

**A Policy-Oriented Approach to Social Representations of  
Criminal Justice in Malta**

**Maria Borg**

A dissertation presented to the Department of Criminology,  
Faculty for Social Wellbeing, in part fulfilment of the  
requirement for the Masters of Arts in Criminology at the  
University of Malta.

**JUNE 2022**



L-Università  
ta' Malta

## **University of Malta Library – Electronic Thesis & Dissertations (ETD) Repository**

The copyright of this thesis/dissertation belongs to the author. The author's rights in respect of this work are as defined by the Copyright Act (Chapter 415) of the Laws of Malta or as modified by any successive legislation.

Users may access this full-text thesis/dissertation and can make use of the information contained in accordance with the Copyright Act provided that the author must be properly acknowledged. Further distribution or reproduction in any format is prohibited without the prior permission of the copyright holder.

## ABSTRACT

State-administered criminal justice is one of the more tangible manifestations of social contract theory, embodying a republic's right to pre-empt and punish crime on account of collective prosperity. Despite this common theoretical foundation, national representations of criminal justice are widely believed to be conditioned by a community's socio-political and cultural environment. This study builds on evidence of this contextual relativity through quantitative and qualitative content analysis of Maltese criminal justice policies. Institutionalised means of communication were used to access and examine the social representations of criminal justice that reached the Maltese public over the past four legislatures. Systematic coding of the quality and quantity of criminal justice policies demonstrated aggregate policy trends, including local tendencies for incrementalism, reactive response, and managerialist practices. This exercise enabled the selection of an illustrative example of criminal justice policy – domestic violence policy. A discursive analysis of this case study revealed an uncomplicated narrative revolving around victims, villains and heroes. It also represented criminal justice as a politicised, victim-oriented and systemised practice. The triangulation of results demonstrated local criminal justice's complex and heterogeneous manifestations, prompting further research in this area. Based on its results, the study encourages conceptual reflexivity among researchers and institutional reflexivity among policymakers. This should promote academic research and policy outputs which are faithful to the Maltese cultural ideal of criminal justice.

**Keywords:** criminal justice; crime policy; social representations theory; political criminology; cultural criminology; narrative policy frameworks

## **ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS**

First and foremost, I wish to convey my sincere gratitude and thanks to my academic supervisor, Professor Gordon Sammut. His continued guidance, expert insight and constructive feedback proved fundamental for this dissertation. Personal appreciation is also due to my family, partner, friends and colleagues who, for months on end, were a source of motivation, emotional support and wise insight. Special thanks are due to Ms Katya Unah, friend and colleague, who kindly assisted with piloting my research instrument. Lastly, I wish to acknowledge the public authorities who professionally and patiently assisted me with procuring content for analysis.

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

Abstract	i
Acknowledgements	ii
List of Abbreviations	vii
List of Figures	viii
List of Tables	ix
Chapter 1: Introduction	1
1.1 Aims and Objectives .....	3
1.2 The Theoretical Framework .....	4
1.3 The Analytical Construct and Conceptual Framework.....	6
1.4 Conclusion .....	8
Chapter 2: Literature Review	10
2.1 A Deconstructive Account of Criminal Justice Policies .....	11
2.2 Heterogeneity and Homogeneity in Criminal Justice Policies .....	14
2.2.1 The decline of the rehabilitative model.....	15
2.2.2 The reappearance of punitive sanctions and expressive justice .....	16
2.2.3 Changes in the emotional tone of crime policy .....	17
2.2.4 The return of the victim .....	18
2.2.5 Public protection above all else .....	19
2.2.6 Politicisation of crime and the new populism .....	19
2.2.7 The reinvention of the prison .....	20
2.2.8 The transformation of criminological thought .....	21
2.2.9 The expanding infrastructure of crime prevention and community safety .....	21
2.2.10 The commercialisation of crime control.....	22
2.2.11 New management styles and working practices .....	22
2.2.12 A perpetual sense of crisis .....	23
2.2.13 The modern crime myth .....	23
2.3 Elements Shaping Criminal Justice Policy .....	24
2.3.1 Global Trends .....	25

2.3.2 Ideology, Narratives and Cultural Values.....	26
2.3.3 Institutional Structures .....	28
2.3.4 The Policy Community .....	32
2.3.5 A Consolidated Framework of Influence .....	38
2.4 The Maltese Socio-Political Culture .....	39
2.5 Conclusion .....	43
Chapter 3: Methodology .....	45
3.1 The Research Technique .....	46
3.2 The Research Design .....	47
3.3 Epistemological and Ontological Positions .....	50
3.4 The Systematic Content Analysis of Local Criminal Justice Policies .....	51
3.4.1 The Coding Frame and Coding Manual.....	52
3.4.2 Content and Timeframes .....	54
3.4.3 Validity and Reliability.....	56
3.4.4 Data Collection .....	60
3.4.5 Data Analysis .....	61
3.5 Thematic Analysis of Political Discourse on Domestic Violence Policy .....	62
3.5.1 The Case Study.....	62
3.5.2 Content and Timeframes .....	65
3.5.3 Data Collection and Analysis.....	66
3.5.4 Measures for Credibility.....	68
3.6 Triangulation of Findings.....	68
3.7 Ethical Considerations.....	69
3.8 Methodological Limitations .....	69
3.9 Conclusion .....	71
Chapter 4: Systematic Content Analysis of Local Criminal Justice Policies .....	72
4.1 Source and Contextual Variables .....	74
4.1.1 Source.....	75
4.1.2 Context.....	77

4.1.3 Year .....	79
4.1.4 Legislature .....	82
4.1.5 Political Party .....	84
4.1.6 Role of Political Party .....	85
4.1.7 Percentage of Focus .....	87
4. 2 Area of Intervention .....	87
4.2.1 Type of Crime .....	88
4.2.2 Nature of Crime.....	91
4.2.3 Justification for Intervention.....	93
4.2.4 Area of Concern .....	95
4.3 Policy Specifications .....	97
4.3.1 Instrument.....	97
4.3.2 Stage in Policy Cycle .....	98
4.3.3 Direct Target Group .....	100
4.3.4 Stakeholders.....	104
4.3.5 Depth and Breadth.....	106
4.4 Representations .....	108
4.4.1 Manifested Principles and Practices .....	108
4.4.2 Orientation .....	113
4.5 Conclusion .....	115
Chapter 5: Thematic Analysis of Political Discourse on Domestic Violence Policy	117
5.1 The Problem .....	118
5.1.1 The Social and Dialectical Construction .....	120
5.1.2 The Visual Construction .....	123
5.2 The Protagonists .....	125
5.2.1 The Victims.....	125
5.2.2 The Villains .....	126
5.2.3 The Heroes .....	127
5.2.4 The General Public .....	129

5.3 Base Values and Perspectives .....	131
5.4 The Solutions.....	134
5.4.1 Complementary Strategies .....	136
5.4.2 Contradictory Approaches .....	142
5.4.3 Problems within the Solution.....	144
5.5 Conclusion .....	144
Chapter 6: Conclusion and Recommendations .....	146
6.1 Closing Discussion .....	147
6.1.1 Representations of Criminal Justice Policies.....	147
6.1.2 Representations of Criminal Justice Policymaking .....	148
6.1.3 Answers to the Research Questions .....	151
6.2 Recommendations and Opportunities for Further Research .....	152
6.3 Conclusion .....	153
References .....	154
Appendix A: Timeline of Maltese Political Events and Salient Issues .....	190
Appendix B: The Coding Frame .....	194
Appendix C: The Coding Manual .....	195
Appendix D: Percentage of Focus: Coding Frame and Manual .....	213
Appendix E: Selection of Content for Analysis .....	216
Appendix F: Illustrative Examples from the Coding Frame .....	238
Appendix G: Ancillary Analysis of Quantitative Data .....	257
Appendix H: Results from Bivariate Statistical Analysis .....	265
Appendix I: Crimes Included in the Coding Frame .....	275
Appendix J: Quantitative Properties for Actions Related to Domestic Violence .....	281

## LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

CDV	Commission on Domestic Violence
CGBVDV	Commission on Gender-Based Violence and Domestic Violence
CJ	Criminal justice
CoE	Council of Europe
DV	Domestic violence
EU	European Union
FN	Forza Nazzjonali
GRECO	Group of States against Corruption
GREVIO	Group of Experts on Action against Violence against Women and Domestic Violence
NPF	Narrative policy framework
PET	Punctuated equilibrium theory
PL	Partit Laburista / Labour Party
PN	Partit Nazzjonalista / Nationalist Party
SRT	Social representation theory

## LIST OF FIGURES

Figure 1:	The policy cycle	13
Figure 2:	Contextualisation of criminal justice policy making	25
Figure 3:	Summary of literature review	44
Figure 4:	The research design.	49
Figure 5:	Krippendorff's processual model of quantitative content analysis.	52
Figure 6:	Timeline of the research sites.	55
Figure 7:	The data matrix plan.	61
Figure 8:	Unit distribution according to context	77
Figure 9:	Unit count by year and stacked by source	81
Figure 10:	Dual Y-Axis graph displaying unit count against percentage of focus over legislatures	82
Figure 11:	Unit distribution by political party.	84
Figure 12:	Unit distribution by role of political party	86
Figure 13:	Unit distribution by nature of crime	91
Figure 14:	Dual Y-Axis graph displaying proactive measures against reactive measures over years	96
Figure 15:	Unit distribution by stage in policy cycle	99
Figure 16:	Unit distribution by direct target group	101
Figure 17:	Stacked histogram of depth by year	108
Figure 18:	Unit distribution by orientation	114
Figure 19:	The overarching theoretical framework	119
Figure 20:	Compilation of photographs from sampled news media items	124

## LIST OF TABLES

Table 1:	A description of variable categories.	53
Table 2:	Original $\kappa$ score for all categorical variables in the original inter-rater reliability test.	59
Table 3:	Revised $\kappa$ score for 'depth' and 'breadth' variables using another subset of data.	60
Table 4:	Lasswell's social and policy process and the Narrative Policy Framework.	67
Table 5:	Unit count, unit percentage and mean percentage of focus by source.	75
Table 6:	Unit count of election years versus the average of other years in a legislature.	79
Table 7:	Cross tabulation of unit count for year by source.	80
Table 8:	Unit count, unit percentage and mean percentage focus by legislature.	83
Table 9:	Unit count and mean percentage of focus disaggregated by political party.	85
Table 10:	Cross-tabulation of political party with role.	87
Table 11:	Unit count and percentages by types of crime.	89
Table 12:	Cross-tabulation of nature of crime with context, legislature and political party.	92
Table 13:	Frequency of type of justification for intervention.	94
Table 14:	Frequency of areas of concern.	95
Table 15:	Frequency of policy instrument.	98
Table 16:	Cross-tabulation of direct target group with context, legislature and political party.	103
Table 17:	Unit distribution by type of stakeholder.	104
Table 18:	Cross-tabulation of depth and breadth with context.	107

Table 19: Unit distribution by principles and practices.	109
Table 20: Cross-tabulation of orientation with context, legislature and political party.	115
Table 21: Descriptions of domestic violence.	122
Table 22: Roles and examples of heroes within domestic violence policy.	128
Table 23: Values and perspectives in domestic violence policy.	132
Table 24: Major plotpoints in the sample.	135
Table 25: Functions of domestic violence law.	137
Table 26: Functions of intersectoral working groups in domestic violence policy.	139
Table 27: Dichotomies in criminal justice policies and local positioning.	148

## **CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION**

[People,] under the threat of the sky, found themselves eager to take place in this demented but partly secure society. They were glad to touch the brown backs of the fence that hemmed in the terror and made it governable (Golding, 1954/1988, p.155).

The Lord of the Flies tale woven by Golding paints a bleak picture of society. How, despite its promise to protect members from outside perils, humans' deviant nature requires it to protect them from each other as well. The novel suitably introduces the present study through its anecdotes to social contract theory. This centuries-old argument is concerned with a community's surrender of certain freedoms to their sovereign, which mobilises the law and order philosophy in the hope that rules and sanctions are potent enough to attain the partly secure society referenced by Golding (Brettschneider, 2011, Matza, 1969/2010, Muhammad, 2020). With reference to works by contract theorists Rousseau (1762/2018) and Hobbes (1651/2008), the study concerns itself with the essence and creation of these rules and sanctions.

The study centres explicitly on the relational meaning of state-administered criminal justice (CJ) as one forum of law and order. Among numerous attempts to define this concept is McAra's (2017) account of its simultaneous manifestation as a political strategy, an institutional performance, and an embodied practice of a state's pre-emptive and reactive response to criminal behaviour. Definitions are widely perceived as malleable to temporal and spatial contexts (e.g., Annison, 2018; Ilan, 2019; Kappeler & Potter, 2017), yet Jones et al. (2019) and Negura and Plante (2021) find empirical analysis of the concept's context-dependent evolution lacking.

In scientific terms, absence of this conceptual reflexivity amounts to abstracted empiricism, meaning research which does not acknowledge the context-sensitivity of criminological concepts and emergent results (Wenzelburger, 2015a). This phenomenon is especially evident in Maltese criminological literature, as virtually no local study was found to explicitly endorse cultural relativity and social representations theory (SRT) with the intent to deconstruct criminology's conceptual building blocks. The need for such research is intensified when the local cross-over between concept and policy – Maltese CJ policy – is frequently subject to multilateral comparisons and compliance monitoring (which has not

always been favourable; e.g., European Commission, 2021; Global Initiative against Transnational Organised Crime, 2021; Group of States against Corruption [GRECO], 2022a).

In practical terms, this local research gap reaffirms Bertoldo and Castro's (2018) perceptive need to bridge the legal and ordinary worlds. In their view, laws are part of the reified universe, objective and not directly amenable to public opinion. Yet, their public acceptance is mediated by a complex process of social representation, which may or may not alter informal norms. To examine the relational meaning of CJ in Malta is to move beyond common-sense thinking, appreciate this mediating process and promote institutional reflexivity within this democratic sphere.

### **1.1 Aims and Objectives**

This study responds to the above research gap by taking "a journey into the spectacle and carnival of crime, a walk down an infinite hall of mirrors where images created and consumed by criminals, criminal subcultures, control agents, media institutions, and audiences bounce endlessly one off the other" (Ferrell, 1999, p.397). Based on a unique theoretical framework, social representations of CJ are deconstructed to reveal "the ways in which the question of crime runs through the substance and discourse of contemporary political life" (Cohen, 1996, p.7) within a specific temporal and spatial context.

The study limits its focus to Malta, a small state island whose CJ system seems to have eluded the systematic theoretical scrutiny that is increasingly common in other countries (e.g., Hermansson, 2019; Jennings et al., 2020; Wenzelburger & Staff, 2016). To the best of the researcher's knowledge, no local study comes close to its primary aim, which is to enable empirically-valid insight into the frequency and quality of social representations of CJ in Malta, and their relations with the surrounding political and cultural context. Using the past four Maltese legislatures as temporal parameters, this ambitious task is narrowed down to three objectives, namely to:

- Systematically examine the character of Maltese CJ policies as presented by political agents through institutionalised means;
- Statistically test for associations or dependencies between categorical variables of CJ policies and the context in and for which they were created; and

- Discursively examine the narrative of one illustrative example of CJ policy and determine which elements and agents are most visible in its policymaking process.

In pursuit of these goals, the study employs a two-phased, mixed-methods approach based on content analysis. The objectives also establish the study's hypothesis that a policy-oriented approach yields valid inferential knowledge. The rest of this chapter justifies these methodological and theoretical choices and concludes by mapping the sequential execution of the research process.

## **1.2 The Theoretical Framework**

The study aims to demystify the Maltese CJ system, in line with Loader and Spark's (2016) argument for a political mode of evaluation of CJ policy. This orientation enables an understanding of how links between thoughts and actions are mediated by dominant social principles (e.g., democracy, authority, and freedom). In their words,

to evaluate crime control politically is to question such presumptions, to tease out the embedded values that are in play ... and thereby to make clear what (else) is at issue when the question of crime and what to do about it is being debated (p.7).

Adherence to this approach is enabled by the postmodern principles of political and cultural criminology and social representation theory (SRT) from the field of social psychology.

Studies in political and cultural criminology draw upon the sociological works of Durkheim, Foucault and Marx to critically consider crime's cultural and political salience and the state's legitimacy over its control (DeKeseredy & Dragiewicz, 2018; Scheingold, 1998). Political criminology is primarily concerned with rhetoric on social decay which justifies the state's quality and quantity of intervention (Scheingold, 1998). It questions representations of policymaking as rational and logical by looking into institutional and strategic forces that determine "how, why, and with what consequences societies choose to deal with crime" (Scheingold, 1998, p.859).

Cultural criminology is another subtype of the critical school that focuses on the triangle that exists between power, construct, and narratives of crime and its control (Hayward, 2016, p.4). Its attentiveness toward the creation and mediation of culturally-relative

constructs explains the study's partiality towards content analysis (Ilan, 2019; McAra, 2017). Crime-related actions are considered to be in an interactive cycle with cultural values, simultaneously shaping and being shaped by them (Elholm & Colson, 2016; Ferrell, 1999).

Political and cultural criminology commonly encourage the meta-analysis of criminological research and concepts instead of readily using said concepts to establish universal truths (Scheingold, 1998). It is this intellectual curiosity about "the contested social and cultural processes by which situations are defined, individuals and groups are categorised, and human consequences are understood" (Ferrell, 2013, p.258) which enables the two orientations to coexist with another significant underpinning of this study: SRT.

SRT defines social representations as sets of culturally generated knowledge that social groups call upon to make sense of a presenting object (presently, CJ) and react meaningfully towards it (Moscovici, 1988; Sammut et al., 2015). The theory counteracts decontextualised and individualistic explanations of human experience by expanding society's meaning from being a sum of its individuals to being an intrinsic element of their psychology (Sammut, 2015; Sammut et al., 2012; Wagner et al., 2016). The complex meaning-making process is aided by collective memories (e.g., memorable crimes) and the community's sense of identity (e.g., Catholic or democratic; Sammut et al., 2012). Communication and adaptation sustain forged social representations (Arruda, 2015; Duveen, 2008; Sammut et al., 2012), further legitimising the study's analysis of preserved communicative material.

The three theoretical pedestals denounce the segregation of mutually dependent concepts common in abstracted empiricism. Alternatively, they hypothesise the non-naturalistic ontological identity of social objects and promote research that is situated in a spatial and temporal environment, and that acknowledges the environment's influence on the research process. Accordingly, the emergent theoretical framework appreciates rather than undermines the moral, legal and practical complexities characterising CJ. It allows a "move beyond the study of disconnected specifics towards a big picture understanding of law and CJ as social institutions embedded in culture, history and a wider social structure" (Smith & Natalier, 2012, p.8).

### **1.3 The Analytical Construct and Conceptual Framework**

Content analysis is an abductive process which requires the researcher to hypothesise a relationship between the analysed content and the operationalised constructs, and defend the belief that this relation produces valid inferential knowledge (Krippendorff, 2018). CJ is an intricate concept, which is why a thorough review of studies similar in scope and methodology was used to determine which constructs were previously employed to reflect its social representations. Most studies involve quantitative measures of imprisonment rates, law and order spending, and legislative proposals (e.g., Barni et al., 2015; Warner, 2021; Wenzelburger, 2015a), yet a smaller segment of studies stand out for availing of a policy-oriented approach (e.g., Asmussen et al., 2020; Elias & Timmermans, 2014; Jennings et al., 2020).

The former set considers representations in terms of resultant conditions. Alternatively, policy-oriented studies focus on the creation and communication of representations within the ambit of the public service and the broad project of governmentality (Wagenaar, 2014). It is where “an individual’s socially constructed perception of reality meets the road of concrete [CJ] policy and security practices” (Githens-Mazer, 2012, p.47), thus the study’s unique intersection between criminology, policy studies and social psychology. In turn, this responds to the widely lamented gap in interdisciplinary research which examines the hermeneutic relationship between public and criminological understanding of crime-related concepts (e.g., Blomberg et al., 2013; Hope, 2020; Peršak, 2019). In Gilisan’s (1991) words,

Science provides a means of understanding policy issues in a particular way, but at the same time, the very stuff of our science is defined by a set of political, historical, and social contexts that furnish the linguistic and cultural frameworks to make science itself understandable (p.207).

The strength of a policy-oriented approach lies in its ability to provide grounded insight into the regular production of the concept under study. It also attends to the power configuration constructed by Michel Foucault and later extracted by O’Malley and Valverde (2014). According to this configuration, national policies are best positioned to provide longitudinal insight into which social problems were elevated to the political agenda, their

proclaimed causes, the applied antidotes and the aspired outcomes. These arguments are substantiated by Wagenaar's (2014) view of policy as meaning in action and Guiney's (2018) argument that "it is often the unfolding political response to age-old questions, rather than those underlying policy problems themselves, which reveals most about the shifting contours of CJ" (p.79).

To accept these premises is to set aside the view of CJ policies as politically initiated actions towards specified ends initially intended by their proponents. Instead, they are to be perceived as the end products of a complex process of negotiation in power and prevalent ideologies (Jones et al., 2019). For this reason, discursive analysis is necessary to deconstruct the language through which CJ initiatives were presented to constituents, draw out an evolving representational scheme of these abstractions and "reveal a culture's story about crime" (Kort-Butler, 2016, par.1). During this process, latent content (i.e., that which is not expressed but implied; Neuendorf, 2017) is as much likely to contribute to the development of social representations as were well-crafted manifested sentiments stated in black and white.

Concept-wise, CJ policies have thus far eluded universal nomenclature, much less an objective definition. They are found under various aliases, including 'law and order policies' (Wenzelburger & Staff, 2016), 'crime policy' (Hassan, 2020) and 'penal policy' (Guiney, 2019). The present study explicitly adopts the term 'CJ policies' given its reference to justice beyond penal punishment (e.g., Barton & Johns, 2012; Davis, 2017; Mallicoat, 2014). The degree to which these variances subscribe to the same conceptualisation is also ambiguous, as much research fails to provide an operational definition of its subject before presenting its convictions. To avoid this pitfall, Chapter 2 presents a deconstructive account of how this concept was presently defined as Maltese criminal laws and their translation into policies tailored to evolving circumstances. This definition complies with the common belief that the construct does not afford the luxury of being universally defined without reference to national statutes and other contextual factors (e.g., Ismaili, 2006; Sack, 1995; Wenzelburger & Staff, 2017).

This relativity curbs the generalisability and use of country-specific studies. This is especially true for research focusing on the US or the UK, given how data may be heavily biased by

the levels of politicisation and punitiveness that characterise these societies (Hobbs & Hamerton, 2014; Kappeler & Potter, 2017; Wenzelburger, 2015a). Even when studies were not based within these two dominant cultures, studied countries were characterised as having liberal market economies and minimal welfare regimes (Hamilton, 2013; Wenzelburger, 2015a), characteristics which Malta may not share to the same degrees. Hence, the necessity of a national case study.

At this stage, it is prudent to acknowledge the researcher's motivation and perspective. The choice of topic was based on an interest in interdisciplinary and critical research, experiential knowledge in public policy and professional pull toward the criminological field. CJ policy was selected based on personal intrigue with its propensity to evoke moral concerns about the state's legitimate power to punish (Cohen, 1996; Hobbs & Hamerton, 2014; Galoob, 2020). It is approached from the lens of a public service officer with two years of experience in the field of domestic violence (DV) policy. Biases caused by proximity to the subject were managed accordingly, as specified in Chapter 3 of this study.

#### **1.4 Conclusion**

In essence, this research is concerned with the social representation of CJ in Malta. A policy-oriented approach and a saturated theoretical framework respond to Scheingold's (1998) concern about most criminological research's apolitical and atheoretical nature. Based on quantitative and qualitative content analysis, it questions and answers:

- With what frequencies and properties were CJ policies represented by past policy agents?;
- Do categorical variables of CJ policies have a statistical association with the context in which they were created?; and
- What elements characterise the narrative of an illustrative example of CJ policy?

The following chapter presents a review of literature on CJ policies, specifically their conceptual deconstruction, their cross-national homogeneity and heterogeneity, and the elements believed to determine the extent or lack of variation. Chapter 3 subsequently presents the study's methodology, which comprises two exercises in content analysis based on a unique epistemological and ontological paradigm. Respective results are

presented in Chapters 4 and 5 and triangulated in Chapter 6. The last completes the data cycle by consolidating findings with previous literature and narrating answers back to the above research questions.

## **CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW**

Chapter 1 delineated the relevance of a local study that examines the social representation of CJ through a policy-oriented approach. This chapter covers knowledge relevant to this goal and on which the methodology was founded. It begins with a deconstruction of CJ policy and moves on to observe its representations in foreign contexts and the elements that explain cross-national variances. The final section concludes with an overview of the Maltese socio-political culture, which grounds this research in the local political imaginary. Reviewed literature comprises a mixture of philosophical, theoretical and empirical works which commonly reinforce the premise that CJ policies are socially constructed and contextually dependent. Perceptively outdated references were inevitable to provide the theoretical bedding on which more recent evidence could be discussed.

## **2.1 A Deconstructive Account of Criminal Justice Policies**

CJ policy was made amenable to empirical scrutiny through its deconstruction into its two elementary composites - 'crime' and 'policy' - and reflection on the trail which links them. Crime can be broadly and stably defined as "legally sanctioned deviance" (Melossi, 2000, p.297), yet its behavioural components and social responses remain contingent on culture and politics (Ismaili, 2006; Jones et al., 2019). Its essence continues to be defined by the state (whose personifications are explored later), even though states' recognition of universally acceptable morals has long been discredited by disillusioned constituents (Fairchild, 1977; Kappeler & Potter, 2017).

Crime's inextricable ties with primitive concerns of safety and security irrevocably justify the state's restriction of individual liberty (Di Ronco & Sergi, 2019). Hence, the metaphorical social contract comes into play, allowing the state to vindicate itself of criminals out of "avid concern for public order and safety ... [through] pacific intention and the appearance of legality" (Matza, 1969/2010, p.197). This optimistic view of governance aligns with Burke's (2013) and Smith and Natalier's (2012) commentary on the orthodox social progress model of CJ (consensus theory). This model maintains that state-administered CJ is proof of an enlightened understanding of the state's benevolent intent to protect social morals. Its sceptical alternative is the radical conflict model (or conflict theories), which believes state intervention to solely concerned with maintaining capitalist

principles and the status quo (Amatrudo, 2009). In simpler terms, this dichotomy represents standard utopian and dystopian views of state-administered CJ (Jouet, 2022).

States employ laws to shape social morality and define the parameters which segregate law-abiders from outlaws (Hassan, 2020; Lewin & Turnbull, 1990). Said laws would be ineffectual without an enforcement mechanism which conserves their legitimacy, hence the assembly of justice systems around jurisdictions' legal frameworks (Hörnqvist, 2021). Through these bureaucratic structures, CJ becomes a niche for governance, an institutional setup, and an embodied practice (McAra, 2017). State policy, the system's fuel, links that which is abstract at the legal level and the reality that enforcers face, enabling rigid laws to adapt according to presenting circumstances (Barton & Johns, 2012). This led to the establishment of public policy as a methodical field of study. The exercise promoted by this discipline - policymaking - is described as a "quasi-scientific exercise" (Barton & Johns, 2012, p.53), owing to its susceptibility to having truths bent towards dominant narratives. The process has eluded a unified systemic model, yet all established ones refer to the same sequential actions and are based on democratic systems and humans' (assumed) rational functioning (Cairney, 2019; Weible et al., 2012).

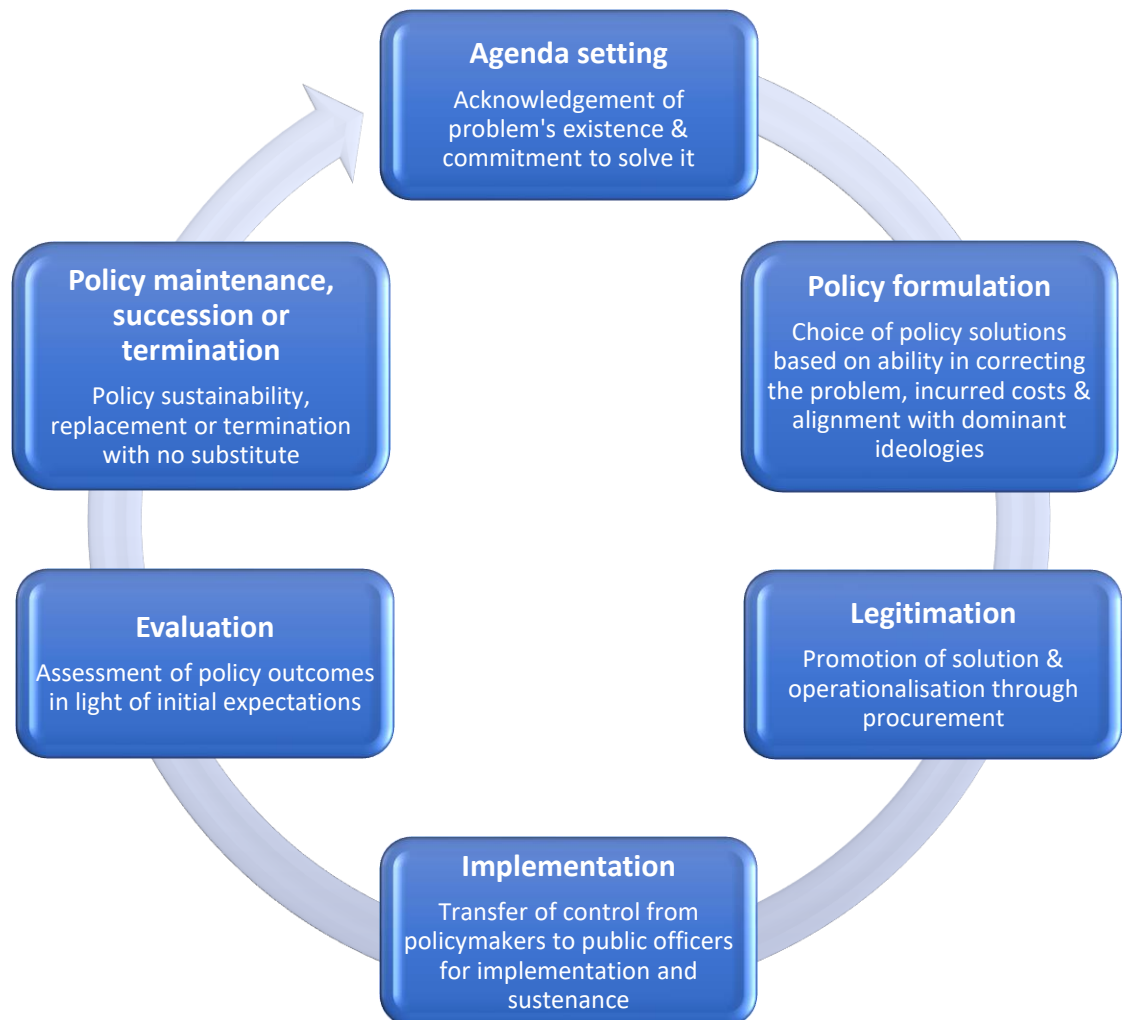
For the sake of consistency, this study endorses Cairney's (2019) cyclical model (Figure 1), chosen for its distinguished use, consolidation of previous models, and transferability to the research instrument. Cairney himself acknowledges that the model's logical execution of policymaking does not translate in practice. As elaborated later in this chapter, decisions rarely follow a logical pattern and are instead mediated by elements which make the process anything but rational in the scientific sense (Wenzelburger & Staff, 2017). The final product of this process is public policy, whose character has been optimistically described as reactionary, principled, value-driven and goal-oriented (Barton & Johns, 2012).

Based on this interpretation, CJ policy is here defined as the state's criminal law and its translation into policies which can be tailored to concurrent circumstances (Barton & Johns, 2012). Its local manifestation is a neglected area of study, especially when it comes to the application of criminological and policy-oriented lenses. Literature on the Maltese CJ system, as a proxy to its policies, believes it reflects the island's generous exposure to foreign cultures (Sammut, 2013; Tabone, 2020). Azzopardi (2016) states that the system

inhibits crime through repressive and ideological mechanisms. The former is best described as institutional shows of control by the state (e.g., the police force, courts and prisons). In contrast, the latter is manifested in the subtle standards set by social control agents, namely national culture, the family, religion and the media. With a nod toward social contract theory, Azzopardi (2016) further notes how ethical concerns over the beguiling of citizens' behaviour through both mechanisms quickly "fade away when the issue of the preservation of the state is brought into the equation" (p.403).

**Figure 1**

*The Policy Cycle*



*Note.* Adapted from Cairney, P. (2019). *Understanding public policy: Theories and Issues*. Palgrave Macmillan.

The system and its policies are primarily founded on the Maltese Criminal Code (Cap.9 of the Laws of Malta). The Code provides a categorised index of crimes and contraventions, their corresponding punishment and the prosecutorial procedures to be taken in the name of the Republic of Malta (Filletti, 2015; Grech, 2006; Tabone, 2020). Based on this and other complementary laws, legislators devolve authority over CJ to governmental institutions, regulating authorities and commissions. These are then responsible for initiating policies that conform with the day's political agenda and effectively executing their roles in line with the Code.

Regrettably, GRECO (2019, 2022a) considers this power distribution disproportionate and advises restructuring to avoid collapse in the system. The Maltese system is also called out for being under-resourced, inefficient and ineffective by transnational monitoring bodies (European Commission, 2021; Global Initiative against Transnational Organised Crime, 2021) and the Maltese public (Bezzina et al., 2021). Indeed, a Justice Reform Commission was established in 2013 to address these deficiencies, annually monitored by the European Commission (Bezzina et al., 2021). Yet, there remains a stark absence of any systematic overview of the system's social representation, arguably an essential task to build the system's capacity for meta-analysis and improve perceptions of its efficacy.

## **2.2 Heterogeneity and Homogeneity in Criminal Justice Policies**

Based on the constructionist theoretical framework of this study, CJ policies are believed to reflect national sovereignty, subject to how a state's cultural values and political ideologies define the utopian ideal of CJ. Berti et al. (2012) propose that the resultant cross-national heterogeneity can be organised on a spectrum between the moral polarities of crime control and due process models. The former model champions public safety over the rights of those who wronged it, believing in swift, efficient punishment in the name of utilitarian governance (Ellis & Nash, 2011). Contrarily, the due process model does not presume suspects' guilt but instead places "the onus ... on the state to prove guilt, rather than the defendant to prove innocence" (Ellis & Nash, 2011, p.14).

Shifts in general temperament are believed to recast policies towards either end of the spectrum (Jennings et al., 2017). Despite this pliability, the renowned Punctuated Equilibrium Theory (PET) maintains that public policy (including CJ policy) has an intrinsic

stable disposition in that it maintains issue frames and models for considerable periods, punctuated by occasional feedback which demands policy realignment (Cairney, 2019; Jennings et al., 2020). Even outside this theory, the evolution of public policy is characterised by incrementalism, as it rarely introduces drastic changes, only minor changes which build on an unchallenged assumption – the status quo (Hobbs & Hamerton, 2014). Kappeler and Potter (2017) term this “systems tinkering” (p.13), a practice which prevents any significant redistribution of sanctioning powers.

20<sup>th</sup>-century scholars argued that this stability was exceptionally evident in the CJ sector, given its perceived insularity to the socio-political and economic forces that transposed society into the twenty-first century (e.g., Blumstein & Larson, 1969; Cohen, 1996; Roach, 1999). Borakove et al. (2015) further comment on common perceptions of silo-mentalities within the system itself (e.g., between the police, courts and prisons). These conceptions have since been invalidated for most systems, instead replaced by the systemic interdependencies within this institutional organism (Borakove et al., 2015; Farrall et al., 2020).

It has become common practice to systematically document the pace and essence of states’ responses to crime (e.g., Elholm & Colson, 2016; Loader & Sparks, 2016; Warner, 2021). The most cited of such studies is Garland’s (2001) typology, a “contemporary classic ... offering an extensive diagnosis of late-modern penality” (Lohne, 2021, p.4). Despite being over two decades old and focused on the US system, his list of predicted changes in CJ remains widely cited, even beyond America’s borders (Annison, 2018; Warner, 2021). Its frequent use as a comparative benchmark (e.g., Hall, 2017; Lohne, 2021; Wenzelburger, 2015a) justifies why his catalogue was chosen for the development of a localised blueprint of Maltese CJ policies. What follows is an exploration of Garland’s list of indices based on more recent evidence, demonstrating how his arguments (even if faulted) remain valid for discussion.

### **2.2.1 The decline of the rehabilitative model**

The post-war period saw the rise of more sympathetic attitudes towards criminals and a shared belief that they were not beyond redemption (Staerklé, 2013). CJ systems reflected this non-determinism by endorsing lenient principles, encapsulated by the term ‘penal

welfarism' (Garland, 2001; Hobbs & Hamerton, 2014). Punishment was forward-looking, given how it sought to improve the offender's utility and society's prospects (Amatrudo, 2009). Penal welfarism has also been described as the medical model of crime, in which criminal behaviour is an illness which could be cured through social re-engineering (Fairchild, 1977; Staerklé, 2013). Inherent in this approach is the state's presumption about a shared agreement for conformity to a specific social order.

The rehabilitative ideal was declining at the time of Garland's writing, giving way to disbelief in the system's capacity to rehabilitate offenders and an increased focus on criminals' rationality (Schmallegger, 2017). Decades later, Corcoran (2019) argues that the penal-welfare ecosystem remains under strain as states struggle with the plausibility of rehabilitating offenders in the face of punitive societies' pressure and disproving evidence. Yet, Martufi (2019) maintains that penal welfarism remains resilient in Europe and is an inherent principle of European CJ policy. Likewise, Warner (2021) observes Nordic countries' renowned penal welfarist practices fuel and be fuelled by representations of criminals centred on their continued status as citizens. No known systematic study exists that could empirically confirm where local policy stands.

### **2.2.2 The reappearance of punitive sanctions and expressive justice**

In tandem with the previous trend, Garland (2001) predicted a turn towards draconian laws and harsh sentencing at the expense of offenders' rights and liberties. Punishment becomes backwards-looking as it seeks to right past wrongs without regard for offenders' futures (Amatrudo, 2009). At the time, Garland observed this change in Northern America and the UK, which remain singled out as having the most punitive CJ systems in the developed world (e.g., Hamilton, 2013; Warner, 2021; Wozniak, 2016).

Global imprisonment rates, a general proxy for punitive levels, have skyrocketed since Garland's work (Coyle et al., 2018; Jacobson et al., 2017). Yet, Coyle et al. (2018) point out that aggregation might obscure the fact that Europe has decreased its imprisonment rates during this century. As yardsticks for comparison, Malta's imprisonment rate per 100,000 individuals is 159, Europe's 175, and America tops all with 376 (Fair & Walmsley, 2021). The reasons for these discrepancies are various. For example, Wenzelburger and Staff (2016, 2017, 2020) credit Germany's evasion of punitive policy to a balanced parliamentary

structure. Alternatively, Kainulainen et al. (2021) explain Finland's lenient policies through the sustained presence of experts in policymaking and social representations of crime which are faithful to reality (as opposed to narratives).

A recent global shift has been noted in the form of progressive reforms calling for reduced prison populations and serious revisions of sentencing structures and miscarriages of justice (Campbell, 2016; Jacobson et al., 2017; Wozniak, 2016). This might represent a policy punctuation (as per PET), as innovative alternatives to traditional responses are promoted (Amatrudo, 2009; Loader & Sparks, 2016). Yet, Wozniak (2016) remains sceptical about the durability of these reforms, especially in countries susceptible to populist sways in policy. Indeed, since his writing, America has already elected one of the most populist administrations of its time, prompting a new "era of punitive excess" (Travis & Western, 2021, par.4).

In local terms, the only known measure of national punitiveness dates back to 2002, when Malta scored in the upper percentile based on support for imprisonment (Mayhew & van Kersteren, 2002). Needless to say, the score is no longer relevant, considering the significant political, cultural and economic changes that Malta has since gone through. Yet, Tillie et al. (2019) remark how Maltese society requires substantial cultural and attitudinal changes if it hopes to accommodate more 'lenient' restorative practices, implying that retribution (not restitution) remains the guiding principle.

### **2.2.3 Changes in the emotional tone of crime policy**

Garland (2001) also predicted that policymakers' hopeful discourse would soon give way to dramatic rhetoric that erases sympathy towards offenders. Garland's prediction echoes Matza's (1969/2010) argument on representations, stating

Leviathan [the state] bedevils the subject as he proceeds and thus is partly compensated for its gross failure to deter ... A main purpose of ban is to unify meaning and thus minimise the possibility that, morally, the subject can have it both ways. Either he will be deterred or bedevilled. (p.148)

The 'bedevilling' shifts the blame from the state's impotence to control its citizens to offenders' sinful nature. Hassan (2020) remarks on policymakers' use of warfare language

to denote the imminent threat posed by criminals, whereas Kappeler and Potter (2017) distinguish themes of difference, innocence and threatened value. Using the 'cultural trauma' of 9/11 as an example, Silva et al. (2019) argue how rhetoric is very much built on notions of inexplorable differences between terrorists and society, loss of innocence and perpetual alertness. This emotive element is not exclusive to punitive cultures. Hermansson's (2018, 2019) case study on Swedish criminal policy reveals how, despite the country being the "antithesis to punitive Anglophone societies" (p.22), emotional rhetoric that unifies society against criminals was still evident in its electoral campaign. The extent to which this emotional tone is present in Maltese discourse is a research lacuna which should be partially rectified through this study.

#### **2.2.4 The return of the victim**

At the time of Garland's writing, the victim persona was already gaining prominence in policy discourse after decades of "official neglect" (Diganan & Cavadino, 1996). Roach (1999) and Garland (2001) recognised victims' potential to personify the forces that pushed CJ models towards modernisation. Their predictions prove correct, as victims are believed to maintain this privileged status (Asmussen et al., 2020; Kainulainen et al., 2021). Case studies, such as those by Walklate et al. (2018) and Asmussen et al. (2020), demonstrate victims' ability to significantly rattle the stable disposition of crime policies and spur policy change.

In turn, victim policies have proven infallible at gaining constituents' trust, solidifying the state's legitimacy and appeasing civil movements (Baker, 2010; Hall, 2017; Lohne, 2021). Yet, repositioning victims' roles in the CJ system has come at great expense for offenders (Kainulainen et al., 2021). This culture of victimisation and the zero-sum dichotomy between offenders and victims have led to a shift in resources, from rehabilitation services to providing support structures for victims (Hall, 2017). With such moves, the onus for restoring victims' well-being no longer lies with themselves but has become an inherent component of CJ (Hall, 2017).

### **2.2.5 Public protection above all else**

Garland (2001) also predicted that the sensualisation of crime and victimisation would bring about an era of fear and constant reassurance of the public's safety. Indeed, fear of crime, a fear rarely based on statistical probabilities, has become a salient issue when studying states' CJ responses (EU Agency for Fundamental Rights, 2021; Staerklé, 2013). Indeed, Formosa Pace (2016) argues that ignoring public concerns and remaining focused on statistical probabilities might disturb society as much as crime itself does ("... one of the remits of this strategy is to target concerns related to the perception of risks and their mitigation ... since issues of divergence can cause frustration and elicit moral panic" [p.8]). Studies maintain that rationality often gives way to personality traits (Barni et al., 2015), belief systems (Knackmuhs et al., 2020) and political socialisation (Gray et al., 2019), entailing a legacy of concern which cultivates a rift between attitudes and realities of crime (Alitavoli & Kaveh, 2018; Pickett et al., 2015). This rift has expanded definitions of 'victimisation', previously an experience claimed solely by direct crime victims. Society is now also afforded the same title of 'victim', even for crimes that have only occurred in its activated imagination. As a result, policymakers now deal with both fears and actual crime rates (Krulichová, 2018).

### **2.2.6 Politicisation of crime and the new populism**

In contrast to earlier perceptions of the system's insularity, Garland (2001) observed its transfer from experts' hands to politicians' awaiting ones. Since then, the rule of the people, also known as populism, has ensured that crime-related initiatives reflect constituents' intolerance towards criminal behaviour, even if their effectiveness is empirically disproven (Hobbs & Hamerton, 2014; Wenzelburger, 2020). The administrations of Thatcher (Farrall & Gray, 2018), Reagan (Cohen, 1996), Sarkozy (Wenzelburger, 2015a) and Johnson (Guiney, 2019) are some famous administrations which exemplify how punitive-oriented electoral campaigns got politicians elected to a policy-controlling position. Based on Foucault's power-knowledge nexus, scientific knowledge of crime was here surpassed by the electorate's power over policymakers (Annison, 2018).

The coupling of populism with the politicisation of crime has motivated the development of phenomena such as 'governance through crime' (Baker, 2010; Scheingold, 1998) and 'political economies of punishment' (Elholm & Colson, 2016). Such countries fork out considerable resources to fight crime, even when statistical probability does not justify this distribution. Githens-Mazer (2012) refers to America's perpetual preoccupation with terrorism as an example. The dominant representation of the terrorist as a villain with no morals (as opposed to a fighter with a subjectively good cause) was converted into political currency, guaranteeing that any politician who endorses this representation is favoured over one who attempts to humanise terrorists and their treatment. This demonstrates how choices regarding which types of crime are addressed and the means to control them are now subject to a cost-benefit analysis, the cost being government expenditure and the benefits being the number of constituents whose favour it gains.

The politicisation of crime has further led to the use of the law's symbolic functions to generate the appearance of relentless action. Elholm and Colson (2016) argue that policymakers have increasingly introduced legislation which serves no meaningful purpose other than reaffirming intolerance towards certain crimes. For example, they refer to the introduction of female genital mutilation as a criminal act in the Danish criminal code, even if it criminalised actions already covered by the code and the punishment was the same as that prescribed for aggravated assault. It served no substantial purpose other than communicating a nation's values. Elholm and Colson (2016) conclude that this trend has led to a "tidal wave of legislation" (p.53) in European countries. No systemic study has empirically validated these claims for the Maltese context.

### **2.2.7 The reinvention of the prison**

Garland (2001) predicted how the aforementioned trends would lead to a reinvigorated use of incarceration as revenge (not rehabilitation). Indeed, to this day, the presence of prison institutions in modern society remains non-negotiable, despite the proven effectiveness of other solutions (Coyle et al., 2017). Nevertheless, scholars often disagree on the institution's capacity to become 'reinvented'. Coyle et al. (2017) maintain that the prison is highly resistant to reform and has historically supported the same patterns and

practices (e.g., disproportionality in inmates' race, ethically questionable disciplining and institutionalised conditioning).

Conversely, Crewe and Levins (2019) and Corcoran (2019) argue in favour of its capacity to change for offenders' benefit, referring to prisons' increased openness for collaboration with public services and the private sector as an indication of this reinvention. This loosely concurs with Garland's perceived indispensability of the prison structure as a political tool. So, the prison remains and adjusts according to dominant representations of CJ, be they penal welfarism or punitive justice.

### **2.2.8 The transformation of criminological thought**

Garland (2001) further predicted how the increased focus on deterrence and punishment would infiltrate criminological practice with control theories. In contrast with theories that argue that society can be redeemed if experts uncover the actual cause of crime (be it poverty, lack of education, mental illness, etc.), control theories do not have faith in perfecting humanity. They have accepted its everlasting presence, even the positive function, in society (Smith & Natalier, 2012). In their view, criminology is to preoccupy itself with determining effective forms of control which address the criminal event and not the criminal. Regrettably, this is perhaps the least researched index, as no recent empirical and systematic review could be found to ascertain or reject it, locally or abroad.

### **2.2.9 The expanding infrastructure of crime prevention and community safety**

In tandem with criminology's preoccupation with control theories, Garland (2001) forecasted a perpetual fixation with risk management and prevention in CJ policy. At this time, Squires (1999) also believed crime prevention to be the novel political narrative, with equal amounts of ideological and instrumental use. Squires also maintained that the complementary term 'community safety' would expand the onus of crime prevention from the state to include active public participation.

The economy of risk can still be witnessed, from basic individualistic measures (e.g., installing security alarms) to community initiatives (e.g., the enactment of neighbourhood watches) to higher levels of governance (e.g., enactment of state-wide crime prevention strategies; Di Ronco & Sergi, 2019; Gallo & Svensson, 2019). This, coupled with the 'public

protection above all else' index, promotes the legitimacy of Panopticon governance, a mandated "disciplinary-control-surveillance matrix" (Burke, 2013, p.273). It pre-empts crime and alters the temporal orientation of the CJ system (Mantello, 2016). Lidskog and Persson (2012) observe a transnational policy convergence of this "preventative turn" (p.295) but also point out exceptions to the rule, claiming historical legacy to be the mediating factor in the uptake of this trend. Once again, the extent to which Malta has taken this "preventative turn" has yet to be empirically proven.

#### **2.2.10 The commercialisation of crime control**

In Garland's time, neoliberalism was already erasing the boundaries between public and private contributions toward crime control. In his view, their conciliation has implications for basic principles of the social contract theory and the state's exclusive legitimacy over it. At present, Sawyer and Wagner (2020) still discuss the moral outrage which often transpires when moves towards privatisation of prison management, policing, and security services are proposed or adopted. Likewise, the European Parliament (2015) had expressed concern over the increase in prison privatisation in Europe and the implications this trend has on prisoners' rights. Regardless of their unpopularity, Albertson et al. (2020) predict that policies which promote demonopolisation and mixed economies in CJ will continue to expand. The extent to which Malta subscribes to this trend hopes to be clarified through this research.

#### **2.2.11 New management styles and working practices**

At the turn of the century, managerialism (or its UK counterpart, new public management) became the new mode of governance in most state institutions, including CJ factions (Garland, 2001; Mc Ewan, 2011). Principles such as efficiency and efficacy were increasingly subject to measurable instruments (such as key performance indicators and financial auditing) and reduced professional discretion (Cohen, 1996, Squires, 1999). This may sound appealing to an institution that is ideologically portrayed as unbiased and infallible. Yet, managerial principles might conflict with the lengthy consideration and carefulness required for this decision-making.

Salet and Terpstra (2020) demonstrate this conflict through their case study on a Dutch policy programme which processes petty crime through standardised decision-making processes and within tight deadlines, akin to the production lines found in factories. This efficiency came at a cost, as the sector requires flexibility and professional judgement in generating tailor-made solutions. Yet, the lure for cost-effective system management is only reinforced by Member States' accountability towards supranational institutions that fund projects and promote multilateral scores for states' progressiveness (e.g., the European Union [EU] and the Council of Europe [COE]; McEwan, 2011; Warner, 2021).

### **2.2.12 A perpetual sense of crisis**

In his last index, Garland (2001) refers to "the crisis of penal modernism" (p.20) and the public's disenfranchisement with the system's efficacy, sentiments forecasted by Reasons (1974). Garland furthers Reason's argument by pointing out how the marginalisation of experts in favour of politicians, the latter's involvement in scandals, and publicised system failures lead to decreased confidence in governments' competencies. The disqualification of both experts and policymakers as effective managers of this system has further deepened the sense of hopelessness.

Presently, Cavadino (2013) observes how the term 'crisis' seems to have lost meaning, given how it denotes a sense of urgency for a problem that has spanned decades. On the other hand, Powderly (2019) argues how this 'crisis' is real and fuelled by the political current of a given nation, as evident in the exclusive nationalism promoted by the Trump administration and the Brexit movement. As a proximate quantitative measure, a survey by the Eurobarometer (2021) revealed mixed scores on Member States' trust in the independence of national CJ systems. Arguments to negate or confirm Garland's theory can be made for the global 35% of European citizens who communicated their distrust in national courts. Fortunately, the Eurobarometer (2021) and Bezzina et al. (2021) report on Maltese's increased trust and faith in the system's independence.

### **2.2.13 The modern crime myth**

In conclusion, the relevance (not accuracy) of Garland's predictions seems to have transcended decades and borders. The twelve interrelated trends together produce a

modern crime myth, in which the innocent (victims), the villains (offenders) and the heroes (the state) shift the spotlight amongst themselves according to what best suits the current political needs (Kappeler & Potter, 2017). Yet, numerous nations do not fit comfortably into this paradigm. Examples of exceptionalism make one cautious about making sweeping statements about the permeation of the culture of control proposed by Garland (2001), despite its accuracy in predicting the state of Anglo-American CJ systems (Elholm & Colson, 2016; Kattler & Ettensperger, 2020; Warner, 2021). Garland (2001) acknowledges that cross-national differences in institutions, social conditions and national cultures can explain how representations of CJ evolve. His position aligns significantly with the theoretical framework of this study, which values temporal, socio-political and cultural factors in knowledge creation. For this reason, the chapter turns to the contextual elements which have demonstrated leverage over the process by which CJ policies are produced.

### **2.3 Elements Shaping Criminal Justice Policy**

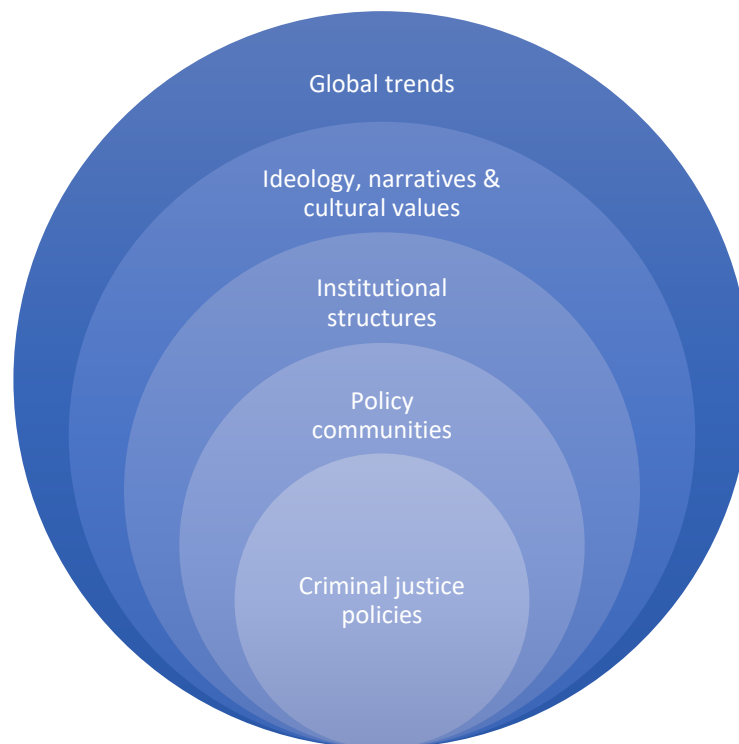
Shared preconditions (e.g., universal animosity towards criminals, a pervasive sense of risk and shared political ideologies) do not guarantee that countries' CJ systems follow the same trajectory (Tonry, 2012; Wenzelburger & Staff, 2017). Numerous theories have been proposed to explain cross-national variances (e.g., Barton & Johns, 2012; Ismaili, 2006; Zimring and Johnson, 2006). Hobbs and Hamerton (2014) especially mention the pluralist model, the policy network model and the institutional model as some frameworks which recognise the potent influence of historical and contextual factors and the interests of the actors involved in the process. Additionally, these frameworks commonly maintain that the path from policy vision to tangible outcomes is anything but the unidirectional, cyclical process proposed by Cairney (2019), as various elements are capable of infiltrating the process at any point (Cairney, 2016; McAra, 2016). These, coupled with the limited capacity of political agendas, produce a complex, heuristic process by which social problems and policy solutions are represented (Weible et al., 2012).

For policy-oriented researchers, this complexity may be both attractive and discouraging. Studies have primarily focused on just one or two mediating factors, fragmenting the comprehensive nexus of power and policy control (e.g., Baumann et al., 2015; Gray et al., 2019; Jennings et al., 2020). Wenzelburger and Staff (2017) were perhaps the first to

develop a unified theoretical framework covering all contextual variables that influence policymakers' decisions. The typology adopted in the present study (Figure 2) was inspired by the inclusivity of their work and Zimring and Johnson's (2006) theory of lenience versus severity vectors. The clear-cut lines between different variables collectives were only drawn to organise the complex web into a coherent framework. Realistically, these variables are not as easily parcelled, and it is their interplay which truly defines state policy. The chapter now explores each variable level and what leverage they demonstrate over CJ policies.

**Figure 2**

*Contextualisation of CJ Policymaking*



*Note.* This original matrix simplifies the multi-level variables that explain cross-national differences in CJ policy. Variables were levelled according to their scale of influence and abstraction and, inversely, their proximity to the resultant product.

### **2.3.1 Global Trends**

More than ever, trends spread far and wide, affecting localised praxis and mindsets in CJ (Wenzelburger & Staff, 2017). Physical distance has become trivial in an economically,

politically and communicatively connected world, where an ideological or political shift is no longer confined to the borders of origin. Globalisation is the term ascribed to this interconnectedness, conceptualised as economically driven, based on free-market principles and aided by perpetual technological advances (Hobbs & Hamerton, 2014). This has enabled crime to don a transnational dimension and prompts governments to institute collaborative relations to control it. Indirectly, globalisation also impacts representations of CJ (Wenzelburger, 2015b), to the extent that Hobbs and Hamerton (2014) argue that it “is becoming a standardised global product at the highest level of generalisation” (p.148).

Researchers identify postmodernism, the risk society phenomenon, individualisation and capitalism as movements which capitalised on globalisation as a vector for their global spread (Beck et al., 1994/2007; O'Malley & Valverde, 2014; Wenzelburger & Staff, 2016). Beck et al.'s (1994/2007) theory of reflexive modernisation argues that the four combined contributed to the project of society's modernisation and produced agents with more analytical and informed approaches to governance. This may attribute to the 'perpetual sense of crisis' predicted by Garland (2001) and, more tangibly, to recent reforms which attack the basic sentiments and practices which underlie the CJ system.

### **2.3.2 Ideology, Narratives and Cultural Values**

Global trends commonly devolve and merge with localised ideologies and cultural values to produce a unique lens through which society views crime and its governance (Loader & Sparks, 2016). This level of elements has a relatively lower level of abstraction, in that its influence on the policymaking process is more easily observed and empirically tested (Loader & Sparks, 2016). This section explores how this trail creates representations “based on the normative assumption of how society ought to work” (Barton & Johns, 2012, p.41).

Ideologies are often described based on their regard for systems of political authority, justifiable given how political rhetoric is the primary medium through which they are propagated (Reasons, 1974; Ricoeur, 1981). Loader and Sparks (2016) define them as “organising clusters of political concepts” (p.7), which describe the conditions of an ideal society and the means with which to achieve it. Loader and Sparks (2016) argue that traditional ideologies, along with emerging ideologies such as populism (the rule of the

people) and technocracy (the rule of the experts), are still relevant in today's societies and outright negate the novel concept of a post-ideological world. In Ricœur's (1981) words:

the death of ideologies would be the most sterile of lucidities; for a social group without ideology or utopia would be without a pan, without a distance from itself, without a self-representation. It would be a society without a global project, consigned to a history fragmented into events which are all equal and insignificant (p.241).

Ideologies define the parameters of normative behaviour, a function which serves the interest of those who wield them to maintain their share of power (Barton & Johns, 2012). They "provid[e] a conceptual shorthand that relies on cultural convention and conjecture to catalog [*sic*], reinforce and reconcile existing social arrangements" (Kappeler & Potter, 2017, p.2). With ideology as its backbone, the law becomes "a legitimising weapon of the highest order" (Reasons, 1974, p.472). Hence, CJ policy becomes subservient to ideological thinking to the extent that a proper outline of the former's character cannot be realised without reference to the principles sustaining it (Hassan, 2020; Loader & Sparks, 2016; Wenzelburger, 2015a). Crime has uniform appeal, regardless of which position on the ideological spectrum policymakers identify. It appeals to the social responsibility in social democracies, the self-sufficient principle of neoliberalism, and the collective interest of populist rhetoric (Loader & Sparks, 2016).

Ideologies specific to crime can also be placed on a spectrum, at which ends are liberals and conservatives (Cohen, 1996; Wenzelburger & Staff, 2016). Extreme liberals view crime as a product of social inequality and thus advocate for increased state involvement to help disadvantaged communities and those forced into crime (Mallicoat, 2014). Alternatively, extreme conservatives believe that anyone who violates the law does so of his own rational volition and propose repressive and retributive responses, much like those observed by Garland (Mallicoat, 2014; Hörnqvist, 2021).

Numerous scholars suggest that ideologies are mobilised through narratives (e.g., Barton & Johns, 2012; Hassan, 2020; Kappeler & Potter, 2017), an argument which fits comfortably with the principles of SRT. These enable context-dependent interpretations of CJ to circulate among social members, justify what they represent, and intellectually blind

society to other representations and more rational solutions (Galoob, 2020; Kappeler & Potter, 2017). For narratives and myths to find traction, they need to endorse a context-specific set of norms, henceforth referred to as cultural values (Elholm & Colson, 2016). By way of example, Hall (2017) refers to the cultural entrenchment of victimisation, where shifts in victims' representations affect policymakers' decisions, regardless of whether this is a wise allocation of resources. Policies based on dominant cultural representations of crime are favoured in government agenda and reinforce the values which founded the representation in the first place. Thus continues the cycle of adaptation and affirmation.

As observed, ideologies are immensely complex concepts. On their own, they are lenses that provide a unique view of the problems which encumber society. When mobilised through narratives, they are powerful instruments in a movement's pursuit of specific actions. Thus, in a very Foucauldian fashion, there needs to be "a suspension of judgement about what is true versus what is ideological, in favour of mapping out what is held to be true by the regime of power under analysis" (O'Malley & Valverde, 2014, p.320). This policy-oriented research is intended as the first step toward this suspension of judgement and unclouding CJ's image reaching the public.

### **2.3.3 Institutional Structures**

Wenzelburger's (2015a) study demonstrates how institutions' permissiveness of autonomy in decision-making partly determines the ideological shaping of CJ policies. This bolsters the legitimacy of the institutional model of policymaking by paying attention to how governance structures determine the parameters within which change may occur (Hobbs & Hamerton, 2014). Given their variety, this section focuses on the influence of three common types of institutions found in developed polities and their manifestation in the studied context.

#### **2.3.3.1 Supranational structures**

This category deals with institutions whose influence supersedes the preferences of national actors. European literature has primarily focused on the imminent authority of the EU. What was once a purely economic infrastructure has now matured into a more ambitious project which infiltrates new fields in the name of economic security, including CJ (Baker, 2010; Elholm & Colson, 2016). Justification for its involvement in an area with

historical national sovereignty is principally based on the increased necessity for shared legal definitions and procedures, particularly relating to crimes with a transnational dimension (Filletti, 2015). Intervention at the EU level secures common understandings of CJ, predicated on the values that its Member States endorsed upon accession (Peršak, 2019).

Multiple treaties gradually secured the legislative competence of the EU, requiring states to adopt mandated policies in their national frameworks and enable a process of Europeanisation (Paoli et al., 2016; Peršak, 2019; Piatowksa, 2016). The European Council is identified as the “signalling authority for policy-making” (Elias & Timmermans, 2014, p.1), deciding the ‘what’, ‘why’, ‘how’ and ‘by when’ criteria of Members States’ policy initiatives (Baker, 2010; European Council, 2020). These pressures, along with more subtle pushes towards uniformity (e.g., providing space for the circulation of best practices; Di Ronco & Sergi, 2019), gradually eradicate national differences for consistency and harmonisation.

The CoE has also been identified as an influential institution in the standardisation of CJ (e.g., Ambos, 2018; Cliquennois, 2018; Piatkowska, 2016). Its interventions are branched into three areas – human rights, democracy and the rule of law – for which it enacted multiple conventions that standardise and monitor national works on CJ systems (CoE, 2022). Ambos (2018) and Cliquennois (2018) comment on the symbiotic relationship between the COE and EU’s views of criminal law, as they reinforce mutual principles through their different competencies. Their intrusion into a domain with an exclusive national claim is believed to be unwelcomed and much-debated (e.g., Cliquennois, 2018; Filletti, 2015; Hobbs & Hamerton, 2014). In the face of resistance, they may concede to a level of fragmentation in CJ policy and settle for policy approximation over desired convergence (Ambos, 2018). Despite this concession, their presence remains secured through dedicated surveillance institutions (e.g., CoE monitoring bodies, Europol and the European Court of Justice; Ambos, 2018; Paoli et al., 2016).

In Malta, “globalisation is not an ideology, it is a necessity” (Randelović, 2021, par.1). For this reason, the state capitalised on this vector to ensure its interests are represented in COE and EU (Zammit et al., 2020). The latter’s influence on local policy is perhaps the more studied of the two. In Quirke’s (2014) view, Malta’s accession to the EU was preordained,

based on the rhetoric's emphasis on shared values between Malta and European countries. Yet, Malta was still required to carry out significant changes in its legal and policy frameworks to accommodate the EU's blended priorities of neoliberalism and welfarism (Xuereb, 2018a). Ellul (2020) and Xuereb (2018b) argue that this process of Europeanisation means that the character and means of execution of national policies can be invariably traced back to EU cultural, political and economic developments. This study explores whether their claims hold in regards to CJ policies.

### ***2.3.3.2 Political and constitutional structures***

Democratic states have standardised structures of operation enshrined in their constitutions, determining how and for how long national leaders are to be appointed and the parameters within which government action may take place. The potency of constitutional power is exemplified by Di Ronco and Sergi's (2019) study, which centres on the Italian Constitutional courts' demonstration of sanctioning powers when it came to Berlusconi's 2008 excessive crime control package. This attests to the potency of national structures and how political will is insufficient to overthrow constitutional constraints.

In local terms, the Republic of Malta constitutionally separates its powers into the three traditional branches: the legislative, executive, and judiciary (Government of Malta, 2021). The former two are directly exposed to public judgement through election cycles which span five years at most. The government is determined by an electoral majority, the executive by the elected Prime Minister, and the legislature in proportion to the number of single transferable votes they receive in a general election (Electoral Commission Malta, 2015a). As with most Western democracies, the executive implements the legislation approved by the legislative, whilst the judiciary ensures that all actions remain within the limits of the Constitution.

When discussing modern democracies, reference should be made to political party systems and their influence on the direction of national policies. Mostly, this influence boils down to the choice that the system allows constituents to determine their leaders and the partisan competitiveness (Muirhead & Rosenblum, 2020; Wenzelburger, 2015b). This influence is sustained if an election results in a parliamentary composition with a balanced representation of the political parties and political ideologies (Brouard et al., 2018). By way

of example, Wenzelburger and Staff (2016, 2017) consider the potency of opposition parties in Germany in voting down the Schröder administration's repressive legislative proposals. This prevented the German CJ policy from going down the same road of penal populism as the Blair British government, despite both administrations having endorsed the 'tough on crime' ideology during their electoral campaigns.

The Maltese electoral party system operates on the principle of 'one man, one vote, one value' (Electoral Commission Malta, 2015a). This, along with universal enfranchisement, is theoretically designed to ensure that parties who wish to run for election may do so with a realistic probability of representation if they secure enough votes (Fenech, 2013). Nevertheless, Maltese politics has become an exclusively bi-partisan affair. Its two primary political parties, the Nationalist Party (PN, the Christian Democrats) and the Labour Party (PL, the Social Democrats), have dominated the Maltese parliament since 1966 and Maltese seats at the European Parliament since 2004 (Cachia et al., 2020; Fenech, 2013; Pace, 2017). The Democratic Alternative, essentially the third largest political party in Malta, remains in the shadow of these two political giants and has thus far been unsuccessful in securing a parliamentary seat (Fenech, 2003; Toplak, 2019).

### ***2.3.3.3 Structures within public administration***

Governmental administrations inherit a workforce of public servants to devolve promised tasks and deliver laborious promises (Barton & Johns, 2012; McAra, 2016). This workforce provides a relatively durable mechanism in the face of periodical legislature changes (Farrall & Gray, 2018). With the advent of New Public Management, elected politicians can avail of increased performance, quality management and public servants' accountability in implementing their directives (Barton & Johns, 2012). Regrettably, no empirical studies on institutions' contribution to CJ policies could be identified by the researcher during the course of this inquiry .

The research thus aims to shed light on this uncharted issue by exploring the extent to which the Maltese public service features as a stakeholder or target group in crime-related discourse. In this regard, Boissevain (1965/1993) noted how "Malta's small size has facilitated the centralised administration of an island fortress" (p.15). Currently, the Maltese public service devolves into several ministries and departments through which

superiors' directives are delegated (Government of Malta, 2021). Each ministry houses a policy development and implementation directorate, ensuring that these institutions remain active in the Maltese policy community (Debono, 2018). All officers are legally bound to follow the directions of any elected government, as enshrined in the Public Administration Act (Cap.595 of the Laws of Malta).

Over the past two decades, local public administration underwent a three-phase reform, respectively focusing on internal changes to upper level management and technological literacy (first phase), standardisation of public services and electronic governance (second phase) and reductions in bureaucracy (third phase; Polidano, 2022). These changes gradually aligned the Maltese public administration with the British principles of New Public Management (Polidano, 2022). Performance management, accountability and meritocracy have now become common terminology in this new administration era, as public servants' work (idealistically) has become guided by neutral forces over political whims. Yet, despite these reforms, Polidano (2022) expresses concern over the fact that "yesmanship" remains a reality within this institution.

#### **2.3.4 The Policy Community**

The previous section demonstrates institutional structures' capacity for hierarchical devolution of powers and restricting top-level policymakers' room for manoeuvre (Loader & Sparks, 2016). This leads this review to the present subsection, which deals with influences at the most micro-level analysis in this typology: human behaviour. So far, reference has been made to the elusive personas of policymakers as the catalysts for policy changes in CJ. This section elaborates on the term by introducing the net of potent individuals, hereafter referred to as the policy community. Weible et al. (2012) develop a typical caricature of community participants, describing them as goal-oriented and emotionally driven individuals who are cognitively incapable of attending to the assault of environmental stimuli. Instead, they use heuristics (i.e., simplified and selective pathways) to process the reality being presented and make decisions, a theory otherwise known as bounded rationality.

The concept of a policy community aligns with the carceral society model of CJ policy, which recognises the diffusion of power over multiple social factions, each with its priorities and

pressures to contend with (Burke, 2013). According to this model, no nucleus of power exists within this community. Instead, Cairney (2016) proposes a much more complex and unpredictable system in which power is fluid and transferable. Contrarily, Hobbs and Hamerton (2014) argue that community members do not operate on an even playing field. Instead, they cite the insider/outsider thesis to demonstrate how this community is divided into those in the thick of the policymaking enterprise and those operating on its margins. With these two frameworks in mind, the following subsections present a typology of community members and evidence of each faction's relevance in CJ policymaking.

#### **2.3.4.1 Politicians**

Wenzelburger (2015a) laments the lack of attention given to humans who sustain institutional structures and employ ideologies to reach specific goals. Annison (2018) likewise points to the Foucauldian tendency in researchers to ignore individual agency in the face of overshadowing frameworks. In contrast with the institutional model's perception of government as a unitary body, the 'ministers in cabinet approach' believes policy to be the result of politicians' preferences and their ability to negotiate them into the government agenda (Barton & Johns, 2012; Baumann et al., 2015).

Unlike Loader and Sparks (2016), Feldman (2012) presents politics as a post-ideological medium which reduces politicians' behaviour to strategic manoeuvring towards securing votes and winning elections. Similarly, Cairney (2016) maintains that modern governance is to make choices that produce both winners and losers, then accept the former's gratitude whilst legitimising the latter's losses. Many scholars seem to have resounded this somewhat simplified notion of strategic politics with no guiding utopian ideology. Recalling the notion of bounded rationality, many maintain that politicians use electoral prospects (not ideologies) as the heuristic through which possible strategies are filtered (e.g., Cairney, 2016; Muirhead & Rosenblum, 2020; Oliver & Marion, 2008).

The political party system provides the setup in which politicians can organise themselves when running for elections. In theory, the utopian and probably unrealistic concept of ethical partisanship requires them to be inclusive and willing to compromise with political opponents in pursuit of the common good (Muirhead & Rosenblum, 2020). In reality, electoral politics requires candidates to secure high winning prospects by attuning

themselves to the needs and insecurities of their electorate and outshining their competition (Farrall & Gray, 2018).

Politicians may find the leverage they require in crime-related matters, given how these resonate deeply with innate needs for personal preservation. Through their dialectical construction, they compete to convince the electorate of their understanding of the problem and the indispensability of their solution (Hassan, 2020). Elholm and Colson (2016) argue that even when higher institutions signal or push towards a specific CJ legislation or policy, politicians claim ownership of the initiative and its expressive dimension. This is believed to enable them to laden the action with symbolic meaning and claim normative authenticity (Boda, 2013).

Once elected, incumbents are bound to implement their promises to the best of their administration's ability (Elias & Timmermans, 2014). The limited resources and carrying capacity of any government agenda make it necessary for them to be selective in the actions they pursue (Elias & Timmermans, 2014). Ever tactical, governing parties regularly choose the courses of action that are attainable within their time in office and produce the most favourable results (Brouard et al., 2018). According to electioneering theory, these calculated decisions are on full display with the momentum that picks up towards the end of the electoral cycle, when the possibility of another term in office looms ahead (Brouard et al., 2018).

In conclusion, the above demonstrates that some sense of rationality indeed drives politicians if rationality is defined as "behaviour that is appropriate to specified goals in the context of a given situation" (Simon, 1985, p.294). It is the goals to which one must look to determine whether the behaviour is self-serving or otherwise. In the cost-benefit equation, are the outputs considered by their effectiveness in eradicating crime, or are they measured by the increase or decrease in prospects of election/re-election? Most literature opts for the latter. For this reason, Hassan (2020) concludes that "[s]o long as politics remains the central animating force in crime control, truly effective mechanisms for law enforcement and a fair and just system will remain elusive" (p.49).

Admittedly, this is a bleak depiction of politicians and their influence on CJ policy. Sweeping generalisations do not do justice to those who enter the political game with the right

intentions. However, in such a competitive and unforgiving environment, actions toward political survival are inescapable (Davis, 2017). As Guiney (2019) articulates, “it is impossible to understand how and why ... ideas come to find expression in official policy without some reference to the competing demands of political statecraft” (par.7).

#### **2.4.4.2 Non-elected Actors**

Abstract ideas espoused at election stage descend to lower branches of government, including practitioners working within the field, routinely referred to as street-level bureaucrats (e.g., Alcadipani et al., 2020; Barton & Johns, 2012; Portillo & Rudes, 2014). Barton and Johns (2012) argue that this delegation is a critical time for politicians, as they relinquish control over the narrative right when their solutions are brought into being. The translation from abstract to real exposes the policy to the interpretation of its implementers, even though elected actors remain accountable for any deviance from the original proposal.

Street-level bureaucrats are distinguished by their (theoretical) political autonomy and proximity to the policy product. Politicians must contend with their experiential superiority and priorities in eradicating crime over putting on shows of control (Ismaili, 2006; Zimring & Johnson, 2006). Yet, Loader and Sparks (2016) comment on their gradual loss of influence in the preliminary stages of policymaking after being undermined by their representation as alienated and too overburdened by administrative work and rules to be effective (Stanica et al., 2020). As a result, Loader and Sparks maintain that public servants have been demoted from consultants on policy development to mere policy implementers. Policy formation is now entrusted to politicians prone to responding to public demands and emotive displays of government action.

#### **2.3.4.3 The Attentive Public**

Public opinion has featured prominently as a decisive precursor to political parties' action. As much as politicians exploit public insecurities for their political advancement, their constituents also capitalise on politicians' prospects for election by advancing their most pressing concerns (Farrall & Jennings, 2012; Wozniak, 2016). This is not to say that democratic responsiveness to crime-related issues is susceptible to any sway in popular demand. Instead, Nicholson-Crotty et al. (2009) argue that this responsiveness manifests

in aggregate terms, as politicians gauge overall dispositions towards liberal or conservative policies when determining the degrees of punishment and public spending on CJ. Indeed, Wenzelburger (2015a) observes a positive relationship between levels of fear of crime and increased law-and-order public spending in twenty Western countries, whereas Di Ronco and Sergi (2019) support this argument on increased penalisation and sanctioning powers in Italy amid expressed public distress towards crime rates.

Likewise, Arceneaux et al. (2016) maintain that shifts in liberal media content are also linked with policy responsiveness, albeit this link is also mediated by the proximity of the next election (in line with the electioneering hypothesis). In line with its theoretical framework, this study endorses Krotz's (2017) definition of media as

a means of production and distribution of symbols, consisting of a technological and organisational structure socially embedded into culture and society, and of the processes of situational production and distribution of content used for communication (p.103).

Fast (2018) refers to the 'media indispensability trope', in which the above structure is viewed as one of the most potent drivers of social change. The "crime-media nexus" (Hayward, 2016, p.5) is indeed one of the main issues that preoccupy cultural criminology, principally how "any clear demarcation between an event and its image is largely lost" (p.5). Hayward implies that the public is increasingly losing its ability to distinguish between the phenomenon (crime) and its sensationalist representation in journalistic narratives, believing the two to be the same, leading to misplaced calls for policy actions (Graziano & Percoco, 2017; Kappeler & Potter, 2017).

Jennings et al. (2020) explore how excessive sensationalism can culminate into moral panics, defined as "symbolic events or narratives/stories which tap into much broader social anxieties or fears" (p.208). Their study relates to the infamous murder of a toddler by two older boys in 1990s Britain, which came to represent the social decay that was taking place (e.g., poverty, single parenthood and loss of traditional values). Jennings et al. (2020) conclude that this incident, coupled with heightened media attention, may have contributed to the punctuation of an equilibrium in British CJ policy and initiated a trend of punitiveness and politicisation of crime in modern Britain.

Public members may also assemble in advocacy groups to draw politicians' attention more formally to their cause (Hall, 2017). The groups' proliferation into the policy network has introduced a certain tension between them and actors who represent the government. A prominent example is victim-rights groups, which have now attained higher influential ground given the public's sympathy for those they represent (Hobbs & Hamerton, 2014). There are also groups which, at present, do not necessarily represent the majority's outlook on matters relating to crime and punishment (e.g., the decriminalisation of abortion in conservative societies).

Means for public expression have also increased considerably, with online petitions, public consultations, opinion polls and greater access to interactive media as some of the more contemporary mediums alongside the traditional election ballots (Hobbs & Hamerton, 2014). These means guarantee greater public access to policies throughout the policy cycle, also widening opportunities for feedback and readjustment according to dominant will. This leverage over a previously exclusive process is essentially one of the most fundamental premises of populism and a substantial influence on modern policymaking.

#### **2.3.4.4 Academics and Researchers**

It is generally accepted that rhetoric and political strategising have taken precedence over scientific knowledge in CJ policymaking (e.g., Davis, 2017; Hamerton & Hobbs, 2014; O'Brien & Littler, 2015). Yet, evidence-based policies and translational criminology have now created a new space for academics in the policymaking arena. The aim is to mobilise scientific findings into having real implications through a theoretical unidirectional link between evidence and policy production (Cairney, 2016; Davis, 2017; Willis, 2013). Ownership of knowledge provided researchers and academics with a bartering chip which they could trade for an increased say in the policy community (Wagenaar, 2014). On the other hand, this link allows public policy to strengthen allegiance to a rational model of policymaking and be promoted as an impartial, logical and fair process (Hobbs & Hamerton, 2014). Again, this alludes to Foucault's power-knowledge theory and promotes critical reflexivity about the role that academic literature (this study included) plays in propagating narratives.

This union is not without its difficulties. Issues remain regarding politicians' and academics' roles in this alliance (Cairney, 2019). Hobbs and Hamerton (2014) demonstrate this by referring to Britain's New Labour government's endorsement of evidence-based policymaking in its crime reduction strategy. The enthusiasm with which this method was greeted diminished as soon as academics became aware of policymakers' pressure on the research process. The impartial process was thwarted by their interference on which phenomena should be studied, who should study them and through which methodology. For this reason, Cairney (2016) and Willis (2013) argue that evidence-based policymaking will only remain aspirational, as politicians are unlikely to tolerate findings that delegitimise their investment.

Political pressure on the research process produces the inverse of evidence-based policies: policy-based evidence. Here, the role of evidence shifts from guiding policy creation to serving as confirmation of the suitability of policies already in place (Hope, 2020). Politicians maintain their renowned practicality and regulate what knowledge is extracted, publicised and acted on in the name of the public service (Strassheim & Kettunen, 2014). Their will creates clientelism among knowledge producers and a mismatch between demands and supplies of criminological research (Cairney, 2016; Davis, 2017; Hobbs & Hamerton, 2014). Consequently, academics have tried their best to pursue research relevant to politicians, including cost-benefit analyses of CJ measures and qualitative research which examines public receipt of state action (Cohen et al., 2020; Freiberg & Carson, 2010).

### **2.3.5 A Consolidated Framework of Influence**

The presented typology is far from exhaustive nor truly representative of the complex, iterative processes which take place in the real world. Nevertheless, this simplified categorisation enables recognition of non-determinism, multicausality, and historical contingency (Cambell, 2015; Wenzelburger, 2015b). It also concurs with Matuseda's (2017) preference for integrating micro and macro variables into multitiered explanations. The typology further denounces the prospect of any actor claiming "privileged access to some overriding master principle of social organization" (Wagenaar, 2014, p.148). Rather, pluralism ensures that various interests, priorities and convictions are brought into the

game, making unanimous agreement on one policy solution very improbable (Ismaili, 2006; Wagenaar, 2014).

Together, the above elements shape the Overton window (also known as the 'window of political possibilities'). This political concept refers to a metaphorical area of acceptable policy discourse based on socio-political and cultural values and the dominant representation of social objects (Karpenko, 2019). This area is more flexible in democratic communities, as propositions move from 'unthinkable' to 'desired' through dialectical construction and propagated narrative (Huidu & Sandu, 2020). One can mention the legalisation of abortion and marijuana use as two CJ issues which, over the past decade, have moved from the fringes of CJ Overton window on crime right to its core (Moody, 2020; Ranzini, 2016). The limited amount of research on this matter indicates that this study is one of the rare instances where the utility of the Overton window concept is applied to CJ.

## **2.4 The Maltese Socio-Political Culture**

Based on crime statistics alone, Malta is a relatively secure country, scoring well below EU and global averages (Formosa, 2021; Macrotrends, 2022). Formosa (2021) argues that local crime trends should be understood in light of the evolution of basic social structures, namely politics, religion, the economy, family, education and technology. Collectively, these structures impact definitions of normative behaviour and define the circumstances in which crime and CJ occur. The study is principally concerned with representations of CJ which emanate from the first of these structures, namely politics.

In this regard, Malta is a unique case study to consider. Vassallo (2012a) effectively articulates this distinctiveness by stating:

The issue of islandness is designated in the algorithm alongside with smallness to figure out the characteristics of public affairs in Malta and to investigate the development of statehood from the point of view of an isolated archipelago which can be very different from that of mainland Europe (p.11).

Despite the institutional similarities it shares with other Western democracies, the policy community and the normative values which guide it are exceptional. For this reason, this

final section engages with local identity politics and orients the study towards the unique socio-political imaginary against which results are interpreted.

According to Elkins (1979), political culture (public perceptions of the political world) is to be viewed in conjunction with states' institutional setup. Regarding political ideologies, PN and PL were bred for different social classes and with different regard for the capitalist status quo (Fenech, 2013). Over the years, PN has come to be identified as a mildly conservative party that promotes traditional values (e.g., Briguglio, 2010; Pace, 2017; Toplak, 2019). However, there is also growing recognition of the need to become more secularised and faithful to the social market economy (Pace, 2017). On the other hand, PL initially embraced a leftist and secularist ideology and acted as an advocate for the working class until the eventual disillusionment with socialism required the party to redefine its political image towards the end of the 20th century (Briguglio, 2010; Fenech, 2013). A slight but significant shift toward the right of the spectrum is evident in the party's preferences for more neoliberal and globalised policy, even if it previously resisted supranational interference (Ellul, 2020; Pace, 2017).

As both parties adjust to evolving values and public demands, they have shifted ever closer on the political ideology spectrum (Fenech, 2013; Pace, 2017). This is especially true for the past decade, as the parties shed some of their more polarised stances on certain issues (e.g., EU membership, divorce and regularisation of marijuana) and have come to concur on both societal goals and the means with which to achieve prosperity (Cachia et al., 2020; Pace, 2017). In Fenech's (2013) view, the hegemonic political ideology governing the two main parties is that which aims for a social market economy with balanced measures for social equality and individual responsibility.

Despite this ideological convergence, the parties are still believed to run parallel and contradictory narratives on most political events (Cioffi, 2017). Their dominance over local sources of traditional media, coupled with the consumerism that dominates this sector, ensures that local news items are laden with polarised, amplified and sensationalist discourse (Cachia et al., 2020; Cioffi, 2017; Simunjak, 2015). Consequently, policy issues, however commonplace, cannot avoid being subject to the political tribalism that permeates Maltese society.

The exceptionalism of Malta's political culture is evident in citizens' engagement in national politics. Contrary to the near-universal disenchantment with politics (Centre for the Future of Democracy, 2020), politics remains close to sacrosanct in Maltese society, and elections remain described as "among the most vivid and passionate in Europe" (Toplak, 2019, p.94). Vital Zammit (2018) embodies politics as "a national hobby" (p.1), in which patronage increases the stakes of electing one party over another (Briguglio, 2010; Fenech, 2008, 2013).

Yet, despite the national pervasiveness of politics, populism simmers only within marginalised parties (Carammia & Pace, 2019). The right-wing hegemonic rhetoric currently dominating European politics has not yet made its way to the Maltese parliament and is not expected to do so anytime soon (e.g., Ehin & Talving, 2021; Taggart & Pirro, 2021; Zulianello & Larsen, 2021). Leusch (2019) attributes this exceptionalism to lenient vectors, such as economic stability, the proliferation of religion and the general positive regard for Malta's connection with the EU. Yet, subtle populist overtones can still be witnessed, especially concerning the preservation of Maltese identity as "predominantly non-chaotic, Catholic and white" (Otto et al., 2019, p.140).

Party allegiance to PN and PL has repeatedly proven difficult to break, even in the face of serious criminal allegations, misconduct and violations of the rule of law (e.g., Carammia & Pace, 2019; Ranieri, 2019; Topak, 2019). Despite both parties being tainted with corruption and misconduct, their misdeeds are mutually used as ammunition during political campaigning (Toplak, 2019). Indeed, Ranieri (2019) provides a critical commentary on Malta's notoriety for political involvement in extra-legal activities, with ties so deep that white-collar crime is perceived to be an integral part of the Maltese political culture (Ranieri, 2019).

For a more inclusive view of the Maltese policy community, Pirotta (2012) posits that "in Malta, people believe that rules are merely the starting point of bargaining and feel hard done when their demands are resisted" (p.23). Its minute size has contributed to the establishment of informal policy networks which capitalise on personal connections, overlapping roles, patronage and clientelism (Pirotta, 2012; Quirke, 2014; Veenendaal, 2019). Indeed, Malta is often reprimanded for politicising higher rank positions in the state,

including the CJ system (e.g., Debono, 2018; GRECO, 2019, 2022a; Polidano, 2022). This effectively erases the democratic boundary between politics and public administration, allowing elected officials to secure institutions' allegiance and responsiveness, stifle resistance and embrace potential opponents in the policy community as their own (Debono, 2018).

Embedded in this network is also a culture of performativity, where policymakers are judged by their acceptance of the electorate's wishes and the number of tangible outputs produced through their work (Baldacchino & Wain, 2013; Saliba, 2020). There is a lack of localised research on how much this culture accommodates evidence in CJ policymaking. The only known comment on this subject dates to 2009 when Calafato and Knepper expressed concern over the discrepancy between the deficient demand and excessive supply of criminological research which could contribute to policy. The study hopes to shed light on this issue by examining academics and research's recurrence in studied discourse.

Based on the above, it can also be argued that the Maltese public (as a persona in the policy community) operates differently than in other contexts (Fenech, 2013). The smallness of the island and intense polarisation enable a measure of co-dependency between higher-ranked policymakers and constituents. For instance, despite the recognised potency of interest groups in national and EU policy formation, the Maltese lobbying community is primarily built on conflict or personal connections and is heavily dependent on the government for resources, support and access to the wider EU policy environment (Cassar, 2020; Ebejer, 2016). This effectively eradicates some or all autonomy that lobbying groups or individuals have during the policymaking process (Cassar, 2020; Vassallo, 2012b).

In conclusion, this section recognises a political culture that exists beneath institutional setups, which permeates the policymaking process in a manner unique to the Maltese environment. Literature references various historical events which contributed to the development of this culture. An effort is made to capture the most salient episodes of Maltese political history in Appendix A for two reasons. First, this summary promotes allegiance to the study's theoretical orientation towards sociological imagination. Second, it acknowledges the role played by situational circumstances and Foucault's theory of power in relation to how these came to be (Matza, 1969/2010; Sammut, 2015; Vliegthart

& Zoonen, 2011). Conclusively, Warrington (2012) effectively captures the essence of this discussion through the following statement:

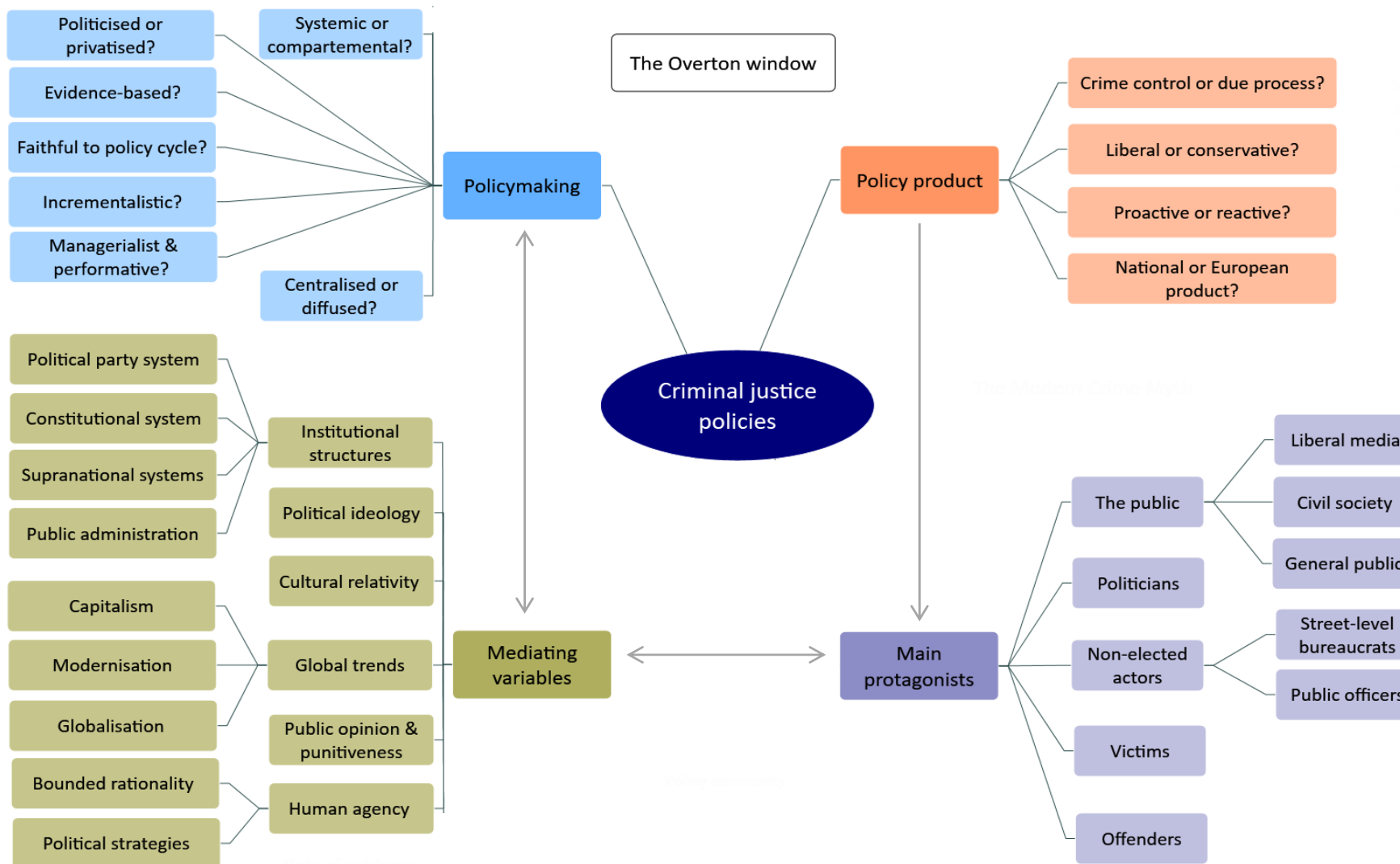
This complex political economy, filled with tension and ambiguity, opportunity and constraint, forged a pattern of governance whose distinguishing characteristics are ... a democracy that is intensely partisan and prone to confrontation, but is nonetheless stable and capable of forming cohesive governments; shrewd, ambitious policy-makers who set their sights by the standards of the world's most developed countries; an administrative apparatus that is immensely experienced, fields an astonishing range of specialists and technocrats for its size, and is capable of mobilising quickly and effectively in response to challenges such as negotiating Malta's accession to the EU; [and] less positively, a political culture that is clientelistic [sic] and often blind to the conflicts of interest that are inevitable in a small, densely-networked society. (pp.26-7).

## **2.5 Conclusion**

This chapter provides a comprehensive outlook on CJ policies, presently considered sources of insight into national representations of CJ. In line with the study's theoretical framework, social constructs such as state policy and CJ are deconstructed and conjoined based on dominant narratives. The chapter further acknowledges the temporal and spatial variations that exist in CJ policies and endorses a pluralist, multi-tiered model of policymaking to explain these differences. A lack of local research attuned to Malta's policy environment was felt throughout the discussion. For this reason, the chapter concludes with an outline of Maltese political culture, on which the methodology outlined in the next chapter was built. The main arguments of this chapter are captured in Figure 3, presenting a matrix of CJ policies against which results from the study's methods can be triangulated, and research questions can be answered.

**Figure 3**

*Summary of Literature Review*



## **CHAPTER 3: METHODOLOGY**

Winston Churchill (1910) once said that “the mood and temper of the public in regard to the treatment of crime and criminals is one of the most unfailing tests of the civilisation of any country” (par.35). The preceding chapters built on this argument by highlighting the nationalism of CJ representations and the need for conceptual reflexivity within the Maltese context. Content analysis was the technique chosen to fulfil this gap, given how it enabled a contextualised approach to CJ policy narratives.

The chapter begins by elaborating on the logic behind this choice. It subsequently presents the study’s research design, which intends to overcome “the sterile and uninteresting counterposition between qualitative and quantitative styles of analysis” (Melossi, 2000, p.296). This mixed-methods approach required the development of the unique philosophical paradigm presented in the succeeding section. The methods’ properties, assigned function and triangulation are described in three subsequent sections. The chapter concludes with an analysis of implied ethical concerns and methodological limitations.

### **3.1 The Research Technique**

Krippendorff (2013) maintains that content analysis is “an empirically grounded method, exploratory in process, and predictive or inferential in intent” (p.3). It includes in its definition any exercise which involves the analysis of specified communicative content with the aim of inferring themes, meaning and authors’ intentions in relation to a research question (Krippendorff, 2013; Neuendorf, 2017). It adheres to the theoretical framework’s belief in anchoring objects within a spatial and temporal environment using empirically-based methods (Krippendorff, 2018). It also responds to Scheingold’s (1998) concern about the zero-sum game between empiricism and the application of politically sensitive theories in mainstream criminology.

The technique’s compatibility with the theoretical framework is also evident in its capacity for systematic historical analysis (Annison, 2018; Rottinghaus, 2012), a perspective many believe is ignored in criminological research (e.g., Godfrey, 2012; Guiney, 2018; Yeomans, 2018). Sammut et al. (2012) highlight the importance of a longitudinal trajectory in research founded on SRT, arguing that contemporary representations are remnants of past socio-political conditions and discourse. Thus, whilst the spatial dimension of this study is fixed

to the Maltese context, the temporal dimension covers near two decades of Maltese political activity.

This technique's consideration of the general socio-political context and individual narratives further addresses the levels of explanation problem discussed by Matsueda (2017). The latter establishes three conventional approaches: methodological holism, methodological individualism and a midway approach. The first two differ in terms of what is responsible for causality, with extreme holists taking a structuralist stance and siding with aggregate variables. In contrast, extreme individualists argue that causality operates solely at micro-levels. This extremism ignores either context or individual agency, both of which are essential components of SRT. Thus, the research design positioned itself midway between the two ends of the spectrum and accorded well with Annison's (2018) premise that macro and micro changes are ontologically intertwined.

### **3.2 The Research Design**

The study was executed in line with the narrative policy framework (NPF) developed by Jones et al. (2014). This interdisciplinary technique recognises narratives as tools that (like social representations) structure information on social experiences (Claisse & Delvenne, 2017). The framework is reminiscent of Erving Goffman's dramaturgical approach, a broader method which is based on the premise that reality is shaped through "sequences of staged performances and distinguishes actors and publics" (Yuana et al., 2020). NPF was chosen based on the core assumptions it shares with the study's theoretical framework, principally its alliance with constructionist ontologies, cultural relativity, and belief in narratives' inherence to human cognition and interaction (Shanahan et al., 2018). NPF simultaneously attends to discernible characteristics (e.g., the setting, time, characters, and plot) and how meaning is infused between these characteristics through values, beliefs, and strategies (Shanahan et al., 2018).

Based on these frames, the design included two exercises in content analysis. The first examined CJ policies in their entirety, taking heed of Garland's (2001) caution against the misguided fragmentation of interdependent elements (e.g., victim policy, policing and sentencing). A tabulated catalogue was developed by analysing four types of policy documents spanning the last four Maltese legislatures. It quantitatively described

dominant representations of CJ in Maltese political discourse and determined what correlations exist between the policies' frequencies, properties and the setting in and for which they were created.

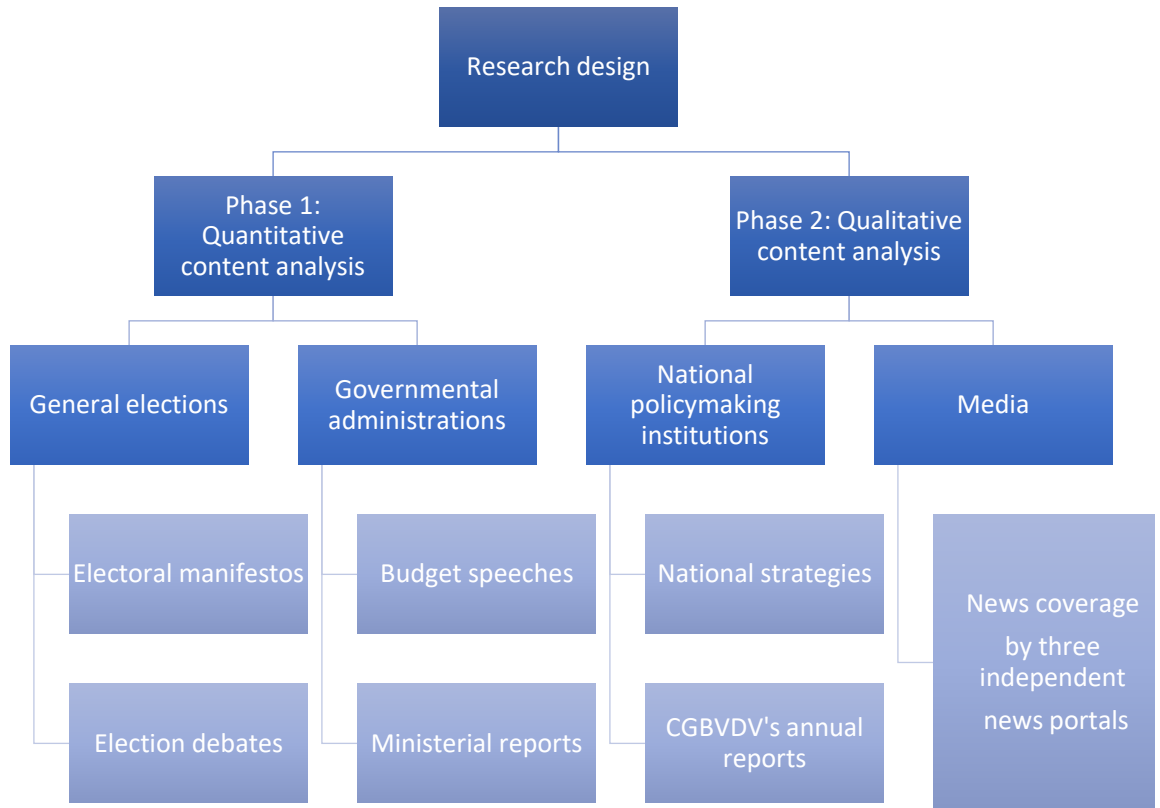
The catalogue sequentially led to the abductive selection of a salient CJ issue to serve as an illustrative case study. Unlike its predecessor, the second method narrowed its focus and qualitatively examined the issue through specialised policy documents and news items published within the same timeframe. The NPF was infused with interpretivism to explore in further depth the narratives surrounding a crime problem and policy solutions and consider which elements and agents are most visible in its policymaking process.

The design is captured in Figure 4, whereas a more detailed account of each method is found in later sections. The present discussion centres on how a coherent research design was accomplished through the methods' complementarity. Their distinct analytical capacities bestowed a measure of methodological pluralism, an intentional feature intended to balance the common methodological extremities in literature. National accounts of CJ either rely solely on historical narratives to deduce generalisable trends (e.g., Garland, 2001; Piatkowska, 2015; Reasons, 1974) or, conversely, rely on purely quantitative data in the form of incarceration rates and budgetary allocation (e.g., Barni et al., 2015; Warner, 2021; Wenzelburger, 2015a).

Regrettably, both the subjectivity of the former approach and the brush-stroke assumptions of the latter undermine the benefits that a systematic pursuit of policy analysis is capable of. Reason (1974) argues that the "mystique and sacredness attached to law and legal bodies" (p.472) in part hinder institutional reflexivity. For this reason, the methods looked past the absoluteness of legal acts and considered their interpretative properties, tangible application and authors' influence, all of which are imperative variables to emergent social representations of CJ.

**Figure 4**

*The Research Design.*



*Note.* This figure is levelled by research technique, research strategies, research sites and content.

The design capitalised on “the ceremonial nature of the political process” (Krippendorff, 2013, p.72) by analysing the documents produced as proof of policymakers’ work. Larrosa-Fuentes (2020) collectively classifies these sources as deliberate political communication, given their common intent to organise and distribute knowledge within democratic institutions. The content was chosen based on a fourfold logical approach:

- It is exclusively concerned with mass messaging (Neuendorf, 2014), a precondition for the survival and adaptation of social representations (Arruda, 2015; Duveen, 2008; Sammut et al., 2012);
- It enabled an agent-centred account, which satisfies Wenzelburger’s (2015a) complaint on mainstream criminology’s disregard for power dynamics (Petintseva et al., 2020);

- It simultaneously presented CJ as a political tool, institutional performance and embodied practice, an outlook which, according to McAra (2017), is essential to ensure well-rounded analysis; and
- It houses a retrospective account of institutionalised patterns, which Krippendorff (2013) argues are “natural candidates” (p.54) for extrapolated findings.

This mixed-methods design aimed to surpass the dichotomous view of content analysis as an exclusively quantitative or qualitative method. Instead, it endorsed Kort-Butler’s (2016) view that both strategies are meant to overlap and complement each other. The manner in which the first research method faded into a concentrated case study is a testament to this consolidation of the respective nomothetic and idiographic methods (Neuendorf, 2017). Yet, before this transfer, the study had to address the distinct epistemological and ontological positions which truly distinguish quantitative and qualitative research. The following section presents this resolution process and the emergent paradigm through which the study approached its subjects.

### **3.3 Epistemological and Ontological Positions**

The study’s theoretical framework and NPF’s principles determined its ontological position: how it perceived the nature of its objects. These paradigms commonly hold that social objects are wholly crafted in a collective’s consciousness and are thus dependent on communication processes and subject to spatial and temporal adaptations (Jones & Radaelli, 2015; Moscovici, 1988). Any study which prescribes to this premise favours a constructionist ontology which, in historian Paul Veyne’s view, “amounts to setting an end to naivety and to realize that what is existing does not need to exist” (as transl. and cited in Sack, 1995, p.63). Thus, the naturalistic identity of social objects was rejected.

The study’s epistemological outlook is less straightforward. Its investment in methodological pluralism required the integration of positivist and interpretivist arguments on the correct means that grant access to true knowledge (Plowright, 2011). Positivism is the philosophical view that the principles employed in natural sciences can generate valid knowledge when used to study social phenomena (Bryman, 2012). Alternatively, interpretivism rejects the premise that knowledge can be universally transcendent and emphasises humans’ role in generating knowledge (Annison, 2018).

The quantification found in the first research method presupposes a positivist philosophy. The process endorsed its prescriptive qualities, especially considering the systematic coding of dependent and independent variables to produce a web of correlations and causality. Numerous measures were taken to limit opportunities for interpretation, increase transparency and restrict data to that which could be ascertained without involving considerable interpretation on the coder's part (Bryman, 2012). Such precautions aimed for a level of objectivity comparable to that found in the natural sciences.

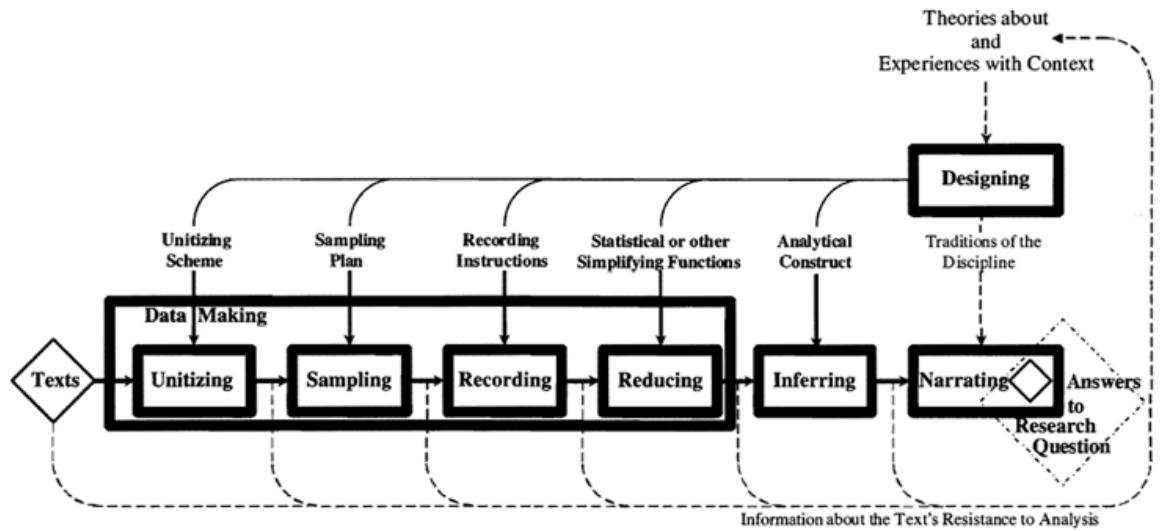
Yet, the study's focus, meaning-making required recognition of the researcher as a social member who partakes in the production of social representations, thus precluding any claim to complete objectivity. Interpretivism was acknowledged as unavoidable in both research methods, given how analyses were guided by the researcher's knowledge of the local environment and the social conventions that give meaning to presented events. Based on Fetters and Molina-Azorin's (2019) allusion to Ying-Yang philosophy, the resultant epistemological paradigm rejects the artificial zero-sum choice between positivism and interpretivism and acknowledges that both creeds are essential for valid knowledge of complex phenomena.

### **3.4 The Systematic Content Analysis of Local Criminal Justice Policies**

The first method involved the systematic analysis of a body of content, which generated a dataset of local CJ policies amenable to descriptive and statistical analysis. This was executed in line with the deductive processes minutely captured by Krippendorff (2013, 2018; Figure 5). The process required the researcher to iteratively move between theoretical and experiential knowledge, instrument design and data collection. Krippendorff's emphasis on contextualisation juxtaposed with the limited amount of local research required some flexibility to accommodate inductive coding as compensation. The following sections provide a linear account of the decisions taken during the design and execution phases of the research instruments.

**Figure 5**

*Krippendorff's Processual Model of Quantitative Content Analysis.*



*Note.* From Krippendorff, K. (2018). *Content analysis: An introduction to its methodology* (4<sup>th</sup> ed). Sage publications. p.86

### 3.4.1 The Coding Frame and Coding Manual

‘Unitising’ is a significantly tasking endeavour which required the development of the original research instruments presented in Appendix B, C and D. Appendix B presents the skeletal coding frame in which data was tabulated, each row dedicated to one codable unit (defined as “the most basic and explicit representations of the phenomena being analysed”; Krippendorff, 2018, p.142). The unitising scheme, meaning the logic by which data is grouped into units, was based on reasoned differentiation among sets of text according to how they prove most meaningful to the research instrument (Kort-Butler, 2016). In this framework, data was grouped by ‘actions’, defined as any proposed, planned or followed-through activity relating to any or all crimes. The concept was refined through a set of inclusion and exclusion criteria (Appendix C) following exposure to the unending variation in narratives which would have collectively obscured the true purpose of this instrument.

The coding frame has a flat design; that is, each codable unit was equally subject to all variables. The number of variables was determined according to how plausible it was to code a unit in one sitting without compromising the research’s objectives (Geisler & Swarts,

2019). The rubric of this frame was organised into six exclusive categories of variables, each serving a distinct purpose (Table 1). It generally observes NPF’s composites of narratives, namely the setting, the characters, the plot and the morals of each coded action (Jones et al., 2014).

**Table 1**

*A Description of Variable Categories.*

Category name	Purpose
Document information	Records the action’s location in a document and the document’s properties for ease of reference.
Contextual variables	Records the context within which the document was published to enable statistical tests between actions’ substance and the environment in and for which they were created.
Area of intervention	Records the issue that the action is meant to address for an aggregate description of which problems passed through the bottlenecks of the political agenda
Policy specifications	Records policy-related data and guarantees the promised policy-oriented approach
Representations	Records the manifested principles, practices and orientations of actions as presented in the document (Jones et al., 2014) for insight into a construct’s social representation (Warner, 2021).
Other notes	Records any other significant detail which does not apply to any variables in the frame.

Appendix C and D present the coding manuals, the joint product of deduction from literature, the researcher’s innovation, and increments of inductive work. They explicitly outline the coding protocols, including conceptual definitions, input formatting and each variable’s plan for analysis. Most variables are categorical, meaning that data input was restricted to predetermined options, which increased efficiency and reliability. Options for

categorical variables were created in such a way as to guarantee precision without having excessively minute differences that increase confusion and coding errors (Krippendorff, 2018; Neuendorf, 2017). In an objectivist fashion, this included the essentialisation of very complex social phenomena and their reduction to a fixed number of possibilities (Vel-Palumbo et al., 2019).

In all cases, mutual exclusivity – the lack of conceptual overlap between one option and another – was maintained (Bryman, 2012; Krippendorff, 2018). However, the possibility of having a multidimensional action to which more than one option could apply was considered. Thus, multiple choices were made available wherever required, with full awareness of the implications that this might have on its statistical processing (Geisler & Swarts, 2019; Neuendorf, 2017).

### **3.4.2 Content and Timeframes**

Sampling is the process by which an analyst confines the number of analysable sources to a manageable size without compromising the representativeness of a population (Krippendorff, 2018). This involved narrowing the political world down to sites of observation which enable valid insight into “the patterns of thought and the imaginary side of life as it took shape in the past, the values and crises of a period” (Moscovici, 1988, p.214).

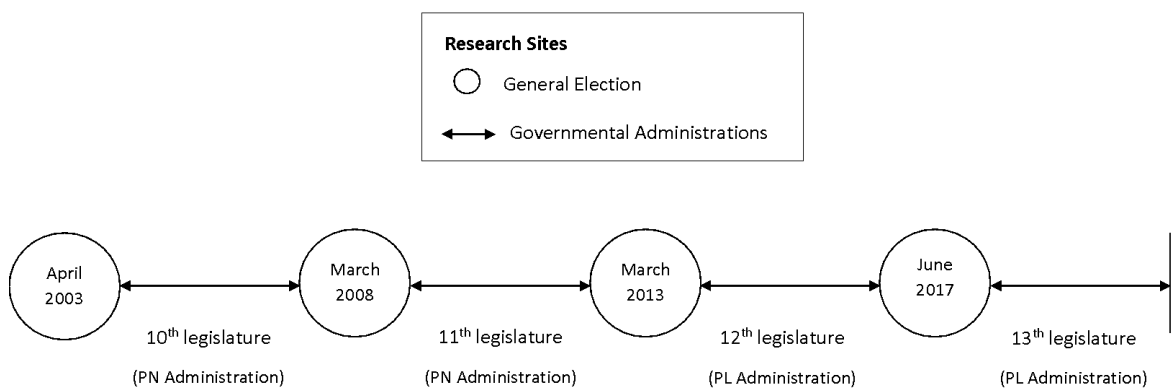
The chosen sites are the electoral campaigns and annual reporting processes of democratic governmental administrations. General elections set high expectations for policy action, as contesting politicians try to outcompete each other in terms of innovation and willingness to bend to public will (Brouard et al., 2018). These contexts are thus invaluable in aiding the circulation of dominant representations, the politicians’ through their proposals and the constituents’ through their voting behaviour. Once in office, the incumbent responds to the demand for democratic accountability through annual retrospective accounts and prospective investment of government resources for the coming years. Collectively, the two sites provide insight into the narratives which deal with what there is, policy-wise, and what should be done (Boda, 2013).

Figure 6 presents a chronological overview of the eight sampled events, showing linear transitions from 2003 to 2021. This attended to Wenzelburger and Staff’s (2016) worry that

analysis of shorter periods risks ignorance of trends and substantial changes brought about by gradual incrementalism. The latest general election, held on 26th March 2022, was omitted from this frame on account of time constraints. This decision was seen to have minimal implications on the study, given how the studied chain of events included two PN and two PL incumbencies and four general elections in which there was no same set of leaders. The pool of content was narrowed down further to the two main political parties (PL and PN), given their command over the Maltese electorate. This partisan element was included following criticism of researchers' tendency to ignore partisan theory in studies based on democratic contexts (Muirhead & Rosenblum, 2020; Wenzelburger, 2015a).

**Figure 6**

*Timeline of Research Sites*



*Note.* Only general elections were considered. Local council and European Parliament elections were excluded, given their status as second-order (Carammia & Pace, 2015; Cachia et al., 2020).

The selected communication channels for these two sites are electoral manifestos, election debates, budget speeches and ministerial reports. Based on Larrosa-Fuentes's (2020) matrix of political communication, only election debates are interpersonal. The others are deliberately one-way political messages with considerable forethought invested in their wording. Yet, all types were recognised as mediated communication that employed mass printing, online accessibility or aired productions to circulate social imagery and symbols (Krotz, 2017). Mediatization, as an inherent element of STR, is here embodied by these

sources, being the intermediary in the interplays between society, language and representations (Arruda, 2015; Fast, 2018).

All sources further embody the democratic ethos and accountability of the Maltese constitution. The first three are products of the higher levels of the executive, thus enabling insight into the political narratives used to legitimate state action. On the other hand, ministerial reports are produced by top management levels of the public service, whose narrative was expected to be comparatively more technical and linguistically sterile. The contrasting levels of power and priorities of those who created the analysed content ensure that the study benefits from a well-rounded account of social representations, having analysed both the emotive and practical dimensions of past policy work.

Appendix E presents the *a priori* rules which guided the sampling process and fully references all sampled materials. The clerical task of accessing this material was facilitated by the provisions of the Freedom of Information Act (Cap.496 of the Laws of Malta), which gives any eligible person the right to access information held by public authorities. Political parties, the Public Broadcasting Service, the Broadcasting Authority and the Department of Information contributed to this content pooling. The procurement process concluded with a sample of eight electoral manifestos, 35 debates, 18 ministerial reports and 19 budget speeches.

### **3.4.3 Validity and Reliability**

An unaccounted stage in Krippendorff's process is the piloting phase, during which the integrity and authenticity of the research instrument and the logical path between questions and answers were secured. The present section presents an evaluation of measures of validity and reliability, which revealed areas for improvement and limitations inherent to the method. Acknowledgement of these limitations ensures that the study does not overstate the capacity of its contributions.

#### **3.4.3.1 The Principle of Validity**

Internal validity is concerned with whether operationalised concepts are compatible with their theoretical variants and with minimising room for error to improve the chances of generating true knowledge (Formosa et al., 2011; Howland et al., 2006; Matthes, 2009).

This criterion is based on positivistic measurement theory, which holds that each variable has only one correct value, and the ability to arrive at this value is determined by the integrity of the research instrument (Neuendorf, 2017).

According to Kort-Butler (2016) and Krippendorff (2013, 2018), statistical metrics for this quality in content analysis are not always practical nor possible. Face validity is alternatively monitored based on how well variables, categories, and indexes correlate with the realities presented in content (Kort-Butler, 2016). Content analysts typically rely on this monitoring over tests for internal validity, given that (in their view) validity stems from coders' cultural immersion and common sense as much as the structural integrity of research instruments (Krippendorff, 2018).

The coding frame and manuals were initially the products of deduction from literature (Chapter 2), in addition to variables based on intuition and the practicality of in-built contrasts (Geisler & Swarts, 2019). The instruments were subject to a pre-test, which involved coding a subsample (10%) of the catalogue. This test:

- promoted internal validity by revealing deficiencies in the number of variables which might have tampered with its validity;
- promoted measurement validity by sharpening the definition of the analytical construct through exposure to different styles of narratives in coded content (e.g., the spontaneity in election debates, the carefully worded manifestos, the lay terms in budget speeches and the technicalities in ministerial reports);
- helped prioritise accuracy over exhaustiveness by pointing out ancillary variables which did not contribute to the study's objectives. This restricted the number of fields and decreased the possibility of errors, missing data or the need for intuitive deduction; and
- highlighted the need for inductive coding to be extended beyond the piloting stage. Otherwise, this would have negated the benefits of using culturally conscious human coders instead of computer-aided text analysis.

To obtain a less biased perspective, observations on the instrument's face validity were sought from a qualified professional with experience in social research. The professional was introduced to the instrument without prior awareness of its objectives. Following familiarisation with the instrument, the tester was asked what she supposed the results

would contribute to the research. This exercise was essentially a back-translation of operationalised concepts to their original theoretical forms (Neuendorf, 2017). The tester was able to identify the instrument's purpose, namely to generate a context-specific database which aggregately describes Maltese CJ policies.

#### ***3.4.3.2 The Principle of Reliability***

Reliability is an inherent quality of any quantitative research, meaning that recurrent applications of the method yield consistent results at various points in time and among different coders (Bryman, 2012; Krippendorff, 2018). One of its most well-known forms is replicability, meaning a method's capacity to be simulated and the results falsified by different researchers. All methodological decisions were explicitly outlined and justified in the manuals so that this method "is learnable and divorceable from the personal authority of the researcher" (Krippendorff, 2013, p.24).

The study also presents scores for inter-coder reliability – the reproducibility of results when generated by different coders (Bryman, 2012; Kort-Butler, 2016). Coding variation inadvertently occurs given the different personal experiences and professional lenses with which coders approach the data (Howland et al., 2006; Neuendorf, 2017). Objectivity, although strived for, cannot be realistically attained, which is why intersubjectivity is considered a worthy approximation in content analysis (Neuendorf, 2017). Here, the analysis shifts its questions from whether something is true (reliability of data) to whether coders agree that it is true (reliability of judgement).

The manuals aimed for a good score of inter-coder reliability by emphasising the avoidance of interpretation and intuitive deduction in the absence of stated admissions in the document. This ensures that cognitive differences such as biases and incorrect assumptions do not tamper with the data (Kort-Butler, 2016). The test involved coding the same subset of content used in the pre-test by someone other than the researcher. The tester was chosen because of her expertise in policy studies, based on Krippendorff's (2018) recommendation to account for the benefits, timewise and expertise-wise, of involving individuals already familiar with the concepts under study. After being introduced to the instrument through a "training session", the tester was given 15 days to code the

subsample. A follow-up meeting was held for the tester to provide suggestions, from her own professional experience, on how to handle ambiguities in content and improve clarity. The original and tester’s datasets underwent a percentage agreement test and Cohen’s Kappa ( $\kappa$ ) test, in light of Howland et al.’s (2006) and Neuendorf’s (2017) commendation of bolstering claims for the reliability of judgement through multiple tests. The more lenient test, the percentage agreement, simply considers hits and misses between datasets. A minimum of 80% agreement was sought based on the prevalent rule of thumb (e.g., Bryman, 2012; Howland et al., 2006; Neuendorf, 2017). The test was carried out using Excel functions and immediately yielded a score of 92.15%.

Oleinik et al. (2014) recommend using Cohen’s  $\kappa$  test where there is considerable analysis of latent content and susceptibility to subjective interpretation might win over. This test is based on the premise that coders’ level of agreement is bilaterally mediated by chance and by familiarity with the context, and “not because their choices are guided by an ‘invisible hand’ of the ‘true’ distribution of categories” (Oleinik et al., 2014, p.2707). Given the rigour of the  $\kappa$  test compared to the percentage agreement, a difference in scores was expected. Indeed, the initial score for the  $\kappa$  test was 70.9% (Table 2).

**Table 2**

*Original  $\kappa$  Score for all Categorical Variables in the Original Inter-rater Reliability Test.*

		Value	Asymptotic Standard Error*	Approximate T**	Approximate Significance
Measure of Agreement	Kappa	.709	.028	32.869	<.001
N of Valid Cases		1116			

*Note.* \*Not assuming the null hypothesis. \*\*Using the asymptotic standard error assuming the null hypothesis.

Separate percentage agreement tests for categorical variables were run. Sixteen of the eighteen variables attained a score of 86.83% or higher. The two problematic ordinal variables yielded disappointing scores of 66.67% and 22.22%. These variables were

recycled models originally developed by Wenzelburger and Staff (2016), whose original Krippendorff's alpha score was 0.87, a remarkably good measure of reliability. This pointed to a deficiency in the variables' explanation in the coding manual and led to their refinement. Another  $\kappa$  test was run on another subset of data, given Rau and Shih's (2021) commendation of the test's use on ordinal variables. Table 3 demonstrate how this revision significantly improved the reliability of both variables.

**Table 3**

*Revised  $\kappa$  Score for 'Depth' and 'Breadth' Variables using Another Subset of Data.*

Variable		Value	Asymptotic Standard Error*	Approximate T**	Approximate Significance
Depth	Kappa Agreement	.810	.176	3.295	<.001
	N of Valid Cases	8			
Breadth	Kappa Agreement	.750	.226	2.191	0.028
	N of Valid Cases	8			

*Note.* \*Not assuming the null hypothesis. \*\*Using the asymptotic standard error assuming the null hypothesis.

The reliability of non-categorical variables was examined based on how similar textual answers were to each other. Unitising reliability, meaning the degree to which data strings are consistently punctuated and entered in the coding frame, had a 100% agreement. These results attested to the satisfactory level of reliability of the original instrument and provided the necessary assurance for the data-collection phase to begin.

#### **3.4.4 Data Collection**

In quantitative content analysis, the task of collecting data is also known as coding: "the process of mapping a given set of descriptively unknown but distinct phenomena into descriptive categories, scaling, measuring or assigning the mutually exclusive values of a variable pertaining to a research question" (Krippendorff, 2013, p.275). Manual coding was carried out using an Excel sheet with macro-enabled instructions. As it had been practically

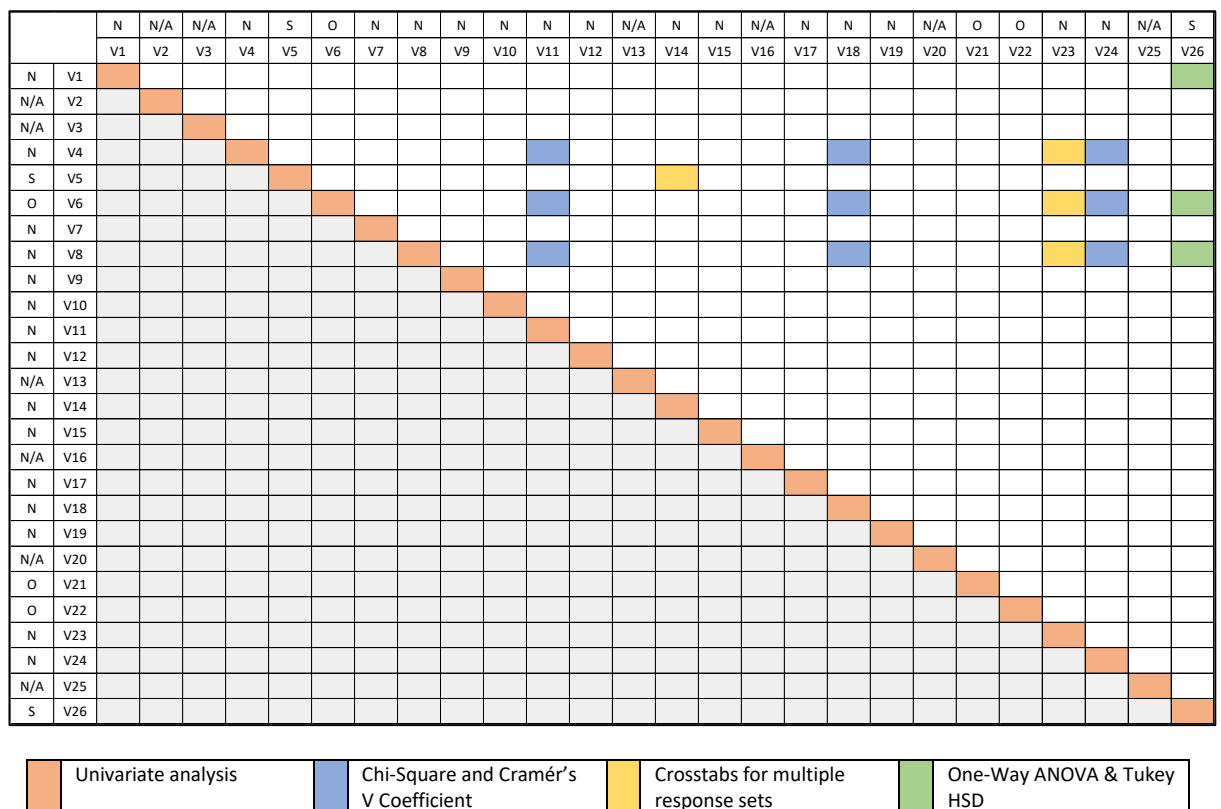
impossible to anticipate all exceptional scenarios during the piloting phase, flexibility, consistency, and transparency were necessary during data mining. The manual was repeatedly recalibrated, and similar units were recoded. Data was cleaned and non-numeric data was converted into predetermined numerical equivalents. The task concluded with the attainment of 621 valid units.

### 3.4.5 Data Analysis

The final stage of Krippendorff’s process starts with reducing a large mass of data through quantification, measurement and contrast (Kort-Butler, 2016; Krippendorff, 2018). This allowed delineation of contextual and temporal differences, existing causalities or correlations between quantified concepts (Bryman, 2012). The data matrix plan (Figure 7) maps the predetermined analysis of each variable (based on Formosa et al., 2011).

**Figure 7**

*The Data Matrix Plan*



*Note.* Refer to Appendix C for variable abbreviations; N=nominal variable; I=interval variable; O=ordinal variable; S=scale variable; N/A = text input.

Bivariate analysis identified causal (One-Way ANOVA) and correlational relationships (Chi-Square test) between different variables, based on Grande's (2017) guidance. For every dependence test, the null hypothesis ( $H_0$ ) specifies that there exists no significant association or dependency between the tested variables, whereas the alternative hypothesis ( $H_1$ ) maintains that there is. A threshold of 0.05 level of significance is observed for every statistical test. The analysis process concluded with the abductive selection of a salient CJ issue for a critical appraisal through the following research method.

### **3.5 Thematic Analysis of Political Discourse on Domestic Violence Policy**

The epistemological leap from the quantitative to the qualitative method meant to rectify the former's weaknesses, where depth was sacrificed for generalisability. The second method is more evident in its allegiance to postmodernist theory, where meaning is not packaged into individual categories but appreciated for its complexity and anomalies (Wagenaar, 2014). The approach herein was based on the notion that language is an imperative constituent of human experience and social meaning (Bryman, 2012). Attention to Foucault's philosophy on discourse – especially the relations he draws between language and power regimes – ensured a critical orientation in this analysis (Wagenaar, 2014).

Whereas the first method used language as a medium which granted access to information about Maltese CJ policies, this method perceived language as an end in itself and recognised its potency to circulate social representations as much as policy outputs. A cultural explanatory frame of one illustrative issue was thus extracted and used to critically appraise the changing social construction of CJ and the power distribution within. This frame could then be triangulated with aggregate descriptions in the first method to provide comprehensive to the study's research questions.

#### **3.5.1 The Case Study**

Quantitative analysis identified political corruption, tax fraud and DV as the three most featured crimes in political communication. This case study was made to focus on the examination of national DV policy, a decision based on a twofold logic. First, of the three popular crimes, DV is the most specific criminal act, in that any of its manifestations are

readily recognised, criminalised and prosecuted based on provisions in the Maltese Criminal Code (Cap.9 of the Laws of Malta) and the Gender-Based Violence and DV Act (Cap.581 of the Laws of Malta). Contrarily, the indictment of political corruption and tax evasion often depends on the seriousness of the act in question. This dependency could have distracted the analysis away from the CJ system towards more administrative procedures and sanctions, thus producing misleading insights. Secondly, the researcher's professional experience in the field of DV policy ensured that jargon, main events and prominent policy documents were acknowledged and included in this analysis.

Although DV policy is here used solely as an illustrative example of CJ policy, it is useful to cover basic literature to orientate the researcher and the reader before delving into its critical analysis. Preliminary searches indicate a lack of recent research on the discursive politics of DV and how and why governments choose to address this issue. Hunnicut (2019), one of the few such studies, believes that the political co-optation of DV serves a strategic purpose and argues that "we have reached an historic moment where all [violence against women] research and activism must turn a critical eye toward the power relations that might be appropriating the cause in order to serve political agendas" (p.215).

The crime itself is interesting to examine, given how it intersects the family, crime, politics and the wider gender equality agenda (Bailey, 2010; McPhee et al., 2021). The 1990s famous Feminist catchphrase 'the personal is political' effectively elevated DV from a discreet familial affair to a gendered social issue which requires a collective response (Bailey, 2010). Consequently, states challenged gender hierarchies and patriarchal family setups, a precarious move in conservative regimes (Safiki, 2017). This initiated a process whose momentum has persisted for decades, likely owing to feminists' impressive feat of placing this issue on the global human rights agenda (Belknap & Grant, 2021; Fletcher & Star, 2018; Krizsán & Roggeband, 2018). In 2011, the CoE's prominent Convention on Preventing and Combating Violence against Women and DV (the Istanbul Convention) was established as the first legally binding instrument that promotes transnational policy convergence and continuous state monitoring to ensure compliance and commitment (Fábián, 2017; Krizsán & Roggeband, 2018; Safiki, 2017).

Yet, despite CoE's efforts, Mellaard and van Meijl (2016) and Krizsán and Roggeband (2018) report that DV policies are still characterised by cross-national heterogeneity over homogeneity. For example, Kotanen (2018) reports on the Finnish policy's non-existent zero-sum dichotomy between offenders and victims and an expert-led policymaking process as two features that contrast with common depictions of modern CJ policies (Sections 2.2.4 & 2.2.6). This national exceptionalism indicates that national sovereignty and cultural differentiation remain relevant parts of the equation and reinforces the relevance of this case study as a reflection of Maltese CJ policies as a whole.

Similar to Garland's sixth prediction (Section 2.2.6), Bailey (2010), Haaken (2008) and Weissman (2019) argue that the narrative has long been hijacked by politicians and reduced to stereotypical depictions of victims, villains and heroes. This simplification easily translates into electoral support when mobilised but diminishes respect for the phenomenon's complexity. This focus on electioneering has also led to a CJ institutional setup which is often deemed ineffective based on the high attrition rates in DV cases, both locally (Group of Experts on Action against Violence against Women and DV [GREVIO], 2020) and abroad (McPhee et al., 2021; Weismann, 2019).

This case study was not a continuation or imitation of any state or supranational organisation monitoring process, such as those carried out by the local Commission on Gender-Based Violence and DV (CGBVDV) or CoE's GREVIO. It did not question *what* provisions exist but *how* and *why* they exist. Parallels may be drawn between this brief review and the typology of elements illustrated in the previous chapter (Figure 2). In fact, the four overarching themes all feature prominently in literature on DV policy – global trends (the feminist movement), political ideologies (leftist gender equality), institutional structures (the CoE), and the policy community (politicians). This reinforces the hypothesis that this case study's observations provide valid insight into Maltese CJ policies in their entirety. With this assurance, the method sought to examine how “people take up normative meanings offered by new laws and global norms and make them their own, applying them to their own contexts, giving them flesh and blood” (Htun & Weldon, 2012, p.564).

### 3.5.2 Content and Timeframes

Sampling was restricted to the same timeframe of the quantitative analysis (2003-2021) to ensure complementarity between methods. The dataset extracted through the first research method readily determined instances where DV policy was addressed. This method returned to these instances, enabling a deeper interpretivist revision of the employed language and extracted narratives. Novel insight was acquired through two other types of content: news coverage of policy initiatives and national policy documents, including CGBVDV's annual reports.

News coverage was included based on cultural criminology's prioritisation of the crime-media nexus. Unlike the other method's content, the narratives were not mediated by policymakers' but journalists' views on the subject. This exception is justified given Hayward's (2016) argument that the media is responsible for the elimination of "any clear demarcation between an event and its image" (p.5). In his eyes, the actual policy document and its media coverage (however biased or inaccurate) are one and the same.

Appendix E describes the contents' sampling procedures and presents the resultant catalogue of content. As a rule, the content was selected based on whether its intended audience was the general Maltese public. For example, the sample could have included Malta's baseline report to GREVIO, which conveniently gathers all national provisions on DV into one document. However, analysing a document intended for the superior selected few would have defeated the study's pursuit of social representations.

Based on Braun and Clarke (2019), the final sample size was not determined in advance. Instead, interpretivism was exercised to determine the point at which theoretical saturation was accomplished, given the belief that narratives do not possess a definite reality which awaits realization. Rather, they are open-ended sequences with no clear threshold for examination (Braun & Clarke, 2019; Clarisse & Delvenne, 2017). The process stopped when the resultant frame was perceived to accomplish its aim of providing valid insight into the salient features of Maltese CJ.

### 3.5.3 Data Collection and Analysis

Data collection ensued once preliminary content was assembled. Manual coding, assisted by NVivo computer software, was again preferred over automated computed analysis, as the former makes good use of culturally sensitive judgement and recognises implicit cues (Howland et al., 2006). The analytic process followed Braun and Clarke's (2018) approach to thematic analysis. Their paradigm was chosen for its accommodation of methodical choices (e.g., its co-existence with the NPF) and its interpretivist epistemology (Braun et al., 2019). It boded well with the critical constructionist theories of this study and recognised the researcher as an active social participant in the knowledge-making process.

Data collection involved in-depth reading and thematic organisation of raw data to extract the elements, patterns and agents which were expressly or latently visible in the policymaking processes. Sampled documents were analysed chronologically to create a narrative flow (or, in NPF's terms, the plot) of local DV policy. NVivo's technology-facilitated this process by enabling better visualisation of codes and their evolution into hierarchical themes (Braun & Clarke, 2018). O'Malley and Valverde's (2014) imperative to suspend judgement for better recognition of ideological cues was kept in mind throughout this process, lest personal and professional experience made the researcher oblivious to founding beliefs and values.

The process was considerate of Lasswell's (1968, 1970) blueprint of the communication process and the NPF (Jones et al., 2014). All formulations follow thematic analysis' postulation that communication can be condensed into a set of overarching themes or elements, as presented in Table 4. The end product of an analysis based on these models should answer the "who, with what intentions, in what situations, with what assets, using what strategies, reach[ing] what audiences, with what result" (Lasswell, 1968, p.62) questions of national DV policy.

It is important to stress that these models only served as the theoretical bedding on which more specific themes could be built with substantive data, not as prescriptive and non-negotiable templates. Lasswell (1968) and Jones et al. (2014) themselves emphasise the importance of contextualising their models by removing, expanding or modifying the

themes according to the studied political environment. This required a measure of interpretivism and reflexivity throughout the themes' creation.

**Table 4**

*Elements in Lasswell's Social and Policy Process and the NPF*

Element	Meaning
Lasswell's social and policy process	
Participants	The value-shapers and value-sharers, either as individuals or groups, official or non-official.
Perspectives	Participants' expectations, identities and narratives.
Situations	Organised or unorganised communicative processes, either territorial (accessible only to one participant) or pluralistic.
Base Values	The assets and liabilities available to the participants.
Strategies	The mobilisation of base values through coercive or persuasive means.
Outcomes	Participants' responses, whether these are indulgent of the public's communicated preferences or otherwise.
Effects	The post-outcome context, here limited to projected effects, given the method's focus on rhetoric over actual tangible outcomes.
The Narrative Policy Framework	
Setting	The spatial and temporal context in which a CJ policy is situated and across which it can transverse.
Characters	The individuals or groups who act or are acted on, often organised as victims, villains and heroes.
Plot	The way the characters relate to each other and the setting.
Morals	The solutions and calls for the realisation of certain aspirations.

*Note.* Adapted from Lasswell, H. D. (1970). The emerging conception of the policy sciences. *Policy Sciences*, 1(1), p.7, and Shanahan, E. A., Jones, M. D., & McBeth, M. K.

(2018). How to conduct a Narrative Policy Framework study. *The Social Science Journal*, 55(3), pp.4-5.

The results of this analysis are presented in Chapter 5, infused with presentations of quantitative data on DV units extracted from the coding frame. These enabled the cross-examination of the two sets of results and affirmed whether representations of DV policy truly reflect the more encompassing realm of CJ. This consolidation also prefaces the triangulation and discussion of both datasets in Chapter 6.

#### **3.5.4 Measures for Credibility**

Braun and Clarke's (2018, 2019) view on thematic analysis does not entail hard and fast rules to ensure neutrality but rather principles which bolster the study's credibility. The literature and methodology recurrently demonstrate the case study's transferability to the wider phenomenon. This means that DV policy enables insight which can be related to Maltese CJ policies in general, akin to the external validity canon in quantitative research (Bryman, 2012; Nowell et al., 2017).

Unlike its precedent, this research method also acknowledges the interdependencies between author and truth and between chosen frameworks of analysis and the results (Ismaili, 2006). Good practices, such as reflexivity and supervisory guidance, were critical in controlling undue interference by personal values and experiences. All methodological decisions are laid bare in this chapter, whereas notes taken during coding were recorded and stored as memos on NVivo.

#### **3.6 Triangulation of Findings**

Wilkes et al. (2021) identify integration as the element that truly distinguishes between well-executed mixed-methods research from research that clumps different methods together to claim methodological diversity. Integration was evidenced by the rationalised sequential ordering of methods and cross-referencing of results. This triangulation of generalisable and specific results should fulfil cultural criminologists' aspirations to be "simultaneously transcendent and situated" (McAra, 2017, p.1). The complementarity of the two methods (in terms of timeframes, purpose and analysed content) facilitated this reconciliatory process and allowed the identification of consistencies and discrepancies.

The triangulation process cumulated into the final discussion in Chapter 6, where results were considered in light of reviewed literature and the study's theoretical framework. The data cycle was completed when answers were narrated back to the original research questions.

### **3.7 Ethical Considerations**

Neuendorf (2017) and Krippendorff (2018) agree that ethical clearance should not be an issue in content analysis. The design herein does not involve the active participation of human subjects. Thus concerns relating to obtrusiveness, confidentiality and harm minimisation are avoided. For this reason, the study was submitted to the Faculty for Social Wellbeing's Research Ethics Committee solely for record purposes. Its ethical use of publicly available material was secured by verifying the samples' authenticity, adequate referencing and honest interpretations. The last principle is especially important in an environment as politically charged and partisan as Malta, where allegiances run so deep that academic scrutiny might be mistaken for political bias.

With reference to the qualitative analysis, one should acknowledge the efforts made to ensure that the researcher's professional ties with the field and CGBVDV did not compromise the results. CGBVDV's distinct contributions to DV policy could not be ignored or excluded from this research. For this reason, several measures were taken to ensure that the study bears no conflict of interest. For example, sampled content did not include publications to which the researcher had contributed. Additionally, special effort was made to keep the analysis in line with the research objectives and avoid any positive or negative judgement on CGBVDV's actions. Instead, these were only examined for how they reflect the wider political agenda and socio-political surroundings. The memos recorded during data collection were preserved as evidence of the researcher's efforts to maintain neutrality when reporting the findings.

### **3.8 Methodological Limitations**

Much of this chapter is concerned with justifying why the research design is fit for purpose. Nevertheless, some weaknesses should be acknowledged so that the study does not overstate the significance of its contributions. Despite its variations, content analysis risks

reductionism, meaning that it becomes primarily concerned with condensing complex ideas into more simplistic categories or themes through systematic coding, akin to what is practised in natural sciences (Bryman, 2012; Howland et al., 2006). This risk was mitigated through recurrent acknowledgement of the wider socio-political context and how the inferences of this study are inexhaustive attempts at recognising the elusive truth of complex social phenomena. Falsifiability by other approaches is a recognised possibility.

The study previously covered the logic behind the choice of analytical construct and content and how these enable valid insight into social representations of CJ (Section 1.3). However, the inclusion criteria used to operationalise CJ policies and determine which content qualifies for investigation also risks the possibility of overlooking policies that more subtly or indirectly contribute to crime control and CJ. For example, education policies or urban planning in electoral manifestos may be infused with an underlying intent to bolster citizens' morality and strategically reduce opportunities for crime. However, these were invariably excluded from the coding frame unless these intentions were explicit.

The study also recognises how political and media outputs policy represent only some of the narratives surrounding CJ, one which is highly symbolic and intended for the electorate's eye. Intentional omissions of policy problems and outputs in this content (e.g., due to the tight bottlenecks of political and media agendas, problem-denying or politicians' reluctance to report unsuccessful or self-serving ventures) are left out of this analysis, thus producing an incomplete account (Lee, 2015). For this reason, it is important to distinguish between what is presented to the public and Maltese CJ's true state of affairs. This is why results are presented in terms of social representations. This study in no way claims that the intricate work in the CJ system can be effectively captured through a few political references.

In this respect, Hobbs and Hamerton (2014) argue that power relations may not be readily discernible by simply looking at what politicians and the media present to the public. This study's critical orientation recognises this possible covert dimension and duly includes it in its analysis. Yet there is no way to ascertain the validity of observations on power structures through the chosen methods. So, these remain at an inferential level and subject to future empirical validation or rejection, which may be done by examining the message-receiver

link (e.g., through interviews with persons who first-hand witness these power relations) (Neuendorf, 2017).

Scheingold (1998) acknowledges that work in political criminology can never be exhaustive. As Kappeler and Potter (2017) eloquently phrase it, “wedding oneself to one theory, perspective, or method of knowing is like relying on a single sense to describe a garden of flowers” (p.40). For this reason, the study’s inconclusiveness is also perceived as one of its strengths. In line with its theoretical framework, it does not aim to discover universal laws but rather to appreciate the complexities surrounding a social object at a certain location at a certain time. Through its inability to cover all accounts of CJ, this study opens a debate on a subject which has eluded local academic scrutiny for far too long.

### **3.9 Conclusion**

This chapter presented the study’s research design, the logic behind its creation and the chronological execution of its methods. Its constructionist ontology and semi-positivistic/semi-interpretivist epistemology produce a unique paradigm that is mindful of the critical theoretical framework and cultural relativism. The inclusion of both quantitative and qualitative research strategies and the consolidation of their respective outputs ensures a balanced and well-rounded investigation of local social representations of CJ. With this in mind, the study presents the methods’ results and interpretation in the subsequent two chapters.

**CHAPTER 4: SYSTEMATIC CONTENT ANALYSIS OF LOCAL CRIMINAL JUSTICE  
POLICIES**

This chapter presents the results from the systematic analysis of CJ policies as featured in institutionalised means of communication. Based on the method outlined in Section 3.4, their analysis aims to articulate the social representation of Maltese CJ and to determine whether the frequencies and properties of representing policies are tuned to the surrounding environment. Results are interpreted in view of literature cited in Chapter 2 to determine alignment or otherwise, ever mindful of the study's overarching theoretical framework. The results are again referenced in Chapters 5 and 6 in pursuit of triangulation between the emergent quantitative and qualitative data.

A few observations are to be noted before delving into the structured presentation. Throughout the data collection process, crime did not surface only as a niche for state intervention but also as a stark and dismal reality of national politics. This statement proved especially true for content forming part of general election campaigns. Most electoral manifestos were laced with subtle references to the opposition's alleged or proven misconduct, whereas election debates were characterised by frank confrontations and trading of accusations concerning both violent (e.g., riots in previous political events) and non-violent (e.g., corruption) crimes. On very few occasions, this provided the set-up for the holier-than-thou party to introduce remedial and preventative policies, the quantity and essence of which are addressed herein.

Additionally, it is important to bear in mind that results only reflect one of the main social control agents of Maltese society, that is, politics (Formosa, 2021). With reference to Burke's (2013) commentary on orthodox social progress and radical conflict models of CJ, political parties unsurprisingly leaned towards the former and largely sought to legitimise and maintain current power distributions. Indeed, the great majority of their proposals built on the premise that the system is fair and beyond questioning, only mere 'systems tinkering' being necessary to ensure its continued effectiveness.

Yet, hints of the radical conflict model could be witnessed in election debates, when third parties challenged main parties' representatives to explain the discriminating and imbalanced status quo in the CJ sector. For instance, during the 2013 electoral campaign, the Democratic Alternative thrice asked the government to answer to the overly harsh sentencing on personal drug use (Amaira, Busuttil et al., 2013; Azzopardi et al., 2013;

Micallef et al., 2013). Such challenges were ignored by PL and PN party representatives, possibly indicating that they thought it unwise or not worthwhile to use their limited onscreen time defending drug-related punitiveness.

Other parallels may be drawn between literature in Chapter 2 and the studied content. For instance, Hassan's (2020) remarks on warfare overtones in policymakers' rhetoric were witnessed in phrases such as 'our war against litter and illegal dumping shall be ruthless and relentless' (Gonzi, 2006) and 'we will fight crime ... restrain this the curse which is plaguing our society' (PL, 2003). Likewise, the symbolism that Elholm and Colson (2016) believe to be inherent to CJ policies was made explicitly clear in one instance, where an anti-corruption law provision was declared to primarily serve a symbolic purpose after a rival politician pointed out the practical issues that its implementation entails.

With these reflections and the wider Maltese political culture in mind, the chapter runs through the multifaceted nature of CJ policies, here presented through a set of 19 variables. Results are exhibited in line with the data matrix plan in Figure 7. Reference to Appendices C and D is encouraged for detailed explanations of variables and Appendix F for illustrative examples from the coding frame. Examples and quotes extracted from the samples are also cited throughout and fully referenced in Appendix E. Analysis which was intriguing but ancillary to the scope of this research is presented in Appendix G for the reader's benefit. Graphs displaying results from statistical tests are presented in Appendix H to improve the chapter's readability.

#### **4.1 Source and Contextual Variables**

This section introduces the independent variables against which representational measures were analysed. The importance of source and setting cannot be overstated given the theoretical framework's view that a social object cannot be well and truly defined without reference to the spatial and temporal dimensions in which it is embedded. This section accordingly attends to this context-sensitivity and presents the frequencies with which CJ policies featured across time, policy arenas and stages of the democratic cycle.

#### 4.1.1 Source

Data was first disaggregated by the source from which a unit originated. Table 5 presents unit frequencies and percentages of the four sources and the mean percentage of focus on CJ policies for the three sources with a comprehensive take on state affairs (i.e., excluding ministerial reports because of their specificity). Results demonstrate how election debates were least likely to dedicate their allotted space for political communication to CJ changes. Conversely, electoral manifestos, budget speeches and ministerial reports feature comparable unit counts.

**Table 5**

*Unit Count, Unit Percentage and Mean Percentage of Focus by Source.*

Source	Units*		Focus**	
	Count	%	Mean %	SD
Electoral manifesto	191	30.76	4.53	3.29
Election debate	48	7.73	1.43	1.81
Budget speech	180	28.99	3.11	2.81
Ministerial report	202	32.53	n/a	n/a
Total	621	100.00	2.37	2.61

*Note.* \*The number of entries in the coding frame. \*\*The average proportion of the documents which was relevant to the frame.

A One-Way ANOVA test on percentage of focus' dependence on source ( $F(2, 66) = 8.17, p = <0.01$ ) confirmed that space afforded to CJ policies was significantly contingent on the type of document (Table H1). With the rejection of  $H_0$ , a Tukey HSD test was run to test pairwise differences. Table H2 demonstrates the significant differences in mean values for election debates against electoral manifestos ( $p = <0.01$ , 95% C.I. = -1.08%, -5.12%) and budget speeches ( $p = <0.05$ , 95% C.I. = -3.24%, -0.11%). No statistical significance was found for differences in mean percentage of focus between electoral manifestos and budget speeches ( $p = ns$ , 95% C.I. = -0.78%, 3.63%).

Based on insights acquired throughout the data collection process, Tukey HSD's test results can be explained in terms of sources' time and space constraints. Politicians had the leisure to determine the quantity and quality of their promises in their manifestos and budget speeches, to elaborate on or ignore issues according to the party's will. On the other hand, party representatives in election debates were hard-pressed by strict time schedules. It is in this constrained environment that the political utility of crime was truly evident, where the issue competed with other niches of state intervention (e.g., health, employment and education). Based on this premise and scores for election debates, the local political salience of CJ seems particularly low.

The properties of each source may also contribute to this interpretation. It is interesting to note how the three sources with one-way messaging (i.e., electoral manifestos, budget speeches and ministerial reports) have considerably higher unit counts than the only source Larrosa-Fuentes (2020) would categorise as interpersonal and largely unscripted. Intriguingly, this could indicate that policymakers were more likely to promote CJ measures in non-confrontational environments, despite Warrington's (2012) commentary on the very confrontational nature of Maltese politics.

In addition, similarities may be drawn between electoral manifestos and budget speeches as marketing tools which showcased past, present and future initiatives. The non-significant difference in scores is reasonable given how most of such documents dedicated entire sections to justice, albeit the consistency with which they defined this construct was obscure (e.g., social justice versus CJ). On the other hand, ministerial reports seemingly failed the assumption that they have much higher unit counts than general sources, despite their straightforward language and exclusive focus on CJ. In reality, much of their content was recycled year after year (which, given the frame's parameters, disqualified them from being repeatedly coded in the frame unless there were significant changes).

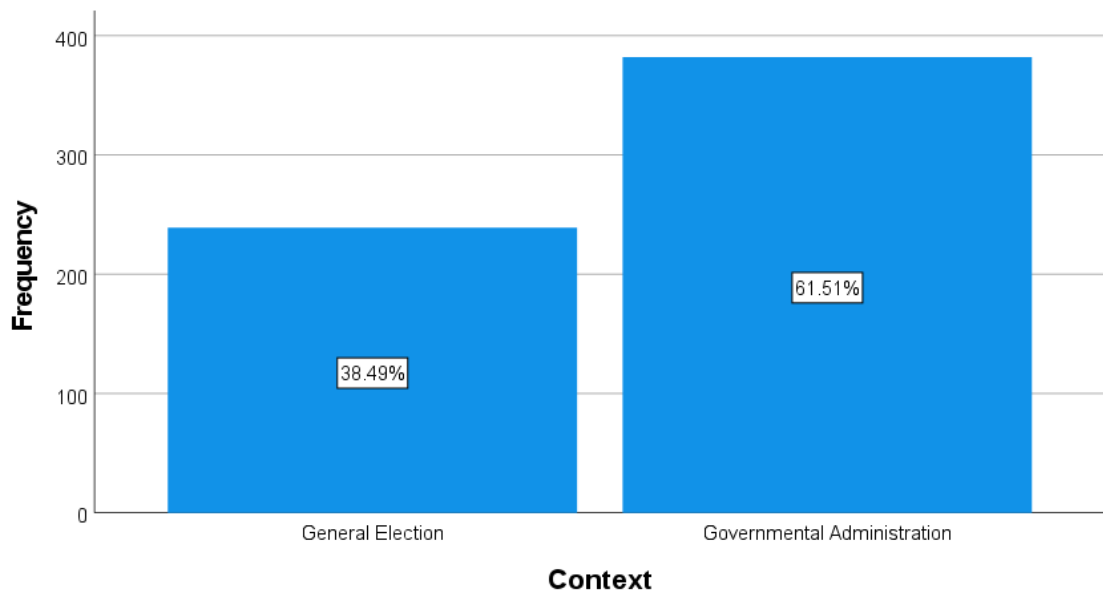
At this stage, such speculation must be acknowledged for what it is, a niche for future research on political communication on CJ. For the purposes of this research, it can be conclusively stated that representations of CJ do not feature evenly across policy documents, both in terms of quantity (unit count) and in terms of allotted time/space (percentage of focus).

#### 4.1.2 Context

Figure 8 aggregates the above variable into two research sites, general elections and governmental administrations, as embodiments of different stages in the cycle of democratic power turnover. Based on the renowned electioneering hypothesis (e.g., Arceneaux et al., 2016; Barton & Johns, 2012; Brouard et al., 2018), elections were expected to increase the stakes for the retention or acquisition of power and motivate parties to increase the policy development pace. Yet, percentages in Figure 8 favour administrations over elections with a considerable margin of 23.02%. This even though the number of documents for the latter context (N=43) was higher than sources for governmental administrations (N=37).

**Figure 8**

*Unit Distribution according to Context.*



These results communicate an uneven level of representation of CJ at different stages of the electoral cycle. The heightened competitiveness characterising general elections did not seem to motivate politicians' production of CJ policies as much as the accountability reports presented during a legislature. Consequently, CJ was much more likely to be

presented as a maintenance issue in a government's portfolio than as an electoral commodity which gains constituents' favour. In fact, the country's crime rate (as an indication of the state of Malta's CJ system) was only once used as a retort by an opposition party against the one in government (Abela, Gulia et al., 2003).

Considering politicians' strategic sensitivity to constituents' needs (Brouard et al., 2018; Farrall & Gray, 2018; Wozniak, 2016) and the Maltese public's leverage over politicians (Pirota, 2012; Quirke, 2014; Veenendaal, 2019), this result implies that public concern over crime and CJ was not potent enough to warrant its inclusion in a tight electoral agenda. Policymakers' preference to report on CJ policies during a legislature might also make sense in light of Baldacchino and Wain's (2013) observation of the Maltese culture of performativity. In contrast with electioneering theory, Maltese policymakers may have wanted to sustain the image of their performance throughout their years in office rather than reserve it for when the polls draw close.

Further building on the electioneering hypothesis and (re-)election-oriented policymaking, the frame included an operationalised test by Wenzelburger and Staff (2016). Unit counts for governmental administrations during an election year are compared with other years in a legislature, expecting election years to have pointedly higher frequencies. Their original version was modified to suit the Maltese context, where elections are usually held during a year's first two quarters. Hence, an 'election year' (a year in which government increases the policy pace and public relations) locally refers to the year preceding the year of the election.

Cross-comparisons between the average unit count for years between elections and the year before an election indicate that the electioneering hypothesis again failed to hold ground within the parameters of this study (Table 6). If re-election prospects were the heuristic which guides both parties' actions, and contesting parties were in tune with their constituents' needs, then it would be safe to assume that CJ was not one of the electorate's top concerns. This noticeably alienates the local context from punitive-oriented campaigning that has characterised some of the more popular administrations in Britain, America and France (Guiney, 2019; Warner, 2021; Wenzelburger, 2015). The reasons behind this exceptionalism certainly merit further investigation.

**Table 6***Unit Count of Election Years versus the Average of Other Years in a Legislature*

Legislature	Election year	Unit count of other years in the legislature					Unit count for election year
		1 <sup>st</sup>	2 <sup>nd</sup>	3 <sup>rd</sup>	4 <sup>th</sup>	Average	
Budget Speeches*							
10 <sup>th</sup>	2007	8	3	9	11	7.75	3
11 <sup>th</sup>	2012	2	3	7	2	3.5	4
12 <sup>th</sup>	2016	1	9	14	n/a**	8	5
13 <sup>th</sup>	2021	8	15	13	34	17.5	22
Ministerial Reports**							
10 <sup>th</sup>	2007	11	11	n/a	n/a	11	1
11 <sup>th</sup>	2012	0	10	n/a	n/a	5	0
12 <sup>th</sup>	2016	15	27	n/a	n/a	21	17

*Note.* \* Table spanners separate budget speeches and ministerial reports in recognition of their different sampling approaches. \*\*The 12<sup>th</sup> legislature was four years long, as opposed to the usual five years.

#### **4.1.3 Year**

This variable enquires into the temporal dimension inherent to the study's theoretical framework, by displaying quantitative variances of CJ. Units were disaggregated by year and stacked by source to identify the most inclusive years for CJ policies whilst also acknowledging discrepancies caused by different sampling methods. Table 7 and Figure 9 reveal an uneven unit spread. Years which included general elections were naturally expected to have higher counts than administration years, given how all four sources applied. Indeed, unit count peaked in election years and noticeably decreased for years in between. This supports one of the central premises of the methodology, namely that general elections are viable contexts for the circulation of representations of CJ, even if the issue's political utility was not particularly high.

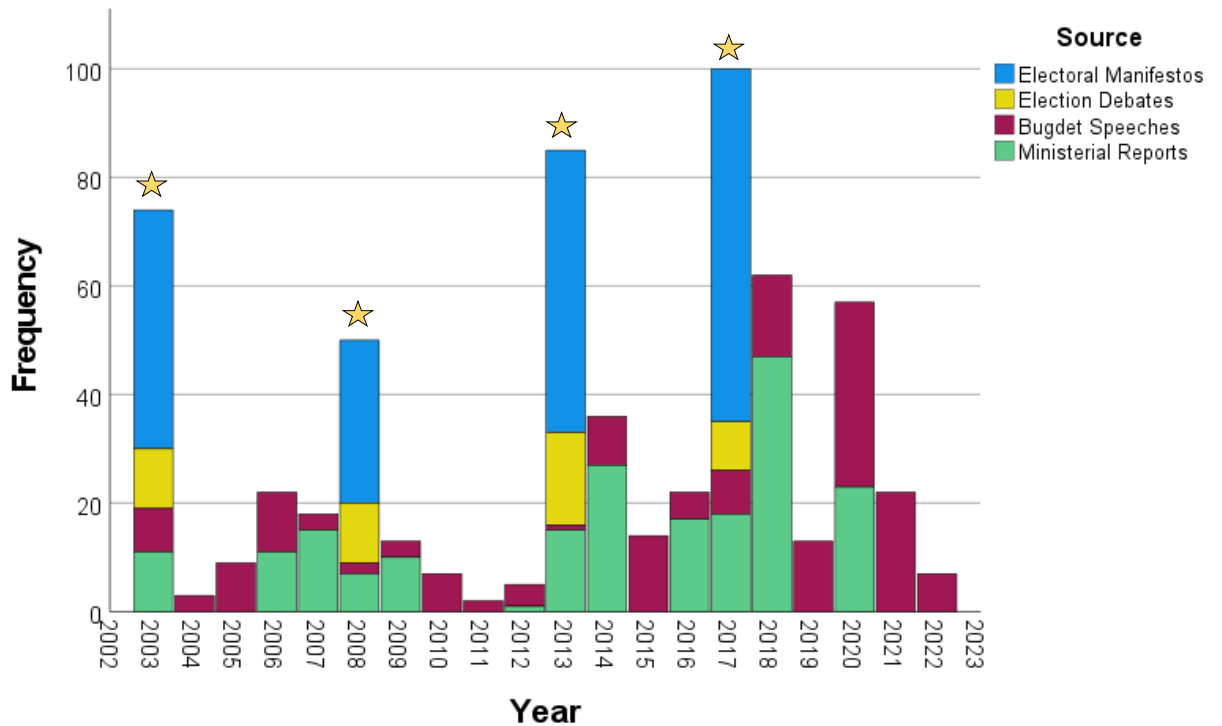
**Table 7***Cross Tabulation of Unit Count for Year by Source.*

Year	Source				Total
	Electoral Manifestos	Election Debates	Budget Speeches	Ministerial Reports	
2003	44	11	8	11	74
2004	n/a	n/a	3	n/s	3
2005	n/a	n/a	9	n/s	9
2006	n/a	n/a	11	11	22
2007	n/a	n/a	3	15	18
2008	30	11	2	7	50
2009	n/a	n/a	3	10	13
2010	n/a	n/a	7	n/s	7
2011	n/a	n/a	2	n/s	2
2012	n/a	n/a	4	1	5
2013	52	17	1	15	85
2014	n/a	n/a	9	27	36
2015	n/a	n/a	14	n/s	14
2016	n/a	n/a	5	17	22
2017	65	9	8	18	100
2018	n/a	n/a	15	47	62
2019	n/a	n/a	13	n/s	13
2020	n/a	n/a	34	23	57
2021	n/a	n/a	22	n/s	22
2022	n/s	n/s	7	n/s	7
Total	191	48	180	202	621

*Note.* n/a=not applicable; n/s=not chosen in random sampling

**Figure 9**

*Unit Count by Year and Stacked by Source.*



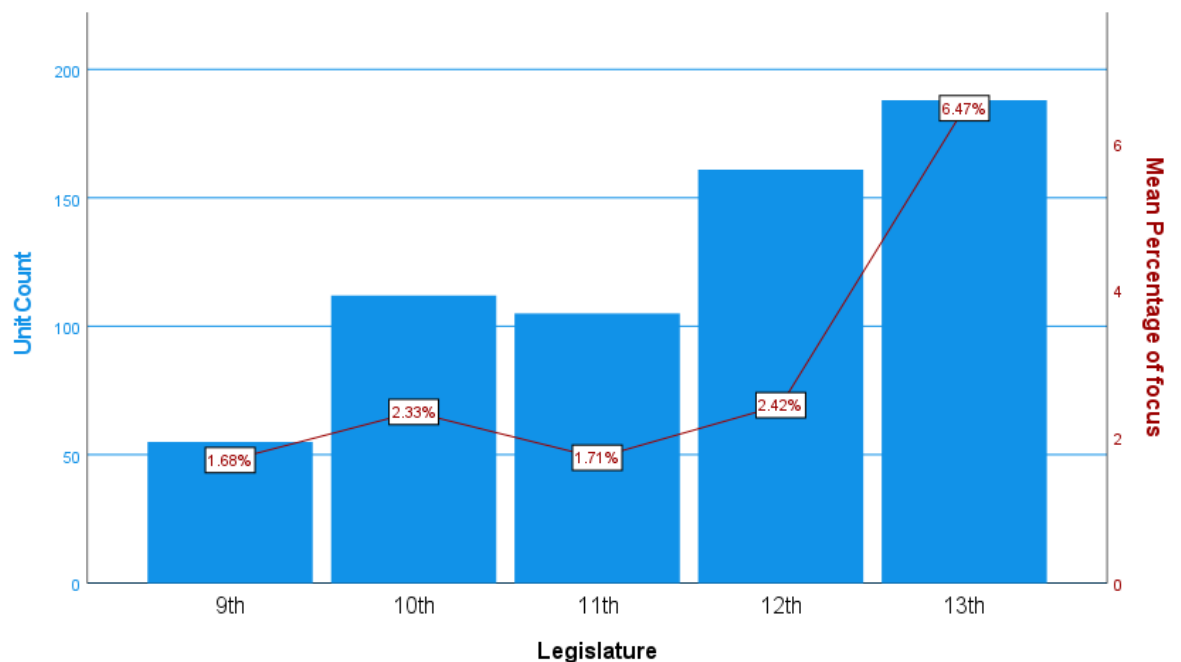
Efforts should be made to interpret the results in consideration of previous political events listed in Appendix A. This historical contextualisation was necessary given the significant changes that Maltese social structures have undergone over the past decades (Formosa, 2021). For example, a noticeable increase in the unit count is evident for years 2018 and 2020, even though no general election was held within that period. Interestingly, these years represented a turbulent time in Maltese political history, including within them European Parliament elections, serious criminal accusations of higher executives, the murder of a prominent journalist, the recommendations issued by the Venice Commission and the protests which led to the resignation of the previous Prime Minister. These circumstances may have sensitised the public to CJ issues, possibly induced a moral panic (Jennings et al., 2020) and prompted an increased focus on CJ within the political sphere. This speculation is not meant to be proven or disproven in this study but merely to serve as a steppingstone for further research. A separate examination of annual frequencies against annual crime incidents is included in Appendix G for the reader’s interest.

#### 4.1.4 Legislature

Years were clustered into legislatures to reveal patterns and causal relationships which would have been obscured if only disparate years were considered. Figure 10 visualises the parallel trajectories between unit count and percentage of focus when disaggregated by legislature. These parallels imply proportionality between the number of proposed policies and time spent on deliberation. Unit aggregation by legislature also represents different executives and the potency of human agency. Regarding the ‘ministers-in-cabinet’ approach (Barton & Johns, 2012) and the political theory of partisanship (Muirhead & Bloom, 2020), the variable was used to hypothesise that different executive and parliamentary compositions have a significant influence on the quantity, percentage of focus and quality of CJ policies.

**Figure 10**

*Dual Y-Axis Graph Displaying Unit Count against Percentage of Focus over Legislatures.*



This premise was partly examined by filtering data to include units generated within the context of governmental administrations (Table 8) and running a One-Way ANOVA test (Table H3). Results ( $F(4,15) = 3.93, p = <0.05$ ) reject the plausibility of  $H_0$ , and instead

indicate that there is a significant causal relationship between legislature (independent) and percentage of focus (dependent). Results were subsequently run through Tukey’s HSD for multiple comparisons (Table H4), revealing significant discrepancies between the 13<sup>th</sup> legislature and the rest (all  $p$ -values = <0.01). Contrarily, paired comparisons between the 9<sup>th</sup> to the 12<sup>th</sup> legislatures yielded no significant discrepancies.

**Table 8**

*Unit Count, Unit Percentage and Mean Percentage Focus by Legislature*

Legislature	Period	Party in Office	Units*		Focus*	
			Count	%	Mean %	SD
9 <sup>th**</sup>	Oct 1998 - Apr 2003	PN	0	0	2.82%	0
10 <sup>th</sup>	May 2003 – Mar 2008	PN	71	18.59	2.09%	1.19
11 <sup>th</sup>	Apr 2008 – Mar 2013	PN	36	9.42	1.71%	1.04
12 <sup>th</sup>	Apr 2013 – Jun 2017	PL	88	23.04	1.99%	0.26
13 <sup>th</sup>	Jul 2017 – Mar 2022	PL	188	49.21	6.47%	3.96
Total/Average			382	100.00	3.11%	2.81

*Note.* \*The number of entries and the average proportion of documents relevant to the frame, filtered by context to only include governmental administrations.

\*\*Only documents for the 2003 election fall within the bounds of the 9<sup>th</sup> legislature. Unit count and percentage mean scores should be interpreted with this limitation in mind.

The non-significant differences between the other legislatures seemingly undermine the ministers-in-cabinet approach and the political theory of partisanship. This insignificance was especially noticeable for the 12<sup>th</sup> legislature, which failed to provide a considerable negative or positive shift in focus despite PL's election after a three-legislature PN rule. On the other hand, the statistically significant percentage for the 13<sup>th</sup> legislature reinforces the plausibility of concurrent national events having sensitised the nation to threats to the rule of law (Appendix A), especially considering how the party elected for the 13<sup>th</sup> legislature

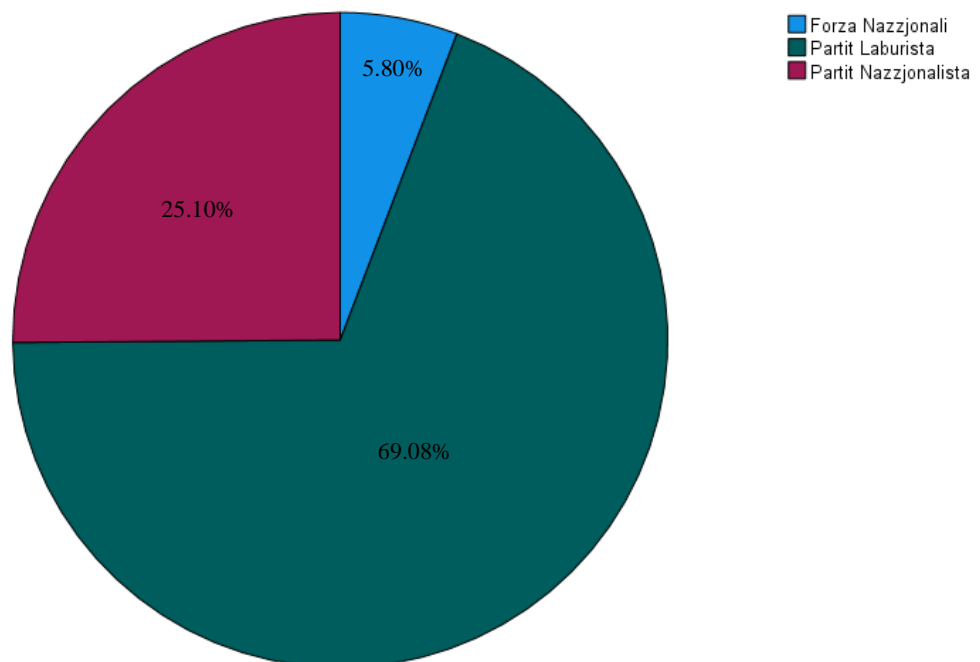
was led by the same Prime Minister and had, for the most part, maintained the previous cabinet.

#### 4.1.5 Political Party

This variable continues to build on the political partisanship theory advanced by Muirhead and Bloom (2020), which considers the influence of political parties on the quality and quantity of policy outcomes. With both parties equally represented in general elections and administrations, univariate analysis was used to determine whether they evenly allocate attention to CJ issues across all sources. Figure 11 and Table 9 reveal how unit distribution was noticeably lopsided toward PL, even if the PN's unit count and percentage of focus are amalgamated with its coalition partner for the 2017 election, Forza Nazzjonali (FN). A One-Way ANOVA test was run on mean percentages of focus (Table H5), which results negated the hypothesised causality between party and focus on CJ ( $F(2,53) = 1.77$ ,  $p = ns$ ).

**Figure 11**

*Unit Distribution by Political Party.*



**Table 9***Unit Count and Percentage Focus Disaggregated by Political Party*

Political party	Units*		Percentage of Focus**	
	Count	%	Mean %	SD
FN	36	5.80	3.82***	5.36
PL	429	69.08	3.31	2.68
PN	156	25.10	2.07	1.02
Total	621	100	2.37	2.61%

*Note.* \*The number of entries in the coding frame. \*\*The average proportion of each document which was relevant to the frame. \*\*\*FN's score should be interpreted with due consideration that it is only relevant to the 2017 GE, has the lowest number of documents, and has a considerably high SD score.

The substantial discrepancy in unit count may communicate differences in the perceived utility of crime as an electoral commodity, despite claims on the parties' moderation of ideological differences (Fenech, 2013; Pace, 2017). However, this result was perhaps evened out by the statistically non-significant differences in the mean percentage of focus, implying that PL, despite proposing or implementing more changes to CJ policies, spared much less on their elaboration. Further research which is attentive to these subtle but significant differences in parties' policy approaches is encouraged.

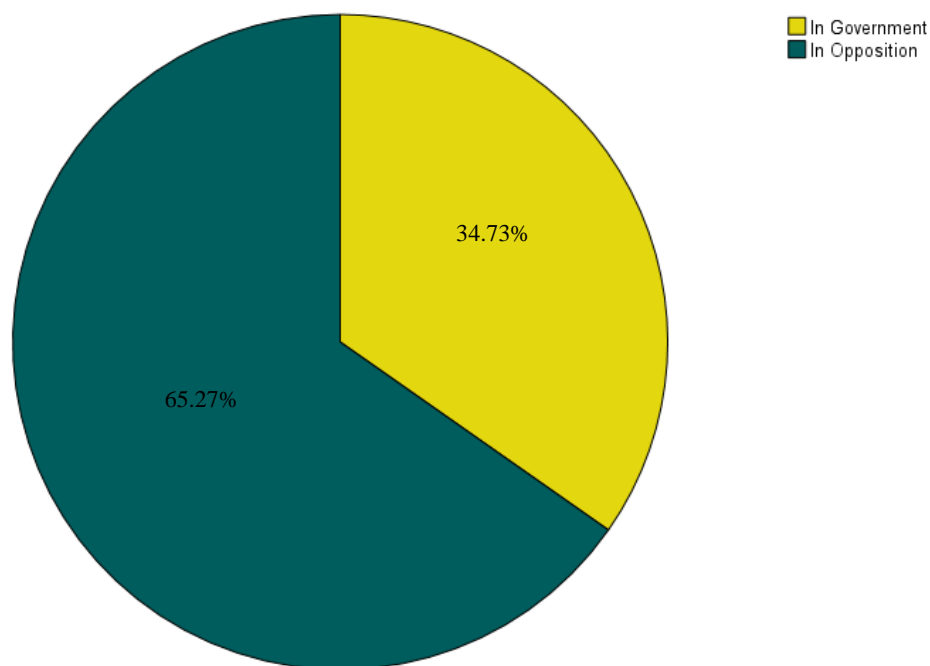
**4.1.6 Role of Political Party**

This variable was included based on the interesting contrasts that emerge in parties' adversarial roles during elections, especially given the intense political rivalry in the local context. For this reason, codable units were filtered by context to include only those represented in electoral campaigns. Results are visualised in Figure 12 and cross-tabulated with the political party in Table 10. Aggregate data in the former is evidently biased towards the opposition (65.27%), interesting given how parties in government have the leisure to boast about policies they implemented during their time in office, as well as set a vision of

continuity for their constituents. On the other hand, opposition parties are limited to criticising what already exists and providing solutions and alternatives, a role which seems to have been taken quite seriously by both parties.

**Figure 12**

*Unit Distribution by Role of Political Party*



Based on this argument, Table 10 indicates that PN scored remarkably low counts for the 'in government' category for a party in office during three of the four analysed campaigns. To sustain this argument for historical contingency (with reference to Appendix A), one can note how political events would have deviated attention from CJ during PN's candidacy whilst in office. Indeed, it was observed how documents in the earlier years were generally devoted to the EU accession saga and the process of modernisation. Still, this does not explain why CJ did not feature with higher frequencies, especially considering the concessions, reforms and policy convergence in all areas of governance that came with this accession (Ellul, 2020).

**Table 10**

*Cross-Tabulation of Political Party with its Role\**

Count		PL	PN	Total
Role of political party	In Government	36	47	83
	In Opposition	118	38	156
Total		154	85	239

*Note.* \*Out of the four elections, PN only once led an electoral campaign whilst in opposition, during which it entered a coalition with FN. In contrast, PL led three electoral campaigns in opposition. Results should be interpreted with this information in mind.

#### **4.1.7 Percentage of Focus**

In this chapter, the percentage of focus has been tested for dependence on source, legislature and political party through One-Way ANOVA tests, two of which yielded highly significant results (Tables H1 to H3). The mean scores of the variable in themselves do not allow much insight into how well CJ fares in comparison with other niches of governance (e.g., education, employment and taxes). However, considering how the global mean percentage of focus was 2.37% ( $SD = 2.61\%$ ), it could be tentatively inferred that Maltese governance was plausibly alienated from the ‘governance through crime’ phenomenon advanced by many (e.g., Elholm & Colson, 2016; Hassan, 2020; Jennings et al., 2020). Based on this percentage and unstructured observation throughout the data collection process, it can be concluded that other governance sectors easily took precedence over crime-related issues in policy documents with a general focus.

## **4. 2 Area of Intervention**

Sustained by the premises of social contract theory, state intervention in criminal matters has commonly become governments’ birth right. However, research demonstrates how permissiveness for state intervention in citizens’ private lives needs to be reinforced through rhetoric and action, lest it becomes delegitimised through neglect (e.g., Matza, 1969/2010; Moriconi, 2017; O’Malley & Valverde, 2014). This section looks into these argumentative sources of legitimacy, the concerns which were addressed and why, in

policymakers' terms, these were funnelled through the tight bottleneck of the political agenda.

#### **4.2.1 Type of Crime**

Univariate analysis of this variable discerned what types of crime were most singled out by policymakers (Table 11). Continuous reference was made to the Maltese Criminal Code (Cap.9 of the Laws of Malta) when answering this multiple response variable. The Code distinguishes between crimes and contraventions, criminal and civil action, and punishment and civil remedies but fails to draw definitive parameters between these dualisms (Grech, 2006). Consequently, justification for the inclusion of offences as crimes is recorded in Appendix I as testament to objectivity and intracoder reliability.

The majority of codable units deal with general provisions, meaning actions that address the CJ process and are not specific to one form of crime. Given the various crimes being covered, these were inductively aggregated into composites to improve coherence and observation. Aggregately, the three most prominent composites were corruption, drug-related offences and fraud. In contrast, the three leading crimes on the political agenda were political corruption, tax fraud and DV.

The outcomes help shape the local Overton Window of CJ, as they specify which forms of human conduct were valued for their cultural and political significance in public discourse. The popularity of the top three specific crimes is justifiable through numerous lenses. For instance, the prominence of anti-corruption initiatives may be linked to the numerous studies and surveys which persistently identified political corruption as a highly salient and worrying reality (e.g., Azzopardi et al., 2021; European Commission, 2020; Transparency International, 2021). On the other hand, the importance placed on tax fraud might be explained through the fluctuating fiscal morality of Maltese society (e.g., Aquilina, 2017; Grima, 2014; Zammit, 2016) and an average of 21% of Maltese GDP belonging to shadow economy (Central Bank of Malta, 2020). For reasons specified in Chapter 3, DV was chosen as the case study for the second phase of this study. Thus, interpretation of its prominence on the political agenda is reserved for the next chapter, where discursive analysis delves deeper into the essence of policymakers' approach to the third most popular type of crime.

**Table 11***Unit Count and Percentages by Types of Crime*

Type of Crime*		Individual scores			Composite scores		
Composite	Specific	Responses		Cases	Responses		Cases
		N	%	%	N	%	%
General provisions		292	42.57	47.02	292	42.57	47.02
Bias crimes	Conversion therapy	3	0.44	0.5	9	1.31	1.46
	Gender-based violence	2	0.29	0.32			
	Hate crimes	2	0.29	0.32			
	Radicalisation/extremism	2	0.29	0.32			
Child victimisation	Child abuse (general)	15	2.19	2.42	17	2.49	2.84
	Child labour	1	0.15	0.26			
	Paedophilia	1	0.15	0.16			
Corruption	Political	57	8.31	9.18	60	8.75	9.66
	Sports	3	0.44	0.48			
Cybercrime	Cyberattacks	8	1.17	1.29	26	3.8	4.19
	Cyberviolence	5	0.73	0.81			
	General	13	1.90	2.09			
Damage to property	Arson	1	0.15	0.16	3	0.44	0.5
	On national property	2	0.29	0.34			
Drug-related offences	General	9	1.31	1.45	65	9.47	10.47
	Drug trafficking	26	3.79	4.19			
	Drug use	30	4.37	4.83			
Environmental crimes	Illegal dumping	5	0.73	0.81	5	0.73	0.81
Fraud	Benefit fraud	19	2.77	3.06	71	10.36	11.43
	Counterfeit currency	1	0.15	0.16			

	Document fraud	3	0.44	0.48			
	Tax fraud	48	7.00	7.73			
Human trafficking	General	2	0.29	0.32	15	2.18	2.41
	Involuntary	4	0.58	0.64			
	Voluntary	9	1.31	1.45			
Illegal trade	General	7	1.02	1.13	12	1.75	1.93
	Of alcohol	2	0.29	0.32			
	Of cultural heritage	1	0.15	0.16			
	Of weapons	2	0.29	0.32			
Miscellaneous	Animal cruelty	7	1.02	1.13	40	5.84	6.54
	Illegal gambling	3	0.44	0.58			
	Money laundering	22	3.21	3.54			
	Theft	8	1.17	1.29			
Personal abuse (adults)	DV	33	4.81	5.31	48	7	7.72
	On persons with disability	1	0.15	0.16			
	On elderly	3	0.44	0.48			
	Sexual assault	6	0.87	0.97			
	Sexual exploitation	2	0.29	0.32			
	Prostitution	3	0.44	0.48			
Termination of life	Abortion	3	0.44	0.48	7	1.02	1.12
	Euthanasia	2	0.29	0.32			
	Homicide	2	0.29	0.32			
Terrorism	Funding	8	1.27	1.29	16	2.44	2.58
	Planning and execution	8	1.17	1.29			
Totals		686	100.00	110.47	686	100.	110.5

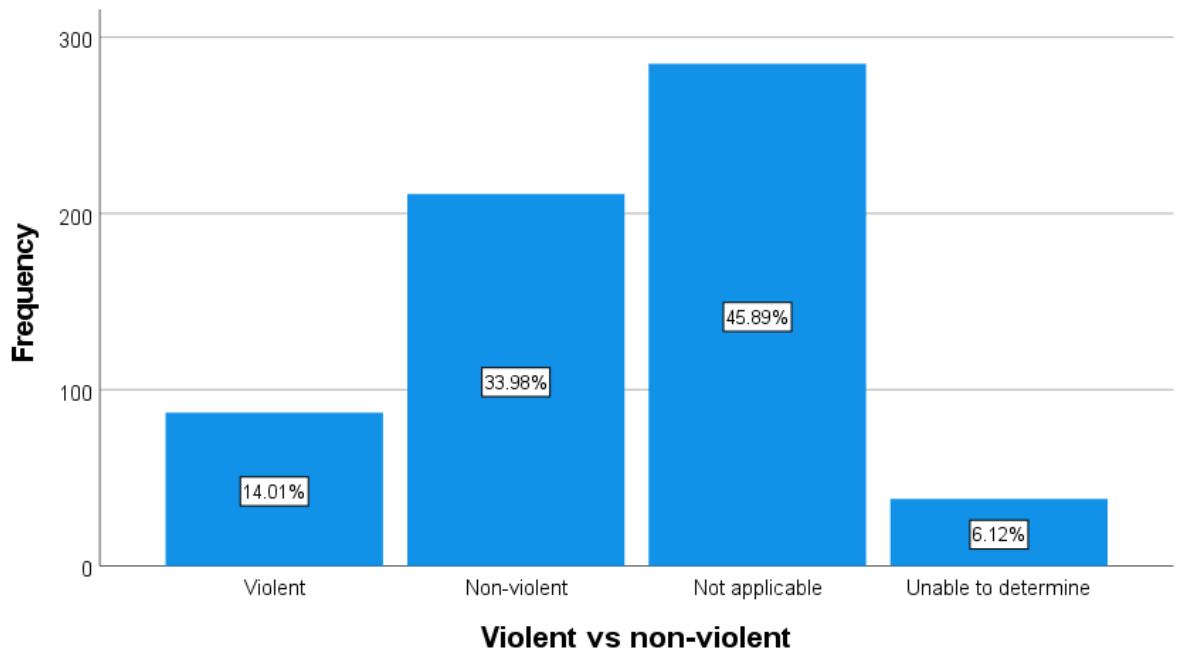
Note. \*Dichotomy group tabulated at value 1.

#### 4.2.2 Nature of Crime

This variable examines the premise that politicians focus on violent and sensationalised crime in order to appeal to primitive concerns about physical safety among the public (e.g., Kappeler & Potter, 2017; Pickett et al., 2015; Sawyer & Wagner, 2020). At face value, the results displayed in Figure 13 negate this hypothesis. Excluding the ‘not applicable’ option (for general provisions), non-violent crimes dominated in any context, legislature and political party (Table 12). It thus seems that Maltese policymakers did not share the same affinity for sensationalist representations as most countries (e.g., EU Agency for Fundamental Rights, 2021; Githens-Mazer, 2012; Kappeler & Potter, 2017). Instead, they were very considerate of white-collar, profit-oriented crime over violent crime. This shift from violence could reflect Formosa’s (2021) commentary on increased efforts to maintain minimal perceptions of risk and feelings of security among Maltese society. If this is the case, these results can be traced back to why opposition parties expended more effort on CJ policies than parties in government (Section 4.1.6).

**Figure 13**

*Unit distribution by Nature of Crime*



The Chi-Square test checked for associations between nature of crime and context ( $\chi^2 (3) = 27.64, p = <0.01$ ), legislature ( $\chi^2 (12) = 46.51, p = <0.01$ ) and political party ( $\chi^2 (6) = 8.43, p = ns$ ; Table H6).  $H_0$  was rejected for context and legislature and accepted for political party. The strength of association of the two statistically significant relationships was tested through Cramér's V Coefficient (Table H7), which revealed a moderate effect size for dependency on context (.21) and weak for legislature (.16).

**Table 12**

*Cross-tabulation of Nature of Crime with Context, Legislature and Political Party*

Categorical Variables	Categorical Options	Nature of Crime				Total
		Violent	Non-violent	Not applicable	Unable to determine	
Context	General election	45	101	80	13	239
	Administration	42	110	205	25	382
Legislature	9 <sup>th</sup> legislature	10	28	13	4	55
	10 <sup>th</sup> legislature	10	51	42	9	112
	11 <sup>th</sup> legislature	22	41	40	2	105
	12 <sup>th</sup> legislature	19	43	93	6	161
	13 <sup>th</sup> legislature	26	48	97	17	188
Political Party	PN	23	59	64	19	156
	PL	56	137	208	28	429
	FN	8	15	13	0	36
Total		87	211	285	38	621

### 4.2.3 Justification for Intervention

This variable attends to employed justifications for the need and manner of state intervention. The analyst followed the Foucauldian premise to suspend judgement and not assume the existence of a problem from deduction or experience, instead questioning why the issue is being addressed in that particular way and at that particular time. It is unlikely that the true motivation behind an action made its way into the political rhetoric, especially if it is self-serving (e.g., to shift focus from a hotter issue) or non-utilitarian (e.g., strategic electioneering proposals). Nevertheless, it was worth while to consider what heuristics were used and which narratives were presented as instigators for change to the public.

Table 13 describes the multiple response set which was inductively created during the data cleaning phase. Most units were presented with no outward explanation of their necessity. This stands in stark contrast with arguments on the importance of rhetorical persuasion in an area as invasive as CJ (e.g., Cohen, 1996; Hobbs & Hamerton, 2014; Matza, 1969/2010). The second most common category, party beliefs and values, fits more comfortably into this premise. Here, policymakers adopt the orthodox social progress model advanced by Burke (2013), in which the party dons righteousness and addresses a CJ issue through an ideological lens.

The third most popular category, 'insufficient, inefficient or inadequate CJ processes, policies or services', exemplifies the incrementalism that characterises public policy (Hobbs & Hamerton, 2014). With another reference to the orthodox social progress model, parties promoted an increase in the government's pace or expenditure instead of significant changes to the current status quo. Indeed, action words such as 'strengthen', 'improve' and 'bolster' were very common, demonstrating how deficiencies were likely to be addressed by layering over underlying assumptions on power structures and relations.

Numerous deductions can be made from the leftover categories. Crime rates and research were an underused source of legitimacy by policymakers, surprising considering how Malta's moderate crime rate bodes well with the modest focus on CJ (Appendix G). On the other hand, sparse mentions of research echo Calafato and Knepper's (2009) comments on the continued mismatch between the supply and demand of criminological research. Additionally, policymakers were not prone to formally attribute an action's origins as being

motivated by supranational influences (e.g., the EU or the CoE), even though their influence on motivating change in the CJ sector is well-established (Paoli et al., 2016).

**Table 13**

*Frequency of Type of Justification for Intervention*

Justification*	Responses		Cases
	N	%	%
Not mentioned	443	70.77	71.34
Beliefs and values in favour of state intervention	48	7.67	7.73
Insufficient, inefficient or inadequate CJ processes, policies or services	42	6.71	6.76
Actual or perceived prevalence and evolution of a particular crime or crime in general	34	5.43	5.48
Economic consequences of crime	28	4.47	4.51
In response to research, analysis and assessment	13	2.08	2.09
In response to superiors' recommendations and directives	12	1.92	1.93
Social consequences of crime	6	0.96	0.97
Total	626	100.00	100.81

*Note.* \*Dichotomy group tabulated at value 1.

Lastly, policymakers were more likely to consider the economic consequences of crime over the social impact. For example, the justifications for state intervention on organised crime were based on the implications on Malta's attractiveness to investors over the threat to social morality. In addition, many actions were legitimised through projections of monetary savings based on the policy's success. This demonstrates Maltese politicians' emphasis on economic prosperity as an instigator for crime control and CJ over social responsibility. It is well worth looking into what this communicates about perceptions of economic over social prosperity.

#### 4.2.4 Area of Concern

A descriptive analysis of this multiple response variable reveals which area of CJ was of most concern to Maltese policymakers (Table 14). It also felt necessary to organise the categories of this variable into proactive and reactive measures, excluding 'unable to determine' units. This aggregation is presented in Figure 14, creating the essential contrast to contribute to the decades-long debate on the shift from post-crime to pre-crime society (e.g., Garland, 2001; Mantello, 2016; Squires, 1999).

**Table 14**

*Frequency of Areas of Concern*

Area of Concern*	Responses		Cases
	N	%	%
Unable to determine	139	19.97	22.38
Administration of justice	111	15.95	17.87
Corrective measures for convicted offenders	88	12.64	14.17
Prevention	79	11.35	12.72
Detection	78	11.21	12.56
Investigation	65	9.34	10.47
Enforcement	52	7.47	8.37
Protective and supportive measures for victims	52	7.47	8.37
Regulation	23	3.30	3.70
Criminalisation	8	1.15	1.29
Decriminalisation	1	0.14	0.16
<b>Total</b>	<b>704</b>	<b>100.00</b>	<b>113.37</b>

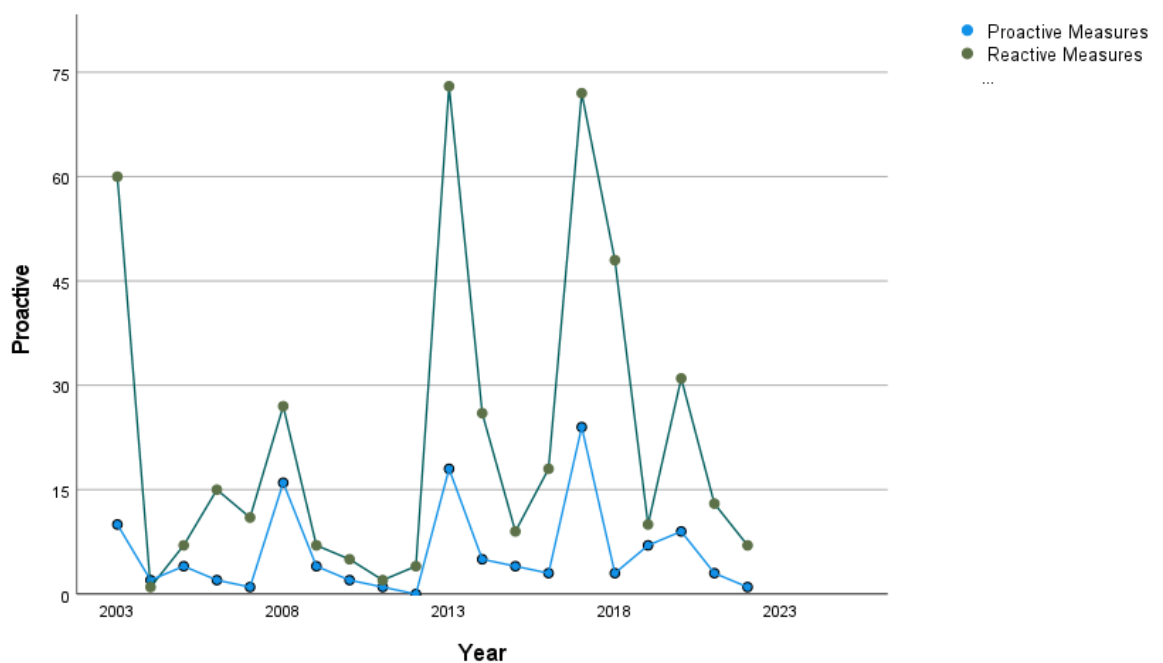
*Note.* \*Dichotomy group tabulated at value 1.

The results in Table 14 and Figure 14 commonly demonstrate how Malta did not conform to the predicted uptake of crime prevention as the main crime control strategy (Garland, 2001). Only a few units presented pre-emptive approaches, recurrently dwarfed by

retrospective policies across all years except for 2004. This social representation is surprising given how a focus on reactive responses might risk highlighting, in Matza’s (1969/2010) terms, the state’s “gross failure to deter” (p.148). Yet, the national exceptionalism demonstrated by these results is reminiscent of Lidskog and Persson’s (2012) study, in which they justify Sweden’s similar non-conformity with pre-crime models through cultural relativity.

**Figure 14**

*Dual Y-Axis Graph Displaying Proactive Measures against Reactive Measures over Years*



*Note.* The ‘proactive measures’ composite includes criminalisation, decriminalisation, prevention and regulation scores. The ‘reactive measures’ composite includes scores for detection, enforcement, investigation, administration of justice, corrective measures for offenders and protective and supportive measures for victims.

Recalling another of Garland’s predictions, the return of the victim, it is surprising how corrective measures for convicted offenders considerably overtook protective and supportive measures for victims. At this stage, this does not indicate the prominence of penal welfarism in Malta; rather that political action is more likely to focus on the offender

over the victim. In addition, moderate scores for detection and regulation diminish O'Malley and Valverde's (2014) premise of Panopticon governance in the local context. On the other hand, the very low scores for criminalisation and decriminalisation communicate that there is not much fluidity in behavioural definitions of crime.

### **4.3 Policy Specifications**

This section enables this discussion to don the promised policy-oriented approach and promotes a meta-analysis of the analytical constructs informing this analysis. Being the first local research to do so, the variables in this section were produced through equal parts deductive and inductive processes. In terms of NPF, the section contributes data on the plots and characters (victims, villains and heroes) of Maltese CJ policies.

#### **4.3.1 Instrument**

This variable permitted insight into what forms of remedial action were most popular in political representations of CJ. In theory, policy solutions are products of a rational cost-benefit analysis between expenditure, implications on electoral prospects and actual rectification of an identified problem (Cairney, 2019; Loader & Sparks, 2016). Given the study's critical lens, this overly optimistic view of the policymaking process was rejected. More cynic explanations were sought as to why a government chose to address a particular problem with a particular solution. Table 15 presents the categorical, multiple response set of policy solutions in descending frequencies.

Policy development was the most employed instrument, followed by increased resources and opportunities, legal revisions and expansion of state services. These results collectively communicate how policymakers' actions largely built on what has already been established through incremental improvement and expansion. Additionally, the generous score for the introduction or amendment of Maltese legislation echoes Elholm and Colson's (2016) commentary on the increased focus on state law as a legitimising weapon. The variable also discerns the relatively low utilisation of research and evidence as solutions in Maltese CJ policies. As with justifications for intervention (Section 4.2.3), the frequency with which they were mentioned supports the consensus on policymakers' distant relationship with scientific evidence (e.g., Davis, 2017; Hamerton & Hobbs, 2014; O'Brien & Littler, 2015).

**Table 15***Frequency of Policy Instrument*

Policy Instrument*	Responses		Cases
	N	%	%
Policy development	219	30.63	35.27
Increase in state resources and opportunities to carry out professional duties	134	18.74	21.58
Introduction of new legal provisions and amendment of existing ones	115	16.08	18.52
Improvement or expansion of state-funded services	105	14.69	16.91
Training and capacity building	54	7.55	8.70
Awareness and community relations	36	5.03	5.80
Research and analysis	30	4.20	4.83
Unable to determine	21	2.94	3.38
Other	1	0.14	0.16
Total	715	100.00	115.14

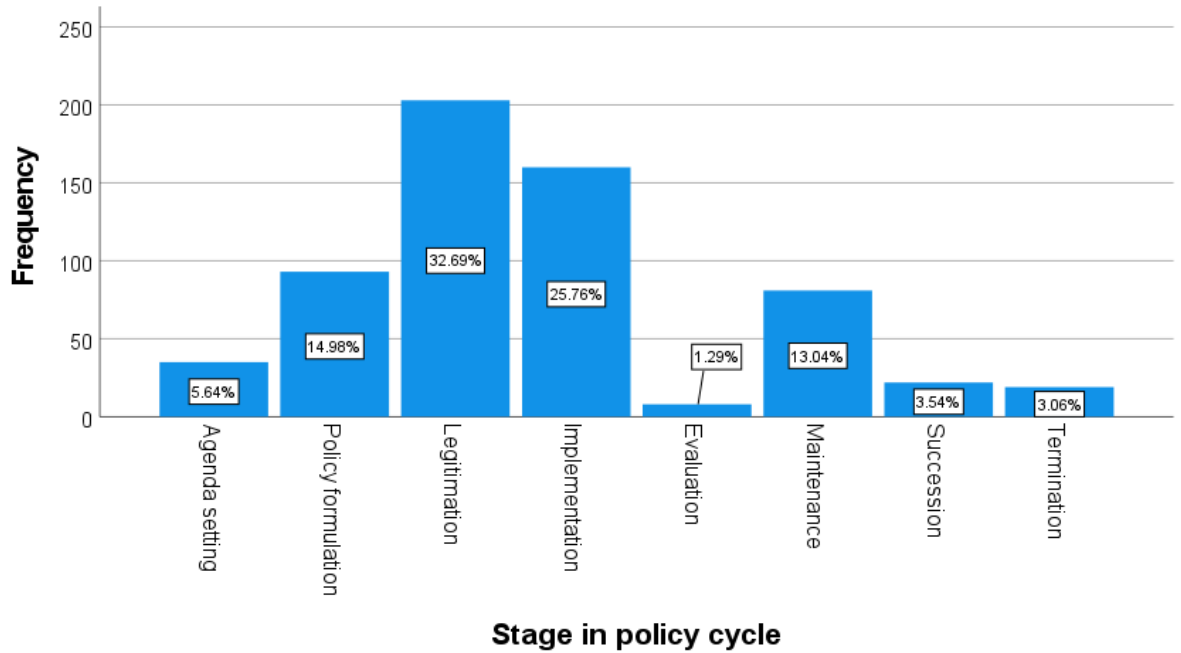
*Note.* \*Dichotomy group tabulated at value 1.

**4.3.2 Stage in Policy Cycle**

Cairney (2019) acknowledges that policy cycles (including his own) are rarely applied in practice but serve as good organising frameworks, the kind required for this quantitative analysis. His model was operationalised and coded to acknowledge the possibility of having policy actions initiated during one legislature and then transferred to another along with the autonomy to sustain or discard it. The descriptive analysis in Figure 15 reveals the stages in the policy cycle in which policymakers felt the need to communicate or reiterate changes to CJ. Political communication appears skewed towards the beginning of the cycle, where issues are still being defined, and solutions are legitimised and implemented.

**Figure 15**

*Unit Distribution by Stage in Policy Cycle*



The low scores for succession and termination (in comparison with maintenance) support the emergent hypothesis that significantly reformative or altering actions were rarely present in Maltese political communication, going against the perceived increased propensity for reforms within the CJ sector (e.g., Campbell, 2016; Jacobson et al., 2017; Wozniak, 2016). Rather, this supports the PET and the idea that CJ generally resists minor sways in public and political temperament and maintains its incrementalist pace (Hobbs & Hamerton, 2014).

The fact that 'evaluation' was the least frequent stage in which actions were promoted supports Cairney's (2016) and Willis' (2013) arguments that opportunities for de-legitimation are not provided much space in political communication. Even if evaluation exercises are carried out by the administrative branches of the public sector, it is understandable how these might not have found their way into policy documents meant to showcase the government's unparalleled understanding of crime problems and solutions. Ultimately, it could be concluded that Maltese politicians were more likely to

represent themselves as planners and accomplishees over revisionists, perhaps playing up to the Maltese culture of performativity (Wain & Baldacchino, 2013).

#### **4.3.3 Direct Target Group**

The purpose of this variable is to aggregately deduce which characters were represented as targets for changing patterns in behaviour. Note that this does not aim to distinguish whether the action was favourable towards the target's wellbeing or otherwise, a variable discussed later in this chapter (Section 4.3.2). Figure 16 demonstrates how offenders were identified as prominent figurative personas in CJ, whose behaviour can be modified or restrained. The relative difference between this group (typically the metaphorical villains) and victims again contrasts greatly with Garland's (2001) prediction of the latter's return as one of the most prominent figures in the CJ narrative.

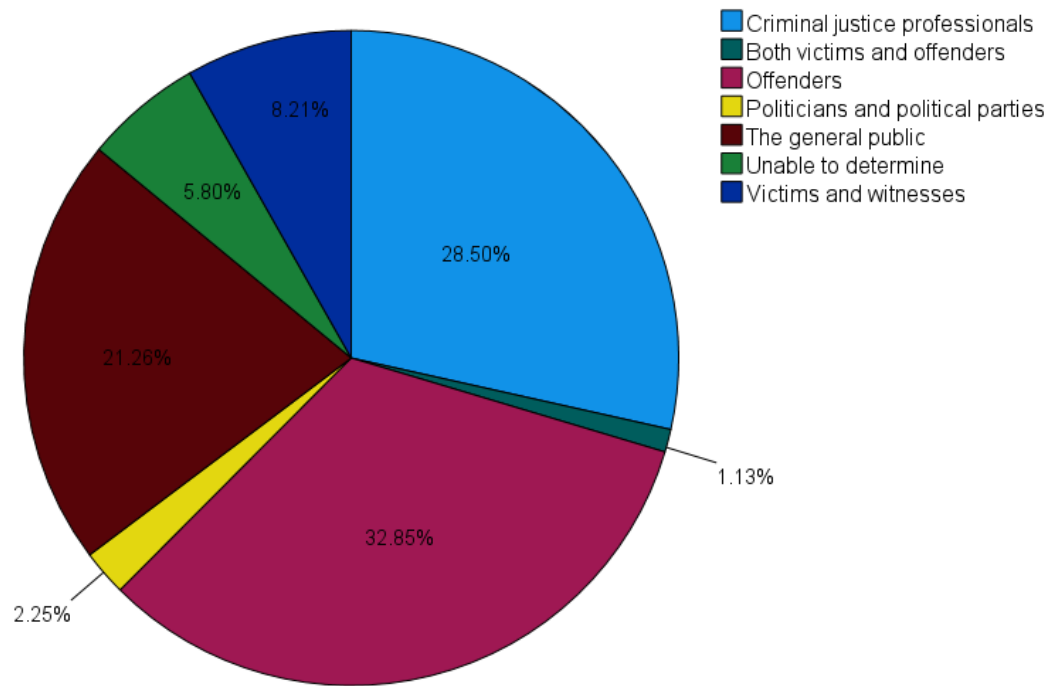
Actions targeting the work of street-level bureaucrats (typically the metaphorical heroes) were second most common, outwardly supporting the professionalisation and efficacy of Maltese CJ professionals. It is wise to consider that these professionals often play dual roles in policy implementation, being both recipients and active implementers of state policy (Section 4.3.4). Even if the Maltese constitution removes these non-elected actors from electoral accountability, this double investment demonstrates the extent to which they are influenced by the public's electoral preferences.

Maltese society was the third running target group of the frame, based on actions which passively modified citizens' behaviour or actively engaged them in fighting crime. The latter case is indicative of the community safety phenomenon that Garland (2001) predicted in his time. It is also interesting to note specific groups within the public which were inductively included in the list of categories based on their prominence. For instance, a separate category was created for politicians based on their simultaneous representations as heroes and criminals-in-waiting. Statements addressing these target groups included: "no matter how many reforms are implemented, as long as there are human beings, mistakes can be made, crimes can be committed, corruption can take place" (Azzopardi et al., 2012) and "let me be clear, as long as there is man, there is corruption" (Hili et al., 2017). This naturalist stance on political corruption likely diminishes the politician's communication of anti-corrupt practices as soon as they are spoken. It also seems that

politicians were covertly inserting a clause in their promise to end corruption by not making any guarantees on the party's behaviour.

**Figure 16**

*Unit Distribution by Direct Target Group*



The Chi-Square test was used to determine statistically significant associations between direct target groups and context, legislature and political party (Table H8). The contingency table (Table 16) demonstrates discrepancies between target groups across dependent variables, the significance of which was readily confirmed for context ( $\chi^2(6) = 46.73, p < 0.01$ ). Initial tests for legislature and political party were invalid due to low frequencies, as indicated by Cramér's V. Smaller categories for direct target groups were collapsed and amalgamated with more encompassing categories to resolve this issue. Legislature was subsequently verified to have a significant association with direct target group ( $\chi^2(16) = 60.17, p < 0.01$ ), whereas the null hypothesis was accepted for political party ( $\chi^2(8) = 10.31, p = ns$ ). Table H9 presents Cramér's V's estimation of effect size between significant relations, the best of which is moderate for context (.27) and the worst weak for legislature (.16).

These results communicate how different personas were statistically likely to vary across the electoral cycle, as the narrative became subject to different levels of competitiveness and public scrutiny. On the other hand, the feeble relationship with legislature, the independent temporal variable, is loosely reflected in the contingency table. For example, an increasing prominence of victims (e.g., Asmussen, 2020; Gallo & Svensson, 2019; Hall, 2017) and public involvement (e.g., Garland, 2001; Lidskog & Persson, 2012; Squires, 1999), can be observed, albeit not to the degree that can be witnessed in other jurisdictions. Surprisingly, represented policy recipients have no significant association with the creators and marketers of these policies, again reinforcing the premise that significant ideological and strategic differences in CJ were practically insignificant.

**Table 16***Cross-tabulation of Direct Target Group with Context, Legislature and Political Party*

Categorical Variables	Categorical Options	Direct Target Group							Total
		General public	Crim. jus. professionals	Victims & witnesses	Offenders	Victims & offenders	Politicians & parties	Unable to determine	
Context	Elections	62	44	22	87	1	14	9	239
	Administrations	70	133	29	117	6	0	27	382
Legislature	9 <sup>th</sup>	14	8	9	21	0	0	3	55
	10 <sup>th</sup>	14	47	5	32	0	5	9	112
	11 <sup>th</sup>	36	14	5	40	1	5	4	105
	12 <sup>th</sup>	37	42	14	58	3	4	3	161
	13 <sup>th</sup>	31	66	18	53	3	0	17	188
Political Party	PN	30	51	10	48	1	2	14	156
	PL	93	120	37	140	6	12	21	429
	FN	9	6	4	16	0	0	1	36
Total		132	177	51	204	7	14	36	621

#### 4.3.4 Stakeholders

This variable is built on the institutional model of policymaking, whereby formal structures are acknowledged to be part and parcel of the process and the product (Barton & Johns, 2012). In line with the insider/outsider thesis (Hobbs & Hamerton, 2014), this analysis is believed to shed light on which institutions were most relevant to making and sustaining Maltese CJ policies. In terms of NPF, stakeholders are the characters who act, in contrast with those who are acted on (i.e., the direct target group; Jones et al., 2014). Stakeholders are listed in Table 17, aggregated by purpose and legal character.

**Table 17**

*Unit Distribution by Type of Stakeholder*

Type of Stakeholder*	Responses		Cases
	N	%	%
None are mentioned	55	5.82	8.86
Unable to determine	17	1.80	2.74
Supranational organisations (other than CoE & EU)	12	1.27	1.93
Non-EU countries	6	0.63	0.97
Council of Europe	16	1.69	2.58
EU, European institutions and the Member States	85	8.99	13.69
Government (ministries, departments and services)	188	19.89	30.27
Ombudsman, regulatory and supervisory authorities	24	2.54	3.86
National commissions, committees and task forces	29	3.07	4.67
Political parties	123	13.02	19.81
Parliament	6	0.63	0.97
National courts of justice	40	4.23	6.44
National correctional services	92	9.74	14.81
The Office of the Attorney General	8	0.85	1.29
Armed Forces of Malta	9	0.95	1.45
Malta Police Force	176	18.62	28.34
Other national law enforcement agencies	7	0.74	1.13

Institutions, academies, colleges and universities	14	1.48	2.25
Non-governmental and not-for-profit organisations	14	1.48	2.25
Private and profit-oriented organisations	8	0.85	1.29
Local councils	8	0.85	1.29
Religious and/or voluntary organisations	8	0.85	1.29
<b>Total</b>	<b>945</b>	<b>100.00</b>	<b>152.17</b>

*Note.* \*Dichotomy group tabulated at value 1. Discretion was used when devolving categories to create more specific options. Categories are mutually exclusive, but more than one option could be selected.

Government, including devolutionary ministries, departments and public services, was the most frequently mentioned contributor. This measure of self-representation can be construed as a way to promote the narrative of the state's legitimacy and its indispensability in society's fight against crime. Scores for the Malta Police Force, the second most prominent stakeholder, are unsurprising (given GRECO, 2022a, 2022b) and indicative of the repressive mechanism of the Maltese CJ system (Azzopardi, 2016). The third most prominent type of stakeholder were political parties, scored based on their representation as the sole party pushing for and succeeding in attaining certain actions.

The three categories combined indicate that the CJ was largely a governmental affair, dependent on the politicians and those to whom they grant sanction powers (i.e., the police). GRECO's (2019) comments on the intricate ties between the Force's headship positions and political figures demonstrate how well these three categories work together to shape the CJ narrative. This is very much in line with Garland's (2001) index on the politicisation of crime control, especially when compared with scarce mentions of academic institutions. Using Loader and Sparks' (2016) distinction between technocratic governance (rule by the experts) and tactical governance (rule by power) of crime, Malta was here presented to lean heavily towards the latter.

European forces, including the Union, its institutions and Member States, were generously referenced, implying that the Maltese CJ system was very much exposed to the principles of the European project. This supports the premise that CJ is no longer a fixed matter of

national sovereignty but rather that it is regularly and increasingly subject to standardisation and convergence (Ambos, 2018; Hobbs & Hamerton, 2014).

Ultimately, the considerable list of stakeholders and the multiple responses recorded for separate units support Barkove et al. (2015)'s premise that insulation, silo-mentalities and compartmentalisation are no longer viable characteristics of CJ. Rather, results reflect the considerable policy community and the expansion of actors' interdependencies (Burke, 2013). On the other hand, the wide range of scores proves that stakeholders did not operate on an even playing field. Based on the insider/outsider theory (Hobbs & Hamerton, 2014), results placed some groups (e.g., the private sector, local councils and academic institutions) on the peripheries of the policy community. In contrast, governance structures and political parties were at the nucleus of the community and the narrative.

#### **4.3.5 Depth and Breadth**

The variables 'depth' and 'breadth' refer to the extent to which an action diverged from the current status quo and its reach toward various social groups. With strategic electioneering in mind, it was hypothesised that the depth and breadth of CJ actions were affected by the stages of the electoral cycle. Chi-Square tests (Table H10) confirmed the statistical significance of the association between context and depth ( $\chi^2(3) = 17.81, p = <.01$ ) and breadth ( $\chi^2(3) = 29.81, p = <.01$ ). Cramér's V Coefficient (Table H11) marked the effect size of these relationships as respectively weak (.17) and moderate (.22).

Despite these significances, the contingency table (Table 18) indicates that the 'intermediate' category is by far the most popular for all four crosstabs, suggesting that changes to the CJ system were largely moderate in their approach and effect. They involved more efforts than the system's tinkering mentioned by Kappeler & Potter (2017) but less than the revolutionary reforms that can be witnessed elsewhere in the world (e.g., Garland, 2001; Travis & Western, 2021; Wozniak, 2016). In terms of breadth, actions were moderately to minimally inclusive of different social groups, communicating a moderate spread of policies' effects among the Maltese population.

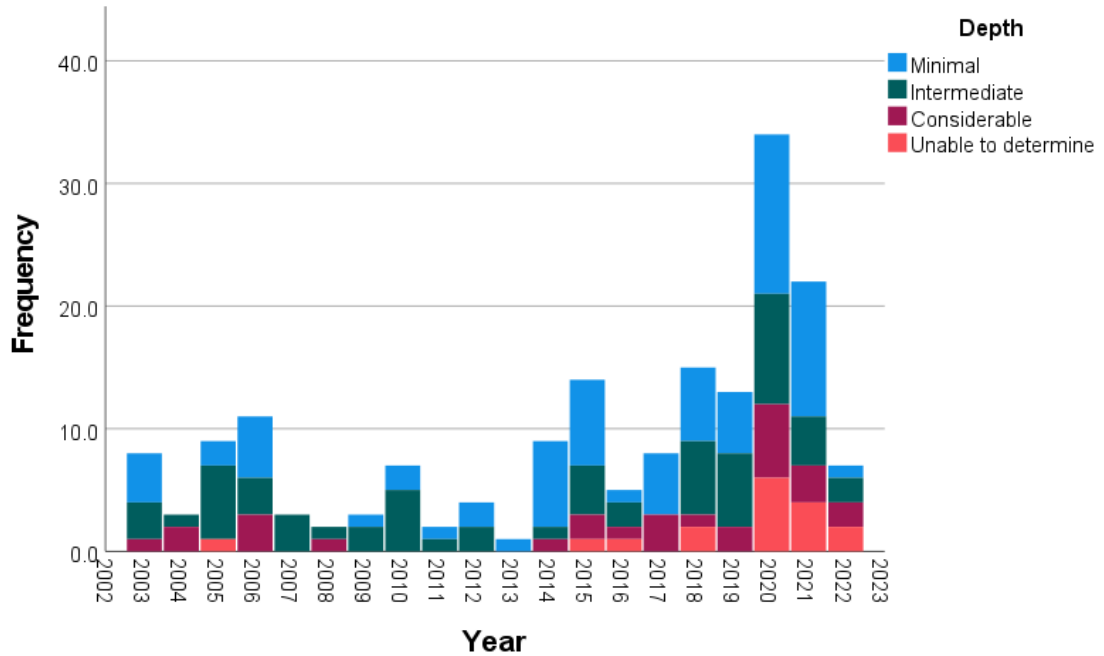
**Table 18***Cross-tabulation of Depth and Breadth with Context*

	Context		
	Administrations	General elections	Total
	Depth		
Minimal	70	134	204
Intermediate	110	150	260
Considerable	55	66	120
Unable to determine	4	33	37
	Breadth		
Minimal	99	106	205
Intermediate	115	172	278
Considerable	21	73	94
Unable to determine	4	31	35
<b>Total</b>	<b>239</b>	<b>382</b>	<b>621</b>

Depth was also analysed by year as an indication of Maltese CJ policymaking's alignment with PET. This theory would translate into the dominance of "minimal" changes across years, intermittently punctuated with "intermediate" and (less frequently) "considerable" changes. Results (Figure 17) negate this hypothesis. Scores for 'intermediate' and 'considerable' indicate that CJ policies were not characterised by punctuated equilibriums and insulated, stable dispositions. Rather they are better described as having had a steadier evolutionary rate with a generous mix of minimal, intermediate and considerable modifications.

**Figure 17**

*Stacked Histogram of Depth by Year*



*Note.* Data was restricted to budget speeches, given how this is the only annual source for which a census was analysed.

#### **4.4 Representations**

So far, analysis has been restricted to manifest variables, the properties of which could be easily extracted from the content by a policy-attuned coder. The last section progresses to variables with a more latent disposition. These were not readily presented in content but were teased out by a coder who is knowledgeable about the studied context. They include the principles, practices and orientation of coded units, which, in NPF's terms, collectively communicate the morality and aspirations of the local CJ system. The elevated need/risk for subjectivity and interpretivism is justified given the variables' unique contribution to a proper understanding of CJ representations.

##### **4.4.1 Manifested Principles and Practices**

This variable was based on Warner's (2021) premise that principles and practices are one way to discern concepts that do not easily lend themselves to empirical observation (such

as ideologies and social representations). The principles and practices listed in Table 19 are primarily deductions from cited literature and small increments of inductive fieldwork. The results are meant to provide a tailored and localised typology of national CJ policies that captures the values and ideological markers underpinning previous Maltese CJ policies.

**Table 19**

*Unit Distribution by Principles and Practices*

Principles and Practices*		Responses		Cases
Type	Options	N	%	%
System management	Centralisation	53	5.35	8.53
	Interdisciplinary coordination	75	7.57	12.08
	Managerialism	61	6.16	9.82
	Privatisation	1	0.10	0.16
	Professional accountability	52	5.25	8.37
System principles and practices	Deterrence	103	10.39	16.59
	Essentialism	21	2.12	3.38
	Incapacitation	20	2.02	3.22
	Non-essentialism	34	3.43	5.48
	Restitution	66	6.66	10.63
	Retribution	82	8.27	13.20
	Welfarism	66	6.66	10.63
System convergence	Disassociation	4	0.40	0.64
	Europeanisation	89	8.98	14.33
	Legality	67	6.76	10.79
	Multilateralism	65	6.56	10.47
Unable to determine		132	13.32	21.26
Total		991	100.00	159.58

*Note.* \*Dichotomy group tabulated at value 1.

The fact that the highest frequency is 'unable to determine' communicates policymakers' lack of investment in elaboration for their policy initiatives. Actions coded to this category include:

- a simple acknowledgement of a problem in electoral manifestos;
- a promise to address the deficiencies of the other party in election debates;
- a pledge to invest money in a specific area of CJ in budget speeches; and
- a bland report of an implemented policy in ministerial reports.

This suggests that Maltese political rhetoric on CJ lacked the emotive tone that Garland (2001) insisted would characterise CJ policies across the globe.

Nevertheless, a substantial portion of units was elaborated enough for implicit principles and practices to be discerned. Table 19 organises these options into three categories. The first relates to principles and practices concerned with the management of the local CJ system, which was evidently characterised by managerialism and interdisciplinarity. Previous results have demonstrated how the government houses most actions, so it is understandable why these results reflect the principles of New Public Management that came to characterise this sector during the studied timeframe (McEwan, 2011; Polidano, 2022).

Scores for interdisciplinary coordination once again disprove the silo mentality (Borakove et al., 2015). On the other hand, Garland's tenth index on the mixed economy of CJ was irrelevant to the Maltese context, even if Xuereb (2018a) claimed that Maltese politics is experiencing an unprecedented shift towards EU's market principles. Contrarily, in the 2017 electoral campaign, PL emphasised how "the aspect of public order and discipline should always be within the state's remit and not dictated by the commercialisation of the operative itself" (PL, 2017, p.53).

Scores for professional accountability indicate dedication toward increasing the reliability and integrity of CJ professionals. This result could be viewed in light of Garland's (2001) argument on "the crisis of penal modernism" (p.20), which underscores the decreased confidence in the system's ability to fulfil its objectives. Indeed, numerous actions focus on restoring the trust and prestige of the Police Force. Considering Malta's moderate scores

for trust in the national CJ system (European Commission, 2021), this focus may be seen as misplaced or as the cause of this general peace of mind.

The next category relates to principles and practices which define the system through their contrasts. For instance, non-essentialism (i.e., the belief that offenders can rehabilitate themselves and become morally equivalent members of society) was more dominant than the belief that offenders are deviant by nature and unlikely to change. This contributes to the local debate on the relevance of penal welfarism and the 'what works' saga in European countries (Corcoran, 2019; Martufi, 2019). Much like other Member States, social re-engineering and rehabilitation were still on the local political agenda, despite arguments to the contrary (e.g., Corcoran, 2019; Di Ronco & Sergi, 2019; Garland, 2001).

Deterrence, meaning actions disbalance the cost-benefit equation of crime, featured quite significantly in this category. This indicates that the local CJ system operated on the premise of rational choice theory that crime control is a matter of finding the right punishment (Schmallegger, 2017). This prevalence can be contrasted with welfarism, an ideological viewpoint which views social inequality as the primary cause of crime (Lidskog & Persson, 2012; Mallicoat, 2014). The distinction between deterrence and welfarism can be exemplified through Azzopardi's (2016) comment on the Maltese CJ system having both repressive (deterrence) and ideological (welfarism) mechanisms. Taking benefit fraud as an illustrative example, ideological persuasion was represented by statements such as "it would be the greatest injustice to those in real need, if benefits were paid to whoever is not entitled to receive them" (Scicluna, 2016, p.80). In contrast, the establishment of the Benefit Fraud and Investigation department was characteristic of repressive mechanisms.

Azzopardi's two mechanisms can further be amalgamated with the liberal and conservative ideologies on crime discussed by Mallicoat (2014). The liberal corresponds with the ideological mechanism which uses social responsibility as the most effective form of CJ, whilst conservative ideology may be likened to repressive mechanisms based on their shared faith in the rational-choice theory. Ultimately, based on the frequencies in Table 19, the deterrence-repression-conservatism triangle seems to have won over the welfarist-ideological-liberal model.

Additionally, retributive sentiments were more common than restitutive actions in this dataset. Based on Amatrudo's (2009) distinction between backwards-looking and forward-looking policies, this result aligns Malta with the former orientation. This is because actions more often seek compensation for the wrongs of the past without much regard for the future. At this stage, there is no way of conclusively ascertaining whether these indications of policy punitiveness are even comparable to those nations frequently cited in the literature (e.g., Piatkowska, 2016; Warner, 2021; Wozniak, 2016). However, these results support Tillie et al.'s (2019) argument that Malta has proven resistant to less conventional forms of punishment.

The last category relates to principles and practices which indicate the extent to which the system converges or diverges from international standards. Scores for legality and Europeanisation indicate that superior institutions often determined policy direction through direct commands (e.g., directives) or implicit nudges (e.g., allocation of funds for certain objectives). Years after it acceded the EU, Malta seemed to be very much still engaged in the ongoing process of policy assimilation among the Member States mentioned by Ellul (2020) and Xuereb (2018a). This willingness to conform could be ascribed to the general absence of Eurosceptic and populist movements in the prominent political environment (Leusch, 2019).

Scores for multilateralism exemplify the phenomenon of globalisation, whereby several nations collaborate to attain their goals, inadvertently promoting policy convergence and eliminating national differences. Ultimately, results greatly conform with Warrington's (2012) claim about the local policy environment being dominated by "shrewd, ambitious policy-makers who set their sights by the standards of the world's most developed countries" (p.27).

The inevitability of a multiple response set for this variable regrettably restricted statistical testing for associations with independent variables (the second research objective). For the time being, cross-tabs between principles and practices and context, legislature and political party are included in Appendix G for the reader's benefit. Interpreting these cross-tabs may advance certain hypotheses which could benefit from future multivariate analysis.

#### 4.4.2 Orientation

This variable is loosely based on dichotomies presented in literature, including conservative and liberal policies (Mallicoat, 2014), the zero-sum dichotomy between the guilty and the injured (Asmussen et al., 2020) and the dichotomy between the crime control and due process models of CJ (Berti et al., 2012). Admittedly, it would have benefitted more from being placed on a spectrum instead of being limited to mutually exclusive categories. However, this would have compromised the data's reliability by increasing the raters' subjectivity during coding (Bryman, 2012).

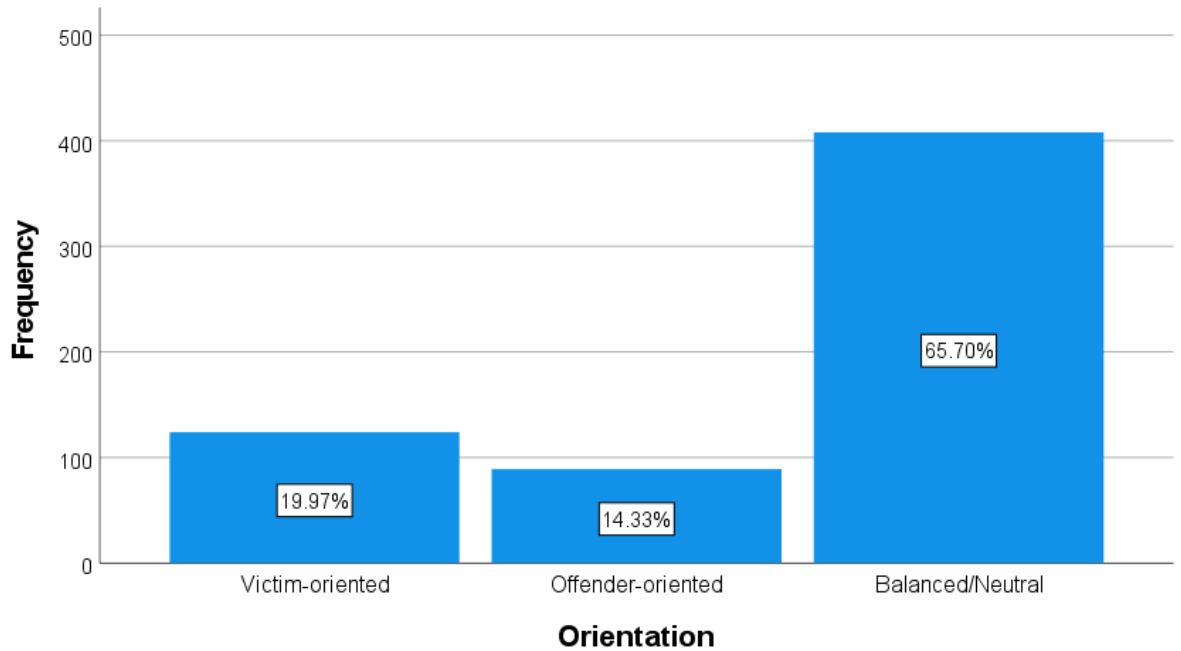
Figure 18 demonstrates how the rhetoric for most actions was overwhelmingly neutral, meaning that no partiality towards victims or offenders could be detected. This essentially disproves the victim-offender zero-sum game advanced by Asmussen et al. (2020) by demonstrating that even regard for both groups exists in local political rhetoric. When actions were partial, they were more often lenient towards victims than offenders.

This result should be considered with those presented for areas of concern (Section 4.2.4) and direct target groups (Section 4.3.3). These variables demonstrated the higher representation of offender services over victim services and the higher representation of offenders over victims as target groups. When viewed against results in Figure 18, they imply that actions concerning offenders (although more prominent) are not necessarily oriented towards their wellbeing. For instance, proposed introductions of electronic tags during bail (PN, 2013) mainly targeted offenders' behaviour and services. Still, it was truly intended to protect victims and assuage their concerns as due processes take place.

The gap might be indicative of the extent to which Malta prioritised the public and victims' safety and its levels of punitiveness. Indeed, scholars' reports about increased favouritism of victims (e.g., Asmussen et al., 2020; Hall, 2017; Kainulainen et al., 2021) are generally confirmed by this variable, although perhaps not to the extent they envisaged for other nations. Maltese CJ policies tentatively edged towards the culture of victimisation (Hall, 2017) and the crime control model of CJ (Berti et al., 2012), although penal welfarism and the due process model remain relevant. Thus, it would be more prudent to characterise the temperament of Maltese CJ policies as moderate, subject to future revisions in a few years.

**Figure 18**

*Unit Distribution by Orientation*



Orientation was further tested for associations with context, legislature and political party. The contingency table (Table 20) exhibits similar discrepancies that can be observed across the three independent variables. In each cross tab, the ‘balanced/neutral’ category invariably placed first, followed by victim-oriented policies. Consequently, the Chi-Square test (Table H12) revealed significant associations between all tested pairs (context -  $\chi^2(2) = 8.07, p = <0.05$ ; legislature -  $\chi^2(8) = 30.82, p = <0.01$ ; political party -  $\chi^2(4) = 16.45, p = <0.05$ ). Yet, Cramér’s V Coefficient (Table H13) reveals that effect sizes are weak at best, advising caution when making statements about the malleability of orientations of CJ policies against the socio-political environment. It would be more prudent to acknowledge that the contextual variables included in this frame are only some of a plethora of mediating factors whose abundance can never be done justice through this study alone.

**Table 20***Cross-tabulation of Orientation with Context, Legislature and Political Party*

Categorical Variables	Categorical Options	Orientation			Total
		Victim-Oriented	Offender-Oriented	Balanced / Neutral	
Context	Elections	61	35	143	239
	Administrations	63	54	265	382
Legislature	9 <sup>th</sup>	16	4	35	55
	10 <sup>th</sup>	13	11	88	112
	11 <sup>th</sup>	28	12	65	105
	12 <sup>th</sup>	33	39	89	161
	13 <sup>th</sup>	34	23	131	188
Political Party	PN	31	16	109	156
	PL	83	61	285	429
	FN	10	12	14	36
Total		124	89	408	621

**4.5 Conclusion**

The chapter presented a blueprint of Maltese CJ policies, including their setting, plot, characters and embedded morals against which they were developed. Descriptive results collectively communicate that despite a measure of politicisation of CJ issues, the discussion is balanced and void of the extremism that characterises some of the more dominant cultures. The balanced representations of retributive and restitutive sentiments, the practically non-existent commercialisation of crime control and the dominance of reactive over proactive measures are some examples which prove Malta to be the exception to Garland's classic rules. This exceptionalism reinforces the principles of cross-

national heterogeneity and interpretivism in CJ, based on the country's "normative assumption[s] of how society *ought* to work" (Barton & Johns, 2012, p.41).

Aside from their descriptive utility, results were also tested for dependencies with the surrounding spatial and temporal environments. This fulfilled the second research objective, namely to determine whether representational elements of CJ policies are statistically associated or dependent on the surrounding context. Tables H14 and H15 summarise the outcomes of causal and association tests, in which the plausibility for  $H_0$  was only accepted twice out of the 14 run tests. Based on levels of significance alone, these results reinforce the importance of contextualised understanding, as propagated by the study's theoretical framework.

Conclusively, this chapter supports and contrasts with literature cited in Chapter 2. Yet, this analysis does not claim exhaustiveness of all possible mediating variables or interpretations. Rather, the chapter is infused with prompts for possible areas of future research. Indeed, the dataset on which this analysis is based remains amenable to further development. The groundwork presented herein allows the study to move on to the next phase of its methodology, where it sheds its quantitative approach and embellishes this discussion with more in-depth observations.

**CHAPTER 5: THEMATIC ANALYSIS OF POLITICAL DISCOURSE ON DOMESTIC  
VIOLENCE POLICY**

The study now changes its positivist stance and shifts its focus from generalisability to an in-depth discursive analysis of local narratives on CJ. Using DV policy as an illustrative example, this chapter presents the themes characterising its representation. The overarching framework (Figure 19) organises data under four main themes, together representing the narrative's plot (the problem), the rational-minded characters (the protagonists), the cultural setting (base values and perspectives) and the teachable morals (the solutions), all requisites for any effective policy series (Jones et al., 2014; Shanahan et al., 2018).

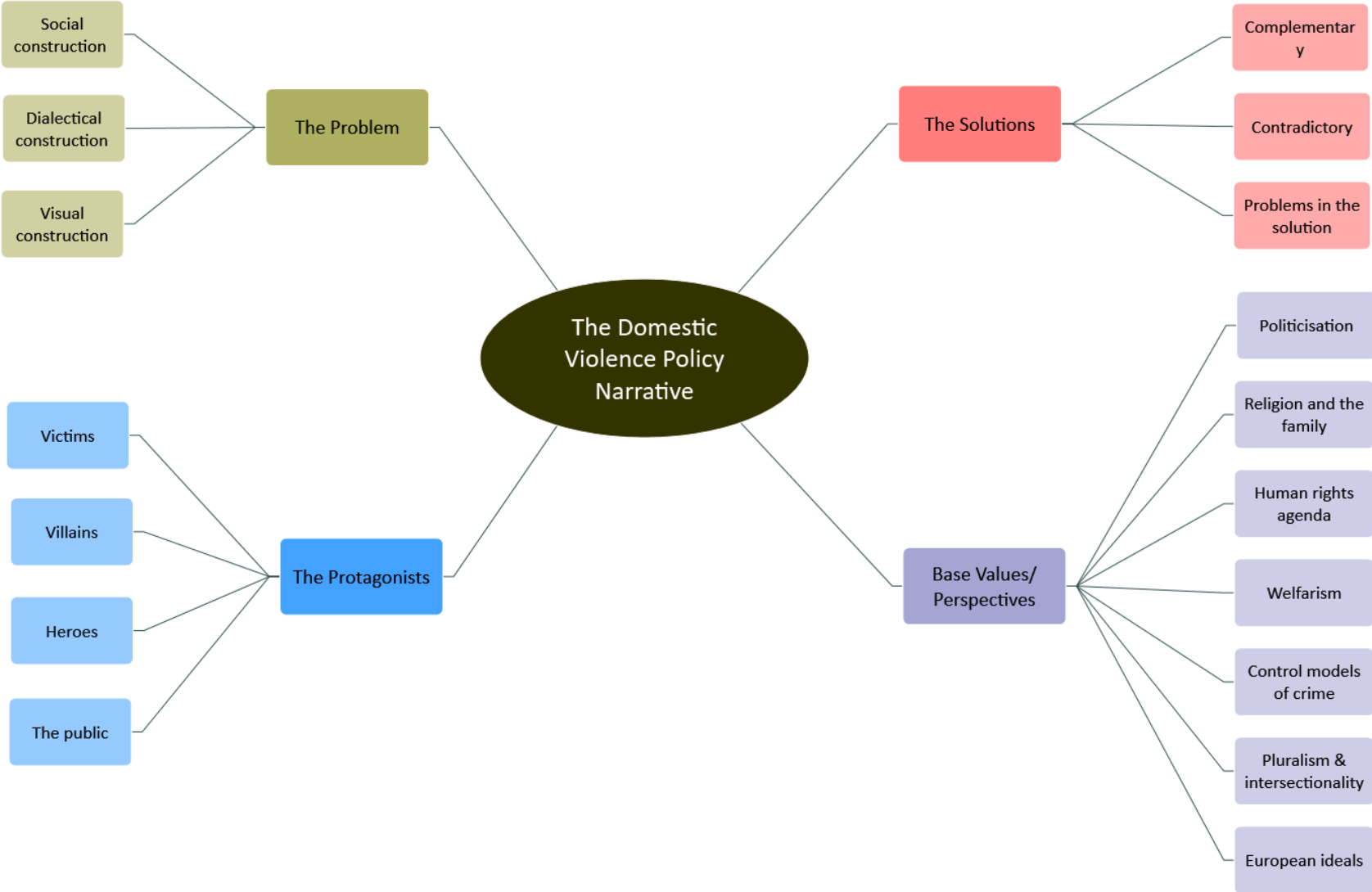
With reference to the data analysis process outlined in Section 3.5.3, the chapter runs through descriptions of each theme and sub-theme, duly citing quotes from the sample, literature from Chapter 2 and the quantitative results in Chapter 4. This cross-referencing is meant to affirm the co-validity of the two research methods and consolidate the emerging social representation of CJ in Malta with other empirical evidence, a process which concludes with a discussion in Chapter 6. Data visuals extracted from the quantitative coding frame are presented in Appendix J to improve the chapter's readability.

## **5.1 The Problem**

As with any plot of substance, the extracted narrative involved generous rhetorical persuasion of a problem's existence and why the hero lay claim to its solution (Boda, 2013). The effort expended on convincing the public of the problem's existence contrasts starkly with results in Chapter 4, where the vast majority of CJ initiatives were presented to the public without justification for their need (Section 4.2.3). This section explores DV's social, dialectical and visual construction through a 20-year temporal and political lens, and follows its evolution from a morally grey, personal matter into a politically condemned crime of societal concern.

Figure 19

The Overarching Thematic Framework



### 5.1.1 The Social and Dialectical Construction

A characteristic representation of DV in Malta was the evolutionary course it underwent to be recognised as a legitimate and worthy cause for the state to pursue and administer justice. Policymakers were observed to transpose the issue from the private to the public domain by persistently referring to DV as “a crime against society” (Hansen, 2005, par.8), “a public health issue” (Commission on Domestic Violence [CDV], 2010, p.27) and as “everybody’s business” (Dalli, 2016b, par.4). The metaphorical barriers around the family unit gradually became translucent, as crime and politics became the more prominent elements in the issue’s social construction.

This transposition began before the samples’ timeframe and continued throughout, even when the issue’s recurrence on the political agenda implied its acceptance by the Maltese constituency. As a result, the threat was no longer restricted to a few unfortunate victims but was extended to the entire community. Thus, the social contract came into play and recurrently justified the state’s authority to intervene for the safety of not a few but all its citizens (Di Ronco & Sergi, 2019; Matza, 1969/2010). This social orientation compliments Azzopardi’s (2016) observation of how concerns about the state’s intrusion in private affairs “fade away when the issue of the preservation of the state is brought into the equation” (p.403).

In the words of one public administrator,

This idea that what happens in a private home is private – that it is somehow a matter that only concerns the individual in that household – is simply untrue. It affects all of society [...] It affects the victim the most, but also everyone else. DV traumatises children who are exposed to it; they will carry the trauma for the rest of their lives. The victim may end up with broken limbs or other serious injuries; but even if not, *the incident will affect their ability to function normally* [emphasis added]. There may be depression involved, or other issues. So, in fact, the social effects are much broader than the individual incident itself. To give an analogy: it’s a bit like passive smoking. Smoking may seem ‘benign’ compared to this: but we can all see that it is a collective social health issue, not just an individual one (Vassallo, 2017, par.13).

In addition to the 'public protection above all else' mentality (Garland, 2001), policymakers' argument for state intervention also alludes to a functionalist perspective, in which society is threatened by some members' decreased utility and contribution. With this orientation, it was within the state's interest to be done with "the days when the police said they could not help because DV was a private, internal matter of the family" (The Times, 2005a, par.8) and "when the local priest would tell victims, who confided in him, that it was simply the cross they had to bear and to be suffered in silence" (Galea Debono, 2005, par.7).

As part of this evolutionary account, policymakers recurrently emphasised the country's strides in terms of public perceptions of DV. The issue's entry into the metaphorical Overton Window reportedly dates to the late 1980s, when attempts at formal responses to this "social taboo" (Grixti, 2020, par.3) were met by general incredulity. Indeed, the then minister Hon. Dolores Christina reports being "advised not to invent issues which did not exist" (The Times, 2005b, par.7). Sentiments seemed to change drastically over the decade, so much so that CDV's chairperson described the advent of the first DV Bill in 2005 as "long awaited [and] greeted with great excitement and hope" (p.6). No empirical evidence documents this enthusiasm, so whether this was genuinely reflective of public sentiments or a promotion strategy for the bill remains debatable. Regardless, policymakers maintained this optimistic belief that the public's acceptance of DV policy remained on an upward slope.

News reporters and policymakers repeatedly referenced "harrowing murder[s]" (Malta Independent, 2020a par.6) of DV victims and quoted ever-rising statistics. Interestingly, these incidents and figures were never construed as a failure of the state's ability to prevent and intervene. Statistics and stories were used to promote further the state's indispensability and need for increased sanctioning powers, in line with Matza's (1969/2010) arguments. Continuous reference to DV homicides may have also intended to serve as symbolic turning points for local policy, much like the impact of 9/11 on global terrorism policy (Silva et al., 2019) or the impact of the British toddler murder on the country's punitive orientation (Jennings et al., 2020).

Policymakers' attempts at persuading the public of the gravity of the DV problem also included varied technical and emotive descriptions of the act itself, as exemplified in Table

21. Technical descriptions were largely founded on empirical data or professional experience, but were overshadowed by chiefly metaphorical descriptions underpinned by more abstract moral arguments. The latter descriptions exemplify Garland’s (2001) prediction of a change in the emotional tone of CJ policy by pointing to the act’s conflict with social parameters of normality.

**Table 21**

*Representations of DV.*

Representation	Description
	Technical
Complex	Its representation as a multi-faceted crime, whose legal definition was revised twice within 12 years to accommodate its various manifestations; its co-existence, even conflation, with the wider spectrum of violence against women and gender-based violence; its implied or suspected co-morbidity with other social problems (e.g., mental illness, poverty and social exclusion).
Gendered	Its representation as one of its diminutive forms (heterosexual intimate partner violence) at the expense of other manifestations; it being both caused and causing a culture of tolerance/denial of misogyny, patriarchy and gender inequality; it being “a manifestation of historically unequal power relations between women and men, which have led to domination over, and discrimination against, women by men” (Bonnici, 2022, par.9).
Pervasive	Its capacity to transcend any social or economic class, geographical location or familial setup
Cyclical	Its capacity for intergenerational transfer and long-lasting ripple effects

---

Emotive	
Physically weakening	Its presentation as a “social ill” (Scicluna, 2018, p.105), a “social plague” (CGBVDV, 2021, p.4), a “social wound” (The Times, 2005b, par.4) and “a scar on society” (Arena, 2020, par.8).
Distressing	It being a “social scourge” (e.g., Azzopardi, 2018, par.4; CDV, 2007, p.6; CDV, 2010, p.9) which hinders individual and societal fulfilment and thwarts collective wellbeing.
Antithetical	It housing incompatible sentiments (love and violence; respect and abuse), making the action “doubly condemnable” (Hansen, 2005, par.20).
Immoral	It being described as “a crime against human dignity” (CDV, 2010, p.9), “a violation of women’s human rights” (CDV, 2010, p.27), “a violation of the dignity of the individual” (Lepre, 2006, par.3) and “one of the worst forms of violence there could be in society” (The Times, 2006c, par.15).

---

### 5.1.2 The Visual Construction

Policy documents consistently avoided provoking imagery and opted for more sterile photographs featuring policymakers and street bureaucrats at work. On the other hand, images used by the media invariably visualised the gendered and violent nature of DV. With reference to examples featured in Figure 20, the facial expressions of the depicted female victims and the images’ dark colouring were likely meant to communicate the physical and emotional suffering inflicted by DV aggressors (here portrayed as men).

**Figure 20**

*Compilation of photographs from sampled news media items*



*Note.* From Dalli (2016a; top left), Dalli (2016b; top right), Caruana (2017; bottom left), Costa (2017; bottom right)

The images largely reflected the blueprint of DV in Table 21. The only observed deviation is that the images did not acknowledge the multifaceted nature of DV, instead sticking only to its physical manifestation. This focus could be explained by the media's propensity for sensationalism and the rift it could create between reality (e.g., DV's various forms) and its image (e.g., the physical manifestation of DV; Pickett et al., 2015, Kappeler & Potter, 2017; Krotz, 2017). Consequently, politicians and the media, two prominent social control agents (Azzopardi, 2016), may not have been promoting the same narrative. Based on observation, politicians seemed to be aiming for a balance between DV's empirical and emotive dimensions, whereas the media was only concerned with the latter.

## **5.2 The Protagonists**

This section focuses on the characters who featured prominently in the narrative on DV policy. The theme was organised based on Kappeler and Potter's (2017) tri-dimensional categorisation of victims, villains and heroes. The analysis also revealed a fourth persona in the narrative, the general public, who could not be exclusively parcelled into any of the aforementioned three, given how it was made to embody them all.

The representation of these characters was straightforward and uniform throughout the sample. Their lack of complexity points to bounded rationality in action, as policymakers seemingly used simplified notions to guide their decision-making despite the phenomenon's complexity (Weible et al., 2012). As a result, the roles and characteristics of these characters were definitive and likely determined by hermeneutic scripts that provided a conceptual shorthand of how they ought to behave.

### **5.2.1 The Victims**

Represented victims can be categorised into four social groups: women, children, other dependents and men, in descending order of prevalence. The predominant image of female victims was in line with gendered descriptions of DV (Table 21). Numerous assumptions about this group were evident in the employed language, reinforcing policymakers' assumed use of the bounded rationality technique. For example, references to female victims are often latched with the second social group, children, indicating their presumed parental status. Indeed, the frequency with which children were mentioned alongside female victims prompted street-bureaucrats' assurance that "this emphasis on the effect of DV on children ... in no way ... relegate[s] the suffering of women who are the predominant victims of DV" (Psaila, 2003, par.7).

Children victims fell within the wider group of dependants, the third social group identified through this analysis. Together with the elderly, they were portrayed as being "among the weakest members of society" (Dalli, 2002, p.23) and "vulnerable members of the family [who] deserve the appropriate protection and support" (CDV, 2010, p.9). However, treatment for elderly victims reportedly fell short of that provided for child witnesses, as a

former commissioner for older persons argues that “when an elderly woman turns up at the casualty, alone and injured, no one bats an eye” (Dalli, 2004, par.20).

Both Psaila’s (2003) and Dalli’s (2004) statements seem to imply that the metaphorical ‘spotlight’ and policy space for victims is definite and is to be shared among the various groups. Another possible explanation for the unequal policy standing of the aforementioned victim groups is the determinism with which policymakers discussed child victims. They prophesied them becoming “either victims, or perpetrators themselves” (Galea Debono, 2005, p.42) and referenced evidence of how “victimised girls became victims when they grew up and victimised boys became aggressors” (The Times, 2005b, par.10). These predictions made state intervention all the more crucial for certain victims.

Men and boys are the least most common group of victims, often mentioned as an afterthought. References to this group were presented along the lines of: “it is important not to forget that men can also be victims of such crime” (The Malta Independent, 2020b, par.19). In view of gendered depictions of the problem (Table 21 & Figure 20), male victims seemed to not fit comfortably in the narrative, an issue that local policymakers periodically attempted to remedy.

Regardless of social identity, all victims of DV were collectively represented as innocent, traumatised individuals who inherit a lasting legacy of devastating effects, “shattered lives” (CDV, 2007, p.5) and “crippling fear” (Dalli, 2015, par.9). A few notable exceptions to this determinism were mentioned, namely the victims-turned-activists who are now part of the policy network. These align greatly with victims’ role in Walklate et al.’s (2018) and Asmussen et al.’s (2020) case studies. However, activists or otherwise, all victims in the sample seemed to enjoy a privileged status among the cast of this narrative, supporting Garland’s (2001) prediction on the significant return of the victim in CJ policies’ narrative.

### **5.2.2 The Villains**

Representations of the villains can be surmised through the following quote: “If you are a man who feels that you might be a perpetrator – who has problems controlling behaviour towards your partner through physical, emotional, verbal sexual, and/or financial abuse – you need to seek help” (Calleja, 2009, par.17). Three deductions on perpetrators’ character

can be made from this appeal: perpetrators are male, self-aware and with behavioural problems that make them abusive towards their partners.

This depiction, however reductionist, can be witnessed throughout the sample, even if the writers were not explicit about their assumptions of the perpetrator's identity (e.g., "the aggressive person is ordered to stay away from *his* [emphasis added] soon-to-be former spouse" – Dalli, 2015, par.5). Again, DV was largely presented in terms of intimate partner violence and as a gendered phenomenon. Policymakers provided various explanations as to why one becomes a perpetrator, among which are mental imbalances, drug and alcohol abuse and "masculine trait[s] of wanting to be superior" (Galea Debono, 2005, par.32).

This determinism and displacement of 'evil' from the individual towards social norms and risk factors perhaps aimed to shift some of the blame from the perpetrator onto the social circumstances surrounding them. This interpretation is reminiscent of a liberal orientation in DV policies, whereby the offender's actions reflect society's support failures, not rationally-calculated moves (Mallicoat, 2014). Yet, perpetrators were also portrayed as methodical ("the way perpetrators think and plan ahead"; CDV, 2010, p.41) and manipulative ("reports of DV were withdrawn after victims were sweet-talked or threatened"; The Times, 2005b, par.2). This shift towards the crime control model of criminal justice served to set them apart from the rest of society and drew a more definitive line between the innocent and the evil.

### **5.2.3 The Heroes**

Kappeler and Potter (2017) employ the term 'hero' for what is otherwise known as the policy community. The typology extracted from the sample is presented in Table 22, and combines both institutional set-ups and distinguished actors within. The variety shown in the 'examples' column supports the carceral model of policy and the perceived diffusion of power (Burke, 2013). Indeed, despite their categorical segregation, speakers denoted a certain harmony among this community and spoke in terms of the collective 'we'. This is evident in phrases such as "together, we worked to offer women and children an opportunity to move away from the misery and harm of violent relationships, through an array of services provided by different public and voluntary organisations" (CDV, 2007, par.5).

**Table 22***Roles and examples of heroes within DV policy.*

Group	Projected role	Examples from sample
National political figures	Forming public opinion; protecting victims; pioneering progress in the field; organising financial and human resources; motivating street-level bureaucrats; legitimising other categories' initiatives	Political leaders; ministers; parliamentary secretaries; parliament; electoral candidates
Public administrators	Advising politicians and state institutions; ensuring compliance with state obligations; administering bureaucratic tasks; acting on political will; coordinating service provision; requesting resources from ministries	CDV/CGBVDV; permanent secretaries; ministry officials; local councils
Street-level bureaucrats	Providing services; committing to continuous professional development; empathising with and supporting victims	Welfare professionals and CJ professionals
Civil society	Supporting street-level bureaucrats; requesting financial support from the state; surveying compliance with state obligations	Religious organisations; academia; NGOs
Supranational organisations	Creating blueprints for action; guiding localised action; promoting multilateral cooperation; monitoring states' fulfilment of obligations; sourcing legitimacy; advocating a gendered approach; providing funds and structural support	International pressure groups; World Bank; CoE; EU

Mutual gratitude and thanks were frequently exchanged among these categories, including homages to distinguished political and non-political figures. Politicians' use of phrases such as:

- “A DV Act ... has seen the passionate involvement and imprint of Family and Social Solidarity Minister Dolores Cristina” (Galea Debono, 2005, par.20);
- “mind you, the bill [...] was discussed, dissected and agreed upon with scholars and authors of the calibre of Dr Lara Dimitrijevic, Dr Marceline Naudi and Dr Claire Azzopardi Lane” (Bonnici, 2022, par.5); and
- “the yearly commitment [...] was held under the distinguished patronage of Dr Lydia Abela” (CGBVDV, 2021, p.4)

communicate the idea of ‘celebrity statuses’ in the field who lend legitimacy and, in academics’ case, an element of technocracy to pursued actions (Loader & Sparks, 2016). Indeed, contrary to Loader and Sparks’ commentary on the loss of their influence on agenda setting and policy formulation, policy and DV experts featured prominently in the examined narrative, with virtually none of the usual hostility or clashes.

Nevertheless, each faction was largely portrayed as subject to the will of national politicians. For example, CGBVDV was seen to be “given the *go-ahead* [emphasis added] to strengthen its work” by the incumbent government (Scicluna, 2017, p.92). Additionally, in line with quantitative results from Section 4.2.3 and Paoli et al.’s (2016) argument, national politicians claimed ownership over initiatives mandated by CoE and EU frameworks. Thus, contrary to what Cairney (2016) proposes, a nucleus of power did seem to exist in this policy community. However, this centrality on the national politicians can also be justified given the political ownership over most of the sources from which these results were acquired.

#### **5.2.4 The General Public**

The general public was afforded its own category as a protagonist, given the multiple roles it occupies in the narrative. Maltese society was simultaneously presented as part-villain, part-victim and part-hero, in ascending order of prevalence. The public was sparsely considered an enabler for DV and perpetrators. Even with the lapse of a decade of DV policy, then Minister, Hon. Helena Dalli reports how “a significant minority are sceptical

about the veracity of claims by those reporting DV [...] and believed that some such reports were fabrications” (“Guarantee protection”, 2017, par.10).

However, in line with Garland’s (2001) prediction about the increased focus on public protection, society was more frequently perceived as an actual or a potential victim. It was victimised given the aforementioned decreased utility of the citizens who have been directly impacted and its ripple effects on surrounding systems. Additionally, policymakers also felt the need to address future victims of DV by promising to “ensure that all persons in Malta feel safe, and that should they become victims of violence, the right set of services are there for them” (Ministry for European Affairs and Equality, 2017, p.i). Perhaps this was meant to promote the view that the government was not expending considerable resources on a small, unfortunate segment of society but was doing so on behalf of the community.

The public’s third role refers to the idea of uninvolved individuals acting on behalf of the victim and the state and exposing DV to the authorities. Indeed, the public’s power and responsibility for active intervention were solidified with the legal amendments of 2018. This active bystander approach relates closely with Garland’s (2001) predicted expansion in the infrastructure of community safety and Squires’ (1999) argument on the potential shift in the onus for preventing crime from the authorities to the public.

The systemic coding frame was revisited to conclude this commentary on characters and consolidate qualitative observations with quantitative results. Looking solely at DV-related units from the quantitative coding frame, Figure I1 presents the scores for direct target groups. This provides a quantitative indication of how the spotlight was shared among the above-mentioned four groups in the previous sample. Results largely concur with observations from the discursive analysis. In their uniform and stereotypical characterisation, victims dominated most of the DV narrative in both samples and methods of analysis, commonly followed by the heroes (CJ professionals). Interestingly, the villains (offenders) and the public share equal representations in the quantitative data set, despite the public’s relatively multifaceted character in this qualitative analysis.

### 5.3 Base Values and Perspectives

This theme combines the dimensions of Lasswell's (1968, 1970) social and policy process, base values and perspectives, given how references to setting-specific values were invariably interlaced with how these help or hinder policymakers' actions. Indeed, the narrative involved frequent acknowledgement of the influence that Maltese culture, history and geography have on citizens' meaning-making process and their acceptance of the narrative. State responses to DV frequently considered the customs and religion which may impact prevalence and solutions. Mentions of a "culture of forgiveness" (Dalli, 2014, par.17) and Catholicism's influence on the public's perception of the problem (Calleja, 2011) are two cited factors which perceptively distinguished the local setting from more secularist jurisdictions.

A public servant encapsulated the state's introspective outlook with reference to relativist theory, along the lines that

you have to understand cultures through their own perspective' [...] for instance, speaking about ourselves as 'Mediterranean', and all these other labels [...] they need to be unpacked. [...] And while we, as a society, may have 'accepted' some forms of violence to a certain degree – for instance, spanking children – it doesn't follow that we should continue to accept that, just because we are 'Mediterranean'. Being 'Mediterranean' means nothing in this sense. [...] We cannot continue to accept this as the 'dark side' of our norm (Vassallo, 2017, par.15)

Results further accentuated the tougher barriers reportedly faced by victims and professionals in Gozo, a smaller island in Malta's archipelago with even tighter-knit communities. "Gozo's specific situation" (CDV, 2007, p.8) is recurrently afforded special consideration in policy formulation, with Gozitan representatives often serving to bridge the cultural gaps and tailor aspects of policy implementation.

This contextualisation compliments the principles espoused by cultural criminology (Illan, 2019) and Loader and Spark's (2016) argument that policy solutions are largely determined by their alignment with dominant cultural values. It indicates a critical reflexive outlook on policymakers' part, given how they acknowledged that the crime and policy are not external to social reality but are instead constructed in line with the surrounding

environment. This approach might explain why, in Mellaard and van Meijl's (2016) and Krizsán and Roggeband's (2018) view, DV policy is still characterised by cross-national heterogeneity, despite the CoE's and EU's attempts to standardise the product in line with European ideals. Table 23 effectively summarises the most prominent values and perspectives used to justify state intervention.

**Table 23**

*Values and Perspectives in DV Policy.*

Value/Perspective	Description
Human rights perspective	The public's and victims' entitlement to safety and security, gender equality, dignity and respect.
State responsibility and welfarism	The state's assumption of responsibility to cater for victims' wellbeing (e.g., employment opportunities, housing, financial support and welfare services).
Religion	The influence of Catholicism on how the problem is perceived and how it is dealt with (e.g., their resistance to divorce in case of DV)
Control models	The zero-tolerance approach to DV and those who perpetrate it through calls for harsher sentencing.
The family	The increasingly accepted permeability of the family unit and tolerance of its dissolution in cases of DV.
Social pluralism & intersectionality	The attention to the multiple barriers that social groups encounter when seeking justice (e.g., gender, migrant status, ethnicity, disability, age and sexual orientation).
The European ideal	An appreciation of other countries' strides in the area and attempts at catching up to their standards (e.g., through study visits, twinning programmes and seminars).
Politicisation	The transposition of the DV issue from the experts to the political realm.

Numerous parallels may be drawn between Table 23 and results from Chapter 4. For example, the leftist ideology that is evident in references to policymakers being “duty-bound” (Azzopardi, 2018, par.1) to their citizens mirrors the prevalence of ‘welfarism’ as a practice and principle in the quantitative coding frame. Likewise, retributive sentiments (e.g., “current penalties are not harsh enough, leaving much to be desired” – Dalli, 2016a, par.5) and attempts at Europeanisation (e.g., the “name and fame multilateral competition among EU countries” – Galea Debono, 2005, par.4) both featured prominently in previous quantitative results.

There is also a noticeable alignment between Malta’s reported political culture (Section 2.4) and the role it played in the narrative, as the theme continues to build on the previous argument on the centrality of national politicians in DV policy. Discourse analysis revealed considerable politicisation in policy action, a technique which Garland (2001) predicted about all CJ policies. Even if quantitative analysis demonstrated the low electoral salience of crime (Section 4.1.8), this did not preclude politicians from fighting over credit and condemning the opposition’s idleness. As a result, politicians were made to alternate between hero and villain personas. A prime example of this politicisation is the following transcript from one election debate:

Hon. Marlene Farrugia (FN): What has been done about DV in our country? You, who are watching me in some corner in some room. Afraid to talk because every time you file a report, you are still ridiculed. Do you know what happened to the domestic violence law? Hon. Dalli has been wasting our time for four years, and instead of presenting this law in parliament for its second reading, she left it there to gather dust.

Hon. Helena Dalli (PL): [Hon. Farrugia] confuses me when she speaks about violence against women [...] It’s a bit rich when I was the only politician in this country who presented a white paper in 1989 that specifically addressed violence against women. What happened? We ended our term in government, and PN [...] waited six years to present this law in Parliament. Hon. Gonzi, the white paper was presented after six years with my signature on it [...] that’s how much violence against women interested them (Micallef, Dalli et al., 2017).

This illustrative example supports many researchers' argument that DV policy has been coopted and has now become a battle of who did what (e.g., Bailey, 2010; Haaken, 2008; Weissman, 2019). It also affirms Cioffi's (2017) statement on the two parties' parallel and non-congruent perceptions of the same events. The PN-PL divide was further compounded by references to perceived ideological differences between the two parties and how, in PL's view, these hinder the more conservative party (PN) from appreciating the grievousness of the issue. Hon. Bonnici from PL, in a commentary on DV and its ties to femicide, presented an absolutist view of this divide, claiming that

"it is only Labour that can implement change in our country. The Nationalist Party and fellow conservative forces have time and time again been on the wrong side of history, each time real, robust and strong social reforms have been undertaken in our country" (Bonnici, 2022, par.2).

Reference was again made to the quantitative coding frame discussed in Chapter 4 to examine these determinate claims. Data was filtered to include only units relating to DV and disaggregated by political party. Results in Figure I2 support the premise that PL presented DV in its agenda more than PN. This both bolsters Muirhead and Rosenblum's (2020) promotion of the need to recognise party systems' influences and also seems to negate Fenech's (2013) and Pace's (2017) premise that ideological differences between the two parties have become practically non-existent, at least in this regard.

## **5.4 The Solutions**

This theme combines and mobilises all preceding themes (the problem, the protagonists and the values) and transforms the abstract notion of CJ into tangible outcomes. Table 24 presents the major plot points found in the document series, indicating that the pace for representation of DV policy seems to have picked up significantly over the past years. However, the resultant list of events also reflects sample restrictions and the exclusion of incremental changes which led to these major turning points. Based on this plot, the application of PET (Cairney, 2019; Jennings et al., 2020) can be observed in the gaps between one major event and another. Given the qualitative approach of this analysis, the study avoided listing each separate activity and instead focused on the underlying strategies which contribute to the social representation of DV policy.

Before delving into these strategies, it is worth noting how policymakers' presentations of their solutions to the public. A balanced tone was observed in most instances, sparsely punctuated with self-congratulatory or self-deprecating comments. For example, an author in a news article reported how "we have a very worthy story to tell and we gave [GREVIO] a good account of ourselves" (Grixti, 2020, par.2). In contrast, a national figure was said to implicitly offer "an acknowledgement that our national record in this sphere has been less than positive in the past [and] we've not really been good to the victims of DV" (Vassallo, 2017, par.1, 16). The orthodox social progress and the radical conflict models can be respectively observed in these two statements. Projected effects of the solutions were ultimately meant to instate "the legacy [for] a country which addresses the social realities of hundreds of people, sensitively and intelligently" (CGBVDV, 2021, p.6).

Extracted approaches were largely complementary, except for two contradictory pairs. Unlike results in Section 4.2.4, policymakers perceptively attained a good balance between proactive and reactive strategies. Balance can also be observed in repressive versus ideological control mechanisms (e.g., harsher sentencing versus awareness-raising campaigns; Azzopardi, 2016). Overall, themes can be seen to reflect the categories that were inductively coded for areas of concern (Section 4.2.4), policy instruments (Section 4.3.1) and principles and practices (Section 4.5.1) in the first research method. Tables I1 to I3 present DV units' scores for these categories for cross-comparison with the following discussion.

**Table 24**

*Major plot points in the sample.*

Date	Party*	Event
Aug. 1998	PL	White Paper on DV was issued
Mar. 2006	PN	Entry of DV Act into force and establishment of Commission on DV
Sept. 2014	PL	Ratification of the Istanbul Convention
Jan. 2017	PL	Launch of Victim Support Unit in the Malta Police Force

Nov. 2017		Launch of the first national strategy on gender-based violence and DV
May 2018	PL	Entry of Gender-Based Violence and DV Act into force.
Feb. 2020	PL	Appointment of first full-time Commissioner for CGBVDV.
Apr. 2020		Provision of free legal aid for DV victims
Oct. 2020		Launch of Gender-Based and DV Police Unit.
Nov. 2020		Publication of GREVIO's first baseline report on Malta.
Apr. 2021	PL	Launch of Victim Support Agency
Jun. 2021		Launch of the second national strategy on gender-based and DV.
Sept. 2021		Enactment of a memorandum of understanding between CGBVDV and the University of Malta
Feb. 2022	PL	Presentation of Femicide bill in Parliament

*Note.* \*Party in government.

#### **5.4.1 Complementary Strategies**

##### ***5.4.1.1 Legal Protection and Legality***

One of the most frequently cited instruments for creating and legitimising DV policy was the law. The DV Act of 2006 went through “a long and winding road to Parliament” (Galea Debono, 2005, par.20) and was at last celebrated as a major accomplishment which kickstarted a series of other initiatives. Policymakers very often promoted the numerous functions of this law and its (harsher) 2018 successor, here covered in Table 25. Mentions of other acts, including legal provisions for divorce and femicide, were used to bolster further Government’s and Parliament’s zero-tolerance stance toward DV.

Legality was distinct but complementary to legal protection, given how it sought to bring the policy in line with legal provisions. The present sample continued to build on quantitative scores for this principle (Section 4.5.1) through continuous reference to national law and the Istanbul Convention as guides for field-level implementation. Indeed, legal requirements of the convention were fully transposed to national law in 2018, whilst attainment of the convention’s policy standards for day-to-day implementation remained

an ongoing task. In this sense, NGOs fulfilled their supervisory roles by pointing out existing discrepancies and urging action to become compliant.

**Table 25**

*Functions of DV law*

Function	Description
Definitional	Statutes' ability to comprehensively define a phenomenon as complex as DV and the state's response and obligations
Symbolic	Statutes' representation of society's condemnation of those who perpetuate DV.
Retributive	Statutes' portrayal as indispensable tools for the administration of justice and just desserts
Foundational	Statutes' representation as the foundation on which proper social change and state action can take place.

**5.4.1.2 Primary and Secondary Prevention**

In line with claims on the preventative turn of CJ (Lidskog & Persson, 2012), primary and secondary prevention occupied a considerable portion of this sample. Primary prevention, namely, any intervention before incidents occur, was seen to complement legal provisions and was evident in the lists of educational initiatives and awareness-raising campaigns which target various populations. These initiatives can be seen to represent the ideological mechanisms that Azzopardi (2016) believes to be an inherent characteristic of Malta's crime control strategy.

The most common target population was young people, with one Minister arguing that "by intervening at an early stage, our schools would become incubators to form our countries adolescents into exemplary adults in the future" (Attard, 2021, par.7). These campaigns largely centred on instilling a zero-tolerance philosophy towards DV within Maltese culture, in line with the above-specified base values and the wider gender equality agenda. Various mediums were used to bring "this social wound to the fore" (The Times, 2005b, par.14), including traditional and social media, educational curricula and printed material. Symbolic

dates were frequently used to reinforce these messages, with United Nations Day against Violence against Women and the complimentary 16 days of activism which follow being an almost reverent period.

Throughout the sample, policymakers also became increasingly invested in secondary prevention, namely the prevention of further violence once one or more episodes have occurred. It was, for one, exemplified by policymakers' appeals to victims, such as "DV is not a life sentence; you can use your voice to get help" (Calleja, 2021, par.11) or "so, pick up the phone now, dial 179 and find yourself a new life away from abuse and violence" (Laiviera, 2011, par.11). More tangible interventions for secondary prevention included:

- Financial support for victims who purchase private police services for protection;
- Legal provisions for emergency and longer-term protection orders for victims;
- Introduction of tagging mechanisms for perpetrators to ensure that the provisions of a protection order are respected;
- Changes to the physical environment of the court to minimise contact between victim and perpetrator; and
- Legal provisions for the ex-officio prosecution of perpetrators even if the victim has (willingly or coercively) forgiven them.

These examples, coupled with the reported lack of referrals to treatment programmes, point to an underlying belief of essentialism in perpetrators' behaviour. This trait was already observed in quantitative results in Section 4.5.1 and is discussed further on.

#### ***5.4.1.3 Concerted Responses***

In CDV's 2009 annual report, the incumbent chairperson wrote "in unity has always been our strength" (2010, p.11). This quote effectively sums up the spirit with which the characters cited in Section 5.2.3 related to each other in their field of work. The prominence of multidisciplinary cooperation and coordination was based on the premise that the problem requires holistic and coherent solutions. This theme mirrors scores for interdisciplinary cooperation in Section 4.5.1 and continues to support Borakove et al.'s (2015) premise that the silo-mentality which characterised older versions of CJ systems is

no longer relevant.

From its outset, DV policy was led by intersectoral working groups, whose denominations varied from the Coordinated Response Team to the Steering Group to finally settling on the Interministerial Committee. The three main functions of these setups and other informal attempts at gathering stakeholders (e.g., meetings and seminars) are covered in Table 26. These strategies were meant to unite the stakeholders' agendas and produce an image of a bottom-up DV policy whose objectives are common for all involved.

**Table 26**

*Functions of Intersectoral Working Groups in DV Policy*

Function	Description
Advisory and consultative	Repeated acknowledgement of professionals' invaluable expertise through direct contact with victims and perpetrators. Policy development was reportedly based on consultation and deliberation between desk and street-level bureaucrats, the aim being to "engender universal ownership of the plan[s]" (CDV, 2007, p.11),
Coordination of service provision	Targeting defragmentation and harmonisation of cross-sectoral service provision in acknowledgement of the "structural and operational links between the various entities which interfaced with persons experiencing DV and perpetrators" (CDV, 2007, p.11). Tangible examples include public social partnerships, memoranda of understanding, and multiagency risk assessment meetings.
Networking opportunities	Multidisciplinary gatherings, subtly valued for their networking value.

**5.4.1.4 Victim-Centred Interventions**

A core feature of state interventions was the importance placed on the victim, more so than the perpetrator. Street-level bureaucrats were repeatedly encouraged to provide the

right balance of “love and compassion” (CGBVDV, 2021, p.1) to restore victims’ dignity and enable them to lead independent lives. This emphatic approach was also evident in the numerous studies and attempts at an experiential understanding of what victims go through. The Malta Police Force even went so far as to invest in a simulator which enables officers to experience DV through the eyes of child witnesses.

Building on results from Section 4.5.2 and Figure I3, these and other initiatives were recurrently presented as explicitly in favour of the victims’ interest and implicitly against perpetrators. The crime control model was evident, especially in the later years, as victims’ safety was prioritised above all else (Ellis & Nash, 2011). This victim-oriented approach can also be deduced from the minimal service provision for perpetrators and the manner in which existent services are represented. In earlier samples, “treatment for perpetrators was still conspicuous by its absence” (The Times, 2005e, par.8). Calls to strengthen perpetrator services and increases in referrals were present throughout the timeframe, implying belief in the rehabilitative capacity of DV offenders, but not enough for policymakers to invest their monetary and human resources.

Unlike results in Section 4.5.1, essentialism seemed to be the predominant belief over non-essentialism, which might explain the zero-sum dichotomy between helping victims and helping perpetrators. When rehabilitative interventions were mentioned, they were invariably presented in terms of how these benefit the victim. Villains were rarely addressed as active contributors to the administration of CJ but were forced to atone for their mistakes through the court-mandated treatment programmes. To continue with NPF’s plot metaphor, the story ended with villains receiving their just desserts and the victims being freed of their burdens, with no room for redemption in this narrative.

#### ***5.4.1.5 Institutional Reflexivity and Managerialist Overtones***

Local DV policy was further characterised by its makers’ capacity for recurrent policy monitoring and evaluation. Indeed, the sample itself was a testament to these practices, including within it two sequential national strategies, legally mandated annual reports and one systematic GREVIO evaluation visit. The analysis also revealed a hierarchical structure of accountability for policy improvement, with constituents and supranational bodies at

the top of the hierarchy, national politicians in the middle rank and desk and street-level bureaucrats bringing up the rear.

This institutional reflexivity is seen to contrast starkly with the number of policy actions that were reported at evaluation stage in the quantitative coding frame (1.29%). It could be that the political utility of these evaluation exercises is greater for more attentive audiences and is not the catch-all promises that policymakers use in more general policy documents. Alternatively, the popularity of evaluation practices can be more plausibly explained by legal provisions, which mandate annual reports and recurrent policy development.

The manner in which these evaluations took place echoes a managerialist approach, one of Garland's (2001) predictions and a common score in the quantitative analysis (Section 4.5.1). As a preamble to the second national strategy, a prominent political figure wrote "a strategy is paramount for every aspect of policymaking. A plan is needed to give direction and set aims and deliverables" (CGBVDV, 2021, p.6). In managerialist fashion, these aims and deliverables were often presented in numerical terms (e.g., the strategy's list of expected outcomes, the number of meetings held, the number of professionals trained, etc.) to methodically ascertain their achievement.

#### ***5.4.1.6 Evidence-Based Policies or Policy-Based Evidence***

Evidence, in the form of academic research, administrative data collection and country-level reports for transnational entities, was perceived as a requisite in DV policy as it allows policymakers to "truly keep [their] hands on society's pulse" (CDV, 2016, p.27). Its presence was intermittently evident from the outset, even if its role evolved throughout the sample. From CDV's building of a library of any DV-related material to the Commission being assigned a full-time research officer to the recent signing of a memorandum of understanding between CGBVDV and the Faculty for Social Wellbeing at the University of Malta, evidence was always presented as a priority.

The Commissioner for CGBVDV argued how "research lies at the heart of what we do, and so we cannot be effective if we do not have recent information of the realities on the ground as to what people are experiencing across Malta and Gozo" (Fenech, 2021, par.7).

It implies that academics were afforded space in policy development, a luxury not always afforded in other areas of CJ (Cairney, 2016; Willis, 2013). However, the positioning of evidence vis-à-vis policy products in the power-knowledge nexus proposed by Foucault remains obscure. Thus, at this stage, it cannot be ascertained whether academics were permitted free reign to produce evidence on which policies are based (evidence-based policy), or were led to certain territories which perpetuate state actors' understanding of the problem and the required solutions (policy-based evidence; Hope, 2020).

#### **5.4.1.7 Specialisation**

Even though DV was described as a common reality, it was also presented as an issue which requires an elevated amount of expertise. This, along with the requirements of proper emotional literacy in service providers, distinguished it from other forms of crime. Numerous training initiatives sought to increase the specialised knowledge of street-level bureaucrats, even amounting to a specialised police force “manned by a team of professionals with specialised training who are sensitive to the complexities of crime and the needs of victims” (Arena, 2020, par.2). The importance of specialisation was often highlighted through the ramifications of its absence, which were said to include

the phenomenon of dual reporting, alleged refusals to receive reports, interviewing the victims in an insensitive manner, lack of recording of patterns of abuse, barriers to reporting for particularly vulnerable categories of women and insufficient and ineffective collection of evidence in cases of rape and DV (Malta Independent, 2020b, par.8).

#### **5.4.2 Contradictory Approaches**

##### **5.4.2.1 Gendered versus Gender-Neutral Approaches**

In response to DV's portrayal as a gendered phenomenon, policymakers periodically advocated a gendered approach and “the realisation of de jure and de facto equality between women and men is a key element in the prevention of violence against women” (Bonnici, 2022, par.8). Men and boys were singled out as important contributors to the solution. Yet, Malta was called out for assuming a gender-neutral approach, most evident in its choice “to employ the term ‘gender-based violence’ rather than ‘violence against

women', as it retains a gender perspective while encompassing all the gender and sex spectrum in its definition" (Ministry for European Affairs and Equality, 2017, p.9).

Even before the ratification of the Istanbul Convention, policymakers felt the need to assure the Maltese public that, "contrary to a wide misconception, DV legislation is not only aimed at protecting women but all adults, as well as children, whether born or conceived yet unborn" (Lepre, 2006, par.6). This neutrality contrasted with other determinate claims about the crime's gendered nature and indicates that policymakers have yet to consolidate the state's approach. However, the restriction of protection and support services to women and children, and calls for men to change their attitudes imply that a gendered approach was indeed present at a policy level, even if the state was adamant about maintaining this neutrality.

#### ***5.4.2.2 Standardisation versus Discretionary Powers***

Analysis revealed contrasts between policies which sought standardisation of service provision and policies which encouraged professionals to exercise discretion. The former was perhaps the more prevalent of the two, evident in the numerous references to minimum standards for service provision, standard operating procedures and, most importantly, the ratification of the Istanbul Convention for international benchmarking. Indeed, the policy convergence which the Convention promotes improves the potential for Hobbs and Hamerton's (2014) prediction that CJ policy will soon become a global product.

On the other hand, the judiciary stood out against other street-level bureaucrats in the level of discretion that they were allowed to exercise. Whilst field workers were made to abide by fleshed-out guidelines, the judiciary was allowed to decide whether a court case should proceed even if the victim forgives the perpetrator, whether a temporary protection order should be issued or whether the perpetrator should be doled a treatment order. The discretion that these professionals were allowed might thus point to different political standings among street-level bureaucrats. This relates closely to Ismaili's (2006) and Zimring and Johnson's (2006) observations on how policymakers' powers in determining the CJ agenda are on par with those who implement them and are superior in terms of experience and technical knowledge. The fact that the judiciary is locally constitutionally separated from politicians further validates this argument.

### **5.4.3 Problems within the Solution**

Throughout the sample, policymakers occasionally put aside their rose-coloured glasses and acknowledged limitations in their policy work. These limitations can be categorised under two main headings, the first being a lack of resources and the second being the ineffective workings of the local CJ system. Starting with the former, CDV frequently lamented the lack of funding it received to deliver its expected functions. One of its annual reports states

The Commission's budget was decreased by €20,000 to €27,000 in January 2010. As a result of this decrease, the Commission will have to forego certain plans and re-prioritise its work for the coming year [...] Once more I find myself having to state categorically that one of my own personal disappointments remains that, notwithstanding our raising the issue of the need for more human resources in the DV field at every opportunity, this need has still not been met (CDV, 2010, pp.22, 49).

This focus on tangible resources indicates that a systematic and a quantitative look into public spending on CJ issues might provide good insight into political commitment, much like what was accomplished by Wenzelburger (2015a).

The second most common complaint was the inefficacy of the courts, particularly relevant for a study centred on representations of CJ. This issue was rarely presented so directly but delivered through the subtle discourse which reported on the need to improve the chances of victims coming to court and eliminate the barriers that currently prevent them from doing so. This is a common theme in literature on DV policy. McPhee et al. (2021) sustain this premise by pointing to the high attrition rates (cases with no or unsatisfactory sentencing) of DV cases, whilst Bailey (2010) points to the number of cases which never make it to court.

## **5.5 Conclusion**

Here, DV policy was used as an illustration of the more encompassing concept of CJ and was presented as a social, political and domestic issue with generous supranational input. Plotwise, it presented a narrative which followed the heroes' character build-up, growing

evermore successful in saving poor victims from the abuse of their loved villains. The similarities and differences drawn between the results and previous literature attest to the complexity of the research subject. The data triangulation which started in this chapter now concludes with the upcoming closing discussion, in which the research questions of this study are answered, and the potential for further enquiry is explored.

## **CHAPTER 6: CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

This study preoccupied itself with a retrospective examination of social representations of CJ in Malta. This was accomplished through a policy-oriented approach using the content analysis research technique. The chapter concludes this task by answering the study's research questions through the triangulation of results and the general blueprint of CJ policies extracted from literature (Chapter 2, Figure 3). In acknowledgement of the study's methodological strengths and weaknesses (Section 3.8), the chapter finally moves on to discuss the potential implications on national policymaking and local criminological research.

## **6.1 Closing Discussion**

The literature that founded the study's methodology can be categorised into that which examines the policymaking process and the policy product. With reference to Figure 3, this discussion revisits the literature's main arguments and analyses their local relevance based on the two sets of empirical results. The research questions specified in Chapter 1 are subsequently answered.

### **6.1.1 Representations of Criminal Justice Policies**

Figure 3 presents a matrix against which the character of national CJ policies can be judged. Decisiveness on the positioning of Maltese CJ policies in emergent dichotomies was not always possible, especially in cases of discrepancies between the two sets of results. Table 27 illustrates these discrepancies by systematically triangulating each dichotomous model with the empirical data. Each argument attests to the internal heterogeneity of local CJ policies and further promotes the use of specific case studies to offset ambiguities when these are studied in aggregate terms.

**Table 27***Dichotomies in CJ Policies and Local Positioning.*

Dichotomy	Positioning of National Representations of CJ
Crime control versus due process model	Neutral when considered in aggregate terms, given results for orientation in the coding frame. A shift towards the crime control model was exemplified by the DV policy.
Liberal versus conservative ideologies	Undecided, given the comparative scores for essentialist and non-essentialist practices and the mix of forward-looking (restitution) and backwards-looking (retribution) approaches to punishment in the quantitative coding frame. Lenience towards the conservative model in the DV policy narrative, based on perpetrators' representation as rational and inherently deviant.
Proactive versus reactive approaches	Certainly reactive, based on aggregate scores from the quantitative coding frame. Less definitive for the case study given the comparative focus between primary and secondary prevention and CJ responses.
National versus European product	Nationalism was the predominant representation in both data sets, based on national politicians' extensive ownership over the narrative and focus on the local context. A desire for policy convergence is evident in recent years, so the potential for a European CJ product cannot be denied.
Orthodox social progress versus radical conflict model	Lenience towards the orthodox social progress model of CJ, based on the recurrent maintenance of shares of power and the representation of CJ processes and products as natural, objective and non-negotiable.

**6.1.2 Representations of Criminal Justice Policymaking**

In terms of representations of Maltese CJ policymaking, both result sets demonstrated the local enterprise's endorsement of managerialist practices, validating Garland's (2001) and

Squires (1999) supposedly outdated predictions that the focus is to become split between means and policy outcomes. Continuous reference to quantitative performance measures also attests to the assumption that Maltese public service reforms toward New Public Management (Polidano, 2022) extended to the CJ sector. Alternatively, results disprove the local validity of Albertson et al.'s (2020) argument on the emerging demonopolisation of the CJ sector in European and American states through the privatisation of services.

Mixed results were yielded in regards to the CJ's transposition to the political realm, as predicted by Garland (2001) and sustained by many others (e.g., Farall & Gray, 2018; Galoob, 2020; Weissman, 2019). Meagre percentages of focus from the first method indicate its low political salience, especially when compared to other areas of governance. This argument is further supported by the statistically insignificant relations between categorical variables and political parties. Contrarily, discourse on DV policy centres on politicians' indispensable contributions to the field and the parties' distinct ownership over major events. The local culture of performativity (Baldacchino & Wain, 2013) became more evident in this selective focus over aggregate representations. This implies that in-depth, narrative-oriented analysis might be more effective in teasing out embedded power structures over positivistic approaches.

Both samples observed conformity with the policy cycle model. Traceability of policy development was more evident in the second method given the specificity of the sample. Results also partially conform with the incrementalist model, based on intermediate and minority scores for 'depth' in the first research method and the cumulative events between the major plot points in the DV narrative.

Centralisation and diffusion of power were observed in near equal measures. In line with managerialist practices, numerous policies in both frames promoted the centralisation of decision-making and coordination tasks. Alternatively, the two sets of results also attest to the diffusion of policy development and implementation tasks to multiple institutions, subject to their expertise and relevance to the action. Systemic practices overshadowed compartmentalisation and silo-mentalities in the studied sample, contributing to the carceral society model of CJ policy. Scores and references to interdisciplinary collaboration

compliment this argument, promoting the idea of a coordinated CJ policy network, albeit with the superseding influence of national politicians.

Literature also presents CJ policymaking as susceptible to a wide range of mediating variables to explain its cross-national homogeneity. Three of these variables were made amenable to statistical testing, namely the electioneering hypothesis (context variable), temporal shifts (legislature variable) and human agency (legislature and political parties variables). Even though multiple response sets limited the capacity for bivariate tests, results still demonstrated statistically significant links between these independent variables and dependent properties of CJ policies (Table H15).

The influence of institutional structures was evident in both result sets. For example, the stages in the electoral system (context) were proven to have a significant association with the nature of addressed crimes and their direct target groups. Additionally, conformity with supranational structures, particularly the EU and CoE, was a source of motivation for numerous policies, even if national politicians noticeably maintained ownership and control over their narrative. Furthermore, the communicated indispensability of the public service and street-level bureaucrats indicates that Boissevain's (1965/1993) dated description of the "centralised administration of an island fortress" (p.15) still holds. Lastly, the sporadic but significant mentions of evidence in CJ policymaking indicate the relevance of the evidence-based policy/policy-based evidence phenomenon. However, they suggest that local praxis is still far from the technocratic model proposed by Loader and Sparks (2016).

The subtle presence of more abstracted variables (e.g., political ideologies and global trends) was drawn out thanks to the critical lens adopted in both methods. For example, a combination of capitalist principles and reflexive modernisation (as proposed by Beck et al., 1997) can be witnessed in the first dataset's focus on non-violent and profit-oriented crime. Additionally, the globalisation and Europeanisation of CJ were evident in scores for 'Europeanisation' and 'multilateralism' in the quantitative coding frame, sustaining Ellul's (2020) and Xuereb's (2018a) argument on how the origins of most Maltese policies can be traced back to the EU.

### 6.1.3 Answers to the Research Questions

This discussion circles back to the research questions specified in Chapter 1. In answer to ‘with what properties were CJ policies represented by past policy agents?’, the study concludes that these local products are considerably heterogeneous but can also be characterised by certain aggregate inclinations. These include:

- their relative focus on non-violent and profit-oriented crime;
- their susceptibility to being prioritised by PL over PN;
- their perceptively low political and electoral salience in the political agenda;
- their retrospective orientation to crime;
- their incremental build-up and steady pace of change;
- their managerial focus on collaboration, coordination and accountability;
- the prominence of deterrence, retribution and welfarism;
- their potential for transnational policy convergence; and
- their neutral tone over the victim-offender zero-sum rhetoric.

With reference to the second research question, statistical analysis revealed numerous associations between the categorical properties of CJ policies and the context in and for which they were created. These are summarised in Table H16, showing how the stage of the electoral cycle (context) and the temporal and human agency dimensions (legislature) were the most potent independent variables. Policies’ dependency on political parties was limited to their orientation, an interesting finding when considering the polarised narratives that characterise local political culture (Cioffi, 2017).

In response to the third and final research question on what elements characterise the narrative of an illustrative example of CJ policy, the discursive analysis of DV policy unearthed a plot akin to Goffman’s dramaturgy theory. Its elements include the problem’s social, dialectical and visual construction, the protagonists, the founding values and perspectives and the crafted solutions. Through this combination, the policy narrative begins with the villains causing the problem, unfolds with the heroic actions of the state and concludes with victims’ restitution. Clear lines were drawn between the good (e.g., victims, CJ professionals and active bystanders) and evil (e.g., perpetrators, idle politicians and disbelievers) with virtually no morally-grey characters. As a result, the narrative’s

inherent elements neatly defined the parameters of acceptable thought and action towards CJ, possibly creating a tight Overton window that may be impervious to radical views.

The study's primary aim, namely to enable empirically valid insight into Maltese social representations of CJ and their relations with the political and cultural context, is fulfilled through the combination of these three linear answers. Based on this policy-oriented approach, local CJ is simultaneously presented as the product of a complex and heuristic process and a performance of nationally distinct principles and practices with the potential to verge towards European and global trends.

## **6.2 Recommendations and Opportunities for Further Research**

In this conclusion, it would be prudent to acknowledge that this discussion is based solely on what was presented in samples, and that representations do not always equate to realities. Its focus on the abstract (representations) might not translate into tangible policy outputs, but does prompt conceptual and institutional reflexivity on CJ. Outcomes attend to Bertoldo and Castro's (2018) call for more focus on the mediatory processes between the reified universe (laws) and the consensual universe (the representation and reception of these laws). This encourages reflection on local orientations, power structures, principles and practices that have long remained unquestioned and encourage realignment where deviation from collective ideologies and cultural values is perceived. The recent timeframe of this study ensures that its findings can be extrapolated to present and near future circumstances. Idealistically, this motivates future policies which are more faithful to the culturally-defined ideal of CJ.

The conceptual reflexivity exercised in this study also promotes research which is attentive to the influence of contextual socio-political and cultural factors, as opposed to research characterised by abstracted empiricism. The methodology is also a testament to criminology's capacity for interdisciplinary research with fields that are usually considered periphery to its focus (i.e., policy studies, philosophy of criminal law and social psychology). This demonstration of how the combination of these fields can produce empirically valid results aims to promote further investment in research which is appreciative of interdisciplinarity.

Additionally, the study's saturated theoretical framework and complimentary frames (e.g., NPF) ensure that exhaustiveness in this area is not probable. The data extracted from the study remains available for further empirical scrutiny and statistical analyses. The complexity of the research topic also means that results could not cover all possible representations. An exploration of social representations of CJ through lenses other than policy and politics is encouraged, bearing the study's methodological strengths and weaknesses (Section 3.8) in mind. For example, the study's examination of dominant political narratives (exclusively PN & PL) might benefit from contrast with the analysis a more critical sample (e.g., narratives of smaller political parties and activists), ensuring a balance between the consensus and conflict perspectives. Field expert interviews, discursive analysis of social media interactions and focus groups are some other ways with which the local discussion kickstarted by this study could continue to develop.

The exclusive focus on DV policy in the second phase of the methodology restricted qualitative data to this phenomenon. Even if this selection was justified, results are still limited to one narrative of CJ. State response to crime which differs significantly from DV might communicate a completely different representation of CJ. For this reason, other case studies and cross-comparative research are proposed for future research.

### **6.3 Conclusion**

This dissertation studied the relational meaning of CJ, specific to a policy-oriented lens and a critical deconstructive approach. Aggregately, results on local CJ policies both conform with and deviate from foreign empirical knowledge. Conformities support the argument that cross-national variances in CJ responses may gradually give way to European values and global policy convergence. Alternatively, discrepancies between the local results and foreign literature attest to cultural relativity and support the principles of SRT, political criminology and cultural criminology. With its results, the study hopes to have paved a path for a rounded and interdisciplinary examination of social representations of CJ as one manifestation of the social contract theory.

## REFERENCES

- Albertson, K., Corcoran, M., Phillips, J., & Phillips, J. (2020). Introduction: Marketisation and privatisation in criminal justice: An overview. *Marketisation and Privatisation in Criminal Justice* (1st ed.). Policy Press. <https://doi.org/10.2307/j.ctv138wr8f>.
- Alcadipani, R., Cabral, S., Fernandes, A., & Lotta, G. (2020). Street-level bureaucrats under COVID-19: Police officers' responses in constrained settings. *Administrative Theory & Praxis*, 42(3), 394-403. <https://doi.org/10.1080/10841806.2020.1771906>
- Alitavoli, R., & Kaveh, E. (2018). The US media's effect on public's crime expectations: A cycle of cultivation and agenda-setting theory. *Societies*, 8(3), 58. <https://doi.org/10.3390/soc8030058>
- Amatrudo, A. (2009). *Criminology and political theory*. Sage Publications Ltd.
- Ambos, K. (2018). Europeanised substantive criminal law in the broader sense: Council of European and EU. In K. Ambos (Ed.), *European criminal law* (pp. 317-410). Cambridge University Press.
- Annisson, H. (2018). Politics and penal change: Towards an interpretive political analysis of penal policymaking. *The Howard Journal of Crime and Justice*, 57(3), 302-320. <https://doi.org/10.1111/hojo.12269>
- Aquilina, P. (2017). *The ethical reasoning of tax practitioners in Malta: An assessment* (Master's thesis, University of Malta). <https://www.um.edu.mt/library/oar/handle/123456789/30493>
- Arceneaux, K., Johnson, M., Lindstädt, R., & Vander Wielen, R. J. (2016). The influence of news media on political elites: Investigating strategic responsiveness in

Congress. *American Journal of Political Science*, 60(1), 5-29.

<https://doi.org/10.1111/ajps.12171>

Arruda, A. (2015). Image, social imaginary and social representations. In G. Sammut, E.

Andreouli, G. Gaskell, & J. Valsiner (Eds.), *The Cambridge handbook of social representations* (pp. 128-142). Cambridge University Press.

<https://doi.org/10.1017/CBO9781107323650.012>

Assmussen, I. H., Adrian, L., Holmberg, L., & Johansen, L. V. (2020). The victim as policy agent? Exploring a single case from Denmark. *European Journal on Criminal Policy and Research*, 28(3), 79-95. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10610-020-09457-0>

Azzopardi, A., Bonnici, J., & Marmara, V. (2021). *General opinion survey of the Maltese population*. University of Malta.

<https://www.um.edu.mt/library/oar/handle/123456789/76619>

Azzopardi, J. (2016). Social control, crime and deviance. In M. Briguglio, & M. Brown (Eds.), *Sociology of the Maltese islands* (pp.393-407). Miller Books.

Bailey, K. D. (2010). Lost in translation: Domestic violence, the personal is political, and the criminal justice system. *Journal of Criminal Law & Criminology*, 100, 1255.

Baker, E. (2010). Governing through crime: The case of the European Union. *European Journal of Criminology*, 7(3), 187-213.

<https://doi.org/10.1177/1477370810362836>

Baldacchino, J., & Wain, K. (2013). *Democracy without confession: Philosophical conversations on the Maltese political imaginary*. Allied Publishers.

- Barni, D., Vieno, A., Roccato, M., & Russo, S. (2015). Basic personal values, the country's crime rate and the fear of crime. *Social Indicators Research*, 129(3), 1057-2074. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11205-015-1161-9>
- Barton, A., & Johns, N. (2012). *The policy making process in the criminal justice system*. Routledge Taylor & Francis Group.
- Baumann, M., Debus, M., & Müller, J. (2015). Personal characteristics of MPs and legislative behavior in moral policymaking. *Legislative Studies Quarterly*, 40(2), 179-210. <https://doi.org/10.1111/lsg.12072>
- Beck, U., Giddens, A., & Lash, S. (1994/2007). *Reflexive modernization: Politics, tradition and aesthetics in the modern social order*. Stanford University Press.
- Belknap, J., & Grant, D. (2021). Domestic violence policy: A world of change. *Feminist Criminology*, 16(3), 382-395. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1557085120987610>
- Berti, C., Mestitz, A., Palmonari, A., & Sapignoli, M. (2012). Social representations of Italian criminal justice: Ideals and reality. In A. Silvana de Rosa (Ed.), *Social representations in the 'social arena'* (129-140). Routledge Taylor & Francis Group.
- Bertoldo, R. & Castro, P. (2018). From legal to normative: A combined social representations and sociocognitive approach to diagnosing cultural change triggered by new environmental laws. *Culture & Psychology*, 25(3), 324-344. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1354067X18790730>
- Bezzina, F., Camilleri, E., & Marmarà, V. (2021). *Public service reforms in a small island state: The case of Malta*. Springer. <https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-74357-4>

- Blomberg, T., Mestre, J., & Mann, K. (2013). Seeking causality in a world of contingency. *Criminology & Public Policy*, 12(4), 571-584. <https://doi.org/10.1111/1745-9133.12026>
- Blumstein, A., & Larson, R. (1969). Models of a total criminal justice system. *Operations Research*, 17(2), 199-232. <https://doi.org/10.1287/opre.17.2.199>
- Boda, Z. (2013). Homo politicus: Towards a theory of political action and motivation. *World Political Science*, 9(1), 71-96. <https://doi.org/10.1515/wpsr-2013-0004>
- Boissevain, J. (1965/1993). *Saints and fireworks: Religion and politics in rural Malta*. Routledge. <https://doi.org/10.4324/9781003135975>
- Borakove, M. E., Wosje, R., Cruz, F., Wickman, A., Dibble, T., & Harbus, C. (2015). *From silo to system: What makes a criminal justice system operate like a system?*. [https://www.safetyandjusticechallenge.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/07/From-Silo-to-System-30-APR-2015\\_FINAL.pdf](https://www.safetyandjusticechallenge.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/07/From-Silo-to-System-30-APR-2015_FINAL.pdf)
- Braun, V., & Clarke, V. (2018). *Thematic analysis: An introduction*. YouTube. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5zFcC10vOVY>
- Braun, V., & Clarke, V. (2019). To saturate or not to saturate? Questioning data saturation as a useful concept for thematic analysis and sample-size rationales. *Qualitative Research in Sport, Exercise and Health*, 13(2), 201-216. <https://doi.org/10.1080/2159676X.2019.1704846>
- Braun, V., Clarke, V., Hayfield, N., & Terry, G. (2019). Thematic analysis. In P. Liamputtong (Ed.), *Handbook of research methods in health social sciences* (pp. 843-860), Springer Link. <https://doi-org.ejournals.um.edu.mt/10.1007/978-981-10-5251-4>

- Brettschneider, C. (2011). Rights within the social contract: Rousseau on punishment. In A. Sarat, L. Douglas, & M. Merrill Umphrey (Eds.), *Law as punishment, law as regulation* (pp. 50-76). Stanford University Press.
- Briguglio, M. (2010). Malta's Labour Party and the politics of hegemony. *Socialism and Democracy*, 24(2), 213-226. <https://doi.org/10.1080/08854300.2010.481443>
- [Briguglio, M. \(2017\). Panama papers and Malta. In M. Hodun \(Ed.\), \*European atlas of democratic deficit\* \(pp. 63-67\). Projekt.](#)
- Brouard, S., Grossman, E., Guinaudeau, I., Persico, S., & Froio, C. (2018). Do party manifestos matter in policy-making? Capacities, incentives and outcomes of electoral programmes in France. *Political Studies*, 66(4), 903-921. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0032321717745433>
- Bryman, A. (2012). *Social research methods* (4<sup>th</sup> ed.). Oxford University Press.
- Burke, R. H. (2013). Theorizing the criminal justice system: Four models of criminal justice development. *Criminal Justice Review*, 38(3), 277-290. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0734016812473822>
- Cachia, J. C., Ellul, F., Harwood, M., & Sammut, C. (2020). Malta and the 2019 EP elections: Maximising popular engagement with “Europe”. *Review of Economics and Political Science*. <https://doi.org/10.1108/REPS-02-2020-0032>
- Cairney, P. (2016). *The politics of evidence-based policy making*. Springer.
- Cairney, P. (2019). *Understanding public policy: theories and issues*. Bloomsbury Publishing.
- Calafato, T., & Knepper, P. (2009). Criminology and criminal justice in Malta. *European Journal of Criminology*, 6(1), 89-108. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1477370808098107>

- Campbell, M. C. (2016). Are all politics local? A case study of local conditions in a period of “law and order” politics. *The ANNALS of the American Academy of Political and Social Science*, 664(1), 43-61. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0002716215602702>
- Carammia, M., & Pace, R. (2015). The anatomy of a misfit: The 2014 European election in Malta. *South European Society and Politics*, 20(3), 425-444. <https://doi.org/10.1080/13608746.2015.1075313>
- Carammia, M., & Pace, R. (2019). *Malta: Unstoppable Labour*. Centro Italiano Studi Elettorali. <https://cise.luiss.it/cise/2019/05/31/malta-unstoppable-labour/>
- Cassar, G. (2020). *The Europeanization of Maltese interest groups: a comparison between business and environmental groups* (Master's thesis, University of Malta). <https://www.um.edu.mt/library/oar/handle/123456789/72022>
- Cavadino, M. (2013). Crisis? What crisis? In M. Cavadino, & J. Dignan (Eds.), *The penal system: An introduction* (5<sup>th</sup> ed.), (pp. 9-31). SAGE Publications Ltd.
- Central Bank of Malta. (2020). *An analysis of the shadow economy in Malta*.
- Centre for the Future of Democracy. (2020). *Global satisfaction with democracy: 2020*. [https://www.cam.ac.uk/system/files/report2020\\_003.pdf](https://www.cam.ac.uk/system/files/report2020_003.pdf)
- Churchill, W. (1910). *House of Commons Debate: 20<sup>th</sup> July 1910*. UK Parliament. [https://api.parliament.uk/historic-hansard/commons/1910/jul/20/class-iii#column\\_1354Source:%20https://quotepark.com/quotes/1926870-winston-s-churchill-the-mood-and-temper-of-the-public-in-regard-to-the/](https://api.parliament.uk/historic-hansard/commons/1910/jul/20/class-iii#column_1354Source:%20https://quotepark.com/quotes/1926870-winston-s-churchill-the-mood-and-temper-of-the-public-in-regard-to-the/)
- Cioffi, Y. (2017). *Reporting terrorism in Maltese media* (Bachelor's thesis, University of Malta).

- Claisse, F., & Delvenne, P. (2017). As above, so below? Narrative salience and side effects of national innovation systems. *Critical Policy Studies*, 11(3), 255-271.  
<https://doi.org/10.1080/19460171.2015.1119051>
- Cliquennois, G. (2017). Introduction: The European monitoring of national penal and prison policies: Influence and shaping. In G. Cluquennois, & H. Suremain (Ed.), *Monitoring Penal Policy in Europe* (pp. 1-17). Routledge.
- Cohen, M., Farrington, D. P., Clear, T. R., Austin, J. F., & Decker, P. (2021). Accounting for the costs of crime in assessing criminal justice policies. *Journal of Policy Analysis and Management*, 40(1), 284-284. <https://doi.org/10.1002/pam.22271>
- Cohen, S. (1996). Crime and politics: Spot the difference. *The British Journal of Sociology*, 47(1), 1-21.
- Corcoran, M. (2019). *Building statutory, private sector and civil society partnerships in penal resettlement: Some insights from research*. Confederation of European Probation and Europris. <https://www.cep-probation.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/01/Dr-Mary-Corcoran-article.pdf>
- Council of Europe. (2022). *Theme files*. <https://www.coe.int/en/web/portal/files>
- Coyle, A., Heard, C., & Fair, H. (2016). Current trends and practices in the use of imprisonment. *International Review of the Red Cross*, 98(903), 761-781.  
[doi:10.1017/S1816383117000662](https://doi.org/10.1017/S1816383117000662)
- Crewe, B., & Levins, A. (2020). The prison as a reinventive institution. *Theoretical Criminology*, 24(4), 568-589. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1362480619841900>
- [Criminal Code. Chapter 9 of the Laws of Malta. https://legislation.mt/eli/cap/9/eng](https://legislation.mt/eli/cap/9/eng)

- Davis, M. (2017). *The role of state agencies in translational criminology*. Springer International Publishing.
- Debono, A. (2018). *The role of politics in the management of public administration: A study on the politicisation of the public service in Malta* (Bachelor's thesis, University of Malta).
- DeKeseredy, W. S., & Dragiewicz, M. (2018). Critical criminology: Past, present and future. In W.S DeKeseredy & M. Dragiewicz (Eds.), *Routledge handbook of Critical Criminology* (pp. 1-17). Routledge Handbooks Online.  
<https://doi.org/10.4324/9781315622040>
- Di Ronco, A., & Sergi, A. (2019). From harmless incivilities to not-so-serious organised crime activities: The expanded realm of European crime prevention and some suggestions on how to limit it. In Van Duyne, P., & Von Lampe, K. (Eds.), *Cross border crime colloquium 2018* (pp.149-178). Eleven Publishing.  
[DOI:10.32631/cc19.07](https://doi.org/10.32631/cc19.07)
- Dignan, J., & Cavadino, M. (1996). Towards a framework for conceptualizing and evaluating models of criminal justice from a victim's perspective. *International Review of Victimology*, 4(3), 153-182.  
<https://doi.org/10.1177/026975809600400301>
- Duveen, G. (2008). Social actors and social groups: A return to heterogeneity in Social Psychology. *Journal for the Theory of Social Behaviour*, 38(4), 369-374.  
<https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1468-5914.2008.00385.x>

- Ebejer, C. (2016). *The role of Maltese interest groups in European policy formulation* (Master's thesis, University of Malta).  
<https://www.um.edu.mt/library/oar/handle/123456789/74099>
- Ehin, P., & Talving, L. Electoral performance of populist parties in Eastern Europe 1989-2019: Policy recommendations designed to counteract the rise of populism.  
<https://populism-europe.com/wp-content/uploads/2021/09/Working-Paper-6.pdf>
- Electoral Commission Malta. (2015a). *Elections*. <https://electoral.gov.mt/elections>
- Electoral Commission Malta. (2015b). *Referenda*.  
<https://electoral.gov.mt/ElectionResults/Referendum?year=27&v=null>
- Electoral Commission Malta. (2022a). *General elections*.  
<https://electoral.gov.mt/ElectionResults/General>
- Electoral Commission Malta. (2022b). *Members of the European Parliament*.  
<https://electoral.gov.mt/ElectionResults/MEP?year=42&v=null>
- Elholm, T., & Colson, R. (2016). The symbolic purpose of EU criminal law. In R. Colson & S. Field (Eds.), *EU criminal justice and the challenges of diversity: Legal cultures in the area of freedom, security and justice* (pp. 48-64). Cambridge University Press.  
<https://doi:10.1017/CBO9781316156315.004>
- Elias, L., & Timmermans, A. (2014). Organised crime on the European Council agenda: Political attention dynamics. *The European Review of Organised Crime*. 1(1), 160-177.
- Elkins, D. J. (1979). A cause in search of its effect, or what does political culture explain?. *Comparative politics*, 11(2), 127-145. <https://doi.org/10.2307/421752>

- Ellis, T., & Nash, M. (2012). Crime control or due process?. In T. Ellis, & S.P. Savage (Eds.), *Debates in criminal justice: Key themes and issues* (pp. 7-32). Routledge.
- Ellul, A. D. (2020). *The Europeanisation of social democratic parties in Mediterranean states* (Master's thesis, University of Malta).
- Eurobarometer. (2021). *Perceived independence of the national justice systems in the EU among the general public*. <https://europa.eu/eurobarometer/surveys/detail/2272>
- European Commission. (2020). *Country report Malta: 2020*.  
<https://op.europa.eu/en/publication-detail/-/publication/a653f6f3-5944-11ea-8b81-01aa75ed71a1>
- European Commission. (2021). *2021 Rule of law report: Country chapter on the rule of law situation in Malta*. <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/PDF/?uri=CELEX:52021SC0720&from=EN>
- European Council. (2020). *Setting the EU's political agenda*. Council of the European Union. <https://www.consilium.europa.eu/en/european-council/role-setting-eu-political-agenda/>
- European Parliament. (2015). *Motion for a European Parliament resolution on prison systems and conditions*. [https://www.europarl.europa.eu/doceo/document/A-8-2017-0251\\_EN.html](https://www.europarl.europa.eu/doceo/document/A-8-2017-0251_EN.html)
- European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights. (2021). *Crime, safety and victims' rights: Fundamental rights survey*.  
<https://fra.europa.eu/en/publication/2021/fundamental-rights-survey-crime>

- Fábián, K. (2017). The politics of domestic violence in central Europe: International and domestic contestations. In E. S. Buzawa, & C. G. Buzawa (Eds.), *Global responses to domestic violence* (pp. 125-149). Springer, Cham.
- Fair, H., & Walmsley, R. (2021). *World prison population list* (13<sup>th</sup> ed.). World Prison Brief. [https://www.prisonstudies.org/sites/default/files/resources/downloads/world\\_prison\\_population\\_list\\_13th\\_edition.pdf](https://www.prisonstudies.org/sites/default/files/resources/downloads/world_prison_population_list_13th_edition.pdf)
- Fairchild, E. S. (1977). Politicization of the criminal offender: Prisoner perceptions of crime and politics. *Criminology*, 15(3), 287-318. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1745-9125.1977.tb00068.x>
- Farrall, S., & Gray, E. (2018). *Crime, politics and time*. University of Sheffield. <https://www.britisoccrim.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/12/BSCN83-Farrall-Gray.pdf>
- Farrall, S., & Jennings, W. (2012). Policy feedback and the criminal justice agenda: An analysis of the economy, crime rates, politics and public opinion in post-war Britain. *Contemporary British History*, 26(4), 467-488. <https://doi.org/10.1080/13619462.2012.678052>
- Farrall, S., Gray, E., & Mike Jones, P. (2020). Politics, social and economic change, and crime: Exploring the impact of contextual effects on offending trajectories. *Politics & Society*, 48(3), 357-388. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0032329220942395>
- Fast, K. (2018). A discursive approach to mediatisation: Corporate technology discourse and the trope of media indispensability. *Media and Communication*, 6(2), 15-28. <https://doi.org/10.17645/mac.v6i2.1311>

- Feldman, L. (2012). Political criminology, the plural state, and the politics of affect. In A. Sarat (Ed.), *Special Issue: The Legacy of Stuart Scheingold (Studies in Law, Politics, and Society, Vol. 59)* (pp. 81-98). Emerald Group Publishing Limited.  
[https://doi.org/10.1108/S1059-4337\(2012\)0000059008](https://doi.org/10.1108/S1059-4337(2012)0000059008)
- Fenech, D. (2003). The 2003 Maltese EU referendum and general election. *West European Politics, 26*(3), 163-170. <https://doi.org/10.1080/01402380312331280638>
- Fenech, D. (2008). The 2008 Maltese general election: the tortoise and the hare. *West European Politics, 31*(5), 1049-1054. <https://doi.org/10.1080/01402380802234755>
- Fenech, D. (2013). The 2013 Maltese general election: unplugging the blockage. *West European Politics, 36*(5), 1088-1094.  
<https://doi.org/10.1080/01402382.2013.815479>
- Fenech, D. (2017). The 2017 Maltese general election: parallel monologues. *West European Politics, 41*(5), 1217-1225.  
<https://doi.org/10.1080/01402382.2017.1404245>
- Ferrell, J. (1999). Cultural criminology. *Annual Review of Sociology, 25*(1), 395-418.  
<https://doi.org/10.1146/annurev.soc.25.1.395>
- Ferrell, J. (2013). Cultural criminology and the politics of meaning. *Critical Criminology, 21*(3), 257-271. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10612-013-9186-3>
- Fetters, M. D., & Molina-Azorin, J. F. (2019). A call for expanding philosophical perspectives to create a more “worldly” field of mixed methods: The example of Yinyang philosophy. *Journal of Mixed Methods Research, 13*(1), 15-18.  
<https://doi.org/10.1177/1558689818816886>

- Filletti, S. (2015). *Significant developments in EU criminal law and their impact on Maltese criminal law*. [Doctoral dissertation, University of Malta].  
<https://www.um.edu.mt/library/oar/handle/123456789/16535>
- Fletcher, P., & Star, C. (2018). The influence of feminist organisations on public policy responses to domestic violence and violence against women: A systematic literature review. *Social Alternatives*, 37(2), 53-61.  
<https://search.informit.org/doi/10.3316/ielapa.814402665323207>
- Formosa Pace, J. (2016). *Crime prevention strategy for the Maltese Islands 2017-2021: Public consultation*. Ministry for Home Affairs and National Security.  
<https://homeaffairs.gov.mt/en/media/Policies-Documents/Pages/Crime-Prevention-Strategy-for-Public-Consultation-2017-2021.aspx>
- Formosa, S. (2021). *Annual crime review: Year 2020*. Crime Malta Observatory.  
[http://crimemalta.com/docs/CrimeMalta\\_Report2020.pdf](http://crimemalta.com/docs/CrimeMalta_Report2020.pdf)
- Formosa, S., (2022), *Crimemalta Annual Statistics: 2002 – 2021*, Msida
- Formosa, S., Scicluna, S., Azzopardi, J., Formosa Pace, J., & Calafato, T. (2011). *The research road we make: statistics for the uninitiated*. University of Malta.  
<https://www.mca.org.mt/sites/default/files/pageattachments/foi-chapter-496.pdf>
- Freiberg, A., & Carson, W. G. (2010). The limits to evidence-based policy: Evidence, emotion and criminal justice. *Australian Journal of Public Administration*, 69(2), 152-164. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1467-8500.2010.00674.x>

- Frisch, S. A., & Kelly, S. Q. (2012). Political science and archival research. In S. A. Frisch, D. B. Harris, S. Q. Kelly, & D. C. W. Parker (Eds.), *Doing archival research in political science* (pp. 35-60), Cambria Press.
- Gallo, C., & Svensson, K. (2019). *Victim support and the welfare state*. Taylor & Francis.  
<http://library.oapen.org/handle/20.500.12657/37531>
- Galoob, S. (2019). Criminal law and/as political theory. *Tulsa Law Review*, 55(2), 203-210.
- Garland, D. (2001). *The culture of control: Crime and social order in contemporary society*. The University of Chicago Press.
- Geisler, C., & Swarts, J. (2019). *Coding streams of language: Techniques for the systematic coding of text, talk, and other verbal data*. Ft. Collins.  
<https://doi.org/10.37514/PRA-B.2019.0230>
- [Gender-Based Violence and Domestic Violence Act. Chapter 581 of the Laws of Malta.](https://legislation.mt/eli/cap/581/eng)  
<https://legislation.mt/eli/cap/581/eng>
- Gilsinan, J. F. (1991). Public policy and criminology: An historical and philosophical reassessment. *Justice Quarterly*, 8(2), 201-216.  
<https://doi.org/10.1080/07418829100091001>
- Githens-Mazer, J. (2012). The rhetoric and reality: Radicalization and political discourse. *International Political Science Review*, 33(5), 556-567.  
<https://doi.org/10.1177/0192512112454416>
- Global Initiative against Transnational Organised Crime. (2021). *Global organised crime index: 2021*. <https://ocindex.net/assets/downloads/global-ocindex-report.pdf>

Godfrey, B. (2011). Historical and archival research methods. In D. Gadd, S. Karstedt, & S. F. Messner (Eds.), *The handbook on criminology research methods* (pp. 159-175), SAGE Publications Ltd.

Golding, W. (1954/1988). *William Golding's The Lord of the Flies: Casebook edition*. Penguin Group.

Government of Malta. (2021). *Government synopsis: Malta – The state, the government, parliament, the courts, and the public administration*.  
[https://www.gov.mt/en/Government/Government%20of%20Malta/Synopsis/pages/governance-synopsis.aspx#:~:text=Malta%20is%20a%20republic%2C%20that,judicial%20branch%20\(the%20courts\).](https://www.gov.mt/en/Government/Government%20of%20Malta/Synopsis/pages/governance-synopsis.aspx#:~:text=Malta%20is%20a%20republic%2C%20that,judicial%20branch%20(the%20courts).)

Grande, T. *Introduction to Statistics*. YouTube.

[https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLdIFfrVsmlvAR\\_EVJ5GFrsrpDibczolr](https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLdIFfrVsmlvAR_EVJ5GFrsrpDibczolr)

Gray, E., Grasso, M., Farrall, S., Jennings, W., & Hay, C. (2019). Political socialization, worry about crime and antisocial behaviour: An analysis of age, period and cohort effects. *The British Journal of Criminology*, 59(2), 435-460.  
<https://doi.org/10.1093/bjc/azy024>

Graziano, P. R., & Percoco, M. (2017). Agenda setting and the political economy of fear: How crime news influences voters' beliefs. *International Political Science Review*, 38(5), 520-533. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0192512116656947>

Grech, J.P. (2006). *Criminal justice systems in Europe and North America: Malta*. The European Institute for Crime Prevention and Control.

- Grima, M. (2014). *Social norms and tax compliance in Malta as an EU Member State* (Master's thesis, University of Malta).
- Group of Experts on Action against Violence against Women and Domestic Violence. (2020). *GREVIO baseline evaluation report: Malta*. Council of Europe. <https://rm.coe.int/grevio-inf-2020-17-malta-final-report-web/1680a06bd2>
- Group of States against Corruption. (2019). *Fifth evaluation round: Preventing corruption and promoting integrity in central governments (top executive functions) and law enforcement agencies*. <https://rm.coe.int/grecoeval5rep-2018-6-fifth-evaluation-round-preventing-corruption-and-/168093bda3>
- Group of States against Corruption. (2022a). *Fifth evaluation round: Preventing corruption and promoting integrity in central governments (top executive functions) and law enforcement agencies*. <https://rm.coe.int/fifth-evaluation-round-preventing-corruption-and-promoting-integrity-i/1680a69ed2>
- Group of States against Corruption. (2022b). *Preventing corruption and promoting integrity in central governments (top executive functions) and law enforcement agencies: Compliance report Malta*. <https://rm.coe.int/fifth-evaluation-round-preventing-corruption-and-promoting-integrity-i/1680a69ed2>
- Guiney, T. (2019, August 27). Boris Johnson's 'crime week' and the conservative politics of law and order. *British Politics and Policy Blog*. <https://blogs.lse.ac.uk/politicsandpolicy/boris-johnsons-crime-week/>
- Haaken, J. (2008). Too close for comfort: Psychoanalytic cultural theory and domestic violence politics. *Psychoanalysis, Culture & Society*, 13(1), 75-93. <https://doi.org/10.1057/palgrave.pcs.2100150>

- Hall, M. (2017). *Victims of crime: constructions, governance and policy*. Palgrave Macmillan. [https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-319-64589-6\\_7](https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-319-64589-6_7)
- Hamilton, C. (2013). Punitiveness and political culture: Notes from some small countries. *European Journal of Criminology*, 10(2), 154-167.  
<https://doi.org/10.1177/1477370812464469>
- Hassan, K. (2020). The politicization of crime and its implications. *The Pegasus Review: UCF Undergraduate Research Journal*, 11(2), 5.
- Hayward, K. J. (2016). Cultural criminology: Script rewrites. *Theoretical Criminology*, 20(3), 297-321. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1362480615619668>
- Hermansson, K. (2018). The role of symbolic politics in exceptional crime policy debate: A study of the 2014 Swedish general election. *Journal of Scandinavian Studies in Criminology and Crime Prevention*, 19(1), 22-40.  
<https://doi.org/10.1080/14043858.2018.1452874>
- Hermansson, K. (2019). *Symbols and emotions in Swedish crime policy discourse* (Doctoral dissertation, Stockholm University). <https://www.diva-portal.org/smash/record.jsf?pid=diva2%3A1362256&dswid=-7766>
- Hobbes, T. (1651/2008). *Leviathan*. Oxford World's Classics.
- Hobbs, S., & Hamerton, C. (2014). *The making of criminal justice policy*. Routledge: Taylor & Francis Group. <https://doi.org/10.4324/9781315798080>
- Hope, T. (2020). Epistemic public criminology: The fallacies of evidence-based policing. In T. Daems & S. Pleysier (Eds.), *Criminology and Democratic Politics* (pp. 163-183). Routledge. <https://doi.org/10.4324/9780367821906>

Hörnqvist, M. (2021). *The pleasure of punishment*. Routledge.

<https://doi.org/10.4324/9780429196744>

Howland, D., Becker, M. L., & Prelli, L. J. (2006). Merging content analysis and the policy sciences: A system to discern policy-specific trends from news media

reports. *Policy Sciences*, 39(3), 205-231. [https://doi.org/10.1007/s11077-006-](https://doi.org/10.1007/s11077-006-9016-5)

[9016-5](https://doi.org/10.1007/s11077-006-9016-5)

Htun, M., & Weldon, S. L. (2012). The civic origins of progressive policy change:

Combating violence against women in global perspective, 1975–2005. *American*

*Political Science Review*, 106(3), 548-569. [doi:10.1017/S0003055412000226](https://doi.org/10.1017/S0003055412000226)

Huidu, A., & Sandu, A. (2020). Social construction of values and social

acceptability. *Revista Romana de Sociologie*, 5(6), 331-343.

Hunnicut, G. (2019). Addressing violence against women from critical feminist

perspectives: Challenging the politicization of violence against women. *Journal of*

*international women's studies*, 20(7), 205-218.

Ilan, J. (2019). Cultural criminology: The time is now. *Critical Criminology*, 27(1), 5-20.

<https://doi.org/10.1007/s10612-019-09430-2>

Ismaili, K. (2006). Contextualizing the criminal justice policy-making process. *Criminal*

*Justice Policy Review*, 17(3), 255-269. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0887403405281559>

Jacobson, J., Heard, C., & Fair, H. (2017). *Prison: Evidence of its use and over-use from*

*around the world*. Institute for Criminal Policy Research.

Jennings, W., Farrall, S., Gray, E., & Hay, C. (2017). Penal populism and the public

thermostat: Crime, public punitiveness, and public policy. *Governance*, 30(3), 463-

481. <https://doi.org/10.1111/gove.12214>

- Jennings, W., Farrall, S., Gray, E., & Hay, C. (2020). Moral panics and punctuated equilibrium in public policy: An analysis of the criminal justice policy agenda in Britain. *Policy Studies Journal*, 48(1), 207-234. <https://doi.org/10.1111/psj.12239>
- Jones, M. D., & Radaelli, C. M. (2015). The narrative policy framework: Child or monster?. *Critical Policy Studies*, 9(3), 339-355.  
<https://doi.org/10.1080/19460171.2015.1053959>
- Jones, M. D., McBeth, M. K., & Shanahan, E. A. (2014). Introducing the narrative policy framework. In M. D. Jones, E. A. Shanahan, & M. K. McBeth (Eds.), *The science of stories* (pp. 1-25). Palgrave Macmillan, New York.
- Jones, T., Blaustein, J., & Newburn, T. (2019). Researching cross-national policy mobilities in crime control. *Criminology & Criminal Justice*, 21(3), 408-426.  
<https://doi.org/10.1177/1748895819864627>
- Jouet, M. (2022). Foucault, prison, and human rights: A dialectic of theory and criminal justice reform. *Theoretical Criminology*, 26(2), 202-223.  
<https://doi.org/10.1177/13624806211015968>
- Kainulainen, H., Honkatukia, P., & Niemi, J. (2021). The invisible victim in criminal policy. *Bergen Journal of Criminal Law & Criminal Justice*, 9(2), 21-21.  
<https://doi.org/10.15845/bjclcj.v9i2.3522>
- Kappeler, V. E., & Potter, G. W. (2017). *The mythology of crime and criminal justice*. Waveland Press.
- Karpenko, O. V. (2019). The "Overton Window" as a manipulative mechanism of public values transformation. *Journal of the National Academy of Management of Culture and Arts*, 1(1), 51-54.

- Kattler, A., & Ettensperger, F. (2020). National internal security policies across Europe—a comparative analysis applying big data clustering techniques. *Political Research Exchange*, 2(1), 1787796. <https://doi.org/10.1080/2474736X.2020.1787796>
- Knackmuhs, E., Farmer, J., & Knapp, D. (2020). The interaction of policy narratives, moral politics, and criminal justice policy beliefs. *Politics & Policy*, 48(2), 288-313. <https://doi.org/10.1111/polp.12343>
- Kort-Butler, L. (2016). *Content analysis in the study of crime, media, and popular culture*. *Oxford Research Encyclopaedia of Criminology*. <https://doi.org/10.1093/acrefore/9780190264079.013.23>
- Kotanen, R. (2018). The rise of the crime victim and punitive policies? Changes to the legal regulation of intimate partner violence in Finland. *Violence against women*, 24(12), 1433-1453. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1077801217733559>
- Krippendorff, K. (2013). *Content analysis: An introduction to its methodology* (4<sup>th</sup> ed). Sage Publications.
- Krippendorff, K. (2018). *Content analysis: An introduction to its methodology* (4<sup>th</sup> ed). Sage Publications.
- Krizsán, A., & Roggeband, C. (2017). *The gender politics of domestic violence: Feminists engaging the state in Central and Eastern Europe*. Routledge.
- Krotz, F. (2017). Explaining the mediatisation approach. *Javnost – The Public*, 24(2), 103-118. <https://doi.org/10.1080/13183222.2017.1298556>
- Krulichová, E. (2019). The relationship between fear of crime and risk perception across Europe. *Criminology & Criminal Justice*, 19(2), 197-214. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1748895818757832>

- Larrosa-Fuentes, J. (2020). Political talk, conversation, discussion, debate, or deliberation? An interpersonal political communication definition and typology. *Global Media Journal México*, 17(33), 1-19.
- Lasswell, H. D. (1968). The uses of content analysis data in studying social change. *Social Science Information*, 7(1), 57-70. <https://doi.org/10.1177/053901846800700104>
- Lasswell, H. D. (1970). The emerging conception of the policy sciences. *Policy sciences*, 1(1), 3-14. <https://doi.org/10.1007/BF00145189>
- Lee, A. (2015). *How (and how not) to use archival sources in political science*. University of Rochester. [http://www.rochester.edu/college/faculty/alexander\\_lee/wp-content/uploads/2014/07/archives.pdf](http://www.rochester.edu/college/faculty/alexander_lee/wp-content/uploads/2014/07/archives.pdf)
- Lee, D. K. (2016). Alternatives to P value: confidence interval and effect size. *Korean journal of anesthesiology*, 69(6), 555-562. <https://doi.org/10.4097/kjae.2016.69.6.555>
- Leusch, C. (2019). Maltese exceptionalism in the populist trend. *Democracy and Resentment: Why are so many people angry nowadays?* <https://doi.org/10.26481/marble.2019.v1.752>
- Lewin, J. L., & Trumbull, W. N. (1990). The social value of crime?. *International Review of Law and Economics*, 10(3), 271-284. [https://doi.org/10.1016/0144-8188\(90\)90014-K](https://doi.org/10.1016/0144-8188(90)90014-K)
- Lidskog, R., & Persson, M. (2012). Community safety policies in Sweden. A policy change in crime control strategies?. *International Journal of Public Administration*, 35(5), 293-302. <https://doi.org/10.1080/01900692.2011.646084>

- Loader, I., & Sparks, R. (2016). Ideologies and crime: Political ideas and the dynamics of crime control. *Global Crime*, 17(3-4), 314-330.  
<https://doi.org/10.1080/17440572.2016.1169926>
- Lohne, K. (2021). Penal welfarism 'gone global'? Comparing international criminal justice to The Culture of Control. *Punishment & Society*, 23(1), 3-23.  
<https://doi.org/10.1177%2F1462474520928114>
- Macrotrends, (2022). *Malta Crime Rate & Statistics: 1990-2022*.  
<https://www.macrotrends.net/countries/MLT/malta/crime-rate-statistics>
- Mallicoat, S. L. (2014). The politics of crime and the policy making process. In S. L. Mallicoat & C. L. Gardiner (Eds.), *Criminal justice policy* (pp. 1-14). Sage Publications Inc.
- Mantello, P. (2016). The machine that ate bad people: The ontopolitics of the precrime assemblage. *Big Data & Society*, 3(2), 1-11.  
<https://doi.org/10.1177/2053951716682538>
- Martufi, A. (2018). The paths of offender rehabilitation and the European dimension of punishment: New challenges for an old ideal?. *Maastricht Journal of European and Comparative Law*, 25(6), 672-688. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1023263X18820678>
- Matsueda, R. L. (2017). Toward an analytical criminology: The micro–macro problem, causal mechanisms, and public policy. *Criminology*, 55(3), 493-519.  
<https://doi.org/10.1111/1745-9125.12149>
- Matthes, J. (2009). What's in a frame? A content analysis of media framing studies in the world's leading communication journals, 1990-2005. *Journalism & Mass*

*Communication Quarterly*, 86(2), 349-367.

<https://doi.org/10.1177/107769900908600206>

Matza, D. (1969/2010). *Becoming deviant*. Transaction Publishers.

Mayhew, P., & van Kersteren, J. (2002). Cross-national attitudes to punishment. In J.V. Roberts, & M. Hough (Eds.), *Changing attitudes to punishments, public opinion, crime and justice* (pp. 63-92). Willan Publishing.

McAra, L. (2017). Can criminologists change the world? Critical reflections on the politics, performance and effects of criminal justice. *British Journal of Criminology*, 57(4), 767-788. <https://doi.org/10.1093/bjc/azw015>

McEwan, J. (2011). From adversarialism to managerialism: Criminal justice in transition. *Legal Studies*, 31(4), 519-546. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1748-121X.2011.00201.x>

McPhee, D., Hester, M., Bates, L., Lilley-Walker, S. J., & Patsios, D. (2021). Criminal justice responses to domestic violence and abuse in England: An analysis of case attrition and inequalities using police data. *Policing and Society*, 1-18. <https://doi.org/10.1080/10439463.2021.2003358>

Mellaard, A., & Van Meijl, T. (2017). Doing policy: Enacting a policy assemblage about domestic violence. *Critical policy studies*, 11(3), 330-348. <https://doi.org/10.1080/19460171.2016.1194766>

Melossi, D. (2000). Changing representations of the criminal. *British Journal of Criminology*, 40(2), 296-320. <https://doi.org/10.1093/bjc/40.2.296>

- Moody, A. (2020). *Unthinkable: When the Overton window slams on your fingers*. The Gospel Coalition Australia. <https://au.thegospelcoalition.org/article/unthinkable-when-the-overton-window-slams-on-your-fingers/>
- Moriconi, M. (2017). Reframing illegalities: crime, cultural values and ideas of success (in Argentina). *Crime, Law and Social Change*, 69(4), 497-518.  
<https://doi.org/10.1007/s10611-017-9760-9>
- Moscovici, S. (1988). Notes towards a description of social representations. *European Journal of Social Psychology*, 18(3), 211-250. <https://doi.org/10.1002/ejsp.2420180303>
- Muhammad, M. E. (2020). Social contract theories of Hobbes, Locke and Rousseau: An extrapolation of point of harmony and tensions. *Educational Resurgence Journal*, 2(4), 123-128.
- Muirhead, R., & Rosenblum, N. L. (2020). The political theory of parties and partisanship: Catching up. *Annual Review of Political Science*, 23, 95-110.  
<https://doi.org/10.1146/annurev-polisci-041916-020727>
- Negura, L., & Plante, N. (2021). The construction of social reality as a process of representational naturalization. The case of the social representation of drugs. *Journal for the theory of social behaviour*, 51(1), 124-144.  
<https://doi.org/10.1111/jtsb.12264>
- Neuendorf, K. A. (2017). *The content analysis guidebook*. Sage Publications Inc.  
<https://doi.org/10.4135/9781071802878>
- Nicholson-Crotty, S., Peterson, D. A., & Ramirez, M. D. (2009). Dynamic representation(s): Federal criminal justice policy and an alternative dimension of public

mood. *Political Behavior*, 31(4), 629-655. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11109-009-9085-1>

Nowell, L. S., Norris, J. M., White, D. E., & Moules, N. J. (2017). Thematic analysis: Striving to meet the trustworthiness criteria. *International Journal of Qualitative Methods*, 16(1), 1609406917733847. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1609406917733847>

O'Malley, P., & Valverde, M. (2014). Foucault, criminal law, and the governmentalization of the state. In M. D. Dubber (Ed.), *Foundational texts in modern criminal law* (pp. 317-34). Oxford Scholarship Online. <https://doi.org/10.1093/acprof:oso/9780199673612.001.0001>

O'Brien, M., & Littler, M. (2015). Introduction: On political criminology. *The Journal of Political Criminology*, 1(1), p.1-6.

Oleinik, A., Popova, I., Kirdina, S., & Shatalova, T. (2014). On the choice of measures of reliability and validity in the content-analysis of texts. *Quality & Quantity*, 48(5), 2703-2718. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11135-013-9919-0>

Oliver, W. M., & Marion, N. E. (2008). Political party platforms: Symbolic politics and criminal justice policy. *Criminal Justice Policy Review*, 19(4), 397-413. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0887403408318829>

Otto, L., Nimführ, S., & Bieler, P. (2019). Preserving Maltese identity in refugee management: On the emergence and absence of a prison spatiality. *Shima*, 13(2), 135-154. [10.21463/shima.13.2.11](https://doi.org/10.21463/shima.13.2.11)

Pace, R. (2008). *Malta's cliff hanger election: Epilogue or a turning point?*. University of Malta. <https://www.um.edu.mt/library/oar/handle/123456789/23466>

- Pace, R. (2017). Winning against the trend: Labour's victory in the 2017 Maltese parliamentary election. *South European Society and Politics*, 22(4), 509-529.  
<https://doi.org/10.1080/13608746.2017.1410274>
- Panke, D., & Gurol, J. (2018). Small States as Agenda-Setters: The Council Presidencies of Malta and Estonia. *Journal of Common Market Studies*. 56, 142-151
- Paoli, L., Adriaenssen, A., Greenfield, V. A., & Conickx, M. (2017). Exploring definitions of serious crime in EU policy documents and academic publications: A content analysis and policy implications. *European Journal on Criminal Policy and Research*, 23(3), 269-285. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10610-016-9333-y>
- Peršak, N. (2019). EU criminalisation, its normative justifications, and criminological considerations for EU criminal policy and justice. In J. Ouwerkerk, J. Altena, J. Öberg, & S. Miettinen, *The Future of EU Criminal Justice Policy and Practice* (pp. 15-36). Brill Nijhoff. [https://doi.org/10.1163/9789004367371\\_003](https://doi.org/10.1163/9789004367371_003)
- Petintseva, O., Faria, R., & Eski, Y. (2020). *Interviewing elites, experts and the powerful in criminology*. London: Palgrave Macmillan.
- Piatkowska, S. J. (2016). Crime and punishment in the European Union. In J. Wesley (Ed.), *The Encyclopedia of Crime and Punishment* (pp.1-5). Wiley Online Library.
- Pickett, J. T., Mancini, C., Mears, D. P., & Gertz, M. (2015). Public (mis)understanding of crime policy: The effects of criminal justice experience and media reliance. *Criminal Justice Policy Review*, 26(5), 500-522.  
<https://doi.org/10.1177/0887403414526228>
- Pirotta, G. A. (2012). *Bringing good governance to Malta*. University of Malta.  
<https://www.um.edu.mt/library/oar/handle/123456789/52472>

- Plowright, D. (2011). *Using mixed-methods: Frameworks for an integrated methodology*. Sage Publications Inc. <https://dx.doi.org/10.4135/9781526485090>
- Polidano, C. (2022). *Public Administration in Malta: An Overview*. [https://www.researchgate.net/publication/351287646 Public Administration in Malta An Overview](https://www.researchgate.net/publication/351287646_Public_Administration_in_Malta_An_Overview)
- Portillo, S., & Rudes, D. S. (2014). Construction of justice at the street level. *Annual Review of Law and Social Science*, 10(1), 321-334. [10.1146/annurev-lawsocsci-102612-134046](https://doi.org/10.1146/annurev-lawsocsci-102612-134046)
- Powderly, J. (2019). International criminal justice in an age of perpetual crisis. *Leiden Journal of International Law*, 32(1), 1-11. [doi:10.1017/S0922156518000675](https://doi.org/10.1017/S0922156518000675)
- Public Administration Act. Chapter 595 of the Laws of Malta. <https://legislation.mt/eli/cap/595/eng/pdf>
- Quirke, B. J. (2014). Malta and the fight against EU fraud: Is it a Maltese cross? In P. C. Van Duyne, M. Scheinost, G. A. Antonopoulos, J. Harvey, & K. von Lampe (Eds.), *Narratives on organised crime in Europe: criminals, corrupters & policy* (pp. 353-372). Wolf Legal Publishers.
- Raineri, L. (2019). The Malta Connection: A Corrupting Island in a 'Corrupting Sea'?. *The European Review of Organised Crime*, 5(1), 10-35.
- Ranđelović, J. (2021). *Evarist Bartolo, Foreign and European Affairs Minister of the Republic of Malta: Globalization is not an ideology, it is a necessity*. Diplomacy & Commerce. <https://www.diplomacyandcommerce.rs/evarist-bartolo-foreign-and-european-affairs-minister-of-the-republic-of-malta-globalization-is-not-an-ideology-it-is-a->

[necessity/#:~:text=For%20us%20globalization%20is%20not,to%20look%20for%20a%20job.](#)

Ranzini, S. L. (2016). *The Overton window and how Trump won the nomination with it*. The Hill. <https://thehill.com/blogs/pundits-blog/presidential-campaign/298417-the-overton-window-and-how-trump-won-the-nomination/>

Rau, G., & Shih, Y. S. (2021). Evaluation of Cohen's kappa and other measures of inter-rater agreement for genre analysis and other nominal data. *Journal of English for Academic Purposes*, 53, 101026. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jeap.2021.101026>

Reasons, C. E. (1974). Politicizing of crime, the criminal and the criminologist. *The Journal of Criminal Law and Criminology*, 64(4), 471-477. <https://doi.org/10.2307/1142447>

Ricoeur, P. (1981). *Hermeneutics and the human sciences: Essays on language, action and interpretation*. Cambridge University Press.

Roach, K. (1998). Four models of the criminal process. *Journal of Criminal Law & Criminology*, 89, 671. <https://doi.org/10.2307/1144140>

Rottinghaus, B. The Search for the Elusive Executive. In Frisch, S. (Ed.), *Doing Archival Research in Political Science* (pp. 203-226), Cambria Press.

Rousseau, J. J. (1762/2018). *Rousseau: The social contract and other later political writings*. Cambridge University Press.

Sack, F. (1995). Socio-political change and crime: A discourse on theory and method in relation to the new face of crime in Germany. *Crime, Law and Social Change*, 24(1), 49-63. <https://doi.org/10.1007/BF01297657>

- Salet, R., & Terpstra, J. (2020). Criminal justice as a production line: ASAP and the managerialization of criminal justice in the Netherlands. *European Journal of Criminology*, 17(6), 826-844. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1477370819828332>
- Saliba, J. (2020). *Political campaigning in Malta: the experience of big party candidates in minority districts* (Bachelor's thesis, University of Malta). <https://www.um.edu.mt/library/oar/handle/123456789/62795>
- Sammut, G. (2015). Attitudes, social representations and points of view. In G. Sammut, E. Andreouli, G. Gaskell, & J. Valsiner (Eds.), *The Cambridge handbook of social representations* (pp. 96-112). Cambridge University Press. <https://doi.org/10.1017/CBO9781107323650.012>
- Sammut, G., Andreouli, E., Gaskell, G., & Valsiner, J. (2015). Social representations: a revolutionary paradigm?. In G. Sammut, E. Andreouli, G. Gaskell, & J. Valsiner (Eds.), *The Cambridge handbook of social representations* (pp. 3-11). Cambridge University Press. <https://doi.org/10.1017/CBO9781107323650.012>
- Sammut, G., Tsirogianni, S., & Wagoner, B. (2012). Representations from the past: social relations and the devolution of social representations. *Integrative Psychological and Behavioral Science*, 46(4), 493-511. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s12124-012-9212-0>
- Sammut, J. P. (2013). *The conduct of criminal prosecution in Malta: a legal and comparative analysis* (Master's thesis, University of Malta). <https://www.um.edu.mt/library/oar/handle/123456789/7842>
- Sawyer, W., & Wagner, P. (2020). *Mass incarceration: The whole pie 2020*. Prison Policy Initiative. [https://www.prisonpolicy.org/factsheets/pie2020\\_allimages.pdf](https://www.prisonpolicy.org/factsheets/pie2020_allimages.pdf)

- Scheingold, S. A. (1998). Constructing the new political criminology: Power, authority, and the post-liberal state. *Law & Social Inquiry*, 23(4), 857-895.  
<https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1747-4469.1998.tb00036.x>
- Schmallegger, F. (2017). *Criminology today: An integrative introduction* (8<sup>th</sup> ed.). Pearson.
- Shanahan, E. A., Jones, M. D., & McBeth, M. K. (2018). How to conduct a Narrative Policy Framework study. *The Social Science Journal*, 55(3), 332-345.  
<https://doi.org/10.1016/j.soscij.2017.12.002>
- Sifaki, E. (2017). What political dynamics lead to domestic violence legislation being implemented. *New Internationalist*, 8.
- Silva, J. R., Duran, C., Freilich, J. D., & Chermak, S. M. (2019). Addressing the myths of terrorism in America. *International Criminal Justice Review*, 30(3), 302-324.  
<https://doi.org/10.1177/1057567719833139>
- Simon, H. A. (1985). Human nature in politics: The dialogue of psychology with political science. *American political science review*, 79(2), 293-304. [doi:10.2307/1956650](https://doi.org/10.2307/1956650)
- Šimunjak, M. (2016). *Media pluralism in Malta: A test implementation of the media pluralism monitor 2015*. European University Institute. [doi:10.2870/374068](https://doi.org/10.2870/374068)
- Smith, P. D., & Natalier, K. (2012). *Understanding criminal justice: Sociological perspectives*. Sage Publications Inc.
- Squires, P. (1999). Criminology and the “community safety” paradigm: Safety, power and success and the limits of the local. In M. Brogden (Ed.), *The British criminology conferences: Selected proceedings* (Vol. 2). Belfast: Queens University.
- Staerklé, C. (2013). Political lay thinking as representations of social order. *Culture and Political Psychology: A Societal Perspective*, 7, 49-74.

- Stanica, C. M., Balica, D., Henderson, A. C., & Țiclău, T. C. (2020). The weight of service delivery: administrative and rules burdens in street-level bureaucracy. *International Review of Administrative Sciences*, 88(1), 240-257.  
<https://doi.org/10.1177/0020852319895095>
- Strassheim, H., & Kettunen, P. (2014). When does evidence-based policy turn into policy-based evidence? Configurations, contexts and mechanisms. *Evidence & Policy: A Journal of Research, Debate and Practice*, 10(2), 259-277.  
<https://doi.org/10.1332/174426514X13990433991320>
- Tabone, T. (2020, Feb 8). *The main components of the Maltese Legal System and the primary provisions of Maltese Constitutional and Criminal Law*. The Medium.  
<https://medium.com/@tabonemarlon/the-main-components-of-the-maltese-legal-system-and-the-primary-provisions-of-maltese-6380b10fb33>
- Taggart, P., & Pirro, A. L. (2021). European populism before the pandemic: Ideology, Euroscepticism, electoral performance, and government participation of 63 parties in 30 countries. *Italian Political Science Review/Rivista Italiana Di Scienza Politica*, 51(3), 281-304. <https://doi.org/10.1017/ipo.2021.13>
- Tillie, S., Kolarova, D., Kovalenko, R., Battell, A., Casey, C., Kusch, J., & Prodan, C. (2019). *Restorative practice: An overview of its adoption in Bulgaria, Ireland, Germany, Malta and Spain*. SOS Malta, Partners Bulgaria Foundation, Childhood Development Initiative CLG, SGM & Brain Shuttle.  
<https://policycommons.net/artifacts/2090272/trep-regional-report-restorative-practice/2845570/>

- Tonry, M. (2012). *The Oxford handbook of crime and criminal justice*. Oxford University Press.
- Toplak, J. (2019). Money and elections in Malta. *Journal of Mediterranean Studies*, 28(1), 91-107. <https://www.muse.jhu.edu/article/738270>.
- Transparency International. (2021). *Malta Country Data*.  
<https://www.transparency.org/en/countries/malta>
- Travis, J., & Western, B. (2021, April 13). The era of punitive excess. *Brennan Center for Justice*. <https://www.brennancenter.org/our-work/analysis-opinion/era-punitive-excess>
- Vassallo, M. T. (2012a). Interest representation in Malta: Identifying features of Europeanisation. University of Malta.  
<https://www.um.edu.mt/library/oar/handle/123456789/52589>
- Vassallo, M. T. (2012b). Researching governance, politics and public affairs from a Maltese perspective. University of Malta.  
<https://www.um.edu.mt/library/oar/handle/123456789/52470>
- Veenendaal, W. (2019). How smallness fosters clientelism: A case study of Malta. *Political Studies*, 67(4), 1034-1052. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0032321719828275>
- Vel-Palumbo, M., Howarth, L., & Brewer, M. B. (2019). 'Once a sex offender always a sex offender'? Essentialism and attitudes towards criminal justice policy. *Psychology, Crime & Law*, 25(5), 421-439. <https://doi.org/10.1080/1068316X.2018.1529234>
- Vital Zammit, G. (2018). Malta: The political situation. *IEMed Mediterranean Yearbook*.  
<https://www.iemed.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/01/MaltaThe-Political-Situation.pdf>

- Vliegthart, R., & Van Zoonen, L. (2011). Power to the frame: Bringing sociology back to frame analysis. *European Journal of Communication*, 26(2), 101-115.  
<https://doi.org/10.1177/0267323111404838>
- Wagenaar, H. (2014). *Meaning in action: Interpretation and dialogue in policy analysis: Interpretation and dialogue in policy analysis*. Routledge.  
<https://doi.org/10.4324/9781315702476>
- Wagner, W., Kello, K., & Rämmer, A. (2018). Making social objects: The theory of social representation. *The Cambridge handbook of sociocultural psychology*, 130-147.  
<https://doi.org/10.1017/9781316662229>
- Walklate, S., Maher, J., McCulloch, J., Fitz-Gibbon, K., & Beavis, K. (2018). Victim stories and victim policy: Is there a case for a narrative victimology?. *Crime, media, culture*, 15(2), 199-215. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1741659018760105>
- Warner, K. (2021). Resisting the new punitiveness: Penal policy in Denmark, Finland, and Norway and contrary trends in Ireland. In L. J. Leonard (Ed.), *Global perspectives on people, process, and practice in criminal justice* (pp. 110-143). IGI Global.  
<https://doi.org/10.4018/978-1-7998-6646-6.ch007>
- Warrington, E. (2012). *Reflections on Malta's governance experience*. University of Malta.  
<https://www.um.edu.mt/library/oar/handle/123456789/52509>
- Weible, C. M., Heikkila, T., DeLeon, P., & Sabatier, P. A. (2012). *Understanding and influencing the policy process*. *Policy sciences*, 45(1), 1-21.  
<https://doi.org/10.1007/s11077-011-9143-5>

- Weissman, D. M. (2019). The politicisation of domestic violence. In J. K. Stoeber (Ed.), *The politicisation of safety* (pp. 38-61), New York University Press.
- <https://doi.org/10.18574/9781479888733>
- Wenzelburger, G. (2015a). Parties, institutions and the politics of law and order: How political institutions and partisan ideologies shape law-and-order spending in twenty western industrialized countries. *British Journal of Political Science*, 45(3), 663-687. <https://doi.org/10.1017/S0007123413000501>
- Wenzelburger, G. (2015b). A global trend toward law and order harshness?. *European Political Science Review*, 8(4), 589-613. [doi:10.1017/S1755773915000247](https://doi.org/10.1017/S1755773915000247)
- Wenzelburger, G. (2020). *The partisan politics of law and order*. Oxford University Press.
- Wenzelburger, G., & Staff, H. (2016). German exceptionalism? An empirical analysis of 20 years of law and order legislation. *Politics & Policy*, 44(2), 319-350.
- <https://doi.org/10.1111/polp.12151>
- Wenzelburger, G., & Staff, H. (2017). The 'third way' and the politics of law and order: Explaining differences in law and order policies between Blair's New Labour and Schröder's SPD. *European Journal of Political Research*, 56(3), 553-577.
- <https://doi.org/10.1111/1475-6765.12202>
- Wilkes, N., Anderson, V. R., Johnson, C. L., & Bedell, L. M. (2021). Mixed methods research in criminology and criminal justice: A systematic review. *American Journal of Criminal Justice*, 1-21. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s12103-020-09593-7>
- Willis, A. (2013). Introduction: What is criminology? And why criminology?. In J. Azzopardi, S. Formosa, S. Scicluna, A. Willis (Eds.), *Key issues in criminology: Janus*

/// (pp. 13-22). Department of Criminology, Faculty for Social Wellbeing, University of Malta.

Wozniak, K. H. (2016). Public opinion and the politics of criminal justice policy making: Reasons for optimism, pessimism, and uncertainty. *Criminology & Public Policy*, 15(1), 179-186. <https://doi.org/10.1111/1745-9133.12185>

Xuereb, K. (2018a). Neocolonialist practices in cultural governance in Malta as an EU state. In European Network on Cultural Management and Policy (Ed.), *Congress Proceedings: Beyond EYCH2018. What is the cultural horizon? Opening up perspectives to face ongoing transformations* (pp.5-20). European Commission.

Xuereb, K. (2018b). The impact of the European Union on cultural policy in Malta. *Croatian International Relations Review*, 24(82), 38-61. <https://doi.org/10.2478/cirr-2018-0009>

Yeomans, H. (2019). Historical context and the criminological imagination: Towards a three-dimensional criminology. *Criminology & Criminal Justice*, 19(4), 456-474. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1748895818812995>

Yuana, S. L., Sengers, F., Boon, W., Hajer, M. A., & Raven, R. (2020). A dramaturgy of critical moments in transition: Understanding the dynamics of conflict in socio-political change. *Environmental Innovation and Societal Transitions*, 37, 156-170. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.eist.2020.08.009>

Zammit, M., Grech, D., & Zammit, K. (2020). *Malta on the international sphere: A small state's perspective*. Government of Malta. <https://foreign.gov.mt/en/perspectives-on-the-work-of-the->

[ministry/Pages/Malta-on-the-International-Sphere-A-Small-States-Perspective.aspx](#)

Zammit, P. (2016). *Tax evasion in Malta: An ethical analysis of the perception of the Maltese people* (Master's thesis, University of Malta).

Zimring, F. E., & Johnson, D. T. (2006). Public opinion and the governance of punishment in democratic political systems. *The Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science*, 605(1), 265-280. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0002716205285949>

Zulianello, M., & Larsen, E. G. (2021). Populist parties in European Parliament elections: A new dataset on left, right and valence populism from 1979 to 2019. *Electoral Studies*, 71, 102312. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.electstud.2021.102312>

## APPENDIX A: TIMELINE OF MALTESE POLITICAL EVENTS AND SALIENT ISSUES

This appendix provides an overview of political events featured in local literature to promote appreciation for historical contingency and enable sociological imagination during the interpretation of results (Matza, 1969/2010; Sammut et al., 2013; Yeomans, 2018). It ensures that social representations are contextualised within concurrent political circumstances, and that leniency and severity vectors in criminal justice responses are acknowledged. It is not an exhaustive list, nor does it aim to be so. Rather, it only includes events that scholars thought were relevant to their research and commentary at that time. This is in line with the bounded rationality concept referenced in the study, whereby humans' restricted cognitive capabilities limit their focus on certain narratives or issues at the expense of others (Weible et al., 2011). Events are referenced to ensure transparency and impartiality on the researcher's behalf, especially considering the politically charged environment in which this study takes place. Sources with suspected bias, illegitimate sources and unfounded claims were excluded from this list.

**Table A1**

*Timeline of Maltese Political Events and Salient Issues.*

Period	Salient Issues and Events
The 9 <sup>th</sup> legislature (pre-2003 election)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Perceptions of increased pluralism and cultural heterogeneity in society (Briguglio, 2010)</li> <li>• Continued debate on shared sovereignty and Malta's accession to the EU (Briguglio, 2010; Fenech, 2003).</li> <li>• Non-constitutionally binding referendum of Malta's accession to the EU in March 2003 (Briguglio, 2010; Electoral Commission, 2015b)</li> </ul>
The 2003 General Election	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Europhilia and Euroscepticism as key issues of contention during the campaign (Briguglio, 2010)</li> </ul>

---

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• PN elected to government with 51.81% of votes and a margin of victory of 4.48% (Electoral Commission Malta, 2022a)</li> </ul>
The 10 <sup>th</sup> legislature (2003 – 2008)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Accession to the European Union on May 1<sup>st</sup>, 2004, and adoption of Euro currency in 2008</li> <li>• European Parliament elections in June 2004. Results favoured PL, with 48.42% of votes and a margin of victory of 8.66% (Electoral Commission Malta, 2022b)</li> <li>• A perceived increase in economic liberalisation and privatisation (Briguglio, 2010)</li> <li>• Moderation of PL’s position towards the EU (Briguglio, 2010)</li> <li>• Resignation of then Prime Minister and PN leader (Dr Eddie Fenech Adami) and election of a new leader and Prime Minister (Dr Lawrence Gonzi) (Briguglio, 2010)</li> <li>• The sustainability and efficiency of certain public services called into question (Briguglio, 2010)</li> <li>• Charges of unethical practices and corruption among elected officials (Fenech, 2008)</li> <li>• Accession to Schengen Area (Pace, 2008)</li> </ul>
The 2008 General Election	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Need for good governance and possible re-negotiation of the EU packages as some of the main issues of contention during the campaign (Briguglio, 2010; Pace, 2008)</li> <li>• PN elected to government for the third time running, with 49.34% of votes and a margin of victory of 0.55% (Electoral Commission Malta, 2022a; Fenech, 2008)</li> </ul>
The 12 <sup>th</sup> legislature (2008 – 2013)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Resignation of then PL leader (Dr Alfred Sant) and election of a new leader (Dr Joseph Muscat) in 2008, in addition to several structural changes to party management (Briguglio, 2010)</li> </ul>

---

---

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• European Parliament elections in June 2009. Results favoured PL, with 54.77% of votes and a margin of victory of 14.28% (Electoral Commission Malta, 2022b)</li> <li>• Charges of corrupt practices in oil procurement by incumbent administration (Fenech, 2013)</li> <li>• The dividing referendum on the introduction of divorce in Malta in 2011 (Electoral Commission, 2015b; Fenech, 2013)</li> </ul>
<p>The 2013 General Election</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Good governance, transparency and meritocracy as some of the key issues of contention in the campaign (Briguglio, 2017)</li> <li>• PL elected to government after 15 years of PN rule, with 54.83% of votes and a historic margin of victory of 11.49% (Electoral Commission Malta, 2022a)</li> </ul>
<p>The 12<sup>th</sup> legislature (2013-2017)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Resignation of then PN leader (Dr Lawrence Gonzi) and election of a new leader (Dr Simon Busuttil) in 2013</li> <li>• “the most prosperous economic times in history” (Vital Zammit, 2018, p.1)</li> <li>• European Parliament elections in May 2014. Results favoured the PL, with 53.39% of votes and a margin of victory of 13.37% (Electoral Commission Malta, 2022b)</li> <li>• Introduction of same-sex civil unions in 2014 (Pace, 2017)</li> <li>• The revelation of elected officials' involvement in the Panama Papers and the Egrant enquiry in 2016 (Fenech 2017; Group of States against Corruption, 2019; Pace, 2017)</li> <li>• Malta was the host of The Council Presidency in 2017 (Panke &amp; Gurol, 2018)</li> <li>• 12<sup>th</sup> legislature cut short as the government called for a general election one year ahead of schedule (Pace, 2017)</li> </ul>

---

---

The 2017 General Election	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The rule of law and economic prosperity as some of the key issues of contention during the campaign (Briguglio, 2017; Cachia et al., 2020)</li> <li>• PN enters a coalition with Partit Demokratiku (Cachia et al., 2020; Pace, 2017)</li> <li>• PL elected to government with 55.04% of votes and a margin of victory of 11.36% (Electoral Commission Malta, 2022a)</li> </ul>
<hr/>	
The 13 <sup>th</sup> legislature (2017-2022)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Resignation of then PN leader (Dr Simon Busuttil) and election of a new leader (Dr Adrian Delia) in 2017 (Cachia et al., 2020)</li> <li>• Bombing and murder of Maltese investigative journalist whose main area of focus was corruption in 2017 (Group of States against Corruption, 2019; Ranieri, 2019)</li> <li>• Report by the Venice Commission in 2018, after a national request for an opinion on constitutional amendments and the separation of powers (Group of States against Corruption, 2019)</li> <li>• European Parliament elections in May 2019. Results favoured PL, with 54.39% of votes and a margin of victory of 16.39% (Electoral Commission Malta, 2022b)</li> <li>• Dissent and public protests towards the end of 2019 led to the resignation of then Prime Minister (Dr Joseph Muscat) and PL leader and the election of a new leader and Prime Minister, Dr Robert Abela (Cachia et al., 2020)</li> <li>• Replacement of then PN leader (Dr Adrian Delia) with Dr Bernard Grech in 2020</li> </ul>
<hr/>	
The 2022 General Election	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• PL elected to government with 55.11% of votes and a margin of victory of 13.37% (Electoral Commission Malta, 2022a)</li> </ul>

---



## APPENDIX C: THE CODING MANUAL

### General Definitions

- Criminal justice policies: Any state policy which is invested in, rhetorically or tangibly, to condition the criminal justice system and its various components. Motions for amendments to national laws also qualify for this frame but should be distinguished from policies as instructed in the manual.
- Document: Any textual or audio-visual material which formed part of the collection of analysed and coded content.
- Action: Any state action listed in an analysed document and related to any investment in the criminal justice system. An action can be freestanding or a part of a broader policy framework.

### General Instructions

**Unitising:** Any action that meets the below requisites is a codable unit and must be coded within a separate row. If data on an action is dispersed throughout a document, this must still be recorded within that unit's entry. A unit's start and end are determined by the type of remedy employed and the area of concern. Interpretation and discretion are essential in the unitising process.

### ***Inclusion and Exclusion Criteria***

1. *Reference to criminal conduct and related reactions:* The realm of criminal justice is vast and perpetually inclusive. Any action can be traced back to humans' fundamental need for law and order with logical reasoning. Yet, it would defeat the purpose of this quantitative exercise to intuitively deduce relations to criminal justice without empirical backup. To inhibit the problematic inclusiveness of the social object under study, actions that could loosely relate to criminal justice but make no specific mention of it are to be excluded. For example, a simple reference to the procurement of new police cars could be reasoned to tie with improved law enforcement responses to crime. However, it is just as plausible that this procurement was motivated by a

need for more reliable or environmentally sustainable means of transport. So, without means to ascertain either argument, this measure would be excluded.

2. *Mention of a related actionable policy measure:* Mentions of criminal accusations exchanged among parties officials or vague notions of action (e.g., "this government cleaned Maltese politics of corruption") are not recorded unless a discernible and actionable remedial policy is linked with these statements.
3. *Reference to a substantive change with direct implications on criminal justice provisions:* Mentions of policies, projects, priorities and engagements which yielded (or will yield) tangible and relevant outcomes in criminal justice provisions qualify as codable units. On the other hand, repetitions of entities' preordained and unchanging roles, infrastructural and administrative changes (e.g., rebranding of websites) and passive references to actions with no tangible consequences (e.g., simple references to attending meetings with no comment on the outcome) are to be excluded.

Variable	Definition	Type of variable	Instructions	Options	Definition of Options
<b>Document Information</b>					
Source (V1)	The type of document from which an action is sourced.	Deductive, nominal variable with fixed categories.	Options are restricted to a drop-down menu. Only one option is to be selected.	Electoral manifesto Election debate Budget Speech Ministerial Report	Action is sourced from a manifesto. Action is sourced from a debate. Action is sourced from a budget speech Action is sourced from a report.
Document identification code (V2)	The code assigned to each document for cross-referencing between frame and catalogue.	Deductive textual input	("D."0000"."LL"."00)		
Unit location in document (V3)	The page/s or minute/s location of the action.	Deductive textual input	"p.0" or "m.0"		

**Contextual Variables**

Context (V4)	The context within and for which the document was developed.	Deductive, nominal variable with fixed categories.	Options are restricted to a drop-down menu. Only one option is to be selected.	General election campaign  Governmental administration	The document was produced as part of an electoral campaign.  The document was produced annually by an incumbent administration.
Year (V5)	The year to which the document refers.	Deductive, scale variable	“0000”		
Legislature (V6)	The legislature during which the action was promoted	Deductive, ordinal variable based on input in V5 (Year).	Only one option is to be selected.	9th  10th  11th  12th  13th	The action was promoted during the 9 <sup>th</sup> legislature (Sept. '98 - Apr. '03)  The action was promoted during the 10 <sup>th</sup> legislature (May '03 - Mar. '08)  The action was promoted during the 11 <sup>th</sup> legislature (Apr. '08 - Mar. '13)  The action was promoted during the 12 <sup>th</sup> legislature (Apr. '13 - Jun. '17)  The action was promoted during the 13 <sup>th</sup> legislature (Jul. '17 - Feb. '22)

Election year (V7)	Whether the action was promoted a year before a general election	Deductive, nominal variable with fixed categories.	Options are restricted to a drop-down menu. Only one option is to be selected.	Yes	The document is dated to a year immediately before a general election.
				No	The document is dated to a year not immediately before a general election.
				Not applicable	The document is an electoral manifesto or election debate.
Political party (V8)	The party which promoted the action.	Deductive, nominal variable with fixed categories.	Options are restricted to a drop-down menu. Only one option is to be selected.	PN	The action was promoted by PN.
				FN	The action was promoted by FN.
				PL	The action was promoted by the PL.
Role of political party (V9)	The role held by the political party during a general election.	Deductive, nominal variable with fixed categories.	Options are restricted to a drop-down menu. Only one option is to be selected.	In Government	The action was promoted by a party in government.
				In Opposition	The action was promoted by a party in opposition.

**Area of Intervention**

Type of crime/s (V10)	The type of crime being addressed	Deductive textual input & inductive categorisation.	Write the offence/s as listed in the document.		
Nature of crime (V11)	The classification of the aforementioned crime as violent or non-violent.	Deductive, nominal variable with fixed categories.	Options are restricted to a drop-down menu. Only one option is to be selected.	Violent	The crime is pursued to inflict physical or psychological pain on the victim or damage to the victim's property.
				Non-violent	The crime is profit-oriented, even if violence may be a side effect.
				Not applicable	The action addresses general provisions.
				Unable to determine	There is ambiguity or a cluster of different types of crimes.

Type of justification (V12)	The inductive classification of reasons for state intervention.	Inductive, ordinal variable based on input in V13.	Select all that are applicable.	In response to research & analysis	Action was justified through research and assessments.
				In response to superiors' directives	Action was justified through superior entities' intervention.
				Values in favour of state intervention	Action was justified by the government's/party's endorsement of certain beliefs and values.
				Inadequate processes, policies or services	Action was justified by confirmed or perceived insufficiency, inefficiency or inadequacy in current measures.
				Actual or perceived prevalence of crime	Action was justified through the actual or perceived prevalence or evolution of crime.
				Social consequences of crime	Action is justified crime's implications on social well-being.
				Economic consequences of crime	Action was justified given crime's implications on economic welfare.

				Not mentioned	The need for action was not justified in the document.
Actual justification (V13)	Explicitly stated reasons which preface and justify the action	Deductive textual input	Only record what is explicitly identified.		
Area of concern (V14)	The area/s in which inadequacy has been observed and to which the action pertains.	Inductive, nominal variable.	Select all that are applicable.	Criminalisation  Decriminalisation  Prevention  Regulation  Detection	Action promotes the criminalisation of conduct which was legal until then.  Action promotes the decriminalisation of a criminal offence.  Action promotes change in primary prevention towards criminal offences.  Action promotes change in regulatory monitoring procedures.  Action promotes change in crime-detection procedures.

Enforcement	Action promotes change in actions which enforce criminal law.
Investigation	Action promotes change in the investigative procedures.
Administration of justice	Action promotes change in justice administration procedures.
Corrective measures for offenders	Action promotes change in provisions for offenders.
Protective measures for victims & witnesses	Action promotes change in provisions for victims and witnesses.
Other	Insert perceived area of concern as text in the "Other Notes" variable.
Unable to determine	A crime-related issue is identified but specific area of concern is not.

---

**Policy Specifications**

---

Instrument (V15)	The type of instrument used to	Inductive, nominal variable.	Select all that are applicable	Improvement/expansion of state-funded service provision	The action improves or expands state-funded services to satisfy the recipients' real or envisaged needs.
------------------	--------------------------------	------------------------------	--------------------------------	---	--

achieve the desired  
change in policy.

Policy development

The action establishes or expands intragency and interagency policies.

Introduction or  
amendment of legal  
provisions

The action introduces new legal provisions or amends perceived inadequacies in existing ones.

Increase in resources &  
opportunities to carry  
out professional duties

The action significantly increases resources and opportunities for intervention for criminal justice professionals.

Training and capacity  
building

The action improves or expands criminal justice professionals' upskilling and capacity-building provisions.

Research and analysis

The action invests in research and analysis to understand presenting problems.

				Awareness raising and community relations	The action consists of one-way or bidirectional communication between stakeholders and society.
				Other	Insert policy instrument as text in the "Other Notes" variable.
				Unable to determine	There is a reference to change without sufficient explanation.
Description of action (V16)	Descriptive summary of the action.	Deductive textual input	Concisely list details which fall within the scope of this study.		
Stage in Policy Cycle (V17)	The stage in which the action can be situated in the policy process at the time.	Deductive, ordinal variable with and fixed categories.	Options are restricted to a drop-down menu. Only one option is to be selected.	Agenda setting	The document reports the identification and definition of a problem and its inclusion in the political agenda.
				Policy formulation	The document reports the objectives, the costs and the policy options available to policymakers.

Legitimation	The document reports the selection of a policy instrument and its promotion.
Implementation	The document reports the implementation of a policy instrument.
Evaluation	The document reports the evaluation of an implemented policy.
Maintenance	The document reports on the maintenance of an existent policy and incremental adjustments.
Succession	The document reports on the complete reformation of a policy area which builds on precedent provisions.
Termination	The document reports the conclusion or discontinuation of a policy measure.

---

---

Direct target group (V18)	The group most affected (positively or negatively) by the action's results.	Inductive, nominal variable.	Options are restricted to a drop-down menu. Only one option is to be selected.	<p>The general public</p> <p>Criminal justice professionals</p> <p>Victims &amp; witnesses</p> <p>Offenders</p> <p>Political parties and politicians</p> <p>Both victims and offenders</p> <p>Other specific groups</p> <p>Unable to determine</p>	<p>The action applies to and affects all citizens.</p> <p>The action affects the work of criminal justice professionals.</p> <p>The action targets victims and witnesses.</p> <p>The action targets offenders.</p> <p>The action targets politicians and political parties.</p> <p>The action targets both victims and offenders in equal measure.</p> <p>The action influences the actions of a distinguishable group in the general public. Specify in "Other Notes" field.</p> <p>Not enough information is provided to determine who benefits from the action.</p>
---------------------------	---	------------------------------	--	--	--

---

Type of stakeholder (V19)	The classification of stakeholders in V20 according to purpose and legal character.	Inductive, nominal variable based on input in V20.	Categories to be mutually exclusive, but multiple-choice.		
Actual stakeholders (V20)	Explicitly specified stakeholders whose contribution is necessary for the action's success	Deductive variable with textual input.	Clean and sort data into thematic categories in V19.		
Depth (V21)	The extent to which the action, if implemented, is perceived to change or challenge the status quo.	Deductive, ordinal variable with fixed categories.	Options are restricted to a drop-down menu. Only one option is to be selected.	Minimal  Intermediate  Considerable	The action produces small changes to the system with minimal implications for the status quo.  The action produces mid-size changes to the system with minor implications for the status quo.  The action produces profound changes to the system, which considerably altered the status quo.

				Unable to determine	It is uncertain how profound the change produced by the action is/was.
Breadth (V22)	The extent to which the action, if implemented, reaches various social groups.	Deductive, ordinal variable with pre-established and fixed categories.	Options are restricted to a drop-down menu. Only one option is to be selected.	Minimal	The action would have affected only one group of individuals in society.
				Intermediate	The action would have affected two or more social groups.
				Considerable	The action would have affected many or all individuals in society.
				Unable to determine	It is uncertain how broad the change produced by the action is/was.

**Representations**

Manifested principles and practices (V23)	The principle/s and practice/s manifested in the action as presented in the document.	Inductive, nominal variable.	Select all that are applicable. Any additional categories to be cleaned after data collection is completed. All units	Centralisation	The action unifies control of a resource or process and minimises fragmentation.
				Deterrence	The action deters criminal behaviour by unbalancing the cost-benefit equation.

to be recoded  
according to the  
latest list of options.

Disassociation	The action promotes disassociation with the values and policies of a superior entity regarding a certain issue.
Essentialism	The action endorses the belief that offenders are likely to commission or repeat a criminal action because it is in their nature to be deviant.
Europeanisation	The action upgrades and assimilates local practices to be level the standards identified by the EU.
Incapacitation	The action promotes the prevention of further criminal conduct through physical segregation.
Interdisciplinary coordination	The action promotes sharing resources and information among professionals.
Legality	The action promotes policy changes which conform with national law.

Managerialism	The action promotes managerial principles, including efficiency measures and structured practices.
Multilateralism	The action promotes collaboration amongst states with a common goal.
Non-essentialism	The action endorses the belief that offenders can be rehabilitated.
Privatisation	The action involves outsourcing services to the private sector.
Professional accountability	The action increases professionals' accountability during their duties.
Restitution	The action restores society's well-being after the commission of crime.
Retribution	The action serves justice and dispenses punishment to compensate for the offender's wrongdoing.
Welfarism	The action promotes the equitable distribution of fiscal resources

				Unable to determine	The action, as presented, does not communicate any discernible principles and practices
Orientation (V24)	The tone indicates partiality or neutrality towards social groups.	Deductive, nominal variable with pre-established and fixed categories.	Options are restricted to a drop-down menu. Only one option is to be selected.	Victim-Oriented	The action benefits actual or possible victims of crime.
				Offender-Oriented	The action benefits suspected or convicted offenders.
				Balanced/Neutral	The action is neutral and no partiality can be detected.

**Other Notes**

Other notes (V25)	Other relevant details which have not been covered.	Deductive textual input	Concisely list any other detail of relevance.
-------------------	---	-------------------------	---

## APPENDIX D: PERCENTAGE OF FOCUS CODING FRAME AND MANUAL

The purpose of this variable is to determine how much space criminal justice policies are afforded in electoral manifestos, election debates and budget speeches. Data from ministerial reports was excluded from this coding frame given how the specificity of this reports on criminal justice would have affected the average of documents which have a more general take on government activities. Below is the formula used to estimate such focus in each document. It is acknowledged that an accurate measure cannot be readily obtained owing to format variation. Nonetheless, the near-accurate percentages of focus allow cross-comparison amongst documents according to who published them, at what time and in which context, and to determine whether political consideration for crime was allocated evenly across all independent variables.

### Instructions for Calculation

Heading	Code	Description	Input
Document code	n/a	The document for which the percentage of focus is being calculated.	"D."0000"."LL"."00
Source	V1	The type of document being analysed.	"Electoral manifesto" / "Election debate" / "Budget speech"
Legislature	V6	The legislature during which the document was published.	"9th" / "10th" / "11th" / "12th" / "13th"

Political Party	V8	The party that published the document electoral manifesto or budget speech, or the party that contributed to an election debate. Create an entry for each party for the latter source.	"PN" / "PL" / "FN"
Length of relevant content	N1	The number of pages/minutes of relevant content. In the case of texts, exclude title pages, contents, back pages and references. In the case of audio-visual documents, exclude introductions and conclusions by moderators, advertisements and interventions by party representatives not from PN or PL.	"000"
Pages/minutes with relevant content	n/a	The pages/timeframes that house content that qualifies as codable units. Create a separate row for each entry to facilitate calculation.	"page/s." 0 or "minute/s." 0
Total number of sentences on pages	N2	This is only relevant for pages not wholly dedicated to criminal justice policies. Count and list the number of complete sentences found on each page.	0
Number of relevant sentences on page	N3	This too is only relevant for pages not entirely dedicated to criminal justice policies. Count and list the number of sentences which pertain to codable actions.	0

Share of relevant sections on the page	N4	The exact share of the page which is dedicated to codable actions.	$(N3/N2)$ to nearest two decimal places
Number of relevant pages/minutes	N5	The space in the document which is relevant to the coding frame.	SUM(N4)
Focus of the whole document	V26	The percentage of the document which is relevant to the coding frame.	$(N5/N1)*100$

**Coding Frame**

Document code	Source	Legislature	Political Party	Length of relevant body	Pages/mins w/ relevant content	Total no. sentences on page	No. of relevant sentences	Share of relevant sections	Number of relevant pages/mins.	Focus of the whole document
---------------	--------	-------------	-----------------	-------------------------	--------------------------------	-----------------------------	---------------------------	----------------------------	--------------------------------	-----------------------------

## APPENDIX E: CONTENT SELECTED FOR ANALYSIS

**Table E1**

*Sampling Procedures for Quantitative Analysis*

Content	Sampling Technique	Reasons for inclusion
General elections		
Electoral manifestos	Census of PN & PL manifestos for 2003 – 2017 general elections, given accessibility and manageability of data	Chosen for their representation of marketing strategies employed in electoral campaigns and the plethora of issues that the party promises to address (Brouard et al., 2018).
Election debates	Convenience sampling of debates which included representatives from PN and PL and were held within three months before a general election, given issues with data accessibility.	Chosen as an extension of manifestos' content, with the added benefit of unscripted speech on proposals' merits and weaknesses.
Governmental administrations		
Ministerial reports	Sampling of annual accounts by the police force, criminal courts, and correctional, victim and probation services for years immediately before and after a general election and a random year in between.	Chosen for their retrospective insight on a political party's activities during its time in office.

Budget speeches	Census of budget speeches' transcript for years 2003 – 2022, given the accessibility and manageability of data.	Chosen for their insight on a political party's prospective activities during its time in office.
-----------------	---	---

**Table E2**

*Sampling Procedures for Qualitative Analysis*

Content	Sampling Procedure
News coverage	The news outlets <i>Malta Today</i> , <i>Times of Malta</i> and <i>Malta Independent</i> were chosen for their relative political neutrality, language (English), and their lasting presence in Malta's media sector. Their online archives were searched using "domestic violence" and "policy" as keywords and April 2003 – February 2022 as a custom temporal range. Results were manually filtered by the same parameters of the quantitative coding frame. Items which covered substantial, longer-lasting action were favoured over those reporting short-term events. A spread of articles over years and portals was aimed for, but the tendency for news items to centre around prominent events (in line with Punctuated Equilibrium Theory) and the inaccessibility of some items in portals' archives were inevitable. A total of 47 articles were analysed by the time data saturation was perceptively reached.
National strategies	The two national strategies on domestic violence were publicly available online on the CGBVDV website.
CGBVDV's annual reports	Article 16 of the Gender-Based Violence and Domestic Violence Act (Cap.581 of the Laws of Malta) requires CGBVDV to compile and

---

publish annual reports of policy development on domestic violence, which are readily available on its website. One report for each legislature was randomly selected at the outset.

---

## **E.1 References for Samples in Quantitative Analysis**

### ***E.1.1 Electoral Manifestos***

Partit Laburista (2003). *Programm elettoral: Futur aħjar, l-ewwel int*. Malta

Partit Laburista (2008). *Manifest elettoral: Pjan għal bidu ġdid*. Malta.

Partit Laburista (2013). *Manifest elettoral 2013: Malta tagħna lkoll*. Malta.

Partit Laburista (2017). *Manifest elettoral 2017: L-aqwa żmien ta' pajjiżna*. Malta.

Partit Nazzjonalista (2003). *Programm elettoral tal-Partit Nazzjonal: Biex Malta tikber fl-Ewropa*. Malta.

Partit Nazzjonalista (2008). *Programm elettoral: Iva, flimkien kollox possibli (2008-2013)*. Malta.

Partit Nazzjonalista (2013). *Programm elettoral tal-Partit Nazzjonalista: Qabza oħra ta' kwalità*. Malta.

Forza Nazzjonali (2017a). *A country of opportunity: An electoral programme for young people*. Malta.

Forza Nazzjonali (2017b). *Electoral programme 2017: I chose Malta*. Malta.

Forza Nazzjonali (2017c). *Our commitment to Gozo: 100 proposals*. Malta.

### **E.1.2 Election Debates**

Abela, K., Gulia, G., D'Amato, H., Bartolo, E., & Borg, T. (2003, March 31). *Dibattitu politiku: Wens għalik u għall-familja kollha*. Broadcasting Authority. Malta.

Abela, K., Zammit Dimech, F., Bonnici, J., Attard Montaldo, J., & Buhagiar, C. (2003, April 5). *Dibattitu politiku: L-ekonomija tissaħħaħ biċ-ċertezza*. Broadcasting Authority. Malta.

Amaira, R., Busuttil, S., Fenech Adami, B., Mallia, M., Faerne, C., & Busuttil, L. (2013, February 27). *Xandiriet għall-elezzjoni ġenerali 2013: Ucuħ Maltin, poplu wieħed*. Broadcasting Authority. Malta.

Amaira, R., Falzon, M., Schembri, D., Vassallo, E., & Busuttil, S. (2013, February 6). *Xandiriet għall-elezzjoni ġenerali 2013: Malta tagħna lkoll*. Broadcasting Authority. Malta.

Amaira, R., Mangion, C., Bartolo, E., Gatt, A., & Galea, L. (2008, March 5). *Xandiriet politiċi: Pjan għal bidu ġdid*. Broadcasting Authority. Malta.

Azzopardi, P., Briguglio, M., Muscat, J., & Gonzi, L. (2013, January 18). *Dibattitu bejn il-mexxejja tal-partiti*. Xarabank. Malta.

Azzopardi, P., Briguglio, M., Muscat, J., & Gonzi, L. (2013, March 1). *Dibattitu bejn il-mexxejja tal-partiti*. Xarabank. Malta.

Azzopardi, P., Farrugia, A., Busuttil, S., & Cacopardo, C. (2012, December 15). *Dibattitu bejn mexxejja deputati tal-partiti*. Xarabank. Malta.

Azzopardi, P., Muscat, J., & Busuttil, S. (2017, May 26). *Dibattitu bejn il-mexxejja tal-partiti politiċi*. Xarabank. Malta.

- Bugeja, R., Busuttil, S., Fenech, T., Meli, A., & Gulia, G. (2013, January 30). *Xandiriet għall-elezzjoni ġenerali 2013: Qabza oħra ta' kwalità*. Broadcasting Authority. Malta.
- Bugeja, R., Cacopardo, C., Abela, T., Hili, C., Busuttil, S., & Puli, C. (2013, January 23). *Xandiriet għall-elezzjoni ġenerali 2013: Magħna taf fejn int*. Broadcasting Authority. Malta.
- Bugeja, R., Muscat, J., & Gonzi, L. (2013, March 6). *Xandiriet għall-elezzjoni ġenerali 2013: Tema ġenerali*. Broadcasting Authority. Malta.
- Bugeja, R., Muscat, J., Demarco, M., Zrinzo Azzopardi, S., & Cassola, A. (2008, February 29). *Xandiriet politiċi: Lil din l-art ħelwa*. Broadcasting Authority. Malta.
- Bugeja, R., Said, C., Puli, C., Cassola, A., Scicluna, E., & Micallef, M. (2013, February 25). *Xandiriet għall-elezzjoni ġenerali 2013: Il-Partit Nazzjonalista se joħloq 24,000 xogħol ġdid*. Broadcasting Authority. Malta.
- Bugeja, R., Vella, G., Gulia, G., Pullicino Orlando, J., & Cassar, J. (2008, February 15). *Xandiriet politiċi: Tmexxija onestà, tmexxija nadifa*. Broadcasting Authority. Malta.
- Galea, C., Fenech Adami, E., & Sant, A. (2003a, March 6). *Dibattitu politiku: Tema ġenerali*. Broadcasting Authority. Malta.
- Galea, C., Fenech Adami, E., & Sant, A. (2003b, April 9). *Dibattitu politiku: Tema ġenerali*. Broadcasting Authority. Malta.
- Grima, G., Cacopardo, C., D'Amato, H., Xuereb, A., & Galdes, R. (2008, February 20). *Xandiriet politiċi: Bil-vot tiegħek il-bidla*. Broadcasting Authority. Malta.
- Grima, G., Falzon, M., Coleiro Preca, M., Borg, T., & Cristina, D. (2008, February, 18). *Xandiriet politiċi: Xogħol, ħarsien, dinjità*. Broadcasting Authority. Malta.

Hili, L., Busuttil, S., Muscat, J., Farrugia, M., Cassola, A., & Debattista, R. (2017, May 17).

*The University General Election Debate*. Third Eye. Malta.

Micallef, M., Fenech, T., & Brincat, L. (2008, February 12). *Xandiriet politiċi: Biex nibqgħu ngħixu aħjar*. Broadcasting Authority. Malta.

Micallef, M., Dalli, H., Schembri, S., Puli, C., & Farrugia, M. (2017, May 15). *Skema ta' xandiriet politiċi*. Broadcasting Authority. Malta.

Micallef, M., Demarco, M., Portelli, M., Farrugia Portelli, J., & Schembri, D. (2017, May 17). *Skema ta' xandiriet politiċi*. Broadcasting Authority. Malta.

Micallef, M., Galea, L., Dingli, A., Abela, C., & Dalli, H. (2008, February 21). *Xandiriet politiċi: Biex nirnexxu lkoll*. Broadcasting Authority. Malta.

Micallef, M., Muscat, J., Borg, T., Brincat, L., & Galea, V. (2008, February 26). *Xandiriet politiċi: Trasparenza, serjetà*. Broadcasting Authority. Malta.

Micallef, M., Muscat, J., & Busuttil, S. (2017, May 31). *Skema ta' xandiriet politiċi*. Broadcasting Authority. Malta.

Micallef, P., Muscat, J., Gonzi, L., & Briguglio, M. (2013, February 20). *What about us? Leaders' debate*. Malta College of Arts, Science and Technology's Student Council. Malta.

Sansone, K., Mangion, C., Vella, G., Frendo, M., & Fenech, T. (2008, February, 22). *Xandiriet politiċi: Sant iġib il-qagħad*. Broadcasting Authority. Malta.

Sansone, K., Muscat, J., Busuttil, S., Mallia, M., & Xuereb, A. (2008, February 25). *Xandiriet politiċi: Bil-vot tiegħek il-bidla*. Broadcasting Authority. Malta.

- Scicluna, E., Dalli, J., Bonnici, J., Farrugia, A., & Mifsud, A. (2003, March 25). *Dibattitu politiku: Gvern Nazzjonalista, gvern li falla*. Broadcasting Authority. Malta.
- Scicluna, E., Gonzi, L., Gatt, A., Vella, G., & Bartolo, E. (2003, March 8). *Dibattitu politiku: Serjetà għall-pajjiżna*. Broadcasting Authority. Malta.
- Scicluna, E., Preca, M. L., Cardona, C., Galea, L., & Vassallo, E. (2003, March 27). *Dibattitu politiku: 14-il elf impjeg għalik*. Broadcasting Authority. Malta.
- Scicluna, E., Vella, K., Brincat, L., Borg, J., & Dalli, J. (2003, April 6). *Dibattitu politiku: Nifs ġdid lill-ekonomija*. Broadcasting Authority. Malta.
- Spiteri, J., Cardona, C., & Fenech, T. (2013, January 9). *Xandiriet għall-elezzjoni ġenerali 2013: Il-proposti tal-Partit Nazzjonalista u l-Partit Laburista għal din l-elezzjoni*. Broadcasting Authority. Malta.

### **E.1.3 Budget Speeches**

- Caruana, C. (2021, October 11). *Malta li rridu għal uliedna: Baġit 2022*. Government of Malta. Malta. Retrieved September 8, 2021 from <https://finance.gov.mt/en/The-Budget/Pages/The-Budget-2022.aspx>
- Dalli, J. (2002, November 25). *Ministry of Finance: Budget Speech 2003*. Government of Malta. Malta.
- Dalli, J. (2003, November 24). *Ministry of Finance and Economic Affairs: Budget Speech 2004*. Government of Malta. Malta.

Fenech, T. (2008, November 3). *Responsibility, sustainability, solidarity: Budget 2009*.

Government of Malta. Malta. Retrieved September 8, 2021 from

<https://finance.gov.mt/en/The-Budget/Pages/The-Budget-2009.aspx>

Fenech, T. (2009, November 9). *Xogħol: Ninvestu bil-għaqqal fik u fil-pajjiż*. Government of

Malta. Malta. Retrieved September 8, 2021 from [https://finance.gov.mt/en/The-](https://finance.gov.mt/en/The-Budget/Pages/The-Budget-2010.aspx)

[Budget/Pages/The-Budget-2010.aspx](https://finance.gov.mt/en/The-Budget/Pages/The-Budget-2010.aspx)

Fenech, T. (2010, October 25). *Bix-xogħol ninvestu f'socjetà b'saħħitha għalik*.

Government of Malta. Malta. Retrieved September 8, 2021 from

<https://finance.gov.mt/en/The-Budget/Pages/The-Budget-2011.aspx>

Fenech, T. (2011, November 14). *B'għaqqal u b'serjetà biss nirbħu l-maltemp*. Government

of Malta. Malta. Retrieved September 8, 2021 from

<https://finance.gov.mt/en/The-Budget/Pages/The-Budget-2012.aspx>

Gonzi, L. (2004, November 24). *Renewing our country together: Budget 2005*.

Government of Malta. Malta. Retrieved September 8, 2021 from

<https://finance.gov.mt/en/The-Budget/Pages/The-Budget-2005.aspx>

Gonzi, L. (2005, October 31). *Building our strengths for a better quality of life: 2006*

*Budget*. Government of Malta. Malta. Retrieved September 8, 2021 from

<https://finance.gov.mt/en/The-Budget/Pages/The-Budget-2006.aspx>

Gonzi, L. (2006, October 18). *Securing our Children's Future: Budget Speech 2007*.

Government of Malta. Malta. Retrieved September 8, 2021 from

<https://finance.gov.mt/en/The-Budget/Pages/The-Budget-2007.aspx>

Gonzi, L. (2007, October 15). *Familji fis-sod: Baġit 2008*. Government of Malta. Malta.

Retrieved September 8, 2021 from <https://finance.gov.mt/en/The-Budget/Pages/The-Budget-2008.aspx>

Scicluna, E. (2012, April 3). *Ministry for Finance: Budget speech 2003*. Government of

Malta. Malta. Retrieved September 8, 2021 from <https://finance.gov.mt/en/The-Budget/Pages/The-Budget-2013.aspx>

Scicluna, E. (2013, November 4). *Malta stronger and fairer: Budget 2014*. Government of

Malta. Malta. Retrieved September 8, 2021 from <https://finance.gov.mt/en/The-Budget/Pages/The-Budget-2014.aspx>

Scicluna, E. (2014, November 17). *Nippremjaw il-bżulija: Baġit 2015*. Government of

Malta. Malta. Retrieved September 8, 2021 from <https://finance.gov.mt/en/The-Budget/Pages/The-Budget-2015.aspx>

Scicluna, E. (2015, October 12). *Malta ekonomija b'saħħitha: Baġit 2016*. Government of

Malta. Malta. Retrieved September 8, 2021 from <https://finance.gov.mt/en/The-Budget/Pages/The-Budget-2016.aspx>

Scicluna, E. (2016, October 17). *Ġid li jasal għand kulhadd: Baġit 2017*. Government of

Malta. Malta. Retrieved September 8, 2021 from <https://finance.gov.mt/en/The-Budget/Pages/The-Budget-2017.aspx>

Scicluna, E. (2017, October 9). *Inlestu għall-futur: Baġit 2018*. Government of Malta.

Malta. Retrieved September 8, 2021 from <https://finance.gov.mt/en/The-Budget/Pages/The-Budget-2018.aspx>

Scicluna, E. (2018, October 22). *Ngħixu s-suċċess: Baġit 2019*. Government of Malta.

Malta. Retrieved September 8, 2021 from <https://finance.gov.mt/en/The-Budget/Pages/The-Budget-2019-G5J3D1.aspx>

Scicluna, E. (2019, October 14). *Inkomplu nikbru flimkien: Baġit 2020*. Government of

Malta. Malta. Retrieved September 8, 2021 from <https://finance.gov.mt/en/The-Budget/Pages/The-Budget-2020-GD-9691.aspx>

Scicluna, E. (2020, October 19). *B'saħħitna l'quddiem: Baġit 2021*. Government of Malta.

Malta. Retrieved September 8, 2021 from <https://finance.gov.mt/en/The-Budget/Pages/The-Budget-2021-ND111213.aspx>

#### **E.1.4 Ministerial Reports**

Government of Malta (2004). *Annual reports of government departments 2003*.

Government Printing Press. Malta.

Ministry for Home Affairs and National Security (2014). *Annual report 2013*. Government

of Malta. Malta. Retrieved September 8, 2021 from

<https://www.gov.mt/en/Government/Government%20of%20Malta/Ministries%20and%20Entities/Annual%20Government%20Reports/Documents/Annual%20Reports%202013/MHAS.pdf>

Ministry for Home Affairs and National Security (2015). *Annual report 2014*. Government

of Malta. Malta. Retrieved September 8, 2021 from

<https://www.gov.mt/en/Government/Government%20of%20Malta/Ministries%20and%20Entities/Annual%20Government%20Reports/Documents/Annual%20Reports%202014/MHAS%20Annual%20Report%202014.pdf>

Ministry for Justice, Dialouge and the Family (2013). *Annual report 2012*. Government of

Malta. Malta. Retrieved September 8, 2021 from

<https://www.gov.mt/en/Government/Government%20of%20Malta/Ministries%20and%20Entities/Annual%20Government%20Reports/Pages/Annual-Report-of-Govenment-Departments.aspx>

Ministry for Justice, Culture and Local Government (2015). *Annual report 2014*.

Government of Malta. Malta. Retrieved September 8, 2021 from

<https://www.gov.mt/en/Government/Government%20of%20Malta/Ministries%20and%20Entities/Annual%20Government%20Reports/Documents/Annual%20Reports%202014/MJCL%20Annual%20Report%202014.pdf>

Ministeru għall-Ġustizzja, Kultura u Gvern Lokali (2017). *Rapport annwali 2016*.

Government of Malta. Malta. Retrieved September 8, 2021 from

<https://www.gov.mt/en/Government/Government%20of%20Malta/Ministries%20and%20Entities/Annual%20Government%20Reports/Documents/Annual%20Report%202016-2017/Annual%20Report%202016%20MJCL.PDF>

Ministeru għall-Ġustizzja, Kultura u Gvern Lokali (2018). *Rapport annwali 2017*.

Government of Malta. Malta. Retrieved September 8, 2021 from

<https://www.gov.mt/en/Government/Government%20of%20Malta/Ministries%20and%20Entities/Annual%20Government%20Reports/Documents/Annual%20Report%202016-2017/Annual%20Report%202017%20MJCL.PDF>

Ministeru għall-Ġustizzja, Kultura u Gvern Lokali (2019). *Rapport annwali 2018*.

Government of Malta. Malta. Retrieved September 8, 2021 from

<https://www.gov.mt/en/Government/Government%20of%20Malta/Ministries%20and%20Entities/Annual%20Government%20Reports/Documents/Annual%20Report%202018%20MJCL.PDF>

[0and%20Entities/Annual%20Government%20Reports/Documents/Annual%20Reports%202018/MJCL%20Rapport%20Annwali%202018.pdf](https://www.gov.mt/en/Government/Government%20of%20Malta/Ministries%20and%20Entities/Annual%20Government%20Reports/Documents/Annual%20Reports%202018/MJCL%20Rapport%20Annwali%202018.pdf)

Ministeru għall-Ġustizzja, l-Ugwaljanza u l-Governanza (2021). *Rapport annwali 2020*.

Government of Malta. Malta. Retrieved September 8, 2021 from

<https://www.gov.mt/en/Government/Government%20of%20Malta/Ministries%20and%20Entities/Annual%20Government%20Reports/Documents/Annual%20Report%20of%20Government%20Departments%202020/Ministeru%20g%27all-%20ustizzja,%20l-Ugwaljanza%20u%20l-Governanza.pdf>

Ministeru għall-Intern u s-Sigurtà Nazzjonali (2017). *Rapport annwali tad-dipartiment tal-*

*Gvern 2016*. Government of Malta. Malta. Retrieved September 8, 2021 from

<https://www.gov.mt/en/Government/Government%20of%20Malta/Ministries%20and%20Entities/Annual%20Government%20Reports/Documents/Annual%20Report%202016-2017/Annual%20Report%202016%20MHAS%20Proof%20read%2014.5.2018.pdf>

Ministeru għall-Intern u s-Sigurtà Nazzjonali (2018). *Rapport annwali tad-dipartiment tal-*

*Gvern 2017*. Government of Malta. Malta. Retrieved September 8, 2021 from

<https://www.gov.mt/en/Government/Government%20of%20Malta/Ministries%20and%20Entities/Annual%20Government%20Reports/Documents/Annual%20Report%202016-2017/Annual%20Report%202017%20MHAS.PDF>

Ministeru għall-Intern u s-Sigurtà Nazzjonali (2019). *Rapport annwali tad-dipartiment tal-*

*Gvern 2018*. Government of Malta. Malta. Retrieved September 8, 2021 from

<https://www.gov.mt/en/Government/Government%20of%20Malta/Ministries%20and%20Entities/Annual%20Government%20Reports/PublishingImages/Pages/An>

[nual-Report-of-Government-Departments---](#)

[2018/MHAS%20Rapport%20Annwali%202018.pdf](#)

Ministeru għall-Intern, s-Sigurtà Nazzjonali u Infurzar tal-Ligi (2021). *Rapport annwali tad-dipartiment tal-Gvern 2020*. Government of Malta. Malta. Retrieved September 8, 2021 from

<https://www.gov.mt/en/Government/Government%20of%20Malta/Ministries%20and%20Entities/Annual%20Government%20Reports/Documents/Annual%20Report%20of%20Government%20Departments%202020/Ministeru%20g%C4%A7all-Intern,%20is-Sigurta%27%20Nazzjonali%20u%20Infurzar%20tal-Li%C4%A1i.pdf>

Office of the Prime Minister of Malta (2007). *Annual reports of government departments 2006*. Government of Malta. Malta. Retrieved September 8, 2021 from

<https://www.gov.mt/en/Government/Government%20of%20Malta/Ministries%20and%20Entities/Annual%20Government%20Reports/Documents/Annual%20Report%20of%20Government%20Departments%20-%202006.pdf>

Office of the Prime Minister of Malta (2008). *Annual reports of government departments 2007*. Government of Malta. Malta. Retrieved September 8, 2021 from

<https://www.gov.mt/en/Government/Government%20of%20Malta/Ministries%20and%20Entities/Annual%20Government%20Reports/Documents/Annual%20Report%20of%20Government%20Departments%20-%202007.pdf>

Office of the Prime Minister of Malta (2009). *Annual reports of government departments 2008*. Government of Malta. Malta. Retrieved September 8, 2021 from

<https://www.gov.mt/en/Government/Government%20of%20Malta/Ministries%20and%20Entities/Annual%20Government%20Reports/Documents/Annual%20Report%20of%20Government%20Departments%20-%202008.pdf>

[0and%20Entities/Annual%20Government%20Reports/Documents/Annual%20Report%20of%20Government%20Departments%20-%202008.pdf](https://www.gov.mt/en/Government/Government%20of%20Malta/Ministries%20and%20Entities/Annual%20Government%20Reports/Documents/Annual%20Report%20of%20Government%20Departments%20-%202008.pdf)

Office of the Prime Minister of Malta (2010). *Annual reports of government departments 2009*. Government of Malta. Malta. Retrieved September 8, 2021 from

<https://www.gov.mt/en/Government/Government%20of%20Malta/Ministries%20and%20Entities/Annual%20Government%20Reports/Documents/Annual%20Report%20of%20Government%20Departments%20-%202009.pdf>

Office of the Prime Minister (2014). *Annual report 2013*. Government of Malta. Malta.

Retrieved September 8, 2021 from

<https://www.gov.mt/en/Government/Government%20of%20Malta/Ministries%20and%20Entities/Annual%20Government%20Reports/Documents/Annual%20Reports%202013/OPM.pdf>

## **E.2 References for Samples in Qualitative Analysis**

### ***E.2.1 News Articles***

Abbas Shalan, S. (2022, February 15). 'Femicide law is not discriminatory, it protects victims of domestic violence' – Minister. *Malta Independent*.

<https://www.independent.com.mt/articles/2022-02-15/local-news/Femicide-law-is-not-discriminatory-better-protects-victims-of-domestic-violence-Minister-6736240661>

Arena, J. (2020, December 1). New police unit 'sensitive' to domestic violence victims.

*Times of Malta*, 6.

Attard, G. (2020, November, 30). Malta Police Gender-Based and Domestic Violence Unit officially launched. *Malta Independent*.

<https://www.independent.com.mt/articles/2020-11-30/local-news/Malta-Police-Gender-Based-and-Domestic-Violence-Unit-officially-launched-6736229066>

Attard, G. (2021, December 1). 'Safe Dates' pilot project campaign against domestic violence launches in four schools. *Malta Independent*.

<https://www.independent.com.mt/articles/2021-12-01/local-news/Safe-Dates-pilot-project-campaign-against-domestic-violence-launches-in-four-schools-6736238755>

Azzopardi, K. (2020, August 24). Domestic violence simulation for police training launched, specialised squads being set-up. *Malta Independent*.

<https://www.independent.com.mt/articles/2020-08-24/local-news/Domestic-violence-simulation-for-police-training-launched-specialised-squads-being-set-up-6736226365>

Azzopardi, S. (2018, December 20). The State is duty bound to protect victims. *Times of Malta*, 36.

Bonnici, O. (2022, February, 12). A must read: The Istanbul Convention. *Malta*

*Independent*. <https://www.independent.com.mt/articles/2022-02-12/blogs-opinions/A-must-read-the-Istanbul-Convention-6736240549>

Calleja, C. (2009, July 24). Call for prevention of domestic violence. *The Times*, 6.

Calleja, C. (2011, May 7). 'Give domestic violence victims a second chance'. *The Times*, 5.

- Calleja, L. (2021, December 1). Teens learn about domestic violence and 'safe dates' in PSDC lessons. *Malta Today*.  
<https://www.maltatoday.com.mt/news/national/113594/watch-teens-learn-about-domestic-violence-and-safe-dates-in-psdc-lessons#.Yoll59jMI2w>
- Carabott, S. (2014, November 2). More police train to help on violence in the home. *The Sunday Times of Malta*, 7.
- Carabott, S. (2018, April 29). How the police are helping domestic violence survivors. *The Sunday Times of Malta*, 10.
- Caruana, C. (2017, November 5). Victims of domestic violence to receive more protection. *The Sunday Times of Malta*, 5.
- Cilia, R. (2018, April 25). Domestic violence bill approved – 20 PN MPs vote against; age of consent also lowered to 16. *Malta Independent*.  
<https://www.independent.com.mt/articles/2018-04-25/local-news/Domestic-violence-bill-approved-20-PN-MPs-vote-against-age-of-consent-also-lowered-to-16-6736188798>
- Costa, M. (2017, November 7). Domestic violence perpetrators to be ejected from family home, new Bill proposes. *Malta Today*.  
<https://www.maltatoday.com.mt/news/national/82012/second-reading-of-domestic-violence-bill-today#.YolmddjMI2w>
- Dalli, K. (2015, August 10). Emergency orders to aid victims of domestic violence. *Times of Malta*, 4.

Dalli, M. (2014, April 14). 'Government committed to curbing violence against women' -

Helena Dalli. *Malta Today*.

[https://www.maltatoday.com.mt/news/national/37984/government\\_committed\\_to\\_curbing\\_violence\\_against\\_women\\_helena\\_dalli#.YolnANjMI2w](https://www.maltatoday.com.mt/news/national/37984/government_committed_to_curbing_violence_against_women_helena_dalli#.YolnANjMI2w)

Dalli, M. (2016a, July 19). Domestic violence overhaul widens definition of rape. *Malta*

*Today*.

[https://www.maltatoday.com.mt/news/national/67634/domestic\\_violence\\_overhaul\\_widens\\_definition\\_of\\_rape#.YolnUdjMI2w](https://www.maltatoday.com.mt/news/national/67634/domestic_violence_overhaul_widens_definition_of_rape#.YolnUdjMI2w)

Dalli, M. (2016b, September 20). Harsh punishments to eliminate domestic violence.

*Malta Today*.

[https://www.maltatoday.com.mt/news/national/69726/harsh\\_punishments\\_to\\_eliminate\\_domestic\\_violence#.Yolnv9jMI2w](https://www.maltatoday.com.mt/news/national/69726/harsh_punishments_to_eliminate_domestic_violence#.Yolnv9jMI2w)

Fenech, J. (2021, September 23). Offices set up for local research on gender-based and

domestic violence. *Malta Independent*.

<https://www.independent.com.mt/articles/2021-09-23/local-news/Offices-set-up-for-local-research-on-gender-based-and-domestic-violence-6736236964>

Galea Debono, F. (2005, April 23). Breaking the Silence. *The Times*, 24, 25.

Grech, H. (2017, November 2). Standard operating procedures for domestic violence

cases to be launched. *Malta Independent*.

<https://www.independent.com.mt/articles/2017-11-02/local-news/Standard-Operating-Procedures-for-domestic-violence-cases-to-be-launched-6736180996>

Grixti, A. (2020, March 9). Standing up to domestic violence. *Times of Malta*, 12.

- Hansen, P. (2005, September 4). Women's confederation on Domestic Violence Bill. *The Sunday Times*, 8.
- Laiviera, R. (2011, October 31). Tackling the scourge of domestic violence. *The Times*, 10.
- Laiviera, R. (2016, December 8). Empowering survivors of gender-based violence. *Times of Malta*, 16.
- Lepre, R. (2006, November 26). Domestic violence: Recent legislative developments. *The Sunday Times*, 14.
- Malta Independent. (2013, November 25). Men against violence coalition launched. *Malta Independent*. <https://www.independent.com.mt/articles/2013-11-25/news/men-against-violence-coalition-launched-3293282306/#:~:text=The%20Men%20Against%20Violence%20C>
- Malta Independent. (2018, January 24). Domestic violence bill approved, PN MP Edwin Vassallo only one to vote against. *Malta Independent*. <https://www.independent.com.mt/articles/2018-01-24/local-news/Domestic-violence-bill-approved-PN-MP-Edwin-Vassallo-only-one-to-vote-against-6736184015>
- Malta Independent. (2020a, February 10). Commission against Gender Based and Domestic Violence plans better education on the subject. *Malta Independent*. <https://www.independent.com.mt/articles/2020-02-10/local-news/Commission-against-Gender-Based-and-Domestic-Violence-plans-to-better-education-on-the-subject-6736219486>

Malta Independent. (2020b, November 23). Violence against women and domestic violence in Malta: GREVIO calls for stronger gender perspective. *Malta Independent*. <https://www.independent.com.mt/articles/2020-11-23/local-news/Violence-against-women-and-domestic-violence-in-Malta-GREVIO-calls-for-stronger-gender-perspective-6736228878>

Malta Independent. (2021, June 17). Government launches second national strategy on gender-based violence and domestic Violence. *Malta Independent*. <https://www.independent.com.mt/articles/2021-06-17/local-news/Government-launches-second-National-Strategy-on-Gender-Based-Violence-and-Domestic-Violence-6736234442>

Malta Today. (2014, September 19). Malta commits to full implementation of Istanbul Convention. *Malta Today*. [https://www.maltatoday.com.mt/news/europe/43967/malta\\_commits\\_to\\_full\\_implementation\\_of\\_istanbul\\_convention#.YolnhNiMI2w](https://www.maltatoday.com.mt/news/europe/43967/malta_commits_to_full_implementation_of_istanbul_convention#.YolnhNiMI2w)

Psaila, S. (2003, May 11). Breaking the Silence. *The Sunday Times*, 47.

Sansone, K. (2016, August 6). Tougher domestic abuse laws only for new cases. *Times of Malta*, 1, 4.

Sansone, K. & Calleja, L. (2022, February 1). Femicide to be distinct criminal offence as Cabinet overrules justice minister. *Malta Today*. [https://www.maltatoday.com.mt/news/national/114738/femicide\\_to\\_be\\_distinct\\_criminal\\_offence\\_as\\_cabinet\\_overrules\\_justice\\_minister#.YollmtjMI2w](https://www.maltatoday.com.mt/news/national/114738/femicide_to_be_distinct_criminal_offence_as_cabinet_overrules_justice_minister#.YollmtjMI2w)

- The Sunday Times. (2007, August, 26). Commission on Domestic Violence first annual report. *Times of Malta*, 78.
- The Sunday Times. (2005, June 26). Domestic violence bill. *Times of Malta*, 88.
- The Times. (2005a, June 8). Bill seen as one element of efforts to fight domestic violence. *Times of Malta*, 13, 14.
- The Times. (2005b, June 1). Domestic violence bill before Parliament. *Times of Malta*, 14.
- The Times. (2005c, June 21). House supports Domestic Violence Bill. *Times of Malta*, 14.
- The Times. (2005d, June 17). Innovative features in Domestic Violence Bill. *Times of Malta*, 13, 14.
- The Times. (2005e, June 3). No need seen for new commission on domestic violence. *The Times*, 13.
- Times of Malta. (2017a, February 4). Time for coordinated action on violence against women. *Times of Malta*, 6.
- Times of Malta. (2017b, November 8). Guarantee protection to victims of violence. *Times of Malta*, 6.
- Times of Malta. (2020, April 25). Domestic violence victims get free legal aid in civil cases. *Times of Malta*. <https://timesofmalta.com/articles/view/domestic-violence-victims-get-free-legal-aid-in-civil-cases.787913>
- Vassallo, R. (2017, November 26). Domestic violence is a social, not individual, concern – Silvan Aguis. *Malta Today*.

<https://www.maltatoday.com.mt/news/interview/82506/domestic-violence-is-a-social-not-individual-concern-silvio-agius#.YoloVtjMI2w>

#### ***E.4.2 Annual Reports by the Commission on Gender-Based Violence and Domestic Violence***

Commission on Domestic Violence (2007). *Annual Report: March 2006-February 2007*.

Retrieved February 15, 2022 from

<https://stopviolence.gov.mt/en/Documents/Docs/domestic-violence-annual-2006-en.pdf>

Commission on Domestic Violence (2010). *Annual Report: March 2009-February 2010*.

Retrieved February 15, 2022 from

<https://stopviolence.gov.mt/en/Documents/Docs/domestic-violence-annual-2009-en.pdf>

Commission on Domestic Violence (2015). *Annual Report: 2014-2015*. Retrieved February

15, 2022 from

<https://stopviolence.gov.mt/en/Documents/Docs/report%202014%20dv%20final.pdf>

Commission on Gender-Based Violence and Domestic Violence (2020). *Annual Report:*

*2019*. Retrieved February 15, 2022 from

[https://stopviolence.gov.mt/en/Documents/Docs/2019%20CDV%20annual%20report-\(online\).pdf](https://stopviolence.gov.mt/en/Documents/Docs/2019%20CDV%20annual%20report-(online).pdf)

#### ***E.4.3 National Strategies on Domestic Violence***

Commission on Gender-Based Violence and Domestic Violence (2021). *Malta's National*

*Strategy on Gender-Based Violence and Domestic Violence: 2021-2022*. Retrieved

February 15, 2022 from

<https://stopviolence.gov.mt/en/Documents/Docs/20524%20->

[%20Second%20Strategy%20\(another%20duplicate\).pdf](https://stopviolence.gov.mt/en/Documents/Docs/20524%20-%20Second%20Strategy%20(another%20duplicate).pdf)

Ministry for European Affairs and Equality (2017). *Society's Concern: Gender-Based*

*Violence and Domestic Violence Strategy & Action Plan – Vision 2020*. Retrieved

February 15, 2022 from

[https://meae.gov.mt/en/Documents/GBV\\_DV%20Strategy%20and%20Action%20](https://meae.gov.mt/en/Documents/GBV_DV%20Strategy%20and%20Action%20)

[Plan%20publication.pdf](https://meae.gov.mt/en/Documents/GBV_DV%20Strategy%20and%20Action%20Plan%20publication.pdf)

## APPENDIX F: ILLUSTRATIVE EXAMPLES FROM THE CODING FRAME

Options	Definition	Illustrative example	Reference (Appendix E)
<b>Type of Justification</b>			
In response to research and analysis	Action was justified through research and assessments.	Delivery of training by the Probation Board of Northern Ireland to the Department of Probation and Parole, based on results from their study on treatment of sex offenders.	Ministeru għall-Ġustizzja, Kultura u Gvern Lokali, 2017
In response to superiors' directives	Action was justified through superior entities' intervention	Transposition of a directive by the European Parliament and EU Council on an accused's right to interpreters when the accused does not speak national languages.	Ministry for Justice, Culture and Local Government, 2015
Values in favour of state intervention	Action was justified by the government's/party's endorsement of certain values.	Calls for constitutional amendments based on the party's belief that there is imbalance and permissiveness for corruption in the way higher executives are appointed.	Hili et al., 2017

Inadequate processes, policies or services	Action was justified by confirmed or perceived insufficiency, inefficiency in current measures	A promise to address the exaggerated delays in drug-related court cases and ensure that those who follow rehabilitation programmes are not at risk of relapse.	Forza Nazzjonali, 2017c
Actual or perceived prevalence of crime	Action was justified through the prevalence or evolution of certain crime	Preparation of a strategy to address pickpocketing, owing to its increased prevalence over the previous Summer.	Ministeru għall-Intern u s-Sigurtà Nazzjonali, 2019
Social consequences of crime	Action is justified crime's implications on social well-being.	Plans to enable cross-national collaboration among Member States' police forces against organised crime given the threat that this crime poses to public peace.	Partit Nazzjonalista, 2003
Economic consequences of crime	Action was justified given crime's implications on economic welfare.	A merger between the Inland Revenue Department and the Tax Department to better detect tax evasion, given how it undermines the sustainability of public services and social security.	Scicluna, 2016
Not mentioned	The need for action was not justified in the document.	The Law on Domestic Violence entered into force.	Fenech, 2008

**Area of Concern**

Criminalisation	Action promotes the criminalisation of conduct which was legal until then.	Advancing legislative bills for the prohibition of conversion therapy.	Scicluna, 2018
Decriminalisation	Action promotes the decriminalisation of a criminal offence.	Launch of a national strategy to inform national reform on cannabis use.	Scicluna, 2020
Prevention	Action promotes change in primary prevention towards criminal offences.	Introduction of a national crime prevention and reduction strategy, including community and targeted policing.	Partit Laburista, 2017
Regulation	Action promotes change in regulatory monitoring procedures	Establishment of systems which monitor decision-making within the Malta Police Force as a means to increase public trust in the force and minimise corruption.	Partit Laburista, 2003
Detection	Action promotes change in crime-detection procedures.	Introduction of random searches and surprise inspections in prisons.	Ministry for Home Affairs & National Security, 2014

Enforcement	Action promotes change in actions which enforce criminal law.	Extending the practice of community policing to communities which have higher criminal activity.	Caruana, 2021
Investigation	Action promotes change in the investigative procedures.	Increase the investigative powers of the Asset Recovery Bureau through a Memorandum of Understanding between the Bureau and the court.	Ministeru għall-Ġustizzja, Kultura u Gvern Lokali, 2019
Administration of justice	Action promotes change in justice administration procedures.	Investment in a representative survey on the public's satisfaction with judiciary systems, to be evaluated against the standards set by the European Commission and the Council of Europe.	Ministeru għall-Ġustizzja, Kultura u Gvern Lokali, 2019
Corrective measures for offenders	Action promotes change in provisions for offenders.	Launch of a pilot project which introduces electronic tagging for offenders.	Partit Nazzjonalista, 2008
Protective measures for victims & witnesses	Action promotes change in provisions for victims and witnesses.	Establishment of an Agency for Crime Victims to centralise and expand state-funded victim services.	Scicluna, 2020
Unable to determine	A crime-related issue is identified but specific area of concern is not.	Launch consultations on upcoming reform on human trafficking provisions.	Scicluna, 2017

		<b>Instrument</b>	
Improvement/ expansion of state- funded service provision	The action improves or expands state-funded services to satisfy the recipients' real or envisaged needs.	Improvement of the parole system to ensure that applications from inmates who qualify for parole are processed more efficiently.	Ministry for Home Affairs and National Security, 2014
Policy development	The action establishes or expands intragency and interagency policies.	Development of a national work plan to better address Financial Action Task Force's plan of action.	Caruana, 2021
Introduction or amendment of legal amendments	The action introduces new legal provisions or amends perceived inadequacies in existing ones.	Finetuning legal provisions on the accused's rights to the presence of an advocate during an arrest.	Scicluna, 2015
Increase in resources and opportunities to carry out professional duties	The action significantly increases resources and opportunities for intervention for criminal justice professionals.	Installation of CCTV cameras in public spaces as a form of deterrence, in collaboration with local councils.	Scicluna, 2019
Training and capacity building	The action improves or expands criminal justice professionals'	Inauguration of the new Police Academy, which provides accredited certification, focused on public	Scicluna, 2014

	upskilling and capacity-building provisions.	relations, support for victims and the force's protection role.	
Research and analysis	The action invests in research and analysis to understand presenting problems.	Launch of a consultation project on drug law reforms.	Scicluna, 2014
Awareness raising and community relations	The action consists of one-way or bidirectional communication between stakeholders and society.	Commitment to promote a culture of morality in which citizens recognise their taxes' contribution to the country's development.	Partit Laburista, 2013
Unable to determine	There is a reference to change without sufficient explanation.	Strengthen the fight against domestic violence.	Partit Nazzjonalista, 2008
<b>Stage in Policy Cycle</b>			
Agenda setting	The document reports the identification and definition of a problem and its inclusion in the political agenda.	Calling for serious action towards the prevalence of drug trafficking and consumption among adolescents.	Partit Laburista, 2003
Policy formulation	The document reports the objectives, the costs and the policy options available to policymakers.	Establishment of a multidisciplinary commission to discuss the regularisation of marijuana and provide recommendations on how it should be implemented.	Forza Nazzjonali, 2017c

Legitimation	The document reports the selection of a policy instrument and its promotion.	Inauguration of a national strategy which strengthens mediation services, in line with academic research and international legislation, implemented by the Committee on Mediation Services.	Ministeru għall-Intern, Sigurtà Nazzjonali u llnfurzar tal-Liġi, 2021
Implementation	The document reports the implementation of a policy instrument.	Establishment of the Parole Unit and the Parole Board to process requests for parole.	Ministry for Home Affairs and National Security, 2014
Evaluation	The document reports the evaluation of an implemented policy.	Evaluation of two programmes for offenders known as Cognitive Skills Programme and Sex Offender Programme to maintain accountability and efficiency.	Ministeru għall-Intern u s-Sigurtà Nazzjonali, 2019
Maintenance	The document reports on an existing policy measure's maintenance and incremental adjustments.	Continued commitment to align Maltese policy and legislation with the recommendations that the Venice Commission and GRECO put forward.	Caruana, 2021

Succession	The document reports on the complete reformation of a policy area which builds on precedent provisions.	Amalgamation of the Force's Mobile Squad and Special Assignment Group to set up the Rapid Intervention Unit and increase the workforce.	Ministry for Home Affairs and National Security, 2014
Termination	The document reports the conclusion or discontinuation of a policy measure.	Conclusion of the transfer of the Criminal Records Office to the Justice Directorate, which allows the force to narrow to focus on public order.	Scicluna, 2019
<b>Direct Target Group</b>			
The general public	The action applies to and affects all citizens.	Investment in a holistic reform of the national justice system to restore public's faith in this democratic pillar through increased checks and balances.	Partit Laburista, 2013
Criminal justice professionals	The action affects the work of criminal justice professionals.	Expansion of the remit of the Malta Police Force's Statistics Office to include crime analysis, which reports will help better targeted policing.	Ministry for Home Affairs and National Security, 2014
Victims & witnesses	The action targets victims and witnesses.	Alterations to the courts' physical environment ensure that victims do not have to wait outside the courtroom with perpetrators, especially when there are safety issues and/or psychological abuse.	Forza Nazzjonali, 2017c

Offenders	The action targets offenders.	Increase in prison security through body scanners to prevent illegal substances from entering the facility.	Scicluna, 2019
Political parties and politicians	The action targets politicians and political parties.	Introduction of the Financing of Political Parties Act to regulate party's income and prevent corruption and money laundering.	Scicluna, 2016
Both victims and offenders	The action targeted both victims and offenders in equal measure.	Introduction of mediation services as an alternative method of conflict resolution between victims and offenders.	Partit Laburista, 2017
Unable to determine	Not enough information is provided to determine who benefits from the action.	Continuation of policy development related to drug trafficking and illegal gambling.	Partit Nazzjonalista, 2003
<b>Type of Stakeholder</b>			
Supranational organisations	Supranational organisations were identified as stakeholders.	Alignment of local anti-terrorism actions with those actions mandated by the United Nations.	Partit Laburista, 2008
Non-EU countries	Non-Member States were identified as stakeholders.	Facilitation of a Digital Forensic and Investigations Consultation programme by the US Department of the State.	Office of the Prime Minister, 2008

Council of Europe	The Council of Europe and/or its sub-entities were identified as stakeholders.	Implementation of reforms which address MONEYVAL's recommendations, especially legal provisions for the recovery of criminal proceeds.	Caruana, 2021
EU Institutions & Member States	EU institutions or its Member States were identified as stakeholders.	Enrolment in the European Network for Victims' Rights and active participation in Member States application for this network to be given a more permanent structure.	Ministeru għall- Ġustizzja, Kultura u Gvern Lokali, 2019
National courts of Justice	The Courts of Justice were identified as stakeholders.	Establish a Family Court to safeguard children's wellbeing in domestic violence cases.	Partit Laburista, 2003
National correctional services	Correctional services, including probation and parole services, are identified as stakeholders.	Improvement of special divisions within correctional facilities to better respect the needs of LGBTIQ inmates.	Forza Nazzjonali, 2017c
Office of the Attorney General	The Office of the Attorney General was identified as a stakeholder.	Transfer of prosecution functions from the Police Force to the Attorney General's office to develop a specialised prosecution service and allow the Force to better focus on its investigative capabilities.	Caruana, 2021

Armed Forces of Malta	The Armed Forces of Malta were identified as stakeholders.	Involvement of Armed Forces of Malta to increase security against terrorism, human trafficking and drug trafficking.	Partit Laburista, 2008
Malta Police Force	A Malta Police Force was identified as a stakeholder.	Regular meetings between the Police and local councils to discuss the community's problems and security issues.	Ministeru għall-Intern u s-Sigurtà Nazzjonali, 2019
Other national law enforcement agencies	Law enforcement agencies (other than those specified in other options) were identified as stakeholders.	Collaboration with local wardens to increase the presence of law enforcement in localities, especially those more susceptible to crime.	Partit Laburista, 2013
Government, public administration and public services	The Government and the public service (other than those covered by other options) were identified as stakeholders.	Collaboration between Malta Communications Authority, the Ministry for Industry, Investment and Information Technology and the Cybercrime Unit to draft a national eSecurity Strategic plan.	Office of the Prime Minister, 2007
Ombudspersons, regulatory and supervisory authorities	Ombudspersons and/or regulatory or supervisory authorities with autonomous powers were identified as stakeholders.	Strengthen operations between Malta's Financial Services Authority and FIAU to make them more effective in their fight against money laundering and terrorism financing.	Scicluna, 2019

National commissions, committees and task forces	Specialised national commissions, committees or task forces were identified as stakeholders.	Establishment of a Special Prosecutor within the Permanent Commission against Corruption with executive powers of investigation and prosecution.	Partit Nazzjonalista, 2008
Political parties	A political party was identified as a stakeholder.	Electoral promises to increase facilities for minors serving a sentence in an institution other than the Corradino Correctional Facility or Mount Carmel.	Partit Laburista, 2013
Parliament	Parliament was identified as a stakeholder.	Presentation of a Prevention of Corruption of Sports Act to Parliament.	Forza Nazzjonali, 2017b
Institutions, academies, colleges and universities	An institution, academy, college or university was identified as a stakeholder.	Development and delivery of courses for offenders in collaboration with MCAST.	Ministeru għall-Intern u s-Sigurtà Nazzjonali, 2017
Non-governmental & not-for-profit organisations	A non-governmental and not-for-profit organisation was identified as a stakeholder.	Promise to support NGOs involved in the delivery of rehabilitative services, and assist and support families of inmates in correctional services.	Forza Nazzjonali, 2017c
Private and profit-oriented organisations	A private and profit-oriented organisation was identified as a stakeholder.	Collaboration with the ICT sector to develop mechanisms which improve cybersecurity, prevent cyberattacks and create a safe ICT ecosystem.	Partit Laburista, 2017

Local councils	A local council was identified as a stakeholder.	Promote increased collaboration between schools, local councils, social workers, church authorities and the police to prevent and combat abuse among children and vulnerable persons.	Partit Laburista, 2013
Religious and/or voluntary organisations	A religious-based and/or voluntary organisation was identified as a stakeholder.	Provide help for church-run shelters for victims of domestic violence and social assistance to all persons residing in shelters.	Abela, Gulia et al., 2003
<b>Depth</b>			
Minimal	The action produces small, incremental changes to the system with no real implications for the status quo.	Allocation of more funds to voluntary organisations which provide services for offenders and victims.	Fenech, 2011
Intermediate	The action produces mid-size changes to the system with minor implications for the status quo..	Improvement of relations between the police force and correctional services for better communication and sharing of information.	Ministeru għall-Intern u s-Sigurtà Nazzjonali, 2019
Considerable	The action produces profound changes to the system, which considerably altered the status quo.	Implementing a strategy on the Police Force, aiming to transform this force into a service.	Scicluna, 2020

Unable to determine	It is uncertain how profound the change produced by the action is/was.	Introduction of new policies on child abuse.	Abela, Gulia et al., 2003
<b>Breadth</b>			
Minimal	The action would have affected only one group of individuals in society.	Introduction of a new policy in Corradino Correctional Facility regarding the dignified and human treatment of transgender offenders.	Ministeru għall-Intern u s-Sigurtà Nazzjonali, 2017
Intermediate	The action would have affected two or more groups of individuals in society.	Strengthened statutory compensation for victims of crime through collaboration between non-governmental entities and the Victim Support Unit.	Ministeru għall-Ġustizzja, Ugwaljanza u Governanza, 2021
Considerable	The action would have affected many or all individuals in society.	Implementation of a five-year strategy to increase public trust in the Police Force, flexibility, efficiency, and managerial practices.	Partit Laburista, 2003
Unable to determine	It is uncertain how broad the change produced by the action is/was.	Continue to prevent fiscal evasion through technological investment and increased collaboration between our country's regulatory, supervisory and enforcement entities.	Scicluna, 2019

### Principles and Practices

Centralisation	The action unifies control of a particular resource or process and minimises fragmentation.	Integration of the various inspectorates under the Ministry of Social Policy to have a more effective structure to combat benefit abuse.	Fenech, 2009
Deterrence	The action deters criminal behaviour by unbalancing the cost-benefit equation.	Introduction of harsher penalties related to paedophilia or child abuse.	Partit Nazzjonalista, 2013
Disassociation	The action promotes disassociation with the values and policies of a superior entity on certain issues	Negotiation with the EU to retain Malta's position on abortion to maintain national law upon accession.	Galea et al., 2003a
Essentialism	The action endorses the belief that offenders are likely to commission or repeat a criminal action because it is in their nature to be deviant.	Setting up a sex-offender registry to be accessed by disciplined forces and institutions who have an interest in knowing this information.	Partit Nazzjonalista, 2008
Europeanisation	The action upgrades and assimilates local practices to be level the standards identified by the European Union.	Arrangements for the Force to be in line with Europol, Schengen and SIRENE policy before Malta's accession to the EU.	Government of Malta, 2004

Incapacitation	The action promotes the prevention of further criminal conduct through physical segregation.	Introduction of new security procedures in specific areas of Corradino Correctional Facility.	Ministry for Home Affairs and National Security, 2015
Interdisciplinary coordination	The action promotes sharing of resources and information among professionals.	Formation of the interministerial committee on domestic violence.	Ministeru għall-Ġustizzja, Ugwaljanza u Governanza, 2019
Legality	The action raises the national standards to conform with national legislation.	Inauguration of child-sensitive rooms when it comes to child protection in cases of domestic violence, based on the criteria of the Istanbul Convention.	Ministeru għall-Intern u s-Sigurtà Nazzjonali, 2017
Managerialism	The action promotes managerial principles, including efficiency measures and structured practices.	Employment of new court experts from various fields to facilitate processing pending cases.	Scicluna, 2017
Multilateralism	The action promotes collaboration amongst states with a common goal.	Strengthened diplomatic efforts and collaboration with Libya in the fight against the criminals who put so many lives in danger through unsafe transportation and illegal immigration.	Scicluna, 2020

Non-essentialism	The action endorses the belief that offenders can rehabilitate themselves.	Strengthened offenders' rehabilitation and reintegration prospects through professional help, individualised care plans, guidelines on accessing social services and provision of work-related training.	Ministeru għall-Intern u s-Sigurtà Nazzjonali, 2019
Privatisation	The action involves outsourcing services to the private sector.	Establishment of a public-private partnership between the Government and the private sector to enhance the investigative capabilities of the Asset Recovery Bureau and make current procedures more effective, efficient and autonomous.	Scicluna, 2014
Professional accountability	The action increases professionals' accountability during their duties	Promoting a zero-tolerance policy for corruption through regular monitoring of public services and establishing an internal auditing unit under the Office of the Prime Minister.	Bugeja, Vella et al., 2008
Restitution	The action restores society's wellbeing after the commission of a crime.	Introduction of a law through which assets procured through criminal activity are confiscated and used to finance social projects.	Partit Laburista, 2013

Retribution	The action serves justice and dispenses punishment to compensate for the offender's wrongdoing.	Introduction of stiffer sentencing for corruption convictions, including confiscating assets for convicted offenders.	Partit Laborista, 2013
Welfarism	The action promotes the equitable distribution of fiscal resources	Investment in Legal Aid Agency to improve its services and accessibility to vulnerable social groups, especially in cases in family and criminal courts.	Partit Laborista, 2017
Unable to determine	As presented in the document, the action does not communicate discernible principles and practices.	Proposition of amendments that facilitate the compilation procedure and formally regulate the plea bargaining institute in a way that this can come in at any stage of the judiciary process.	Partit Laborista, 2013
<b>Orientation</b>			
Victim-Oriented	The action benefits or is partial towards actual or possible victims of crime.	Launch of a voluntary exit programme for people who wish to have the means and assistance to leave prostitution and create a life free from exploitation.	Sciocluna, 2019
Offender-Oriented	The action benefits or is partial towards suspected or convicted offenders.	Launch of a consultation project on reform in drug laws, through which emerged an unequivocal reply:	Sciocluna, 2014

victims of drugs need treatment and assistance to get out of addiction, not doors closed in their faces.

---

Balanced/Neutral	The action is neutral and no partiality can be detected.	Reduction of bureaucracy which is believed to enable corruption and abuse.	Scicluna, Gonzi et al., 2003
------------------	--	--	------------------------------

---

## **APPENDIX G: ANCILLARY ANALYSIS OF QUANTITATIVE DATA**

This appendix presents analyses which indirectly contribute to the study's research objectives. This ensures that the discussion in the main study remains focused on the research goals, but the involved reader can still access additional, substantial information.

### **G.1 Cross-examination of Annual Focus on Criminal Justice and Annual Crime Incidents**

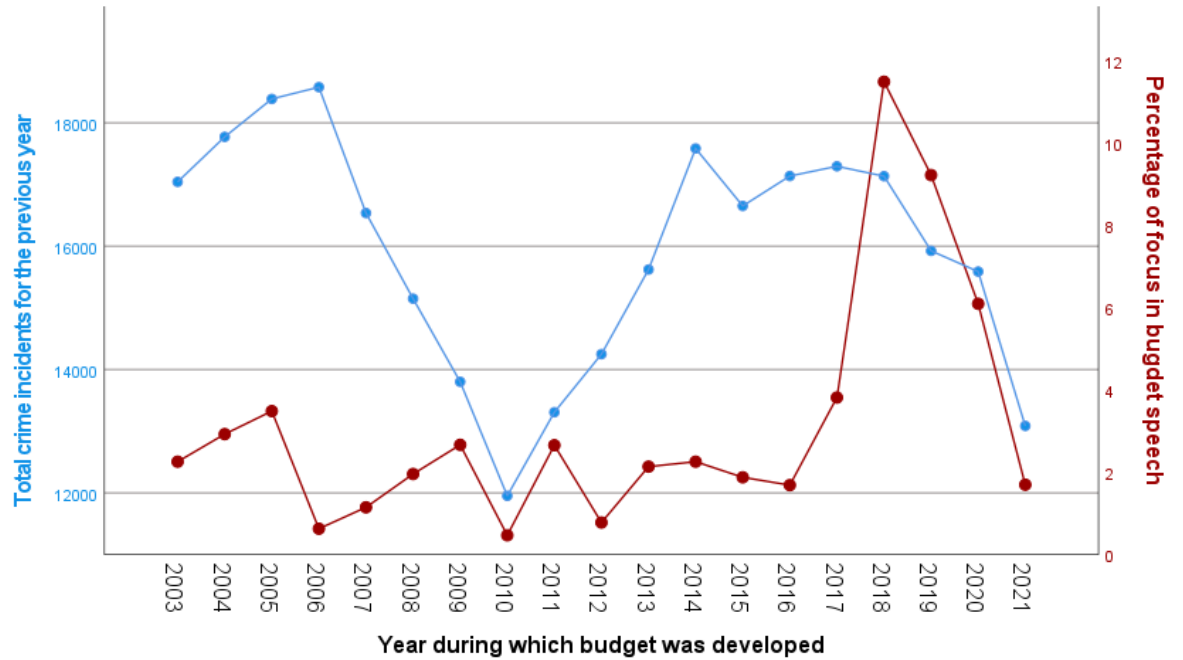
Results for annual unit counts can be cross-examined with corresponding annual crime incidents, considering Scheingold's (1998) argument on the disjuncture between the size of society's crime problem and the amount of state intervention. This does not directly attend to any research objective or question. Rather, it partially fulfilled the researcher's intellectual curiosity on the application of Scheingold's argument in the local context.

Annual crime incidents (as objective measures of Malta's crime problem) were obtained from Formosa (2022) and correlated with budget speeches' percentage of focus (given how these were the only source which was produced annually and for which a census was analysed). Budget speeches were developed the year before that which they addressed. They were also hypothesised to be informed by accounts of the previous year (e.g., a budget speech for 2020 is delivered during 2019 and informed by national circumstances in 2018).

Based on this premise, Figure G1 presents the patterns for annual focus on criminal justice and annual crime incidents. At times, the interpolation lines for the two y-axes follow similar trajectories. A Pearson Correlation was run to confirm these similarities, which contrarily yielded a non-significant result ( $r = .199, p = ns$ ). This finding can be interpreted in two ways. First is the possibility of a miscalculated time lag. Alternatively, the result could support a body of literature under the political criminology enterprise, which advocates that state intervention in criminal justice is decided by something other than the actual prevalence of crime in the country. Either way, this issue is being pitched as one of the many possible research ventures which may follow this study.

**Figure G1**

*Dual Y-Axis Graph with Scale X-Axis Displaying Mean Percentage of Focus in Budget Speeches against Total of Crime Incidents by Year*



**Table G1**

*Pearson Correlation Test on Percentage of Focus and Total Crime Incidents*

		Percentage of focus	Total crime incidents
Percentage of focus	Pearson Correlation	1	.199
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.413
	N	19	19
Total crime incidents	Pearson Correlation	.199	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.413	
	N	19	19

## G.2 Cross-Tabulation of Principles and Practices' Multiple Response Set with Context, Legislature and Political Party

The inevitability of a multiple response set for principles and practices restricted statistical testing for associations with independent variables, as outlined in the second research objective. Alternatively, Tables G2 to G4 feature cross-tabs between the multiple response set and context, legislature and political party. Several patterns can be discerned from principles and practices disaggregation by independent variables.

For instance, one can notice how system management practices and practices towards system convergence featured more in governmental administrations over general elections. On the other hand, retributive sentiments were considerably more apparent in general elections, attesting to electioneering theory and indicating the common emotive appeals in these contexts. Results for principles and practices and legislature are more moderate, as discernible temporal patterns could not be noted in most variables.

Alternatively, the cross-tabulation with political party demonstrates how PL invariably scored higher than PN, which could indicate ideological differences or simply reflect PL's higher unit count. These observations and others advance several hypotheses which could benefit from future multivariate analysis

**Table G2**

*Cross-tabulation of Principles and Practices with Context*

Type	Manifested Principles and Practices*		Context		Total
			General elections	Governmental administrations	
System management	Centralisation	Count	13	40	53
		% of Total	2.1%	6.4%	8.5%
	Interdisciplinary coordination	Count	19	56	75
		% of Total	3.1%	9.0%	12.1%
	Managerialism	Count	20	41	61

		% of Total	3.2%	6.6%	9.8%
	Privatisation	Count	0	1	1
		% of Total	0.0%	0.2%	0.2%
	Professional	Count	35	17	52
	accountability	% of Total	5.6%	2.7%	8.4%
System principles and practices	Deterrence	Count	44	59	103
		% of Total	7.1%	9.5%	16.6%
	Essentialism	Count	8	13	21
		% of Total	1.3%	2.1%	3.4%
	Incapacitation	Count	5	15	20
		% of Total	0.8%	2.4%	3.2%
	Non-essentialism	Count	16	18	34
		% of Total	2.6%	2.9%	5.5%
	Restitution	Count	25	40	65
		% of Total	4.0%	6.4%	10.5%
	Retribution	Count	56	26	82
		% of Total	9.0%	4.2%	13.2%
	Welfarism	Count	24	41	65
		% of Total	3.9%	6.6%	10.5%
System convergence	Disassociation	Count	3	1	4
		% of Total	0.5%	0.2%	0.6%
	Europeanisation	Count	9	80	89
		% of Total	1.4%	12.9%	14.3%
	Legality	Count	20	47	67
		% of Total	3.2%	7.6%	10.8%
	Multilateralism	Count	4	61	65
		% of Total	0.6%	9.8%	10.5%

Unable to determine	Count	61	72	133
	% of Total	9.8%	11.6%	21.4%
Total	Count	239	382	621
	% of Total	38.5%	61.5%	100.0%

*Note.* Percentages and totals are based on respondents. \*Dichotomy group tabulated at value 1.

**Table G3**

*Cross-tabulation of Principles and Practices with Legislature*

Type	Manifested Principles and Practices*		Context					Total
			9 <sup>th</sup>	10 <sup>th</sup>	11 <sup>th</sup>	12 <sup>th</sup>	13 <sup>th</sup>	
System management	Centralisation	Count	2	13	11	12	15	53
		% of Total	0.3%	2.1%	1.8%	1.9%	2.4%	8.5%
	Interdisciplinary coordination	Count	3	9	10	18	35	75
		% of Total	0.5%	1.4%	1.6%	2.9%	5.6%	12.1%
	Managerialism	Count	5	14	7	20	15	61
		% of Total	0.8%	2.3%	1.1%	3.2%	2.4%	9.8%
Privitisation	Count	0	0	0	1	0	1	
	% of Total	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.2%	0.0%	0.2%	
Professional accountability	Count	6	13	15	7	11	52	
	% of Total	1.0%	2.1%	2.4%	1.1%	1.8%	8.4%	
System principles & practices	Deterrence	Count	9	25	29	14	26	103
		% of Total	1.4%	4.0%	4.7%	2.3%	4.2%	16.6%
	Essentialism	Count	2	4	2	4	9	21
		% of Total	0.3%	0.6%	0.3%	0.6%	1.4%	3.4%
	Incapacitation	Count	2	1	5	3	9	20
		% of Total	0.3%	0.2%	0.8%	0.5%	1.4%	3.2%

		% of Total	0.3%	0.2%	0.8%	0.5%	1.4%	3.2%
Non-essentialism	Count		2	4	4	12	12	34
	% of Total		0.3%	0.6%	0.6%	1.9%	1.9%	5.5%
Restitution	Count		10	7	5	20	23	65
	% of Total		1.6%	1.1%	0.8%	3.2%	3.7%	10.5%
Retribution	Count		17	12	31	12	10	82
	% of Total		2.7%	1.9%	5.0%	1.9%	1.6%	13.2%
Welfarism	Count		8	10	13	23	11	65
	% of Total		1.3%	1.6%	2.1%	3.7%	1.8%	10.5%
System convergence	Disassociation	Count	2	0	0	2	0	4
	% of Total		0.3%	0.0%	0.0%	0.3%	0.0%	0.6%
Europeanisation	Count		2	19	11	18	39	89
	% of Total		0.3%	3.1%	1.8%	2.9%	6.3%	14.3%
Legality	Count		7	6	8	17	29	67
	% of Total		1.1%	1.0%	1.3%	2.7%	4.7%	10.8%
Multilateralism	Count		1	18	3	15	28	65
	% of Total		0.2%	2.9%	0.5%	2.4%	4.5%	10.5%
Unable to determine	Count		8	25	22	43	35	133
	% of Total		1.3%	4.0%	3.5%	6.9%	5.6%	21.4%
Total	Count		55	112	105	161	188	621
	% of Total		8.9	18.0	16.9	25.9	30.3	100.0

*Note.* Percentages and totals are based on respondents. \*Dichotomy group tabulated at value 1.

**Table G4***Cross-tabulation of Principles and Practices with Political Party*

Type	Manifested Principles and Practices*		Political party			Total	
			PN	FN	PL		
System management	Centralisation	Count	20	2	31	53	
		% of Total	3.2%	0.3%	5.0%	8.5%	
	Interdisciplinary coordination	Count	11	2	62	75	
		% of Total	1.8%	0.3%	10.0%	12.1%	
	Managerialism	Count	15	3	43	61	
		% of Total	2.4%	0.5%	6.9%	9.8%	
	Privitisation	Count	0	0	1	1	
		% of Total	0.0%	0.0%	0.2%	0.2%	
	Professional accountability	Count	6	0	46	52	
		% of Total	1.0%	0.0%	7.4%	8.4%	
	System principles and practices	Deterrence	Count	33	3	67	103
			% of Total	5.3%	0.5%	10.8%	16.6%
Essentialism		Count	5	0	16	21	
		% of Total	0.8%	0.0%	2.6%	3.4%	
Incapacitation		Count	4	0	16	20	
		% of Total	0.6%	0.0%	2.6%	3.2%	
Non-essentialism		Count	6	5	23	34	
		% of Total	1.0%	0.8%	3.7%	5.5%	
Restitution		Count	11	4	50	65	
		% of Total	1.8%	0.6%	8.1%	10.5%	
Retribution		Count	16	3	63	82	
		% of Total	2.6%	0.5%	10.1%	13.2%	

	Welfarism	Count	24	3	38	65
		% of Total	3.9%	0.5%	6.1%	10.5%
System convergence	Disassociation	Count	2	0	2	4
		% of Total	0.3%	0.0%	0.3%	0.6%
	Europeanisation	Count	27	0	62	89
		% of Total	4.3%	0.0%	10.0%	14.3%
	Legality	Count	6	1	60	67
		% of Total	1.0%	0.2%	9.7%	10.8%
	Multilateralism	Count	22	0	43	65
		% of Total	3.5%	0.0%	6.9%	10.5%
Unable to determine		Count	38	17	78	133
		% of Total	6.1%	2.7%	12.6%	21.4%
Total		Count	156	36	429	621
		% of Total	25.1%	5.8%	69.1%	100.0%

*Note.* Percentages and totals are based on respondents. \*Dichotomy group tabulated at value 1.

## APPENDIX H: RESULTS FROM BIVARIATE STATISTICAL ANALYSIS

**Table H1**

*One-Way ANOVA Test between Mean Percentage of Focus and Source\**

	Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	91.92	2	45.97	8.17	<.001**
Within Groups	371.38	66	5.63		
Total	463.31	68			

*Note.* \*Sources exclude ministerial reports for reasons cited in text. \*\**p*-value does not exceed the 0.05 level of significance. Null hypothesis is rejected.

**Table H2**

*Multiple Comparisons of Percentage of Focus' Dependence on Source using Tukey HSD*

Source 1	Source 2	Mean Difference*	Std. Error	Sig.	95% Confidence Interval	
					Lower Bound	Upper Bound
EMs	EDs	3.10%*	0.84%	.001	1.08%	5.12%
	BSs	1.42%	0.92%	.276	-0.78%	3.62%
EDs	EMs	-3.10%*	0.84%	.001	-5.12%	-1.08%
	BSs	-1.67%*	0.65%	.033	-3.24%	-0.11%
BSs	EMs	-1.42%	0.92%	.276	-3.62%	0.78%
	EDs	1.67%*	0.65%	.033	0.11%	3.24%

*Note.* EM = electoral manifesto, ED = election debate, BS = budget speech. \*The mean difference is significant at the 0.05 level.

**Table H3***One-Way ANOVA Test between Mean Percentage of Focus and Legislature*

	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	76.54	4	19.13	3.93	.022*
Within Groups	73.03	15	4.87		
Total	149.56	19			

*Note.* \**p*-value does not exceed the 0.05 level of significance. Null hypothesis is rejected.

**Table H4***Multiple Comparisons of Percentage of Focus' Dependence on Legislature using Tukey HSD*

Legislature 1	Legislature 2	Mean Difference	Std. Error	Sig.	95% Confidence Interval	
					Lower Bound	Upper Bound
9 <sup>th</sup>	10 <sup>th</sup>	-0.66%	0.87%	0.94%	-3.10%	1.78%
	11 <sup>th</sup>	-0.03%	0.87%	1.00%	-2.47%	2.41%
	12 <sup>th</sup>	-0.75%	0.90%	0.92%	-3.29%	1.79%
	13 <sup>th</sup>	-4.79%*	1.26%	0.00%	-8.32%	-1.27%
10 <sup>th</sup>	9 <sup>th</sup>	0.66%	0.87%	0.94%	-1.78%	3.10%
	11 <sup>th</sup>	0.62%	0.80%	0.93%	-1.61%	2.86%
	12 <sup>th</sup>	-0.09%	0.83%	1.00%	-2.44%	2.25%
	13 <sup>th</sup>	-4.14%*	1.21%	0.01%	-7.53%	-0.75%
11 <sup>th</sup>	9 <sup>th</sup>	0.03%	0.87%	1.00%	-2.41%	2.47%
	10 <sup>th</sup>	-0.62%	0.80%	0.93%	-2.86%	1.61%
	12 <sup>th</sup>	-0.72%	0.83%	0.91%	-3.06%	1.63%
	13 <sup>th</sup>	-4.76%*	1.21%	0.00%	-8.15%	-1.37%
12 <sup>th</sup>	9 <sup>th</sup>	0.75%	0.90%	0.92%	-1.79%	3.29%
	10 <sup>th</sup>	0.09%	0.83%	1.00%	-2.25%	2.44%
	11 <sup>th</sup>	0.72%	0.83%	0.91%	-1.63%	3.06%

	13 <sup>th</sup>	-4.05%*	1.23%	0.01%	-7.51%	-0.58%
13 <sup>th</sup>	9 <sup>th</sup>	4.79%*	1.26%	0.00%	1.27%	8.32%
	10 <sup>th</sup>	4.14%*	1.21%	0.01%	0.75%	7.53%
	11 <sup>th</sup>	4.76%*	1.21%	0.00%	1.37%	8.15%
	12 <sup>th</sup>	4.05%*	1.23%	0.01%	0.58%	7.51%

Note. \*The mean difference is significant at the 0.05 level.

**Table H5**

*One-Way ANOVA Test between Percentage Focus and Political Party*

	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	23.40	2	11.70	1.77	.180
Within Groups	350.31	53	6.61		
Total	373.71	55			

Note. \**p*-value exceeds the 0.05 level of significance. Null hypothesis is accepted.

**Table H6**

*Chi-Square Test to Test Dependence of Nature of Crime on Context, Legislature and Political Party*

Categorical Variable		Value	df	Asymptotic Significance (2-sided)
Context	Pearson Chi-Square	27.64*	3	<.001
	Likelihood Ratio	27.85	3	<.001
	N of Valid Cases	621		
Legislature	Pearson Chi-Square	46.51**	12	<.001
	Likelihood Ratio	47.83	12	<.001

	N of Valid Cases	621		
Political Party	Pearson Chi-Square	8.43***	6	.208
	Likelihood Ratio	10.39	6	.109
	N of Valid Cases	621		

*Note.* Level of statistical significance is 0.05. Null hypothesis is rejected for context and legislature and accepted for political party. \*0 cells (0.0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 14.62. \*\* 1 cells (5.0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 3.37. \*\*\* 1 cells (8.3%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 2.20.

**Table H7**

*Symmetric Measures using Cramér's V for Nature of Crime with Context, Legislature and Political Party*

Categorical Variable			Value	Approximate Significance	Interpretation of effect size*
Context	Nominal by Nominal	Cramér's V	.21	<.001	Moderate
	N of Valid Cases		621		
Legislature	Nominal by Nominal	Cramér's V	.16	<.001	Weak
	N of Valid Cases		621		
Political Party	Nominal by Nominal	Cramér's V	.08	.208	Negligible
	N of Valid Cases		621		

*Note.* \*Based on Lee's (2016) suggested interpretation of Cramér's V (p.92).

**Table H8***Chi-Square Test of Dependence between Target Group and Context, Legislature and**Political Party*

Categorical Variable		Value	df	Asymptotic Significance (2-sided)*
Context	Pearson Chi-Square	46.73**	6	<0.001
	Likelihood Ratio	52.30	6	<0.001
	N of Valid Cases	621		
Legislature	Pearson Chi-Square	60.17***	16	<0.001
	Likelihood Ratio	61.76	16	<0.001
	N of Valid Cases	621		
Political Party	Pearson Chi-Square	10.31****	8	.244
	Likelihood Ratio	10.27	8	.246
	N of Valid Cases	621		

*Note.* \*Level of statistical significance is 0.05. Null hypothesis is rejected for dependence on context and legislature and accepted for dependence on political party. \*2 cells (14.3%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 2.69. \*\*2 cells (8.0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 3.19. \*\*\*7 cells (13.3%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 2.09.

**Table H9**

*Symmetric Measures using Cramér's V for Direct Target Group with Context, Legislature and Political Party*

Categorical Variable			Approximate Value	Significance	Interpretation of effect size*
Context	Nominal by Nominal	Cramér's V	.27	<0.001	Moderate
	N of Valid Cases		621		
Legislature	Nominal by Nominal	Cramér's V	.16	<0.001	Weak
	N of Valid Cases		621		
Political Party	Nominal by Nominal	Cramér's V	.09	.244	Negligible
	N of Valid Cases		621		

*Note.* Level of statistical significance is 0.05. \*Based on Lee's (2016) suggested interpretation of Cramér's V (p.92).

**Table H10**

*Chi-Square Test to Test Dependence between Depth and Context*

	Value	Df	Asymptotic Significance (2-sided)
Depth			
Pearson Chi-Square	17.81*	3	<.001
Likelihood ratio	20.15	3	<.001
N of valid cases	621		
Breadth			
Pearson Chi-Square	29.81**	3	<0.001
Likelihood ratio	32.50	3	<0.001
N of valid cases	621		

Note. \*0 cells (0.0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 14.24. \*\*0 cells (0.0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 13.47.

**Table H11**

*Symmetric Measures using Cramér's V for Depth, Breadth and Context*

	Depth		Breadth	
	Value	Approximate Significance	Value	Approximate Significance
Nominal by Cramér's V	.17	<.001	.22	<0.001
Nominal				
N of Valid Cases	621			

Note. \*Level of statistical significance is 0.05. Null hypothesis is rejected.

**Table H12**

*Chi-Square Test to Test Dependence between Orientation and Context, Legislature and Political Party*

Categorical Variable		Value	df	Asymptotic Significance (2-sided)
Context	Pearson Chi-Square	8.07*	2	0.018
	Likelihood Ratio	7.94	2	0.019
	N of Valid Cases	621		
Legislature	Pearson Chi-Square	30.82**	8	<.001
	Likelihood Ratio	29.80	8	<.001
	N of Valid Cases	621		
Political Party	Pearson Chi-Square	16.45***	4	.002

Likelihood Ratio	14.71	4	.005
N of Valid Cases	621		

*Note.* Level of statistical significance is 0.05. Null hypothesis is rejected for all variables.  
 \*0 cells (0.0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 34.25.  
 \*\*0 cells (0.0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 7.88.  
 \*\*\*0 cells (0.0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 5.16.

**Table H13**

*Symmetric Measures using Cramér's V for Orientation with Context, Legislature and Political Party*

Categorical Variable			Value	Sig.	Interpretation of effect size*
Context	Nominal by Nominal	Cramér's V	.11	0.018	Weak
	N of Valid Cases		621		
Legislature	Nominal by Nominal	Cramér's V	.16	<.001	Weak
	N of Valid Cases		621		
Political Party	Nominal by Nominal	Cramér's V	.12	.002	Weak
	N of Valid Cases		621		

*Note.* Level of statistical significance is 0.05. \*Based on Lee's (2016) suggested interpretation of Cramér's V (p.92).

**Table H14***Summary of Run Tests for Causality*

Dependent Variable	Dependent Variable	Run tests	<i>p</i> -value	Acceptance or rejection of null hypothesis
Percentage of focus	Source	One-Way ANOVA	<0.001	Rejected
	Legislature	One-Way ANOVA	<0.004	Rejected
	Political party	One-Way ANOVA	<0.001	Accepted

**Table H15***Summary of Run Tests for Associations*

Variable 1	Variable 2	Run tests	<i>p</i> -value	Acceptance or rejection of null hypothesis
Nature of Crime	Context	Chi-Square & Cramér's V	<0.001	Rejected
	Legislature	Chi-Square & Cramér's V	<0.001	Rejected
	Political party	Chi-Square & Cramér's V	0.208	Accepted
Direct target group	Context	Chi-Square & Cramér's V	<0.001	Rejected

	Legislature	Chi-Square & Cramér's V	<0.001	Rejected
	Political party	Chi-Square & Cramér's V	0.367	Accepted
Depth	Context	Chi-Square & Cramér's V	<0.001	Rejected
Breadth	Context	Chi-Square & Cramér's V	<0.001	Rejected
Orientation	Context	Chi-Square & Cramér's V	0.018	Rejected
	Legislature	Chi-Square & Cramér's V	<0.001	Rejected
	Political party	Chi-Square & Cramér's V	0.002	Rejected

## APPENDIX I – CRIMES INCLUDED IN THE CODING FRAME

Type of crime	Reference to Criminal Code (Cap.9)		Other justification for inclusion
	Section/ Article	Title of offence	
Abortion	Article 241	Procuring miscarriage	
Abuse of persons with disability	Subtitle XI	Of abuse on elderly and dependant persons	
Animal cruelty			Provisions in Article 47 of the Animal Welfare Act (Cap. 439)
Arson	Articles 315-319	Setting fires of arsenals etc.; arson to common danger; arson without danger of life; arson of vineyards	
Benefit fraud	Article 188	False declarations or information to a public authority.	
Child abuse (general)	Part II, Title II	Crimes against the person	
Child labour	Article 248DB	Child labour	

Conversion therapy			Provisions in the Affirmation of Sexual Orientation, Gender Identity & Gender Expression Act (Cap.567)
Counterfeit currency	Article 172	Counterfeiting of seals, stamps, or other Government marks	
Cyberattacks	Article 337C	Unlawful access to, or use of, information	
Cybercrime (general)	Article 337C	Unlawful access to, or use of, information	
Cyberviolence	Part II, Title II	Crimes against the person	
Damage to national property			The Malta Police Force's Cultural Heritage Crimes Unit includes investigations of threats and vandal acts on cultural assets in its mandate.

Document fraud	Article 103; Article 183; Article 184	Preparation or production of false documents; forgery of public, commercial or private bank documents by person not being a public officer; malicious use of false documents	
Domestic Violence	Part II, Title II	Crimes against the person	Provisions also found in the Gender-Based Violence and Domestic Violence Act (Cap.581).
Drug-related offences (general); drug use; drug trafficking			Provisions in the Dangerous Drugs Ordinance (Cap.101)
Elderly abuse	Subtitle XI	Of Abuse on Elderly and Dependent Persons	
Euthanasia	Article 211; Article 213	Wilful homicide; inciting or helping others to commit suicide	
Funding of terrorism	Article 328F	Funding of terrorism	

Gender-based violence	Part II, Title II	Crimes against the person	Provisions also found in the Gender-Based Violence and Domestic Violence Act (Cap.581)
Hate Crimes	Title VIII; Articles 82A	Crimes against the person; incitement to racial hatred	
Homicide	Articles 211 - 226B	Wilful/Involuntary homicide	
Human trafficking (voluntary & involuntary)	Sub-title VII Bis	Traffic of persons	
Illegal dumping			Provisions in Article 15 of the Abandonment, Dumping and Disposal of Waste in Streets and Public Places or Areas Regulations (L.N. 296 of 2018)
Illegal gambling			Provisions in Article 23 of the Gaming Act (Cap.583).
Illegal trade (General)			Provisions in Article 65 of the Customs Ordinance (Cap.37).

Money laundering		Provisions in Article 3 (2Aa) of the Prevention of Money Laundering Act (Cap.373).
Paedophilia	Article 204C	Participation in sexual activities with persons under the age of sixteen.
Political corruption	Sub-title IV	Unlawful, exaction and bribery
Prostitution	Article 205; Article 197	Compelling or inducing person of age to prostitution; prostitution of descendant, minor or spouse
Radicalisation and extremism	Article 82; Article 82A	Spreading of false news; incitement to racial hatred
Sexual assault	Article 204D	Unlawful sexual activities
Sexual exploitation	Article 204B	Inducing persons under age to prostitution or to participation in a pornographic performance
Sports corruption	Sub-title IV	Unlawful, exaction and bribery

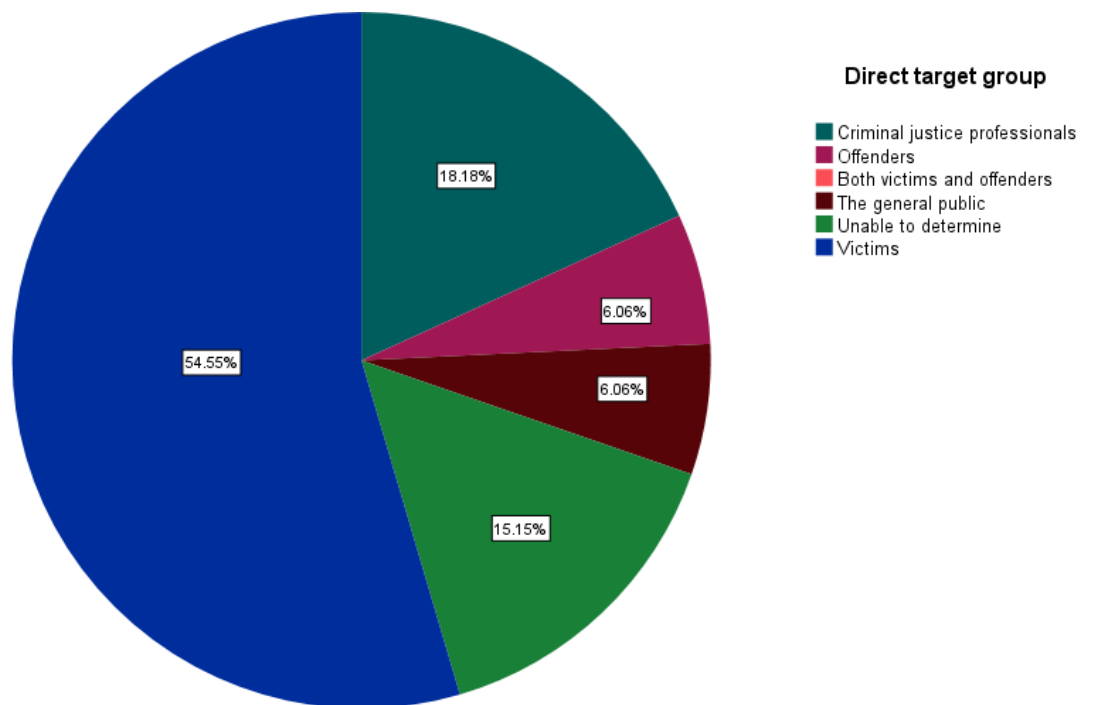
Tax fraud	Article 188	False declarations or information to a public authority.	Provisions also found in Article 52 of the Income Tax Management Act.
Terrorism	Article 328A	Acts of terrorism and terrorist activities	
Theft	Title IX, Sub-title 1	Of theft	
Trafficking of alcohol, trafficking of cultural heritage, trafficking of weapons			Provisions in Article 65 of the Customs Ordinance (Cap.37).

## APPENDIX J: QUANTITATIVE PROPERTIES FOR ACTIONS RELATED TO DOMESTIC VIOLENCE

Appendix J presents an overview of the properties which were quantitatively coded for units relating to domestic violence in the first research method. The purpose of this data is to enable cross-comparison of quantitative and qualitative results and cross-validation of the two research methods. Interpretation and cross-referencing are included in Chapter 5.

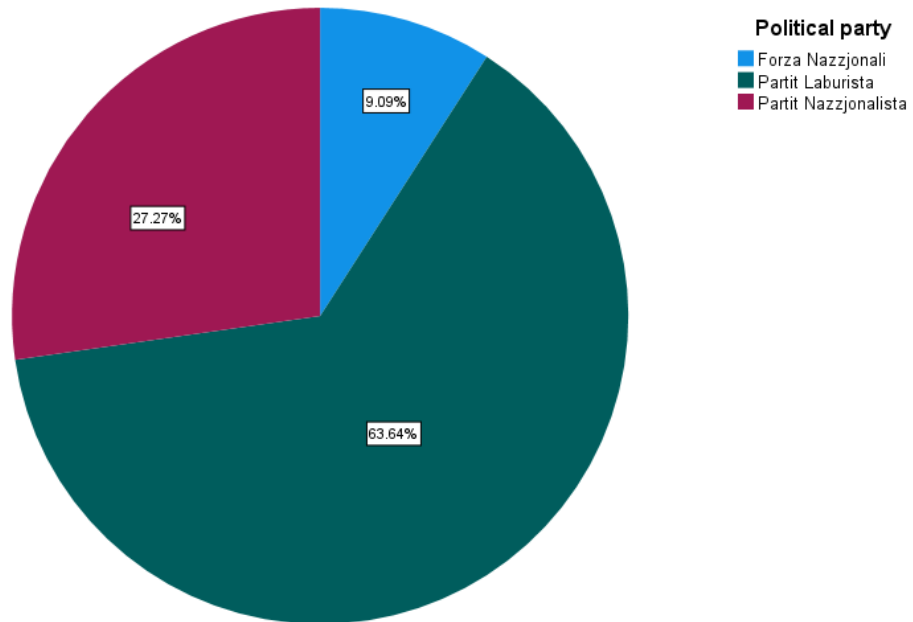
**Figure 11**

*Quantitative scores for direct target groups for units on domestic violence in the quantitative coding frame.*



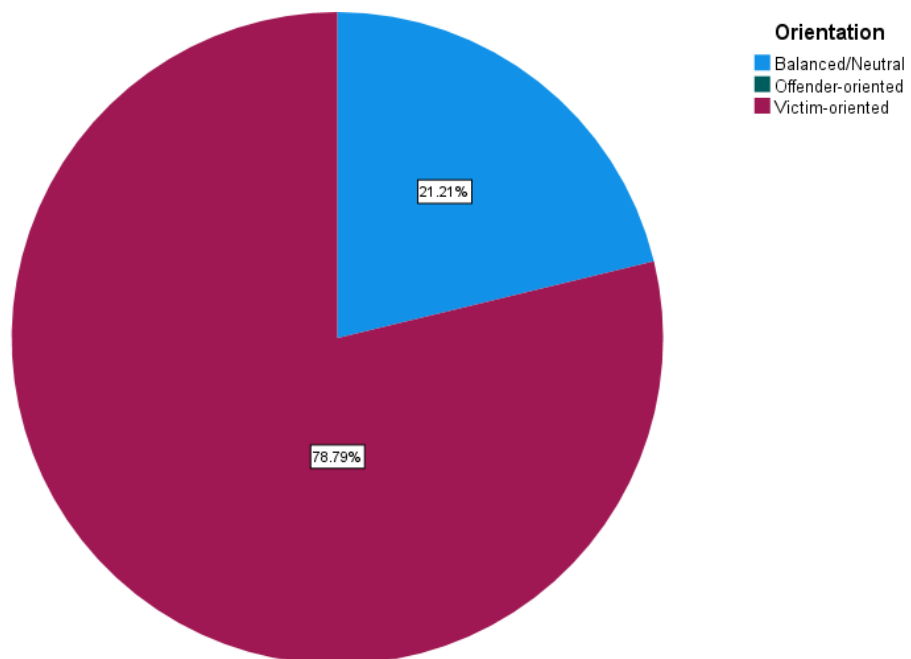
**Figure 12**

*Results from quantitative coding frame, displaying units on domestic violence by political party.*



**Figure 13**

*Scores for orientation in domestic violence units.*



**Table I1***Scores for areas of concern in domestic violence units.*

Areas of concern	Responses		% of cases
	N	%	
Criminalisation	1	2.6%	3.0%
Prevention	1	2.6%	3.0%
Administration of justice	8	20.5%	24.2%
Corrective measures for offenders	1	2.6%	3.0%
Protective and supportive measures for victims	15	38.5%	45.5%
Unable to determine	13	33.3%	39.4%
<b>Total</b>	<b>39</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>118.2%</b>

*Note.* Dichotomy group tabulated at value 1.**Table I2***Scores for policy instrument in domestic violence units.*

Instrument	Responses		% of cases
	N	%	
Improvement or expansion of state-funded services	12	31.6%	36.4%
Policy development	8	21.1%	24.2%
Introduction of new legal provisions and amendment of existing ones	8	21.1%	24.2%
Training and capacity building	5	13.2%	15.2%
Research and analysis	3	7.9%	9.1%
Unable to determine	2	5.3%	6.1%
<b>Total</b>	<b>38</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>115.2%</b>

**Table I3***Scores for principles and practices in domestic violence units.*

Principle/Practice	Responses		% of cases
	N	%	
Centralisation	2	3.5%	6.1%
Deterrence	3	5.3%	9.1%
Europeanisation	2	3.5%	6.1%
Interdisciplinary coordination	6	10.5%	18.2%
Legality	7	12.3%	21.2%
Non-essentialism	1	1.8%	3.0%
Restitution	17	29.8%	51.5%
Retribution	4	7.0%	12.1%
Welfarism	10	17.5%	30.3%
Unable to determine	5	8.8%	15.2%
<b>Total</b>	<b>57</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>172.7%</b>