

GUATEMALA

Analysis of the state of homicidal violence

January-September 2023

Overview

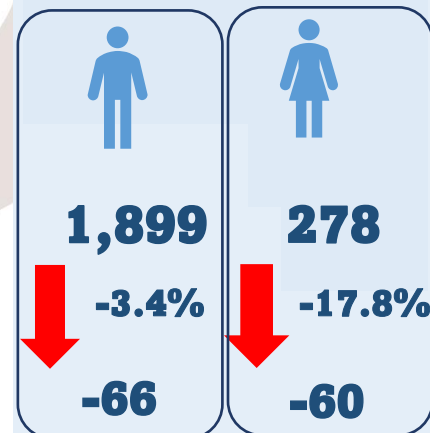
Between January and September 2023, the trend in homicides according to Nacional Civil Police records was as follows:

- 2,177 people were victims of homicide, a 5.5 per cent decline in comparison with same period in 2022. This translates to 126 fewer victims of homicide.
- Homicides of women dropped noticeably to 17.8 per cent, while homicides of men exhibited a 3.4 per cent decline.
- There was a 7.2 per cent reduction in homicides in very-urban and urban areas, which accounted for 71.5 per cent.
- In the very rural areas, recorded homicides rose 6.7 per cent compared to Jan-Sep 2022. According to observations in other election years, this trend coincides with what happened in 2011 and 2015¹, when there were instances of political violence and social conflict, especially in rural areas.
- The department of Guatemala exhibited the greatest decline in homicides as compared to the same period in 2022, accounting for 64.8 per cent of the reduction in the whole country. This may be the result of stepping up police operations.
- 2023 is projected to close with a rate of 16.7 homicides per 100,000 population. However, a rise in social conflict was registered in October with some violent incidents that could result in a year-end rate of 17.9 homicides per 100,000 population.

As of September 2023:

2,177

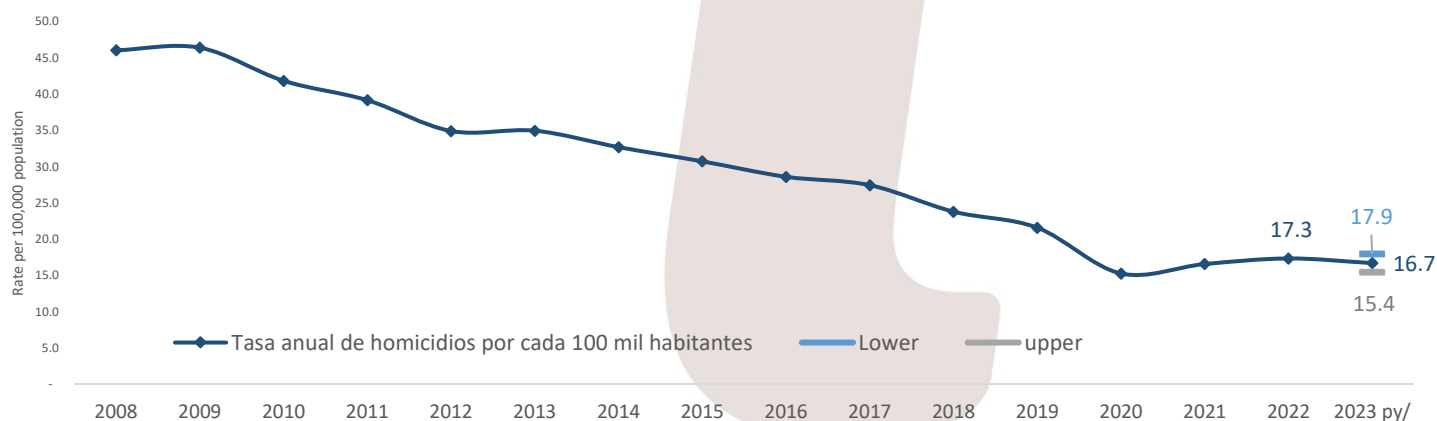
lives lost to homicide



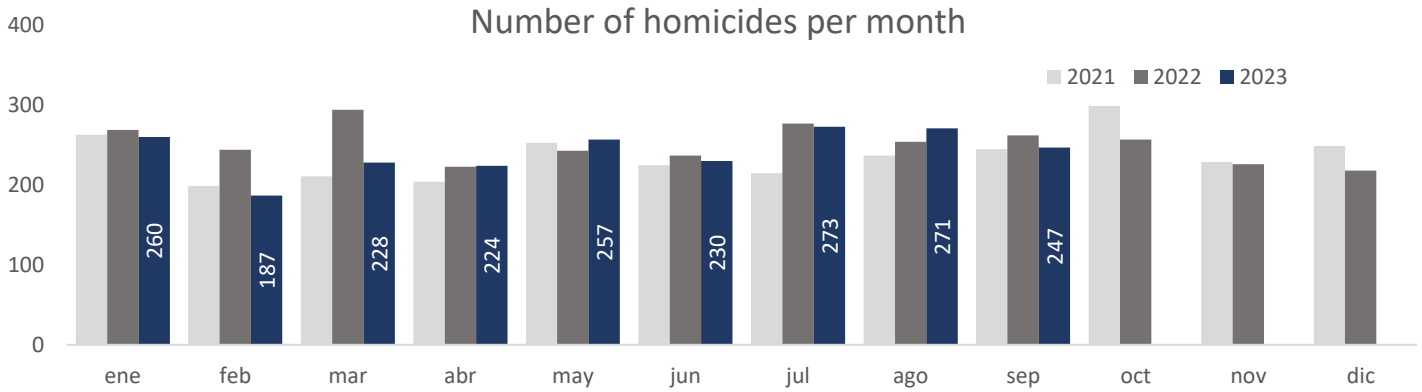
Fewer victims compared to January-September 2022

Homicides

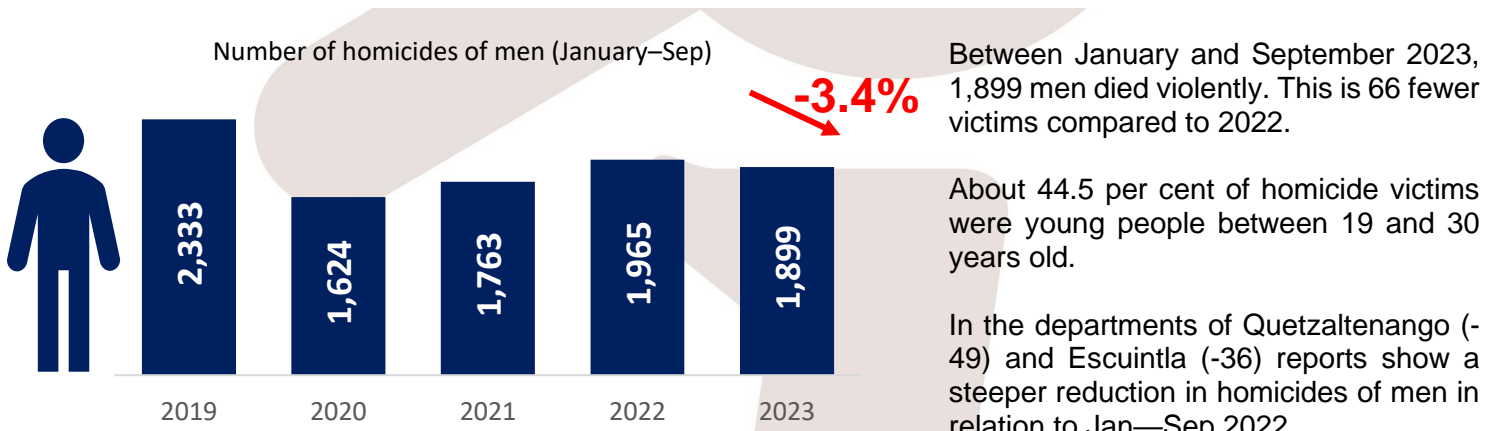
The projected² homicide rate in Guatemala at the end of 2023 is 16.7 homicides per 100,000 population, which represents a 0.6-point decline compared to the rate reported in 2022 (17.3). It is important to note that this projection is lower than prior to the pandemic in 2019 at 21.5 homicides per 100,000 population. However, it is critical to keep eyes on the homicide trend in the last quarter, which could be on the rise, as it is a high rate, approximately 17.9. This is higher than the annual rate in 2022.



¹ DatAction Analysis of Citizen Security in 2022: Guatemala on the internet: <https://infosegura.org/dataaccion/analisis-de-la-seguridad-ciudadana-costa-rica-guatemala>
² Projection based on historical series starting January 2019 with the Exponential Smoothing (ETS) Algorithm.



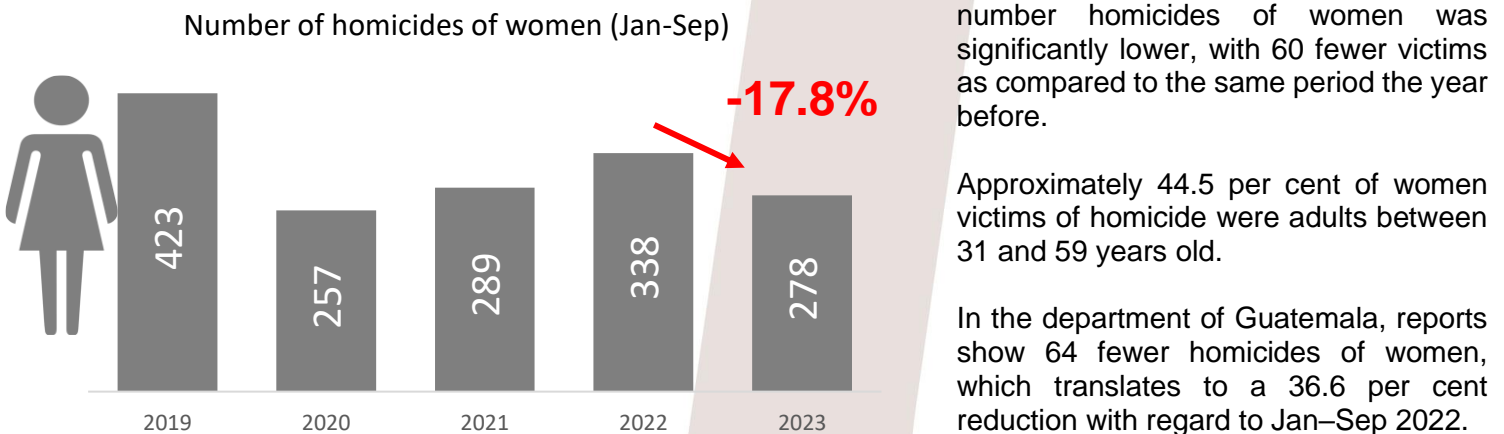
Throughout 2023, April, May and August were higher than the corresponding months in 2022. Particularly notable are the months of February and March with over 50 fewer homicides as compared to the same months in 2022. Note that since the start of the year, the Ministry of Governance has implemented the 2023 General Elections Integrated Strategic Action Plan to guarantee order and public safety during the elections.



Between January and September 2023, 1,899 men died violently. This is 66 fewer victims compared to 2022.

About 44.5 per cent of homicide victims were young people between 19 and 30 years old.

In the departments of Quetzaltenango (-49) and Escuintla (-36) reports show a steeper reduction in homicides of men in relation to Jan–Sep 2022.



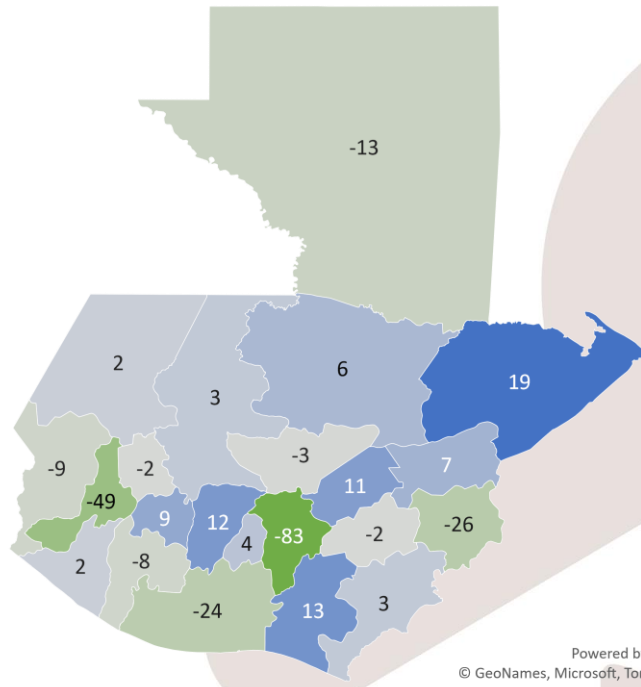
Up to September 2023, the cumulative number homicides of women was significantly lower, with 60 fewer victims as compared to the same period the year before.

Approximately 44.5 per cent of women victims of homicide were adults between 31 and 59 years old.

In the department of Guatemala, reports show 64 fewer homicides of women, which translates to a 36.6 per cent reduction with regard to Jan–Sep 2022.

Between January and September 2023 some **8** out of every **10** homicides were committed with firearms. In the case of women, there was a reduction in the use of all weapon types, whereas in men, there was a rise in cases of homicide with blunt object (+15.2%) and strangulation (+57.1%).

Dif. Número de homicidios ene-sept 2023/2022 -83 0 19



Territorial Approach

The departments of Guatemala Quetzaltenango Chiquimula and Escuintla reported the sharpest decline in the number of homicides, as compared to the period between January and September 2022. Together, these four departments reported 182 fewer homicides. Nevertheless, they accounted for 60 per cent of homicides reported in 2023.

On the other hand, the departments of Izabal, Santa Rosa, Chimaltenango and El Progreso reported the most significant gains in the number of homicides.

	Departments with the greatest increase in homicides Jan-Sep 2023–2022	Department with most reduction in homicide Jan-Sep 2023–2022
Homicides men	Izabal (+17) Santa Rosa (+16) Chimaltenango (+14)	Quetzaltenango (-46) Escuintla (-36) Guatemala (-19)
Homicides women	Escuintla (+12) Zacapa (+8)	Guatemala (-64) Chiquimula (-10)

A geographic disaggregation of the data shows a steeper decline in homicides in the very urban, urban and rural areas. Nevertheless, there is a rise in homicides in very rural areas (+6.7%).

It is important to take into account that Guatemala underwent an election process up until August 2023, this was a risk factor due to local-level political and social tensions that add to citizen insecurity. During election years, the ever-present possibility of political violence adds to social conflict, especially in rural areas.

The eighth report by the Election Observation Mission in Guatemala (EOM-GT)³ shows that from January 1 to August 31 125 acts of electoral violence were recorded, and 195 incidents of election-related conflict, most concentrated in June.

Number of homicides by geographical region

January to September	2023	2022	Diff Jan-Sep 2023/2022
Very urban (>75%)	1,341	1,441	-6.9%
Urban (50%>75%)	215	236	-8.9%
Rural (25%>50%)	299	326	-8.3%
Very rural (<25%)	320	300	6.7%

Records show serious incidents, from the destruction of material property to verbal attacks, threats, protests, road blockades, as well as attempted and consummated murder.

Source: 2010-2022 INE with data provided by National Civil Police. Jan-Sep 2023 National Civil Police with data downloaded on 18 October 2023 from the Internet: <https://pladeic.mingob.gob.gt/> output tables submitted 7 October by the Statistics Section at the National Civil Police.
 Note: There is a difference of one case in the municipal data due to the delay in the adjustments in the databases published in PLADEIC and the output tables provided by the Statistics Section of the National Civil Police.

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³ The eighth report of the Election Observation Mission in Guatemala (2023), a network of seven civil society organizations: <https://moe.gt/octavo-informe-mision-de-observacion-electoral-de-guatemala/>