

**OCTOBER**  
**2020**

BELIZE CRIME OBSERVATORY



**CRIME ANALYSIS**  
**REPORT**

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## SUMMARY

### MAJOR CRIMES DECLINED

**29%**

during January to  
October 2020

### MURDER COUNT DECLINED

**25%**

### MURDERS INCREASED IN STANN CREEK AND COROZAL

### SHOOTINGS INCREASED IN 4 of 6 DISTRICTS

- During the month of **October 2020**, police-reported major crimes declined **46%** when compared to October 2019, from 115 to 62.
- The overall decline for the period January to October 2020 was **29%** when compared to the same period in 2019. The total police reported major crimes incidents fell from 1,066 to 754 (a difference of 312 major crimes.)
- The greatest absolute decline was recorded for burglaries, down from 585 to 403 (a decline of 182 incidents or 31%).
- There were overall declines recorded for all major crimes categories, both for the month of October and for the period spanning January to October 2020.
- However, some districts recorded increases in certain major crimes categories. Most notable was the increase in property crimes in Toledo. For the period January to October 2019, Toledo reported 23 property crimes, whereas 33 were reported for the same period in 2020. This increase amounted to roughly 43%.
- Major crimes against life and personal integrity, particularly murder and rape, increased in Stann Creek. Whereas nationally a 25% decrease in murders was reported, the number of persons murdered in Stann Creek increased from 10 to 12, while reported cases of rape more than tripled, as cases surged from 3 to 10.
- Cases of unlawful sexual intercourse edged upward during the 10-month period in Cayo and Orange Walk, although they declined nationally.
- Whereas the number of shootings decreased in both the Belize and Cayo Districts, they increased in the remaining 4 districts. The number of reported shootings almost doubled in Corozal, from 8 to 15, and the murder count also doubled in that district, from 3 to 6.

*Whereas major crimes had declined overall for the period January to October 2020, there were some locations where increases were recorded in specific categories of major crimes.*

*Toledo is the most notable case. It was the only district to have recorded an overall increase in major crimes, particularly due to an escalation in police-reported property crimes. The total number of major crimes increased from 34 for January to October 2019 to 41 for January to October 2020 (or 21%).*

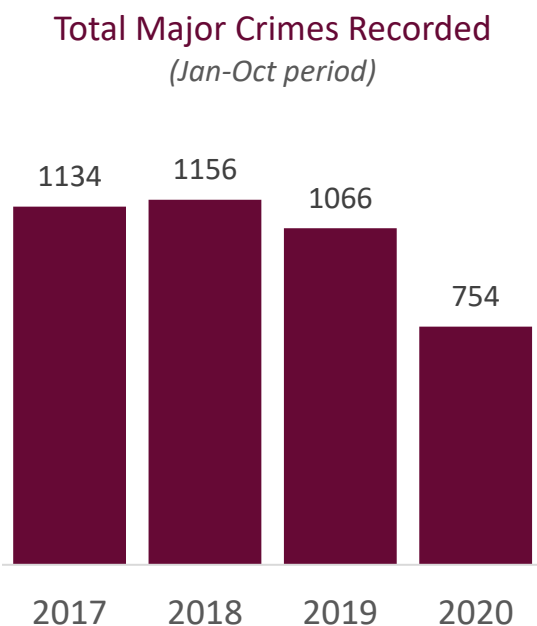
# Crime Analysis Report

PERIOD: 1<sup>st</sup> – 31<sup>st</sup> October 2020

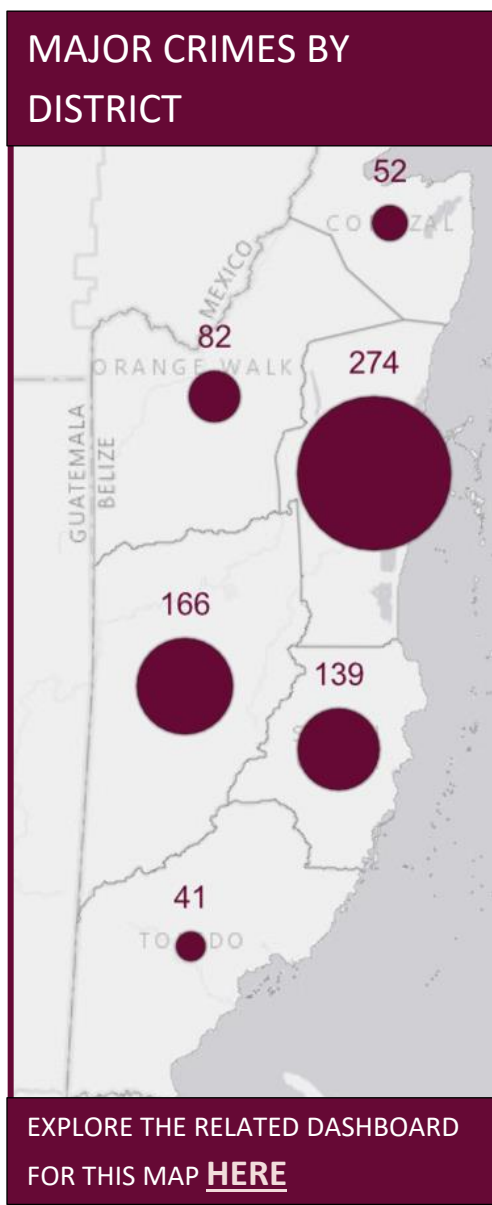


## MAJOR CRIMES

In October 2019, major crimes were down about 8% compared with the same 10-month period in 2018. Major crimes declined for the second consecutive year, by a further 29% for January to October 2020.



The marked decline coincides with the COVID-19 pandemic, which has necessitated increased policing efforts on the ground. Whereas there was an overall decline across 5 of 6 districts, the dynamics varied, particularly for property crimes (robberies, burglaries, and thefts). Of note is that Toledo was the only district to have recorded an overall increase.



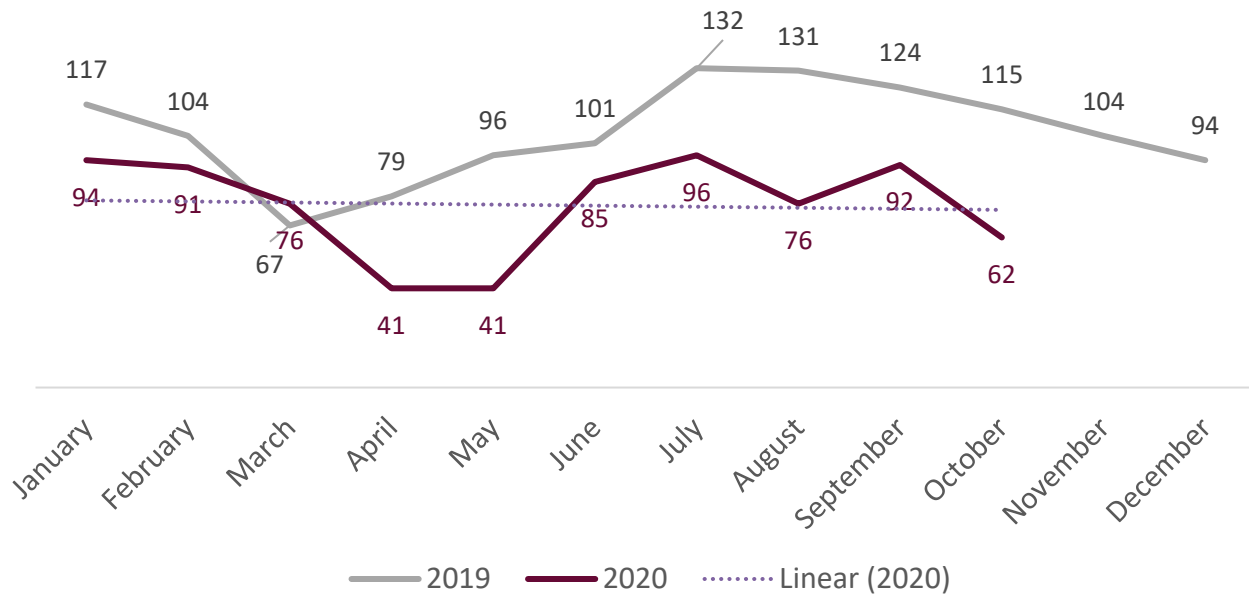
(Data source: Belize Police Department, Joint Intelligence Coordinating Center)

# Crime Analysis Report

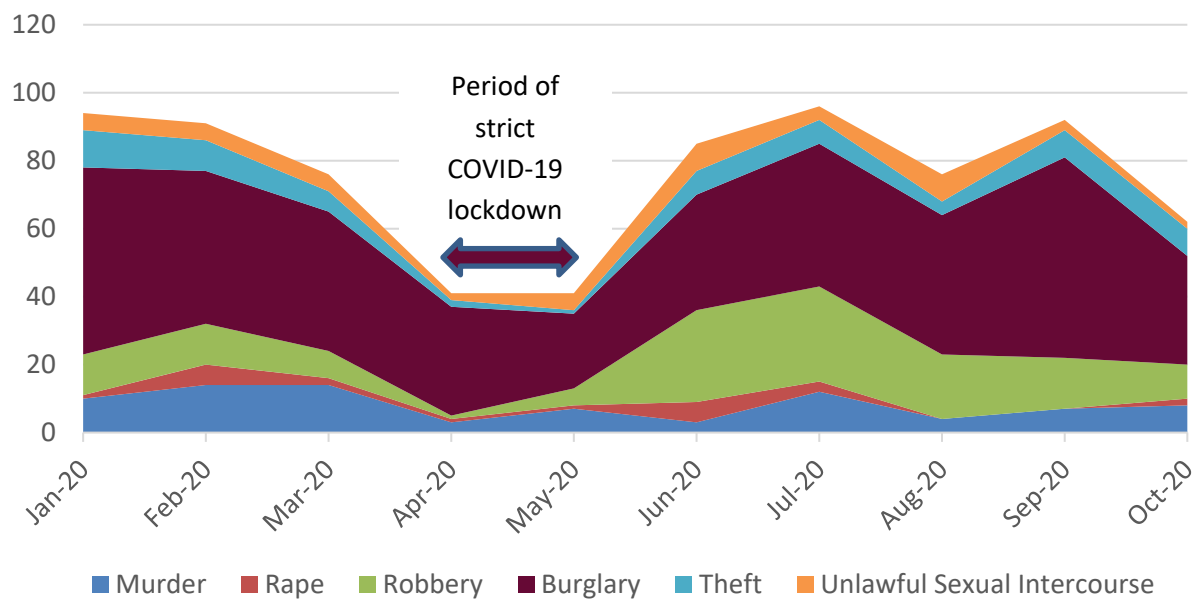
PERIOD: 1<sup>st</sup> – 31<sup>st</sup> October 2020



## TOTAL POLICE-REPORTED MAJOR CRIMES (Year-on-year comparative, 2019 vs 2020)



## TREND IN CRIME COUNTS BY MAJOR CRIMES CATEGORY (Jan-Oct 2020)



(Data source: Belize Police Department, Joint Intelligence Coordinating Center)

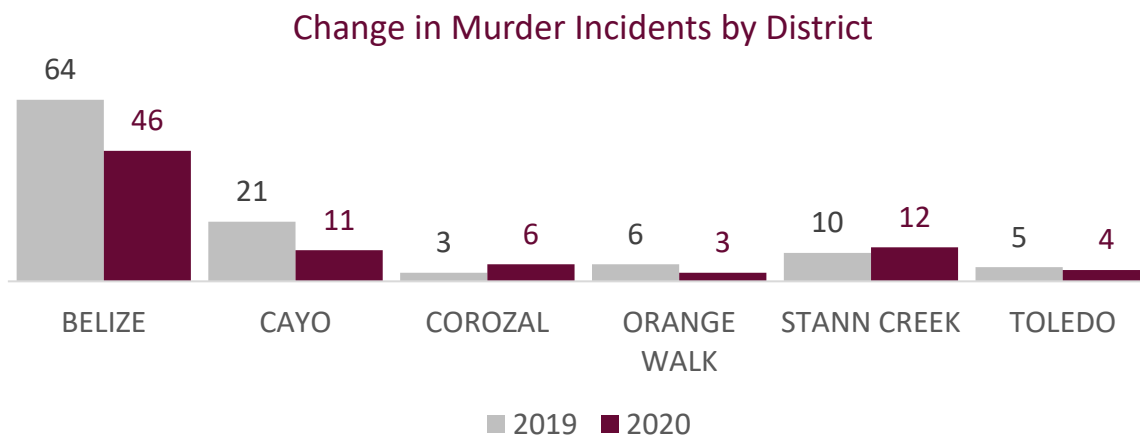
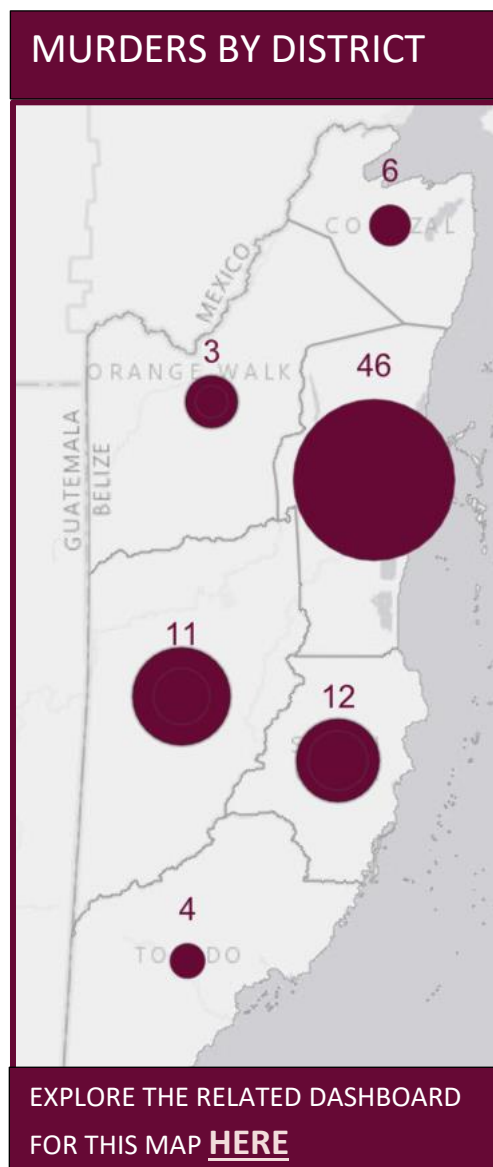
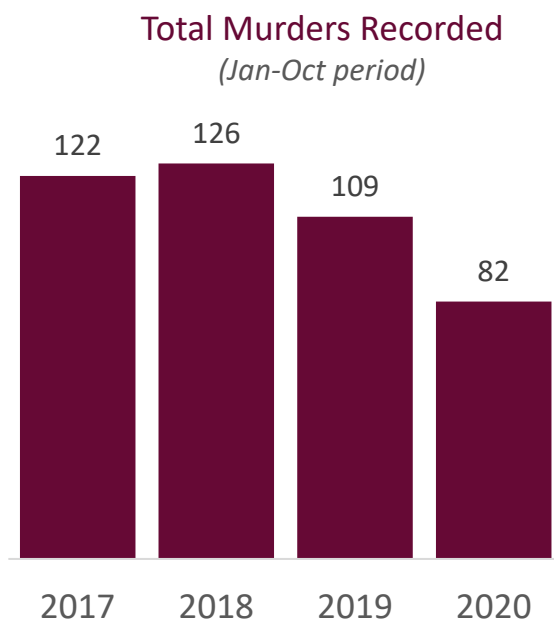
# Crime Analysis Report

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## MURDERS

The Belize District continued to account for most murders, 46 of 82 (or 56%). After a reprieve in the Belize City area, there was a resurgence of murders in recent months. Of the 8 murders recorded in Belize during October 2020, 6 occurred in the Belize District and 5 in Belize City. The remaining 2 were recorded in Stann Creek. Overall, the murder count was down 25% (or 27 incidents) relative to the same period in 2019, from 109 to 82.



(Data source: Belize Police Department, Joint Intelligence Coordinating Center)

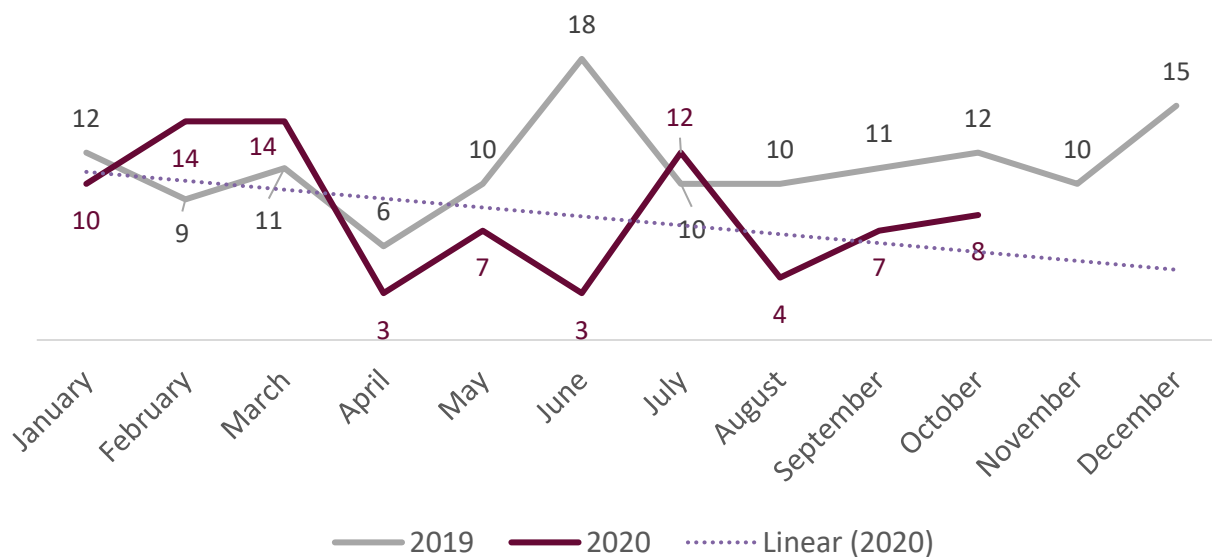
# Crime Analysis Report

PERIOD: 1<sup>st</sup> – 31<sup>st</sup> October 2020



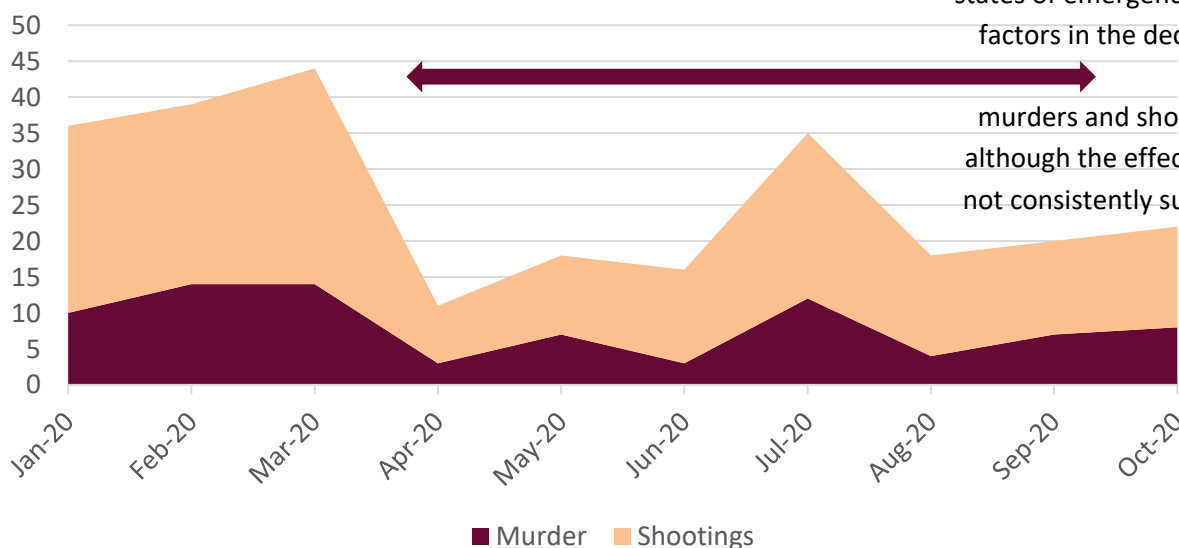
## MURDERS RECORDED BY MONTH

(2019 vs 2020)



## TREND IN INCIDENT COUNTS BY CATEGORY

(Jan-Oct 2020)



Period of strict COVID-19 lockdown and gang-related states of emergencies were factors in the decline in murders and shootings, although the effects were not consistently sustained

(Data source: Belize Police Department, Joint Intelligence Coordinating Center)

# Crime Analysis Report

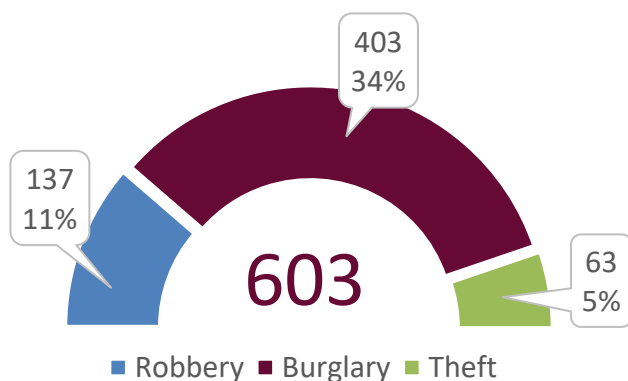
PERIOD: 1<sup>st</sup> – 31<sup>st</sup> October 2020



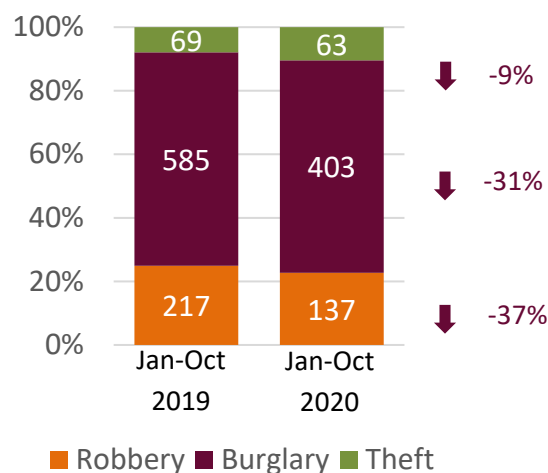
## PROPERTY CRIMES

Robberies, burglaries, and thefts continued to account for approximately 8 in every 10 incidents of major crimes cases recorded by Police. Whereas reports of all crimes within these categories declined, the largest decline was recorded for robberies, which tend to occur in public spaces, while the smallest increase was recorded for thefts, which generally tend to occur in private spaces.

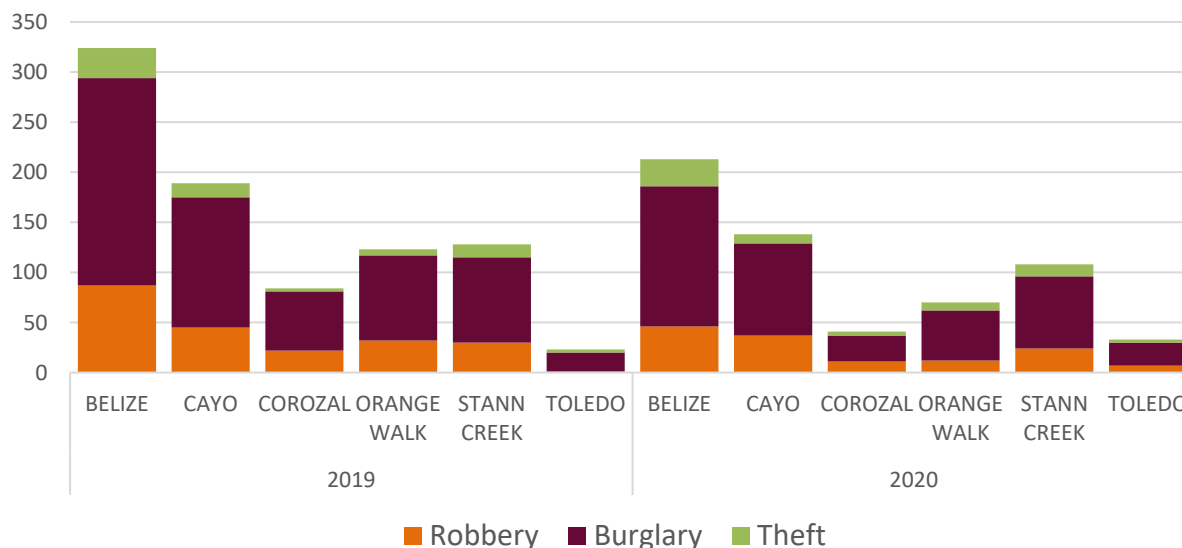
Proportion of Robberies, Burglaries and Thefts



Proportion of Robbery, Burglary and Theft Incidents



Incidents of Robbery, Burglary and Theft by District (Jan-Oct 2019 vs Jan-Oct 2020)



(Data source: Belize Police Department, Joint Intelligence Coordinating Center)



# Crime Analysis Report

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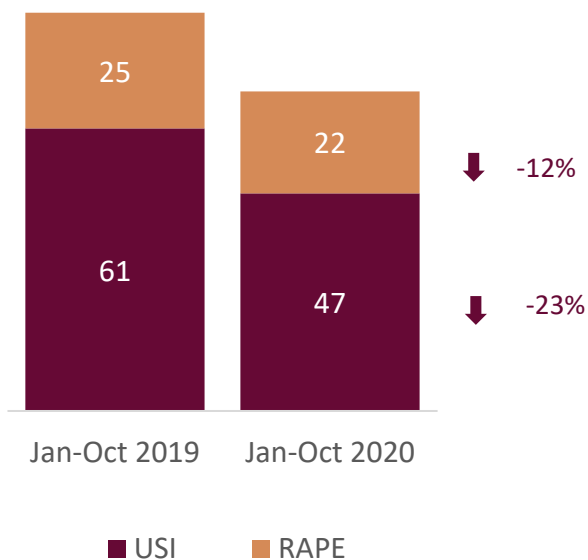


## SEXUAL VIOLENCE

Overall, the total number of police-reported sexual violence cases fell by 20%, from 86 to 69. The decline in rape incidents was less than the decline in unlawful sexual intercourse cases. Rape incident reports were down by 3, from 25 to 22, whereas cases of unlawful sexual intercourse were down by 14, from 61 to 47.

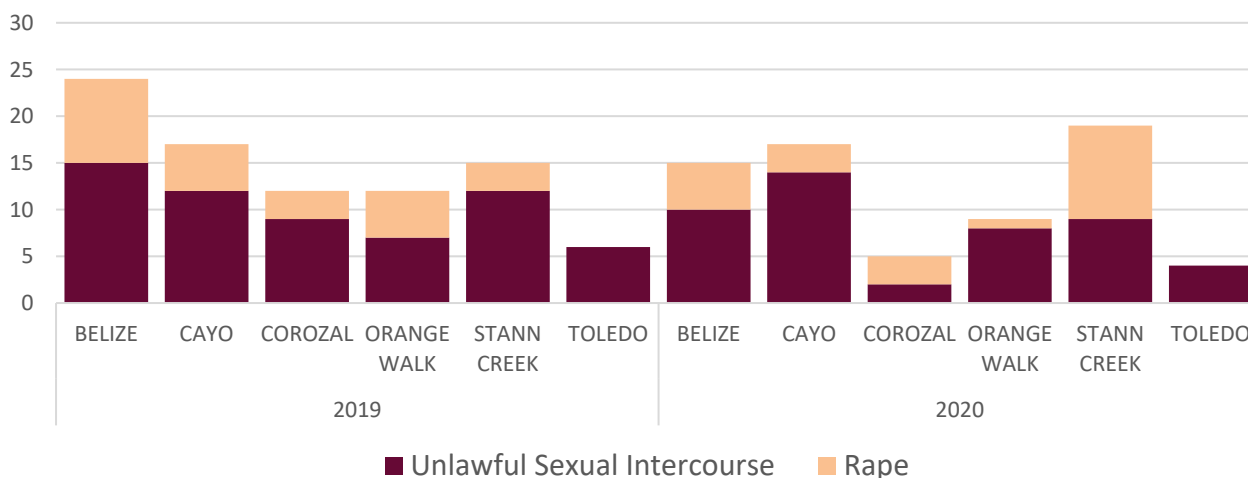
The chart below shows the relative number of rape and unlawful sexual intercourse cases by district, for January to October 2019 as compared to January to October 2020. Note that the Cayo District recorded more cases overall than the Belize District, although its population is smaller than the Belize District. Also, there was a notable increase in the number of rape cases recorded in Stann Creek. Whereas 3 cases were recorded in that district during January to October 2019, there were 10 cases recorded during January to October 2020. This is a significant anomaly for two reasons: (i) the general downward trend of crime over the period, and (ii) the fact that rape incidents are generally a small proportion of reported major crimes, and incidents do not normally exceed cases of unlawful sexual intercourse. In this case, they did.

Total Sexual Violence Reports



## SEXUAL VIOLENCE CASES BY DISTRICT

(Jan-Oct 2019 vs Jan-Oct 2020)



# Crime Analysis Report

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## CONCLUSIONS

- Major Crimes continue to decline for a second consecutive year, with the greatest decline recorded for robberies and burglaries.
- Although there was a 29% decline in major crimes cases nationally, Toledo recorded an increase amounting to 21%.
- The Belize District continued to account for most murders, which is disproportionately high for its population size.
- Although a 25% decline in murders was recorded nationally, Corozal and Stann Creek both recorded increases for the 10-month period.
- Shooting incidents decreased notably in the Belize and Cayo Districts but increased in the remaining 4 districts.
- Property crimes accounted for 8 in 10 major crimes cases. Toledo recorded a 43% increase in major crimes during the period.

For more information, visit our Open Data Hub. Click [HERE](#) for easy access.

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## 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.

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

**Belize Crime Observatory**  
Ministry of National Security (Home Affairs)



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[bco@nsc.gov.bz](mailto: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 May 2020. Any future revisions will be noted in subsequent reports.*