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EDI COVID-19 ESSAY SERIES

August 2020

Crime in the time of covid-19¹

How Colombian gangs responded to
the pandemic

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Innovations for Poverty Action -
Universidad de Chicago - Universidad EAFIT



About the covid-19 essay series

In response to the covid-19 global pandemic, the EDI programme commissioned a series of essays written by EDI researchers. Essays highlight the relevance of EDI research to the covid-19 crisis, in many cases referring to ongoing EDI research. They illustrate how an understanding of the relationship between institutions and economic development might help to gauge the impact of the crisis and to formulate a response. For more information, please visit: www.edi.upmi.co.uk

EDI publications represent the views of the authors, and are not necessarily held or endorsed by the programme or its partner organisations.

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Download COVID-19 Survey Report

Crime in the Time of COVID-19: How Colombian Gangs Responded to the Pandemic

Since the COVID-19 outbreak, scholars and journalists have spread anecdotes of gangs and criminal organizations coming to the aid of citizens, governing in place of the state.

Researchers studied if gangs respond to COVID-19 in Medellín. Despite the headlines, gang involvement in pandemic response is exceptional and mostly idiosyncratic. Surveying every low- and middle-income neighborhood in Medellín, they find that most of the support for civilians comes from state authorities and not from gangs.

To read more about this project, click here to read the publication (in Spanish), [*Covid-19: consecuencias y desafíos en la economía colombiana: Una mirada desde las universidades*](#) (please refer to the chapter that starts on page 243).

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