



## **Crime in the Algarve lowest since 2001 2013 Crime figures and Analysis**

Welcome news for the Algarve is that preliminary crime statistics published by Direção-Geral da Política de Justiça show that there were 23,060 recorded crimes in the Algarve in 2013, a decrease of 9.3% compared with the 2012. This is the lowest since 2001 and is the 5<sup>th</sup> successive year that crime has decreased in the region.

The national report indicates that in Portugal as a whole there were 376,336 crimes recorded, a decrease of 6.9% compared with 2012. Violent crime fell by a significant 9.5% to 20,147 cases.

Despite the downturn in crime, once again theft from vehicles across the country was the highest reported crime at 29,654 cases and this together with theft of vehicles represents about 11.8% of all reported crime. Although most crime categories decreased, there were 27,318 cases of domestic violence where the victims were spouses, children or family members, an increase of 2.4% making it the second highest reported crime. The PSP and GNR recorded 31930 victims of domestic violence (81% were women) and 31,079 offenders (86% men).

For the first time in four years however robberies inside residences decreased; registering 848 cases compared to 995 in 2012. Household burglaries also decreased by 11.7% to 22197 cases. Bank, farmacia and gasoline station robberies were similar to 2012, but an increase of nearly 15% occurred on board public transport. Contrasting to this however, jewellery shop robberies decreased by 45.1%. Unsurprisingly there was an increase in scams reported to police up by 759 to 12,287 cases and there were 1105 cases of bank fraud reported up by 267 cases.

The number of homicides stood at 116 33 less than in 2012. Most of these involved family, friends or acquaintances.

Continuing with their war on weapons police seized a total of 5501 weapons during the year , 2012 more than in 2012. Crime in schools increased to 6353 cases up by 632,; most of these involved aggression or theft.

### **The Algarve**

Preliminary crime figures for the Algarve show that crime decreased in 11 of the 16 municipalities the exceptions being Vila do Bispo, Monchique, Lagos, Alcoutim and Olhão where there were slight increases. The biggest decrease was in Vila Real de Santo Antonio down 25%, followed by Silves down by 22%; Albufeira down 12.8% and Loulé where crime decreased by 11.8% to 3791 cases compared to 2012.

The significant decreases in overall crime in some of the inner areas appears largely attributable to decreases in crimes against property, which includes burglaries, theft from vehicles and other thefts, where in Silves and Loulé combined showed a decrease of 20.2%. Crime against persons which includes assault, robbery and, domestic violence stood at 4327 cases compared with 4477 in 2012. In the Algarve crime against property constitutes 66% of overall reported crime compared with 53.7% for the country as a whole, but crime against persons is only 19% of total crime compared with 22.4% nationally.

Geographically there tends to be more crime in the populated central areas of the Algarve. In the less populated eastern part of the region comprising Alcoutim, Tavira, Castro Marim and V.R.S Antonio 2110 crimes were reported which is just 9.3% of the regions total.

The reason why crime is decreasing is difficult to attribute to one single factor. During 2013 there have been a number of major successes in terms of police operations against criminal gangs and police commanders indicate that some overseas criminal elements have left the country. In terms of the Algarve, which is showing a more significant decrease in crime compared with the country as a whole, the likely reasons include: the increase in police personnel during the summer months; special programmes such as the GNR Safe Residence programme and the PSP Safe Destination programme together with greater awareness and preventative steps being taken by the community.

More detailed information can be found on [www.safecommunitiesalgarve.com](http://www.safecommunitiesalgarve.com)

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