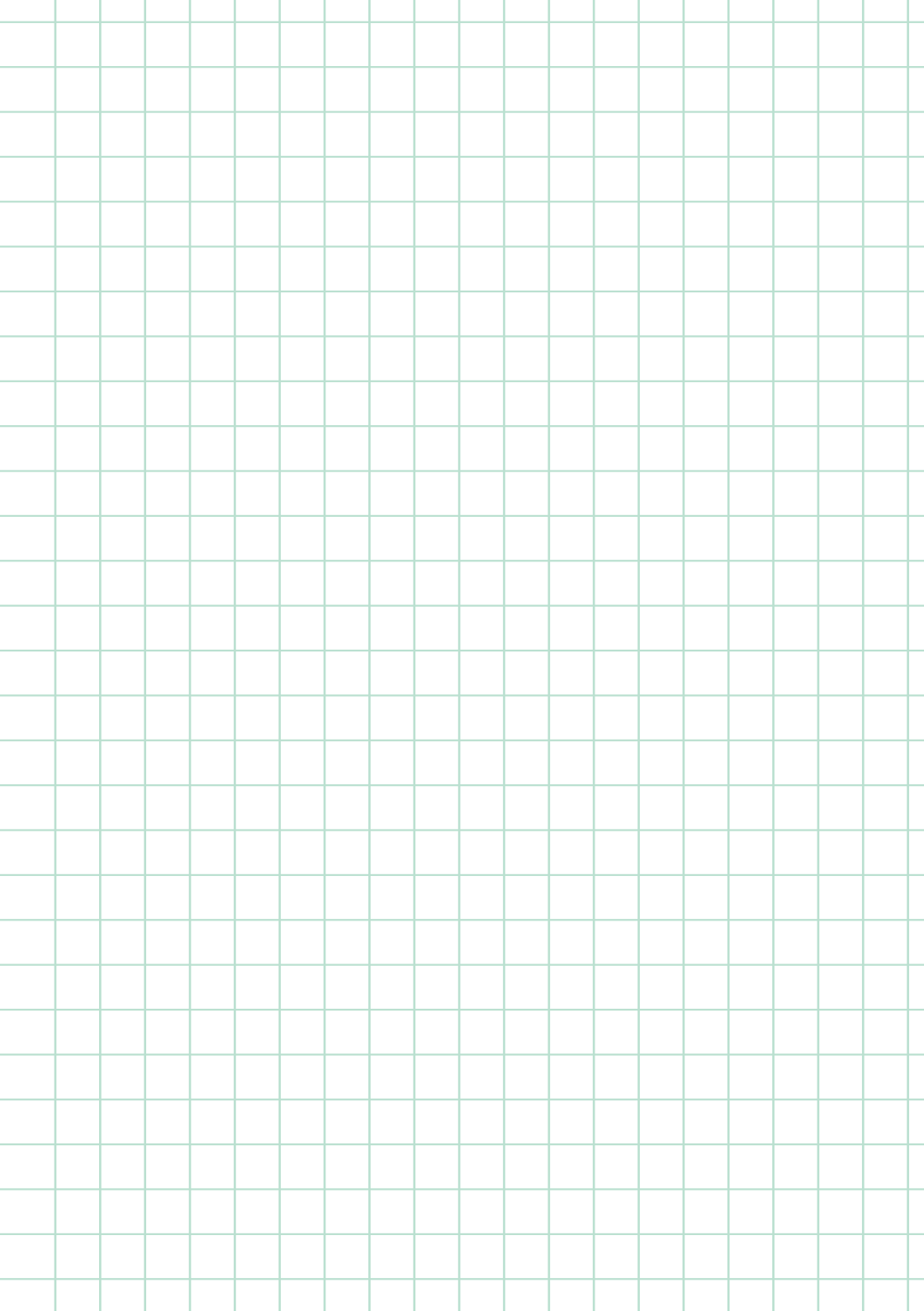




# A GUIDE TO MAP MAKING

THE MAPA DE LA POLICÍA EXPERIENCE:  
MAKING "MAPS OF POWER"





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## **0) EDIPO / The Political Investigation Team**

The Political Investigation Team (Edipo) is a new kind of human rights organisation which aims to provide social political justice organisations fighting for social democratisation with tools to analyse current conflict in society. Working out ways of reacting to present day violence is an increasingly urgent issue. Edipo strives to continue the legacy of the social movements that built Memory, Truth and Justice in Argentina in the aftermath of the civil-military dictatorship (1976-1983).

The assembly and analysis of information is vital for the construction of efficient self-defence strategies. The challenge lies in collectively building a map that records the continuous changes in contemporary power structures.

## **I. INTRODUCTION / *A maps of power manual***

This manual for making maps of power is part of the exchange carried out in *Us & Them*: a project funded by Erasmus+ involving four social justice organisations from different parts of the world: Maghweb (Palermo, Italy), Amiga Joven (Medellín, Colombia), Movimiento Por La Paz (Madrid, Spagna) e La Revista Crisis (Buenos Aires, Argentina). During our rich exchange of different experiences and knowledge, all participants recognised the need to learn in greater depth about the various methodologies discussed. This is how Edipo decided to present its mapping work as a fruitful, dynamic research method.

Our idea of map making emerged from the need to construct tools containing information about how power functions inside social conflict. Our research approach is based on the analysis of information and regards information as a fundamental tool when constructing strategies for anti-violence resistance.

This manual is an invitation: it invites readers to take part in a collective research network which aims to gather information with multi-disciplinary methodologies from the worlds of journalism, academia and activism. Please note that the entire manual is guided by Edipo's "Mapa de la Policía" [Map of the police n.d.t] experience in Buenos Aires and aims to make way for the replication of the map's methodologies and strategies in any place that might find them useful.

## **II. WHY MAKE A MAP?**

## **II. a. Theorising maps of power**

One of the main difficulties emerging from current social movements is the lack of transparency about the power and violence that erupts from social conflict. The systematic organisation of information on a collective platform is a way of analysing information that is available about such power and violence. Often, the bodies who know about and understand the existence of structures hide or mask themselves to avoid being checked, to avoid being held accountable. This is why we consider the accessible analysis of information about institutions and their networks vital resources for social and political justice organisations. Organising such information requires a systematic methodology which puts political investigation back into the hands of the people.

## **II. b. The Political Investigation Methodology**

One of the main difficulties emerging from current social movements is the lack of transparency about the power and violence that erupts from social conflict. The systematic organisation of information on a collective platform is a way of analysing information that is available about such power and violence. Often, the bodies who know about and understand the existence of structures hide or mask themselves to avoid being checked, to avoid being held accountable. This is why we consider the accessible analysis of information about institutions and their networks vital resources for social and political justice organisations. Organising such information requires a systematic methodology which puts political investigation back into the hands of the people.

To structure the research and gather information in the most organised way, we recommend you use the following resources to collect data:

- Information published online, qualified people are needed to gather and analyse these.
- Public and private databases, these demand that collaborative

researchers determine what information is present and the ways it can be systematically accessed.

- On the ground, through tools available to social justice organisations.
- Technical resources, that provide theories about the issue as well as different perspectives on it. Such resources aim to understand the process surrounding the issue and its different contextual elements.
- Legal documents and juridical procedures, a qualified legal figure should be in the team to handle these kinds of resources



**III.  
MAPPA  
OF THE  
POLICE**

### **III. a. Defining our tools**

The “Mapa de la Policía” [Map of the Police n.d.t] platform became a strategy for social and political justice organisations to protect the population from police violence more effectively and counteract this phenomenon. The map was built in a context of growing social degradation in which authorities cannot monitor the activity, violence and abuse of the security forces.

The tool is made of a network of people, social, civil and political justice organisations that have joined forces for the sake of human rights to denounce violence and abuse by police forces, an area which is usually highly obscure.

### **III. b. Building a map of the police**

Before you embark on the research and analysis process, we suggest you begin by:

- Identifying key human sources of information: specialists and academics with expertise on the subject, to create an outline for a research plan. In this phase it is important to listen with open ears, without prejudice.
- Gaining knowledge about the legal framework. In the case of Mapa de la Policía we referred to the legal framework that governs security forces in the Autonomous City of Buenos Aires and the existing organigram from operative agents.
- Using tools from journalism: conducting interviews with people employed by the public administration inside the police system to obtain information about the structure of the institution. Here it's important that you can work out how changes and movements in staff are communicated.
- Identifying social and political justice organisations and organisations working for the geographical area of interest who work with the subject matter. Consolidate connections with such organisations to prepare a common strategy.

### III. c. 1. Platform sections

The platform is composed of different elements. This section illustrates its detailed components:

*To organise the work of each section, we suggest that you subdivide them into different working work groups so that you can update each one easily and enact intervention strategies.*

#### III. c. 1. The map and hierarchical structures

The map printed below shows the districts of Buenos Aires and directions indicating each Police station and chief of police.

The police locations are divided according to each neighbourhood, as are local authorities. The button on the left Who are the chiefs of



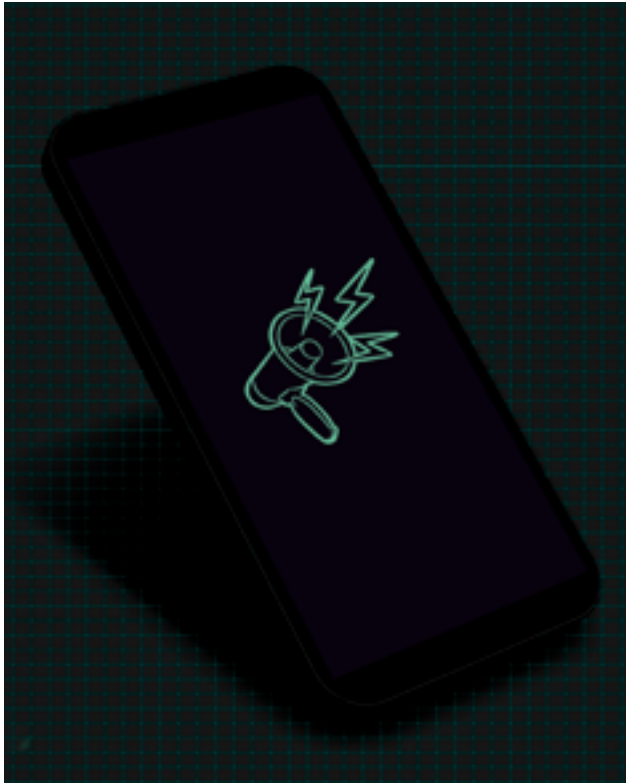
the police force? shows the police command's organogram. To arrive at this set of data, we retraced the information already available on the internet and began to pull the threads together and fill in the gaps from there. Some of our sources of information were local news portals, websites and the armed forces' lists of phone numbers.

### **III. c. 2. Making denunciations**

Creating an archive for the different reports of abuse made on the website aims to make the violent situations visible and allow the person who has found themselves in a violent situation to be provided with resources.

questo punto, la persona viene contattata per verificare l'identità.

- The form that people can fill in includes the following information: site and date of the happening; description of the violent episode; details about the perpetrator; contact information; personal data about the person who is making denunciations and future opportunities for reporting a claim. There is also a "Terms and conditions" button so that the user can provide their data consensually and voluntarily.
- Web reporting does not necessarily imply a legal, institutional denunciation. First the team needs to note down why the person is making the denunciation on the platform.
- The person making the denunciation can choose whether or not they want to share the event on social media.
- When collective denunciations are made, there is a specific form for political and social justice organisations to fill out.
- The number of reports are counted by being sent to a specific email inbox. This inbox receives the reports and replies with an automatic email confirming that the denunciation of violence has been received.



- To verify the facts, contact information is requested. At this point, the person is contacted so that their identity can be verified.
- When the person wants to denounce something after completing the form, we recommend that they consult the relevant professional to know how to proceed.
- Everything can remain anonymous. We only publish the source if the person who has made the denunciation gives their consent.
- The team that receives the claim is composed of lawyers. After the verification of the person's identity, the next step is that of guiding the person in constant relation to their requests. The intervention closes once the person has been put into the care of a competent body or their denunciation has been registered through preselected means of communication.



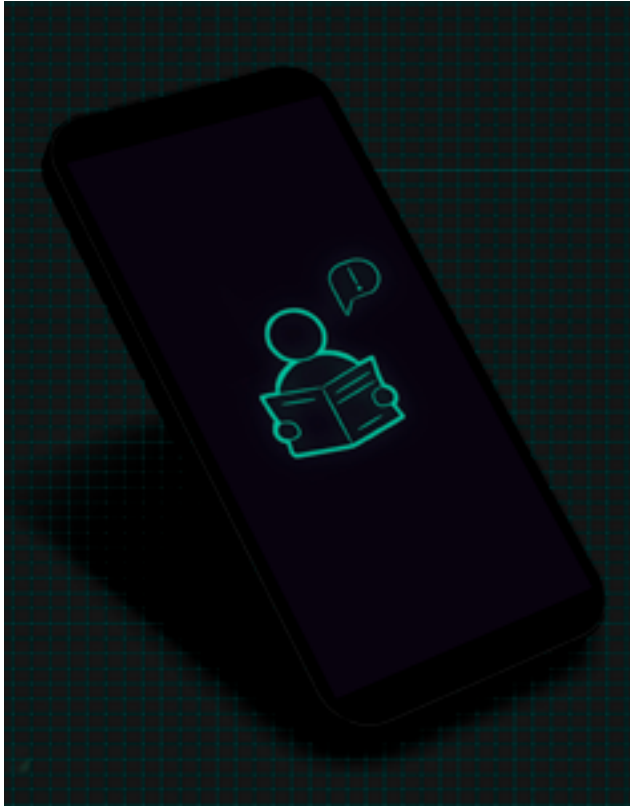
### III. c. 3. Resources

This section presents the collection of resources that are available to address and respond to police violence. The collection includes useful recommendations for addressing police violence on the ground in the district in which it takes place.

- At the moment, the available resources available are divided into the following sections: what to do in situations of random police arrest; what to do in case of police repression during demonstrations; useful resources to film an act of violence; resources for migrants being stopped or held by the police;

resources for women or members of the LGBTI+ community who find themselves in situations of gender based violence and have immediately undergone violence from the police; resources for vendors selling goods in public spaces.

- It's important to highlight the importance of measuring power (im) balances of power and the importance of not exposing oneself to police with a conflictual attitude. Caution and self-protection should be prioritised.
- This section is constantly updated to perfect existing resources or add new ones.



### III. c. 4. Investigations

The investigative section of the platform aims to present the research carried out in relation to the topic in an original way. This section aims to remain relevant in the "long term" and articulate all the different situations across time. The section is divided into three parts:

- Reports: a real and proper site of journalistic investigation. For example, a classification of the police based on their history which began from the institution's origins.
- Beyond the dossier: detailed investigations which are gradually updated as new developments are made: judicial cases, sentences, new stories, ecc.
- Summaries: the activity of the map is recorded every two months. These summaries indicate the tool's potential.



### III. c. 5. Gender-based violence

A section of the map is dedicated to reporting violent episodes within the police force and among civilians. One of the most common forms of police violence is that of denying civilians the right to make a denunciation at the police station. Gender-based violence indirectly or directly involving the police can be reported using an ad-hoc formula.

### IV. a. Designing the platform

For the design of the platform, we advise that you have:

- A technical team who are committed to building the website.

We suggest (if you have the available resources) that this team is composed of:

-A web designer specialised in interaction and navigation

-A full stack web developer

-A project coordinator who's experienced in working with technology

- A research project that acts as a core point of reference. To begin building the map of power, we advise the project coordinators and makers to search for other similar projects :

for the construction of the **Mapa de la Policía**, the following platforms were used as references: **Hate Map** from the Southern **Poverty Law Center and Grita** from the Temblores ONG.

- Take geolocalisation into account: geolocalisation is a key point for planning and project development. It's important to define the space in which the website is developed and visualise and perceive division of the different geographical circumscriptions which the map will cover.

- Colour choices: we advise that you examine other examples and pay attention to the public you want to target. The tools that can be

used in this phase are Pinterest bacheca or a simple Google search for palette and contrast options.

- The audience examination committed to identifying those who use the tools, goals and objectives. Here it's important to distinguish whether the tool is destined for the general public or a specific sector of the public. The tool is always public if it's destined for journalists, researchers and/or social and political groups.

#### **IV. b. database**

The information visualised on the "Mapa de la policía" has all been recorded in an internal database. The information is archived and analysed in this database in order to create profiles that can be published in the most complete way possible that respects the laws and publishable public data rules.

The database is constantly fed with information: inside the database you can archive images, general documents, public documents, reports, press releases, ecc.

The information extracted from open public data is fundamental and requires constant updating to be published and re-published according to the different cases.

Many of the sources feeding the databases are documents published by the police, like public databases, agendas and data published on the police websites, the media, via community informers and the Nosis reports. This data is verified by the profile of a particular security forces agent.

- ▶ For the construction of the tool, before its launch a year of work was carried out to organise the acquired information before publishing it.
- ▶ It's important to remember that, for security reasons, not all data can be published.
- ▶ Regular checks verifying the security status of the database are made, and particular attention is paid so as not to leak data, especially the data of the people reporting cases of violence through the platform.
- ▶ For this reason the work foresees the use of personalised software that is flexible, interactive, open and participatory.

# US AND THEM



crisis

