



AGENCIA ANDALUZA DE COOPERACIÓN INTERNACIONAL  
PARA EL DESARROLLO  
Consejería de Igualdad, Políticas Sociales  
y Conciliación



REGIONAL HUMAN DEVELOPMENT REPORT 2021

# **TRAPPED: HIGH INEQUALITY AND LOW GROWTH IN LATIN AMERICA AND THE CARIBBEAN**

GOVERNANCE

CONCENTRATION OF  
POWER

VIOLENCE

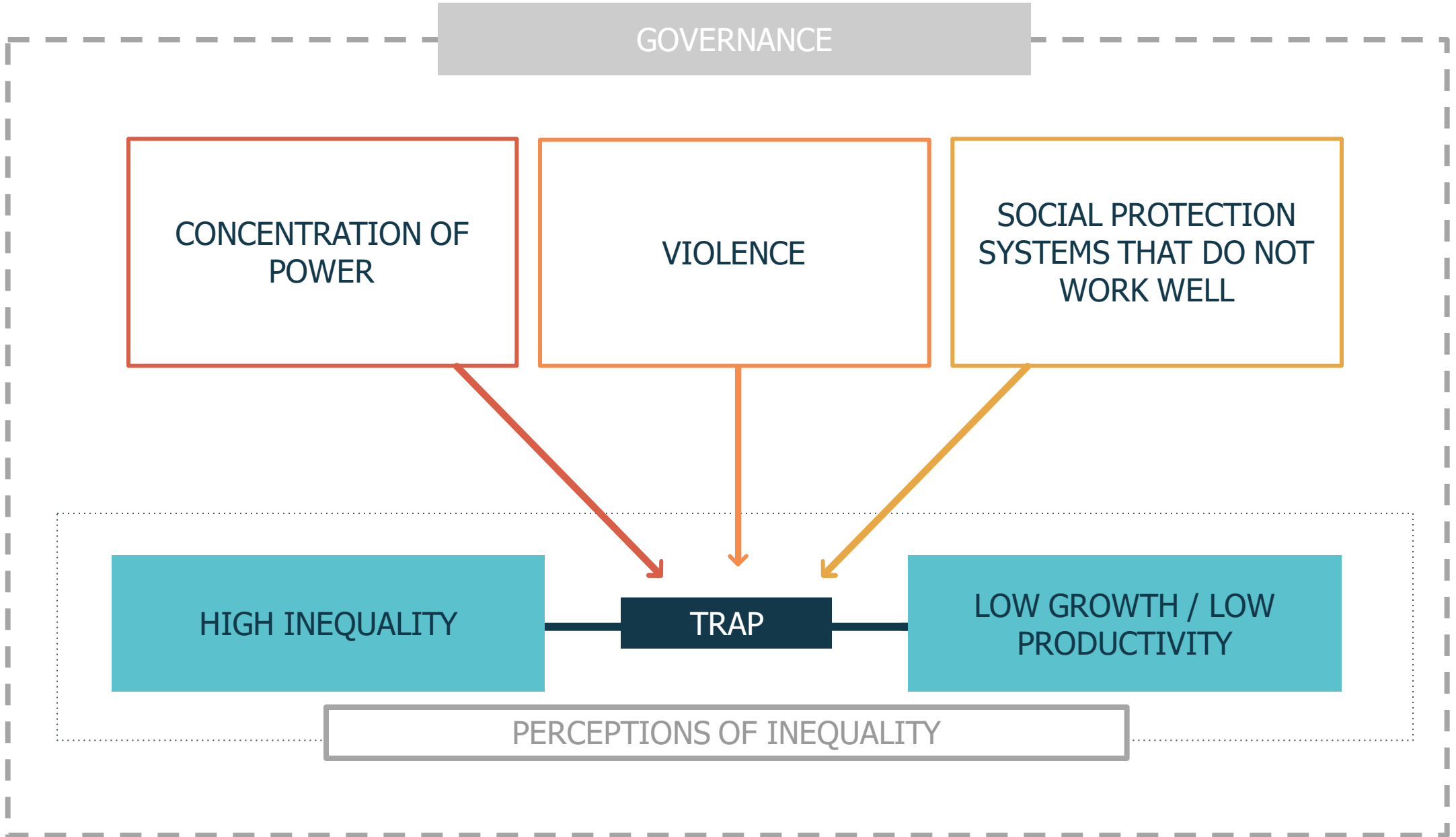
SOCIAL PROTECTION  
SYSTEMS THAT DO NOT  
WORK WELL

HIGH INEQUALITY

TRAP

LOW GROWTH / LOW  
PRODUCTIVITY

PERCEPTIONS OF INEQUALITY



# CHAPTER 4

## THE LINKS BETWEEN VIOLENCE, INEQUALITY AND PRODUCTIVITY



GOVERNANCE

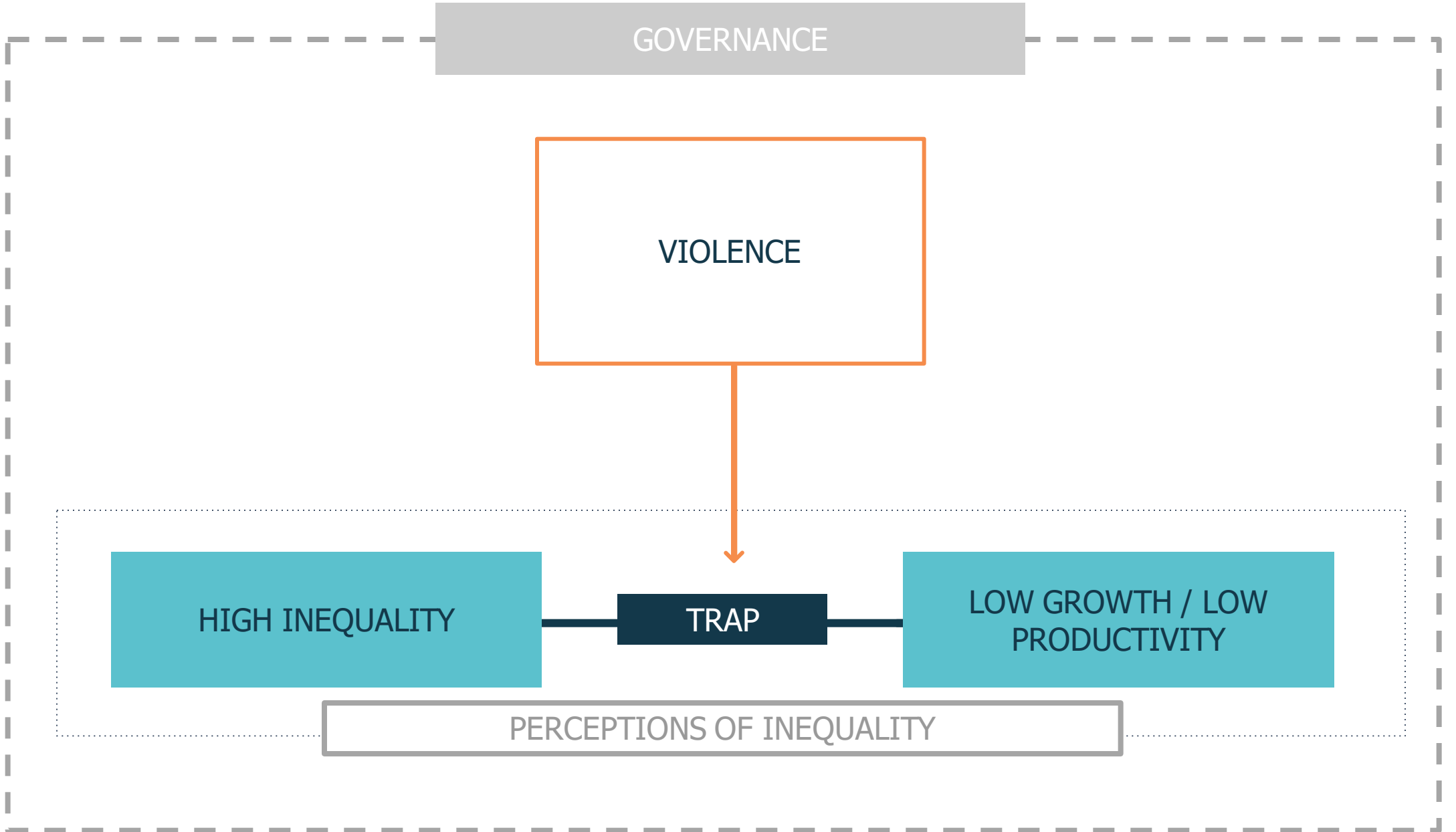
VIOLENCE

HIGH INEQUALITY

TRAP

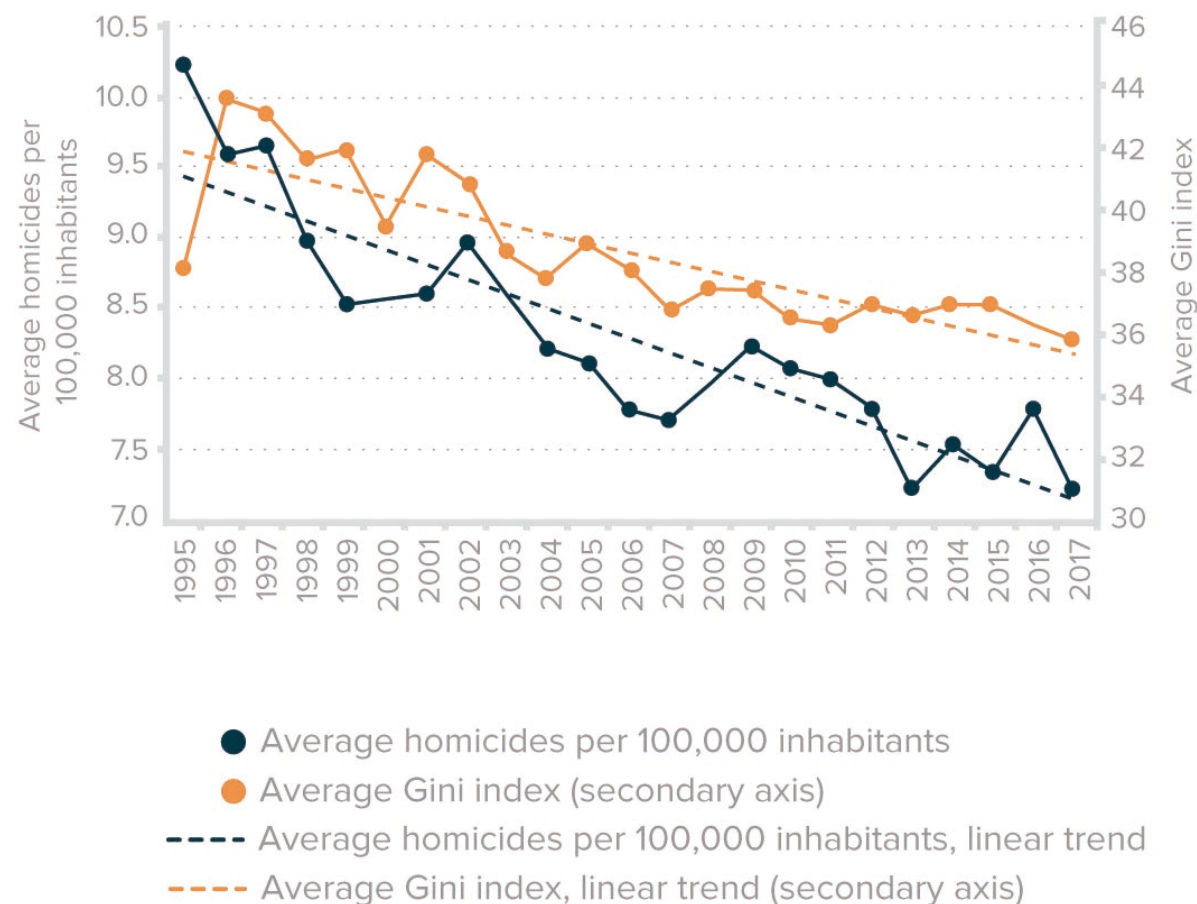
LOW GROWTH / LOW  
PRODUCTIVITY

PERCEPTIONS OF INEQUALITY



In the world, both the homicide rate and income inequality have decreased over time

## Homicide rate and income inequality (Gini), world, 1995-2017

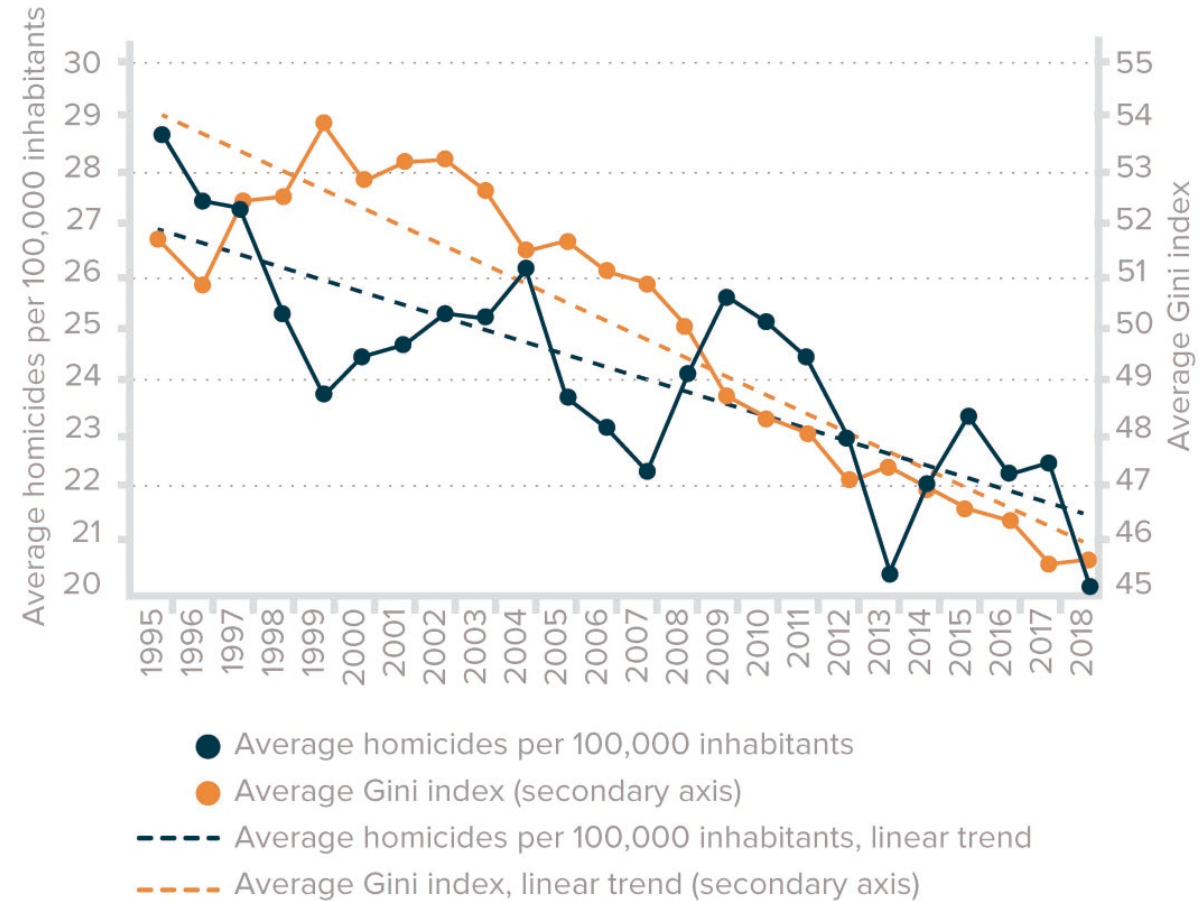


Source: Schargrodsky and Freira 2021, Background Paper of the UNDP LAC RHDR 2021; WDI (World Development Indicators) (dashboard), World Bank, Washington, DC, <https://datatopics.worldbank.org/world-development-indicators/>.  
Note: Averages are calculated using the sample of countries available for each year. The total number of countries is 106: Africa (21), Asia (24), Eastern Europe (21), LAC (21), North America (2), Oceania (1), and Western Europe (16).

Also in LAC, both the homicide rate and income inequality have decreased.

Yet LAC remains **the most violent region** in the world.

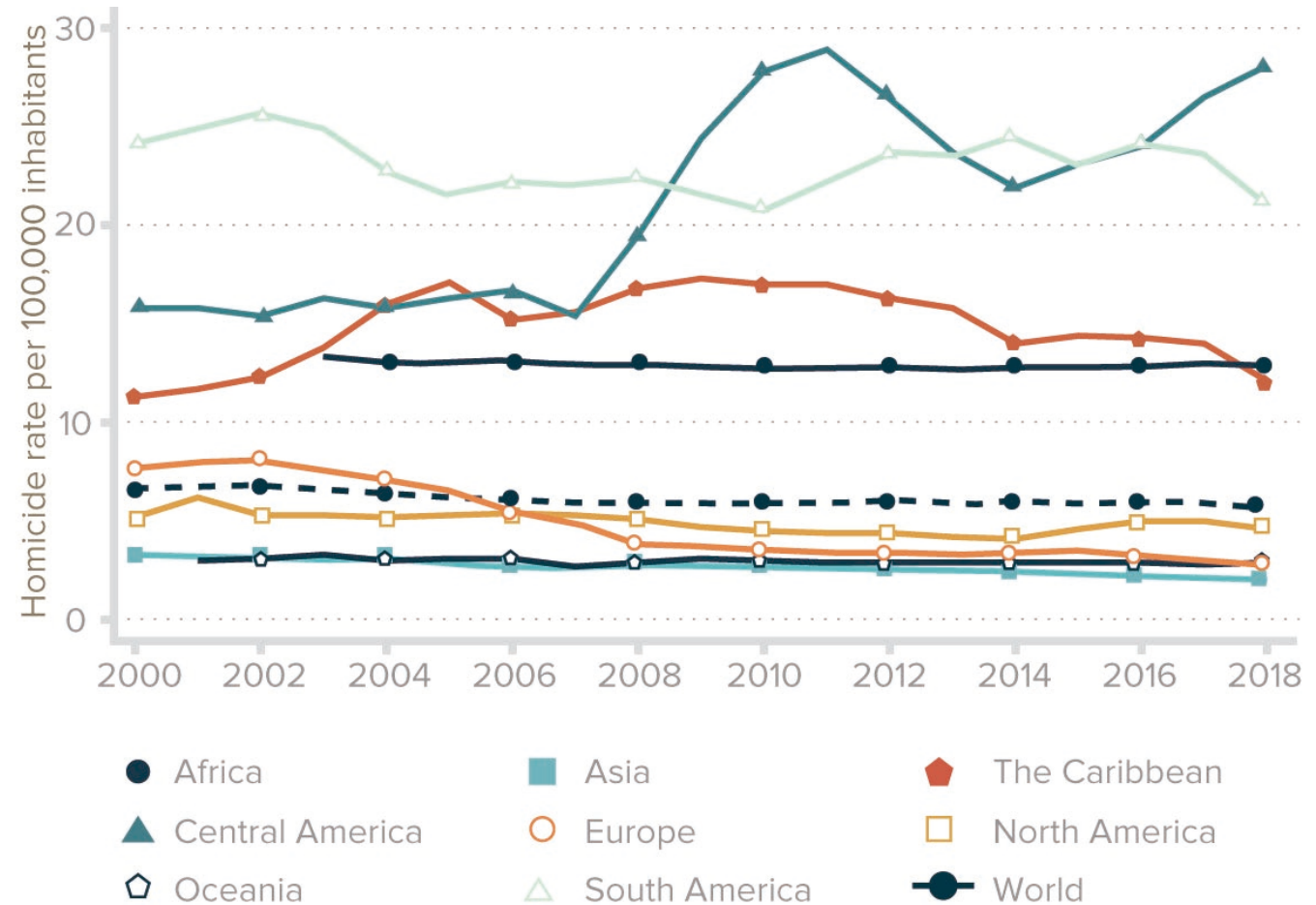
Homicide rate and income inequality (Gini), LAC, 1995–2018



Source: UNDP elaboration; WDI (World Development Indicators) (dashboard), World Bank, Washington, DC, <https://datatopics.worldbank.org/world-development-indicators/>.  
 Note: Averages are calculated using the sample of countries available for each year. Not every country is available every year. The sample includes 21 LAC countries.

Homicide rates in  
LAC subregions  
significantly surpass  
worldwide averages

## Intentional homicide rate per 100,000 inhabitants in world regions and LAC subregions



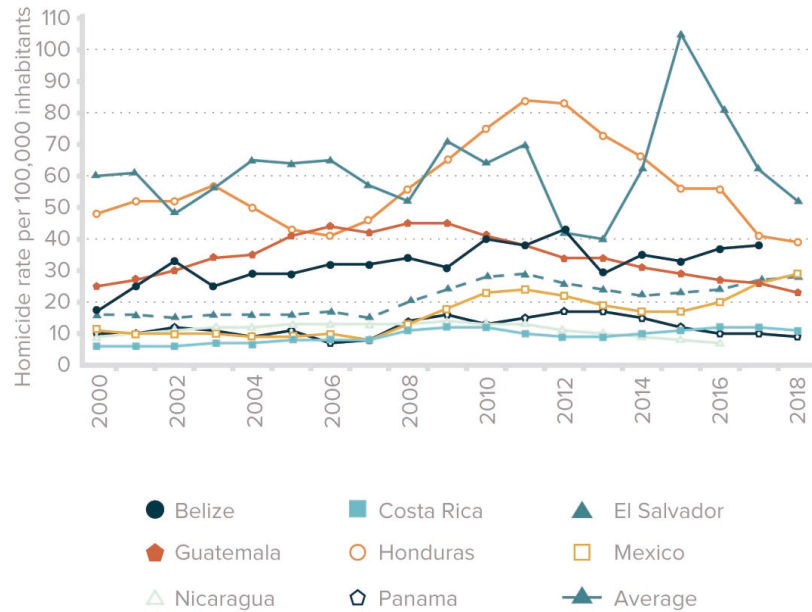
Source: Arjona 2021, Background Paper of the UNDP LAC RHDR 2021; data of Global Study on Homicide: 2019 Edition (dashboard), United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, Vienna, <https://www.unodc.org/unodc/en/data-and-analysis/global-study-on-homicide.html>.



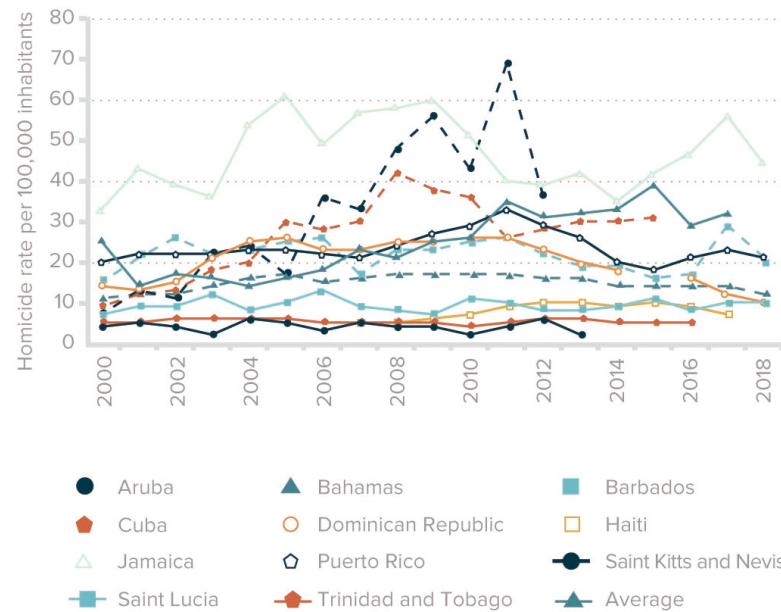
# Homicide rates in some countries are three or thirteen times the rates elsewhere in the same subregion

## Intentional homicide rate across LAC subregions, 2000-2018

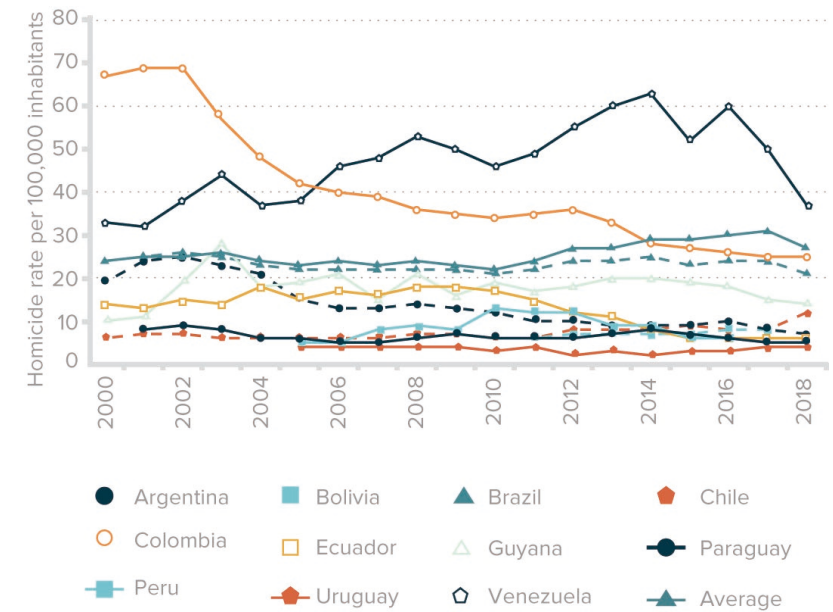
### Central America



### The Caribbean



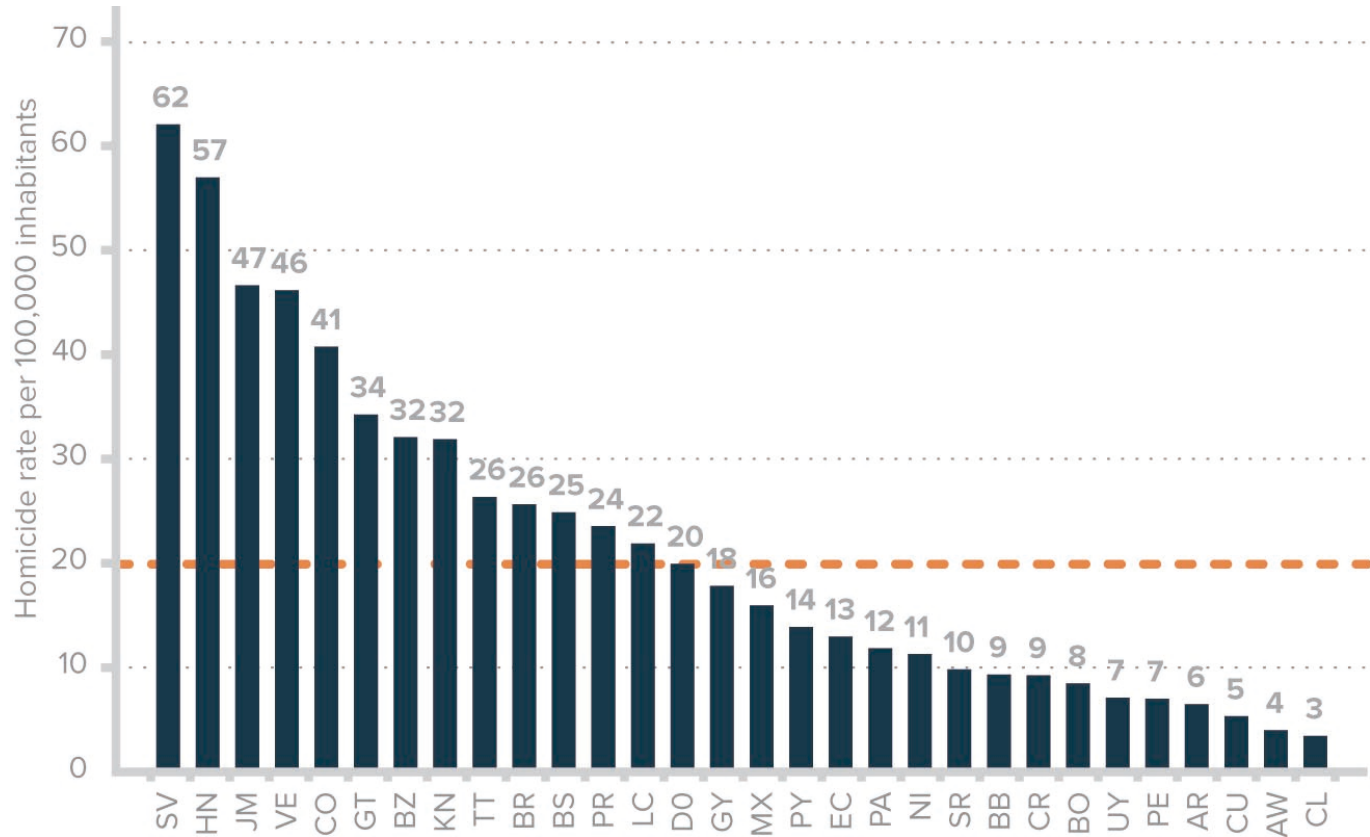
### South America





There is huge variation in homicide rates across LAC countries

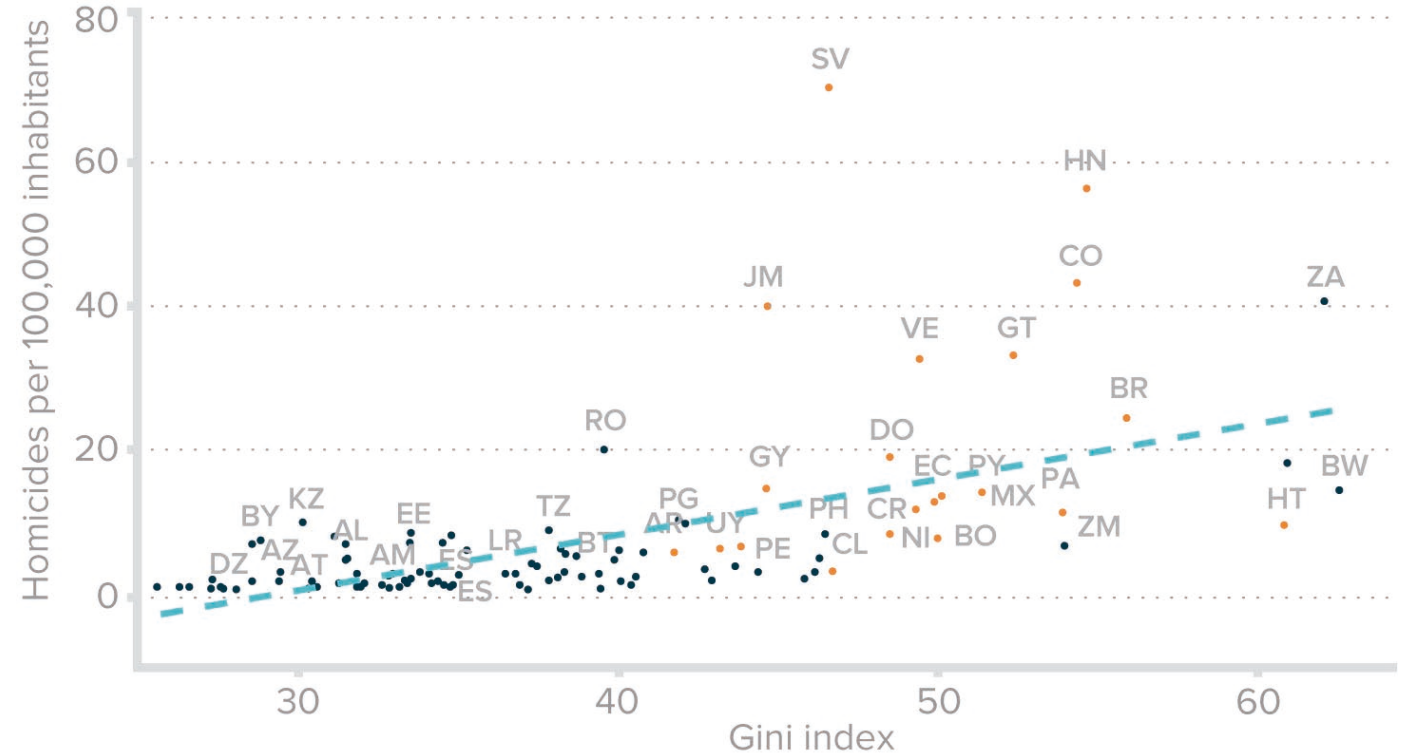
Average intentional homicide rate in LAC, 2000–2018



Source: Arjona 2021, Background Paper of the UNDP LAC RHDR 2021; data of Global Study on Homicide: 2019 Edition (dashboard), United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, Vienna, <https://www.unodc.org/unodc/en/data-and-analysis/global-study-on-homicide.html>.  
 Note: The LAC average is shown as a dotted orange line.

## Homicide rates and income inequality (Gini), world, 1995–2017

LAC countries have **higher homicide rates** than countries at similar inequality levels

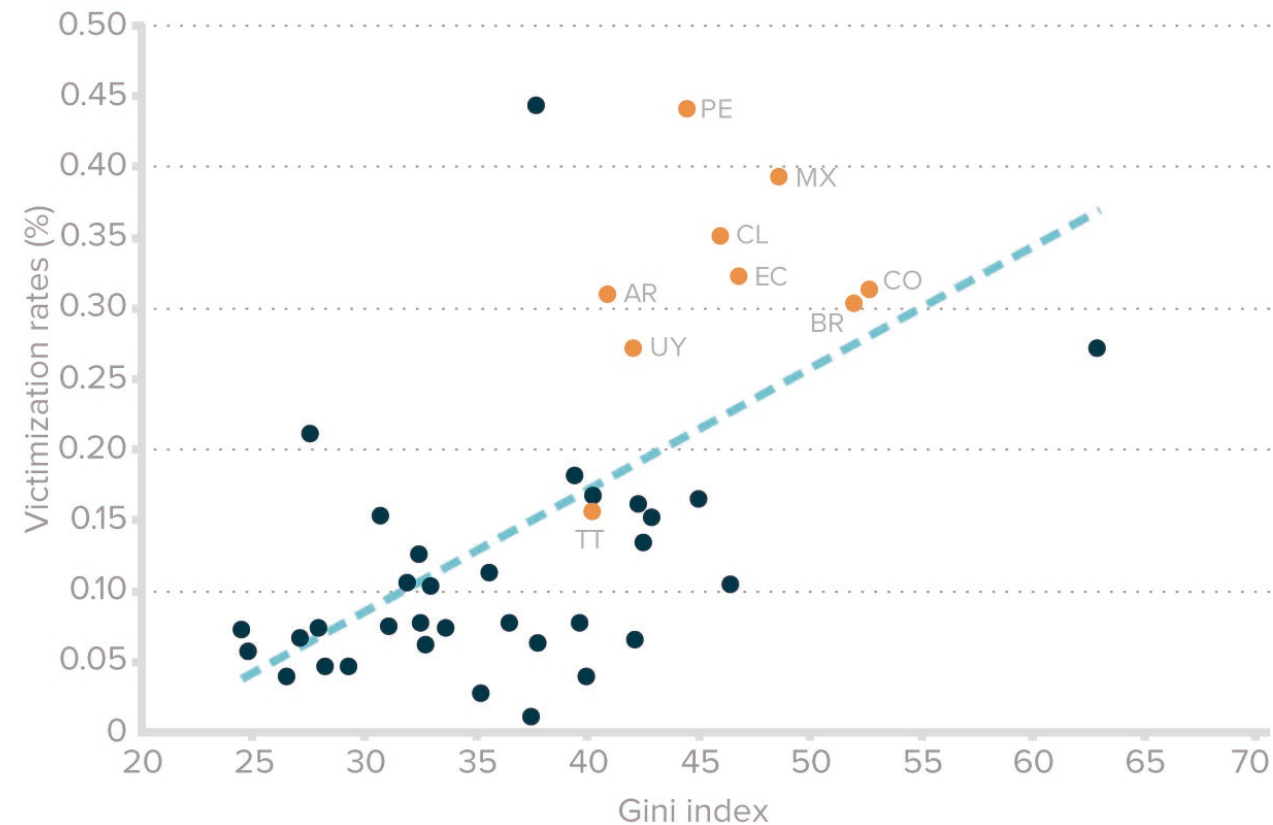


Source: Schargrodsky and Freira 2021, Background Paper of the UNDP LAC RHDR 2021; WDI (World Development Indicators) (dashboard), World Bank, Washington, DC, <https://datatopics.worldbank.org/world-development-indicators/>.

Note: LAC countries are represented by orange dots. Averages are calculated for each country using the available year observations from 1995 to 2017. The total number of countries is 106: Africa (21), Asia (24), Eastern Europe (21), LAC (21), North America (2), Oceania (1), and Western Europe (16).

LAC countries have **higher victimization rates** than countries at similar inequality levels

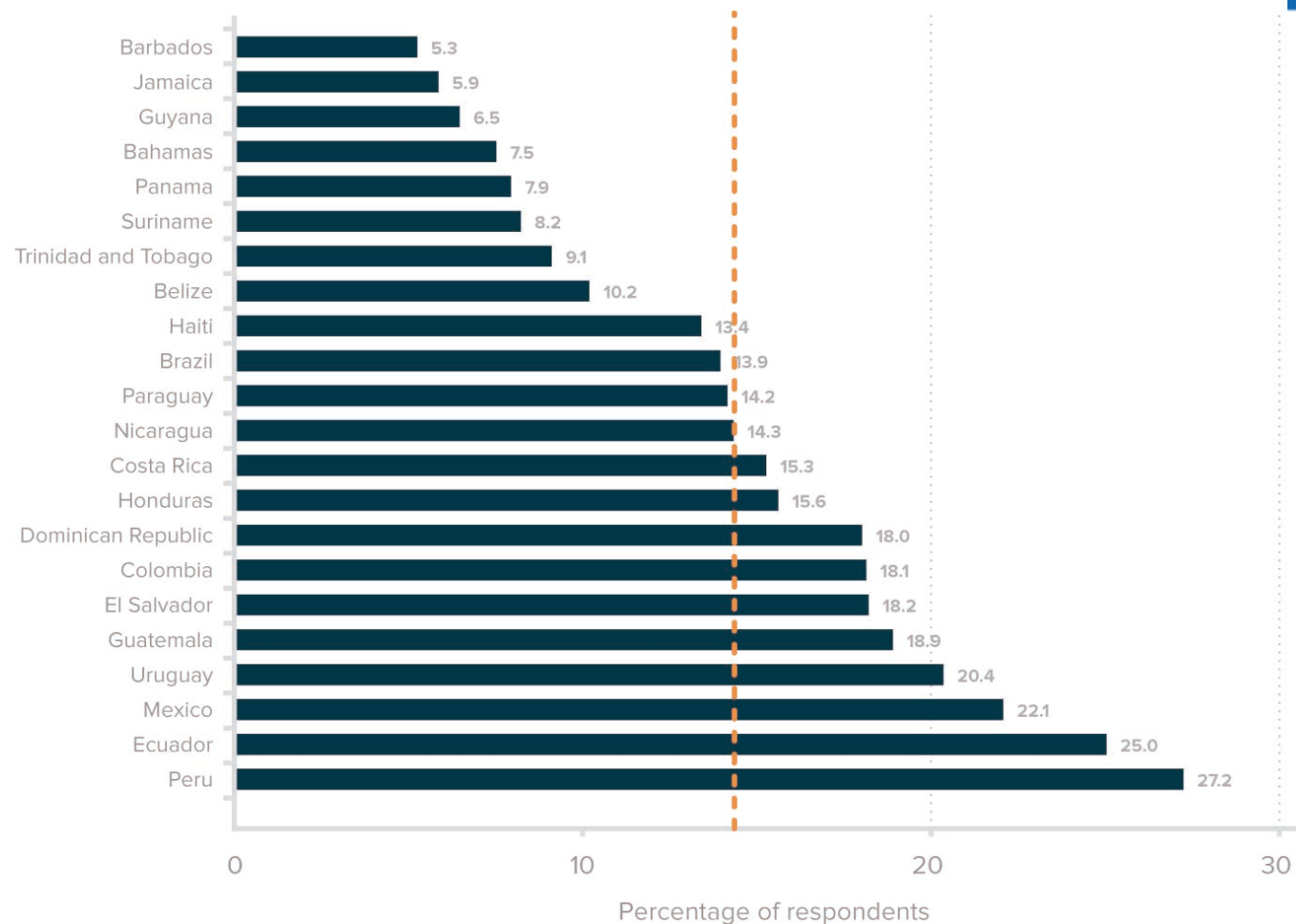
Crime victimization rates and income inequality (Gini), world, 2010–2014



Source: Schargrodsky and Freira 2021, Background Paper of the UNDP LAC RHDR 2021; WDI (World Development Indicators) (dashboard), World Bank, Washington, DC, <https://datatopics.worldbank.org/world-development-indicators/>; WVS (World Values Survey) (dashboard), King's College, Old Aberdeen, United Kingdom, <http://www.worldvaluessurvey.org/wvs.jsp>.  
 Note: LAC countries are represented by orange dots. The crime victimization question was included in the World Values Survey between 2010 and 2014, but during only one year in each country. The Gini index corresponds to the year the victimization rate was available or the closest available year. The total number of countries is 42: Africa (7), Asia (12), Eastern Europe (10), LAC (9), North America (1), and Western Europe (3).

More than 1 LAC resident in 10 has been the victim of a crime in the previous 12 months

## Respondents who report they were victims of a crime in the previous 12 months, average %, 2010–2014



Source: Arjona 2021, Background Paper of the UNDP LAC RHDR 2021; data of AmericasBarometer (dashboard), Latin American Public Opinion Project, Vanderbilt University, Nashville, Tennessee, <https://www.vanderbilt.edu/lapop/core-surveys.php>.  
Note: The LAC average is shown by the dotted orange line.

# Inequality fosters criminal, political and social violence in LAC



## CRIMINAL VIOLENCE

- **The type of violence most associated with illicit trade.**
- Some violence due to conflict within criminal organizations.
- Victims: especially young men.
- Poor individuals and communities.
- Theft may affect the rich more, but the evidence is mixed.

## POLITICAL VIOLENCE

- Violent political activism: protests on the rise since 2013 (but only a proportion are violent).
- Protests on women's rights and the LGBTBI population, against corruption and climate change, demanding health services and democracy.
- State violence: police brutality, extrajudicial killings, violence against human rights defenders (the highest in the world) and against journalists.

## SOCIAL AND DOMESTIC VIOLENCE

- Third highest lifetime prevalence of sexual violence perpetrated by non-partners and the second highest rate of violence perpetrated by partners. (WHO 2013).
- Critical femicide in several countries.
- Highest rate of violence against LGBT population in the world.
- High lethal violence of adolescents. High levels of violent discipline at home.
- **Ethnic minorities: a surprising shortage of statistics.**

There is **quantitative evidence** that more unequal societies are more violent.

The relationship between inequality and violence is more robust than between poverty and violence.

Violence disproportionately affects the **most vulnerable**, and in this way **perpetuates and amplifies inequality**

- Victims of violence are **overrepresented** among the poorest, LGBT+ groups, women, ethnic minorities.
- When disadvantaged populations are victimized, they face **even greater disadvantages** in various aspects of human development.
- Some forms of violence affect societies through their impact on **local governance**.

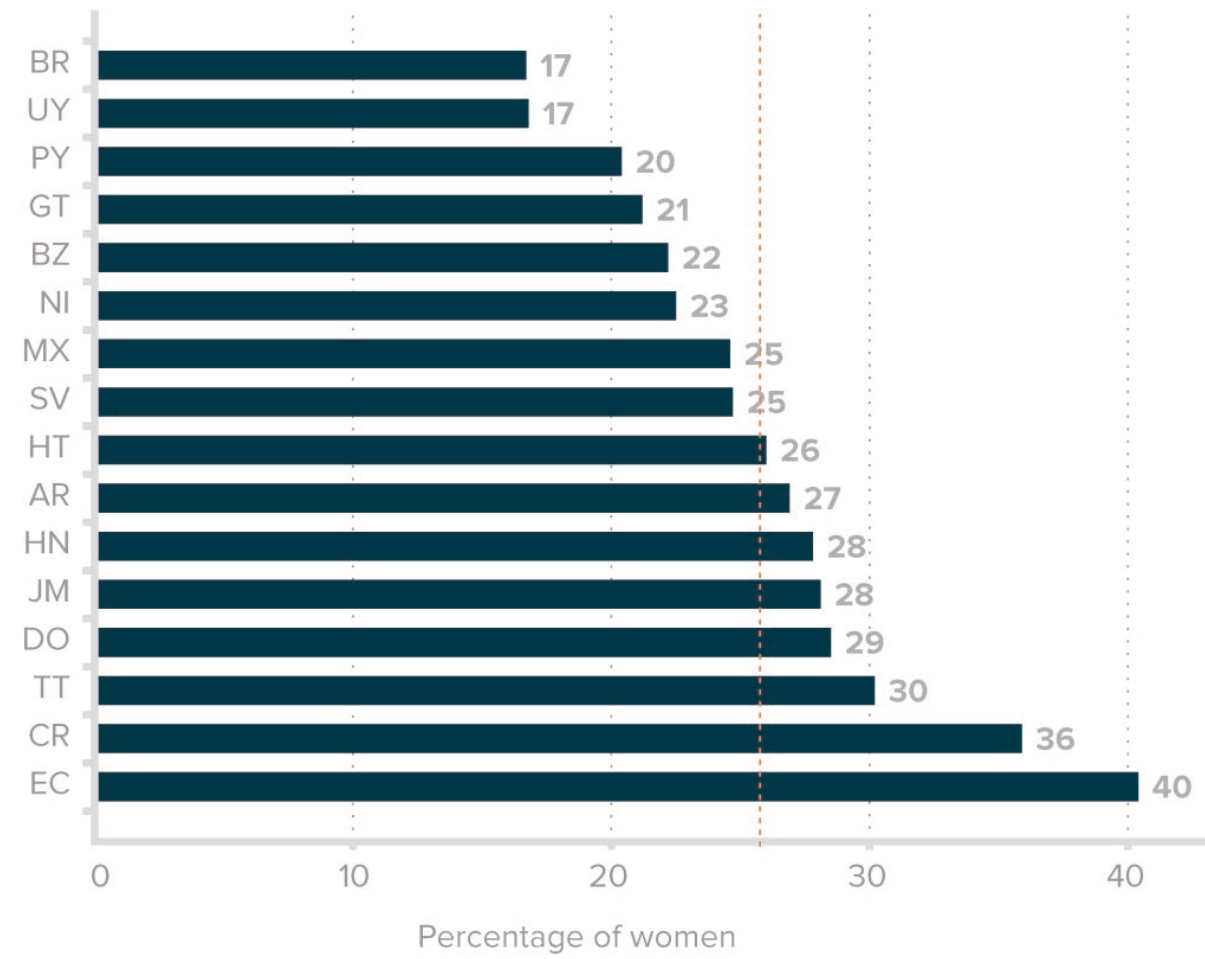




Intimate partner violence against women in the region is widespread



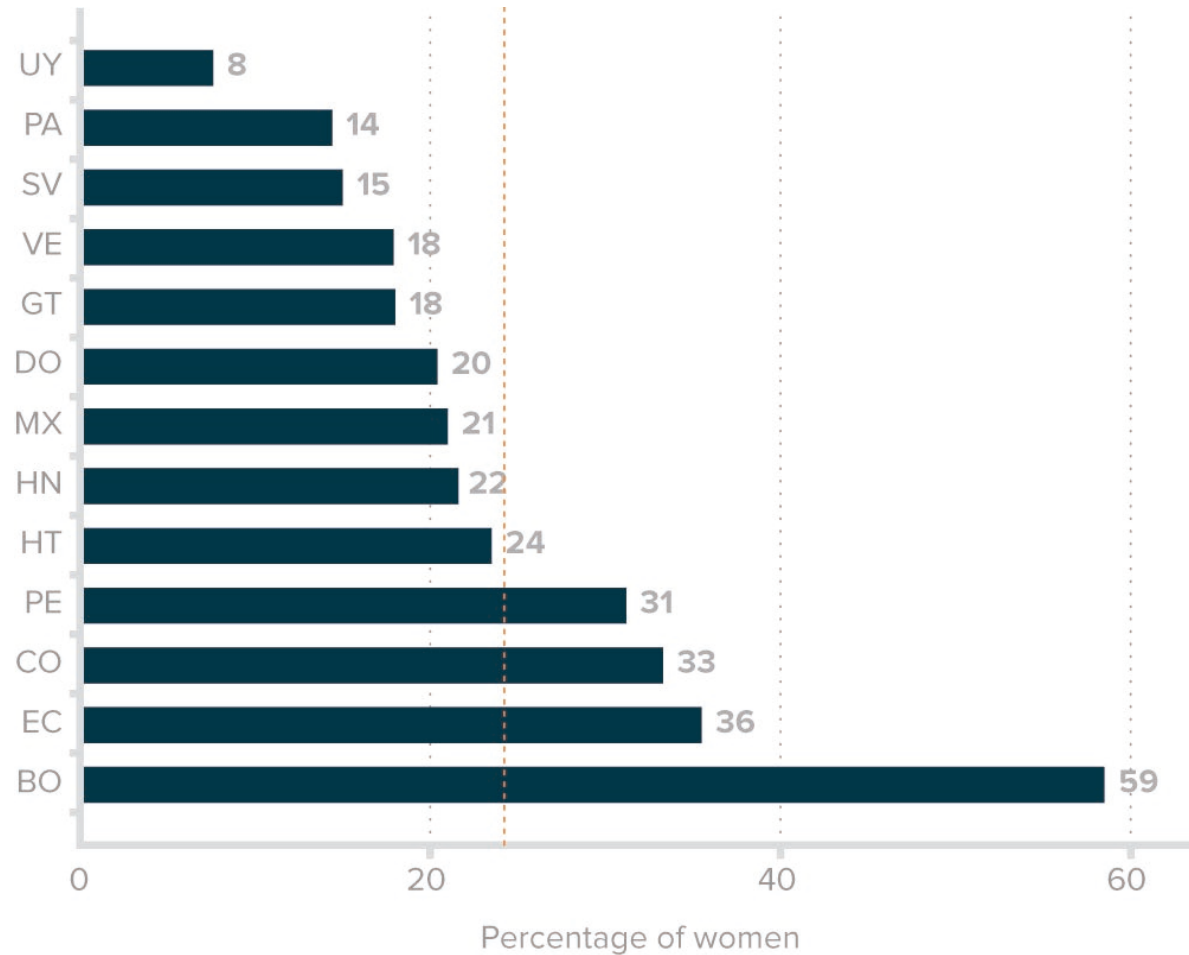
Share of women physically or sexually abused by any partner, %, latest available year, 2003–2017



Source: Arjona 2021, Background Paper of the UNDP LAC RHDR 2021 based on data of Bott et al. 2019.  
Note: The dotted orange line indicates the LAC average.

In most countries,  
**more than 1**  
**woman in 10** has  
**been sexually or**  
**physically abused**  
by her most recent  
partner

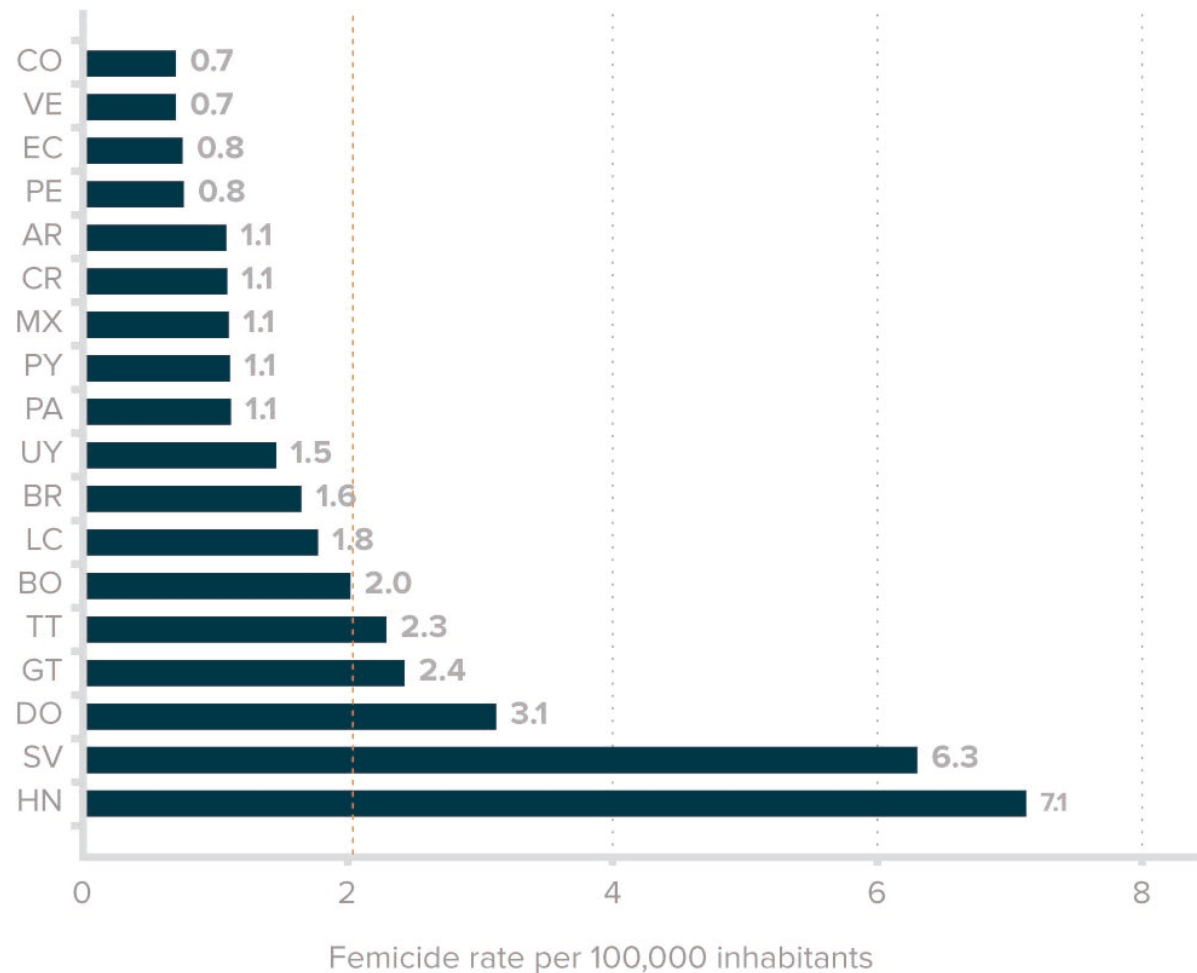
Share of women physically or sexually abused by most recent partner, %, latest available year, 2003–2017



Source: Arjona 2021, Background Paper of the UNDP LAC RHDR 2021 based on data of Bott et al. 2019.  
Note: The dotted orange line indicates the LAC average.

Within LAC,  
**Central America**  
is the subregion  
with the **highest**  
**levels of femicide**

Average femicide rate per 100,000 inhabitants in LAC countries, 2000–2019

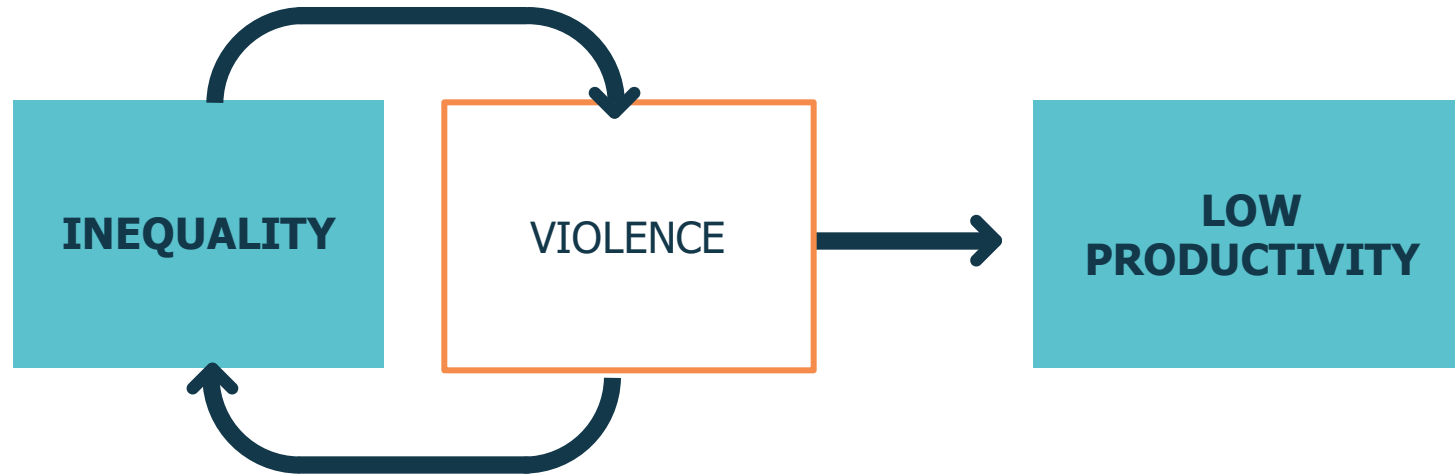


Source: Arjona 2021, Background Paper of the UNDP LAC RHDR 2021; Femicide or Feminicide (dashboard), Gender Equality Observatory for Latin America and the Caribbean, United Nations Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean, Santiago, Chile, <https://oig.cepal.org/en/indicators/femicide-or-feminicide>.  
Note: The dotted orange line indicates the LAC average.

Violence **impacts economic growth** through its impact on individuals, firms, communities, and institutions.

- Decreases and distorts **investment**.
- Weakens **local state capacity** and makes it more vulnerable to rent-seeking behaviour and corruption.
- Destroys **human capital**.
- Some forms of violence also destroy **physical capital and natural capital**.

# Violence is an important factor underlying the high-inequality low-growth trap in LAC



Its eradication requires active policy interventions in several areas.

- ➔ More independent and effective **judiciary systems**.
- ➔ Need for **dialogue on new approaches** to address illicit trade.
- ➔ **Zero tolerance** for discrimination.
- ➔ **Care services** for women's economic empowerment.
- ➔ **Mental health care for victims** of violence.
- ➔ **More and better data**, especially on the most serious forms of violence afflicting the region.



THANK YOU

OCTOBER 2022