

Violence in Mexico cost \$268 billion in 2018

- 2018 was the most violent year on record. The level of peace in Mexico deteriorated 4.9%, marking the third year of successive deteriorations.
- The national homicide rate increased by 14% in 2018; 69.4% of homicides were committed with a gun.
- The rate of organized crime related offenses increased 11.6%.
- Mexico's funding for justice is half of the OECD average – 97% of crimes go unpunished.
- Yucatán remains the most peaceful state in Mexico, followed by Campeche, Tlaxcala, Chiapas and Hidalgo.
- Baja California is now the least peaceful state in Mexico, followed by Guerrero, Colima, Quintana Roo and Chihuahua.
- Guanajuato recorded the largest deterioration in its overall score, following a 127 percent increase in its homicide rate in 2018.
- Baja California Sur had the largest improvement in score, after reducing its homicide rate by 76 percent from 105 to 26 per 100,000 people.

Mexico City, April 9th, 2019. According to the sixth edition of the 2019 Mexico Peace Index (MPI), published by the Institute for Economics and Peace (IEP), the level of peace in Mexico deteriorated by 4.9% in 2018, with 22 states falling in peace and only 10 improving.

Mexico continues to underinvest in its criminal justice system, resulting in 97% of crimes going unpunished. The country spends the least of 33 OECD countries on its police and justice system, as a percentage of GDP, and less than half of other Latin American countries. Mexican states had a median of 110 public security officials per 100,000 people in 2017, underscoring the lack of capacity. The most recent data shows that Mexico has only 3.5 judges and magistrates per 100,000 people, significantly below the global average of 16. This deficit in judges means that fewer cases go before the bench and contributes to the low conviction rates.

The economic impact of violence rose 10% in 2018, reaching 5.16 trillion pesos (US\$268billion), equivalent to 24% of the country's GDP. Costs associated with homicide account for 51% of the economic impact. If Mexico could reduce its overall violence to the levels of its five most peaceful

states, it could achieve a peace dividend of 2.5 trillion pesos per year, equivalent to more than 11 times what the federal government currently spends on domestic security and justice.

The three states that improved the most in the 2019 MPI – Baja California Sur, Sinaloa and Sonora – had government programs specifically designed to address local challenges. All of these programs incorporated intergovernmental agencies in collaboration with companies and civil society.

Corruption remains a major concern for many Mexicans, with almost 70% of Mexicans thinking that judges were corrupt in 2018, and more than 65% of Mexicans perceiving the same of the Public Ministry.

Violence affects men and women differently. Men are most likely to be victims of homicide, making up nine out of ten victims, while 44% of women reported that they had experienced violence from their partner sometime during their lives. Youth are more affected by violence than adults, with the homicide rate for youth aged 15 to 29 being 42 percent higher than that of the general population. During 2018, at least one out of every four victims of human trafficking were children or adolescents.

National results:

- In 2018, peace in Mexico deteriorated by 4.9%, caused in large part by the 14% rise in the homicide rate, which went from 24 to 27 per 100,000 people. It was the worst year for peace in Mexico. Since 2015, three of the five indicators in the index have deteriorated: homicide, violent crime, and firearms crime.
- The violent crime indicator improved in 2018 for the first time in the last four years. The national rate improved 0.4% in 2018, which halted the sharp increase observed in 2017.
- The assault rate remained at a similar level to 2017, while the rate of sexual violence increased 12.4% and the rate of domestic violence increased 5.7%.
- Since 2015, the detention without sentence indicator has improved each year. This indicator measures the number of people in prison who have not been sentenced.
- In 2018 there was a 15.8% increase in crimes committed with a firearms compared to 2017. This is roughly in line with the increase in homicides.
- The organized crime rate increased by 11.6% from the prior year.

Disturbingly, there were 850 acts of political violence registered from 1 September 2017 to 31 August 2018, of which 75% were directed at municipal-level political figures and 81% targeted at opposition figures. Of 175 total registered assassinations, the highest numbers were recorded in Guerrero and Oaxaca: 32 and 29, respectively. Journalists were also affected by the rising violence. In 2017, 507 cases of attacks against journalists were recorded. By July of 2018, 389 attacks had already been registered, over 40 percent more than the same period in the previous year.

The report also analyses the strength of Mexico's Positive Peace factors. These are the common factors that are associated with highly peaceful societies and consist of eight pillars: *Well-functioning government, Equitable distribution of resources, Free flow of information, Sound business environment, High levels of human capital, Acceptance of the rights of others, Low levels of corruption and Good relations with neighbors*. It finds that Mexico is weak in a number of key pillars including the levels of corruption, functioning of government and freedom of the media, which are highlighted by the attacks on politicians and journalists.

For more information about the 2019 Mexico Peace Index, and to download the report and graphics, visit: www.visionofhumanity.org

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NOTES FOR EDITORS

The Institute for Economics and Peace (IEP) is an independent and nonpartisan research center dedicated to promoting a better understanding of the social and economic factors that develop a more peaceful society.

The Mexico Peace Index is based on a methodology similar to other indices developed by the IEP, including the United States Peace Index and the United Kingdom Peace Index; however, additional measures were included to more accurately reflect the context in Mexico.

In the Mexico Peace Index, five indicators were used to analyze the level of peace: the homicide rate, violent crime, firearms crime, detention without a sentence and organized crime. It should be noted that the study was conducted with the guidance of a panel of experts representing various institutions: the National Institute of Statistics and Geography (INEGI), World Justice Project, México Evalúa, Stanford University, the National Citizen Observatory and Jurimetria. The Mexico Peace Index uses data published by the Executive Secretariat of the National Public Security System (SESNSP) and INEGI.

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