

DECEMBER 2020

BELIZE CRIME OBSERVATORY



CRIME ANALYSIS REPORT

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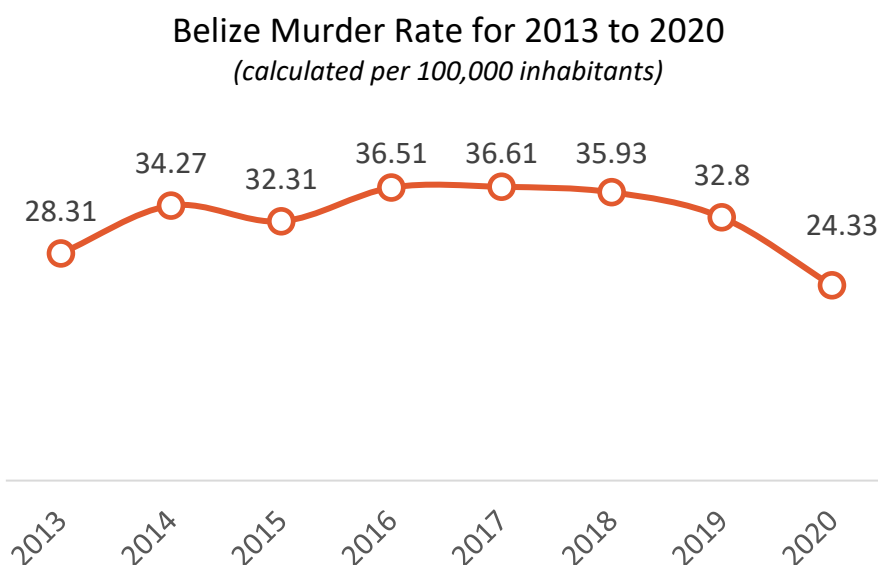
Crime Analysis Report

PERIOD: 1st – 31st December 2020



SUMMARY

- The year 2020 saw a monumental decline in major crimes cases registered by the Belize Police Department. A total of **888** major crimes cases were registered, compared to **1,264** during 2019. This decline of **376** cases amounted to **29.75%**.
- Overall, declines were recorded nationally for all categories of crimes, with the greatest declines recorded for robbery and burglary, while the least declines were recorded for sexual offences in the 'major crimes' category: rape and unlawful sexual intercourse.
- About **8 in every 10** cases were incidents of robbery, burglary, or theft. Murders accounted for approximately 1 in every 10 major crimes cases.
- Murders decreased during December 2020, both relative to the previous month and the same month in 2019. Eight murders were recorded during December 2020, a reduction from 12 in November 2020 and 15 in December 2019.
- For January to December 2020, murders were down by **23.88%**, with **32** fewer murder victims recorded. This was due to a reduction in murders from **134** for January to December 2019 to **102** for January to December 2020.
- Approximately **9 in 10** murder victims were males. From among the **102** victims recorded, **11** were females and **91** were males.
- Belize's murder rate, therefore, fell during 2020 to **24.33 per 100,000 inhabitants**, the lowest rate recorded for Belize since 2001, when the murder rate was 18.35 per 100,000 inhabitants.



HISTORICAL DATA

EXPLORE MURDER RATES BY DISTRICT SINCE 2009 BY ACCESSING OUR ONLINE WEB APP [HERE](#)

Data Source: Belize Police Department

Crime Analysis Report

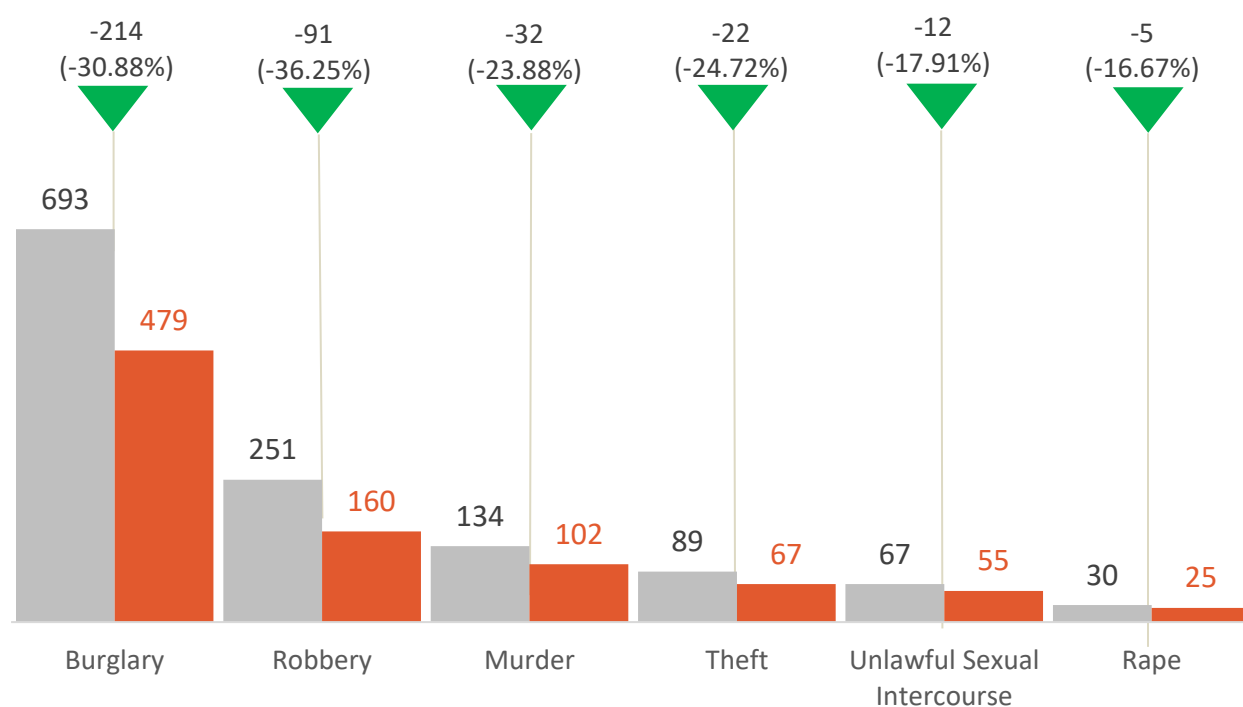
PERIOD: 1st – 31st December 2020



MAJOR CRIMES

- Burglaries accounted for just over half of the 'major crimes' cases (53.94%).
- There were three times as many burglary cases than robberies documented.
- The overall decline in major crimes of **29.75%** represents a marked improvement from the **8%** decline registered for January to December 2019.
- Whereas there was a marked increase during 2019 in sexual violence reports in the 'major crimes' category, there was a notable decrease during 2020.

Change in Number of Major Crimes Cases Registered by Police



■ Jan-Dec 2019 ■ Jan-Dec 2020

Data Source: Belize Police Department

The six crime categories included above reflect the Belize Police Department's Major Crimes classification scheme. Please refer to the Glossary of this report for more information.

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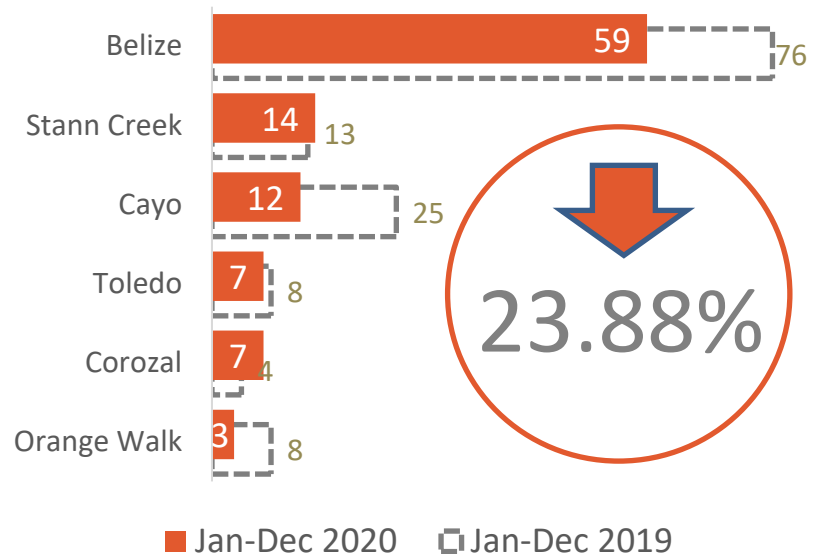


MURDERS

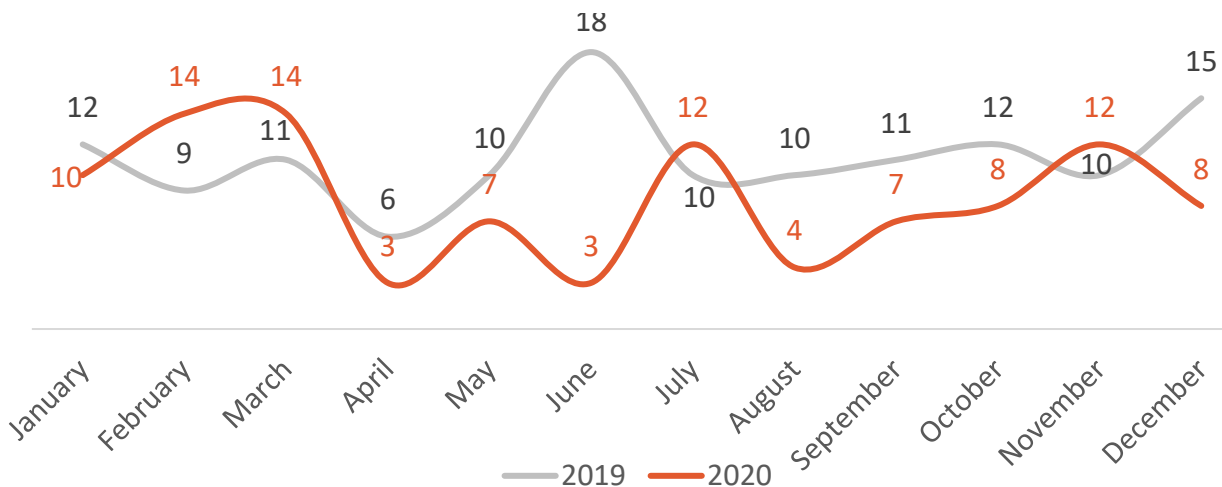
Nationally, the murder count declined by 23.88%, with a decrease of 32 incidents, from 134 during January to December 2019 to 102 for the period January to December 2020.

However, the number of murders increased in the districts of Corozal and Stann Creek.

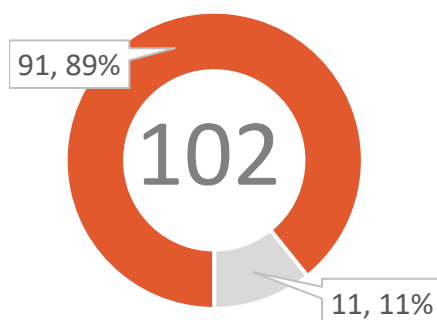
The murder count declined in the 4 remaining districts.



Number of Murders Recorded per Month



Proportion of Male and Female Victims



About
9 in every 10
murder victims
for Jan-Dec 2020
were males

Data Source: Belize Police Department

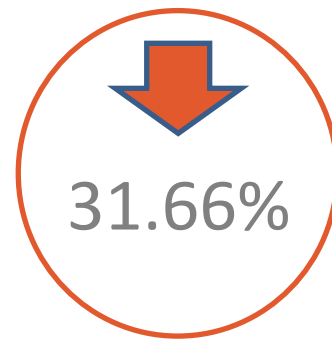
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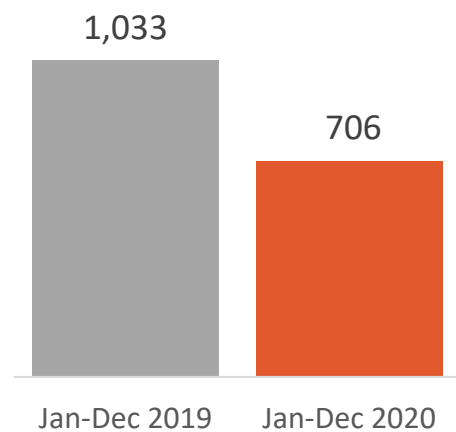
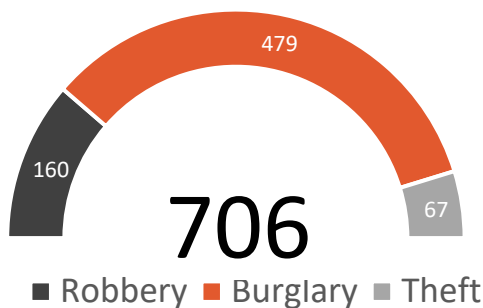


PROPERTY CRIMES

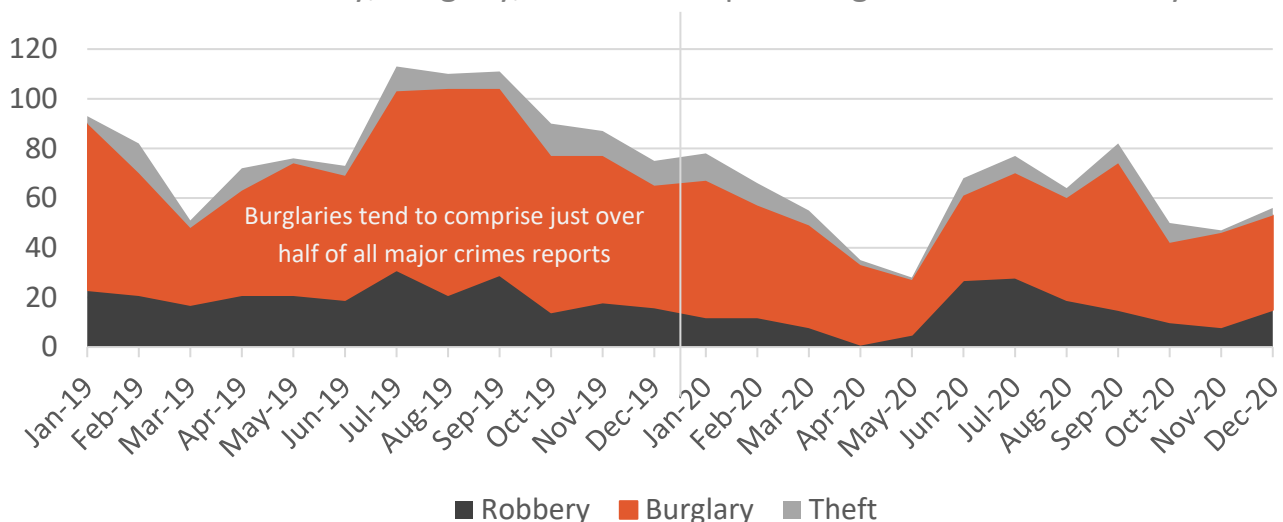
During December 2020, there was an overall increase in incidents of robbery and theft. There had been a general decline in property crimes over the prior two months. That decline followed a marked rise during June to September. There was a similar rise evident during the same period in 2019. Overall, though, property crimes have reduced markedly since the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic. The total reduction, from 1,033 during January to December 2019 to 706 for January to December 2020, amounted to 31.66% (or 327 cases).



A marked decline is registered for property crimes



Number of Robbery, Burglary, and Theft Reports Registered since January 2019



Data Source: Belize Police Department

Note: Police exclude theft cases for items valued under BZ\$5,000 from major crimes reports.

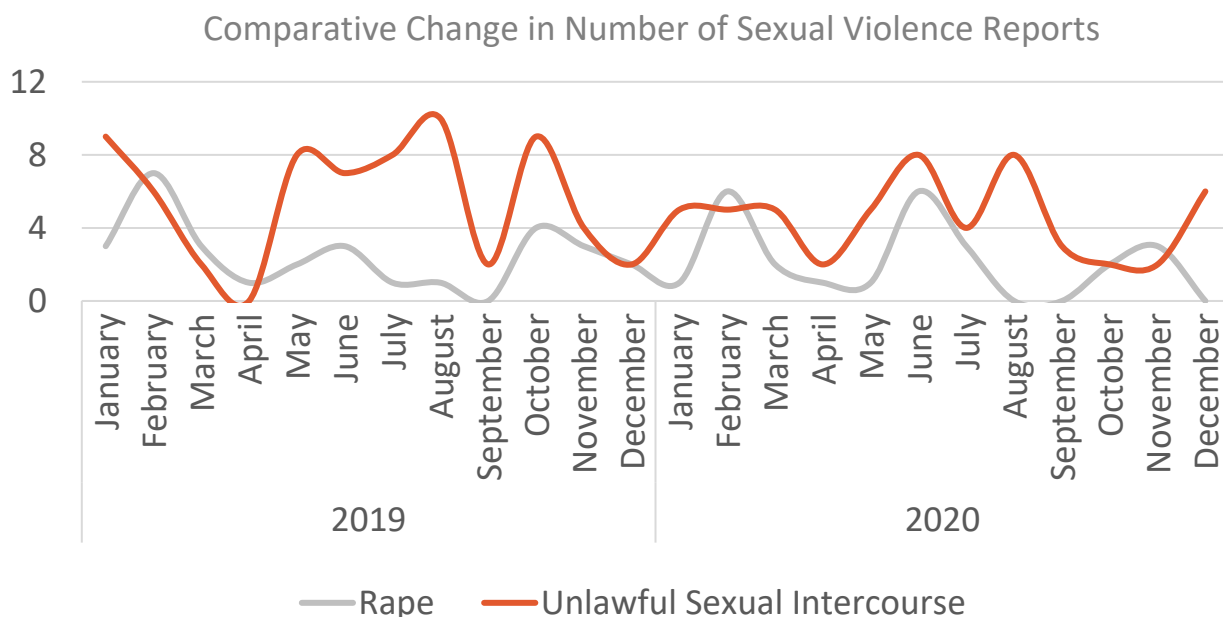
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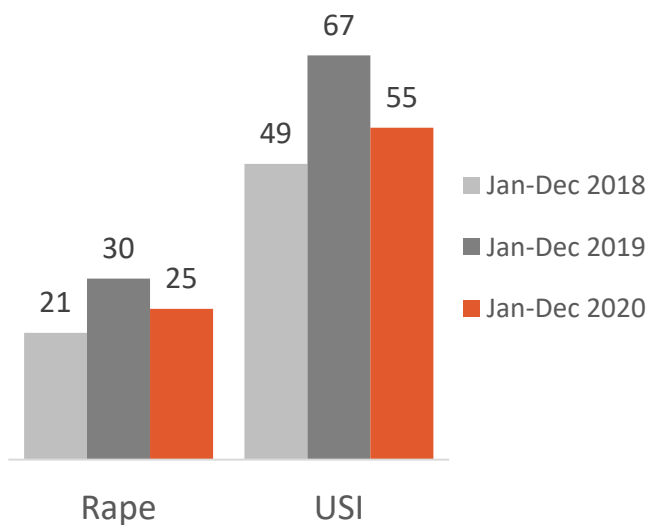


SEXUAL VIOLENCE

Although sexual violence was on an upward trajectory during the second quarter of 2020 (April to June), there has been an overall decline since January 2020. Generally, sexual violence reports were down by 17.5% for January to December 2020, when compared with the same period in 2019. The reduction in reports registered by Police was greater for unlawful sexual intercourse than for rape. Notable spikes in reports of unlawful sexual intercourse occurred in June, August, and December.



3-year Comparative for Sexual Violence Reports



- There was a pronounced decline in reports of rape and unlawful sexual intercourse (USI) during January to December this year, relative to the same period last year.
- The decline was not enough to reduce incidents to below levels recorded during 2018.
- Whereas sexual violence in the major crimes category had increased in 2019, all other major crimes had registered an overall decline.

Data Source: Belize Police Department

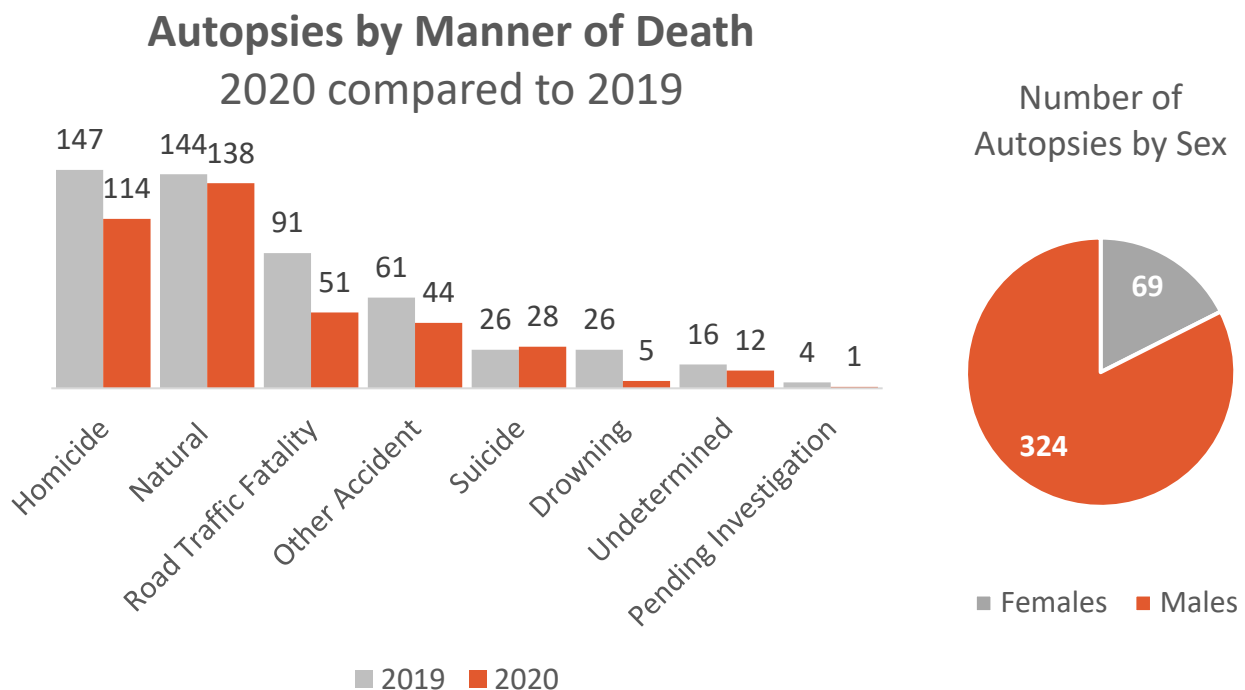
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AUTOPSIES

During the month of December 2020, the National Forensic Science Service conducted 44 autopsies. About 4 in every 10 were for deaths due to natural causes, while a quarter were for homicides. For the entire year, a total of 393 autopsies were conducted, a reduction from 515 the previous year. This meant that there were 122 fewer autopsies conducted during 2020 than in 2019, representing a decline by 23.69%.



There was a decline in the number of autopsies conducted for all categories except suicide. The number of autopsies for persons deemed to have committed suicide increased from 26 in 2019 to 28 in 2020. The number of autopsies done for which persons died in road traffic incidents fell by 43.96%, from 91 to 51. Meanwhile, a 22.45% reduction was observed for autopsies conducted on homicide victims, as the total autopsies declined by 33, from 147 to 114. Half of the autopsies were for victims of violent deaths: homicides, suicides, and road traffic fatalities. The vast majority of the deceased victims were males.

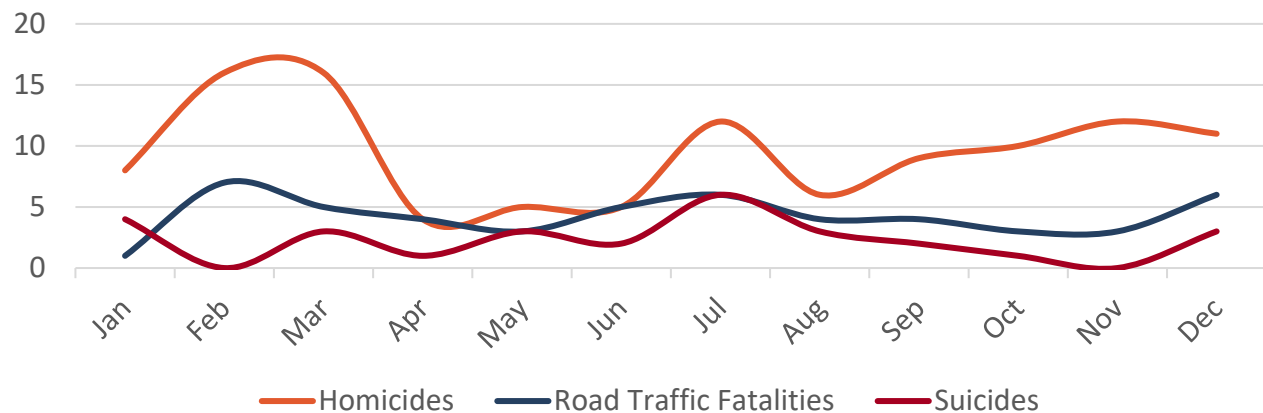
Data Source: National Forensic Science Service

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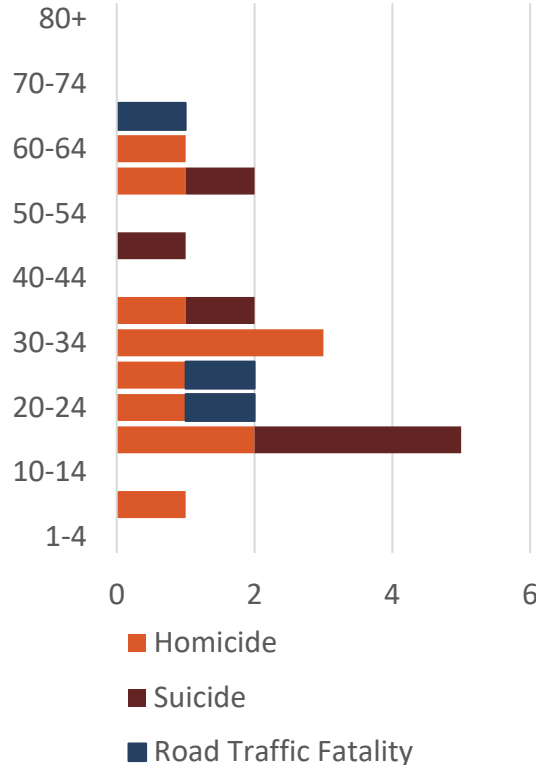
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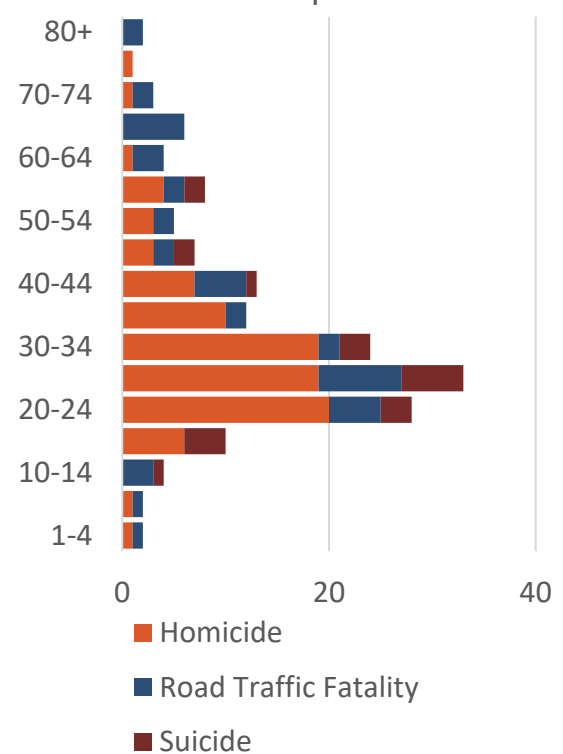
Number of Autopsies Conducted Monthly for Violent Deaths during 2020



Age Disaggregation of **Female** Victims of Violent Deaths, 2020 Autopsies



Age Disaggregation of **Male** Victims of Violent Deaths, 2020 Autopsies



Data Source: National Forensic Science Service

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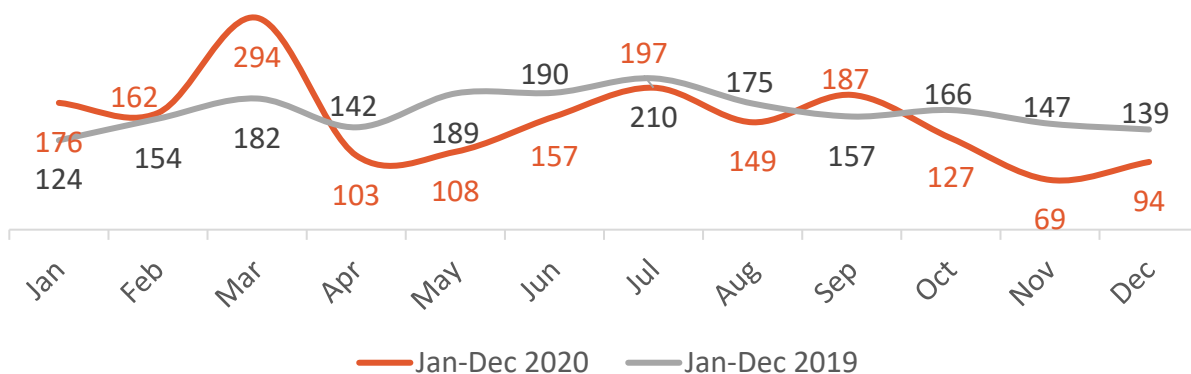
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INCARCERATION

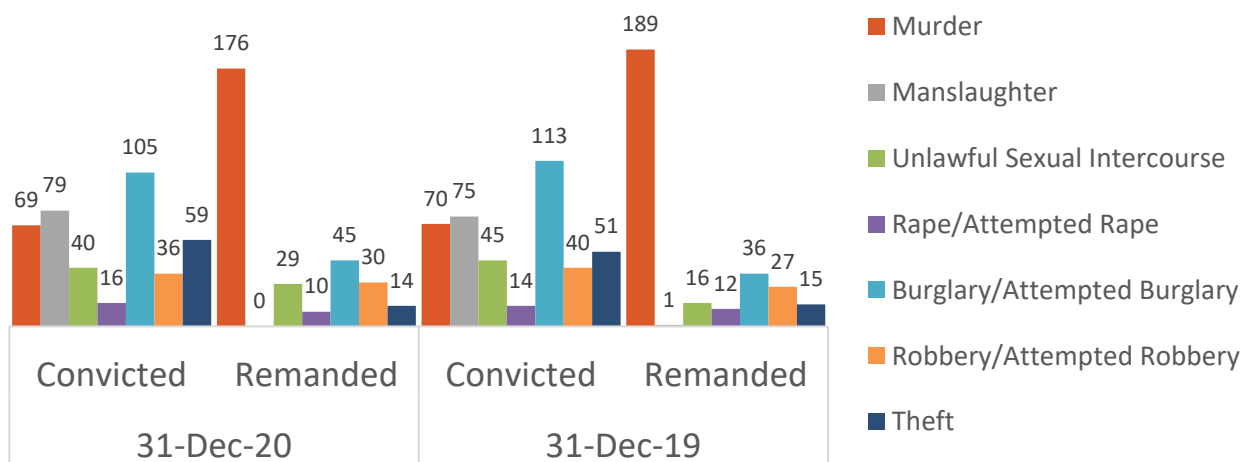
There were 94 people incarcerated during December 2020: 36 newly convicted persons and 58 newly remanded. Over the course of 2020, there were 1,823 people incarcerated, a decrease of 8% (or 152) when compared to 2019, when 1,975 were incarcerated. Meanwhile, the prison population grew by 2% or 24 inmates; 1,108 inmates were registered as of 31 December 2020, compared to 1,084 at the end of 2019. The most notable decline was in the 'under 18' population, which fell from 29 at the end of 2019 to 15 at the end of 2020.

Number of Persons Incarcerated per Month
During 2020, Compared to 2019



There was also a nominal decrease in the number of inmates either remanded for or convicted of murder. These inmates represented 22% of the prison population.

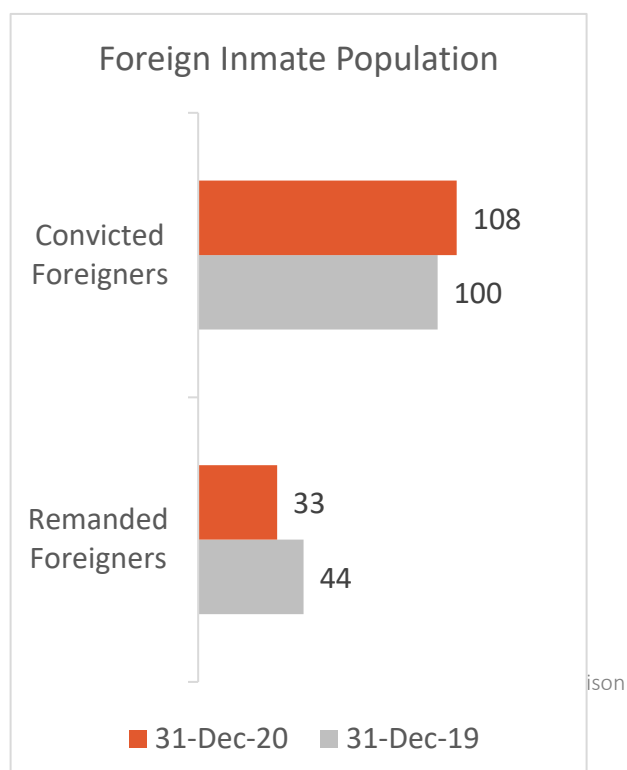
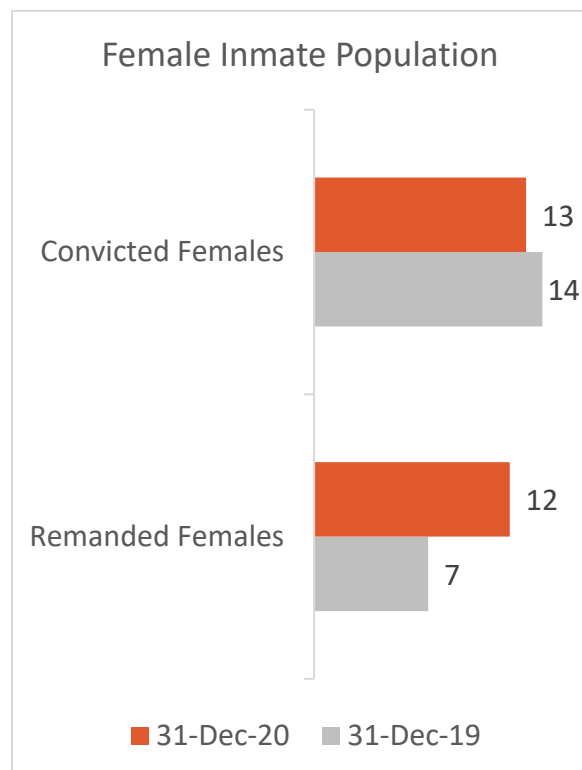
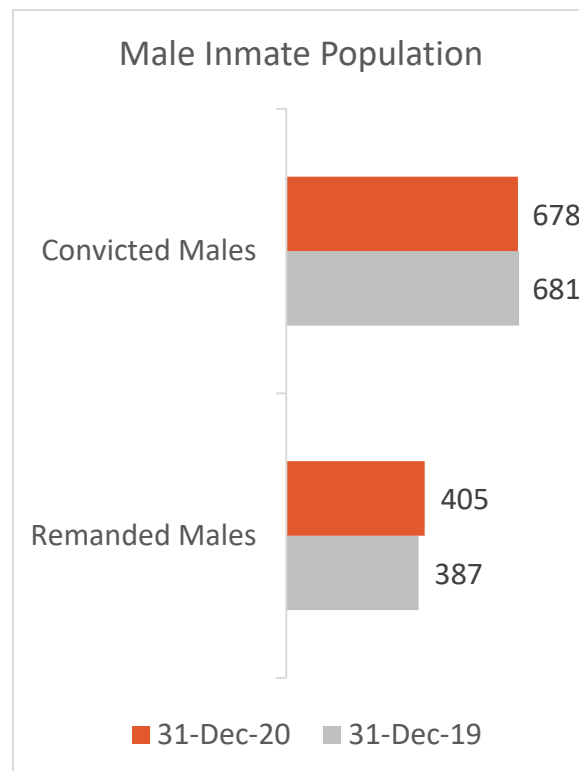
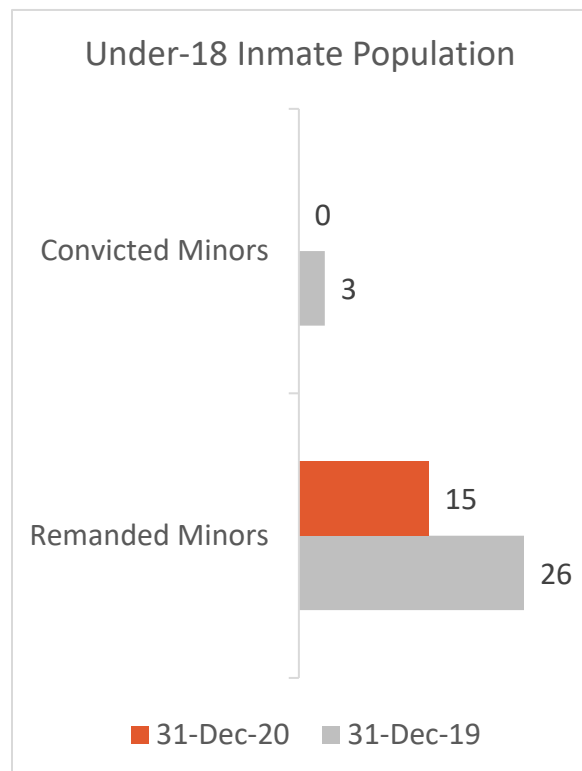
Remanded or Convicted Inmates Registered Among End-of-Year
Prison Population for Major Crimes or Related Crimes.



Data Source: Belize Central Prison/Kolbe Foundation

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Data Source: Belize Central Prison/Kolbe Foundation

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DATA DASHBOARDS

View the BCO's [interactive crime data dashboards](#) to access more detailed information. Access them through the “Data” tab on our website.



Dashboards provide details by [location](#) and [crime type](#).



GLOSSARY

Gang-related Crime: a criminal offence carried out by a gang or member of a gang, as classified by the Belize Police Department. The 2018 Amendment to The Crime Control and Criminal Justice legislation (Chapter 102 of the Laws of Belize) regards “any criminal activity or any enterprise, pursuit or undertaking in relation to a serious offence, acquiesced in, or consented or agreed to, or directed, ordered, authorized, requested or ratified by any gang member” as gang-related activity, and includes a schedule of serious offences under the wider classification of gang-related activities.

Homicide: the unlawful killing of a human being by another human being, either intentionally or not. The homicide classification used in this report is based on the classification by the National Forensic Science Service, for reporting purposes and includes murder and manslaughter.

Major Crime: The Belize Police Department includes six crime types under its classification of major crimes: murder, rape, unlawful sexual intercourse, robbery, burglary, and theft. Only theft of items valued BZ\$5,000 and above are included among major crimes.

Police Formation/Precinct: The Belize Police Department operates 17 policing areas, referred to as formations and precincts. The Belize City area is divided into four precincts: Precinct 1, Precinct 2, Precinct 3, and Precinct 4. Orange Walk has one police formation, and so does Corozal. Punta Gorda is the police formation for the entire Toledo District. Stann Creek is divided into three policing areas: Placencia, Dangriga and the Intermediate Southern Formation in Independence Village. The divisions exist for operational purposes and are not necessarily geographic. For example, the Belmopan Formation includes some surrounding villages, such as Roaring Creek and Armenia.

Property Crimes: robberies, burglary, and theft, involving the deprivation of the victim of any form of property, including cash, livestock, household goods, motor vehicles, etc.

Sexual Violence: The two major crimes classified as sexual violence in this report are rape and unlawful sexual intercourse.

Suicide: The act of an individual taking his or her own life.

Violent Death: Any form of death that results from an external factor, such as the use of a weapon or any object, toxin, or means of force, either by another person or the victim, whether the fatality was accidentally or intentionally caused. This report focuses on three types of violent deaths: homicides, suicides, and road traffic fatalities.

ACCESS MORE **DATA** via

<https://bco.gov.bz/data/>

EXPLORE AND **DOWNLOAD CRIME DATA** from

BCO's Open Data Site: <https://crime-data-belizeco.hub.arcgis.com/>



*“Supporting Improvements in
Citizen Security by Informing,
Interpreting, and Influencing
the Understanding of Crime.”*

Belize Crime Observatory
Ministry of Home Affairs & New Growth Industries



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bco@nsc.gov.bz

*DATA SOURCES: Belize Police Department - Joint Intelligence Coordinating Center and Gang
Suppression Unit; the National Forensic Science Service; and the Belize Central Prison.
Figures are reported as of December 2020. Any future revisions will be noted in subsequent reports.*