



Crime statistics in Mexico

I. Objectives

- To compare monthly crime statistics in Mexico, for the period 2019-2020.
- To identify each month examples of under-estimations or manipulations of crime statistics.

II. Data

The present analysis considers the monthly crime statistics released by the Executive Secretariat of the National Public Security System (SESNSP), which, in turn, is based on local prosecutors' offices information. Six crimes are analyzed:

- Homicide
- Femicide
- Kidnapping
- Extortion
- Theft
- Vehicle theft
- Domestic violence

III. Context

To address Mexico's security crisis, it is fundamental to generate statistics and interpretations, which can be trustworthy. However, official crime statistics seriously under-estimate some crimes, because there is a very low rate of reports by citizens, because federal and local authorities do not promote citizens' complaints or reports, because they do not inspire citizens' confidence, and/or because they manipulate the information. The percentage of crimes, which is not reported, is extremely high, with an average, in serious crimes, above 90%. This is why it is essential to promote reports and to generate true statistics.

IV. Main findings

a) Comparison between January-May 2019 and January-May 2020

- Homicide and domestic violence reports increased 3% and 4%, respectively. During the period January-May, 2020, there were more reports of homicides and domestic violence than in any other year with registries.
- Reports of femicide, kidnapping, extortion, theft and vehicle theft, decreased 5%, 40%, 5%, 22% and 18%, respectively. Again, it must be remembered that there is a very high percentage of crimes which are not reported, rendering these statistics as a very poor indicator of the real situation of insecurity in Mexico.



Crime	2019 Rate	2020 Rate*	Total of reports between January and May 2019	Total of reports between January and May 2020	Change between total of reports during January-May 2019, and total of reports during January-May 2020	Percentage change between total of reports during January-May 2019, and total of reports during January-May 2020
Homicide	28.3	30.9	14,576	15,016	440	3%
Femicide	0.8	0.8	407	385	-22	-5%
Kidnapping	1.3	1.0	746	445	-301	-40%
Extortion	7.0	6.9	3,632	3,459	-173	-5%
Theft	225.6	223.3	123,795	97,148	-26,647	-22%
Vehicle theft	55.0	55.4	29,960	24,688	-5,272	-18%
Domestic violence	162.1	168.7	81,798	85,445	3,647	4%

*The 2020 rates are predictions based on a statistical model. **Source:** *Causa en Común*, based on SESNSP crime statistics

b) Some extreme cases of crime under-estimation or manipulation

- Tlaxcala only has two reports of femicide between January and May, 2019, and does not have any report of femicide between January and May, 2020. This state only reports seven cases of domestic violence between January and May 2019, as well as between January and May 2020.
- Michoacán only has one report of extortion between January and May, 2019, and only has five reports of extortion between January and May, 2020.
- Colima does not have any vehicle theft report from January to May, 2019, nor from January to May, 2020.

V. Causa en Común proposes:

- To promote complaints by citizens, creating permanent campaigns as an incentive to report crimes; increasing the mechanisms and channels to do so; and providing special support to vulnerable people, like women that suffer domestic violence.
- Training courses can be provided in all states, to improve the collection of crime related data. In order to improve crime statistics, incentives and consequences must be established in the law. Institutional mechanisms must also be established to supervise, detect and sanction those who provide incomplete or false information; a possibility is to contemplate legal, administrative and budgetary sanctions to individuals, corporations, public prosecutors' offices and federal institutions, which hide or manipulate information.