

## **To measure or not to measure. The Mexican Case.**

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All societies require to measure crime in order to implement effective public policies to fight it. No efficient government can ignore this fact and National Statistical Offices (NSO's) being by definition the state agencies in charge of producing statistics on relevant social phenomena can not eschew this responsibility. Crime can be no exception to their endeavours and the discussion on this topic should concentrate on the most effective methods to approach the subject. The role of National Statistical Agencies cannot be overstated, as direct producers of information and as coordinators and the source of standards for other state producers of information on crime. The measurement of crime is a complex matter that requires not only the highest standards in statistical production but the use of a varied array of statistical (and geographic) tools. For this information to be useful in the implementation of public policies it must include besides the data on crime itself, that related to the resources and performance of the state institutions charged with the responsibility to combat it as well as to the public perception of their results. Prosecution and Justice Statistics must also be part of this equation. INEGI the Mexican Institute of Statistics and Geography has faced in recent years the challenge to provide Mexican society with relevant information on this topic that may provide a useful frame of reference for the discussion of the role NSO's should assume in the measurement of crime.

Key Words: Public policies, role of NSO's, crime, statistical tools