

Local Government Public Spending and the Incidence of Crimes and Offenses in Peru, 2019–2023: The Case of Budget Program 0030

Gasto público de gobiernos locales y la incidencia de delitos y faltas en el Perú, 2019-2023: Caso Programa Presupuestal 0030

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Resumen

La investigación tuvo como objetivo evaluar el impacto del gasto público ejecutado por los gobiernos locales en la incidencia de delitos y faltas en el Perú durante el periodo 2019-2023, dando respuesta al problema de cómo influye el gasto público de los gobiernos locales en la incidencia de delitos y faltas en el Perú, durante el periodo 2019 – 2023 se tomó como referencia el Programa Presupuestal 0030. El estudio se desarrolló bajo un enfoque cuantitativo, de tipo aplicada, orientado a generar mayor conocimiento sobre la relación entre el gasto público en seguridad ciudadana y la criminalidad. El nivel de investigación fue descriptivo-correlacional, con un diseño no experimental y de corte transversal. Para la recolección de datos se emplearon fuentes oficiales como las estadísticas de criminalidad y seguridad ciudadana del INEI (Instituto Nacional de Estadística e Informática) y la consulta amigable del MEF (Ministerio de Economía y Finanzas). Los resultados evidenciaron que los delitos contra el patrimonio —principalmente hurto y robo— fueron los más frecuentes en el periodo analizado. Asimismo, se halló una correlación positiva pero débil entre el gasto público en seguridad ciudadana y la incidencia de delitos y faltas (Rho de Pearson = 0.10; $p < 0.05$). En conclusión, si bien existe relación estadística, un mayor gasto en seguridad ciudadana no garantiza necesariamente la reducción de la criminalidad en el contexto peruano.

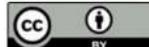
Palabras claves: inversión pública, incidencia delictiva, seguridad ciudadana

Código JEL: H53 Gastos del Gobierno Nacional y Programas de Bienestar

Abstract

The research aimed to evaluate the impact of public spending executed by local governments on the incidence of crimes and offenses in Peru during the period 2019–2023, addressing the question of how local government public spending influences the incidence of crimes and offenses in the country during that period, taking Budget Program 0030 as a reference. The study followed a quantitative approach, classified as applied research, oriented toward generating greater knowledge about the relationship between public spending on citizen security and criminality. The research level was descriptive-correlational, with a non-experimental and cross-sectional design. Data collection was based on official sources such as crime and citizen security statistics from the National Institute of Statistics (INEI) and the “Consulta Amigable” platform of the Ministry of Economy and Finance (MEF). The results showed that crimes against property—mainly theft and robbery—were the most frequent during the analyzed period. Furthermore, a positive but weak correlation was found between public spending on citizen security and the incidence of crimes and offenses (Pearson’s Rho = 0.10; $p < 0.05$). In conclusion, although a statistical relationship exists, higher spending on citizen security does not necessarily guarantee a reduction in criminality in the Peruvian context.

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Keywords: public investment, crime incidence, citizen security

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Introduction

Citizen security is currently one of the main social and governmental concerns due to the increase in crime, which creates a climate of insecurity, limits economic development, and affects citizens' quality of life. According to the 2023 Global Organized Crime Index, Colombia tops the list with 7.67 points, followed by Mexico with 7.57, due to the strong presence of armed groups and drug cartels. Peru ranks ninth with 6.35 points, reflecting the severity of the problem in the country. This situation affects foreign investment, tourism, and public safety, creating a risky environment that impacts the well-being of the population (Global Initiative Against Transnational Organized Crime, 2023).

In this context, Budget Program 0030: "Reduction of crimes and offenses that affect citizen security" has become a key instrument of public policy, structured in five products aimed at the prevention and control of crime: (i) sector patrols, (ii) police stations with the basic conditions for community service, (iii) police operations to reduce crimes and offenses, (iv) specialized subunits with the basic conditions for police interventions and (v) organized community in favor of citizen security, all aimed at the prevention and control of crime (National Council of Citizen Security, 2019).

This study analyzes the execution of spending under Budget Program 0030 in the country's regions, with particular attention to the budget transferred to local governments, which are responsible for implementing sector-based patrols, promoting organized communities, and executing Public Investment Projects in citizen security. As shown in Figure 1, between 2019 and 2023, property crimes were concentrated mainly on the country's coast, as indicated by the greater intensity of the red color.

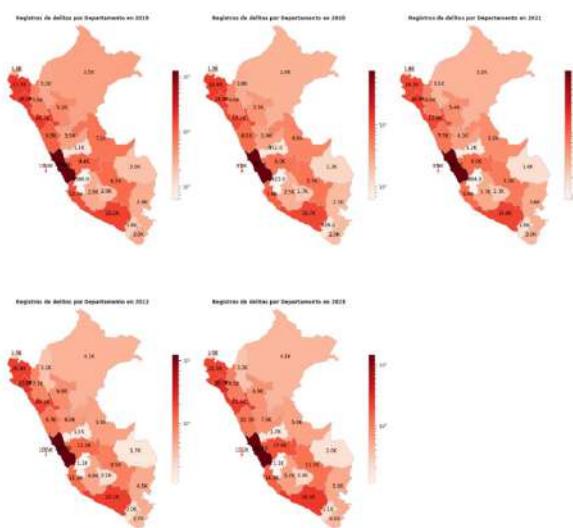
Lima stands out, registering an increase from 128,200 crimes in 2019 to 148,000 in 2023, making it the department with the highest crime rate. Lambayeque and La Libertad saw a significant increase, with Lambayeque experiencing a 67.6% rise. In the highlands, departments such as Arequipa, Junín, and Cusco also showed increases linked to urbanization and internal migration. In contrast, the jungle region showed a lower crime rate, with reductions in Ucayali and slight increases in San Martín.

Additionally, the analysis of offenses confirms the trend of concentration on the coast, particularly in Lima. Lima accounted for more than 60% of national cases in 2019, and although it reduced its figure to 7,180 in 2023,

it continued to concentrate nearly half of the country's incidents. In contrast, in the highlands, the records were more dispersed, and in the jungle they remained low, consolidating the latter as the region with the lowest incidence of crimes and offenses.

Figure 1

Territorial distribution and territorialization of crime incidence in Peru by year and department, 2019-2023



Note: Prepared based on data from the Integrated System of Crime and Citizen Security Statistics.

Population, Housing, and Businesses and the Incidence of Crimes and Offenses Against Property

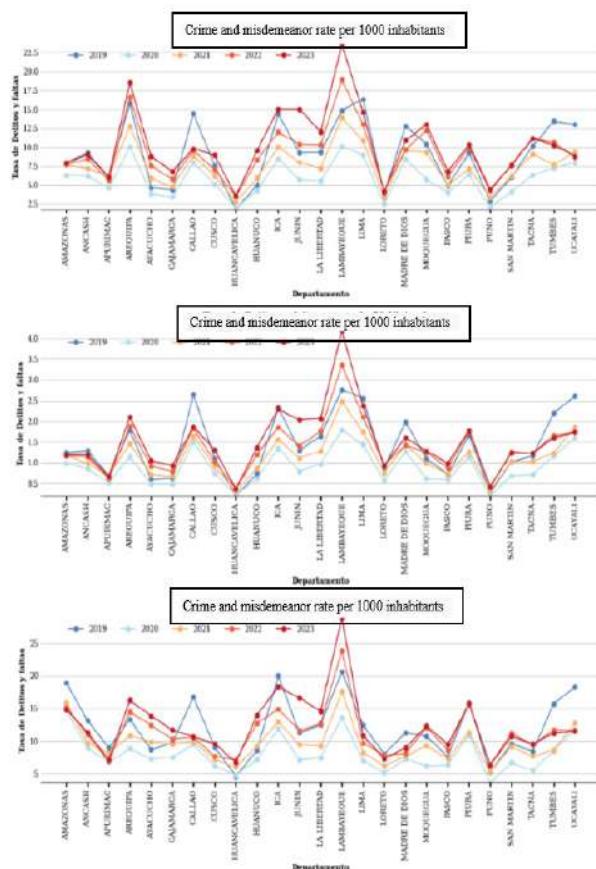
According to data obtained from the National Institute of Statistics and Informatics (INEI, n.d.) and the Integrated System of Crime and Citizen Security Statistics (DATACRIM, n.d.), the evolution of population, housing, and businesses in Peru showed a direct relationship with the incidence of crimes and offenses against property, although with notable regional differences.

Among the years analyzed, the population growth from 32.1 to 33.7 million inhabitants was accompanied by higher levels of crime in highly urbanized departments, especially Lima, Lambayeque and Arequipa, as shown in Figure 2. In 2023, these territories registered rates of 13.98, 23.18 and 17.01 crimes per 1,000 inhabitants, respectively, in contrast to the significantly lower values observed in less populated regions such as Huancavelica, Loreto and Puno.

Similarly, the increase in housing from 9.7 to 10.8 million showed an association with higher crime risks, with Lambayeque standing out with the highest average rate (2.83 per 50 homes) and a growth of 51.85%, while rural departments maintained low rates, but with significant relative increases. In the business sector, the incidence rose from 11.18 to 11.90 crimes per 100 businesses, with Lambayeque again leading with an average of 20.26 and a spike to 28.38 in 2023. This reflects how factors such as urbanization, population concentration, and the expansion of economic activities create differentiated scenarios of vulnerability to crime in the various regions of the country.

Figure 2

Crime and misdemeanor rate per 1,000 inhabitants, 50 households and 100 businesses by department, 2019-2023



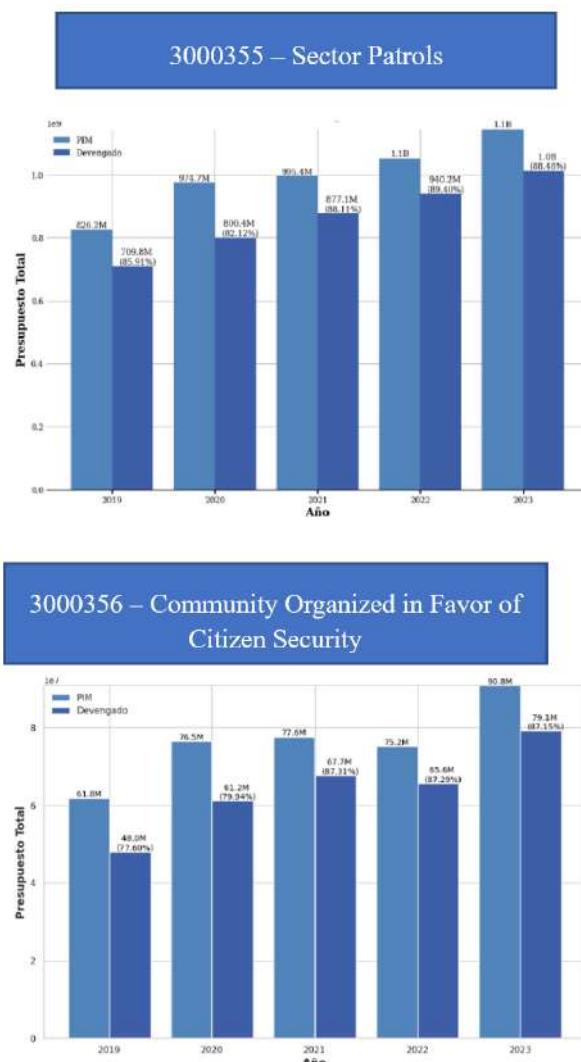
Note: Based on data from INEI and DATACRIM

Figure 3 shows that, with respect to the program's outputs, Sector Patrols exhibited an increasing trend in both the initial budget (PIM) and actual expenditures, with resource execution ranging between 85.91% and 89.40%. This efficiency reflects a sustained commitment to implementing patrols as a key strategy for maintaining citizen security in municipal areas.

Meanwhile, the product "Organized Community in Favor of Citizen Security" showed greater variability in budget allocation, with a notable reduction in 2022. However, the execution level remained high, between 77.60% and 87.31%, demonstrating efficient resource management and the relevance of citizen participation in crime prevention.

Figure 3

PIM and Accrued Costs for Products 3000355 – Sector Patrols and 3000356 – Community Organized in Favor of Citizen Security, 2019-2023



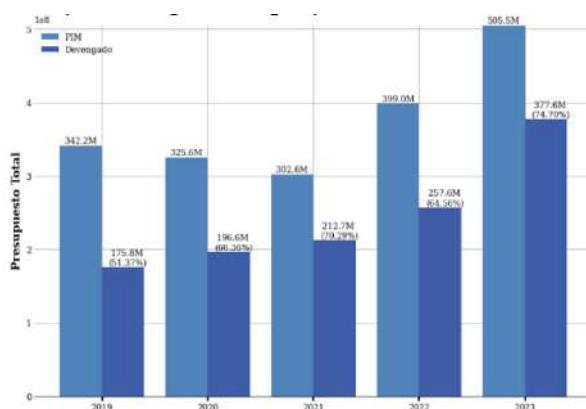
Note: Prepared by the author. Based on data from the User-Friendly Consultation

PP0030 Projects

Regarding the types of projects funded, those focused on improving and/or expanding citizen security services predominate, both at the local and regional levels. These encompass diverse components, including the acquisition of modern equipment, ongoing training for community security personnel, the installation of surveillance systems, and community awareness campaigns. These strategies underscore the importance of effective collaboration between authorities and citizens to ensure the success and sustainability of the projects.

As illustrated in Figure 4, the budget allocation for citizen security projects shows an upward trend during the study period. However, significant variability is observed in the percentage of budget execution year after year. In 2019, a low execution rate (51.37%) was observed, likely associated with administrative limitations and implementation delays. However, by 2023, execution had risen to 74.70%, demonstrating an improvement in the management capacity of local governments. This positive trend suggests a process of strengthening the planning and administration of resources allocated to citizen security.

Figure 4
Initial Budget Allocation and Expenditure of PP030 Projects, 2019-2023

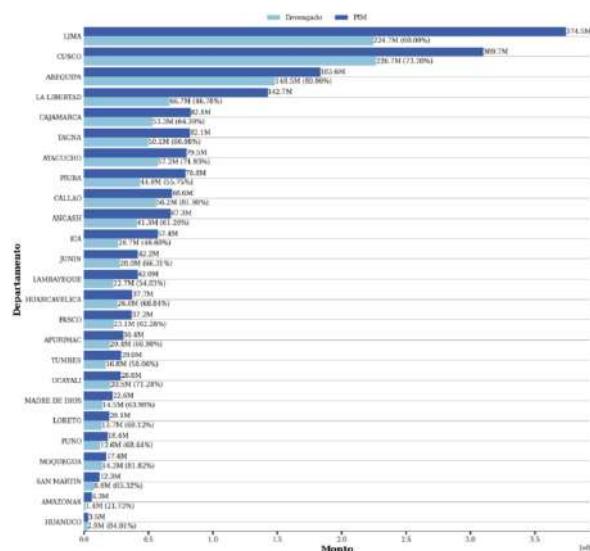


Note: Prepared by the author. Based on data from the Friendly Consultation system.

Regarding the accumulated Modified Institutional Budget (PIM) and the amount spent on projects, Lima, despite having the largest budget (374.5 million soles), only spent 60% of its resources, leaving 40% unused during the analyzed period, as shown in Figure 5. In contrast, Cusco, with a PIM of 309.7 million soles, spent 73.2%, demonstrating greater efficiency in the

use of its resources. Arequipa stood out even more with an execution rate of 80.9%, reflecting efficient budget management in citizen security projects.

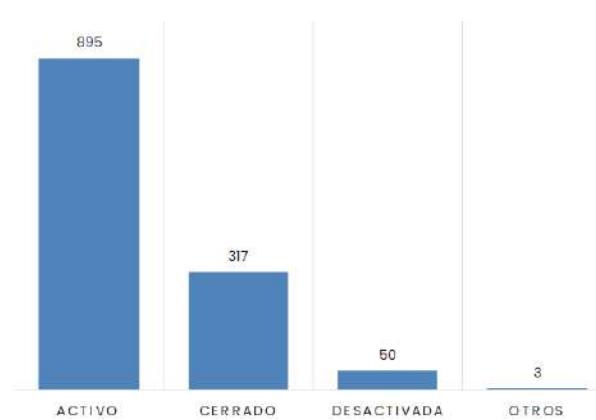
Figure 5
PIM and Accumulated Accrued Projects by Department, 2019-2023



Note: Prepared by the author. Based on data from the User-Friendly Consultation system.

Regarding the status of investments within the context of Budget Program 0030, it shows that, out of a total of 1,265 investment projects, the majority are in "ACTIVE" status, with 895 projects, representing approximately 70.7% of the total. This indicates a high level of continuity in investments related to citizen security.

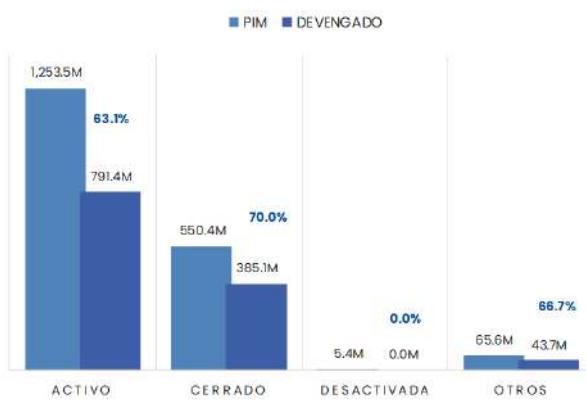
Figure 6
Number of projects by investment status 2024



Note: Prepared by the author. Based on data from the User-Friendly Consultation and SSI (Investment Monitoring System).

On the other hand, 317 projects (25.1%) have been “CLOSED.” However, this includes both completed and uncompleted investments for various reasons, such as (i) changes in the technical design, (ii) the need for execution no longer exists, (iii) the investment does not address a priority gap, (iv) duplicate investments, and (v) expiration of the approval. Additionally, 50 projects have been identified as “DEACTIVATED,” suggesting the interruption of activities for various reasons, such as duplication, lack of jurisdiction, project fragmentation, the project not being a project (it is an activity or IOARR), or the inability to intervene within the jurisdiction. Finally, there is a category called “OTHER,” which encompasses three specific projects: “PRE-INVESTMENT STUDIES,” “IMPLEMENTATION OF THE SERENAZGO SERVICE,” and “EXPANSION OF THE SERENAZGO SERVICE.” Although this category is smaller in number (0.2% of the total), it includes key initiatives for strengthening the municipal security service, essential for citizen safety.

Figure 7
Investment Budget and Accumulated Expenditure by Investment Status, 2019-2023



Note: Prepared by the author. Based on data from Consulta Amigable and SSI (Investment Tracking System).

** The investment status is based on the SSI query dated August 1, 2024

Materials and Methods

The research was conducted in Peru with an analytical and comparative approach at the departmental level, focusing on the budget execution of Budget Program 0030, “Reduction of crimes and offenses affecting citizen security.” The study encompassed all 24 departments and the Constitutional Province of Callao, considering data from the period 2019–2023.

The methodological design adopted was non-experimental and longitudinal, as the study variables

were not directly manipulated but rather observed and analyzed over time. This approach allowed for the examination of the evolution of budgetary, demographic, and crime indicators, as well as their interrelationship across different periods, providing a comprehensive view of the trends observed in citizen security (Hernández et al., 2014).

The main repositories consulted were the following official platforms:

- **Integrated System of Crime and Citizen Security Statistics (DATACRIM):** Provides detailed data on the incidence of crime at the national and departmental levels.
- **User-Friendly Query of the Ministry of Economy and Finance (MEF):** Offers data on the planning, modification, and execution of the budget for Budget Program 0030.
- **District Information System for Public Management:** Provides data on the number of registered businesses and the number of occupied private dwellings.
- **Investment Tracking System – Invierte.pe:** Allowed for the identification of investments related to citizen security carried out by local governments during the study period.

Results

Growth Rate of the Modified Institutional Budget (PIM) in Relation to the Growth Rate of Crimes and Offenses

The analysis shows that the increase in the PIM has not always been associated with a reduction in crimes and offenses, demonstrating that a larger budget does not necessarily guarantee an improvement in citizen security. Departments such as Moquegua (+223.0% PIM, +34.0% crimes and offenses), Huancavelica (+222.9% PIM, +86.3% crimes and offenses), and Arequipa (+143.1% PIM, +40.4% crimes and offenses) have experienced significant growth in their allocated budgets, but crime has continued to rise. This could be due to inefficiencies in resource allocation, management problems, or the presence of external factors that have fueled the increase in crime.

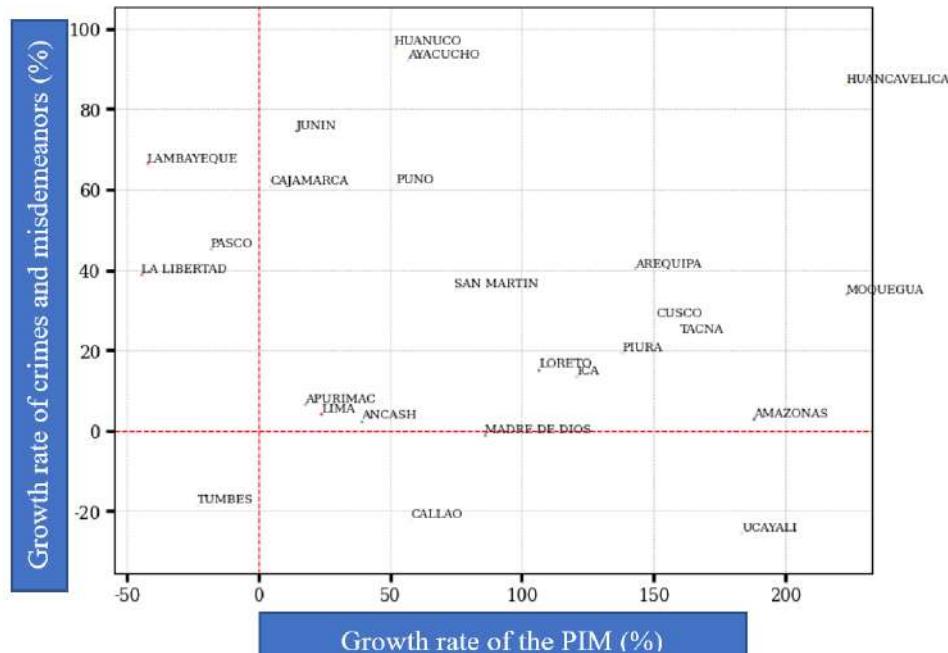
In contrast, regions like Ucayali (+183.4% PIM, -25.3% crimes and misdemeanors) and Callao (+57.7% PIM, -22.0% crimes and misdemeanors) show an increase in PIM accompanied by a reduction in crime, suggesting that in these regions the allocation of resources has been more effective in implementing security strategies. On the other hand, departments like La Libertad (-44.6% PIM,

+38.8% crimes and misdemeanors) and Lambayeque (-42.3% PIM, +66.7% crimes and misdemeanors) have experienced a reduction in PIM and an increase in crime rates. However, in Tumbes (-23.2% PIM, -18.3% crimes

and misdemeanors) and Ucayali (-25.3% PIM, -25.3% crimes and misdemeanors), the decrease in PIM has not led to an increase in crime.

Figure 8

Relationship between the PIM growth rate and the number of crimes and misdemeanors, 2019-2023



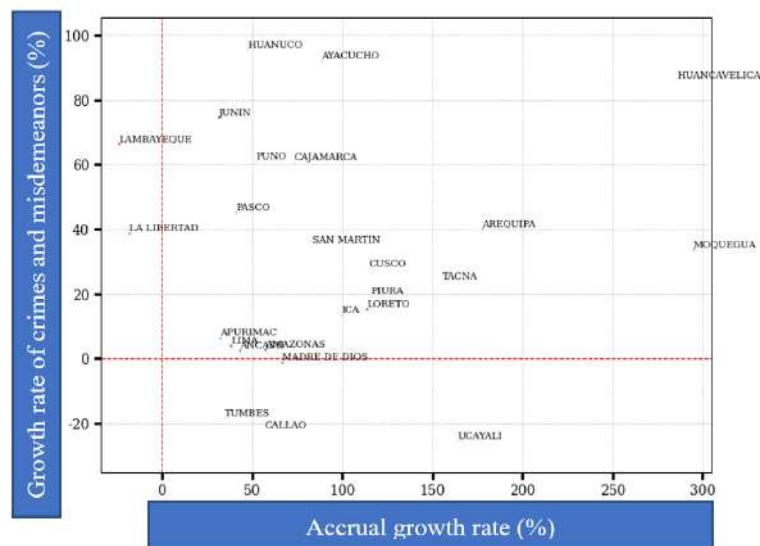
Note: Original work

Growth Rate of Accrued Expenses in Relation to the Growth Rate of Crimes and Offenses (2019 to 2023)

Accrued expenses, understood as the actual execution of the budget, allow for the evaluation of the efficiency of public spending on security. Figure 9 and Table 1 show that departments such as Moquegua (+294.8% accrued expenses, +34.0% increase in crimes and offenses), Huancavelica (+285.9% accrued expenses, +86.3% increase in crimes and offenses), and Arequipa (+177.3% accrued expenses, +40.4% increase in crimes and offenses) exhibit high budget execution rates, but crime continues to rise, indicating that spending is not being channeled efficiently.

In contrast, Ucayali (+164.2% increase in expenditures, -25.3% decrease in crimes and misdemeanors) and Callao (+57.2% increase in expenditures, -22.0% decrease in crimes and misdemeanors) show an increase

in budget execution accompanied by a reduction in crime, suggesting better planning and allocation of resources. In some cases, the reduction in expenditures has coincided with an increase in crime, as in La Libertad (-18.3% increase in expenditures, +38.8% decrease in crimes and misdemeanors) and Lambayeque (-23.8% increase in expenditures, +66.7% decrease in crimes and misdemeanors), reinforcing the idea that a lack of investment in public safety can negatively affect crime rates. However, in other departments such as Tumbes (+34.8% increase in revenue, -18.3% decrease in crimes and misdemeanors) and Ucayali (+164.2% increase in revenue, -25.3% decrease in crimes and misdemeanors), crime has decreased despite a reduction in budget execution.

Figure 9*Relationship between the growth rate of revenue and the number of crimes and misdemeanors, 2019-2023***Note:** Original work**Table 1***Growth Rate of PIM and Accrued in relation to the Growth Rate of Crimes and Offenses (2019 to 2023)*

PIM_2019	PIM_2023	Growth rate. PIM	DEV_2019	DEV_2023	Growth rate. Dev	Crimes 2019	Crimes 2023	Growth rate Crimes Misdemeanors
HUANUCO	14.36M	21.75M	51.5%	12.97M	19.17M	47.8%	3,625	7,086
AYACUCHO	20.34M	31.83M	56.5%	14.94M	28.12M	88.3%	3,014	5,798
HUANCABELICA	6.63M	21.40M	222.9%	5.35M	20.66M	285.9%	627	1,168
JUNIN	28.71M	32.88M	14.5%	22.08M	29.08M	31.7%	10,959	19,146
LAMBAYEQUE	38.05M	21.96M	-42.3%	24.97M	19.03M	-23.8%	18,779	31,303
PUNO	26.02M	39.64M	52.3%	22.88M	34.78M	52.0%	3,224	5,193
CAJAMARCA	25.93M	27.05M	4.3%	13.33M	23.13M	73.5%	6,004	9,658
PASCO	12.27M	10.05M	-18.1%	6.23M	8.78M	40.9%	1,221	1,774
AREQUIPA	60.38M	146.79M	143.1%	48.90M	135.58M	177.3%	19,152	26,881
LA LIBERTAD	114.43M	63.38M	-44.6%	59.85M	48.92M	-18.3%	17,537	24,342
SAN MARTIN	10.67M	18.60M	74.4%	9.36M	17.19M	83.6%	5,181	7,003
MOQUEGUA	3.82M	12.33M	223.0%	2.59M	10.22M	294.8%	1,766	2,367
CUSCO	57.63M	144.64M	151.0%	50.65M	108.74M	114.7%	9,213	11,790
TACNA	11.79M	30.68M	160.3%	9.41M	24.07M	155.8%	3,357	4,158
PIURA	45.35M	107.94M	138.0%	35.93M	77.65M	116.1%	18,119	21,641
LORETO	12.28M	25.37M	106.5%	11.06M	23.66M	113.9%	3,651	4,210
ICA	27.57M	60.84M	120.7%	22.39M	44.73M	99.8%	13,187	14,981
APURIMAC	12.18M	14.34M	17.7%	8.92M	11.79M	32.2%	2,330	2,483
LIMA	573.93M	711.06M	23.9%	446.42M	617.16M	38.2%	149,205	155,517
AMAZONAS	3.56M	10.27M	188.1%	3.19M	5.01M	57.2%	3,268	3,363
ANCASH	43.05M	59.82M	39.0%	34.97M	50.12M	43.3%	10,173	10,429
MADRE DE DIOS	4.93M	9.17M	86.1%	3.96M	6.58M	66.4%	2,073	2,050
TUMBES	13.81M	10.60M	-23.2%	6.78M	9.14M	34.8%	3,209	2,623
CALLAO	54.14M	85.35M	57.7%	48.90M	76.90M	57.2%	14,652	11,427
UCAYALI	8.40M	23.79M	183.4%	7.51M	19.86M	164.2%	7,338	5,481
Total, general	1,230.23M	1,741.53M	41.6%	933.54M	1,470.07M	57.5%	330,864	391,872
								18.4%

Note: Prepared by the author. Amounts are expressed in millions of soles (M).

Correlations Between Budget Execution and the Incidence of Crimes and Offenses

The correlations between the number of projects executed and the incidence of crimes vary significantly among departments, as shown in Figure 10. High positive correlations are observed in Arequipa (0.74), Ayacucho (0.73), and Cusco (0.70), suggesting that a greater number of projects has coincided with an increase in crimes and offenses, possibly due to a greater capacity for incident reporting or the implementation of projects that have not been effective in reducing crime. In contrast, Piura (-0.74), Pasco (-0.72), and Tacna (-0.51) show negative correlations, indicating that a greater number of projects has been associated with a reduction in crime incidence in these departments.

The correlation between the PIM (Public Investment Budget) and crime rates is generally highly positive (0.96), indicating that departments receiving larger budget allocations have not necessarily reduced crime. Departments such as Moquegua (0.65), Arequipa (0.86), and Huancavelica (0.87) show the highest correlations, suggesting that a larger budget has coincided with an increase in crime rates. However, there are cases like Lambayeque (-0.61), Tumbes (-0.69), and Ucayali (-0.79), where the increase in the PIM has shown a negative relationship with crime, suggesting a possible positive effect of funding on citizen security.

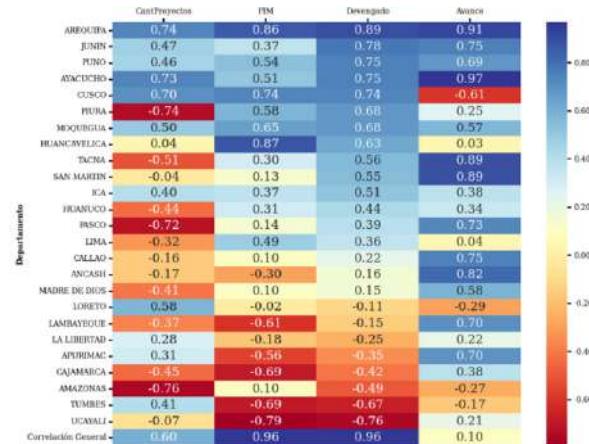
Regarding accrual, which represents the effective execution of the budget, it maintains a high national correlation (0.96) with crime, indicating that departments with higher budget execution have experienced increases in the incidence of crimes and misdemeanors. Arequipa (0.89), Junín (0.78), and Puno (0.75) show the highest correlations. However, cases such as Lambayeque (-0.15), Ucayali (-0.76), and Amazonas (-0.49) are identified, where the increase in budget execution has been accompanied by a reduction in crime.

The progress rate, defined as the ratio of Accrued Expenses to Budgeted Expenditure (PIM), is an indicator of the efficiency of budget execution. Overall, the correlation with the incidence of crimes and misdemeanors is low (0.10), indicating that budget execution efficiency has not been a determining factor in crime reduction. However, significant variations are observed among departments. Ayacucho (0.97), Arequipa (0.91), and Tacna (0.89) show the highest correlations, indicating that greater efficiency in budget execution has coincided with an increase in crime rates, which could be related to additional structural factors affecting

security. In contrast, Cusco (-0.61), Loreto (-0.29), and Amazonas (-0.27) show negative correlations, suggesting that in these departments, greater efficiency in budget execution could be associated with a reduction in crime.

Figure 10

Correlation between the number of projects, PIM, Accrued and Progress and incidence of crimes and offenses by department, 2019-2023



Discussion

Incidence of Crimes and Misdemeanors

Property crimes have been the most prevalent in the country, representing on average 64% of all crimes registered between 2019 and 2023. This finding coincides with studies such as Flores Orona et al. (2022), who indicate that property crimes are the most frequent in Mexico and reflect the population's vulnerability to opportunistic criminal activities. In Peru, 1,426,489 incidents were registered in this category, with theft and robbery being the most common forms.

On the other hand, offenses against persons have increased their share of all offenses. In 2019, they represented 53.51%, while in 2023 they reached 70.98%, reflecting an increase in assaults and mistreatment. Likewise, offenses against property rank second, representing 33% of the total. These types of crimes and offenses have been included in the analysis because they fall under the jurisdiction of local government security forces. This contrasts with other classifications, such as violence, which in many cases occur in domestic settings.

With respect to the departments, Lima has the highest number of property crimes, accumulating 576,663 incidents in the analyzed period, with a peak

in 2023 (148,337 incidents). Other regions with a high incidence are Lambayeque, Arequipa, and La Libertad, where significant increases have been recorded in recent years. Regarding offenses, Lima is the department with the most accumulated incidents (55,579), followed by Arequipa and Junín.

Relationship between Population, Urbanization, and Crime Rates

The research confirms a high correlation between population and crime rates ($r = 0.96$), supporting the postulates of the Microeconomic Theory of Crime (Becker & Stigler, 1974), which posits that criminals act rationally and that the probability of capture or punishment directly influences the decision to commit a crime. Densely populated departments such as Lima and Lambayeque register the highest crime rates (13.98 and 23.18 per 1,000 inhabitants, respectively), demonstrating that deterrence strategies have not been sufficiently effective.

On the other hand, an increase in the number of homes was observed nationwide. However, this growth did not translate uniformly into an increase in crime. While in departments like Lambayeque and Lima the crime rate per 50 homes increased in 2023, reaching 4.19 and 2.26 respectively, in Ucayali there was a decrease of 33% compared to 2019.

Furthermore, the growth in the number of businesses has also been correlated with an increase in crime in certain departments. Lambayeque has the highest crime rate per 100 businesses (28.38 in 2023), suggesting that business activity may be associated with greater exposure to crime.

Budget Execution of Budget Program 0030

From the perspective of the Theory of the Public Good (Samuelson, 1954), a public good such as citizen security, being non-rivalrous and non-excludable, requires state intervention to avoid underinvestment. Under this approach, Budget Program 0030: "Reduction of crimes and offenses that affect citizen security" constitutes a key public policy tool aimed at financing comprehensive actions that strengthen the operational and preventive capacity of local governments. This program finances initiatives such as "Sector Patrols" and "Community Organized in Favor of Citizen Security," in addition to investment projects.

(i) Sector Patrols

Between 85.91% and 89.40% of the budget allocated to this product has been executed, indicating adequate resource allocation. However, the coverage of patrol plans shows significant variations. For example, in Callao, coverage was 100% in 2019 and 2020, decreasing to 57.1% in 2023; while in Pasco, an improvement was observed, increasing from 55.2% in 2019 to 89.7% in 2023. However, in departments such as Lambayeque and Lima, a decrease in the implementation of these plans was evident. This variability is consistent with the findings of Escobedo Pinto (2019), who noted that municipal incentive programs do not have uniform compliance and that management gaps affect service quality. Similarly, Santos et al. (2020) conclude that public spending did not reduce crime in highly violent countries, except in those that prioritized preventive strategies and institutional strengthening.

(ii) Organized Community in Favor of Citizen Security

Despite the decrease in the budget allocation in 2022, the implementation of this product remained at high levels, ranging from 77.60% to 87.31%, demonstrating efficient resource management. The formation of Neighborhood Watch Committees for Citizen Security suffered a considerable drop in 2021 and 2022, possibly due to the effects of the pandemic. However, in 2023 a recovery was observed in certain departments, such as Lima, which registered 4,456 committees in 2019 (21.24% of the total) and 2,700 in 2023 (14.82% of the total). Other departments with noteworthy figures are Cusco, Arequipa, and Piura, with more than 1,300 neighborhood watch committees. According to Quispe Condori & Rodríguez Quispe (2023), community organization is a key factor in reducing the perception of insecurity and improving quality of life.

(iii) Investment Projects

Although the budget allocation for projects has increased, execution presents significant challenges. In 2019, only 51.37% of the budget allocated to security projects was executed, but in 2023 this figure improved to 74.70%, indicating a strengthening of investment management. However, Torres Angarita (2014) points out that increased budgets for security policies, as occurred in Quito, do not necessarily improve effectiveness if spending is concentrated on infrastructure without strategic planning. Cases like Lima, which despite having the largest budget allocation for projects, only

executed 60% of these resources. This relates to the Efficiency Theory of Public Spending (Niskanen, 1971), which argues that public institutions may not allocate resources efficiently due to bureaucratic incentives. The total number of projects is 1,265. Lima leads with 198 projects, followed by Cusco (171) and Ancash (99).

- **Active Investments:** Of the 1,265 total projects, 895 are active, representing 70.7%. Despite having an accumulated Public Investment Program (PIM) of 1,253 million soles in active investments, only 63.1% of these resources were executed, highlighting gaps in budget management.

- **Closed and Deactivated Investments:** 317 projects have been closed, representing 25.1%. However, this group includes both completed investments and those that were not finished for various reasons. Additionally, 50 projects have been deactivated, suggesting interruptions in their execution, whether due to duplication, fragmentation, or other factors. Finally, from the perspective of Welfare Economics Theory (Pigou, 1920), the State must correct market failures and negative externalities, such as crime, through interventions that increase social welfare.

Conclusion

The analysis of the impact of public spending on the incidence of crimes and misdemeanors shows that a larger budget does not necessarily guarantee a reduction in crime. At the national level, the Rho correlations between crime incidence and the PIM (0.96) and the accrued funds (0.96) reveal a very strong and positive relationship, indicating that the departments with the highest crime rates are also those that receive and spend the most resources from Budget Program 0030. However, the overall budget execution (accrued funds/PIM) shows a low correlation (0.10), demonstrating heterogeneous variation among departments.

Departments like Moquegua (+223.0% PIM, +34.0% crimes and misdemeanors) and Huancavelica (+222.9% PIM, +86.3% crimes and misdemeanors) experienced a significant budget increase without achieving a reduction in crime, while in Ucayali (+183.4% PIM, -25.3% crimes and misdemeanors) and Callao (+57.7% PIM, -22.0% crimes and misdemeanors) a reduction in crime was observed after a budget increase. Furthermore, external factors such as the COVID-19 pandemic, the country's political instability, and social isolation have influenced the effectiveness of investment implementation on citizen security indicators, which could have limited the expected impact of public policies during the evaluation period.

The analysis relied on secondary data from official records and statistical reports, which may contain underreporting or differences in the classification criteria for crimes and offenses across regions. Furthermore, using departmental-level data limits the ability to capture relevant variations occurring at the district or local level, hindering the precise identification of specific crime patterns and a more accurate evaluation of the effectiveness of public safety spending in smaller territorial areas. In addition, not all crimes and offenses are reported to the authorities, whether due to distrust in the system, fear of reprisals, or the perception that the incident will not be addressed. This creates a gap between actual and recorded crime, affecting the accuracy of official records and, consequently, the study's ability to reflect the true level of crime incidence.

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