

# CRIME MALTA ANNUAL CRIME REVIEW

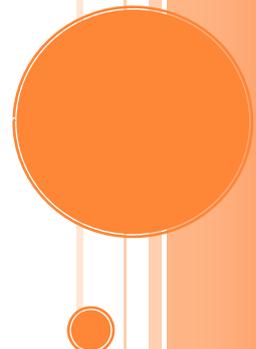
*Year 2016*

2016 figures depict a generic trend line decrease in reported crime though experiencing a near-stabilisation of the recent increase in offences. The past years' fluctuation increase was caused by one specific offence subcategory. The Maltese offence profile has maintained last year's shift from a public-oriented to a personal-target dimension. Crime is evolving from a social-space structure to the invasion of personal-space.

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April 2017



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*Year 2016*

CrimeMalta's review of Malta's interactive spatial technologies and spatial statistics such as published in this year's annual report for 2016.

This report covers the 2016 annual statistics as elicited from analysis of reported crime, incarceration statistics and spatial analysis. The outputs below pertain to the closed 'accounts' for 2016 crime.

In summary, at **17,298 reported offences**, crime analysis shows a plateauing of the recent years' crime increase, evidenced through a slight increase in crime reports over the 2015 period comprising an absolute **increase of 160 crimes or 0.9%**. This is a slowing down from the previous year's 3% increase that comprised an absolute **increase of 490 crimes**. Once again the entire increase was absorbed by a single phenomenon falling within the Theft category, which phenomenon has grown by 5 times since 2009 and again by 21% from 2015: **Pickpocketing** has increased by 417 offences in 2016. In fact, from 450 such reports in 2009, this offence has maintained the league of tables increase in Maltese reporting **comprising 2447 instances or 14% of all crimes**, up from 2030 in 2015. Ironically **most other categories of theft have decreased** apart from theft from occupied residences and theft from vehicle interiors that registered 12% (57 cases) increase and 25% (224 cases) respectively. Common theft went down by 304 cases or 26% reversing the previous year's sharp increase. Theft comprises 51% of all offences reported to the Police.

The second highest reported offence, **Damages**, has seen a **slight decrease** to 23% of all offences. **Domestic Violence** has maintained its consistent increase **year-on-year reaching 7%** of all offences, again surpassing the fourth highest ranking offence, **Bodily Harm**, which has registered a **year on year decrease** initiated in 2009 down to 5%, which points to a steadily more tolerant and less violent society in the social realm, a phenomenon that does not reflect its antithesis where Domestic Violence, ensconced within the private realm, has seen a veritable increase in personal and intimate violence, equally split between psychological and slight bodily harm. In turn, **Fraud** again experienced an increase of 6% over the previous year. These 5 categories of crimes comprise 90% of all crime reports.

The analysis of crime requires the study of the dark figure of crime and where the proposed EU-SASU has been shelved by the EU. The Dark Figure of crime Survey is pending final publication by the Department of Criminology at the University of Malta.

# THE DARK FIGURE OF CRIME

The causes of the 2016 change are interesting in criminological terms. As described in previous reports, the foundations that comprise social structures known as PREFE (Politics, Religion, Economy, Family and Education) have experienced rapid change such that the impact of values and norms becomes less tangible. Whilst the Political or legal measures have evolved and security implementation has increased in the social arenas resulting in the reduction of such offences as theft from residences, damages, bodily harm and prostitution, the strongest pillar pertaining to the family or household has become increasingly fragile such that the incidence of the personal-security incidents has grown dramatically. This is reflected through domestic violence, irrespective of form or method, whether psychological or physical.

As Economic measures increasingly offer most offenders an opportunity to partake to crime when the rewards far exceed the sanctions, offences such as theft emanating from the invasion of person-spaces increase as they offer a quick intake of funds. The fact that the recreation and leisure activities offer ripe ground for offending particularly where the recreational zones are crowded and person space is not possible, the opportunity for dexterous hands offers a high rate of return. Vitaly important is the expected increase in tourism-related offences, where tourism offers an opportunity for crimes in terms of numbers and access to the partaking of goods: an increase that did not occur to a large extent as expected to reflect the high increase in tourist numbers. Pickpocketing did increase and may be an indicator of such an opportunity being offered, however the crimes potentially predicted as reflective of an increase in 200,000 incoming tourists failed to materialize. This may be due to an alert public, increased awareness, tourism police and better security visibility. The study of pick-pocketing as a comparative analysis of people movements may help one to understand the dynamics pertaining to the relative increase in both the criminal process and the social phenomenon under study as being offered by the opportunity offered by the increase in potential victims.

In terms of crime mitigation, the Maltese society needs to focus further on this phenomenon and change accordingly, even in terms of educational campaigns that target both citizens and visitors, whilst building awareness scales on the measurement of such offences, the relative offender-victim dynamics, the flow of goods and the offence displacement when action is taken by the state and its operational arms.

## MORPHING OF THE MALTESE CRIME SCENARIO

Offences in the Maltese Islands have morphed from a multi-thematic to a spatial structure:

*From a Social-Space scenario to a Private-Space scenario*

Whilst homicides took media precedence, such was not based on volume but on method, where the figures were lower than the average for the past decade. The method, particularly the employment of explosive devices raised concern and increased calls for mitigation.

The past year has seen an increased awareness process on Domestic Violence as well as the uptake of projects that study the phenomenon. Last year's report for a focus on raising awareness towards the mitigation of crime that integrates further community policing aimed at decreasing the social-space offences further, have been taken up by the relevant entities. The need to focus on the movement away from the perception that the mitigation is simply a role that the Police Force must be solely responsible for is erroneous, but one needs to view such as rather a call for collective Social Responsibility.

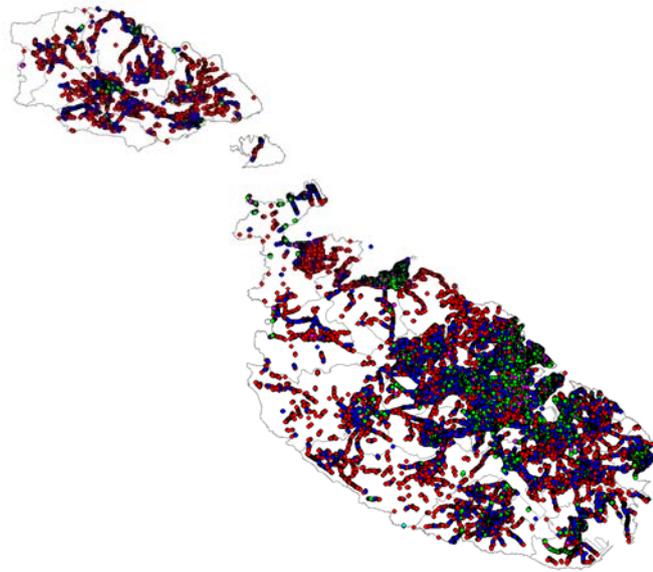
Previous CrimeMalta reports pointed towards a depiction where Social Capital is provided through the PREFE structures, of which the Police Force form a part. However, the essential aspects that will pivot towards offence mitigation lies in the enhancement of Social Cohesion through awareness raising, values redefinition, self-respect and the will to report and stop offences. Such a process requires a sea change in both the Police Force and relative enforcement agencies remit as well as civil society through NGOs and self-help groups.

One cannot continue to observe crime as the arena for uniformed officers but one where such are enhanced through social and publicity activity run by social entities to ensure knowledge on crime, rescue and support functions as well as personal safety and security increase. It is imperative that offences are viewed as a personal domain issue as against that pertaining to the police. The latter are tasked with securing social spaces but the individual is tasked with securing their private spaces.

On a regional/locality level, crime reports need to be taken seriously as they posit a comparative approach to research methodology that would allow one to make information-based policy and in effect take realistic measures to mitigate crime fluctuations.

Criminologist Professor Saviour Formosa ([www.crimemalta.com](http://www.crimemalta.com)) has been publishing crime statistics and reviews since 2008 through the analysis of crime trends in Malta as of 1949 and through spatio-temporal analysis as from 1998 (305,837 offences). Crime studies in Malta comprise 38 main categories of crime and 214 sub categories.

The studies take the form of a rate analysis, as against a count analysis, through the study of a RISC assessment (Relative Index of Spatial Crime), trend analysis and spatio-statistical analysis. The RISC categories that show which towns suffer most from crime, or inversely are safest in Malta and Gozo, can be found below.



Over the years a spatial depiction was developed to aid users to visualise crime through maps, where due to the increasingly available mobile technologies, users can interact with their location and identify safety zones as well as offence areas. The 2016 report comprises the publication of interactive maps highlighting graduated maps, heat maps and choropleth maps as well as variable high-level cluster maps that users can review and understand safety and security in the Maltese Islands. The categories comprise Main Category Offences, Sub-Category Offences and RISC.



## FIGURES TO PONDER

- **Crimes that Increased** (in descending order): theft (mainly pick-pocketing), domestic violence, fraud, attempted offences, violence against pub. officer, drugs and arson
- **Crimes that Decreased** (in descending order): damage, bodily harm, threats and private violence, computer misuse, sexual offence and forgery
- **Thefts** have seen an overall decrease in most categories, except for Pickpocketing theft from occupied residences and vehicle interiors that registered 12% (57 cases) increase and 25% (224 cases) respectively that exhibited an increase in reporting. Overall, Theft comprises 51% of all offences, of which pickpocketing comprises 14%, an increase of 2% over the previous year record
- **Damages** constituted a stabilisation of reports between 2015 and 2016, decreasing slightly
- **Bodily Harm** dropped to 901 cases in 2016 which results in a 3% drop, though still registering an average of 2.5 incidents per day.
- **Fraud** has experienced a 6% increase over the previous year, a consistent rate of increase
- **Computer** related crime experienced a 23% decrease over the previous year
- **Drugs** reporting increased by 38% in 2016 to 217, the highest since 2004
- **Domestic Violence** has continued its steady increase reaching 1272 instances in 2016 up from 1205 reports in 2015, which points to a 183% increase between 2008 (450 reports) and 2016, when specific statistics on Domestic Violence became available due to changes in legislation (2007)
- **Threats and Public Violence** have reversed the trend established in 2008, which posted a situation where reports increased year-on-year, however dented by the 2016 decrease of 11%
- **Sexual Offences** decreased by 10% over the previous year
- **Violence against Public Officers** increased by 5%
- **Theft from Residences** has increased by 57 cases or 12% as compared to 2015 reaching 552 cases which whilst higher than the 2015 figure reflects the previous years' figures and the lower-than-average year reporting.

## Temporal Statistics

In terms of Temporal statistics, the summer months remain the highest offence absorbers, steadily increasing from April to **August**, declining slightly till December, dropping in January and then slowly increasing till April.

**Saturday**, followed by Sunday attract most incidences though during the past three years Mondays registered the highest target days. The rest of the weekdays are comparatively stable with circa 42 offences per Monday.

Offences occur mainly at **18:00** or between 10:00 and 14:00.

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## PRISONS IN MALTA

**Prison numbers registered a steady decrease since 2012 when high rates went beyond the Psychological Threshold of 600 residents.**

CCF remains inundated with a high number of inmates, held in the Island's only prison that comprises services for both sexes, all categories of offences, all ages, national and international provenance, sentenced and remanded offenders, amongst other categories. Youths have been transferred to Mtaħleb.

As from 2012, CrimeMalta's research process was also enhanced to include the prison population statistics, with data going back to 2001.

The latest figures show a steady decrease in CCF population, as reviewed on a year-to-year basis.

Some statistics recorded on a Friday base-date:

- The CCF Psychological **Capacity Threshold** of 600 inmates was exceeded at the end of September 2012, increasing till April 2014 and decreasing to 539 inmates in June 2015;
  - The CCF Population as at **30<sup>th</sup> December 2016** (last Friday): 553 (516 males and 37 females);
  - The CCF Population as at the **highest ever recorded Friday** - 25<sup>th</sup> April 2014: 645 (607 males and 38 females).
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## RISC MODEL: LEAGUE TABLES FOR 2015

As part of a review of RISC Modelling for the Maltese Islands, a number of analytical studies have been carried out for the period between 1998 and 2016. Domestic Violence and Commercial Activity-related RISC has been included as from 2015.

### Grand Total Offences

In terms of Grand Total Offences, San Giljan maintains its perennial hold at the top of the League, hosting over 5 times the national rate of offences, which is calculated as the observed offences as against those which should potentially occur in those areas under study. At a rate between 2 and 5 times the national rate, Mdina followed a close second, which group also comprises Valletta, Floriana, Sliema, San Pawl il-Bahar and Marsa, a rank similar to the 2015 report, except that Ta' Xbiex was overtaken by Marsa.

At a rate between the national up to twice that rate one can find Msida, Ta' Xbiex, Gzira, Marsaxlokk, Gudja, Zebbug (Gozo), Paola, Mellieha, Ghajnsielem, Birzebbugia, Pieta, Birgu and Bormla.

All the other Councils host a lower than national rate, albeit none have a Zero RISC.

### Theft from Residences

Whilst this category of offences registered no councils having over 5 times the national rate of offences, in 2016, the relative RISC still appears for those towns experiencing the phenomenon. Marsa, San Pawl il-Bahar, Msida, Swieqi, Xghajra, San Lawrenz, Ghasri, Zebbug (Gozo) and Pembroke registered within the 2x-5x RISC. In contrast, most other zones have lower than average rates and that Gharghur and Fontana registered zero residential offences in 2016.

### Theft of and from Vehicles

During 2016, San Giljan took top spot, followed by Marsa, Xghajra and Floriana as the highest RISC areas where one's car could be vandalised, broken into and/or stolen, which towns host between 2 and 5 times. Note that these towns host the largest parking and transport-related activities that attract offenders to high-volume and relatively less monitored opportunities. At the other end of the scale, Kercem, Sannat and Gharb registered zero vehicle-related offences.

### Domestic Violence

Domestic violence reports pertain to stalking, slight bodily harm, grievous bodily harm and psychological harm. Ghasri, Xghajra and Bormla host between 2 and 5 the national rate as against the 2015 high-rates Birzebbugia, San Pawl il-Bahar and Floriana. With diminishing rates of RISC, it is imperative to note that a significant number of councils exhibit some form of domestic violence that is above the national rate (yellow in the RISC

Council
SAN GILJAN
MDINA
VALLETTA
FLORIANA
SLEMA
SAN PAWL IL-BAHAR
MARSA
MSIDA
TA' XBIEX
GZIRA
MARSAXLOKK
GUDJA
ZEBBUG (Ghawdex)
PAOLA
MELLIEHA
GHAJNSIELEM
BIRZEBBUGIA
PIETA
BIRGU
BORMLA
GHASRI
HAMRUN
LUQA
MUNXAR
XGHAJRA
RABAT (Malta)
PEMBROKE
MARSASCALA
QORMI
ISLA
SANTA VENERA
KALKARA
SAN LAWRENZ
SWIEQI
RABAT (Victoria)
ZEJTUN
KIRKOP
MOSTA
BIRKIRKARA
MGARR
NAXXAR
GHARB
GHARGHUR
ZABBAR
SAN GWANNI
FGURA
ATTARD
SAFI
QRENDI
TARXIEN
ZURRIEQ
ZEBBUG (Malta)
MTARFA
IKLIN
GHAXAQ
XAGHRA
BALZAN
SANTA LUCIA
XEWKJA
MQABBA
LUA
SIGGIEWI
NADUR
QALA
DINGLI
SANNAT
FONTANA
KERCEM

maps depicted in the CrimeMalta website) at 1-2 times the rate. In effect all towns have incident reporting but may register lower than national rates.

At the other end of the scale, Mdina and San Lawrenz registered zero offences, a phenomenon also found in rural and small areas where the changes in legislation may yet have an effect in terms of encouraging victims to report.

### Commercial Activity-related

San Giljan hosted the highest RISC rates, which at the top of the League, host over 5 times the national rate of offences. Pembroke, Gudja and San Pawl il-Bahar was registered at second place hosting between 2 and 5 times the national rate of offences, indicative of their proximity to the main economic centres such as the San Giljan recreational zone and the Gudja airport. The least RISC registering towns at zero RISC include Kirkop, Ghasri, Nadur, Sannat, Fontana and Gharb.

Grand Total	Residential	Vehicle	Domestic	Commercial
<b>Council</b>	<b>Council</b>	<b>Council</b>	<b>Council</b>	<b>Council</b>
SAN GILJAN	MARSA	SAN GILJAN	GHASRI	SAN GILJAN
MDINA	SAN PAWL IL-BAHAR	MARSA	XGHAJRA	PEMBROKE
VALLETTA	MSIDA	XGHAJRA	BORMLA	GUDJA
FLORIANA	SWIEQI	FLORIANA	BIRZEBBUGIA	SAN PAWL IL-BAHAR
SLIEMA	XGHAJRA	LUQA	SAN PAWL IL-BAHAR	SLIEMA
SAN PAWL IL-BAHAR	SAN LAWRENZ	PAOLA	GUDJA	SANTA LUCIJA
MARSA	GHASRI	PEMBROKE	KIRKOP	MELLIEHA
MSIDA	ZEBBUG (Ghawdex)	TA' XBIEX	IKLIN	VALLETTA
TA' XBIEX	PEMBROKE	VALLETTA	VALLETTA	MARSASCALA
GZIRA	SAN GILJAN	GZIRA	KALKARA	FLORIANA
MARSAXLOKK	MDINA	BIRZEBBUGIA	MTARFA	GZIRA
GUDJA	MELLIEHA	ZABBAR	ISLA	PAOLA
ZEBBUG (Ghawdex)	MUNXAR	PIETA	BIRGU	SAFI
PAOLA	GZIRA	MSIDA	FLORIANA	MUNXAR
MELLIEHA	LUQA	KALKARA	MSIDA	SAN LAWRENZ
GHAJNSIELEM	GHAJNSIELEM	SAN PAWL IL-BAHAR	ZABBAR	XGHAJRA
BIRZEBBUGIA	SLIEMA	ZEBBUG (Ghawdex)	MQABBA	MTARFA
PIETA	PIETA	BORMLA	MOSTA	GHAJNSIELEM
BIRGU	MARSASCALA	QORMI	SAN GILJAN	RABAT (Malta)
BORMLA	BORMLA	BIRGU	ZEJTUN	LUQA
GHASRI	PAOLA	GUDJA	ZURRIEQ	BORMLA
HAMRUN	BIRGU	HAMRUN	GHAJNSIELEM	BIRZEBBUGIA
LUQA	BIRZEBBUGIA	FGURA	GHARGHUR	QORMI
MUNXAR	VALLETTA	GHAJNSIELEM	SANTA VENERA	KALKARA
XGHAJRA	TA' XBIEX	MARSAXLOKK	PEMBROKE	HAMRUN
RABAT (Malta)	GUDJA	MGARR	ZEBBUG (Ghawdex)	MDINA
PEMBROKE	ZEJTUN	GHASRI	ZEBBUG (Malta)	ATTARD
MARSASCALA	IKLIN	SANTA VENERA	LUQA	NAXXAR
QORMI	LJJA	MARSASCALA	MARSASCALA	MGARR
ISLA	FGURA	ZEJTUN	BIRKIRKARA	IKLIN
SANTA VENERA	HAMRUN	SLIEMA	MELLIEHA	MARSA
KALKARA	TARXIEN	TARXIEN	PIETA	ZEJTUN
SAN LAWRENZ	SIGGIEWI	MELLIEHA	GHAXAQ	TA' XBIEX
SWIEQI	QALA	BIRKIRKARA	SAFI	ZURRIEQ
RABAT (Victoria)	QORMI	GHAXAQ	QORMI	FGURA
ZEJTUN	ISLA	SAFI	BALZAN	RABAT (Victoria)
KIRKOP	SANTA VENERA	ISLA	MARSAXLOKK	SANTA VENERA
MOSTA	SAN GWANN	MDINA	SIGGIEWI	BIRKIRKARA
BIRKIRKARA	BALZAN	NAXXAR	RABAT (Malta)	ZEBBUG (Ghawdex)
MGARR	SAFI	GHARGHUR	SAN GWANN	PIETA
NAXXAR	MOSTA	SAN GWANN	HAMRUN	SAN GWANN
GHARB	NAXXAR	MUNXAR	LJJA	ZABBAR
GHARGHUR	BIRKIRKARA	LJJA	DINGLI	TARXIEN
ZABBAR	RABAT (Malta)	RABAT (Victoria)	ATTARD	XAGHRA
SAN GWANN	MQABBA	ZURRIEQ	PAOLA	SWIEQI
FGURA	FLORIANA	SWIEQI	GZIRA	ISLA
ATTARD	SANNAT	MOSTA	TARXIEN	MSIDA
SAFI	QRENDI	RABAT (Malta)	MARSA	SIGGIEWI
QRENDI	KALKARA	ATTARD	SLIEMA	MOSTA
TARXIEN	ATTARD	SIGGIEWI	FGURA	BIRGU
ZURRIEQ	XEWKJJA	ZEBBUG (Malta)	QRENDI	GHAXAQ
ZEBBUG (Malta)	MTARFA	KIRKOP	MUNXAR	ZEBBUG (Malta)
MTARFA	GHARB	SANTA LUCIJA	NAXXAR	KERCEM
IKLIN	ZEBBUG (Malta)	SAN LAWRENZ	MGARR	QALA
GHAXAQ	ZABBAR	QALA	SWIEQI	MARSAXLOKK
XAGHRA	SANTA LUCIJA	XEWKJJA	KERCEM	LJJA
BALZAN	MARSAXLOKK	MTARFA	QALA	QRENDI
SANTA LUCIJA	DINGLI	IKLIN	FONTANA	BALZAN
XEWKJJA	MGARR	XAGHRA	SANTA LUCIJA	DINGLI
MQABBA	XAGHRA	QRENDI	GHARB	GHARGHUR
LJJA	RABAT (Victoria)	FONTANA	NADUR	MQABBA
SIGGIEWI	NADUR	BALZAN	XEWKJJA	XEWKJJA
NADUR	KIRKOP	MQABBA	TA' XBIEX	KIRKOP
QALA	GHAXAQ	DINGLI	SANNAT	GHASRI
DINGLI	ZURRIEQ	NADUR	XAGHRA	NADUR
SANNAT	KERCEM	KERCEM	RABAT (Victoria)	SANNAT
FONTANA	GHARGHUR	SANNAT	MDINA	FONTANA
KERCEM	FONTANA	GHARB	SAN LAWRENZ	GHARB

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## REFERENCE MAPS:

Main site: <http://www.crimemalta.com>

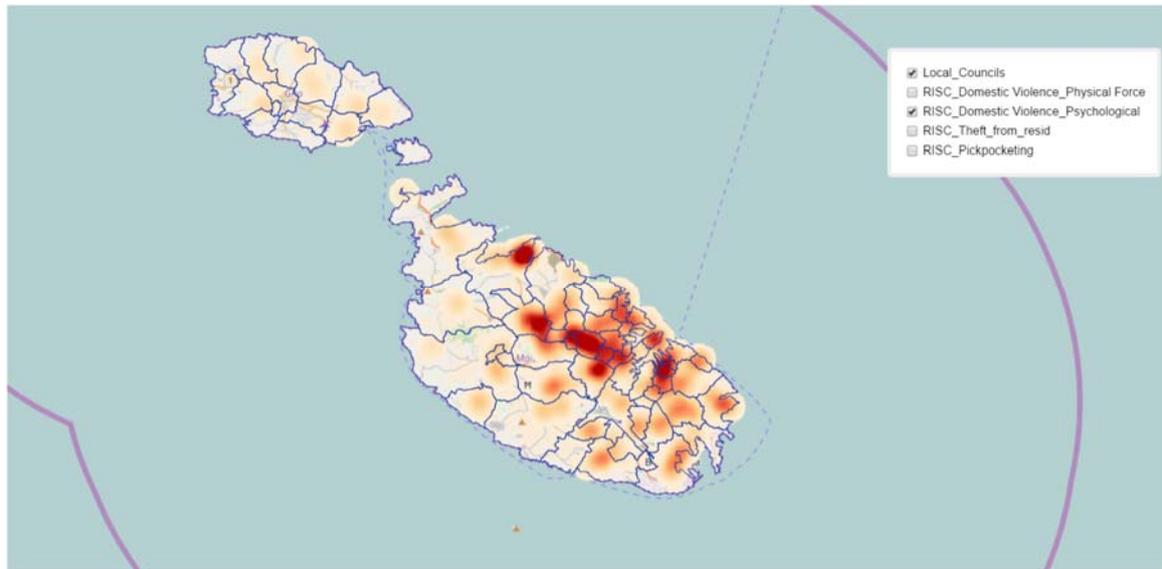
Main Crime Categories Interactive Map: <http://crimemalta.com/qgis2016/main>

Main Crime Sub Categories Interactive Map: <http://crimemalta.com/qgis2016/subselected>

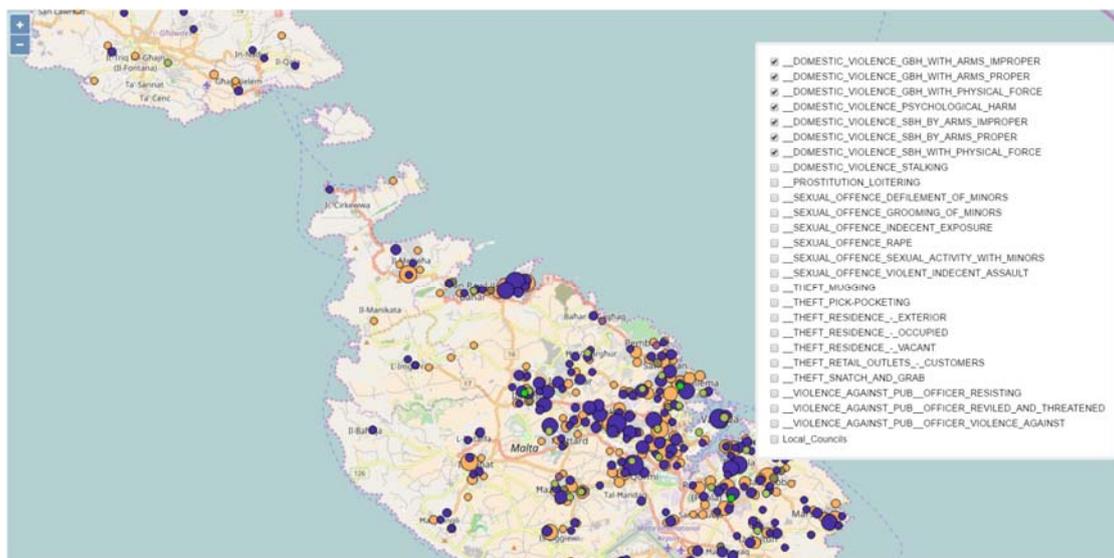
RISC Map: <http://crimemalta.com/qgis2016/risc>

## Sample Imagery

### Heat Map – Domestic Violence – Psychological Harm



### Domestic Violence Interactive Cluster Map



### Pick-Pocketing Interactive Cluster Map

