



MINISTRY FOR HOME AFFAIRS
AND NATIONAL SECURITY



**CRIME
PREVENTION**
KEEPING YOU SAFE



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Crime Prevention Strategy for the Maltese Islands 2017-2021

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Foreword by the Minister for Home Affairs and National Security



Looking ahead in Crime Prevention

A new chapter in the history of crime prevention in Malta is being written. A modern country is defined by its policies and strategies, and the initiatives it takes to create a better place for its citizens. As a government we are committed to strengthening the safety and security of our nation.

We are proud to present the first ever National Crime Prevention Strategy, to be implemented over a five year period. The aim is to streamline the activities of a number of entities working to prevent crime and reduce recidivism. The focus is on addressing actual risks and a commitment to address the needs of offenders, victims and their respective families.

This follows a thorough analysis of both official figures and data related to hidden and/or unknown crimes. Malta was one of the last remaining countries in the EU without a National Crime Prevention Strategy. Our approach was sporadic. Malta was never proactive when it came to strategically preventing the occurrence of crime, addressing the motivation of youth before they set out on criminal paths.

To register advancement in the field of crime prevention requires us to be drivers of change. 2015 figures show a generic trend line decrease in reported crimes locally though increases in specific categories. Today, crime is becoming faceless, contactless and conducted from a distance. The nature of victimhood and police investigations is changing. If we are to keep pace, if we are to stop these crimes, we need to be inventive.

The measures outlined in this document are based on what the evidence suggests are six main areas providing new ways of tackling crime prevention. The areas comprise schoolbased prevention initiatives, the drafting of a Youth Justice Act, enhanced policing for Crime Prevention, and the identification of crime families to apply appropriate mitigating actions that address their particular needs. The other recommendations are actions to reduce the incidence of specific crimes, re-offending and re-victimisation, and the design of situational crime prevention measures.

As with so many challenges we face as a society, prevention is better than cure. Stopping crime before it happens and preventing the harm caused to victims must be preferable to picking up the pieces afterwards. This is the philosophy that drove us to the drafting of this document and to measures that are achievable. I am confident stakeholders will implement them with enthusiasm.

Hon. Mr Carmelo Abela

SYNTHESIS

In synthesis, the proposals emanating from this strategic document aim at streamlining the activities of a number of entities in conjunction with a focus on the phased approaches required for the eventual implementation of the strategy requirements. A risk-factor approach guided by academic research findings is proposed in view of crime prevention and the reduction of recidivism. The focus is being set on addressing actual risks and the need to be committed towards the needs of offenders, victims and their respective families. A number of specialised initiatives such as community policing and target policing have been outlined whilst highlighting that crime control goes beyond policing as has been experienced to date. Such entails the active collaboration of residents, government and private organisations together with NGOs as stakeholders, which partnership is forecasted to pave the way to enhanced trust and public safety.

Schools have been identified as the ideal places to reach children and youths through costeffective initiatives expected to divert criminal career development. This will be enhanced through proposals related to youth justice services that will inject a flexible approach to reducing the rate and severity of offending.

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Introduction: Conceptualising on crime prevention

01

The '*What Works?*' research has put rehabilitation back on the agenda focusing on the reintegration of ex-offenders to mainstream society (Israel & Chui, 2006). Inversely, other research claiming that '*Nothing works*' has undoubtedly questioned rehabilitation initiatives (Martinson, 1974). Also, to date the incapacitation of offenders through imprisonment has been central to penal policy in Malta. The increasing number of convictions across the decades bears witness to a situation that, despite the few alternatives to imprisonment (mainly probation, suspended sentence and community service orders), custodial sanctions are more popular than non-custodial ones in Malta (Leppi-Seppala, 2011; Formosa Pace, 2015).

On the other hand, the Restorative Justice Act which came into effect in 2012, enabled a rehabilitative dimension through the introduction of measures such as parole. In turn, the **Crime Prevention Policy 2017-2021** outlined in this document is aimed at putting on the national agenda crime prevention and crime reduction in the Maltese islands primarily through the adoption of a risk focused approach. It is to be highlighted that the focus **here is to build on existing services and not to replicate any, placing crime prevention on the national agenda for the first time in the local context**. Also a number of areas have been identified by stakeholders in the consultation process which include the issues of human trafficking, mental health issues (children, youths and prison population) and fraud that need to be taken on board. However, one has to note that such phenomena require further academic research so as to be able to draft initiatives based on research evidence.

A risk focused policy agenda is more sensible and cost-effective as it targets actual not imaginary risks (Ugwndike, 2011). Thus, this calls for moving away from a model which has throughout decades focused on punishments as attested by incarceration rates in Europe (Leppi-Seppala, 2011) to a more pragmatic model focusing on risk management. Such a scenario can be envisaged as comparable to the shift from an era of mass incarceration rates to an era where European countries are focusing primarily on the politicisation of crime control. Such a change will be accommodated by injecting a specialised model of policing through the introduction of community policing ⁽¹⁾ (Carr, 2012) and target policing ⁽²⁾ (Newton, 2016).

Additionally, the motivations underlying this crime prevention strategy allow for a departure from repressive action and individual target hardening to one focusing primarily on strategies that will be implemented on a national scale. This is made possible after having examined crime trends across decades and phenomena related to the dark figure of crime ⁽³⁾. Thus, a wide range of initiatives particularly focusing on children and youths are being proposed. This is done in light of established research that claims that most crime is committed by youths whilst few of them persist to pursue a criminal career towards adulthood (Moffitt, 1993); schools are the best places to address the needs of children and youths (Theimann, 2016); and research emphasising the need for youth support services within the community and research highlighting that education factors could interchangeably act as crime preventers or crime promoters (Ekblom, 2010).

Furthermore, the focus here is also to identify issues linked to non-reporting of crimes identified in the Crime Victimization Survey (Formosa Pace, Formosa, Azzopardi, Calafato, Calafato Testa et al., 2015) and concentrate on scenarios that could lead to non-reporting and other psychosocial phenomena. Interestingly, as an enhancement to the debate, Stummvoll (2012) posits that most criminologists in Europe have taken on board urban planning, environmental designs and social area management, identified in Malta through the Formosa (2007) spatial analysis of crime, land use and social aspect of the islands' society.

In this way crime prevention is perceived as 'natural control' as citizens become partners to crime control together with law enforcement entities. Furthermore, the focus is on creating spaces where people feel safe through CPTED (Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design). Nonetheless, change is being seen through the scenarios where the use of technical target hardening techniques such as locks, electronic CCTV cameras and alarm systems are being complemented by psychologically and socially effective crime prevention strategies. In effect, residents work on strengthening recognition and attachment and subsequently reduce anonymity (Newman, 1976). This mirrors Giddens' (2009) concept of the social context wherein the social context is 'modified by and exists because of human action' based on his work on Structuration theory that depicts a realisation that exclusive focusing on the offender or the offence kept the understanding of crime mitigation from realising its reason d'être. It is only when the two pivots are brought together within a social construct that is the physical, social and natural environments that mitigation can occur. Additionally, community action reinforces social control and paves way to collective efficacy.

Interestingly, Reiner (2000) highlights that 'good policing may help preserve social order but it cannot produce it'. On the other hand, there exists an ongoing struggle between crime and control at community level, strengthened by eventualities where once law-enforcement agencies are perceived as legitimate, moral alignment between law enforcement agencies and public is likely to prevail (Hough, 2013). A case in point is that neighbourhood watch schemes introduced in a number of localities in Malta have unsuccessfully striven to succeed, often at times falling through in the first phases of the effort.

It is acknowledged that one of the main challenges of this strategy is to get the community actively involved in crime prevention. It is reiterated that this is key to the success of the strategies in the light of research highlighting that there exists a relationship between crime, land use, time and space, more evident in small islands and insular communities (Formosa, 2007).

Nonetheless, one major challenge is that of transforming principles into good practices (Hough, 2013). Millie (2013) poses a very valid question 'do police really have to intervene in every kind of emergency?' Police find themselves engaging in tasks that overlap with the role of social workers and probation officers, serve as emergency or disaster managers as well as stewards and security officers in public events. Hence, the role of the police stretches from crime control to social service duties to that of public order (Millie, 2013). This has yielded an undesirable scenario in most European countries, that of the enlargement of police tasks which is a stressor in itself, and the relative increased expectations of the general public for more results, affectivity and efficiency. Also, if such expectations are not met consequently a lack of trust is likely to prevail which is harmful to crime reduction. In turn, the police cannot work in such scenarios in isolation with other social partners where Banton (1964) highlights that in prevention the police are only one of the many agencies of social control.

Another important issue relates to moral panic; the role of the media and social media in the amplification, intensification and exaggeration of crime prevalence examples: the 2005 'hunt for the hoodies' in the United Kingdom and the 2014/15 burglaries in Sliema serve as cases in point.

In both settings, the media undoubtedly amplified the dimension of risk jeopardising the fact that the crime was displaced which in turn effectively hindered the police in mitigation and closure of cases. This said, it is acknowledged that trying to prevent this does posit a major challenge even more so since crime in itself generates sensationalism and on the other hand the use of social is embedded in our lifestyle. Scholars in the UK have pushed forwards the 'reassurance gap' by targeting the issues that matter most to the public.

This said, the public needs to be well informed through research on crimes and crime patterns. Identifying priorities and prioritising problems thus posits a major issue in understanding crime and its prevention. Consequently, one of the remits of this strategy is to target concerns related to the perception of risks and their mitigation within a cohesive construct across the entities and interested stakeholders, since issues of divergence can cause frustration and elicit moral panic.

Following extensive consultations with relevant stakeholders, the Ministry for Home Affairs and National Security is publishing this document that outlines a number of policy initiatives entitled the Crime Prevention Policy 2017-2021.

The document is structured in 6 Key Areas that incorporate the following:

- **School-based prevention**
- **Youth justice**
- **Policing for Crime prevention**
- **Crime families**
- **Focus on the reduction of the incidence of specific crimes, re-offending and revictimisation**
- **Situational crime prevention designs**

(1) Community Policing: policing in collaboration with residents and organisations working together in crime control in a specific geographical area.

(2) Target Policing: evidence based policing.

(3) Dark Figure of Crime: crimes that goes unreported.





School-based Prevention

02

Schools are the most practical places to reach children and youths where many different children and youths interact on a daily basis. Also, it is the place where children and youths face social interactions, exercise decision making, face conflicts as well as situations of aggression. Whilst a number of pro-social attitudes and positive relationships serve as preventers to less desirable behaviours, conversely, the presence of promoters which act as 'negative' stimuli, such as hostility and lack of sense of belonging, are also equally unavoidable. This said, research adopting a social learning perspective highlights that 'the school is an important place for crime prevention' (Theimann, 2016). Nonetheless, a memorandum of understanding needs to be established between the Ministry for Home Affairs and Ministry of Education in order to implement the strategies outlined below. It is to be highlighted that the Ministry of Education has worked on and has data related to issues such as absenteeism, which is identified in literature as a crime promoter. Hence, such collaboration will facilitate the operational aspects of proposals within this key area in its entirety. Furthermore, this could also pave way to the establishment of a unit within the Psycho-Social Services of the Education Department that focuses specifically on crime prevention.

The focus within this context is on research that claims that if a 'child steps off on the wrong foot' (Moffitt, 1993) and finds it difficult to overcome successfully a traumatic experience (Garbarino, 2003; Rutter, 2012), s/he would be inclined to remain in an unconventional path. In summary, the accumulated consequences together with the inability to make up for lost opportunities may be propagated by persistent offending (Moffitt, 1993). It is to be highlighted that the three proposals outlined below shall focus on the prevention and the reduction of violence and aggression. Also, it is to be highlighted that such programmes are more effective if complemented by programmes run in the community supporting parents and guardians of children at risk.

2.1 SPECIALISED PROGRAMMES: REDUCING VIOLENCE

The rationale behind this initiative is to run a specialised programme in a number of schools particularly focusing on those areas identified as hotspots of domestic violence and potential high risk youths. It is highlighted that these hotspots were identified from Formosa's (2016) crime trend analysis. Additionally, youths who manifest some form of social and emotional behavioural difficulties are at risk, even more so if this is compounded by other risks such as absenteeism, falling behind at school and the presence of social drawbacks within their families.

These risk and mediating factors are considered as transmission proxies to the incidence of violence and crime in an extensive number of research studies (Biljevald & Wijkman, 2009). On the other hand, practitioners and professionals working with children and youths in the Maltese Islands are immensely concerned about youths aged less than 14 years who are involved in crime, abuse of substances and even more so their attitudes towards delinquent behaviour. The younger than (<) 14 years' age group constitute a 'hot potato' and similar to other youths face a number of issues (psychological, mental health, violence, stressors, crime, alcohol, gambling, exposure to crime amongst other factors as crime promoters) which are unknown and/or unidentified and/or not tackled. Hence, the need to address crime promoters in youths is also acknowledged by the various professionals working in the field.

It is to be highlighted that the agencies Sedqa and Caritas Malta which have been operational in the local scene for decades, provide a wide range of services related to substance misuse, dependencies, family support, school programmes, inmates' programmes and outreach just to mention a few. Consequently, the focus here is to address lacunae and not to replicate on services that are already in place and such would constitute a waste of resources.

Programmes intended to reduce violence by youths and victimisations of youths should focus on a wide-range of areas. These include anger management, impulsivity control, emotional control, empathy, problem solving, conflict leading to violence, behaviour modification, positive social skills and social competency skills which are eventually aimed to bring about the development of resilience once the struggle to transform oneself is practised.

This said, it is important to highlight that the success of such programmes is heavily dependent on whether or not adolescents acknowledge the need for behavioural modification and eventually react positively (Zemel, Ronel & Einat, 2016). The need to focus on mental health issues featured prominently in the feedback provided during the consultation phase. This said, it is being recommended that research on mental health phenomena vis-à-vis delinquency and crime should be on the agenda of policy makers which findings would guide one to draft specific initiatives once identified.

As envisaged, the situation is complex since crime prevention was not on the agenda of policy makers to date, and youths do not constitute a homogenous group. Each child/youth is unique, hence such entails understanding emotions, cognitive-development and different behaviours at the individual level. Nonetheless, the absence of residential settings that address the needs of youths at risk which risk is augmented by their family setting, does not alleviate the current challenges practitioners and educators are facing on a daily basis. This said, as per Budget 2017, FSWS has been tasked to set up a therapeutic unit for youths.



Consequently, the need for a service in the Maltese Islands emanates from a number of scenarios which include the following:

- i) domestic violence incidence rates;
- ii) a significant number of youths who were prosecuted before the Juvenile Court (January 2007 and July 2015) faced charges involving the use of violence to accomplish the crime such as 'offence against the person' (49.7%) and 'offence affecting public order' (17.7%). Additionally, most crimes committed by Maltese youths happen during weekdays and during school hours (28.7%), followed by weekend nights (16.7%), and weekday nights (12.3%) (Formosa Pace et al., 2015);
- iii) crime families in Malta are violent prone (Formosa Pace, 2015), however it is yet unknown whether violence precedes the crime or vice versa; and
- iv) reports of violence manifested by youths towards their parents/guardians.

In order to tackle the phenomenon, a phased approach is outlined below based on a foundational and an implementation approach.

Phase 1: (2017-2018)

- **Step 1:** Identification of schools functionally enabled to run programmes. This will be carried out in view of the official reports of domestic violence by geographical area;
- **Step 2:** Identification of staff needed to run and implement programmes and identification of training needed for professionals;
- **Step 3:** Exploring the possibility of using the settings (LSZ s ⁽⁴⁾ & Learning Centres, ALP ⁽⁵⁾; Youth hubs) that are already in place;
- **Step 4:** Set up of a strategy group (Education, Psycho-social teams from the respective colleges, Police, Department of Probation and Parole, Ministry for Family and Social Security that will work on:
 - i) the identification of referral method (Police, Juvenile Court, Probation and Parole Department);
 - ii) draft programmes intended to meet the needs of high risk groups;
 - iii) identify the role of the key worker (Refer to Youth Intervention Teams, page 23) wherein every youth enrolled in the programme would have his/her mentor who will monitor overall progress, refer to services when necessary in a way that service hopping is minimized and to ensure that in cases wherein the youth concerned is a service user of another agency, services are coordinated in a way that the situation does not present itself as being overwhelming; and
- **Step 5:** Training of professionals identified in Step 2 working in the delivery of specialised programmes focusing on reducing violence.

Phase 2: (as from scholastic year 2018-2019)

Implementation of programmes must be carried out once all steps identified in phase 1 are accounted for. Geographical areas that require immediate attention include the localities of **Birzebbugia**, **San Pawl il-Bahar** and **Floriana** as attested by domestic violence risk maps identified in the Formosa annual report (Crime Malta, 2016). It is to be highlighted that domestic violence reports 'pertain to stalking, slight bodily harm, grievous bodily harm and psychological harm' (Formosa, 2016, p. 8). On the other hand, proposing a nation-wide initiative is not feasible at this stage. This said, undoubtedly this initiative will set the foundation for drafting other programmes in the future, focusing on a number of other potential hotspots of violence.

(4) Learning Support Zones

(5) Alternative Learning Programmes

2.2 VIOLENCE PREVENTION CURRICULUM (2017-2020)

Significant universal school based programmes run in Europe focus on a number of areas (self-esteem, problem solving, positive social skills etc.) are already tackled during the PSCD ⁽⁶⁾ lessons in primary and secondary schools. Research shows that from a social-learning perspective, the use of speakers whom Theimann (2016) defines as ‘external people’, is far less effective than running programmes by teachers who have already established some form of close relationships with students. Consequently, close teacher-student relationships are considered as promoters to learning.

It is acknowledged that a number of areas and learning outcomes outlined in the running of universal violence prevention programmes such as those outlined above are already integrated in the PSCD syllabus. However, the need for a ‘violence-prevention curriculum’ is felt considering the incidence of reported domestic violence on a national scale, unreported sexual offences and ‘violent prone’ youths as attested by Juvenile Court data. Topics such as substance misuse, alcohol, cybercrime and bullying have been taken on board for a number of years. In summary, the focus should be on ‘attitudes towards aggression and violence’; the phenomenon of pornography; diversity and tolerance; respect and social inclusion from primary (Year 4) stages towards the secondary level. However, a number of subjects could be roped in themes other than PSCD to ensure that a cross-thematic approach is adopted. Such subjects include Religion, Social Studies and Ethics. The phased aspects outlined below posit the proposed approach.

(6) Personal, social and career development



Phase 1: (2017)

A proposal is being made to set up a think tank composed of professionals particularly PSCD, Religion, Social Studies and Ethics teachers; police; social workers; community workers; youth workers; mental health professionals; criminologists and professionals involved in victim support. The focus is:

- i) to identify and establish those key areas which require further beefing up such as emotional literacy;
- ii) the examining of programmes carried out abroad;
- iii) drafting of a 'violence prevention curriculum';
- iv) drafting of booklets for primary schools (year 4 to year 6);
- v) creation of video clips that could be used in secondary schools;
- vi) exploring curricula that focus on 'conflict resolution'; and
- vii) identification of training for teaching staff.

Phase 2: (2018)

Training of teachers through in-service courses, seminars and professional development sessions on violence prevention curriculum. It is to be highlighted that awareness and training are deemed a must for effective delivery of the proposed curriculum.

Phase 3: (2019-2020)

Implementation stage of the drafted curriculum.





2.3 COLLEGE BASED DESIGNS

A number of crime promoters to delinquent behaviour are school related such as truancy, absenteeism, poor academic achievement (Farrington, 2000; Loeber & Stouthamer-Loeber, 1986), lack of sense of belonging and behavioural issues, amongst other factors. A combination of risk factors exerts a 'cumulative effect' (Besemer, 2012). Furthermore, from a social-learning perspective, schools are considered as fulcrum to the design and running of crime prevention programmes on a national scale. Also, this is the most practical place to reach different children and youths aged less than 16 years in a setting wherein they socially interact on a daily basis and the setting that represents the melting pot of families that reside in Malta.

This said, some form of preventive work has always been taken on board in schools in Malta. Also, FSWS has confirmed that the ESPAD report attests their commitment in such preventive work in schools. Nonetheless, a number of agencies do provide their expertise to the respective Colleges and educational settings. However, most initiatives lack a theoretical framework and research such as that carried out by Hahn, Fuqua-Whitley and Wethington et al. (2007) and Wilson, Lipsey and Derzon (2003), highlights that sessions/programmes delivered by 'lay and external people' are less effective. In other words, the speaker or facilitator delivering the session/programme is perceived as a stranger to the participants (Theimann, 2016). Nonetheless, from a social-learning perspective, positive relationships serve as promoters to learning. This is a key factor to the running of programmes which are ultimately aimed at fostering behavioural modification. Consequently, this proposal aims to go beyond meetings which are often held at administration level and intends to get a number of stakeholders on board inclusive of community involvement through Local Councils as outlined below.

The focus here is to set up a think tank of professionals hailing from the education sector, psychology, counselling, youth work, social work and criminology to work on drafting good practices to serve as school-based crime prevention strategies. The main rationale is to set the foundation for designing college-based programmes wherein each college will have its own universal programme intended to reduce crimes specific to its geographical area and address unique issues within respective colleges which issues could serve as risk and mediating factors to crime.

The involvement of Local Councils here is recommended considering that people closest to the problem/phenomena should be at the driving seat and such would also complement with concepts directly linked to community policing. It is to be highlighted that the main components of this programme are aimed to complement Proposal 2.2 Violence Prevention Curriculum.

The phased process will be carried out in 2 phases:

Phase 1 (2018-2019)

- i. Identification of risk factors to delinquency and crime;
- ii. Identification of rule breaking activities that take place within the walls of the respective schools;
- iii. Enhancing school capacity building exercises;
- iv. Creating 'schools within schools'; that is the set up and running of support units;
- v. Mentoring of school based programmes and/or campaigns;
- vi. Identification of potential barriers to behavioural modification, crime reduction and resistance to participation in proposed programmes/campaigns;
- vii. Organisation of focus groups to evaluate intervention components and optimise implementation of proposed programmes; and
- viii. Organisation of focus groups to work on proposing family based initiatives/programmes and community engagement.

Phase 2 (2019-2021)

The focus here is to bring on board a number of stakeholders such as parents/caregivers, students, staff working in schools and community members so as to design an ecological framework that is aimed to enhance school-based intervention programmes designed in Phase 1.

This is also intended to augment the cooperation and communication between all stakeholders. Furthermore, interested parties shall be engaged fully in the diagnosis of problems, plan objectives and design solutions.

The sections below outline a potential challenge that could affect the success of the initiatives outlined in this section School based Prevention outlining tangible and measureable outcomes.

Potential challenges: School based Prevention

A number of issues may serve as barriers to the initiatives outlined above. These include:

- i) unaddressed and unresolved personal issues of service users;
- ii) fidelity to the programme/s could be an obstacle (service users and service providers);
- iii) resistance to training;
- iv) failing to comprehend different attitudes towards violence;
- v) getting people/professionals from different walks of life on board;
- vi) involvement of parents and community members in voluntary activities; and
- vii) legal restrictions

Positive outcomes and measures

The effectiveness of the strategies that are outlined in this section of the Crime Prevention Strategy can be evaluated and measured by indicators, which include:

- i) Juvenile Court cases;
- ii) School records;
- iii) Acting out behaviours in schools: rule-breaking, truancy, class disruptions, damages to school property, classroom manners, fights and aggression; and
- iv) Measures of conduct behaviour: rule-breaking, physical and verbal aggression and defiance.



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PUL

Youth Justice 03

Criminal career research focuses on the onset, persistence, and desistance factors underling the development of criminal careers. The age of onset is that between 8 and 14 years followed by a phenomenon where youths become more crime prolific between the age of 15 and 19 years, when their offending activity reaches a peak. Research has shown that those youths aged between 20 and 29 years who manage to move out of crime and enter adulthood in a conformist way, manage to desist (Farrington, 1992). These youths are, according to Moffitt's (1993) typology, 'temporary offenders'. Desistance has been attributed to a series of factors ranging from marriage, migrating to 'better' neighbourhoods and even more so employment. These factors could act interchangeably act as crime preventers and crime promoters (Ekblom, 2010).

In synthesis, assortative partnering featuring in crime families in Malta, economic inactivity and exposure to crime within the family and at the community level, have been identified as risk/mediating factors to crime continuity across two to five generations of Maltese families (Formosa Pace, 2015).

The empirical rationale underlying the initiatives outlined in the two phases below centres on research that highlights that most crime committed by youths is temporary and only a 'few' develop criminal careers as persistent offenders. An extensive list of risk factors other than those outlined above, have been directly and/or indirectly linked to onset, persistence and the development of criminal careers. Furthermore, when a child 'steps on the wrong foot' (Moffitt, 1993, p.682) and remains in an unconventional path, the accumulated consequences when young are carried into adulthood limiting the opportunities for change and subsequently desistance.



More importantly, findings from research carried out in Malta highlights that a total of 875 cases were decided before the Juvenile Court in the Maltese Islands between January 2007 and July 2015. Interestingly almost half of the juvenile delinquents were aged 15 and slightly more than a quarter involved crimes committed by 14 year olds (Formosa Pace et al., 2015). Also, the age of the typical Maltese inmate is between 20-24 years. Furthermore, the Department of Probation and Parole, as at May 2016, registered an active case ⁽⁷⁾ load of 112 ⁽⁸⁾ juveniles aged less than eighteen.

On the other hand, the recent legal changes related to the age of criminal responsibility, constitutes an issue which is worrying a number of different stakeholders. It is being argued that there exists the possibility that youths aged less than 14 could think that they are 'untouchables' since they cannot be held accountable before their fourteenth birthday. On the other hand, one could counterargue that in the absence of both residential programmes targeting the needs of youths in crime and crime prevention programmes, prosecution will not alleviate the problem.

Furthermore, the potential involvement in criminal activity, of youths aged less than 14 could have turned out to be convenient in the planning and organisation of crime. Nonetheless, the risk of being involved in the planning and commission of crimes they are exposed to increases thanks to their criminal relatives and offenders in the community. This is accommodated through exposure to crime which has been identified as risk and/or a mediating factor to crime continuity in the Formosa Pace (2015) study, focusing on intergenerational offending in the Maltese Islands.

Additionally, aggressiveness inflicted by youths on other youths and on adults has over the recent years signalled a red light in terms of the exponential increase being experienced. The Department of Probation and Parole had registered around 30 cases (2016) of crimes where juveniles were adjudicated for inflicted violence on their respective parent/s and/or legal guardian/s. Also around 100 cases of child-parent violence were identified by Aenzija Appo which cases are being addressed. It is to be highlighted that the number of cases outlined here reflects only those juveniles who faced legal proceedings and consequently were referred to the said department. Furthermore, the Department of Probation and Parole in conjunction with Aenzija Appo will embark on a programme in collaboration with the University of Nottingham, as from 2017. The focus of this programme is to tackle the cases of child-parent violence. It is to be highlighted that Aenzija Appo is currently carrying out research focusing specifically on the phenomenon of child-parent violence.

Furthermore, the need of professionals working with youths is felt even more, however, this needs to be widened further, requiring a scenario where one needs to go beyond sitting on one's laurels in terms of the number of operational youth cafes, the number of colleges having a college based youth worker, the existent outreach services in the community carried out by youth workers through Leap Centres, Youth In Focus and the Adolescent Day Programme.

Interestingly, the Law Courts, Police, Correctional services and the Drug Offenders Rehabilitation Board do not employ youth workers even though their clients are mostly youths. This said, a number of professionals already working in the respective fields could be specifically trained in working with youths at risk of becoming chronic offenders. This is definitely doable and highly cost-effective.

Consequently, the strategies outlined below are intended to address the needs of specific target groups of **youths aged between 14 to 16 years** and who are often referred to in the literature as 'troubled youths' and **youths aged between 17 to 21** who are at risk of developing a criminal career should they persist in offending. This, in reference to youths who manifest delinquency and criminal tendencies and who are at risk of developing criminal careers, should they continue to engage in criminal activity as 'persistent offenders' towards adulthood (Moffitt, 1993). The strategies outlined below will set the foundation for another identified lacuna in our criminal justice system, that of having a **Youth Justice Act**.

(7) Probation order; social inquiry report; community service order; pre-sentence inquiry report.

(8) 24 females and 88 males.

Consequently, a 5-year action plan is proposed, which is intended to reduce crimes committed by youths and ultimately aims to facilitate desistance from crime throughout the life course. Also, one cannot consider that youths constitute a homogenous group and their social reality is dynamic, a situation synonymous to living in a globalised world. Subsequently, it is to be advised that this should be followed by an audit once this exercise is completed so as to guide the way forward. Nonetheless, a number of challenges have been identified which include substance abuse, consumption of alcohol, lack of safe entertainment spaces, the impact of the social media, the impacts of tourism and globalisation, bullying in its various forms, reckless driving, service hopping and to a certain extent absence of civic sense and social responsibility.

3.1 YOUTH INTERVENTION TEAMS

The implementation of the initiative proposed in this document is two-fold:

Phase 1: (Target year 2017-2018)

The set-up of a review panel ⁽⁹⁾ consisting of experts hailing from the Department of Probation and Parole, Police, Juvenile Court, Education - Psycho-Social Services, Mental Health Services, Ministry for Family and Social Security, Caritas Malta, University of Malta (Criminology, Youth and Community Studies, Psychology and Social Work) and Aenzija gaag.

The primary focus is that of implementing a thorough review of youth justice in Malta; from arrest to prosecution to sanctioning and treatment. This review will guide the proposed strategies and is also pivotal to the potential draft of a Youth Justice Act. Once this review is accomplished the main remit of this entity would be of identifying a pool of professionals, identification of training of professionals and deciding on the referral process necessary for implementing front-line services and youth intervention teams. Hence, this panel will change its role into a strategy committee that will outline the mechanisms that will allow for the implementation of the services outlined below.

Phase 2: (Target years 2019-2021).

The services outlined below are intended to run concurrently:

1. Front line services

- police contact directly intervention teams on the arrest of a youth;
- assistance provided when facing arrest, court charges and subsequent convictions;
- assistance to family members/caregivers/legal guardians when faced with criminal charges of their child/children; and
- ensuring that youths are supported and informed throughout the process which would lead to prosecution.

2. Intervention teams working with referred youths

- support youths referred by Police (those not facing criminal trials);
- help in supporting youths when awarded non-custodial sanctions;
- keep contact with youths in custody;
- monitor the progress of youths in schools;
- focus on empowerment: post-secondary initiatives, training and employability skills;
- ensure that youths are informed about and have access to services available; and
- establish the role of a key worker as a mentor to the youth referred to the intervention team. The key worker as mentor could refer his/her client to services when the need arises. The remit of the key worker is to be clearly outlined so as to avoid overlapping since there exists the possibility that youths referred to the intervention teams could be service users of services provided by other local entities.

(9) It is to be highlighted that wherever expert panels are being proposed throughout this policy document, the composition of such is to be gender balanced.



Policing for Crime Prevention 04

An analysis of the crime categories based on data emanating from the 2010-2015 (Formosa, 2016) period was carried out where the main and sub categories were examined, from which six main areas of crime were identified as meriting the most immediate intervention. The methodology used was that of the rate weighting of each crime category as a percentage of the total offences registered.

Whilst a number of offences related to vehicle theft, hit and run, were identified (Tables 1a and 1b), such were not included as the issue related to insurance and coverage mitigation as against direct intervention comprising a traumatised victim such as a person who experienced a household burglary. It is to be highlighted that non-reporting of 'theft of car', 'theft of moped', 'scooter, motorcycle and theft of bicycle', scored 0% in the crime victimisation survey, indicating clearly issues related to insurance coverage (Formosa Pace et al., 2015). The total number of offences registered in the period amounted to 94,542 offences of which 53% pertained to Theft, followed by Damage, Bodily Harm, Domestic Violence, Attempted Offences and Fraud.



Table 1a: Main Categories

Category	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2010-2015	% of total
Theft	7773	8522	8687	8468	8198	8654	50302	53.2
Damage	1937	1765	2613	4658	4106	4129	19208	20.3
Bodily Harm	1043	1107	1032	958	990	926	6056	6.4
Domestic Violence	659	848	1027	1024	1046	1205	5809	6.1
Attempted Offences	586	628	625	604	598	420	3461	3.7
Fraud	234	269	359	626	430	470	2388	2.5
Other	1074	1109	1275	1246	1280	1334	7318	7.8
Grand Total	13306	14248	15618	17584	16648	17138	94542	100

Table 1b: Sub Categories

Main	Sub	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2010-2015	% of total
Damage	Willful damage by other	1698	1564	1560	1416	1444	1306	8988	9.5
Theft	Pick-pocketing	501	696	1312	1469	1538	2030	7546	7.9
Damage	Inv. Damage by hit and run	58	34	806	2036	2117	2302	7353	7.8
Theft	Other theft	1010	1204	961	1287	1008	1174	6644	7.0
Theft	Theft from vehicle – interior	1219	1019	1203	1134	857	932	6364	6.7
Theft	Bar/restaurant – customers	633	909	956	602	724	706	4530	4.8
Bodily harm	SBH by physical force	748	817	753	663	741	646	4368	4.6
Theft	Residence – occupied	574	631	696	556	656	495	3608	3.8
Domestic violence	SBH with physical force	404	467	591	517	513	570	3062	3.2
Theft	Streets and public areas	370	414	423	338	439	403	2387	2.5
Theft	Theft from vehicle – exterior	398	427	358	390	427	337	2337	2.5
Domestic violence	Psychological harm	189	313	351	395	452	554	2254	2.4
Theft	Hotel – customers	427	582	350	302	261	321	2243	2.4
Theft	Theft from beaches	411	313	314	280	273	371	1962	2.1
Fraud	Fraudulent gains	201	218	298	495	344	354	1910	2.0
Theft	Theft of vehicle	372	364	307	325	242	229	1839	1.9
Theft	Farms and fields	219	237	210	258	214	170	1308	1.4
Theft	Retail outlets – premises	255	258	222	192	176	180	1283	1.4
Attempted offences	Theft – residence	182	176	216	162	239	133	1108	1.2
Theft	Residence – exterior	187	218	195	141	176	123	1040	1.1
Damage	Involuntary damage by other	12	10	99	288	296	310	1015	1.1
Theft	Retail outlets – customers	192	139	121	176	151	175	954	1.0
Drugs	Possession	156	154	170	164	166	143	953	1.0

In effect, the main categories chosen for the study due to their specific potential for impact analysis cover different aspects of crime pertaining to:

- the invasion of personal space and property: Theft (Pick-Pocketing and Residences that were occupied);
- the incidence of inter-personal offences: the main aspect covering Psychological Harm
- the offences of an economic nature; and
- the social scourges such as the Possession of Drugs.

Table 2 identifies the percentage weight related to the total number of crimes over the 2010-2015 period under study totaling 17.2% (94,542) of all such offences. Targeting these specific offences serves as the initial step in the crime prevention strategy as they offer a sizable percentage of all offences and which fall within a few categories as against the targeting of a larger number of crime categories spread over many themes.

The five sub-categories were analysed for their occurrence over space and time with a summary analysis for each. The incidence of Pick-Pocketing has reached a high rate that has increased over the years (covering 7.9% or 7546 of the offences registered in the period). The subcategory of theft from Occupied Residences (residences that have people residing in them), comprising 3.8% (3608) of all offences, followed by Psychological harm (Domestic Violence) amounting to 2.4% or 2254 incidents. The other two sub-categories under study include Fraudulent Gains at 2% or 1910 incidents and Possession of Drugs at 1% or 953 incidents.

Table 2: Percentage weight for the identified offences

Main and Sub-Category	Incidences	Percent
Theft: Pick-Pocketing	7546	7.9%
Theft: Residence – Occupied	3608	3.8%
Domestic Violence: Psychological Harm	2254	2.4%
Fraud: Fraudulent Gains	1910	2.0%
Drugs: Possession	953	1.0%
All Offences	94542	100%
Chosen Categories Net Weight	16271	17.2%

Location

The issue of location is a vital factor for the study of offences, particularly due to the fact that San Giljan registers high for the combined offences followed by Sliema, Valletta, San Pawl il-Bahar and Birkirkara, which towns comprise 55.3% of all offences. Interestingly there are some thematic hotspots that need to be taken into account in this study, particularly the high rates of pickpocketing registered in **San Giljan (54.5%)** and **Sliema (18.5%)**, Fraud in **Birkirkara (15.8%)**, Possession of Drugs in **Paola (17.1%)**, **San Pawl il-Bahar for Psychological Harm (8.5%)** and **Theft from Occupied Residences in San Giljan (9.1%)**. Table 3 and Figure 1 outline the findings from this thematic analysis.

Table 3: Offence Location

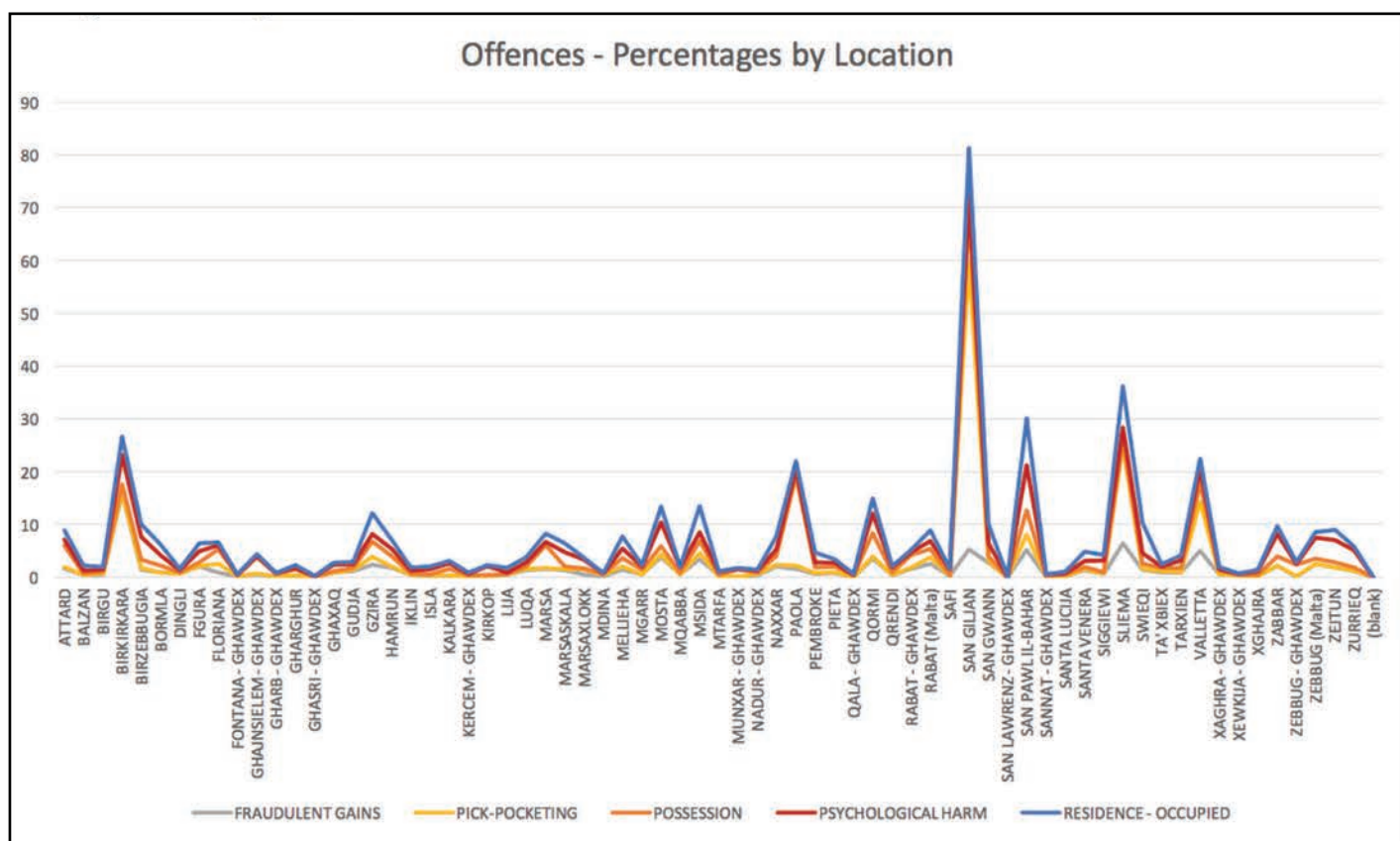
Locality	Fraudulent Gains	Pick-Pocketing	Possession	Psychological Harm	Residence - Occupied	Grand Total
SAN GILJAN	5.3	54.5	9.8	2.7	9.1	28.9
SLIEMA	6.4	18.5	1.4	2.0	7.9	11.5
VALLETTA	5.0	9.4	3.4	2.8	2.0	6.0
SAN PAWL IL-BAHAR	5.2	2.9	4.6	8.5	8.9	5.4
BIRKIRKARA	15.8	0.4	1.4	5.6	3.5	3.7
MSIDA	3.5	1.1	2.3	1.7	5.0	2.4
GZIRA	2.3	1.5	2.9	1.4	4.0	2.2
MOSTA	3.8	0.5	1.6	4.5	3.0	2.1
QORMI	3.5	0.4	4.4	3.7	2.9	2.0
PAOLA	1.6	0.6	17.1	1.4	1.4	1.9
SWIEQI	1.4	0.2	0.9	2.1	5.7	1.9
SAN GWANN	2.7	0.3	0.9	2.5	3.6	1.6
RABAT (Malta)	2.5	1.2	1.6	1.6	2.0	1.6
BIRZEBBUGIA	1.4	0.3	1.6	4.3	2.4	1.5
ZABBAR	2.1	0.1	1.8	4.2	1.5	1.3
ZEJTUN	1.8	0.1	0.9	4.3	1.9	1.3
MELLIEHA	1.4	0.6	1.6	1.9	2.3	1.3
FLORIANA	0.9	1.7	2.7	0.8	0.6	1.3
NAXXAR	2.0	0.3	1.7	1.3	2.5	1.2
ZEBBUG (Malta)	2.4	0.1	0.9	3.9	1.1	1.2
ATTARD	1.5	0.3	4.1	1.2	1.7	1.1
HAMRUN	1.8	0.3	1.9	1.5	1.6	1.0
MARSASKALA	1.3	0.1	0.5	2.8	1.7	1.0
MARSA	1.6	0.2	4.3	0.6	1.6	1.0
BORMLA	0.9	0.1	1.3	2.0	2.0	0.9
FGURA	2.0	0.1	0.7	2.1	1.4	0.9
MARSAXLOKK	0.5	1.0	0.1	1.7	0.4	0.8
ZURRIEQ	1.1	0.1	0.6	3.3	0.7	0.8
SANTA VENERA	1.3	0.1	0.4	1.2	1.7	0.8
PEMBROKE	0.6	0.2	1.0	1.0	1.8	0.8
SIGGIEWI	0.6	0.0	0.3	2.1	1.1	0.6
LUQA	1.3	0.3	0.4	0.8	0.9	0.6
RABAT – GHAWDEX	1.5	0.3	2.4	0.5	0.4	0.6
TARXIEN	0.9	0.0	0.8	1.4	1.0	0.6
PIETA	0.7	0.2	1.0	0.8	0.7	0.5
GUDJA	1.2	0.3	0.3	0.7	0.4	0.5
GHAJNSIELEM – GHAWDEX	0.5	0.3	3.0	0.3	0.3	0.5
TA' XBIEX	0.9	0.3	0.6	0.3	0.4	0.4
GHAXAQ	0.9	0.0	0.2	1.2	0.4	0.4
BALZAN	0.4	0.0	0.2	0.5	1.0	0.4

Crime Prevention Strategy

Locality	Fraudulent Gains	Pick-Pocketing	Possession	Psychological Harm	Residence - Occupied	Grand Total
BIRGU	0.4	0.3	0.3	0.4	0.5	0.4
KALKARA	0.3	0.0	1.3	1.0	0.5	0.4
ISLA	0.3	0.1	0.2	0.9	0.6	0.3
KIRKOP	0.2	0.0	0.2	1.6	0.2	0.3
LIJA	0.5	0.0	0.0	0.4	0.8	0.3
QRENDI	0.4	0.1	0.4	1.0	0.3	0.3
IKLIN	0.4	0.0	0.2	0.6	0.6	0.3
MGARR	0.5	0.1	0.8	0.7	0.2	0.3
NADUR – GHAWDEX	0.3	0.3	0.3	0.3	0.2	0.3
GHARGHUR	0.3	0.0	1.2	0.3	0.5	0.3
ZEBBUG – GHAWDEX	0.1	0.1	2.2	0.1	0.3	0.3
MQABBA	0.5	0.0	0.2	1.1	0.1	0.3
XAGHRA – GHAWDEX	0.5	0.0	0.7	0.2	0.4	0.2
DINGLI	0.7	0.0	0.1	0.4	0.3	0.2
SAFI	0.3	0.0	0.1	1.1	0.1	0.2
XGHAJRA	0.2	0.0	0.2	0.7	0.2	0.2
MDINA	0.2	0.3	0.2	0.1	0.0	0.2
MUNXAR – GHAWDEX	0.1	0.1	1.4	0.1	0.1	0.2
MTARFA	0.3	0.0	0.1	0.7	0.1	0.2
SANTA LUCIJA	0.2	0.0	0.3	0.2	0.3	0.1
KERCEM – GHAWDEX	0.1	0.0	0.2	0.3	0.2	0.1
XEWKIJA - GHAWDEX	0.4	0.0	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.1
GHARB - GHAWDEX	0.1	0.0	0.5	0.0	0.1	0.1
QALA - GHAWDEX	0.0	0.0	0.3	0.1	0.2	0.1
SANNAT - GHAWDEX	0.1	0.0	0.1	0.3	0.1	0.1
FONTANA - GHAWDEX	0.2	0.0	0.2	0.1	0.1	0.1
GHASRI - GHAWDEX	0.0	0.0	0.1	0.0	0.1	0.0
SAN LAWRENZ - GHAWDEX	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Grand Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0



Figure 1: Offences by Location



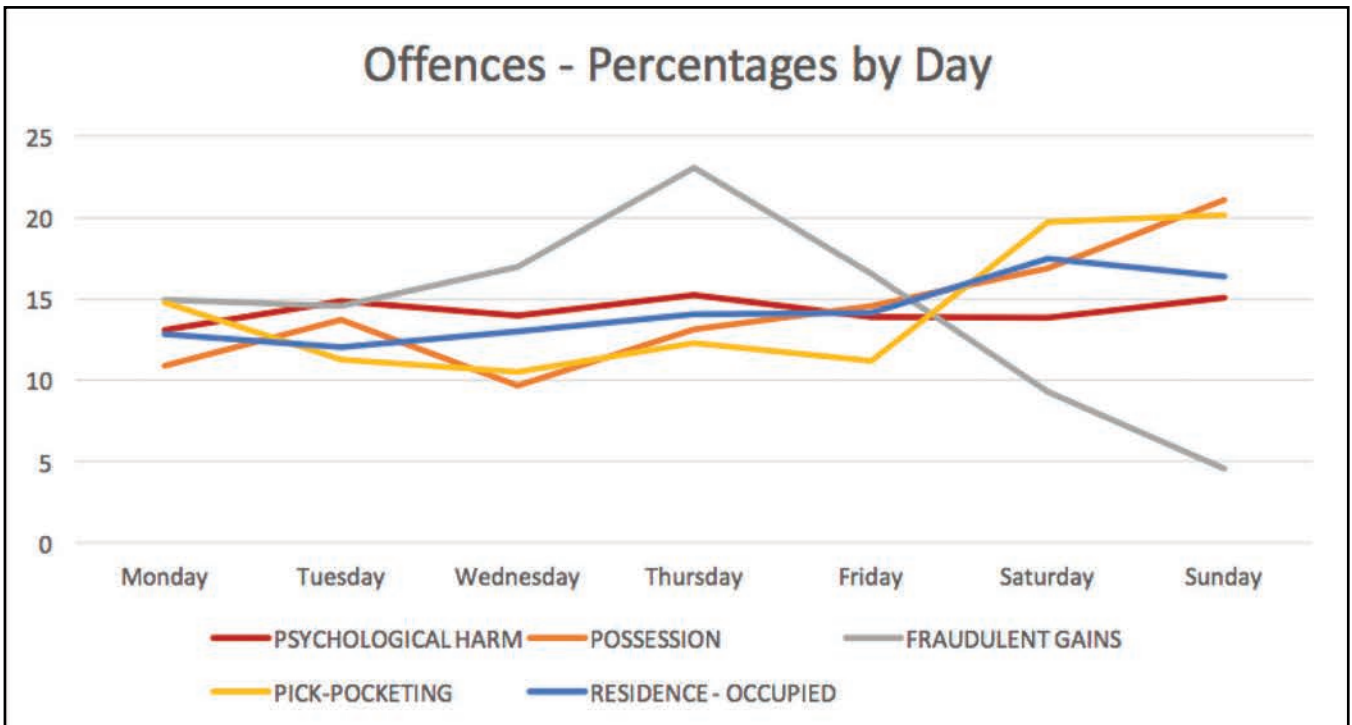
Temporal Aspects (Day and Time of Offences)

The issue of day and time that offences that were reported over the 2010-2015 period depict marked differences for the different crime categories. Table 4 and Figure 2 depict the day when such offences occur where notably, **Pick-Pocketing is heavily present during the weekend and the early hours of Monday (flowing over from the Sunday-night presence in the recreational zones)**. In terms of **drug possession such is also the case for Friday, Saturday and Sunday**. Interestingly Fraud registers low incidence during the weekend and high midweek, such being related to commercial activity that is not necessarily related to recreation and entertainment but a wholly different activity that would need further study. Also, results from the crime victimisation survey indicate that 87% of the respondents claimed that they would not file a police report related to fraud. In terms of **Theft from Residence such peeks during the weekend and is relatively stable during the week days**. **Domestic Violence occurs throughout the week as inter-personal crime** does not exhibit temporal specificities in terms of day.

Table 4: Day of Offence

	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday	Grand Total
Psychological Harm	13.1	14.9	14.0	15.3	13.9	13.8	15.1	100.0
Possession	10.9	13.7	9.7	13.1	14.6	16.9	21.1	100.0
Fraudulent Gains	14.9	14.6	17.0	23.1	16.5	9.3	4.6	100.0
Pick-Pocketing	14.8	11.3	10.5	12.3	11.2	19.7	20.1	100.0
Residence - Occupied	12.8	12.1	13.0	14.1	14.2	17.5	16.4	100.0

Figure 2: Day of Offence



In terms of the time that the offences occur, such is depicted on an hourly basis as per the time of report (not the actual time the offence occurred unless the victim was aware of such). This is due to the occurrence where victims may realise that they were victimized after a number of hours or days. Table 5 and Figure 3 depict the hourly peaks for offence occurrence, showing that there are marked differences between the categories.

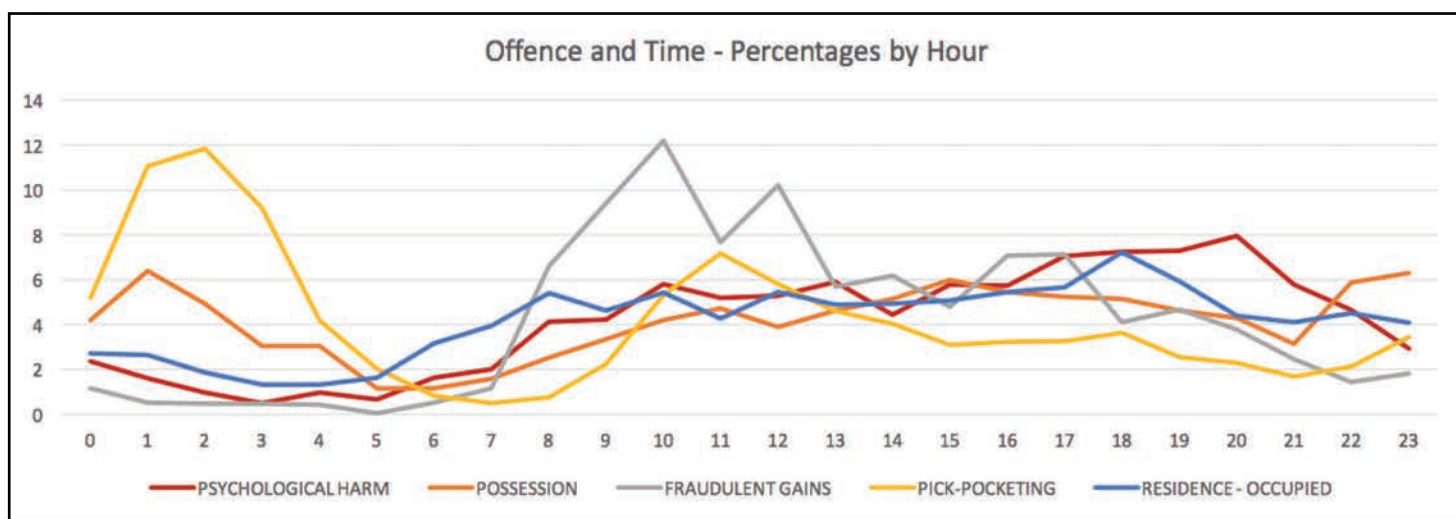
Psychological harm starts early in the day from 08:00 increasing steadily throughout the day peaking at 20:00 showing the presence of continuous harm and stress on the victim. This needs further study through an analysis of the qualitative aspects of the report helping researchers to identify whether offences are related to the return from home by type of complaint and whether such incidents reflect the status, age and nationality of the victim and or offender, as in such cases the offender is known.

Possession of drugs falls mainly within the late night and early hours of the morning, which coincides with the weekend entertainment/recreation activity. The incidence also reflects the effectiveness of the security and policing forces in netting such activity. In terms of fraud, such relates directly to the nature of the activity where offences are registered prior to noon and during the time when retail reopens between 16:00 and 17:00. Reporting on Pick-Pocketing, there is a significant spike between 01:00 and 03:00, once again related to the weekend activity and the loss of the victim’s personal space in the recreation/entertainment zones. Interestingly, another peak is identified between 10:00 and 12:00, where such offences are related to the retail zones and other entertainment activities. These activities and the offence itself need further in-depth study as this offence category was responsible for a rapid increase and which has been marked as the main phenomenon changer for 2014-2015 change analysis due to its combined effect on the negation of decrease in crime registered over the previous year (Formosa, 2016 - CrimeMalta 2015 Annual Report). In terms of Thefts from Residences, whilst an initial increase is registered between 06:00 and 08:00 the rate stays relatively stable up to 17:00, peaks at 18:00 when residents return home and then declines due to the fact that offences occurring when residents are within the building is lower due to the perceived risk for the offender.

Table 5: Time of Offence

Time of Day (Hour)	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	Grand Total
Psychological Harm	2.4	1.6	1.0	0.5	1.0	0.7	1.6	2.0	4.1	4.2	5.8	5.2	5.3	5.9	4.4	5.8	5.7	7.1	7.2	7.3	7.9	5.8	4.7	2.9	100
Possession	4.2	6.4	4.9	3.0	3.0	1.2	1.2	1.6	2.5	3.4	4.2	4.7	3.9	4.6	5.1	6.0	5.5	5.2	5.1	4.6	4.3	3.1	5.9	6.3	100
Fraudulent Gains	1.2	0.5	0.5	0.5	0.4	0.1	0.5	1.2	6.6	9.4	12.2	7.7	10.2	5.7	6.2	4.8	7.1	7.1	4.1	4.7	3.8	2.4	1.4	1.8	100
Pick-Pocketing	5.2	11.1	11.8	9.2	4.2	2.0	0.8	0.5	0.8	2.2	5.3	7.2	5.8	4.6	4.0	3.1	3.2	3.3	3.6	2.5	2.3	1.7	2.1	3.4	100
Residence – Occupied	2.7	2.6	1.9	1.3	1.3	1.6	3.2	3.9	5.4	4.6	5.4	4.3	5.5	4.9	4.9	5.1	5.5	5.7	7.2	5.9	4.4	4.1	4.5	4.1	100

Figure 3: Time of Offence



The section below presents a discussion on the identified initiatives for crime reduction and prevention following the analysis of police reports (Formosa, 2016) and findings from the Crime Victimization Survey (Formosa Pace et al., 2015).

4.1 POLICING FOR CRIME PREVENTION: PROPOSED INITIATIVES

The first initiative focuses on the importance of best professional practices which are undoubtedly enhanced by investments in training both for new recruits and current members of the Police Force. The second strategy focuses on the circumstance that police operate within a community in which the need to establish close relationships is deemed important for effective policing (Millie & Bullock, 2013). The ‘see like a citizen’ phenomenon (Innes, 2010) is paramount to operating realistically at local levels; spending time in communities, understanding residents and providing information through formal mechanisms such as public meetings. This also requests departing from a scenario wherein ‘we are too much stuck on traditional policing’ whilst it is acknowledged that such venture is challenging, and move towards a system wherein training needs to be specialised, organised and regular.

4.1.1 TRAINING: (2017-2019)

A number of areas have been identified as proposed training topics for the police. The focus here is on a number of topics which have been identified after having examined official police reports that attest to crime trends over the decades (1950 to 2010), findings from the Crime Victimization Survey (2015), Juvenile Court Cases (January 2007 to July 2015) and following consultations.

It is to be acknowledged that a number of courses have and are being offered thanks to the collaboration between psychologists at Mount Carmel Hospital and the Police as well as Aenzija Appo. These courses focus primarily on dealing with and supporting domestic violence victims. However, the need for more specialised training for domestic violence, sexual offending (victims' needs and offenders' issues) and community policing have been identified as major priorities. Other areas for further training include the phenomena of pickpocketing and shoplifting, elderly safety, intellectual disabilities as well as mental health first aid and awareness. The elderly constitute a vulnerable target group and are often to a certain extent ignored.

4.2 COMMUNITY POLICING

This is perhaps the most misjudged and to a great extent one of the most abused concepts in police management in most jurisdictions often because the notion of community policing is often misunderstood. Additionally, it is often mistaken for a programme aimed at targeting soft crimes. However, community policing goes beyond the traditional method of law enforcement since it primarily aims at working in collaboration with residents, public and private organisations in crime control in a specific geographical area and/or neighbourhood. It seems that the current trends in Europe are pushing towards the adoption of this approach which is considered 'smart' and more importantly effective consequently shifting away from a model in which police operate adopting the 'general practitioner' stance. In other words, this strategy shall bring about a shift in the thinking processes about policing moving away from focusing primarily on individual police performance towards a mechanism that fosters cooperation and moral alignment between the police and the public. In a nutshell, the Criminal Justice system is not the sole solution to phenomena related to public safety issues.



At this point one would ask what are the ingredients that foster effectiveness in community policing as against the traditional policing methods? First, through implementing community policing one is acknowledging that crime control needs to be taken up by a number of stakeholders. Also, the latter are active partners and mutually responsible for the identification and resolving of problems. Furthermore, officers are encouraged to spend more time in developing and building relationships with residents, businesses, schools and organisations that sit within a particular space considered as an activity field (Wikström, 2008). In other words, activities which were previously likely to be perceived as diversions from the 'real police work' would be taken upon as the core of policing. It is highlighted that such proposals need to be tuned in line with the recent survey results and recommendations as part of the proposed strategy for Policing (Refer to the Parliamentary Social Affairs Committee session held on July 18 2016 which highlighted the need for preventive patrol, routine activity and incident response, emergency response, criminal investigation through evidence-based approaches and intelligence-driven policy making and problem-oriented policing). Furthermore, the current structures are not in place to implement neither community policing nor target policing and specialised training is also required.

Phase 1: Setting the foundations (2017-2018)

- **Step 1:** Setup of a think tank composed of professionals mainly criminologists and top police management. The main remit of this body is to establish clearly the role of community policing, identify the stages of implementation whilst outlining the potential implications that follow;
- **Step 2:** Identification of training requirements to implement community policing;
- **Step 3:** Implement specific training in Community Policing for police officials (2018). Community policing is new to Malta, officials in the police force need to receive adequate training before implementation. It is advised that training is carried out by local council regions in order to be able to introduce this policing style on a council by council level in a way that all geographic areas of the Maltese islands are eventually covered. It is to be highlighted that the Police are considering changes to regional boundaries in a way that such would be more in line with Local Councils' regions.

Phase 2: Working together (2018)

It is proposed that the professionals identified in Phase 1 hold meetings with local councils' representatives (10). It is highly important that the first sessions are to be dedicated to understanding what community policing is about, even more so since this is a new concept.

In other words, this new policing system will bring about operational changes in resolving problems and dealing with crime on a daily basis. Additionally, local councils and residents for the first time, will be directly and actively involved in reducing and preventing crime. This is ultimately aimed to set the pillars for bringing together law-enforcement officials, public entities and residents in the Maltese Islands, working together in terms of crime control.

Phase 3: Implementation stage (2019-2020)

Community policing allows for partnerships between the police and the community (Carr, 2012) as this policing mechanism allows for addressing public safety concern, fear of crime and the harm done to the social fabric as a result of the 'disorder' following the incidence of crimes. It is also envisaged that beat officers will operate for a significant amount of time in a particular geographic area in order to get to know the residents/community members and comprehend their issues. The fulcrum of the success of community policing is holding regular meetings (monthly/bi-monthly) with residents and volunteers as the 'eyes and ears' of the police (Carr, 2012).

(10) Local Councils Association, Regional Committees and individual Local Councils

Furthermore, community policing will also enhance trust in the police rendering policing as a more legitimate activity. This said, residents who are less committed to behave as law-abiding citizens would be reluctant to help the police.

The following concepts need to be accounted for since the ethos of community policing embraces concepts directly linked to crime prevention, early identification and timely intervention of problems:

- Policing goes beyond law enforcement and the essence of police work should be community-based. Apprehending criminals represents just one of the many tasks;
- Allow for active citizen involvement; encourage patrols carried out by residents and encourage initiatives wherein residents put forward crime prevention initiatives. Also, public meetings allow for both input and feedback. Residents need to comprehend that officers operate within an organisation and they often would not be in a position to reveal all/most of the information at hand;
- Geographic and spatial issues: officers need to be assigned to a particular area where they are expected to function for a number of years; officers need to know and get close to whoever lives and works within their area of assignment. Getting embedded within a particular social context allows for gaining locational knowledge (geographical) and at the same time gaining the necessary trust to build functional relationships (spatial); and
- Proactive policing: examples include foot patrol, educational campaigns and providing support to residents as volunteers. It is to be highlighted, that prevention is central to the implementation of community policing.

4.3 TARGETED POLICING (2018-2020)

Targeted policing is defined as 'a form of policing that is evidence based' (Avdija, 2008) and it allows for making decisions and the implementation of programmes through the use of empirical evidence (MacKenzie, 2006). Hence, research is used to guide practice (Sherman, 1988). Additionally, targeted policing is a type of policing that is 'place-specific, offencespecific, offender-specific, and time-specific' (Avdija, 2008, p.111). These initiatives are rooted in three theoretical explanations mainly rational choice theory ⁽¹¹⁾ (Agnew, 2005), routine activity theory ⁽¹²⁾ (Cohen & Felson, 1979; Cullen & Agnew, 2006) and incapacitation theory ⁽¹³⁾ (MacKenzie, 2006). Furthermore, targeted policing does not focus solely on crime hotspots but includes the use proactive measures through the joint collaboration between the police and the community to reduce victimisation.

The focus here is on crime hotspots of pickpocketing, possession of drugs and theft from occupied residences, through the embarkation of exercises such as foot-patrols in specific geographical areas and times outlined earlier. It is to be highlighted that research shows that targeted policing should be 'time and location specific' (Newton, 2016). On the other hand, problem solving interventions often result in the displacement of crime from one area to another, however targeted interventions tend to allow for the 'diffusion of benefits'. These targeted interventions lead to the reduction of crime in targeted areas as well as in nearby areas (International Crime Science Conference, 2011). Consequently, the strategy outlined here focuses on the implementation of targeted policing in identified hotspots of pickpockets by time and space in the Maltese islands (Formosa, 2015) as outlined earlier in this document. Implementation phase:

- 'Hotspots' and 'hot times' patrols by uniformed and/or plain clothed police officers; and
- Holding annual public meetings at Local Councils (twice a year) to make people aware of which behaviours render one susceptible to for example a pickpocket and theft from homes whilst highlighting tips needed to prevent such genre of thefts. It is to be highlighted that the target audience for such meetings includes residents and workers within a particular locality as per identified hotspots.

(11) The rational choice perspective has been applied to the study of a series of crimes.

(12) This theory has been used in the study of crime and the design of crime prevention strategies

(13) The focus is on crime prevention through taking away the possibility for an offender to commit future crimes.



Crime Families: An Overview

05

In every society the family has a key functional role as it provides support and regulates social behaviours (Baumner & Gustafson, 2007). Bonds are established and these operate as informal means of social control (Farrall, Bottom & Shapland, 2010) which in turn could also serve as crime preventers (Laub & Sampson, 2003; Shaw, Bell & Gilliom, 2000). In other words, from a functionalist perspective, the behaviours of children are closely monitored by parents (Pettit, Laird, Dodge, Bates & Criss, 2001). Nonetheless, when the family does not fulfil its functional role a series of social problems inclusive of crime are likely to prevail (Ou & Reynolds, 2010).

Studies in family research carried show that crime runs and concentrates in families wherein the family serves as a 'wellspring of crime' (Derzon, 2005). Such research has revealed a different facet of the family, that being a crime promoter, triggering off the onset and nourishing the continuity of offending across generations. In Malta, one in three inmates registered at CCF (between 1950 and 2010) belonged to a crime family (Formosa Pace, 2015). The increasing number of convictions across the decades bears witness to a situation that, despite the few alternatives to imprisonment (mainly probation, suspended sentence and community service orders), custodial sanctions are more popular than non-custodial ones in Malta. Hence, an increasing number of children are expected to have their parents behind bars in Malta since the number of inmates at CCF has increased across the six decades. Also, the initiatives outlined in this key area aim to complement and build on the Restorative Justice Act outlined earlier in this document, through processes that preserve the safety and dignity of victims, offenders and community.



This said, findings from Formosa Pace (2015) show that having a sibling, a parent and/or a spouse partaking to crime is a risk and/or mediating factor to crime continuity and the risk is augmented by the increased presence of criminal relatives. In summary, similar to transnational research, crime runs and concentrates in Maltese families.

Additionally, crime families are more crime-prolific and as recidivists they are more likely to experience social constructs related to 'social exclusion'. Such challenges include job related factors, reestablishment of relationships following incarceration and also emotional issues regarding where and in which context ex-inmates are socially accepted, a situation that could also be compounded by labelling.

Furthermore, individuals belonging to crime families are more likely to commit serious crimes and crimes that require more planning and organisation. The processes required for this are accommodated by the provision of entrusted accomplices within the family. Interestingly and unlike earlier claims that co-offending between parents and children is rare (Farrington, Barns & Lambert, 1996; Farrington, Coid & Murrar, 2009; Reiss & Farrington, 1991; Rowe & Farrington, 1997), findings from the Malta study show that co-offending involving parents and their children is a risk/mediating factor to crime continuity.

The concept of 'assortative partnering' featuring in the larger crime families compounded by cultural and geographical factors could directly or indirectly promote crime (Formosa Pace, 2015).

Furthermore, it is to be highlighted that to date in Malta, inmates' families have never availed themselves from a service that specifically addresses their needs. Consequently, a number of meso and macro level initiatives are being proposed as part of a national crime prevention strategy that takes on board an approach that facilitates the interconnectedness between human agency and social structures within the Maltese islands.

5.1 ADDRESSING THE SPECIFIC NEEDS OF CHILDREN WHO BELONG TO CRIME FAMILIES (2017-2020)

A number of psycho-social and economic issues do prevail as hardships caregivers and children of inmates' face following incarceration. These include family breakup, emotional and mental health issues, social stigma, education factors and financial drawbacks. On the other hand, interim custodial care is already in place, on arrest and incarceration of a caregiver/legal guardian for children, whose sole caregiver faces incarceration either as an arrestee or on sentencing. Also, one has to bear in mind that findings from Formosa Pace (2015) clearly indicate that the occurrence of multiple risk factors explains the concentration of convictions in a small number of families. However, those identified to be at risk are unknown to authorities to date.

It is hereby acknowledged that a number of services through the LEAP within the FSWS structure are already in place and are provided at community level. Such services aim to reach the needs of families and individuals who are at risk of facing social exclusion. These include the services of guidance of career advisors, job coaching and family based mentoring in a way that the needs of the respective family are assessed, and when necessary clients are referred to existent services. Furthermore, FSWS shall introduce multisystematic therapy, wherein each team would work in the community. Each team is envisaged to have a number of professionals ranging from social workers, child psychologists, youth workers, clinical psychologist, family therapist and a nurse.

Consequently, it is envisaged that clients would be able to avail themselves from a homebased service should they not wish to call at the centre ⁽¹⁴⁾. This said, such a service could be widened in a way that the psycho-social needs of inmates' families, once identified, are addressed. This strategy proposes a number of community based services for inmates' families. The focus here is on mental wellbeing, educational factors and support.

(14) Team 1 shall be set up in Gharghur covering also Qawra area. Team 2 shall be set up in Msida covering also Valletta, Floriana and Pieta areas. A location in the South is yet to be identified.

- i) Nationwide hotlines and/or on-line platforms (2017): other than serving as a helpline these could help in identification of vulnerable children and other restricted relatives of incarcerated inmates previously unknown to national agencies. The most feasible method at this point is to make use of the existent helpline 179, a service which is currently being reviewed and ameliorated ⁽¹⁵⁾. Hence, once identified one could be referred to support in the community as outlined below; and
- ii) Family and education support in localities that host a concentration of crime families in Malta and Gozo (2018-2020): services of counselling; youth outreach; mental health services; family workshops; play therapy and play sessions; career guidance; academic support. The focus here is on the 5-10 localities (Valletta, Bormla, Santa Lucia, San Lawrenz (Gozo), Isla, Floriana, Kalkara, Kirkop, Birgu and Pieta) that host a concentration of crime families. Such services are voluntary and so is attendance which factor could significantly affect measured successes.

5.2 NEIGHBOURHOOD AND HOUSING (2018-2020)

Certain neighbourhoods host a concentration of crime families and are characterised by social stigma and poverty pockets. Such calls for a re-thinking of policies related to neighbourhood factors and social housing in Malta.

The focus here is on the set-up of a think tank made of professionals mainly geographers, criminologists, urban planners and the police. It is to be highlighted that the remit of this think tank is to design an environmental crime prevention strategy that will focus on a number of criminogenic issues accounting for intergenerational and non-intergenerational factors. Furthermore, this will take on board crime trends identified from police reports and the crime victimisation survey, hence accounting for the dark figure of crime. In summary the focus here is on addressing ecological factors as crime promoters on a national scale.

15 Volunteers used to operate this hotline however this is being reviewed in a way that professionals will also be included. In addition, a number of on-call professionals are planned to be robed in a way that when referral is alerted by the person taking the call, s/he would refer the service user to the respective professional.





Focus on the reduction of the incidence of specific crimes, re-offending and re-victimisation

06

The initiatives outlined in this section focus on crime genres that need immediate action to prevent crime and disorder after having analysed official figures (reported offences to the police annually) across decades and also in view of findings from the crime victimisation survey which data represents the dark figure of crime. It is being highlighted that the focus here is not on the identification of the root causes of crime as many of these are rather difficult for policy makers to change since crime is inevitable. Furthermore, the campaigns outlined within this key area aim at creating awareness on a wide range of phenomena from sexual offending to pickpocketing and hate crime.

6.1 SEX OFFENDING: THE DARK FIGURE OF CRIME

The focus here is on addressing the under reporting phenomenon pertaining to sex offences. The results from the crime victimisation survey indicate clearly that people are highly unlikely to report this crime should the situation arise as attested by the figure of 85% (Formosa Pace et al., 2015). Consequently, this scenario presents the urgent need to address this phenomenon considering that a potential number of victims are unknown, the arising psychological, medical and clinical issues (victim and offender) could not have been addressed whilst on the other hand a significant number of offenders are hypothetically targeting other potential victims.

In turn, in spite of the various initiatives taken on board by NGOs such as Victim Support Online, *kellimni.com* as well as flyers distributed in strategic places ⁽¹⁶⁾, victims may not be fully aware of their rights. These include the right to receive support and right to legal aid amongst other rights. Another service is that of Sexual Assault Response Team (SART) which operates thanks to the joint collaboration between Victim Support Malta, The Ministry for Family and Social Solidarity, the Ministry for Health and the Ministry for Home Affairs and National Security.

Furthermore, victims may not be aware of procedures, fear lengthy legal process whereas sanctions are not considered as punitive enough to merit going through all the legal hurdles. In other words, the chances of getting effective punishment is proportionately low as attested by the number of inmates serving prison terms for sexual offences; an average of 24 inmates per year ⁽¹⁷⁾. Unfortunately, it is also acknowledged that a significant number of victims recall negative experiences when they file a police report feeling investigated rather than being considered as a victim and allegations of inconsistent recall of events. Undoubtedly, this is a very sensitive area which will be tackled through adequate training as outlined earlier.

This said, a publicity campaign adopting a dual approach is hereby proposed. One that is aimed to meet the needs of a specific target audience; victims and potential victims of sex crimes and another campaign aimed at deterring offenders. One needs to take into account accessibility issues in order to determine how accessible the audiences are and to reach as many people as possible, victims and offenders alike. Hence, it is proposed that the television, radio and the social media will be used for the simultaneous implementation of the two publicity campaigns outlined below. This is aimed to reach victims whilst exerting an indirect positive effect in deterring potential offenders.

⁽¹⁶⁾ *Mater Dei, Police stations, Appogg*

⁽¹⁷⁾ *This was calculated for the years 2005 to 2012; of which 18 were still awaiting trial whereas only 6 were serving a prison term. Also, 16 of whom (average of 24 inmates on sex offences) were Maltese whilst the rest (8 inmates) were of non-Maltese origin.*

These campaigns are more cost effective despite the fact that television and radio spots could be more expensive than social media. Most importantly campaigns targeted to reach victims as their target audience should avoid sounding too alarming and should not provide unnecessary information which could be perceived as frightening. Provided that such campaigns are affective, it is envisaged that a number of offenders previously unknown to the criminal justice system would be identified and eventually, if there is enough evidence, prosecuted and convicted. Nonetheless, the treatment of sex offenders in the Maltese Islands represents another lacuna, which needs to be addressed urgently in order to prevent further offending and victimisation.

The Campaigns proposed would cover the following aspects:

Campaign 1: (2017-2018)

- Raising awareness on fear of reporting sexual offending;
- Explaining methods that could be used to report the crime;
- Reinforcing the use of national hotlines;
- Identifying locations of facilities where to report the crime;
- Highlighting that harm has been done and help is needed;
- Identifying support services available; and
- Highlighting the rights of victims.

Campaign 2: (2017-2018)

- Focusing on the increased risk and probability of arrest;
- The focus here should be on threatening apprehension;
- Highlighting the legal consequences; and
- Successful campaigns should not focus on deterring later punishment but it is more advisable to focus on immediate detection and arrest.

In terms of the treatment of sex offenders, the following approach is being advocated.

Treatment of sex offenders (2017-2019)

- **Step 1:** (2017): the set- up of a think tank of professionals ranging from Police, Victim Support Malta, SART, Criminologists, Lawyers, Psychologists, Counsellors, Psychiatrists and Psychotherapists;
- **Step 2:** (2017-2018): the think tank shall work on identifying training centres abroad and making subsequent arrangements; identifying the pool of professionals that need to be trained; identifying the body that will coordinate delivery of programmes;
- **Step 3:** Drafting legal provisions (2017-2018) so that treatment is backed by legal mechanisms; and
- **Step 4:** Running of treatment programmes (2019).

A thorough examination of treatment programmes should follow the implementation stage so as to guide the way forward with regards to 'what works'.

6.2 THE INCIDENCE OF PICKPOCKETING

The focus here is on the reduction of theft through the prevention of the pickpocket phenomenon. The measures outlined here allow for the identification of actions directly linked to self-protection through an awareness campaign. A number of misconceptions about pickpockets prevail. A pickpocket may not necessarily be someone easily identifiable or has a stereotypical appearance but is highly likely to appear 'normal' and has ample time to study how to blend into the crowd without being detected whilst committing the theft.

This is very likely to happen just as easily as much as one (the offender) is likely to bump into the other (the victim) in a crowd. Pickpockets are likely to operate during days and times when people carry more money than they usually do; for example, near bank entrances/exits, on public holidays, tourists on holiday, during the sales season, village festa, Christmas time, shopping centres, carnival and concerts, at the beach, shopping bags left open wherein wallets would be visible amongst other spatio-temporal aspects.

It is quite likely that the pickpocket is a solo offender, however it is also possible that pickpockets work in teams of 2 to 3 involving a female as an accomplice. A typical scenario could include; the expert of the three would commit the theft passing the valued goods to the other accomplice, whilst the female accomplice would engage in a conversation with the victim to get him/her distracted. This does not last long, it is only a matter of a few seconds!

6.2.1 REDUCING PICKPOCKETING: CAMPAIGN (2017-2018)

This is aimed to make people aware of behaviours that render one susceptible to become a victim of a pickpocket even more so when they are in crowds and when they appear to be distracted, a case in point would be when one is busy talking on the mobile. The focus here is on equipping people with information that allows them to be prepared and proactive, but in no way causing moral panic so as not to elicit the fear of crime. The use of social media for providing the following tips is recommended as this will reach a relatively large number of people other than being cost-effective.

In summary the campaign will focus on the following:

- Providing tips for men;
- Providing tips for women; and
- Providing tips for children and youths;
- Providing tips for travellers; and
- Providing tips for the elderly

6.3 REDUCING RE-VICTIMISATION

Around 17,000 victims of crimes (from all reported offences categories) are recorded annually in Malta as per police reports, of which around 1076⁽¹⁸⁾ are victims of domestic violence and around 112⁽¹⁹⁾ are victims of sexual offences (adults and minors) (Formosa, 2016 as analysed from the NPS Police data). It is to be highlighted that the Victims of Crime Act (Chapter 539) was introduced in April 2015. However, the necessary structures to implement the legal provisions outlined in this Act (Chapter 539) were and are not in place as outlined below.

One of the legal provisions (Chapter 539) specifies that every victim irrespective of the nature of the crime is legally entitled to receive support. However, it is to be acknowledged that should everyone request such a service by right, the existent national services and NGOs would be flooded with cases. On the other hand, should everyone be given the entitled support, this would necessitate a significant enlargement in human capacity. The latter is an exercise that needs to be studied thoroughly in order to outline whether such a support service could materialise on such a large scale.

To date, the Police refers a number of victims of domestic violence and child sexual abuse to the national agency Appogg, and a number of adult as victims of sex offences to Victim Support Malta; an NGO which is also the coordinating body of sexual assault response team.

(18) an average was calculated for cases reported between 2012 and 2015

(19) an average was calculated for cases reported between 2012 and 2015



It is to be highlighted that not all victims of domestic violence and sexual offences are referred for to the existent support services. FSWS runs an Out of Hours Emergency Service that deals specifically with child protection services and cases of domestic violence. Also, with regard to minors their needs are tackled through Child Protection Services. So at this point one would ask who is receiving support following victimisation?

In practice, support is given when requested by the victim and referral to services is dependent on official/s investigating the reported crime. This calls for the urgent standardisation of referral practices in line with evaluating human capacity. In other words, it is pointless referring more people if the provision of support is hindered by lack of capacity and professionals who are needed to provide the requested support. This dilemma can only be countered through capacity-building and the implementation of the strategic proposals emanating from this strategy.

Furthermore, as per Victims of Crime Act, every victim should, after being affected by a crime (irrespective of the nature of the offence) be administered an assessment by a competent authority. However, in spite of the legal framework being in place, the same cannot be said about the outlined measures such as the 'risk and needs assessment'. Furthermore, to date, there seem to be no plans to mobilise this. Also, this tool would allow one to identify the victim's need and whether s/he is at risk of further victimisation. However, considering the complexity and the nature of legal implications related to the Victims of Crime Act, the phenomenon of victim support and related justice issues need to be prioritised. In other words, efforts should be made to identify the necessary resources (human and financial) to be made available to victims in a way that victims would ultimately receive the support they are legally entitled to irrespective of the nature of crime. The involvement of various government entities as well as NGOs is hereby recommended.

A case in point relates to minors as victims of abuse. Such cases are referred to the:

- i) Vice Squad of the Police which situation suffices to a great extent on the legal aspect of the scenario, however a wide range of issues (medical issues; family issues, psycho-social issues and educational issues) inevitably prevail concurrently, as well as to
- ii) Child Protection Services.

These need to be tackled by a series of different entities through the setting-up of a task force that would implement the required assistance. The need is felt to address this lacuna in order to reduce re-victimisation and subsequently re-offending both of which scenarios are harmful to the social fabric.

6.3.1 REVIEW OF REFERRAL OF VICTIMS TO SUPPORT (2017-2018)

This involves getting a number of different entities working together to i) review the current referral process of victims to support services and ii) strategically plan and eventually work on the implementation of this mechanism. Such will include members from the police who work with victims, NGOs offering their services to victims, professionals from health and mental health, family and social welfare sectors. They would be tasked with diverse issues such as the remit to:

- **Step 1:** review current practices;
- **Step 2:** review current available support services;
- **Step 3:** outline standardised practices that need to be in place in line with the services available; and
- **Step 4:** implement adequate and high-level referral practices.

6.3.2 STUDYING REPEATED VICTIMISATION (2018-2019)

Investigating the incidence and nature of re-victimisation using reported offences to the police entails the expertise of academics in the field of social sciences to guide the research process.

This entails digging deeper into filed police reports to establish the following:

1. Identify repeat victims;
2. Identify patterns of re-victimisation; and
3. Identify the nature of the relationships between offender and victim.



This exercise is pivotal to the design and implementation of future crime-prevention initiatives and cannot treat victims as external to the entire crime and safety dynamic. Offences occur due to the availability of potential victims and the opportunity offered to the offender, thus helping the victim prior and post the trauma is pivotal to the whole strategy.

6.3.3 MOBILISING 'RISK AND NEEDS ASSESSMENT' (2019-2021)

It is advised that priority is given to victims of domestic violence and sexual offences. One is at no point underestimating the needs of other victims of crime, as such a scenario would pave way to secondary victimisation. The proposals include:

- **Step 1:** Identification of professionals as a strategic team;
- **Step 2:** Full Integration of the 'risk and needs assessment' as part of the regulations of the police;
- **Step 3:** Identification of the competent authority as a one-stop shop;
- **Step 4:** Identification of assessment tool/s;
- **Step 5:** Identification of training of professionals ⁽²⁰⁾ administering the assessment tools;
- **Step 6:** Provision of training; and
- **Step 7:** Implementation of 'risk and needs assessments'.

6.4 AWARENESS CAMPAIGN ON HATE CRIME (2018-2019)

The focus here is to facilitate the understanding of situations that could lead to hate crime. The rationale behind this initiative is to adopt a pre-emptive approach. In other words, the social life in Malta is characterised by a melting pot of cultures and one needs to prevent scenarios that accommodate feelings of mistrust that could pave way to the commission of bias crimes.

In summary, the campaign will focus on the following:

- Understanding phenomena related to the occurrence of hate crime in Europe and the US;
- Understanding phenomena related to erroneous beliefs and cultural 'essence'; and
- Tolerance; cultural integrity vs. cultural discomforts.

6.5 REDUCING RECIDIVISM (2017-2019)

In terms of recidivism or re-entry into prison, a total of 5,093 individuals received conviction tickets which registered their admission at CCF between 1950 and 2010; these were convicted for a total of 10,888 offences (Formosa Pace, 2015). Also, in a comparative study of imprisonment rates in Europe, all countries except four (Estonia, Lithuania, Romania & Finland) experienced an increase in imprisonment rates.

Also, interestingly, 'the small states of Croatia, followed by Malta and Cyprus' showed the highest increases (Lappi-Seppälä, 2011, p.304). Of concern is the fact that the individual Maltese inmate is more likely to follow a recidivist ⁽²¹⁾ trend. When comparing the recidivism patterns of inmates belonging to crime families and inmates belonging to the general prison population between 1950 and 2010, clear recidivist trends emerge for individuals belonging to crime families whom are more likely to experience a revolving door situation.

Crime families register the highest frequency of recidivism with 72.2% whereas the whole parameter representing the prison population in its entirety is noted by 66.2% (Formosa Pace, 2015).

(20) Professionals could include graduates from the fields of criminology, psychology, social work and mental health who would be supervised. This has been mentioned by various professionals since a number of graduates (first degrees) are effectively lost annually.

(21) Recidivism is measured on re-entry to CCF. In other words, 2 conviction tickets would classify one as a recidivist, a term that may need revisiting due to the issue of terminology between re-entry and legal recidivism.

Education and employment factors have for long been identified as 'crime preventers' whilst their absence or deficit is linked to 'crime promoters' (Ramakers, Bijleveld & Ruiter, 2011). These social constructs could serve as turning points providing one with the opportunity for change, social mobility and possibly earning a living through legitimate means. Falling behind at school as well as absenteeism has for long been claimed to be risk factors to crime and the propagation of crime across generations of families in a number of studies (examples: Farrington, 2002, 2011; Farrington, Jolliffe, Loeber, Stouthamer-Loeber & Kalb, 2001).

Furthermore, job training and investments in education within correctional facilities have yielded reduction in recidivism specifically re-entry to prison (MTC Institute, 2016). Particularly interesting, economic inactivity features predominantly in crime families when compared to the non-family component (inmates not belonging to crime families serving incarcerations at CCF during the same 6 decades) and the national unemployment rates (Formosa Pace, 2015).

Also, the older generations of crime families could find it more convenient to earn a living through crime, thus unlikely to desist and cater for the family's economic needs in a legitimate manner. This said, addressing the economic inactivity of crime families who earn a living through crime considering that they specialise in crimes such as aggravated theft, robbery and particularly drug related offences (Formosa Pace, 2015), represents a situation where one would be raising the bar too high.

On the other hand, those inmates who were employed prior to their incarceration tend to perform jobs that rank low with regard to salaries and social status (Formosa Pace, 2015). This could be linked to various factors such as in the case of crime families who could earn a living to meet the families' financial needs through crime (Formosa Pace, 2015). Furthermore, Hunter and Boyce (2009) highlight that to a great extent inmates are 'dissociated from the world of legal work'. One has to bear in mind that the typical Maltese inmate is likely to be aged 20-24 years (Formosa, 2007). With regard to employment factors, the Maltese inmate is more likely to be non-active (unemployed) than anyone else who belongs to the general Maltese population.

Other crime promoters include lack of academic skills, missed opportunities (Moffitt, 1993) besides a wide range of psycho-social issues as well as potential clinical issues (Gearing, Schwalbe & Short, 2012). It is to be highlighted that inmates do not avail from services that are made available to the community at large. Thus the needs of inmates are to a great extent not accounted for, paving way to a situation where an accumulation of risk factors as crime promoters may limit their opportunities for change which would eventually pave way to phenomena directly linked to recidivism.

A number of training programmes are available to inmates serving prison terms at CCF and at YOURS. These include courses which are run on regular basis such as English, Maltese, sports and life skills, whilst a number of other programmes usually taken on board as projects which are run periodically and systematically. The latter include phototherapy, food handling ⁽²²⁾, health and safety ⁽²³⁾, first aid, drama, multi-culturalism and art. Furthermore, inmates who would have applied to sit for 'O' levels prior to incarceration would (thanks to arrangements between CCF and MATSEC) be able to sit for such exams within the walls of CCF and YOURS accordingly. Also, life-long learning programmes are coordinated between CCF administration and the Education Department. It is to be pointed out that there are plans for the introduction of vocational courses in the near future.

This said, it is also acknowledged that inmates belonging to the younger cohorts tend to serve shorter sentences or would be still awaiting trial, consequently making it difficult for one to enroll in an educational programme run within the community through study leave during his/her stay at CCF and/or YOURS. Also, the need is felt to tackle the unwillingness of potential employers to engage ex-inmates (Formosa & Formosa Pace, 2013).

22 Run by Jobsplus

23 Run by Jobsplus

It is ascertained that employment and career advisors from Jobsplus (formerly known as Employment and Training Corporation) ⁽²⁴⁾ do conduct visits to inmates at CCF twice monthly whilst inmates at YOURS need to get down to CCF to benefit from such a service to date. Additionally, the existent 'Bridging the Gap Scheme' run by Jobsplus, targets a wide spectrum of 'socially disadvantaged' people, as its target audience includes people with disabilities, former substance abusers, former prison inmates and a wide range of social cases. At face value, one would question how could different target audiences with specific needs and challenges benefit from the above mentioned scheme. This said, it is noted that the scheme operates in a way that eligible participants are screened individually for their skills, a potential employer is identified, job exposure is given for a stipulated time frame ⁽²⁵⁾ (usually 8 weeks) and potentially this would lead to employment provided the employer is contented to do so.

With regard to inmates, during the last three months of their prison sentence, they are entitled to pre-release work as part of prison leave regulations. More importantly, prison regulations have been recently amended wherein inmates during the last three months of their sentence are allowed to work daily; that is from Monday to Friday except on Public holidays. It is to be highlighted that prior to this amendment, inmates worked 15 days per month (a total of 480 hours), which scenario could have served as a stumbling block to joining gainful employment once out of prison. This time-frame could be utilised constructively in a way that renders them eligible to the 'Bridging the Gap Scheme' wherein during the work exposure they would, similar to other participants in the scheme, earn a salary of 80% of the national minimum wage per week. This is offered to inmates to date however undoubtedly more inmates should be encouraged towards the scheme particularly those belonging to the younger age groups (less than 21 years) whose participation in the scheme is almost negligible. Nonetheless, more preparation of inmates participating in the scheme would definitely help.

(24) The ETC has been officially re-branded as Jobsplus as from July 2016.

(25) On agreement between Jobsplus and employer.



Furthermore, the recidivism rates outlined earlier speak for themselves. This said, such requires investment in human resources within the walls of CCF and YOURS. On the other hand, meetings with Jobsplus are also planned so as to explore the potential participation in 'pre-employment training programme' ⁽²⁶⁾, offered and run by Jobsplus within the prison setting and financed through national funds.

Furthermore, the provision of training programmes specifically for inmates particularly for those belonging to the younger cohorts is felt even more so when one takes into account the unemployment rates of offenders. These will provide one with skills that render them employable within the community. Such programmes need to target anti-social attitudes and the unwillingness to take low-paying jobs. Additionally, programmes should focus on issues related to self-confidence and self-belief bearing in mind the potential accumulation of failures and missed opportunities one would have experienced throughout his/her life course.

6.5.1 TRAINING AND EMPLOYMENT (2017-2018)

The exercise proposed here is based on a four-fold approach:

- i) Building on the existent collaboration between the national employment agency Jobsplus and corrections professionals. Potential proposals need to be agreed upon and drafted by the end of 2017;
- ii) A campaign that focuses on the importance of employment in the re-entry process since various studies claim that employment reduces criminal activity. Additionally, on a national scale, the focus should be on reducing the costs incurred on the tax payer to sustain incarceration;
- iii) Raising more awareness ñ target potential employers so as to increase employment opportunities; and
- iv) Exploring more training opportunities for inmates.

6.5.2 ADDRESSING THE NEEDS OF INMATES (2018-2019)

In terms of addressing the inmates, proposals for change include:

- i) Inmates aged less than 16 whom have not yet finished their compulsory schooling are to benefit from the service of home tuition teachers. The latter represents a service offered by the Education Division to students who cannot attend school. In other words, to date this service is not offered to those who should be at school but cannot since they are serving a prison term. Whilst the number of inmates aged less than 16 is relatively very low ⁽²⁷⁾, one cannot afford a patchy service since education is considered as a crime preventer. On the other hand, the creation of a new service is not feasible considering the number of youths aged less than 16 who serve a prison term. This said, it is paramount that the identified teachers are trained and are also willing to work within a prison setting; and
- ii) A pool of professionals ranging from medical staff, psychologists, psychiatrists, social workers, career advisors, job information officers, training coordinator and youth workers that on a regular basis provide their services to inmates at CCF and YOURS.

The concept revolves around having a one-stop-shop service offering the required services.

(26) This training programme covers 3 modules of 40-50 hours each, focusing on employability skills, social skills and independent living skills. Not all three modules are compulsory; classes are small (10 students). Residents at Caritas, Santa Marija and RiSe programme are benefitting from this.

(27) 31 juveniles aged between 13 and 16 years were serving a prison sentence at CCF, between 2000 and 2010



Situational Crime Prevention Designs

07

An Overview

The focus is on recognising the connection between the physical environment in local areas and risk factors as crime promoters. Most situational designs that were implemented in Europe, initially focused particularly on target hardening such as door locks, alarms and securing areas through access control. However, the strategies outlined here attest a shift in rationale in line with research highlighting the need to move towards soft target hardening techniques (Stummvoll, 2012). In other words, a design that incorporates psycho-social phenomena, pedagogical as well as environmental strategies.

A number of challenges are acknowledged in this document. These include getting on board a number of stakeholders when to date anything related to crime prevention was deemed as a task to be taken up by the police. Also, the neighbourhood watch scheme in its entirety has failed to take off in the Maltese Islands. This might be partly attributed to the potential passive roles adopted by residents, anonymity and lack of sense of belonging mainly but mostly likely to have been compounded by Mediterranean cultural factors directly related to 'omerta' (Formosa Pace, 2015). Such a situation is shared by similar experiences in Southern Europe, a case in point is Cyprus where similar to Malta, the neighbourhood watch scheme has failed. However, it is to be highlighted that a number potential scenarios might have also hindered the success of neighbourhood watch as a situational crime prevention model in Malta. These include:

- i) the scenario that community policing not in place when neighbourhood watch was introduced;
- ii) the perceived non-clarity pertaining to the roles of police and local wardens wherein residents could be misinformed about the remit of each entity;
- iii) lack of training;
- iv) inadequate liaison between local councils and police; and
- v) lack of sense of ownership of the scheme. In view of community plans that are planned to be drafted at Regional level by end 2016 ⁽²⁸⁾, it is recommended that such community plans are accounted for in the planning and subsequent implementation of the initiatives outlined below.

7.1 CRIME VS. FEAR OF CRIME CAMPAIGN (2017-2018)

Security issues identified as a requirement of the Crime Prevention publicity campaign:

- The need to understand the fear of crime and actual risks;
- The need to understand that certain communities allow for crime prevalence. This is accommodated by individual and ecological factors. Also in certain social contexts, this is shaped by the routine activities, retail outlets, tourism and entertainment hubs; and
- The need to highlight the distinct roles of Police and Local Wardens (the term community officers will in the near future replace the term local wardens hence it is important that residents do not confuse this with community policing).

(28) Such shall cover areas linked to socio-economic, cultural and community plans.

7.2 PARTNERS IN CRIME PREVENTION 2018-2020

A multi-disciplinary approach involving residents, entertainment patrons, local councils, the police and law enforcement agencies as combining forces represents the best way forward. To date the issue of lack of human resources, lack of training and the absence of initiatives that bring a number of agencies working together have served as a stumbling block to a number of projects not necessarily crime related.

Another potential scenario is that surveillance mechanisms are carried out by different entities which do overlap however each entity tends to focus on its specific remit ignoring the possibility that interested parties could actively work collectively as partners in reducing crime. However, challenges are envisaged particularly since the principal target of private organisations is to succeed financially and might disown the process. Another challenging issue relates to strengthening the bond between the younger generations and the community in light of research claiming that teens are the most likely to challenge authority instigating confrontation (Hough, 2013).

Hence, the focus here is on the modification of the physical design and the surveillance of potential activities that could serve as catalyst to the incidence of crimes. This design will make possible the introduction of trained surveillance staff in vulnerable environments from bars to discotheques to shopping centres.

Furthermore, and most importantly, this is intended to be implemented once the mechanisms for executing community policing are in place. In other words, it is envisaged that the success of the measures outlined below depend significantly on community policing.

7.2.1 IDENTIFICATION OF HOTSPOTS AND CRIME PREVENTION AT COMMUNITY LEVEL

There is no formal obligation for a resident to be an active participant in crime reduction but such would be central to the success of environmental designs as members who live and work in a particular geographic space know the physical and the social space best. Furthermore, in this way, surveillance would be natural and residents would be in a better position to identify and provide suggestions on how to tackle recurring issues. A design wherein residents are active participants in public order, is a must as this will contribute to stability, order and social harmony; all of which are considered to be crime preventers. In other words, the 'people closest to the problem' need to sit at the driving seat. Residents need to be encouraged to take responsibility for the mitigation of crime reduction and prevention. The focus here is on immediate risks and needs based on crime research that has been carried out in the Maltese Islands.

This said, willing consent and cooperation of residents are key to the success of situational crime prevention strategies. Involving a number of stakeholders for example in the case of entertainment hubs, crime prevention should be taken on board by patrons of restaurants, pubs, bars, discotheques amongst others as active partners of crime prevention. In other words, crime prevention in entertainment and touristic hotspots should not be taken up solely and/or primarily by the police. Furthermore, entertainment patrons need to acknowledge the impact their activity exerts on the social environment, in view of the stressors and the harm done to the social fabric as clearly attested by the number and nature of the annual reported offences.

Local Councils could help in providing a good overview of the space and time aspects of offending and victimisation as well as societal safety and security. Such could occur within their remit in the multi-dimension social day and night functions; dark and isolated areas; potential crime hotspots; potential hotspots for vandalism; lighting and accessibility. In other words, local councils could help in creating an environment where people feel safe.

Representatives are to be encouraged to attend training focusing primarily on public safety. Such training will be carried out by a team of police officers working within the community. In a functional approach these proposals are aimed to complement community policing.



In conclusion, the proposals emanating from this strategic document aim at streamlining the activities of a number of entities in conjunction with a focus on the phased approaches required for the eventual implementation of the strategy requirements. A risk-factor approach guided by academic research findings is proposed in view of crime prevention and the reduction of recidivism. The focus is being set on addressing actual risks and the need to be committed towards the needs of offenders, victims and their respective families. A number of specialised initiatives such as community policing and target policing have been outlined whilst highlighting that crime control goes beyond policing as has been experienced to date.

Such entails the active collaboration of residents, government and private organisations together with NGOs as stakeholders, which partnership is forecasted to pave the way to enhanced trust and public safety. Schools have been identified as the ideal places to reach children and youths through cost-effective initiatives expected to divert criminal career development. This will be enhanced through proposals related to youth justice services that will inject a flexible approach to reducing the rate and severity of offending.



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