



**MAYORAL HOMICIDE IN MEXICO:
A SITUATIONAL ANALYSIS ON THE VICTIMS,
PERPETRATORS, AND LOCATIONS OF ATTACKS**

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Abstract

This essay seeks to identify the key factors that explain why local officials—specifically mayors, former mayors, mayors-elect, and mayoral candidates—are being killed in Mexico. Second, it aims to provide a set of policy alternatives to tackle this important threat to Mexican democracy, particularly in the context of the 2018 electoral process. To accomplish this goal, the paper uses the routine activity theory (RAT) crime triangle methodology to examine *who* are the targeted officials (the victims), *who* are the attackers (the offenders), and *where* the attacks have occurred (the place). Since official records are nonexistent on the subject, open source intelligence (OSINT) techniques are used to create a database that includes all attacks against local officials, from the first case recorded in Mexico on July 8, 2004, to March 1, 2018, when the researchers ended their data gathering process. The paper presents 178 documented deadly attacks (i.e., homicides) against local officials. Additionally, the paper examines a number of specific variables that appear to increase the risk of attack. As the cases are not distributed homogenously either spatially or temporally, the authors discuss the role crime concentration plays in these attacks. In particular, the paper focuses on studying *municipios* (i.e., cities) with “repeat victimizations,”—in other words, places where two or more mayors have been killed. Evidence-based approaches to the problem are proposed for a useful understanding of these high-profile attacks. An informed examination of previous cases can help to implement successful interventions for mitigating future attacks.

Key words: Mexico, organized crime, homicides, crime triangle, mayors, local authorities, victimization, political violence, alcaldes

Introduction¹

Violence against local officials in Mexico, in particular against mayors (*alcaldes*), made its presence felt for the first time in Mexico in 2004. Since then, this kind of violence has expanded substantially. To date, dozens of mayors, former mayors, mayors-elect, and mayoral candidates have been killed. Federal and local authorities have pointed to organized criminal groups (OCGs) as the main culprit in these aggressions. Nevertheless, in very few occasions have prosecutors made arrests or offered any credible evidence as to who the attackers are or whether OCGs were actually responsible. If this threat remains ignored by the authorities, it is likely to be even more damaging to Mexican institutions in the near future. For instance, around 80% of all Mexican *municipios* (1,924 out of 2,456) will elect mayors on July 1, 2018. With such a high prevalence of attacks, the role of mayor has become one of the deadliest and riskiest professional positions in the country. Yet despite the enormous negative implications for Mexican democracy, these attacks remain largely understudied and ignored.

This policy paper aims to identify the key factors that explain why mayors, former mayors, mayors-elect, and mayoral candidates are being targeted in Mexico. For this purpose, the essay examines the situational dynamics that may raise a mayor's risk of becoming a victim, taking into account the geographical location of his/her *municipio* as well as other context-specific factors that could be associated with these deadly assaults. This research is useful and timely, particularly as the upcoming elections could prompt attacks against candidates currently running for local posts as well as local officials whose terms will end in the coming months. The study focuses on mayors, even though other officials are also being targeted.

To achieve these aims, this policy paper has to overcome a number of different challenges. For instance, no official record exists for how many mayors, former mayors, mayors-elect, or mayoral candidates have been killed in Mexico. To fill this gap, we offer a data set that is unique in a number of ways. First, an open source intelligence (OSINT) approach was used to compile information on mayors targeted in Mexico between 2004—the first time such attacks were reported in the country—and March 1, 2018, when data collection ended. Second, to present a clear analysis of the attacks, a routine activity theory (RAT) crime triangle model² was employed. This is an approach adapted from environmental criminology³ that we believe can help frame these attacks as “crime events”—that is, they

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² The crime triangle dissects the “crime event” into 1) victim(s), 2) offender(s), and 3) the place(s) of crime (Felson 1995; Cohen and Felson 1979; Eck 2001). We will offer an in-depth explanation in Section 3.

³ Environmental criminology refers to the study of crime in the context of the environment in which it occurs. From this perspective, crime is the result of the interaction between places, incentives, and spatial patterns.

were the result of a set of decisions and actions (Cornish 1994; Wilcox and Miller 2014). The study also provides evidence on the extent to which OCGs are responsible for the attacks.

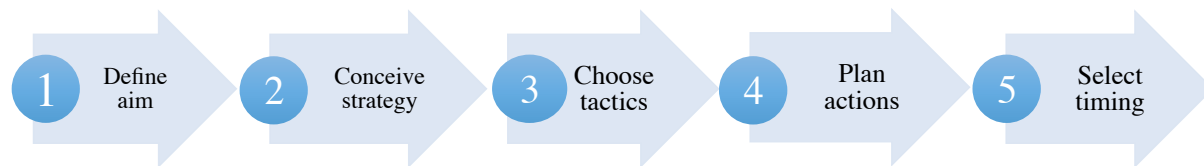
This paper is divided into five sections. The first section applies a rational choice approach to examining the decision-making processes of OCGs to understand how they decide whether to target a local official. In the second section, key hypotheses relevant for the particular case of Mexico are posited and assessed. In the third section, we discuss the utility of the RAT crime triangle as a framework to study these violent events. Fourth, the methodology is explained, including how data were compiled and how the new data set was developed. Finally, the key findings and some policy implications are discussed. In general, the paper aims to raise awareness regarding the assassinations of local officials in Mexico and make the case that these attacks constitute a major threat to the consolidation of the rule of law in Mexico.

Why Target a Local Official?

When a local official is targeted, Mexican authorities most commonly suggest that an OCG is responsible. There are a number of different reasons to assume that this explanation is at least likely. For instance, the relationship between local authorities and OCGs is, by definition, extremely complex. On the one hand, to run a successful illegal business, the best strategy for an OCG is to avoid interference from local authorities and, if possible, to receive (passively or actively) help from officials, who in exchange for their inaction or even active collaboration can benefit from the expansion of illegal profits. On the other hand, local authorities are the first line of defense against organized crime. They are supposed to tackle, disrupt, and mitigate OCGs' activities (e.g., extortion, kidnapping, oil theft, robbery, etc.) as they break the law and severely harm local communities. Naturally, mayors who refuse to take an inactive stance toward OCGs or who engage in fighting crime can run afoul of OCGs.

Knowing this, OCGs appear to follow a decision-making process in evaluating whether to take actions against local officials who may present obstacles to their activities. Considering the various concepts and mechanisms to operationalize this process, most of which we find in the relevant literature (Finckenauer 2005; Bailey & Taylor 2009; Pinotti 2012; Sberna and Oliveri 2014; Alesina, Piccolo and Pinotti 2016), we propose an ad hoc decision-making model for the cases included in this analysis. This model is made up of five key elements and is useful because it defines an attack against a local official as a "crime event"—that is, the result of a set of decisions and actions that lead to an attack (Cornish 1994; Wilcox and Miller 2014).

Figure 1. Attack on a Local Official as a “Crime Event”: A Five-step Rational Decision-making Process



Source: Authors’ analysis.

First, an OCG must decide what its wants from an official (i.e., the mayor, candidate, etc.). In all cases, OCGs look to deter officials from attempting to stop their unlawful activities. Even so, the specific action an OCG may take toward an individual official may vary according to the context. Several options are possible, from deterring individuals from running for office to impeding the election of a local official who may either harm the OCG’s interests or benefit a rival OCG. From a rational choice theoretical point of view, the resolution of any of these aims is a function of the expected utility of a given official versus the risk he or she poses to the OCG. The OCG can of course attempt to co-opt the official and persuade him or her to not act against it, or to even cooperate with the OCG. Overall, as reported in Table 1, we anticipate five major options OCGs may consider at this point: (a) Deter honest, reputable, and competent individuals/politicians from running for office; (b) Promote candidates that do not constitute a threat to OCG interests; (c) Impede the election of a local authority who may benefit a rival OCG; (d) Assure the successful election of a corrupt politician that has accepted an alliance with the OCG; and (e) Avoid investigations, arrests, prosecutions, and conviction by a given mayor’s administration.

Second, an OCG must decide its strategy, understood as the one that guarantees the best chances of achieving a predefined aim. Theoretical approaches suggest that these responses vary from evasion to corruption to confrontation (Bailey & Taylor 2009). *Evasion* occurs when an OCG decides to “operate under the radar,” probably because it estimates that this strategy is the least costly method of accomplishing its goals. *Corruption* includes payoffs, bribes, and other improper benefits or contracts. Ultimately, “the aim is to influence [an official] to act or to refrain from acting” (Korshell et al. 2007, 154).⁴ *Confrontation* is physical aggression, which ranges from threats to lethal force. This last strategy is the primary focus of this research. In this context, an attack against a mayor shows the strength of a criminal organization and simultaneously sends signals to other actors. By attacking officials, an OCG also demonstrates its willingness to carry out a threat. If a mayor is murdered, it

⁴ An OCG’s operations and ability to corrupt are usually interconnected. In the case of Mexico, Morris (2013) states that drug-related corruption might be the most common type of corruption. This involves a payoff to politicians, high-level public servants, governors, and of course, mayors. The goal is to impact decision-making or administrative decisions within public administration.

signals to his or her successors that the OCG controls the city, and that its interests will not be jeopardized.

Third, when an OCG chooses to engage in confrontation, it must decide the best tactics to accomplish its aggression goal. It must be said, however, that most OCGs would prefer evasion or corruption, if they can manage to protect their interests through those strategies. Sometimes, for example, OCGs seek to create alliances with officials. Finckenauer (2005) has suggested that in some settings—particularly where law enforcement is weak—authorities and criminals tend to have explicit or implicit agreements. An agreement, for example, could be reached in which police officers in a given city allow minor drug offenses in some specific areas, at specific times, as long as they are not violent (i.e., red light districts). Such arrangements appear to have been quite common in Mexico for decades, partly because authorities were more interested in “managing” crime rather than ending it.

Physical aggression seems to have become more common in recent years. Even so, it is not random. Aggression often occurs when officials (or their successors) who actively or passively participated in “arrangements” with an OCG decide to enforce the law, affecting the interests of the criminal group. In other words, OCGs may attack mayors when their *modus vivendi* arrangements with local authorities are modified without their knowledge or consent, when higher levels of federal or state government force officials to take action against an OCG, or when mayors respond to public pressure to combat an OCG, etc. Similarly, criminals may attack officials they believe have entered into arrangements with another OCG or are aiding rival groups, or when they want to expand their operations into a new area where another OCG operates and require help from local authorities.

Fourth, once an OCG decides to use lethal force, it must also decide how much violence to enact and craft a plan of action. Violence can range from subtle harassment and open threats (via telephone, email, or face-to-face intimidation) to property damage and physical violence—such as beatings, knifings, shootings, and murder (Korshell et al. 2007). In dramatic cases, OCGs may expose the victims’ bodies in public or use other techniques to communicate the attack, such as uploading videos of the assault online or unfurling narco-banners (*narcomantas*) in public places. Although police officers, politicians, and other public servants are most often targeted, an OCG’s aggressive actions can also extend to the relatives or political allies of those officials (Korshell et al. 2007).

Finally, an OCG must choose the timing of the aggression. To protect its interests, an OCG can choose to implement the previous steps before, during, or after an election. When an OCG uses violence before an election, it aims to influence “political selection”—who runs for office. Violence can also be used to modify the electoral outcome *during* the election. The goal is to guarantee that a potential winner will not interfere in the OCG’s interests. Violent behavior can also be executed *after* an election. Here, the goal is to either influence policymaking (Dal Bo and Di Tella 2003; Dal Bo and Di Tella 2006), pressure local authorities to approve a contract for a company associated with an OCG (i.e., extract rents from the public budget), etc. Although in our theoretical model the OCG would normally

have more incentives to attack a mayor before an election, it is also true that the decision to attack could occur at any time.

Table 1. Understanding OCGs’ Rationale for Confronting Mexican Mayors

Step 1: Define aims				
Deter honest, reputable, and competent individuals/politicians from running for office	Promote candidates that do not constitute a threat to their interests	Impede the election of a local authority who may benefit a rival OCG	Assure the successful election of a corrupt politician that has accepted an alliance with the OCG	Avoid investigations, arrests, prosecutions, and conviction by a given mayor’s administration
Step 2: Conceive strategy				
Evasion	Corruption	Confrontation		
Step 3: Choose tactics				
Eliminate an existing alliance with a rival OCG	Create a new alliance	Enforce/improve existing alliance		
Step 4: Plan actions				
No violence	The threat of violence	The use of violence	The open exposure of violence	
Step 5: Select timing				
Before the election	During the election	After the election	In the context of reelection	

Source: Authors’ elaboration

Using this framework has crucial implications. For instance, it leads to the explicit recognition that OCGs are rational actors who make decisions to bolster their criminal enterprises. Rational choice theory (Cornish and Clarke 1989) also predicts that OCGs initiate different courses of action according to their perceptions as well as the existing incentives within the environment in which they operate. Therefore, if an OCG decides to attack a mayor, this should be interpreted as the outcome of a rational process, implicitly involving an assessment and calculation of possible costs and expected benefits (Becker 1974; Cornish and Clarke 1986; Felson 2011). Aggression against an official implies that the OCG concluded that the costs of tolerating the government’s actions are greater than the risk of drawing attention to itself by attacking an official (Bailey and Taylor 2009, 5).

Despite these theoretical explanations, empirical literature on attacks against officials is still sparse. An international example comes from Daniele and Dipoppa (2016), who conducted an empirical analysis of attacks against local Italian politicians from 2010 to 2014. In their research, they sought to provide an understanding of how OCGs develop strategic actions to influence politics. One of their key findings was that “criminals might be more likely to target first-time elected governments, as they are less likely to have already been threatened by criminal organizations” (Daniele and Dipoppa 2016, 2). Under such circumstances, OCGs will intimidate a new administration after an election to influence crucial decisions, including law enforcement policies and political appointments.

The following section discusses some of the possible hypotheses that could explain the attacks against officials in Mexico. Then, the paper presents an approach to frame the issue as well as the methodology employed for the analysis.

A Review of Three Hypotheses

One hypothesis suggests that political assassinations in Mexico occur when an OCG is strong enough to force politicians to: 1) accept—against their will—the OCG’s criminal interests; 2) become “partners in crime” with that OCG (and benefit from its activities); or 3) enforce the rule of law, but only against a rival OCG (Astorga, 2015). In this context, mayors are being killed, then, because Mexico’s illegal industries have become more competitive, and with competition, the price of bribes has increased, and killing has become more valuable (Ríos 2010 and 2012).

A second hypothesis posits that attacks against local officials occur because of the inability of the three levels of government to structure and coordinate their actions when confronting OCGs. Regarding the latter, Trejo and Ley (2015) present evidence showing that drug violence is more intense in subnational regions ruled by elected officials who are affiliated with different political parties than the incumbent president. Alternatively, fewer attacks occur in subnational regions ruled by members of the president’s political party or by parties that are ideologically closer to the incumbent president’s party. This indicates that criminal groups in Mexico may attack local officials in order to take advantage of the policy disagreements that stem from political party differences among the federal, state, and municipal levels. In other words, they attack simply because there is an opportunity.

A third hypothesis suggests that OCGs may commit violent acts to gain local resources they would not be able to obtain otherwise. Hope (2017) finds that several criminal organizations of varied sizes have emerged in recent years because of the splintering of large drug trafficking organizations. As a result, crime has become more intensified locally. Thus, one big drug cartel turned into multiple gangs with lots of weapons, manpower, and the willingness to use violence. For these new criminal groups, mayors hold a fundamental role in their operations as they are a valuable source of information, e.g., the names of property and business owners in that municipality, which parties are involved in large public contracts, etc. Therefore, criminals target officials because this represents an opportunity to access financial resources from the

municipality’s public budget as well as strategic information on potential victims (individuals or enterprises) they can bribe, extort, kidnap, etc.

How to Approach the Issue? The RAT Crime Triangle

Eck (2003) defines “crime events” as incidents connected in a meaningful way—i.e., they cannot be considered “random” or “arbitrary.” From this perspective, scholars have shaped a powerful theoretical framework—the Routine Activity Theory (RAT). This crime science approach suggests that a crime is “highly likely when an offender and a target come together at the same place, at the same time, and there is no one nearby to control the offender, protect the target, or regulate conduct at the place” (Eck 2001, 86; see also Felson 1995; Cohen and Felson 1979). To date, RAT has been “used to explain a broad range of crime-types, including violence, property crimes, sexual assault, and stalking” (Tillyer and Eck 2011, 179).

Figure 2. The Routine Activity Theory Crime Triangles



Source: M.S. Tillyer and J.E. Eck (2011)

Perhaps the strongest assumption behind the RAT is that crime events cannot be explained by focusing only on the offenders or the targets. It is necessary to have a broader perspective, examining offenders, targets, and places. One of the key features of the RAT is the crime triangle (also known as the problem triangle), composed of six elements: three in the inner core and three in the external core (Scott, Eck, Knutsson, and Goldstein 2008; Tillyer and Eck 2011). As shown in Figure 2, the inside triangle involves the *offender*, the *target*, and a *place* where all three interact. The outer triangle is related to three types of supervisors: handlers, guardians, and place managers. The six elements embedded in the crime triangle are interrelated. The three elements in the inner triangle set up the basic elements for a problem, whereas the outer triangle involves the elements that could stop it (Scott, Eck, Knutsson, and Goldstein 2008). In other words, the outer triangle elements are *controllers*. Guardians protect the targets (Cohen and Felson 1979), place managers supervise

the locations (Eck 1994), and handlers deter the offenders (Felson 1986). Following RAT assumptions, after successfully attacking a target, “an offender might seek out other targets that have similar characteristics” (Eck 2003, 93). This has consequences in terms of repeat victimization, patterns of crime, and impunity, as will be discussed further when analyzing the murders of mayors in Mexico.

Methodology

This research studies the homicides of local officials, particularly of mayors, former mayors, alternate mayors,⁵ and mayors-elect, which took place between the first recorded attack on July 8, 2004, and the last day in which evidence was gathered for this study—March 1, 2018.⁶ It is worth pointing out again that, even though political assassinations have a significant impact on democratic institutions in Mexico, no single report or database detailing all murders of local officials exists. Nevertheless, three different lists of attacks on local officials were retrieved from open sources, which served as the baseline for this research. The first data set was compiled by Ríos (2010). This included 26 cases of mayoral assassinations between 2004 (when the first homicide is thought to have occurred) and 2010. The second source was compiled by the Mexican newspaper *El Universal*, which in 2016 listed attacks that occurred between January 2005 and January 2016. This data set includes the assassinations of 52 mayors, five alternate mayors, 44 relatives of mayors, five mayoral candidates, and 70 former mayors, as well as mayors who have been kidnapped and mayors who have gone missing (these cannot be legally declared murdered).⁷ The third data set was compiled by the Mexico’s Local Authorities Association (AALMAC),⁸ which published a list of 84 cases from 2006 to 2016, including homicides of mayors and other local officials (e.g., local treasurers).

These three data sets have substantial inconsistencies, not only in the number of cases but also in some of the reported details on the victims and the attacks. This prompted us to compile our own database to verify and add to the information for each case. This retrospective data collection process combined open source intelligence techniques with a systematic review of national and international media. The data collection relied on the RAT

⁵ In Mexico, mayors are able to leave the post for whatever reason—to run for another political office, an illness, or death. When this occurs, an alternate mayor takes office.

⁶ Appendix 1 includes the list of all the recorded attacks studied in this research. Although the study only covers the cases before March 1, 2018, for completeness we also include an additional list of all the attacks that occurred after this day and before this study was published (although these are not studied any further).

⁷ These missing mayors are covered in the analysis as it was possible to collect data about their crime event.

⁸ There are four mayoral associations in Mexico. The first is Mexico’s Local Authorities Association (Asociación de Autoridades Locales de México—AALMAC). Three others are: 2) the National Mayors’ Association (Asociación Nacional de Alcaldes—ANAC), 3) the National Federation of Mexican Municipalities (Federación Nacional de Municipios de México—FENAMM), and 4) the National Conference of Mexican Municipalities (Conferencia Nacional de Municipios de México—CONAMM). Each encompasses different municipalities and/or political affiliations. However, only AALMAC has released an official review of mayoral homicides in Mexico.

crime triangle framework and focused on gathering information on the three elements inside the triangle: the offender, the target, and the place/setting for the crime event.

Media were the primary source for our database. This includes information drawn from local, national, and international news articles. National media were most commonly used for all cases. Because of this double process of data verification and new data collection, a novel data set was created that includes 178 cases of deadly aggression against mayors. Appendix 2 includes a brief description of all of the variables considered in determining the offender, the target/victim, and the place/setting.

The main limitation during the data collection process was the lack of official information. This motivated the use of alternative (unofficial) sources such as open sources (e.g., local and national media). Moreover, the databases mentioned above showed three types of inconsistencies. First, the number of cases reported was different in each, even when comparing the same time period. Second, often the victim’s position was listed inaccurately (e.g., some data sets may have described an individual as a mayor when the victim was in fact a former mayor, or vice versa). Third, the municipalities’ names were sometimes incomplete or inaccurate. There was also a clear shortage of further details about the victims, the offenders, and the locations where the assassination took place. A second limitation of this study is related to the nature of the research itself. This document is an exploratory case study and does not aim to provide external validity. We doubt the findings can be generalized.

Key Findings

The sample consists of 178 cases (N=178). We examine all of them in the next three sections. Results were coded and analyzed through the IBM SPSS statistical analysis software package.

Who is the Victim?

Position

Table 2 shows the percentage of cases found for every position. The most targeted officials were former mayors (57%) and incumbent mayors (33%). Mayors-elect (6%) were attacked to a lesser degree, while alternate mayors constituted the lowest proportion of victims (4%).

Table 2. Target’s Position

Position	Frequency	Percentage
Former mayor	101	57%
Mayor	58	33%
Mayor-elect	11	6%
Alternate mayor	8	4%
Total	178	100%

Source: Authors’ calculations

Age

Media articles examined during the research did not report the targets' age in 79 out of 178 cases. The following results are from the cases where that information was available. Table 3 shows that 40- to 50-year-olds were the most targeted age group (48.5%), followed by 50- to 60-year-olds (24.2%). The least targeted age groups were victims age 60 and up (16.2%), ages 30-40 (10.1%), and ages 20-30(1%).

Table 3. Target's Age

Age Group	Frequency	Percentage
20-30 years old	1	1%
30-40 years old	10	10.1%
40-50 years old	48	48.5%
50-60 years old	24	24.2%
60+ years old	16	16.2%
Total	99	100%

Source: Authors' calculations

Gender

Males made up the largest percentage of targets (97%). Female mayors were targeted in 3% of the cases.

Political Affiliation

Table 4 shows the political party affiliations of the targets. Generally, the majority of the targets were members of the Institutional Revolutionary Party (Partido Revolucionario Institucional–PRI) with 42.7%, the Democratic Revolution Party (Partido de la Revolución Democrática–PRD) with 20.8%, and the National Action Party (Partido Acción Nacional–PAN) with 16.3%. Targets appointed by Indigenous Customary Practices (ICP) made up 6.7% of victims. The political parties with the smallest number of attacks were coalitions with 3.4%, the Labor Party (Partido del Trabajo–PT) with 2.2%, the Green Party (Partido Verde Ecologista de Mexico–PVEM) with 2.2%, and the Citizen's Movement (Movimiento Ciudadano–MC) with 1.7%.

Table 4. Target's Political Affiliation

Political Party	Frequency	Percentage
PRI	76	42.7%
PRD	37	20.8%
PAN	29	16.3%
ICP	12	6.7%
Coalition	6	3.4%

PT	4	2.2%
PVEM	4	2.2%
MC	3	1.7%
Other	1	.6%
Not identified	6	3.4%
Total	178	100%

Source: Authors' calculations

Municipality and State

Mexico has 32 states and 2,456 municipalities. The states with the highest number of municipalities are Oaxaca (570), Puebla (217), and Veracruz (212). The states with the lowest number of municipalities are Quintana Roo (9), Baja California (5), and Baja California Sur (5). Table 5 summarizes the number of municipalities per state, the number of attacks per state, and the number of municipalities where attacks occurred in each state.

Table 5. States and Municipalities with Attacks

State	Number of Municipalities	Number of Attacks Identified	Municipalities with Attacks
Aguascalientes	11		
Baja California	5		
Baja California Sur	5		
Campeche	11		
Chiapas	118	3	3
Chihuahua	67	12	9
Coahuila	38	2	2
Colima	10	1	1
Durango	39	9	7
Guanajuato	46	2	2
Guerrero	81	20	16
Hidalgo	84	4	4
Jalisco	125	8	7
Mexico City	16		
Michoacán	113	18	15
Morelos	33	5	4
Nayarit	20		
Nuevo León	51	4	4
Oaxaca	570	28	26
Puebla	217	9	9
Querétaro	18		

Quintana Roo	9	1	1
San Luis Potosí	58	5	5
Sinaloa	18	3	3
Sonora	72	1	1
State of Mexico	125	9	9
Tabasco	17	2	2
Tamaulipas	43	8	8
Tlaxcala	60		
Veracruz	212	20	19
Yucatán	106	1	1
Zacatecas	58	3	3
Total	2,456	178	161

Source: Authors' calculations

The 178 attacks analyzed took place in 24 out of 32 states. It is also worth noting that aggressions occurred in 161 of out 2,456 municipalities (6.5%) (Appendix 3). None of the attacks included in this data set occurred in the states of Aguascalientes, Baja California, Baja California Sur, Campeche, Mexico City, Nayarit, Querétaro, and Tlaxcala.

The 178 attacks took place in the states of Chiapas, Chihuahua, Coahuila, Colima, Durango, Guanajuato, Guerrero, Hidalgo, Jalisco, Michoacán, Morelos, Nuevo León, Oaxaca, Puebla, Quintana Roo, San Luis Potosí, Sinaloa, Sonora, State of Mexico, Tabasco, Tamaulipas, Veracruz, Yucatán, and Zacatecas. The five states with the highest number of attacks on local officials were Oaxaca, Guerrero, Veracruz, Michoacán, and Chihuahua. Table 6 details the 13 municipalities in which more than one attack occurred (i.e., repeat victimizations).

Table 6. States and Municipalities with Repeat Victimizations

States	Municipality	Number of Cases	Position	Years of Attacks
Chihuahua	Aquiles Serdán	2	2FM	2008 and 2012
	Guadalupe	3	1M and 2FM	2006, 2007, and 2010
Durango	Otáez	3	1ME, 1M and 1FM	2004* and 2009
Guerrero	Petatlán	2	1M and 1FM	2009 and 2017
	Técpan de Galeana	3	1M and 2FM	2009, 2012, 2017
	Zapotitlán Tablas	2	1M and 1AM	2009 and 2010
Jalisco	Cuautitlán de García Barragán	2	1M and 1FM	2006 and 2008
	Buenavista	3	1M and 2FM	2005, 2008, and 2013
Michoacán	Santa Ana Maya	2	2FM	2009 and 2013

Morelos	Tetecala	2	2FM	2013 and 2016
Oaxaca	San José del Progreso	2	1M and 1FM	2010 and 2016
	San Miguel Tilquiápam	2	1M and 1AM	2012 and 2013
Veracruz	Juan Rodríguez Clara	2	1ME and 1AM	2010*

Note: Repeat victimization indicates that two or more homicides were committed in the same municipality. The asterisks (*) indicate that two homicides were committed in the same year in the municipality. The table includes attacks on mayors (M), former mayors (FM), mayors-elect (ME), and alternate mayors (AM).

Source: Authors' calculations

Companions During the Attack

Evidence indicates that a large proportion of the targets were alone when the attack occurred (57%), while 43% of the victims were accompanied by someone during the incident.

Attacks on Targets' Relatives

Although a vast majority of these companions (71%) were not relatives, a small proportion (16%) of relatives experienced aggressions during the mayor's attacks. There were also some cases in which relatives suffered an aggression before the victim (8%), while a smaller proportion (5%) were victimized after the aggression (Table 7).

Table 7. Attacks on Relatives

Timing of Attack	Frequency	Percentage
Before	14	8%
During	29	16%
After	8	4%
None	126	71%
Not identified	1	1%
Total	178	100%

Source: Authors' calculations

Member of a Political or Social Association

A large proportion of the targets (73%) did not belong to a political or social association besides their political party, while a small group (27%) did.

Attacked in His/Her Municipality

Most of the attacks (66%) occurred in the target's municipality, but there were a significant number of cases in which the attack did not take place in the mayor's city of residence (33%).

Elected More Than Once

When measuring the length of the target’s political career, data reveals that only a small proportion (5%) of the victims were mayors more than once, whereas the vast majority of targets (95%) were first-time elected officials.

Who is the Offender?

The Number of Criminals

A vast majority (85%) of the aggressions involved two or more perpetrators. Aggressions with one offender occurred less frequently (15%). This is relevant, as Mexico defines organized crime as activities involving more than three offenders.

Firearms Use/Type of Attack

Evidence suggests that a large proportion of the homicides (76%) were committed with firearms. In 12% of cases, the victims were kidnapped, then murdered. Mayors were stabbed to death (4%) or tortured (4%) in fewer cases. Some targets are considered “disappeared” (legally, they have not been killed) in a small proportion of cases (4%).

Firearms Use/Type of Gun

Unfortunately, open data sources did not provide extensive information about the type of firearms in a large number of these cases (74%). However, in 22% of the cases, the weapon used in the attacks was a military assault rifle (i.e., AK-47 or AR-15), shotgun, or machine gun. A small proportion of the mayoral homicides (4%) were stabbing attacks.

Ammunition

An analogous situation occurred with ammunition. Although open source materials did not provide evidence in most of the cases (70%), the available data revealed that different calibers of weapons were used during the attacks. These include 2.23 mm, 9 mm, 12 mm, .22 mm, 7.62 mm, .38 mm, and .45 mm.

The Number of Gunshots

Table 8 details the level of violence in all the cases. As mentioned above, firearms were the most commonly used weapon. In most cases, the attack involved multiple gunshots (83%) while only one shot was fired in a small proportion of the attacks (17%).

Table 8. Number of Cases in which Multiple Gunshots were Fired

More than One Shot	Number of Cases	Percentage
No	23	13%
Yes	110	62%
Not identified	45	25%
Total	178	100%

Source: Authors’ calculations

Use of Motor Vehicles

Evidence suggests that a large proportion (67%) of the cases involved the use of a motor vehicle. This trend is similar if we look at the attacks for each of the four positions. There were a small number of cases (33%) in which the offender committed the crime while walking.

The Use of Death Threats

Only a small proportion of the victims (10%) received death threats prior to the attack, while the vast majority (90%) did not. Mayors received the highest number of death threats among the four positions.

Previous Attacks Attempted

Most of the targets (85%) were first-time victims of violence, (and criminals' tactics were effective). On the contrary, a small number of mayors (15%) were subjected to previous aggressions but survived the attacks.

Drivers/Causes of Aggression

While media sources did not explicitly mention the drivers/causes of assassination in 30% of the cases, our research proposes some categories by indicating (without specifying or inferring) the rationale behind each aggression using available data (Table 9).

Media reported OCGs as the main offenders in numerous attacks on targets (13%), but failed to present any evidence either to suggest that the target had been aligned with OCGs (corrupt) or was aiming to tackle crime (innocent); such reporting ignores the fact that these two conditions represent very different scenarios. The lack of further details on this variable did not allow us to further classify these crime events according to the categories listed in Appendix 2.

Evidence reported suggests that a small number of cases (5%) were motivated by personal reasons. For instance, the victim may have been murdered as a consequence of a conflict with family members such as his/her spouse, child, stepchild, business partners, or lovers or former lovers. But, as shown in Table 9, a small proportion of attacks were the result of acts of betrayal by (corrupt) local police (2%)—generally involving a cop or several officers turning the local official over to the organized crime group (it is worth noting that only mayors and former mayors were victimized by local police). In another small percentage of attacks (2%), OCGs targeted the public official because they considered him an ally of a rival group. Yet another small percentage of mayors were targeted because organized criminals felt betrayed by the public official (2%). Political violence toward the four positions—that is, conflict between local interest groups and authorities in which at least one is willing to use force against the other—made up a significant portion of the attacks (24%), as did OCG efforts to victimize the “rebel target” (i.e., the target is assassinated because of his/her lack of willingness to get involved in or to permit criminal operations of an OCG, such as drug trafficking or extortion) (13%). A smaller amount of aggressions (9%) were the consequence of conventional crime (i.e., burglary or assault).

As the findings in Table 9 show, it is possible to affirm that there are two main drivers behind mayoral homicides. On the one hand, there are cases that are indicative of political violence (24%). On the other hand, there are also cases that suggest organized crime involvement (30%).

Table 9. Drivers/Causes of Aggression

Drivers	Frequency	Percentage
Personal reasons	9	5%
Political violence	43	24%
Conventional crime	16	9%
Betrayal from the local (corrupt) police	3	2%
Organized crime victimizing the “rebel target”	22	13%
Organized crime victimizing the “allied target” of a rival group	4	2%
Organized crime victimizing the “traitor target”	4	2%
Organized crime but no further details	23	13%
Not mentioned	54	30%
Total	178	100%

Source: Authors’ calculations

What is the Situation?

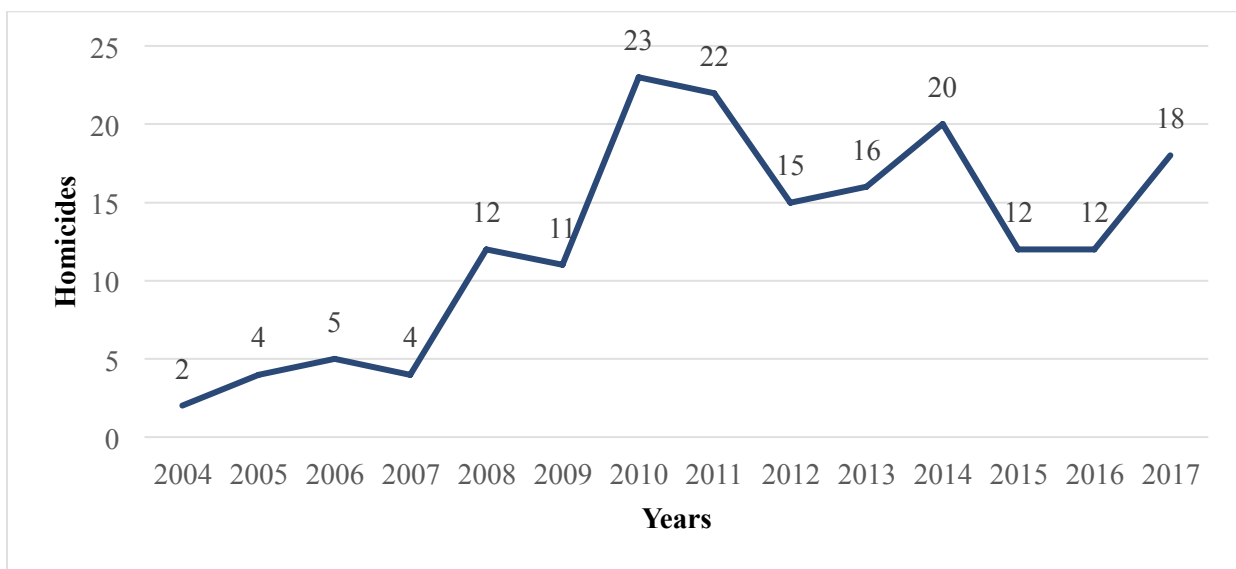
Date of Attack

Data shows that the first recorded attack on a mayoral-level public official took place on July 8, 2004. The victim was a mayor-elect from the municipality of Otáez in the State of Durango, in north-central Mexico (Appendix 3). The last reported mayoral homicide at the time of this analysis⁹ occurred on January 10, 2018. The target in that case was a former mayor from the municipality of Colipa in the State of Veracruz, on the Gulf of Mexico. Both homicides occurred in very different regions and span over a period of 5,198 days—the period analyzed in this study. Although there has been a steady stream of murders of local officials, there are some years in which the number of such homicides is particularly high—2010 to 2017.

⁹ The data collection process was completed on March 1, 2018.

Figure 3 below shows the number of mayoral homicides that have occurred since 2004. As the data reveals, 2010, 2011, and 2014 were among the most violent years for local public officials. The number of mayors killed dropped in 2015 and remained relatively stable in 2016. However, in 2017, the number of homicides rose again. It is worth noting that homicides of local officials seem to mirror the national homicide trend. The years 2011 and 2017 had the highest number of total murders in the sampling period and were the two most violent years in Mexico’s history. Thus, it could be that more mayors were killed in those years simply because more people were killed in the country overall. Because of this possibility, this essay does not venture to make causal inferences and serves as a more descriptive study.

Figure 3. Attacks by Year



Source: Authors’ calculations

Of the four positions identified in this analysis, former mayors have been targeted the most over the 13 years covered in this study, with 2011, 2014, and 2015 being particularly violent years. The most violent year for mayors was 2010 followed by 2017. No aggressions against mayors occurred in 2004 and 2007. The first reported attack on an alternate mayor occurred in 2009, with the most recent attack on these officials in 2014. The first aggression against a mayor-elect was in 2004. This position did not suffer further attacks until 2010 (Table 10).

Table 10. Attacks Per Year, by Position

Year	ME	FM	M	AM	Total
2004	1	1			2
2005		3	1		4
2006		2	3		5
2007		4			4
2008		8	4		12
2009		6	4	1	11
2010	3	5	13	2	23
2011		15	7		22
2012	1	8	3	3	15
2013	3	9	4		16
2014	1	15	2	2	20
2015	1	10	1		12
2016		6	6		12
2017	1	7	10		18
2018 (until March 1)		2			2
Total	11	101	58	8	178

Source: Authors' calculations

Mayoral attacks have occurred in all months, though the highest number of attacks were recorded in October (11%), June (11%), and April (10%). March (5%) and December (6%) registered the fewest number of aggressions. Incidents occurred in almost the same proportion every weekday. Hence, there is no significant information to report in this category.

Time of Attack

It was not possible to retrieve this information for 21 cases (12%). Offenders committed homicides during the morning and in the afternoon at similar rates (24%). A large number of murders occurred at night (40%).

Place of Attack

Most of the attacks (40%) took place on highways or streets. The second most common place for the attacks was the targets' homes (27%), followed by commercial venues (19%). Other venues where homicides occurred included public and religious spaces, as well as political and social events.

Population

Among the municipalities where mayoral homicides occurred, Mártires de Tacubaya has the smallest population, with 1,424 individuals. It is located in the state of Oaxaca, in Southwest Mexico. Tecámac has the largest population, with 446,008 people. This

municipality is located in Estado de México in the south-central region—and, notably, 40 km from Mexico City. About 28% of the municipalities have a population of 10,000 people or less, while 25% have a population of between 10,001 and 20,000 (Table 11).

Table 11. Population of Municipalities Where Attacks Occurred

Percentage of Attacks	Population
28%	0-10,000
25%	10,001-20,000
15%	20,001-30,000
8%	30,001-40,000
6%	40,001-50,000
4%	50,001-60,000
2%	60,001-70,000
1%	70,001-80,000
2%	80,001-90,000
1%	90,001-100,000
1%	100,001-110,000
1%	110,001-120,000
1%	120,001-130,000
1%	180,001-190,000
1%	230,001-240,000
1%	340,001-350,000
1%	360,001-370,000
1%	390,001-400,000
1%	440,001-450,000

Source: Authors' calculations

Distance between the Municipality and the State's Capital

Evidence shows that over a third (33%) of the attacks took place in municipalities located within a 100-km radius of the state's capital (see Table 12). A small percentage (2%) of the cases occurred between 501 km and 600 km from the state capital. The city of Cuernavaca in south-central Mexico was the only case in which a state capital registered an attack. Miguel Alemán, Tamaulipas, located in northeastern Mexico, was the farthest municipality from the state capital, though it coincidentally is located on the border between Texas and Mexico.

Table 12. Distance Between the Municipality Where Attacks Occurred and the State’s Capital

Percentage of Attacks	Distance
33%	0-100 km
27%	101-200 km
22%	201-300 km
13%	301-400 km
3%	401-500 km
2%	501-600 km

Source: Authors’ calculations

Governor’s Political Affiliation

A large proportion (58%) of attacks occurred in states with a PRI governor. In contrast, a small number (18%) of homicides occurred under a PRD government at the state level. Fewer attacks happened in states with PAN (11%) governors.

President’s Political Affiliation

About 55% of the attacks happened during a PAN presidency (2000-2012). So far, there have been 80 mayoral homicides recorded (45%) during Peña-Nieto’s PRI administration.

Discussion

Although there have been few attempts to explain mayoral homicides in Mexico, the situation is poorly understood due to a lack of information on the victims, the perpetrators, and the places where the crimes have occurred. The current literature does not provide an accurate picture of how the situation has emerged and evolved over recent years, the real micro-causes and patterns behind it, and most importantly, a solution for what can be done to stop these attacks. This research registered 178 deadly attacks from 2004 until March 1, 2018 (when the authors concluded the data collection phase for the analysis).

Unfortunately, other homicides have occurred after March 2018; our calculations estimate that, through May 17, 2018, there have been a total of 201 victims, including mayoral pre-candidates and mayoral candidates running for office during the 2018 electoral process. As a result of these figures, evidence would show that 1.2 mayoral homicides have occurred on average per month since July 2004. Unfortunately, attacks against mayors are only the tip of the iceberg. In effect, other high-profile attacks suggest emerging patterns. For instance, over the last few years, several journalists and priests have been murdered as well, and until now there is no empirical evidence of what is spurring these cases.

Policy Implications

Security practitioners must be aware that the attacks against local public officials in Mexico is a complex phenomenon with multiple causes and explanations. Response and prevention strategies must therefore discern between two different main triggers for these cases: organized crime and political violence (which we defined as conflict between local interest groups and authorities in which at least one is willing to use force against the other, effectively signaling that the state does not possess a monopoly on the use of force).

Moreover, as evidence throughout this text has pointed out, violence against mayors presents characteristics of an epidemic as attacks tend to cluster spatially. For instance, as it can be seen in Appendix 3, the case of Chihuahua illustrates that mayoral homicides were recorded in four bordering municipalities (i.e., one right to each other). A similar concentration pattern occurred in Durango and Guerrero, where clusters (i.e., hotspots) are also visible. Taking this empirical evidence into consideration, it is likely to expect that other attacks might occur in new municipalities and states, but those in close geographical proximity might be under greater risk. Likewise, the situation could even escalate further, as attacks against state governors—and not only mayors—are likely to occur in forthcoming years.

Attacks against local authorities is definitely attention-grabbing for a number of reasons. For instance, Congress has recently approved immediate re-election of mayors. As such, for the first time mayors can be in office for a second consecutive term,¹⁰ a change that could potentially make them more vulnerable to attacks as they will be in power for a longer time period. In addition, recent studies have shown that Mexican citizens are starting to acquire weapons as a mean of self-defense. A 2017 study found that 3% of urban Mexican households acquired a gun for self-defense, most of them during the last five years (Pérez Esparza and Hemenway 2017). From a situational crime prevention perspective (Wortley 2003), more people with access to guns in a violent setting does not seem to be an appropriate formula for reducing the security threat of gun violence.

This research aimed to provide a deeper understanding of attacks against officials by producing a novel data set with 178 cases of mayoral homicides. Overall, it features a descriptive analysis of the extent of the problem over time and space, and an analysis of some characteristics of the victims and offenders, as well as specific circumstances of the “crime event” (e.g., the place). This empirical study also explores possible drivers of mayoral homicides and discusses policy implications. Further research could be conducted by extending the data set to include aggressions toward other local officials (e.g., treasurers, comptrollers, and aldermen) as well as local political leaders. For instance, during the 2018 electoral process, there have already been deadly attacks on local deputy candidates, and no study has assessed this phenomenon comprehensively.

¹⁰ There are cases of local officials who have been elected mayor more than once; however, their terms were not consecutive.

More generally, this exploratory research offers several contributions to the study of crime from a *crime science* perspective. First, it shows how mayoral homicides in Mexico present several challenges as well as opportunities for academics, policymakers, and security practitioners. Second, it serves as the first attempt to understand the problem through the RAT crime triangle. Third, it urges a change in the public discourse about the murders of mayors, candidates, and former mayors. This is relevant given that, although federal and local authorities have asserted that mayoral homicides are “always” committed by organized crime groups, evidence reveals that other factors—such as political violence or conflict between non-criminal actors—may be at play. Lastly, this study aims to shed light on the gravity of the situation, revealing how these homicides are clearly a national security concern as they threaten Mexico’s political institutions, suggesting that the stability of democracy requires an evidence-based discussion that is able to offer long-term solutions.

The study also corroborates that firearms were the most used weapon against mayors. This has many repercussions in terms of Mexico’s homeland security, and for policies that are required in the immediate future. For instance, Pérez Esparza and Weigend (2015) suggest that “Mexican firearms policy is—and has been—one of the most restrictive in the world” (p. 116). Despite this policy, the assassination of municipal mayors is another example of how gun violence—fueled by guns that have been trafficked into the country—has reached different sectors of Mexican society. In sum, it is mandatory to counter the supply of firearms as well to develop better strategies to combat gun trafficking in Mexico as a key solution to reduce aggregate risks of future attacks.

Where to start? The first course of action is to improve the data collection process. In particular, new variables might be explored to increase the explanatory power of the analysis. In the case of the target (i.e., mayors), it will be interesting to explore how long mayors were in office before being attacked, or how soon they suffered an attack after leaving office. Second, in the case of the offender (i.e., OCGs), four new areas can be considered. First, there can be analysis of whether a judicial investigation was launched to prosecute offenders for attacks, and which agency oversaw it (if any). This is relevant since on several occasions, Mexico’s Attorney General’s Office was responsible for the judicial investigation (rather than the local justice department). Hence, it is not clear under what circumstances Mexico’s Attorney General’s Office intervenes in the prosecution process; protocols should thus be established to professionalize the investigations and to reduce possible biases. Third, there needs to be exploration of whether homicides took place before or after the most violent days in the municipality. This would, for example, help to determine whether mayoral homicides are independent from (or related to) overall increased violence within a municipality. Fourth, there should be analysis of possible correlations between mayoral homicides and the capture of drug kingpins or an election, as this phenomena also could be temporally and spatially associated.

Some additional variables can be included for a better understanding of the situation. For instance, analyses would benefit from studying the condition of the illegal drugs industry in the *municipio* (i.e., information on whether the municipality is a source, a transit territory, or a destination for illegal drugs). Second, data on which drug cartels are

operating within the municipality and the overall level of violence can likewise help to monitor crime dynamics. Third, a comprehensive analysis should also include the main economic activities in the region, and whether they are productive or mainly extractive, such as mining. Fourth, following the hypothesis (previously discussed) that attacks against mayors are the result of OCGs' desires to take part of the municipal budgets, future studies might find it useful to include the local financial environment, taking aspects such as city budgets into consideration. Other key processes and variables that could be examined in future studies include: (5) the logistical infrastructure available to regular citizens and, by extension, to criminal groups (6) the number of homicides at the state level; and (7) the inclusion of epidemiological models in order to assess possible predictions or identify additional risk factors based on specific populations and risk dynamics.

Given that the election will take place in July 2018, the second course of action is to focus on prediction and prevention. Special attention is required regarding municipalities where repeat victimizations have already occurred. This is key, as crime science literature suggests that it is very likely that another murder or murders will occur in the short run, especially in places where this type of violence has already occurred. To this effect, Appendix 3 includes several maps that illustrate the spatiotemporal evolution of all local official homicides through three presidential administrations (Fox, Calderon, and Peña-Nieto). As these figures demonstrate, the location of mayoral homicides have shifted from the north to the south. Chihuahua, Durango, and Guerrero constitute an important cluster of homicides, as does the border between the states of Veracruz and Tabasco. Under such circumstances, proximity to regions with high rates of homicides may also matter. Therefore, we recommend running a spatiotemporal cluster analysis (i.e., a hotspot) as this could be useful to forecast and prevent further attacks based on previous evidence.

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Appendix 1

1.1. List of Recorded Attacks between July 8, 2004, and March 1, 2018

Case	Mayor's Name	Municipality	State	Date of Attack	Position
M001	José Manuel Soto Ortiz	Otáez	Durango	2004-07-08	Mayor-elect
M002	Esteban Estrada Corral	Otáez	Durango	2004-10-03	Former Mayor
M003	Teodoro Herrera Sosa	Soto La Marina	Tamaulipas	2005-01-17	Former Mayor
M004	Saúl Rubio Ayala	Sinaloa	Sinaloa	2005-05-16	Former Mayor
M005	Fernando Chávez López	Buenavista	Michoacan	2005-07-08	Mayor
M006	Jesús Clara Morales	Xochihuehuetlán	Guerrero	2005-10-22	Former Mayor
M007	Neguib Tadeo Manrique Madariaga	Ciudad Ixtepec	Oaxaca	2006-01-13	Mayor
M008	Eulalio Esparza Nieto	Chalco	Edomex	2006-06-01	Former Mayor
M009	Raúl Delgado Benavides	Cuautitlán de García Barragán	Jalisco	2006-07-15	Mayor
M010	Omar Alberto Amaya Núñez	Guadalupe	Chihuahua	2006-09-25	Former Mayor
M011	Walter Herrera Ramírez	Huimanguillo	Tabasco	2006-11-15	Mayor
M012	Apolonio Amaya Fierro	Guadalupe	Chihuahua	2007-04-10	Former Mayor
M013	Alfredo Cabrera Castro	Omealca	Veracruz	2007-05-03	Former Mayor
M014	Enrique Hernández Bernardino	Tlatlaya	Edomex	2007-08-08	Former Mayor
M015	Juan Antonio Guajardo Anzaldúa	Río Bravo	Tamaulipas	2007-11-29	Former Mayor
M016	Ramiro Rubio Esquivel	La Huacana	Michoacan	2008-01-04	Former Mayor
M017	José Alfredo Pérez Castro	Tochtepec	Puebla	2008-02-19	Former Mayor
M018	Jorge Ortega Farías	Buenavista	Michoacan	2008-04-11	Former Mayor

Mayoral Homicide in Mexico

Case	Mayor's Name	Municipality	State	Date of Attack	Position
M019	Leopoldo Juárez Urbina	Cherán	Michoacan	2008-05-08	Former Mayor
M020	Juan Marcelo Ibarra Villa	Madero	Michoacan	2008-06-01	Mayor
M021	Manuel de Jesús Ángulo Torres	Topia	Durango	2008-06-03	Mayor
M022	Juan Manuel Orozco Serrano	Cuautitlán de García Barragán	Jalisco	2008-07-24	Former Mayor
M023	Homero Lorenzo Ríos	Ayutla de los Libres	Guerrero	2008-09-24	Mayor
M024	Salvador Christopher Vergara Cruz	Ixtapan de la Sal	Edomex	2008-10-03	Mayor
M025	José Álvarez Rodríguez	Hidalgo	Nuevo Leon	2008-10-25	Former Mayor
M026	Leonel Roberto Carrillo Márquez	Aquiles Serdán	Chihuahua	2008-11-27	Former Mayor
M027	José Vázquez Piedra	Turicato	Michoacan	2008-11-30	Former Mayor
M028	Ignacio Álvarez Vargas	Coscomatepec	Veracruz	2009-01-24	Former Mayor
M029	Claudio Reyes Núñez	Otáez	Durango	2009-02-04	Mayor
M030	Francisco Javier Rodríguez Aceves	Petatlán	Guerrero	2009-02-21	Former Mayor
M031	Octavio Manuel Carrillo Castellanos	Vista Hermosa	Michoacan	2009-02-24	Mayor
M032	Dimas Arzeta Cisneros	Técpan de Galeana	Guerrero	2009-03-13	Former Mayor
M033	Nicolás León Hernández	Lázaro Cárdenas	Michoacan	2009-04-03	Former Mayor
M034	Alfonso Cruz Rivera	Zapotitlán Tablas	Guerrero	2009-04-18	Alternate Mayor
M035	Luis Carlos Ramírez López	Ocampo	Durango	2009-06-01	Mayor
M036	Efraín Gutiérrez Arcos	Santa Ana Maya	Michoacan	2009-06-11	Former Mayor
M037	Héctor Ariel Meixueiro Muñoz	Namiquipa	Chihuahua	2009-07-14	Mayor
M038	Jafet Romero Mendoza	Tezonapa	Veracruz	2009-09-09	Former Mayor

Mayoral Homicide in Mexico

Case	Mayor's Name	Municipality	State	Date of Attack	Position
M039	Aurelio Fausto Cháidez Chavarín	Angostura	Sinaloa	2010-01-09	Former Mayor
M040	Ramón Mendivil Sotelo	Guadalupe y Calvo	Chihuahua	2010-02-17	Mayor
M041	Manuel Estrada Escalante	Mezquital	Durango	2010-02-22	Mayor
M042	Vidal Olivera Cruz	San Lorenzo Albarradas	Oaxaca	2010-04-01	Mayor
M043	Rey Hernández García	Tlacoachistlahuaca	Guerrero	2010-04-25	Former Mayor
M044	José Santiago Agustin	Zapotitlán Tablas	Guerrero	2010-04-28	Mayor
M045	Abel Uribe Landa	Tetipac	Guerrero	2010-05-03	Former Mayor
M046	Jesús Manuel Lara Rodríguez	Guadalupe	Chihuahua	2010-06-19	Mayor
M047	Oscar Venancio Martínez Rivera	San José del Progreso	Oaxaca	2010-06-19	Mayor
M048	Nicólas García Ambrosio	Santo Domingo de Morelos	Oaxaca	2010-06-30	Mayor
M049	Alberto Herrera Casillas	Tecalitlán	Jalisco	2010-07-10	Former Mayor
M050	Alfonso Peña Peña	Tepehuanes	Durango	2010-07-26	Mayor
M051	Edelmiro Cantú Leal	Santiago	Nuevo Leon	2010-08-15	Mayor
M052	Marco Antonio Leal	Hidalgo	Tamaulipas	2010-08-29	Mayor
M053	Alexander López García	El Naranjo	San Luis Potosi	2010-09-09	Mayor
M054	Prisciliano Rodríguez Salazar	Doctor González	Nuevo Leon	2010-09-23	Mayor
M055	Gustavo Sánchez Cervantes	Tancítaro	Michoacan	2010-09-27	Alternate Mayor
M056	Artemio Tomás Jiménez Baños	Mártires de Tacubaya	Oaxaca	2010-10-08	Mayor-elect
M057	José Felipe García García	Cruillas	Tamaulipas	2010-10-13	Mayor-elect
M058	Jaime Lozoya Ávila	San Bernardo	Durango	2010-11-05	Mayor

Mayoral Homicide in Mexico

Case	Mayor's Name	Municipality	State	Date of Attack	Position
M059	Gregorio Barradas Miravete	Juan Rodríguez Clara	Veracruz	2010-11-09	Mayor-elect
M060	Omar Manzur Assad	Juan Rodríguez Clara	Veracruz	2010-11-09	Alternate Mayor
M061	Nazario Cruz Vargas	Tecámac	Edomex	2010-11-18	Former Mayor
M062	Saúl Vara Rivera	Zaragoza	Coahuila	2011-01-05	Mayor
M063	Abraham Ortiz Rosales	Temoac	Morelos	2011-01-10	Mayor
M064	Luis Jiménez Mata	Santiago Amoltepec	Oaxaca	2011-01-13	Mayor
M065	Abel Guerrero García	Ajacuba	Hidalgo	2011-01-16	Former Mayor
M066	Juan Carlos Guardado Méndez	Fresnillo	Zacatecas	2011-02-03	Former Mayor
M067	José Luis Prieto Torres	Allende	Chihuahua	2011-02-17	Former Mayor
M068	Saturnino Valdes Llanos	Tampico Alto	Veracruz	2011-02-23	Mayor
M069	Mario Eduardo Chuc Aguilar	Felipe Carrillo Puerto	Quintana Roo	2011-03-10	Former Mayor
M070	Enterbio Reyes Bello	Copanatoyac	Guerrero	2011-04-06	Former Mayor
M071	Silvia Moreno Leal	Balleza	Chihuahua	2011-05-12	Former Mayor
M072	Fernando Duarte Flores	Hidalgo	Coahuila	2011-05-14	Former Mayor
M073	Eduardo García Delgado	Lerdo de Tejada	Veracruz	2011-06-07	Former Mayor
M074	Fortino Cortés Sandoval	Benito Juárez	Zacatecas	2011-06-27	Mayor
M075	Ernesto Cornejo Valenzuela	Benito Juárez	Sonora	2011-07-21	Former Mayor
M076	Porfirio Flores Ayala	Cuernavaca	Morelos	2011-07-31	Former Mayor
M077	José Eduvigés Nava Altamirano	Zacualpan	Edomex	2011-08-19	Mayor
M078	Luz María García Villagrán	Gran Morelos	Chihuahua	2011-08-22	Former Mayor

Mayoral Homicide in Mexico

Case	Mayor's Name	Municipality	State	Date of Attack	Position
M079	Gustavo Pacheco Villaseñor	San Juan Bautista Tuxtepec	Oaxaca	2011-09-15	Former Mayor
M080	Antonio Jacinto López Martínez	San Martín Itunyoso	Oaxaca	2011-10-17	Former Mayor
M081	Ricardo Guzmán Romero	La Piedad	Michoacan	2011-11-02	Mayor
M082	Fortunato Ruiz Blázquez	Ixhuacán de los Reyes	Veracruz	2011-12-12	Former Mayor
M083	José Martínez Mendoza	Cosalá	Sinaloa	2011-12-21	Former Mayor
M084	Wilfrido Flores Villa	Nahuatzen	Michoacan	2012-02-04	Alternate Mayor
M085	Francisco García Girard	Aquiles Serdán	Chihuahua	2012-04-14	Former Mayor
M086	Rafael Ariza Bibiano	Coyuca de Benítez	Guerrero	2012-05-31	Former Mayor
M087	Margarito Genchi Casiano	Florencio Villarreal	Guerrero	2012-06-11	Former Mayor
M088	Marisol Mora Cuevas	Tlacojalpan	Veracruz	2012-06-28	Mayor
M089	Pedro Filemón Luis Hernández	San Miguel Tilquiápam	Oaxaca	2012-08-02	Alternate Mayor
M090	Nadin Torralba Mejía	Técpan de Galeana	Guerrero	2012-08-05	Mayor
M091	Édgar Morales Pérez	Matehuala	San Luis Potosi	2012-08-12	Mayor-elect
M092	Imeldo Rayón de Jesús	San Juan Juquila Mixies	Oaxaca	2012-08-23	Alternate Mayor
M093	Nahum Tress Manica	Isla	Veracruz	2012-08-27	Former Mayor
M094	Miguel Jaimes Palacios	San Miguel Totolapan	Guerrero	2012-09-07	Former Mayor
M095	Lorenzo Salinas Mendoza	Santa María Temaxcaltepec	Oaxaca	2012-09-26	Former Mayor
M096	Raúl Antonio Rodríguez Barrera	Miguel Alemán	Tamaulipas	2012-10-31	Former Mayor
M097	María Santos Gorrostieta Salazar	Tiquicheo de Nicolás Romero	Michoacan	2012-11-12	Mayor
M098	Pablo Antonio Pintor	Ciudad del Maíz	San Luis Potosi	2012-12-16	Former Mayor

Mayoral Homicide in Mexico

Case	Mayor's Name	Municipality	State	Date of Attack	Position
M099	Cristóbal Javier Angulo	Paraíso	Tabasco	2013-01-16	Former Mayor
M100	Enrique Marín Lara	Soledad de Doblado	Veracruz	2013-02-22	Former Mayor
M101	Francisco David Carrasco Carnero	Julimes	Chihuahua	2013-02-23	Mayor-elect
M102	Feliciano Martínez Bautista	San Juan Mixtepec	Oaxaca	2013-03-24	Mayor
M103	José René Garrido Rocha	San Salvador El Verde	Puebla	2013-04-20	Mayor
M104	Celestino Félix Vázquez Luis	San Miguel Tilquiápam	Oaxaca	2013-06-04	Mayor
M105	José Ramírez Román	Saín Alto	Zacatecas	2013-06-21	Former Mayor
M106	Gerónimo García Rosas	Aquila	Veracruz	2013-07-22	Mayor
M107	Víctor Tapia Ocampo	Tetecala	Morelos	2013-08-13	Former Mayor
M108	Everardo Hugo Hernández Guzmán	San Andrés Cabecera Nueva	Oaxaca	2013-09-10	Mayor-elect
M109	Osvaldo Esquivel Lucatero	Buenavista	Michoacan	2013-09-11	Former Mayor
M110	Javier Sagrero Chávez	Quiroga	Michoacan	2013-09-13	Former Mayor
M111	Julio César Salinas Terán	Huehuetlán	San Luis Potosi	2013-10-10	Former Mayor
M112	Jorge Luis Martínez Martínez	General Zuazua	Nuevo Leon	2013-10-13	Former Mayor
M113	Ygnacio López Mendoza	Santa Ana Maya	Michoacan	2013-11-07	Former Mayor
M114	Epigmenio Rafael Aragón Luis	San Pedro Totolapan	Oaxaca	2013-12-05	Mayor-elect
M115	David Manríquez Pérez	Llera	Tamaulipas	2014-01-13	Former Mayor
M116	Eduardo Gándara Varela	San Juan del Río	Durango	2014-01-19	Former Mayor
M117	José Luis Cervantes Cruz	Pueblo Viejo	Veracruz	2014-02-13	Mayor-elect
M118	Benjamín Galván Gómez	Nuevo Laredo	Tamaulipas	2014-02-27	Former Mayor

Mayoral Homicide in Mexico

Case	Mayor's Name	Municipality	State	Date of Attack	Position
M119	Roberto Avendaño Guzmán	Guevea de Humboldt	Oaxaca	2014-03-17	Former Mayor
M120	Gustavo Garibay García	Tanhuato de Guerrero	Michoacan	2014-03-22	Mayor
M121	Orlando Hesiquio de la Cruz	Igualapa	Guerrero	2014-04-04	Former Mayor
M122	Rafael Landa Fernández	Atzalan	Veracruz	2014-04-18	Alternate Mayor
M123	Ernesto Cantera Gabriel	San Mateo Piñas	Oaxaca	2014-05-01	Former Mayor
M124	Taurino Gopar Pérez	San Miguel del Puerto	Oaxaca	2014-05-08	Former Mayor
M125	Francisco Quiñones Ramírez	Ahuacuotzingo	Guerrero	2014-06-28	Former Mayor
M126	Martín Echeverría Ávila	Santiago Jamiltepec	Oaxaca	2014-07-12	Former Mayor
M127	Teódulo Gea Domínguez	Pánuco	Veracruz	2014-07-14	Alternate Mayor
M128	Manuel Gómez Torres	Ayutla	Jalisco	2014-08-03	Mayor
M129	Rosendo García Rodríguez	Amecamenca	Edomex	2014-09-04	Former Mayor
M130	Gabriel Gómez Michel	El Grullo	Jalisco	2014-09-23	Former Mayor
M131	Carlos Orozco Madrigal	Cabo Corrientes	Jalisco	2014-10-21	Former Mayor
M132	Cándido Morales Andrade	Acultzingo	Veracruz	2014-10-21	Former Mayor
M133	Efrén Álvarez López	San Sebastián del Oeste	Jalisco	2014-12-14	Former Mayor
M134	Silvestre González Rangel	La Misión	Hidalgo	2014-12-21	Former Mayor
M135	Alberto Alméida Fernández	Ahumada	Chihuahua	2015-02-24	Former Mayor
M136	Santos García Machorro	Cuapiaxtla de Madero	Puebla	2015-03-09	Former Mayor
M137	Rosalino Vargas Martínez	San Francisco del Mar	Oaxaca	2015-04-15	Former Mayor
M138	Serafín Fidel Silva Feria	Santo Tomás Ocotepec	Oaxaca	2015-04-29	Former Mayor

Mayoral Homicide in Mexico

Case	Mayor's Name	Municipality	State	Date of Attack	Position
M139	Ambrosio Borbonio Anne	Cuitláhuac	Veracruz	2015-05-20	Former Mayor
M140	Miguel Ángel Luna Munguía	Valle de Chalco	Edomex	2015-06-02	Former Mayor
M141	José Alfredo Jiménez Cruz	San Miguel Chimalapa	Oaxaca	2015-06-07	Former Mayor
M142	Rogelio Sánchez Galán	Jerécuaro	Guanajuato	2015-06-23	Mayor-elect
M143	Enrique González Gómez	Cihuatlán	Jalisco	2015-07-15	Former Mayor
M144	Mario Sánchez Cuevas	San Miguel El Grande	Oaxaca	2015-09-25	Mayor
M145	Luis Javier Hernández Juárez	Villagrán	Tamaulipas	2015-10-04	Former Mayor
M146	Lorenzo Hernández Guerrero	Coxcatlán	San Luis Potosi	2015-12-31	Former Mayor
M147	Gisela Raquel Mota Ocampo	Temixco	Morelos	2016-01-02	Mayor
M148	Alberto Mauro Sánchez Muñoz	San José del Progreso	Oaxaca	2016-02-16	Former Mayor
M149	Jesús Alaín Anzueto Roblero	Frontera Comalapa	Chiapas	2016-03-01	Former Mayor
M150	Eustacio Tarcisio Lorenzo	Xochiltepec	Puebla	2016-04-19	Former Mayor
M151	Juan Antonio Mayen Saucedo	Jilotzingo	Edomex	2016-04-22	Mayor
M152	Neftalí Hernández Mejía	Domingo Arenas	Puebla	2016-07-15	Former Mayor
M153	Domingo López González	Chamula	Chiapas	2016-07-23	Mayor
M154	Ambrosio Soto Duarte	Pungarabato	Guerrero	2016-07-24	Mayor
M155	José Santa María Zavala	Huehuetlán El Grande	Puebla	2016-08-01	Mayor
M156	Catalino Chan Chuc	Chikindzonot	Yucatan	2016-08-17	Former Mayor
M157	Jorge Luis Delgado Martínez	Tetecala	Morelos	2016-10-31	Former Mayor
M158	José Villanueva Rodríguez	Ocotlán de Morelos	Oaxaca	2016-12-17	Mayor

Mayoral Homicide in Mexico

Case	Mayor's Name	Municipality	State	Date of Attack	Position
M159	Antolín Vital Martínez	Tepexco	Puebla	2017-01-24	Mayor
M160	Amado Islas Espejel	Tepetlaoxtoc	Edomex	2017-02-25	Former Mayor
M161	Delfino Alfonso Hernández	Altepexi	Puebla	2017-03-31	Former Mayor
M162	Ubaldo López Reyes	Santa María Ozolotepec	Oaxaca	2017-04-24	Former Mayor
M163	Alejandro Hernández Santos	San Bartolomé Loxicha	Oaxaca	2017-04-28	Mayor
M164	Elí Camacho Goicochea	Coyuca de Catalán	Guerrero	2017-05-23	Former Mayor
M165	Crisóforo Otero	Técpan de Galeana	Guerrero	2017-06-08	Former Mayor
M166	José Durán González	Pueblo Nuevo	Guanajuato	2017-09-06	Mayor
M167	Stalin Sánchez González	Paracho	Michoacan	2017-10-06	Mayor
M168	Manuel Hernández Pasión	Huitzilán de Serdán	Puebla	2017-10-10	Mayor
M169	Francisco Tecuchillo Neri	Zitlala	Guerrero	2017-10-13	Former Mayor
M170	Crispín Gutiérrez Moreno	Ixtlahuacán	Colima	2017-10-20	Mayor
M171	Hermilo Bravo Leal	Nopala de Villagrán	Hidalgo	2017-10-29	Former Mayor
M172	Santana Cruz Bahena	Hidalgotitlán	Veracruz	2017-11-20	Mayor-elect
M173	Víctor Manuel Espinoza Tolentino	Ixhuatlán de Madero	Veracruz	2017-11-25	Mayor
M174	José Santos Hernández	San Pedro El Alto	Oaxaca	2017-12-09	Mayor
M175	Sergio Antonio Zenteno Albores	Bochil	Chiapas	2017-12-18	Mayor
M176	Arturo Gómez Pérez	Petatlán	Guerrero	2017-12-28	Mayor
M177	Miguel Ángel Licona Islas	Mixquiahuala	Hidalgo	2018-03-01	Former Mayor
M178	Víctor Molina Dorantes	Colipa	Veracruz	2018-10-01	Former Mayor

Appendix 1.2. List of Recorded Attacks After March 1, 2018

Case	Mayor's Name	Municipality	State	Date of Attack	Position
M179	Juan Ojeda González	Zihuateutla	Veracruz	2018-03-04	Former Mayor
M180	Saturnino Morales	Santiago Texcalcingo	Oaxaca	2018-03-09	Former Mayor
M181	Gustavo Martín Gómez Álvarez	Francisco Z. Mena	Puebla	2018-03-16	Former Mayor
M182	José Efraín García García	Tlanepantla	Puebla	2018-04-12	Mayor
M183	Juan Carlos Andrade	Jilotlán de los Dolores	Jalisco	2018-04-14	Mayor
M184	Alejandro González Ramos	Pacula	Hidalgo	2018-05-03	Mayor
M185	Alejandro González Ramos	Pacula	Hidalgo	2018-05-03	Mayor
M186	José Ramírez Ramírez	San Gabriel Mixtepec	Oaxaca	2018-05-05	Former Mayor
M187	Abel Montufar Mendoza	Coyuca de Catalán	Guerrero	2018-05-08	Mayor
M188	Andrés García Jaime	Amacuzac	Morelos	2018-05-16	Former Mayor

Appendix 1.3. List of Recorded Attacks against Mayoral Pre-candidates and Candidates¹¹

Case	Mayor's Name	Municipality	State	Date of Attack	Position
M189	Ángel Vergara Chamú	Ajuchitlán	Guerrero	2017-09-26	Mayor Candidate
M190	Miguel Ángel Solorio Figueroa	Zihuatanejo	Guerrero	2017-11-15	Mayor Candidate
M191	Armando Arturo López Solano	Quechultenango	Guerrero	2017-11-24	Mayor Candidate
M192	Miguel García González	Casimiro Castillo	Jalisco	2017-12-09	Mayor Candidate
M193	Ángel Medina Burgaña	Tampamolón	San Luis Potosí	2017-12-22	Mayor Pre-Candidate

¹¹ It is important to point out that the categories “mayoral pre-candidate” and “mayoral candidate” were not considered in the analysis, and are included only for completeness.

Mayoral Homicide in Mexico

Case	Mayor's Name	Municipality	State	Date of Attack	Position
M194	Marino Catalán Ocampo	Zihuatanejo	Guerrero	2017-12-31	Mayor Pre-Candidate
M195	Adolfo Serna Nogueda	Atoyac de Álvarez	Guerrero	2018-01-02	Mayor Pre-Candidate
M196	Aáron Varela Martínez	Santa Clara Ocoyucan	Puebla	2018-03-01	Mayor Pre-Candidate
M197	Francisco Rojas San Román	Cuautitlán Izcalli	Estado de México	2018-03-02	Mayor Pre-Candidate
M198	Homero Bravo Espino	Zihuatanejo	Guerrero	2018-03-03	Mayor Pre-Candidate
M199	Adiel Zermann Miguel	Tenango del Aire	Estado de México	2018-05-05	Mayor Candidate
M200	José Remedios Aguirre	Apaseo el Alto	Guanajuato	2018-05-11	Mayor Candidate
M201	Armando Arturo López Solano	Quechultenango	Guerrero	2018-11-24	Mayor Candidate

Appendix 2

2.1. Who is the victim?

The variables set to fill the knowledge gap of who is the target were:

- a) Target’s name: The mayor’s first name, middle name, and surname.
- b) Position: The political/legal condition of the target. There are six different categories. The first one is *mayoral pre-candidate*. This category was used when a person was competing to get the nomination of his/her political party. The second is *mayoral candidate*, when the person was selected by his/her political party to run for mayor. The third refers to *mayor-elect*, used for a mayoral candidate whom the Electoral College provided official documentation confirming that he/she received the highest number of votes during the election.¹² The fourth category is *mayor*, used for officials who formally took office, appointed a cabinet, and had a legal document stating that he/she was elected to lead the municipality for three (and in some cases, four) years.

There are, however, additional circumstances in which a mayor is no longer able to stay in power. This occurs, for instance, when he/she decides to run for another political position, suffers some illness, or dies. Under such circumstances, an *alternate mayor* will take power until a new mayor is elected. This was included as the fifth category. Lastly, the sixth category was used for an individual who was a *former mayor*, i.e., the mayor’s three- or four-year term has concluded and a new mayor has entered office. Thus, the data set took into account the position the target held at the time of the attack. For the purpose of this research, categories (1) and (2) were excluded, and (3) mayor-elect, (4) mayor, (5) substitute mayor, and (6) former mayor were included. In these cases, all are referred to as targets.

Process of Becoming a Mayor in Mexico

Three-year term					
Mayoral Pre-candidate	Mayoral candidate	Mayor-elect (ME)	Mayor (M)	Alternate mayor (AM)	Former mayor (FM)

- c) Age: The age of the victims. They were divided into five age groups: 20-30 years old; 30-40 years old; 40-50 years old; 50-60 years old; and 60+ years old.
- d) Gender: The gender of the victim—male or female.
- e) Political affiliation: The political party or coalition to which the target/victim belonged at the time of the attack. These include: Institutional Revolutionary Party (Partido Revolucionario Institucional-PRI), National Action Party (Partido Acción Nacional-PAN), Democratic Revolution Party (Partido de la Revolución Democrática-PRD), Ecologist Green Party of Mexico (Partido Verde Ecologista de

¹² This document is known as *constancia de mayoría*.

Mexico-PVEM), Citizen's Movement (Movimiento Ciudadano-MC), and Labour Party (Partido del Trabajo-PT). Although Mexico is a democratic country, there are some municipalities in southern Mexico where mayors are not selected through "Western secret ballot elections." Under such exceptional circumstances, the mayor is appointed by indigenous customary practices¹³ (ICP), whereby a local political council decides who is the best person to run the municipality.

- f) Municipality: The name of the locality where the target was elected or appointed.
- g) State: The name of the subnational entity where the target's municipality is located.
- h) Company during the attack: Whether the target was alone or accompanied by someone else.
- i) An attack on relatives: The occurrence of attacks on victims' family members (none, before, during, or after the attack on the target).
- j) Member of a political or social association: The target's community involvement (i.e., whether he/she was a leader or affiliate of unions or community leaders).
- k) An attack in his/her municipality: Whether the target was victimized in the locality where he/she was elected.
- l) Elected more than once: Whether the target had been mayor for more than one term.

2.2. *Who is the offender?*

Although media reported organized crime as the culprit for most of the homicides, there is a lack of evidence for this claim and an information vacuum about the perpetrator. To fill this particular research gap, the study categorized:

- a) The number of criminals: The number of attackers involved in the aggression (one or more).
- b) Firearms use/type of attacks: How the victim was killed.
- c) Firearms use by type of gun: The instrument used by the offender(s) to injure the target.
- d) Ammunition: The type of firearm used to wound or kill the victim (e.g., .22 caliber).
- e) The number of gunshots: The number of times the perpetrator(s) opened fire against the victim if a firearm was used. This research assumes that the more gunshots, the higher the degree of violence involved in the crime.
- f) The use of motor vehicles: Whether the offender(s) used a car or motorcycle during the attack.
- g) The use of death threats: The existence of a previous threat communicated by the offender(s) to the target.

¹³ According to the National Electoral Institute (Instituto Nacional Electoral-INE) (2016), there are approximately 963 municipalities in the states of Oaxaca and Tlaxcala under ICP.

- h) Previous attack attempts: The existence of previous attacks or assassination attempts.
- i) Drivers/causes of aggression: The possible motivations behind the attack. As determined, this research builds on a new typology including eight possible reasons:
1. *Personal reason.* The victim is murdered as a consequence of a conflict with family members such as a spouse, child, stepchild, business partner, or lovers or former lovers. In this category, the target’s position did not lead to the assassination.
 2. *Political violence.* There is a conflict in the municipality or with local political rivals, which ended with the target’s assassination. In this case, the target’s political position led to the murder.
 3. *Conventional crime.* The aggression against the target was the consequence of burglary, theft, or assault. Although crime is involved, the assassination did not occur as a result of the target’s official role.
 4. *Betrayal from the local (corrupt) police.* The mayor was victimized by police officials in his/her municipality. Under such circumstances, the victim’s position triggered the assassination.
 5. *Organized crime victimizing the “rebel target.”* The target is assassinated because of his/her lack of willingness to get involved in (or to permit criminal operations of) an OCG, such as drug trafficking or extortion. Consequently, the responsible organized crime group decided to attack the target as a strategy to minimize its operational costs (and to signal mayors from other municipalities).
 6. *Organized crime victimizing the “allied target” of a rival group.* The target is killed due to an assumption by criminal group A that he/she is benefiting rival criminal group B.
 7. *Organized crime victimizing the “traitor target.”* The target is assassinated as a result of his/her lack of commitment to and/or failure to comply with an agreement with organized crime groups.
 8. *Organized crime with no further details.* Although there was an involvement of organized crime, it was not possible to determine any of the three previous drivers due to a lack of information.

Causes of Aggression	Aggression as a Result of the Target’s Position	Aggression Related to Organized Crime
Personal reason	X	X
Political violence	✓	X
Conventional crime	X	X
Betrayal from the local (corrupt) police	✓	X
Organized crime victimizing the “rebel target”	✓	✓
Organized crime victimizing the “allied-target” of rival group	✓	✓
Organized crime victimizing the “traitor target”	✓	✓

2.3. *What is the situation?*

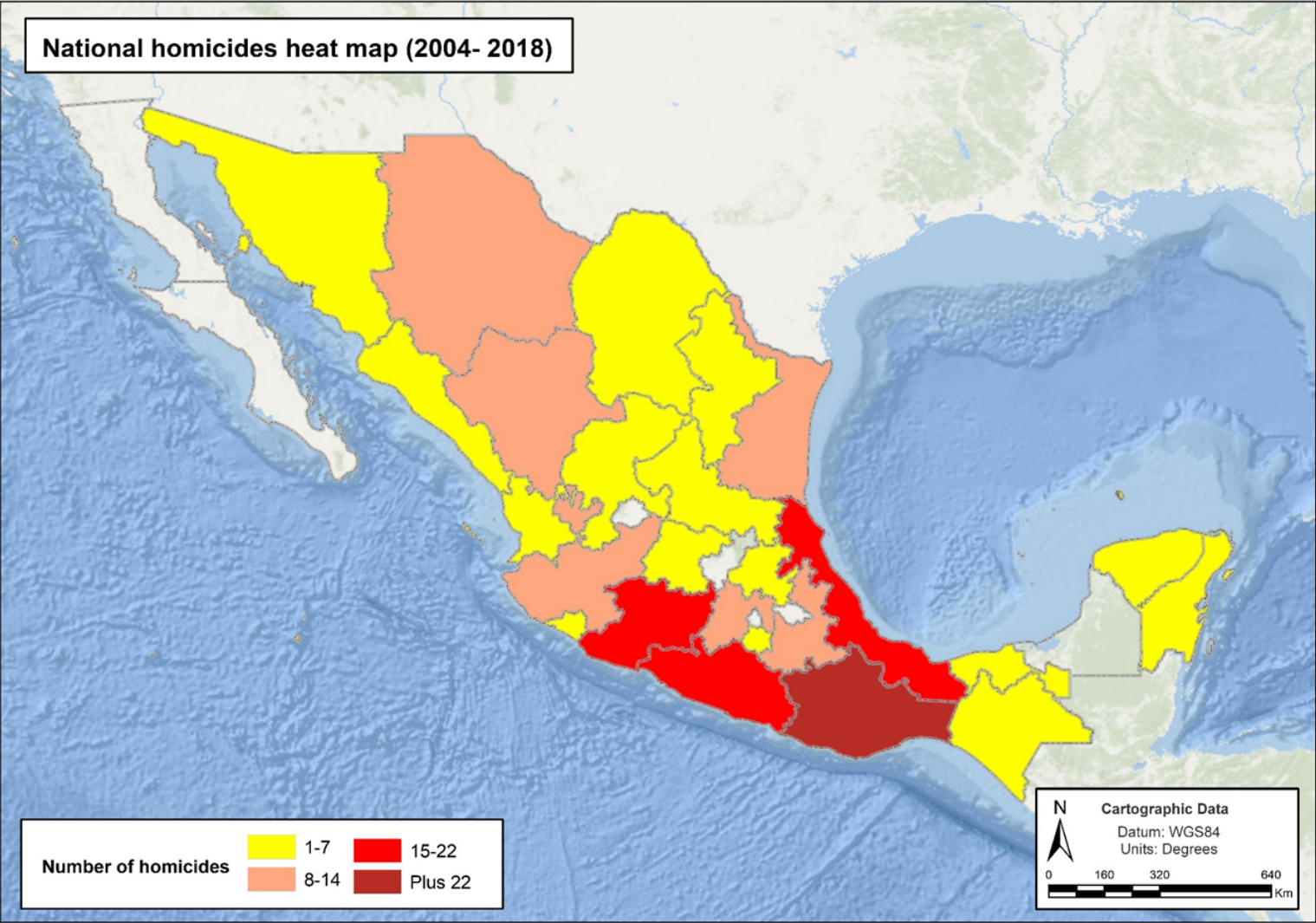
The following variables were established to collect more details about the setting of the crime event:

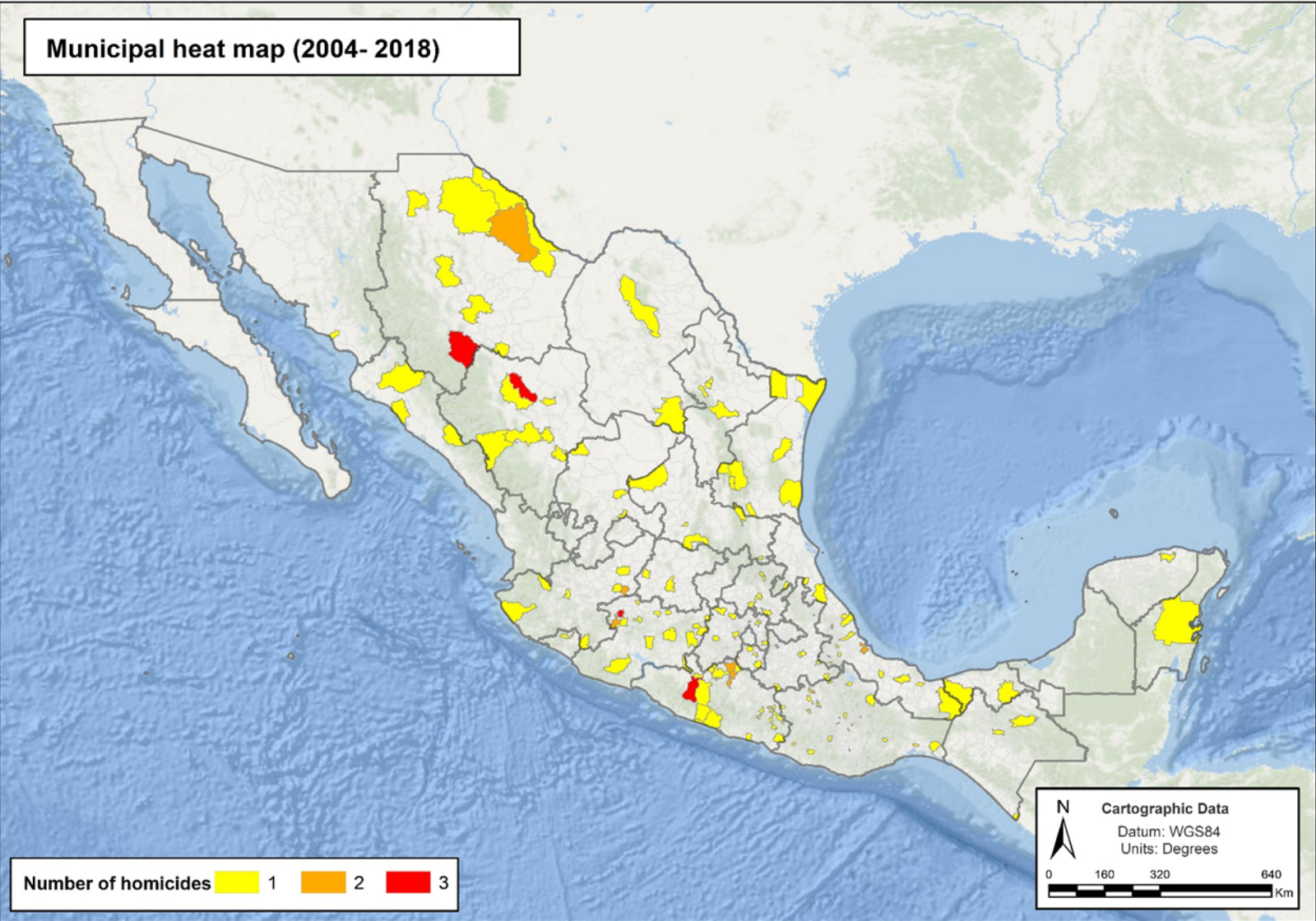
- a) Date of attack: This includes the day, month, and year in which the aggression against the target occurred.
- b) Time of the attack: This noted the time of day when the aggression occurred (morning, afternoon, or at night).
- c) Place of the attack: This categorizes the venue where the aggression took place. Attacks could be executed in offices; homes; roads (e.g., highways, streets, or railways); political or social events; commercial venues such as supermarkets, shops, or restaurants; public spaces; and places of worship.
- d) Municipality's population: This includes the number of people living in the target's municipality.¹⁴
- e) Distance from the state's capital: This calculates the driving distance (km) between the municipality of the attack and the state's capital.¹⁵
- f) Governor's political affiliation: This notes the political party of the governor of the state where the attack occurred.
- g) President's political affiliation: This lists the political party of the sitting president when the attack occurred.

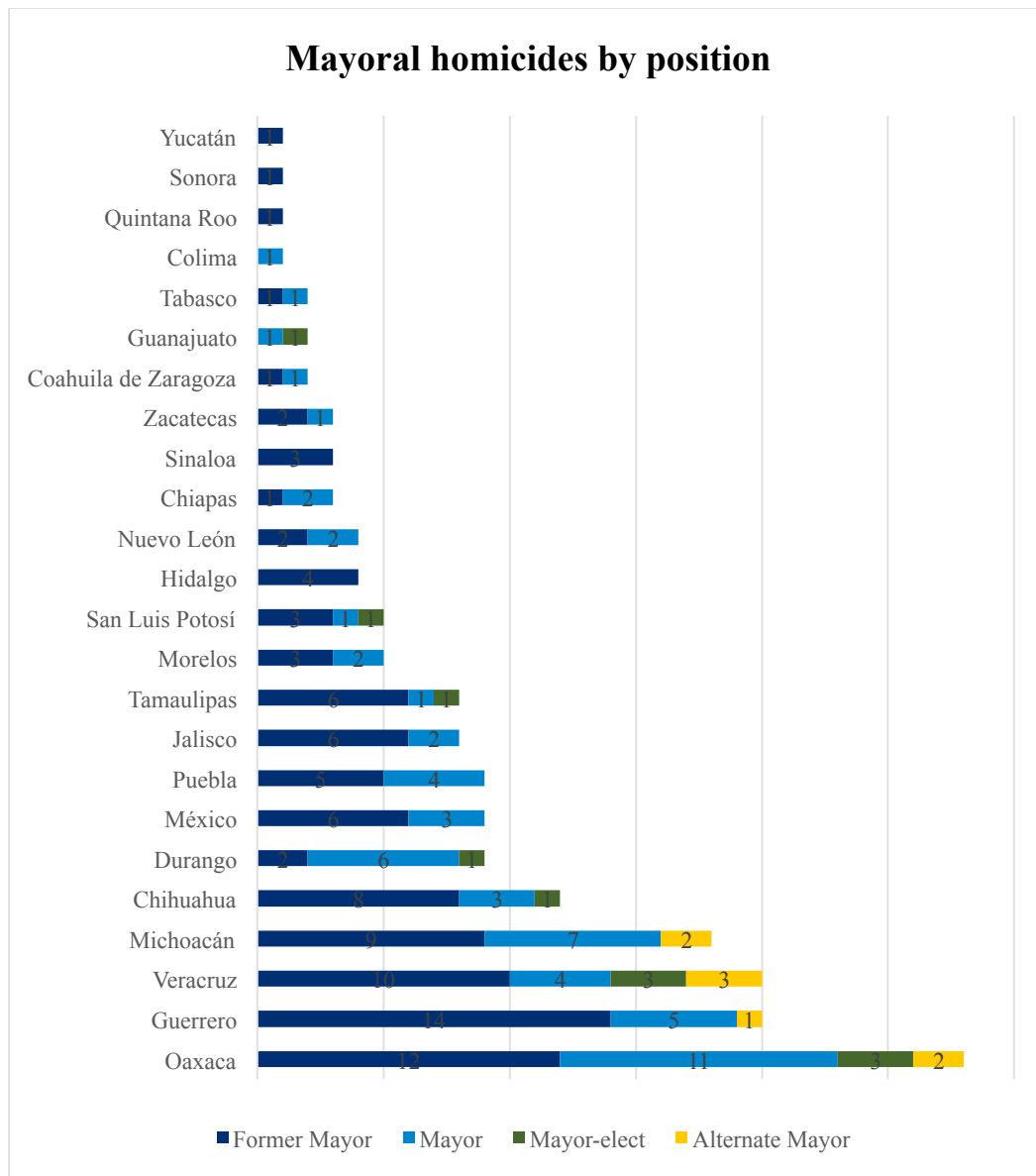
¹⁴ This information was retrieved from Mexico's National Office of Statistics, INEGI (2015).

¹⁵ The distance was determined through a web distance calculator.

Appendix 3







Comparison of Mayoral Homicides during the Calderon and Peña-Nieto Administrations

