

Analysis of the State of Citizen Security in 2022

COSTA RICA

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Analysis of the State of Citizen Security in Costa Rica

- Crimes against life
 - Intentional homicide
 - Femicide

- Crimes against physical integrity
 - Domestic violence
 - Violence against women

- Crimes against property
 - Armed robbery
 - Home burglary
 - Home invasion
 - Commercial burglary
 - Vehicle robbery
 - Vehicle swipe

- Final remarks

Crimes against life

Intentional homicide

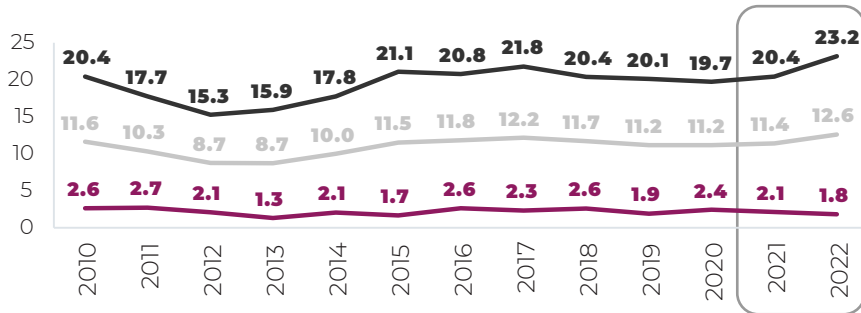
The total rate is **12.6 intentional homicides per 100,000 population**.

23.2 intentional homicides
per 100,000 men

1.8 intentional homicides
per 100,000 women

The intentional homicide rate rose slightly in the last two years

— Total — Men — Women

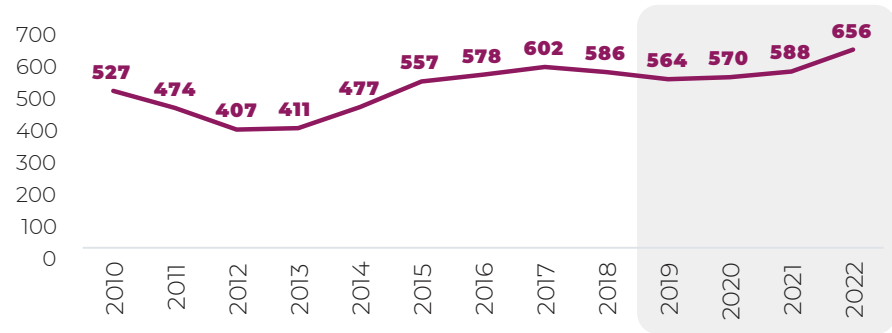


Source: Authors' own calculations based on National Statistics and Census Institute (INEC) and Judicial Investigation Department, 2010-2022.

There are **656 victims of intentional homicide on record, 68 more victims compared to the same period in 2021**.

47 victims in 2019, 48 victims in 2020, 49 victims in 2021 and 55 victims in 2022, with eight more victims added per month from 2019 to 2022.

In 2022, a total of 656 intentional homicides were registered



EVERY LIFE COUNTS
8
more victims per month

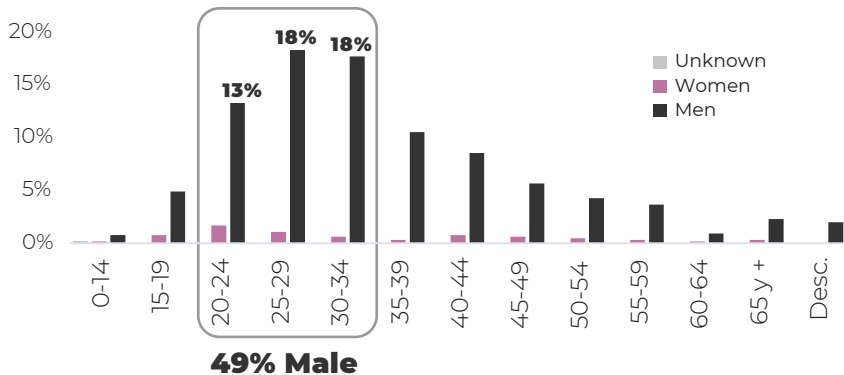
Source: Judicial Investigation Department, 2010-2022.

Who were the victims in 2022?

9 in 10

By sex, we see that **92.7% (608 victims) were male, 7.2% (47 victims) female**, and 0.2% corresponds to a single victim of unknown sex.

The primary victims of continue to be young people, with 53% (49% male and 3% female) between 20 and 34 years of age at the time of death.



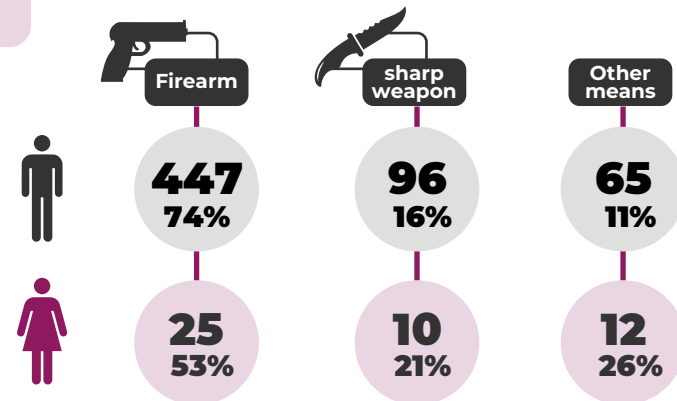
Source: Judicial Investigation Department, 2022.

How did the incidents take place?

55
intentional homicides on average per month in 2022

Some 72% (472 victims) of these incidents were committed using a firearm, 16% (106 victims) using a sharp weapon, and 12% (78 victims) by other means.

Number and percentage of victims by gender



Source: Judicial Investigation Department, 2022.

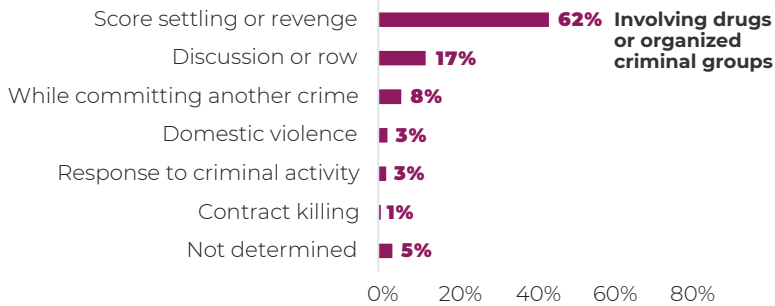
Organized crime present

63% = 407 of intentional homicides were linked to organized crime

(407 victims of score settling or revenge and 6 victims professional motive). The remaining 37% had to do with other motives.

Settling scores/revenge: These cases may involve circumstances that have to do with drugs or to organized criminal groups.

Professional: These are cases where the perpetrator charges a fee for taking the life of the victim, known as contract killing.



Source: Judicial Investigation Department, 2022.

Femicide

Of all violent deaths, how many are femicides?

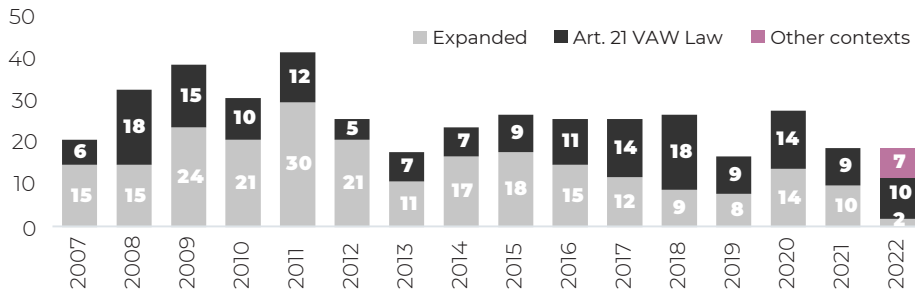
In 2022, a total of 48 violent deaths of women were registered:

10 were classified femicide as per Art. 21 of the Law Penalizing Violence against Women

7 were classified femicide in other contexts as per Art. 21bis of the Law Penalizing Violence against Women

2 as expanded femicide

10 as homicide, no femicides



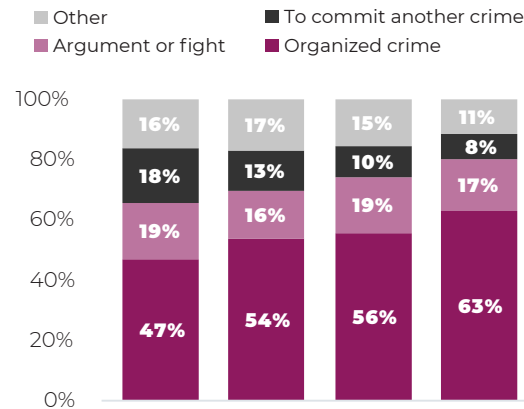
Note: Updated as of February 13, 2023 with data provided by the Deputy Prosecutor for Gender Affairs, the Justice System Statistics Subprocess and the Inter-institutional Subcommittee on Femicide Prevention. Source: Observatory on Gender-Based Violence against Women and Access to Justice, Judicial Branch 2007-2022).

Rise in organized crime as motive

In 2019, 47% of all intentional homicides involved organized crime.

In 2022, the percentage was 63%, or 148 more victims from 2019 to 2022.

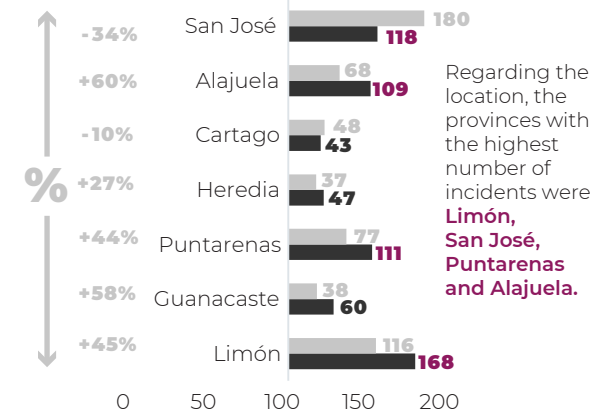
16%+ From 2019 through 2022



Source: Judicial Investigation Department, 2022.

Where did the incidents take place?

■ 2019 ■ 2022



Regarding the location, the provinces with the highest number of incidents were **Limón, San José, Puntarenas and Alajuela.**

As for the cantons with the highest occurrence of intentional homicide in 2022, at the top of the list (cantons listed from lowest to highest occurrence): Limón (62 victims), San José (50 victims), Alajuela (47 victims), Pococí (44 victims), Puntarenas (44 victims) and Matina (25 victims).

Source: Judicial Investigation Department, 2019, 2022.

Art. 21 of the Law Penalizing Violence against Women: As of June 9, 2021, it only sanctioned deaths of women at the hands of husband or current partner, and according to jurisprudential interpretation, exceptions were made to include certain cases at the hands of a former partner. As of June 10, 2021, the aforementioned article includes the murder of women in the following scenarios: Dating, cohabitation, non-cohabitation, casual or other similar relationships, even if there is a divorce, separation or breakup, provided that the conduct does not constitute a more serious crime or a crime for which a greater penalty is imposed.

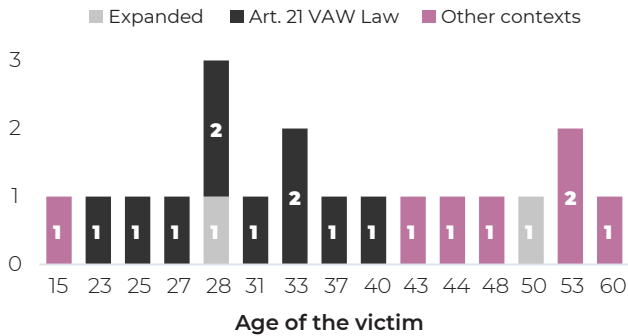
Expanded femicide: Statistical framework for making deaths of women visible, including those for gender reasons, and those not contemplated in Article 21 of the violence against Women law, and for many years, its only normative support was Article 2 of the Inter-American Convention on the Prevention, Punishment and Eradication of Violence against Women, better known as the "Convention of Belém do Pará" (1994).

Femicide in other contexts as per Art. 21bis of the Law Penalizing Violence against Women: Established in Art. 21bis of the Law Penalizing Violence against Women, it will be applied in cases of death that took place after August 23, 2021. It covers most scenarios considered historically and statistically as expanded femicide until that time, and new scenarios were included. It establishes penalties of up to 35 years in prison for cases where the perpetrator took advantage of a relationship or bond of trust, friendship, kinship, authority or a relationship of power with the female victim, or when the act occurred within a family relationship of consanguinity or affinity up to the third degree, whether or not they lived under the same roof. These expanded femicide scenarios had been left out in the June 10, 2021 reform.

Who were the victims in 2022?

The average age was 37. Victims were between the ages of 15 and 60, **showing that violence against women takes place all along the life cycle and affects women of all ages.**

As for victim nationality, approximately nine out of every ten were Costa Ricans and one in ten were Nicaraguan.

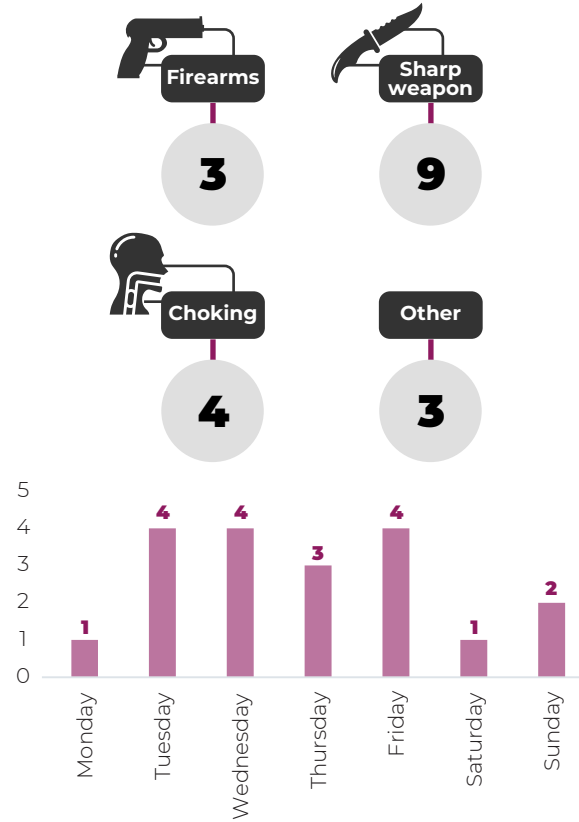


15
out of 19
victims were
mothers

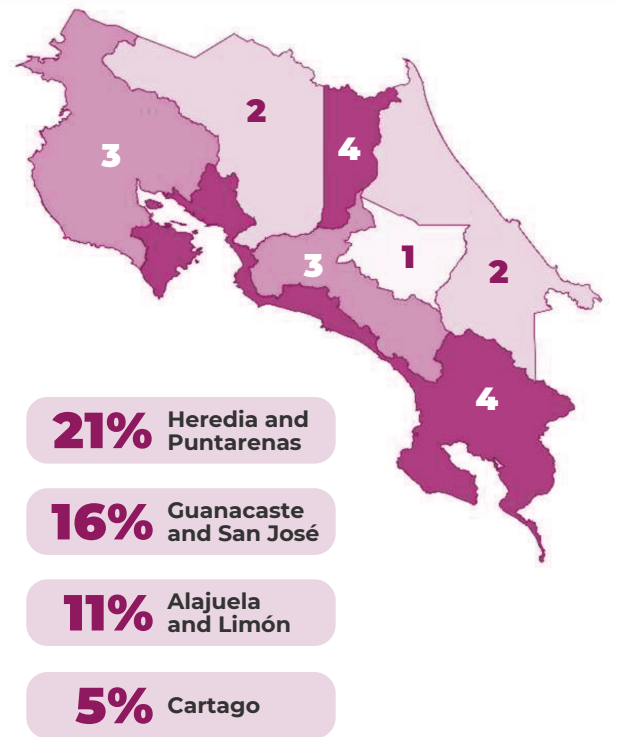
41
people
were left
motherless

24
people were
minors

How did the incidents take place?



Where did the incidents take place?

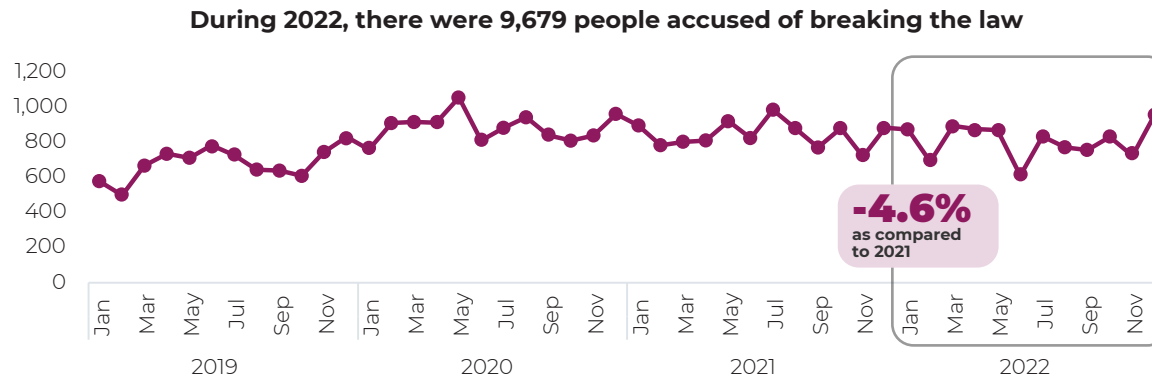


Note: Updated as of February 13, 2023 with data provided by the Deputy Prosecutor for Gender Affairs, the Justice System Statistics Subprocess and the Inter-institutional Subcommittee on Femicide Prevention. Source: Observatory on Gender-Based Violence against Women and Access to Justice, Judicial Branch 2007-2022).

Crimes against physical integrity

Law against Domestic Violence

Domestic Violence is any situation involving physical, psychological, sexual or property abuse in which the individual who carries out the violent act has a relationship of consanguinity, affinity or adoption with the assaulted person.



Fuente: Ministerio de Seguridad Pública, 2019- 2022.

The average monthly number of defendants has decreased in the last two years, however, it did not return to pre-pandemic figures.

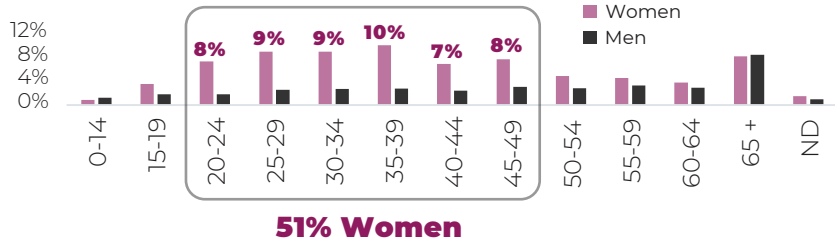
680 offenses on average in 2019, 886 offenses on average in 2020, 845 offenses on average in 2021 and 807 offenses on average in 2022.

Comparing figures from 2019 through 2022, there were 126 more offenses per month.

Who were the victims in 2022?

8 in 10 

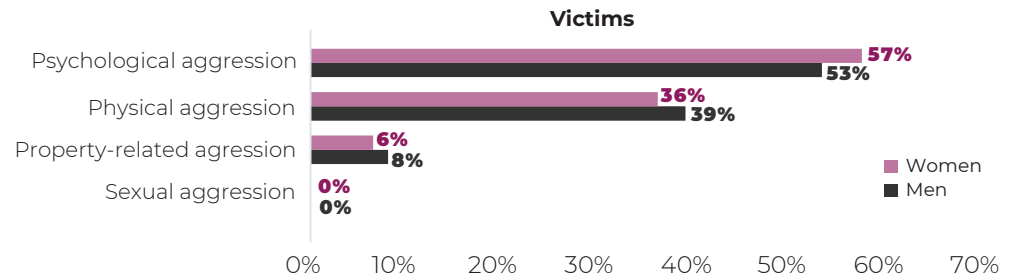
During 2022, **9,899** persons were aggrieved



Source: Ministry of Public Security 2022.

How did the incidents take place?

807 offenses on average per month during 2022

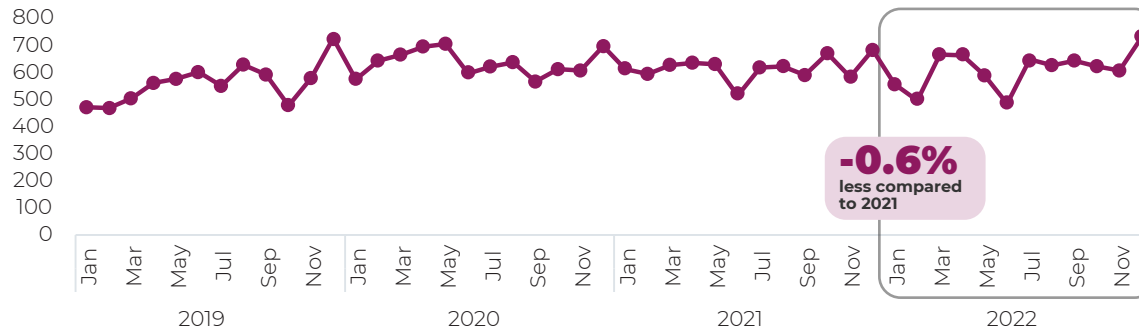


Source: Ministry of Public Security 2022.

Law Criminalizing Violence against Women

Its primary objective is protecting the victim's rights and sanctioning all of its expressions, be they physical, psychological, sexual or patrimonial, against adult women.

During 2022, **7,357** people were accused of breaking the law



Source: Ministry of Public Security 2019 - 2022.

The average monthly number of offenses has dropped off over the last two years, however, it did not return to pre-pandemic figures.

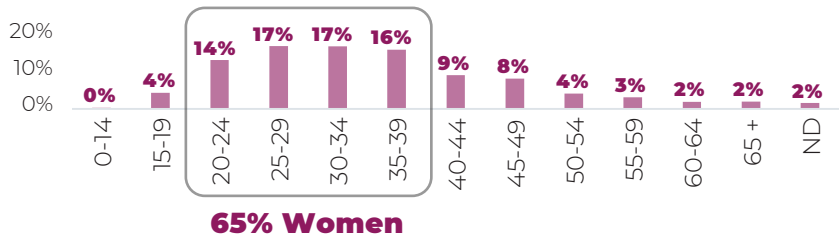
563 offenses on average in 2019, 637 offenses on average in 2020, 617 offenses on average in 2021 and 613 offenses on average in 2022.

Comparing figures from 2019 through 2022, there were 50 more offenses per month.

Who were the victims in 2022?

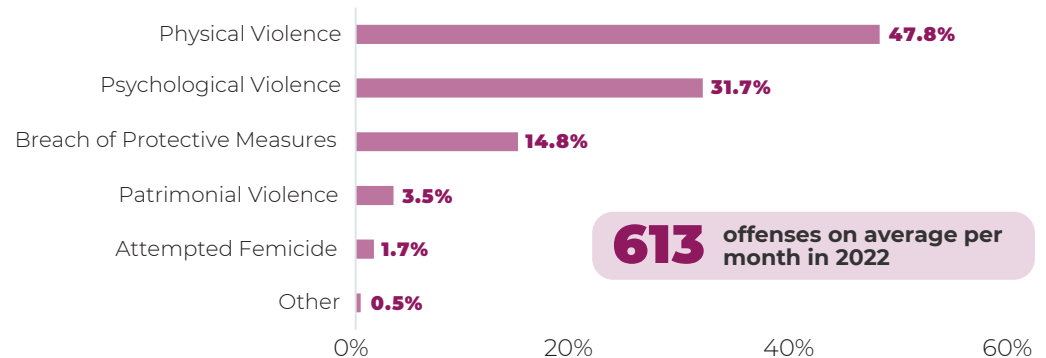
10 in 10 

In 2022, there were **7,384** plaintiffs.



Source: Ministry of Public Security 2022.

How did the incidents take place?



Source: Ministry of Public Security 2022.

Crimes against property

In 2022, there were:

10,645

Armed robberies

504

Home burglary

6,582

Home invasion

4,368

Commercial burglary

4,387

Vehicle theft

3,576

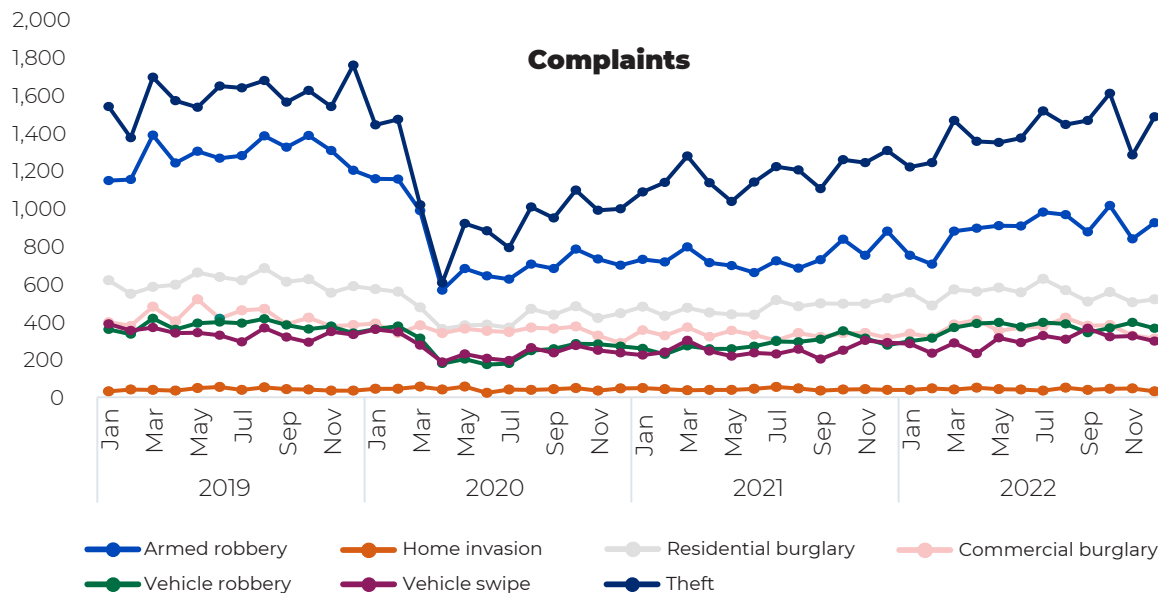
Vehicle swipe

16,804

Theft

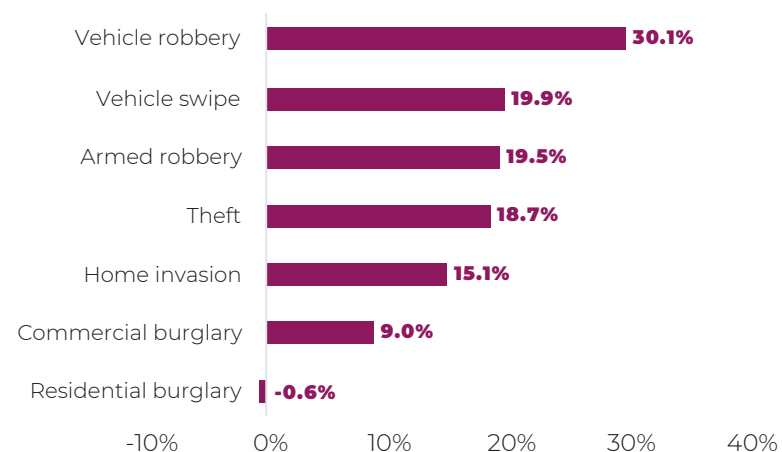
Records show a total of 46,866 complaints (18% more as compared to 2021) as per Judicial Investigation Department (OIJ) data.

Source: Judicial Investigation Department, 2022.



Source: Judicial Investigation Department, 2019-2022 Institutional Report.

Interannual Variation 2021-2022



Source: Judicial Investigation Department, 2022.

Final Remarks

2022 marks a historic record in intentional homicides in Costa Rica, a figure (656) that represents the largest number of victims since this crime was first recorded in the country.

Six in 10 victims of intentional homicide perished in 2022 due to a motive associated with organized crime (score settling, revenge or contract killing).

Of the total for violent deaths of women in 2021, 19 were femicides.

Violations of the laws on Domestic Violence (-4.6%) and Penalizing Violence against Women \square (-0.6%) dropped slightly in 2022 as compared to 2021.

Excluding home burglary, all other property crimes under consideration report an increase in the number of complaints compared to the same period in 2021.

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