

Justiciabarómetro

Survey of Municipal Police in Ciudad Juárez



Final Report

A Comprehensive Assessment of the
Municipal Police of Ciudad Juárez

2011



Comisión Nacional
para Prevenir y Erradicar la
Violencia contra las Mujeres



El Colegio
de la Frontera
Norte



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Prologue



Overview and Acknowledgements

This report presents a first look at the results from the study titled *Justiciabarómetro: Comprehensive Study of Municipal Police in Ciudad Juárez*, which was designed to evaluate the provision of public security in one of Mexico's most troubled cities through the viewpoints, experiences, and opinions of law enforcement officers themselves. To do so, this study relied on two distinct methodological approaches:

1) A qualitative inquiry into the structural and organizational conditions present within the Ciudad Juárez Department of Public Security (Secretaría de Seguridad Pública Municipal de Ciudad Juárez, SSPM), using a variety of techniques—including participant observation, individual and group interviews, focus group studies, field visits, seminars, and analysis of archival documents—that allowed for detailed analysis of three priority areas in police institutions: organizational and operational, intelligence and counter-intelligence, and psychology, health, and work atmosphere;

2) A quantitative analysis of the organizational culture that prevails within the SSPM through a survey of the entire police department to examine their experiences and opinions regarding their professional careers, working conditions, adherence to due process, and relations to crime and society.

Ciudad Juárez



In the process, this study provides unique insights into the knowledge, attitudes, and opinions of local police, public security administrators, and field personnel with regard to a wide range of issues related to their work. Moreover, this research complements and builds on the results of an earlier *Justiciabarómetro* conducted in the Guadalajara Metropolitan Zone (Zona Metropolitana de Guadalajara, ZMG) in 2009. That study, which focused on local police departments in six socio-economically diverse municipalities,

constituted the largest independent survey of its kind ever conducted in Mexico. While this second study in Ciudad Juárez focuses only on a single law enforcement agency, it happens to be one of the most scrutinized among Mexico's more than 2,400 municipal police departments due to the severe public security challenges faced in that city and local authorities' long-standing inability to put a stop to rampant crime and violence. As such, this study provides new insights into these problems, useful lines of inquiry for future research, and recommendations that have been presented to—and in some cases adopted by—local authorities in Ciudad Juárez.

Acknowledgements

The Justicabarómetro is a research initiative coordinated by the Justice in Mexico Project, which since 2005 has been based at the Trans-Border Institute, located within the Joan B. Kroc School of Peace Studies at the University of San Diego. The Justice in Mexico Project actively promotes research, analysis, dialogue, and policy solutions to confront a variety of urgent problems related to public security and the rule of law in Mexico and the U.S.-Mexico border region.

The Justicabarómetro initiative has two main lines of inquiry to study the “operators” of Mexico's criminal justice system, one focusing on police officers involved in the provision of public security and the other focusing on prosecutors, judges, and public defenders involved in the administration of justice. As noted above, the research into these lines of inquiry involves both in-depth qualitative analysis and large-scale quantitative studies, which are designed to complement each other and help penetrate the curtain that often obscures what goes on inside government agencies and institutions.

The Justicabarómetro study of municipal police in Ciudad Juárez benefited from the generous financial support of the Open Society Institute, The Tinker Foundation, and The William and Flora Hewlett Foundation, all of which are dedicated to improving access to information about Mexico's governance challenges, including the provision of public security, accountability and transparency, and access to justice. In addition, the Justicabarómetro study in Ciudad Juárez could not have been carried out without close institutional collaboration among the National Commission for the Prevention and Eradication of Violence Against Women of the Ministry of Interior (Comisión Nacional para Prevenir y Erradicar la Violencia contra las Mujeres, CONAVIM, de la Secretaría de Gobernación, SEGOB), the Municipal Government of Ciudad Juárez, the Colegio de Chihuahua (COLECH), the Colegio de la Frontera Norte (COLEF), and the University of San Diego, under the auspices of a collaborative agreement signed by participating institutions to facilitate the inter-institutional and cross-disciplinary exchange of knowledge and ideas.

As the principle investigators of the study, the authors of this report also wish to acknowledge the other members of the research team that contributed to the project through intensive field visits and background research: Dante Haro Jaime, Francisco J. Gutiérrez Rodríguez, José Francisco Ornelas, and Alfonso Quintero Amador. Also imperative was the knowledge and numerous individual contributions of local scholars who informed and guided the

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The survey component of this study was completed by the polling firm Data Opinión Pública y Mercados (www.dataopm.net), directed by Dr. Pablo Parás. The technical team was managed by Carlos López and the field team was coordinated by Fernando Luna and Elizabeth Bautista, and included María Hernández, Perla Navarrete, Erick Trenti, Nahum Prieto, and Mario Carrillo. The project also benefitted from the administrative support of TBI Assistant Director Charles Pope and Operations Coordinator Stephanie Borrowdale, as well as research assistance from Gladys Avalos, Sophia Carrillo, Gayle Hazard, Morayma Jiménez, and Lorena Quezada. TBI Research Associate Kimberly Heinle was instrumental in the translation of the Spanish language version of this report into English, with minor adaptations to accommodate international audiences. Wherever indicated, the images included in this report were produced by professional photographer Jonathan Lowenstein and made available by NOOR Images, while other images were generated by the Justicabarómetro team.

The authors and other contributors to this study hope that, through this highly collaborative effort, we are all able to contribute to the making of a better police force in Ciudad Juárez and, in the long run, a better system of justice in Mexico. Today, we are certain that there could never be a “new democratic police” in any country, state, city, or community if we forget something fundamental: the human component. Here, then, is our attempt to examine that element and to help one of Mexico's most challenged cities to build a police force for the future. We owe this above all to the thousands of officers who contributed their time, perspectives, and trust to facilitate this study.

Ciudad Juárez, Chihuahua, September 20, 2011

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Introduction



Image courtesy of Jon Lowenstein/NOOR

Evaluating Municipal Police in Ciudad Juárez

Most efforts to evaluate the effectiveness of public security in Mexico tend to concentrate on levels of crime and violence, on citizens' opinions and perspectives, or victims' experiences. For example, the Instituto Ciudadano de Estudios Sobre la Inseguridad (ICESI) produces a large survey of victimization each year. México Evalúa, another non-governmental organization, generates an index of the levels of crime found at the national and state levels. As a result of these and similar efforts, we know a great deal about how the public assesses the performance of Mexico's criminal justice system. Yet, while such studies offer useful measures and evaluations about the outcomes of institutional performance, they do not provide information on the internal attributes and institutional functioning of the agencies responsible for these outcomes. As a result, the criminal justice system itself remains a "black box" about which we know surprisingly little.

In particular, there have been very few efforts to gauge the professional profiles and perspectives of those that operate the criminal justice system. Such research is sorely needed to measure the levels

of professional development and the attitudes of these actors, and to chart a course for the future. In particular, greater effort is needed to understand the limitations and challenges confronting the main operators of the criminal justice system: police, prosecutors, public defenders, and judges.

One of the best research initiatives to advance this objective was a January 2007 study coordinated by Miguel Sarre, titled "Barómetro Local: A Study of Due Process" (Barómetro local: Una silueta del debido proceso), which combined information on due process and the functioning of the judicial system in various states in Mexico. Another example is the Culture of Legality project by Roy Godson of Georgetown University, which seeks to gauge and improve the internal norms, values, and informal practices of police departments. Both studies helped inspire this research, and illustrate that the success of any judicial sector reform effort hinges not only on carefully regulating the operators of the criminal justice system, but also on promoting their professional development and their active engagement in the process of reform.

Among the important operators of the criminal justice system, Mexican police are particularly reviled and frequently disparaged. Mexican citizens view their law enforcement authorities as woefully ineffective, thoroughly corrupt, and frequently prone to abusive and criminal behavior, although it is important to mention that police are curiously held in higher esteem than unions, legislators, and political parties (Consulta Mitofsky, 2010, *Economía, gobierno, y política*). Daily headlines seem to confirm public perceptions, as impunity reigns and police are found to be involved in serious criminal offenses. Municipal police officers are of particular concern because they account for the vast majority of the country's more than 300,000 law enforcement officers, and have by far the most contact with the public.

Concerns about municipal police were the driving force behind Mexican President Felipe Calderón's October 6, 2010 security proposal to the Senate to revise Mexico's Constitution. This reform would dissolve many municipal police agencies, merge qualifying officers into state law enforcement agencies, and form a "unified command" (mando único) at the state level. Dissolution would apply to those local law enforcement agencies that failed to comply with specified requirements, but even in the case of local departments that met these requirements they would answer directly to the state governor and not to the mayor of their own municipality.

On the one hand, a significant part of the argument that supports eliminating local law enforcement agencies and unifying police commands at the state level has to do with the threat presented by organized crime groups, which in many cases are able to easily overwhelm or corrupt inadequately trained, ill-equipped, and poorly paid local police officers. Advocates of unification point to the greater resources, economies of scale, and efficiency of training and managing police under a single, state-level administrative umbrella.

On the other hand, the presumption that this proposal will improve policing rests on the idea that state police are somehow less susceptible to the problems that are found at the local level. Unfortunately, this notion is directly contradicted by significant evidence of the corruption of state-level officials by organized crime groups in recent years. Moreover, the movement to introduce a "unified command" ignores the importance of local community policing and problem solving as vital measures to improve public safety. Finally, despite the relatively limited availability about the source of those problems, proponents of police unification often wrongly assume that the problems confronting local police departments are insurmountable.

As this report went to press, Calderón's proposed initiative remains under consideration in Mexico's Congress, and is in need of more information about the challenges confronted by local police departments. The Justiciabarómetro study of Ciudad Juárez—one of Mexico's most troubled—therefore comes at an important moment of reflection on the role and future of municipal police in Mexico, and hopefully sheds some light on these critical questions. The study provides rich qualitative and quantitative indicators to help understand the needs and weaknesses of this particular department, but also to help evaluate the type of police reforms that Mexico needs.

For example, among the key findings of the survey were severe deficiencies in training and equipment, a lack of merit-based hiring criteria and civil service protections, high levels of distrust among law enforcement personnel, and severe problems of coordination with state and federal law enforcement agencies. Over half the force indicated that they do not have the equipment that they need to do their job, including adequate police uniforms, and half said that the condition of available equipment was bad (33%) or very bad (17%).

Respondents demonstrated a basic knowledge of proper law enforcement protocols, but also expressed a fairly strong desire for more training (47%). 85% said that they have no opportunity to practice the proper use of a firearm on a regular basis, 55% indicated that they do not receive any breaks during their shift, and a significant portion (47%) indicated that they do not have adequate time to exercise during their shift.

Among various questions about law enforcement integrity, 60% of respondents indicated that honesty is the most important virtue of a police officer, but only 40% believed that it was the virtue most present on the force. Meanwhile, on a scale of 0 to 4, roughly 65% indicated that the level of corruption was at 2 or higher and 36% of respondents felt that the level was above 3. In terms of where such corruption is located, 44% of respondents indicated that it was found at the highest levels, 29% indicated that corruption was found at all levels, and the remainder indicated corruption was found only in at lower or middle management levels.

Overall, such findings suggest—consistent with earlier Justiciabarómetro findings in Guadalajara—that the problems confronting local police in Ciudad Juárez reflect deep-seated institutional problems which are shared among municipal police departments in many parts of Mexico. These will no doubt take considerable time and effort to resolve. This survey helps to measure the challenges the department faces, and sets a baseline for evaluating reform efforts over the coming years, regardless of whether Mexican authorities opt to rely on a decentralized model of policing or shift to a unified command.

The Context of Ciudad Juárez



Public Security Challenges in Ciudad Juárez

Beginning in the 1990s, Ciudad Juárez gained a reputation as a city with severe law enforcement problems, due largely to the brutal murders and disappearances of hundreds of young women (many of which were subject to sexual violence and mutilation). Underscoring the lack of professionalism in state and local law enforcement, police investigations into these cases were severely compromised: police files were often incomplete, investigators were careless about evidence collection, and the analysis of victims' remains was often unprofessional. Indeed, evidence was often fabricated and remains were misidentified, causing victims' families—which were often treated disrespectfully by police—to re-live the murders over and over.

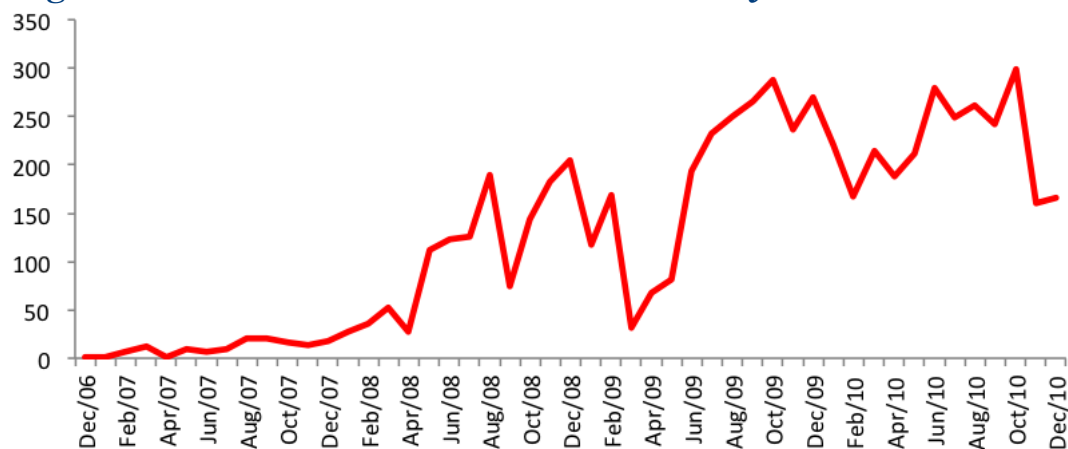
While many of these murders remain unresolved, the focus on public security in Ciudad Juárez has shifted in recent years due to a new and more widespread set of public security challenges. Specifically, over the last three years, a surge in drug-related killings has made Ciudad Juárez the most violent city in Mexico. The recent violence in Ciudad Juárez was provoked and continues to be driven by the dynamics of competition among criminal organizations vying for the control of production zones, trafficking routes to the border, and access to the lucrative

consumer market in the United States. In other words, the conditions that make Ciudad Juárez a battlefield for these organizations have to do with the strategic importance of the border as a gateway to the U.S. market and the disposition of the economy of the border region and the workforce.

In 2008 alone, there were over 1,600 cartel-related killings in the state of Chihuahua, a rate of nearly 50 per 100,000 people (five times the national homicide rate). The rate of killings was much higher in Ciudad Juárez, where much of the violence was concentrated. In 2009, Ciudad Juárez experienced more than 2,500 drug-related homicides. In 2010, the number exceeded 2,600. With a population of 1.4 million people in Ciudad Juárez, the city's homicide rate stands at roughly 190 per 100K inhabitants (about 9 times the rate considered to be epidemic by the WHO). The shape of conflicts between organized crime groups are often unpredictable, since they are influenced by idiosyncratic factors like changes in leadership and arrests, personal rivalries, and bad business deals.

During the last two decades, the movement of the illicit market through Juárez was dominated by the Carrillo Fuentes

Organized Crime Related Homicides in Ciudad Juárez



Source: Sistema Nacional de Seguridad Pública

Organization, also known as the Juárez Cartel or often referred to simply as “La Línea,” which is the name of its branch that is primarily focused on executions. It is believed that for a long time La Línea was protected by a group of corrupt police from the Secretary of Municipal Public Security (Secretaría de Seguridad Pública Municipal, SSPM) in Ciudad Juárez. Since early 2008, a schism between the Carrillo Fuentes Organization and its former partners in the drug trafficking organization known as the Sinaloa Cartel has resulted in a fierce struggle to control trafficking routes through Ciudad Juárez.

This violence—much of which is directed at police—is also linked to the city’s large number of young, disassociated males between the ages of 18 and 35 who are often referred to as the “ni-ni’s” because they “neither study, nor work” (ni estudian, ni trabajan). This “ni-ni” population is part of the generation that was born during the so-called lost decade of the 1980s, when the national economy of Mexico entered into a prolonged period of crisis and instability with a sharp currency devaluation, which resulted in a difficult restructuring and opening up to the global economy. Mexico agreed to the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT) in 1986 and eventually signed the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) in 1994, changes that were devastating for many industries in Mexico but that represented great opportunities for the export sector in the border region. This led the number of maquiladora plants, specifically electronics and high technology, to grow in a spectacular manner along the border.

According to the Observatorio de Juárez, among all homicides in 2009, young men between the ages of 20 and 35 represented roughly 60% of the victims in Ciudad Juárez (far more than their proportion of the population). This segment of the population, made up mostly of the so-called “ni-ni’s,” drive up the already elevated mortality rates due to the fact that they grow up in fertile grounds for gang recruitment, which have become small armies for the criminal organizations. So is the case with the so-called Barrio Azteca gang, which is active in jails and streets in the United States and Mexico and operates under the orders of the Juárez Cartel, or the two small local gangs known as Artistas Asesinos (also known as

“AA,” Double A/Doble A) and the Mexicles that work for the Sinaloa Cartel.

Finally, at the time of this study it was clear that the security situation in Ciudad Juárez was accompanied by a deep sense of social division and distrust: (1) between civic groups, government authorities, and the media; (2) among civic groups of different socioeconomic class and political orientation; (3) between authorities, civic groups, and the media; and (4) between authorities from different levels of government. Different agencies and levels of government appear to distrust each other, and suspect that their partner agencies have been penetrated by organized crime. In sum, they have little desire to work together. Meanwhile, civic groups often eye each other with skepticism, citizens blame the government for the ongoing violence, and authorities repeatedly claim that civic organizations and other critics (e.g., the media) are motivated by political agendas.

The polarization of government and society is particularly troubling since, for some sectors of the community, the government’s efforts to combat drug trafficking organizations appear to enjoy less legitimacy and support than the traffickers themselves. This is partly because “drug traffickers” are also family members, co-workers, and loved ones who are embedded in supportive social networks. When a “drug trafficker” is arrested, abused, or killed, that person may be a son, a father, a brother, a colleague, or a friend. Despite literally thousands of deaths and arrests of drug traffickers in the past few years, until recently there had been little effort by authorities or civic groups to address the broader implications and ripple effects that this kind of trauma has inflicted on society.

Focus of the Study



Image courtesy of Jon Lowenstein/NOOR

Municipal Police in Ciudad Juárez

The primary objective of Justiciabarómetro in Ciudad Juárez was to become more familiar with the experiences and opinions of local police officers as a way to analyze the public security situation that confronts the department as a whole. The scope of interest included all types of opinions, ideas, and knowledge among the police with regard to their work.

Therefore, it was fundamental to examine the organizational dimension of the provision of public security: its framework, procedures, and practices, both internally and in the community. This made it essential to have the perspectives and input of police officers themselves on these issues, in order to understand the factors that shape the experiences of the police work, organizational life inside the police department, and the on-the-job challenges of confronting an environment of violence, crime, and fear.

The implementation of Justiciabarómetro in Ciudad Juárez had some particularities that responded to the recent history of the police department, which need to be mentioned here. At the beginning of Mayor José Reyes Ferriz's term (October of 2007 to 2010), he began with the argument that the municipal police department was the most corrupt it had ever been in history, which required a series of "surgical" interventions. In his words, at the time it was

necessary to "purge immediately and begin to examine the (department's) management, operations, and results to identify the shortest route to take the reigns from the hands of organized crime." The city's diagnostic revealed the necessity of retaking absolute control of the police command, the police academy, the six police stations in the city, patrolling operations, and the 060 Emergency Response Center (Centro de Respuesta Inmediata, CERI)" (Reyes Ferriz, 2008: 5). From there, the mayor outlined a strategy centered on cleansing the police department of its chiefs, officers, and cadets, followed by the subsequent recruitment of civilians and soldiers—in theory those either retired or licensed—that would conform to the so-called New Police (Nueva Policía) with close to 3,000 agents.

At the same time, crime indices in Ciudad Juárez rose in a dramatic fashion in 2008. During the period from 1996 to 2006, the total number of homicides had maintained a stable average rate of 18 killings per month, or about 216 annually. In 2008, as the drug war began to heat up, there were 1,600 people killed (Poder Ciudadano, 2010). These high levels of registered violence in 2008 led then Mayor José Reyes Ferriz to ask for support from the federal government to have the military and federal police intervene to help contain the violence.



José Reyes Ferriz, presidente municipal (2007-10)

This heightened public security strategy, better known as Joint Operation Chihuahua (Operativo Conjunto Chihuahua), deployed 2,026 members of the armed forces, with 425 officers of the federal police and the Attorney General's Office (Procuraduría General de la República, PGR) during its first phase (Meyer, Brewer, and Cepeda, 2010: 11). In June of 2008, the Federal Government ordered the additional deployment of 1,400 soldiers to support those already based there. Afterwards, in March 2009, the federal government sent 5,332 more soldiers to Ciudad Juárez to assume control of the local police department.

However, despite the massive presence of the military throughout the state and particularly in Ciudad Juárez, violent crime did not decrease as anticipated. On the contrary, between 2008 and 2009, a total of 4,200 homicides occurred, and in 2010 alone it reached the alarming number of 3,111 (Hernández, 2011). Simultaneous to this escalating violence, violations of human rights also increased dramatically, calling into question the original mission of the military to come to the city to create an environment of peace and security. Indeed, with the launch of Joint Operation Chihuahua in 2008, the "state of Chihuahua led the list of CNDH reports of human rights violations with 199 reports against the military in the first six months of the year" (Ballinas, 2008).

According to Amnesty International, many of these complaints were related to the policing activities carried out by the military in the state of Chihuahua, and in particular in Ciudad Juárez. From March 2008 to September 2009, the State Human Rights Commission of Chihuahua (Comisión Estatal de Derechos Humanos de Chihuahua, CEDH) and a municipal office that heard complaints in Ciudad Juárez received more than 1,300 complaints of military abuse, which included at least 14 accounts of forced disappearances and 8 of extrajudicial executions.

Besides emphasizing that large sections of Juárez society were criticizing the presence of the military, affirming that they were far from controlling the situation, there had been an increase in the levels of violence and crime since 2008. In response to these arguments and following the massacre of 13 youths and two adults in the Villas de Salvácar neighborhood, President Felipe Calderón Hinojosa (2006-2012) responded at the end of January 2010: "Contrary to what some have said, whether by mistake or malice,

the violence in that city is not due to the presence of the federal forces" (López, 2010). Additionally, he insisted that the murder of the young students was due to a conflict among gangs. Afterwards, when the second assertion was challenged, his government found itself apologizing to the victims and their families after a flood of criticism for his insensitivity.

After making three separate visits to Ciudad Juárez in February 2010, the president announced a new program titled "We Are All Juárez. Let's Reconstruct the City," with an investment of 3.4 million pesos. This social development project was intended to prevent violence by investing in six main areas: security, education, health, social development, economy, and employment. However, a year after it was started, various critics in civil society asserted that the program and the overall counter-drug effort was proving ineffective. For example, as Hugo Almada, a member of the Security Board (Mesa de Seguridad), declared during an interview in the magazine *Proceso*:

"There are problems since nothing has been achieved. This is an unnecessary war directed against the poor. They [the authorities] do not stand up to crimes like money laundering, political corruption, and criminal activity by officials; nor are the authorities interested in attacking the financial structure of the cartels. The action only focuses on the operative part, the consumers, the majority being poor, or the hit men. From a tactical point of view, the strategy has been poorly planned. It lacks intelligence work. This causes the operations to be neither fast nor effective."

--- How have the authorities acted?

"The federal forces or the troops were sent to areas of conflict without any previous investigation; this is the problem with the strategy. I want to be clear: we do not agree (like we said in February 2010, when we asked for assistance in the intelligence area) with the lack of response from the federal government [to combat criminal violence]."

Since the beginning of 2010, the federal government has shifted its security strategy in Ciudad Juárez. However, the pressure from various civil, national, and international organizations protesting the use of the military in public security functions, and especially the intrusive operations and checkpoints that were affecting the lives of ordinary people, had an important role in the eventual decision of the government to transfer the oversight of Joint Operation Chihuahua from the military to the federal police, under the new name Coordinated Operation Chihuahua (Operación Coordinada Chihuahua).

These changes, which occurred in April 2010, led to the arrival of 5,000 federal police agents, who were supported by between 2,500 and 3,000 "new" municipal police. This new security measure, as part of the "We Are All Juárez" program, resulted in federal forces taking on the coordination of the municipal and transit police, and the mayor's decision to name Víctor Gutiérrez Rosas, a retired military general, as the city's new director of public security. With the withdrawal of the military, which was now assigned to guard international ports, airports, main roads, highways, and



Image courtesy of Jon Lowenstein/NOOR

rural zones in Ciudad Juárez, José Reyes Ferriz declared that “the stage of contention with military solutions” had ended and that “now a new stage of police solutions would begin.”

What is certain is that the new role of the federal police in controlling local security gives them a wide range of responsibilities: patrolling the streets of Ciudad Juárez; taking control of the Emergency and Immediate Response Center (Centro de Emergencia y Reacción Inmediata C.E.R.I.); inspecting bars and clubs; investigating cases of kidnapping, extortion, and crimes of high impact; and dismantling criminal networks.

All of these tasks correspond with the functions of a police force focused on intelligence gathering and criminal investigation. However, this role does not clearly establish their role in preventive measures from the standpoint of citizens’ security. That is why it should be emphasized that these functions attributed to the federal police –while totally necessary– do not seem to correspond with the preventive functions of municipal police. These functions instead require police to gain citizens’ confidence, to search for new social formulas to establish mechanisms of citizen collaboration, and to improve the perceived legitimacy of police action.

In this regard, if the “stage of contention” had ended (as asserted by the mayor at the time) and the “stage of police solutions” had arrived, there were many questions that remained. Was the Ciudad Juárez Police Department prepared to become a primary actor and participant in confronting the problems of

crime and violence? Was the department prepared to propose plausible solutions in this regard? Was the department capable of establishing a strategic alliance in collaboration with the federal police? Would a subordinate but supportive relationship develop, or would there be animosity between them?

And looking at prior decisions affecting the municipal police department, what was the result of the police cleansing process, both for those that left and those that stayed? Regarding the military strategy, how did it affect two potentially conflicting objectives: one whose mission is to fight in armed conflicts and the other whose mission is to protect the community and respect of citizens’ human rights? Also, how did the police view the military’s influence, as well as the departure of the military and the initiation of the new federal police command? In sum, how did these efforts look from the other side, that is, from the standpoint of the operators of the local public security system: the members of the police department itself?

All of these were critical questions that guided our inquiry in implementing the Justiciabarómetro research project in the particular context of Ciudad Juárez. At the end of the day, this study is about those men and women that make up the municipal police force in Ciudad Juárez, in a department that has been dramatically reshaped by massive cleansings. The department’s cleansing processes were based exclusively on trust tests, practiced under the assumption that most of the department’s personnel were involved with organized crime. However, the hiring new personnel that was required subsequently was massive, and the process occurred



Image courtesy of Jon Lowenstein/NOOR

without many of the precautions needed to ensure that new hires would be of the highest caliber and to prevent the re-infiltration of the department. For example, as discussed later in the report, while authorities had hoped to infuse the department with new officers from other states and municipalities as a means to avoid complicity with local organized crime networks, the survey found that the majority of officers were born and raised in Ciudad Juárez and its surrounding areas.

Thus, overall, the purge of the police department led to a number of negative consequences, like the significant loss of institutional memory and operational experience, without necessarily addressing some of the main challenges faced by the department. At the same time, the process itself created new internal divisions and a certain degree of distrust on the force between veterans and rookies, cleavages that were accentuated by the use of different uniforms (light blue and gray, respectively) to distinguish experienced officers from new recruits.

Understanding these kinds of contextual factors is essential when considering the findings of this study, which in turn sheds new light on the challenges and issues confronting efforts to reform the public security apparatus in Ciudad Juárez. Hence, the research team incorporated many of the above-noted questions into the study, making it necessary to carefully examine the structural and organizational conditions of the SSPM through various qualitative

research methods. This made it possible to analyze with greater detail the viewpoints, priorities, and concerns of local police officers about their organization and operations in Ciudad Juárez, with particular consideration of the complex and controversial processes recently undergone by the department. Without a doubt, the results obtained provide robust empirical findings that offer a firm foundation to understand the perceptions, priorities, and aspirations of these essential public servants. These results also now make it possible to examine the difficulties and obstacles to local police reform with a level of detail rarely seen in empirical studies of law enforcement agencies in Mexico.

Methodology of the Study

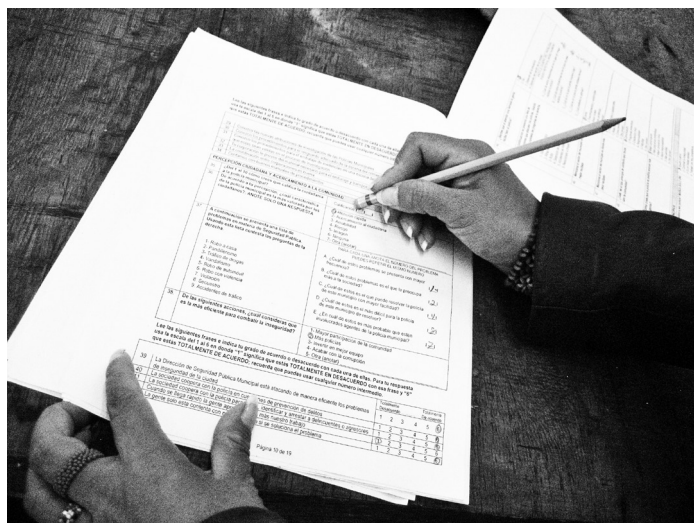
General Considerations and Population Surveyed

The information derived from this study is intended to contribute to the construction of an efficient public security apparatus, with the direct participation and opinions of the most important element of a police force: the men and women that make up the officer corps. Justiciabarómetro is, in this sense, a first and important attempt to gauge their experiences, views, and recommendations. In this sense, by surveying these officers, this study seeks to establish a set of baseline indicators that illustrate the capabilities and weaknesses of the department, against which future improvements can be measured. Beyond this, this study also aspires to contribute policy recommendations, strategies, and targets for the short, medium, and long term in order to help modernize the municipal police department of Ciudad Juárez.

For the reasons noted earlier, Ciudad Juárez is one of Mexico's most difficult public security contexts. In this study, the Justiciabarómetro team attempted to understand the city's primary public security concerns and to gauge the institutional capacity of municipal police forces to address these challenges. As noted previously, the project team used both a qualitative and a quantitative diagnostic approach. First, in the initial phase of this project, the research team conducted multiple meetings with local experts, partner organizations, and officials to obtain the necessary support and permissions to conduct the study.

Second, key members of the team conducted a two-week field research visit, including a qualitative assessment of the structural and organizational conditions in the Ciudad Juárez Municipal Police Department. The research team used on-site participant observation, in-depth individual and group interviews, focus groups, classroom exercises, review of organizational records, archival research, and analysis of available data on public safety in Ciudad Juárez. This approach offered insights into three priority areas for local police, namely organizational and operational dynamics; intelligence and counterintelligence initiatives; and the psychology, health and working environment of local officers.

Third, in line with the approach used in other studies of the Justiciabarómetro initiative based on surveys, the quantitative aspect of



this study relied on a questionnaire with over one hundred questions that was administered to all available personnel in the eight districts that make up the city's municipal police department: Aldama, Babicora, Benito Juárez, CERESO, Chihuahua, Cuauhtémoc, C. Especiales, and Delicias. The survey instrument was developed by the participating researchers, and administered over a period of two weeks during the month of June 2010 by a team of professional pollsters at Data, Opinión Pública y Mercados (DATA-OPM), with the cooperation of the municipal government and the department of public safety.

The study achieved a response rate of 2,381 people out of a total force estimated at 3,146 officers. That is, 75% of the total municipal police officers of the department took the survey, providing a margin of error of +/- 2%. Undoubtedly, the results provide a strong empirical basis to begin to understand the perceptions, priorities and views of these important public servants in Ciudad Juárez. In addition to providing insights into the profiles, knowledge, and expertise of these officers, the survey allowed the research team to learn more about their working conditions, departmental procedures, and their views on crime and society.

Responses to the Justiciabarómetro Survey by Municipal District

District	Population	Showing (Number of interviews answered)	Percentage
Aldama	380	245	64.5
Babicora	674	557	82.6
Benito Juárez	367	240	65.4
CERESO	346	329	95.1
Chihuahua	269	187	69.5
Cuauhtémoc	300	168	56.0
C. Especiales	347	313	90.2
Delicias	463	342	73.9

Results of the Study

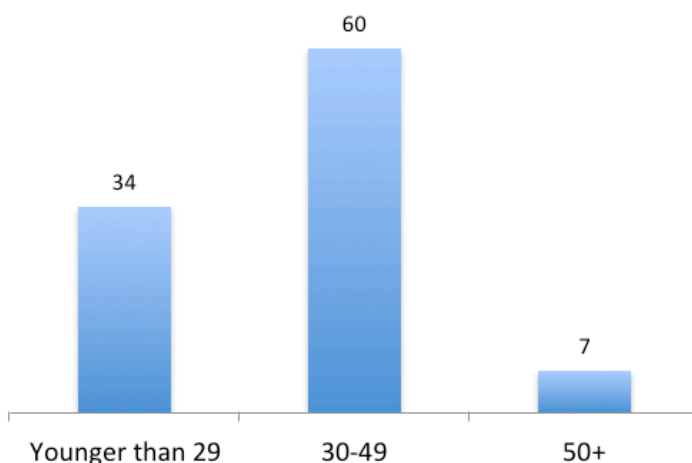


Socio-Demographic Profile of the Police

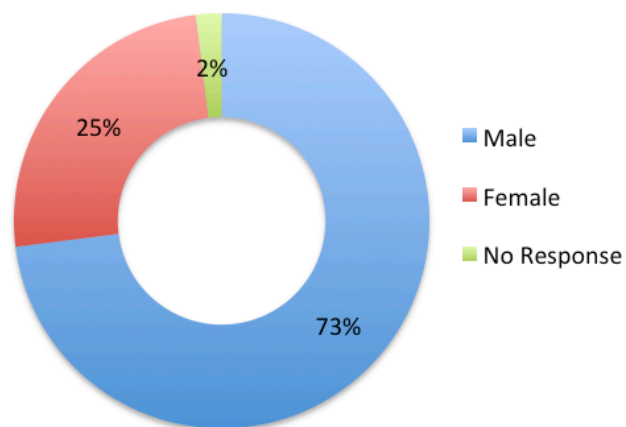
The survey focused partly on the demographic profile of respondents in order to gain a better understanding of the composition of the municipal police department. Of 2,381 respondents, participants averaged 33 years of age—the majority (60%) between 30-49 years old—and were overwhelmingly male (75%). The survey results confirmed that most (54%) were born in the state of Chihuahua, with 47% born in Ciudad Juárez, contradicting earlier reports by authorities that the police force had been largely “re-stocked” with agents from outside the local area.

In terms of family life, the overwhelming majority (86%) of respondents reported having 1 to 3 children. 47% indicated that they were married, 22% lived with a significant other, 20% were unmarried, and 9% were divorced or had other circumstances. In terms of their economic situation, the overwhelming majority (90%) stated that their income is the main source of family income, and in the majority of cases it is the only one. This is a very important consideration, since only 6% stated they earn more than 10,000 pesos (roughly USD\$800) a month and a considerable portion (35%) reported receiving a salary of less than 8,000 pesos (roughly USD \$640) a month. Only 42% stated they own their home.

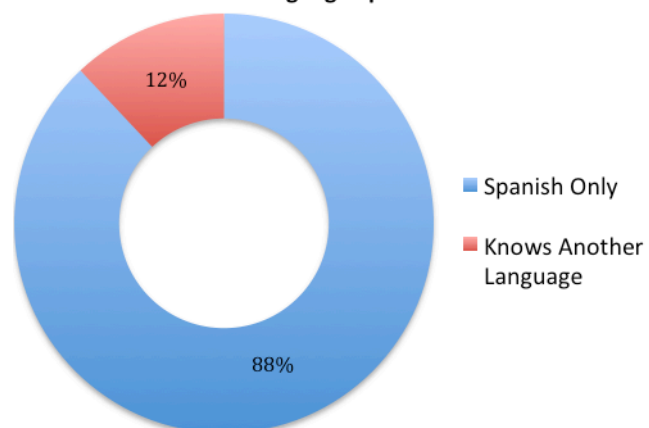
How old are you?
(percentage)



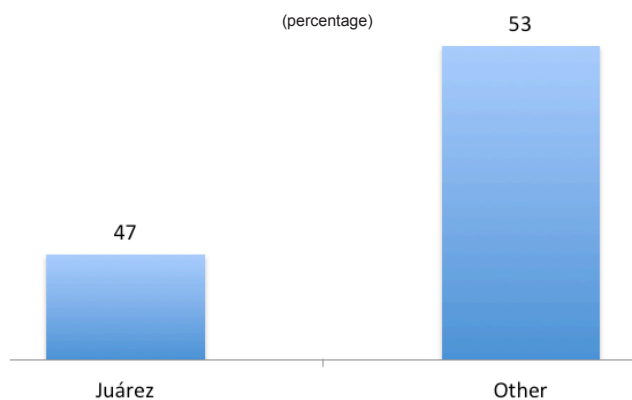
Sex



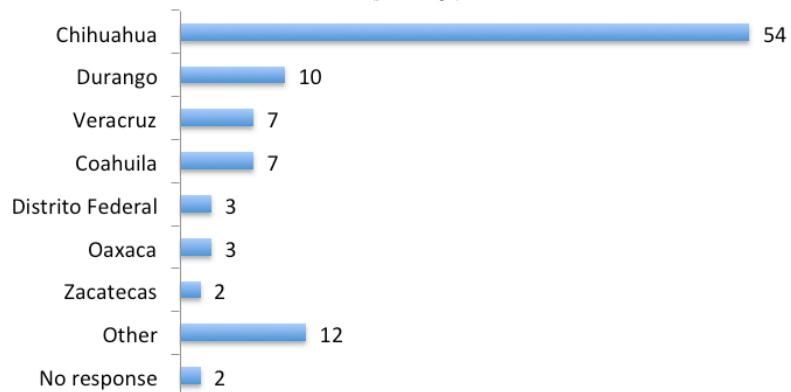
Language Spoken



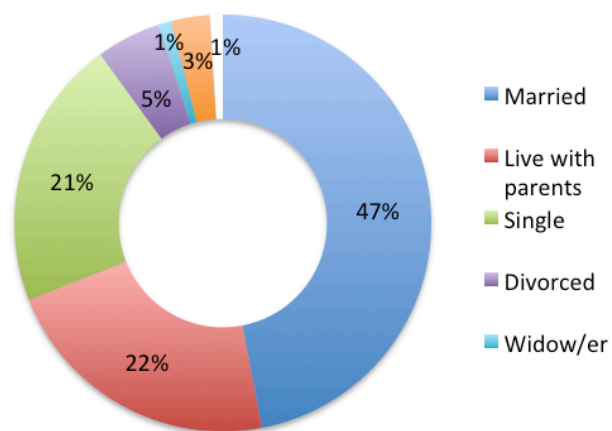
Place of birth (percentage)



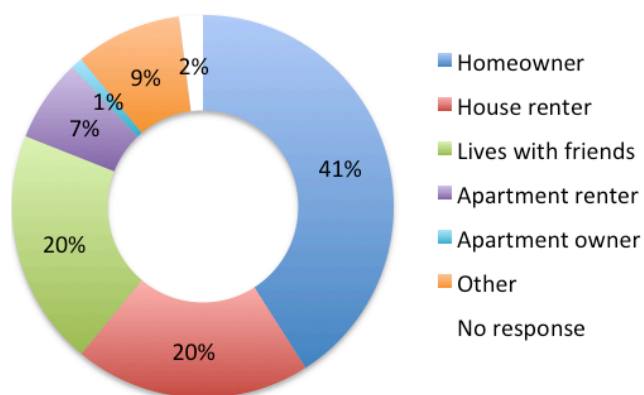
Birth State (percentage)



Marital Status



Household



Results of the Study



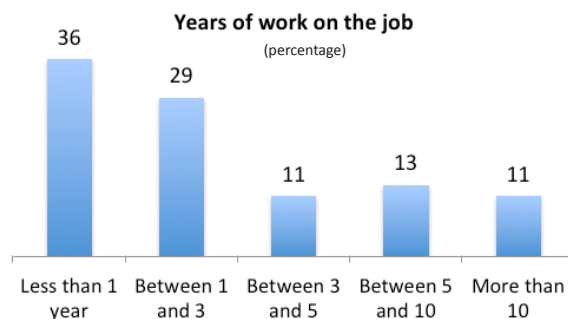
Image courtesy of Jon Lowenstein/NOOR

Professional Profile of the Police

Examining the professional profile of municipal police officers in Ciudad Juárez, the survey found that, as to the educational background of the force, 47% indicated a middle school education, 30% said they have completed high school, but only 14% have college or post graduate degrees. Meanwhile, although Ciudad Juárez lies along the U.S. border, only 12% of the respondents indicated that they know another language (less than 280 of the 2,381 agents who answered the question spoke English).

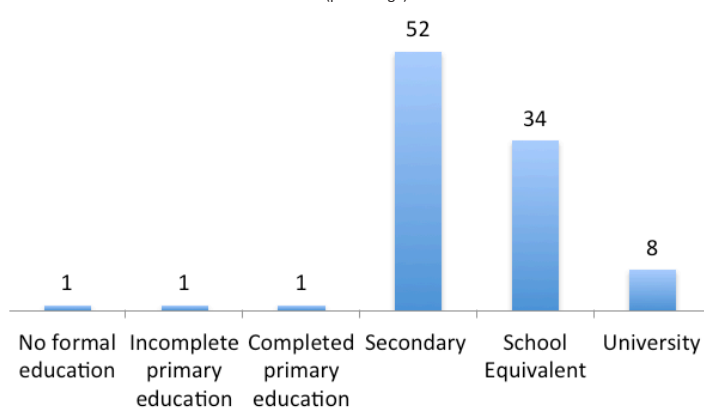
Of those surveyed, only 13% said they had some form of military training. In the vast majority of cases (80%), the police officers had a previous job before their current position, which suggests that being a policeman or woman was an alternative career path and not their first priority. The survey results also illustrate the changes of the Juárez police force's composition as a result of recent restructurings. In quantitative terms, the shift is made clear by the fact that almost 80% have less than five years of experience in the department.

The picture that emerges from these and earlier noted demographic data is one of an older, poorly educated, relatively inexperienced, and professionally underdeveloped police force, in comparison to international standards. It is important to mention that these results

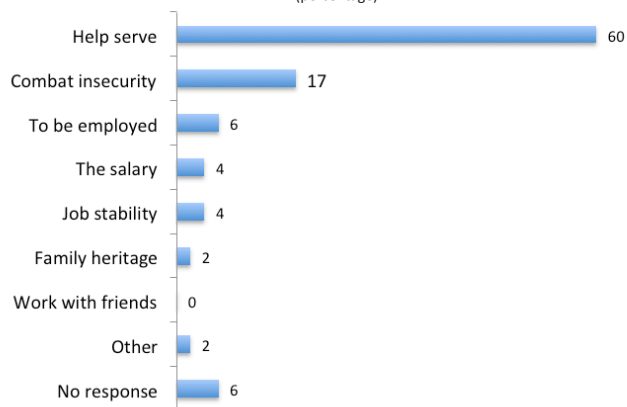


reflect the trend among Mexican municipal police officers in general, and not just in Ciudad Juárez. One key difference for Ciudad Juárez is the recent restructurings, which could have been used as an opportunity for the police department to shed the problems that have dragged the force down, take advantage of the vibrant energy and enthusiasm of young, new recruits, and push forward a new mission and vision that is focused more on the citizenry and the protection of citizens' rights. However, with only 34% of the force younger than 29 years old, it is clear that the renovation of the police did not actually constitute a rejuvenation of the police force in Ciudad Juárez. Thus, the prospects of dramatic improvements in the near future are perhaps not as bright as they could have been.

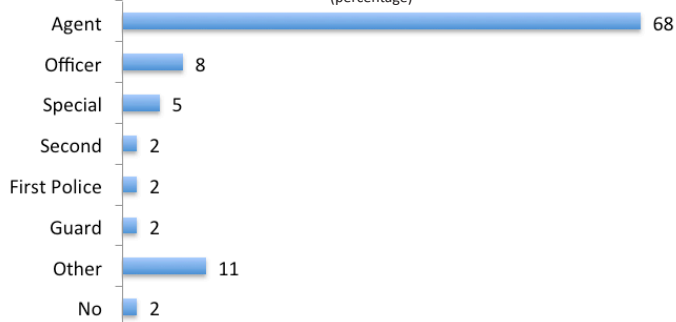
Level of education
(percentage)



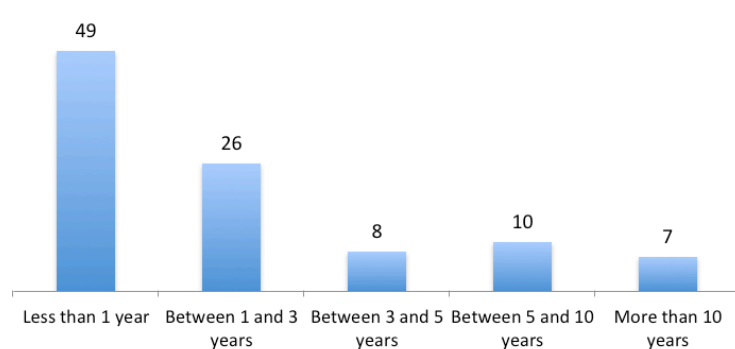
Motivation to become a police officer
(percentage)



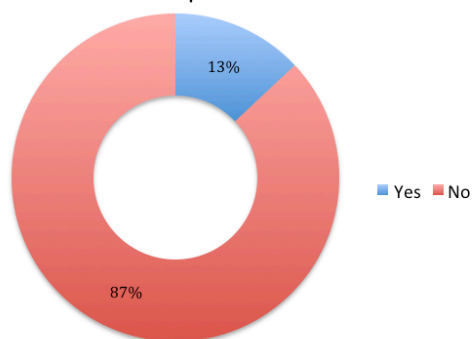
Current Position
(percentage)



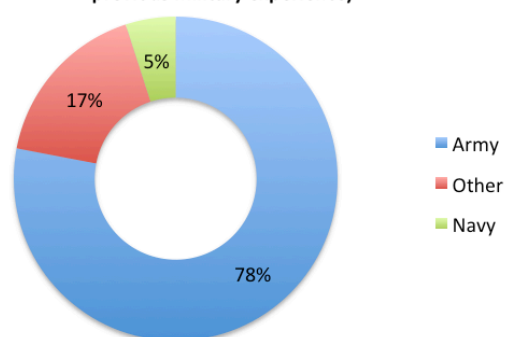
Time in position
(percentage)



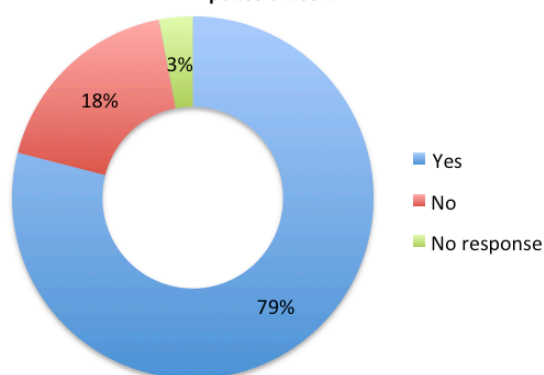
Have you had military training before becoming a police officer?



If you have had military experience, in which sector was it? (Base = 13% that claimed to have had previous military experience)



Did you have another job before becoming a police officer?



Results of the Study



Image courtesy of Jon Lowenstein/NOOR

Working Conditions

The distribution of the police force in Ciudad Juárez, in relation to those surveyed, is as follows: 88% reported working as operative personnel (as opposed to administrative personnel). 63% of respondents are actually field agents, the lowest ranking officers. In general, only 21% indicated that they have a permanent position, as opposed to the 76% that work on temporary contracts. This lack of stable employment for police officers is particularly alarming due to the dangerous nature of policework in Ciudad Juárez. When police are not ensured a permanent position and a clear career trajectory, they have little motivation to demonstrate a commitment to the job or to the citizens that ultimately employ them.

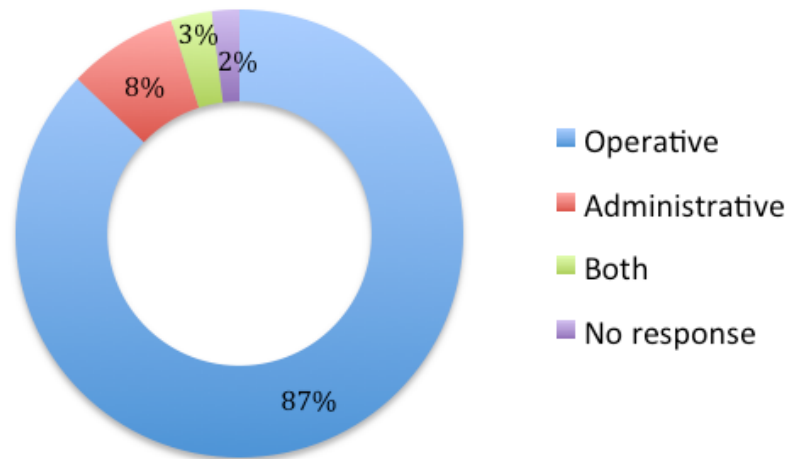
In terms of the distribution of the workload, the survey results showed some differences in the number of days and the length of shifts that police work, with 76% working six days a week, 9% working five days a week, 8% working seven days a week, and the rest working four days or less. 50% had mixed shifts, 30% had a

Justiciabarómetro

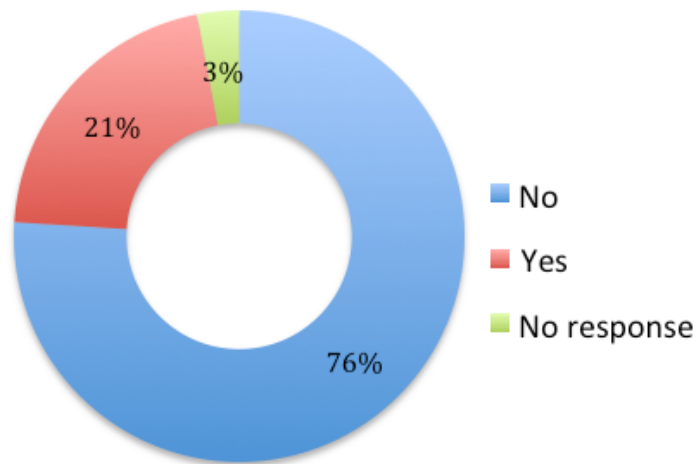
shift of 8x12 (8 hours of work for 12 hours of rest), 9% worked 12x24, 6% worked 12x12, 2% worked 24x48, and 1% worked 24x24. More than half of those surveyed reported that they did not have a break during their shifts, while the 31% who indicated that they did typically had less than half of an hour of break time during their shift.

Despite long hours without breaks, at least half of the respondents (52%) felt that their current workload is adequate. Survey results suggested that the bulk of that workload includes patrolling the city, with relatively little time focused on administrative matters. Most also demonstrated a high degree of satisfaction with their chosen profession, since 82% of respondents indicated that they would want to be a police officer if they had to choose again.

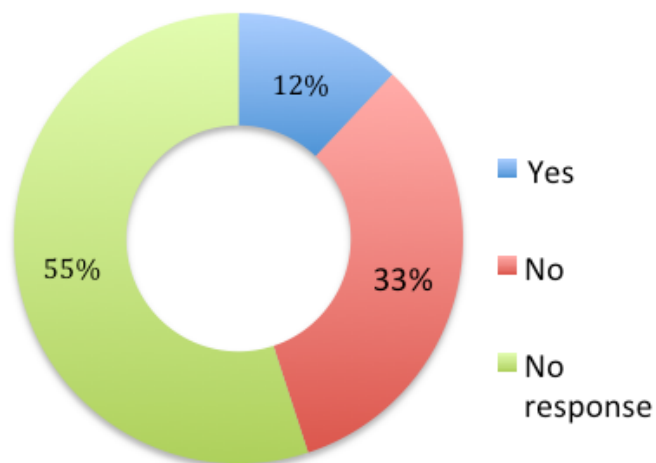
Do you have a contract as an operative or administrative agent?



Do you have a permanent position?

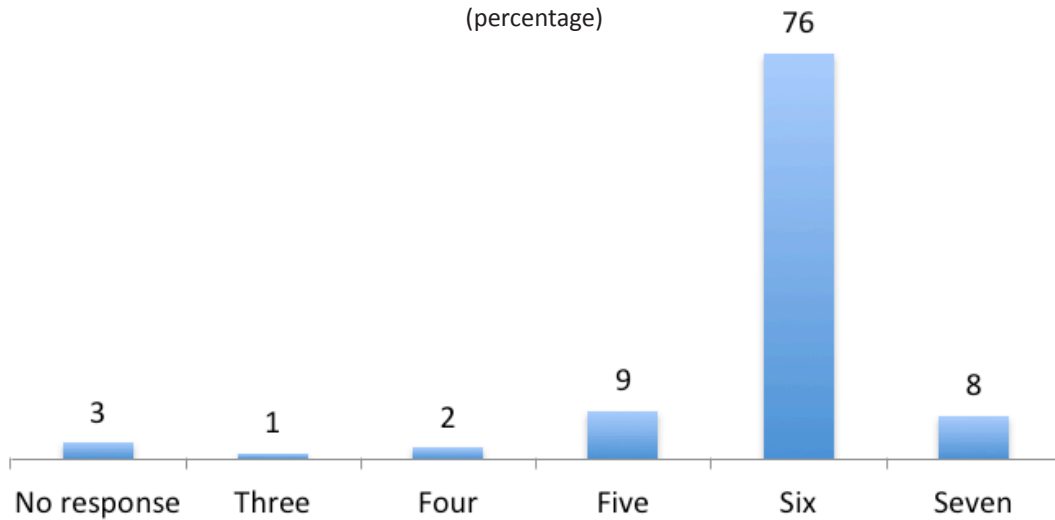


Is your relationship contractual?



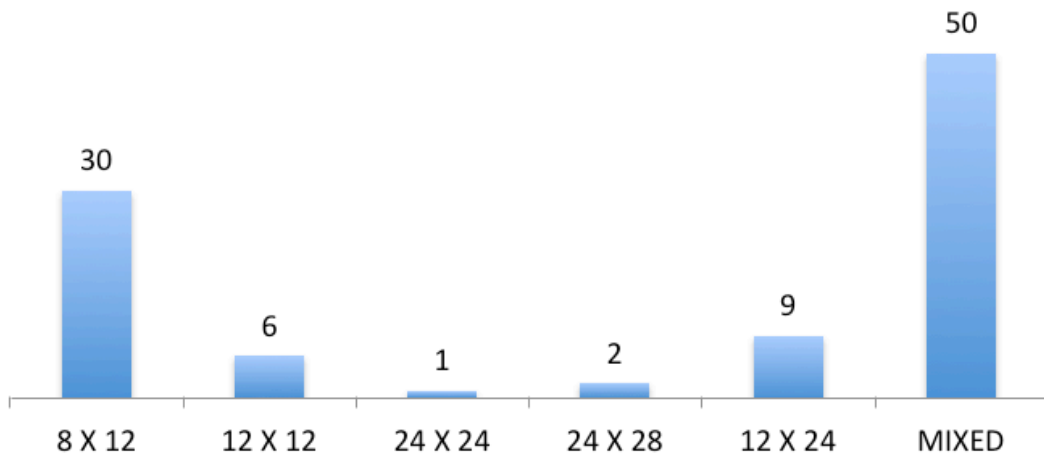
In a typical week, how many days do you work?

(percentage)



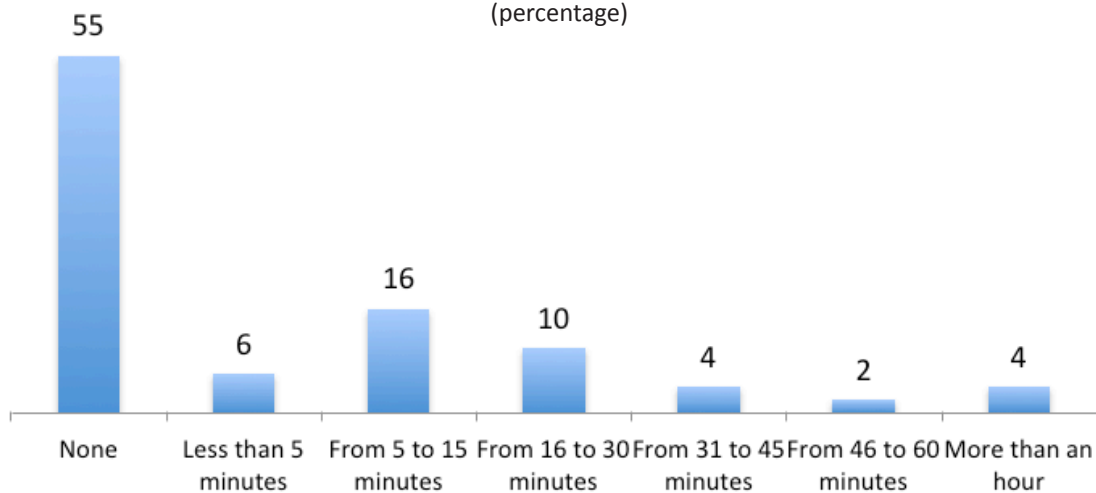
What type of shift do you most frequently have?

(percentage)



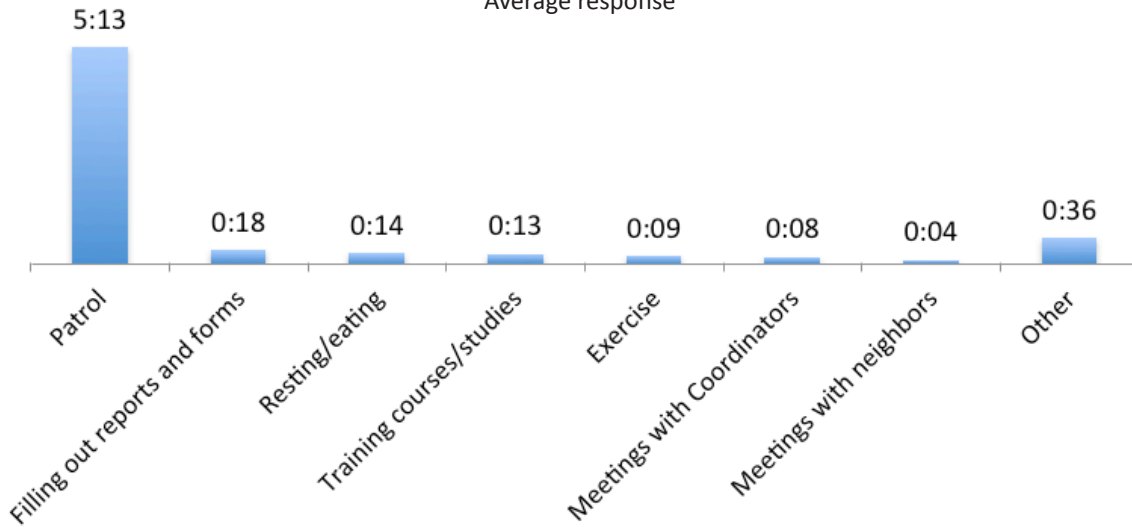
How much of a break (without responsibilities) do you normally have in a regular day of work?

(percentage)



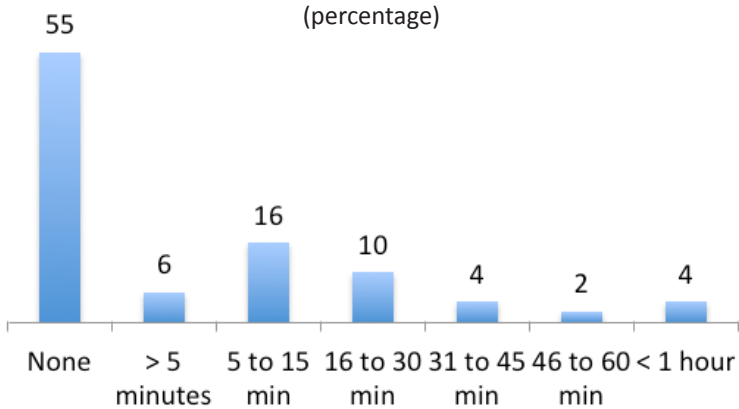
How much time per day do you normally spend on the following activities at work? (Measured in H:MM for each activity)

Average response



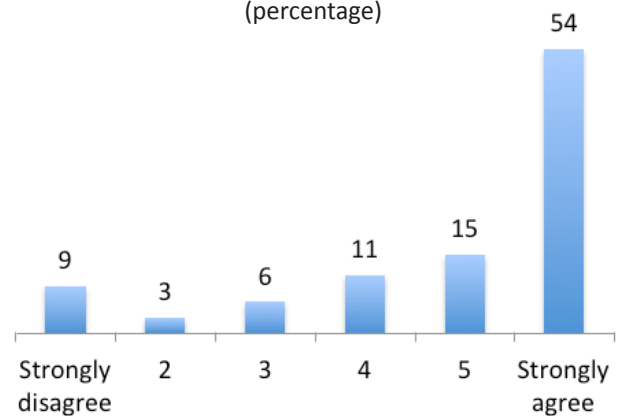
How much of a break (without responsibilities) do you normally have in a regular day of work?

(percentage)

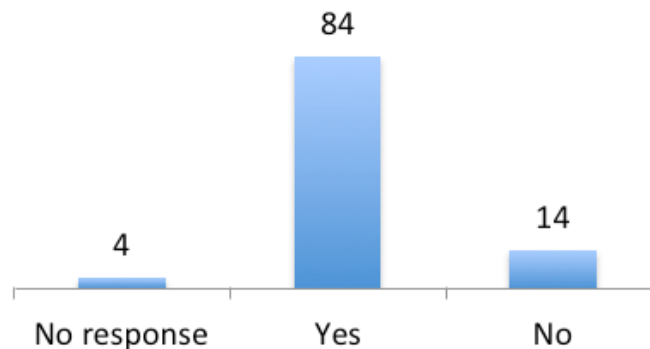


The current workday is acceptable

(percentage)



At this moment, if you were not a police officer, would you like to be one?



Results of the Study

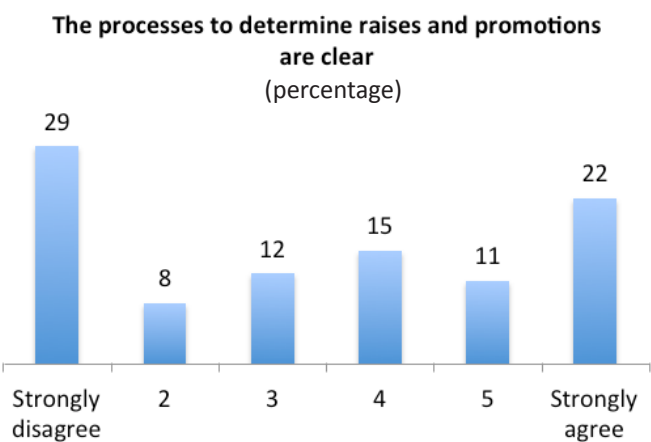
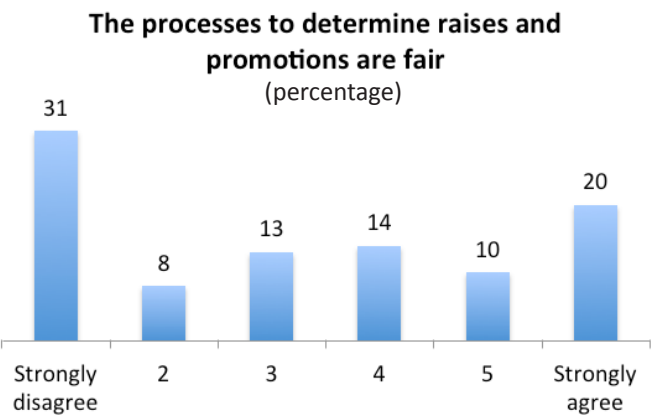
Working Environment, Treatment, and Interpersonal Relations

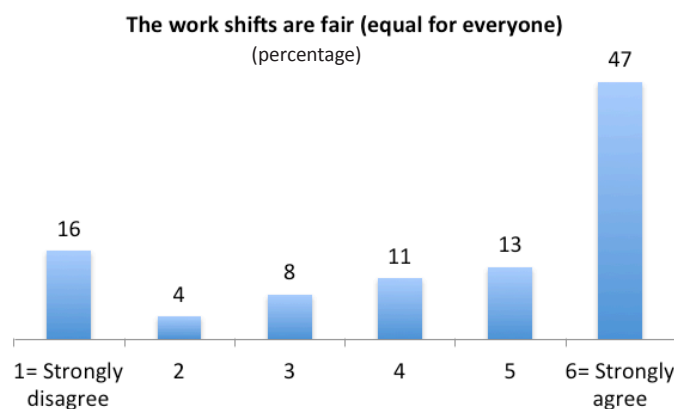
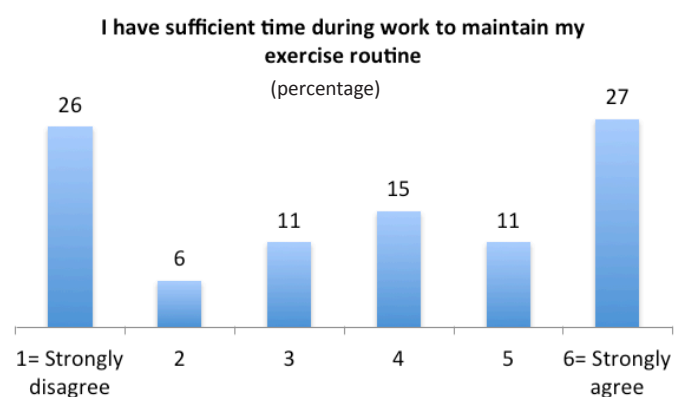
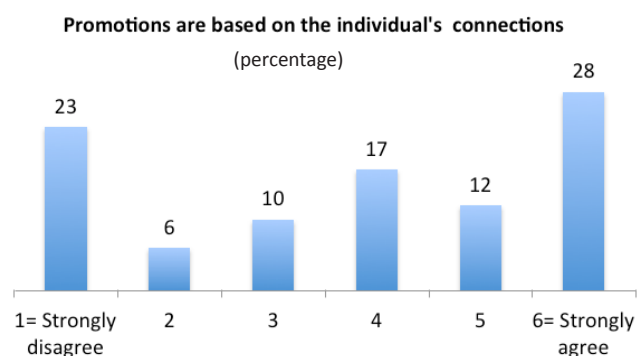
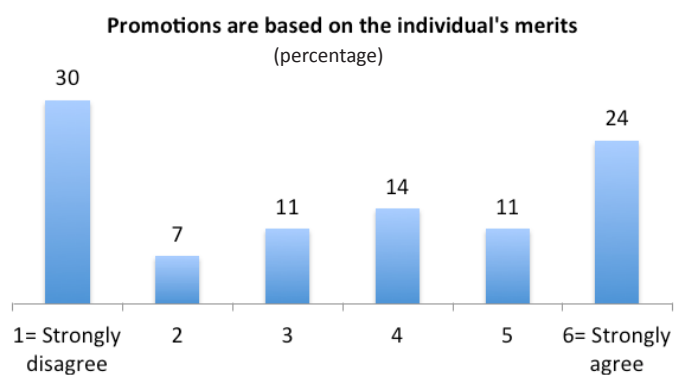
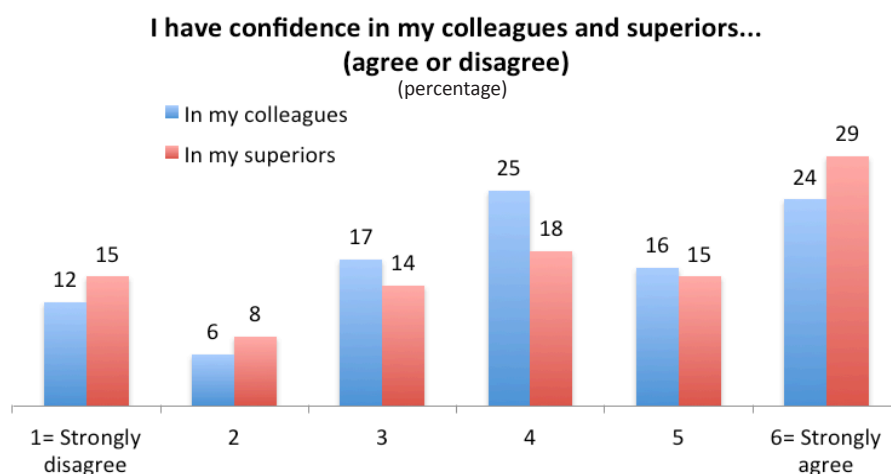
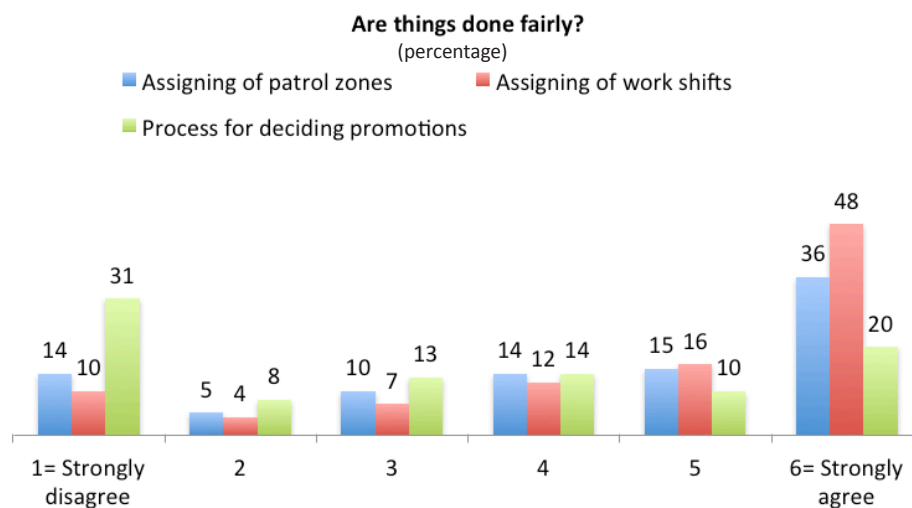
Respondents were fairly divided over whether or not the department’s hiring procedures were adequate, with about a quarter (24%) strongly in agreement and an equal number (24%) strongly in disagreement. Field interviews and other survey questions suggest that indications of disapproval of the hiring process were closely related to frustration with the departmental purge at the outset of the Reyes administration.

Meanwhile, respondents were also significantly dissatisfied with opportunities for advancement on the force. Overall, nearly half disagreed on some level as to whether the processes to determine raises and promotions are fair (52%) and clear (49%). Nearly half (48%) disagreed with the idea that such decisions were based on individual merit, and 30% strongly disagreed. A majority (57%) felt at least to some degree that an individual’s connections were what primarily determined promotions, and 28% strongly agreed with this view.

These responses present a fairly severe condemnation of existing practices for promotion within the department, but also illustrate what is a common problem among municipal police departments in Mexico: the lack of adequate professional criteria or systems of review for career advancement and basic civil service protections for public servants working in the field of law enforcement. In the long term, the development of professional standards for evaluation and advancement is a measure on which the Ciudad Juárez police department must make significant improvement.

Respondents also had an unfavorable opinion regarding the department’s disciplinary sanctions; while the largest portion (28%) responded that disciplinary actions were fair, a sizeable number (22%) strongly disagreed. In other areas, the vast majority of the respondents agreed that the assignment of workshifts and the assignment of patrol zones is fair, and 48% and 36% strongly agreed with these sentiments, respectively. The survey also found relatively high levels of confidence, or trust, within the police department. However, while more than two thirds (65%) indicated that they have at least some degree of “confidence” in their fellow officers, nearly a third disagreed and 12% strongly disagreed. Roughly similar proportions indicated either confidence or lack of confidence in their superiors, though here respondents expressed more intense feelings—in both strong agreement and strong disagreement—when asked about their bosses.





Note: Some figures in the graphs do not add up to 100% due to rounding and because the graph does not include the "No Response" category.

Results of the Study



Equipment and Uniforms

The survey revealed that the Ciudad Juárez police department is poorly equipped and has never had adequate equipment, such as patrol cars, arms, ammunition, vests, and uniforms. One of the most important things for any employee is to have the necessary equipment to fulfill one's duties. In the field of law enforcement, it is not only necessary to protect the public but also vital for the safety of the individual officer. In this respect, the fact that half of the municipal police (54%) in Ciudad Juárez feel they are ill equipped to do their job—that is, do not have the equipment that they need—raises real concerns about the officers.

Indeed, officers indicated in response to a separate question that, in general, the quality of the department's equipment is poor (33%) or very poor (17%). Fewer numbers of respondents felt that certain specific types of equipment were in suboptimal condition, such as batons (15%), radios (11%), hand cuffs (28%), and utility belts (28%). However, in the particular case of patrol vehicles, 35% said that the condition of these units is either bad (35%) or very bad (34%). Given the centrality placed on police patrolling in the department (an issue that we consider elsewhere in this report),

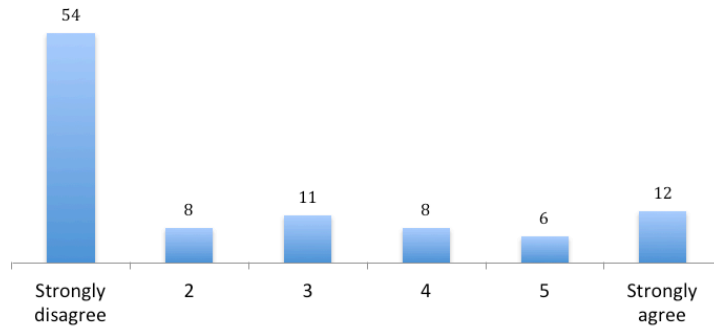
the poor functioning of police vehicles seems to be a problem that requires the department to invest in greater maintenance or an updating of its fleet.

With regard to police uniforms, 35% of respondents did not consider these to be adequate. In fact, 33% reported that their uniforms fit poorly (i.e., were not the right size) and more than half indicated that they were not issued the standard uniform required for the job by the department. Overall, the majority of those surveyed said that the police department supplied their basic equipment and accessories, or that they were reimbursed for them. Still, 30% said they had to buy their uniforms themselves without being reimbursed. Also, one important exception was the case of work boots, since the majority of respondents said that they had to buy these without being reimbursed.

The issue of uniforms is a recurring problem for officers at the municipal level, and raises public safety concerns because the widespread practice of individuals purchasing their own uniforms reduces departmental control over proper use of police attire and may allow some uniforms to fall into the hands of criminals who can then use them to impersonate police officers.

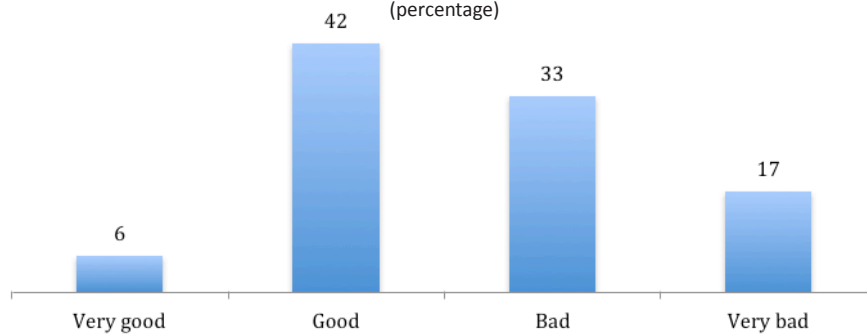
The equipment with which I work is sufficient (it is all I need)

(percentage)

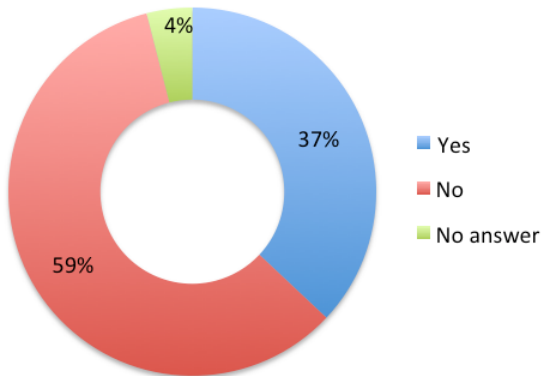


The quality of the equipment in my unit is:

(percentage)

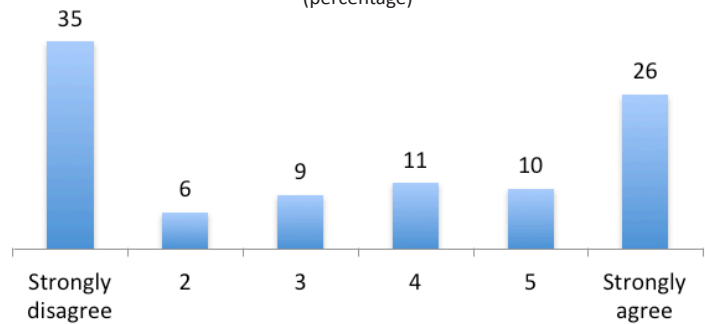


Were you reimbursed for your corresponding uniform?



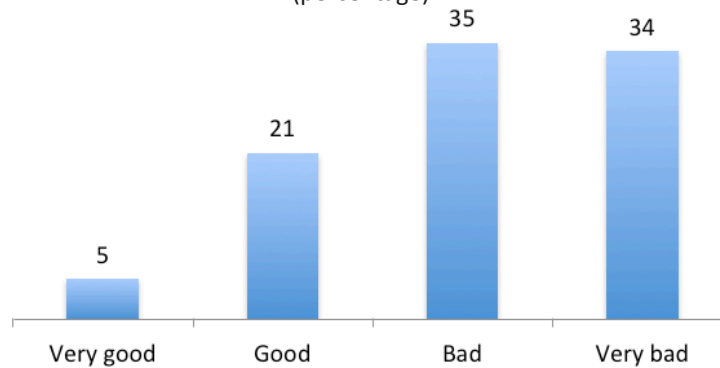
The municipal police uniforms are adequate for your work

(percentage)



Condition of patrol vehicles

(percentage)



Results of the Study



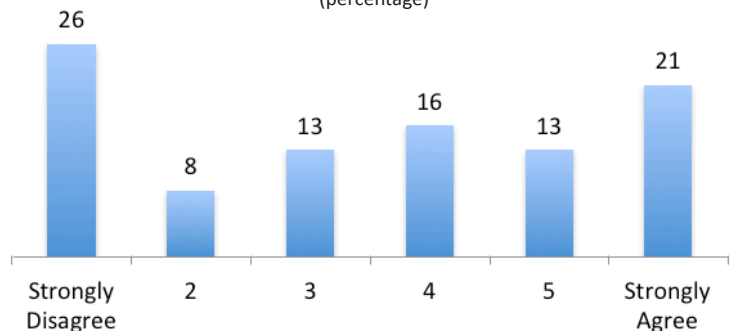
Training, Technical Knowledge, and Due Process

A fundamental issue in the field of public safety is the specialized training of the police; that is, providing the necessary skills every police officer should have to interact frequently with the public and to protect the rights of both crime victims and suspects. This training requires that police be educated about the legal framework in which they operate, the management of both routine law enforcement matters and highly dangerous situations, and the appropriate use of both lethal and non-lethal force.

In general terms, Ciudad Juárez police officers responded correctly to key questions about basic legal topics. The results of the survey showed the following: 86% of those surveyed know that municipal police officers are only authorized to detain a person *in flagrante* (flagrancy)—that is, in the act of committing a crime—and not at the request of an individual (7% made this error) or a superior authority (3% made this error). Roughly 74% correctly responded that, in the case of an administrative infraction, authorities can detain the suspect for up to 36 hours; however, a significant percentage (12%) incorrectly indicated that the maximum was 12 hours, 5% said 24 hours, and the remainder did not know. Roughly 80% responded correctly that a detainee should be immediately turned

Do you receive sufficient continuing education training courses?

(percentage)



over to the prosecutor; however, the remainder were not aware of this fact, which is a serious concern for the preservation of due process within the criminal justice system.

A police officer should have the basic knowledge of the judicial framework related to the performance of his or her duty, not only

in relation to citizens' rights and detentions, but also with regard to his or her own legal rights. In fact, the department is required to provide such training, which is a basic right that the police themselves have, as 53% of respondents were aware.

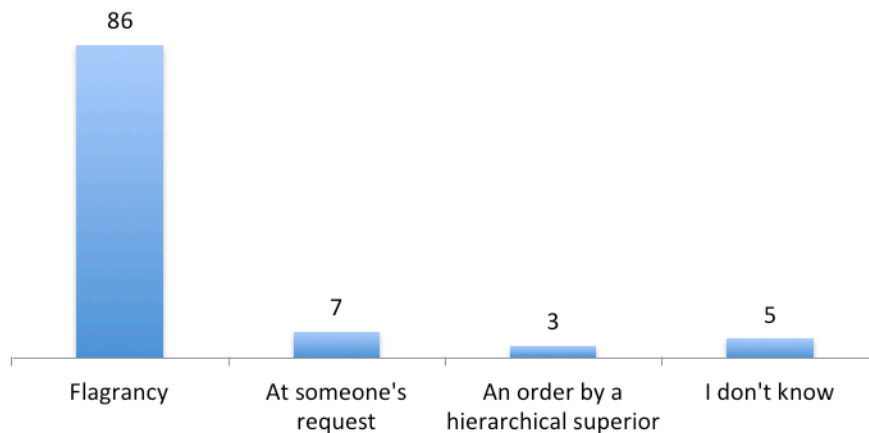
Since the 2008 constitutional reforms that marked the transition from the traditional, predominantly inquisitorial system of criminal justice to a new accusatorial system with significant safeguards to ensure due process and equal representation of both the victim and the accused before the court, police will begin to play an increasingly important part of criminal proceedings and investigations. However, the survey found that 23% of respondents have never received specific training on the role and responsibilities of municipal police in the accusatorial system, although 20% said that they did.

With regard to the procedures for crime scene preservation, 29% said that they did receive training, but 19% say they did not. 27% (majority segment) say they were never trained on gathering evidence at the crime scene, while 22% said that they were trained. A significant number of officers strongly disagreed (31%) that there were adequate training manuals to prepare them on these topics. In short, while it appears that perhaps there have been efforts to train officers, these have not been widespread enough or adequately designed to reach all members of the force.

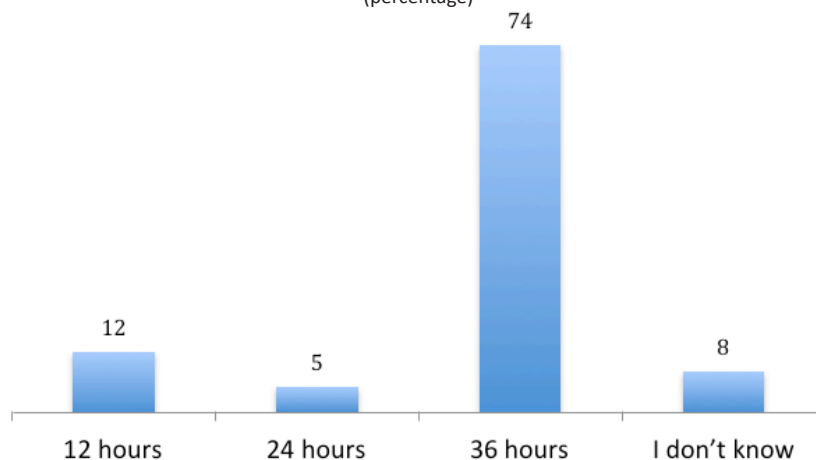
As to the subjective evaluations that police had about their own respect for due process, the survey yielded a number of useful observations. For example, officers overwhelmingly expressed the view that they "always" respect institutional norms in conducting their daily work, but over a third of the respondents (35%) indicated that it was "not always possible" to do so.

While only 3% indicated that they allow themselves to violate institutional norms, that still suggests that there are over 70 "bad cops" who were willing to express their disregard for the department's rules and regulations in the survey. Also, while most officers indicated that police typically apply the law equally to all, a very significant percentage (25%) disagreed with this view. Finally, along these lines, it is important to note that a significant portion of officers (32%) felt to some degree that the police are more severe with the poor, though over half of the officers disagreed or strongly agreed (40%) with them.

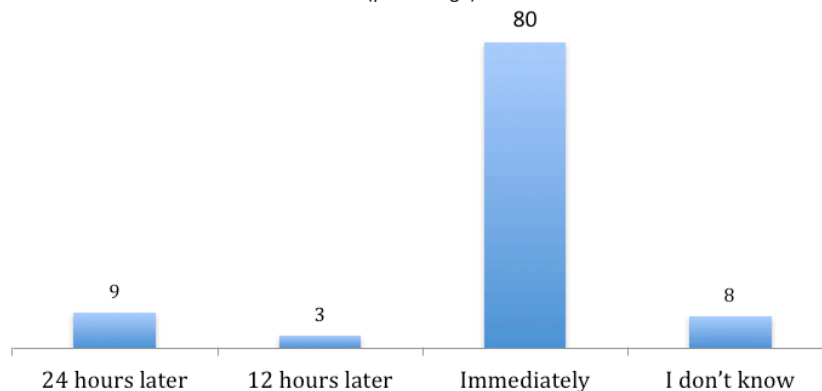
A person may be detained by municipal police in cases of:
(percentage)



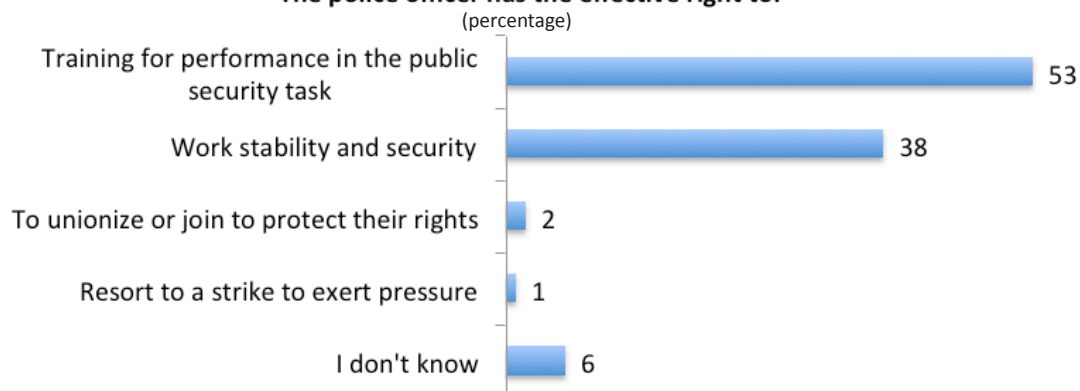
In case a person commits an administrative offense, the police can detain them for:
(percentage)



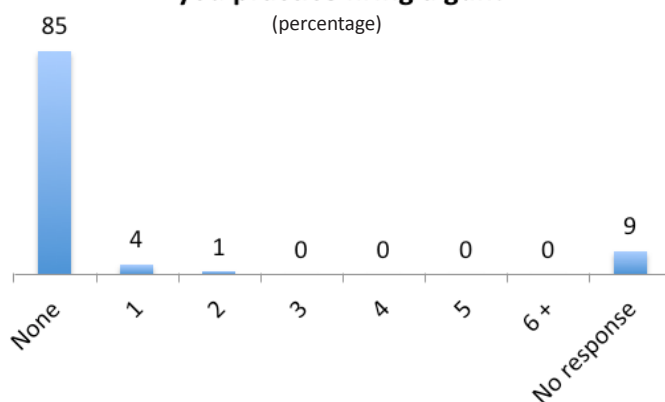
At what point should a suspect be put at the disposal of the Public Prosecutor (Federal or State)?
(percentage)



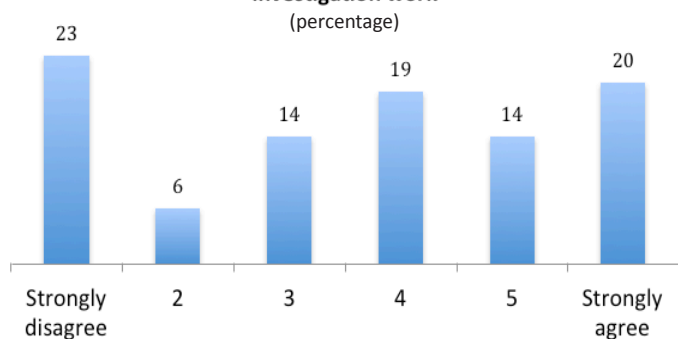
The police officer has the effective right to:



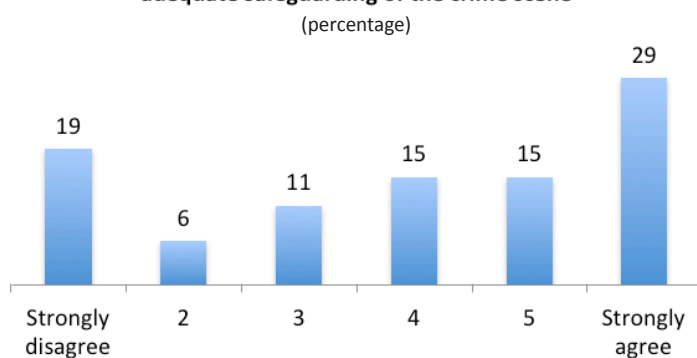
In a regular month, how many times do you practice firing a gun?



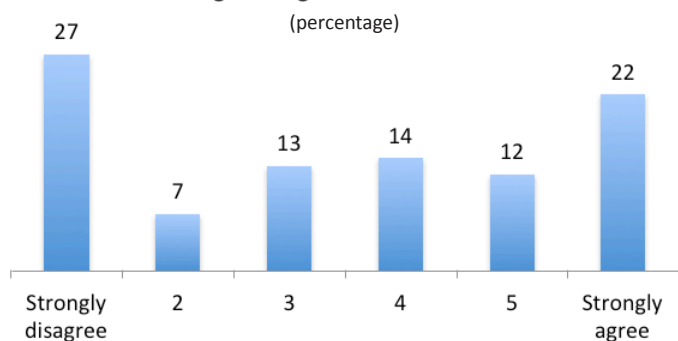
Indicate your level of agreement: I have received training in the new methods of Municipal Police investigation work



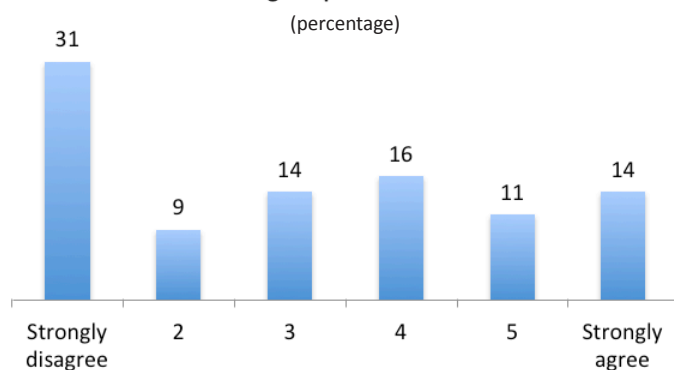
I have received training on the procedures for the adequate safeguarding of the crime scene



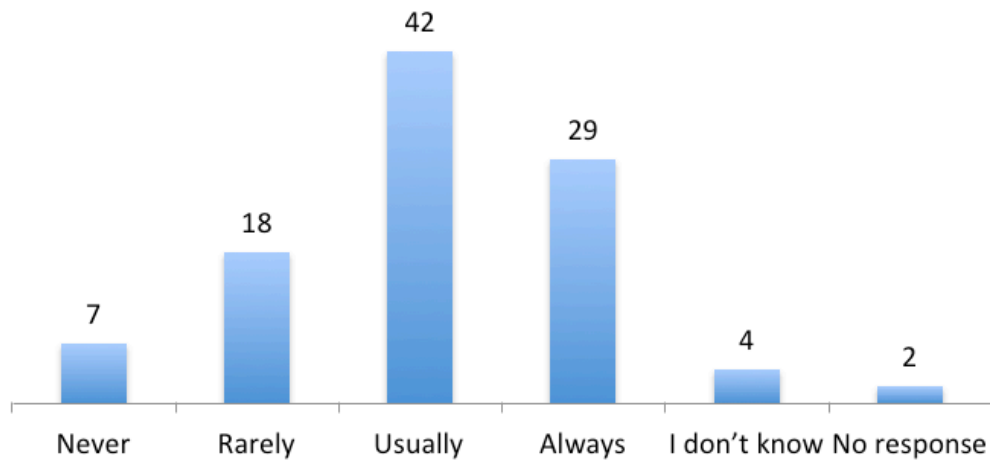
I have received training on the procedures for evidence gathering at a crime scene



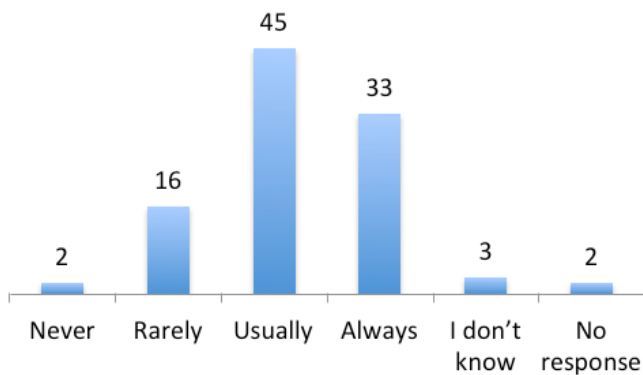
We have good procedure manuals



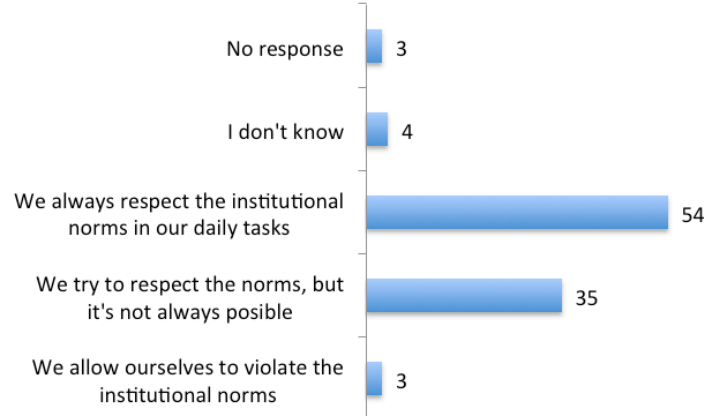
How often do police apply the law equally?



How often do police provide fair treatment to citizens? (percentage)

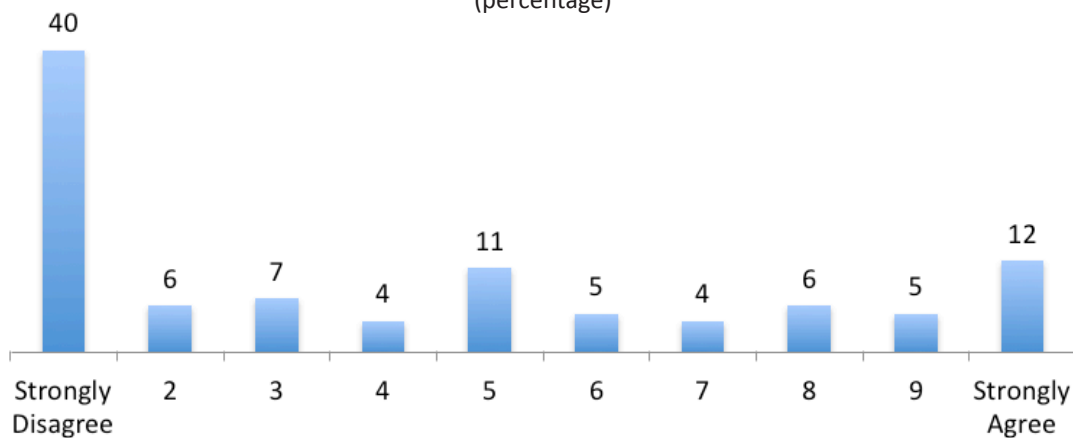


In order to do our work well, my colleagues and I: (percentage)



Police are more severe with the poor

(percentage)



Results of the Study

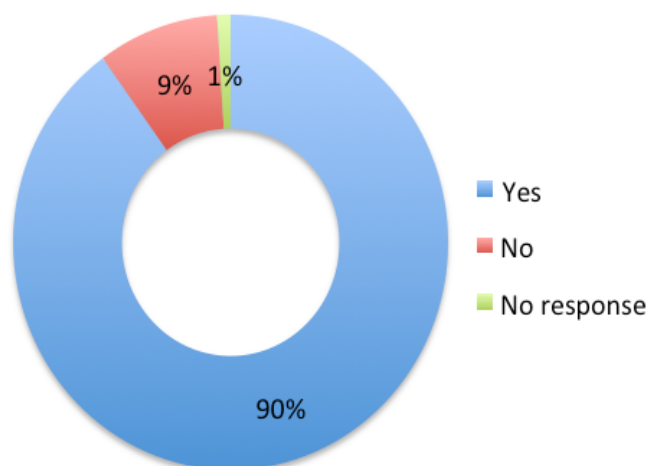


Salaries and Other Forms of Compensation

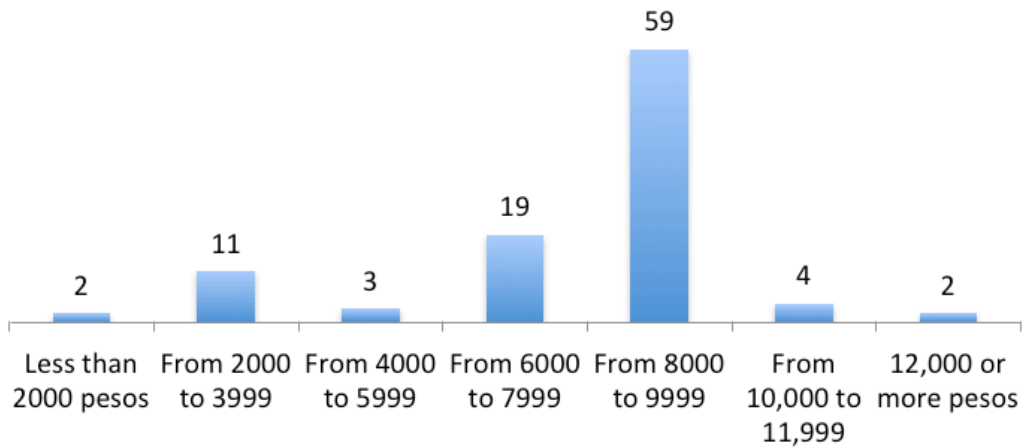
The survey asked several questions about compensation. The overwhelming majority (90%) of the officers that responded to the survey indicated that their salary is the most important source of income for their family, and an even larger percent (96%) said they earn less than 10,000 pesos (about \$850 USD) per month. Three in five officers (59%) reported an income between 8,000 (\$640 USD) and 9,000 pesos (\$720 USD) per month. An overwhelming majority (90%) also said they would like to see an increase in salary. A smaller majority, but still large (70%), said that they would like to see an increase in their supervisors' salaries. More than a third of those surveyed (35%) said they would be satisfied with a 25% increase in their salary, and the majority (86%) reported that they would be satisfied with an increase of up to 50% of their salary.

Apart from an increase in salaries, other priorities for those surveyed consisted of obtaining benefits for their family, including scholarships for their kids (63%), access to better hospitals (59%), and life insurance (53%). Despite concerns about salary, only 9% of those surveyed indicated that they have other sources of income aside from their police work, and the majority (76%) inside this small group did not make more than 400 pesos a month from their alternative source of income.

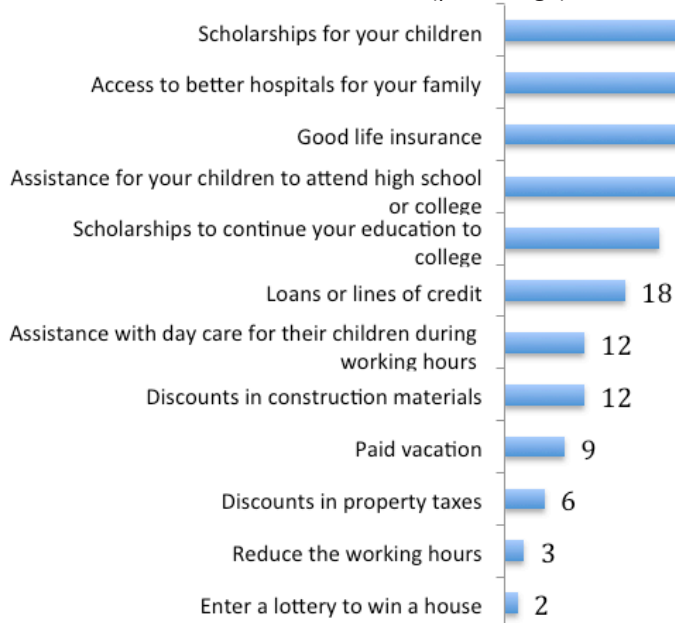
Is your salary the most important source of income in your household?



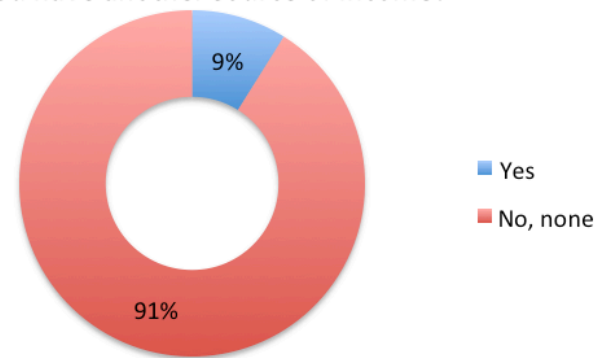
What is your monthly salary for your job in the police force, including bonuses and other compensation? (percentage)



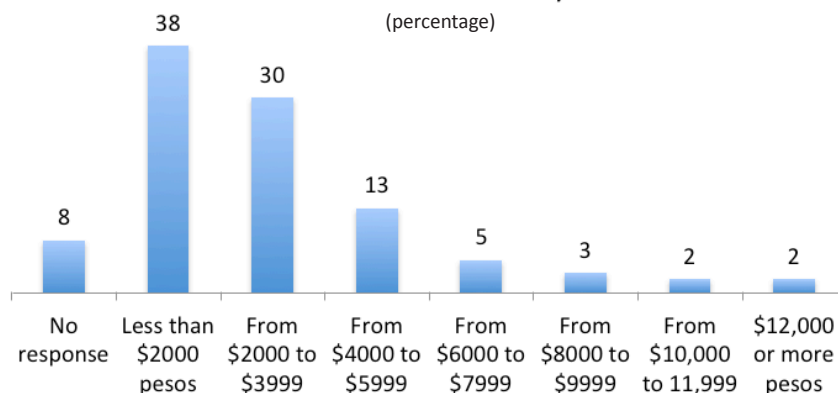
If it weren't possible to raise your salary, which of the following would you find the most appealing? (Sum of three mentions) (percentage)



In addition to your job as a police officer, do you have another source of income?



If you have another source of income, please indicate how much you earn a month in that job: (Base =9% who declared having another source of income) (percentage)



Results of the Study

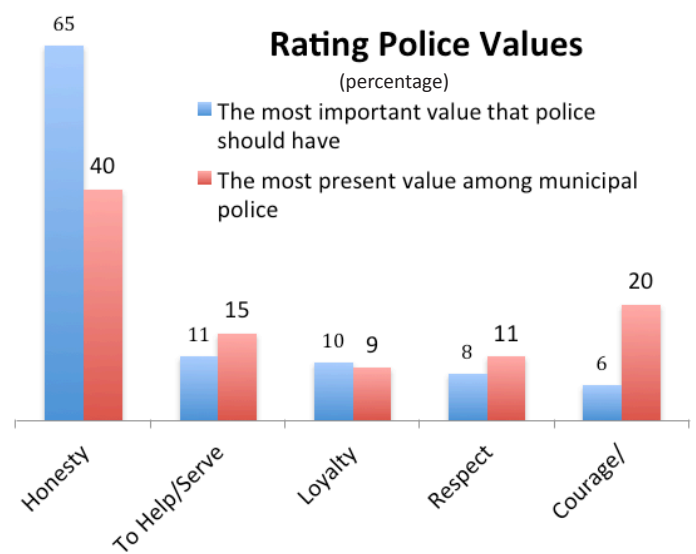


Image courtesy of Jon Lowenstein/NOOR

Values, Corruption, and Trust Tests

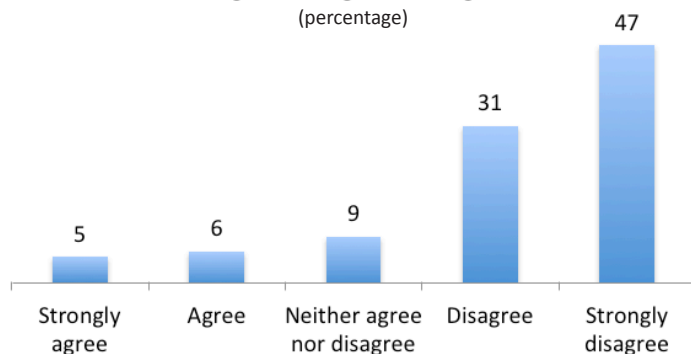
In their responses to various questions, those surveyed highlighted important problems of confidence and integrity among municipal police. While the majority of those surveyed (65%) consider that honesty is the most important value that a police agent can have, less than half (40%) of those surveyed considered that this value was present among their co-workers. Meanwhile, a large majority of those surveyed (78%) disagreed that being involved in illicit activity is acceptable as long as nobody is harmed.

When asked more directly to rate the problem of corruption in the department on a scale of 0 (none) to 4 (high), a large majority (65%) considered the level to be “medium” (2) to “high” (4). When asked where corruption resides within the department, a majority (73%) said that the corruption is found at the highest levels (including 29% that said corruption was a problem at all levels of the force). The majority (68%) does not feel that low salaries cause corruption, which suggests that officers perceive there to be systemic problems or other influences that contribute to corruption within the department. Those surveyed were more divided about whether police were tolerant of corruption and whether there are adequate mechanisms to investigate it.



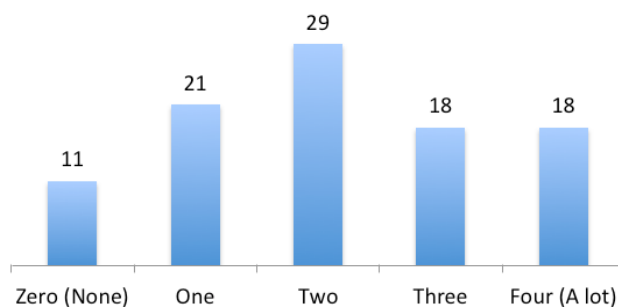
Do you feel it's okay to engage in illegal activities of a lesser degree as long as no one gets hurt?

(percentage)



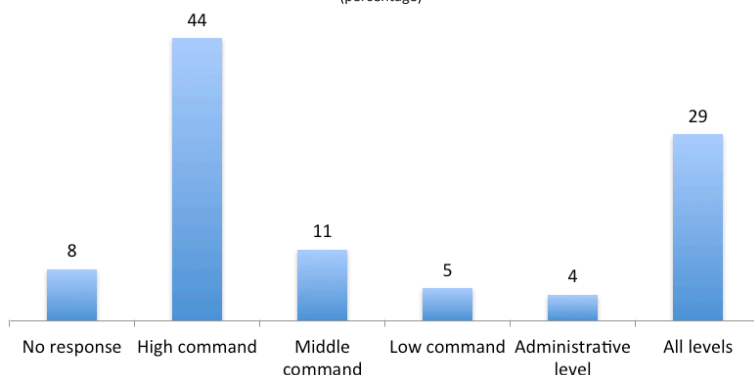
In general, indicate the level of corruption that currently exists in the department on a scale of 0 to 4

(percentage)



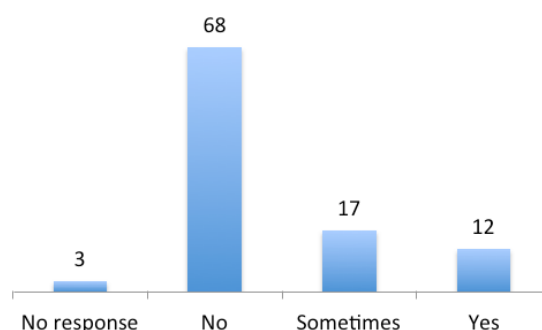
What level of command has the most corruption?

(percentage)



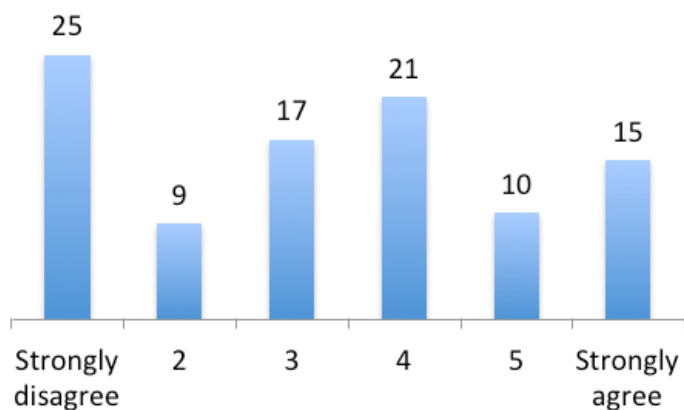
Do you think corruption is a way to offset salary?

(percentage)



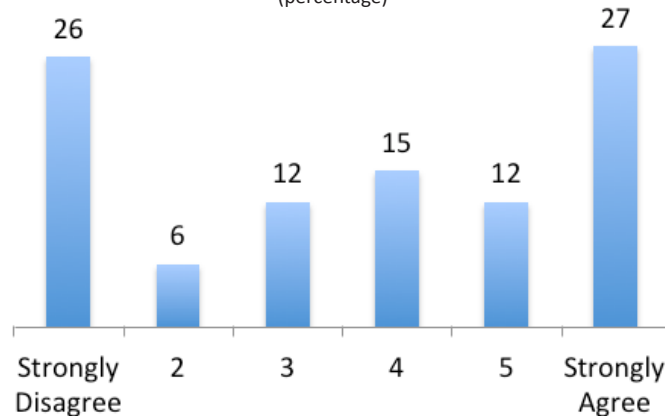
There are many police officers that tolerate acts of bribery

(percentage)



There are mechanisms to investigate corruption

(percentage)



Results of the Study

Gender Perceptions and Treatment of Women

As previously mentioned, only 25% of those surveyed were female. The majority (82% of the entire female population) were field personnel, worked as officers (66%), and occupied their position for less than one year (51%). The women less frequently hold higher ranking positions, as evidenced by the fact that only 5% of those surveyed responded that their supervisor or boss was a woman. Slightly fewer women (85%) than the average for the survey (90%) said that their salary is the main source of income for their household, though this indicates that these winners are the primary income earners (breadwinners) in their family.

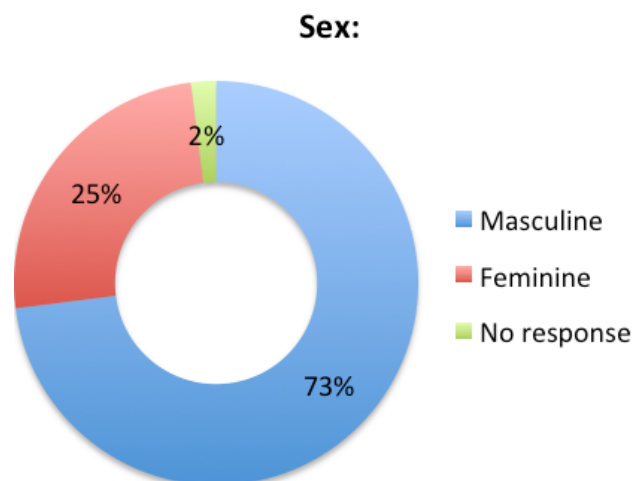
The majority of all those surveyed (62%) indicated that women are valued equally to men, although 29% thought that women are less valued; views on this question differed markedly by gender, since 53% of women thought they were not valued equally to men. However, 70% of all those surveyed recognized that efficient mechanisms do not exist to deal with discriminatory treatment toward policewomen. In terms of internal discipline, 33% said that disciplinary actions were not different for men and women, though more than one in four also strongly disagreed on this point. Over a third (39%) also strongly disagreed that the department's equipment is adequate for the different needs of men and women. Moreover, 61% of respondents agreed on some level with the statement that they trust their male and female colleagues in the department equally; a significant percentage (14%) strongly disagreed.

In response to the question of whether there is continuing education to guarantee equal opportunities for policemen and policewomen, opinions were almost split with equal numbers strongly agreeing (27%) and strongly disagreeing (27%). This polarization in the responses suggests that perhaps there is a lack of institutionalized policies to grant similar opportunities to both sexes. However, closer inspection suggests that the answers may also be related to the respondent's time on the force.

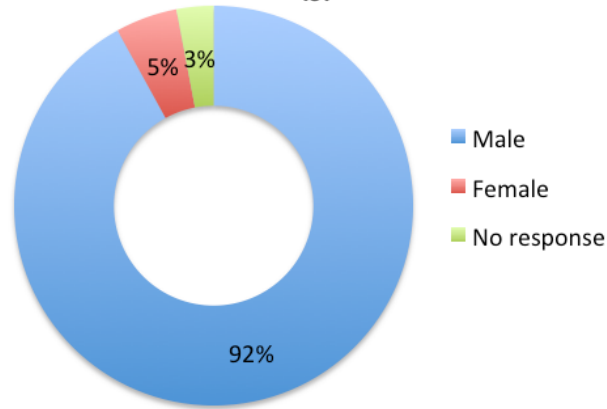
One of the fundamental tasks for municipal police officers is to attend to and solve cases of domestic and gender-related violence. Therefore, officers need to have the necessary preparation and knowledge about how to respond effectively to these situations. According to the survey responses, the first action that police take in Juárez for cases involving violence against women is to channel them directly to medical services (48%), provide information and guidance to victims and families (21%), and try to resolve the conflict and leave as soon as possible (13%). The majority (54%) said that they also refer women who suffer violence to the Center for Attention and Domestic Violence (Centro de Atención y Violencia Intrafamiliar, CAVI).



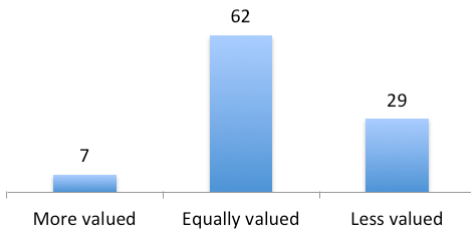
The results of the study show that 40% of respondents believe that the rights of women are an urgent topic and 25% say it is very urgent, while 30% say that this issue is not very urgent. However, 85% consider that violence against women is an urgent to very urgent topic, while only 13% say that it is not. This suggests at least some sensitivity to the problem of crime and violence against women, which has been received significant attention in Ciudad Juárez in recent years.



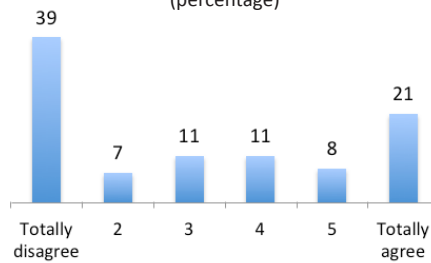
Your supervisor or immediate boss is:



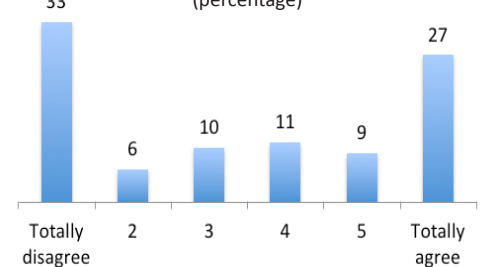
Do you think that female police officers are as valued as male officers, more valued, or less valued?



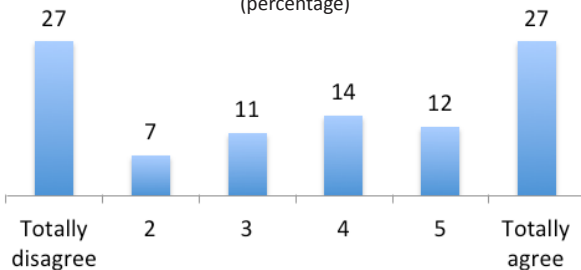
The team you work with adapts to the different needs of men and women (percentage)



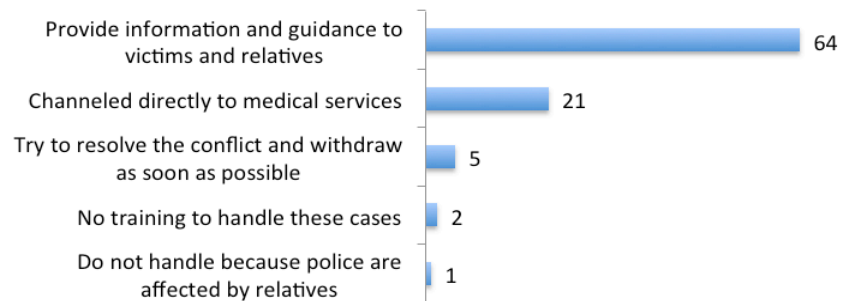
Corrective discipline is different for men and women (percentage)



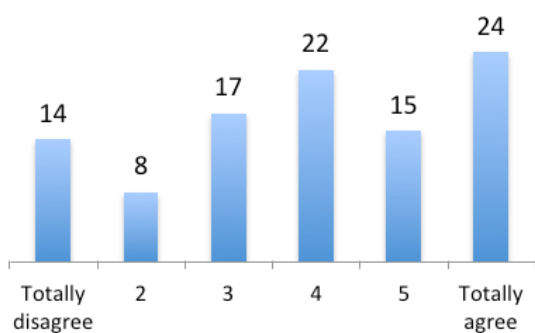
There are continuing education courses to ensure equality of opportunity between men and women police (percentage)



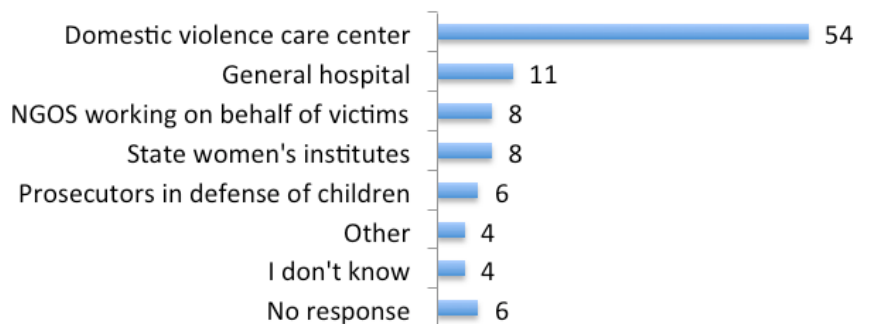
Which are the main actions for cases of violence against women? (The most important)



I trust my female companions as much as my male companions (percentage)



Where do you send women who suffer from violence to receive help? (Choose only one)



Results of the Study

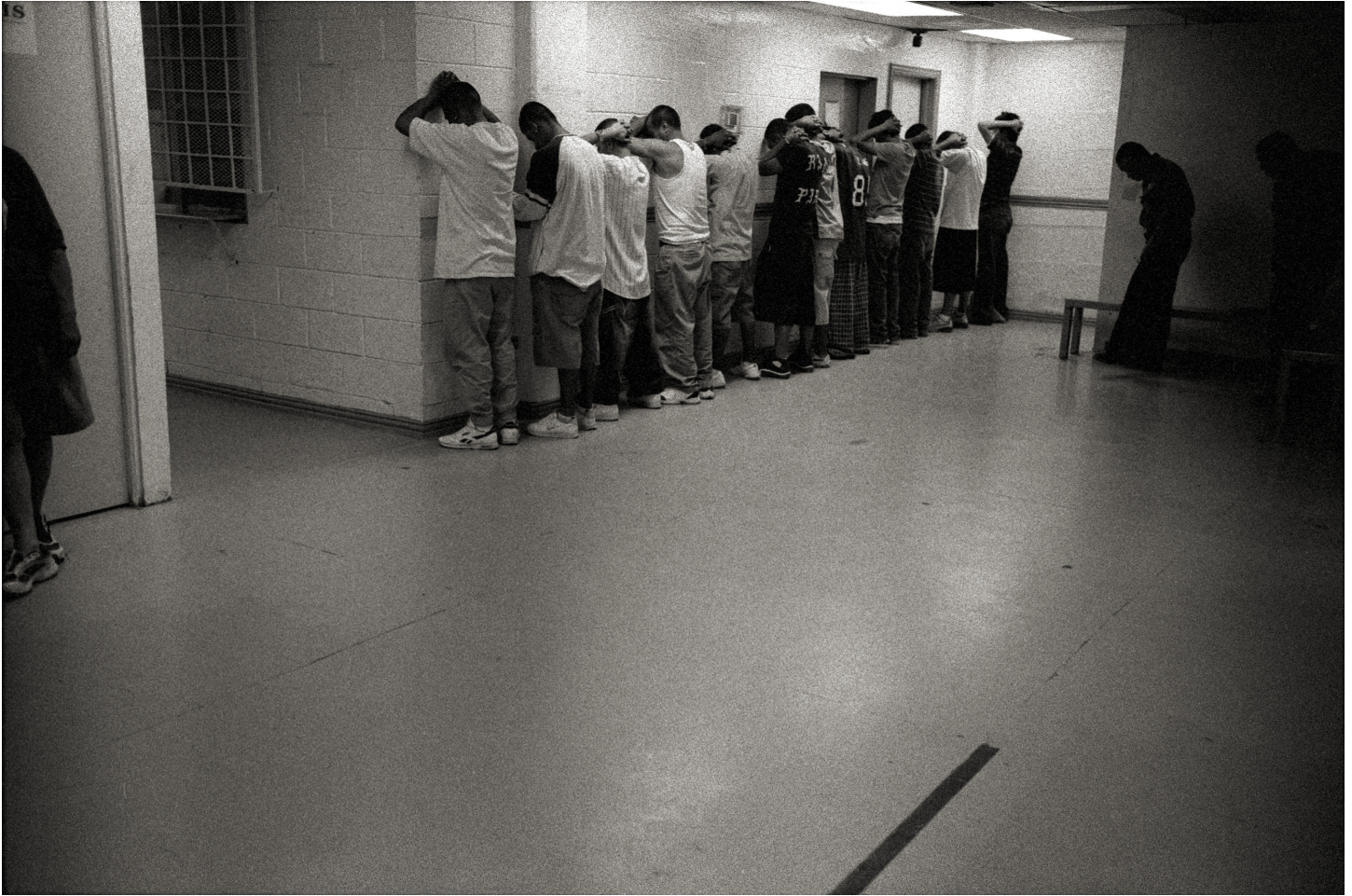


Image courtesy of Jon Lowenstein/NOOR

Perceptions of Crime, Society, and Public Policy

The municipal police of Ciudad Juárez find themselves in a complex and hostile environment that is characterized, in the first place, by an average homicide rate of 7 killings per day, which is attributed to the activities of organized crime groups, according to data provided by the SSPM in May 2010; and in the second place, by the reporting of probable and real cases of domestic and family violence, which saturates the CERI, according to data compiled by CERI from April to May 2010. Given the relationship between domestic violence and gang-related youth violence, these two contextual problems are probably closely linked, as violence at home begets violence in the streets.

Violence increased suddenly and dramatically in Ciudad Juárez in 2008, as the city soon became described by scholars and journalists as a “drug war zone,” the “homicide capital of the world,” or simply “murder city.” In 2009 alone, with just over a million inhabitants, Ciudad Juárez had more than 2,000 homicides, with rate of death by firearms of 128.3 per 100,000, compared to the national average of 8.8 per 100,000. By late-2010, Ciudad Juárez alone accounted for nearly a third of Mexico’s drug-related violence, with a total number of homicides (2,700), more homicides than the combined annual totals of the following U.S. cities: New York (532), Chicago (435),

Philadelphia (304), Los Angeles (297), Washington, DC (131), and Dade-Miami County (84).

In fact, the U.S. city of El Paso, just on the other side of the border from Ciudad Juárez, had just four homicides in 2010, and was proclaimed the most secure city in the United States. The key to the history of these two cities is the lack of effective law enforcement south of the border; general social violence is, in this sense, an ultimate expression of the institutional weakness of law enforcement in Ciudad Juárez, since few murders are investigated, most are not solved, or many are not punished effectively.

A lack of interagency cooperation and a lack of prosecutorial competence and commitment is partly to blame, according to local officials. In an interview with members of the research team, the mayor of Ciudad Juárez during this study, José Reyes Ferriz, indicated that judicial system operators were struggling to adapt to recent criminal procedural reforms. In the meantime, state prosecutors were processing only 150 out of 3,000 people arrested *in flagrante delicto*, and only 50 cases out of 1,300 arrested for the theft of vehicles resulted in a sentence, all of which contributed to frustration among local police.

In the view of local police, prosecutors tend to free the criminals that are caught in the act, and encourage that even those convicted for a crime are released quickly. This means that a convicted killer is often set free after little more than two years of time served in jail. Therefore, the Mayor Reyes identified the judicial process and, in particular, the choices of the State Attorney General's Office of Chihuahua as an obstacle to public security.

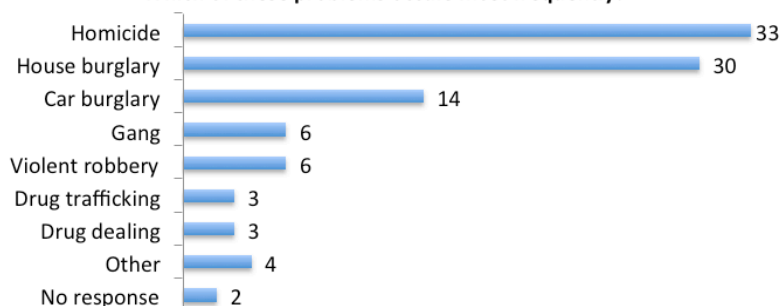
An example of this is the highly publicized case of Rubi Marisol Ortiz, in which her boyfriend and self-declared killer, Sergio Rafael Barraza Bocanegra, was absolved of her murder. The appeals proceedings in the case made evident the low level of professionalism on the part of the prosecutors and judges involved. The case also attracted national and international attention because it resulted in the murder of the victim's mother in retaliation for her very public efforts to protest the release of her daughter's confessed murderer.

However, it also appears that municipal authorities and law enforcement officials are overwhelmed, under-equipped, and lacking mechanisms to ensure sustained improvements to the local police force. Over the past three years alone, the municipal public security force has suffered the loss of three top public security officials, including the head of police administration, the head of police operations, and the head of the local prison system (CERESO). The survey results of this study also illustrated that violence directly affects the local police force on a personal level, as well. 24% of women and 35% of men on the local police force in Ciudad Juárez personally know someone who died as a result of drug related violence (the younger and more educated, the more likely they were connected to a victim).

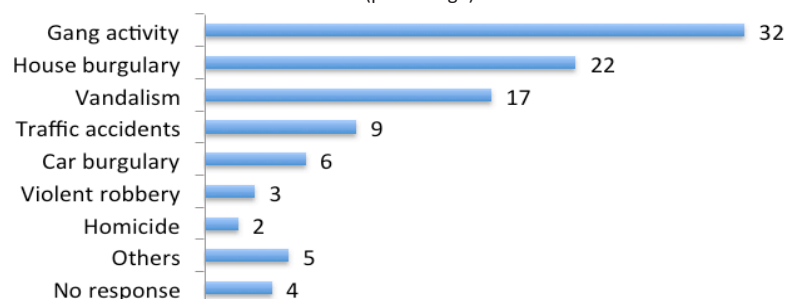
These hard facts have an impact on "subjective security" and the social perception of violence. In Ciudad Juárez, just over 80% of its population 18 years and over considered their city to be unsafe and 94% (the highest proportion nationwide) did not dare to engage in certain activities for fear of becoming the victim of a crime. Criminal impunity begets further public insecurity, as it exacerbates social violence, contributes to widespread societal fear, and adds distrust in law enforcement and criminal justice. One notable result has been the exodus of the local population and the wholesale abandonment of private homes, many of which are simply left uninhabited and unoccupied. The city, in short, exhibits a climate of violence and insecurity, anxiety and fear.

It is worth mentioning the role of mass media in reproducing the stereotypes and feeding a collective perception based upon symbolically constructed violence, fear, and hatred, which has led to radical changes in habits and customs, as society retreats from public spaces and withdraws to the intimacy of their homes. This withdrawal from society and the absence of community spaces is noticeable by simply walking the streets, plazas, and parks of Ciudad Juárez. Some commercial shopping centers provide an exception, but many restaurants have suffered from the effects of violence and extortion by organized crime.

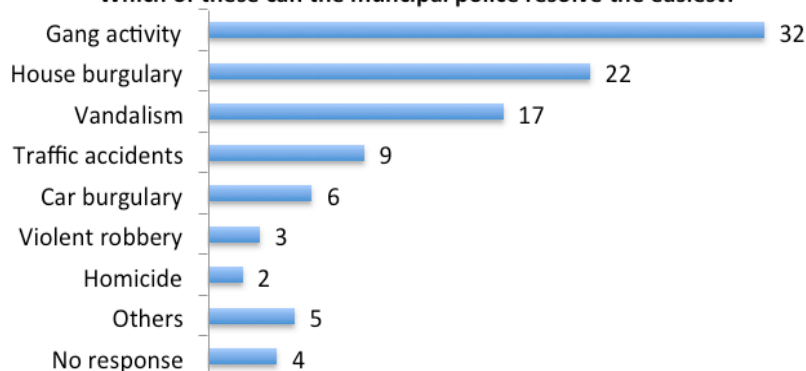
Which of these problems occurs most frequently?



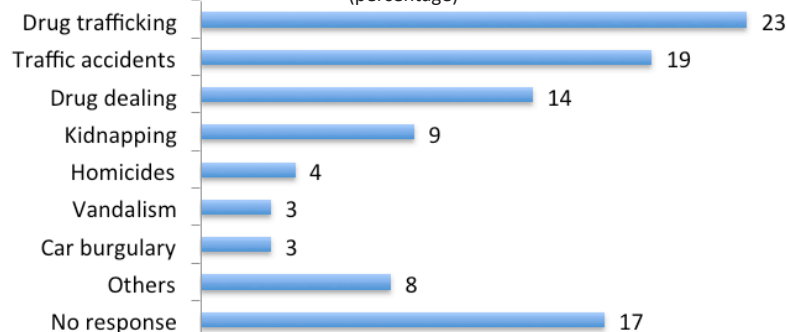
Which of these can the municipal police resolve the easiest?
(percentage)



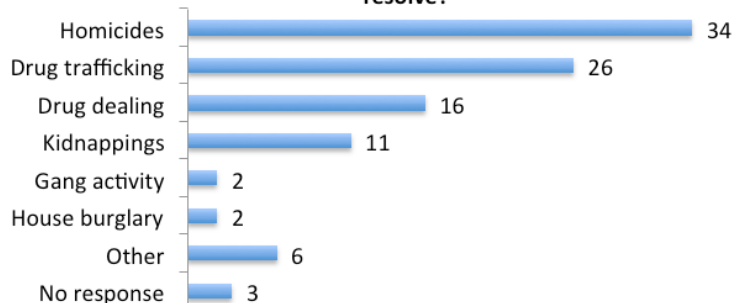
Which of these can the municipal police resolve the easiest?



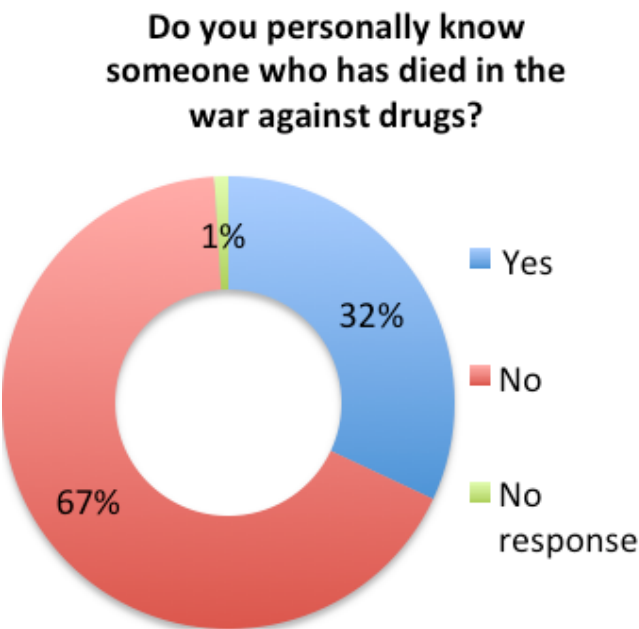
Which of these is most likely to involve municipal agents?
(percentage)



Which of these is the most difficult for municipal police to resolve?



The survey results of this study show that violence directly affects municipal police in Ciudad Juárez on a personal level, since 32% of the municipal police in Ciudad Juárez —24% of women and 35% of men— personally know someone who died as a result of drug-related violence (the younger and more educated the respondent, the more likely they were to have been connected to such a victim).



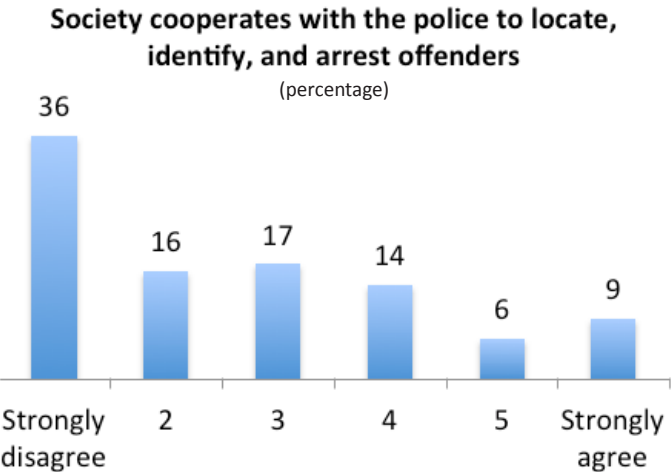
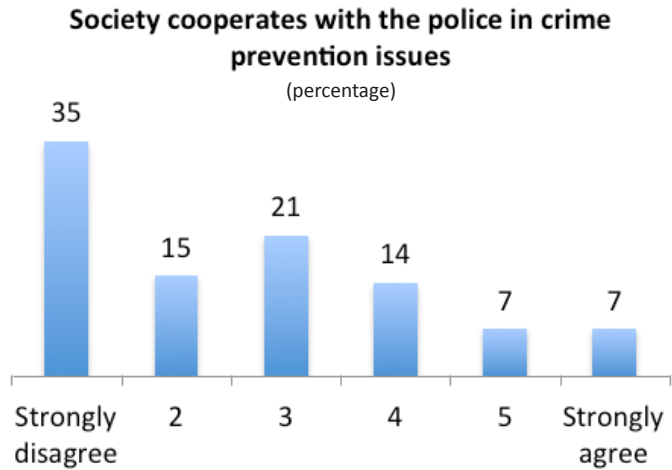
Police officers’ perspectives in relation to crime exhibited some unique characteristics. First, municipal police in Ciudad Juárez consider homicide (33%) to be the most frequent crime they confront, followed by home burglaries (30%). Not surprisingly, a majority (52%) said that the most worrisome problem for society is homicide, with drug trafficking in a distant second place (11%). In contrast, only 2% of police consider that homicide is a crime that can be resolved easily by municipal police. In fact, 34% consider homicide to be the crime most difficult for local police to resolve, followed by drug trafficking (26%); nearly a third (32%) of respondents believe that gangs are among the problems that municipal police are most readily able to resolve.

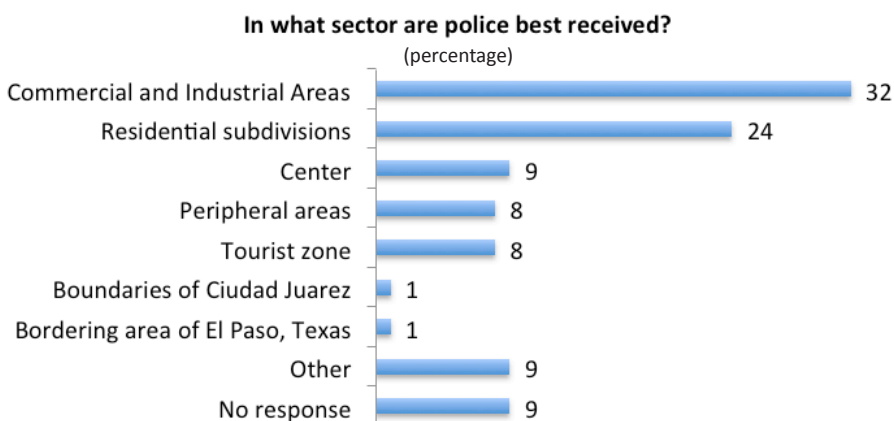
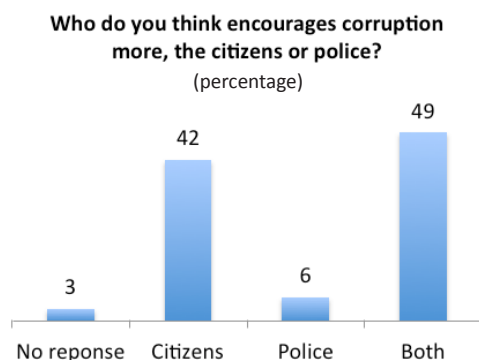
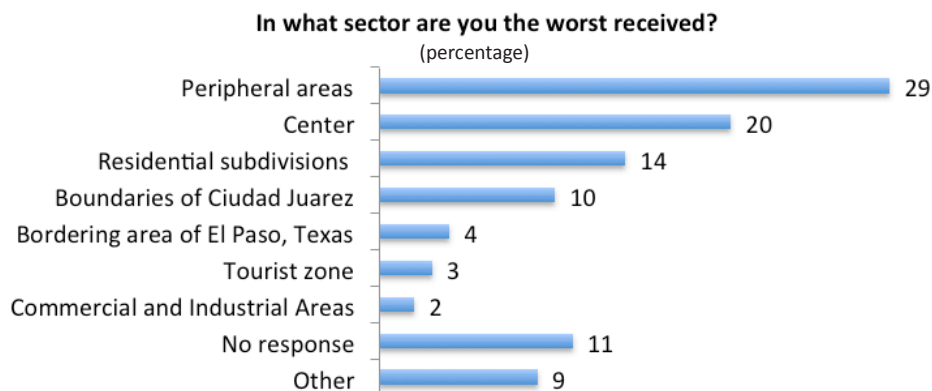
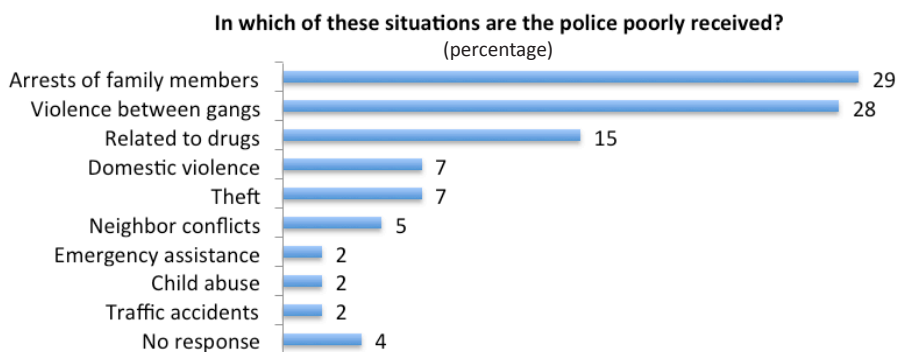
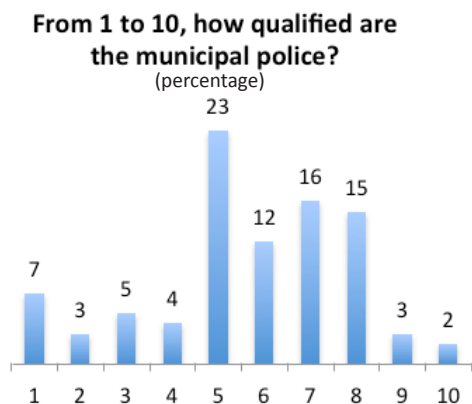
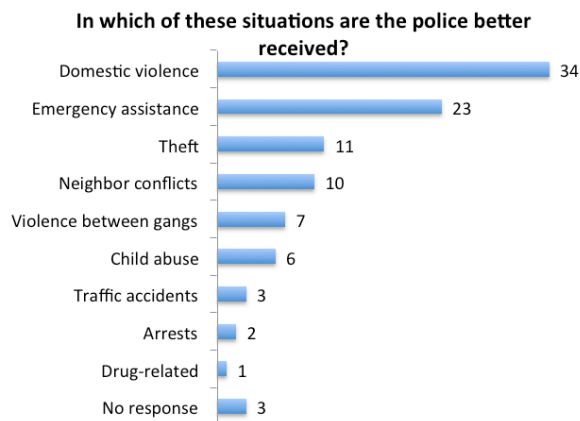
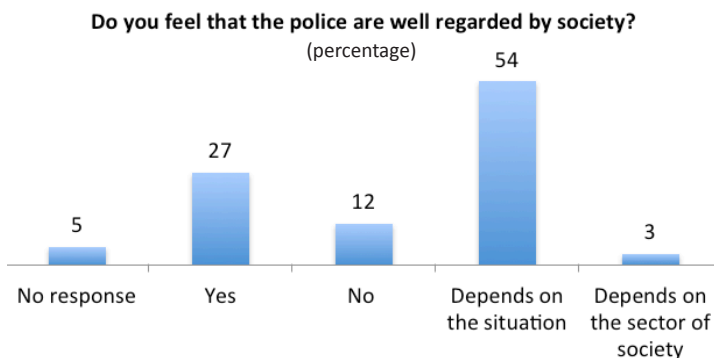
Interestingly, when asked about the kinds of crimes in which a municipal police officer would most likely be involved, about a quarter (23%) indicated drug trafficking and a significant number preferred not to answer the question (17%). The first response suggests that corruption constitutes a major part of the reason why so many municipal police officers believe that they are not able to effectively combat the problem of drug trafficking. The latter response leaves room for speculation, of course, but may indicate less confidence in answering the question, which was generally not the case in most other parts of the survey.

Because the study took place during an internal restructuring of the Ciudad Juárez police force, it is important to take into account the opinions toward that process. The survey found that more than a third of the officers (37%) reported that the internal restructuring and purification process conducted in 2008 and 2009 was neither rigorous nor equitable, and that the recruitment process filled the vacancies with unreliable people. A significant percentage (20%) considered that there had not been any posi-

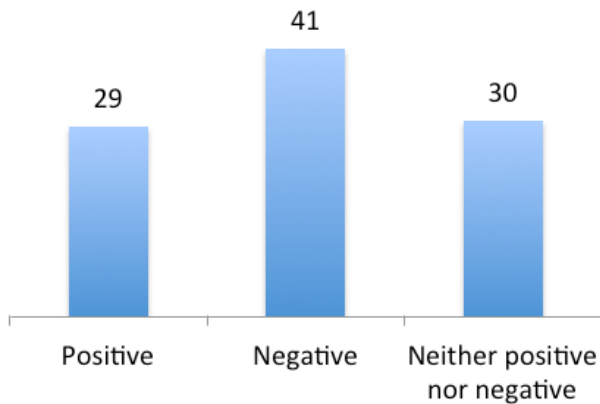
tive results, that the process did not successfully purge the police institution of corrupt officers, and that the new officers were not adequately selected. In general, there was a balance (40%) between those who disagreed and those who agreed that the hiring process of officers is adequate.

Finally, as has been seen in many studies, responses suggest that police in Ciudad Juárez consider greater participation by the community (30%) to be the most effective tool to combat insecurity, followed by the eradication of corruption (26%). This is an encouraging outlook, in that it suggests that a shift to a more community-oriented model of policing would find support within the department and—if they are correct—might provide an effective solution to the city’s public safety concerns. However, the persistence of corruption on the force could be an obstacle to both of these objectives, since citizens must have a police force that they can trust and the overall security situation is exacerbated by corruption.

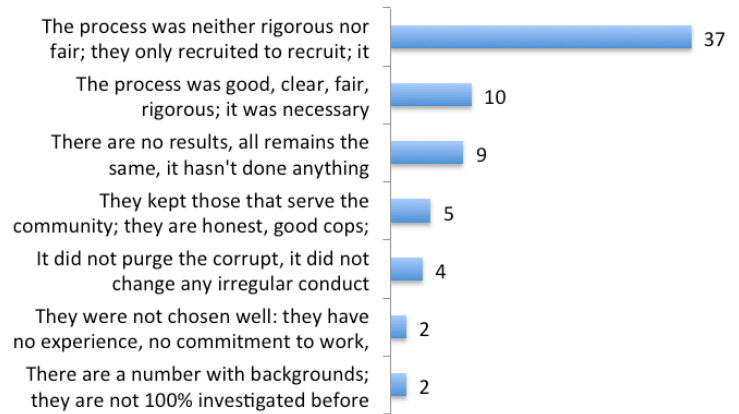




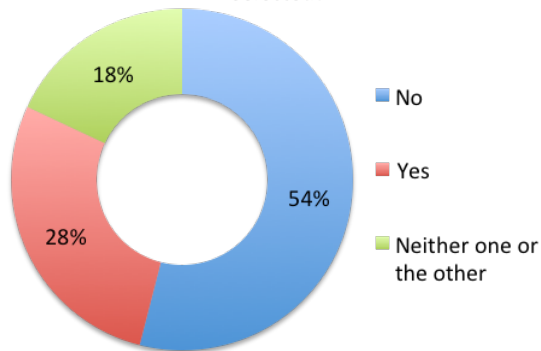
Was the 2008-2009 police force screening and purging process positive or negative?



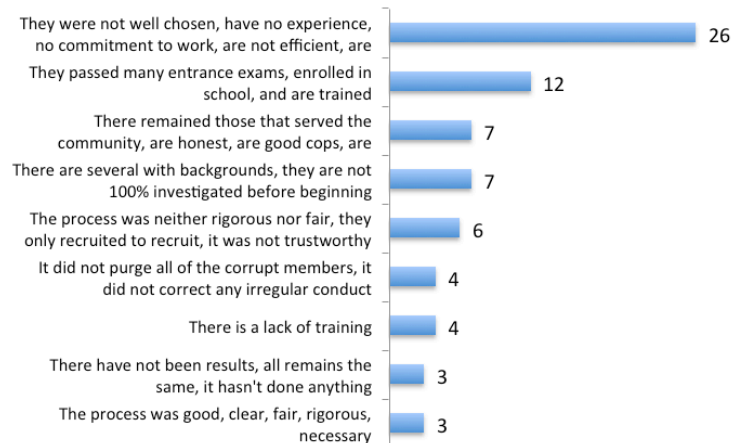
Which sentence indicates how you view the purge?



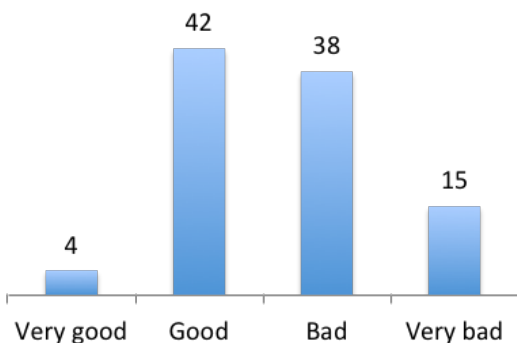
Do you think the new recruits were well selected?



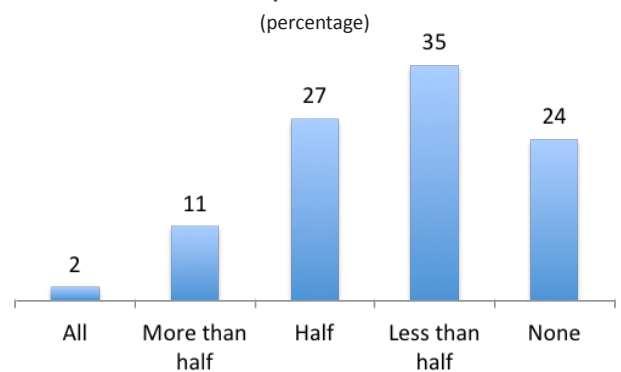
What sentence describes your view of the selection of new recruits after the purge?



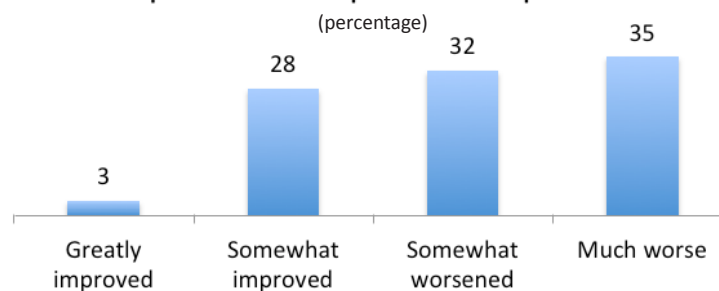
How would you rate Joint Operation Chihuahua?



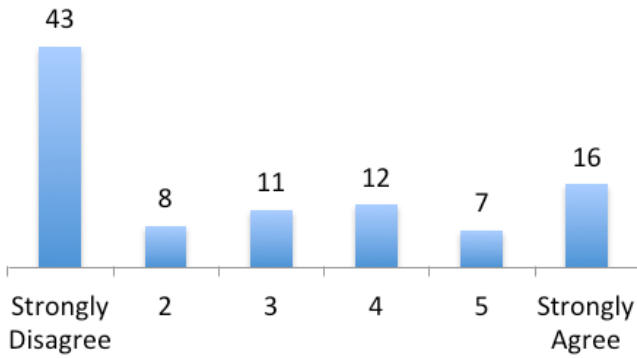
How many of the goals have been reached for this operation?



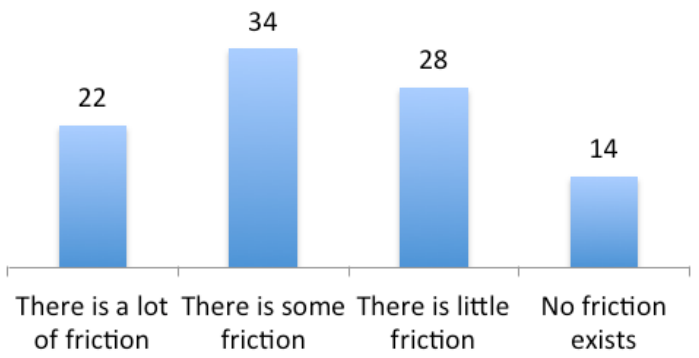
Do you think that the situation in the city has worsened or improved since the Operation was implemented?



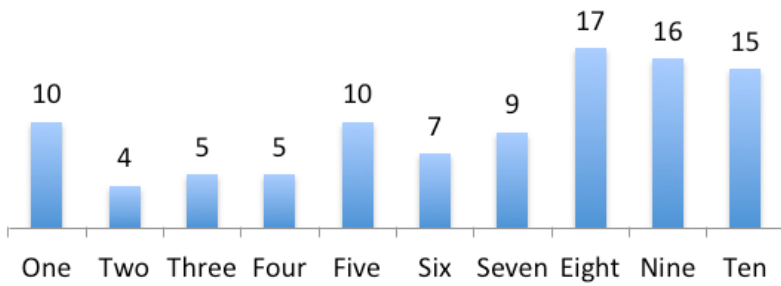
In your town there is real coordination between the municipal public security forces, state and federal regulations.



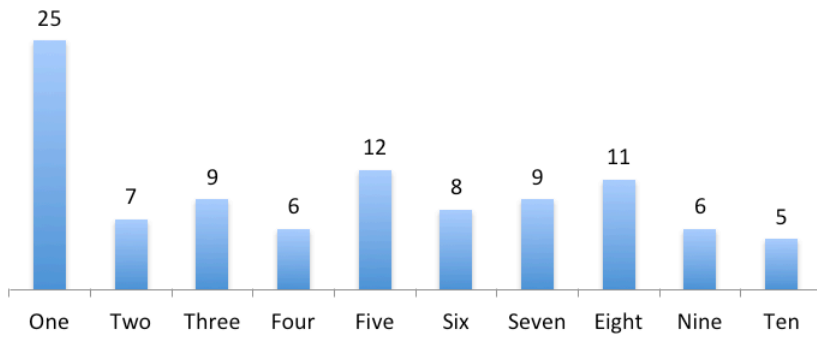
Is there any friction between the police corps patrolling the city, and investigators carrying out joint work?



On a scale of 1 to 10, what is your perspective on the army when collaborating on patrols?

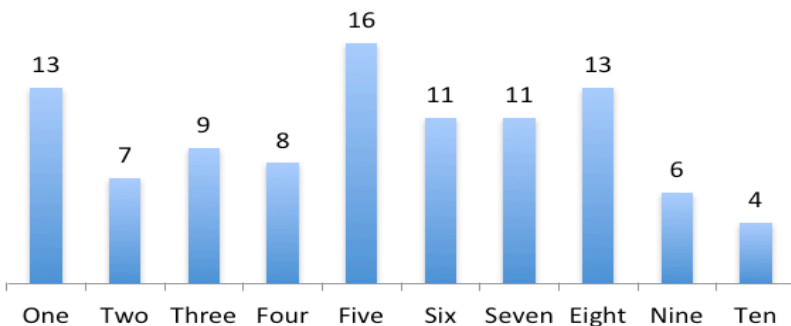


On a scale of 1-10: What is your opinion of the federal police?

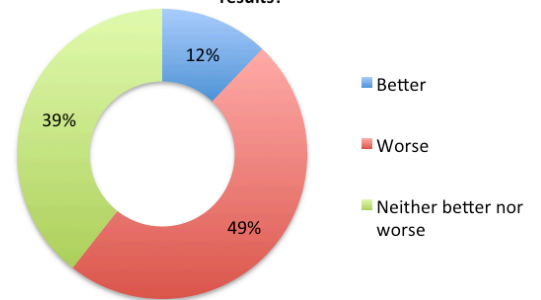


Promedio: 6.5

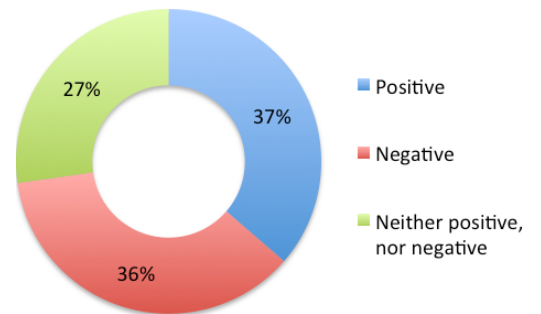
On a scale of 1-10, what is your opinion of the state police?



Has the intervention of the Federal Police in place of and in comparison with SEDENA seen better or worse results?



Was the intervention of the armed forces in the police force positive or negative?



Final Observations

Conclusions and Recommendations

The overall results of this study provide a strong empirical basis for understanding the perceptions, priorities, and concerns of the public servants who are the most important actors in providing for the public security of Ciudad Juárez. The findings of the Justiciabarómetro survey suggest that preventative municipal police play a vital role in the provision of public security in Ciudad Juárez, particularly with regard to the intervention officers in the community as a means to prevent crime and violence.

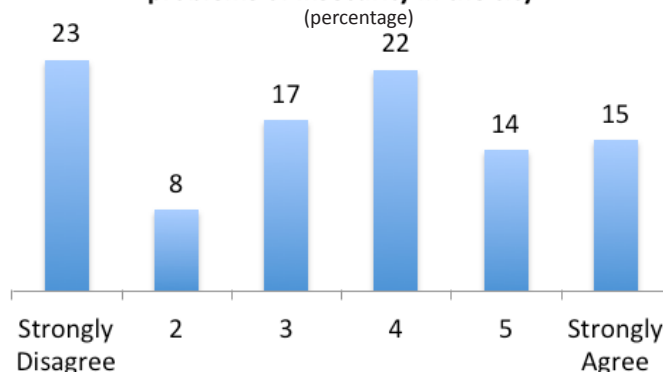
As such, it is strategically important to support local government efforts to move police in the direction of a citizen-focused security paradigm; that is, to advance a police model centered on serving citizens, respecting the law, protecting human rights, and ensuring transparency and accountability. That model of policing implies a need to clearly diagnose the grave institutional problems, the misaligned incentive structures, and the inadequate administration of human resources that are prevalent inside local police forces in Mexico, as illustrated by the example of Ciudad Juárez.

Such institutional weaknesses make it difficult for Mexican law enforcement agencies to comply with their mandate, and frequently convert the police into a social threat. By being underpaid, ill equipped, poorly trained, and without civil service protections or a clear, merit-based career track, police cannot function at the high level that society requires and demands. In this regard, given the magnitude of the external challenges and the internal institutional weaknesses that they face, it will be exceedingly difficult for Mexican police officers to successfully abide by the greater expectations established by various reforms to the criminal justice system that have been introduced since 2008.

Relatedly, police agencies lack efficient internal and external control and evaluation mechanisms, which are sorely needed to reduce the pervasive problems of corruption and abuse that characterize policing at multiple levels throughout the criminal justice system, including high-ranking officials and supervisors. Moreover, as the results of this study indicate, many police themselves openly recognize and admit the problem of involvement in criminal activities. In addition to—and perhaps moreso than—the personal flaws of individual police officers and the internal institutional culture of any given department, this reflects the systemic weaknesses and limited institutional integrity of police agencies, many of which reside especially at high levels of command. Such problems in turn make it difficult for elected government officials and the community to have an effective working relationship with police, and hinders society's ability to hold police agencies accountable. This further exacerbates the lack of mutual trust between state and society that so gravely undermines public security in Ciudad Juárez.

The intention of this study has been to help identify the most significant institutional challenges of the primary public security agency of Ciudad Juárez in order to provide lessons that are relevant both locally and in other parts of Mexico. As such, its objective is not merely academic, but also seeks to provide critical insights on police

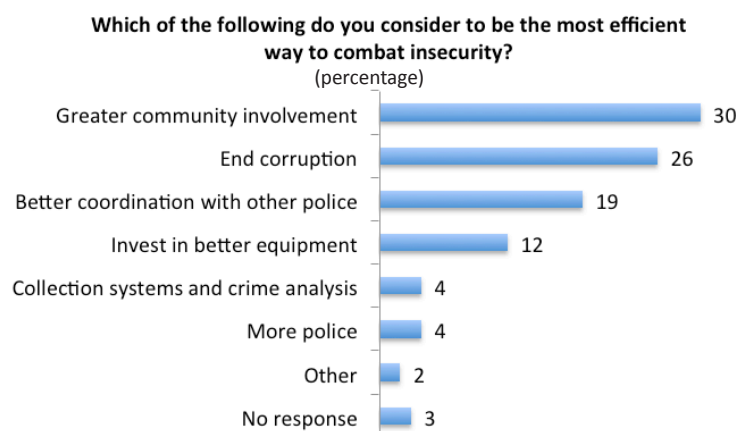
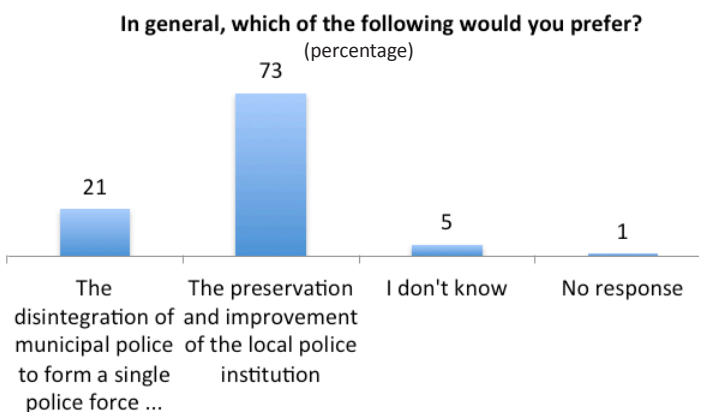
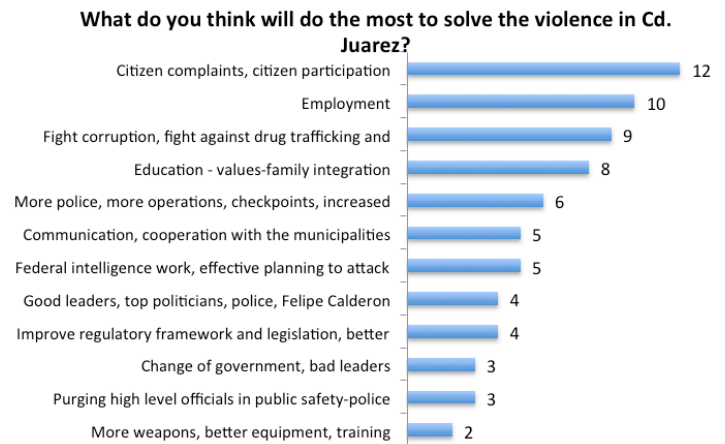
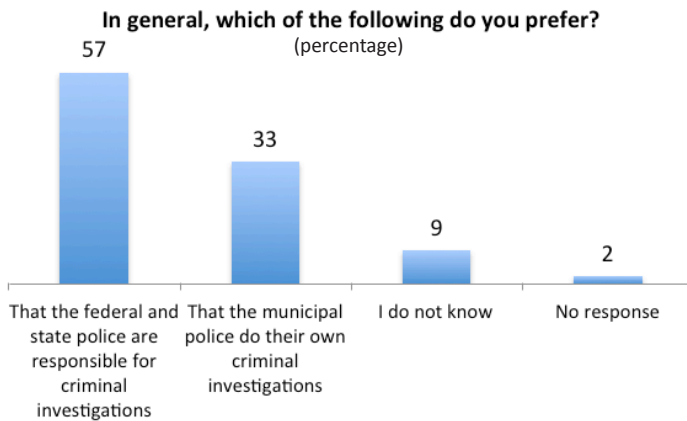
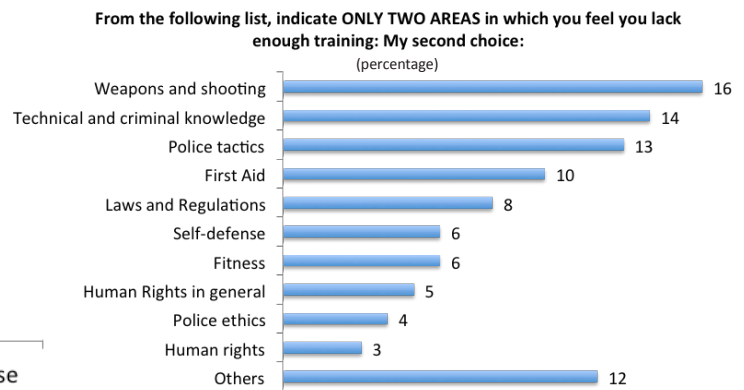
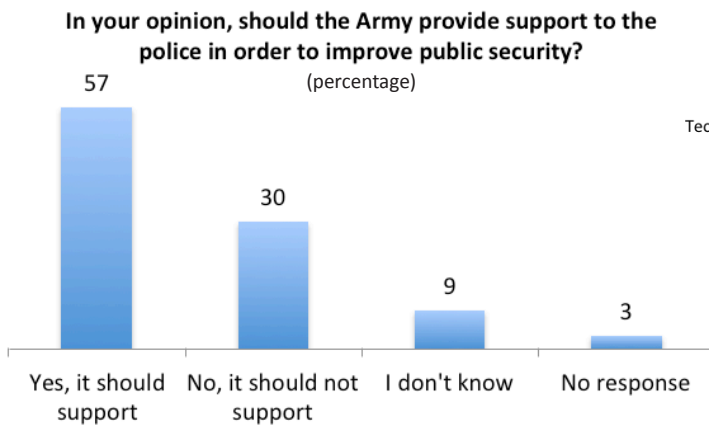
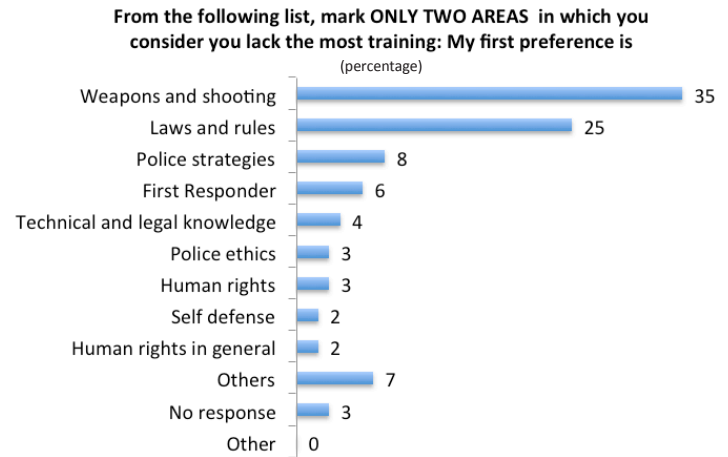
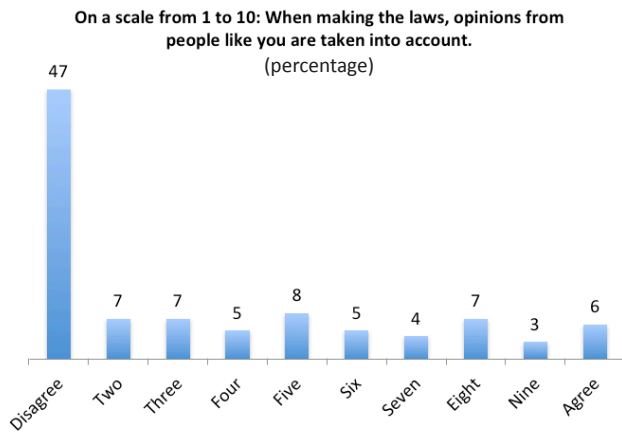
Please indicate your level of agreement: The S.S.P. Municipal is efficiently addressing problems of insecurity in the city
(percentage)



performance, policy recommendations, and (importantly) a baseline for evaluating local police as an instrument of public security over the long term.

Some key policy recommendations that follow from this analysis have to do with the need for authorities to reverse the prevailing negative working conditions faced by police, particularly the uncertainty and insecurity they face in their jobs and long term career advancement opportunities, which understandably contributes to a general lack of professionalism. This is closely related to the problems found in internal police procedures, which are too frequently opaque rather than transparent and biased rather than fair. The processes and mechanisms that allow and encourage police to develop professionally do not only reward good police work, but also help police to build careers with opportunities for long-term professional growth in terms of their skill development, autonomous decision-making, and administrative and managerial capabilities.

Finally, police themselves agree that better communication is required to improve community relations. Comparative experience suggests that opting for closer relations to the community is essential as a means to aid in the detection of situations that contribute to criminal activity, and thereby to act upon them—which is the essence of crime prevention. In this sense, to broaden, improve, and achieve more direct lines of communication with the community, police agencies should endeavor to provide better public access to information, focus on developing effective models of preventative policing, and develop stronger accountability measures to ensure that police officers answer directly to the communities that they serve. Doing so will ensure that police will be more focused on promoting public safety, social harmony, and problem solving to address the underlying conditions that contribute to criminal activity.



Several general recommendations follow from the above noted observations, and from other findings generated by the Justiciabarómetro study. The following recommendations were presented to and discussed in greater detail with local government authorities in Ciudad Juárez:

Police Professionalism and Integrity

- Design a policy of recruiting, selecting, training, and promoting officers through competitive public exams, with clear links to the real demands of the citizens and that guarantee quality and efficiency of service.
- Design civil service protections to recognize the rights of the police and to ensure professional advancement, stability, and security for career officers.
- Ensure that rankings, raises, and promotions conform to state and federal regulations.
- Move to gradually, but significantly, improve wages, pensions, and benefits along with professional standards and expectations.
- Provide decent work facilities and materials, and appropriate and modern equipment, starting with uniforms, weapons, protective gear, and communications devices.
- Design and develop specific policies and actions to reduce and eliminate inequalities between women and men on the force.
- Strengthen internal affairs investigations for reporting and investigating cases of corruption, particularly at high levels.
- Generate a system of performance indicators and policy measures to evaluate progress toward institutional goals.
- Create strong, safe, and anonymous whistle-blower mechanisms to enable both officers and citizens to report illegal activities occurring within police agencies to be investigated and addressed by authorities (e.g., city councils, human rights commissions, and state authorities).
- Support and institutionalize local city councils and citizens councils to serve as advisory bodies to police agencies, and to provide opinions, ideas, suggestions and proposals that will help to improve public safety.
- The municipality of Ciudad Juárez should hand over the administration of CERESO to the state government of Chihuahua, in accordance with Article 18 of the Constitution, and thus free up resources that could be reallocated to promote police reform and modernization.

Addressing Problems of Crime and Violence

- Develop training programs to provide officers with more effective responses to the pervasive problem of domestic violence.
- Integrate police outreach and education programs (e.g., DARE) in neighborhoods with medium and high rates of youth violence and drug use to maintain consistent contact with local schools.
- Establish programs (e.g., Youth Alert) for families and at-risk youth in order to identify signs and risk factors associated with violence that may affect them, and to distinguish between the myths and realities associated with drug use and delinquency.
- Hold regular open meetings between community members, law enforcement, judicial attorneys, and other public servants.
- Work with the media to promote greater information and awareness about issues of security and community relations, and to promote a culture of coexistence, prevention, peace and legality.
- Identify tasks and commitments with reasonable goals, measurements, and timelines to be reported back to the community.

- Provide regular, systematic, and transparent informational reports to the city council, human rights commissions and the general public to help them be more efficient in the evaluation of the Juárez Municipal Police.
- Continue to increase the female recruitment rate in order to improve gender sensitivity and community relations on the force.

Ultimately, whether justice sector reforms are successful depends largely on how they are implemented, and by whom. This study seeks to help policy makers identify the strengths and weaknesses of the local police force in Ciudad Juárez, and to support their continued modernization and professional development. As noted earlier in the report, while the focus here is on Ciudad Juárez, these findings also have considerable relevance to larger national policy debates. There are systemic problems in Mexican policing that can be found at all three levels of government.

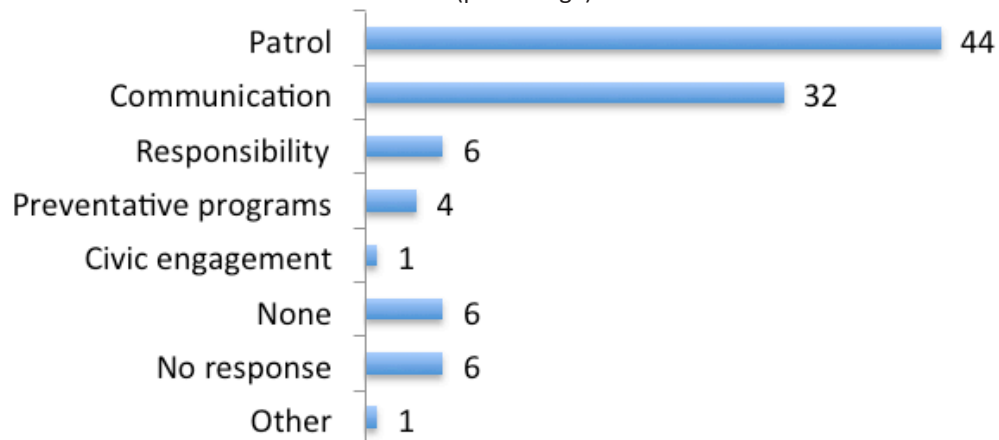
What is urgently needed to correct this, as this study demonstrates, is to strengthen accountability mechanisms, build a professional officer corps and police civil service, raise education and training standards, improve incentives for high-quality policing, and ensure continuity of policy reforms across administrations. But above all, a police force that seeks to achieve greater effectiveness and efficiency, while also focusing on citizen security and co-existence with the communities they serve, helps ensure respect for the rule of law and democracy.

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What is the main type of contact you have with the community?

(percentage)



Which of the following options do you consider the most important to improving the image of the police in the community?

(percentage)



How do you think the police could reach more people?

(percentage)







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