

Firearms smuggling from the US to Mexico

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12/13/2017

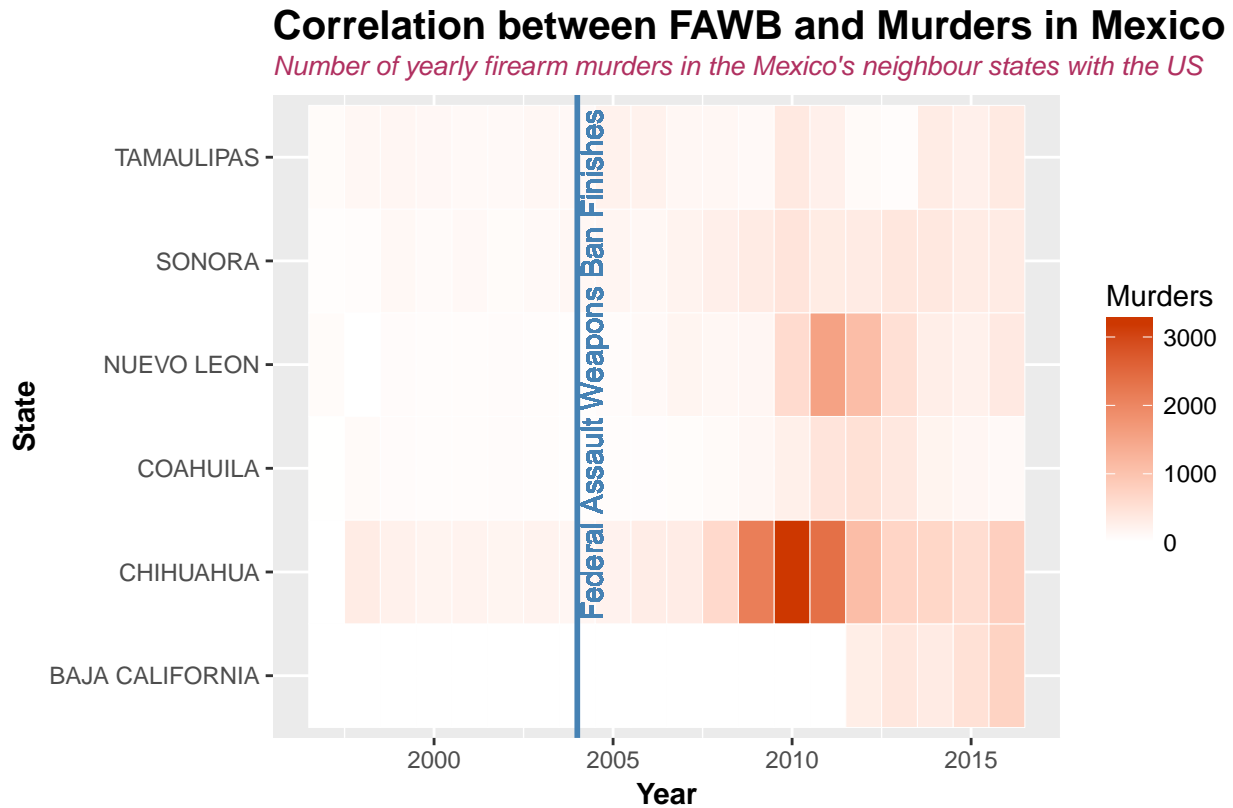
Figure 1



Source: ATF and SESNSP (Executive Secretariat of the Public Security Council: Mexico)

Since the last decade, the level of murders in Mexico has more than double. A lot of reasons have been blame as a consequence: an increase in drug trafficking activities, political fragmentation, a federal government frontal war against drugs, a cartel decapitation strategy even changes in the droop policy of Colombia. However, the illegal smuggling of firearms from the US to Mexico rarely has been named (with the exception of Oendmila Dube, David Esparza, David Shrink among other researchers that had done work in this field). In the previous graph, can be observed that the rifle production and the murders in Mexico follow a similar trend during the last years (there is a positive correlation -0.54- between them).

Figure 2



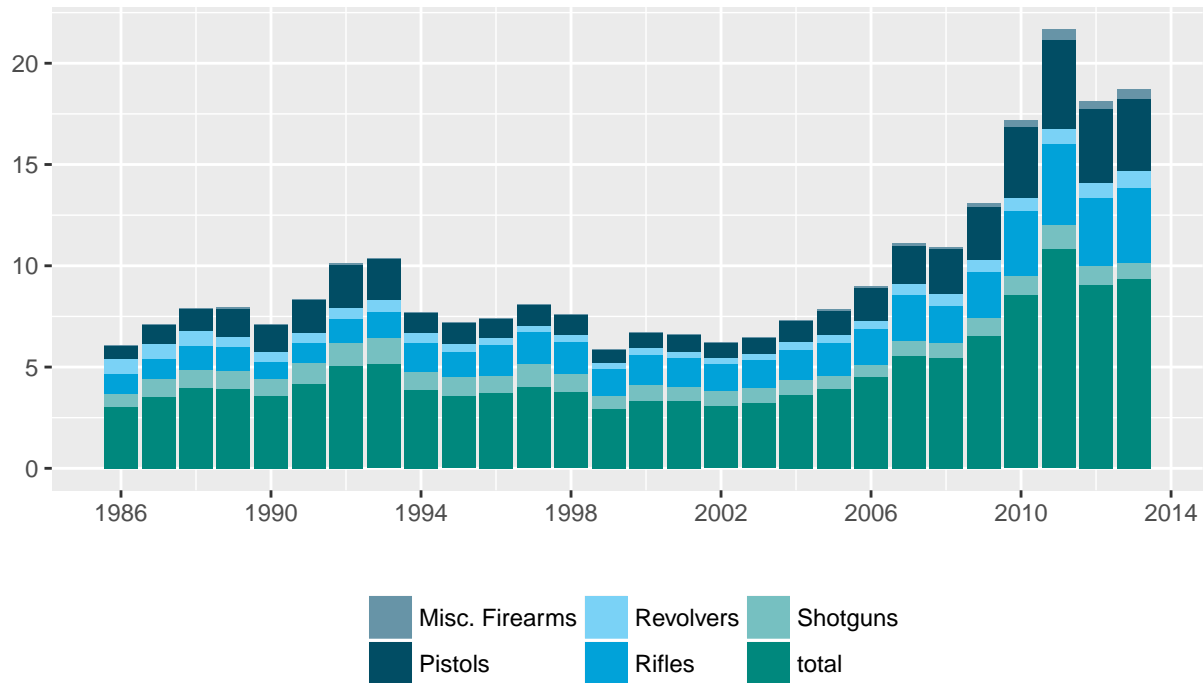
Source: SESNSP (Executive Secretariat of the Public Security Council: Mexico)

According to Dube A., Dube O., & Garc a-Ponce (2011), the north of Mexico suffered more quickly than the rest of the country from the Federal Assault Weapons Ban lift (**FAWB**). The previous graph show the total number of murders by State and year in the States of Mexico that have frontier with the US. There was a change in the number of murders by State and year before and after the **FAWB**. Remarkably, Chihuahua had an evident spike led by the Ciudad Ju rez war between 2009 and 2011.

Figure 3

Firearms manufacture by type

*Firearms production in the US *millions*



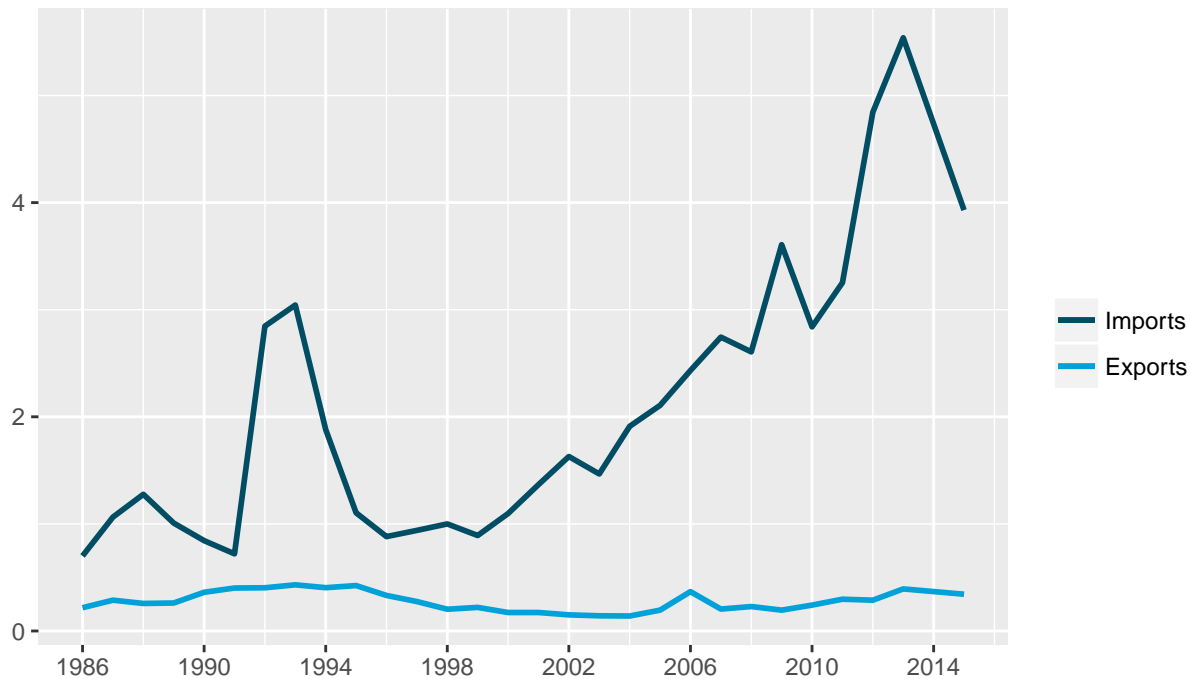
Source: ATF data: U.S Firearms Commerce Report

The relationship between murders in Mexico and **FAWB**, led us to study the firearms industry in the US. From the previous graph, it can be observed that the production of firearms more than triple from the early 2000's over 2015, with rifles and pistols been the categories with the higher increases.

Figure 4

Trade deficit in the US firearm production

*Firearms imports/exports in the US *millions*



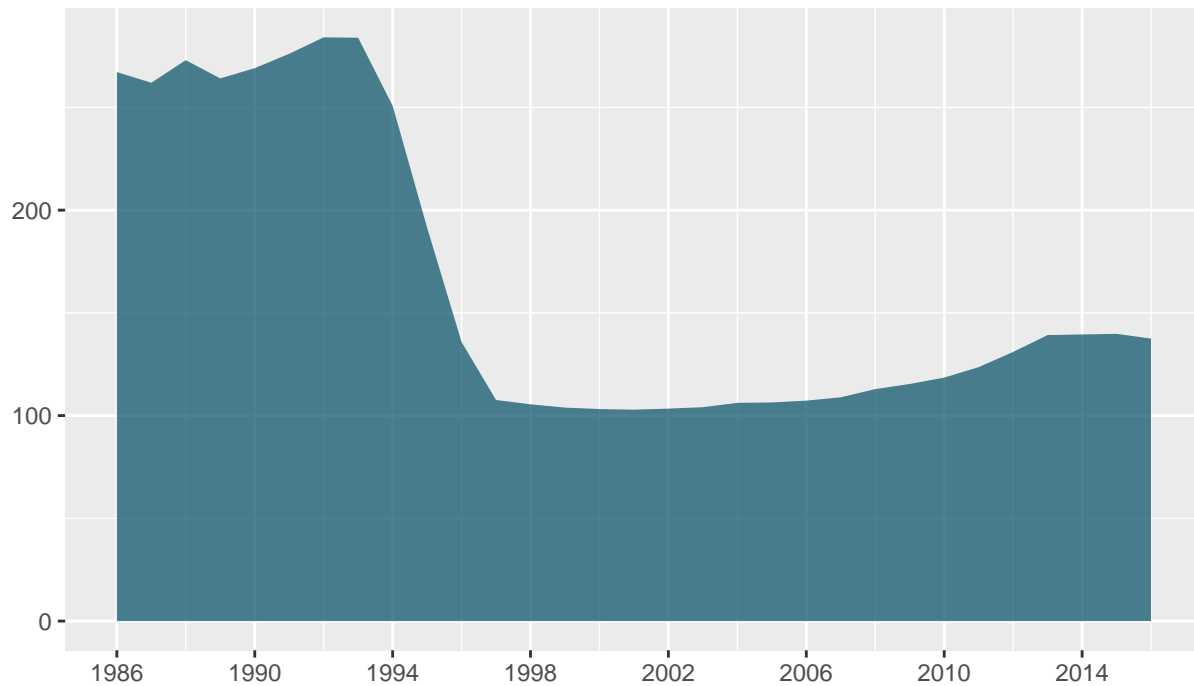
Source: ATF data: U.S Firearms Commerce Report

The objective of this project is to show that the increase of firearms production in the US has been driven by an increase in the demand of firearms in Mexico; particularly, by the increase of firearms smuggling from the US to Mexico. As a result is expected to argue that the US firearms industry is making heavy revenues from the illegal exports of their products (in specific Pistols and Rifles) to Mexico. To show this, we need to prove that the consumption of firearms inside the US has been steady and that the legal exports from the US to other countries are steady as well. The previous graph show that the exports have remained steady while the imports have increased.

Figure 5

Consolidation of armories in the US

Number of licenses for firearms production '000*



Source: ATF data: U.S Firearms Commerce Report

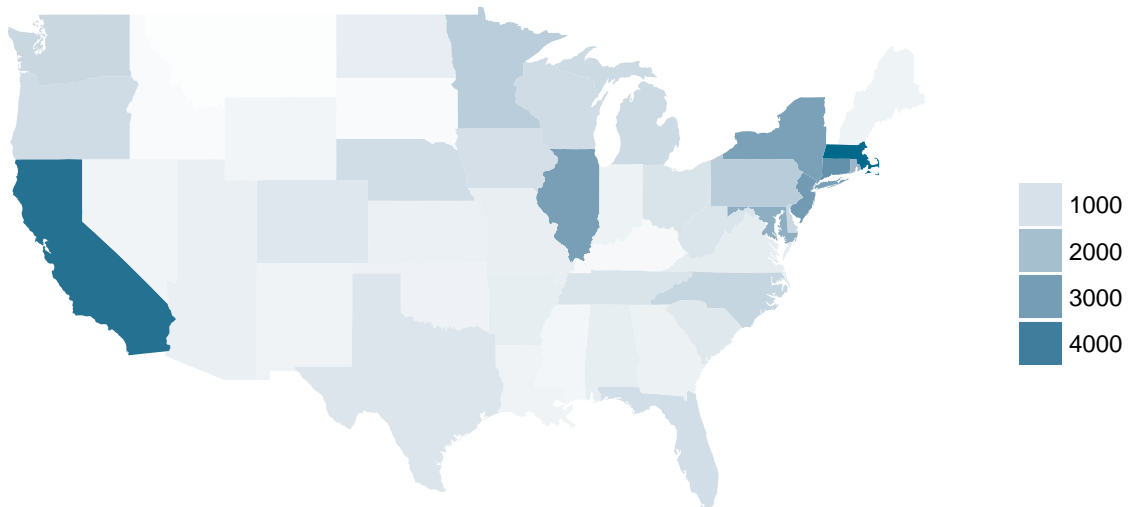
*Production, imports and exports

The number of consolidations are a signal that the profits of an industry as a whole are increasing (The Economist, Mar 26, 2016): profits can be diverted into investments, for example, the acquisitions of smaller or less profitable companies. From the previous graph, firearms manufacturing licenses, there can be observed that the industry has reduced its number of players (all the firms in the industry have to transmit their licenses every three years).

Figure 6

Number of legislation pieces by State in the US

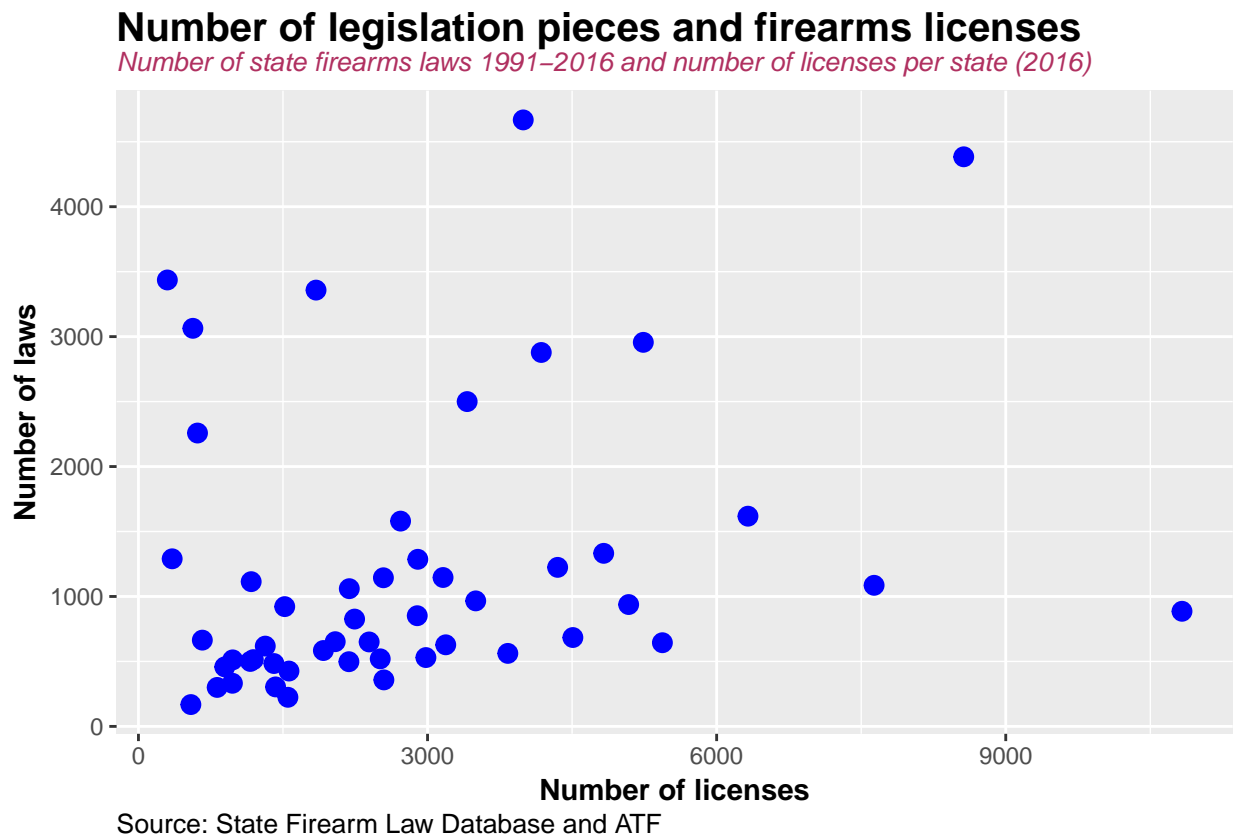
Number of state firearms laws 1991–2016



Source: State Firearm Law Database

With data of the NGO State Firearm Law Database, there was built an index of state tightness over firearms production and use. There can be seen that states like California, New York and Illinois have tighter regulations than states like Texas, Arizona, Wyoming or Montana.

Figure 7

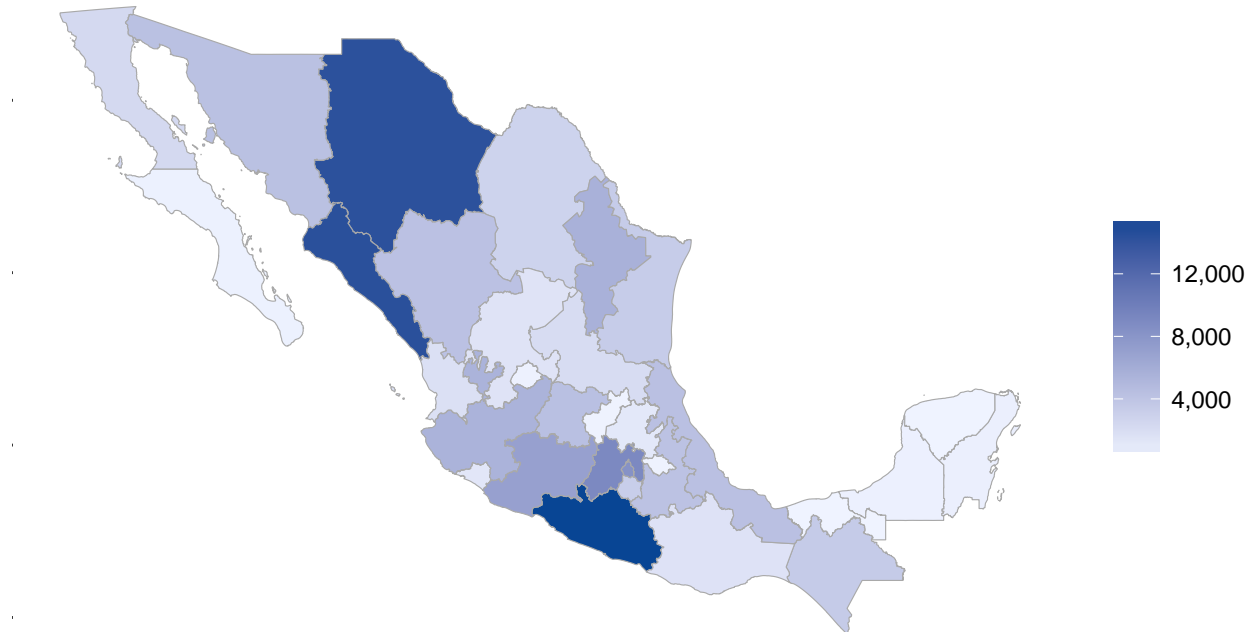


There is not a clear correlation pattern between firearms licenses in 2016 and number of state firearms laws between 1991 and 2016. However, the estimation was not made to account for the state population (the metrics “per capita” could be different).

Figure 8

Firearm murders by State in Mexico

Number of Murders by Firearm 1997–2016 in Mexico: State level



SESNP (Executive Secretariat of the Public Security Council: Mexico)

The states in Mexico with the highest level of murders by firearms are Chihuahua, Sonora (in the north) and Guerrero in the south. Let's explore which is the proportion of them caused by the U.S illegal smuggling of firearms.

Conclusion

There is more research to be done to understand the magnitude of the firearms smuggling from the US to Mexico and the impact that this phenomenon has into the violence that Mexico is passing through. However, the initial exploratory data analysis shows that this situation looks like a duck, swims like a duck, and quacks like a duck Let's show with further research that is a duck.

Bibliography

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