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InSight Crime's 2024 Homicide Round-Up

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At least 121,695 people were murdered in Latin America and the Caribbean during 2024, putting the median homicide rate at around 20.2 per 100,000 people, about the same rate as 2023. The already violent Caribbean continued to roil in 2024, while Latin America saw a general decrease in the number of homicides.

In the tenth annual edition of our yearly round-up, InSight Crime analyzes the organized crime dynamics behind the violence in every country in the region. All rates are per 100,000.

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* Data for these countries is either unreliable, incomplete, or measures homicides in a way that it is not possible to compare homicide rates with other countries. See the country's section in the text and the "Notes and Methodology" section for more information.

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Huge Leap in Murder Rate

Suriname saw its homicide rate increase more than any other country in 2024, followed by Barbados, and Turks and Caicos. These three countries saw their murder rates grow by more than 100%, putting the Caribbean in the top homicide hotspot for yet another year. However, the small populations in this part of the world compared to other countries in the region mean that the alarming figures may stem from isolated instances of violence rather than a rise in organized crime activity.

Suriname (+382.3%)*

Suriname had a homicide rate of 29.9 as of September 2024, with a total of 190 **murders**. This is the highest murder rate spike in the region, with a 382% rise from the same period in 2023 to 2024. However, the jump appears linked to an escalation in violent petty offenses, particularly robberies, rather than organized crime. Violent robberies grew by 143% and gun-related crimes by 123%, and are likely some of the factors behind the growing violence.



Suriname*

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HOMICIDE RATE



% CHANGE

382.3



TOTAL HOMICIDES 190



POPULATION 634,431



MAIN CRIMINAL DYNAMICS

• DRUG TRAFFICKING

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Barbados (+138.0%)

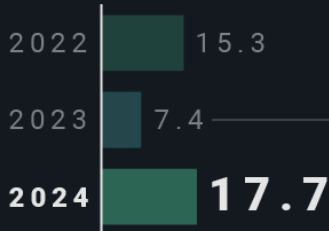
Barbados registered a homicide rate of 17.7 in 2024, but despite the significant increase compared to 2023, its raw number of murder cases is still relatively low compared to other countries in the region. The country **recorded** 50 homicides in 2024, and 48% happened in the parish of St. Michael, the most populous on the island. With a population of less than 300,000, small changes in Barbados' actual homicides causes significant variations in the national rate.

The collapse of a peace **agreement** between rival gangs in Barbados is likely behind the murder spike. Many of the 2024 cases are believed to have been planned attacks, suggesting instabilities in the agreement that lasted over a year.



Barbados

HOMICIDE RATE



% CHANGE

138.0



**TOTAL
HOMICIDES** 50



POPULATION 282,467



**MAIN CRIMINAL
DYNAMICS**

• ARMS TRAFFICKING

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Turks and Caicos (+121.3%)

Turks and Caicos Islands **registered** a homicide rate of 103.1 in 2024, the highest in Latin America and the Caribbean. The country recorded 48 murders up to December 19, registering an increase of over 100% in its homicide rate compared to 2023.

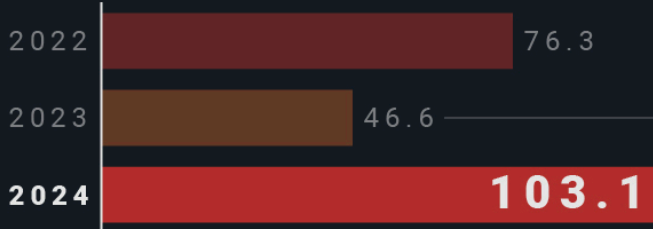
The main **drivers** of violence in the country are sophisticated networks that smuggle firearms and narcotics onto the islands, but human smuggling also seems to play a significant role in the rise in crime.

In addition to increasing levels of violence, Turks and Caicos faces obstacles in solving homicides due to a lack of access to forensic technologies and the geographical distribution of its islands, which complicates security force logistics.



Turks and Caicos

HOMICIDE RATE



% CHANGE

121.2



**TOTAL
HOMICIDES** 48



POPULATION 46,535



**MAIN CRIMINAL
DYNAMICS**

• ARMS TRAFFICKING

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Murder on the Rise

The Caribbean also features heavily in the list of countries with smaller increases in their homicide rates, from St. Lucia's slight growth of 2.7% to Haiti's big increase of 51.6%. Gang activity and firearms are among the main drivers of violence in these countries.

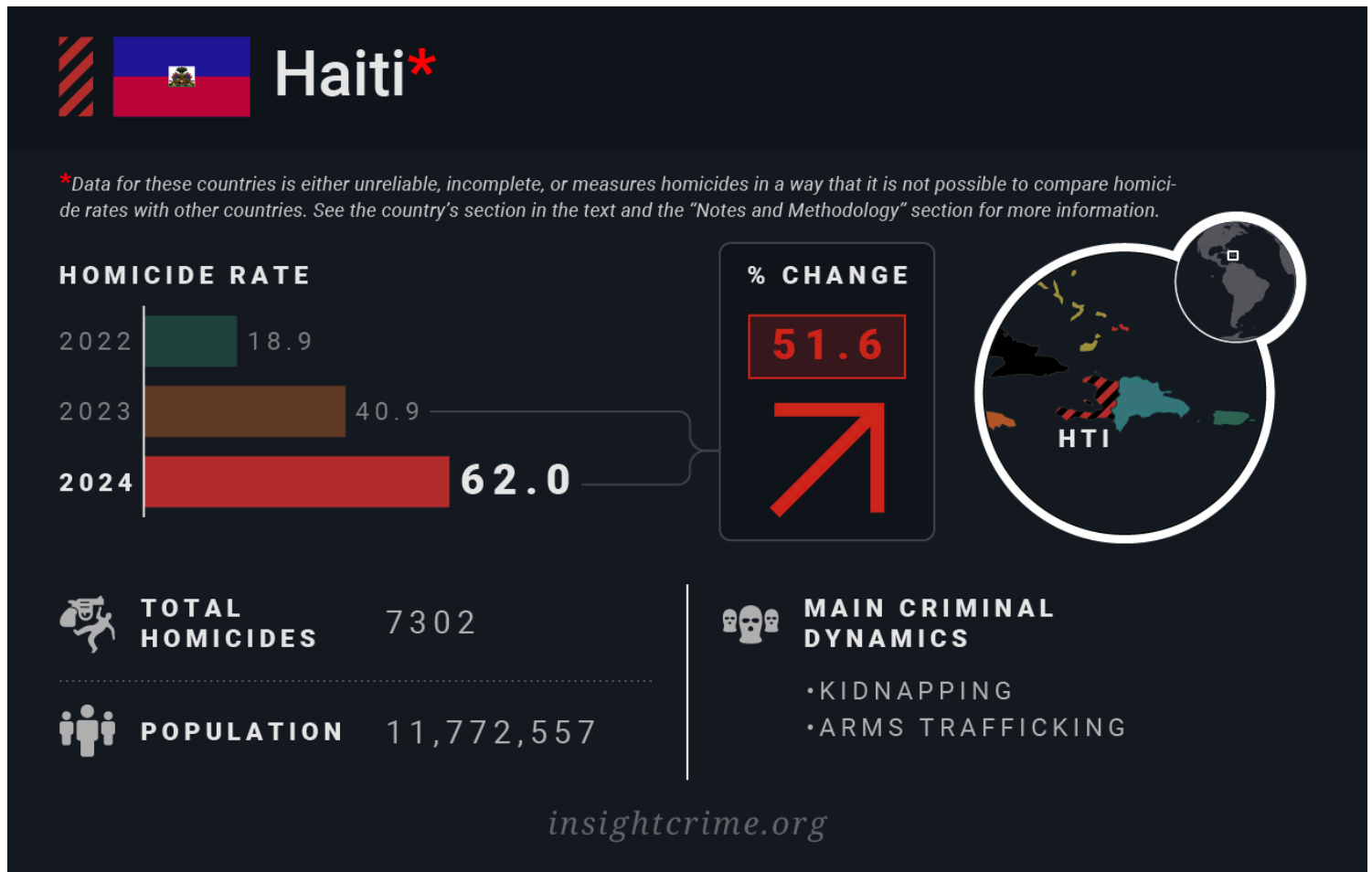
*Haiti** (+51.6%)

Gang violence in Haiti **continued** to surge in 2024, following a trend that began with the assassination of President Jovenel Moïse in 2021. The country reported a record number of homicides in 2024, with over 7,000 murders for a rate of 62 – up from 40.9 in 2023.

In a scenario where the state is largely absent and criminal actors enjoy undisputed social control, gangs carry out **massacres** and force residents to leave their homes to **exploit** the political turmoil and expand their control over the country. Haiti's biggest criminal development last year was the

emergence of a gang alliance known as **Viv Ansanm**, which gave criminal groups a platform to coordinate violence against the state and massacres against civilians.

The deployment of a United Nations-backed, multinational security force was aimed at helping restore law and order in Haiti, which has seen the deployment of foreign security forces as part of **efforts** to tackle gang violence. But the presence of troops did little to quell violence in 2024, according to the **UN**.



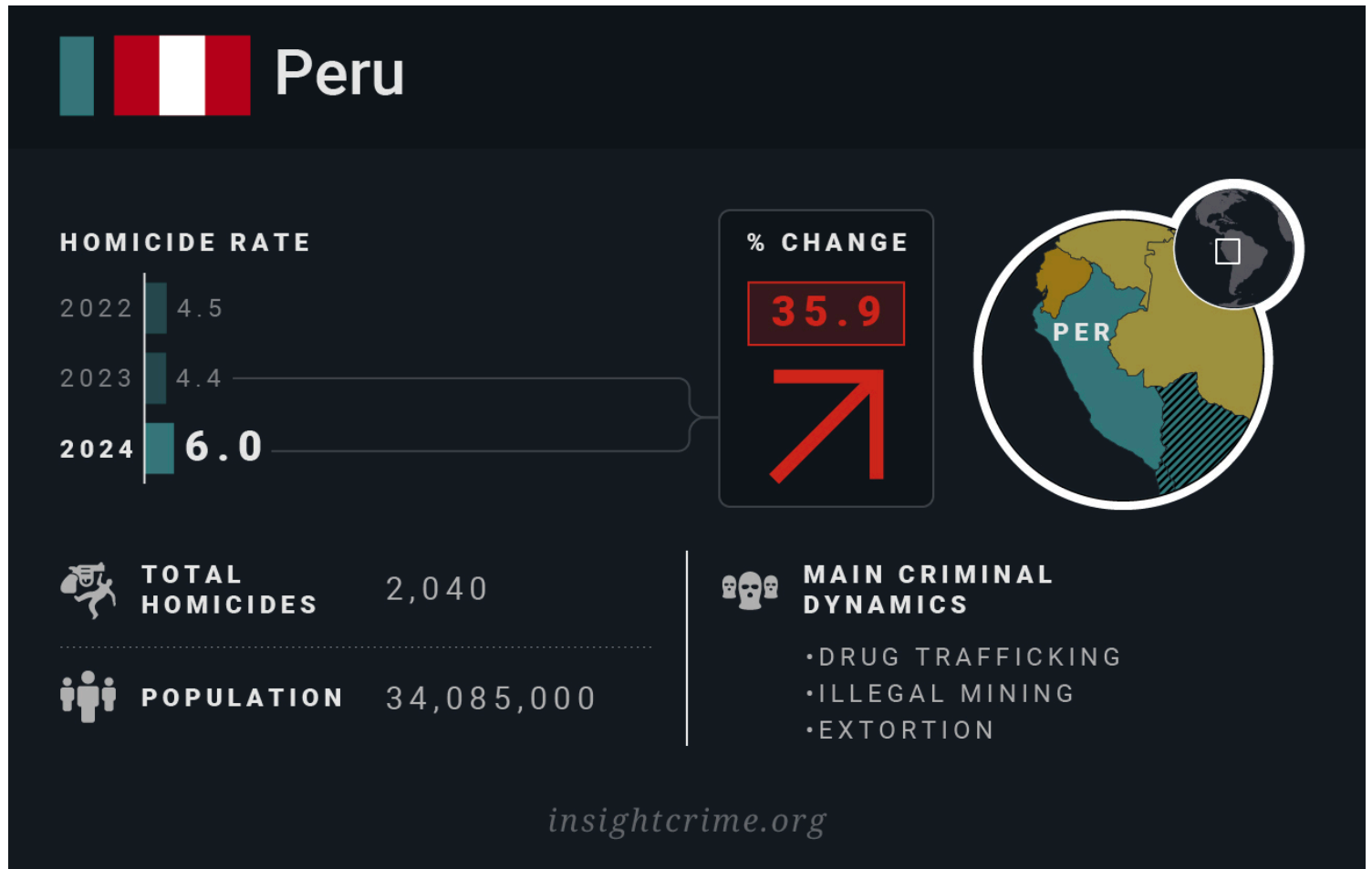
Peru (+35.9%)

Though Peru's homicide rate remains relatively low, it has continued to struggle with mounting violence, closing out 2024 with a 35.9% increase – the largest rise outside the Caribbean. Last year's homicide rate hit almost 6, up from 4.4 in 2023.

Organized crime-related violence last year revolved around illegal mining and **extortion**. Groups that were focused on illegally extracting gold in Peru made **record profits**, but that came with more violence, as groups **attacked** security forces and formal mining companies.

Peru's skyrocketing extortion levels fell slightly in 2024, but the schemes remained violent. Using grenades to intimidate people into paying – and punishing those that do not – became a **popular tactic** during the year.

The government tried to stem the rising violence through the use of declared **states of emergency**, but so far has not seen positive results.



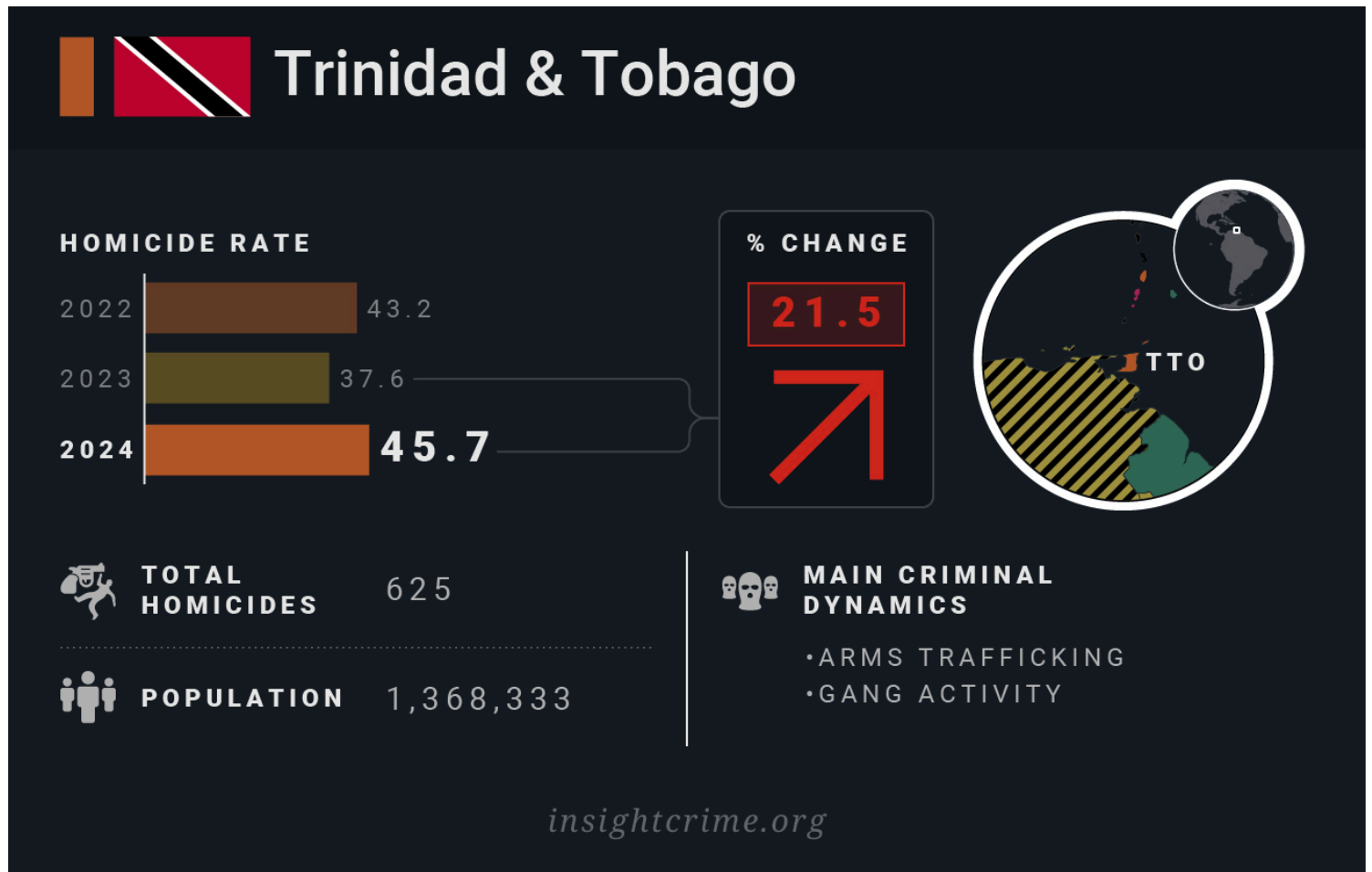
Trinidad and Tobago (+21.5%)

Last year was Trinidad and Tobago's deadliest on record, with 625 murders and a homicide rate of 45.7. The country's record-breaking violence was closely related to gang activity, with 43.68% of murders related to gangs.

Similar to other countries in the region, the government **declared** a state of emergency but Farley Augustine, the Chief Secretary of Tobago's House of Assembly, **expressed** skepticism to the press about the effectiveness of the measure. He emphasized that it "must be part of a bigger plan to tackle the deeper issues driving crime," including arms trafficking into the country. Such concerns are

reinforced by official data accessed by InSight Crime, which shows that 81% of homicides recorded in 2024 were committed with a firearm.

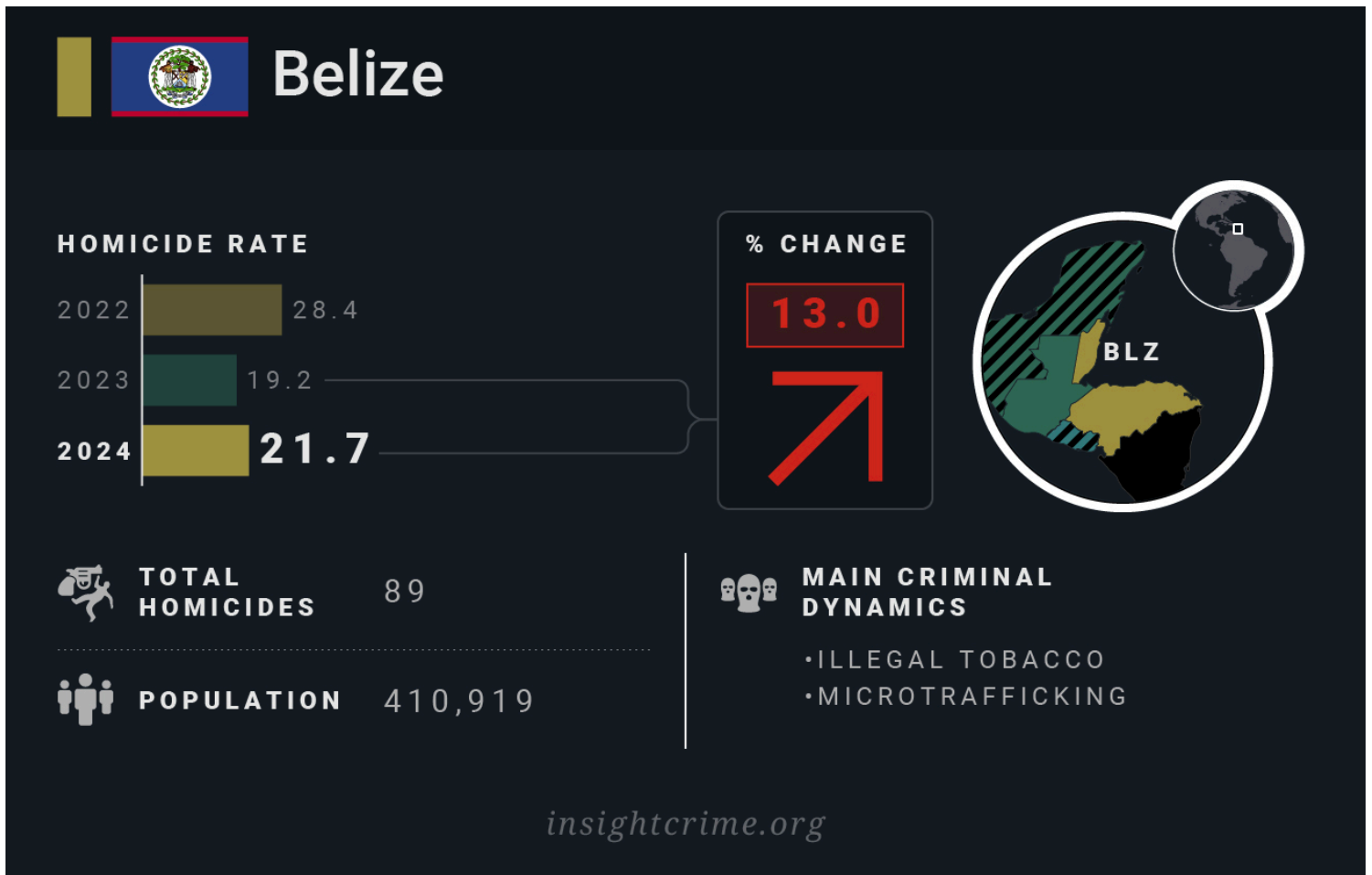
Murders have been rising steadily in recent years as around 180 small, loosely organized gangs compete for control over street-level drug sales and arms trafficking.



Belize (+13.0%)

Belize recorded 89 homicides in 2024 and a rate of 21.7, with nearly 15% of cases involving gangs. Over 70% of the reported killings were carried out using firearms. In 2023, the country saw 78 murders, with a homicide rate of 19.2.

Belize saw **surges** in shootings and homicides in 2024 due to disputes over the control of marijuana markets. In March, authorities **declared** a state of emergency to tackle gang violence.



The Bahamas (+8.0%)

The Bahamas kicked off 2024 with a spate of murders that would set the tone for the year. And with a double homicide on the last day of 2024, the country's murder rate increased 8.0% from 2023's 27.5, reaching 29.7.

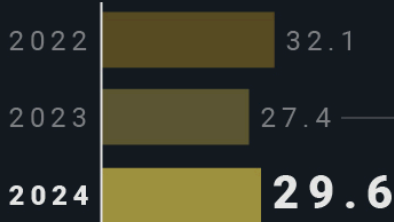
The violence raised international concern. The United States issued a **travel advisory** that cited "retaliatory gang violence" as the cause of a crime wave.

Though the island nation has invested in policing and crime prevention programs, issues within the government have inhibited anti-organized crime efforts. Federal prosecutors **indicted** several members of the Royal Bahamas Police Force (RBPF) in November, alleging they facilitated cocaine trafficking through the Bahamas to the United States.



The Bahamas

HOMICIDE RATE



% CHANGE

8.0**TOTAL
HOMICIDES** 119**POPULATION** 401,283**MAIN CRIMINAL
DYNAMICS**

- DRUG TRAFFICKING
- CORRUPTION

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Saint Vincent and the Grenadines (+7.2%)

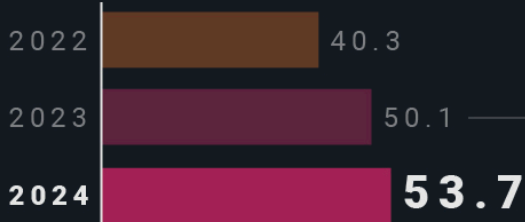
Saint Vincent and the Grenadines recorded a homicide rate of 53.7 in 2024. Firearms continue to be a **major** murder weapon, with high levels of gun violence among criminals. Authorities **reported** seizing large amounts of ammunition last year.

Security agencies **estimate** that five to six gangs currently operate in the country, with Caribbean cocaine traffickers using the island to move drugs to Europe and the United States.



St. Vincent and the Grenadines

HOMICIDE RATE



% CHANGE

7.2**TOTAL
HOMICIDES** 54**POPULATION** 100,616**MAIN CRIMINAL
DYNAMICS**

• ARMS TRAFFICKING

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Puerto Rico (+7.0%)

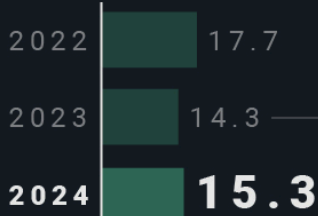
Criminal dynamics worsened in 2024, with fighting between small gangs causing a 7% increase in the island's homicide rate. The year ended with a murder rate of 15.3, up from 2023's 14.3.

Much of the violence is related to drug trafficking and street sales. Like other islands in the Caribbean, Puerto Rico is often used as a transit point for cocaine heading to the mainland United States, while arms are trafficked in the opposite direction. In October, authorities arrested 23 alleged gang members on drug trafficking and weapons charges, **accusing** the group of using “force, violence, and intimidation,” against rivals and to keep members of their organization in line.



Puerto Rico

HOMICIDE RATE



% CHANGE

7.0



TOTAL HOMICIDES 489



POPULATION 3,203,295



MAIN CRIMINAL DYNAMICS

- COCAINE
- ARMS TRAFFICKING

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Panama (+3.2%)

Panama ended 2024 with a homicide rate of 12.9, and the capital province of Panama and the canal-adjacent province of Colón accounted for 75% of cases.

Most of the murders recorded in Colón in 2024 were related to gang disputes over territorial control, local drug sales and access to the Colón port, National Police Operations Chief, Edgardo Núñez, **told** local media. Colón, one of the main trade hubs in Latin America, has increasingly **become** a key entry point for cocaine. Local gangs have infiltrated the port by corrupting employees, including security guards and dockworkers, who receive the drugs and smuggle them into cargo.



Panama

HOMICIDE RATE



% CHANGE

3.2

**TOTAL
HOMICIDES** 581



POPULATION 4,503,876



**MAIN CRIMINAL
DYNAMICS**

• DRUG TRAFFICKING

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Saint Lucia (+2.6%)

While maintaining a relatively stable homicide rate compared to the previous year at 42.8, Saint Lucia surpassed its 2023 record for the number of killings, with two more during 2024. The country's police made progress in **seizing** firearms and ammunition last year, but struggled to confront the mounting gang crisis.



St. Lucia

HOMICIDE RATE



% CHANGE

2.6


**TOTAL
HOMICIDES** 77



POPULATION 179,744



**MAIN CRIMINAL
DYNAMICS**

- ARMS TRAFFICKING
- COCAINE

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Slowly Moving Toward Peace

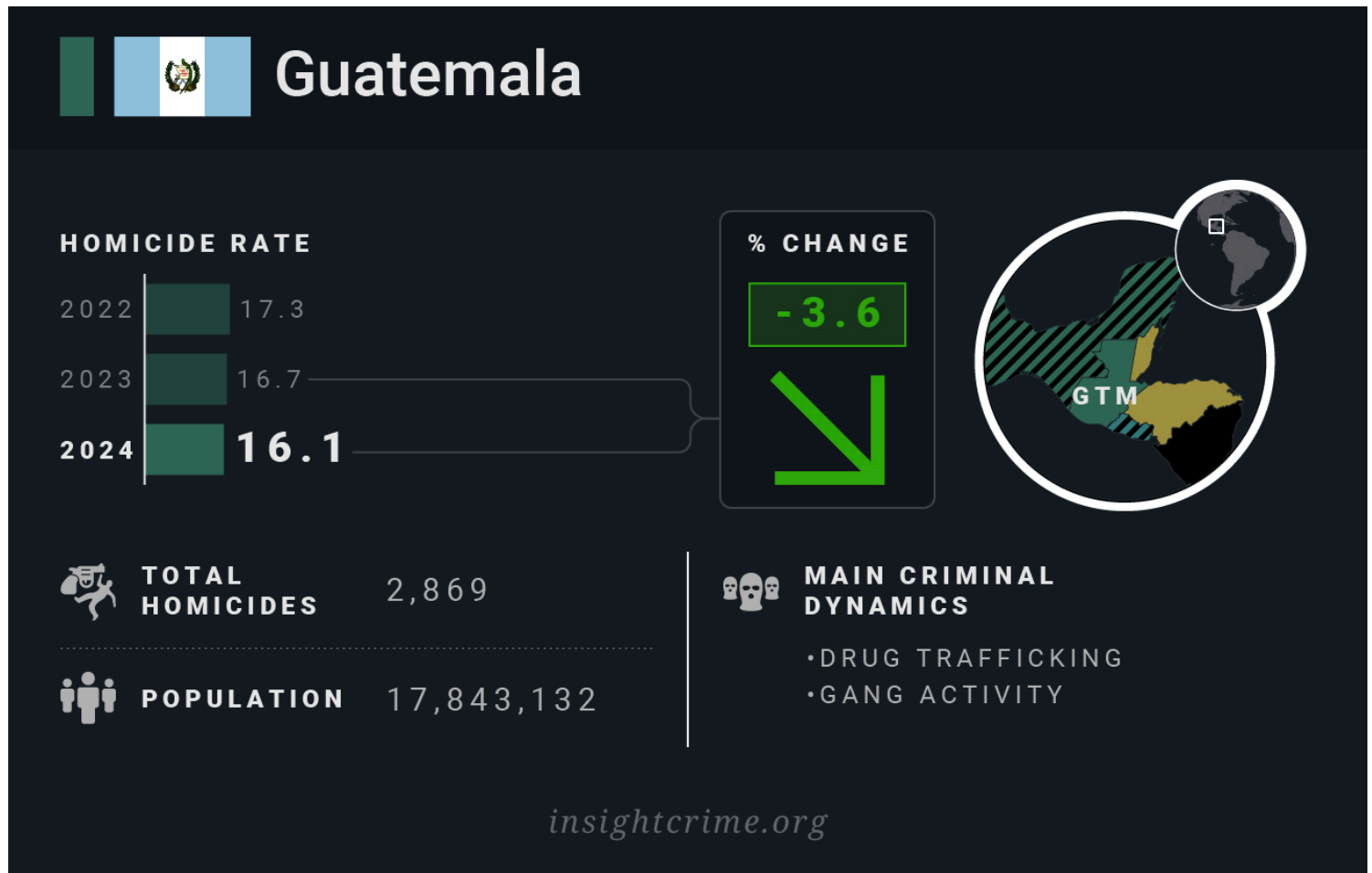
The homicide rate decreased by less than 5% in half a dozen countries. Though these nations still managed to make modest progress in lowering violence, a lack of a substantial reduction in homicides suggests that anti-organized crime strategies may be leading to a stalemate between authorities and criminal organizations.

Guatemala (-3.6%)

Guatemala ended 2024 with a homicide rate of 16.1. The country saw a marginal drop in murders, recording 2,869 cases compared to 2,944 in 2023.

Revenge was the most common motive, accounting for 36% of killings, according to official data, followed by gang violence, which was attributed to 18% of cases. This coincided with a 38% increase in deaths by strangulation during the same period. David Boteo, director of the National Civil Police (Policía Nacional Civil – PNC), **told** local media that the increase in strangulation is primarily linked

to conflicts between cells of the **Barrio 18** gang operating on the outskirts of Guatemala City. Victims of the internal gang war, which **resulted** in 31 violent deaths as of November 26, were often **found** strangled or wrapped in sheets, according to local prosecutors.



Costa Rica (-3.5%)

While murders in Costa Rica decreased slightly in 2024, it was still the second-most violent year on record, with a homicide rate of 16.6, following 2023's record-setting 17.2. Revenge, a motive **linked** to drug trafficking, was the main driver of violence, accounting for 70% of homicides.

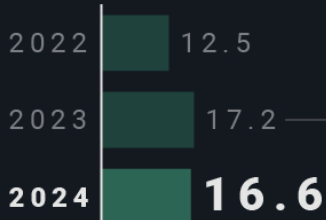
Rándall Zúñiga, head of the Judicial Investigation Department (Organismo de Investigación Judicial – OIJ), **attributed** the decline to Operation Caribe, a strategy aimed at reducing crime in the province of Limón, an important drug trafficking port city which had the highest murder rate in 2023. While homicides in Limón fell by 15% in 2024, it still recorded the country's highest rate at 37.8.

Following Operation Caribe, some trafficking groups migrated to the coastal province of Puntarenas, which recorded the country's second-highest homicide rate in 2024.



Costa Rica

HOMICIDE RATE



% CHANGE

-3.5



**TOTAL
HOMICIDES** 880



POPULATION 5,309,625



**MAIN CRIMINAL
DYNAMICS**

- DRUG TRAFFICKING
- COCAINE

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Nicaragua* (-3.2%)

We cannot properly evaluate homicide rate changes in Nicaragua, as the lack of transparency makes it impossible to validate or analyze the data. At an **official event** in October, the government announced that the homicide rate was 6, which would be a 3.2% decrease from 2023's purported 6.2. But as the announcement occurred partway through the year and given there is no information regarding what period it encapsulates or how the data was collected, there is no way of understanding what that number actually represents.

That lack of transparency makes it difficult to analyze local organized crime dynamics in the country. The government has cracked down on local media and NGOs, greatly restricting reporting, and with travel difficult, few investigations or fact-finding missions are happening.

In a **formal allegation**, published in May 2024, the UN Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights found that the Nicaraguan government has been using forced disappearances to silence critics of the regime.

Venezuela* (-2.2%)

Venezuela has no open data program, so we rely on information from the non-governmental Venezuela Violence Observatory (Observatorio Venezolano de Violencia – OVV). According to the observatory's figures, there was a slight decrease in Venezuela's homicide rate to 26.2 from 2023's 26.8.

The government has **claimed** a far more dramatic decrease down to a rate of 4.1, with no transparency as to where that number comes from or what it includes. The figure is being used to claim success against organized crime under the Maduro regime, which has clung to power after a controversial election in 2024, sparking broad protests.

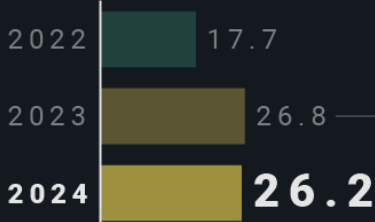
The decline in violence is likely due to two factors. First, as criminal economies have dried up in Venezuela, many of its criminal groups have **moved abroad** – taking violence with them. Second, several groups aligned with the Maduro **regime** now dominate their territory, no longer requiring the use of violence to maintain control and fend off rivals.



Venezuela*

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HOMICIDE RATE



% CHANGE

-2.2



 **TOTAL HOMICIDES** 6,884

 **POPULATION** 26,274,809



MAIN CRIMINAL DYNAMICS

- CORRUPTION
- CRIMINAL MIGRATION

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Colombia (-1.9%)

Colombia recorded a murder rate of 25.4 in 2024 and the lowest number of homicides in the past four years, with 13,393 murders. The decline coincides with multiple negotiations between armed groups and the government that have led to ceasefires as part of the Total Peace (Paz Total) policy.

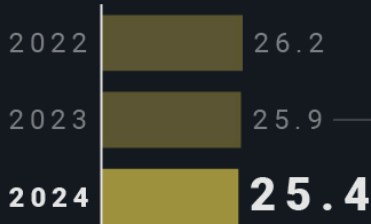
However, certain regions reported an increase in the number of violent murders as a result of organized crime. In the department of Atlántico, on Colombia's Caribbean coast, homicides **increased** as criminal groups like the Gaitanist Self-Defence Forces of Colombia (Autodefensas Gaitanistas de Colombia – **AGC**) and the Conquering Self Defense Forces of the Sierra Nevada (Autodefensas Conquistadoras de la Sierra Nevada – **ACSN**) vied for control of the ports, where they load containers with drugs bound for Europe.

Despite the slight but positive decline in murders in 2024, violence is already spiking because of **renewed** violence in the Catatumbo region, a key cocaine production hub and criminal hotspot along the Venezuelan border.



Colombia

HOMICIDE RATE



% CHANGE

-1.9



TOTAL HOMICIDES 13,341



POPULATION 52,695,952



MAIN CRIMINAL DYNAMICS

- DRUG TRAFFICKING
- COCAINE

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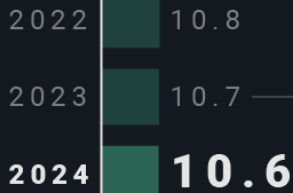
Uruguay (-0.9%)

This small South American nation saw the number of homicides decrease by two victims, ending the year with 379 murders. This is the second year in a row with a single digit drop as other crimes have steadily fallen. Uruguay was plagued by a **violent crime wave** in 2018, as small family gangs fought to control the local coca paste market. While murders have since dropped, the country has yet to find a way to get violence back down to pre-2018 levels.

At the same time, Uruguay's prisons have become increasingly overcrowded and neglected. Problems have grown over the past year as inmates have been able to escape their cells and set deadly fires in other parts of prisons. International criminal organizations already have **members** locked up in **Uruguayan facilities**. With the country's **changing role** in the international cocaine trade and criminal organizations' habitual use of overcrowded prisons to expand and recruit, experts worry that organized crime may become increasingly powerful and violent in the country.



Uruguay

HOMICIDE RATE**% CHANGE****-0.9**
**TOTAL
HOMICIDES** 379

POPULATION 3,577,896

**MAIN CRIMINAL
DYNAMICS**

- COCAINE
- MONEY LAUNDERING

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Homicides Rates Fall

More countries than ever in the ten-year history of InSight Crime's Homicide Round-Up experienced a significant drop in their murder rates. Jamaica and the Dominican Republic bucked the trend in the Caribbean, scoring wins against local gangs and international drug traffickers in 2024.

Honduras (-26.5%)

Homicides in Honduras continued to fall markedly in 2024, with a murder rate of 25.3. Bright spots include the country's two largest cities, Tegucigalpa and San Pedro Sula, where murder rates halved between 2022 and 2024.

The government credits the gains to the country's long-running **state of emergency**, currently in force in 226 of Honduras' 298 municipalities. However, homicide rates have **fallen** both in areas with and without the emergency measures, casting doubt on these claims.

Not all regions followed the national trend. Killings in the country's Bay Islands, a tourist hotspot, increased, and the department closed 2024 as the county's most homicidal.



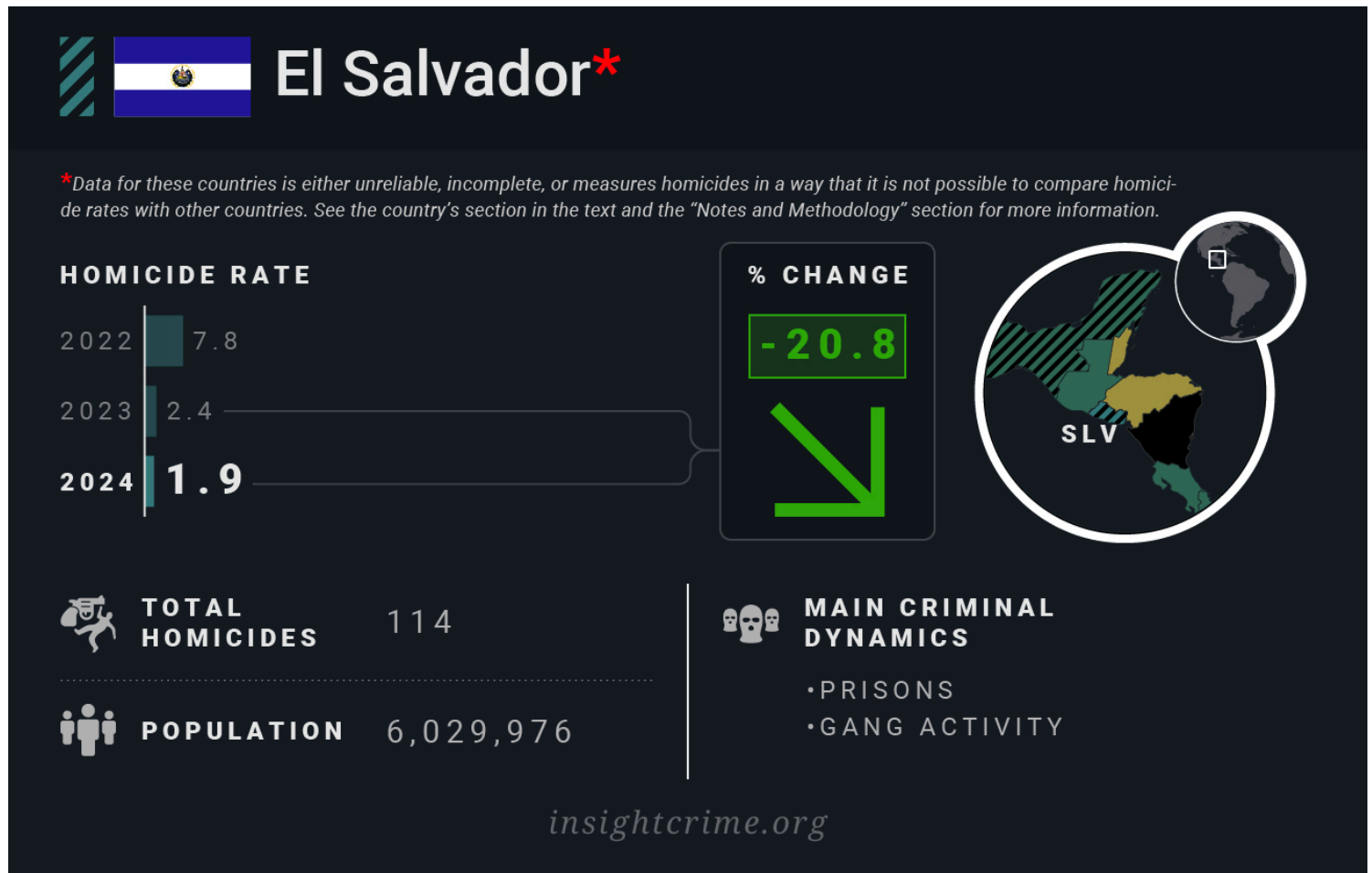
El Salvador* (-20.8)

El Salvador saw yet another drop in homicides in 2024, continuing a historic reduction in violence that has coincided with a multi-year crackdown on gangs. With a record-low murder rate of 1.9 per 100,000 inhabitants, El Salvador now finds itself with one of the lowest rates in Latin America.

The sustained reduction in violence suggests El Salvador's gangs are yet to recover from Bukele's **ruthless security crackdown**, which has centered on mass incarceration and the suspension of basic rights.

The state of emergency has seen an unprecedented round-up of alleged gang members, with 33,000 people **arrested** in just two months. This figure has since **risen** to over 1% of the entire population of El Salvador.

The data may overstate how comprehensive the reduction in violence has been. The government does not follow the **Bogotá Protocol**, the standard for measuring homicides in the region, so its murder rate cannot be directly compared to other countries that do. The government's homicide data **does not count** deaths stemming from confrontations between the authorities and suspected gang members, nor does it include murders where bodies have been found in mass graves. Government transparency has also decreased under Bukele, making it harder to access data on homicides, prisons, and other security topics, **according to** El Salvador-based human rights group Cristosal.



Mexico* (-19.6%)

Mexico experienced a drop in its murder rate to 19.3 in 2024, from 24 the previous year. Despite the progress, warring between major criminal organizations broke out in several parts of the country during the year.

Much of the organized crime related violence was focused in the southwestern border state of Chiapas, where the Jalisco Cartel New Generation (Cartel Jalisco Nueva Generación – **CJNG**) and **Sinaloa**

Cartel have been fighting over territory. Criminal groups have increasingly targeted civilians, leading to massive displacements.

Chiapas, along with Guerrero and Michoacán, also became epicenters of violence as Mexico's presidential election drew near and criminal groups looked to intimidate voters and eliminate candidates.

After the arrests of leaders of the **Chapitos** and the Mayiza – rival factions of the Sinaloa Cartel – tensions mounted in Culiacán, Sinaloa, with violence erupting in September. On average, there were about 39 killings in Culiacán in the first part of 2024. September alone saw 73 killings, which leapt to 116 in October and 115 in November, indicating that Sinaloa may be an epicenter of violence in 2025.

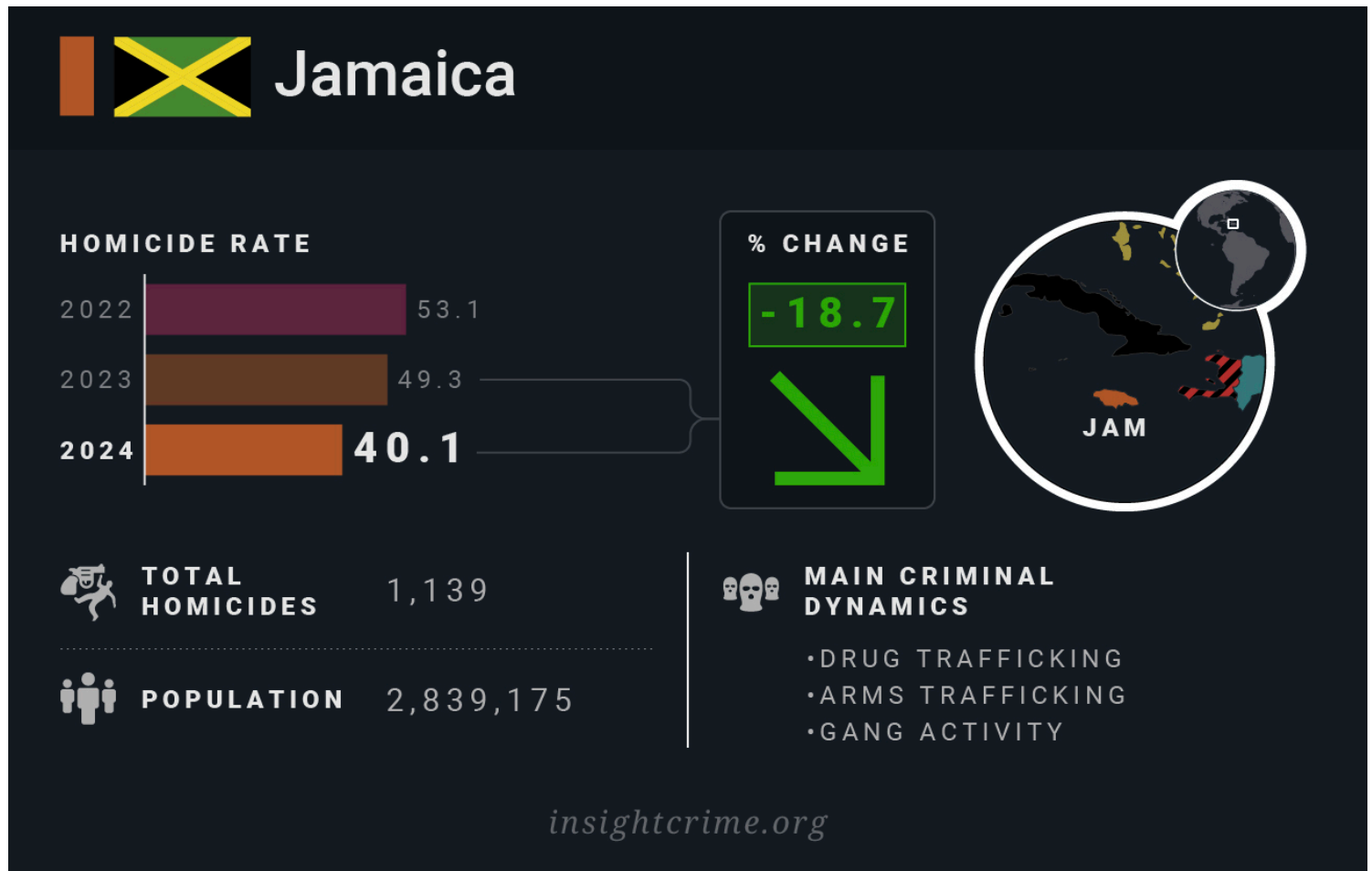


Jamaica (-18.7%)

Jamaica had its lowest homicide rate in a decade in 2024. However, at 40.1 per 100,000 people, it remains a deadly country. The 18.7% decrease in Jamaica's homicide rate is in part driven by a drop in gang-related murders, which accounted for 67% of cases in 2023 but fell to 60% in 2024.

Jamaica has invested significantly in improving the capacity of law enforcement officers to detect crimes and gather intelligence, which may be contributing to the decline in gangs and homicides.

The government declared at least three states of emergency in 2024 due to gang-related violence. However, it is unlikely that this measure had a direct impact on homicide rates, as the frequent use of states of emergency in the past has not **prevented** Jamaica from continuing to struggle with persistently high murder rates.

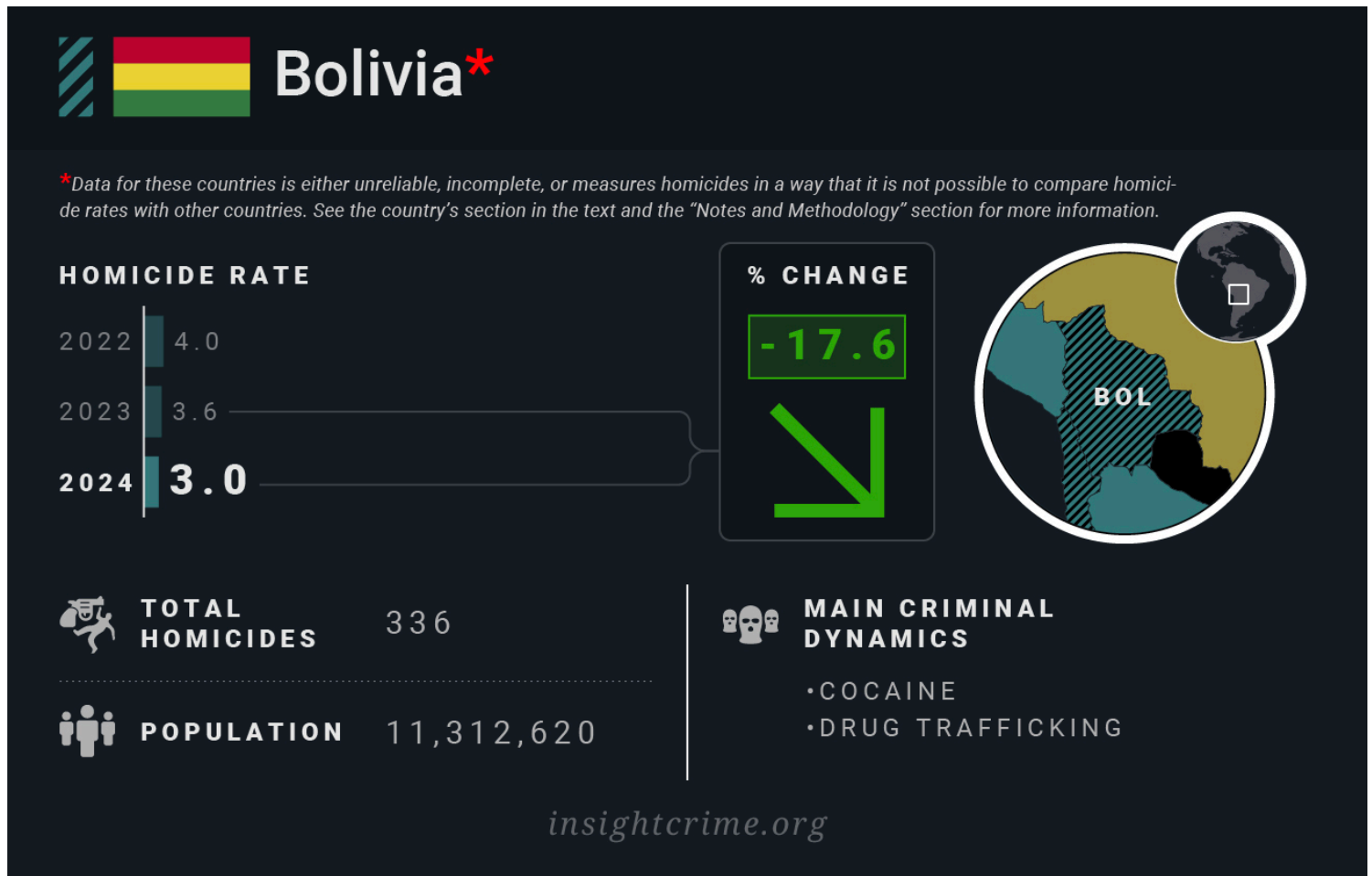


Bolivia* (-17.6%)

In 2024, Bolivia's homicide rate was 3 per 100,000 inhabitants. The country recorded 336 "crimes against life" ("delitos contra la vida") until September 2024, which includes murders, femicides, homicides, infanticides, and parricides. As we only had access to data up to September, we calculated the homicide rate considering this period and compared it to the same period from 2023.

Despite the seeming drop of 16.7% in the country's murder rate, its border regions are suffering the effects of **increased** smuggling activities, which are responsible for significant levels of violence. In

six months of 2024, at least eight soldiers were killed in border clashes with criminal organizations.



Dominican Republic (-16.4%)

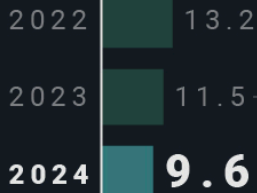
The Dominican Republic **recorded** a 16.4% drop in its homicide rate in 2024 compared to 2023, marking the third consecutive year of decline. Although the Caribbean nation has long been a key transit point for cocaine shipments to Europe, drug trafficking does not appear to be a major driver of violence. Despite a record-setting 37-ton cocaine seizure in 2024, the majority of 2024's homicides were caused by fighting between individuals.

Arms trafficking, however, continues to impact citizen security in the Dominican Republic, as 65% of the murders were committed with a firearm. The **influx** of guns from the United States and the diversion of ammunition from local authorities are fueling criminal gangs.



Dominican Republic

HOMICIDE RATE



% CHANGE

-16.4



TOTAL HOMICIDES 1,374



POPULATION 14,297,607



MAIN CRIMINAL DYNAMICS

- DRUG TRAFFICKING
- ARMS TRAFFICKING

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Argentina (-13.6%)

Homicides dropped significantly in Argentina over 2024, mainly due to a 65.5% reduction of **murders** in Rosario, which has long been the epicenter of violence. The country's murder rate dropped to 3.8, according to data from Argentina's National Criminal Information System (Sistema Nacional de Información Criminal – SNIC), from 4.4 in 2023.

The reduction has been heralded by the new administration as a result of their tough-on-crime security policy, **inspired** by President Nayib Bukele's strategy in El Salvador. But experts and local politicians urge caution, indicating that the policies **fail to address the causes** of violence and a new wave could be just around the corner.

The extreme violence in the port city has been **driven** by local gangs who exploit corruption and Rosario's role as a transit hub for international drug trafficking to ensure a steady supply of drugs for the local market. While 2024 saw rivalries between these groups cool to the lowest level in more than a decade, the last months of the year warned more fighting may be to come as prominent members of Rosario's underground were murdered.



Argentina

HOMICIDE RATE



% CHANGE

-13.6



**TOTAL
HOMICIDES** 1,810



POPULATION 46,654,581



**MAIN CRIMINAL
DYNAMICS**

- COCAINE
- CORRUPTION

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Guyana (-13.0%)

Guyana registered a drop of 13% in its homicide rate in 2024, reaching a **record-low** rate of 14.1.

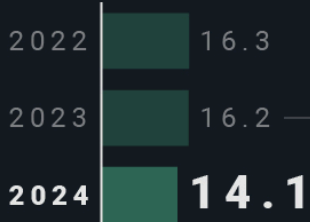
The country's minister of home affairs **attributes** the decrease in killings to strategic interventions by the government and the establishment of command centers around the country. Authorities said they invested in advanced technology and equipment for law enforcement in 2024, which was one of the drivers for the drop in criminality.

What's more, over 70% of murder cases were solved, with the arrest and prosecution of suspects. Guyana also saw the smallest number of robberies in 10 years, and broke records for firearms seizures and drug trafficking prosecutions.



Guyana

HOMICIDE RATE



% CHANGE

-13.0



**TOTAL
HOMICIDES** 117



POPULATION 831,087



**MAIN CRIMINAL
DYNAMICS**

- ILLEGAL MINING
- TIMBER TRAFFICKING

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Ecuador (-12.8%)

Ecuador recorded 6,986 homicides in 2024, reflecting a drop in murders compared to 2023. However, 2024 was still the second-most violent year in the country's history, and homicides in many parts of the country remained at or **exceeded** 2023 levels. After the government declared a **state of internal conflict** in January and deployed the military to the streets and prisons, homicides dropped significantly in the second half of January, and continued to fall through February.

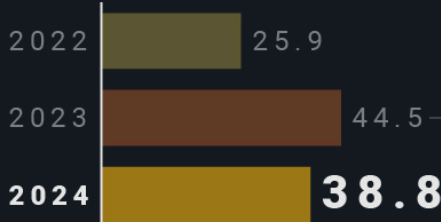
However, by March 2024, killings began to **tick up** again, perhaps an indication that the initial shock of the military intervention had worn off. During this period, many gangs regrouped and adapted, becoming more autonomous and less reliant on prison-based leadership. This shift triggered violent clashes as increasingly fragmented groups vied for control under the new criminal landscape.

Ultimately, the modest drop in homicides masked what was otherwise a year of persistent violence, as the military intervention forced criminal groups to transform rather than die.



Ecuador

HOMICIDE RATE



% CHANGE

-12.8



TOTAL HOMICIDES 6,986



POPULATION 17,900,000



MAIN CRIMINAL DYNAMICS

- DRUG TRAFFICKING
- GANG ACTIVITY

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Chile (-12.7%)

Chile closed 2024 with a murder rate of 5.5, compared to 6.3 in 2023. One reason for the decline is that the available data did not include information from all government entities, meaning the actual figure may be higher. The country recorded 959 homicides and femicides; 79.5% of the victims were Chileans, but there were others from multiple nationalities, including Colombians (5.8%), Venezuelans (5.6%), Peruvians (1.74%), and others.

While murders have decreased overall, violence and homicides related to drug trafficking have **grown**, along with drug seizures. Foreign gangs, such as Venezuela's **Tren de Aragua** and the Gallegos, as well as Peruvian groups the Pulpos and the del Callao, have made significant moves into Chile and established some control over different activities within the country through cooperation with local gangs. Yet local groups still hold significant power in Chile's criminal networks and are also behind growing concerns over organized crime's influence.

With this increase in organized criminal activity, the country's prisons are becoming **increasingly overcrowded** raising concerns that organized crime may grow more powerful and violent behind bars,

as it has in the overcrowded prisons of neighboring countries.



Saint Kitts and Nevis (-8.0%)

After breaking its homicide record in 2023, Saint Kitts and Nevis registered a drop in murders last year, with 59.8 homicides per 100,000 inhabitants. In response to gang violence and a **surge** in gun violence, local authorities **increased** their budget to police illegal drugs, firearms, and ammunition.

The country recorded 19 homicide cases as of June 2024, 12 of which were gang-related. By the end of the year, Saint Kitts and Nevis had reported 28 killings.



St. Kitts and Nevis

HOMICIDE RATE



% CHANGE

- 8.0



**TOTAL
HOMICIDES** 28



POPULATION 46,843



MAIN CRIMINAL DYNAMICS

- MONEY LAUNDERING
- ARMS TRAFFICKING

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Brazil (-5.4%)

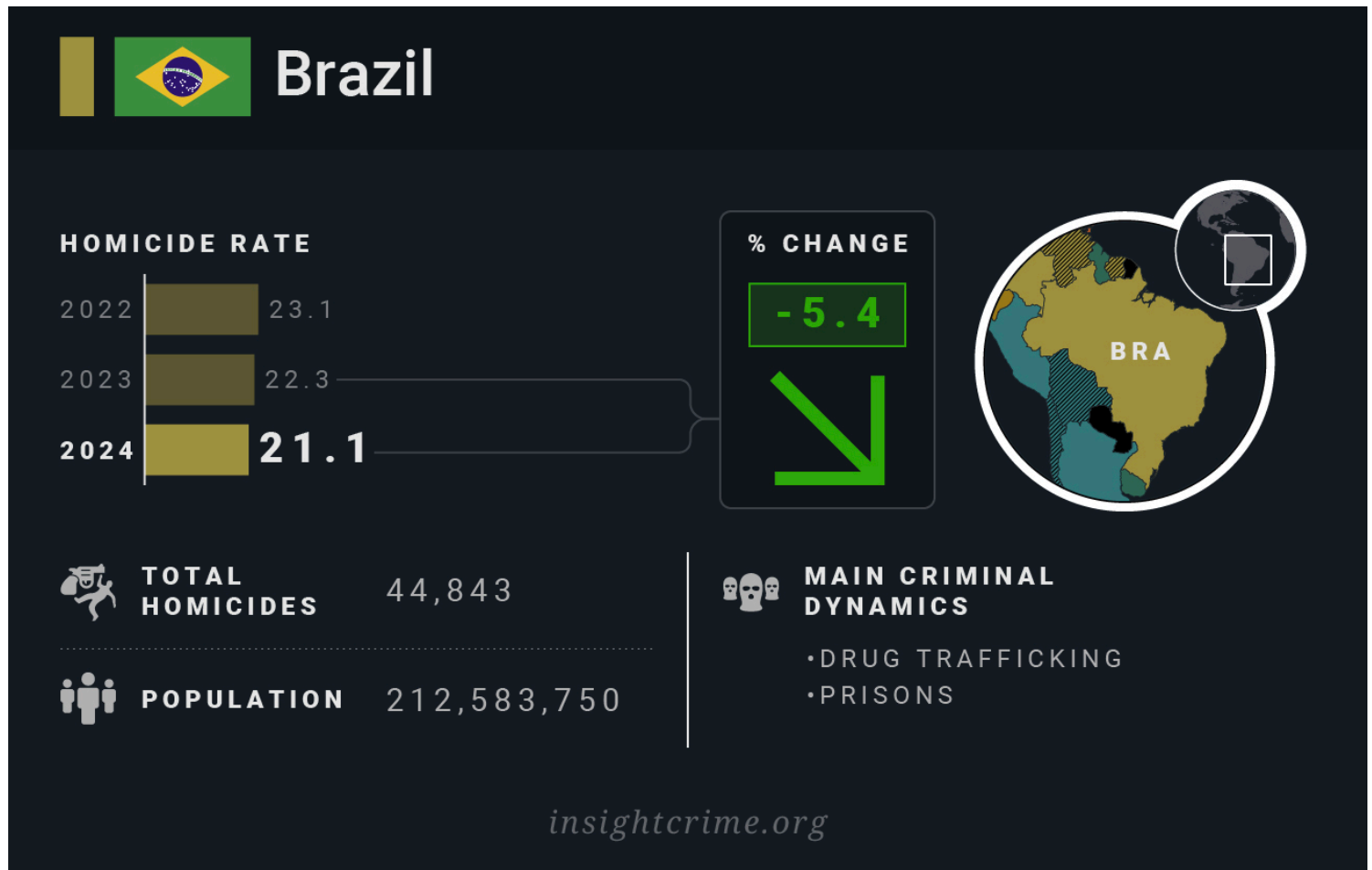
Brazil had a homicide rate of 21.1 in 2024, following a downward trend in murders since 2019. The country's population of over 200 million makes changes in its murder rate less volatile – only significant variations in the reported number of homicides cause relevant differences in its rate. The over 5% drop recorded in 2024 suggests that significantly fewer people were killed compared to 2023.

Nearly 45,000 people were **murdered** in Brazil in 2024, including homicides, femicides, and killings by the police. In 2023, Brazil recorded over 47,000 killings.

One of the explanations for the decrease in homicides may be the movement of criminals towards **digital** crimes. Brazil has some of the highest levels of cybercrimes in Latin America and is increasingly a target and home base for cybergangs attacking online bank accounts.

Another cause is likely the **consolidation** of major criminal groups around the country after a war in Brazil's underworld that started in 2016. Since 2019, the criminal conflicts that escalated in the 2010s as the First Capital Command (Primeiro Comando da Capital – **PCC**) and the Red Command

(Comando Vermelho – **CV**) expanded their territorial control have settled down, according to Rodrigo Azevedo, member of the Brazilian Public Security Forum. After that, the two largest gangs in Brazil established their control over each state and violence began to fall. In 2024, the PCC and the Red Command **agreed** a truce, which could have major impacts on the country's violence scenario.



Paraguay* (-5.3%)

Homicide data for Paraguay in 2024 is not available at the time of publication. Authorities only published data combining murders and attempted murders, which shows a 5.3% decline to a combined murder/attempted murder rate of 19.4 from 2023's 20.3, according to the Public Ministry.

For years, prisons in Paraguay have been hotbeds of violence and organized crime. After the country's largest criminal group, the **Rotela Clan**, staged a riot and temporarily **took over** the country's largest penitentiary, Tacumbú, in late 2023, the government launched several operations to isolate criminal leaders, deport members of foreign criminal organizations, and increase the state's control over its facilities. Though the operations may have temporarily slowed violence related to organized crime,

they **fail to address** the severe overcrowding and failures in the justice system that has allowed gangs to flourish.

Notes and Methodology

Sources

Every year, we submit a public information request for every country in the region. For the countries that do not send us official data, we use official statements, databases, and media reports, or we look for NGOs that compile information on homicides in a transparent and rigorous manner.

Though we are precise in our requests and do our best to build a consistent dataset across the region, countries often change their numbers after cases are solved or reclassified. In some cases, different institutions within a country publish different numbers of homicides. This can lead to different data being released by countries after our annual Homicide Round-Up is published.

Calculating Homicide Rates

In our public information requests, we ask for the official homicide rate, total number of homicides, and official population of the country. When provided, we report the official homicide rate per 100,000 people. When not, we calculate the homicide rate with the official population data for 2024. If there is no population data for 2024 we use a projection, either from the country itself, from our own estimate, or from United Nations estimates. It is difficult to measure a country's population, and even more difficult to estimate projections. We attempt to get the most accurate population for each country and each year, but differences in methodology will lead to slightly different population estimates, so homicides rates may vary as well.

We use homicide rates as it is the standard way of comparing countries of different sizes and is typically understood by general audiences. It is important to note that homicide rates are far more volatile with smaller populations. A single digit change in homicides in a very small nation may result in a large fluctuation in its homicide rate, whereas a change of hundreds of homicides in a large country may barely move the homicide rate.

Country*

The asterisk denotes that the data that are unreliable, incomplete, or collected following a definition that does not conform to the **Bogotá Protocol**. The protocol established the definition of a homicide as “the death of a person caused by an intentional assault by another person or persons.” This excludes unintentional, accidental, and attempted homicides, but includes deaths from war, civil disturbances, prisons, and at the hands of authorities – even when it is determined that an officer acted within the law.

We do our best to compile and standardize homicide data across the region. But as we must rely on various governments to provide the data, we are limited in what data we receive and the quality of said data. In some cases, the data do not include the entire year, which would mean a lower homicide rate. In others, there is no transparency behind the process of collecting the data, making it impossible to verify figures. Some countries have a complete and transparent process, but use a definition of homicides that is different from most countries in the region. In this case, comparing homicide rate between two countries with different definitions would be invalid. Below, we add more details about why these countries are marked with an asterisk in the text.

Bolivia

Bolivia did not respond to our request for data, but there was official information available tracking murders up until September 2024. We used this for the country's analysis, comparing the values to the same period from 2023.

Chile

For 2024, InSight Crime obtained homicide data in Chile from the Investigative Police, but it was inconsistent and ambiguous. The figures did not match those from the Center for the Prevention of Homicides and Violent Crimes and included categories for death without descriptions. InSight Crime was also unable to use data from the above-mentioned center for this edition as it was unavailable

El Salvador

In 2019, El Salvador changed its methodology for collecting homicide data, straying from the Bogotá Protocol. It no longer considers events, such as bodies found in graves or suspected gang members

killed by authorities, as homicides, and there is little transparency regarding murders that may or may not be occurring in prisons. The police used to regularly publish homicides data, but does not anymore.

Haiti

Haiti does not have an open data program and does not release official numbers, so we relied on data from the United Nations Integrated Office in Haiti (BINUH) for our analysis. However, as this is not official data, there may be issues with precision.

Mexico

While Mexico has a relatively transparent process for reporting homicides, it uses data from two different institutions, which often have significantly different numbers. In recent years, researchers have criticized the government's methodology, pointing out that unknown violent deaths have increased rapidly, meaning that there could be a significant number of homicides that are not being classified as such. Unsolved **forced disappearances** are likely another indicator of homicides that have not been classified as such.

Paraguay

As of our publication, our request for official data had not been answered and official statistics on homicides had not been published. Official data that combined homicides and attempted homicides was published, so we used this to try to analyze trends in violence. Adding these two measures together, however, results in a much higher total number and makes it impossible to tell how many homicides actually occurred in 2024.

Nicaragua

There is no transparency whatsoever regarding Nicaragua's homicide data. The rate has been given during press conferences with no further details; our requests for data have been ignored.

Suriname

InSight Crime was unable to obtain open data on homicides in Suriname for 2024, and the government did not respond to requests for official statistics. While there was official information available for the

first nine months of 2024, which was used for the country analysis, it didn't disaggregate murders and manslaughter.

Venezuela

Venezuela does not have an open data program, and the official numbers that are sometimes released have no transparency regarding how they are collected and what is included or omitted in the definition of a homicide. We rely on the OVV for more accurate estimates, but as this is not official data, there may be issues with precision.