



SECURITY OVERVIEW

Buenos Aires – Argentina

Unidad de Análisis Político y Seguridad
Corporativa - UAPSC

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Security Overview

Buenos Aires, Argentina

1. Situational Analysis

The security situation in the city of Buenos Aires in 2024 presents a complex panorama, marked by an increase in certain crimes and a challenging socioeconomic context. In the area of violent crime, 91 intentional homicides were recorded in 2023, representing an increase of 2.3% over the previous year. In addition, femicides doubled from 6 to 12 cases. This increase in violence reflects a worrying trend that continues in 2024. On the other hand, property crimes have seen a significant increase, with a 15% increase in reported robberies in 2023, reaching a total of 64,938 complaints ([I-Ciudad, 2024](#)). Carjackings, in particular, increased by 20%, indicating an escalation in property-related crime. This criminal context is influenced by the country's economic situation, where recession and rising unemployment have contributed to increased social despair. This could be fueling the increase in violent and property crime, as the lack of resources to implement effective crime prevention strategies has become a critical factor aggravating the situation ([TyC, 2024](#)).

Against this backdrop, the local government has begun to implement new strategies to address these problems. Road safety awareness campaigns have been launched and technological tools such as heat maps are being used to identify critical areas where crime is concentrated. However, these measures are still insufficient in the face of the magnitude of the problem. In addition to ordinary crime, Buenos Aires faces challenges related to drug trafficking and related violence. The city has become a strategic point for drug trafficking from neighboring countries, which has intensified fights between criminal gangs. This not only affects public safety, but also increases the perception of insecurity among citizens ([Infobae, 2024](#)).

In this document, the Unidad de Análisis Político y Seguridad Corporativa (UAPSC) of 3+SC will carry out the Security Overview- Buenos Aires, Argentina, analyzing the dynamics that impact security, risk generating factors and crime behavior based on statistics, with the main objective of providing information on the security situation of the city in order to establish prospective scenarios and recommendations that are useful for risk management, treatment and control.

2. Crime Analysis

In order to visualize the percentage changes and dynamics by crime in the city of Buenos Aires, a crime analysis will be carried out below, showing the figures and trends of variation of seven high-impact crimes for the period between 2022 and 2023. Subsequently, each phenomenon will be analyzed in depth, as well as the risk scenarios present in the city, associating recent events of insecurity and the areas in which they materialized.

CRIME STATISTICS IN BUENOS AIRES	2022	2023	Variation % 2022 vs 2023
HOMICIDES	89	91	2%
THEFT FROM PERSONS	111576	128419	15%
CRIMES AGAINST PROPERTY	28760	25570	-11%
CRIMES AGAINST FREEDOM	1801	1331	-26%
THREATS	9899	8365	-15%
TOTAL	152125	163776	8%

Resource: Own elaboration with information from the Ministerio de Seguridad.

Note. Figures subject to change based on updating processes of the source.

According to data from the Ministerio de Seguridad of Argentina, the crimes taken into account increased by 8%, from 152,125 to 163,776 registered cases when comparing the years 2022 and 2023. Theft from persons is the crime that increased the most at both times, with 111,576 reports in 2022 and 128,419 in 2023, representing a 15% increase, thus being the crime with the highest percentage increase. On the other hand, homicides saw a 2% increase from 89 cases in 2022 to 92 in 2023. Although crimes against property showed a decrease of 11%, they continue to be the second highest impact crime, with 28,760 cases in 2022 and 25,570 in 2023.

2.1 Theft from persons

Theft from persons in the city of Buenos Aires is a crime that occurs quite regularly, as it is the crime with the highest number of cases in both years studied. In 2022 there were 111,576 and in 2023 there were 128,419 cases. It should be noted that this category of crime includes robberies, aggravated robberies and thefts, so it is a multidimensional problem that affects citizens in different ways. One of the areas most affected by this is the intersection between Pueyrredón and Corrientes in the downtown area of the Argentine capital. In this intersection 426 incidents were recorded between January and September 2024. Other hot spots in the city include the Obelisco, Constitución, Retiro and Plaza de Mayo, as

all of these places tend to have a high flow of people due to the abundant commerce, thus giving criminals the opportunity to carry out their actions ([MinutoUno](#), 2024). In recent times, authorities have noticed that violence in robberies has increased, and also that most of these acts are carried out with table-style knives, since they are easier to transport and to retain by police officers ([Perfil](#), 2024).

2.2 Theft in different modalities

For the Argentine justice system, the category of other crimes against property refers mainly to thefts in different modalities or with varied objectives, such as thefts of vehicles, motorcycles, residences and commerce; however, in the years prior to 2023 they were not disaggregated and were maintained as a block. For this reason, in this assessment, the statistics of the complete category will be used for the analysis of the different types of theft. In the comparison of the two years, there was an 11% reduction in this type of crime, from 28,760 in 2022 to 25,570 in 2023. Due to the increase in online commerce since the pandemic, the so-called “highway robbers” have found it more lucrative to target vehicles dedicated to the delivery of products purchased over the Internet. This is because they are more vulnerable to criminal gangs, and because in the so-called express robbery modality it is relatively easy to take the goods and leave the place quickly. The Buenos Aires neighborhoods of Palermo and Recoleta have been the main scenarios for this type of actions ([Perfil](#), 2024).

2.3 Land Piracy

According to a report by the Mesa Interempresarial de Piratería de Camiones (MIPC) in the period between 2023 and 2024, 4,476 incidents of land piracy have been registered in Ciudad Autónoma de Buenos Aires (CABA), doubling the previous period and reaching the record in the last 16 years. According to this report, vehicles engaged in minor cargo have been significantly affected in recent times, due to the boom in online commerce. It was also revealed that 60% of land piracy incidents in Argentina occurred in the province of Buenos Aires, while around 20% occur in CABA. The southern neighborhoods of the city of Buenos Aires such as Villa Soldati, Nueva Pompeya and Parque Patricios are the most affected by this criminal dynamic due to their high influx of cargo transporters. In addition, the sector most affected by this crime is that of foodstuffs, with 38% of all cargo thefts ([Perfil](#), 2024).

2.4 Homicides

Homicides in the city of Buenos Aires increased by 2% between 2022 and 2023, from 89 to 91 cases. Historically, the Argentine capital has been characterized as one of the safest metropolises on the continent; however, in recent years there has been a greater presence of criminal gangs dedicated to drug trafficking, which has exacerbated the problem in vulnerable areas of the city and its periphery. The southern area of the city is the most affected by the scourge of homicides with 42 cases in 2023 in communes 1 and 4, which contain the neighborhoods of Retiro, San Nicolás, Constitución, La Boca and Barracas. In addition to this, three urbanizations have been identified in the limits of CABA where most of the homicides found by the

authorities are clustered; these are villas 31, 1-11-14, 21-24 and 20. Criminal gangs dedicated to drug trafficking take advantage of this type of sectors since vulnerable populations typically live in them, and taking advantage of this condition they commit criminal acts ([Minuto Uno](#), 2024).

2.5 Extortion, threats and kidnapping

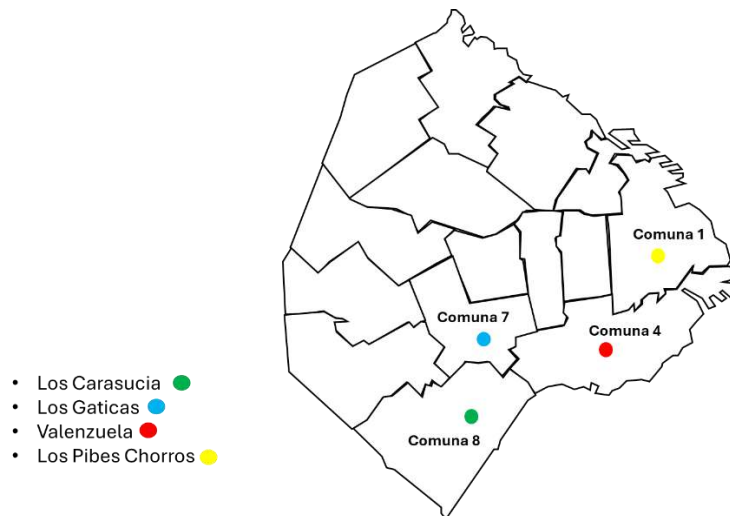
Extortion in the city of Buenos Aires and its metropolitan area has been used by both small criminal groups and large gangs dedicated to drug trafficking to intimidate their victims in order to have a constant flow of money. In May 2024, the Argentine Federal Police (PFA) arrested in the town of José León Suárez four individuals belonging to a gang dedicated to extortion through social networks, in which under the alias of “Soledad” they tricked men into sending intimate photos and then demanded large sums of money. During the raid of the house where the extortion actions were carried out, the authorities found cell phones and large amounts of money that confirmed the accusations made against them ([Infobae](#), 2024). On the other hand, the PFA managed to capture three Chinese citizens belonging to the Chinese mafia who were in charge of extorting Chinese merchants through intimidation and the use of force in Lanús, La Matanza and Marcos Paz ([Ministerio de Seguridad](#), 2024).

Similarly, express kidnappings have been seen on a regular basis in the city, as it is a quick way for criminals to get money. Gangs specializing in this practice study their victims to know when to hold them, and who has the right profile to be able to make them pay for their ransom. On August 24, a clothing merchant was followed by a gang of kidnappers, and just before reaching the private neighborhood where he lives, he was approached and held in the suspects' vehicle. The merchant remained kidnapped until the family paid a total of US\$10,000, 1,200,000 pesos plus jewelry ([La Nación](#), 2024).

3 Risk Generating Factors

3.1 Micro-trafficking and criminal groups

Distribution of the main criminal gangs in Buenos Aires



Resource: Ministerio de Justicia y Seguridad de la Ciudad Autónoma de Buenos Aires, 2024.

In 2024, the gang phenomenon in Buenos Aires is manifesting itself through an alarming increase in violence and criminal activity, especially in the context of drug trafficking. Gangs such as Los Peruanos de la Villa 1-11-14 and Los Mini Gardelitos have intensified their operations, engaging in complex crimes ranging from micro-trafficking to violent robberies in the periphery of CABA, while within the city some gangs engaged in these crimes are Los Carasucia, Los Gaticas or Los Pibes Chorros ([El País](#), 2024). This increase in violence is evident in the homicide statistics in El Área Metropolitana de Buenos Aires (AMBA) which contains CABA as well as other neighboring municipalities, increasing by 14.8% compared to the previous year, reaching a total of 822 murders in 2023. Most of these crimes are perpetrated with firearms, indicating an increasing dangerousness among criminals and greater impunity in their actions. Moreover, violence is not limited to confrontations between gangs; it also affects the civilian population, who live in constant fear of being victims of robberies or assaults ([Infobae](#), 2024).

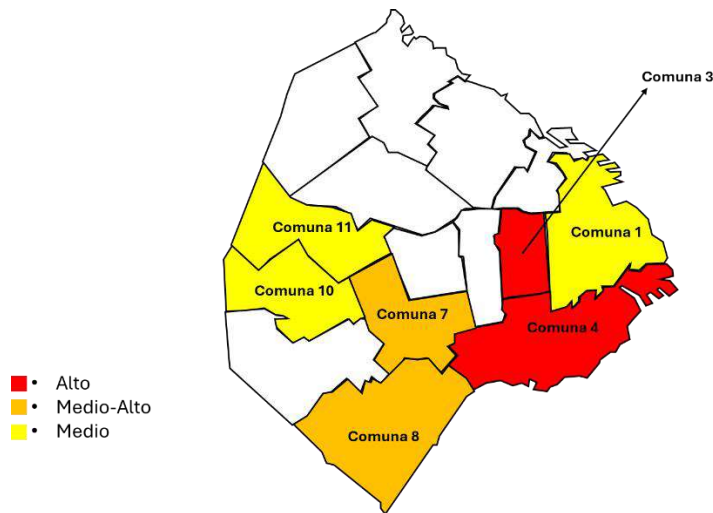
The authorities have implemented various strategies to combat this phenomenon, such as Plan Bandera, which seeks to dismantle criminal networks and reduce violence in the most affected neighborhoods. However, the infiltration of drug trafficking into government and police institutions complicates these efforts. Criminal gangs have developed sophisticated organizational structures that allow them to operate with relative freedom and adapt quickly to the actions of the security forces. Despite attempts to restore order, the struggle between gangs for control of drug trafficking continues to generate a climate of fear and insecurity among citizens. This conflict is not only limited to the peripheries; its violence has begun to spill over into the city center, posing a significant challenge for public security and requiring a comprehensive response that addresses both the symptoms and underlying causes of the problem. The situation calls for a multidimensional approach that includes social prevention, institutional strengthening and collaboration between different levels of government to achieve a lasting impact in reducing organized crime ([Página 12](#), 2024).

3.2 Social Unrest

The social protest in Argentina has historically been a useful tool for different sectors of society to express their dissatisfaction with situations or decisions they consider unfavorable. For this reason, since the return to democracy in 1983, Argentina has been regarded as a leading country in terms of freedom of expression and protest. At various times when the Argentine economy has not been favorable for the population, people have organized to raise their voices against this situation, sometimes resulting in violence, as in the case of the so-called "Corralito." With the arrival of President Javier Milei and his controversial economic measures, sectors such as students, teachers, political opposition, and unions have mobilized to counteract these measures, which they believe do not improve the economic situation. For example, in October, different associations of students and teachers organized a march to Congress in support of the University Financing Law, as it was expected that the executive, led by President Milei, would veto it for not aligning with his policy of public spending cuts ([France 24](#), 2024). Similarly, in August, retirees marched to Congress to support the approval of a law that increases pensions for this population ([El País](#), 2024). In both cases, the police intervened using tear gas and stun grenades to disperse the protesters.

4. Risk Level

The risk level analysis aims to identify areas where, according to institutional statistics, there is a higher likelihood of scenarios of violence and the occurrence of high-impact crimes. In the case of the Security Overview-Buenos Aires, the characterization will be carried out based on security and crime statistics from the Criminal Statistics Report by the Ministerio de Justicia y Seguridad. The analysis will then highlight the most problematic areas of the city using two indicators: homicide cases and the presence of organized criminal groups.



Resource: Ministerio de Justicia y Seguridad de la República Argentina.

Medium Risk Level: Comuna 1, Comuna 10 and Comuna 11

Comuna 1, which includes Retiro and San Nicolás, has a low homicide rate (0.67 per 100,000 inhabitants) due to police surveillance and urban infrastructure. The same applies to **Comuna 10**, which encompasses Villa Real and Monte Castro, with a rate of 0.59. Both areas, along with **Comuna 11** (0.53), show better socioeconomic conditions and less gang influence, classifying them as safer zones.

Medium-High Risk Level: Comuna 7 and Comuna 8

Comuna 7, which includes Flores and Parque Chacabuco, has a homicide rate of 6.61 per 100,000 inhabitants, reflecting an increase in violence due to the presence of gangs. **Comuna 8**, which encompasses Villa Soldati and Villa Lugano, also faces a rise in violence related to drug trafficking and clashes between gangs. Although their rates are lower, the social and criminal factors make them equally concerning.

High Risk Level: Comuna 3 and Comuna 4

Comuna 4, which includes neighborhoods such as La Boca and Barracas, has a homicide rate of 9.98 per 100,000 inhabitants, reflecting a violent environment dominated by gangs. **Comuna 3**, which covers Balvanera and San Cristóbal, has a rate of 6.72, also indicating a high risk due to criminal activity and the influence of organized crime groups. Armed violence and gang conflicts exacerbate the situation in both areas.

5. Foresight Design

In 2023, Argentina recorded approximately 4,195 homicides, representing a 4.9% increase compared to the previous year. However, there was a 10.6% decrease in intentional homicides during the first half of 2024. Despite this positive trend, violence remains a critical issue, especially in areas like Rosario, where the homicide rate is alarmingly high due to intense rivalries among criminal gangs fighting for control of the drug trade. In Rosario, over 50% of homicides are related to clashes between criminal groups, reflecting escalating violence that has begun to spread to other urban areas.

Criminal groups in Buenos Aires are diverse and operate on multiple levels. Local gangs are often involved in drug trafficking and street-level drug sales, fighting for territorial control in specific neighborhoods. These gangs consist of members with criminal records and frequently resort to violence to resolve internal and external conflicts. A notable example is the gang known as Los Monos, responsible for numerous violent crimes and revenge killings in Rosario. Additionally, the growing influence of Brazilian gangs has been observed, as they not only engage in drug trafficking but also introduce a more aggressive and organized model of violence. These organizations have started to establish themselves in Buenos Aires, further complicating the criminal landscape.

In the short term, government policies such as the Plan Bandera are expected to continue having a positive impact on reducing homicides. However, the persistent activity of gangs and their ability to adapt to police strategies could limit these positive outcomes. The recent circulation of a threatening video by narco gang members targeting government authorities indicates that these organizations are willing to openly challenge the state. In the medium term, while stabilization or further reductions in homicide rates may be achieved through current interventions, other crimes could continue to rise if underlying causes such as poverty and lack of opportunities are not adequately addressed. The infiltration of drug trafficking into state institutions also poses a significant challenge to governance and public security.

In conclusion, although there are encouraging signs of reduced homicides due to specific interventions, structural challenges related to criminal groups and their increasing violence remain a central concern for security in Buenos Aires. The key to improving this situation lies in a comprehensive strategy addressing both the symptoms and root causes of organized crime.

6. Recommendations

- Always maintain a high level of situational awareness to identify risks or threats stemming from external factors in the areas you frequent.
- Based on the Risk Level description provided in this document, identify the Communes with a high-risk level to plan security and self-care measures accordingly.
- If traveling by private vehicle, analyze your route and plan alternative routes to address potential issues on the way.
- Try to travel during daylight hours.
- For expatriates or foreign nationals traveling within Buenos Aires, evaluate the possibility of implementing systems to remotely monitor movements from a Command Center.
- When in crowded spaces such as restaurants, shopping malls, or bars, always stay vigilant about your personal belongings and avoid engaging in conversations with strangers who suddenly ask for favors or try to approach you.
- Avoid storing detailed or sensitive information about your family or your employer on your mobile phone.
- Be cautious about the information you share on social media, keeping in mind that less privacy increases exposure to risks such as extortion or kidnapping.
- If you are the victim of a phone extortion attempt, do not hang up, try to take notes, do not provide your name or ID number, and, if possible, record the call.
- In the event of threats in any form, immediately contact the authorities and do not comply with the criminals' demands.
- If possible, undergo training in defensive and evasive driving to enhance your ability to protect yourself or your family in the event of an assault in public spaces.
- If you find yourself in a situation of high vulnerability and at risk of robbery or express kidnapping, do not resist.

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