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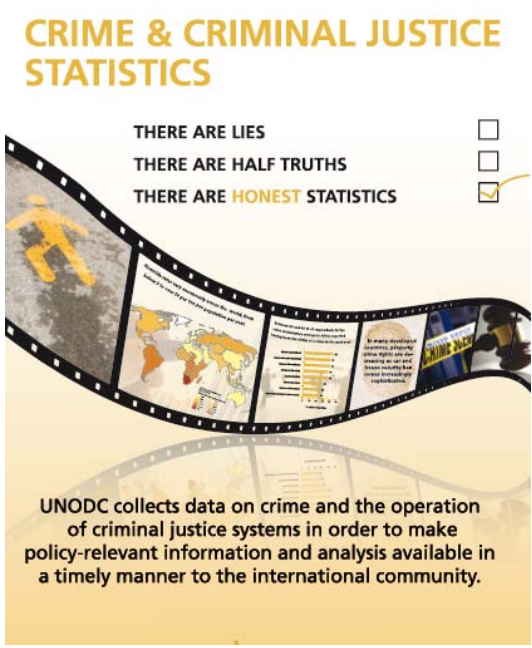
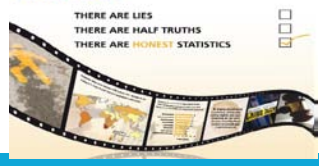


The impact of statistics on decision making related to law enforcement and crime prevention

Angela Me
Chief Statistics and Surveys Section
UNODC



Why do we need statistics for policy making?

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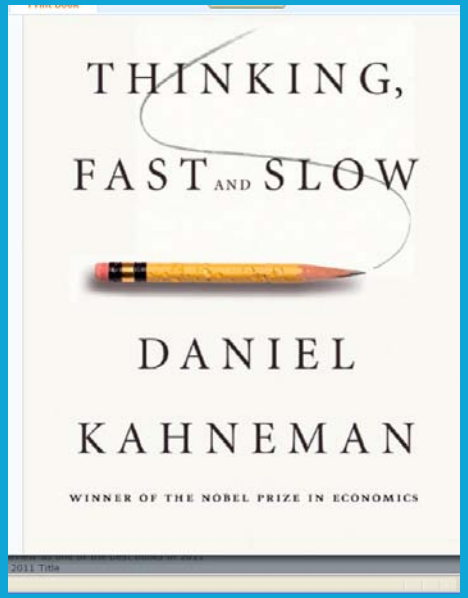
Why do we need statistics?



- As human beings we are not intuitive statisticians
  - "we are prone to exaggerate the consistency and coherence of what we see"
  - Intuitive thinking: jumping to conclusions on the basis of limited evidence

- Without considering statistical infor
  we make biased conclusions

We are blind on our blindness !

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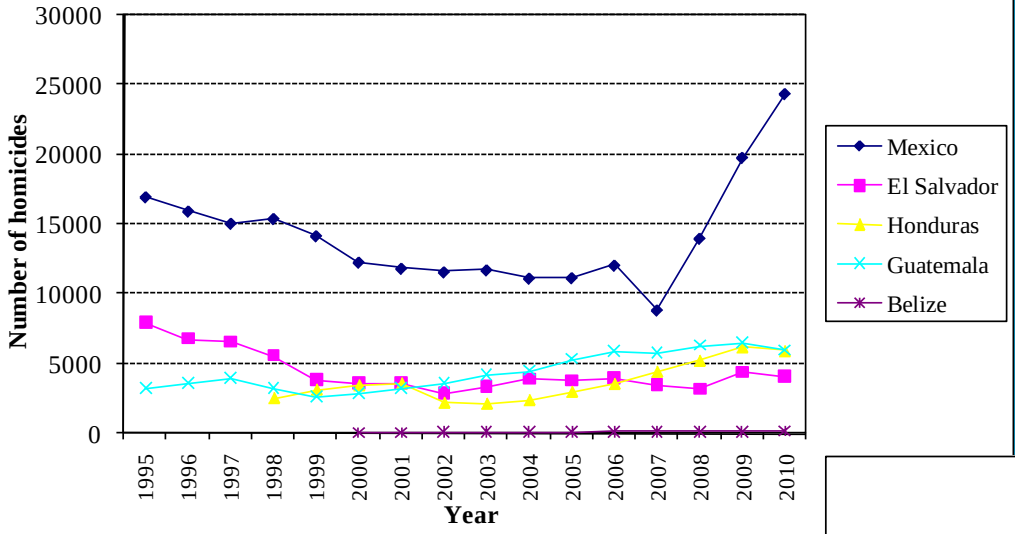
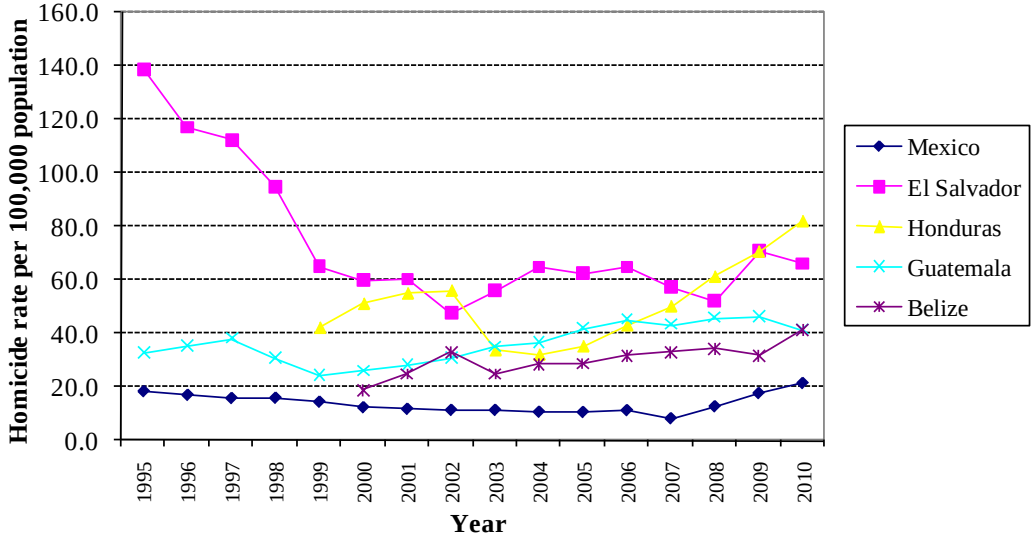
Homicide count 1995-2010



Homicide rate 1995-2010



Source: UNODC Homicide statistics

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What does crime statistics offer to policy makers?

To fight crime

- Identify trends
- Understand linkages
- Measure the magnitude
- To avoid biased analysis

To prevent crime

- Who are the victim and the perpetrators
- What mechanisms are used in crime
- Where is crime
- How crime evolves (the causes)

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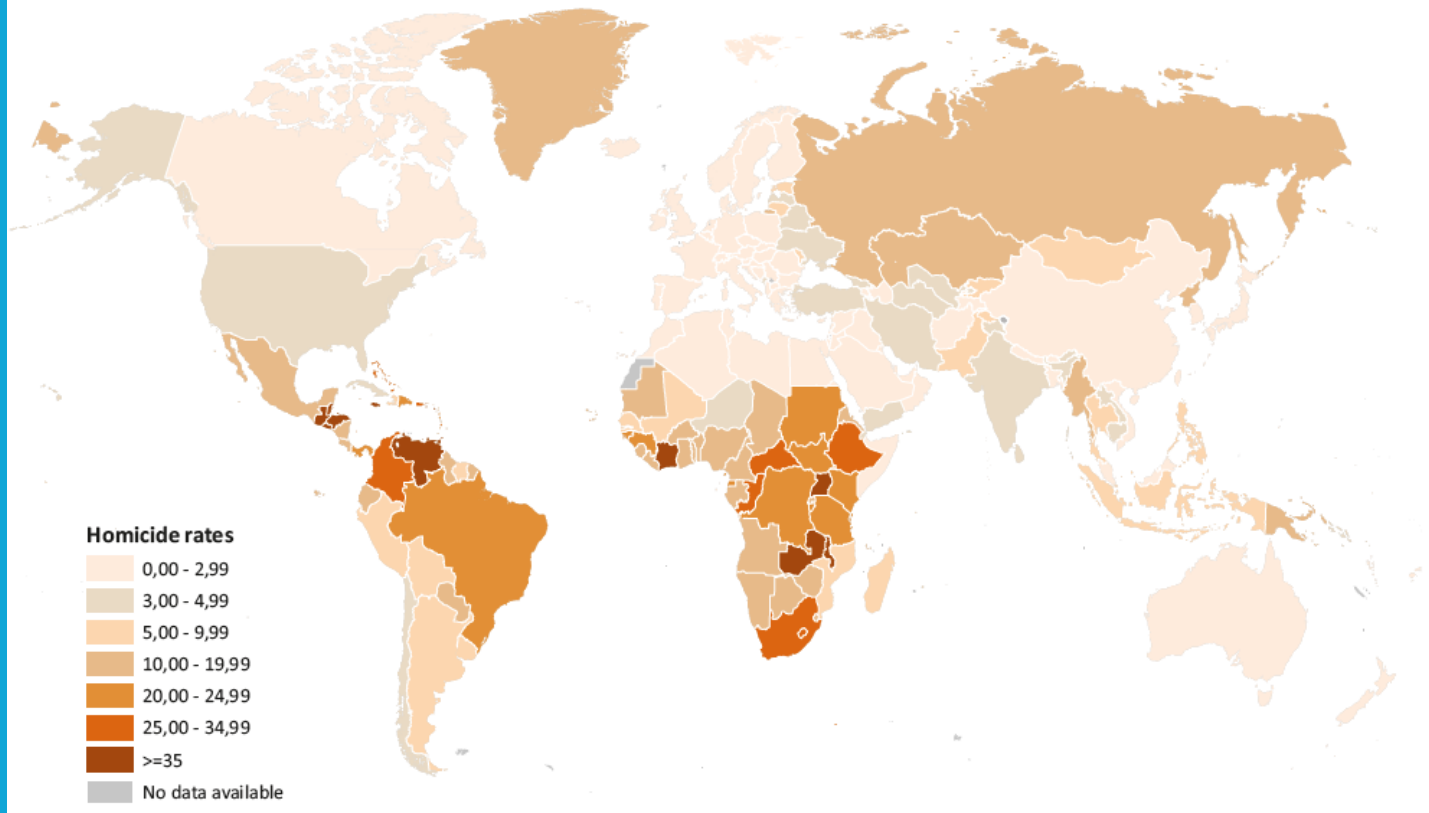
Measuring the magnitude: Homicide rate by country (2010)

Map 1.1: Homicide rates by country (2010 or latest available year)



Note: The boundaries and names shown and the designations used on this map do not imply official endorsement or acceptance by the United Nations.

Source: UNODC Homicide Statistics (2011).

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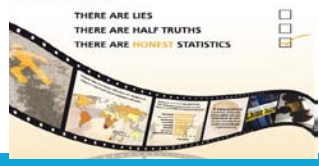
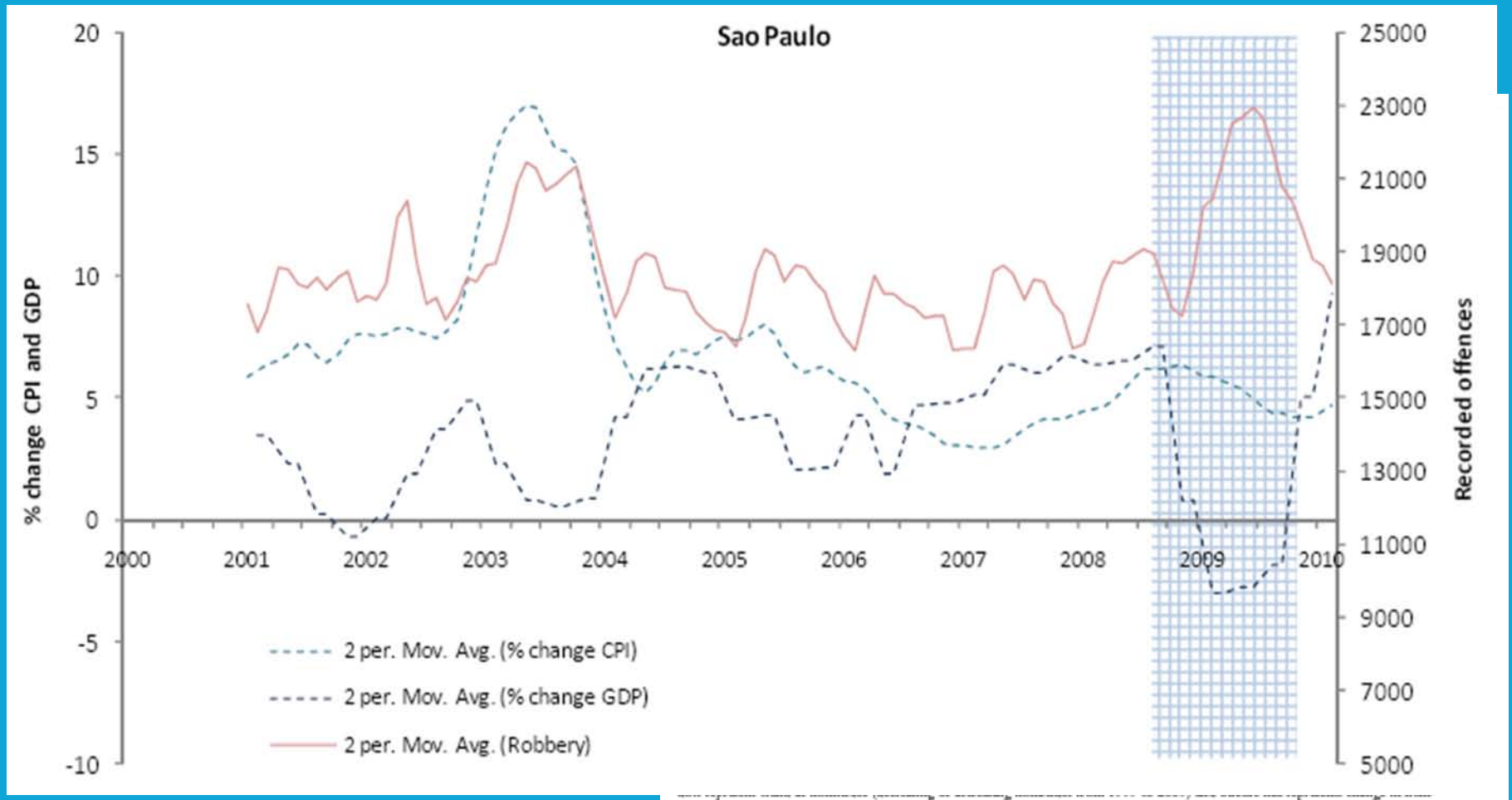


Understanding the linkages



icide rate (from 1995 to 2009).

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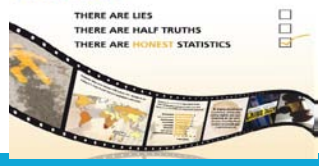
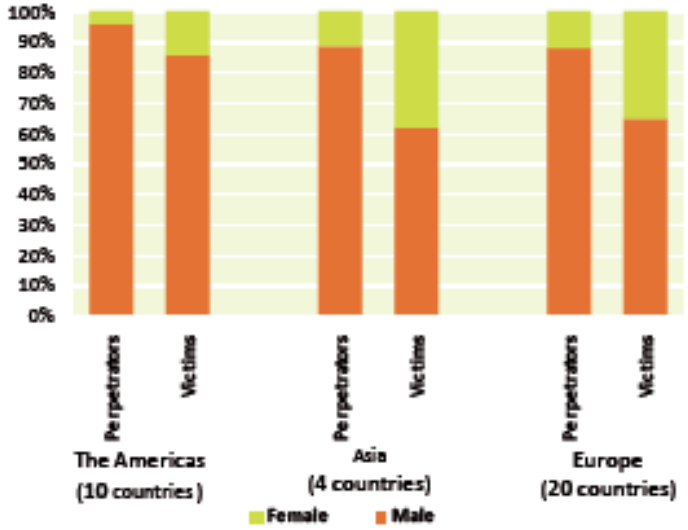


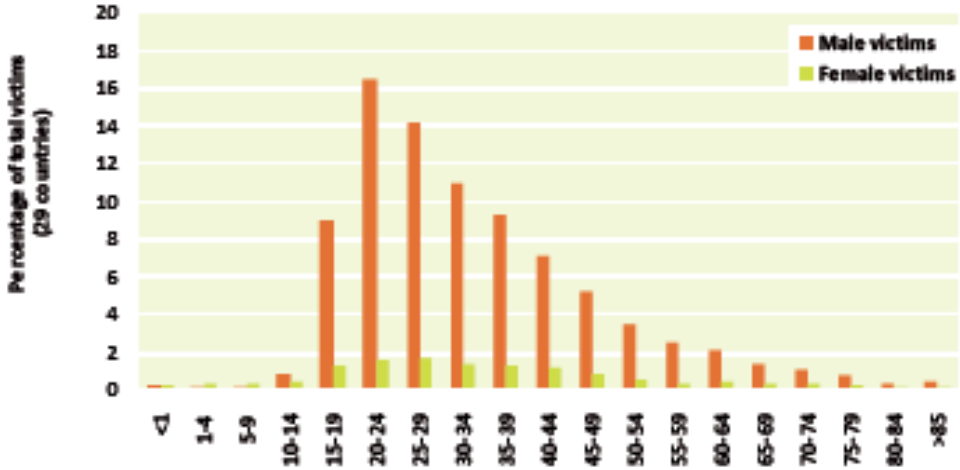
Understanding the who

Fig. 5.13: Distribution of victims and perpetrators of homicide, by sex and region (2009 or latest year available)



Source: UNODC elaboration of UN-CTS.

Fig. 5.6: Distribution of homicide victims by age and sex, Americas (2000-2008)



Source: Global Burden of Injuries, *Injury Mortality Data Collection* (2011).

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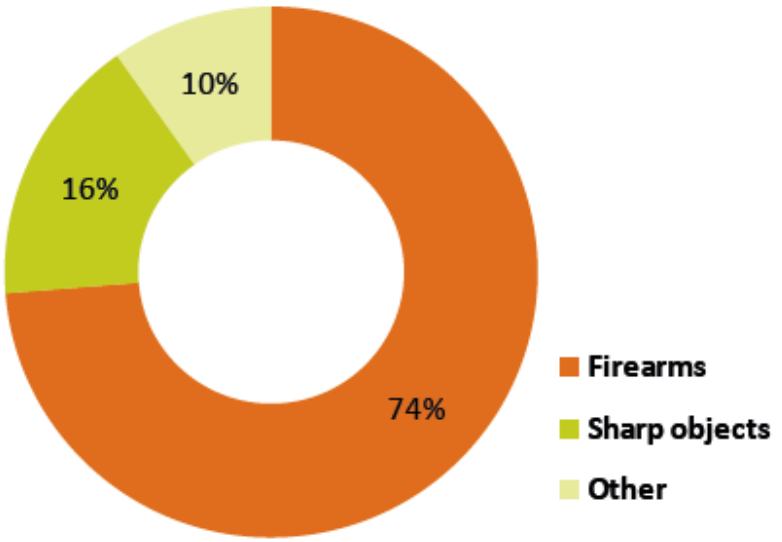
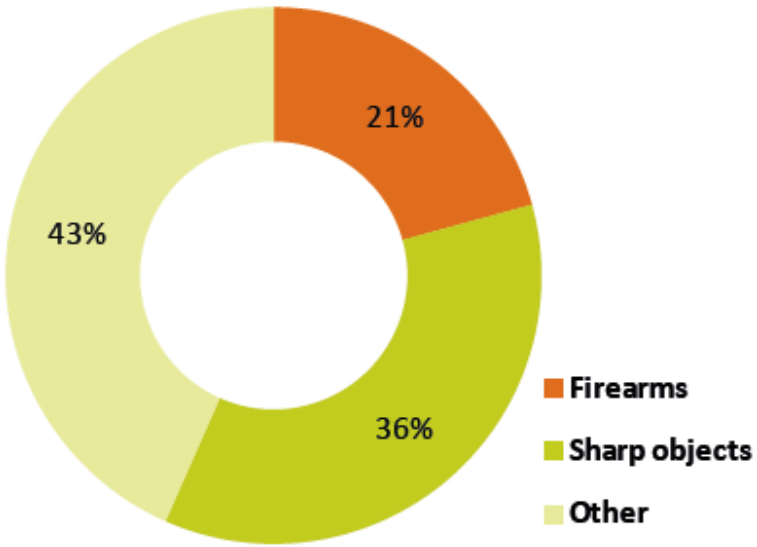
Understanding the how





Source: Global Burden of Injuries, *Injury Mortality Data Collection* (2011).

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Challenges to produce statistical measures of crime

If you can not measure it, you can not improve it

(Lord Kelvin, mathematic physicist)

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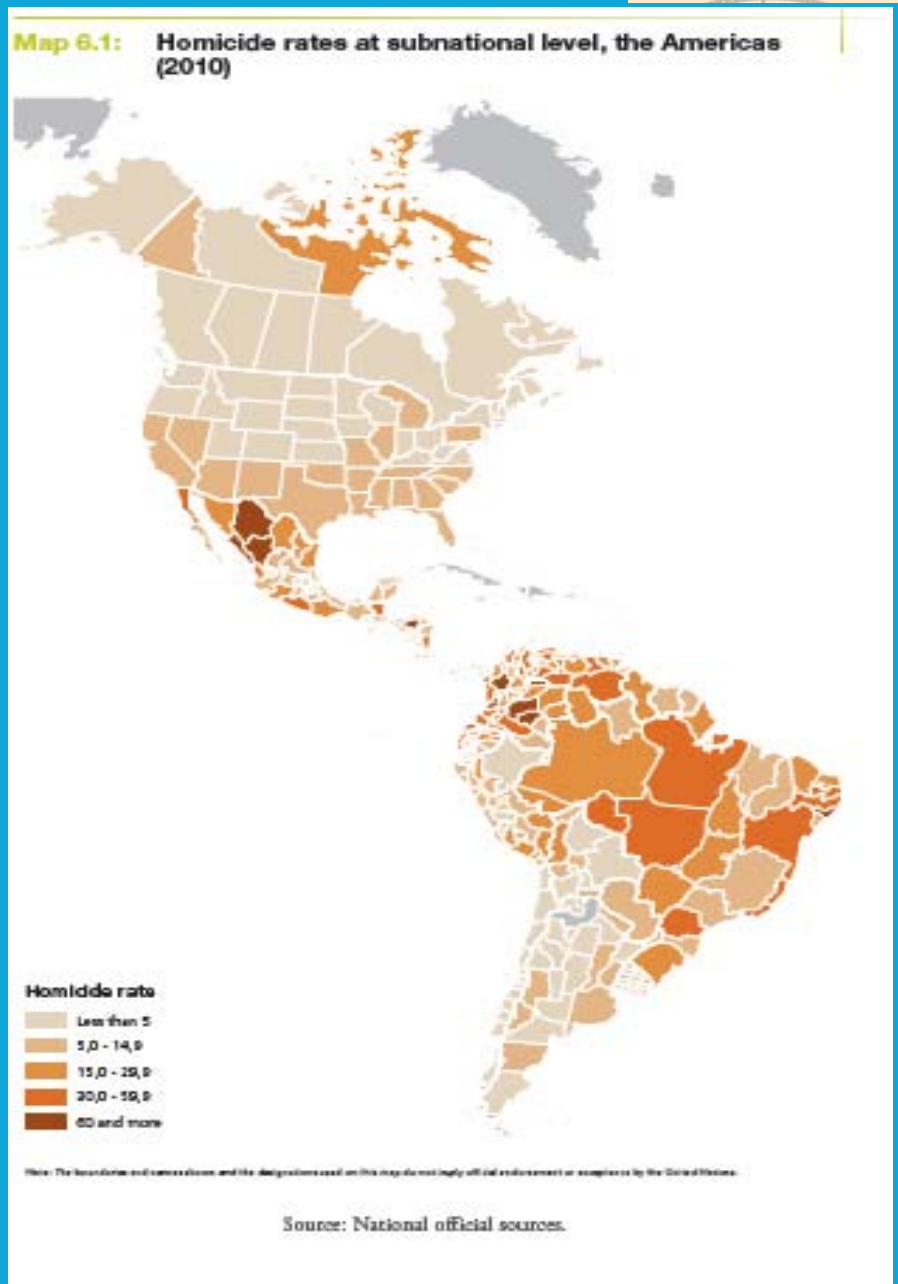
Challenge: To describe the tans-national and sub-national nature of crime



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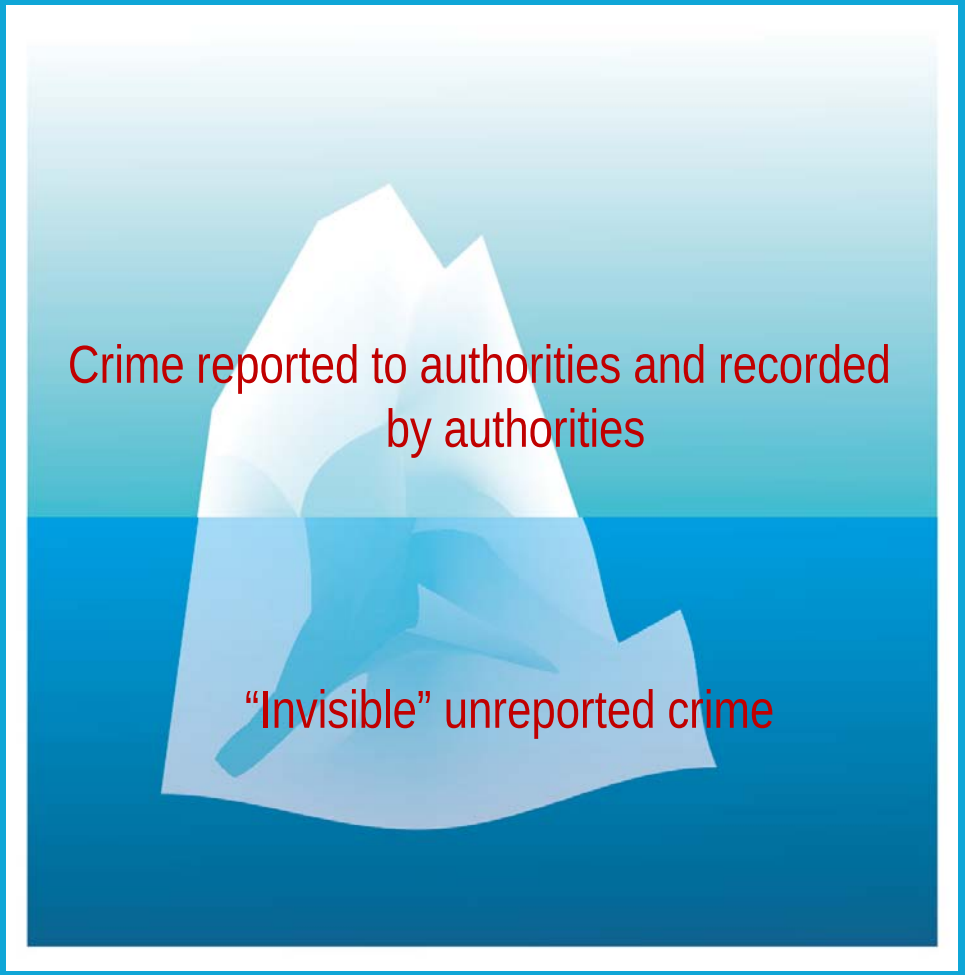
Challenge: To measure the crime iceberg



The sea level depends on the government response to crime and the citizens' trust on the system which differ from country to country

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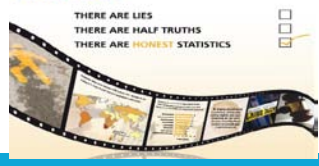
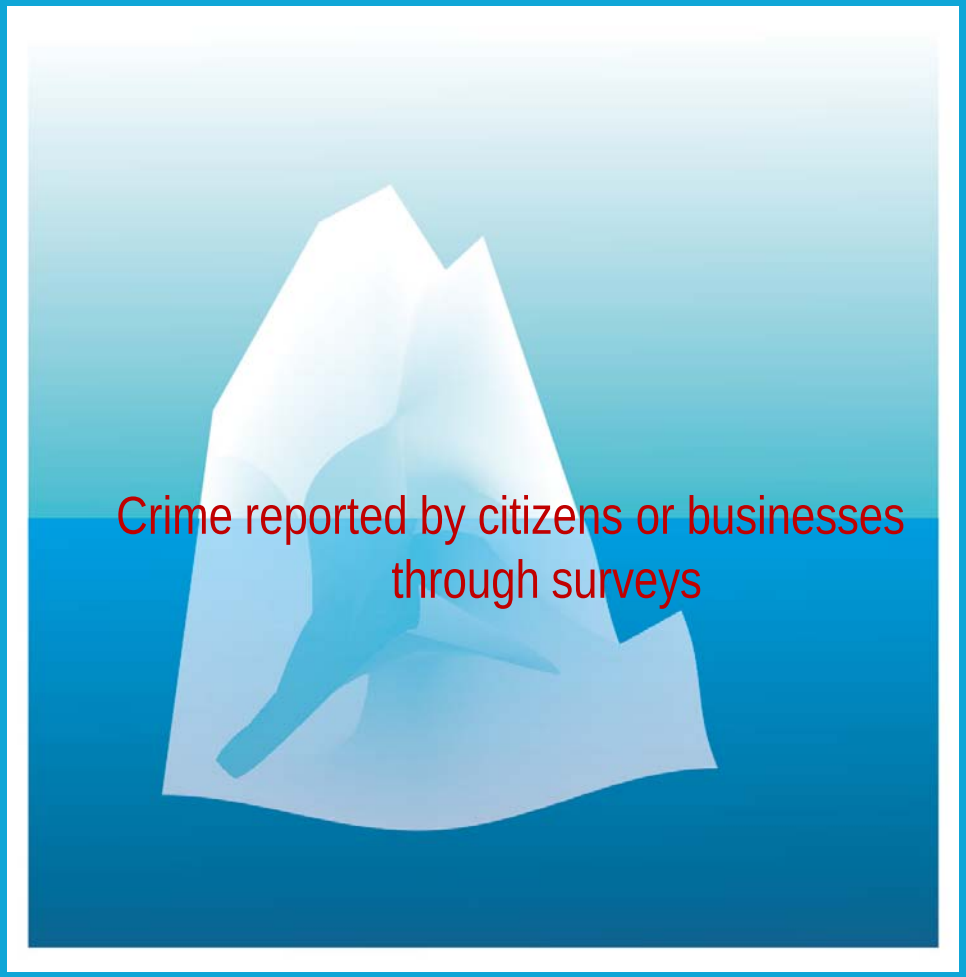


Challenge: To measure the crime iceberg



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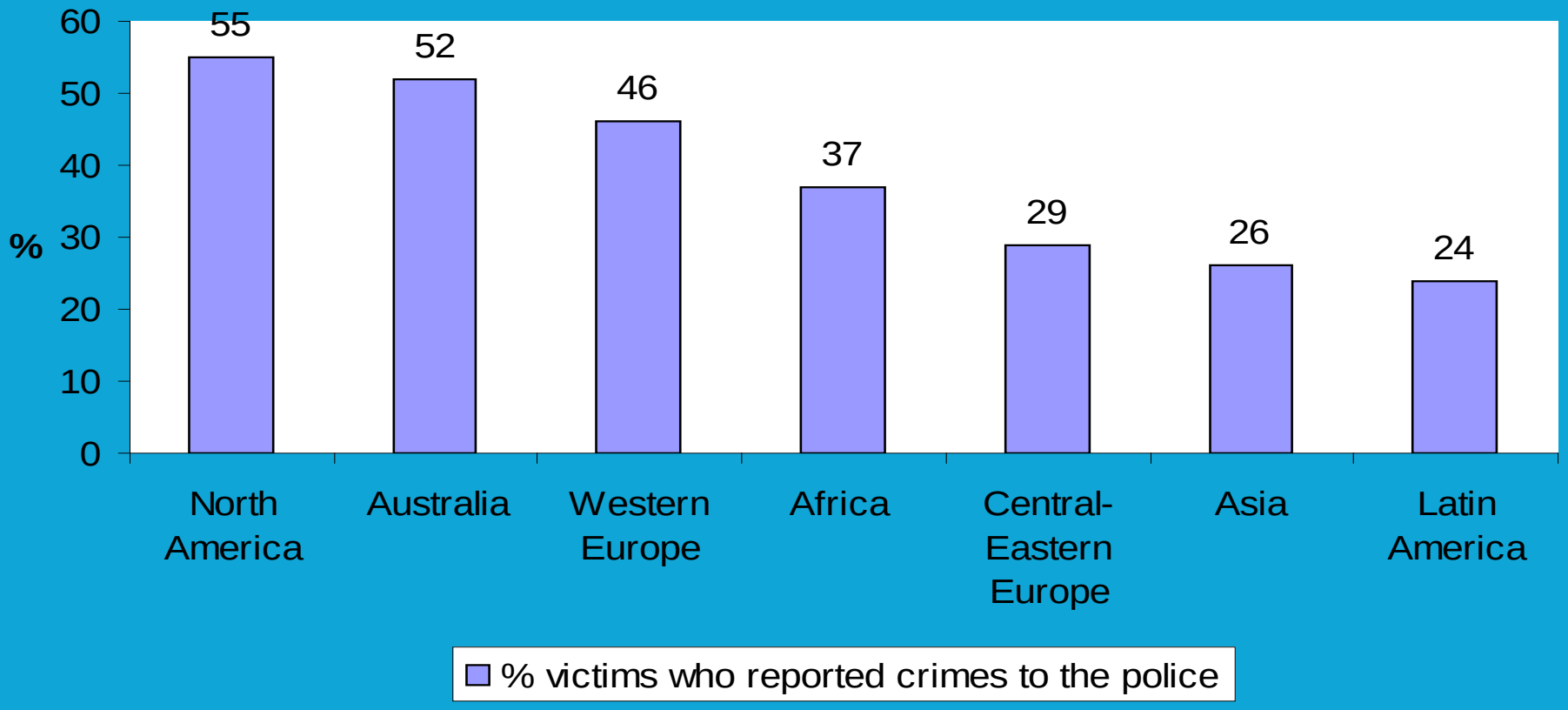
Average percentage of crimes reported to the police in different world regions



Source: International Crime Victim Survey (ICVS)

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What is measured and the comparability of data on reported crime depend on the type of crime

Gender-based violence

Homicides

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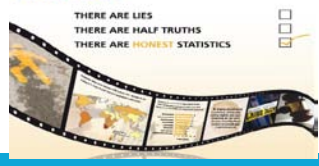
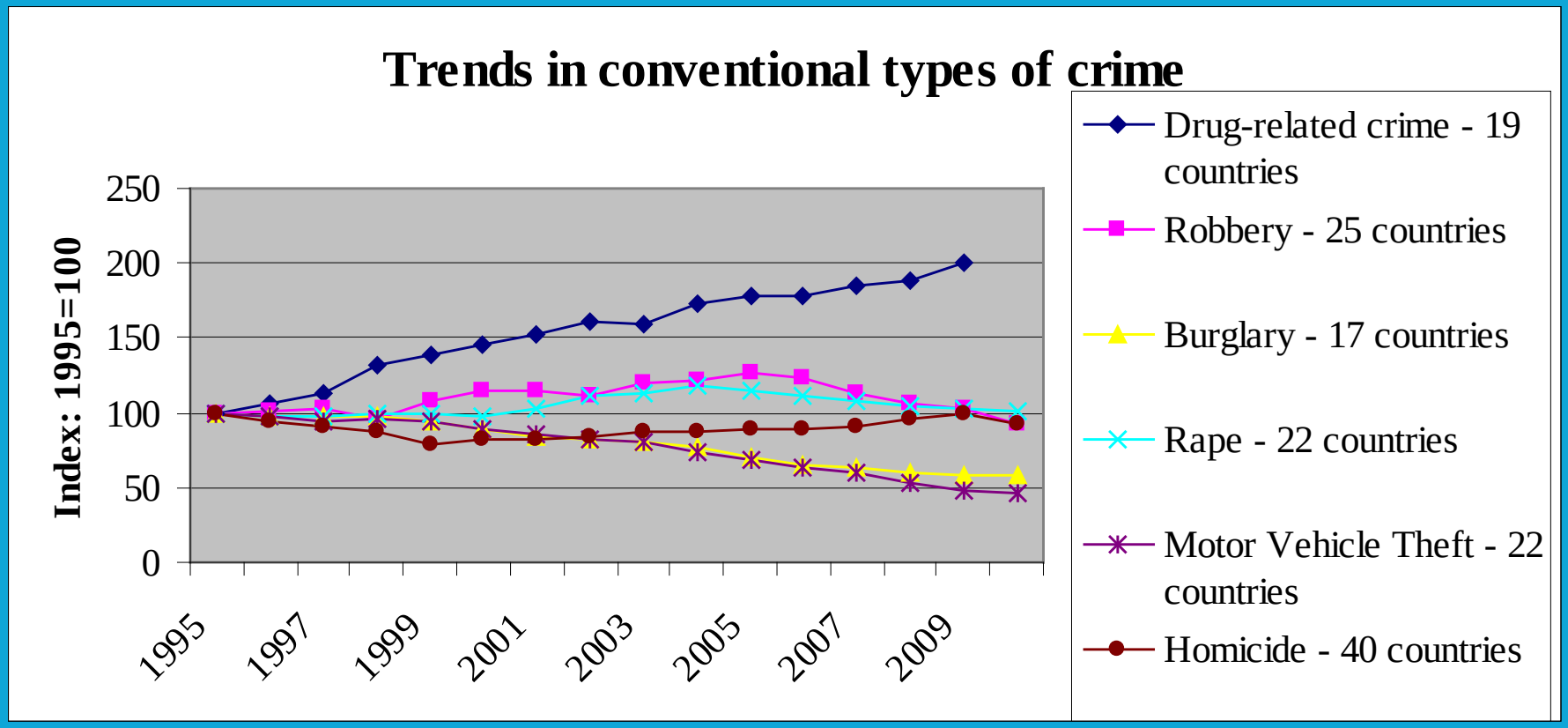


Trends of conventional crime



… but are we measuring all forms of crime?

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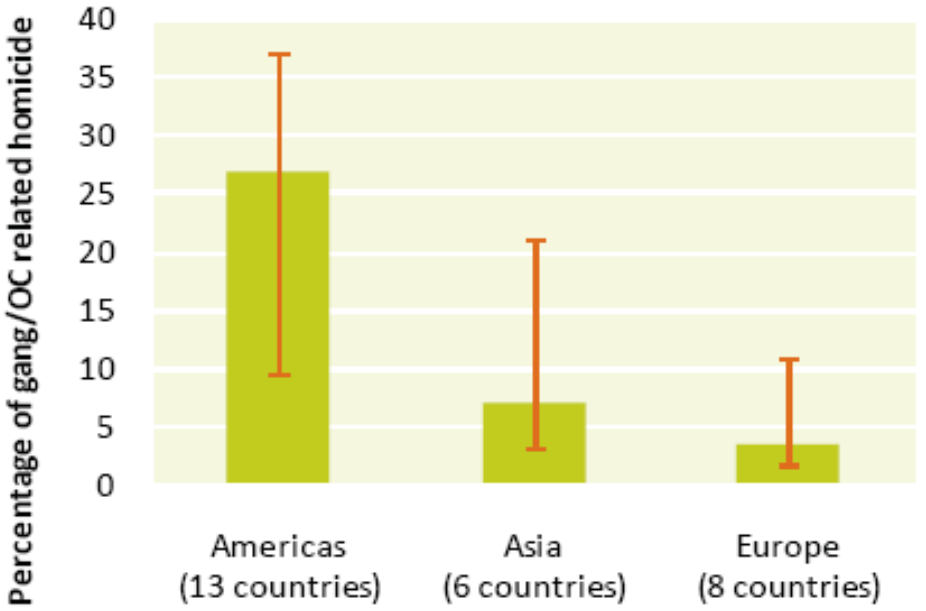
Need to measure the invisible crime

- Corruption
- Economic/financial crime
- Cybercrime
- Money laundering
- Organized crime
  - Human trafficking
  - Smuggling of migrants

Develop methodology to measure the 'difficult to measure' crime

Fig. 3.9: Proportion of gang/organized crime-related homicides by region (2010 or latest available year)



Source: UNODC elaboration of national police data. Bars represent median, 1st and 3rd quartiles of percentage of gang/organized crime-related homicides.

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Develop methodology to measure the 'difficult to measure' crime

- Updating existing recording systems to better understand the typology and dynamics
- Design new data collection tools
- Use different analytical tools (GIS)
  - Identify flows
  - Identify linkages in criminal markets
- Target different actors
  - Banks
  - Private sector

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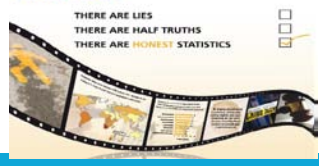
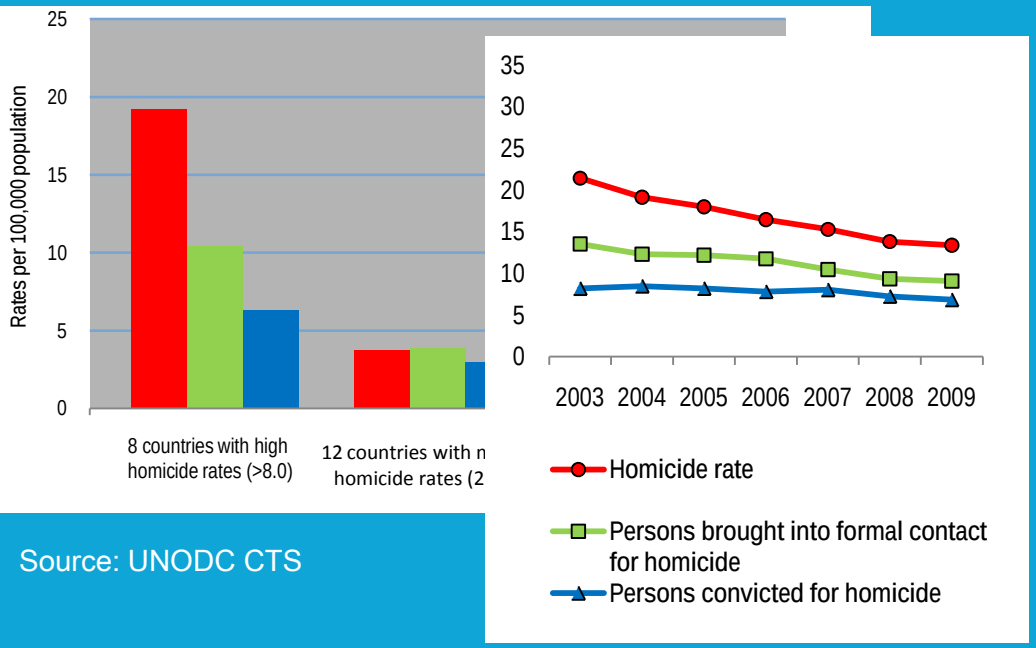
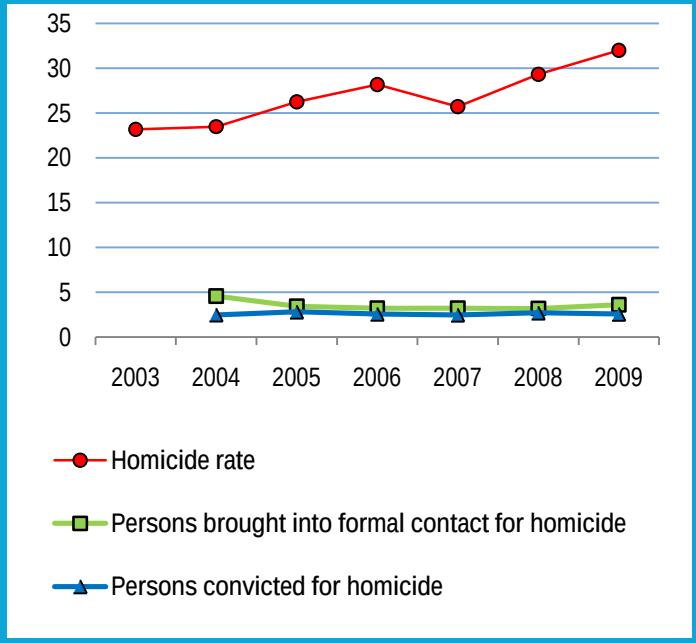


Putting together multiple systems: different criminal justice components and states/federal

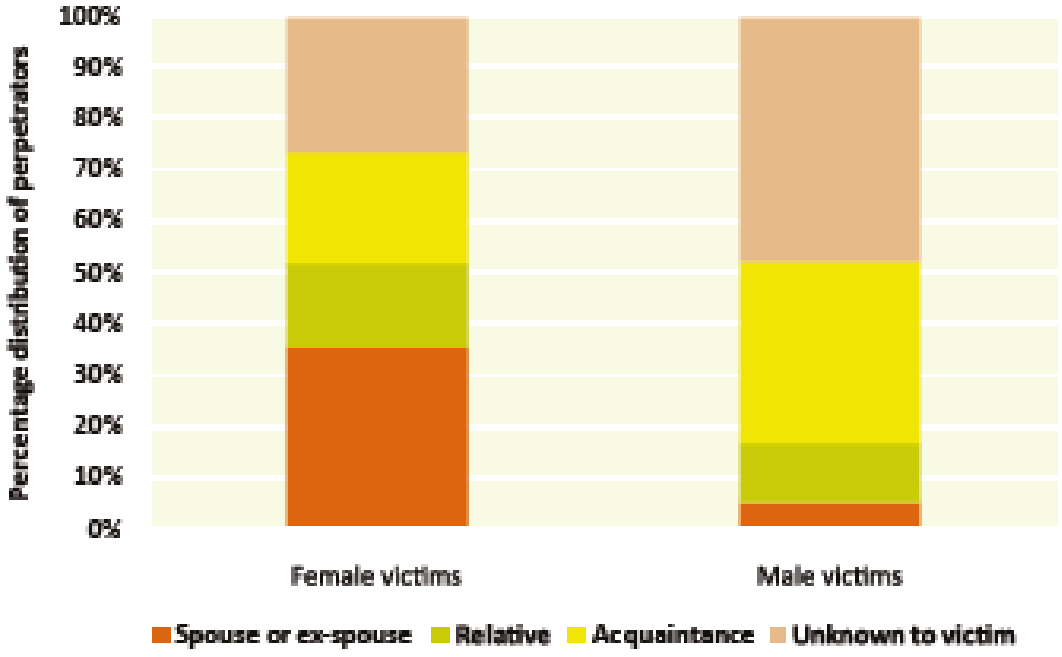


Source: UNODC CTS



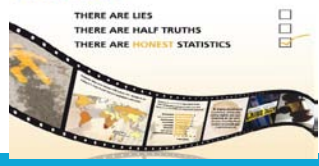
Need for classifications and national coordination mechanisms

Fig. 4.1: Percentage distribution of homicide perpetrators by sex of victim, selected European countries (2008 or latest available year)

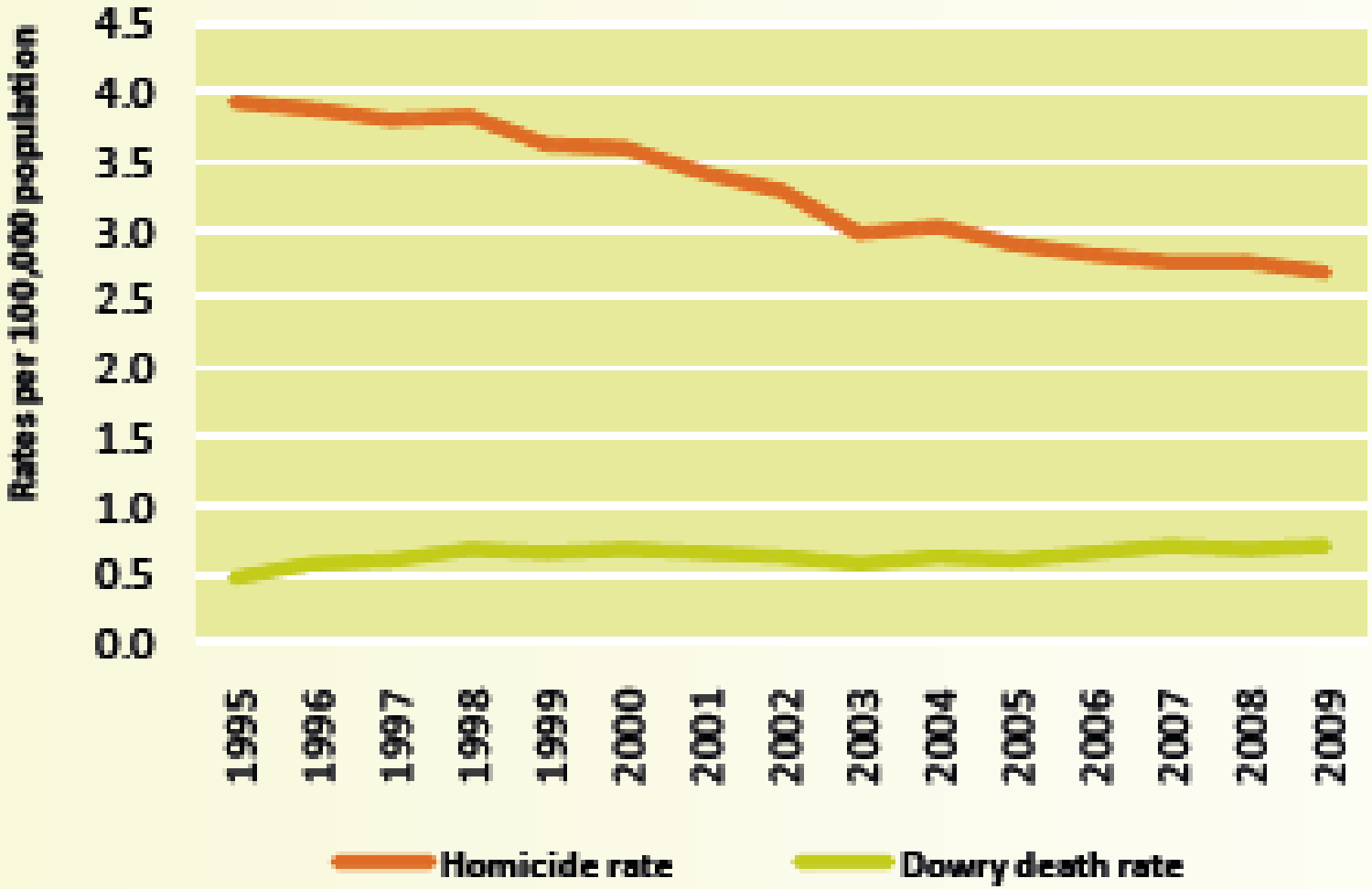


Source: UNECE Statistical Division Database.

Challenge: Need to 'engender' crime statistics



Homicide rates and dowry death rates in India (1995-2009)



Source: National Crime Records Bureau.

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Example: 2006 Violence Against Women in Italy

- About 7 million women experience violence in their life
- More than one million only the previous year
- 3.5% experienced sexual violence
- 74,000 women suffered rape or attempted rape

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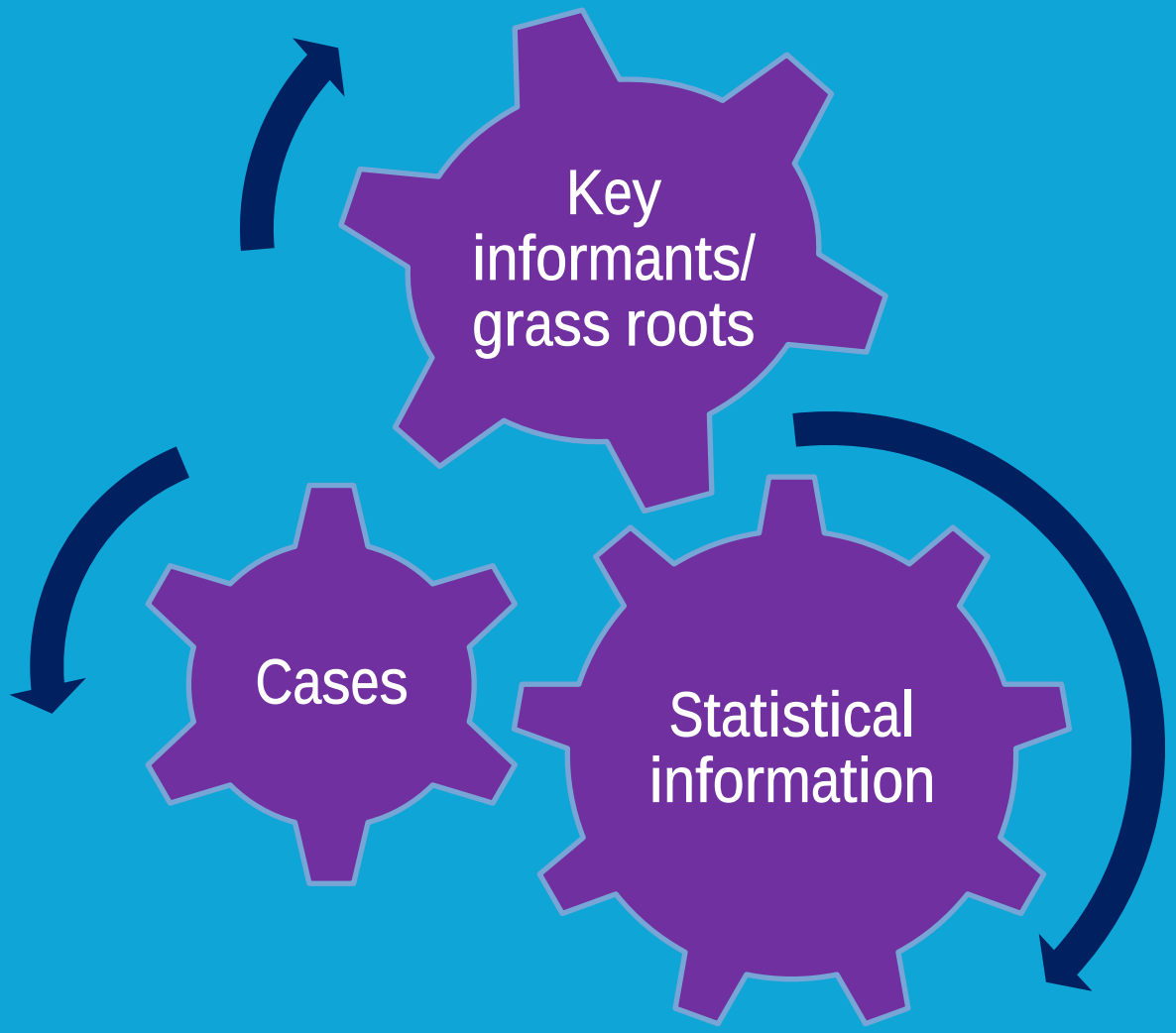
Is statistics enough?



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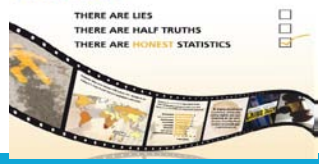

A closer collaboration

STATISTICIANS

Respond to emerging needs (invisible crimes)

Translate statistics into knowledge

RESEARCH/POLICY MAKERS

- Support/value unbiased collection/processing of statistics
- Elaborate data needs
- Understand how to use statistics

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Better data, deeper analysis,

improved policies, less crime

Thank you for
your attention.