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The Role of Special Prosecutors in Combatting Violence Against Women

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The Role of Special Prosecutors in Combatting Violence Against Women¹

Teagan D. McGinnis, Octavio Rodríguez Ferreira, and David A. Shirk

Abstract

In recent years, there has been increased attention to the problem of violence against women in Mexico, and especially the gender-motivated murders of women known as “femicides.” This working paper examines the factors that have contributed to an increase in the number of femicide cases in Mexico, using a mixed methodological approach to evaluate the effects of state level prosecutorial capacity on the reporting of such crimes. In terms of quantitative methods, the authors compiled an original dataset of state prosecutorial budgets and levels of homicidal violence (by gender and by state) and used both means testing and linear regression models to assess differences between states with special prosecutors and those without, while controlling for the level of homicidal violence across states. In terms of qualitative methods, the authors compiled federal and state laws to examine differences in criminal and administrative laws and conducted interviews with state prosecutors and security experts. The authors find statistically significant evidence that appointing a special prosecutor for gender-related crimes increases the investigation of femicide cases by 50% on average, even controlling for levels of homicidal violence in those states. These findings illustrate the impact of recent prosecutorial reforms in Mexico and offer useful insights for policy makers and activists working to combat violence against women in Mexico.

¹ The initial research for this paper was supported by the Honors Program at the University of San Diego. An earlier version of this paper was previously presented at the VII *Simposium Internacional* for the Oral Adversarial Skill-Building Immersion Seminar (OASIS) hosted by the Justice in Mexico program (www.justiceinmexico.org) and sponsored by the U.S. State Department’s Bureau of International Narcotics and Law Enforcement (INL). A revised draft of this paper was presented at the Conference of the International Studies Association-West (ISA-West) hosted in Pasadena, California on September 27, 2021.

Introduction

According to official Mexican government data, between 2015 and 2020, the number of murder cases classified as “femicides” – crimes in which a woman is killed because of her gender – grew by 129%, compared to a roughly 79% increase in homicides overall. At the same time, the actual share of homicides targeting women has not increased in recent years, and there is substantial variation in number of femicides investigated in different Mexican states, which suggests that the recent increase in femicide cases is not simply a function of increased violence in Mexico. To better understand the factors contributing to the increase in femicide cases, we look at the role of state-level public prosecutors. Because the investigation of specially designated crimes (like femicide) hinges in large part on the legal authority, institutional capacity, and individual decisions of state prosecutors, it is important to consider how such factors influence the number of femicides investigated in different states.

The authors explore this question by measuring the impact of specific state-level prosecutorial mechanisms – especially, the role of special prosecutors’ offices for femicide and gender related crimes – that are the result of recent prosecutorial reforms in several Mexican states. We find statistically significant evidence that appointing a special prosecutor for gender-related crimes increases the investigation of femicide cases by 50% on average, even controlling for levels of homicidal violence in those states. These novel findings help to illustrate the impact of recent prosecutorial reforms in Mexico and offer new and useful insights for policy makers and activists working to combat violence against women in Mexico. Moreover, because there is little research on prosecutorial capacity in Mexico, in general, this study helps to lay the groundwork for further research on viable approaches to reforming the administration of justice in Mexico.

Background: Analyzing the Problem of Femicide in Mexico

Mexico has faced a sustained, multi-decade security crisis that has registered record-high levels of violence in recent years.² Indeed, Mexico’s National Institute of Statistics and Geography (*Instituto Nacional de Estadística y Geografía*, INEGI) reports that the number of homicides that occurred in 2020 reached 36,579.³ Amid this elevated violence, the number of homicides targeting women has increased dramatically, with INEGI reporting that 2,876 murders of women occurred in that same year. According to researcher Gema Kloppe-Santamaria, one in ten women are murdered in Mexico every day, often by people that they

² Laura Y. Calderón, Kimberly Heinle, Rita E. Kuckertz, Octavio Rodríguez Ferreira, and David A. Shirk (eds.), *Organized Crime and Violence in Mexico*, Justice in Mexico, San Diego, CA, October 2021. <https://justiceinmexico.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/10/OCVM-21.pdf>

³ For that same year, the Executive Secretariat for the National Public Security System (*Secretariado Ejecutivo del Sistema Nacional de Seguridad Pública*, SNSP) reported a nationwide total of 29,406 murder cases (including cases of multiple homicides), resulting in 34,588 individual victims, or an average of 95 murders per day.

know intimately and that are otherwise respected members of their community.⁴ In this context, there has been a groundswell of anger over the problem of gender violence, and dissatisfaction with the Mexican government's response to it.

In 2020, two notable cases of gender violence – the brutal murder and dismemberment of Ingrid Escamilla in February 2020 and the abduction and murder of 7-year-old Fátima Cecilia shortly afterward – drew caused massive protests throughout Mexico and drew international attention.⁵ Activists mobilized a national boycott and women around the country march by the tens of thousands to participate in a “Day without Women” on March 10, 2020.⁶ While some of these protests grew out of control – as a small number of activists set fire to vehicles and attempted to break through barricades – the national expression of solidarity with female crime victims helped draw much-needed attention to the problem of femicide and violence against women.⁷

Understanding these issues and how they can be addressed requires a closer look at the available data on violence against women, and especially homicides targeting women and the investigation of these crimes. According to data from INEGI, from 1990 to 2015, there was an annual average of 1,681 female homicide victims in Mexico. From 2016-2020, this figure more than doubled to 3,568 female homicide victims annually. Still, this is largely a function of the overall increase in homicidal violence in Mexico. Indeed, while the number of women murdered in Mexico has grown substantially in recent years, the proportion of female victims of homicide has not actually changed much over the last few decades. According to INEGI, the ratio of homicides targeting women hovered between 12-14% from 1990 to 2020, with female victims accounting for an average of around 12% (or 1-in-8) murders in Mexico (as illustrated in Figure 1 and Figure 2).

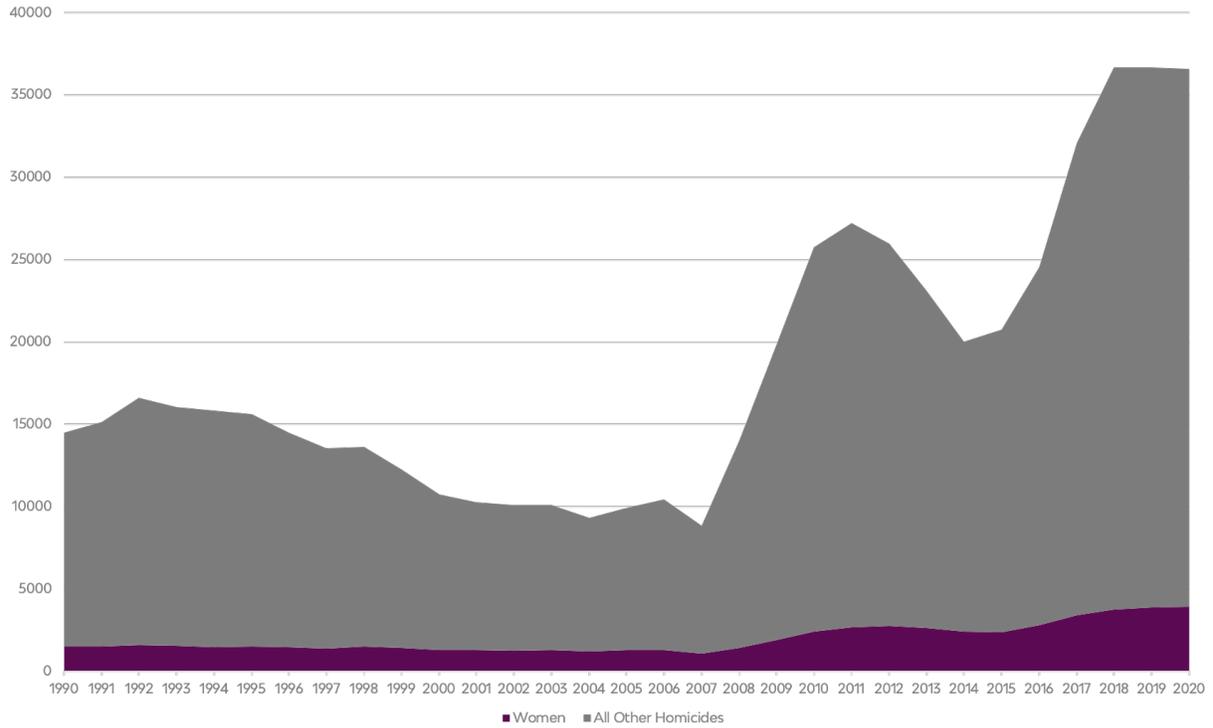
⁴ Gema Kloppe-Santamaría, “Ni Una Menos, Not One Less: Femicides and Gender-Based Violence in Mexico and Northern Central America,” *Gender-Based Violence Dispatch*, No. 12, Mexico Institute, Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars, December 2021. https://www.wilsoncenter.org/sites/default/files/media/uploads/documents/Ni_Una_Menos_Not_One_Less.pdf

⁵ Al Jazeera. “Ingrid Escamilla murder: Mexican social media users express shock.” *Al Jazeera*, February 13, 2020. <https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2020/2/13/ingrid-escamilla-murder-mexican-social-media-users-express-shock>; El Universal. 2020. “Identifican a Fátima, la niña de 7 años asesinada y torturada en Tláhuac.” *El Universal*, February 17. <https://www.eluniversal.com.mx/metropoli/cdmx/identifican-fatima-la-nina-de-7-anos-asesinada-y-torturada-en-tlahuac>. (Accessed April 1, 2021).

⁶ Mary Beth Sheridan and Maya Averbuch, “For Mexico, a Day without Women: Female Workers Plan National Strike Against Rising Gender Violence,” *Washington Post*, March 6, 2020. https://www.washingtonpost.com/world/the_americas/mexico-femicide-womens-strike/2020/03/05/7b7258e0-5c13-11ea-ac50-18701e14e06d_story.html

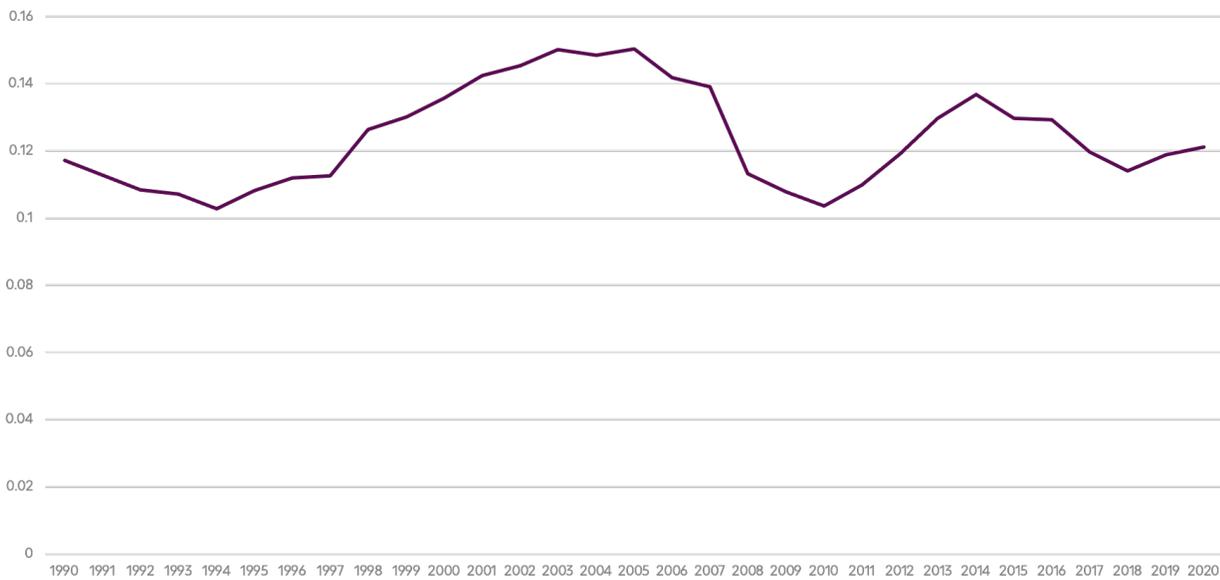
⁷ Paulina Villegas, “Las mujeres de México toman las calles para protestar contra la violencia,” March 10, 2020, <https://www.nytimes.com/es/2020/03/10/espanol/mexico-paro-mujeres-protestas.html>

Figure 1: Share of Homicides Targeting Females in Mexico, 1990-2020



Source: INEGI.

Figure 2: Murders of Women as a Percentage of All Homicides, 1990-2020

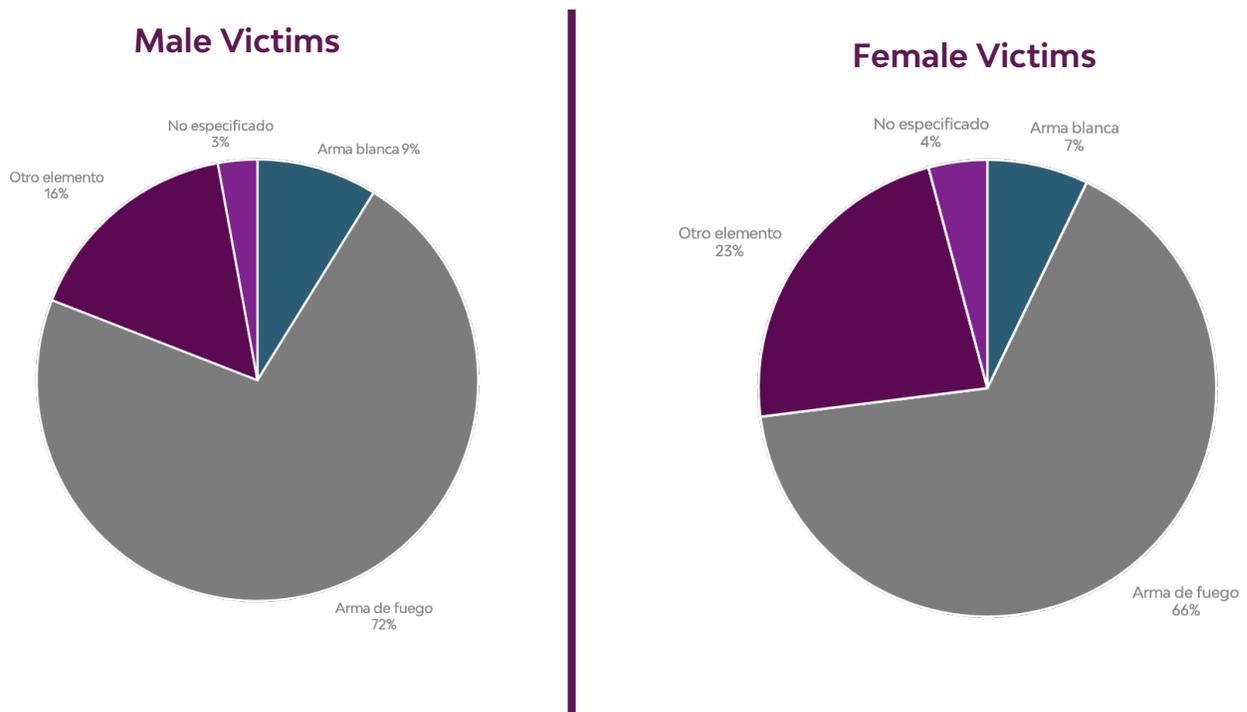


Source: INEGI.

Thus, as is the case in many other countries, the share of male homicide victims in Mexico is greater than the share of female homicide victims. In fact, looking more closely at the trend, we can see that the percentage of women murdered went down slightly in recent years, accounting for 12.06% from 2016-2020 compared to 12.46% from 1990 to 2015. In fact, as illustrated in, the percentage of women murdered appears to be inversely correlated with the overall level of violence. That is, when violence goes up, men tend to make up a disproportionate share of the increased violence.

Still, while women represent only a small portion of murder victims and while the proportion of women being murdered has not increased amid Mexico's greater levels of violence, murders of women in Mexico nonetheless merit special attention. Importantly, the nature of the violence involved in the murders of women in Mexico is distinctive. For example, according to data from INEGI, in 2019, men were 9% more likely to be killed by a firearm than women, and 28.5% more likely to be killed by an edged weapon (see [Figure 3](#)). However, women were 43.75% more likely to be killed by another type of weapon (*otro elemento*), a category that includes blunt objects and other forms of physical trauma (e.g., strangulation). Meanwhile, according to a 2018 INEGI study, nearly half (45%) of all women in Mexico reported being victims of intimate partner violence, underscoring the fact that femicide tends to be linked to broader patterns of gender-motivated violence against women. Such grim statistics illustrate that violence against women has distinct characteristics that require special consideration, because of the different ways in which women are targeted for and subjected to violence.

Figure 3: Causes of Death for Male and Female Homicide Victims



Source: INEGI.

This is not surprising to feminist scholars or students focused on gender-related crimes. Since the 1970s, researchers like Diana Russell and Jill Radford have helped define and popularize the concept of “femicide,” which is a particular form of homicide focused on a woman’s gender identity. In a 1992 edited volume on this topic, Radford and Russell define femicide as “the murder of women, committed by men, for the simple reason of their being women.”⁸ In elucidating the gendered motives behind men killing women, they describe femicides as “attempts to control their lives, their bodies and/or their sexuality, to the point of punishing through death those women that do not accept that submission.”

As noted by the Inter-American Commission of Women of the Organization of American States, in the Latin American context the concept of femicide was adapted and refined by Marcela Lagarde.⁹ In her research, Lagarde expanded on the concept developed by Radford and Russell by giving preference to the term “feminicide” (*feminicidio*), arguing that the literal interpretation of “femicide” as a “woman’s murder” fails to capture the gendered dimensions

⁸ Russell, Diana and Roberta Harmes (2006). *Feminicidio: Una Perspectiva Global*. Mexico City: Centro de Investigaciones Interdisciplinarias en Ciencias y Humanidades of the National Autonomous University of Mexico, p. 74.

⁹ Committee of Experts of the Follow-up Mechanism to the Belém do Pará Convention (MESECVI), “Declaration on Femicide,” *Inter-American Commission of Women of the Organization of American States*, OEA/Ser.L/II.7.10, August 15, 2008. <http://www.oas.org/en/mese cvi/docs/DeclaracionFeminicidio-EN.pdf>

of such crimes. In contrast, feminicide, Lagarde argues, more accurately captures the gender-biased motives, social constructions, and male impunity associated with many murders of women by men.

Lagarde's work was specifically focused on the wave of gender-motivated murders in Ciudad Juárez, one of Mexico's largest border cities, beginning around 1992. That year, the body of Gloria Rivas, a fifteen-year-old girl, was one of the first of hundreds of female murder victims to be discovered, triggering a wave of protests. While a series of local, state, and federal investigations ultimately failed to solve most of the crimes, the murders in Ciudad Juárez helped draw international attention to the problem of gendered murders as a growing epidemic throughout the country. Notably, the disappearance and killing of Claudia Ivette González, Laura Berenice Ramos Monárrez, and Esmeralda Herrera Monreal, whose bodies were discovered in a cotton field in Ciudad Juarez in 2001, served as an emblematic case generating international awareness. In the 2009 ruling of the "Cotton Field" (*Campo Algodonero*) case, the Inter-American Court decreed that the Mexican government must enforce actions and implement changes to investigative protocols aimed at mitigating the reoccurrence of these gender-related crimes.¹⁰ That case helped lay the groundwork for subsequent legal reform efforts to develop a special category in Mexican criminal law to address the phenomenon.

Indeed, thanks to the Cotton Field ruling and the work of scholars like Lagarde, the term *feminicidio* became codified as a specific criminal offense in Mexico and is defined under Article 325 of the Mexican Federal Penal Code (Código Penal Federal) as a crime that deprives a woman of life as a result of her gender or for gender reasons. Furthermore, the code outlines that gender reasons or motivations are present when any of the following circumstances occur:

- "The victim presents signs of sexual violence of any kind;*
- Inflammatory or degrading injuries or mutilations, before or after the deprivation of life or acts of necrophilia, have been inflicted on the victim;
- There are antecedents or data of any type of violence in the family, work or school environment of the perpetrator against the victim;
- There has been a sentimental, emotional or trust relationship between the asset and the victim;
- There are data that establish that there were threats related to the criminal act, harassment or injuries of the perpetrator against the victim;

¹⁰ "The Cotton Field Case in Mexico: Setting Legal Precedents for Fighting Gender-Based Violence," *Evidence and Lessons from Latin America (ELLA)*. <https://fundar.org.mx/mexico/pdf/Brief-TheCottonFieldCase-SettingLegalPrecedentstoGenderViolence.pdf>.

- The victim has been held incommunicado, whatever the time prior to the deprivation of life;
- The victim's body is exposed or displayed in a public place."¹¹

Furthermore, it is worth noting that there are some subnational adaptations that expand upon the legal concept of femicide established under federal law. For example, the state of Jalisco's penal code accounts for "*lesbofeminicidio*" (the murder of a woman because she loves or loved another woman) and "*transfeminicidio*" (the murder of a woman because she is a transgender or transsexual woman) under the additional gender reason of "when the perpetrator acts for reasons of homophobia."¹² Also, entities like Nuevo León specify that every deprivation of a woman's life will be investigated as a femicide. Therefore, Mexican states are not always uniform in their classifications and typologies of femicide, and the use of terms referring to this problem can vary widely. While we acknowledge the importance of Lagarde's semantic and theoretical distinction in using the term "feminicidio," for the purposes of this paper we rely primarily on the term "femicide" for both the general phenomenon and when referring to the specific crime that is codified in Mexican law.

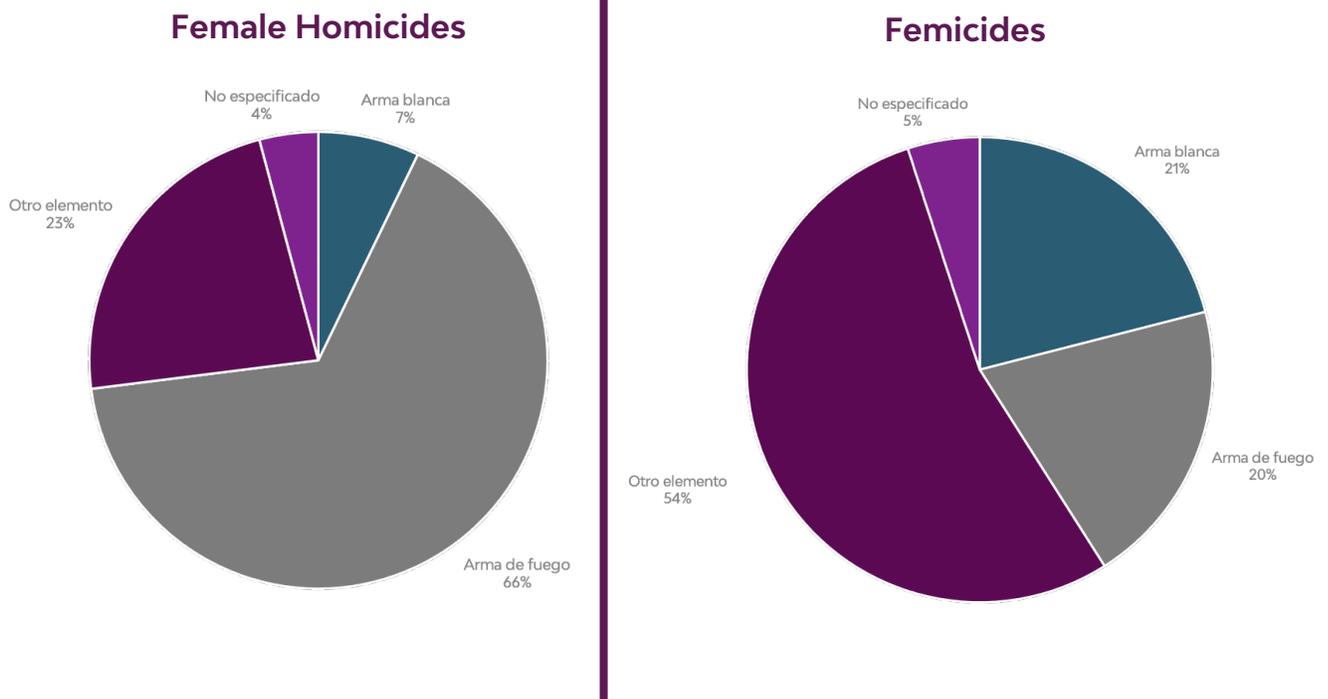
In short, there are valid justifications for treating femicides as separate and distinct from other forms of crime, as is the case for bias-motivated crimes (e.g., hate crimes) and sex crimes (e.g., domestic violence) identified in many countries around the world. Thus, in 2012, femicide was criminalized for the first time at the federal level in Mexico. As a result, the best available data on tracking the number of official femicide cases reported by Mexican authorities begins in 2015, the year in which the National Public Security System (*Sistema Nacional de Seguridad Pública*, SNSP) began reporting these numbers.

The designation of femicides as a specially designated crime enabled prosecutors to focus specifically on crimes targeting women because of their gender, often in the form of domestic abuse and sexual violence. Such crimes tend to involve modes of violence that—unlike shootings—involve direct physical contact between the assailant and the victim. Indeed, when we compare the modus operandi of those crimes investigated as femicides, we see that such cases are much less likely than most homicides involving women involve an edged weapon or some other method, such as strangulation, use of a blunt object, or other physical trauma (See Figure 4).

¹¹ Author's translation. Mexican Federal Penal Code (*Código Penal Federal*). Accessed August 4, 2021. <https://mexico.justia.com/federales/codigos/codigo-penal-federal/>

¹² Although we cannot provide a comprehensive analysis of "transfeminicidios" within this study, we do acknowledge that it is an important dimension of understanding femicides and gender violence, as trans women are, in many cases, more vulnerable to cycles of violence, discrimination, and criminalization. Leyva, Elizabeth. "El Mosaico del feminicidio en México." *Nexos*, December 11, 2017.

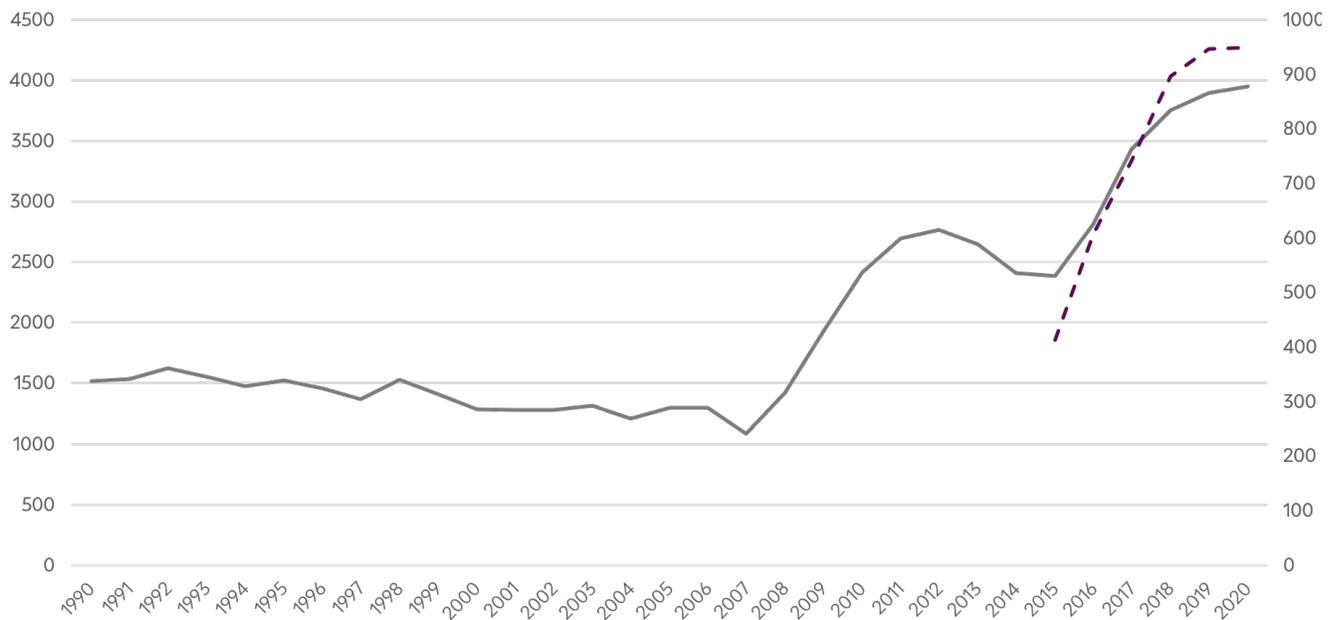
Figure 4: Comparison of Female Homicides and Femicide Cases



Source: INEGI.

What is more, the number of femicide cases increased dramatically after 2015. As illustrated in Figure 5, there was a dramatic increase in the number of femicide cases investigated, which grew from 411 cases in 2015 to 942 cases in 2020. Indeed, the number of femicide cases investigated grew at a faster rate – 129% – than the overall number of female homicides, which increased by about 65% from 2,383 in 2015 to 3,952 in 2020.

Figure 5: Number of Female Homicide Cases Compared to Femicide Cases in Mexico

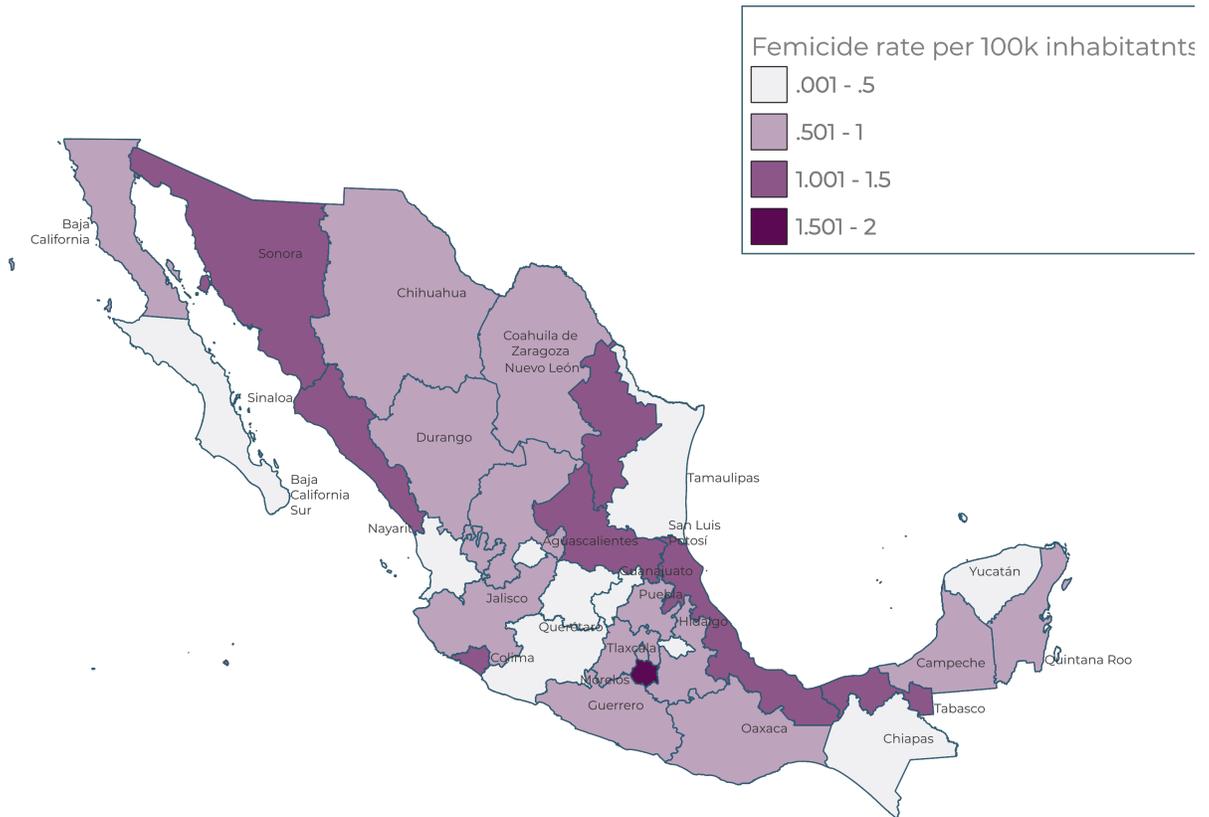


Source: INEGI, SNSP.

In this sense, contrary to public opinion, authorities have been making important strides in tackling the problem of femicide by increasing the number of criminal cases identified as “femicides.” Still, as noted by other studies (Fondevilla and Meneses, 2015; Fondevilla, Massa, and Meneses, 2019), there are sizable differences in the number of femicides reported in different Mexican states, and the rate of femicide cases per capita in any given state is not closely correlated to homicide rates per capita.¹³ In 2019, for example, Mexico saw the highest rates of per capita homicides in states like Baja California, Guerrero, and Guanajuato. Yet, the highest rates of femicides per capita were found in other states, like Nuevo Leon, Veracruz, and Morelos (see Figure 6).

¹³ Fondevilla, G. and Meneses, R. (2015), “Mapping the killer State: Gender, Space, and Deaths due to Legal Intervention in Mexico,” *Women & Criminal Justice*, 24(4): 306-323 – <http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/08974454.2014.890159>; Fondevilla, G., Massa, R. & Meneses, R. (2019), “War on drugs, war on women: visualizing female homicide in Mexico,” *Women and Criminal Justice*, 30:2, 147-154 – <https://doi.org/10.1080/08974454.2019.1653812>

Figure 6: Map of Femicide Rate Per 100,000 Inhabitants, By State (2019)



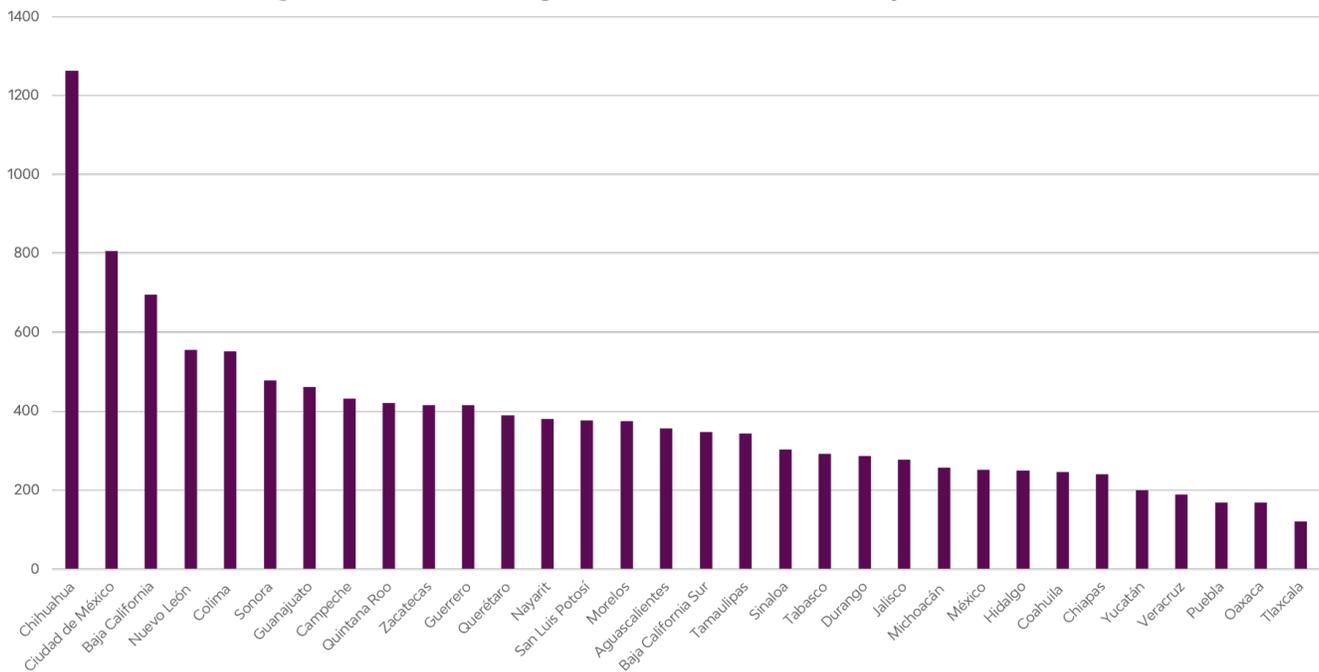
Source: SNSP. Map by Teagan McGinnis and Octavio Rodríguez.

It is worth noting that Mexico’s 32 state-level entities (including Mexico City) vary significantly on a variety of relevant measures, including population size, ethnic diversity, economic development, level of violence, and criminal laws and law enforcement institutions. These conditions provide a useful “natural experiment” to analyze the factors that might contribute to differences in the rate of criminal investigation of femicides across different states. Given the important role that state prosecutors play in determining whether cases should be investigated and charged as femicides, it is especially important to focus on the different functions and capabilities that such officials have in different states.

For example, while budgetary information is cumbersome to obtain for many state-level agencies in Mexico, the authors found that prosecutors have significantly more resources in

some states than in others, as illustrated in Figure 7.¹⁴ Indeed, in the year 2019, for which the most complete recent data was available for all 32 state-level entities in Mexico, the budget for the Chihuahua state prosecutor was roughly three times the average for all states in Mexico, while the state prosecutor’s budget in Tlaxcala was roughly a quarter the average. Thus, it seems reasonable to examine the hypothesis that varying budgetary resources could have a measurable effect on the number of femicide cases investigated.

Figure 7: 2019 Budgets for State Attorneys General



Source: Various state fiscal documents and archival records (e.g. state expenses budgets or *presupuestos de egresos*). See Appendix A.

At the same time, it is possible that femicides are a function of the structure of the prosecutor’s office itself, and the existence – or absence – of specialized units focused on prosecuting gender-related crimes. While there are few studies that empirically measure the effectiveness of prosecutorial agencies in Mexico, some studies (Brewer and Ngong, 2021) have pointed to the role that specially designated agencies can play in reducing criminal impunity.¹⁵ Such studies point to the need for further quantitative research on the impact of prosecutorial

¹⁴ It is worth noting that some states had zero or very limited budgetary information for certain years, or that certain information was difficult to decipher because of differing administrative structures governing state prosecutors’ offices in different states.

¹⁵ For example, a recent report from the Washington Office on Latin America (WOLA) focuses on the role of special anti-corruption prosecutors’ offices in five state-level case studies, and finds that such offices make an important contribution to addressing particularly challenging crimes. Stephanie Brewer and Moses Ngong, “Mexico: A Closer Look at State Anti-Corruption Prosecutors,” Washington Office on Latin America, March 2021. <https://www.wola.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/04/Mexico-State-Anti-Corruption-Prosecutors.pdf>.

mechanisms and resources on the rate at which certain crimes are investigated. Accordingly, our study seeks to make a novel and useful contribution to understanding the role of prosecutors and specific prosecutorial mechanisms in Mexico by focusing specifically on the ways that specially designated prosecutors' offices for the investigation of gender crimes affects the investigation of femicide cases.

Where there are special prosecutors' offices for the purpose of investigating femicide and other gender-related crimes, this focused allocation of resources would seem to favor a greater number of cases identified by criminal investigators as "femicides." While all state criminal codes identify femicide as a specific criminal offense that stems from the definition established by the Mexican Federal Criminal Code, the authors found – through an extensive review of federal and state legal codes and administrative laws, as well as author interviews with state-level prosecutors – that 19 of 32 state-level entities had a special prosecutor's office specifically charged with investigating femicides and crimes against women (See [Figure 8](#)). Such special prosecutor's offices were typically created as part of state-level reforms intended to strengthen the identification, investigation, and prosecution of crimes against women in the aftermath of the 2009 Cotton Field ruling. This map refers to 2019, the year in which this study focuses because it is the year for which the most recent data is available.

Figure 8: Map of States with a Special Prosecutor (*Fiscalía Especializada*) for the Investigation of Femicide and/or Gender-Related Crimes in 2019



Source: Data gathered by authors from state prosecutor's offices (see Appendix B). Map by Teagan McGinnis.

To clarify the rationale for case selection, it is important to emphasize the basis of selection. Of the 13 states without a specially designated prosecutor for femicide and gender-related crimes in 2019, 11 had smaller, designated units charged with investigating femicide and other gender-related crimes within the attorney general's office. However, in contrast to these cases, those states with special prosecutors' offices for femicide investigations had specific legislation and/or administrative regulations that define the institutional role and activities of the special prosecutor. Perhaps most important, the personnel and resources dedicated to such offices are used exclusively for the investigation of femicides and crimes against women, whereas other prosecutors' offices typically have units that are assigned to investigate homicides of all kinds. The designation of special prosecutors for femicides and crimes against women therefore presumably allows for a higher degree of specialization and focus on these specific crimes that would result in higher rates of investigation of such crimes. Whether there is a substantive difference between having a formally designated, specialized *office* or not is a testable claim that we examine through a series of statistical tests discussed below.

Methodology

To evaluate the effect of appointing special prosecutors on the number of femicides investigated in different states, the authors employ a mixed methodological approach. In terms of quantitative methods, we drew on data from Mexico's National Institute for Statistics and Geography (INEGI), the National Public Security System (SNSP), and the National Population Agency (CONAPO) to compile an original dataset that includes levels of homicidal violence (by gender and by state), state prosecutorial budgets, and our list of states with specially designated prosecutors for gender-related crimes.

We operationalize our dependent variable by identifying the rate of femicide cases for each state as reported by Mexico's National Public Security System (SNSP), and adjusting these figures on a per capita basis to control for population size by using data from INEGI and CONAPO for 2019.¹⁶ As mentioned earlier in this paper, while there is some variation in the state-level classification of femicides, Mexico's national criminal code and femicide laws help to establish a baseline for what constitutes a "femicide" under the law. Hence, there is a reasonable degree of consistency in the definition of our dependent variable to make comparisons across states.

In running statistical tests, we took the further step of logging this variable to account for the fact that the distribution of femicides is somewhat skewed, as noted above. Similarly, when controlling for levels of violence by state, we also logged the homicide rate per state to account for the fact that homicide rates are highly skewed across different states, with some states having extremely high or low rates of homicides. We then use means testing and linear regression models to assess differences in the average number of femicide cases investigated, comparing states with special prosecutors and those without, while also controlling for the level of homicidal violence across states.

In terms of qualitative methods, we also compiled federal and state laws to examine differences in criminal and administrative laws and conducted interviews with state prosecutors and security experts that help to inform the findings and policy recommendations of this study. Specifically, during the months of June through December 2021, we conducted zoom interviews in person and via videoconference with current or former prosecutors in the states of Aguascalientes, Oaxaca, and Nuevo León. We withhold the names and specific positions of all government officials who provided interviews to protect them from public criticisms, political pressure, or other forms of retaliation that could possibly result from the information they provided for this study. However, we did receive valuable information and insights from interviews conducted with several Mexican security experts, including Alejandro Hope, Guadalupe Correa-Cabrera, and Juan Pardinas.

¹⁶ CONAPO. "Proyecciones: población a mitad de año." *Consejo Nacional de Población*. http://www.conapo.gob.mx/es/CONAPO/De_las_Entidades_Federativas_2010-2050.

Having identified several variables related to prosecutorial capacity that may affect the number of femicide cases identified in different states, we outline two alternate hypotheses to test against the null hypothesis (H0) that the number of femicide cases should not vary predictably in response to any of these variables. Specifically, as our first hypothesis, we posit that the rate of femicide cases per capita in a given state is correlated to prosecutorial spending per capita. In our second hypothesis, we posit that the rate of femicide cases per capita in a given state is determined by the existence of a special prosecutor's office for femicide and gender-related crimes.

In evaluating the testable hypotheses, this study employs a variety of methods including both qualitative research and descriptive/inferential statistics. Under qualitative techniques, we performed legal research on federal and state codes addressing femicides, anti-femicide policies, and prosecutorial mechanisms. Furthermore, several interviews were conducted with Mexican officials and experts, which gave us unique insight into the inner workings of subnational prosecutorial mechanisms. For our quantitative sources, we used official government data on homicides and femicides from the Executive Secretariat for the National Public Security System, population data from the National Institute of Statistics and Geography, and the National Population Council. We also reviewed fiscal reports to obtain data on state prosecutors' office budgets and used population data to estimate per capita spending. We also relied on news media and official documents for additional information on special prosecutors for femicides and gender-related crimes.

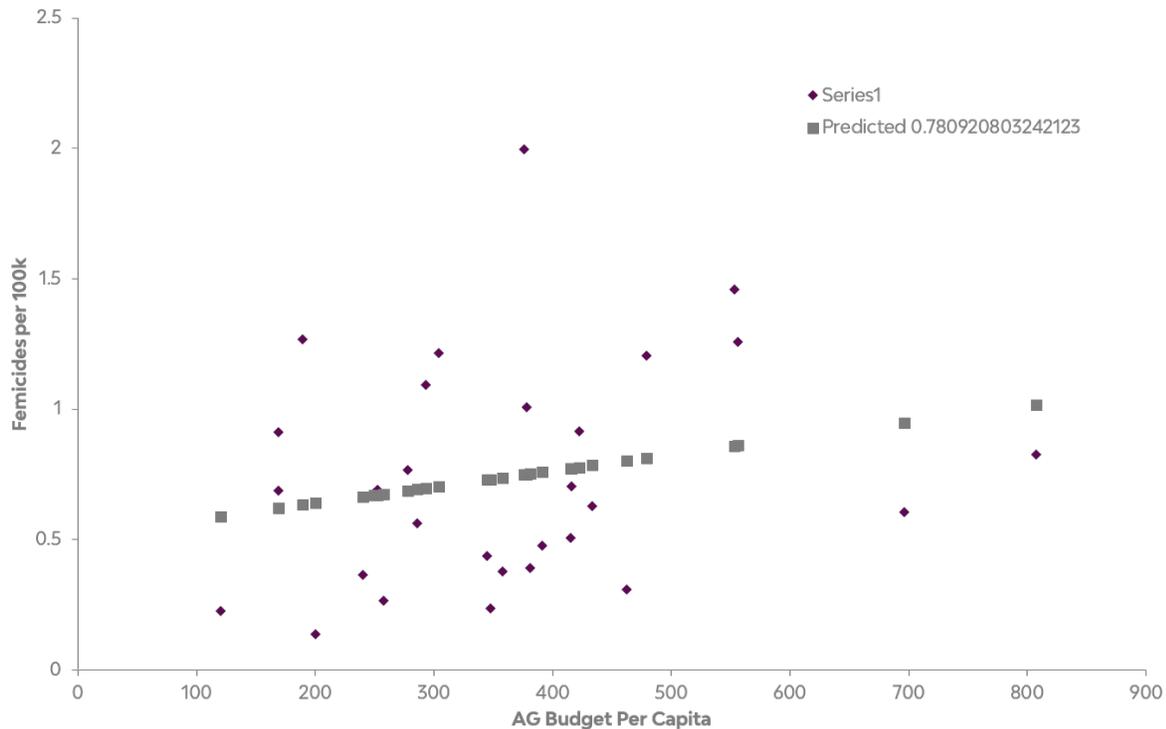
Combining these techniques, we examined the specific hypotheses noted in the previous section. For the first hypothesis, which evaluates the role of state prosecutors' offices' budgets, prosecutorial capacity is presumably partly a function of the available resources for classifying such crimes and conducting investigations. It is therefore possible that a larger overall budget for investigations would increase the rate of femicide cases per capita. We tested this hypothesis by taking the nominal budget assigned to each state attorney's general office, controlling for population, and running a linear regression to test the relationship between our continuous dependent and independent variables.

For the second hypothesis, we reviewed state records and media reports to determine whether and when a state established a special prosecutor's office to investigate femicides and gender-related crimes. We then used a two-sample t-test and conducting further analysis as a regression of our logged dependent variable on the dichotomous independent variable for this hypothesis (i.e., the presence or absence of a special prosecutor). In this case, we also conducted a further test to control for the level of homicidal violence in a given state, in order to evaluate the possibility that more violent states are more likely to have special prosecutors for femicide. We review the results below.

Findings

For the first hypothesis that evaluates the effect of AG budgets, there is a slight tendency suggesting that budgets matter. As illustrated in Figure 11, the greater the per capita expenditure in a state’s prosecutorial budget, the more femicides per capita are identified in a given state. However, our linear regression model resulted in an r-square of .157 and a p-value greater than .391. This suggests that there is not sufficient statistical evidence to support the claim that this effect is not purely random. In other words, the evidence does not clearly support the claim that the State Attorney’s General budget has an effect on the rate of femicide cases. However, because the data used here reflect the total budget for the entire prosecutor’s office, it is possible that this measure does not provide a sufficiently clear indication of the resources allocated for the purpose of investigating femicides in different states.

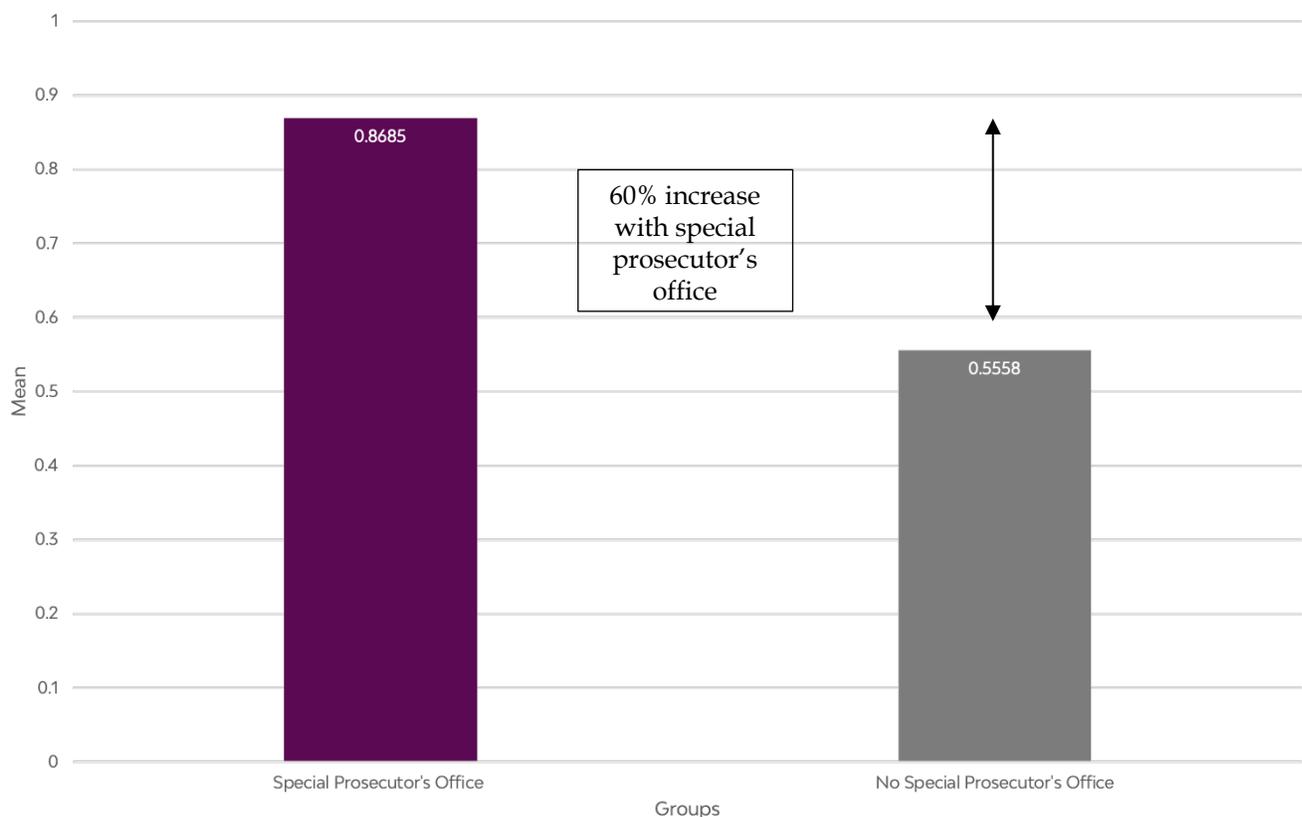
Figure 9: Scatterplot of Number of Femicides Per 100,000 Inhabitants in Relation to Attorney General (AG) Budget Per Capita



In this sense, it is important to consider whether specific mechanisms have been established for the special prosecution of such crimes, since this is an indication that there is some capacity, either in the form of dedicated personnel or resources (or both). Thus, in testing the second hypothesis, which analyzes the effect of having such a special prosecutorial unit, we used a comparison of means test (two-sample t-test) to compare states on the basis of the presence or absence of a special prosecutor for femicides.

That test found a substantial and statistically significant difference in the number of femicide cases per 100k inhabitants, depending on the presence or absence of a special prosecutor's office. Furthermore, according to these findings, when we calculate the percent change between those means, there is 60% increase in the number of femicide cases per 100 thousand inhabitants in states where there is a designated special prosecutor's office for femicide and gender-related crimes (see Figure 10). However, from this study, we know that states that have more homicides may also have more femicides, and more violent states might be more likely to appoint a special prosecutor for femicides.

Figure 10: T-Test Results Comparing Average Number of Femicides in States with Special Prosecutors and States Without



Of course, it is necessary to control for the possibility that states with SFPs are pre-disposed to having higher levels of violence. States that choose to adopt special measures for addressing violence against women may do so precisely because they have higher levels of violence overall. This view was expressed by some state prosecutors that the authors interviewed in states that had both low levels of violence and low rates of reported homicide. Accordingly, as a proxy for the level of violence in each state, we controlled for the number of homicides per capita in each state using a logged regression model to normalize the data for our dependent variable (femicides, represented as LOG_FEMPC) and the independent variable for homicides per capita (LOG_HOMPC) at 10 to the original value. Using this model, we found a

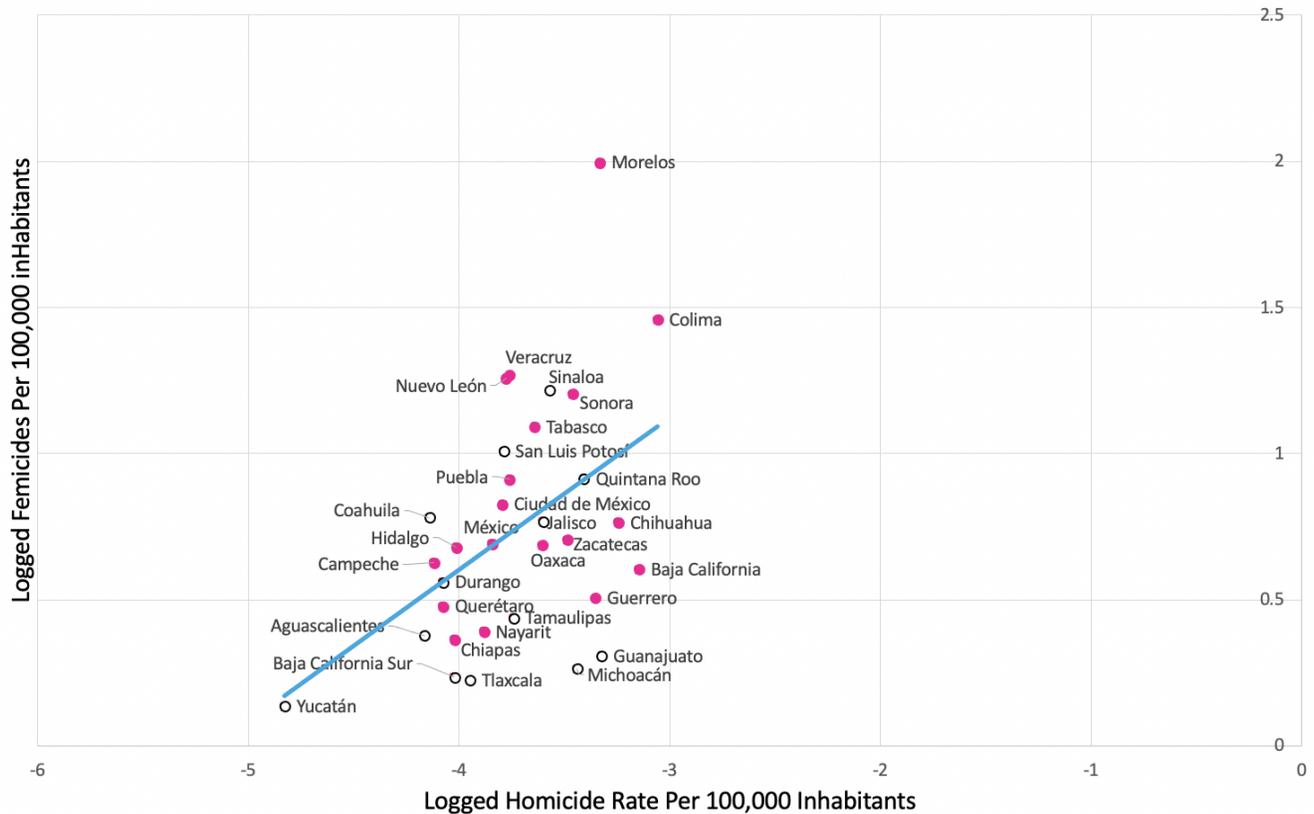
statistically significant result showing that states that had a Special Prosecutor had a 1.5 times greater number of femicides than states that did not (i.e., $10^{.177}=1.50314196609$) (see Table 1). In other words, there were 50% more femicide cases identified in states that had a special prosecutor.

Table 1: Regression Effect of Femicides Per Capita of Special Prosecutor and Logged Homicides Per Capita on Logged Femicides Per Capita

	Unstandardized B	Coefficients Std. Error	Standardized Coefficients Beta	T	Sig.
Constant	-4.171	.434	--	-9.601	<.001
Special Prosecutor	.177	.082	.332	2.153	.04
Logged Homicide Per Capita	.304	.112	.420	2.723	.011

The difference between states with and without special prosecutors is represented visually in Figure 11. As can be seen in the figure, states with special prosecutors (colored dots) tend to have more femicide cases (Y-axis) than states with no special prosecutor (white dots), even when they have similar logged homicide rates (X-axis). For example, in 2019, the states of Puebla and Tamaulipas had similar levels of homicide per capita, but the state of Puebla – which has a special prosecutor for gender-related crimes – had roughly twice as many logged femicide cases per capita. Of course, some states buck the trend: the state of Jalisco investigated slightly more femicides than Oaxaca, despite similarly logged levels of homicide per capita. However, on average, states with a special prosecutor tend to be more likely to have 50% higher rates of femicide investigation than similarly violent states that do not.

Figure 11: State-Level Comparison of Logged Femicides Per Capita and Logged Homicides Per Capita in States With a Special Prosecutor (Colored Dots) and States Without (White Dots)



In short, this study finds compelling evidence that increases in the number of femicides in Mexico are a reflection not only of increased violence, but of institutional reforms that have helped to direct greater resources and more focused attention to the problem of violence targeting women. In Mexican states that establish a dedicated special prosecutor for the investigation of femicides and gender related crimes, there is a substantially and statistically significantly greater number of femicide cases investigated compared to states that do not. Moreover, our findings suggest that this increase in femicide cases is not merely a function of higher budgets or increased violence in those states where a special prosecutor’s office has been established. States that have special prosecutors for the investigation of femicides are substantially more likely to classify female homicides as femicides.

Analysis and Limitations of the Study

Our findings suggest that states with specialized prosecutors identify more homicide cases that can be legally classified as femicides. While it seems logical that having a specially designated prosecutor to investigate crimes would naturally increase a state’s propensity to investigate such crimes, the statistical findings supporting this claim give us little insight as to

the mechanics of how this effect is achieved. The numbers only allow us to understand that states with special prosecutors are better at identifying and reporting femicide cases, but tell us little about precisely why this is the case. Thus, the authors felt it was essential to have direct conversations with state prosecutors, officials, and security experts to supplement our quantitative findings.

As suggested by our results, one major advantage of having specially designated prosecutorial offices is that they have specially trained personnel dedicated specifically to identifying and investigating femicides and gender-related crimes. States without such specially designated personnel often lack a proper understanding of femicide as a category in criminal law. Indeed, according to Griselda Nuñez, Nuevo León's Specialized Prosecutor for Femicides and Crimes Against Women (*Fiscal Especializada en Femicidios y Delitos Contra las Mujeres*): "What is not seen, is not addressed. If you don't name them [femicides], they do not exist. Those who are not reporting femicides are dissolving or erasing the problem because they do not understand it."¹⁷ In other words, if prosecutors are not properly trained and/or do not fully comprehend the legal classification system for a femicide, they will not actively investigate them as femicides.

However, just creating a Special Prosecutor's office is not enough to achieve results. It takes time to develop the capacity to properly investigate femicides and other gender-related crimes. In Nuevo León, the Specialized Prosecutor's Office for Femicides and Crimes Against Women, though formally created in 2017 was not fully functioning until 2018, when Nuñez was formally appointed to the position. Nuñez's strategy included providing specialized training for agents who investigate femicides and creating a data observatory to carefully monitor gender violence crime trends.¹⁸ During the year prior to the creation of the Special Prosecutor's office, in 2016, only three cases of femicide were investigated in Nuevo León. Yet, by the end of 2018, Nuñez's first year in office, that number increased to 67 femicide cases, a femicide rate of approximately 1.26 (per 100k inhabitants). These efforts not only resulted in more investigations but also yielded more prosecutions of gender crimes of all kinds, resulting in 322 combined convictions for the crimes of femicide and familial violence in 2019.¹⁹

State prosecutors from Oaxaca reported similar results thanks to the creation of that state's Specialized Prosecutor's Office for Attention to Crimes Against Women for Reasons of Gender (*Fiscalía Especializada para la Atención a Delitos Contra la Mujer por Razón de Género*). For instance, before applying the Organic Law (*Ley Orgánica*) that created this specialized prosecutors'

¹⁷ Zoom interview with State Prosecutor Griselda Nuñez. July 15, 2021. Original quote: "Lo que no se ve, no se mejora. Si no los nombras, no existe. El que no estén reportando feminicidios están disolviendo borrando el proble porque no lo estás entendiendo."

¹⁸ Fiscalía General de Justicia del Estado de Nuevo León. 2018. "NOMBRAN A FISCAL EN FEMINICIDIOS Y DELITOS CONTRA LA MUJER." Fiscalía General de Justicia del Estado de Nuevo León. <https://fiscalianl.gob.mx/noticias/nombran-a-fiscal-en-femicidios-y-delitos-contra-la-mujer/>.

¹⁹ Recio, Kevin. 2020. "Fiscalía dictó 332 sentencias condenatorias por delitos contra la mujer." *Milenio*, November 28. <https://www.milenio.com/politica/fiscalia-leon-dicto-332-sentencias-delitos-mujer>.

office, the state of Oaxaca only resolved 5-7% of femicide cases.²⁰ After the implementation of specialized offices and the Organic Law, which were originally born out of constitutional reforms to create the autonomous National Prosecutor's Office (FGR) and subsequently, independent state offices, entities saw 70-75% of cases resolved regarding the crime of femicide.

In fairness to states without special prosecutors, it is important to point out that there are still problems in identifying and investigating femicides even in states that do have them. For example, in Nuevo León, the case of María Fernanda Contreras, a 27-year-old woman who disappeared in April 2022, showed that state prosecutors failed to respond to a missing person's report and utilize vital information provided by the family.²¹ Even special prosecutors ultimately depend on the capabilities of the forensics investigators and criminal investigation units that are available to them, so the lack of resources in other areas may limit the effectiveness of a specialized prosecutorial unit. Thus, if the larger prosecutorial apparatus is inadequate or has deficiencies, this will necessarily limit the effectiveness of all prosecutions.

At the same time, there is often an earnest interest and dedication to investigate femicides and gender-related crimes in states without special prosecutors. In Aguascalientes, for example, the authors spoke with assistant attorney general Erik Mejía, who underscored that prosecutors in the state of Aguascalientes were very familiar with the federal and state criminal codes and procedures for the investigation of femicides. However, he also noted that in a small, low-violence state, it was unnecessary to dedicate an entire team to the investigation of femicides. Mejía also indicated that the state's homicide investigation team investigates every female homicide through the lens of femicide laws, effectively starting with the assumption that every female homicide is a possible femicide and working by process of elimination to determine whether the person's gender was the primary motivation.

We investigate the criminal investigation of the violent death of a woman in the same way, with a gender perspective from the beginning. The way to determine what is intentional homicide or femicide is provided by the law itself. In Article 97 of the penal code for the state of Aguascalientes, there are gender-related reasons according to which the violent death of a woman is considered a femicide.²² That is to say, if at some point there are...there are different segments of the code in which there are specific gender-related motivations... determining that it is a case of intentional homicide is done by exclusion. That is, if the investigation shows us that

²⁰ Zoom interview with Oaxaca state officials and prosecutors Juventino Pérez, Luz Elva Rodríguez Chaparro, Laurean Saturnino Regalado. July 21, 2021.

²¹ Guillén, Beatriz. 2022. "La Fiscalía de Nuevo León detiene al presunto feminicida de María Fernanda Contreras." *El País*, April 12. <https://elpais.com/mexico/2022-04-12/la-fiscalia-de-nuevo-leon-detiene-al-presunto-feminicida-de-maria-fernanda-contreras.html>.

²² Article 97 of Aguascalientes's penal code (pages 30-32): <https://eservicios2.aguascalientes.gob.mx/NormatecaAdministrador/archivos/EDO-4-11.pdf>.

the facts of the case are consistent with any of those gender reasons, we would be talking about the crime of intentional homicide.²³

However, even when such procedures are the norm, it appears that prosecutors that are not specially tasked with doing so may be less inclined or motivated to designate certain cases as femicides. In such cases, the evidentiary burden of proving a homicide is often lower than proving a femicide, and therefore there appear to be incentives to choose the easier path to conviction. Indeed, it is possible or even likely that cases that are identified in crime reports as “femicides” are not actually prosecuted under this category. Given the specific criteria for establishing a gender-related motive, it is simply easier to prosecute a crime as a femicide. Moreover, given that prosecutors do not have the option to treat femicide as an “aggravated” form of homicide, this is the safer option. Due to constitutional protections against “double jeopardy,” losing a femicide case would prevent prosecutors from retrying the case as a homicide.

Of course, this is one of the first studies – and, to our knowledge, perhaps the first – to conduct rigorous statistical testing on the impact of special prosecutors for legally designated hate crimes in Mexico. While our study helps lay a foundation, we recognize its limitations and have identified opportunities for further research. First, we found that there is a lack of data to measure financial resources available to special prosecutors. Furthermore, for the expenditure budgets for the prosecutor’s office in each state, the documents available (*presupuesto de erogaciones*) outline prospective allocations for the fiscal year. Therefore, there may be a distinct difference between the proclaimed expenditures and actual expenditures. Also, there are important challenges to obtaining or working federal funding that were revealed in some of our interviews with state prosecutors. For example, autonomous state prosecutors’ offices struggle to garner federal funding, seeing that they are operating more independently from the executive branch of the Mexican government.

Second, there is clearly a need to conduct more research on the implementation dates for special prosecutors in order to conduct more rigorous multi-level modeling across various years. This would generate a more robust study that increases both reliability and validity. Third, there is also a need for more qualitative research on special prosecutors for gender crimes in Mexico in order to understand their challenges and best practices. We learned a great

²³ Zoom interview with assistant attorney general of Aguascalientes Eric Mejía. July 14, 2021. Original quote: “Nosotros la investigación criminal de la muerte violenta de una mujer la investigamos de la misma forma, con perspectiva de género desde el principio. La forma como determinar que es un homicidio doloso o un feminicidio nos lo da la propia ley. En el artículo 97 guional del código penal para el estado para AGS vienen las razones de género dentro de las cuales la muerte violenta de una mujer se considera como feminicidio. Es decir, si en algún momento hay... son diferentes fracciones en las que vienen los supuestos de razones de género... y el determinar que se trata del homicidio doloso es por exclusión. Es decir, si la investigación nos arroja que no se adecua el hecho a ninguna de esas razones de género, nos otros le estaríamos hablando de un delito de homicidio doloso.”

deal by speaking directly with several prosecutors in different states, so it is critical to underscore the importance of conducting further field research on this topic.

Third, but not least of all, we recognize that the data that were available for this study are limited in an important respect: the investigation of femicides (our dependent variable) does not equate to the successful prosecution of such cases. That is, the data currently available from the Mexican federal government does not tell us anything about the outcome of an investigation, or whether that investigation led to a prosecution (let alone the conviction of the perpetrator). In the absence of more detailed aggregate data on criminal case flows in the Mexican criminal justice system, further qualitative case study research could prove fruitful in order to determine the efficacy of femicide investigations. This would require greater in-depth field interviews and archival research than was possible for this study.

Recommendations

Despite the above noted limitations, the findings of this study are important because – while they may appear logical – this is the first time an effort has been made to collect the relevant data and conduct rigorous statistical tests to determine the effect of prosecutorial mechanisms on the rate of femicides with robust and statistically significant results. Furthermore, findings like these lend credibility to policy recommendations that will effectively help protect and administer justice to women, as well as their families, friends, and communities in Mexico.

Informed by the novel findings in this study, as well as interviews with special prosecutors and security experts conducted in the course of our research, our principal recommendations are as follows:

1. Mexican states should consider creating and supporting special prosecutorial units for the investigation and prosecution of femicides;
2. States should consider directing additional resources and providing specialized training to support the investigation and prosecution of femicides, especially in states where a special prosecutor's office has not been established;
3. States should consider increasing the options that prosecutors have to punish gender-related violence by establishing stronger penalties for homicides and other crimes that involve aggravating circumstances (*delitos calificados*) of gender violence.

Indeed, interviews with state-level prosecutors – both with and without special prosecutors dedicated to femicides and gender-related crimes – underscore the importance of allocating trained personnel and resources to investigating these crimes. Investigating the murder of a woman that may be classified as a “femicide” (*feminicidio*) requires specific knowledge and experience working with this legal category. Moreover, the particular nature of femicides – which often involve sexual violence – often requires prosecutors to have technical knowledge,

access to laboratory support, or other resources that may not be required for other types of homicides. Finally, it is important to understand when prosecutors choose to treat a case as a simple homicide due to the legal hurdles that may be involved in demonstrating that there was a gender motive, and give prosecutors more options to consider gender as an aggravating factor in different categories of crime.

Conclusion

Femicide is a special category of homicide of enormous importance to the Mexican public. As many activists have noted, dedicating attention and resources to protect and provide justice to women that are victims of gender-based violence is necessary to address this problem. This paper provides strong, evidence-based support to show that developing the prosecutorial capacity to investigate femicides makes a statistically significant difference in combatting the problem of femicides. As our results show, institutionalizing the dedication of specific personnel and resources for this purpose makes an impactful difference in the identification of such cases. Since instituting the necessary reforms to create special prosecutorial mechanisms is largely a function of political will, we hope that this paper will help provide activists and policy makers with a useful basis to advocate for positive changes to this effect. Also, this analysis demonstrates that more research is needed on this topic to determine more and better ways to hold aggressors to account for gender-related violence.

Appendix A: List of State Expenses Budgets or *Presupuestos de Egresos* in 2019

The authors reviewed the state budget documents or *presupuestos de egresos* for the state prosecutors' offices in all 31 states and the federal entity of Mexico City.

State	AG Budget (in pesos) 2019	AG Pesos per capita	Link to Budget Document
Aguascalientes	\$473,920,000.00	\$357.66	https://eservicios2.aguascalientes.gob.mx/NormatecaAdministrador/archivos/EDO-30-2.pdf
Baja California ²⁴	\$2,538,782,780.44	\$696.53	https://www.congresobc.gob.mx/Documentos/Convocatorias/Presupuesto%20de%20Egresos%20BC%202020.pdf
Baja California Sur	\$296,016,336.00	\$347.28	http://secfin.bcs.gob.mx/fnz/wp-content/themes/fnz_bcs/assets/images/buletines/2019/1.pdf
Campeche	\$414,905,740.00	\$432.94	https://transparencia.finanzas.campeche.gob.mx/index.php/71-I-B-PEN
Chiapas	\$1,321,949,013.96	\$239.99	http://www.haciendachiapas.gob.mx/marco-juridico/estatal/informacion/Decretos/decreto19.pdf
Chihuahua	\$4,794,552,780.00	\$1,263.63	http://www.congresochoihuahua2.gob.mx/biblioteca/iniciativas/archivosIniciativas/9295.pdf
Ciudad de México	\$7,032,123,838.00	\$807.04	https://issuu.com/ejecentral6/docs/proyecto_presupuesto_egresos
Coahuila	\$754,778,168.96	\$245.59	https://www.seacoahuila.org.mx/secretaria-ejecutiva/transparencia/art-21-02-marco-normativo/presupuesto-de-egresos-del-estado-de-coahuila-de-zaragoza-para-el-ejercicio-fiscal-2019.pdf
Colima	\$417,424,417.00	\$553.02	http://www.conalepcolima.com.mx/wp-content/uploads/2019/11/Presupuesto-asignado-cuenta-p%C3%ABblica-2019.pdf
Durango	\$510,837,694.00	\$286.11	http://www.durango.gob.mx/wp-content/uploads/2019/02/iniciativa-ley-de-egresos-estado-de-durango-2019.pdf

²⁴ This is from a 2020 budget document. The authors could not locate Baja California's 2019 *presupuesto de egresos*.

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Guanajuato	\$2,699,373,370.44	\$462.06	https://finanzas.guanajuato.gob.mx/c_legislacion/doc/leyes_estatales/Ley_del_Presupuesto_General_de_Egresos_2019.pdf
Guerrero	\$1,479,100,000.10	\$415.00	http://i.guerrero.gob.mx/uploads/2016/08/Decreto-182-del-Presupuesto-de-Egresos-del-Estado-de-Guerrero-2019.pdf
Hidalgo	\$736,687,608.00	\$249.74	http://transparencia.hidalgo.gob.mx/TRANSCENTRAL/TRANSPFINANCIERA/2019/planeacion/2019_12_Anexo%2012%20-%20Administracion%20centralizada%20y%20administracion%20publica%20paraestatal.pdf
Jalisco	\$2,248,839,100.00	\$278.13	https://transparenciafiscal.jalisco.gob.mx/sites/default/files/12-25-18-v_vol_ii_0.pdf
México	\$4,463,291,271.00	\$252.74	https://transparenciafiscal.edomex.gob.mx/sites/transparenciafiscal.edomex.gob.mx/files/files/pdf/marco-programatico-presupuestal/presupuesto-egresos-2019.pdf
Michoacán	\$1,174,132,104.00	\$257.58	http://congresomich.gob.mx/file/DECRETO-QUE-CONTIENE-EL-PRESUPUESTO-DE-EGRESOS-DEL-GOBIERNO-DEL-ESTADO-DE-MICHOACAN-2019-1.pdf
Morelos	\$734,058,000.00	\$375.65	https://www.periodicooficial.morelos.gob.mx/periodicos/2019/5687_2A.pdf
Nayarit	\$488,043,430.34	\$380.96	https://www.nayarit.gob.mx/transparenciafiscal/des/3_marco_programatico_presupuestal/presupuesto_egresos/2019/presupuesto-egresos-2019.pdf
Nuevo León	\$2,963,700,043.00	\$556.04	http://www.hcnl.gob.mx/trabajo_legislativo/leyes/pdf/LEY%20DE%20EGRESOS%20DEL%20ESTADO%20EJERCICIO%20FISCAL%202019.pdf?2018-12-31
Oaxaca	\$687,947,182.00	\$168.83	https://www.oaxaca.gob.mx/cea/wp-content/uploads/sites/42/informacion/docs/presupuestoegresos/DECRETO_DE_PRESUPUESTO_DE_EGRESOS_2019.docx
Puebla	\$1,074,812,586.00	\$168.86	https://www.itaipue.org.mx/documentos/LEEPEF2019.pdf
Querétaro	\$818,807,788.00	\$390.88	https://www.esfe-gro.gob.mx/archivos/compendio_2019/Leyes_Estatales/714246673_21%20DECRETO%20DE%20PRESUPUESTO%20DE%20EGRESOS%20DEL%20ESTADO%202019.pdf
Quintana Roo	\$737,975,249.00	\$421.99	http://documentos.congresoqroo.gob.mx/documentos/presupuestos/2019/PTO_EGRESOS_EJERCICIO_2019.pdf

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San Luis Potosí	\$1,049,922,012.00	\$377.79	http://www.stjslp.gob.mx/transp/cont/marco%20juridico/pdf-zip/leyes/LE/LE.pdf
Sinaloa	\$925,701,286.00	\$304.15	https://media.transparenciasinaloa.gob.mx/uploads/files/1/Tomo%20II.%20Anexos_web.pdf
Sonora	\$1,472,044,870.00	\$478.78	https://hacienda.sonora.gob.mx/media/198829/dictamen_decreto_presupuesto_egresos_2019.pdf
Tabasco	\$724,816,925.00	\$292.97	https://tabasco.gob.mx/sites/default/files/users/spftabasco/PERIODICO%20OFICIAL%20DECRETO-0.pdf
Tamaulipas	\$1,259,741,474.66	\$344.58	https://transparencia.tamaulipas.gob.mx/wp-content/uploads/2019/01/P.-DE-EGRESOS-2019.pdf
Tlaxcala	\$161,338,071.72	\$120.38	http://finanzastlax.gob.mx/documentosSPF/EGRESOS/PRESUPUESTO%20%20CIUDADANO/2019/PRESUPUESTO%20CIUDADANO%202019.pdf
Veracruz	\$1,554,433,687.00	\$189.51	http://www.veracruz.gob.mx/finanzas/wp-content/uploads/sites/2/2019/03/Decreto-N%C3%BAmero-234-del-Presupuesto-de-Egresos-para-el-Ejercicio-Fiscal-2019.pdf
Yucatán	\$445,034,889.00	\$200.41	https://www.yucatan.gob.mx/docs/transparencia/paquete_fiscal/2019/TOMO_I.pdf
Zacatecas	\$648,977,923.00	\$415.72	http://cgj.zacatecas.gob.mx/assets/presupuesto-de-egresos-del-estado-de-zacatecas-para-el-ejercicio-fiscal-2019.pdf

Appendix B: List of States with Specially Designated Prosecutors for the Investigation of Femicides and Gender Crimes in 2020

The authors reviewed state legal codes and online information available about prosecutors' offices in all 31 states and the federal entity of Mexico City to identify those states' attorneys general had a specially designated special prosecutor (*fiscalía especializada*) or similar office for the investigation and prosecution of femicides and/or gender-related crimes. This information was used to code states according to whether or not there was a specially designated prosecutor's office.

State	Specialized Prosecutor's Office
Baja California	Fiscalía Especializada en Delitos Contra la Vida/Fiscalía Especializada en Delitos Contra Mujeres por Razones de Género
Campeche	Fiscalía Especializada en Femicidios
Chiapas	Fiscal Especializado en Delitos por Razones de Género y Trata de Personas
Chihuahua	Fiscalía Especializada en Atención a Mujeres Víctimas del Delito por Razón de Género y la Familia
Ciudad de México	Fiscalía Especializada para la Investigación del Delito de Femicidio
Colima	Fiscal Especializado en Delitos por Razones de Género y Trata de Personas
Estado de México	Fiscalía Central Para la Atención de Delitos Vinculados a la Violencia de Género
Guerrero	Fiscalía Especializada para la Investigación del Delito de Homicidio Doloso Cometido en Agravio de Mujeres y demás personas, con Orientación o Preferencia Sexual por Identidad o Expresión de Género
Hidalgo	La Fiscalía Especializada para la Atención de Delitos de Género
Morelos	Fiscalía Especializada para la Investigación y Persecución del Delito de Femicidio
Nayarit	Fiscalía Especializada en Investigación de Femicidio
Nuevo León	Fiscalía Especializada en Femicidios y Delitos Contra las Mujeres
Oaxaca	Fiscalía Especializada para la Atención a Delitos Contra la Mujer por Razón de Género
Puebla	Fiscalía Especializada en Investigación de Delitos de Violencia de Género Contra las Mujeres

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Querétaro	Fiscalía Especializada en la Investigación de Delitos Contra la Vida de Mujeres
Sonora	Vicefiscalía de Femicidios y Delitos por Razones de Género
Tabasco	Fiscalía del Ministerio Público de Femicidio
Veracruz	Especializada en Investigación de Delitos de Violencia contra la Familia, Mujeres, Niñas, Niños, y Trata de Personas
Zacatecas	Fiscalía Especializada en Delitos contra las Mujeres por Razones de Género