

GUATEMALA

Analysis of the State of Homicidal Violence

January-December 2022



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Highlights

At the end of 2022, the National Civil Police records show 3,004 victims of homicide, 175 more than in the previous year, but 574 fewer victims than in 2019, the year prior to the social distancing measures due to the COVID 19 pandemic.

The homicide rate in 2022 closed at 17.3 homicides per 100,000 population, approaching the rate for Central America and the Dominican Republic (18.0).

The 39 control plans deployed by the National Civil Police throughout the year, particularly during the last quarter (Plan 30¹), might have had the effect of curbing the rising trend homicides registered between January and September, 2022.

In 2022, every day seven men and one woman died violently, where firearms were the primary means of committing homicide, registering a +7.1% rise in their use as compared 2021.

Out of every ten homicides, four of the victims were young males and females. The greatest increase in age group, both in males as well as females, was among adults between 40 and 59 years of age; these were possibly linked to other type of offenses, such as extortion.

In 2022, homicides trended upward relative to 2021 and 2019 in the municipalities in the western and southwestern departments of San Marcos and Huehuetenango, near the Mexican border.

The municipalities of Guatemala, Villa Nueva and Mixco accounted for 31.8% of all homicides in the country in 2022.

In 2023, citizen security represents an important challenge in containing the rising trend in homicides during an election year.

In 2022,

3,004

people died from homicide



2,567

+6.3%

+151



437

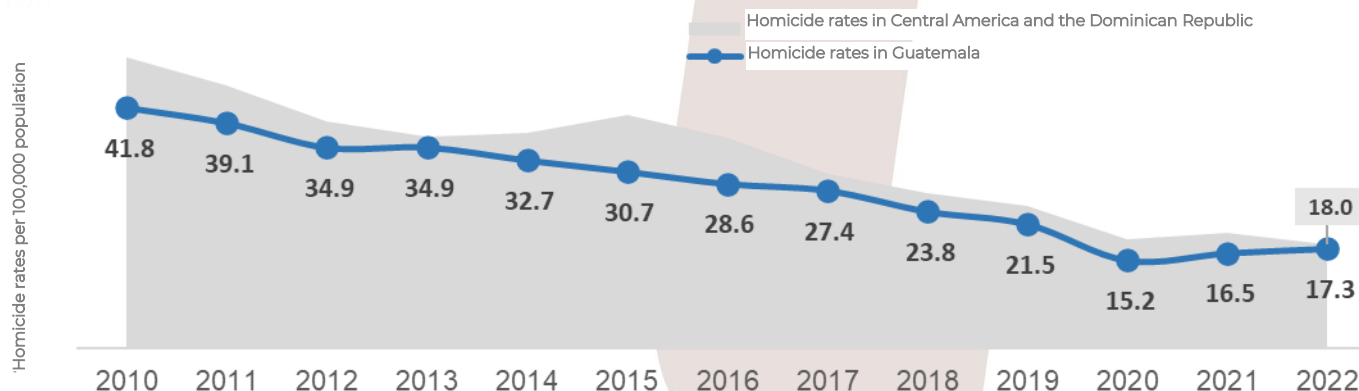
+5.8%

+24

More victims than in 2021

Homicides: 2022

- Guatemala had a lower homicide rate than the average in Central America and the Dominican Republic.



¹ The 30-2022 National Civil Police Plan consisted of setting up checkpoints and conducting searches in strategic places, patrolling, perimeter inspections, and others.

The homicide rate in 2022 close at 17.3 homicides per 100% thousand population, that is 0.7 points below the rate for Central America and the Dominican Republic (18.0)². Over the last twelve years, Guatemala has been below the Central American rate, yet, 2022 registered the smallest difference between the two rates in recent years, due to the significant drop in the homicide rate in some Central American countries, whereas an increase was reported in Guatemala as compared to 2021.

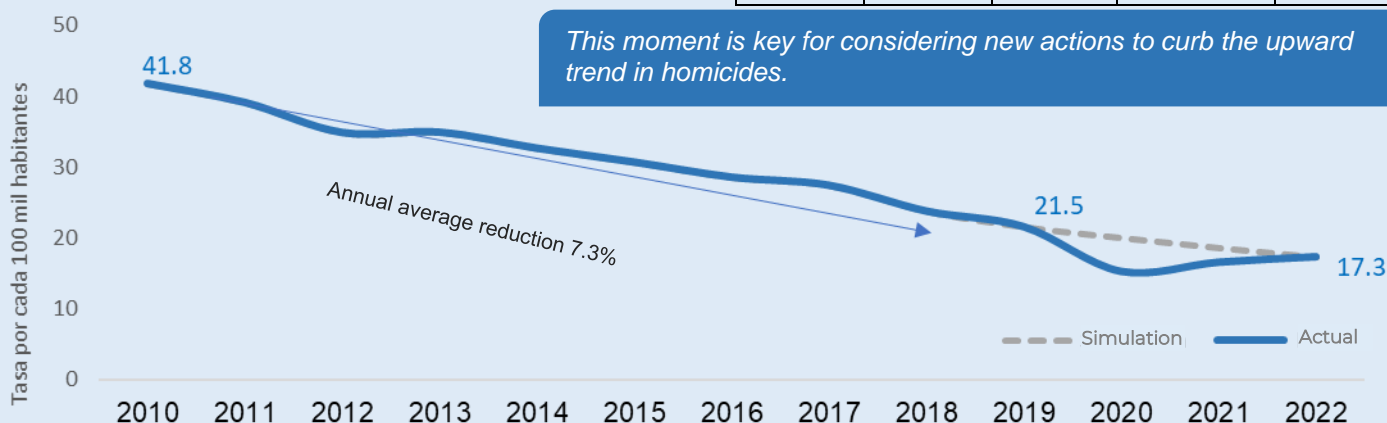
The homicide rate resumed normal trend in the absence of the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic.

17.3

at end of **2022**

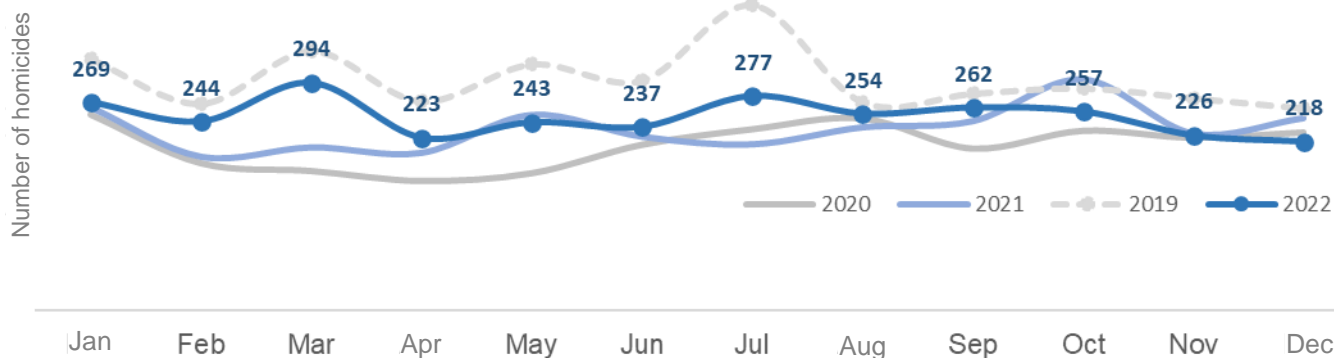
Homicides per 100,000 inhabitants

Year	Actual	Variance	Simulation ³	Variance
2019	21.5		21.5	
2020	15.2	-29.3%	20.0	-7.3%
2021	16.5	8.5%	18.5	-7.3%
2022	17.3	4.7%	17.2	-7.3%



The downward trend in homicides registered in the period from 2010 to 2020 ended and starting in 2021, it registered a slight rising trend. It is important to note that the drop registered in 2020 was three times greater than the steepest descent registered since 2010 (11.9% in 2018). By simulating 2020, 2021 and 2022, with the average reduction of the last nine years, the simulated rate for 2022 is similar to the behavior observed during this year; therefore, the estimated decrease curve in the estimates is again used.

Number of homicides per month



²InfoSegura calculations based on preliminary data provided by institutions in each country in the network: <https://infosegura.org/2023/01/12/tres-datos-positivos-para-comenzar-el-ano>

³ Calculated with an annual average reduction of 7.3% (period 2010-2019) in the homicide rate.

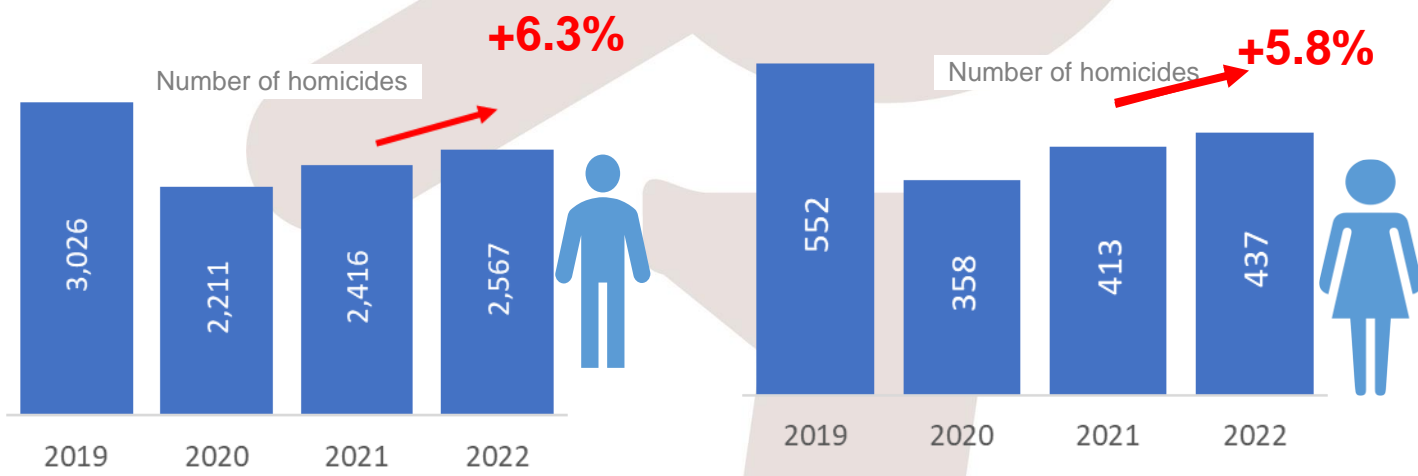
Between January and September, 2022, there was a moderate rise in the homicide trend, primarily in March and July, reaching levels similar to the year prior to the pandemic (2019). Nevertheless, from October to December, there were fewer homicides than 2021, with December registering the lowest number of homicides in the last 12 years. The reduction in homicides in the last quarter of the year, offset to some extent the increase registered during the first half of the year.⁴

Plan 30-2022 PNC

The decline in homicide during the last quarter might be attributed to actions implemented in the National Civil Police 30-2022 Plan. The Plan consisted of setting up checkpoints and conducting searches in strategic places, patrolling, perimeter inspections, and others, and was supported by the Army of Guatemala. This was done at the national level, with priority in the departments of Guatemala and Escuintla.

During 2022, 2,566 males met a violent death, 151 more victims compared to 2021. The municipalities of Guatemala, Amatitlan and San Jose-Escuintla reported the largest increases in homicides of males.

In 2022, there was at least one violent female death per day, 24 more female victims compared to the previous year. This increase was concentrated in the department of Guatemala, where 21 more homicides of women were recorded.

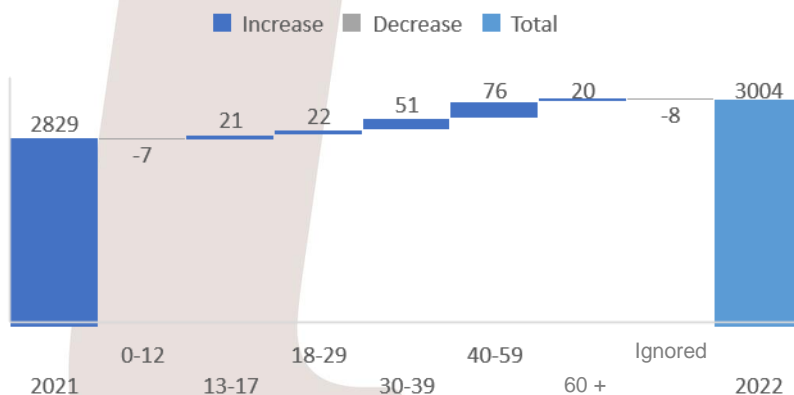


Number of homicides and absolute difference, by age group

8/10

Homicides are committed with a firearm

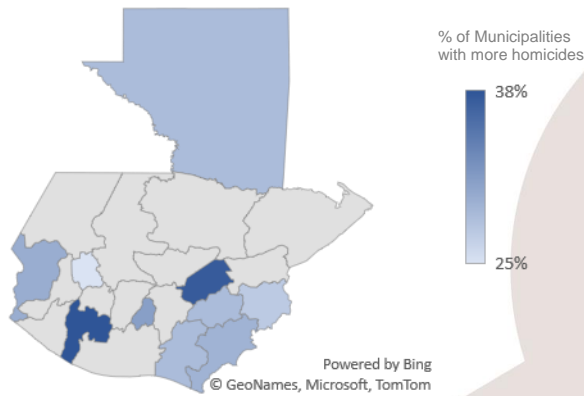
The use of firearms in homicides increased by 7.1%, as compared to 2021. However, in terms of female homicides, the use of this means of aggression was higher, with a 14.0% increase, while in males it was 6.1%.



Out of every ten homicides overall, four victims were young people. The greatest rise homicides by age, in both males and females, was among 40- to 59-year-olds, possibly due to causes related to extortion.

⁴ Plan 30-2022 in network: <https://mingob.gob.gt/plan-30-2022-enfocado-en-reducir-criminalidad-a-nivel-nacional/>

Percentage of municipalities in the department with more homicides than 2019 and 2021



In ten out of 22 departments in Guatemala, over 25% of municipalities registered a greater number of homicides compared to 2021 and 2019.

The departments bordering El Salvador stand out, while departments such as San Marcos and Totonicapán, with low homicide rates in recent years, registered municipalities reporting upward trends in homicides since 2019.

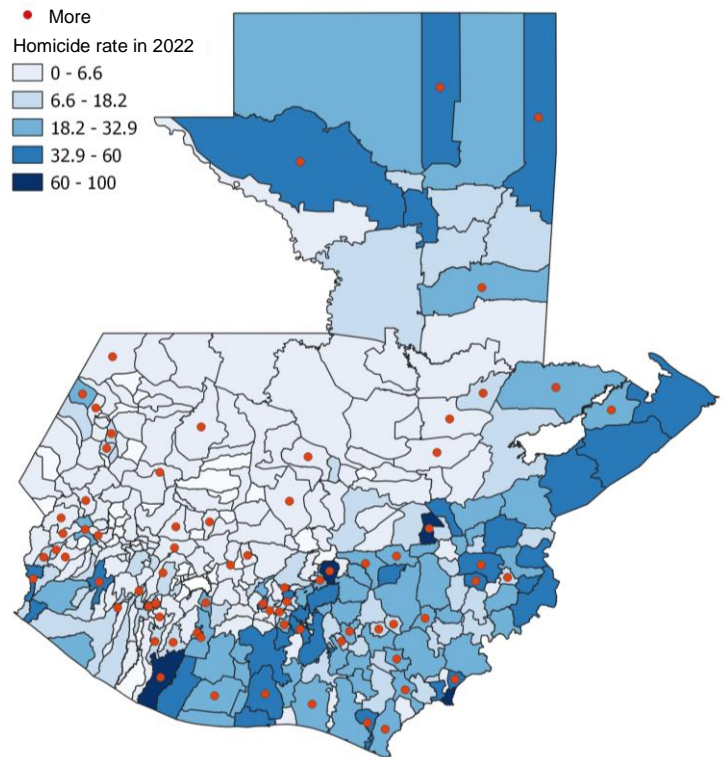
Some 45.6% of the municipalities (155/340) had lower homicide rates in 2022 than the pre-pandemic levels (2019); however, a significant percentage (28.2%) were higher.

In four municipalities around the country, namely Tiquisate, San Pedro Ayampuc, San Cristobal Aguascalán and Jeréz⁵, homicide rates were **4 times greater** than the country rate of 17.3 homicides per 100,000 population).

Compared to 2019 and 2021, more municipalities near the border with Mexico in the departments of San Marcos and Huehuetenango, as well as municipalities in the southwest showed an increase in the number of homicides.

The municipalities of Guatemala, Villa Nueva and Mixco accounted for 31.8% of all homicides in the country in 2022.

More homicides than 2021 & 2019



Source: 2010-2021 INE with data provided by National Civil Police. 2022. Guatemala from January 15, 2022.

This document has been made possible thanks to the support of the Government of the United States of America, through the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) and technical assistance of the United Nations Development Program's Regional Bureau for Latin America and the Caribbean (UNDP-RBLAC). The views and opinions expressed in this document are the sole responsibility of the authors and do not necessarily reflect the opinions or views of the agencies and organizations that contributed to the production of this publication, or United Nations member states.

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⁵ The municipalities of San Cristobal Aguascalán in Progreso, and Jeréz in Jutiapa register a high intensity of homicides (high rate) in relation to their population. Both municipalities registered populations of less than 8 thousand people in 2022, according to 2018 CENSUS Projections.