



## **2012 Portugal Crime Analysis Algarve Crime down for 4<sup>th</sup> Year in Succession**

The 2012 crime statistics for Portugal have recently been published by Sistema de Segurança Interna and Instituto Nacional de Estatística. David Thomas President of Associação Safe Communities Algarve has provided an initial analysis of the data provided.

### **Portugal**

David stated he was encouraged by the -2.3 % decrease in reported overall crime for Portugal compared to 2011 and in particular the decrease of -4.4% in the Algarve for the same period. This comes at a time of economic downturn when crime, particularly property crime, often increases.

The most noteworthy trends for Portugal as a whole was that, apart from theft, the top category of crime was theft from motor vehicle 32,772 cases and theft of vehicles 15,839 cases; these account for 12% of all reported crime. The other notable figure was burglaries which decreased to 25,148, down - 11.1%, the lowest for 5 years. This contrasted however with Residential Robberies (burglaries with violence or threat of violence) which increased from 733 to 995; this is clearly a matter of concern. Some elements are of this are that 40% occurred between 1300 to 1900 hrs; in over half there was one culprit; around half escaped using a car; the value of goods stolen was less than €250 in 34% of cases and most occurred in May and December.

Some 42,489 thefts were recorded. Not surprisingly metal theft account for 35% of these. This was followed by opportunist thefts 7960 and thefts from gardens and land adjacent to property. Agricultural theft and theft of farmyard items accounted for the remainder.

### **Faro District (Algarve)**

Total recorded crime in Faro District (Algarve) was 25,412 cases. This was the 4th year in succession overall crime has decreased in the region taking the reduction to - 14.2% compared to -6.3% for the country since 2008.

In the municipalities the most notable decreases were in Faro down 12.6%; Lagos -12.5%; Albufeira -7.3% and Portimão – 5.6%. Crime levels remain roughly the same in Lagoa, Monchique, and Olhão. An increase of 10.4% in crime was recorded in Silves and in Loulé crime increased 3% compared with a decrease of -14% in 2011 compared to 2010. Overall crime in Albufeira has decreased by - 42.4 % compared to 2004.

Violent crime in the Algarve this was down - 1.0% compared to - 7.8% nationally.

In the broad category of Crimes against Patrimony, which includes thefts, burglaries, thefts from vehicles, and other thefts, the crime level had decreased by – 9.6% in the Algarve compared to

2011. Most notable decreases had been achieved in Albufeira and Lagoa down - 23.3% and - 15.8% respectively

Although Crimes Against Persons decreased in the region by - 3.9% compared to 2011, there is some concern regarding snatchings particularly gold chains. Whereas in Portimão crime against persons decreased by a significant - 15.8%, Loulé and Silves registered 11.6% and 14.8% increases respectively

The crime figures do not tell the whole story. There is always an element of unreported crime but there is nothing to indicate that this element is any higher or lower than previously. Crime figures are also influenced by proactive police operations in which there have been a number of successes in the last few months. So for instance if a criminal group is arrested and found to have carried out multiple crimes some of which have not been reported, the figures will increase. Likewise anti drink driving operations will result in increased crime figures.

Such figures are important however in accurately targeting crime prevention measures at particular crimes.

The GNR have recently acknowledged the work of the foreign community in helping them combat crime for instance through the Safe Residence Program and the work of Safe Communities Algarve. Adopting crime prevention measures is having a positive impact and this will be increasingly important during 2013 which will be a challenging year. For further information please contact [info@safecommunitiesalgarve.com](mailto:info@safecommunitiesalgarve.com)

Safe Communities Algarve

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