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**The power of civil society:
An empirical analysis of its political achievements in a dangerous
public sphere.**

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Abstract

Strengthening civil society and increasing citizens' participation in policy-making are widely discussed matters within political science, international relations and sociology. There is abundant scholarship advocating thoroughgoing collaboration between government and citizens, but the literature focusing on Mexico has become much stronger in theorising than testing. Equally, the co-production of policy has been politically debated or attempted, but too infrequently realised across the different levels of government in Mexico's current dangerous democracy. This has given rise to various assumptions on the functioning of the normative wheels of democracy. In the middle of Mexico's rising insecurity, this PhD thesis empirically explores the challenges for civil society's development and citizens' role in policy-making. By focusing on two contrasting cases of government-society collaboration in the sphere of public security, this research contributes to the understanding of policy co-production in young democracies. The core finding is that, although an elite continues to dominate the main channels of public expression and key political negotiations, an engaged citizenry is gnawing at small cracks in Mexico's semi-clientelist system and achieving tangible influence on policy-making. The analyses that underpin this finding shed new light on the complex relationships and inter-dependencies that define the development of civil society, public sphere and governance in Mexico. Furthermore, they close down the gap between '*politics as practice*' and '*politics as theory*' in the study of participative practices in political agenda setting.

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List of abbreviations

CADHAC	Ciudadanos en Apoyo a los Derechos Humanos A.C. (CSO)
CESOP	Chamber of Deputies' Centre for Social and Public Opinion Studies
CEMEFI	Mexican Philanthropy Centre
CISEN	Mexico's Intelligence and National Security Centre.
CNDH	Mexico's National Commission of Human Rights
CONAGO	National Governors' Commission
CSO	Civil Society Organisations
DTO	Drug-trafficking organisation
ENCUP	National Poll on Political Culture
IDB	Inter-American Development Bank
MUCD	Mexico Unido Contra la Delincuencia (CSO)
NGO	Non-Governmental Organisations
OCS	Organised Civil Society
OECD	Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development
PAN	Partido Acción Nacional (political party)
PCC	Police and Crime Commissioner
PGR	General Prosecutor's Office
PRD	Partido de la Revolucion Democratica (political party)
PRI	Partido Revolucionario Institucional (political party)
SEDENA	Mexico's Ministry for National Defence
TSO	Third Sector Organisation
UNAM	Mexico's National Autonomous University
USA	United States of America

Introduction

Security and justice are both foundations of healthy democracies and essential components of public governance.¹ For this reason, in Mexico, a country that became a new democracy just in 2000, but which shortly afterwards established itself as one of the world's most dangerous ones, securing the adequate provision of public security is a priority for government and society. With Mexico's government seeming to be incapable of fulfilling its public security tasks, citizens are currently building on Mexico's incremental democratic openness to challenge the boundaries of society's involvement in public security making and take control of their community. Nevertheless, different from mature democracies, Mexico is immersed in a public security crisis in which criminal groups have captured the incipient democratic and media institutions and are obstructing social activism.²

The purpose of this thesis is to study and expose the challenges that citizens face in their attempts to constitute organised forms of civil society capable of influencing political decisions in Mexico's young and dangerous democracy. Being immersed in extreme conditions of insecurity, Mexicans face very dissimilar conditions for social activism than their counterparts in developed democracies, to the extent that conventional democratic approaches work differently in the country's particular scenario. This is why, this thesis aims to tackle one of the biggest political themes in the 'utterly unique' Mexican case: **the rebirth of civil society and its capacity to influence public security policy in Mexico's dangerous public sphere**. It does so by building on theoretical experimentation and risky research across the study of two distinctive and contrasting cases of government–society cooperation: the First Citizen Summit to *Build a Prosperous and Fair Mexico*

¹ OECD and IMCO, "Strengthening Evidence-Based Policy-making on Security and Justice in Mexico" (Paris, 2012), 5, [https://www.oecd.org/centrodemexico/Strengthening Evidence-based Policy-making Security and Justice.pdf](https://www.oecd.org/centrodemexico/Strengthening-Evidence-based-Policy-making-Security-and-Justice.pdf) (Accessed 22-12-2017).

² Héctor Aguilar, "La Captura Criminal Del Estado," *Nexos* (Mexico City, January 2015), <http://www.nexos.com.mx/?p=23798> (Accessed 22-12-2017).

and the autodefensas vigilante movement. Both of them involved on public security related issues. The analytical focus on the sphere of public security is not only pertinent due to the country's current insecurity scenario, it is also one of the best approaches to bring new light on the importance of what Habermas describes as communication rationality in the generation of socially legitimate, beneficial and effective policies.³

As the available scholarship, based on orthodox theoretical approaches, fails to provide a comprehensive analysis of the emergence of citizen-centric ideals and their impact on policy-making, this thesis applies a more fluid and nuanced approach. Rather than studying the emergence of social demands and the primacy of the state in public policy development as two homogenous but isolated spheres, this thesis analyses them as part of an interrelated dynamic process: both are socially constructed and politically disputed. In this vein, Habermas' public sphere is one of the most suitable frameworks to study the first phases of citizens' involvement in policy generation, whilst McCombs' agenda setting provides the adequate tool to pinpoint the public's influence over political decisions and evidence the extent to which social demands are transformed into public policy.

This thesis is based on the argument that the existence of organised forms of organised civil society, the public pressure they create and the media presence they acquire are not guarantors of citizen-oriented policies, as it tends to be assumed.⁴ In this vein, it intends to illustrate that democratic governance does not always follows from electoral change, and not all the good democratic things go hand by hand, just as Jonathan Fox has already argued.⁵

³ J Habermas, *The Theory of Communicative Action*, 1st Ed. (Boston: Beacon Press, 1981), 86.

⁴ Fay Lomax et al., "Media and Agenda Setting: Effects on the Public, Interest Group Leaders, Policy Makers, and Policy," *Public Opinion Quarterly* 47, no. 1 (1983): 16–35; Michelle Wolfe, B. Jones, and Frank Baumgartner, "A Failure to Communicate: Agenda Setting in Media and Policy Studies," *Political Communication* 30, no. 2 (2013): 175–92.

⁵ Jonathan Fox, "Sociedad Civil y Políticas de Rendición de Cuentas," *Perfiles Latinoamericanos* 13, no. 27 (2006): 43, <http://perfilesla.flacso.edu.mx/index.php/perfilesla/article/view/225> (Accessed 22–12–2017). Jonathan Fox, "The Difficult Transition from Clientelism to Citizenship: Lessons from Mexico," *World Pol*

Through the study of two contrasting scenarios, this research found that dissimilar public sphere set-ups can deter, constrain and mould civil society's organisation and its policy-making impact, from symbolic to substantive political results. However, Mexico's progressive democratic openness, not necessarily favoured by government but promoted by a more educated and critical public sphere, is allowing an engaged citizenry to gnaw at small cracks in Mexico's semi-clientelist political system to exercise a more tangible influence on policy-making. In such a scenario the public does have the capacity to position its demands on the media and political agendas – at least in matters concerning the provision of public security –, however, an elite continues dominating the main channels of public expression and key political negotiations with government. When this domination reaches a point in which the system does not allow for any input from the general public, a government legitimacy crisis arises, politically-radical and violent forms of social discontent emerge, and a redefinition of power relationships takes place.

The implications of this core findings are twofold. Firstly, as illustrated by the First Citizen Summit to Build a Peaceful and Fair Mexico, Mexico's current societal depoliticization is both a consequence of the narrowness of the channels for citizens' participation in politics and an enhancer of an elitist model of social activism. Secondly, citizens' involvement in policy-making is not only desirable, but necessary for the sustainability of a young democracy like Mexico, a condition evidenced by the autodefensas vigilante movement that emerged due to the lack of government attention to citizens' demands and the lack of government-society channels for political collaboration.

46, no. 2 (1994): 152, 155, https://www.jstor.org/stable/2950671?seq=1#page_scan_tab_contents (Accessed 22-12-2017).

1.1 What? The focus of this research.

This thesis does not aspire to unveil the entire black box of civil society development, even less to build a general theory of social policy-making, as this would be – Peter John would say – an unrealistic task.⁶ Nevertheless, with limited research on civil society's impact on policy-making, this research attempts to break with established debates and develop what Amparo Casar and Claudia Maldonado regard as political science's obligated task: to study the social construction of political problems and the citizenry raised policies to solve them.⁷ For this reason, it looks at the utterly unique case of Mexico, a young electoral democracy where: a) the progressive enforcement of political rights has favoured a boom of Civil Society Organisations (CSOs), b) a rising violence has pushed CSOs to get involved in the definition of public security policies, but where c) the lack of rule of law, political disaffection and mistrust in media seems to imperil the rebirth of a politically effective civil society.

In 2000, Mexico's Revolutionary Institutional Party (PRI) lost the presidency against the National Action Party (PAN). It was the first alternation of presidential power in Mexico in nearly 100 years.⁸ Internationally, analysts rushed to say 'Mexico had evolved from being the longest governing authoritarian regime in the world to becoming a functioning electoral democracy.'⁹ With the new

⁶ Peter John, *Making Policy Work* (London: Routledge, 2011).

⁷ Amparo Casar and Claudia Maldonado, "Formación de Agenda y Procesos de Toma de Decisiones: Una Aproximación Desde La Ciencia Política," *Documentos de Trabajo Del CIDE* 207 (2008): 2–4; David Easton, *The Political System: An Inquiry into the State of Political Science.*, 1st Ed. (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1953); Wyn Grant, "Is the Study of Pressure Groups a Fading Paradigm? Paper Delivered at the 60th Annual Conference of the Political Studies Association of the UK, Edinburgh," (Edinburgh, 2010), http://www.psa.ac.uk/journals/pdf/5/2010/325_469.pdf (Accessed 22–12–2017); Adrian Bua, "Agenda Setting and Democratic Innovation: The Case of the Sustainable Communities Act," *Politics* 32, no. 1 (2012): 10–21; Paul Burstein, "The Impact of Public Opinion on Public Policy: A Review and an Agenda," *Political Research Quarterly* 56, no. 1 (2003): 33.

⁸ V. Fox was the first candidate to defeat the PRI after its 71 years in the presidency.

⁹ Roderic Ai Camp, "The Democratic Transformation of Mexican Politics," in *The Oxford Handbook of Mexican Politics*, ed. Roderic Ai Camp (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012), 3–30; Denisse Dresser, "Mexico: From PRI Predominance to Divided Democracy,," in *Constructing Democratic Governance in Latin America*,

government 'the rule of law will prevail, the sins of the past will be punished and Mexico will elude its existential condition as an underdeveloped nation', journalists stated.¹⁰ Nevertheless, as pointed out by Brenton Holmes, building a democracy is a never-ending task, and the price of democratic freedom is eternal vigilance.¹¹ Mexicans soon realised about the truth of this.

Like other Latin American democracies, Mexico now holds competitive and inclusive elections that lead to peaceful alternations of power. However, whilst in its 70 years of rule the PRI constrained antagonistic forces across criminal and corrupt political groups, the new democratic era blurred these stable power relations and broke established chains of allegiance between criminals and a single and united political force. Drawing an analogy between Matthew Flinders' *Explaining Democratic Disaffection* article and Mexico's context, if the early 2000s witnessed the triumph of electoral democracy in Mexico, then the early 2010s appeared wedded not only to a failing democracy, but to a dangerous one.¹² For instance, in 2014 Mexico was 'the western hemisphere's deadliest country for journalists'.¹³ That same year, being a Municipal President in Mexico was the third most dangerous profession in the world, and corruption was so rampant that Transparency International's *Corruption Perception Index* ranked Mexico 103 among 174 countries.¹⁴ In fact, 17 of

ed. Jorge Domínguez and Michael Shifter, 2nd Ed. (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 2003), 321–50; Joseph Klesner, "The End of Mexico's One-Party Regime" (Ohio: Kenyon College, 2003), http://www2.kenyon.edu/Depts/PSci/Fac/klesner/apsa97_Table1.htm (Accessed 22–12–2017); J Diez, *Political Change and Environmental Policy-making in Mexico*, 1st Ed (New York: Routledge, 2012).

¹⁰ M. Baer, "Mexico at an Impasse," *Foreign Affairs* (MEXICO, February 2004), <http://www.foreignaffairs.com/articles/59536/m-delal-baer/mexico-at-an-impasse> (Accessed 22–12–2017).

¹¹ Brenton Holmes, "Citizens' Engagement in Policymaking and the Design of Public Services" (Canberra, 2011), http://www.aph.gov.au/About_Parliament/Parliamentary_Departments/Parliamentary_Library/pubs/rp/rp1112/12rp01#_ftn2 (accessed 22–12–2017).

¹² Matthew Flinders, "Explaining Democratic Disaffection: Closing the Expectations Gap," *Governance: An International Journal of Policy, Administration, and Institutions* 27, no. 1 (2014): 2.

¹³ Reporteros sin Fronteras, "2015 : Periodistas Muertos." (Mexico, 2015), <http://es.rsf.org/el-barometro-de-la-libertad-de-prensa-periodistas-muertos.html?annee=2015> (Accessed 22–12–2017).

¹⁴ Viridiana Rios, "Tendencias y Explicaciones Al Asesinato de Periodistas y Alcaldes En Mexico: El Crime Organizado y La Violencia de Alto Perfi.," in *Las Bases Sociales y Políticas Del Crimen Organizado y La Violencia En México*, ed. Jose Aguilar (Mexico City: CIES, 2012), 389. Peter Smith, "Mexican Democracy in Comparative Politics," in *The Oxford Handbook of Mexican Politics*, ed. Roderic Ai Camp (Oxford: Oxford

its 32 states were regarded as ‘virtual narco-republics’ by scholars like Philip Caputo.¹⁵ With a government that was neither steering nor rowing in public security tasks, new actors aimed to transform the politically passive citizens into a pro-active and influential policy force. In this vein, a reinvigorated organised civil society (OCS) is now attempting to regenerate the social element of the public sphere, gain access to the governmental agenda setting process and take control of their communities, particularly in the sphere of public security.

In theory, this mission should not be difficult. According to the OECD and Mexican think tank IMCO, public security policy must be a joint task: governments should exercise strong leadership in public security provision while responding to a good governance rationale, actively mobilising society against crime and involving actors, at all levels, in the definition of policy.¹⁶ What is more, governments around the globe express their willingness to encourage and facilitate civil society’s involvement in public security policy-making. In the UK, for instance, the current Government has pledged to ‘enable civil society to play a greater role in the running of public services’ and has recognised ‘the value and strengths of civil society to Police and Crime Commissioners.’¹⁷ Nevertheless, these premises assume and function under the existence of a democratic environment and safe socio-political context that allows the development of an ideal deliberative process – as the one envisaged by Stanley Cohen.¹⁸ By ignoring the fact that these conditions are

University Press, 2012), 22; Transparency International, “Corruption Perceptions Index 2014” (Berlin, 2014).

¹⁵ Philip Caputo in Smith, “Mexican Democracy in Comparative Politics,” 22, 90.

¹⁶ OECD and IMCO, “Strengthening Evidence-Based Policy-making on Security and Justice in Mexico,” 6, 7.

¹⁷ Office for Civil Society, “Making It Easier for Civil Society to Work with the State. Progress Update” (London, 2014), 21, https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/287779/2901952_MakingItEasier_CivilSociety_acc.pdf (Accessed 22-12-2017); Home Office and Rt Hon Theresa May MP, “Home Secretary at the Police Reform Summit” (London, 2015), <https://www.gov.uk/government/speeches/home-secretary-at-the-police-reform-Summit> (Accessed 22-12-2017).

¹⁸ Joshua Cohen, “Deliberation and Democratic Legitimacy,” in *The Good Polity*, ed. Alan Hamlin and Philip Petit, 1st Ed. (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1989), 72–75.

not present in every country, not even in all democratic countries, they fail to address the challenges that citizens and bureaucrats face in young and dangerous democracies like Mexico. Therefore, there is an urgent need for evidence-based research that promotes the development of an OCS capable of influencing political decisions in young or non-democratic scenarios.¹⁹

Focusing on the Mexican case, this thesis intends to overcome the lack of systematic research outside the European and US cases, and tackle the lack of public evaluations of the impact of OCS in government actions.²⁰ It aims to address the relationship between a civil society intending to rebirth in Mexico's newly democratic – yet dangerous – public sphere, and its achievements in influencing the political agenda according to the public's needs. The reasons to do this are fourfold.

First, as argued by think tank FUSDA, Mexico is experiencing the progressive awakening of a civil society demanding more social, economic, cultural and political rights.²¹ With Mexico's democratisation in 2000, citizens' participation in the public sphere has rapidly stopped being considered a concession and is now regarded as a public right. This puts important pressure over governmental institutions to manage genuine social needs and to contain – what Pollard and Court describe as – uncivil non-legitimate and non-representative movements.²² Secondly, as citizens'

¹⁹ OECD and IMCO, "Strengthening Evidence-Based Policy-making on Security and Justice in Mexico"; US Department of State, "Merida Initiative," US Department of State, 2017, <https://www.state.gov/j/inl/merida/> (Accessed 22-12-2017); The White House, "U.S. Commitment to Afghanistan," *Rebuilding Afghanistan*, 2005, <https://georgewebush-whitehouse.archives.gov/infocus/afghanistan/us-commitment.html> (Accessed 22-12-2017).

²⁰ For discussion see Alfonso Leon, "La Seguridad Pública y Las Organizaciones Civiles En México," ed. M. Editores, *Veredas*, no. 24 (2012): 104; Teun van Dijk, *News as Discourse* (New Jersey: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, 1988), 6; P. Bernhagen, "Who Gets What in British Politics – and How? An Analysis of Media Reports on Lobbying around Government Policies, 2011–7," *Political Studies* 60 (2012): 558; Wyn Grant, "Pressure Politics: The Role of Pressure Groups," *Political Insight* (London, August 2014), 29, <http://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/10.1111/2041-9066.12055/abstract> (Accessed 22-12-2017).

²¹ In FUSDA, "Las Organizaciones de La Sociedad Civil," *Sociedad En Movimiento* (Mexico City, March 2010), 29, <https://doi.org/ISSN:2007-0101>.

²² Amy Pollard and Julious Court, "How Civil Society Organisations Use Evidence to Influence Policy Processes: A Literature Review" (London, 2005), 9, <https://www.odi.org/sites/odi.org.uk/files/odi-assets/publications-opinion-files/164.pdf> (Accessed 22-12-2017).

trust in the political system is declining, and with the channels for public–political interaction seeming to be unilaterally blocked by government, an increasing section of the population is turning away from politics, whilst another section is reverting to violent means that can lead to a major crisis of government legitimacy and a redefinition of power relationships. Thirdly, little –if any– attention has been given to the analysis of civil society–media–government power interactions in Mexico. Although Mexican theorists tend to presume that public pressure leads to policy change, very few have conducted empirical analyses to validate this argument (see chapter 2), to the extent that no scientific analysis of the hidden politics of social activism in Mexico has been conducted. Fourthly, it is clear that ‘media is not politics, but nowadays it is not possible to make politics without the media’, Esteinou says.²³ However, despite the fact that 73% of Mexicans use media outlets as their main source of political information and that CSOs’ activists acknowledge that media management is an indispensable requisite for influencing public and governmental agendas (see Chapter 5), CSOs still do not develop adequate assessments of their media impact.²⁴ Taking this into account, as well as the insecure socio-political context that prevails in Mexico, this thesis is not only relevant and distinctive, but well timed to assist with the construction of a more politically engaged, representative and influential civil society.

²³ Javier Esteinou, “Hacia La Ciudadanización de Los Medios de Comunicación En México,” *Razón y Palabra* 23, no. NA (2001): NA, http://www.razonypalabra.org.mx/antiores/n23/23_jesteinou.html (Accessed 22–12–2017).

²⁴ D. Stevens and J. Karp, “Leadership Traits and Media Influence in Britain,” *Political Studies* 60 (2012): 788; F. Abundis, *Los Medios de Comunicación En México*, 2006, http://www.amai.org/pdfs/revista-amai/AMAI-13_art8.pdf.

1.2 Why? Thesis' relevance and distinctive theoretical framework.

This thesis is distinctive and valuable because it is one of the first empirical analyses looking at civil society's political influence in Mexico: it allows understanding how different public sphere set-ups mould public-media-government relations and citizens' involvement in policy-making. Focusing on – what Smith regards as – the inimitable Mexican case, it tests bottom-up democratic premises and breaks with some established research patterns.²⁵ In this vein, as 'researchers and policy influencers are often said to inhabit parallel universes, debating the same matters but never fully engaging with each other's work', this thesis differentiates from existing scholarship by not studying civil society as a standalone issue, but as part of a broader struggle over political influence and power.²⁶ Neither does it consider the analysis of the creation of social demands and the primacy of the state in the establishment of public policies as two homogenous but isolated spheres.²⁷ On the contrary, it departs from the premise that these public and governmental spheres are socially constructed and politically disputed, and that the emergence of public demands and generation of public policies must be studied as an interrelated dynamic process where media plays a pivotal role. For this reason, it brings together Jurgen Habermas' Public sphere theory with Maxwell McCombs and Donald Shaw's Agenda setting work through the use of media analyses as a bridge between both theoretical frameworks. By bridging these streams of thinking, this thesis aims to answer: **What does the analysis of public security policy suggest about the rebirth of civil society and its capacity to influence political decisions in Mexico's dangerous public sphere?**

²⁵ Smith, "Mexican Democracy in Comparative Politics."

²⁶ Pollard and Court, "How Civil Society Organisations Use Evidence to Influence Policy Processes: A Literature Review," 4.

²⁷ Based on arguments from, for instance, Fox and Imke Habers. Fox, "The Difficult Transition from Clientelism to Citizenship: Lessons from Mexico"; Fox, "Sociedad Civil y Políticas de Rendición de Cuentas"; Imke Habers, "Democratic Deepening in Third Wave Democracies: Experiments with Participation in Mexico City," *Political Studies* 55, no. 1 (2007): 38–58.

In this vein, as noticed by Amy Pollard and Julius Court, debates around civil society have often focused on the nature of Civil Society Organisations (CSOs).²⁸ For this reason, the studies on the topic have mainly followed two theoretical lines: a) *theories of transition to democracy* or b) *theories of civil society*.²⁹ Despite both spheres being inherently related to the analysis of civil society as a key political actor, both follow an 'inside-out' research perspective. That is, by closely tying, if not equating, the concept of OCS with CSOs, these studies tend to solely look at the CSOs' characteristics, structure and work, but neglect the study of more nebulous forms of activism and their influence over political processes. What is more, by delimiting their scope of analysis, each line of study isolates the processes it studies from other interdependent variables, reason why they provide isolated or non-comprehensive conclusions on the importance of civil society as an agent of political power. On the one hand, the theories of transition to democracy focus on political negotiations between elite-power holders across traditional democratic processes and institutions (i.e. political parties, government and elections), they ignore the importance of other players (e.g. the media) whose existence is vital for an effective democracy. On the other hand, theories of civil society 'have often focused on the nature of the organisations themselves', presuming the existence of a set of rights, democratic institutions and conditions that allow for the flourishing of civil society.³⁰ Therefore, by functioning in an uncoordinated manner, none of these lenses can effectively pinpoint the influence that an OCS has in political processes, even less address the challenges faced by civil society in dangerous democracies.³¹

²⁸ Pollard and Court, "How Civil Society Organisations Use Evidence to Influence Policy Processes: A Literature Review," V.

²⁹ Alberto Olvera, "The Elusive Democracy: Political Parties, Democratic Institutions, and Civil Society in Mexico," *Latin America Research Review* 45 (2010): 78–107; A Olvera, "Civil Society and Political Transition in Mexico," *Constellations* 4, no. 1 (1997): 105–23.

³⁰ Pollard and Court, "How Civil Society Organisations Use Evidence to Influence Policy Processes: A Literature Review," 1.

³¹ Pollard and Court, V.

This situation prevails across the scholarship dealing with the generation of social demands and bottom-up policy-making.³² In this vein, some studies tend to focus on established democratic institutions (i.e. political parties) or look at traditional forms of democratic expression (i.e. electoral processes), leaving aside more nebulous but richer forms of bottom-up democracy.³³ Others state that civil society is the essential component, even trigger of key socio-political changes.³⁴ Yet, only a small group of them go beyond descriptive analyses to provide strong empirical evidence about civil society's specific input in policy changes. More importantly, Walgrave *et al* argue, the majority of 'studies tend to focus on symbolic rather than on institutional political agendas, merely reflecting on policy changes that are largely rhetorical rather than assessing tangible legislative or

³² J Kingdon, *Agendas, Alternatives and Public Policies* (Boston: Little, Brown, 1984), 4.

³³ For instance, the available studies on the agenda setting process in Mexico between 1975 and 2000 (a total of 11 studies) are mainly related to the news coverage of political parties and government institutions during electoral processes. See for instance, Sebastian Valenzuela and Maxwell McCombs, "Agenda-Setting Effects on Vote Choice: Evidence from the 2006 Mexican Election" (Texas, 2007). Olvera, "The Elusive Democracy: Political Parties, Democratic Institutions, and Civil Society in Mexico."; Peter Ward, "De Clientelismo a Tecnocracia: Cambios Recientes En La Gestión Municipal de México," *Política y Gobierno V*, no. 1 (1998), <http://www.politicaygobierno.cide.edu/index.php/pyg/article/view/511> (Accessed 22-12-2017); Joaquín Osorio-Goicochea, "Partidos Políticos, Poder Legislativo y Sociedad Civil En México (Una Correlación Asimétrica)," *Análisis Plural* 1 (2008): 1-15, https://rei.iteso.mx/bitstream/handle/11117/802/AP_2008-1_SEM_Partidos_politicos.pdf?sequence=2 (Accessed 22-12-2017); Alejandro Natal and Carlos Chavez, "The Agenda on Civil Society Studies in Mexico," *Documentos de Discusión Sobre El Tercer Sector* 42 (2007): 9, <http://www.cmq.edu.mx/index.php/docman/publicaciones/documentos-de-discucion/123-dd0420442/file> (Accessed 22-12-2017).

³⁴ See for instance, the works of Alberto Olvera, Shannan Mattiace, Jorge Volpi and Peter Smith. On the one hand, Mattiace, Volpi, Ward and Smith argue that social movements like the student mobilisation of 1968, and the social solidarity that emerged after the earthquake of 1985 promoted Mexico's *transition* to democracy. To the extent that Olvera argues that although the country's democratic achievements have been discursively kidnapped by political parties, the real initiators of these victories were civil society movements³⁴. Olvera, "The Elusive Democracy: Political Parties, Democratic Institutions, and Civil Society in Mexico."; A Olvera, "Las Tendencias Generales de Desarrollo de La Sociedad Civil En México," in *Sociedad Civil, Esfera Pública y Democratización En América Latina*, ed. A Olvera (Mexico: Fondo de Cultura Económica, 2003), 460; Jorge Volpi, *La Imaginación y El Poder, Una Historia Intelectual de 1968*. (Mexico City: Ediciones Era, 1998); Jonathan Fox and Luis Hernandez, "Mexico's Difficult Democracy: Grassroots Movements, NGOs, and Local Government," *Alternatives* 17, no. 2 (1992): 165-208; Ward, "De Clientelismo a Tecnocracia: Cambios Recientes En La Gestión Municipal de México"; Smith, "Mexican Democracy in Comparative Politics," 80; Shannan Mattiace, "Social and Indigenous Movements in Mexico's Transition to Democracy," in *The Oxford Handbook of Mexican Politics*, ed. Roderic Ai Camp, 1st Ed (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012), 824, https://catalyst.library.jhu.edu/catalog/bib_4113908 (Accessed 22-12-2017); Natal and Chavez, "The Agenda on Civil Society Studies in Mexico," 8.

administrative consequences.³⁵ In fact, some studies are now avoiding this important task by simply warning they ‘do not aim to deal with any formal decision-making process by which citizens influence government’s actions.’³⁶

With scholars having become much stronger in their theorising than in their testing, a shift in the research approach is needed: thinking of the rebirth of civil society and its influence in democratic policy-making processes requires more radical ways of theorising. Therefore, in order to break with – what Grant frames as – ‘established debates on political science’, this research builds on theoretical experimentation to produce new empirical evidence that validates, complements and takes forward existing knowledge on civil society influence on policy making.³⁷ Firstly, Habermas’ public sphere explains the emergence and positioning of demands in the social realm: *how, where* and under *which* conditions do members of society form an association to deliberate and engage in matters of common interest, and influence political decisions? Secondly, McCombs and Shaw’s agenda setting permits studying the transfer of salience among the public, media and government

³⁵ Stefaan Walgrave, Michiel Nuytemans, and Lieven De Winter, “Specifying the Media’s Political Agenda-Setting Power.” (Cambridge, USA, 2004), 12, <https://ecpr.eu/Filestore/PaperProposal/ef8cb67a-5ec5-472a-8c43-6e7c7b3cc830.pdf> (Accessed 22-12-2017).

³⁶ See for instance the works of Chavez, Dahlberg and Leon. In ‘The transformation of the Public sphere: Channel of Congress and Public Opinion’, one of the very few studies on the public sphere in Mexico, Chavez provides an interesting and strong argument that serves as starting point for many analyses: ‘democratization depends on the strengthening of organized societal actors and their progressive control over the state and society.’ However, Chavez’s study mainly looks at the government’s communication strategies from the government’s perspective, failing to address how the public sphere –allegedly the main topic of his study– contributes to, and related to, civil society’s empowerment. Dahlberg, on the other hand, clearly limits the scope of his work. And Alfonso Leon proposes not too complete classification of CSOs based on their information and assistencialism practices, ignoring the existence and valuable contribution of CSOs directly involved on advocacy and representation tasks, therefore, the scholarly knowledge produced by over 100 works on the topic (see Pollard and Court’s study). Octavio Ruiz Chavez, “Transformación de La Esfera Pública: Canal Del Congreso y La Opinión Pública” (Mexico City, 2009); L Dahlberg, “The Habermasian Public Sphere: A Specification of the Idealized Conditions of Democratic Communication,” *New Media & Society* 9 (2007): 10; Leon, “La Seguridad Publica y Las Organizaciones Civiles En México,” 98–101; Pollard and Court, “How Civil Society Organisations Use Evidence to Influence Policy Processes: A Literature Review,” 2.

³⁷ Grant, “Is the Study of Pressure Groups a Fading Paradigm? Paper Delivered at the 60th Annual Conference of the Political Studies Association of the UK, Edinburgh,.”

agendas: *how, when* and under *which* circumstances do the media allow key social activists to achieve policy influence? Thus, while some incompleteness here is inevitable, by applying this distinctive theoretical approach this thesis aims to shed some light on the functioning of the public sphere as a mechanism by which civil society can influence the political agenda and participate in the definition of bottom-up public policies.

1.2.1 Research Questions and Hypothesis

The hypothesis of this research is that Mexico’s progressive democratic openness, not necessarily favoured by government but promoted by a more educated and critical public sphere, is allowing an engaged citizenry to gnaw at small cracks in Mexico’s semi-clientelist political system and exercise a more tangible influence on policy-making. Nevertheless, it argues that when the mechanisms for society-government negotiation are abruptly interrupted, a government legitimacy crisis takes place, politically radical and violent forms of social discontent emerge, and a redefinition of power relationships takes place. Building on these premises, this thesis aims to answer the following main question: **What does the analysis of public security policy suggest about the rebirth of civil society and its capacity to influence political decisions in Mexico’s dangerous public sphere?** Furthermore, it seeks to solve a number of secondary questions:

Table 1. Thesis’ secondary questions

What does the analysis of public security policy-making suggest about the rebirth of civil society and the deepening of a bottom-up democratic Mexico?			
Secondary questions	Macro	Bottom-up democracy / the future	How do the processes occurring within the public sphere contribute to the generation of a bottom-up political change? How much power does the public have?
			Is media the surrogate of the public agenda or a mechanism for public domination?
	Micro	Mechanisms / Case Studies / Tools	Do public policy changes obey society’s demands?
			Is a thicker model of democracy, built around social capital, allowing civil society to set the agenda? Or does a top-down process continue dominating the agenda setting of public security policy in Mexico?

1.3 Thesis structure.

Dealing with two interconnected theoretical notions (i.e. the public sphere and agenda setting) and studying two very dissimilar case-studies of civil society's involvement in public security policy making, this thesis is divided into seven chapters, each one addressing key components of this work (Table 2). Chapter one has already provided the Introduction, briefly outlining this thesis' main objects of study, key questions to be addressed and the reasons that make this research both distinctive and well timed. Chapter two provides the Methodological framework. In this vein, simple specifications of linear models tend to be the preferred research method across agenda setting studies, but as Michelle Wolfe *et al*, Stefaan Soroka and other scholars have stated, 'numbers can only tell part of the story.'³⁸ In the particular case of Mexico, where there is limited available information on the topic, a simple awareness of interaction and feedback effects can in fact provide more valuable and comprehensive insights than the scattered quantitative data. Therefore, the methodology applied in this thesis distinguishes itself from available studies by not only relying on either quantitative or qualitative analyses, but on a mix of them that feed into a comprehensive comparative case study method. Chapter three focuses on the Theoretical Framework. Claiming the need for a shift in the research approach towards civil society, bottom-up policy-making and the inherent communication and negotiation practices surrounding them, this section studies and connects the state of the art on public sphere with than on agenda setting studies.

³⁸ Wolfe, Jones, and Baumgartner, "A Failure to Communicate: Agenda Setting in Media and Policy Studies," 180. Soroka, "Policy Agenda-Setting Theory Revisited: A Critique of Howlett on Downs, Baumgartner and Jones, and Kingdon"; Stefaan Walgrave and Peter Van Aelst, "The Contingency of the Mass Media's Political Agenda Setting Power. Towards a Preliminary Theory," *Journal of Communication* 56, no. 1 (2006): 88-109.

Table 2. Thesis structure.

Chapter	Relevance	Question(s) addressed
2. Methodology.	Hallin and Mancini argue current analyses tend to make limited attempts to develop new empirical research and heavily rely on available scholarship. ³⁹ This section is important as it describes this thesis' research methods of theoretical experimentation and risky fieldwork, to challenge orthodox and unorthodox views on the public sphere, agenda setting and OCS political development.	N/A
3. Theoretical Framework.	Existing empirical scholarship fails to address the challenges faced by democratic public spheres and OCS in dangerous democracies. Theoretically, the main lines of research neglect the study of nebulous forms of activism that surround civil society, including the political processes it defines. This section is relevant as it introduces a shift in the research approach to the rebirth of civil society and its influence in democratic policy-making processes.	How do the processes occurring in the public sphere contribute to bottom-up political changes? How much power does the public have? / Is media the surrogate of the public agenda or a mechanism for public domination?
4. Mexico's public sphere and politics: triggering the rebirth of civil society.	April Johnson has illustrated how Westernised theoretical and practical constructs transplanted into countries with less developed traditions of media and civil society research have proved to operate very differently. ⁴⁰ As Jose Tejada has correctly pointed out, 'there are so many discussions about what civil society entails that it is now easier to define what it does not entail.' ⁴¹ Therefore, the relevance of this chapter lies in the fact that it provides the set-up to understand what Smith defines as the utterly unique Mexican case, and delimited this thesis' object of study by defining OCS in Mexico and describing its main involvement in the political sphere so far.	Is a thicker model of democracy allowing OCS to set the agenda? Or does a top-down democratic set-up dominate the agenda setting of public security policies in Mexico?
5. Case Study 1: Causa en Comun: First Summit to Build a Peaceful and Fair Mexico	Building on Chapter 4, this section looks at a stereotypical form of OCS, yet still unseen in Mexico: formally established, legally recognised, following a top-down management structure and conducting thin cooperation with government. ⁴² This section is relevant as it empirically tests existing scholarship on the functionality, relevance and representative character of CSOs in Mexico.	What does the analysis of public security policy suggest about the rebirth of civil society and its capacity to influence political decisions in Mexico's <i>dangerous</i> public sphere? / Do public policy changes obey society's demands?
6. Case study 2: Hopelessness in the public sphere: autodefensas VS crime	OCS tends to be equated to CSOs. ⁴³ This chapter is relevant as it focuses on the political achievements of more nebulous and non-government sanctioned—even illegal—forms of OCS in Mexico. By doing so, it breaks with existing research paradigms and pre-conceptions of citizenry's political effectiveness.	

³⁹ Hallin and Mancini, *Comparing Media Systems*, 16.

⁴⁰ April Johnson, "Ambivalence, Political Engagement and Context," *Political Studies* 62, no. 3 (2014): 502–21.

⁴¹ Jose Tejada, "Las Dimensiones de La Sociedad Civil," *POLIS* 10, no. 1 (2014): 133–56.

⁴² Maria Morera in Garcia J, "Interview to Maria Elena Morera, President of Causa En Comun CSO." (Mexico City, 2013), pt. Minute 23:00; Grupo RadioFormula, "Crean Organizaciones Sociales Frente Común Por Un México Pacífico y Justo," *Grupo RadioFormula*, May 14, 2012, <http://www.radioformula.com.mx/notas.asp?Idn=243415> (Accessed 22–12–2017).

⁴³ See, for instance, the reports produced by the World Bank, in which civil society is equated to CSOs. World Bank, "The Public Sphere, Communication for Governance & Accountability Program" (Washington, 2012), 3–4, http://www.google.co.uk/url?sa=t&rct=j&q=&esrc=s&frm=1&source=web&cd=1&ved=0CEgQFjAA&url=http%3A%2F%2Fresources.worldbank.org%2FEX%2FResources%2FPubSphereweb.pdf&ei=H3wvUlr_FOIw0QX7-YHoDA&usg=AFQjCNHGfXHKfclzDXLeLhQKUs4mO4kfaQ <http://cgservicio>.

Chapter four provides the contextual set-up that surrounds civil society, public sphere and policy-making in the 'utterly unique Mexican case'.⁴⁴ This chapter is key to the understanding of this thesis relevance and potential socio-political implications. It looks at multiple indicators of crime, media freedom and democratic development in Mexico, but also evaluates the role of an active OCS in the development of the country's public sphere.

Chapter five focuses on this thesis' first case study: the First Citizen Summit to Build a Peaceful and Fair Mexico Mexico (from now on, 'the Summit'). As an institutionalised, government-sanctioned and cooperative non-governmental inactive joined by more than 100 CSOs from all over Mexico, the Summit is one of the best case studies to assess CSOs' capacity to represent civil society in the public sphere, influence the media agenda and act as agents of political change. Chapter six looks at the second case study: the autodefensas self-defence movement in Michoacan, Mexico. Intending to develop a contrasting, contemporary and thought provoking research with potential policy implications, this chapter looks at a more nebulous, non-institutionalised, politically antagonistic, even illegal form of organised civil society.

Lastly, chapter seven provides the main conclusions of the thesis. First, it summarises this thesis' main empirical insights and the similarities and differences found between both case studies, translating the theoretical discussions into empirical findings. Secondly, it outlines the original contributions to knowledge that the study represents. Finally, it presents policy recommendations related to government-civil society collaboration and a suggested agenda for future research.

⁴⁴ Smith, "Mexican Democracy in Comparative Politics," 77.

Chapter 2. Methodology.

The main focus of this thesis is the analysis of a re-invigorated civil society and its capacity to influence policy in Mexico, one of the world's most dangerous public spheres and democracies. Intending to answer the question: **What does the analysis of public security policy suggest about the rebirth of civil society and its capacity to influence political decisions in Mexico's dangerous public sphere?**, this thesis follows a multifaceted approach in order to study a large set of variables and the political input of dissimilar actors. This is why, this thesis applies an array of quantitative and qualitative tools that feed into a more comprehensive case study research method.

2.1 Case Studies Selection.

First of all, this thesis acknowledges Huascar Pessali and Richard Rose's arguments: 'policy-making does not follow a one-size-fits-all approach'.⁴⁵ Dealing with the relatively unexplored case of Mexico and its dangerous public sphere, this thesis cannot exclusively rely on existing Eurocentric studies on public sphere or participative democracy. On the contrary, due to its research particularities, this thesis uses *case studies* as its main research method, as it represents a unique tool to learn about real-world behaviour and the meaning of the public sphere in real-world contexts. The case studies method not only permits identifying and using multiple sources of evidence in natural settings, it also increases the reliability of the results and provides more insightful explanations of the social construction of public security policy. More importantly, in the case of agenda-setting analyses like this thesis, Stefaan Walgrave and Peter Van Aelst argue, case

⁴⁵ See, for instance, the works of Huascar Pessali, "Public Policy Design in Developing Societies. Beyond Transplantation," *Journal of Developing Society* 27, no. 1 (2011): 11–28; Richard Rose, "The Job at the Top: The Presidency in Comparative Perspective," in *The Presidency and Public Policy-making*, ed. G Edwards, S. Shull, and Thomas Norman, 1st Ed (Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press, 1985), 3.

studies permit researchers to ‘detangle when and why politicians react to certain types of news coverage and take into account both the amount of attention and the framing of the topic.’⁴⁶

In order to make the best of use of the case study method, this thesis conducted a thorough selection of cases of analysis by delimiting, first, the scope of this research regarding civil society and public sphere. In this vein, whilst ‘civil society’ and public sphere are two broad terms, it is possible to find similarities and coincidences in their empirical application. For instance, the World Bank ties the concept of the public sphere to that of civil society.⁴⁷ Michael Edwards, former Director of Ford Foundation’s Civil Society Unity, also equates ‘civil society to the public sphere’, and recognises that voluntary organisations and media are vital to the latter.⁴⁸ What is more, Luis Reyes states that CSOs are the most recognisable embodiment of society in Mexico’s public sphere.⁴⁹ Building on this, this thesis chose to focus on the study of CSOs, arguably the most tangible expression of civil society in Mexico. To develop an in–depth and innovative analysis that produce new and specialist knowledge, rather than a broad study to deliver generic findings, the researcher decided to focus on two case studies. With 35,000 CSOs registered in Mexico and over 50 of them working on public security related subjects, the researcher conducted an initial filter to identify what he considered were the 8 most influential CSOs working on public security in Mexico in the 2010s:⁵⁰

⁴⁶ Stefaan Walgrave and Peter Van Aelst, “Political Agenda Setting and the Mass Media,” *Politics: Oxford Research Encyclopedias*, 2016, <https://doi.org/10.1093/acrefore/9780190228637.013.46>.

⁴⁷ The World Bank, “The Public Sphere,” Communication for Governance and Accountability Programme, 2009, <https://siteresources.worldbank.org/EXTGOVACC/Resources/PubSphereweb.pdf> (Accessed 22–12–2017).

⁴⁸ An statement that is echoed by James Sater and Nancy Fraser – although Fraser equates civil society with *weak* public sphere. Michael Edwards, “Civil Society,” *Pedagogies for change*, 2005, http://78.31.105.177/~infed/association/civil_society.htm (Accessed 22–12–2017). James Sater, *Civil society and Political Change in Morocco* (London, 2007); Fraser Nancy, “Theorie Der Öffentlichkeit–Strukturwandel Der Öffentlichkeit,” in *Habermas Handbuch*, ed. Hauke Brunkhorst et al. (Frankfurt: Suhrkamp, 2002), 184–155.

⁴⁹ Luis Reyes, “La Ciudadania En Mexico. Un Beve Recuento Historico.,” *POLIS* 9, no. 2 (2013): 113–50.

⁵⁰ According to INDESOL’s last official census (2013), in 2013 there were between 20,000 and 35,000 registered CSOs in Mexico. However, according to public estimations based on multiple data, in 2015 there were 30,674 CSOs in the country. Regarding the number of CSOs working on public security, please refer to OECD and IMCO’s analysis.

- Common Cause (Causa en Comun).
- Mexico United Against Delinquency (Mexico Unido Contra la Delincuencia).
- Stop Kidnapping (Alto al Secuestro).
- Illuminate Mexico (Iluminemos Mexico).
- Mexico Evaluates (Mexico Evalua).
- Mexico City's Citizens Council for Public Security and Justice Provision (CCCDMX in Spanish).
- UNAM – Colectivo de Analisis de la Seguridad con Democracia (UNAM–CASEDE).
- S.O.S Mexico.

After conducting face-to-face interviews with directors and representatives from these 8 CSOs, and having analysed the documentation provided by the organisations themselves, it was noticed that most of them were being involved, either as convenors or participants, in a high-level national forum on public security policy organised by Causa en Comun. Furthermore, the initial filter also revealed that six of them have noticeably reduced their involvement in Mexico's politics (e.g. Iluminemos Mexico), had now a limited focus on public security policies (e.g. UNAM–CASEDE), or lacked interest in contributing to this research (for instance, S.O.S Mexico did not provide any response to further information requests). Taking this into account, the researcher selected two different types of CSOs for this research:

1. Causa en Comun and the First Citizens Summit to Build a Peaceful and Fair Mexico: Causa en Comun and its Director have been two of the most active actors in Mexico's political sphere in the last decade. Due to the national scope of Causa en Comun's programmes as well as the undisputable political importance of the First Citizen Summit to Build a Peaceful and Fair Mexico (i.e. the only 'citizens' forum that has engaged engage all the presidential candidates

Public Policy as defined by Wyn Grant. Based on an annotated bibliography of 5 previous studies on the topic See, Leon, "La Seguridad Publica y Las Organizaciones Civiles En México"; Lorena Cortes et al., "A Snapshot of Civil Society in Mexico, Analytical Report on the CIVICUS Civil Society Index" (Mexico City, 2011), http://civicus.org/images/stories/csi/csi_phase2/mexico_acr.pdf (Accessed 22-12-2017); Lorenzo Fioramonti, "Methodological Note on the CIVICUS' Civil Society Enabling Environment Index (EE Index)" (Mexico, n.d.); Shaila Rosagel, "Dinero y Poder, Anzuelos Del Sistema Para Activistas," *SinEmbargo.Mx*, April 7, 2015, <http://www.sinembargo.mx/07-04-2015/1302704> (Accessed 22-12-2017). Wyn Grant, *Pressure Groups and British Politics* (Great Britain: MacMillan Press Ltd, 2000), 14; María Zuniga, "Activismo Vive Un Boom Gracias a Dinero Público," *SIPSE.COM*, October 19, 2015, <http://sipse.com/mexico/mexico-organizaciones-sociedad-civil-reciben-mas-dinero-publico-174726.html> (Accessed 22-12-2017); INDESOL, "SCP Register of Beneficiaries" (Mexico City, 2013), http://www.indesol.gob.mx/en/web_indesol/Registro (Accessed 22-12-2017); OECD and IMCO, "Strengthening Evidence-Based Policy-making on Security and Justice in Mexico," 39.

and presidents of Mexico's political parties in discussion tables with over 100 CSOs from all over the country), the researcher considered this to be an ideal case-study for this research.

2. Mexico City's Citizens Council for Public Security and Justice Provision (CCCDMX in Spanish): selected due to its –arguable– quasi quango character, capacity to influence public security policy from within the local government structure and key role in large-scale and local (i.e. Mexico City) programmes that have evolved into national security initiatives. Furthermore, from the eight CSOs initially selected, this was the only one not participating in the First Citizens Summit.

Although both CSOs represented interesting and unstudied cases of social activism in Mexico, by the time their selection was being completed, important socio-political changes, including the sudden appearance of a radical form of social activism, took place in Mexico. In this vein, in February 2013, a vigilante or *self-defence* movement (autodefensas in Spanish) emerged in Mexico's state of Michoacan. Being unacknowledged as a legitimate form of social activism by government, but as an exemplar organised civil society movement by academics and the general public, the autodefensas prompted this thesis to adapt to new circumstances, re-evaluate the analytical appropriateness of the CSOs previously chosen and select the most interesting, challenging and thought-provoking cases of civil society activism in Mexico.⁵¹ Therefore, to produce a good contrast thesis that allows understanding the rebirth of civil society and its capacity to influence political decisions in Mexico's

⁵¹ Enrique Guerra, for instance, equated the self-defence movement to an autonomous form of civil society. Similarly, Iliana Rodríguez stated that 'whilst the self-defence groups defied the rule of law, they represented a form of organised civil society defending itself' from organised crime. Senator Marcela Torres (from PAN) declared that 'one of the best examples of citizens' organisation was the *self-defence movement*, integrated by citizens defending their integrity.' In Erick Juárez, "Al Fortalecer a Las Organizaciones de La Sociedad Civil, Se Empodera a La Ciudadanía: Legisladores," *RRC*, March 17, 2014, <http://rendiciondecuentas.org.mx/al-fortalecer-a-las-organizaciones-de-la-sociedad-civil-se-empodera-a-la-ciudadania-legisladores/> (Accessed 22-12-2017); Enrique Guerra, "Las Autodefensas de Michoacán. Movimiento Social, Paramilitarismo y Neocaciquismo," *Política y Cultura* 44 (2015): 7-31, http://www.scielo.org.mx/scielo.php?script=sci_arttext&pid=S0188-77422015000200002 (Accessed 22-12-2017); Iliana Rodríguez, "Michoacán: De La Autodefensa Al Conflicto Armado," *Forbes*, January 15, 2014, <https://www.forbes.com.mx/michoacan-de-la-autodefensa-al-conflicto-armado/#gs.LRCMzaQ> (Accessed 22-12-2017).

dangerous public sphere, the researcher decided to re-focus this thesis into the study of two contemporary, and more importantly, distinct, if not opposing forms of civil activism in Mexico:

1. Causa en Común and the First Citizen Summit to Build a Peaceful and Fair Mexico (as previously selected): a top-down, formally constituted, government sanctioned CSO, with a long record of collaborative interaction with Mexico’s national government.
2. The autodefensas in Michoacan: a more nebulous, bottom-up and semi legal form of civil activism with a regional focus and an antagonistic approach towards government. With sufficient firearms, people and funding, the self-defence groups had the means to expel municipal government officials, challenge the state government authority and proved to be an influential actor in national public security policy-making.

Table 3. Case Studies

Government – Civil Society relation	Scope of influence/ analysis	Actors	Intended socio-political change
<p>Case Study 1: ‘The First Citizen Summit to Build a Peaceful and Fair Mexico’</p> <p><i>Thin</i> cooperation through an institutionalised and government-sanctioned CSO.</p>	National (Mexico)	<p>1.– Citizens organised in institutionalised and government-sanctioned CSOs.</p> <p>2.– Mexico’s national political parties.</p> <p>3.– Office of the President of Mexico.</p>	– To achieve the inclusion of a series of their citizen demands into the political commitments (and actions) of the then Presidential Candidates (and latter President of Mexico) ahead of the 2012 elections.
<p>Case Study 2: The rise of the self-defence groups against government.</p> <p>Antagonistic.</p>	Local (State of Michoacan)	<p>1.– Citizens in the form of ‘Self-defence groups.’</p> <p>2.– Government of the State of Michoacan.</p>	<p>–To expel organised crime from the state and achieve the capture of the leaders of the Caballeros Templarios Drug Trafficking Organisation (DTO).</p> <p>–To be legally recognised as the ‘legitimate providers of public security in their communities.’</p>

Different from most of the literature on the topic, focusing on the usual –and easier to study– cases of institutionalised Civil Society Organisations, by focusing on the Autodefensas and Citizen Summit case-studies this thesis took a riskier but also –expectedly– richer and fulfilling approach. On the one hand, the study of the Autodefensas movement, its organisation and achievements implied undertaking new risks not involved when researching about CSOs located in Mexico’s capital

city such as Causa en Comun and the First Citizens Summit. For instance, travelling to one of the world's riskiest towns, organising interviews with members of criminal groups (as labelled by government) and joining police and military operations against drug-trafficking organisations (DTOs) (see sub-chapter 2.3). However, on the other hand, the researcher expected that undertaking these risks could also lead to find new evidence about the functioning of the public sphere in dangerous environments, and the political achievements of civil society in the face of an allegedly democratic but corrupt government.

Having said that, this thesis also differentiates from existing studies in that it not only looks at *symbolic* political outcomes from civil society activism (e.g. speeches, public questionings, etc.), but also assesses their *substantive* and tangible forms of political influence (e.g. legislative changes or implementation of new public programmes). In order to do so, this thesis looked at four main units of analysis:

- 1) level of public representation/interaction,
- 2) media presence,
- 3) level of political contact and,
- 4) degree of legislative influence.

Considering this and that a single research method 'does not allow uncovering the power relations that permit or prevent groups from effectively affecting policy-making', and that the study of social movements across the public sphere and agenda-setting frameworks is 'better addressed by embracing multiple methods', this thesis applies a set of quantitative and qualitative tools as described in chapters 2.2. and 2.3.⁵²

⁵² Robert Yin, "Case Study Methods," in *Handbook of Complementary Methods in Education Research*, ed. Judith Green, G. Camilli, and Patricia Emlore, 2nd Ed. (London: SAGE Publications, 2006), 111–22; R Yin, *Applications of Case Study Research*, 3rd ed. (London: SAGE Publications, 2012); Bernhagen, "Who Gets What in British Politics – and How? An Analysis of Media Reports on Lobbying around Government Policies, 2011–7," 562; Kevin Carragee and Wim Roefs, "The Neglect of Power in Recent Framing Research," *Journal of Communication* 54, no. 2 (2004): 228. Christina Hughes, "Qualitative and Quantitative Approaches" (Warwick: University of Warwick, 2017),

2.2 Quantitative Analysis.

This thesis builds on the public sphere and *agenda-setting* to study how a re-energised civil society can create public demands, position them into the political sphere and influence the generation of public policies inside the alleged new bottom-up democratic governance in Mexico. With the two lines of thought considering media a main influence, and with the Mexican media being still regarded a powerful tool of political messages, this study develops a quantitative analysis to measure the salience and identify the transmission of agendas between the *public* and *governmental* spheres.⁵³ In this vein, as stated by Joseph Uscinski, existing agenda-setting studies 'do not intend to investigate the influence of the public's agenda over the media's agenda; they merely control for it as a means to buttress the claims of media influence over the audience.'⁵⁴ Similarly, current 'audience-driven-based' studies work under the assumption that audience's concerns drive media content, only explain the effects on that direction and obviate the mutually influential relation among both agendas. Therefore, in order to conduct an innovative and academically valuable research, this thesis builds on Uscinski's work to look for evidence of a causal relationship between the media and public agendas over time. To do so, and conduct a longitudinal time lag study, this research not only builds on news archival records, but also studies poll analyses.

2.2.1 News archival records' analysis.

Firstly, to analyse media coverage patterns, this thesis solely studies printed media reports due to three main reasons:

http://www2.warwick.ac.uk/fac/soc/sociology/staff/academicstaff/hughes/researchprocess/quantitative_and_qualitative_approaches.docx (Accessed 22-12-2017).

⁵³ José Antón, "¿Por Qué Sobreviven Los Periódicos?," *Forbes*, September 4, 2014, <https://www.forbes.com.mx/por-que-sobreviven-los-periodicos/#gs.1UUIx5c> (Accessed 22-12-2017).

⁵⁴ Joseph Uscinski, "When Does the Public's Issue Agenda Affect the Media's Issue Agenda (and Vice-Versa)? Developing a Framework for Media-Public Influence," *Social Science Quarterly* 90, no. 4 (2009): 797.

- ❖ According to the available scholarship, traditional and newer media formats still reference newspapers.⁵⁵
- ❖ In the last decade, the frequency in which Mexican citizens read newspapers has increased in the last decade, whilst TV-viewing and radio-listening for political information has declined.⁵⁶
- ❖ Despite the importance of the ‘new media’, recent studies show that traditional media continues dominating the public sphere.⁵⁷ In fact, in the specific case of Mexico 92% of citizens do not use the internet to learn about political matters.⁵⁸

Considering this, this thesis looks at three of the most influential newspapers in Mexico (i.e. El Universal, Reforma and El Norte) each one with a different ‘social personality’ and political line.⁵⁹ Furthermore, due to the particularities of case-study 2 (i.e. the Autodefensas in Michoacan, see Chapter 6), it also analyses the news reports of Cambio de Michoacan newspaper. For case study 1 (i.e. Causa en Comun and the First Citizen’s Summit), the research focused on those news reports published between the 1st of January 2010 (i.e. when the movement started to be organised) and the 31st of December 2014. For case-study 2 (i.e. self-defence groups), it looked at the news reports from the 1st of March 2011 (i.e. date of the first news report on autodefensas) to the 31st of June 2015, when –government argued– the organised movement came to an end.

Secondly, as each one of the newspapers uses a different electronic filing system, this research developed a systematised – and replicable – analysis through the use of *Lexis Nexis* news database

⁵⁵ Temple, for instance, argues that many bloggers are only ‘bleating in cyberspace’ as ‘independent citizen journalism news sites do not offer radical alternatives to the mainstream media.’ ‘Most blogs – Temple continues – are banal nonsense read by a handful of people.’ In Mick Temple, “Civic and Audience Empowerment: The Role of Citizen Journalism,” in *Agents of (Dis)Empowerment Media and Civic Engagement*, ed. R Scullion et al. (London: Routledge, 2013).

⁵⁶ INEGI/Ministry of the Interior, “Quinta ENCUP 2012” (Mexico City, 2012), http://www.encup.gob.mx/en/Encup/Quinta_ENCUP_2012 (Accessed 22-12-2017).

⁵⁷ Jose Candon, “Movimientos Sociales, Internet y Medios de Comunicación,” *Estudios Sobre El Mensaje Periodístico* 18, no. 2 (2010): 683; Alejandro Cardenas, “Agenda-Setting 2.0: En Las Estrategias... Pero No de La Sociedad Civil,” *Forbes*, November 23, 2015, <https://www.forbes.com.mx/agenda-setting-2-0-en-las-estrategias-pero-no-de-la-sociedad-civil/> (Accessed 22-12-2017).

⁵⁸ INEGI/SEGOB, “ENCUP 2008: Resultados de La Encuesta Nacional Sobre Cultura Política y Prácticas Ciudadanas” (Mexico, 2008).

⁵⁹ Verenise Sanchez, “Los 10 Periódicos Online Más Influyentes En México,” *Merca2.0*, June 13, 2013, <http://www.merca20.com/los-10-periodicos-mas-influyentes-en-mexico/> (Accessed 22-12-2017).

(for the national newspapers) and Cambio de Michoacan’s newspaper electronic and physical databases.⁶⁰ Using *Lexis Nexis* database this research identified *N* number of articles with a headline containing descriptive elements linked to both case–studies (see Table 4). However, reading through them, a *u* number of results were not related to this thesis’ case studies.⁶¹ Hence, an additional control analysis was conducted to improve the accuracy of the analysis of media salience (*n*) for each case study ($N - u = n$). By only considering those ones related to this thesis, a total of 10,854 (8,823 on autodefensas and 2,031 on Causa en Comun) news reports were analysed to study media salience of social and governmental actions across time (see Chapters 5 and 6). Having cleaned the newspaper articles database, this research built on Yin and Abrajano and Branton’s work to transform the news reports’ descriptive and qualitative elements into quantifiable data that allows measuring media salience and summarising the logic, sense and relation of each case study with this thesis’ main research question.⁶²

Table 4. Search–terms for media salience analysis

* Search-terms marked with a *star* (*) denote *fixed terms* that needed to be contained in the news results in

Case of Study	Combination 1 (Public agenda)			Combination 2 (Political agenda)		
<i>Thin cooperation: First Citizens’ Summit (Common Cause)</i>	Causa en Común*	Agenda Ciudadana (First Citizen Summit)	Propuestas (Proposals)	Políticos (Politicians)	Candidatos (Political candidates)	Propuesta Ciudadana* (Citizens’ proposals)
<i>Antagonism Autodefensas’ (Self–defence groups)</i>	Autodefensas*	Michoacán*	Grupos armados (Armed groups)	Gobierno (Government)	Secretario (Minister)	Autodefensas* (Self–defence groups)

order to be considered in the study. The other search phrases were used as ‘and/or’ in each one of the searches. Using *Lexis Nexis* database and software.

⁶⁰ For more information refer to <https://www.nexis.com/> and <http://www.cambiodemichoacan.com.mx/>.

⁶¹ For instance, on case–study 1 the *Lexis Nexis* database provided multiple results containing the search term “Causa en Comun”, however, the news reports were not related to the First Citizen Summit. On case–study 2, Cambio de Michoacan’s search engine retrieved numerous articles containing “autodefensas” on their headlines, but they were related to similar social movements taking place across Central America, not in Michoacan (this thesis’ main topic of analysis).

⁶² J Dunaway, M. Abrajano, and R. Branton, “Agenda Setting, Public Opinion, and the Issue of Immigration Reform” (San Diego, 2007); Yin, *Applications of Case Study Research*, 132.

Although the media coverage analysis here described provides a good starting point to identify part of the reasons behind public opinion, perceptions and demands on public security related issues, it does not reveal the hidden politics of government–society interaction in the definition of public security policy. Therefore, to enrich its quantitative element, this research made use of additional analytical tools, including poll analysis, and qualitative methods like focus groups and semi–structured interviews (see sub–chapter 2.3).

2.2.2 Poll Analysis.

In order to assess the feasibility of civil activism and its impact on public security policy-making it is not sufficient to analyse the media’s representations of citizen movements, it is eminently necessary to study and fully understand the political culture that prevails in Mexico. This is why, this thesis made use of, and analysed multiple datasets from different polls on convergent topics, including:

- ❖ *National Poll on Insecurity (ENSI)* (in 2005, 2009, 2010). With an average of 70,200 answers each year, it provides useful information on criminal activity across Mexico, particularly on the black figure of crimes.⁶³
- ❖ *National Poll on Political Culture and Citizen Practices (ENCUP)* (from 2001 to 2012), providing data on citizens’ (i.e. +18 years old) political participation in Mexico.⁶⁴
- ❖ *Continuous National Poll on Public security Perception (ECOSEP)* (April 2009 to June 2013). With an average of 2,336 families interviewed each year (all interviewees being 18 years old or older), it evaluates people’s *perceptions* of insecurity.⁶⁵

⁶³ INEGI, “No Encuesta Nacional Sobre Inseguridad (ENSI)” (Mexico City, 2010), <http://www.inegi.org.mx/est/contenidos/proyectos/encuestas/hogares/especiales/ensi/default.aspx> (Accessed 22–12–2017).

⁶⁴ INEGI, “ENCUP Resultados de La Encuesta Nacional Sobre Cultura y Prácticas Ciudadanas 2008” (Mexico, 2008), <http://www.encup.gob.mx/> (Accessed 22–12–2017).

⁶⁵ INEGI, “Encuesta Continua Sobre La Percepción de La Seguridad Pública (ECOSEP)” (Mexico City, 2014), <http://www.inegi.org.mx/est/contenidos/proyectos/encuestas/hogares/regular/es/ecocep/default.aspx> (Accessed 22–12–2017).

- ❖ *National Poll on Urban Public security (ENSU)* (September 2013 to December 2014). A quarterly poll conducted across just one year that substituted the ECOSEP poll, focusing solely on highly populated urban areas and on citizens 18 years old and older.⁶⁶
- ❖ *National Poll on Victimization and Perception on Public Security (ENVIPE)* (from 2011 to 2014). Replacing the ENSU to allegedly comply with international methodological standards.⁶⁷
- ❖ *National Polls on Political Culture (ENCUP)*, and the monthly *Continuous Polls on Perception of Public Security (ECOSEP)*, measuring society and politicians' perceptions on *politics, insecurity and government efficiency*.
- ❖ the *National Polls on Victimization and Public Security (ENVIPE)*, conducted on an annual basis from 2011 to 2014.

This part of the quantitative research posed important data limitations, though. For instance, different from the U.S.A., where government and multiple NGOs have historically conducted monthly polls in different matters; in Mexico polls are conducted on an irregular basis (e.g. ENCUP), or have been substituted by new ones following different methodologies. This not only impedes a consistent sampling, but also makes of accurate historical comparisons a difficult task to achieve. Taking this into account, as well as the fact that existing literature heavily relies on contingency tables, time-series and, Michelle Wolfe *et al* say, 'simple specifications of linear models' that do not permit uncovering the subtler parts of the agenda setting and bottom-up policy-making processes,⁶⁸ this research implemented what is considered is a more complete analytical approach. In this vein, in order to avoid falling in the common error of 'making theoretical assumptions based

⁶⁶ INEGI, "Encuesta Nacional de Seguridad Pública Urbana (ENSU)" (Mexico City, 2014), <http://www.inegi.org.mx/est/contenidos/proyectos/encuestas/hogares/regulares/ensu/default.aspx> (Accessed 22-12-2017).

⁶⁷ INACIPE, "Encuesta Nacional de Victimización y Percepción Sobre Seguridad Pública (ENVIPE)" (Mexico City, 2014), <http://www.inegi.org.mx/est/contenidos/proyectos/encuestas/hogares/regulares/envipe/> (Accessed 22-12-2017).

⁶⁸ Additionally, Yue Tan and David Weaver, who have systematically applied a quantitative approach to their work, have also regarded their findings as 'simple speculations about the order in which the three agendas influence each other.' Yue Tan and David Weaver, "Local Media, Public Opinion, and State Legislative Policies," *International Journal of Press/Politics* 14, no. 4 (2009): 454, 470; Wolfe, Jones, and Baumgartner, "A Failure to Communicate: Agenda Setting in Media and Policy Studies," 180; Soroka, "Policy Agenda-Setting Theory Revisited: A Critique of Howlett on Downs, Baumgartner and Jones, and Kingdon," 771. Walgrave and Van Aelst, "Political Agenda Setting and the Mass Media."

[solely] on data, as if all people and situations were the same',⁶⁹ this thesis builds on Walgrave and Van Aelst, Soroka and Wolfe *et al's* work to also develop the following set of interconnected qualitative analyses that allow identifying interactions, feedback effects and policy windows.⁷⁰

2.3 Qualitative analysis.

2.3.1 Semi-structured interviews.

In addition to the quantitative methods previously described, this research made use of elite interviews, as they represent a unique mechanism to learn from longings and experiences from those ones making, and those ones being affected by the politics here studied. In this vein, the researcher initially aimed to conduct 25 interviews:

- Eight CSOs' representatives: This group was part of the eight initially selected CSOs (see Chapter 2.1.) and was selected based on their level of presence in national media, perceived influence in national policy-making and participation in high-level political Summits on public security policy. However, as the research evolved, the list of pre-selected interviewees also changed (see Table 5 for the final list). These interviews provided first hand and up-to date (although not necessarily the most accurate) information on some of the most pressing societal demands in the sphere of public security.
- Five Senators and Deputies member of the Congress' commissions on public security: Different from the few existing studies on the topic, like Rogelio Hermosillo's work, this thesis did not focus on the Presidential figure and its impact in policy-making. On the contrary, considering that 'Mexico's constitution makes of Congress the most powerful actor in law-making,'⁷¹ it looked at the perceptions and actions of the Congress' Parliamentary Commissions on Public Security towards citizens' involvement in public security making.⁷²

⁶⁹ Steve Hilton, Scott Bade, and Jason Bade, *More Human : Designing a World Where People Come First*, 1st Ed. (WH Allen, 2015), sec. Government.

⁷⁰ Wolfe, Jones, and Baumgartner, "A Failure to Communicate: Agenda Setting in Media and Policy Studies"; Soroka, "Policy Agenda-Setting Theory Revisited: A Critique of Howlett on Downs, Baumgartner and Jones, and Kingdon"; Walgrave and Van Aelst, "Political Agenda Setting and the Mass Media."

⁷¹ Benito Nacif, "Policy-making under Divided Government in Mexico," 2003, 3, <http://citeseerx.ist.psu.edu/viewdoc/download?doi=10.1.1.472.9021&rep=rep1&type=pdf> (Accessed 22-12-2017).

⁷² Rogelio Hermosillo, "Desarrollo de La Institucionalidad Pública Para La Participación de Las OSC En Políticas Públicas," in *Agendas Ciudadanas Para El Fortalecimiento de La Sociedad Civil*, 1st Ed. (Mexico City: Iniciativa Ciudadana y Desarrollo Social, Incide Social, A.C., 2007).

- 12 news reporters covering the Autodefensas and First Citizens Summit case–studies. This would allow to identify and evaluate the role of the media as a mediator figure between bottom–up and top–down democratising forces. More importantly for this research, this would allow to contrast how key players in each sphere (politicians, activists, media and citizens) defined and perceived civil society’s effectiveness in each one of the case studies – information that is obviated through pure quantitative research.

In order to conduct such interviews, this research built on Ricardo Bucio *et al*’s and Nick Fox and William Harvey’s’ work to pursue and arrange one to one meetings via e–mail and telephone.⁷³ Telephone interviews were discarded as, as noticed by Nick Fox and William Harvey, it is difficult to secure their appropriate recording and, therefore, their adequate *a posteriori* analysis.⁷⁴ Having said this, securing all the initially aimed interviews proved to be particularly difficult, most especially in the case of politicians as they systematically rejected the interview requests for such a sensitive topic. Nonetheless, this research managed to conduct a total of 24 interviews with politicians, opinion makers and civil society leaders (see Table 5).

Table 5. List of interviewees.

Politicians			
Name	Political Party	Post	Date
1)Deputy Elizabeth Oswelia Yáñez Robles	<i>Partido Accion Nacional</i>	Secretary of the Legislative Commission on Public Security.	4 October 2013
2)Deputy Ana Isabel Allende Cano	<i>Partido de la Revolución Democrática</i>	Secretary of the Legislative Commission on Public Security.	29 October 2013

News Reporters			
Name	Media	Code Name in Thesis	Date
1)Juan Perez	BBC	Juan Perez	13 January 2014

⁷³ Ricardo Bucio, Moises Rodriguez, and Ana Maria Sanchez, “Fondos Publicos a Organizaciones de La Sociedad Civil,” in *Agendas Ciudadanas Para El Fortalecimiento de La Sociedad Civil*, 1st Ed. (Mexico City: Iniciativa Ciudadana y Desarrollo Social, Incide Social, A.C., 2007), 152; Nick Fox, “Using Interviews in a Research Project” (Sheffield, 2009); William Harvey, “Strategies for Conducting Elite Interviews,” *Qualitative Research* 11, no. 4 (2011): 431–41.

⁷⁴ Fox, “Using Interviews in a Research Project”; Harvey, “Strategies for Conducting Elite Interviews.”

2)Co–editor1**	Uruapan local newspaper**	CO1	27 and 29 January 2014.
3)Jorge Villalpando	El Universal / Al Jazeera	Jorge Villalpando	15 January 2014
4)Deputy Director1**	Michoacan local newspaper**	DD1	28 January 2014
5) Raul Lopez Mendoza (murdered in Sept 2014)	Cambio de Michoacan	Raúl López	28 January 2014
6) Pablo Madriz Rojas (deceased in Sept 2013)	<i>La Ranchera</i>	Pablo Madriz	23 November 2012

**Due to security risks, the interviewees explicitly requested their anonymity.

CSOs' representatives			
Name	CSO / Institution (Post)	Code name in the thesis	Date
1)Lisa Sanchez	<i>México Unido Contra la Delincuencia</i> (Programme Coordinator)	Lisa Sánchez	10 October 2013
2)Alejandro Martí	S.O.S. México (President)	Not included	4 November 2012
3)Elías Kurí	<i>Iluminemos México</i> (Director)	Kurí	27 November 2012
4)María Elena Morera	Causa en Comun (President)	Morera	4 November 2012
5)Luis Wertman	<i>Consejo Ciudadano de Seguridad Pública de la Ciudad de México</i> (President)	Not included	6 November 2012
6)Natalia Armijo	CASEDE	Not included	23 November 2012
7) Homero Tapia Diaz	Mexico Unido Contra la Delincuencia (Coordinator of the government collaboration programme).	Homero Tapia	22 November 2012
8) Edgar Baltazar	Causa en Comun (Manager, Programme for Citizenry Accompaniment to Police).	Edgar Baltazar	29 September 2014

All semi–structured face–to–face interviews, of 1 hour each on average, were conducted in the interviewees' office, some of them were recorded (depending on the interviewees' preference), in

order to create a trustable environment where they felt free to speak openly. Each one of the Interviewees was asked about his/her objective, utility and input towards state and society, opinion with regards to the relation between OCS and government, and policy proposals related to the two case studies (See Annex 1). Each interview was transcribed and analysed through *NVIVO* software.

Having said this, it is necessary to acknowledge at least two facts related to the use of the information collected through the elite-interviews method. First, as argued by Catherine Pope and Nicolas Mays, 'what people say might not necessarily be what they do.'⁷⁵ By dealing with the politically controversial and sensitive matters of public security and bottom up-democracy, there is a risk that, on the one hand, civil society representatives could fall in the trap of providing misleading information, or exaggerating their political impact, in an effort to support their own existence. On the other hand, whilst government officials of the political party(ies) in power are propense to supply positive pictures of government acting, those in opposition tend to provide negative accounts of government achievements. Therefore, the researcher needed to be cautious when using the information obtained through the above-mentioned interviews. Secondly, as pointed out by Prof. Michael Temple and Dr. Matthew Bishop, focusing the interviews on senior politicians, newspaper editors and Directors of CSOs could only reinforce the views of the Mexican elite in the country's established top-down model of policy-making. In this vein, it is unfortunate to state that in Mexico's scenario of political apathy (if not anti-politics), similar to that found in the UK by Paul Fawcett, Matthew Flinders *et al.*, citizens' passivity in public affairs (excluding social media experiences) has facilitated an inevitability of elites, where the elite does not encourage mass participation and where important decisions are being made at the highest levels.⁷⁶ Therefore, as

⁷⁵ Catherine Pope and Nicholas Mays in Jo Moriarty, "Qualitative Methods Overview" (London, 2011), 10, http://eprints.lse.ac.uk/41199/1/SSCR_Methods_Review_1-1.pdf (Accessed 22-12-2017).

⁷⁶ Paul Fawcett et al., eds., *Anti-Politics, Depoliticization and Governance.*, 1st Ed (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2017).

this thesis seeks to analyse and understand how policy decisions are being made, it found it indispensable to take into account the opinions from – what could be regarded as – Mexico’s power elite: they (i.e. CSOs’ leaders) are the ones who have the financial capacity to organise social movements or manipulate political demonstrations, who define the continuity, expansion or shrinking of civil liberties (i.e. lawmakers), and the ones who – it has been argued – are capable of shaping, if not defying public opinion (i.e. journalists). Considering this unavoidable caveat, in order to prevent privileging particular insights over others as well as the elitization of this research, this thesis built on additional non–elite interviews (conducted between 2013 and 2014). Due to the sensitivity of the issue and the security risks that citizens faced when publicly expressing their views on the matter, it was only possible to conduct one focus group and a few one–to–one interviews with citizens in Michoacan:

1. Vicar Gregorio Lopez, Apatzingan’s Vicar, and speaker of the Autodefensas movement.
2. Member 1 of the Self–defence groups (SD1 from now on).**
3. Member 2 of the Self–defence groups (SD2 from now on).**
4. Focus group with five citizens from Apatzingan, Michoacan (FC1 from now on).**

**Note: Due to security risks, the interviewees explicitly requested their anonymity.

Nonetheless, each one of them provided first–hand data and inside knowledge on the structure, functioning and achievements of the autodefensas case–study, one of the most nebulous forms of citizens activism in Mexico’s recent history. Furthermore, in order to avoid the use of potentially biased information collected through elite–interviews, this thesis implemented complementary methods for data validation like direct observation through field work (see Chapter 2.3.2).

Lastly, it is necessary to state that during the time this thesis was written, two of its valuable contributors (i.e. Journalist Raul Lopez Mendoza and Journalist Pablo Madrid Rojas) lost their lives,

and others subsequently requested their anonymity due to security concerns.⁷⁷ Therefore, it is necessary to make sensible decisions about the information to be made public.

2.3.2 Fieldwork: direct observation in a risky environment.

The previous sub-chapters have described some of the research methods and tools applied in this work. For instance, similar to existing literature on the topic, this thesis builds on media accounts of citizens' involvement in political discussions, national polls on citizens' perceptions of insecurity and other reports from Mexican think tanks. Notwithstanding the value of the data obtained through this methods, Steve Hilton is correct when stating that 'no set of data can substitute the intimated, nuanced knowledge that a policymaker should internalise by going out and experiencing the complexity of the world' where politics is taking place, Steve Hilton says.⁷⁸ To date, though, the existing analyses on Mexico's public security problems make limited attempts at new empirical research.⁷⁹ This is why, this thesis aims to make a distinctive contribution to the field by providing new evidence that informs public debates, but also challenges common assumptions of government-civil society interactions in policy-making, and one of the main routes to achieve this goal is through developing a more context-specific approach that captures the opinions not only of those who are making politics, but also of those who will be affected by their policies.

For this reason, for Case Study 1 (i.e. the First Citizen Summit) the researcher travelled to Mexico City to experience and understand the security context in which the Summit was organised and took place. For example, which were the main social challenges, facilities provided or constrained

⁷⁷ Francisco Castellanos, "Hallan Muerto a Reportero Gráfico Del Diario 'Cambio de Michoacán,'" *Proceso*, September 21, 2014, <http://www.proceso.com.mx/382697/hallan-muerto-a-reportero-grafico-del-diario-cambio-de-michoacan> (Accessed 22-12-2017); Redacción, "Michoacán: Muere En Accidente Periodista Que Presenció Asesinato de Diputado," *Proceso*, September 15, 2013, <http://www.proceso.com.mx/352878/michoacan-muere-en-accidente-periodista-que-presencio-asesinato-de-diputado> (Accessed 22-12-2017).

⁷⁸ Hilton, Bade, and Bade, *More Human : Designing a World Where People Come First*, sec. Government.

⁷⁹ Hallin and Mancini, *Comparing Media Systems*, 16.

imposed by government, or citizens' attitudes towards the Summit? For Case Study 2, the autodefensas *vigilante movement*, where there is very limited academic scholarship on the matter, the researcher went out into the real world to blend in with the local communities affected by the armed movement. Across four weeks (12th–24th May 2013 – 19th to 31st January 2014) the researcher lived with journalists in the city of Apatzingan, joined public security officials during their reconnaissance missions across the towns of Nueva Italia and Uruapan, Michoacan, Mexico; and met with local citizens to understand their main needs and perceptions of bottom-up policy-making at a municipal and state levels. This fieldwork allowed the researcher to go beyond obtaining mediated – and limited – representations of reality, to actually produce new information on: a) the socio-political conditions under which the autodefensas movement emerged, b) the impact that the autodefensas had on citizens and government decisions, and c) the role of government, media and civil society in the conflict.

Overall, the unique blend of quantitative and qualitative research methods applied in this thesis not only permits analysing the 'software' (i.e. content, meaning and reasoning) of social action in politics, but also its 'hardware' component (i.e. actions and mechanisms) in policy-making. More importantly, the conjunction of these analytical methods represents one of the most suitable mechanisms to link and study the relationship between Public sphere and Agenda setting theories in policy-making, something that very few researchers have attempted to do.⁸⁰

⁸⁰ Some of the limited works on the matter include that from David Meyer and Sidney Tarrow. David Meyer and Sidney Tarrow, *The Social Movement Society*, ed. David Meyer and Sidney Tarrow (Oxford: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, Inc., 1996), 31.

Chapter 3. Theoretical Framework.

This chapter details and analyses the state of the art in relation to two of the most relevant theoretical discussions through which scholars seek to understand the relationship between the public and political spheres, i.e. Habermas' Public Sphere and McCombs and Shaw's Agenda Setting frameworks. To do this, it departs from two major arguments:

1. Public sphere: Public debate across an engaged citizenry is an essential component of both the public sphere and bottom-up policy-making, and media's acting in these processes is of vast importance.
2. Agenda setting: Social, media and government agendas are mutually influenced. Media, however, is a key determinant mediator. Therefore, the more salient a matter is to the media, the more it will be to the public (sphere) agenda and the more responsive government will be.

This chapter is important in that it critically analyses existing westernised theoretical generalisations on civil society development, democratisation and media effects, as they have proved to operate very differently in dissimilar environments.⁸¹ For instance, the vast scholarship on media and civil society is mainly focused on the United States, France, Great Britain and Germany cases, nevertheless, Daniel Hallin and Pablo Mancini argue, there is a tendency to apply it in countries with less developed traditions of media research.⁸² With 'few theoretical attempts having been made to investigate potential linkages between a broad range of theories on agenda setting and policy creation', even less to test them in young democracies in developing countries like Mexico, this chapter builds on two theoretical lenses: the public sphere and agenda setting theories.⁸³ Whilst this thesis does not attempt to create a grand theory of public policy, it does aim

⁸¹ Johnson, "Ambivalence, Political Engagement and Context," 518.

⁸² Surprisingly, the authors themselves focus their research on the usual cases of Europe and U.S.A. Daniel Hallin and Paolo Mancini, *Comparing Media Systems: Three Models of Media and Politics* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2004), pp. 1–20.

⁸³ Christoph Knill and Jale Tosun, *Public Policy: A New Introduction* (New York: Palgrave MacMillan, 2012), 285.

to advance in the understanding of the production of social demands, their communication to the political sphere and transformation into public policy by government institutions.

3.1. Public sphere

The idea of a communal, civil or popular life has been at the core of political analyses throughout time. Aristotle, for instance, stated that man is by nature a political animal and that all persons achieve the highest sense of purpose to the polis by means of their fullest possible engagement in it. Cicero envisaged the notion of a *res publica*, where the people's political involvement impacted on the discussion and implementation of ideals of justice, equality and democracy. Contemporary scholars like Manuel Castells, Eamonn Callan and Catherine Martin, continue acknowledging the importance of forums for political engagement in the development of modern societies.⁸⁴ Therefore, the analysis of Mexico's and any other contemporary public sphere requires understanding its connection to the basic principles of democratic and inclusive public discussions, civil society's development and public-government interactions, all of them connected through the media.

3.1.1 The defining foundations of the public sphere

The public sphere emerged and, Habermas says, had its golden age in the XVIII century.⁸⁵ With the State apparatus beginning to absorb socio political functions and responsibilities, and citizens' financial contributions becoming indispensable for its survival, the public felt the need to restrain the State's power and develop its capacity to demand governmental accountability. This not only

⁸⁴ Cathie Martin and Duane Swank, *The Political Construction of Business Interests: Coordination, Growth and Equality*, ed. Margaret Levi (Mexico City: Cambridge University Press, 2012); Eamonn Callan, *Creating Citizens: Political Education and Liberal Democracy* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2003).

⁸⁵ Habermas, *The Theory of Communicative Action*, 86.

moved the decision-making power from an the absolute ruling monarch to the nation–state institutions, but also promoted the appearance of new forms of political participation.⁸⁶ Furthermore, Celia del Palacio argues, the emergence of coffee houses and the invention of printing favoured the creation and dissemination of knowledge and opinion.⁸⁷ Citizenry gradually stopped being defined by terms of ownership and social class, and progressively became engaged in politics and started fighting for more civil rights.⁸⁸ With increasing public discussions among ordinary people (i.e. every tax payer) in a common space, separated and independent from the state, a public sphere started to flourish.

The public sphere, therefore, emerged as the link between communities and polities, where members of society started to understand themselves, form an association –not constituted by its political structure– to deliberate, discuss and engage in matters of common interest, and produce a common mind, public opinion, or public agenda about them.⁸⁹ However, it should not only be regarded as a communicative practice, it goes beyond, as it encompasses and intends to put the State in touch with the needs of society, and vice versa. It is the space where society reaffirms its leadership, control or predominance over the State:

‘It is the space of communication of ideas and projects that emerge from society and are addressed to the decision makers in the institutions of society.’⁹⁰ It allows ‘ordinary people to become involved in making decisions about how a country should be run.’⁹¹ It is the only channel by

⁸⁶ Celia Del Palacio, “Esfera Pública y Prensa: Inicios de Periodismo En Guadalajara (1809–1835),” *Comunicación y Sociedad* 31 (1997): 131.

⁸⁷ Del Palacio, 131.

⁸⁸ J Habermas, *The Structural Transformation of the Public sphere: An Inquiry Into a Category of Bourgeois Society*. (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1989).

⁸⁹ Nitoiu, “The European Public Sphere: Myth, Reality or Aspiration?,” 28; Stuart Hall et al., *Policing the Crisis. Mugging, the State and Law and Order.*, ed. Jock Young and Paul Walton, *Policing the Crisis* (London: The Macmillan Press Ltd, 1978), 63, <https://colectivociajpp.files.wordpress.com/2012/08/stuart-hall-etc-policing-the-crisis-mugging-the-state-and-law-and-order-critical-social-studies-1978.pdf> (Accessed 22–12–2017); a. Linklater, “Public Spheres and Civilizing Processes,” *Theory, Culture & Society* 24, no. 4 (July 1, 2007): 31–37, <https://doi.org/10.1177/0263276407080091>.

⁹⁰ Dahlgren, *Television and the Public sphere: Citizenship, Democracy and the Media*, 8.

⁹¹ D Alan McKee, *The Public sphere: An Introduction* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2005), 4–8, 7.

which citizens can shape the policies of the state and the development of society as a whole.⁹²

Therefore, Cristian Nitoiu and Hans-Jörg Trenz consider the public sphere a central feature of any democracy, 'a promoter of good and accountable governance.'⁹³ It is the communication structure – Charles Taylor would say 'common space' – 'where anybody with a certain degree of knowledge and a critical capacity participates in public discussions, deliberates without being subject to coercion and contributes to the formation of public opinion to set what is just for the general interest and influence political decisions' –an opinion also echoed by Alan McKee.⁹⁴ In other words, the public sphere is where the public agenda is created.

In sum, the notion, definition and scope of the public sphere has evolved throughout time and contexts. Whilst, during the XVII century the idea of 'public' was almost a synonym of 'state-related' or 'public authority', 100 years later it involved a bourgeoisie vision including only an enlightened minority, or literate-educated strata. Currently, Habermas states, it is understood as, and it is formed by, a larger group of uneducated people, to the extent that it has become a certain type of plebeian public sphere.⁹⁵ Notwithstanding the variations on its understanding and scope of expression, it is undeniable that the basis of the public sphere is a top-down democratic development that recognises the existence of an autonomous society. Many arguments accompany

⁹² Manuel Castells, "The New Public Sphere: Global Civil Society, Communication Networks, and Global Governance.," *Annals* 616 (2008).

⁹³ Nitoiu, "The European Public Sphere: Myth, Reality or Aspiration?"; Hans-Jörg Trenz, "The Unknown Player in European Integration," in *Media, Democracy and European Culture*, ed. I Bondebjerg and P. Madsen (Bristol: Intellect, 2008), 49–64.

⁹⁴ World Bank, "The Public Sphere, Communication for Governance & Accountability Program"; Miguel Angel Lara, "Effective Participation in Latin America: From Extralegal to Legal Mobilization. The Challenges Ahead.," *Razón y Palabra* (Mexico, February), http://www.razonypalabra.org.mx/democracia_sustentable/01_DemoSust_feb.pdf (Accessed 22–12–2017); Charles Taylor, *Modern Social Imaginaries* (Durham, N.C: Duke University Press, 2008), 83.

⁹⁵ S Schwarzkopf, "The Statisticalization of the Consumer in British Market Research, C.1920–1960'," in *Statistics and the Public sphere: Numbers and the People in Modern Britain, c. 1800–2000*, ed. Tom Crook and Glen O'Hara (London: Routledge, 2011), 144; Habermas, *The Structural Transformation of the Public sphere: An Inquiry Into a Category of Bourgeois Society.*, 18, 213; Taylor, *Modern Social Imaginaries*, 87.

and support this statement. Carl Boggs, for instance, states that the public sphere is the supreme space where ‘social movements and transformative politics, civic discourse and an engaged citizenry’ converge with emancipator visions and emergent forms of self–governance; two of the main engines and characteristics of a bottom–up and participative democracy’.⁹⁶ For this, however, other democratic conditions, need to co–exist:⁹⁷

- 1) Aligned to what Peter Dahlgren considers the ‘civic culture’, Nitoiu and Trezn state that ‘information should be free’.⁹⁸
- 2) For a ‘citizenly raised’ decision to be valid, it must be assured that everyone affected by it can understand and accept the consequences of its observance.⁹⁹
- 3) In order to guarantee the above, government should be an active promoter of open citizen debates.¹⁰⁰ This, as the functions, institutions and instruments of the public sphere *de facto* ‘spelled out by law’, as it is law who sets the basic rights concerning the sphere of the public.’¹⁰¹

Similarly, Habermas and Cohen describe a sort of ‘ideal deliberative process’ involving the following key aspects:¹⁰²

- 1) *Ideal speech situation*: all speakers should enjoy an equal opportunity to speak; the exchange of arguments should be free, equal, plural and inclusive and, in principle, any deliberation should be considered procedurally democratic, fair and legitimate.
- 2) *Discourse ethics*: Impartial deliberations should justify positions by means of arguments, be open to the participation of other

⁹⁶ Carl Boggs, *The End of Politics. Corporate Power and the Decline of the Public sphere* (New York: The Guilford Press, 2000).

⁹⁷ Bua, “Agenda Setting and Democratic Innovation: The Case of the Sustainable Communities Act,” 14.

⁹⁸ Dahlgren, *Television and the Public sphere: Citizenship, Democracy and the Media*.

⁹⁹ Judith Bessant, “The Political in the Age of the Digital: Propositions for Empirical Investigation,” *Politics* 34, no. 1 (2014): 33–44; Bua, “Agenda Setting and Democratic Innovation: The Case of the Sustainable Communities Act,” 14.

¹⁰⁰ Claes Vreese, “The European Union as a Public Sphere,” *Living Reviews in European Governance* 2, no. 3 (2007).

¹⁰¹ Vreese and Habermas in Habermas, *The Structural Transformation of the Public sphere: An Inquiry Into a Category of Bourgeois Society.*, 83; Vreese, “The European Union as a Public Sphere.”

¹⁰² J Habermas, *Between Facts and Norms: Contributions to a Discourse Theory of Law and Democracy* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1996), 304–8; Cohen, “Deliberation and Democratic Legitimacy,” 72–75.

deliberators, be truthful, frame arguments in terms of the common good and aim to eventually achieve rational consensus.

3) *Free and reasoned agreement among equals.*

These conditions or processes indicate that – firstly – in order to influence, force concessions, or make a change in agreements and actions from the ruler; citizens, organised in society, need to be exposed to and be capable of exchanging, rational–critical, but also antagonistic arguments. Therefore, with only a very limited number of citizens having direct access to political actors, the media becomes ‘the best proxy and location of expression of the public sphere’, even its ‘chief institution’, Hall *et al* argue.¹⁰³ In other words, the media becomes the main accessible source of ‘information on public affairs and discussions.’¹⁰⁴ This is why, Claes Vreese argues, ‘any study of the public sphere should have the media as an inevitable component.’¹⁰⁵ Secondly, for the public sphere to develop, it is not sufficient that citizens passively receive information, there needs to be an engaged citizenry and citizens need to create their own public agenda. They need to identify problems across the information they receive, amplify their social relevance and dramatize them in order to engage expressive action, appeal to the generality of the population and champion common sense from technocrats and bureaucrats.¹⁰⁶

¹⁰³ Hall et al., *Policing the Crisis. Mugging, the State and Law and Order.*

¹⁰⁴ Mick Temple, “A Forum for Frtuitcakes and Fascists: The Saviour of Mainstream Journalism,” in *The End of Journalism: Industry, Technology and Politics*, ed. Alec Chalres (Oxford: Peter Lang, 2014), 7; Jacobs and Townsley, *The Space of Opinion, Media Intellectuals and the Public sphere*, 63; Hall et al., *Policing the Crisis. Mugging, the State and Law and Order.*, 8, 63; Paul Lazarsfeld, Bernard Berelson, and Hazel Gaudet, *How the Voter Makes up His Mind in a Presidential Campaign*, 1st Ed. (New York: Columbia University Press, 1944); Habermas, *The Structural Transformation of the Public sphere: An Inquiry Into a Category of Bourgeois Society.*, 85; S Splichal, *Public Opinion, Developments and Controversies in the Twentieth Century* (New York: Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield, 1999), 23; Trenz, “The Unknown Player in European Integration,” 54.

¹⁰⁵ Vreese, “The European Union as a Public Sphere,” 8.

¹⁰⁶ Benjamin Moffitt and Simon Tormey, “Rethinking Populism: Politics, Mediatization and Political Style,” *Political Studies* 62 (2014): 391; Bessant, “The Political in the Age of the Digital: Propositions for Empirical Investigation.”

Yet, these processes presuppose the existence of democratic top–down and bottom–up forces that trigger and facilitate the rise of an energetic society capable of working alongside government in policy decisions. Part of this assumes the prevalence of an independent press providing ‘an agenda that fosters enlightened democratic participation and citizenry.’¹⁰⁷ A media that fulfils what Stefaan Walgrave *et al*, Roger Cobb and Elder Charles would see as its *raison d’être*: provide unbiased newsworthy information, educate the people and connect the public with the political sphere as part of a cyclical process of reinforcement of the public sphere.¹⁰⁸ Conditions that seem perfectly adequate in ‘free’ and full democracies like the UK, home country to the second most trusted news source in the world, where civil rights are fully respected, almost 9% of the economically active population (EAP) work in the third sector and were media freedom ranks among the top best 40 countries in the globe.¹⁰⁹ However, in developing, partially free and flawed democracies the panorama is a different one. In Mexico, civil society is so constrained that less than 0.5% of its EAP works in the not-for-profit sector, media freedom is ranked as one of the worst in the world and the main news outlets are perceived are considered to be Latin America’s second

¹⁰⁷ Roger Cobb and Elder Charles, “The Politics of Agenda Building: An Alternative Perspective for Modern Democratic Theory.,” *Journal of Politics* 33, no. 4 (1971): 909; Walgrave, Nuytemans, and De Winter, “Specifying the Media’s Political Agenda–Setting Power.,” 4.

¹⁰⁸ Cobb and Charles, “The Politics of Agenda Building: An Alternative Perspective for Modern Democratic Theory.,” 909; Walgrave, Nuytemans, and De Winter, “Specifying the Media’s Political Agenda–Setting Power.,” 4.

¹⁰⁹ Ranked ‘free’ by freedom house, regarded a ‘full democracy’ by The Economist and placed number 38 out of 180 countries in media freedom by Reporters Without Borders in 2017. Freedom House, “Freedom in the World” (Washington, 2017), <https://freedomhouse.org/report/freedom–world/freedom–world–2016> (Accessed 22–12–2017); Reporters without Borders, “2016 World Press Freedom Index” (Paris, 2017), <https://rsf.org/en/ranking#> (Accessed 22–12–2017); The Data Team, “The Economist Intelligence Unit’s Democracy Index” (London, 2017), <http://www.economist.com/blogs/graphicdetail/2017/01/daily–chart–20> (Accessed 22–12–2017); Salamon Lester, Wojciech, and Sokolowski, *Global Civil society: Dimensions of the Nonprofit Sector*, ed. Johns Hopkins Center for Civil Society, 1st ed. (Baltimore: Kumarian Press, 2004), <http://www.icnl.org/research/resources/assessment/global–civil–society–index.pdf> (Accessed 22–12–2017). Amy Mitchell and Rachel Weisel, “Political Polarization & Media Habits” (Washington, 2014).

most officialism media.¹¹⁰ Cases like Mexico, thus, have led to criticisms of the effectiveness of a public sphere.

3.1.2 Empirical challenges and criticisms to established theoretical notions.

Important empirical and theoretical arguments present important challenges to the development of a public sphere like the one described in the previous sub-chapter. Some of the most important ones include:

- 1) The *formal* rules of the old public sphere are now part of the *informal* ones of the contemporary public sphere.
- 2) The commercialisation of the media could lead to elite monologues.
- 3) Opinion leaders not challenging but contributing to the inevitability of the elites.

3.1.2.1 *The formal rules of the old public sphere are now part of the informal ones of the contemporary public sphere.*

Although it is true that the notion of the public sphere has expanded throughout time (i.e. in terms of who can and is capable of being part of it), it seems that the *formal* rules of the old public sphere are now part of the *informal* ones of the contemporary public sphere. In this vein, political discussions, Carl Boggs says, ‘have always been [and continue to be] the domain of elites, quite remote from the life rhythms of ordinary citizens.’¹¹¹ While in the XVII century only those propertied –or in Mexico’s case those who knew how to read and write– were able to participate in public

¹¹⁰ Ranked ‘partly free’ by freedom house, ‘Flawed democracy’ by The Economist’ and placed number 149 out of 180 countries in media freedom by Reporters Without Borders in 2017. Redaccion, “Latinobarómetro 2016. México Pierde Confianza En Los Medios, En Los Políticos y El Presidente,” *SinEmbargo.Mx*, September 2, 2016, <http://www.sinembargo.mx/02-09-2016/3087706> (Accessed 22-12-2017); The Data Team, “The Economist Intelligence Unit’s Democracy Index”; Freedom House, “Freedom in the World”; Reporters without Borders, “2016 World Press Freedom Index”; Lester, Wojciech, and Sokolowski, *Global Civil society: Dimensions of the Nonprofit Sector*.

¹¹¹ Boggs, *The End of Politics. Corporate Power and the Decline of the Public sphere*.

debates; in the XXI century, Werner Holly states, the same power elites continue dominating the flow of political communication, debates and the public sphere.¹¹² Bureaucrats and the deputies of the State continue being the political actors *par excellence*. With better access to political participation schemes, Dan Bulley and Victor Perez–Díaz argue, these actors leave the secondary players (e.g. peasants, workers, masses) with only limited access to public opinion.¹¹³ Referendums, popular votes and consultations by which citizens expect to decide the fate of major issues are already dominated by these rich, powerful and established political actors, Todd Donovan says.¹¹⁴ For this reason, Manuel Castells says, the notion and impact of citizenry has been reduced to election periods which – going back to Perez–Díaz and Matthew Crozat’s work – are nevertheless a blunt instrument of political participation.¹¹⁵ They are shaped by political interest groups with the power of narrowing the available political options at their convenience, Castells says.¹¹⁶ A condition that becomes even more pronounced in countries with fragile democratic institutions like Mexico, where key political –and exclusionist– players continue occupying a privileged role in defining the country’s economic and political agendas.¹¹⁷ Therefore, contrary to Coleman, Hall, Taylor and Akman’s arguments (see Section 3.1.1) it seems that, as stated by Peter Dahlgren, ‘the role of the

¹¹² Werner Holly, “Tabloidisation of Political Communication in the Public Sphere,” in *Handbook of Communication in the Public Sphere*, ed. Ruth Wodak and Veronika Koller (Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 2010), 318; Del Palacio, “Esfera Pública y Prensa: Inicios de Periodismo En Guadalajara (1809–1835),” 140.

¹¹³ Dan Bulley, “Producing and Governing Community,” *Politics: Special Issue on Security and the Politics of Resilience* 33, no. 4 (2013): 270; Victor Perez–Díaz, *State, Bureaucracy and Civil society. A Critical Discussion of the Political Theory of Karl Marx New Studies in Sociology* (NJ: Humanities Press, 1978), 9.

¹¹⁴ Wyn Grant, *Pressure Groups, Politics and Democracy in Britain*, 2nd editio (Hertfordshire: Harvester Wheatsheaf, 1995), 1; Todd Donovan, “Direct Democracy: Lessons from the United States,” *Political Insight* (London, November 2014), 27, <http://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/10.1111/2041-9066.12072/full> (Accessed 22-12-2017).

¹¹⁵ Perez–Díaz, *State, Bureaucracy and Civil society. A Critical Discussion of the Political Theory of Karl Marx New Studies in Sociology*; Matthew Crozat, “Are the Times A–Changin’? Assessing the Acceptance of Protest in Western Democracies,” in *The Social Movement Society: Contentious Politics for a New Century*, ed. David Meyer and Sidney Tarrow (Oxford: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, Inc., 1998), 282.

¹¹⁶ Castells, “The New Public Sphere: Global Civil Society, Communication Networks, and Global Governance,” 79; Crozat, “Are the Times A–Changin’? Assessing the Acceptance of Protest in Western Democracies,” 59.

¹¹⁷ Roderic Ai Camp, “Mexican Political Elites in a Democratic Setting,” in *The Oxford Handbook of Mexican Politics*, ed. Roderic Ai Camp, 1st Ed (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012), 824.

public is currently being displaced by private and government forces, and *the* public sphere is in decline.¹¹⁸

Regarding the media's input in the democratic development of the public sphere and the 'triangular relation' between democracy, public opinion and media of which Octavio Ruiz talks about, Perez-Díaz and Richard Sparks state that a free unrestricted press plays a prominent role in the public sphere and in any modern society.¹¹⁹ In fact, both argue, the media is 'one of the main ways in which our kind of society talks about itself and its future.'¹²⁰ It is 'the most tangible and immediate expression of political attention to the public sphere,'¹²¹ it influences, structures, and shapes public opinion, legitimises different patterns of behaviour and rules within the 'political public sphere.'¹²² Nevertheless, there is not always a positive linkage between media development and the strengthening of the public sphere. In fact, contemporary studies point towards the existence of a restrictive media, with predetermined outcomes, acting in detriment of the public sphere. Temple, for instance, argues that the media has passed from being a 'provider of information' and an 'educator or instructor' of the public, to 'a dealer of public opinion', 'tickling the public' and –Habermas would say– allowing privileged private interests to invade the public

¹¹⁸ Dahlgren, *Television and the Public sphere: Citizenship, Democracy and the Media*, 8.

¹¹⁹ Richard Sparks, "Entertaining the Crisis: Television and Moral Enterprise," in *Crime and the Media: The Post-Modern Spectacle*, ed. David Kidd-Hewitt and Richard Osborne (London: Pluto Press, 1995), 50; Perez-Díaz, *State, Bureaucracy and Civil society. A Critical Discussion of the Political Theory of Karl Marx New Studies in Sociology*, 25; Ruiz Chavez, "Transformación de La Esfera Pública: Canal Del Congreso y La Opinión Pública."

¹²⁰ Sparks, "Entertaining the Crisis: Television and Moral Enterprise," 50; Perez-Díaz, *State, Bureaucracy and Civil society. A Critical Discussion of the Political Theory of Karl Marx New Studies in Sociology*, 25; Ruiz Chavez, "Transformación de La Esfera Pública: Canal Del Congreso y La Opinión Pública."

¹²¹ Dahlgren, *Television and the Public sphere: Citizenship, Democracy and the Media*.

¹²² Nitoiu, "The European Public Sphere: Myth, Reality or Aspiration?," 30; S Bentivegna, "Politics and New Media," in *Handbook of New Media: Social Shapings and Consequences of ICTs*, ed. L. Lievrouw and Livingstone (SAGE Publications, 2002), 55; L Jeffries, "Language in Conflict: The Politics Behind the Rhetoric," *Political Insight* (London, March 2013), 29, <http://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/10.1111/2041-9066.12009/abstract> (Accessed 22-12-2017).

sphere¹²³. With media being ‘the field of cultural production most susceptible to money and power’, elite groups are now also capable of developing a ‘top down’ flow of political opinion, and Mexico is clear example of this.¹²⁴ Although there are 297 public channels across the country, only 8.9% of TV viewers regard them as their preferred one(s), whilst the private media duopoly, with over 532 channels across Mexico (i.e. 94% of the commercial channels in Mexico), dominates the population’s preferences.¹²⁵ With the preponderance of commercial channels, Mexican scholars and politicians have expressed their concern about the media’s capacity to ‘manipulate public opinion’ and provide ‘disguised political propaganda.’¹²⁶

3.1.2.2 . *The commercialisation of the media could lead to elite monologues.*

In its constant search for accurate, up-to date and relevant information, media tends to give preponderance to the opinions of those in high-status and powerful socio-political positions who, it is assumed, have more accurate and specialised information. Nonetheless, by recruiting the powerful, Jessica Erbe, Peter Madsen and others argue, media reproduces and reinforces the

¹²³ Habermas, *The Structural Transformation of the Public sphere: An Inquiry Into a Category of Bourgeois Society.*, 185; Temple, “Civic and Audience Empowerment: The Role of Citizen Journalism,” 233–47.

¹²⁴ Bessant, “The Political in the Age of the Digital: Propositions for Empirical Investigation”; Temple, “Civic and Audience Empowerment: The Role of Citizen Journalism”; R Benson and E Neveu, *Bourdieu and the Journalistic Field*, ed. Rodney Benson and Erik Neveu (Cambridge: Polity, 2005), <https://doi.org/10.1177/0196859906287771>; Bulley, “Producing and Governing Community.”

¹²⁵ Zocalo, “Quiénes, Cuántos y En Dónde Controlan La Televisión Mexicana,” *Zocalo*, November 3, 2011, <https://mediocracia.wordpress.com/2011/11/03/quienes-cuantos-y-en-donde-controlan-la-television-mexicana/> (Accessed 22–12–2017); Ruy Alonso, “9 Datos Sobre El Consumo de TV En México,” *El Economista*, August 11, 2016, <http://eleconomista.com.mx/industrias/2016/08/11/9-datos-sobre-consumo-tv-mexico> (Accessed 22–12–2017).

¹²⁶ Claudia Sheinbaum, “La Réplica Es Un Derecho Social, Plantean Las Adelitas a Televisa,” *La Jornada*, April 12, 2008, <http://www.jornada.unam.mx/2008/04/12/index.php?section=politica&article=006n1pol> (Accessed 22–12–2017); Rocío Galarza, “Clase Política y Medios: Explorando El Fenómeno de La Publicidad Política Encubierta En México,” *Revista Mexicana de Ciencias Políticas y Sociales* 1, no. 221 (2014): 51–76, http://ac.els-cdn.com/S0185191814708153/1-s2.0-S0185191814708153-main.pdf?_tid=14c269e2-02ab-11e7-83ed-00000aab0f6b&acdnat=1488832126_e02bf146ac6f0ad1bacd26b8abd08d3d (Accessed 22–12–2017).

existing structure of power.¹²⁷ This not only makes of the already powerful the primary definers of public discussions, but also produces serial monologues between elite groups rather than a real dialogue between all actors.¹²⁸ As a result, Bessant argues, the elite groups are capable of developing a top-down flow of political opinion, promoting or championing a specific view of politics and economics.¹²⁹

These arguments not only dispute those who ensure that ‘the role of the press is always to challenge dominant ideologies’ and that ‘media has certain duties within democracy.’¹³⁰ They also show that in systems where far more people receive opinions than define them, a public sphere cannot produce anything else than what Habermas describes as a ‘quasi-public sphere’.¹³¹ There is, therefore, a clear need to reflect on the understanding and study of the public sphere, its socio-political effects and scope, and the players that conform to it and interact within it, particularly when studying policy-making processes in relatively unstudied political scenarios like Mexico. It is necessary to question whether the public sphere acts as a method of enlightenment (linking communities and polities), or as a control mechanism over the disadvantaged through simulacrum of political engagement – as argued by Temple, Conaghan and Mancini. Consequently, it is

¹²⁷ Jessica Erbe, “What Do the Papers Say?, How Press Reviews Link National Media Arenas in Europe,” *The Public* 12, no. 2 (2005): 77; Peter Madsen, “Intellectuals, Media and the Public Sphere,” in *Media, Democracy and European Culture*, ed. I. Bøjebjerg and P. Madsen (Bristol: Intellect, 2008), 261.

¹²⁸ Habermas, *The Structural Transformation of the Public sphere: An Inquiry Into a Category of Bourgeois Society.*, 213; Conaghan, *Fujimori’s Peru, Deception in the Public sphere*, 21; Jacobs and Townsley, *The Space of Opinion, Media Intellectuals and the Public sphere*, 58.

¹²⁹ This is the reason why scholars, such as Bessant, considering that the ‘internet sponsored deliberative democratic imaginary’ as an alternative as, from her insight; *it complements formal political systems that are dominated by elite political classes*. Bessant, “The Political in the Age of the Digital: Propositions for Empirical Investigation.”

¹³⁰ Temple, “A Forum for Fruitscakes and Fascists: The Saviour of Mainstream Journalism.”

¹³¹ Habermas, *The Structural Transformation of the Public sphere: An Inquiry Into a Category of Bourgeois Society.*, 244, 248.

mandatory to consider the mutually influential relations across a variety of players, including civil society itself, which, Thomas Risse argues, can also fall into the trap of an inevitability of elites.¹³²

3.1.2.3 . *Opinion leaders not challenging but contributing to the inevitability of the elites.*

Although no study on the subject has been conducted in Mexico, according to Risse's analyses on 'European transnational identities and public spheres', opinion leaders – regarded by society as part of the non-political community and independent from entrenched groups – tend to consume and respond more to media reports than average citizens. By doing so, Risse argues, they inadvertently become 'socially legitimate transmission agents', or interpreters of the media, shaping the public sphere in accordance to the messages they receive and seize from media and the powerful groups behind them.¹³³ With the media and social activists being immersed in this vicious circle, where elite defines the information shared, it seems that influencing the public sphere is almost an unattainable task for the disadvantaged groups. Therefore, it is imperative for this thesis to explore whether the disadvantaged citizens and the 'non-unified' social movements can influence the public sphere in Mexico as elite does (see Chapters 5 and 6).

Having analysed the evolution of the public sphere throughout time, as well as pinpointed the main challenges for its adequate functioning as an influential force over the public and government agenda, the next sub-chapter contextualises this theoretical analysis by looking at the few studies on the public sphere that have been conducted in Mexico.

¹³² T Risse, *A Community of Europeans? Transnational Identities and Public spheres* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2010).

¹³³ Risse, 114. A condition reaffirmed by Klapper, Lazarsfeld, Berelson and Katz, who found that those more involved in public deliberations are the ones with the highest level of media consumption. E Katz and P Lazarsfeld, *Personal Influence: The Part Played by People in the Flow of Mass Media Communications*, 1st Ed. (New York: Free Press, 1955); Joseph Klapper, "The Effects of Mass Communication," in *Foundations of Communications Research*, ed. F. Lazarsfeld and B Berelson, 1st Ed. (Michigan: University of Michigan, 1963), 51.

3.1.3 Studies on the public sphere in Mexico.

Mexican scholars of the public sphere have attempted to study some of the matters outlined in the previous section. Nonetheless, by conducting isolated studies that focus on singular processes (e.g. communication practices) or actors (e.g. CSOs), their conclusions do not permit understanding the relation between the public sphere, a rebirth of civil society and the development of a bottom-up democratic governance.

To begin with, Celia Del Palacio’s work provides an interesting historical assessment of the public sphere in the City of Guadalajara, Mexico, between 1809 and 1835. Recognising that the notion of public opinion is linked to the public sphere, Del Palacio describes how during the XIX century media regarded itself as the ‘speaker, representative, even creator of public opinion’ in Mexico.¹³⁴ During the 1800s the printer was, she says, ‘the tribune for ideological combat’ in Mexico. It was through news journals that outrage against the establishment and citizen involvement in the battle for Independence were instigated and coordinated, but at the same time, it was through these specialised texts that an informal but entrenched distinction was created between non-readers and readers, actors and spectators (Table 6):

Table 6. Media: differentiating between inhabitants and citizens in Mexico’s public sphere.

Readers: who use media as an instrument for opinion formation and faction consolidation.	Non-readers
Public: where thinking and reasoning are necessary conditions.	Multitude: anyone empathetic with the cause.
Actors: those attempting to directly influence the course of political events, identify problems, propose solutions and mould others’ opinions.	Spectators are those who follow the actors’ decisions, and whose acts are aligned to them.

Source: Author’s own elaboration with information from Del Palacio, “Esfera Pública y Prensa: Inicios de Periodismo En Guadalajara (1809–1835),” 124.

¹³⁴ Del Palacio, “Esfera Pública y Prensa: Inicios de Periodismo En Guadalajara (1809–1835),” 124.

Building on the importance of the media as information disseminator but also as trigger of debates and organiser of the public sphere –at least during times of Independence; Del Palacio concludes that the Mexico of the XIX century was divided in two main groups: a) *the people*, forming ‘the plebs’, and b) *government* owned by ‘the patricians’, the most illustrious, richest, and socially influential members.¹³⁵ Through her analysis, Del Palacio’s study provides an interesting picture of the development of the public sphere of Mexico of the XIX century. Her conclusions on the degree of citizens’ involvement and importance in the public sphere, depending on their level of understanding and usage of the media, represent an interesting point of departure for this thesis: whilst the notion and scope of the public sphere in Mexico have evolved throughout time, it seems that Mexicans have not yet transcended their role as spectators to become active citizens in policy-making processes.

In contrast to Del Palacio, Octavio Ruiz focuses on contemporary Mexico, offering a brief comparative assessment of the public sphere’s communication function. Ruiz’s work is important as it tacitly recognises some of the theoretical pillars of this thesis:

- a) ‘talking about public opinion without referring to Habermas and his model’, is almost impossible.¹³⁶
- b) civil society and public opinion affect the usefulness and effectiveness of public policies, and ‘democratisation depends on the strengthening of organised societal actors and their progressive control over state and society.’¹³⁷

Maria Varela interestingly followed a different path by focusing on the socio–political freedoms and limitations surrounding the public sphere in Mexico. Looking at women’s civil and political empowerment, Varela states that equal gender participation in the public sphere in Mexico is still

¹³⁵ Del Palacio, “Esfera Pública y Prensa: Inicios de Periodismo En Guadalajara (1809-1835).”

¹³⁶ Ruiz Chavez, “Transformación de La Esfera Pública: Canal Del Congreso y La Opinión Pública,” 8.

¹³⁷ Ruiz Chavez, “Transformación de La Esfera Pública: Canal Del Congreso y La Opinión Pública.”

regarded a concession rather than a right.¹³⁸ By comparing the levels of education, poverty and political participation between men and women, Varela argues that although Mexico's current legal framework has been designed to topple the barriers for women's political participation, informal practices sustain political inequality. Varela's work is relevant for this thesis in that it illustrates the importance of inclusive channels of socio-political participation in the consolidation of a truly public – rather than 'quasi-public' – sphere.

Few other scholarly accounts have focused on the Mexican case. Yet, as noticed by Fox, most of them concentrate on traditional forms of democratic expression (i.e. electoral competition), rather than looking at richer and more nebulous forms of bottom-up democracy.¹³⁹ For instance, despite explicitly recognising this problem at the beginning of their work, Alberto Olvera and Peter Ward end by almost entirely focusing their work on the study of electoral processes in Mexico.¹⁴⁰ Similarly, although Joaquín Osorio-Goicochea entitles his work *Political parties, legislative power and civil society in Mexico*, the scholar devotes most of his work to develop a sustained criticism of the political parties system, and only briefly analyses the importance of civil society in the legislative processes.¹⁴¹

The theoretical challenges outlined in the first part of this chapter, as well as the limited literature on the public sphere in Mexico evidence the need for new and contextualised studies that not only reflect on the public sphere's capacity to influence political decisions, but also analyse the conditions that hinder or promote its development in non-democratic scenarios. In this vein, whilst Habermas'

¹³⁸ Maria Helena Varela, "Iguales, Pero No Tanto. El Acceso Limitado de Las Mujeres a La Esfera Pública En México," *CONfinés* 8, no. 16 (2012): 39–66.

¹³⁹ Fox, "The Difficult Transition from Clientelism to Citizenship: Lessons from Mexico"; Fox, "Sociedad Civil y Políticas de Rendición de Cuentas."

¹⁴⁰ Olvera, "The Elusive Democracy: Political Parties, Democratic Institutions, and Civil Society in Mexico.," 101; Ward, "De Clientelismo a Tecnocracia: Cambios Recientes En La Gestión Municipal de México."

¹⁴¹ Osorio-Goicochea, "Partidos Políticos, Poder Legislativo y Sociedad Civil En México (Una Correlación Asimétrica)."

Public Sphere theory permits studying the mutually influential relation between public and media agendas, and its impact on the definition of social demands, it does not allow uncovering how these citizenly-raised demands become matters of public policy. Therefore, it is necessary to create a theoretical bridge that permits closing the cycle between the generation of public demands and their implementation through governmental action. This is why the next sub-chapter looks at the McCombs and Shaw agenda setting framework.

3.2. The Agenda setting.

‘Not every matter becomes public and not all public issues become subject to governmental action’, Amparo Casar and Claudia Maldonado say.¹⁴² Therefore, understanding how certain events and demands become public problems and government concerns helps to fill the knowledge gap on policy-making that the public sphere theory does not address. Building on this, this section seeks to cover the most relevant components of the agenda-setting theory to illustrate its key value for this thesis.

3.2.1 Foundations of the agenda–setting theory.

The agenda setting framework was envisaged as a ‘highly detailed map of the mass media agenda and its effects.’¹⁴³ Having its origins on Lippmann’s *Public Opinion* work, stating that ‘news media acts as our window to the vast world beyond direct experience, determining our cognitive maps of that world’, it was expanded by Maxwell McCombs and Donald Shaw to convert it into ‘one of the most influential approaches in political communication studies.’¹⁴⁴

¹⁴² Casar and Maldonado, “Formación de Agenda y Procesos de Toma de Decisiones: Una Aproximación Desde La Ciencia Política,” 4.

¹⁴³ M. McCombs, “Building Consensus: The News Media’s Agenda–Setting Roles,” *Political Communication* 14, no. 4 (1997): 9; Lippmann, *Public Opinion*.

¹⁴⁴ Lippmann, *Public Opinion*.

The media ‘plays an important part in shaping political reality, readers learn not only about a given issue, but also how much importance to attach to that issue’, McCombs and Shaw said in their seminal work *The Agenda setting function of the mass media*.¹⁴⁵ This connection made between social developments, media actions and governmental decisions, made of McCombs and Shaw’s framework one of the most suitable models to study ‘the process by which problems become salient as political matters meriting the attention of the polity.’¹⁴⁶

By bridging the agenda-setting framework with the works of Harold Laswell, Curtis MacDougall and others, it becomes possible to understand the cycle by which public issues become newsworthy items and even subjects of discussion at government institutions, and the following two key maxims serve as the perfect introduction for the explanation of the agenda setting framework’s role in this thesis:

- ***Who says what, to whom, in what channel, with what effect?***¹⁴⁷

As argued by Curtis MacDougall, billions of events occur at any given moment, producing too much information that not all of it is known by the population.¹⁴⁸ Only the information (i.e. *what*) that receives preferential treatment and diffusion (*channel*) succeeds in becoming an ‘event’ capable of attracting socio-political attention (*effect over whom*).

- ***Politics is about who gets what, when and how?***¹⁴⁹

The political system is an ‘input–output model where demands are *articulated* by different groups, channelled into the *political system* by *aggregators* and transformed into *outputs*’ (policies, decisions and actions).¹⁵⁰

¹⁴⁵ McCombs Maxwell and Shaw Donald, “The Agenda Setting Function of Mass Media,” *The Public Opinion Quarterly* 36, no. 2 (1972): 176.

¹⁴⁶ Lomax et al., “Media and Agenda Setting: Effects on the Public, Interest Group Leaders, Policy Makers, and Policy,” 17.

¹⁴⁷ H. Salevsky and I Muller, *Translation as Systemic Integration* (Berlin: Frank & Time, 2011), 19.

¹⁴⁸ MacDougall in Hall et al., *Policing the Crisis. Mugging, the State and Law and Order.*, 53.

¹⁴⁹ H. Laswell, *Politics: Who Gets What, When, How* (New York: Whittlesey House, McGraw–Hill, 1936).

¹⁵⁰ S Singh and K Dunn, “Veto Players, the Policy–Making Environment and the Expression of Authoritarian Attitudes,” *Political Studies* 61, no. 1 (2013): 122.

Being a multi-faceted framework about the transfer of salience among agendas, it is necessary to analyse its characteristics layer by layer, just as proposed by McCombs. Therefore, the following sub-chapters obey the following order:

- 3.2.2. media agenda
- 3.2.3. public agenda
- 3.2.4. political agenda

3.2.2 The media agenda.

The media agenda is perhaps the most well researched 'unit' of the agenda setting framework, particularly across western advanced democracies where freedom of expression is, or at least is assumed to be, guaranteed and actively promoted by government. Nevertheless, as noticed by McCombs, limited attention has been devoted to Latin American case studies, imposing barriers to the analysis of the topic, this is why this section is based on existing Anglo-Saxon literature.¹⁵¹

Based on his analyses on the U.S.A. case, McCombs argues that the study of the processes and actors influencing the *media agenda* can be compared to the action of 'peeling an onion' made of four layers (see Figure 1):¹⁵²

- 1) news sources
- 2) leading news media agencies
- 3) news norms
- 4) media agenda

¹⁵¹ McCombs in Sharon Meraz, "Maxwell McCombs – Interviewed by Sharon Meraz," School of Journalism, 2003, <https://journalism.utexas.edu/faculty/reese/maxwell-mccombs-interviewed-sharon-meraz> (Accessed 22-12-2017).

¹⁵² Maxwell McCombs, *Setting the Agenda: The Mass Media and Public Opinion* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 2004), 98.

Figure 1. The ‘peeling an onion’ metaphor of the agenda setting.



Source: Author's own elaboration with data from McCombs, *Setting the agenda: the mass media and public opinion*, 2008.

1. *News sources*. In the USA case, McCombs argues, this layer is dominated by the Presidential figure as everything done by the person in office is considered newsworthy. However, other factors and actors influence this layer too. According to Brian Fogarty, Senators with important institutional positions also receive a high level of media attention.¹⁵³ Through press releases, conferences and bills' sponsorship, these actors reach the media and position a topic into its agenda, especially when running for higher office.¹⁵⁴ Public information officers occupy a privileged position too, particularly during political campaigns, when they set up to 32% of the agendas of major newspapers like the *New York Times* and *The Washington Post*.¹⁵⁵ Unsurprisingly, the political actors' influence over media agendas varies from country to country. Considering the case of political parties, McCombs found that while in the 1984 U.S.A. presidential campaigns there was a correlation of +0.31 between the political parties' agenda and the national television agenda, in the case of the 1983 British

¹⁵³ B Fogarty, "National News Attention to the 106th Senate," *Politics* 33, no. 1 (2013): 21, <http://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/10.1111/j.1467-9256.2012.01451.x/full> (Accessed 22-12-2017).

¹⁵⁴ Politicians running for office, for instance, to receive almost the double of coverage than the median voter senator Fogarty, "National News Attention to the 106th Senate."

¹⁵⁵ McCombs, *Setting the Agenda: The Mass Media and Public Opinion*, 2004, 103.

general election, the correlation was much more relevant: +0.70. This, McCombs says, is a consequence of the differences in journalism traditions. While in the UK elections are automatically considered newsworthy, in the former the value or worthiness of the elections is compared with other matters of the day.¹⁵⁶ In the case of Mexico there is more limited scholarship and no equivalent data to compare with, but two of the few and more recent studies on the topic point towards a bigger correlation. First, Manuel Guerrero *et al* found that, notwithstanding Mexico's democratic advances in the last 20 years, media outlets sustain a 'conveniently pro-government' approach, publishing up to 100% supportive news items that follow the government's agenda.¹⁵⁷ Secondly, in their studies on Mexico and Colombia, Mary Alzate and Gerardo Romo identified that the political agenda dominated the agenda of local media.¹⁵⁸ Overall, the scholarship suggests that politicians greatly lead the media on *government matters* (e.g. defence and foreign affairs) and *prominent matters* (e.g. economic and social policy ones), but the political agenda is led by the media on *sensational matters* (e.g. law and order and the environment).¹⁵⁹

Politicians, though, are just one of many sources of information. In fact, as explained in the next point, bigger media corporations can also define the agenda of smaller and more local media outlets.

¹⁵⁶ McCombs, 105.

¹⁵⁷ Manuel Guerrero et al., "Policy Analysis in the Media: The Coverage of Public Issues and the Relevance of Context," in *Policy Analysis in Mexico*, ed. Jose Mendez and Mauricio Dussauge-Laguna, 1st Ed. (Chicago: International Library of Policy Analysis, University of Chicago press, 2017), 275.

¹⁵⁸ Mary Alzate and Gerardo Romo, "Prensa Local y Agenda de Gobiernos Municipales. Análisis de Casos En Colombia y México," *Estudios Sociales* 23, no. 46 (2015): NA, http://www.scielo.org.mx/scielo.php?script=sci_arttext&pid=S0188-45572015000200003 (Accessed 22-12-2017).

¹⁵⁹ For discussion see Uscinski, "When Does the Public's Issue Agenda Affect the Media's Issue Agenda (and Vice-Versa)? Developing a Framework for Media-Public Influence"; Walgrave, Soroka, and Nuytemans, "The Mass Media's Political Agenda Setting Power."

2. *Leading news media agencies.* According to Fogarty 'inter-media agenda-setting' model, leading/elite news corporations influence the agenda of local or smaller news agencies.¹⁶⁰ Through news agencies' dispatches, leading agencies not only share their articles with others, but can also reach a wider audience by being quoted by other media.¹⁶¹ For instance, *The New York Times* influences the U.S.A. Associated Press, and consequently other newspapers and television networks, whilst in Spain, the Spanish newspaper *El Pais* has developed a collaborative relation with the Spanish edition of the American *Herald Tribune*.¹⁶²

3. *Social norms and traditions of journalism.* Questions about *what* happened, but also *where* did 'that' happen and how close 'that' is to the outlet's audience, play an important part in determining what editors would consider newsworthy. In this vein, for an item to be considered newsworthy, it should involve unusual information, come from the correct and reliable channels, relate to famous or high status persons and be ratified by one major newspaper as newsworthy.¹⁶³ As a result, crime news are 'a gift to all the news-hungry editors, engravers and others who depended on exciting the public's imagination to turn a profit'. Crime stories are news worthy by definition.¹⁶⁴

¹⁶⁰ For a detailed explanation on this topic please refer to Erbe, "What Do the Papers Say?, How Press Reviews Link National Media Arenas in Europe," 78.

¹⁶¹ van Dijk, *News as Discourse*, 116.

¹⁶² McCombs, *Setting the Agenda: The Mass Media and Public Opinion*, 2004, 114; Madsen, "Intellectuals, Media and the Public Sphere," 263.

¹⁶³ Paul Rock, "News as Eternal Recurrence," in *The Manufacture of News: Social Problems, Deviance and the Mass Media*, ed. S. Cohen and J. Young (London: Constable, 1973), 77; Bob Roshier, "The Selection of Crime News by the Press," in *The Manufacture of News: Social Problems, Deviance and the Mass Media*, ed. S. Cohen and J. Young, 1st Ed. (London: Constable, 1973), 35; L. Wilkins, "Information and the Definition of Deviance," in *The Manufacture of News: Social Problems, Deviance and the Mass Media*, ed. S. Cohen and J. Young, 1st Ed. (London: Constable, 1973).

¹⁶⁴ C. McCreery, "The Monster and the Press," in *Moral Panics, The Media and the Law in Early Modern England*, ed. D. Lemmings and C. Walker (UK: Palgrave and McMillan, 2009), 279.

3.2.2.1 Influencing the media agenda.

‘Information control is the key for the exercise of power’, a control that, José Candon argues, is dominated to the largest extent by media outlets. ‘Media is where power is created’, he adds.¹⁶⁵ With the media framing public and political discussions, politicians, social movements and power groups are engaged in a struggle to attract the media’s attention, influence its agenda and define a social reality.¹⁶⁶ Nevertheless, as noticed by Pamela Shoemaker and Stephen Reese, and Karen Lancerdorfer and Byoungkwan Lee, very little scholarly attention has been devoted to this part of the process.¹⁶⁷ Some of the few studies on the matter includes those of Candon, Lydia Valera, and Kevin Carrage and Wim Roefs. Focusing on civil society’s impact on the media agenda, the scholars found that ‘access to media is an unequally distributed good: whereas political elites generally obtain access almost automatically, social movements face many obstacles.’¹⁶⁸ Nevertheless, Candon argues, there is room for manoeuvre. With media being inclined to cover ‘programmed events in which a visible leader of a formal organisation clearly expresses its position towards a specific policy’, CSOs – particularly the more critical of government – could find an entry point to influencing the media agenda.¹⁶⁹ Anne Russell also found that CSOs can gain further media coverage

¹⁶⁵ Candon, “Movimientos Sociales, Internet y Medios de Comunicación,” 680.

¹⁶⁶ L Gurevitch and M Levy, “Introduction,” in *Mass Communication Review Yearbook*, 1st Ed. (California: SAGE Publications, 1985), 18; T Nelson and D Kinder, “Issue Frames and Group–Centrism in American Public Opinion,” *Journal of Politics* 58 (1996): 1055–78.

¹⁶⁷ Pamela Shoemaker and Stephen Reese, *Mediating the Message: Theories of Influences on Mass Media Content*, 2nd Ed. (New York: Longman Group Ltd., 1996), 3, <https://journalism.utexas.edu/sites/default/files/sites/journalism.utexas.edu/files/attachments/reese/mediating-the-message.pdf> (Accessed 22–12–2017); Lancerdorfer and Lee, “Who Influences Whom? The Agenda–Building Relationship Between Political Candidates and the Media in the 2002 Michigan Governor’s Race,” 201.

¹⁶⁸ Candon, “Movimientos Sociales, Internet y Medios de Comunicación”; Valera, “Building the News Media Agenda: Spanish Political Parties’ Influence on Traditional Media and Blogosphere Agendas during the 2011 Electoral Campaign,” 117; Carragee and Roefs, “The Neglect of Power in Recent Framing Research”; Nelson and Kinder, “Issue Frames and Group–Centrism in American Public Opinion”; Entman, “Framing: Towards a Clarification of a Fractured Paradigm.”

¹⁶⁹ Candon, “Movimientos Sociales, Internet y Medios de Comunicación,” 681.

by simplifying their message and developing a close coordination with government officials, a conclusion that challenges Candon's argument suggesting that large collective actions that challenge the status quo enjoy a better media coverage.¹⁷⁰ In addition to this, Shoemaker and Reese have also produced a sort of 'blueprint' for influencing the media agenda:¹⁷¹

- ❖ Using people who are already prominent across social and political spheres;
- ❖ Approaching newspapers and magazines over television and radio, as the latter are more sensitive to the need to make a profit;
- ❖ Reaching to upper level media managers living close to the actor's (CSO, politician, etc.) geographic zone of influence, as they are more prone to transmit local news and editorials;
- ❖ Knowing and adapting to the media's organisation routines, from production of media releases to timing of press conferences;
- ❖ Approaching media in 'slow news days' and months.

Few, though, would claim that media influencing really works in such an orderly, linear way.

3.2.2.2 *Summing up.*

Building on the arguments presented in this sub-chapter, it could be argued that it would be reductionist to assume that media builds its agenda free from any social or political influence. In other words, neglecting the influence of external sources (e.g. elites, advocates and movements) in the build-up of the media agenda would be simply an exaggeration of journalistic autonomy.¹⁷² 'Journalists frame matters, but indubitably, their interpretations are shaped by discourses external to the news organisation.'¹⁷³ Therefore, it could be argued, 'the best way to understand the role of the news media, including its agenda, is to view it as a part of a larger contest among political

¹⁷⁰ Anne Russell, "MADD Rates the States: A Media Advocacy Event to Advance the Agenda Against Alcohol-Impaired Driving," *Public Health Reports* 110 (1995): 240-45.

¹⁷¹ Shoemaker and Reese, *Mediating the Message: Theories of Influences on Mass Media Content*.

¹⁷² Valera, "Building the News Media Agenda: Spanish Political Parties' Influence on Traditional Media and Blogosphere Agendas during the 2011 Electoral Campaign," 117.

¹⁷³ Carragee and Roefs, "The Neglect of Power in Recent Framing Research," 219.

antagonists for the control of the public agenda.¹⁷⁴ This is why the following analysis of the theoretical functioning of the *public agenda* becomes crucial for understanding the medullar connection between the public sphere and agenda setting frameworks, one of the key elements of this research.

3.2.3 Public agenda setting.

The *public agenda* 'is comprised of all the matters that the members of a political community deem as sufficiently important to attract public attention or interest and which fit within the legitimate jurisdiction of the existing government authority.'¹⁷⁵ For Mary Alzate and Gerardo Romo, it needs to be understood as a construction process composed of two intrinsically connected relations, one bottom–up (i.e. from citizens to government) and another top–down (formed by socio–political relations that incentivise social and governmental action). As such, the public agenda is the inevitable starting point of any political agenda and public policy.

With the public agenda being defined by popular sentiments, social demands and institutional frameworks,¹⁷⁶ the processes involved in communicative practices, the generation of consensus for topic prioritisation and transmission of complex messages also become important determinants of the public agenda.¹⁷⁷ Consequently, a vast literature demonstrates that media is the main source of information for citizens, society and government, illustrating that, to a large extent, the public

¹⁷⁴ R. Hänggli, "Key Factors in Frame Building: How Strategic Political Actors Shape News Coverage?," *American Behavioral Scientist* 56, no. 3 (2011): 301.

¹⁷⁵ Roger Cobb and Charles Elder, *Participation in American Politics: The Dynamics of Agenda Building*, 1st Ed (Baltimore: Allyn and Bacon, 1972).

¹⁷⁶ J Cohen, *The President's Legislative Policy Agenda, 1789–2002*, 1st Ed (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012), 20; Alzate and Romo, "Prensa Local y Agenda de Gobiernos Municipales. Análisis de Casos En Colombia y México."

¹⁷⁷ Alzate and Romo, "Prensa Local y Agenda de Gobiernos Municipales. Análisis de Casos En Colombia y México"; Casar and Maldonado, "Formación de Agenda y Procesos de Toma de Decisiones: Una Aproximación Desde La Ciencia Política."

agenda is determined by the media.¹⁷⁸ In the UK, for instance, about 9 in 10 people regard television as their main source of information, whilst in Mexico 73% of the population is of the same opinion.¹⁷⁹

The media is, then, 'perhaps the most important space in which communicative interaction among citizens can take place, and the mechanism by which citizens can influence each other.'¹⁸⁰ Therefore, 'in an adequate information environment citizens enjoy more opportunities to learn about politics.'¹⁸¹ Yet, this environment heavily depends on media coverage, which, in turn, gives journalists the capacity to 'significantly influence their audience's picture of the world.'¹⁸² In other words, involuntarily *and* voluntarily media directors, editors and journalists are capable of limiting public deliberation and the development of an informed and broader public opinion. Involuntarily as, with limited available space, media editors, directors and journalists give preference to certain topics over others and decide which items are deemed to be considered newsworthy.¹⁸³ Voluntarily, as marketing targets have become more important than editorial goals, reason why media directors, choose to focus on items that would sell more newspapers than on those that are more relevant for the public good.¹⁸⁴

Due to this voluntary and involuntary media bias, a scholarly debate has emerged on the relationship between media agenda and its positive or negative impact over public opinion and

¹⁷⁸ S. Ansolabehere, "The Paradox of Minimal Effects," University of Michigan, 2012, <http://www.press.umich.edu/pdf/0472099213-ch2.pdf> (Accessed 22-12-2017); Holly, "Tabloidisation of Political Communication in the Public Sphere," 319.

¹⁷⁹ Stevens and Karp, "Leadership Traits and Media Influence in Britain," 788; Abundis, "Los Medios de Comunicación En México"; Helms, "Democratic Political Leadership in the New Media Age: A Farewell to Excellence?," 653; Conaghan, *Fujimori's Peru, Deception in the Public sphere*, 146.

¹⁸⁰ Felipe Betancourt, "The Development of the Media and the Public Sphere in Mexico," *Mexican Law Review* 5, no. 2 (2011): 308.

¹⁸¹ Jennifer Jerit, Jason Barabas, and Toby Bolsen, "Citizens, Knowledge, and the Information Environment," *American Journal of Political Science* 50, no. 2 (2006): 266, https://www.jstor.org/stable/3694272?seq=1#page_scan_tab_contents (Accessed 22-12-2017).

¹⁸² David Weaver, "Political Matters and Voter Need for Orientation," in *The Emergence of American Political Matters* (Minneapolis: West, 1977), 19.

¹⁸³ Hall et al., *Policing the Crisis. Mugging, the State and Law and Order.*, 73.

¹⁸⁴ Lippmann and Lisky in Wolfe, Jones, and Baumgartner, "A Failure to Communicate: Agenda Setting in Media and Policy Studies," 183.

public agenda-setting. On the one hand, scholars like Michael Howlett have emphatically stated that media content cannot be equated to, nor used as a surrogate for, public agenda, as not everything the public knows and is talking about is part of the media content.¹⁸⁵ On the other hand, Joseph Klapper has challenged the media's capacity to influence the public agenda, by arguing that 'personal experience can be a more powerful teacher than mass media when matters have a direct impact on people's lives.'¹⁸⁶ Klapper's 'minimal effects' theory, however, has been regarded by some as 'one of the most noticeable embarrassments of modern social science.'¹⁸⁷ Harold Zucker, James Winter and Chain Eyal are some of the scholars who have refuted Klapper's arguments by stating that 'the agenda of the news media does become the agenda of the public' to a considerable degree.¹⁸⁸ McCombs' studies have shown that the news media agenda has a long-lasting effect over the public agenda of up to 26 weeks (See Annex 2).¹⁸⁹ For Paul Lazarsfeld, Bernard Berelson and Hazel Gaudet – and to a lesser extent for Stevens and Karp – the causal relation also seems to be clear.¹⁹⁰ Extensive literature around the U.S.A case study supports this premise too. Salma Ghanem's study on the media coverage of crime in the US in the 1990s showed a positive correlation of +0.73 between *media agenda* and *public agenda*.¹⁹¹ Others, such as David Weaver and Doris Graber have suggested that on the specific case of crime, *media* has more influence over *public agenda* and

¹⁸⁵ Howlett in Soroka, "Policy Agenda-Setting Theory Revisited: A Critique of Howlett on Downs, Baumgartner and Jones, and Kingdon," 765.

¹⁸⁶ Klapper, "The Effects of Mass Communication," 36.

¹⁸⁷ Bartels in Boynton and Richardson, "Agenda Setting in the Twenty-First Century," 1918.

¹⁸⁸ Zucker, and Winter and Eyal studies indicate the transfer of matter salience from the media agenda to the public agenda in the U.S.A. occurs in a period of time that ranges from four to eight weeks, with the first sizeable effects appearing since week one after the news reports are published, and decaying after eight weeks. See James Winter and Chain Eyal, "Agenda Setting Perspective on Historical Public Opinion," *Public Opinion Quarterly* 45 (1981): 376–83; Harold Zucker, "The Variable Nature of News Media Influence," in *Communication Yearbook 2*, ed. B Ruben (New Jersey: Transaction Books, 1978); Holly, "Tabloidisation of Political Communication in the Public Sphere," 320.

¹⁸⁹ McCombs, *Setting the Agenda: The Mass Media and Public Opinion*, 2004.

¹⁹⁰ See Lazarsfeld, Berelson, and Gaudet, *How the Voter Makes up His Mind in a Presidential Campaign*, 75.

¹⁹¹ S. Ghanem, *Media coverage of crime and public opinion: an exploration of the second level of agenda setting*, (University of Texas at Austin, 1996).

public opinion than personal experiences.¹⁹² And Gross and Aday's analysis of crime in Washington concluded that news reports exercised more influence on people than 'local crime rates', 'direct experience as a victim' or 'knowing someone who has been victim of a crime'.¹⁹³ In fact, an analysis of 90 empirical studies lead Wayne Wanta and Xalma Ghanem to conclude that the correlation between the *media agenda* and the *public agenda* was – on average – $r=53$.¹⁹⁴ This not only validated Johanna Dunaway, Marisa Abrajano and Regina Branton's work, it also refuted Klapper's minimal effects theory and made clear that at least in the U.S.A. the news media is successful in telling their audiences *what* to think and *how* to think about it.¹⁹⁵

These arguments allow arguing that even though citizens are neither defenceless against the influence of the media nor 'automatons waiting to be programmed by the news media', the media does have an active role in setting the *public agenda*. By determining *what is being said* and *how it is being said*, the media tells their audiences *what* to think and *how* to think about.¹⁹⁶ In other words, the media impacts on how its audience *defines, interprets* and *evaluates* information.¹⁹⁷ All

¹⁹² For instance, Weaver, Graber, McCombs and Eyal's study on public opinion in the US demonstrated that, on the one hand, in the case of on the unobtrusive matters (i.e. government credibility, foreign affairs, crime and race relations), the correlation between media agenda and public agenda was of +0.67 and +0.74. On the other hand, on obtrusive matters (such as unemployment and taxes), in which the population has a very close personal experience as it is directly affected in a daily basis by them, the correlation between media agenda and public agenda was smaller, of between +0.20 and +0.32. David Weaver et al., *Media Agenda setting in a Presidential Election: Issues, Images and Interest* (New York: Praeger, 1981)..

¹⁹³ Kimberley Gross and Sean Aday, "The Scary World in Your Living Room and Neighborhood: Using Local Broadcast News, Neighborhood Crime Rates, and Personal Experience to Test Agenda Setting and Cultivation," *Journal of Communication* 53 (2003): 411–26.

¹⁹⁴ Wayne Wanta and Salma Ghanem in Tan and Weaver, "Local Media, Public Opinion, and State Legislative Policies," 456.

¹⁹⁵ Dunaway, Abrajano, and Branton, "Agenda Setting, Public Opinion, and the Issue of Immigration Reform," 2–3.

¹⁹⁶ Dunaway, Abrajano, and Branton, 2–3; Nitoiu, "The European Public Sphere: Myth, Reality or Aspiration?," 30; D. Scheufele and D. Tewksbury, "Framing, Agenda Setting, and Priming: The Evolution of Three Media Effects Models," *Journal of Communication* 57 (2007): 9–20.

¹⁹⁷ Entman, "Framing: Towards a Clarification of a Fractured Paradigm."

this could lead to conclude that Lippmann, Kettel, and Amos Tversky and Daniel Kahneman are correct:

‘There is both a reality outside and pictures in people’s heads, with those pictures not necessarily corresponding to reality but being largely determined by mass media and its framing of events.’¹⁹⁸

These findings, though, do not neglect in any way the influence that the public sphere exercises over the media agenda, but signal that the causal connection is asymmetrical or weaker when analysed in a one-way direction, i.e. from the public to the media agenda. As stated by Candon and Uscinski, ‘the public does have a role in shaping the national information environment’, and multiple analyses acknowledge this.¹⁹⁹ Huckins, for instance, found strong correlations between the U.S.A’s Christian Coalition agenda and that from the U.S.A.’s main newspapers, suggesting that an interest group can make a purposeful impact over the media agenda.²⁰⁰ Candon, Shoemaker, Lancerdorfer, Valera, Russell and Uscinski’s works are only a sample of studies illustrating the influence of the public agenda over the media agenda, notwithstanding how weak or indirect this influence might be. What is missing, Huckins would argue, are more studies on the interest group’s capacity to influence the news agenda.

3.2.3.1 Summing up. Media and public agendas: towards policy change.

The theoretical and normative findings previously presented set the basis for the first part of this thesis. They illustrate the existence of a bridge between citizens’ attitudes, needs and realities with

¹⁹⁸ Lippmann in Tan and Weaver, “Local Media, Public Opinion, and State Legislative Policies,” 456. and S. Kettel, “Legitimizing Britain’s War on Terror,” *The British Journal of Politics and International Relations* 15, no. 2 (2013): 276; A. Tversky and D Kahneman, “The Framing of Decisions and the Psychology of Choice,” *Science* 211 (1981): 453–58.

¹⁹⁹ Candon, “Movimientos Sociales, Internet y Medios de Comunicación,” 686; Uscinski, “When Does the Public’s Issue Agenda Affect the Media’s Issue Agenda (and Vice–Versa)? Developing a Framework for Media–Public Influence,” 811.

²⁰⁰ Kyle Huckins, “Interest Group Influence on the Media Agenda: A Case Study,” *J&MC Quarterly* 76, no. 1 (1999): 83.

those from government and elite: all of them converge in, nourish from and define the public sphere through the acting of the media. The literature review developed in this sub-chapter has revealed that the media has the capacity to initiate, if not direct, public discussions by shaping domestic and international public agendas. 'The majority of agenda-setting studies, however, stop precisely at this point: they solely look at the impact that mass media has over the public.'²⁰¹ Therefore, there is a policy disconnect in the agenda-setting studies: whilst political communication scholars dedicate little time to the study of the policy connection of media effects, policy researchers invest a limited energy in understanding the effects of the media.²⁰²

It is due to this unconnected research that, on the one hand, Wolfe *et al* argue, there is a 'generalised assumption that policy is influenced just because there are media effects on the public'. Scholars, Wolfe *et al* add, rarely connect media effects back to policy or agenda setting.²⁰³ On the other hand, researchers tend to presume that the normative wheels of democracy roll when public pressures arise, assuming that elected officials will be responsive and set to work to change policies and programs.²⁰⁴ Nevertheless, as Michelle Wolfe *et al* wonder, 'how does one simply know that policy is influenced just because of society's demands?'²⁰⁵

²⁰¹ An opinion echoed by Mary Alzate and Gerardo Romo. Lomax et al., "Media and Agenda Setting: Effects on the Public, Interest Group Leaders, Policy Makers, and Policy," 18; Alzate and Romo, "Prensa Local y Agenda de Gobiernos Municipales. Análisis de Casos En Colombia y México."

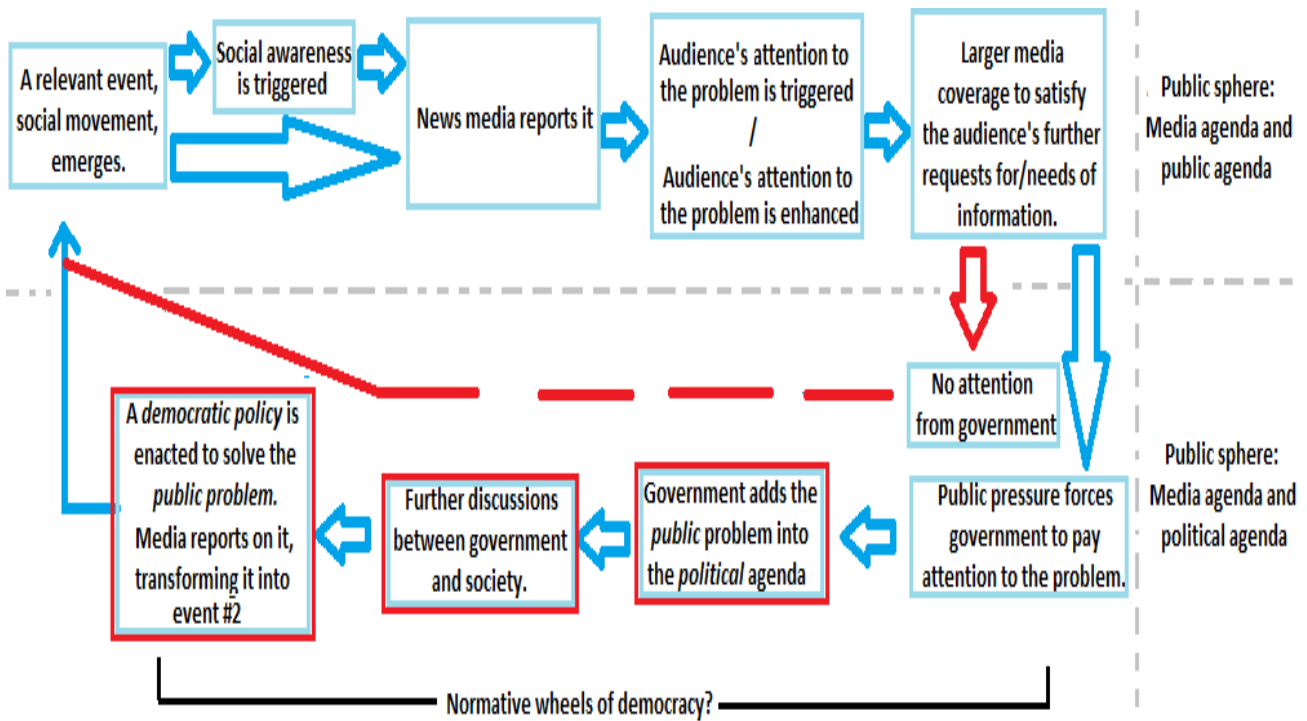
²⁰² For discussion please see Wolfe, Jones, and Baumgartner, "A Failure to Communicate: Agenda Setting in Media and Policy Studies," 176; Walgrave, Nuytemans, and De Winter, "Specifying the Media's Political Agenda-Setting Power."

²⁰³ Wolfe, Jones, and Baumgartner, "A Failure to Communicate: Agenda Setting in Media and Policy Studies," 177.

²⁰⁴ An opinion echoed by Mary Alzate, Gerardo Romo and many other scholars. Lomax et al., "Media and Agenda Setting: Effects on the Public, Interest Group Leaders, Policy Makers, and Policy," 18; Alzate and Romo, "Prensa Local y Agenda de Gobiernos Municipales. Análisis de Casos En Colombia y México"; Burstein, "The Impact of Public Opinion on Public Policy: A Review and an Agenda."

²⁰⁵ Wolfe, Jones, and Baumgartner, "A Failure to Communicate: Agenda Setting in Media and Policy Studies."

Figure 2. When the wheels of democracy do not work in policy-making



Considering this, this thesis goes beyond traditional studies in order to explore whether political forces (using or not the media) can trigger symbolic and substantive (red box) politics. In this vein, it aims to understand the extent to which a reinvigorated civil society and democratic agenda setting process can be developed and subsist in Mexico. This is why, the following section describes the theoretical linkage between media agenda and governmental agenda.

3.2.4 Political agenda.

The previous section provided compelling arguments about the media's impact on both public opinion and public agendas. This section continues with the agenda-setting analysis by focusing on the political agenda. Theoretical propositions point towards the existence of a mutually influential relation between the government and media agendas. Whilst the effect of the political agenda over the latter has been briefly discussed and acknowledged in this chapter (see chapter 3.2.2), it is of

bigger importance for this thesis to understand the influence that media has over government decisions. The literature review conducted in this sub-chapter helps understanding whether media could serve as a tool by which public issues defined by an OCS can reach, engage and trigger a change in the political sphere.

3.2.4.1 *Influencing the political agenda.*

As with the media and public agendas, there is no dearth of social matters or public problems intending to become part of the policy agenda, yet, only a few become part of government discussions. ‘The policy agenda is composed of the demands that policy-makers agree to consider. It is not the sum of all political demands, but the list of issues to which political actors pay attention to.’²⁰⁶ In the same tenor, John Kingdon explains, public policy is ‘a process that includes agenda setting, identification of alternative choices, and the implementation of one of those choices.’²⁰⁷ Whilst in the UK, ‘policy’ is understood as the ‘translation of government’s political priorities and principles into government programmes and course of action to deliver desired changes’, in Mexico, it is seen as those ‘responses that the State, political regime or government execute towards socially problematic situations.’²⁰⁸ Notwithstanding these multiple definitions, two facts are undeniable:

- ❖ Political agenda is politics’ priority list.²⁰⁹
- ❖ Public policy implies a purposive course of action that results from, and defines, the relationship between government and its environment.

²⁰⁶ Graduate Center for Public Policy and Administration, “Policy Agenda” (Long Beach, California: Graduate Center for Public Policy and Administration, 2002), <http://web.csulb.edu/~msaintg/ppa590/agenda.htm> (Accessed 22–12–2017).

²⁰⁷ John Kingdon, *Agendas, Alternatives, and Public Policies*, 2nd Ed (New York: Longman Group Ltd., 2003), 3.

²⁰⁸ Secretaría de Desarrollo Social. Consejo de Investigación y Evaluación de la política social, “Políticas Públicas,” Secretaría de desarrollo social Estado de Mexico, 2017, http://cieps.edomex.gob.mx/politicas_publicas (Accessed 22–12–2017); Office of Government Commerce, “Successful Delivery Pocketbook” (London, 2010), <http://webarchive.nationalarchives.gov.uk/20100503135839/http://www.ogc.gov.uk/documents/cp0043.pdf> (Accessed 22–12–2017).

²⁰⁹ Walgrave and Van Aelst, “Political Agenda Setting and the Mass Media.”

With ‘politics being the business of problem solving’; public policy and political agenda become ‘outcomes of bargaining among interest groups.’²¹⁰ They involve power struggles, formal and informal mechanisms, and negotiations across a large number of actors. Political parties, the president, public opinion, real–world events, media, severity of the problem and protests, are just some of the elements that drive the political agenda.²¹¹ However, a vast scholarship and political events suggest media plays one of the most critical roles in the process.²¹² In this vein, more than 40 years ago Jock Young stated that ‘in the modern urban society information is obtained at second hand, through the mass media, rather than direct by face–to–face contact or interaction with the events.’²¹³ Ten years ago, Tony Blair explicitly acknowledged the existence of an ‘inevitable and necessary’ relationship between politics/politicians and the media:²¹⁴

Such interaction [media–government] is inevitable and necessary given the fact that the politicians rely on the media as the primary means of communication; and the media rely on the politicians for political stories... Of course, politicians will court the media because they need to be reported and reported... The relationship between political leaders and their counterparts in the media matters enormously... The media are obviously going to be a powerful part of society and in particular a powerful influence on political debate... Politicians will therefore interact with them closely... I have identified the use of media as instruments of political power... But the [media’s] principal purpose of using such power is, in my judgement, as much political, Blair said.²¹⁵

²¹⁰ Patrick Scott, “Making Public Policy,” Saylor, 2012, <https://www.saylor.org/site/wp-content/uploads/2012/08/POLSC2315.1.pdf> (Accessed 22–12–2017); Walgrave, Nuytemans, and De Winter, “Specifying the Media’s Political Agenda–Setting Power.,” 10.

²¹¹ Walgrave and Van Aelst, “Political Agenda Setting and the Mass Media”; Wolfe, Jones, and Baumgartner, “A Failure to Communicate: Agenda Setting in Media and Policy Studies,” 175.

²¹² Walgrave, Soroka, and Nuytemans, 1,2; Walgrave, Nuytemans, and De Winter, “Specifying the Media’s Political Agenda–Setting Power.,” 2.

²¹³ Jock Young, “The Role of the Police as Amplifiers of Deviancy, Negotiators of Reality and Translators of Fantasy.,” in *Images of Deviance*, ed. Stanley Cohen (Auckland: Penguin Books, 1971), 252.

²¹⁴ Steven Barnett, “Plurality, Leveson and the Threat to the BBC,” *Political Insight* (London, 2011), <https://www.psa.ac.uk/insight-plus/plurality-leveson-and-threat-bbc> (Accessed 22–12–2017).

²¹⁵ Tony Blair, “The Leveson Inquiry: Witness Statement from the RT Hon Tony Blair,” National Archives (National Archives, 2012),

Scholars like Walgrave and Van Aelst have also supported Blair's claims when stating that media coverage is used in politics because it is suitable for political elites. Politicians simply learn about society [,] problems and solutions but also about public opinion' via the news. What is more, they continue, politicians vie for media coverage.²¹⁶

It is then apparent that media does play an important role in policy-making. Kingdon, Baumgartner and Jones, Dunaway, Abrajano and Branton's works, for instance, have shown that in the U.S.A 'public policy agenda fluctuates with the volume of media attention paid to particular issues.'²¹⁷ Other scholars have similarly argued that public opinion plays an important role in setting the political agenda, to the extent that Kettel, Conaghan, Jacobs and Townsley suggest politicians are now more the followers of public opinion than its leaders.²¹⁸ Hans-Jorg Trezn has also stated that journalists are 'no longer the ones observing the performance of the political system; it is now the political actors who observe the media system to learn how to re-represent themselves and get more frequent and positive media coverage.'²¹⁹ What is more, Ruth Sanz states that 'the political system is now working under a mediatised democracy mobilised by a persuasive media', in which major initiatives and public policies tend now to be revealed on television or newspapers rather

<http://webarchive.nationalarchives.gov.uk/20140122145147/http://www.levesoninquiry.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2012/05/Witness-Statement-of-Tony-Blair1.pdf> (Accessed 22-12-2017).

²¹⁶ Walgrave and Van Aelst, "Political Agenda Setting and the Mass Media."

²¹⁷ Kingdon, *Agendas, Alternatives and Public Policies*; Wolfe, Jones, and Baumgartner, "A Failure to Communicate: Agenda Setting in Media and Policy Studies"; Dunaway, Abrajano, and Branton, "Agenda Setting, Public Opinion, and the Issue of Immigration Reform," 3.

²¹⁸ See, for instance, Kettel's analysis of Tony Blair's government in the UK, Jacobs and Townsley's study of the media in the USA, and Conaghan's research of Fujimori's relationship with the media in Peru. In Kettel, "Legitimizing Britain's War on Terror," 268; Conaghan, *Fujimori's Peru, Deception in the Public sphere*, 145; Jacobs and Townsley, *The Space of Opinion, Media Intellectuals and the Public sphere*, 4; Walgrave, Nuytemans, and De Winter, "Specifying the Media's Political Agenda-Setting Power." Grant, *Pressure Groups, Politics and Democracy in Britain*, 84; Meyer and Tarrow, *Soc. Mov. Soc.*, 5..

²¹⁹ Trezn, "The Unknown Player in European Integration," 59.

than in a legislative power.²²⁰ Bartels even argued that ‘by and large *The Times* leads and the U.S.A.’s politicians follow.’²²¹ Overall, some of the main arguments supporting media’s political agenda–setting effects can be summarised as follows:

Table 7. Main theories supporting the media political agenda setting effects.

Scholar	Argument
Roger Cobb (1972) Craig Trumbo (1995)	Extraordinary/new events coverage bears more media impact
John Kingdon (1984)	The lengthier media attention, the more media impact
David Protesse (1987)	The more an issue is already present on the political agenda, the more media impact.
Frank Baumgartner (1997)	Negative news bear more impact than others.

Source: Author’s own elaboration with information from Walgrave, Nuytemans, and De Winter, “Specifying the Media’s Political Agenda–Setting Power.”

Notwithstanding the soundness of these arguments, the existing literature presents two major constrains:

- a) ‘Little is known about the media’s political agenda–setting effects outside the United States, as very few studies have focused on other countries.’
- b) There is limited scholarship studying ‘the media’s precise role in substantive – rather than symbolic – political agenda–setting.’²²²

On the one hand, political agenda-setting processes are defined by the specific institutional contexts in which they occur, and media effects vary across policy domains. Therefore, the lack of studies focusing on non-western scenarios made it difficult to validate the media effects on government agendas in different socio-political contexts. In fact, even agenda setting studies focused on the same context offered contrasting results. For instance, Stefaan Walgrave and Peter

²²⁰ Helms, “Democratic Political Leadership in the New Media Age: A Farewell to Excellence?,” 663; Ruth Sanz, “‘I Have a Question for You’: Mediatized Democracy, Citizen Participation and Elections in Catalonia,” in *Media Talk and Political Elections in Europe and America* (New York: Palgrave MacMillan, 2013), 257, <http://www.palgraveconnect.com/pc/doi/finder/view/10.1057/9781137273321.0009>.

²²¹ Soroka and Martels in Walgrave, Nuytemans, and De Winter, “Specifying the Media’s Political Agenda–Setting Power.,” 9.

²²² Walgrave, Soroka, and Nuytemans, “The Mass Media’s Political Agenda Setting Power.,” 2.

Van Aelst found diverging conclusions across 15 agenda-setting analyses on the U.S.A. polity.²²³ On the other hand, as pointed out by Walgrave *et al*, most studies focus on the media effects over *symbolic*, rather than *substantive* political agendas.²²⁴ In this vein, symbolic agendas are inherently more flexible than resource agendas. It is fairly simple for policy makers to hold a news conference or issue a press release, but it can be quite difficult for them to shift resources from one priority to another. Resource agendas seem to be more resistant to media influence than are symbolic agendas.²²⁵ This is why those analyses focusing on symbolic agendas do not provide new evidence for advancing the understanding of the public sphere and its influence on policy making. In Kingdon's words: 'newspapers might trigger press conferences but might have little impact in determining the policy priorities of policymaking elites.'²²⁶

Therefore, as suggested by Walgrave *et al*, the field is in dire need of work on other political settings, particularly on substantive or hard policy outputs in new and fragile democratic setups.

3.3 Addressing the theoretical challenges and summarising the thesis' theoretical framework.

The literature review developed in this chapter highlights that the vast amount of academic work on the Public sphere and Agenda setting is overwhelmingly focused on the U.S.A. and other Western advanced democracies. With a particular focus on elites and the media's influence over public opinion and public agenda, the literature overlooks the importance of other key political players and

²²³ Walgrave and Van Aelst, "The Contingency of the Mass Media's Political Agenda Setting Power. Towards a Preliminary Theory."

²²⁴ Walgrave, Soroka, and Nuytemans, "The Mass Media's Political Agenda Setting Power.," 4; Walgrave and Van Aelst, "Political Agenda Setting and the Mass Media"; Walgrave, Nuytemans, and De Winter, "Specifying the Media's Political Agenda-Setting Power.," 13.

²²⁵ Pritchard and Berkowitz in Walgrave, Nuytemans, and De Winter, "Specifying the Media's Political Agenda-Setting Power.," 13.

²²⁶ Kingdon, *Agendas, Alternatives and Public Policies*.

processes, disregarding the theories' empirical implications and applicability in non-democratic countries, and understudying their connection with the political agenda. As such, the literature cannot be fully applied to young democracies like Mexico, where a public security crisis, security-saturated public sphere and incipient democratic institutions demand the promotion of political initiatives stemming from the public sphere and their transformation into formal legislation. Therefore, the search for better mechanisms for a wider and more effective public sphere, capable of co-organising, co-determining and co-transforming the political agenda in public security – with the mediation of the media and other tools – is a pivotal task for political scientists and a pressing job for politicians in Mexico.²²⁷

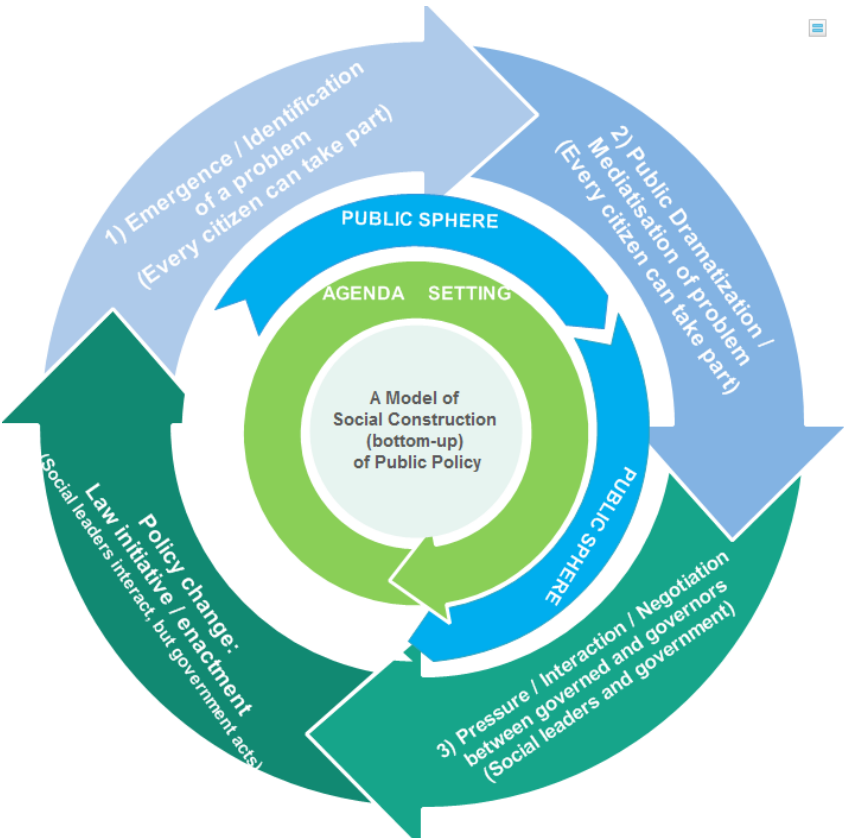
With 'different theories telling different stories and emphasizing different elements', this task can only be achieved by integrating the public sphere and agenda setting frameworks. Binding Habermas with Shaw and McCombs' work allows this research to provide not only one of the first comprehensive analyses on the subject, but recommendations with potential implications on Mexico's political and democratic institutionalism. First, it builds on Habermas' Public sphere work to understand how socio-political interactions permit or hinder the rebirth of an OCS capable of influencing political decisions.²²⁸ Nevertheless, as not every interaction, decision or change in the public sphere translates into political action, it is necessary to use innovative methods to analyse the way in which public demands evolve into public policies. This is why, this thesis binds Habermas' theory with the Agenda setting framework (see Figure 3). McCombs and Shaw's Agenda setting framework complements Habermas' theory in that it closes up the theoretical cycle of social

²²⁷ Jose-Angel Garcia, "Democracy and Political Participation in Mexico: Not a Matter of Magic but of Will," The Crick Centre: Understanding Politics, 2014, <http://www.crickcentre.org/blog/democracy-political-participation-mexico-matter-magic-will/> (Accessed 22-12-2017).

²²⁸ Habermas, *The Structural Transformation of the Public sphere: An Inquiry Into a Category of Bourgeois Society*; McKee, *The Public sphere: An Introduction*; Lara, "Effective Participation in Latin America: From Extralegal to Legal Mobilization. The Challenges Ahead."

construction of public policy (i.e. bottom-up or citizenly raised policies), starting in the public sphere and ending with political decision-making. In other words, the Agenda setting allows studying the hidden politics of the negotiation and incorporation of the public agenda into the political agenda.

Figure 3. The model of social construction of public security



Having described the theoretical basis of this research, the following three chapters look at Mexico’s political context and two different case studies of civil society activism in which this thesis’ social construction of public security policy model – as well as theoretical generalisations on civil society, democratisation and policy definition – can be tested. In this vein, Chapter 5 looks at the First Citizen Summit to Build a Prosperous and Fair Mexico, an institutionalised, government-sanctioned and cooperative non-governmental inactive joined by more than 100 CSOs that attempted to shape the President’s agenda on public security policy. Chapter 6

studies the development of the Autodefensas self-defence movement, a more nebulous, non-institutionalised, politically antagonistic, even illegal organised civil society expression intending to dictate political decisions in the Mexican state of Michoacan. Through this, this thesis will shed new light on the development of the public sphere, civil society and bottom-up policy-making in previously unstudied non-democratic scenarios like Mexico.

Chapter 4. Mexico's dangerous public sphere: triggering the rebirth of civil society.

The theoretical review conducted in the previous chapter evidenced that the formulation of public policy, including public security, cannot be studied without understanding a country's specific public and political spheres, including its institutional framework, socio-political context and media relations. In the particular case of Mexico's dangerous democracy, where journalists, activists and politicians alike are subject to co-optation, intimidation, even assassination, it is necessary to pay special attention to the effects that public (in)security has over the development of an OCS. This is why this chapter conducts an evaluation of the public and political spheres in which policy-making was taking place in Mexico during the early 2010s. Furthermore, to weigh the importance of 'the public' in Mexico's politics, it also studies the level of citizenisation of public security policy and government's actions to promote citizens' participation in policy-making.

4.1 Mexico's security trap: a new democracy and securitised public sphere calling for the public's intervention.

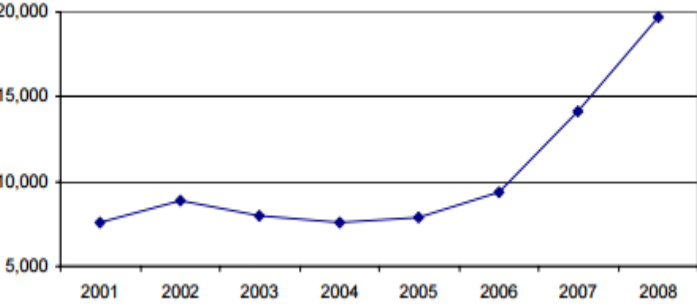
With the arrival of the new millennium and, coincidentally, *electoral* democracy to Mexico, Mexicans expected improvements in public security provision. Contrary to this, the country seems to have fallen into what John Bailey calls, a 'security trap.'²²⁹ The elections of 2000 did bring alternation of power across executive and legislative branches of government at national and state levels, but also weakened government's control over criminal organisations. With the end of the

²²⁹ John Bailey, "Drug Traffickers as Political Actors in Mexico's Nascent Democracy," in *The Oxford Handbook of Mexican Politics*, ed. Roderic Ai Camp, 1st Ed (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012), 824, https://catalyst.library.jhu.edu/catalog/bib_4113908 (Accessed 22-12-2017).

PRI's one-party rule, the corrupt agreements between politicians and criminals started to be fractured, producing a violent reconfiguration of power. Therefore, what was initially seen as the beginning of Mexico's electoral democratic miracle, full of dreams of freedoms and progress, gradually transformed into a dangerous democracy.

Whilst Mexico had experienced higher levels of violence than other similar industrialised nations, criminality in the country had been reducing markedly since the late 1930s. The homicide rate, for

Graph 1. Annual budget of the Ministry of Public Security, SSP, 2001–2008 (prices in MXN, 2008)



example, was declining uninterruptedly, passing from 19.7 homicides per 100,000 inhabitants in 1992, to just over 9 in 2006.²³⁰ However, this trend began to change at the end of Vicente Fox's presidency

(2000–2006). With the increasing influence of the DTOs over municipal political and economic spheres across Mexico, in 2006, the newly elected President, Felipe Calderon (2006–2012), launched a more direct confrontation against organised crime: a 'war' – in his own words – against drugs. In this vein, since arriving to the Presidency, Calderon pushed for a larger army's involvement in counter-trafficking tasks. For instance, from being responsible for public security tasks in 14 states and 32 municipalities in 2007, by 2013 the Navy was already operating in 24 states and 88 municipalities.²³¹ This militarisation of public security prompted Robert Bunker to suggest that

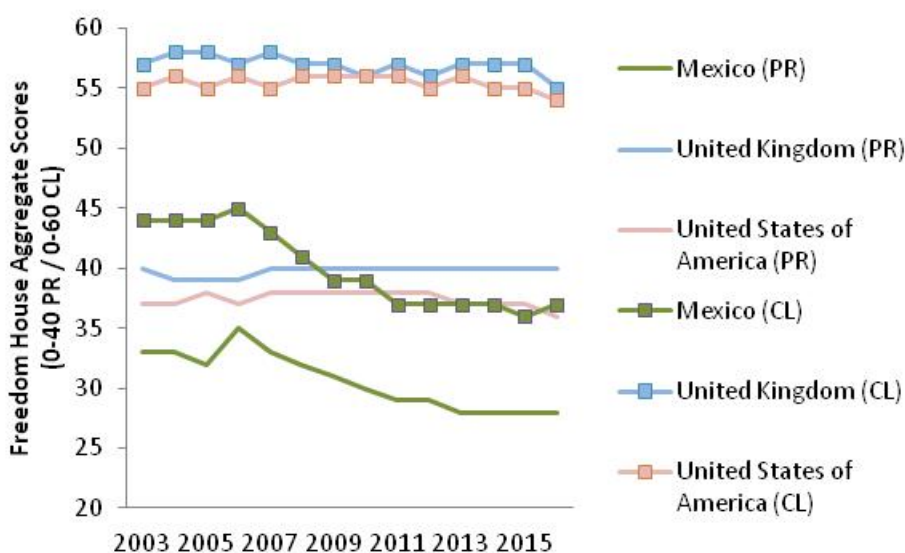
²³⁰ The homicide rate measures the totality of homicides denounced, not only *intentional* homicide (*homicidio doloso* in Spanish). Guillermo González-Pérez et al., "Deaths by Homicide in Mexico: Trends, Socio-Geographical Variations and Associated Factors," *Ciência & Saúde Coletiva* 17, no. 12 (2012): 3198, <http://www.scielo.br/pdf/csc/v17n12/05.pdf> (Accessed 22-12-2017); David Vicenteño, "Baja Índice de Homicidios En México: Segob," *Excelsior*, February 16, 2015, <http://www.excelsior.com.mx/nacional/2015/02/16/1008565#imagen-7> (Accessed 22-12-2017).

²³¹ Auditoría Superior de la Federación / Cámara de Diputados, "Evaluación Número 1207 'Política Pública de Seguridad Pública.'" (Mexico City, 2013), 287, http://www.asf.gob.mx/Trans/Informes/IR2013i/Documentos/Auditorias/2013_1207_a.pdf (Accessed 22-12-2017).

Mexico was waging a war, not with armies, but with groups that advanced democracies still call terrorists, guerrillas, bandits and robbers.²³²

Rather than cleaning Mexico from corruption and drugs, President Calderon dismembered established DTOs into smaller but more refined groups, more flexible in their operations and more difficult to trace to control.

Graph 2. Evolution of civil liberties (CL) and political rights (PR) in Mexico (2003–2015).



Source: Author's own elaboration with information from Freedom House.²³³

Civil liberties and political rights like freedom of expression were also negatively affected (see Graph 2). For instance, by 2010 more than 20% of the population had been a victim of a crime and over 35% of households have had at least one family member injured in a crime scene.²³⁴ In 2015, Mexico was one of only ten countries in the world where journalists had been murdered and the Latin America's country with the 'most dramatic case of violence against environmental activists.'²³⁵ The

²³² R Bunker, "Ephocal Change: War Over Social and Political Organisation," *Parameters: US Army War College Quarterly* 27, no. 2 (1997): 40.

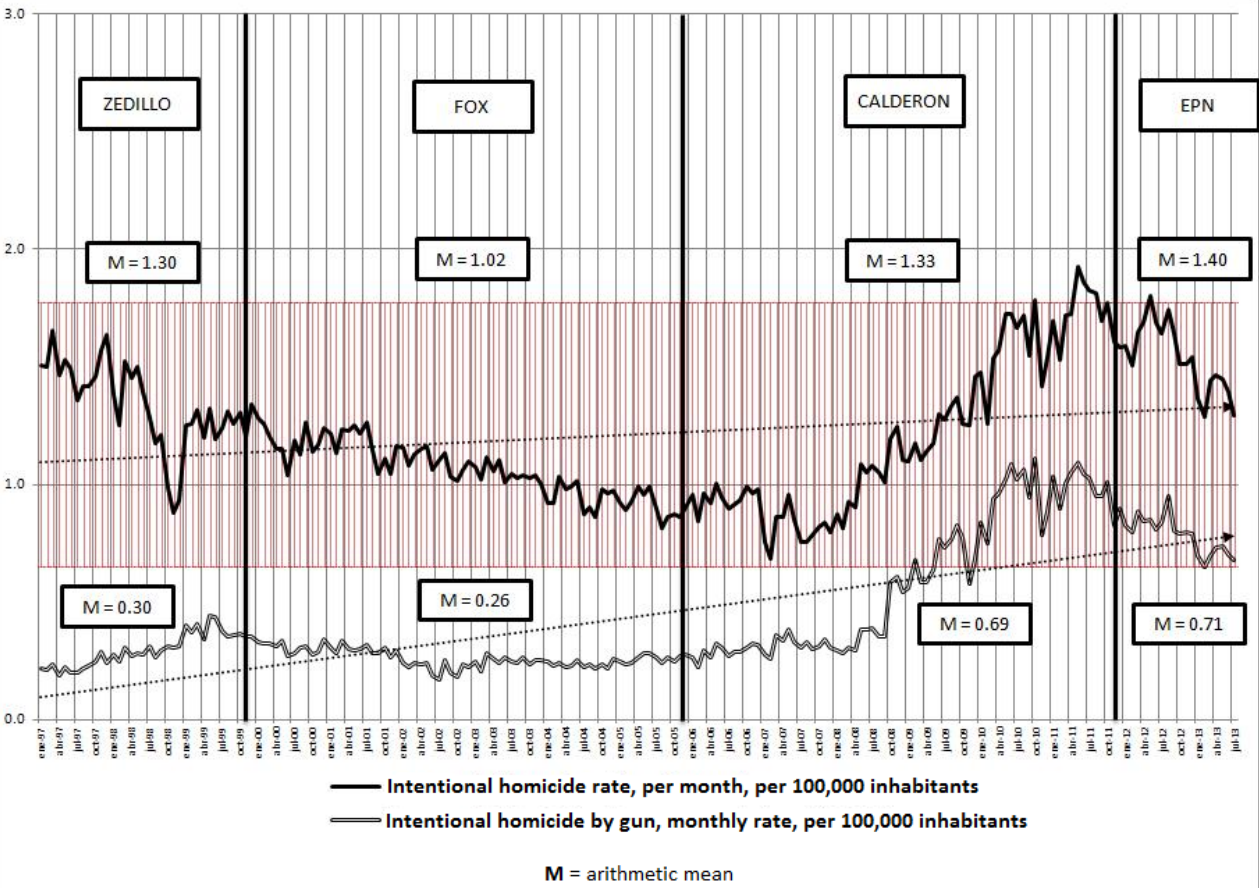
²³³ Freedom House, "Freedom in the World."

²³⁴ Rios, "Tendencias y Explicaciones Al Asesinato de Periodistas y Alcaldes En Mexico: El Crime Organizado y La Violencia de Alto Perfi."

²³⁵ Hercilia Castro, "México, El Caso Más Dramático de AL En Asesinatos de Activistas, Acusa La RMI," *La Jornada*, August 25, 2013,

risk of being murdered also increased. In 2009 the national homicide rate reached 15.7 homicides per 100,000 inhabitants but passed to 17 homicides in 2014 (see Graph 3).²³⁶ According to Transparency International, corruption worsened too. Whilst in 2005 Mexico was ranked 65th out of 159 countries in its *Corruption Perceptions Index*, by 2010, it ranked 98th out of 178, and in 2016, 123rd out of 176 countries.²³⁷

Graph 3. Homicide rate, per month, per administration, per 100,000 inhabitants.

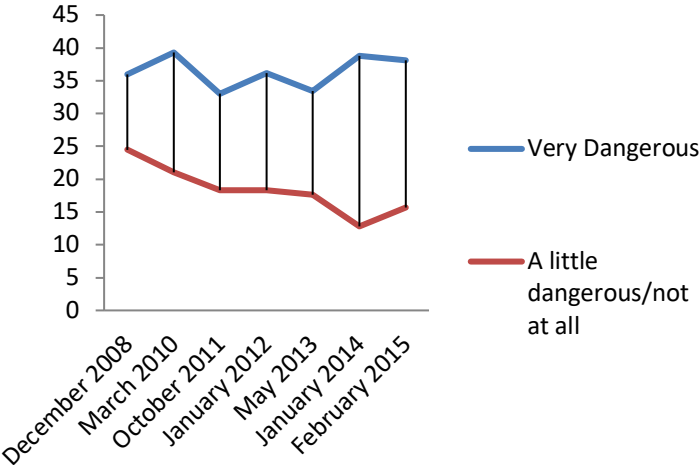


Source: C. Vilalta, “Observatorio Delictivo” (Mexico City, 2011), <http://www.geocrimen.cide.edu/index.php?page=observatorio> (Accessed 22–12–2017).

<http://www.lajornadaguerrero.com.mx/2013/08/25/index.php?section=politica&article=005n2pol> (Accessed 22–12–2017); Fronteras, “2015 : Periodistas Muertos.”
²³⁶ Considering homicides denounced, and not only *intentional* homicide (*homicidio doloso* in Spanish). González–Pérez et al., “Deaths by Homicide in Mexico: Trends, Socio–Geographical Variations and Associated Factors,” 3198; Vicenteño, “Baja Índice de Homicidios En México: Segob.”
²³⁷ Freedom House, “Mexico” (Washington, 2006), <https://freedomhouse.org/report/freedom-world/2006/mexico#.VVOsyvViko> (Accessed 22–12–2017); Transparency International, “Mexico” (Berlin, 2017), <https://www.transparency.org/country/MEX> (Accessed 22–12–2017).

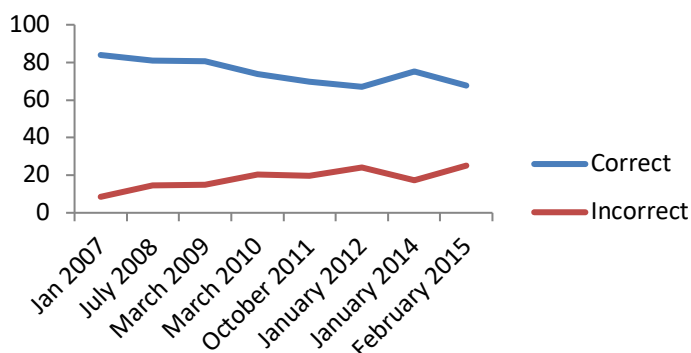
With the military using maximum intensity force, rather than policing practices across civil communities, government also increased society’s distrust in the government’s public security apparatus.²³⁸ The army, for instance, once one of the country’s most trusted institutions, is now facing a credibility crisis, as an increasing sector of the population believes that ‘using the army is not the right solution to Mexico’s drug trafficking problem’ (see Graph 5). Recent polls also illustrate how the collusion between government and DTOs has diminished the potential for society-government cooperation (see Graph 4).

Graph 4. How dangerous is to help police in your city?



²³⁸ See, for instance, all the cases of military abuse towards civilians reported by Marcos Moloeznic. In Marcos Moloeznic, “The Impact of the Use of Military Force against Drug Trafficking in Mexico,” *Renglones* 61 (2009): 9–12, http://www.renglones.iteso.mx/upload/archivos/Marcos_Moloeznic (Accessed 22–12–2017); De los reporteros, “La Guerra Perdida Contra El Narcotráfico,” *El Diario MX*, July 27, 2013, http://diario.mx/Opinion/2013-07-27_f045344b/la-guerra-perdida-contra-el-narcotrafico/ (Accessed 22–12–2017).

Graph 5. Is it correct or incorrect to use the army against drug-trafficking?



Source: Author's own elaboration with information from Consulta Mitofsky, "Décima Cuarta Encuesta Nacional Sobre Percepción de Inseguridad Ciudadana En México" (Mexico City, 2015), 10, http://mucd.org.mx/recursos/Noticias/XIVEncuestaNacionalSobrePercepcindelInseguridadCiudadanaenMxico/documentos2/NA_MUCD2015Feb.pdf (Accessed 22-12-2017).

At state and municipal levels, insecurity also repressed investigative journalism. Just between 2000 and 2009, 46 journalists were murdered across the country, creating a situation of uncertainty and disinformation in which criminal groups were able to demand silence and impose media, public, even government agendas.²³⁹ Overall, with over 50% of the population perceiving every public security authority as corrupt, 2 out of 3 citizens from the poorest economic strata considering government does not pay attention to their demands and with the generalised opinion that 'it is more important for government to try to maintain law and order than to protect people's freedoms,' the development of a democratic public sphere and politically effective OCS was an extremely complicated, even dangerous task.²⁴⁰ Paradoxically, as explained in the following sub-chapter, this context of insecurity ended triggering the awakening of civil society in Mexico.

²³⁹ Centro de Periodismo y Ética Pública in Sallie Hughes, "Democracy in the Newsroom: The Evolution of Journalism and the News Media," in *The Oxford Handbook of Mexican Politics*, ed. Roderic Ai Camp, 1st Ed (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012), 388, https://catalyst.library.jhu.edu/catalog/bib_4113908 (Accessed 22-12-2017).

²⁴⁰ Based on data from A. Kphut et al., "Crime and Drug Cartels Top Concerns in Mexico" (Washington, 2011). Paul Sánchez, "Gestión de La Crisis de Seguridad En México, La Guerra Contra El Narcocontráfico, Administración Pública y Reformal Del Estado." (Mexico: CLAD, 2011), 24-25, <http://siare.clad.org/fulltext/0067806.pdf> (Accessed 22-12-2017); INEGI/SEGOB, "ENCUP 2008:

4.2 Civil society's awakening in an insecure public sphere.

*Despite the awesome, intimidating power of vested interests pitted against them, large groups of people do often respond critically to the world in which they live; they will commonly agitate, resist, fight back, and organize under even the most difficult circumstances, and they will forge a variety of social movements.*²⁴¹

'The concept of the public sphere is closely tied to the notion of civil society, although they are not synonymous.'²⁴² Civil society, says Noelle McAfee, is 'the demarcation of entities and associations by which socio-political activities give place to the space of public sphere.'²⁴³ It is 'a matter of collective choice, but not government', where people have the 'freedom to conduct self-organised efforts', Calhoun argues.²⁴⁴ As such, civil society actors, Taru Salmenkari concludes, are 'essential for an authentic public sphere because they emerge from the public and make the public sphere more inclusive to new ideas. They conglomerate and represent citizens' individual voices.'²⁴⁵ From here, Jose Garcia states, civil society can be understood as 'the sphere of intermediation between the state and the basic fundamentals of society.'²⁴⁶ It is 'the moral structure of democracy', Reyes argues, 'the chance for minorities and disadvantaged groups to argue their case in a

Resultados de La Encuesta Nacional Sobre Cultura Política y Prácticas Ciudadanas"; Colectivo de Análisis en Seguridad y Democracia, "Cuarta Encuesta Nacional Sobre Cultura Política y Prácticas Ciudadanas 2008" (Mexico City, 2009), http://investigadores.cide.edu/aparicio/data/verano09/ENCUP_2008_Informe.pdf (Accessed 22-12-2017).

²⁴¹ Boggs, *The End of Politics. Corporate Power and the Decline of the Public sphere*.

²⁴² World Bank, "The Public Sphere, Communication for Governance & Accountability Program," 3.

²⁴³ Goelle McAfee, "Civil Society, or the Public Sphere?," *gonepublic: philosophy, politics, & public life*, 2009, <https://gonepublic.net/2009/07/24/civil-society-or-the-public-sphere/> (Accessed 22-12-2017); Michael Edwards, "Civil Society," NA, 2004, <http://fpc.org.uk/fsblob/195.pdf>.

²⁴⁴ Craig Calhoun, "Civil Society and the Public Sphere," in *The Oxford Handbook of Civil society*, ed. Michael Edwards (New York: Oxford University Press, 2011), 311-23, http://eprints.lse.ac.uk/42621/1/_lse.ac.uk_storage_LIBRARY_Secondary_libfile_shared_repository_Content_Calhoun,C_Civil_society_Calhoun_Civil_Society_2014.pdf (Accessed 22-12-2017).

²⁴⁵ Taru Salmenkari, "Consensus and Dissensus in the Public Sphere: How East Asian Associations Use Publicity," *Studia Orientalia Electronica* 2 (2014): 18,25.

²⁴⁶ Jose-Angel Garcia, "Civil Society: The Democratising Factor of Mexico?," in *Reflexiones Sobre Le Estado de Derecho La Seguridad Pública y El Desarrollo de México En América Latina*, ed. Felipe Betancourt, First (Mexico City: Forthcoming. Instituto de Investigacions Jurídicas, UNAM, 2017), 107-27.

democratic scenario that does not work for all the people'.²⁴⁷ In this sense, the Inter-American Bank for Development (IDB) regards civil society as being made of:

Associations, academic and non-for profit institutions, professional groups, corporate social responsibility groups, NGOs, unions, religious institutions, youth groups, African-descendant organisations, indigenous groups, formal and informal organisations that belong and/or represent the community's interests with philanthropic, ethical, cultural, religious and scientific perspectives.²⁴⁸

Building on the above, this thesis defines civil society as Organised Civil Society (OCS): a non-profit association, organized under certain level of institutionalism which can – but not necessarily has to – be formally registered with government, functioning as a self-governed body, with a voluntary membership and which main objectives are to alter or reform legislation in benefit of society. It does not look to obtain political power, neither to be part of the State, and government does not have a monopoly on its managerial decisions.²⁴⁹

In this vein, the first expressions of OCS in Mexico were the higher education institutions, the Catholic Church and the charitable organisations it established in the 1960s.²⁵⁰ Although *de jure* citizens already had political rights and attributions, society was *de facto* voiceless in the country's public sphere, even more in the political realm. Whilst the prevalent poverty and illiteracy limited citizens' capacities to exercise their political rights, the government's tight political control did not

²⁴⁷ Wilson, in Grant, *Pressure Groups, Politics and Democracy in Britain*; Reyes, "La Ciudadania En Mexico. Un Beve Recuento Historico."

²⁴⁸ Banco Interamericano de Desarrollo, "Definición de Sociedad Civil," Banco Interamericano de Desarrollo, 2013, <http://www.iadb.org/es/sociedad-civil/definicion-de-sociedad-civil,18852.html> (Accessed 22-12-2017).

²⁴⁹ Registered in Mexico's Information System of the Federal Registrar of CSO's (SIRFOSC), which, regrettably, has not been updated to this day (See Annex 10). For discussion see SIRFOSC, "El Registro Federal de las OSC En Cifras," Comision de Fomento de las Actividades de las Organizaciones de la Sociedad Civil, 2015, <http://www.corresponsabilidad.gob.mx/?p=482bd57ea95bb42cc15c82d63af42ea9&idContenido=35y> (Accessed 22-12-2017); FUSDA, "Las Organizaciones de La Sociedad Civil," 24; J. Cohen and A. Arato, *Civil society and Political Theory* (Cambridge MA: MIT Press, 1992); Reyes, "La Ciudadania En Mexico. Un Beve Recuento Historico."

²⁵⁰ Tejeda, "Las Dimensiones de La Sociedad Civil."

permit the few social organisations to fully develop. Even the scarce social mobilisations that used to take place were structured by the government apparatus to reinforce its power against its political rivals. Nevertheless, this scenario started to change by the end of the decade.

In 1968, workers' unions and students' movements developed a critical attitude against the political system. By taking over the facilities of Mexico's National Autonomous University (UNAM), and constantly demonstrating in the streets, students and citizens showed their dissatisfaction with an unresponsive government. However, far from receiving a positive response from government, President Diaz Ordaz (1964–1970) violently repressed the movement on the 2nd of October 1968. Soldiers and secret police apprehended, tortured and kidnapped dozens of students, killing between 30 and 300 of them.²⁵¹ Although, for government, this seemed to be the way to manage and restrain antagonistic political forces in the public sphere, this massacre triggered further social movements. In the words of FUSDA CSO, it was then when 'the awakening of civil society became the awakening of the Mexican society demanding its social, economic, cultural and political rights.'²⁵²

By 1982, government continued resisting and repressing workers' unions, social groups, strikes, and any type of demonstration against low salaries. However, three important socio-economic and political events radically challenged government-society interactions. First, in 1982, a severe economic crisis forced government to cut subsidies and the pay-outs to supportive workers unions. Secondly, in 1985, Mexico City was hit by an earthquake of magnitude 8.1 Richter, killing between 6,000 and 10,000 people.²⁵³ With a 'lethargic and grossly incompetent government's response' to

²⁵¹ An accurate figure has never been produced, neither by civil society, nor by government.

²⁵² In FUSDA, "Las Organizaciones de La Sociedad Civil," 29.

²⁵³ More than 30 years after the earthquake government has been unable to produce an accurate figure of the number of deaths. Unofficial reports produced in 2015 talk of a death toll of between 10,000 to 12,843 people. Arturo Paramo, "Sismo 85: Definen Cifra de Muertes," Reforma, September 17, 2015, <http://www.excelsior.com.mx/comunidad/2015/09/17/1046211> (Accessed 22–12–2017); Valentina Perez and Karla Casillas, "El Sismo de Los 10 Mil Muertos.," El Universal, September 14, 2015, <http://www.eluniversal.com.mx/articulo/periodismo-de-investigacion/2015/09/14/el-sismo-de-los-10-mil-muertos> (Accessed 22–12–2017).

the disaster, solidarity among citizens emerged all across Mexico. For instance, in Mexico City citizens organised social groups to provide housing and demand the provision of social services for those in need. Thirdly, in 1988, the country witnessed 'one of the most egregious examples of electoral fraud: massive protests took over the streets, triggering the development of a civil society movement centred on the struggle for political rights and democracy, and the beginning of the end of the PRI's authoritarian rule.'²⁵⁴

With civil society challenging the functioning of government and the widespread notion of electoral fraud, President Carlos Salinas (1988-1994) was forced to declare 'the end of the one-party system and promise a new relationship between state and society'.²⁵⁵ However, contrary to this, Salinas and the political elite went back to PRI's clientelist practices. Through a corporatist state that recruited and financed social organisations, President Salinas intended to co-opt social activism to further retard the expansion of civil society in Mexico.²⁵⁶ Nevertheless, internal political fractures within the *PRI*, a lack of focus on long-term objectives and another socio-political and economic crisis, made it fail.

²⁵⁴ Cuauhtémoc Cardenas, the candidate of the opposition from the left (National Democratic Front, now known as PRD), was enjoying an increasing popularity. After the voting polls closed and the ballots started to be counted, Cardenas was ahead of the 'officialism' candidate, Carlos Salinas de Gortari, from PRI. Nevertheless, during the counting process the computing system suddenly crashed, rebooted the count and government declared Salinas de Gortari as the new elected president with 50.7% of the vote – with Cardenas having achieved only 31.1% of the vote.

In 1997, the political party lost control over Mexico City, its absolute majority in the chamber of Deputies and, therefore, the presidential control over the legislative. And, in 2000, it lost the presidency. Olvera, "The Elusive Democracy: Political Parties, Democratic Institutions, and Civil Society in Mexico.," 83; Thompson, "Ex-President in Mexico Casts New Light on Rigged 1988 Election"; María Murillo, "Postreform Regulatory Redistribution in Argentina and Mexico," in *Political Competition, Partisanship, and Policy-making in Latin American Public Utilities* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2009).

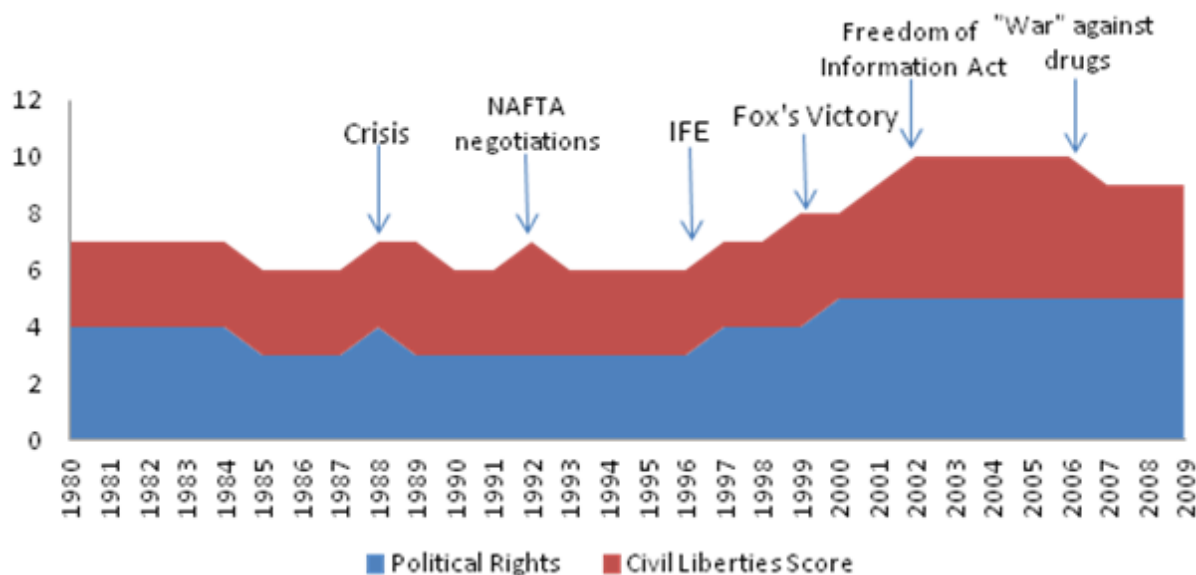
²⁵⁵ Fox, "The Difficult Transition from Clientelism to Citizenship: Lessons from Mexico."

²⁵⁶ Ilán Bizberg, "El Papel de La Sociedad Civil En Las Transformaciones Políticas Actuales," in *México, Los Retos Ante El Futuro*, ed. G. Cánovas (Mexico City: El Colegio de México and Fundación Konrad Adenauer, 2007), 33–56, http://www.academia.edu/3147018/El_papel_de_la_sociedad_civil_en_las_transformaciones_politicas_actuales_retos_ante_el_futuro (Accessed 22–12–2017).

By 1994, at the end of President Salinas' term, Mexico suffered another 'peso' devaluation (i.e. the Tequila Crisis) and the rise of the Zapatista movement claiming for indigenous autonomy in the southern state of Chiapas. With an economically and politically strained government and a new President in office (Ernesto Zedillo 1994–2000), CSOs started to gain social recognition as legitimate social actors capable of influencing public opinion, debating with government and leading society in the pursuit of common benefits.

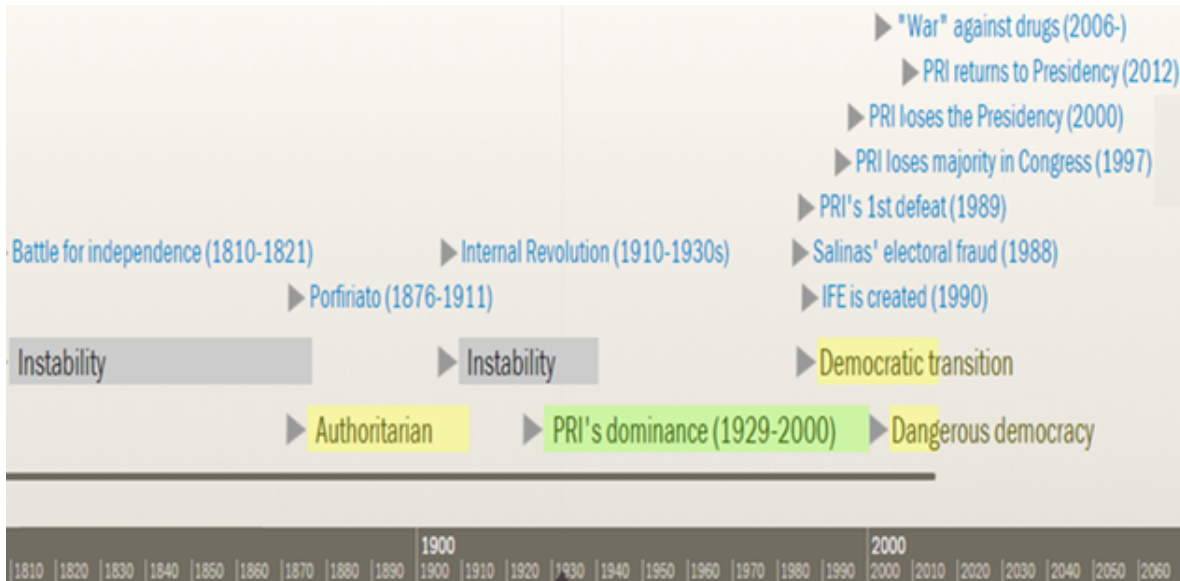
Overall, it is possible to argue that the expansion of civil liberties and political rights, including the development of civil society organisations, were not the result of the government's voluntary openness to civil society, but a consequence of key socio-political developments that forced a gradual reconfiguration of society-government interactions (see Graphs 8 and 9).

Graph 6. Evolution of political rights and civil liberties vs National socio-economic events.



Source: Author's own elaboration with information from Smith, "Mexican Democracy in Comparative Politics"; Freedom House, "Mexico."

Graph 7. Mexico's democratic history



Source: Author's own elaboration.

Political events that took place during and after Mexico's electoral democratisation in 2000 also validate the correlation between the evolution of Mexico's democratic public sphere with key socio-political developments (see Graph 9). In this sense, Grant argues that 'the degree of political influence that pressure groups can achieve depends on the type of political party in office', and this seems to apply in the case of Mexico.²⁵⁷ Previous to 2000, there had not been any other political party in the presidency than PRI, reason why there were very limited spaces for political debate open to the general public. However, as power alternations started to take place in Mexico, civil society began to acquire more political rights.²⁵⁸ In this vein, after Vicente Fox's presidential victory in 2000, Mexicans witnessed the largest development of civil society organisations in the country's

²⁵⁷ Grant, *Pressure Groups, Politics and Democracy in Britain*, 145.

²⁵⁸ The first alternation of power occurred in 1997, when the Partido de la Revolución Democrática (PRD) defeated PRI in Mexico City's local elections.)

history (see Graph 9).²⁵⁹ Taking advantage of the ‘2000 democratic wave’, Mexican activists began to claim for more social rights, including better education and urban services and the prosecution of human rights violations. What is more, the democratic furore pushed politicians to be more willing to listen, talk to and debate with their constituents.²⁶⁰ Nevertheless, the flourishing of civil society seemed to have stopped during President Calderon (2006–2012) and President Peña Nieto (2012–2018) administrations. A phenomenon that finds explanation in Hipsher’s approach to civil society evolution. According to Hipsher, social movements work in a cyclical way:²⁶¹ first, in the initial stages of transitions to democracy (i.e. President Zedillo (1994–2000) government allows for more freedom of action, permitting mobilisers to push for further and faster democratic evolution. Once this democratic transition arrives to its maturity phase, and democratic cooperation has been established, social movements start to be institutionalised, if not co-opted or corporatized, and to decline in both number and radicalism.²⁶² This condition is perpetuated and enhanced by the CSOs’ financial needs. The current economic and political scenario, Tejeda argues, has ‘imprisoned’ civil society between the state’s coercive interests aiming to recover its influence in socio-political spheres, and corporate interests looking to colonize civilizations and cultures through civil society.²⁶³ In this vein, according to CIVICUS, 23% of the CSO’s funding comes from individual donors (although it is not specified who these donors are), 22% from government, 12% from national sources (unspecified), 10% from national businesses and the rest from the sale/provision of services, foreign

²⁵⁹ As more than 50% of the still active CSOs were created between 1991 and 2000 FUSDA, “Las Organizaciones de La Sociedad Civil,” 31.

²⁶⁰ Azuela, *PRImera Cumbre Ciudadana Para Construir Un México Pacífico Y Justo*, 78.

²⁶¹ Patricia Hipsher, “Democratic Transitions as Protest Cycles: Social Movement Dynamis in Democratizing Latin America,” in *The Social Movement Society*, ed. David Meyer and Sidney Tarrow (Oxford: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, Inc., 1998), 154.

²⁶² Grant, *Pressure Groups and British Politics*, 56; Ilán Bizberg, “Una Democracia Vacía. Sociedad Civil, Movimientos Sociales y Democracia.” (Mexico City: Colmex, 2010), 11, <http://cei.colmex.mx/PDFs/ProfBizberg/Movimientos.pdf> (Accessed 22–12–2017).

²⁶³ Tejeda, “Las Dimensiones de La Sociedad Civil,” 138.

donors, and membership fees.²⁶⁴ While this diversification provides CSOs with more autonomy from government, the influence that private donors can gain inside the organisations cannot go unnoticed, especially when only 26% of CSOs can currently meet their financial needs.²⁶⁵ What is more, by rewarding those *cooperative* activist groups with grants and seats in the decision-making tables and isolating the more critical ones, government has also found the perfect strategy to fragment civil society. Therefore, the constant battle for funding has created a scenario where those CSOs aligned to orthodox objectives become stronger, whilst the smaller, weaker but perhaps more critical CSOs face smaller chances of survival.²⁶⁶

In Mexico, though, not only CSOs are being co-opted or corporatized, but – as detailed in the following sub-chapter – citizens’ political disaffection is also limiting the development and influence of civil society as a whole.

4.3. A reinvigorated civil society in the recently democratised public sphere?

With electoral democracy ‘arriving’ into Mexico in 2000, society witnessed a more open and bottom-up governmental system where citizens, OCS, academics and government started to work together. However, the rapid evolutionary trend that civil society experienced from the 1980s to 2000 seems to be slowing down in terms of expansion and effectiveness. This section builds on data from over 12,000 responses to more than 5 national polls across 12 years, to develop a cross-tab analysis of public attitudes to civil society, citizens’ involvement in the public and political spheres,

²⁶⁴ Cortes et al., “A Snapshot of Civil Society in Mexico, Analytical Report on the CIVICUS Civil Society Index,” 30.

²⁶⁵ Cortes et al., 40.

²⁶⁶ Perez-Díaz, *State, Bureaucracy and Civil society. A Critical Discussion of the Political Theory of Karl Marx* *New Studies in Sociology*, 31, 76, 147.

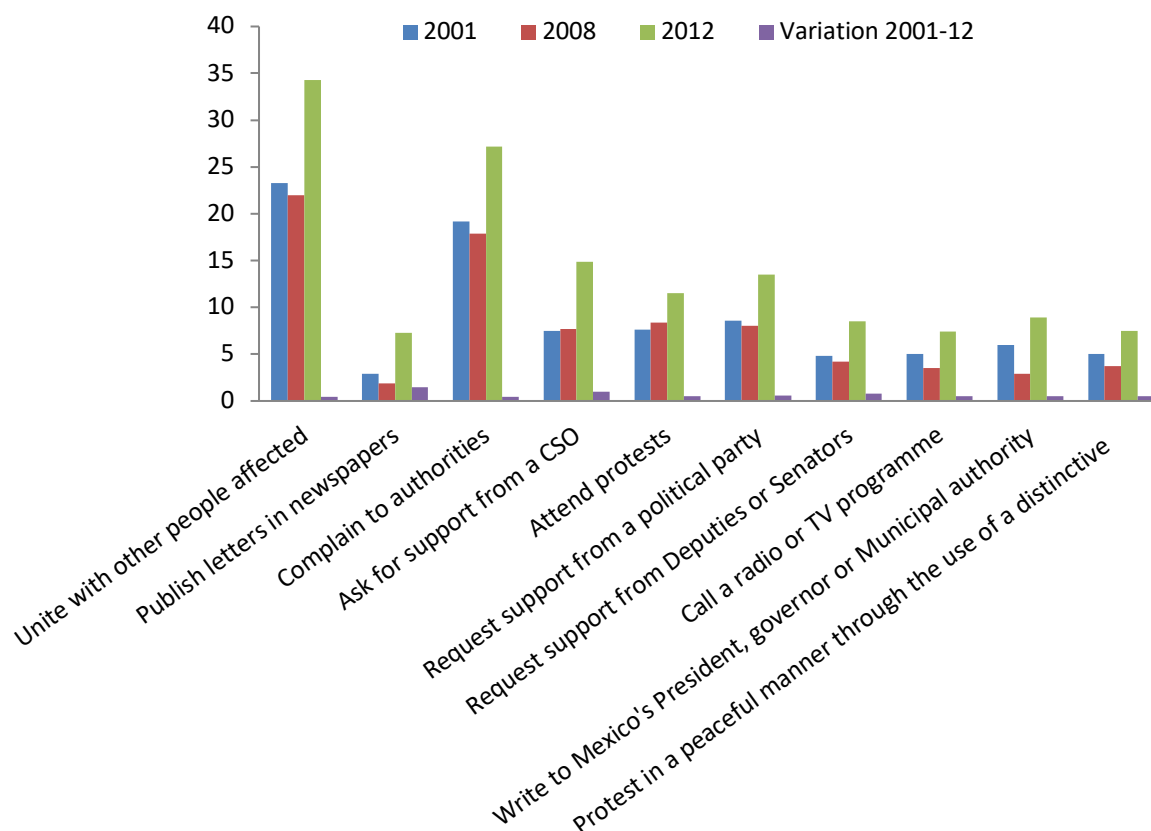
and most efficient mechanisms for bottom–up political engagement. Through this method, this section aims to provide initial insights into two of the secondary questions of this thesis:

What does the analysis of public security policy-making suggest about the rebirth of civil society and the deepening of a bottom–up democratic Mexico?			
Secondary questions	Macro	Bottom–up democracy / the future	How do the processes occurring within the public sphere contribute to, or trigger the generation of a bottom–up <i>political</i> change? How much power does <i>the public</i> have?
			Is media the surrogate of the public agenda or a mechanism for public domination?
	Micro	Mechanisms / Case Studies / Tools	Do public policy changes obey society’s demands?
			Is a thicker model of democracy, built around social capital, allowing civil society to set the agenda? Or does a top–down process continue dominating the agenda setting of public security policy in Mexico?

With the new millennium and the ‘instauration’ of electoral democracy in Mexico, civil society became more willing to participate in, and eager to influence those public affairs of its interest than before. In 2001, for instance, 68% of the population was of the opinion that ‘*the people* should promote a change in law if it was considered to be unfair’.²⁶⁷ Between 2001 and 2012, citizens’ involvement in different forms of non–electoral political activity also increased by between 42% (i.e. complain to authorities) and 148% (publish letters in newspapers) (see Graph 10).

²⁶⁷ ENCUP 2001.

Graph 8. % of citizens involved in non-electoral political activism (2001–2012).



Political Action	2001	2008	2012	Variation 2001–12
Unite with other people affected	23.3	22	34.3	47.3%
Publish letters in newspapers	2.9	1.9	7.3	147.9%
Complain to authorities	19.2	17.9	27.2	41.8%
Ask for support from a CSO	7.5	7.7	14.9	97.1%
Attend protests	7.6	8.4	11.5	50.0%
Request support from a political party	8.6	8	13.5	57.6%
Request support from Deputies or Senators	4.8	4.2	8.5	75.9%
Call a radio or TV programme	5.0	3.5	7.4	48.2%
Write to Mexico's President, governor or Municipal authority	6.0	2.9	8.9	47.9%
Protest in a peaceful manner through the use of a distinctive	5.0	3.7	7.5	48.5%

Source: Author's own elaboration with information from Secretaría de Gobernación, "ENCUP 2001, Resumen de Resultados" (Mexico City, 2001), <http://www.encup.gob.mx/work/models/Encup/Resource/20/1/images/resumen2001.pdf> (Accessed 22–12–2017); Colectivo de Análisis en Seguridad y Democracia, "Cuarta Encuesta Nacional Sobre Cultura Política y Prácticas Ciudadanas 2008"; INEGI/Ministry of the Interior, "Quinta ENCUP 2012."

Nevertheless, Mexicans' involvement in both the political and public spheres remains extremely low. This could not only reveal the lack of channels for political involvement, but also the development of what Flinders and Wood call 'societal depoliticization:' a sense of diminished interest in public affairs on the part of the public.²⁶⁸ For example, in 2001, 40.3% of Mexicans stated that participating in public demonstrations and blockades 'would be their preferred method to demonstrate public inconformity', 28.7% said it would be joining a social organisation and 16.7% that it would be by 'promoting the destitution of a public servant.'²⁶⁹ Nevertheless, between 1988 and 2001, only 8% of citizens had attended a citizens' organisation meeting and just 6% participated in political demonstrations.²⁷⁰

Citizens' political involvement was not aligned to their perception of the effectiveness of political activism either (Table 9). For example, in 2001, mechanisms for citizens' political activism, including 'attending protests', 'uniting with other people' and 'writing to Mexico's President', were considered to be 'a lot useful in the solution of a community problem' by between 14% and 34% of the population.²⁷¹ However, only between 5% and 23% of citizens had participated in them (see Graph 11). Similarly, calling a radio or TV programme' was the political action with the 2nd largest number of people considering it 'a lot useful' for solving a community's problem (29.2% of citizens), but the 8th preferred action in terms of number of people actually doing it (5%).

²⁶⁸ Matthew Flinders and M. Wood, "Depoliticisation, Governance and the State," *Policy & Politics* 42, no. 2 (2014): 137.

²⁶⁹ Secretaría de Gobernacion, "ENCUP 2001, Resumen de Resultados" (Mexico City, 2001), <http://www.encup.gob.mx/work/models/Encup/Resource/20/1/images/resumen2001.pdf> (Accessed 22-12-2017).

²⁷⁰ Gobernacion.

²⁷¹ Each percentage varied according to the mechanism in question. For instance, for 'Protest in a peaceful manner with a distinctive' there were 14.7% citizens thinking it was 'a lot useful in the solution of a community problem', and for 'Unite with other people affected' there were 34.1%. For discussion see Annex 3 Graph and/or Question 8A, Gobernacion.

Graph 9. % of citizens participating in non-electoral political actions (2001).

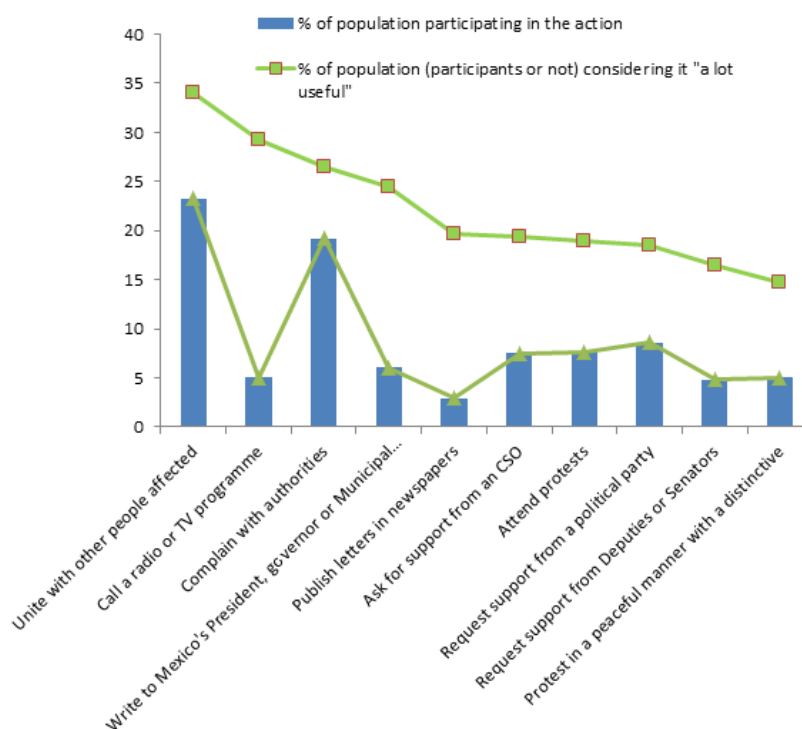
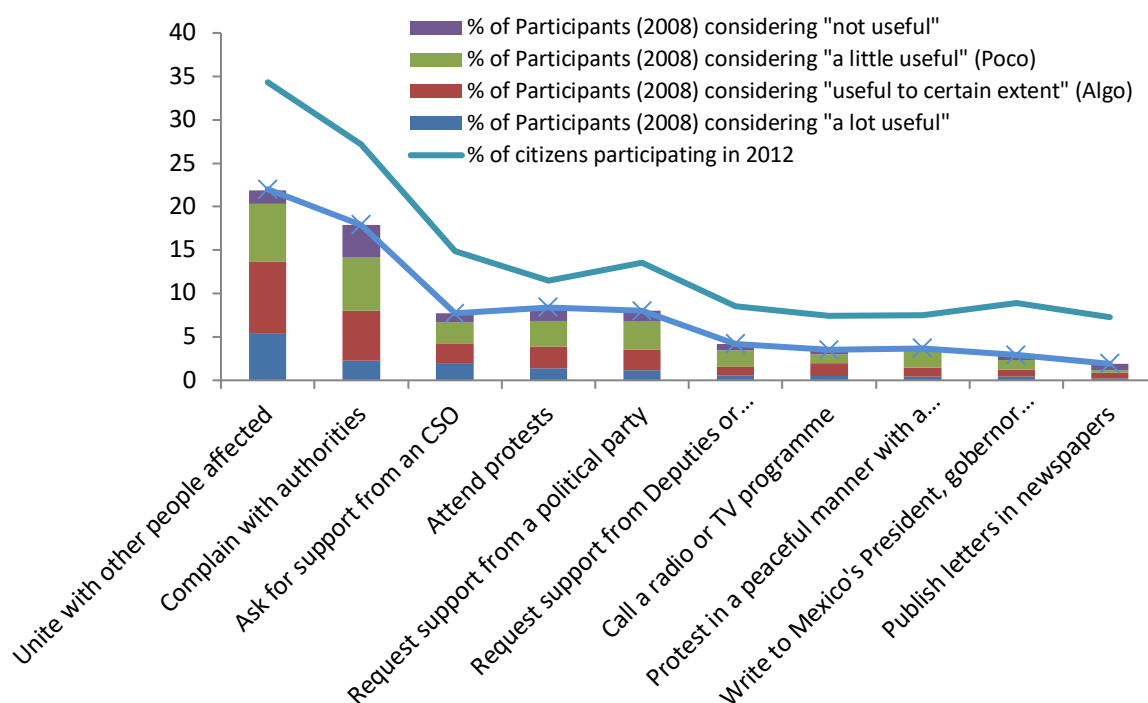


Table 8. Most popular political actions and their level of perceived political effectiveness (2001).

Political action	Ranking by % of population (participants or not) considering it "a lot useful"	% of population (participants or not) considering it "a lot useful"	Ranking by % of population participating in the action	% of population participating in the action
Unite with other people affected	1	34.1	1	23.3
Call a radio or TV programme	2	29.2	8	5.0
Complain to authorities	3	26.6	2	19.2
Write to Mexico's President, governor or Municipal authority	4	24.5	6	6.0
Publish letters in newspapers	5	19.7	10	2.9
Ask for support from a CSO	6	19.4	5	7.5
Attend protests	7	18.9	4	7.6
Request support from a political party	8	18.5	3	8.6
Request support from Deputies or Senators	9	16.5	9	4.8
Protest in a peaceful manner with a distinctive	10	14.7	7	5.0

Source: Author's own elaboration with information from Gobernacion.

Graph 10. Citizens participating in non-electoral political activism (2008–2012)



2008	Ranking by % of participants (2008) considering it "a lot useful"	% of population participating in the action (2008)	% of Participants (2008) considering "a lot useful"	% of Participants (2008) considering "useful to certain extent" (Algo)	% of Participants (2008) considering "a little useful" (Poco)	% of Participants (2008) considering "not useful"	Ranking by % of population participating in 2012	% of population participating in 2012
Ask for support from an CSO	1	7.7	25.10	30.40	31.00	13.50	3	14.85
Unite with other people affected	2	22	24.80	37.30	30.30	7.10	1	34.32
Attend protests	3	8.4	16.90	29.60	34.90	18.40	5	11.45
Request support from a political party	4	8	14.80	28.80	40.80	15.50	4	13.54
Request support from Deputies or Senators	5	4.2	14.00	23.90	44.60	17.40	7	8.52
Call a radio or TV programme	6	3.5	14.00	41.40	31.20	10.80	9	7.43
Write to Mexico's President, gobernador or Municipal authority	7	2.9	13.50	29.60	37.20	19.50	6	8.92
Complain with authorities	8	17.9	12.60	32.20	34.20	20.90	2	27.21
Protest in a peaceful manner with a distinctive	9	3.7	11.60	27.80	55.90	4.50	8	7.49
Publish letters in newspapers	10	1.9	9.30	34.40	17.00	39.30	10	7.27

Source: Author's elaboration with information from INEGI, "ENCUP Resultados de La Encuesta Nacional Sobre Cultura y Prácticas Ciudadanas 2008"; INEGI/Ministry of the Interior, "Quinta ENCUP 2012."

The above data permits some initial conclusions. First, it supports the thesis that the lack of information prevailing before and during the first years of Mexico's democratisation could have obstructed or deterred social activism.²⁷² Secondly, citizens' perception of the media's effectiveness in both the public and political sphere showed a drastic drop from 2001 to 2008. Whilst in 2001, 'calling a radio or TV programme' and 'publishing a letter in the newspaper' were among the top 5 activities by their perceived level of effectiveness; by 2008 they were among the last 5, being surpassed by 'attending protests.' This can lead this thesis to argue that, after the country's democratisation process, either media became more unapproachable to the public, or citizens noticed a more evident collusion between media and the elite, i.e. the *elite monologues* mentioned by Jacobs and Townsley (see Chapter 2.1.2).²⁷³ Thirdly, as 'attending protests' became the political action with the 3rd largest perceived effectiveness (2008) and one of the top 5 by percentage of citizens engaged in 2012, it could be possible to state that Mexico has started moving into a 'protest society', similar to the ones prevailing in Western democracies.²⁷⁴ However, while in the U.K., the Netherlands, Italy and the United States, people with higher levels of education and income tended to be more prone to be protesters, in Mexico the participation in public demonstrations and blockades increases among the lowest income sectors.²⁷⁵

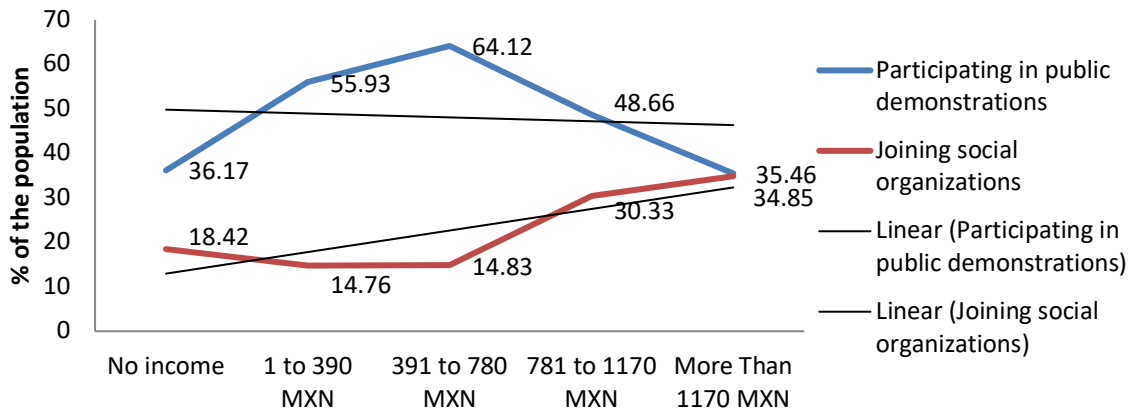
²⁷² Considering a time-frame between 1994 (beginning of the last *PRI* sexenio) and 2001 (on year after Mexico's electoral democratisation and when the ENCUP was conducted).

²⁷³ Jacobs and Townsley, *The Space of Opinion, Media Intellectuals and the Public sphere*.

²⁷⁴ Dalton in Crozat, "Are the Times A-Changein'? Assessing the Acceptance of Protest in Western Democracies," 60.

²⁷⁵ Crozat, 77.

Graph 11. Preferred form of participation in non-electoral political activism (by level of income, 2001)



Source: Author’s own elaboration with information from Gobernacion, “ENCUP 2001, Resumen de Resultados.”

Fourthly, organised forms of civil society (i.e. uniting with other people affected by the problem), rather than individual political actions, seem to have been the preferred type of political activism among Mexicans. This point is perfectly illustrated by the percentage of citizens asking CSOs’ support to solve their problems, which passed from 7.5% in 2001, to 7.7% in 2008 and to 14.85% in 2012.²⁷⁶

Lastly, due to the CSOs’ importance as the most preferred, if not most recognisable mode of citizens’ political activity, the next sub-chapters study them in isolation and within the broader political context in which they operate, just as Grant suggested doing more than two decades ago:²⁷⁷

²⁷⁶ Gobernacion, “ENCUP 2001, Resumen de Resultados”; INEGI/SEGOB, “ENCUP 2008: Resultados de La Encuesta Nacional Sobre Cultura Política y Prácticas Ciudadanas”; INEGI/Ministry of the Interior, “Quinta ENCUP 2012.”

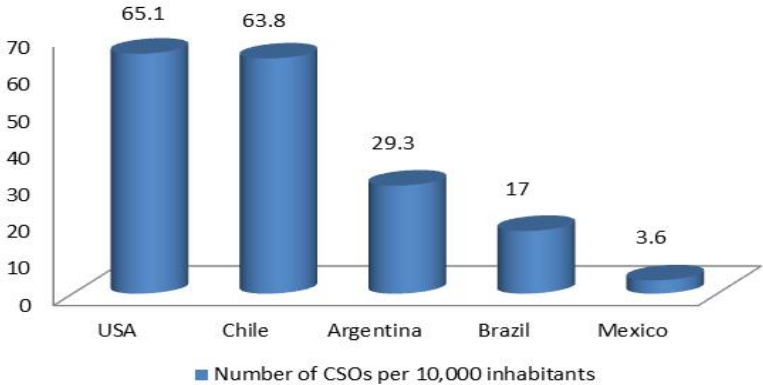
²⁷⁷ Grant, *Pressure Groups, Politics and Democracy in Britain*, 8; Grant, *Pressure Groups and British Politics*. For discussion on the roles or functions of CSOs, see Larry Diamond, “What Civil Society Can Do to Develop Democracy,” in *Presentation to NGO Leaders, February 10, 2004, Baghdad* (Baghdad: Stanford University, 2004), https://web.stanford.edu/~ldiamond/iraq/Develop_Democracy021002.htm (Accessed 22–12–2017); Barry Lowenkron, “The Role of NGOs in the Development of Democracy,” *Scoop Independent News* (Washington DC: Scoop World, 2006), <http://www.scoop.co.nz/stories/WO0606/S00277.htm> (Accessed 22–12–2017).

4.4. Civil Society Organisations, an embryonic but already elite-dominated sector.

CSOs are considered to be the most tangible expression of citizens’ political activism.²⁷⁸ Therefore, this section briefly studies the evolution and perils that Mexican CSOs face in order to understand how they mingle with Mexico’s democratisation, support a more democratic public sphere and allow for the development of citizenised policies.

Although there is no precise data on the subject, the Federal Registry of Civil Society Organizations estimates there are currently between 20,000 and 35,000 CSOs in Mexico, that is an average of four CSOs per each 10,000 citizens -whilst in the U.S.A. there are more than 65 (see Graph 12). On the specific case of public security, it is estimated that only 50 think tanks, CSOs and academic institutions are working on the topic.²⁷⁹ This is perhaps one of the reasons why Luis Reyes argues that ‘civil society in Mexico is still living and experiencing more a mirage than a goal achieved.’²⁸⁰

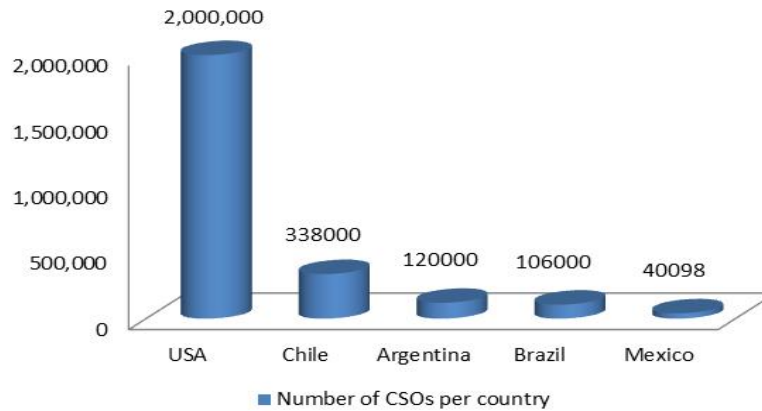
Graph 12. Number of CSOs in America.



²⁷⁸ See, for instance, the reports produced by the World Bank in which it equates civil society to CSOs.’World Bank, “The Public Sphere, Communication for Governance & Accountability Program,” 3–4.

²⁷⁹ OECD and IMCO, “Strengthening Evidence-Based Policy-making on Security and Justice in Mexico,” 39.

²⁸⁰ Reyes, “La Ciudadania En Mexico. Un Beve Recuento Historico.”



Source: Author’s own elaboration with information from Maite Azuela, *Primera Cumbre Ciudadana Para Construir Un México Pacífico Y Justo* (Mexico City: Universidad Nacional Autonoma de Mexico, 2013).

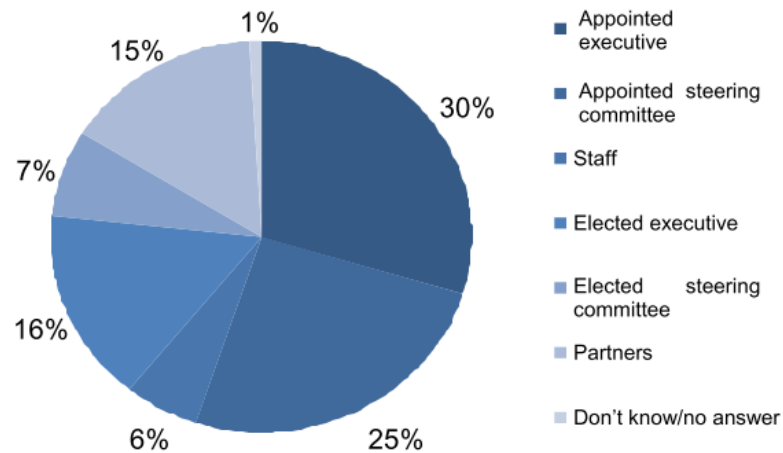
The analysis of the CSO’s membership also provides interesting facts. Data from CIVICUS reflects that almost 41% of the CSO’s active members attained university, 17% only completed secondary studies and 18% just primary education.²⁸¹ This supports existing theoretical arguments, including Grant’s work, ensuring that CSOs are usually composed by only a small ‘biased well-educated, middle-class’ sample of the entire society.²⁸² Thus, although CSOs are supposed to be ‘the chance for minorities and disadvantaged groups to argue their case in a democratic scenario that does not work for all the people’; in a country like Mexico, where 60% of citizens belong to the ‘low income’ stratum but where CSOs are dominated by the educated elite, ‘the specific weight of each social class in society seems not to correspond with the one it has on the political stage.’²⁸³

²⁸¹ Cortes et al., “A Snapshot of Civil Society in Mexico, Analytical Report on the CIVICUS Civil Society Index.”

²⁸² In the UK case, Grant found that 64% of the members of the pressure groups researched had a high-level of education. Grant, *Pressure Groups, Politics and Democracy in Britain*, 132.

²⁸³ ADN Político, “Las 6 Clases Sociales Que Hay En México, Según La Profeco,” *ADN Político*, May 13, 2014, <http://www.adnpolitico.com/ciudadanos/2014/05/13/las-6-clases-sociales-que-hay-en-mexico-segun-la-profeco> (Accessed 22-12-2017); Heriberto López, “Los Niveles Socioeconómicos y La Distribución Del Gasto” (Mexico, 2009), <http://www.amai.org/NSE/NivelSocioeconomicoAMAI.pdf> (Accessed 22-12-2017); Wilson in Grant, *Pressure Groups, Politics and Democracy in Britain*, 160; Perez-Díaz, *State, Bureaucracy and Civil society. A Critical Discussion of the Political Theory of Karl Marx New Studies in Sociology*, 94.

Graph 13. CSOs' decision making structures.



Source: Cortes et al., "A Snapshot of Civil Society in Mexico, Analytical Report on the CIVICUS Civil Society Index," 46.

This elitist condition within CSOs is perpetuated by their decision-making structures. On the one hand, only 6% of CSOs in Mexico allow their staff to have a direct input in the decision-making process. What is more, from those CSOs that work under a single person directive (75% of all CSOs in Mexico) only 45% elect their leaders.²⁸⁴ In addition to this, CSOs' leadership tends to be related to Mexico's business sector, particularly across those organisations working on public security. For instance, Causa en Comun CSO is presided by Maria Elena Morera, wife of businessman Pedro Galindo Rodriguez (bakery industry), Alto al Secuestro CSO is directed by businesswoman Isabel Miranda de Wallace and Mexico SOS CSO is coordinated by businessman Alejandro Martí.

In Ai Camp's words, this condition explicitly reaffirms the existence of 'a power elite; a network of a small set of people who are the individual actors within Mexico's power structure and who also share direct and informal access to other elite actors in their sphere of influence.'²⁸⁵ Yet, as

²⁸⁴ Cortes et al., "A Snapshot of Civil Society in Mexico, Analytical Report on the CIVICUS Civil Society Index."

²⁸⁵ Ai Camp, "Mexican Political Elites in a Democratic Setting," 288.

explained in the following sub-section, the elite is not completely responsible for the CSOs' lack of representation and inclusion, as Mexico's government actively co-opts and constrains CSOs.²⁸⁶

4.4.1 CSOs, co-opted and not too efficient.

According to Hipsher 'Latin America's political system is co-opting social leaders, if not marginalising and blocking the development of collective forms of protest,' and Mexico seems to clearly exemplify this condition.²⁸⁷ In the 1970s, Mexico's government co-opted workers' unions through financial grants and the use of public force, rewarding allegiance to PRI and punishing the opposition. In the 2000s, the – allegedly – first democratically elected government neutralised its critics by making them part of the political system they were initially opposing. For instance, during Vicente Fox's presidency, Rogelio Hermsillo, former director of *Alianza Civica* CSO (1995–1996), was named Director at the Ministry for Social Development (2001–2006).²⁸⁸ Maria Elena Morera's (Causa en Comun) son worked for the Minister for Public Security. Alejandro Martí (Mexico SOS) has also been criticised for his 'top-down activist views that do not correspond to the problems and reality lived by the millions of families in Mexico.'²⁸⁹ More recently, in 2012, the PAN convinced

²⁸⁶ Vreese, "The European Union as a Public Sphere."

²⁸⁷ Hipsher, "Democratic Transitions as Protest Cycles: Social Movement Dynamis in Democratizing Latin America," 169.

²⁸⁸ Ilan Bizberg, however, also identifies other examples where government did in fact use its control of the judiciary to either neutralise its opponents through incarceration practices, or benefit its supporters by not following –or blocking– adequate judicial practices. For example, during Felipe Calderon's administration (2006–2012), Napoleón Gomez Urrutia, –then– director of the SNTMMSRM miners' union and stronger opponent of private mining companies, was –Ilan Bizberg says– unfairly prosecuted for allegedly corrupt practices; but the historically corrupt SNTE teachers' union was rewarded for the political support it offered to Calderon during the 2006 elections. Bizberg, "Una Democracia Vacía. Sociedad Civil, Movimientos Sociales y Democracia.," 16.

²⁸⁹ Grupo Formula, "Eduardo Gallo Llama Cupulares a SOS y Alto Al Secuestro. Con Ciro Gómez Leyva," *Grupo Formula*, June 11, 2014, <http://www.radioformula.com.mx/notas.asp?Idn=417951&idFC=2014> (Accessed 22–12–2017); Davidson and Elstub, "Deliberative and Participative Democracy," 367–85; Patricia Davila, "Gobierno Abre Espacios a Martí y Morera En Consejo Nacional de Seguridad," *Proceso*, July 30, 2012, <http://www.proceso.com.mx/315592/2012/07/30/gobierno-abre-espacios-a-marti-y-morera-en-consejo-nacional-de-seguridad> (Accessed 22–12–2017); La voz de la Frontera, "Sueño Guajiro," *La Voz de La Frontera*, February 2014, <http://www.oem.com.mx/lavozdelafrontera/notas/n3445871>. (Accessed 22–12–2017).

Miranda de Wallace (Alto al Secuestro) to run for office in one of Mexico City's boroughs. Although unsuccessful, activist Javier Sicilia and journalist Gilberto Haaz said, this move illustrated how PAN 'co-opted this social fighter into the very tempting sphere of politics' and 'cheated on the real democracy'²⁹⁰. These and other examples illustrate how despite CSOs might be the citizens' preferred method for political activism (see chapter 4.3), there is an 'abysmal distance between CSOs and the civil society they say they represent, but a close connection between their leaders and the inefficient government they say they criticise.'²⁹¹ What is worse, the above cases support the notion that 'politics can only be conceived from the top.'²⁹² Thus, civil society as a whole is becoming more silent and fractured, as the CSOs' agendas are drifting away from a systemic critique to progressively play the game of those institutions they were initially challenging. Consequently, as CSOs continue being led by a group of 'university educated activists' who assume their vision, realities, demands and basic needs are shared by everyone else, CSOs are losing credibility among citizens (Graph 14).²⁹³ This is why new politically radical and bottom up expressions of OCS, like the autodefensas movement studied in Chapter 6, are becoming more common across Mexico.

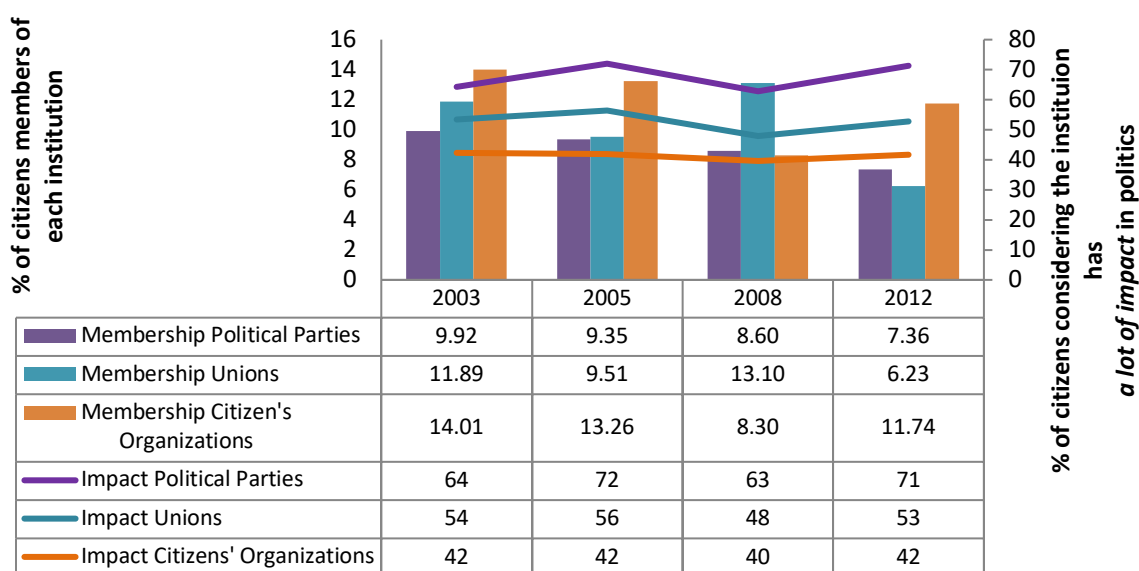
²⁹⁰ Jose Cardenas, "La Wallace Pone La Sal... y La Pimienta," *Excelsior*, January 13, 2012, <http://www.excelsior.com.mx/opinion/2012/01/13/jose-cardenas/801835> (Accessed 22-12-2017); Gilberto Haaz, "Acertijos," *El Sol de México*, February 14, 2012, <http://www.oem.com.mx/ELSOLDEORIZABA/notas/n2384807.htm> (Accessed 22-12-2017).

²⁹¹ Francisco Rodriguez, "La Señora Morera," *Indice Político*, October 25, 2012, <http://www.indicepolitico.com/la-senora-morera/> (Accessed 22-12-2017); Alejandro Baltazar, "María Elena Morera, Activismo Al Servicio Del Gobierno Federal," *Revolucion Tres Punto Cero Michoacan*, February 1, 2014, <http://michoacantrespuntocero.com/maria-elena-morera-activismo-al-servicio-del-gobierno-federal/> (Accessed 22-12-2017); Rosagel, "Dinero y Poder, Anzuelos Del Sistema Para Activistas."

²⁹² Perez-Díaz, *State, Bureaucracy and Civil society. A Critical Discussion of the Political Theory of Karl Marx New Studies in Sociology*, 31, 76, 147; Bizberg, "Una Democracia Vacía. Sociedad Civil, Movimientos Sociales y Democracia.," 21.

²⁹³ Rosagel, "Dinero y Poder, Anzuelos Del Sistema Para Activistas"; Reyes, "La Ciudadanía En Mexico. Un Beve Recuento Historico."

Graph 14. Socio-political organisations' membership vis-à-vis the organisations' political impact.



Source: Author's own elaboration with information from Gobernacion, "ENCUP 2001, Resumen de Resultados"; INEGI, "ENCUP 2003, Resumen de Resultados"; INEGI/SEGOB, "ENCUP 2008: Resultados de La Encuesta Nacional Sobre Cultura Política y Prácticas Ciudadanas"; INEGI/SEGOB, "ENCUP 2005."

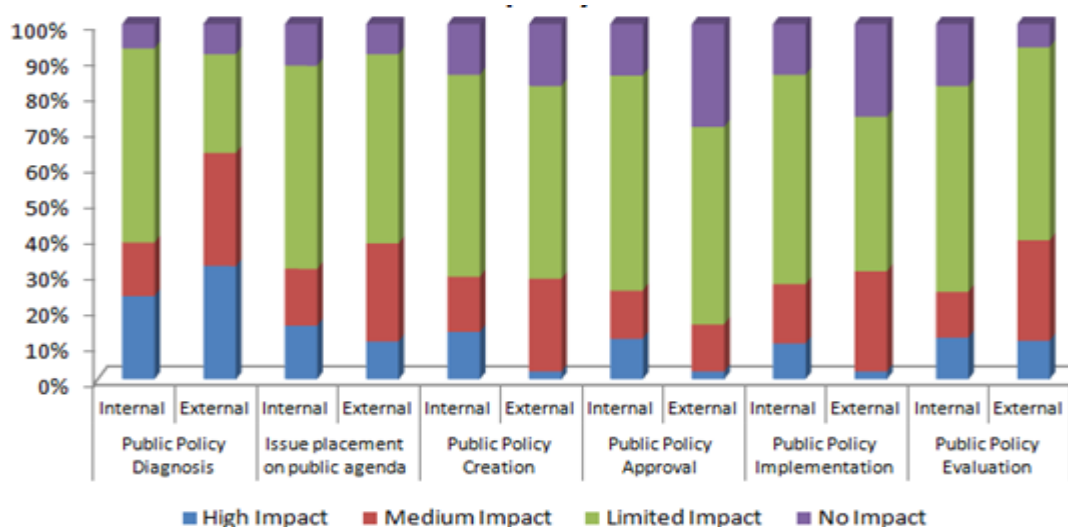
What is more, in 2012 only 42% of the population considered that CSOs have had 'a lot of impact' in politics, a low percentage compared to the 70% of population that thought the same about political parties (see Graph 15). More worrying, in 2013, 40% of citizens considered CSOs would be less capable of influencing politics in the future,²⁹⁴ an opinion also shared by third sector professionals in Mexico, who believe CSOs are highly effective on public policy diagnosis but highly ineffective in policy creation or drafting, approval and implementation.²⁹⁵ In fact, according to the former Secretary of the Public Security Commission of the Chamber of Deputies, Deputy Elizabeth Oswelia, 'CSOs-legislative interaction is mainly about forums' rather than policy discussions.²⁹⁶

²⁹⁴ Reyes, "La Ciudadania En Mexico. Un Beve Recuento Historico."

²⁹⁵ FUSDA, "Las Organizaciones de La Sociedad Civil," 31; Reyes, "La Ciudadania En Mexico. Un Beve Recuento Historico."; Cortes et al., "A Snapshot of Civil Society in Mexico, Analytical Report on the CIVICUS Civil Society Index," 57.

²⁹⁶ Jose-Angel Garcia, "Inteview to Deputy Elizabeth Oswelia Yañez, Secretary of the Public Security Commission of the Chamber of Deputies (LX Legislature)" (Mexico City, 2013).

Graph 15. Internal and external perceptions of CSOs' impact on public policy



		High Impact	Medium Impact	Limited Impact	No Impact
Public Policy Diagnosis	Internal	23.4	15.1	54.6	6.8
	External	31.9	31.9	27.7	8.5
Matter placement on public agenda	Internal	15.1	16	57.1	11.7
	External	10.6	27.7	53.2	8.5
Public Policy Creation	Internal	13.4	15.5	56.8	14.3
	External	2.2	26.1	54.3	17.4
Public Policy Approval	Internal	11.4	13.6	60.5	14.5
	External	2.2	13.3	55.6	28.9
Public Policy Implementation	Internal	10.1	16.7	58.9	14.3
	External	2.2	28.3	43.5	26.1
Public Policy Evaluation	Internal	11.7	12.9	58	17.4
	External	10.9	28.3	54.3	6.5

Source: Author's own elaboration with information from Cortes et al., "A Snapshot of Civil Society in Mexico, Analytical Report on the CIVICUS Civil Society Index."

In addition to this, other factors continue constraining civil society's development and impact in policy discussions. To begin with, Azuela states, citizens' organisations tend to have a reactive and temporary existence in Mexico, as they tend to focus on narrowed interests and look for personal, unorganised and one-off compensations and benefits.²⁹⁷ What is more, citizens rapidly disarticulate

²⁹⁷ Azuela, *Primera Cumbre Ciudadana Para Construir Un México Pacífico y Justo*.

their social collective action and return to their individualistic way of acting once the problem seems to have been solved, this is why,²⁹⁸ Bizberg and Lara argue, ‘Mexican civil society movements rarely transform into lasting political projects.’²⁹⁹ Various cases validate these arguments. For instance, in 2004, a public demonstration in the name of public security mobilised 200,000 citizens in Mexico City. Despite its size, it did not accomplish any substantial political change, but was belittled by Mexico City’s Mayor (Andres Manuel Lopez Obrador, current Presidential candidate) who referred to it as the ‘protest of the wealthy.’³⁰⁰ In 2011, the ‘Estamos hasta la madre’ (We are Fed Up) social movement organised by Javier Sicilia was joined by hundreds of thousands of citizens all across Mexico. Although the movement achieved the enactment of the ‘General Law of Victims’ (chapter 5.4.1), the law was regarded as a deficient piece of legislation by Sicilia himself.³⁰¹ Some of the reasons behind the limited effectiveness of these political actions, CIDAC and Antonio Crespo argue, are governmental co-optation, high levels of citizens’ political disengagement and lack of financial resources.³⁰²

²⁹⁸ Azuela, IX.

²⁹⁹ Programa Nacional para la Prevención Social de la Violencia y la Delincuencia 2014–2018 in Auditoría Superior de la Federación / Cámara de Diputados, “Evaluación Número 1207 ‘Política Pública de Seguridad Pública’,” 321; Lara, “Effective Participation in Latin America: From Extralegal to Legal Mobilization. The Challenges Ahead,” 10.

³⁰⁰ Enrique Krauze, “El Mesías Tropical,” *Letras Libres*, June 30, 2006, <http://www.letraslibres.com/revista/convivio/el-mesias-tropical?page=full> (Accessed 22–12–2017).

³⁰¹ Leo Zuckerman, “Los Logros de Un Movimiento Ejemplar,” *Excelsior*, May 30, 2012, <http://www.excelsior.com.mx/opinion/2012/05/30/leo-zuckermann/837747> (Accessed 22–12–2017); AiMedios, “Destaca Sicilia Logros Del ‘Movimiento Por La Paz,’” *Alinstantenoticias*, September 15, 2011, <http://alinstantenoticias.com/portal/2011/09/destaca-sicilia-logros-del-“movimiento-por-la-paz”/> (Accessed 22–12–2017); M. Nobigrot and M Cancino, “Ley General de Víctimas, Los Retos II,” *Animal Político*, March 6, 2013, <http://www.animalpolitico.com/blogueros-inteligencia-publica/2013/03/06/ley-general-de-victimas-los-retos-ii/> (Accessed 22–12–2017).

³⁰² CIDAC, “La Iniciativa Ciudadana Más Allá de La Ley 3 de 3”; José Crespo, “Iniciativas Ciudadanas,” *El Universal*, February 8, 2016, <http://www.eluniversal.com.mx/entrada-de-opinion/articulo/jose-crespo/nacion/2016/02/8/iniciativas-ciudadanas> (Accessed 22–12–2017).

In sum, it seems clear that even though Mexico achieved its democratisation (i.e. alternation of power) in 2000, a large section of the public still perceives it does not gain anything from the political game, even CSOs' professionals regard civil society as fragile and lacking influence in public life and politics in general.³⁰³ Contrary to the pluralist system and participative democracy promised in 2000, Mexico's socio-political scenario still emulates an elitist public sphere, where socio-political activism is dominated by the interests, preferences and projects of the wealthier and better organised.³⁰⁴ The country's insecurity also continues raising social discontent with the political system to the extent that the public appears to have lost faith in the state's capacity to respond to public demands and society no longer sees the state as an effective means of delivering the public good of public security.

Taking this into account, this study seeks to contribute to the understanding and promotion of CSOs' policy work in Mexico's dangerous public sphere. This is why, notwithstanding Grant argues that 'measuring, even estimating the effectiveness of any pressure group (including CSOs) is a difficult task',³⁰⁵ this thesis conducts a systematic analysis of both the way CSOs operate and the policy objectives they achieve. What is more, considering that different scholars on Latin American studies argue that legal methods of political participation (e.g. forums with specialists, academia and government) are more policy efficient than extra-legal methods³⁰⁶, this thesis tests the efficiency of two very dissimilar forms of CSOs-government interaction, one, a politically

³⁰³ Not only Mexico faces this challenge, in the UK political alienation has also been growing in the last few years. Ben Seyd, "Is Britain Still a 'Civic Culture'?", *Insight Politics* (Oxford, 2013); Geryy Stoker, "Different Routes to Reforming Politics," *Political Insight* (Oxford, November 2013); Reyes, "La Ciudadanía En Mexico. Un Beve Recuento Historico."

³⁰⁴ Carina Galar, "Fox Abandonó La Transición," *Contralínea* (Mexico City, 2003), http://www.contralinea.com.mx/c11/html/politica/feb03_fox_abandono.html (Accessed 22-12-2017); Presidencia de la República, "Avanza México Hacia Democracia Participativa" (Mexico City: Presidencia de la República, 2004), <http://fox.presidencia.gob.mx/actividades/?contenido=15782> (Accessed 22-12-2017).

³⁰⁵ Grant, *Pressure Groups, Politics and Democracy in Britain*, 127.

³⁰⁶ Lara, "Effective Participation in Latin America: From Extralegal to Legal Mobilization. The Challenges Ahead."

institutionalised and government sanctioned model (i.e. The First Citizen Summit in Chapter 5), the other, and an extra-legal and antagonist movement aiming to change the rules of the game (i.e. Autodefensas in Chapter 6). Through this comparative analysis, this thesis draws some meaningful conclusions about the rebirth of civil society and the deepening of a bottom-up democratic Mexico.

Nevertheless, in order to do this, it is first necessary to understand the communication structures and relations that define citizens interactions, shape the structure and functioning of civil society and determine society-government interactions in policy-making processes.

4.5 A mediatised public sphere in need of a citizenised media.

Communication, say Patricia Duran *et al*, is ‘ideal for civil society and the objectives it pursues’; it allows them to enhance their impact and prestige, sensitise society about their work, gain further public credibility and become real agents of political change.³⁰⁷ Processes that, Habermas, Shaw and McCombs and other scholars argue, are heavily dependent on a free and informative media (Chapter 2). Media management is therefore – Tapia *et al* say – ‘an indispensable requisite for any CSO intending to influence public opinion, and public and governmental agendas.’³⁰⁸ With this in mind, it becomes essential to study the mediatised context that surrounds and determines the acting and effectiveness of OCS in Mexico where, (paradoxically) the mediatised public sphere seems to be constraining the development of a *civic culture*.

According to Javier Esteinou, ‘political discourses and the actions of popular representatives are not any longer the ones defining the Mexicans’ vision of themselves and their country’s future, but television and radio permanently influence the citizens’ minds and inform them about the conduct

³⁰⁷ Patricia Duran et al., “La Comunicación Estratégica y La Sociedad Civil,” *Razon y Palabra* 79, no. NA (2012): NA, http://www.razonypalabra.org.mx/N/N79/V79/18_DuranCisnerosMelendezGarcia_V79.pdf (Accessed 22-12-2017).

³⁰⁸ Monica Tapia et al., “Manual de Incidencia En Políticas Públicas” (Mexico City, 2010), 91, <http://www.alternativasycapacidades.org/sites/default/files/MIPP.pdf> (Accessed 22-12-2017).

to be followed.³⁰⁹ In this vein, with 73% of the population using the media as their main source of political information, and newspapers' consumption having increased by over 100% between 2003 and 2012, Mexico's case reaffirms Temple, Hall, and Jacobs and Townsley's works, showing that the media is 'the main accessible source of information on public affairs and discussions' (Chapter 2.1).³¹⁰ At the same time it supports Shaw and McCombs, Betancourt and other's findings on the importance of media on public opinion making and public sphere shaping (Chapter 2).³¹¹

Whilst in advanced democracies this mediatisation of the public sphere can foster the 'ideal deliberative process' and 'citizenised model of policy-making' of which Cohen and Bua talk about (Chapter 2.1), in Mexico the mediatisation of public life is producing different results across the socio-economic sectors of the population. First of all, regarding media consumption, the poorer citizens are, the more they consume TV and the less they read newspapers or use the Internet as main source of news information (Graph 17).³¹² For example, whilst 56% of Mexico's richest population (socio-economic group AB) watch TV to inform themselves about the country's main news, the percentage grows to 71% across the poorest citizens (extreme poverty, socio-economic group E). With only 7% of the total TV programming in Mexico corresponding to news programmes,

³⁰⁹ Esteinou, "Hacia La Ciudadanización de Los Medios de Comunicación En México."

³¹⁰ Temple, "A Forum for Frituitcakes and Fascists: The Saviour of Mainstream Journalism," 7; Jacobs and Townsley, *The Space of Opinion, Media Intellectuals and the Public sphere*, 63; Dahlgren, *Television and the Public sphere: Citizenship, Democracy and the Media*; Hall et al., *Policing the Crisis. Mugging, the State and Law and Order.*, 63; Splichal, *Public Opinion, Developments and Controversies in the Twentieth Century*, 23; Trezn, "The Unknown Player in European Integration," 54; INEGI, "ENCUP 2003, Resumen de Resultados"; INEGI/Ministry of the Interior, "Quinta ENCUP 2012"; Abundis, "Los Medios de Comunicación En México."

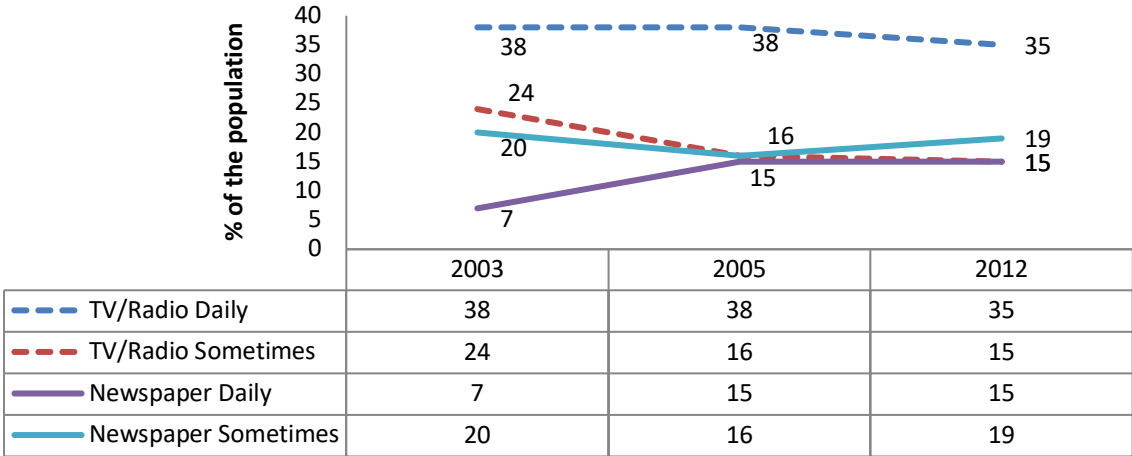
³¹¹ Betancourt, "The Development of the Media and the Public Sphere in Mexico"; Jerit, Barabas, and Bolsen, "Citizens, Knowledge, and the Information Environment"; Weaver, "Political Issues and Voter Need for Orientation"; van Dijk, *News as Discourse*; Lippmann, *Public Opinion*.

³¹² Those living in extreme poverty continue relying on TV, however, expectedly, the financial cost of TV equipment pushes this % down among the 'extreme poverty income group' and, consequently, increases the level of radio consumption (a cheaper equipment).

the most vulnerable groups in Mexico lack of an adequate understanding of their communities and the country’s socio–political and economic reality.³¹³

The analysis of newspaper consumption produced contrasting results. In this case, the wealthier a person is, the more he/she uses this type of media for news information: whilst 11% of the AB socio economic group read newspapers, only 3% of the poorest group do it too (Graph 17). As newspapers tend to allow the opinions of a wider spectrum of voices, its readers (i.e. the wealthiest sector of Mexico’s society) are better informed about the society’s most pressing needs and the available mechanisms for influencing government’s decisions.³¹⁴

Graph 16. Use of TV/Radio and newspapers for news information (2012).

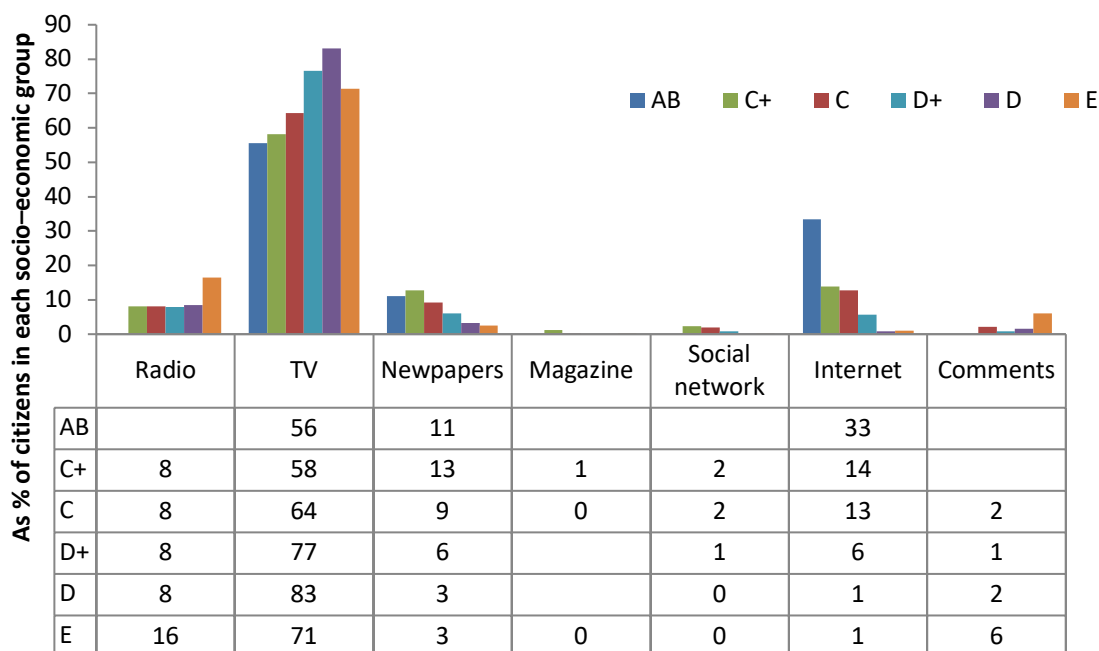


Source: Author’s own elaboration with information from INEGI/Ministry of the Interior, “Quinta ENCUP 2012.”

³¹³ Including programming in state owned TV channels and those owned by two private media companies (Televisa and TV Azteca), but excluding cable or satellite TV. 25% of the programming of ‘free TV corresponds to commercialisation, 14% to movies and only 7% to news programmes. Regarding the ‘state–owned TV’, it only reaches 47% of homes in Mexico with a *rating* of less than 1.7. Rodrigo Gómez et al., “Los Medios Digitales: México” (Mexico, 2012), 21, 28, <https://www.opensocietyfoundations.org/sites/default/files/mapping-digital-media-mexico-spanish-20120606.pdf> (Accessed 22–12–2017).

³¹⁴ For instance, in his 12 years analysis of news reports in 3 newspapers, Jose Santillan found that 23.6% of the articles were produced by academics, 19% by politicians 14% by journalists and 43% by invited guests

Graph 17. Main sources of news information according to income level (2012)³¹⁵



Source: Author's own elaboration with information from INEGI/Ministry of the Interior, "Quinta ENCUP 2012."

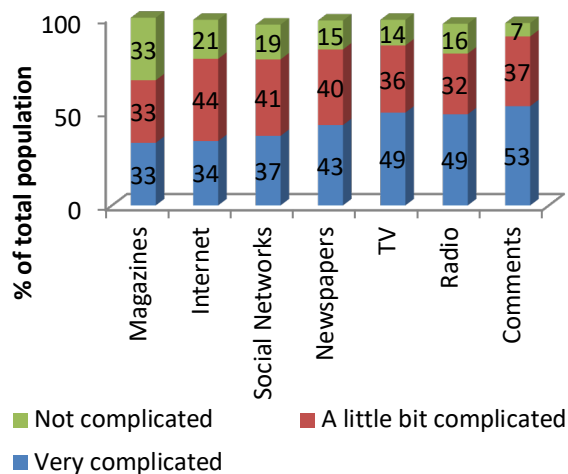
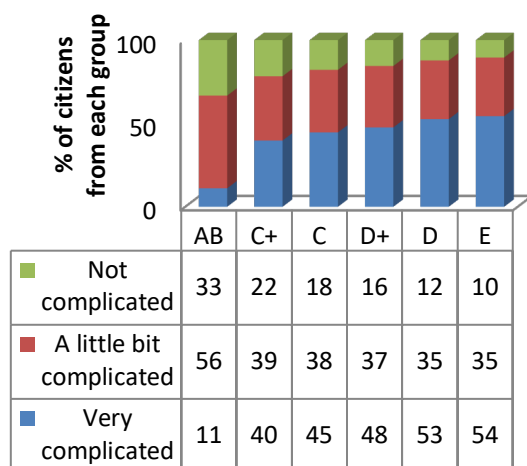
More astonishing are the differences in the use of the internet as main source of news information. Although Mexico had the 4th highest number of blogs in the world in 2009, the internet in Mexico has not yet triggered the 'deliberative democratic imaginary' that Judith Bessant has found in other case studies.³¹⁶ In fact, one of the most recent polls on the topic revealed there are more Mexicans aged 18+ reading newspapers than accessing internet articles, blogs or forums. Contrary to the UK, where the consumption of printed newspapers is in decline and the readership of electronic news outlets is increasing, in Mexico 93% of those reading newspapers prefer to do it from printed formats, and the majority of users of the internet are part of the wealthiest sector of the population (i.e. AB, C+ and C economic groups).³¹⁷

³¹⁵ Percentages would total 100% in all the cases if the 'I do not know'/'did not answer' answers are counted.

³¹⁶ Bessant, "The Political in the Age of the Digital: Propositions for Empirical Investigation"; Gómez et al., "Los Medios Digitales: México," 51.

³¹⁷ INEGI, "Módulo Sobre Lectura. Febrero Del 2016." (Aguascalientes, 2016), http://www.inegi.org.mx/saladeprensa/boletines/2016/especiales/especiales2016_04_02.pdf (Accessed

Graph 18. How complicated is politics? According to income level and type of media used (2012).



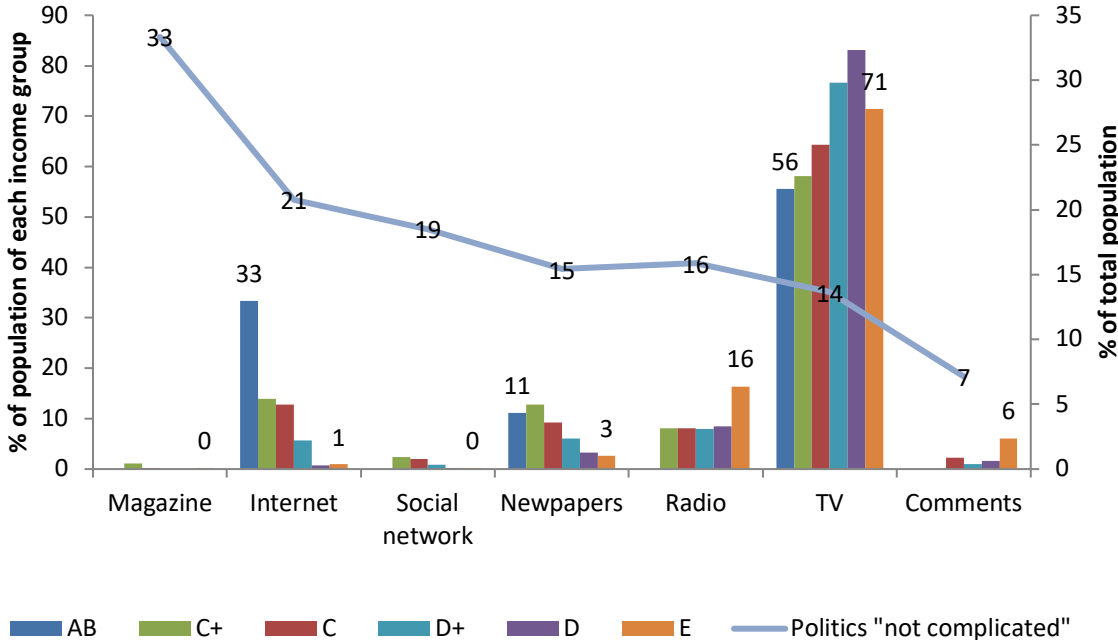
Source: Author’s own elaboration with information from INEGI/Ministry of the Interior, Quinta ENCUP 2012.

Further analyses also reveal a connection between the unequal communicative distribution, and citizens’ public understanding and participation in politics. For example, those who use magazines, internet, social networks and newspapers as their main source of news information – mostly the richest socio-economic groups – consider politics less complicated than those who rely on TV, radio

22–12–2017); Mark Sweney, “Time Spent Reading Newspapers Worldwide Falls over 25% in Four Years,” *The Guardian*, June 1, 2015, <https://www.theguardian.com/media/2015/jun/01/global-newspaper-readership-zenithoptimedia-media-consumption> (Accessed 22–12–2017).

and face-to-face comments – coincidentally those from the poorest income groups (see Graphs 18 and 19).³¹⁸

Graph 19. Politics is too complicated vis-à-vis Media used by each income group (2012).



Sources: Author’s own elaboration with information from INEGI/Ministry of the Interior, Quinta ENCUP 2012.

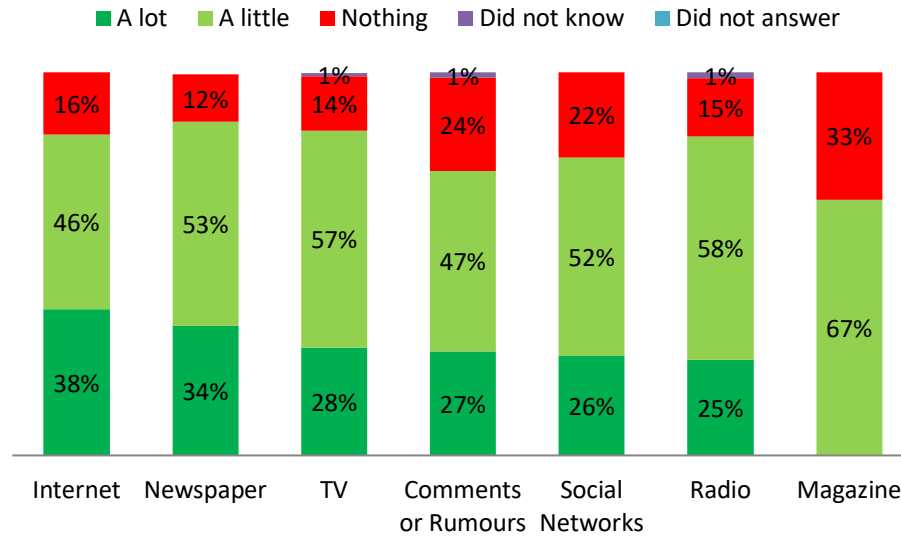
Correspondingly, citizens who rely on the Internet and newspapers as their main sources of information are more inclined to consider that society can have a stronger ‘influence in governmental decisions’ than those who rely on TV, Radio or Comments (Graphs 18 to 20).³¹⁹ In this scenario it was not surprising to find that the richer a person was, the more news information that person had and the more probable it was that he/she had taken or attempted to take part in a protest or CSO movement (see Graph 21).³²⁰

³¹⁸ Less than 35% of those who read magazines or use the internet to know about the news consider politics ‘very complicated’, compared to 50% among those who use TV or Radio for the same purpose. INEGI/Ministry of the Interior, “Quinta ENCUP 2012.”

³¹⁹ For instance, whilst 34% of those who use newspapers consider citizens can influence those decisions ‘a lot’, only 25% of those who use radio are of the same opinion.

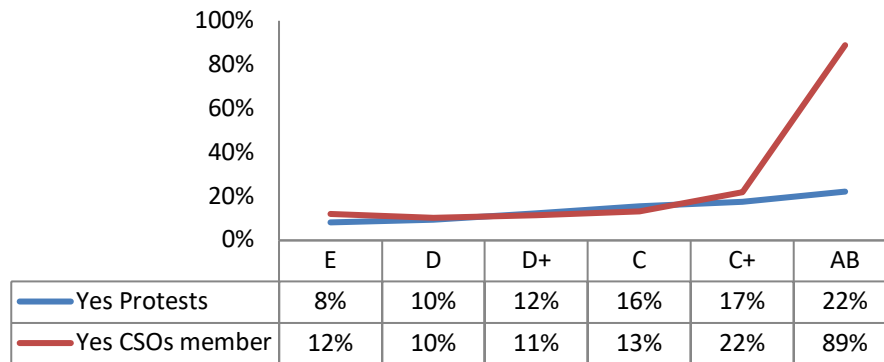
³²⁰ ENCUP 2012: ‘Have you ever tried to attend a protest?’ (ENCUP 2012, Question 56 (5)).

Graph 20. Can citizens influence government's decisions? (By type of media used, 2012).



Source: Author's own elaboration with information from INEGI/Ministry of the Interior, Quinta ENCUP 2012.

Graph 21. Citizens participating in protests and CSOs as % of each economic group (2012)



Source: Author's own elaboration with information from INEGI/Ministry of the Interior, Quinta ENCUP 2012.

The above findings provide important analytical elements for the following chapters of this thesis. First, the apparent connection between media consumption, socio-economic condition and citizens' political participation supports Gustavo Cardoso and Jeff Chester's argument that 'society

and the public sphere are organised on the basis of media communication networks.³²¹ Therefore, as stated by Callan, Benjamin Moffitt and Simon Tormey (Chapter 2), for the public sphere to develop it is not sufficient that citizens passively receive information, there has to be an engaged citizenry creating their own public agenda.³²² To put this better, citizens need not only to work under the established precepts of *agenda-setting* mechanisms, but, Cobb and Elder argue, transcend into an *agenda building* process.³²³

Secondly, if this data is juxtaposed to Hall *et al*, Erbe, Madsen and Jacobs and Townsley's work ensuring that media recruits the powerful, reproduces their messages and creates a hierarchy of credibility, this sub-chapter has illustrated how Mexico's public sphere is defined by elite monologues. With over 77% of the low-income population (i.e. 68% of all Mexicans) relying on a type of media (TV) that devotes only 7% of its space to news information, the elite-dominated media is limiting the information that citizens receive and can use in public discussions aimed at political change.³²⁴

³²¹ Gustavo Cardoso and Jeff Chester in Castells, "The New Public Sphere: Global Civil Society, Communication Networks, and Global Governance."

³²² Moffitt and Tormey, "Rethinking Populism: Politics, Mediatization and Political Style," 391; Bessant, "The Political in the Age of the Digital: Propositions for Empirical Investigation"; Callan, *Creating Citizens: Political Education and Liberal Democracy*.

³²³ Cobb and Elder, *Participation in American Politics: The Dynamics of Agenda Building*; Cardenas, "Agenda-Setting 2.0: En Las Estrategias... Pero No de La Sociedad Civil."

³²⁴ Considering data on population distribution by socio-economic stratum for 2016 and citizens' media preferences in 2012. For discussion see Misael Mora, "Niveles Socioeconómicos En México" (Mexico City, 2016), <https://www.rankia.mx/blog/mejores-opiniones-mexico/3095882-niveles-socioeconomicos-mexico> (Accessed 22-12-2017); AMEDIRH, "¿Cuánto Ganan Al Mes Los Hogares En México Por Nivel Socioeconómico?" (Mexico City, 2014), <http://www.amedirh.com.mx/publicaciones/noticias/item/cuanto-ganan-al-mes-los-hogares-en-mexico-por-nivel-socioeconomico> (Accessed 22-12-2017); INEGI/Ministry of the Interior, "Quinta ENCUP 2012."

4.6. Final thoughts on Mexico's dangerous and mediated public sphere.

The quantitative and qualitative analyses of data gathered from over 12,000 responses to 5 different polls across 12 years suggests that although Mexico achieved its electoral democratisation in 2000, citizens' involvement in politics continues to be very low and politically inefficient, limiting the public sphere's potential in democratic politics. What is more, the few established forms of organised civil society (i.e. CSOs) seem to be dominated by educated and wealthy elites, neither encouraging bottom-up and inclusive decision-making within them, nor being effective in the three most important phases of the public policy cycle. If civil society is equated to CSOs, the cases of government co-optation and business elite governance discussed in this Chapter portray a context in which there seems not to be any real decision-making process in the public sphere, but top-down political practices defining society's future. Lack of access to media channels, limited information on non-electoral political activism and high levels of disaffection with politics are some of the factors that continue perpetuating a top-down 'democracy' in Mexico.

Furthermore, it has become evident that the use of the media is an inescapable condition and indispensable tool for any social player intending to influence policy. 'The media is not politics, but nowadays it is not possible to make politics without the media. Media are not political parties either, but it produces further political proselytism than any of these organisations', Esteinou said, and he seems to be right.³²⁵ With Sanz, Bartel and Walgrave *et al* arguing that politics is witnessing an increasing mediated democracy where 'newspapers lead and politicians follow', and with Mexican 'politicians following the old-school politics where nothing is news until it is published in the printed media', newspapers seem to be the media outlet that OCS should be targeting in order to influence Mexico's political sphere.³²⁶ However, just as argued by Esteinou argues, this sub-chapter has found

³²⁵ Esteinou, "Hacia La Ciudadanización de Los Medios de Comunicación En México."

³²⁶ Antón, "¿Por Qué Sobreviven Los Periódicos?"

that the social nature of the media in Mexico is being determined by economic and political elites. Peasants' organisations, indigenous groups, ecological movements, students' organisations, even NGOs, lack media spaces in which to discuss social problems and promote their initiatives, to the extent that – Esteinou states – 'media is truly amazingly capable of concealing their real country to Mexicans.'³²⁷

Therefore, facing the media's hidden politics, civil society should follow Tejeda's advice and distance itself from traditional politics. To effectively secure its rebirth and foster the deepening of bottom-up policy-making in Mexico, the mediatised citizenry also needs to promote and secure the citizenisation of the media, particularly of the most influential outlets (i.e. newspapers). An energised OCS needs to open the established channels of communication, if not create new ones, to wider the public sphere and promote the organic development of an integral civil and political society. To do so, it needs to transform the imbalanced communicative and social pact that the PRI's consolidated during its 70 year rule into a democratic and plural relationship that allows citizens to participate, contribute and co-define the country's political and cultural spectrum.³²⁸

Having identified these important theoretical points, the following chapters analyse two distinct forms of organised civil society: one formally established, legally recognised, following a top-down management and conducting thin cooperation with government; the other, initially labelled as

³²⁷ Esteinou, "Hacia La Ciudadanización de Los Medios de Comunicación En México."

³²⁸ In *Media and civil society organisations*, Carolina Montoya analyses this particular matter through the study of what she calls 'experiences of alliances between media and CSOs' across Mexico and Latin America. However, the experiences she looked at were in fact defined, if not orchestrated, by media elite: 1) *Tienes el valor o te vale?* Was a campaign to promote social values across Mexico, however, it was implemented by private media company Televisa, and directed by its own social foundation (Fundacion Televisa). 2) *Diario los Altos de Jalisco*: A municipal newspaper granting news space for CSOs coverage. Its limited circulation and the fact that the newspaper's editorial board has the capacity to decide whether to publish or not CSOs pleas or proposals, make it difficult to treat as a socially beneficial project. Catalina Montoya, "Medios de Comunicación y Organizaciones de La Sociedad Civil: Fortaleciendo Alianzas Para La Democracia y Los Derechos Humanos En América Latina," *Signo y Pensamiento* XXVIII, no. 55 (2009): 164–88, <http://www.redalyc.org/articulo.oa?id=86020246012> (Accessed 22–12–2017).

illegal, even as a ‘threat to national security’, which arose from bottom–up political discontent.³²⁹

Building on Grant’s work, Chapters 5 and 6 analyse how their acting and achievements under specific public sphere conditions (i.e. location, actors, media freedom, etc.) and political circumstances, reaffirm or refute both the preliminary conclusions given throughout this four first chapters and the theoretical generalisations described in Chapter 2.

Chapter / Case-study	Scope of influence/ analysis	Actors	Intended socio–political change
CHAPTER 5 Case Study 1: ‘The First Citizen Summit to Build a Peaceful and Fair Mexico’	National (Mexico)	1. Citizens organised in institutionalised and government–sanctioned CSOs. 2. Mexico’s national political parties. 3. Office of the President of Mexico.	–Thin cooperation with national government through an institutionalised and government–sanctioned CSO. – To achieve the inclusion of a series of their citizen demands into the political commitments (and actions) of the then Presidential Candidates (and later President of Mexico) ahead of the 2012 elections.
CHAPTER 6 Case Study 2: The rise of the self–defence groups against government.	Local (State of Michoacan)	1. Citizens in the form of ‘Self–defence groups.’ 2. Government of the State of Michoacan.	–Antagonist relationship with Michoacan’s municipal and state levels of government. –To expel organised crime from the state and achieve the capture of the leaders of the DTO. –To become, and be legally recognised as, the ‘legitimate providers of public security in their communities.’

³²⁹ Angelica Melin, “Autodefensas, a Punto de Convertirse En La Nueva Amenaza: Monreal,” *MVS Noticias*, February 28, 2014, <http://www.noticiasmvs.com/#!/noticias/autodefensas-a-punto-de-convertirse-en-la-nueva-amenaza-monreal-319> (Accessed 22–12–2017).

Chapter 5. Case study 1: Causa en Común CSO and the First Citizens' Summit to Build a Peaceful and Fair Mexico.

This chapter focuses on the First Citizen Summit to Build a Peaceful and Fair Mexico to study how established CSOs, working in a collaborative manner with government and lead by Mexico's economic elite, gain public support and political relevance, and intend to achieve political changes. The main argument presented here is that institutionalised and government-sanctioned forms of OCS, not attempting to radically shake the political system, enjoy of constant and wide access to the main corridors of policy-making in Mexico. Nevertheless, it is precisely this lack of politically radical demands and tactics which impedes them from achieving quick and substantial policy gains for the society sector they argue to represent. Furthermore, this chapter demonstrates that influencing public policy involves a long process of negotiations and legislative drafting. This is why to regard the First Citizen Summit to Build a Peaceful and Prosperous Mexico, a two-day Summit, as the sole promoter or trigger of policy change – as its convenors have attempted to do – would be overstating its importance.

To support this argument, this chapter develops different analyses throughout its five sub-chapters, all of them building on data from primary documents of government policy (e.g. law discussions, constitutional changes, and legislative addresses), official memoirs and interviews with CSOs' directors, Deputies and media editors. The First sub-chapter provides a succinct analysis of the public (in)security and antagonistic political scenario that triggered and surrounded Causa en Común and other CSOs' involvement in security related matters. The Second one studies the decision-making structure within '*The First Citizen Summit to Build a Peaceful and Prosperous Mexico*', a civil society initiative of great importance in Mexico's politics due to two main factors:

1. The Summit's scale: involving over 100 CSOs from all across Mexico, the Summit managed to gather all the candidates running for Mexico's presidency in the country's elections of 2012 to discuss – what the organisers described as – citizenly raised security initiatives.³³⁰
2. The Summit's socio-political importance: the Summit took place in a watershed moment in Mexican politics. In 2012, drug-trafficking related violence increased in 15 of Mexico's 32 states, the Institutional Revolutionary Party (PRI) returned to power after 12 years in opposition and Mexico's biggest media company (i.e. Televisa) and PRI were accused of political corruption.³³¹ These and other political events triggered the appearance of multiple social movements demanding the opening of greater space for citizens' involvement in government decisions, however, none of them obtained as much political support and recognition as the First Citizen Summit.

Considering that Van Dijk, Macek, Lazarsfeld, Shaw and McCombs, and others (see Chapter 3) regard the media as a key influencer of public and government agendas, the third sub-chapter studies the media coverage given to the Summit, its initiatives and the public (i.e. CSOs) and political players related to it. This permits discerning if this institutionalised and government-sanctioned form of civil society activism was able to position its demands as 'newsworthy items' and whether *what was said* and *how it was said* about them had an effect on public policy design. After this, the fourth sub-chapter matches the Summit's proposals, with their media coverage and the legislative initiatives approved in the matter. Lastly, the fifth sub-chapter provides the conclusions from this first case-study.

³³⁰ Centro Mexicano para la Filantropía, "Primera Cumbre Ciudadana Para Construir Un México Pacífico y Justo," CEMEFI, 2013, <http://www.cemefi.org/servicios/noticias/filantropicas/1273-primera-cumbre-ciudadana-para-construir-un-mexico-pacifico-y-justo.html> (Accessed 22-12-2017).

³³¹ Jose Merino and Jessica Zarkin, "2013, El Cuarto Año Mas Violento Desde 1990," *Animal Político*, July 29, 2014.

5.1. Context: Public (in)security and electoral changes: pushing for national activism.

By 2011 Mexico had already completed a decade of electoral democracy. Nevertheless, the mechanisms for justice provision and ‘bottom–up policy-making’ seemed to remain inefficient, if not inexistent. For instance, from 2000 to 2010, the number of crimes rose almost uninterruptedly across the majority of Mexico’s 32 states (see Figure 5). Just between 2007 and 2010 the official homicide rate grew more than in any other country in the world. What is worse, scholars like Leticia Ramírez, Leslie Solís and Nestor de Buen considered that the homicides’ dark figure could be even three times bigger than that of reported homicides (see Graph 22).³³² A condition that prevails and keeps worsening throughout time due to citizens’ increasing distrust in the country’s judicial system. For example, in 2011, 43% of the crimes committed in Mexico were not reported (see Graph 22), as 23% of the victims considered that doing it was a waste of time, 17% distrusted public authorities, 11% believed it was a long and tedious procedure and 8% was afraid of the aggressor(s) revenge.³³³ Even when crimes were reported, justice was not delivered either: in Mexico City and Michoacan only 25% and 10% of the homicides cases end with formal sentences.³³⁴ Although Michoacan’s law establishes one of the harshest sentencing guidelines for homicide in Mexico (between 15 and 30 years in prison), it has a conviction rate of less than 10%.³³⁵ If data is analysed at a national level the findings are more startling, as just 3.3% of all the homicide cases in Mexico end with a criminal

³³² Leticia Ramírez de Alba, Leslie Solís, and Nestor de Buen, “Indicadores de Víctimas Visibles e Invisibles de Homicidio” (Mexico City, 2012), 19, http://www.mexicoevalua.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/02/MEX-EVA_INDIX_IVVI-HLOW.pdf (Accessed 22-12-2017).

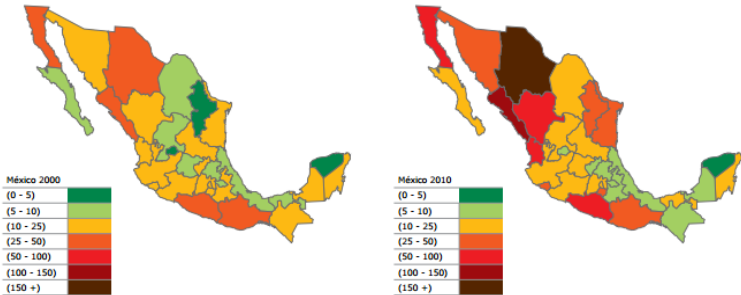
³³³ Of the total of citizens who were victims of a crime but did not reported the crime. Centro de Estudios Sociales y de Opinión Pública, “Seguridad Pública e Incidencia Delictiva” (Mexico City, 2014), 36.

³³⁴ Ramírez de Alba, Solís, and de Buen, “Indicadores de Víctimas Visibles e Invisibles de Homicidio,” 32; RadioFormula, “Crean Organizaciones Sociales Frente Común Por Un México Pacífico y Justo.”

³³⁵ For a better comparison state by state, please refer to Annexes 14 and 15. Ramírez de Alba, Solís, and de Buen, “Indicadores de Víctimas Visibles e Invisibles de Homicidio,” 28,32,34.

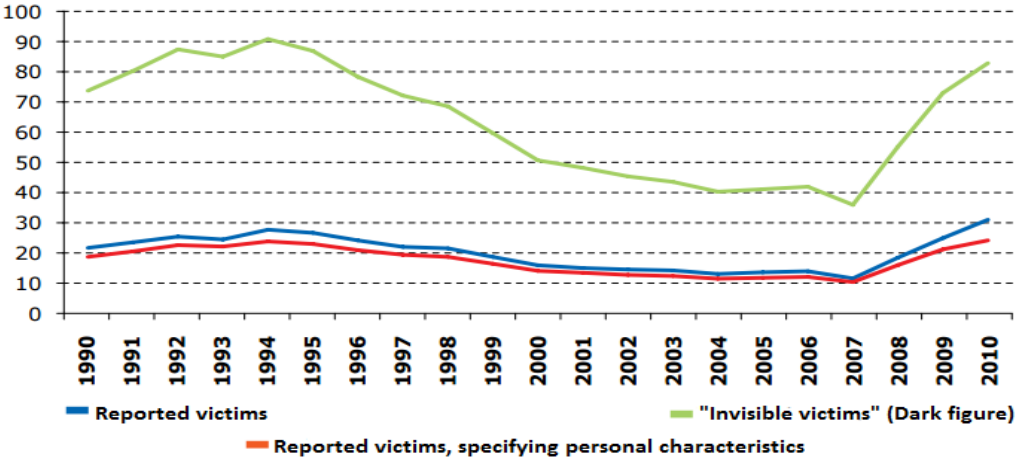
conviction – a very low percentage compared to Chile’s 80%.³³⁶ These and other figures clearly describe a country where – in Pazo’s words – ‘there is a state of laws, but not rule of law.’³³⁷

Figure 4. Geographic evolution of homicides in México.



Source: Ramirez de Alba, Solís, and de Buen, “Indicadores de Víctimas Visibles e Invisibles de Homicidio,” 19.

Graph 22. Visible vs Invisible homicides in Mexico



Source: Ramirez de Alba, Solís, and de Buen, 27.

Political disaffection was also high. In 2010, 73% of Mexicans were unsatisfied with the country’s democracy, 76% did not trust political parties and 10% of the young population declared they will

³³⁶ Ramirez de Alba, Solís, and de Buen, 32; RadioFormula, “Crean Organizaciones Sociales Frente Común Por Un México Pacífico y Justo.”

³³⁷ Luis Pazos, “En México ¿hay Estado de Derecho?,” *La Prenda Gráfica*, August 1, 2015, <http://www.laprensagrafica.com/2015/08/01/en-mexico-hay-estado-de-derecho> (Accessed 22-12-2017).

never participate in politics.³³⁸ In this context, Mexicans were regrettably getting accustomed to living with high criminal rates and a government incapable of addressing even their most pressing security needs. Nevertheless, according to Maria Elena Morera (President of Causa en Comun CSO), the straw that broke the camel's back was the attack to the *Casino Royale* casino in Mexico's northern state of Nuevo Leon.³³⁹ On the 25th of August 2011, one year before Mexicans elected their 57th President, an organised criminal group arrived at the casino, attacked the staff and customers, locked the venue's doors and set the place on fire, murdering 52 people.³⁴⁰ That event, Morera says, marked a watershed moment in citizens' activism, as the 'representatives of civil society felt compelled to act and build an articulated citizenry co-responsible for public policy decisions.'³⁴¹

Building on the electoral context that surrounded the presidential election of 2012, including the facilities it provided for social mobilisation and citizens' increasing political disaffection, fifteen CSOs

³³⁸ 24 Horas, "Organizaciones Realizan Primera Cumbre Ciudadana," *24 Horas*, May 21, 2012, <http://www.24-horas.mx/oranizaciones-realizan-primera-cumbre-ciudadana/> (Accessed 22-12-2017); FUNDECI, "Pronunciamiento Primer Cumbre Ciudadana" (Mexico City: FUNDECI, 2012), <http://www.fundeci.org/2012/05/pronunciamiento-primera-cumbre-ciudadana.html> (Accessed 22-12-2017); NTX, "Desinteresados En Política, 80% de Jóvenes," *El Universal*, March 17, 2010, <http://archivo.eluniversal.com.mx/notas/666686.html> (Accessed 22-12-2017); LASS, "Los Mexicanos Son Desinteresados En Política," *LASS*, February 5, 2012, <http://www.las5.mx/noticia/7633/los-mexicanos-son-desinteresados-en-politica> (Accessed 22-12-2017); CIDAC, "OSCs En México: El Reto de La Autonomía" (Mexico City, 2012), http://www.nuevamayoria.com/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=3487&Itemid=1 (Accessed 22-12-2017).

³³⁹ Gustavo Sanchez, "Las 50 Ciudades Más Peligrosas Del Mundo; 9 Son Mexicanas," *Aristegui Noticias*, February 7, 2013, <http://aristeguinoticias.com/0702/mexico/las-50-ciudades-mas-peligrosas-del-mundo-9-son-mexicanas/> (Accessed 22-12-2017).

³⁴⁰ Gobierno de la República Mexicana, "Primera Cumbre Ciudadana Para Construir Un México Pacífico y Justo" (Mexico: Gobierno de la República Mexicana, 2012), <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XKzw0fz3y3s> (Accessed 22-12-2017); BBC News, "Mexico Drugs Crisis: Monterrey Shocked by Casino Attack," *BBC News*, August 27, 2011, <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-latin-america-14693074> (Accessed 22-12-2017); Christsian Rea, "Elección 2012 Fue Más Sucia Que La de 2006, Investigador," *Terra*, February 2, 2013, <http://noticias.terra.com.mx/mexico/politica/elecciones/sucesion-presidencial/eleccion-2012-fue-mas-sucia-que-la-de-2006-investigador,972b1b8c71d58310VgnVCM4000009bcceb0aRCRD.html> (Accessed 22-12-2017).

³⁴¹ 24 Horas, "Organizaciones Realizan Primera Cumbre Ciudadana"; FUNDECI, "Pronunciamiento Primer Cumbre Ciudadana"; Jose-Angel Garcia, "Interview to Maria Elena Morera, President of Causa En Común CSO." (Mexico City, 2013).

joined forces to organise what would become the First *Citizens'* Summit to Build a Peaceful and Fair Mexico – a Summit aiming to influence the policy agenda of who was going to become president of Mexico.³⁴² With Maria Elena Morera and Causa en Comun leading this important initiative, the following sub-chapter analyses the Summit's structure in order to identify the level of influence that citizens (either individually or through other forms of collective action) could have achieved in the definition of the Summit's proposals.

5.2 Causa en Comun, other CSOs and the Summit's organisation.

Causa en Comun and its Director, Maria Elena Morera, are two of the most recognisable institutions in social activism in Mexico; two names, if not 'brands' that appeared in the socio-political scenario as a result of the kidnapping of Morera's husband in 2001. This unfortunate event and the previous kidnapping of her brother in law in 1995, pushed Morera to join and preside over Mexico Unido Contra la Delincuencia (MUCD) in 2003, a CSO created by businesswoman Josefina Ricaño, whose son was also kidnapped and murdered in 1997.³⁴³ In her swearing-in speech as MUCD's president, Morera stated 'MUCD was going to be nobody's accomplice:

If someone is acting badly we are going to evidence him/her. MUCD does not obey any kind of political or ideological interest, and our characteristics are plurality, openness, a constructive criticism and a proactive attitude. To media, we ask you to use your power and

³⁴² Joanna Lavinia, "Las Organizaciones Civiles y Sociales (OCS) En México y Su Presencia En Los Medios de Comunicación Impresos Nacionales," *La Implicación de Las Organizaciones Civiles y Sociales (OCS) En La Evaluación de La Gobernanza En México*. (Paris: Instituto de Investigación y debate sobre la gobernanza, 2008), <http://www.institut-gouvernance.org/es/analyse/fiche-analyse-386.html> (Accessed 22-12-2017).

³⁴³ Benjamín Castrejan and Jesús Hernández, "Una Odontóloga Contra La Delincuencia," *Expansión*, 2008, <http://www.cnnexpansion.com/actualidad/2008/09/03/alza-su-voz-contra-la-delincuencia>; MUCD, "Mensaje de MUCD," *Grupo Paladín*, n.d., http://www.manualdeseguridad.com.mx/manual_de_seguridad/mensaje_MUCD.asp; Jose Rejes, "Memorias de Un Secuestrador," *Contralinea*, 2010, <http://contralinea.info/archivo-revista/index.php/2010/08/01/memorias-de-un-secuestrador/>; MUCD, "Toma de Protesta de Maria Elena Morera" (Mexico City, 2004), <http://www.MUCD.org.mx/Toma-de-Protesta-Maria-Elena-Morera-n135.html>.

influence to exhibit that delinquency is failing and society detests it, but also to continue with your constructive criticism and proactive approach towards government, whilst recognising those who are working well.³⁴⁴

Six years later, in 2009, Morera left MUCD to set-up her own CSO, Causa en Comun, where she committed ‘to work to open more spaces for citizens’ participation and public deliberation, and to create more democratic institutions’ in Mexico.³⁴⁵ Although relatively new, being 8 years old Causa en Comun has already overcome the short life expectancy of Mexican CSOs of just two years, and established itself as an authority in Mexico’s social activism sector.³⁴⁶ Since its foundation, Causa en Comun has coordinated national-scale projects with government and other leading CSOs, however, not all of them have been as successful as planned nor have they achieved the expected results:

- ❖ In 2010 MUCD subscribed to the government’s *National Agreement for Security, Justice and Legality 2008–2012*, setting actions, targets, times and responsibilities across government institutions to strengthening the State’s capacity on public security provision.³⁴⁷ The agreement, however, did not accomplished its goals to the extent that Morera declared that it let society down as ‘government forgot about citizens by providing unsubstantiated figures on unfinished commitments’ to citizens’ demands.³⁴⁸
- ❖ In 2011, working with the Electoral Institute of the State of Mexico, Causa en Comun created and promoted the programme *The safest thing is to vote*, to increase the electoral turnout in that year’s Governor election.³⁴⁹ Despite a large media campaign and the participation of senior political figures, the initiative ended producing the second lowest electoral turnout since 1986.³⁵⁰

³⁴⁴ MUCD, “Toma de Protesta de Maria Elena Morera.”

³⁴⁵ Carolina Quezada, “Nace En México ‘Causa En Común’ Hacia Un Cambio Social Profundo,” *Periodismo de Paz*, April 13, 2010, <http://ciudadania-express.com/2010/04/13/nace-en-mexico-“causa-en-comun”-hacia-un-cambio-social-profundo/> (Accessed 22–12–2017).

³⁴⁶ CIDAC, “OSCs En México: El Reto de La Autonomía.”

³⁴⁷ Secretaria de Gobernación, “Acuerdo Nacional Por La Seguridad, La Justicia y La Legalidad” (2008), http://www.dof.gob.mx/nota_detalle.php?codigo=5057719&fecha=25/08/2008 (Accessed 22–12–2017).

³⁴⁸ Garcia, “Interview to Maria Elena Morera, President of Causa En Común CSO.”; Jose–Angel Garcia, “Interview to Edgar Baltazar, Former Manager of the Programme of Citizenship Accompaniment to Police in Causa En Comun” (Mexico City, 2014).

³⁴⁹ Redacción, “Promueve ‘Causa En Común’ Campaña,” *Excelsior*, June 1, 2011, <http://www.excelsior.com.mx/2011/06/01/nacional/741594> (Accessed 22–12–2017).

³⁵⁰ NOTIMEX, “La Elección Rebasó El Promedio de Abstencionismo En El Estado de México,” *CNN Mexico*, July 4, 2011, <http://mexico.cnn.com/nacional/2011/07/04/quien-fue-el-culpable-del-abstencionismo-en-edomex> (Accessed 22–12–2017).

Notwithstanding the extent of these and other programme failures, Causa en Comun remains being an active political actor and one of the CSOs with which citizens are most familiarised with. In this vein, in 2011, in the midst of the Presidential race, Causa en Comun launched the initial call to organise the First Citizen Summit *for a Peaceful and Fair Mexico*. Defined by Morera as an ‘unprecedented event’ and one of Causa en Comun’s most successful programmes, the Summit gathered all the country’s political parties, over 200 CSOs from across Mexico and the then presidential candidates (including current President Peña Nieto).³⁵¹ Some of the CSOs that joined Maria Elena Morera as convenors of the Summit included *Iluminemos México*, coordinated by textile businessman Jorge Elias Kuri; Mexico Unido Contra la Delincuencia, overseen by businesswoman Josefina Ricaño and Mexico SOS, directed by sports businessman Alejandro Martí.³⁵² Motivated by ‘the violence crisis, the impunity and corruption problems, and citizens’ exclusion from the decision-making processes’, Morera argued, more CSOs started to join the Summit’s discussions. By November 2011, nineteen CSOs were already meeting biweekly and by January 2012, thirty were already involved in the Summit (see Annex 4), scheduled for the 21st and 22nd of May 2012.³⁵³

Aiming to create a ‘mega-event’ (as described by Morera herself) that represented Mexico’s plural civil society, the convenors of the Summit (see Annex 4) conducted a poll with CSOs in the country to produce a list of citizens’ demands with regards to public security. With more than 100 respondents, the convening CSOs prepared a draft list of topics to be discussed during the two-day

³⁵¹ Maria Morera in Garcia J, “Interview to Maria Elena Morera, President of Causa En Comun CSO (4 November 2012),” pt. Minute 23:00; RadioFormula, “Crean Organizaciones Sociales Frente Común Por Un México Pacífico y Justo.”

³⁵² Maite Azuela, “Una Historia Que Vale La Pena Contar,” in *Primera Cumbre Ciudadana Para Construir in México Pacífico y Justo: Una Historia Que Debe Contarse*, 1st Ed. (Mexico City: Universidad Nacional Autonoma de Mexico, 2013), XIII–XIV, <http://causaencomun.org.mx/wp-content/uploads/2014/04/Relatoria-1-Cumbre-Ciudadana.pdf> (Accessed 22-12-2017).

³⁵³ Garcia, “Interview to Maria Elena Morera, President of Causa En Común CSO (4-Nov-2012).”

Summit. In this vein, for a topic to be included in the Summit's final list it needed to comply with at least one of two characteristics:

- 1) To be supported/mentioned by at least two respondents.
- 2) To be a topic with less than 33% of respondents voting against it.³⁵⁴

Following this selection process, the following topics were included in the Summit's agenda:

- 1) Strengthening of Civil Society Organisations.
- 2) Political Reform and citizens' participation.
- 3) Inclusion and social cohesion.
- 4) Quality education.
- 5) Transparency and Accountability.
- 6) Sustainable Economic Development and worthy employment.
- 7) Citizens security, justice and human rights.³⁵⁵

With a defined agenda, the convenors started working on what Maria Elena Morera considered were four key strategies to succeed in opening more political spaces for social leaders, facilitating political dialogue and achieving the Summit's policy influence.³⁵⁶

1. Positioning the issue of participative democracy in the media's agenda: From the *convening* CSOs' point of view it was important that each one of the matters discussed and proposals made before, during and after the Summit were part of public discussions and public opinion: 'an ongoing flow of information about the CSOs' activities to, towards and through the media was essential for the Summit's success', they said.³⁵⁷
2. The construction of a common agenda: A central problem in the design of associational structures, Schmitter and Streech argue, is the management of internal interest diversity; a matter that becomes more noticeable when a supra-organisation (in this case Causa en Común) or movement (i.e. the Summit) intends to feed a variety of viewpoints into other organisations' decision-making processes.³⁵⁸ In this case, the participants 'committed to yield in their private interests in order to achieve a common goal.'³⁵⁹

³⁵⁴ Azuela, "Una Historia Que Vale La Pena Contar."

³⁵⁵ Aurorar Vega, "ONG's Celebran Cumbre Ciudadana Por La Paz y La Justicia," *Excelsior*, May 21, 2012, <http://www.excelsior.com.mx/2012/05/21/nacional/835605#imagen-3> (Accessed 22-12-2017).

³⁵⁶ Azuela, *Primera Cumbre Ciudadana Para Construir Un México Pacífico y Justo*, 14; Garcia, "Interview to Maria Elena Morera, President of Causa En Común CSO (4-Nov-2012)," pt. Minute 4:05.

³⁵⁷ Azuela, *Primera Cumbre Ciudadana Para Construir Un México Pacífico y Justo*, 111.

³⁵⁸ Grant, *Pressure Groups, Politics and Democracy in Britain*, 134.

³⁵⁹ Azuela, "Una Historia Que Vale La Pena Contar."

3. Implementation of a less confrontational decision-making voting system: Considering the ideological differences across the organisations, the *convening* CSOs did not implement a ‘yes’ or ‘no’ voting system but a ‘traffic light voting-system’. In words of Maria Elena Morena, this system used a green card vote meaning *total agreement*, a yellow one signifying *I have doubts and am not enthusiastic about the idea, but I can live with it*, and a red one vote expressing *complete disagreement* with the proposal. As a result, rather than proposals being immediately discarded, through yellow votes the ideas were ‘tolerated’ for their discussion during the Summit.³⁶⁰
4. Engage Mexico’s most important political forces in the process: ‘The *higher the level* of the political actors involved, Morera argued, the better and more efficient the results would be.’ In this vein, all Mexican political parties’ leaders and their presidential candidates attended the Summit.

Through the implementation of these strategies, by March 2012 the convenors had already engaged 37 CSOs with the Summit’s activities. Nevertheless, the Summit’s composition ended up validating Grant’s findings: ‘in a centralised political system (like Mexico), the effective insider groups need to be in, or close to the metropolis’.³⁶¹ In this vein, those CSOs from outside Mexico City, with less visibility and less financial resources, were unable to participate in the design and execution of the Summit as much as their counterparts based in the country’s capital.³⁶² Whilst *Illuminemos México*, Mexico Unido Contra la Delincuencia and Causa en Comun (all established in Mexico City and the last two associated to Morera) were involved in 41%, 44% and 100% of the Summit; *Puebla Vigila*, from the State of Puebla (2 hrs from Mexico City) and *Fundación Comunitaria Oaxaca*, from the State of Oaxaca (8 hrs from Mexico City), were only able of participating in 18% and 3% of the process (i.e. the further they were located from Mexico City, the less they could be involved in the process) (see Figures 6 and 7).³⁶³

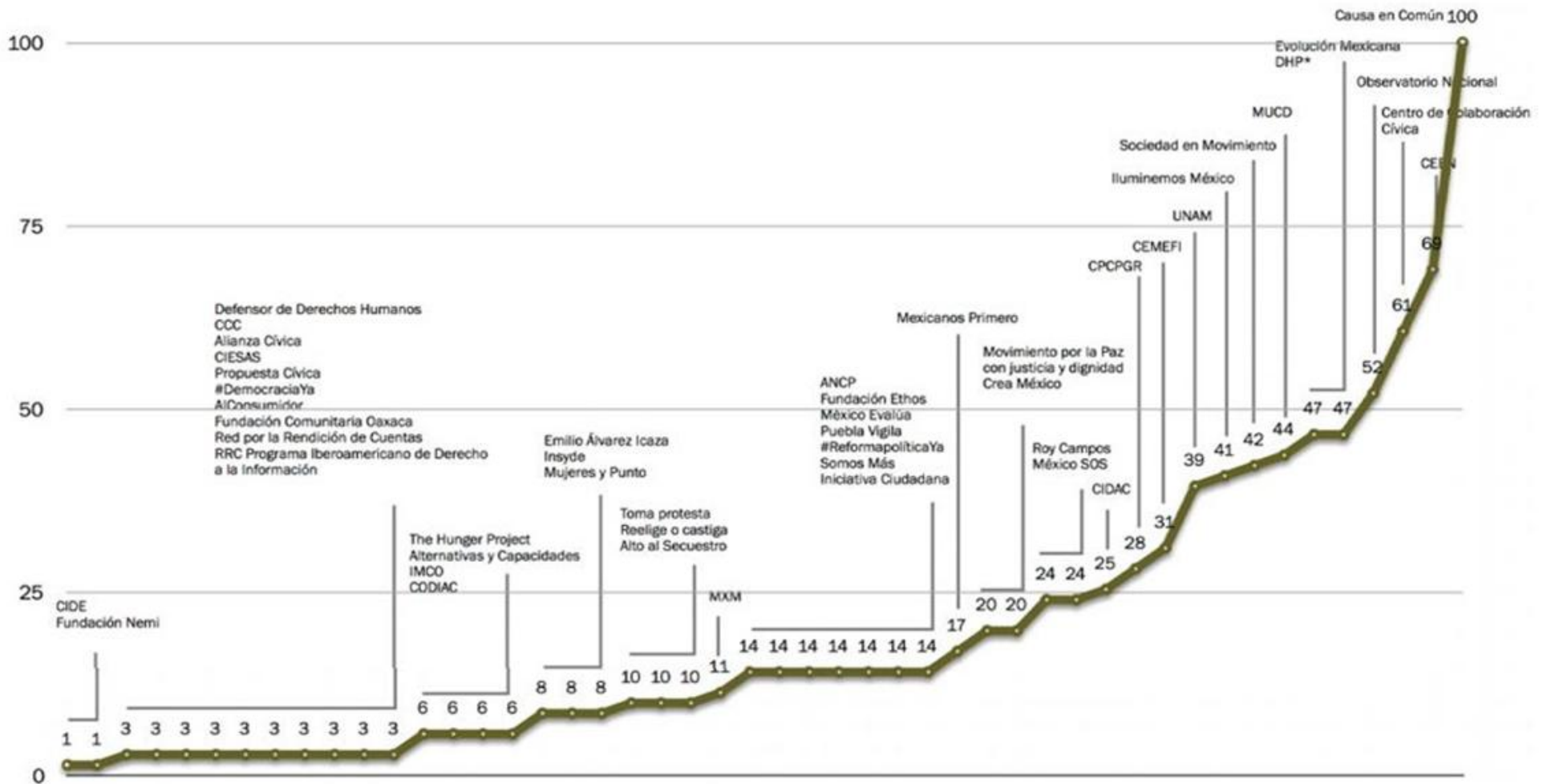
³⁶⁰ Azuela, *Primera Cumbre Ciudadana Para Construir Un México Pacífico y Justo*; Azuela, “Una Historia Que Vale La Pena Contar.”

³⁶¹ Grant, *Pressure Groups, Politics and Democracy in Britain*, 16.

³⁶² Maria Morera in Garcia J, “Interview to Maria Elena Morera, President of Causa En Comun CSO (4 November 2012),” Minute 2:10.

³⁶³ Azuela, *Primera Cumbre Ciudadana Para Construir Un México Pacífico y Justo*, 15.

Figure 5. CSOs' participation in the First Citizens' Summit for a Peaceful and Fair Mexico (by level of participation in meetings, measured in %).



Source: Mariana Azuela, *Primera Cumbre Ciudadana para Construir un México Pacífico y Justo*, UNAM, 1st Edition (Mexico City, 2013).

Figure 6. Dispersion of the participant CSOs.



Source: Mariana Azuela, *Primera Cumbre Ciudadana para Construir un México Pacífico y Justo*, UNAM, 1st Edition, p.31 (Mexico City, 2013).

Notwithstanding these unequal opportunities for participation in the Summit, by May 2012, 168 CSOs were participating in the Summit's discussion tables on 7 main categories:³⁶⁴

- 1) Strengthening of an organised civil society
- 2) Political reform and citizen participation
- 3) Transparency, accountability and access to information and media
- 4) Social inclusion and cohesion
- 5) Quality education
- 6) Dignified employment and sustainable economic development
- 7) Citizens' security and human rights

Looking for examples of the rebirth of OCS in the public sphere and bottom-up policy-making in public security, this thesis solely focuses on the 'access to information and media', and 'citizen's

³⁶⁴For discussion on the number of attendants, see Animal Político, "Celebrarán ONGs Primera Cumbre Ciudadana Para La Paz y La Justicia," *Animal Político*, May 21, 2012, <http://www.animalpolitico.com/2012/05/celebraran-ongs-primera-cumbre-ciudadana-para-la-paz-y-la-justicia/> (Accessed 22-12-2017).

security' matters. In this vein, for 'access to information and media', the convenors agreed that the Summit should work on proposals related to:

- a) Developing a legislative reform that limits media monopolies, promotes pluralism within the public media and improves the quality of media contents.
- b) Guaranteeing the universal access to internet in Mexico and establish a national plan to boost it across society.

In 'citizens security' CSOs would focus on proposals linked to:

- a) Securing the implementation of a 'Law of Victims' and the related secondary reforms.
- b) Ensuring the permanent citizens' participation in the National Council of Public Security.
- c) Promoting an effective national policy on human rights.
- d) Guaranteeing the implementation of the penal reform in all the states across Mexico.
- e) Promoting alternative methods for conflict resolution.

Photo 1. An example of a CSOs' discussion panel during the First Citizens' Summit to Build a Peaceful and Fair Mexico.



Source: Pablo Mayorga, "Organizaciones Civiles Alistan Propuestas Ciudadanas Para Los Candidatos," *CNN*, May 21, 2012, <http://mexico.cnn.com/nacional/2012/05/21/organizaciones-civiles-alistan-propuestas-ciudadanas-para-los-candidatos> (Accessed 22-12-2017).

These, and the rest of the topics on the agenda, were voted by 168 CSOs, after a total of 07:45 hours of discussion on the 21st of May (see Photo 1).³⁶⁵ Through this process, and notwithstanding the fact that 74% of the participant CSOs were from Mexico City and 9 states (including Michoacan) lacked any representation in the Summit (see Figure 7), the participant CSOs’ produced what they called the ‘Agenda of the Mexican civil society’ for the future President of Mexico including the following specific medium–term public policy demands:³⁶⁶

Table 9. CSOs’ demands in the First Citizens’ Summit for a Peaceful and Just Mexico.

On Access to information and media	On Citizens’ Security
1. To design a legislative reform that limits monopolies in media and telecommunications, promotes pluralism with public, indigenous, social and communitarian media, transparency and quality of media content.	1. To generate a strategy so the provision of public security is administered by security personnel and organisations prepared for that function, creating a Civil Auditor Body for this matter.
2. To guarantee the universal access to broadband and the neutrality of the network, as well as a comprehensive policy of digital television that guarantees the access and redistribution of the new digital dividend, allowing for the inclusion of new actors.	2. To make an effective national policy of human rights, in accordance to the constitutional reform on the matter, including the mechanisms to guarantee its application (i.e. approval of the Amparo Law)
3. To protect the right to information through effective measures guaranteeing media and journalists’ security.	3. To review the policy on drugs, due to the impact it has in organised criminality and public security.
	4. Ensure citizens’ permanent participation in the National Council of Public Security.
	5. Guarantee the adequate implementation of the Judicial Reform in the States and Federation: a) Create Centres of Justice for Women that support the victims during the allegation and the entire process. b) Implement a professional career service for Public Ministry offices.
	6. To typify the crime of ‘disappeared people.’

³⁶⁵ For discussion see Vega, “ONG’s Celebran Cumbre Ciudadana Por La Paz y La Justicia.” 168 and Animal Político, “Celebrarán ONGs Primera Cumbre Ciudadana Para La Paz y La Justicia.”

³⁶⁶ Mayorga, “Organizaciones Civiles Alistan Propuestas Ciudadanas Para Los Candidatos”; Cumbre Ciudadana, “Cumbre Ciudadana. Presentación de Prioridades” (Mexico City, 2012), http://massociedad.org.mx/Shared Documents/RecTecInfo/Prioridades_1eraCUMBRE_CIUDADANA.pdf (Accessed 22–12–2017). Azuela, *Primera Cumbre Ciudadana Para Construir Un México Pacífico y Justo*, 56.

- 7. Creation of a National Citizens Observatory to ensure the implementation of the Law against Human trafficking.
- 8. Ensure the adequate implementation of the Law of Victims and implement the secondary reforms
 - a) Immediate publication in the *Diario Oficial de la Federación*.

On the 22nd of May 2012, the CSOs presented the presidential candidates with their policy proposals, ‘demanding’ (they said) the following actions:

- a) To reply to their proposals within 15 days (i.e. 10th of June 2012), stating his/her views and actions to be implement if being elected President.
- b) To name a point of contact to give follow up to their demands.
- c) To establish follow up meetings throughout his/her administration (2012–2018) in order to monitor the implementation of such policies.³⁶⁷

Having said this and outlined both the Summit’s decision-making process and its ‘public agenda’ on media access and public security, it is necessary to assess whether this initiative did ‘favour civil society’s appropriation of public discussion and empower it in the policy–making process’, as argued by the Summit’s convenors.³⁶⁸ This is why, the following sections study the Summit’s impact on media and policy agendas in order to solve the following secondary questions:

What does the analysis of public security policy suggest about the rebirth of civil society and its capacity to influence political decisions in Mexico’s dangerous public sphere?			
Secondary questions	Macro	Bottom–up democracy / the future	How do the processes occurring within the public sphere contribute to the generation of a bottom–up political change? How much power does the public have? ³⁶⁹
	Micro	Mechanisms / Case Studies / Tools	Is a thicker model of democracy, built around social capital, allowing civil society to set the agenda? Or does a top–down process continue dominating the agenda setting of public security policy in Mexico?

³⁶⁷ CEMEFI, “OSC Dialogan Con Los Presidenciables En La Cumbre Ciudadana” (Mexico City, 2012), <http://www.cemefi.org/servicios/noticias/filantropicas/1288–sociedad–civil–dialoga–con–los–presidenciables–en–lacumbre–ciudadana.html> (Accessed 22–12–2017).

³⁶⁸ NOTIMEX, “Dan a Conocer Primera Cumbre Ciudadana,” *Uniradioinforma*, May 14, 2012, <http://www.uniradioinforma.com/noticias/mexico/116949/dan–a–conocer–primera–cumbre–ciudadana.html> (Accessed 22–12–2017); Anabel Curz, “Se Abrió Un Eje de Diálogo Entre OSC y Gobierno Electo de México” (Mexico City, 2012), <http://rendircuentas.org/2012/10/fortalecimiento–de–la–sociedad–civil–un–eje–de–dialogo–entre–osc–y–gobierno–electo–de–mexico/> (Accessed 22–12–2017).

³⁶⁹ For discussion see Burstein, “The Impact of Public Opinion on Public Policy: A Review and an Agenda,” 31.

5.3 The Summit and its influence over the media agenda.

The previous section depicted the motives, organisation and political objectives behind the First Citizen Summit to Build a Peaceful and Fair Mexico. Building on that, this section looks at how that CSOs' initiative achieved to transform the public sentiment (i.e. the Summit's Agenda of the Mexican civil society) into a news worthy topic capable of influencing political decisions, as it would have been suggested by Kingdon, Wolfe, Jones and Baumgartner.³⁷⁰

According to Trenz, 'media plays an important role as an agenda setter', so important that, Lippmann argued, it acts as our window to the vast world beyond direct experience and becomes our cognitive map of that world.³⁷¹ In the same line, political analysts like Sanz have stated, 'the political system is now working under a mediatised democracy mobilised by a persuasive media.'³⁷² More specifically, the President of Mexico's *National Commission for Human Rights*, Luis Raul Gonzalez, has acknowledged how important it is for civil society to have a systematic and permanent access to media in order to attract government's attention to its demands.³⁷³ Considering these statements, and in order to identify whether they were true in the case of the First Citizen Summit, this section builds on McCombs, Chibnall, Van Dijk and others' work on agenda-setting (see Chapter 3) to assess the Summit's achievements in setting the media agenda. To do that, it analyses more than 2,000 news reports published between the 1st of January 2010 (around the creation of Causa en Comun CSO) and the 31st of December 2014 (when the last news report on the Summit was published) in three of the most important newspapers in Mexico (i.e. El Universal, El Reforma and

³⁷⁰ Kingdon, *Agendas, Alternatives and Public Policies*; Wolfe, Jones, and Baumgartner, "A Failure to Communicate: Agenda Setting in Media and Policy Studies"; Dunaway, Abrajano, and Branton, "Agenda Setting, Public Opinion, and the Issue of Immigration Reform," 3.

³⁷¹ Lippmann, *Public Opinion*.

³⁷² Sanz, "I Have a Question for You': Mediatized Democracy, Citizen Participation and Elections in Catalonia."

³⁷³ Sanz; Lavinia, "Las Organizaciones Civiles y Sociales (OCS) En México y Su Presencia En Los Medios de Comunicación Impresos Nacionales."

El Norte), each one with a different, if not antagonistic, editorial line.³⁷⁴ To allow for replicable studies, the news reports here analysed correspond to those ones matching to specific ‘term’s search combinations’ in Lexis Nexis’ news search engine (see Table 10).

Table 10. News term search combinations to identify the capacity of CSOs to become newsworthy.

Intended finding	Case	Term(s) search combination	
Capacity to become “newsworthy”	Causa en Común	Causa en Común	or Maria Elena Morera
	<i>Iluminemos México</i>	<i>Iluminemos México</i>	or Elías Kuri
	Mexico Unido Contra la Delincuencia	Mexico Unido Contra la Delincuencia	or Josefina Ricaño
	<i>México S.O.S.</i>	<i>México S.O.S.</i>	or Alejandro Martí
	<i>Observatorio Nacional</i>	<i>Observatorio Nacional</i>	

To begin with, this part of the research found that from all the five *original* convenors of the Summit, Mexico SOS was the Summit’s CSO that the printed media mentioned the most between January 2010 and December 2014.³⁷⁵ With a total of 763 news reports, El Universal, La Jornada and El Norte published an average of five articles per week on the CS’s activities. Maria Elena Morera and Causa en Comun came in second place with 629 reports, an important figure considering this CSO is the youngest among the five convening CSOs. Behind them were Josefina Ricaño and Mexico

³⁷⁴ Printed media was selected due to its importance in Mexico’s socio-political spheres. For discussion see section 3.2.1 and Luis Martinez, “Mercado de Periódicos Impresos Mexicano Crecerá En Ventas y Producción” (Mexico City, 2015), <http://www.pwc.mx/mercado-de-periodicos-impresos-mexicano-crecera-ventas-y-produccion> (Accessed 22-12-2017); Jackson Jasper, “National Daily Newspaper Sales Fall by Half a Million in a Year,” *The Guardian*, April 10, 2015, <https://www.theguardian.com/media/2015/apr/10/national-daily-newspapers-lose-more-than-half-a-million-readers-in-past-year> (Accessed 22-12-2017).

³⁷⁵ For purposes of this research, printed media is represented by the newspapers El Universal, El Reforma and El Norte. Considered influential due to their presence across the national territory and the number of daily copies printed: El Norte, in the state of Nuevo Leon, with more 161,000 copies per day and 77m page views online; El Universal, with national presence but mainly distributed in the centre of Mexico, with 170m page views online and 180,000 copies per day; Metro, in the State of Mexico, with 20,000 copies per day; and Reforma, with national presence but mainly distributed in the centre of Mexico, with 140,000 copies and 35m page views online. In Coordinación Nacional de Comunicación Social: Instituto Federal Electoral, “Catálogo Nacional de Medios Impresos En Internet 2013” (Mexico City, 2013), http://www2.ine.mx/documentos/JGE/acuerdos-jge/2013/SO22julio2013/JGEo220713ap6-1_x1.pdf (Accessed 22-12-2017).

Unido Contra la Delincuencia (496 news reports), Observatorio Nacional Ciudadano (137) and Elias Kuri and Iluminemos Mexico (76) (See Annex 5). However, whilst Mexico SOS achieved the biggest media coverage between 2010 and 2015, its media presence has been decaying throughout time. Possibly the result of the lack of new socio-political projects or the absence of an efficient media strategy, Mexico SOS seems to have stopped being as interesting to the media as before, passing from having 170 news reports in 2010 to less than 100 in 2014. The same occurred with MUCD and Iluminemos Mexico, the former going down from 131 articles to 56, and the latter from 32 to just two in the same period of time. Contrary to this, Maria Elena Morera and Causa en Comun's media presence has augmented overall, from having 96 articles published about them in 2010, to 131 news reports in 2014. In fact, Causa en Comun was the only convening CSO that enjoyed a permanent monthly presence in the printed media across the five years analysis. Observatorio Nacional Ciudadano, a 'super citizens organisation' founded in September 2010 by MUCD, Iluminemos Mexico, Mexico SOS and Causa en Comun, among other CSOs, also increased its media presence, from five news reports in 2010 to nearly 60 in 2014 (see Annex 18 and Table 11) Although this cannot be taken as an indicative of a correlation between a CSOs' age and the level of media coverage it receives, the fact that media coverage to the older CSOs (i.e. MUCD being founded in 1998, and Mexico SOS and Iluminemos Mexico in 2008) has declined while that to the newer CSOs has – relatively – increased, provides new information to suggest the possibility of a cyclical evolution of civil society presence in the media. An issue that could be the subject of new research on the interaction between the media and public agendas.

Table 11. Number of news reports about Causa en Comun, Iluminemos Mexico, MUCD, Mexico SOS and Observatorio Nacional Ciudadano per year and newspaper (2010–2014)

	Causa en Comun			Iluminemos Mexico			MUCD			Mexico SOS			Observatorio Nacional			Total
	Norte	Reforma	Universal	Norte	Reforma	Universal	Norte	Reforma	Universal	Norte	Reforma	Universal	Norte	Reforma	Universal	
2010	27	44	25	9	17	6	36	59	36	44	81	45	2	2	1	434
2011	45	71	62	1	9	2	29	40	19	57	99	66	5	5	2	512
2012	41	67	20	5	12	0	22	49	14	43	73	47	11	17	5	426
2013	27	48	21	3	10	0	18	44	4	33	54	22	8	17	4	313
2014	32	67	32	0	2	0	14	30	12	26	47	26	14	30	14	346
Total	172	297	160	18	50	8	119	222	85	203	354	206	40	71	26	2031

Source: Author’s own elaboration with information from Lexis Nexis.

The media analysis also suggests that, in contrast to what MacDougall would expect, CSOs did not have to ‘fight’ with each other for media attention. In this vein, a Pearson correlation test showed no strong correlation between the number of news reports on one CSO and those of another one. Even in the case where media competition could be expected (i.e. MUCD vis-a-vis Causa en Comun – as Morera left the former to set-up the latter), the Pearson test showed no significant correlation between the news articles published on Causa en Comun and those on MUCD ($r=0.050$), nor vice-versa ($r=0.050$) (Table 12). Qualitative data also backs this finding, with media professionals like BBC reporter Juan Perez, assuring ‘the printed media in Mexico does not have a minimum or maximum space for news reports on the topic of civil society.’³⁷⁶

³⁷⁶ Jose–Angel Garcia, “Interview to Juan Perez, BBC Reporter for Latin America” (Mexico City, 2014), pt. Min: 5:30.

Table 12. Analysis of correlation across the news media coverage given to Causa en Comun, MUCD, Iluminemos Mexico, Mexico SOS and Observatorio Nacional Ciudadano.

Correlations

		Causa_En_C omun	MUCD
Causa_En_Comun	Pearson Correlation	1	.050
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.758
	N	53	41
MUCD	Pearson Correlation	.050	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.758	
	N	41	47

Correlations

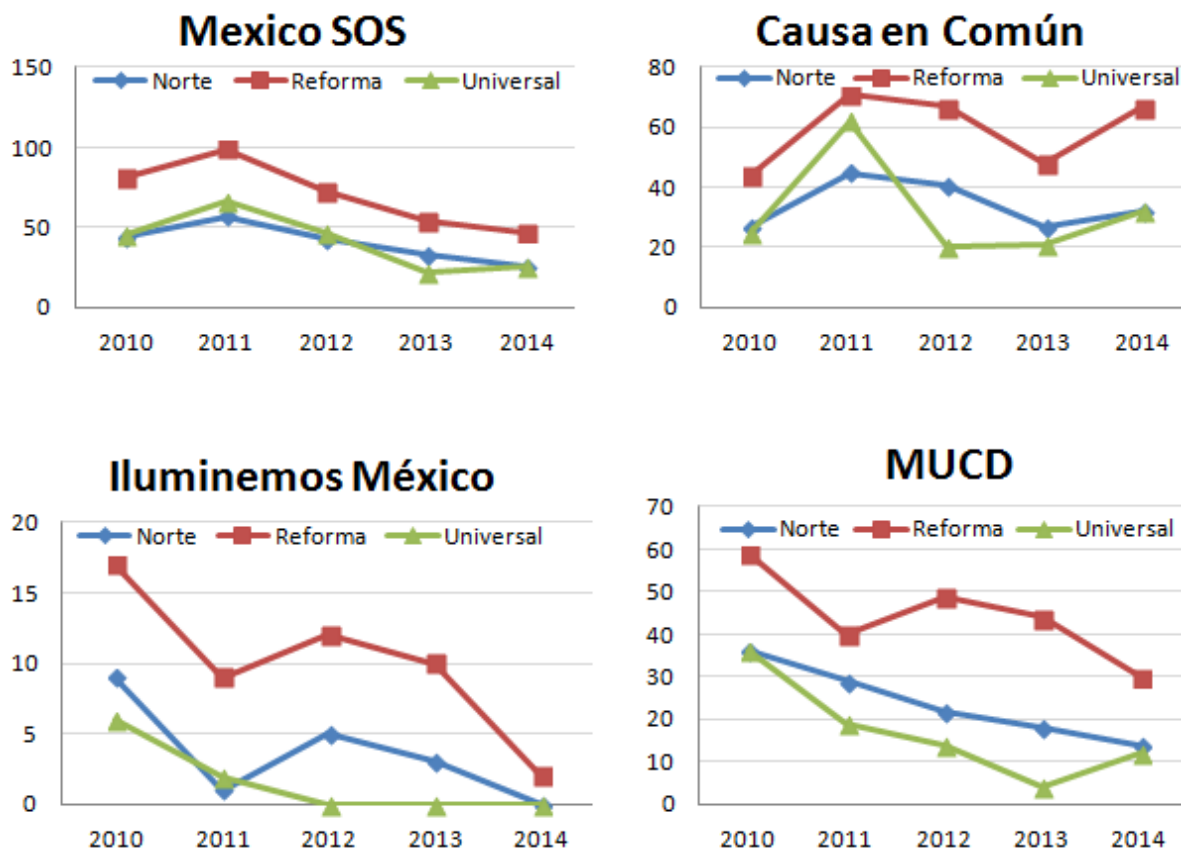
		Causa_En_C omun	Iluminemos_ Mexico	MUCD	Mexico_SOS	Observatorio_ Nacional_Ciu dadano
Causa_En_Comun	Pearson Correlation	1	.279	.050	.121	-.153
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.143	.758	.424	.455
	N	53	29	41	46	26
Iluminemos_Mexico	Pearson Correlation	.279	1	-.294	-.083	-.013
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.143		.174	.680	.958
	N	29	31	23	27	19
MUCD	Pearson Correlation	.050	-.294	1	.169	-.157
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.758	.174		.296	.496
	N	41	23	47	40	21
Mexico_SOS	Pearson Correlation	.121	-.083	.169	1	-.216
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.424	.680	.296		.299
	N	46	27	40	52	25
Observatorio_Nacional_Ciudadano	Pearson Correlation	-.153	-.013	-.157	-.216	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.455	.958	.496	.299	
	N	26	19	21	25	28

Whilst other studies would build on this initial assessment to state that Mexico’s printed media does provide civil society with spaces to deliberate on the government’s actions and communicate their strategies and proposals, therefore, to argue that media fulfils its role as main interlocutor of the public sphere,³⁷⁷ this research went beyond and developed a more thorough study, which contrary to the preliminary findings, illustrated an actual reduction of media coverage to CSOs. In this vein, although media coverage to certain CSOs (i.e. Causa en Comun) (see Graph 23) has

³⁷⁷ See, for instance, Reyes, “La Ciudadania En Mexico. Un Beve Recuento Historico.”

increased throughout time, the overall media coverage to civil society diminished between 2010 and 2014, passing from an average of 37 monthly news reports in 2010 to 29 in 2014 (see Graph 23).³⁷⁸

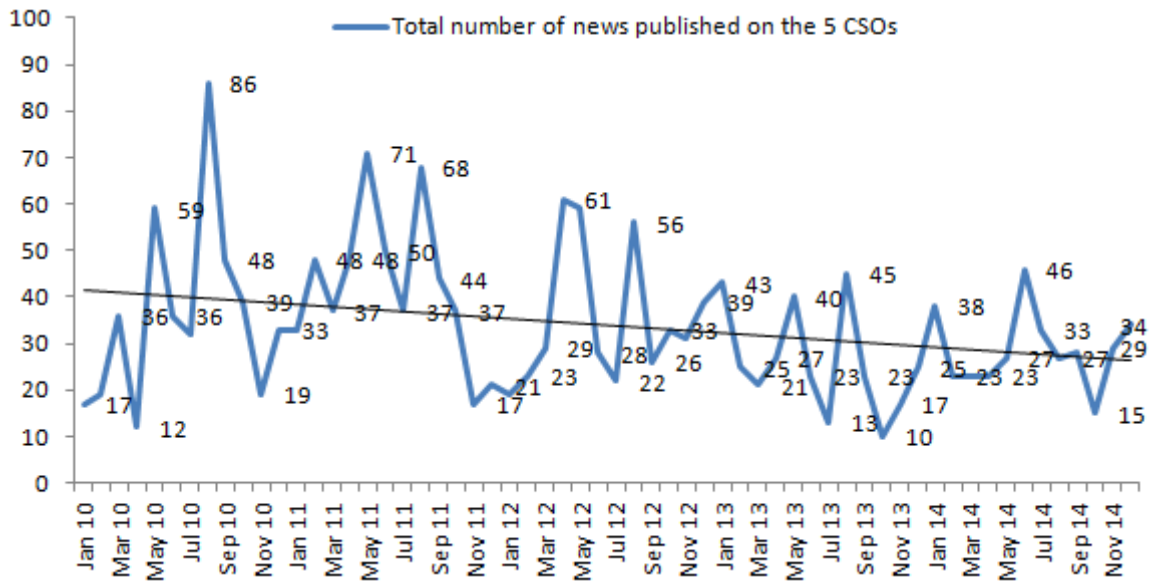
Graph 23. Number of annual news reports about Mexico SOS, Causa en Común, Iluminemos Mexico and MUCD (2010–2014).



Source: Author's own elaboration with information from Lexis Nexis.

³⁷⁸ For this specific chapter, 'civil society as a whole' is represented by the five convener CSOs: MUCD, Causa en Común, Iluminemos Mexico, Mexico SOS and Observatorio Nacional Ciudadano.

Graph 24. Linear trend analysis of media coverage to civil society in Mexico (2010–2014).



Source: Author’s own elaboration with information from Lexis Nexis.

It would be incorrect, though, to point to the media as being solely responsible for this decrease. CSOs themselves lack the resources to position their stories in the news media, even of conducting media market research to design an influential media strategy. With not all media outlets paying the same level of attention to their work, it would be expected that CSOs work to establish a close relationship with those newspapers that currently provide the most limited coverage to their activities (i.e. El Universal). However, evidence suggests this is not being done:

- Iluminemos Mexico is mostly represented, and its activities carried on by just one individual, its Director, Elías Kurí, who lacks specialist media management skills.³⁷⁹
- MUCD ‘does not conduct a media follow-up, as ‘the CSO lacks the resources to do it.’³⁸⁰

³⁷⁹ Jose-Angel Garcia, “Interview to Elias Kuri, Director of Iluminemos Mexico (27-Nov-2012)” (Mexico City, 2012).

³⁸⁰ Lisa Sanchez in Garcia J., “Personal Interview to Lisa Sanchez, Programme Coordinator, Mexico Unido Contra la Delincuencia” (Mexico City, 2014), pt. Minuto 58:00; Homero Tapia in Garcia J., “Personal Interview to Homero Tapia–Perez, Coordinator of the Government Collaboration Programme. Mexico Unido Contra la Delincuencia.” (Mexico City, 2012).

- Causa en Comun acknowledged they did not have the capacity to conduct media analyses.³⁸¹

This not only evidenced the CSOs' limited use of media as a key tool to influence the public sphere and political discussions. Paraphrasing Octavio Chavez, CSOs are still incapable of working within the 'triangular relation between democracy, public opinion and media.'³⁸² What is more, with CSOs stating that 'media provides a better coverage of their activities with politicians during electoral times to then focus more on the politicians' actions', the impact of civil society in Mexican politics seems to be reduced to election periods – just as Castells argued.³⁸³

Overall, this sub-chapter has illustrated the CSOs' capacity to become 'sufficiently attractive' actors for media coverage. Causa en Comun, MUCD, Mexico SOS, Iluminemos Mexico and Observatorio Nacional Ciudadano, have found spaces in three of the most influential newspapers in Mexico. Nevertheless, their scarce financial and human resources impede them from developing an effective media strategy to improve their presence in printed media. With limited media coverage to CSOs' activities, the effectiveness of the public sphere as a central future of a bottom-up democracy is also jeopardised. In such a scenario, Benjamin Moffitt, Tormey, Habermas and Bessant's ideals and understanding of the public sphere would not materialise either as the public sphere cannot become the space where citizenry could 'champion common sense from bureaucrats and shape the development of society as a whole' (Chapter 2).³⁸⁴

³⁸¹ Garcia, "Interview to Maria Elena Morera, President of Causa En Común CSO (4-Nov-2012)."

³⁸² Ruiz Chavez, "Transformación de La Esfera Pública: Canal Del Congreso y La Opinión Pública."

³⁸³ Garcia, "Interview to Maria Elena Morera, President of Causa En Común CSO (4-Nov-2012)," pt. Minute 12:00. Jessica Zermeño, "Ciudadanos: Campaña Paralela; Reportaje Elecciones y Sociedad Civil. Mientras Los Partidos y Sus Candidatos Están En Campaña, La Sociedad Civil Organizada Trabaja Para Fijarle Una Agenda Al Próximo Presidente de La República," Reforma, May 13, 2012. Castells, "The New Public Sphere: Global Civil Society, Communication Networks, and Global Governance."

³⁸⁴ Sparks, "Entertaining the Crisis: Television and Moral Enterprise," 50; Habermas, *The Structural Transformation of the Public sphere: An Inquiry Into a Category of Bourgeois Society.*, 359; Vreese, "The European Union as a Public Sphere," 8.

Building on these findings on the media coverage given to individual CSOs, it results interesting to study whether a cohort of CSOs (i.e. the Summit) is capable of achieving a greater influence over the media agenda in Mexico, particularly between the 26th of August 2011 (day of the attack to Casino Royale casino) and the 31st of December 2014 (when the last news report on the Summit was published) (See Annex 6).

5.3.1 The Summit's Citizen Agenda and its influence over Mexico's media agenda.

Although Causa en Comun and the other convening CSOs started working on the Summit in September 2011, no printed media reported on the discussions that preceded the Summit until the 13th of May 2012 (just one week before the Summit). In fact, fifty-two reports (59% of the total) were published that month, and the rest between June 2012 and August 2013. Secondly, almost two thirds of the articles published in May 2012 were about the convening CSOs and its leaders rather than about the Summit, to the extent that an NVIVO word cloud analysis reveals that newspapers were more concerned with individual activist figures, than with the specificities of the Summit's proposals or discussions (see Figure 7). For instance, *candidates*, *organisations*, and *politics* were amongst the terms the articles mentioned the most, whilst *agreement*, *education*, *electoral and transparency* (all of them topics discussed in the Summit) were barely mentioned.

First, different from the convenors' opinion, the analysis suggests that the Summit was not responsible for the initial media coverage of these topics, as they had been on the newspaper's radar since at least January 2010 (see Graph 25).

Table 13. News reports on "Access to information and media" included in the Summit's Citizens Agenda.

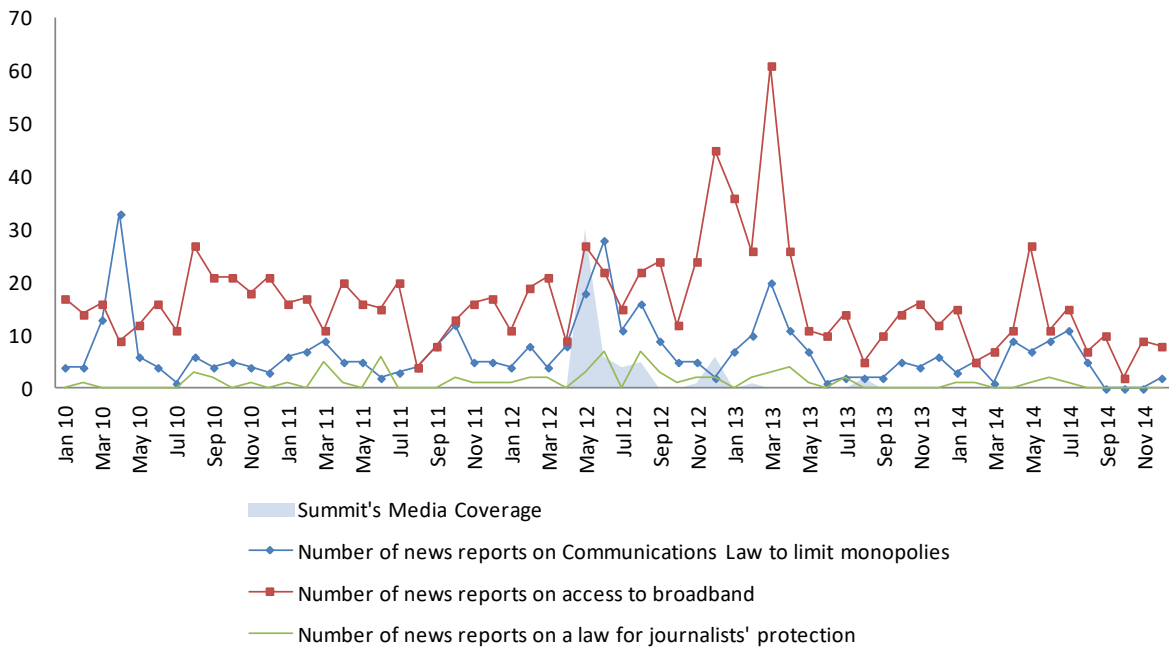
Topic	Search combinations in <i>Lexis Nexis</i>	Number of news reports 2010–2014
To design a legislative reform that limits monopolies in media and telecommunications, promotes pluralism with public, indigenous, social and communitarian media, transparency and quality of content in media.	1. Media and 2. Monopolio and 3. Comunicacion 4. Not Petroleo ³⁸⁵	Reforma: 186 El Norte: 88 El Universal: 66
	5. Ley de Medios (telecomunicaciones law) and 6. Comunicación. 7. Not monopolies 8. Not Argentina ³⁸⁶	Reforma: 26 El Norte: 22 El Universal: 16
To guarantee the universal access to broadband and the neutrality of the network, as well as a comprehensive policy of digital television that guarantees the access and re-distribution of the new digital dividend, allowing for the inclusion of new actors.	9. Banda ancha (broadband) and 10. Acceso (access) ³⁸⁷	Reforma: 485 Universal: 276 Norte: 233
To protect the right to information through effective measures guaranteeing media and journalists' security.	11. Proteccion reporteros or 12. Protección periodistas or 13. Proteger a reporteros and 14. Ley (Law)	Universal: 34 Reforma: 13 Norte: 6

³⁸⁵ The reason for adding this 'exclusionary term' obeys to the fact that the Energy reform (involving the then-previous monopoly over oil extraction by Mexico's state oil company) was also being discussed at that moment (2010–2014).

³⁸⁶ The search purposely exclude a) the 'monopolios' search term to avoid the duplication of results *vis-à-vis* the previous search and b) 'Argentina' as there were many news related to the Argentinian monopoly laws.

³⁸⁷ This case does not look for a 'law' as the legal regulation on the subject is related (if not included) in the Telecommunications law analysed for the previous case.

Graph 25. Evolution of the media coverage of the topics related to the Citizens' demands on media and telecommunications.



Source: Author's own elaboration with information from Lexis Nexis database.

Secondly, although data does show a peak in media coverage to the three topics around the date of the Summit (i.e. May and June 2012) (see Graph 25), a Pearson analysis demonstrates there is only a weak correlation between the media coverage of the Summit and that of the three topics (See Tables 14–16).

Table 14. Analysis of correlation between media coverage to the ‘communication law’ and that given to the ‘Summit.’

Correlations

		Total_Communications_Law	Total_Citizens_Summit
Total_Communications_Law	Pearson Correlation	1	.342**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.007
	N	60	60
Total_Citizens_Summit	Pearson Correlation	.342**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.007	
	N	60	60

** . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Table 15. Analysis of correlation between media coverage to the ‘universal broadband access’ topic and the one given to the ‘Summit.’

Correlations

		Total_Citizens_Summit	Total_Broadband
Total_Citizens_Summit	Pearson Correlation	1	.230
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.077
	N	60	60
Total_Broadband	Pearson Correlation	.230	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.077	
	N	60	60

Table 16. Analysis of correlation between media coverage to the ‘law for the protection of journalists’ topic and the one given to the ‘Summit’

Correlations

		Total_Citizens_Summit	Total_Law_Journalists
Total_Citizens_Summit	Pearson Correlation	1	.271*
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.036
	N	60	60
Total_Law_Journalists	Pearson Correlation	.271*	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.036	
	N	60	60

*. Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

A weak correlation that was in fact defined by multiple key socio-political developments occurring in parallel to the Summit. On the topic of a 'communications law against monopolies', an NVIVO text analysis showed that the Summit and the five convening CSOs were only referenced in 9 news reports and mentioned in less than 0.01% of the text of the 406 news-articles on the topic (see Table 17).³⁸⁸ This illustrates the limited input the Summit had on the media's agenda, especially when compared to the influence that other socio-political actors had. In this vein, parallel to the Summit, in May 2012 Mexico witnessed the rise of the "#YoSoy132" movement, a student' initiative also demanding the democratisation of the Mexican media. A movement that occupied nearly 1.0% of the text-space of the news articles published on the matter.

Similarly, on 'guaranteeing universal access to broadband' and the 'law for the protection of journalists', these topics were already part of the media's agenda months before their discussion in the Summit (see Graph 27). Regarding guaranteeing universal access to broadband, the Summit was mentioned just 40 times across the 995 news on the topic (see table 17), with Mexico's President and Congress being the topic's main definers of media discussions³⁸⁹. Equally, on the law for the protection of journalists, the Summit had null influence on its media reporting as it was not mentioned once in the 53 news reports on the topic. In this case, although Alejandro Martí and Observatorio Nacional Ciudadano were quoted a total of thirteen times, the news reports on the topic were better defined by government agencies as Senate was mentioned 30 times, Deputies 27, and different parliamentary commissions 85 times.

³⁸⁸ A search of the terms 'Morera', 'Martí', 'Kuri', 'SOS', 'Iluminemos', 'Ricaño', 'MUCD', 'Observatorio.'

³⁸⁹ News published between 2010 and 2014.

Table 17. CSOs presence in the news reports about 'right to access to broadband'

	Mentions 2010-2014	Mentions April-May 2012	Mentions Dec 12	Mentions March 2013
Javier Sicilia / Movimiento por la Paz	2	0	0	0
Isabel Miranda de Wallace / Alto al Secuestro	0	0	0	0
Alejandro Martí / Mexico SOS	0	0	0	0
Maria Elena Morera / Causa en Comun	6	0	6	0
First Citizens Summit	40	2	6	3
Eias Kuri /Iluminemos Mexico	1	0	0	0
Candidate(s)		41		
President		17	123	85
Congress		9	27	35
Senate			6	20

Overall, based on the analysis of 1,452+ news articles, it is possible to state that the Summit cannot claim to have positioned, or shaped the discussions of any of its demands on access to information and media in the newspapers' agenda.

The Summit and the media coverage of the public agenda on 'citizens' security.'

In this case, a quantitative analysis reveals that between January 2010 and November 2014 the three newspapers published a total of 1,124 news reports about the topics contained in the Summit's agenda for 'citizens' security' (see Annex 8 and Table 18):

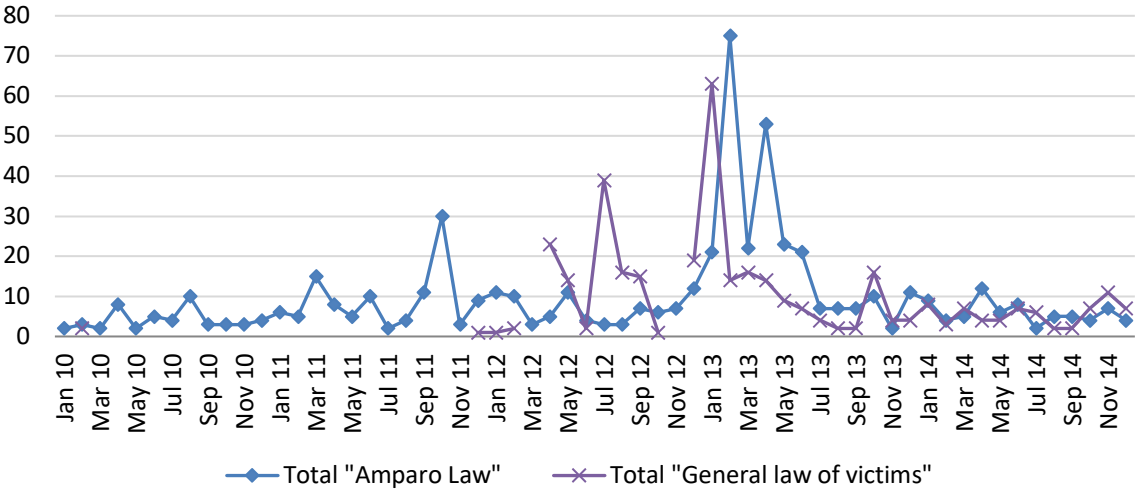
Table 18. News reports on the topics of 'citizens' security' included in the Summit's Citizens Agenda.

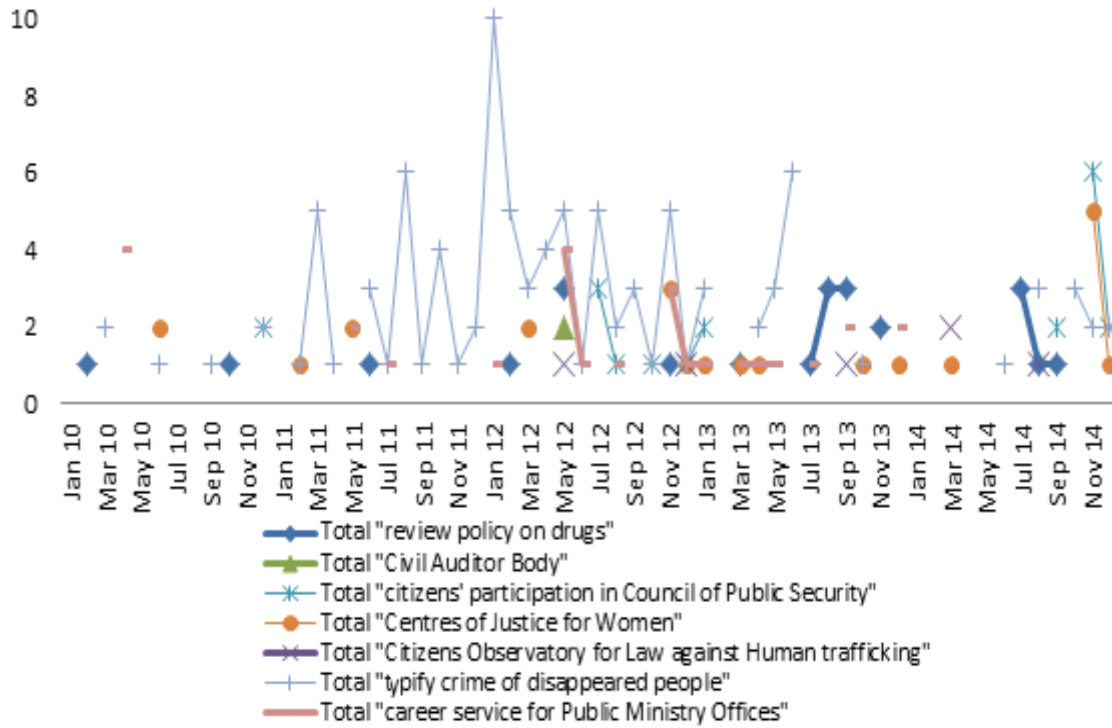
Topic	Search combinations in <i>Lexis Nexis</i>	Number of news reports 2010–2014
1.To generate a strategy so the provision of public security is administered by security personnel and organisations prepared for that function, creating a Civil Auditor Body .	1. Auditoría civil (Civil auditor) and 2. Seguridad pública (public security)	Norte: 1 Reforma: 1
2.To make an effective national policy of human rights, in accordance to the	3. Reforma (Reform) and	Reforma: 306 El Universal: 139

constitutional reform on the matter, including the mechanisms to guarantee its application: - Approving the reform to the Amparo Law	4. Ley de Amparo (Amparo Law)	El Norte: 124
3. To review the policy on drugs , due to the impact it has in organised criminality and public security.	5. Revisar (to revise) or 6. Revisión (review) and 7. Política de drogas (drugs policy)	Reforma: 16 Norte: 5 Universal: 2
4. Ensure citizens' permanent participation in the National Council of Public Security	8. Representantes Ciudadanos (citizens' representatives) and 9. Consejo Nacional de Seguridad Pública (National Council of Public Security)	Reforma: 9 Norte: 8 Universal: 3
Guarantee the adequate implementation of the Judicial Reform in the States and Federation: 5. Creation of Centres of Justice for Women that support the victims during the allegation and the entire process. 6. Implement a professional career service for Public Ministry offices	10. Centros de Justicia de Mujeres (Centres of Justice for Women) 11. Servicio Profesional de Carrera (professional career service) and 12. Ministerio Público (Public Ministry offices)	Reforma: 12 El Universal: 5 Norte: 6 Reforma: 14 Norte: 7 Universal: 6
7. To typify the crime of ' disappeared people '	13. Tipificar (typify) and 14. Desaparición (disappearance)	Reforma: 29 Norte: 51 Universal: 22
8. Creation of a National Citizens Observatory to ensure the implementation of the Law against Human trafficking.	15. Observatorio Nacional Ciudadano and 16. Trata de personas (human trafficking)	Reforma: 4 El Universal: 2
9. Ensure the adequate implementation of the Law of Victims and implement the secondary reforms. Immediate publication in the Diario Oficial de la Federación	17. Ley General de Víctimas (General Law of Victims)	Reforma: 154 Universal: 120 Norte: 84

Similar to the findings on access to information and media agenda, the Summit seemed not to have triggered the initial media coverage of seven of the nine topics part of its agenda on citizens security – as they were already being discussed in the newspapers before May 2012 (when the Summit firstly appeared in the media, see Annex 8). Nevertheless, the Summit did position the topics of ‘creation of a National Citizen Observatory to ensure the implementation of the Law against Human Trafficking’ and ‘creation of a Civil Auditor Body to review the strategy for the provision of public security’ in the media agenda. On the one hand, as illustrated in Graph 26 and Annexes 6 and 8, media coverage to both topics began the same the Summit started (i.e. 21st of May 2012). On the other hand, a semiotics analysis also shows that both the Summit and its convening CSOs were referenced a total of 26 times across the 8 newspapers articles on those two topics, with the term Summit (*Cumbre* in Spanish) being the signifier of the newspaper’s articles (see Table 19 and Figure 8).

Graph 26. Monthly media coverage of the public agenda on citizens' security topics (2010–2014)





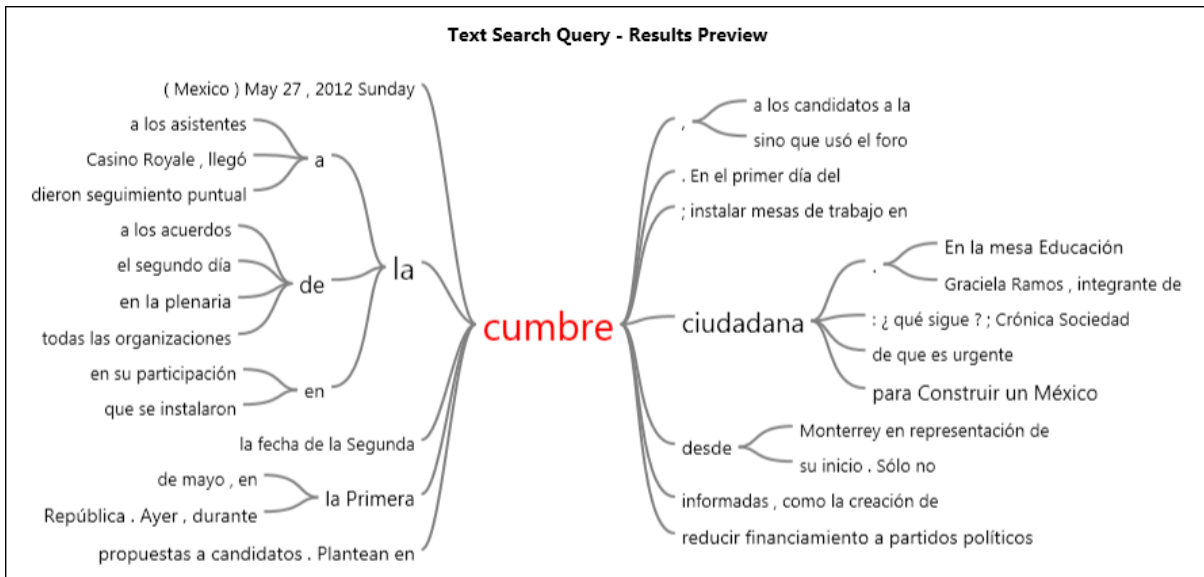
Source: Author's own elaboration with data from Lexis Nexis

Table 19. Influence of the Summit on the media coverage of the public agenda on citizens' security.

Name	References	Coverage
News Civil Auditor	6	0.27%
News Law of Victims	90	0.04%
News Public Ministry	13	0.06%
News National Observatory Human Trafficking	20	0.56%
News policy on drugs	14	0.07%
News Citizens' Representatives	16	0.13%
News typify the crime of disappearances	9	0.02%
News Amparo Law	20	0.01%

Source: Author's own elaboration with data from Lexis Nexis via NVIVO.

Figure 8. Word Tree analysis: Summit's influence on media coverage of 'the creation of a National Citizens Observatory in Human Trafficking' and 'civil auditor for the public security strategies' (2010–2014)



Source: Author's own elaboration with data from Lexis Nexis via NVIVO.

In addition to this, it is important to state that whilst the Summit only influenced the media coverage of these two topics, different expressions of civil society managed to define the media framing of three other topics:

- 1) The demand to typify the crime of disappeared people was positioned by *CADHAC* CSO (Citizens in Support of Human Rights A.C.) With nearly 60 mentions across the 100+ articles on the topic, CADHAC not only positioned the topic in *El Universal*, *El Reforma* and *El Norte* newspapers, it also labelled the problem and defined the potential political actions linked to it.³⁹⁰
- 2) Regarding ensuring the adequate implementation of the Law of Victims and implementing the secondary reforms, the first news-report on the topic (February 2010) was triggered by Isabel Miranda de Wallace (*Alto al Secuestro* CSO) and Alejandro Martí's (*Mexico SOS*) actions. What is more, although the First Citizens Summit was mentioned 47 times across the 358 news reports on the topic (Graph 26 and table 20), the peaks of media coverage referred more to the actions of Javier Sicilia (participant, not convenor of the Summit) than to the Summit itself.³⁹¹ As such, it can be argued that rather than improving the media

³⁹⁰ Compared to 3 mentions of *Ricaño*, 1 of *Morera*, 1 of *Marti*, 5 of *Observatorio Ciudadano* and 0 of *Cumbre Ciudadana* (Citizens' Summit).

³⁹¹ For instance, in 2012, when the topic reached its 2nd and 3rd highest levels of media coverage, neither the Summit nor its convening CSOs were quoted a single time, but Sicilia was 23 times in the 23 news reports

attention towards the topic, the Summit attempted to capitalise on the actions of other CSOs to position itself on the media agenda.

Table 20. CSOs influence in the media's reports on the promulgation of a "Law of Victims".

CSO	Mentions February 2010	Mentions April 2012	Mentions May 2012	Mentions July 2012	Mentions January 2013
Javier Sicilia / Movimiento por la Paz	0	23	10	22	58
Isabel Miranda de Wallace / Alto al Secuestro	2	0	6	0	16
Alejandro Martí / Mexico SOS	2	0	1	0	26
Maria Elena Morera / Causa en Comun	0	0	15	0	1
First Citizens Summit	0	0	36	0	0

- 3) On Approving the reform to the Amparo Law, the topic was already part of the media agenda years before the Summit. Whilst the Summit was only mentioned a total of five times across the 569 news articles on the topic, Morera and Causa en Común two times, Martí and Mexico SOS, eight times; and Iluminemos Mexico, three times, those CSOs that were not part of the Summit's original convening group influenced the media's agenda in a more noticeable way. This included Miranda de Wallace and her CSO Alto al Secuestro (with 21 mentions), and Javier Sicilia (with six mentions). Paradoxically, the political sphere seems to have been even more influential. On the one hand, the media coverage of Wallace activism rose as a result of her relevance as political candidate during that time.³⁹² On the other hand, in those months when the topic reached its highest media coverage (i.e. February and April 2013), the opinions of governmental institutions (like the Chamber of Deputies) and business groups (like the Mexican Employers Council-COPARMEX), dominated the media coverage of the topic (see Table 21).

of April and 22 times in the 39 notes from July. In January 2013, the 'Law of Victims' was reported in 63 news reports across the three newspapers, however, the *Summit* remained being 'media inconsequential' as the news did not mention it but focused on the opinions of Sicilia (58 mentions) and the personal comments of Alejandro Martí and Isabel Miranda de Wallace.

³⁹² In the early 2012 Miranda de Wallace began to run for office at one of Mexico City's districts Azuela, *Primera Cumbre Ciudadana Para Construir Un México Pacífico y Justo*, 14; Lara, "Effective Participation in Latin America: From Extralegal to Legal Mobilization. The Challenges Ahead."

Table 21. Main definers of media discussions on the "Reform to the Amparo Law" (01 Feb 2013–30 Apr 2013).

Socio Political Actor	Number of mentions
Deputies	165
Senators	50
Coparmex	10
CCE	37
Mexican Banking Association	10
Iluminemos Mexico	4
Mexico SOS	2
Alto al Secuestro	2
Causa en Comun	0
Observatorio Nacional Ciudadano	0

Source: Author's own elaboration with information from Lexis Nexis.

Summing up, the media coverage analysis here conducted illustrated how, despite its size (i.e. +100 CSOs involved), the Summit secured limited media influence, from the date of its conception in late 2011 to the date the last report about it was published. Access to information and media was the topic area of the Summit's agenda where it had the least influence. In fact, rather than creating or defining new social demands, the Summit worked on existing ones to attempt to – in the words of Maria Elena Morera – 're-attract attention to the topics and force government to give an answer to those matters.'³⁹³ The Summit did achieve better results in the topic area of citizens security, however, 78% of its demands in this area (i.e. 7 out of 9) were not new initiatives but proposals previously positioned in the media by the convening and other CSOs. Although the Summit did not achieve tangible results in multiple topics in the area of citizens security, it is important to state that other CSOs did so, particularly activist Javier Sicilia, in issues like typifying the crime of disappeared people, implementing the Law of Victims' and reforming the Amparo Law. This allows concluding that whilst the public agenda can influence the media agenda in Mexico, this does not occur in all

³⁹³ Garcia, 'Interview with Maria Elena Morera, President of Causa En Común CSO.,' pt. Minute: 4.13; Garcia, 'Interview to Edgar Baltazar, Former Manager of the Programme of Citizenry Accompaniment to Police in Causa en Comun,' pt. Minute: 5:41.

cases as, as Howlett stated, 'not everything the public (in this case being the Summit) knows and is talking about becomes part of the media content.'³⁹⁴

Building on these findings, and considering Jacobs and Townsley, Dunaway *et al*, and Walgrave *et al*'s arguments ensuring the media 'connects the individual with the state' and 'newspaper coverage precedes political attention', it is imperative to test to what extent the Summit's public agenda transcended the media coverage and became part of the political agenda (i.e. government policy). This is why, the following sub-chapter evaluates whether media served as a mechanism by which the Summit initiated political decision making and affected public policy.³⁹⁵ Considering that only a limited number of studies have developed such a connected study, the following sub-chapters would contribute to breaking with theoretical paradigms and assumptions on the relationship between public, media and government agendas.

5.4 Policy outcomes: analysing the Summit's media and policy achievements.

The previous section provided the basis to state that the Summit showed a limited, yet important, capacity to influence the media agenda and potentially shape the debate on certain public demands (i.e. the Citizens' Agenda). A condition that could serve to argue that the public sphere in Mexico acts as the communicative space where citizens (although CSOs leaders in this case) were able to participate in public debates (i.e. the Summit) and contribute to the formation of

³⁹⁴ Howlett in Soroka, "Policy Agenda—Setting Theory Revisited: A Critique of Howlett on Downs, Baumgartner and Jones, and Kingdon," 765.

³⁹⁵ See Jacobs and Townsley, *The Space of Opinion, Media Intellectuals and the Public sphere*, 254; Kingdon, *Agendas, Alternatives, and Public Policies*; Dunaway, Abrajano, and Branton, "Agenda Setting, Public Opinion, and the Issue of Immigration Reform," pt. 3; Walgrave, Soroka, and Nuytemans, "The Mass Media's Political Agenda Setting Power."; Knill and Tosun, *Public Policy: A New Introduction*, pt. 116.

public opinion.³⁹⁶ Whilst this evidence tends to suffice for media agenda-setting studies, it does not allow to make strong arguments about citizens and the public sphere's capacity to influence government decisions. For this reason, this sub-chapter intends to go beyond ordinary agenda-setting studies to analyse if the public sphere can transcend its communicative function to effectively act as the channel by which citizens can shape the policies of the state. In other words, it aims to become the linkage between those empirical findings on the generation of social demands (i.e. the Summit and its media coverage) and those ones about the formulation of public policies of which Kingdon talks about.³⁹⁷ In this vein, on May 13th, 2012, Maria Elena Morera declared:

CSOs are tired of 'being used by politicians as a marketing strategy. After this Summit, whoever becomes President needs to know there are some things that are irreducible for us, and that is what we are going to define; we don't want a setback and we have a clear plan to achieve what we want.'³⁹⁸

However, how effective was the Summit in terms of the number of its demands being transformed into legal reforms and public policies? According to the convenors, a total of 78% of the proposals were accepted by the four main Presidential candidates.³⁹⁹ In this vein, Josefina Vazquez Mota, from *PAN* subscribed 100% of them, Quadri, from *Nueva Alianza* 77%; and Lopez Obrador (*PRD*) 99% (see Graph 27). In contrast, Enrique Peña Nieto from *PRI*, the most popular candidate among the electorate, subscribed only 69% of them.⁴⁰⁰ With Enrique Peña Nieto being

³⁹⁶ 24 Horas, "Organizaciones Realizan Primera Cumbre Ciudadana"; FUNDECI, "Pronunciamiento Primer Cumbre Ciudadana"; Garcia, "Interview to Maria Elena Morera, President of Causa En Común CSO (4-Nov-2012)." McKee, *The Public sphere: An Introduction*, 4–8.

³⁹⁷ Kingdon, *Agendas, Alternatives and Public Policies*, 4.

³⁹⁸ Zermeño, "Ciudadanos: Campaña Paralela; Reportaje Elecciones y Sociedad Civil. Mientras Los Partidos y Sus Candidatos Están En Campaña, La Sociedad Civil Organizada Trabaja Para Fijarle Una Agenda Al Próximo Presidente de La República."

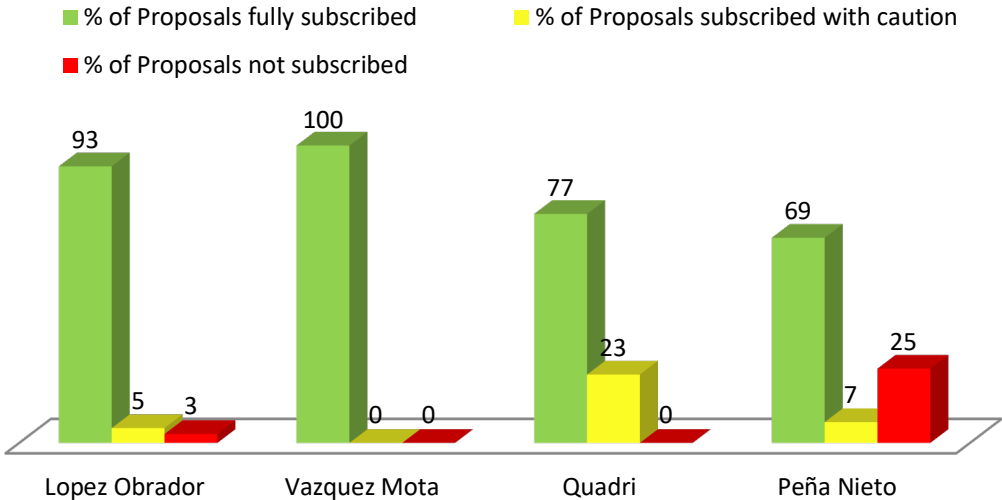
³⁹⁹ Cumbre Ciudadana, "Un 78% de Las Propuestas de La Primera Cumbre Ciudadana Fueron Aceptadas Por Candidatos y Partidos." (Mexico City, 2012), <http://www.ccilaguna.org.mx/documentos-publicos/comunicado-respuestas-candidatos-a-cumbre-ciudadana.pdf> (Accessed 22-12-2017).

⁴⁰⁰ CNN Mexico, "López Obrador Se Acerca a Peña Nieto En Las Preferencias, Revela Encuesta," *CNN Mexico*, June 12, 2012, <http://mexico.cnn.com/nacional/2012/06/12/lopez-obrador-se-coloca-a-cuatro->

the candidate who was elected President (2012–2018) this thesis focuses on his actions to enact or discard the Summit’s demands on ‘citizens’ security’ and ‘access to information and media.’

Graph 27. Summit’s proposals subscribed by each presidential candidate in 2012.

Citizens' proposals subscribed by each presidential candidate



Source: Author’s own elaboration with information from Azuela, *Primera Cumbre Ciudadana Para Construir Un México Pacífico y Justo*.

In June 2012, Candidate Enrique Pena Nieto subscribed 69% of the Summit’s proposals, however, after having been elected President, his position noticeably changed. Just a few days after taking office, President Pena Nieto promoted the installation of the so called ‘Pact for Mexico’, a cross-party negotiation that, he argued, would help to steer an agenda of structural reforms through Congress. In this Pact, Peña Nieto decided to focus on even fewer than 69% of the Summit’s demands:

puntos-de-pena-nieto-revela-encuesta (Accessed 22-12-2017); Cumbre Ciudadana, “Un 78% de Las Propuestas de La Primera Cumbre Ciudadana Fueron Aceptadas Por Candidatos y Partidos.”

Table 22. Comparison between Summit's demands, its influence on the media agenda, Peña Nieto's commitments as Presidential candidate and President of Mexico.⁴⁰¹

Summit's demands on "access to information and media".	Summit's influence on the media agenda.	Enrique Peña Nieto's position on the topic (as Presidential candidate in June 2012).	Enrique Peña Nieto's proposals in the 'Pact for Mexico' (as elected President in Dec 2012)
To design a legislative reform that limits monopolies in media and telecommunications, promotes pluralism with public, indigenous, social and communitarian media, transparency and quality of content in media.	Limited input	Subscribed: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Committed to promote competition in telecommunications, strengthening public television and the provision of new concessions to new TV chains. 2. Will promote a constitutional reform to create a citizens and autonomous organism that supervises the advertising contracts between government and media, guaranteeing journalistic freedom and citizens' access to information. 	To strengthen the Federal Commission on Competency in order to provide it with tools and mechanisms to determine and sanction dominant positions (monopolies) in any sector of the Mexican economy.
To guarantee the universal access to broadband and the neutrality of the network, as well as a comprehensive policy of digital television that guarantees the access and re-distribution of the new digital dividend, allowing for the inclusion of new actors.	Limited input, with government being main definer.	Subscribed: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 3. Will promote the "National Plan for Broadband" with the objective to achieve universal access to broadband. 4. Will offer safe access points to Wi-Fi, using public buildings as points of emission. 5. Through the "Crusade for Digital Alphabetization", to accelerate the internet connectivity for public schools, in at least 40,000 full time schools. 6. To provide free laptops to all the students of 5th and 6th grade of primary school. 7. Installation of community digital training and education centres in all the states of Mexico, guaranteeing the access to IT to new sectors of the population. 8. Government will allow for an ordered transition to digital television. 	To guarantee an equitable access to world class telecommunications, hence: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a) To reform the Constitution and guarantee the right to access internet b) To guarantee the provision of internet in public buildings To incentivise competition in radio and television, guaranteeing the implementation of world-class practices.
To protect the right to information, guaranteeing media and journalists' security.	Limited input, with government being main definer.	Unanswered.	To strengthen the mechanisms of protection of human rights and journalists. Creation of a special instance where authorities and OCS work together to determine the creation of such mechanisms.

⁴⁰¹ This analysis is based on information available from official documents from Causa en Comun, the *Summit* and Mexico's government. For discussion see: Fundación en Movimiento; President Enrique Peña Nieto et al., "Pacto Por Mexico" (Mexico City, 2012), <http://pactopormexico.org/PACTO-POR-MEXICO-25.pdf> (accessed 22-12-2017).

Public demands on “citizens security” included in the Summit’s Citizens Agenda	Summit’s influence on the media agenda.	Enrique Peña Nieto’s position on the topic (as Presidential candidate in June 2012).	Enrique Peña Nieto’s proposals in the ‘Pact for Mexico’ (as elected President in Dec 2012)
<p>To generate a strategy so the provision of public security is administered by security personnel and organisations prepared for that function, creating a Civil Auditor Body for this matter.</p>	<p>Noticeable input, positioning and defining the topic.</p>	<p>Subscribed</p> <p>9. To work for a more democratic public security, based on prevention, community participation, re-design and the professionalisation of police and justice models.</p> <p>10. To create a ‘National Strategy to Reduce Violence’ connecting the three powers and orders of government, organised civil society, media and political parties.</p> <p>11. Create a national policy of crime prevention, re-structure and professionalise the country’s police corporations, modernise and improve the justice system.</p> <p>12. Creation of the National Audit System</p>	<p>Creation of a new “Gendarmería Nacional”.</p>
<p>To make an effective national policy of human rights, in accordance to the constitutional reform on the matter, including the mechanisms to guarantee its application:</p> <p>a) Approving the reform to the Amparo Law</p>	<p>Limited input, but positioned and defined by other OCS initiatives.</p>	<p>Subscribed</p> <p>13. To promote the required reforms to the secondary laws to augment the efficiency of the recent reform on human rights.</p> <p>14. Promote the constitutional and legal reforms to ensure respect to human rights in the actions of the military and police forces across the country.</p> <p>15. To implement the reform on Oral Trials (Accusatory System) in all the States in Mexico.</p>	<p>To reform the “Amparo Law” to make it compatible with the recent constitutional reforms.</p>

To review the policy on drugs, due to the impact it has on organised criminality and public security.	Limited input.	Subscribed: 16. Against the de-penalisation of drugs.	Government will focus on those municipalities experiencing the highest levels of violence in the country. 1) Institutionalisation of social security programmes to tackle poverty, full time schools, young employability programmes, and the recovery of public spaces.
Ensure citizens' permanent participation in the National Council of Public Security	Limited input.	Unanswered	Not found
Guarantee the adequate implementation of the Judicial Reform in the States and Federation a) Creation of Centres of Justice for Women that support the victims during the allegation and the entire process. b) Implement a professional career service for Public Ministry offices	Limited input, with government being main definer.	Unanswered	Not found
To typify the crime of "disappeared people"	Limited input.	Unanswered	Not found
Creation of a National Citizens Observatory to ensure the implementation of the Law against Human trafficking.	Noticeable input, positioning and defining the topic.	Unanswered	Not found
Ensure the adequate implementation of the Law of Victims and implement the secondary reforms a) Immediate publication in the Diario Oficial de la Federación	Limited input, but positioned and defined by other OCS initiatives.	Unanswered	To protect human rights as a State Policy: a) Law for the reparation of damage (repair the violation of human rights). Article 1 of the Constitution. b) Law for the Attention of Victims (now known as the "General Law of Victims"). Strengthen the mechanisms for the protection of human rights defenders and journalists, creating a special instance involving the participation of authorities and civil society.

Source: Azuela, Primera Cumbre Ciudadana Para Construir Un México Pacífico y Justo, 95; Pacto por México, "Los 5 Acuerdos" (Mexico City, 2012), <http://pactopormexico.org/quienes/> (Accessed 22-12-2017).

Notwithstanding President Peña Nieto's limited action towards the complete Summit's agenda, the convenors of the Summit argued they influenced the government's agenda as some of its

demands ended up being included in the government's 'Pact for Mexico.'⁴⁰² Although this statement cannot be refuted, a thorough analysis highlights the fact that some of the proposals included in President Peña Nieto's Pact for Mexico (deemed as citizen victories by Maria Elena Morera) were already part of the agenda of previous administrations. Three of these initiatives were:

- ❖ The implementation of a Law of Victims ('General Law of Victims').
- ❖ To protect the right to information through effective measures guaranteeing media and journalists' security ('Law for the Protection of Human Rights Defenders and Journalists').
- ❖ A National Citizens Observatory to ensure the implementation of the Law against human trafficking.

5.4.1 The implementation of a Law of Victims.

Although the enactment of the General Law of Victims is considered to be one of the 'Summit's major victories', an archival research of media accounts and legislative tracking reveal that policy discussions on this topic are traceable to at least April 2010.⁴⁰³ In fact, at least three different initiatives were proposed, analysed and voted by Congress before the Summit included it on its agenda.

First, on the 22nd of April 2010, Deputies Felipe Gonzalez, Jaime Rafael Diaz and Ramon Galindo (both from PAN), presented the *Federal Law of Rights of Victims of Crime* legislative proposal. Less than a year later (2011), Javier Sicilia brought back the public and political discussions on the need for a 'law for victims.'⁴⁰⁴ In this vein, in July 2011, during the 'Chapultepec dialogues' Sicilia organised with then President Felipe Calderon (2006–2012), Sicilia publicly 'demanded the creation of law for the attention of victims:'

⁴⁰² Azuela, *Primera Cumbre Ciudadana Para Construir Un México Pacífico y Justo*.

⁴⁰³ For discussion see Azuela, "Una Historia Que Vale La Pena Contar"; Azuela, *Primera Cumbre Ciudadana Para Construir Un México Pacífico y Justo*.

⁴⁰⁴ Blanca Campos, "Sicilia Demanda Detener Ley de Seguridad Nacional," *Sexenio*, February 28, 2011, <http://www.sexenio.com.mx/articulo.php?id=6963> (Accessed 22–12–2017); CNN Mexico, "Javier Sicilia Exige Una Ley de Víctimas En La Cámara de Diputados," *CNN Mexico*, December 14, 2011, <http://mexico.cnn.com/nacional/2011/12/14/javier-sicilia-exige-una-ley-de-victimas-en-la-camara-de-diputados> (Accessed 22–12–2017).

The country cannot wait, victims cannot wait; pain and injustice is affecting them. We need to legislate now,' he stated.⁴⁰⁵

Sicilia's demand and the citizen support it raised, 'pushed Senate to commit to enact a Law of Victims', to the extent that on the 14th of December 2011 (months before the Summit took place), Deputy Teresa del Carmen (*PRD*) presented a legislative initiative for a 'General Law of Protection and Integral Reparation to Victims of Human Rights Violations Generated by Violence.'⁴⁰⁶ The initiative, however, did not pass either, due to the opposition from PAN and PRI. After this political impasse, Sicilia was the only activist directly involved in the production of a third legislative initiative.⁴⁰⁷ With the support of other CSOs, in January 2012 Sicilia presented the initiative for the 'General Law of Victims' to Senate, a proposal that served as the basis for that one presented by a coalition of Senators from different political parties on the 17th of April 2012. On the 25th of April 2012 (one month before the Summit) such a proposal was unanimously approved by the upper chamber (Senate) to then been approved by the lower Chamber (Deputies) on the 30th of April 2012. Nevertheless, this legislatively approved initiative did not become law, as it was blocked by then President Calderon, arguing it was a 'flawed' proposal (a condition latterly acknowledged by Congress itself).⁴⁰⁸

Although the Summit did include this proposal on its list of demands and, by doing so, contributed to its media coverage, it is undeniable that it was Sicilia who continue pushing it

⁴⁰⁵ Campos, "Sicilia Demanda Detener Ley de Seguridad Nacional"; CNN Mexico, "Javier Sicilia Exige Una Ley de Víctimas En La Cámara de Diputados."

⁴⁰⁶ Teresa del Carmen Inchaustegui, "Que Expide La Ley General de Protección y Reparación Integral a Víctimas de Violaciones a Derechos Humanos Generadas Por La Violencia, a Cargo de La Diputada Teresa Del Carmen Inchaustegui Romero Del Grupo Parlamentario Del PRD." (2011), http://sil.gobernacion.gob.mx/Archivos/Documentos/2012/02/asun_2856451_20120229_1328815297.pdf (Accessed 22-12-2017); Andrea Becerril, "Avanza En El Senado El Proyecto de Ley de Atención a Víctimas Del Delito," *La Jornada*, March 25, 2012, <http://www.jornada.unam.mx/2012/03/25/politica/018n2pol> (Accessed 22-12-2017).

⁴⁰⁷ Becerril, "Avanza En El Senado El Proyecto de Ley de Atención a Víctimas Del Delito."

⁴⁰⁸ Redacción AN, "La Ley de Víctimas, Cronología de Una Reforma En La Congeladora," *Aristegui Noticias*, July 9, 2012, <http://aristeginoticias.com/0907/mexico/la-ley-de-victimas-cronologia-de-una-reforma-en-la-congeladora/> (Accessed 22-12-2017).

forward. For instance, on the 28th of May 2012, Sicilia – not Morera or the Summit – achieved President Peña Nieto’s commitment towards the Bill.⁴⁰⁹ When the law was enacted on the 9th of January 2013, Sicilia was the only social activist to whom politicians referred to in their speeches.⁴¹⁰ What is more, in all the official documents related to the legislative process behind this law neither Morera nor the Summit are directly mentioned, but Senators and Deputies explicitly acknowledged that the different initiatives for a Law of Victims were directly the result of ‘the work of the social movement lead by Javier Sicilia’ and ‘of an ethical commitment that the Senate had with civil society organisations, particularly with poet Sicilia.’⁴¹¹

Overall, although this illustrates that the Summit did not position the ‘General Law of Victims’ in the media or political agendas, it does show that civil society, organised in a movement like Sicilia’s one, has the capacity to do so.

5.4.2 Law for the Protection of Human Rights Defenders and Journalists.

In this case, government and CSOs’ records demonstrate that it was the ‘Espacio’ consortium of CSOs (not including any of the convenors of the Summit), which has positioned the topic on the government agenda since 2010.⁴¹² According to the 22 Senators part of the Commission of Foreign Relations and Non-Governmental Organisations of the LXI Legislature organisations like *CENCOS*,

⁴⁰⁹ Presidencia de la República, “Diversas Intervenciones Durante La Publicación de La Ley General de Víctimas” (Mexico City: Presidencia de la República, 2013), <http://www.gob.mx/presidencia/prensa/diversas-intervenciones-durante-la-publicacion-de-la-ley-general-de-victimas> (Accessed 22-12-2017).

⁴¹⁰ PRD, “Discurso Ofrecido Por La Senadora Angélica de La Peña Durante La Publicación de La Ley General de Víctimas.” (Mexico City, 2013), <http://prd.senado.gob.mx/wp/?p=9817> (Accessed 22-12-2017).

⁴¹¹ Camara de Diputados, “DECRETO Por El Que Se Expide La Ley General de Víctimas.” (2013), 1,12, http://www.diputados.gob.mx/sedia/biblio/prog_leg/018_DOF_09ene13.pdf (Accessed 22-12-2017).

⁴¹² For a complete list of the organisations involved, see Peace Brigades International, “La Implementación de La Ley de Protección Para Personas Defensoras de Derechos Humanos y Periodistas” (Mexico City, 2012), http://www.peacebrigades.org/fileadmin/user_files/projects/mexico/files/Mechanism/1403BriefingMecanismoPBI.pdf (Accessed 22-12-2017). Rogelio Hernandez, “La Sonrisa Del Representante de La ONU Para El Espacio OSC,” *La Jornada*, August 3, 2015, <http://lajornadasanluis.com.mx/opinion/la-sonrisa-del-representante-de-la-onu-para-el-espacio-osc/> (accessed 22-12-2017).

Peace Brigades International, Centro de Derechos Humanos Miguel Agustín Pro Juárez and Centro de Derechos Humanos de la Montaña Tlachinollan (all part of *Espacio consortium*) who signalled ‘the lack of mechanisms of protection of human rights defenders’ and the ‘silent effect generated by the incapacity of journalists to publish information about violence, disappearances and murders’ back in 2010⁴¹³ Since then and until March 2012, Senators Ruben Camarillo, Martha Leticia Sosa and many others, sustained over twenty meetings with Espacio, but none with the Summit.⁴¹⁴ More importantly, Senators themselves explicitly recognised that the Law for the Protection of Human Rights Defenders and Journalists enacted in June 2012 was ‘based on Espacio’s proposal for the integration of mechanisms for protection of Human Rights Defenders and Journalists presented in 2010.’⁴¹⁵

⁴¹³ Comisión de Relaciones Exteriores Organizaciones No Gubernamentales, “Proceso Participativo Para La Elaboración de La Iniciativa de Protección a Personas Defensoras de Derechos Humanos y Periodistas” (Mexico City, 2012), 8, 9, http://sil.gobernacion.gob.mx/Archivos/Documentos/2012/07/asun_2891153_20120711_1342021022.pdf (Accessed 22-12-2017); Secretaría de Gobernación, “Ley Para La Protección de Personas Defensoras de Derechos Humanos y Periodistas” (Mexico City, 2012), https://www.google.co.uk/url?sa=t&rct=j&q=&esrc=s&source=web&cd=1&ved=0ahUKewjooO2C_Z7JAhWKWBoKHQwzAOsQFggiMAA&url=http%3A%2F%2Fwww.peacebrigades.org%2Ffileadmin%2Fuser_files%2Fprojects%2Fmexico%2Ffiles%2FMechanism%2F1206Presentacion-Ley-Defensores-y-Peri.

⁴¹⁴ Please refer to Comisión de Relaciones Exteriores Organizaciones No Gubernamentales, “Proceso Participativo Para La Elaboración de La Iniciativa de Protección a Personas Defensoras de Derechos Humanos y Periodistas,” 25, 50; Peace Brigades, “Iniciativa Ley Para La Protección de Persona Defensoras de Derechos Humanos y Periodistas” (Mexico City: Peace Brigades, 2012), http://www.peacebrigades.org/fileadmin/user_files/projects/mexico/files/Mechanism/1203FichaTecnica_ES.pdf (Accessed 22-12-2017); Espacio OSC, “Propuesta de Integración Para El Mecanismo de Protección de Defensores y Defensoras de Derechos Humanos y Periodistas” (Mexico City: PBI Mexico, 2010), http://www.pbi-mexico.org/fileadmin/user_files/projects/mexico/files/Mechanism/1010PropuestaMecanismo.pdf (Accessed 22-12-2017); Cámara de Diputados, “DECRETO Por El Que Se Expide La Ley Para La Protección de Personas Defensoras de Derechos Humanos y Periodistas.” (2012), http://www.diputados.gob.mx/LeyesBiblio/proceso/lxi/257_DOF_25jun12.pdf (Accessed 22-12-2017).

⁴¹⁵ To compare Orozco’s proposal with the law enacted, please refer to Comisión de Relaciones Exteriores Organizaciones No Gubernamentales, “Proceso Participativo Para La Elaboración de La Iniciativa de Protección a Personas Defensoras de Derechos Humanos y Periodistas,” 25, 50; Peace Brigades, “Iniciativa Ley Para La Protección de Persona Defensoras de Derechos Humanos y Periodistas”; Espacio OSC, “Propuesta de Integración Para El Mecanismo de Protección de Defensores y Defensoras de Derechos Humanos y Periodistas”; Cámara de Diputados, DECRETO por el que se expide la Ley para la Protección de Personas Defensoras de Derechos Humanos y Periodistas.

5.4.3 A National Citizens Observatory to ensure the implementation of the Law against human trafficking.

Despite being one of the few topics that the Summit effectively positioned in the media agenda, it was not the Summit who achieved substantial results in policy-making on the matter, but other CSOs that were not part of the Summit. In this vein, legislative tracking exhibits that the socio-political actor that initiated the discussions and continues monitoring the legislative processes surrounding this law is Rosi Orozco, President of *Unidos Contra la Trata* CSO and former Federal Deputy (2009 to 2012). It was due to her political activism from within Congress that the Chamber of Deputies institutionalised its Legislative Commission to Fight Human Trafficking in 2010. Acting as the Commission's president, Deputy Orozco proposed the initiative for the *General Law to Prevent, Sanction and Eradicate the Crimes in the area of Human Trafficking and for the protection and assistance to the Victims of these Crimes* in August 2011, and achieved its enactment in June 2012.⁴¹⁶

5.5. Main findings on the First Citizen Summit.

The analysis of a) the structure and actions of the First Citizen Summit to Build a Peaceful and Fair Mexico and its convenors, b) their coverage in printed media and c) government responses to

⁴¹⁶ Congreso de la Union, "Ley General Para Prevenir, Sancionar y Erradicar Los Delitos En Materia de Trata de Personas." (2014), <http://documents.mx/documents/ley-general-para-prevenir-sancionar-y-erradicar-los-delitos-en-materia-de-trata-de-personas.html> (Accessed 22-12-2017); Secretaría de Gobernación, "Ley General Para Prevenir, Sancionar y Erradicar Los Delitos En Materia de Trata de Personas y Para La Protección y Asistencia de Víctimas de Éstos." (Mexico City, 2015), <http://documents.mx/documents/1-ley-general-para-prevenir-sancionar-y-erradicar-los-delitos-en-materia-de-trata-de-personas-y-para-la-proteccion-y-asistencia-a-las-victimas-de-estos.html> (Accessed 22-12-2017); Rosi Orozco, "Pide Rosi Orozco Al Senado Aprobar Lo Antes Posible La Nueva Ley Contra La Trata de Persona" (Mexico City: Rosi Orozco, 2012), <http://rosiorozco.com/pide-rosi-orozco-al-senado-aprobar-lo-antes-posible-la-nueva-ley-contra-la-trata-de-personas/> (Accessed 22-12-2017); Rosi Orozco, "ONGs Piden Comisión Para La Trata de Personas" (Mexico City: Rosi Orozco, 2012), <http://rosiorozco.com/ongs-piden-comision-para-la-trata-de-personas/> (Accessed 22-12-2017).

the Summit's demands allow this thesis to state that an Organised Civil Society has been capable of influencing the public, media and government agendas in Mexico, at least since 2010. However, this chapter has also revealed that civil society's involvement and influence in policy-making is not as open, expeditious or straightforward as Mexican *politicians* intend to portray, but neither always as obscured, fallacious or unachievable as some *political analysts* declare.⁴¹⁷ In this vein, the First Citizen Summit to Build a Peaceful and Fair Mexico represents a clear example of the most recognisable, although not most common, form of OCS in Mexico. With Mexico City being considered an exemplar metropolis in terms of policies that encourage an engaged citizenry and progressive inclusive legislation, even a 'luxury gateway from the country's DTOs, kidnappings and killings', it provided a public sphere similar to the one envisaged by Dahlgren, Castells and Habermas (see Chapter 3).⁴¹⁸ It not only offered a geographical space where political ideas emanated from the public could be addressed to the government decision makers. Free of radical (in)security threats, it also permitted the free circulation of information and public deliberation. In other words, the Summit was surrounded by, and guaranteed (as Cohen would have said) the ideal speech situation for all those who participated in it. Under these conditions the Summit had a good potential to serve and enhance the functioning of the public sphere as the connector between the state and the needs of society, just as Nitoiu and Hall *et al* argued.

⁴¹⁷ See for instance Kliksberg's work and the opinion of the current Ministry of the Interior in Bernardo Kliksberg, "Diez Falacias Sobre Los Problemas Sociales de América Latina.," *Revista de La Facultad de Ciencias Económicas* V, no. 18 (n.d.), <http://sisbib.unmsm.edu.pe/bibvirtualdata/publicaciones/economia/18/a02.pdf> (Accessed 22-12-2017); Ernesto Aroche, "¿Y Las Autoridades Locales? Cerradas a Dialogar Con La Sociedad Civil: 2ª Cumbre Ciudadana," *Animal Político*, June 3, 2014, <http://www.animalpolitico.com/2014/06/y-las-autoridades-locales-cerradas-dialogar-con-la-sociedad-civil-2a-cumbre-ciudadana/> (Accessed 22-12-2017).

⁴¹⁸ Luisita Lopez, "My Mexico City Is Everyone's Now," *New York Times*, December 28, 2016, https://www.nytimes.com/2016/12/28/travel/mexico-city-culture-childhood-new-awakening.html?_r=0 (accessed 22-12-2017); Adam Ludwing, "A New Lab To Reinvent Mexico City," *Forbes*, November 10, 2013, <https://www.forbes.com/sites/teconomy/2013/11/10/a-new-lab-to-reinvent-mexico-city/> (accessed 22-12-2017); GOOD, "GOOD 2014 Good City Index" (New York, 2014), <https://www.good.is/guides/good-cities-index-2014> (accessed 22-12-2017).

Nevertheless, envisaged, designed, and fully coordinated by established CSOs, the Summit proved Alfonso Leon's point that 'Mexican CSOs work as communications nodes originated in private interests aiming to transcend in the public space.'⁴¹⁹ Being the domain of elites, quite remote from the life rhythms of ordinary citizens, the Summit did validate Boggs, Temple and Bua's works, as it showed that the ruling of Mexico could be achieved without input from the majority: the usual suspects were dominating every socio-political interaction in Mexico. In this vein, the main organisers of the Summit were all directors of established and government-sanctioned CSOs which, notwithstanding their intentions for inclusiveness and representativeness, ended by inadvertently perpetuating the inevitability of elites which Boggs talks about. For instance, sworn in as President of Causa en Comun, Maria Elena Morera promised to work to open more spaces for citizen participation and public deliberation.⁴²⁰ However, in a country where 68% of Mexicans belong to the low-income stratum, and where citizens' involvement in non-electoral forms of political activism is partly determined by citizens' income, this ended being an unachievable goal, even during the Summit's 'mega event of civil society' (as defined by Morera herself).

Being under the coordination of the usual suspects – the educated and wealthy members of society, related to the country's economic elite –, the Summit also ended by ratifying the works of contemporary analysts like Dahlgren or Boggs, as the Summit inadvertently gave place to displace the role of the public by private forces. In this vein, notwithstanding the existence of over 35,000 CSOs in Mexico, the Summit involved just over 150, most of them registered in Mexico's main metropolis: Mexico City. Whilst those CSOs based in Mexico City were capable of being involved in over 41% of the Summit, those from the periphery – and perhaps with different and more pressing social demands – ended up participating in just 14% of its process.⁴²¹With better access to political

⁴¹⁹ Leon, "La Seguridad Publica y Las Organizaciones Civiles En México," 106.

⁴²⁰ Quezada, "Nace En México 'Causa En Común' Hacia Un Cambio Social Profundo."

⁴²¹ Azuela, *Primera Cumbre Ciudadana Para Construir Un México Pacífico y Justo*, 15.

participation schemes and closer to the main corridors of political power, Causa en Comun and the other convening CSOs organised a Summit that, notwithstanding its undeniable importance as one of the first events unifying dispersed social activism efforts, ended being a partial and – more importantly – a top–down representation of citizen political participation.

More importantly, the Summit’s agenda, portrayed as the *Agenda of the Mexican civil society for the future President of Mexico*, was discussed and approved by only 168 CSOs, displacing the importance of the public and supporting both Ai Camps and Reyes’ views that in Mexico key political players define the country’s economic and political agendas. By assuming that their vision, realities and demands were shared by the rest of the population, even by those missing CSOs from those unrepresented states, the convening and participant CSOs also confirmed Calhoun’s studies of CSOs and the public sphere: ‘many CSOs take on what they regard as public purposes but remain *in groups* of people knit together by personal relationships.’⁴²² With such a limited number of participants, and due to the convening CSOs’ relation with government (more collaborative than radically critical), the Summit risked becoming a detrimental democratic practice, favouring the development of what Temple describes as ‘simulacrums of political engagement’.⁴²³ Therefore, it can be argued that contrary to its alleged objective, the Summit, like other forms of OCS, did fall into the trap of the ‘inevitability of elites’ of which Risse talks about.⁴²⁴ Seen as a top–down and elite–designed initiative, the Summit also contributed to the decline in citizens’ trust in CSOs and their increasing demand for more representative and politically radical forms of OCS (e.g. the autodefensas case).

It would be incorrect, however, to completely blame the convening CSOs for the Summit’s partial representation of the national and inter–class needs and interests. As in the U.K., in Mexico, CSOs are not responsible for what Flinders and Wood call the ‘societal depoliticization’, a condition that

⁴²² Calhoun, “Civil Society and the Public Sphere,” 123.

⁴²³ Temple, “Civic and Audience Empowerment: The Role of Citizen Journalism.”

⁴²⁴ Risse, *A Community of Europeans? Transnational Identities and Public spheres*.

preceded the Summit and which, paradoxically, has been increasing since Mexico's electoral democratisation in 2000.⁴²⁵ Although citizens are becoming more interested in political matters, levels of participation in non-electoral forms of political activism continue to be quite low (see chapter 4). Some of the reasons are the lack of incentives to do it, the perceived low effectiveness of CSOs and the absence of resources (e.g. financial resources, time constraints, etc.). As noticed in Chapter 4, financial constraints are an important limitation to the survival of CSOS across the country. With only 26% of the CSOs in Mexico having the financial means to sustain their current activities, CSOs' life expectancy is of just 2 years. A condition that, Flinders would argue, has pushed the smaller and more critical CSOs to either cease operating or become more collaborative with the State, losing their distinctive qualities and potentially becoming an unintended delivery arm of the State.⁴²⁶

The media coverage analyses conducted in this chapter also revealed that the lack of financial and human resources for media management is another important constraint to the development of an effective OCS and public sphere in Mexico. For example, printed media attention to CSOs' actions (including those from the Summit's convenors) has been declining since 2010. Even in those cases in which the Summit achieved a noticeable media presence, the news reports about its proposals and demands were more, or better, defined by government actors. Therefore, it seems that Alvarez Icaza is right when stating that as long as CSOs lack of specialists in civil communications, civil society's demands and proposals will not be adequately attended.⁴²⁷

The Summit, thus, partially achieved its organisational objectives: 'to forge a robust, representative and mobilised civil society capable of mobilising actors with diagnostics and

⁴²⁵ Flinders and Wood, "Depoliticisation, Governance and the State."

⁴²⁶ Matthew Flinders, "The Future of the State," *The Political Quarterly* 79, no. 1 (2008): 29.

⁴²⁷ Emilio Alvarez, "Medios y Sociedad Civil: Una Alianza Para El Control Político," *Razón y Palabra* 18 (2000), <http://www.razonypalabra.org.mx/anteriores/n18/18ealvarez.html> (Accessed 22-12-2017).

proposals.⁴²⁸ Although it did offer a public space where civil society representatives identified common problems, discussed contrasting alternatives and demands, and presented clear proposals for the political realm, it failed to mobilise civil society across the country and produce a representative national civil society Summit. More importantly, it did fail to secure important policy gains. As Bovens correctly points out:

‘Policies [...] decrees and decisions are often made in committees and cross a number of desks before they are implemented,’ even discussed, this researcher would add.⁴²⁹

In this vein, this chapter has revealed that far from being ‘Summit citizens’ victories’, the policies enacted were the result of the actions from other less publicly known, yet politically influential – and elite defined – CSOs or OCS’ initiatives (e.g. the Law of Victims coordinated by Javier Sicilia). What is more, Maria Elena Morera has recently stated that ‘once they signed the Pact for Mexico, political actors almost completely abandoned dialogue and interlocution with civil society and (many of the answers to the Summit’s) proposals ended being diluted in legislative negotiations or ended becoming petty regulations.’⁴³⁰ This is why, to regard the First Citizen Summit to Build a Peaceful and Fair Mexico, a two day event, as the creator, promoter or trigger of policy changes (as its convenors have attempted to do), would be overstating its importance.

Through this and other findings, this chapter has broken with existing paradigms on the normative wheels of democracy, assuming that media effects on public agenda are followed by

⁴²⁸ Redacción Aristegui Noticias, “Un Lenguaje Común Para Alcanzar La Democracia: Woldenberg y Sicilia,” *Aristegui Noticias*, May 22, 2012, <http://aristeguinoticias.com/2205/mexico/un-lenguaje-comun-para-alcanzar-la-democracia-woldenberg-y-sicilia/> (accessed 22-12-2017).

⁴²⁹ M Bovens, “Daring to Be a Daniel: The Pathology of Politicised Accountability in a Monitor Democracy.,” *Administration & Society* 43, no. 5 (2007): 595–619.

⁴³⁰ Ernesto Aroche, “Puebla, Entre Las Entidades Más Cerradas Al Diálogo Con Las OSCs,” *La Dobe*, June 3, 2014, <http://ladobe.com.mx/2014/06/puebla-entre-las-entidades-mas-cerradas-al-dialogo-con-las-oscs/> (Accessed 22-12-2017); Aroche, “¿Y Las Autoridades Locales? Cerradas a Dialogar Con La Sociedad Civil: 2ª Cumbre Ciudadana.”

political action (see Chapter 3): sometimes political action does precede media and public attention (e.g. the case of the Law of Victims) whilst in others, public agenda initiates and can define political change (e.g. the creation of the National Observatory on Human Trafficking).

Taking into account that this chapter focused on institutionalised forms of OCS (i.e. CSOs), and acknowledging that neither civil society nor the public sphere are limited to CSOs, the following chapter replicates this analysis of public–media–political effectiveness in a more nebulous form of OCS. It focuses on the case of the ‘self–defence groups’ in Mexico, an OCS movement against the increasing violence in the state of Michoacan that, in contrast to the Summit, did not count on the government’s support, but in fact was initially suppressed by government. Despite its importance, very limited scholarly attention has been devoted to study the policy impact of the self-defence movement and similar nebulous expressions of OCS.

Chapter 6. Case study 2: Hopelessness in the public sphere: self-defence groups vs crime.

*Hopelessness has become so extreme that some citizens are turning to violence themselves through vigilantism.*⁴³¹

In 2006, President Calderon launched what Eduardo Guerrero described as ‘a full-fledged surge against organised crime.’⁴³² Since then, Mexico has been immersed in a deadly confrontation with drug-trafficking organisations (DTOs) that lead to 100,199 executions just between 2006 and 2012.⁴³³ A figure that, compared to the 3,970 homicides that occurred in England and Wales between 2006 and 2012, reflects the insecurity environment in which Mexicans were living in.⁴³⁴

Although Mexico’s drug-trafficking related insecurity has national and international causes and repercussions, there are local cases of particular importance. One of them is the State of Michoacan, in west-central Mexico. Due to its weather and geographic characteristics (similar to those found in Colombia) that facilitate the cultivation of marihuana, its significance as a strategic maritime port of shipment between South America and the U.S.A., and the prevailing levels of poverty in the state, Michoacan has been one of the main bastions for DTOs in the world.⁴³⁵ Since the early 2000s to at

⁴³¹ Diane Davis, “The Political and Economic Origins of Violence and Insecurity in Contemporary Latin America: Past Trajectories and Future Prospects,” in *Violent Democracies in Latin America*, ed. A Desmond and D Goldstein (Durham: Duke University Press, 2010), 324.

⁴³² Eduardo Guerrero, “An Assessment of Illegal Protection Markets in Mexico,” in *Rethinking the “War on Drugs” Through the US–Mexico Prism*, ed. Ernesto Zedillo and Haynie Wheeler (Yale Center for the Study of Globalization, 2012), 33.

⁴³³ Raul Flores, “ONG Da Cifra de Muertos En El Sexenio de Calderón; Suman Más de 100 Mil,” *Excelsior*, November 27, 2012, <http://www.excelsior.com.mx/2012/11/27/nacional/871927> (Accessed 22–12–2017); Guerrero, “An Assessment of Illegal Protection Markets in Mexico,” pt. 33.

⁴³⁴ Citizens Report, “Murders in the UK – Location, Rate and Victim Profile of Murder, Homicide and Fatal Violence” (London, 2015), <http://www.citizensreportuk.org/reports/murders-fatal-violence-uk.html> (Accessed 22–12–2017).

⁴³⁵ By mid 2014, 50% of the population was living in poverty and there was 10% of illiteracy in the state. Veronica Macias, “Narcotráfico, Arraigado En La Tierra y La Sociedad de Michoacán,” *El Ecomista*, March 2, 2014, <http://eleconomista.com.mx/sociedad/2014/03/02/narcotrafico-arraigado-tierra-sociedad-michoacan> (Accessed 22–12–2017).

least 2015, political and even civil rights were heavily constrained in the state. Media organisations were censored and citizen mobility, even inside the state, was restricted. In some municipalities government was substituted de facto by a drug trafficking social structure that conditioned the provision of social services in exchange for allegiance and the payment of quotas, i.e. extortions. With organised crime having effectively penetrated the municipal government, civil society was notoriously weak, subsumed to a corrupt government and intimidated by drug traffickers.

This situation changed when after years of criminal exploitation, citizens organised themselves in 'armed vigilante movements' that not only challenged the State's authority and monopoly of the use of force, but also altered state and national policies on security provision. These armed vigilante movements, from now on called autodefensas, had three key demands:

- 1) Security:
 - ❖ The installation of security check-points by the army and federal police across the municipalities under their control.
- 2) Their legalisation as autodefensas.⁴³⁶
- 3) The capture of the seven leaders of the Caballeros Templarios DTO: Servando Gomez (*La Tuta*), Nazario Moreno, Enrique Plancarte, Dionicio Loya, Jesus Vazquez, *El Tena* and *El Chicano*.⁴³⁷

⁴³⁶ Juan Velediaz, "La Huida de Los Templarios," *Estado Mayor*, May 7, 2014, <http://www.estadomayor.mx/42436> (Accessed 22-12-2017). Soria Corona, "La Resistencia de Las Autodefensas Al Desarme Tensa El Conflicto En Michoacán," *El País*, April 7, 2014, http://internacional.elpais.com/internacional/2014/04/07/actualidad/1396904994_104673.html (Accessed 22-12-2017); Animal Político, "Mireles Niega Apoyo Al Desarme (Video)," *Animal Político*, January 14, 2014, <http://www.animalpolitico.com/2014/01/mireles-niega-apoyo-al-desarme-video/#axzz2qOcyEHcc> (Accessed 22-12-2017); Animal Político, "'Dejaremos Las Armas Cuando Se Restablezca El Estado de Derecho En Michoacán': Mireles (Video Completo)," *Animal Político*, January 15, 2014, <http://www.animalpolitico.com/2014/01/dejaremos-las-armas-cuando-se-restablezca-el-estado-de-derecho-en-michoacan-mireles-video-completo/> (Accessed 22-12-2017); Redacción, "Autodefensas Condicionan Desarme a Caída de Siete Líderes 'Templarios,'" *24 Horas*, February 24, 2013, <http://www.24-horas.mx/autodefensas-condicionan-desarme-a-caida-de-siete-lideres-templarios/> (Accessed 22-12-2017); La Jornada, *El Pueblo Que Venció Al Crimen Organizado. Testimonio de Un Policía Comunitario En Michoacán* (Mexico: La Jornada en Línea, 2013), <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8M79tqOcgAY> (Accessed 22-12-2017).

⁴³⁷ CNN Mexico, "La Muerte de Plancarte Deja a 'la Tuta' Como El Último Líder 'Templario,'" *CNN Mexico*, April 1, 2014, <http://mexico.cnn.com/nacional/2014/04/01/la-muerte-de-plancarte-deja-a-la-tuta-como-el-ultimo-lider-templario> (Accessed 22-12-2017).

With the ‘first armed uprising of the Mexico of the XXI century’ being entirely built around public security demands, it is one of the best case studies to analyse whether non-legally constituted and antagonistic forms of OCS can impact the media and political agendas in Mexico.⁴³⁸ This is why, this chapter builds on the public sphere theory to study whether Michoacan’s dangerous democratic environment permitted the development of a public sphere where the state was in touch with the needs of society, and media allowed citizens to come together and exchange ideas⁴³⁹ Simultaneously, it applies the agenda-setting framework to determine whether Michoacan’s socio-political context allowed or not the public and political spheres to function as an input-output model where demands were articulated by a broader range of socio-political groups. To do this, this chapter is divided into 4 sub-chapters. The First one describes Michoacan’s violent and criminally dominated public sphere. The Second and Third sub-chapters build on data collected through one-to-one interviews, focus groups and first-hand experiences during four weeks’ fieldwork in one of the world’s most dangerous places: sub-chapter two provides an insider perspective of the autodefensas movement, its organisation and objectives, whilst section three conducts the media agenda-setting analysis. The Fourth one conducts the ‘political agenda-setting’ analysis, developing legislative tracking of initiatives related to the autodefensas’ demands.

The core finding of this chapter is that non-institutionalised and non-government sanctioned forms of OCS are capable of achieving their political goals, even in undemocratic and dangerous contexts. The autodefensas movement in Michoacan does highlight the fact that communication practices are essential for an effective public sphere, but contrary to existing paradigms, media

⁴³⁸ A. McKee, *The Public sphere: An introduction*, p.7; Dahlgren, *Television and the Public sphere: Citizenship, Democracy and the Media*, 8; McKee, *The Public sphere: An Introduction*, 7; Sopitas, “A Un Año de Que Se Levantaron Las Autodefensas. ¿Qué Nos Ha Mostrado Este Movimiento?,” *Sopitas*, February 24, 2014, <http://www.sopitas.com/293886-a-un-ano-de-que-se-levantaron-las-autodefensas-que-nos-ha-mostrado-este-movimiento-video/> (Accessed 22-12-2017).

⁴³⁹ Jacobs and Townsley, *The Space of Opinion, Media Intellectuals and the Public sphere*, 254; Habermas, *The Structural Transformation of the Public sphere: An Inquiry Into a Category of Bourgeois Society*.

agenda does not always precede public agenda, and the autodefensas achievements are a clear example of this. By creating alternative microcosms of public discussions, the autodefensas challenged the macrocosms of the State's criminally coerced public sphere, positioned new topics on the media agenda and triggered clear legislative changes. Overall, this chapter breaks with existing perceptions insisting that only 'elite' dominated, institutionalised and governmentally sanctioned structures of civil society (i.e. CSOs) are politically influential. It also hopes to trigger a shift in the study of civil society in Mexico, pointing the need to tackle civil society developments outside the usual democratic scenarios, particularly where media is controlled by criminal groups.

6.1. Context: Michoacan's and the first armed uprising of the Mexico of the XXI century.

Since the 1950s Michoacan has been known for its production of marihuana and poppy flower, and from the 1990s, with the association of Mexico's 'Cartel del Milenio' (i.e. Millennium Cartel) and Colombia's' Medellín Cartel, for the making of methamphetamines. Up to the 1990s, though, Romeo LopCam argues, violence was not an issue that worried Michoacans.⁴⁴⁰ However, after the elections of 2000, Mexican municipalities obtained a larger scope for political manoeuvre: from having few resources and powers in the 1980s, they became responsible for local services and obtained the right to establish their own public security policies.⁴⁴¹ Nevertheless, Michoacan's municipalities remained the least developed ones across Mexico, a condition particularly noticeable in their incapacity to control organised crime and drug-trafficking.⁴⁴² Being a fertile and strategic geographic point for the production and exportation of marihuana, Michoacan has witnessed

⁴⁴⁰ Romeo LopCam, "Brevísima Historia Del Crimen Organizado En Michoacán," *Subversiones*, February 5, 2014, <http://subversiones.org/archivos/19328> (Accessed 22-12-2017); Bailey, "Drug Traffickers as Political Actors in Mexico's Nascent Democracy," 471.

⁴⁴¹ See Andrew Selee, "Municipalities and Policymaking," in *The Oxford Handbook of Mexican Politics*, ed. Roderic Ai Camp, 1st Ed (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012), 824.

⁴⁴² Selee.

increasingly violent battles between leading international DTOs. Between 1995 and 2000, the Cartel del Milenio and the Gulf Cartel's elite violent commando, the *Zetas*, engaged in a violent confrontation for the control of Michoacan. After five years of altercations, over 500 executions and 17 beheadings, the *Zetas* and the Gulf Cartel imposed their rule in the state. However, other DTOs were already ready to fight this profitable market, to the extent that 'violence became these guys' tool to obtain all kinds of streams of income.'⁴⁴³ The year 2000, 'was the point of inflection in the history of organised crime in Mexico, it was then when criminal organisations became real machineries for killing', says Guillermo Valdez, former director of Mexico's Intelligence and National Security Centre (CISEN).⁴⁴⁴

With the incarceration of Osiel Cardenas Guillen, leader of the Gulf Cartel, in 2003, a new dispute for power emerged, leading to the appearance of the La Familia Michoacana (The *Michoacan Family* in English) DTO, controlled by Servando Gomez, *La Tuta*; Nazario Moreno, *El Chayo*; and José de Jesús Méndez, *El Chango*; all of them previous members of the Gulf Cartel.⁴⁴⁵ Having created an alliance with the national *Cartel of Sinaloa* DTO, the newly created Familia Michoacana challenged Los Zetas and triggered one of the most noticeable raises in homicides in Michoacan's history (see Graph 28).⁴⁴⁶

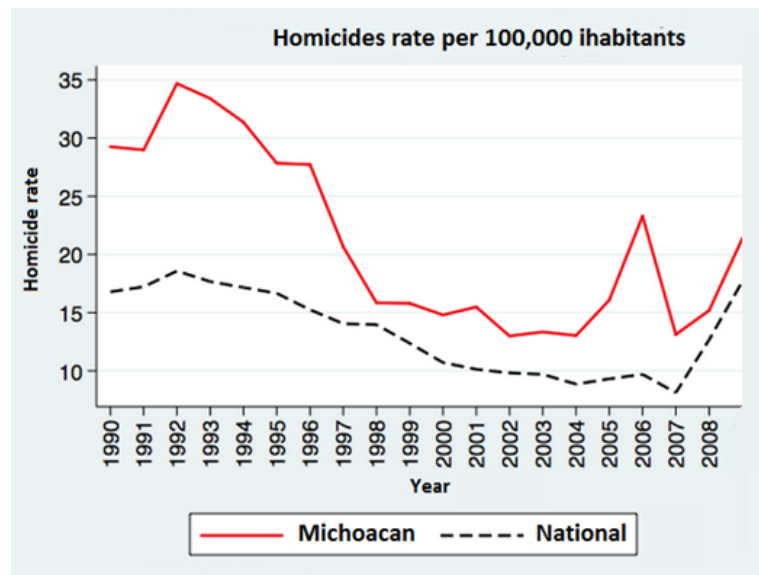
⁴⁴³ Hope in Elliott McLaughlin, "Treviño's Los Zetas Known for 'complete Absence of Scruples,' Expert Says," *CNN*, July 17, 2013, <http://www.cnn.com/2013/07/16/world/americas/trevino-los-zetas-profile/> (Accessed 22-12-2017); Alejandro Subversa, "El Poder de 'La Familia Michoacana,'" *El Universal*, December 4, 2006, <http://www.eluniversal.com.mx/nacion/146203.html> (Accessed 22-12-2017).

⁴⁴⁴ Aguilar, "La Captura Criminal Del Estado."

⁴⁴⁵ Samuel Logan and John Sullivan, "Mexico's 'Divine Justice'" (Mexico, 2009), <http://www.isn.ethz.ch/Digital-Library/Articles/Detail/?lng=en&id=104677> (Accessed 22-12-2017); Jaime Ramirez, "Michoacán, Dos Décadas Anidando Al Narcotráfico," *El Ecomista*, August 5, 2013, <http://eleconomista.com.mx/sociedad/2013/08/05/michoacan-dos-decadas-anidando-narcotrafico> (Accessed 22-12-2017).

⁴⁴⁶ Manrique Gandaría, "Seis Grupos Se Disputan Las Plazas de La Familia Michoacana," *La Prensa*, February 23, 2011, <http://www.oem.com.mx/laprensa/notas/n2158033.htm> (Accessed 22-12-2017).

Graph 28. Homicides rate per 100,000 in Michoacan 1990–2008



Source: Jose Merino, Eduardo Fierro, and Jessica Zarkin, “Michoacán En Datos (Parte I): Dos Décadas de Violencia,” *Animal Político*, January 21, 2014, <http://www.animalpolitico.com/blogeros-salir-de-dudas/2014/01/21/michoacan-en-datos-parte-dos-decadas-de-violencia/> (Accessed 22–12–2017).

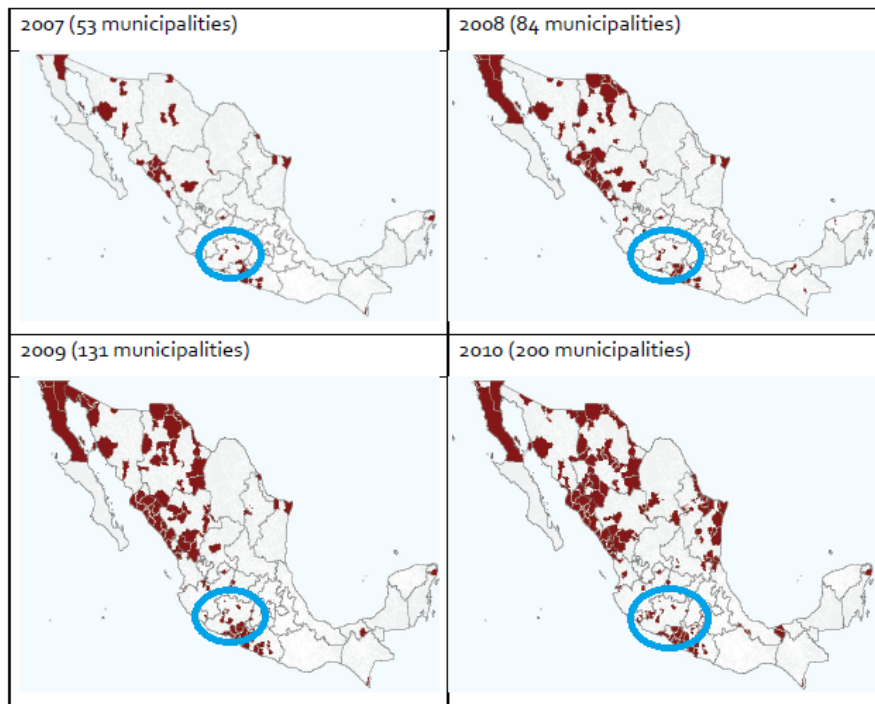
Whilst in 2002 there were less than 15 homicides per 100,000 inhabitants in Michoacan, once this intra-cartel fight started they grew to nearly 25 in 2006. In 2006 alone, La Familia Michoacana assassinated 5 directors, 1 deputy director, 1 commandant and 7 officers of Michoacan’s municipal police forces. With new and more radical terror tactics, La Familia Michoacana also altered both the media’s communicative role and society’s perception of its informative value. On the one hand, by intimidating newspapers’ owners and news editors, assassinating reporters, even creating their own local newspaper (CO1 stated), La Familia Michoacana controlled the flux of socio-political information, if not the public sphere in certain municipalities of Michoacan.⁴⁴⁷ In Jesus Lemus’ words, *La Tuta* became ‘the most media savvy drug trafficker in Mexico’s history.’⁴⁴⁸ On the other

⁴⁴⁷ CO1= Co-editor of an Uruapan local newspaper. See Table 8 in Chapter 3.3. Jose-Angel Garcia, “Interview to CO1 in Michoacan.” (Uruapan, 2014), pt. Minute 23:05.

⁴⁴⁸ See, for instance, some of the media insertions that *La Familia Michoacana* published in different local newspapers in Apatzingan. Jesus Lemus, “¿Quién Es La Tuta?,” *Reporte Índigo*, February 27, 2015, <http://www.reporteindigo.com/reportes/mexico/quien-es-la-tuta> (Accessed 22–12–2017); Univision,

hand, La Familia Michoacana was responsible for the first act of ‘narco–terrorism’ in Mexico. On the night of the 15th of September 2008, in the middle of the celebration of the 98th anniversary of Mexico’s Independence, a grenade exploded in Michoacan’s main plaza, killing 8 people and injuring more than 100.⁴⁴⁹ As noticed by Lorenzen, this event crossed ‘the thin red line’ in society’s tolerance towards drug–trafficking; it broke with the drug-traffickers code of conduct: citizens were not any longer extent from narco–violence.⁴⁵⁰ With the state government being incapable of providing justice and security, violence expanded from the municipalities of Uruapan, Apatzingan and Morelia to Chinicuila, Coalcoman, Tepalcatepec, Buenavista, Aguililla and Aquila (see Figure 9).

Figure 9. Organised–crime related deaths by Municipality



Source: Author’s own elaboration with information from Guerrero, “An Assessment of Illegal Protection Markets in Mexico”.

“La Familia Michoacana,” *Univision*, March 18, 2014, <http://www.univision.com/la-huella-digital/openpage/2014-03-18/caballeros-templarios-pt1> (Accessed 22-12-2017).

⁴⁴⁹ Eduardo Guerrero, “La Dictadura Criminal,” *Nexos* (Mexico, April 2014), <http://www.nexos.com.mx/?p=20026> (Accessed 22-12-2017).

⁴⁵⁰ Rebecca Lorenzen, “Narcoterrorismo En México” (Mexico City, 2008), [http://biblioteca.cide.edu/Datos/COPPAN/2008/octubre/10.6.2008 COYUNTURA VC Narcoterrorismo en México Oct 2008.pdf](http://biblioteca.cide.edu/Datos/COPPAN/2008/octubre/10.6.2008%20COYUNTURA%20VC%20Narcoterrorismo%20en%20M%C3%A9xico%20Oct%202008.pdf) (Accessed 22-12-2017).

In this scenario, in 2009 President Calderon initiated more frontal operations against drug trafficking in Michoacan – his hometown –, arresting 12 Mayors (including those from Apatzingan and Uruapan) and 26 public servants due to their complicity with La Familia Michoacana DTO.⁴⁵¹ This, in the words of Hector Aguilar, marked ‘the beginning of the end of *La Familia*.’⁴⁵² By the 24th of January 2011, the DTO published its last press release announcing the disbandment of La Familia Michoacana (See photo 2).⁴⁵³

Photo 2. One of the last media messages from La Familia Michoacana (25th November 2010).



Source: Algutal, “No Buscamos Vencer Sino Convencer Dice Con Mantas La Familia Michoacana,” 2010, <http://algutal.com/2010/11/>.

Nevertheless, DTOs’ operations did not stop. By March 2011, new DTOs emerged, and new territorial battles took place again (see Figure 10). In this vein, rather than ‘disappearing’, La Familia

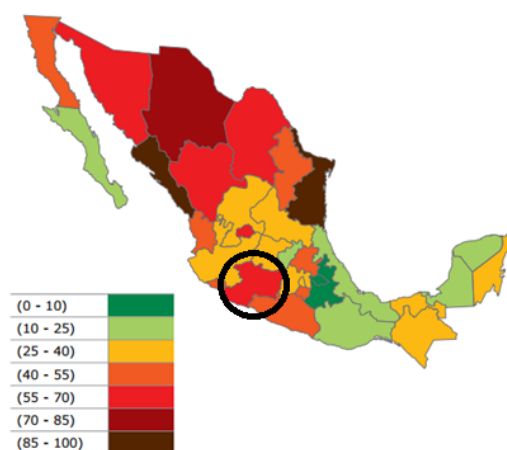
⁴⁵¹ Univision, “La Familia Michoacana.”

⁴⁵² Aguilar, “La Captura Criminal Del Estado”; Guerrero, “La Dictadura Criminal.”

⁴⁵³ Guerrero, “La Dictadura Criminal.”

Michoacana disintegrated into new violent groups: *Guerreros Unidos* (United Warriors), *La nueva empresa* (The new enterprise) and *Los Caballeros Templarios* (The Templar Knights); this last one created on the 11th of March by *La Tuta*, former leader of La Familia Michoacana. After ‘some of the bloodiest fights between drug cartels, *Los Caballeros Templarios* succeeded in dominating the state once again.’⁴⁵⁴

Figure 10. Deaths by homicide presumably related to organised crime between December 2006 and December 2010 (as % of total homicides).



Source: Ramirez de Alba, Solís and de Buen, “Indicadores de Víctimas Visibles e Invisibles de Homicidio,” 29.

Building on *La Familia*’s expertise in media and public opinion management, *Los Caballeros Templarios* implemented new terror propaganda strategies.⁴⁵⁵ In this vein, DD1 argued, the *Caballeros Templarios* made use of press insertions and narco–messages to ‘legitimate their fight as socially driven and justify themselves as the best option to other DTOs.’⁴⁵⁶ In their first narco–message (see Photo 3), the DTO stated ‘they would be developing the *altruistic* tasks that *La Familia*

⁴⁵⁴ Héctor Aguilar, “México 2014: Narco Para Principiantes,” *El País*, March 25, 2014, http://elpais.com/elpais/2014/03/17/opinion/1395083669_842358.html (Accessed 22–12–2017).

⁴⁵⁵ Teleformula, “*La Tuta*” a *Policías Comunitarias*: “*Recupero Mis Tres Pueblos y Todo Acaba*” (Mexico City, 2013), <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nO-DGWQVR30> (Accessed 22–12–2017).

⁴⁵⁶ Garcia, “Interview to the Deputy Director of a Local Newspaper in Michoacan.”

Michoacana used to develop in the state. They would maintain order, stop robberies, kidnappings and extortions, and shield the state against possible intrusions from rival organisations.⁴⁵⁷

Photo 3. Narco message from Caballeros Templarios



Source: Isabel Longhi–Bracaglia, “Los ‘Caballeros Templarios’ Del ‘Narco,’” *El Mundo*, March 10, 2011, <http://www.elmundo.es/america/2011/03/10/mexico/1299781228.html> (Accessed 22–12–2017).

This was not a new phenomenon for Michoacans, in fact, they were already accustomed to living with DTOs and their violence: ‘whilst they did not mess with us, everything was fine,’ AD1 stated; (citizens) used to see them passing through the streets highly armed, but it was as if they were ghosts, they did not do anything to us.⁴⁵⁸ ‘Everybody, at certain point, needed to be or was in contact with the DTOs. They did their thing without involving us. It was not ok, but it worked.’⁴⁵⁹ However, this blind-eye relationship changed when the DTOs started extorting and kidnapping local businessmen and farmers.⁴⁶⁰ Just in the first 3 months since its public appearance (i.e. March to June

⁴⁵⁷ See the first public appearance of the Los Caballeros Templarios in Longhi–Bracaglia; Redacción, “Aparecen En Huetamo Mantas Anunciando La Presencia de Los Caballeros Templarios,” *Cambio de Michoacan*, March 10, 2011, <http://www.cambiodemichoacan.com.mx/nota-145385> (Accessed 22–12–2017).

⁴⁵⁸ Garcia Jose–Angel, “Interview to SD1 in Uruapan, Michoacan.” (Uruapan, 2014).

⁴⁵⁹ Jose–Angel Garcia, “Interview to the Deputy Director of a Local Newspaper in Michoacan” (Apatzingan, 2014), pt. 00:15:07.

⁴⁶⁰ Alberto Najjar, “Lo Que Hay Detrás de La Nueva Ola de Violencia En Michoacán,” *BBC Mundo*, July 25, 2013, http://www.bbc.com/mundo/noticias/2013/07/130724_michoacan_historia_tras_la_violencia_narco

2011) the Caballeros Templarios DTO executed 30 people and shot down a Federal Police helicopter. That same year the DTO contributed with USD\$2m to the electoral campaign of the PRI's candidate, Fausto Vallejo, who governed Michoacan between 2010 and 2014; an investment that proved to be extremely profitable for the DTO but highly detrimental for Michoacans.⁴⁶¹ In the first year of Fausto Vallejo's administration (February 2012–April 2013) violence became even more pronounced:

- ❖ In 2007, the state's kidnapping rate was of one per 100,000 inhabitants, by 2013 it was of nearly 5.
- ❖ Between 2012 and 2014, Michoacan surpassed the world's homicide average rate.⁴⁶²
- ❖ In 2012, 94% of crimes (629,524) were not reported to the authorities as citizens were afraid of doing it.⁴⁶³
- ❖ By 2013, small and large farmers across 73 of Michoacan's 114 municipalities had been extorted by the DTO.⁴⁶⁴
- ❖ In 2013, the municipality of Yurécuaro, Michoacan, became the most dangerous place in the world, with 166 homicides per 100,000 inhabitants.⁴⁶⁵
- ❖ The U.N. identified that 70% of Michoacan's municipalities were infiltrated by organised crime.⁴⁶⁶

fico_caballeros_templarios_mexico_an (Accessed 22–12–2017); La Jornada, *El Pueblo Que Venció Al Crimen Organizado. Testimonio de Un Policía Comunitario En Michoacán*.

⁴⁶¹ Aguilar, "La Captura Criminal Del Estado."

⁴⁶² According to the U.N. the world's homicide average rate in 2013 was of 6.9 homicides per 100,000 inhabitants. In Michoacan, it was of 16.8 in 2012, 19.91 in 2013, and 19.81 in 2014. CNDH, "Informe Especial Sobre Los Grupos de Autodefensa En El Estado de Michoacan y Las Violaciones a Los Derechos Humanos Relacionadas Con El Conflicto." (Mexico City, 2016), pt. 226, http://www.cndh.org.mx/sites/all/doc/Informes/Especiales/2016_IE_gruposautodefensa.pdf (Accessed 22–12–2017).

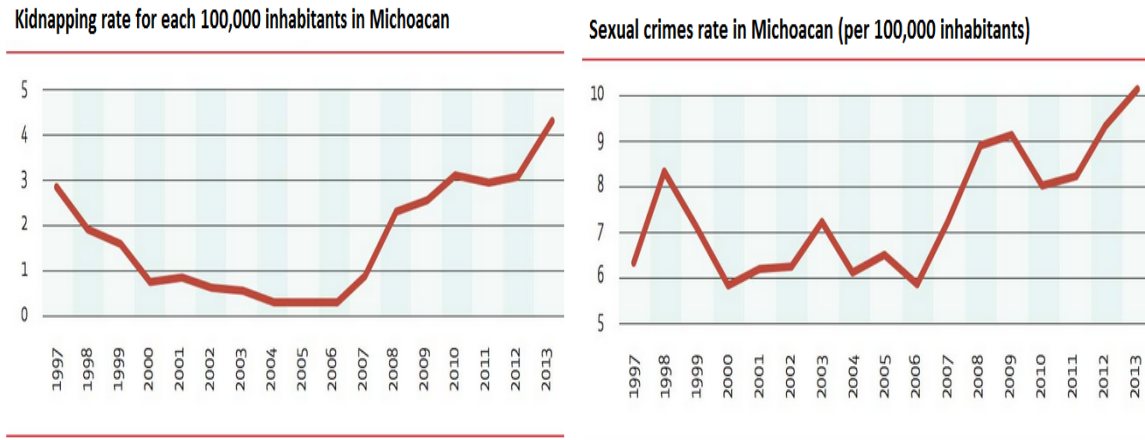
⁴⁶³ CNDH, pt. 232.

⁴⁶⁴ Claudia Solera, "Michoacán, Una Tierra Favorita Para El Narco," *Excelsior*, November 18, 2013, <http://www.excelsior.com.mx/nacional/2013/11/18/929236> (Accessed 22–12–2017).

⁴⁶⁵ Mou Szysak, "Yurécuaro, El Lugar Más Violento Del Planeta," *Otrámerica*, February 7, 2013, <http://otramerica.com/temas/yurecuaro-lugar-mas-violento-planeta/2834> (Accessed 22–12–2017).

⁴⁶⁶ Redacción, "Michoacán, El Escenario de La Ingobernabilidad," *Informador. Mx*, September 30, 2013, <http://www.informador.com.mx/mexico/2013/475222/6/michoacan-el-esenario-de-la-ingobernabilidad.htm> (Accessed 22–12–2017).

Graph 29. Kidnapping and sexual crimes rates in Michoacan (1997–2013).



Source: Guerrero, “La Dictadura Criminal.”

With a noticeable government incapacity, if not outright unwillingness, to control violence and crime, Michoacans were in desperate need of organising themselves in autodefensas movements to undertake those security functions that government was not fulfilling.

6.2. Autodefensas: From an undermined society to an organised vigilante movement.

'Michoacan is nobody's land', 'travelling around Michoacan is an extreme sport', 'we are abandoned,' 'everybody: police, military, whoever, is colluded.'⁴⁶⁷ These, and other circumstances triggered the appearance of armed citizen movements. For instance, due to his involvement in social protests, Vicar Gregorio Lopez, then Vicar of Apatzingan, received multiple death threats to the extent that he was forced to wear a bulletproof vest whilst giving mass (Photo 4).⁴⁶⁸ M.D. Jose Mireles, from Tepalcatepec, Michoacan, was another citizen who suffered from the insecurity in the state: his nephew, and youngest and older sisters were kidnapped by Los Caballeros Templarios, three incidents that contributed to the premature death of his mother. Furthermore, the DTO also stole his father's cattle, risking his family's financial stability.⁴⁶⁹

Photo 4. Meeting with Vicar Gregorio Lopez. Apatzingan, Michoacan, 29th January 2014.



⁴⁶⁷ Garcia Jose–Angel, "Interview to SD1 in Uruapan, Michoacan.;" Garcia Jose–Angel, "Interview to SD2 in Uruapan, Michoacan." (Apatzingan, 2014); Garcia, "Interview to CO1 in Michoacan."

⁴⁶⁸ Ioan Grillo, "Pope Francis's Visit to Mexico Highlights the Church's Drug War Woes," *Time* (Mexico City, February 2014), <http://time.com/4216331/pope-francis-mexico-visit-cartel-drug-war/> (Accessed 22–12–2017).

⁴⁶⁹ Sanjuana Martinez, "Las Batallas Del Doctor Mirles," *Nexos*, June 1, 2014, <http://www.nexos.com.mx/?p=21605> (Accessed 22-12-2017).

With families across the state suffering from similar crimes, and criminal extortions having cut Michoacans farmers' income by 40%, citizens were forced to act, to organise in self-defence forces and 'take the law into their own hands.'⁴⁷⁰

Rather than stopping them, government tacitly accepted its inability to contain organised crime and explicitly recognised the communities' right to organise, demand and provide their own communal security. For instance, on the 19th of February 2013, Michoacan's Governor, Fausto Vallejo, publicly stated he agreed with the concept of self-protection and would work with these communities' representatives to legitimate their self-defence civil groups by training and institutionalising them as 'communitarian police forces.'⁴⁷¹ Federal Senators from opposition (PRD) also supported the existence of 'communitarian police forces' in the neighbouring state of Guerrero.⁴⁷² Nevertheless, this political support towards self-defence movements radically changed

⁴⁷⁰ Belén Fernández, "Mexico's 'Vigilante Monster,'" *Aljazeera*, January 27, 2014, <http://www.aljazeera.com/indepth/opinion/2014/01/mexico-vigilante-monster-201412754425289780.html> (Accessed 22-12-2017); BBC Mundo, "Michoacán, El Reino Narco de Los Caballeros Templarios," *BBC Mundo*, May 9, 2013, http://www.bbc.com/mundo/noticias/2013/05/130509_michoacan_reino_caballeros_templarios_mexico_narcotrafico_an (Accessed 22-12-2017); Francisco Castellanos, "Las Autodefensas Se Fortalecen y Multiplican," *Proceso* (Tepalcatepec, Michoacan, November 2013), <http://www.proceso.com.mx/?p=358939> (Accessed 22-12-2017); Salvador Camarena, "Las Autodefensas de Michoacán No Son Un Grupo de Delincuentes," *El País*, February 10, 2014, http://internacional.elpais.com/internacional/2014/02/09/actualidad/1391984271_096367.html (Accessed 22-12-2017).

⁴⁷¹ Redacción, "Regularizará Michoacan Grupos de Autofensa Civil, Anuncia Vallejo.," *Proceso*, February 19, 2013, <http://www.proceso.com.mx/334074/regularizara-michoacan-grupos-de-autodefensa-civil> (Accessed 22-12-2017).

⁴⁷² On the 19th and 23rd of February 2013, Senator Sofío Ramirez stated 'his party [PRD] was looking to achieve these groups' recognition' as, he argued, their existence was supported by: a) Law 701 of the State of Guerrero, which confirmed the 'recognition of the Community Police –but, and a big but– as part of the State's System of Public Security'; b) the Agreement 169 of the International Labour Organisation, stating national governments should respect local communities' customs and habits (e.g. self-defence); and Article 2 of Mexico's constitution, establishing the indigenous groups' right for autonomous organisation (although respecting the federal pact and the states' sovereignty). See Honorable Congreso de la Union, "Article 2. Constitución Política de Los Estados Unidos Mexicanos" (n.d.), <http://info4.juridicas.unam.mx/ijure/fed/9/3.htm?s=> (Accessed 22-12-2017); International Labour Organisation, "Convenio Sobre Pueblos Indígenas y Tribales, 1989" (1989), http://www.ilo.org/dyn/normlex/es/f?p=NORMLEXPUB:12100:0::NO::P12100_INSTRUMENT_ID:312314 (Accessed 22-12-2017); Consejería Jurídica del Poder Ejecutivo – Estado de Guerrero, "Ley No. 701 de Reconocimiento, Derechos y Cultura de Los Pueblos y Comunidades Indígenas Del Estado de Guerrero."

when the citizen movements evolved from being isolated, disorganised and small-scale events into large, organised and moneyed armed vigilante groups across Michoacan's strategic agricultural economic towns.

On the 24th of February 2013, M.D. Jose Mireles rose in arms in the community of Tepalcatepec, Michoacan: 'If I have them in front of me, those who caused my mother's death, those who kidnapped my sisters, I am going to eat them for sure.'⁴⁷³ That is what he told his father whilst coordinating Mexico's most recent and largest autodefensas movement. In parallel, Hipolito Mora, from the neighbouring town of Felipe Carrillo Puerto (aka 'La Ruana'), and Estanislao Beltran, from Buenavista Tomatlan, (see Map 1) rose up in arms against drug traffickers and narco-politicians.⁴⁷⁴ By 9:00 am the self-defence groups were only formed by 80 people with 22 rifles and shotguns, but by 3:00pm they were already 3,000 people who had already disarmed the municipal police in Tepalcatepec and La Ruana.⁴⁷⁵

With sufficient firearms to challenge municipal government's authority, the autodefensas gained visibility and public support across the country. By February 2013, 78% of Mexicans had heard of the movement and 57% agreed with the autodefensas actions to defend their communities against

(2011), [https://adsdatabase.ohchr.org/IssueLibrary/RECONOCIMIENTO DE LOS PUEBLOS Y COMUNIDADES INDIGENAS-GUERRERO.pdf](https://adsdatabase.ohchr.org/IssueLibrary/RECONOCIMIENTO_DE_LOS_PUEBLOS_Y_COMUNIDADES_INDIGENAS-GUERRERO.pdf); Irma Ortiz, "Darle Certeza a La Policía Comunitaria," *Siempre, Presencia de México*, February 23, 2013, <http://www.siempre.com.mx/2013/02/darle-certeza-a-la-policia-comunitaria/> (Accessed 22-12-2017); Sergio Noriega, "PRD Propone Legalizar Las Policías Comunitarias," *Sexenio*, December 19, 2013, <http://www.sexenio.com.mx/articulo.php?id=25322> (Accessed 22-12-2017).II

⁴⁷³ Martinez, "Las Batallas Del Doctor Mirles."

⁴⁷⁴ Mexico Difunde, *Mensaje de Las Guardias de Autodefensa y Policías Comunitarias de 7 Municipios de Michoacán* (Mexico, 2013), https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=v_1_fPCu8q8 (Accessed 22-12-2017); Milenio Digital, "Quienes Son Los Líderes de Las Autodefensas?," *Milenio*, February 12, 2014, http://www.milenio.com/policia/lideres_autodefensas-Michoacan-Hipolito_Mora-doctor_Mireles-Estanislao_Beltran_0_244175749.html (Accessed 22-12-2017); Benjamin Alvarez, "A Cuatro Años, Las Autodefensas Se Niegan a Extinguirse," *Contramuro*, February 24, 2017, <https://www.contramuro.com/a-cuatro-anos-las-autodefensas-se-niegan-a-extinguirse/> (Accessed 22-12-2017).

⁴⁷⁵ Laura Castellanos, "Autodefensas: En Un Año Limpian 22% de Michoacán," *El Universal*, February 24, 2014, <http://archivo.eluniversal.com.mx/nacion-mexico/2014/autodefensas-en-un-año-se-extienden-a-14-municipios-990065.html> (Accessed 22-12-2017); La Jornada, *El Pueblo Que Venció Al Crimen Organizado. Testimonio de Un Policía Comunitario En Michoacán*.

delinquency. What is more, almost 50% of the population considered that by taking justice into their own hands the autodefensas were helping authorities to end crime.⁴⁷⁶ Businessmen and national social activists were also in favour of the movement. For example, businessmen organisation COPARMEX stated that the autodefensas were a 'valid expression of citizens' inconformity.'⁴⁷⁷ Citizens, journalist Raul Lopez explained, did consider the autodefensas were a legitimate social force capable of achieving what the state could not: 'to provide them with security through a representative authority that had the community's best interests at heart.'⁴⁷⁸ 'The autodefensas gave Michoacans the opportunity to obtain the justice that government did not aim to provide. They represented an opportunity to recover the freedom of expression that no longer existed in Michoacan', CO1 and a FC1 added.⁴⁷⁹ With increasing public support, the autodefensas movement quickly expanded across the municipalities of Buenavista, Aguililla, Chinicuila, Aquila, Tancítaro, Los Reyes, Coahuayana and the northern town of Yurécuaro.⁴⁸⁰ Soon, Mexico's General Prosecutor said, Michoacan became Mexico's government's 'main security concern' and 'the perfect example of ungovernability in Mexico.'⁴⁸¹

⁴⁷⁶ Parametría, "La Importancia de Confiar En Las Instituciones. Las Autodefensas En México" (Mexico City, 2012), http://www.parametria.com.mx/carta_parametrica.php?cp=4615 (Accessed 22-12-2017); Viridiana Rios, "Autodefensas: El Riesgo de No Aplicar La Ley," *Nexos*, April 1, 2014, <https://www.nexos.com.mx/?p=20018> (Accessed 22-12-2017).

⁴⁷⁷ Ezequiel Flores, "Empresarios Dan Su Apoyo a Grupo de Autodefensa En Guerrero," *Proceso*, June 17, 2013, <http://www.proceso.com.mx/345124/empresarios-apoyan-a-grupo-de-autodefensa-en-guerrero> (Accessed 22-12-2017).

⁴⁷⁸ Jose-Angel Garcia, "Interview to Raul Lopez Mendoza, Journalist of Cambio de Michoacan" (Michoacan, 2013), pt. Min: 15.52.

⁴⁷⁹ Garcia, "Interview to CO1 in Michoacan."; Jose-Angel Garcia, "Focus Group on February 2nd 2014 in Apatzingan, Michoacan." (Apatzingan, 2014).

⁴⁸⁰ Laura Castellanos, "Autodefensas: En Un Año Se Extienden a 14 Municipios," *El Universal*, February 24, 2014, <http://archivo.eluniversal.com.mx/primera-plana/2014/impreso/autodefensas-8221limpian-8221-22-de-michoacan-44490.html> (Accessed 22-12-2017).

⁴⁸¹ Redacción, "Michoacán, El Estado Más Violento: Murillo Karam," *Quadratin*, April 17, 2013, <https://www.quadratin.com.mx/justicia/Michoacan-el-estado-mas-violento-Murillo-Karam/> (Accessed 22-12-2017); Redacción, "Michoacán, El Escenario de La Ingovernabilidad."

In this scenario, and just three months after assuming office, President Peña Nieto stated that ‘these groups’ practices were illegal actions and government would combat them.’⁴⁸² Mexico’s Minister of the Interior, Osorio Chong, declared ‘these groups needed to disappear as the figure of self-defence groups does not exist in Mexico’s law.’⁴⁸³ More importantly, Michoacan’s governor, Fausto Vallejo, changed his initial support and started to challenge the movement: although he would not cancel the dialogue with these groups, he now considered the autodefensas were illegal as they possessed illegal weapons and were taking justice into their own hands. ‘Illegal groups need to be eradicated’, he said.⁴⁸⁴ Institutionalised citizen organisations like the ones studied in Chapter 5 also opposed the autodefensas. For instance, Morera, from Causa en Comun, stated they were movements financed by organised crime, whilst Miranda de Wallace, from Alto al Secuestro, equated them to guerrillas.⁴⁸⁵

Nevertheless, with over 83% of Michoacans not feeling safe in their own state and only 10.3% fully trusting the state police, the autodefensas ignored those calls asking for their disarmament and demobilisation.⁴⁸⁶ Instead, the autodefensas found even further support in other municipalities: citizens believed the autodefensas’ power was a better option to the useless government institutions.⁴⁸⁷

⁴⁸² International Crisis Group, “Justicia En El Cañón de Un Arma: Las Milicias Civiles En México,” *Boletín Informativo Sobre America Latina* 29 (2013): 16, <http://www.crisisgroup.org/~media/Files/latin-america/mexico/spanish/b029-justice-at-the-barrel-of-a-gun-vigilante-militias-in-mexico-spanish.pdf> (Accessed 22-12-2017).

⁴⁸³ International Crisis Group, 16.

⁴⁸⁴ Informador.Mx, “Fausto Vallejo ve Autodefensas Como Amenaza a La Ley,” *Informador. Mx*, February 2013, <http://www.informador.com.mx/mexico/2013/499832/6/fausto-vallejo-ve-autodefensas-como-amenaza-a-la-ley.htm> (Accessed 22-12-2017).

⁴⁸⁵ Rafael Cabrera, “Autodefensas Son Financiadas Por El Crimen: Activistas,” *Animal Politico*, September 13, 2013, <http://www.animalpolitico.com/2013/09/autodefensas-son-financiadas-por-el-crimen-activistas/> (Accessed 22-12-2017).

⁴⁸⁶ Ilse Garcia, “Guerrero y Michoacán: Los Más Violentos... Los Más Pobres.,” *SinEmbargo.Mx*, June 4, 2014, <http://www.sinembargo.mx/04-06-2015/1366198> (Accessed 22-12-2017).

⁴⁸⁷ Víctor Toledo, “Autodefensas: De Michoacán Para El Mundo,” *La Jornada*, November 26, 2013, <http://www.jornada.unam.mx/2013/11/26/opinion/020a2pol> (Accessed 22-12-2017).

‘It is not possible that government itself wants to disarm us in order to give access to other drug cartels [...] we are not living in a state of law, we are in war, and the fact that government is calling the army to arrest us pushes us to continue fighting. If we want to be safe, we need to do it ourselves’, Mireles said.⁴⁸⁸

By mid 2013, with an increasing number of autonomous but connected autodefensas movements across Michoacan, their leaders constituted the *General Council of Self-defence and communitarian groups*. With a horizontal decision-making process, where ‘nobody was more than the other’, Mireles said, the *Council* ruled over the autodefensas’ acting, and coordinated its future incursions against DTOs and interaction with media.⁴⁸⁹ Nevertheless, being trapped in a system that did not recognise their legality and which had allowed the appearance of DTOs in their state, the autodefensas were not only confronting the Caballeros Templarios DTO, but also – occasionally – federal security forces with orders to disarm them. For instance, in October 2013 (8 months after the autodefensas’ uprising), 4 members of Mireles’ family were kidnapped, dismembered and incinerated by the DTO in Nueva Italia as a threat to his movement.⁴⁹⁰ At the same time, in an effort to impede the dissemination of the autodefensas’ movement across Michoacan and Mexico, federal government dispatched more army battalions and federal police forces to the state:

- On the 19th of May 2013, security forces entered the municipalities of Coalcoman, Buenavista and Tepalcatepec (see Map 3). In Buenavista, citizens armed with machetes and stones stopped the military convoy approaching their community, forcing soldiers to turn around and leave without achieving their autodefensas disarmament.⁴⁹¹
- In August 2013, the army detained 45 members of Aquila’s autodefensas group for the possession of banned guns.

⁴⁸⁸ Corona, “La Resistencia de Las Autodefensas Al Desarme Tensa El Conflicto En Michoacán”; Grillonautas2, “Autodefensas Jamás Solicitaron Al Pueblo Michoacano Levantarse Contra El Gobierno: Dr. Mireles” (Mexico, 2013), <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kOLVpAat90c> (Accessed 22-12-2017).

⁴⁸⁹ Animal Político, “Mireles Niega Apoyo Al Desarme (Video).”

⁴⁹⁰ C Aristegui, “Autodefensas Pedimos Cabezas de 7 Líderes ‘Templarios’ En Michoacán: Mireles En MVS,” *Aristegui Noticias*, November 18, 2013, <http://aristeguinoticias.com/1811/mexico/si-caen-los-7-lideres-templarios-dejamos-las-armas-autodefensas-en-mvs/> (Accessed 22-12-2017).

⁴⁹¹ Laura Castellanos, “Impiden Ingreso de Ejército En Michoacan,” *El Universal*, May 20, 2013, <http://archivo.eluniversal.com.mx/estados/90629.html> (Accessed 22-12-2017).

- In December 2013, army entered the municipality of 'La Huacana' to disarm their autodefensas, but after an intense confrontation a woman was accidentally shot and killed by a soldier.⁴⁹²

The autodefensas capitalised on these confrontations and social discontent to continue fighting for their objectives, and to counteract the Caballeros Templarios' dominance over the local media and public sphere, the self-defence groups started their own media strategy to 'transform *La Tuta* into a monster across media accounts'.⁴⁹³

'The autodefensas are fighting a media campaign against you, it is a trap against you, and they are winning over the media [...] they are transforming you into a monster [...] what I feel is that there has been a slow reactionary capacity here, you need to do something, to give us some narco-messages or something,' Jose Luis Diaz, Caballeros Templarios' media adviser, told *La Tuta* in 2013.⁴⁹⁴

However, this task proved to be difficult. Whilst in Western democratic scenarios 'crime news are a gift to all the news-hungry editors,' in Michoacan's violent context, they were in fact a problem for reporters and editors. In Michoacan's cities like Uruapan even the most read newspaper was subject to threats and secret forced-agreements with DTOS.⁴⁹⁵

'National and international media can easily move around Michoacan, but local journalists are already identified, they know everything about our families and constrain us from publishing information,' DD1 said.⁴⁹⁶

⁴⁹² Miguel Garcia, "Chocan Ejército y Autodefensas, Surge Grupo En Tierra Caliente Michoacana.," *Excelsior*, December 19, 2013, <http://www.excelsior.com.mx/nacional/2013/12/19/934760> (Accessed 22-12-2017).-

⁴⁹³ Garcia, "Interview to Jorge Villalpando Castro, Video-Journalist for Al-Jazeera and Former Editor of El Universal Media Content.," pt. Minute:00:41:00; Garcia, "Interview to Raul Lopez Mendoza, Journalist of Cambio de Michoacan." *La Jornada, El Pueblo Que Venció Al Crimen Organizado. Testimonio de Un Policía Comunitario En Michoacán*; Mexico Difunde, *Mensaje de Las Guardias de Autodefensa y Policías Comunitarias de 7 Municipios de Michoacán*; NA, "La Tuta" *Reparte Dinero a Corresponsal de Televisa y a Otro Periodista*, pt. Minute: 6:03, 7:24, 12:50, 22:37; Carlos Loret, "Gobernador Entre Sombras," *Carlos Loret de Mola*, October 30, 2013, <http://www.carlosloret.com/2013/10/gobernador-entre-sombras/> (Accessed 22-12-2017).

⁴⁹⁴ NA, "La Tuta" *Reparte Dinero a Corresponsal de Televisa y a Otro Periodista*.

⁴⁹⁵ Garcia, "Interview to Juan Perez, BBC Reporter for Latin America (13-Jan-2014)," pt. Minute: 00:57:00.

⁴⁹⁶ Garcia, "Interview to DD1 (18 January 2014)."

The Caballeros Templarios ‘managed everything in the local media, to the extent that they considered themselves news editors.’⁴⁹⁷ ‘They were able to call journalists to their mobile phones or arrive to their offices to openly state their demands.’⁴⁹⁸ To further intimidate journalists, DTO’s lieutenants even ‘used to pick up 5 or 6 journalists, behead them and place their bodies on a roundabout,’ to the extent that in 2014 Michoacan was one of the five riskiest states to practice the profession in the riskiest country for journalism in the world.⁴⁹⁹ In Jesus Lemus’ words, ‘organised crime landed in the editorial boards, the heart of the public opinion machine.’⁵⁰⁰ For instance, the Caballeros Templarios financed the *Esquema* news agency to influence the media coverage given to the autodefensas and their criminal organisation.⁵⁰¹ To systematise their control over other media outlets, the DTO also produced two electronic media outlets (i.e. *MS Television* and *Avance de Apatzingan*) to subtly broadcast their propaganda and arrange interviews for the international media, including those between *La Tuta* and reporters from *MundoFox* (USA) and *Channel 4* (UK).⁵⁰²

⁴⁹⁷ Garcia, “Interview to CO1 in Michoacan (27-Jan-2014),” pt. Minute:2:04:00.

⁴⁹⁸ Garcia, “Interview to CO1 in Michoacan (27-Jan-2014).”

⁴⁹⁹ La extra, “Mexico Permanece Como El País Más Peligroso En El Mundo Para Los Periodistas: Cristina Portillo,” *La-Extra.Mx*, January 1, 2014, <https://laextra.mx/mexico-permanece-como-el-pais-mas-peligroso-en-el-mundo-para-los-periodistas-cristina-portillo/> (Accessed 22-12-2017); Mont, “Veracruz Es La Entidad Más Peligrosa Para Ejercer El Periodismo En Este País,” *Regeneración Radio*, February , <http://www.regeneracionradio.org/index.php/represion/asesinatos/item/4663-el-periodismo-criminalizado-por-el-duartismo> (Accessed 22-12-2017); Francisco Castellanos, “En Michoacan, Larga Cadena de Asesinatos de Periodistas,” *Proceso*, July 20, 2016, <http://www.proceso.com.mx/448001/en-michoacan-larga-cadena-asesinatos-periodistas> (Accessed 22-12-2017). Garcia, “Interview to CO1 in Michoacan (27-Jan-2014),” pt. Minute: 02:07:00.

⁵⁰⁰ Otra Vez, “La Tuta, Fin Del Comunicado,” *Letras Libres* (Mexico City, March 2015), <http://www.letraslibres.com/blogs/otra-vez/la-tuta-fin-del-comunicado> (Accessed 22-12-2017).

⁵⁰¹ NA, “*La Tuta*” *Reparte Dinero a Corresponsal de Televisa y a Otro Periodista*; Garcia, “Interview to CO1 in Michoacan (27-Jan-2014).”

⁵⁰² Radiar Noticias, “Los Alcaldes De Michoacan Y Los Presuntos Nexos Con Los Caballeros Templarios,” *Radia Noticias*, November 6, 2013, <http://radiarnoticiasmichoacan.blogspot.co.uk/2013/11/los-alcaldes-de-michoacan-y-los.html> (Accessed 22-12-2017); Admin, “La Tuta y Líderes Templarios van Con Todo, Se Les Atraviese Quien Se Les Atraviese,” *Tierra Del Narco*, January 8, 2014, <http://www.tierradelnarco.com.mx/2014/01/la-tuta-y-lideres-templarios-van-con.html> (Accessed 22-12-2017); Jonathan Nacar, “Reporteras de Veracruz y Michoacán Denuncian Acoso y Amenazas de Funcionarios,” *24 Horas*, February 3, 2015, <http://www.24-horas.mx/reporteras-de-veracruz-y-michoacan-denuncian-acoso-y-amenazas-de-funcionarios/> (Accessed 22-12-2017); Garcia, “Interview to CO1 in Michoacan,” pt. Minute: 02:29:00. Otra Vez, “La Tuta, Fin Del Comunicado”; Humberto Padgett,

The DTO, however, was not the only player constraining freedom of expression. In February 2006, local Deputy David Garibay, broke into a newspaper's office and armed, and threatened to kill its Director if the media outlet continued criticising his political actions.⁵⁰³ A few weeks later (i.e. March 2006), journalists Ramon Angeles Sarta and Maria Esther Aguilar disappeared, with local journalists believing they were murdered by local authorities.⁵⁰⁴

Facing this situation, 'many local journalists started sending information to international newspapers and organisms, using nicknames. But some of them started to be murdered, so journalists stopped doing it.'⁵⁰⁵

'Many times we contacted international organisations to request their help in order to send some of our threatened colleagues abroad, for their protection. We requested their assistance so many times, but nothing happened, thus, we were forced to negotiate with the drug-traffickers,' DD1 and CO1 explained.⁵⁰⁶

Journalists and editors 'were pushed to negotiate with the devil, to find the way to survive. They started publishing journalistic articles under the general authorship of *Redaccion* (i.e. Editorial in English), even stopped publishing many details to satisfy the DTO's requests'.⁵⁰⁷ 'The media's situation in Michoacan was so *fucked up*. While many times the information in the national media was made up and full of *everything is ok* type of news, we (i.e. local media), who knew everybody

"La Propaganda y La Ocupación Templaria," *SinEmbargo.Mx*, October 10, 2013, <http://www.sinembargo.mx/10-10-2013/779731> (Accessed 22-12-2017).

⁵⁰³ Agencias, "Ejecutan a Reportero Gráfico En Michoacán," *El Siglo de Torreon*, March 10, 2006, <https://www.elsiglodetorreon.com.mx/noticia/201339.ejecutan-a-reportero-grafico-en-michoacan.html> (Accessed 22-12-2017); Redacción, "Ejecutan de Dos Tiros a Exfotógrafo de La Voz de Michoacán," *Proceso MX*, March 10, 2006, <http://www.proceso.com.mx/?p=215610> (Accessed 22-12-2017); Jaime Marquez, "Diputado Pide Licencia Para Encarar Denuncia," *El Universal*, March 10, 2006, <http://archivo.eluniversal.com.mx/estados/60456.html> (Accessed 22-12-2017).

⁵⁰⁴ Agencias, "Ejecutan a Reportero Gráfico En Michoacán"; Redacción, "Ejecutan de Dos Tiros a Exfotógrafo de La Voz de Michoacán"; Marquez, "Diputado Pide Licencia Para Encarar Denuncia."

⁵⁰⁵ Garcia, "Interview to CO1 in Michoacan (27-Jan-2014)," pt. Minute: 00:34:00; 02:11:00.

⁵⁰⁶ Garcia, pt. Minute: 27:00, 34:00, 54:00; Garcia, "Interview to DD1 (18 January 2014)," pt. Minute: 00:03:17.

⁵⁰⁷ Garcia, "Interview to CO1 in Michoacan (27-Jan-2014)," pt. Minute: 27:00, 34:00, 54:00; Garcia, "Interview to DD1 (18 January 2014)," pt. Minute: 00:03:17.

was dying, could not publish many things.⁵⁰⁸ Even if accurate information was reported by the national newspapers, it had a null effect in Michoacan's public sphere, as those news outlets have minimal circulation in the state.⁵⁰⁹ For example, El Universal, one of Mexico's largest and most influential newspapers, only distributes 10 copies in Apatzingan, a municipality of nearly 100,000 people, of which three of them are sold to the population and the rest are bought by local government and media outlets.

Overall, CO1 said, 'the DTO's leaders were intelligent, they knew that in an uninformed society it would be easier to maintain the status-quo.'⁵¹⁰ In fact, it can be argued that the Caballeros Templarios perfectly understood the importance of Laswell's media maxims and how to control the media agenda-setting layers. By intimidating citizens and corrupting journalists and public servants, the DTO left local media with very few sources of information: only a few who knew the facts were willing to speak, and of those, some were murdered after, even before, speaking to the press. Furthermore, with national and international media having very limited penetration in Michoacan, the DTO effectively determined the local media agenda and, potentially, influenced the national one.

Considering this scenario, and building on Rogers, Sanz and Wolfe *et al*'s arguments stating that 'what people know is what they read in the newspapers', that 'the political system functions under a mediatised democracy' and that 'national public policy agenda fluctuates with the volume of media attention to particular issues' (see Chapter 2.2), it becomes unsurprising that there was a

⁵⁰⁸ Garcia, "Interview to CO1 in Michoacan (27-Jan-2014)," pt. Minute: 41:00.

⁵⁰⁹ As explained by DD1. Garcia, "Interview to DD1 (18 January 2014)," pt. Minute: 00:15:06.

⁵¹⁰ Garcia, "Interview to CO1 in Michoacan (27-Jan-2014)," pt. Minute: 00:41:00; 02:30:56.

national political paralysis in/towards Michoacan.⁵¹¹ The autodefensas, however, started to change this media and public sphere scenario.

‘When the autodefensas began their activities, there were threats to stop publishing news about them. However, as the autodefensas expand in number and territorial dominance, the DTO stopped exercising as much pressure over local news agencies as before.’⁵¹² First, knowing that they would not find an echo in the local traditional media, either because of its collusion with criminal groups or due to the DTO’s threats, the autodefensas turned to social media to denounce insecurity and communicate their actions to a wider audience. In this vein, their webpage *Valor por Michoacan* became the space where Mireles constantly accused municipal and state public servants of working for the Caballeros Templarios, and where the *Consejo Michoacano de Autodefensas* communicated its decision to expel the state police corporations from their communities.⁵¹³ Through this mechanism, Pablo Madrid and Lemus argue, Mireles and the autodefensas triggered a national and international interest to their demands: soon, ‘the silence of local media and public servants started to fall.’⁵¹⁴ In words of Vicar Gregorio Lopez, ‘the autodefensas began to understand the media dynamics in order to use them as a mechanism for informing society about their movement.’⁵¹⁵

⁵¹¹ For example, the Deputies members of Mexico’s the Public Security Commission used newspaper reports as one of their main sources of information on social needs. Furthermore, national government institutions in charge of preserving, if not promoting, citizens and societal development, like the National Commission for Human Rights (CNDH), officially stated they did not know about Michoacan and neighbour states’ security and human rights problems until they read about the autodefensas in the newspapers. Garcia, “Interview to Deputy Elizabeth Oswelia Yañez, Secretary of the Public Security Commission of the Chamber of Deputies (LX Legislature) (4-Oct-2013).” CNDH, “Informe Especial Sobre Los Grupos de Autodefensa y La Seguridad Pública En El Estado de Guerrero,” CNDH (Mexico City, 2013), 1–2, http://www.cndh.org.mx/sites/all/doc/Informes/Especiales/2013_IE_grupos_autodefensa.pdf (Accessed 22–12–2017); CNDH, “Informe Especial Sobre Los Grupos de Autodefensa En El Estado de Michoacan y Las Violaciones a Los Derechos Humanos Relacionadas Con El Conflicto.”

⁵¹² Garcia, “Interview to CO1 in Michoacan (27-Jan-2014).”

⁵¹³ Jesus Lemus, *Tierra Sin Dios*, 1st Ed. (Mexico City: Grijalbo, 2015).

⁵¹⁴ Lemus.

⁵¹⁵ Jose–Angel Garcia, “Interview to Vicar Gregorio Lopez, Vicar of Apatzingan, Michoacan” (Apatzingan, 2014), pt. Minute: 00:16:24.

‘They even learnt to ration their information so they could be part of the daily media agenda’, Villalpando said.⁵¹⁶ For instance:

‘In January [the 18th] 2014, the autodefensas secured the house of one of the DTO’s main leaders and organised a press conference in the community of Antunez. They already knew how to do it perfectly, they sent us a press release stating the time and place to meet next morning, and some key points for us to prepare in advance. Next day, they told us the house they secured was of Nazario Moreno, alias *El Chayo*, one of the DTO’s founders. They knew how important this news was as President Calderon’s administration had previously told Mexico and the world *El Chayo* was killed by security forces back in 2010. Next day, they called us all again, they showed us some things, t-shirts, books, and guns which belonged to *El Chayo*; things they had already obtained days ago, the very first day [the 18th]. Then, the day after, they called us back and presented us with the sword that *El Chayo* used in the DTO’s initiation rituals... and so forth. They did that on many occasions, and we could not do anything about it.’⁵¹⁷

Furthermore, whilst government’s information was inaccurate, if available, the ‘autodefensas were capable of providing names and numbers relatively quickly; neither the army, nor the federal police, even less the municipal presidents, talked to people.’⁵¹⁸ What is more, they understood how to limit their negative media coverage. According to various journalists, the autodefensas started ‘to make use of their preferred and most supportive media (e.g. La Jornada and El Universal

⁵¹⁶ Garcia, “Interview to Jorge Villalpando Castro, Video-Journalist for Al-Jazeera and Former Editor of El Universal Media Content.,” pt. Minute: 00:48:28.

⁵¹⁷ Manuel Ajenjo, “El Padre Goyo y El Chayo,” *El Ecomista*, January 20, 2014, <http://eleconomista.com.mx/columnas/columna-especial-politica/2014/01/20/padre-goyo-chayo> (Accessed 22-12-2017); JC Vargas and Miguel Garcia, “Exhiben Excesos de ‘Templarios,’” *Excelsior*, January 19, 2014, <http://www.excelsior.com.mx/nacional/2014/01/19/939075#imagen-6> (Accessed 22-12-2017); Laura Woldenberg, “‘Nuestro Objetivo Principal Es Limpiar de Los Templarios a Los 113 Municipios’, Dice Vocero de Autodefensas,” *Vice*, January 23, 2014, http://www.vice.com/es_mx/read/nuestro-objetivo-principal-es-limpiar-de-los-templarios-a-los-113-municipios-dice-lider-de-autodefensas (Accessed 22-12-2017); Garcia, “Interview to Jorge Villalpando Castro, Video-Journalist for Al-Jazeera and Former Editor of El Universal Media Content.”

⁵¹⁸ A case in point was an autodefensas’ incursion into the town of Coalcoman joined by this researcher on the 25th of May 2013 (see Photo 5). Whilst government reports could only state that federal security forces were dispatched to investigate, the autodefensas were capable of telling journalists, on real-time, the number and place of deaths’, Villalpando confirmed (see Photo 5).⁵¹⁸ Garcia, “Interview to Jorge Villalpando Castro, Video-Journalist for Al-Jazeera and Former Editor of El Universal Media Content (15-Jan-2014),” pt. Minute: 00:55:35.

newspapers) whilst directly refusing access to those media channels they considered gave them negative coverage (e.g. Televisa and TV Azteca).⁵¹⁹

Photo 5. Autodefensas incursion in Coacomán, 25 May 2013.



Source: Garcia, "Interview to Jorge Villalpando Castro, Video-Journalist for Al-Jazeera and Former Editor of El Universal Media Content.



⁵¹⁹ Garcia, pt. Minute: 01:07:00, 00:41:00.

Through its actions, CO1 and DD1 stated, the autodefensas did contribute to improve freedom of expression in the state. By October 2013, CO1 said, the ‘discussion tables between DTOs and media had stopped, as the DTOs were busier with other things.’⁵²⁰ With the assassination or apprehension of some of the DTO’s media managers, ‘media could also start publishing everything again, even mentioning the names of the criminals wanted by the authorities. It was a noticeable difference’, DD1 added.⁵²¹ ‘Society started to be informed again and they trusted more in the power of civil society.’⁵²² However, to what extent are these statements true? How noticeable was the autodefensas’ impact on the liberalisation of the media agenda? These are some of the questions that the following sub-chapter intends to answer through multiple quantitative methods.

6.2.1 Autodefensas: freeing both media and public sphere.

Building on the previous section, this sub-chapter looks at nearly 10,000 news reports about the Caballeros Templarios DTO, Michoacan autodefensas and the government’s actions related to them in order to measure the autodefensas’ impact on media and government agendas.

Through a qualitative study of the news reports published in *El Universal*, *El Norte* and *Reforma* national newspapers, but also in *Cambio de Michoacan* local newspaper, this thesis found that between March 11th, 2011 (i.e. day of the emergence of the Caballeros Templarios) and June 31st, 2015 (i.e. allegedly the end of the autodefensas uprising), 8,823 reports were published on the matter:

⁵²⁰ Garcia, “Interview to DD1 (18 January 2014),” pt. Minute: 00:17:40.

⁵²¹ For instance, *El Pantera* was killed on the 27th of February 2014 and Nazario Moreno on the 10th of March 2014. Garcia, pt. Minute: 00:21:19.

⁵²² Garcia, “Interview to CO1 in Michoacan (27-Jan-2014),” pt. Minute: 1:02:00.

Table 23. Media coverage of the "Autodefensas" and "Caballeros Templarios" DTO (2011–2015)

	Autodefensas	Templarios	Total
Reforma	1,734	1,312	3,046
Cambio de Michoacan	1,214	944	2,158
El Universal	1,008	827	1,835
El Norte	1,019	765	1,784
Total	4,975	3,848	8,823

Source: Author's own elaboration with information from Nexis Database and Cambio de Michoacan, "Cambio de Michoacan Newspaper's Search Engine," Cambio de Michoacan, n.d., <http://www.cambiodemichoacan.com.mx/buscar.php> (Accessed 22–12–2017).

A figure that allows stating that the autodefensas and Caballeros Templarios DTO were newsworthy topics, however, Michoacan's challenging security sphere did limit the freedom of press. In this vein, local news reports on the DTO remained quite restricted between 2011 and the beginning of 2014, supporting the local journalists' arguments discussed in this chapter's previous sub-section. Several events back up these findings, including the following two:

1. Journalists: spread our message, or you will pay with your flesh. Citizens: Deaths will begin if PAN arrives to power.

From May to August 2011, Michoacan was involved in pre-electoral exercises and from the 31st of August to the 8th November 2011 in formal electoral campaigns that lead to the election of Fausto Vallejo (*PRI*) as Michoacan's Governor. Vallejo's campaign and governorship, though, was always suspected of having links to the Caballeros Templarios, a collusion that became evident when on the 12th of November 2011, the Caballeros Templarios published an advert on Michoacan's *AM* pushing citizens to vote for *PRI*.⁵²³

⁵²³ For instance, Jorge Monroy found out that between 2009 and 2011 Fausto Vallejo's close collaborators actively negotiated and sought the DTO's support for his campaign. Jorge Monroy, "Reyna Tenía Una Red de Negociadores Con Los Templarios," *Economista, El*, April 10, 2014, <http://economista.com.mx/seguridad-publica/2014/04/10/reyna-tenia-red-negociadores-templarios> (Accessed 22–12–2017).

‘To the people of Michoacan: we do not want the *PAN* in any level of government, we will not stop until we bring the *PAN* to standstill. Deaths will begin if they [*PAN*] arrive to power, heads and dismembered bodies will appear. To journalists: tell the truth and spread our message or you will pay with your flesh. Do not wear any merchandise or t-shirts with the *PAN*’s logo, we do not want innocent people to die.’⁵²⁴

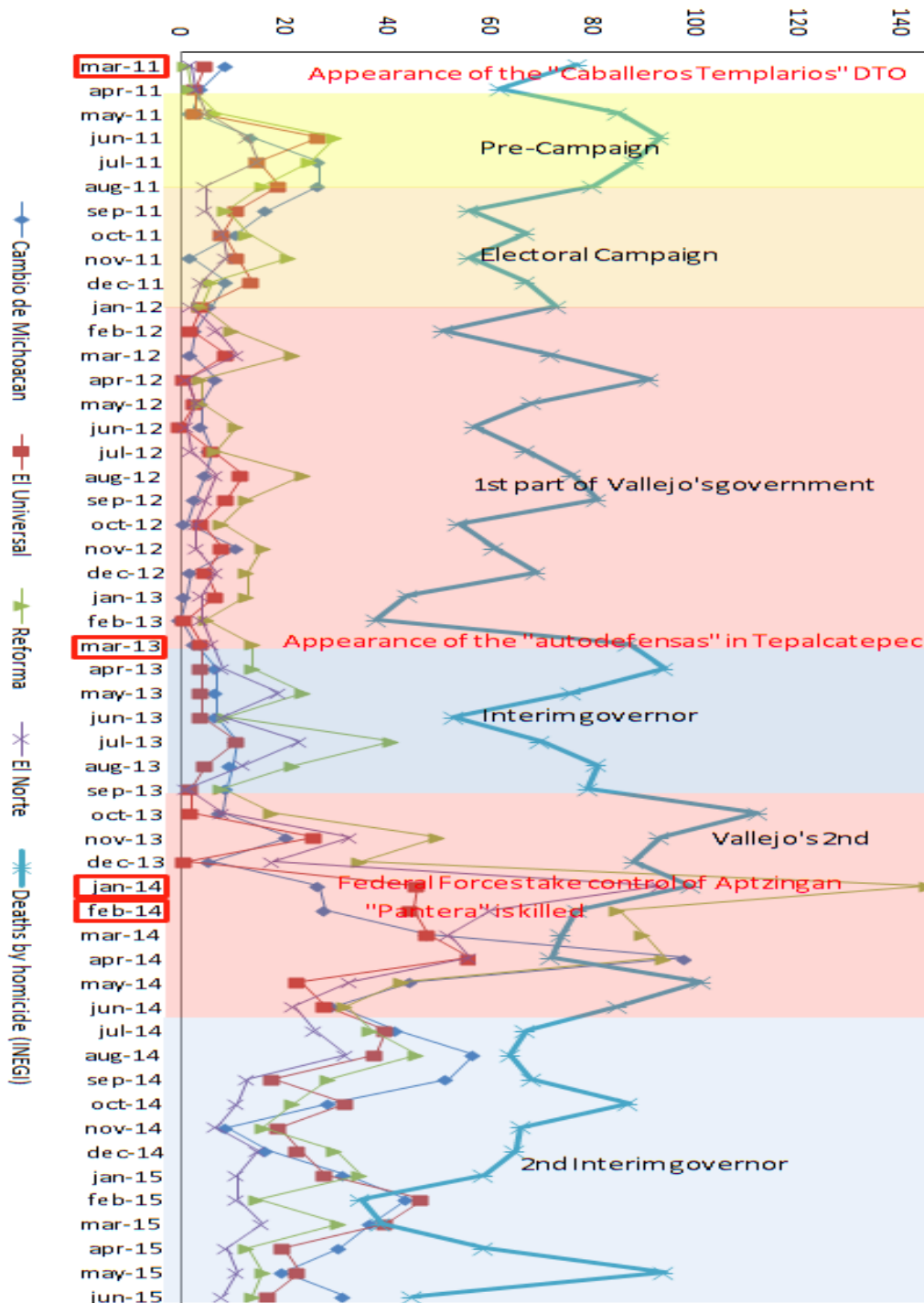
2. ‘Writing about the Caballeros Templarios became forbidden for the local media.’ ‘The Governor was their puppet.’

According to DD1 and CO1, with ‘Fausto Vallejo serving as a puppet of the Caballeros Templarios, ‘writing about the DTO became forbidden for the local media.’⁵²⁵ In this vein, before the DTO acquired considerable power in the State (i.e. between March 2011 and September 2011), *Diario de Michoacan* published an average of 14.2 news reports per month about it, more than any of the three national newspapers (see Annex 9). However, once Vallejo assumed office and the Caballeros Templarios cemented their dominance on the state, local media coverage about the DTO’s atrocities reduced to an average of 8.9 news reports per month. Once the autodefensas’ presence became more notorious across the state (i.e. from April 2014 onwards), *Cambio de Michoacan*’s reporting on the topic started to overcome the national newspapers again (See Annex 9 and Graph 30).

⁵²⁴ Lemus, *Tierra Sin Dios*.

⁵²⁵ Garcia, “Interview to Vicar Gregorio Lopez, Vicar of Apatzingan, Michoacan”; Garcia, “Interview to the Deputy Director of a Local Newspaper in Michoacan”; Garcia, “Interview to CO1 in Michoacan (27-Jan-2014),” pt. Minute: 1:00:07.

Graph 30. Homicides in Michoacan vis-à-vis news reports on Caballeros Templarios and autodefensas (by month and newspaper 2011–2015).



Source: Author's own elaboration with information from INEGI, "Mortalidad Conjunto de Datos: Defunciones Por Homicidios"; Michoacan, "Cambio de Michoacan Newspaper's Search Engine."

Some could argue these differences in media coverage could have been the result of a reduction in both the news slot for local media and the DTO and autodefensas' importance as newsworthy topics. Evidence, however, disproves these arguments. First, the daily printed version of *Cambio de Michoacan* contained a sustained average of 68 news reports daily between October 2011 and June 2015.⁵²⁶ Secondly, considering that 'crime-news is a gift to all the news-hungry editors who depend on exciting the public's imagination to turn a profit' and that 'bloody news' are the main selling point of Michoacan's local media', it can be argued that due to their actions, both the Caballeros Templarios and Autodefensas remained being newsworthy topics.⁵²⁷ For instance:

- ❖ By May 2013, local and national business organisations continued regarding the Caballeros Templarios as 'one of their main concerns.'⁵²⁸
- ❖ Between August 2012 and August 2013, more than 100 families were forced to migrate to other states in the country.⁵²⁹
- ❖ Data from Mexico's National Institute of Statistics (INEGI) and the Executive Secretariat of the National System of Public Security illustrates that homicides related to organised crime continued rising throughout the DTOs and Governor Vallejo's rule (see Graph 31).

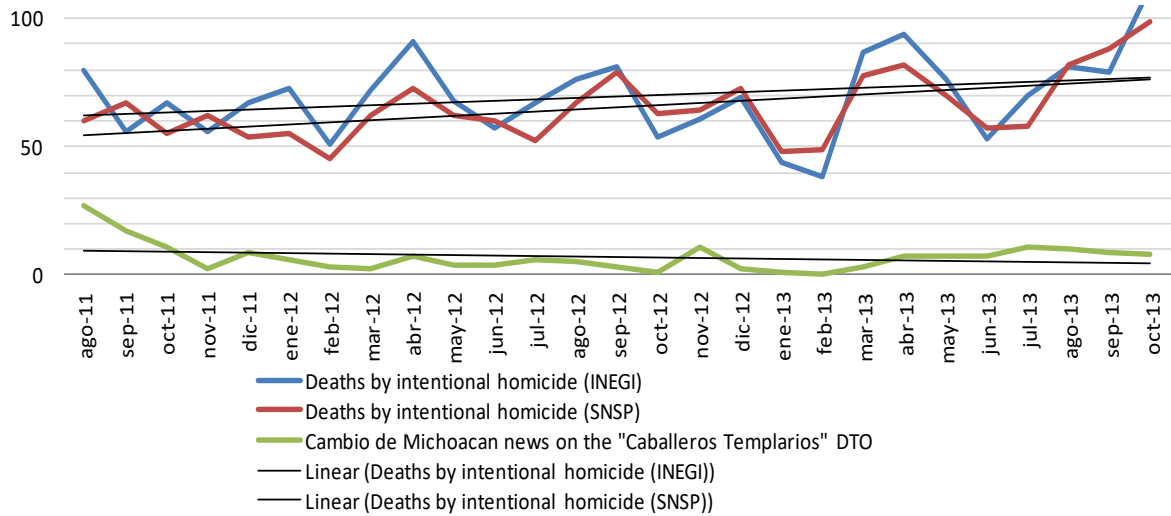
⁵²⁶ For example, the printed versions of Monday 18th and Monday 25th of February 2013 included 57 and 62 news reports, and the printed version of the 14th and 21st of April 2014 contained 58 and 60 news reports. These figures exclude those reports published on the newspaper's Entertainment (*Escenarios* in Spanish) section and columns of opinion, but include those contained in the newspaper's supplement *Municipios*. See Annex 9.

⁵²⁷ McCreery, "The Monster and the Press."

⁵²⁸ Univision, "Los Caballeros Templarios Imponen Su Ley En Michoacán," *UNIVISION*, May 9, 2013, <http://www.univision.com/noticias/narcotrafico/los-caballeros-templarios-imponen-su-ley-en-michoacan> (Accessed 22-12-2017).

⁵²⁹ AFP, "Al Menos 40 Familias Desplazadas En Oeste de México Por Miedo Al Narco," *El Tiempo*, August 21, 2013, <http://www.eltiempo.com/archivo/documento/CMS-13005590> (Accessed 22-12-2017).

Graph 31. Deaths by intentional homicide vis-a-vis Cambio de Michoacan coverage to the Caballeros Templarios



Source: Author’s own elaboration with information from INEGI, “Mortalidad Conjunto de Datos: Defunciones Por Homicidios”; Secretariado Ejecutivo del Sistema Nacional de Seguridad Pública, “Incidencia Delictiva Del Fuero Común” (Mexico City, 2015), <http://secretariadoejecutivo.gob.mx/incidencia-delictiva/incidencia-delictiva-fuero-comun.php> (Accessed 22-12-2017); Michoacan, “Cambio de Michoacan Newspaper’s Search Engine.”

Pearson’s analyses did not reveal a significant correlation between the number of homicides and the news published on the DTO and autodefensas between March 2011 and June 2015 either: for homicides *vis-à-vis* media coverage to Caballeros Templarios, the Pearson’s coefficient was almost inexistent (i.e. $r=-0.009$) and *vis-à-vis* media coverage to the autodefensas it was of only $r=0.212$. (Table 24).⁵³⁰

⁵³⁰ Similarly, no significant correlation was found when divided the time frame into three parts: pre-during-post *autodefensas* movement. This indicates that level of homicides related to the conflict, at least on their own, did not determine media coverage in Michoacan (see Annex 10).

Table 24. Pearson correlations between number of homicides and the media coverage given to Caballeros Templarios DTO and Autodefensas (March 2011 and June 2015).

		Homicides	Autodefensas
Homicides	Correlación de Pearson	1	.212
	Sig. (bilateral)		.132
	N	52	52
Autodefensas	Correlación de Pearson	.212	1
	Sig. (bilateral)	.132	
	N	52	52

		Homicides	DTO
Homicides	Correlación de Pearson	1	-.009
	Sig. (bilateral)		.949
	N	52	52
DTO	Correlación de Pearson	-.009	1
	Sig. (bilateral)	.949	
	N	52	52

Therefore, it is possible to state that as illustrated by the qualitative data on the previous sub-chapter, the changes in Cambio de Michoacan’s reporting on the DTO did not conform to an unavailability of information, but to the limited freedom of expression and constrained public sphere that prevailed in Michoacan:

‘while people were being killed in Michoacan, the authorities at state and municipal levels, being colluded with the DTO, wanted to limit the information on the criminal.’⁵³¹ ‘If an international or national media outlet arrived, they (i.e. the DTO), colluded with state government, organised interviews with *La Tuta* and more. They were so eager to do this that if someone from the BBC, CNN or AP arrived in town, *La Tuta* asked for them, they were received, escorted and given interviews. But for us, this was restricted. *La Tuta* wanted to produce an image abroad portraying the DTO as a social fighter,’ CO1 and Lopez said.⁵³²

⁵³¹ Garcia, “Interview to CO1 in Michoacan (27-Jan-2014)” ; Garcia, “Interview to Raul Lopez Mendoza, Journalist of Cambio de Michoacan (28-Jan-2014).”

⁵³² Garcia, “Interview to CO1 in Michoacan (27-Jan-2014),” pt. Minute: 00:35:15; 00:23:24.

With scarce information being filtered by local media, the ‘inter–media agenda–setting process’ of which Fogarty and McCombs talk about was only partly activated, as national and international media did not have any material to publish or informative lead to follow, DD1 said:

‘It was not possible for us to share information with reporters from other media’,⁵³³
 ‘Local media used to have the information but could not publish it, and national media was incorrectly portraying an image of “everything is fine’ in Michoacan.’⁵³⁴

Nevertheless, as the autodefensas movement rose (March 2013 – Feb 2014), the ‘inter–media agenda–setting process’ started to work in the way that McCombs and Fogarty would have expected, with Pearson analyses showing an almost perfect positive correlation between national and local media coverages of the Caballeros Templarios (i.e. $r=.871$ and bigger, see tables 25 to 27).

Table 25. Correlation between local and national media coverage of Caballeros Templarios, previous to the autodefensas movement.

		Cambio	Norte	Reforma	Universal
Cambio	Correlación de Pearson	1	.368	.345	.645**
	Sig. (bilateral)		.077	.099	.001
	N	24	24	24	24
Norte	Correlación de Pearson	.368	1	.827**	.648**
	Sig. (bilateral)	.077		.000	.001
	N	24	24	24	24
Reforma	Correlación de Pearson	.345	.827**	1	.732**
	Sig. (bilateral)	.099	.000		.000
	N	24	24	24	24
Universal	Correlación de Pearson	.645**	.648**	.732**	1
	Sig. (bilateral)	.001	.001	.000	
	N	24	24	24	24

** . La correlación es significativa en el nivel 0,01 (2 colas).

⁵³³ Garcia, pt. Minute: 2:28; Garcia, “Interview to DD1 (18 January 2014),” pt. Minute: 00:15:17.

⁵³⁴ Garcia, “Interview to CO1 in Michoacan (27-Jan-2014)” ; Garcia, “Interview to DD1 (18 January 2014).”

Table 26. Correlation between local and national media coverage of Caballeros Templarios, during the autodefensas movement.

		Cambio	Norte	Reforma	Universal
Cambio	Correlación de Pearson	1	.894**	.871**	.973**
	Sig. (bilateral)		.000	.000	.000
	N	12	12	12	12
Norte	Correlación de Pearson	.894**	1	.994**	.940**
	Sig. (bilateral)	.000		.000	.000
	N	12	12	12	12
Reforma	Correlación de Pearson	.871**	.994**	1	.917**
	Sig. (bilateral)	.000	.000		.000
	N	12	12	12	12
Universal	Correlación de Pearson	.973**	.940**	.917**	1
	Sig. (bilateral)	.000	.000	.000	
	N	12	12	12	12

** . La correlación es significativa en el nivel 0,01 (2 colas).

Table 27. Correlation between local and national media coverage of Caballeros Templarios, after the autodefensas movement.

		Cambio	Norte	Reforma	Universal
Cambio	Correlación de Pearson	1	.765**	.746**	.683**
	Sig. (bilateral)		.001	.001	.004
	N	16	16	16	16
Norte	Correlación de Pearson	.765**	1	.964**	.700**
	Sig. (bilateral)	.001		.000	.003
	N	16	16	16	16
Reforma	Correlación de Pearson	.746**	.964**	1	.697**
	Sig. (bilateral)	.001	.000		.003
	N	16	16	16	16
Universal	Correlación de Pearson	.683**	.700**	.697**	1
	Sig. (bilateral)	.004	.003	.003	
	N	16	16	16	16

** . La correlación es significativa en el nivel 0,01 (2 colas).

*Tables in Spanish not translated into English to ensure validity of the data. Content equates to that produced by SPSS reports in English.

Having said this, it is possible to state that the Caballeros Templarios DTO effectively impeded the local media to server its most basic function: to connect the individual with the state and act as the spiritual mirror in which a people could see itself and the spirit of the state. By restricting freedom of expression, the DTO prevented Michoacan's society from having an informed mind, participating in public debates and triggering socio-political changes. In other words, the criminal group dominated Michoacan's public sphere, and as such, a fully functional citizenry could not flourish in Michoacan.⁵³⁵ Although the emergence of a social force capable of shaping the policies of the state seemed to be an unfeasible goal, the autodefensas ended showing this was not an impossible task.

⁵³⁵ A. McKee, *The Public sphere: An introduction*, p.7; Dahlgren, *Television and the Public sphere: Citizenship, Democracy and the Media*, 8.

6.3 The autodefensas policy outcomes: *public power* setting the agenda?

'I think you have arrived in the key moment for your study. This is the moment when civil society starts to gain power; we have reached such a level of social degradation that society was pushed to solve things itself. And this is what the autodefensas are doing', CO1 said in 2014.⁵³⁶

Since the day of their uprising in February 2013 the autodefensas in Michoacán incessantly fought against the Caballeros Templarios, but also government forces. Nevertheless, until January 2014 the autodefensas had failed to achieve their three main demands:⁵³⁷

- 1) Security:
 - ❖ The installation of security check-points by the army and federal police across the municipalities under their control.
- 2) Their legalisation as autodefensas.⁵³⁸
- 3) The capture of the 7 leaders of the Caballeros Templarios DTO: Servando Gomez (*La Tuta*), Nazario Moreno, Enrique Plancarte, Dionicio Loya Plancarte, Jesus Vazquez Macías, *El Tena* and *El Chicano*.⁵³⁹

The year 2014, however, proved to be pivotal for the autodefensas' survival and goals. On the 4th of January 2014, Mireles suffered an airplane accident in Michoacan, incapacitating him from being involved in the movement. Consequently, his aide, Estanislao Beltran, aka 'Papa Smurf', took control of the autodefensas' leadership. Regrettably, CO1 recalls, Estanislao was not as good and charismatic communicator as Mireles, diminishing the autodefensas' media impact.⁵⁴⁰ On the 10th

⁵³⁶ Garcia, "Interview to CO1 in Michoacan.," pt. Minute: 00:00:04; Garcia, "Interview to Jorge Villalpando Castro, Video-Journalist for Al-Jazeera and Former Editor of El Universal Media Content.," pt. Minute: 00:28:00.

⁵³⁷ Informador.Mx, "Autodefensas de Michoacán Se Expanden a Churumuco," *Informador. Mx*, December 29, 2013, <https://www.informador.mx/Mexico/Autodefensas-de-Michoacan-se-expanden-a-Churumuco-20131229-0037.html> (Accessed 22-12-2017).

⁵³⁸ For more information, please refer to the following news reports and political analyses. Velez, "La Huida de Los Templarios." Corona, "La Resistencia de Las *Autodefensas* Al Desarme Tensa El Conflicto En Michoacán"; Animal Político, "Mireles Niega Apoyo Al Desarme (Video)"; Animal Político, "Dejaremos Las Armas Cuando Se Restablezca El Estado de Derecho En Michoacán": Mireles (Video Completo)"; Redacción, "Autodefensas Condicionan Desarme a Caída de Siete Líderes 'Templarios'"; La Jornada, *El Pueblo Que Venció Al Crimen Organizado. Testimonio de Un Policía Comunitario En Michoacán*.

⁵³⁹ CNN Mexico, "La Muerte de Plancarte Deja a 'la Tuta' Como El Último Líder 'Templario.'"

⁵⁴⁰ Garcia, "Interview to CO1 in Michoacan (27-Jan-2014)."

of January 2014, Michoacan's Governor, Fausto Vallejo, formally requested the federal government's military support for public security provision by which:

- ❖ Federal government took responsibility over the provision of security in the State.
- ❖ 'The autodefensas were asked to either join the police force or disarm' by Osorio Chong, Mexico's Minister of the Interior.⁵⁴¹
- ❖ Federal government 'disbanded local and state government powers', sent 1,500 more police officers to the state and created the new *Commission for Security and Integral Development for Michoacan* under the command of Commissioner Alfredo Castillo, part of President Peña Nieto's right-hand men.⁵⁴²

With Commissioner Castillo controlling the functioning of Michoacan's government, the federal security forces took control over the security of 27 municipalities, pressing the autodefensas to cooperate more closely with federal government. In this vein, on the 15th of January 2014, with Mireles still out of the picture, Commissioner Castillo, Governor Fausto Vallejo, Hipolito Mora and Estanislao Beltran, signed the first agreement to begin the autodefensas institutionalisation through their incorporation into Michoacan's Rural Defence Corps.⁵⁴³ An accord based on the following points:

1. This agreement will work towards the institutionalisation of the self-defence groups through their incorporation into the 'Rural Defence Corps', under the control of Mexico's Ministry of Defence.

⁵⁴¹ Redacción Animal Político, "Fuerzas Federales Ya Empiezan a Llegar a Michoacán," *Animal Político*, January 13, 2014, <http://www.animalpolitico.com/2014/01/gobierno-emplaza-autodefensas-de-michoacan-dejar-las-armas-se-hara-cargo-de-la-seguridad/> (Accessed 22-12-2017); BBC News, "Mexican Police Start to Disarm Vigilantes in Michoacan," *BBC News*, January 14, 2014, <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-latin-america-25724986> (Accessed 22-12-2017).

⁵⁴² President Enrique Peña Nieto, "DECRETO Por El Que Se Crea La Comisión Para La Seguridad y El Desarrollo Integral En El Estado de Michoacán." (2014), http://www.dof.gob.mx/nota_detalle.php?codigo=5329743&fecha=15/01/2014 (Accessed 22-12-2017); Jorge Monroy, "En Michoacán, EPN Aplicó Desaparición de Poderes de Facto," *El Economista*, January 19, 2014, <http://eleconomista.com.mx/sociedad/2014/01/19/michoacan-epn-aplico-desaparicion-poderes-facto> (Accessed 22-12-2017).

⁵⁴³ CNDH, "Informe Especial Sobre Los Grupos de Autodefensa En El Estado de Michoacan y Las Violaciones a Los Derechos Humanos Relacionadas Con El Conflicto.," pt. 198.

2. The autodefensas' members would have the option to become part of the Municipal Police forces, as long as they complied with all relevant law regulations.
3. Self-defence groups would register all their firearms, and, in exchange, Mexico's Ministry of Defence would provide them with all the tools they required for their operation, transportation and communication.
4. Government would audit the expenditure of the public resources given to each municipality.
5. There would be a rotation of the representatives of the judiciary power in each municipality.
6. The recently created Commission for Michoacan would maintain a constant communication with the municipal authorities to provide the required support.
7. For those members of the autodefensas who have been detained for carrying illegal guns and freed under provisional liberty, these agreements would give them the possibility to attend their legal procedures in Michoacan rather than in another state.
8. Law enforcement against those municipal and state public servants involved in criminal activities.

This move brought both positive and negative consequences for the autodefensas' demands.⁵⁴⁴

Positively, the autodefensas began to achieve one of the movement's goals: The installation of security check-points by the army and federal police across the municipalities under their control (see Map 1). Since the Commissioner's arrival to Michoacan, the autodefensas started to join efforts with federal security forces in order to extend their fight against DTOs: whilst 'the self-defence groups executed the action, police forces/army provided additional assistance if required', Villalpando said and this researcher witnessed.⁵⁴⁵ Government's approach to disarmament also changed. Although government continued publicly stating that the autodefensas' disarmament was a precondition for further negotiations, *de facto* government allowed citizens to continue being

⁵⁴⁴ Redacción, "Durante El Nuevo Operativo de Las Fuerzas Federales En Michoacán van 110 Detencione," *La Jornada*, January 27, 2014, <http://www.jornada.unam.mx/2014/01/27/politica/015n1pol> (Accessed 22–12–2017).

⁵⁴⁵ Garcia, "Interview to Jorge Villalpando Castro, Video-Journalist for Al-Jazeera and Former Editor of El Universal Media Content."

armed for their protection. In words of CO1 and Vicar Gregorio Lopez, after the tacit agreement ‘the autodefensas used to put their guns down when the media was taking photos, but citizens remained armed in agreement with the Marines.’⁵⁴⁶

Map 1. Autodefensas and federal security forces working together.



Source: Charles Parkinson, “‘Nuevo Cartel’ En Michoacán Refuerza Temores Por La Criminalización de Las Autodefensas,” *InsightCrime* (Mexico City, May 2014), <http://es.insightcrime.org/noticias-del-dia/nuevo-cartel-michoacan-refuerza-temores-criminalizacion-autodefensas> (Accessed 22-12-2017).⁵⁴⁷

According to the – then – Federal Commissioner for Public Security, this increasing cooperative relation lead to the capture of Jesus Vazquez Macias, alias *El Toro* (in January 20th, 2014) and Dionisio

⁵⁴⁶ García, “Interview to Vicar Gregorio Lopez, Vicar of Apatzingan, Michoacan”; García, “Interview to CO1 in Michoacan.”; García, “Interview to the Deputy Director of a Local Newspaper in Michoacan”; García, “Interview to Jorge Villalpando Castro, Video-Journalist for Al-Jazeera and Former Editor of El Universal Media Content.”

⁵⁴⁷ Charles Parkison, “‘Nuevo Cartel’ En Michoacán Refuerza Temores Por La Criminalización de Las Autodefensas,” *InsightCrime* (Mexico City, May 2014), <http://es.insightcrime.org/noticias-del-dia/nuevo-cartel-michoacan-refuerza-temores-criminalizacion-autodefensas> (Accessed 22-12-2017).

Plancarte, aka *El Tío* (in January 27th, 2014), two of the names in the autodefensas' most wanted list.⁵⁴⁸ With this, the self-defence groups were on track to achieve another of its main goals: the capture of the 7 leaders of the Caballeros Templarios DTO. Thus, further actions were put in place to accomplishing their third goal: their legalisation as autodefensas: 'the autodefensas wanted to enlist, that [government] gave us some budget, registration and a uniform to wear, to be legal, and we are working towards that', Vicar Gregorio Lopez stated.⁵⁴⁹ Although the agreement of the 15th of January did not last, as the autodefensas continued with their incursions without registering in the Rural Defence Corps, cooperation between government and autodefensas did not cease. Therefore, on the 26th of January 2014, both sides signed a second agreement, witnessed by Maria Elena Morera, from Causa en Comun, and other CSOs' representatives. Rather than forcing a sudden disarmament, the new accord contained only four mutually accepted prescriptions (see Photo 6):⁵⁵⁰

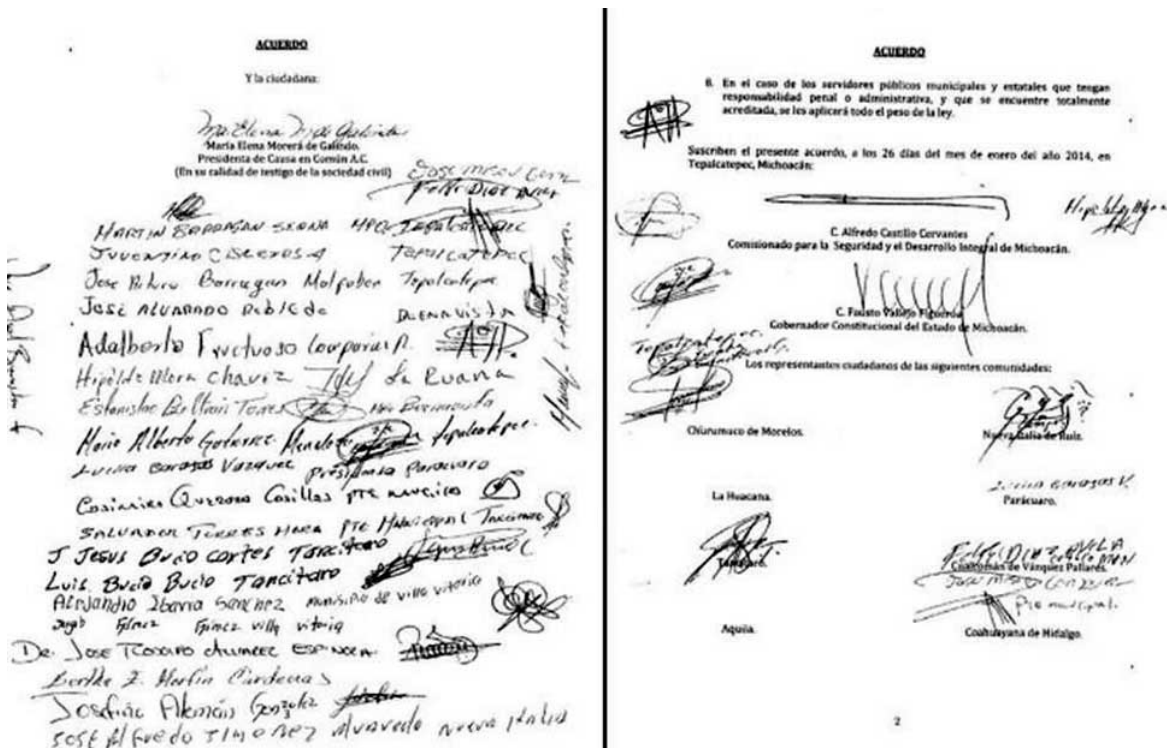
1. The self-defence groups would not enter Morelia (Michoacan's capital), nor any other main city (apart from those they have already taken).
2. The groups would only be present in road filters or revision points, always in collaboration with federal forces.
3. There would not be any new autodefensas' incursions without being agreed with the Federal and State authorities.
4. [More importantly, the agreement treated them as equal by stating] Federal and State authorities, and autodefensas would work in a coordinated and transparent way to recover order and tranquillity in Michoacan.

⁵⁴⁸ Benito Jiménez, "Gobierno Pacta Con Líderes Legalizar Autodefensas En Michoacán," *Terra*, February 27, 2014, <http://noticias.terra.com.mx/mexico/gobierno-pacta-con-lideres-legalizar-autodefensas-en-michoacan,0b6bfabc236d3410VgnVCM5000009ccceb0aRCRD.html> (Accessed 22-12-2017).

⁵⁴⁹ Garcia, "Interview to Vicar Gregorio Lopez, Vicar of Apatzingan, Michoacan," pt. Minute: 00:02:59.

⁵⁵⁰ CNDH, "Informe Especial Sobre Los Grupos de Autodefensa En El Estado de Michoacan y Las Violaciones a Los Derechos Humanos Relacionadas Con El Conflicto.," 201.

Photo 6. Second agreement between the autodefensas and Mexico's government (26 Jan 2014)



Source: Reforma, “Exhiben Acuerdo Castillo–Autodefensas,” Diario Mx, March 3, 2016, http://diario.mx/Nacional/2016-03-03_12aaa23d/exhiben-acuerdo-castillo_autodefensas/#DmxBox (Accessed 22-12-2017).

On the negative side, however, this further collaboration with government exacerbated internal disputes within the autodefensas movement. First, on the 4th of February 2014, the Autodefensas’ Council officially named Estanislao Beltran as their spokesperson.⁵⁵¹ An action that, Mireles said, stopped the communication between both leaders.⁵⁵² Secondly, on the 22nd of February 2014, Hipolito Mora, Vicar Gregorio Lopez and the leaders of 10 autodefensas groups across Michoacan

⁵⁵¹ Jorge Gil, “Estanislao Beltrán Releva a Mireles Como Vocero de Autodefensas,” *Proceso*, February 5, 2014, <http://www.proceso.com.mx/364151/estanislao-beltran-releva-a-mireles-como-vocero-de-autodefensas> (Accessed 22-12-2017).

⁵⁵² Veronica Macias, “Mireles Acusa a Castillo de Asociarse Con Los Criminales,” *El Ecomista*, May 29, 2014, <http://eleconomista.com.mx/sociedad/2014/05/29/mireles-acusa-castillo-asociarse-criminales> (Accessed 22-12-2017).

accused Estanislao Beltran of having links with a new DTO, i.e. the *Viagras*.⁵⁵³ With Mireles returning to Michoacan on the 24th of February, two sets of rival autodefensas movements developed in Michoacan.⁵⁵⁴

Due to the increasing frictions between autodefensas groups, a third agreement was signed on the 3rd of March 2014. In this agreement government ceased referring to the movement as autodefensas and started framing them as ‘groups of organised citizens:’⁵⁵⁵

- 1) The groups of organised citizens will share information with the Commission for Michoacan’s Development and Integral Development, which would be managed by Mexico’s Intelligence and National Security Centre (CISEN).
- 2) The groups of organised citizens, in coordination with federal authorities, will remove the barricades where they are no longer needed.
- 3) The groups of organised citizens will inform the authorities about the municipalities where they still do not have presence, so authorities can arrest those groups that portray themselves as autodefensas.
- 4) The groups of organised citizens reiterated their commitment to incursion in urban areas.
- 5) The groups of organised citizens commit to conduct a ‘cleaning process’ to expel people who are not part of the movement.

With some autodefensas being aligned to this agreement (i.e. those lead by Estanislao and *The American*) and others being in disagreement (those following Mireles and Hipolito Mora), further tensions arose. On the 6th of March 6th, Vicar Gregorio Lopez was removed from the Autodefensas

⁵⁵³ Lo del Narco, “Lo Del Narco” (Chicago: Lo del narco, 2014), http://lodelnarco.blogspot.com/2014/05/historias-del-narco_12.html (Accessed 22-12-2017).

⁵⁵⁴ Informador.Mx, “Autodefensas Rompen Con Estanislao Beltrán,” *Informador. Mx*, February 21, 2014, <https://www.informador.mx/Mexico/Autodefensas-rompen-con-Estanislao-Beltran-20140222-0141.html> (Accessed 22-12-2017); Redacción, “‘El Americano’ Aparece En Video Con ‘La Tuta’ y El Líder de ‘Los Viagra’ (+video),” *24 Horas*, August 27, 2014, <http://www.24-horas.mx/el-americano-aparece-en-video-con-la-tuta-y-el-lider-de-los-viagra-video/> (Accessed 22-12-2017); Staff, “La Tierra Caliente: Entrevista Con El Líder de Los ‘Los Viagras,’” *Vice News*, March 19, 2015, https://www.vice.com/es_mx/article/la-tierra-caliente-entrevista-con-el-lider-de-los-viagras (Accessed 22-12-2017).

⁵⁵⁵ CNDH, “Informe Especial Sobre Los Grupos de Autodefensa En El Estado de Michoacan y Las Violaciones a Los Derechos Humanos Relacionadas Con El Conflicto.,” pt. 201.

Council and announced his departure to Italy.⁵⁵⁶ One week later, Hipolito Mora's group (i.e. La Ruana's autodefensas) confronted Luis Antonio Torres' (*the American*) group in the community of Tepalcatepec, leading to Hipolito Mora's arrest on the 11th of March.⁵⁵⁷

Although public support continued rising (from 42% of citizens agreeing with them in August 2013 to 53% in March 2014), due to the increasingly noticeable divisions inside the movement, the percentage of Mexicans agreeing with the government's demand for disarmament also rose (from 29% in January 2014 to 53% in April 2014, see Graph 32).⁵⁵⁸ Furthermore, institutions like Mexico's CNDH increasingly pronounced against the continuous expansion of these armed groups stating 'there was no justification for the existence of groups taking justice in their own hands.'⁵⁵⁹

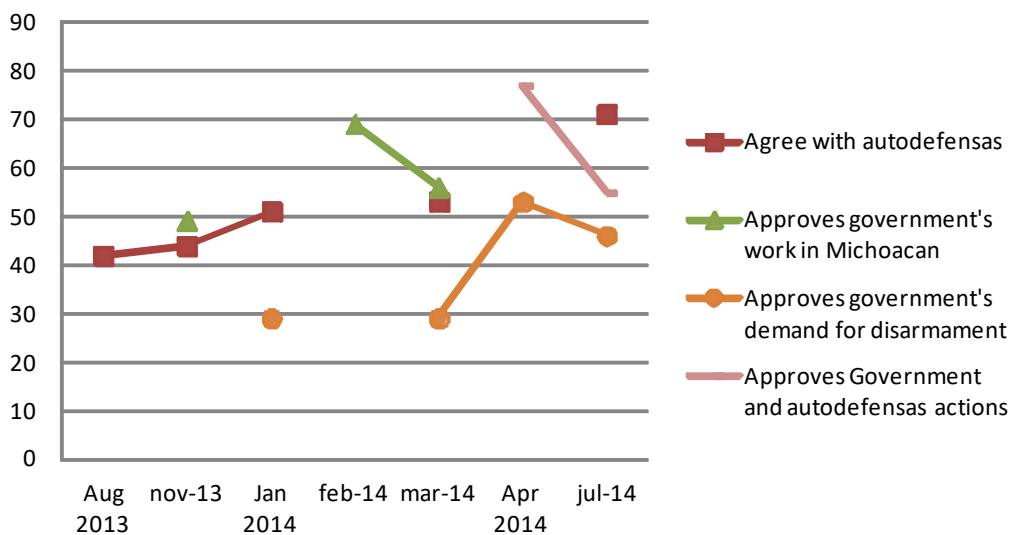
⁵⁵⁶ Redacción, "Hipólito Mora Reconoce Problemas Entre Autodefensas," *24 Horas*, February 9, 2014, <http://www.24-horas.mx/hipolito-mora-reconoce-problemas-entre-autodefensas/> (Accessed 22-12-2017); Redacción, "Desconocen Al 'Padre Goyo' Como Interlocutor de Autodefensas," *Proceso*, March 8, 2014, <http://www.proceso.com.mx/366716/excluyen-al-padre-goyo-como-interlocutor-de-autodefensas> (Accessed 22-12-2017).

⁵⁵⁷ Juan Becerra, Liliana Padilla, and Marco Coronel, "Mora, 'El Cacique Asesino', Contra 'El Americano', 'El Narco Sicario'.," *Milenio*, March 12, 2014, http://www.milenio.com/policia/Mora-cacique-asesino-Americano-sicario_0_260973918.html (Accessed 22-12-2017); Paula Chouza, "El Portavoz de Las Autodefensas Hipólito Mora, Detenido Por Homicidio," *El País*, March 12, 2014, http://internacional.elpais.com/internacional/2014/03/12/actualidad/1394599883_151918.html (Accessed 22-12-2017); Ernesto Martínez, "Detienen a Hipólito Mora Por La Muerte de El Pollo y José Luis Torres," *La Jornada*, March 12, 2014, <http://www.jornada.unam.mx/2014/03/12/politica/013n1pol> (Accessed 22-12-2017).

⁵⁵⁸ CESOP, "Capsula Semanal de Opinion Pública, 268" (Mexico City, 2014); CESOP, "Capsula Semanal de Opinion Publica 275" (Mexico City, 2014).

⁵⁵⁹ Jessica Corona, "No Hay Justificación Para Autodefensas En Michoacan: CNDH," *Milenio*, January 13, 2014, http://www.milenio.com/politica/justificacion-autodefensas-Michoacan-CNDH_0_226177881.html (Accessed 22-12-2017).

Graph 32. Trends in public opinion towards self-defence groups in Michoacan



	Aug 2013	nov-13	Jan 2014	feb-14	mar-14	Apr 2014	jul-14
Army will reduce violence		55					
Agree with autodefensas	42	44	51		53		71
Approves government's work in Michoacan		49		69	56		
Fausto Vallejo, the solution		50					
Approve Federal Police in Michoacan				83			
Approves government's demand for disarmament			29		29	53	46
Government should support autodefensas				51			
Approves Government and autodefensas actions						77	55

Source: CESOP, “Capsula Semanal de Opinion Publica, 267”; CESOP, “Capsula Semanal de Opinion Pública, 268”; CESOP, “Capsula Semanal de Opinion Publica 275”; CESOP, “Capsula Semanal de Opinion Publica 290” (Mexico City, 2014); CESOP, “Encuesta Telefónica Sobre Los Grupos de Autodefensa” (Mexico City, 2013).

With Hipolito Mora still in jail and being conscious that public opinion favouring their disarmament had been increasing, SD1 and SD2 said, the autodefensas ‘sought to achieve most of what they could while they could.’⁵⁶⁰ In this vein, on April 14th 2014, Mireles, Estanislao and the leaders of other 18 autodefensas met with Commissioner Castillo, and agreed a fourth pact to establish ‘firm commitments towards the legalisation, coordination, demobilisation, dialogue,

⁵⁶⁰ Garcia Jose–Angel, “Interview to SD1 in Uruapan, Michoacan.”; Garcia Jose–Angel, “Interview to SD2 in Uruapan, Michoacan.”

protection, compensation and legal solutions' for the conflict, an accord that would signal the beginning of the end of the autodefensas' movement. In this vein, the agreement established:⁵⁶¹

1. The possibility for local citizens to join a new 'Rural Police force' in Michoacan.
2. The extension to the deadline for incorporation to the 'Rural Defence Corp' (not to be confused with the former), a body dependant on the Ministry of National Defence.
3. The creation of Michoacan's 'Rural Police Corporation' by May 11th, 2014. Between April 15th and that day, the local Minister of Public Security was to be in charge of the staff's recruitment and training.
4. Between the date of the agreement and May 10th, the autodefensas, federal and local government will continue working together to localise organised crime targets.
5. By May 10th, the autodefensas should have registered their weapons, and the Ministry of Defence will determine their right to be owned according to existing legal regulations.
6. The Commissioner will meet every Tuesday and Thursday with representative sectors of Michoacan's municipalities to discuss Integral Development and Security related matters.
7. In terms of Integral Development, the Commissioner will be accompanied by other high-level authorities from federal government to respond to the local citizens' demands.
8. The Commission for the Security and Integral Development committed to look for programmes to support the widows and orphans of the security conflict in the state.
9. To transfer those autodefensas' members detained for illegal possession of guns to Apatzingan's prison.
10. For those other autodefensas' members detained for other serious crimes, in addition to gun possession, the legal process will continue according to law.
11. The Commission commits to generate the required conditions to guarantee the physical security of the leaders of the autodefensas.

⁵⁶¹ @ADN Político, "11 Acuerdos Entre El Gobierno y Autodefensas En Michoacán," @ADNPolítico, April 15, 2014, <http://www.adnpolitico.com/gobierno/2014/04/15/los-11-acuerdos-entre-el-gobierno-y-las-autodefensas> (Accessed 22-12-2017).

Photo 7. Autodefensas agreeing their disarmament on 14th April 2014.



Source: CNN Mexico, “Autoridades de Michoacán Iniciarán Desarme de Autodefensas El 28 de Abril,” CNN Mexico, April 25, 2014, <http://mexico.cnn.com/nacional/2014/04/25/autoridades-de-michoacan-iniciaran-desarme-de-autodefensas-el-28-de-abril> (Accessed 22-12-2017).

With the signature of this agreement, Commissioner Castillo and Mexico’s Minister of the Interior, Osorio Chong, stated:

‘From May 10th onwards there cannot be any armed citizens in the streets; it is an agreement, not an ultimatum, between them (i.e. the autodefensas) and state and federal government. Those who continue being armed will face the consequences, and government would be able to arrest them for illegal possession of firearms’.⁵⁶²

In the same tenor, Mireles argued:

“The autodefensas do not disappear but are transforming into State Rural Police. They will continue carrying short guns, but what we do not want is that people go to buy

⁵⁶² CNN Mexico, “Autoridades de Michoacán Iniciarán Desarme de Autodefensas El 28 de Abril”; Milenio Digital, “Desarme de Autodefensas Será En 27 Municipios: Castillo,” *Milenio*, April 25, 2014, http://www.milenio.com/policia/Castillo-acuerda-autodefensas-calendario-desarme_0_287371680.html (Accessed 22-12-2017).

tortillas with *goat horns* (i.e. long and more powerful weapons). We are not in war anymore.’ Mireles said on April 16.⁵⁶³

By the 1st of May 2014, 1,500 people had already applied to join the government’s Rural Defence Corps and 1,700 firearms had already been registered with Mexico’s Ministry for National Defence (SEDENA). On the 10th of May 2014, just as agreed, the ‘illegal’ autodefensas dissolved themselves and became ‘legal’ entities sworn in by Commissioner Castillo. Different from being part of the Rural Defence Corp, functioning under the umbrella of the Ministry of National Defence (as required in the first agreement of the 15th of January 2014), the autodefensas evolved into a new and relatively independent ‘Rural State Police.’ Although the self-defence groups did not manage to be legally named as autodefensas (one of their key demands), they did accomplish their recognition as a legitimate citizen force for security provision in their communities.⁵⁶⁴

Photo 8. Papa Smurf being sworn in as "Policia Rural" by Commissioner Castillo (10th of May 2014).



Source: Redacción, “Autodefensas Ahora Son Policías Rurales.,” *Proceso MX*, May 10, 2014, <http://www.proceso.com.mx/371912/autodefensas-ahora-son-oficialmente-policias-rurales-somos-gobierno-papa-pitufo> (Accessed 22-12-2017).

⁵⁶³ Milenio Digital, “Autodefensas Detenidos Saldrán Libres. Mireles,” *Milenio*, April 16, 2014, http://www.milenio.com/policia/doctor_mireles-autodefensas-alcalde_de_apatzingan_0_281971879.html (Accessed 22-12-2017).

⁵⁶⁴ Redacción, “Michoacán Aún Es Un Infierno: Mireles,” *La Jornada*, May 6, 2014, <http://www.jornada.unam.mx/2014/05/06/politica/013n1pol> (Accessed 22-12-2017); México Evalúa, “Michoacán Requiere de Una Estrategia de Estado” (Mexico City, 2014), <http://www.mexicoevalua.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/06/Comunicado-Michoacan.pdf> (Accessed 22-12-2017).

The agreement, however, also produced relevant wins for society. First, since the beginning of the movement, Mireles and the autodefensas' leaders accused Jesus Reyna, Michoacan's Interim Governor (April–October 2013), Rodrigo Vallejo Mora, son of Michoacan's Governor Fausto Vallejo (2012–2014) and many other local politicians of being colluded with the Caballeros Templarios.⁵⁶⁵ Although for many years they acted with total impunity, once the autodefensas started mobilising, their networks of corruption were discovered and each one of these political figures was arrested.⁵⁶⁶

Secondly, government met the autodefensas' demand for the incarceration of the Caballeros Templarios seven main leaders. Up to the date of the agreement (i.e. April 2014) four of them had already been apprehended, or killed, by security forces:

- Jesus Vazquez Macias was detained by federal security forces on the 19th of January 2014.⁵⁶⁷
- Dionicio Loya Plancarte was captured by army and security forces on January 27th 2014.⁵⁶⁸
- Nazario Moreno, who presumably died in 2010, was officially killed (for real) on March 9th 2014.⁵⁶⁹
- Enrique Plancarte was also killed by security forces on the March 31st 2014.⁵⁷⁰

⁵⁶⁵ Martinez, "Niega Jesús Reyna Vínculos Con El Narco; Lo Acusa Jefe de Autodefensas"; Redacción, "Aseguran Que Jesús Reyna Pertenece a Los 'Caballeros Templarios,'" *SDP Noticias*, July 30, 2013, <http://www.sdpnoticias.com/estados/2013/07/30/aseguran-que-jesus-reyna-pertenece-a-los-caballeros-templarios> (Accessed 22–12–2017).

⁵⁶⁶ CNDH, "Informe Especial Sobre Los Grupos de Autodefensa En El Estado de Michoacan y Las Violaciones a Los Derechos Humanos Relacionadas Con El Conflicto.," 196.

⁵⁶⁷ CNN Mexico, "Autoridades Consignan a Líder 'templario' Señalado Por Autodefensas," *CNN Mexico*, January 20, 2014, <http://mexico.cnn.com/nacional/2014/01/20/autoridades-detienen-a-presunto-lider-templario-acusado-por-autodefensas> (Accessed 22–12–2017).

⁵⁶⁸ Rodrio Aguiar, "Fuerzas Federales Detienen Al Líder 'templario' Dionicio Loya Plancarte," *CNN Mexico*, January 27, 2014, <http://mexico.cnn.com/nacional/2014/01/27/fuerzas-federales-detienen-al-lider-templario-dionicio-loya-plancarte> (Accessed 22–12–2017).

⁵⁶⁹ Ioan Grillo, "Mexico's Craziest Drug Lord 'Died' Twice and Used to Dress as God," *Time* (Mexico City, March 2014), <http://time.com/19936/nazario-moreno-knights-templar-michoacan/> (Accessed 22-12-2017).

⁵⁷⁰ CNN Mexico, "La Muerte de Plancarte Deja a 'la Tuta' Como El Último Líder 'Templario.'"

Servando Gomez *La Tuta* was then captured in February 2015 and *El Tena* on the 5th of March 2015.⁵⁷¹ The last one, *El Chicano* (whose real name is unknown) remains free so far.⁵⁷²

Thirdly, the autodefensas also achieved further federal investment in the state, including MXN\$45bn in social policies, the signature of a national agreement for Michoacan's electrification and the construction of 400 public dining rooms for kids.⁵⁷³

Fourthly, and perhaps more importantly, despite their confrontational attitude against government, the autodefensas achieved what many lobbying groups and CSOs like those analysed in Chapter 5, attempt to do: to sit with the key decision makers, be treated as equals and change public policy.

6.3.1 The autodefensas, achieving their recognition through the Rural Force Body of the Public Security Ministry of the State of Michoacan de Ocampo.

With the agreement of April 2014, the autodefensas pushed federal government to legislate their operation in their preferred terms and to bypass legal locks to secure their functioning as Rural State

⁵⁷¹ SDP Noticias, "Capturan a 'El Tena', Lugarteniente de Los Caballeros Templarios En Michoacán," *SDP Noticias*, March 5, 2015, <http://www.sdpnoticias.com/estados/2015/03/05/capturan-a-el-tena-lugarteniente-de-los-caballeros-templarios-en-michoacan> (Accessed 22-12-2017); Martinez, "Capturado La Tuta, El Narcotraficante Más Perseguido de México."

⁵⁷² R. Lucio, "'El Tena' One of the Most Wanted and Still at Large....," *Borderland*, March 8, 2015, <http://www.borderlandbeat.com/2015/03/el-tena-one-of-most-wanted-and-still-at.html> (Accessed 22-12-2017); @ADN Político, "H3, El Nuevo Cártel Formado Por Autodefensas y Templarios," *ADN Político*, May 6, 2014, <http://www.adnpolitico.com/gobierno/2014/05/06/h3-el-nuevo-cartel-formado-por-autodefensas-y-templarios> (Accessed 22-12-2017).

⁵⁷³ In April 2014, Mexico's President Office even created a website (i.e. <http://www.presidencia.gob.mx/PlanMichoacan/>) to inform about the government's commitments (although the webpage is now inaccessible. Paula Chouza, "Peña Nieto Regresa a Michoacán a Tres Semanas de Anunciar Un Plan Millonario," *El País*, February 25, 2014, http://internacional.elpais.com/internacional/2014/02/25/actualidad/1393365914_958612.html (Accessed 22-12-2017); Secretaría de Gobernación, "250 Obras y Acciones Del Plan Michoacán" (Mexico City: Presidencia de la República, 2014), <http://www.gob.mx/presidencia/articulos/250-obras-y-acciones-del-plan-michoacan> (Accessed 22-12-2017).

Police.⁵⁷⁴ In this vein, although the federal and state executive powers recognised the existence of Michoacan's Rural State Police, 'the administrative agreement between the autodefensas, the Commissioner and governor (i.e. the agreement of the 14th of April 2014) was not sufficient to justify the Rural Police's existence as it did not legally specify its responsibilities, neither limited its faculties. In other words, it did not state 'what they were going to do.'⁵⁷⁵ In fact, the quickly designed agreement and fast-tracked creation of the 'Rural State Police' contravened three local and federal laws:

- ❖ Article 53 of the *Organic Law of the Mexican Army and Air Force* establishes that 'the Ministry of National Defence is formed by Combat Units, Units of Services, Special Corps, Rural Defence Corps and Military Education establishments.'⁵⁷⁶ At no point, did this law support the existence of the State Rural Police.
- ❖ Even if the State Rural Police was wrongly equated to the Rural Defence Corps (part of the Ministry of Defence), article 23 of the *Manual for the organisation, functioning and employment of the Rural Force Corps* establishes that only those citizens 'without previous criminal convictions' and 'aligned to Mexico's government politics' could be part of this organism.⁵⁷⁷ Both of them were conditions not met by the previous members of the autodefensas.
- ❖ Thirdly, even in the case that the State Rural Police was going to function as a State dependant institution (not managed by Mexico's Ministry of Defence), *Michoacan's Public security System Law* did not contemplate that

⁵⁷⁴ Arturo Daen, "Autodefensas de Michoacan Llegan Al Plazo Límite Para Su Demovilización.," *CNN Mexico*, May 10, 2014, <http://mexico.cnn.com/nacional/2014/05/10/autodefensas-de-michoacan-llegan-al-plazo-limite-para-su-desmovilizacion> (Accessed 22-12-2017).

⁵⁷⁵ Fonseca, "Fuerzas Rurales de Michoacan En El Limbo"; Steven Dudley, "Un Marco Legal No Resolverá El Problema de Las Autodefensas En México" (Mexico City: Insight Crime, 2014), <http://es.insightcrime.org/analisis/un-marco-legal-no-resolvera-el-problema-de-las-autodefensas-de-mexico> (Accessed 22-12-2017).

⁵⁷⁶ Cámara de Diputados del H Congreso de la Unión, "Ley Orgánica Del Ejército y Fuerza Aérea Mexicanos" (1986), http://www.diputados.gob.mx/LeyesBiblio/pdf/169_061114.pdf (Accessed 22-12-2017); Patricia Monreal, "Policía Rural, Fuera Del Marco Legal de Michoacán," *Cambio de Michoacan*, May 13, 2014, <http://www.cambiodemichoacan.com.mx/nota-224205> (Accessed 22-12-2017).

⁵⁷⁷ SEDENA, "Instructivo Para La Organización, Funcionamiento y Empleo de Los Cuerpos de Defensa Rurales." (n.d.), http://www.sedena.gob.mx/pdf/otros/instruc_org_fun_empl_cpos_def_rur.pdf (Accessed 22-12-2017).

figure either, nor the resources to be allocated to it and their operational level within the state's police hierarchy.⁵⁷⁸

These legal loopholes and the autodefensas' capacity to re-emerge pushed government to create the legislation needed for the new police group to continue working: 'government did not have any other option than legalising us', Hipolito Mora said.⁵⁷⁹ In this vein, on the 13th of May 2014, without previous legislative discussion and less than three days after the *de facto* institutionalisation of the Rural Police forces, Michoacan's governor Fausto Vallejo published the *Decree by which Michoacan's government created the Rural Force Body of the Public security Ministry of the State of Michoacan de Ocampo*. Legislation that, rather than unilaterally determining the functioning of the *Rural Police*, legitimised the agreements that citizens achieved with government.

Although this decree was opposed by 14 federal Senators from *PAN* due to – what Jose Contreras has described as – its contradictions with Michoacan's legislation and Mexico's *General Law of the National System of Public security*, both federal government and Michoacan's governor supported the validity of – what media and analysts have called – the 'super decree.'⁵⁸⁰ Thus, the autodefensas

⁵⁷⁸ Monreal, "Policía Rural, Fuera Del Marco Legal de Michoacán"; H. Congreso del Estado de Michoacan, "Ley Del Sistema de Seguridad Pública Del Estado de Michoacan de Ocampo" (2011), http://patzcuaro.gob.mx/transparencia/2015/leyes/LEY_DE_SEGURIDAD.pdf (Accessed 22–12–2017).

⁵⁷⁹ Redacción, "Gobierno No Tuvo Alternativa Más Que Legalizarnos: Autodefensas," *Quadratin*, January 28, 2014, <https://www.quadratin.com.mx/sucesos/Gobierno-tuvo-alternativa-mas-que-legalizarnos-autodefensas/> (Accessed 22–12–2017).

⁵⁸⁰ For instance, Senator Roberto Gil and 13 others from opposition, argued that Fausto Vallejo's decree was in total opposition to the General Law of the National System of Public Security and the Law of the Public Security System of the State of Michoacan, as 'the organization of the local institutions of public security corresponds to the state Congress, rather than to the executive figure' and, in this occasion, Michoacan's congress was not consulted for the decree, neither approved it. At the same time, the existing law determines that 'in order to obtain a job in any of the public security corporations, it is necessary to be a graduate of one of the State's institutions in charge of training the security forces and have approved the evaluation of the State's Centre of Evaluation, Accreditation and Trust Control', a legal condition that was challenged by the Decree's article 4. Furthermore, Article 10 of the Decree goes establishes a different hierarchy within the State Rural Police than that established for the rest of the Security System. Jose Contreras, "El Decretazo Del Fantasma," *Cronica.Com.Mx*, 2014, <http://www.cronica.com.mx/notas/2014/833445.html> (Accessed 22–12–2017); Secretaría de Gobernación, "Dictamen En Sentido Negativo de La Primera Comisión de Gobernación, Puntos Constitucionales y de Justicia Por El Que La Comisión Permanente Del Congreso de La Unión Exhortaba Al H. Congreso Del Estado de Michoacan de Ocampo a Interponer Controversia Const" (2014),

not only achieved their lawful recognition as legitimate providers of public security, they also secured citizen's rights to rightfully possess weapons for legitimate defence.

6.3.2. Other achievements and losses.

In addition to their political-legislative success, throughout their movement the autodefensas gained an important level of leverage among key Mexican influencers. Parallel to the autodefensas' actions to achieve their legitimacy as *State Rural Police*, Mireles worked alongside Isabel Miranda de Wallace, Javier Sicilia, Alejandro Marti (see Chapter 5) and other social leaders to constitute the *Self-Defence against Citizen Insecurity and Impunity group* aiming to expand the autodefensas model as a form of OCS against an unresponsive government.⁵⁸¹ Nevertheless, hopes for this expansion, if not re-generation of the autodefensas movement at a national level vanished with Mireles' arrest. On the 27th of June 2014, Mireles was detained with over 70 people for possessing over 40 guns and 3,600 gun cartridges.⁵⁸² Although Mireles had the support of Javier Sicilia, who equated him to 'Mexico's revolutionary hero Pancho Villa', he failed to gain assistance from his former comrades.⁵⁸³ For instance, Estanislao Beltran stopped giving interviews about Mireles' case. More importantly, Hipolito Mora never demanded his liberation but stated:⁵⁸⁴

http://sil.gobernacion.gob.mx/Archivos/Documentos/2014/06/asun_3121637_20140625_1403712687.pdf (Accessed 22-12-2017).

⁵⁸¹ Juan Fierro, "Sicilia, Miranda de Wallace, Mireles y Solalinde, Juntos En Apoyo a Autodefensas," *Noticias MVS*, May 6, 2014, <http://www.noticiasmvs.com/#!/noticias/sicilia-miranda-de-wallace-mireles-y-solalinde-juntos-en-apoyo-a-autodefensas-95.html> (Accessed 22-12-2017).

⁵⁸² CNN Mexico, "Autoridades Detienen En Michoacán a José Manuel Mireles," *CNN Mexico*, June 27, 2014, <http://mexico.cnn.com/nacional/2014/06/27/autoridades-detienen-en-michoacan-a-jose-manuel-mireles> (Accessed 22-12-2017); Jose Cardenas, *Alfredo Castillo Habla de La Detención Del Dr. Mireles* (Mexico, 2014), <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4HltVhfgO7o> (Accessed 22-12-2017).

⁵⁸³ Rubicela Morelos, "Sicilia Llama a Grupos Sociales a Exigir Liberación Inmediata de Mireles," *La Jornada*, July 2, 2014, <http://www.jornada.unam.mx/ultimas/2014/07/02/sicilia-hace-un-llamado-a-grupos-sociales-para-exigir-liberacion-inmediata-de-mireles-3592.html> (Accessed 22-12-2017).m

⁵⁸⁴ Laura Castellanos, "La Transfromación de Papá Pitufo," *El Universal*, October 21, 2014, <http://archivo.eluniversal.com.mx/nacion-mexico/2014/impreso/la-transformacion-de-8216papa-pitufo-8217-219561.html> (Accessed 22-12-2017); Caballero, "La Traición de Papá Pitufo"; Dalia Martinez, "No Traicioné a Mireles: Estanislao Beltrán," *Red Política*, *El Universal*, July 5, 2014,

‘Mireles was one of those who raised his hand in that famous agreement (of April 14th, 2014) stating that nobody was going to possess illegal firearms without any type of government credential. I did not vote because I was in jail, he did it and there he is now, in jail’.⁵⁸⁵

Consequently, the initial alliance between Mireles, Hipolito Mora and Estanislao (see Photo 9) that once permitted the autodefensas to become the first armed uprising of the Mexico of the XXI century was now broken, signalling the beginning of the end of the autodefensas movement.⁵⁸⁶

Photo 9. Mireles, Mora and Estanislao.



Source: Redacción, “Mireles No Respetó El Acuerdo de Desarme: Hipólito Mora,” SDP Noticias, Julio 8, 2014, <http://www.sdpnoticias.com/estados/2014/07/08/mireles-no-respeto-el-acuerdo-de-desarme-hipolito-mora> (Accessed 22–12–2017).

Soon after Mireles’ arrest, different Law Makers from opposition produced different initiatives to decree an amnesty law for Mireles and other former members of the Autodefensas. For instance, in September 2014, 15 [federal] Senators from political parties in opposition (*PAN*, *PRD* and *PT*),

<http://www.redpolitica.mx/estados/no-traicione-mireles-estanislao-beltran> (Accessed 22–12–2017).
Ernesto Martinez, “Hipólito Mora Declara Como Testigo En El Caso Mireles,” *La Jornada*, November 30, 2015, <http://www.jornada.unam.mx/ultimas/2015/11/30/hipolito-mora-declara-como-testigo-en-el-caso-mireles-4314.html> (Accessed 22–12–2017).

⁵⁸⁵ Although Mora would then declare in March 2015 that –then former– Commissioner Castillo ‘asked him to destroy Mireles.’ AN Redacción, “Hipólito Libre: Revela Que Castillo Le Pidió ‘Hacer Pedazos’ a Mireles,” *Aristegui Noticias*, March 10, 2015, <http://aristeguinoticias.com/1003/mexico/hipolito-libre-lamenta-liberacion-del-americano-revela-que-castillo-le-pidio-despedazar-a-mireles/> (Accessed 22–12–2017).

⁵⁸⁶ Michael Lohmuller, “Problema de Autodefensas En México, Sin Solución En El Corto Plazo,” *Insight Crime*, November 17, 2015, <http://es.insightcrime.org/analisis/problema-autodefensas-mexico-sin-solucion-corto-plazo> (Accessed 22–12–2017).

presented a legislative project to ‘decree an amnesty for those who participated or were part of the autodefensas groups and were either subject to judicial investigation or process, or have been sentenced, as long as those processes were started between March 7th 2013 and 1st of September 2014.’⁵⁸⁷ Similar legislative initiatives were proposed almost in parallel in Michoacan’s state Congress, including Deputy del Carmen’s ‘Initiative with Project of Decree of an Amnesty Law for Autodefensas and Comunitarians of the State of Michoacan’.⁵⁸⁸ Nevertheless, all the initiatives failed. Thus, by 2016 the autodefensas movement was extinct. On the 1st of January 2016, Silvano Aureoles, Michoacan’s current Governor (2015–2021), officially declared the end of the movement: ‘today, we face a new stage in Michoacan’s history. We leave behind the time of nonsense and violence to move forward to an environment of peace and stability. With the end of the autodefensas, we come back to the path of institutionalism and legality’, he said.⁵⁸⁹ On the 11th of May 2017, Mireles was released from prison, but the autodefensas movement was completely defeated in 2016 when he explicitly accepted asked for the government’s forgiveness:

‘for having attempted to alter the political order and tried to solve a problem without government’s support... Thank you and sorry Javier Sicilia [...] Isabel Miranda [...] and all the autodefensas. I beg you, masters of law and justice, for the prompt liberation of all my autodefensas brothers.’⁵⁹⁰

⁵⁸⁷ Javier Corral, “Presentación de Iniciativa. De Los Senadores Javier Corral Jurado, Manuel Bartlett Díaz, Layda Sansores San Román, Ernesto Ruffo Appel, Salvador Vega Casillas, Francisco Búrquez Valenzuela, Daniel Gabriel Ávila Ruíz, Dolores Padierna Luna, Alejandro Encin” (2014), <http://www.javiercorral.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/05/Ley-de-Amnistía-a-favor-de-las-personas-integrantes-de-los-grupos-denominados-Autodefensas-en-el-estado-de-Michoacán..pdf> (Accessed 22-12-2017).

⁵⁸⁸ Talía del Carmen, “Iniciativa Con Proyecto de Decreto de Ley de Amnistía Para Autodefensas y Comunitarios Del Estado de Michoacan de Ocampo, Presentada Por La Diputada Talía Del Carmen Vazquez.” (2015), http://transparencia.congresomich.gob.mx/media/documentos/gacetas/Gaceta_IV_149_N_14-04-15.pdf; Arturo Estrada, “Presentan Ley de Amnistía Para Autodefensas En Congreso de Michoacán,” *El Financiero*, April 14, 2015, <http://www.elfinanciero.com.mx/nacional/presentan-ley-de-amnistia-para-autodefensas-en-congreso-de-michoacan.html> (Accessed 22-12-2017).

⁵⁸⁹ Redacción, “Oficializan Fin de Las Autodefensas En Michoacán,” *El Sol de Nayarit*, February 11, 2016, <http://www.elsoldenayarit.mx/politica/41357-oficializan-fin-de-las-autodefensas-en-michoacan> (Accessed 22-12-2017).

⁵⁹⁰ Red 113 Michoacan, *Pide Perdón El Doctor Mireles Por Su Lucha En Contra Del Crimen Organizado* (Mexico: Red 113 Michoacan, 2016), <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=frzmCLOPyTQ> (Accessed 22-12-2017);

6.4. Main findings on the autodefensas.

Mexico is so utterly unique that it defies comparison, it stands in a class of itself, Smith stated.⁵⁹¹ Not only this, by being submerged in what Calderon frames as ‘a never-ending democratisation process,’ Mexico has also been immersed in a long-lasting security trap, and one case that perfectly illustrates these points was the autodefensas movement in Michoacan.⁵⁹²

Different from the socio-political context found in the First Citizens Summit case-study (see Chapter 5) the autodefensas faced a public sphere co-opted by a powerful DTO and its accomplices in local government. Initially labelled as an illegal movement in Michoacan, even a threat to national security by Mexico’s political class, the autodefensas challenged a virtual narco-republic, where government was depoliticising, but not towards the *demos* or the public, as Flinders and Buller argue happens in effective governance, but towards an interest group disinterested in the public good.⁵⁹³ In this scenario, Candon, McCreery, Fogarty, and Bendix and Liebler’s theoretical predictions failed to materialise. First, crime news were not a gift to all the news-hungry editors, as they could not publish them. No inter-media agenda-setting process materialised and sensational interests ‘close to home’ were not enough to prompt or support investigative journalism. The media was a dealer of public opinion, just as suggested by Temple, but nor for Bua’s usual suspects, but for a dominant criminal organisation. In other words, media was incapacitated from fulfilling what Walgrave *et al*, Cobb and Charles consider is its *raison d’être* (see Chapter 2.1), i.e. it was providing biased

Ernesto Martínez, “Mireles Pide Perdón Al Gobierno Por ‘Malinterpretar’ La Constitución,” *La Jornada*, January 9, 2016, <http://www.jornada.unam.mx/ultimas/2016/01/09/mireles-pide-perdon-al-gobierno-mexicano-por-desobediencia-civil-1601.html> (Accessed 22-12-2017).

⁵⁹¹ Smith, “Mexican Democracy in Comparative Politics,” 77.

⁵⁹² Pablo Calderon, “Internationalisation as a Democratic Tool: Revisiting Mexico’s Double Transition,” *Bulletin of Latin American Research* 33, no. 2 (2014): 5, https://kclpure.kcl.ac.uk/portal/files/30821558/BLAR_pre_print_draft.pdf

⁵⁹³ Matthew Flinders and J. Buller, “Depoliticisation: Principles, Tactis and Rules.,” *British Politics* 1, no. 3 (2006): 296.

information, failing to educate the public on matters of common interest and was in fact, disconnecting the federal government from the public's needs. As such, Cohen's ideal speech situation and discourse ethics were substituted by censorship and limited forms of deliberation circumscribed to the private (rather than public) sphere. Put simply, media freedom and other civil liberties and political rights that tend to accompany democratic setups were almost non-existent in Michoacan's *pseudo* democratic environment: Michoacans did not fully know what was occurring in their state, and those who knew were unable to raise government's attention. Power, thus, 'was not a fluid positive-sum concept and a resource held by all actors'; on the contrary, it was so concentrated and seemingly unmovable across the DTO that, paradoxically, it triggered the most radical power struggle that Mexico has seen in its recent history.⁵⁹⁴

Nevertheless, facing this scenario, the autodefensas managed to create microcosms of public discussions across their communities to challenge the macrocosms of the criminally dominated state's public sphere. By becoming media savvy and understanding the importance of media management, the autodefensas rationed information and started controlling the framing of news reports. With this, the movement influenced and allowed for new media discussions, fostered public discussions and transformed the public sphere into one of criticism against government inefficiency. As a result, contrary to Zucker, Winter and Eyal's arguments and, more importantly, against O'Keefe and Gross and Aday's work, in Michoacan the media did not set the agenda of the public, but it was the public agenda who defined the media agenda, making of the autodefensas one of the few cases which would arguably support Klapper's minimal effects theory (Chapter 2).

Overall, contrary to the Summit, the autodefensas case study represented a more unique and relatively unstudied form of OCS, as most of the research has focused on the more traditional Civil

⁵⁹⁴ Matthew Flinders, "Governance in Whitehall," *Public Administration* 80, no. 1 (2002): 69.

Society Organisations. In this case, elite domination was not the main concern or obstructor of new forms of OCS, but it was the lack of public security which triggered the decline of the public sphere in Michoacan. Being immersed in a violent context in which government was actively hindering civil society's development, the autodefensas represented Reyes and Grant's vision of civil society: a chance for minorities and disadvantaged groups to argue their case in a democratic scenario that does not work for all the people. It also embodied Gramsci's description, as the autodefensas constructed new and cultural hegemony by rebelling against the orthodox, rather than working alongside it – as the Summit did.

In a context where freedom of expression was severely constrained, the autodefensas created new microcosms of public spheres within their towns and municipalities to challenge the constraining macrocosms of the public sphere that prevailed across the state. These face-to-face communication structures they established, fed the micro public spheres with multiple and contrasting expressions of political discontent and nourished them with citizenly raised demands and potential solutions to society's problems. As such, the autodefensas not only battled a non-democratic public sphere, but promoted the rebirth of what Azuela calls a 'civic responsibility culture' capable of forging its own public agenda and shaping society as a whole, just as Habermas and McKee would have suggested.⁵⁹⁵

More importantly, the autodefensas movement not only re-installed a civil culture where citizens' involvement in political decisions stopped being seen as a concession and became a political right. Through disruptive but publicly supported political actions, including the expulsion of government authorities from their communities, the autodefensas effectively showed that an

⁵⁹⁵ Habermas, *The Structural Transformation of the Public sphere: An Inquiry Into a Category of Bourgeois Society.*, 359; McKee, *The Public sphere: An Introduction*, 8. Azuela, *Primera Cumbre Ciudadana Para Construir Un México Pacífico y Justo*, 76; Consejo Ciudadano de Seguridad Pública y Promoción de Justicia del Distrito Federal, "Memory" (Mexico City, 2011).

organised citizenry is a viable alternative to an inefficient and criminally captured government. Not only did it trigger symbolic changes from government, it also achieved the substantive policy changes it aimed for, i.e. establishment of security checks, the capture of six out of seven of the DTO's leaders and its legalisation as legitimate providers of public security for their communities.

Chapter 7. Conclusions.

This thesis has studied the processes and conditions under which two very different expressions of Organised Civil Society have not only survived, but also developed and influenced media and government agendas in an effort to secure their political goals. Different from their counterparts in advanced democratic setups, the First Citizen Summit to Build a Fair and Prosperous Mexico and the Autodefensas self-defence groups were not immersed in a democratic scenario where public debates are inclusive and representative, media freedom and independent journalism are the norm, and bottom-up decision-making structures are actively promoted by government. On the contrary, by emerging in Mexico, both movements faced a dangerous public sphere characterised by elite-dominated public institutions, high levels of political disaffection, rising homicide rates and blatant corruption between and across government, media and criminal groups. It is in this context that this research not only has proved to be well timed, but also well suited to provide new evidence to inform government policies on bottom-up and participative democracy.

Through an innovative theoretical mix, bridging Habermas' Public Sphere theory with McCombs and Shaw Agenda Setting Framework through media effects analyses, this thesis has uncovered some of the hidden politics of policy making in Mexico, shed new light on the political capacities and impact of bottom-up social movements and challenged theoretical paradigms about the functioning of the normative wheels of democracy in non-western scenarios. Therefore, in order to provide the main conclusions of this research, this chapter is divided into three sub-chapters. The first one provides this thesis' main empirical insights. The second sub-chapter outlines the original contributions to knowledge that the study represents. The last one focuses on the policy recommendations and potential elements for future research.

7.1 Main empirical insights.

‘To make explicit what is implicit is an ambiguous task’, Perez-Diaz says.⁵⁹⁶ This is perhaps one of the reasons why much of the existing scholarship on civil society and its participation in policy-making processes tends to be risk-averse and is more oriented towards theorising than into testing. Consider this, rather than developing another isolated analysis of the structure of civil society or the media effects over public opinion, with limited policy implications, this research built on empirical data to pragmatically test theoretical paradigms on the functioning of civil society in young or non-democratic scenarios like Mexico. What is more, as ‘researchers and policy influencers are often said to inhabit parallel universes, debating the same matters but never fully engaging with each other’s work’, this thesis differentiates from existing scholarship in that it did not study civil society as a standalone issue, but as part of a broader struggle over political influence and power.⁵⁹⁷ Neither did it consider the analysis of the creation of social demands and the primacy of the state in the establishment of public policies as two homogenous but isolated spheres.⁵⁹⁸ On the contrary, it departed from the premise that these public and governmental spheres are socially constructed but politically disputed, and that the emergence of public demands and generation of public policies must be studied as an interrelated dynamic process – where media plays a pivotal role.

By doing this and bringing together Habermas and McCombs and Shaw’s works this thesis was able to answer its main research question: **What does the analysis of public security policy suggest**

⁵⁹⁶ Perez-Díaz, *State, Bureaucracy and Civil society. A Critical Discussion of the Political Theory of Karl Marx New Studies in Sociology*.

⁵⁹⁷ Pollard and Court, “How Civil Society Organisations Use Evidence to Influence Policy Processes: A Literature Review,” 4.

⁵⁹⁸ Fox, “The Difficult Transition from Clientelism to Citizenship: Lessons from Mexico”; Fox, “Sociedad Civil y Políticas de Rendición de Cuentas”; Harbers, “Democratic Deepening in Third Wave Democracies: Experiments with Participation in Mexico City.”

about the rebirth of civil society and its capacity to influence political decisions in Mexico's dangerous public sphere?

In this vein, this thesis empirically illustrated the inherent relationship that exists between civil society development and public sphere conditions. For instance, the Summit could have not taken place in an undemocratic public sphere unsupportive of CSOs' development; neither would the autodefensas have emerged if Michoacan's public sphere had offered the facilities for open and responsive political debates. Similarly, it identified that the more open for dialogue and inclusive the public sphere is, the less radical the forms of OCS are: where the public sphere functions adequately, civil society will co-exist with government in a cooperative way (e.g. the Summit), but when it does not and citizens perceive they are being either ignored or negatively affected by the prevailing political game, it will trigger the appearance of more radical forms of OCS rebelling against the orthodox and established system (e.g. the autodefensas).⁵⁹⁹

Nevertheless, this thesis also found that not all expressions of organised civil society are inclusive, representative or socially focused as their leaders portray them. In fact, whilst the evidence gathered and analysed in this thesis supports Jean Grugel's point stating that 'the influence of CSOs grows in inverse proportion to the influence of the state, it also backs up Flinders and Habermas' arguments assuring that depoliticization allows the powerful and well-organised special interests to design and implement policy for their own benefit.'⁶⁰⁰

On the one hand, it is undeniable that Mexico's democratisation in the year 2000 and the consequential weakening of centralised government institutions favoured the flourishing of CSOs

⁵⁹⁹ Crozat, "Are the Times A-Changin'? Assessing the Acceptance of Protest in Western Democracies," 59.

⁶⁰⁰ Habermas, *The Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere: An Inquiry Into a Category of Bourgeois Society.*, 18, 213; Jean Grugel, *Democracy without Borders: Transnationalism and Conditionality in New Democracies.*, ed. J. Grugel, *The Journal of Politics*, 1st Ed (London: Routledge, 1999). Matthew Flinders, *Defending Politics: Why Democracy Matters in the 21st Century* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012), 103.

like Causa en Comun or MUCD. However, caution needs to be taken, as a decline in the influence of the state not always translates into further freedoms for civil society movements interested in the public good. For instance, in the case of Michoacan, the hollowing of the state did not allow civil society to grow, but permitted criminal groups to expand their socio-political influence at the expense of society.

On the other hand, the increasing levels of political depolitization and antagonism that prevail in Mexico have effectively allowed the richest and more educated groups to dominate the channels of political engagement with government. A case in point was the First Citizens Summit, an event labelled as a citizen initiative, but which was clearly constructed and dominated by members of the economic elite of Mexico's metropolis who, notwithstanding their suffering as high-profile victims of crime, do not represent or understand the Mexican society, where 12.3 million people live with USD\$1.3 a day. Nevertheless, the country's progressive democratic openness, not necessarily favoured by government but promoted by a more educated and critical public sphere, is allowing unorthodox and bottom-up forms of citizenry to 'gnaw at small cracks in the country's semi-clientelist system and exercise a more tangible influence on policy-making.'⁶⁰¹ A case in point was the autodefensas movement, where a local expression of civil society proved itself capable of retaking control over its community and directly challenging the existence of – what Azuela would have called – 'an incompetent paternalistic system'.⁶⁰²

Political disengagement or civil society's development and influence, though, are two conditions or processes partially dependant on the interactions that society and government have with and through the media, and the Summit and the autodefensas are cases-in-point. Far from being a one-way relationship where the media agenda always defines the public agenda, in the case of Mexico,

⁶⁰¹ Fox and Hernandez, "Mexico's Difficult Democracy: Grassroots Movements, NGOs, and Local Government," 172.

⁶⁰² Azuela, *Primera Cumbre Ciudadana Para Construir Un México Pacífico y Justo*, 24.

both seem to be mutually influential. Neglecting this, Valera would argue, would be simply an exaggeration of journalistic autonomy.⁶⁰³ Although it might be accurate to state, as Winter, Eyal, Lazarsfeld and more do, that media influences the public agenda to a larger extent than *vice versa*, this thesis did not find any element to support or deny this statement in Mexico's context. However, this thesis did find compelling evidence supporting those limited theoretical arguments, like Klapper's minimal effects theory, ensuring that public agenda not only influences, but can dictate and define the agenda of the media. Clear examples of this were the Autodefensas' capacity to time and frame the media coverage of its activities and those from the Caballeros Templarios (Chapter 6), and the Summit's – more limited – impact on the media agenda with regards to its proposals on the Law Against Human Trafficking (Chapter 5).

Lastly and more importantly for this thesis were its findings regarding civil society's capacity to transform citizenry generated demands into policies implemented by government. Being of the same opinion as Kingdon that 'newspapers might trigger press conferences but might have little impact in determining the policy priorities of policymaking elites,' this thesis did not look at symbolic achievements, as scholars of the agenda setting in Mexico tend to do, but focused on the civil society's substantive accomplishments.⁶⁰⁴ The analyses here conducted found that although institutionalised and government-sanctioned forms of OCS like the Summit have better access to the main corridors of power and are able to attract both media and governmental attention to their demands, they are not equally successful in influencing the policy agenda. In fact, due to their close collaboration with government and less radical approach towards policy change, evidence showed that the Summit was mainly made of discussion simulacrums of already agreed political negotiations. Whilst the Summit was extremely effective in achieving symbolic changes like the

⁶⁰³ Valera, "Building the News Media Agenda: Spanish Political Parties' Influence on Traditional Media and Blogosphere Agendas during the 2011 Electoral Campaign," 117.

⁶⁰⁴ Kingdon, *Agendas, Alternatives and Public Policies*.

candidates' attendance to the event and their commitment to implement parts of the Summit's agenda, it did not trigger or achieve substantive policy alterations in President Pena Nieto's administration. Meanwhile, radical and single-issue movements like the autodefensas seem to be more efficient in achieving their short-term goals, even though they tend to disarticulate once the problem seems to be solved.

7.2. Contributions to knowledge.

McKee and Castells define the public sphere as the space of communication of ideas and projects that emerge from society and are addressed to the decision makers in the institutions of society.' It is 'the only channel by which citizens can shape the policies of the state and the development of society as a whole,' they say.⁶⁰⁵ What these statements fail to address, though, is that not every public sphere is capable of evolving into an agent of political change, and in some cases not even of putting citizens in touch with each other. By looking at two very contrasting case studies, one acting in a democratic scenario similar to that found in Western nations and the other being immersed in one of the riskiest cities in the world, this thesis has evidenced the urgent need to develop context-based studies that not only look at the initial phases of the generation of public demands or the last stages of policy definition, but that analyse them in an interconnected way. If this does not occur scholars might end up validating elite dominated initiatives as true representatives of civil society and triggers of political change. What is worse, isolated research could make citizens believe that they are getting what they want while effective power lies elsewhere. Cases in point are Azuela's work describing the Summit as a politically relevant initiative just because of its symbolic achievements, or Olvera, Mattiace, Volpi and Smith's works that fail to pinpoint society's specific

⁶⁰⁵ McKee, *The Public sphere: An Introduction*, 4–8, 7; Castells, "The New Public Sphere: Global Civil Society, Communication Networks, and Global Governance."

policy achievements, even to explain how social movements negotiated with government.⁶⁰⁶ In this vein, this thesis has controverted theoretical paradigms presuming that public pressures over elected officials make them set to work to change policies and programs, and has empirically shown that society's demands are not necessarily preceded by policy changes.

Different from Hall *et al's* findings, this research has also demonstrated that media cannot be equated to the public agenda, as it simply does not reflect everything the public knows or is talking about. In this vein, the media was neither discussing all the topics part of the Summit's agenda, nor informed society about the real socio-political scenario that prevailed in Michoacan during the autodefensas struggle for securing the effective provision of public security.

Overall, there is no doubt that Mexico is moving forward in terms of its democratisation and bottom-up governance. In 2000, for instance, Mexico witnessed the largest development of civil society organisations in the country's history. Previous disorganised social movements have been progressively transforming into established CSOs and now work in a multiplicity of areas, from freedom of information to public security. Society is also progressively seeing its involvement in the public sphere and political decisions as a right rather than a concession, it is awakening and demanding more social, economic and political rights. Nevertheless, with just over three CSOs per 10,000 inhabitants, an increasingly depoliticised society, and non-inclusive CSOs acting in a dangerous public sphere, civil society is still more a mirage than a goal achieved. However, it is precisely the country's increasingly dangerous context what has pushed social activists to get involved in the public security field and to aim to retake control of their communities.

⁶⁰⁶ See A. Olvera, "Las Tendencias Generales de Desarrollo de La Sociedad Civil En México." In *Sociedad Civil, Esfera Pública y Democratización En América Latina*, edited by A Olvera, 460. Mexico: Fondo de Cultura Económica, 2003; Volpi, Jorge. *La Imaginación y El Poder, Una Historial Intelectual de 1968*. Mexico City: Ediciones Era, 1998; Mattiace, Shannan. "Social and Indigenous Movements in Mexico's Transition to Democracy." In *The Oxford Handbook of Mexican Politics*, edited by Roderic Ai Camp, 1st Ed., 824. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012. https://catalyst.library.jhu.edu/catalog/bib_4113908 (Accessed 22-12-2017).

With 2017 having been Mexico's most violent year since records began, new self-defence groups sporadically emerging across the country and the possibility that a left-wing political party wins the presidency for the first time in Mexico's history, this thesis provides a good starting point for the understanding and improvement of public-media-government relations in Mexico. Being one of the first studies that looks at the complete dynamic process by which public demands are created and then transformed into public policies, this thesis could inform the new government's plans for gradually strengthening a collaborative public sphere as a strategy to minimise the risk of new radical and violent uprisings. Furthermore, by having empirically challenged dominant paradigms on both the correlation between democratic development and civil society expansion, and media effects over public and political decisions, this thesis has potentially opened new research agendas in Mexican studies that could fit in with the work of established research groups like the Escuela Veracruzana for public sphere.

7.3 Policy recommendations and future research.

This research represents one of the first attempts to empirically study civil society's impact on policy-making in Mexico. Considering the limited available data on the topic, this thesis has produced new knowledge of the field, narrowing the divide between politics as theory and politics as practice in Mexico. Throughout the analysis of Mexico's public sphere, civil society development (Chapter 4) and its influence on policy-making (Chapters 5 and 6), this thesis has also highlighted the need for government to work with and reach out to civil society. By doing so, it pinpointed the challenges for civil society-government policy co-creation, which not only increase societal depoliticization and hinder collaborative forms of OCS, they also trigger more politically radical manifestations of social discontent.

Building on this and intending to contribute to reduce social marginalisation and discontent that could lead to violent redistributions of power, the following recommendations are made:

For government:

- ❖ Access to information: Improving information-sharing practices between civil society organisations and facilitating their involvement in policy-making could increase accountability and transparency while reducing citizens' distrust in CSOs. Databases like SEDESOL's CSOs register and the Government reports on financial contributions to the third sector could be a good starting point.
- ❖ Funding: Building on the U.K.'s *Minister for Society* model, transforming Mexico's *General Direction for Engagement with Civil society* into an under secretariat could promote a better distribution of economic resources across the third sector, reduce CSOs' co-optation by private interests and foster a more systematic coordination between government and civil society representatives.
- ❖ Channels for participation: institutionalising the five permanent seats for civil society in the National Security Council is an important step for society-government collaboration. Providing voting rights, ensuring the non-re-election of its members and installing similar mechanisms in other ministries could increase citizens' understanding and acceptance of controversial but necessary policies.
- ❖ Representation and equality: CSOs located in Mexico City have better resources and possibilities to engage with government than its counterparts in the rest of the country. Establishing a regionalised model of interaction, including local offices for civil society engagement and delivering government sponsored Summits with society across the country could improve government legitimisation and minimise the possibility of radical and antagonist movements.
- ❖ Elitism: As noticed in this thesis, there is limited alternation of power within the CSOs' boards. Therefore, institutionalising government policies that request periodical changes in the CSOs' boards (preferably elected than appointed) as a condition for public funding could avoid 'groupthink' and improve citizens' involvement within them. More importantly, this could contribute to demystifying the elitism surrounding the social activist role.

For civil society:

- ❖ Credibility. The lack of transparency within the third sector reduces citizens' trust in social activists and perpetuates citizens' disengagement in non-electoral political activism. Disseminating reliable information about the CSOs' budgets, programmes and results could improve CSOs reputation.
- ❖ Influence. Institutionalised CSOs continue almost entirely focusing on policy *diagnosis*, the policy-making area in which they are the most successful. However, they leave aside *policy creation, approval and implementation*, the three most important phases of the policy-making cycle. Sharing lessons with others, rather than attempting to appropriate each other's work, and ensuring institutional memory could allow civil society to better integrate and turn its collective expertise into actionable policy demands.
- ❖ Communication. Developing a good media management strategy could permit civil society movements or organisations to better position their demands on the public and political realms, shape the debates around them and obtaining not only symbolic, but also substantive political responses.

The above are general recommendations that could be worth a deeper analysis. However, their potential implementation needs to be accompanied by a detailed and in-depth study of their financial implications, expected political support and required negotiations.

Future research agendas

In addition to the recommendations previously made, this thesis has evidenced the fact that agenda-setting effects and policy-making processes cannot be understood in isolation, their analysis requires a more contextualised approach in which the acting of public and political individuals and institutions are carefully considered and comprehensively studied. By doing this, this thesis has also shed new light into seven broad areas for potential future research, particularly in relation to the Mexican case:

- ❖ Government funding for social activism and its effect over civil society's de-radicalisation.

- ❖ Relationship between political parties and CSOs: clientelism and the CSOs as electoral tools.
- ❖ CSOs' democratisation.
- ❖ The hidden politics of social activism: using CSOs as a gateway for political influence.
- ❖ CSOs' negotiation strategies with the legislative and executive branches of government.
- ❖ Are different policy fields more susceptible to CSOs influence?

In many ways, the discussions and findings presented in this research highlight the need to devote more scholarly and practitioner attention to the analysis of civil society development and its involvement in policy-making outside the over studied cases of Western democracies. They also call for the contextualisation of studies on governance, public sphere and civil society: policies do no work if political studies are so far removed from the daily reality they are trying to change.

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Annexes

Annex 1. Questions for semi-structured interviews

Interview questionnaire: politicians

Role

- a) What are your main functions within the Public Security Commission??

Law initiatives

- a) How do you decide which topic to bring into the Commission's discussions?
- b) How to decide which is the most pressing one?

Civil Society–Government

- a) Is Mexico living a 'bottom-up' democracy?
- b) It is often said: 'Government that doesn't respond to social demands is a tyranny, and that who responds to all is not a government.' Your views?
- c) What does Civil Society mean for you?
- d) Which are the CSOs with which you work the most?

Direct involvement

- a) How would you define your involvement in the autodefensas and Agenda Ciudadana topics?
- b) Any achievements, challenges? What would you improve?

Media

- a) Is media impartial? Particularly on its reporting of public security.

Interview questionnaire: media

Media

- a) What is the main role of the Media in Mexico?

Media, democracy and society

- a) What does Civil Society mean for you?
- b) Is Mexico living a 'bottom-up' democracy?
- c) Which are the CSOs with which you work the most? The top 5?
- d) Has CSO effective in the autodefensas and *agendas ciudadanas*?

Media coverage

- a) How do you select the topics you cover?
- b) How to be impartial in covering the autodefensas and *agendas ciudadanas* topics?
- c) Do you consider that media coverage on the topic has been useful for government/civil society?
- d) Any challenges you have faced?
- e) Do you believe something can be improved in the media's action towards a bottom-up democratic development and civil-society development?

Interview questionnaire: Civil Society

Role

- a) What does Civil Society mean for you?
- b) Why was the organisation constituted?

Civil society

- a) Is Mexico living a 'bottom-up' democracy?
- b) It is often said: 'Government that doesn't respond to social demands is a tyranny, and that who responds to all is not a government.' Your views?
- c) Are there any effective mechanisms for OCS participation in public policy?
- d) Which are the government agencies and politicians you work with in public security making?

Civil society in policy-making

- a) How would you define your organisation's work with government in the Agendas Ciudadanas?
- b) How did you achieve the collaboration?
- c) How did you engage citizens and politicians with your cause?

Media

- a) Did media play a role in your strategy?

Annex 2. Sizeable media's agenda-setting effects over public agenda

'Traditional' news media.	Number of accumulated weeks producing the maximum correlation from the media to public agenda.	Number of weeks before the disappearance of a significant correlation from the media and public agenda.
National TV news	1	8
Local TV news	2	12
Regional newspaper	3	26
Local newspaper	4	26
News magazine	8	26

Source: Author's own elaboration with data from M. McCombs, *Setting the Agenda: The Mass Media and Public Opinion* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 2008).

Annex 3. % of citizens participating in political actions (2001).

Usefulness	Yes Participated			Not Participated			Did not know			Total Yes Participated	Total population considering "a lot useful"	Total population considering "not useful"
	A lot	A little	Not useful	A lot	A little	Not useful	A lot	A little	Not useful			
Unite with other people affected	11.77	9.00	2.53	22.35	33.35	19.71	0.00	0.04	0.00	23.30	34.12	22.24
Publish letters in newspapers	1.31	0.89	0.74	18.40	42.85	34.01	0.00	0.04	0.00	2.93	19.71	34.75
Complain with authorities	7.33	7.67	4.18	19.24	31.92	28.21	0.00	0.04	0.00	19.19	26.57	32.39
Ask for support from an CSO	3.86	3.02	0.65	15.50	42.79	32.55	0.00	0.04	0.00	7.53	19.36	33.20
Attend protests	3.97	2.76	0.91	14.95	39.43	36.55	0.00	0.04	0.00	7.63	18.92	37.45
Request support from a political party	4.42	2.92	1.25	14.04	36.60	39.19	0.00	0.00	0.00	8.59	18.46	40.44
Request support from Deputies or Senators	2.20	1.88	0.76	14.27	34.02	45.13	0.00	0.00	0.00	4.84	16.47	45.90
Call a radio or TV programme	2.94	1.84	0.23	26.25	37.39	29.82	0.00	0.00	0.00	5.01	29.19	30.05
Write to Mexico's President, governor or Municipal authority	3.03	2.14	0.86	21.42	35.13	35.71	0.02	0.00	0.00	6.03	24.47	36.57
Protest in a peaceful manner with a distinctive	2.57	1.86	0.61	12.14	33.78	46.99	0.01	0.00	0.06	5.04	14.73	47.61

Source: Author's own elaboration with information from ENCUP 2001.

Annex 4. Convenor CSOs for the First Citizens Summit for a Peaceful and Just Mexico.

Adherence dates	Type of participation	CSOs
August 2011	Convenors	Causa en Común * Centro de Estudios Estratégicos Nacionales * Centro de Colaboración Cívica * Mujeres por Mujeres * Dejemos de Hacernos Pendejos * Evolución Mexicana * Fundación NEMI * Iluminemos México * Mexico Unido Contra la Delincuencia * México SOS * Observatorio Nacional * Reelige o Castiga * Roy Campos * Toma Protesta*
September 2011	New Participants	Alto al Secuestro
November 2011	New Participants	INSYDE * Movimiento por la Paz con Justicia y Dignidad *
January 2012	New Participants	Alianza Cívica * Centro de Investigación y Estudios Superiores en Antropología Social * Fundación Ethos * México Evalúa * Propuesta Cívica * Centro Mexicano para la Filantropía * Reforma Política YA*Puebla Vigila

Source: Author's own elaboration with information from Azuela, Primera Cumbre Ciudadana Para Construir Un México Pacífico y Justo.

Annex 5. News reports on the Summit's original convening CSOs (per month, from January 2010 to December 2014).

	Causa en Comun/M. E. Morera				Iluminemos Mexico/Elias Kuri				MUCD/Josefina Ricaño			
	Norte	Reforma	Universal	Total	Norte	Reforma	Universal	Total	Norte	Reforma	Universal	Total
Jan 10	1	3		4	1	2		3	2	3	1	6
Feb 10		1		1		1		1	1	3		4
Mar 10	4	6	1	11		1		1	6	8		14
Apr 10	1	2		3		1	1	2	3	3	1	7
May 10	5	7	3	15		1		1	3	7	2	12
Jun 10	4	6	1	11		1		1	3	3		6
Jul 10	1	2	1	4					2	8	5	15
Aug 10	7	11	8	26	1	1		2	8	12	13	33
Sep 10	1	4	1	6	5	5	3	13		4	5	9
Oct 10			8	8	1	1		2	2	1	2	5
Nov 10	2	1	1	4		1	2	3	2	3	3	8
Dec 10	1	1	1	3	1	2	1	4	4	4	5	13
Jan 11	1	1	3	5		1		1	4	2	4	10
Feb 11	3	6	7	16		1		1	2	2	3	7
Mar 11	7	7	5	19					3	4		7
Apr 11	2	5	5	12	1	2		3	3	5	1	9
May 11	3	8	3	14		4	1	5	5	5	1	11
Jun 11	1	3	11	15					4	7	3	14
Jul 11	3	6	6	15					3	5	3	11
Aug 11	10	16	6	32					2	2	3	7
Sep 11	6	7	6	19		1		1	2	4		6
Oct 11	4	4	3	11					1	2		3
Nov 11	1	3	3	7						1	1	2
Dec 11	4	5	4	13						1		1
Jan 12	3	5	1	9		1		1	1	2	1	4
Feb 12	1		2	3					4	9	3	16
Mar 12		2	1	3		1		1	1	4	1	6
Apr 12	5	10	2	17					2	2		4
May 12	4	9	2	15	2	5		7	2	6		8
Jun 12	6	8	4	18	1	2		3		1		1
Jul 12	3	2	2	7		1		1		3		3
Aug 12	6	15	2	23	1	1		2	2	5	3	10
Sep 12		1		1					2	4	2	8
Oct 12	2	2	1	5					2	3	2	7
Nov 12		2	1	3					4	7	2	13
Dec 12	11	11	2	24	1	1		2	2	3		5
Jan 13	1	1	6	8	1	4		5	2	5		7
Feb 13		6	6	12		2		2		4		4
Mar 13	1	4	1	6					1	4	1	6
Apr 13	4	8	2	14						1	1	2
May 13	1	3	3	7	1			1	5	10		15
Jun 13	1	3		4	1	1		2	2	7		9
Jul 13	1	1	1	3		1		1	1	2		3
Aug 13	9	12	2	23					1	3	1	5
Sep 13	4	4		8						5		5
Oct 13	1	2		3								
Nov 13	2	2		4					4	1		5
Dec 13	2	2		4		2		2	2	2		4

	Causa en Comun/M. E. Morera				Iluminemos Mexico/Elias Kuri				MUCD/Josefina Ricaño			
	Norte	Reforma	Universal	Total	Norte	Reforma	Universal	Total	Norte	Reforma	Universal	Total
Jan 14	8	8	2	18		1		1	4	4	1	9
Feb 14	1	2	1	4		1		1	1	7	1	9
Mar 14	2	4		6						1		1
Apr 14	1	7		8					1	2		3
May 14		4		4					1	2		3
Jun 14	1	7	9	17					3	7	4	14
Jul 14	2	9	5	16					1	1		2
Aug 14	3	5	1	9								
Sep 14	5	7	2	14					1	2		3
Oct 14	1	2	2	5					2	1	2	5
Nov 14	2	4	7	13						3	2	5
Dec 14	6	8	3	17							2	2
Total	301	541	264	1106	26	75	8	109	186	373	125	684

	Mexico SOS/Alejandro Martí				Observatorio Nacional Ciudadano			
	Norte	Reforma	Universal	Total	Norte	Reforma	Universal	Total
Jan 10	1	3		4				
Feb 10	4	9		13				
Mar 10	3	5	2	10				
Apr 10								
May 10	11	13	7	31				
Jun 10	6	6	6	18				
Jul 10	3	7	3	13				
Aug 10	3	14	8	25				
Sep 10	5	10	2	17	1	1	1	3
Oct 10	5	9	10	24				
Nov 10	2	1	1	4				
Dec 10	1	4	6	11	1	1		2
Jan 11	5	5	7	17				
Feb 11	4	10	10	24				
Mar 11		8	3	11				
Apr 11	8	7	9	24				
May 11	14	17	9	40		1		1
Jun 11	4	10	5	19	1	1		2
Jul 11	7	3	1	11				
Aug 11	4	13	9	26	1	1	1	3
Sep 11	4	8	4	16	2			2
Oct 11	4	14	4	22			1	1
Nov 11	2	2	3	7		1		1
Dec 11	1	2	2	5	1	1		2

	Mexico SOS/Alejandro Martí				Observatorio Nacional Ciudadano			
	Norte	Reforma	Universal	Total	Norte	Reforma	Universal	Total
Jan 12	2	2	1	5				
Feb 12		1	3	4				
Mar 12	5	10	3	18		1		1
Apr 12	7	13	17	37	1	2		3
May 12	8	12	6	26	1	2		3
Jun 12	2	2	1	5		1		1
Jul 12	2	5	1	8	2	1		3
Aug 12	5	6	1	12	2	4	3	9
Sep 12	1	9	5	15	1	1		2
Oct 12	8	5	3	16	2	2	1	5
Nov 12	3	6	4	13	1	1		2
Dec 12		2	2	4	1	2	1	4
Jan 13	5	7	7	19		2	2	4
Feb 13		4	3	7				
Mar 13	2	6	1	9				
Apr 13	2	4	5	11				
May 13	7	10		17				
Jun 13	2	4		6	1	1		2
Jul 13		2		2	2	2		4
Aug 13	5	4	3	12	1	4		5
Sep 13	2	3		5	1	3	1	5
Oct 13	2	2	2	6			1	1
Nov 13	2	3		5	2	1		3
Dec 13	4	5	1	10	1	4		5
Jan 14	2	3	1	6	2	2		4
Feb 14	1	2	2	5	2	2		4
Mar 14	2	3	1	6	3	7		10
Apr 14		4	3	7		2	3	5
May 14	5	10	2	17		2	1	3
Jun 14	4	5	3	12	1	1	1	3
Jul 14	1	2	3	6	2	5	2	9
Aug 14	1	2	4	7	2	5	4	11
Sep 14	4	3		7		2	2	4
Oct 14		1	2	3	1	1		2
Nov 14	2	7	2	11				
Dec 14	4	5	3	12	1	1	1	3
Total	144	383	95	371	33	64	23	120

Source: Author's own elaboration with information from Lexis Nexis.

Annex 6. News reports on the First Citizens Summit (September 2011 – December 2014)

DATE	HEADLINE	PUBLICATION	Discarded
June 4, 2014 Wedne	Piden cesar dispendio del Gobierno federal	Reforma (Mexico)	Reason: Second Citizens Summit
June 3, 2014 Tuesda	Genaro García me amenazó cuando era secretario, señala activista	El Universal (Mexico)	Reason: Puebla Citizens' Summit
June 3, 2014 Tuesda	Urge Morera fortalecer seguridad en estados	Reforma (Mexico)	Reason: Second Citizens Summit
May 22, 2014 Thursd	Reclaman ONG demoras de Peña; Convocan a Segunda Cumbre Ciudadana. Anotan retraso en juicios orales y profesionalización de policías	Reforma (Mexico)	Reason: Second Citizens Summit
August 29, 2013 Thu	México debe cambiar.- Narro	Reforma (Mexico)	
August 28, 2013 Wed	Pide Narro actitud prudente" ante protestas de maestros"	El Universal (Mexico)	
February 13, 2013 W	Fijan acciones para seguridad; Focalizan plan en 100 municipios. Prevéen destinar más de \$118 mil millones durante el presente año	Reforma (Mexico)	
December 16, 2012 S	Rechazan ONG reparto de despensas	El Norte (Mexico)	
December 16, 2012 S	Rechazan ONG reparto de despensas	Reforma (Mexico)	
December 14, 2012 F	Ven ONG incompleto el Pacto por México; Urgen organismos a aclarar cómo impactarán medidas en vida de mexicanos	El Norte (Mexico)	
December 14, 2012 F	Ven ONG incompleto el Pacto por México; Urgen organismos a aclarar cómo impactarán medidas en vida de mexicanos	Reforma (Mexico)	
December 3, 2012 M	Ven primeros pasos con ley de víctimas; [NUEVA ERA 2012-2018]	Reforma (Mexico)	
November 3, 2012 S	Los tuiteros de la transición	El Universal (Mexico)	
September 23, 2012	Colaborador Invitado / Ciudadanía y república democrática; Los ciudadanos mantienen vigente ante Peña Nieto la agenda que presentaron a partidos y candidatos en la campaña electoral	Reforma (Mexico)	
August 31, 2012 Frid	Asume el sol azteca propuestas de ONG	Reforma (Mexico)	
August 22, 2012 Wed	Peña Nieto ofrece apertura a organizaciones civiles	El Universal (Mexico)	
August 22, 2012 Wed	EPN ofrece diálogo con la sociedad	El Universal (Mexico)	
July 26, 2012 Thursd	Eligen a ciudadanos para integrar CNSP	Reforma (Mexico)	
July 25, 2012 Wedne	ONG postulan candidatos a consejeros de seguridad	El Universal (Mexico)	
July 20, 2012 Friday	Piden amarrar consejeros ciudadanos	Reforma (Mexico)	
July 1, 2012 Sunday	Se disputan Los Pinos; VOTO'12. Reportaje. Después de 90 días de campaña y tres de reflexión, llegó el día de elegir a un nuevo Presidente de la República	Reforma (Mexico)	
June 27, 2012 Wedn	Avalan candidatos agenda ciudadana; VOTO'12. Suscriben aspirantes el 78% de los temas planteados por ONG's; algunos con reservas	Reforma (Mexico)	
June 19, 2012 Tuesd	Exigen al IFE ampliar pacto de civilidad; VOTO'12. Piden incluir, además de candidatos, a la IP, sociedad civil y medios de comunicación	Reforma (Mexico)	
June 18, 2012 Mond	PRD exige que PREP no sea una reedición del 2006	El Universal (Mexico)	
June 14, 2012 Thursd	Respetaremos posibles manifestaciones tras elección: Poiré	El Universal (Mexico)	
June 4, 2012 Mond	Juan Ciudadano / Duopolio a debate	El Norte (Mexico)	
June 4, 2012 Mond	Juan Ciudadano / Duopolio a debate	Reforma (Mexico)	
May 27, 2012 Sunday	Cumbre ciudadana: ¿qué sigue?; Crónica Sociedad organizada. Más de 300 organizaciones civiles generaron una agenda de más de 100 puntos para los candidatos a la Presidencia	Reforma (Mexico)	
May 24, 2012 Thursd	Los mexicanos tenemos que cambiar	El Universal (Mexico)	

DATE	HEADLINE	PUBLICATION	Discarded
May 24, 2012 Thursday	José Woldenberg / Y sin embargo, se mueve	Reforma (Mexico)	
May 23, 2012 Wednesday	Sergio Aguayo / ¿Podemos creerle?	El Norte (Mexico)	
May 23, 2012 Wednesday	Garantizan agenda civil; VOTO '12. Entregan propuestas a los 4 candidatos y les dan 15 días para dar respuesta de su compromiso	El Norte (Mexico)	
May 23, 2012 Wednesday	Pide AMLO respaldo ciudadano; VOTO '12	El Norte (Mexico)	
May 23, 2012 Wednesday	Ofrece EPN un diálogo abierto; VOTO '12	El Norte (Mexico)	
May 23, 2012 Wednesday	Solicita AMLO el respaldo de la sociedad; VOTO'12	Reforma (Mexico)	
May 23, 2012 Wednesday	Ofrece JVM incrementar apoyos para asociaciones; VOTO'12	Reforma (Mexico)	
May 23, 2012 Wednesday	Regañan a Quadri en foro ciudadano; VOTO'12	Reforma (Mexico)	
May 23, 2012 Wednesday	TEMPLO MAYOR	Reforma (Mexico)	
May 23, 2012 Wednesday	Sergio Aguayo / ¿Podemos creerle?	Reforma (Mexico)	
May 23, 2012 Wednesday	Prometen candidatos cumplir agenda civil; VOTO'12. Dan ONGs beneficio de la duda a los aspirantes presidenciales. Entregan propuestas y les dan 15 días para dar respuesta de su compromiso	Reforma (Mexico)	
May 23, 2012 Wednesday	Garantiza Peña diálogo con organismos; VOTO'12	Reforma (Mexico)	
May 22, 2012 Tuesday	Vázquez Mota pide renovar sin claudicar" lucha antinarco"	El Universal (Mexico)	
May 22, 2012 Tuesday	La agenda de los candidatos	El Universal (Mexico)	
May 22, 2012 Tuesday	...Y demandan comicios de calidad	El Norte (Mexico)	
May 22, 2012 Tuesday	Urgen a empoderar a la sociedad civil; Llaman ONG a marcar una agenda pública a gobernantes. Afirman que falta imponer consecuencias a las decisiones de los políticos por incumplimiento	El Norte (Mexico)	
May 22, 2012 Tuesday	Piden ciudadanos fijar límites a SNTE; Exponen organizaciones sus propuestas a candidatos. Plantean en cumbre reducir financiamiento a partidos políticos y obligar transparencia	El Norte (Mexico)	
May 22, 2012 Tuesday	Proponen replantear política contra drogas	El Norte (Mexico)	
May 22, 2012 Tuesday	Demandan restringir monopolios en medios	El Norte (Mexico)	
May 22, 2012 Tuesday	Exigen ciudadanos fijar límites a SNTE; Exponen organizaciones sus propuestas a candidatos. Plantean en cumbre reducir financiamiento a partidos políticos y obligar transparencia	Reforma (Mexico)	
May 22, 2012 Tuesday	Demandan restringir monopolios en medios	Reforma (Mexico)	
May 22, 2012 Tuesday	Proponen replantear la política contra las drogas	Reforma (Mexico)	
May 22, 2012 Tuesday	Urgen empoderar a la sociedad civil; Llaman ONGs a imponer agenda a gobernantes. Señalan que no se han cobrado costos a la clase política por incumplimiento	Reforma (Mexico)	
May 22, 2012 Tuesday	...Y demandan comicios de calidad	Reforma (Mexico)	
May 22, 2012 Tuesday	TEMPLO MAYOR	Reforma (Mexico)	
May 21, 2012 Monday	Woldenberg pide robustecer a la sociedad ante campañas	El Universal (Mexico)	
May 21, 2012 Monday	Ciudadanos: campaña paralela; Impulsan más de 200 agrupaciones primera cumbre. Trabaja la sociedad civil organizada para fijarle una agenda al próximo Presidente	El Norte (Mexico)	
May 21, 2012 Monday	Juan Ciudadano / Cumbre para construir	El Norte (Mexico)	
May 21, 2012 Monday	Juan Ciudadano / Cumbre para construir	Reforma (Mexico)	
May 20, 2012 Sunday	La Semana en Perspectiva	El Universal (Mexico)	

Annex 7. News articles published on the topics of 'Guaranteeing universal access to broadband' and 'a law for the protection of journalists' (by month and newspaper).

	Guaranteeing universal access to broadband				A law for the protection of journalists			
	Reforma	Norte	El Universal	Total	Reforma	Norte	El Universal	Total
Jan 10	11	6		17				
Feb 10	8	2	4	14			1	1
Mar 10	6	7	3	16				
Apr 10	3	4	2	9				
May 10	6	2	4	12				
Jun 10	7	7	2	16				
Jul 10	6	3	2	11				
Aug 10	12	9	6	27			3	3
Sep 10	9	7	5	21				
Oct 10	7	2	12	21				
Nov 10	11	1	6	18			1	1
Dec 10	10	4	7	21				
Jan 11	8	6	2	16			1	1
Feb 11	8	1	8	17				
Mar 11	7		4	11			1	1
Apr 11	6	7	7	20				
May 11	6	5	5	16				
Jun 11	6	2	7	15	1	1	2	4
Jul 11	11	3	6	20				
Aug 11	2	2		4				
Sep 11	5		3	8				
Oct 11	6	3	4	13			2	2
Nov 11	5	2	9	16			1	1
Dec 11	10	2	5	17	1			1
Jan 12	7	4		11	1			1
Feb 12	14	1	4	19			2	2
Mar 12	12	3	6	21			2	2
Apr 12	3	1	5	9				
May 12	8	7	12	27			2	2
Jun 12	13	7	2	22	1	1	3	5
Jul 12	8	7		15				
Aug 12	12	5	5	22	2	2		4
Sep 12	8	3	13	24			2	2
Oct 12	6	3	3	12	1	1		2
Nov 12	15	3	6	24			2	2
Dec 12	22	13	10	45	1		1	2

	Guaranteeing universal access to broadband				A law for the protection of journalists			
	Reforma	Norte	El Universal	Total	Reforma	Norte	El Universal	Total
Jan 13	20	10	6	36				
Feb 13	13	7	6	26			1	1
Mar 13	27	17	17	61			2	2
Apr 13	13	8	5	26	1		2	3
May 13	7	4		11			1	1
Jun 13	4	5	1	10				
Jul 13	10	4		14	1	1		2
Aug 13	3	1	1	5				
Sep 13	7	3		10				
Oct 13	9	1	4	14				
Nov 13	7	3	6	16				
Dec 13	4	2	6	12				
Jan 14	8	3	4	15			1	1
Feb 14	2	2	1	5			1	1
Mar 14	6		1	7				
Apr 14	4	1	6	11				
May 14	13	8	5	26	1			1
Jun 14	5	2	4	11	1			1
Jul 14	4	1	10	15	1			1
Aug 14	2	2	3	7				
Sep 14	5	2	3	10				
Oct 14	1		1	2				
Nov 14	4	2	3	9				
Dec 14	3	1	4	8				
Total	448	217	260	925	12	6	31	49

Source: Author's own elaboration with information from El Universal, Reforma and Norte newspapers data from Lexis Nexis.

Annex 8. Media coverage given to the ‘citizens’ security’ topics included in the Summit's agenda (by month and newspaper).

	Civil Auditor				Amparo Law				Policy on drugs			
	Reforma	Norte	El Universal	Total "Civil Auditor Body"	Reforma	Norte	El Universal	Total "Amparo Law"	Reforma	Norte	El Universal	Total "review policy on drugs"
Jan 10					1	1		2				
Feb 10					2		1	3	1			1
Mar 10					1		1	2				
Apr 10					4	3	1	8				
May 10					1	1		2				
Jun 10					3	2		5				
Jul 10					2	2		4				
Aug 10					5	2	3	10				
Sep 10					2		1	3				
Oct 10					3			3	1			1
Nov 10							3	3				
Dec 10					2	1	1	4				
Jan 11					1	2	3	6				
Feb 11					3		2	5				
Mar 11					14		1	15				
Apr 11					4	3	1	8				
May 11					3	1	1	5				
Jun 11					5	1	4	10	1			1
Jul 11					2			2				
Aug 11					1		3	4				
Sep 11					7	2	2	11				
Oct 11					15	7	8	30				
Nov 11					1		2	3				
Dec 11					4	1	4	9				
Jan 12					5	2	4	11				
Feb 12					4	3	3	10		1		1
Mar 12					3			3				
Apr 12					4		1	5				
May 12	1	1		2	4	4	3	11	2	1		3
Jun 12					2		2	4				
Jul 12					2	1		3				
Aug 12					3			3				
Sep 12					3	2	2	7				
Oct 12					2	1	3	6				
Nov 12					4		3	7	1			1
Dec 12					8	2	2	12				
Jan 13					9	3	9	21				
Feb 13					34	20	21	75				
Mar 13					10	6	6	22	1			1
Apr 13					32	15	6	53				
May 13					14	4	5	23				
Jun 13					14	6	1	21				
Jul 13					5	2		7	1			1
Aug 13					5		2	7	3			3
Sep 13					6	1		7	1	1	1	3
Oct 13					7	1	2	10				
Nov 13					1	1		2	1	1		2
Dec 13					4	4	3	11				
Jan 14					6	2	1	9				
Feb 14					2	1	1	4				
Mar 14					4	1		5				
Apr 14					6	4	2	12				
May 14					4	1	1	6				
Jun 14					3	1	4	8				
Jul 14						1	1	2	1	1	1	3
Aug 14					2	1	2	5	1			1

	Civil Auditor				Amparo Law				Policy on drugs			
	Reforma	Norte	El Universal	Total "Civil Auditor Body"	Reforma	Norte	El Universal	Total "Amparo Law"	Reforma	Norte	El Universal	Total "review policy on drugs"
Sep 14					2	1	2	5	1			1
Oct 14					2	1	1	4				
Nov 14					4	2	1	7				
Dec 14						1	3	4				
Total	1	1		2	306	124	139	569	16	5	2	23

	Citizens' Representatives				Centres of Justice for Women				Public Ministry Office			
	Reforma	Norte	El Universal	Total "citizens' participation in Council of Public Security"	Reforma	Norte	El Universal	Total "Centres of Justice for Women"	Reforma	Norte	El Universal	Total "career service for Public Ministry Offices"
Jan 10												
Feb 10												
Mar 10												
Apr 10									2	2		4
May 10												
Jun 10						2		2				
Jul 10												
Aug 10												
Sep 10												
Oct 10												
Nov 10												
Dec 10	1	1		2								
Jan 11												
Feb 11					1			1				
Mar 11												
Apr 11												
May 11					1		1	2	1		1	2
Jun 11												
Jul 11									1			1
Aug 11												
Sep 11												
Oct 11												
Nov 11												
Dec 11												
Jan 12									1			1
Feb 12												
Mar 12					1	1		2				
Apr 12												
May 12									2	1	1	4
Jun 12									1			1
Jul 12	2	1		3								
Aug 12	1			1					1			1
Sep 12												
Oct 12	1			1								
Nov 12					2		1	3		2	1	3
Dec 12			1	1	1			1			1	1
Jan 13			2	2	1			1	1			1
Feb 13												
Mar 13					1			1			1	1
Apr 13							1	1			1	1
May 13									1			1

	Citizens' Representatives				Centres of Justice for Women				Public Ministry Office			
	Reforma	Norte	El Universal	Total "citizens' participation in Council of Public Security"	Reforma	Norte	El Universal	Total "Centres of Justice for Women"	Reforma	Norte	El Universal	Total "career service for Public Ministry Offices"
Jun 13												
Jul 13											1	1
Aug 13												
Sep 13										1	1	2
Oct 13						1		1				
Nov 13												
Dec 13					1			1	1	1		2
Jan 14												
Feb 14												
Mar 14							1	1				
Apr 14												
May 14												
Jun 14												
Jul 14												
Aug 14												
Sep 14	1	1		2								
Oct 14												
Nov 14	3	3		6	2	1	2	5				
Dec 14		2		2	1			1				
Total	9	8	3	20	12	5	6	23	13	7	7	27

	Disappearances				Human trafficking				General Law of Victims			
	Reforma	Norte	El Universal	Total "crime of disappeared people"	Reforma	Norte	El Universal	Total "Citizens Observatory for Law against Human trafficking"	Reforma	Norte	El Universal	Total "General law of victims"
Jan 10												
Feb 10									1	1		2
Mar 10	1		1	2								
Apr 10												
May 10												
Jun 10			1	1								
Jul 10												
Aug 10												
Sep 10			1	1								
Oct 10												
Nov 10												
Dec 10	2			2								
Jan 11												
Feb 11	1			1								
Mar 11	3	2		5								
Apr 11		1		1								
May 11												
Jun 11	1		2	3								
Jul 11		1		1								
Aug 11	3	3		6								
Sep 11			1	1								
Oct 11	1	2	1	4								
Nov 11			1	1								
Dec 11		1	1	2					1			1
Jan 12	2	7	1	10							1	1
Feb 12		5		5					1	1		2
Mar 12		2	1	3								
Apr 12	2	1	1	4					9	2	11	22
May 12		3	2	5	1			1	7	3	2	12
Jun 12		1		1					1			1
Jul 12		5		5					14	12	12	38
Aug 12		1	1	2					11	3	2	16
Sep 12	2	1		3					7	3	5	15
Oct 12		1		1					1			1
Nov 12	2	3		5								
Dec 12		1		1			1	1	7	5	7	19

	Disappearances				Human trafficking				General Law of Victims			
	Reforma	Norte	El Universal	Total "crime of disappeared people"	Reforma	Norte	El Universal	Total "Citizens Observatory for Law against Human trafficking"	Reforma	Norte	El Universal	Total "General law of victims"
Jan 13		2	1	3					23	17	23	63
Feb 13									2	2	10	14
Mar 13									7	2	7	16
Apr 13			2	2					8	2	4	14
May 13		2	1	3					5	3	1	9
Jun 13	3	3		6					2	3	2	7
Jul 13									2	2		4
Aug 13									1		1	2
Sep 13					1			1	1		1	2
Oct 13			1	1					7	7	2	16
Nov 13										1	3	4
Dec 13									2	1	1	4
Jan 14									5	2	1	8
Feb 14									1		2	3
Mar 14					2			2	5	1		6
Apr 14									2	1	1	4
May 14									3		1	4
Jun 14			1	1					3		4	7
Jul 14									3	3		6
Aug 14	2	1		3			1	1	1		1	2
Sep 14									2			2
Oct 14	1	1	1	3					1	1	5	7
Nov 14	1	1		2					2		9	11
Dec 14	2			2					4	3		7
Total	29	51	22	102	4		2	6	152	81	119	352

Source: Author's own elaboration with information from Lexis Nexis.

Annex 9. Monthly coverage of the "Autodefensas VS Caballeros Templarios" conflict.

Month	Autodefensas				[Caballeros] Templarios			
	Cambio de Michoacan	El Universal	Reforma	El Norte	Cambio de Michoacan	El Universal	Reforma	El Norte
mar-11	0	0	0	0	9	5	1	2
abr-11	0	0	1	1	4	3	2	3
may-11	0	4	2	3	2	3	7	5
jun-11	0	2	5	3	14	13	30	27
jul-11	0	1	0	0	27	15	25	15
ago-11	0	1	0	0	27	19	16	5
sep-11	0	0	2	0	17	11	9	5
oct-11	0	1	1	0	11	8	13	8
nov-11	0	1	0	0	2	11	21	9
dic-11	0	0	0	0	9	14	6	4
ene-12	0	2	0	0	6	4	4	2
feb-12	0	1	1	0	3	2	10	7
mar-12	0	0	0	0	2	9	22	11
abr-12	0	0	0	0	7	1	4	1
may-12	0	0	0	0	4	3	4	3
jun-12	0	0	0	0	4	0	11	1
jul-12	0	1	0	0	6	6	7	2
ago-12	0	2	0	0	5	12	24	7
sep-12	0	0	0	0	3	9	13	5
oct-12	0	4	1	0	1	4	8	3
nov-12	0	0	1	0	11	8	16	3
dic-12	0	0	1	0	2	5	13	7
ene-13	0	40	34	5	1	7	13	4
feb-13	0	71	72	22	0	1	5	4
mar-13	3	46	59	32	3	4	14	6
abr-13	3	25	41	22	7	4	14	8
may-13	6	14	50	36	7	4	24	19
jun-13	6	14	25	14	7	4	9	8
jul-13	3	18	46	32	11	11	41	23
ago-13	13	31	95	62	10	5	22	12
sep-13	11	9	30	11	9	2	8	1
oct-13	11	9	36	18	8	2	18	8
nov-13	33	17	58	35	21	26	50	33
dic-13	30	12	54	35	6	1	35	18
ene-14	141	107	224	156	27	46	145	93
feb-14	77	61	166	116	28	45	85	60
mar-14	111	64	138	67	48	48	90	52
abr-14	140	55	96	59	98	56	94	56
may-14	104	61	102	76	45	23	43	33
jun-14	69	33	51	23	30	28	32	22
jul-14	71	46	69	35	42	40	37	26
ago-14	37	35	28	27	57	38	46	32
sep-14	24	10	16	9	52	18	29	13
oct-14	26	20	15	6	29	32	22	11
nov-14	19	13	13	6	9	19	16	7
dic-14	70	47	62	35	17	23	30	15
ene-15	36	38	53	30	32	28	35	11
feb-15	14	9	11	2	44	47	15	11
mar-15	49	24	14	5	37	40	31	16
abr-15	21	14	19	9	31	20	13	9
may-15	46	26	27	19	20	23	16	11
jun-15	40	19	15	8	32	17	14	8

Source: Author's own elaboration with information from El Universal, El Norte, Reforma and Cambio de Michoacan newspapers' archives.

Annex 10. Correlations between homicides and local media coverage of autodefensas and Caballeros Templarios DTO.

	Local coverage of autodefensas	Local coverage of DTO	Homicides
mar-11	0	9	77
apr-11	0	4	62
may-11	0	2	85
jun-11	0	14	93
jul-11	0	27	88
aug-11	0	27	80
sep-11	0	17	56
oct-11	0	11	67
nov-11	0	2	56
dec-11	0	9	67
jan-12	0	6	73
feb-12	0	3	51
mar-12	0	2	72
apr-12	0	7	91
may-12	0	4	68
jun-12	0	4	57
jul-12	0	6	67
aug-12	0	5	76
sep-12	0	3	81
oct-12	0	1	54
nov-12	0	11	61
dec-12	0	2	69
jan-13	0	1	44
feb-13	0	0	38
mar-13	3	3	87
apr-13	3	7	94
may-13	6	7	76
jun-13	6	7	53
jul-13	3	11	70
aug-13	13	10	81
sep-13	11	9	79
oct-13	11	8	112
nov-13	33	21	93
dec-13	30	6	88
jan-14	141	27	99
feb-14	77	28	77
mar-14	111	48	74
apr-14	140	98	72
may-14	104	45	101
jun-14	69	30	85
jul-14	71	42	67
aug-14	37	57	64
sep-14	24	52	68
oct-14	26	29	87
nov-14	19	9	66
dec-14	70	17	65
jan-15	36	32	59
feb-15	14	44	35
mar-15	49	37	39
apr-15	21	31	59
may-15	46	20	94
jun-15	40	32	45

Correlation between 'Homicides' and 'media coverage' of the Caballeros Templarios *DTO* and Autodefensas, prior to the autodefensas uprising (March 2011–Feb 2013).

		Homicides	DTO	Autodefensas
Homicides	Correlación de Pearson	1	.451 [*]	. ^b
	Sig. (bilateral)		.027	.
	N	24	24	24
DTO	Correlación de Pearson	.451 [*]	1	. ^b
	Sig. (bilateral)	.027		.
	N	24	24	24
Autodefensas	Correlación de Pearson	. ^b	. ^b	. ^b
	Sig. (bilateral)	.	.	.
	N	24	24	24

Correlation between 'Homicides' and 'media coverage' given to Caballeros Templarios *DTO* and Autodefensas, during the autodefensas uprising (March 2013–Feb 2014).

		Homicides	DTO	Autodefensas
Homicides	Correlación de Pearson	1	.150	.282
	Sig. (bilateral)		.641	.375
	N	12	12	12
DTO	Correlación de Pearson	.150	1	.847 ^{**}
	Sig. (bilateral)	.641		.001
	N	12	12	12
Autodefensas	Correlación de Pearson	.282	.847 ^{**}	1
	Sig. (bilateral)	.375	.001	
	N	12	12	12

** . La correlación es significativa en el nivel 0,01 (2 colas).

Correlation between 'Homicides' and 'media coverage' given to Caballeros Templarios *DTO* and Autodefensas, after the autodefensas uprising (March 2014–June 2015).

		Homicides	DTO	Autodefensas
Homicides	Correlación de Pearson	1	-.019	.409
	Sig. (bilateral)		.943	.116
	N	16	16	16
DTO	Correlación de Pearson	-.019	1	.580 [*]
	Sig. (bilateral)	.943		.018
	N	16	16	16
Autodefensas	Correlación de Pearson	.409	.580 [*]	1
	Sig. (bilateral)	.116	.018	
	N	16	16	16

* . La correlación es significativa en el nivel 0,05 (2 colas).