COLOMBIA SITUATIONAL REPORT
March 2025

HELPS
LATAM EXPERT

COUNTRY RISK PROBABILITY ASSESSMENT

3,76/5	75,35%

VULNERABILITIES	THREATS
Political	Terrorism
Economic	Organized Crime
Sociocultural	Civil Unrest
Technological	Common Crime
Ecological	Health Threat
Legal	Enviromental
	Cybercrime
	Internal Threats

GENERAL RISK PROBABILITY IN THE CONTEXT

71,01%

RANGE

05	Severe
04	High Risk
03	Elevated
02	Guarded
01	Low

HELPS
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The First part of our proposed methodology focuses on assessing vulnerabilities and threats across the country. This comprehensive and multidimensional approach encompasses political, economic, sociocultural, technological, ecological, and legal aspects. Furthermore, it considers specific threats such as terrorism, organized crime, protests, common crime, cybercrime, climate disasters, and medical threats.

Data is collected using official government sources, national and international media, and individual testimonials in each country. This approach ensures a broad and diverse view of the region's situation. Data is collected over a 30-day period, allowing for real-time analysis and its progressive evolution. Once the information is gathered, it is classified into different categories of vulnerabilities and risks. Each category is evaluated on a scale of 1 to 5, with 1 being the lowest level and 5 being the most severe. This scale allows for a quantitative assessment, facilitating comparison between different categories.

The purpose of this methodology is to understand and measure vulnerabilities. Countries are diverse and complex, with a variety of challenges and opportunities. By providing a quantitative assessment, it offers tools for evaluation and decision-making, research, and understanding the situation in each country.

Lastly, the methodology is dynamic and adaptable. By collecting data from a variety of sources and updating the information every 30 days, it can keep up with rapid changes in the political, economic, and social environment. This is especially important in a region like Latin America, where conditions can change quickly.

The second part of our protective intelligence framework assesses and quantifies the probability of general risk to any individual or organization in a context by evaluating the vulnerabilities and threats within the designated area.

The scores help understand the severity of deficiencies (General Vulnerabilities) and capabilities (General Threats), which are then used to calculate the overall risk probability.

1. General Vulnerabilities (measured by the inadequacy of controls)

1.1 Deficiencies in the System (PESTEL) - rated from 1 to 5, with 1 being adequate, 2 having some inconsistencies, 3 being deficient, 4 being very deficient, and 5 being totally ineffective.

1.2 Deficiencies in Response Capacities: Police, Armed Forces, Disaster Management, Emergency & Medical—rated from 1 to 5, with 1 being adequate, 2 having some inconsistencies, 3 being deficient, 4 being very deficient, and 5 being totally ineffective.

2. General Threats (measured by capabilities)

2.1 Resources: Personel, Weapons, Equipment, Transportation- rated from 1 to 5, with 1 being nonexistent, 2 being low, 3 being medium, 4 being high, and 5 being unlimited (or unknown).

2.2 Information about: Type of crimes, Criminal Resilience, surveillance and Intelligence capability, Ability to co-opt internal staff - rated from 1 to 5, with 1 being unlimited, 2 being high, 3 being medium, 4 being low, and 5 being nonexistent (or unknown).

3. General Risk in the context (Average between CRP, IC, GTC)

In this part of the methodology, a comprehensive evaluation of the overall risk in a specific context is conducted. This evaluation is based on the average of three key components. The first component is Inadequate Controls (IC), referring to security or preventive measures that may be insufficient or not functioning correctly. The second component is the General Threat Capability (GTC), which assesses the potential dangers that threats might pose in each scenario due to their capabilities.

The third and final component is the Country Risk Probability (CRP), which considers the inherent risk level in the country based on PESTEL and TOPCMEX measures. By summing these three components, we obtain the General Risk Probability in the Context in the context, providing a comprehensive measure of the risk level to which an individual or entity may be exposed
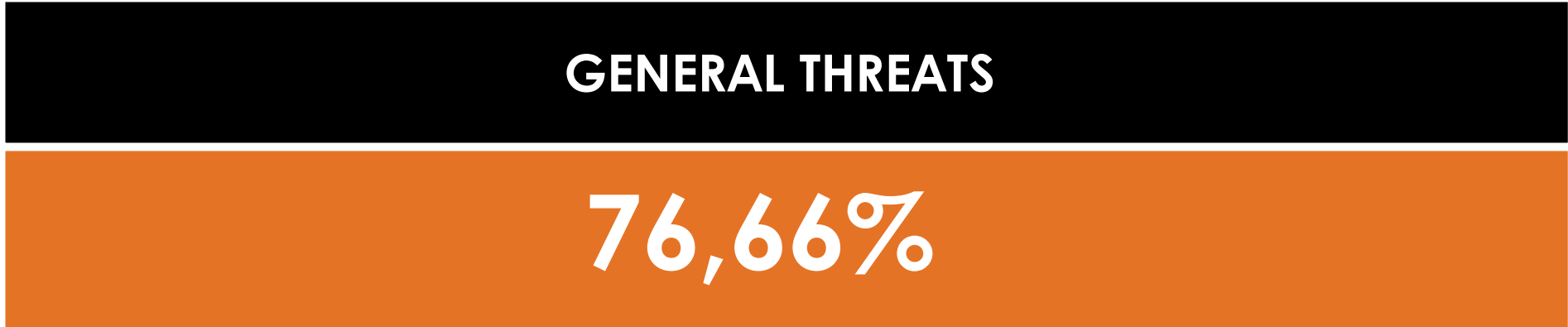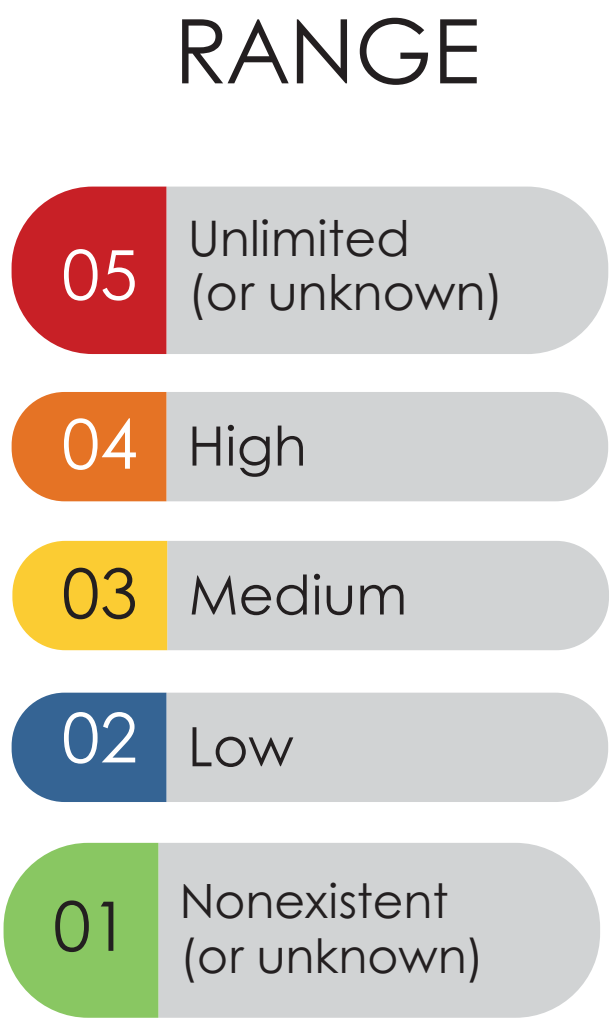
INADEQUATE CONTROLS

GENERAL VULNERABILITIES

71,6%
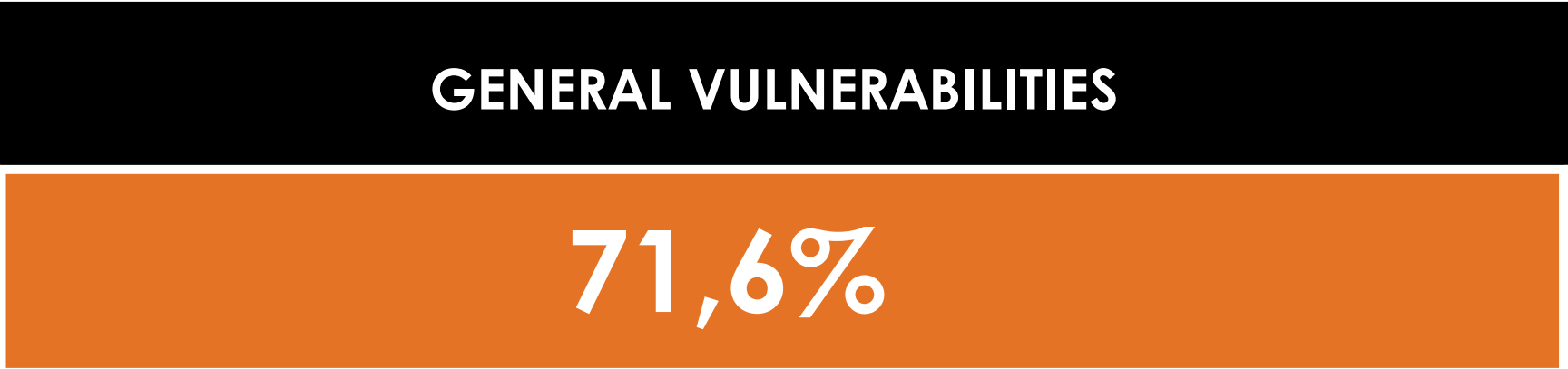
SYSTEM DEFICIENCIES	DEFICIENCIES IN CONTROL
Political	Law enforcement
Economic	Emergency management
Sociocultural	Medical
Technological	Comunications
Ecological	Transport
Legal	Foreign

RANGE

05	Totally ineffective
04	Very poor
03	Poor
02	Certain inconsistencies
01	Adequate

GENERAL THREATS CAPACITY

GENERAL THREATS

76,66%

VIOLENCE	RECURRENCE	RESOURCES
TERRORISM	TERRORISM	Personel
ORGANIZED CRIME	ORGANIZED CRIME	Weapons
CIVIL UNREST	CIVIL UNREST	Equipment
COMMON CRIME	COMMON CRIME	Transportation
HEALTH THREAT	HEALTH THREAT	
ENVIRONMENTAL	ENVIRONMENTAL	
CYBERCRIME	CYBERCRIME	
INTERNAL THREATS	INTERNAL THREATS	

RANGE

05	Unlimited (or unknown)
04	High
03	Medium
02	Low
01	Nonexistent (or unknown)

THREATS	HELPS LATAM EXPERT ANALYSIS	SCORE
TERRORISM Colombia's Surge in Violence: A Return to Past Conflicts	Since the beginning of the year, violence and terrorist attacks in Colombia have sharply increased, echoing the conflict of 20 years ago. Security forces are facing challenges such as bus burnings and hidden gas cylinders set to explode on busy highways. This surge is driven by guerrillas and organized crime groups vying for control of areas rich in illegal mining, oil, and coca cultivation. The rise in attacks poses significant security risks for individuals and businesses in affected regions. Unfortunately, the violence shows no signs of diminishing, leading to unintentional homicides, kidnappings, and injuries. In the Colombia Travel SOP generated by OSAC, terrorist activity is ranked tenth as a threat, indicating how it affects employees or organizations.	**5.0**
ORGANIZED CRIME Cocaine Trade Conflict Escalates ELN and FARC's 33rd Front Battle for Control	The conflict over Colombia's largest cocaine-producing region has intensified this year, involving the ELN and the FARC's 33rd Front. This violence has led to rising homicides, kidnappings, and displacement, particularly in cities like Cúcuta, Barranquilla, Bogotá, Cali, and Medellín. Despite efforts by armed forces to combat organized crime, infiltration of the military by these groups continues. In the Colombia Travel SOP generated by OSAC, extortion by organized crime is placed sixth as a threat, indicating how it affects employees or organizations. Companies in affected areas must enhance their security measures to protect their executives.	**4.0**
CIVIL UNREST Growing Civil Unrest: Protests and Demonstrations on the Rise	Several factors have contributed to civil unrest in various regions of Colombia. These factors differ according to the needs of different population sectors. Recent examples of civil unrest include student demonstrations, roadblocks created by rice producers, protests on the Rumichaca Bridge that have blocked traffic on the border with Ecuador, and widespread protests against the government. While violence during these demonstrations has not significantly escalated, resulting in only minor injuries or conflicts, an increase in civil unrest among the population is anticipated.	**4.0**
COMMON CRIME Ordinary Crime and Organized Crime: A Dangerous Collaboration	Ordinary crime is on the rise and increasingly connected to organized crime. Activities like robberies, thefts, kidnappings, homicides, and extortions link these two sectors. Organized crime groups often hire common crime gangs to carry out specific illegal actions, as seen in cities like Medellín and Bogotá. The surge in violence in Colombia has led to conflicts between criminal gangs, resulting in homicides and specialized kidnappings. Kidnappings and extortions of high-value executives and social leaders also continue. Colombian intelligence indicates that typical criminals are trying to mislead the police and citizens by using graffiti to instill fear in the community.	**4.0**
HEALTH THREAT Health Crisis in Colombia: Rising Disease Risks and Medical Shortages	Heavy rains can increase the risk of respiratory diseases, including influenza and flu. The most common illnesses during this period are whooping cough, SARS, and yellow fever. Although there hasn't been a significant rise in cases of these diseases, preventive measures are recommended. Colombia's health system is in crisis, resulting in a shortage of medicines and a lack of medical appointments for patient care. This crisis has led to the deaths of several individuals who were unable to access adequate health services.	**3.0**

THREATS	HELPS LATAM EXPERT ANALYSIS	SCORE
ENVIRONMENTAL Environmental Crisis: Deforestation, Illegal Mining, and Energy Shortages	Deforestation, illegal mining, and illicit agriculture are significant issues affecting the country's ecology, often linked to criminal organizations that finance their activities through these means. A key concern is sustainable water and energy management and environmental conservation. While urban areas have seen intense rainfall, reservoirs for hydroelectric plants remain dry, leading to a recurring water and energy shortage. If this situation continues, exacerbated by deforestation and inadequate preventive measures from authorities, it could result in failures within the energy system.	4.0
CYBERCRIME Cybercrime Surge: Colombia Becomes a Prime Target for Digital Attacks	Cybercrime in the country has surged by 40.49%, according to a professor at ITM in Medellín. The most common types of cyberattacks include phishing, ransomware, identity theft, impersonation, computer theft, and unauthorized access to computer systems. These offenses have positioned Colombia as Latin America's fourth most targeted country for cyberattacks. The increase in these incidents can be attributed to the rise of criminal gangs using artificial intelligence (AI). With AI, these groups can craft more personalized attacks, effectively deceiving their victims to gain access to personal information, which they then use for criminal activities or extortion.	4.0
INTERNAL THREATS Security Risks for Companies: Extortion, Insider Threats, and Data Breaches	The rise of structural and direct violence in Colombia has led to significant internal security threats for various companies. This vulnerability is becoming increasingly apparent as incidents of extortion, blackmail, and the kidnapping of employees' relatives are on the rise. Additionally, the theft of personal data and the involvement of criminal organizations often highlight security weaknesses within these companies. It appears that criminals have insider knowledge about the locations of valuable items they intend to steal. Failures in security technology further exacerbate the situation. Criminal gangs, now more organized and sophisticated, are adept at exploiting vulnerabilities in the security systems on which citizens rely. Many reports have been submitted about suspicious activities in response to these threats.	3.0

AVERAGE SCORE	THREATS PERCENTAGE
3,875	**77,5%**

VULNERABILITIES	HELPS LATAM EXPERT ANALYSIS	SCORE
POLITICAL Political Instability and Corruption Challenges in Colombia	Since December, Colombia has faced political instability due to changes in central ministries, causing discontent within the government. As it nears the end of its mandate, the government is restructuring to enhance political stability. An Invamer survey indicates a 63% disapproval rating among the Colombian people, affecting the president and many mayors and officials. Allegations of corruption among government associates have intensified concerns about internal corruption, posing a threat to the administration. In the Colombia Travel SOP generated by OSAC regarding increased corruption, 14% of members expressed concerns about the corruption in private institutions and local security providers.	**4.0**
ECONOMIC Economic Struggles Amid Declining Household Spending	Colombia's economy is facing challenges due to declining household spending, which is impacting various sectors. Many citizens are experiencing harsh conditions, leading to reduced consumption. The Bank of the Republic anticipates a recovery in the first quarter, projecting annual growth of 2.3%. While sectors like automotive (13% increase) and education (16% rise) are recovering, entertainment and tourism are declining by 5% and 10%, respectively. Companies must adapt to conservative consumer spending, influenced by the rising dollar against the peso. The future of Colombia's economy will hinge on international factors, particularly US tariff policies, and the government should focus on attracting foreign investment.	**3.0**
SOCIOCULTURAL Organized Crime Expands Targets: Executives and Social Leaders at Risk	Violence in Colombia, particularly in regions like Catatumbo, has been escalating, leading to increased kidnappings, extortion, homicides, and forced recruitment. Guerrilla groups and criminal gangs are competing for control over drug trafficking and illegal mining, posing significant challenges to the Armed Forces. According to a UN report, last year saw 72 massacres and 89 social leaders murdered. In the Colombia Travel SOP generated by OSAC concerning Violent Conflict, 54% of members indicated an increase in violence between guerilla or criminal factions, including the use of explosives as a tripwire to halt operations in specific departments or cities. As a result, companies and executives must enhance their security measures to ensure safety amid this rising violence.	**4.0**
TECHNOLOGICAL AI-Driven Cyber Threats: The Rise of Deepfakes and Scams	Digital vulnerabilities in Colombia are rising, fueled by advancements in AI. Deepfakes and cyber scams have become more sophisticated, often using mimicked voices to impersonate bank employees or company representatives. While not new, these scams are increasingly advanced. Government initiatives to promote research and development may improve the technological landscape for businesses. Companies must adapt by incorporating the latest technologies to cut costs and enhance security, ensuring safe operations.	**4.0**
ECOLOGICAL Environmental Crisis: Deforestation, Illegal Mining, and Climate Challenges	The ecological sector is facing growing challenges due to the influence of organized crime, mainly through deforestation and illegal mining, which have harmed local communities and businesses. Following policy changes, international aid from the US has ceased addressing these environmental threats. In Medellín, illegal mining near the Porce III hydroelectric plant has led to clashes with authorities and the destruction of equipment. These activities are linked to organized crime. Furthermore, heavy rains continue to affect several cities, causing flooding and traffic congestion, but these rains are not replenishing the water reservoirs that supply the cities. The situation may worsen due to the ongoing conflict with illegal mining and deforestation.	**4.0**
LEGAL Legal Reforms and Their Potential Impact on Businesses and Workers	The legal sector is currently stable, but this may change if a new labor law is approved that affects night shifts and public sector working hours. This presents an opportunity for those nearing retirement, who may switch from the public to the private sector, potentially bringing new clients to private companies. Additionally, updates to Decree 1072 will require companies to strengthen their health and safety management systems by adopting new ISO standards. Failure to comply may result in a temporary suspension of activities for Colombian companies.	**3.0**

AVERAGE SCORE	VULNERABILITY PERCENTAGE
3,66	**73,33%**

The United States Department of State has assigned Colombia a Level 3 status. This is due to prevalent issues of crime, civil unrest, terrorism, and kidnapping.

The increase in kidnappings by organized crime in the cities of Bogotá and Medellín increases the possibility of being identified as a potential target when visiting the country. Recommended in the country is avoiding using public transportation and taxis, not providing specific information about where your visit will be, and avoiding sharing information about your activities.

The political situation in Colombia is complicated, primarily due to frequent ministerial changes and corruption involving private companies and government entities, as highlighted in the OSAC report. Companies should assess their business partners carefully to avoid associating with entities engaged in illicit activities.

Remain vigilant in bustling public spaces like markets, shopping centers, and lively events. Remember, assaults, armed robberies, and other forms of attack can occur, so staying alert is essential for your safety. Your awareness can make a difference in protecting yourself and those around you.

The ELN and a dissident faction of FARC have recently been involved in violent incidents. Certain areas, such as the departments of Catatumbo, Arauca, Cauca, and the border region between Colombia and Venezuela, are hazardous. It is advisable to hire private security due to the potential increase in violence.

Be vigilant regarding suspicious individuals, vehicles, or objects, and promptly report them to the police or security personnel. This alertness is essential due to the increase in terrorist attacks, including various bombings in the Catatumbo region.

EMERGENCY NUMBERS	Numbers
Police	112
Firefighters	119
Medical Emergencies	125
British Embassy	+57 (601) 326 8300
US Embassy Bogota	+57 (601) 275-2000

AIRPORT

Airport	Location	Type	Remarks	Numbers
El Dorado International Airport	Bogota	International	The nation's primary airport is a vital hub in Latin America, connecting people and cultures across the region.	+57 (601) 266 2000
Jose Maria Cordova International Airport	Medellín	International	This airport is the second most significant gateway for international travel, as a beacon of connectivity and exploration.	+57 (604) 520 8531 & +57 (604) 402 5110
Alfonso Bonilla Aragon International Airport	Valle del Cauca, Cali	International	Thirdly, air traffic is a vital artery, forging essential connections between the United States and Latin America.	+57 (602) 666 3026 Ext. 203

HOSPITALS

Hospitals are operating normally. The National Hospital Fundación Santa Fe de Bogotá is the biggest and most well-equipped medical facility in Bogotá. The San Juan de Dios Hospital in Cali is the one that offers the highest complexity service in the city. For Medellin, the San Vicente Foundation University Hospital stands out as the health center with the best care indices.

ROADS

Roads in the country are functioning as usual. But ther have been incidents on the perimeter roads heading to Cali. Several of these attacks aim to block access to the city and destroy infrastructure.

HOTELS

The hotels in the country operate normally. It is recommended to stay in Bogota at the hotels, Hotel Movich Buró 26 or Ayenda Bioma 1010, in Cali at the Hotel Spiwak Chipichape or Ayenda Bugatier, and in Medellin at the Sites Hotel or 14 Urban Hotel.

INTERNATIONAL MOBILITY

There have been no changes in Colombia's immigration policies during April 2024. It is estimated that 18.5 million people entered and left the country during 2023. The highest flow of refugees and migrants is from Venezuela, with an approximate figure of 2.48 million people.

We have Protective Intelligence capabilities in:

? If you have specific questions or wish to subscribe to our **IN-DEPTH PERU-SPECIFIC CONTEXTUAL ANALYSIS, you may** contact our Protective Intelligence team at ✉ pi@latam.expert

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