

YOUNGSTERS MOST ENDANGERED IN LATIN AMERICA



The world is definitely not a safe place for young people. Especially Latin America may be a dangerous place for young people to go on vacation. According to the “Map of Violence: The Young People of Latin America”, a study conducted by the Latin American Technological Information Network this continent is the least safe for people aged between 15 and 24.

The study revealed terrible news about South American countries. Here the murder rate among young people is the highest in the world. A young person here is 30 times more likely to be murdered than his or her European counterparts. In countries like Greece, Hungary, England and so on, the probability that they get killed is even 70 times lower.

The study compared murder rates for 2007 in 83 countries. In Latin America, the murder rate reached 36.6 for 100,000 young people. The most dangerous country for young people is definitely **El Salvador** with a murder rate of 92.3 per 100,000. The second position goes to **Colombia** with a rate of 73.4. Then come **Venezuela** (64.2), **Guatemala** (55.4) and **Brazil** (51.6). Among the safest Latin American nations are **Chile**, **Cuba** and **Uruguay**, those countries have the rate “only” around seven. The **U. S.** is also quite an unsafe destination for young people with a murder rate of 12.9 per 100,000. **Canada** is doing better with 2.5 but it is still less safe than **Greece** (0.5) or **Japan** (0.3).

The major reason for violence in Latin America seems to be the unjust division of income and wealth, bad family and social environment, school and social services and the existence of youth violent gangs.

Could similar reports influence global tourism and young travelers? These days volunteer tourism is on the rise and young people love to participate in various often dangerous projects. They seek adventure and adrenalin but are they really willing to risk their lives by coming to e.g. El Salvador? Violence is definitely not easy to overcome when branding a destination and these problems may scare off many visitors who would otherwise bring the needed money to the problematic regions.

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