



Portugal Security Report for 2017 (RASI)

Overall

The Annual Homeland Security Report (RASI) for 2017, has been presented to the Assembly of the Republic.

Total crime for 2017 stood at **341,950** reported cases compared with **330,872** in 2016 and increase of 3.3%. Violent and serious crime however decreased by 8.7% to **15,303** cases 1458 less than in 2016

The Minister of Interior Eduardo Cabrita stated that, in recent years, Portugal has consistently been considered in several international assessments as “one of the safest countries in the world”.

Within the violent crime category there were reductions in robberies in residences (-14%), motor vehicles (-11%) and schools (-6.4%), criminal groups (- 8.8%) and robberies on the public highway and by snatching in public transport (-12.9%).

The main increases in overall crime included counterfeiting, forest fires and scams.

In the major crime categories: 50% of all crime was property crime; 24.1% crime against persons; 15.4% crime against society (mainly drink driving), 1.7% crimes against the State and 0.6% in the new category of crime against animals.

Another crime “with significant growth” was forest fires, which increased more than 27%.

The Minister also mentioned the increase in the crime of fraud, particularly in the sale or renting of dwellings, especially through the Internet. This was one of Safe Communities Portugal’s priorities in 2017 and will again be this year.

Eduardo Cabrita also pointed out that until October 2017 there was a “just concern” about the robberies of ATMs, which increased by 73% compared to 2016, and the measures adopted led to “a significant reduction” of these robberies in November and December of 2017 and in the first months of 2018.

Main crimes 2017 compared to 2016

Crime	2017	2016	% change
Simple assault	23,146	23,176	-1.0
Theft from vehicles	22,729	21,424	6.1
Domestic violence	22,599	22,773	-1.7
Driving 1.2g/l or over	19,848	20,849	-4.8
Other damage	17,201	16,482	4.4
Threats and coercion	14,610	14,246	2.6

Pickpocketing	13,334	13,879	-3.9
Opportunist theft	12,775	13,870	-7.9
Scams	12,466	8,429	47.9
Burglary with break-in or false keys	12,300	14,365	-14.4
Counterfeiting and currency*	11,560	3,175	264.1
Forest, bush and agriculture fires	11,221	8,779	27.8
Theft of vehicle	10,254	11,531	-11.0
Driving without a licence	9,305	9,301	0.0
Fraud and computer crime	8,149	8,448	-3.5
Drug trafficking	8,215	7,255	13.2
Other Thefts	7368	7160	2.9

*The Minister pointed out that the increase in counterfeiting at 246% does not represent a real increase in this crime in the last year, and is due to the fact that the registration of these crimes was delayed in previous years " due to lack of resources of the central brigade of investigation of corruption and economic and financial crime ". Last year, a task force was created, which included "(transient) collaboration of elements of other brigades from different directions of the PJ and the adoption of internal measures, namely delegation of registration procedures."

Distribution of crime

A total of 16 districts showed an increase in overall reported crime, the highest percentage increase being Guarda and Madeira both at 6.7% compared to 2016. The highest number of reported crimes were Lisbon at 90,691 and Porto 58,342. Faro District (Algarve) was in 4th place with 21,207 a slight increase of 1.8% compared to last year.

This is the first increase in the Algarve since 2010. Total reported crime since then has recorded a 25.7% decrease. The largest increase in crime was Lisbon at 5,316 reports.

Districts registering a decrease were Braga (-0.4%); Coimbra (-5.3%) and Leiria (-0.35).

In terms of violent crime 15 districts showed a decrease, the greatest being Villa Real at 35.6% and the lowest Faro District at 0.4%. The remaining districts went against the overall trend with increases, the highest being Guarda at 35.6% from 59 to 80 cases. In terms of the distribution of violent crime 45.4% of all cases were recorded in Lisbon; 14.7% in Porto, 10.7% in Setubal and 6.5% in Faro District. This also reflects the overall crime distribution.

Drug Trafficking

The number of cases stood at 8215 compared to 7255 last year. The number of people detained in Portugal for drug trafficking has increased again, following a trend of recent years. In 2017, according to RASI, 7256 people were detained by the security forces, an increase of 24% over the previous year in which 5681 people were detained. In 2016, there was already a 5.3% increase in the total number of detainees compared to 2015. Most of these actions are carried out by PSP and GNR, with hashish being the drug that has led to more arrests.

Of the 7256 persons who were arrested, 666 were female and the remainder were male. There were 1124 detainees of foreign nationality, which demonstrates the transnational character of the phenomenon".

The report does not clarify whether this total of 7256 detainees refers to different individuals or there are cases of arrests of the same person at different times of the year.

Seizures

The amounts of cocaine and hashish seized in Portugal last year rose 162% and 116.3%, respectively, while heroin and ecstasy decreased.

Drug	No of seizures	Weight seized	% Change no of seizures
Cocaine	1576	2748.6	39.0
Heroin	1024	48.2	33.7
Hashish	6917	15,277.9	48.6
Ecstasy	585	16,700	109.7

Moreover, there were no major changes in international smuggling routes, with Portugal being one of the gateways to cocaine and hashish in Europe. There has been no significant change from previous years, with heroin continuing to arrive in Portugal through other European countries and also from Mozambique by air. Hashish continues to be mostly from Morocco and cocaine from South America,

RASI points out that "There is a growing use of the internet, especially the dark net, by isolated individuals and criminal groups, to commercialize the most diverse types of illicit drugs and new psychoactive substances that consumers receive directly by mail to their homes. It also highlights "the detection of a laboratory of new psychoactive substances in national territory, "a case that involved a Polish couple living in Lourinhã who received payments in crypto-coins.

Violent crime

In 2017, violent and serious crimes accounted for only 4.4% of all criminal activity in the past year, recording the lowest figure in the last ten years, according to RASI. Violent and serious crime, which includes crimes that cause a strong sense of insecurity, decreased from 24,317 occurrences to 15,303, meaning a reduction of 37.1% since 2008.

The fall was mainly due to a decline in extortion (-28.3%) and robbery, which declined both in public transport (-27.5%) and in commercial or industrial buildings (-21.5%) and on public roads (-9.9%).

On the contrary, serious personal injury offenses increased by 12.1%. This is defined as those cases where there is the intention to seriously and permanently disfigure the victim or put the person in danger of life.

Among the crimes that the General Secretariat of the Internal Security System, responsible for the report, considers violent and serious, were that of rape which was among the few crimes that registered an increase.

Last year there were 408 rapes, 73 more than a year earlier. This increase of 21.8% was accompanied by a rise in the number of detainees, from 45 people in 2016 to 53 a year later. All detainees are men. Rape resulted in 53 arrests last year. Of those who were accused of this crime, more than half were between 21 and 40 years of age, followed by the age group from 41 to 50 years (20.3% of the perpetrators), and the proportion of defendants over the age of 50 increased.

In total, last year, fewer than 174 cases of violence were committed in a marital context than in 2016. A decrease of 0.8%, which resulted in 32,291 victims. Among them, the percentage of men (21% of victims) increased.

For this crime, 703 suspects were detained – 27 fewer than in 2016 and more than 3,000 suspects in 2009. However, more than 20 thousand of the 29,711 open investigations, were closed and there were prosecutions in 4465 cases.

Air piracy and other crimes against the security of civil aviation – which went from 25 cases in 2016 to 45 last year – and robberies at pharmacies also increased.

Crime	2017	2016	% change
Street robberies	5848	6492	-9.9
Snatching	3938	4311	-8.7
Resistance and coercion	1639	1688	-2.9
Residential robbery	569	591	-3.7
Robbery -Public transport	456	629	-25.0
Rape	408	335	21.8
Robbery – commercial and industrial	398	507	-21.4
Extortion	345	481	-28.3
Serious assault	584	521	12.1
Negligent homicide (accident)	404	350	7.9
Robbery at Petrol stations	102	137	-25.5
Homicide	82	76	7.8
Robbery- Farmacias	44	36	22.2
Bank and credit company robberies	23	39	-41.0

Fewer detainees for sexual abuse of minors

Among sexual offenses, in cases of child abuse there were 101 in 2017, 21 fewer than a year earlier

About 67% of inquiries into crimes of a sexual nature initiated by the Judiciary Police concern minors. These crimes include child sexual abuse (which represents 42.6 per cent of total inquiries), pornography involving minors (14.3 per cent), sexual abuse of a dependent minor, enticement of minors for sexual purposes, sexual acts with adolescents, pimping and the use of prostitution.

Economic Crime

The Public Prosecutor's Office has filed more than 30,000 inquiries for fraud in 2017 and nearly two thousand for abuse of tax trust, and has opened 945 inquiries for corruption.

In the area of economic and financial crime, the data indicate that the crimes for which the Public Prosecutor's Office has opened further investigations are fraud (except tax fraud), abuse of tax trust (4242), followed by abuse of confidence against social security (1999), corruption (945) and tax fraud (861).

Computer-related crimes using technology have seen a "generalized increase" in 2017, with emphasis on improper or illegitimate access, hacking, deception and sabotage.

The document states that computer crimes continue to rise, with 175 more cases in 2017 compared to 2016, an increase of 21.8%.

Among this type of crime was the increase in illegitimate or improper access (21%), computer misuse (16%), computer fraud (16%) and computer sabotage (27%). For these crimes 76 people were accused, nine more than last year.

Computer and telecommunications scams during the year were significant. There were more than eight thousand cases associated with this type of crime resulting in 367 defendants.

Forest fires

The crime of causing fire increased by 27.8% in 2017, corresponding to 11,211 cases, 2442 more than in the previous year. The number of detainees almost tripled, from 116 in 2016 to 309, a difference of 166%.

Property theft

The number of burglaries from residential properties decreased from 14,365 to 12,300 a decrease of - 14.4%. The number of thefts from supermarkets reflected this trend by decreasing from 1726 in 2016 to 1402 in 2017. Likewise thefts from the annexes of properties decreased from 3914 to 3394 cases.

Theft of non-precious metals continued to decrease and stood at 2888 cases compared with 15,184 in 2012 – reflecting concerted action against scrapyards.

Four confirmed victims of trafficking

Last year only four victims of human trafficking were confirmed in Portugal, a decrease of 96% (in the previous year they had been 118). The total number of suspected victims identified by the authorities also fell by a third, with the vast majority reported for labour exploitation (47), followed by almost half (24) for sexual exploitation. Of note, of the 175 people reported, 45 involved minors – of which 24 are still under investigation. Four were not confirmed.

On the other hand, the number of child pornography crimes (for which 37 people were arrested) decreased by 39%.

Immigration

Denials of entry into Portugal, rose by 37%, to two thousand people, mostly Brazilian citizens (60%), followed by a much smaller percentage of Angolans (7%).

Authorities are concerned about marriages of convenience: a network operating in Ireland was dismantled and between 2012 and 2017 registered 664 marriages involving Portuguese. Of these, 89% were women, who married mostly Pakistanis (288), Bengalis (129) and Indians (95). The other 11% were Portuguese men who married citizens of Brazil, Mauritius, Nigeria, Venezuela and Pakistan.

The RASI also indicates that there are at least 21 deportations: in addition 354 foreigners were removed from the national territory. And the notifications for voluntary abandonment decreased by 12.1%, to 4810.

As for the attribution of Portuguese nationality, it was granted to 27,362 citizens, 1301 more than the previous year. This was a reflection of the increase from 35,416 to 37,262 applications, the maximum value of the last eight years. Brazil is again at the top of the list, with 10,805 registrations, followed by Cape Verde (3022), Israel (2539), Ukraine (1960) and Angola (1613).

Terrorism

Last year, the authorities detected seven terrorist organizations in Portugal, four of them national. The presence of six international terrorist organizations had been recorded a year before, with no information on how many nationals (only three of them were known to have been detained secretly), adding that there are

no references to Portugal in the messages of the terrorist groups and no indications that point to the preparation of an attack. The authorities continue to classify the terrorist threat in the country as moderate. "However, there is no immunity from current terrorism," notes RASI, so that Portugal necessarily faces "the potential risks" that fall on other European countries.

The RASI also notes that there is a possibility that the country could be used as a transit platform or logistical support for the recruitment of *ihadists*.

Crimes against animals

The number of cases reported in 2017 stood at 1950 cases compared to 1623 in 2016, a 20.1% increase

Detentions and other enforcement action

A total of 46,283 persons were detained, around the same as last year. The number constituted "arquidos" (formal suspects) however increased from 52,778 to 76,000. A total number of searches conducted by police increased from 11,916 to 15,181. Vehicles seized also increased to 1790 from 1584 in 2016.

Traffic

During 2017 there were 136,239 road accidents compared to 133,157 in 2016. Deaths on the roads increased from 455 to 520 and serious injuries from 2295 to 2387. Slight injuries also increased from 40,741 to 43,298.

According to data from the Car Management Information System (SIGA), there was a decrease of 257,725 in traffic fines (-20.6%) compared to 2016, for minor, serious and very serious infractions. That is, while in 2016 more than one million fines were registered- 1 248 089 -, last year there were less than one million (990 364).

Police Strength

The negative balance between security forces entering and exiting became worse in 2017. Last year, 1575 police officers left the forces and only 808 entered, resulting in a deficit of 767. In 2016 the negative balance was 287, about one third. In total, GNR, PSP, Police Judiciary (PJ), Maritime Police and Foreigners and Borders Service (SEF) totalled 45 553 professionals at the end of last year. This was 1.1% lower than in 2016

According to the RASI, the PSP was the force to suffer the biggest deficit, with 921 departures and only 305 entering. The police force is the lowest ever, with 20 217 elements. In the GNR the balance was also negative, but less so, with 452 recruited and 549 departures. The PSP has a total of 20 217 police, the GNR are 22 724. SEF is the only force to have a positive balance, with the admission in 2017 of 41 new inspectors bringing the total to 831.

In the Judicial Police, which has not received a new inspector since 2014, the critical situation of human resources has had an impact on the register of counterfeit crimes, which was the main cause of the general crime increase (+ 3.3%).

The PJ has the lowest number in its history of criminal investigation staff (inspectors and coordinators), totalling 1271 in 2017. Last year, 78 inspectors and coordinators ceased to function. According to the RASI, 42

chief inspectors left. Only this year - although not yet defined - should a new course begin for the 120 new inspectors, selected in the competition launched in 2014.

Suicides in Prisons

Last year, 15 people committed suicide in prisons, six more than in 2016. This increase in the number of inmates' suicides takes place after a two-year decline – only in 2014 had there been 22 recorded.

1st April 2018