



## Social conflict in Venezuela during the first semester of 2016

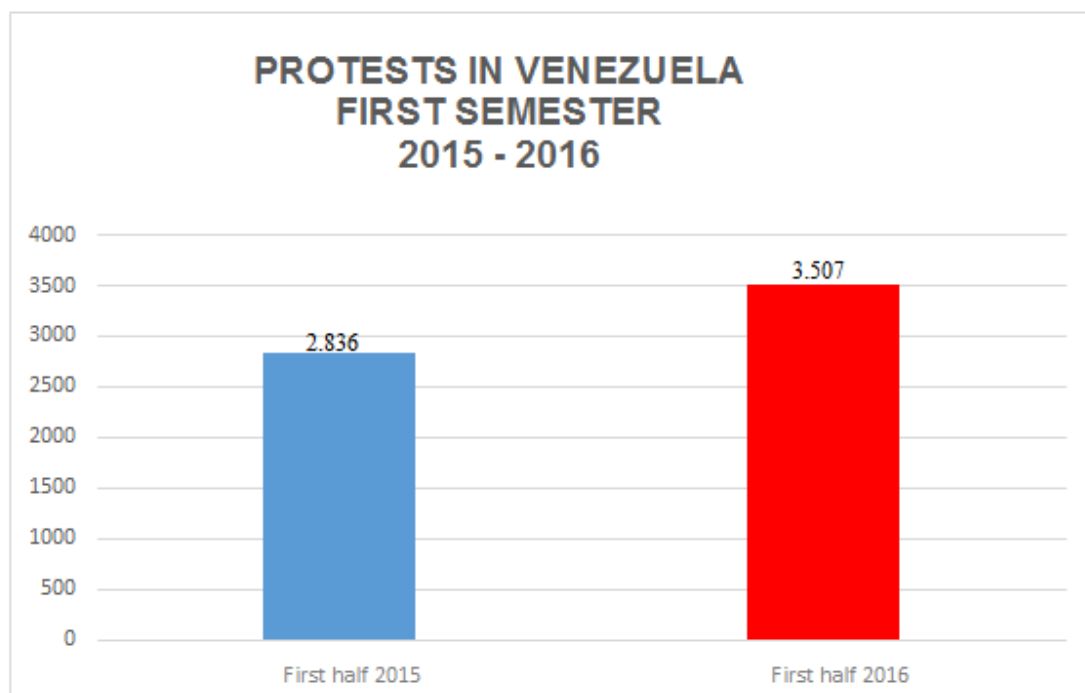
*Neighbors take the streets to demand social rights*

*Protests for shortage and deficient supply of food increase 90%*

*416 cases of lootings and looting attempts during the first semester of 2016*

**The Venezuelan Observatory of Social Conflict (OVCS for its initials in Spanish) registered, at least, 3.507 protests** during the first semester of 2016. An average of 19 protests per day in all the national territory.

The balance as of June represents an increase of 24% compared with the protests documented in the first six months of 2015.



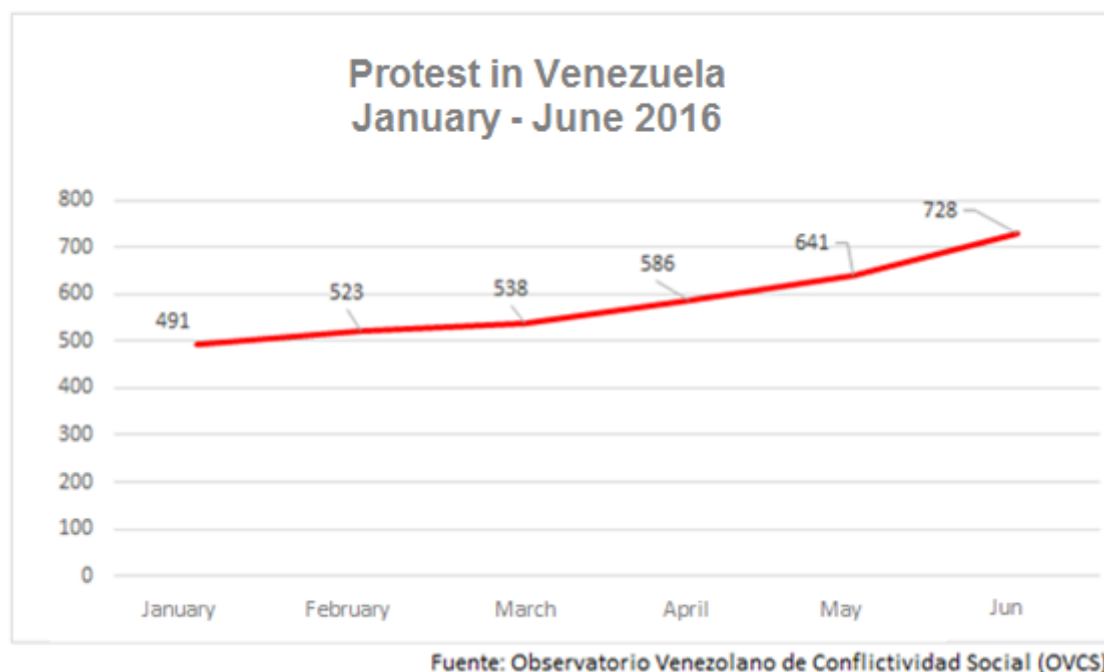
Fuente: Observatorio Venezolano de Conflictividad Social (OVCS)

The Venezuelan Observatory of Social Conflict (OVCS)

<http://observatoriodeconflictos.org.ve>

## Venezuela immersed in a spiral of conflict

Based in monitored protests in the first six months of the year it is reiterated that Venezuela continues immersed in a spiral of social and political conflicts that grows over passed time. This is mainly attributed to the lack of response from the authorities to citizens' needs and demands.



As it documented in the protests in the first half of 2015, this time the people took to the streets demanding economic, social and cultural rights (ESCR).

## Characterization of the Venezuelan protest

In the first six months of the year, the OVCS documented 3.507 protests, characterized by:

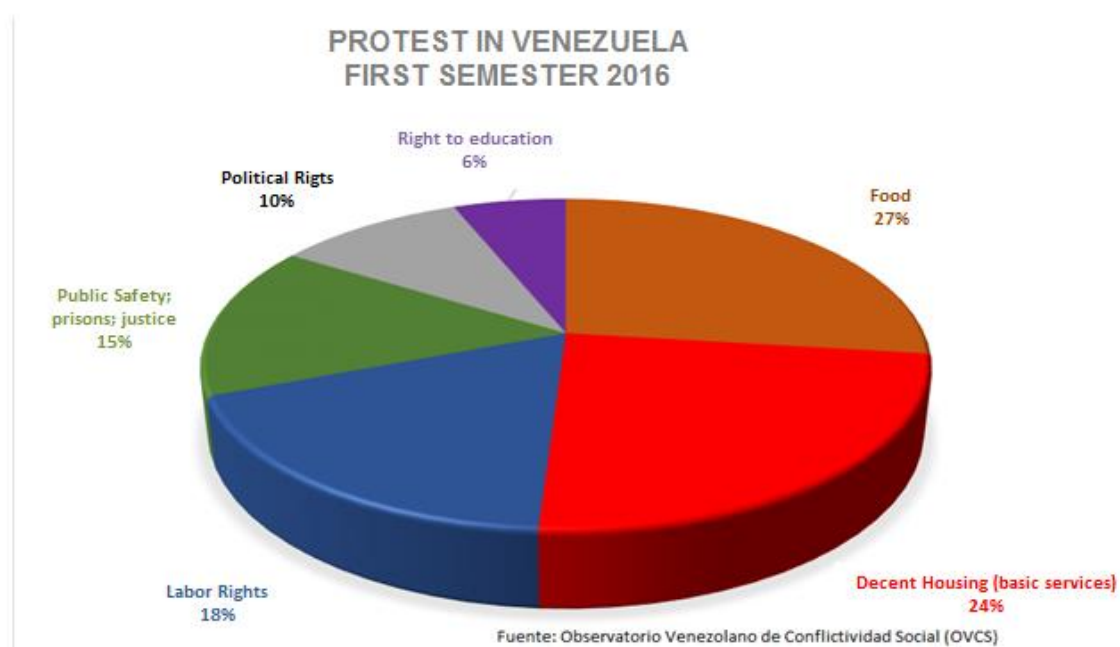
- Popular protests
- Massive protests
- Spontaneous protests
- Protests for food, potable water and electricity
- Nocturnal Protest

## The streets to demand economic, social and cultural rights (ESCR)

It highlights that 75% of street actions and documented conflicts in this period was related to economic, social and cultural rights (ESCR).

In reviewing in detail the demands of protesters, they are distributed in:

1. Rejection of lack and food shortages. 954 protests (27%).
2. Adequate housing (basic services). 836 protests (24%).
3. Labor rights. 624 protests (18%).
4. Demands for public safety, rights of persons deprived of liberty, the right to justice. 509 protests (15%).
5. Political rights. 361 protests (10%).
6. Education. 223 protests (6%).



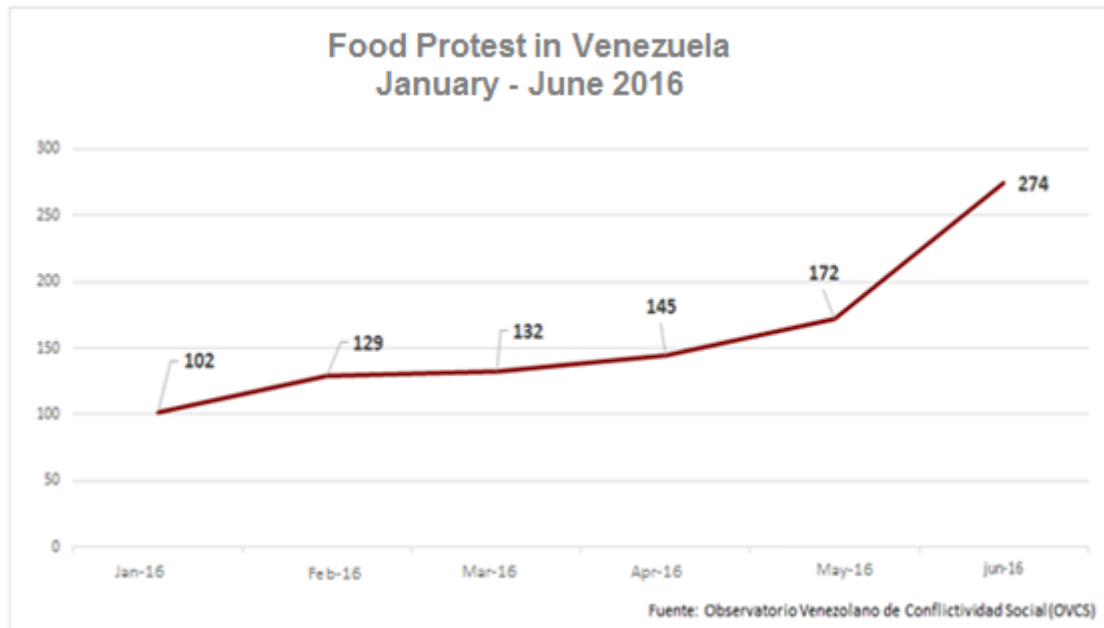
## Modality of protest

The street closure remains the main form of protest, followed by gatherings and marches.

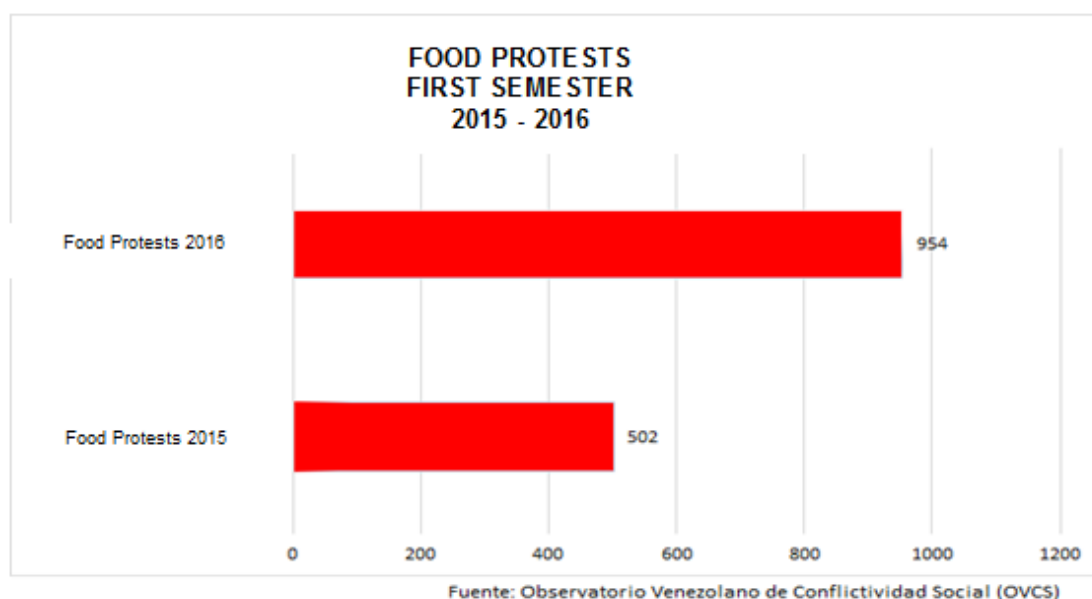
## Food crisis in Venezuela

**The situation of food insecurity lived by the Venezuelan people is characterized by shortages, high prices and lack of products, and is expressed daily in the streets.**

In the first six months, 954 food protests were documented, carried out mainly by neighbors. An average of 5 daily protests across the country.



This figure represents an increase of 90 % compared to the first half of 2015, when 502 protests were reported.



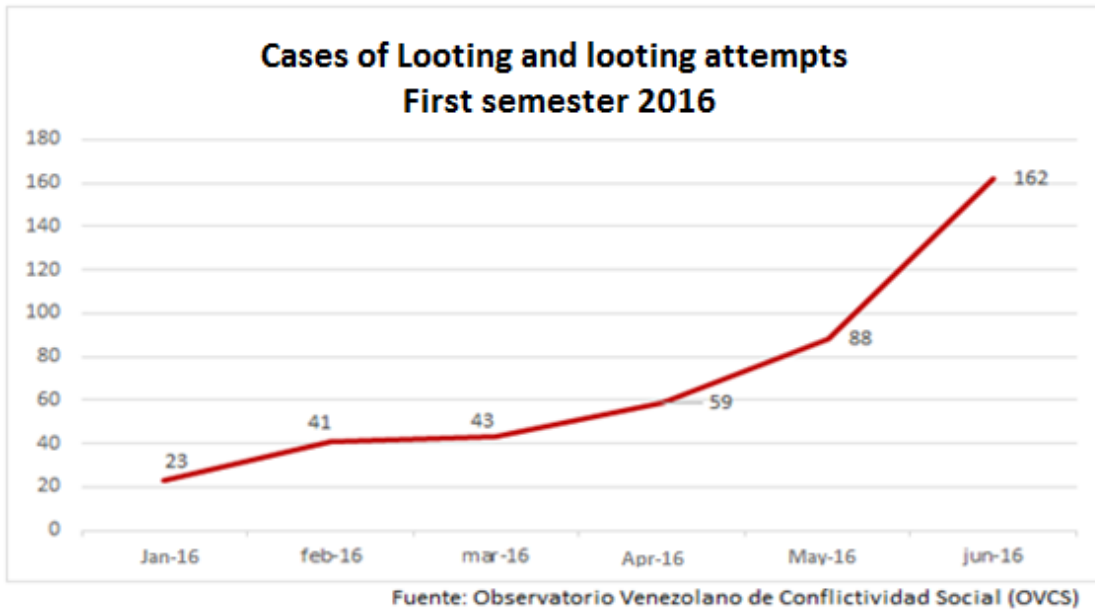
### **Local Committees of Supply and Production (*CLAP for its initials in Spanish*)**

In response to the serious situation of food insecurity throughout Venezuela, the state implemented a system of distribution of food products controlled by groups with political-party affiliation, named Local Committees of Supply and Production (***CLAP for its initials in Spanish***). According to government spokesperson with this new distribution scheme, food security and country sovereignty is guaranteed. However, since the CLAP began distribution of products the protests over food were increased considerably. For example, in May they filed a rise of 320% and 309% in June, compared with the same months of 2015.

### **Lootings and looting attempts**

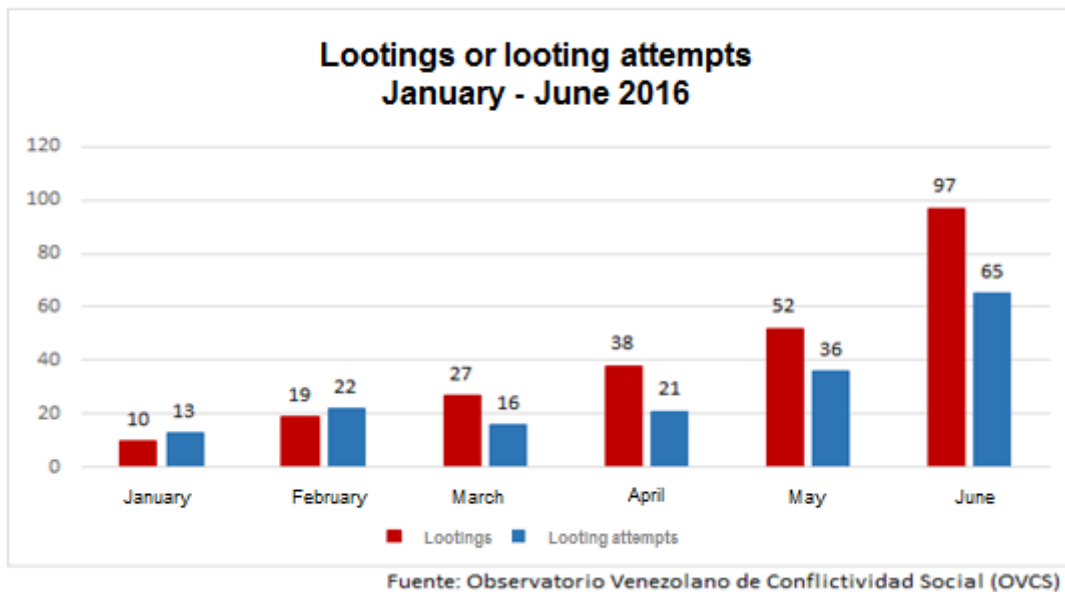
In this semester, 416 lootings or looting attempts were documented throughout the country. The violence acts continue against shops, grocery stores, supermarkets and transports.

From the OVCS we reiterate our concern at the escalation of lootings and looting attempts. We demand to the Venezuelan authorities that they guarantee the human right to food as established by the Venezuelan Constitution. We exhort people to demand their rights peacefully and within the framework of legality.



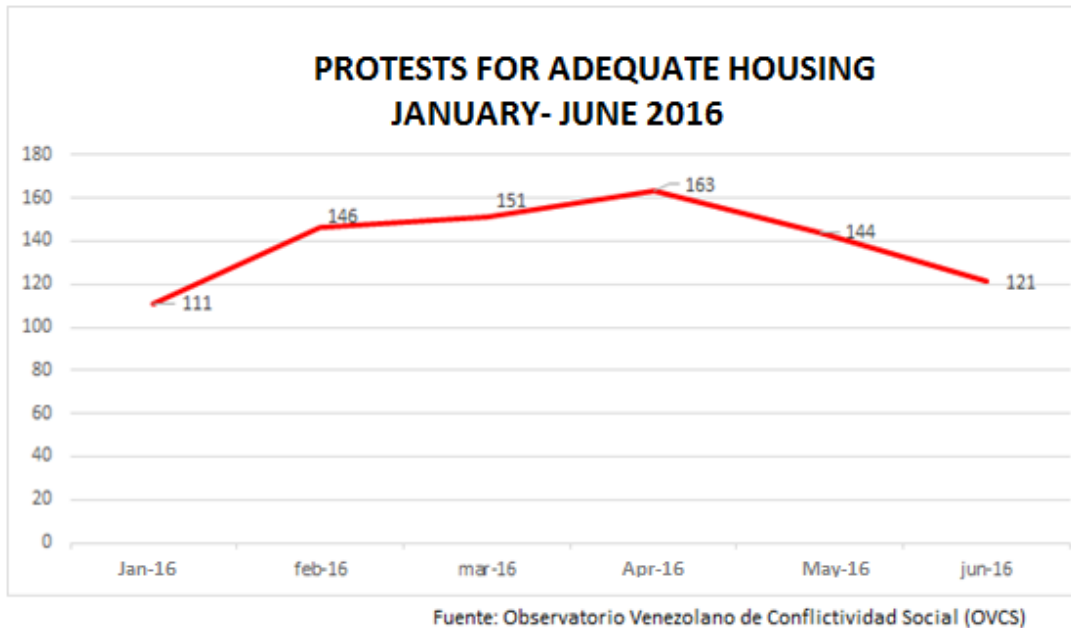
Since March lootings outnumber looting attempts.

So far this year 243 has been documented lootings and 173 looting attempts across the country.



### Protests for the right to adequate house

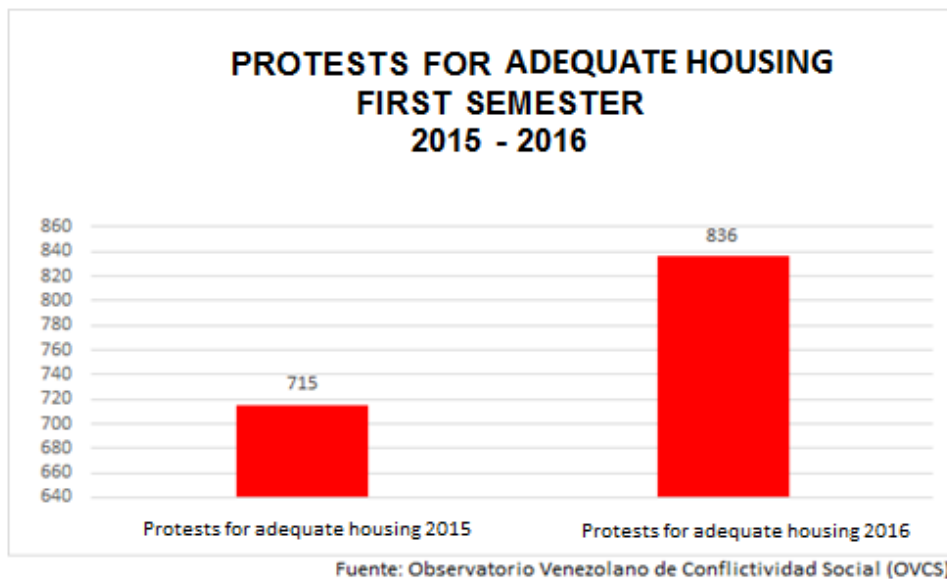
From January to June were documented 836 protests to demand the right to adequate housing, essentially for basic services.



Neighbors made massive protests, mainly street closures to draw the attention of the authorities and demand solutions.

It stands in these six months that were reported nocturnal protests in rejection of power outages and lack of potable water in rural and urban areas.

This figure represents an increase of 17% compared to the same period of 2015, when 715 were reported protests for the right to housing.



## Labor Protest

**In the first half of the year labor protests have been reduced related to the same period of 2015.** This year 624 protests were documented compared to the 969 cases reported last year.

Workers, although see worsen it their living conditions due to the economic crisis in the country, have redirected their conflicts to the demand for resources that allow the enterprises where they work acquire raw materials to produce assets and food.

Workers see with concern the decline of production, because they see in risk their employment stability.

Already in some cases measures have been taken as the advancement of collective vacations or temporary suspension of work waiting for conditions to improve, however, the reality is that the lack of inputs to reactivate the productive apparatus persists.

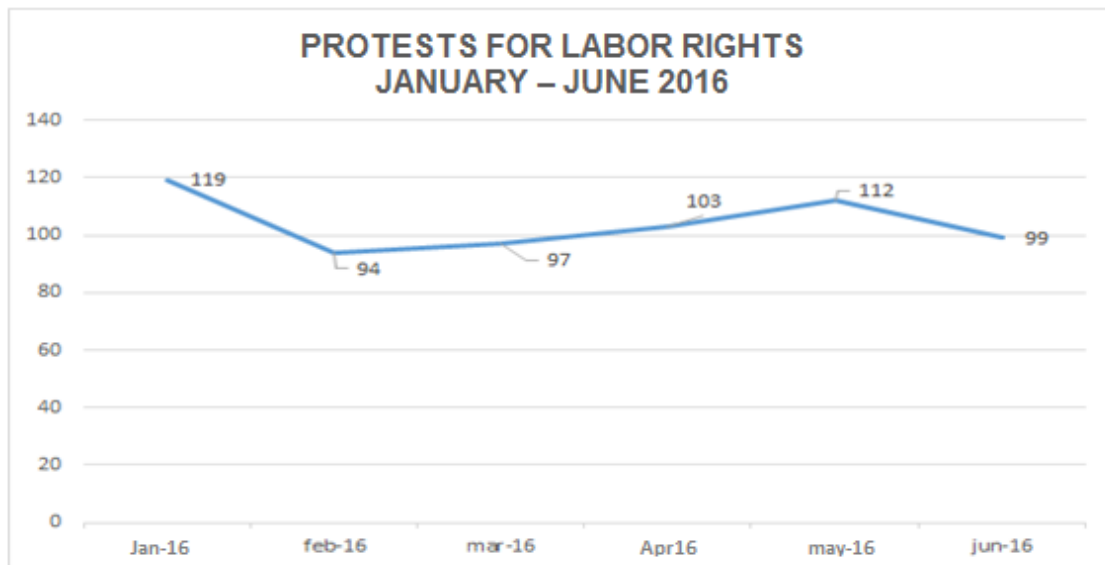
On this point, the OVCS wants to make an alert of the situation faced by workers and their employment stability. It is important that authorities direct their efforts to attend the serious problematic to avoid an increase in unemployment.

Another point on which efforts should conduct is in control of inflation with effective production plans. The escalation of prices has made havoc with wages. It not exist increase or collective agreement that faces the inflation experienced by products, fundamentally the food, which is where much of the family budget goes.

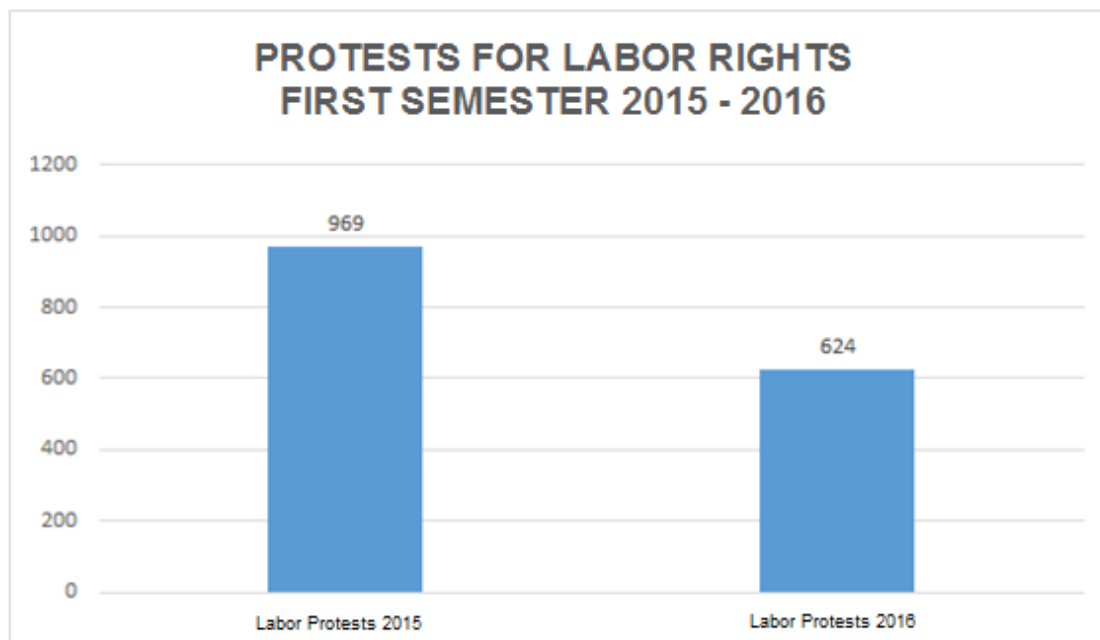
The minimum wage adjustments, two so far this year, have served little to attend the public demand that daily see limited their purchasing power.

To this must not neglect the cash flow difficulties faced by the small and medium enterprises to keep payroll expenses.





Fuente: Observatorio Venezolano de Conflictividad Social (OVCS)



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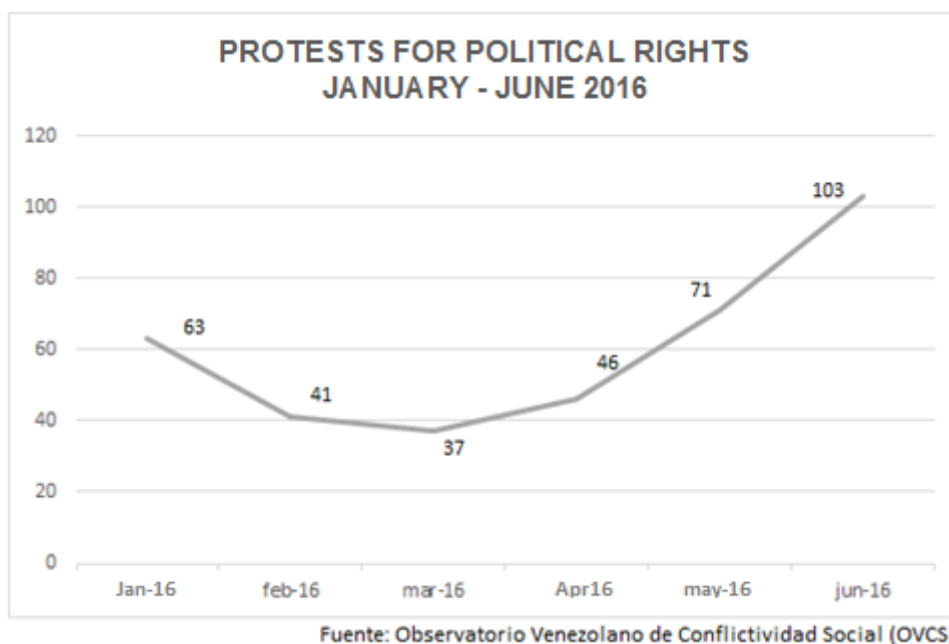
### Protests for political rights

Protests to demand political rights represent 10% of all documented in this semester.

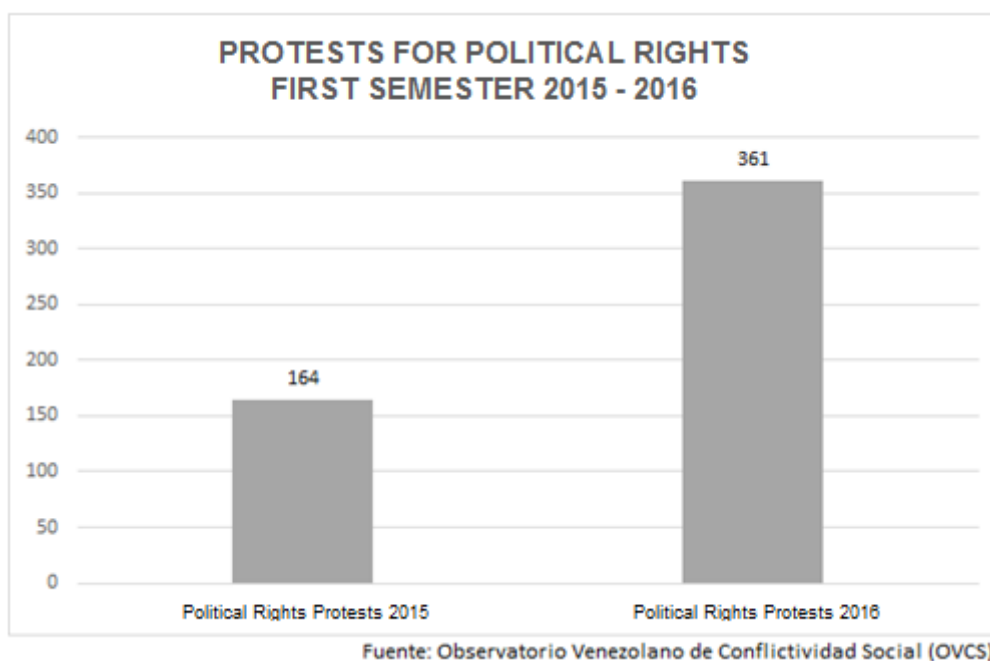
From the second quarter was observed a consistent increase in demonstrations linked to the revocatory referendum process.

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This figure represents an increase of 120% compared to the first half of 2015, when 164 were reported protests for political rights.



### Repression of demonstrations

In the first half of 2016 the pattern of repression of demonstrations developed by the Venezuelan government in 2014 it reedit. Characterized by:

- a) Actions coordinated between the National Bolivarian Guard (GNB), National Bolivarian Police (PNB) and Pro-Government armed groups (Paramilitary groups).

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- b) Obstruction or impediment of demonstrations; cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment; arbitrary detentions; use of toxic substances and fire guns, among others.

We warn that **currently the pattern of repression incorporates members of the Local Committees of Supply and Production (CLAP).**

### **Repression of demonstrations for food**

In these six months the Venezuelan streets have been the scene of many massive demonstrations to demand human right to food. The government's response to these protests has been repression.

**Repression and violence against demonstrations by food leaves a balance of at least 6 people killed.**

### **Recommendations and exigencies to the Venezuelan State**

- Conduct a prompt, expeditious, exhaustive and transparent investigation to establish justice for the killings, assaults and illegal arrests in the context of public demonstrations.
- Implement the necessary democratic correctives in the public policies to guarantee the human rights of the population.
- Respond timely and effective manner to citizens' demands.
- Guarantee the human right to peaceful demonstration of people who take the streets to express their opinions on government policies.
- Implement the recommendations made by international organizations on human rights and democracy.

*This research uses as the main input the monitoring of situation through media in national and regional levels. Also sources of government agencies and non-governmental organizations (NGOs). Stand out the direct observation non-participant, on the studied issues.*

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