

Criminal victimization in the territories, 2014

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Majority of crimes reported by residents in the territories are non-violent

In 2014, close to 36,000 criminal incidents were reported by residents of the territories. Of these, the majority were non-violent (58%), including theft of personal property or household crimes. The remainder were violent crimes, specifically sexual assault, robbery and physical assault.

Of the eight crime types measured by the General Social Survey (GSS), physical assault (32%) and theft of personal property (30%) were the two most frequently reported by residents of the territories.

Rates of both self-reported violent and household victimization decrease

In 2014, the violent victimization rate in the territories—which includes sexual assault, robbery and physical assault—was 170 incidents per 1,000 population, down 29% from 2009. The household victimization rate—which includes breaking and entering, theft of motor vehicles or parts, theft of household property, and vandalism—was 252 incidents per 1,000 households, about a third lower than in 2009.

While these rates declined, the rate of theft of personal property was similar to that recorded in 2009.

While victimization rates in the territories have decreased since 2009, they are almost twice as high as those recorded in the provinces.

Nunavut has highest rates of violent and household victimization but lowest rate of theft of personal property

Nunavut reported the highest rates of both violent and household victimization, both among the territories and nationally. However, Nunavut reported the lowest territorial rate of theft of personal property. Overall, the proportions of people across the territories who reported being a victim in 2014 were similar, ranging from 27% in Nunavut to 29% in the Northwest Territories.

Risk of victimization higher in the territories' larger communities

The proportion of territorial residents who reported being a victim of a crime in 2014 was highest in communities with a population of 2,000 or more. Nearly one-third (32%) of residents in these larger communities reported being the victim of at least one of the crimes measured by the GSS. This compares with one in five people (19%) in communities with less than 2,000 residents. This difference was mainly attributable to higher rates of theft of personal property reported in the larger communities.

One-third of territorial residents experienced violence during their childhood

Approximately one-third of residents of the territories (34%) reported having been the victim of either physical or sexual abuse by an adult before the age of 15, a proportion slightly higher than that recorded in the provinces (30%).

Older residents of the territories—particularly those aged 45 to 64 years—were more likely than younger residents to be victims of childhood maltreatment. Approximately one-quarter (26%) of respondents aged 15 to 34 reported experiencing childhood abuse, compared with 45% among those aged 45 to 64 years.

Those who were victimized as a child reported a violent victimization rate in 2014 that was more than two-and-a-half times higher than those who were not victimized as a child.



When other factors are controlled for, Aboriginal identity is not linked to the risk of violent victimization

Overall, the rate of violent victimization was higher for Aboriginal residents of the territories (215 incidents per 1,000 Aboriginal people) than for non-Aboriginal residents (121 per 1,000 non-Aboriginal people).

Having an Aboriginal identity was not associated, however, with the risk of violent victimization when other risk factors were taken into account. Numerous factors were found to be associated with the risk of violent victimization in the territories, including gender, age, disability, history of childhood victimization, history of homelessness, drug use, social cohesion in the neighbourhood and personal income, but not Aboriginal identity.

Spousal violence rate remains stable

More than 1 in 10 (12%) residents of the territories with a current or ex-spouse or common-law partner reported that they had been the victim of spousal violence in the previous five years. That proportion is similar to that recorded in 2009. In contrast, the provinces recorded a decline in spousal violence, from 6% in 2009 to 4% in 2014.

Half of spousal violence victims (50%) reported experiencing more than one violent incident during the previous five years. Close to one in five (18%) reported experiencing 10 or more such incidents over the same period.

The types of violence experienced by spousal violence victims took various forms, ranging from those that could be considered less severe (including being threatened, having an object thrown at oneself, or being pushed or slapped) to more severe forms of violence (including being beaten, choked, threatened with a gun or knife, or sexually assaulted). Approximately 3 in 10 spousal violence victims reported having experienced these most severe types of violence.

About half (49%) of spousal violence victims in the territories reported sustaining injuries on at least one occasion due to the violence, a proportion higher than that recorded in the provinces (31%).

Proportionately more Aboriginal people among spousal violence victims

Aboriginal people were over-represented among victims of spousal violence in the territories. While they represented almost half (49%) of the spousal population of the territories, they accounted for three-quarters (75%) of victims of spousal violence in the five years preceding the survey. Furthermore, Aboriginal people represented 93% of victims of the most severe forms of spousal violence, that is, having been beaten, choked, threatened with a weapon or sexually assaulted.

Reporting to police increases in the territories

In 2014, results from the GSS showed that more than one-third (36%) of criminal incidents not involving spousal violence and about half (49%) of spousal violence incidents occurring in the territories were reported to police. Overall, reporting rates were lower in the provinces, where 31% of incidents other than spousal violence and 29% of spousal violence incidents were reported to police.

The vast majority of territorial residents reported having confidence in their local police (83%), up from 71% in 2009. However, this proportion was lower among Aboriginal people (76%) than their non-Aboriginal counterparts (90%).

Most residents of the territories are satisfied with their personal safety

Overall, the majority of residents of the territories reported that they were either satisfied or very satisfied with their personal safety from crime (87%).

Females were less likely than males to report feeling safe. This was particularly true when asked about feelings of safety in specific situations, such as walking alone after dark. About one-third (34%) of females in the territories reported feeling very safe in that situation, compared with almost two-thirds (62%) of males.

Table 1
Victimization incidents, by type of offence, 2009 and 2014

	Territories				Provinces			
	2009	2009	2014	2014	2009	2009	2014	2014
	number (thousands)	rate	number (thousands)	rate	number (thousands)	rate	number (thousands)	rate
Total violent victimization	17.7	240	15.0	170	3,267	118	2,245	76
Sexual assault	3.6	50	2.6	30	677	24	633	22
Robbery	2.1	29	F	F	368	13	190	6
Physical assault	11.9	162	11.3	129	2,222	80	1,422	48
Total household victimization	13.4	379	10.3	252	3,184	237	2,029	143
Breaking and entering	3.2	91	2.6	63	630	47	441	31
Motor vehicle / parts theft	1.4	39	1.0	24	453	34	261	18
Theft of household property	5.4	153	4.1	102	1,109	83	766	54
Vandalism	3.4	96	2.6	63	992	74	561	40
Theft of personal property	7.1	97	10.6	121	2,981	108	2,154	73

F too unreliable to be published

Note(s): Rates of violent victimization and theft of personal property are calculated per 1,000 population aged 15 years and older. Rates of household victimization are calculated per 1,000 households.

Source(s): General Social Survey – Victimization (4504).

Table 2
Victimization incidents, by selected community, territories, 2014

	Total violent victimization		Total household victimization		Theft of personal property	
	number (thousands)	rate	number (thousands)	rate	number (thousands)	rate
All territories	15.0	170	10.3	252	10.6	121
Yukon	3.6	120	3.4	218	4.4	148
Whitehorse	2.9	129	2.5	218	4.3	189
Other communities	F	F	0.8	218	F	F
Northwest Territories	5.4	161	3.9	248	4.5	136
Yellowknife	2.8	177	2.0	264	3.4	214
Other communities	2.6	146	1.9	234	F	F
Nunavut	6.0	241	3.0	313	1.7	68
Iqaluit	F	F	1.0	355	F	F
Rankin Inlet	F	F	0.4	469	F	F
Other communities	3.5	213	1.6	271	F	F

F too unreliable to be published

Note(s): Rates of violent victimization and theft of personal property are calculated per 1,000 population aged 15 years and older. Rates of household victimization are calculated per 1,000 households.

Source(s): General Social Survey – Victimization (4504).

Note to readers

Data on victimization were collected as part of the General Social Survey (GSS) on Victimization, which aims to provide data on the personal experiences of Canadians with respect to eight types of crime. The GSS is a household survey conducted every five years; the most recent cycle was conducted in 2014. The target population of the survey consisted of people aged 15 and older and excluded people living full-time in institutions. In 2014, 2,040 respondents from the territories and 33,127 respondents from the provinces took part in the survey. The results for the provinces were released earlier and can be found in the Juristat article, "[Criminal victimization in Canada, 2014](#)."

Statistics Canada also collects information on crime through the Uniform Crime Reporting Survey, which is an annual census of all violations of the Criminal Code and certain other federal laws that come to the attention of the police and that the police have substantiated. Although the two surveys cover similar themes, they have numerous differences in terms of survey type, scope, coverage and data sources.

Definitions, data sources and methods: survey number [4504](#).

The Juristat article, "[Criminal victimization in the territories, 2014](#)" ([85-002-X](#)), is now available. From the *Browse by key resource* module of our website, under *Publications*, choose *All subjects*, then *Crime and justice*, and *Juristat*.

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