

Understanding Gangs, Gang Members, and Gang Control in the Caribbean

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Understanding the problem

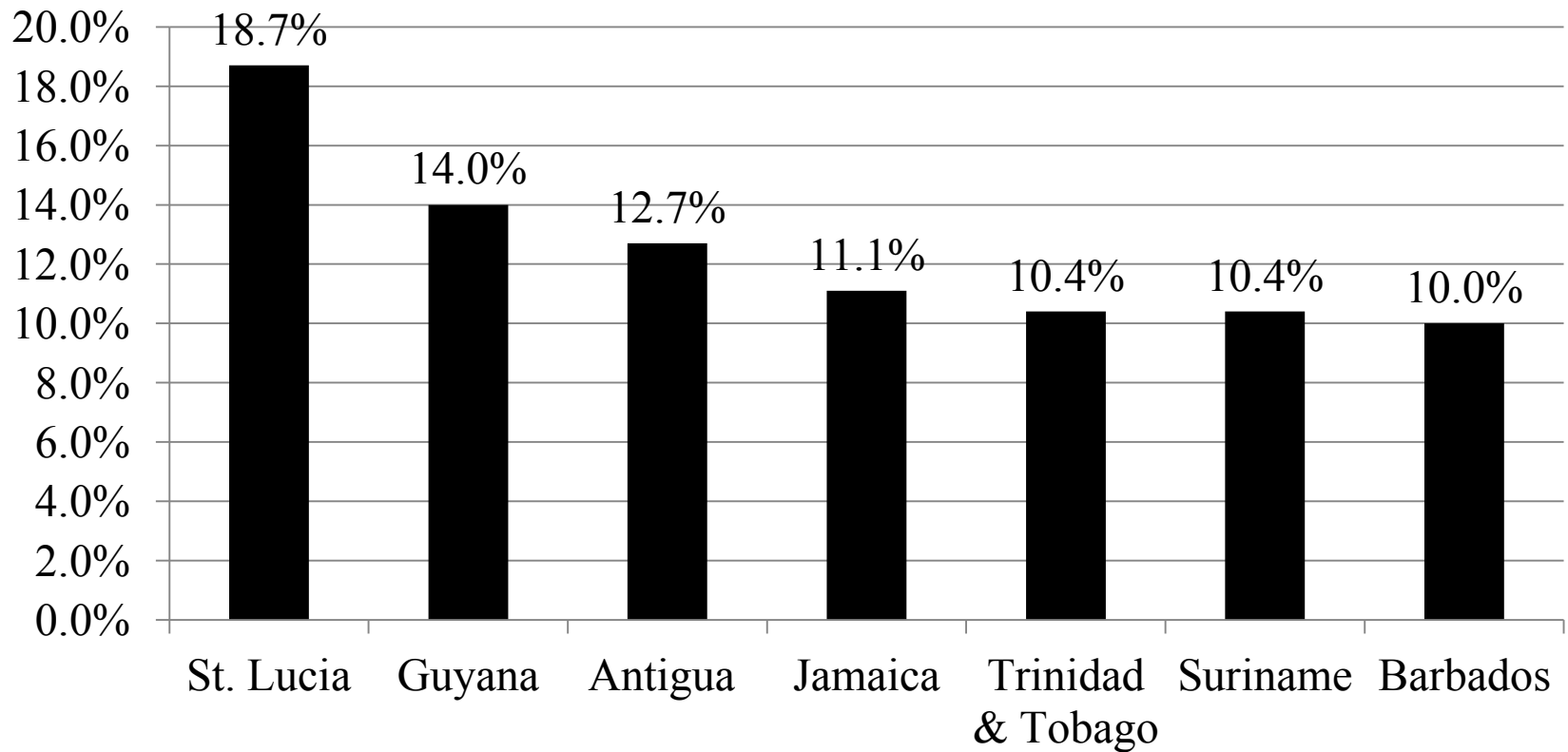
- Diagnose the problem
 - Are street gangs present?
 - If they are, what problems are they associated with?
- Diagnose the capacity of key stakeholders
 - Prevention
 - Intervention
 - Suppression

Information from the Police

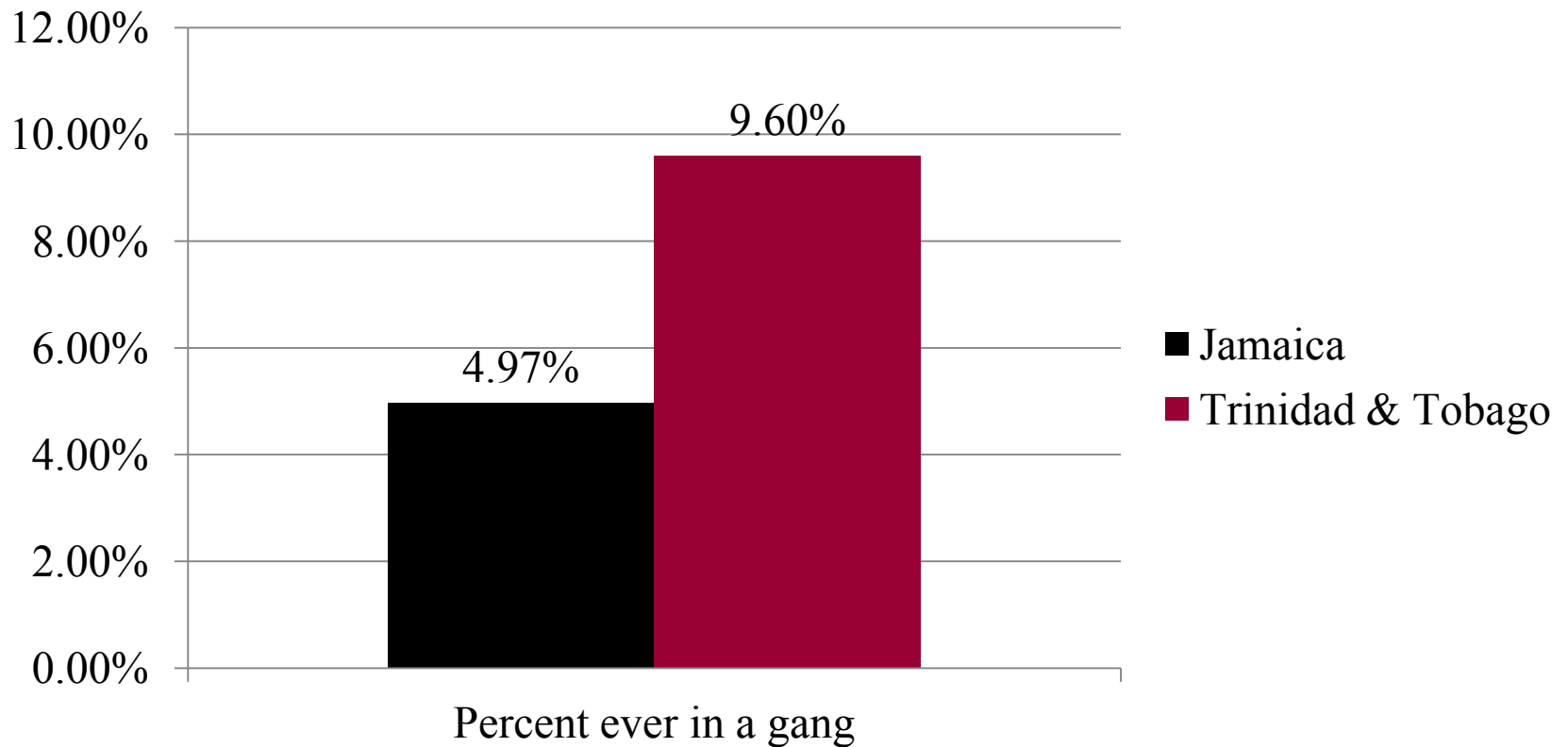
Scope of the gang problem by nation

	Trinidad and Tobago	Dominica	Grenada	St Vincent
Sub-Station has a gang problem	39.4%	29.0%	66.7%	28.6%
Total number of gangs	93	10	22	8
Total number of gang members	1,379	113	299	186

Information from Citizens: There are criminal gangs in my neighborhood



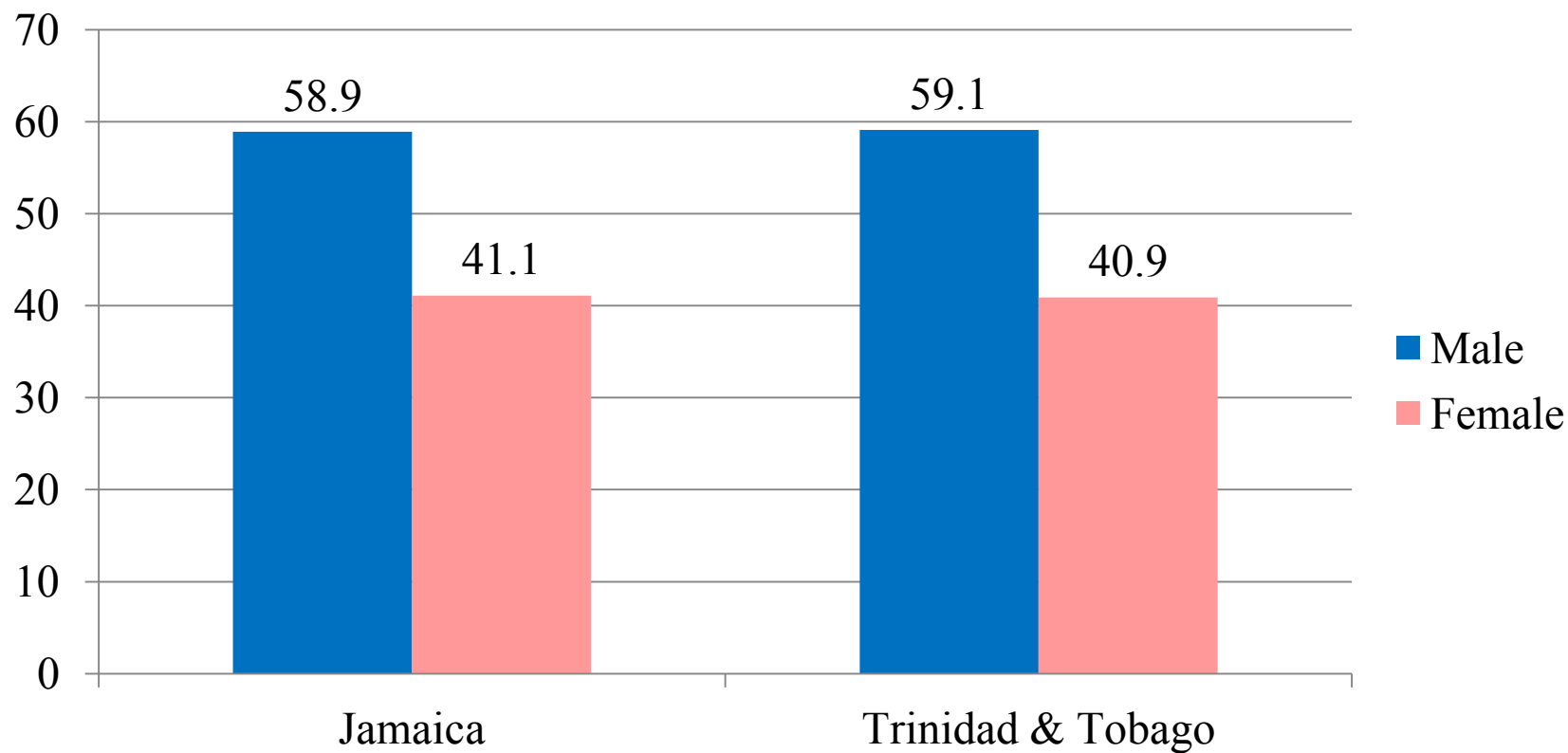
Self-report data from 14 to 15 yr. old youth

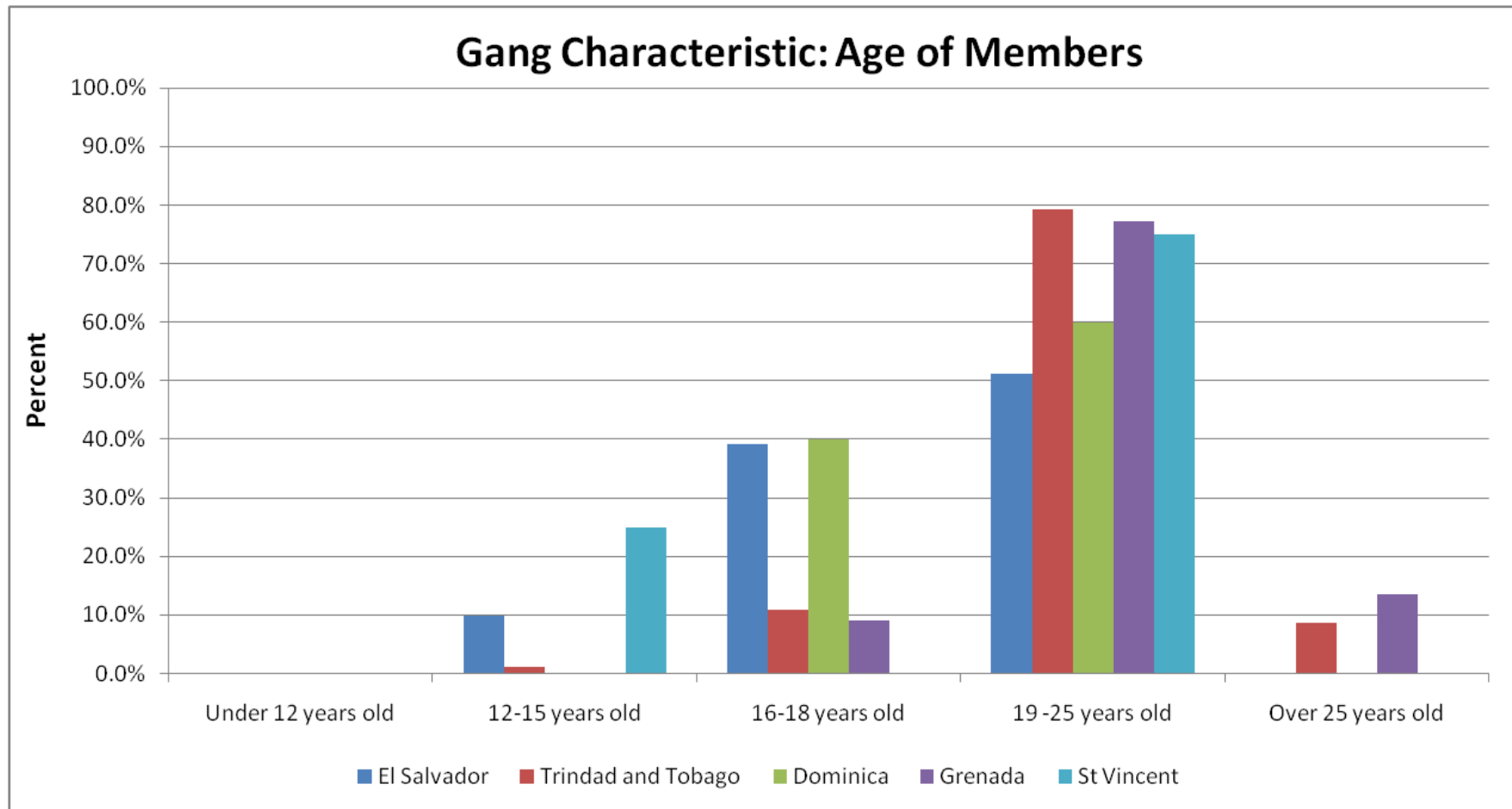


When & Why Do School Youth Join a Gang

Age of first involvement (mean)	12.95 years old
Reason for joining gang	<u>percent</u>
Protection/safety	29.4
Friendship	42.0
Parent(s) in a gang	2.1
Siblings in a gang	3.8
Make money	8.0
Other reason	14.7

Gang membership by gender among school aged youth





Gang migration and international connections

	Trinidad & Tobago	Dominica	Grenada	St Vincent
Gang has members born in another country	5.9%	0.0%	10.0%	12.5%
Members migrate to other countries	NA	87.5%	31.6%	37.5%
Which countries? (ordered by frequency)		Guadelupe	USA	Canada
		Martinique	Trinidad	Trinidad
		St Thomas	St Vincent	USA
		Antigua	Canada	Barbados
		St Martin	England	

Organizational characteristics of the gang

	Trinidad and Tobago	Dominica	Grenada	St Vincent
Has a name	52.7%	88.9%	52.4%	100.0%
Turf	87.9%	60.0%	61.9%	87.5%
Protects turf	75.3%	66.7%	55.0%	85.7%
Signs	NA	0.0%	14.3%	0.0%
Symbols	20.5%	0.0%	14.3%	50.0%
Ways of speaking	NA	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
Clothing	NA	62.5%	76.2%	50.0%
Tattoos	NA	0.0%	23.8%	50.0%
Illegal things are acceptable	98.9%	77.8%	100.0%	87.5%
Supports a political issue	24.1%	11.1%	0.0%	0.0%
Spend time together in public space	87.0%	60.0%	84.2%	100.0%
Subgroups	39.8%	12.5%	19.0%	50.0%

	80% or more
	50% to 80%
	50% or less

Self-reported delinquency among gang and non-gang school aged youth

Jamaica

- Gang members were involved in:
 - 7 times the amount of violence
 - 2 to 7 times the amount of property crime
 - 4 times the amount of marijuana use

Trinidad & Tobago

- Gang members were involved in:
 - 6.5 times the amount of violence
 - 4.6 times the amount of property crime
 - 11 times the amount of drug sales
 - 5-7 times the amount of marijuana use

Combining the Expert Survey with official data

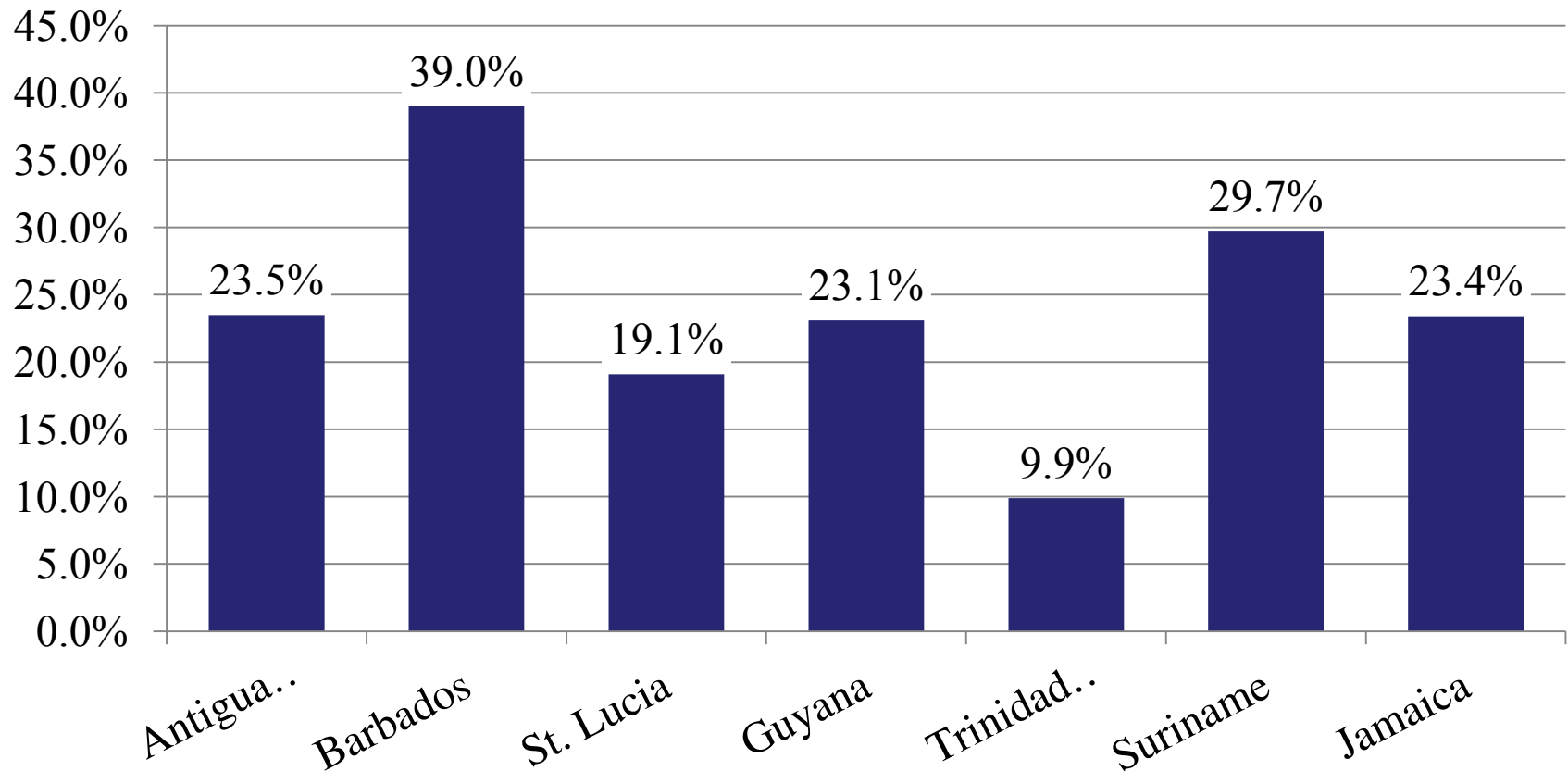
1. Trinidad & Tobago gang expert survey
 - Replication of Eurogang Research Program Expert Survey.
 - Surveyed gang experts in all TT station districts, 100% response rate, in 2006.
2. Homicide data
 - Number of homicides in 2006 by station district
 - Homicide data is reliable and valid
3. 2000 Trinidad & Tobago census data
 - On foot
 - Focus on socio-economic and public health issues
 - Shape file for station districts obtained from TTPS

Interpreting the estimated incidence rate ratios

Increase in # of gangs members	Percent increase in homicides	Increase in # of gangs	Percent increase in homicides
1	0.4%	1	9.1%
5	2.0%	2	19.0%
10	4.1%	3	29.9%
50	22.1%	4	41.7%
100	49.1%	5	54.6%
150	82.0%	10	138.9%
200	122.2%	20	470.8%
400	393.7%		

Diagnosing Institutional Capacity to Control Gangs and Gang Crime

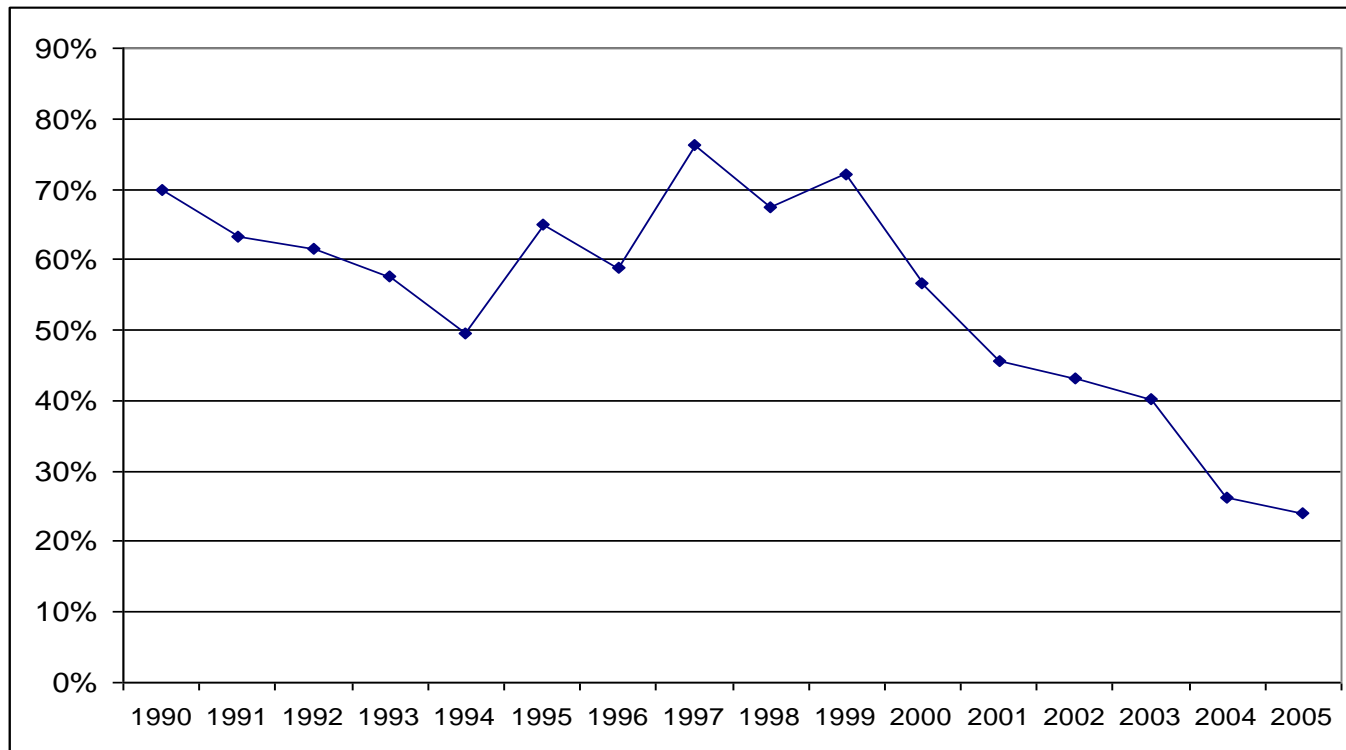
Have Confidence in the Police to Effectively Control Gang Violence



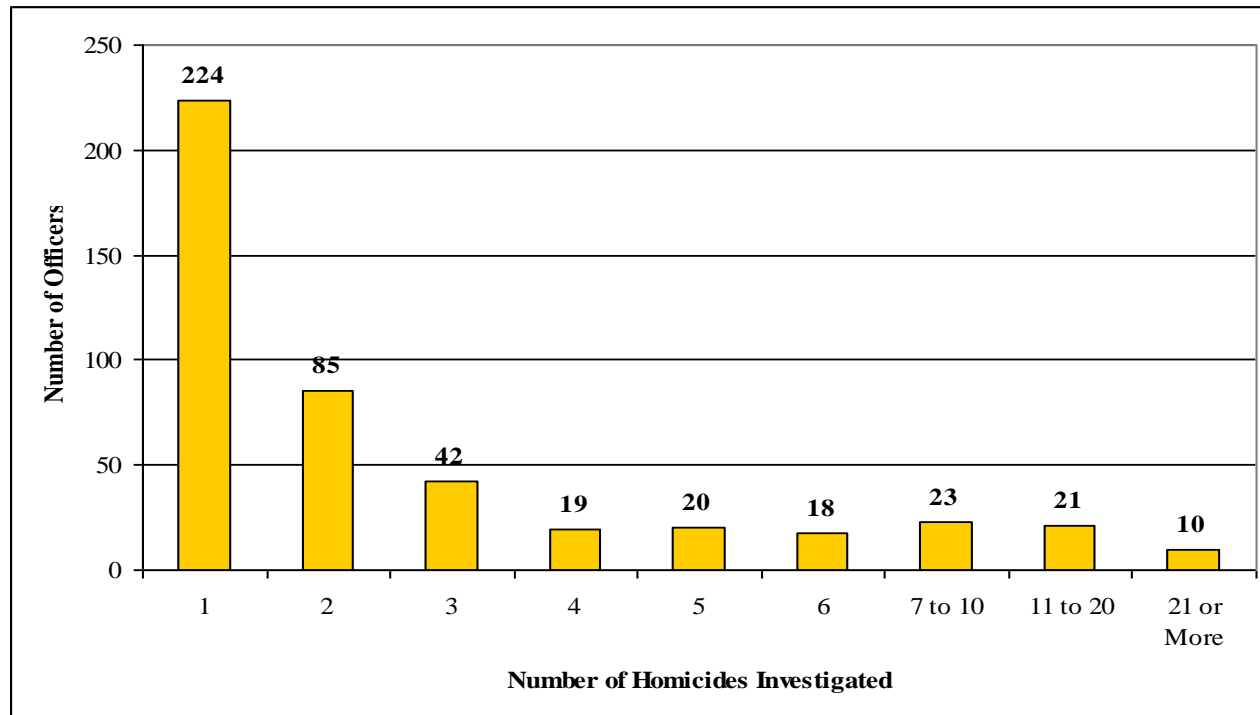
Percent of residence who perceive corruption

	Judges are corrupt	Justice system is corrupt	Powerful criminals go free	Politically connected criminals go free
Antigua	32.3%	44.3%	38.2%	46.7%
Barbados	24.5%	33.8%	40.9%	42.0%
St. Lucia	33.7%	48.1%	49.3%	53.5%
Guyana	39.0%	47.7%	48.8%	54.0%
Trinidad and Tobago	58.7%	69.8%	61.6%	70.2%
Suriname	35.6%	45.8%	39.1%	47.1%
Jamaica	36.3%	57.3%	52.8%	57.8%

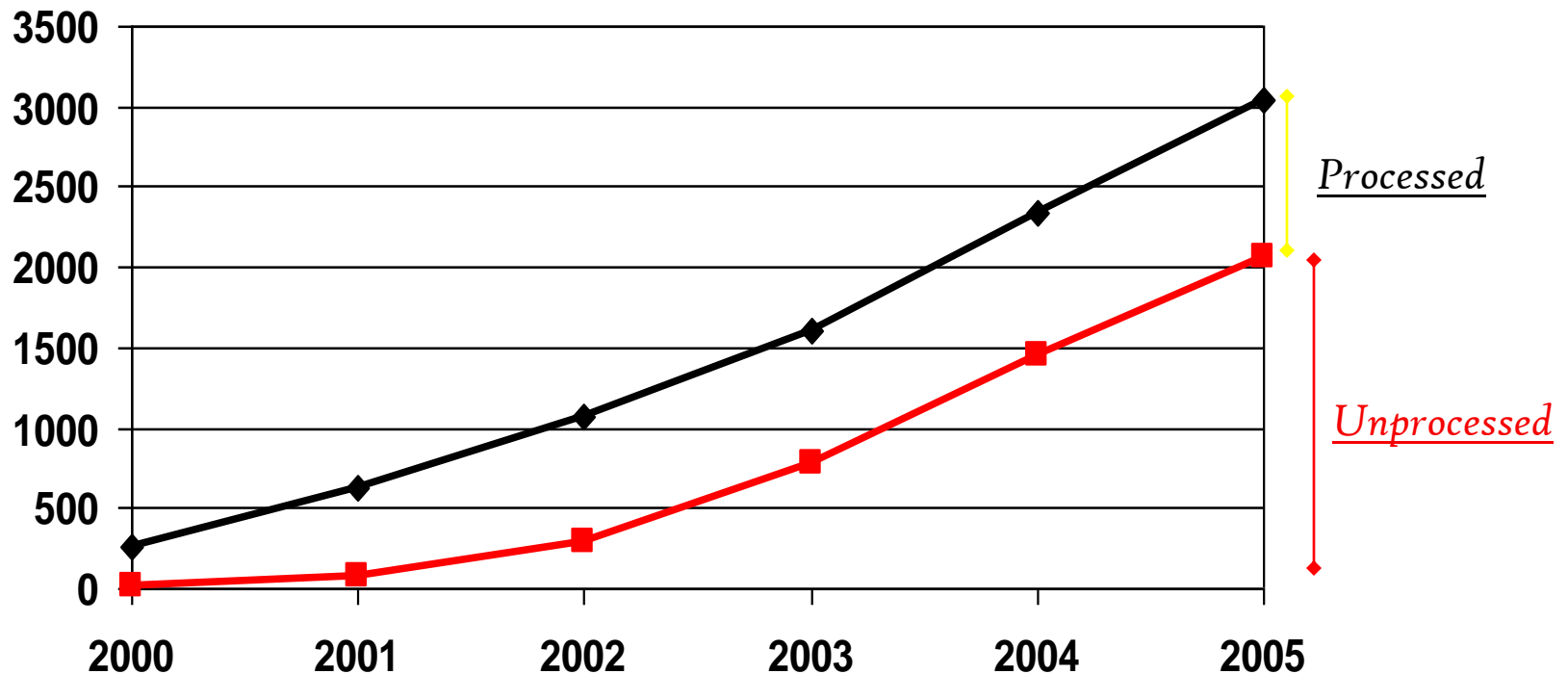
Homicide clearance rates: 1988-2005



Homicide Investigator Experience



Firearms Cases at the Forensic Science Centre



**Black line indicates cumulative number of firearms cases submitted.*

**Red line indicates cumulative number of unprocessed firearms cases.*

Resident perceptions, behaviors, and beliefs

- 86% of residents reported hearing gunshots in their neighborhood at least once in the past 30 days
- Only 7% of the residents who heard gunshots in the past 30 days reported them to the police
- 71% of residents “strongly agree” that people who report crimes committed by gang members to the police are likely to experience retaliation by gang members
- 77% stated that the police did not respond quickly when people ask them for help

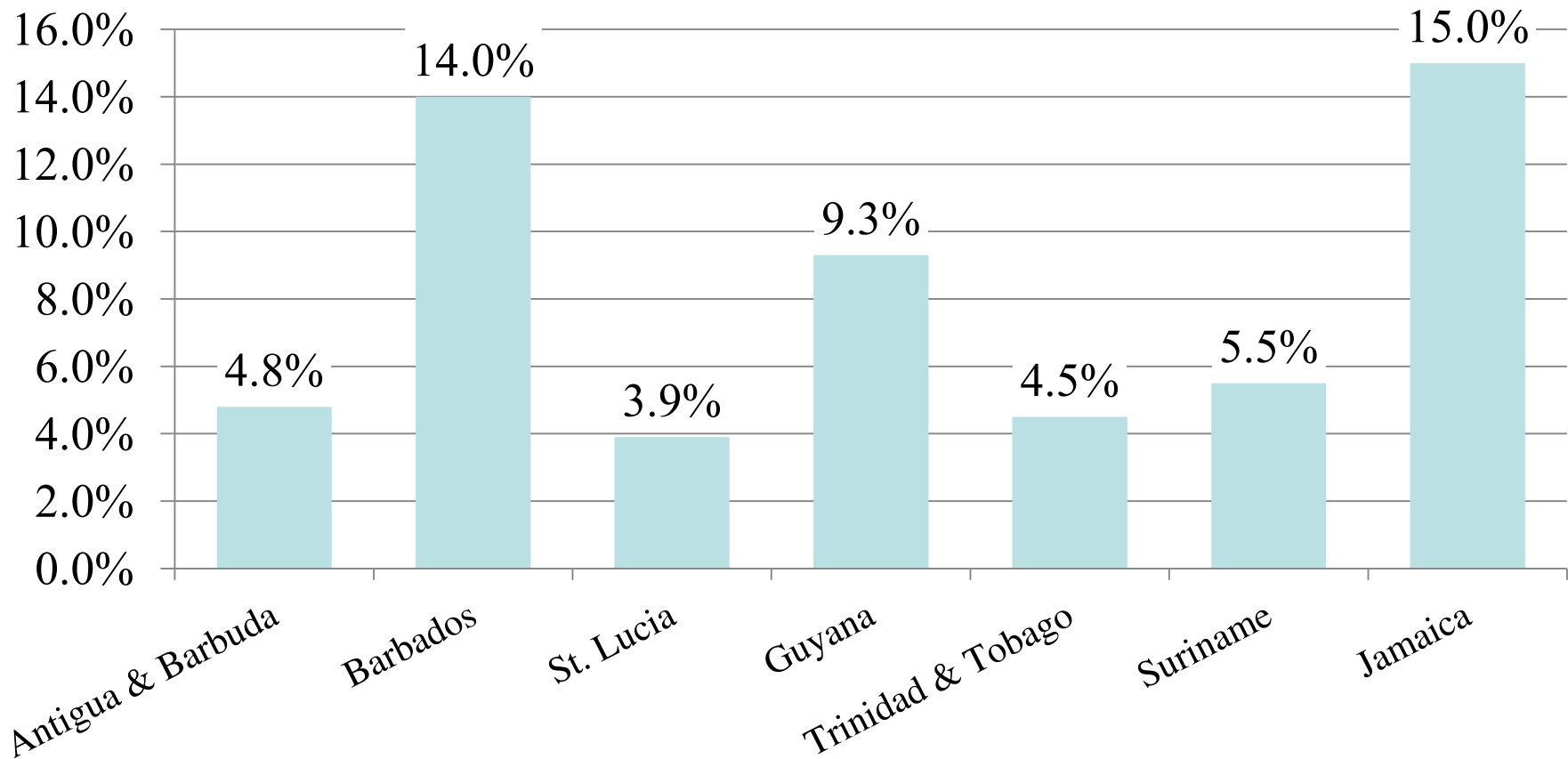
Besson Street Gang Homicide Case Processing Success January 2005 through January 2006

	Number	Total Percent	Probability of Event
Homicides involving Gang Member	53	----	100%
Arrests	3	5.6%	5.6%
Convictions	0	0	0.0%

Gang role in informal social control within the community (examples)

- “Gang bring down crime. They instituted a community court that meets weekly where young males are punished and give strokes.... One to two local councilors have gone to the courts to observe their practice”
- “Gangs are the first one’s to respond to crime, the police are incompetent, they take too long and never finish the work. If you go to the gang leader you know they will take care of you.”
- If you live in a community where there is gang cohesion you are more safe because they [protect you.]...Gangs provide safety, create jobs,... give people food, give mothers milk for their baby’s.”

Have Gangs Made the Neighbourhood Safer?



Summary: Mechanisms of Formal Social Control are Broken

- Lack of responsiveness to public
- Lack of training
- Lack of investigative capacity
- Lack of evidence processing capacity
- Police-prosecutors lack experience
- Public/jurors do not trust the police