

December 2020 | Abhinav S. Krishnan

Spotlight on Crime Victimization in Latin America and the Caribbean

Crime victimization is low but increasing in the Latin America and Caribbean (LAC) region

On average in the LAC region, nearly a quarter have been the victim of a crime

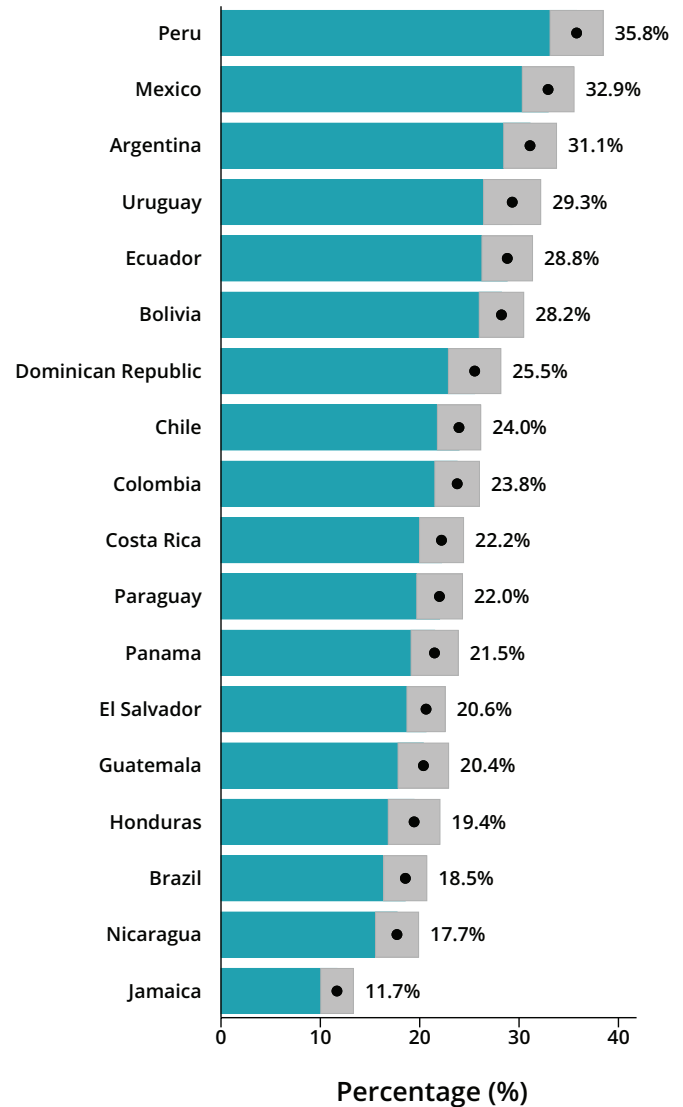
Since 2010, LAPOP's AmericasBarometer has measured crime victimization by asking the following question:

VIC1EXT. Have you been a victim of any type of crime in the past 12 months? That is, have you been a victim of robbery, burglary, assault, fraud, blackmail, extortion, violent threats, or any other type of crime in the past 12 months?

In the 2018/19 round, this question was included in surveys in 18 LAC countries. Here we code responses into a dichotomous variable, which allows us to estimate the percentage of people in the region that had been a victim of a crime in the 12 months prior to the survey.

The country with the highest crime victimization in 2018/19 is Peru (35.8%), while Jamaica (11.7%) holds the lowest crime victimization in the LAC region. It is important to note that this is not a measure of the country's crime rate but, rather, a measure of the proportion of the population that has recently experienced one or more crimes. On average in the LAC region, nearly one in four adults report having been the victim of a crime.

Crime Victimization, 2018/19

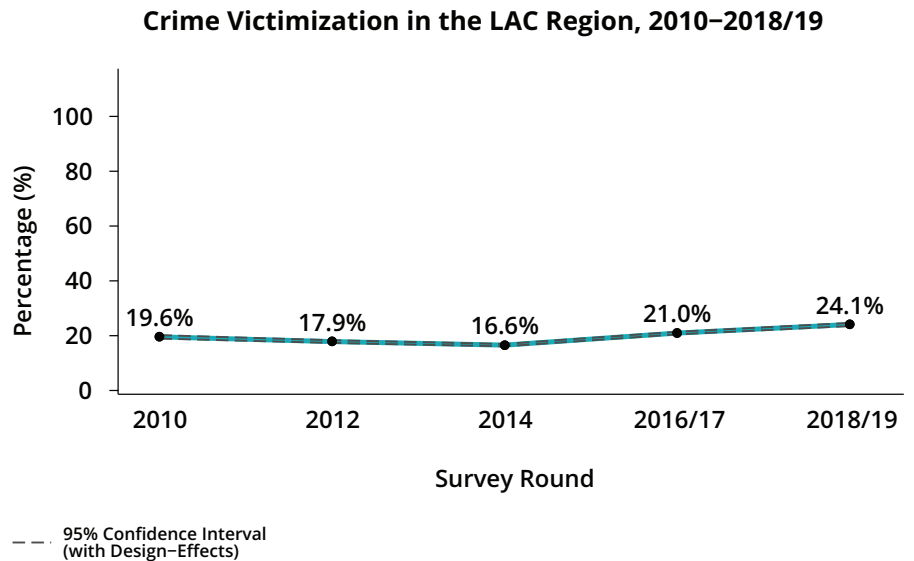


95% Confidence Interval (with Design-Effects)

Source: © AmericasBarometer, LAPOP, 2018/19; GM1.0

Crime victimization has increased in the LAC region

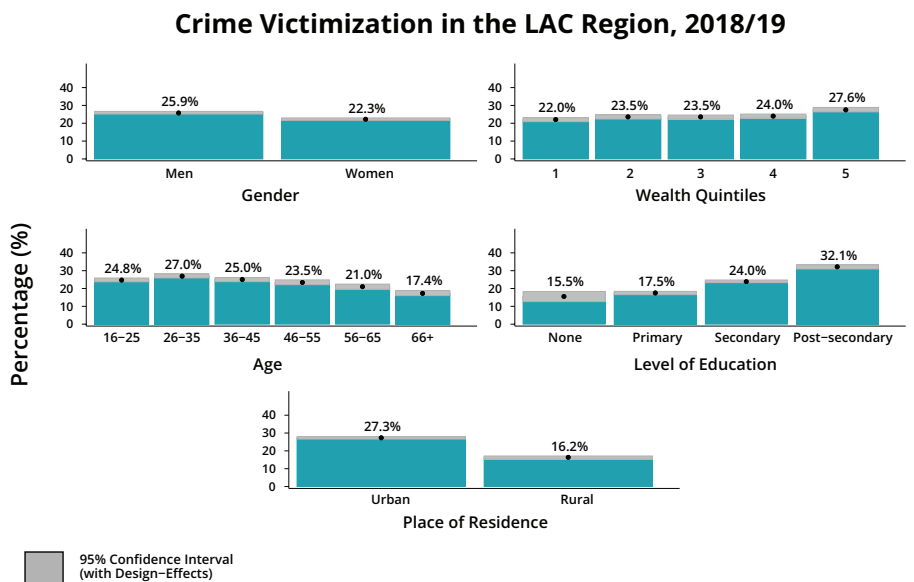
Between 2010 and 2014, crime victimization rates had decreased slightly from 19.6% to 16.6%. In the average LAC country, crime victimization has steadily increased since 2014. In 2018/19, crime victimization reached its highest regional average (24.1%).



Source: © AmericasBarometer, LAPOP, 2010–2018/19; GM1.0

Crime victimization is higher among those who are men, wealthy, young, educated, and urban residents

What characteristics of individuals predict crime victimization in the LAC region? On average, men are more likely to report crime victimization compared to women (25.9% and 22.3%, respectively). Among wealth quintiles, the highest levels of crime victimization are found in the richest quintile (27.6%). Younger cohorts also experience more crime victimization compared to older cohorts. More educated individuals are more likely to report having been the victim of a crime than less educated individuals. Lastly, more individuals who live in urban areas (27.3%) experience crime victimization compared to rural residents (16.2%).



Source: © AmericasBarometer, LAPOP, 2018/19; GM1.0



Interested in knowing more about the LAPOP Lab's AmericasBarometer study?
 Consult the data and our reports at
www.vanderbilt.edu/lapop

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As a charter member of the American Association for Public Opinion Research (AAPOR) Transparency Initiative, the LAPOP Lab is committed to routine disclosure of our data collection and reporting processes. More information about the AmericasBarometer sample designs can be found at www.vanderbilt.edu/lapop/core-surveys.php

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