



H.F.R.I.
Hellenic Foundation for
Research & Innovation

Description of the funded research project
1st Call for H.F.R.I. Research Projects to Support Faculty
Members & Researchers and Procure High-Value
Research Equipment

Title of the research project: Spatial aspects of Crime and insecurity in the era of economic crisis: Trends, dimensions and correlations

Principal Investigator: Professor Christina Zarafonitou

Reader-friendly title: UrbanCrime

Scientific Area: Social Sciences

Institution and Country: Panteion University of Social and Political Sciences, Greece

Host Institution: Panteion University of Social and Political Sciences

Collaborating Institution(s):

Budget: 157.400,00€

**Project webpage
(if applicable):**

Duration: 36 months

Research Project Synopsis

The study aims to examine the dynamic development of the crime phenomenon and the consequent insecurity in the period of economic crisis. Its evolution will be investigated in relation to economic deprivation in the municipalities of the region of Athens. The available data from Greek public authorities will be accompanied by quantitative and qualitative data from semi-structured interviews with households in order to create a digitized geodatabase of crime, socioeconomic and demographic data. The dataset will be visualized in a GIS environment and different hypothesis will be tested by using modern techniques of geographical analysis of crime. Finally, the results will be available for the public, in a Web Gis platform.

Project originality

The innovation of the UrbanCrime project lies in that:

- *it is the first effort to imprint the fear of crime and its determinants in the era of Greek crisis in the urban area of Athens*
- *current exploratory spatial analysis techniques will be applied to investigate patterns in the dataset, quantify the relations between covariates and disseminate the results through a Web GIS platform*

Expected results & Research Project Impact

The resulting research findings can be used to create a framework for comprehending and understanding the factors that create and exacerbate the insecurity of the citizens in the economic crisis and to help prevent crime and develop effective countermeasures. They can also be used in designing policies to properly inform citizens about crime, organize local councils for crime prevention and delinquency, and design a more effective, non-violent policy with respect for human rights.

Within the framework of UrbanCrime “hot spots” of fear of crime will be mapped, vulnerable populations will be identified, social inequities will be geo-located and quantified, social determinants causing these inequities and further enhancing their impact will be apportioned. This strict break-down of cause and effect will enable future mitigation measures not to be horizontal and arbitrary, but targeted and socially more equitable. The cognitive maps that will be created will facilitate authorities to understand the cause and effect of fear of crime, leading them to take action as well as prevention and safety measures.

UrbanCrime is of theoretical and empirical significance to the scientific community. The theoretical impact is based on defining the different influential factors that shape the perception of fear of crime, quantify their relationship spatially and compare the finding with the international research evidence.

Its empirical impact is on the creation of a primary dataset with factors related to the fear of crime and vulnerability groups, on a spatial level not previously available and measure the fear of crime and examine its spatial variability within the urban environment of Athens.

The importance of this funding

H.F.R.I. funding is vital for implementing research in the scientific field of social sciences, since the project focuses on research regarding the feeling of security in times of economic crisis.

The project's implementation will contribute to the production and dissemination of scientific publications from Greece, enriching the academic and research community with knowledge and know-how, setting the baseline for further research.

Additionally, funding helps to reverse brain drain, as it gives reputable scientists the opportunity to conduct research in their own country, preventing them from seeking employment and resources abroad.



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