradation, made up of blocks of flats, ruined by vandalism and graffiti.

Many areas are abandoned, full of rubbish heaps and in some cases even abandoned asbestos.

Tiche like Acradina, is residential and commercial, developed thanks to an industrial settlement. At Arcadina, there is the Sports Palace and at Tiche there is the police forces Headquarters. The social network is medium-high. Different is the picture of some areas with a high demographic concentration mostly in the popular zones of Santa Panegia which faces urban degradation due to absence of green spaces, cultural associations, criminality, abusive buildings and vandalism.

Belvedere is a suburb of Siracusa, situated at the north of the city. A tranquil zone,

characterised by a number of socio-administrative services permitting good living conditions (schools, carabinieri, medical clinic). In the last years, in the surrounding areas, there is a residential area under completion, destined to a medium-high social class.

There has been a relevant economic development due to the setting up of a vast business park. There is also a centre for the elderly, cultural associations, and a sports complex at the disposal of the school.

The zone Epipoli, on the extreme western outskirts of the city, not very far from the suburb of Belvedere, has been subjected to a construction boom which has changed it into one of the most populated roads in the city without however ensuring the adequate services.

The whole zone of Epipoli has modern dwellings, the second largest health department of Siracusa and the Municipal Police. The most difficult area is the village Miano, a semi-abusive development of the urban network, isolated without any relations with the bordering areas of archaeological and panoramic value. Besides degradation accentuated by unfinished buildings, there is a minor criminality active in house breaking and thefts from villas and apartments,

Neapolis, the modern quarters, is in the expansion zone of the city that, in the second half of the last century, exploded according extremely unregulated urban criteria. Undoubtedly it is the most important economic and commercial zone. There are many offices, shops, schools, hospital, voluntary associations and sports structures.

This area is inhabited mainly by a medium-high social class with a good standard of education, even if in popular areas there is a component of diversified ethnic races which however is well integrated in the socio-economic status.

Cassibile, suburb to the South, is based mainly on agriculture, although the tourist-hospitality economy is increasing, stimulated by the vicinity of the seaside zone of Fontane Bianche.

The small town has an extremely variegated social network, characterised by a strong foreign immigration (occupied in agriculture) but even families who have settled down in the bordering communes. The population is mainly made up of labourers. There is a high level of female unemployment. The zone is far from the city and feels the absence of cultural and sports infrastructures. The school, the voluntary associations and the parish church represent the only social realities of the area which also has a station of the Carabinieri. Measures for integration are inadequate and periodically one can see the setting up of camping tents to guarantee a shelter for the hundreds of seasonal workers who during the harvesting period, invade the territory. The problem of abuse of workers and illegal employment is much diffused.

Siracusa has great environmental problems linked to pollution due to the presence of the industrial area in the extreme north. The irregular and fast urban expansion,

determined by the growth of the new economy is at the base of a high rate of abusive buildings, especially in the peripheral zones of the city which, without services and infrastructures, have heterogeneous family groups of the same traditions.

The provincial headquarters of the Carabinieri of Siracusa in order to accentuate preventive measures and control of the territory and therefore, guarantee more contrasts to criminality by enforcing a sense of security in the population has done various extraordinary supervision duties even through the use of aircrafts.

The criminality of Siracusa traditionally linked to the zones of Santa Lucija and Santa Panagia, operating in the extortion sector and drug trafficking, has been greatly down-sized thanks to investigations brought forward by the investigating authorities.

A criminal phenomenon particularly diffused in the capital is setting vehicles on fire which however in the majority of cases, is not linked to organised crime but to feuds between single individuals.

### **The Province of Palermo**

The Province, which extends mainly along the Northern coast of Sicily where there is the capital of the Region, in virtue of the progressive urbanisation and building expansion in the last years, has seen a real changeover in the landscape (particularly the agricultural centres in the hinterland).

The economy of the Province is made up mainly of the tertiary sector, even though there are some big industrial areas (Carini and Termini). Moreover, the Province, has many environmental and cultural resources, attracting a large amount of visitors every year.

Well connected to an inter-provincial level, Palermo is a primary point of reference to air traffic from the island towards other destinations thanks to the presence of an international airport and important infrastructures connected to it.

While the number of residents at Palermo has diminished in the last 40 years, on a provincial level it was exactly the opposite. With particular reference to the metropolitan area of Palermo: the surrounding areas, attractive for their way of life, have undergone an urbanisation process (this determines the daily a congestion in the arterial roads from and towards the capital and the danger of areas deprived of essential services).

With regards security, and prevention of criminal activities, the police forces, despatched in various stations, in order to cover all the territory, are not only occupied in the direct contrast of organised crime, but also in first hand interventions done by mobile radio sections especially in the area of Palermo.

There is also the Special Assignment group which represents the central operations section by means of the “anticrime sector”, a special group which has to coordinate and assemble the whole investigative activity carried out by the operations centre of the province regarding mafia criminals.

The strong establishment of these clans on the territory, although there is more awareness to report as evidenced by a big number of civil actions by the families of victims and conscientious groups of people, such as Confederation of Industries, Confederation of Business entities and anti-racket associations, is justified not so much by the “military” force exercised by these clans, but more by the diffused illegality which undermines the roots of collective and personal identity. For example, the abusive constructions and often illegal management of essential services (such as electricity and water) or the control of any economic activity which impedes access to the local market; as well as the social services which often operate in isolation and does not always succeed in satisfying the needs of the public.

Among the principal interests of the Palermo mafia, there is the drug marketing.

There is a great increase of serious economic crimes and fraud against the State and international organisations; particularly, in the last years, the number of crimes linked to the lack of observance of safety rules at places of work (often excluded where there is diffused illegal work) and the inadequacy of repressive and preventive rules has increased. There has also been an increment of sexual and technological crimes.

Common crimes are extortions, usury and aiding offenders to avoid justice, particularly diffused in some urban zones of Palermo and the more extreme outskirts. Due to the small number of reports made, investigations are finalised by making use of possible indices of extortion (damages, tapped telephones, unaccountable documents and control of bank operations).

Thefts from supermarkets, private apartments and other dwellings are also very diffused (thefts are often attributed to young persons linked to micro-criminality; - an ad hoc office has been instituted on a provincial level); even crimes relevant to the environment are conspicuous (many arson episodes have destroyed hectares of woodland).

Among the strategies proposed to reply to the collective need for security, an integrated prevention response, between repression and interventions in the social sector to work on certain causes of criminality and to remove the conditions which favour the vicinity to criminality by young generations, is being adopted.

The Province of Palermo has extremely diversified elements in socio-economic activities and demographic characteristics.

### **The Alto-Belice - Corleone**

Altofonte, Belmonte Mezzagno, Bisacquino, Bolognetta, Campofiorito, Camporeale, Contessa Entellina, Cefala’Diana, Chiusa Sclafani, Corleone, Giuliana, Godrano, Mezzojuso, Marineo, Monreale, Palazzo Adriano, Piana degli Albanesi, Prizzi, Roccamena, San Cipirello, San Giuseppe Jato, Santa Cristina Gela, Villafrati. The territory of the districts of Alto Belice-Corleone, prevailingily hilly and mountainous, confine with the

metropolitan area of Palermo, with Belice and the province of Agrigento

The main part of the communes is small in dimensions. It is possible to affirm that there was a demographic expansion in the towns nearest to the capital. There is a high level of elderly people, typical of agricultural communities together with a low standard of education.

The economy is mainly agricultural (in the Belice valley, the communes of Camporeale, Godrano, Marineo, San Cipirello, San Giuseppe Jato, and Santa Cristina Gela and in the Corleone area, those of Bisacquino, Campofiorito, Chiusa Sclafani, Contessa Entellina, Corleone, Giuliano, Palazzo Adriano, Prizzi and Roccamena) with a good presence of employees in the public sector. A discreet tourism interests the territories of Corleone, Palazzo Adriano, Piana degli Albanesi and Prizzi; vast zones show numerous problems linked to lack of work which only in part is due to the recent crisis. The absence of an entrepreneurial mentality, the inadequacy of the road network, create a social tension in which micro-criminality finds individuals for its activity.

From the social point of view, the primary problem is that of public order with relation to the presence of mafia delinquency in the territory which has impeded an adequate socio-economic development. Some internal communes live in conditions of isolation due to inadequate road infrastructures, even social and sports services are lacking (with the exception of Corleone, Monreale and Piana degli Albanesi).

For this reason, protocols activated by the police and local entrepreneurs are useful, in order to adopt instruments and strategies to contrast criminality, reinforcing the procedure controls of the tenders for public works.

### **The system “Termitano” and the Valle Del Torto**

Alia, Aliminusa, Baucina, Caccamo, Campofelice di Fitalia, Casteldaccia, Castronuovo di Sicilia, Cefala’ Diana, Cerda, Ciminna, Lercara Friddi, Mezzojuso, Montemaggiore Belsito, Roccapalumba, Sciara, Sclafani Bagni, Termini Imerese, Trabia, Valledolmo, Ventimiglia di Sicilia and Vicari.

The Termini area is characterised by extreme territorial diversification, linked to the presence of coastal zones (extremely urbanised, sometimes even in an uncontrolled manner of which many are in a state of degradation), destined for industrial activities or residential and tourist areas like Trabia, and by rural areas in the hinterland. The planning policies intend to enhance minor centres near the river areas of Fiume San Leonardo, Fiume Torto and northern Imera, mainly agricultural and cattle raising techniques (valley San Leonardo). However, such efforts have not stopped migrations related to unemployment (particularly among young people) aggravating the socio-economic degradation of the territory.

The local economy (mainly agricultural and industrial) is deeply in crisis; services are not distributed in a heterogeneous manner. Even the scarcity of economic resources



has forced entities to cut down on costs for social purposes. Many families live in a state of discomfort affecting greatly the young generation, who turn to alcohol and drug consumption. Many associations active in social work operate in the larger town of Termini.

Termini Imerese (which, together with Casteldaccia and Trabia, are in the metropolitan area of Palermo) situated on the slopes of the natural reserve of Monte San Calogero, an important road focal point and commercial harbour, is a point of reference for the urban centre and has the principal socio-territorial services of the surroundings (hospital and Sert, court house, correctional facility, Carabinieri, State Police, Guardia di Finanza and numerous primary and secondary schools frequented by students from all bordering communes).

The low part of the original centre and the monumental centre of the high part of the city, have seen migration towards other urban areas (the administration has activated a series of initiatives for the recovery of the historical zones).

Police forces are occupied in supervision of the territory to contrast public disorder, such as prostitution or abusive landfills, but also to prevent diffused crimes (thefts). A mobile squad has been set up in some strategic zones (parks, schools) and in the town centre. Surveillance is guaranteed by the process of civilian-dressed police agents in order to prevent vandalism and commercial abuses. Drug trafficking is related to the presence of organised crime.

### **The system Madonia – Cefalu'**

Campofelice di Roccella, Cefalu', Lascari, Pollina, Alimena, Blufi, Bompietro, Polizzi Generosa, Scillato, Caltavuturo, Castelbuono, Collesano, Gangi, Gratteri, Isnello, San Mauro Castelverde, Castellana Sicula, Geraci Siculo, Petralia Soprana and Petralia Sottana.

It is a very vast heterogeneous area, made up of territories surrounding the city of Cefalu' and towns at the foot of the Madonie.

The coastal district near Cefalu', where there are also Campofelice di Roccella, Pollina, Lascari and the Park of the Madonie represents two great factors for tourist attraction thus developing the tertiary sector (hospitality activities). Cefalu' represents together with Castelbuono and Petralia Sottana the principal centres for services.

In the Madonie area, besides the notoriety of Castelbuono (linked to richness of monumental properties and strong identity roots), a flourishing tourist system is developing linked to the production of typical wine and gastronomic products and cultural manifestations (Castellana Sicula, Collesano, Ganci, Geraci Siculo, Gratteri, Isnello, Petralia Soprana, Sottana and San Mauro Castelverde), while the zones of Bompietro, Caltavuturo, Polizzi Generosa and Scillato, are mainly agricultural.

In the area, notwithstanding the efforts by single administrations, during these last

years, in favour of policies for the young generation to set up small artisan entities, for the creation of meeting places for socialisation, there has been certain social drawbacks linked to substantial unemployment and absence of future prospects.

The territory is particularly exposed to risk of micro-criminality during the summer months. The area is not exempt from organised crime. The mafia clans of the Madonie, which extend their operations till the coast, have a strong consolidated structure.

The most frequent crimes, are: thefts from villas, as these are uninhabited for a long period of time during the year and are situated in rather isolated zones. There is also a high level of drug trafficking.

Lastly, the environmental crimes are linked to abusive landfills and illegal dumping of toxic waste products.

### **Metropolitan Area of Palermo**

Altavilla Milicia, Altofonte, Bagheria, Balestrate, Belmonte, Capaci, Carini. Casteldaccia, Cinisi, Ficarazzi, Giardinello, Isola delle Femmine, Montelepre, Misilmeri Palermo, Partinico, Santa Flavia, Termini Imerese, Terrasini, Trabia, Trappeto, Torretta, Ustica, and Villabate.

The metropolitan area of Palermo is made up of a number of urban agglomerates, with a high density of inhabitants, from the gulf of Termini and Palermo till the area of Trapani, with extremely diversified characteristics. Residential and tourist areas (some of an abusive origin), industrial settlements (the areas of Carini, Palermo and Termini), infrastructures (Punta Raisi airport, Termini Imerese harbour, and small tourist harbours along the coast) and motorways.

The eastern metropolitan coast (from Bagheria to Trabia) is characterised by the tourist and hospitality sector.

The districts of Partinico are predominantly agricultural. In Partinico, there is the manufacture/tertiary sector to the west and tourism on the western coast, from Capaci to Carini, characterised by an expansion of tourist residential areas (holiday houses) with a low density of inhabitants, sometimes a source of environmental and landscape degradation.

Some centres have maintained quite a defined urban identity developing socio-territorial services (Termini Imerese, Bagheria, Monreale, Carini and Terrasini), others instead, nearer to Palermo are now totally annexed to it (Villabate, Ficarazzi, Isola delle Femmine, and Capaci) which represent the main focal point, even if big centres like Bagheria, Partinico and Terrasini, have developed some form of autonomy.

Levels of public security have been maintained substantially unchanged throughout the years, however the effects of the economic crisis cannot be underestimated, as these have caused a rapid escalation of robberies, thefts and a well-established mafia type

criminality, which does not hesitate to recur to arson against exponents of institutions and local entrepreneurs. The security and control of the territory are entrusted to the State Police and Carabinieri, distributed more or less in a homogeneous way all over the territory.

If, generally, citizens have more confidence in the Police Forces, the employment crisis makes the young generation, above all, an easy prey to criminals. The major communes have installed video-surveillance systems to exercise a greater control of the territory.

### **Palermo**

The commune of Palermo is subdivided into eight administrative districts corresponding to well define zones.

The town Centre (first district), the sixth and eighth districts constitute the very heart of the city due to the presence of numerous services (Via Roma, Via Maqueda, and Via della Liberta'); the fourth and fifth districts have university campus and the principal hospital services.

The most densely populated districts are the fourth, the fifth and the eighth (adjacent to the first, where moreover there is a big concentration of foreigners with a clear majority of Asians and Africans).

Notwithstanding the changes in the last years, the social and economic reality of Palermo is now characterised by many problems, from residence necessities to transport ones, from unemployment to absence of basic services (in continuous emergency, for example, the problems of recycling urban rubbish), with an inadequate distribution of services on the territory. Some urban and administrative decisions, taken throughout the years, together with the abusive occupation of buildings (Zen, Sperone and Borgonuovo) have aggravated the local image. Such zones are often distinguished not only for building degradation and social ill-being but for high levels of school truancy (Zen, in the eighth district, zone Oreto/Station and Villagrazia/Falsomiele in the third).

Besides these difficulties, there are problems linked to the role of organised crime and fraudulent agreements with public institutions, which influence greatly the socio-political life of the capital.

The city of Palermo is overcome by drug trafficking, thus affecting public order (drug addicts tend to find financial resources for drugs by means of thefts and robberies). The zones at major risk are those of Falsomiele, Vucciria, Bonagia, Brancaccio and Zen.

In Via Spinuzza and in some areas like Arenella, Acquisanta, Borgovecchio, Zen, Brancaccio and Sperone, there is an intense trafficking of light drugs and cocaine, while at Capo and near the market area of Ballaro' (a high concentration of African population) there is the distribution of those commonly defined as hard drugs.

Besides, there are juvenile delinquents operating in gangs, involved in micro-criminality

(thefts, grabbing/snatching, or robberies by adolescents often coming from the zones of Pallavicino or Settecannoli).

The social service for minors, in collaboration with local entities and thanks to public finances, have activated a number of projects aimed at the diffusion of legality in areas considered at risk (zone S.Filippo Neri and first district).

To note the incidence of crimes against persons, particularly sexual violence; at Palermo there is an inter-institutional anti-violence committee in order to offer assistance to women, victims of abuse.

Normally all districts have a police station as a guarantee of territory control and some form of video-surveillance but generally in the fight to prevent and control crime, diffused in many areas. Work of associations and private entities result inefficient. Inadequate interventions are correlated to the scarce capacity to build up a network, leaving the territory in danger and making residents feel abandoned by institutions.

The town centre (first district), divided in four zones (Palazzo Reale, Monte di Pietà, Tribunali and Castellammare), is situated around the central zone of Quattro Canti di Città' (specifically around Piazza Vigliena). The zone has been subject to a certain degradation and disinterest; some buildings are semi-derelict or dilapidated often occupied in an abusive manner by the homeless or individuals living in extreme misery).

Inside the district, there are three historical markets of the city; Via Roma and Via Maqueda represent the principal commercial areas of the zone. Along the years, such zones have undergone relevant changes, with many shops managed by foreigners. In these quarters, there is a very high concentration of minor foreigners, high rates of violence in families and a tendency to criminal activity all over the territory.

The zone "Palazzo Reale - Monte di Pietà" rich in history and art, but greatly degraded from an architectural, urban and socio-economic point of view, has scholastic institutions and is experiencing a progressive haemorrhage of residents who are moving towards residential urban areas bordering the city.

Non-EU citizens who live in the zone, generally work in menial jobs such as window cleaners and in car wash services. The other inhabitants are businessmen, street vendors, employees, carpenters and artisans specialised in ebony works.

During the Second World War, many buildings were damaged, contributing to their progressive abandonment due to degradation during the following decades. Some years back, a slow attempt to recover the zone was made thanks to restoration and restructuring works by private individuals and also by public funds. The zone of Piazza Marina and Kalsa are being transformed into a zone with characteristics linked to tourism and entertainment.

The second district (Oreto, Brancaccio, and Settecannoli) extends along the south side of the city and represents the conjunction between the town centre, the seaside areas

(Bagheria) and outskirts. The territory is defined by two directional roads: Corso dei Mille and the motorway Palermo-Catania.

This territory has many important areas. There is a part of the zone of Oreto, with architectural remains dating to the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries post-war (Oreto-Corso dei Mille) which extends along the coastal zone and has recently constructed buildings where there is a middle class community, mainly employees and the small old towns linked to fishing or agriculture (Sant'Erasmus, Brancaccio, Conte Federico, Ciaculli, and Croce Verde).

The zone Corso dei Mille – Sant'Erasmus, a more ancient urban area, has seen in the past years a clear demographic decline, in contrast with a big growth in the more peripheric areas of the district (Roccella and Ciaculli).

There are some zones at risk such as Sperone and the old rural small town of Brancaccio (for years the site of major industrial activities of the city). The district has an important railway station which even acts as an unloading/loading bay for various goods.

Near these historical small towns (Sperone, Bandita, and Settecannoli) there is a vast recently constructed area (part of which consists of social housing for low income persons) not supplied by adequate services (particularly critical are the services for very young children), which has brought about the construction of multi-storey blocks of flats not well integrated with the local architectural typically rural setting (houses of one or two storeys) and has favoured also social problems.

At Sperone, in the seventies, social housing estates were constructed. These have upset the original setting changing the small centre into a zone with evident problems even at social level (absence of services, scarce maintenance, misery, school truancy, delinquents and mafia presence). Numerous attempts were made to recuperate the area, but which often resulted insufficient. A fundamental role for the re-launching of the zone was played by the school and by religious institutions.

The area Brancaccio/Ciaculli, made up of a more ancient centre, has recently seen new residential and commercial zones, in the attempt to re-launch a territory seen by most as high social risk. Many schools are not adequate due to lack of maintenance. Juvenile crime is alarming and social and juvenile ill-being is diffused. The unemployed are well over the city average.

Though this is quite a historical and architectural heritage and beautiful seaside areas, the territory is strongly controlled by the mafia. This has accentuated the degradation of areas developed as housing estates, (Via Hazon, Simoncini Scaglione and Biondo). Only lately there has been a slow process of refurbishment but the area continues to present great urban and infrastructural difficulties. Many schools (the opening of a secondary school for which Padre Puglisi, the priest assassinated by the mafia, had fought) are being opened.

There are various post offices, bank branches, a public library, a railway station, a bus terminus and a hospital. Economic activities are extremely heterogeneous: farmers, small retailers, abusive vendors and part of the population is occupied in industrial activities (often victims of rackets and protection money - "pizzo").

There is the absence of kindergartens and family consultancy services. Associations aiming at cultural promotion of the territory are very active, thus contrasting absence of institutional interventions.

Families are very numerous, some of whom with a fixed middle class income, others in conditions of extreme poverty, mostly ex- prisoners. There are many separated families and cases of violence in family households. There is a diffused sense of illegality which favours illegal work, smuggling, drug trafficking, theft but also prostitution and juvenile delinquency.

About twenty years ago, a group of citizens spontaneously joined together to show the state of ill-being of the community, later they found Father Puglisi as their spiritual guide. Among the initiatives that were taken, the fight against spreading illegality but even the setting up of a centre intent to promote social activities and which still operates in the territory.

Contrary to the general perception, the residents of Brancaccio do not consider their environment as particularly unsafe, since there are no episodes of indiscriminate violence, as these are kept under control by mafia clans. The diffused fears are linked to vandalism and crimes committed by minors.

The presence of the Municipal Police headquarters is important and situated in a symbolic zone exposed to abusive constructions and landfills/dumping sites).

The third district, in proximity of important road networks (as for example Viale della Regione Siciliana) is made up of the southeast zones of the city like Guadagna, Falsomiele, Villagrazia (agricultural centres) and part of the zone Oreto/stazione, made up of various commercial entities and headquarters of police forces.

Villagrazia, with a prevailing agricultural economy and a rural architecture (one storey buildings around a principal road, small commercial activities, an elementary and a secondary school) has a more ancient part and another part with recently constructed blocks of flats making up new housing estates, densely inhabited such as Borgo Ulivia and Falsomiele, all typical social housing.

There are a number of families depending on one income and individuals who are living on precarious jobs. Even the cultural level is not particularly high, with numerous cases of ill-being and bad family relations and many young people making use of drugs.

In the last years the presence of foreign immigrants has brought forward new problems in terms of security and integration.

Even though there are school complexes, there are not any adequate social centres

which can attract young people and thus do away with drugs.

The centre of Falsomiele, changed throughout the years into a dormant zone. It saw its proper urban characteristics transformed due to residential expansion which has seen the growth of blocks of flats completely different from local architecture, causing estrangement and isolation. Many roads are in a poor condition and even the drainage system is inadequate. There are few commercial activities.

There is a large part of the population living in miserable conditions or occupied in low profile jobs; standards of education are low, drug consumption and trafficking is frequent among youths (particularly in the area of the central small square) while micro-criminality seems to be on the quiet side.

Civilian-dressed police officers patrol the territory all day long.

The fourth district is made up of zones Altarello, Cuba, Santa Rosalia, Mezzomonreale and Boccadifalco; there is a high concentration of buildings (mostly in the last twenty years upsetting the characteristics which were mainly agricultural), inhabited by mostly one-child and one income family groups.

The area is crossed by Corso Calatafimi (connection with the commune of Monreale), one of the most important roads of the city, and Via Pitre' which has assumed a strategic role and connects the suburb of Boccadifalco with the centre.

The zone Boccadifalco, a few kilometres away from the city centre, has maintained almost intact its old architectural characteristics (narrow streets and very old houses). The meeting places for youth entertainment are few, with few job opportunities available if not in the black economy.

The zone Cuba (leading to the area of Corso Calatafimi) has many scholastic institutes and public and commercial services besides numerous law enforcement quarters. The meeting centres are inadequate. The socio-economic context is extremely heterogeneous, made up of a middle class with a sufficient cultural level (living in modern constructed houses) and by a big percentage of precarious workers or groups of non-EU citizens who live in more degraded areas, some of whom are illiterate.

In recent years, together with the crisis, beside episodes of micro-criminality there has been an increment in drug trafficking involving mostly young people; many commercial activities have shut down and they have been substituted by shopkeepers from foreign countries (primarily Chinese).

Mezzomonreale is a residential area, with recently built villas immersed in green areas, inhabited by a medium-high class of people active in the tertiary sector, with an adequate standard of education. Villa Tasca, before entering the inhabited centre, is characterise by social housing, it has many schools, even if for the main part of services one has to recur to Palermo.

Altarello, like Mezzomonreale is still partly rural but has experienced a new residential

expansion. The local parish church represents the only meeting place. The urban network is made up of not very high buildings dating to the second half of the last century. The original resident population has a modest socio-cultural level (there are some cases of impoverishment, occupied in agriculture or manual activities, while the new residents are employed in the tertiary sector). Huge supermarkets have been opened in Via Perpignano in recent years.

Like other more modest realities, there are many inadequate basic services which fail to guarantee territory control and prompt intervention on situations at risk of degradation.

The zone of Montegrappa/S.Rosalia is made up of different areas. A zone is characterised by social housing, which together within the historical part, is in a dilapidated state and degradation (not only urban but also morally, linked to the presence of separated and impoverished family nuclei, cultural and occupational poverty etc.). The other zone is a new residential expansion in proximity of a hospital, where a middle class has settled.

The fifth district is made up of Borgonuovo, Uditore, Passo di Rigano, Noce and Zisa.

A new small suburb on the outskirts of Palermo, is a popular zone with modern buildings (there are even abandoned dwellings), which has become a dormant zone, deprived of services (excluding some schools, often subject to vandalism and damages, in this sense, there is a project for the installation of video surveillance cameras) and social meeting places. Many inhabitants live with little money, have low cultural levels and live with relationship and economic problems.

The zone has a police headquarters to control the surrounding territory; there is a diffused micro-criminality operating in drug trafficking.

Some schools have activated a number of interventions aimed at the diffusion of legality, which involve not only the young generation but also families.

The zone Zisa, is apart from the centre and is made up of an alternation of historical buildings and modern residential housing estates, inhabited by a middle class community. There are also families (even immigrants) living in precarious conditions, with low standards of education. Criminality, even mafia, is diffused. There is a lot of juvenile deviances which is socially alarming.

Uditore and Noce are rural suburbs which, by time, experienced an ambience of a more modern architecture, multi-storey buildings, absence of equipped areas and green spaces.

Generally it is a district where there is social and economic hardships, coinciding with a modest level of literacy and high rates of illegal work and unemployment. Particularly in the area Zisa and Noce there is a high level of juvenile delinquency. Numerous police investigations have mapped the territory, identifying areas influenced by the mafia families of Noce, together with those of Altarello and Cruillas (extortions, damages, management betting offices and drug trafficking).



In the sixth district of Palermo there are the zones of Cruillas-San Giovanni Apostolo and Resuttana-San Lorenzo. The major problems are in the districts of Cruillas – San Giovanni Apostolo (ex Cep) situated in the northwest outskirts of the city.

The urban layout of these two zones is extremely chaotic, composed mainly of popular housing and modestly elevated buildings often degraded (cases of abusive constructions; vandalism acts on public institutions; inadequate public illumination system and abandoned zones); with an absence of recreational areas. The only social attractions are the parish churches and a few schools. Even public connections with other zones are insufficient. Many roads are used as dumping sites and a diffused illegality (which is not clearly perceived by many residents who attribute reasons of degradation exclusively on absences of public administration) spread all over the territory.

The zone San Lorenzo has been for a long time one of the zones with a major mafia density, evidenced by the presence of numerous commercial activities which in reality are sources for money-laundering for mafia clans.

The huge demographic increment has brought some modifications in the socio-economic sub-strata, even if a certain family culture is evidenced by youths frequenting the local school. Mafia control of the territory has impeded the development of micro-criminality, thus making the area seem quite secure.

The seventh district, which includes the zones of Arenella-Vergine Maria, Pallavicino, Tommaso Natale-Sferracavallo, and Partanna-Mondello, is distinguished by the presence of the zone of San Filippo Neri (ZEN).

Here there are some scholastic institutes but it is an extremely degraded peripheric zone, a free zone, considered among the most difficult of Palermo.

It is a zone of social housing (divided in two areas, Zen 1 and Zen 2) with multi-storey buildings, sometimes with window-bars (although to be more precise the effect of major estrangement is with the Insulae d of Zen 2) wide anonymous roads and few open spaces, often left unattended. There is diffused building degradation and absence of personal services. Many buildings are unfinished and have been occupied abusively by residents before the installation of the electric and drainage systems (Zen 2).

The absence or inadequacy of refurbishment policies, attempted by various Administrations has favoured the development of criminality and a certain hardship leading to a true and proper mistrust in institutions.

Many families, often quite numerous, live in conditions of extreme misery and discomfort. There is a high level of school truancy (female adolescents often remain at home to help mothers, while boys prefer to look for a job in order to be able to contribute to the family economy). In reality, there is a generation gap between the inhabitants of Zen 1, mostly elderly people, and that of Zen 2, young couples with children.

The population is made up of very numerous families (sometimes with serious

socio-emotional problems), often depending on one income and with low literacy levels. The crisis has given a huge boost to local micro-criminality. Economic and employment crisis have increased criminal activities among minors. Crimes are perpetrated not only on the outside but also inside the residential area. There are frequent vandalism acts against institutions (recently a plan for the installation of video-surveillance cameras in local schools has been approved). Police patrols are numerous, carried out by police agents in plain clothes. Since some years now, there is a police headquarters, even if residents think that the presence of security forces in the territory is insufficient.

Some residents have tried to react to the general degradation, by means of maintenance works aimed at making the surrounding environment better, but there is still a feeling of ill-being linked to the knowledge of the bad name of the zone.

The projects of refurbishment activated in these last years, have set up a police headquarters and the opening of one of the largest commercial centres in Sicily.

Arenella is an extremely variegated reality, characterised not only by ancient sometimes dilapidated roads (where socio-recreational services are absent or insufficient and schools are the only place where to socialise), but even more modern and orderly areas.

There are employees, labourers and artisans. Illiteracy is quite diffused as is unemployment (mainly women).

Deviance and juvenile delinquency are numerous. The most diffused crimes are drug trafficking, illegal betting and crimes against public property.

Marinella, an area bordering Via Tommaso Natale and Zen, is a zone of high mafia density, but all in all, retained as tranquil by residents (even if there are high levels of deviances and poverty among minors).

The urban landscape is made up of modern residences and dilapidated blocks of flats (near the railroad). There is an extremely variegated socio-economic status, in some zones (like Via Calcante), middle class families live together with poor family groups.

There are no meeting places for the young at Marinella. They get together in front of a commercial activity. Since some years socio-cultural and assistance activities are promoted by a social centre, which offers its services in local scholastic institutes, financed by some preoccupied citizens about the extreme degradation of the zone.

Even Pallavicino, situated in the territory which connects the capital with Mondello, represents a zone at risk. Economic activities are those linked to business. There are some schools, cultural and recreational centres are scarce and the only recreational space is offered by the local parish church.

In this zone, as in other areas of the district, the architectural heritage is defined by more ancient nuclei (social housing and dilapidated zones) and more modern areas.

The zone has become a place for trafficking and consumption of drugs. The irregular presence of Police Forces is badly seen by residents.

Mondello or Sferracavallo are a different situation. Tourist suburbs characterised by a seasonal inhabited, medium-high-rise buildings, residential areas, greatly appreciated by metropolitan citizens, because of the tranquillity of the territory.

The eighth district is much extended and covers the area of Politeama, Piazza Liberta', Montepellegrino and Malaspina-Palagonia. Near these residential quarters, rich in services (Politeama and Via Liberta') there are realities of environmental and socio-cultural degradation.

Borgovecchio, an ancient nucleus of houses (often dilapidated) and streets teeming with artisan and commercial activities, is adjacent to the Politeama and the harbour. The zone is sadly known for its high rates of criminal deviancy and a high mafia density. The presence of the public sector is almost inexistent (limited to schools), the main part of activities are offered by voluntary associations operating in the territory.

The districts of Malaspina and Palagonia, historical site of a juvenile prison and a court of justice for minors, are residential areas preferred by residents of Palermo, where there are numerous public offices and business activities. It is a middle class residential area, with medium-high socio-cultural levels.

### **The Province of Ragusa**

The province of Ragusa, situated at the extreme south-eastern part of the Sicilian region, represents an extremely smaller reality vis-à-vis other areas.

It is composed of only twelve communes on hillside territory, dominated by the "Iblei" plateau, to the west where there is the Vittoria plain.

In relation to infrastructure, urban and economic settlements, it is possible to outline three macro-areas: the mountainous hinterland, with the small agricultural towns of Chiaramonte Gulfi, Giarratana and Monterosso Almo (today at the margin of development expansions, affected by huge decreases in population); the areas of Ragusa, Modica, Scicli and Ispica (more densely inhabited and with a growing tourism of a cultural type); and the coastal territory that is also under pressure by buildings for the tourism industry but also due to agricultural interests.

Tourist attractions are not only the artistic cities of Modica and Scicli, but also the important archaeological sites of Kasmene and Kamarina, from the beaches of Marina di Ragusa to the seaside resorts of Pozzallo both of which have a harbour area and have become principal destinations for nightlife.

Notwithstanding that economic crisis has greatly affected the economy of the province, it has an extremely contained rate of unemployment and an income pro-capita among the highest in Sicily, a situation determined by the development of the tertiary sector and the effective contribution given by the greenhouse horticultural sector (Ispica and Scicli) and by flower nurseries (particularly diffused in the areas of Vittoria, Comiso and Acate).

The production of cheese and milk products together with the diffusion of cattle raising techniques has also helped the economic development.

The relative well-being of these areas has favoured the increase of immigration towards these zones.

Foreign presence in the territory is an old and unstable phenomenon, especially in the commune of Santa Croce Camerina and Ragusa but even more in the plains of Vittoria (where they are occupied in the primary sector and many live in a community centre, run by religious authorities).

Even school truancy is extremely contained, evidencing more the relative socio-cultural well-being of residents (even if one cannot deny that in agricultural zones, like Vittoria, there is a higher percentage vis-à-vis the provincial average, due to the necessity of families to make use of all resources, inside the families themselves, for activities relating to farming).

However one cannot deny that the effects of the crisis are starting to be felt in the territory. There are many requests for assistance to minors in a state of misery, mainly Italians who turn to Caritas centres operating in Ragusa, Vittoria and Comiso.

The social categories, more at risk, are families and separated persons, immigrants from Eastern countries are also in the most difficult situations. Besides psychological support, Caritas offers material as well as financial (by means of subsidies forms of credit).

There is a diffused micro-criminality, active in robberies and drug trafficking due to the presence of non-EU groups of citizens particularly in the coastal zone (Albanese trafficking arms and drugs). There has been an increment in the number of arson episodes against economic operators in the zone of Scicli. There is a high percentage of illegal work especially in agriculture and commercial services.

The commune of Ragusa has a constant and homogeneous demographic growth. The city, after a violent earthquake in the 17<sup>th</sup> century was rebuilt in two adjacent areas: Ibla and Ragusa Alta.

Ibla, the most ancient part, which works of art have been declared as UNESCO world heritage site is a destination for cultural tourism. It is on a low hillside zone, inhabited mainly by old people and university students coming from bordering communes but also from far away areas (in this area there is a satellite campus of the University of Catania. Besides an elementary school, a police headquarters, there are not many services present and there is the absence of socio-cultural meeting spaces and recreational areas. Business activities are few (necessary for primary exigencies) found in proximity of the central square around which there are many nightclubs and hospitality structures. A popular residential area is found near the University.

About three kilometres away, in an elevated position, there is Ragusa with the main part of the administrative and commercial services. The town centre of Ragusa has been subject to restoration and refurbishment works; therefore the state of the buildings is

quite good. In Corso Italia and surrounding areas of Via Dante and Via Trieste, there is a minority of non-EU citizens, well integrated and occupied in activities of greenhouse cultivations, while the elementary school of Via Ecce Homo near the zone with the same name, still has the highest number of immigrant students.

A slow decline of population from the centre by the original citizens coincide with the closing down of tens of commercial activities and numerous private dwellings totally abandoned, which has led to the development of a vast residential area (especially in the hinterland and in the direction of Comiso, where there are also some commercial activities).

In the direction of Marina di Ragusa, there is a vast industrial area. There are also restaurants, hotels and various agricultural commercial activities.

Police forces are well distributed; some zones have video-surveillance systems, particularly pedestrian zones (Ibla). Police forces ensure supervision over the territory, with road blocks in the Marina zone and along the entrances to the city.

The city is reputed to be quite tranquil by its inhabitants. There are no zones at risk and public buildings are well inserted in the urban layout (thus avoiding the creation of ghettos) the city detains the record in Sicily of an efficient police headquarters.

Among the most diffused crimes, there is drug trafficking (a large consumption of opium related drugs by 30 to 35 year old males, followed by cocaine and cannabis). Alcohol abuse is also on the increase among the younger generation. There are also sporadic episodes of sexual voyeurism.

Particularly in the coastal areas (often uninhabited during winter and scarcely illuminated, so more appealing for thieves), there is a number of thefts which lately interested even the industrial zone, where there are robberies, vandalism, thefts and stealing of material (relative above all to iron materials, copper and various metals).

Although such phenomena have not yet assumed preoccupying proportions, many are requesting reinforcement of control services in the entire zone by Police Forces which should be supported by the implementation of a video-surveillance system in zones considered more at risk. However, this would contrast the problem of abusive landfills/dumping sites.

However, with regards to environment, one has to keep in mind that in many buildings, especially at Ibla, there is the presence of asbestos, which removal is very expensive, so it is left entirely to the citizens who often do not have the means to dispose of it thus creating a health hazard for the local community.

## CAPITOLO UNO

# Introduzione a JANUS

Sandra Scicluna

Questo progetto è in parte finanziato dal Programma 2009 Grants ISEC Azione "Prevenzione e lotta contro la criminalità". Esso è stato presentato il 31 luglio 2009 ed è stato approvato il 15 Dicembre 2010. Ha una durata di 36 mesi, a partire dal 15 dicembre 2010 fino al 14 dicembre 2013. Il progetto ha due principali partner - l'Istituto di Criminologia (oggi Dipartimento di Criminologia) dell'Università di Malta e l'Associazione Nazionale Famiglie Emigranti -Delegazione Regionale Sicilia. Inizialmente c'era anche un partner associato, la Provincia Regionale di Trapani che ha poi abbandonato il progetto a causa delle modifiche introdotte nella suddivisione amministrativa e territoriale della regione Sicilia.

Il Dipartimento di Criminologia della Facoltà per il Benessere Sociale presso l'Università di Malta è il capofila di questo progetto. Questo Dipartimento offre corsi e ricerche nel settore criminologico e studi di giustizia penale. Funge da centro risorse per la giustizia penale maltese. L'università fa parte di un certo numero di associazioni universitarie europee, come l'Associazione delle Università del Commonwealth e della rete di accesso europeo. Il Dipartimento stesso ha accordi bilaterali con altre università europee. Il Dipartimento offre anche bachelor e master; inoltre si occupa della formazione degli ispettori di polizia e degli ufficiali giudiziari. I membri del suo staff partecipano regolarmente a progetti UE, come capofila o come partner. I progetti comprendono ricerche su temi come: carceri, libertà vigilata, violenza domestica, bullismo e processi migratori. Ci sono anche numerose ricerche in corso nel campo della giustizia penale.

L'Associazione Nazionale Famiglie Emigranti [Associazione Nazionale Famiglie Emigrati] è un'organizzazione non governativa, nata nel 1947 per assistere gli immigrati italiani in giro per il mondo. Ha una sede a Roma (IT), con filiali in tutto il mondo. Il ruolo dell'ANFE è cresciuto fino a comprendere la formazione e la ricerca. La rete dei servizi Anfe mette a disposizione le strutture dell'Università on-line - Unitelma Sapienza. In questo progetto l'Università di Malta ha lavorato principalmente con la delegazione siciliana, più precisamente il centro di Marsala. L'ANFE - Delegazione siciliana è una agenzia formativa accreditata presso la Regione Siciliana. Ogni anno offre numerosi corsi finanziati dal Fondo

Sociale Europeo. L'ANFE ha un centro regionale di coordinamento e 25 uffici accreditati in ogni provincia siciliana, dove hanno luogo le attività di formazione, di integrazione professionale e socio-economica. Inoltre, ANFE gestisce 9 uffici polifunzionali distribuiti nei territori regionali e dislocati presso istituzioni siciliane locali, come agenzie del lavoro, uffici governativi, scuole e prigioni. La rete di relazioni dell'ANFE lo ha resa un partner ideale per accedere alle varie agenzie in possesso dei dati riguardanti il progetto di ricerca.

L'idea del progetto è nata dalle conclusioni di un dottorato di ricerca del Dr. Saviour Formosa e dalla creazione del Modello CRISOLA. L'acronimo CRISOLA sta per l'interazione tra criminalità, costrutti sociali e uso del territorio. L'idea progettuale originaria, era quella di provare a confrontare altre isole con Malta, progetto troppo ampio che ci ha costretto a concentrarsi su un'area meno estesa. Alla fine si è deciso di concentrarsi su uno studio comparativo dei territori di Malta e Sicilia, in particolare la provincia di Trapani. Il circondario trapanese è stato scelto perché la sua popolazione è simile a quella maltese, anche se sparsa su un territorio più vasto.

Con questo capitolo si cerca di offrire una panoramica del progetto evidenziando gli aspetti positivi e negativi che sono emersi in fase di realizzazione dello stesso. Non si tratta di attribuire premi o critiche, quanto piuttosto di fornire una narrazione fedele del lavoro di tre anni, considerando tutti gli aspetti.

### **Quali erano gli obiettivi del progetto?**

La priorità specifica del progetto era la prevenzione della criminalità in una logica orizzontale, dando particolare attenzione alla tematica della prevenzione dei reati e della criminologia, così come l'aspetto dell'applicazione delle leggi. Rispetto a queste tematiche sono stati scelti due obiettivi:

- stimolare, promuovere ed elaborare metodi e strumenti orizzontali necessari per una strategia di prevenzione e lotta contro la criminalità e garantire la sicurezza e l'ordine pubblico;
- promuovere e organizzare azioni di coordinamento, cooperazione e comprensione reciproca tra le autorità di sicurezza, le altre autorità nazionali e i relativi organi dell'Unione europea

Il raggiungimento di questi obiettivi, ha necessitato l'individuare di diverse stadi. La prima fase del progetto consisteva in una revisione e valutazione delle informazioni esistenti, la legislazione e le prassi operative. Sono stati valutati, anche, l'impatto e l'efficacia delle strategie di prevenzione del crimine. Ciò avrebbe dovuto portare alla formulazione di raccomandazioni specifiche, a livello NUTS 3, sulla potenziale riduzione della criminalità mediante il ricorso a parametri sociali e territoriali che raramente sono considerati nella definizione delle politiche a livello locale o regionale.

Inoltre, il progetto ha l'obiettivo di creare strumenti e ausili (come il GIS), serie di dati e indicatori, per l'elaborazione analitica della ricerca in corso, che dovrebbero favorire la creazione di una rete di esperti che contribuirà al consolidamento dei risultati raggiunti. I dati ottenuti dovrebbero consentire la formulazione di analisi volte a valutare la portata dei cambiamenti politici determinata dai suggerimenti emersi dal progetto. I risultati potranno essere ulteriormente utili per eventuali indagini comparative con altre regioni/stati.

Il lavoro è stato scomposto in pacchetti, ognuno dei quali sarà spiegato successivamente. Questi pacchetti di lavoro includono una pluralità di attività: dalla cooperazione operativa al coordinamento delle attività di analisi, di monitoraggio e di valutazione; dallo sviluppo e trasferimento di tecnologie e metodologie per lo sviluppo alla creazione di una rete. Il progetto ha previsto anche azioni di sensibilizzazione e attività di diffusione .

### **Lo sviluppo dell'idea concettuale**

L'idea concettuale è stata sviluppata attraverso una valutazione di una ricerca spazio-temporale (Formosa, 2007) sulla criminalità a Malta (criminologia ambientale) attraverso una rivisitazione della teoria della disorganizzazione sociale, basata sul concetto di ecologia urbana umana (Maguire et al, 1997; 308). L'ecologia urbana teorizza l'esistenza di una correlazione positiva tra la criminalità, le questioni sociali e l'uso del terreno (Entoft et al, 2000). Tali studi sottolineano la vitalità dei paesaggi sociali e di come essi influenzino o siano influenzati dal territorio. D'altra parte Felson e Clark (1998), ispirandosi dalla Teoria dell'Opportunità, hanno studiato il modo in cui le condizioni ambientali e gli ambienti fisici possano costituire un'opportunità per la criminalità, mentre l'approccio delle *routine activities* (attività odierne) postula che ogni reo e vittima seguono percorsi ripetibili o routine che vengono definiti dallo spazio e dal tempo in cui vivono (Ekblom, 2001).

Le teorie di cui sopra s'inseriscono appieno all'interno della criminologia ambientale secondo la quale la variabile spaziale è quella più importante. La progettazione urbana tende a raggruppare le potenziali vittime in aree specifiche, aumentando o riducendo le opportunità per il crimine. Mentre nelle aree rurali, le opportunità sono legate alla presenza di un soggetto in vista, le aree urbane diventano attraenti per i trasgressori quando un territorio diventa prospero (Enrodf et al, 2000). La ricerca criminologica del territorio consente ai ricercatori di analizzare e valutare le aree oggetto di studio, individuare le caratteristiche che producono attività criminali e aiutano a prevedere le future azioni criminali. A sua volta l'analisi dell'interazionismo sociale in un territorio consente l'attuazione di strategie di prevenzione della criminalità di successo (Chainey e Ratcliffe, 2005; Schnieder e Cucina, 2007) .



### **Innovazione e implementazione**

E' stata data anche una certa importanza agli aspetti innovativi del progetto. Il carattere innovativo deriva dall'approccio intersettoriale alle strategie di prevenzione del crimine, utilizzando tecnologie di alto livello, e attività di analisi volte alla comprensione delle dinamiche che influenzano e/o causano la criminalità.

Le modalità operative della criminologia ambientale a livello del NUTS3, cioè a livello provinciale, costituiscono una novità per il territorio Europeo, di solito disponibili a livello di NUTS 5 (città/paese) e su base nazionale. Il coinvolgimento delle parti sociali, dell'uso del territorio e delle agenzie impegnate nella prevenzione e nella neutralizzazione del crimine, è utile per l'identificazione di buone prassi che possano assicurare le opportune modifiche legislative e operative per la creazione di una società più sicura. Il fatto che la scelta iniziale sia caduta sulle due isole, è basata sullo studio dell'insularità e delle cause/effetti del crimine oltre che delle strutture sociali e urbane. Tuttavia questo metodo può essere impiegato a qualsiasi livello dell'UE in quanto crea un nuovo strumento di analisi e identificazione delle diverse relazioni. Il progetto è innovativo in quanto utilizza la triangolazione tra diverse attività di ricerca e varie implementazioni.

L'attuazione del progetto è avvenuta in due diversi momenti. Questo progetto si basa su diverse metodologie che si basano sui risultati ottenuti dai due partner. Durante la prima parte è stato realizzato un sondaggio, sono stati analizzati i dati e prodotti dai report. Quest'attività comporta la creazione di un database GIS e di un set di sondaggi, revisione della normativa e degli enti che operano nel settore; l'impiego di esperti nazionali per la ricerca sul campo e dei partner per l'analisi dei risultati; la creazione di strumenti di analisi e di indicatori oltre alla formazione di un workshop in Sicilia per discutere dei risultati del sondaggio e proporre misure proattive per adottare strategie più efficaci nella prevenzione del crimine. La seconda parte prevede la formulazione di indicazioni per il monitoraggio e un innalzamento dei livelli di enforcement. Il processo comporta: le proposte per migliorare la legislazione e la prassi; gli indicatori per il monitoraggio annuale per consolidare i risultati del progetto e la costruzione di un osservatorio con sede a Malta, con il compito di assicurare l'aggiornamento gli indicatori.

### **Work Package**

Per facilitare il lavoro, il progetto è stato suddiviso in cinque fasi.

*Work Package 1:* produzione di un documento di indirizzo politico basato sulle proposte di modifica alle procedure legislative, politiche e operative, a livello NUTS 3, in materia di prevenzione del crimine. E' inclusa anche una valutazione delle diverse legislazioni vigenti e degli enti che operano nella lotta alla criminalità e l'individuazione delle correlazioni sociali e territoriali.

*Work Package 2:* produzione di un sistema informativo spaziale afferente la criminalità e i parametri sociali e territoriali, nonché la creazione di sussidi visivi e dati analitici, strumenti di mappatura e raccolte di dati. *Work Package 3:* esempi di buone prassi individuate in materia di prevenzione e sviluppo di una serie di metadati e indicatori sulla prevenzione del crimine. *Work package 4:* creazione di una rete a livello di NUTS 3 per l'aggiornamento della ricerca. L'ultimo Work Package è relativo alla diffusione dei dati, implica pertanto la creazione di un CD interattivo, di un sito web, webmaps, newsletter e pubblicazioni accademiche.

### **I risultati del progetto**

Prima della fine del progetto sono stati raggiunti una pluralità di risultati. Il primo è una revisione legislativa e operativa della normativa vigente in materia di prevenzione del crimine (capitolo 3), come previsto dalla fase 1, una serie di mappe GI e risultati statistici spaziali oltre che la predisposizione di strumenti di mappatura, presentati nel capitolo 7, (seconda fase.) Una serie di indicatori relativi alla legislazione e alle operazioni presentate nel capitolo 6 (terza fase).

Il secondo risultato ha portato alla pubblicazione di due libri che illustrano i risultati del progetto con suggerimenti su quali strategie europee adottare in materia di prevenzione del crimine a livello di NUTS 3, tracciando possibili traiettorie a livello legislativo, nonché sulle azioni necessarie per promuovere un effettivo cambiamento, comprese le necessarie modifiche e/o aggiornamenti alla normativa esistente (Work Package 3). In questo libro si trova anche un documento con dati utili per il monitoraggio annuale, necessario per la validazione dei risultati prodotti, e per la realizzazione della rete (come specificato nella quarta fase). Inoltre, i risultati del progetto saranno pubblicati sul sito web e in formato digitale, come previsto dalla quinta fase.

### **Una breve panoramica sul partenariato**

L'istituzione di questa partnership è stata il risultato di progetti precedenti, in cui i ricercatori del Dipartimento di Criminologia hanno incontrato i professionisti dell'ANFE, per discutere di diverse tematiche afferenti le loro attività. La collaborazione sviluppatasi nel corso degli anni, ha reso naturale la formulazione di un progetto europeo su un tematica comune a entrambi gli enti. La presentazione informale del modello CRISOLA alle forze dell'ordine e agli agenti di correzione, ha suscitato un forte interesse. Si è quindi deciso di proseguire in questa direzione, presentando un progetto. Dopo l'approvazione del progetto, si è tenuto un primo incontro a Malta, durante il quale si è proceduto ad illustrare il progetto ai ricercatori ed è stata pianificata un, cosiddetta *road map* (ossia piano). Abbiamo deciso che sarebbe interessante condurre interviste su due livelli - quello dei professionisti che operano nel settore e quello delle autorità locali. In Sicilia

le interviste sono state svolte a livello provinciale con l'eccezione delle città di Palermo e Catania (demograficamente ed economicamente, le più rilevanti del territorio regionale) e del circondario di Trapani, in cui per motivi diversi sono stati coinvolte anche le singole autorità comunali.

Malta è stata impegnata nella costruzione del questionario da utilizzare, successivamente tradotto dai partner italiani. Per esigenze di traduzione, alcune domande sono state modificate per garantire la comprensibilità del testo. Il questionario si trova nell'Appendice A ed i risultati si trovano nei capitoli 4 e 5.

Oltre all'elaborazione dei questionari, i partner sono stati impegnati nel reperire i dati sulla criminalità, sui problemi sociali e sull'uso del territorio (CRISOLA). Si è trattato di un compito estremamente arduo. I principali problemi riscontrati sono legati alla mancanza di informazioni a livello locale o alla presenza di formati non idonei. Comunque, i ricercatori sono riusciti a superare gli ostacoli e la maggior parte dei dati sono stati inseriti in un programma di info map, in modo da poter generare mappe informative. I risultati possono essere visionati nel secondo libro, dedicato a questi dati.

Considerata l'estensione del territorio Siciliano, il partner Maltese ha trascorso due settimane per l'esplorazione dell'area oggetto della ricerca e per l'immissione di dati in un computer portatile. Quest'attività si è rivelata interessante perché ci ha dato l'opportunità di lavorare insieme e imparare gli uni dagli errori degli altri.

Sei mesi prima della fine del progetto, in Sicilia, è stato condotto un *workshop* con l'obiettivo di ottenere il *feedback* sugli indicatori creati dai partner maltesi. Il *workshop* ha visto la partecipazione di vari professionisti e l'interesse mostrato ci ha permesso di modificare alcuni indicatori, in maniera da aderire maggiormente alla realtà. Alcuni spunti, interessanti a livello teorico, da utilizzare successivamente come base per l'osservatorio, si sono rilevati difficili da realizzare. Per esempio, uno degli indicatori richiedeva la percentuale di successo delle attività di riabilitazione predisposte per i detenuti. Questo dato di per sé si è rivelato problematico a Malta, dove ci sono pochi centri di trattamento, in quanto non vi è un criterio uniforme per la valutazione. La difficoltà aumenta per il territorio siciliano dove il numero di centri di riabilitazione è maggiore. Non è impossibile riempire questo indicatore, tuttavia tale lavoro necessiterebbe maggiore attenzione e tempo.

La conferenza finale si terrà in Sicilia e dal momento che il libro sarà già stato pubblicato, è impossibile commentarne gli esiti. Sicuramente la predisposizione dell'osservatorio consentirà una futura cooperazione in questo campo. Speriamo di poter continuare questo lavoro, ampliando la base di dati e coinvolgendo altri paesi, in maniera tale da creare uno strumento più efficace per la prevenzione della criminalità.

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## CAPITOLO DUE

# Concettualizzare il Modello CRISOLA

Saviour Formosa

Perché creare un modello concettuale? L'esame dei diversi aspetti (criminologia ambientale, GIS e scenario Maltese) oltre ad una situazione complessa legata alla disponibilità dei dati Maltesi del 2007, ha evidenziato la necessità di costruire una mappa mentale che consenta la creazione di un modello di base e generico su come la criminalità, le questioni sociali e uso del suolo interagiscono insieme .

Sono state anche individuate tecniche e un set di dati che possono essere utilizzati per l'identificazione e la comprensione della criminalità. E' possibile illustrare meglio l'uso di questi *dataset* attraverso un modello concettuale relativo alla criminalità, agli aspetti sociali e all'uso del suolo, ivi incorporati con l'acronimo CRISOLA.

Il modello si è sviluppato attraverso diversi livelli suddivisi in tre fasi, partendo da un livello astratto (fase 1), attraverso l'individuazione dei principali gruppi di dati (fase 2) fino all'elenco finale delle singole caratteristiche (Fase 3). Il modello non è esaustivo in quanto relativo a gruppi di dati che ancora devono essere creati/individuati, le misurazioni statistiche individuate così come l'inclusione di altre teorie afferenti il crimine. Il modello può essere ulteriormente sviluppato attraverso studi futuri per approfondire le aree di studio non incluse in questa ricerca e che possono rivelarsi significative o meno, comportando ulteriori cambiamenti.

### **Le tre componenti di Crisola: Crimine, Costrutti Sociali e uso del territorio**

Inizialmente il modello concettuale considerava il crimine come variabile isolata, ma il crimine non può essere considerato isolatamente: si inserisce in un ambiente più ampio e complesso. Nella mappa mentale si cercò di inserire i parametri sociali e relativi uso del suolo all'interno del modello al fine di razionalizzare il processo per facilitare l'analisi. Il risultato unisce i tre ambiti disciplinari di CRISOLA e cerca di individuare i collegamenti teorici tra i diversi set di dati.

La decisione di mettere insieme il crimine, le discipline sociologiche e l'uso del territorio, si basa sulla comprensione delle interazioni tra i tre aspetti. Il modello cerca di comprendere l'attività criminale all'interno delle strutture sociali e fisiche in cui opera. La

principale area di studio è l'interazione tra:

- le caratteristiche del crimine attraverso l'analisi delle caratteristiche del reo e del delitto e le interrelazioni tra i due;
- le caratteristiche sociali di un territorio, attraverso l'analisi della sua povertà/deprivazione;
- le caratteristiche fisiche di un territorio, in particolare l'uso del suolo, i parametri strutturali e la zonizzazione.

Le caratteristiche sociali di una società umana sono legate l'ambiente fisico in cui si sono sviluppate, due componenti che possono influenzare o essere influenzate dalla criminalità. L'analisi del reo richiede una comprensione del costruito sociale in cui l'autore del reato opera, come la ricchezza e la povertà. L'analisi dei reati richiede la comprensione della struttura territoriale in cui si verifica il reato, le opportunità offerte, i trasporti e le attività che possono portare al verificarsi di reati.

#### **Fase 1 – Livello Astratto**

La tabella 3.1 1 mostra la prima fase, necessaria per raggiungere una struttura di base all'interno della quale analizzare le eventuali relazioni tra le tre discipline. Si tratta di un modello astratto di alto livello che mira ad osservare i processi paralleli tra le tre discipline e alla loro comprensione. Si sviluppa il concetto attraverso cinque stadi lineari che possono facilitare successivi studi interdisciplinari sulla criminalità. E' volto all'analisi della struttura tematica, con particolare attenzione al parametro principale, relativo ai temi che possono causare un cambiamento, identificando il costruito spaziale all'interno del tema, mettendo in evidenza l'impatto sul capitale e sulla coesione sociale fino ad arrivare ad una fase di cambiamento.

Quest'ultima fase può essere affrontata solo attraverso studi longitudinali che possono tracciare un quadro a lungo termine di ciò che costituisce il cambiamento. Anche se l'attuale studio esamina la criminalità per un certo periodo di tempo, questo modello ha bisogno di essere rivisitato con dati a lungo termine, se si ha la necessità di analizzare i processi di cambiamento più resistenti. Questo è necessario soprattutto nella fase finale relativa alle variazioni di ciascuno dei paradigmi teorici CRISOLA.

Tabella 1.1: Phase 1 - Conceptual Model Logical Matrix

<b>Sociale</b>	<b>Crimine</b>	<b>Fisiche</b>
Analisi della struttura sociale dell'area individuata	Analisi del crimine nell'area individuata Attraverso i reati e i comportamenti del reo	Analisi delle costruzioni spaziali attraverso uno studio di zonizzazione del territorio in base alle diverse tipologie di sfruttamento dello stesso, degli aggregati spaziali e delle strutture fisiche
↓	↓	↓
Mette a fuoco i parametri socio-economici e socio-culturali in relazione alla comprensione della povertà e della deprivazione come surrogato per il benessere sociale e della comunità	Si concentra sui reati come misura della attrattività di un territorio e sulle informazioni relative al trasgressore come misura di disorganizzazione sociale	Si concentra sulla zonizzazione dell'uso del suolo come misura di benessere, per arrivare ad una comprensione della strutture di opportunità
↓	↓	↓
Identifica la costituzione socio-spaziale delle aree, che porta a una struttura sociale-zonizzazione	Identifica la costituzione spaziale e criminale delle aree che permette la costruzione di una zonizzazione del reato	Identifica la costituzione delle aree che porta ad una zonizzazione relativa all'uso del suolo
↓	↓	↓
Impatto sul capitale e sulla Coesione sociale	Impatto sulla sicurezza	Impatto sul capital spaziale
↓	↓	↓
Cambiamenti Sociali	Cambiamento nel crimine	Cambiamenti nello sfruttamento del territorio



## **Fase 2 – Identificazione dei collegamenti**

Il modello della Fase 1 favoriva uno sguardo generico sullo studio in questione, si è resa, pertanto, necessaria l'elaborazione di un modello più dettagliato (secondo livello) che ci ha permesso di cogliere le interrelazioni tra i diversi aspetti: attraverso l'individuazione di serie di dati che possono essere utilizzati per l'analisi. Trattandosi di una mappa mentale, la fase 2 (Figura 2.1) ha cercato di definire gli aspetti emersi nella letteratura di settore e di integrarli all'interno del modello. Si è cercato di riunire le diverse teorie, i dataset, gli aspetti spazio-temporali, i predittori e le principali dottrine che possono essere utilizzati in uno studio sulla criminalità. Questi includono parametri quali l'età e la densità, che sono stati descritti nei capitoli precedenti. Spingendosi oltre nel modello (verso la parte inferiore di ogni sezione e dove sono evidenziati i predittori) è necessaria un'ulteriore ricerca per identificare le reali interazioni e come ciascun parametro possa essere prevedibile. Il modello non tenta di risolvere questi problemi in questo studio, ma descrive i possibili studi da intraprendere nel futuro.

La figura 2.1 mostra le tre sezioni distinte del sociale, della criminalità e dell'uso del Territorio. Ogni sezione ha un databox relativo ad un specifico tema, un indice o un concetto. La sezione seguente descrive un possibile databox.

### ***Sezione sociale: il databox della prossimità come esempio***

*Riferimento alla fase the fase 2 e identificazione dell'indice di prossimità all'interno della sezione sociale.*

*L'indice di prossimità analizza ciascuna area a Malta in base alla sua vicinanza ad una serie di fattori. Questi sono suddivisi in due:*

- i. la vicinanza al centro sociale (identificata dal numero 3, che si riferisce anche al alla Fase 3)) e*
- ii. le strutture chiave afferenti 4 settori,*
  - a. due legate alla costruzione dello Stato, come case vacante (4) e degrado (5) (finestre rotte-tipping) e*
  - b. le altre due relative alla densità – popolazione (6) e alle abitazioni (7).*

L'unione di questi quattro elementi ci permette di sviluppare un indice di povertà strutturale (8) da integrare al tema della vicinanza della comunità. Questi due costrutti permetterebbero la creazione di un indice di povertà spaziale (9), in base al quale la povertà non è essenzialmente una costruzione economica, ma è anche legata ad una variabile sociale. Integrando l'indice di povertà socio-economica (10), con l'indice di povertà spaziale (9) si ottiene l'indice di deprivazione (11). Questo processo è seguito da una misura statistica che potrebbe portare all'identificazione alla classificazione di differenti zone sociali. In questa fase emerge il primo collegamento interdisciplinare: un possibile

collegamento tra le zone sociali (12), come identificate nel processo sopra descritto e la potenziale relazione (collegamento marrone) con la localizzazione del trasgressore (37). Questa associazione può essere ulteriormente analizzata attraverso misure statistiche.

Altri potenziali relazioni interdisciplinari sono identificate nel collegamento tra le zone sociali (povertà) (12) e l'uso del suolo e le aree relative alla comunità (15). Questo collegamento potrebbe meglio descrivere il rapporto tra le aree "povere" e la loro posizione nell'uso del territorio, destinato ad un uso sociale piuttosto che ad un uso industriale e ricreativo. Si possono identificare le aree "povere" che si trovano al di fuori delle zone sociali, nonché le loro concentrazioni all'interno di specifiche aree delle zone sociali. Altri collegamenti tra i diversi temi riguarderebbero i legami tra il livello finale di ogni tema e il potenziale impatto di ogni cambiamento sugli altri. La zonizzazione sociale (12) e l'uso del suolo (27) è un collegamento potenziale (linea rossa), che permette di prevedere i cambiamenti nella deprivazione attraverso cambiamenti nell'uso del suolo e viceversa.

Le altre sezioni seguono la stessa logica e ogni ramo successivo evidenzia la particolare tematica, paradigma teorico e il set di dati relativi ad essa. Il modo migliore per comprendere il modello è quello di guardare ancora una volta l'esempio dell'indice di prossimità nella Figura 3.1. Il modello di II livello nella Figura 2.1 è accompagnato da una descrizione e da un livello spaziale (Figura 2.2) che spiega i diversi aggregati di dati territoriali disponibili, da quello nazionale a quello regionale per aree catalogate, i livelli possono essere impiegati per la maggior parte dei dataset elencati. La sezione descrittiva, tuttavia elenca i diversi set di dati disponibili (D), le teorie (T), i principali dati di base (M), così come altre informazioni pertinenti.

Ancora una volta, prendendo l'indice di prossimità come esempio, il data-box vicinanza al centro (3) è codificato con 3 codici, D2A: i dati (D) sono disponibili nell'Address-point (2A), dettaglio spaziale. Analogamente il databox di case vacanze (4) è codificato con T3A e D2I, dove per esempio T3A si riferisce alla teoria della disorganizzazione sociale e all'analisi dei dati sulla base delle teorie dei cerchi concentrici e delle finestre..

Altre questioni includono la probabilità di integrare i delitti non riportati dalle statistiche ufficiali, una volta perpetrati. Ad oggi non ci sono studi di settore a Malta, tranne per uno studio effettuato il cui campione era troppo piccolo per essere ritenuto affidabile.

I data-box colorati indicano un qualche tipo di studi importanti non rilevati nelle letterature, ritenuti essenziali per la comprensione della criminalità, come l'analisi di spazio-temporale, la previsione-frammentazione (31), che tenta di comprendere gli aggregati spaziali (es: Comune, zona enumerazione, via) e la cui prevedibilità diminuisce a lungo andare, che consentirebbe ai ricercatori di sapere quanto lontano potersi spingere nella previsione, per avere valori statisticamente significativi. Tale modello potrebbe aiutare la comprensione della criminalità a livelli operativo e tattico.

### **Fase 3 – Identificazione dataset e attributi**

Nel terzo livello, sono riportate diverse misure statistiche all'interno di ogni dataset individuato. Trattasi di un livello teorico, per cui ogni link deve avere un costruito teorico collegato ad esso con la presentazione delle ricerche effettuate che validano il modello. La fase 3 è molto dettagliata, analizza ogni data-box, identifica il relativo set di dati come indicato nella fase 2, sono elencati gli attributi all'interno di tale insieme di dati e quindi si tenta di individuare le misure statistiche per ogni livello all'interno del processo. Nella maggior parte dei casi, le misure statistiche richiedono ulteriori ricerche sulle possibile misure da impiegare. Inoltre, in questa fase, nuovi indici sono stati immessi come la sicurezza, le condanne e la recidive, ognuno dei quali è stato identificato come fondamentale per un particolare indice complesso.

Come precedentemente, un esempio permette di descrivere meglio la terza fase, prendendo come riferimento ancora una volta il data-box relativo all'indice di prossimità (3).

Nelle fase 3, la distanza dal centro diventa una misura statistica, ulteriormente spiegata mediante l'utilizzo di un indice che classifica le diverse distanze basandosi sulle tecniche di buffering GI che impiegano intervalli di 100m. Sono anche stati identificati nuovi indici che contribuiscono a chiarire il modo in cui viene creato un indice più complesso. L'esempio che segue è basato sull'indice benessere (2) che è diviso in due componenti (persone a rischio e dipendenza strutturale). Ognuno di questi è composto da tre insiemi di dati (es: pensioni, assistenza sociale, vedove), ogni insieme è composto dalla somma ( $\Sigma$ ) di una serie di prestazioni assistenziali relative a tale categoria (attributi all'interno del set di dati dell'indice del benessere). Ad esempio, vedove superstiti è composto da pensioni di vedove (NM e NMWP) e pensioni dei superstiti (SRP e PERS). I risultati vengono poi integrati con altre categorie come nella Fase 2 descritta in precedenza.

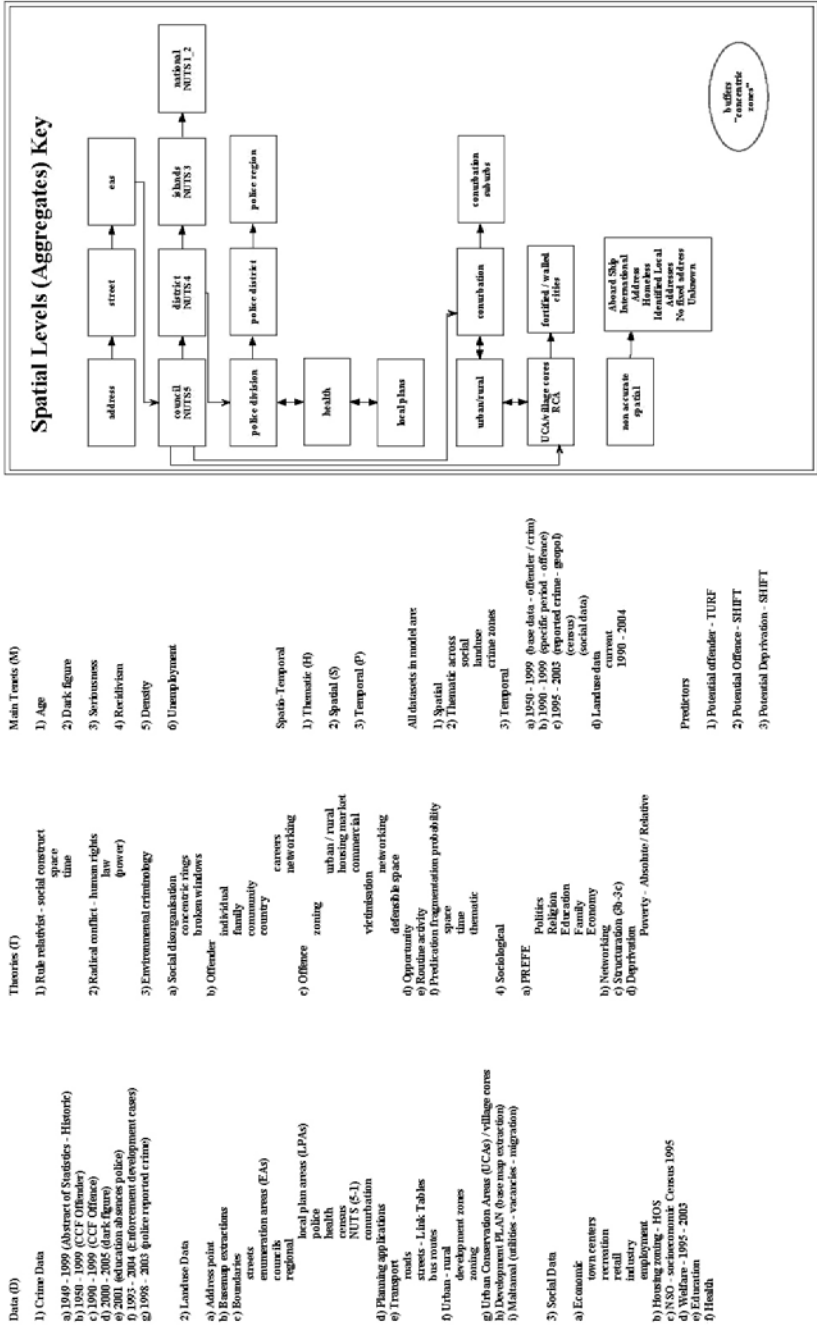
### **Sintesi del Modello concettuale**

In sintesi, l'obiettivo principale in queste tre fasi era la comprensione delle potenziali relazioni tra i costrutti CRISOLA. Queste relazioni funzionano all'interno di un ambiente umano che è intrinsecamente dinamico, in cui ogni cambiamento in un settore pregiudica gli altri due, positivamente o negativamente. Il modello sarà utilizzato successivamente per affinare ulteriormente le diverse teorie e realizzare studi approfonditi in ciascuno dei settori.

Il modello concettuale è stato redatto per consentire di individuare la direzione che questo studio avrebbe preso: l'individuazione di alcune aree da analizzare, se esistono dati a sostegno di tali studi e anche l'identificazione di ulteriori aree di ricerca. Ha inoltre contribuito a elencare le teorie rilevanti, la disponibilità dei dati, gli aspetti spaziali e temporali e le possibili relazioni tra i diversi costrutti CRISOLA. Una volta che il modello concettuale è stato redatto, la fase successiva si concentra sulla stesura delle "research questions" (cioè, le domande dello studio).



Figura 2.2: Conceptual Model Phase 2 – Linkages – Themes – Key





## CAPITOLO TRE

# Aspetti Legislative - Legislazione Maltese e Italiana

Jacqueline Azzopardi

Lo scopo di questo capitolo è quello di offrire un brevissimo riassunto della legislazione maltese e italiana (vedasi tabella), di possibile interesse per eventuali ricerche sulla criminalità, sull'uso del territorio e le variabili sociali che potrebbero portare alla criminalità. Il capitolo non vuole essere esaustivo, piuttosto l'elenco ha lo scopo di aiutare il lettore a comprendere meglio il quadro giuridico vigente.

La Tabella 1 è una sintesi degli aspetti più salienti e rilevanti della legislazione maltese. In essa sono riportate le leggi (e i loro ambiti di riferimento) a partire dal Capitolo 9 del Codice Penale, in materia di delitti e infrazioni (danni a persone e cose). Le note di carattere legale sulle scommesse (sui risultati delle partite di calcio e delle gare del Malta racing club) rientrano in questa categoria. Il Capitolo 10 è indicato come "codice delle leggi di polizia" e regola l'ordine pubblico. In questa sezione, oltre ad altre leggi di ordine pubblico, si trovano le leggi che regolano la pulizia, l'intrattenimento pubblico in generale e il consumo di alcol da parte dei minori. Il Capitolo 33 è definito "ordinanza sugli Esplosivi" e, come indica il nome, controlla non solo l'uso di esplosivi nel settore delle costruzioni, ma regola anche l'industria dei fuochi d'artificio. Questa legge definisce anche la locazione delle fabbriche dei fuochi d'artificio, l'uso di fuochi d'artificio e il trasporto di eventuali esplosivi (compresi fuochi pirotecnici). I giardini pubblici sono regolati dal decreto del capitolo 32 (ordinanza Giardini Pubblici). E' questa l'ordinanza che regola i tempi di apertura/chiusura di giardini pubblici ed il loro uso in determinati giorni dell'anno. Bisogna tenere a mente che le amministrazioni locali potrebbero essere responsabili per la gestione di alcuni giardini pubblici. L'ordinanza doganale (capitolo 37) disciplina le importazioni e le esportazioni e si occupa di reati connessi. È interessante notare che esiste un'ordinanza dedicata alla coltivazione di patate (l'ordinanza sulle patate). Chiaramente, la coltivazione e l'esportazione di patate è considerata come un aspetto molto importante dell'agricoltura maltesi. Così, si sente l'esigenza di garantire (per legge) la sua corretta coltivazione, il divieto di importazione di semi di patata e il divieto di fissare tariffe di intermediazione. Naturalmente, questo diritto agrario è un'eco della legislazione della seconda guerra mondiale. Il Capitolo 65 regola il traffico, e le relative note legali (queste



si trovano anche nel codice penale). Gli incontri pubblici sono regolati dal capitolo 68 (ordinanza sulle manifestazioni pubbliche); in base a questa legge, chiunque/qualunque ente organizzzi un incontro pubblico/raduno deve richiedere un permesso. Il settore è di competenza delle forze di polizia di Malta (non dei comuni) cui spetta l'obbligo di mantenere l'ordine pubblico.

Il Capitolo 70 costituisce l'ordinanza sul Lotto pubblico. L'importanza di questa legge probabilmente deriva dalla cultura maltese/mediterranea che, in generale, apprezza il gioco d'azzardo. Tale normativa regola i diversi tipi di giochi del lotto, nonché la stessa posizione delle postazioni del lotto. Questo aspetto (la posizione delle postazioni del lotto) della legge potrebbe interessare sia gli enti locali che la polizia, per quel che riguarda la prevenzione della criminalità. Tuttavia, tutto il resto è regolato dal Dipartimento locale del Lotto. La legge sulla tutela dell'area di Portes de Bombes) (capitolo 74) è emersa nel

1933, in risposta allo sviluppo abusivo che si andava diffondendo nella zona. Questa legge riguarda direttamente il comune di Floriana (legislazione urbanistica). Nel capitolo 78, si trova l'ordinanza sulle scommesse ippiche che regola ippodromi e contiene ulteriori disposizioni sulle scommesse; interessa i comuni di Marsa e Qormi. Al Capitolo 89 afferisce l' alcool denaturato. Si chiama: Methylated Spirits Ordinance, ed è emersa durante la seconda guerra mondiale, per controllare l'importazione e la produzione di alcool denaturato. E' ancora in vigore. Il Capitolo 97 contiene un'ordinanza sull'allevamento del bestiame. Oltre ad altri controlli, in questo capitolo, ricade la concessione di licenze per l'allevamento dei tori. E' un altro esempio di diritto agrario, che porta con sé pesanti sanzioni. Dal momento che l'agricoltura costituiva la principale industria locale, dopo il settore delle costruzioni, si trovano diverse normative di settore, anche estremamente minuziose. Al capitolo 101 afferiscono le sostanze stupefacenti; controllando l'importazione, la produzione e la commercializzazione degli stupefacenti. L'ordinanza sulle aree non salubri rientra nel capitolo 103. Questo capitolo si occupa della bonifica delle aree prive di servizi igienico-sanitari (in particolar modo, nelle costruzioni del dopoguerra). Questa legge rende obbligatoria la bonifica di tali aree in cui non è nemmeno possibile respirare. Il capitolo 106 controlla la coltivazione del tabacco, vietandola a Malta. In apparente contrasto con il capitolo 74, il capitolo 119 è costituito dalla legge su Porte des Bombes (esenzione per categoria), in virtù della quale i siti vicino a Spencer Hill (nei pressi di Marsa e Hamrun) devono essere esentati dal capitolo 74. Chiaramente, questa legge è importante per i comuni di Marsa e Hamrun. La sabbia e la ghiaia locale sono tutelati dal Capitolo 127: The Sands Preservation Act. Questa normativa prevede l'obbligo di un'autorizzazione per prelevare la sabbia e/o ghiaia dalle spiagge locali. Il Capitolo 164 è inerente alla legge sulla polizia - che regola, in modo chiaro, il servizio della polizia locale. Questa normativa stabilisce l'obbligo per la polizia, di incontrare i comuni almeno una volta al mese per discutere dell'ordine pubblico e dei problemi di criminalità. Il Capitolo

200 è il Clean Air Act. Questo regola l'inquinamento nella zona Inner Harbour e, come tale, si rivolge principalmente a navi e camini. Alla fine della lista, si trova il Capitolo 206: Il Regolamento sui rifiuti (questi includono un'indicazione sulle dimensioni dei cassonetti). Questa legge è stata destinata ad essere abrogata e sostituita da altre norme.

*Table 1: Sommario della legislazione Maltese*

<b>Capitolo</b>	<b>Titolo</b>	<b>Settore</b>	<b>Nome</b>
9	Codice Penale	Reati e violazioni– principale suddivisione: reati contro la persona e contro il patrimonio	Note di carattere legale sulle scommesse relative ai risultati delle partite di calcio a alle gare del Malta Racing Club
10	Codice delle leggi di Polizia	Ordine pubblico	Manutenzione generale (il Codice, precedente alla creazione della corrente legislazione, fu scritto nel 1850), acquedotti, fontane, agenzie intermediarie (pitkali), shoesmiths, porti e banchine (raccolta animali nel mare, svolgimenti di regate, inquinamento delle acque), regolamenti sui teatri pubblici, protezione del timo selvatico, difesa delle conifere, luoghi d'intrattenimento, consumo di sostanze alcoliche tra i minori
33	Ordinanza in materia di esplosivi	Controllo sull'utilizzo di materiale esplosivo Nel settore delle costruzioni e dei prodotti Pirotecnici etc.	Caratteristiche delle sedi per le aziende pirotecniche e uso improprio dei prodotti pirotecnici, trasporto materiale esplosivo

<b>Capitolo</b>	<b>Titolo</b>	<b>Settore</b>	<b>Nome</b>
34	Ordinanza relativa alla chiusura dei giardini pubblici	Regolamentazione orari di chiusura e usi in alcuni giorni dell'anno	I consigli locali potrebbero avere una specifica autorità su alcuni giardini
37	Ordinanza doganale	Regola import e export	Reati collegati
64	Ordinanza sulle Patate (Coltivazione)	Disciplina la corretta coltivazione, la l'importazione dei semi e il prezzo di vendita	Risale al dopoguerra – un'altra legge sull'agricoltura
65	Regolamentazione del traffico	Raccolta delle leggi sul traffico e note di Carattere Legale	Tutte le violazioni e i crimini nell'atto principale (oltre al codice penale)
68	Ordinanza manifestazioni Pubbliche	Disciplina alcuni aspetti delle manifestazioni pubbliche per le ricadute sull'ordine pubblico	Dietro autorizzazione della Polizia, non del Consiglio comunale, per le ricadute sull'ordine pubblico
70	Ordinanza sul Lotto Pubblico	Disciplina le differenti tipologie di Lotto	Le aree destinate alle agenzie del lotto sono di pertinenza del consiglio comunale e della polizia per quanto attiene la prevenzione del crimine - Regolamentato dal dipartimento del lotto

<b>Capitolo</b>	<b>Titolo</b>	<b>Settore</b>	<b>Nome</b>
74	Legge a tutela dell'area di Portes des Bombes	Area circostante Portes des Bombes - disposizioni sullo sviluppo abusivo (legge del 1933)	D' interesse del Consiglio di Floriana; pianificazione legislativa
78	Ordinanza sulle scommesse ippiche	Per legalizzare l'uso dei totalizzatori in In alcune gare e fornire ulteriori disposizioni sulle scommesse	D' interesse di Marsa e dell'area di Qormi
89	Methylated Spirits Ordinance	Controllo sull' importazione e produzione	Risale al dopoguerra ed è ancora in vigore
97	Ordinanza sull'allevamento del bestiame	Concessione licenze sull'allevamento dei tori	Un altro esempio di legge agraria con pesanti punizioni, quando l'agricoltura rappresentava il primo settore produttivo dopo quello edile, la tematica era ricorrente nella legislazione
101	Ordinanza sulle sostanze stupefacenti	Normativa sull'importazione, produzione di delle sostanze pericolose	La tematica è regolata anche dal Capitolo 31
103	Ordinanza sulle aree non salubri	Bonifica delle aree poco pulite nel periodo successivo alla ricostruzione postbellica	Rende obbligatoria la pulizia di alcune aree

<b>Capitolo</b>	<b>Titolo</b>	<b>Settore</b>	<b>Nome</b>
106	Ordinanza sulla coltivazione del tabacco	Controlla chi produce e dove deve essere prodotto il tabacco	Le attuali disposizioni in realtà ne vietano la coltivazione
119	Porte De Bombes Act (Esenzione)	Siti vicini Spencer Hill esenti dalle prescrizioni previste dal capitolo 74	Dovrebbe ricadere nell'interesse del Consiglio di Marsa o anche di Hamrun - Previste dal capitolo 74 in relazione agli edifici e alle violazioni dell'ordine
127	Legge per la tutela della sabbia	tutela della sabbia e della ghiaia	Occorre un'autorizzazione per il trasporto della sabbia e dei ciottoli dalle spiagge
164	Legge sulla polizia	Regola il servizio di polizia	Incontri obbligatori una volta al mese con Consiglio locale in merito all'ordine Pubblico e alla problematiche delinquenziali
200	Clean Air Act	Disposizioni sull'inquinamento nell'area del porto di Inner	Inquinamento determinate dalle imbarcazioni e dalle ciminiere
206	Legge sui rifiuti	Disposizioni sui rifiuti	Disposizioni sulla dimensione dei cassonetti; la legge doveva essere abrogata e rimpiazzata da altre normative

*gov.mt/frame.asp?l=2&url=http://www.mjha.gov.mt*

La tabella 2 riassume la normative italiana considerata più importante. L'elenco inizia con l'art 416/bis del Codice penale. Questo si occupa principalmente di delitti di criminalità organizzata e individua il reato di associazione mafiosa. L'articolo 266 del codice di procedura penale regola le politiche di sorveglianza. Secondo questa legge, le intercettazioni possono essere autorizzate solo all'interno di un "procedimento giudiziario" - con l'eccezione di fenomeni di terrorismo e di indagini collegate. L'articolo 6 della legge sulla Privacy territoriale (Legge del 23.04. 2009). Come la legge precedente, essa afferisce alle politiche di sorveglianza, per esempio, consente ai comuni di impiegare la videosorveglianza per garantire la "sicurezza urbana". L'articolo 4 della legge n.49 del 21/2/2006 in materia di droga e alcol. Questa legislazione ha portato ad un inasprimento delle sanzioni in relazione alle condotte illecite, sia penali che amministrative. Le droghe leggere e pesanti sono equiparate. La legge 309 10.9.1998, relativa anch'essa alla droga e all'alcol, contiene disposizioni per la prevenzione dell'abuso di sostanze stupefacenti, il trattamento e la riabilitazione dei tossicodipendenti. La legge n. 125 del 30/03/2001 Legge quadro in materia di alcol e di problemi correlati.

La legge 39 del 1990 si occupa di immigrazione e regola organicamente l'immigrazione, introducendo la programmazione dei flussi dall'estero. Come la legge precedente anche la 40 del 1998 e la legge 189 del 2002 si occupano di immigrazione. La legge n. 40 si concentra sulla rimozione degli ostacoli verso la piena integrazione degli immigrati attraverso una politica di integrazione sociale. Questa legge stabilisce che, una volta l'anno, siano stabiliti per mezzo di un decreto del Presidente del Consiglio, le quote per l'immigrazione legale in Italia, gli immigrati legali hanno diritto alle cure mediche e al ricongiungimento delle famiglie, mentre gli immigrati clandestini possono essere cacciati dal paese. Per la prima volta, questa legge prevede la creazione di un centro di permanenza temporanea per tutti gli immigrati clandestini. In base alla legge n.189 i presunti immigrati clandestini fermati dalla polizia sono portati in centri specifici controllati dalle forze dell'ordine. Le autorità hanno poi 60 giorni per scoprire l'identità di questi immigrati. Una volta stabilito che il loro soggiorno è illegale, gli viene ordinato di lasciare l'Italia entro cinque giorni. Successivamente, se tornano in Italia, saranno arrestati e processati. Questa legge ha introdotto un principio di novità: l'introduzione del permesso di soggiorno per motivi di lavoro, dietro presentazione del contratto di lavoro che lega i lavoratori migranti ai datori di lavoro. Gli Articoli 38/39 del decreto leg. Leg. n. 286 del 25.07.98 si occupano del diritto allo studio degli immigrati.

La legge 94 del 15/07/2009 regola l'ordine pubblico. Questa normativa introduce il relativamente nuovo reato di "immigrazione clandestina" e regola l'attività dei gruppi di volontari che presidiano il territorio. Il D.M. 08/02/1977 in materia di Organizzazione del Servizio di Polizia delle frontiere, regola le politiche di sorveglianza. Questa legge ha istituito un nuovo sistema di sorveglianza delle frontiere per il mantenimento

dell'ordine pubblico. La legge n.55 del 19/03/1990 disciplina il settore della criminalità organizzata. Essa stabilisce nuove regole per la prevenzione della mafia e altri gravi forme di pericolosità sociale. La legge regionale n.77 del 12.01.2012 si occupa di reati fiscali. Presenta disposizioni relative alla contabilità e al patto di stabilità regionale. La legge n.257 del 27/03/1992 regola il settore ambientale, in particolare lo smaltimento dei rifiuti e dell'amianto. La circolare ministeriale n.73 del 7/02/1994 si concentra sui diritti umani. Questa legge presenta le regole per avviare un dialogo interculturale e la convivenza democratica nelle scuole. La legge 328 (8.11.2000) in materia di assistenza sociale, offre il quadro normativo necessario per promuovere un sistema integrato di servizi sociali. La legge regionale 26 del 15.05.86 regola la sicurezza pubblica con la presentazione di misure regionali a favore delle politiche locali per la sicurezza delle comunità siciliane. La legge del 19/07/1991, n. 216 torna a promuovere l'assistenza sociale (come è stato fatto con la 328) predisponendo misure regionali per la prevenzione della criminalità relativa ai minori, programmi di assistenza e incentivi per i minori socialmente svantaggiati e l'assistenza alle vittime di reati.

La legge n.125 (24/07/2008) e la n. 269 del 08.03.1998 si occupano di sicurezza pubblica. La prima conferisce funzioni e compiti di controllo alle autorità locali responsabili dell'ordine pubblico e della sicurezza. La seconda presenta disposizioni contro lo sfruttamento della prostituzione, della pornografia, del turismo sessuale che coinvolge i bambini e altre nuove forme di riduzione in schiavitù. La legge regionale n. 3 del 09.03.2005 e il decreto legislativo n.152 del 03.04.2006 si occupano di problematiche ambientali. La prima regola l'eliminazione delle carcasse (animali da fattoria o altro); la seconda definisce il quadro normativo applicabile a tutte le questioni concernenti la tutela dell'ambiente. La direttiva del Parlamento europeo 12.03.12 e costituisce una risposta ai reati di criminalità organizzata. Essa regola il congelamento e la confisca dei proventi di reato nell'unione europea, rendendo più facile per gli stati membri la confisca e il recupero dei profitti della criminalità organizzata transfrontaliera. Anche la legge n. 155 (del 31/07/2005) si concentra sulla criminalità organizzata. Presenta misure urgenti per dare più forza alla lotta e alla prevenzione del terrorismo internazionale. La presente legge espande ampiamente i poteri di polizia nelle indagini anti-terrorismo. L'Art.30 della Convenzione sui diritti del fanciullo rientra nella categoria Diritti Umani. Esso dichiara che ad un bambino appartenente a una di minoranze autoctona non può essere negato il diritto di godere della propria cultura, di professare e praticare sua propria religione, o usare il proprio linguaggio.

<b>Capitolo</b>	<b>Titolo</b>	<b>Tema</b>	<b>Note</b>
416/bis	Codice penale	Criminalità organizzata	Definisce le principali caratteristiche delle associazioni mafiose
266	Codice di procedura penale	Sorveglianza	Le intercettazioni possono essere predisposte solo all'interno di un procedimento giudiziario, tranne nel caso di indagini sul terrorismo
6	Legge sulla privacy 23.04.2009	Sorveglianza	Consente l'installazione di videocamere da parte del Comune, al fine di garantire l'ordine pubblico.
49 Art. 4-ter.	Law 2006.02.21	Droghe e alcol	Introduce un nuovo sistema sanzionatorio. Equiparazione tra droghe leggere e pesanti. Inasprimento sanzioni per l'uso di hashish e marijuana
309	Legge 9.10.1998	Droghe e alcol	Legge sull'uso dei narcotici e sulle sostanze psicotrope, prevenzione, trattamento e riabilitazione dei tossicodipendenti
125	Legge 30.03.2001	Droghe e alcol	Quadro normativo in materia di alcolismo
39	Legge 28.02.1990	Immigrazione	Introduce: la programmazione dei flussi dall'estero per regolamentare organicamente l'immigrazione



<b>Capitolo</b>	<b>Titolo</b>	<b>Tema</b>	<b>Note</b>
40	Legge 06.03.1998	Immigrazione	rimozione degli ostacoli verso la piena integrazione degli immigrati attraverso una politica di integrazione sociale. Questa legge stabilisce che, una volta l'anno, siano stabiliti per mezzo di un decreto del Presidente del Consiglio, le quote per l'immigrazione legale in Italia. Come i cittadini italiani, gli immigrati legali hanno diritto alle cure mediche e al ricongiungimento delle famiglie, mentre gli immigrati clandestini possono essere cacciati dal paese. Per la prima volta, questa legge prevede la creazione di un centro di permanenza temporanea per tutti gli immigrati clandestini
189	Law 07.30. 2002	Immigrazione	i presunti immigrati clandestini fermati dalla polizia sono portati in centri specifici controllati dalle forze dell'ordine. Le autorità hanno poi 60 giorni per scoprire l'identità di questi migranti. Una volta stabilito che il loro soggiorno è illegale, gli viene ordinato per lasciare l'Italia entro cinque giorni. Successivamente, se tornano in Italia, saranno arrestati e processati. Questa legge ha introdotto un principio di novità : il rilascio del permesso di soggiorno per lavoro dietro presentazione del contratto, che lega i lavoratori migranti ai datori di lavoro
94	Pacchetto sicurezza legge 15.07.2009	Ordine pubblico	Introduce il reato d'immigrazione clandestina e l'istituzione di ronde di volontari

<b>Capitolo</b>	<b>Titolo</b>	<b>Tema</b>	<b>Note</b>
Artt 38/39	Decreto leg. n. 286 del 25.07.98	Immigrazione	Relativo al diritto allo studio dei migranti
	Accordo di shengen	Comunità Europea	Abolizione dei controlli doganali per il traffico dei passeggeri e delle merci
D.M 08/02/1977	Organizzazione dei servizi di polizia di frontiera	Sorveglianza	Introduzione di un nuovo sistema di polizia di frontiera
55	Legge 19.03.1990	Criminalità organizzata	Nuove regole contro la mafia e contro altre forme di devianza sociale
7	Legge regionale 12.01. 2012	Fiscale	Disposizioni relative al bilancio e al patto di stabilità
257	Legge del 27.03.1992	Ambiente	Smaltimento dei rifiuti: regolamento concernente la dismissione dell'amianto
73	Ministerial Circolare 2.7.1994	Human right	Disposizioni per il dialogo interculturale e la convivenza democratica nelle scuole
328	Legge del 8.11.2000	Social care	Legge quadro sui servizi socio-assistenziali integrati
26	Legge Regionale del 15.05. 86	Ambiente	Misure regionali in materia di controllo della attività urbanistico - edilizia, riordino urbanistico e sanatoria delle opere abusive
216	Legge 19.07.1991	Servizi socio-assistenziali	Misure regionali per la prevenzione della criminalità minorile: incentivi per la prevenzione dei minori svantaggiati, assistenza delle vittime
125	Legge 24.07.2008	Ordine pubblico	Conferisce funzioni e poteri di controllo alle autorità locale in merito all'ordine e alla sicurezza pubblica

<b>Capitolo</b>	<b>Titolo</b>	<b>Tema</b>	<b>Note</b>
269	Legge 08.03.1998	Ordine pubblico	Norme contro lo sfruttamento della prostituzione, della pornografia, del turismo sessuale in danno di minori, quali nuove forme di riduzione in schiavitù.
3	Legge regionale 09 .03.2005	Ambiente	Interventi per la rimozione delle carcasse di animali morti.
12.03.12	Direttiva Europea	Criminalità organizzata	Norme minime per gli Stati membri in materia di congelamento e di confisca dei proventi di reato attraverso la confisca diretta, le pene sostitutive per il valore in causa, i poteri estesi di confisca.
art 30	Convenzione sui diritti del fanciullo	Diritti umani	un bambino appartenente a una di minoranze autoctona non può essere negato il diritto di godere della propria cultura, di professare e praticare sua propria religione, o usare proprio linguaggio..
155	Legge del 31/07/2005	Criminalità organizzata	Presenta misure urgenti per dare più forza alla lotta e alla prevenzione del terrorismo internazionale. La presente legge espande ampiamente i poteri di polizia nelle indagini anti-terrorismo.
152	Decreto leg. 03.04.2006	Ambiente	Codice dell'ambiente, legge quadro sulle problematiche ambientali

In sintesi, queste leggi raccontano la storia di un popolo del mediterraneo – una storia fatta di problemi, invasioni e lotte per la libertà. Le leggi maltesi raffigurano la storia della sua gente, che ha dovuto affrontare condizioni avverse quali: la mancanza di risorse naturali oltre a risorse umane, l'assenza di acqua dolce, la lotta per coltivare un terreno impervio, la conquista e la colonizzazione da parte di molti, compresi gli inglesi (malta ottenne l'indipendenza nel 1964), essendo stata una fortezza e una base militare degli inglesi, subì bombardamenti molto pesanti durante la seconda guerra mondiale. Ma, a parte il resoconto storico, queste leggi descrivono una nazione ambiziosa: è religiosamente fervida, che crede nel fato/destino e coglie ogni occasione per riunirsi a condividere le occasioni di gioia. Naturalmente, ciò si traduce in attività e comportamenti che devono essere controllati per un buon mantenimento dell'ordine e dello stato di diritto.

Anche una lettura superficiale delle leggi italiane proposte, traccia un quadro dell'Italia e della Sicilia molto vicino alla realtà. L'enfasi sulle leggi sull'immigrazione potrebbe essere interpretata come la reazione italiana alla necessità di proteggere le propri coste dalle ondate ricorrenti di barconi con migranti disperati che provengono dall'africa, ma anche dalla necessità di proteggere la vita, di tutelare e promuovere i diritti umani – perciò le politiche sociali per l'integrazione, promuovono la piena integrazione degli immigrati. Tuttavia, la migrazione irregolare non è l'unico motivo di preoccupazione. Dall'enfasi posta sulla prevenzione e la lotta alla criminalità organizzata, si deduce l'impressione che la mafia ha ancora un forte ascendente. La mafia potrebbe aver cambiato tattica, ma incombe lo stesso sugli innocenti. Da qui la necessità di proteggersi dai fenomeni mafiosi e dai reati correlati, quali il traffico di droga e le frodi fiscali. Tuttavia, la posizione strategica dell'Italia e della Sicilia non solo attrae la mafia, ma potrebbe rivelarsi appetibile per i terroristi - così si spiega l'attenzione per le politiche di sorveglianza. Oltre agli aspetti negativi della tradizionale mentalità mediterranea, guidata dall'onore e dalla vergogna, che a un certo punto accetta, se non addirittura promuove, la violenza, quando percepita come giustificata (come nei casi in cui l'onore della famiglia viene violato e la famiglia si copre di vergogna), la cultura mediterranea è intrisa di valori positivi della famiglia e della solidarietà – in tal ottica si spiega l'accento sui diritti umani, l'assistenza sociale, la prevenzione abuso di sostanze e l'ambiente.



## CAPITOLO QUARTO (PARTE A)

# Aspetti Operativi I - Prospettive NUTS - Malta

Jacqueline Azzopardi, Janice Formosa Pace, Mary Muscat e Sandra Scicluna

### **Introduzione**

Questo capitolo mostra i risultati ottenuti dalle interviste con i 64 comuni Maltesi e 4 Gozitani. Le interviste sono state fatte o con il sindaco o con il segretario esecutivo. Per favorire l'analisi, le isole Maltesi sono state divise in sei distretti a livello NUTS 4. Malta è divisa in cinque distretti – il distretto Southern Harbour (il distretto sud del porto), il distretto Northern Harbour (il distretto nord del porto), il distretto South-East (il distretto del Sud-est), il distretto Western (il distretto occidentale) e il distretto Northern (il distretto nord), mentre le isole di Gozo e Comino sono il sesto distretto. Il distretto Southern Harbour comprende Birgu, Bormla, Fgura, Floriana, Isla, Kalkara, Luqa, Marsa, Paola, Santa Lucija, Tarxien, Valletta, Xgħajra e Żabbar. Il distretto Northern Harbour comprende Birkirkara (B'Kara), Gżira, Hamrun, Msida, Pembroke, Pietà, Qormi, San Ġwann, Santa Venera, Sliema, St. Julian's, Swieqi e Ta'Xbiex. Mentre Birżebbuġa, Għaxaq, Gudja, Kirkop, Marsaskala, Marsaxlokk, Mqabba, Qrendi, Safi, Żejtun e Żurrieq fanno parte del distretto South-East. Il distretto Western comprende Attard, Balzan, Dingli, Lija, Iklin, Mdina, Mtarfa, Siggiewi e Żebbuġ. Il quinto distretto di Malta e quello del Nord comprende Ghargħur, Mellieħa, Mgarr, Mosta, Naxxar e St Paul's Bay. Gozo insieme a Comino costituiscono il sesto e ultimo distretto delle isole Maltesi.

La presentazione delle interviste effettuate, segue un ipotetico itinerario turistico delle isole, attenzionandone la storia, i panorami e le caratteristiche tradizionali, ma anche e soprattutto il tessuto sociale e i fenomeni culturali. Dopo un breve sommario dei cinque distretti di Malta, si procederà all'illustrazione del territorio di Gozo. Questo capitolo si conclude con la presentazione degli elementi più salienti evinti dalle interviste con le Autorità locali; tali risultati saranno poi confrontati con i dati statistici presentati nei Capitoli 7 e 8. La mancanza di una corrispondenza, non indica necessariamente che gli Amministratori mentano, quanto piuttosto che la loro percezione possa essere distorta a causa di eventi contingenti, quali ad esempio un elevato numero di lamentele ricevute relative ad una zona in particolare. È molto importante ricordare che questo capitolo

riporta sole affermazioni fatte dagli amministratori locali, che in alcuni casi potrebbero rivelarsi ben lontane dalla realtà.

The Southern Harbour District (Il distretto Sud del Porto)

Il distretto numero uno comprende le seguenti località:

1. Birgu
2. Bormla
3. Fgura
4. Floriana
5. Isla
6. Kalkara
7. Luqa
8. Marsa
9. Paola
10. Santa Lucija
11. Tarxien
12. Valletta
13. Xgħajra
14. Żabbar

Birgu, Bormla e Isla sono comunemente note come “Le Tre Città” e insieme a Kalkara fanno parte della zona chiamata Cottonera. Queste tre città si estendono su una profonda area portuale, che ospitava l’industria cantieristica (prima che fosse chiusa), e che ora è stata trasformata in un porto fiorente. Tale marina è ora spesso frequentata da superyacht, in particolare sulla riva di Birgu che ospita anche l’esclusivo Casinò di Venezia (sito in un edificio storico restaurato) vicino al museo marittimo da un lato e al maestoso Forte Sant’Angelo dall’altro (ora, parte di esso è utilizzato come quartier generale dei Cavalieri). Accanto al porto, vi è l’antico villaggio di Birgu con le sue gemme, tra cui il Palazzo dell’Inquisitore, chiese, vecchie case pittoresche, strade strette e decorate, ristoranti e wine bar. A Birgu, si trovano anche bastioni spettacolari e un campo da gioco. Di fronte a Birgu, di fronte al porto, si trova Isla, con il suo splendido bastione - giardino (nota come IL-Gardjola) che regala panorami mozzafiato del Grande porto, Valletta (su un lato), Birgu e Calcara dall’altro (di fronte al porto). Isla è spesso visitata dai pellegrini che affollano la sua parrocchia per pregare davanti alla statua di Gesù Redentore – ritenuta miracolosa. Come Birgu, Isla è caratterizzata da vecchie case pittoresche, strade strette, con un paio di ristoranti e pub, in particolare sulla riva. Bormla si trova sul lato interno del porto, proprio tra Birgu e Isla. Ha una maestosa chiesa parrocchiale, arroccata su una rampa di scale ... caratteristica di questo pittoresco e antico villaggio portuale. In realtà, molte strade laterali sono piene di gradini, su cui lati sorgono gli edifici. Ci sono complessi residenziali di tipo popolare.

Le Tre Città o Cottonera sono molto ricche di storia e di cultura. In realtà, in termini di cultura e di stratificazione sociale, una volta rivaleggiavano con Mdina (dove risiedeva la maggior parte degli aristocratici). I giorni d'oro di Cottonera potrebbero essere iniziati quando i Cavalieri sbarcarono in Birgu nel 1530 ...con la costruzione di imponenti locali e fortificazioni, prima di trasferirsi a La Valletta. Come Mdina, Cottonera divenne sede della nobiltà e dei ceti agiati. Questo trend sarebbe proseguito fino alla seconda guerra mondiale, quando la zona fu pesantemente bombardata dalle forze dell'Asse e chi poteva permettersi di cercare rifugio, fuggirono a nord di Malta. Di conseguenza, la maggior parte di coloro che sono rimasti nelle tre città erano poveri, svantaggiati e coloro che lavorano alla darsena .... quei soggetti che i sociologi definiscono come appartenenti alle classi subalterne. Dopo la seconda guerra mondiale, questa zona era nel caos, il costo degli immobili qui è diventato basso, attraendo i soggetti socialmente ed economicamente svantaggiati. Di conseguenza, nell'area di Cottonera, povertà e disagi sociali divennero all'ordine del giorno. Oggi, ad eccezione di alcune residenze antiche restaurate (che sono ora di proprietà dei ricchi) e degli appartamenti di lusso con vista sul porto, nonostante gli sforzi fatti e il drastico lifting che è stato fatto, Cottonera, ha una forte concentrazione di persone svantaggiate ed è costantemente alle prese con problemi sociali quali: la precarietà finanziaria, famiglie disaggregate, abuso di sostanze e l'usura. Una volta lasciata Birgu, in direzione di Fgura, svoltando a destra, dirigendosi ancora una volta verso la costa e il porto peschereccio, si arriva all'antico e pittoresco villaggio di Calcara, con la sua chiesa che si trova proprio sul mare, circondata da vecchie case. Da un punto di vista sociale, i residenti di Calcara sono paragonabili a quelle di Cottonera.

- Nella città di **Isla** (Senglea) i livelli di criminalità non sono preoccupanti. Infatti, si ritiene che, grazie all'installazione di alcune telecamere a circuito chiuso (in Gardjola e la zona campo di calcio), Isla sia una delle località con i più bassi tassi di criminalità. Inoltre, non sembrano esserci ex -detenuti che vivono lì. Il giardino bastione (Il-Gardjola) è spesso fonte di fastidio e oggetto di vandalismo. Una nota positiva, l'abuso di droga è in diminuzione in questa località. Anche se poche, le vittime della criminalità sono adulte tra i venticinque e i quaranta anni. La precarietà finanziaria e la povertà regnano incontrastate. Prova di ciò è il fatto che le bollette tendono a essere pagate a rate. Si ritiene che la vicinanza di Isla al Casinò di Venezia potrebbe aggravare la situazione, giacché i poveri della zona potrebbero essere tentati di giocare quel poco che hanno ... e che potrebbe ulteriormente contribuire ad impoverire le famiglie (in cui almeno un membro ha il vizio del gioco) che si trovano già in difficoltà. Telecamere a circuito chiuso sono state installate nella zona di Gardjola (giardino bastione) e nella zona del campo di calcio. Inoltre le isole ecologiche sono monitorate. Tuttavia, non vi è alcun sistema di vigilanza di quartiere. Nonostante la stazione di polizia sia spesso chiusa, ci sono regolari pattuglie a piedi e volanti di polizia. I residenti sembrano



sentirsi più sicuri nel segnalare le infrazioni al Comune piuttosto che alla polizia.

- Ironia della sorte a **Bormla** (Cospicua), si sostiene che la principale area di rischio si trovi proprio accanto alla stazione di polizia locale. Questo luogo è conosciuto per manifesto e continuo abuso di sostanze stupefacenti. Sembra che ci sia un buon numero di ex detenuti che vivono a Bormla. La paura del crimine è tangibile, soprattutto tra gli anziani, ritenuti le principali vittime. Tutte le zone in cui ci sono costruzioni di edilizia sociale a Bormla sono considerate malfamate. Purtroppo, sembra che, i residenti di Bormla tendono ad essere oggetto di stereotipi e pregiudizi, cosa che incide pesantemente sulla crescita delle nuove generazioni. Per quanto riguarda la salute e la sicurezza, si sostiene che le opere infrastrutturali incompiute di Bacir Numero Uno, costituiscono un pericolo. Anche se la presenza della polizia è evidente ... c'è anche una stazione di polizia (tra l'altro operante anche come sede del distretto di polizia), la sua influenza è appena percepita. Come i residenti di Isla, anche i residenti di Bormla sembrano sentirsi più sicuri nel segnalare le infrazioni al consiglio comunale piuttosto che alla polizia.
- A **Birgu** (Vittoriosa), il livello di criminalità non è così elevato come potrebbe essere sembrare. Nonostante la giovane età di alcuni trasgressori (perlopiù quattordicenni), i furti di auto e gli atti di vandalismo sono diminuiti negli ultimi anni. L'abuso di droga è dilagante e contribuisce a peggiorare la già precaria situazione finanziaria di molti residenti. Anche il gioco d'azzardo sembra essere un problema ed è aggravato dalla presenza del Casinò di Venezia (sul lungomare Birgu). Luoghi come il Foss (sotto i bastioni) e il campo di gioco sembra essere terreno fertile per i reati, a causa della mancanza di controllo e di supervisione. Vittime della criminalità tendono a essere anziani e adolescenti, in particolare i quattordicenni, che sono in età vulnerabile. La presenza della polizia, a quanto pare, è poco sentita ed è richiesta, in particolare, dagli anziani e dalle imprese sul lungomare. Come a Isla e Bormla, i residenti di Birgu sembrano sentirsi più sicuri nel segnalare le infrazioni al Comune piuttosto che alla polizia.
- A **Kalkara** il livello di criminalità è direttamente legato al dilagante abuso di sostanze stupefacenti. Il consiglio locale è attualmente al corrente della presenza di due o tre spacciatori di droga e di famiglie dei delinquenti che risiedono nel territorio. Questi soggetti sono causa di problemi e contribuiscono a generare un forte allarmismo tra i residenti. L'abuso di droga è correlato ai furti di auto e ad atti di vandalismo. Non sembrano esserci aree privilegiate dalla criminalità. Delitti e criminali si spostano da una zona all'altra, a seconda di quale sia considerata più sicura (per loro), magari trattasi di aree meno visibili e con scarsa vigilanza. Difficile identificare le vittime, non si può affermare che gli anziani abbiano più paura rispetto ad altre categorie. Si ritiene che il senso d'impotenza e di rassegnazione abbiano preso il sopravvento. Di fronte

ai fenomeni criminali, gli abitanti sembrano rimanere passivi. Il centro cittadino è pieno di telecamere a circuito chiuso che servono come deterrente. Il sistema della vigilanza di quartiere non è mai stato supportato dai residenti, quindi non è attuabile. La presenza della polizia non è soddisfacente, poiché la stazione di polizia non è sempre aperta e le pattuglie di polizia non sono sufficienti. Tuttavia, se ci si riferisce agli incontri tra la polizia e il Comune, la comunicazione con la polizia potrebbe essere considerata buona, ma non così efficace come previsto.

Lasciando la Cottonera, si trova Fgura, Paola e il cimitero dell'Addolorata - il più grande cimitero di Malta, con i suoi quattro lati che toccano Santa Luċija e Luqa (l'area più lontana), Marsa (zona industriale, in basso dove si trova l'ingresso del cimitero) e Tarxien (su per la collina, attraverso una rotonda). Guidando su per la collina, di fronte al cimitero dell'Addolorata e girando a sinistra, ci si ritrova a Tarxien - sede di templi preistorici e dell'ipogeo sotterraneo. Tali reperti si trovano in mezzo ad un'antica e pittoresca cittadina - con case e chiese. La strada principale che attraversa Tarxien è dominata da negozi. Dopo aver guidato attraverso Tarxien, si arriva a Paola, in una grande piazza, di fronte alla maestosa chiesa parrocchiale. All'estrema sinistra si trova il Corradino Correctional Facility (l'unico carcere a Malta). Tuttavia, una volta in piazza, se si procede dritto, si finisce a Fgura. Lungo la strada principale, si trova un numero considerevole di negozi, tra cui un piccolo centro commerciale e un cinema. A Fgura, vi è una vasta tipologia di residenze: le antiche e caratteristiche case a schiera, maisonette e appartamenti (in particolare nei complessi residenziali relativamente moderni). Fgura confina con l'area di Cottonera. Se invece si va dritto e si gira a destra (dopo Marsaskala), ci si ritrova a Żabbar. Żabbar è un altro borgo antico, con chiese, case antiche e pittoresche, un ospedale privato e alcuni negozi. Spostandosi verso la costa, si finisce a Xgħajra - un pittoresco villaggio in riva al mare, dove si può godere di una passeggiata su un lungomare panoramico. Da un punto di vista sociale, le persone che vivono in questa zona (Tarxien, Paola, Fgura, Żabbar e Xgħajra) possono essere considerate appartenenti ai ceti meno abbienti e alla classe operaia. Anche se i problemi sociali sono un riflesso di quelli della società maltese in generale (vale a dire, famiglie disgregate, genitori single, gravidanze adolescenziali/abuso di sostanze e usura), tendono ad acuirsi in questa zona, abitata prevalentemente da persone socialmente ed economicamente svantaggiate.

- **Tarxien:** Il tasso di criminalità qui si mantiene abbastanza alto a causa dell'abuso di droga, spesso correlato al furto (in abitazioni e di auto) e ad atti di vandalismo. A volte, i delinquenti sostano di fronte gli ingressi dei garage per drogarsi e causare un fastidio. L'area di Joanna Gardens (frequentata anche da non residenti) è fonte di piccole noie e coperta dai rifiuti. C'è un certo numero di delinquenti che vivono a Tarxien. Le vittime di reati hanno diversa estrazione sociale, quindi non è possibile identificare una

categoria specifica. Tarxien potrebbe essere considerato come un lungo stradone e gli spazi aperti sono gli unici punti di ritrovo, in particolare per i giovani. Dal momento che la società tende ad aver paura dei giovani - anche dei cittadini onesti, figuriamoci le teste calde - i residenti sono stanchi della loro presenza. In risposta a ciò, il Comune di Tarxien ha adottato una strategia alquanto controversa: l'installazione di un allarme contro le zanzare in aree frequentate dai giovani. L'allarme viene attivato ogni volta che il livello di rumore diventa molesto e il segnale emesso irrita così tanto le orecchie, che l'unica soluzione è quella di allontanarsi. Tutto Tarxien è coperto da un sistema di vigilanza di quartiere che si ritiene sia efficace (c'è un assessore preposto alle questioni di ordine pubblico). La polizia ha base a Paola e assicura la propria presenza a Tarxien con pattuglie. Inoltre, le autorità di polizia incontrano regolarmente Comune. Come nella zona di Cottonera, i residenti Tarxien sembrano sentirsi più sicuri nel segnalare i reati al Consiglio locale piuttosto che alla polizia.

- **Paola:** La criminalità è estremamente elevata a Paola, non tanto per il luogo in sé, quanto per la centralità dei suoi servizi. Infatti, a causa della presenza del policlinico, sono distribuite ogni anno circa 90.000 siringhe e la maggior parte di queste finiscono per essere gettate proprio nel territorio di Paola. Altre forme di reati comuni sono: atti di vandalismo, rifiuti, furti nelle case, gioco d'azzardo e abuso di droga. L'area dedicata principalmente al consumo di sostanze stupefacenti, piuttosto che al crimine, è situata nella zona 'Blandun Wied' e nei pressi del cimitero dell'Addolorata, soprattutto la parte posteriore, non illuminata la sera. Tale zona è nota per episodi di vagabondaggio, prostituzione e abuso di droga. Ci sono diversi pregiudicati residenti a Paola. Le vittime sono senza dubbio gli anziani. Ci sono stati diversi tentativi falliti di creare un sistema di sorveglianza e l'assenza della polizia si fa sentire al punto tale che è diventata una questione importante per il consiglio comunale. Ci sono telecamere a circuito chiuso installate nei locali comunali, e presso la stazione di polizia, ma la polizia sembra reagire con molta lentezza e talora non intervenire del tutto, nei casi in cui la violazione della legge è registrata sulle telecamere. Inquinamento e traffico rappresentano una grave minaccia per la salute e la sicurezza dei residenti di Paola.
- **Fgura:** i livelli di criminalità sono considerati nella norma, con un paio di casi di violenza domestica, furti di veicoli e atti di vandalismo, l'abuso di droga e il traffico sono i principali reati, in particolare nella zona di Wied Blandun (in comune con Paola), considerata un'area ad alto rischio. Un'altra zona calda è il bar adiacente al centro- bocce, soggetto a continue irruzioni dalla squadra antidroga della polizia.
- Dal momento che questo punto è proprio accanto al parco giochi, il Comune ha in programma lo spostamento degli uffici (o delle loro sedi) e la recinzione del parco giochi. E' stato installato un nuovo bancomat vicino al Tip Top (un negozio nella strada principale di Fgura) alla fermata del bus. Il buio e la forma (una sorta di tunnel)

di questa zona lo rende ideale per la criminalità. In realtà, almeno una volta (secondo le segnalazioni), sarebbe stato teatro di uno stupro. Poiché il tasso di criminalità è considerata basso, almeno ufficialmente, ci sono poche vittime di reati. Ci sono due sistemi di videosorveglianza a circuito chiuso, una nei pressi dell'isola ecologica e l'altra per regolare il traffico. Una terza telecamera a circuito chiuso deve essere installata nella piazza dietro la chiesa parrocchiale - in Pjazza Reggie Miller, dove fastidi e vandalismo sono all'ordine del giorno. Ufficialmente, non c'è vigilanza di quartiere, ma i residenti hanno occhi vigili e collaborano per scoraggiare la criminalità. Il consiglio locale ha un ottimo rapporto con il distretto di polizia e Fgura è adeguatamente coperta da pattuglie. I residenti denunciano i reati e lo fanno alla polizia, piuttosto che al consiglio comunale. Essendo una via di passaggio, i residenti si lamentano dalla congestione del traffico e della mancanza di parcheggi.

- **Żabbar:** il reato prevalente in questa località, è rappresentato dall'abuso di droga -correlato a quello di narcotici che qui risulta dilagante. Infatti, il campo di gioco che si trova proprio dietro la stazione di polizia, è regolarmente disseminato di siringhe usate. Una guardia di sicurezza privata è stata una volta impiegata nel tentativo di affrontare questo problema, tuttavia, la mancanza dei poteri di polizia, rendeva tale figura inefficace. Oltre all'abuso di sostanze stupefacenti, furti e atti vandalici abbondano in questa località. Le aree conosciute come Biccieni e tal- Misrah sono note per le risse e le perturbazioni dell'ordine pubblico. Il gioco d'azzardo sembra essere un problema, plausibilmente acuito, dall'installazione di macchinette da gioco in alcuni bar di Żabbar. Diversi pregiudicati vivono a Żabbar. Le vittime di reato sono principalmente i giovani, con difficoltà economiche e con bassi livelli d'istruzione, che diventano tossicodipendenti. La paura del crimine è tangibile, soprattutto tra gli anziani. Non vi è alcuna vigilanza di quartiere, anche se c'è stato un tentativo, peraltro fallito, di incentivare una simile iniziativa, non semplicemente per monitorare il territorio e segnalare eventuali facinorosi, ma per avere un maggiore contatto soprattutto con i giovani in difficoltà. Tale tentativo è stato guidato dal parroco nella zona conosciuta come Sant Andrija. Una commissione è stata effettivamente istituita ma ha presto chiuso i battenti. Apparecchiature TVCC sono state installate nel campo di gioco ed è prevista l'installazione di alcune telecamere nelle aree residenziali e a San Pietro. Il Comune ha riunioni mensili con la polizia e il livello di comunicazione con le Forze dell'Ordine è ritenuto abbastanza soddisfacente. Eppure, i residenti sembrano sentirsi impotenti di fronte alla tossicodipendenza e ai fenomeni correlati che proliferano a Żabbar; la presenza di tre alti funzionari di polizia che vi risiedono, non è stata sufficiente per ridurre tale problema. La presenza della polizia è rafforzata in occasione delle feste cittadine. Sembra che i residenti di Żabbar abbiano perso ogni fiducia nella polizia e che semplicemente non si fidino. A peggiorare la cosa, l'opinione diffusa

che da parte della polizia locale, negli ultimi venti anni, non sia una stata promossa nessuna azione a difesa della comunità. Il Consiglio Locale non reputa di propria competenza segnalare alla polizia quando intervenire. La gente denuncia i reati e i delitti, ma preferisce rivolgersi al Consiglio piuttosto che alla polizia, poiché nel secondo caso vi è l'obbligo, per chi sporge denuncia, di testimoniare in tribunale.

- **Xghajra:** Xghajra non ha un tasso di criminalità preoccupante e i reati commessi sono di solito l'abuso di sostanze stupefacenti e i reati a esso correlati, quali il furto (anche in aree rurali e luoghi aperti), tossicodipendenza e conferimento illegale di rifiuti (in particolare di siringhe usate, nelle località periferiche e negli edifici vuoti). Anche la guida pericolosa costituisce un problema. Si è altresì affermato che alcuni autisti che operano nei trasporti pubblici, e le pattuglie della polizia corrono per le strade di Xghajra. Sembra che gli anziani siano le potenziali vittime di reati, inclusi i proprietari di appezzamenti agricoli distanti e senza sorveglianza e coloro che sono derubati dai propri parenti (e quindi hanno difficoltà a dichiarare di aver subito un crimine). Quando si parla di un comportamento indisciplinato (insubordinato, ribelle), viene attribuito ai soggiornanti di breve periodo.

Non vi è alcuna vigilanza di quartiere e le telecamere a circuito chiuso non sono ancora installate, tuttavia è pianificata la realizzazione di un sistema di videosorveglianza nel nuovo parco giochi. La presenza della polizia è invocata da più parti, ma, ad eccezione dei mesi estivi (quando s'incrementa il numero delle pattuglie a piedi) si è ridotta drasticamente. In passato vi erano sia le pattuglie a piedi che a cavallo e ci si avvaleva del contributo della sezione di polizia canina. Tali risorse non sono più impiegate. Il Consiglio non sa perché ciò sia accaduto, ma suppone che l'attenzione della polizia si sia concentrata sulla zona di Marsaskala (dove vive primo ministro) e su Żabbar (dove vive il Commissario di polizia). I residenti hanno paura a denunciare i reati alla polizia e, evidentemente, si sentono più a loro agio con Consiglio che può garantirne l'anonimato.

L'Addolorata confina anche con Santa Luċija e Luqa e con Marsa (zona industriale, all'estremità inferiore ove vi è l'ingresso del cimitero). Quindi, se si guida su per la collina (di fronte al cimitero dell'Addolorata) e si gira a destra, ci si trova a Santa Luċija. Trattasi di una zona residenziale relativamente moderna, composta principalmente da ville, villette, villini, appartamenti e una chiesa in stile moderno. C'è anche un complesso di edilizia popolare. Nella parte posteriore di questa zona, accanto ad una scuola secondaria, si trova un piccolo ma pittoresco giardino cinese. Con l'eccezione, forse, della maggior parte di coloro che vivono negli appartamenti popolari, i residenti di Santa Luċija potrebbero essere considerati come appartenenti principalmente alle classe medie e superiori. I problemi familiari si trovano ovunque, ma ancora una volta, forse a causa della precarietà finanziaria, si ritiene che affliggano maggiormente le famiglie che risiedono nei quartieri popolari.

Se si esce da Santa Luċija, si gira a sinistra e si procede dritto (dietro il cimitero Addolorata), si arriva a Luqa. Si tratta di un antico borgo, con case tradizionali intorno alla chiesa. Ci sono anche alcuni terreni agricoli e case coloniche. Con l'eccezione dei casali ristrutturati (in genere di proprietà dei ricchi), la maggior parte dei residenti di Luqa è costituita perlopiù del ceto medio basso o da appartenenti alla classe operaia. Il centro storico è popolato, in particolare, da persone anziane.

Attraversato Luqa, ci si trova nei pressi del campo sportivo di Marsa, del vecchio cimitero turco, e su una delle arterie più trafficate e a più corsie di Malta. Guidando in direzione di Valletta (dritto) e girando a destra, su un ponte, ci trova al centro di Marsa. Marsa è conosciuta come una zona industriale che in parte dà sul grande porto (nota come Il - Menqa) - dove rimorchiatori e navi cargo stazionano in un braccio di mare molto torbido) e gli immigrati popolano le strade circostanti, in particolare una rotatoria nelle vicinanze. L'acqua di mare e l'aria di Marsa sono fortemente inquinate a causa della presenza della centrale di Marsa (che va a carbone). In questa zona, si trova il Centro per i migranti irregolari (proprio di fronte al porto ... il-Menqa, da dove, si pensa che vengano adescati ad hoc da possibili datori di lavoro che, a quanto pare, li assumono in nero quotidianamente o per qualche ora di lavoro. Marsa ha due chiese principali (uno dei quali è la chiesa dedicata alla Santissima Trinità ... l'altro è dedicato a Maria Regina. Ironia della sorte, questo crea rivalità tra gli abitanti di queste due principali aree residenziali di Marsa. A Marsa, si trovano una scuola elementare, vecchie case, una serie di appartamenti e maisonette, in particolare nei complessi residenziali di tipo popolare. La maggior parte dei residenti di Marsa può essere considerata come appartenente ai ceti meno abbienti e alla classe lavoratrice. Famiglie disgregate, genitori single, gravidanze precoci, problemi finanziari rendono Marsa un terreno fertile per eventuali problemi. Marsa confina con Hamrun.

Infatti, quando si esce da Marsa e si gira a destra, ci si trova sulla strada principale di Hamrun, che conduce a Floriana e Valletta. Una volta fuori Hamrun, attraverso la porta di Bombs (un vecchio, arco storico), si arriva a Floriana - particolarmente famosa per i Granai (il grano e il mais in passato erano stoccati dai Cavalieri di Malta, nei sotterranei) e la sua chiesa (con vista sui granai) dedicata a San Publio, il primo vescovo di Malta, direttamente ordinato e nominato da san Paolo stesso. Nella strada principale di Floriana, si trova un certo numero di negozi, club e bar. Floriana ospita anche una serie di ambasciate straniere. Nelle strade di periferia, ci sono vecchie case di campagna e appartamenti, e appartamenti statali (noti come 'kerrejja'). Famiglie disgregate, genitori single, gravidanze precoci, problemi finanziari e sociali sono elementi che contribuiscono a rendere le aree di edilizia popolare come potenzialmente a rischio. Sempre in periferia, si trova il quartier generale della polizia (usato come ospedale nei tempi passati), e proprio dall'altra parte della strada, si trova la Curia (la sede principale della Chiesa a Malta).

- La strada principale di Floriana porta a **Valletta** - la capitale di Malta. Nota per le sue viste mozzafiato sul Grand Harbour (in particolare dall'Upper Barraka Garden) – dove vi è una presenza massiccia di navi da crociera che popolano regolarmente le strade con i turisti ... e 'karozzini' (la tradizionale carrozza a cavallo). Valletta è una penisola famosa per i suoi edifici storici, in particolare, il Forte di S. Elmo, l'Ospedale dei Cavalieri (ora Mediterranean Conference Centre), il Palazzo, la Cattedrale di San Giovanni, il Museo di Archeologia, il numero di chiese e cappelle, le diverse residenze dei Cavalieri, l'Archivio nazionale e il Tribunale. Ci sono palazzi, uffici (tra cui la sede del primo ministro), ministeri, negozi e boutique, pub, discoteche, pizzerie, fast food, centri commerciali, cinema, ristoranti e qualche antica casa molto pittoresca residenziali. Alla fine di Valletta, proprio di fronte a Fort St Elmo -, di fronte a Sliema (questa zona è chiamata Marsamxett) - si trovano alcuni edifici residenziali di tipo popolare (condomini), tra cui uno particolarmente noto che sorge in una zona chiamata il- Mandragg. Considerando che, circa cinquanta anni fa, i ceti abbienti hanno investito nel patrimonio immobiliare di Valletta, oggi la maggior parte delle costruzioni è a uso ufficio o commerciale. Le poche persone che risiedono a Valletta tendono a concentrarsi nei quartieri popolari e possono essere considerate come socialmente ed economicamente svantaggiate ... casi di famiglie spezzate, gravidanze adolescenzial/premature e genitori single non fanno altro che aggravare ulteriormente tale situazione. Queste difficoltà possono portare alla povertà e alla scarsa cura dei bambini e dei giovani che vivono in questa zona ... e come risultato a fenomeni delinquenziali e attività correlate alle gang.
- **Santa Luċija**: Il problema dell' abuso di droga così diffuso a Santa Luċija, soprattutto nel corso del 1990, è stato drasticamente ridotto. L'omicidio di una coppia anziani nel loro appartamento a Santa Luċija, circa un decennio fa, è ancora fresco nella mente dei residenti, con conseguenze sulla serenità degli abitanti che vivono in uno stato d'inquietudine difficile da controllare. Tuttavia, nel complesso, non sembra esserci un problema di criminalità preoccupante a Santa Luċija. Prevalgono i reati minori, come ad esempio: velocità eccessiva, rumore (soprattutto in estate) e atti di vandalismo. Non sembrano esserci pregiudicati che vivono a Santa Luċija. Non c'è nessun sistema di vigilanza di quartiere né cancelli o recinzioni. Tuttavia un certo numero di telecamere a circuito chiuso è stato installato nel giardino cinese; ma non c'è alcun tipo di sorveglianza diversa da queste. La presenza della polizia è migliorata (pattuglie di polizia - sia della squadra antidroga che della squadra mobile - sono frequenti), anche se la stazione di polizia spesso è chiusa. La maggior parte dei reati viene denunciata ma i residenti preferiscono rivolgersi alla Consiglio locale prima e poi, eventualmente, alla polizia.
- **Luqa**: il tasso di criminalità non è elevato. Si tratta di piccole infrazioni, quali atti di vandalismo (in particolare a Hal - Farrug) e velocità eccessiva (soprattutto i taxi a

New Street o vicino all'aeroporto), oltre al conferimento illegale di rifiuti. Le vittime sono perlopiù persone anziane - soprattutto quelle che vivono nelle zone rurali. Spesso sono colpite da furti nei campi (di prodotti agricoli e strumenti) e da vandalismo. Le telecamere a circuito chiuso (gestite dal Comune) sono installate nei pressi della Banca di Valletta. Il campo di gioco non è recintato e talvolta c'è qualche problema. Anche se vi è una stazione di polizia nella piazza principale, è necessaria una maggiore presenza della polizia. Si ritiene che, la scarsa illuminazione della zona industriale costituisca una grave minaccia per la sicurezza dei residenti poiché favorisce i reati.

- **Marsa:** l'abuso di droga è dilagante - come attestato dal numero di siringhe usate trovate nei giardini pubblici. Pochi furti vengono denunciati alla polizia. Dal momento che la vecchia scuola è stata trasformata in un centro di accoglienza per i migranti irregolari/illegali, i residenti si lamentano che questa zona, in particolare nei pressi di Albert Town, sia stata invasa da loro. I reati connessi alla presenza d'immigrati irregolari sono: crimini razziali (da parte dei cittadini maltesi e tra di loro), vagabondaggio, alcolismo e comportamenti osceni nei giardini pubblici. Si sostiene che la forte rivalità tra i devoti/sostenitori delle due grandi feste di paese (la chiesa parrocchiale della Santa Trinità, e la chiesa dedicata a Maria Regina) ha portato a litigi e disordini (costringendo talora le autorità della Chiesa ad annullare le feste legate alle celebrazioni) si sia un po' placata. Non vi è alcun sistema di vigilanza di quartiere (forse a causa del forte senso di appartenenza alla comunità che si è affievolito nel corso dei decenni), ma l'amministrazione comunale ha in programma di installare telecamere a circuito chiuso nelle aree verdi. La comunicazione con la polizia è stata descritta come eccellente e da quando Marsa sta diventando un vero quartiere, la presenza della polizia è destinata ad aumentare. L'inquinamento proveniente dalla centrale e dalle zone industriali è considerato una grande minaccia per la salute e la sicurezza dei residenti di Marsa.
- **Floriana:** l'abuso di droga costituisce un grosso problema, soprattutto tra i giovani. Lo smaltimento illegale di siringhe usate costituisce un problema più vasto (si trovano nel parco-giochi, nei pressi del centro sanitario, dietro la chiesa dei Frati Cappuccini e nelle metropolitane). Il centro sanitario di Floriana è preposto alla distribuzione gratuita di siringhe, di conseguenza un certo numero di tossicodipendenti, provenienti da diverse località, converge su Floriana per avere le siringhe gratuite. Il furto di auto è abbastanza diffuso, cosa abbastanza prevedibile, considerato il numero di parcheggi che si trova a Floriana. Tuttavia, ci sono stati pochissimi casi di furto nelle case e rapine nei negozi. Altri due problemi sono rappresentati dal vandalismo e dalle discariche abusive/abbandono dei rifiuti (l'area Fenicia, l'area di Cristo Re, il Gardens Mall e la zona vicino al Comune, così come quella nei pressi della Biblioteca Nazionale). L'ingresso del parco-giochi è dotato di una telecamera a circuito chiuso, tuttavia occorrerebbe fare degli aggiustamenti, poiché nessuno si è mai preso la briga di guardare le registrazioni



complete. Tutte le ambasciate e 'Triq Santa Anna', che porta alla zona di 'Tal- Bombi', sono dotate di telecamere a circuito chiuso. Non c'è vigilanza di quartiere. Il Comune ha richiesto una maggiore presenza della polizia, soprattutto durante la notte, sebbene la situazione sia migliorata negli ultimi quattro anni, proprio grazie ad un maggiore impegno delle forze dell'ordine. Il Comune ha anche lanciato il premio "Police Officer of the Year" - tuttavia la nomina deve essere prima approvata dalle autorità di polizia. Il Comune sostiene che i canali di comunicazione con la Polizia siano aperti, ma i risultati sono un'altra cosa. La mancanza di parcheggi e l'uso dei granai per un sacco di attività nazionali sono causa di stress per i residenti di Floriana.

- **Valletta:** I residenti di Valletta sono oggetto di pregiudizi. In realtà trattasi di una cattiva fama derivante da alcuni residenti turbolenti che vivono nelle aree più difficili di Valletta (zona di Tal- Mandragg, per un esempio). Infatti, si sostiene che, molti si spostano a Valletta dopo aver commesso un crimine. Le statistiche mostrano una diminuzione dei delitti denunciati (La Valletta) - di un terzo nel 2010 rispetto al 2009. La maggior parte dei reati è di modesta entità, come il furto di automobili. Si sostiene che, in particolare nel recente passato, bande giovanili (non residente Valletta) gironzolassero intorno alla zona del capolinea, causando problemi, bersagliando e intimidendo le persone. Vandalismo e discariche abusive sono un problema (soprattutto nella zona di Due Balli e di Marsamxett). Sembra che i negozianti non stiano facendo la propria parte (poiché non sono interessati a installare telecamere a circuito chiuso). Solo Republic Street è dotata di telecamere a circuito chiuso. La polizia è molto efficiente e reagisce prontamente. Le uniche critiche sono correlate al fatto che le forze di polizia concentrano la propria attenzione sulle imprese piuttosto che sulle zone residenziali. Tant'è che il Consiglio paga delle spese extra per il servizio di polizia in modo da poter coprire anche le zone residenziali di Valletta. Si segnala una nota positiva, l'introduzione della polizia in segway (una sorta di biga con due ruote parallele che riesce a mantenere il guidatore in perfetto equilibrio) ha migliorato la sicurezza e la sicurezza a Valletta.

### **Distretto N.1: Reati/Problemi Sociali**

- Con l'eccezione di Paola, Żabbar e Bormla, il livello di criminalità non è allarmante.
- Furti di auto e atti di vandalismo sono diminuiti negli ultimi anni, ma lo spaccio e il consumo di sostanze stupefacenti sembra dilagare, peggiorando la già precaria situazione finanziaria di molti residenti. A Bormla, la zona più a rischio è proprio quella accanto alla stazione di polizia. Questo luogo è conosciuto per manifesti e continui fenomeni di abuso di sostanze stupefacenti.
- Anche il gioco d'azzardo sembra essere un problema ed è aggravato dalla vicinanza del Casinò di Venezia (sul lungomare Birgu) e dalla disponibilità di macchinette da gioco

in alcuni dei bar del distretto.

- In questo distretto, è facile assistere a episodi di vagabondaggio/prostituzione.
- Emergono anche fenomeni di violenza domestica (e stupro).
- Tra gli altri problemi si segnalano anche disturbi, liti/risse, legati a piccole gang, atti vandalici, conferimento abusivo dei rifiuti e discariche abusive.
- Anche la guida pericolosa è un problema.
- Dal momento che la vecchia scuola di Marsa ora viene utilizzata come centro di accoglienza per i migranti irregolari/illegali, i residenti si lamentano che questa zona, in particolare la zona di Albert Town, è stata occupata da loro. I reati connessi con la presenza d'immigrati irregolari sono: crimini razziali (con i cittadini maltesi, e/o tra di loro), vagabondaggio, ubriachezza molesta e comportamenti indecenti nei giardini pubblici.
- La paura del crimine è tangibile, soprattutto tra gli anziani.
- Si trovano delinquenti di appena quattordici anni.
- Gli anziani sono percepiti come le principali potenziali o reali vittime di reati.
- Gli adolescenti sono considerati come potenzialmente a rischio/criminali (soprattutto i giovani ignoranti e poveri che diventano facile preda di criminali e dipendenti da sostanze stupefacenti).
- L'installazione di alcune telecamere a circuito chiuso potrebbe aver contribuito a ridurre la criminalità.
- La precarietà finanziaria e la povertà sembrano imperanti.
- Non ci sono sistemi di sorveglianza di quartiere.
- Ogni area popolare costituisce una zona calda per potenziali crimini o problemi sociali.
- Per quanto riguarda la salute e la sicurezza di questo distretto, si afferma che: le opere infrastrutturali incompiute (ad esempio, quelle di essere stato fatto per Bacir Number 1 e al Bormla), costituiscono un pericolo: il traffico pesante, la mancanza di posti auto e l'inquinamento del traffico, rappresentano un'importante minaccia per la salute e la sicurezza dei residenti; l'inquinamento proveniente dalla centrale elettrica di Marsa e delle zone industriali è considerato come pericoloso per la salute e la sicurezza dei residenti .
- Con l'eccezione di Fgura, Floriana e La Valletta, in generale, le prestazioni di polizia in questo distretto sono considerate insoddisfacenti, in particolare a Paola (l'assenza di Polizia a Paola è diventata un grosso problema per il Consiglio. Ci sono telecamere a circuito chiuso installate nei locali consiliari, nonché presso la stazione di polizia, ma la polizia non reagisce tempestivamente o si astiene dall'intervenire quando la violazione della legge viene ripresa dalle videocamere); i residenti di Żabbar sembrano avere perso la fiducia polizia e a Bormla si sostiene che l'abuso di droga è praticato spudoratamente nella zona circostante la stazione di polizia). Tuttavia, se

ci si riferisce agli incontri tra la polizia e le autorità comunali, la comunicazione con le forze dell'ordine potrebbe essere considerata come buona, ma non efficace come previsto. In realtà, i canali di comunicazione della polizia - consiglio - sono aperti, ma i risultati sembrano essere un'altra questione. I residenti sembrano sentirsi più sicuri nel segnalare infrazioni alle autorità locali piuttosto che alla polizia. Evidentemente, la denuncia alle autorità comunali è più comoda poiché può garantire l'anonimato.

- Si ritiene che un senso diffuso d'impotenza, di rassegnazione e apatia, domini in questo distretto.

### The Northern Harbour Distirct (Il distretto del Nord del Porto)

Il secondo distretto comprende le seguenti località maltesi:

- B'Kara
- Gżira
- Ħamrun
- Msida
- Pembroke
- Pietà
- Qormi
- San Ġwann
- Santa Venera
- Sliema
- St Julian's
- Swieqi
- Ta' Xbiex

Da un punto di vista geografico, B'Kara, Ħamrun, Qormi, San Ġwann, e Santa Venera sono posizionate nella zona centrale, e sono molto simili tra loro. Sono zone urbane, commerciali e densamente popolate, soprattutto in prossimità dei centri che sono circondati da edifici residenziali. I fastidi e disagi, generati dalla concentrazione di attività commerciali, non sono stagionali, sebbene peggiorino durante le ore di punta, i giorni di scuola e a Natale. Da un punto di vista sociologico, sembrerebbe che i benestanti si siano trasferiti in altre zone che, seppur non molto distanti, sono considerate più silenziose e consone ai ceti elevati. Infatti, anche commercialmente, sembrerebbe che i negozi in tali località abbiano una clientela relativa modesta (in termini di reddito.)

Quella che segue è una breve panoramica dei problemi sociali e della delinquenza a B'Kara, Ħamrun, Qormi San Ġwann e Santa Venera:

- **B'Kara:** Il livello di criminalità è relativamente basso, furti nelle case e di auto, spesso correlati alla tossicodipendenza. Quindi, vi è la presenza di fenomeni di abuso di sostanze stupefacenti. Non vi è alcuna vigilanza di quartiere e le uniche telecamere a circuito chiuso monitorano un giardino pubblico. La comunicazione con la polizia è molto buona e sembra che ci sia una notevole presenza delle forze dell'ordine a B'Kara.
- **Ħamrun:** Qui risiedono pochi stranieri. La percentuale di persone separate legalmente è in linea con il tasso nazionale. Vandalismo e droga (soprattutto nei bagni pubblici) sono fenomeni dilaganti. Inoltre, abbastanza diffuso è il gioco d'azzardo illegale (nel piazzale davanti alla stazione di polizia). Non ci sono telecamere a circuito chiuso e non è stato adottato il regime di vigilanza di quartiere. Tuttavia, i furti nei negozi sembrano essere ridotti, la maggior parte dei negozi è dotata di telecamere a circuito

chiuso. La comunicazione con la polizia è soddisfacente.

- **Qormi:** qui la povertà sociale sembra essere radicata, con un costante aumento di gravidanze in età adolescenziale, separazioni e uso di droga (in particolare nella zona del campo di gioco), aggravata dal basso livello d'istruzione dei residenti. I furti sono abbastanza comuni, anche se vi è una certa riluttanza, abbastanza evidente, a denunciare. Non ci sono telecamere a circuito chiuso e non è stato adottato il sistema di vigilanza di quartiere. La comunicazione con la polizia è soddisfacente, anche se è necessaria una maggiore presenza della polizia.
- **San Ġwann:** questa località sembra essere popolata prevalentemente da famiglie a basso reddito. Ci sono pochi migranti se non addirittura nessuno. La delinquenza, compresi atti di vandalismo, è molto bassa. Non vi è alcun sistema di vigilanza di quartiere o di telecamere a circuito chiuso. Tuttavia, le relazioni con la polizia sono positive.
- **Santa Venera:** la povertà sociale in questa località sembra aver subito un'impennata. La zona residenziale è un luogo malfamato, poiché è diventata un terreno fertile per la delinquenza (soprattutto da parte di giovani devianti) e per la violenza. C'è anche un afflusso di migranti. La comunicazione con la polizia è buona, ancora di più la cooperazione con la polizia è incoraggiata dalle stesse autorità locali. Ci sono delle telecamere a circuito chiuso in alcune strade, tuttavia il Consiglio teme che, in tema di sicurezza, non si sia fatto abbastanza.

Le località di Gżira, Msida, Pietà e Ta' Xbiex sono collegate tra loro e hanno il vantaggio geografico di essere situate in prossimità del mare, cosa da non trascurare. Tuttavia, la costituzione geografica di questa zona e la qualità del mare, ne consentono una fruizione legata al turismo di diporto. Sebbene la gente e in particolare i locali vi pratichino il nuoto, e ci siano alcuni pub e ristoranti, oltre che negozi, queste località non sono considerate come un paradiso balneare, mete di intrattenimento o di shopping. Storicamente, durante la seconda guerra mondiale (Malta era una colonia Britannica - una colonia fortezza, per la precisione), per la loro vicinanza alle aree portuali e a Valletta - la capitale di Malta (da qui al porto di Marsamxett, Valletta, vi è solo un breve giro in barca), questa zona divenne molto conosciuta tra i membri dell'esercito Britannico e gli ufficiali della marina. E come insegnano le leggi economiche: la domanda ha creato l'offerta ... sia di pub sia prostitute. Anche se la spiaggia è circondata da alcune belle ville, con vista sul porto e su Valletta (ora la maggior parte di loro sono residenze ufficiali di Vip), nonostante la presenza di certo numero di popolari wine bar, locali d'intrattenimento e buoni ristoranti, la zona è popolata da persone di reddito modesto e basso background culturale.

- **Gżira:** in questa località si registrano furti d'auto e abuso di droga, ma la situazione non è molto allarmante. La comunicazione con la polizia è soddisfacente, sebbene la sua presenza del territorio sia ritenuta insufficiente. La riapertura della stazione di polizia in questa località è stata considerata molto utile. Non vi è alcun sistema di vigilanza di quartiere e una telecamera a circuito chiuso è stata installata nella parte abbandonata, ma solo per regolare il traffico.
- **Msidra:** questa località è considerata un po' cosmopolita con particolari problemi connessi alla criminalità, come l'abuso di droga, atti di vandalismo e vagabondaggio (in particolare nelle aree vicine a Gżira e Ta' Xbiex). Alcuni migranti vivono in questa zona e un buon numero è stato segnalato per guida senza patente. Msida sembra essere un porto sicuro per i rifugiati. Il disagio sociale si fa sentire, soprattutto nei complessi popolari. In aumento i genitori single e separati, con annesse conseguenze, quali l'abbassamento delle qualità di vita e l'assenza di controllo genitoriale. La comunicazione con la polizia è soddisfacente, ma non vi è alcun sistema di vigilanza di quartiere.
- **Pietà:** il disagio sociale è evidente con i genitori single e i separati in aumento. Alcuni migranti risiedono a Pietà. C'è anche un fenomeno di invecchiamento della popolazione (i residenti per lo più hanno un'età superiore ai 60 anni). Il crimine sembra essere in diminuzione. Si registrano sporadici episodi di furto nelle case e nei negozi (la maggior parte dei quali ha luogo mentre i residenti - per lo più anziani - partecipano alla Messa 07:00). Tuttavia il vandalismo costituisce effettivamente un problema, in particolare nel campo da gioco che oggi è recintato e nei giardini della Marina (per lo più, per mano di giovani/studenti che frequentano il Junior College a Msida). Non esiste un sistema di sorveglianza dei quartieri e anche se il contatto con la polizia è soddisfacente, il fatto che Pietà non ha alcuna stazione di polizia, pone un problema.
- **Ta' Xbiex:** Ta' Xbiex è afflitta soprattutto da furti nei negozi e di automobili. Una particolare area (conosciuta come la zona Guzeppa Cali) è monitorata da telecamere a circuito chiuso, soprattutto per scoraggiare il vagabondaggio e la prostituzione che costituiscono un problema in questa zona. La comunicazione con la polizia è soddisfacente tuttavia, si ritiene che la presenza della polizia sia carente.

Le località di Pembroke, Sliema, St. Julian, e Swieqi sono un po' diverse. Da Ta' Xbiex si può raggiungere Sliema, dalla quale si può poi andare a St Julian e Pembroke. Tutte queste località sono raggiungibili in barca, poiché si affacciano su un ammalante e cristallino mare blu. La zona che da Swieqi arriva fino a San Giuliano e Pembroke, può essere considerata come zona residenziale e non ha accesso diretto al mare. Sliema (anche se non nella sua interezza ... in effetti, vi è una zona popolare in cui vive un ceto medio - basso e il sottoproletariato) è

percepita come popolata dall'upper- class e da un ceto benestante, in particolare da uomini d'affari di successo. Sliema è attraversata da un lungomare mozzafiato, costeggiato da file di appartamenti molto costosi con vista sul mare. Sliema è popolare tra le giovani famiglie perché offre: ampi spazi, campi da gioco, gelaterie, lidi balneari, ristoranti, alberghi, bar e wine bar ... per non parlare delle spiagge spettacolari rocciose che sono l'ideale per il nuoto. Comprensibilmente, è anche molto popolare tra i turisti. Spostandoci da Xbiex Ta ' , attraverso Sliema e oltre (sulla costa), si può alla fine raggiungere St. Julians. In passato, questa zona era un piccolo villaggio di pescatori. Al giorno d'oggi, anche se ci sono ancora delle tracce dell'antico porto quali le barche da pesca tradizionali, St. Julian è rinomata come per la sua vita notturna ... la Mecca del divertimento. Ci sono alcuni negozi, ma ci sono molto più pub, locali notturni, ristoranti e alberghi. Ci sono anche due casinò, bar per soli uomini, una sala da bowling, discoteche e un enorme cinema con sedici sale cinematografiche. St. Julians è particolarmente popolare tra gli amanti delle feste: gli adolescenti e i giovani. Soprattutto in estate, si riempie di gruppi di giovani studenti stranieri che vengono a Malta per studiare l'inglese. Sociologicamente parlando, St. Julians può essere considerato come il punto d'incontro per la maggior parte della gioventù Maltese (e Gozzitana), di ogni ceto sociale e livello d'istruzione, che affolla questa zona (soprattutto durante i fine settimana). Qui le culture s'incontrano e si scontrano.

Proseguendo la nostra passeggiata sul lungomare, si arriva a Pembroke ... appena dopo aver superato quattro grandi alberghi e l'Istituto per gli Studi Turismo (in cui i potenziali albergatori, chef e qualsiasi altro potenziale professionista nel settore del turismo segue corsi pratici e accademici). Gli Inglesi usarono Pembroke utilizzato come zona residenziale, quando Malta era ancora una colonia (1800-1964). Una volta che gli ultimi funzionari inglesi lasciarono Malta (1979), a Pembroke, si è sviluppata una vasta d'aria di edilizia popolare, i caseggiati sono stati assegnati a coloro le cui domande sono state accettate e che successivamente sono stati opportunamente selezionati. Così, anche se la maggior parte delle case (perlopiù a schiera), beneficia di vista sul mare mozzafiato, questa zona non è particolarmente abitata dai ricchi e dalle classi superiori, poiché associata alle classi inferiori.

Dopo aver camminato attraverso le case popolari di Pembroke e attraversando la strada principale, ci si trova a Swieqi. Swieqi è collegata anche a St Julian, ma da una strada secondaria. In realtà, non ha accesso diretto al mare. Swieqi è una zona residenziale. Dal momento che non ci sono zone di edilizia popolare e che si trova in una buona posizione (vicino al mare, vicino alla zona di intrattenimento e vicino ai negozi), è apprezzata dalle classi media e superiore. La maggior parte delle case è a schiera e si registrano episodi legati al consumo di sostanze stupefacenti. Non vi è alcuna vigilanza di quartiere e le uniche telecamere a circuito chiuso installate servono a monitorare un giardino pubblico. La comunicazione con la polizia è molto buona e sembra che ci sia una notevole presenza di polizia nella zona di B'Kara.

- **Sliema:** Sliema sembra aver mostrare tassi di criminalità spicciola abbastanza elevati, trattasi perlopiù di furti e borseggi, che, durante l'estate, colpiscono le aree balneari che si trasformano in veri e propri Hotspot. Per quanto riguarda le telecamere a circuito chiuso, la maggior parte dei negozi ne è dotata. Non vi è alcuna vigilanza di quartiere. La comunicazione con la polizia è buona ma Sliema ha bisogno di maggiore presenza della polizia.
- **St. Julians:** Il vandalismo è dilagante, in particolare nel centro del villaggio dove, si dice, le auto vengono prese di mira da studenti stranieri, venuti a Malta per studiare l'inglese. Il vandalismo è evidente vicino alla costa: alberi, piante e illuminazione. Questo è particolarmente palese durante l'estate. Come a Sliema i furti dalle spiagge sono abbastanza comuni. Tuttavia, il problema principale è rappresentato dal frequente verificarsi di scontri, in particolare nei bar. Non ci sono né sistemi di sorveglianza di quartiere, né telecamere a circuito chiuso. Tuttavia, la maggior parte delle case sono dotate di allarmi e di telecamere di sicurezza. Si ritiene che, soprattutto in estate, sia necessaria una maggiore sorveglianza della polizia.
- **Swieqi:** il vandalismo di Swieqi è collegato a quello di St. Julians; è un problema dilagante soprattutto in estate, quando le auto in questa zona sono prese di mira da parte degli studenti venuti a Malta per studiare l'inglese, i quali spesso sono coinvolti in atti osceni. Sembra che, soprattutto gli studenti spagnoli, abbiano preso l'abitudine di correre nudi nella notte. Pochi i fenomeni predatori. Ci sono alcuni tossicodipendenti (in particolare in un cantiere fatiscente). Non ci sono sistemi di sorveglianza di quartiere ma c'è una telecamera a circuito chiuso che regola il traffico. Non c'è una caserma di polizia e la presenza della polizia non è sufficiente poiché l'attenzione delle forze di sicurezza è rivolta alla località di Paceville). Il contatto con la polizia è positivo.
- **Pembroke:** Anche se a Pembroke la criminalità è un problema tutto l'anno, i fenomeni criminali si intensificano in estate. Il vandalismo è dilagante e i colpevoli sono perlopiù giovani. Si potrebbe quindi concludere che vi sia un basso livello di istruzione, la mancanza di supporti della polizia, così come la mancanza di disciplina. I residenti non comunicano molto tra loro e non vi è un forte senso di appartenenza alla comunità. I furti sono all'ordine del giorno, ma tendono a non essere dichiarati. Un sacco di persone (etichettate comunemente come "stranieri") visitano la zona ogni giorno, per motivi diversi (ad esempio il lavoro o per relazioni romantiche). La località è priva di un senso di territorialità e di appartenenza. E' stato scioccante apprendere che in media cinque casi di stupro sono segnalati ogni estate e ci sono altri casi di stupro che non vengono denunciati. Molti studenti stranieri che risiedono o vanno a Pembroke durante l'estate e la maggior parte degli adolescenti sembrano essere sessualmente promiscui. Non vi è alcuna vigilanza di quartiere e non ci sono telecamere a circuito chiuso. In giro vi è sono molti rifiuti, come ad esempio le bottiglie di alcool abbandonate nelle strade. Si



sostiene che la presenza della polizia non sia sufficiente, poiché le forze dell'ordine si concentrano su St. Julians. Tuttavia, la comunicazione con la polizia è soddisfacente e la squadra mobile risponde immediatamente quando viene chiamata.

### **Distretto N.2: Reati/ Problemi sociali**

Sembra che vi sia una diminuzione dei reati in generale, sebbene si registrino episodi sporadici di furti nelle case e rapine nei negozi (la maggior parte delle quali avviene quando i residenti– perlopiù anziani – assistono alla funzione religiosa delle 7.00).

- Il vandalismo costituisce un problema in tutto il distretto.
- I furti sono abbastanza comuni, anche se si registra una certa omertà
- I furti nelle case e di automobili tendono a essere correlati all'abuso di droga
- Furti nelle spiagge.
- Borseggio.
- Le rapine nei negozi sembrano essere ridotte al minimo plausibilmente poiché la maggior parte dei negozi è dotata di telecamere a circuito chiuso.
- Vi è tossicodipendenza.
- Le aree residenziali possono essere considerate come potenziali bersagli della criminalità poiché, in alcuni casi, sembrano essere diventate un terreno fertile per la delinquenza (principalmente, si sostiene, da giovani devianti) e la violenza.
- Sembra che ci sia un costante aumento di gravidanze in età adolescenziale, separazioni e abuso di droga (in particolare nei campi da gioco e bagni pubblici).
- Il livello di criminalità è aggravato dai bassi livelli d'istruzione.
- Il vandalismo è dilagante.
- Il gioco d'azzardo illegale è comune (in particolare a Hamrun, nella piazza antistante la stazione di polizia),
- Un certo numero di persone sono state fermate per guida senza patente .
- I genitori single e quelli separati sono in aumento, ciò ha determinato un abbassamento della qualità della vita e un'assenza del controllo genitoriale sui minori.
- •L'accattonaggio e la prostituzione rimangono un problema in questo distretto.
- La frequente presenza di litigi violenti, in particolare nei bar, è un problema.
- Atti osceni nelle zone abitate, in orario notturno.
- Ogni estate si registrano casi di stupro e molti non vengono denunciati.
- In giro si vede una certa sporcizia, come bottiglie di alcool vuote abbandonate nelle strade.
- Non ci sono comitati di quartiere e l'installazione di telecamere a circuito chiuso (per la sicurezza, non per il traffico) è minima.
- Nel complesso, la comunicazione con la polizia è molto buona, ma la maggior parte delle zone necessita una maggiore presenza delle forze dell'ordine.

### **The South-East District (Il Distretto del Sud-Est)**

Il distretto N.3 comprende le seguenti località:

- Birżebbuġa
- Ġhaxaq
- Gudja
- Kirkop
- Marsaxlokk
- Marsaxlokk
- Mqabba
- Qrendi
- Safi
- Żejtun
- Żurrieq

Kirkop, Mqabba, Qrendi, Safi e Żurrieq sono situate molto vicino all'aeroporto (Gudja). In realtà, una volta fuori dall'aeroporto, girando a sinistra e proseguendo per circa cinque minuti, ci si trova già nelle zone di Kirkop, Mqabba, Qrendi Safi, e Żurrieq. Questi villaggi sono praticamente uniti e sono quindi molto simili: piccoli, caratteristici (in particolare, ai margini, nei centri rurali con complessi residenziali, relativamente moderni), con aree residenziali, agricole e zone industriali (parte dell'aeroporto, fabbriche e cave).

Tuttavia, anche se il paese di Żurrieq è molto simile a Kirkop, Mqabba, Qrendi e Safi, una volta che si lascia la zona di recente costruzione e s'inizia a guidare verso il mare (questa parte dell'isola è dominata dalla scogliera di fronte alla piccola isola disabitata di Filfla), si raggiunge il piccolo villaggio di pescatori di Żurrieq ... da dove si può fare una gita in barca fino alla famosa Grotta Azzurra. Chiaramente, a differenza Kirkop, Mqabba, Qrendi e Safi, questa parte di Żurrieq è molto popolare tra i turisti. Sebbene anche a Qrendi ci sia un'attrazione turistica denominata " Il- Maqluba ". caratterizzata da un pezzo consistente di terra (che si trova vicino alla cappella del paese) che ha ceduto ed è ormai in sostanza un grosso buco, con ecosistemi verdi unici ... chiaramente questo sito non è così popolare tra i turisti come la Grotta Azzurra.

Da un punto di vista sociologico, il tasso di separazioni coniugali e dei genitori single è significativo ma paragonabile a quello nazionale. Il disagio si fa sentire in alcune zone di Kirkop, Mqabba e Qrendi, dovuto principalmente alla mancanza d'istruzione, alle separazioni coniugali e/o all'improvviso licenziamento. Sembra che ci sia una tendenza all'abbandono degli studi in età scolare, i ragazzi, piuttosto che migliorare la propria istruzione, preferiscono cercare un lavoro. Tuttavia, questo fenomeno non si riscontra a Safi e Żurrieq, dove il livello d'istruzione dei residenti sembra essere più elevato. Il piccolo villaggio di Safi può effettivamente vantare di avere sette medici e un avvocato tra i suoi abitanti ... qualcosa d'inaudito di trenta anni fa!

**Reati/ Problemi sociali:**

- **Kirkop:** Pochi delinquenti vivono a Kirkop, tuttavia si ritiene che, a causa della vicinanza del villaggio all'aeroporto, un certo numero di noti esponenti del traffico di droga della zona di Cottonera viva qui per comodità. Il reato principale è il furto nelle case, di denaro e oro e l'abuso di droghe. Anche il vandalismo era un grande problema, ma si è notevolmente ridotto grazie al regime di vigilanza di quartiere, che ora copre tutto il quartiere. Le telecamere sono state installate come risposta ai furti che colpiscono perlopiù gli anziani. Si sostiene che Kirkop abbia il più alto numero di ronde e, si ritiene, che questo abbia contribuito a ridurre ulteriormente la criminalità. Sembra che ci sia una mancanza di fiducia nelle forze dell'ordine (dovuta plausibilmente alla mancanza di interventi incisivi sul territorio) che porta ad atteggiamenti omertosi. Sembra che i residenti trovino più semplice e più naturale segnalare i reati al Comune, piuttosto che alla polizia. Il senso d'insicurezza tra i residenti è aumentato a causa della vicinanza all'aeroporto e la presenza di due fabbriche di materiale pirotecnico esplose nel passato.
- **Mqabba:** solo tre residenti stanno scontando una pena detentiva. I furti sono rari, tuttavia ci sono alcune zone in cui giovani si riuniscono, ove avviene il consumo di sostanze stupefacenti. Inoltre, è un fatto noto che i giovani minorenni/bambini guidino senza patente. Gli uffici consiliari sono ospitati nello stesso edificio che ospita la stazione di polizia. Non vi è alcun sistema di vigilanza di quartiere e non sono state installate telecamere a circuito chiuso. Si sostiene che la presenza della polizia non sia sufficiente (ronde).
- **Qrendi:** Non c'è molta criminalità a Qrendi però, a giudicare dalla quantità di siringhe che si trovano in zona, l'abuso di droga, anche se non allarmante, potrebbe costituire un problema. Non vi è alcuna vigilanza di quartiere, secondo molti l'alto livello di omertà la renderebbe inefficace. La comunicazione con la polizia è soddisfacente.
- **Safi:** Gli anziani di Safi, nel 1990, sarebbero stati più volte presi di mira e avrebbero subito episodi di furti violenti. In realtà, ci è anche stato riferito che alcune delle vittime sono state legate e picchiate dai criminali. Anche se tali eventi risalgono al 1990, vi è ancora una certa inquietudine e, almeno a livello psicologico, si considerano ancora delle vittime. Ci sono state segnalazioni di abuso di droga, effettivamente, ci sono stati casi di overdose. Non c'è molta criminalità in questa località e non vi risiedono noti criminali. Tutta Safi è coperta da vigilanza di quartiere e ci sono alcune telecamere a circuito chiuso intorno, alcune delle quali installate dai proprietari degli immobili. Anche se la stazione di polizia non è sempre aperta, la presenza della polizia è palese, come quella di pattuglie che regolarmente controllano il territorio. Tuttavia, come a Kirkop e Żurrieq, sembra che i residenti trovino più facile segnalare i reati al Consiglio locale piuttosto che alla polizia.

- **Żurrieq:** Sebbene la criminalità in questa località sia in diminuzione, la violenza domestica e l'abuso di droga sono abbastanza diffusi. Il vandalismo e i rifiuti costituiscono un problema. Altri inconvenienti sono: parcheggio illegale, velocità eccessiva e il rumore. Questi sono generalmente attribuiti ai giovani. Sono state installate delle telecamere a circuito chiuso e la presenza della polizia è soddisfacente (la stazione di polizia è sempre aperta e le pattuglie sono frequenti). Come a Kirkop, sembra che per i residenti sia più facile segnalare i reati al Consiglio comunale, piuttosto che alla polizia. Non vi è alcun sistema di vigilanza di quartiere.

Anche Birzebbugia, Ghaxaq, Gudja, Marsaskala, Marsaxlokk e Żejtun sono molto vicine all'aeroporto (Gudja). Per raggiungere queste località, una volta fuori dall'aeroporto, proseguire fino alla rotonda e girare a destra. Dopo aver guidato per circa cinque minuti, ci si trova a Gudja (l'aeroporto è situato alla periferia di Gudja). Se si gira di nuovo a destra, si finisce a Ghaxaq. Gudja e Ghaxaq sono praticamente unite.

Fisicamente, Ghaxaq e Gudja sono molto simili. Sono caratteristici, vecchi e piccoli villaggi. Nel centro del paese si trovano case antiche, nelle periferie ci sono complessi residenziali (case a schiera principalmente) e le aree di confine (soprattutto agricole) sono punteggiate da case coloniche ristrutturate. Attraversando Ghaxaq, superata la rotonda e proseguendo dritto, si raggiunge Żejtun. Żejtun è pittoresco e antico e ha residenze simili a Ghaxaq o Gudja, ma è abbastanza grande rispetto a questi due villaggi. Tornando indietro e girando a sinistra, passato un altro villaggio chiamato "Bir id - Deheb" e poi girando di nuovo a sinistra, ci si ritrova a Marsaxlokk - il villaggio di pescatori. Marsaxlokk ha il vantaggio di essere proprio sul mare ... un porto peschereccio... punteggiato dalle colorate barche tradizionali maltesi. Marsaxlokk è un piccolo e pittoresco villaggio antico ... in riva al mare, dove si può fare una passeggiata sul lungomare e incontrare i vecchi pescatori, che probabilmente riassettano le reti da pesca. Marsaxlokk ospita il famoso mercato tradizionale della Domenica (in riva al mare), che è affollato da venditori ambulanti (vendita di qualsiasi cosa, dai souvenir, vestiti, arredi morbidi, prodotti culinari maltesi e pesce fresco) e dagli acquirenti (residenti e turisti).

Da Marsaxlokk, si potrebbe continuare verso l'interno, e a destra si trova Marsascula, o girare a sinistra, attraversare Marsaxlokk e alla fine andare a Birzebbugia. Marsascula è un altro villaggio in riva al mare, popolare tra i turisti per la presenza di un lungomare panoramico, hotel, case-vacanza, pub, take-away, gelaterie, ristoranti (tra cui cinese e siciliano), bar e un campo da gioco. Ci sono edifici antichi ma, nel complesso, gli immobili sono relativamente moderni, in particolare gli appartamenti di lusso, e i modesti, ma esteticamente piacevoli, appartamenti vicino alla zona id "Taz-Zonzo". Dall'altra parte di Marsascula, si trovano principalmente case a schiera relativamente moderne, alcune ville, un hotel e case coloniche ristrutturate sul bordo mare. Marsascula ha un'area di pallanuoto

che consiste principalmente di un porticciolo per piccole imbarcazioni. Tuttavia, Marsascala tende a essere conosciuta in particolare tra la gente del posto, per il nuoto.

Se si attraversa Marsaxlokk, si finisce a Birzebbugia: un altro villaggio in riva al mare, più grande di Marsaxlokk. E' principalmente un piccolo porto per imbarcazioni, tuttavia ha anche una vasta spiaggia di sabbia, diventata più grande per effetto delle correnti marine, conseguenza della costruzione di FreePort. FreePort è un porto piuttosto grande per le navi-merci che utilizzano Malta come punto di transito per i container. Birzebbugia è molto caratteristico, in particolare nel centro, dove si trovano per lo più antiche case maltesi tradizionali. Ci sono case, appartamenti, villette, case a schiera ... in particolare nelle zone residenziali. Ci sono anche alcune ville e case coloniche ristrutturate, soprattutto nelle zone agricole. Sulla costa di Birzebbugia, si trova un monumento per commemorare la siglatura dell'accordo che pose fine alla guerra fredda. I Presidenti Gorbaciov e Bush avrebbero dovuto firmare questo documento su una nave in alto mare, ma la zona è stata colpita da una violenta tempesta e hanno chiesto rifugio a Malta. Anche Birzebbugia, si trova un lungomare panoramico e un considerevole numero di pub, una discoteca (anche), alberghi, case vacanza, pub, take-away, gelaterie, ristoranti e caffè. Proprio accanto alla spiaggia c'è un campo di gioco notevole che ospita anche aree attrezzate. Questa zona è frequentata da turisti, ma è soprattutto rinomata presso i locali.

#### **Reati/ Problemi sociali:**

- **Birzebbuġa:** Il crimine sembra avere un carattere stagionale. I furti nelle spiagge e di auto aumentano in estate. L'abuso di droga è molto diffuso e si dice che il traffico di droga continua indisturbato in luoghi disabitati. Nel parco giochi, adiacente alla scuola elementare, si trova una considerevole quantità di siringhe. Non vi è alcun sistema di vigilanza di quartiere (anche se l'amministrazione ha cercato di favorirne la creazione) e le uniche telecamere a circuito chiuso sono state installate presso la sede del Consiglio. Nel tentativo di prevenire la criminalità e gli abusi, i barbecue sono stati banditi dalle spiagge. Gli anziani tendono a essere le principali vittime della criminalità, per cui vivono in una situazione di costante allarme. Come a Safi, Kirkop, Żurrieq e Ghaxaq, sembra che i residenti di Birzebbuġa trovino più facile segnalare i reati al Consiglio, piuttosto che alla polizia, e lo fanno solo dopo una profonda riflessione e con esitazione. Si sostiene che la centrale di Dellimara e la zona industriale di Freeport costituiscano una minaccia per la tranquillità e sicurezza dei residenti. Stranamente, l'antico impianto per la distribuzione del gas non è stato menzionato. La comunicazione con la polizia è soddisfacente, ma i residenti evitano il coinvolgimento della polizia.
- **Ghaxaq:** i tassi di criminalità non sembrano particolarmente elevati, le violazioni della legge si limitano a piccole infrazioni (soprattutto eccesso di velocità sulla tangenziale

di Ghaxaq). Tuttavia, la tangibile rivalità per la festa del villaggio (ironia della sorte, tra i seguaci di Santa Maria e quelli di San Giuseppe), costituisce una minaccia per la tranquillità e la sicurezza di questo piccolo centro. Il campo di gioco sembra essere la principale area malfamata, soprattutto in estate, quando i giovani si riuniscono causando fastidio ai residenti. Vandalismo e rifiuti sono un problema, in particolare nelle aree verdi dei quartieri residenziali. Delle telecamere, infatti, sono state installate in questa zona. Non vi è alcuna vigilanza di quartiere. C'è una stazione di polizia nel cuore di Ghaxaq, ma non sempre è aperta. Le pattuglie si muovono a piedi, ma si occupano solo di contravvenzioni. Come a Safi, Kirkop e Żurrieq, sembra che i residenti Ghaxaq trovino più facile segnalare i reati al Consiglio locale, piuttosto che alla polizia.

- **Gudja:** nel complesso, si ritiene che i livelli di criminalità non siano elevati (il furto è raro e quando si verifica, è di entità modesta, probabilmente legato all'abuso di sostanze stupefacenti), tuttavia l'abuso di droga è considerato un problema, siringhe abbandonate si trovano di solito nella periferia di Gudja (il campo di calcio dove i giovani si riuniscono), si ritiene che la maggior parte dei tossicodipendenti sia non residente. Si sostiene che, giacché Gudja è una via di passaggio, gli estranei ne approfittano per abbandonare illegalmente i loro rifiuti (tra cui siringhe usate). Le vittime della criminalità a Gudja tendono a essere gli anziani, tra i quali vi è un alto grado di allarmismo, Tipici i reati correlati alle feste cittadine (chiasso, comportamenti indisciplinati o indecenti) commessi durante i periodi di festa: entrambi nel mese di ottobre (Tac - Cintura e Tar - Ruzarju). In confronto, Santa Maria (in agosto) è tranquilla. Non vi è alcun sistema di vigilanza di quartiere in funzione - non ci sono delle telecamere a circuito chiuso. La stazione di polizia Gudja non è sempre aperta, tuttavia la zona è coperta da frequenti pattuglie di volanti della polizia.
- **Marsaskala:** la criminalità sembra essere in diminuzione, anche se ci sono state segnalazioni di atti di vandalismo, furti di auto e furti sulle spiagge. Il campo di gioco vicino alla chiesa e la zona vicino a Il - Maghluq (in questa zona ci sono alcune discoteche che attirano le giovani generazioni) sono considerate come aree a rischio criminalità e fonti di fastidio. Non vi è alcun sistema di vigilanza di quartiere. Ciò è stato imputato in gran parte al debole senso di appartenenza identitario. Le uniche telecamere sono state installate dalle banche (per controllare i propri accessi). La recente costruzione di una stazione di polizia a Marsaskala è stata ben accolta dai residenti.
- **Marsaxlokk:** Anche qui non ci sono elevati livelli di criminalità, fatta eccezione per l'abuso di sostanze stupefacenti che rappresenta un grosso problema. I luoghi deputati al consumo sono spesso gli edifici vuoti. Il secondo problema è il vandalismo. Pochissimi pregiudicati vivono qui. Anche a Marsaxlokk gli anziani sono prede preferite dai criminali. Le imbarcazioni da diporto, che passano dal porto di Marsaxlokk, sono

considerate come una fonte di rumore e di conseguenza sono viste come una minaccia per la sicurezza e la tranquillità di Marsaxlokk. Non ci sono delle zone particolarmente colpite dal crimine. Non ci sono telecamere a circuito chiuso installate e non vi è alcun sistema di vigilanza di quartiere (apparentemente a causa dell'apatia dei residenti). La presenza della polizia è accettabile e ci sono pattuglie durante le serate, inviate dalla polizia di Birzebbugia.

- **Žejtun:** Nel complesso, il tasso di criminalità non è considerato elevato, ma sembra che ci sia un problema di abuso di droga, in particolare nei giardini pubblici. A Žejtun, le vittime della criminalità tendono a essere gli anziani che vivono in una condizione di costante paura. Secondo i residenti sarebbero soggetti estranei a causare dei problemi, poiché non hanno un forte senso di attaccamento alla comunità locale. Il mancato rispetto dei limiti di velocità è considerato come uno dei problemi di Žejtun, in particolare lungo le arterie stradali in periferia. Ci sono alcuni delinquenti che vivono a Žejtun (alcuni dei quali si recano regolarmente presso la locale stazione di polizia per firmare). Vi è un sistema di vigilanza di quartiere alle spalle della chiesa, pensato per gli anziani che vivono lì. Le autorità consiliari lamentano che, nonostante le numerose riunioni tenutesi, la polizia non è presente e non interagisce con la popolazione locale.

### **Distretto N. 3.: Reati/ Problemi sociali**

- I principali reati segnalati sono: furto, tossicodipendenza, violenza domestica, guida senza patente, mancato rispetto limiti di velocità e altre violazioni del codice stradale, reati legati alle feste cittadine (ubriachezza, disturbo della quiete, urinare in pubblico, comportamenti indecenti e risse), abbandono dei rifiuti, oltre che discariche abusive e atti vandalici.
- I giovani sono considerati potenziali criminali e fonte di problemi e quindi una minaccia.
- Gli anziani sono stati vittime di criminali in passato e quindi sono generalmente afflitti da una paura acuta della criminalità .
- Vi è un sistema di vigilanza di quartiere che si estende su tutto Kirkop, ma sembra un'eccezione. Gli altri paesi non hanno nulla di simile.
- Anche se poche e distanti tra loro, in questo distretto sono state installate alcune telecamere.
- Anche se, in generale, la comunicazione con la polizia è soddisfacente, sembra che ci sia una generale mancanza di fiducia nella polizia e una diffusa omertà. In realtà,
- i residenti trovano più semplice e più naturale denunciare i reati al Consiglio piuttosto che alla polizia.
- I residenti che vivono vicino all'aeroporto (questo distretto è vicina all'aeroporto), si sentono un po' a rischio proprio per la loro vicinanza all'aeroporto (questo distretto

è vicino all'aeroporto), si sentono un po' a rischio proprio per la loro vicinanza a tale struttura e alle due fabbriche di materiale pirotecnico, esplose in passato. Si sostiene che la centrale Dellimara e la zona industriale di Freeport (che si trova in questo distretto) rappresentino una minaccia per la serenità e la sicurezza dei residenti.

### **The Western District (Il Distretto del Occidente)**

Il distretto number quattro comprende le seguenti località:

- Attard
- Balzan
- Dingli
- Lija
- Iklin
- Mdina
- Mtarfa
- Siggiewi
- Żebbuġ

Attard, Lija e Balzan, sono comunemente noti come i tre villaggi. Geograficamente si trovano nella zona centrale dell'entroterra situata in un territorio famoso per i suoi agrumi. Attard, Lija e Balzan sono molto richieste per il loro patrimonio immobiliare. Sono prevalentemente residenziali, con alcuni negozi, soprattutto nei centri del villaggio. Balzan è il primo paese che s'incontra dopo Birkirkara, guidando in direzione di Dingli (via Attard). Si tratta di un caratteristico, antico e pittoresco villaggio, con strade strette, costituito principalmente da vecchie case/ville, chiese, cappelle e conventi (tra cui quella del Buon Pastore, che ospita gli immigrati irregolari, oltre ad altre persone svantaggiate/emarginati/bisognosi). Ci sono anche wine bar, caffetterie e ristoranti. Nella parte moderna di Balzan troviamo anche appartamenti e villette. Da un punto di vista sociale, i residenti Balzan appartengono alla classe medio - alta, con l'eccezione dei migranti/rifugiati (così come altri protetti di origine maltese) residenti nel convento del Buon Pastore. La disoccupazione è molto bassa e non vi è alcuna alloggio sociale a Balzan. Balzan è caratterizzata da problemi d'invecchiamento della popolazione. Gli anziani tendono a vivere da soli e quindi sono potenziali bersagli di ladri (furti in abitazioni).

Fuori Balzan, passando davanti al giardino di Sant'Antonio e al Palazzo del Presidente, oltrepassato un albergo a cinque stelle, ci si ritrova ad Attard. Con l'eccezione del nucleo antico del borgo, che, come Lija, ha strade strette e vecchie, case pittoresche e case coloniche ristrutturate, proprio accanto alla vecchia chiesa parrocchiale, le parti esterne di Attard sono relativamente nuove. Fino all'inizio degli anni Novanta, Attard era nota per le sue ville e villette a schiera, abitate dalle classi abbienti... alcune delle quali con piscine.



Al momento, la tendenza da parte dei progettisti e di demolire questi edifici familiari, sostituendoli con condomini. In effetti, da tranquillo villaggio e zona residenziale, Attard, gradualmente ma costantemente, si trasformando in zona frenetica, congestionata dal traffico (in particolare nelle ore di punta) e in cui parcheggiare è problematico. Ci sono anche due case di riposo per anziani così come alcuni negozi di caffè/bar/pizzerie. Ci possono essere problemi sociali (in particolare nella zona case popolari), ma non sono così evidenti. La maggior parte degli anziani risiede nel nucleo originario del villaggio intorno alla chiesa parrocchiale, la popolazione di Attard è caratterizzata da giovani coppie che si sono spostate ad Attard da diverse località in quanto, oltre ad essere centrale e comoda, la proprietà immobiliare è considerata di lusso. Da un punto di vista sociale, i residenti sono un mix di classe media medio/superiore e classe inferiore (soprattutto nelle zone edilizia sociale).

Subito dietro i giardini di Sant'Antonio, tra Attard e Balzan, vi è il terzo paese, chiamato Lija. Lija è una zona residenziale, tuttavia ci sono fabbriche e una piccola zona industriale nelle sue periferie. Lija è un tipico villaggio maltese che si è sviluppato a un ritmo molto veloce. Il nucleo antico del borgo è sorto intorno alla chiesa parrocchiale e le nuove costruzioni risalgono a circa venticinque anni fa. C'erano aree/campi aperti in prossimità del nucleo centrale del villaggio, tuttavia la maggior parte di queste sono state destinate alla costruzione di nuovi edifici. Un esempio è la residenza universitaria di Malta. Lija vanta ville con una storia particolare, come ad esempio Villa Francia, Villa Depiro Gourgon, Villa Preziosi (Strickland ha vissuto qui) e Villa Ganado. Così non sorprende che un numero considerevole di persone benestanti costruirono le loro ville a Lija (centro del villaggio e campagna). Tuttavia, vi è anche un complesso residenziale di tipo popolare. Secondo vecchi documenti, i giardini di Sant'Antonio erano una volta parte di Lija. Da un punto di vista sociale, a Lija vi è una mix di persone appartenenti alla classe superiore e inferiore (in particolare nell'area residenziale di tipo sociale). Si assiste a un fenomeno d'invecchiamento della popolazione. Anche se non fa parte dei tre villaggi, Iklin è molto vicino a Lia.

Oltrepassata Lija, girando a sinistra sulla strada principale e poi a destra (di fronte alla strada principale), si finisce a Iklin. Iklin è una zona residenziale, caratterizzata da case a schiera ben tenute, alcune ville, appartamenti e villette. E' considerata come una zona relativamente tranquilla, tuttavia una notevole quantità di traffico passa attraverso ogni giorno, in particolare dopo la vicina deviazione per Birkirkara. La percentuale di famiglie spezzate (persone separate) riflette il dato nazionale e i problemi sociali non sono evidenti. Come a Balzan, Attard e Lija, il livello d'istruzione sembra essere abbastanza elevato, la maggior parte dei giovani frequenta l'università e la disoccupazione è bassa.

- **Attard:** Attard è afflitto da atti di vandalismo. I suoi giardini pubblici, i servizi igienici pubblici e persino i locali consiliari sono regolarmente presi di mira dai vandali. Sono stati segnalati una serie di furti nelle case e siringhe usate si trovano spesso in giardini pubblici e nelle aree centrali (a riprova dell'uso di sostanze stupefacenti). C'era un sistema di vigilanza di quartiere, ma questo non ha funzionato e, di conseguenza, l'esperienza è stata archiviata. I giardini pubblici e le sedi consiliari sono monitorati da telecamere a circuito chiuso. Inoltre, alcune case sono dotate di telecamere e di sistemi di allarme, mentre le strade dei moderni complessi residenziali sono monitorate e rese sicure grazie alla presenza di allarmi e telecamere a circuito chiuso. Si ritiene che la presenza della polizia non sia sufficiente ad Attard e spesso, la stazione di polizia locale è chiusa. Così, i residenti sono costretti a chiamare la stazione di B'Kara, quando trovano la stazione di polizia di Attard chiusa. Tuttavia, la comunicazione tra l'Amministrazione locale e la polizia è buona.
- **Balzan:** ci sono circa tre gruppi familiari legati notoriamente al mondo della criminalità. I problemi ricorrenti sono vandalismo e droga. Gran parte dei problemi provengono da tre villaggi (Lija, Attard, Iklin) e dalla vicina B'kara. Nei casi di vandalismo commessi da giovani, il Consiglio promuove un servizio civile volontario per evitare di ricorrere all'azione giudiziaria. C'è anche una tendenza nei giovani a scorazzare con le moto, a sfidarsi e a commettere atti devianti. Un sistema di vigilanza di quartiere è stato avviato, tuttavia, sembrerebbe aver creato più problemi di quanti ne abbia risolto; quindi, questa iniziativa è stata abbandonata. Inoltre, le telecamere a circuito chiuso sono state rimosse, in quanto sono state considerate come non convenienti economicamente. Tuttavia, alcune residenze sono dotate di telecamere a circuito chiuso. Il Consiglio prevede di installare un servizio di vigilanza nel campo di gioco e presso i servizi igienici pubblici in risposta ai ricorrenti atti di vandalismo. Il Consiglio ha un buon rapporto con i villaggi vicini e con la polizia. Vengono tenute riunioni regolari con la polizia e, dal 2011 è stata aperta la stazione di polizia di Balzan con un ispettore di stanza qui (forse a causa della centralità che ha assunto Balzan).
- **Lija:** Si sostiene che non ci siano reali problemi connessi alla criminalità e, quindi, la necessità di istituire un sistema di vigilanza di quartiere non è stata mai avvertita. Tuttavia, il Consiglio di Lija è stato recentemente colpito da un furto: qualcuno ha rubato 150 € dalla sede. Gli anziani avvertono di essere potenziali obiettivi dei criminali. La loro paura è stata alimentata da episodi di furti nelle case. Non ci sono telecamere a circuito chiuso installate, ma il Consiglio locale e alcune abitazioni sono dotati di proprie telecamere. Il Consiglio detiene buoni rapporti con le autorità di sicurezza, pur non essendoci una stazione di polizia.
- **A Iklin:** l'incidenza della criminalità è considerata estremamente bassa, in effetti, sono stati segnalati solo pochi furti sporadici. Tuttavia, abbondano atti di vandalismo e

l'uso di un linguaggio volgare, in particolare nella zona del parco-giochi, soprattutto di notte. Un altro problema è rappresentato dall'abbandono illegale di bombolette spray, inalate dai giovani nel parco giochi. Le siringhe usate vengono illegalmente scaricate nelle aree circostanti la circonvallazione (situato tra Iklin e B'Kara), tuttavia questo non è un problema legato a Iklin. Non esiste un programma di sorveglianza di quartiere. L'unica telecamera a circuito chiuso, installata dal Consiglio locale, è un dispositivo di controllo del traffico. Alcuni residenti (soprattutto le ville) hanno propri sistemi di videosorveglianza. Inoltre, la zona è molto ben illuminata durante la notte. I contatti tra la polizia e il consiglio locale Iklin sono regolari. Il Consiglio, s'incontra con i rappresentanti delle diverse forze dell'ordine, come, ad esempio, con quello della squadra antidroga della polizia. Questa rete è considerata come molto utile. La squadra mobile della polizia pattuglia Iklin frequentemente e regolarmente.

Oltre Attard, salendo in direzione nord - ovest, lungo una strada principale fiancheggiata da alberi su entrambi i lati (Attard Road), in direzione di Rabat, si è davanti alla vista della caratteristica Mdina - la vecchia capitale di Malta, anche denominata "The Silent City". È stata costruita dagli arabi per salvaguardare Malta. In realtà, Mdina è una piccola città fortificata, molto antica, arroccata su bastioni, che sovrasta i campi ondulati di Rabat e Imtarfa e, una buona parte di Malta. Mdina storicamente è stata sede della vecchia aristocrazia maltese (la maggior parte dei quali risiedeva o risiede ancora qui) ed è molto ricca di cultura, tradizione e storia. Ha strade molto strette ed è ricca di magnifiche case antiche, palazzi e palazzi. A Mdina si trova la cattedrale di Malta e la residenza ufficiale dell'arcivescovo di Malta (così come l'impressionante Museo della Cattedrale). Ci sono conventi (come quello delle monache di clausura) e cappelle in tutta Mdina. A Mdina, si trovano negozi turistici, spettacoli tematici per turisti, bar, pizzerie, ristoranti esclusivi (anche un hotel a cinque stelle) ... anche un tradizionale doratore! Solo i residenti possono entrare con le auto o parcheggiare qui. Mdina è un luogo residenziale e turistico, tuttavia trattasi perlopiù di un turismo giornaliero. Mdina ha circa 300 residenti: non ci sono problemi sociali noti (né povertà, disoccupazione o migranti). È caratterizzata da processi d'invecchiamento della popolazione, poiché il giovani preferiscono andare via. Da un punto di vista sociale, sembrerebbe che Mdina sia abitata perlopiù dagli appartenenti alle classi superiori e da benestanti. Se ci sono problemi familiari, essi tendono a rimanere ben nascosti.

Fuori Mdina, dall'entrata secondaria (non la principale), oltrepassando una galleria in collina e una rotonda (vicina alla storica Villa romana - che in realtà era una cittadina romana), ci si trova a Rabat. Rabat è una mix di aree residenziali, agricole, turistiche e commerciali. È arroccata sulla stessa collina su cui si trova Mdina. In effetti, in epoca romana, Mdina e Rabat costituivano una sola città. Nel nucleo centrale di Rabat, si trovano

chiese, cappelle, l'antico casinò, l'Archivio Nazionale (una volta un ospedale chiamato "Santu spirtu"), residenze per anziani, conventi, attrazioni turistiche e musei (come il Museo Wignacourt, le Catacombe di Sant'Agata, il Museo così come le Catacombe di San Paolo e le Grotte), così come enoteche, discoteche, bar, ristoranti e negozi. La domenica, nel centro di Rabat, viene anche organizzato un mercato delle pulci. Il villaggio principale è molto caratteristico, caratterizzato da strade strette e vecchie case. Rabat condivide la ricca storia di Mdina. Durante la seconda guerra mondiale, una notevole quantità di persone provenienti dal sud di Malta ha cercato rifugio (dai bombardamenti pesanti) a Rabat, presso le famiglie locali. Rabat è anche caratterizzata da un fenomeno d'invecchiamento della popolazione (soprattutto nella zona più centrale). Da un punto di vista sociale, le classi subalterne risiedono soprattutto nei complessi residenziali di Hal Qajjet e Hal bajjada e nelle zone circostanti. Le classi medie e superiori sembrano preferire la zona di Tal - Virtù. Qui, si trovano case e ville a schiera. I problemi familiari e sociali riflettono quelle nazionali, anche se un certo numero di donne maltrattate/ vittimizzate si rivolgono regolarmente al consiglio per chiedere aiuto e gli anziani conducono spesso una vita scadente a causa delle condizioni delle case – con scale e ambienti umidi. La povertà è in aumento come attesta il gioco d'azzardo illegale. Eppure, l'abuso di droga è minimo. Il basso livello d'istruzione prevalente a Rabat può portare i suoi residenti ad avere priorità diverse. Questa potrebbe essere una diversa forma di povertà.

Fuori Mdina, dall'ingresso posteriore, non da quello principale, in direzione di Rabat, girando a destra lungo una stretta strada di campagna (alla vecchia fermata del treno), continuando dritto, attraverso la circonvallazione e un villaggio in cima alla collina ... si arriva a Imtarfa. Imtarfa è stata sede dell'esercito britannico e di un ospedale inglese (Malta era una colonia britannica 1800-1964). Il Consiglio ha promosso iniziative volte alla valorizzazione del patrimonio storico militare di Imtarfa quali, ad esempio, l'evento annuale chiamato "Military Imtarfa". Oltre ad edifici militari, Imtarfa vanta la presenza della torre dell'orologio e di un vecchio ospedale militare. Dopo la partenza degli inglesi, gran parte di Imtarfa divenne sede di famiglie che rientrano nei programmi di edilizia sociale. In realtà, Imtarfa è una zona prevalentemente residenziale grazie al numero di complessi residenziali che sono stati costruiti in questa località sin dalla fine degli anni novanta. C'è anche una residenza per anziani tuttavia, la maggior parte degli utenti proviene dai villaggi vicini. In aggiunta, ci sono due centri per persone con disabilità: il Centro di Formazione per adulti (pubblico) e il Dar il- Kaptan (di proprietà privata). Dal punto di vista sociale, la povertà è poco visibile, ma il numero delle separazioni è piuttosto elevato. Ci sono solo circa sessanta anziani residenti, su una popolazione di circa 2.500. Il livello d'istruzione e di occupazione è abbastanza soddisfacente. Solo dieci migranti sembrano vivere a Imtarfa.

Una volta fuori Imtarfa, via Rabat, in direzione nord ovest, ci si trova nel caratteristico

e pittoresco villaggio di campagna di Dingli - reso celebre per le sue scogliere. Anche se geograficamente vicino a Rabat, Dingli è piuttosto differente. Il nucleo tradizionale del villaggio (la chiesa parrocchiale, dedicata a Santa Maria, che si trova sul punto più alto

- circondata da vecchie case, che sono principalmente abitate da anziani e ove ci sono alcuni negozi) è circondato da complessi residenziali pubblici relativamente nuovi (principalmente case a schiera) che sono immersi nella campagna - con campi coltivati e incolti. A Dingli, si trovano due gruppi politici, un centro per la banda locale (usato anche come una scuola di musica per i membri della band) e una squadra di calcio (Dingli Swallows). Tra due complessi residenziali pubblici, si trova il campo da calcio e un giardino pubblico. Un altro giardino pubblico si trova vicino alle scogliere. Dingli è di per sé, una attrazione turistica, tuttavia, vanta anche la presenza di rifugi, utilizzati in tempo di guerra e del " Ghajn tal- Hasselin ", recentemente restaurato, - in cui le donne del villaggio si riunivano per lavare i vestiti. Oltre alla chiesa parrocchiale, numerose cappelle, residenze, negozi e locali; si trovano anche enoteche e ristoranti. Da un punto di vista sociale, il centro è abitato soprattutto da classi medio - basse. Anche se si ritiene che la povertà non sia particolarmente allarmante, si afferma che i livelli di istruzione siano tendenzialmente bassi; ciò è attestato dalla presenza di certi atteggiamenti e da problemi di alfabetizzazione (come è stato registrato dalle statistiche parrocchiali) .

In viaggio lungo la scogliera di Dingli, in direzione sud, si arriva a Siggiewi - un altro caratteristico villaggio di campagna, circondato da campi. Siggiewi è un mix di zone agricole e residenziali. Come altri villaggi tradizionali, al centro del nucleo del villaggio vi è la chiesa parrocchiale (dedicata a San Nicola), circondata da vecchie case. Questa zona è a sua volta circondata da complessi residenziali di tipo sociale - case prevalentemente a schiera. A loro volta, questi complessi residenziali sono circondati dal verde e da campi coltivati o altro. A Siggiewi, oltre alla chiesa parrocchiale e le residenze, si trovano numerosi negozi, bar e club, oltre a tre principali attrazioni/luoghi d'interesse turistico (" The Malta Limestone Heritage ", " The Birds of Prey Centre " e il " Tal- Girgenti "Open Cappella, dove presumibilmente, Santa Maria appariva a un'anziana donna santa). Socialmente, i residenti di Siggiewi tendono a essere prevalentemente appartenenti alla classe operaia e alla borghesia. Vi è un certo numero di genitori single. Gli abitanti dei complessi residenziali sono a rischio povertà, ma non si può affermare che la povertà sia una caratteristica specifica di questo territorio. Il livello d'istruzione e di occupazione è considerato soddisfacente.

Siggiewi e Żebbuġ sono praticamente attaccati. Attraversata Siggiewi, si arriva a Żebbuġ. Come altri villaggi tradizionali maltesi, al centro di Żebbuġ si trova la chiesa parrocchiale (dedicata a San Filippo), circondata da vecchie case tradizionali, con strade strette. Il nucleo del villaggio è abbastanza grande ed esteso. Alla periferia di Żebbuġ, si trovano gruppi di villette a schiera relativamente moderne. Żebbuġ (uno dei paesi più antichi

dell'isola) è principalmente una zona residenziale con un passato di economia rurale. Le aree di Ram e Hal Mula ospitano micro- imprese che operano su scala industriale. Żebbuġ vanta due edifici di particolare importanza storica: Dun Mikiel Scerri e Dun Karm di Preca. Altri punti di riferimento sono: la Porta di Rohan, Villa San Filep, il Palazzo Baruni Azzopardi e la Loggia di Caccia del gran maestro de Vilhena. Socialmente, i residenti Żebbuġ appartengono prevalentemente alla classe operaia e alla borghesia. In linea con il dato nazionale, le separazioni coniugali in Żebbuġ sono in aumento. Per quanto riguarda il livello d'istruzione dei residenti, a Żebbuġ, sembra ci sia un mix composto da persone con istruzione post-laurea, istruzione media e scarsa istruzione. Ci sono alcuni casi di povertà. I soggetti più anziani vivono da soli e, a Żebbuġ, si avverte il bisogno di una struttura residenziale per anziani. Si sostiene che la presenza di rifiuti abbandonati per strada sia prova dello scarso civismo dei cittadini di Żebbuġ:

- **Dingli:** Si ritiene che i livelli di criminalità siano bassi. L'uso di sostanze stupefacenti nella zona delle scogliere (non necessariamente da parte dei residenti Dingli) è un fenomeno preoccupante. In estate ci sono numerosi casi di vandalismo, particolarmente nei giardini pubblici. La velocità eccessiva, specialmente nelle strade principali, costituisce un altro problema. I giardini pubblici e le strutture consiliari sono monitorate con un sistema di telecamere a circuito chiuso, mentre le videocamere nella piazza principale, sono state rimosse. I rapporti con la polizia sono buoni, sebbene occorrerebbe una maggiore presenza sul territorio.
- **Mdina:** Sembra che la delinquenza non esista a Mdina. Ciò potrebbe essere determinato dal fatto che Mdina sia una comunità piccola e molto chiusa. Inoltre, a Mdina ci sono due aree sottoposte a sorveglianza: sono monitorate da un sistema di videosorveglianza in funzione 24 ore su 24, posto dalla polizia. Ci sono anche telecamere a circuito chiuso intorno a Mdina, conseguentemente, l'area è monitorata tutti i giorni e tutto l'anno. Inoltre – tutti i negozi hanno sistemi di allarme e/o telecamere a circuito chiuso. Per garantire ulteriormente la sicurezza vi è anche una stazione di polizia.
- **Mtarfa:** il vandalismo è evidente e allarmante a Mtarfa. Gli atti di vandalismo sono perpetrati da giovani gang, che gironzolano per le strade e creano problemi, come per esempio: distruzione di pali della luce, specchietti di autovetture, cartelloni e luci. Altri due problemi sono molto diffusi: il furto di bombole (lasciati davanti alle case, per i distributori del gas) e l'incendio dei cassonetti. Non ci sono sistemi di sorveglianza di quartiere o videocamere. Per ironia della sorte, l'assenza delle telecamere è dovuta al fatto che quelle installate in precedenza sono state rotte o rubate. La stazione di polizia di Mtarfa è spesso chiusa e per questo non vi è una grossa presenza di forze dell'ordine sul territorio. Il contatto con le forze di polizia, comunque, è ritenuto abbastanza soddisfacente.

- **Rabat:** furti di automobili, nelle case e nei campi sono rari a Rabat. Nella zona più bersagliata, il Comune è intervenuto predisponendo come misura di sicurezza un sistema intercom. Si ritiene che i criminali non provengano da Rabat, quanto da alcune aree ben note, specialmente dai sobborghi. Nel centro cittadino i livelli di criminalità sono molto bassi, plausibilmente poiché il centro è molto trafficato e dunque soggetto a un controllo (non ufficiale) da parte dei locali. Non ci sono sistemi di sorveglianza di quartiere e soltanto alcune case private sono dotate di un sistema di videosorveglianza. La presenza della polizia non è percepita come soddisfacente e da più parti è stato sottolineato che spesso non vi è una volante disponibile.
- **Siggiewi:** a Siggiewi è stato denunciato qualche furto, ma l'uso di sostanze stupefacenti e i problemi di vandalismo sono molto comuni nelle zone residenziali. Secondo i dati, gli atti vandalici sono commessi da minori. Discussioni accese sono all'ordine del giorno nel centro cittadino. Di solito gli animi si accendono per questioni legate al parcheggio. A Siggiewi ci dovrebbero essere alcuni pregiudicati. Le relazioni con la polizia sono considerate soddisfacenti, anche se spesso la locale stazione è chiusa, poiché tutto sommato trattasi di un paese tranquillo.
- **Żebbuġ:** Sono stati segnalati alcuni furti, il cui numero non è comunque allarmante ben più grave è il fenomeno dell'abbandono delle carcasse di animali morti nelle zone a valle e del conferimento abusivo dei rifiuti nelle periferie. Sono stati segnalati alcuni casi di vandalismo. Ciò accade in alcuni giorni specifici, per esempio quando l'elettricità va via per ore. Non ci sono sistemi di sorveglianza di quartiere né telecamere (valutate economicamente non convenienti). I rapporti con la polizia sono oltremodo buoni, la presenza della polizia è stata ulteriormente potenziata con l'insediamento di un nuovo ispettore.

#### **Distretto N.4: Reati /Problemi sociali**

- Furti di auto, nelle case e nelle zone agricole
- Uso di sostanze stupefacenti.
- Vandalismo.
- Deposito illegale di rifiuti – specialmente siringhe usate e bombolette spray, che sarebbero inalate dai giovani o ancora l'abbandono di carcasse di animali e di rifiuti.
- L'alta velocità costituisce un problema.
- Piccoli litigi sono abbastanza comuni nel centro del paese, in particolare nei pressi dei parcheggi.
- L'uso di un linguaggio non appropriato è molto comune.
- Molti giovani scorazzano con le biciclette, sfidandosi e compiendo atti di devianza.
- Gli anziani sono le potenziali vittime e spesso vivono in una condizione di paura.

### **The Northern District (Il Distretto del Nord)**

Il distretto cinque comprende le seguenti località:

- Gharghur
- Mellicha
- Mgarr
- Mosta
- Naxxar
- St Paul's Bay

Proseguendo dritto, dopo San Ġwann, verso nord, ci si ritrova ad una rotonda. Girando a destra per due volte, si arriva nel pittoresco, antico, tranquillo, piccolo borgo di Gharghur. Arroccato su una collina che domina una valle spettacolare che da una parte conduce verso l'interno della campagna maltese e, dall'altra, conduce alla strada costiera (o Bahar ic - Caghaq). Il centro del villaggio è composto di una chiesa, circondata da affascinanti e di antiche case tradizionali maltesi. A Gharghur, si trovano alcuni negozi, club, almeno due ristoranti e wine bar, oltre ad una scuola elementare. La maggior parte delle case, alla periferia di Gharghur, sono state demolite e sostituite da appartamenti. Ci sono anche una serie di case coloniche sparse nei campi vicini. Gharghur potrebbe essere considerato come un villaggio rurale poiché è circondato da una rigogliosa campagna. Da un punto di vista sociale, in termini di occupazione e ricchezza, la gente di Gharghur sembra benedetta. Tuttavia, casi di disgregazione familiare e separazioni, sono evidenti anche qui e, a quanto pare, la maggior parte dei residenti di Gharghur, di mezza età e anziani, non ha completato la propria istruzione formale e potrebbero essere classificati come soggetti in abbandono scolastico. Potrebbe darsi che dal momento che la maggior parte delle famiglie Gharghur possiede dei terreni agricoli, i giovani siano incoraggiati a saltare la scuola per lavorare nei campi e aiutare le loro famiglie. La cosa positiva è che anche se questa era una pratica abbastanza comune in tempi passati, oggi, solo un paio di ragazzi abbandonano la scuola per lavorare nei campi. Un numero considerevole di persone anziane vive a Gharghur e, a quanto pare, le generazioni più giovani scelgono di continuare a vivere a Gharghur anche dopo il matrimonio o dopo essersi sistemati con il proprio partner. Le persone provenienti da fuori ... gli "Stranieri", come vengono chiamati, non sono benvenute e spesso sono guardate con sospetto. La popolazione di Gharghur è aumentata notevolmente negli ultimi anni, dal momento che sembra che ci sia un afflusso di giovani coppie che si sono stabilite negli appartamenti moderni.

Una volta fuori Gharghur, tornando indietro alla rotonda, se si procede verso destra, ci si trova nel vicino villaggio di Naxxar; in altro villaggio tradizionale, simile a Gharghur, ma più grande e non così silenzioso. Nel centro paese, si trova la chiesa parrocchiale, circondata da residenze (ora soprattutto appartamenti che hanno sostituito le villette



cittadine), Palazzo Parisio (un palazzo che in parte è una residenza di una nobile famiglia maltese, in parte è aperto al pubblico come attrazione turistica/luogo d'interesse culturale) ristoranti, wine bar, club, negozi, una banca, un distributore di benzina. Naturalmente, in particolare vicino alla chiesa parrocchiale, si trovano antiche e tradizionali abitazioni cittadine maltesi e si trovano almeno tre scuole: una scuola elementare, una scuola media e una scuola post-secondaria. Così, Naxxar è frequentato da un buon numero di adolescenti e giovani adulti. Un altro punto d'interesse è, forse, il vecchio mulino a vento vicino alle scuole. Alla periferia di Naxxar (e Gharghur), si trovano imponenti ville e villette a schiera moderna. Essendo contiguo a Gharghur, Naxxar è arroccato su una collina; da un lato si affaccia su Attard e Mosta, dall'altro si affaccia su Bumarrad, sulla Baia di San Paolo e una parte della strada costiera (Bahar ic-Caghaq). Come Gharghur, ma in misura minore, è circondato da campi. Socialmente, i residenti Naxxar sembrano appartenere un livello accettabile. Non c'è né povertà, né presenza di migranti, cosa abbastanza prevedibile in quanto il costo del patrimonio immobiliare di Naxxar è alto. Si sostiene che coloro che sono disoccupati in realtà siano soggetti che "non vogliono lavorare". Relativamente alle separazioni coniugali e alla presenza di genitori single, Naxxar rispecchia la tendenza nazionale che è comunque alta. A Naxxar, vi è un numero considerevole di persone anziane. Questi anziani residenti sembrano soffrire di solitudine. Il Consiglio cerca di affrontare questo problema con la fornitura di servizi alla famiglia e centri di assistenza diurna. In aggiunta, ci sono le strutture residenziali per gli anziani, gestite dal settore privato ("Santa Casa" e "Loyal House"). I residenti bisognosi di Naxxar tendono a ricorrere più facilmente al parroco piuttosto che al Comune. Il consiglio locale di Naxxar fa la sua parte, fornendo quante più informazioni sui servizi esistenti e su come sia possibile accedervi.

Guidando intorno alla chiesa parrocchiale Naxxar, in direzione dell'ingresso principale e giù per la collina (che è fiancheggiata da alberi su entrambi i lati), ci si trova su una strada principale e si arriva a una rotonda. Girando a destra e proseguendo dritto, ci si ritrova a Mosta. Nel centro di Mosta, si trova il maestoso Duomo (o Rotonda) e la chiesa parrocchiale dedicata all'Assunzione della Madonna (Santa Maria), la chiesa è stata resa famosa una da bomba della seconda guerra mondiale, caduta sul suo soffitto (mentre altre due sono rimbalzate), finendo sull'edificio pieno di gente, che non è esplosa. Questo è stato considerato un miracolo. Vi è bel po' di traffico, soprattutto nel centro di Mosta, dove si trovano numerosi negozi, ristoranti, due banche, wine bar, club, take-away, la stazione di polizia, il centro civico e il centro sanitario regionale. Naturalmente, in particolare nel centro di Mosta, si trovano esempi di case tradizionali maltesi, tuttavia, più distanti, si trovano appartamenti e villette, quindi ai margini di Mosta (in prossimità di Naxxar), si trovano ville e villette a schiera moderne. Ci sono anche una serie di complessi residenziali (St Joseph Street, Santa Margherita, Tad - Dieb, Ta ' Mliet e le Blata Gholja abitazioni tenute). Mosta è famosa anche per la sua valle, chiamata "The Valley of Honey" (Wied

il-Ghasel) ove si trova una cappella. La leggenda narra che durante una invasione turca, una donna abbia cercato rifugio in una grotta. Quando i turchi avanzarono, bruciando i campi, la donna si nascose e pregò la Vergine Maria, chiedendole protezione. Quando i Turchi si avvicinarono all'ingresso della grotta dove si nascondeva, hanno deciso di non continuare la ricerca della grotta perché il suo ingresso era stato miracolosamente sigillato da una tela di ragno .

Al confine di Mosta, in prossimità di Naxxar e affacciandosi su Bumarrad, sulla Baia di San Paolo e su parte della strada costiera, si possono anche vedere le cave aperte sotto Mosta, parte della linea Victoria, oltre al giardino che si chiama “ Giardino del ponte di Mosta” (il- Gnien tal- Gharusa tal- Mosta), tat- Targa Batteria, le Catacombe di Ta ‘ Bistra e i Forti di Mosta. Con tutti questi punti di attrazione, oltre ad essere residenziale e commerciale, Mosta è anche una zona turistica. La maggior parte dei residenti, a quanto pare, gode di un tenore di vita soddisfacente. Un numero considerevole di giovani di Mosta frequenta l'Università. Le separazioni coniugali sembrano in aumento, ma questo fenomeno è in linea con i dati nazionali. Una volta separate, le persone sembrano spostarsi fuori, dato che gli alloggi qui sono costosi. Per questo motivo e poiché sono più convenienti i residence siti nella Baia di San Paolo, le persone separate tendono a spostarsi da Mosta alla Baia di San Paolo. Mosta è una comunità molto unita e la chiesa sembra avere una forte influenza sui residenti. In effetti, un numero considerevole di residenti svolge attività di servizi di volontariato per la chiesa. Il Consiglio locale di Mosta fa la sua parte, soprattutto quando si tratta di assistenza ai giovani. In realtà, ha impiegato un giovane per offrire servizi di consulenza e informazione ai giovani di Mosta. Il Gnien l- Gharusa (“ Mosta Bride’s Garden “) è stata identificato come sito per il potenziale sviluppo di un'area dedicata ai giovani. Il nucleo centrale del villaggio ospita molte persone anziane, che spesso vivono da sole. Ci sono quattro case di riposo per anziani a Mosta (una pubblica, Casa Arkati - privata, Central home - anch'essa di proprietà privata, e una gestita dai francescani) e il centro comunale di assistenza diurna per anziani. Il Mosta Civic Centre fornisce servizi sanitari e sociali a tutti i residenti Mosta (la nuova Clinica Regionale effettivamente fornisce servizi per tutto il distretto).

- **Għargħur:** Pochi crimini vengono segnalati a Għargħur. Tuttavia, vi è una particolare zona, denominata " Top of the World", che manca d'illuminazione e attira tossicodipendenti da altre località. Inoltre un'altra conseguenza negativa di quest'abuso è il fenomeno dell'abbandono illegale di siringhe. Questo villaggio ha una stazione di polizia con una presenza di soddisfacente di pattuglie. Non ci sono telecamere a circuito chiuso, né banche o sportelli bancomat. I locali sono preoccupati per la possibile creazione di un centro di detenzione minorile a Għargħur. Si sostiene, che ciò potrebbe rendere l'area Għargħur un luogo ad alto rischio per la criminalità.

- **Naxxar:** Il complesso residenziale di Binja Hamrija, a Naxxar è caratterizzato da atti di vandalismo e vagabondaggio di minori. Il vandalismo (anche sotto forma di incendio doloso) colpisce anche i giardini pubblici, le porte delle case e il parco giochi. Tali reati sarebbero perpetrati da bande giovanili (da 15 a 20 giovani in una banda) che sono non residenti e provengono da zone limitrofe. Questi atti di vandalismo si svolgono normalmente dopo le 19:30. Secondo i residenti, l'abuso di droga e il traffico di sostanze stupefacenti è dilagante. Non c'è una grossa presenza di polizia a Naxxar, sebbene le relazioni con le forze di sicurezza siano ritenute soddisfacenti. Incontri con le forze di polizia si tengono ogni due mesi e ogni qualvolta si presenti la necessità. Non vi è alcun sistema di vigilanza di quartiere e la sola telecamera a circuito chiuso (gestita dal Consiglio), collocata nella piazza, è stata rimossa perché, si sostiene, abbia creato più problemi di quanti ne abbia risolto. La maggior parte delle ville della zona hanno sistemi di sicurezza (allarmi e/o telecamere a circuito chiuso).
- **Mosta:** Il vandalismo è dilagante, soprattutto negli spazi aperti e in particolare durante i mesi estivi. Gli atti vandalici colpiscono la zona dietro la stazione di polizia, le aree che non sono ben illuminate e la zona pedonale. Tali fenomeni includono la rottura di specchietti e danni alla segnaletica stradale. Inoltre, i residenti del complesso residenziale si lamentano che le loro bombole vengono rubate. Incredibile ma vero, anche i cartelloni pubblicitari sono stati rubati. Non vi è alcuna vigilanza di quartiere. La maggior parte delle ville ha i propri sistemi TVCC. Il Centro Civico è monitorato da telecamere a circuito chiuso. Il contatto con la polizia è soddisfacente, ma è stato notato che non ci sono abbastanza poliziotti di quartiere, soprattutto nelle aree oggetto di vandalismo.

Una volta fuori il confine di Mosta, lungo il ponte, al di là della valle (Wied il-Ghasel), ci si trova a una rotonda. Procedendo dritto ci si ritrova a un'altra rotonda. Girando a destra e continuando a destra, s'incontra Imgarr. Questo è uno dei più piccoli villaggi dell'Isola. Al centro del villaggio, si trova una chiesa (dedicata a Santa Maria), circondata da vecchie case, club e ristoranti. Mġarr è famosa per i conigli. In realtà, molti maltesi affollano Mġarr, non solo per l'annuale fiera della fragola, ma regolarmente, per gustare il coniglio - una specialità tradizionale maltese. Mġarr è eminentemente agricolo ma ci sono anche un certo numero di residence, alcune case antiche, appartamenti/maisonette, ma anche moderne casette a schiera. Come Mosta, Mġarr è frequentata da turisti, non solo per la chiesa locale (l'edificio fu finanziato dai contadini grazie alla vendita delle uova ... da qui la particolare forma ovoidale della Chiesa) e per la vicinanza alla scenica spiaggia di Gnejna (che significa piccolo giardino), ma anche e specialmente, per i suoi ristoranti specializzati nella cucina tradizionale. Socialmente, a Imgarr non sembra ci siano persone svantaggiate. Il numero di separazioni matrimoniali appare elevato, soprattutto tra i

residenti delle case popolari. In particolare negli appartamenti popolari in affitto, sembra ci siano alcuni casi di povertà. La parrocchia gestisce la distribuzione di generi alimentari, grazie ai finanziamenti dell'Unione Europea. Nella zona residenziale, l'istituto per le case popolari ha assegnato un certo numero di lotti abitativi a persone con problemi di salute mentale, creando così un disagio ai vicini residenti. A Imgarr sono ancora presenti gruppi familiari estesi. Di conseguenza, i residenti più anziani tendono a vivere con i loro figli, ad eccezione di quelle persone i cui figli si sono stabiliti all'estero. Gli anziani che hanno bisogno di assistenza e cure vivono in case di riposo.

Da Mosta, si potrebbe decidere di scendere una ripida collina, indicata come il colle di " Dio e di sua Madre " (da- telgha ta ' Alla u Ommu). Una volta, ai piedi della collina (di fronte alle saline), se si gira a sinistra per la strada principale (l'ultima parte della Strada Costiera), attraverso Kennedy Grove (un parco per famiglie, molto frequentato dalle famiglie maltesi per pic-nic), poi a destra, si giunge a Qawra (lato mare, un villaggio relativamente moderno considerato principalmente una località/zona turistica estiva). Lungo la strada principale costiera di Qawra - che costeggia il lungomare sulla destra, con vista sul mare e la litoranea (Bahar ic- Caghaq e Maghtab) - si vedono numerosi appartamenti, monolocali, bar, un piccolo numero di negozi, ristoranti e alberghi. Qawra è una cittadina principalmente residenziale e anche se originariamente era soprattutto una località di villeggiatura estiva (in cui i maltesi che possedevano una seconda casa passavano le loro vacanze estive) e una zona turistica, adesso, a quanto pare è diventata sede di diverse famiglie maltesi. Qawra potrebbe essere considerato come il primo paese della Baia di San Paolo. Continuando a guidare e girando leggermente a sinistra, dietro la curva (zona conosciuta come Ta ' Fra Ben - oggi sede del National Aquarium), alla fine ci si ritrova nel territorio di Bugibba - un'altra parte della baia di San Paolo. Fermandosi e affacciandosi sul lungomare, si nota una piccola isola disabitata con la statua di San Paolo (e un allevamento di pesce di fronte ad essa). Si ritiene che, dopo che San Paolo sia stato arrestato dai Romani e portato a Roma (per verificare che fosse un cittadino romano), la nave sia naufragata su quell'isola. Sarebbe stato San Paolo a portare la religione cattolica romana a Malta perché, mentre era qui, avrebbe predicato e convertito i maltesi. Una delle storie più popolari relative a San Paolo (documentata, anche, dalla Sacra Bibbia) narra come, dopo essere stato salvato dall'annegamento e mentre gli isolani fornivano un livello encomiabile di ospitalità (in realtà, questa caratteristica maltese è sottolineata anche nella Santa Bibbia) ... mentre stava scaldandosi davanti al fuoco, spuntò una vipera, che gli morse la mano, lasciandolo miracolosamente illeso. In un primo momento, i maltesi si aspettavano che morisse, affermando che San Paolo doveva essere stato un uomo malvagio, dal momento che gli dei lo avevano consegnato all'annegamento e ancora inviato una vipera a ucciderlo. La predicazione di San Paolo ha lasciato un segno indelebile nella cultura maltese; non solo poiché padre, in certo senso, del cattolicesimo romano, ma anche

perché gli schemi, prevalentemente rigidi, conservatori, patriarcali della cultura maltese sono alimentati dai suoi insegnamenti. Come Qawra, fino a pochi anni fa, Bugibba era soprattutto una zona turistica con molte residenze estive. Al giorno d'oggi, le cose sono cambiate. Forse perché la proprietà qui costa un pò meno degli immobili nel centro di Malta, come Qawra, Bugibba sta rapidamente diventando la patria di molti, in particolare di famiglie svantaggiate. Lungo la costa di Qawra e Bugibba, non ci sono molte ville, questa zona è perlopiù caratterizzata dalla presenza di condomini. Chiaramente, Bugibba, come Qawra, vanta numerosi bar, ristoranti, alberghi e negozi (soprattutto al centro).

Continuando a guidare, ci si ritrova verso la fine della Baia di San Paolo ... nella zona scherzosamente chiamata “dei pigri” (Tal - Ghazzenin). Qui si trova il campo di pallanuoto, dove la squadra di pallanuoto popolare, “The Neptunes” si esercita. Questo è anche un lido, dove, in estate, le famiglie si riuniscono per uno snack e per nuotare. Oltrepassato il lido e il campo... oltre la torre (costruita dai Cavalieri) ... guardando in basso, ci si trova davanti ad una vista spettacolare, mare azzurro e rocce biancastre. Su questo lato della baia di San Paolo, si trova il club di vela – e la scuola elementare di San Paolo Bay. Questa parte della baia di San Paolo è la parte più antica. In effetti, qui vi si trova l'antica chiesa (sulla strada principale), curiosamente affiancata, su ciascun lato, dalle sedi dei due principali partiti politici a Malta (il Partito Laburista e il Partito Nazionalista). Come accade in altri borghi antichi, la chiesa parrocchiale è circondata da vecchie case. Tuttavia, anche in questa parte della baia di San Paolo, si trovano un certo numero di appartamenti, bar, ristoranti e negozi.

Lasciata questa zona e giù per una collina (chiamata tal- Vecca) si arriva alla parte finale della Baia di San Paolo: Xemxija (che significa “Sunny Area”). Qui vi è un porticciolo per imbarcazioni. Da un lato, vi è il mare aperto e l'isola di San Paolo. Dall'altro lato, la spettacolare campagna maltese - la valle di Pwales. Costeggiando la baia e su per la collina, in cima, vi è una chiesa, ultimo “baluardo” della Baia di San Paolo. Questa è stata ricostruita, perché, a causa di un problema nelle fondamenta, l'ex chiesa gradualmente è sprofondata nel terreno. Come le altre aree della baia di San Paolo, Xemxija era considerata soprattutto un'area turistica, sede di residenze estive. In questo periodo, sta rapidamente diventando punto di approdo per molte persone. A Xemxija ci sono alcune vecchie case tradizionali, ma soprattutto, appartamenti. Ci sono anche un paio di negozi, bar e ristoranti ... e almeno due alberghi di un certo livello.

Diverse problematiche sono evidenti nella Baia di San Paolo. Queste includono: problemi di salute mentale, problemi comportamentali legati alla scuola, genitori single, il rapido sviluppo della comunità multi-etnica, il lavoro nero, la disoccupazione, gli immigrati non registrati, separazioni coniugali e l'analfabetismo (in particolare a Bugibba e Qawra, dove i problemi sociali sembrano dilagare). Crisi di identità tra i figli di stranieri, mentre la povertà tende a rimanere celata. Il Consiglio di San Paolo segnala diverse

persone, che hanno bisogno di consulenza, all'Agenzija Appogg. Inoltre, il consiglio locale fornisce lavoro alla comunità di Qawra, grazie ai servizi di Agenzija Access. I residenti tendono a spostarsi da un appartamento all'altro, all'interno della stessa zona. Questa è una conseguenza del fatto che i proprietari mantengono bassi gli affitti e offrono contratti d'affitto di breve durata; conseguentemente questi appartamenti sono diventati come potenzialmente a rischio per la presenza di problemi sociali .

- **Mġarr:** I problemi di criminalità a Mġarr sono legati a forme di violenza, esibizionismo e furto. La violenza e l'esibizionismo potrebbero derivare da problemi di salute mentale e pur non avendo a che fare con fenomeni criminali, costituiscono comunque reato. Non ci sono zone a rischio criminalità, ma il parco-giochi regolarmente è preso di mira dai vandali. Pochi furti sono segnalati - sia perché ne vengono commessi pochi sia perché, si sostiene che i residenti non abbiano molta fiducia nella polizia. Eppure, Il Comunedni Mġarr ha un buon rapporto con la polizia e le relazioni sono soddisfacenti. Non vi è alcun sistema di quartiere e non vi sono sistemi TVCC installati, ad eccezione di quello presso la sede del consiglio comunale. Alcuni negozi hanno sistemi antifurto.
- **St. Paul's Bay:** A quanto pare, la criminalità è un fatto quotidiano nella Baia di San Paolo. I reati variano: atti di vandalismo, furti, rapine, risse (soprattutto dietro il Palazzo Qawra e gli alberghi Suncrest), abuso di droghe, abuso di minori, prostituzione e alcuni casi di incesto. Ci sono due stazioni di polizia nella Baia di San Paolo: una a Qawra e un'altra nella zona denominata " dei pigri " (Tal - Ghazzenin). Le relazioni con la polizia sono buone, tuttavia si ritiene che la presenza della polizia nella Baia di San Paolo sia carente. Non ci sono sistemi TVCC installati nelle strade e nessuna vigilanza di quartiere.

Lasciata St Paul Bay, procedendo più a nord, oltre le zone chiamate " Mistrà " e " Ta ' Selmun ", alla fine si arriva a un considerevole, pittoresco, antico borgo, arroccato su una collina, che domina la più grande spiaggia sabbiosa di Malta " Ghadira " (che significa " piscina "). Questo villaggio si chiama " Mellieħa " (che significa " salato"). Al centro si trova una maestosa chiesa parrocchiale, dedicata alla Madonna. Accanto ad essa, si trova il Santuario di Santa Maria e il vecchio rifugio di guerra. Scendendo sulla strada principale si giunge alla grotta di Santa Maria ... un luogo considerato sacro, dove le preghiere sarebbero ascoltate dalla Madonna, come attestano le numerose testimonianze (di miracoli ricevuti) ... foto, ritagli di giornale ... sul muro. Alle spalle della chiesa parrocchiale, si trova un piccolo cimitero. Proprio accanto a questo cimitero, c'è un piccolo campo di gioco per i bambini e un piccolo snack - bar, che gode della vista mozzafiato della spiaggia di " Ghadira ", della Torre Rossa (una fortezza costruita dai Cavalieri), dell'isola di Comino e parte dell'isola sorella, Gozo. Nel cuore di Mellieħa, si trovano tradizionali e antiche case maltesi, negozi, ristoranti, una casa per anziani, scuole e almeno due hotel. Più

lontano dal nucleo centrale, si trovano appartamenti (in particolare a “ Ghadira “) e ville (in particolare nelle aree conosciute come “Santa Maria Estate” e “ Cortin “). Il nucleo centrale di Mellieħa è sempre stato prevalentemente residenziale. Non lo stesso si può dire di Ghadira, Santa Maria Estate e Cortin.

Tuttavia, potrebbe essere che oggi, la particolare congiuntura spinga alcune famiglie ad abitare il più lontano possibile da Ghadira ... e in alcuni casi all'interno di case di fortuna (che a dire il vero sono dei garage trasformati in alloggi).

Il tessuto sociale di Mellieħa sembra essere abbastanza integro. I residenti, la maggior parte dei quali lavora a Mellieħa, appaiono laboriosi ed impegnati. In effetti, i tassi di disoccupazione a Mellieħa sono tra i più bassi sulle isole. La maggior parte delle donne di Mellieħa ha un lavoro part-time o full-time. Così, non ci sono problemi legati alla povertà. Sembra che non ci sia nessun problema legato alle sostanze stupefacenti o furti. I furti si verificano soprattutto in estate, nelle spiagge. Tuttavia, detto questo, questi furti sembrano essere in diminuzione. Le esigenze degli anziani, dei giovani e delle persone con disabilità sono soddisfatte in un unico complesso (“ Dar Madonna tal- Mellieħa “). In questo edificio, si trovano: un Centro Diurno per anziani (in cui viene insegnato come usare il computer/ cellulari e vengono offerti corsi di artigianato e dove possono usufruire dei servizi di un podologo e parrucchiere), una palestra (frequentata da istruttori regolarmente, almeno una volta alla settimana); un dormitorio notturno/struttura di riposo per otto persone e una clinica (il servizio medico è fornito gratuitamente, due volte a settimana). La maggior parte dei corsi del Centro per l'impiego e la formazione (ETC) sono gestiti all'interno di questo complesso e, quindi, i residenti non hanno bisogno di recarsi a Hal -Far (che è molto lontano - dall'altro lato dell'isola) per frequentare corsi di formazione professionale.

- **Mellieħa:** Anche se i furti nelle case, nella zona di Mellieħa, sembrano essere molto rari, i furti nelle spiagge di Mellieħa sono abbastanza comuni. Il consumo di droga appare modesto e avviene perlopiù nelle spiagge. Si ritiene che i consumatori siano perlopiù giovani, provenienti da altre zone dell'isola. Il vandalismo è dilagante nei giardini pubblici. A oggi, ci sono due sistemi di sorveglianza di quartiere funzionanti, tuttavia è in programmazione la realizzazione di altri tre. Ci sono solo un paio di telecamere a circuito chiuso installate. I contatti con la polizia sono stati descritti come 'molto buoni'. Infatti, oltre alle riunioni mensili con l'ispettore regionale, si sono una serie di incontri che si svolgono regolarmente con diversi membri della forza di polizia.

**Distretto 5:Reati/Problemi Sociali**

- Poiché le separazioni coniugali e le famiglie disgregate stanno rapidamente diventando fenomeni abbastanza diffusi sull'isola, le conseguenze negative di questo fenomeno sembrano essere in aumento. Queste conseguenze sono: violenza, risse, problemi mentali e bambini che gironzolano per le strade senza sorveglianza. La Baia di San Paolo sembra essere la più colpita, da problematiche sociali e da fenomeni criminosi (ci sono stati anche casi di incesto segnalati).
- I casi di esibizionismo segnalati (a Imgarr), la violenza e l'esibizionismo, potrebbero derivare da problemi di salute mentale e pur non avendo a che fare con fenomeni criminali, costituiscono comunque reato.
- Il vandalismo sembra essere dilagante in questo distretto.
- A quanto pare, il traffico di droga, il consumo di sostanze stupefacenti e l'abbandono illegale di siringhe usate, costituisce un grave problema nel distretto cinque.
- La pedofilia sembra essere comune.
- Anche in questo distretto sono stati segnalati casi di prostituzione.
- Sono stati anche segnalati furti e scippi.



**Distretto 1 - 5: Crimine/Problemi sociali sul isola di Malta**

- A Malta, i livelli di criminalità non sono percepiti come preoccupanti. Tuttavia, la precarietà finanziaria e la povertà sembrano regnare nelle aree popolate dalla classe operaia e dai ceti inferiori. Qui si riscontra un senso consolidato d'impotenza, la rassegnazione e l'apatia hanno preso il sopravvento e i residenti, in particolare i giovani con bassi livelli d'istruzione, sono disoccupati e tendono a ricorrere a valvole di sfogo quali l'abuso di sostanze stupefacenti.
- Appare altresì evidente che a Malta le separazioni coniugali e le rotture familiari si stanno rapidamente diffondendo, così come le conseguenze negative associate a tali fenomeni sembrano essere in aumento. Queste conseguenze sono: violenza, risse, problemi mentali e bambini lasciati in giro per le strade senza alcuna supervisione da parte degli adulti.
- Sembra che le zone residenziali possano essere considerate come potenziali zone di attrazione per la criminalità poiché, in alcuni casi, sembrano essere diventate un terreno fertile per la delinquenza (si ritiene principalmente da parte dei giovani devianti) e per la violenza.
- I principali reati sono: furto, abuso di droga, la violenza domestica (anche la pedofilia e l'incesto), contravvenzioni stradali (guida pericolosa, guida senza patente, parcheggio abusivo, mancato uso di cinture di sicurezza e l'utilizzo di telefoni cellulari durante la guida) sembrano molto frequenti, i reati associati alle feste cittadine o al carnevale (ubriachezza, disturbo della quiete, urinare in pubblico, atti osceni e zuffe), conferimento abusivo di rifiuti e atti di vandalismo.
- Il fenomeno illegale delle discariche a cielo aperto e rappresenta un problema - in particolare in relazione all'abbandono di siringhe usate e di bombolette spray (il cui contenuto viene utilizzato dai giovani per drogarsi), o ancora di carcasse di animali morti.
- Il gioco d'azzardo illegale è un problema a Malta.
- La frequente presenza di fastidi, litigi/lotte, è un problema, in particolare tra i vicini di casa e nei bar o nei luoghi di divertimento.
- Il vagabondaggio (fenomeno diffuso tra gli anziani) e la prostituzione sono ancora diffusi.
- Ci sono stati casi di atti osceni in zone residenziali, nel bel mezzo della notte.
- Sono stati segnalati certo numero di casi di stupro, in particolare durante l'estate e ci sono altri casi di stupro che non sono denunciati alle autorità.
- E' stata anche segnalata presenza di attività riconducibili a gang.
- I giovani sono considerati come potenziali criminali e portatori di problemi...e quindi una minaccia. Si ritiene che molti dei colpevoli abbiano non più di 14 anni.
- Molti sostengono che tra i giovani siano abbastanza comuni alcuni atteggiamenti,

- quali lo scorazzare con le bici, sfidarsi, commettere piccoli atti di devianza.
- Gli adolescenti, comunque, sono considerati potenziali soggetti a rischio a delinquere/ criminali (soprattutto i giovani ignoranti e poveri, che diventano presto facile preda di criminali e dipendenti da sostanze stupefacenti.)
  - Gli anziani sono percepiti come le principali (potenziali o reali) vittime di reati.
  - Gli anziani che hanno subito un crimine nel passato, ne rimangono traumatizzati e convivono con un senso di paura continuo.
  - I migranti irregolari/illegali sono visti con sospetto e risentimento. Sono stati, infatti, associati a reati quali: reati di odio razziale (su di loro da parte di Cittadini maltesi, e/o tra di loro), vagabondaggio, alcolismo e comportamenti inaccettabili nei giardini pubblici.
  - I comitati di quartiere raramente sono operativi. Sembra che ci sia la percezione generale che tale forma di sorveglianza crei più problemi di quanti ne risolve. L'installazione di telecamere a circuito chiuso (per la sicurezza, non per il controllo del traffico) è minima, nonostante il fatto che, ci sia la percezione che, l'installazione di alcune telecamere a circuito chiuso possa contribuire a ridurre la criminalità.

### **Distretto Sei – Gozo e Comino**

Gozo (o Ghawdex in maltese) è l'isola sorella di Malta. Rispetto a Malta, Gozo è considerato più rurale (meno sviluppato) ed è conosciuto per le sue numerose colline spettacolari, campi, villaggi pittoreschi e panorami mozzafiato sul mare. Si potrebbe sostenere che Gozo gode di un'allure un po' mistica e misteriosa. In realtà, la leggenda vuole, che fu sede della ninfa Calipso - la strega che avrebbe gettato un incantesimo sul letterario (o mitico) Omero - come narrato nell'Odissea. La storia narra come Omero sia stato tenuto sotto un incantesimo da Calypso ... fino a quando lei finalmente l'ha liberato in modo da poter ritornare verso casa, da sua moglie, Penelope.

Gozo è famosa per il preistorico tempio megalitico di Hagar Qim (in Xagħra) e Pinu Santuario Ta' Pinu (in Gharb) - la magnifica chiesa eretta sul luogo in cui la Madonna sarebbe apparsa più volte a un contadino chiamato Pinu. A oggi, si ritiene che la Madonna di Pinu (Ta' Pinu) interceda e conceda miracoli ai suoi devoti - come attestato dai numerosi reperti rinvenuti in un locali adiacenti - prove di grazie ricevute. Inoltre, nel centro del villaggio di Gharb, si trova la casa in cui viveva Frenk - un uomo mistico e molto religioso, conosciuto come guaritore ... secondo molti ancora in grado di curare anche dopo la sua morte. Se la religione è considerata molto importante dai maltesi, lo è ancora di più a Gozo, infatti, anche se Gozo è una piccola isola, ha quarantasei chiese, artisticamente decorate in maniera splendida.

A proposito di bellezze naturali, Gozo è un gioiello. Ad esempio, la Finestra Azzurra, che si trova a Dwejra (sotto San Lawrenz), è uno dei posti più spettacolari dell'isola di

Gozo. Si tratta di un arco naturale sul mare, formatosi milioni di anni fa, con il crollo di una grotta calcarea. Questo posto è così maestoso, che ha catturato l'attenzione di registi internazionali del cinema ed è servito come back-drop per una serie di film, come ad esempio: l'originale "Scontro tra Titani", "Odissea di Omero" e "Troy". Gozo vanta di numerose spiagge sabbiose e rocciose, come Marsalforn, la Spiaggia Rossa (Ir - Ramla l - Hamra), Qbajjar, Hondoq ir - Rummien, Imgarr ix- Xini, San Blas, Dahlet Qorrot e Dwejra .

La popolazione di Gozo è di intorno alle 22.000 persone - paragonabile alle dimensioni della popolazione, per esempio, di B'Kara (Malta). Si ritiene che, Gozo sia stata svuotata dei suoi abitanti in diverse occasioni, in particolare per opera degli invasori turchi. La relativa lontananza dell'isola di Gozo è un'arma a doppio taglio: da un lato, essa ha contribuito a preservare la bellezza naturale dell'isola, ma d'altra parte, ha derubato gli isolani della vita più confortevole di cui gode il popolo maltese. Attratti dalla prospettiva di un futuro migliore, soprattutto negli anni '60, molti abitanti di Gozo hanno deciso di tentare la fortuna all'estero ed emigrare (soprattutto negli Stati Uniti o in Australia). Alcuni di loro sono tornati dopo aver risparmiato abbastanza soldi da garantirsi un buon livello di vita a Gozo; a riprova di quanto detto, alcune case sono chiamate: "Dio benedica l'Australia" e "Dio benedica l'America".

Dal momento che le giovani generazioni di Gozo preferiscono vivere a Malta (forse perché il campus principale dell'università è a Malta e, forse, perché i giovani abitanti di Gozo sono attirati a Malta, dalle prospettive di lavoro), l'età media della popolazione di Gozo tende aumentare. A Gozo tutti si conoscono tra di loro, vige una sorta di codice di omertà, i Gozzitani tendono a farsi i fatti propri e a trattare gli estranei con sospetto. Di conseguenza, non ci si può aspettare sia semplice compiere ricerche sui problemi sociali e criminali a Gozo.

**Il ditretto N. 6 (Gozo e Comino) comprende le seguenti località:**

- Fontana
- Ghajnsielem (l'isola di Comino e amministrata da questo Comune)
- Għarb
- Għasri
- Kerċem
- Munxar
- Nadur
- Qala
- Rabat
- San Lawrenz
- Sannat
- Xagħra
- Xewkija
- Żebbuġ

Una vista superficiale alla cartina di Gozo mostra che, per procedere senza intoppi da un villaggio all'altro, sarebbe opportuno guidare attraverso il centro di Gozo - Rabat (o Victoria, come l'inglese ribattezzò). Rabat (Victoria) è il capoluogo di Gozo. Questa località ha una popolazione di circa 7500 persone. Non ci sono frazioni/comitati della comunità locale.

Rabat è essenzialmente una zona residenziale, commerciale e turistica. E' suddivisa nelle zone: Tac - Ċawla, Kappuccini/Bellija, Ta' Gedrin (in via di Ta ' Pinu), Ta' Kana e Ta ' Pompei. La manutenzione da parte dei residenti è soddisfacente e il Consiglio locale ha avviato progetti che hanno portato a un ammodernamento dell'area giochi, con l'introduzione di un tappeto erboso nella zona del campo e di marciapiedi. Non ci sono zone note per il degrado. Il complesso residenziale (Tac- Ċawla) è ben tenuto. Sono più i pregiudizi legati al luogo ad avere un impatto sui residenti.

La percezione comune è che le principali problematiche sociali si concentrino in Taç-Ċawla, dal momento che, circa 40/50 anni fa, le persone che avevano fatto domanda di alloggi sociali, sono stati collocate in quest'area. Ci sono un certo numero di famiglie disgregate, coppie sposate che si sono separate e un'alta percentuale di ragazze madri. Anche ciò è dovuto alla concentrazione in questa zona di persone con problemi sociali. Taç-Ċawla è considerata un'area 'no- limit', da quando è stata anche associata al traffico di droga. Tuttavia, con l'innalzamento dei livelli d'istruzione, il marchio sociale è stato lentamente rimosso. Tanto che, un certo numero di residenti Taç-Ċawla ha raggiunto un'istruzione universitaria e lavora nel campo del diritto. Il sindaco ritiene, effettivamente, che la subcultura di Taç-Ċawla possa essere affrontata in gran parte attraverso l'educazione.

Tuttavia, il livello generale di istruzione è ancora sotto la media nazionale. Prevedibilmente, dato che la maggior parte dei residenti Tač-Ċawla usufruisce di prestazioni sociali, la disoccupazione è alta. Per quanto riguarda l'intera località (Rabat/Victoria), vi è una percentuale molto alta di lavoratori autonomi - più ancora che a Malta. Questo potrebbe benissimo essere il risultato di fattori storici, geografici e culturali.

In generale, a Rabat, si ha l'impressione che ci sia un gran numero di famiglie i cui figli sono emigrati. Questo diventa più evidente nel periodo natalizio, quando un numero considerevole di anziani residenti partecipa alle attività di Natale (anche canti natalizi). La popolazione di Rabat è già soggetta a fenomeni di invecchiamento della popolazione, ma la percentuale di anziani sembra essere sempre più alta. Ciò può essere dovuto al fatto che i figli dei residenti possono scegliere di vivere al di fuori di Rabat o anche di lavorare e stabilirsi a Malta. Ci sono un certo numero di ONG (organizzazioni non governative) che operano in favore dei soggetti socialmente svantaggiati, come ad esempio: l'Oasi, una fondazione per la lotta e la prevenzione contro le droghe e che si occupa anche della sensibilizzazione riguardo al tema dello shopping compulsivo, gli Alcolisti Anonimi, centru Moviment Azzjoni Soċjali (MAS), Amici del Malato e degli anziani, Fondazzjoni Arka insieme alla Caritas (Gozo) e dei Cavalieri di San Giovanni, che si rivolgono ai malati. La Chiesa ha un ruolo molto importante da svolgere nel rispondere alle problematiche sociali e il centru Raghaj it- Tajjeb (Il buon pastore) sta facendo un lavoro eccellente. Il consiglio locale organizza corsi per lo sviluppo delle abilità genitoriali (indirizzandosi in particolare sull'area di Tac - Ċawla), computer, istruzione e corsi di artigianato. Gli anziani hanno attività organizzate per loro, sia in loco sia all'esterno, anche visite culturali a Malta. Il consiglio locale attenziona in particolare residenti anziani che hanno problemi di mobilità e che trascorrono molto del loro tempo a casa. Si tratta per lo più di persone che risiedono nel centro dell'abitato. Molti sono costretti a spostarsi, poiché i principali servizi si trovano a Rabat, come ad esempio: i tribunali, scuole (MCast e Sixth Form), dipartimenti governativi, così come i servizi forniti dal settore privato e la Chiesa.

### **Crimine**

Come nel resto di Gozo, sembra che la popolazione nutra sentimenti di paura legati al crimine, tale allarme sembra acuirsi soprattutto negli anziani. Questa paura della criminalità è alimentata da segnalazioni di furti nelle case degli anziani, che si sostiene siano perpetrati da persone non del luogo. Tali furti sono terminati negli ultimi due anni. La preoccupazione principale è l'abuso di droga che è praticato apertamente. Le telecamere a circuito chiuso, installate per il traffico e i maggiori controlli in Pjazza San Frangisk, sono serviti, seppur indirettamente, per eliminare (o almeno ridurre) il traffico di droga che presumibilmente si concentra in questa zona. Infatti, grazie a questi interventi, due trafficanti sono stati effettivamente arrestati.

I soggetti devianti (non appartenenti ad alcuna categoria in particolare), che vivono a Rabat, sono per lo più legati all'uso di sostanze stupefacenti; anche se uno dei criminali più noti, è stato Totò Riina (il boss della mafia siciliana, che in realtà risiedeva a Rabat, Gozo). Essi tendono a essere molto socievoli e civili, quindi non immediatamente etichettabili come delinquenti. La zona più a rischio sembra essere il parco giochi - mancante di illuminazione. Questa zona è particolarmente colpita dai vandali. L'area è stata abbellita dal Consiglio.

Taċ-Ċawla si è guadagnato la reputazione di luogo malfamato perché qui i vicini di casa litigano sempre tra loro. Nella zona pedonale di Rabat, i giovani si riuniscono la sera in due bar e arrecano fastidio nella zona. Tuttavia, con l'aiuto della polizia, questo problema è stato risolto. La presenza della polizia lascia molto a desiderare. La polizia sembra essere più occupata a pattugliare il resto di Gozo piuttosto che concentrarsi sulla località di Rabat. Ora, con i progetti stradali, sono anche coinvolti nella gestione del traffico e sono quindi abbastanza occupati. Ci sono telecamere a circuito chiuso (TVCC) in Pjazza San Gorg. Non sono previsti piani di vigilanza di quartiere. La paura della criminalità influenza in gran parte gli anziani, il cui panico aumenta anche solo per un faro stradale che non funziona e dev'essere cambiato. I residenti non amano sporgere denuncia alla polizia, nei pochi casi in cui lo fanno, preferiscono rivolgersi prima al Consiglio. I residenti sanno come proteggere se stessi e le loro proprietà, ma hanno ancora bisogno di apprendere qualcosa in più. Ad esempio, alcuni residenti di Rabat hanno ancora l'abitudine di lasciare la chiave nella porta di casa o rivelare i propri spostamenti su internet (Facebook). Dal momento che Rabat ha un certo numero di locali notturni, le attività a essi connesse, sono quelle con il maggiore impatto negativo sulla sicurezza e sulla protezione dei residenti di Rabat; ciò attualmente costituisce un problema, oltre al traffico e alla mancanza di parcheggi - cosa abbastanza prevedibile, dato che per raggiungere i villaggi senza complicazioni, si preferisce attraversare Rabat.

Munxar è una frazione di Sannat, si trova sul lato sud di Rabat ed è contigua alla vicina baia di Xlendi. Xlendi è una valle che si estende fino a una spiaggia di sabbia e al mare aperto. E' caratterizzata da una vista mozzafiato di scogliere, mare azzurro e campagna. Xlendi è nota come luogo di villeggiatura estiva, in cui praticare nuoto/immersioni/pesca. A Xlendi si trovano bar, ristoranti, alberghi e altri alloggi vacanze. La chiesa parrocchiale di Munxar è dedicata a St. Paul. Superata la chiesa parrocchiale, si può scegliere se prendere la strada per Ras il - Bajjada o per la baia di Xlendi. Munxar è conosciuta per le passeggiate rilassanti e in particolare per i suoi panorami spettacolari sul mare Mediterraneo. Munxar ha una popolazione di circa 1000 abitanti, contro quella di Xlendi di circa 200 (naturalmente, questo numero non include i turisti e i villeggianti). La popolazione Munxar è in gran parte composta da famiglie con soggetti al di sotto dei 18 anni di età. Al contrario, Xlendi, ha più anziani rispetto ai giovani. Munxar e Xlendi sono

essenzialmente zone residenziali, agricole e turistiche - soprattutto Xlendi. I residenti cercano di mantenere la loro località più pulita possibile, fatta eccezione per le poche case sfitte, a Munxar, che potrebbero avere bisogno di manutenzione e alcuni appartamenti vacanti a Xlendi.

A Munxar e Xlendi sembra che ci sia una modesta presenza di famiglie spezzate / coppie separate (3 o meno) e sono per lo più situate nella nuova zona abitativa. La disoccupazione effettiva sembra essere trascurabile. Il numero di laureati a Munxar è in costante aumento, ma i livelli di istruzione modesti di Xlendi abbassano la media. Gli anziani di Munxar non risiedono in una zona particolare, ma sono parte integrante della comunità. Essi difficilmente vivono da soli, non solo perché vi è una forte unità familiare, ma anche per le attività sociali e culturali spesso organizzate dal Comune. La chiesa di Munxar effettivamente fornisce servizi di solidarietà agli anziani in particolare, ma non solo.

### **Crimine**

Come nel resto di Gozo, sembra che ci sia una certa paura, particolarmente sentita dai residenti anziani. Quest'angoscia è esplosa dopo una serie di furti subiti dagli anziani di Munxar, nelle proprie case. Quest'ondata di crimine, che si è placata negli ultimi due anni, sarebbe riconducibile a soggetti provenienti da fuori. Per il resto si registrano piccole infrazioni - soprattutto legate al traffico.

Ci sono un paio di delinquenti che risiedono in modo permanente a Xlendi e altri che vi risiedono temporaneamente- forse per via della disponibilità di appartamenti. Trattasi di assassini e trafficanti di droga. Presumibilmente, il traffico di droga è correlato alla presenza della discoteca Grotta. Uno spacciatore è stato catturato nella piazza principale di Munxar. Spesso, sia a Munxar che a Xlendi, si trovano siringhe usate dai tossici. In effetti, le autorità hanno deciso di rastrellare la sabbia di Xlendi per evitare danni e ferite a coloro che frequentano la spiaggia.

La presenza della polizia lascia molto a desiderare. Nonostante le pattuglie della polizia di Rabat, la paura del crimine si è acuita, in gran parte a causa dell'attività della discoteca Grotta. Oltre ad essere un luogo malfamato, la discoteca arreca fastidio ai residenti a causa dei festaioli chiassosi che la frequentano e che, dopo l'orario di chiusura, scorazzano con le auto lungo le strade di Munxar e Xlendi. Tale situazione ha spinto il Comune di Munxar a scegliere di tenere aperta la stazione di polizia di Xlendi piuttosto che quella di Munxar, soprattutto in estate. Ci sono telecamere a circuito chiuso nei pressi delle isole ecologiche. Mentre questo rapporto era in fase di compilazione, il Comune di Munxar stava prendendo in considerazione l'installazione di altre telecamere a circuito chiuso (TVCC), nei propri locali, nel tentativo di controllare la piazza principale e frenare i fastidi notturni causati dai festaioli della discoteca Grotta.

Spesso questi giovani annoiati si rendono colpevoli di atti di vandalismo, arrecando danni alle proprietà. Non è mai esistito un sistema di vigilanza di quartiere (Munxar/Xlendi) perché il Consiglio ha trovato la collaborazione indispensabile dei residenti. Il campo di gioco è un luogo malfamato in cui si concentra la delinquenza, con i fastidi tipici generati dai ragazzi che frequentano la zona. I residenti sono estremamente riluttanti a denunciare il crimine alla polizia e anche al Consiglio. Per quanto riguarda le vittime, a parte gli anziani, esiste il bullismo tra gli studenti di qualsiasi età scolastica. Ci potrebbero essere anche i casi di violenza domestica ma non casi di alcolismo. C'è anche il traffico di droga che, tuttavia, non necessariamente coinvolge i residenti di Munxar. Appare chiaro che Xlendi in termini di sicurezza rappresenti una sfida maggiore rispetto a Munxar.

Vicino Xlendi e Munxar, si trova Sannat - o, più precisamente, Ta' Sannat. Questa località si trova al sud di Gozo. E' famosa per le sue caratteristiche scogliere alte e i panorami mozzafiato sul Mar Mediterraneo e sull'isola di Malta. Ci sono 4 suddivisioni: Tal-'in - Wara ' dietro la scuola (Main Street), tal- Pjazza, 'Seguna, e Ta' Ċenċ; ci sono altri punti di riferimento - l' hotel, il tempio di Imramma, i solchi creati dai carri, i Dolmen, Bidni Park e id-Dahla Taċ-Ċnus. Il nucleo abitato si distende gran parte lungo Main Street. È interessante notare che, nel 1951, la regina Elisabetta II ha visitato "The Lace House", che si trova nella piazza di Sannat denominata "Tax-Xelina".

Sannat è essenzialmente residenziale e turistica grazie all'Hotel Ta' Ċenċ, alla presenza del tempio e dei solchi. Questa località è ben tenuta e non sembrano esserci zone fatiscenti. Piccole infrazioni, come l'abbandono dei rifiuti, sono per lo più commesse da gente di passaggio che usa impropriamente le locali isole ecologiche.

Il ricercatore ha avuto l'impressione che i problemi familiari a Sannat vengano condivisi solo con il parroco di Sannat. In realtà, il Consiglio di Sannat non ha saputo fornire alcuna informazione al riguardo. Ultimamente è stato registrato un aumento della disoccupazione e il livello di istruzione rimane al di sotto della media nazionale. In effetti, l'alfabetizzazione appare bassa, di conseguenza, l'Amministrazione organizza corsi di alfabetizzazione. Il consiglio di Sannat organizza la Notte Scarlatta, dal momento che il rosso è il colore di Sannat, della sua squadra di calcio e di Santa Margherita (la santa patrona). Ogni anno c'è un tema culturale diverso per Notte Scarlatta.

Sannat ha una popolazione di circa 2.300 abitanti. Di questi, circa 800 sono persone anziane si concentrano perlopiù a Main Street. Per questo motivo, Main Street è considerata una priorità assoluta per le iniziative sociali locali. In realtà, il Consiglio ha chiesto più pattuglie di polizia, in questa zona, dove vivono gli anziani, potenziando anche l'illuminazione stradale.



## **Crimine**

Come nel resto di Gozo, la paura del crimine è particolarmente evidente negli anziani, a causa dei furti nelle case, subiti in passato. Questi crimini, che non sino verificati negli ultimi due anni, sono stati presumibilmente perpetrati da persone provenienti da fuori. Eppure, incredibilmente, i residenti continuano a lasciare le chiavi nella porta di casa e le vetture aperte, con le chiavi nel cruscotto.

A parte la presenza di rifiuti abbandonati nelle zone disabitate, sembra che sia molto diffuso l'abuso di droga e il vandalismo ai danni delle proprietà. Per esempio, la distruzione dei grandi specchi, installati per facilitare il flusso di traffico nei punti ciechi. I residenti sono estremamente riluttanti a denunciare il crimine, e quando finalmente lo fanno, evidentemente, trovano più facile chiamare il Consiglio piuttosto che la polizia.

E' abbastanza comune trovare siringhe usate (data la presenza di tossicodipendenti) nella zona conosciuta come id - Dahla Tac- Ċnus. Il campo da gioco sembra essere l'area più a rischio, in quanto i residenti si lamentano costantemente del fastidio che, si presume, sia causato da giovani. La presenza della polizia non è certamente soddisfacente. Si sostiene che la stazione di polizia Sannat diventi così fredda in inverno che gli agenti di polizia preferiscono restare nelle loro auto, piuttosto che dentro la sede.

Non sembrano esserci delinquenti abituali che vivono a Sannat. Le vittime sono: gli anziani, tossicodipendenti e giovani tra i 15 ei 18 anni, colpiti fenomeni quali la pressione tra i pari e bullismo. Non ci sono industrie o attività che influiscono negativamente sulla sicurezza e sulla protezione dei residenti di Sannat.

Fontana è un sobborgo di Rabat, che si trova sulla strada tra Rabat e Xlendi. Fontana è nota per la sua lussureggiante, verde, fertile Valle Lunzjata e il famoso getto d'acqua che sgorga da una sorgente in questa valle. La località è essenzialmente residenziale, agricola e turistica (la Loggia /le naturali sorgenti d'acqua e le produzioni artigianali, sono attrazioni turistiche). Ci sono tre aree principali: il nucleo del villaggio, Ta ' Randu e Ta' Mulejja (che comprende la casa dei gesuiti chiamata Dar Manresa). La località è ben tenuta, anche se, ci sono un numero considerevole di case sfitte, a causa di problemi di successione, che stanno cadendo in rovina e fatiscenti. Questi edifici sono per lo più concentrati intorno alla zona della chiesa.

Anche se Il Comune di Fontana è coinvolto in un sacco di progetti ecologici relativi all'EkoGħawdex, secondo l'Autorità per l'ambiente e la Pianificazione (MEPA), Fontana ha uno dei più alti tassi di inquinamento da traffico. Lo svincolo tra Triq tal- Għajn, Triq Vajring e Pjazza Santu Wistin è un nodo di traffico importante che potrebbe ulteriormente contribuire a questo inquinamento. Anche se Fontana è uno dei villaggi più piccoli e più verdi di Gozo (nella sua valle vive una specie protetta di granchi d'acqua dolce), i suoi abitanti sono ancora afflitti dal traffico intenso e dal conseguente inquinamento acustico e d'auto.

Fontana ha una popolazione di circa 850 abitanti - circa 40, sono anziani. Trenta di queste persone anziane vivono completamente da sole, per cui il Consiglio di Fontana cerca di mantenere un contatto costante con loro, anche offrendo il pasto di mezzogiorno in giorni particolari dell'anno. Non sembrano esserci più di quattro famiglie disgregate/coppie sposate separate. La disoccupazione è trascurabile e il livello di istruzione sembra conforme alla media nazionale. Ci sono stati un certo numero di professionisti che hanno lasciato Fontana per trovare lavoro altrove o si sono sposati fuori. Non ci sono molte aree libere da destinare ai residenti e così la gente di Fontana tende a migrare.

### **Crimine**

A Fontana, il tasso di criminalità sembra essere estremamente basso, legato a qualche furto occasionale; ma i residenti lasciano ancora le chiavi nella porta di casa e nelle auto. Ci sono due soggetti che sono stati condannati. I reati più comuni sono le infrazioni stradali, perlopiù eccessiva velocità. Si sostiene le autorità si rifiutino d'installare eventuali autovelox, anche se, negli ultimi 10 anni, 3 persone sono morte nella zona Triq il- Ghajn, a causa della velocità eccessiva.

Ci è stato altresì segnalato che la presenza della polizia a Fontana è quasi nulla. Evidentemente, vi è un eccessivo ricorso alla stazione di polizia di Rabat. Quando sono costretti a chiedere aiuto, i residenti di Fontana preferiscono rivolgersi alle autorità consiliari, piuttosto che alla polizia. Un sistema di videosorveglianza è installato vicino alla sorgente e non ci sono sistemi di sorveglianza di quartiere. L'inquinamento acustico causato dalla discoteca Grotta (nella zona di Xlendi/Munxar) influisce negativamente su Fontana. In realtà, il rumore può essere sentito da lontano, come da Dar Manresa che si trova dall'altra parte di Fontana. Le gare automobilistiche frequenti e i motori fuori giri, nel cuore della notte, disturbano notevolmente i residenti. La discoteca Grotta è l'attività che maggiormente incide in maniera negativa sulla sicurezza e sulla tranquillità del luogo.

A Fontana tra gli anziani c'è un forte allarme rispetto alla delinquenza. Le notizie, soprattutto quelle cattive, si spostano rapidamente, e le storie di altre persone anziane rapinate in pieno giorno, traumatizzano gli anziani di Fontana. Per quanto riguarda l'uso di sostanze stupefacenti: ci sono alcune siringhe che si trovano lungo i lati dello scorrimento veloce (Triq il- Ghajn) che potrebbero appartenere ai modaioli della discoteca Grotta o a persone di passaggio. Un altro problema che affligge Fontana sono gli enormi camion che utilizzano l'arteria stradale. Si ritiene che questi enormi camion possono anche creare danni strutturali alle case a causa delle vibrazioni causate dai veicoli. Di conseguenza, oltre a subire l'inquinamento acustico e ambientale creato da questi camion, i residenti di Fontana soffrono d'ansia per i possibili danni strutturali alle case.

Nadur è arroccato su una collina, sul lato est di Gozo. La sua posizione la rendeva un posto di vedetta ideale per i protettori dell'isola e, infatti, questo è stato il ruolo di Nadur

tradizionalmente. La località è divisa in sei aree principali: Ta ' Hida, Tal- Hali, San Blas, Ta' Kenuna, Tad - Duru e Ta ' Grinju. Sebbene la maggior parte dei residenti di Nadur viva nel nucleo centrale, ci sono residenze diffuse nella zona che dal centro s'irradia verso la campagna, Il paese si affaccia su vallate spettacolari e sulla costa, in particolare sulle baie mozzafiato di San Blas, Dahlet Qorrot e Ramla (sotto la famosa Grotta Calypso). Nadur è prevalentemente una zona residenziale e agricola. C'è una caserma delle Forze Armate di Malta (AFM) a Ta ' Sopy e una serie di cave sul lato di Qala. Nadur non presenta aree fatiscenti e vi è un alto livello di manutenzione e di pulizia da parte dei residenti. Nadur è molto conosciuto per la sua festa parrocchiale (Imnarja) del 29 giugno, la festa di San Pietro e San Paolo e per il suo famoso carnevale.

Sembra che ci sia un modesto numero di famiglie spezzate/coppie separate. A Nadur, la disoccupazione sembra essere trascurabile ma i posti di lavoro a Gozo sono pochi e continuano a diminuire, di conseguenza, i Gozzitani si devono spostare a Malta per lavorare. Il livello di istruzione qui sembra essere sopra la media nazionale. Nadur ha una popolazione di circa 4.800, di cui circa 1.920 sono anziani. Gli anziani sono concentrati nelle parti più antiche delle sei aree. Il Comunedì Nadur si occupa di queste persone, organizzando frequentemente visite culturali ed eventi sociali, in particolare con gli anziani. Nel complesso residenziale Tal- Hali vi sono una pluralità di coppie giovani, e per questo motivo, la popolazione Nadur è composta da un buon numero di bambini e giovani. Il numero di abitanti di Nadur cresce durante l'estate, quando gli emigrati tornano dall'estero per visitare le proprie famiglie. Le persone con problemi sociali tendono a cercare l'aiuto della chiesa, piuttosto che il quello del Consiglio, per questo motivo il soggetto intervistato non era molto informato circa i problemi sociali di Nadur.

### **Crimine**

L'elevata paura nei confronti della criminalità che affligge molti anziani, sembra riflettere quella del resto di Gozo. Questo timore è stato alimentato dai furti nelle case, subito dagli anziani. Anche se questo tipo di crimini, plausibilmente correlati a personaggi non residenti, non si verificano in questi ultimi due anni, gli effetti negativi sono ancora evidenti. Per il resto gli unici problemi connessi alla criminalità sembrano essere, in realtà, semplicemente infrazioni stradali. I residenti lasciano ancora le chiavi nella porta principale e/o nelle loro auto.

La presenza della polizia è considerata soddisfacente. Tuttavia, si ritiene che, anche se ci sono pattuglie regolari di polizia, queste non siano sufficienti, specialmente durante la stagione di carnevale (Nadur è famosa per le sue feste di carnevale - cui, partecipano in massa persone provenienti da tutta l'isola), quando il senso d'insicurezza dei cittadini si acuisce. Per ironia, durante le feste di carnevale, organizzate a Nadur, i residenti rimangono a casa e vivono uno stato di tensione per la paura che i propri beni possano

essere oggetto di atti vandalici. E a volte, le proprietà di Nadur vengono danneggiate/ vandalizzate dai festaioli del carnevale, soprattutto da chi si ubriaca. I residenti di Nadur, a quanto pare, sono infastiditi degli schiamazzi e della generale mancanza di rispetto delle persone che visitano Nadur per il carnevale (per lo più Maltesi). I festeggiamenti del carnevale durano cinque giorni. Soprattutto durante i giorni che precedono l'apertura dei festeggiamenti carnascialeschi di Nadur, si produce un'isteria generale. Questo panico si manifesta con una raffica di denunce e di raccomandazioni indirizzate al Consiglio di Nadur - soprattutto per adottare misure di prevenzione del crimine (per esempio, fissando lampioni rotti/ non funzionanti), e gli sforzi frenetici dei residenti per proteggere la loro proprietà. L'attività di carnevale ha il suo picchio maggiore il sabato, ma tra lunedì e martedì si placa. La località non ha mai avuto sistemi di vigilanza di quartiere e non ha telecamere a circuito chiuso (TVCC).

Il principale luogo, rinomato non tanto per i crimini quanto piuttosto perché fonte di fastidio per i residenti (chiasso) è il parco giochi di Tal - Hali, a Gnien il- Kunsill, preso di mira da giovani chiassosi che disturbano i residenti. Tuttavia, tale fenomeno si sposta altrove quando la polizia interviene. I residenti di Nadur preferiscono segnalare gli atti criminali al Consiglio, prima di mettersi in contatto con la polizia. Lo stesso non si può dire dei residenti stranieri (europei), di cui un numero crescente vive a Nadur.

A Nadur, ci sono anche delinquenti noti alle autorità. Gli anziani, essendo vengono identificati come potenziali vittime. Con l'eccezione delle attività di carnevale, a Nadur, non ci sono particolari settori o attività che influenzano la sicurezza e la sicurezza del territorio.

Ta' Kerċem, un paese con una popolazione di circa 1.905 abitanti, si trova vicino al lato sud-ovest di Rabat, tra la Valle Lunzjata (al confine con Fontana), le lussureggianti colline di Tal- Mixta, Ghal Ilma e Ta' Dbiegi, fino al Laghetto di San Rafflu e alle scogliere di Xlendi. Dei circa 1.905 abitanti, circa 500 sono sotto i 18 anni di età, circa 100 sono stranieri e altri 100 sono maltesi con carta d'identità di **Gozo** (che molto probabilmente vivono a Malta la maggior parte dell'anno). Santa Luċija è considerata una frazione di Ta ' Kerċem, con la chiesa e la sua bucolica piazza, in cui i suoi residenti (principalmente agricoltori) s'incontrano prima e dopo la messa nella cappella dedicata a Santa Luċija. Il Comuned di Ta ' Kerċem amministra anche il borgo di Santa Luċija, che è troppo piccolo per essere diviso in aree amministrative più piccole. Ta ' Kerċem e Santa Luċija sono essenzialmente aree residenziali e agricole. Come la maggior parte di Gozo, la zona è molto ben tenuta dai residenti, con pochissime case sfitte che sembrano leggermente malmesse a causa della mancanza di manutenzione. C'è un problema con i mezzi pesanti utilizzati per il trasporto di materiale di cava, che attraversano il piccolo villaggio, danneggiando le strade con il loro peso e causando l'inquinamento acustico.

A Ta' Kerċem e Santa Luċija vi è un numero ridotto di famiglie disgregate/ coppie

separate. Il livello di disoccupazione è trascurabile. Sembra che ci sia una distribuzione equilibrata tra le persone che svolgono i lavori umili e professionisti. L'agricoltura, che nel periodo del post – guerra, ha rappresentato l'economia trainante di Gozo, ora ne costituisce solo una parte. Non ci sono problemi per quanto riguarda l'immigrazione. Il livello di istruzione riflette la media nazionale. Il tessuto urbanistico è stato interessato dalla costruzione di un nuovo complesso residenziale, negli ultimi 20 anni. Questo complesso residenziale ha portato a Ta ' Kerċem nuove famiglie giovani, alterando l'equilibrio di una popolazione soggetta a invecchiamento. Gli anziani residenti non sono concentrati in una specifica zona, ma sono equamente distribuiti intorno alla località.

### **Crimine**

I livelli d'insicurezza percepiti a Ta Kerċem e a Santa Luċija non si discostano di molto da quelli degli anziani, con particolare riferimento ai soggetti in età avanzata, che hanno subito furti ad opera di soggetti stranieri, fenomeno che si è comunque arrestato negli ultimi due anni. Per il resto si registrano piccole infrazioni (perlopiù legate al traffico), piuttosto che vere e proprie fattispecie criminose. Per quanto riguarda il traffico di droga, il Consiglio è a conoscenza del fatto che qualcuno ha abbandonato delle siringhe nella piazza principale, circa otto anni fa. In generale la località viene percepita come sicura, non ci sono pregiudicati né vittime del crimine, fatta eccezione per gli anziani che si sentono vulnerabili e bersagliati. Il paese è controllato in maniera soddisfacente dalla polizia di Rabat (la stazione di polizia di Ta Kerċem è spesso chiusa). La comunità è disposta a segnalare alcuni eventi, comunque non riconducibili a fattispecie criminali, alle autorità consiliare, piuttosto che alla polizia. Non si segnalano particolari iniziative legislative, sistemi di sorveglianza di quartiere, servizi di gating o specifiche aree a rischio. Una telecamera a circuito chiuso è stata installata nella zona dell'isola ecologica.

Ghajnsielem è il primo paese che s'incontra una volta usciti dal porto di Mġarr (scalo traghetti). La località ha una popolazione di circa 3.260 abitanti, di cui circa 200 non sono maltesi stabilitisi qui. C'è stato un tempo in cui Ghajnsielem era considerato parte di Nadur. Ghajnsielem è famoso per il villaggio di Natale, organizzato quasi ogni anno da appassionati e volontari come parte delle attività del Dicembre Fest. Tale evento è indubbiamente correlato al gemellaggio tra Ghajnsielem e Betlemme (un protocollo d'intesa è stato effettivamente siglato tra le due località, sul turismo religioso). L'isola di Comino fa parte di Ghajnsielem.

Ghajnsielem è principalmente un'area residenziale, agricola (fattorie di Ta ' Kordina), commerciale e turistica (si registra la presenza del Grand Hotel, del porto di Mġarr, Chambray, la grotta di Calipso e altre evidenze archeologiche a Xatt l- Ahmar, i reperti neolitici a Borg Gharib, tal- Qieġhan e tal- Imrejżbiet, la Fougasse, la Torre di Mġarr ix -

Xini e la Cappella Babbo Ċeċilja, la più antica cappella a Gozo che fu un grande rifugio

della seconda guerra mondiale). Ghajnsielem è diviso in tre aree: Tal - Gudja, ta ' GOL - Kaxxa e Ta' Kordina.

Il livello di manutenzione del centro è più elevato degli standard locali. Tuttavia, a causa di una serie di problematiche, la Chiesa e la comunità non possono beneficiare di una sovvenzione dell'Unione europea per apportare delle migliorie alla zona antistante l'ingresso al paese, che necessita di lavori di manutenzione. Dal momento che questa è la cosa che maggiormente colpisce i visitatori, si trae l'impressione che tutto il centro di Ghajnsielem abbia un aspetto fatiscente. In aggiunta, ci sono una serie di abitazioni vuote, mancanti di manutenzione da parte dei proprietari a causa di problemi di successione. Anche questi edifici contribuiscono ad aumentare l'impressione di degrado. Geograficamente a Ghajnsielem vi sono diverse sorgenti d'acqua naturale. In effetti, in passato, un ex ministro (On. Lorry Sant) aveva pianificato di esportare acqua naturale da Ghajnsielem a Malta.

A Ghajnsielem vi è un numero esiguo di famiglie disgregate/coppie separate, e la disoccupazione è pressoché inesistente. L'età media della popolazione non è particolarmente elevata come si potrebbe supporre. La prova di ciò è il gran numero di famiglie con bambini piccoli. Gli anziani sono in gran parte concentrati nella zona centrale del villaggio. Il livello di istruzione è in aumento, anche se i professionisti spesso si stabiliscono a Malta - dove ci sono più opportunità di lavoro. La casa Dar Guzeppa Debono accoglie madri incinta, che a volte vengono da Malta per partorire a Gozo. Ghajnsielem ospita anche centro di assistenza per gli adulti e un altro per i bambini, così come il Centro diurno per anziani (che viene utilizzato per le riunioni del consiglio comunale). Ghajnsielem ospita inoltre: l'Education Ministry's Arts Centre (che si rivolge a tutti gli abitanti di Gozo), una scuola privata di lingua inglese, un ostello della gioventù per stranieri gestito dalla Chiesa presso Dar San Guzeppa. La festa di Ghajnsielem si tiene ogni anno a dicembre e il presepe vivente attira un sacco di gente da tutta l'isola maltese. Vi è una migrazione interna (maltese e stranieri), ma non c'è l'emigrazione verso l'esterno, eccezione fatta per i residenti che lavorano a Malta.

### **Crimine**

Come per il resto di Gozo, anche tra la popolazione di Ghajnsielem, in particolare tra gli anziani, c'è un certo allarme nei confronti del crimine, acuitosi dopo una serie di furti subiti dagli anziani, si sostiene, per mano di estranei, che negli ultimi due anni non si sono più verificati. Secondo un luogo comune, a Ghajnsielem vi sarebbe un forte consumo di alcolici (più delle altre località di Gozo), tale diceria risale al periodo in cui gli inglesi erano di stanza a Fort Chambray. L'area più a rischio sembra essere la piazza principale, in condizioni di fatiscenza, soprattutto per il fastidio prodotto dagli schiamazzi dei giovani che vi si riuniscono la sera. Inoltre, si sostiene che questi giovani siano, spesso, anche

autori di atti di vandalismo e causino sporcizia. Il fatto che tale fenomeno continui a manifestarsi sembra correlato al fatto che la stazione polizia rimanga chiusa la maggior parte del tempo.

L'intervistato non era a conoscenza della presenza a Ghajnsielem di eventuali trasgressori e la percezione generale è che i crimini siano rari. Vi è un certo consumo di sostanze stupefacenti, in gran parte nella zona intorno al club di calcio. Dal momento che Triq l- ImGarr, è una via di passaggio importante per tutti gli abitanti, vi è un grosso problema di traffico. Infatti, si ritiene che in quella strada, si verifichino molti incidenti. Tale fenomeno potrebbe essere attribuito al traffico legato alla presenza dei traghetti in uscita da Gozo. C'è anche un problema di rifiuti dietro il cimitero, in gran parte a causa di imprenditori edili che vi abbandonano materiale di scarico. Anche a Comino c'è un problema correlato ai rifiuti, in particolare, dopo i barbecue. A Ghajnsielem non c'è un sistema di vigilanza di quartiere a causa della scarsa partecipazione pubblica. Il bullismo è stata citato come la principale forma di vittimizzazione e l'età delle vittime varia: bambini della scuola, adolescenti, adulti e anziani. L'elemento che principalmente influenza la sicurezza e la protezione dei Ghajnsielem è rappresentato dal traffico dei traghetti di Gozo.

Se vi capita di godervi un bicchiere di vino in una delle tante enoteche della piazza antistante la chiesa di Qala, vi trovate nel villaggio più lontano da Rabat. Naturalmente, invece si potrebbe godere dei suoi panorami mozzafiato delle sue coste (in particolare della baia di Hondoq ir - Rummien) e dell'isola di Comino. Con la maggiore estensione territoriale (va dal Mgarr a Dahlet Qorrot), Qala ha una popolazione di circa 2.500 abitanti, di cui circa 500 non sono locali. Ci sono circa 250 gli stranieri e altri 150 maltesi che sono registrati all'anagrafe di Qala.

La zona è prevalentemente residenziale e agricola, presente qualche attività industriale legata ad attività estrattive. Non ci sono complessi residenziali e le persone più giovani sembrano spostarsi da Qala. Qala non è diviso in sezioni. Si sostiene che più della metà delle sue strade siano nuove e che le strade rurali (dal 1970) abbiano disperatamente bisogno di lavori di manutenzione. Qala è ben tenuto. Ci sono un sacco di edifici vuoti a causa di problemi ereditari, in particolare intorno al centro abitato. Ci sono tre grandi progetti avviati recentemente: l'istituzione di un Museo del Folklore, il restauro del Forte Sant'Anton, la creazione del percorso storico e dell'area pic-nic all'ingresso di Qala, nei pressi del campo di calcio.

Sembra che a Qala ci siano pochi casi di famiglie disgregate/coppie separate, il tasso di disoccupazione riflette la media nazionale. Il livello di istruzione della popolazione di Qala sembra essere in aumento. Circa un terzo dei residenti sono persone anziane, che vivono principalmente nel nucleo abitato. Si sostiene che chi viva da solo, abbia più paura della criminalità e della solitudine.

## **Crimine**

A Qala, il tasso di criminalità sembra essere basso, il reato predominante è l'abuso di droga tra i giovani. Occasionalmente si verificano atti di vandalismo ai danni delle case e furti. Ci sono delinquenti che vivono a Qala e alcuni di loro stanno scontando pene detentive. Non ci sono zone particolari da segnalare. Ci sono telecamere a circuito chiuso installate nel campo di gioco, nella scuola e nella zona del museo del folklore. A Qala, non ci sono sistemi di sorveglianza di quartiere. La stazione di polizia è generalmente aperta, ma sono necessari ulteriori pattuglie in piazza, per evitare il parcheggio irregolare che si verifica costantemente, forse a causa della presenza di cinque ristoranti/wine-bar nella piazza principale.

Sembrano esserci due principali categorie di vittime della criminalità: gli anziani (che temono la criminalità) e i giovani/studenti (tossicodipendenti). Ci sono anche i casi di pedofilia di cui l'Amministrazione è venuta a conoscenza, segnalandoli alla polizia. I residenti preferiscono relazionarsi con il consiglio locale piuttosto che con la polizia, perché, in questo modo, l'anonimato è garantito. L'attività principale che disturba la sicurezza e la tranquillità di Qala è il traffico di mezzi pesanti che attraversano la località, dalle cave alla periferia.

Xagħra (o, più correttamente, ix-Xagħra) è considerato come il luogo dove probabilmente vivevano i primi abitanti di Gozo. In realtà, è a Xagħra che si trovano i meglio conservati, mistici, templi preistorici di Ggantija. Tuttavia, questi templi non sono l'unica attrazione turistica di Xagħra. Nelle vicinanze, si può visitare il mulino a vento tradizionale di Ta 'Kola. Inoltre, anche a Xagħra, si può godere delle affascinanti bellezze geografiche e sotterranee della Grotta di Xerri e della cava di Ninu. Xagħra è anche sede di uno degli hotel più popolari di Gozo. Eppure Xagħra ha mantenuto le pittoresche caratteristiche del villaggio. Ha una popolazione di circa 5.000 abitanti, dei quali, circa 800 sono registrati come residenti (maltesi con la carte d'identità di Gozo), ma che vivono chiaramente altrove, probabilmente a Malta.

Xagħra è principalmente una zona residenziale, turistica e commerciale (ci sono una serie di negozi, pub e ristoranti) oltre che agricola. La località è ben tenuta e pulita. Ci sono cinque aree: Pjazza, Sant'Anton, Tan- Nazzarenu, Tac - Ċimiterju (compresi Triq tas-Srug e Triq tal- Kortoll) e Bullara (zona hotel). Tan- Nazzarenu è una sorta di villaggio separato. Si crede che abbia ospitato uno degli insediamenti più antichi di Xagħra e ancora, le persone della zona Pjazza sembrano sentirsi superiori rispetto a quelli di Tan-Nazzarenu; atteggiamento spiegabile plausibilmente per il fatto che Xagħra ha una parrocchia più grande e maggiori fondi rispetto alla chiesa Tan-Nazzarenu.

L'intervistato è convinto del fatto che il consumo di sostanze stupefacenti sia tale, che se un forte vento dovesse soffiare, le persone cadrebbero tutte sotto effetto delle cocaina. Questo fenomeno influenza la stabilità sociale di Xagħra in quanto, purtroppo, la



tossicodipendenza non sembra aver risparmiato giovani coppie e famiglie, portando con sé un livello di povertà latente. Con l'eccezione di queste giovani coppie/famiglie, Xaghra sembra avere una popolazione sempre più anziana a causa dal costante esodo di giovani che sono costretti a lasciare Xaghra e Gozo per andare a Malta, per motivi di studio o lavoro. L'intervistato ha affermato che a Xaghra, si smette di essere genitori quando i bambini raggiungono i 16 anni di età, ossia quando la maggior parte dei ragazzi lascia le case d'origine e i genitori restano soli. I residenti anziani sono in gran parte concentrati nelle zona di San Anton e di Tan-Nazzarenu.

### **Crimine**

Come per il resto di Gozo, la gente di Xaghra, i particolare gli anziani, hanno sviluppato un certo senso d'insicurezza, a causa di furti nelle case, si dice per mano di estranei, arrestatisi circa due anni fa. Da quando il consumo di stupefacenti si è largamente diffuso a Xaghra e le droghe sono diventate più care, la paura e l'insicurezza si sono acuite. C'è un numero di pregiudicati che vive a Xaghra, ma la loro presenza non sembra incidere sui livelli di criminalità– piuttosto sono spesso fonte di piccoli disturbi.

Non ci sono particolari zone a rischio e non sono stati attivati sistemi di sorveglianza di quartiere.

Il soggetto intervistato sostiene che la presenza della polizia sia minima e ciò consente agli spacciatori, appostati nella via principale, di agire tranquillamente alla luce del giorno. Ci sono delle telecamere a circuito chiuso nei pressi delle isole ecologiche e nei campi da gioco. Gli anziani sono considerati come potenziali vittime, in ragione anche della loro paura di subire reati. Un'altra categoria di vittime è quella dei tossici, in particolare nel caso di minori. Nonostante tutto, le persone lasciano le chiavi appese alla porta e nelle macchine. L'intervistato sostiene che dietro tali atteggiamenti ci sia la convinzione 'se qualcuno rubasse una vettura, dove dovrebbe andare?'. Il che implica che la modesta estensione territoriale di Gozo offra un falso senso di sicurezza. Non si segnala la presenza di particolari attività che influiscano negativamente sui livelli di sicurezza.

**Għarb** è un antico e tradizionale villaggio che inizialmente era solo una frazione. Si trova nella parte occidentale di Gozo. Għarb è molto rinomato per il suo interessante museo del folklore e per il villaggio dell'artigianato di Ta 'Dbiegi, tuttavia sono più le sue caratteristiche mistiche che probabilmente attirano di più i turisti locali e stranieri. Karmni Grima e Frenc Tal - Għarb sono i due più famosi residenti di Għarb. Si ritiene che la Beata Vergine Maria si sia manifestata a Karmni Grima - e questo ha portato alla costruzione della maestosa Basilica di Ta 'Pinu. Frenc Tal - Għarb è conosciuto come un santo, uomo umile e guaritore – si dice, ancora capace di fare miracoli anche dopo la morte. Għarb ha una popolazione di circa 1.300 abitanti, di cui 120 sono bambini che frequentano la scuola

primaria. La popolazione quasi raddoppia nei mesi estivi, soprattutto luglio e agosto, a causa del turismo.

Gharb è principalmente un paese residenziale, con economia agricola e turistica. Si compone di quattro aree: Tat - Trux, Birbuba, Santu Pietru e la parte nuova/Il- Parti l- Ġdida. Lo stato degli edifici di Gharb può essere descritto come eccellente; i residenti tendono a mantenere pulite le loro proprietà e la località. Quest'attenzione per il territorio diminuisce costantemente nell'area compresa tra Gharb e San Lawrenz, nota come tal- Wileġ. Ci sono pochissimi problemi sociali (non più di due coppie separate); la disoccupazione è trascurabile; nessuna evidenza di povertà e il livello di istruzione è superiore alla media nazionale. Vi è un afflusso di immigrati che partecipano a un progetto agricolo finanziato dall'ETC relativo alla raccolta di pomodori. Oltre a ciò, non vi è alcuna migrazione interna. La popolazione è in costante invecchiamento. I residenti anziani sono concentrati in gran parte intorno alle zone di San Pietru e Birbuba.

### **Crimine**

Come nel resto di Gozo, la gente di Gharb, in particolare gli anziani, hanno sviluppato un sentimento di paura nei confronti del crimine, dopo una serie di furti, perpetrati nelle residenze private, ai danni degli anziani, presumibilmente per mano di estranei, ma che comunque negli ultimi due anni non si sono più verificati. Gli anziani sono stati colpiti da un'ondata di furti negli anni '70 e '80, poi placatasi. Durante quel periodo, si diffuse un forte allarmismo. Paradossalmente, l'abitudine di lasciare la chiave nella porta di casa è sopravvissuta nei secoli. A Gharb non ci sono sistemi di sorveglianza di quartiere, né telecamere a circuito chiuso o particolari direttive volte alla prevenzione della criminalità. Anche se la sera ci sono delle volanti, la presenza della polizia a Gharb tende a essere sporadica. L'intervistato ha affermato che ci potrebbe essere dei furti che non vengono segnalati. Non sembrano esserci problemi di abuso di droga e le principali violazioni sembrano essere correlate a piccoli fastidi. Qualche pregiudicato vive qui. Per quanto riguarda le vittime di reati, sembra non esserci un profilo specifico della vittima. In realtà, l'intervistato ha affermato che soggetti con diverse caratteristiche demografiche sono vittime di crimini come il furto. L'attività che ha un impatto sulla sicurezza e sulla tranquillità della località è legata al villaggio dell'artigianato locale di Ta ' Dbiegi.

Xewkija - considerato il più antico villaggio di Gozo - si trova tra il villaggio di Ghajnsielem e Rabat. Entrando a Xewkija dalla strada principale, si possono osservare i resti di un mulino che è stato costruito nell'epoca de Gran Maestro Ramon Perellos. Questo mulino è considerato una peculiarità, dal momento che le sue estremità indicano le otto principali direzioni del vento. Xewkija è rinomata per la sua chiesa parrocchiale: La Rotonda, dedicata a San Giovanni Battista, dove i Cavalieri di San Giovanni erano soliti riunirsi a Gozo. E' anche famosa per quello che viene definito come la lastra di marmo

di Majmuna: su questa lastra è scolpita una scritta in arabo per commemorare la morte di una ragazza araba chiamata Sarah. A Xewkija oggi, si trovano: le sezioni distaccate dell'Università di Malta, gli uffici dell'istituto per l'occupazione e la formazione; lo stadio di Gozo, l'ente governativo per l'agricoltura; il cimitero di St. Mary'; il cimitero di Xewkija e una zona industriale. Xewkija ha una popolazione di circa 3.000 abitanti. E' considerato come il quarto più grande villaggio di Gozo. In realtà, l'aumento della popolazione ha portato allo sviluppo di complessi residenziali a Tal- Barmil, Ta ' Gokk e nella zona di Tal-Hamrija ... e il complesso residenziale di Tal- Barmil è considerato una frazione.

Xewkija è principalmente un'area residenziale e agricola tuttavia, vi è una zona industriale consistente all'interno dei suoi confini. Quasi tutta Xewkija è una zona urbana di particolare interesse soggetta a vincoli ambientali, ad eccezione di Tal- Barmil e della zona industriale. Xewkija è suddiviso rispettivamente: nella frazione di Tal – Barmil, Tal – Hniena e (vicino alla Cappella con lo stesso nome), il- Parti l- Qadima (che circonda la chiesa principale), una zona a sud conosciuta come Ta ' Hanzira al confine con Munxar, il complesso residenziale noto come tal- Hamrija (nei pressi della zona industriale), Ta Xhajma sulla strada per Xaghra (area agricola in cui sorge l'ippodromo) e Ta ' ta Gokk zona, che si trova tra la parte più antica e Ta ' Hanzira .

A Xewkija sembra ci siano solo un paio di famiglie spezzate/coppie separate e la disoccupazione è pressoché nulla. La presenza del MCAST a Xewkija risponde alle esigenze educative dei locali, ma ancora molti giovani sono costretti a recarsi a Malta per frequentare l'università e per lavoro. L'inquinamento della zona industriale ha effetti sui bambini della zona, che soffrono di asma. Ci sono circa 800 anziani residenti, sparsi su tutto il territorio. La chiesa parrocchiale ha una forte influenza sulla struttura sociale della comunità e fornisce servizi per soggetti con problemi sociali.

## **Crimine**

Come per il resto di Gozo anche tra la popolazione di Xewkija, in particolare tra gli anziani, si è sviluppata una certa paura del crimine. Ciò è avvenuto dopo una serie di furti perpetrati a danno degli anziani, si sostiene per mano di estranei; fenomeno che non si è più verificato negli ultimi due anni.

Non ci sono delinquenti che vivono a Xewkija e la presenza della polizia è soddisfacente, grazie alla stazione di polizia, recentemente ristrutturata, aperta la maggior parte del tempo e alle pattuglie della polizia che coprono le strade durante le serate. La zona più a rischio è quella di Triq il- Horob, nei pressi del campo di gioco del MCAST, dove abbondano piccoli reati (soprattutto vandalismo). Non ci sono sistemi di Vigilanza di Quartiere e le telecamere a circuito chiuso sono state installate nella sede dei locali comunali, al MCAST e presso le scuole locali. Potenziali vittime privilegiate sono gli anziani. Secondo l'intervistato, la comunità avrebbe bisogno di una maggiore sensibilizzazione in materia di

prevenzione della criminalità. L'attività principale, che al momento influenza sicurezza e la tranquillità del territorio, è l'ampio progetto di costruzione della strada.

Ghasri si trova nella parte occidentale di Gozo. Anche se copre una vasta area, Gharb vanta la minore popolazione di residenti a Gozo: 521 abitanti - di cui, la metà sono anziani. Questi sono concentrati nella zona residenziale. Questa situazione è ulteriormente esacerbata dalla fuga dei locali che hanno scelto di vivere stabilirsi fuori. Gharb si sviluppa tra Żebbuġ e Ghammar. Gharb è noto per il faro di tal- Gurdan, che si affaccia su campi rigogliosi e sul profondo blu e Mar Mediterraneo. Gharb è anche famosa per il pittoresco Wied il - Ghasri - la valle che attraversa campi e scende fino al mare. Gharb è prevalentemente residenziale e agricolo. Ci sono quattro aree: Ta ' Ghammar, tal-Fanal, ic- centru, e Wied Sara. La località è molto curata sia dal consiglio locale che dai residenti .

Secondo la percezione comune, i problemi sociali sarebbero pochi. Si sostiene che solo chi non vuole lavorare, non trova lavoro. Ci sono tre livelli di istruzione: specialistica (terziaria), media (scuola normale) e l'analfabetismo (comune tra chi lavora nei campi). Non ci sono immigrati, anche se vi è la presenza turisti locali e stranieri che abitano nelle case coloniche e negli appartamenti.

### **Crimine**

Come il resto di Gozo, la gente di Gharb, in particolare gli anziani, ha sviluppato una forte paura nei confronti del crimine, a causa di una serie di furti nelle case ai danni degli anziani che si recavano in chiesa; si sostiene che tali fenomeni, che comunque non si sono più verificati negli ultimi due anni, siano correlati a soggetti non locali. Il consumo di sostanze stupefacenti, così come altri reati connessi, potrebbero essere presenti nella periferia, che non risulta abbastanza tutelata come zona.

La presenza della polizia potrebbe essere rafforzata. Non sono previsti sistemi di vigilanza di quartiere, né telecamere a circuito chiuso o particolari direttive in merito alla prevenzione della criminalità. L'unico zona "calda" è il punto di raccolta rifiuti, ma, anche questa zona diventa un problema solo in estate, quando i turisti (che soggiornano in alloggi in affitto) non rispettano le regole. Questa è la forma più comune di disturbo, a parte il rumore che si diffonde dai casali in affitto, come il Ta ' Frenc Complex. Le persone anziane sono considerate come potenziali o reali vittime di reati.

Il pittoresco villaggio tradizionale di San Lawrenz si trova su un altipiano circondato da tre colline: Ghammar, Gelmus e Ta ' Dbiegi. Anche se il villaggio in sé è pittoresco, San Lawrenz è famosa nel mondo per la baia di Dwejra. Lungo la strada tortuosa, con un panorama di scogliere, mare blu profondo e luccicante, campi e valli, si possono ammirare tre speciali attrazioni naturali: la Finestra Azzurra e il Fungus Rock su una lato e l'Inland Sea dall'altro. Sebbene descritto come un arco naturale, la Finestra Azzurra sembra più un'alta roccia piatta- un dolmen - piuttosto che un arco.

La finestra Azzurra ... o blu ... è uno spettacolo, sia quando il mare è calmo, sia quando il mare è agitato con la formazione di schiuma bianca. Naturalmente, questa macchia di bellezza naturale marina (in particolare quello che viene definito come il Blue Hole) è conosciuta dai subacquei. Come accennato in precedenza, questa zona è anche molto nota ai registi cinematografici. In realtà, è stata teatro di film come: “ Scontro tra Titani “, “Il conte di Montecristo” e “ L’Odissea “. Fungus Rock si presenta come un enorme pilastro di roccia. Questa mastodontica roccia calcarea emerge dal profondo della laguna di Dwejra – sulla sinistra della strada per Dwejra. Dal parcheggio della Finestra azzurra, si può scendere, a destra, verso il mare – e parcheggiare in un’area acciottolata, vicino alle case galleggianti. Una volta fuori dalla macchina, si può raggiungere a piedi il piccolo molo che si affaccia su una laguna verde, piccola e poco profonda, che viene alimentata dal mare aperto, attraverso una fenditura della parete rocciosa che risale verso l’alto, davanti a questa piccola baia di ciottoli - creando così un mare interno ... o una grande piscina. Da qui i turisti fanno in gite in barca, spostandosi dal mare interno verso il mare aperto (attraverso le fenditura nella roccia), da dove si possono ammirare le scogliere mozzafiato, le grotte marine sotto le scogliere ... il corallo ... e la Finestra Azzurra.

San Lawrenz ha una popolazione di circa 550 abitanti - e, a quanto pare, un numero crescente di persone con carta d’identità di Gozo, iscritte a quest’anagrafe, che in realtà vivono ancora a Malta. San Lawrenz - il cui nucleo comprende praticamente tutto il villaggio - è troppo piccolo per essere diviso in aree amministrative più piccole. Questa località è prevalentemente residenziale e agricola, con le sole attrazioni turistiche di Dwejra e del Kempinski Resort. San Lawrenz è molto ben tenuto e pulito. Nemmeno il considerevole numero di edifici vuoti si trova in uno stato fatiscente.

Apparentemente non ci sono problemi sociali, il livello di disoccupazione è trascurabile - eccezione fatta per chi non vuole lavorare, Vi è un processo d’invecchiamento della popolazione di San Lawrenz. Gli anziani residenti non sono concentrati in una zona specifica. Purtroppo, la presenza di panorami mozzafiato, hanno fatto elevare i prezzi degli immobili e di conseguenza, la gente del posto ha difficoltà a comprare e a stabilirsi a San Lawrenz. Inoltre, i giovani di San Lawrenz decidono di spostarsi per cercare lavoro. Il livello di istruzione sembra corrispondere alla media nazionale.

### **Crimine**

Come il resto di Gozo, la gente di Għarb, in particolare gli anziani, hanno sviluppato una forte paura nei confronti del crimine, a causa di una serie di furti nelle case – ai danni degli anziani; si sostiene che tali fenomeni, che comunque non si sono più verificati negli ultimi due anni, siano correlati a soggetti non locali. Piuttosto che veri e propri reati, sono abbastanza comuni le piccole infrazioni (per lo più legate al traffico, in particolare il mancato utilizzo delle cinture di sicurezza). La gente di San Lawrenz ha ancora l’abitudine

di lasciare le chiavi nelle porte d'ingresso delle case o le macchine aperte con la chiave all'interno. Anche se la stazione di polizia è stata ripristinata, la presenza della polizia non è considerata soddisfacente. Infatti, si sostiene che sono necessari ulteriori pattuglie della Polizia di Rabat. Non ci sono mai stati sistemi di vigilanza di quartiere. A quanto pare, l'area più a rischio è quella di Dwejra, plausibilmente a causa del suo isolamento, non essendoci residenti. L'intervistato l'ha descritta come una 'terra di nessuno'. Questa mancanza di controllo informale facilita il furto dei segnali stradali e atti vandalici. Inoltre lo stesso sospetta che in quest'area si verifichino episodi di contrabbando. Delle telecamere a circuito chiuso controllano la piazza principale di San Lawrenz. Il traffico di droga e l'abuso di droga non sembrano costituire un problema in questa località. Tuttavia spesso si verificano furti di biciclette. Fortunatamente, gli anziani hanno una propria routine fatta di visite culturali settimanali ed eventi sociali, poiché l'amministrazione comunale non ha un programma interventi sociali di nessun tipo. A differenza di quanto accade in altri paesi, i residenti di San Lawrenz (soprattutto di età superiore ai 40 anni), non esitano a ricorrere alla polizia prima di riferire qualcosa al Consiglio. Ci sono forse uno o due criminali che vivono a San Lawrenz e le potenziali vittime sono le anziani.

Żebbuġ, (o iz- Żebbuġ) è un villaggio sito nel nord-ovest di Gozo, vicino a Għarb e Marsalforn. È arroccato su una collina, gode di una vista spettacolare sulla campagna che scende giù fino alla costa rocciosa di Qbajjar - dove si trova un patchwork di saline tradizionali che adornano le rocce bianche che scendono bruscamente sul profondo blu del Mar Mediterraneo. Questo villaggio è rinomato per le sue olive e per l'olio d'oliva, ma è anche famoso per i suoi merletti. Si sostiene che le persone hanno vissuto a Żebbuġ fin dall'antichità. Infatti, Żebbuġ vanta anche la presenza di siti dell'Età del Bronzo. La località ha una popolazione di circa 1.400 abitanti e circa 1.300 persone che risiedono a Marsalforn (forse la più famosa località estiva turistica a Gozo) Oltre ad avere una costa spettacolare -. fatta di rocce e sabbia - un percorso pedonale panoramico e un campo da gioco per bambini, è costellato di wine bar, pub, ristoranti, residenze per vacanzieri, appartamenti e hotel. Le spiagge di Qbajjar e Xwejni rientrano nell'ambito di territoriale del Consiglio Comunale di Żebbuġ.

Żebbuġ è principalmente una zona residenziale, commerciale (ci sono piccole industrie, come ad esempio: imprese di costruzione e saline) oltre che agricola. Oltre ad essere residenziale e commerciale, Marsalforn è anche una zona turistica. Żebbuġ è divisa in due zone, che prendono il nome dalla loro configurazione geografica: il- Ponta (che tradotto significa, il punto - sita dietro la chiesa parrocchiale) e ix - Xaġhra l- Kbir (che tradotto significa, la grande piazza, all'ingresso di Żebbuġ provenendo da Għasri), si sostiene che, soprattutto a causa delle piogge invernali che penetrano in profondità e dei muri danneggiati, la manutenzione è perennemente in corso.

La percezione comune è che il livello di povertà corrisponda a quello della media

nazionale. Ci sono un paio di famiglie disgregate e il tasso di disoccupazione riflette la media nazionale. L'intervistato ritiene che il livello di istruzione si stia elevando. A parte Żebbuġ, vi è un flusso migratorio verso Marsalforn, proveniente da altre zone di Gozo, cui si aggiungono molti maltesi che plausibilmente sono registrati a Marsalforn, soprattutto durante i fine settimana (ci sono più appartamenti che case coloniche in affitto). Si stima che circa 2 residenti di Żebbuġ su 5 siano anziani e le loro residenze non sono concentrate in una particolare area di Żebbuġ o Marsalforn.

### **Crimine**

Come il resto di Gozo, la gente di Għarb, in particolare gli anziani, ha sviluppato una forte paura nei confronti del crimine, a causa di una serie di furti nelle case – ai danni degli anziani; si sostiene che tali fenomeni, che comunque non si sono più verificati negli ultimi due anni, siano correlati a soggetti non locali. In effetti, circa due settimane prima dell'intervista, ci sarebbe stato un tentativo di effrazione ai danni della proprietà del sindaco; si dice che la squadra forense della polizia abbia impiegato troppo per raggiungere Gozo. Si stimano circa 12 irruzioni in un periodo di tre anni e non vi è alcuno schema comune che permetta alle autorità di prevedere gli obiettivi successivi. Questo potrebbe suggerire che i crimini commessi potrebbero rientrare nella categoria dei crimini di opportunità, anche se, è stato sottolineato che le abitudini delle vittime sono state osservate e studiate in precedenza.

Ci sono delinquenti noti alle Autorità che vivono stabilmente a Żebbuġ (trafficienti di droga) e ci sono altri che vivono momentaneamente a Marsalforn. Le vittime di reato praticamente rientrano in tutte le fasce d'età e sono coloro nelle cui case si sono verificate delle irruzioni. Il Consiglio è ha conoscenza dell'abbandono nei campi di siringhe, utilizzate per drogarsi (non vi è alcun particolare hotspot).

Si sostiene che la presenza della polizia sia appena percettibile. Ulteriore benzina sul fuoco, come dice il proverbio, si sparge nel caso in cui un esponente del potere giudiziario in pensione è dotato di un piantone (un ufficiale di guardia che piantona la sua abitazione), ogni volta che va a soggiornare in una residenza di vacanza (che sia estate, durante le vacanze lunghe o durante i fine settimana) - quando tutto Żebbuġ richiede la presenza della polizia. Sembra che la polizia preferisca utilizzare le pattuglie mobili di sera, ma questo non è sufficiente.

Come a San Lawrenz, i cittadini di Żebbuġ preferiscono rivolgersi alla polizia piuttosto che alle autorità consiliari. Abbondano le piccole infrazioni che sono fonte di devianza spicciola. Il Giardino di Żebbuġ (Gnien Tlett Gholjiet, che si trova sulla via di ix- Xagħra) è spesso oggetto di atti vandalici. C'è una telecamera a circuito chiuso installata nei pressi del punto di raccolta adiacente al cimitero - alla periferia di Żebbuġ. Quanto a Marsalforn: la stazione di polizia è spesso aperta. Ci sono state 8 irruzioni a Marsalforn nei 6 mesi

precedenti la ricerca. Loro è stata la cosa più rubata durante queste irruzioni. Anche il vandalismo abbonda. Due omicidi sono avvenuti a Marsalforn (l'avvocato Grech e Gigi Galea noto come ir - Rizzu che è stato gettato in un pozzo vicino a Wied l- Ghasri nel 1996 /98). Gli Antifurti sembrano essere la misura di prevenzione preferita dai residenti. Tutto sommato, sembra che tutti i residenti, indipendentemente dall'età, soffrano di un certo timore nei confronti dei fenomeni criminali, preoccupazione alimentata dalla irruzioni subite dai residenti di Marsalforn, durante la messa cui si erano recati.

### **Distretto N.6: Reati/Problemi Sociali**

- Sembra che non ci siano molte famiglie disgregate o coppie separate a Gozo.
- Il livello di disoccupazione riflette la media nazionale.
- Il livello di istruzione degli abitanti di Gozo rispecchia quella nazionale ma sembra si stia elevando.
- La popolazione di Gozo sembra soggetta a fenomeni d'invecchiamento.
- I Gozzitani hanno paura della criminalità, sentimento radicato soprattutto negli anziani.
- È interessante notare che gli intervistati hanno sempre sostenuto che i crimini sono perpetrati da parte di estranei.
- Vi è una tendenza a identificare i giovani come fonte di eventuali fastidi e/o reati.
- Anche se il tasso di criminalità è considerata basso, ciò non significa che alcuni reati più gravi, come gli omicidi, non si verifichino a Gozo. Ad esempio si pensi ai due omicidi che hanno avuto luogo a Marsalforn (quella del dottor Grech e Gigi Galea noto come ir - Rizzu che è stato gettato in un pozzo vicino alla valle di Ghasri).
- Il traffico di droga e l'abuso di sostanze stupefacenti rappresentano i maggiori problemi di Gozo. Infatti, in giro e anche in luoghi pubblici, si trovano frequentemente siringhe usate.
- Anche l'alcolismo può anche essere motivo di preoccupazione.
- Non sembra ci sia un numero considerevole di detenuti/pregiudicati che vivono a Gozo ...Totò Riina (il boss della mafia siciliana) in realtà risiedeva a Rabat, prima di essere catturato.
- Reati minori, in particolare quelli relativi al traffico (guida pericolosa), disturbo della quiete pubblica (soprattutto battibecchi tra i vicini) e l'immondizia, sembrano essere eventi piuttosto comuni .
- Anche il vandalismo abbonda. Per esempio, la distruzione dell' arredo urbano .
- A Gozo, le vittime del crimine sono perlopiù gli anziani; si afferma, però, che esistano episodi di bullismo tra gli studenti di qualsiasi età scolastica. Inoltre, ci potrebbero essere anche casi di violenza domestica (compresi abusi sui minori) .
- La presenza della polizia a Gozo lascia molto a desiderare .



- A Gozo, vi è un uso limitato di telecamere a circuito chiuso (TVCC) .
- Non sono previsti piani di quartiere a Gozo .
- I gozzitani hanno una scarsa propensione a segnalare i reati e preferiscono comunque rivolgersi al consiglio (con l'eccezione di San Lawrenz e Żebbuġ i cui residenti tendono a denunciare alla polizia piuttosto che al Consiglio locale).
- I residenti sanno come proteggere se stessi e le loro proprietà, ma sono necessarie ulteriori campagne di sensibilizzazione.
- Permane ancora l'abitudine di lasciare la chiave nella porta di casa o nelle vetture, comunicare la propria partenza su internet (il loro muro di Facebook) - un'abitudine che non sembra interessare solo Gozo.
- Oltre alla congestione del traffico, la velocità eccessiva, il passaggio di autocarri pesanti che danneggiano le abitazioni e le strade, l'inquinamento e i problemi di parcheggio, le attività riconducibili alle discoteche e alle feste hanno un forte impatto negativo sulla sicurezza e la tranquillità dei gozzitani .

### **Conclusioni**

L'analisi dei dati evidenzia che i fenomeni criminali sono percepiti dalle Autorità maltesi, come sostanzialmente poco preoccupanti. Sulla isola di Gozo i reati sono praticamente inesistenti e i pochi casi segnalati sembrerebbero essere correlati alla presenza di stranieri o comunque di soggetti non residenti. Non esiste un problema di sicurezza, tanto che a Gozo le persone ancora lasciano ancor le chiavi nella porta. La preoccupazione maggiori sono legate alla diffondersi di problemi di disgregazione familiare, quali l'elevato numero di separazioni, gravidanze tra le adolescenti, e la presenza di famiglie monoparentali. Emergono alcuni punti critici correlati al consumo di droghe e alcol, a episodi di violenza domestica, prostituzione e una certa preoccupazione nei confronti delle nuove generazioni. Trattasi di problemi correlati alla moralità cui è attribuito un ruolo chiave nel mantenimento dell'ordine pubblico.

Oggetto di processi di vittimizzazione sono gli anziani, che hanno sviluppato una forte insicurezza a causa del fatto spesso sono presi di mira dai criminali. Anche se vi è una buona cooperazione con la polizia una buona parte dei comuni ha affermato la prassi, abbastanza comune sia a Malta che a Gozo di segnalare i reati ai Comuni piuttosto che alla polizia. Questo atteggiamento di omertà è tipico nelle isole del Mediterraneo, che indica come la comunità maltese sia una società chiusa, in cui ciascuno si fida dei vicini ma diffida degli estranei.

## CAPITOLO QUARTO (PARTE B)

# Aspetti Operativi I - Prospettive NUTS - Sicilia

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### **Introduzione**

La regione Sicilia è stata divisa storicamente in nove province: Agrigento, Caltanissetta, Catania Enna Messina, Palermo, Ragusa, e Siracusa; ciascuna delle circoscrizioni provinciali è dotata di una propria autonomia amministrativa e governativa (in atto un processo di riforma volto alla riorganizzazione amministrativa delle stesse).

La distribuzione dei residenti mostra grandi concentrazioni nelle province metropolitane di Palermo, Catania e Messina e nelle aree costiere in generale, mentre le aree dell'entroterra, tipicamente montane e/o collinari, hanno una bassa densità demografica e forti tassi di spopolamento e invecchiamento.

L'economia è ancora sorretta dall'agricoltura (settore tradizionale fortemente in crisi) e dal terziario, in forte crescita nell'ultimo ventennio; debole lo sviluppo del tessuto industriale e di quello imprenditoriale, concentrato essenzialmente nelle aree del Catanese, nel siracusano (Priolo), nel circondario palermitano (Termini Imerese) e a Gela; tutto il territorio costiero, seppur in maniera diversificata, è interessato dallo sviluppo del settore turistico (tale settore è particolarmente radicato nel comprensorio di Taormina).

La crisi ha fortemente colpito tutto il territorio regionale sebbene alcune province ne siano state meno interessate, in particolare la provincia di Ragusa rappresenta un'oasi felice per condizioni di vivibilità (con un tasso di disoccupazione estremamente contenuto e un reddito pro-capite tra i più elevati della Sicilia) mentre l'area più povera, con fortissimi disagi e carenze, è quella tra Agrigento, Caltanissetta ed Enna.

La popolazione siciliana, negli ultimi anni, ha avuto una leggera contrazione determinata dalla forte migrazione verso l'estero, che coinvolge soprattutto la componente giovanile e dalla contrazione dei nuclei familiari.

Il calo demografico è in parte controbilanciato dalla presenza straniera sul territorio, derivante dai paesi dell'Est Europa, e dalle zone dell'Africa mediterranea, che si concentra in alcune aree specifiche: le città di Palermo, Catania e Messina, l'area del Mazarese in provincia di Trapani (ove la manodopera è fortemente utilizzata nel settore della pesca) e

la Provincia di Ragusa, in particolare Vittoria.

La maggior parte della popolazione di sesso maschile è impegnata nell'economia primaria, mentre le donne sono impiegate nel settore dei servizi alla persona; molti immigrati vivono in quartieri privi di servizi, da tempo abbandonati dai residenti italiani; questi soggetti non possono contare su una solida rete assistenziale e rimangono fuori dai circuiti di legalità; d'altronde anche l'attuale legislazione sull'immigrazione e sui diritti di cittadinanza non riesce a tradursi in uno strumento concreto per il diffondersi di una cultura dell'integrazione e dell'accoglienza.

La forte disoccupazione, legata all'attuale periodo congiunturale, che sta pesando gravemente un tessuto socio-economico, caratterizzato già di suo da forti carenze strutturali e da una generale condizione di arretratezza produttiva, colpisce soprattutto la componente femminile e quella giovanile, ma interessa anche la forza lavoro con livelli d'istruzione elevati, difficilmente collocabile all'interno del mercato locale; i dati, peraltro, sono inoltre fortemente falsati dagli altissimi livelli dell'economia sommersa che in alcune zone, come per esempio l'agrigentino, arriva a superare anche il cinquanta per cento.

Altro versante problematico è rappresentato dagli incidenti sul lavoro, che aumentano continuamente, a testimonianza di un diffuso disinteresse per la salute del lavoratore e per la normativa sulla sicurezza nei luoghi di lavoro, spesso avvertita come troppo farraginosa.

Opinione abbastanza condivisa dai rappresentanti delle Istituzioni e dalla gente comune è che l'emarginazione sociale coincida con un'offerta sociale sostanzialmente povera; il degrado ambientale risulta fortemente interconnesso con quello socioculturale: la precarietà lavorativa, l'indigenza dilagante, in un contesto di diffusa illegalità, costituiscono un elemento propulsore per la criminalità.

Le più colpite, sono le fasce giovanili, vittime di famiglie disgregate e con legami normativi del tutto lassi, privi di stimoli culturali, sono la categoria dimenticata, pronta a trasformarsi in manovalanza spicciola o in branco violento (bullismo e vandalismo).

I minori sono al tempo stesso persecutori e vittime, come evidenziato dall'andamento dei reati di violenza sessuale e familiare a danno di adolescenti e minori, i cui valori rimangono allarmanti.

Per quanto attiene ai livelli di scolarizzazione, sono tendenzialmente bassi e si registrano altissimi i tassi di dispersione scolastica, in particolare presso gli istituti superiori; molti giovani non terminano il proprio percorso scolastico poiché preferiscono immergersi direttamente nel mondo del lavoro per cercare un sostentamento; sostanzialmente poco incisivi sembrano essere i risultati prodotti dai percorsi d'inclusione sociale portati avanti dalla Regione e dalle Istituzioni scolastiche (gravi ritardi nella progettazione, disorganizzazione, assenza di una logica integrata e di una visione comune).

In via generale è possibile affermare che vi è un aumento della devianza minorile in coincidenza con un abbassamento dell'età anagrafica dei soggetti, che risulta

particolarmente significativo nelle Province di Messina e Palermo, ove si registrano alti tassi di devianza.

Un quadro sicuramente desolante, in cui le organizzazioni criminali, presenti sul territorio con diverse forme (cosa nostra e stidda), arrivano a incidere sui diversi settori economici e produttivi, condizionando pesantemente anche la vita politica locale, attirandosi le simpatie di larga parte della popolazione (l'intreccio tra società civile, mafia, politica ed economia, ha assunto contorni preoccupanti in alcune zone in particolare, come ad esempio il Trapanese); numerose sono le truffe effettuate a danno dello Stato e della Comunità Economica Europea, in materia di gestione illegale di fondi pubblici e della res pubblica.

Nell'ultimo periodo, nelle zone in cui il controllo mafioso si è allentato, si è radicata una forte microcriminalità, dedita a furti, rapine, spaccio e sfruttamento della prostituzione (talora di derivazione straniera) si sta rapidamente diffondendo in tutto il territorio, generando alti livelli di ansia e di paura presso una popolazione che, tradizionalmente, fatica a vivere le istituzioni come fonte di giustizia e protezione.

Simbolo dell'impoverimento generale cui si assiste, è divenuto il furto delle utenze domestiche (per la cui trattazione, nel palermitano, è stato aperto uno specifico ufficio) e dello spigolamento abusivo (furto dei tombini e dei cavi, per il reperimento di materiali metallici, che vengono poi rivenduti illegalmente) o ancora i furti dei prodotti agricoli nelle aree rurali (molti agricoltori, si sono trovati ad improvvisare ronde notturne a difesa dei propri terreni).

In generale la copertura del territorio da parte delle Forze dell'Ordine e dei servizi sociali, non si può ritenere totalmente adeguata, soprattutto a causa della contrazione della spesa pubblica, che ha avuto ricadute estremamente negative sia sulla dotazione delle risorse umane che di quelle materiali a disposizione di ciascun presidio, condizionando, in alcuni casi anche pesantemente, la qualità dell'offerta (si pensi ad esempio alle condizioni di difficoltà che si trovano a vivere le carceri e i tribunali); l'associazionismo e il volontariato costituiscono una realtà che assume il ruolo di supporto ai bisogni dei cittadini, laddove si registra la carenza del servizio pubblico; anche in questo caso si tratta di azioni isolate che non riescono ad essere inserite all'interno di una cultura di rete.

Un indubbio contributo è stato offerto dai fondi del Pon sicurezza, che ha permesso di sviluppare e realizzare, tra gli altri, progetti di videosorveglianza per il controllo e il mantenimento della legalità sul territorio; anche i protocolli di legalità volti a definire in maniera chiara la gestione degli appalti pubblici, sono uno strumento spesso utilizzato per evitare che il fenomeno mafioso possa inserirsi nelle pieghe della società civile.

Una realtà, indubbiamente complessa, quella siciliana, che vive una condizione di forte marginalità, tipiche delle periferie meridionali, ulteriormente acuita dalla condizione d'insularità: un contesto nel quale, nonostante le notevoli risorse naturali e umane, alle

notevoli le carenze infrastrutturali, che non consentono un reale sfruttamento delle possibilità offerte del territorio, si mescolano politiche di gestione e di prevenzione spesso inefficaci se non addirittura inadeguate.

### **Provincia di Trapani**

Con un'estensione superiore ai duemila quattrocento km<sup>2</sup> e con una popolazione di oltre quattrocentomila abitanti, la provincia di Trapani è collocata all'estremità occidentale della Sicilia.

I ventiquattro comuni del comprensorio trapanese sono caratterizzati da una distribuzione della popolazione estremamente disomogenea, con una forte concentrazione nei grandi centri urbani di Alcamo, Castelvetro Erice, Marsala, Mazara del Vallo, Trapani, (molti dei quali in prossimità della fascia costiera) e una scarsa densità abitativa dei Comuni dell'entroterra.

Il territorio è composto perlopiù da colline e pianure in cui vive oltre metà dei residenti e, solo marginalmente, da un'area montuosa scarsamente popolata; la maggior parte dei centri abitati non supera i ventimila abitanti con una concentrazione della popolazione inferiore rispetto alla media regionale.

L'estremità Nord-occidentale del territorio trapanese è occupata dai comuni che gravitano intorno al capoluogo provinciale (Paceco, Custonaci, Erice, Valderice e Buseto Palizzolo) e può essere suddivisa in due porzioni ben distinte: una fascia più alta in cui ricadono il comune di Custonaci e le estremità settentrionali dei territori di Erice, Valderice e Buseto Palizzolo, area fortemente interessata dalle attività estrattive legate alla presenza di una delle più grandi industrie marmifere della Sicilia; una fascia meridionale prettamente caratterizzata dalle tradizionali attività primarie che comprende interamente il territorio del comune di Paceco, l'entroterra del comune di Trapani e le parti meridionali dei territori di Erice, Valderice e Buseto.

Da ambedue le aree, va distinta infine la zona costiera circostante il Capoluogo: nella parte meridionale sorgono gli impianti delle saline che interessano sia Trapani, Paceco che Marsala mentre verso Nord si sviluppa il litorale, prevalentemente destinato a usi turistici e balneari, che si prolunga fino alla spiaggia di San Vito Lo Capo e ancora oltre fino a arrivare all'antico borgo di Castellammare del Golfo.

L'area meridionale della provincia di Trapani è costituita dalla città costiera di Mazara del Vallo e dall'agglomerato urbano e commerciale di Castelvetro.

L'entroterra trapanese ricopre anche parte del territorio della valle del Belice, investita da un terremoto nel 1968, su cui ricadono i comuni di Salemi, Calatafimi, Gibellina, Partanna, Poggioreale, Salaparuta e Santa Ninfa.

Quest'area presenta ancora vistose criticità, specie nelle zone vicine all'epicentro;

molte le costruzioni abbandonate e oramai fatiscenti nelle campagne e nei centri urbani; ampie le aree cementificate, ove precedentemente erano stati allestiti alloggi temporanei il cui smantellamento è avvenuto dopo molti anni.

L'esperienza del Belice, rappresenta in maniera emblematica il fallimento delle politiche di pianificazione e integrazione territoriale poste in essere dallo Stato.

Molti edifici storici, solo marginalmente colpiti dall'evento sismico, furono totalmente abbattuti per motivi di presunta sicurezza; in molti casi è stato fatto un uso quantomeno discutibile dei fondi pubblici (molti utilizzarono i fondi ricevuti per la costruzione di seconde e terza case) che portarono allo spopolamento dei nuclei centrali; sono stati adottati modelli urbanistici, estranei agli assetti urbani tradizionali, caratterizzati da un eccessivo sopradimensionamento delle infrastrutture con conseguente effetto dispersione degli abitati e grosse difficoltà da parte degli Enti Locali nella gestione e manutenzione di tale esorbitante patrimonio urbano e immobiliare che ha portato, nella maggior parte dei casi, all'inevitabile riconversione ad altri usi delle strutture originariamente destinate a usi sociali (ad esempio i centri sociali e civici sono diventati sei delle amministrazioni locali, eccezione fatta per il comune di Salaparuta il cui centro sociale è affidato a un'Associazione Culturale) e anche lo smantellamento delle baracche, costruite con dosi massicce di amianto, ha posto numerosi problemi ai Comuni in tema di smaltimento del materiale pericoloso a causa degli elevati costi.

Anche le politiche di sviluppo economico si sono rilevate inadeguate, gran parte delle aree industriali e commerciali, che avrebbero dovuto essere rilanciate grazie al boom edilizio e per la realizzazione delle quali era stata prevista l'implementazione di un sistema viario infrastrutturale fortemente composito, non si sono mai sviluppate; l'asse autostradale che avrebbe dovuto collegare Mazara del Vallo a Marsala non è stato ancora completato; alcuni centri più piccoli vivono in una condizione d'isolamento e marginalità a causa di un sistema dei trasporti non sempre adeguato.

Lo stesso sistema agricolo, sul cui potenziamento non si è sufficientemente lavorato, ha subito importanti trasformazioni, una lenta riconversione che ha portato al passaggio da impianti specializzati nelle produzioni cerealicole a colture vitivinicole e olivicole; il rilancio del Belice, dopo anni di profonda stagnazione, oggi passa attraverso la valorizzazione del settore zootecnico e della piccola industria lattiero-casearia, lungo la direzione di uno sviluppo del settore enogastronomico e di un turismo di tipo rurale.

L'intero territorio provinciale è a forte rischio idrogeologico e ambientale correlato principalmente all'erosione dei fiumi e alla destabilizzazione dei terreni e dei costoni rocciosi, condizioni spesso determinate dall'adozione di strumenti urbanistici non idonei, dall'eccessiva antropizzazione del territorio e dalla mancanza d'interventi di manutenzione e prevenzione.

Il rischio idrogeologico interessa anche le infrastrutture viarie, molte direttrici

principali presentano cedimenti del manto stradale, in altri casi, le carreggiate, durante i mesi invernali, sono invase di fango e detriti, trasportati dalle copiose piogge.

Nonostante la maggior parte dei Comuni sia dotata di uffici di protezione civile e si sia provveduto all'istituzione dei centri operativi comunali (strutture di supporto e coordinamento operativo istituite per costruzione di un sistema locale di protezione civile nonché di pianificazione dell'emergenza da effettuare nel tempo ordinario), in molte località non esistono piani di prevenzione e, laddove questi siano stati redatti, sono disattesi o risultano superati, per cui necessiterebbero di un aggiornamento.

Un altro aspetto critico, in termini di salvaguardia del patrimonio ambientale, è rappresentato dai roghi che ogni anno devastano il territorio trapanese, le cui cause sono molteplici: le alte temperature, l'attività dolosa da parte di piromani, l'abitudine di abbandonare i rifiuti nelle aree circostanti i terreni agricoli e lo scarso controllo o l'assenza di bonifica dei fuochi accesi; in alcuni casi si cela anche il sospetto che gli incendi siano causati da questioni occupazionali connesse a cantieri forestali o da problemi legati al controllo del territorio (non a caso è stata approvata una legge in virtù della quale sui territori incendiati non è possibile edificare strutture e infrastrutture finalizzate a insediamenti civili e attività produttive per almeno dieci anni e non può essere cambiata la loro destinazione d'uso per almeno quindici anni).

Per cercare di arginare il problema, non si può soltanto pensare a interventi strutturali (seppur importanti) per il risanamento e la messa in sicurezza delle aree a rischio ma occorre agire, attraverso strategie d'informazione e sensibilizzazione alle problematiche della prevenzione del dissesto, sulle stesse Amministrazioni comunali (che spesso agiscono secondo interventi di difesa straordinaria in una logica di emergenza) e sulla stessa comunità civile; si rendono necessari piani strategici costruiti attraverso un'analisi puntuale e la mappatura del patrimonio naturale e edilizio presente nelle aree a rischio.

L'analisi del mercato del lavoro nel territorio provinciale evidenzia come la maggior parte della popolazione sia impiegata nell'amministrazione pubblica e vi sia una netta predominanza del settore agricolo rispetto agli altri comparti economici.

Esso, infatti, rappresenta complessivamente oltre il quaranta per cento dell'intero sistema imprenditoriale, assegnando alla Provincia un vero e proprio primato rispetto alle altre aree del territorio siciliano, gran parte delle colline antistanti, marginalmente interessate dalla produzione cerealicola, sono coltivate a vigneto (rinomate le produzioni di zibibbo e passito del marsalese) e a uliveti.

Nonostante quanto detto occorre sottolineare che il settore agricolo versa in uno stato di profonda crisi, causata dai bassi livelli dei prezzi all'origine, all'interno di un mercato fortemente competitivo, che non consentono di coprire i costi di produzione, da un sistema di arretratezza infrastrutturale, dall'esiguo numero di strutture di trasformazione dei prodotti agricoli (realizzate negli ultimi decenni con fondi pubblici, anche

comunitari), dalla mancata realizzazione di un'adeguata filiera per il confezionamento e la commercializzazione delle produzioni locali, dallo scarso appeal del settore primario per i giovani.

Questi fattori incidono sulla diminuzione del valore di mercato degli appezzamenti, di conseguenza molti produttori, stanno procedendo all'estirpazione di molti vigneti, creando anche un rilevante problema ambientale, incentivati anche da misure finanziarie di sviluppo che nel tempo si sono susseguite, forse non troppo oculate, volte a ridurre il potenziale produttivo e consentire un riequilibrio del mercato (incentivi per l'estirpazione dei vigneti e vendemmia verde).

Particolare interesse per l'economia trapanese ha assunto anche il settore della pesca e dell'indotto industriale a esso afferente che vede coinvolte le aree costiere del capoluogo di Provincia e soprattutto del Mazarese; trattasi di piccole e medie attività, a carattere eminentemente artigianale e familiare con bassi gradi di specializzazione e innovazione tecnologica.

Se si analizza il tessuto imprenditoriale nelle sue componenti costitutive, emerge chiaramente una maggiore incidenza delle aziende artigiane specializzate nelle attività manifatturiere e nel settore delle costruzioni (il cosiddetto artigianato di produzione che risentendo fortemente della situazione congiunturale negativa ha visto esaurirsi rapidamente la spinta propulsiva agli investimenti degli ultimi anni) concentrate prevalentemente nelle aree del marsalese e nella città di Trapani.

L'arcipelago delle Egadi, prospicienti il porto di Trapani e della cittadina medievale di Erice, sita sull'omonimo promontorio, arricchiscono l'offerta di un patrimonio ambientale inestimabile, costituito da numerose aree protette, quali la Riserva Naturale orientata dello Zingaro, la Riserva Naturale del fiume Belice, le aree attrezzate delle Isole dello Stagnone e le altrettanto numerose aree speciali, quali quella del bacino artificiale di lago Baita, Lago di Venere a Pantelleria, Colombaia e Lanterna (isole marittime).

Un patrimonio ambientale e naturalistico, quello del Trapanese, che indica una possibile traiettoria di sviluppo dell'economia in senso turistico, settore che non è stato ancora pienamente potenziato.

L'economia, in crisi in altri settori, sembra effettivamente, sempre più, trascinata dal crescente andamento positivo dei flussi turistici, legato alla presenza d'importanti infrastrutture di traffico aereo e marittimo: un attrezzato porto che si sta trasformando in meta di turismo crocieristico e la riconversione dell'aeroporto militare di Birgi che ha intensificato le rotte verso le grandi capitali europee e verso il territorio nazionale attraverso accordi con compagnie low cost.

Negli ultimi anni sono sorte una pluralità di attività legate al comparto alberghiero ed extra - alberghiero: residenze turistiche, alberghiere, alloggi privati; campeggi, villaggi turistici, case per vacanze e imprese agrituristiche; inoltre, qualche centinaio di ristoranti,



sono sparsi fra le località balneari e l'entroterra, alcune sale per ricevimenti e banchetti nei territori di Marsala e Trapani e Castellammare del Golfo.

Un settore in continuo sviluppo, sebbene l'offerta della ricettività e dei servizi risulti ancora lontana dagli standard nazionali e regionali; fattori, questi che spiegano le caratteristiche del turismo locale: i dati sulle presenze evidenziano un tempo di permanenza estremamente basso poiché non superano i due o i tre giorni, un turismo di tipo stanziale e fortemente stagionale.

Nonostante la presenza di un'adeguata rete autostradale, marittima e aerea, il territorio è investito da forti mancanze nel sistema viario locale (scarsa manutenzione e strade in dissesto) e le linee ferroviarie che fanno capo a Trapani e ai comuni del comprensorio, sono assolutamente inadeguate, poco interessate dalla rete degli scambi commerciali e della mobilità delle persone a causa dell'arretratezza dei tracciati e per i numerosi dissesti; anche i servizi di trasporto pubblico risultano insufficienti rispetto alle esigenze della comunità.

Tra le numerose proposte avanzate per risolvere il problema dei collegamenti tra i centri più piccoli e le realtà più urbanizzate, si suggerisce la trasformazione delle linee ferroviarie tradizionali in comparti metropolitani.

Per quanto concerne il mercato occupazionale, emerge un trend negativo del numero di occupati, determinato soprattutto dalla contrazione del settore edile e terziario, che ha interessato in ugual misura i due sessi, sebbene occorra evidenziare che la provincia ha uno dei più bassi tassi di disoccupazione femminile.

Il mercato del lavoro accusa poca flessibilità e favorisce la precarietà, sono diminuiti i contratti a tempo indeterminato a favore della diffusione di forme di contrattazione atipica; si registra una diffusa sacca di lavoro irregolare e condizioni di lavoro in nero (in particolare nel settore edile e dell'agricoltura), esiste poi una discrasia tra le esigenze del mercato del lavoro e l'offerta a causa di carenze strutturali nell'attività formativa (che ha incentivato la costituzione di un folto nucleo di manodopera non specializzata) e di un sistema socio-culturale che favorisce l'emergere di professionalità altamente qualificate in settori poco incisivi dell'economia locale.

Non a caso, nel tempo si è registrata la contrazione delle piccole imprese legate alle attività artigianali tradizionali (calzolai, falegnami, sarte) e il ricorso alla manodopera straniera per l'espletamento delle attività legate al settore primario (fenomeno che coinvolge in maniera indiscriminata sia i centri minori sia i comuni più urbanizzati).

Tali criticità spingono costantemente una crescente massa di lavoratori, per lo più giovani laureati, a trasferirsi al Nord e all'estero, in cerca di nuova occupazione e di condizioni di vita migliori.

La crisi ha inciso pesantemente sul bilancio delle famiglie, che hanno un reddito pro-capite fra i più bassi della penisola, con la conseguente riduzione delle spese per i consumi;

il crollo drastico dei consumi interni è stato in parte controbilanciato dagli scambi commerciali con l'estero grazie a rinnovate politiche di marketing e sviluppo territoriale.

Da un punto di vista sociale, due elementi caratterizzano il panorama provinciale: il progressivo invecchiamento della popolazione (con un indice di vecchiaia di valore superiore rispetto a quello regionale) in linea con gli standard nazionali e una diminuzione dei tassi di natalità con conseguente contrazione dei nuclei familiari.

La Provincia registra un lieve incremento demografico in parte ascrivibile a un incremento della presenza d'immigrati, presenti in maniera consistente nell'isola di Pantelleria e nel Comune di Mazara del Vallo.

La componente più numerosa degli stranieri è quella proveniente dalla Romania, seguita dalla comunità magrebina; esiste anche una vasta comunità cinese che ha investito in attività commerciali e di ristorazione in tutti i centri del territorio.

Nell'area interessata dall'analisi, la percentuale di minorenni è di molto inferiore rispetto alla popolazione anziana e vi sono altissimi tassi di dispersione scolastica (si consideri che il tasso di non conseguimento della scuola dell'obbligo è di poco inferiore al venti per cento e anche la percentuale di laureati è inferiore alla media regionale); in questo contesto l'accesso alle scuole pubbliche che lavorino in continuità con il territorio è assolutamente indispensabile: ma mentre la presenza delle scuole dell'obbligo è assicurata in tutti i comuni, diverso è il quadro dell'offerta per quanto attiene gli istituti superiori presenti nei solo centri urbani più grandi.

Il problema coinvolge particolarmente gli studenti delle isole minori, costretti a un continuo pendolarismo e spesso condizionati dalla situazione climatiche che soprattutto in inverno blocca i trasporti.

In termini di prestazioni socio-assistenziali, sebbene nel corso degli anni siano stati promossi una pluralità d'interventi mirati alle diverse fasce di utenza anche in convenzione con strutture private, si registra una carenza infrastrutturale relativa all'area dei disabili, dei migranti e dei centri per la prevenzione della violenza femminile; non esiste una reale mappatura dei bisogni del territorio, rispetto alle emergenze sociali in talune aree del tutto sono assenti i centri assistenziali, semiresidenziali e diurni.

Risultano, inoltre, carenze nell'area minorile riguardanti le comunità alloggio e, soprattutto nei Distretti di Castelvetrano e di Mazara, le inadeguatezze interessano anche i centri semiresidenziali e diurni.

Il riordino dei presidi sanitari, determinato da esigenze di razionalizzazione delle risorse pubbliche, ha inoltre comportato gravi ricadute sulla dotazione delle risorse dell'entroterra e dei centri minori, la cui popolazione spesso è costretta a spostarsi per usufruire dei servizi specialistici; vi è inoltre una scarsa politica di concertazione tra le amministrazioni e gli operatori del terzo del settore il che pregiudica la possibilità di erogare prestazioni integrate di tipo individualizzato di alta qualità.

I livelli di sicurezza della provincia di Trapani non si discostano di molto dalla media regionale, ma il dato risulta fortemente influenzato dalle caratteristiche della criminalità organizzata locale, totalmente frammista al tessuto economico e politico, rendendone difficile l'individuazione da parte delle autorità e influenzando anche il livello di sicurezza percepita degli stessi residenti.

La capacità di esercitare un incisivo controllo del territorio e la vocazione economico-imprenditoriale costituiscono il punto di forza della predetta organizzazione, in grado di condizionare pesantemente la realtà sociale, economica e istituzionale, tanto da rendere necessaria l'istituzione di un nucleo operativo specializzato nella lotta contro i reati materia di criminalità economica.

L'attuale orientamento delle cosche mafiose, capeggiate dal boss castelvetranese Messina Danaro, è costituito dal riciclaggio dei capitali perlopiù derivanti dal traffico illecito di sostanze stupefacenti, che vengono successivamente reinvestiti in attività apparentemente lecite, gestite da soggetti prestanome che operano nei più disparati campi del sistema economico.

È comprovata, ad esempio, l'ingerenza d'impresе riferibili a soggetti mafiosi nel sistema dei subappalti e degli appalti pubblici delle forniture legati all'edilizia e alla sanità, attraverso anche azioni di turbativa d'asta pubblica; innumerevoli, anche i crimini economici riconnessi alle false fatturazioni e reati societari alle truffe.

Particolare interesse è stato rivolto dalle organizzazioni criminali all'indotto derivante dagli impianti di produzione di energie alternative che, comè noto, beneficiano di particolari forme di finanziamento pubblico agevolato; molti dei parchi eolici realizzati sul territorio sono diventati oggetto d'indagine delle autorità giudiziarie.

Da qui il tentativo da parte delle organizzazioni criminali d'intessere rapporti d'affari con funzionari pubblici attraverso la perpetrazione dei reati di concussione e corruzione (si ricordi che molti amministratori locali sono stati oggetto d'indagini volte ad accertare la sussistenza di pratiche di conduzione clientelare della "res pubblica").

Ne sono testimonianza anche i diversi procedimenti conclusi negli ultimi anni per favoreggiamento mafioso che, a breve distanza temporale, hanno portato allo scioglimento per infiltrazione mafiosa del comune di Salemi e quello di Campobello di Mazara.

Anche il racket a scopo estorsivo è fortemente radicato in ambito provinciale, il fenomeno che colpisce soprattutto il settore ricettivo è caratterizzato dall'esborso di percentuali in denaro o dall'imposizione di assunzioni o di servizi e appare, a oggi, una delle attività principali delle organizzazioni criminali di questa Provincia che avvalendosi della forza intimidatoria del vincolo associativo esercitato nei confronti degli esercenti consente il sovvenzionamento delle organizzazioni ma anche la gestione e il controllo dell'imprenditoria.

Non sfugge alla fenomenologia criminale anche il traffico legato allo smaltimento

dei rifiuti e alla gestione delle discariche abusive (che spesso coinvolgono le diverse cave disseminate sul territorio).

Sotto il profilo ambientale, nonostante esistano numerosi processi a carico degli amministratori locali per presunte irregolarità nella gestione delle pubbliche discariche, occorre sottolineare che il fenomeno è incentivato anche dai comportamenti poco appropriati dei privati (soggetti singoli ma anche imprenditori che lavorano nel settore marmifero e delle costruzioni) che hanno trasformato alcune aree del territorio in spazi abusivi di conferimento rifiuti.

La strategia scelta dalle cosche locali, dopo gli anni delle stragi (che hanno fortemente scosso l'opinione pubblica e hanno portato alla militarizzazione di molte aree) è quella di tenere un basso profilo, basato su strumenti d'intimidazione diversi dalle armi (per così dire più "soft"), quali gli attentati incendiari; una strategia che consenta di sfuggire all'attenzione degli organi inquirenti e che si avvale anche di un profondo radicamento territoriale, che spesso si trasforma in vera e propria di omertosa collusione (si segnala a tal riguardo lo scarso numero di denunce che afferiscono soprattutto agli atti di tipo intimidatorio, è pertanto lecito presumere l'esistenza di un elevato numero di casi non denunciati).

Il radicamento sul territorio locale delle organizzazioni criminali di stampo mafioso trova una spiegazione nel fallimento delle politiche stataliste attuate negli anni dai governi centrali: la mafia ha saputo pienamente sfruttare per il proprio tornaconto le problematiche e le aspirazioni di un'area caratterizzata da forti spinte autonomiste e in cui vi sempre più diffuso disagio sociale.

La precarietà dell'attuale situazione economica, le difficoltà di accesso al credito degli istituti bancari, hanno, inoltre, ulteriormente aggravato il fenomeno dell'usura, intrinsecamente legato anche agli ambienti dei giochi e delle scommesse, sia legali sia clandestini, che si stanno diffondendo anche nei centri più piccoli.

Trattasi di una realtà ancora particolarmente sommersa e difficilmente denunciata nel trapanese che attecchisce soprattutto nei contesti periferici della Provincia e sembra essersi sviluppata secondo dinamiche apparentemente estranee rispetto alle organizzazioni criminali di stampo mafioso, il fenomeno colpisce soprattutto gli imprenditori e i piccoli e medi esercenti.

Nel tentativo di arginare il problema, alcune Amministrazioni hanno fatto ricorso alla promozione di campagne di sensibilizzazione e di manifestazioni a sostegno dei potenziali soggetti a rischio e si è provveduto anche all'istituzione di un numero unico per le denunce.

La lotta senza quartiere da parte degli organi di Pubblica Sicurezza ha puntato, da un canto all'attività di cattura dei ricercati e, dall'altro, all'indebolimento delle organizzazioni criminali, mediante indagini dirette a contrastare le principali attività delittuose perpetrate dai clan mafiosi; si consideri inoltre che in tutti i comuni è garantita la presenza di un

comando dei carabinieri e/o di un presidio di polizia municipale.

Le attività investigative mirano anche all'accertamento e alla confisca dei patrimoni illeciti e alla loro riutilizzazione a fini sociali, attraverso cui lo Stato testimonia la propria forza riappropriandosi del territorio.

La mafia sembra essere ben consapevole del valore culturale della confisca dei patrimoni, tanto che si registra una certa recrudescenza dei fenomeni di danneggiamento nei confronti dei beni sequestrati e d'intimidazione rivolti anche nei confronti di quei soggetti economici (spesso cooperative sociali) cui viene affidata la gestione degli stessi beni; contemporaneamente si evidenzia il tentativo di rientrare in possesso dei patrimoni confiscati, parte della quale viene messa all'asta, attraverso il loro riacquisto.

Il territorio è interessato, inoltre, anche da una microcriminalità specializzata in reati contro la pubblica amministrazione e contro il patrimonio.

Nel tentativo di assicurare alla popolazione livelli di sicurezza adeguati (anche in considerazione dei tagli agli organici) si è cercato di razionalizzare la presenza delle Forze dell'Ordine sul territorio, attraverso posti di blocco e servizi ispettivi di prevenzione.

La maggior parte dei Comuni maggiori, grazie ai contributi europei, si sono dotati d'impianti di videosorveglianza collocati nelle aree maggiormente a rischio.

Un importante strumento per il controllo dei tentativi d'infiltrazione mafiosa è costituito dall'attivazione dei protocolli di legalità, ossia accordi volontari che prevedono il rispetto di alcune condizioni specifiche, tra gli enti locali, prefetture e privati che hanno ottenuto appalti per la creazione di opere pubbliche o la gestione di servizi.

Da più parti si sottolinea l'importanza della formazione di piani d'intervento interistituzionali che coinvolgono i diversi enti e le amministrazioni a fianco delle Forze di Polizia, sia in fase di prevenzione delle forme di emarginazione sociale che di repressione dei comportamenti illeciti.

In materia di reati ambientali si segnala la crescita del numero di segnalazioni per violazioni e abusivismo edilizio (fenomeni particolarmente evidenti nelle zone costiere), comportamento spesso incentivato da una politica che ha sostenuto le sanatorie e condoni edilizi; al riguardo occorre evidenziare che solitamente le denunce coinvolgono solamente i proprietari degli immobili, una politica di serio contrasto al fenomeno potrebbe essere quella di punire anche i comportamenti dei costruttori.

Nel territorio le maggiori problematiche sono costituite dalle numerose costruzioni abusive, la più parte realizzate nelle fasce costiere, molte delle quali - spesso acquisite dagli enti comunali- dovrebbero essere demolite; a tal riguardo, solo il Comune di Marsala, a seguito dell'adozione di circa una ventina ordinanze di sgombero coattivo d'immobili abusivi, ha attivato correttamente la procedura, predisponendo gli atti necessari per l'indizione della gara d'appalto per il trasloco delle masserizie e degli arredi e per i lavori di demolizione.

L'argomento è stato, più volte, oggetto d'esame da parte dell'Autorità provinciale dell'ordine e della sicurezza pubblica per i risvolti sociali e di ordine pubblico che la questione assume; se è vero che la presenza di abitazioni abusive incide fortemente sui livelli di antropizzazione del territorio con effetti devastanti per l'ecosistema, non si può d'altronde negare che la demolizione di questi beni spesso è accompagnata da proteste anche violente da parte dei proprietari che non accettano di buon grado le decisioni delle autorità giudiziarie.

In materia d'immigrazione, rispetto al passato, si registra una netta flessione in conseguenza delle modifiche intervenute alla normativa vigente, ritenuta incompatibile con i principi normativi comunitari; la legge prevedeva originariamente la pena della reclusione per lo straniero irregolare che disattendesse l'ordine d'espulsione dal territorio senza motivi giustificati, le successive modifiche hanno introdotto come punizione una pena pecuniaria.

Rimane comunque un problema legato alla gestione dei flussi immigrativi, con particolare riferimento agli sbarchi clandestini, che si verificano nelle aree costiere pantese e trapanesi, specialmente durante il periodo estivo.

Sebbene il fenomeno abbia avuto una leggera flessione, grazie anche agli accordi internazionali siglati con i paesi d'origine per il controllo delle coste, numerose sono le criticità.

In primis, non esistono forze di sicurezza specializzate dedite all'immigrazione, ciò significa che per creare una cintura di sicurezza, occorre sottrarre unità al controllo del territorio.

In secondo luogo, la strategia dei clan criminali, impegnati nella tratta degli stranieri, ha subito profonde modifiche, in luogo dei grandi barconi in grado di ospitare molte unità, facilmente individuabili, vi è una chiara predilezione per le imbarcazioni di modeste dimensioni difficilmente rintracciabili, senza contare chi arriva via terra.

Un altro aspetto critico è correlato alle procedure per l'espulsione e il rimpatrio dei migranti, se da un lato vi è un'eccessiva burocratizzazione che implica forti ritardi nell'esecuzione dei provvedimenti, dall'altro anche le procure di rimpatrio risultano difficili da applicare a causa dell'esiguità delle risorse economiche (il che significa sostanzialmente che lo straniero rimane posteggiato nei centri d'identificazione o lasciato libero sul territorio con l'intimazione di procedere al rimpatrio.)

Esiste più in generale un problema dell'accoglienza e della promozione del dialogo interculturale, i centri predisposti (due ricadenti nel territorio) si trasformano spesso in vere e proprie strutture segreganti in cui si registrano continue proteste ed evasioni, non esistono adeguati programmi di alfabetizzazione spesso relegati alle attività delle singole associazioni attive sul territorio e ancora, poche risultano le iniziative di supporto dell'inserimento lavorativo e sociale degli stessi che spesso passano le loro giornate nell'inerzia totale.

La presenza di un elevato numero di cittadini extracomunitari in ambito provinciale ha determinato, in talune circostanze, ripercussioni sullo stato dell'ordine e della sicurezza pubblica, con riferimento a determinate tipologie di reato quali lo spaccio di sostanze stupefacenti, i reati predatori e le violenze domestiche; da sottolineare anche che spesso la manovalanza straniera è oggetto di fenomeni di sfruttamento e d'intermediazione illecita di manodopera (cd. Caporalato).

Va rilevato che non si sono registrate, finora, emergenze sotto il profilo di atteggiamenti d'intolleranza razziale sebbene non si possa ancora parlare di una vera e propria integrazione; la città più rappresentativa in tal senso è Mazara del Vallo, dove forte è la presenza di cittadini tunisini inseriti principalmente nel settore della pesca.

Tra le iniziative adottate a livello provinciale in tema di sicurezza stradale e consumo di sostanze stupefacenti, da segnalare il Progetto "Divertimento Sicuro" che ha visto il coinvolgimento della Polizia Municipale, Polizia Stradale, Arma dei Carabinieri, Guardia di Finanza e istituzioni sanitarie, attraverso la predisposizione di ulteriori servizi di controllo del territorio mirati alla repressione e alla prevenzione degli incidenti dovuti ad alcol o droga, attuati da un Gruppo Interforze coadiuvato dal personale medico sanitario della locale ASP, presente direttamente sul luogo degli accertamenti; diffuse anche le iniziative di prevenzione e sensibilizzazione promosse dagli istituti scolastici; in realtà, anche l'analisi dei servizi socio-assistenziali, evidenzia una certa inadeguatezza al contrasto del fenomeno, avvertito come una vera e propria piaga difficile da debellare a livello locale.

Nel comprensorio trapanese insistono diverse strutture carcerarie sia per adulti che per minori, che vivono una situazione di forte disagio, legate al problema del sovrappopolamento delle strutture.

In considerazione dell'aumento eccessivo della popolazione carceraria, le criticità maggiori riguardano la difficoltà, rispetto alle limitate risorse finanziarie e personali disponibili, di dover predisporre le misure più appropriate e più idonee per garantire a tutta la popolazione detenuta quei servizi prevalentemente di natura socio-culturale e psicologica: in tal senso fondamentale è stata l'apertura degli uffici penali di esecuzione esterna per incentivare l'uso di misure detentive alternative.

. Al riguardo è stata sottoscritta, nell'ambito del Patto di Sicurezza per la provincia di Trapani, una Convenzione con il Comune di Erice, al fine di attivare un sistema di videosorveglianza nelle aree pubbliche circostanti la Casa Circondariale di Trapani, con l'obiettivo e recuperare personale della Polizia penitenziaria, impiegato nei servizi di vigilanza esterna.

L'assenza di legami normativi forti, la frammentazione del tessuto sociale, la disgregazione dei nuclei familiari, ha fatto emergere la recrudescenza di fenomeni di violenza nei confronti delle fasce più deboli (minori e donne) che sembra coinvolgere

non solo i gruppi familiari ma anche gli stessi operatori pubblici preposti alla vigilanza e alla prevenzione (tra giugno del 2011 a il giugno del 2012 si registrano all'incirca una cinquantina di procedimenti per violenza sessuale e pedofilia e approssimativamente una trentina per atti di stalking).

Il numero di casi di maltrattamenti ai minori denunciati all'Autorità Giudiziaria rappresenta solo una piccola parte degli abusi commessi nei confronti del bambino e si riferiscono a quegli episodi, talmente palesi, da non poter essere misconosciuti o tollerati, la maggior parte delle denunce viene inoltrata da funzionari che, per la qualifica che ricoprono, non possono sottrarsi a precisi obblighi di legge.

Appare chiaro, da quanto finora descritto, che il contesto socio territoriale della Provincia risulta abbastanza problematico, vi è un crescente disagio da parte dei cittadini che convivono con una situazione di precarietà non solo economica ma anche sociale, i fenomeni d'esodo che coinvolgono soprattutto i Comuni dell'entroterra, la crisi occupazionale, le logiche di tipo clientelare che regolano il mondo del lavoro, il senso d'impotenza si coniugano a una certa rassegnazione rispetto alla possibilità di reale cambiamento; s'intrecciano una pluralità di problematiche che coinvolgono anche le scelte fatte dalle stesse Istituzioni negli ultimi anni, vi è un senso di profonda sfiducia nei confronti di uno stato che non riesce a dare sufficienti garanzie di sicurezza e non è in grado di offrire politiche di sviluppo adeguate.

Sinteticamente è possibile evidenziare alcune caratteristiche chiave, comuni a tutto il comprensorio:

- Grosso patrimonio storico, artistico e paesaggistico
- Diffuso associazionismo
- Forte presenza di tradizioni enogastronomiche e folcloristiche
- Arretratezza del sistema economico del territorio (che vede una diffusione enorme del settore pubblico e una scarsa capacità imprenditoriale.)
- Preminenza del settore agricolo rispetto ad altri comparti imprenditoriali
- Dotazione infrastrutturale non adatta a supportare uno sviluppo turistico di dimensione più elevate.
- Presenza della criminalità organizzata di tipo mafioso e commistioni con la classe politica e il tessuto sociale
- Microcriminalità dedita a furti e reati contro il patrimonio in parte ascrivibile alle difficili condizioni economiche
- Scarse politiche di concertazione e integrazione tra i diversi livelli dell'amministrazione pubblica e le associazioni private in tema di sicurezza, prevenzione e politiche sociali
- Offerta culturale sostanzialmente povera
- Alti tassi di dispersione scolastica
- Fenomeni di esodo che coinvolgono i comuni dell'entroterra che vivono una forte



stagnazione delle attività economiche.

- Sottodimensionamento degli organi di sicurezza

**Soluzioni proposte:**

- Miglioramento sistema di mobilità attraverso la costruzione di un sistema ferroviario funzionale e la trasformazione delle linee in ferroviarie in linee metropolitane.
- Riqualificazione entroterra, valorizzazione delle risorse locali e incentivazione del turismo enogastronomico
- Maggiori industrie sulla lavorazione del pescato e potenziamento della filiera legata alla trasformazione e commercializzazione dei prodotti agricoli.
- Creazione di tavoli di concertazione interistituzionali per affrontare il fenomeno del disagio sociale.
- Iniziative di promozione culturale, sensibilizzazione e diffusione della legalità che coinvolgano la cittadinanza locale.
- Aumento della spesa sociale per rafforzare gli organici degli organi di sicurezza e investire sul controllo del territorio e la prevenzione della devianza.

## Comuni della Valle Del Belice

Gibellina, Calatafimi Segesta, Campobello di Mazara Castelvetro Selinunte, Partanna, Poggioreale, Salemi, Salaparuta, Santa Ninfa, Vita

### Gibellina

Il comune di Gibellina, uno dei centri più vicini all'epicentro del terremoto del 1968, fu totalmente raso al suolo e ricostruito su un territorio pianeggiante appartenente al territorio di Santa Ninfa e vicino ai principali nodi di trasporto (lo svincolo autostradale Palermo/Mazara del Vallo e la tratta ferroviaria).

L'Amministrazione locale, all'epoca interessata a fare del Comune il simbolo della rinascita culturale e sociale della valle del Belice, invitò architetti di fama nazionale e internazionale a partecipare alla ricostruzione; Gibellina è diventata un laboratorio sperimentale di arte contemporanea.

La pianta urbanistica richiama dall'alto la forma di una farfalla, in un centro "diffuso" troviamo i servizi pubblici intorno ai quali si snodano le residenze dei cittadini, perlopiù piccole villette a schiera, di due piani, dotate di garage autonomo e piccolo giardino.

Tutti i quartieri, circondati da strade principali e/o secondarie, con una netta divisione tra vie pedonali e traffico veicolare, confluiscono in piazze e spazi di verde che avrebbero dovuto fungere da luogo d'incontro per i cittadini; parallelamente alla linea ferrovia sorgono gli edifici di edilizia pubblica popolare e l'area artigianale.

L'opera di riedificazione fu lunga e soggetta a numerose modifiche, quando l'assetto urbano cominciò a strutturarsi, ci si accorse dell'esistenza di spazi totalmente privi d'insediamenti e si predispose la progettazione di un sistema integrato di piazze che avrebbe dovuto dare unitarietà ai due corpi rimasti isolati.

Nonostante Gibellina rappresenti un unicum nel panorama italiano, sia dal punto di vista urbanistico che per la sua singolare storia che ne ha fatto un museo a cielo aperto, soffre di una pluralità di problematiche peraltro in parte comuni agli altri paesi del Belice.

Il tessuto sociale, di origine eminentemente rurale, ha mostrato una certa difficoltà nell'integrarsi nel nuovo circuito moderno, molte opere sono ancora incompiute, altre di recente costruzione dimostrano vistosi segni di degrado (la Chiesa Mare costruita nella parte più alta della città è già stata interessata da opere di restauro e manutenzione), altre ancora sono del tutto inadeguate rispetto alla funzione sociale per le quali erano state realizzate.

Lo spazio urbano risulta sovradimensionato, alcuni edifici pubblici sono stati riconvertiti e destinati a nuovi usi, gli insediamenti artigianali e edilizi, che avevano avuto slancio negli anni della ricostruzione, colpiti dalla recessione, hanno visto drasticamente ridurre le proprie attività.

Sono stati avviati una pluralità di progetti per il completamento di alcune opere (quali il centro sociale e il mercato coperto), ma anche per la manutenzione e per la riqualificazione urbana di alcuni edifici popolari.

Il Comune, pur trovandosi da un punto di vista geopolitico in una situazione favorevole e nonostante la presenza del Museo Civico d'Arte Moderna e di numerose opere d'arte disseminate lungo le strade, è solo in parte interessato dai flussi turistici (trattasi di forme di turismo culturale di nicchia), si trova escluso dai più grandi circuiti turistici che tendono a privilegiare mete ben più rinomate e di più con un patrimonio architettonico più facile da interpretare, come Erice e Marsala; le ragioni dell'assenza di una rete turistica sono dovute a una pluralità di problematiche, quali la mancanza di alberghi e strutture extra - alberghiere adatte a flussi più ampi.

L'offerta culturale è ulteriormente arricchita dalle associazioni che operano nel territorio; una delle più rinomate è la Fondazione Orestyadi, sita presso un'antica masseria, danneggiata e ricostruita a ridosso del Comune, oggi sede d'istituzioni culturali e universitarie; da anni la Fondazione è impegnata nel promuovere l'immagine di Gibellina nel mondo attraverso manifestazioni di tipo musicale e teatrale (quest'ultime spesso tenute presso il "Cretto", un'opera monumentale costruita sui ruderi del vecchio centro).

Il Comune offre i servizi scolastici di base e una sezione superiore dell'istituto di moda; soddisfacente anche la dotazione di attrezzature sportive (campi di calcetto, bocce, tennis, calcio e piscina) mentre non esistono presidi sanitari, ragion per cui la popolazione è costretta a spostarsi presso la struttura poli-ambulatoriale di Salemi o presso i presidi ospedalieri di Castelvetrano e Mazara del Valle.

L'economia è ancora trainata dal settore agricolo difatti il territorio ospita importanti impianti per la produzione e trasformazione dei prodotti vitivinicoli e olivicoli, ma anche piccole aziende di tipo zootecnico e prodotti lattiero - caseari; si è anche cercato di dare un contributo alla valorizzazione dell'economia locale attraverso l'apertura di mercati rionali.

Il paese ha una densità demografica leggermente superiore a quella dei comuni limitrofi, seppur lontana dalla media provinciale, l'andamento demografico nell'ultimo decennio è stato fortemente negativo a causa di un bilancio naturale che tende ad assottigliarsi e di una forte migrazione verso i paesi del Nord.

Il degrado sociale, di dimensione media, è presente nei quartieri di periferia (mentre nel vecchio centro storico numerosi sono gli esempi di degrado ambientale), i problemi principali riguardano la disoccupazione e il lavoro nero, oltre ai bassi tassi di scolarità.

Il Comune è ritenuto abbastanza sicuro, le zone oggetto di criminalità si trovano in periferia ai margini con la zona agricola e il tipo di reati più diffusi sono il furto e lo spaccio, anche se quest'ultima tipologia di crimine ha scarsa incidenza poiché l'approvvigionamento di stupefacenti proviene dai comuni limitrofi.

Bassa risulta la percentuale dei reati denunciati (inferiore al 40%); i crimini sono

commessi perlopiù da soggetti con bassi livelli di scolarità che vivono in ambienti violenti o da immigrati, le vittime sono donne anziane con bassi livelli d'istruzione.

Sono stati effettuati e pianificati per il futuro interventi di videosorveglianza per innalzare i livelli di sicurezza del territorio (in particolare nel centro urbano), sebbene sia un'opinione comune ai responsabili della vita politica e sociale del Comune, la necessità di una maggior coinvolgimento della cittadinanza e del Governo nazionale per contrastare il fenomeno della criminalità; problemi quali quello della tossicodipendenza e della disoccupazione sono avvertiti come troppo ampi per essere gestiti a livello locale.

### **Calatafimi –Segesta**

Arroccato su una collina, il territorio di Calatafimi-Segesta risulta caratterizzato dalla presenza di un centro storico, solo marginalmente danneggiato dal terremoto del '68, in cui risiede ancora la maggior parte degli abitanti e in cui si trovano le attività commerciali e i principali servizi pubblici.

In direzione Ovest, in contrada Sasi, ricade un'area di edilizia pubblica di tipo residenziale e industriale, di più recente costruzione, distante circa tre chilometri dal nucleo abitativo centrale e contigua all'area industriale di Alcamo.

Lo stato dei collegamenti stradali con i centri più grandi e con il capoluogo provinciale è tutto sommato soddisfacente, grazie soprattutto al ruolo svolto dal vicino svincolo autostradale; più difficile la mobilità provinciale verso l'entroterra del salemitano: a causa delle frequenti piogge durante il periodo invernale, le strade provinciali sono spesso colpite da frane e smottamenti.

Trattasi di un'area a prevalenza agricola (vitigni e uliveti circondano la collina di Calatafimi), settore che vive un periodo di forte flessione che ha spinto molti degli agricoltori ad abbandonare i propri terreni.

Anche il settore edile, che aveva avuto un forte slancio negli anni 80 a seguito dei finanziamenti pubblici confluiti per la ricostruzione, vive una fase di profonda stagnazione.

Il paese nonostante la presenza dell'antico parco archeologico di Segesta, teatro di manifestazioni drammatiche di rilevanza internazionale che nel periodo estivo e meta di un turismo di tipo eminentemente culturale, è solo in minima parte interessato da questo flusso turistico.

Calatafimi ha anche una forte tradizione folcloristica, correlata alla devozione religiosa del SS. Crocifisso ma, nonostante la presenza di numerose risorse culturali e ambientali, il territorio non ha sviluppato appieno l'offerta turistica a causa di una pluralità di fattori: scarsa la qualità dei servizi offerti, inesistenza di servizi alberghieri ed extra - alberghieri adeguati, inefficacia delle politiche di marketing territoriale attivate.

In progettazione, oramai da oltre un decennio, la creazione di un parco mistico, ricomprendente il territorio che va da c/da Kaggera alla strada provinciale, che avrebbe

dovuto incentivare la presenza di un turismo religioso.

La catastrofe sismica prima e la recessione poi, hanno pesantemente influito sui flussi migratori in uscita che si sono impennati negli anni susseguenti, tanto che molte case risultano al momento non occupate e presentano vasti segni di abbandono e fatiscenza.

Sul territorio del Comune e in particolare nell'area che va da via Tenente Li Bassi a Via Elia, insistono una pluralità di beni, per la maggior parte acquisiti dall'Amministrazione, del tutto fatiscenti, abbandonati dai proprietari che hanno utilizzato i finanziamenti ottenuti per ricostruire in aree più distanti, rinunciando alla proprietà degli stessi.

La popolazione, essenzialmente anziana, con livelli socio-culturali medio bassi, è composta da agricoltori, pensionati e dipendenti del settore pubblico; vi sono ampie sacche di disagio sociale, determinate dalla disoccupazione e dalla presenza di un'economia sommersa.

Il Comune offre i servizi scolastici di base (scuole materne e scuole medie, siti nelle aree periferiche e alcuni istituti tecnico professionali, C/da Sasi), frequentati per la maggior parte da soggetti derivanti dagli strati sociali più bassi, che hanno visto una forte riduzione delle classi, per cui i giovani che volessero proseguire gli studi, sono costretti a recarsi presso i vicini centri di Trapani, Castellammare del Golfo e Alcamo.

L'offerta dei servizi extra-scolastici è scarsa, sebbene il Comune abbia progettato la creazione di una struttura sportiva proprio in C/da Sasi.

Il quartiere popolare, appare un agglomerato anonimo, estremamente dispersivo, privo di punti di aggregazione (fatta eccezione per la presenza di una parrocchia allocata dentro la palestra scolastica precedentemente dismessa), non esistono alcuni servizi di base, quali farmacie e uffici postali e i residenti sono costretti a spostarsi nel centro antico per il soddisfacimento della maggior parte dei bisogni primari.

In questa parte del territorio sono stati attivati interventi di manutenzione e risanamento degli insediamenti a edificazione pubblica che versavano in uno stato di degrado urbano e per il futuro si prevede il completamento di opere di urbanizzazione primaria e secondaria in cui saranno insediate piccole imprese di tipo artigianale.

Il degrado investe anche le zone agricole, in alcune delle quali sono presenti aree adibite al conferimento abusivo dei rifiuti (a testimonianza di una generale mancanza di senso civico dei cittadini).

La percezione dei livelli di sicurezza da parte delle Autorità tende a confermare che il territorio sia tutto sommato tranquillo, sebbene vi sia una certa ritrosia nei cittadini a sporgere denuncia.

Si registrano episodi sporadici di spaccio e furto, ma il fenomeno delinquenziale appare chiaramente correlato alla disoccupazione, che colpisce in particolar modo i giovani e ai bassi livelli d'istruzione.

Vittime sono perlopiù le donne anziane che vivono in aree periferiche, a confine con i

territori agricoli e in una condizione di forte isolamento.

Il controllo del territorio è assicurato dalla presenza di posti di blocco e pattugliamento delle zone a rischio o maggiormente trafficate (via A. De Gasperi) e il Comune si sta attrezzando per la realizzazione d'impianti di videosorveglianza per innalzare i livelli di sicurezza.

Opinione assai condivisa è che la lotta alla criminalità sul territorio, passi non solo attraverso il controllo del territorio da parte degli inquirenti, ma anche e soprattutto, sia correlata a un problema di legalità diffuso, tipico di una mentalità culturale povera di senso civico e di patrimonio identitario.

In tal senso, significativa è la presenza sul territorio di associazioni quali Libera, impegnate a livello regionale per diffondere la cultura della legalità e liberare il territorio delle mafie, attraverso l'organizzazione di eventi, manifestazioni e attività che consentano ai cittadini di sentirsi parte di una comunità più ampia.

### **Campobello di Mazara**

Il comune di Campobello di Mazara, di circa diecimila abitanti, è composto da un nucleo urbano accentrato, intorno al quale s'irradia una vasta area rurale, anche di tipo residenziale, che si estende senza soluzione di continuità fino alle coste su cui ricadono le due frazioni balneari di Torretta Granitola e Tre Fontane.

Il nucleo originario si è sviluppato intorno a un antico castello (trasformato successivamente in un palazzo baronale) ed era costituito da due lunghe file edifici contigui all'attuale via Garibaldi e viale Risorgimento (aree in cui si concentrano poche attività commerciali e parte dei servizi pubblici), intorno ai quali si è poi proceduto a inserire gli insediamenti di più recente costruzione.

Le unità abitative, in cui si concentra la maggior parte della popolazione, sono posizionate a schiera sui margini stradali, trattasi di residenze per lo più unifamiliari a due o massimo tre elevazioni.

Il recente sviluppo urbanistico ha marginalizzato il vecchio nucleo che ospita comunque le principali evidenze storico-architettoniche (palazzo ducale e chiesa mare), un istituto scolastico comprensivo e i servizi comunali e bancari; nel tentativo di ridare centralità all'area s'inserisce la creazione del museo della storia contadina sito in un antico palazzo nobiliare.

Sono stati effettuati degli interventi di manutenzione straordinaria e di restauro conservativo, il primo in via delle Rose per la riparazione della condotta idrica e il secondo al palazzo comunale.

Il piano regolatore stilato dal Comune, in vista di una maggiore razionalizzazione degli spazi, prevede la rilocalizzazione delle attività produttive che ricadono ancora all'interno del centro urbano e individua due nuove aree per gli insediamenti produttivi: la prima

all'ingresso Nord-orientale della città (tra la via Vittorio Emanuele e la circonvallazione est) da destinare ad attività di tipo agricolo; la seconda, a ridosso della stazione ferroviaria a Ovest della città, da destinare all'insediamento prevalentemente di attività produttive artigianali e industriali, con annesse aree per l'esposizione e il commercio.

All'interno del piano sono previsti anche investimenti per l'espansione della edilizia popolare che interesseranno la contrada Erbe Bianche, dove già esistono altri insediamenti popolari.

La frazione di Torretta Granitola è un piccolo borgo marinaro risalente alla prima metà del 1800, sede di un'antica tonnara oramai in disuso e di un faro ancora attivo, distante pochi chilometri dal centro di Campobello; la frazione si è oramai trasformata in luogo di villeggiatura ambito dai residenti dei comuni limitrofi per la tranquillità della zona.

In quest'area ricade un centro socio-assistenziale per disabili, qualche bar e attività di ristorazione, poco distante è stato costruito un villaggio turistico composto da residence; si registra la carenza di spazi pubblici e di un adeguato sistema viario.

Per tale zona è stato previsto un piano di riordino urbanistico mirato anche al recupero della qualità degli edifici (in particolare per le aree più esterne) l'adeguamento degli standard di viabilità e delle attrezzature collettive necessarie al miglioramento delle condizioni di vivibilità.

Ben diversa appare la realtà di Tre Fontane, litorale sabbioso circondato da numerosi agglomerati perlopiù di tipo abusivo che durante la stagione estiva si riempie fino a sfiorare le settantamila unità; oltre all'assenza di attrezzature pubbliche, molte sono le aree urbane non ancora completate per cui ci si è attivati perseguendo logiche di riqualificazione edilizia.

La contrada ospita numerosi stabilimenti balneari concentrati perlopiù nell'area centrale, all'estremità del territorio si sono sviluppate le attività attinenti la nautica da diporto e gli sport acquatici; nel tratto orientale è stato costruito anche un parco giochi acquatico - in prossimità della limitrofa frazione di Triscina.

Campobello è anche sede di un sito archeologico di particolare valore che si trova a circa una decina di chilometri a Ovest, si tratta della zona delle cosiddette Cave di Cusa dalle quali in passato venivano estratti i materiali per le costruzioni locali; il sito è stato restaurato e viene saltuariamente utilizzato per eventi e spettacoli.

Data la vicinanza con Castelvetro, il rapporto tra due centri abitati è particolarmente stretto, ciò consente ai cittadini di Campobello di fruire giornalmente dei servizi offerti dal centro maggiore (da segnalare in proposito che nella zona di separazione tra i due centri insistono le rispettive aree di espansione; ne deriva una tendenza alla progressiva conurbazione dei due insediamenti); sia per i comuni interessi relativi all'infrastrutturazione del territorio (collegamento delle rispettive frazioni costiere) e alla tutela ambientale, sia infine per i comuni interessi economici in campo turistico e in campo agro-alimentare

in considerazione del fatto che il Comune rimane un grosso centro agricolo, vocato alla coltivazione dell'olivo e al settore vitivinicolo, caratterizzato, comunque, anche da fiorenti attività artigianali.

La crisi economica, il bassissimo ricavo che si ottiene dalla lavorazione del prodotto agricolo, hanno determinato nell'ultimo ventennio l'abbandono totale dei giovani dell'imprenditoria agricola, in cerca di un lavoro permanente in grado di garantire un'esistenza dignitosa, fenomeno in virtù del quale l'attività agricola, oramai affidata ai pochi imprenditori campobellesi, viene realizzata mediante l'impiego di manodopera stagionale offerta per lo più dagli immigrati stranieri.

La migrazione delle famiglie che ha causato una forte contrazione della popolazione scolastica, è bilanciata in parte, proprio dal consistente numero di alunni extracomunitari, alcuni dei quali provenienti dalla Tunisia e dal Marocco, altri di seconda o terza generazione, le cui famiglie soggiornano nel territorio da molti anni.

Il grande afflusso d'immigrati stranieri nel comune di Campobello è un fenomeno che ha avuto dei riflessi sociali importanti; se da un lato, sopperendo alla mancanza di manodopera giovanile italiana, ha permesso che la tradizione agricola continuasse sotto la direzione della piccola imprenditoria locale, dall'altro si è innescato un processo d'integrazione sociale che è ben lontano dall'essersi totalmente concluso (numerose sono le situazioni limite, soprattutto nei periodi di maggior fabbisogno, come la raccolta, durante i quali intere zone del comune, vicine ai margini del paese, sono occupate da tendopoli abusive in cui si insediano i braccianti agricoli e, a detta delle autorità, proprio in questi periodi sembrerebbe registrarsi un forte aumento dei furti e dei danneggiamenti nelle abitazioni delle località balneari e del paese.

Nonostante le difficoltà economiche e il periodo di austerità, si diffondono su tutto il territorio i punti raccolta scommesse e le sale giochi attrezzate anche per le attività on-line.

La situazione economica dei residenti del Comune è molto disomogenea, sebbene sia possibile affermare che la classe sociale più rappresentata nel territorio è quella composta dal ceto medio basso, per lo più impiegati e pensionati, lavoratori dipendenti appartenenti al settore terziario pubblico e privato, piccoli imprenditori e una fascia di manovalanza nel settore edile e agricolo; è diffuso il lavoro nero che colpisce soprattutto la forza lavoro agricola.

Esiste anche un nucleo sempre più consistente di famiglie che vivono ai margini sociali, con problemi economici rilevanti e situazioni di estremo degrado culturale, la maggior parte delle quali sono concentrate nella contrada Erbe Bianche, un'area di recente costruzione, priva di qualsiasi tipo di servizio che si colloca ai margini della strada provinciale che congiunge Campobello Di Mazara alla località balneare di Tre Fontane.

Il Comune presenta un elevato rischio ambientale, culturale e sociale, sia sotto l'aspetto dei fenomeni di emarginazione e della dispersione scolastica, sia sotto quelli della legalità e della macrocriminalità.



Numerosi gli interventi delle Forze dell'Ordine, spesso nei quartieri popolari (Erbe Bianche), che hanno tentato di sradicare il fenomeno mafioso, lo spaccio di sostanze stupefacenti e lo svolgimento delle attività illecite, tra cui la raccolta abusiva di rifiuti speciali (ferro e rame).

La storia di Campobello è intrinsecamente legata a una forte concentrazione mafiosa; il territorio è ritenuto dalle autorità giudiziali una delle roccaforti del boss latitante castelvetranese Matteo Messina Denaro e gli inquirenti hanno evidenziato l'esistenza di forti collegamenti tra noti esponenti locali e amministratori pubblici; non a caso il Comune nell'ultimo ventennio è stato commissariato per ben due volte poiché si è accertata la presenza d'infiltrazioni mafiose nel consiglio comunale; molte inchieste hanno, inoltre, portato al sequestro di attività e beni riconducibili ad attività illecite.

Il recente arresto del Sindaco con conseguente scioglimento di tutte le autorità politiche del territorio comunale non solo ha lasciato la popolazione senza guida politica segnando un periodo d'impasse, ma ha segnato, in maniera diretta e indiretta, tutta la classe politica della città e tutta la popolazione residente che manifesta la sensazione di abbandono, insicurezza e sfiducia nei confronti delle istituzioni politiche e giuridiche in generale.

Il controllo del territorio da parte delle cosche è pressoché totale, per cui il fenomeno della microcriminalità non è particolarmente rilevante; trattasi di furti sporadici che colpiscono gli agglomerati popolari nelle frazione balneare di Tre Fontane e le zone ai margini della città, durante i mesi invernali; fenomeni di spaccio e lavoro nero.

Se appare chiaro che i cittadini sono ben consci della scarsa sicurezza del proprio territorio, per contro la stessa cittadinanza sembra segnata da un atteggiamento di forte connivenza, testimoniato dalla bassa percentuale dei reati denunciati all'autorità.

I crimini più spiccioli sono commessi da immigrati, poveri e da quanti vivono in zone di emarginazione; le vittime sono anziani, soggetti di sesso femminile e individui con bassi livelli d'istruzione.

Le attività più colpite sono quelle legate al commercio e alla ristorazione e l'analisi dei reati evidenzia una certa propensione a colpire quelle realtà che risultano più distanti dal centro abitato (plausibilmente poiché nel centro storico sono stati disposti sistemi di videosorveglianza che frenano l'attività delinquenziale).

Le autorità insistono sull'importanza di un maggior coinvolgimento della popolazione per arginare i fenomeni criminali e sulla necessità di affrontare in maniera collegiale piaghe sociali quali la disoccupazione e il lavoro nero, la cui dimensione appare a oggi troppo rilevante per essere affrontata a livello comunale.

### **Castelvetrano-Selinunte**

Il comune di Castelvetrano, composto da circa trentamila abitanti e, sito in un'area pianeggiante e ricca di vegetazione all'estremità Sud-occidentale della provincia,

rappresenta il centro economico principale dell'entroterra del Belice.

La cittadina è servita da uno svincolo autostradale e da numerose vie di accesso a strade statali e provinciali che consentono una certa rapidità nei collegamenti tra la città e le provincie più vicine di Agrigento e di Palermo.

Il centro è dotato anche di una stazione ferroviaria che ha sempre rappresentato uno snodo importante per la Valle del Belice e della Sicilia occidentale, ma che oggi è largamente sottoutilizzata; le officine, le rimesse dei treni, i magazzini e gli altri piccoli e grandi fabbricati destinati a depositi vari, sono ormai da anni dismessi, e hanno subito il degrado del tempo.

L'amministrazione Comunale, che ha sempre sentito la necessità di collegare la vecchia cittadina con la zona di nuovo sviluppo verso l'autostrada, ha condiviso il progetto di riqualificazione urbana così che l'area possa diventare futura cerniera di scambio tra la città consolidata e la nuova città in espansione.

Il programma dovrebbe portare anche al ripristino della tratta ferroviaria Marinella di Selinunte (Parco Archeologico) – foce del Belice, per dare un rinnovato slancio all'economia turistica.

Se l'attività economica prevalente è ancora rappresentata dal settore agricolo, con coltivazioni di uliveti e vigneti, detto settore risente notevolmente della crisi economica cui si aggiunge il problema sociale dell'abbandono da parte dei giovani delle attività agricole.

Il Comune è diventato anche un nodo commerciale strategico per tutta l'area provinciale: poco distante dallo svincolo autostradale dell'A29, in contrada Strasatto, nell'ultimo decennio si è difatti sviluppata un'importante area commerciale e artigianale (sebbene in realtà non tutte le infrastrutture previste siano state completate), caratterizzata da aziende che operano prevalentemente nel settore dell'abbigliamento e dell'alimentare (da sottolineare una vasta presenza, nel settore, della comunità cinese).

A fronte della progressiva chiusura delle attività storiche di tipo tradizionale, si registra invece l'apertura di molti punti di scommesse e dei "compro oro", dette attività evidenziano un latente disagio sociale dovuto alla mancanza di nuovi sbocchi occupazionali.

In direzione totalmente opposta all'area commerciale sorge una vasta zona di edilizia pubblica (quartiere Belvedere), nello specifico si tratta di un rione posto nel territorio meridionale nella città che, partendo dalla via Campobello, si estende verso Nord-est.

Il centro pre-urbano e parte di quello urbano sono caratterizzati da abitazioni di recente costruzione, per lo più unifamiliari e con un massimo di due o tre elevazioni.

Il centro storico è stato oggetto d'interventi di riqualificazione al fine di aumentare la sostenibilità del traffico viario e di valorizzare il patrimonio storico locale; oggetto di questo intervento è stato, in particolare, il Sistema delle Piazze (trattasi di tre piazze contigue tra di loro che costituiscono l'ossatura del nucleo storico), punto di riferimento e d'incontro per i residenti.

Nel pieno centro storico si è proceduto alla creazione di nuovi posti auto e sono stati avviati i lavori per il completamento dell'intervento di restauro di alcuni locali di proprietà comunale, in via Quattro Novembre, da utilizzare quale centro per la prevenzione del rischio di marginalità sociale e per il miglioramento della qualità della vita e per il recupero dell'ex Convento San Francesco di Paola, in piazza Escrivà, che porterà alla creazione di un vero e proprio Centro Polifunzionale di Cultura, con mediateca, pinacoteca, biblioteca, aula informatica, aule didattiche, laboratori, centro congressi e uffici.

A Nord del nucleo primario si è sviluppata un'area residenziale di tipo privato, popolata da un ceto medio impegnato nel settore terziario.

Nel territorio di Castelvetrano si trovano i servizi indispensabili cui fanno riferimento anche la maggior parte dei comuni limitrofi: uffici postali, negozi di vario genere (molti delle attività più prestigiose sono concentrate nell'area più antica), banche, ville comunali, il Teatro Comunale, la Biblioteche e l'Ospedale e anche una struttura di detenzione.

Parecchie sono le parrocchie che, dislocate nei vari punti della città, costituiscono un forte punto di riferimento per bambini, adolescenti e ragazzi; altra preziosa risorsa è costituita dalle numerose palestre, associazioni sportive e culturali, AIAS, Caritas, scuole di danza classica e moderna che interagiscono sinergicamente come sistema formativo integrato assieme alla scuola presente su tutto il territorio con una vasta offerta di servizi dell'obbligo e d'istituti superiori (punto di riferimento per i comuni limitrofi dell'entroterra).

La città di Castelvetrano, comprende all'interno del proprio territorio anche due frazioni: Marinella di Selinunte che ospita anche uno dei più grandi parchi archeologici d'Italia e numerose strutture ricettive e di ristorazione; Triscina, sede d'insediamenti residenziali di tipo stagionale, è rinomata per il proprio lido balneare.

Le due frazioni hanno un assetto urbanistico ben differente; l'abitato di Selinunte è sorto alla fine dell'ottocento e da borgo marinaro si è trasformato in un centro turistico - balneare (ristoranti e piccole boutique collocati perlopiù nella via principale, mentre gli hotel e i residence si espandono nelle zone circostanti) e con spiagge incontaminate e un mare limpido che solo marginalmente è stato interessato dal fenomeno dell'abusivismo, poiché per la frazione sono state adottate regole urbanistiche abbastanza rigide fin dall'inizio (da segnalare un'area di lottizzazione circostante il parco archeologico ove è stato realizzato l'unico edificio pubblico ossia una colonia estiva per bambini); Triscina invece, non ha un assetto urbanistico organizzato, trattasi piuttosto di un esempio di edilizia spontanea in gran parte di tipo abusivo che solo in parte è stata sanata grazie ai condoni (circa cinque mila case di cui oltre 800 insanabili), trattasi di case unifamiliari a un'elevazione o al massimo due elevazioni e di modesta fattura che fino a qualche anno fa non disponevano delle opere di urbanizzazione primaria, le poche attività commerciali si trovano nella via principale e sono di tipo eminentemente stagionale.

Il tessuto sociale castelvetranese è abbastanza eterogeneo: esistono in alcune zone evidenti criticità economiche e sociali (bassi redditi, lavoro precario, disoccupazione) che emergono con maggiore evidenza nei quartieri popolari, costruiti negli anni settanta, di Belvedere e rione Amari, ove le problematiche delle famiglie di origine arrivano a condizionare pesantemente anche il percorso scolastico e formativo dei ragazzi (l'area registra elevati tassi di dispersione scolastica).

Da segnalare l'iniziativa spontanea da parte dei cittadini che da tempo si sono organizzati in un comitato di quartiere per cercare di proporre soluzioni utili a risolvere i problemi più pressanti.

E' da rilevare che questa zona è nota alle autorità anche per l'alto tasso di criminalità e in particolare per il fenomeno di spaccio di sostanze stupefacenti.

Proprio il quartiere di Belvedere è interessato da diversi investimenti pubblici per il risanamento dell'area che dovrebbero portare alla costruzione del Centro Polifunzionale Sociale e al recupero di alcuni edifici di edilizia popolare, nell'ambito del finanziamento del Contratto di Quartiere, co-finanziato dallo Stato, Regione, ente per la gestione delle case popolari e il Comune.

L'area, inoltre, è stata individuata come zona franca urbana (ossia soggetta a sgravi fiscali per facilitare l'insediamento di piccole e medie imprese di tipo artigianale), nella convinzione che la presenza di attività commerciali garantisca una maggiore sorveglianza e innalzi i livelli di sicurezza del territorio.

Le vicende di Castelvetrano sono strettamente interconnesse alla problematiche mafiose e alle vicende del boss Denaro, considerato dalle autorità come il più influente capomafia esistente.

Le indagini degli organi competenti hanno evidenziato l'esistenza di forti infiltrazioni nel settore dell'economia e della politica (frequenti sono le confische di beni nei confronti d'imprenditori locali cui la mafia risponde con incendi di tipo doloso) e una generale connivenza del tessuto sociale, tanto che si ritiene imprescindibile nella lotta alla criminalità organizzata, la promozione da parte degli enti locali di azioni di sensibilizzazione alla cultura della legalità per i giovani.

Al fine di contrastare il fenomeno mafioso territorialmente presente nel Comune, le istituzioni effettuano un controllo capillare del territorio affinché lo stesso possa essere percepito come sicuro dalla comunità, in realtà la presenza delle forze dell'ordine appare poco incisiva, soprattutto in relazione alla microcriminalità che negli ultimi tempi affligge il circuito cittadino (rapine, furti, danneggiamenti a beni pubblici e privati); anche il sistema di videosorveglianza di cui il Comune è dotato appare spesso fuori uso per mancanza di manutenzione.

E da rilevare che le frazioni balneari di Selinunte e Triscina, che godono di un turismo stagionale, in particolar modo nel periodo estivo, nei mesi invernali sono quasi totalmente

disabitate e pertanto sono oggetto d'innumerevoli furti e di reati contro il patrimonio.

Per soddisfare la crescente domanda di sicurezza urbana manifestata dalla cittadinanza, in special modo nelle serate di alcuni giorni della settimana in cui si assiste a un particolare movimento di cittadini e giovani provenienti anche dalle località limitrofe al nostro Comune, l'Amministrazione ha deciso di adottare misure straordinarie, dirette a contrastare qualsiasi forma d'illegalità, al fine di assicurare la sicurezza urbana e dei cittadini, rafforzando i controlli serali.

In conclusione, alla luce della disamina del territorio e delle interviste effettuate è possibile ritenere che Castelvetro presenti un livello di criminalità direttamente legato alla propria storia e alle attività economiche connesse ai settori produttivi esistenti e dovute soprattutto al fenomeno mafioso e di collusione politica; in ragione di tali caratteristiche le Autorità tendono a percepire il proprio territorio come tendenzialmente tranquillo poiché non particolarmente scosso, se non nell'ultimo periodo, da episodi frequenti di microcriminalità che tendono ad avere un impatto più drammatico sulla comunità.

### **Partanna**

Partanna situato fra le valli del Modione a Ovest e del Belice a Est, è un centro agricolo distante circa a ottanta chilometri del capoluogo di provincia Trapani.

Il suo centro storico in cui ricadono i principali servizi amministrativi, la stazione dei carabinieri e le attività commerciali, si concentra intorno a un antico Castello; in seguito al sisma molti edifici subirono danni, come la Chiesa Madre, altri invece furono completamente distrutti; nelle immediate vicinanze, tra le palazzine restaurate e gli edifici storici, vi sono ancora gli squarci lasciati dalle abitazioni danneggiate.

Dopo il terremoto, sorse un nuovo quartiere in contrada Camarro, che si trova a un livello più basso rispetto alla città storica e in cui vive più della metà della popolazione; la contrada, interessata dalla presenza della maggior parte degli istituti scolastici, è perlopiù caratterizzata da edilizia di tipo residenziale e da ampi spazi destinati al verde pubblico che sono in larga parte abbandonati o versano in uno stato di degrado a causa di atti di vandalismo (da segnalare l'attività di pulizia di alcune aree a opera di volontari).

A destra dell'asse stradale che collega il centro con la circonvallazione, sorge una vasta area di edilizia popolare che in parte ripropone il modello urbanistico delle case-giardino di Gibellina; alcune zone sono state oggetto d'interventi di riqualificazione urbana attraverso la costruzione di opere di urbanizzazione primaria e secondaria e d'interventi di arredo pubblico.

A qualche chilometro a Est dall'abitato, in contrada Stretto, vi è una vasta un'area archeologica risalente al periodo neolitico (resa accessibile ai visitatori grazie a fondi del piano operativo regionale) e anche in pieno centro, non lontano dalla Chiesa Madre di Partanna, si trova un sito preistorico; questi beni sono stati riportati a nuova luce grazie

alle campagne di scavo e ai campi di volontariato organizzati dalla Soprintendenza per i Beni Culturali e Archeologici di Trapani, dall'Amministrazione comunale di Partanna, in collaborazione con associazioni culturali locali e atenei italiani ed europei.

Il Comune ha, inoltre, avviato numerosi interventi per il risanamento e la riqualificazione urbana del territorio; ad esempio il Castello Grifeo, dopo un lungo periodo di restauro, è diventato se di un polo museale che ospita manifestazioni ed eventi che richiamano anche i cittadini dei comuni limitrofi; dato il fenomeno di forte abbandono del territorio, gli stessi amministratori ammettono una certa difficoltà a individuare politiche di programmazione futura che consentano di dare nuova linfa vitale al tessuto socio-economico.

Sussistono in modo molto marginale problemi legati alla bassa scolarità ma il disagio sociale più grave è determinato dalla disoccupazione e dal lavoro nero, oltre che dalla diffusione della tossicodipendenza soprattutto presso le fasce più giovani; in misura molto bassa si evidenziano problemi legati alla disgregazione dei gruppi familiari.

Il comune di Partanna è composto da un ceto medio-alto, la classe impiegatizia ricopre oltre il cinquanta per cento della popolazione residente; la composizione delle famiglie è di tipo mononucleare, ciascun gruppo è costituito in media da quattro persone; i redditi provengono prevalentemente oltre che dall'impiego pubblico anche dall'attività agricola; altre attività lavorative minori sono l'edilizia, l'artigianato, il commercio.

Nel paese mancano sale cinematografiche e centri culturali attivi, mentre operano diversi centri sportivi pubblici e privati che consentono ai giovani di praticare sia la disciplina tennistica sia quella calcistica, numerose le associazioni culturali, gruppi musicali e teatrali, associazioni di volontari per l'assistenza agli anziani e ai disabili cui è rivolto anche un servizio di centro diurno.

Partanna, un paese che in passato è stato teatro di lotte intestine tra clan mafiosi, solo in parte è stata riscattata dal sacrificio di una giovane collaboratrice di giustizia (proveniente da una famiglia mafiosa) che, sfiduciata dopo le stragi di Falcone e Borsellino, morì suicida.

La comunità è rimasta sostanzialmente indifferente, la sua tomba (distrutta dalla stessa mare a simbolo del suo ripudio) è stata più volte danneggiata e la villa a lei dedicata giace in condizioni di degrado.

Oggi il paese vive un periodo di apparente tranquillità. Il territorio è percepito come abbastanza sicuro da parte dei cittadini, la percentuale dei reati denunciati, non si discosta di molto da quella dei comuni limitrofi, anche se le attività investigative hanno svelato commistioni tra imprenditori locali e cosche; le aree con maggiori problemi coinvolgono soprattutto l'estremità occidentale della zona di recente costruzione, mentre il centro storico è spesso caratterizzato da episodi di spaccio.

L'area residenziale, confinante con i terreni agricoli, è spesso colpita da fenomeni di furto ad opera perlopiù di giovani che versano in stato di disoccupazione e di forte disagio; la presenza di attività commerciali sul territorio non sembra avere effetti positivi

sui livelli di sicurezza della zona e i cittadini delle zone a rischio si sentono abbandonati; si auspica un maggior intervento della Regione e del Governo nazionale per contrastare i fenomeni criminali e il rilancio di politiche di sviluppo e promozione locale per porre un freno al problema dello spopolamento dei piccoli comuni.

### **Poggioreale**

Poggioreale, nonostante l'abitato storico fosse ancora in larga parte integro, fu dichiarata inagibile a causa del sisma e il nuovo centro urbano fu trasferito in un insediamento su un pendio più a valle (luogo scelto poiché non esistevano territori più idonei nelle immediate vicinanze del centro storico e che necessitò di una serie di opere per la messa in sicurezza e il rimboschimento dell'area); il Comune si è sviluppato intorno a assi circolari intersecati dalle aree destinate alle attrezzature pubbliche intorno alle quali sorgono, secondo uno schema a gradoni, le costruzioni di tipo residenziale.

Nel primo nucleo abitativo a Sud, arrivando dal via del Belice, è stata costruita la scuola elementare e quella superiore di primo grado; proseguendo verso l'alto, in direzione Nord-est si trova la scuola materna e, poco distante, una larga piazza di matrice neoclassiceggianti (su cui s'interveniva per darle un aspetto più vicino agli assetti tradizionali e che avrebbe dovuto ospitare le attività artigianali) intorno alla quale sorgono i principali servizi amministrativi e pubblici; la sede del Municipio, il teatro comunale (ancora in fase di completamento), la chiesa; l'area adibita al mercato, il centro sociale, la biblioteca comunale (se di un museo etno-antropologico dedicato alla cultura contadina).

Continuando a salire lungo la strada principale si trovano i servizi bancari; poco distante, in una zona leggermente più defilata, la stazione dei carabinieri e nella sommità si trova una piazza circolare attraversata da un viadotto pedonale intorno alla quale sorgono insediamenti residenziali.

Alle estremità del territorio, quasi in contiguità con i terreni agricoli, sorge la maggior parte di edifici di edilizia pubblica residenziale, molti dei quali per molto tempo sono rimasti disabitati e successivamente sono stati posti in vendita per cercare di sottrarli al degrado.

Sono stati realizzati degli interventi di manutenzione straordinaria aventi a oggetto il rifacimento del manto stradale e la sistemazione degli alloggi popolari, il ripristino funzionale di alcuni edifici, l'arredo pubblico e la messa in sicurezza del costone orientale promossi dalle istituzioni locali con finanziamenti nazionali e comunitari.

Il territorio è oggetto di un turismo transitorio interessato all'area dei ruderi (per la quale è stato presentato un progetto di recupero e valorizzazione che s'integra con il recupero già compiuto del Convento dei Cappuccini e della Chiesa Madre, al fine di consentirne inserimento all'interno della rete museale belicina).

Poggioreale come Salaparuta, appartiene alle aree rurali intermedie, ossia caratterizzate

da importanti attività agricole (coltivazioni permanenti), come ad esempio l'area vitivinicola e che potenzialmente, grazie alla vicinanza con altri territori con maggiore appeal, potrebbero integrare queste attività con altre quali la ristorazione e il turismo rurale che non risultano al momento implementate.

La vocazione agricola del territorio trova testimonianza non solo nel piccolo museo, ma anche nelle sagre e manifestazioni che ripropongono al visitatore i sapori e i colori delle antiche tradizioni, tra cui la Sagra della ricotta e dei Formaggi, la Sagra della Muffuletta.

Non vi sono particolari zone di degrado sociale e la popolazione può definirsi omogenea, nel senso che vi è una certa integrazione tra i diversi gruppi sociali per cui non vi è una netta differenziazione.

I problemi sociali più gravi riguardano l'emigrazione dei giovani in massa verso altre città in cerca di lavoro, la povertà, la disoccupazione (sono previsti finanziamenti per la riattivazione delle economie locali).

Il comune di Poggioreale si può definire abbastanza sicuro, anche se il fenomeno criminale è plausibilmente sottostimato a causa di un atteggiamento di refrattarietà da parte della cittadinanza e delle stesse autorità; solo il trenta per cento dei reati viene effettivamente denunciato; le zone più a rischio si trovano ai margini della città, al confine tra il centro abitato e la zona agricola.

La tipologia criminale è legata allo sfruttamento di manodopera irregolare e allo spaccio e alla detenzione di sostanze stupefacenti e i crimini sono commessi perlopiù da coloro che vivono nelle aree di edilizia pubblica residenziale, poveri e giovani.

Premesso che lo sviluppo delle condizioni di legalità è sostenuto non solo da politiche di controllo del territorio (nel comune è stato attivato un progetto per l'installazione di telecamere di sicurezza) ma anche dalla promozione di azione di sviluppo socio-culturale, si ritiene che a tal fine occorra avviare una maggiore attività di concertazione che coinvolga sia la comunità locale sia le istituzioni provinciali.

### **Salaparuta**

Il centro urbano di Salaparuta, di cui rimangono solo alcuni ruderi, dopo il terremoto fu ricostruito a qualche chilometro di distanza nella valle dell'Alto Belice, secondo i modelli urbanistici delle new town, caratterizzati da ampie strade e vasti spiazzi, circondati da spazi verdi che avrebbero dovuto fungere anche da punto d'incontro per la comunità locale; qui, come del resto nella vicina Poggioreale, emergono tutte le criticità che il terremoto prima e la ricostruzione poi, hanno portato con sé.

Il Comune è poco inserito all'interno del circuito della mobilità provinciale e regionale (rete viaria carente e inadeguato servizio di trasporto pubblico), vi è inoltre un problema di sovradimensionamento della dotazione infrastrutturale, in ragione del quale molti edifici versano in uno stato di abbandono; dominante l'effetto di straniamento rispetto



alle scelte del disegno urbanistico che non hanno aiutato la popolazione a ricostruire la propria identità; l'economia, caratterizzata in massima parte da aziende che operano nel settore vitivinicolo (alcune delle quali affermate a livello internazionale), è in forte crisi determinata da una flessione a livello nazionale ma altresì acuita anche dalla scarsa disponibilità delle risorse idriche.

La maggior parte delle abitazioni è costituita da palazzine mono - familiari, dai colori chiari, composte da due o al massimo tre piani, gli alloggi popolari (che ricadono nelle aree di via Trentino e via Sardegna) sono stati costruiti negli anni settanta e, contrariamente a quanto avvenuto in altre zone, sono stati ben integrati nel tessuto urbano.

In realtà molti nuclei di edilizia pubblica non sono mai stati consegnati per mancanza di utenza, per cui sono abbandonati, tanto che in passato si era proposto di riconvertirli e destinarli a fini sociali (comunità di accoglienze per minori e diversamente abili), progetto che a oggi non ha avuto ancora nessun esito, ma che avrebbe avuto molteplici ricadute positive: la sottrazione dei beni al degrado, un aiuto concreto per le categorie sociali che presentano problemi di disagio e la possibilità di nuove prospettive occupazionali.

Per promuovere e potenziare il livello socio-assistenziale a favore dei cittadini a rischio emarginazione sociale, il territorio ospita una comunità di accoglienza per ragazze mari con gravi problemi familiari e personali e una casa di riposo per anziani, gestite da cooperative sociali.

Nel comune di Salaparuta, sono presenti una scuola materna e una scuola media, entrambi dipendenti da un punto di vista amministrativo dell'Istituto comprensivo di Santa Ninfa, esistono, inoltre, due istituti privati (uno per l'infanzia e l'altro per l'istruzione tecnica superiore secondaria); non ci sono asili nido né baby parking, ma un'area attrezzata all'aperto sita tra viale Lombardia e Via Matteotti, che è ancora in fase di completamento; l'offerta socio-culturale e d'intrattenimento è rappresentata dalla presenza di una biblioteca e da un campo sportivo.

Non esiste un'offerta scolastica adeguata che risponda alle esigenze né dei giovani, che si spostano su Castelvetro o Santa Ninfa, né a quelle delle famiglie con bambini molto piccoli, costrette a rivolgersi presso strutture a pagamento presenti nei comuni limitrofi (da segnare la futura apertura di un centro che dovrebbe accogliere minori da zero a tre anni, provenienti da nuclei familiari indigenti e dalla struttura ospitante le ragazze mari).

Il contesto sociale è composto perlopiù da anziani pensionati e da adulti impegnati in attività agricole e nel settore dei servizi pubblici e il tasso di disoccupazione è estremamente elevato; le famiglie sono per la maggior parte monoreddito e con un livello culturale medio - basso, la cura dei bambini e degli anziani è spesso affidata alla donne, categoria che insieme a quella giovanile, risulta la più colpita dal fenomeno della disoccupazione.

Da anni il Comune vive processi di spopolamento che lo hanno trasformato lentamente in un paese fantasma, poche le attività commerciali, pressoché inesistente

l'offerta ricettiva, fenomeno cui si è cercato d'intervenire attraverso progetti di servizio civile e per l'inserimento socio-lavorativo dei giovani.

La crisi economica ha innalzato i livelli di criminalità, la comunità appare turbata dall'incremento dei piccoli furti e delle truffe che colpiscono soprattutto le persone che vivono sole, l'attività di controllo dei carabinieri ha anche permesso di sventare alcuni reati contro il patrimonio pubblico (numerosi i danneggiamenti agli impianti elettrici per il furto del rame che viene poi rivenduto al mercato Nero)

Per garantire la sicurezza urbana e la tutela dell'ordine pubblico, gli amministratori comunali di Salaparuta, stanno cercando di sviluppare un progetto di videosorveglianza che dovrebbe interessare l'area artigianale nella zona tra via Garibaldi e via Mazzini e alcune vie del nuovo centro urbano.

### **Salemi**

Salemi, situata nell'entroterra siciliano, a pochi chilometri dallo svincolo autostradale "Mazara-Palermo", è circondata da colline coltivate a viti ed è uno dei territori più estesi della provincia di Trapani.

La città, in passato molto popolata, ha subito negli anni un fenomeno di progressivo esodo (determinato in parte dal terremoto che ha colpito la popolazione del Belice nel 1968 e in anni più recenti dalla crisi economica che ha colpito le piccole aziende presenti sul territorio).

Il centro storico, costituito da viuzze strette, in cui ancora sono collocati i servizi amministrativi di base e alcune attività economiche storiche, ha vissuto negli anni un fenomeno di abbandono in parte alimentato dalle stesse Istituzioni e dagli errori di programmazione della ricostruzione (i cittadini che ricevevano i contributi per la ricostruzione non avevano alcun obbligo di ricostruire nella stessa area, indi per cui molti hanno spostato i capitali ricevuti per ricostruire le proprie case nelle aree più lontane dal centro).

Per risanare questa parte del territorio (in cui insistono spazi fatiscenti e chiusi al pubblico) è stata lanciata l'iniziativa delle "case a 1 euro", ossia l'acquisto, a prezzi agevolati, di queste beni pressoché totalmente danneggiati, con l'obbligo di procedere alle opere di edificazione entro un periodo di tempo delimitato (in realtà sembrerebbero esistere problemi legati al rilascio delle concessioni e alla proprietà delle aree).

Al momento la situazione si presenta abbastanza disastrosa: sebbene in alcuni casi si siano effettuati vari interventi di restauro conservativo (ex Collegio de gesuiti, del Municipio e di una struttura in piazza Pare Pio), esistono molti edifici pericolanti e aree chiuse al pubblico (aree vie Cappasanta, Gullo, Fontanieri e Vicolo Stella e vie Anfuso, Bastioni, Alonzo e Santa Armata).

Attorno al centro, nella parte alta della cittadina si è sviluppata l'area moderna costituita

da case indipendenti e condomini su cui insistono molte attività commerciali (molte delle quali hanno cessato di esistere a causa della recessione).

Più a Sud, vi è una vasta area di edilizia popolare e di tipo residenziale caratterizzata da un tessuto socio-culturale di tipo eterogeneo (media borghesia e strati sociali più degradati).

Anche nelle aree circostanti la via Mazara e la zona Capuccini, sono stati avviati interventi di sistemazione degli arredi pubblici e di messa in sicurezza degli edifici al fine di migliorare il decoro urbano del Comune.

Ben diversa la situazione socio-economica del quartiere Cuba, area residenziale di tipo popolare abitata da famiglie con gravi problemi di disagio sociale ed economico.

Il territorio è circondato da numerose frazioni, alcune delle quali centri residenziali di tipo stagionale (San Ciro, Filci) e altre più urbanizzate con servizi di base, nella frazione di Ulmi ad esempio, vi sono una scuola materna, una parrocchia, uno sportello postale e piccole attività commerciali.

Nonostante goda di una posizione geografica abbastanza centrale poiché equidistante dai maggiori centri abitati, vi è una generale carenza dei servizi pubblici di trasporto e una forte inadeguatezza del sistema viario intercomunale.

La presenza dello svincolo autostradale a pochi chilometri di distanza, garantisce un buon collegamento con i comuni dell'area costiera e con il capoluogo di regione; le strade statali che collegano Salemi con Marsala e Trapani sono, invece in stato di perenne dissesto, a causa dell'assenza d'interventi appropriati di manutenzione.

L'economia è di tipo prevalentemente agricolo, nonostante la maggior parte delle cantine sociali presenti nella zona sia oramai dismesse a causa dell'assenza di politiche di sviluppo lungimiranti; permangono ancora stabilimenti per la trasformazione delle olive, ma come per altri centri, si pone il problema della commercializzazione del prodotto finito.

Molte aziende private, specializzate nel settore dell'edilizia e del manifatturiero, hanno visto una drastica riduzione della propria attività a causa della pesante crisi congiunturale.

La città è ricca di monumenti, Piazza Alicia, su cui si affaccia un antico castello, è stata annoverata tra patrimoni dell'Unesco; sulle colline antistanti vi sono numerosi scavi archeologici a oggi purtroppo difficilmente accessibili; sparse nel territorio vi sono molti casati e ville nobiliari.

Le politiche locali non sono state in grado di sfruttare le ricchezze monumentali, archeologiche e culturali presenti valorizzando il territorio (si pensi, ad esempio, alla tradizionale festa di S. Giuseppe, che in passato riempiva le strade di migliaia di turisti e che oggi ha vissuto un forte ridimensionamento) e anche il circuito culturale turistico della Valle del Belice non si è adeguatamente sviluppato, motivi per cui il settore non riesce a divenire volano delle attività economiche.

I servizi presenti sono inadeguati rispetto alle esigenze del territorio, l'offerta scolastica è rappresentata dalle classi dell'obbligo, un istituto tecnico commerciale e il liceo classico; quelle culturali sono rappresentate dal museo civico che ospita tra le tante sezioni, il Museo della Mafia, nonché da una delle biblioteche più fornite del comprensorio.

Il Comune ospita una struttura ospedaliera, che, a causa della razionalizzazione della spesa sanitaria, ha visto drasticamente ridursi il numero dei servizi offerti, inoltre sono presenti tre comunità (anziani e minori); non esistono asili nidi comunali né servizi educativi ricreativi pomeridiani; il cinema è chiuso da anni, poche le possibilità di aggregazione (affidate a un timido associazionismo di tipo sportivo e alle Istituzioni religiose), scarsa attenzione a giovani e anziani, sono previsti sussidi monetari per i disagiati, forme di segretariato sociale e l'apertura di nuove comunità (a opera di privati).

Alle carenze dell'Amministrazione ha cercato di sopperire l'associazionismo locale che tenta di coinvolgere la cittadinanza attraverso manifestazioni e iniziative volte a rafforzare l'identità locale.

La popolazione è per lo più costituita da anziani e la struttura familiare, sebbene vi siano leggeri mutamenti, è quella normo-costituita formata da circa tre componenti familiari per nucleo.

I livelli di povertà e disagio sono medi; i problemi sociali sono legati soprattutto alla disoccupazione, al lavoro nero nonché al fenomeno della tossicodipendenza.

Nel centro storico, abbandonato dai residenti, si alternano extracomunitari (nordafricani) che, talora, occupano in maniera abusiva le case, spesso carenti dei servizi minimi, in attesa di trovare una sistemazione (molte sono state recentemente murate per impedirne l'accesso).

Non esiste alcun servizio per gli immigrati (eccezion fatta per la distribuzione del cibo e dell'abbigliamento organizzata dalle associazioni religiose e benefiche) e non vi è alcuna integrazione con i residenti: si vedono spesso ciondolare in piccoli gruppi nella piazza principale in attesa di qualcuno che gli offra un lavoro.

Esiste anche una folta minoranza dell'Est, impegnata nelle attività agricole e servizi di assistenza alla persona, che sembra maggiormente integrata nel tessuto sociale del Comune.

I livelli di criminalità sono definiti medi e il Comune è ritenuto dalle autorità abbastanza sicuro, sebbene si sia verificata una forte recrudescenza di fenomeni legati all'impovertimento sociale che ha destato una certa preoccupazione nei cittadini che, nonostante la presenza di un comando dei Carabinieri, lamentano una scarsa attenzione da parte delle Istituzioni nei confronti delle politiche di sicurezza.

Se è vero che esiste un fenomeno di abbandono del centro, si ritiene che generalmente la presenza sul territorio di attività economiche, produca un aumento dei livelli di benessere e di sicurezza (qualche hanno fa i negozi hanno beneficiato di un finanziamento pubblico

per l'avvio di attività di ristrutturazione per assicurare un maggiore decoro urbano).

I reati più diffusi sono costituiti dai furti che colpiscono gli edifici residenziali del centro e delle contrade, le truffe, i crimini economici e lo spaccio (centro storico), preoccupante negli ultimi tempi anche la presenza di scippi in pieno centro che interessano le persone più anziane.

Poveri con bassi livelli di scolarità, soggetti cresciuti in ambienti violenti, sono considerati come potenzialmente pericolosi; le vittime sono perlopiù gli anziani e i soggetti con bassi livelli d'istruzione, le strutture più colpite dei criminali sono le abitazioni private e le attività commerciali e soltanto il cinquanta per cento dei reati è segnalato alle Autorità.

Un passato di tradizione mafiosa alle spalle sembra trascinarsi nel tempo: il consiglio comunale, presieduto dal noto personaggio politico e televisivo Vittorio Sgarbi, chiamato a risolvere le sorti della città (tra le iniziative più rinomate l'inaugurazione del Museo della Mafia multimediale), è stato sciolto per infiltrazioni mafiose, e a tutt'oggi è commissariato; numerosi beni sono stati confiscati a imprenditori legati al mercato delle energie rinnovabili e delle costruzioni; la città è inoltre conosciuta agli inquirenti per la presenza di alcuni narcotrafficanti conosciuti a livello internazionale.

Il territorio, in particolare nel periodo estivo, è afflitto da incendi dolosi che hanno in parte devastato l'area naturalistica e archeologica di Montagna Grande.

Con l'utilizzo dei fondi comunitari, si procederà all'installazione di telecamere di videosorveglianza (dodici telecamere in punti strategici) per aumentare i livelli di sicurezza del territorio (caratterizzato, anche da episodi sporadici di vandalismo contro le strutture pubbliche).

Secondo gli operatori pubblici, una soluzione, per combattere il disagio sociale, potrebbe essere rappresentata dall'investimento in attività di promozione culturale e in politiche occupazionali che prevedano un maggior coinvolgimento della cittadinanza e un maggior raccordo con i comitati regionali.

Esiste, anche, una fascia di disagio legata alla fenomenologia della tossicodipendenza, troppo ampia per essere risolta a livello locale, nonostante il Comune abbia cercato di effettuare alcuni interventi sporadici per arginare il fenomeno che si sta diffondendo trasversalmente presso tutti gli strati della popolazione, colpendo in misura particolare le fasce più giovani.

### **Santa Ninfa**

Santa Ninfa è un piccolo comune della provincia di Trapani che conta circa cinque mila abitanti; il paese, distrutto dal sisma, fu ricostruito in parte nel territorio in cui sorgeva precedentemente e in parte nell'area circostante, sulla base dello schema urbano preesistente ma con una maggiore attenzione per gli spazi comuni e la struttura viaria.

Le abitazioni preesistenti al sisma sono state del tutto demolite, tranne qualche antico

palazzo e alcune chiese che, per la loro importanza storica e architettonica, sono state ristrutturate.

La nuova area urbana si è successivamente sviluppata verso l'estremità meridionale in direzione delle contrade di Gibellina, Acquanova e Granozzi.

In questo territorio, caratterizzato da strade ampie e diritte, sorgono una chiesa, le scuole dell'obbligo e l'asilo nido, i locali del Centro Sociale, la Biblioteca Comunale sede del Museo, il centro Sanitario, un polo sportivo e di numerose attività commerciali e servizi di pubblica utilità.

Di notevole rilevanza è la presenza di un'area artigianale adiacente al centro abitato, poco distante dall'asse del Belice, i cui lotti, già urbanizzati e ultimati, sono stati assegnati agli imprenditori locali; all'interno della zona artigianale è sorto un centro direzionale dotato di strutture per mostre, mercati e convegni.

Dopo la ricostruzione, dagli anni novanta fino a oggi, si è verificato un continuo declino dell'economia della città, infatti, molti giovani hanno dovuto abbandonare il paese natio per cercare fortuna e lavoro al Nord Italia o addirittura all'estero.

Nel territorio di Santa Ninfa operano da anni numerose associazioni di volontariato che hanno avuto notevole importanza nell'offrire risposte alle diverse esigenze della popolazione e nel promuovere la cultura della donazione, della solidarietà e della responsabilità.

Inoltre, importante è la presenza nel territorio di una struttura di accoglienza per minori con disagi familiari.

Oltre le scuole dell'obbligo si registra la presenza di un istituto d'istruzione professionale che ha un'utenza proveniente da tutti i comuni della Valle del Belice.

La classe sociale più rappresentata è quella media, perlopiù composta da pensionati e impiegati, ma non mancano la situazione al limite con ceti economicamente bassi che vivono in condizioni di forte precarietà e marginalità sociale.

Anche il Comune di Santa Ninfa risente dell'influenza mafiosa del boss Castelveteranese Matteo Messina Denaro, anche se in misura minore rispetto ai comuni vicini di Campobello di Mazara e Partanna.

Le attività economiche principali sono rappresentate dalle attività tradizionali dell'agricoltura e dell'allevamento; diffusa anche la presenza di attività industriali e artigianali legate all'edilizia e al comparto elettrico, il cui sviluppo è stato facilitato dalla posizione geografica del luogo e dall'innata capacità imprenditoriale degli abitanti.

Il comune di Santa Ninfa, è definito dai suoi amministratori come un paese molto sicuro, con bassi livelli di criminalità legati a episodi sporadici di tipo predatorio che si verificano spesso nelle località di campagna e sono perpetrati da immigrati che si trovano sul territorio; le problematiche sociali maggiormente sentite dalla popolazione sono rappresentate dall'elevato tasso di disoccupazione e dal lavoro nero; si consideri che a

livello locale importanti sono i proventi derivanti dalle attività di commercializzazione e distribuzione della carne, rivolti a tutto il mercato provinciale, che risultano comune una valvola di sfogo, seppur modesto, al problema occupazionale.

Diversi sono i casi di spaccio di stupefacenti, che colpiscono i ceti più disagiati e i giovani, sempre più insoddisfatti, che non riescono a inserirsi nel mondo del lavoro o che non proseguono gli studi e non trovano sul territorio adeguati svaghi.

È possibile effettuare una classificazione delle vittime a seconda della tipologia dei reati: giovani, soggetti con bassi livelli d'istruzione e di sesso femminile sono coinvolti dal fenomeno del lavoro sommerso, mentre gli anziani, che vivono in condizione d'isolamento, sono vittime ambite dai lari.

Si ritiene che i reati vengano segnalati nella misura del trenta per cento alle autorità giudiziarie e che le categorie sociali a maggior rischio di delinquere sono gli immigrati stranieri, gli zingari e i poveri.

Difficile da gestire a livello comunale è la problematica della disoccupazione e, più in generale, si ritiene di fondamentale importanza puntare sul coinvolgimento della società civile per cercare di arginare la fenomenologia criminale.

## **Vita**

Il comune di Vita, sito tra i due comuni di Salemi e Calatafimi, è un piccolo abitato dell'entroterra trapanese, articolato in due zone adiacenti collegate tra loro da due assi viari, in parte costituiti da due cavalcavia.

Il centro storico, in cui vive circa un terzo della popolazione, è stato solo marginalmente coinvolto dall'evento sismico che ha colpito la valle del Belice, mentre in un'area a valle più Sud, si è sviluppata una nuova zona di espansione, ancora in fase di completamento, in cui vive la parte restante della popolazione e in cui insiste una modesta area artigianale.

Il nucleo originario, sede degli uffici comunali e dei principali servizi amministrativi, è soggetto a fenomeni franosi e versa in uno stato di totale degrado, con molti edifici pericolanti e fatiscenti; qualche anno fa per migliorare il decoro urbano, numerosi artisti sono stati chiamati a realizzare lungo le strade del centro storico affreschi rappresentanti il tema dei lavori e della tradizioni della cultura contadina e della devozione religiosa in onore dei culti mariani.

Negli anni, il Comune è intervenuto per scongiurare il pericolo di crolli, mettendo in sicurezza alcune aree e attraverso interventi di restauro conservativo e manutenzione straordinaria; è stato inoltre istituito un centro operativo composto da tecnici cui è stato affidato l'incarico di verificare la presenza di eventuali pericoli, in maniera tale da porre in essere corrette azioni di prevenzione.

La nuova zona residenziale è invece caratterizzata da un moderno assetto viario e da piccole abitazioni mono - familiari; in questa zona, precisamente nell'area circostante

Viale Europa, sono state create diverse opere di edilizia pubblica; in stato di attuazione un progetto per l'avvio di attività di risanamento della zona, volte al completamento delle opere di urbanizzazione, alla sistemazione delle aree di verde pubblico, al fine d'innalzare i livelli di vivibilità sociale.

A qualche chilometro di distanza dal centro abitato si trova un'area verde attrezzata ricadente nel territorio del Bosco di Baronia.

L'economia è essenzialmente agricola, specializzata nella coltivazione delle viti e nella produzione di olio di pregiata qualità; esiste una marginale area legata alla zootecnia e alla produzione di prodotti caseari, mentre la presenza delle attività commerciali risulta estremamente esigua.

Sul territorio ricade una florida realtà aziendale specializzata nella produzione di materiale per il settore edile che vanta diversi punti vendita non solo su territorio nazionale e che ha fluenti scambi commerciali anche con l'estero.

L'andamento demografico mostra come vi siano altissimi tassi di decremento sebbene la densità abitativa sia notevolmente superiore alla media provinciale (oltre duecentoquarantacinque abitanti per km<sup>2</sup>), tali numeri sono determinati dalla mancanza d'insediamenti abitativi.

Sul territorio sono presenti la scuola materna e le medie, i ragazzi che vogliono frequentare gli studi superiori gravitano sulla vicina città di Salemi o si spostano nel Capoluogo provinciale.

Gli impianti sportivi sono collocati nel nuovo centro urbano e il Comune ha avviato, con il contributo dei finanziamenti comunitari, un progetto per la costruzione di un centro sportivo coperto.

Una particolare rilevanza nell'ambito delle attività socio-culturali, ha il Centro Sociale, una struttura che ospita un Auditorium e la Sala Polivalente, utilizzata per incontri culturali, conferenze, proiezioni, spettacoli, mostre oltre che per serate d'intrattenimento, La struttura funziona come centro di aggregazione per giovani e anziani, attraverso iniziative di vario genere e la sollecitazione d'interessi culturali e ricreativi; presso lo stesso centro sono ubicate la Biblioteca Comunale, quella multimediale e la sede di un'associazione di promozione turistica.

Come per altre realtà della Valle del Belice, non sembrano registrarsi alti tassi di delinquenza e il Comune è considerato abbastanza sicuro, in realtà, un dato abbastanza allarmante emerge dalla percentuale di soggetti che si rivolgono alla autorità per denunciare un crimine, percentuale che è paurosamente al di sotto del venti per cento, a prova di una cultura ancora profondamente omertosa che ha poca fiducia nelle Istituzioni.

I crimini più diffusi sono legati allo spaccio e al furto; esiste anche una forte concentrazione mafiosa, soprattutto nelle campagne e nei dintorni ove frequenti sono le operazioni dei carabinieri che hanno portato al sequestro di beni appartenenti a boss che



vivono sul territorio.

Coloro che hanno una maggiore propensione a delinquere sono i soggetti con un livello culturale basso, spesso giovani che vivono un forte disagio economico e sociale.

Altro dato interessante, che si discosta dalla media, è costituito dall'impossibilità di costruire un identikit delle vittime, poiché i diversi fenomeni criminali tendono a coinvolgere tutte le fasce della popolazione.

Da più parti si richiede una maggiore collaborazione e integrazione tra il Governo Regionale e le Amministrazioni Comunali, a garanzia di una maggiore presenza sul territorio e in una logica di concertazione che permetta di affrontare il problema della disoccupazione in una prospettiva sinergica.

A livello comunale l'Amministrazione si sta attivando per tentare ripristino totale del centro storico in vista della possibile trasformazione del Comune in un "paese albergo" incentivando, quindi, lo sviluppo di un'economia turistica che potrebbe offrire nuove opportunità di lavoro.

Sono state, anche, attivate timide politiche di riattivazione dell'economia attraverso l'incentivazione dei mercati rionali, l'inserimento professionale attraverso l'istituzione di borse lavoro e il rafforzamento e la valorizzazione delle tradizioni locali.

Il Festival Internazionale del Folklore, patrocinato dal Comune, è una delle manifestazioni, più rinomate della Sicilia Occidentale, attraverso cui si promuove l'incontro con la cultura popolare con attività musicali e rappresentazioni che coinvolgono rappresentanti provenienti da tutto il mondo.

## Trapani e i Comuni Del Comprensorio

Custonaci, Buseto Palizzolo, Erice, Paceco, Trapani; San Vito Lo Capo, Valderice.

### Custonaci

Custonaci, seppure collocato in una posizione sfavorevole rispetto alle opportunità d'interscambio con i centri più urbanizzati poiché non particolarmente interessato dal sistema della mobilità regionale, rappresenta, comunque, un centro economico florido rispetto agli altri comuni dell'entroterra.

Il Comune ha una forte vocazione turistica (fortemente sviluppata nella fascia costiera di Cornino e di Frassino, aree prettamente turistiche e residenziali) e anche un'elevata presenza industriale legata all'estrazione del marmo, trattasi di effetti del bacino marmifero più produttivo della Regione.

La concentrazione nel centro delle attività estrattive, ha in parte compromesso l'identità storica e ambientale di alcune zone; la forte antropizzazione ambientale, crea un impatto visivo di notevole entità, spesso acuito dalla presenza di cumuli di detriti di cava.

La popolazione è impiegata anche nel tradizionale settore primario dell'agricoltura e dedicata a forme di zootecnia.

Custonaci ha un ampio patrimonio naturalistico e ambientale (grazie alla presenza della Riserva di Monte Cofano e del parco Cerruolo) e nei dintorni del Comune sono stati ritrovati alcuni reperti archeologici del periodo preistorico (in particolare nella Grotte di Miceli e di Mangiapane) vicini all'area adibita a Museo Etno – Antropologico, che è anche lo scenario naturale del Presepe Vivente, meta ogni anno di migliaia di visitatori.

Anche questa cittadina, come molti Comuni limitrofi, fino alla metà del secolo scorso apparteneva al territorio ericino e solo nella prima metà dello scorso secolo ottenne l'autonomia amministrativa.

La popolazione risiede nel centro e nella frazione pianeggiante di Purgatorio, caratterizzata da insediamenti abitativi che conservano un buono stato di origine eminentemente rurale.

Il centro urbano, a pianta ortogonale, si è sviluppato intorno al Santuario, importante luogo di culto mariano, nel quale ogni anno si svolgono importanti celebrazioni liturgiche e religiose che attirano curiosi e pellegrini.

Cornino, antico centro marinaro e meta del turismo balneare locale, è sede di numerose residenze estive e attività ricettive; nonostante le piccole dimensioni, il piccolo centro è ben servito (banche, farmacia, diverse attività d'intrattenimento, etc.).

Sono presenti iniziative di arredo pubblico (che hanno interessato l'area di Purgatorio), di restauro conservativo e di manutenzione straordinaria nel centro città ad opera delle istituzioni locali e dei privati.

Nella programmazione delle opere pubbliche sono previsti interventi di restauro conservativo oltre all'avvio dei lavori per la metanizzazione di tutto il territorio e la sistemazione e l'ammodernamento del sistema idrico (che, in particolare nel periodo estivo, è inadeguato).

Il potenziamento della struttura balneare di Cornino, la realizzazione di fiere mercato e di numerose manifestazioni di tipo culturale e enogastronomico, hanno favorito la nascita di diversi Bed & Breakfast in aggiunta alle strutture alberghiere presenti, che contribuiscono a accrescere la presenza dei turisti sul territorio.

Trattasi del paese con più alti tassi di natalità e con percentuali tra le più basse per quanto riguarda l'età media, a testimonianza di un tessuto sociale relativamente giovane; nell'ultimo decennio, inoltre, è aumentata in maniera esponenziale la presenza d'immigrati sul territorio (trattasi perlopiù di rumeni e tunisini).

L'offerta scolastica è rappresentata dalla presenza delle scuole dell'obbligo, sul territorio vi è inoltre una comunità alloggio destinata a soggetti che hanno turbe psichiche.

L'Amministrazione prevede, all'interno del progetto comunitario "Happy Town" l'inaugurazione di un centro che offra ad attività di sostegno scolastico, sostegno genitoriale, aggregazione e assistenza domiciliare di emergenza, coordinate da un'equipe costituita da uno psicologo e da un assistente sociale.

Il Comune si presenta nel suo complesso come un'oasi felice, con bassi livelli di povertà, sebbene vi sia un certo disagio legato al problema della tossicodipendenza che colpisce le fasce più giovani, le cause sono ascrivibili all'assenza di stimoli culturali adeguati.

I livelli di criminalità sono bassi, vi è una propensione a identificare i colpevoli di reato secondo le categorie dell'età anagrafica (giovani) e dell'appartenenza etnica (immigrati) e una forte coscienza civica che spinge i cittadini a superare il muro dell'omertà e a denunciare i crimini subiti.

I fenomeni più diffusi sono costituiti da truffe e da crimini economici legati all'infiltrazione mafiosa nelle aziende impegnate nell'estrazione del marmo.

Si segnala negli ultimi anni la recrudescenza di reati contro il patrimonio ai danni delle piccole attività commerciali, probabilmente imputabile alla crisi economica, fenomeno che imporrebbe di ripensare alle politiche di sviluppo finora avviate dalle Autorità.

Per far fronte al problema degli incendi, che ha devastato parte delle riserve presenti nel territorio trapanese, è stato attivato un presidio del Corpo Forestale (c/da Cerriolo).

### **Buseto Palizzolo**

Sito sulle colline a Est di Trapani, il tessuto urbano è di matrice estremamente rurale, composto da una pluralità di frazioni distribuite lungo le strade statali e comunali e spesso isolate l'una dall'altra; delle diverse contrade, in realtà solo Buseto centro, Bruca, Battaglia e Baia, hanno caratteristiche assimilabili a quelle di un centro urbano.

La particolare configurazione urbanistica di quest'area è determinata dalla frammentazione del comune di Monte San Giuliano (che ha coinvolto anche i comuni di Valderice, Custonaci e San Vito Lo Capo.)

L'abitato, composto perlopiù da case unifamiliari di tipo tradizionale o da piccole villette, si trova in una posizione strategica per l'accesso alle riserve naturali e paesaggistiche del Trapanese.

A Sud-Est, a qualche chilometro di distanza da Buseto Superiore, sorge il Bosco Scorare, area boschiva tra le più grandi della Sicilia Occidentale e meta di numerose escursioni, che in passato è stata teatro di attacchi da parte di piromani che hanno pesantemente danneggiato gran parte della macchia ivi presente.

Il fenomeno degli incendi, che ogni anno interessa vaste aree, soprattutto demaniali, sembrerebbe da ricondurre non solo alle particolari condizioni climatiche ma anche nel ritardo dell'avvio delle attività di manutenzione e prevenzione delle aree demaniali e di quelle sottoposte a vigilanza.

L'economia è trainata dal settore agricolo (viticoltura, uliveti e coltivazioni cerealicole) formato da piccole aziende, spesso a conduzione familiare, i cui operatori sono soggetti adulti e anziani, mentre si registra un calo occupazionale dei giovani che, come in altri paesi dell'entroterra, tendono a abbandonare il territorio in cerca di condizioni lavorative migliori, nonostante l'Amministrazione abbia cercato di porre argine al problema occupazionale, attraverso l'istituzione di borse lavoro e programmi di reinserimento socio-lavorativo a favore dei soggetti che versano in precarie condizioni economiche.

Questo dato trova riscontro fra l'altro anche nel trend demografico che evidenzia saldi naturali e migratori sostanzialmente negativi, una forte contrazione dei nuclei familiari e una popolazione nella media più anziana, rispetto a altre aree provinciali.

Le attività commerciali e produttive (marmifici, ristorazione, oledifici) sono ancora poche, sebbene ci siano leggeri segni di sviluppo legati all'apertura di attività connesse al comparto ricettivo.

Il Comune ospita i servizi scolastici di base (alcuni dei quali sono dislocati nelle frazioni minori per garantire il diritto all'istruzione) ma i residenti sono costretti a rivolgersi al capoluogo provinciale per l'accesso ai servizi pubblici principali, alle attività commerciali e le strutture burocratiche e amministrative non presenti sul posto.

L'offerta extrascolastica è rappresentata da alcune aree attrezzate sportive di proprietà pubblica e privata, quella sociosanitaria è rappresentata da un consultorio familiare e da un servizio di neuropsichiatri infantile.

Nell'ambito dello stato di conservazione del patrimonio storico, occorre evidenziare l'esistenza di alcune emergenze legate all'abbandono degli antichi bagli, tipici del centro rurale posti nelle aree circostanti il centro urbano, che versano in condizioni di degrado e fatiscenza.

Nel complesso, trattasi di un piccolo centro, caratterizzato dalla presenza di un forte associazionismo che non vive particolari criticità in tema di sicurezza, sebbene ci siano deboli segni di disagio sociale.

Considerato che la popolazione è distribuita in maniera più o meno omogenea su tutto il territorio, la caratteristica articolazione delle frazioni nel territorio contribuisce a determinare problemi nella mobilità e per la fruizione di alcuni servizi, quali per esempio farmacie e uffici postali che si trovano nell'area centrale e distano da alcune frazioni anche sei o sette chilometri.

In tal senso, all'interno di un progetto che coinvolge anche altri centri del comprensorio, il Comune si sta attivando per l'attivazione di servizi di accompagnamento e trasporto gratuiti per le fasce più deboli che garantiscano una maggiore vivibilità del territorio.

La crisi di valori, comune alla società attuale, investe potentemente il tessuto giovanile: l'assenza di politiche giovanili, di centri di aggregazione, le scarse alternative culturali, spingono gli adolescenti a assumere comportamenti inappropriati legati all'abuso di alcolici.

L'assunzione di bevande alcoliche si accompagna a fenomeni di disturbo della quiete pubblica, danneggiamenti all'arredo urbano, specialmente nel periodo estivo e negli orari serali e notturni.

L'Amministrazione comunale ha cercato d'intervenire attraverso ordinanze volte a proibire l'uso di alcolici nelle ore notturne e progetti di prevenzione a sostegno della genitorialità e dei minori.

### **Erice**

Erice è un antico borgo medievale sito sull'omonimo promontorio, noto a livello internazionale per il suo patrimonio architettonico e per le sue tradizioni culturali ed enogastronomiche.

Il nucleo originario più antico, abitato da qualche migliaio di residenti, ha perduto il suo carattere eminentemente residenziale poiché ha vissuto una condizione di forte spopolamento, a seguito dello sviluppo di un'area di espansione edilizia verso Sud che ha interessato l'abitato di Casa Santa, contiguo alla città di Trapani, ove si è concentrata la maggior parte della popolazione e dei servizi pubblici.

A oggi, grazie ai territori che ricadono nel tessuto urbano della città di Trapani, il Comune ha una popolazione di oltre venticinquemila abitanti, di cui oltre lottanta per cento nei quartieri a fondo valle.

L'antico centro che accoglie moltissimi edifici religiosi (molti delle quali sono state sottoposte a misure di restauro conservativo a opera delle stesse istituzioni ecclesiastiche), meta di un turismo anche residenziale di tipo stagionale, è popolato da numerosi servizi ricettivi e alberghieri e da piccole realtà artigianali specializzate nella vendita di prodotti tipici.

Il Comune è impegnato in progetti di riqualificazione urbana degli edifici storici e di valorizzazione delle risorse del territorio che dovrebbero portare a un recupero di alcune strutture da riconvertire successivamente a fini sociali.

Erice è anche sede del centro di cultura scientifica che promuove ogni anno una moltitudine di eventi e rassegne internazionali di tipo scientifico e cultura e ha consentito lo sviluppo, nel tempo, anche di un turismo di tipo congressuale.

La forte frammentazione del tessuto imprenditoriale del territorio ericino, come quello trapanese, la flessione del settore agricolo nonché la mancanza d'industrie di grandi dimensioni rendono estremamente difficoltoso l'inserimento nel mondo del lavoro dei giovani con alti livelli di scolarizzazione, che si trovano costretti a emigrare o a accettare lavori dequalificanti.

La parte di popolazione meno scolarizzata, invece, ha trovato uno sbocco lavorativo, principalmente nei lavori socialmente utili e nelle attività ricettive del territorio provinciale, che hanno svolto un importante contributo allo sviluppo occupazionale del territorio ericino.

A testimonianza della forte vocazione turistica del comprensorio, nel vicino abitato di Casa Santa, posto a valle, sorge un Istituto Professionale di Stato per i Servizi Alberghieri e della Ristorazione che accoglie alunni provenienti non solo dal capoluogo e dai comuni del suo hinterland, ma ha un bacino di utenza che abbraccia tutta la provincia, da Alcamo a San Vito Lo Capo.

La particolare configurazione urbanistica e geografica di Erice alta pone non pochi problemi per quanto riguarda il piano della mobilità. L'assenza di parcheggi, la scarsa funzionalità dell'asse viario caratterizzato da larghi curvoni e strapiombo, la chiusura del sistema funiviario, hanno un effetto congestionante sul traffico, fenomeno che emerge prepotentemente nei periodi estivi di maggior affluenza.

Anche la qualità e la presenza degli impianti sportivi, delle strutture scolastiche e dei centri aggregativi risulta insufficiente rispetto alla domanda dei residenti, in particolare questa mancanza fa riferimento alle aree di edilizia popolare poste a valle.

Per quanto attiene la scuola, presente fino alla media superiore con due istituti, la dotazione di strutture edilizie è sottodimensionata. Va sottolineato che a oggi è presente una sola struttura comunale adibita a asilo nido, ricadente nel territorio di Casa Santa, in un edificio precedentemente abbandonato sito in via Cosenza, che accoglie bambini. Assenti o in stato di degrado i parchi giochi all'aperto, gran parte dei campi di calcetto e le mini strutture d'impiantistica sportiva, soprattutto nei quartieri più popolari.

Il Comune ha avviato una pluralità di progetti volti alla creazione di spazi attrezzati, anche coperti) per lo svolgimento delle attività sportive (calcio, bocce, pattinaggio), da realizzare nelle aree più marginali o disagiate (es. Napola o Fontanelle Sud); inoltre va sottolineato che nel quartiere popolare di San Giuliano è presente un edificio, sito in via

Baden Powell, destinato in passato alla scuola primaria dei bambini del rione, successivamente abbandonato in stato di degrado, per il quale sono state previste attività di risanamento all'interno delle azioni autorizzate dalla programmazione comunitaria.

A Erice, in via Pollina, su un bene confiscato a un imprenditore collegato alla mafia, verrà realizzato un Centro giovanile di documentazione della legalità, che consentirà lo studio e la conoscenza del fenomeno mafioso e dei suoi devastanti influssi sul tessuto socio-culturale ed economico, nonché di veicolare progettualità, iniziative e buone pratiche; inoltre verranno promossi incontri e confronti, dialoghi e iniziative, anche mediante il coinvolgimento d'istituzioni ed esponenti della società civile.

Il quartiere S. Giuliano, localizzato nell'immediata periferia a Nord-Ovest dell'insediamento, è una tra le aree più degradate del territorio comunale; trattasi di un agglomerato confuso, nato negli anni sessanta per rispondere alle esigenze di decongestionamento dell'insediamento urbano della città di Trapani, abitato prevalentemente da famiglie che vivono di espedienti e in condizioni di forte precarietà, con livelli di reddito bassi e povere di strumenti culturali.

All'interno di questa zona sono presenti aree ulteriormente depresse (via Ciullo D'Alcamo e via Dei Pescatori) che presentano altissimi tassi di dispersione scolastica e disoccupazione.

Le famiglie sono fortemente disgregate e non sempre riescono a svolgere il proprio ruolo di agenzia educativa, frequenti gli episodi di criminalità minorile correlati allo spaccio di sostanze stupefacenti, vandalismo e risse; prezioso, in tal senso, è il contributo offerto dalle istituzioni parrocchiali, che operano su un territorio profondamente carente di strutture aggregative.

Nonostante i numerosi programmi approntati dalle scuole per la prevenzione della devianza e della dispersione scolastica, i giovani dimostrano una forte sfiducia nei confronti delle istituzioni, vissute come una barriera che si frappone all'ingresso nel mondo del lavoro.

S. Giuliano si caratterizza, inoltre, per una numerosa presenza di soggetti anziani che spesso convivono con i propri figli e le rispettive famiglie poiché in quanto pensionati rappresentano la principale fonte di reddito.

I diversamente abili sono la fascia di popolazione più penalizzata dalle inadeguatezze strutturali e abitative, che lamenta problemi legati all'inadeguatezza degli spazi verdi, la carenza delle strutture infrastrutturali e dei servizi di tipo sociale che necessitano d'interventi urgenti interventi di riqualificazione e risanamento.

L'Amministrazione è impegnata in una pluralità d'interventi di riqualificazione urbana dell'intero tratto costiero di San Giuliano (quale la ristrutturazione delle case popolari, il completamento delle opere urbanizzazione del quartiere e riqualificazione della litoranea); questa parte di territorio del Comune di Erice, diventerà inoltre, una vera e propria area

“no-tax” per tutte quelle aziende che decideranno d’insediarsi le proprie attività.

L’abitato urbano, eccezion fatta per le aree più popolari (che come visto in precedenza sono caratterizzate da una pluralità di problematiche) è considerato nel complesso abbastanza sicuro livelli medi di criminalità e un’alta percentuale crimini denunciati, a testimonianza di un tessuto sociale medio-alto; i reati più diffusi sono legati al lavoro nero.

I crimini sono commessi perlopiù da coloro che vivono in quartieri emarginati, in ambienti violenti e dagli immigrati; non è possibile individuare vittime definite e non sono stati pianificati interventi incisivi per migliorare i livelli di sicurezza del territorio, eccezion fatta per l’attivazione di circuiti di video-sorveglianza nel quartiere di San Giuliano, via Mokarta e Centro storico.

L’attuale periodo congiunturale e la crisi sociale che ha investito il territorio, si accompagna a un diffuso timore da parte dei cittadini nei confronti del futuro.

La piaga della criminalità organizzata è troppo ampia per essere gestita a livello locale e occorrerebbe una maggior integrazione con il governo nazionale (emissione provvedimenti legislativi più aspri) e autorità locali

### **Paceco**

Paceco è un comune eminentemente agricolo di circa undicimila unità, che per un breve periodo fu annesso al territorio di Trapani e che riottenne l’autonomia amministrativa dopo gli anni quaranta.

Nel territorio di Paceco, il cui tessuto urbano ricade per la maggior parte nell’area comunale della vicina cittadina di Trapani, è posta la frazione di Nubia, nota per la produzione dell’aglio rosso e per la presenza del Museo del Sale, immerso nel panorama dominato dalla riserva naturale del sistema delle saline, su cui insistono piccole strutture di tipo ricettivo e di residenze turistiche stagionali.

Nella fascia costiera di Nubia, parte del territorio urbano risulta soggetto a vincolo paesaggistico ed è interessato da due aree archeologiche, una nel territorio attraversato del fiume Baiata e l’altro convergente con l’estremità superiore del timpone Castelluzzo. Vaste aree del territorio comunale sono, inoltre, soggette a vincolo idrogeologico mentre, in prossimità del fiume Balata si trova una zona a forte rischio di dissesto, in particolare durante i mesi piovosi per la presenza di eventuali fenomeni franosi.

Il Comune è, anche, conosciuto nel territorio per la produzione artigianale di dolci tipici (cannoli) nella frazione di Dattilo, insediamento recente, posto nell’entroterra e sviluppatosi secondo processi di espansione dell’abitato preesistente che si trova al confine del territorio comunale.

La frazione di Dattilo ha mantenuto le caratteristiche tipiche dei piccoli borghi agricoli siciliani e la popolazione gravita intorno alla città di Paceco per tutti i servizi; estremamente carente risulta il sistema delle opere di urbanizzazione primaria e secondaria.



Inadeguate risultano anche le urbanizzazioni del sottosuolo: a causa della vetustà del sistema di condotta dell'acqua che comporta continui disservizi e della fatiscenza del dissalatore di Nubia, i cittadini vivono una situazione di continua emergenza idrica.

Il centro urbano, sviluppatosi intono al nucleo più antico di origine settecentesca, è attraversato dall'asse viario che collega Marsala a Trapani, con gravi problemi di congestionamento del traffico nelle ore di punta.

Sono presenti un istituto scolastico comprensivo dell'obbligo e numerosi servizi extrascolastici (strutture sportive attrezzate), alcune delle quali versano in profondo stato di degrado a causa della scarsa manutenzione, situazione che rischia di danneggiare l'operato delle numerose associazioni presenti, impegnate da anni nella promozione di una cultura aggregativa attraverso l'attività sportiva.

Lungo le strade principali ai margini del centro abitato, si sono sviluppate in maniera disordinata le aree di tipo residenziale, che in parte hanno rispettato le previsioni del programma di sviluppo urbanistico e in parte si configurano come agglomerati abusivi.

Esiste un problema di qualità urbana e edilizia e di degrado dell'architettura storica nelle aree più antiche, alcuni edifici versano in stato di abbandono (come il piccolo chiosco posto nella Villa Comunale) mentre altri sono stati oggetto di restauro conservativo.

In vista della valorizzazione dei beni a valenza storica, tra le linee programmatiche del Comune, è da annoverare anche il recupero, attraverso l'esproprio e l'acquisizione all'uso pubblico, di alcuni immobili, che potrebbero essere riconvertiti e resi fruibili dalla comunità (l'area in cui ricadono i resti dell'ex castello Fardella e il giardino annesso potrebbero ad esempio essere riutilizzati come sede di musei.)

Nonostante la carenza delle risorse economiche, grazie a una continua lotta contro l'evasione fiscale e ai contributi nazionali, le autorità hanno avviato iniziative di arredo pubblico e manutenzione straordinaria nel centro città, anche nel lungo periodo.

Nel futuro saranno effettuati interventi di completamento di alcuni edifici scolastici e delle opere di urbanizzazione primaria e in vista della riqualificazione delle aree periferiche (quartieri Aula, Platamone, Sapone e Cipponeri caratterizzati dalla presenza d'insediamenti abusivi) e di ristrutturazione dell'ex cinema in vista della creazione di un centro socioculturale.

Le zone maggiormente a rischio si concentrano nel centro cittadino, in cui vive la maggior parte della popolazione (la restante, inferiore alle duemila unità, è sparsa e distribuita principalmente nelle frazioni di Dattilo e Nubia.)

La struttura della popolazione è abbastanza anziana, non vi è una grande ricambio generazionale; sebbene il saldo naturale non risulti particolarmente positivo, il Comune, negli ultimi anni, ha vissuto un andamento demografico crescente grazie all'immigrazione da parte proveniente dai comuni limitrofi.

Il livello d'Istruzione dei residenti è nel complesso medio, sebbene gli anziani presentino

tassi di alfabetizzazione più bassi; per far fronte alle esigenze di una popolazione che invecchia, sul territorio sono presenti comunità di accoglienza per opera dei privati.

Esistono dei problemi sociali, legati alla diffusione della droga sul territorio, alla crescente disoccupazione e alla diffusione di un'ampia economia sommersa; fenomeni eccessivamente complessi per essere risolti a livello locale e che necessiterebbero un maggior coinvolgimento di tutti gli enti pubblici al fine di porre in atto strategie di prevenzione e di sviluppo adeguate.

Le Autorità sono impegnate nel sostenere progetti a favore della riduzione dei comportamenti a rischio nelle scuole locali e a sostegno dei nuclei familiari in situazione di disagio socio-economico, con minori in età scolare che presentano difficoltà d'inserimento scolastico.

Paceco è un comune di medie dimensioni, in cui vive una comunità che ha forti radici identitarie, in cui non si registrano altissimi tassi di delinquenza e la maggior parte dei reati viene comunque denunciata.

Un territorio abbastanza sicuro a detta delle Autorità; i crimini, più diffusi sono quelli contro il patrimonio e violenza alle persone, sono commessi perlopiù da coloro che vivono in zone d'emarginazione, immigrati e giovani e il fenomeno colpisce trasversalmente tutta la popolazione; non si ritiene che la presenza sul territorio di attività imprenditoriali abbia contribuito a innalzare i livelli di sicurezza e le fasce sociali più emarginate dimostrano una crescente preoccupazione per il loro futuro.

Nonostante la percezione di relativa sicurezza non si può negare che esista una larga parte del territorio tradizionalmente controllato dalla presenza di associazioni di tipo mafioso con pesanti ingerenze di tipo estorsivo nel settore degli appalti pubblici correlati all'edilizia e della gestione illecita dei finanziamenti pubblici destinati al settore agricolo.

### **San Vito Lo Capo**

San Vito Lo Capo è una località balneare, sita sulla costa occidentale della Sicilia, nota per la qualità delle sue spiagge e dell'ambiente naturale circostante.

Il centro urbano di San Vito, sede dei principali servizi commerciali e amministrativi, si è sviluppato intorno a un Santuario, secondo uno schema a scacchiera in direzione della costa; trattasi di una serie di vie strette su cui si affacciano una pluralità di case dai colori chiari di matrice arabeggiante.

Nell'area del porto e della spiaggia vi è una forte concentrazione delle aree destinate alla balneazione, delle attività di ristorazione, dei servizi al diportismo nautico e delle attrezzature sportive.

Del Comune fanno parte anche le frazioni di Macari e Castelluzzo collocate sulla costa occidentale lungo la strada statale che collega Castellammare del Golfo e San Vito.

Castelluzzo è un piccolo centro abitato che mantiene intatte le proprie caratteristiche

rurali, interessato solo marginalmente dallo sviluppo dell'economia Sanvitese (ospita piccole attività di ristorazione e qualche struttura agrituristica), circondato da vaste piantagioni di uliveti secolari e meta di un turismo eminentemente naturalistico.

La pianura costiera della piccola frazione, si distingue nettamente dalla parte più interna su cui sorge il paese, ha conservato, quasi priva d'insediamento (viabilità asfaltata, edifici), la sua integrità naturale.

Macari è l'agglomerato abitativo più piccolo del territorio di San Vito Lo Capo, piccolo borgo contadino e marinaro, popolato da poche centinaia di residenti e nel quale si trovano strutture ricettive di piccole dimensioni.

Le due frazioni sono vicine alla Riserva dello Zingaro, un territorio che si estende per oltre millecinquecento ettari in gran parte ricadente nel comune di San Vito Lo Capo (la restante ricade nel territorio di Castellammare del Golfo, devastato dagli incendi che in alcune occasioni sono arrivati a lambire i centri abitati con gravi disagi per i turisti e i residenti presenti).

Il territorio vanta una tradizione nel campo della pesca, della pastorizia, dell'agricoltura e dell'estrazione marmifera; attività che oggi hanno subito un evidente declino a causa dello sviluppo del settore terziario e, in particolare, del turismo.

Oggi, quindi, l'attività prevalente è costituita da un turismo stagionale che vede la maggior parte dei servizi (bar, hotel, campeggi, ristoranti, autolinee, cinema, pub, ecc.) aperti soltanto nei periodi di maggiore affluenza turistica (Aprile/Ottobre).

La forte stagionalità dei flussi turistici rappresenta il più grosso disagio di quest'area che ha oramai abbandonato le tradizionali attività primarie e la cui economia, estremamente florida nel periodo estivo, durante il periodo invernale vive una profonda crisi.

Negli ultimi anni, allo scopo di prolungare le attività legate al turismo, le Amministrazioni locali, sfruttando una fiorente tradizione enogastronomica, imperniata sulla cucina a base di pesce, hanno investito in nuove forme di marketing territoriale, ampliando l'offerta turistica attraverso sagre a manifestazioni di tipo culturale.

Tra le rassegne internazionali più importanti, particolare rilievo ha assunto la manifestazione del "Cous Cous Fest", una rassegna gastronomica che si pone anche e soprattutto come momento d'incontro tra i popoli, culture e le tradizioni dei paesi del Mediterraneo.

L'inserimento del Comune nell'ambito del territorio regionale si realizza attraverso strade provinciali carenti sotto un profilo strutturale e incapaci di reggere la mobilità dei mesi estivi.

L'Amministrazione comunale ha investito molto sul problema della sostenibilità ambientale dei processi turistici e della salvaguardia del patrimonio ambientale e naturalistico: in passato un utilizzo non sempre coerente delle concessioni a uso dell'attività di balneazione, ha fortemente compromesso la fruizione di ampi spazi liberi destinati

alla pubblica balneazione; i processi di degrado interessano fortemente l'area costiera e sono causati soprattutto dall'intenso uso turistico stagionale che determina congestione e dalle trasformazioni non appropriate dei luoghi per la realizzazione delle seconde case, ma anche l'area collinare e montana sono a rischio degrado a causa dell'abbandono delle attività agropastorali e dei frequenti incendi (spesso di origine dolosa) che depauperano il patrimonio naturale.

Il centro storico è chiuso al traffico veicolare durante il periodo estivo, sono stati effettuati interventi di sistemazione del verde pubblico e di risanamento che hanno investito anche l'area costiera, si è cercato di ovviare al problema dell'abusivismo edilizio attraverso una gestione più oculata delle concessioni, una migliore lottizzazione del territorio e attraverso attività di verifica ispettiva che hanno portato al sequestro di alcuni insediamenti balneari.

Il turismo e lo sviluppo che lo hanno accompagnato hanno migliorato la qualità della vita dei Sanvitesi, ma, allo stesso tempo, l'impatto con altri modelli di vita ha creato una forte discrasia tra i nuovi modelli di tipo consumistico e i modelli tradizionali, caratterizzati da legami fortemente normativi con importanti ricadute sulla struttura sociale; una delle piaghe sociali che sta minando fortemente il sistema dei valori tradizionali è rappresentato dalla disgregazione dei nuclei familiari.

San Vito resta dipendente dagli altri comuni per gran parte dei servizi tecnico-amministrativi e le infrastrutture sportive extra-scolastiche sono considerate insufficienti, soprattutto riguardo al forte traffico turistico.

Nel territorio non esistono istituti d'istruzione secondaria e i giovani studenti sono costretti a spostarsi nel Capoluogo, non si riesce a rispondere ai loro bisogni educativi e sarebbe necessario creare una rete d'interventi educativi attraverso la collaborazione con agenzie extrascolastiche che, nell'inter-scambio, aiutassero i giovani a risolvere i problemi che sono chiamati ad affrontare nel percorso di crescita e di sviluppo della loro personalità, plausibilmente i bassi livelli di scolarità possono in parte essere spiegati a causa delle difficoltà di cui sopra citate.

Le molte attività economiche presenti su territorio, da un lato hanno contribuito a innalzare i livelli di sicurezza ma dall'altro hanno anche attirato l'attenzione delle cosche criminali, che si sono inserite potentemente in tutti i settori; numerosi i crimini economici legati alla gestione dei fondi comunitari e agli appalti pubblici che hanno portato alla costituzione di un patrimonio non ingente gestito in maniera diretta o indiretta, delle organizzazioni.

Numerosi controlli ispettivi effettuati presso i cantieri edilizi, hanno evidenziato varie irregolarità, dalla consuetudine del mancato rispetto della normativa in materia di sicurezza sui posti di lavoro ai fenomeni di lavoro nero.

Nonostante il territorio sia considerato abbastanza sicuro, vi è anche una criminalità

diffusa di tipo predatorio che colpisce le piccole attività commerciali anche di tipo alberghiero e gli insediamenti più periferici.

Il controllo del territorio, in particolare durante i periodi di alta stagione, da parte degli organi preposti è esercitato attraverso la predisposizione di numerosi posti di blocco e presidi territoriali, effettuati anche con la collaborazione delle forze di sicurezza provenienti dal Capoluogo, mentre il Comune si è dotato di un sistema di videosorveglianza nel centro storico e nelle aree del litorale.

### **Trapani**

Trapani, capoluogo dell'omonima provincia e seconda alla città di Marsala per popolazione, possiedono innumerevoli bellezze naturalistiche e un patrimonio storico di pregevole valore.

Situata alla pendici del Monte Erice, il suo territorio costiero si affaccia sull'arcipelago delle Isole Egadi; il centro storico, lambito dal mare sia a Nord sia a Sud è costituito un labirinto di strade strette, di matrice araba, su cui sorgono edifici storici di pregevole fattura e i principali monumenti religiosi.

Il nucleo originario (Casalicchio) è delimitato da due assi viabili, Corso Italia a Sud e Via Garibaldi a Nord, trattasi di aree pedonali nelle quali gravitano i principali servizi amministrativi, ristoranti, pub e attività commerciali.

Il centro antico delle città copre una zona non particolarmente estesa, ben curata (oggetto di numerosi interventi di ripristino e restauro conservativo) e facilmente attraversabile a piedi o con i mezzi pubblici, intorno alla quale si è sviluppata, in anni recenti, in direzione ovest, l'attuale via Fardella nella quale si trovano numerosi negozi di abbigliamento e accessori.

Negli anni si registrato un esodo del centro storico verso le zone di espansione che ricadono in territorio ericino, parte del quale risulta inglobato nell'area di Trapani; l'assenza di fatto di confini territoriali tra i due comuni pone rilevanti difficoltà nella gestione amministrativa dei servizi condivisi.

Sul territorio insistono numerose frazioni e quartieri ubicati sia sulla fascia costiera sia nell'entroterra (queste ultime a prevalente vocazione agricola) che per molto tempo sono stati abbandonati a se stessi, con un'urbanizzazione non regolamentata e spesso frutto di scelte di sviluppo territoriali non sempre lungimiranti.

In concomitanza dell'organizzazione di manifestazioni sportive internazionali, nel passato è proceduto a un vasto intervento di riqualificazione delle aree del centro storico verso le aree di Torre di Ligny e Mura di Tramontana (in cui vi è un'ampia richiesta immobiliare proveniente da investitori esteri).

Nel territorio a Nord-ovest delle Provincia ricadono vasti insediamenti di edilizia pubblica; quartieri quali Palma, Villa Rosina, Cappuccinelli, Fontanelle-Milo, Fontanelle

sud e San Giuliano (ricadenti nel territorio ericino), che necessitano di veri e propri interventi strutturali, difficili da realizzare a causa della scarsità delle risorse economiche.

La maggior parte delle abitazioni, in queste zone, sono a carattere intensivo e gli edifici sono tutti uguali con poco spazio tra un caseggiato e l'altro e solo di recente nel quartiere Palma, sono stati effettuati interventi per il risanamento di un'area sportiva attrezzata, che da tempo giaceva in condizioni di forte dissesto.

Tra le frazioni più popolate di Trapani vi è Fulgatore, piccolo borgo agricolo che sorge quasi a ridosso dello svincolo autostradale Palermo-Mazara del Vallo, collegata al centro cittadino mediante servizio di autobus urbano.

Trapani non rappresenta ancora una delle mete privilegiate dal turismo (in particolare ancora poco conosciuta al pubblico estero) ma costituisce una buona punto di partenza per una vacanza itinerante verso il territorio limitrofi di questa, grazie alla sua dotazione infrastrutturale (porto, ferrovia e Aeroporto internazionale).

Una grossa operazione di marketing locale è stata messa a segno qualche anno fa con l'organizzazione della Luis Vuitton Cup e della esposizione temporanea delle opere di Caravaggio, che hanno permesso al capoluogo di provincia di assumere una dimensione più internazionale.

Ciò detto, nonostante il buon andamento dei flussi turistici, permane una certa inadeguatezza delle strutture ricettive e dell'offerta dei servizi dell'indotto, frutto di una programmazione spesso confusa e pertanto inefficace degli interventi di valorizzazione del patrimonio storico e ambientale e anche di una scarsa gestione imprenditoriale del territorio.

A Trapani vi è una grossa concentrazione di aziende artigiane, a conduzione individuale, specializzate nelle attività manifatturiere; mentre la produzione agricola (presente soprattutto nell'hinterland) ha un ruolo più marginale rispetto agli altri Comuni del territorio, ed è interessata perlopiù dal settore viticolo.

Sul territorio ricadono due aree industriali attrezzate, la prima vicino il porto (interessato in passato da una forte tradizione cantieristica, oggi profondamente in crisi) e la seconda posizionata a Sud-ovest del territorio comunale; la presenza del porto ha consentito negli anni di sviluppare una flotta peschereccia oggi ridimensionata; l'antico mercato del pesce, dopo essere stato ristrutturato viene utilizzato per ospitare manifestazioni e eventi culturali.

Ampie parti del territorio costiero sono, infine, destinate agli impianti di produzione del saline che assumono non solo una rilevante importanza a livello commerciale ma sono un patrimonio naturalistico d'ineffabile bellezza.

Negli ultimi anni, il settore terziario, che traina l'economia locale, ha avuto un incremento esponenziale, ne costituisce riprova il fatto che i comuni limitrofi si appoggino alla città di Trapani per l'accesso ai principali servizi socio-sanitari, amministrativi e scolastici.

Oltre al presidio ospedaliero, l'Azienda sanitaria provinciale assicura sul territorio la presenza di un consultorio familiare e un presidio di continuità assistenziale e numerosi servizi soci assistenziali anche in convenzione con strutture private.

La città è sede di numerosi istituti scolastici e di un polo universitario che accoglie un vasto bacino d'utenza, costituito da studenti pendolari provenienti dai Comuni del comprensorio; numerosi musei che accolgono importanti collezioni storiche e archeologiche e moltissime chiese.

Ampia l'offerta delle attrezzature sportive, diverse palestre scolastiche, palazzetti dello sport multi attrezzati, stajo, kartodromo, pista per il pattinaggio, sebbene i cittadini lamentino una non sempre efficace gestione delle stesse (attrezzature non sicure, accessi limitati a causa della mancanza di personale addetto).

L'impianto del sistema dei trasporti, in realtà, non è capace di sostenere alti volumi di traffico, determinando una congestione del traffico nell'hinterland più prossimo alla città e una difficoltà complessiva d'interscambio con le zone più interne; il tracciato che collega Trapani con le aree interne alla provincia risulta estremamente sconnesso per la mancanza di opere di manutenzione, mentre l'asse che collega Trapani con Marsala e Mazara del Vallo non è in grado di soddisfare appieno le esigenze del traffico veicolare a causa di problemi di tipo strutturale.

Rispetto alle esigenze della popolazione si registra la carenza di asili nido pubblici, la domanda di luoghi di aggregazione sociale non risulta del tutto soddisfatta, nonostante vi siano molti edifici pubblici abbandonati al vandalismo e al deterioramento che potrebbero essere riconvertiti a finalità socio-culturali.

Le popolazioni del territorio convivono con l'annosa mancanza di acqua potabile e anche i servizi idrici e fognari risultano del tutto inadeguati.

La realtà sociale, culturale e economica del territorio si presenta eterogenea: una minima parte della popolazione vive in condizioni estremamente disagiate (in particolare quanti vengono dall'area di edilizia residenziale pubblica) mentre una rimanente porzione vive situazioni di maggiore benessere; va sottolineato che la città, dopo Erice, ha i più alti livelli di reddito medio pro capite e difatti numerose famiglie presentano un tenore di vita medio-alto, determinato da una situazione culturale elevata: gli adulti hanno conseguito il diploma di scuola superiore, sebbene siano ancora pochi i laureati e, quasi sempre, all'interno dei gruppi famigliari sia la donna sia l'uomo svolgono un'attività lavorativa.

I livelli di povertà e disagio sono medi; i problemi sociali sono legati soprattutto alla disoccupazione e al lavoro nero, fenomeni che coinvolgono soprattutto coloro che risiedono nella zona di Fontanelle Sud e del rione Palma.

In queste aree, ove sono presenti alcune scuole di primo grado e solo qualche attrezzatura sportiva (Fontanelle Sud), si concentra una pluralità di piccoli nuclei familiari, profondamente disagiati, che presentano bassi livelli economici e culturali: alcuni adulti

hanno conseguito solo il diploma di scuola media inferiore, molti di loro sono disoccupati o alla ricerca di un'occupazione fissa.

Importante la presenza sul territorio delle associazioni e delle parrocchie che svolgono attività volte alla promozione del dialogo e della solidarietà, elementi vitali per costruire strategie e alternative utili alla comunità.

Le zone costiere del trapanese, in coincidenza dell'arrivo della bella stagione, sono colpite dalla fenomenologia degli sbarchi clandestini con evidenti ricadute sullo ordine pubblico.

Per fronteggiare il fenomeno dell'immigrazione clandestina è stata istituita una comunità gestita da una cooperativa sociale in c/da Salina Grande, all'interno del circuito degli S.P.R.A.R. (sistema di protezione per richiedenti asilo e rifugiati, composto dalla rete territoriale degli enti locali che, attraverso un'attività di concertazione con le realtà del terzo settore, attivano progetti di accoglienza integrata).

Il CARA che ospita sia uomini che donne, è un centro aperto, senza presidi delle forze dell'ordine all'ingresso (anche se i militari sono presenti con una pattuglia sebbene posti in una posizione defilata e poco visibile, in una costruzione, di proprietà della Provincia).

I residenti del C.A.R.A. denunciano una condizione di forte disagio; ambienti freddi, cibo pessimo (non previsto cibo halal per i musulmani), frequente sovrappopolamento durante i periodi di estivi, mancanza di risorse e servizi primari.

Anche i dipendenti vivono una condizione di forte disagio legata alla mancata corresponsione degli stipendi.

I cittadini di Salina Grande, frazione di meno di circa un migliaio di unità, vivono in una situazione di marginalità acuita dal dissesto delle strade urbane, dalla mancanza d'illuminazione e dall'inadeguatezza del servizio di trasporto pubblico che collega l'isolato con la città di Trapani e che risulta insufficiente e non in grado di assorbire l'incremento del traffico dovuto alla presenza dei migranti che si spostano per recarsi nelle sei di lavoro (tra le soluzioni proposte e immediatamente ritrattate a causa delle polemiche, alcuni esponenti dell'amministrazione ventilavano l'ipotesi di creare linee alternative per soli immigrati).

Una soluzione potrebbe essere rappresentata dal decentramento dei migranti in strutture più piccole, a dimensione umana, sparse all'interno della comunità o dalla possibilità di dotare gli immigrati di abbonamenti gratuiti ai mezzi pubblici.

Una parte della popolazione (seppur marginale rispetto al totale) lamenta un problema d'integrazione aggravato dalla presenza di piccoli furti ai beni privati e ai terreni agricoli, disturbi della quiete notturna e atti di vandalismo; una situazione d'insicurezza forse anche acuita dall'assenza di politiche di controllo del territorio e da una certa componente pregiudiziale.

Qualche anno fa è stato finanziato un progetto di risanamento dell'area che presentava



forti segni di dissesto idrogeologico con frequenti allagamenti che coinvolgevano che hanno in qualche caso compromesso alcune dimore private.

In contrada Milo, al margine della collina ericina, vicino al Comando provinciale dei vigili del fuoco e alla stazione dell'Agenzia spaziale italiana è sorto un CIE (Centro d'identificazione ed Espulsione) in sostituzione del fatiscente centro di Vulpitta, che funziona a regime ridotto dopo le numerose polemiche seguite alla morte di sei migranti morti a causa di un incendio.

Il CIE, che ospita una popolazione maschile, vive una condizione di perenne emergenza, grate e davanzali sono stati divelti e trasformati in vere e proprie armi utilizzati durante i numerosi tentativi di fuga (spesso riusciti); frequenti anche gli atti di autolesionismo e il ricorso a psicofarmaci per sedare i soggetti più insofferenti.

Protestano anche le autorità di pubblica sicurezza per la scarsità dell'organico, che rende difficoltosa la gestione di un impianto troppo grande e poco sicuro, nel tentativo di fermare le rivolte ci si attrezza come può, anche facendo ricorso a pompe idranti, sebbene, a avviso dei residenti, non siano mancati in passato violenze e maltrattamenti; i problemi sono acuiti, inoltre, dalla mancata separazione tra i soggetti ex detenuti, tossicodipendenti e quanti sono appena sbarcati.

Il tempo medio di trattenimento nel CIE è di circa due mesi (cinquantasette giorni) e uno dei problemi più pressanti di questi centri è rappresentato dall'assenza di attività ricreative e formative che coinvolgano i migranti, troppo spesso posteggiati in attesa del nulla, per non parlare del fatto che non esistono neanche strutture di culto e programmi di assistenza legale adeguata.

Nell'ambito del Programma operativo nazionale per la sicurezza, con il contributo di fondi comunitari e nazionali, il Comune ha promosso la costruzione di un Centro polivalente per gli immigrati per l'inserimento lavorativo e l'inclusione sociale, l'area interessata ricade in c/da Cipponelli in un bene confiscato alla mafia.

Per quanto attiene alla presenza straniera sul territorio, la comunità più numerosa è quella proveniente dalla Romania, seguita da quella macedone e quella marocchina.

La comunità magrebina e africana è perlopiù dedita ad attività di tipo manuale, tipiche del settore agricolo e caratterizzate da forte stagionalità; l'assenza di opportunità di lavoro stabili influenza profondamente le componenti del flusso migratorio del comprensorio, che si configura come essenzialmente transitorio.

Diverse le caratteristiche della migrazione proveniente dai paesi balcanici; la componente maggioritaria (costituita prevalentemente da donne) è impegnata in attività di servizi e assistenza domestica, meglio integrata nel società locale; ben diversa la situazione della comunità cinese, che è organizzata in maniera più autonoma e gestisce principalmente attività commerciali.

Si considera che la presenza di attività criminali sul territorio rientri nella media

regionale ma che, a causa dell'estensione dell'area, sia difficile assicurare un controllo capillare del territorio, per cui i livelli di sicurezza percepiti dai cittadini risultano estremamente bassi.

La fenomenologia dei reati è abbastanza variegata fatta di crimini economici e reati riconducibile allo sfruttamento della manodopera irregolare; di reati contro il patrimonio (furti, rapine, danneggiamento, ricettazione, riciclaggio) e contro la persona (lesioni personali, estorsioni, calunnie, minacce e atti di violenza sessuale); reati strettamente correlati alla problematica della tossicodipendenza o al mondo che gravita intorno a essa (spaccio e detenzione di sostanze stupefacenti).

Numerosi sono gli atti di vandalismo che colpiscono le opere pubbliche, gli spazi verdi, i contenitori per l'immondizia e quant'altro si trova sul territorio; per contrastare tali fenomeni le autorità hanno provveduto al rafforzamento delle attività di sorveglianza e si è cercato di coinvolgere la cittadinanza sensibilizzandola al problema del degrado urbano e alla necessità di tutelare il patrimonio pubblico.

La droga circola velocemente e sempre più consistente nel tessuto sociale e le organizzazioni criminali di matrice mafiosa che ne gestiscono il traffico, hanno dimostrato di sapersi adeguare alla contrazione dei consumi legati alla crisi economica, abbassando i prezzi degli stupefacenti a scapito della qualità degli stessi.

Il fenomeno della tossicodipendenza investe trasversalmente tutti gli strati della popolazione, ma mentre i ceti più agiati possiedono la disponibilità economica per l'acquisto degli stupefacenti, le classi medio basse, non avendo grossi redditi, per sovvenzionarsi sono costrette a spacciare, rubare e perpetrare atti di violenza, che colpiscono anche famiglie di origine.

Le squadre antidroga hanno compiuto diversi blitz sul territorio per smantellare il mercato di sostanze stupefacenti anche attraverso perquisizioni presso le abitazioni private (molte operazioni coinvolgono l'area di Fontanelle-Sud).

Nel Comune è attivo da anni un centro Sert (servizio per le tossicodipendenze), impegnato nell'attivazione di progetti di prevenzione e sensibilizzazione della popolazione; i soggetti più colpiti sono perlopiù uomini dediti al consumo dell'eroina, cocaina e cannabis.

L'area che presenta maggiori sacche di disagio è quella di Fontanelle Sud e di San Giuliano e più in generale i quartieri fatiscenti, sempre meno popolati, i cui abitanti denunciano un problema d'incolumità e l'assenza di adeguati spazi di aggregazione e centri di ascolto.

Numerose indagini hanno inoltre evidenziato l'esistenza di un mercato ancora sommerso legato al meretricio e allo sfruttamento della prostituzione (vittime giovani donne straniere attratte sul territorio italiano con la promessa di un posto di lavoro) che sembra coinvolgere gli strati medio alti della popolazione e che ha portato in passato all'arresto di personaggi apparentemente insospettabili.

Nel Comune capoluogo ricade una casa circondariale, in località S. Giuliano, spesso al centro delle polemiche per la carenza degli organici e i problemi di sovrappopolamento; proprio per garantire una maggiore sicurezza ai cittadini si è provveduto all'istallazione di un impianto di videosorveglianza che vigili sulle attività dei detenuti.

La popolazione carceraria ha bassi livelli di scolarità, di bassa estrazione socio-economica e prevalentemente riconducibile alle sacche di marginalità dei quartieri popolari e spesso proveniente da nuclei familiari disgregati e poveri da un punto di vista culturale, esiste anche un'area marginale di provenienza straniera.

Nonostante le potenzialità del territorio, da quanto detto finora, appare chiara la motivazione per la quale la città di Trapani si attesta agli ultimi posti nella classifica sulla qualità della vita, particolarmente difficile da gestire a livello locale è il fenomeno della disoccupazione, per cui sarebbe necessario implementare politiche nazionali di sviluppo che, di fatto, negli anni sono sempre più venute meno.

E le iniziative di contrasto attuate dai vari organi competenti non hanno dato una risposta soddisfacente; la scarsa integrazione tra le diverse realtà operanti sul territorio, l'insufficienza di personale formato, la carenza di strutture e l'inadeguatezza dei fondi hanno permesso alla malavita organizzata di diffondere, in maniera alle volte incontrastata, la cultura dell'illegalità.

Per combattere i fenomeni criminali occorrerebbe un maggior coinvolgimento della cittadinanza e dei governi nazionali; in generale vi è una scarsa attenzione del fenomeno della devianza minorile e adulta, la mancata interiorizzazione di una cultura dell'inclusione sociale e della prevenzione delle situazioni di disagio; poca efficacia delle politiche di orientamento e inserimento lavorativo.

In collaborazione con gli enti di formazione del territorio sono stati finanziati progetti per l'inclusione socio-lavorativa di soggetti portatori di disagio sociale e diversamente, attraverso esperienze di stage e work experience nelle realtà imprenditoriali locali.

Sul territorio sono presenti posto di blocco e periodicamente vengono svolte azioni a ampio raggio di concerto tra tutte le forze dell'ordine a contrasto dei fenomeni dell'abusivismo commerciale, della contraffazione, dei reati contro il patrimonio e lo spaccio di stupefacenti.

In anni recenti si è provveduto all'istallazione d'impianti di videosorveglianza posti nell'area commerciale e amministrativa del centro e lungo la litoranea Nord (area Cappuccinelli).

Negli ultimi anni si stanno rafforzando anche i controlli contro il fenomeno delle discariche illegali e dell'abusivismo edilizio che spesso colpisce le aree costiere deturpandone il panorama (es. area in direzione di Marausa, frazione posta lungo la provinciale che collega Trapani a Marsala, sede di residenze estive e piccoli lidi).

## **Valderice**

Valderice, città prevalentemente agricola, nel tempo è divenuta meta di villeggiatura preferita dai residenti del comprensorio trapanese; l'assetto territoriale è caratterizzato da un centro urbano, diverse contrade e alcune stazioni balneari come quella di Bonagia, Lido Valderice e la spiaggia di Rio Forgia.

Il Comune, per incentivare lo sviluppo turistico dell'area, ha attivato una pluralità d'interventi per il recupero ambientale del litorale costiero in passato coinvolto da fenomeni di lottizzazione non controllata che hanno fortemente trasformato il panorama territoriale; nelle aree turistico - balneari Nord-occidentali sono state effettuate opere di urbanizzazione primaria grazie, anche, al contributo di alcuni residenti.

La frazione di Bonagia, distante pochi chilometri dal centro, è costituita da un antico borgo, sede di una tonnara oramai in disuso che, a seguito di opere di riqualificazione è stata riconvertita e ospita il museo (testimonianza della tradizione marinara) e di una struttura alberghiera e di ristorazione.

Per il futuro si prevedono opere di manutenzione straordinaria e verde pubblico da parte delle istituzioni locali e in particolare la riqualificazione infrastrutturale del Fondo Auteri (una dei più grandi campi scout della Sicilia), ove dovrebbe sorgere un centro polifunzionale aggregativo e un giardino botanico; importante anche il recupero del Molino Excelsior, sito in contrada di S. Marco, oggi destinato a ospitare eventi e manifestazioni culturali.

Alcune frazioni del Comune presentano caratteristiche eminentemente rurali, legate alle tradizionali attività agricole, artigianali e zootecniche, altre sono state fortemente interessate dallo sviluppo urbano e economico che ha coinvolto il territorio e presentano un tessuto più organico (Paparella, Ragosia, Fico e Bonagia); nelle località di Xhiare, Seggio e ex Avicola Aurora, sono presenti alcuni insediamenti produttivi attivi nel settore dell'edilizia.

Valderice sorge a ridosso di un'area boschiva costituita dal Parco di Misericordia vicino a un antico Santuario e dalla Pineta S. Barnaba, all'interno del quale ricade l'omonimo Teatro in cui ogni anno vengono organizzate numerose manifestazioni; nelle anche alcune frazioni sono state dotate di aree verdi attrezzate.

La maggior parte dei servizi e delle attività commerciali ricade nel centro storico, sebbene in alcune delle frazioni più popolate (Crocevie o Chiesanuova) siano presenti degli uffici postali e delle scuole.

Se la dislocazione territoriale risulta più che adeguata rispetto alla distribuzione della popolazione sul territorio, carente (a causa della scarsità delle risorse a disposizione) risulta la capacità di offrire servizi altamente specializzati e individualizzati (nel territorio comunale vi sono due strutture, gestite dalle istituzioni religiose, che accolgono minori in difficoltà anche con handicap).

Più in generale è possibile affermare che Valderice si è distinta nel tempo per la forte vivibilità dell'ambiente e per una continua attenzione da parte dei servizi territoriali per le problematiche di tipo sociale.

Il Comune è stato impegnato in numerosi progetti a sostegno della genitorialità e per la valorizzazione dell'infanzia, esistono adeguate strutture sportive, numerose attività laboratoriali, centri diurni per diversamente abili e per anziani, strutture di accoglienza e centri culturali.

Vi sono molte associazioni a scopo umanitario e finalità culturali e in passato la città ha avuto il riconoscimento di città sostenibile dei bambini e delle bambine.

Importante è anche l'azione svolta dal centro di ascolto "STOP alla violenza sulle donne" che coinvolge altri comuni del territorio (Marsala, Alcamo e Buseto Palizzolo), nato per dare un sostegno e un supporto alle donne che hanno vissuto violenze e maltrattamenti.

I livelli di povertà e disagio sono medi; problemi sociali sono legati soprattutto alla disoccupazione e al lavoro nero, nonché alle rapida diffusione di nuclei familiari a rischio disgregazione.

Il Comune dispone sussidi monetari per i soggetti che vivono in condizioni di marginalità sociale, sono, inoltre, previste molte campagne di prevenzione e promozione del territorio.

Anche i livelli di criminalità non sembrano discostarsi molto dalla media provinciale e la fenomenologia criminale sembra essere fortemente correlata al crescente disagio socio-economico che coinvolge la popolazione; i reati più diffusi sono truffe, crimini economici e lavoro nero. Fortemente bersagliate da fenomeni di racket estorsivo sono le attività di commercio a dettaglio e quelle impegnate nel settore della ristorazione.

Le categorie a rischio sono i giovani disoccupati; immigrati e gli analfabeti, mentre le vittime più colpite sono i giovani e i soggetti con alti livelli d'istruzione.

Sul territorio sono attivati posti di blocco per garantire il controllo del territorio e allo studio delle Autorità ci sono diverse proposte per l'installazione di telecamere a circuito chiuso collegate con le centrali degli organi di sicurezza.

Un problema particolarmente sentito è quello della lentezza dei procedimenti giudiziari, determinata da una carenza di personale, che ha ricadute importanti sull'ordine sociale poiché innesca un cortocircuito nel sistema giudiziario.

Esistono aree oramai abbandonate a causa di un'eccessiva ampiezza del territorio e di un fenomeno di spopolamento che porta i soggetti a spostarsi verso le zone più vicine ai centri urbani più grandi, coloro che risiedono nelle aree più periferiche vivono una condizione di forte disagio legata alla percezione di essere stati del tutto abbandonati dalle Istituzioni.

## Il Sistema delle Isole

### Arcipelago delle Egadi e Pantelleria

#### Le Egadi

L'arcipelago delle Egadi, antistante alla città di Trapani, è costituito dalle isole minori di Levanzo e Marettimo e da due piccoli isolotti (Maraneo e Formica), dipendenti da un punto di vista amministrativo dal territorio comunale dell'isola maggiore di Favignana.

L'isola di Maraneo è un piccolo lembo di terra disabitato mentre Formica, abbandonata all'incuria per oltre novanta anni, è stata acquistata da una comunità religiosa e ospita un centro di accoglienza per soggetti che vivono in condizione di forte disagio (prevalentemente tossicodipendenti).

Sull'isolotto di Formica esiste un'antica tonnara, un mulino, un castello con un faro e una delle più antiche cappelle della civiltà cristiana; l'isola possiede anche un piccolo porto, approdo per imbarcazioni di modeste dimensioni; è inoltre presente un museo dedicato alla tradizione della pesca del tonno.

Gli edifici presenti sono stati in parte ricostruiti grazie al lavoro svolto negli anni dagli ospiti della struttura di accoglienza, i quali sono anche impegnati in una pluralità di attività di tipo artigianale, agricolo e peschereccio, mediante le quali riescono a soddisfare la maggior parte dei propri bisogni.

L'arcipelago è sottoposto a vicoli di diverso tipo volti alla salvaguardia del patrimonio naturalistico e archeologico presente non solo sulla terra emersa ma anche nel sottosuolo e nei fondali marini (ricco di reperti archeologici).

L'assetto territoriale delle tre isole più grandi è abbastanza simile ed è costituito da un nucleo urbano centrale, d'insediamento più antico, da cui snoda un asse stradale principale che costeggia il territorio, su cui affluisce una pluralità di sentieri che consentono i collegamenti con le aree più periferiche.

Lottanta per cento della popolazione dell'arcipelago risiede nell'isola maggiore ed è distribuita prevalentemente nel centro urbano principale, ubicato lungo il litorale occidentale (area in cui si concentrano le attività commerciali, i servizi pubblici, piccole strutture ricettive e a conduzione familiari, numerose residenze private, le parrocchie e il piccolo porto) mentre un nucleo sparuto vive presso i siti minori delle località di Quattro Vanelle, Pozzo Ponente, Corso e Balate.

Il nucleo centrale di Marettimo, ove si concentra la popolazione, è sito sulla costa orientale dell'isola; da esso parte una strada principale lungo la quale confluiscono una pluralità di piccole viuzze che lo collegano alle alture circostanti; dopo Favignana, è l'isola più estesa e durante il periodo invernale ospita qualche centinaio di residenti, i quali possono beneficiare di un presidio medico per il primo soccorso e pochi servizi di

ristorazione e di vendita al dettaglio.

Circa il restante cinque per cento della popolazione totale del Comune risiede nell'isola di Levanzo ed è anche in questo caso prevalentemente concentrata nel piccolo centro abitato ubicato nella parte meridionale dell'isola; la ricettività è ancora limitata, pochissime le attività commerciali, vi sono due agenzie marittime per il trasporto di mezzi e persone.

Riguardo all'offerta socio-sanitaria, tutte e tre le isole dell'arcipelago sono dotate di una guardia medica; totalmente assenti sono invece le strutture ospedaliere, Favignana ospita anche due farmacie e una pista per l'elisoccorso.

Sul territorio dell'isola di Favignana ricade una casa di reclusione collegata a una casa lavoro; una struttura che ospita sia criminali già condannati che soggetti sottoposti a misura di sicurezza detentiva perché giudicati pericolosi socialmente; l'assenza di distinzione tra le due categorie comporta una grave penalizzazione in termini di diritti nei confronti degli internati; vi è una carenza del personale socio-assistenziale e spesso per scarsità di risorse economiche non si riesce a assicurare ai detenuti la possibilità di praticare attività di recupero.

L'analisi dei principali dati demografici mette in evidenza due fenomeni concomitanti: lo spopolamento e l'invecchiamento della popolazione residente.

Il numero di residenti in costante e sensibile diminuzione per oltre un quarantennio, evidenzia a oggi un modesto incremento, attribuibile esclusivamente al saldo migratorio positivo laddove il saldo naturale, invece, rimane negativo.

Quasi la metà delle abitazioni presenti in tutto il territorio comunale risulta non occupata, molte famiglie abbandonano le isole minori alla ricerca di situazioni scolastiche e lavorative che offrano maggiori garanzie di continuità e qualità; uno spopolamento che determina un complessivo impoverimento del tessuto sociale, perché a rimanere sono i più anziani, i meno scolarizzati, quindi la parte meno dinamica della società (non a caso la struttura dell'età della popolazione è caratterizzata da un indice di vecchiaia molto alto).

Nel territorio comunale opera un istituto comprensivo (scuola elementare e scuola media), articolato in più plessi dislocati sulle tre isole che compongono l'arcipelago.

Il livello d'istruzione della popolazione è nettamente cresciuto, tuttavia rimane ancora inferiore sia al dato regionale che a quello provinciale; il tasso d'istruzione superiore è nettamente inferiore rispetto agli altri comuni, un fattore determinante per il differenziale esistente tra le isole del comune di Favignana e le altre realtà può essere individuato nell'assenza sul territorio comunale di scuole superiori.

Nel tentativo di assicurare una maggiore continuità sul territorio, l'istituto scolastico di Favignana ha promosso il progetto Scuola 2.0, basato sulla sperimentazione delle attività didattiche a distanza attraverso l'utilizzo delle nuove tecnologie e sono state organizzati una pluralità di corsi di formazione, rivolti ai nuclei familiari, per la qualificazione dei soggetti in età adulta.

Tutte le isole, in misura maggiore o minore possiedono un patrimonio archeologico e storico culturale di notevole pregio, una minima parte del quale è stata risanata e successivamente resa accessibile ai visitatori.

Tra le località di maggiore interesse dell'isola di Marittimo vi è il Castello di Punta Troia, situato sulla cima di un suggestivo promontorio nell'estrema punta nord-occidentale dell'isola mentre su un vasto pianoro in prossimità del centro abitato, si segnalano i resti di un vasto edificio militare di epoca romana.

Tra tutto il patrimonio architettonico del territorio, l'esempio più compiuto di riqualificazione è, plausibilmente, la Tonnara Florio vicina al porto di Favignana, dove avveniva, fino a pochi anni fa, la lavorazione per la conservazione del tonno; le attività di restauro hanno ridato dignità al sito che oggi è aperto al pubblico e utilizzato come museo.

Lo sviluppo delle attività turistiche, che indubbiamente ha dato un nuovo slancio e una vitalità economica a questi territori, è stato accompagnato anche da una pluralità di problemi legati alla sostenibilità ambientale delle stesse, alla forte stagionalità dei flussi e alla riconversione delle attività tradizionali.

Per quanto attiene il sistema dei trasporti e della viabilità, l'isola di Favignana offre un servizio del trasporto pubblico locale, esistono molteplici attività di noleggio veicoli (biciclette e ciclomotori) ma non sono previste piste ciclabili, con gravi problemi per la sicurezza dei cittadini; per evitare un congestionamento del centro storico, durante il periodo estivo, si è provveduto a creare delle isole pedonali e zone a sosta limitata (che spesso non vengono rispettate); anche il sistema d'illuminazione nelle aree periferiche non sempre risulta adeguato.

Alcune zone presentano forti segni di antropizzazione, si pensi ad esempio ai residence sorti a ridosso delle cave di tufo dismesse e alle abitazioni familiari costruite in prossimità delle spiagge, un mix di abusivismo edilizio e politiche territoriali non sempre oculate (a oggi il Comune non è ancora dotato di un piano regolatore) che rischia di trasformare pesantemente il paesaggio naturale.

Le aree, in passato destinate alla coltivazione dei seminativi e dei vigneti, sono state in larga parte abbandonate a causa di problemi strutturali (scarse risorse idriche) e di una certa disinteresse nei confronti del comparto da parte delle giovani (indubbiamente le attività turistiche presentano un appeal maggiore).

Infine permane un problema di ordine socio-culturale relativo all'integrazione tra i modelli più spregiudicati i valori tradizionali: è soprattutto la popolazione più anziana che mostra segni di disagio e riesce con difficoltà ad adeguarsi ai ritmi imposti dal traffico turistico durante il periodo estivo.

Non esistono molti fenomeni di perturbazione dell'ordine pubblico, l'arcipelago è essenzialmente tranquillo e i pochi episodi sono perlopiù riconducibili alla presenza di turisti che si attardano la sera lungo le strade del centro bevendo e schiamazzando (i pub



e i ristoranti sono collocati all'interno dell'abitato centrale); durante il periodo estivo vi sono numerosi controlli (presso le attività commerciali) da parte degli organi preposti per contrastare il fenomeno del lavoro irregolare e dell'evasione fiscale; nella cittadina è presente un servizio di raccolta dei rifiuti urbani che opera in maniera puntuale assicurando il decoro del territorio.

### **Pantelleria**

Il comune di Pantelleria si trova sull'omonima isola vulcanica (la più estesa tra quelle siciliane), posta a metà tra le coste africane e quelle italiane; il centro abitato, in cui vive quasi la metà della popolazione, si estende lungo l'area costiera Nord-occidentale del territorio pantesco, intorno a una caratteristica baia e al porto turistico e peschereccio che funge da attracco per i collegamenti con la Sicilia.

Il resto dei residenti si distribuisce prevalentemente nelle località di Kamma e di Scauri, situate rispettivamente lungo la costa orientale e Sud-occidentale e una minima parte risiede in alcune case sparse sul territorio; solo le aree interne dell'isola, cioè quelle intorno al parco naturale di Montagna Grande e la zona meridionale risultano essere non abitate e soggette a vincolo naturalistico; a ridosso del centro urbano si trova un piccolo aeroporto che opera sia come scalo merci che per il trasporto di passeggeri. Nell'area Sud-occidentale (in direzione di Scauri) ci sono i siti archeologici di Cimilia e Mursia.

L'isola di Pantelleria, a causa del suo assetto urbanistico che negli anni si è configurato come "diffuso", ha sviluppato un sistema viario abbastanza articolato; tuttavia la maggior parte del territorio è collegata da strade spesso non asfaltate e prive di un adeguato sistema d'illuminazione (problematica comune a Favignana), poiché a oggi solo le principali arterie di collegamento, sono state oggetto di manutenzione e risanamento da parte dell'Amministrazione.

L'impianto urbano dell'isola è caratterizzato da un nucleo originario, in parte ricostruito dopo i danneggiamenti della seconda guerra mondiale e dominato da una pluralità di edifici isolati di modeste dimensioni, con grosse difficoltà di accesso per i mezzi pesanti e i veicoli in generale. Esistono anche alcuni quartieri storici, solo in parte danneggiati, ricadenti nelle aree circostanti la via Manzoni (corrispondente all'antica Casbah), la Via Cagliari, lungo Corso Umberto e nella vecchia zona dei pescatori fra la Via Catania e la Via Borgo Italia (area con maggiore densità abitativa), oggetto d'interventi di recupero e di ripristino.

L'incremento della domanda turistica ha segnato la progressiva decadenza del centro storico come area residenziale, favorendo la costruzione di nuove tipologie d'insediamento nelle zone periferiche e in quelle del lungomare costiero in direzione di Scauri, dove furono tra l'altro, realizzate nuove aree commerciali e industriali.

Il patrimonio abitativo è correlato all'attività turistica e all'offerta di residenze stagionali

tanto che la percentuale delle abitazioni non occupate durante il periodo invernale è molto elevata. Gli edifici di più recente costruzione sono spesso costituiti da palazzi con più elevazioni (trattasi di edifici abitati da residenti stanziali) o da costruzioni destinate a un uso prevalentemente turistico, seconde case individuali o plurifamiliari, casette a schiera o strutture residenziali di tipo alberghiero; verso l'entroterra sorgono gli antichi edifici di tipo rurale e d'origine araba denominati "Dammusi" (gran parte delle quali è stata recuperata grazie all'iniziativa dei privati).

Nonostante un andamento demografico leggermente positivo, l'indice di vecchiaia assume valori elevati, registrandosi pertanto un progressivo invecchiamento della popolazione; la maggior parte degli anziani si concentra nel nucleo più antico della cittadina, mentre nelle aree periferiche (in direzione del lungomare) gli edifici residenziali di tipo multipiano sono occupati dalle classi sociali più umili; ciascuna famiglia ha un numero medio di membri di tre soggetti e il livello d'istruzione superiore è inferiore rispetto alla media regionale, con valori particolarmente bassi per quanto riguarda l'istruzione universitaria (dato comune a tutta la Provincia); anche il reddito medio non è particolarmente elevato a causa di una scarsa presenza imprenditoriale che non consente di sfruttare appieno le potenzialità turistiche.

Da sottolineare la presenza di una forte componente straniera ben al di sopra della media regionale e provinciale, che si costituisce come forza lavoro portante per le attività primarie (agricoltura e pesca), all'interno di una società caratterizzata da forti tassi d'invecchiamento e da un generale disinteresse dei giovani nei confronti di lavori avvertiti come poco appetibili e poco remunerativi.

La popolazione straniera è composta in massima parte da soggetti provenienti dalla Romania e in via marginale da nord-africani; le componenti maschili sono impegnate nel settore agricolo e edilizio, mentre le donne offrono servizi di assistenza agli anziani; contrariamente a altre realtà territoriali, a detta degli amministratori locali, gli immigrati non vivono forti condizioni di marginalità, ma sembrerebbero abbastanza integrati nel tessuto locale.

Il modello di sviluppo economico dell'isola è legato al settore dei servizi correlato al turismo (commercio, pubblici esercizi, ristoranti, alberghi, servizi d'intermediazione immobiliare, trasporti e noleggio veicoli) e alla pubblica amministrazione.

L'attività turistica è un fenomeno ovviamente stagionale, la maggior parte delle presenze si registra nel periodo estivo con una forte concentrazione nel mese di agosto, con evidenti ricadute sulle infrastrutture locali soggette a forte pressione; si ripropongono problemi tipici dei centri urbani più piccoli tra cui la gestione del traffico veicolare e la minaccia dell'inquinamento ambientale da un lato e dall'altro la necessità di dare nuovo slancio all'economia locale attraverso una diversificazione dei flussi turistici e politiche di miglioramento dei servizi e del sistema ricettivo, oltre che di riqualificazione dell'ambiente.

Precedentemente all'avvento del turismo, Pantelleria traeva gran parte del proprio reddito dall'agricoltura, oggi fortemente ridimensionata; il cappero oltre che la viticoltura rappresentano le principali coltivazioni dell'isola (moltissime aziende vitivinicole sono poste in prossimità delle zone costiere occidentali e la produzione del passito è rinomata a livello internazionale).

Sul piano dell'offerta sociale e scolastica, nell'isola sono presenti una struttura privata per minori da zero a tre anni; i servizi scolastici di base (elementari e medie) oltre a un istituto d'istruzione secondaria di secondo grado che offre diversi indirizzi (le scuole elementari sono presenti in tutte le frazioni, mentre le scuole medie e gli istituti superiori sono collocati al centro urbano). Il Comune dispone inoltre un servizio ospedaliero molto ridimensionato a causa dei tagli, sono inoltre attive forme di segretariato sociale, iniziative di borsa lavoro e un servizio di banco alimentare offerto dalla Caritas; sul territorio, inoltre vi è una struttura che opera come centro di accoglienza temporanea per senza tetto (talora utilizzata per far fronte alle emergenze legate agli sbarchi clandestini). Non esistono strutture residenziali per gli anziani che vivono in condizioni di disagio, ma l'Amministrazione ha provveduto a individuare misure alternative di assistenza e d'integrazione lavorativa.

Il paese vive problematiche comuni sia alle altre isole siciliane sia alle altre località turistiche del comprensorio trapanese; il rapido sviluppo economico, il forte isolamento legato alla condizione insulare, l'assenza di agenzie del tempo libero (a esclusione di un centro ricreativo per adolescenti e giovani), dello spettacolo e l'inadeguatezza delle strutture culturali e sportive, a tal proposito è opportuno sottolineare che nelle contrade sono situati alcuni campetti sportivi e il Comune prevede a breve la costruzione di una struttura polivalente coperta e di una nuova area attrezzata in terreni confiscati alla mafia presso la località di Zubebi e di Zito; pochi gli spazi verdi attrezzati per i più piccoli, siti nel centro urbano e spesso poco curati.

La trasmissione di modelli urbani in forte contrasto con la tradizione locale ha reso sempre più problematici i fenomeni della droga e dell'alcolismo, che colpiscono soprattutto i giovani; la frammentazione dei nuclei familiari e l'assenza di valori normativi forti è alla base dei numerosi fenomeni di devianza giovanile espressi in tutte le diverse sfaccettature: dalla dispersione scolastica al vandalismo fino agli atti di bullismo.

A Pantelleria non sembrano registrarsi fenomeni di criminalità organizzata anche in virtù della particolare posizione geografica dell'isola che non consente il facile insediamento di tali forme; anche gli episodi di abusivismo che hanno devastato intere zone costiere della Sicilia, sono estremamente modesti; la comunità ha forti radici identitarie, ci si conosce gli uni con gli altri, ma ciononostante negli ultimi anni si registra la crescita di atti criminali legati a furti, truffe e rapine che colpiscono le residenze estive e le attività commerciali.

Se alcuni eventi criminosi sono da collegare alla presenza dei numerosi clandestini che

sbarcano sull'isola (fenomeno peraltro in forte riduzione), più in generale, plausibilmente, le cause andrebbero ricercate nel periodo di crisi; da segnalare che nell'area della povertà vi sono bisogni emergenti che si manifestano in un crescente disagio abitativo (determinato da affitti spesso troppo costosi) e da una certa precarietà lavorativa.

Il territorio ospita diversi presidi di sicurezza, quali carabinieri, vigili del fuoco, polizia municipale e guardia di finanza.

### **Le zone costiere Sud-occidentali e le aree limitrofe**

Marsala, Mazara del Vallo e Petrosino

#### **Marsala**

Marsala è la città più popolata della Provincia di Trapani e ha un tessuto economico estremamente dinamico; essa si caratterizza, inoltre, per la ricchezza del proprio patrimonio storico, archeologico e naturalistico, fattori che concorrono all'arricchimento dell'offerta dell'economia del sistema locale.

L'assetto urbano del Comune è estremamente variegato e peculiare: il centro antico che, contrariamente a quanto avvenuto nei comuni del territorio provinciale, è stato solo marginalmente colpito da processi di degrado e spopolamento (la maggior parte della popolazione è concentrata in questa zona), è delimitato dai resti di antiche cinta murarie (in parte distrutte nel passato, dalle stesse Amministrazioni locali); trattasi di un'area in massima parte pedonale, caratterizzata dalla presenza di una via più centrale che accoglie molte attività commerciali; intorno alla quale sorgono gli uffici comunali, banche, servizi postali, piccole strutture ricettive, bar, enoteche e alcuni istituti scolastici; la maggior parte delle strutture è in buono stato di conservazione, sebbene esistano alcuni edifici a ridosso della via principale che evidenziano uno stato di degrado legato all'incuria (proprio in questa parte del territorio si concentra una modesta percentuale d'immigrati).

Contigua al centro storico è l'area portuale, in cui sono presenti, oltre all'Autorità Marittima, due agenzie per la mobilità verso le isole Egadi, un'area dedicata all'attività cantieristica, un club nautico, diverse aree di sosta e una pluralità di attività commerciali, alcune delle quali anche di tipo ristorativo.

Intorno al nucleo insediativo più antico, si sviluppa l'area urbana più recente, costituita perlopiù da ampi viali e palazzi multipiano alternati a palazzine storiche, che si estende verso nord in direzione della città di Trapani, a sud sulla strada per Mazara del Vallo, e a est sulla statale per Salemi.

Questo territorio è occupato da diverse attività commerciali intorno alle quali si è sviluppata un'edilizia di tipo residenziale anche di tipo pubblico.

Negli anni passati, le aree più a ridosso dal centro storico sono state interessate da

una proliferazione incontrollata dell'edificazione che ha investito molti siti archeologici ivi collocati, dei quali è rimasta qualche debole traccia.

In direzione di Salemi, nei pressi dello scorrimento veloce che collega il territorio urbano con le periferie più lontane, è stato collocato il nuovo presidio ospedaliero marsalese che accoglie i pazienti provenienti dai comuni limitrofi.

Infine, una parte considerevole del territorio marsalese è occupata da una pluralità di contrade (un centinaio), che presentano un assetto sostanzialmente comune, caratterizzato da piccoli insediamenti che si distribuiscono lungo le principali direttrici viarie; in realtà a seconda della distanza delle stesse dal centro urbano si possono distinguere: nelle immediate vicinanze alcune zone d'espansione edilizia, intorno a queste, piccoli centri rurali oramai inglobati all'interno del territorio urbano e nelle contrade più lontane, al confine con terreni agricoli, nuclei di abitazioni sparpagliate.

Molte delle frazioni più grandi sono dotate dei servizi primari, scuole, talora presidi di polizia, piccole attività artigianali e commerciali.

Strasatti è il centro più popolato, sito lungo la statale 115 che collega Marsala a Mazara del Vallo, qui vive un'alta percentuale d'immigrati che trovano occupazione nelle molteplici aziende agricole (vitivinicole e vivaistiche) presenti nel territorio circostante.

Oltre alla presenza delle scuole dell'obbligo e dell'istituto professionale per l'Agricoltura, la frazione ospita anche i servizi postali, sportelli bancari, una struttura alberghiera, alcuni bar e un campo sportivo in stato d'abbandono (sebbene l'Amministrazione comunale stia provvedendo alla riqualificazione dell'area).

La contrada soffre di problematiche di disagio legate all'inadeguatezza della mobilità interna (disservizi e dissesti che causano spesso incidenti e continui allagamenti) e a uno scarso decoro urbano determinato anche da un sistema di raccolta dei rifiuti non sempre puntuale.

Tutta la zona del litorale marsalese si caratterizza per un'articolazione non sempre armoniosa tra siti d'interesse archeologico e aree di pregio naturalistico (solo in parte sottoposti a vincoli ambientali) e zone di espansione residenziale, con l'effetto di una forte pressione antropica accentuata da un'edilizia a volte abusiva e dalla presenza di scarichi fognari che confluiscono direttamente a mare, tutti fenomeni che rischiano di mettere seriamente in pericolo gli equilibri dell'eco-sistema ambientale.

Le politiche di sviluppo e sostenibilità ambientale, attuate negli ultimi anni, hanno cercato di porre un freno alla crescita abnorme del territorio urbanizzato che si è generato nell'ultimo trentennio e determinato dall'assenza, in passato, di opportuni strumenti di controllo e contenimento dell'edificato.

A Nord, lungo la litoranea verso Trapani, si sviluppa la via del Sale, caratterizzata dalla presenza della Riserva Orientata dello Stagnone che racchiude le isole di Schola, Santa Maria, Isola Lunga e di Mozia, sedi di numerosi ritrovamenti archeologici e degli antichi

impianti di produzione del sale, parte dei quali ancora in attività.

In quest'area sorgono numerose villette, aree attrezzate per lo sport nautico, strutture residenziali di tipo turistico e piccole attività di ristorazione a conduzione prevalentemente familiare.

Lungo la costa meridionale, in direzione di Mazara del Vallo, si trovano una pluralità di residenze, molte delle quali seconde case di villeggiatura dei residenti, centri per gli sport acquatici, diversi alloggi di media dimensione destinati all'accoglienza turistica e numerosi stabilimenti balneari.

L'economia marsalese è ancora saldamente legata al settore agricolo, seguito dal settore commerciale, trattasi d'impresе spesso di medie e piccole dimensione a gestione familiare che mostrano bassi livelli di redditività.

Vista l'importanza del settore è da segnalare che da tempo è stato avviato a Marsala il Corso di Laurea in Vitecoltura e Enologia dell'Università di Palermo; l'entroterra marsalese è caratterizzato da coltivazioni vitivinicole di spessore (Marsala, tra l'altro, è sede di alcune cantine rinomate su tutto il territorio nazionale e moltissime enoteche, il Comune è inserito nei circuiti turistico - culturale delle strade del vino) e dalla presenza di molti insediamenti di tipo rurale (casali e bagli) molti dei quali, all'interno di un processo di riscoperta e di valorizzazione del territorio e delle tradizioni enogastronomiche locali, sono stati oggetto di attività di recupero a iniziativa prevalentemente privata.

Nonostante il polo produttivo vitivinicolo della Sicilia occidentale rappresenti uno dei più rinomati in campo nazionale e internazionale, il settore ha risentito, seppur in maniera meno consistente rispetto agli altri comparti, delle conseguenze della crisi, acuita dalla flessione degli investimenti privati, da infrastrutture commerciali insufficienti o scelte speculative basate sul sistema dei sussidi comunitari per le vendemmie verdi e l'estirpazione dei vigneti; tutti fenomeni che hanno portato all'abbandono di alcune porzioni del territorio.

Da qui l'importanza di tutelare il sistema agricolo locale, basato sulla piccola produzione e sulla piccola proprietà, avviando delle politiche di protezione e valorizzazione sia dei bagli, sia delle "vigne" urbane.

Il Comune è impegnato in un progetto per la creazione di un'area industriale che dovrebbe sorgere a qualche chilometro dal centro abitato, su un terreno a Est, oggi, destinato prevalentemente a uso agricolo e collegato con i principali svincoli stradali e autostradali attraverso un asse di scorrimento veloce.

Marsala, non è stata in grado di tesaurizzare appieno la crescita del traffico turistico, generato dal potenziamento dell'aeroporto di Trapani-Birgi; si tratta di difficoltà che vanno ricondotte principalmente alla mancanza di un'organica politica di comunicazione pubblica sulle risorse turistiche e i servizi di ricettività della città e in parte a un'errata programmazione del piano dei trasporti.

Per quanto attiene al sistema dei trasporti e della mobilità, la città manifesta un buon accesso al traffico aereo grazie alla vicinanza dell'aeroporto di Birgi e di quello di Palermo-Punta Raisi raggiungibile in circa un'ora di autostrada, ben più critiche le modalità di connessione del Comune rappresentate da altre tipologie di trasporto (sia passeggeri che merci); la dotazione infrastrutturale del porto non consente lo sviluppo di un elevato traffico marittimo, la ferrovia è largamente sottodimensionata rispetto alle esigenze della popolazione e anche il sistema dei trasporti pubblici risulta inadeguato.

Emblematica in tal senso è l'assenza di servizi pubblici di collegamento tra l'aeroporto e la città, ma la stessa mobilità interna è deficitaria (es. collegamento con l'Isola di Mothia e le saline), vi è una scarsa diffusione degli autonoleggi con conducente e del servizio taxi.

Non esistono servizi di car sharing e bicicletta sharing, è presente un unico punto d'informazione turistica posizionato nel centro storico.

La dotazione di servizi turistici nel territorio marsalese è piuttosto scarsa, nonostante le strutture ricettive operanti nel Comune di Marsala siano raddoppiate nel giro di un ventennio (per quanto riguarda gli esercizi alberghieri, si tratta nella maggior parte dei casi di alberghi di categoria medio-alta; mentre gli esercizi extralberghieri si articolano in piccoli alloggi in affitto, bed and breakfast e strutture agrituristiche) e nonostante la presenza di alcuni poli museali e numerosi beni monumentali e archeologici, l'organizzazione dell'offerta turistica è carente soprattutto nei servizi di base e collaterali al settore.

Per quanto riguarda la fruibilità e l'apertura al pubblico, si osserva che alcune strutture sono però visitabili in orario ridotto o solo su appuntamento, altre non sono accessibili perché non ancora attrezzate e messe in sicurezza (questo nello specifico è riferito a alcune aree archeologiche).

A Marsala sono inoltre presenti una biblioteca comunale, all'interno del Complesso Monumentale San Pietro, dotata di un cospicuo patrimonio librario e un Archivio Storico in piazza Carmine.

Il Comune presenta una buona dotazione di attrezzature e servizi primari di base; sottodimensionata risulta invece la dotazione di servizi secondari, oggi imprescindibili per lo sviluppo urbano (offerta culturale, socializzazione), il cui incremento, oltre a accrescere in modo significativo la qualità della vita degli abitanti, potrebbe rappresentare anche l'occasione per azioni di ridisegno urbano, riqualificazione ambientale, riconfigurazione funzionale.

L'offerta di attrezzature per l'istruzione è da considerarsi adeguata per quanto relativo alla loro dislocazione territoriale, gli studenti sono serviti da un complesso di strutture scolastiche - dalla scuola dell'infanzia, alle scuole elementari, medie inferiori e superiori, gestiti dal Comune e dalla Provincia.

Diversa la situazione rispetto alla qualità delle infrastrutture presenti, in alcuni casi si rilevano criticità in termini di requisiti di vivibilità delle strutture e per quanto attiene alla loro localizzazione all'interno dell'ambito urbano con conseguenti problemi di mobilità e trasporto degli allievi, molti istituti d'istruzione superiore secondaria sono inoltre caratterizzati da altissimi tassi di dispersione scolastica (20% circa), cui si è cercato di provvedere attraverso progetti integrati con le altre scuole del territorio per il miglioramento della qualità dell'offerta educativa.

La dotazione di strutture e attrezzature per i servizi culturali, sportivi e ricreativi nel Comune di Marsala è complessivamente sottodimensionata rispetto alla popolazione insediata e al ruolo di polo territoriale e turistico di medie dimensioni che la città vorrebbe assumere.

La città è attualmente dotata di diversi impianti sportivi di proprietà comunale, ma molte strutture sono in realtà scarsamente utilizzate per una pluralità di ragioni: la crisi rende difficile la sopravvivenza delle associazioni sportive locali; alcune aree sono spesso non accessibili a causa dell'assenza d'interventi di risanamento.

La struttura sportiva di Villa Damiani in contrada Oliva, appartenente a una cooperativa privata e successivamente acquisita dal Comune, è da sempre abbandonata a se stessa fino a essere oggetto di devastazioni e vandalismi tanto da essere «smontata» in più parti, dalla piscina coperta alla palestra, alle vasche per la sauna, completamente smontate e portate via, assieme ai servizi igienici, ai sanitari, alle tubazioni dell'acqua, del gas e dell'energia elettrica e all'ammattonato; anche un campo di calcio sito in contrada Terrenove-Bambina è privo di manutenzione e soggetto alle incursioni vandaliche che l'hanno pressoché distrutto.

Infine, in merito alle infrastrutture per attività socio-ricreative, vanno segnalate la presenza in città di due teatri e sale cinematografiche, di una sala privata di Bowling, numerosi pub, discoteche e diversi bar.

I cittadini lamentano una scarsa qualità urbana e un degrado diffuso in alcune zone della città (che coinvolge in particolare le aree archeologiche e i quartieri popolari), dovuto alla mancanza di manutenzione e da uno scarso senso civico da parte degli stessi residenti; la carenza di verde e parchi urbani di qualità; una generale sottovalutazione e scarsa conoscenza dell'enorme patrimonio culturale e ambientale presente sul territorio.

L'andamento della popolazione residente nel comune di Marsala si presenta in crescita ed è caratterizzato da una continua flessione del tasso di natalità e da una certa stabilità del tasso di mortalità; si registra pertanto un progressivo invecchiamento della popolazione accompagnato da un generale decremento del numero delle famiglie composte da tre componenti.

L'offerta dei servizi socio-assistenziali nel Comune comprende, oltre al succitato presidio ospedaliero in c/da Cardilla che accoglie soggetti provenienti da tutto il territorio



limitrofo, anche un poliambulatorio, un servizio di consultorio familiare, un Sert, un centro tutela per i minori e numerose comunità convenzionate, di accoglienza per soggetti in difficoltà (minori, giovani e madri in difficoltà, anziani e tossicodipendenti, immigrati).

Un ruolo importante è rivestito dalla rete dell'associazionismo locale che agisce a supporto e a integrazione dei servizi forniti dall'Amministrazione pubblica; in anni in cui il disagio sembra colpire in maniera sempre più diffusa i bilanci delle famiglie, un contributo fondamentale è quello offerto dalle strutture diocesane locali, che hanno predisposto un servizio di mensa gratuito e si occupano anche della distribuzione di beni di prima necessità.

Nonostante la ricchezza dell'offerta pubblica e privata emerge un quadro estremamente frammentato legato all'assenza d'integrazione delle stesse; non esiste un piano locale di coordinamento che consenta la predisposizione d'interventi organici.

Negli ultimi anni si è assistito a una crescita pressoché costante del numero di stranieri residenti nel Comune di Marsala in cui risiede una forte componente tunisina e rumena, fenomeno strettamente correlato alla domanda di forza lavoro espressa dalle attività agricole di base (viticoltura, vivaismo e floricoltura) e dal settore estrattivo (cave di tufo e sale).

In favore degli immigrati regolarmente residenti nel territorio della città, sono state predisposte forme di sostegno economico e di tirocinio al fine di favorire efficaci processi d'inclusione lavorativa e sociale e assicurarne il sostentamento personale e familiare; da qualche anno in contrada Perino opera un centro di seconda accoglienza che può assistere fino a quaranta soggetti circa; ciononostante nel piano di zona recente (documento che regola le prestazioni socio-assistenziali per la comunità), non sono previste azioni di tipo specifico.

Le autorità tendono a sottodimensionare il problema dell'immigrazione, nella convinzione che la popolazione straniera residente a Marsala sia portatrice di esigenze e bisogni sostanzialmente comuni anche ai cittadini italiani che vivono in condizioni di forte disagio, ossia bisogni collegati alle emergenze di tipo economico, lavorativo, abitativo e assistenziale; le poche iniziative d'integrazione sono portate avanti dagli enti operanti nel terzo settore.

Un problema diffuso su tutto il territorio è quello delle dipendenze da stupefacenti (eroina e cocaina) che investe soprattutto la fascia d'età dei giovani adulti (25-29 anni) in stato di disoccupazione o sottoccupazione e con bassi livelli d'istruzione scolastica.

Un ruolo centrale, per quanto attiene all'offerta di servizi per questa area, lo riveste il Sert che opera nel territorio attraverso prestazioni ambulatoriali e domiciliari sia di tipo farmacologico sia di tipo terapeutico/riabilitativo.

Vengono, inoltre, svolte attività sulla prevenzione, informazione e sensibilizzazione sul fenomeno delle dipendenze e in particolare sulla recente diffusione della dipendenza da

gioco d'azzardo (nonostante la crisi, recentemente sono sorti numerosi centri scommesse e si moltiplicano anche i siti on line relativi al gioco d'azzardo), le indagini degli inquirenti hanno portato alla scoperta di un'associazione per delinquere che distribuiva presso gestori di esercizi pubblici apparecchi che, collegandosi a siti internet privi di concessione, consentivano il gioco d'azzardo e le scommesse clandestine.

Per quanto riguarda i minori, le diverse problematiche riscontrate sono strettamente correlate ai differenti contesti socio – educativi di riferimento; in ambito scolastico emergono difficoltà legate all'apprendimento e a disturbi di tipo comportamentale acuiti da una scarsa attenzione del gruppo familiare d'origine; tutto ciò spesso sfocia nell'abbandono degli studi e nell'incremento della dispersione scolastica; il governo regionale centrale, ogni anno mette a bando migliaia di euro per finanziare progetti volti alla riduzione della devianza e della dispersione mediante una maggiore integrazione tra offerta scolastica e il mondo di lavoro.

Nel territorio esistono diverse comunità di accoglienza per minori a rischio, alcune delle quali ospitano anche ragazze madri e gestanti in difficoltà e un centro socio ricreativo per bambini e adolescenti; un passo importante è stata anche l'apertura del centro per la famiglia che si occupa di una pluralità d'interventi a sostegno delle famiglie che presentano problemi, quali, fra gli altri, servizi di mediazione familiare, counseling e assistenza psicologica.

Il tessuto sociale è costituito prevalentemente da abitanti appartenenti alla classe sociale media, prevalentemente legata al settore terziario, all'attività agricola e a quella turistica.

Da qualche anno si assiste anche a Marsala a un aumento delle richieste di aiuto di ordine economico (anche da parte di categorie sociali non riconducibili a quelle classiche di povertà) fenomeno questo dovuto sia alla contingente crisi finanziaria sia al fatto che il territorio, nel suo complesso, non offre grandi opportunità d'inserimento lavorativo stabile, poiché sia l'attività turistica che quella agricola hanno un andamento fortemente stagionale.

I più colpiti dall'attuale congiuntura economica sono i soggetti più anziani, spesso costretti a vivere in condizioni d'isolamento e di grave dissesto economico: il Comune ha predisposto un servizio di aiuto domestico in favore di persone anziane in condizione di normale parziale autosufficienza e il servizio di Assistenza Domiciliare Integrata in favore di persone anziane con rilevanti problematiche inerenti l'autonomia personale e lo stato di salute fisico e psichico.

Sono anche previsti sussidi monetari per famiglie disagiate e sul territorio sono presenti centri sociali, attività di segretariato sociale.

In via generale, livelli di povertà e disagio restano circoscritti alle aree periferiche della città e in particolare dei quartieri popolari di Amabilina e Sappusi e via Istria.

Spesso trattasi d'insediamenti vecchi o comunque mancanti di manutenzione e in alcuni casi totalmente fatiscenti, isolati, disabitati o abbandonati all'incuria e alle intemperie del tempo; molti dei quali spesso occupati in maniera abusiva.

Le case popolari di Via Mazara, a esempio, non sono mai state completate e l'area è avvolta dal più completo degrado ambientale a causa della fatiscenza della struttura, nel passato, in seguito a accurato sopralluogo, queste palazzine furono dichiarate inagibili e pertanto sgomberate; le famiglie residenti sono state alloggiate presso abitazioni private in affitto grazie a un sostegno economico offerto del Comune e nonostante sia stato approvato un progetto per il risanamento e il recupero strutturale degli edifici, i lavori non sono ancora stati avviati a causa di problemi di tipo burocratico, con grave danno per le famiglie che sono ancora senza una dimora.

Diversa la situazione dei quartieri Amabilina e Sappusi, in cui insistono delle scuole e talora centri sociali; trattasi perlopiù di quartieri ghetto, scarseggiano le attività commerciali, la presenza delle Forze dell'Ordine Gli spazi verdi sono pressoché inesistenti, e le poche aree attrezzate sono spesso abbandonate all'incuria (su richiesta della comunità, il Comune ha attuato interventi di pulizia per il ripristino del decoro urbano).

Presso il lungomare Salinella, a Sappusi, si sta sviluppando un piano per l'implementazione delle attività sportive e di diporto grazie alla creazione di un piccolo porticciolo voluto fortemente dagli imprenditori locali, nel tentativo d'innalzare i livelli di vivibilità sociale.

Le Forze dell'Ordine rendono un discreto servizio sul territorio tenuto conto che l'estensione è molto elevata e il numero e i mezzi a disposizione è sempre più esiguo.

Nel Comune sono presenti una stazione dei Vigili del Fuoco, il Commissariato di Polizia Stradale, la Stazione dei Carabinieri, la Tenenza della Guardia di Finanza; da anni oramai l'Amministrazione si è affidata a un sistema di videosorveglianza per il controllo delle aree urbane e per il controllo degli accessi nelle zone a traffico limitato (centro storico), strumenti che, talora, versano in uno stato di non operatività per la mancata manutenzione; nel medio termine si prevede l'ampliamento della videosorveglianza anche nei centri extraurbani.

Marsala ospita anche una sezione circoscrizionale del tribunale giudiziario che si occupa dei reati commessi anche nel comprensorio del mazarese (Partanna, Castelvetrano etc.).

I reati più diffusi sono i furti nelle abitazioni private site nelle aree periferiche, le rapine contro gli istituti di credito e gli uffici postali, nonché le truffe e i crimini economici nei confronti degli enti territoriali e della pubblica amministrazione; tutte attività tradizionalmente imputabili a singole individualità sebbene nell'ultimo periodo la micro-criminalità tenda a essere sempre più strutturata, tanto che si evidenzia un'escalation di reati pretori in forma più organizzata (in particolare per quanto relativo alle rapine).

Si stanno cercando di rafforzare gli strumenti di prevenzione al fenomeno, anche, attraverso il monitoraggio dei soggetti già noti alle Forze dell'Ordine poiché hanno commesso in passato reati del medesimo genere.

Non è possibile fare una precisa classificazione delle vittime seppure, inevitabilmente, i soggetti più colpiti delle azioni criminali sono gli anziani e i minori; i crimini sono commessi perlopiù da coloro che vivono in ambienti violenti, nelle zone popolari e dagli immigrati.

Numerosi sono anche i reati di natura ambientale e edilizia, contro i quali l'amministrazione sta provvedendo anche attraverso la confisca e la demolizione degli immobili abusivi.

Si ritiene comunque che esistano problematiche troppo ampie per essere affrontate a livello comunale (disoccupazione, sicurezza, immigrazione e sanità) e per le quali sarebbe opportuno l'istituzione di opportuni tavoli tecnici presieduti sia dalle autorità di pubblica sicurezza che dagli enti locali.

### **Petrosino**

Il comune di Petrosino, sito a metà strada tra Mazara del Vallo e Marsala, solo negli anni ottanta ha ottenuto l'autonomia amministrativa dalla città di Marsala, cui era annesso e con la quale condivide non solo la maggior parte dei servizi socio assistenziali e comunali, quali l'approvvigionamento idrico, la viabilità e il trasporto pubblico urbano, ma anche un'economia basata sull'agricoltura e sul sistema vitivinicolo, un vasto patrimonio di architettura rurale (chiani) disseminato nel paesaggio agricolo che è intrecciato fortemente con il tessuto urbano, fatto di piccole contrade e da un'area costiera lungo la quale si distribuisce la popolazione durante il periodo estivo.

Non vi è un nucleo abitato definito, il centro urbano del Comune, contiguo alla frazione Marsalese di Strasatti e costituito originariamente da circa sette contrade, si estende pressoché lungo tutto il territorio. Nell'entroterra a nord del paese, alcune zone sono state oggetto di bonifica. In un terreno che costeggia la ferrovia si estende l'antica frazione di Torreggiano, la più estesa tra quelle presenti e la più densamente popolata. In quest'area si trovano la farmacia, la stazione ferroviaria, un istituto tecnico superiore e la scuola dell'obbligo, poche attività commerciali e un piccolo bar. L'area confinante con il territorio ha una scarsa densità abitativa essendo interessata da terreni agricoli.

La piazza F. De Vita, su cui sorge la chiesa più importante del paese, costituisce il nodo nevralgico, da cui partono le principali direttrici statali. Più a Sud, in direzione della fascia costiera, sono posti gli uffici comunali, la stazione dei carabinieri, i servizi bancari e le attività commerciali.

Tra le aree costiere, di particolare rilievo è la spiaggia di Torrazza che assieme a Capo Feto, costituisce un'area naturalistica d'interesse comunitario. Questo tratto di litorale

presenta un ambiente naturale solo marginalmente colpito dai processi di cementificazione che hanno visto sorgere tutt'intorno, lidi e residenze.

Sono presenti iniziative di edilizia popolare, arredo e verde pubblico, opere di urbanizzazione primaria e secondaria da parte delle istituzioni locali che hanno coinvolto soprattutto gli edifici scolastici e le strutture cimiteriali (che versavano in un grave stato di degrado).

Nel Comune vi sono un centro culturale, lo stadio comunale (area colpita da atti vandalici) e un'area attrezzata per la pratica delle bocce. Mancano le strutture ludiche ricreative, nonostante sia prevista la realizzazione di un parco giochi con hot spot wi-fi che dovrebbe configurarsi come spazio d'incontro per adulti e per i più piccoli.

Interessante anche il contributo dell'iniziativa privata che, attraverso il recupero del patrimonio rurale, punta allo sviluppo di un'economia diversificata legata al settore turistico alberghiero, in tal senso fondamentale sarebbe un'opera di riordino delle coste e il risanamento delle aree balneari site in c/da Biscione.

A qualche chilometro dal centro sorge un'area di sviluppo artigianale e industriale in cui sono insediate alcune imprese agricole e legate all'indotto (vivai, coltivazioni erbe officinali, distilleria per la trasformazione dei prodotti vitivinicoli.)

L'indice di disoccupazione è superiore a quello nazionale e investe soprattutto i giovani diplomati e laureati. Il livello di reddito medio dei residenti è tra i più bassi della provincia, sebbene la maggior parte delle famiglie disponga di una dignitosa abitazione (trattasi perlopiù di edifici abbastanza modesti, composti dal solo piano terra che si affacciano direttamente sulle strade). La maggior parte della popolazione è impiegata nel settore primario, seguito dall'impiego pubblico e da quello commerciale.

Le scuole dell'obbligo, divise in vari plessi, facenti capo a un Istituto comprensivo, sono dislocate nelle varie contrade. La maggior parte degli abitanti, sopra i quarant'anni, è in possesso del titolo di studi obbligatorio. Sebbene il tasso di alfabetizzazione di base sia soddisfacente diversa è la situazione per quanto attiene il possesso del diploma e il conseguimento della laurea (percentuali che si abbassano di molto).

Il paese è stato interessato da una costante, seppur lieve, crescita demografica dovuta a tassi di natalità sostanzialmente alti e da un saldo migratorio positivo.

Il territorio è percepito come profondamente instabile sul piano della sicurezza, si registrano alti tassi di criminalità legati alla presenza di una microcriminalità spicciola dedita prevalentemente ai reati contro il patrimonio, allo sfruttamento del lavoro irregolare e ai reati contro la persona.

Le vittime più colpite appartengono alle cosiddette categorie a rischio, quali anziani, donne, soggetti con bassi livelli di scolarità e le piccole attività di vendita al dettaglio, mentre il fenomeno del lavoro nero coinvolge soprattutto le minoranze etniche presenti nel territorio che hanno trovato occupazione all'interno del comparto agricolo (una forte

componente proveniente dal maghreb).

Emergono problemi legati alla pianificazione e allo sfruttamento del territorio e alla scarsa vigilanza.

Molte strade sono spesso al buio a causa del fenomeno sempre più diffuso sul territorio, dei furti dei cavi di rame posti sui tralicci elettrici; oltretutto la mancanza d'illuminazione agevola il compimento di reati predatori nelle abitazioni private. A contrasto del fenomeno sono stati intensificati i controlli sul territorio da parte delle forze dell'ordine in particolare nelle ore notturne.

Di particolare rilevanza anche la diffusione delle discariche a cielo aperto. Grazie anche alle azioni di monitoraggio del territorio da parte di associazioni ambientaliste sono stati rinvenuti diversi punti di conferimento ospitanti materiali solidi, spesso altamente tossici, plausibilmente abbandonati da qualche privato o azienda per evitare di sostenerne i costi di smaltimento che sono estremamente onerosi (una possibile soluzione al problema potrebbe essere quella di prevedere degli incentivi economici per lo smaltimento).

La massiccia diffusione delle discariche abusive colpisce in particolar modo le aree costiere interessate anche dal problema dell'abusivismo edilizio e da fenomeni di edificazione non oculata resi possibili anche dalle concessioni rilasciate da improvvisi uffici tecnici (di recente si è provveduto al sequestro di alcune strutture balneari per sospette irregolarità urbanistiche).

Alcune zone sono sottoposte a videosorveglianza ma ai fini di un'azione più capillare di contrasto alla criminalità si reputa necessario da parte dell'Amministrazione un maggior coinvolgimento della cittadinanza e della comunità locale.

### **Mazara del Vallo**

Il comune di Mazara del Vallo è sito sulla costa Sud-occidentale della Sicilia. Il suo territorio, il più vasto della Provincia, è estremamente variegato: a Nord si sussegue un'area leggermente collinare caratterizzata dalla presenza insediamenti di tipo rurale, circondati da appezzamenti di terreno destinati a coltivazioni agricole; nella parte orientale si estende l'area industriale extraurbana di San Nicola; a Sud è bagnata dal Mar Mediterraneo e in direzione di Marsala si trova l'area di contrada Ferla ove sono sorte alcune aziende di coltivazione e trasformazione dei prodotti agricoli.

La città è caratterizzata dalla presenza del fiume Mazaro che storicamente separava il centro storico, sito sulla sponda sinistra, dalla vecchia periferia (all'epoca caratterizzata da terreni di tipo agricolo) area che si estende ancora oggi fino alla zona di villeggiatura e balneare. La zona del centro, che racchiude il cuore più antico della Città, è delimitata da un quadrilatero composto dalle vie di Corso Umberto, corso Vittorio Veneto, corso Aria e dal mare.

Il centro storico è rinomato per la presenza di numerosi vicoli e cortili ed era anticamente diviso in quattro quartieri: a Sud il quartiere di San Giovanni, sede storica dei palazzi religiosi

e amministrativi di cui rimangono alcune evidenze architettoniche; San Francesco, nella parte occidentale, che ospita il quartiere della Casbah, ossia la medina di chiara matrice arabeggiante con stradine strette e tortuose, vicoli ciechi, cortili con pozzi e pile, arcate in tufo e scalette in pietra, case spesso umide, molto piccole e diroccate abitate da famiglie solitamente numerose. Al centro Nord si sviluppa il quartiere ebraico della Giudecca e Xitta mentre all'estremità orientale ci sono tipici quartieri popolari di tipo residenziale.

Il nuovo centro urbano può considerarsi delimitato dal fiume Delia a sud, dal mare a ovest e dal sistema autostradale nella zona Nord-orientale. L'assetto urbano della zona periferica è definito da strade larghe e ben squadrate e edifici multipiano di ben più recente costruzione.

La zona residenziale, a Ovest del Mazaro, si caratterizza per la presenza di edifici in un ottimo stato di conservazione; mentre il centro abitato e storico sono, almeno nelle parti più visibili, abbastanza curati (grazie alla realizzazione d'interventi di ripristino funzionale e di valorizzazione del territorio che hanno interessato l'area). Di contro nelle zone di periferia ci sono edifici in stato di abbandono o fatiscente.

Oltre al centro abitato, il Comune di Mazara comprende altre zone periferiche, tra cui: l'area protetta di Capo Feto; il sito archeologico di Roccazzo nei pressi della strada provinciale Mazara-Salemi; la frazione di Borgata costiera, piccolo borgo rurale di poche centinaia d'unità, sviluppatasi intorno a un baglio oramai diroccato e inserita in un più ampio territorio interessato da coltivazioni agricole, in prevalenza vitivinicole. Il territorio è stato, inoltre, interessato da un diffuso fenomeno insediativo all'esterno del centro urbano, principalmente lungo l'area costiera (dalla zona di Tonnarella fino al territorio che si estende lungo capo Granitola) che ha interessato anche la fascia più a ridosso della battigia con grave danno per l'ecosistema naturale (si tratta in prevalenza di case di villeggiatura, realizzate abusivamente, per le quali l'Amministrazione comunale ha proposto nel tempo diversi piani di risanamento urbanistico).

Questa espansione della città è avvenuta soprattutto a scapito del centro storico, che ha subito un progressivo declino demografico ed economico compensato solo in minima parte dall'insediamento della popolazione d'origine maghrebina.

Il territorio è abitato da famiglie di lavoratori legati alle attività marinare, oltre che di artigiani, operai, esercenti e, in minima parte, imprenditori, impiegati e liberi professionisti. Le attività primarie (pesca e agricoltura) conservano una significativa centralità nel modello di sviluppo attuale di Mazara, sebbene il loro peso sia mutato in maniera strutturale.

L'imprenditorialità agricola, poggiata sulla viticoltura e interessata dalla crisi strutturale comune a tutti i territori dell'entroterra siciliana, ha avuto una notevole contrazione nell'ultimo triennio.

Il settore della pesca ha rappresentato, dagli anni settanta in poi, il principale motore dell'economia cittadina, ponendo in posizione di subalternità il settore dei servizi.

La flotta peschereccia, una delle più grandi d'Italia, che assorbe una vasta manovalanza, ha vissuto negli ultimi anni un forte ridimensionamento legato a una pluralità di fattori tra cui l'adozione del blocco biologico (ossia una sospensione regolamentata delle attività della pesca) per far fronte al depauperamento delle specie viventi presenti nei fondali marini locali. Uno dei più grossi problemi è rappresentato anche dai, talora difficili, rapporti con i paesi costieri del Mediterraneo e alla mancanza di una chiara e condivisa delimitazione dei confini marittimi. Spesso i pescherecci nella ricerca di acque più fertili si trovano a sconfinare e vengono sequestrati dalle autorità straniere.

La trasformazione economica e la crescita demografica che ha investito la città nel ventennio precedente, ha colpito fortemente l'area corrispondente alla zona portuale del Transmazaro. Il porto naturale, poco distante dal mercato del pesce, ospita ancora le attività cantieristiche e le officine meccaniche. Sulle rive del fiume sorgono inoltre piccole attività artigianali legate all'indotto della pesca.

L'espansione della flotta, grazie anche agli incentivi finanziari erogati in passato dai governi centrali, ha evidenziato le inadeguatezze del porto naturale e spinto alla costruzione di un nuovo bacino divenuto tra l'altro sede della capitaneria di porto.

Il porto di Mazara del Vallo, oltre che essere uno scalo peschereccio, oggi rappresenta anche uno snodo importante per i traffici commerciali e, seppur in maniera minore, anche un approdo di tipo turistico (saltuariamente funge anche da base per il turismo crocieristico). Nel bacino si trovano inoltre strutture adibite alla manutenzione del metanodotto della SNAM che collega l'Algeria all'Italia e che sbocca nei pressi di Capo Feto.

La volontà di salvaguardare questo prezioso patrimonio architettonico ha spinto l'Amministrazione comunale a valutare l'ipotesi di ritagliare un'area museale all'interno di un luogo eminentemente simbolico del centro storico e ancora visibilmente attraversato dagli intensi movimenti umani e dai traffici economici della vita quotidiana equivarrebbe a estendere l'operazione museografica a tutto il territorio urbano che gravita sul porto canale.

Il Comune ha previsto anche l'attivazione di una serie d'interventi di manutenzione e riqualificazione urbana, volti al risanamento e alla riqualificazione del quartiere popolare di via Sansone, all'interno e Transmazaro, per sottrarre al degrado le palazzine popolari e realizzare uno spazio architettonico destinato anche a divenire area di aggregazione e eventi.

Il Transmazaro è un quartiere giovane, in continua espansione ed è sede delle più importanti attività economiche della Città, tutte legate ai prodotti ittici e alle attività marine. Nel quartiere operano gruppi parrocchiali, un Comando della Polizia Municipale, una Scuola Media inferiore, il mercato Ortofrutticolo, lo Stadio Comunale e alcune aree attrezzate affidate a privati. Appare chiaro che, il territorio è scarso di servizi



pubblici a qualunque livello, mancano palestre pubbliche, circoli ricreativi, e spazi verdi attrezzati.

Le abitazioni sono quasi tutte di recente costruzione, molte unifamiliari, pochi i palazzi e molte ville. Infatti, il territorio è in parte sede di residenze estive e pertanto la popolazione durante il periodo estivo si moltiplica in maniera esponenziale.

Sotto il profilo economico, l'area è da inserire nella fascia medio alta, anche se non mancano i casi d'indigenza e problematiche sociali.

Mazara è d'importanza fondamentale anche per la storia dell'architettura normanna e barocca in Sicilia: dalla cattedrale al prezioso Museo diocesano e alla piazza della Repubblica. Il Comune si caratterizza anche per la presenza di numerose chiese e per le oasi naturali di lago Preola e i Gorgi tondi; a causa anche di un certo degrado del patrimonio architettonico e alla mancanza d'investimento nel settore. I flussi turistici destinati alla città e al suo territorio rimangono, comunque, marginali e caratterizzati da forte stagionalità. Negli ultimi anni si registra una leggera crescita, l'offerta di servizi turistico- alberghieri di alto livello e di un intervento di timida riqualificazione del centro storico che ha portato all'apertura di piccole attività specializzate nell'offerta d'intrattenimento. Nell'entroterra rurale sono sorte alcune iniziative imprenditoriali. Si sta aprendo la strada verso il consolidamento di una prospettiva turistica complementare a quella dell'agricoltura (anche in un'ottica di sistema con quanto avviene in altri comuni limitrofi).

Nel territorio mazarese si trovano i servizi indispensabili per la città: uffici postali e bancari, una struttura ospedaliera e alcuni centri di volontariato oltre che case di accoglienza per anziani e per minori in difficoltà. Lo sviluppo della città, come per altri centri urbani di dimensioni maggiori, risulta caratterizzato da un'evidente inadeguatezza di servizi e strutture sociali e da una scarsa presenza di centri di cultura (il comune ospita un museo, una pinacoteca e una biblioteca) teatri o anche centri sportivi (sono presenti alcune palestre private, mentre l'unico centro sportivo pubblico attrezzato è ubicato in zona Affacciata ed è raggiungibile con mezzi pubblici non sempre efficienti).

Il territorio presenta molte aree a rischio, localizzate nei quartieri periferici di nuova espansione dove vivono famiglie irregolari con capi famiglia spesso assenti o con gravi problemi giudiziari.

Il quartiere di Mazara due, che si trova a Nord del tracciato autostradale, vive una condizione di forte degrado sociale determinata da una pluralità di fattori coagenti quali la povertà, la disoccupazione e il lavoro nero, bassi gradi d'istruzione e anche continui disservizi.

Trattasi di una sorta di area dormitorio, con strade ampie e palazzi multipiano, pochi gli spazi aggregativi e di socializzazione legati alle attività offerte dalla vicina parrocchia e da una scuola elementare. I residenti lamentano il mancato funzionamento della

pubblica illuminazione (il servizio è spesso interrotto a causa dei furti dei cavi di rame), l'inadeguatezza dei servizi di trasporto pubblico, lo stato di abbandono in cui prostra l'asilo comunale e numerosi episodi di degrado urbano nelle aree circostanti la scuola.

Tra gli interventi previsti oltre al ripristino e a un ulteriore potenziamento dell'illuminazione, anche finanziamenti per innalzare il decoro urbano e lo sviluppo commerciale dell'area attraverso opere di ristrutturazione che coinvolgeranno gli edifici di proprietà comunale da destinare all'avvio di piccole attività di tipo imprenditoriali.

Ben difficile risulta la vivibilità dei quartieri popolari più vicini al centro, siti in via Potenza, ove vi sono ampie sacche di degrado sociale e di microcriminalità. A ridosso di quest'area, caratterizzata perlopiù da alti palazzi di recente costruzione, sorge un parco giochi (riaperto recentemente dopo decenni di abbandono) e a esso adiacente un plesso scolastico materno ed elementare, l'Ospedale e un modesto numero di attività commerciali.

Una realtà assestante è quella rappresentata dall'antica medina nel cuore del centro storico e in particolare dell'area interna a esso compresa tra le Piazze Regina e Repubblica che in seguito al terremoto avvenuto agli inizi degli anni ottanta (1981) è stata abbandonata dai residenti, i quali beneficiando di finanziamenti, hanno scelto d'insediarsi nei nuovi quartieri residenziali sorti nella zona del Transmazaro e all'estremità Nord-occidentale dell'antica Casbah.

L'area, negli anni successivi al terremoto, è stata occupata per la maggior parte da famiglie tunisine e marocchine d'origine. Nonostante ciò, successivamente molti degli immigrati tunisini di prima generazione hanno preferito spostarsi nella zona peri-urbana e della ferrovia (considerata più sicura) mentre alcune vie risultano abitate dal secondo gruppo di stranieri più numeroso in città, d'origine balcanica.

La popolazione residente è composta perlopiù da marinai e soggetti di origine straniera che lavorano nell'indotto, considerati più integrati rispetto a coloro che vivono a terra. Naturalmente gli effetti della crisi generalizzata del comparto della pesca hanno colpito il reddito dei marittimi e quindi inciso pesantemente sulla vita degli immigrati, molti dei quali negli ultimi anni sono stati costretti ad abbandonare le proprie case e cercare fortuna al Nord o rientrando nei paesi d'origine.

Diverso appare l'integrazione degli immigrati di origine slava, i quali sembrano rappresentare la componente più discriminata da parte dei residenti; sebbene il fenomeno dei rom sia da un punto di vista statistico poco rilevante. Essi patiscono una visibilità e una stigmatizzazione rilevante; pari, se non superiore, a quella sperimentata dai tunisini.

Se gli amministratori negli anni hanno più volte celebrato il modello integrativo rappresentato dalla città di Mazara, un'analisi più approfondita sembra evidenziare l'esistenza di numerose contraddizioni e difficoltà che sembrano caratterizzare l'insediamento degli stranieri sul territorio.

La presenza straniera nel centro storico, a ridosso del quale sono sorti pub ristoranti,

percepita dalle autorità come fondamentale per il rilancio dell'area, viene vissuta dalla stragrande maggioranza dei Mazaresi come un'invasione che ha innalzato i livelli di pericolosità e avrebbe spinto molti negozi storici a trasferirsi in altre zone.

Schiamazzi notturni, risse, spaccio e presenza di stranieri irregolari sono i fenomeni più comuni riscontrati dalle forze di polizia, le quali operano quotidianamente sul territorio con perquisizioni e posti di blocco.

La presenza di una scuola tunisina della città e di alcuni centri di rappresentanza messi a disposizione dalle strutture comunali, secondo alcuni esempio di reale e costruttivo dialogo interculturale, in realtà sembrano avere un aspetto fortemente ghettizzante sottolineato dalla totale assenza di qualunque attività che metta in contatto tali realtà con del resto della città.

Da più parti si richiedono con forza maggiori controlli dell'ordine pubblico a Mazara del Vallo dove, specie il sabato sera, gli episodi di violenza e di criminalità, soprattutto furti, la fanno ormai da padroni la città appare invivibile a causa anche della mancanza adeguata di sorveglianza. Sono ancora da realizzare gli impianti di videosorveglianza.

Anche cittadini mazaresi, alcuni dei quali abitano e lavorano in piazza Regina, sono pressoché tutti rimasti vittime di episodi di micro criminalità, quali furti, rapine, danneggiamenti, etc., che sono diventati nel tempo sempre più frequenti.

Al di là dei danni economici, certamente da non trascurare, tali fatti hanno indotto negli esercenti e nelle rispettive famiglie un sentimento d'impotenza, d'ingiustizia e d'insicurezza, alimentato dalla incapacità di attuare interventi risolutivi, da parte delle amministrazioni pubbliche.

A nulla sono finora serviti i sistemi di allarme, di videosorveglianza, e di sicurezza di cui molti cittadini si sono muniti, a proprie spese. A ciò si aggiunge che il centro storico e, in particolare, Piazza Regina, sono diventati il centro dello spaccio di droga.

Tra i reati più diffusi si registrano anche il lavoro nero e furti in appartamento. Al fine di prevenire i reati e assicurare una maggiore sicurezza urbana, la città si è dotata di un sistema di video sorveglianza.

I reati sono commessi da coloro che vivono nei quartieri popolari e con bassi livelli di scolarità, le vittime sono perlopiù donne anziane con bassi livelli di scolarità e a rischio sono le attività commerciali e le abitazioni private.

Le forze dell'ordine in questi ultimi tempi hanno fatto un buon lavoro, encomiabile ma insufficiente al raggiungimento del pieno risultato. Sono stati potenziati e intensificati i controlli e i servizi nel centro storico, dove in alcune zone, esistono vere e proprie isole in cui piccoli criminali tentano di trasformare quel territorio in terra di nessuno dove persino lo Stato deve ritenersi invasore e, quindi, non gradito.

I livelli di occupazione tra le donne e i segmenti più giovani della popolazione si situano su livelli mediamente bassi. Il crescente numero di persone che si rivolgono ai

servizi sociali e alla Caritas cittadina per chiedere aiuto contribuisce a rendere ancora più esasperato l'atteggiamento di fronte alla dilagante delinquenza.

Le deboli opportunità nell'occupazione professionale, peraltro, sono tra le maggiori cause delle criticità del contesto sociale giovanile che in alcuni quartieri periferici della città, spingono i ragazzi a assumere comportamenti criminali dai contorni preoccupanti.

Anche Mazara risulta fortemente interessata dal fenomeno mafioso con numerose infiltrazioni nel settore degli appalti e delle energie rinnovabili legate alla creazione di un parco eolico nel territorio.

Si rileva la necessità di un maggior coinvolgimento della cittadinanza e un raccordo tra istituzioni locale e governo per contrastare la criminalità e in particolar modo le problematiche connesse alla tossicodipendenze e il lavoro nero.

Occorrono politiche volte allo sviluppo della pesca e del turismo, al rilancio dell'economia locale e all'attivazione di attività commerciali, soprattutto nelle zone disagiate, che consentano d'innalzare i livelli di sicurezza, implicando una maggiore presenza sul territorio delle forze dell'ordine.

### **La costa settentrionale e i territori limitrofi**

Alcamo e Castellammare del golfo

#### **Alcamo**

Il comune Alcamo si estende su un'area collinare a ridosso del Monte Bonifato su un territorio ben collegato sia al capoluogo che a Palermo, grazie alla vicina rete autostradale e alla presenza del tracciato ferroviario (il quale, soprattutto in direzione Trapani risulta fortemente sottoutilizzato).

Il territorio Alcamese non è particolarmente esteso nonostante la cittadina rappresenti uno dei centri più popolati del territorio provinciale; il nucleo originario del centro urbano, alle cui sommità si trovano le evidenze architettoniche storicamente più interessanti (la maggior parte dei quali è stata oggetto d'interventi di recupero e di ripristino funzionale) è delimitato, a Nord, da Corso VI Aprile che attraversa parte del centro storico e rappresenta la via dei negozi e dei principali servizi comunali: intorno a essa si è sviluppato il tessuto urbano della cittadina; parallelamente a questa si dirama l'asse stradale di Viale Europa, caratterizzato da edifici residenziali multipiano di moderna costruzione e piccole attività commerciali.

Proprio l'area più antica, è stata oggetto di molte iniziative di restauro conservativo e di ripristino funzionale e per il futuro sono previste opere di restauro conservativo, edilizia popolare e ripristino funzionale di alcuni edifici avviate sia dalle istituzioni locali che grazie a contributi provenienti da privati.

Tra i diversi progetti che il Comune si è impegnato a realizzare nel tempo, vi è la riqualificazione dell'area di S. Ippolito, un progetto che dovrebbe portare alla realizzazione di nuovi edifici di tipo popolare e alla creazione di un parco urbano in cui i percorsi pedonali colleghino le aree verdi ai campi sportivi.

Sempre nell'ambito di una riqualificazione globale della cittadina alcamese, l'Amministrazione ha previsto la realizzazione della cittadella dei giovani, con l'obiettivo di creare luoghi di aggregazione che prescindano dall'attività scolastica, attraverso la riconversione d'immobili comunali siti in via Foscolo.

In direzione di Alcamo Marina, località balneare al confine con Castellammare del Golfo, vi è una vasta zona di espansione edilizia di tipo eminentemente abusivo (frutto di un'edificazione del tutto sregolata che ha portato alla costruzione d'insediamenti a ridosso della spiaggia e in una zona a forte rischio idrogeologico) mentre tutt'intorno al perimetro urbano si dirama una vasta area destinata alle coltivazioni agricole.

A valle si è sviluppata una vasta area artigianale che si estende fino al territorio comunale di Calatafimi. In contrada Sasi e in contrada Fegotto sono sorti numerosi consorzi all'interno dei quali operano imprese affermate, alcune delle quali rinomate a livello internazionale, specializzate nella produzione metalmeccanica, nella lavorazione del vetro; nella produzione di gesso e marmo, nella produzione di arredamenti; nello smaltimento dei rifiuti nella verniciatura industriale, nelle arti grafiche e progettazione pubblicitaria.

Esistono comunque altre importanti imprese che operano nei settori industriali e commerciali legati all'utilizzo di energie rinnovabili e degli impianti fotovoltaici, nei settori edili e nella produzione d'infissi e arredi; nel florovivaismo e nella zootecnia.

Nel decennio precedente nel territorio di Alcamo, sono sorte numerose aree per la rivendita di automobili nuove e usate e si sono sviluppati diversi negozi in franchising mentre le piccole imprese commerciali a conduzione individuale stanno lentamente scomparendo a causa del difficile periodo economico.

Il settore trainante rimane ancora quello dell'agricoltura, la produzione locale, per la maggior parte, viene esportata nell'ambito del mercato nazionale, anche se ultimamente i margini economici non sono soddisfacenti e ciò ha spinto molte imprenditori agricoli a cessare le proprie attività. L'Amministrazione locale ha svolto una funzione di supporto alla promozione dei prodotti locali garantendo forme di sostegno finanziario a alcune ditte artigiane che consentissero loro di partecipare a eventi e manifestazioni nazionali e internazionali, nell'ottica di valorizzazione delle risorse tipiche locali.

La viticoltura da sola produce oltre metà dell'intero reddito locale. Al vino alcamese è riconosciuta la Denominazione d'origine controllata e sul territorio sono sorte diverse (circa una trentina di aziende vitivinicole) cantine sociali. Il Comune è inserito da anni nella rete delle Città del Vino e delle Strade del Vino per lo sviluppo enoturistico. A

conferma dell'importanza delle produzioni vitivinicole, presso il Castello dei conti di Modica è stata istituita l'Enoteca regionale con annesso Museo del vino e delle tradizioni.

Anche l'olivicoltura è uno dei pilastri portanti dell'economia locale, con almeno una decina di aziende specializzate nella trasformazione dei prodotti olivicoli. L'industria dolciaria e di produzione di frutta secca sta tentando di decollare così come la produzione del melone purceddu d'Alcamo, tra i più rinomati meloni d'inverno.

Poiché una larga maggioranza dei giovani alcamesi oggi preferisce altre attività di studio e formazione, lo sviluppo agricolo Alcamese è stato possibile grazie al ricorso alla manodopera straniera, senza la quale gran parte dei terreni sarebbero rimasti incolti. Si tratta di una manodopera solo in parte stanziale, la maggior parte degli immigrati, durante il periodo della vendemmia, si trasferisce nel territorio per poi, una volta conclusa l'attività, cercare fuori nuove possibilità di lavoro.

La città di Alcamo ha diverse potenzialità di sviluppo identificabili nelle caratteristiche turistiche e naturalistiche dell'area e legate al possesso di un patrimonio storico culturale di pregio (Castello, Collegio e Chiesa Mare ma un territorio nel quale sono disseminati grandi bagli e case patronali) e alla presenza della riserva orientata naturale denominata dal Bosco D' Alcamo sul monte Bonifato. Estremamente ampia è l'offerta di servizi di svago divertimento (pub, bar e ristoranti). Non mancano le manifestazioni organizzate da enti teatrali e musicali di cui la più importante è il festival del Blues; ma tale ricchezza sinora non è stata adeguatamente valorizzata. Il territorio risulta ancora marginalmente interessato dai flussi turistici concentrati solo nella stagione estiva e senza significative ricadute economiche. D'altronde anche la capacità dell'offerta alberghiera non risulta particolarmente sviluppata.

Alcamo condivide con gli altri comuni costieri le risorse offerte dal Golfo di Castellammare e le problematiche connesse alla salvaguardia e alla valorizzazione del proprio ambiente naturale con particolare riferimento all'indiscriminata trasformazione di terreni agricoli in discariche abusive di rifiuti tossici, al forte dissesto creato dall'abusivismo edilizio nelle zone costiere e al fenomeno degli incendi che durante la stagione estiva colpisce le aree boschive.

La cittadina costituisce indubbiamente un polo attrattivo per i comuni limitrofi, poiché sul territorio sono presenti un gran numero di scuole primarie e superiori, uffici e attività commerciali; il distretto scolastico e la condotta agraria, molteplici servizi tecnici, sociali e culturali, quali il segretariato Sociale, la Biblioteca civica e multimediale.

L'offerta socio-sanitaria sia privata che pubblica è ampia. Un centro diurno comunale per anziani, una comunità alloggio per disabili gravi, diversi servizi di asilo nido, alcuni centri per minori, un presidio ospedaliero e non ultimo il centro antiviolenza a difesa delle donne in difficoltà.

La città è dotata di adeguati spazi per le attività del tempo libero dei ragazzi: centri sportivi pubblici (palestra comunale, campi da tennis) e privati (scuole di danza, palestre, struttura per il pattinaggio su ghiaccio). Malgrado questo c'è un grave problema dall'inadeguatezza degli spazi verdi pubblici.

Atteso che Alcamo si colloca in una situazione economica media, l'ambiente socioeconomico e culturale è abbastanza eterogeneo, infatti sono rappresentati tutti i ceti sociali (operai, agricoltori, artigiani, commercianti, professionisti e impiegati nel settore pubblico).

Negli ultimi dieci anni si è assistito, inoltre, all'inserimento nel tessuto sociale tradizionale di nuclei familiari provenienti dalla Romania, dall'Africa e dall'Asia orientale; i primi trovano occupazione nel settore dell'assistenza alla persona, i secondi offrono manodopera per l'agricoltura e per l'artigianato, mentre la componente cinese è impegnata in attività commerciali e tende a condurre una vita autonoma che denota scarsa esigenza d'integrazione sociale.

La comunità sociale è costituita da nuclei familiari composti per lo più da quattro persone e, nella maggior parte dei casi, dipendenti dal lavoro del capofamiglia. Comunemente ad altre realtà del Mezzogiorno, alcuni quartieri della cittadina, posti nelle aree più periferiche, sono caratterizzate da situazioni di estremo degrado, acuite dal vistoso aumento della disoccupazione che colpiscono soprattutto i più giovani che spesso vivono una condizione di forte insuccesso scolastico (alti tassi di dispersione scolastica), aggravato anche da un fenomeno di forte frammentazione correlato al crescente numero di casi di separazione delle coppie.

Le zone considerate comunemente più a rischio sono quelle dell'ex Villaggio Regionale, costruito negli anni ottanta, che è un vero e proprio quartiere "ghetto" dove sono concentrate situazioni al limite di degrado e di abbandono anche con carenze igienico-sanitarie e socio-culturali gravissime, o ancora le zone di nuova espansione di S. Anna e Tre Santi (in direzione di via Kennedy in cui ricadono una scuola media inferiore e un istituto d'istruzione superiore).

Nonostante diversi siano stati in questi ultimi anni gli interventi realizzati in favore dei minori che presentano un forte disagio sociale, nel territorio del Comune di Alcamo è ancora presente un'ampia fascia sociale minorile, aperta ai rischi della devianza e della manovalanza da parte della criminalità organizzata, proveniente spesso da zone sociali degradate; mentre molti adolescenti manifestano sempre più preoccupanti segnali di disagio, espressi purtroppo talvolta con atti di vandalismo, episodi di bullismo e l'uso di sostanze stupefacenti.

Parecchi sono i minori in condizioni di trascuratezza e scarsa cura e minori a rischio di abuso e di violenza psicologica dovuta alle difficoltà nelle capacità genitoriali. Il disagio dei minori assume una connotazione ancora più preoccupante se si pensa che spesso è

strettamente collegato ad altre forme di disadattamento (esempio prostituzione minorile) con conseguenze terribili sul piano della crescita individuale e sociale.

Nonostante gli sforzi fatto dagli enti locali, si rileva l'insufficienza dei servizi per la prima infanzia, l'inadeguatezza delle strutture e degli interventi a sostegno della genitorialità, l'assenza di centri di aggregazione e d'interazione che facciano da raccordo tra le istanze familiari e quelle individuali.

Un ruolo determinate è svolto dall'opera salesiana "Don Bosco" le cui attività di animazione e accoglienza richiamano numerosi giovani e ragazzi provenienti anche dalle zone a rischio.

Alcamo tuttavia presenta forme di devianza altamente pericolose e una radicata presenza della criminalità organizzata, fattori che condizionano pesantemente le opportunità d'investimento e di mobilitazione di capitali nella direzione dell'intrapresa di attività produttive e che richiederebbero un forte impegno di promozione di una forte e diffusa educazione alla legalità spesso delegato agli istituti scolastici che portano avanti diversi progetti per sensibilizzare gli alunni in tema di cultura della legalità

Senza dimenticare la grave emergenza rappresentata dai recenti attentati incendiari che coinvolgono imprenditori locali e in particolare le aziende specializzate nel settore delle costruzioni.

La competitività di molte imprese è inoltre fortemente compromessa dalla presenza di ampie zone di economia sommersa e dalla ricerca di manodopera sempre meno specializzata e quindi meno costosa costituita dalla popolazione straniera.

Nonostante la presenza di sufficienti spazi verdi, si lamenta da parte della cittadinanza una generale incuria acuita dalla presenza di atti vandalici, rapine, scippi, borseggi, atti di disturbo della quiete pubblica e il mancato rispetto delle elementari regole civiche ascrivibili non solo alla presenza straniera ma anche agli stessi residenti.

Negli ultimi anni, si registra una certa recrudescenza dei fenomeni di microcriminalità che colpisce soprattutto le aree periferiche e in particolare le abitazioni di villeggiatura situate nelle campagne e nelle zone costiere, nonché gli edifici rurali dove sono custoditi macchinari e attrezzi; quali a esempio la contrada Calatubo (tra Alcamo e Balestrate) e le zone più centrali di Alcamo Marina. Diventa stringente la necessità di prevenire scippi ai danni soprattutto di donne anziane, spesso vittime di truffe e raggiri.

Opinione comune della popolazione è che le autorità abbiano sottovalutato tale fenomeno per evitare di creare allarmismi sociali, sebbene la polizia e i carabinieri siano impegnati in attività straordinarie di controllo del territorio.

Le Forze dell'Ordine, data la scarsità di mezzi e uomini, fanno il loro possibile per assicurare il controllo del territorio; tra gli interventi effettuati si segnalano: ispezioni nelle abitazioni di pregiudicati e sorvegliati speciali, posti di blocco, volanti nel territorio tra le province di Palermo e Trapani; nonostante tutto molti cittadini ricorrono sempre più



spesso a servizi di vigilanza privata.

Il Comune di Alcamo ha in progetto l'installazione di un sistema di telecamere di sicurezza collegate con la sede centrale della polizia (circa una cinquantina) dislocate nel centro urbano, nelle principali vie di accesso alla città, nell'area artigianale di c/da Sasi e nella località balneare di Alcamo Marina.

### **Castellammare del Golfo**

Il territorio di Castellammare del Golfo si estende su un'area costiera di circa sessanta chilometri, posta a ridosso di Monte Inici, al confine con la cittadina di Alcamo.

Il nucleo più antico dell'insediamento è costituito da una cittadella fortificata che si è sviluppata intorno a un antico castello, trasformato in polo museale a seguito di un intervento di restauro, intorno al quale si sono sviluppati nel seicento una pluralità d'insediamenti di tipo residenziale.

Il paese è composto di circa quindicimila abitanti di cui una buona parte è emigrata; tal esodo ha colpito proprio la parte più antica del centro storico, nel quale molte sono le abitazioni non occupate e spesso affette da numerosi esempi di degrado a causa degli scarsi se non addirittura assenti interventi di manutenzione da parte dei proprietari che si sono trasferiti nelle aree periferiche.

I fenomeni di degrado e di abbandono si verificano in maniera incontrollata nelle aree comprese tra la via dei Medici e Corso Mattarella, in particolare negli isolati contigui alla centralissima via Garibaldi, ove, oltre a via Roma e a via Marconi, sono concentrate le principali attività economiche e amministrative del Comune.

L'abbandono è aggravato anche da un certo disinteresse della amministrazione locale, che ha favorito il diffondersi di un abusivismo strisciante attraverso cui le famiglie meno abbienti, non in grado di poter acquistare una nuova residenza, riescono a rendere meno precarie le condizioni abitative; è così che gran parte delle semplici case monocellulari che contrassegnavano le lunghe schiere abitative delle strade corridoio diventano case torre, quando non palazzine condominiali.

Intorno al centro storico, in direzione meridionale si sono sviluppate nuove aree di edilizia urbana perlopiù a carattere, da segnalare il progressivo esodo delle attività commerciali in via Segesta, quartiere all'intorno del quale insistono le scolastiche e i presidi di sicurezza.

L'area di Bocca della Carrubba, poco distante dal centro, è caratterizzata dalla presenza di palazzi multipiano di tipo moderno; in via Aldo Moro, nello specifico, sorge un'area di edilizia economica di popolare, in stato di forte degrado, abitata da anziani e famiglie con grave disagio sociale e economico (previsti interventi di manutenzione straordinaria per sottrarre la zona al degrado).

La contrada di Fragini è una vallata eminentemente agricola, posta nell'entroterra

a ridosso di Monte Inici e Monte Sparagio, ha sviluppato negli ultimi decenni una consistente edilizia di case di villeggiatura estiva.

La frazione di Balata di Baida, qualche chilometro a Sud dal centro urbano, conta qualche centinaio di abitanti, qui vive una buona percentuale di stranieri di etnia Rumena, ben integrata e impegnata nel settore dell'agricoltura e dei servizi turistici. Il piccolo borgo da qualche anno è rinomato per l'organizzazione di una rappresentazione vivente della natività che richiama numerosi visitatori.

L'area, tradizionalmente legata alle attività estrattive e agricole, è caratterizzata dalla presenza dei ruderi di un antico castello, da poche attività commerciali e da un servizio postale e una guardia medica per soddisfare le richieste minime della comunità locale. In questa zona (c/da Celso) ricadono insediamenti abitativi diffusi e insediamenti artigianali/industriali.

Scopello è una frazione, con circa un centinaio di abitanti, cresciuta attorno a un antico baglio su un'altura distante poco più di dieci km dal capoluogo comunale; nel territorio sono sorte numerose attività di ristorazione e di servizi di ospitalità.

A valle in prossimità della costa vi è un'antica tonnara oramai in disuso meta di turisti e bagnanti.

Lungo la strada che collega Scopello a Castellammare, sono state costruite ville di tipo abusivo, alcune proprio a ridosso della zona costiera, con grave danno del patrimonio ambientale presente.

Castellammare è anche conosciuta per un patrimonio naturale di notevole rilevanza; quali la Riserva dello Zingaro, la spiagge della Playa e di Guidaloca e le Terme Segestane.

La costa dello Zingaro è una delle pochissime in Sicilia senza strada litoranea, oggi la Riserva si estende nella parte Occidentale del Golfo di Castellammare fino alla località di San Vito Lo Capo. Parte della riserva è stato totalmente devastato da attentati incendiari.

Guidaloca è una baia a metà strada tra il paese e la Riserva che ospita una grande spiaggia e tutt'intorno una pluralità di ville estive.

Il sistema produttivo era tradizionalmente legato all'agricoltura e in particolare alla coltivazione della vite, di cui vi sono tracce nelle aree meridionali del territorio comunali; mentre il turismo e la ricettività sono in fase di sviluppo recente per effetto d'interventi legati alla programmazione negoziata e prevalentemente nelle contrade, sono cresciute le strutture alberghiere, i Bed and breakfast, le case vacanze, e le strutture di erogazione di servizi al turismo (diving, ristoranti, rent-car).

Anche la pesca e le attività portuali, a essa riconducibili, hanno svolto un ruolo importante nell'economia locale, oggi grandemente ridimensionato; il porto e l'area della marina, oggetto di un vasto intervento di riqualificazione, ospitano oggi numerose attività di deposito, di ristorazione e d'intrattenimento; tali attività occupano una parte assai ridotta del vasto patrimonio di edifici produttivi che ancora si conserva e che versa in

condizioni di abbandono.

Il tasso di occupazione è molto basso, anche a causa di un tessuto imprenditoriale di tipo industriale pressoché assente; esistono microrealità produttive riconducibili all'attività estrattiva, all'edilizia, alla lavorazione del legno, del ferro, e del marmo (i cui depositi presso la statale che collega il Centro con le contrae dell'entroterra, rappresentano un grave elemento di pericolo per l'ambiente naturale); assai limitata è la presenza di attività artigianali.

Il comune di Castellammare del Golfo evidenzia una situazione sociale, caratterizzata da bisogni materiali insoddisfatti che interessano alcune fasce di popolazione territorialmente localizzate, sottosviluppate, dove la precarietà del lavoro (disoccupazione, sottoccupazione, lavoro irregolare) si somma alla carenza di abitazioni, centri culturali, e all'assenza di beni elementari di sopravvivenza.

Negli ultimi anni l'esponentiale aumento della povertà a Castellammare del Golfo, è stato intercettato dai servizi sociali e in parte contenuto grazie alle attività del centro "Don Pino Puglisi", sorto in un bene confiscato alla mafia in contrada Tavolatella. Questo centro funge come ente di distribuzione di generi alimentari per le famiglie bisognose. Negli ultimi anni si sono moltiplicati i furti nelle abitazioni in particolare nella zona di via Segesta e nelle aree di campagna perlopiù compiuti a opera di gruppi dell'Est Europa.

Si segnala anche la presenza di un'attività di meretricio esercitata presso abitazioni private che vede coinvolte perlopiù cittadine straniere; diffuso anche il fenomeno del consumo delle sostanze pericolose (cocaina e droghe leggere) presso la popolazione giovanile.

Una situazione aggravata anche dalla presenza di una criminalità latente che si manifesta con continui attentati incendiari che ogni anno coinvolgono le risorse boschive del territorio ma spesso sono perpetrati anche ai danni degli imprenditori locali impegnati nel settore delle costruzioni, plausibilmente, in questo caso, tale fenomenologia sembra riconducibile all'attività estorsiva e ai tentativi di condizionamento nel settore degli appalti da parte delle cosche mafiose. Contro questa spirale di violenza importanti sono le iniziative promossi dalle due associazioni anti racket operanti sul territorio; il Comune ha inoltre deciso di provvedere all'installazione d'impianti di sorveglianza piazzate sulle vie del centro cittadino ma anche nella prima periferia e nell'area balneare. Le forze dell'ordine hanno previsto anche alcune telecamere per la lettura delle targhe delle automobili, da collocare agli ingressi della cittadina.

## **Le provincie siciliane**

### **Provincia Di Agrigento**

Il territorio della Provincia regionale di Agrigento costituisce l'area centro meridionale della Sicilia ed è composto da quarantatré comuni perlopiù di piccole dimensioni. Circa il cinquanta per cento della popolazione è distribuita in alcuni centri maggiori (Agrigento, Canicatti, Favara, Licata, Palma di Montechiaro, Porto Empedocle, Ribera, Sciacca), con una netta concentrazione della popolazione nelle aree costiere.

Il comprensorio agrigentino è in massima parte collinare. Nella zona settentrionale sorgono i rilievi montuosi dei Sicani, caratterizzati dalla presenza di piccoli centri, dediti tradizionalmente alla zootecnia e all'agricoltura e in cui negli ultimi anni si stanno sviluppando una pluralità di servizi ricettivi legati al turismo rurale e all'offerta di prodotti tipici (Bivona, Cammarata, San Giovanni Gemini, Santo Stefano Quisquina, Sambuca e Burgio Casteltermi, Bivona e Alessandria della Rocca). Molte di queste zone sono afflitte da una forte stagnazione demografica e da una diffusa condizione di disoccupazione e sottoccupazione per esempio Canicatti, nell'entroterra è al centro di una vasta area agricola che con una rinomata produzione vitivinicola che le permette di distinguersi nettamente dagli altri panorami agricoli legati tradizionalmente alle produzioni olivicole e ai mandorleti.

Sciacca, Porto Empedocle e Licata sono centri marinari e hanno un carattere commerciale e marginalmente anche industriale, mentre gli altri centri costieri hanno una vocazione eminentemente turistica (San Leone è tra le località balneari più rinomate).

Il turismo è un settore in forte crescita. Grazie alle attrazioni artistiche e culturali, alle bellezze naturalistiche (appartengono al territorio della provincia anche le isole di Lampedusa e Linosa, oltre alla riserva dei monti Iblei) e ai numerosi siti archeologici, tra cui spicca la Valle dei Templi, dichiarata dall'UNESCO patrimonio mondiale dell'umanità. Interessanti dal punto di vista archeologico sono Eraclea Minoa e Realmonte.

I comuni della Provincia sono costituiti prevalentemente da insediamenti di nuova fondazione; i centri storici di antica origine, più ricchi di architetture notevoli, sono quelli di Agrigento, Naro e Favara, ma tutti indistintamente versano in condizioni di degrado (se si eccettua il restauro di alcuni degli edifici più importanti) e presentano fenomeni di abbandono e spopolamento.

La Provincia di Agrigento è considerata come una delle più difficili tra quelle siciliane per condizioni di vivibilità e sviluppo. Il contesto territoriale è caratterizzato da una sciente qualità degli insediamenti (anche delle strutture costruite in epoca più recente), dalla diffusione di forte fenomeni di degrado del territorio e di dissesto idrogeologico, acuiti da diffusi fenomeni di edilizia abusiva; non ultime anche l'inadeguatezza dei servizi primari

quali per esempio le difficoltà dell'approvvigionamento idrico (costante il razionamento delle acque).

Si riscontra un elevato tasso di natalità e un elevato concomitante tasso di emigrazione che ha favorito una generale tendenza all'abbandono delle campagne. Il livello d'istruzione più diffuso è la licenza di scuola media inferiore, seguito dal diploma di scuola superiore e da pochi laureati. Si rileva una quota consistente di popolazione priva di titolo di studio. La Provincia ha alti tassi di dispersione scolastica, estremamente frequente il lavoro minorile non qualificato e a basso salario. Si registra una grave carenza di luoghi di aggregazione socio culturale in particolare destinati ai giovani ai quali, grazie al dipartimento di sociologia, è indirizzato un servizio di ascolto presso sportelli all'interno gli istituti scolastici; oltre a un ceto ampio composto da dipendenti del settore pubblico, emerge la presenza di un notevole tasso di disoccupazione che colpisce in maniera esasperata i giovani. In realtà nella maggior parte dei casi, i dati sembrerebbero essere esasperati dalla presenza di una forte economia sommersa.

Le condizioni di sottosviluppo del contesto agrigentino sono strettamente collegate alle difficoltà socio-economiche della popolazione, cui non è facile porre rimedio nel breve termine. Tra i punti di debolezza del sistema devono essere inserite anche la carenza di collegamenti territoriali efficienti, la qualità e la quantità della ricettività turistica che non riesce a rilanciare l'economia del territorio, e la capacità di governance delle pubbliche amministrazioni che ha alimentato per anni fenomeni di scempio del territorio.

Questo contesto già difficile, è ulteriormente aggravato dalla pressante presenza della criminalità di tipo mafioso, considerata tra le più attive a livello regionale e internazionale (Canada e Stati Uniti d'America). L'organizzazione avrebbe altissimi livelli di radicamento in particolare in alcuni centri quali Licata, Palma di Montechiaro, Favara, Ribera, l'area di Sciacca Canicattì, Racalmuto, Castrofilippo, Agrigento e la conurbazione di Porto Empedocle. Un'organizzazione di tipo tradizionale dedita a episodi delinquenziali quali atti incendiari, intimidazioni, in particolare a danno di attività commerciali, artigiane e industriali, ascrivibili al fenomeno estorsivo, ma che hanno spesso colpito anche i politici e funzionari pubblici. Un territorio in cui la metodologia omicida come estremo atto di punizione non è del tutto scomparsa.

Il forte consolidamento sul territorio, testimoniato dalla scarsa propensione da parte dei cittadini a sporgere denuncia, sarebbe di fatto ascrivibile alla grave crisi economica e occupazionale che da decenni esiste nell'Agrigentino, che tra l'altro sarebbe anche il fattore scatenante del moltiplicarsi di una criminalità diffusa e predatoria, che risponde non esclusivamente alle logiche della criminalità organizzata, ma sempre più spesso vede coinvolti incensurati attivi nel settore dei furti in abitazioni estive (deserte durante i periodi invernali) o ancora dalla sottrazione del rame e dagli scippi. Vi è una certa recrudescenza delle rapine a mano armata, nello spaccio minuto di sostanze stupefacenti,

nel gioco d'azzardo (svolto sia in bische clandestine sia in sale da gioco mediante l'utilizzo di video poker), e nella vendita di merce con marchi contraffatti.

Molti degli immigrati che arrivano sul territorio, di origine nordafricana, non riescono a essere assorbiti dal mercato del lavoro locale e finiscono a irrobustire le fila della malavita. Da segnalare che, proprio nell'agrigentino, si sono verificati isolati episodi di riduzione in schiavitù e tratta di esseri umani.

Si registra anche la presenza di fenomeni collegati allo stalking e, seppur in maniera minore, atti di violenza sessuale perpetrate spesso nei confronti di minorenni.

Nonostante il tentativo di assicurare un dispositivo di sicurezza capillare che vede la presenza delle forze dell'ordine in tutti i centri abitati e le numerose iniziative a sostegno della società civile in collaborazione con gli enti scolastici locali, oltre che la stipulazione dei protocolli di legalità per evitare le infiltrazioni delle cosche nel sistema delle opere pubbliche; il territorio risulta fortemente a rischio, anche in considerazione dell'esiguità degli organici delle forze di sicurezza, carenze che si manifestano soprattutto durante il periodo estivo e primaverile, in coincidenza con gli sbarchi dei clandestini sulle coste del Lampedusano (ridottisi in maniera sensibile anche grazie alla politica dei respingimenti). Endemica anche la crisi del tribunale (presente nel Capoluogo, a Canicatti e a Licata) la cui attività è stata fortemente ridimensionata negli ultimi anni.

Questo, ha significato una diminuzione del controllo del territorio e un aumento dunque degli episodi di microcriminalità; da qui la necessità d'impiegare anche personale amministrativo per pattugliare e controllare il territorio in divisa; aumentando le unità appiedate e automunite, integrando anche il numero di poliziotti di quartiere.

Agrigento, posta in una zona collinare, si affaccia sul vista del Mare Mediterraneo e della sottostante celeberrima Valle dei Templi, circondata da un vasto territorio dedito alle coltivazioni agricole (mandorleti e uliveti).

La parte centrale del territorio comunale, caratterizzata dal centro storico del capoluogo di origine medievale posto sull'estremità del colle, è ricca di edifici storici, molti dei quali versano in evidente stato di degrado e necessitano d'imponenti interventi di ristrutturazione. Tale zona, pur rimanendo la sede delle maggiori infrastrutture, da anni vive continui progressi di spopolamento. La parte più disastata è forse quella più occidentale del quartiere Santa croce, area ove, nella seconda metà del secolo scorso fa, si è verificata una frana che ha costretto i residenti ad abbandonare le proprie abitazioni per essere trasferiti negli insediamenti di edilizia pubblica di Villaggio Peruzzo (a nord di S. Leone) e di Villaseta.

In alcune aree del centro storico (via Garibaldi, via Amendola, via Empedocle), inoltre, sono stati effettuati massicci interventi di sostituzione edilizia con invadenti edifici multipiano, che hanno, in qualche modo contribuito ad aumentare il degrado ambientale della zona, stravolgendone l'assetto tradizionale.

L'unica zona in discreto stato di conservazione, che presenta una certa vitalità ed esercizi commerciali di buon livello, è quella gravitante sulla via Atenea, la strada più importante del centro storico, a ridosso della quale sono stati aperti recentemente un certo numero di bed and breakfast, recuperando e riutilizzando piccoli edifici storici.

L'area moderna, ove vive più della metà della popolazione, si è sviluppata in maniera estremamente caotica e le periferie residenziali sono cresciute in modo disordinato, abitati spesso distanti dal centro, caratterizzati dall'incompletezza delle realizzazioni e dall'assenza dei servizi di base; la diffusione dell'edilizia abusiva sotto forma di seconde case, costituite da costruzioni isolate o edifici condominiali multipiano. La scarsa qualità delle opere pubbliche realizzate negli ultimi decenni hanno contribuito a massacrare il delicato e affascinante paesaggio del territorio agrigentino.

Il villaggio residenziale di Villaseta sito, a Sud-ovest della città, la cui costruzione è stata estremamente lenta, presenta numerose carenze: le attività commerciali non sono mai attecchite e si respira una condizione di marginalità, povertà e degrado, dovuti anche all'assenza totale di manutenzione da parte del Comune.

A Sud-est di Agrigento vi è un diffuso tessuto insediativo sviluppatosi intorno Villaggio Mosè polmone economico e commerciale della città.

La zona Nord di Agrigento che ospita, le contrae residenziali di Fontanelle e Palmentelle, è un'area parzialmente urbanizzata, dove maggiormente si è espansa la parte nuova dell'abitato.

Molti edifici pubblici attrattori di grandi utenze e apportatori di notevole carico urbanistico, sono ubicati perlopiù in quest'area, in zone con gravi problemi di accessibilità, come nel caso del campus scolastico ubicato in contrada Calcarelle. Mentre attualmente gran parte delle attività che fanno capo al Polo Universitario di Agrigento sono allocate in forma precaria e disdicevole nella zona industriale di S. Michele, lontanissima dal centro urbano, che presenta un misto raccapricciante di attività commerciali, residenziali, produttive e rurali, e anche sede del presidio ospedaliero.

Si tratta di un'area desolata, lontana dal centro urbano, dove sono localizzate non raggiungibile dal trasporto pubblico urbano e carente di adeguate aree di parcheggio.

L'ambito territoriale a Nord-ovest della collina di Agrigento è caratterizzato da un basso livello di antropizzazione, con prevalente uso agricolo del suolo; gli unici insediamenti qui presenti sono costituiti dalla frazione di Giardina Gallotti e della frazione di Montaperto, entrambi sviluppatasi intorno a villaggi rurali di origine medioevale.

La parte meridionale è caratterizzata dall'insediamento costiero di San Leone (ambita meta balneare, dotata di un piccolo porticciolo turistico) e dalla contrada Zingarello, un piccolo insediamento residenziale stagionale da grandi lottizzazioni abusive di edifici multipiano.

È evidente che la riqualificazione della fascia costiera dovrebbe costituire uno

degli obiettivi prioritari di un programma complessivo finalizzato a potenziare e articolare l'offerta turistica, rimuovendo l'abusivismo più sfacciato, risanando l'ambiente e ripristinando la naturalità dei luoghi. Il rischio idrogeologico, acuito da politiche urbanistiche non oculate, è stato oggetto di rigorosi provvedimenti statali e regionali di vincolo, che la comunità locale per decenni ha cercato di contrastare e di aggirare in tutti i modi, con espedienti di vario genere.

L'abusivismo edilizio investe non sole nelle aree costiere, uno dei luoghi di maggiore concentrazione di edifici abusivi è l'agglomerato di Villaggio Mosè per non parlare di una notevole quota di edilizia abusiva che si trova anche all'interno e ai margini della Valle dei Templi.

Le caratteristiche socio-economiche della popolazione del Comune Capoluogo non presentano sostanziali differenze da quelle del contesto territoriale circostante, anche se vi sono alcune differenze riguardanti le istituzioni e gli eventi culturali, che nel capoluogo hanno ben maggiore consistenze.

Al suo interno la città, centro burocratico e amministrativo dell'intera provincia, accoglie diverse scuole pubbliche anche per la prima infanzia; sono presenti anche alcune biblioteche, gestite da diversi organi istituzionali e non (Comune, Chiesa e da soggetti privati); numerose associazioni culturali, cooperative sociali e diverse associazioni di volontariato.

Agrigento, con il suo ricco patrimonio storico-archeologico, è sede di ben cinque musei che accolgono parte dell'ingente ricchezza archeologica dichiarata dall'UNESCO patrimonio dell'umanità.

Il Comune di Agrigento risulta maggiormente sviluppato in relazione alla dotazione infrastrutturale e ai servizi di livello superiore (credito, attività commerciali, istruzione) e presenta una maggiore incidenza del terziario pubblico e commerciale, integrato dal flusso turistico attivato dal patrimonio archeologico, naturalistico e paesaggistico che incrementa la ricettività alberghiera, a differenza dell'intera Provincia in cui il settore primario assorbe circa il quaranta per cento delle attività produttive.

I flussi turistici sono in crescita ormai da alcuni anni, i grandi alberghi e le sei congressuali, a parte alcuni edifici storici (Hotel Villa Athena ecc.), hanno trovato localizzazione sia nella parte moderna della città consolidata (via della Vittoria) sia lungo la strada dorsale dell'insediamento di Villaggio Mosè; strutture ricettive di media dimensione si possono trovare a San Leone o nel centro storico.

Nell'area urbana sono presenti anche strutture di tipo ludico-ricreativo: un centro sociale per minori, una ludoteca, diverse piscine (di cui una pubblica), palestre, un palazzetto dello sport, campi di calcio e tennis (due parchi polivalenti per attività sportive, culturali e ricreative - Parco del Mediterraneo e Parco dell'Addolorata sono in stato di abbandono), tre sale cinematografiche, e due teatri. Gli indicatori culturali non sono



particolarmente soddisfacenti - poche sono le librerie e le palestre, ridotta è anche la presenza dell'associazionismo.

Trattasi di una cultura eminentemente tradizionale, in cui la famiglia rappresenta l'agenzia di socializzazione di primaria importanza (in linea con l'andamento nazionale, si è registrata una notevole modifica dei gruppi familiari tradizionali, con una maggiore presenza di famiglie mononucleari; di famiglie con un numero limitato di figli un incremento delle separazioni/divorzi con la nascita, in parallelo, di nuove forme di famiglie cosiddette allargate).

Per ciò che concerne le strutture assistenziali è possibile rilevare la presenza di alcune case di riposo sia pubbliche che private, dei centri di riabilitazione per disabili, comunità per pazienti psichiatrici con un Centro Diurno e una comunità per minori.

E' evidente, dall'analisi delle infrastrutture generali (economiche e sociali) presenti nel territorio, che tali risorse risultano carenti e inadeguate al fabbisogno dell'intera popolazione. L'invecchiamento della popolazione produce l'esigenza di assistenza socio-sanitaria, l'aumento della presenza straniera, la diffusione della criminalità connessa ai problemi di tossico e alcoldipendenza, sono tutti fenomeni che si traducono inevitabilmente in mutevoli percezioni dei bisogni e delle domande rivolte al sistema pubblico.

Anche il lavoro nero rappresenta una piaga sociale dilagante. L'economia sommersa, infatti, coinvolge oltre metà della popolazione in età lavorativa.

La posizione geografica e la stretta vicinanza con l'isola di Lampedusa, pongono Agrigento come vera "frontiera" del Mediterraneo e, quindi, costretta a confrontarsi continuamente con il fenomeno migratorio e con quello della clandestinità; nel territorio vi è una presenza d'immigrati, proveniente prevalentemente dai diversi paesi del nord-africa (Marocco e Tunisia).

Tra i minori stranieri, presenti nel territorio, la gran parte frequenta regolarmente la scuola dell'obbligo, ma una percentuale significativa (il 36%) resta fuori dagli ambiti istituzionali scolastici.

All'interno della città, vi è un centro di prima accoglienza per cittadini stranieri, gestito dal Ministero dell'Interno e uno Sportello Informativo per cittadini stranieri realizzato dalla Provincia Regionale di Agrigento, in collaborazione con soggetti del privato sociale.

Per far fronte a tale fenomeno, negli ultimi anni, il Comune di Agrigento ha attivato progetti rivolti ai cittadini stranieri richiedenti asilo.

Le più rilevanti forme di malessere sociale si registrano, con maggiore incidenza, nel territorio della prima e della quarta circoscrizione, quelle con maggiore densità (il centro di Agrigento e le aree di Villaseta e Monserrato), anche se è possibile evidenziare una presenza di tali fenomeni, sparsi a macchia di leopardo, su tutto il territorio.

Il territorio della circoscrizione è caratterizzato da forme di disagio sociale legate, in parte, al livello socio-culturale della popolazione che vi risiede. Vi sono ampie sacche di

degrado urbanistico e marginalità sociale che hanno eletto tale zona a sede tradizionale della malavita locale. Frequenti sono gli episodi di microcriminalità legati ad atti di violenza (risse e liti) che spesso coinvolgono i giovani.

A incrementare tale situazione di svantaggio, è stato il costante aumento del fenomeno di migrazione interna, che ha portato allo spopolamento della parte più antica della città.

Molte delle case fatiscenti che dominano parte del centro storico, sono abitate da stranieri, che vivono in condizioni di forte disagio.

Il fenomeno immigratorio ad Agrigento non è solo caratterizzato da situazioni estreme; sono numerose, infatti, le famiglie d'immigrati ormai naturalizzate, inserite nel tessuto sociale ed economico locale, con un lavoro stabile; a testimonianza di questo inserimento nel tessuto socio-economico locale, molti esercizi commerciali, sono gestiti dagli stranieri (soprattutto cinesi, ma non solo) residenti nella nostra provincia.

Le periferie, in particolare l'area di Fontanelle (II circoscrizione) e Villaseta (V circoscrizione), sono caratterizzate da forme di disagio indotto dal degrado abitativo e dall'isolamento sociale che contraddistingue questi luoghi, in particolare, a Villaseta si concentrano quote significative di marginalità sociale, devianza e criminalità.

In tali contesti si registra un alto tasso di disoccupazione della popolazione, una maggiore incidenza di mortalità scolastico e una significativa presenza di soggetti con problemi di dipendenza dalla droga.

Il territorio di Giardina Gallotti/Montaperto, invece, si pone in netto contrasto con le caratteristiche appena delineate, infatti, tale contesto territoriale, sembra avulso dalla dinamica sociale che attraversa la città.

La realtà sociale di questa frazione, del territorio agrigentino, conserva ancora una matrice economico-sociale di tipo rurale e i legami familiari sono strutturati secondo un'accentuata cultura patriarcale.

Molti degli interventi attuati dal Servizio Sociale locale, spesso coordinati dalla Magistratura, sono rivolti alla tutela dei minori (inadempienza da parte dei genitori, maltrattamenti, abusi, conflitti coniugali, ecc.) e delle donne (tantissime sono le violenze domestiche perpetrate sulle donne e segnalate informalmente agli operatori del servizio).

Non vi è comunque un'adeguata attenzione a fenomeni come l'abuso, il maltrattamento di donne e minori.

Il Comune offre un servizio di recupero e di reinserimento ai minori sottoposti a problemi giudiziari e a rischio devianza che vengono alloggiati in una struttura residenziale presso le Comunità alloggio della Coop. Casa Amica.

Per quanto riguarda i servizi a sostegno dei tossicodipendenti, si tratta spesso d'interventi volti all'assistenza medica. Non si prevedono forme di sostegno mirate all'inclusione sociale di tali individui (attualmente l'amministrazione si limita a offrire un contributo economico che, per tali categorie di soggetti, può risultare iatrogeno e rischioso);

In tema di sicurezza, numerose, sono le pattuglie antirapina e antisceppo della Polizia di Stato che operano in borghese, durante tutto il giorno, e tutti i giorni, per contrastare gli episodi criminali (scippi ma anche pestaggi, maxi risse, e intimidazioni a imprenditori e commercianti) che hanno interessato il centro cittadino in particolare nelle aree di via Garibaldi (riconducibili alla presenza di una componente nord-africana che ha occupato alcune case in maniera abusiva).

L'attività predatoria (furti, scippi e rapine) coinvolge non solo il centro ma anche la borgata di San Leone.

Il controllo del territorio è assicurato dalla presenza di un sistema di videosorveglianza, attivo in alcune zone del centro (piazza Marconi, piazza Cavour) e piazzale Aster a San Leone, ritenuti a particolare rischio d'ordine pubblico. Prevista l'installazione di altre telecamere, anche nei quartieri periferici; tra le iniziative previste anche l'uso di una telecamera mobile al fine di scoraggiare i soliti incivili che usano il suolo pubblico per scaricare.

### **Provincia Di Catania**

La provincia di Catania ha una forte consistenza demografica e negli ultimi venti anni si è verificato un incremento complessivo della popolazione, a fronte di una distribuzione non del tutto omogenea. Vi è un progressivo aumento nei centri più prossimi a Catania, derivante in parte da una costante emigrazione dal Comune capoluogo che, conseguentemente, tende a spopolarsi.

La struttura della popolazione è tendenzialmente giovane sebbene il fenomeno dell'invecchiamento e della decrescita dei tassi di natalità cominci ad avere un certo peso (in particolare nei centri più distanti dalla cittadina metropolitana).

Gli stranieri residenti in provincia sono perlopiù provenienti dall'Est Europa, seguiti dai Nord-Africani, impegnati nelle attività lavorative di tipo dipendente, in particolare nel comparto agricolo e manifatturiero e servizi di assistenza alla persona. Nelle città di Catania e Misterbianco vi è un'alta concentrazione di asiatici perlopiù cinesi dediti al commercio.

L'andamento demografico positivo è da ricollegarsi alla presenza sul territorio di numerose imprese, attive in primis, nel settore commerciale, seguito da quello agricolo, edile e manifatturiero, sebbene la Provincia presenti un prodotto interno lordo inferiore alla media siciliana.

Si delinea pertanto un tessuto economico dominato dal settore terziario, mentre si registra, anno dopo anno, la contrazione del settore primario e il lento declino del secondario.

Sebbene l'agricoltura rappresenti ancora un pilastro in particolare per le aree

pedemontane, il settore è caratterizzato da un forte impasse legato a uno scarso consociativismo e una bassa propensione al rischio degli imprenditori agricoli che, isolati, sono incapaci di fronteggiare le sfide del un mercato globale.

La ridotta concentrazione del settore ricettivo ed extralberghiero testimonia la mancata realizzazione di una vocazione turistica e l'incapacità nella valorizzazione delle risorse archeologiche, architettoniche (il Barocco) e ambientali legate alla presenza del vulcano dell'Etna.

Il tasso di disoccupazione in provincia di Catania, pur mantenendosi a livelli particolarmente elevati, è tra i meno alti della Sicilia, mentre una parte dell'economia catanese risulta fortemente influenzata dal fenomeno del lavoro nero. Su tutto il territorio della provincia vi è una microcriminalità diffusa che investe soprattutto la componente minorile. Le attività di "cosa nostra" nel catanese tendono a intrecciarsi fortemente con la struttura imprenditoriale e politica locale ma si estendono anche al di fuori del territorio provinciale e vanno dalle estorsioni alla creazione d'impresе utilizzate a fini di riciclaggio. L'intero territorio provinciale di Catania è composto cinquantotto comuni e in base alla zonizzazione, prevista dal piano strategico nazionale, è suddiviso in tre macroaree accomunate da simile configurazione geografica, sociale ed economica:

### **Area Metropolitana**

*Catania, Aci Bon Accorsi, Aci Castello, Aci Catena, Acireale, Belpasso, Camporotondo Etneo, Gravina di Catania, Mascaluca, Misterbianco, Motta S.Anastasia, Nicolosi, Paternò, Pedara, Ragalna, San Giovanni La Punta, San Gregorio, San Pietro Clarenza, S.Agata Li Battiati, S.Maria di Licodia, Santa Venerina, Trecastagni, Tremestieri Etneo, Valverde, Viagrande e Zafferana Etnea.*

Il territorio presenta una densità media di settecentocinquanta abitanti per Km/q (con punte di oltre millecinquecento nel capoluogo) a testimonianza della forte capacità attrattiva della città di Catania e dei comuni limitrofi rispetto agli altri paesi, elemento questo che influisce anche sul reddito medio dei residenti che è al di sopra della media provinciale. L'area metropolitana è composta da ventisette piccoli centri, di cui diciannove sono dislocati a Est del comune di Catania (trattasi di una fascia territoriale estremamente complessa dal punto di vista delle interrelazioni con il capoluogo).

Catania è stata caratterizzata da fenomeni sociali e contraddizioni economiche comuni alle altre aree urbane del mezzogiorno, aggravate da un'imponente espansione strutturale, che negli ultimi decenni ha investito il territorio, da un problema di saturazione del territorio e dalla mancata razionalizzazione delle principali direttrici di trasporto.

La città ha una vocazione eminentemente imprenditoriale e qualche anno fa è diventata uno dei principali poli dell'economia tecnologica e della New economy (tanto da meritarsi l'appellativo di Etna Valley), grazie alle politiche d'incentivi attuate dalle Autorità.

Negli anni novanta, grandi multinazionali si sono concentrate sul territorio attratte da una dotazione infrastrutturale e dalla presenza di servizi culturali apparentemente più adeguati rispetto all'offerta delle altre cittadine del Mezzogiorno.

Nell'ultimo decennio il settore ha avuto una grossa flessione, determinato dalla crisi ma anche dall'emersione di grosse criticità legate a un'inadeguata pianificazione territoriale e una scarsa razionalizzazione delle risorse che ha spinto a una delocalizzazione delle aziende e ha prodotto una migrazione della manodopera specializzata, scoraggiando la nascita di piccole e medie imprese.

Catania costituisce anche uno snodo turistico non indifferente, la città possiede un enorme patrimonio storico, artistico e ambientale (inserito nel patrimonio dell'umanità dall'Unesco) coniugato a un sistema di trasporti tutto sommato strutturato (Aeroporto, Porto, F.F.S.S., Autostrade e trae di collegamento con il resto della Regione).

Lo sviluppo e la valorizzazione non sempre coerente del territorio hanno compromesso la vocazione turistica della città che soltanto negli ultimi anni è riuscita ad attirare flussi turistici provenienti dall'estero, ma l'offerta turistica rimane ancora frammentata, debole e non organizzata, con conseguente mancata fruizione puntuale del patrimonio artistico culturale; mancata stagionalizzazione del sistema dell'offerta turistica con conseguenti periodi di tutto esaurito contrapposti a lunghi periodi di vuoto; mancanza di strutture, extra - alberghiere, per l'intrattenimento, lo svago e la cultura che non favoriscono la presenza di un turismo stanziale.

La chiusura delle grandi imprese edili catanesi, sul territorio ha creato una fascia di disagio sociale che ha colpito il settore della libera professione, dei servizi connessi all'impresa, i lavoratori in esubero sono stati, in minima parte, riassorbiti dalle pubbliche amministrazioni a contratti precari.

Il capoluogo etneo è estremamente eterogeneo e per certi versi frammentato. Esistono ampie aree di degrado sia nei quartieri storici sia nelle periferie, con grossi problemi d'integrazione e inefficienze infrastrutturali e vi è una scarsa manutenzione del patrimonio ambientale naturale.

Il tessuto sociale è estremamente dinamico, il tradizionale assetto familiare costituito dalla famiglia normo-costituita tende sempre più allo sgretolamento.

L'istituzione del matrimonio è sempre più minata, come testimoniato dal costante aumento delle separazioni e dei divorzi, mentre tendono a emergere nuovi modelli (famiglia nucleare, monogenitoriale, ricomposta etc.), contrassegnati da nuclei sempre più ridotti e isolati che assolvono con grande difficoltà gli impegni di cura sia nei confronti dei figli sia dei genitori anziani e dei componenti con disabilità.

Il prolungamento della vita media rappresenta un'indubbia conquista, tuttavia, anche nel Comune di Catania a questo dato si associa il calo della natalità.

I dati rivelano che a Catania, come per il resto della penisola, sono le famiglie numerose

a maggior rischio di povertà; l'incidenza della povertà cresce, infatti, in modo esponenziale con l'aumentare del numero dei figli.

In tema d'occupazione si rileva una generale difficoltà del mondo femminile ad accedere al mercato de lavoro, fenomeno in parte ascrivibile alla limitatezza dei servizi a sostegno della famiglia e della riduzione delle politiche di welfare.

Tra le criticità segnalate emerge la mancanza di uno studio attento sul mercato del lavoro locale in grado di sviluppare alternative economiche e consentire nuove occasioni di lavoro.

Esiste un gap tra caratteristiche della domanda espressa dalle imprese e il profilo formativo ed esperienziale di coloro i quali sono alla ricerca di una prima occupazione o di chi si ritrova in uno stato di disoccupazione di ritorno che colpisce gli over quaranta.

Tra i principali fattori di malessere sociale si rilevano: grosse difficoltà di accesso ai corsi di formazione e istruzione per i soggetti in area penale esterna (tempi previsti per l'iscrizione ai corsi non corrispondenti ai tempi processuali); scarto eccessivo tra il numero delle richieste di assistenza abitativa pervenute e quelle soddisfatte (vi è purtroppo una forte emergenza abitativa); degrado igienico-sanitario delle abitazioni riservate agli stranieri; affitti esorbitanti e mancanza di strutture di pronta accoglienza, anche temporanee.

Per far fronte alle emergenze sociali, il Comune ha cercato di attuare strategie a sostegno delle marginalità quali l'attivazione di tirocini professionalizzanti, servizi di accompagnamento e consulenza per la ricerca degli alloggi e interventi di sostegno economico finalizzati al miglioramento delle condizioni igienico-sanitarie delle abitazioni delle famiglie che vivono in condizioni di estrema indigenza. In una situazione d'instabilità economica e fragilità sociale assumono una particolare importanza, gli interventi che implicherebbero massicci investimenti nella spesa sociale, difficili da attuare in questi tempi di rigidità. Volti all'apertura:

H. 24 di dormitori e mense pubbliche,

di strutture di pronta accoglienza per soggetti sia adulti che minori;

un servizio di residenza anagrafica per le persone senza fissa dimora.

Il fenomeno dei tagli alla spesa pubblica ha anche determinato una forte riduzione degli organici di Pubblica sicurezza sebbene per garantire il controllo del territorio, sono stati intensificati gli interventi di contrasto di fenomeni quali bullismo, conferimento illecito di rifiuti, vandalismo (graffiti nel centro storico) e prostituzione.

Il recupero del territorio passa non solo attraverso la riqualificazione delle aree degradate ma anche attraverso la lotta all'occupazione abusiva (da parte di Rom e senza tetto), mediante le attività di sgombero forzato (Palazzo "Bernini" e "Fontanarossa).

Da ricordare che nel comprensorio insistono diversi insediamenti nomadi abusivi non autorizzati e privi dei servizi minimi (acqua, energia elettrica, servizi igienici).

Su tutto il territorio comunale si registra, inoltre, la presenza di molti immigrati

clandestini, parte della quale è dedicata ad attività illegali; nonostante siano state avviate e fatte numerose pratiche per l'espulsione dei soggetti fermati e identificati, la mancata disponibilità di risorse finanziarie rende, di fatto, impossibile l'attuazione dei provvedimenti di espulsione, vanificando gli sforzi fatti.

La tipologia dei delitti accertati è afferente soprattutto alla circolazione stradale e alla problematica ambientale. Per impedire il fenomeno delle discariche a cielo aperto sono stati costantemente effettuati sopralluoghi da parte del nucleo addetto alla vigilanza ambientale.

<b>Reati</b>	<b>Quantità</b>
Guida senza patente .....	171
Lesioni personali .....	126
Illeciti penali urbanistici .....	111
Invasione terreni o edifici - imbrattamento .....	86
Omissione di soccorso .....	54
Furto semplice e aggravato .....	36
Guida in stato di ebbrezza .....	32
Illeciti penali ambientali .....	31
Rifiuto di generalità' .....	29
Oltraggio a pubblico ufficiale .....	25
Resistenza a p.U. ....	24
Commercio prodotti con marchio contraffatto .....	23
Inosservanza provvedimenti dell'autorità' .....	22
Soggiorno illegale nel territorio dello stato .....	20
Omessa custodia veicolo sequestrato .....	17
Falsa dichiarazione sull'identità' o qualità' personali .....	16
Mancata esibizione di documenti all'autorità' .....	14
Violenza o minaccia a p.U. ....	12
Omicidio colposo .....	12
Ricettazione .....	11
Danneggiamento .....	9
Guida sotto effetto sost. Stupefac. ....	7
Interruzione pubblico servizio .....	4
Rapina .....	4
Sostituzione di persona .....	3
Violazione di sigilli .....	3
Atti osceni .....	2
Evasione .....	2

Falsita' ideologica .....	2
Rissa .....	2
Simulazione di reato .....	2
Banconote contraffatte.....	2
Truffa .....	2
Violazione di domicilio .....	2
Violenza sessuale .....	2
Clonazione targa .....	1
Diffamazione .....	1
Ingiuria .....	1

*Fonte: Relazione Attività di Polizia Giudiziaria (01/07/2011 – 30/06/2012)*

La città si è dotata d'impianti di videosorveglianza soprattutto nelle Piazze principali (Piazza Bellini, Piazza Dei Martiri, Piazza Borsellino, Piazza Federico di Svevia, Piazza Mazzini, Piazza Europa, Piazza Lincoln, Piazza Verga e Corso delle Province) al fine di garantire un maggiore controllo del territorio.

L'area territoriale di Catania è suddivisa in dieci municipalità (sebbene a causa di tagli e una maggiore razionalizzazione si stia procedendo a una riduzione delle stesse).

Le prime tre municipalità, corrispondenti ai quartieri centrali, sono quelle che registrano una forte concentrazione della popolazione, sebbene siano investite da un fenomeno di spopolamento determinato da una pluralità di fattori concomitanti (crisi, emergenza abitativa e affitti alti, degrado) in parte bilanciato da un incremento dell'immigrazione (anche clandestina.)

La prima municipalità è costituita dal Centro storico che comprende l'area monumentale, da alcuni anni caratterizzata da un'intensa vita notturna legata alla presenza di servizi extralberghieri di svago e divertimento, oltre che un'area residenziale di edilizia relativamente recente adibita a uffici e ad abitazioni.

La via Etnea, rinomata tradizionalmente per la presenza di boutique eleganti, è tra le più frequentate dai residenti (sebbene la crisi, la creazione dei centri commerciali e gli alti costi della locazione abbiano inciso pesantemente sulla chiusura di molte attività e sulla crescita del fenomeno dell'abusivismo commerciale).

Sul territorio insistono presidi ospedalieri, Sert, Centri di Salute mentale, consultori pubblici, associazioni di volontariato e buona parte delle scuole di ogni ordine e grado. I posti di polizia e le stazioni dei Carabinieri rientrano quasi tutti all'interno del quartiere "Cappuccini".

Il tradizionale quartiere dei Cappuccini registra una forte disoccupazione, vistosi processi d'invecchiamento e contrazione dei nuclei familiari; in quest'area vi è un ceto



medio impiegatizio, occupato nel terziario, con livelli d'istruzione relativamente elevati.

Tra gli interventi programmati e in parte attivati ci sono: l'erogazione di finanziamenti, corrisposti a fondo perduto, a favore delle piccole imprese artigianali locali, la riattivazione delle economie endogene, interventi contro la dispersione scolastica e opere di riqualificazione urbana.

L'area di Civita e S.Cristoforo-Angeli Custodi vede la presenza di case vecchie e degradate, in cui si è insediato un vasto sottoproletariato urbano, che vive nelle pieghe dell'economia sommersa.

Numerose sono le azioni di sequestro dei beni appartenenti alla mafia e gli interventi di arredo pubblico.

A S.Cristoforo prevalgono le attività commerciali e artigianali, le donne sono largamente escluse dal mercato ma, soprattutto, i livelli di occupazione e di disoccupazione dichiarati hanno dimensioni anomale, plausibilmente a causa della diffusione del lavoro nero.

Vi è una significativa presenza di popolazione giovane e di nuclei numerosi con livelli di svantaggio culturale abnormi; il quartiere è occupato da due terzi degli immigrati residenti nel Comune e vi sono imponenti processi di esodo e d'invecchiamento della popolazione.

Oltre alla presenza di autorità di Pubblica sicurezza, vi sono dislocati servizi per immigrati e anziani.

Frequenti gli episodi di spaccio e una forte densità mafiosa; la maggior dei minori arrestati proviene da quest'area ove ci sono altissimi tassi dispersione.

Da segnalare l'area del Corso dei Martiri libertà e San Berillo su cui per molto tempo si è insediata una bidonville all'aria aperta con forte degrado ambientale, problemi di spaccio e prostituzione.

Tra i progetti previsti per aumentare i livelli di sicurezza e il decoro urbano vi è il risanamento di tali aree geografiche.

Nel Centro storico, esistono inoltre molti edifici di proprietà pubblica che versano in condizioni di abbandono come nel caso Palazzo Bernini, edificio fatiscente spesso oggetto di sgomberi per la presenza di senza tetto.

La zona di Picanello-Ognina (seconda municipalità) appare in realtà estremamente eterogenea; delimitata dalla rinomata area residenziale e commerciale di Corso Italia e da buona parte del lungomare (con palazzi storici e affitti altissimi), cui si contrappongono i vecchi quartieri di Ognina (antico borgo marinaro) e Picanello (quartiere storico popolare con presenza di spaccio), aree medio - borghesi a vie in degrado (in direzione della Stazione ferroviaria).

Nell'area vi è un diffuso disagio legato alla problematica ambientale in particolare nel Villaggio Duvet, in cui esistono discariche abusive e fenomeni di degrado urbano e microcriminalità.

Nella seconda municipalità vi è una forte densità abitativa formata perlopiù da media

borghesia e piccoli commercianti e da una minoranza non indifferente di lavoratori dipendenti a basso salario, artigiani, venditori ambulanti e disoccupati e precari con reddito minimo.

L'area negli ultimi anni è stata investita da massicci investimenti per la riqualificazione urbana e dall'ampliamento dei servizi di base; oltre al presidio della Polizia Municipale, offre una Biblioteca circoscrizionale, la presenza di molti uffici pubblici, strutture sportive, spazi verdi attrezzati, scuole di ogni ordine e grado e servizi sanitari.

Nella terza circoscrizione (Borgo-Sanzio) ricadono le aree che vanno dai sobborghi storici di Borgo Sant'Agata e Consolazione al signorile piazzale Raffaello Sanzio.

In generale la zona è caratterizzata da un forte dinamismo economico e sociale, nel tempo è divenuta sede di molti servizi finanziari e commerciali. Borgo Sant'Agata e Consolazione conservano un assetto quasi periferico (con un'ampia area residenziale concentrata lungo le principali direttrici viarie).

In direzione di piazzale Sanzio sorgono i palazzi storici e le attività commerciali e finanziarie (con veri e propri quartieri residenziali alto borghesi); da segnalare in questa zona la forte presenza dell'immigrazione extraeuropea.

La quarta Municipalità coincide con le aree periferiche a nord della città, ove è situata la Cittadella universitaria e con le zone residenziali Barriera del Bosco e Canalicchio.

Nel quartiere Barriera si trovano edifici commerciali e servizi socio-assistenziali di tipo pubblico e privato; in generale, trattasi di una zona dall'assetto estremamente diversificata in cui coesistono fabbricati di tipo rurali e edifici di recente costruzioni.

L'area a ridosso di Canalicchio è stata invasa da residence che si affacciano direttamente sulle strade, non vi è una forte densità abitativa, sebbene la municipalità eserciti un certo appeal per quanti si trasferiscono nel territorio catanese.

Nonostante la presenza di un centro sociale e servizi culturali, con particolare riferimento a Canalicchio, l'anonimità del reticolato urbano impedisce agli spazi pubblici presenti di assumere una reale valenza aggregativa.

San Giovanni Galermo, unico quartiere della V Municipalità, nasce come comune autonomo, successivamente annesso al territorio del Capoluogo.

Trattasi di un quartiere dormitorio e al tempo stesso un nodo strategico per il traffico tra i comuni limitrofi e la città di Catania.

Il quartiere è caratterizzato da una strada principale su cui convergono piccoli vicoli e dalla presenza di un forte abusivismo edilizio (fenomeno che ne ha stravolto l'assetto negli anni 60).

La maggior parte delle costruzioni sono modeste. Da più parti emerge la necessità d'intervenire per garantire ai cittadini adeguati spazi di socializzazione e aree verde attrezzate.

Non esiste un comando della polizia di stato e anche la presenza della polizia municipale

(causa mancanza di risorse) non riesce a garantire un controllo totale del territorio.

Il tessuto urbano della sesta Circoscrizione (Trappeto-Cibali) è costituito di un'edificazione di recente costituzione le cui origini sono diverse: abitazioni e terreni privati a ridosso della piazza Santa Maria di Gesù; quartieri di edilizia residenziale pubblica nelle aree più lontane dal centro ma anche aree di edilizia spontanea di tipo abusivo successivamente sanate.

L'asse urbano che converge su Piazza Bonadies è occupato da edifici più anziani; i quartieri di Via Santa Sofia, Cibali e Trappeto sud (dotato di un'edilizia cooperativa) hanno caratteristiche sociale sostanzialmente omogenee.

Santa Sofia è soprattutto, se non esclusivamente, un quartiere residenziale; quello di Cibali (in cui ricade lo stadio comunale) è abitato da un ceto medio borghese che per il proprio fabbisogno attingono prevalentemente agli edifici commerciali locali.) Ben diverso l'assetto di Trappeto Nord in cui insistono ampie sacche di disagio sociale.

Le attività economiche e le infrastrutture presenti in quest'area sono del tutto insufficienti a coprire i fabbisogni delle famiglie ivi residenti.

L'offerta di servizi socio-culturali si limita a un asilo nido, una scuola alimentare e alcune strutture sportive abbastanza recenti.

Il problema della mancanza di opere di urbanizzazione primaria coinvolge sia la rete viaria (molte strade sono ancora da completare) ma anche il sistema fognario.

Una situazione difficile da un punto di vista della vivibilità del territorio che presenta alti tassi di criminalità giovanile cui si accompagnano fenomeni di dilagante dispersione scolastica.

Monte Po-Nesima costituisce la VII circoscrizione di Catania. La composizione della popolazione è estremamente variegata, il ceto medio - impiegatizio convive accanto a soggetti in cerca di occupazione. Le famiglie tendono a essere più numerose rispetto alla media con bassi livelli culturali.

La parte a nord di viale M. Rapisardi è interessata da una modesta attività commerciale e da piccoli spazi verdi.

Per frenare il fenomeno dell'abusivismo commerciale, l'area viene presidiata giornalmente da una o più pattuglie.

Nesima, quartiere costruito circa 60 anni fa in seguito a un'iniziativa di Edilizia pubblica, appare caratterizzato da strade strette e piazzali.

Monte Po, di più recente costruzione, rimane ancora oggi un quartiere satellite non integrato con il resto della città (recentemente è stata completata la metanizzazione del territorio).

In questi quartieri la creazione di ampi rioni privi di arredo urbano, la cementificazione, la carenza d'infrastrutture e l'assenza d'iniziative imprenditoriali, hanno fortemente influito sulla creazione di un'immagine negativa del territorio.

Inoltre nella zona di confine della Municipalità vi sono ampie aree incontaminate, perlopiù destinate a uso agricolo.

Lòttava Municipalità (San Leone-Rapisardi) è attraversata da viale M. Rapisardi e Corso Indipendenza lungo i quali nel tempo si sono insediate piccole imprese commerciali, ristoranti e bar; molte le aziende artigianali presenti nell'area di via Palermo.

Trattasi di una zona a carattere residenziale medio-borghesi e popolare, i cui residenti sono impegnati prevalentemente nel settore commerciale e nel terziario. Tra le principali carenze si registra l'assenza di spazi verdi e strutture per il tempo libero.

La nona circoscrizione comprende l'area di Librino e San Giorgio; di recente costruzione il quartiere è stato oggetto di massiccia edificazione abusiva.

Librino rappresenta una delle aree più disagiate del Comune per una pluralità di elementi tra i quali la mancata realizzazione delle opere d'infrastrutturazione sociale previste, l'isolamento dal resto della città, forte disgregazione, carenza dei servizi e delle opere di urbanizzazione, presenza di poche attività commerciali.

Il territorio accoglie un circolo didattico e istituti scolastici comprensivi, un presidio sanitario, un centro sociale e di presidi di pubblica sicurezza.

Nel passato si è avviato un progetto per la creazione di un'area artigianale, di fatto, non operativa, mentre è ancora in fase di attivazione la Zona franca Urbana (trattasi di un'area sottoposta ad agevolazioni fiscali e contributive volte alla creazione di nuove attività economiche nel campo della micro e della piccola impresa e alla creazione di nuove infrastrutture).

Molte le opere incompiute, quali ad esempio la Città dello sport e il teatro posto alle spalle di via Moncada, ristrutturato ma non operativo; i servizi pubblici sono del tutto inadeguati e insufficienti data l'estensione e le problematiche del territorio e l'ampiezza della popolazione da servire, spesso poi sono caratterizzati da un'endemica carenza di personale e dall'inadeguatezza dei locali.

Nonostante la presenza di associazioni impegnate nella lotta contro il degrado urbano e sociale, si lamenta l'assenza di programmazione integrata da parte delle istituzioni determinata da un'eccessiva parcellizzazione degli interventi. Negli ultimi anni si è tentato di apportare un relativo innalzamento delle condizioni di vita, attraverso un miglioramento del sistema viario.

Tra le proposte individuate dai residenti per una maggiore valorizzazione del territorio, s'individuano il ripristino e l'assegnazione in via definitiva degli alloggi popolari, la riqualificazione delle aree in stato di degrado, il risanamento degli impianti d'illuminazione e la realizzazione di strade e cavalcavia, il ripristino e la costruzione degli impianti sportivi e socio-culturali.

Il livello socio-culturale delle famiglie è basso, alti i tassi di disoccupazione e si registrano fenomeni di sfruttamento del lavoro minorile che coinvolge in particolare

gli adolescenti di sesso maschile, mentre i giovani, spesso non accedono all'istruzione superiore perché impegnate in lavori domestici.

Librino non risulta tra i quartieri in cui si verificano più crimini, ma indubbiamente costituisce l'area di provenienza della maggior parte dei delinquenti (a testimonianza del fatto che vi è da parte dei residenti, una certa propensione a delinquere).

San Giovanni Rena - Zia Lisa costituiscono l'area della decima circoscrizione; il territorio, tra i meno popolati, manifesta una forte vocazione metropolitana; la zona è sede d'infrastrutture e servizi d'interesse comune (quali l'aeroporto di Fontana Rossa, il mercato ittico e ortofrutticolo) e dell'area industriale di Pantano d'Arci; qui, si trova l'unica porzione del territorio d'interesse naturalistico sottoposta a vincolo ambientale (l'oasi del Simeto, purtroppo deturpata da fenomeni di abusivismo edilizio) e infine, in prossimità della costa sabbiosa, vi è il vasto territorio della Playa che accoglie strutture destinate allo sport e allo svago, e che procede a Sud.

La zona industriale conta numerosissimi insediamenti, di grandi e medie dimensioni, che impiegano migliaia di addetti.

Il panorama industriale piuttosto vario è reso peculiare per l'assenza assoluta d'industrie di base e per un preciso orientamento verso le industrie leggere, a più elevato impiego di manodopera in rapporto ai capitali impiegati.)

A queste aree di maggior pregio economico e con grandi potenzialità di sviluppo si contrappongono le aree residenziali, essenzialmente di tipo pubblico, povere e degradate, con gravi sacche di disagio socio-economico, che interessano una porzione modesta del territorio.

Il più antico è il villaggio S. Maria Goretti dotato di una scuola elementare, una chiesa e qualche piccola attività commerciale; successivamente furono costruite il Villaggio S. Agata e quello di Zia Lisa ove esistono anche fabbricati di tipo cooperativistico; proprio su questo territorio si registra la presenza d'insediamenti Rom.

La viabilità è rimasta incompleta e le aree destinate alle attrezzature sono di proprietà pubblica, ma la gran parte versa in stato di abbandono ed estremo degrado urbano; si registra anche a presenza di vere e proprie baraccopoli abusive (nel quartiere Madonna del Divino Amore, vicino il cimitero).

La cintura dei comuni limitrofi a Catania presenta gravi problemi in termini di congestione del traffico veicolare (l'assetto territoriale, spesso stravolto dagli interventi strutturali posti in essere dalla amministrazioni, non consente ulteriori modifiche volte a un reale miglioramento delle condizioni attuali, si dovrebbe pertanto investire in programmi di potenziamento dei servizi pubblici di trasporto).

Un altro fattore di crisi è rappresentato dalla diffusione nelle aree limitrofe dei grandi poli commerciali (la Provincia ha la più alta concentrazione di megastore) che, inevitabilmente, determinano la progressiva scomparsa delle piccole attività commerciali

a conduzione familiare, incapaci di sostenere il peso della competitività e la mancata valorizzazione dei prodotti locali, con gravi ripercussioni sull'indotto del settore.

Un ulteriore elemento negativo di tale fenomeno è rappresentato dalla saturazione della rete viaria e degli spazi urbani esistenti che risultano inadeguati ad accogliere un bacino di utenza estremamente ampio con evidenti ricadute anche sul grado del decoro urbano.

La maggior parte dei comuni metropolitani (a causa della loro vicinanza con il Capoluogo) sono stati interessati negli ultimi anni da una forte espansione edilizia e da medi incrementi demografici.

Trattasi originariamente, di centri agricoli che, non avendo tradizioni storiche culturali e produttive particolarmente radicate, difficilmente hanno mantenuto l'aspetto di piccole cittadine indipendenti (eccezion fatta per alcuni borghi come Camporotondo e S. Pietro Clarenza) e spesso hanno visto un largo ridimensionamento della propri ad attività, riconvertendosi al terziario e trasformandosi in alcuni casi in veri e propri quartieri dormitorio (seppur con autonome amministrazioni) per i pendolari che lavorano nel capoluogo o che sono oramai totalmente inglobati nel tessuto urbano di Catania (Gravina e S. Agata Li Battiati, in particolare).

I due centri, con un'alta densità abitativa, sono situati all'ingresso di Catania e presentano grossi problemi di mobilità: le arterie principali, su cui si concentra il traffico da e per Catania con forti livelli di congestione nelle ore di punta, attraversano l'abitato e ospitano i servizi di base, l'area residenziale e quella commerciale.

In taluni casi l'espansione edilizia, legata alla forte congestione abitativa, è stata accompagnata da fenomeni di abusivismo che hanno in parte stravolto gli assetti territoriali tradizionali e da una generale carenza d'infrastrutture di base; spesso si rileva un'assenza d'integrazione tra le periferie (di recente costruzione) e i vecchi centri storici.

Nonostante i numerosi interventi posti in essere dalle amministrazioni (anche con il contributo di fondi nazionali e comunitari), per avviare opere di riqualificazione, di edilizia popolare e residenziale, di completamento delle infrastrutture primarie e secondarie, non si è formato, a oggi, un sistema articolato e integrato di servizi in grado di soddisfare il fabbisogno dell'utenza, per cui le relazioni tra i vari aggregati urbani in questo senso dipendono strettamente, dalla città di Catania.

Esemplare a tal riguardo è l'esperienza del comune di Mascalucia, a pochi chilometri da Catania, che ha maggiormente risentito dei flussi migratori provenienti dal capoluogo; la struttura originaria (caratterizzata tradizionalmente da aziende che operano nel settore vitivinicolo) progressivamente si è trasformata in un popolato centro abitativo (fenomeno che investe prima i quartieri centrali e successivamente le periferie che si sono sviluppate in maniera confusa e sregolata).

A Nord, in direzione di Massa Annunziata (piccolo borgo isolato), vi sono numerose

lottizzazioni e singole abitazioni (spesso trattasi di seconde residenze utilizzate stagionalmente) che si estendono fino ai comuni di Nicolosi e Pedara. Il territorio ospita una stazione dei Carabinieri, il tribunale, scuole dell'obbligo e Istituti d'istruzione superiore.

Tra i servizi socio-territoriali offerti si rileva la presenza di un centro anziani, una comunità alloggio per minori e una comunità terapeutica assistita.

Non vi sono adeguati spazi verdi e zone attrezzate, il territorio risulta fortemente sfruttato e ancora una volta si registrano problemi legati alla mobilità: il forte disagio è espresso anche dai livelli particolarmente alti di dispersione scolastica e dalla presenza di microcriminalità specializzata in piccoli furti.

Da rilevare, comunque, l'esistenza di altre polarità legate a un maggiore appeal esercitato da alcuni centri economici minori (quali Acireale per il turismo, Giarre-Riposto, Paternò per il settore agricolo), che hanno visto l'intensificarsi di fenomeni di espansione, non direttamente correlati all'andamento industriale e socio demografico del capoluogo etneo.

Acireale possiede un ricco patrimonio architettonico barocco, il comune, tradizionalmente dedito all'agricoltura, nel tempo ha cercato di diversificare la propria economia, incrementando il settore terziario e rilanciando il settore turistico attraverso il recupero delle tradizioni legate ai "Pupi" e al Carnevale. In realtà nonostante gli sforzi intrapresi non si è ancora riuscito appieno a valorizzare le risorse del territorio (annosa, a esempio, la questione delle terme da tempo chiuse al pubblico).

Esistono episodi diffusi di macrocriminalità inserita nel tessuto sociale; delinquenza minorile; lavoro nero e disoccupazione.

Il controllo del territorio è assicurato dalla presenza locale dei Carabinieri, dei Vigili del fuoco e della Guardia di Finanza; tra le infrastrutture presenti un istituto penale per minori e scuole di ogni grado.

Acì Bonaccorsi costituisce una realtà a sé stante rispetto ai comuni limitrofi: centro di passaggio (non attraversato dalle principali arterie viarie), il comune si è distinto per la qualità dell'ambiente e dell'offerta di servizi e attrezzature entrando a far parte dell'Associazione dei Comuni Virtuosi.

Il territorio non è particolarmente esteso e non vi è una forte densità abitativa, anche in questo caso vi è una differenza tra il centro antico, sede dei principali servizi e infrastrutture primarie e le aree di costruzione più recente su cui insistono le attività commerciali.

Il tessuto urbano di Nicolosi è stato stravolto dall'edilizia residenziale (ville e villini residenze estive) e dalle colate laviche; il territorio, per la maggior parte, è sottoposto a vincolo (in quanto ricadente nel parco dell'Etna).

L'area commerciale si concentra lungo le due direttrici di Via Etna e via Garibaldi; sviluppato anche l'artigianato (in particolare la lavorazione della pietra lavica).

In realtà l'economia negli ultimi anni è fortemente legata al turismo invernale e allo sviluppo dell'indotto del terziario; i livelli di reddito sono medi sebbene permanga una latente crisi occupazionale che investe soprattutto i giovani con bassi livelli d'istruzione.

Paternò e Belpasso sono i comuni più popolati della cintura che si trova nell'area a ovest di Catania. Un bacino territoriale che presenta caratteristiche dissimili dagli altri comuni della fascia metropolitana. I centri urbani sono riusciti in qualche modo a conservare una maggiore identità storico-territoriale legata a un'economia di tipo agricolo, sebbene non si possa negare l'esistenza di fenomeni di espansione commerciale e artigianale del tutto inopportuni rispetto alle caratteristiche infrastrutturali della zona.

Emblematico, a tal proposito, l'esempio di Belpasso, cittadina d'origine agricola e artigianale che si sta orientando al terziario, sul suo territorio la costruzione d'imponenti aggregati commerciali ha fortemente compromesso le condizioni di vivibilità con ricadute importanti anche sui i comuni del circondario.

Il risultato di un'urbanizzazione sregolata accompagnata dalla mancanza di servizi è il territorio di Piano Tavola (a ridosso della zona industriale), frazione, abitata da oltre 7000 abitanti, che si trova tra Belpasso, Camporotondo Etneo, Misterbianco e Motta Sant'Anastasia e pertanto caratterizzata da forte frammentazione amministrativa.

Paternò è un centro a vocazione agricola in cui è sviluppato il commercio e il terziario; la cittadina ha per molto tempo subito fenomeno di spopolamento del centro storico in direzione dei quartieri di recenti costruzioni quali Ardizzone (prevalente edilizia popolare, uffici pubblici) e Scala legati a episodi di abusivismo edilizio.

Paternò ha uno dei tassi di occupazione più bassi della Provincia e grossi problemi ambientali legati a inefficienze nello smaltimento rifiuti e una scarsa sensibilità dei cittadini che tendono ad alimentare il fenomeno delle discariche abusive a cielo aperto (qualche anno fa, per sottrarre le strade all'incuria e ai rifiuti, si è dovuto intervenire con le forze dell'esercito).

Forte la presenza, nel tessuto economico, dei clan mafiosi.

Interessante anche l'esperienza del comune di Misterbianco che, negli ultimi trenta anni, ha visto una forte crescita urbana e demografica quasi del tutto indipendente dai flussi d'immigrazione derivanti dal capoluogo.

Trattasi di una zona industriale, su cui insistono attività di tipo commerciale e artigianale, che nel tempo è diventata punto di riferimento per molte aree del Mezzogiorno ed è attraversata dalle principali direttrici viarie.

Le periferie vivono una condizione d'isolamento (comune agli altri centri); si registrano un forte abusivismo e un'inadeguata evoluzione dell'assetto urbano in tema di servizi, spazi verdi attrezzati, centri di aggregazione e servizi scolastici limitati alla scuola inferiore dell'obbligo.

Emerge un quadro desolante in cui gli interessi privati delle imprese (sostenute dagli



amministratori locali attratti dalle possibilità di creare nuovi spazi occupazionali) hanno avuto il sopravvento sulle politiche di salvaguardia del territorio e sulla razionalizzazione delle risorse.

La forte concentrazione abitativa e l'abusivismo edilizio, comuni all'area metropolitana, chiaramente, hanno messo in risalto le difficoltà da parte delle amministrazioni locali nella gestione dei servizi comunali, quali quelli idrici e di smaltimento rifiuti (abbondano su tutto il territorio le discariche abusive e gli episodi di vandalismo) e più in generale una scarsa lucidità nelle opere di pianificazione e programmazione territoriale.

Un altro elemento di disagio sociale (soprattutto in prospettiva futura) è rappresentato dai meccanismi d'integrazione fra la popolazione locale e i cittadini immigrati che tendono a inserirsi nei contesti più piccoli occupando quelle posizioni lavorative poco appetibili per i giovani perché collocate nei gradini più bassi del mercato del lavoro. Il fenomeno delle tossicodipendenze (in diminuzione il consumo di eroina e in aumento quello della cocaina) in questi ultimi anni si è ulteriormente radicato e sviluppato nel territorio anche a causa dell'incapacità di porre in atto efficaci strategie per la prevenzione del fenomeno.

Dai dati ufficiali non si rilevano situazioni di eccessivo disagio minorile in merito alla dispersione scolastica, che mantiene percentuali piuttosto basse (eccezion fatta per singoli casi come quello di Mascalucia), o al numero di minori sottoposti a provvedimenti giudiziari, sebbene non si possa negare che vi sia la presenza di fenomeni sommersi di disagio e devianza minorile legati da un lato all'assenza di vincoli socio-normativi forti e dall'altro dall'incapacità di promuovere adeguate misure d'inclusione.

Altro fenomeno che negli ultimi anni ha subito un notevole incremento quello della violenza sulle donne (in particolare in riferimento al distretto socio-sanitario afferente l'area di Catania, Misterbianco e Motta Sant'Anastasia).

Su tutta l'area, sebbene con diverse concentrazioni, si registrano episodi legati alla microcriminalità e criminalità organizzata che, in particolare nei centri limitrofi al territorio della città metropolitana, appaiono sensibilmente correlati agli alti tassi di disoccupazione determinati dall'attuale crisi congiunturale.

Per garantire un maggiore controllo del territorio e aumentare i livelli di sicurezza, la maggior parte dei comuni si è dotata o sta provvedendo all'istallazione di servizi di videosorveglianza, grazie anche ai finanziamenti derivanti dalla Comunità Economica Europea.

### **Area Pedemontana – Jonica**

Adrano, Biancavilla, Bronte, Calatabiano, Castiglione di Sicilia, Fiumefreddo di Sicilia, Giarre, Linguaglossa, Maletto, Maniace, Mascali, Milo, Piedimonte Etneo, Randazzo, Riposto, Sant'Alfio.

L'area pedemontana ovest raccoglie una vasta area rurale che presenta problemi

complessivi di sviluppo secondo la definizione del Piano Strategico Nazionale (ossia aree con forte disoccupazione e scarsa densità abitativa): Adrano; Biancavilla; Bronte; Maletto; Maniace e Randazzo.

Molti di questi centri hanno anche un patrimonio storico e paesaggistico non trascurabile (il lato Ovest dell'Etna è stato coinvolto in maniera minore dai fenomeni lavici e conserva in parte intatte le proprie caratteristiche morfologiche) che non è pienamente sviluppato a causa di problemi legati alla mancanza d'infrastrutture.

La vocazione agricola di questi territori, che ha fortemente risentito degli influssi negativi della crisi, per molti anni è stata abbandonata e soltanto in tempi recenti sono state attivate politiche per il rilancio dell'economia tradizionale.

Il paese di Bronte è rinomato per la produzione e la commercializzazione del pistacchio, metà del suo territorio ricade in zone con vincoli (Parco dell'Etna e Parco dei Nebrodi).

Maletto trae le proprie risorse dalla coltivazione delle fragole, Maniace dalla frutta e Randazzo dalla filiera dell'olio e dalla zootecnia. La valorizzazione delle risorse locali si è coniugata con attività di promozione nel settore enogastronomico (sagre, mostre e manifestazioni).

Il Comune di Arano, il più popolato tra quelli di cui sopra, si caratterizza per una realtà economica legata al terziario, alle piccole imprese a conduzione familiare e al settore agricolo; negli anni settanta nel Comune fu avviata in via sperimentale la prima centrale sociale termoelettrica nel mondo.

Una sperimentazione, seguita da molte attese, che si rivelò fallimentare fino al duemilaundici, anno in cui l'Enel decise di procedere al suo smantellamento e all'installazione d'impianti fotovoltaici che hanno fornito una parziale alternativa occupazionale in un'area comunque depressa e con fenomeni di sfruttamento del lavoro minorile.

Il livello economico-culturale può considerarsi globalmente medio e un terzo della popolazione è costituito da giovani in attesa di prima occupazione.

Il territorio è provvisto dei servizi pubblici di base, si registra la carenza di strutture aggregative di tipo pubblico, ma vi è una forte presenza dell'associazionismo.

Negli ultimi anni il territorio è stato devastato da omicidi legati a faide interne di tipo mafioso per il controllo del territorio. La pressione mafiosa arriva a incidere pesantemente sull'economia locale.

L'area pedemontana Est ospita i comuni di Calatabiano, Castiglione di Sicilia, Fiumefreddo, Giarre, Linguaglossa, Mascali, Milo, Piedimonte Etneo, Riposto e Sant'Alfio.

Il comprensorio è costituito da un territorio montano che si estende fino alla zona costiera; i comuni più vicini all'Etna sono tradizionalmente impegnati nel settore vitivinicolo che ha avuto un nuovo slancio grazie agli investimenti aziende che operano a livello regionale e nazionale.

Le amministrazioni locali hanno inoltre investito ingenti risorse per la valorizzazione

delle risorse locali attraverso incentivi alle imprese e forme di microcredito per ampliare offerta ricettiva.

Dopo Nicolosi, Linguaglossa rappresenta uno dei principali punti di partenza per i fautori degli sport invernali.

L'area attrezzata è stata parzialmente distrutta dalle eruzioni del duemiladue dell'Etna e solamente dopo dieci anni si è arrivati alla ricostruzione: i lavori, rallentati da difficoltà e impedimenti burocratici, hanno fortemente messo in difficoltà l'economia locale.

La popolazione ha un reddito medio basso, vi è una forte disparità nell'accesso al mondo del lavoro da parte delle donne. È diffuso il fenomeno mafioso dell'estorsione a danno degli imprenditori locali.

Il Comune di Castiglione di Sicilia sorge su una collina a nord dell'Etna e ha una forte tradizione di tipo agricolo sebbene si stia cercando di potenziare il comparto turistico.

Nel territorio è presente una struttura ricettiva a vocazione golfistica e sono stati programmati una pluralità d'interventi volti all'ampliamento dell'offerta turistica ('enoteca regionale, case vacanze ecc.).

Nel tempo è divenuta sede di residenze estive e molte aree sono sottoposte a vincolo di tutela storico-architettonica (l'area ricade nel Parco dell'Etna e nella Riserva naturale dell'Alcantara).

Il tessuto sociale è estremamente omogeneo, caratterizzato sia da un alto tasso di spopolamento che da una struttura abbastanza anziana della popolazione; vi è una forte presenza d'immigrati che provengono perlopiù dai paesi dell'Est; diffusi i fenomeni di disagio sociale che coinvolgono minori e giovani.

Giarre è un centro eminentemente commerciale (le attività sono concentrate lungo Corso Italia e via Callipoli), ha incentivato il settore terziario, artigianale, floro-vivaismo (valida alternativa alla tradizionale attività di tipo agricolo).

Il centro è composto da antichi palazzi settecenteschi e ottocenteschi; il quartiere Jungo ospita le scuole di ogni ordine e grado e una zona di Edilizia Popolare; nella zona Nord della città, si trova uno dei più grandi mercati ortofrutticoli all'ingrosso della Sicilia.

Vi è una forte concentrazione d'immigrati (circa il 4% della popolazione). La popolazione in età lavorativa è abbastanza anziana a causa di uno scarso ricambio generazionale.

Tra i problemi maggiori da segnare il rischio idrologico e la gestione inadeguata dei rifiuti; diffusa la presenza di criminalità attraverso episodi di racket, usura, furti e rapine.

Il Comune si è attivato per l'installazione d'impianti videosorveglianza collocati nel centro storico, nelle scuole e nelle strade più trafficate.

Il problema principale dei comuni che ricadono all'interno dell'area pedemontana Est è rappresentato dalla carenza di collegamenti viari adeguati tra i comuni alle pendici dell'Etna e i territori costieri (Fiumefreddo, Mascali, Riposto e Calatabiano).

Le aree costiere sono toccate da un turismo stagionale legato alla polarità di Taormina. In questi territori si è sviluppata una zona residenziale che ha per anni sostenuto e mantenuto in piedi l'economia del comprensorio (settore edile).

La mancanza di adeguate strutture ricettive e di servizi d'intrattenimento favorisce lo spostamento dei flussi turistici verso i vicini comuni del Messinese.

Il Comune di Calatabiano classificato come area ad agricoltura intensiva e specializzata è dedito alla coltura agrumicola e vitivinicola. Il livello d'istruzione delle famiglie è basso, molti nuclei sono monoreddito, altri vivono dinamiche complesse tali da non consentire lo svolgimento del ruolo genitoriale in maniera adeguata.

Nel territorio si sta lentamente sviluppando una vocazione turistica legata alla presenza delle Gole dell'Alcantara e della spiaggia di San Marco, tanto che in sede di programmazione territoriale si sta ventilando l'ipotesi di creare un porto canale per favorire l'accesso alle imbarcazioni di porto.

Come per altre aree il territorio presenta gravi deficit per quanto attiene la presenza di spazi verdi e d'infrastrutture scolastiche, c'è una forte presenza di una mafia di tipo agricolo legata a furti di bestiame, danneggiamenti alla proprietà ed estorsioni.

L'economia di Fiumefreddo si basa sulla commercializzazione di prodotti agricoli, florovivaistici e sul terziario, trattasi anche di uno snodo strategico dei flussi turistici da e verso Giarre e la zona costiera.

Le spiagge del Comune, per anni premiate per la pulizia e la qualità degli accessi, sono diventate meta di un consistente turismo stagionale che ha comportato un rapido sviluppo spesso privo di programmazione.

Il tessuto sociale ha un tenore di vita abbastanza eterogeneo, vi è una fascia medio - alta composta da liberi professionisti e piccoli commercianti e una più ampia fascia di famiglie che vivono una forte condizione di disagio economico e culturale.

### **Area Calatina**

Caltagirone, Castel di Judica, Grammichele, Licodia Eubea, Mazzarrone, Militello Val di Catania, Mineo, Mirabella Imbaccari, Palagonia, Raddusa, Ramacca, San Cono, San Michele di Ganzaria, Scordia, Vizzini

L'area Calatina ricopre circa la metà de territorio provinciale ma è caratterizzata da una scarsa densità abitativa (circa 100/kmq) a testimonianza della forte migrazione verso il capoluogo etneo.

Il territorio, estremamente eterogeneo (alternanza di aree collinari e montuose), comprende il Sud Simeto e abbraccia quindici comuni siti lungo l'asse stradale e ferroviario, tra Catania a Gela.

La struttura urbana, caratterizzata da realtà isolate con una difficile mobilità nel territorio, causata da un disagiato impianto viario e dalla carenza di servizi atti alla

mobilità, fa sì che Caltagirone e più in particolare i comuni che gravitano intorno al suo territorio, vivano in un contesto di marginalizzazione sia territoriale sia economica rispetto alle altre aree provinciali con cui non vi sono grosse interrelazioni.

I comuni del circondario attraversano una profonda crisi, il crollo della spesa sociale impedisce a loro di avviare strumenti di programmazione adeguati ed efficaci di valorizzazione del territorio.

Le aree del Calatino presentano, inoltre, un forte rischio idrogeologico e sismico e molti centri non hanno adeguato via di fuga per favorire l'evacuazione della popolazione in caso di calamità.

Il fenomeno peraltro, è acuito anche dalla presenza di un forte abusivismo edilizio e dall'insufficienza delle opere di manutenzione ordinaria che garantirebbero, attraverso interventi preventivi, una messa in sicurezza delle zone maggiormente dissestate.

Negli ultimi mesi si assiste, inoltre, a un peggioramento delle condizioni di vivibilità del territorio correlate alla gestione e al conferimento dei rifiuti.

In via generale nell'area calatina si registra un peggioramento delle condizioni economiche delle famiglie e incremento della disoccupazione (plausibilmente il dato ufficiale risulta molto inficiato dalla presenza di una forte economia sommersa e del lavoro irregolare).

Negli anni nel territorio si è verificato un incremento dei fenomeni criminosi: dalle intimidazioni e atti di vandalismo contro i rappresentanti delle pubbliche istituzioni, danneggiamenti e saccheggi nelle scuole; furti e rapine a danno degli agricoltori.

Emerge a livello locale, l'esigenza di un maggior controllo del territorio da parte delle forze dell'ordine.

La situazione generale del comprensorio presenta problemi sociali comuni, quali fenomeni di marginalità sociale, episodi di disagio minorile, problemi di ricambio generazionale e riduzione tassi di natalità; scarso civismo, presenza diffusa di criminalità, fenomeni di degrado urbano (soprattutto nei centri storici) e una generale inadeguatezza delle infrastrutture.

Alle modificazioni prodotte nel tessuto sociale dall'invecchiamento della popolazione (che comunque mediamente risulta inferiore rispetto ad altre province siciliane), si associano i processi che più complessivamente investono le famiglie, con l'accrescersi della scomposizione dei nuclei familiari, dei fenomeni legati al disagio, giovanile ma anche adulto, alle fragilità economiche e/o sociali che spesso si ripercuotono sui minori.

L'area è interessata da un fenomeno di abbandono del territorio, che tocca solo marginalmente i comuni caratterizzati da una forte concentrazione delle imprese agricole (Licodia Eubea e Mazzarone, il comune che presenta il reddito medio procapite più basso d'Italia) in cui la presenza d'immigrazione clandestina e regolare risulta avere un peso significativo sulla composizione della popolazione, per concentrarsi, in particolar modo,

nei centri di San Michele Gazzaria Vizzini, Militello in Val di Catania, Raddusa e Mirabella Imbaccari.

Il problema del “ricambio generazionale” riguarda soprattutto alcuni contesti, Mirabella Imbaccari, Mineo, Militello in Val di Catania, nei quali la quota di popolazione anziana supera abbondantemente quella dei giovani, mentre appare senz’altro meno grave più a Ramacca e Palagonia, (dove il numero dei giovani è quasi maggiore rispetto di quello degli anziani).

Il comprensorio del Calatino Nord è composto da comuni di tipo agricolo: Castel di Ludica; Militello in Val di Catania; Mineo; Palagonia; Raddusa; Ramacca; Scordia.

Il settore primario serve in realtà a soddisfare le esigenze locali e non riesce a varcare i confini del comprensorio, vi è un problema legato a una mentalità tradizionale poco incline a creare reti, scarse capacità di coordinamento, assenza di politiche incisive di salvaguardia dei prodotti locali (nonostante non si possa negare l’impegno delle amministrazioni che ha portato al riconoscimento e alla valorizzazione di alcune tipicità) e criticità legate alla logistica (mancanza d’infrastrutture adeguate per il trasporto pesante e insufficienza delle aree di stoccaggio) e alla finanza, tutti fattori che influenzano pesantemente i livelli di competitività.

Sebbene in concentrazione minore rispetto all’agricoltura, sul territorio sono presenti anche aziende impegnate nel settore agroalimentare e in quello edile, trattasi di settori che, come quello agricolo, presentano grosse difficoltà correlate a carenze strutturali di sviluppo e testimoniate dalla presenza di fenomeni di evasione fiscale e lavoro nero.

Nel tentativo di arginare l’esodo verso altre zone e per rilanciare le sorti dell’economia locale (caratterizzate da uno scarso sviluppo industriale e da una certa arretratezza del settore agricolo) nel passato, grazie a finanziamenti di tipo pubblico, si è intervenuto per superare il gap infrastrutturale e per incentivare il settore turistico attraverso la salvaguardia del patrimonio artistico e naturalistico di alcuni comuni e soprattutto del comune capofila. L’attività turistica, tradizionalmente legata al comune capofila e alla città di San Michele di Gazzaria, si sta lentamente sviluppando su tutto il territorio, come testimoniato dall’incremento delle attività ricettive.

Per quanto attiene ai dati relativi all’istruzione emerge l’esistenza di una fascia non irrilevante di quasi analfabetismo e più in generale un basso livello socioculturale. Appare particolarmente preoccupante la situazione dei comuni di Grammichele e Scordia, in cui gli interventi formativi sono estremamente frammentari e la percentuale di soggetti che ottiene il diploma bassissima.

A Caltagirone, la popolazione presenta livelli d’istruzione che, sebbene inferiori, non si discostano molto dalla media nazionale.

Il Comune, distante circa ottanta Km dal capoluogo, ha assunto un ruolo di capofila per i comuni limitrofi. Rinomata nel mondo, grazie alla presenza di una tradizione artigiana

specializzata nella lavorazione della ceramica, la città possiede un patrimonio artistico e culturale di notevole rilievo, tanto da essere inserita dall'Unesco nell'elenco dei Patrimoni dell'Umanità.

Nel corso dell'ultimo decennio quest'area ha usufruito d'importanti finanziamenti alle imprese e per la realizzazione d'infrastrutture pubbliche, grazie a efficienti politiche di concertazione volte alla creazione di un polo logistico per tutte le attività legate al settore agroalimentare.

Il Centro Storico, per il quale sono state previste opere di risanamento e abitato da famiglie d'estrazione culturale medio-bassa e con situazioni di degrado urbano e edilizio, ha subito un progressivo spopolamento dovuto al trasferimento verso le zone residenziali e di edilizia popolare concentrate nella "Zona Nuova e di Espansione" e contraddistinta da famiglie con reddito medio e nella parte periferica da famiglie disagiate.

Le frazioni, sebbene presentino condizioni ambientali e socio economiche diversificate sono perlopiù dedite all'agricoltura.

Il comune di Caltagirone, nonostante che nelle aree a forte densità abitativa si registrino maggiori carenze legate alla disponibilità di spazi verdi e centri pubblici di aggregazione per giovani (la cui presenza è legata all'offerta della Istituzioni cattoliche), offre una vasta gamma di servizi pubblici e privati in grado di soddisfare le esigenze primarie dei cittadini dei comuni limitrofi.

In sintesi è possibile affermare che seppur negli ultimi anni significative inversioni di tendenza in termini di recupero urbano e di riqualificazione delle sue funzioni economiche e sociali è ancora segnata da un forte squilibrio per la quantità e qualità delle attività e dei servizi presenti, per le condizioni di degrado ambientale e abitativo, in particolare nell'area del centro antico.

Esistono marginali sacche di disagio sociale legate al peggioramento delle condizioni occupazionali e a un'alta infiltrazione della criminalità organizzata.

Sono anche stati progettati impianti di videosorveglianza in alcune aree specifiche del territorio quali la Scala di Santa Maria del Monte, via Giambattista Nicaastro, il parcheggio in località Lago Ballone, via Ardito all'angolo con la via Pentolai, lo slargo antistante la Chiesa fra la via San Bonaventura e il Largo della Croce, via Acquanuova all'incrocio con la via Pollicino, la piazza Innocenzo Marcinò, la via Vittorio Emanuele all'angolo con la via Volta Campanile, il viale Regina Elena all'incrocio con la via dei Greci (vicino all'Istituto d'arte), la via Luigi Sturzo all'angolo con la via Moschitta e il parcheggio Cappuccini.

Il comune di San Michele di Ganzaria è ricco di beni culturali e archeologici (non valorizzati appieno), e risorse naturalistiche legate alla presenza del Monte Ganzaria, caratterizzato dalla presenza di castagneti, pregevole vegetazione spontanea e diverse specie di animali. Accanto al turismo l'economia si basa sulla agricoltura e in particolare sulla produzione di frutta.

Militello Val di Catania, il cui patrimonio pur essendo quantitativamente inferiore a quello degli altri comuni è altrettanto significativo, è caratterizzata da molti palazzi e monumenti di epoca barocca, su cui, con il supporto tecnico della Soprintendenza ai Beni culturali di Catania sono stati eseguiti restauri e consolidamenti.

Se è vero che i comuni vicini devono necessariamente far riferimento al comune capofila per l'accesso ai servizi scolastici, le strutture sportive e culturali, d'altro canto vi è la progressiva diffusione sul territorio d'infrastrutture relative ai diversi settori economici e in particolare al comparto agricolo.

Nel piccolo comune di Mazzarrone, a esempio, è sito uno dei più grandi mercati ortofrutticoli dell'are con un bacino d'utenza che travalica i territori del Comprensorio.

L'attività agricola con la produzione, trasformazione e commercializzazione di uve da tavola rappresenta l'unica fonte di reddito che, in base ai dati ufficiali, è tra i più bassi d'Italia (da segnalare che dalle statistiche non emergono i proventi dell'economia sommersa).

La necessità di ricorrere a manodopera specializzata, per affinare le tecniche di produzione e promozione del prodotto in contesti sovranazionali, ha contribuito a innalzare il tasso d'istruzione spingendo i residenti a proseguire gli studi superiori e universitari.

Il paese in virtù della capacità produttiva derivante dall'agricoltura ha vissuto un fenomeno di forte immigrazione che fornisce manodopera stagionale anche di tipo irregolare (fenomeno difficilmente rilevabile attraverso i principali indicatori statistici).

Il lavoro nero, che nell'agricoltura rappresenta circa l'80%, è in parte correlabile al fatto che il sistema previdenziale delle indennità agricole rende conveniente per talune categorie di lavoratori il lavoro irregolare.

Palagonia, che insieme a Scordia rappresenta una dei comuni più popolati dopo Caltagirone, sorge su un colle e mostra forti segni di espansione edilizia, determinata anche dall'incremento più o meno costante della popolazione.

Il comune ha un ricco patrimonio archeologico, non convenientemente sfruttato né tantomeno conosciuto dalla maggior parte della popolazione giovanile (spesso chi vive nelle periferie riconosce di non aver mai visitato il centro storico) e non esistono strutture di ricettive in grado di favorire un flusso turistico consistente.

L'area che comprende i quartieri Matrice e Immacolata è quella che, pur con tutte le varie trasformazioni subite, conserva un suo impianto urbanistico di tipo medievale, col caratteristico dei vicoli e strette viuzze e ospita i maggiori monumenti e edifici storici. Sul fronte dell'abusivismo, si può rilevare come esso continui a perpetuarsi da parte degli stessi abitanti del posto che apportano trasformazioni alle abitazioni è la trasformazione delle caratteristiche scalinate in pietra locale in colate di asfalto.

Esempio eclatante di abusivismo è la presenza di un garage ricavato a ridosso della facciata della Cappella San Giuseppe, sita in via Duca degli Abruzzi.



Per molto tempo si è lamentato a Palagonia lo stato di totale abbandono in cui versavano i siti d'interesse storico-archeologico delle aree, in parte risanate grazie all'utilizzo di fondi di tipo pubblico.

La maggior parte delle ingenti risorse investite, solo parzialmente è stata sfruttata per impiantare delle vere e proprie attività di sfruttamento turistico; se l'affidamento dei servizi di gestione a privati ha avuto delle ricadute positive nel caso delle Coste di S. Febronia, ove aldilà delle competenze attribuite, si è proceduto alla bonifica di alcuni punti del sito, rendendo tra l'altro nuovamente fruibile la "sorgente naturale di S. Febronia", ben diversa appare la situazione dell'Eremo di S. Febronia, le cui pareti sono minacciate dall'umidità che ha fortemente danneggiato gli antichi affreschi ivi presenti e della "Basilichetta S. Giovanni" in forte stato di degrado (illuminazione distrutta, ampie aiuole il cui solo verde è costituito da ulivi e magnolie ormai secchi).

L'economia di Palagonia è incentrata sulla coltivazione e sulla commercializzazione delle arance rosse, cui si affiancano piccole attività commerciali (peraltro le più colpite dalla crisi).

Il carattere stagionale, tipico di un'economia agricola, ha un peso importante sui processi migratori e sui livelli di disoccupazione, contribuendo a rendere ulteriormente precaria la condizione socio-economica delle famiglie.

Il tessuto sociale, composto da soggetti appartenenti a realtà culturali ed economiche medio basse, è caratterizzato da una diffusa mentalità individualistica, da forte frammentazione (ne è testimonianza la scarsa presenza sul territorio dell'associazionismo) e da una scarsa coscienza sociale che provoca disinteresse per la cura delle strutture esistenti e del patrimonio ambientale.

Frequenti i casi di disagio e devianza giovanile minorile che trovano riscontro nei tassi di dispersione (critici in particolar modo nella scuola media secondaria), nel diffondersi di tossico dipendenze e delinquenza.

In relazione alle infrastrutture si registra la mancanza di spazi ricreativi, attrezzature sportive, verde pubblico, centri di aggregazione e la sostanziale inadeguatezza delle strutture esistenti.

Da più parti si lamenta il peso di una città stretta nella morsa della criminalità, dello spaccio di stupefacenti, del dilagare di pericolose devianze (consumo di droghe e alcolismo), del dispregio della legalità (con particolare riferimento ai tanti incidenti stradali causati che dal mancato rispetto del codice della strada e delle norme di sicurezza, al fronte del quale, a loro dire, non vi è una reale presa di posizione da parte delle Forze dell'Ordine, o se c'è, manca poi la collaborazione da parte dei cittadini).

Scordia è una cittadina eminentemente agricola, caratterizzata da presenza di attività artigianali e piccole industrie attive nel settore manifatturiero.

Il centro storico è circondato da quartieri più moderni dall'assetto eterogeneo,

estremamente confuso nella zona Nord Ovest con costruzioni multipiano non rifinite esternamente e strade strette, poco luminose e iper-trafficate (Chiuso, Guccione, Montagna, Pinnatazza); ordinato e molto più vivibile nelle aree a sud (Barona, Cittadino, Ponticello, Gabella San Rocco).

Presenti scuole, ampi spazi verdi e numerosi servizi socio-culturali; sul territorio vi è la partecipazione di un forte associazionismo che collabora con i servizi socio-territoriali per la riduzione dei fenomeni di marginalità sociali.

Esistono larghe aree deturpate dall'abusivismo e da una cementificazione non controllata (fenomeno che coinvolge anche aree protette). Sono frequenti gli episodi di microcriminalità, vandalismo, intimidazioni, furti e tossicodipendenza.

Il paese ha mostrato una certa inadeguatezza nelle politiche di accoglienza agli immigrati (alcuni edifici delle zone periferiche sono stati occupati da extracomunitari, perlopiù regolari, che vivono in condizione di precarietà).

Vizzini è un sito d'interesse storico paesaggistico a (Area Valle dei Mulini e Borgo della Cunzaria) le cui potenzialità risultano pressoché inutilizzate (marginale la vocazione turistica).

Il territorio, crocevia di alcune direttrici di trasporto principali, è eminentemente agricolo.

Intorno al Castello sorge il nucleo originario più antico (case rurali poco popolate e pochi edifici storici, assenza di servizi pubblici e attività commerciali); ben diverso l'assetto dei quartieri costruiti dopo il 700, depositari delle aree monumentali di maggior valori e cuore economico, sociale e amministrativo della città.

La composizione sociale è costituita da agricoltori, allevatori e dipendenti del terziario.

La stagnazione dell'economia si è accompagnata a diffusi fenomeni di abbandono del territorio (che ha avuto una flessione demografica, nell'ultimo decennio, di oltre il 6%) e all'emergere di fasce di microcriminalità.

A Vizzini vi è un presidio ospedaliero, la caserma dei Carabinieri e scuole pubbliche.

### **Provincia di Caltanissetta**

La Provincia, in larga parte pianeggiante, può essere suddivisa in due diverse aree: l'estremità settentrionale che comprende oltre al Capoluogo, i comuni di: *Acquaviva Platani, Bompensiere, Campofranco, Marianopoli, Milena, Montebello, Mussomeli, Resuttano, San Cataldo, Santa Caterina Villarmosa, Serradifalco, Sutura, Valledlunga Pratameno, Villalba*; e una zona più a Sud che si estende fino all'area costiera di Gela, in cui ricadono i comuni di *Butera, Delia, Mazzarino Niscemi e Riesi e Sommatino*.

Il sistema imprenditoriale provinciale è costituito in massima parte da piccole e medie imprese operanti prevalentemente nel settore agricolo e commerciale, con una preminenza assoluta del settore terziario.

I territori dell'estremità settentrionale hanno una forte tradizione agricola con

moltissimi sono i distretti enologici (Vallelunga Pratameno, Riesi, Butera, Serradifalco, San Cataldo, Milena, Sommatino, Delia). La produzione cerealicola impiega largamente le aree del capoluogo Nisseno, mentre la zootecnia è sviluppata a San Cataldo, Marianopoli, Resuttano, Villalba, S.Caterina Villarmosa); rinomata anche la produzione olivicola e dei carciofi nell'area di Niscemi.

Nella piana di Gela si è sviluppata una vasta area industriale legata alla presenza di aziende petrolchimiche, poco distante dalla riserva naturale del Biviere di Gela.

Lo sviluppo dell'impianto industriale inizialmente è stato accompagnato da un innalzamento dei livelli occupazionali e del benessere sociale in un'area tradizionalmente considerata tra le più povere della Sicilia, ma alla lunga la diminuzione costante della manodopera assieme all'aumento vertiginoso del costo della vita, con il progressivo abbandono delle attività agricole e l'aumento del tasso di disoccupazione.

L'industria oltre che essersi sviluppata a Gela è presente nel Capoluogo con piccole e medie aziende operanti nel settore di produzione di prodotti artigianali per fumatori e liquori (esportati in tutto il mondo) nonché produzione e lavorazione del sughero (Niscemi), polo tessile (Riesi) e una pluralità di aziende per la trasformazione dei prodotti alimentari disseminate in tutto il territorio.

Negli ultimi decenni si è sviluppata l'area industriale e produttiva. Nell'area tra San Cataldo, Caltanissetta e Serradifalco ove è inoltre rinomata la produzione del miele d'eccellenza e della raffinazione e confezionamento del sale proveniente in gran parte dalla vicina provincia di Trapani.

Pur essendo la Provincia attraversata dalla rete autostradale che collega Palermo a Catania, il territorio è caratterizzato da importanti carenze infrastrutturali che penalizzano fortemente il rafforzamento del tessuto imprenditoriale.

L'estremità più occidentale risulta meno popolata con riferimento alla densità abitativa, i paesi più piccoli, in cui vi è un numero più elevato di emigranti, sono i più colpiti dal fenomeno dell'invecchiamento della popolazione.

Da un punto di vista sociale non vi è ancora un grosso sfaldamento dei nuclei familiari, sebbene si sia verificata una leggera contrazione nella composizione dei gruppi (due, tre componenti per famiglia).

La provincia di Caltanissetta, insieme a quella di Enna, sono all'ultimo posto per il tasso di occupazione femminile; tale fenomeno è spiegabile a causa dell'assenza di politiche del lavoro adeguate.

Una provincia estremamente povera, in cui si registrano altissimi tassi di dispersione scolastica e soglie di analfabetismo allarmanti, ove molte famiglie vivono in una situazione di forte indigenza e nella quale la più praticata soluzione per un futuro certo è rappresentata dall'emigrazione.

Occorre comunque ricordare come dietro soglie di disoccupazione altissime si celino

anche molteplici casi di lavoro nero, estranei a ogni tipo di rilevazione, non sempre esclusivamente riconducibili alla criminalità organizzata.

Una realtà in cui operano non solo cosche legate a Cosa Nostra ma anche elementi dell'organizzazione criminale autonomista definita la "stidda" (particolarmente attiva nel circondario Gelese e a Niscemi considerate tradizionalmente aree a rischio) che operano, talora in forma consociativa, per l'aggressione dei patrimoni privati e della ricchezza pubblica (nello specifico nel settore degli appalti e dei lavori pubblici attraverso l'inquinamento delle gare pubbliche, orientando l'assegnazione degli appalti a favore di ditte controllate dalle estorsioni, imposte a imprenditori e commercianti).

Va, tuttavia, segnalato che, diversamente dal passato, molti commercianti hanno cominciato a ribellarsi all'imposizione del "pizzo", in particolar modo, un movimento del rilancio della cultura della legalità si è imposto nella città di Gela, dove è sorta, un'associazione molto attiva sul territorio, analoga associazione è stata costituita anche a Caltanissetta.

Le denunce e le intercettazioni telefoniche hanno permesso di scoprire estorsioni legate al racket cui non corrisponde a un aumento delle denunce per il reato di usura (in forte crescita a causa della congiuntura economica sfavorevole e di una criticabile politica restrittiva del credito da parte delle banche).

Il distretto di Caltanissetta detiene il triste record nazionale di minorenni incriminati per reati di mafia; i minorenni compiono rapine ed estorsioni aggravate, un elevatissimo di danneggiamenti a scopo intimidatorio e in alcuni casi omicidi. Il fenomeno sembrerebbe andare di pari passo con una dispersione scolastica spesso nascosta, la cui entità statisticamente sembrerebbe marginale.

In netta diminuzione le violenze sessuali e gli episodi di stalking che comunque appaiono diffusi e spesso scaturiscono da contesti socioculturali poveri, se non dirittura degradati, consumati all'interno di nuclei familiari o contro persone non in grado di tutelarsi adeguatamente perché minori o disabili.

Numerosi sono i reati contro la pubblica amministrazione, mentre si è verificata una leggera flessione dei delitti contro il patrimonio (continua a essere, comunque, allarmante il fenomeno dei furti di veicoli e in appartamento e il numero delle rapine), circostanza resa favorevole dall'efficace azione di prevenzione e controllo del territorio da parte delle forze dell'ordine; il fenomeno di danneggiamenti è perpetrato perlopiù attraverso attentati incendiari, nella maggior parte dei casi si tratta di episodi che vedono interessati esercizi commerciali, autoveicoli, ciclomotori, coltivazioni agricole (diffuso il vandalismo, in genere rappresenta uno strumento di rappresaglia per futuri motivi talora legato alle frodi nei confronti delle compagnie di assicurative).

Spesso, soprattutto il territorio gelese e le zone limitrofe, si distinguono per una complessiva incuria nella gestione della cosa pubblica. Una situazione generale di

difficoltà acuita dall'insufficienza dei controlli sul territorio con conseguente percezione d'insicurezza per la popolazione, ma anche dalla carenza di servizi essenziali.

Per quanto riguarda i reati in materia di stupefacenti il territorio di Gela continua a caratterizzarsi per lo spaccio al minuto sia di hashish che di cocaina. L'approvvigionamento, di norma, avviene in diverse aree del catanese e anche nel palermitano. L'attività illecita è spesso condotta da gruppi di giovani.

Numerose sono anche le infrazioni nel settore della sicurezza sul lavoro (che spesso coinvolgono gli immigrati), contro il quale si dovrebbero attuare azioni di controllo sul territorio, mediante un'azione coordinata e non occasionale, dalle varie autorità competenti cui associare una maggiore sensibilizzazione dei lavoratori.

Per quanto attiene la dislocazione delle Forze di Polizia sul territorio, la Polizia di Stato è articolata con due Commissariati, uno a Gela, e uno a Niscemi. L'Arma dei Carabinieri oltre a un Comando Provinciale, è dislocata equamente su tutto il territorio, mentre la Guardia di Finanza ha un Comando Provinciale, una Compagnia a Caltanissetta, a Gela e una Brigata a Mussomeli.

La dotazione effettiva delle forze di Polizia Municipali è inferiore a quella prevista in tutti i comuni, così, per far fronte a tale problematica si è cercato di sostenere una gestione consorziata dei servizi.

Il movimento culturale in Provincia fa sicuramente capo al Capoluogo. Negli ultimi anni anche grazie alla ristrutturazione e riapertura di alcuni edifici storici la città sta riconoscendo un momento di rilancio a livello culturale grazie alla presenza di teatri, di cinema, numerosi musei e altri impianti che contribuiscono all'ampliamento dell'offerta culturale, quali il centro culturale polivalente, la creazione di un parco letterario; da sottolineare anche l'attività svolta sul territorio da numerosi circoli culturali e Associazioni.

Il centro storico della città gravita intorno a piazza Garibaldi, intersecata dalla principale direttrice viaria di Corso Umberto (l'altro asse principale è rappresentato da via Vittorio Emanuele), area in cui sorgono il Municipio e le più importanti evidenze storico-architettoniche e alcuni musei.

Molte aree del centro storico sono abbandonate, da tempo, affette da un forte spopolamento e da impoverimento sociale. In particolare l'antico quartiere arabo di San Domenico, a est di piazza Garibaldi, caratterizzato dalla presenza di una pluralità di case, molte delle quali fatiscenti abbandonate dai residenti, affittate, anche a prezzi elevati, a gruppi di extracomunitari. Il quartiere è anche rifugio di sbandati e di senzatetto.

In generale è possibile affermare che il centro storico sta perdendo la prestigiosa funzione di rappresentanza e di centro commerciale all'aperto, e ciò a favore dei centri commerciali, il più delle volte ubicati all'esterno del territorio cittadino. Molti quartieri hanno perduto la propria identità; gran parte delle scuole, degli uffici pubblici, studi professionali, scuole, laboratori artigianali, sono state spostate verso la nuova zona

d'espansione. La maggior parte dei quartieri del centro antico è abitata da persone anziane.

Santa Flavia è uno dei quartieri più grandi e popolati. Si divide in due zone: una parte alta caratterizzata da una strada molto ampia, intersecata da vie più strette e brevi e da qualche piazzetta, con palazzine di recente costruzione, con una buona sistemazione urbanistica e una parte più basse alle spalle della zona, è costituita da un dedalo di viuzze strette e ripide, dove si trovano case vecchie, alcune a piano terra, senza servizi adeguati alle esigenze igienico-sanitarie. Non si dispongono di spazi verdi e ricreativi in cui giocare, gli unici spazi di aggregazione sono offerti dalle scuole e dalle parrocchie.

In questa zona vivono alcune famiglie di extracomunitari con bambini in età scolastica. Le attività svolte dagli abitanti sono varie, accanto a qualche professionista e a qualche impiegato, ci sono molti disoccupati, operai, venditori ambulanti e qualche artigiano, molte le famiglie monoreddito e con bassi livelli culturali.

Il quartiere di Santa Flavia (anche Santa Venera), oggi presenta una diffusa microcriminalità, con scorribande di delinquenti, scippi, rapine, furti in abitazione, atti vandalici e diversi episodi di degrado urbano.

L'urbanizzazione degli ultimi decenni ha favorito, come detto in precedenza, soprattutto lo sviluppo della periferia Sud-orientale, a partire da un quartiere in prevalenza costituito da cooperative, molto popoloso e estremamente anonimo, privo di spazi verdi, cui si è cercato di dare una in termini di vivibilità, maggiore valore con la progressiva edificazione di villette monofamiliare.

Nel quartiere di Pian Del Lago hanno sede gli impianti sportivi che comprendono quasi tutte le discipline e sono numerose le società affiliate alle relative federazioni e Enti di promozione sportiva.

Le zone di nuova espansione hanno visto l'insediamento di un ceto medio composto da famiglie in cui entrambi i coniugi sono occupati in attività professionali o impiegatizi.

Paradossalmente, anche a causa dell'emigrazione verso i paesi del Nord, vi è un centro storico dominato da un'edilizia fatiscente i cui vivono in condizioni di estrema precarietà numerosi gruppi familiari (non infrequenti gli episodi di sfollamento a causa della pericolosità delle strutture), mentre gran parte del patrimonio periferico è largamente sottoutilizzato. In realtà l'Amministrazione locale è impegnata in una vasta opera di risanamento volto al recupero di parte del patrimonio presente e la sua riconversione a fini sociali.

Poco distante dal centro urbano sorge il villaggio di Santa Barbara, un ex villaggio operaio di edilizia eminentemente popolare, in cui alcuni edifici sono abbandonati all'incuria e con spazi pubblici non adeguati. Al momento sono previsti interventi di riqualificazione per il recupero di alcuni alloggi e il completamento di opere di urbanizzazione primaria nonché opera di sistemazione delle aree a verde e la creazione di uno spazio da adibire a ludoteca (nel quartiere sono presenti anche una scuola e una parrocchia).

A Ovest del centro abitato si è sviluppata una vasta area residenziale scarsamente popolata, in cui tra l'altro è stato collocato il presidio ospedaliero e in cui, in direzione del comune di San Cataldo, si stanno sviluppando una pluralità di attività commerciali di grandi dimensioni.

Caltanissetta, da mesi, è sotto attacco da parte della criminalità, sia locale quella proveniente da altre città siciliane, il fenomeno ha fortemente minato la sicurezza dei cittadini nisseni, la quale sempre più spesso sono colpiti da furti negli appartamenti, per non parlare delle rapine ai negozi e alle banche.

Si rilevano anche consistenti truffe nel conseguimento di finanziamenti, nazionali ed europei finalizzate a operazioni di riciclaggio.

Per sostenere e assistere coloro che sono colpiti dal racket si sta attivando un progetto per la realizzazione di uno sportello di assistenza, formazione e consulenza per la tutela del sistema imprenditoriale locale.

Vi è inoltre una scarsa sensibilità ambientale. Molte aree, in particolare il quartiere Angeli nel centro storico, sono divenute discariche a cielo aperto a causa del conferimento di rifiuti di qualsiasi genere da parte dei residenti.

Caltanissetta è la città italiana con il più alto indice di povertà assoluta, e rappresenta un territorio di transito per la popolazione migrante.

Da qualche anno i flussi verso la Provincia di Caltanissetta sono molto diminuiti, permangono, comunque, invii di richiedenti protezione internazionale da altre province siciliane e da altre zone della penisola.

La nazionalità maggiormente presente nel territorio è quella eritrea, anche se da un anno si registra un incremento della presenza afghana. numerosi gruppi di stranieri che ogni giorno popolano le vie che collegano la zona sud al centro storico, o alle ragazze che nelle ore serali vendono il proprio corpo in via Rochester.

Da sottolineare a Caltanissetta la presenza del centro di accoglienza dei profughi anella zona Pian del Lago, ove nei periodi di maggior emergenza alcuni cittadini extra-comunitari richiedenti asilo trascorrono la notte accampati, con tende o semplici coperte, nello spiazzo antistante il cancello del Centro di Accoglienza; quando escono dal Centro d'accoglienza, per recarsi in città, sono costretti a servirsi di una strada trafficata senza marciapiede e senza illuminazione (una situazione di pericolo che mette a repentaglio la vita dei cittadini extra-comunitari e degli automobilisti stessi).

Tra gli interventi previsti per rafforzare il controllo del territorio, l'attivazione del servizio di vigilanza di quartiere; un piano coordinato per il controllo della regolarità del soggiorno dei cittadini stranieri; il potenziamento della vigilanza e di prevenzione presso gli Istituti scolastici, per la prevenzione dei fenomeni della tossicodipendenza e profili; per prevenire danneggiamenti alle strutture scolastiche, attraverso lo svolgimento di servizi anche in abiti civili; e per garantire il corretto svolgimento delle attività didattiche; ma

anche la vigilanza e il monitoraggio dei tratti di strade comunali interessate da problemi di carattere idrogeologico, specie nei periodi di condizioni climatiche avverse, quali: temporali, piogge torrenziali, etc.; il miglioramento dell'attività di monitoraggio del territorio attraverso il potenziamento della centrale operativa con il connesso sistema di videosorveglianza.

L'altro polo attrattivo della Provincia è costituito dalla cittadina di Gela la quale ha una densità demografica superiore allo stesso Comune Capoluogo.

Rispetto al primo nucleo insediativo, sorto su un'area collinare, Gela si è sviluppata lungo una vasta area costiera posta all'estremità meridionale dell'Isola. Durante gli anni scorsi il centro è stato oggetto di numerose trasformazioni che hanno fortemente inciso sull'assetto originario (in molti casi si è proceduto in maniera abusiva all'aggiunta di nuove elevazioni sui nuclei più antichi).

In generale la qualità delle abitazioni del centro storico è abbastanza modesta, gli edifici non presentano molte elevazioni e i piani terra sono destinati all'uso commerciale (Corso Vittorio Emanuele).

Ben diversa l'area d'espansione residenziale ricavata nella zona a Ovest del paese, ove originariamente fu realizzato un villaggio che avrebbe dovuto ospitare i lavoratori della raffineria.

Trattasi di un'area in cui sorgono insediamenti condominiali e palazzine a schiera dai colori tenui, ampia dotazione di servizi autonomi e larghe vie con vaste isole pedonali e aree verdi che gravitano intorno all'area Sud-occidentale, in cui vi è un centro commerciale e Centro socio-culturale che ospita al suo interno una scuola comprensiva di secondo grado, una sala polifunzionale adibita a cinema-teatro e spazio per manifestazioni di vario genere, vari cortili e diverse aree sportive attrezzate che garantiscono complessivamente una qualità ambientale e abitativa al di sopra della media locale.

In anni recenti questa zona è stata progressivamente inglobata all'interno del tessuto urbano il quale si è andato espandendosi con arie di edilizia popolare.

L'area sorge poco distante dal quartiere Caposoprano, caratterizzato da un livello socio-economico medio-alto e dalla presenza di palazzine multifamiliari, una zona ricca di servizi, dall'Ospedale a scuole di diverso ordine e grado, mentre rimangono quasi del tutto assenti le aree attrezzate e gli spazi per il verde pubblico.

A Nord verso l'entroterra si estende la Piana di Gela, separata dal centro storico dalla via Venezia lungo la quale sono distribuiti molti uffici commerciali e amministrativi oltre che sede dei carabinieri (gli altri uffici sono posti nel centro storico).

Accanto alle aree agricole, si è sviluppata una diffusa edilizia di tipo eminentemente abusivo (Albani Roccella, Setteferine, Margi ecc.), in cui talora mancano le opere di urbanizzazione primaria, le famiglie presentano condizioni socio - culturali per lo più medio basse: sono poche i nuclei che possono contare su un lavoro stabile e ben



remunerato e altrettanto poche sono le famiglie i cui componenti possiedono un titolo di scuola medio alto.

Altissimi anche i tassi di dispersione scolastica, si tratta di un'area dove la scuola o la parrocchia divengono unico centro di aggregazione socio-culturale.

Solo recentemente il Comune di Gela, ha apportato una pluralità d'interventi volti al risanamento di alcune zone (quartiere Santa Lucia, considerato uno dei quartieri a maggiore densità criminale).

L'estremità settentrionale del litorale è occupata da un'area turistica, in gran parte abusiva nella quale sono sorti numerosi stabilimenti balneari e bar, pizzerie, pub, ristoranti, trattorie, gelaterie, luoghi di ristoro a servizio di cittadini e turisti. All'estremo opposto sorge una vasta area naturalistica a ridosso della quale è collocata l'area industriale che ospita un impianto petrolchimico e aziende specializzate nel settore manifatturiero e delle costruzioni; tutt'intorno si sviluppa una vasta area agricola.

La città è dotata di due infrastrutture portuali, una delle quali è collocata nella prossimità dello stabilimento petrolchimico e consente il transito di grandi imbarcazioni mercantili (sebbene a causa di un progressivo deterioramento si sia dovuto spostare gran parte del transito merci sulla struttura portuale di Licata), mentre l'altra si trova in corrispondenza della città e costituisce il punto di approdo per le piccole imbarcazioni da diporto.

Gela per molto tempo è stata al centro di lotte di potere tra diverse famiglie per il controllo del territorio. Il diffuso abusivismo, la forte presenza della criminalizzata organizzata, il forte inquinamento ambientale legato alle attività della raffineria, la crisi occupazionale determinata dal ridimensionamento delle attività industriali, rendono il territorio gesei uno dei meno vivibili sul territorio regionale.

Negli ultimi anni si sono verificati molti attentati incendiari ai danni di auto e portoni, e intimidazioni contro le attività commerciali a fini estorsivi. A Gela vi è anche una microcriminalità diffusa, perlopiù minorile, specializzata nei furti nelle abitazioni e negli scippi e nelle rapine ai danni dei negozi.

Il comune in prima linea è impegnato, insieme a diverse associazioni civiche, in diversi progetti per l'educazione alla legalità e soprattutto, nella lotta anti-racket, che ha portato a un notevole aumento delle denunce.

Si chiede una sempre maggiore collaborazione educativa e di sostegno minorile alle famiglie, alla scuola, agli enti locali e alla società civile per la messa al centro di alcuni programmi statali di aiuto al ripristino della legalità e incentivi allo sviluppo.

### **Provincia di Enna**

La provincia ennese è collocata in posizione centrale all'interno dell'isola siciliana, ciononostante il territorio ha sempre vissuto una condizione di marginalità rispetto alle altre Provincie.

La maggior parte dei venti Comuni di cui è composta ha un'economia basata

sull'agricoltura, particolarmente sviluppata nell'area di Leonforte e Agira.

Nei dintorni dell'area di sviluppo industriale di Dittaino e nelle zone di Nicosia, Ragalbuto e Valguarnera, vi è un diffuso sistema di piccole e medie imprese di tipo artigianale.

Da sottolineare l'esistenza di due importanti aree archeologiche: l'antica città di Morgantina nel comune di Aidone e la Villa Romana del Casale a Piazza Armerina (seconda città della Provincia).

Nel territorio si stanno sviluppando aziende agrituristiche e aziende zootecniche.

La distribuzione demografica è caratterizzata da un forte accentramento della popolazione nei centri urbani a discapito delle campagne e una maggiore concentrazione nella parte centrale che risulta meglio collegata rispetto alle altre aree.

La Provincia vive da tempo una vera e propria crisi demografica per nulla compensata dalla popolazione straniera sul territorio, la cui presenza risulta ancora marginale (etnia rumena e marocchina concentrata soprattutto nel Capoluogo e a Piazza Armerina). La maggior parte degli uomini in età lavorativa è emigrata e il tenore di vita dei residenti è abbastanza modesto mentre paradossalmente Enna è una delle poche province in cui l'inserimento socio-lavorativo degli immigrati è superiore rispetto a quello della popolazione locale.

Per quanto relativo alla dotazione di strutture culturali e ricreative, all'offerta della rete di telecomunicazioni, alla dislocazione territoriale delle strutture per l'istruzione, si denuncia un gap non indifferente rispetto alle aree più sviluppate; tanto che i cittadini sono costretti a gravitare su Catania o sul nisseno per molti servizi.

Da un punto di vista sociale, si sottolinea la permanenza di valori identitari forti e si denota una certa coesione dei gruppi familiari.

Il tasso di scolarità sia primaria sia superiore si attesta su valori superiori all'ottanta per cento, in particolare nei Comuni in cui sono presenti gli istituti scolastici e nei centri maggiori.

Il fenomeno della disoccupazione è meno drammatico che in altre realtà, grazie a una crescita sostenuta del lavoro indipendente, nonostante il fenomeno della povertà e l'impovertimento generalizzato spingano molti a chiedere aiuto alle locali strutture diocesane.

Enna è la città più popolata e la sede dei principali servizi sociali e d'interesse pubblico. Il centro cittadino di natura medievale ospita le strutture che costituiscono l'offerta culturale del territorio: chiese, monumenti storici, biblioteca comunale e diversi musei che si snodano lungo Via Roma pullulante di boutique e negozi oltreché delle principali istituzioni e enti (provincia, comune, prefettura, teatro, banche e assicurazioni).

Il quartiere San Pietro, in cui sono presenti anche alcuni insediamenti di edifici popolari, è uno dei quartieri più antichi della città e anche uno dei più disagiati, dal punto

di vista urbanistico, con presenti molte strutture edilizie in pieno degrado. Insieme a S. Francesco – Lombardia, il quartiere sarà oggetto di una vasta opera di risanamento volta alla rivitalizzazione dell'intera area.

Tra i progetti previsti, oltre all'apertura di un centro polivalente, anche la sistemazione di alcuni i fabbricati, allo stato abbandonati o inutilizzati, per una futura assegnazione a giovani coppie e studenti.

Il territorio è andato via spopolandosi a favore della nuova zona d'espansione sviluppatasi a valle. Una realtà residenziale in cui solo negli ultimi tempi sono state portate a compimento le fondamentali strutture di collegamento viario interno e sono stati realizzati anche moderni impianti sportivi (piscina, palazzetto dello sport, aree attrezzate sportive). La zona ospita anche strutture a valenza culturale e sociale oltre che essere sede dei carabinieri e del presidio ospedaliero.

In quest'area sono dislocate anche moltissimi istituti scolastici, l'università e la maggior parte dei negozi al dettaglio e all'ingrosso. Nonostante ciò l'assetto urbanistico dell'insediamento è tuttora privo di un centro urbano vero e proprio, scarsa la presenza di centri sociali e luoghi d'incontri. In contrada Gentilomo si è insediata un'area artigianale.

A pochi chilometri dal centro, nella prossimità di una riserva naturale, si è sviluppata una vasta area di edilizia residenziale di tipo stagionale in cui sono sorti anche numerosi hotel e strutture ricettive.

Il tratto di Via Roma, che va da Piazza Balata a Piazza San Tommaso, è stato oggetto di numerosi danneggiamenti, quali il ribaltamento dei cassonetti della spazzatura.

Per contrastare gli episodi di vandalismo, il Comune ha previsto l'installazione del sistema di una trentina di videocamere e un rafforzamento dei presidi di sicurezza municipale sul territorio.

Tra i reati segnalati sono numerose le infrazioni in materia di smaltimento o di recupero di rifiuti speciali e pericolosi. Si segnala anche la presenza di una corrente mafiosa che ha scelto un basso profilo ma rimane operativa nel territorio, arrivando a condizionare pesantemente il tessuto economico e quello sociale. L'ausilio dei collaboratori di giustizia ha svelato l'esistenza di una struttura mafiosa articolata in diverse famiglie attive soprattutto a Enna e a Barrafranca (quest'ultima continua a mantenere il primato di piazza privilegiata nel commercio della droga).

Limitati casi di estorsione e danneggiamenti riconducibili essenzialmente alla criminalità organizzata, anche se il fenomeno risulta fortemente sottodimensionato a causa della connivenza da parte degli operatori economici che difficilmente sporgono denuncia.

Un controllo forte quello esercitato dalle cosche che, per assicurarsi notevoli fonti di finanziamento, spesso si spinge fino all'acquisizione totale delle attività commerciali e imprenditoriali. In questi ultimi mesi, gli interessi mafiosi sembrerebbero essere rivolti anche al business del rame ricavabile dai cavi elettrici.

Secondo le autorità per contrastare i fenomeni estorsivi si potrebbe ricorrere a forme di fiscalità agevolata per coloro che denunciano racket e usura, laddove in passato le stesse associazioni di categoria si sono attivate per l'apertura di uno Sportello della legalità che ha visto la promozione di azioni finalizzate a prevenire la corruzione e a offrire alle vittime del racket e dell'usura consulenza e assistenza completa per l'accesso a fondi e garanzie dello Stato.

Vi è poi, anche una microcriminalità di tipo diffuso operante soprattutto nel territorio di Leonforte; nell'ultimo periodo sono cresciuti i furti nelle abitazioni e i reati contro la persona, lo sfruttamento della prostituzione minorile e i reati contro il patrimonio.

Le autorità ritengono che la criminalità vada contrastata con la repressione e la promozione della cultura della legalità nelle scuole, coinvolgendo anche le famiglie. Occorre investire nell'istruzione e nella cultura, con benefici e ricadute positive anche nella convivenza civile, poiché laddove il livello di scolarizzazione è più basso, più forte è la presenza della delinquenza; interessante in tal senso l'attivazione di protocolli, tra le Forze dell'Ordine e il Ministero dell'Istruzione, per promuovere presso le scuole, attraverso una pluralità d'incontri, il valore della legalità economica, con particolare riferimento alla prevenzione dell'evasione fiscale e dello sperpero di risorse pubbliche, delle falsificazioni, della contraffazione, nonché dell'uso e dello spaccio di sostanze stupefacenti.

Vanno, peraltro anche, garantite occasioni di lavoro ai nostri giovani, che non devono emigrare.

Per quanto attiene al consumo delle sostanze stupefacenti, diffuso anche tra gli immigrati, si è registrato un incremento di consumo delle cosiddette droghe leggere dei giovani tra i sedici e i ventiquattro anni.

Il fenomeno delle dipendenze sembra inoltre essere acuito da forti disagi economici; in tal senso si cerca di agire attraverso l'inserimento dei soggetti a rischio nel mondo del lavoro sebbene; nei centri principali sono presenti alcune strutture per l'accoglienza e dei centri diurni.

### **Provincia di Messina**

La Provincia, sita nell'area Nord-orientale della Sicilia, è in gran parte costituita dalle catene montuose dei Monti Peloritani e da quella dei Nebrodi.

Messina, la terza provincia per densità di popolazione, è fortemente frammentata da un punto di vista amministrativo, sebbene degli oltre cento comuni che la compongono solo il 20% superi le cinquemila unità e la popolazione sia insediata prevalentemente nelle aree costiere tirreniche e ioniche, i cui centri sono nati come estensioni dei comuni montani, con una forte concentrazione nel territorio di Messina, Barcellona e Milazzo (con le attrattive che questa comporta, movimenti in entrata e concentrazione di popolazione a più alto titolo di studio e attività nel settore terziario).

Le condizioni nel mercato del lavoro appaiono perfettamente in linea con l'andamento medio della Sicilia, il carattere eminentemente montuoso della Provincia spiega la ripartizione delle forze lavoro.

La maggior parte degli occupati è impegnata nel settore dei servizi (in particolare amministrazione pubblica e istruzione, commercio e turismo), seguita da una presenza industriale legata all'attività cantieristica e energetica (Milazzo e area meridionale di Messina).

Nelle zone dell'entroterra e nelle aree agrumicole presenti nel litorale ionico c'è una marginale attività agricola legata alla cultura del nocciolo.

La viticoltura (abbastanza modesta) interessa principalmente i territori dei comuni di Barcellona Pozzo di Gotto, Santa Lucia del Mela e Lipari.

Negli ultimi anni però il comparto ha accusato un lento e costante declino imputabile principalmente ai crescenti costi di produzione costringendo parte degli imprenditori locali ad abbandonare il territorio.

Come per altre realtà del mezzogiorno, anche il territorio messinese è affetto da un progressivo invecchiamento della popolazione che ha i maggiori picchi nei comuni dell'entroterra inferiori ai duemila abitanti (e in particolare Novara di Sicilia).

La Provincia presenta, soprattutto negli ultimi anni, la tendenza a perdere popolazione a favore dei comuni confinanti o anche di territori più distanti, nonché altri fenomeni rilevanti a livello sociale come una particolare flessione della popolazione di età giovanile.

Se la popolazione ha subito una leggera flessione demografica determinata da un saldo naturale negativo, a Messina si registra una quota di stranieri residenti maggiore rispetto alla media regionale composta da un'ampia comunità asiatica, romena e marocchina; l'incidenza è maggiore nei comprensori di Taormina e delle isole Eolie; la maggior parte dei residenti lamenta la mancata pianificazione di politiche d'integrazione degli immigrati.

Le donne sono impegnate nel settore delle pulizie e della cura alla persona mentre la componente maschile costituisce spesso la bassa manovalanza per le attività edili e agricole o è occupata nel settore del commercio ambulante.

Il tasso di occupazione è di poco superiore alla media regionale con un reddito medio lievemente inferiore che registra le punte più basse nei Comuni dei Nebrodi, a conferma della disparità tra le zone dell'entroterra e quelle costiere, disparità che afferiscono anche la condizione socio-culturale e la dotazione infrastrutturale e dei servizi (indubbiamente inferiore nell'area nebroida).

Il litorale tirrenico, presenta un livello alto di conurbazione dei centri urbani dislocati su di esso che risultano pertanto indistinguibili e separati a tratti solo dai numerosi agglomerati artigianali e industriali che incidono negativamente sui flussi turistici locali.

I servizi, concentrati nei centri urbani principali, sono ridotti o assenti nelle zone limitrofe, strutturalmente fuse a tali centri; le infrastrutture principali dislocate sulla costa,

penalizzando i collegamenti con i paesi dell'entroterra.

In merito all'offerta socio-assistenziale e ai servizi territoriali sebbene negli ultimi anni si stia realizzando una redistribuzione delle risorse dal capoluogo press i centri intermedi (Patti, Milazzo, Sant'agata di Militello, Barcellona e Capo d'Orlando), le realtà territoriale interne rimangono in una condizione sostanzialmente di marginalità.

Il vero punto di forza di Messina, riguarda la forte presenza in città del terzo settore sviluppato soprattutto nel campo dei servizi sociali, cui si affianca la realtà del mondo dell'associazionismo.

Il messinese presenta grossi problemi in tema di sicurezza ambientale, larghe parti dell'entroterra e delle zone costiere sono soggette a grossi rischi idrogeologici (molti centri sono stati ricostruiti nelle zone a valle, mentre altri sono stati fortemente colpiti in passato da gravi episodi franosi), molte zone balneari inoltre necessitano d'interventi di recupero delle spiagge affette da un fenomeno di erosione, oltre alle caratteristiche del territorio; la problematica è acuita da una pluralità di fattori correlati all'abbandono dei territori agricoli, alla frequenza degli attentati incendiari che da anni devasta l'area de Nebrodi, alla realizzazione d'infrastrutture che hanno profondamente modificato l'assetto territoriale e a un generale disinteresse per le politiche di messa in sicurezza delle zone a rischio da parte delle Autorità locali.

In tema di reati, Messina è considerata come una delle province più sicure a livello regionale, sebbene le indagini delle autorità evidenzino l'esistenza di una forte commistione tra figure istituzionali e fenomeni mafiosi (le azioni a contrasto si avvalgono non solo dei risultati delle indagini giudiziarie ma anche e soprattutto della confisca dei patrimoni illeciti e della preziosa collaborazione derivante dal pentitismo). Crescono percentualmente i reati di corruzione e di concussione e anche dei crimini economici.

Una tragica piaga, che ogni anno fa moltissime vittime, è rappresentata dagli innumerevoli omicidi e lesioni colpose, derivanti da violazione delle norme del codice di circolazione stradale; in sensibile crescita anche gli infortuni sul lavoro che coinvolgono soprattutto la componente lavorativa straniera.

I reati informatici sono quasi raddoppiati e si registra un notevole incremento dei furti d'auto e di quelli in abitazione e in misura minore delle rapine; è aumentato anche il fenomeno delle lottizzazioni abusive, sebbene il fenomeno della speculazione edilizia non abbia assunto le componenti esasperate comuni alle aree costiere delle altre province regionali; il territorio a maggior rischio ambientale risulta quello dell'area industriale costiera del distretto mamertino.

E ancora, il quoziente di criminalità minorile testimonia valori superiori alla media regionale, in tal senso interessante per la promozione del concetto della legalità, sono i progetti portati avanti da alcuni istituti scolastici volti alla sensibilizzazione delle fasce più giovani.

I reati di violenza sessuale continuano a emergere sotto la spinta di un'opera di sensibilizzazione condotta dai mass media e dalle associazioni locali.

La Provincia di Messina può essere suddivisa in alcune macroaree che hanno aspetti territoriali e socio-economici per certi aspetti comuni.

### **Area metropolitana**

*Alì, Alì Terme, Antillo, Barcellona Pozzo di Gotto, Casalvecchio Siculo, Castelmola, Castoreale, Condro, Fiumedinisi, Forza d'Agro, Furci Siculo, Furnari, Gaggi, Gallodoro, Giardini Naxos, Gualtieri Sicaminò, Itala, Leni, Letojanni, Limina, Lipari, Malfa, Mandanici Merì, Messina, Milazzo, Monforte San Giorgio, Mongiuffi Melia, Nizza di Sicilia, Pace del Mela, Pagliara, Roccafiiorita, Roccalumera, Roccavaldina, Rometta, S. Marina di Salina, San Filippo del Mela, San Pier Niceto, Sant'Alessio Siculo, Santa Lucia del Mela, Santa Teresa di Riva, Saponara, Savoca, Scaletta Zanclea, Spadafora, Taormina, Terme Vigliatore, Torregrotta, Valdina, Venetico, Villafranca Tirrena*

Il territorio comprende oltre al capoluogo, circa cinquanta comuni, ricadenti nell'area costiera tirrenica a ridosso del messinese fino alla cittadina di Falcone, nell'antistante arcipelago delle Eolie, nell'area costiera ionica e nelle colline dell'entroterra a ridosso dei monti Peloritani.

Le dinamiche demografiche evidenziano una tendenza all'esodo dai centri dell'area Peloritana a favore del territorio costiero, all'interno di questo contesto i centri più popolosi sono, oltre al capoluogo, Barcellona Pozzo di Gotto, Milazzo, Taormina e Giardini Naxos.

Nello specifico, Messina assorbe circa il 40% della popolazione provinciale, sebbene anche a causa di una certa inadeguatezza abitativa si noti una certa mobilità interna verso i due centri urbani di Barcellona e Milazzo, con popolazione residente superiore alle 30.000 unità.

Messina rappresenta un polo attrattivo soprattutto per l'offerta di servizi sociali e amministrativi (si ricordi che tra l'altro la Città è sede di un polo universitario che possiede un campus con all'interno una delle cittadelle sportive universitarie più grandi d'Italia, di numerose biblioteche e di ospedali il cui bacino d'utenza arriva a interessare anche i comuni della Calabria meridionale); l'estremità meridionale e l'area della Falcata sono invece specializzate in attività di tipo industriale legate alla cantieristica navale e alle attività militari. Si record inoltre che il porto di Messina è il crocevia dei traffici e della mobilità tra la Sicilia e l'area continentale e vengono inoltre esercitate funzioni a carattere turistico.

La localizzazione delle zone industriali nella periferia Sud di Messina, a ridosso del tracciato ferroviario, non ha permesso lo sviluppo di una vera specializzazione industriale, a causa dell'inadeguatezza delle infrastrutture portuali; tali aree appaiono oggi, vocate a

un uso funzionale differente legato al terziario e in particolare le attività commerciale.

Il tessuto urbano attuale non è il risultato di un'espansione del centro storico, ma di un'aggregazione di centri uniti da una forte tradizione identitaria.

Il nucleo più antico è fortemente legato al porto, nella cui zona sono distribuiti i principali servizi, mentre piazza Cairoli demarca il punto centrale tra l'area storica e la nuova espansione verso Sud, dalla stessa si diparte la principale arteria stradale (viale San Martino) che ospita i negozi più importanti.

Si è inoltre assistito al fenomeno dell'incremento dell'iniziativa privata per la costruzione di seconde case a carattere stagionale che ha, in maniera particolare, gravato sull'area dei laghi tra Ganzirri e Torre Faro.

La periferia meridionale e in particolar modo le aree aiacenti ai torrenti San Filippo e Zaffaria, è stata contraddistinta da insediamenti di edilizia pubblica per i ceti popolari, caratterizzata da bassi livelli di standard urbanistici che hanno accentuato la già carente dotazione comunale di servizi al cittadino favorendo l'emergere di situazioni di degrado.

Nonostante i lavori di riqualificazione che hanno interessato diverse aree urbane, il tessuto urbano di Messina risulta fortemente frammentato, ai quartieri di tipo residenziale perlopiù sviluppatosi lungo la circonvallazione che collega la zona Nord della città, si alternano le zone in cui sorgono ancora le baracche costruite in occasione del terremoto che nei primi del novecento colpì la città, come nel caso della centrale via Cannizzaro e del circostante popoloso quartiere Gravitelli, uno dei tanti quartieri a rischio di Messina.

Da aree in cui si concentrano agenzie educative, strutture Universitarie e agenzie private che hanno sviluppato dei centri d'interesse per varie fasce di età e da un tessuto socioeconomico medio-alto, si passa a zone di espansione affette da un grosso disordine urbanistico, con una dotazione di servizi sottodimensionata e grossi problemi di tipo sociale e bassi livelli di scolarità (quartieri di Giostra e del quartiere satellite di Santa Lucia sopra le Contesse, di Villaggio Adalgisio o Bordonaro a Sud della città.)

Bordonaro era un antico villaggio cui nel tempo si sono aggiunti numerosi complessi edilizi e residence che ne hanno cambiato la fisionomia e in cui alcune strutture pubbliche sono abbandonate al degrado e al vandalismo, mentre in altre aree il degrado si associa al fenomeno delle discariche a cielo aperto.

Queste zone, investite da forti trasformazioni economiche e sociali e dalla nascita di complessi edilizi in cemento di tipo anonimo, hanno una composizione demografica abbastanza eterogenea sebbene si possa evidenziare una larga concentrazione con famiglie spesso mono - genitoriali con forti problemi occupazionali e in taluni casi fortemente disgregate; le politiche sociali attivate dal Comune hanno portato all'attivazione di alcuni centri d'aggregazione.

Tuttavia l'offerta culturale rimane ancora marginale, spesso legata alla presenza delle associazioni di tipo religioso, mentre in relazione alla dotazione delle strutture scolastiche,



su tutto il territorio sono dislocati istituti comprensivi o superiori e vi è una buona distribuzione dei presidi di sicurezza; ben più modesto invece appare il numero delle attività commerciali.

Negli ultimi anni si sono verificati molti furti in appartamento, accentuati anche dalla crisi e spesso perpetrati da bande improvvisate, in maggior parte locali ma anche di etnia europea o extra europea, mentre il fenomeno delle rapine appare sostanzialmente stazionario, grazie alla presenza d'impianti di videosorveglianza su tutto il territorio.

Per quanta riguarda la fenomenologia estorsiva, un grande lavoro l'hanno fatto le associazioni anti racket ma il numero delle denunce è ancora estremamente basso.

Per garantire maggiore sicurezza nelle aree maggiormente frequentate dalla movida messinese, con particolare attenzione all'uso di sostanze stupefacenti e eventuale abuso di sostanze alcoliche e per migliorare il contesto socio-territoriale in cui lavorano le imprese, è stato previsto l'inserimento di telecamere di videosorveglianza nel territorio del centro storico e specificatamente negli spazi circostanti via Garibaldi e Via Vittorio Emanuele in cui sono stati creati nuovi spazi di aggregazione o ancora nella zona del porto naturale, in cui con una certa frequenza si verificano furti, piccoli traffici di droga, disturbo della quiete pubblica ma anche fenomeni di vandalismo.

Specifici servizi di controllo del territorio sono stati eseguiti, nei fine settimana, nel centro storico e nelle zone limitrofe dagli agenti delle Volanti congiuntamente a quelli della Sezione di Polizia Stradale.

Le relazioni con il capoluogo dei paesi della zona costiera e dell'entroterra sono frequenti, sebbene negli ultimi anni si sia cercato di promuovere un certo decentramento presso i centri maggiori di Milazzo, Barcellona e Taormina che svolgono un ruolo di polarità commerciali intermedie.

Di notevole importanza sono gli agglomerati industriali A.S.I. tra Milazzo e Villafranca con la Raffineria mediterranea, il Polo Petrolifero, la centrale elettrica a San Filippo del Mela e il Polo artigianale (ex Pirelli). L'aziende agricole si estendono prevalentemente tra Barcellona Pozzo di Gotto e Santa Lucia del Mela; il settore della pesca occupa un ruolo determinante nell'economia del comune di Milazzo.

Le industrie sono presenti soprattutto nell'area costiera tirrenica orientale compresa tra i territori di Milazzo e Villafranca, caratterizzata da una forte antropizzazione dei centri urbani, maggiore proprio nella città mamertina.

La città di **Milazzo**, ben inserita nel sistema della mobilità interna grazie alla vicinanza con il circuito autostradale, è un polo petrolifero e energetico di grande rilievo. Seconda zona portuale della Provincia è base per i flussi turistici per le Eolie e anche sede di numerosi istituti scolastici inferiori e superiori.

Tale zona ha gravissimi problemi d'inquinamento ambientale che coinvolgono anche la limitrofa valle del **Niceto** e valle della **Mela**, caratterizzata dall'inquinamento legato alla

commistione tra aziende agricole (florovivaismo nella prima e orticoltura e agropastorale nelle restanti) e insediamenti industriali in prossimità delle aree costiere. Nonostante i numerosi fondi stanziati, ancora non sono stati effettuati interventi sostanziosi di bonifica e la situazione appare ulteriormente aggravata dal fenomeno di deposito di rifiuti incontrollati sul territorio demaniale.

Trattasi di un'area caratterizzata, paradossalmente, da una forte disoccupazione giovanile, determinata dal fatto che non vi è coincidenza tra i profili professionali richiesti e le figure presenti. Per molti, inoltre, la presenza dell'indotto industriale è vissuta come un ostacolo a quella che dovrebbe essere la vocazione naturale del territorio ossia quella turistica.

Milazzo e i territori limitrofi sono interessati dagli stessi fenomeni, alcuni più accentuati nel territorio di Milazzo, altri nei territori del Mela e del Niceto: la disoccupazione, la droga, la disarticolazione dei servizi di grande interesse, la crisi delle attività economiche, i flussi migratori verso il Nord, la dispersione scolastica tra i ceti più bassi, la presenza di extracomunitari portatori di bisogni gravi, la disgregazione delle famiglie, la perdita del valore della sussidiarietà, e l'allontanamento dalle Istituzioni.

In termini di esercizi alberghieri la Provincia si colloca al primo posto in Sicilia e gran parte dei flussi turistici si concentra nell'aria di Giardini e delle isole Eolie.

Mentre l'area orientale della costa tirrenica e l'area compresa tra Sant'Alessio e Scaletta sulla costa ionica è caratterizzata dall'insufficienza delle strutture ricettive e da una presenza di seconde case spesso di scarsa qualità; ben diversa è l'offerta del polo turistico di Taormina che ha esteso la propria capacità attrattiva anche nei confronti dei territori limitrofi, di Giardini Naxos e Letojanni, zone costiere fortemente urbanizzate in cui si concentrano moltissime strutture alberghiere, pub, bar e residence stagionali.

Nello specifico Giardini è dotata di una piccola struttura portuale che ha puntato sul turismo di diporto, mentre il lungomare di Letojanni è rinomato per la presenza di numerose spiagge attrezzate.

I paesi della zona ionica hanno una dimensione estremamente modesta, solo il Comune di **Taormina** raggiunge le diecimila unità, i Comuni hanno uno scarso livello di attrazione residenziale e una forte fuoriuscita della popolazione, tali aree presentano alti tassi d'istruzione specialmente per quanto relativo alla componente maschile, impegnata eminentemente nel settore terziario con una forte prevalenza nel commercio e nell'area del servizio pubblico. I centri ionici gravitano su Taormina e Santa Teresa di Riva per i servizi socio territoriali di base, preziosa in tal senso l'iniziativa privata che ha permesso lo sviluppo di azioni di confinamento con i primi a favore enti locali in tutta una serie di aree problematiche (disabili, minori a rischio, senza fissa dimora). La distribuzione delle attività economiche si basa sul commercio e sul turismo nella zona costiera e sull'agricoltura nelle zone dell'entroterra.

Vi è un notevole tasso di disoccupazione legato alla stagionalità del flusso turistico che colpisce soprattutto la popolazione femminile (ciò vale in particolare per i territori limitrofi a Taormina). Emergono anche nuovi fenomeni di tipo disgregativo che investono le famiglie.

Nonostante, quest'area sia considerata come apparentemente tranquilla, non si può negare l'esistenza di una pluralità di fattori perturbativi dell'ordine pubblico; dal problema dell'accattonaggio che coinvolge le aree in cui si concentrano i turisti a quello della droga che investe tutto il comprensorio; annosa è la problematica legata alla diffusa cementificazione e al dissesto idrogeologico che, in passato ha colpito in maniera estremamente grave i territori di **Scaletta e Giampilieri** e che in misura minore coinvolge l'area di **Giardini Naxos** e i territori circostanti.

L'altra area a vocazione eminentemente turistica è rappresentata dalle isole Eolie che, a partire degli anni settanta hanno vissuto un vero e proprio boom economico accompagnato da forme di speculazione edilizia. Ancora scarsi sono i servizi e le infrastrutture. L'agricoltura ha uno spiccato valore nell'isola di Salina e è in progressivo abbandono nelle altre.

**Lipari e Salina** sono le più centrali e le più prossime tra loro e più in generale le più popolate, anche quest'area seppur marginalmente soffre di una condizione di disagio poiché il tenore di vita della maggior parte della popolazione risulta medio - basso a causa di precariato a lungo termine e da un'emergenza abitativa legata al caro degli affitti.

Anche il livello d'istruzione non è particolarmente elevato anche a causa di una certa discontinuità dei servizi scolastici legata alla condizione di pendolarismo degli insegnanti (spesso costretti a rimanere sulla terraferma durante il periodo invernale).

Sia Salina sia Lipari offrono un servizio scolastico di base e nel Comune maggiore è presente anche un istituto tecnico superiore.

L'offerta dei servizi socio-territoriali privilegia il settore degli anziani con la presenza di alcune strutture residenziali e ricreative a essi dedicate. Preoccupante appare il fenomeno della dipendenza degli alcolici e dalle droghe soprattutto nella fascia degli adolescenti, che trova una spiegazione nell'assenza di spazi d'aggregazione adeguati.

Il controllo del territorio è assicurato dalla presenza di una sede dei Carabinieri e dalla Guardia di Finanza (localizzate a Lipari) ma più in generale si tratta di una comunità tranquilla perturbata di tanto in tanto da atti di delinquenza minorile di poco conto.

I centri più interni, a ridosso dell'area Peloritana, offrono ancora una qualità di paesaggio complessivo di particolare pregevolezza legato alla tradizione agricola.

Da un punto di vista sociale, si riscontra un maggiore grado di coesione delle famiglie e l'assenza di forti fenomeni di degrado sociale.

Sul versante della criminalità organizzata il territorio di Messina e di quella che viene definita invece fascia jonica è indubbiamente meno virulento rispetto alle aree tirreniche,

in fase di transizione tra l'attività predatoria legata alle attività estorsive che colpiscono eminentemente gli esercenti anche quelli più piccoli e i cantieri edilizi e al traffico di stupefacenti i cui proventi vengono spesso riutilizzati per l'investimento in alcune zone considerate tranquille quali come Taormina e Giardini Naxos (il traffico è particolarmente attivo nelle fascia meridionale del capoluogo), a una fase di maggiore tranquillità legata al riciclaggio e all'usura.

Diverse le caratteristiche dell'area barcellonese, assimilabile strutturalmente alle cosche del Palermitano, che è arrivata negli anni a assumere un ruolo totalizzante sul controllo dell'economia e del settore degli appalti pubblici (grandi opere pubbliche e insediamenti turistico - alberghieri), attraverso sodalizi con esponenti politici e dell'imprenditoria locali e con una strategia del terrore che non esita a ricorrere a l'omicidio e all'intimidazione incendiaria.

**Barcellona** è un grosso polo commerciale caratterizzato da un tessuto produttivo di piccole e medie imprese prevalentemente a conduzione familiare e a carattere artigianale, a parte pochi esempi d'insediamenti industriali, mentre i territori limitrofi sono dediti a forme di agricoltura.

L'economia si basa sul settore terziario, come evincibile dalla presenza di numerosi servizi pubblici, tra i quali l'ospedale, il tribunale, scuole di ogni ordine e grado e numerose associazioni culturali.

I tassi d'istruzione sono superiori alla media regionale, sebbene il fenomeno della dispersione scolastica cominci a assumere un peso crescente (in buona parte comunque riguarda soprattutto le famiglie di stranieri).

Tutto il territorio è carente di strutture idonee per l'aggregazione e la socializzazione. Il Comune è dotato di strutture sportive e spazi verdi ma più in generale l'offerta dei servizi ludico-ricreativi culturali non può ritenersi adeguata. In questo contesto cresce la delinquenza minorile che si manifesta in reati contro la persona, contro l'ordine pubblico e il patrimonio.

Anche il consumo di sostanze stupefacenti sta avendo una grossa diffusione, il fenomeno secondo le autorità sembrerebbe alimentato da alcune condizioni specifiche quali l'indigenza e la disoccupazione. In tal senso oltre le iniziative promosse dal locale Sert, utile è il contributo dei programmi di sensibilizzazione sviluppati dalle scuole.

Nell'ultimo quinquennio la percentuale di stranieri è pressoché raddoppiata accanto alla presenza albanese e a quella componente (quest'ultima caratterizzata, da nuclei familiari che svolgono attività dedite al commercio) si registra una forte comunità Marocchina.

Da sottolineare la lenta diffusione del meretricio e la tratta degli esseri umani che viene messa in atto da gruppi di malavitosi anche italiani ai danni delle donne.

Si è osservato che i processi di marginalizzazione della popolazione immigrata sono

fondamentalmente legati alla presenza di situazioni di povertà lavorativa, abitativa e di mancato accesso ai servizi.

Le quote deboli della popolazione immigrata sono soprattutto gli ultimi arrivati, spesso clandestini, disoccupati o lavoratori saltuari per i quali quindi è più difficile avviare un processo d'inclusione e inserimento sociale. Invece quando si registrano tempi d'insediamento lunghi e reti sociali «forti» sono possibili processi di fuori uscita dalla marginalità sociale.

### **Area dei Nebrodi e territori limitrofi**

*Acque dolci, Calcara Li Fusi, Basico, Brolo, Capizzi, Capo d'Orlando, Caprileone, Caronia, Castel Di Lucio, Castell'Umberto, Cesarò, Ficarra, Floresta, Fondachelli-fantina, Francavilla di Sicilia, Frazzanò, Galati- Mamertino, Gioiosa Marea, Graniti, Librizzi, Longi, Malvagna, Mazzarra Sant'Andrea, Militello Rosmarino, Mistretta, Mirto, Moio Alcantara, Montalbano Elicona, Motta Camastra, Motta d'Affermo, Montagna Reale, Naso, Novara di Sicilia, Oliveri, Patti, Pettineo, Piraino, Raccuja, Reitano, Roccella Valdemone, Rodi Milici, S. Agata Militello, S. Angelo di Brolo, S. Fratello, S. Marco d'Alunzio, S. Pietro Patti, S. Teodoro, S. Salvatore di Fitalia, S. Stefano di Camastra, San Teodoro, Santa Domenica Vittoria, Sinagra, Tortorici Tusa e Ucria.*

L'area si presenta estremamente diversificata, con un territorio si che estende dalla costa del versante tirrenico occidentale della Provincia di Messina verso l'interno dell'entroterra siciliano, si consideri che in questa zona vi sono circa diciannove comuni soggetti a vincolo naturalistico, il cui territorio ricade nell'area protetta del Parco dei nebrodi (*Acqueolci, Alcara Li Fusi, Capizzi, Caronia, Cesarò, Floresta, Galati Mamertino, Longi, Militello Rosmarino, Mistretta, Raccuja, Sant'Agata Militello, Santa Domenica Vittoria, San Fratello, San Marco d'Alunzio, Santo Stefano di Camastra, San Teodoro, Tortorici, Ucria*).

Le aree interne sono rimaste isolate mentre la popolazione ha trovato uno sbocco a livello economico e sociale nelle zone del litorale tirrenico. Trattasi di comuni montani di piccole dimensioni, che vivono un processo di spopolamento e che gravitano intorno ai centri costieri più popolosi per la maggior parte dei servizi amministrativi e scolastici.

Sono proprio le zone costiere, quelle soggette a una maggiore pressione antropica, fenomeno particolarmente rilevante soprattutto durante i periodi estivi a causa dell'incremento dei flussi turistici che si concentrano tra le aree di S. Agata di Militello e Capo d'Orlando.

Per quanto riguarda il patrimonio artistico - culturale dell'area, nonostante la presenza di centri storici e di monumenti di rilievo, non si registrano che poche azioni significative mirate alla valorizzazione sia dal punto di vista del recupero volto alla fruizione, sia dal punto di vista della programmazione e della gestione anche a causa del fatto che molti

Comuni non è dotata di strumenti urbanistici locali.

Il patrimonio edile di quest'area è esposto al degrado legato all'abbandono, da segnalare inoltre che alcuni centri sono stati successivamente riedificati nella aree a valle (es. Acqueolci, San Fratello, Santo Stefano di Camastra, ecc.) a causa della franosità del terreno. Tutti i Comuni collinari legati alla costa tirrenica denunciano gravi deficienze di accesso e di collegamento.

L'economia si basa essenzialmente sul settore terziario e agricolo (in particolare nell'entroterra anche da coltivazioni di nocciole e attività pastorizie) mentre le imprese si concentrano nei centri di Capo d'Orlando e Sant'Agata di Militello, aziende specializzate nel settore manifatturiero e nella lavorazione, di legno e metalli; da segnalare l'interessante concentrazione di attività di produzione e commercializzazione di prodotti in ceramica nel comune di S. Stefano di Camastra. Tusa è famosa per il suo patrimonio archeologico.

Sul piano dei livelli d'istruzione, a fronte di una contenuta diffusione del fenomeno dell'analfabetismo, relativamente buona è la percentuale di diplomati, sebbene il maggior numero di scuole medie (inferiori e superiori) si concentri nei centri maggiori e costringendo gli studenti a un continuo pendolarismo.

Nel complesso il territorio costiero offre la maggiore risposta ai bisogni dell'intera popolazione, con una dotazione di servizi socio territoriali che risultano pressoché assenti nei Comuni più interni (diversamente da Mistretta che rappresenta la realtà più strutturata tra i paesi dei Nebrodi).

Nel territorio si evince la scarsa presenza di strutture residenziali a gestione pubblica per anziani compensato dalla presenza di strutture private e dalla solidarietà familiare, ancora molto forte in tale territorio. Purtroppo in espansione è l'utilizzo da parte dei giovani dell'uso di sostanze stupefacenti e di alcool. Il contesto culturale soprattutto nei Comuni montani dove difficilmente facilitano, altresì, l'approccio all'alcool fin dalla giovane età. Dall'analisi dei fabbisogni emergono le seguenti priorità: - carenza di una rete di servizi flessibili in grado di promuovere spazi di conciliazione tra i tempi di lavoro e la vita familiare.

Si denota la presenza massiccia d'immigrati non regolari, provenienti da paesi extracomunitari, l'esigenza di creare centri di aggregazione in modo da gestire il popolamento della costa favorendo la socializzazione tra individui provenienti da realtà diverse anche se appartenenti alla stessa realtà territoriale.

Il lavoro a domicilio, non regolarizzato e a volte sfruttato, trova diffusione nel territorio del Distretto e più in generale sui Nebrodi.

Uno spazio difficile da quantificare è poi occupato dal lavoro nero che trasversalmente interessa tutti i settori produttivi e tutte le classi di età.

Di tutto il territorio, la zona più disagiata è quella dei Comuni dei Nebrodi al confine con le province di Palermo e Enna; zona a alta densità mafiosa che risente chiaramente

delle influenze di quella del palermitano e in cui un ruolo fondamentale nel rispetto della legalità è esercitato dalla presenza degli uffici giudiziari di Mistretta e delle Forze dell'Ordine a essi collegati.

Trattasi, tuttavia, di un contesto sociale e geografico caratterizzato da molti deficit strutturali e economici: la zona del mistrettese è, infatti, una zona quasi prettamente montana; sprovvista d'idonee vie di comunicazione è situata al confine delle province di Messina, Enna e Palermo e condivide con gli stessi gli interessi delle famiglie mafiose che gravitano intorno al mondo degli appalti pubblici, alle estorsioni ma anche a fenomeni di lupara bianca.

Si evidenzia, anche se non in maniera diffusa, un fenomeno di sfruttamento della prostituzione che coinvolge alcune strutture private e un bacino d'utenza medio alto.

L'attività di ordinamento tra i diversi servizi sociali ha portato all'emersione di fenomeni di violenza domestica che sembrano essere in crescita.

Gli inquirenti sono, inoltre, costantemente impegnati la tutela del territorio, attraverso un controllo costante sull'abusivismo edilizio e nel contrasto agli abusi sessuali; da sottolineare l'attività di prevenzione degli incendi boschivi che spesso si sviluppano in tutto il territorio.

### **La provincia di Siracusa**

Il siracusano occupa l'estremità sud-orientale dell'Isola, tra Catania e Ragusa; nelle aree dell'entroterra sorgono numerosi nuclei urbani di piccola e media dimensione, molti dei quali a ridosso dei monti Iblei, caratterizzati da consistenti processi di forte contrazione e invecchiamento della popolazione (Buccheri, Buscemi, Canicatti, Bagni, Cassaro, Ferla, Palazzolo Acreide e Sortino), mentre altri, più strutturati, hanno una spiccata vocazione agricola e zootecnica (Lentini, Carlentini e Francoforte).

Vi sono anche alcune aree di pregevole importanza da un punto di vista storico e architettonico che ricadono nella cosiddetta valle di Noto, un circuito turistico e culturale riconosciuto come patrimonio universale dall'Unesco. Fortemente in crescita, in anni recenti, lo sviluppo del settore delle energie rinnovabili: nel comprensorio insistono, infatti, molti parchi eolici; la Provincia possiede anche un ricco territorio costiero.

L'area meridionale, tra Noto e Pachino, è caratterizzata da una prevalenza d'insediamenti cittadini di modeste dimensioni, che, recentemente, hanno avuto una significativa espansione anche grazie alle risorse turistiche legate alle piccole e medie imprese sorte intorno alla zona archeologica di Eloro e alle aree balneari di Avola, Noto e della penisola della Maddalena (a Sud di Siracusa).

Tale territorio è interessato anche da una fiorente agricoltura, basata sulle colture ortofrutticole che occupano l'area costiera di Pachino e le zone circostanti del borgo peschereccio di Portopalo.

I principali problemi di queste zone sono rappresentati dai fenomeni derivanti da un eccessivo sfruttamento del territorio collegato alla presenza intensiva della serricoltura, ma anche dall'abusivismo edilizio. Il processo d'inurbamento ha visto il diffondersi di una pluralità di edificazioni che negli anni recenti hanno interessato molti tratti della costa.

Si tratta prevalentemente di seconde case, utilizzate nella stagione estiva, che contribuiscono a produrre un deterioramento paesaggistico, al quale si aggiunge anche quello ambientale, dovuto alla mancanza di opere di urbanizzazione primaria.

L'area costiera a Nord, segnata da una forte antropizzazione, oltre a accogliere i sobborghi dei nuclei urbani di maggiore grandezza, come Augusta e la stessa Siracusa, è definita dall'alternanza d'insediamenti industriali (la più parte dei quali, legata alla presenza dell'indotto petrolchimico) in prossimità di Melilli e di Priolo, dalla presenza di alcune aree archeologicamente importanti come Megara, delle aree portuali minori e infine, dai nuovi insediamenti per attività artigianali, commerciali e ricreative, realizzati nella zona di espansione recente della città di Siracusa, avvenuta a Nord.

Negli ultimi anni, si è innescato un processo di urbanizzazione di tipo residenziale che, ha investito questa parte del territorio, perlopiù costituito di case isolate, sebbene siano stati realizzati anche alcuni interventi di tipo più strutturato che, per esempio, hanno portato alla costruzione del villaggio turistico di Brucoli.

I centri a ridosso delle zone costiere presentano una maggiore dotazione infrastrutturale oltre che una migliore offerta dei servizi socio-territoriali, con una maggiore concentrazione nel comune Capoluogo per quanto riguarda le attività amministrative e culturali.

Le zone montane, come per la maggior parte dei comuni dell'entroterra siciliano, appaiono esposte a una condizione di abbandono e degrado determinato dell'isolamento (acuito da una mobilità non sempre adeguata) e da una pluralità di altri fattori, dalla crisi dell'economia agricola ai problemi relativi all'assetto idrogeologico del territorio.

La distribuzione territoriale dei titoli di studio appare sostanzialmente omogenea, seppure con una maggiore percentuale di laureati e diplomati nel Comune capoluogo e una maggiore presenza di alfabeti e analfabeti nei comuni interni e in quelli a Sud, si tratta di livelli ancora medio bassi spiegabili plausibilmente a causa della scarsa dotazione della Provincia da un punto di vista dell'offerta di formazione superiore e specialistica che giustificherebbe la bassa scolarizzazione in giovane età e la bassa percentuale di diplomati e laureati. In molti comuni del territorio sono assenti gli istituti scolastici superiori di secondo grado, determinando un grave disagio per le fasce giovanili costrette ai viaggi giornalieri.

In termini di criminalità, si sottolinea la presenza di una consistente componente mafiosa, radicata su tutto il territorio (in particolare nel Capoluogo, nel sistema Lentinese e nelle zone agricole a Sud) e attiva soprattutto nel traffico di sostanza stupefacenti ma che non disdegna neanche di esercitare il proprio controllo anche sul mercato agricolo (Ispica



e Pachino), frequenti anche le estorsioni (soprattutto a Lenitini) e in crescita i casi legati all'usura a danno dei piccoli imprenditori. I fenomeni di microcriminalità sono legati ai furti (abitazioni e rame) e alle rapine (banche e uffici postali) la cui consistenza non è comunque ancora tale da generare un vero allarme sociale.

Per quanto riguarda il fenomeno dello sfruttamento della prostituzione, esso è, in parte, appannaggio di soggetti pregiudicati locali, non legati alla criminalità organizzata, ma anche di rumeni attivi nel traffico della tratta delle donne.

La questura ha predisposto numerose azioni preventive, con la collaborazione di diverse forze, per assicurare un controllo più capillare del territorio mediante la costituzione di posti di blocco sulle principali strade statali e provinciali, si è proceduto, inoltre, al controllo di persone sottoposte a misure cautelari.

La Camera di Commercio di Siracusa, al fine di garantire condizioni di maggiore sicurezza e per prevenire il rischio del compimento di furti, rapine e altri atti illeciti da parte di terzi, è impegnata in progetti di sostegno economico volto all'implementazione di sistemi di video allarme e video-sorveglianza presso le aziende locali.

A Siracusa, Augusta e Noto sono inoltre presenti alcune strutture penitenziarie che vivono una condizione di forte difficoltà legata alla questione del sovraffollamento delle carceri e alla carenza del personale addetto alla sicurezza.

Siracusa, tradizionalmente legata all'allevamento e all'agricoltura, negli anni ha vissuto un processo di forte industrializzazione legato all'inserimento del polo petrolchimico di Priolo. Una vasta area commerciale si è sviluppata nella zona occidentale e da non dimenticare che tutto il territorio (ma in particolare la zona del centro storico) è interessato da un flusso turistico di tipo culturale legato alla presenza del barocco e di beni archeologici di notevole pregio.

Il territorio di Siracusa è suddiviso in circoscrizioni, ciascuna delle quali conserva una certa autonomia, che si estendono dalla terraferma fino all'isola di Ortigia che rappresenta il centro più antico della città, il cui sviluppo ha mantenuto pressoché intatto l'assetto urbanistico tradizionale di tipo medioevale, caratterizzato da vie anguste e dalla presenza di numerosi beni archeologici e monumentali. Nella zona settentrionale, in prossimità della terraferma, sono ubicati la maggior parte dei servizi amministrativi, molte attività commerciali e ricettive, le sezioni distaccate dell'università di Catania. L'asse viario principale è costituito da via Matteotti e da via Roma che separano l'area occidentale, eminentemente turistica, da quella orientale, a spiccata vocazione residenziale, meno interessata dai processi di riqualificazione e di restauro che grazie all'implementazione delle facoltà universitarie e delle manifestazioni culturali, hanno portato al risanamento di alcuni quartieri, ove il forte disagio aveva segnato una crescita consistente della microcriminalità.

La borgata di Santa Lucia è il secondo quartiere storico di Siracusa, posto, a Nord-Ovest

di Ortigia, che è stato al centro dell'attenzione per una serie di progetti di riqualificazione, nonostante il progressivo spopolamento, in questo quartiere insistono ancora alcune attività economiche, bancarie, diverse associazioni di volontariato e istituzioni scolastiche, mentre scarseggiano i centri culturali.

La maggior parte delle famiglie è in possesso del diploma di maturità.

La popolazione si compone di un ceto estremamente eterogeneo composto da liberi professionisti, impiegati, artigiani, commercianti, ma anche operai, famiglie a basso reddito, disoccupati o immigrati extracomunitari.

I residenti di questo quartiere esprimono viva preoccupazione riguardo alla propria sicurezza per il proliferare di attività illecite e per il forte degrado sociale che ne compromettono la vivibilità e la qualità della vita.

Le circoscrizioni con una più alta concentrazione demografica, sono quelle sviluppatesi in direzione dell'estremità settentrionale della città, con funzioni eminentemente residenziali; in alcuni di questi quartieri (nello specifico l'area di Mazzarrona a Grottasanta), sono stati compiuti numerosi errori urbanistici che hanno favorito lo sviluppo di aree dormitorio carenti di servizi e attività commerciali; negli ultimi anni l'amministrazione, ha avviato alcuni progetti di recupero che dovrebbero favorire il rilancio del territorio nel quale è presente una scuola, una biblioteca di quartiere, un centro anziani, uno stajo; è un quartiere popolare periferico noto per i suoi scippi, la sua delinquenza e il degrado, costituito da palazzine, rovinate da vandalismo e graffiti.

Molte aree versano in una condizione di forte abbandono, pieni di cumuli di spazzatura e in alcuni casi c'è anche l'amianto abbandonato.

Tiche come Acradina, hanno una vocazione eminentemente residenziale e commerciale e si sono sviluppate grazie all'insediamento e allo sviluppo del polo industriale. Acradina ospita anche la Cittadella dello Sport e a Tiche è presente un presidio di sicurezza. Il tessuto sociale è tendenzialmente medio – alto, ben diverso appare il quadro di alcune aree a alta concentrazione demografica poste in particolare nei quartieri più popolari di Santa Panegia in cui vi è uno stato di forte degrado acuito legato alla mancanza di spazi verdi, di associazioni culturali e una forte presenza criminale, abusivismo e vandalismi.

Belvedere è una frazione di Siracusa, sita a Nord della città, trattasi di un quartiere tranquillo, caratterizzato da una pluralità dei servizi socio-amministrativi che consentono una certa vivibilità sociale (scuole, carabinieri, guardia medica); negli ultimi anni, nelle aree circostanti, si sta sviluppando un'edilizia residenziale destinata a un'utenza medio – alta.

Il territorio ha avuto un notevole sviluppo economico soprattutto grazie alla creazione di un vasto parco commerciale. Sono presenti anche un centro per anziani, alcune associazioni culturali e alcune attrezzature sportive messe a disposizione dalla scuola.

Il quartiere Epipoli, ubicato nell'estrema periferia occidentale della città, a poca distanza

dalla frazione di Belvedere, è stato caratterizzato da un boom edilizio che l'ha trasformato in uno dei rioni più popolosi della città senza tuttavia, assicurarne gli adeguati servizi.

L'intero quartiere dell'Epipoli ospita moderne abitazioni, ma anche il secondo presidio sanitario di Siracusa e la polizia municipale. L'area più difficile è Il villaggio Miano, una parte del tessuto urbano semiabusivo, chiuso in se stesso che non intesse nessuna relazione con gli elementi limitrofi di grande pregio paesaggistico e archeologico. Oltre a episodi di degrado acuiti anche dalla presenza di opere incompiute, da segnalare la presenza di una spicciola criminalità usa a effrazioni e furti in ville e appartamenti.

Neapolis, il quartiere moderno, è sorto sull'onda dell'espansione edilizia della città, nella seconda metà del secolo scorso, secondo criteri urbanistici estremamente sregolati; indubbiamente è il più importante quartiere economico e commerciale della città, sede di molti uffici e negozi, scuole e del presidio ospedaliero, associazioni di volontariato e adeguate strutture sportive.

Quest'area è abitata perlopiù da un ceto medio - alto con un buon livello culturale, sebbene insistano nelle aree popolari una componente di etnie diversificata che però risulta ben inserita nel tessuto socio-economico locale.

Cassibile, frazione a Sud, è basata principalmente sull'agricoltura, sebbene sia in crescita anche l'economia turistico-ricettiva, incentivata dalla vicinanza della zona balneare di Fontane Bianche.

Il borgo presenta un tessuto sociale estremamente variegato, caratterizzato da una forte immigrazione straniera (impegnata nell'agricoltura) ma anche famiglie che si sono stabilite da comuni limitrofi. La popolazione si identifica in un ceto prevalentemente operaio con una forte livello di disoccupazione femminile. Il quartiere è distante dalla città e risente della mancanza d'infrastrutture culturali e sportive. La scuola, le associazioni di volontariato e la parrocchia, rappresentano le uniche realtà sociali del quartiere che ospita anche una stazione dei carabinieri. Sono inadeguate le misure per l'integrazione e periodicamente si segnala la creazione di tendopoli di fortuna per garantire l'accoglienza delle centinaia di lavoratori stagionali che durante il periodo della raccolta confluiscano sul territorio. È molto diffuso anche il problema dello sfruttamento della manodopera e del caporalato.

In via generale occorre ricordare, che la città di Siracusa ha grossi problemi ambientali legati all'inquinamento legato alla presenza dell'area industriale che si è sviluppata nell'estremità settentrionale. L'ampliamento urbanistico irregolare e accelerato determinato dalla crescita della nuova economia è alla base di un alto indice di abusivismo edilizio, soprattutto nelle zone di periferiche della città che, sprovviste di servizi e infrastrutture, accolgono gruppi familiari eterogenei per tradizioni e costumi.

Il Comando Provinciale Carabinieri di Siracusa, al fine di accentuare l'attività di prevenzione e controllo del territorio e, quindi, garantire una maggiore azione di

contrasto ai fenomeni di criminalità infondendo più senso di sicurezza nella popolazione, ha effettuato diversi servizi straordinari di controllo del territorio anche grazie all'utilizzo di veicoli aerei.

La malavita siracusana storicamente legata ai quartieri di Santa Lucia e Santa Panagia, attiva nel settore delle estorsioni e del traffico di sostanze stupefacenti, è stata fortemente ridimensionata grazie alle indagini portate avanti dagli organi inquirenti.

Un fenomeno criminale particolarmente diffuso nel capoluogo è quello degli incendi di autovetture che, però, nella maggior parte dei casi, non è legato alla criminalità organizzata, quanto a contese tra singoli cittadini.

### **La provincia di Palermo**

La Provincia, che si sviluppa principalmente in lunghezza lungo la costa settentrionale della Sicilia ed ospita il capoluogo di Regione, in virtù della progressiva urbanizzazione e a causa delle espansioni edilizie succedutesi negli ultimi anni, ha in parte visto stravolto il proprio il paesaggio (in particolare i centri agricoli dell'entroterra).

L'economia del Palermitano è costituita in massima parte dal settore terziario, nonostante la presenza di alcune grandi aree industriali (Carini e Termini); la Provincia, dispone, inoltre, di risorse ambientali e culturali di notevole pregio, in grado da attrarre un cospicuo flusso di visitatori ogni anno.

Ben collegata a livello interprovinciale, Palermo rappresenta anche un punto di riferimento primario per il traffico aereo dall'isola verso le altre destinazioni grazie alla presenza di un aeroporto internazionale e importanti infrastrutture viarie ad esso connesse.

Mentre il numero di residenti a Palermo nel corso degli ultimi quaranta anni è diminuito, a livello provinciale si è verificato un fenomeno inverso, con particolare riferimento all'Area Metropolitana di Palermo: le aree del circondario, divenute appetibili per la migliore qualità di vita offerta, hanno vissuto un processo di urbanizzazione (ciò determina quotidianamente un intasamento delle arterie di circolazione da e verso il Capoluogo e il pericolo di creazione di quartieri dormitorio privi dei servizi essenziali).

Sul piano della sicurezza e della prevenzione delle attività criminose; i nuclei operativi della polizia, distaccati in diverse stazioni a garanzia della copertura totale del territorio, sono non solo impegnati nel contrasto diretto alla criminalità organizzata, ma anche nel pronto intervento effettuato attraverso nuclei di radio mobile, concentrando il proprio operato soprattutto nell'area di Palermo.

Vi è anche il Raggruppamento operativo speciale che rappresenta il comando centrale esteso attraverso il "reparto anticrimine", un'articolazione speciale che ha il compito di

coordinare e di raccordare l'intera attività investigativa svolta dal Comando sulla provincia nei confronti di criminali di stampo mafioso.

Il netto radicamento delle cosche sul territorio, pur in presenza di un rinnovato risveglio delle coscienze, testimoniato dall'alto numero di costituzioni di parte civile di familiari delle vittime e delle parti sane della compagine sociale, quali la confindustria, la confcommercio e le associazioni anti-racket, si giustifica non tanto dalla forza "militare" da queste esercitata, quanto piuttosto da una diffusa illegalità che mina le radici dell'identità collettiva e personale: si pensi per esempio all'abusivismo edilizio e alla gestione spesso illegale dei servizi essenziali (quali elettricità e acqua) o ancora al controllo di qualsiasi attività economica che impedisce il libero accesso al mercato locale; per non parlare dei servizi sociali che operano spesso in una logica di isolamento e non sempre riescono ad soddisfare le esigenze dell'utenza.

Tra gli interessi precipui della mafia palermitana, il maggiore è rappresentato dallo smercio di sostanze stupefacenti

Con riferimento alle tipologie dei reati, si evidenzia un forte aumento dei crimini economici e truffe ai danni dello stato e delle organizzazioni internazionali; particolarmente gravoso è divenuto negli ultimi anni anche il numero di effrazioni legati alla mancata osservanza delle normative sulla sicurezza dei luoghi di lavoro (spesso del tutto estranea alle logiche del lavoro nero diffuso su tutto il territorio) e all'inadeguatezza della normativa repressiva e preventiva; si registra anche un incremento, dei reati sessuali e informatici.

Tra i reati di criminalità comune si segnalano le estorsioni, l'usura e il favoreggiamento particolarmente diffusi specialmente in alcune zone urbane di Palermo e nei circondari più periferici; a fronte dell'esiguità numerica di denunce, le indagini sono finalizzate al rilevamento di possibili indizi sintomatici delle attività estorsive (danneggiamenti. Intercettazioni telefoniche, all'individuazione di documentazione extracontabile e al controllo dei flussi bancari).

Diffusi sono anche i reati predatori nei confronti dei supermercati e degli appartamenti privati e dei furti sulle utenze domestiche (i furti sono spesso imputabili a soggetti giovani legati alla microcriminalità; a livello provinciale è stato istituito un apposito ufficio per la trattazione di questa tipologia di reati); così come rilevanti sono i crimini relativi all'ambiente ( vastissimi incendi dolosi hanno distrutto ettari di zone boschive).

Tra le strategie proposte per rispondere al bisogno collettivo di sicurezza, si consiglia di adottare una prevenzione integrata tra repressione penale e interventi nell'ambito sociale per agire su alcune delle cause della criminalità e per rimuovere le condizioni che favoriscono l'accostamento al crimine da parte delle giovani generazioni.

La provincia di Palermo presenta elementi estremamente diversificati per quanto attiene alle attività socio-economiche e le caratteristiche demografiche.

### **L'Alto Belice Corleonese**

*Altofonte, Belmonte Mezzagno, Bisacchino, Bolognetta, Campofiorito, Camporeale, Contessa Entellina, Cefalà Diana, Chiusa Sclafani, Corleone, Giuliana, Godrano, Mezzojuso, Marineo, Monreale, Palazzo Adriano, Piana degli Albanesi, Prizzi, Roccamena, San Cipirello, San Giuseppe Jato, Santa Cristina Gela, Villafrati. Il territorio del comprensorio dell'Alto Belice-Corleonese, prevalentemente collinare e montano, confina con l'area metropolitana di Palermo, con il Belice e la Provincia di Agrigento.*

La maggior parte dei comuni sono di piccole dimensioni, in generale è possibile affermare che si è verificata un'espansione demografica dei paesi più vicini al Capoluogo a discapito dei paesi più distanti; per quanto relativo alle caratteristiche della popolazione, si registra un tasso di vecchiaia elevato, tipico delle realtà agricole cui si associa anche un basso tasso di scolarizzazione.

L'economia è di tipo eminentemente agricolo (nel belicino, i comuni di Camporeale, Godrano, Marineo, San Cipirello, San Giuseppe Jato e Santa Cristina Gela e in quello corleonese, quelli di Bisacchino, Campofiorito, Chiusa Sclafani, Contessa Entellina, Corleone, Giuliana, Palazzo Adriano, Prizzi, Roccamena), con una buona presenza di occupati nel settore pubblico; un discreto flusso turistico interessa i territori di Corleone, Palazzo Adriano, Piana degli Albanesi e Prizzi; vaste zone evidenziano numerose problematiche legate alla carenza di lavoro che solo in parte risulta ascrivibile alla recente crisi; l'assenza di una mentalità imprenditoriale, l'inadeguatezza del sistema viario, alimentano uno stato di tensione sociale in cui la microcriminalità trova manodopera per le proprie attività.

Dal punto di vista sociale, la prima emergenza attiene all'ordine pubblico in relazione alla presenza nel territorio di fenomeni di delinquenza mafiosa, che ne hanno impedito un adeguato sviluppo socio-economico, alcuni comuni interni vivono in una condizione di isolamento a causa della impervietà delle infrastrutture viarie e risulta carente l'offerta dei servizi sociali e sportivi (ad esclusione dei comuni di Corleone, Monreale e Piana degli Albanesi).

Utili in tal senso sono i protocolli attivati tra la prefettura e gli imprenditori locali volti ad individuare strumenti e strategie per il contrasto della criminalità, rafforzando il controllo sulle procedure di assegnazione degli appalti.

### **Il sistema Termitano e la valle del Torto**

*Alia, Aliminusa, Baucina, Caccamo, Campofelice di Fitalia, Casteldaccia, Castronuovo di Sicilia, Cefalà Diana, Cerda, Ciminna, Lercara Friddi, Mezzojuso, Montemaggiore Belsito, Roccapalumba, Sciara, Sclafani Bagni, Termini Imerese, Trabia, Valledolmo, Ventimiglia di Sicilia, Vicari*

Il termitano si caratterizza per l'estrema diversificazione territoriale, legata alla presenza di zone costiere (estremamente urbanizzate, talora anche in maniera incontrollata di cui molte in stato di degrado), destinate ad attività industriali o aree residenziali e turistiche, come Trabia, e dalle aree rurali dell'entroterra; le politiche di programmazione negoziata hanno puntato molto sulla valorizzazione dei centri minori posti in corrispondenza dei bacini fluviali del Fiume San Leonardo, del Fiume Torto e dell'Imera Settentrionale, eminentemente agricoli e dediti anche alla zootecnia (valle San Leonardo), ma tale sforzo non sempre ha consentito l'arresto dei fenomeni di migrazione legati all'inoccupazione e alla disoccupazione (che colpiscono in particolar modo i giovani) aggravando i processi di degrado socio-economico del territorio.

L'economia locale (perlopiù agricola e industriale) è gravemente in crisi; i servizi sono distribuiti sul territorio in maniera non eterogenea e la scarsità di risorse economiche, ha costretto gli enti a tagliare la spesa per il sociale; molti nuclei familiari vivono uno stato di forte disagio che ha ricadute importanti sui giovani, dediti al consumo di alcol e droghe; la maggior parte delle associazioni attive nel campo sociale opera nel centro più grande di Termini.

Termini Imerese (che, insieme a Casteldaccia e Trabia, ricade in realtà nell'area metropolitana di Palermo) posta alle pendici della Riserva Naturale Orientata di Monte San Calogero, importante snodo viario e porto commerciale, si caratterizza come centro urbano di riferimento e per i principali servizi socio-territoriali del circondario (Ospedale e Sert, Tribunale, Casa Circondariale, Carabinieri Polizia di Stato, Guardia di Finanza, numerosi Istituti d'Istruzione primaria e superiore frequentati da pendolari provenienti dai comuni limitrofi).

La parte bassa del nucleo originario e il centro monumentale della città alta, sono state interessate da un fenomeno di migrazione verso le altre aree urbane (in tal senso l'Amministrazione comunale ha attivato una serie di iniziative per il recupero delle zone storiche).

Le Forze dell'Ordine sono impegnate in un'attività di controllo del territorio per contrastare fenomeni di disordine urbano, quali la prostituzione sulle strade o le discariche abusive, nonché per prevenire reati di criminalità diffusa (reati predatori); si è anche proceduto ad attivare un servizio mobile di vigilanza in alcune zone strategiche (parchi, scuole) e nel centro storico, la sorveglianza è garantita dalla presenza di agenti in borghese per prevenire fenomeni di vandalismo, e abusivismo commerciale; lo spaccio è correlato alla presenza di una criminalità organizzata.

### **Il sistema Madonita-cefaludese**

*Campofelice di Roccella, Cefalù, Lascari, Pollina, Alimena, Blufi, Bompietro, Polizzi Generosa, Scillato, Caltavuturo, Castelbuono, Collesano, Gangi, Gratteri, Isnello, San Mauro Castelverde, Castellana Sicula, Geraci Siculo, Petralia Soprana e Petralia Sottana.*

È un' area molto vasta ed eterogenea, costituita dai territori circostanti la città di Cefalù e dai paesi che sorgono a ridosso delle Madonie.

Il distretto costiero afferente Cefalù, in cui rientrano anche Campofelice di Roccella, Pollina, Lascari e il Parco delle Madonie rappresentano due grandi fattori d'attrazione turistica e hanno portato allo sviluppo del settore terziario (attività di tipo ricettivo)

Cefalù rappresenta insieme a Castelbuono e Petralia Sottana uno i centri principali per i servizi.

Nell'area Madonita, oltre alla notorietà di Castelbuono (legata alla ricchezza di beni monumentali e alle forti radici identitarie), si sta sviluppando un fiorente sottosistema turistico legato alle produzioni enogastronomiche tipiche e alle manifestazioni di tipo culturale (Castellana Sicula, Collesano, Ganci, Geraci Siculo, Gratteri, Isnello, Petralia Soprana e Sottana, San Mauro Castelverde), mentre le zone di Bompietro, Caltavuturo, Polizzi Generosa, Scillato, sono invece eminentemente agricole.

Tutta l'area, nonostante gli sforzi compiuti dalle singole amministrazioni per favorire le politiche giovanili per la micro impresa, per l'artigianato, la formazione e per gli spazi di aggregazione sociale, negli ultimi anni, ha visto lo sviluppo di un certo malessere sociale legato alla forte disoccupazione e alla mancanza di prospettive,.

Il territorio è particolarmente esposto al rischio di microcriminalità durante il periodo estivo; l'area non è esente da fenomeni di criminalità organizzata: le cosche mafiose delle Madonie, che estendono le proprie propaggini sino alla costa, hanno una struttura fortemente consolidata .

I reati più frequenti, comunque, sono quelli predatori: furti nei villini, soprattutto, considerato che essi in buona parte, durante l'anno, restano disabitati e che si trovano in zone piuttosto isolate; si registra anche un elevato traffico di droga.

Ultimo settore d'intervento è costituito dai reati ambientali legati alle discariche abusive e al deposito illegale dei rifiuti tossici.

### **Area metropolitana di Palermo**

*Altavilla Milicia, Altofonte, Bagheria, Balestrate, Belmonte, Capaci, Carini, Casteldaccia, Cinisi, Ficarazzi, Giardinello, Isola delle Femmine, Montelepre, Misilmeri Palermo, Partinico, Santa Flavia, Termini Imerese, Terrasini, Trabia, Trappeto, Torretta, Ustica Villabate*



L'area metropolitana di Palermo è costituita da una pluralità di agglomerati urbani, ad alta densità abitativa, che si susseguono dal golfo di Termini e Palermo fino al trapanese e dalle caratteristiche estremamente diversificate: abitati residenziali e turistici, talora di origine abusiva; insediamenti industriali (aree di Carini, Palermo e Termini), infrastrutture (aeroporto di Punta Raisi, porto di Termini Imerese e i porticcioli turistici lungo la costa) autostrade.

Il sistema costiero metropolitano orientale (da Bagheria fino a Trabia) è caratterizzato dallo sviluppo del settore ricettivo e turistico.

Il comprensorio Partinicese comprende il sistema agricolo di Partinico, il sistema manifatturiero terziario a Ovest e il sistema turistico costiero occidentale, dal comune di Capaci fino a Carini, caratterizzato da un'espansione di tipo turistico residenziale (villeggiatura), a bassa densità abitativa, talora fonte di degrado paesaggistico e ambientale.

Alcuni centri hanno mantenuto un'identità urbana abbastanza definita, sviluppando anche una relativa offerta di servizi socio-territoriali (Termini Imerese, Bagheria, Monreale, Carini, Terrasini), altri invece più vicini a Palermo, sono oramai totalmente annessi a Palermo (Villabate, Ficcarazzi, Isola delle Femmine, Capaci), che rappresenta il polo attrattivo principale, sebbene i grossi centri come Bagheria, Partinico e Terrasini, abbiano sviluppato qualche forma di autonomia.

I livelli di sicurezza pubblica si sono mantenuti sostanzialmente inalterati negli anni, tuttavia non vanno sottovalutate le conseguenze della crisi economica che hanno portato ad una rapida escalation di rapine e furti e la presenza della criminalità di stampo mafioso, fortemente radicata, che non esita a ricorrere alla fenomenologia incendiaria contro esponenti delle istituzioni e dell'imprenditoria locale; la sicurezza e il controllo del territorio sono affidati a i commissariati della polizia di Stato e a alle stazioni dei carabinieri, distribuite in maniera più o meno omogenea su tutto il territorio.

Se in via generale i cittadini mostrano una maggiore fiducia nei confronti delle forze dell'ordine, il problema legato alla crisi occupazionale, rende soprattutto i più giovani una facile preda della criminalità; i Comuni maggiori si dotati di sistemi di videosorveglianza per attuare un maggiore controllo sul territorio.

## **Palermo**

Il comune di Palermo è suddiviso in circa otto circoscrizioni amministrative corrispondenti a zone ben definite del territorio.

Il Centro storico (I Circoscrizione), la sesta e l'ottava circoscrizione costituiscono il centro nevralgico della Città, per la presenza di numerosi servizi (via Roma, via Maqueda e via della Libertà); la quarta e la quinta circoscrizione ospitano le diverse sedi universitarie e offrono i principali servizi ospedalieri.

Le circoscrizioni più densamente popolate sono la quarta, la quinta e l'ottava (contigua alla prima circoscrizione ove peraltro, si registra una maggiore concentrazione di stranieri, con una netta preponderanza degli asiatici e degli africani).

Nonostante i cambiamenti intervenuti negli ultimi anni, la realtà sociale ed economica di Palermo è ancora oggi caratterizzata da molte criticità e problemi, dall'emergenza abitativa a quella dei trasporti, dalla disoccupazione alla mancanza di servizi di base (in continua emergenza, ad esempio, per le problematiche legate allo smaltimento dei rifiuti urbani), con una inadeguata distribuzione degli stessi sul territorio; alcune scelte urbanistiche ed amministrative, effettuate negli anni, unitamente alla pratica diffusa dell'occupazione abusiva (Z.E.N., Sperone e Borgo Nuovo), hanno ulteriormente aggravato il quadro locale; tali zone spesso si distinguono non solo per il degrado edilizio e il malessere sociale ma anche per alti indici di dispersione scolastica ( Zen, nell'ottava circoscrizione; quartiere Oreto/Stazione e Villagrazia/Falsomiele nella terza).

A queste criticità si aggiungono poi i problemi legati al ruolo della criminalità organizzata e alla collusione con le istituzioni pubbliche, che condizionano pesantemente la vita socio-politica del Capoluogo.

La città di Palermo è fortemente colpita dal fenomeno dello spaccio di sostanze stupefacenti, con ricadute importanti nel settore dell'ordine pubblico (i tossicodipendenti tendono a reperire le risorse finanziarie per la droga, con furti e rapine); le zone della città più rischiose sono quelle di Falsomiele, Vucciria, Bonagia, Brancaccio e Zen.

In via Spinuzza e in alcune aree, quali Arenella, Acquasanta Borgo vecchio, Zen, Brancaccio e Sperone, vi è un intenso traffico di droghe leggere e di cocaina, mentre al Capo e presso l'area del mercato di Ballarò (ove vi è un'alta concentrazione di africani) avviene la distribuzione di quelle definite comunemente droghe pesanti.

Vi è inoltre una delinquenza minorile, perlopiù connessa al branco, che si traduce in microcriminalità spicciola (furti, scippi o rapine per opera di minori spesso provenienti dal quartiere Pallavicino o da Settecannoli).

Il servizio Sociale per i Minorenni, in collaborazione con enti locali e grazie a finanziamenti pubblici, ha avviato una pluralità di progetti volti propri alla diffusione della legalità nelle aree considerate a rischio (quartiere S.Filippo Neri, e prima circoscrizione)

Da segnalare l'incidenza di delitti contro la persona, in particolare la violenza sessuale; occorre ricordare che a Palermo si è costituito un circuito interistituzionale di antiviolenza per erogare un servizio di assistenza alle donne vittime di abusi.

Normalmente tutte le circoscrizioni sono dotate di almeno un presidio di sicurezza a garanzia del controllo del territorio e di qualche forma di videosorveglianza, ma più in generale, nella lotta per la prevenzione e il contrasto del disagio, oramai diffuso in diverse aree, il lavoro delle associazioni e del privato sociale risulta insufficiente; l'inadeguatezza degli interventi è correlata alla scarsa capacità di strutturarsi in rete, lasciando il territorio

scoperto e alimentando nei residenti un senso di abbandono da parte delle istituzioni.

Il Centro storico (**I Circoscrizione**), diviso in quattro zone (Palazzo Reale, Monte di Pietà, Tribunali e Castellammare), si raccoglie intorno alla zona centrale dei Quattro Canti di Città (e nello specifico attorno alla piazza Vigliena); la zona è stata interessata da un processo di parziale degrado e disinteresse; alcuni edifici sono semi-diroccati o comunque evidenziano uno stato di fatiscenza (spesso occupati in maniera abusiva da senzatetto e soggetti in stato di forte indigenza).

All'interno della circoscrizione sono dislocati i tre mercati storici della città; via Roma e via Maqueda rappresentano le aree commerciali principali della zona, negli anni tale aree hanno subito notevoli trasformazioni con moltissimi esercizi gestiti da stranieri; in questi quartieri vi è un'altissima concentrazione di minori stranieri, alti tassi di violenza intra-familiare e si registra una marcata propensione al crimine su tutto il territorio.

Il mandamento "Palazzo Reale – Monte di Pietà", ricco di storia e di arte, ma fortemente degradato dal punto di vista architettonico, urbanistico e socio-economico, ospita istituzioni scolastiche e vive una progressiva emorragia di residenti che si spostano verso le aree urbane residenziali limitrofe alla città.

Gli extracomunitari che vivono nel quartiere, lavorano in genere come persone di servizio, lava-vetri, lava-macchine, ecc.; gli altri abitanti del quartiere sono commercianti, venditori ambulanti, impiegati, falegnami, ebanisti;

Durante la seconda guerra mondiale molti edifici furono danneggiati, contribuendo a determinarne il progressivo abbandono a causa del degrado durante i decenni successivi; da qualche anno è cominciato un lento tentativo di recupero del quartiere grazie ad interventi di restauro e ristrutturazione ad opera di privati e con fondi pubblici; la zona di piazza Marina e della Kalsa, recentemente si stanno trasformando in una zona dalle caratteristiche legate al turismo e al divertimento.

La seconda circoscrizione (**Oreto- Brancaccio –Settecannoli**, si estende lungo il lato meridionale della città e rappresenta l'anello di congiunzione tra il centro storico e le aree balneari (Bagheria) e periferiche; il territorio è definito da due traiettorie viarie: l'asse di Corso dei Mille e l'autostrada Palermo-Catania.

Trattasi di un territorio che presenta diverse sfaccettature; nella circoscrizione ricade una parte del quartiere Oreto, con evidenze architettoniche risalenti al diciottesimo e diciannovesimo secolo postbellico (Oreto – Corso dei Mille) che si estende lungo la zona costiera e si caratterizza per la presenza di abitazioni di recente costruzione in cui si è insediato il ceto medio di tipo impiegatizio; insieme a diverse borgate storiche palermitane legate alla pesca o all'agricoltura (Sant'Erasmus, Brancaccio, Conte Federico, Ciaculli, Croce Verde).

La zona di Corso dei Mille - Sant'Erasmus, area di urbanizzazione più antica, ha subito negli ultimi anni un netto decremento demografico, a fronte di una forte crescita delle

aree più “periferiche” della circoscrizione (in particolare Roccella e Ciaculli.

Vi insistono anche alcune zone a rischio quali lo Sperone e l'antica borgata rurale di Brancaccio (per anni sede delle maggiori attività industriali del centro cittadino); la circoscrizione è interessata dalla presenza importante dell'asse ferroviario che opera anche come scalo merci.

Accanto alle borgate storiche (Sperone, Bandita; Settecannoli) si è sviluppata una vasta area di più recente costruzione (parte della quale di edilizia di tipo popolare, destinata a soggetti meno agiati) non supportata da servizi adeguati (risulta particolarmente critica l'offerta di servizi per l'infanzia), che ha portato alla costruzione di palazzi multipiano poco integrati con l'assetto architettonico locale di tipo eminentemente rurale (abitazioni di uno o due piani) e ha favorito lo sviluppo di numerose criticità non solo urbanistiche ma anche sociali.

Allo Sperone, negli anni settanta, si procedette alla costruzione di alcuni caseggiati di edilizia popolare, che ne hanno stravolto l'assetto originario, trasformando il piccolo centro in un quartiere con evidenti problematiche a livello di assetto urbanistico e sociale (mancanza di servizi, scarsa manutenzione, indigenza, dispersione scolastica, episodi di delinquenza comune e presenza mafiosa); numerosi sono stati gli interventi messi in atto per il risanamento dell'area, che si sono spesso rivelati insufficienti; un ruolo fondamentale per il rilancio del quartiere è stato, invece giocato dalla scuola e dalle istituzioni religiose.

L'area di Brancaccio/Ciaculli, costituita da un nucleo più antico, ha visto in epoche tutto sommato recenti la creazione di nuove zone di edilizia residenziale e commerciale, nel tentativo di rilanciare un territorio da molti percepito come ad alto rischio sociale; molti edifici scolastici non sono adeguati per mancanza di manutenzione; allarmante risulta il fenomeno della criminalità minorile e diffusi i fenomeni di disagio sociale e giovanile; nel territorio risiede una grossa porzione di disoccupati di sesso maschile, il cui numero è al di sopra della media cittadina.

Nonostante la presenza di un patrimonio architettonico storico non indifferente e di aree balneabili di pregio, il territorio è fortemente condizionato dalle compagini mafiose, che hanno contribuito ad accentuare il degrado delle aree sviluppatasi nell'ambito dei piani di edilizia popolare, (vie Hazon, Simoncini Scaglione e Biondo); solo negli ultimi anni si è avviato un timido processo di riqualificazione, ma l'area continua a presentare forti difficoltà sia da un punto di vista urbanistico che infrastrutturale; nonostante la presenza di molti istituti scolastici (si segnala l'apertura della scuola media, per la quale si era battuto Padre Puglisi, il prete assassinato in un agguato mafioso),

Nella circoscrizione sono presenti diversi uffici postali, sportelli bancari, una biblioteca, una stazione ferroviaria, un terminal bus e una struttura ospedaliera; le attività economiche sono estremamente eterogenee: agricoltori, piccoli commercianti a dettaglio, venditori abusivi e parte della popolazione è impegnata in attività industriali ( spesso oggetto di richieste di racket e pizzo).

Per quanto attiene ai servizi territoriali, mancano gli asili nido e i consultori familiari; molto attive sono comunque le associazioni volte alla promozione culturale del territorio e di animazione sociale che cercano di sopperire all'assenza d'interventi istituzionali.

Il tessuto sociale è composto da famiglie molto numerose, alcune delle quali con reddito fisso appartenenti alla borghesia, altre in condizioni di indigenza, i cui componenti hanno spesso un passato di detenzione; molte le famiglie disgregate e i casi di violenza intra-familiare, vi è un diffuso senso d'illegalità che agevola lo sviluppo del lavoro nero, del contrabbando, dello spaccio di droga, i furti ma anche prostituzione e delinquenza minorile.

Circa un ventennio fa è nato un movimento spontaneo di cittadini volto a denunciare lo stato di forte disagio della comunità, che trovò poi la propria guida spirituale in Padre Puglisi; tra le iniziative intraprese, da segnalare non solo la lotta contro l'illegalità dilagante ma anche la creazione di un centro impegnato in attività di promozione sociale che continua a operare sul territorio.

Differentemente dalla percezione generale, i residenti di Brancaccio non considerano il proprio ambiente come particolarmente insicuro, poiché privo di episodi di violenza indiscriminata tenuta sotto controllo dalle cosche mafiose; i timori diffusi sono, piuttosto, legati al vandalismo e alla criminalità minorile.

La presenza del nucleo circoscrizionale di Polizia Municipale nella circoscrizione, particolarmente esposta a fenomeni di abusivismo (edilizia, discariche, ecc), costituisce un segno importante di presenza istituzionale anche dal punto di vista simbolico.

La terza circoscrizione, in prossimità d'importanti assi viari (come ad esempio viale della Regione Siciliana), ospita i quartieri a Sud-est del centro come **Guadagna**, **Falsomiele**, **Villagrazia** (borgate eminentemente agricole) e parte della zona di **Oreto/stazione**, che ospitano diversi esercizi commerciali e dei presidi delle forze dell'ordine.

Villagrazia, con un'economia prevalentemente agricola ha un'architettura eminentemente rurale (con edifici monopiano costruiti intorno ad una strada principale, poche attività commerciali, una scuola media ed elementare) è costituita da una parte più antica e da palazzi di costruzione più recente nella seconda fase le aggregazioni nuove, di tipo eminentemente residenziale nelle quali c'è una maggiore densità abitativa come per esempio Borgo Ulivia e Falsomiele in cui si registra anche un'edilizia di tipo popolare.

Esaminando i diversi milieu socio-economici presenti, si registrano una pluralità di famiglie monoreddito e di soggetti che vivono in stato di precariato lavorativo o di inoccupazione; anche il livello culturale risulta non particolarmente elevato; si segnalano numerosi casi di disagio e di relazioni familiari al limite del patologico; molti giovani sono dediti al consumo di sostanze stupefacenti.

Negli ultimi anni la presenza di stranieri immigrati ha posto nuovi problemi in termini di sicurezza e integrazione.

Nonostante la presenza di alcuni plessi scolastici, non ci sono adeguati centri di animazione sociale che possano fungere da attrattori per i giovani molti dei quali sono dediti al consumo di stupefacenti.

La borgata di Falsomiele, trasformatasi negli anni in un quartiere dormitorio, ha visto profondamente modificate le proprie caratteristiche urbane, a seguito dell'espansione residenziale che ha sostenuto la crescita di palazzi del tutto estranei all'architettura locale, con conseguente effetto di straniamento e isolamento; molte strade sono dissestate e anche il sistema fognario non risulta adeguato; poche anche le attività commerciali.

Vi è una larga fascia di popolazione che vive in condizioni d'indigenza o impegnata in lavori di basso profilo; bassi i livelli di scolarizzazione e diffuso tra i giovani il consumo di droghe e lo spaccio (in particolare nell'area della piccola piazzetta centrale) mentre rispetto al passato la microcriminalità sembra vivere un periodo di stasi.

Durante la giornata sono compiuti controlli sul territorio da parte della polizia in borghese.

La quarta circoscrizione comprende i quartieri di **Altarello, Cuba, Santa Rosalia, Mezzomonreale e Boccadifalco**; trattasi di territorio con una grossa concentrazione edilizia (la maggior parte degli edifici sorti nell'ultimo ventennio ne ha in parte stravolto le caratteristiche eminentemente agricole), abitato perlopiù da gruppi familiari monocomponenti e monoreddito).

L'area è attraversata da Corso Calatafimi (collegamento per il Comune di Monreale), da anni divenuto uno degli asse viari più importanti della città, e dalla via Pitrè che ha assunto un ruolo strategico e collega la borgata di Boccadifalco con il centro.

Il Quartiere Boccadifalco, distante qualche chilometro dal centro cittadino, ha mantenuto quasi del tutto inalterate le caratteristiche architettoniche antiche (strade strette e case vetuste); poche le opportunità di svago per i giovani che non hanno punti di aggregazione; scarse anche le opportunità occupazionali, per la maggior parte riconducibili a forme di economia sommersa.

La zona della Cuba (afferente l'area di Corso Calatafimi) ospita molti istituti scolastici e servizi pubblici e commerciali oltre che numerose caserme; inadeguati risultano i centri che offrono opportunità di aggregazione; il contesto socio-economico è estremamente eterogeneo, costituito da un ceto medio con sufficiente livello culturale (che risiede nei fabbricati di più moderna costruzione) e da una larga percentuale di precari o nuclei di extracomunitari che vivono nelle zone di maggiore degrado, alcuni in condizioni di analfabetismo.

In anni recenti, in concomitanza con l'acuirsi della crisi, oltre ad episodi di microcriminalità si registra anche la crescita del fenomeno dello spaccio di sostanze stupefacenti che vede coinvolti in massima parte i giovani; molte attività commerciali hanno chiuso i battenti sostituiti da esercenti che provengono da paesi stranieri (in primis, i cinesi).

Mezzomonreale è un'area di tipo residenziale, con villette di nuova costruzione immerse nel verde, abitate da un ceto medio - borghese, impegnato nel terziario, con adeguato livello culturale; Villa Tasca, poco prima del centro abitato, caratterizzata da edilizia popolare, conta numerose scuole, sebbene per la maggior parte dei servizi si faccia riferimento a Palermo.

Altarello, come Mezzomonreale, costituisce una realtà in parte ancora rurale che ha subito comunque una nuova espansione di tipo residenziale; la parrocchia locale continua a rappresentare l'unico punto di aggregazione; il tessuto urbano è costituito da edifici con poche elevazioni risalenti alla seconda metà del secolo scorso; la popolazione originaria residente evidenzia un livello socio-culturale modesto (non mancano casi di particolare disagio legati al consumo, impegnata nell'agricoltura o in attività di tipo manuale, mentre i nuovi residenti sono impegnati nel settore terziario; in via Perpignano, in anni recenti, sono sorti dei grandi supermercati.

Come per altre realtà più modeste, si denuncia da più parti l'inadeguatezza dei servizi di base, che non riescono a garantire la copertura del territorio e a intervenire tempestivamente sulle situazioni a rischio di degrado.

Il quartiere di Montegrappa/S.Rosalia è composto da diverse aree: una zona è caratterizzata da edilizia eminentemente popolare che, insieme alla parte storica, vive uno stato di fatiscenza e degrado (non solo urbano ma talora anche di tipo morale, legato alla presenza di nuclei familiari disagiati e disgregati, povertà culturale e occupazionali, etc.); una zona di nuova espansione, di tipo residenziale in prossimità di una struttura ospedaliera, in cui si è insediata la classe medio borghese.

La quinta Circoscrizione comprende i quartieri di **Borgo Nuovo, Uditore Passo di Rigano, Noce e Zisa.**

Borgo nuovo, sito in una zona periferica di Palermo, è un quartiere popolare di edilizia moderna (non mancano edifici in stato di abbandono), che si è andato configurando come quartiere dormitorio, privo di servizi (ad esclusione di qualche presidio scolastico, spesso oggetto di vandalismi e danneggiamenti, a tal proposito è stato avviato un progetto per l'installazione di videocamere di sorveglianza) e di luoghi di aggregazione sociale; la maggior parte degli abitanti vive di piccoli espedienti, ha bassi livelli culturali e molte famiglie vivono in condizioni di disagio relazionale ed economico.

Il quartiere ospita un presidio di sicurezza attento al controllo del territorio del circondario; vi è una microcriminalità diffusa dedita allo spaccio.

Alcuni istituti scolastici hanno avviato una pluralità d'interventi volti alla diffusione della legalità, che vedono coinvolti non solo i giovani ma anche le famiglie.

Il quartiere Zisa, in posizione non troppo defilata rispetto al centro, è costituito dall'alternanza di edifici storici e caseggiati moderni di tipo eminentemente residenziale; abitato tendenzialmente da un ceto medio - borghese, si caratterizza anche per la presenza

di una componente di famiglie (anche immigrate) che vivono in condizioni di precarietà, con bassi livelli di istruzione; si registrano diffusi fenomeni di criminalità, anche mafiosa, oltre che numerosi episodi di devianza minorile che destano un diffuso allarme sociale.

Uditore e Noce, sono borgate rurali che nel tempo hanno visto l'insediamento di un'architettura più moderna, connotata da palazzi multipiano e dall'assenza di aree attrezzate e di verde pubblico.

Più in generale si tratta di un comprensorio che vive una condizione di disagio sociale ed economico; coincidente con un'alfabetizzazione modesta ed elevati tassi di lavoro nero e disoccupazione; in particolare nell'area Zisa e Noce si registra un elevato livello di devianza giovanile; numerose indagini della polizia hanno permesso di mappare il territorio, individuando le sfere d'influenza esercitate dalle famiglie mafiose di Noce, assieme a quelle di Altarello e di Cruillas (pizzo, estorsioni, danneggiamenti, gestione agenzie per le scommesse, traffici di stupefacenti).

Nella sesta circoscrizione di Palermo ricadono i quartieri di Cruillas-San Giovanni Apostolo e Resuttana - San Lorenzo; le maggiori criticità si riscontrano nel comprensorio di Cruillas-San Giovanni Apostolo (ex Cep), posto nella periferia nord-occidentale della città.

L'assetto urbano di questi due quartieri risulta sostanzialmente estremamente caotico, composto prevalentemente da edilizia popolare o da caserugi di modesta elevazione e spesso in stato di degrado (si registrano anche casi di abusivismo edilizio; atti vandalici nei confronti delle istituzioni pubbliche, inadeguata illuminazione pubblica e zone abbandonate); assenti le aree attrezzate; gli unici attrattori sociali sono rappresentati dalle parrocchie e da pochi istituti scolastici, anche i collegamenti pubblici verso le altre zone sono insufficienti, molte strade sono adibite a discarica urbana e una diffusa illegalità, (che non viene chiaramente percepita da molti residenti che attribuiscono le ragioni del degrado esclusivamente alle mancanze dell'amministrazione pubblica) pervade tutto il territorio.

Il quartiere San Lorenzo è stato per molto tempo, uno dei quartieri a maggiore densità mafiosa, evincibile dalla presenza di numerose attività commerciali che in realtà fungono da fonte di riciclaggio per le cosche mafiose.

L'enorme incremento demografico, ha apportato alcune modifiche nel sub-strato socio economico, sebbene una certa cultura di tipo familistico sia evincibile dagli atteggiamenti dei ragazzi frequentanti la scuola locale; il controllo su territorio della mafia, ha impedito lo sviluppo della microcriminalità, configurando l'area come sostanzialmente sicura.

La VII circoscrizione, che include le zone di Arenella-Vergine Maria, Pallavicino, Tommaso Natale-Sferracavallo, Partanna-Mondello, si distingue per la presenza del rione San Filippo Neri (ZEN).

In questo territorio, ove ricadono alcuni Istituti scolastici, si è sviluppata una periferia estremamente degradata, una zona franca, considerata tra le più difficili di Palermo.



Trattasi di un quartiere interamente di edilizia popolare (diviso in due aree, definite comunemente Zen 1 e Zen 2 ), con palazzi multipiano, talora grate alle finestre (seppur a voler essere più precisi, l'effetto di maggiore straniamento si ha con le Insulae dello Zen 2) strade larghe ed anonime e pochi spiazzi , spesso lasciati incolti; vi è un diffuso degrado edilizio e si registra l'assenza di servizi alla persona; molti edifici non sono mai stati completati e sono stati occupati abusivamente dai residenti prima che si potesse procedere all'allacciamento del sistema fognario ed elettrico (Zen 2).

L'assenza o l'inadeguatezza delle politiche di risanamento intentate dalle diverse Amministrazioni ha favorito lo sviluppo della criminalità e di un certo malessere che è sfociato in vera e propria sfiducia delle istituzioni.

Molti nuclei familiari, spesso numerosi, vivono in una condizione di disagio e indigenza e si evidenzia un'alta dispersione scolastica (le adolescenti spesso rimangono a casa per aiutare le madri, mentre i ragazzi preferiscono cercare un lavoro per contribuire all'economia familiare); in realtà occorre sottolineare una differenza generazionale tra gli abitanti dello Zen 1, perlopiù anziani, e quello dello Zen 2, giovani coppie con figli).

La popolazione è composta da famiglie molto numerose (talora con gravi problemi socio-affettivi), spesso monoreddito e con bassi livelli di alfabetizzazione; la crisi ha dato un forte slancio alla microcriminalità locale; l'aggravarsi della crisi economica ed occupazionale hanno incrementato attività illegali e si registrano alti tassi di criminalità anche minore: i reati vengono perpetrati non solo all'esterno ma anche all'interno del circondario da parte degli stessi residenti; frequenti gli atti di vandalismo nei confronti delle istituzioni (di recente si è provveduto all'approvazione di un piano di videosorveglianza per i locali istituti scolastici); numerosi sono i controlli della polizia, effettuati anche attraverso agenti in borghese; solo da qualche anno è stato inaugurato un presidio di sicurezza, sebbene gli abitanti considerino insufficiente la presenza delle forze dell'ordine sul territorio.

Alcuni residenti hanno cercato di reagire al degrado generale, con interventi di manutenzione volti al miglioramento dell'ambiente circostante, ma permane un senso di malessere legato alla consapevolezza della nozione associata al quartiere.

I progetti di riqualificazione avviati in questi ultimi anni hanno portato alla realizzazione di una caserma sul territorio e all'apertura di uno dei centri commerciali più grandi della Sicilia.

L'Arenella costituisce una realtà estremamente variegata, caratterizzata non solo da rioni antichi e talora fatiscenti (ove mancano o sono insufficienti i servizi socio-ricreativi e le scuole rappresentano l'unica agenzia di socializzazione, ma anche aree più moderne e curate.

Accanto ad un ristretto ceto impiegatizio, convivono operai e artigiani; diffusi un certo analfabetismo e la disoccupazione (che colpisce maggiormente le donne.)

Numerosi gli atti di devianza e criminalità giovanile; i reati più diffusi sono legati allo spaccio di stupefacenti, alle scommesse clandestine e atti contro il patrimonio.

Marinella, area limitrofa alla via Tommaso Natale e allo Zen, è un quartiere ad alta densità mafiosa, ma tutto sommato ritenuto tranquillo dai residenti (sebbene siano presenti elevati indici di devianza e disagio minorile).

Il paesaggio urbano è costituito da residence moderni e palazzi fatiscenti (a ridosso della tratta ferroviaria); esiste un tessuto socio-economico estremamente variegato, in alcune zone (come via Calcante), le famiglie borghesi convivono con nuclei familiari disagiati.

A Marinella non esiste un punto di aggregazione per i giovani che si riuniscono di fronte un'attività commerciale; da anni gran parte delle attività socio-culturali ed assistenziali sono promosse da un centro sociale, che presta servizio negli istituti scolastici locali, finanziato da alcuni cittadini preoccupati per il degrado imperante nel quartiere.

Anche Pallavicino, sito sul territorio che collega il capoluogo con Mondello, rappresenta una zona a rischio; le attività economiche prevalenti sono quelle legate al commercio; nel quartiere operano alcuni istituti scolastici, scarseggiano i centri culturali e ricreativi e l'unico spazio attrezzato è quello offerto dalla parrocchia locale.

In questa zona, come nelle altre aree del comprensorio, il patrimonio architettonico è definito da nuclei più antichi (di tipo popolare e in stato di degrado) e aree più moderne.

Il quartiere è diventato luogo di spaccio e di consumo di sostanze stupefacenti e la presenza delle Forze dell'Ordine, non assicurata in maniera continuata, è mal sopportata dai residenti.

Ben diverso appare il quadro offerto da realtà come Mondello o Sferracavallo, borghi turistici caratterizzati da un'edilizia medio-alta di tipo stagionale, divenuti mete residenziali fortemente ambite dai cittadini metropolitani per la tranquillità del territorio.

L'ottava Circostrizione è notevolmente estesa e comprende l'area del Politeama, di Piazza Libertà, di Montepellegrino e di Malaspina-Palagonia.

Accanto a quartieri residenziali e ricchi di servizi (Politeama e via Libertà) convivono realtà di degrado sia ambientale sia socio-culturale.

Borgovecchio, nucleo antico di case (spesso fatiscenti) e di vie brulicanti di attività artigianali e commerciali, è adiacente al Politeama e al porto; il quartiere è tristemente noto per gli alti livelli di devianza criminale e la forte densità mafiosa; la presenza del settore pubblico è pressochè inesistente (limitata all'offerta scolastica), la maggior parte delle attività sono offerte da associazioni di volontariato che operano sul territorio.

Il comprensorio di Malaspina e Palagonia, sede storica di un carcere minorile e di del Centro di Giustizia Minorile, sono aree residenziali ambite dai Palermitani, in cui sono presenti numerosi uffici pubblici, e attività commerciali, si configura come area sostanzialmente residenziale di tipo borghese, con livelli socio-culturali, medio - alti.

### **La provincia di Ragusa**

La provincia di Ragusa, posta all'estremo Sud-orientale della regione Sicilia, rappresenta una realtà estremamente più piccola rispetto alle altre aree.

Composta solo da dodici comuni che sorgono su un territorio prevalentemente collinare, dominato dall'altipiano Ibleo, a Ovest del quale si distende la piana di Vittoria.

In relazione alla dotazione infrastrutturale e al tipo d'insediamenti urbanistici e economici presenti, è possibile individuare tre macroaree: l'entroterra montuoso, con i piccoli borghi agricoli di Chiaramonte Gulfi, Giarratana e Monterosso Almo, oggi ai margini delle traiettorie di sviluppo e affetti da imponenti processi di spopolamento; le aree di Ragusa, Modica Scicli e Ispica con una maggiore densità abitativa e investite da un crescente flusso turistico di tipo culturale; il territorio costiero ad alta pressione insediativa, con una vocazione turistica ma anche ad alto sfruttamento agricolo.

L'offerta turistica è rappresentata non solo dalle città d'arte di Modica e Scicli, ma anche dagli importanti siti archeologici di Kasmene e di Kamarina, dalle spiagge di Marina di Ragusa e dai lidi balneari di Pozzallo che ospitano entrambe un'area portuale e sono divenute mete principali del divertimento notturno.

Nonostante la crisi economica abbia colpito pesantemente il tessuto economico ragusano, la Provincia ha un tasso di disoccupazione estremamente contenuto e un reddito pro-capite tra i più elevati della Sicilia, situazione determinata dallo sviluppo del settore terziario e dall'incisivo contributo offerto del settore ortofrutticolo in serra (Ispica e Scicli) e della floricoltura (particolarmente diffusa nelle aree di Vittoria, Comiso e Acate). Interessante anche la produzione casearia e la diffusione della zootecnia.

Il relativo benessere di queste aree ha favorito la crescita dell'immigrazione verso queste zone.

La presenza straniera nel territorio è un fenomeno stabile e di vecchia data, specialmente nel Comune di Santa Croce Camerina e di Ragusa ma ancora di più nella zona della piana di Vittoria (ove sono impegnati nel settore primario e molti trovano alloggio presso un centro di accoglienza gestito dalle autorità religiose).

Per quanto riguarda la dotazione dell'offerta scolastica di rapporto utenti-strutture e di stato dell'edilizia scolastica, la maggior parte delle scuole insistono, ovviamente su Ragusa in quanto Capoluogo, che offre anche servizi dell'istruzione universitaria.

Anche i tassi di dispersione sono estremamente contenuti, testimonianza dell'ulteriore situazione di relativo benessere socio-culturale dei residenti (sebbene non si possa negare che nelle zone spiccatamente agricole, come Vittoria, vi sia una percentuale più alta rispetto alla media provinciale, fenomeno spiegabile dalla necessità per i gruppi familiari di utilizzare tutte le risorse a disposizione all'interno del nucleo per l'espletamento delle attività contadine).

Non si può comunque negare che gli effetti della crisi comincino a farsi sentire sul territorio, numerose le richieste di assistenza di minori in stato d'indigenza perlopiù italiani che si rivolgono ai centri della Caritas operanti a Ragusa, Vittoria e Comiso.

Le categorie sociali più a rischio restano le famiglie ed i separati; tra gli immigrati in maggiore difficoltà si annoverano le comunità dell'Est.

Oltre al sostegno psicologico, la Caritas è impegnata nell'offrire un supporto materiale e talora anche finanziario (attraverso la concessione di forme di credito agevolate).

Vi è una diffusa presenza microcriminalità, attiva perlopiù nel settore delle rapine e dello spaccio di droga ascrivibili alla presenza di gruppi extracomunitari, in particolare nella zona costiera (da sottolineare la presenza di comunità di albanesi, che gestirebbero il traffico d'armi e di stupefacenti), ed è stato, contestualmente, registrato un incremento del numero degli attentati incendiari ai danni di operatori economici della zona di Scicli. È alta la percentuale di lavoro sommerso soprattutto nel campo dell'agricoltura e dei servizi commerciali.

Il Comune di Ragusa presenta un trend di crescita demografica costante e omogenea. La città, dopo un violento terremoto nel diciassettesimo secolo, è stata ricostruita in due aree contigue: Ibla e Ragusa Alta.

Ibla, la parte più antica i cui capolavori, sono stati dichiarati Patrimonio dell'Umanità dall'UNESCO e meta di un turismo culturale. Si trova su una zona collinare in basso, abitata perlopiù da anziani e da universitari provenienti dai comuni limitrofi ma anche da aree più distanti (in quest'area è collocata la sezione distaccata dell'università di Catania). Oltre a una scuola elementare, e un presidio di sicurezza, non sono presenti molti servizi e si registra l'assenza di spazi di aggregazione socio-culturale e di aree attrezzate. Le attività commerciali sono poche (necessarie al soddisfacimento delle esigenze primarie) poste in prossimità della piazza centrale intorno alla quale ci sono molti locali notturni e strutture ricettive. Vicino l'università sorge un'area di edilizia popolare.

A circa, tre chilometri, in posizione sopraelevata, sorge Ragusa che ospita la maggior parte dei servizi amministrativi e commerciali. Il centro storico di Ragusa è stato oggetto d'interventi di ripristino e restauro e lo stato degli edifici è abbastanza decoroso (in Corso Italia e nelle aree circostanti di via Dante e Via Trieste, risiede una minoranza extracomunitaria, ben integrata e impegnati nelle attività di serricoltura, mentre la scuola elementare di via Ecce Homo a ridosso del quartiere omonimo ha ancora oggi il più alto numero di scolari immigrati). Un lento spopolamento del centro da parte degli autoctoni, coinciso con la chiusura di decine di attività commerciali e da numerose abitazioni private in stato di totale abbandono, che ha portato allo sviluppo di un vasto sistema di edilizia residenziale (soprattutto nell'entroterra e in direzione di Comiso, ove si trovano anche alcune attività commerciali).

In direzione di Marina di Ragusa, vi è una vasta area industriale, la zona tra l'altro è

sede di ristoranti, hotel e diverse attività commerciali agricoli.

Buona risulta la distribuzione sul territorio delle forze di sicurezza, alcune zone sono soggette a sistemi di videosorveglianza, in particolare nelle zone pedonali (Ibla). Le forze di sicurezza assicurano il controllo su tutto il territorio, con posti di blocco nella zona Marina e nei punti d'ingresso delle città.

La città è percepita come sostanzialmente tranquilla da parte dei suoi abitanti, non esistono zone a rischio e l'edilizia pubblica è ben inserita nel tessuto urbanistico (evitando così la creazione di aree ghetto). La città tiene il primato in Sicilia per efficienza degli Uffici Prefettizi.

Tra i reati più diffusi si segnala la presenza di crimini riconducibili allo spaccio di sostanze stupefacenti (si registra un largo consumo di oppiacei nei soggetti di sesso maschile tra i trenta e i trentacinque anni, seguito dalla cocaina e dalla cannabis); si sta diffondendo anche il problema dell'abuso di alcool tra la popolazione giovanile; sporadici anche gli episodi di voyeurismo sessuale.

Sul territorio, e in particolare nelle aree costiere (spesso disabitate durante il periodo invernale e dotate di scarsa illuminazione pubblica, quindi più appetibili per i lari), si registra una pluralità di furti, che nell'ultimo periodo hanno interessato anche la zona industriale, ove si registrano rapine, vandalismo, furti, e spigolamento abusivo (relativo soprattutto a materiali ferrosi, rame, metalli vari).

Nonostante tali fenomeni non abbiano ancora assunto proporzioni preoccupanti, da più parti giunge la richiesta di un rafforzamento dei servizi di controllo su tutta la zona da parte delle Forze dell'Ordine che dovrebbero essere supportati dall'implementazione di un servizio di videosorveglianza nelle zone considerate più a rischio.

Tra l'altro ciò consentirebbe anche di contrastare il problema delle discariche abusive.

In tema ambientale va comunque ricordato che in molti edifici soprattutto a Ibla è presente l'amianto, la cui bonifica o rimozione, molto costosa, è lasciata a carico totale del cittadino che spesso non provvede, con grave danno della salute della comunità locale.

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