

2015

The year that went down the hole

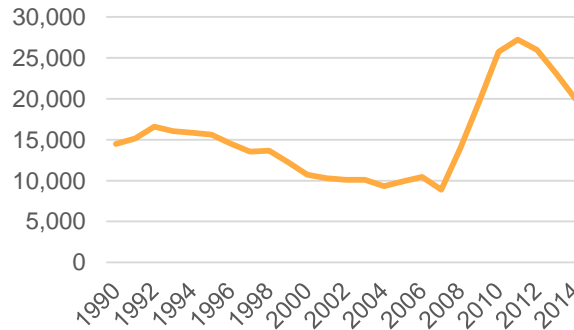
2013-2014: Some positive signs...

Less kingpins



Less violence

Mexico: homicides, 1990-2014



Source: INEGI

2013-2014: Some ominous clouds

Ayotzinapa



Tlatlaya



2015: the tide turns

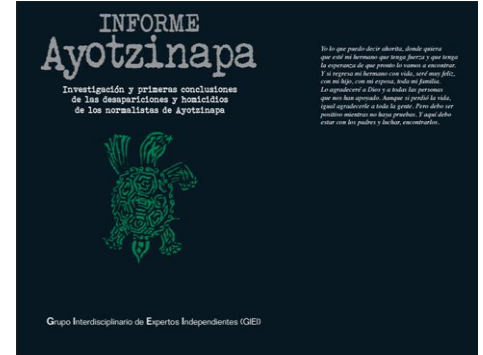
Violence on the rise



El Chapo escapes



Doubts on Ayotzinapa



The marijuana surprise

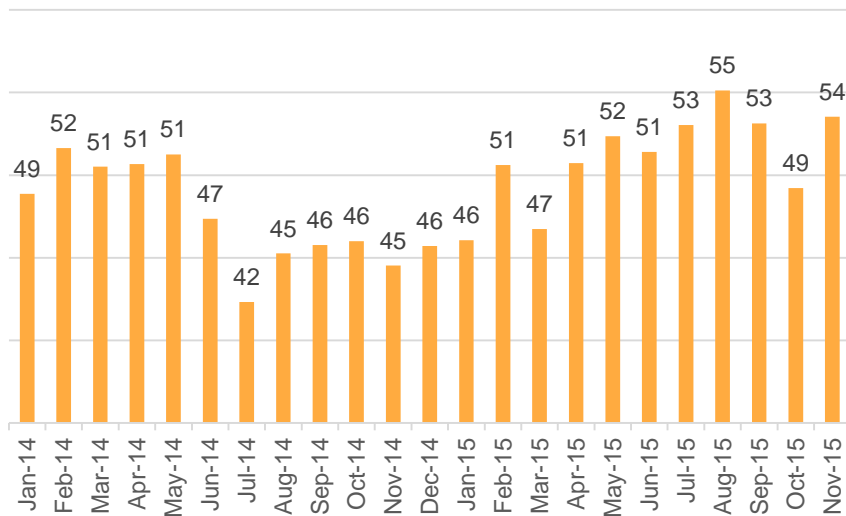


Government agenda stalls



Violence on the rise

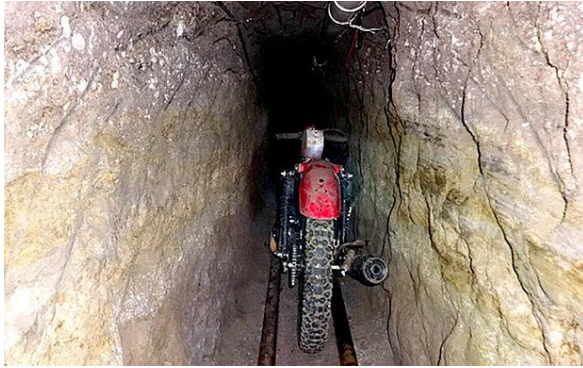
Homicide victims, 2014-2015
(daily average)



Source: SESNSP

- Homicides: +20% from through 2015: first year since 2011 with rise in murder rate (+7%)
- 65,000 homicide victims under EPN

El Chapo: Escape and Recapture



- Escape and recapture: two faces of Mexican law enforcement
- Good at capturing capos, not so good at prosecuting and keeping them in prison.
- Extradition? Likely. When? Big question. It could take years
- Another escape? Don't rule it out. Structural weaknesses of prison system persist



Ayotzinapa



- February 2015: PGR presents what it calls the “historical truth” about disappearance of 43 students.
- September 2015: OAS-backed group of independent experts pokes holes in “historical truth”. Likewise for National Human Rights Commission.
- Main disagreement: what happened to the bodies?
Burned to ashes?
- 111 indicted; 0 convicted (so far)
- No closure: no bodies, no weapon, no motive

Marijuana surprise



- Supreme Court allows marijuana home grows in unprecedented ruling
- Limited legal or practical effects in short term: only applies to four plaintiffs.
- Avalanche of the new cases (183 as of last count)
- Huge political impact: marijuana legalization became mainstream political topic
- Full legalization on the horizon? Probably not. But maybe some movement on medical marijuana
- Also potential legalization by court rulings (as with casinos)

Government without agenda



- December 2014: President Peña Nieto sends bill to Congress to create single state police forces.
- Bill has stalled in Congress. No real champion within the administration.
- Push for so-called *Mando Único* by means of voluntary compacts between states and municipalities.
- Unstable arrangement: police officers are still municipal employees, even if under command of governors. Growing conflict (Tepic, Cuernavaca)
- Some alternatives (PAN), but no real political traction.
- Other topics in limbo

Looking ahead



- Violence is likely to continue on a moderate uptrend
- Guerrero will increasingly become the epicenter of crime and violence. Ayotzinapa still an open sore.
- The Jalisco New Generation Cartel (CJNG) could become the new focus of persecution
- Extradition of El Chapo? Not likely this year. Too many legal hurdles.
- Big story: implementation of new criminal justice system (probably a bumpy process)
- Police reform? Possible, but tricky. Total disappearance of municipal police forces is unlikely.
- In general, no major policy initiatives. More crisis management than structural reform.

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