



## SECURITY OVERVIEW

Caracas – Venezuela

Unidad de Análisis Político y Seguridad  
Corporativa - UAPSC

April 2025.

## Security Overview

### Caracas, Venezuela

#### 1. Situational Analysis

Caracas, the capital of Venezuela, continues to face significant security challenges in 2024. Despite government efforts and local initiatives to reduce crime, the city is still considered one of the most dangerous in Latin America. Crime dynamics in Caracas are influenced by a combination of socio-economic, political and structural factors, which have persisted for years and continue to affect the quality of life of its inhabitants. In 2024, crime in Caracas manifests itself in various forms, including robberies, kidnappings, extortions, homicides and control of areas by organized gangs. Violent crime, in particular, remains a major concern, with homicide rates that, while showing some decline compared to previous years, remain high by international standards. Criminal gangs, known as “colectivos” or “megabandas,” operate in various areas of the city, especially in marginal neighborhoods and peripheral areas. These organizations exert territorial control, imposing their own rules and extorting money from merchants and residents. In addition, drug trafficking and illegal arms sales are activities that fuel violence and insecurity in the city ([OVV](#), 2025).

The perception of the population of Caracas regarding security is, in general, one of distrust and fear. Citizens report feeling insecure both in public spaces and in their own communities. The lack of trust in law enforcement institutions, such as the police and the judicial system, is a factor that aggravates this sense of vulnerability. Many residents have adopted self-protection measures, such as installing security systems in their homes, hiring private security services and limiting their movements, especially at night. In addition, internal and external migration continues to be a common response among those seeking to escape violence and insecurity ([Voz de América](#), 2025).

In this document the Unidad de Análisis Político y Seguridad Corporativa (UAPSC) of 3+SC will carry out the Security Overview-Caracas 2025, analyzing the dynamics that impact security, the factors that generate risk and the criminal behavior based on statistics, with the main objective of making known the security situation of the city in order to establish prospective scenarios and recommendations that are useful for the management, treatment and control of risks.

## 2. Crime Analysis

In order to visualize the percentage changes and dynamics by crime in the city of Caracas, a crime analysis will be conducted below, showing the figures and trends of variation of five high-impact crimes for the periods between 2022 and 2023, and 2023 and January-October 2024. Subsequently, each phenomenon will be analyzed in depth, as well as the risk scenarios present in the city, associating recent insecurity events and the areas in which they materialized.

| CRIME STATISTICS IN CARACAS | year 2022  | year 2023  | Variation % 2022 vs 2023 | year 2023  | jan-oct 2024 |
|-----------------------------|------------|------------|--------------------------|------------|--------------|
| HOMICIDES                   | 174        | 165        | -5%                      | 165        | 117          |
| THEFT                       | 106        | 75         | -29%                     | 75         | 49           |
| COERCION                    | 4          | 8          | 100%                     | 8          | 2            |
| KIDNAPPING                  | 7          | 9          | 29%                      | 9          | 2            |
| THREATS                     | 4          | 8          | 100%                     | 8          | 2            |
| <b>TOTAL</b>                | <b>295</b> | <b>265</b> | <b>-10%</b>              | <b>265</b> | <b>172</b>   |

**Resource:** Own elaboration with information from the Observatorio de Violencia de Venezuela (OVV).

**Note.** Figures subject to change based on updating processes of the source.

According to data from the Observatorio de Violencia de Venezuela (OVV), in 2022 there were a total of 363 criminal events in the Metropolitan Area of Caracas (AMC), however, in the statistical table only five crimes are reflected, this because they are the ones that impact the population of Caracas. The same happens with the year 2023, which presented 336 criminal events in the AMC, although the number reflected in the statistics is lower. When comparing these two periods, it is observed that the most reported crime in the OVV databases is homicide, with 174 events in 2022 and 165 in 2023, which represents a 5% reduction. Robbery is the next crime that impacts Caracas the most having 106 events in 2022 and 75 in 2023 being this a reduction of 29%. After these crimes we see that coercion, which includes the crime of extortion, as well as threats showed a 100% increase from 4 to 8 events between 2022 and 2023. Kidnapping, on the other hand, showed an increase of 29% between 2022 and 2023, going from 7 to 9 events. When analyzing the figures for 2024, we see that these trends are maintained; however, given that there are two months left in the database, we could think that there may be an overall reduction in crimes compared to the previous year.

It should be noted that these figures are a compilation by the Press Observatory of the OVV Capital Region, so they may differ from the official figures of the administration of the Mayor's Office of Caracas. Official figures are not freely available, so the OVV is the most reliable source for crime figures in the Caracas

Metropolitan Area. It is also key to be clear and explicit that this statistical table contains the events counted by the OVV, however, there are more victims and they are analyzed in the following section.

## 2.1 Theft from persons

In 2024, robberies in Caracas showed a 17% rate of occurrence in the first four months, according to the Observatorio de Violencia de Venezuela (OVV), with an increase to 30% in December (8 of 24 reported events). Although it is not specified whether these include robberies to individuals, they include extortive kidnappings, such as the case of a family robbed in El Cementerio, where the criminals demanded \$45,000 and released the victims after police pressure (OVV, 2024). Official CICPC figures report reductions in homicides (national rate of 3.49 per 100,000 inhabitants in 2024). ([Infobae](#), 2025).

## 2.2 Theft in different modalities

Vehicle and commercial robberies in Caracas during 2025 will present varied methods, although with recurring patterns. In the case of vehicles, criminals employ tactics such as booking their victims as they arrive at their homes or frequent locations, taking advantage of personal information to plan the crime. In addition, they use technological methods to deactivate modern security systems, although no technical details are specified in the available records ([Venezolana de Televisión](#), 2025). For commercial robberies, violent kidnappings stand out, such as the one that occurred in December 2024 near El Cementerio market, where criminals stole \$45,000 and released the victims after police pressure ([OVV](#), 2025). Authorities report operations to curb these activities, such as the recovery of stolen vehicles through tracking devices, although structural challenges persist in urban security ([El Debate](#), 2025).

## 2.3 Land Piracy

Cargo thefts in Caracas during 2025 are articulated through coordinated strategies that take advantage of the heavy transport crisis and logistical vulnerabilities. Criminals block key routes such as the Autopista Regional del Centro or the Barcelona-Cumaná highway with physical obstacles (trunks, logs) to force vehicles to stop, then threaten drivers with firearms to steal goods ([Unión Radio Noticias](#), 2025). This modus operandi is facilitated by the paralysis of 55% of the national fleet due to prohibitive replacement costs and the absence of insurance to cover losses ([Unión Radio Noticias](#), 2025). Although the INTT maintains controls at strategic points such as Tazón to restrict traffic schedules, extortion by officials who demand goods in exchange for not sanctioning transporters persists ([Gobierno Bolivariano de Venezuela](#), 2025). The lack of trust in the authorities and the dependence on land routes for urban supplies keep Caracas as the epicenter of these crimes, where insecurity and the economic crisis feed off each other.

## 2.4 Homicides

Available data does not provide specific figures on homicides in Caracas for 2025, but projections and trends for 2024 indicate that the steady decline will continue, albeit with persistent challenges. In 2024, the national homicide rate in Venezuela was 4.1 per 100,000 inhabitants, according to the CICPC ([Infobae](#), 2024). In Caracas, the violent death rate (which includes homicides, police interventions and cases under

investigation) was 48.2 per 100,000 inhabitants, with a specific homicide rate of 8.9 ([OVV](#), 2025). Although there are no official statistics for 2025, the Observatorio de Violencia de Venezuela (OVV) reported in 2024 that violence was shifting to the domestic sphere, with 41% of crimes committed by family members or acquaintances, and a decrease in street confrontations, attributed to gang neutralization and migration ([OVV](#), 2025). The lack of updated data for 2025 prevents confirming whether this trend continues, but the historical context and national figures (which have shown a decline since 2016) suggest that Caracas could continue to experience a decrease, although interpersonal violence and the lack of transparency in statistics will remain critical factors ([El Nacional](#), 2025).

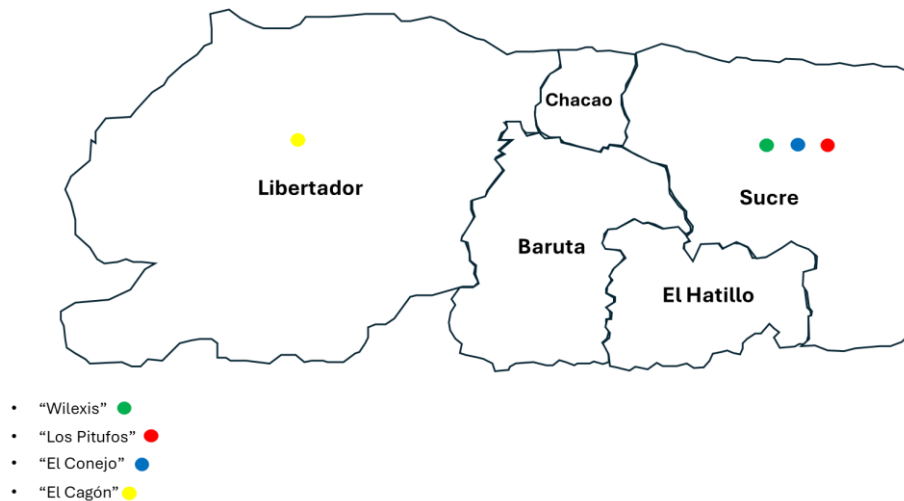
## 2.5 Extortion, threats and kidnapping

In 2025, Caracas experiences an increase in extortion and political repression, with police and military officials playing a central role. According to newspaper reports, in September 2024, state agents extort merchants and citizens, including during security operations, taking advantage of institutional impunity ([Infobae](#), 2024). In January 2025, Foro Penal documented 83 political arrests, among them the kidnapping of Rafael Tudares (son-in-law of Edmundo González) and the detention of activist Carlos Correa, whose whereabouts are still unknown ([Infobae](#), 2025). The NGO Human Rights Watch recorded extrajudicial executions and disappearances associated with operations against armed groups, with torture and forced recruitment of minors ([HRW](#), 2025). Although specific figures on extortions in 2025 are not available, *El País* reported that Chavismo has increased military patrols and searches in the streets and on public transport, creating an atmosphere of intimidation ([El País](#), 2025). In March 2025, two officers of the Cuerpo de Investigaciones Científicas, Penales y Criminalísticas (CICPC) were arrested for extorting money from citizens, highlighting systematic corruption. These facts reflect institutionalized violence, in which official security becomes a tool of control and exploitation.

### 3 Risk Generating Factors

#### 3.1 Micro-trafficking and criminal groups

Distribution of the main criminal gangs in Caracas



**Resource:** Observatorio Venezolano de Violencia, 2024.

In Caracas, gangs operate with hierarchical structures that dominate specific territories, mainly in popular neighborhoods and marginalized areas. These organizations, known as megabandas or colectivos, engage in criminal activities such as kidnapping, extortion and robbery, in addition to imposing social control in the areas where they operate. Drug micro-trafficking is one of their main sources of income, with distribution networks ranging from fixed points in neighborhoods such as Petare, La Vega and El Valle to street sales in central areas. According to various non-governmental organizations, approximately 60% of homicides in the city are related to confrontations between gangs for the control of territories or drug trafficking routes. The scarce presence of the state in these areas allows the gangs to impose their own rules, generating continuous cycles of violence. In 2025, Chavista collectives in Caracas function as civilian paramilitary groups that combine tasks of social control, political repression and armed defense of Nicolás Maduro's regime. Based in key neighborhoods such as "23 de enero", where the remains of Hugo Chávez rest, and Petare, these groups collaborate with state security forces to dissuade opposition protests, using hooded motorcycles, firearms and intimidation tactics ([La Nación](#), 2025). Their financing comes from both legal (social programs) and illegal sources (extortion, drug trafficking), which allows them to maintain territorial control in popular areas where crime is low, but political repression is high ([Swissinfo](#), 2025). Although some leaders, such as Damaris Mujica of the Warairarepano collective, defend their role as "guardians of peace",



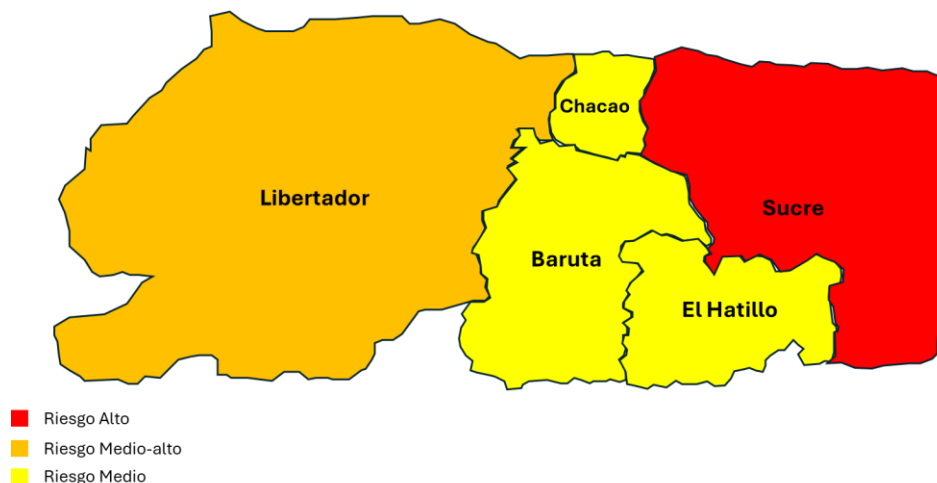
international organizations and local witnesses describe them as tools of state terrorism that hinder opposition mobilization through fear ([Swissinfo](#), 2025).

### 3.2 Social Unrest

Social protest in Venezuela, especially in Caracas, has become a key way for the political opposition to the Chavista regime to express its demands and concentrate its influence on the political scene. In view of the restrictions imposed by the government of Nicolás Maduro on the exercise of opposition politics, it is not unusual that, in the face of important events or situations affecting the population, demonstrations by broad sectors arise. An example of this occurred throughout 2024, when several social movements protested against the results of the presidential elections. In these demonstrations, the opposition demanded the government to guarantee a fair vote count after Maduro's victory. International organizations such as Human Rights Watch (HRW) have documented police repression in these protests, denouncing acts of violence and irregular procedures against demonstrators ([HRW](#), 2024). Also, at the beginning of 2025, there were new opposition demonstrations against Maduro's inauguration as president, in which opposition leader María Corina Machado was arrested by pro-government forces, although she was later released ([BBC](#), 2025).

## 4. Risk Level

The risk level analysis aims to identify the areas where, according to institutional statistics, there is a higher likelihood of violence scenarios and the occurrence of high-impact crimes. In the case of this Security Overview - Caracas, the characterization will be based primarily on the security and crime statistics from the Observatorio de Violencia de Venezuela (OVV). The next step will be to outline the most problematic areas of the city using two indicators: homicide cases and the presence of organized criminal groups.



**Resource:** Observatorio Venezolano de Violencia.

### **Medium Risk Level:** Chacao, Baruta and El Hatillo municipalities

**Chacao** has a homicide rate of 34.1 per 100,000 inhabitants and is recognized as a commercial and residential area with a lower presence of organized gangs. **Baruta** and **El Hatillo** have homicide rates of 18.0 and 18.3 per 100,000 inhabitants, respectively, being the lowest in the AMC. These are middle- and upper-class areas with reinforced private security.

### **Medium-High Risk Level:** Libertador municipality

**Libertador** Municipality recorded a rate of 48.2 violent deaths per 100,000 inhabitants in 2024. It also includes areas such as Coche and Antímano, which have a historical incidence of homicides and minor crimes. Additionally, it registered 36 deaths under investigation per 100,000 inhabitants, an indicator of unresolved violence.

### **High Risk Level:** Sucre municipality

**Sucre** recorded a rate of 63 violent deaths per 100,000 inhabitants in 2024, the highest in the Metropolitan Area of Caracas (AMC). It is also the focus of frequent police operations against gangs such as "Los Pitufos" and the megagang "Wilexis," which was neutralized in 2024. Additionally, it includes Petare, its most populated parish, historically linked to territorial disputes among armed groups.

## **5. Foresight Design**

In 2025, security in Caracas remains a complex challenge, marked by high levels of crime and violence despite efforts by the government and security forces. Structural factors such as socioeconomic inequality, institutional corruption, and the presence of organized criminal groups limit the effectiveness of public policies. Initiatives like increased patrolling in critical areas, modernization of surveillance systems, and social programs in vulnerable neighborhoods have shown only modest results. Although collaboration with international organizations and civil society has been crucial in responding to emergencies, the root causes of insecurity have yet to be addressed. The main strategy has been militarized control, with operations such as "Escudo Bolivariano," prioritizing repression over citizen guarantees. While gangs like "Wilexis" in Sucre have been neutralized, pockets of violence persist in popular neighborhoods, whereas municipalities such as Chacao and Baruta continue to maintain low crime rates. The institutional crisis deepens with laws that restrict the work of NGOs and human rights defenders, making independent monitoring increasingly difficult.

In the short term, a relative stabilization is expected in priority areas, although spikes in violence may occur due to the economic crisis or political tensions. The expansion of transnational criminal



networks, such as drug trafficking and illegal mining, could increase conflict in certain regions. In the medium term, the future of security in Caracas will depend on the State's capacity to implement comprehensive reforms, including investment in police intelligence, strengthening the judicial system, and job creation. If progress is made, the city could gradually reduce its crime rates; otherwise, the fragmentation of territorial control between gangs and security forces could worsen insecurity, especially in urban outskirts. Political and economic uncertainty will remain a key factor. In the medium term, Sucre could continue to be an epicenter of violence if structural causes are not addressed, while prison overcrowding and "differentiated treatment" policies for inmates may trigger a prison crisis. International cooperation and moderate political dialogue will be essential to reduce tensions, although the current model suggests that security will likely remain focused on territorial control rather than social policies.

## 6. Recommendations

- Always maintain a high level of situational awareness to identify risks or threats arising from external situations in the places or areas you travel through.
- Based on the Risk Level description provided in this document, identify the municipalities and parishes with a high risk level. This is in order to anticipate security and self-care plans.
- When traveling in a private vehicle, analyze your route and have alternative routes available to handle any unexpected issues along the way.
- Try to make your trips during daylight hours.
- For the movement of expatriates or foreign individuals within Caracas, assess the possibility of having systems in place to remotely monitor their movements from a Command Center.
- If you are in crowded places such as restaurants, shopping centers, or bars, always stay alert to protect your personal belongings and avoid engaging in conversations with people who suddenly ask for favors or try to approach you.
- Avoid storing detailed or sensitive information about your family members or your workplace on your mobile phone.
- Be cautious about what you share on social media, keeping in mind that lower privacy settings increase the risk of extortion or kidnapping.

- If you are a victim of a phone extortion attempt, do not hang up. Try to take notes, do not provide your name or ID number, and if possible, record the call.
- In case you are threatened in any form, contact the authorities immediately and do not comply with the demands of criminals.
- If possible, get trained in defensive and evasive driving to increase your ability to protect your life and your family's in the event of a street assault.
- If you find yourself in a highly vulnerable situation and are likely to be a victim of robbery or express kidnapping, do not resist.

## References

Barráez, S. (8 de septiembre de 2024). Terrorismo, extorsión y detenciones: así funciona la maquinaria represiva del régimen chavista desde la llegada de Diosdado Cabello al Ministerio del Interior. Obtenido de Infobae: <https://www.infobae.com/venezuela/2024/09/08/terrorismo-extorsion-y-detenciones-asi-functiona-la-maquinarria-represiva-del-regimen-chavista-desde-la-llegada-de-diosdado-cabello-al-ministerio-del-interior/>

BBC News Mundo. (9 de enero de 2025). La oposición denuncia la detención y posterior liberación de María Corina Machado en Venezuela tras reaparecer en las protestas contra la toma de posesión de Maduro. Obtenido de BBC News Mundo: <https://www.bbc.com/mundo/articles/cx2n2vxp3jmo>

El Debate. (28 de febrero de 2025). Aumentan los robos de coches en lo que va de año: los métodos más habituales y cómo evitarlos. Obtenido de El Debate: [https://www.eldebate.com/motor/20250228/aumentan-robos-coches-ano-metodos-habituales-como-evitarlos\\_274633.html](https://www.eldebate.com/motor/20250228/aumentan-robos-coches-ano-metodos-habituales-como-evitarlos_274633.html)

El Nacional . (29 de enero de 2025). Venezuela cerró 2024 con una tasa de homicidios de 4,1 por cada 100.000 habitantes. Obtenido de El Nacional : <https://www.elnacional.com/venezuela/venezuela-cerro-2024-con-una-tasa-de-homicidios-de-41-por-cada-100-000-habitantes/>

Gobierno Bolivariano de Venezuela . (6 de febrero de 2025). INTT refuerza control de acceso de vehículos de carga pesada en Caracas. Obtenido de INITT: <https://www.intt.gob.ve/inttweb/?p=15557>

HRW. (4 de septiembre de 2024). Venezuela: Brutal represión contra manifestantes y votantes. Obtenido de Humans Rights Watch : <https://www.hrw.org/es/news/2024/09/03/venezuela-brutal-represion-contra-manifestantes-y-votantes>

Infobae. (5 de diciembre de 2024). Venezuela acumula una tasa de 3,49 homicidios por cada 100.000 habitantes durante 2024. Obtenido de Infobae: <https://www.infobae.com/america/agencias/2024/11/07/venezuela-acumula-una-tasa-de-349-homicidios-por-cada-100000-habitantes-durante-2024/>

Infobae. (28 de enero de 2025). La tasa de homicidios en Venezuela cerró 2024 con 4,1 por cada 100.000 habitantes. Obtenido de Infobae: <https://www.infobae.com/america/agencias/2025/01/28/la-tasa-de-homicidios-en-venezuela-cerro-2024-con-41-por-cada-100000-habitantes/>

Infobae. (12 de enero de 2025). Represión en Venezuela: la ONG Foro Penal registró al menos 83 detenciones políticas en lo que va de 2025. Obtenido de Infobae: <https://www.infobae.com/venezuela/2025/01/12/la-ong-foro-penal-registro-83-arrestos-politicos-en-venezuela-en-lo-que-va-del-2025/>

La Nación . (10 de enero de 2025). Los Colectivos, el “brazo armado” civil del régimen de Maduro. Obtenido de La Nación : <https://www.lanacion.com.py/mundo/2025/01/10/los-colectivos-el-brazo-armado-civil-del-regimen-de-maduro/>

La Voz de América. (29 de enero de 2025). El estrés y el miedo se “adueñan” de Caracas: informe revela “pérdida de libertades” en Venezuela. Obtenido de La Voz de América: <https://www.vozdeamerica.com/a/estres-miedo-se-adueñan-de-caracas-informe-revela-perdida-de-libertades-venezuela/7955128.html>

Moleiro, A. (6 de enero de 2025). El chavismo redobla la presencia policial y militar en las calles de Caracas. Obtenido de El País: <https://elpais.com/america/2025-01-07/el-chavismo-redobla-la-presencia-policial-y-militar-en-las-calles-de-caracas.html>

Prensa OVV Región Capital. (18 de febrero de 2025). Caracas durante 2024: Menos muertes, pero más violencia intrafamiliar y de pareja. Obtenido de OVV: <https://observatoriodeviolencia.org.ve/news/caracas-durante-2024-menos-muertes-pero-mas-violencia-intrafamiliar-y-de-pareja/>

Prensa OVV Región Capital. (16 de enero de 2025). Robos representaron al menos un tercio de los delitos ocurridos en Caracas durante diciembre. Obtenido de OVV:

<https://observatoriodeviolencia.org.ve/news/robos-representaron-al-menos-un-tercio-de-los-delitos-ocurridos-en-caracas-durante-diciembre/>

Prensa OVV Región Capital. (24 de marzo de 2025). Sucre fue el municipio del Área Metropolitana de Caracas con más violencia en 2024. Obtenido de OVV: <https://observatoriodeviolencia.org.ve/news/sucre-fue-el-municipio-del-area-metropolitana-de-caracas-con-mas-violencia-en-2024/>

Stroehlein, A. (2025). Venezuela. Obtenido de Humans Rights Watch : <https://www.hrw.org/es/americas/venezuela>

Swissinfo. (9 de enero de 2025). El «brazo armado» civil de la Revolución que jura con Maduro: los colectivos. Obtenido de Swissinfo: <https://www.swissinfo.ch/spa/el-%22brazo-armado%22-civil-de-la-revoluci%c3%b3n-que-jura-con-maduro%3a-los-colectivos/88691547>

Union Radio Noticias . (5 de febrero de 2025). ¿Cuáles son las perspectivas de la operatividad de cargas en Venezuela para este 2025? II A tiempo. Obtenido de Youtube : <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=k-vtdsyth-A&t=2s>

Venezolana de Televisión . (26 de septiembre de 2020). CICPC dispone de 23 ejes de investigación contra robo y hurto de vehículos. Obtenido de Venezolana de Televisión : <https://www.vtv.gob.ve/cicpc-23-ejes-investigacion-contra-robo-hurto-vehiculos/>