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, by its acronym in Spanish) which, in turn, are based on local prosecutors' offices information. Seven crimes are analyzed:

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

III. Context

To address Mexico's security crisis, it is fundamental to generate statistics, 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 that 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 statistics, which actually reflect Mexico's reality.

IV. Main findings

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

- Domestic violence reports increased 3%; femicide reports, 2%; and homicide reports, 1%. During the period January-October, 2020, there were more reports of domestic violence, femicide and homicides than in any other year with registries.
- Reports of kidnapping, extortion, theft with violence, and vehicle theft with violence, decreased 37%, 9%, 21%, and 18%, respectively. Again, it must be remembered that there is a very high percentage of crimes that are not reported, rendering these statistics as a very poor indicator of the real situation of insecurity in Mexico. Furthermore, the COVID-19 crisis must have had an important downward effect.

Crime	2019 Rate	2020 Predicted Rate*	Total of reports between January and October 2019	Total of reports between January and October 2020	Change between total of reports during January-October 2019, and total of reports during January- October 2020	Percentage change between reports during January-October 2019, and reports during January-October 2020
Homicide	28.3	29.0	29,644	29,983	339	1%
Femicide	0.8	0.8	789	801	12	2%
Kidnapping	1.3	0.9	1,404	890	-514	-37%
Extortion	7.1	6.7	7,742	7,055	-687	-9%
Theft with violence	228.7	188.5	243,437	191,104	-52,333	-21%
Vehicle theft with violence	55.6	47.5	58,885	48,104	-10,781	-18%
Domestic violence	166.9	175.6	178,400	184,462	6,062	3%

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

b) *Extreme cases of crime under-estimation or manipulation*

- Aguascalientes and Baja California Sur reported only two femicides during the first ten months of 2020, while Campeche reported three femicides during the same period. Furthermore, Aguascalientes had a reduction of 50% in the number of femicides registered between the first ten months of 2019 and the same period of 2020.
- Tlaxcala has not reported any cases of domestic violence in January, March, April, June and July 2020, and has only registered 11 cases so far this year. It is important to note that this state has a very serious problem of human trafficking, especially of women for prostitution.
- Colima does not have any vehicle theft reports, from January to October 2019; nor from January to October 2020. Also, Colima reports 74% less registries for theft with violence from January to October of this year, than those reported during the same period of last year. Strange, since this state has the highest homicide rate of the country.
- Guanajuato, Chihuahua, and Michoacán reported a very small number of extortions during January to October 2020. Guanajuato has 14 registries; Chihuahua, reported 19; and Michoacán, 20. It must be remembered that those states are both among the most violent.

V. *Causa en Común proposes:*

- To reverse the current trend towards increased militarisation, and to implement a long-term development plan for local police corporations and public attorneys' offices.
- To promote reports by citizens, creating permanent campaigns for that purpose; to multiply the mechanisms and channels for making reports; and to provide special support to vulnerable people, such as women and children victims of domestic violence.
- Training courses can be taught in all states to improve the collection of crime statistics. Legal, administrative, and budgetary sanctions should also be contemplated for those individuals, corporations, public prosecutors' offices and federal institutions, which hide or manipulate information.