

Fear of crime in contemporary Greece: Research evidence

CHRISTINA ZARAFONITOU, Professor of Criminology, Panteion University of Social and Political Sciences

Fear of crime is considered as a complex social phenomenon with important consequences at both personal and societal level. Its semantic boundaries remain unclear and the pursuit of its definition results in a skepticism concerning its conceptualisation. The research evidence in Greece reflects the association of citizens' insecurity with the perception of the quality of their everyday life as degraded as well as their dissatisfaction with the state services, and in particular with the police effectiveness, in this field. In this context, the interpretation of the examined phenomenon will be based on the fundamental assumption that a feeling of general social insecurity is expressed through fear of crime.

I. The reasoning of empirical research on fear of crime

Fear of crime is considered as a complex social phenomenon with important consequences at both personal and societal level. Its semantic boundaries, however, remain unclear and the pursuit of its definition results in a skepticism concerning its appropriate conceptualisation and the criteria which lead to this (Vanderveen, 2006:29), contributing consequently to a disputation even of its status as a social phenomenon (Gray *et al.*, 2008:378).

Literally, '*fear of crime*' is defined as "a rational or irrational state of alarm or anxiety engendered by the belief that one is in danger of criminal victimisation" (McLaughlin, 2006:164). On this basis, the feeling of unsafety is provoked by the perception of crime as "a real and serious enough threat in order to be taken into account in the arrangement of everyday life" (Killias, 2001:399). This feeling is defined as the opposite of '*personal safety*' which consists of "the daily, often taken for granted, routines, that human beings engage in as a way of feeling safer at home, on the street and in the workplace" (Walkrate, 2006:292). Fear of crime and unsafety are often related to '*personal insecurity*' stemming from "the threat, imminent or remote, direct or indirect, imaginary or real, posed for individuals by other people, identifiable groups, larger and impersonal entities like the system, the market, the establishment or even society in the abstract" (Berki, 1986).

The aforementioned concepts are often used interchangeably in an attempt to refer to the same feeling or situation¹. In fact, fear of crime is not only associated with the probability of victimisation but also with the perception of social reality as well as with the capacities of reaction and protection (Mucchielli, 2002:22). Furthermore, research has confirmed the existence of differentiations between the indicators of crime and those of fear of crime (Crawford, 2007:899). In order to explain this ambiguity, a classic distinction is made between *direct fear of victimisation* concerning the subject and his/her family, and the perception of crime as a *serious social problem* causing anxiety even when it does not concern the subject directly (Furstenberg, 1971; Lagrange, 1993; Robert & Pottier, 2004). In the first case, the fear is approached, as already noted, as a personal situation, whereas in the second case, the insecurity is general and focuses on criminality as a social problem. This distinction partially allows for the association of fear of crime with indicators of an area's criminality and victimisation levels without ignoring the fact that the subjective perception of threats is based on '*vulnerability*' (Killias, 2001; Killias & Clerici, 2000; Box, *et al.*, 1988; Taylor & Hale, 1986) which people attribute to themselves or to those close to them. The above distinction may also ex-

1. In the Greek language only one word is used for insecurity/unsafety=*anasfaleia*.

plain the large number of citizens claiming on surveys and polls that they fear crime, thus expressing their general *social concerns* within a "symbolically dense concept of crime" (Jackson, 2004:962). This distinction has also been founded on the perception of fear of crime either as *expressed* or as *experienced* depending on its association with the "expression of related concerns, funneled through this concept of crime", or with the "summed expressions of threat and vulnerability" (Jackson, 2004:962).

The tendency to exaggerate estimations of criminality and criminal threats often originates from an improper correlation of personal and/or social insecurities with fear of crime. A further explanation may arise from the origin of fear of crime which does not rest solely on personal experiences but expands to those of others since the knowledge about crime stems from different sources of information (Lupton & Tulloch, 1999:521). The expression of similar feelings is connected to a series of different factors such as those concerning the quality of life of an area's residents, their trust in the penal system as well as their socio-ideological views.

Fear of crime and insecurity are considered, above all, as basic factors in shaping citizens' attitudes toward punishment (Killias, 2001:399, Zarafonitou, 2011). Most research studies agree that citizens' views towards the severity of criminals' treatment and generally towards the severity of criminal policies are affected by these anxieties². The fact that a large number of citizens demand stricter policies of 'law and order' is often associated with their general insecurity related to the dimensions of the criminal problem as well as their lack of confidence in the criminal justice system which they consider ineffective in protecting them from crime. This aspect of insecurity is additionally linked to other social anxieties such as unemployment, immigration, health care or education (Zarafonitou, 2008a).

The residents of modern cities are concerned mainly about street crime and "signs of incivility"³. Despite the fact that in urban centers the problems related to organised criminality are perhaps more serious⁴, it is

2. For an overview on the subject, see contributions included in the collective work of Kury & Ferdinand (Eds), 2008.

3. The consideration of factors related to what is defined as "environmental disorder" or "signs of incivility", such as broken windows, graffiti, litter in the street, dilapidated buildings, poor public lighting etc., have been included in American and British surveys from early on (Skogan & Maxfield, 1981, Lewis & Salem, 1986, Reiss, 1986).

4. According to Garland, citizens are persuaded that they face constantly new threats based "almost exclusively on street crime and forget the serious harms caused by criminal corporations, white-collar criminals or even drunk drivers" (Garland, 2001:136).

everyday criminality and "incivilities"⁵ which appear to be associated with the perception of life as degraded as well as with the feeling that state does not care and abandons citizens. Due to the fact that the state very often neglects issues of citizens' quality of life mainly in areas of low socio-economic status, the aforementioned problems are gathered there. This leads to a vicious circle where the residents who can afford it, move from these areas while the most powerless remain, without having the power to act as pressure groups towards the state. This trend prescribes a process of further degradation, since these areas are not desirable to install socially accepted activities (housing, commercial activities, cultural activities, etc.), thereby reducing further their value (square metre prices) and attractiveness, and thus being 'selected' either for deviant and/or criminal activities (drug trafficking, prostitution, illegal trade etc.) or as a last resort by vulnerable population groups (Shaw & McKay, 1969). In this context, it is observed that worry about crime is also 'shaped' by a series of subjective parameters, such as the psychological perception of vulnerability, the wider social views and attitudes and the perception of everyday risk⁶. These approaches reveal the significant role of information about crime which, especially in urban areas, is monopolized by the mass media.

The examination of fear of crime in contemporary Greek society is based among others on the aforementioned reasoning, while the interpretation of the related research data rests on the fundamental assumption that through fear of crime a "feeling of general social insecurity" is expressed, stemming to a large extent from the above-mentioned perception of social and environmental disorder as indicative of the absence of state interest, which surpasses it and intervenes in the shaping of the perception of personal and social views (Mucchielli, 2002:23).

II. The Greek research data

i. Research methodology

Research on fear of crime has not a long tradition in Greece. Furthermore, Greece had not participated in international victimisation surveys until 2005, when it was included, for the first time, in the last European Victimization Survey (Van Dijk *et al.*, 2007a). On the national level, only one victimisation survey was conducted, in 2001 (Karydis, 2004), although this subject has been examined in the framework of surveys on fear of crime carried out in Athens during the last decade (Zarafonitou, 2002; 2004a; 2004b; Zarafonitou & Courakis, 2006, Zarafonitou 2010)⁷. According to data derived from the European Victimization Survey, Greeks are among the most affected by a vague sense of insecurity (Van Dijk *et al.*, 2007a; Van Dijk *et al.*, 2007b).

The first Greek survey⁸ on fear of crime was conducted in 1998 and its focus was on the study of *fear of crime as well as of the social percep-*

tions of the criminal phenomenon in five areas of the Greek capital (Zarafonitou, 2002). Subsequent studies in 2004 (Zarafonitou, 2004a; 2004b; 2006a; 2006b; 2008a) and 2006 (Zarafonitou & Courakis, 2006; Zarafonitou, 2008a) were carried out in three areas of Athens in which the city center was always included⁹. Recently, the survey "*New forms of policing and the feelings of (un)safety among the shopkeepers in Athens and Piraeus*" (Zarafonitou, 2010) has also been, carried out in one area close to the center of Athens, one central area of Piraeus and one outlying area of the capital.

The choice of the research areas was always based on socio-economic criteria and environmental characteristics¹⁰. The sample in each case was comprised of approximately 500 persons, inhabitants of these areas, who responded to the questionnaires. The sampling, aiming at the representation of each area, included the following stages: a first stratification on the basis of the administrative subdivisions as shown on the maps of each municipality, and then their broader subdivisions (ten in each area) where an equal number of questionnaires was distributed and completed by "door to door" personal interviews. Immigrants were not included in these samples in order to ensure homogeneity. On the contrary, a separate research was conducted in 2004 which addressed the insecurities of immigrants only and their attitudes to the criminal phenomenon as well as their opinions about safety measures (Zarafonitou 2004b; 2006b).

Concerning the survey of 2001, the sample was representative of the national population and it was comprised of 6.095 persons aged 15 and over (Karydis, 2004:78). Finally, the sample of the EU ICS was divided into a larger national one (1.216 residents, aged 16+) and a smaller one focused on the capital (804 persons), (Van Dijk *et al.*, 2007a: 14). In these cases, telephone interviews and the CATI mode of data collection were used (Van Dijk *et al.*, 2007b)¹¹.

9. The survey includes interviews with police representatives and questionnaires addressed to shopkeepers or employees of shops located in the aforementioned areas.

10. The research areas included in the study of 1998 were two municipalities of east Athens (A1, A2) and two of west Athens (D1, D2) respectively as well as an area of the center (C) of the Greek capital. Area A1 is one of the most expensive districts of Greater Athens with an almost exclusive residential character. It is a pre-eminently upper-class district, with upgraded residences, green public spaces, many private schools and foreign embassies. Area A2 constitutes a quite crowded middle-class district with a variety of land use (residence, commerce, entertainment, sports), gathering a considerable number of young people. Area D1 constitutes a central section of one of the most crowded municipalities of the capital with intense urban development during the last years. In the area there are also an industrial zone, labour housing projects and lower-class neighborhoods. Area D2 is a section of an Athenian municipality where green spaces, industrial zones and technical educational facilities exist. A community character, however, is evident in this case too as in the area D1. Finally, the area in the center of Athens (C) is a deprived district of the city center characterised by intense commercial activity, administrative and other economic activities, intense population concentration and heterogeneity. The residential facilities are downgraded and many immigrants have settled in the broader district (Zarafonitou, 2002:88). The 2004 research was carried out in two municipalities of west Athens and the aforementioned city-center district. Area D2 is at a distance of 10 km from the center of Athens and its population has a low socio-economic status. The population of Area D3 is middle-class and the land use, except for the residential section, is of commercial character. In both areas the community character remains (Zarafonitou, 2004). Finally, the 2006 study was carried out in the same city-center district and the aforementioned upper-class Area A1 and the Area D2 of the 2004 study (Zarafonitou and Courakis, 2006).

11. About the methodology of this kind of surveys, see especially: Farrall *et al.*, 1997:657-678; Ditton *et al.*, 2000:142-156; Mayhew, 2000:91-119; Lynch, 2002:431-457; Vanderveen, 2008:33-52; Kury & Obergfell-Fuchs, 2008:53-84; Gray *et al.*, 2008:3-24 and Gray *et al.*, 2008b:363-380.

5. This is a vague concept which, in the framework of some approaches such as that of "broken windows" (Wilson & Keeling, 1982), is considered as an indication of other important problems such as lack of social solidarity or criminality (Crawford, 2001).

6. It has been observed, for example, that persons with more "authoritarian" views as regards "law and order" perceive more often the environment as characterised by "incivility" and associate this perception with problems of consensus and social cohesion as well as degradation of social ties and informal social control (Jackson, 2004: 960).

7. See also: Panoussis *y.*, Karydis *V.* (1999). "Fear of victimisation, insecurity and police inefficiency". In V-PRC, *The public opinion in Greece*, Athens: Nea Synora, (in Greek) as well as: Spinellis *C.D.*, Chaidou *A.*, Serassis *T.*, (1991), "Victim theory and research in Greece", in Kaiser *G.*, Kury *H.*, Albrecht *H.J.*, *Victims and criminal justice*, Freiburg: 123-159.

8. A pilot study had preceded in 1996 which was conducted in one borough of the Greek capital (Zarafonitou, 2000: 511-519).

Table 1: Research on fear of crime in Greece

YEAR	AREAS	SAMPLE
Athens, 1998	Five (5) research areas	493 residents aged 15+
1st national survey, 2001	Greece	6,095 residents aged 15+
Athens, 2004a	Three (3) research areas	450 residents aged 15+
Athens, 2004b	Three (3) research areas	208 immigrants
EU ICS, 2005	Greece and Athens	1216 and 804 residents respectively (2020 in total), aged 16+

Athens, 2006	Three (3) research areas	444 aged 15+
Athens, 2010	Three (3) research areas	229 shopkeepers or employees

ii. Asking about fear of crime

The examination of the meaning of fear of crime as well as the methods used in its investigation or its *conceptualisation and operationalisation* (Vanderveen, 2006:23) precedes and originates simultaneously from the research experience.

Table 2: Asking about fear of crime

RESEARCH	QUESTIONS ON FEAR OF CRIME
Athens, 1998	"Are there any areas in your area (municipality) where you are afraid to walk alone after dark?" (Yes-No)
1st national survey, 2001	"Speaking generally, how safe do you feel walking alone in your neighbourhood after dark? Do you feel very safe, fairly safe, bit safe, not at all safe?" "Please try to remember the last time that you came out for any reason in your area after dark. Have you avoided some places or people for safety reasons?" (Yes, No, I never go out after dark, I don't know/I don't answer). "What would you say are the chances that over the next 12 months someone will try to break into your home? Do you think this is very likely, likely or not likely?"
Athens, 2004a	"How safe do you feel walking alone in the areas of your municipality after dark?" (Very safe, fairly safe, bit unsafe, very unsafe) "Do you feel safe when you are at home alone after dark?" (Yes-No) "How likely do you think it is to be a victim of crime in the near future?" (Very likely, fairly likely, bit likely, not likely)
Athens, 2004b	"How safe do you feel walking alone in the area of the municipality where you live, after dark?" (Very safe, fairly safe, bit unsafe, very unsafe) "How safe do you feel when you are at home alone after dark?" (very safe, fairly safe, bit unsafe, very unsafe)
EU ICS	"How safe do you feel walking alone in your area after dark? Do you feel very safe, fairly safe, a bit unsafe or very unsafe?" "How likely do you think it is that your house will be burgled in the coming year" (Very likely, fairly likely, bit likely, not likely)
Athens, 2006	"How safe do you feel walking alone in the area of the municipality where you live, after dark?" (Very safe, fairly safe, bit unsafe, very unsafe)
Athens, 2010	"How do you characterize the neighbourhood where your shop is located?" (very safe, fairly safe, bit unsafe, very unsafe) "How likely do you think it is that you or your shop will fall victim of crime in the coming months" (Very likely, fairly likely, bit likely, not likely)

As it is obvious in table 2, the items used in Greece to investigate fear of crime levels are quite similar to those of the International Crime Victimization Survey (Van Dijk *et al.*, 2007b). Thus, the question "how safe do you feel walking alone in your area after dark?" is used in all surveys with the exception of the survey of 1998 in which the respondents were asked directly "if he/she were afraid" and the one of 2010 in which the question refers to the perception of area's safety. In addition, fear of crime is examined through "risk perception" according to the model of the ICVS, whereas in most local surveys, unsafety was examined in relation to being at home as well as on the street.

This latter variable indicated an even greater fear on the part of the respondent.

II. Research evidence on fear of crime

i. The rates of unsafety

In general, the Greek research data has ascertained high levels of fear of crime as shown aggregated in table 3.

Table 3: Rates of unsafety

RESEARCH	QUESTIONS	RATES OF FEAR OF CRIME/UNSAFETY
Athens, 1998	"Are there any areas in your municipality where you are afraid of walking alone after dark?" (Yes-No)	58.7% (Yes)
1st national survey, 2001	"Speaking generally, how safe do you feel walking alone in your neighbourhood after dark? Do you feel very safe, fairly safe, bit safe, not at all safe?" "Please try to remember the last time that you came out for any reason in your area after dark. Have you avoided some places or people for safety reasons?" (Yes, No, I never go out after dark, I don't know/I don't answer.) "What would you say are the chances that over the next 12 months someone will try to break into your home? Do you think this is very likely, likely or not likely? Do you think this is very likely, fairly likely, likely or not likely?"	34.6% (Bit safe or not all safe) 24.9% (Yes) 66% (Very likely, fairly likely, likely)
Athens, 2004a	"How safe do you feel walking alone in the areas of your municipality after dark?" (very safe, fairly safe, bit unsafe, very unsafe) "Do you feel safe when you are at home alone after dark?" (Yes-No) "How likely do you think it is to be a victim of crime in the near future?" (Very likely, fairly likely, bit likely, not likely.)	52.7% (Bit unsafe, very unsafe) 30.1% (No) 50.6% (Very likely, fairly likely)
Athens, 2004b, (immigrants)	"How safe do you feel walking alone in the area of the municipality where you live, after dark?" (Very safe, fairly safe, bit unsafe, very unsafe) "How safe do you feel when you are at home alone after dark?" (Very safe, fairly safe, bit unsafe, very unsafe)	27.0% (Bit unsafe, very unsafe) 17.9% (Bit unsafe, very unsafe)
EU ICS	"How safe do you feel walking alone in your area after dark? Do you feel very safe, fairly safe, a bit unsafe or very unsafe?" "How likely do you think it is that your house will be burgled in the coming year" (Very likely, fairly likely, bit likely, not likely)	42% (Greece) 55% (Athens) (Bit unsafe, very unsafe) 49% (Greece) 73% (Athens) (Very likely, fairly likely)
Athens, 2006	"How safe do you feel walking alone in the area of the municipality where you live, after dark?" (Very safe, fairly safe, bit unsafe, very unsafe)	56.5% (Bit unsafe, very unsafe)
Athens, 2010	"How do you characterize the neighbourhood where your shop is located?" (very safe, fairly safe, bit unsafe, very unsafe) "How likely do you think it is that you or your shop will fall victim of crime in the coming months" (Very likely, fairly likely, bit likely, not likely)	58.90% (Bit unsafe, very unsafe) 87.10% (Very likely, fairly likely)

These rates prove to be smaller at the national level compared to those of the city level; however, they remain high in relation to the average of ICVS which was 23% in 2000 (vs. 34.6% in Greece in 2001) concerning unsafety in the streets¹² and 29% (vs. 66% in Greece in 2001) concerning perceived risk of burglary in the coming year (Van Kesteren *et al.*, 2000). Moreover, the EU ICS average in 2005 was 28% (vs. 42% in Greece) concerning unsafety in the streets and 30% (vs. 49% in Greece) concerning the perceived risk of burglary (Van Dijk *et al.*, 2007a, Zarafonitou 2009b).

The rates of unsafety of the residents of Athens are even higher throughout the above period of time and only in 2004, the year of the

Olympic Games, a small decrease is observed¹³. In comparison to the European average (32%), Athenians display the largest percentage of unsafety in the streets (55%) thus holding the first place of all the other Europeans in 2005. Likewise, the European average concerning the perceived risk of burglary in the coming year was 35% in contrast to 73% in Athens (Van Dijk *et al.*, 2007a: 64). A similar picture is derived also from the findings of the local surveys in Athens since fear of crime rates were 58.7% in 1998, 52.7% in 2004 and 56.5% in 2006 (Zarafonitou, 2002, 2004a; Zarafonitou & Courakis, 2006). As regards the recent survey addressed to shopkeepers (2010), the level of expressed unsafety is even higher (58.9%). It could be argued that this finding reflects Garland's approach (2001: 152) concerning the exten-

12. The rate of unsafety was higher in the survey on "Fear of victimisation, insecurity and police efficiency" carried out in Greece, in 1998 (Panoussis, Karydis, 1999:250). According to the answers of 800 citizens, 64.5% felt unsafe or not very safe and 76.9% answered that they were afraid.

13. This small decrease in the rates of unsafety is probably due to the general climate of "security" resulting from the measures taken in this framework and their extensive media presentation. It is of particular interest that during the period preceding the Olympic Games, the publication of subjects related to insecurity was restricted (Chainas, 2007).

sion of anxieties of the middle classes, especially in times of significant social changes and economic recession.

iii. Who fears what and when

The feelings of fear of crime and insecurity are not equally distributed in the population and are differentiated on the basis of respondents' personal characteristics. Women express a much higher percentage of fear in all the above surveys without exception¹⁴. Regression and multilevel analysis of the 1998 research data on the *estimated individual effects* have shown that "females have more than 5 times greater odds¹⁵ to be afraid than males of otherwise identical characteristics" (Tseloni, 2002:184). In this analysis, married people have 73% greater odds of fear, and employees, students and those with low educational levels have almost double odds of fear whereas a positive effect on fear of crime results from long term residence in the area (Tseloni, 2002:186). A similar picture results from the 2004 research data analysis since "men report 83 percent lower odds than women of feeling unsafe walking alone after dark and roughly 60 percent lower odds of feeling unsafe at home alone after dark or perceiving a high crime risk" (Tseloni & Zarafonitou, 2008:399). The probability of fear is higher also among salaried workers, long term residents of an area, and the poorly educated (Tseloni & Zarafonitou, 2008:399). In general, the area where a respondent lives proved to be the most important individual factor. For example, the center of Athens and an upper class residential area produced results at the two opposite ends of the scale regarding unsafety felt by their residents. This finding reflects the important role of personal and/or social vulnerability in shaping feelings of insecurity (Pantazis, 2000; Killias & Clerici, 2000)¹⁶.

The surveys carried out in greater Athens have included also a question investigating the reasons considered by the respondents themselves as provoking their fear of crime (Zarafonitou, 2002; 2004a; Zarafonitou & Courakis, 2006).

Table 4: The object of fear

Athens	1998	2004	2006
Thefts & robberies	17.1% & 16.3%	19.9% & 17%*	27.2%
Drugs	15.3%	21.2%	14.2%
Assaults	15.3%	8.5%	20%
Sexual offenses	13.3%	10.2%	12.4%**

* Robberies and burglaries.

** Only rapes

The correlation of fear/unsafety with property crimes reflects to some degree a rational perception of risk by the residents of the Greek capital, considering the officially recorded proportions of these offenses. Additionally, drug-related problems appear to be a considerable concern for the Greek society as will become obvious below. In contrast, the fear caused by sexual and physical assaults appears to be much

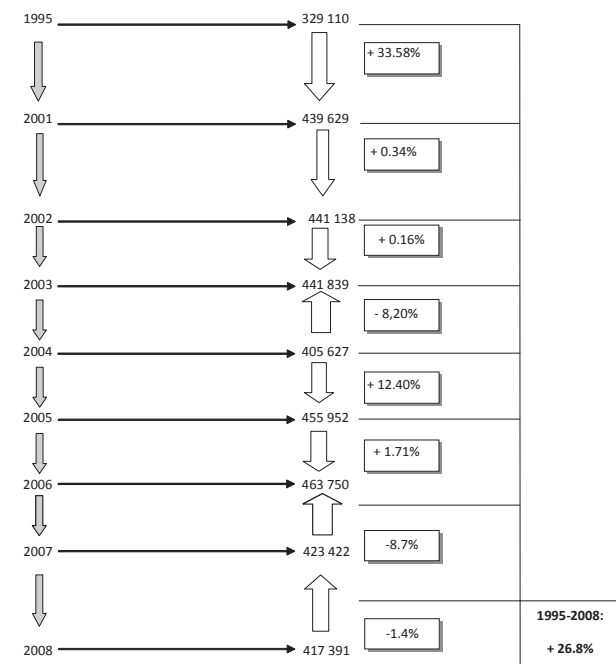
higher compared to the percentages of these types of crime as recorded in crime statistics (table 8)¹⁷.

Finally, the intensity of fear appears to be differentiated on the basis of time. This factor was examined only in two surveys in Athens (1998, 2004) through an additional question addressed only to those having expressed fear or unsafety. In the first one (Zarafonitou, 2002:102), the question was "when are you afraid of walking alone: during the day, night, or both" and as it was expected, a large majority (79.4%) responded that it was at night that they feared the most. It could be said that the wording of the question accounted for this high percentage. For this reason, the question which was posed to the residents of the capital who participated in the next survey (Zarafonitou, 2004a) was "open" asking them "after what time do you feel unsafe". The answers were almost similar to the ones of the previous study since 75.7% made it clear that they were afraid from 10:00 pm onwards, 21.7% claimed that they were afraid from 8:00 - 10:00pm, and 2.6% before 8:00 pm.

III. The trends of apparent criminality¹⁸

Though fear of crime is not causally associated with crime levels, it is still of particular interest to be studied in relation to the dimensions and the trends of criminality as derived from Eurostat crime statistics and from the data of the International Crime Victimization survey, as well as from those provided by the Hellenic Police.

Table 5: Total offences in Greece (Change 1995-2008: +26,8%).



Source: C.Tavares & G.Thomas, Statistics in focus, *Population and social conditions*, Eurostat 19/2008, 36/2009, 58/2010

According to Eurostat data, the criminality in Greece increased by 26.8% during the period 1995-2008, recording however several fluctuations.

14. The emphasis on 'fearful' women has been criticised as 'stereotyping' (Gilchrist *et al.*, 1998:284). Pain claims, also, that, "elderly women's fear about violent crime and harassment presents a reasonable reflection of risk" (Pain, 1995:596).

15. Odds=ratio of the probability of occurrence over the complement probability (of non-occurrence).

16. According also to the recent research data (Zarafonitou 2010), the shopkeepers of the area close to the center of Athens report the highest levels of unsafety compared to the rest of the sample.

17. The 2010 data derived from the survey in shopkeepers indicate financial crisis as the prior threat (30, 6%), while thefts and burglaries are ranked second with 25.5%.

18. As the statistics presented in this section come from different sources, an effort was made in order to include the most updated published evidence from its source.

tuations all these years, as shown in table 5 (Tavares & Thomas, 2008, 2009, 2010). This rise is mainly due to:

- a) An increase of 236.2% of drug trafficking which were 2.930 in 1995 and reached 9.852 in 2008 and
- b) An increase of 93.6% of robberies which were 1.600 in 1995 and reached 3.097 in 2008.

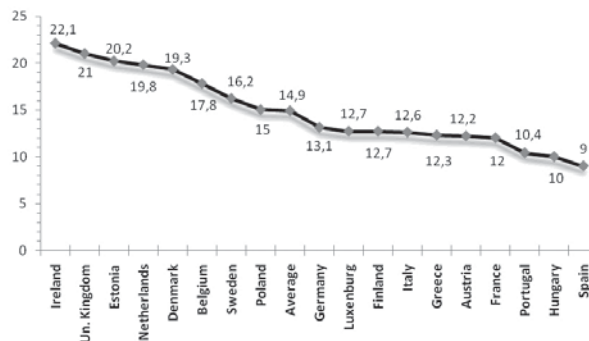
During the same period, prison population increased by 86.3% (it was 5.831 in 1995 and became 10.864 in 2007¹⁹), (Tavares & Thomas, 2008, 2010).

The number of police staff increased during 2001-2006 by 6.1% (Tavares & Thomas, 2008). In comparison with the European average, the number of police officers per 100 000 residents is quite high in Greece since in 2006 this rate was 435 while the European mean was 371 and the European median was 332 (Aebi *et al.*, 2010:113).

In spite of the aforementioned increase in crime, Greece ranks below the European average. According to the above data, the number of total offences per 100.000 population in 2007 was 3 927 while the European mean was 4 675 (the median was smaller, i.e. 4 108), (Aebi *et al.*, 2010:37).

The lower level of criminality is also indicated on data derived from the last EU ICS since the overall one-year victimisation prevalence rate in Greece is 12.3% which is lower than the average (14.9%).

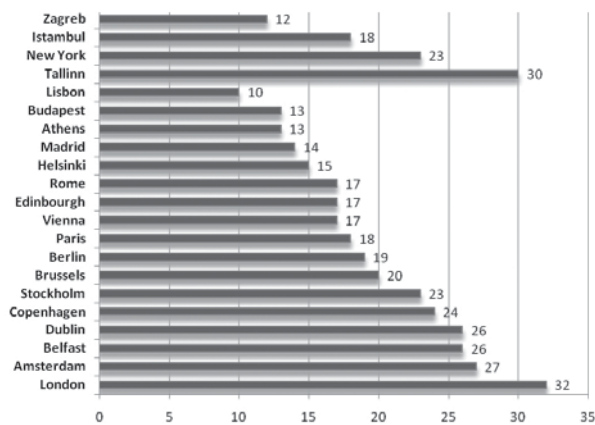
Figure 1: Prevalence victimisation rates for 10 common crimes in 2004-2005.



Source: Van Dijk *et al.*, 2007a: 19

A similar picture is evident in the comparison of the victimisation rate in Athens (13.5%) to the average of other main cities (21.5%). Thus, Athens is ranked fourth from the end among capital cities.

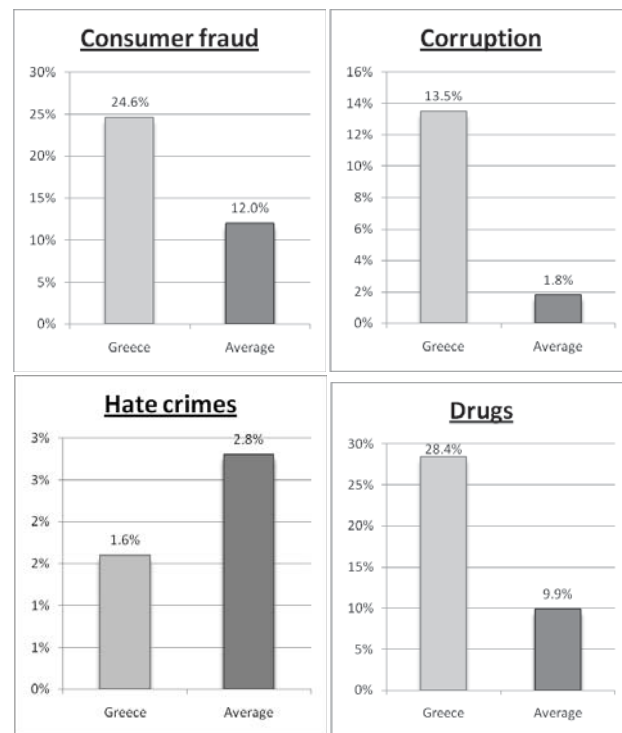
Figure 2: Crime prevalence in capital cities. Respondents affected by at least one type of crime within 2003/04



Source: Van Dijk *et al.*, 2007b : 241

The finding of low victimisation²⁰ is, nevertheless, reversed when the data concern *non-conventional crimes*²¹ (Van Dijk *et al.*, 2007a: 55), like corruption or drug-related problems, where Greece is ranked first.

Table 6: Non-conventional crimes (%), EUICS 2005



Source: Van Dijk *et al.*, 2007a: 55s.

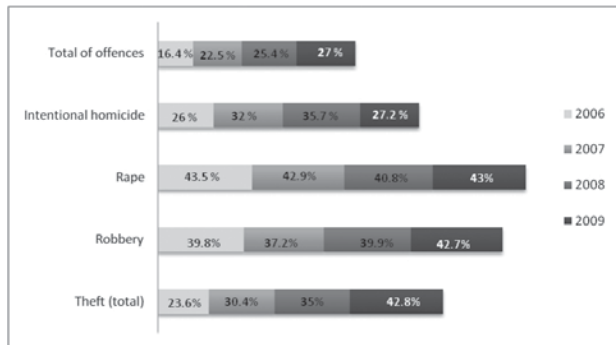
In order this general assessment of criminality to be completed, it is interesting to refer to related data concerning among others the participation of aliens in criminality in general as well as in particular types of crime and the recorded crime level in greater Athens.

19. In this case, the statistics of 2007 are presented for they are the most updated available regarding prison population in the aforementioned source.

20. These data cover 10 *conventional crimes*: vehicle related crimes (theft of a car, theft from a car, theft of a motorcycle or moped, theft of a bicycle), burglary, attempted burglary, theft of personal property crimes (robbery, sexual offences, assault and threat).
 21. Street-level corruption, consumer fraud, drug-related problems and hate crimes.

According to the Greek crime statistics, the percentage of aliens among offenders in 2006 was overall 16.4% (19.3%, when excluding the violations of car legislation). This percentage reached 27% (30.8% when excluding the violations of car legislation) in 2009 through a continuing increase, as shown in table 7. This rate is disproportionate to their participation in the general population (8% in accordance to the census of 2001) (Pavlou, 2004) and, in particular categories of offences it is even bigger during the aforementioned period of time. Specifically, in 2006 their percentage in intentional homicide was 26% (27.2% in 2009), in rape 43.5% (43% in 2009), in robbery 39.8% (42.7% in 2009) and in theft and burglary 23.6% (42.8% in 2009), concerning both completed and attempted offences in all the aforementioned cases.

Table 7: Percentage of aliens among offenders, 2006-2009.



Source: Minister of Citizen Protection, Crime Statistics, Greece, 2006-2009

Finally, it's worth mentioning that the larger percentage of criminality occurs in the area of the Greek capital, especially concerning certain categories of crime, as reflected in table 8.

Table 8: Offenses committed in the Greek capital (2006, 2009).

Country	Total of offences		Great Athens
100%			
2006	463 750	160 004	34.5%
2009	386 893	162 410	42%
Intentional homicide			
2006	222	84	37.8%
2009	252	95	37.7%
Assaults			
2006	7 399	3 122	42.2%
2009	7 869	3 274	41.6%
Rape			
2006	267	103	38.6%
2009	250	92	36.8%
Theft (total)			
2006	66 498	42 916	64.5%
2009	91 296	54 495	59.7%
Robbery			
2006	2 598	2 061	79.3%
2009	3 099	2 268	73.2%

Source: Minister of Citizen Protection, Crime statistics, Greece, 2006, 2009

According to the aforementioned, criminality in Greece has been on the rise in recent years, and in particular during the period when the surveys on fear of crime were conducted. This tendency is observed to be mainly due to property crimes and drug offenses. More than one-third (34.5% or 66.4% excluding the violations of car legislation) of criminality was registered in greater Athens in 2006 and almost two fifths in 2009 (42% or 46.9% excluding the violations of car legislation). As regards particular types of crime, almost half of murders and assaults (37.8% and 42.2% in 2006, 37.7% and 41.6% in 2009), 64.5% in 2006 and 59.7% in 2009 of thefts and 79.3% in 2006 and 73.2% in 2009 of robberies are committed in greater Athens. The percentage of aliens among offenders was 16.4% (19.3%, when excluding the violations of car legislation) in 2006 and 27% (30.8% when excluding the violations of car legislation) in 2009 in the area of the capital. The residents of greater Athens experience more intensely the most significant social and environmental problems, such as unemployment, housing, and pollution, resulting from intense urbanisation (Zarafonitou, 1994).

VI. Explanatory factors for fear of crime

According to what was mentioned above, victimisation rates of conventional crimes are quite low and consequently they could not be considered by themselves as adequate explanatory factors of the Greek citizens' feelings of unsafety, which appear to be exaggerated. However, in order a convincing interpretation of these findings to be revealed, the following factors need to be taken into consideration:

- i) The perception of the quality of everyday life in the area of domicile (i.e. exposure to drug-related problems, corruption, street-crime)
- ii) The high level of victims' unsafety
- iii) The general attitudes towards police effectiveness.

i. Perception of the quality of everyday life in the area of domicile

According to the surveys on fear of crime carried out in Athens, the dissemination of fear of crime is not equally distributed in each area. A noteworthy differentiation is observed on the basis of each one's socio-economic profile. Thus, the highest percentage of fear is always recorded at the deprived part of the city center followed by the areas of western Athens, whereas the lowest percentage is recorded in the upper socio-economic residential area. The rate of fear of crime in the district of the city-center²² was 76% in 1998, 65.3% in 2004 and 75.7% in 2006. On the contrary, this rate was only 40.4% (1998) and 23.3% (2006) in the upper class residential area of the Greek capital (Zarafonitou, 2002, 2006). It is of particular interest that the regression and multilevel analysis of the 1998 research data in Athens revealed that the area of residence was the main predictor of fear. Regarding in particular the area of the city center, it was found that it accumulated the "highest odds ratio of fear" (683% greater than in the upper class residential area) (Tseloni, 2002:190). Likewise, the analysis of the 2004 research data revealed that living in the area of the city-center increased the odds of perceiving likelihood of victimisation as high by 56% (Tseloni & Zarafonitou, 2008:399).

The predominance of the center of Athens was also confirmed in the national survey where the highest percentages of unsafety (55.7%) were recorded in relation to the remaining areas of the Greek capi-

22. This area was chosen on the basis of the local competence of the police precinct. About the characteristics of the research areas see *supra*.

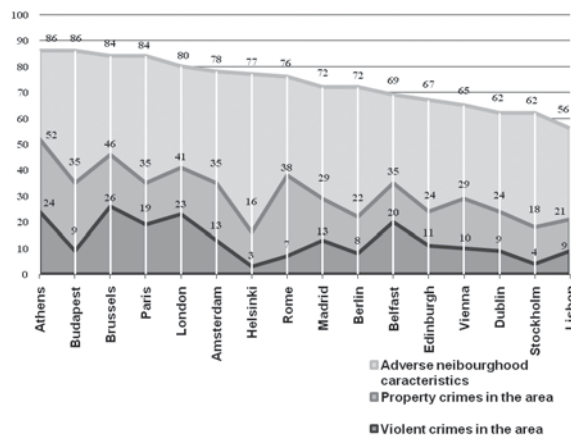
tal. However, this finding perhaps holds true only for Athens since in Thessaloniki, which is the second largest Greek urban center, the higher percentages of unsafety were recorded in its periphery (Karydis, 2004:16).

The association of socio-economic parameters with feelings of unsafety is also confirmed through the EU ICS data (Hideg & Manchin, 2005). According to these, a strong correlation emerges between unsafety and some neighbourhood characteristics which describe a "deprived area" or, in other words, the "adverse neighbourhood": *youth on the streets, homeless persons, beggars, littering, graffiti, vandalism, and public intoxication*. The profile of the neighbourhood is also examined in EU ICS, on the basis of the perceived prevalence of two categories of crime in the area. These crimes are:

- a) Property crimes (car theft and theft from cars along with burglary and other petty thefts), and
- b) Violent criminality (relatively widespread fighting and personal assaults, extended with racial / ethnic violent crimes and domestic violence).

The image of an "unsafe environment" is mainly correlated with: *unsupervised youth (35%), littering (31%) and graffiti (29%)*. The poorest assessment of local area is higher among the inhabitants of Athens and Brussels (and to a smaller extent of Budapest and London) who are consistently dissatisfied about the frequency with which they confront criminality and deprived area characteristics (Hideg & Manchin, 2005). Personal safety of citizens in European capitals depends primarily on neighbourhood characteristics.

Figure 3: Assessment of local areas



Source: Gergely Hideg and Robert Manchin, *Environment and Safety in European Capital*, based on the data of the European International Crime Survey (EU ICS), Gallup Europe, EU ICS Working Papers.

The assessment of local areas in European capitals (frequent occurrence of any of the aforementioned attributes) is summarised in the following features (Hideg & Manchin, 2005):

Adverse neighbourhood characteristics: Athens & Budapest 86%, Brussels 84%

Property crimes in the area: Athens 52%, Brussels 46%, London: 41%

Violent crimes in the area: Brussels 26%, Athens 24%, London 23%.

In this context, the role of previous victimisation experience proved important, since falling victim to violent or property crimes is more frequent among those who have a rather unfavourable view of neighbourhood characteristics. The most important determinant is how safe people feel and how much they believe that property crimes are prevalent in their area. Only about half of those who report a high level of property crimes say that they are rarely or never afraid of walking in their neighbourhood after dark. This is opposed to 74% who feel safe and don't perceive a similarly high level of property crimes in their local area.

Respectively, if a respondent reports a high level of violent criminality in the local area, he/she is 121% more likely to have fallen victim to a violent crime than those who give a better rating (39% vs. 18%). Similarly, if one lives in an area with a reported high level of property crimes, this person is 46% more likely to have a recent victimisation experience concerning property crime than those whose assessment is more favourable in this respect (63% vs. 43%).²³

The aforementioned parameters refer also to the perception of "quality of life" that emerged from the research on fear of crime among inhabitants of Athens in 2004, measured by satisfaction from health services, education, public transportation, and the environment. According to these findings, the quality of life appeared to be an important factor concerning unsafety since 76.8% of those who expressed feelings of unsafety were also dissatisfied by the quality of life in their municipality. This rate was 58% among the respondents who felt safe (Zarafonitou, 2004a).

	Safe		Unsafe	
	Satisfied	89	41.99%	55
Not satisfied	123	58.01%	182	76.80%
Total	212	100.00%	237	100%

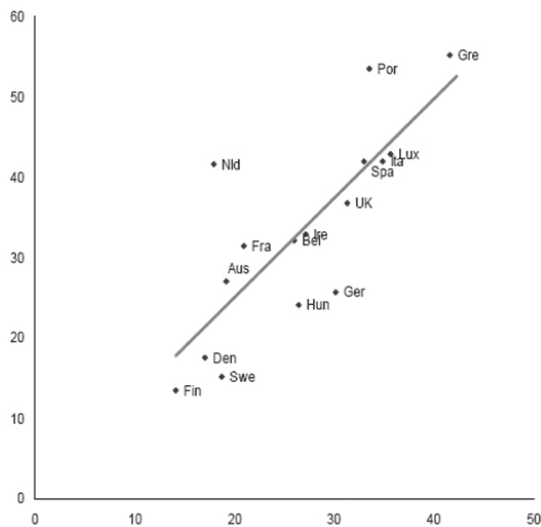
χ^2 : ,000

Source: Ch.Zarafonitou, *Insecurity, fear of crime and attitudes of the inhabitants of Athens toward the criminal phenomenon*, Panteion University, 2004 (in Zarafonitou, 2008).

Furthermore a strong correlation is observed between the exposure to drug-related problems and fear of crime. The impact of this exposure on fear of crime is derived from the perception of drug addicts as dangerous. The last EU ICS included a related question, which proved to be of particular interest for Greece since 25% of the respondents answered that *over the last 12 months very often or from time to time they were personally in contact with drug-related problems in the area where they live. For example they saw people in drugs, taking or using drugs in public places or they found syringes left by drug addicts*.

23. Other perceived adverse neighbourhood characteristics have a similar effect: increasing the chance of violent victimisation by 66% and the chance of property victimisation by 30% (Hideg & Manchin, 2005).

Figure 4. Correlation of the exposure to drug-related problems and fear of crime



Source: J. van Dijk, J. van Kesteren & P.Smit, *Criminal Victimization in International Perspective. Key findings from the 2004-2005 ICVS and EUICS*

According to these data, the inhabitants of Greece, Portugal and Luxembourg are ranked in the first three places. Though the answers to this question give little information about actual trends in drug-related problems²⁴, it should be mentioned that this phenomenon has concerned Greek society especially after 1980.

In the survey of 2004, the inhabitants of Athens indicated drugs to be the most important social problem in their local area (25.5%), more so than immigrants (21.2%) and unemployment (19.9%). Crime as a general social problem was ranked fourth (Zarafonitou, 2004a). Drugs also occupied the first rank in the hierarchy of *the criminological issues which were discussed within the family during the last 2 weeks* according to the sample of the national survey in 2001 (Karydis, 2004:163). The surveys of 1998 and 2006 examined this relation through the reasons causing their fear/unsafety; drug-offenses were included in the four main answers with 15.3% and 14.2% respectively²⁵.

ii. The high level of victims' unsafety

Although the research findings are not homogeneous concerning the relationship between past victimisation experience and the feeling of fear, this connection clearly and steadily comes out of Greek research (Tseloni & Zarafonitou, 2008). According to the data above, in 1998, the examination of the level of victimisation among people having expressed feelings of fear of crime has shown that there were more victims among them. Nevertheless, the distribution of victimisation rates does not coincide with the one of fear of crime since the biggest percentage of victimisation was not reported in the area of the centre where the highest percentages of fear of crime are recorded (Zarafonitou, 2002:120). In any case, the correlation between vic-

timisation and fear of crime was also found in the multivariate analysis of these data, according to which victimisation during the year preceding the study nearly doubled (87%) the odds of fear (Tseloni, 2002:188).

This correlation was confirmed also in the survey of 2004 carried out in Athens as well as in the national survey of 2001 (Karydis, 2004:162). According to these findings, in 2001, victims expressed more feelings of unsafety compared to non-victims (42.8% vs. 28.4%). Likewise, in 2004, the inhabitants of Athens felt more unsafe if they had one or more victimisation experiences in the last year (Zarafonitou, 2008b:163)²⁶. This assumption could explain convincingly the much larger representation of victims among those who feel unsafe in comparison to that of non-victims (72.8% vs. 47.5%) and vice-versa.

	Victimisation and feelings of (un)safety				
	Safe		Unsafe		Total
Victims	25	27.20%	67	72.80%	92
No Victims	187	52.50%	169	47.50%	356
Total	212	47.30%	236	52.70%	448

χ^2 : ,000

Source: Ch.Zarafonitou, *Insecurity, fear of crime and attitudes of the inhabitants of Athens toward the criminal phenomenon*, Panteion University, 2004 (in Zarafonitou, 2008).

This finding is verified also by the multivariate multilevel modelling of the aforementioned data according to which previous victimisation increases the odds of feeling unsafe while walking alone after dark by 166%, at home by 69% and the perceived risk of future victimisation by 193% (Tseloni & Zarafonitou, 2008: 397). The feelings of unsafety are also influenced by indirect victimisation (see also, table 11) since knowing a victim increases the odds of unsafety in the streets by 79% and the perceived risk by 128% (Tseloni & Zarafonitou, 2008: 397).

Athens, 2004	Indirect victimisation and feelings of (un)safety				
	Safe		Unsafe		Total
Indirect victims	86	38.90%	135	61.10%	221
No victims	123	56.40%	95	43.60%	219
Total	209	47.60%	230	52.40%	439

χ^2 : ,000

Source: Ch.Zarafonitou, *Insecurity, fear of crime and attitudes of the inhabitants of Athens toward the criminal phenomenon*, Panteion University, 2004 (in Zarafonitou, 2008).

Finally, this picture is not altered in the study of 2006 since approximately three-fourths (73.3%) of those who declared to have had previous experience of victimisation²⁷ answered that they felt unsafe on the street at night in contrast to 26.7% who did not feel unsafe. Likewise, there are many more victims among those who feel unsafe in comparison to non-victims (40.7% vs. 19.4%).

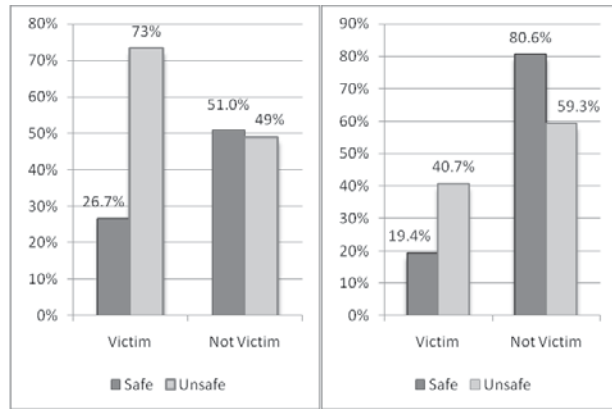
24. As it is pointed out by Van Dijk, *et al.* (2007b:97): 1) Contact of the general public with drug-related problems cannot be seen as an indicator of the actual level of drugs consumption. 2) No strong relationships were found between the extent of the public's exposure to drugs and national rates of cannabis consumption and estimated rates of drug addicts. 3) No relationships were found between exposure to drugs-related problems and levels of property crime.

25. The impact of the exposure to drug-related problems on fear of street crime is strongly ascertained from EU ICS data (Van Dijk *et al.*, 2007b: 133).

26. The picture is similar according to the findings of the research on immigrants conducted in Athens (Zarafonitou, 2006:277).

27. Within the framework of this survey, the question was posed, basically, in order to examine the effect of a similar experience in shaping punitiveness of the subjects and not to measure victimisation. For this reason, the question was "in the last five years, have you become a victim of one or more crimes?"

Figure 5: Victimization and unsafety



Source: Zarafonitou Ch. (2008a). *Punitiveness. Contemporary trends, dimensions and inquiries*. Athens: Nomiki Viviothiki Publisher.

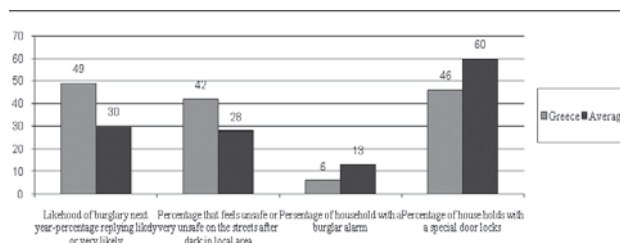
The fact that taking precautionary measures at personal level is not very common in Greece could give some partial explanation for the high levels of victims' unsafety (Killias, 2001:402). From the recorded answers to the question "what changed in your everyday life after your victimisation or the victimisation of your acquaintances" it was ascertained that more than half took absolutely no measures and answered either that they "feel generally unsafe" (31.4%), or "nothing has changed" (19.1%), while 23.3% made reference to security measures taken at home (locks, alarms, etc.) and 14.3% answered that they avoid certain areas (Zarafonitou, 2008b:164).

Table 12 Athens, 2004	Changes in your life after the direct or indirect victimisation	
Measures of safety in their houses (locks, alarm etc)	83	23.30%
Moving to another area	6	1.70%
Avoidance of some places	51	14.30%
Carrying weapons (knife, gun, spray)	16	4.50%
General unsafety	112	31.40%
Improvement of relations with neighbours	21	5.60%
No change	68	19.10%
Total	357	100.00%

Source: Ch.Zarafonitou, *Insecurity, fear of crime and attitudes of the inhabitants of Athens toward the criminal phenomenon*, Panteion University, 2004

These findings are also verified by EU ICS data.

Figure 6: Perception of the likelihood of victimisation, unsafety after dark in local area, households with burglar alarm or with special door locks



Source: Van Dijk et al., 2007a.

In the above-mentioned explanatory factors, the absence of victims' support from specialised agencies could be added. Indeed, this kind of support is not common at all, as indicated by the ranking of Greece (2%) below the related ICVS average in 2004/5 (9%). On the contrary, the need for support expressed from victims is very high (64%) (Van Dijk et al., 2007b:121,123). In any case, the explanation of the high levels of victims' unsafety could not be considered separately from the overall phenomenon.

iii. General attitudes towards police effectiveness

Among the reasons associated with unsafety is also the lack of confidence in the police. The first surveys on fear of crime observed the decisive role that the presence of police can play in this context, especially if it is willing, effective, and appreciated by the community (Box et al., 1988, 353). This role becomes even more important in modern urban environments. Within this framework, the police is perceived by citizens as "an organization in the service of the local population" and, as such, satisfaction from police services "constitutes a 'logical' criterion for its assessment" (Killias, 2001, 429). In this way, the findings indicate that those who feel more intense fear are those who are also most dissatisfied by the work of the police and who seek greater policing (Zvekic, 1997, 8).

In Greece, the citizen's attitudes are, in general, mostly negative concerning police performance and effectiveness. This is a finding verified from all the national and local surveys. The respondents in Athens found the police work in their area insufficient or mediocre in 1998 (61.8% and 36.3% respectively) (Zarafonitou, 2002:130) and ineffective in 2004 and 2006 (71.8% and 68.6% respectively) (Zarafonitou, 2008b:168, Zarafonitou & Courakis, 2006)²⁸. In 2010, 58.4% of the shopkeepers of Athens and Piraeus evaluated as a little or no effective the police in tackling crime in local area (Zarafonitou, 2010). This assessment becomes even more negative in the case of victims or respondents who expressed feelings of unsafety.

According to the national survey of 2001, the assessment of police effectiveness was somewhat better in the domain of policing and criminal policy (5.56 on a scale from one to ten), (Karydis, 2004:139). This survey examined public attitudes toward police through numerous questions and the whole assessment measured 5.80 (on a scale from one to ten as above), (Karydis, 2004:139). This relatively positive assessment was due, partly, to the phrasing of the question which referred to the police and not to the police station in the area of residence as was the case in the local research studies. In addition, residents of large urban areas tend to have a more negative attitude toward the police (Hauge, 1979), which explain the poorest assessment in Athens.

In comparison with other European citizens, Greeks expressed one of the poorest assessments of the police (57% vs. 67% EU average), in the context of the European Victimization Survey of 2005. Regarding inhabitants of Athens, 52% were satisfied with the police force's control of crime in local areas and this assessment ranked in the last place among European capitals (Van Dijk et al., 2007a: slide 17). These indicators were even lower in Greece when they referred to the victims' satisfaction regarding the denunciation of five conventional crimes (28% vs. 55% EU average), (Van Dijk et al., 2007a: 115).

28. The only positive assessment emerged from the answers of the immigrant-inhabitants of Athens in 2004 who evaluated the police work as effective or quite effective in their majority (74.3%) (Zarafonitou, 2006b:104).

This negative attitude, however, does not affect citizens' tendency to report crimes to the police. Thus, 64.5% of the victims in the surveys on fear of crime in Athens did report their victimisation to the police (Zarafonitou, 2004). This rate was 70.4% in 2006 (Zarafonitou, Courakis, 2009:154) and 73.6% in 2010 (shopkeepers only, Zarafonitou, 2010). According to the last ICVS findings, on a national level, this percentage was 49%, being larger than the European average (47%) (Van Dijk *et al.*, 2007b:110). These findings reveal that the police as an institution, is not challenged, yet its effectiveness concerning crime control is.

The above attitudes are indicative of dissatisfaction with police services in relation to protecting citizens from crime and, specifically street crime. The same result is derived from the justification of fear of crime since the respondents mention the insufficient policing among the most important reasons for their unsafety. This factor was deemed critical along with "many immigrants" (19.8%) immediately after "the isolated and badly-lit areas" (20.1%) by the residents of Athens in 1998 (Zarafonitou, 2002:128). A similar rating was observed in the study of 2004 (22.9%) in which Athenians ranked "many immigrants" as the most significant factor (23.66%) in this context, (Zarafonitou, 2004a). Finally, in the study of 2006, the "insufficient policing" was considered as the most significant explanation for their unsafety (27.2%) and was followed by "many immigrants" (17.5%) and "badly lit streets" (16.3%) (Zarafonitou, Courakis, 2006).

Residents of large urban centers dissatisfaction with the police is strengthened by the increase of criminality as well as the weakening of informal social control. The above data confirm this hypothesis since the lack of social contacts and social solidarity increases feelings of insecurity. Thus, "the indifference of the passers-by in case of a criminal attack" is listed as the fourth significant factor for fear of crime (9.7%) by Athenians in 1998 (Zarafonitou, 2002:128) and in 2004 (10.4%), and is followed by the "indifference of neighbours" (9.6%), (Zarafonitou, 2004), whereas the "absence of contact with neighbours" was ranked fifth (7.5%) in 2006 (Zarafonitou & Courakis, 2006).

V. Mass media

In attempting to interpret the high levels of unsafety, the mass media must not be omitted from the factors which play a serious role in this process (Karydis, 2010). Greek research examined their role as a source of information, evaluating at the same time the perception of their credibility.

Table 13: Mass media as source of information about crime and their reliability²⁹

Research	TV/Radio	Reliability of mass media - General sample	Reliability of mass media- Unsafe
Athens, 1998	74.1%	67%*	60.9%
Greece, 2001	65.8%**	49.4%***	—
Athens, 2004	63.9%	63.2%****	54.7%
Athens, 2006	52.9%	74.1%*****	—

* The provided answers were: less serious than in fact is, as it is in fact and more serious than in fact is. In the table the only answer included is "more serious than in fact is".

** The question included also newspapers (Karydis, 2004:167).

29. Data of this table come from: Zarafonitou, 2002 & 2004, Zarafonitou & Courakis, 2006, Karydis, 2004.

*** The question was about the way criminality is presented and if it is corresponding to the reality and the answers included in the table are "no, rather no", while 43.5% answered "yes, rather yes" (Karydis, 2004:167).

**** In the 2004 survey the question was about the objectivity of presentation of the criminal phenomenon from the media and the answers of this table are "a bit or at all objective".

***** In this table is included only the answer "more serious than in fact is".

As the above table depict, the mass media are the main source of information concerning crime-related issues. However, their reliability is considerably questioned because of the way they publicise issues of criminality. The majority of citizens believe that the mass media exaggerate in their presentations of the actual severity of the criminal problem. Those respondents who feel unsafe also agree on this point but to a lesser degree, which shows the association of mass media crime representations with fear of crime. In any case, it is a significant factor in the formation of social attitudes on crime which would have been even more significant if their reliability was not questioned to such a degree.

VI. The impact of fear of crime

The consequences of fear of crime are obvious on the daily lives of citizens as well as on criminal policy. These results were accumulated from the attitudes of citizens as indicated by their suggestions for the design and implementation of more effective policies. The main focus of respondents in this case concern punitiveness and its connection with the feeling of unsafety.

This subject was examined within surveys conducted in the Greek capital as in the most recent European victimisation survey in which Greece also participated. The local surveys of 1998 and 2004 requested respondents to state their proposals about the measures that need to be taken in order criminality to be dealt with appropriately. On the other hand, the study of 2006 which examined the "unsafety, punitiveness and criminal policy" focused on this relationship through the standard question of the ICVS and other questions which investigated punitiveness. Likewise, EU ICS asked respondents to choose the most appropriate sentence for "a man of 21 years old who is found guilty of burglary/housebreaking for the second time, -this time he has taken a colour TV", (Van Dijk *et al.*, 2007b).

The survey questions of 1998 and 2004 were open-ended and the responses were classified in thematic units (Zarafonitou, 2002:144 & Zarafonitou, 2004)³⁰.

Table 14: Unsafety and punitiveness

Research	More repression	Prison
Athens, 1998	57.6%	
Athens, 2004	59.1% + 16.1%*	
EUICS, 2005		30%**
Athens, 2006		31%

* During the classification of the answers, an additional unit is had been derived which was focused exclusively on the stricter treatment of immigrants. This unit is added in the general repressive measures proposed in this context.

** The EUICS average in 2004/05 was 24% (Van Dijk *et al.*, 2007a:117).

The impression which is obtained from Greek research is that there is a tendency to adopt stricter criminal policies associated with citizens'

30. The thematic units of the 1998 study were: more repression, circumstantial prevention, social prevention, treatment-rehabilitation, and policy-mass media.

unsafety, previous experience of victimisation, the negative evaluation of the police, and the mass arrival of immigrants. Thus, punitive attitudes are expressed strongly by:

- those who are afraid of walking in the street at night (62.1%) and the victims (62.9%), (Zarafonitou, 2002),
- those who feel unsafe in their own homes at night (65.1% + 10.6%) and those who consider the police to be ineffective (65.6% + 14.2%), (Zarafonitou, 2004a),
- those who feel that it is unsafe to walk alone in their area after dark (35.7% vs. 25% of those feeling safe), those who claimed to have been victimised in the past 5 years (36.9% vs. 28.5% of the non-victims), those who considered crime as the most important social problem (43.2% vs. 25.5%) and those who suggested that the most important social problem is the continuous entry of immigrants in the country (49.0% vs. 25.5% of the rest), (Zarafonitou, 2008a:135).

According to the aforementioned, the citizens who feel unsafe express negative attitudes towards the effectiveness of the police and they are also the ones who request stricter criminal policies. Indeed, the attitudes toward the police constitute a factor of citizens' unsafety and one of its significant consequences as well. This is depicted by the more negative evaluations made by those who express feelings of fear and unsafety and also by the victims³¹.

The above research findings are indicative of the consequences of fear of crime in the formation of social attitudes towards crime and criminal policies. The punitiveness which is displayed through the choice for more policing and the expansion of imprisonment is basically connected, on the one hand, to the unsafety resulted from property and street crimes and, on the other, to the negative evaluation of police effectiveness. However, punitiveness does not originate exclusively from everyday unsafety but also from a variety of factors such as the socio-economic status, the level of education and the ideological-political views of the citizens. Punitiveness which is connected to these factors appears to be relatively independent from fear of crime but very dependent on the perception of the dangerousness of specific population groups on the basis of their social or national origin, gender, age etc. In this case, punitiveness is manifested as a "philosophy" towards retributive punishment in which other purposes of penal sanctions are reduced (Zarafonitou, 2008a:132).

VII. Epilogue

During the last two decades, significant social changes have occurred in Greece, the most important of which were the mass entry of immigrants as well as the recent economic crisis. In this period the dimensions and the characteristics of criminality reveal a general trend of aggravation. Though the levels of criminality are lower compared to most European countries, they appear to be higher compared to its past levels in Greece. The rise of everyday criminality, especially of robberies and burglaries, has a direct impact on personal unsafety. Likewise, the contact of inhabitants of urban centers and, in particular of Athenians, with different aspects of drug-related problems in their everyday life, contributes to the perception of local life as degraded. These problems are more intense in the central area of Athens, where especially in the last years, the environmental degradation is obviously combined with a considerable concentration of immigrants and

31. According to the aforementioned research findings of 1998, the police is considered inadequate by the 61.8% of the total sample. This percentage is 73.4% among those who are afraid and 74% among the victims (Zarafonitou, 2002:130). Likewise, in the research of 2004, 72% believed that the police were ineffective. This percentage was 77.6% in the case of those who felt unsafe on the streets (Zarafonitou, 2004a).

in particular of illegal ones, the surge of prostitution and drug-related problems as well as the growth of illegal trade and the serious consequences of the financial crisis (e.g. shops closure).

On the other hand, the state is not properly adapted to these changes and, consequently, the official social control exerted through police agencies and criminal justice system as a whole does not inspire trust in a large part of the population. In addition, participative policies are not widely used in Greece (Panoussis, 1993; Spinellis, 1997:291; Zarafonitou, 2003, 2004; Papatheodorou, 2005; Courakis, 2007), and thus, informal social control remains also weak.

The feeling of insecurity influences citizens' quality of life on a daily basis, through self-restraints of social activity, leading also to a heavy financial burden which aims to enhance the measures of their self-protection. The social insecurities associated with crime, stemming from a complex interaction of personal, socio-political and communicative factors, affect additionally the shaping of punitive attitudes, expressed as a need for the implementation of strict and retributive penal policies (Zarafonitou, 2011). In this context, the often extreme forms of criminality which characterise contemporary societies, contributing to the intensification of citizens' fear and insecurity, instead of being tackled, are exacerbated by policies of a selective and 'expressive' alleged suppression. This process is part of a vicious circle of aphoristic choices at personal and social level, exclusions, insecurities and conflicts, often expressed through the terms of criminality. The confrontation of this impasse does not seem to be either simple or easy, since it is not confined solely to crime but involves broader issues of social *disorganization*.

In this light, the role of state's services appears to be fundamental, especially in the context of Greece as well as in societies with similar features, where there is a tradition of a 'strong state' (Robert, 2005:95). Given that the citizen-state relationship is quite problematic and that the sense of citizenship is not appropriately developed, Greeks' wider social insecurities and concerns are reflected in fear of crime. In this framework the widely expressed appeal for more intensive policing and stricter sentences reflects both a general lack of satisfaction as well as the wavering trust of a large number of citizens towards the penal system. Under these conditions, fear of crime is shaped not only as a personal situation but also as a social phenomenon. This complexity constitutes a challenge for criminological research.

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Christina Zarafonitou, Dr., Professor of Criminology -Department of Sociology- and the Director of the MA "Contemporary criminality and its confrontation" at Panteion University of Social and Political Sciences. She teaches in graduate and post graduate level. Her main scientific interests include: Empirical Criminology, Environmental Criminology, Fear of crime/insecurity, Victimisation' surveys, Local crime prevention, Punitiveness, Social representations of crime and criminal justice, Police-public relations. Email: chrizara@panteion.gr

