

Police-reported crime in rural and urban areas in the Canadian provinces, 2017

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The Canadian Centre for Justice Statistics

Release date: May 7, 2019



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Police-reported crime in rural and urban areas in the Canadian provinces, 2017: Highlights

- Police services serving a mostly rural population served 16% of the population in the provinces in 2017, but reported 23% of violent crimes, 17% of property crimes, 27% of *Criminal Code* traffic offences, and 23% of other *Criminal Code* violations.
- In 2017, the police-reported crime rate in rural areas (6,210 incidents per 100,000 population) was 23% higher than the urban crime rate (5,051 incidents per 100,000 population).
- The police-reported crime rate in Canada declined from 2009 to 2017. However, the decrease was larger in urban areas (-19%) than in rural areas (-13%). As with the crime rate, since 2009, the CSI has decreased more in urban areas (-19%) than in rural areas (-7%).
- The higher crime rate in rural areas was driven by a small number of police services that reported very high crime rates. In fact, most police services serving a predominantly rural population recorded relatively low rates of crime.
- Higher crime rates in rural areas were mainly observed in the Prairie provinces. In the Prairie provinces in 2017, rates in rural areas were 36% to 42% higher than in urban areas.
- Higher rural crime rates were mainly observed in the northern areas of the provinces: in the South, crime rates were lower in rural areas in all provinces except Alberta.
- The higher crime rates in rural areas were mainly due to high rates of physical assault, mischief and disturbing the peace. These common violations were reported about twice as often by police services serving a mostly rural population.
- From 2009 to 2017, rural police services reported a total of 1,078 homicides, for an average annual rate of 2.02 homicides per 100,000 population. In urban areas, 4,068 homicides were reported during the same period, for a rate of 1.55 homicides per 100,000 population. However, the rate of attempted murder was lower in rural areas.
- Other violent crimes overrepresented in rural areas included sexual violations against children and violent firearms offences (such as discharging or pointing a firearm). Conversely, more robberies and offences related to human trafficking or the commodification of sexual activity were reported in urban areas.
- In 2017, the rate of impaired driving was about twice as high in rural areas as it was in urban areas. The gap was even wider for incidents of impaired driving causing bodily harm or death.

Police-reported crime in rural and urban areas in the Canadian provinces, 2017

by Samuel Perreault

Crime has long been viewed by the media and in research as a predominantly urban issue. Conversely, rural areas are associated with pastoral landscapes, tranquillity and places where social problems are scarce compared to urban areas (Donnermeyer et al. 2013; Allen Bouffard and Muftic 2006; Weisheit et al. 1994). Many Canadians share this perception: compared with their urban counterparts, rural residents are, overall, more likely to be satisfied with their personal safety and to believe that crime is lower in their neighbourhood than elsewhere in Canada (Perreault 2017).

Yet recent studies and police-reported statistics challenge the perception that crime is concentrated in large cities (Allen 2018; Allen and Perreault 2015; Donnermeyer et al. 2013; Francisco and Chénier 2007). Recent high-profile events have brought the topic of rural crime to the forefront, and it has become a key public safety issue. For example, Saskatchewan recently announced a series of measures to tackle rural crime, including the launch of a dedicated team of 258 police officers (Government of Saskatchewan 2018). Similar measures were also implemented in Alberta (Government of Alberta 2018).

At the same time, the need for information on rural crime has increased, including detailed, up-to-date data that shed light on the nature and extent of crime and crime trends in rural areas. This *Juristat* article examines these issues using police-reported data from the Uniform Crime Reporting (UCR) Survey and the Homicide Survey, as well as self-reported data from the General Social Survey (GSS) on Canadians' Safety (Victimization) in the Canadian provinces.¹

Text box 1 Definitions

Criminal incident: Includes all *Criminal Code* and other federal statute offences reported by police services. Incidents are categorized by the most serious violation in the incident.

Crime rate: The crime rate is calculated by summing all *Criminal Code* incidents reported by the police and dividing by the population. The crime rate excludes *Criminal Code* traffic violations, as well as other federal statute violations such as drug offences.

Crime Severity Index (CSI): The CSI takes into account both the volume of crime and the relative severity of crime. In order to calculate the police-reported CSI, each violation is assigned a weight. CSI weights are based on the violation's incarceration rate, as well as the average length of prison sentence handed down by criminal courts. The more serious the average sentence, the higher the weight assigned to the offence, meaning that the more serious offences have a greater impact on the index. Unlike the traditional crime rate, all offences, including *Criminal Code* traffic violations and other federal statute violations such as drug offences, are included in the CSI. To calculate the CSI, the weighted offences are summed and then divided by the population. Similar to other indexes (e.g., Consumer Price Index), to allow for ease of comparison, the CSI is then standardized to a base year of "100" (for the CSI, the base year is 2006). All CSI values are relative to the Canada-level CSI for 2006. CSI values are available back to 1998. For more information on the CSI, see *Measuring Crime in Canada: Introducing the Crime Severity Index and Improvements to the Uniform Crime Reporting Survey* (Wallace et al. 2009), *The Methodology of the Police-Reported Crime Severity Index* (Babyak et al. 2009), *Updating the Police-Reported Crime Severity Index Weights: Refinements to the Methodology* (Babyak et al. 2013) and the *Measuring Crime in Canada: A detailed look at the Crime Severity Index* video (Statistics Canada 2016a).

Accused: An accused person is someone aged 12 and older who police services have identified in connection with a criminal incident based on evidence linking the accused to the crime, whether or not charges were laid or recommended.² An incident can involve more than one accused.

Census metropolitan area (CMA) and census agglomeration (CA): A CMA or CA is formed by one or more adjacent municipalities centred on a population centre (known as the core). A CMA must have a total population of at least 100,000, of which 50,000 or more must live in the core. A CA must have a core population of at least 10,000. To be included in the CMA or CA, adjacent municipalities must have a high degree of integration with the core, as measured by commuting flows derived from census data. A CMA or CA may have more than one police service.

Rural and small town area: Rural police services serve a territory where the majority of the population lives outside a CMA or CA. While small towns that do not qualify as CAs are included in this category, the term "rural area" will be used for the sake of brevity. Police services are classified "rural" or "urban" based on the majority of the population they serve, rather than on the exact place of residence of each Canadian. Consequently, urban residents can be served by a police service classified as "rural," and vice versa. In the interest of conciseness, the terms "rural" (or "rural area") and "urban" (or "urban area") are used to designate areas or populations based on the classification of the police services that serve them. The definitions of "rural" and "urban" in this report may differ from those used in other Statistics Canada reports.

Urban: Urban police services serve an area where the majority of the population lives within a CMA or CA.

Provincial North: The Provincial North comprises the northern regions of British Columbia, Alberta, Saskatchewan, Manitoba, Ontario, Quebec, and Newfoundland and Labrador, according to the definition agreed on by the Northern Development Ministers Forum and used by the Conference Board of Canada's Centre for the North. Generally speaking, these northern boundaries reflect provincial administrative regions. For more information, see Statistics Canada 2018 or Allen and Perreault 2015.

Crime rate, Crime Severity Index higher in rural areas

Most Canadians live in urban areas, and most crimes are committed there. However, when population size is taken into account, rural residents experience more crime than their urban counterparts. In 2017, rural police services served about 16% of the population in the ten provinces, but reported 20% of all violations of the *Criminal Code* and other federal statutes. Specifically, rural police services reported 23% of violent crimes, 17% of property crimes, 27% of *Criminal Code* traffic offences, 23% of other *Criminal Code* offences, and 21% of drug offences.

In Canada, two official measures of crime are typically used: the crime rate and the Crime Severity Index (CSI). The crime rate measures the volume of crime, including all *Criminal Code* violations (except traffic) relative to the population size; meanwhile, the CSI measures both the volume and severity of crime, and includes all *Criminal Code* and other federal statute violations.

In 2017, rural police services reported 374,441 *Criminal Code* violations (excluding traffic), which corresponded to a rate of 6,210 incidents³ per 100,000 population. This rate was 23% higher than what was reported by urban police services (5,051 incidents per 100,000 population) (Table 1). The gap was wider when all federal statute violations and traffic offences were taken into account: the resulting rural crime rate was 30% higher than the urban rate (7,324 and 5,629 incidents per 100,000 population, respectively).

However, the difference between rural and urban areas was smaller when comparing CSIs—that is, when crime severity was also taken into account. In 2017, the urban CSI was 70.1; in rural areas, it was 17% higher (82.1). The fact that a smaller gap existed between urban and rural CSIs than between their traditional crime rates suggests that crime in rural areas is more frequent primarily because of higher rates of minor crimes.

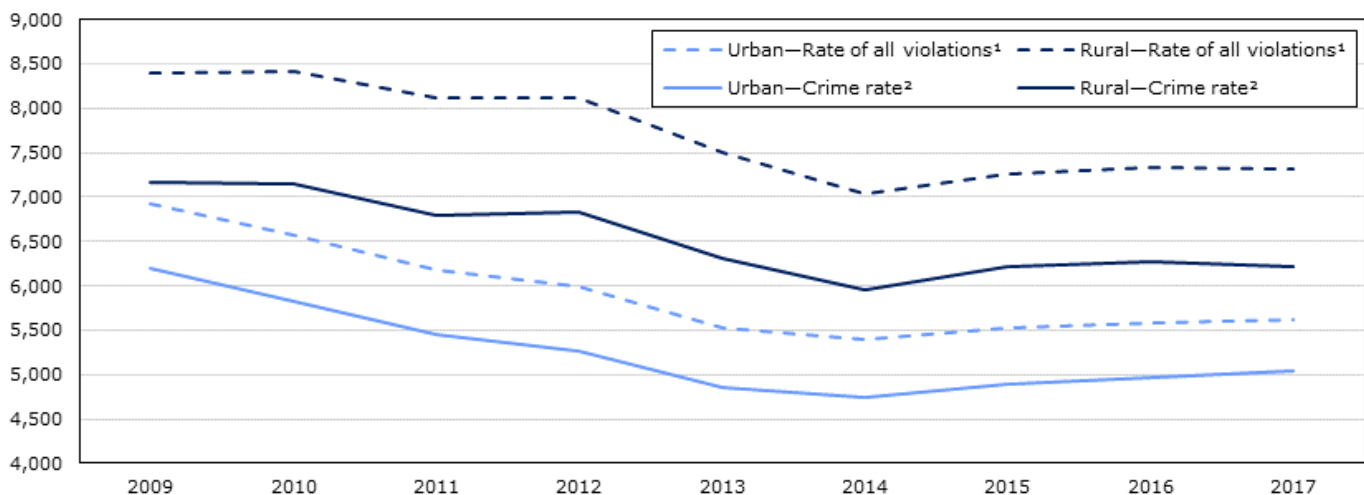
Urban and rural crime rates lower than in 2009

Overall, urban and rural crime rates have followed similar trends since 2009: a decline until 2014 followed by a slight increase (Chart 1). However, while the decline between 2009 and 2014 was steady for urban crime rates, in rural areas it was punctuated by two slight increases. In contrast, the rural crime rate declined slightly in 2017, while the urban rate continued to rise. Compared with 2009, police-reported crime rates in 2017 were 13% lower in rural areas and 19% lower in urban areas.

Chart 1

Rates of police-reported *Criminal Code* and other federal statute violations, urban and rural police services, all provinces, 2009 to 2017

rate per 100,000 population



1. Includes all *Criminal Code* offences (including traffic offences), as well as other federal statute violations, such as drug offences (see Table 1).

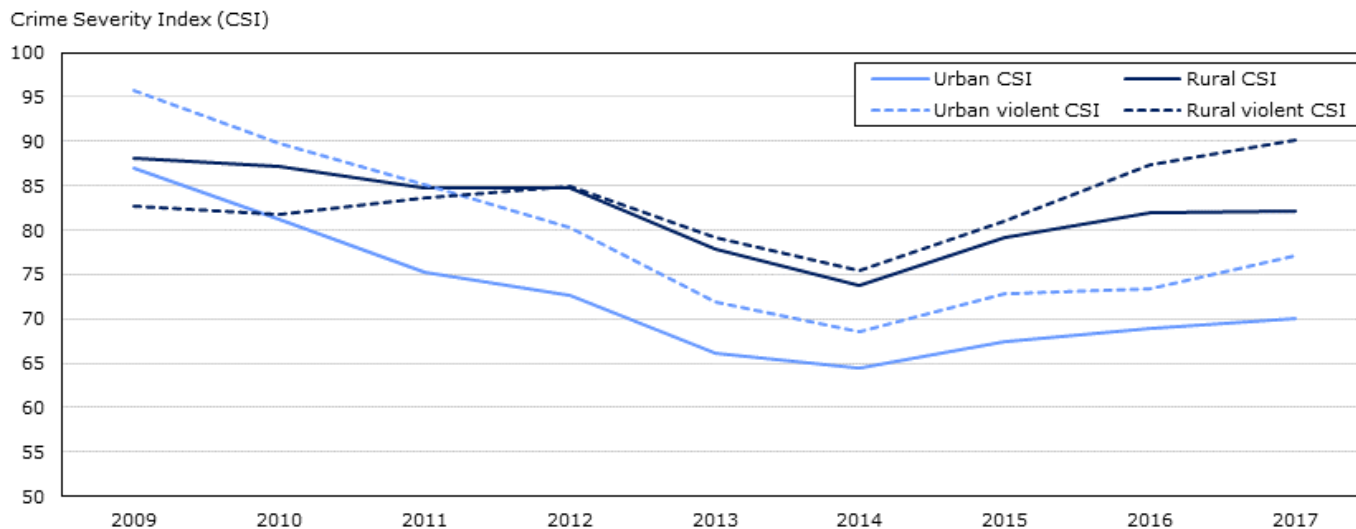
2. Includes *Criminal Code* offences, excluding traffic violations (see Table 1).

Note: Urban police services serve an area where the majority of the population lives within a census metropolitan area (CMA) or census agglomeration (CA). Rural police services serve an area where the majority of the population lives outside a CMA or CA. A CMA or a CA is comprised of one or more adjacent municipalities centred on a population centre (known as the core). A CMA must have a total population of at least 100,000, of which 50,000 or more must live in the core. A CA must have a core population of at least 10,000. To be included in the CMA or CA, adjacent municipalities must have a high degree of integration with the core, as measured by commuting flows derived from census data. A CMA or CA may have more than one police service. Rates are calculated per 100,000 population, and population counts are based on the July 1 estimates from Statistics Canada's Demography Division. Excludes data from the Royal Canadian Mounted Police's Canadian Police Centre for Missing and Exploited Children.

Source: Statistics Canada, Canadian Centre for Justice Statistics, Uniform Crime Reporting Survey.

The Crime Severity Index (CSI) in both urban and rural areas also decreased over this same period. In 2009, the urban and rural CSIs were similar (86.9 and 88.2, respectively). However, the urban CSI then fell more sharply, to 70.1 in 2017 (-19%), while the rural CSI was down a more modest 7% (to 82.1) (Chart 2).

Chart 2
Police-reported Crime Severity Index, urban and rural police services, all provinces, 2009 to 2017



Note: The Crime Severity Indexes are based on *Criminal Code* incidents, including traffic offences, as well as other federal statute violations. The base index was set at 100 for 2006 for Canada. Urban police services serve an area where the majority of the population lives within a census metropolitan area (CMA) or census agglomeration (CA). Rural police services serve an area where the majority of the population lives outside a CMA or CA. A CMA or a CA is comprised of one or more adjacent municipalities centred on a population centre (known as the core). A CMA must have a total population of at least 100,000, of which 50,000 or more must live in the core. A CA must have a core population of at least 10,000. To be included in the CMA or CA, adjacent municipalities must have a high degree of integration with the core, as measured by commuting flows derived from census data. A CMA or CA may have more than one police service. Population counts are based on the July 1 estimates from Statistics Canada's Demography Division. Excludes data from the Royal Canadian Mounted Police's Canadian Police Centre for Missing and Exploited Children.
Source: Statistics Canada, Canadian Centre for Justice Statistics, Uniform Crime Reporting Survey.

In rural areas, the fact that the decrease in the CSI was smaller than the decrease in the crime rate reflects a decrease in less serious crimes. This is the opposite of what was observed in urban areas, where the CSI and the crime rate experienced similar declines.

To summarize, nationally, rural areas in 2017 reported higher crime severity and crime rates than urban areas, with both regions experiencing declines compared to 2009. However, the declines in rural areas were of a lesser magnitude. The following section will explore those rural areas that are responsible for the overall higher rates of crime in those regions.

High rural crime rates are mainly observed in the Prairies

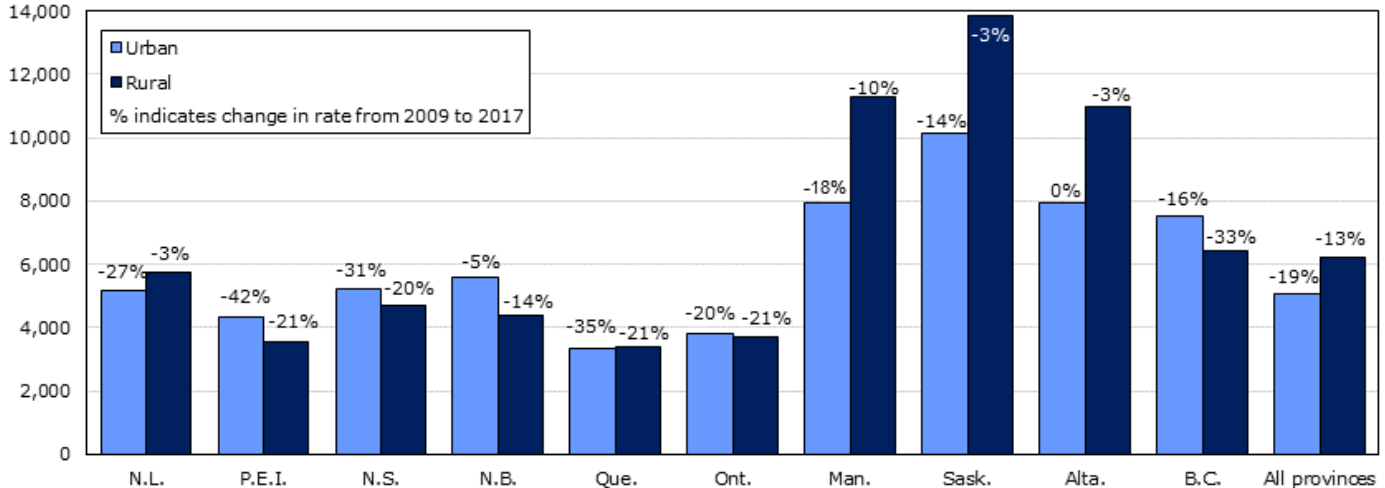
Rural crime is an issue that has recently resonated in the Prairies in particular, as evidenced by initiatives implemented in those provinces to tackle rural crime (Government of Saskatchewan 2018; Government of Alberta 2018) and by the tabling of Motion 167 in the House of Commons by an Alberta Member of Parliament (House of Commons Canada 2018).

Rural crime was especially prevalent in the Prairie provinces. In the majority of provinces, rural crime rates were almost identical to or lower than those recorded in urban areas (Chart 3). The exceptions were Newfoundland and Labrador, Manitoba, Saskatchewan and Alberta. Among the provinces where rates were higher in rural areas, Newfoundland and Labrador posted the smallest difference: the rural rate was (on average) 11% higher than the urban rate. In the Prairie provinces, rates in rural areas were 36% to 42% higher than in urban areas.

Chart 3

Police-reported crime (excluding traffic violations), urban and rural police services, by province, 2017

rate per 100,000 population



Note: Includes *Criminal Code* offences, excluding traffic violations. Urban police services serve an area where the majority of the population lives within a census metropolitan area (CMA) or census agglomeration (CA). Rural police services serve an area where the majority of the population lives outside a CMA or CA. A CMA or a CA is comprised of one or more adjacent municipalities centred on a population centre (known as the core). A CMA must have a total population of at least 100,000, of which 50,000 or more must live in the core. A CA must have a core population of at least 10,000. To be included in the CMA or CA, adjacent municipalities must have a high degree of integration with the core, as measured by commuting flows derived from census data. A CMA or CA may have more than one police service. Rates are calculated per 100,000 population, and population counts are based on the July 1 estimates from Statistics Canada's Demography Division. Excludes data from the Royal Canadian Mounted Police's Canadian Police Centre for Missing and Exploited Children.

Source: Statistics Canada, Canadian Centre for Justice Statistics, Uniform Crime Reporting Survey.

These provinces were also where the rural crime rate decreased the least since 2009. The rural crime rate fell by 3% in Newfoundland and Labrador, Saskatchewan and Alberta (Chart 3). The decrease was slightly larger in rural Manitoba (-10%), but remained smaller than in the rural areas of other provinces (where it ranged from -14% to -33%) or than in urban Manitoba (-18%). For certain types of crime, there was an increase in rural areas compared to 2009. This was notably the case for property crime in Alberta (+13%) and other *Criminal Code* offences in Newfoundland and Labrador (+37%) and New Brunswick (+14%) (Table 2).

In most provinces, the rural crime rate has followed a trend similar to the national rural rate: a general downward trend until 2014, followed by an increase (Table 3). In the Prairie provinces and in New Brunswick, the increase from 2014 to 2015 was especially large, driven by a relatively strong increase in property crime. However, the rural crime rate observed in these provinces subsequently stabilized or decreased. Since its low point in 2014, the crime rate in these provinces—including the property crime rate—increased more in urban areas than in rural areas, although the decrease from 2009 to 2014 has been also generally greater in urban areas than in rural areas.

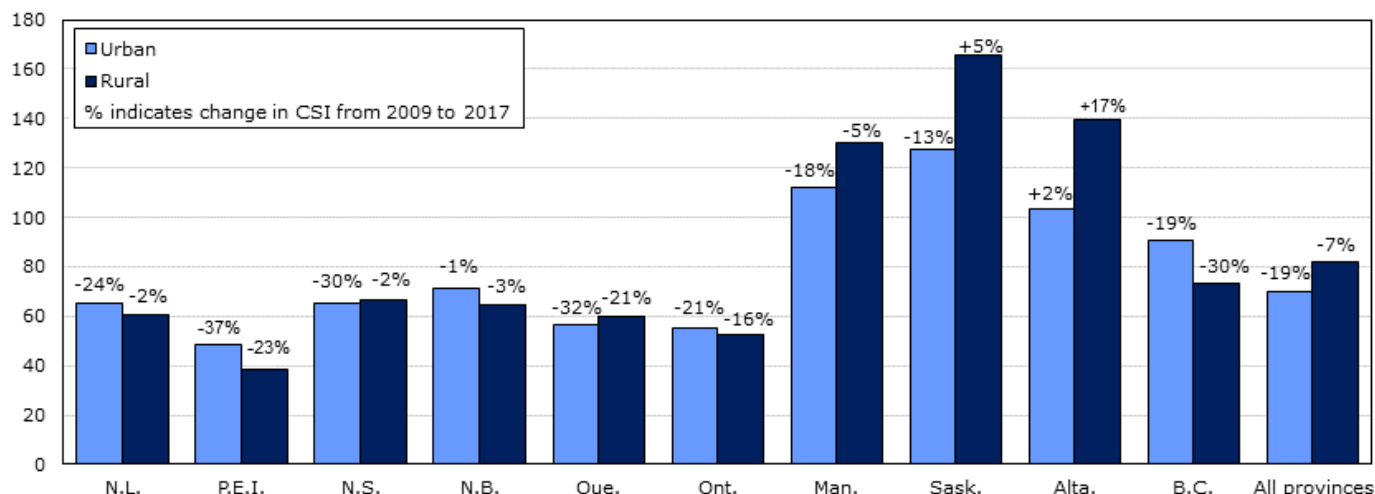
Rural Crime Severity Index also higher in the Prairies

The distribution of Crime Severity Index (CSI) among the provinces was quite similar to that of provincial crime rates (Chart 4). The highest rural CSIs among the provinces were also observed in the Prairies, although the differences in CSIs compared with urban areas were smaller than differences between rural and urban crime rates. However, contrary to trends in the crime rates, an increase in the CSI from 2009 was observed in rural Alberta (+17%) and Saskatchewan (+5%) (Table 4). In many other provinces, especially Nova Scotia and New Brunswick, the overall decrease from 2009 in the rural CSI was also more modest than the decline in their crime rate. The fact that in some areas, the crime rate decreased while the CSI did not follow a similar trend either by increasing or slightly decreasing suggests there was a change in the nature of crime, with a decline in the rates of less serious offences or a possible increase in more serious offences.

Chart 4

Police-reported Crime Severity Index, urban and rural police services, by province, 2017

Crime Severity Index (CSI)



Note: The Crime Severity Indexes are based on *Criminal Code* incidents, including traffic offences, as well as other federal statute violations. The base index was set at 100 for 2006 for Canada. Urban police services serve an area where the majority of the population lives within a census metropolitan area (CMA) or census agglomeration (CA). Rural police services serve an area where the majority of the population lives outside a CMA or CA. A CMA or a CA is comprised of one or more adjacent municipalities centred on a population centre (known as the core). A CMA must have a total population of at least 100,000, of which 50,000 or more must live in the core. A CA must have a core population of at least 10,000. To be included in the CMA or CA, adjacent municipalities must have a high degree of integration with the core, as measured by commuting flows derived from census data. A CMA or CA may have more than one police service. Population counts are based on the July 1 estimates from Statistics Canada's Demography Division. Excludes data from the Royal Canadian Mounted Police's Canadian Police Centre for Missing and Exploited Children.
Source: Statistics Canada, Canadian Centre for Justice Statistics, Uniform Crime Reporting Survey.

Moreover, while the rural crime rate in Newfoundland and Labrador in 2017 was higher than the rate in urban areas, the opposite was observed with the CSI (Chart 4). This difference was based on the fact that those crimes which were very common in rural areas of this province were of relative low seriousness.⁴ For example, level 1 assaults, mischief, disturbing the peace and failure to comply with a court order accounted for 61% of the rural crime rate in this province, but only 24% of the CSI.

Conversely, the rural CSI is the same as the urban CSI in Nova Scotia, but exceeds it in Quebec. In Nova Scotia, the higher rural CSI was mainly the result of a high number of frauds, a heavily-weighted offence in the CSI calculation.

Interestingly, in both urban and rural areas, crime rates and CSIs are generally higher in Western Canada, especially in the Prairie provinces. Since more than a quarter (27%) of the rural population lives in one of these provinces, compared with only 17% of the urban population, the crime rate and CSI in rural Canada are more influenced by trends in the Prairies, while the Prairies have less influence on the crime rate and CSI in urban Canada. Said otherwise, the Prairies have a notable impact on rural crime at the national level.

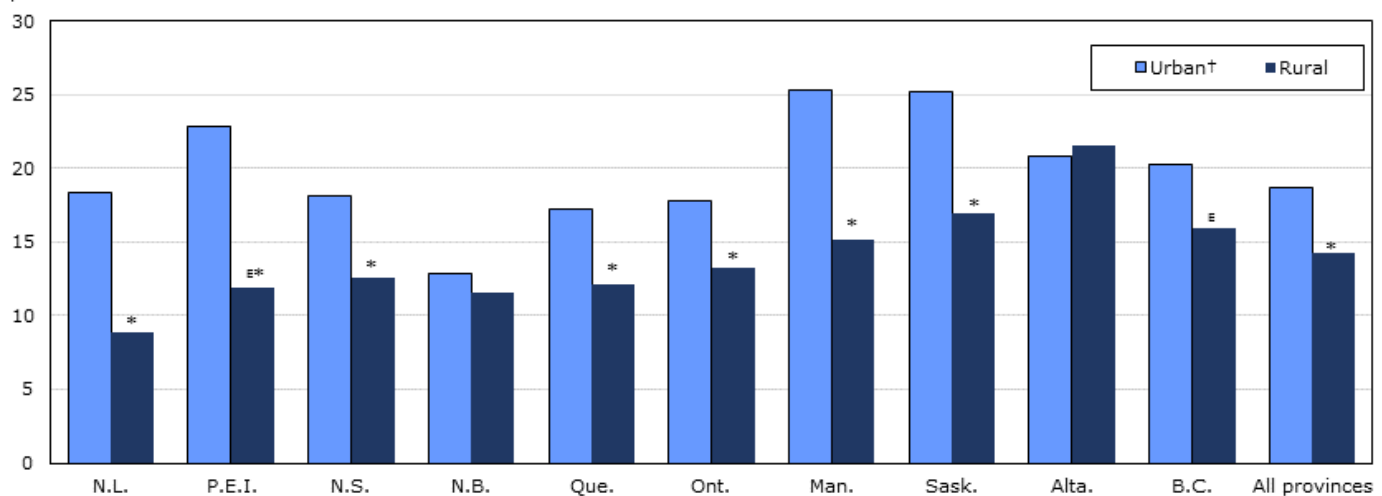
Text box 2**Self-reported victimization rates are lower in rural areas than in urban areas**

In Canada, official crime statistics are mainly gathered through two separate but complementary surveys. On the one hand, there are police-reported data collected through the Uniform Crime Reporting (UCR) survey, which consist of an annual census of all *Criminal Code* offences and other federal statute violations that come to the attention of the police. On the other hand, every five years, Statistics Canada conducts the General Social Survey (GSS) on Canadians' Safety (Victimization) to gather information on the victimization experiences of a sample of Canadians aged 15 years and older. GSS data include both crimes reported to the police and those not reported. However, they include a more limited number of crimes and, notably, exclude crimes targeting businesses, institutions, public assets or victimless crimes.

GSS data show that rural Canadians as a whole are less likely to indicate that they had been the victim of a crime. In 2014, during the most recent GSS on Victimization cycle, nearly one rural Canadian in seven (14%) stated that they had been the victim of at least one crime measured by the GSS⁵ during the 12 months preceding the survey. Among Canadians living in urban areas, this proportion was almost one in five (19%). Moreover, this difference was observed in almost all provinces, with the exception of New Brunswick and Alberta, where the urban and rural rates were similar (Text box 2 chart).

Text box 2 chart**Proportion of the population that reported having been a victim of a crime, urban and rural areas, by province, 2014**

percent



‡ use with caution

† reference category

* significantly different from reference category ($p < 0.05$)

Note: An urban area is defined as a census metropolitan area (CMA) or a census agglomeration (CA). Rural areas are all areas outside CMAs and CAs. A CMA or a CA is formed by one or more adjacent municipalities centred on a population centre (known as the core). A CMA must have a total population of at least 100,000, of which 50,000 or more must live in the core. A CA must have a core population of at least 10,000. To be included in the CMA or CA, adjacent municipalities must have a high degree of integration with the core, as measured by commuting flows derived from census data. A CMA or CA may have more than one police service.

Source: Statistics Canada, General Social Survey.

This apparent contradiction between the police-reported data and self-reported data on victimization experiences could be partly due to differences in reporting to the police. For example, 45% of rural household crimes in 2014 were reported to the police, a much higher proportion than that observed in urban areas (35%). However, reporting rates were similar for violent crimes (29% in rural areas and 28% in urban areas) and theft of personal property (31% and 29%, respectively).

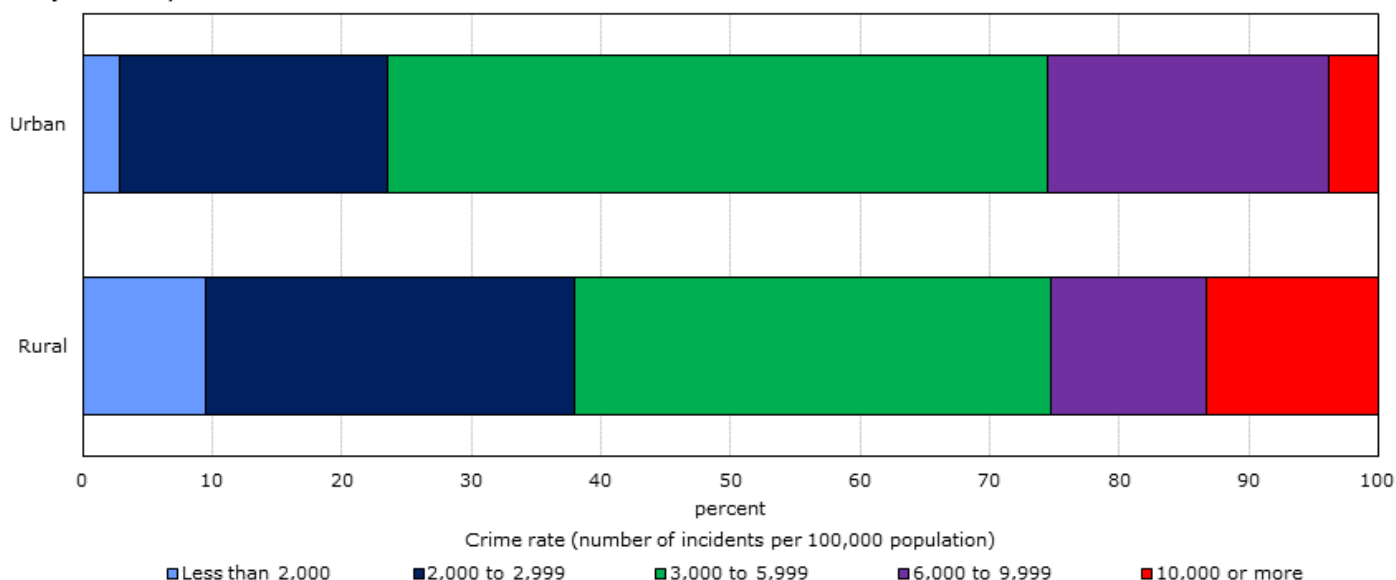
It should be noted that certain crimes are not included in the self-reported victimization data. Specifically, this is the case for criminal harassment or indecent communications, non-consensual distribution of intimate images, and crimes without a direct victim, such as disturbing the peace, offences against the administration of justice, or non-violent weapons offences. Likewise, crimes targeting a business, a public asset or a victim under the age of 15 are not measured by the GSS. As such, differences in the scope and methodology of the surveys may partly explain why the trends derived from the data on self-reported victimization do not completely reflect the police-reported data.

More variation in crime rates among rural areas than among urban areas

One of the main difficulties in addressing the nature and scope of rural crime is that there are a multitude of different rural realities. Some communities experience an economic or population decline, while others are faced with the effects of a rapid economic boom. Some communities are particularly remote, while others are relatively close to large population centres and have access to a broader range of services. Lastly, some Indigenous communities—which are generally in rural rather than in urban areas—are also faced with significant socioeconomic and safety issues.

This diversity in the rural context is reflected in variations in the crime rate. In both urban and rural areas, about three-quarters of the population was served by a police service that recorded a crime rate below 6,000 incidents per 100,000 population in 2017 (Chart 5). However, in rural areas, the proportion of the population served by a police service recording a relatively low crime rate—below 3,000 incidents per 100,000 population—was much greater than in urban areas (38% compared to 24%).

Chart 5
Proportion of the urban and rural population, by crime rate reported by the corresponding police service, all provinces, 2017



Note: Includes *Criminal Code* offences, excluding traffic violations. Urban police services serve an area where the majority of the population lives within a census metropolitan area (CMA) or census agglomeration (CA). Rural police services serve an area where the majority of the population lives outside a CMA or CA. A CMA or a CA is comprised of one or more adjacent municipalities centred on a population centre (known as the core). A CMA must have a total population of at least 100,000, of which 50,000 or more must live in the core. A CA must have a core population of at least 10,000. To be included in the CMA or CA, adjacent municipalities must have a high degree of integration with the core, as measured by commuting flows derived from census data. A CMA or CA may have more than one police service. Rates are calculated per 100,000 population, and population counts are based on the July 1 estimates from Statistics Canada’s Demography Division. Excludes data from the Royal Canadian Mounted Police’s Canadian Police Centre for Missing and Exploited Children.

Source: Statistics Canada, Canadian Centre for Justice Statistics, Uniform Crime Reporting Survey.

By comparison, more than one person in eight (13%) living in a rural area was served by a police service with a particularly high crime rate of at least 10,000 incidents per 100,000 population. By contrast, only 4% of people living in an urban area had the same problem. Of note, it is these communities with particularly high crime rates that cause the overall rural crime rate to be higher than in urban areas. It should also be noted that approximately 7 in 10 rural police services with a high crime rate are located in the Prairie provinces.

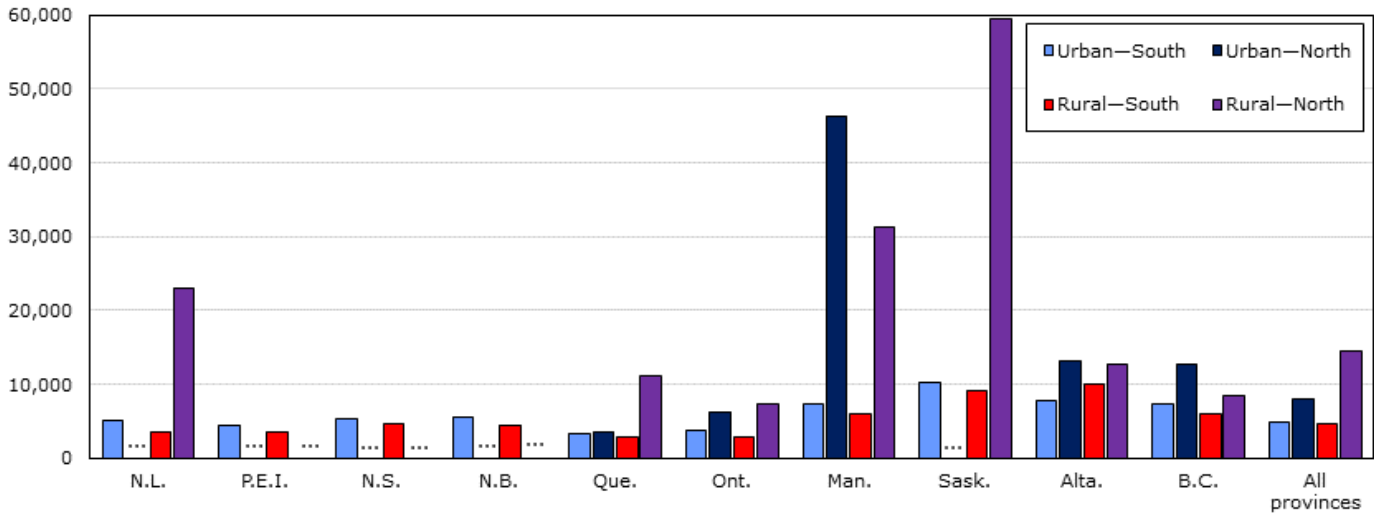
High rural crime rates reflect high rates in the Provincial North

In a study of crime in the Provincial North, Allen and Perreault (2015) highlighted the sometimes difficult socioeconomic conditions and the relatively high crime rates in a number of these regions. The crime rate in the Provincial North was, overall, more than double that observed in the South. However, approximately 15% of the rural population in Canadian provinces lives in the northern regions of the provinces, compared with 4% of the urban population (see definitions in Text box 1).

Much of the difference between the rural and urban crime rates stems from differences between the southern and more northern regions of the provinces. In the southern part of the provinces, the overall rural crime rate is lower than the urban rate (4,706 incidents per 100,000 population, compared with 4,931 incidents per 100,000 population). This trend is observed in all provinces, except Alberta (Chart 6).

Chart 6**Police-reported crime, urban and rural police services, by north and south region, and by province, 2017**

rate per 100,000 population



... not applicable

Note: Includes *Criminal Code* offences, excluding traffic violations. The provincial North comprises the northern regions of British Columbia, Alberta, Saskatchewan, Manitoba, Ontario, Quebec, and Newfoundland and Labrador. Urban police services serve an area where the majority of the population lives within a census metropolitan area (CMA) or census agglomeration (CA). Rural police services serve an area where the majority of the population lives outside a CMA or CA. A CMA or a CA is comprised of one or more adjacent municipalities centred on a population centre (known as the core). A CMA must have a total population of at least 100,000, of which 50,000 or more must live in the core. A CA must have a core population of at least 10,000. To be included in the CMA or CA, adjacent municipalities must have a high degree of integration with the core, as measured by commuting flows derived from census data. A CMA or CA may have more than one police service. Rates are calculated per 100,000 population, and population counts are based on the July 1 estimates from Statistics Canada's Demography Division. Excludes data from the Royal Canadian Mounted Police's Canadian Police Centre for Missing and Exploited Children.

Source: Statistics Canada, Canadian Centre for Justice Statistics, Uniform Crime Reporting Survey.

Moreover, the rural crime rate in the southern part of the provinces decreased at almost the same pace as the rate in urban areas, i.e., an 18% decrease since 2009, compared with a 19% decrease in urban areas.

Rural crime rates particularly high in northern Saskatchewan, Manitoba, Newfoundland and Labrador, and Quebec

Whereas in the South, the crime rate is lower in rural areas, the reverse is true in the North. Overall, the crime rate in the North is higher in rural areas than in urban areas (14,512 incidents per 100,000 population, versus 8,003 incidents per 100,000 population) and is decreasing more slowly (-2% since 2009 compared with -11%). However, this trend is mainly due to low crime rates observed in the urban areas of northern Quebec which include large urban centres such as Saguenay. To a lesser extent, this trend is also due to rates in northern Ontario, which includes the large urban centres of Greater Sudbury and Thunder Bay—where crime rates are relatively close to the national average. Crime rates in northern Manitoba, Alberta and British Columbia—the three other provinces with urban areas in the northern regions—are lower in rural areas than in urban areas.

Crime rates in the North are particularly high in northern Saskatchewan and, to a lesser extent, in northern Manitoba and in Labrador, as in the most northern regions of Quebec. The sociodemographic profile of these regions is similar to that of the territories, where crime rates are also notably greater than the Canadian average. For example, it includes several small, isolated localities, higher proportions of Indigenous peoples, a generally younger population, a higher number of individuals per household, and above-average proportions of lone-parent families (Allen and Perreault 2015).

Text box 3

Rural crime in the territories

The territories differ from the provinces and, in many respects, differ from each other. For example, the territorial population is on average younger than that of the provinces; this situation is observed especially in Nunavut and, to a lesser extent, in the Northwest Territories. The territories also have higher proportions of persons identifying as Indigenous, lone-parent families, persons with less than a high school diploma and crowded dwellings—again mainly in Nunavut and, to a lesser extent, in the Northwest Territories.

These characteristics have often been observed in tandem with higher crime rates (Allen and Perreault 2015; Charron et al. 2010; Savoie 2008). Moreover, the territories posted notably higher crime rates than the provinces. For example, in 2017, the crime rate for all of the territories (32,640 incidents per 100,000 population) was six times higher than that observed for all provinces (5,242 incidents per 100,000 population). Particularly for this reason, the territories were excluded from the present analysis of rural crime, since they deserve to be analyzed separately.

That said, the territories also show differences with respect to their urban and rural areas. In the territories, urban areas are limited to Whitehorse and Yellowknife, the only two census agglomerations (CAs) found there. In 2017, the combined crime rate for these two CAs was 22,702 incidents per 100,000 population. By comparison, the rate recorded for all rural areas in the territories was nearly twice as high, i.e., 40,464 incidents per 100,000 population.

These data do not, however, perfectly reflect Nunavut's situation. That territory has no community that meets the criteria of a CA, but some differences are observed between its larger and smaller communities. For example, the capital, Iqaluit, has a few thousand people, along with government institutions and many services (hospital, schools, court, etc.); therefore, it is the Nunavut community that is the closest to being an urban centre.

However, Iqaluit is the Nunavut community that posted the highest crime rate in 2017. It recorded a rate of 60,564 incidents per 100,000 population, compared with 28,097 incidents per 100,000 population in the rest of Nunavut. Also, Rankin Inlet—the second-largest community in terms of number of population—also posted a relatively high crime rate (36,220 incidents per 100,000 population).

However, these differences are largely due to high rates of mischief and incidents related to disturbing the peace. These two offences alone represented nearly three quarters of the police-reported crimes in Iqaluit in 2017 and 60% of those reported by police in Rankin Inlet. In their study on criminality in Inuit Nunangat, Charron et al. (2010) observed that the highest crime rates were in communities with fewer restrictions on alcohol. Iqaluit and Rankin Inlet are precisely among the few communities in Nunavut with bars on their territory, which may in part be related to higher rates of mischief and incidents related to disturbing the peace, i.e., crimes that can sometimes be associated with public disorder.

Apart from this factor, certain studies have noted that the rapid, forced transformation of a traditional way of life to a more western lifestyle may have led to a loss of cultural references, as well as changes in social roles and social norms, which may have impacted crime in particular (Charron et al. 2010; Mancini Billson 2006). In some ways, Iqaluit may also be the locality in Nunavut with the most similarities with southern urban centres. For example, it has higher proportions of non-Indigenous people and university graduates than the rest of the territory.

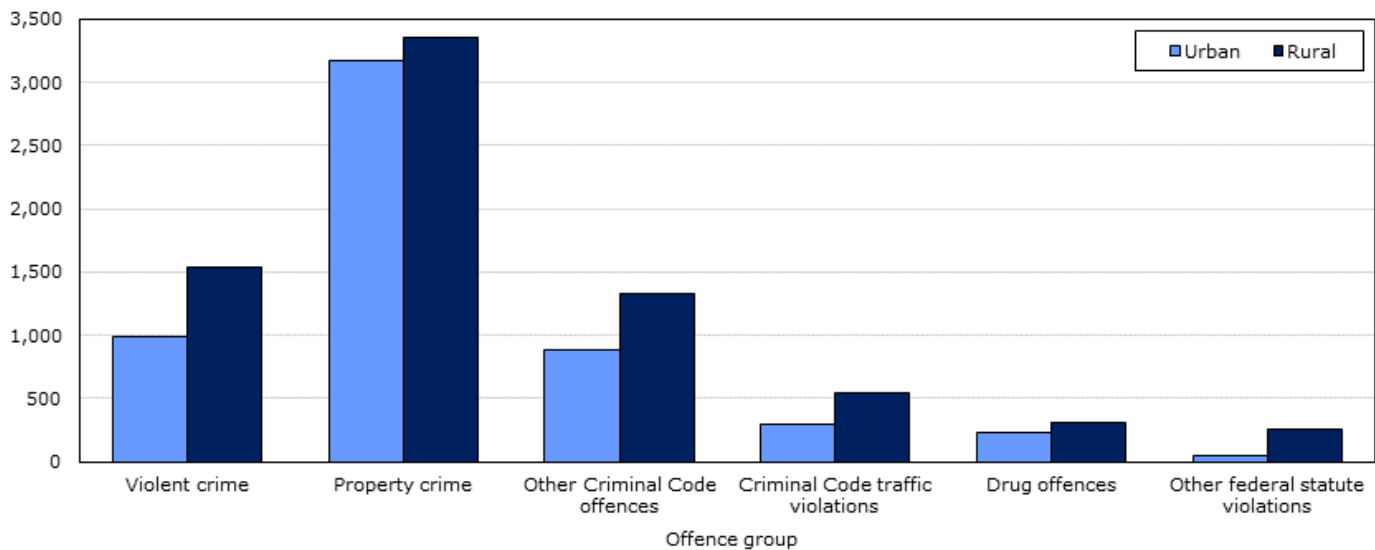
Rural areas record higher rates of all major crime categories

Urban and rural areas differ in many respects, including with regard to the nature of the crime. Thus, not only is rural crime higher overall, there are also differences in the type of crimes committed in rural areas. For example, in 2017, the rural violent crime rate was 55% higher than in urban areas (Chart 7), although the difference in violent Crime Severity Index (CSI) was smaller (77.2 in urban areas and 90.2 in rural areas, i.e., a difference of 17%).

Chart 7

Rates of police-reported *Criminal Code* and federal statute offences (urban and rural police services), by offence group, all provinces, 2017

rate per 100,000 population



Note: See Table 1 for a detailed list of the offences in each category. Urban police services serve an area where the majority of the population lives within a census metropolitan area (CMA) or census agglomeration (CA). Rural police services serve an area where the majority of the population lives outside a CMA or CA. A CMA or a CA is comprised of one or more adjacent municipalities centred on a population centre (known as the core). A CMA must have a total population of at least 100,000, of which 50,000 or more must live in the core. A CA must have a core population of at least 10,000. To be included in the CMA or CA, adjacent municipalities must have a high degree of integration with the core, as measured by commuting flows derived from census data. A CMA or CA may have more than one police service. Rates are calculated per 100,000 population, and population counts are based on the July 1 estimates from Statistics Canada's Demography Division. Excludes data from the Royal Canadian Mounted Police's Canadian Police Centre for Missing and Exploited Children.

Source: Statistics Canada, Canadian Centre for Justice Statistics, Uniform Crime Reporting Survey.

The rate for other *Criminal Code* offences—which include, among others, offences against the administration of justice, disturbing the peace and non-violent weapons offences—was also 50% higher in rural areas than in urban areas.

The most marked differences, however, were with respect to *Criminal Code* traffic offences and with federal statute offences. The rate of traffic offences in rural areas was nearly double that recorded in urban areas, while the rate of federal statute offences was more than five times higher.⁶

Both in rural areas and urban areas, property offences accounted for the main category of crime, encompassing 56% of offences in urban areas and 46% in rural areas. This crime category also had the most modest difference between rates in urban and rural areas. The rate for all property offences in rural areas (3,355 incidents per 100,000 population) was only 6% higher compared with the rate recorded by urban police services (3,177 incidents per 100,000 population).

The decrease in the rural crime rate from 2009 was observed for nearly all major crime categories, namely, violent crimes (-11%), property crimes (-17%), *Criminal Code* traffic offences (-20%), other *Criminal Code* offences (-8%) and drug-related offences (-17%).

The only rate that rose was for federal statute offences (other than drug-related offences); this was due to an exceptionally high number of *Customs Act* offences reported in 2017, related to a greater than usual number of migrants crossing the Canada–United States Border.⁷ Furthermore, despite the decrease in the violent crime rate, the violent CSI, in contrast, increased from 82.7 in 2009 to 90.2 in 2017. In other words, the volume of violent crimes decreased, but their average severity increased.

Although the rates for nearly all crime categories decreased in rural areas, the rate decreases were generally more pronounced in urban areas. More specifically, the violent crime rate in urban areas fell by 18% and the property offence rate decreased by 22%. Only the decreases in the rate of drug-related offences (-14%) and “other *Criminal Code* offences” (-0.3%) were smaller in urban areas than in rural areas.

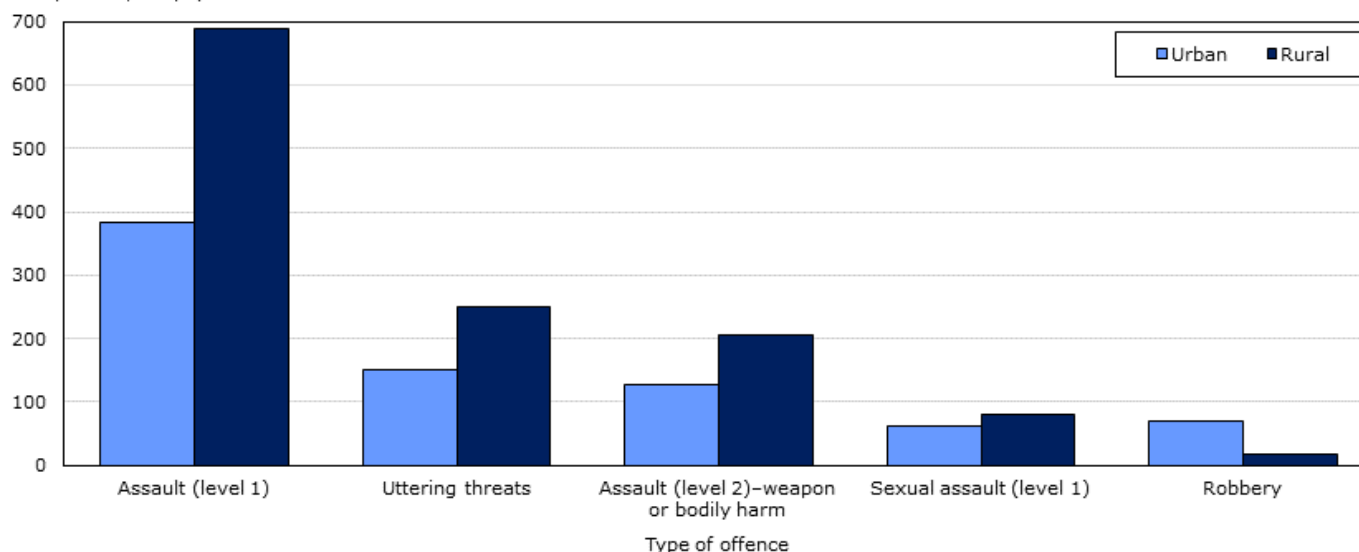
Violent crime

Overall, the rate of police-reported violent crimes was higher in rural areas than in urban areas. Hidden behind this overall picture, however, were notable differences: certain violent crimes were much more likely to occur in rural areas, while others were far more frequent in urban areas.

Physical assaults twice as common in rural areas than in urban areas

In both urban and rural areas, physical assaults—more specifically, common assaults (level 1)—were the violent crimes most often reported by police (Chart 8). The rates of physical assault in 2017, however, were approximately twice as high in rural areas than in urban areas, for level 1, 2 or 3 assaults as well as for assault against a peace officer (Table 1).

Chart 8
Selected violent crimes reported by urban and rural police services, all provinces, 2017
 rate per 100,000 population



Note: Urban police services serve an area where the majority of the population lives within a census metropolitan area (CMA) or census agglomeration (CA). Rural police services serve an area where the majority of the population lives outside a CMA or CA. A CMA or a CA is comprised of one or more adjacent municipalities centred on a population centre (known as the core). A CMA must have a total population of at least 100,000, of which 50,000 or more must live in the core. A CA must have a core population of at least 10,000. To be included in the CMA or CA, adjacent municipalities must have a high degree of integration with the core, as measured by commuting flows derived from census data. A CMA or CA may have more than one police service. Rates are calculated per 100,000 population, and population counts are based on the July 1 estimates from Statistics Canada’s Demography Division. Excludes data from the Royal Canadian Mounted Police’s Canadian Police Centre for Missing and Exploited Children.

Source: Statistics Canada, Canadian Centre for Justice Statistics, Uniform Crime Reporting Survey.

Moreover, rates of physical assault posted a smaller decrease in rural areas than in urban areas. Since 2009, the rate of common assaults decreased by 13% in rural areas, while urban areas saw a 19% decrease. Level 2 and 3 physical assault rates (major assault) actually increased in rural areas, by 3% and 8%, respectively; in urban areas, meanwhile, they decreased by 14% and 16%.

Among the provinces, the highest rural rates of physical assault were recorded in rural areas of Manitoba and Saskatchewan, while the lowest rates were recorded in the Maritime provinces (particularly in Prince Edward Island) as well as in Ontario (Table 5). The largest difference was observed in terms of aggravated assault (level 3), where the highest rate, recorded in Manitoba, was 17 times⁸ higher than the lowest rate, noted in New Brunswick.

Uttering threats was the violent crime second-most frequently reported by police after physical assault, both in urban areas and rural areas; as in the case of physical assault, rates of uttering threats were notably higher in rural areas than in urban areas. In 2017, police reported 250 incidents of uttering threats per 100,000 population in rural areas, compared with 150 in urban areas.

Rate of sexual assault increases in urban areas, remains stable in rural areas

In 2017, special attention was paid to issues surrounding sexual assault. More specifically, campaigns such as #MeToo and #TimesUp had high visibility on social and traditional media and have increased awareness among the population about the frequency of sexual assault. Investigative reporting also shed light on how police classify sexual assaults as either founded or

unfounded, prompting several police services to re-examine files and renew their commitment to victims (Doolittle 2017; Canadian Association of Chiefs of Police 2017; Canadian Centre for Justice Statistics 2018).

These events have likely contributed to the increase in the rate of sexual assault reported by police on a national level from 2016 to 2017 (+13%) (Allen 2018). However, this increase is essentially concentrated in urban areas, where the rate of sexual assault reported by the police rose from 54 sexual assaults per 100,000 population in 2016 to 63 sexual assaults per 100,000 population in 2017. In rural areas, the rate of sexual assault in 2017 was slightly higher than in urban areas, namely, 82 sexual assaults per 100,000 population. This rate was almost identical to that recorded in rural areas in 2016 and 4% below the rate observed in 2009 (Table 1).⁹

A recent study showed that the number of police-reported sexual assaults rose sharply beginning in October 2017, when the #MeToo campaign was launched (Rotenberg and Cotter 2018). However, it seems that this effect was also less marked in rural areas, which may partially explain the fact that the increase in the rate of police-reported sexual assaults was essentially observed in urban areas. In urban areas, the rate of sexual assaults for October, November and December 2017 was 39% higher than the rate recorded for the same period a year earlier. In rural areas, the increase was about half as large, i.e., 21%.

Among the provinces in 2017, police-reported rates of sexual assault in rural areas were highest in Manitoba (119 incidents per 100,000 population) and Saskatchewan (111 incidents per 100,000 population). In contrast, police services in Prince Edward Island (47 incidents per 100,000 population) and New Brunswick (54 incidents per 100,000 population) recorded the lowest rural sexual assault rates (Table 5).

Text box 4 **More incidents deemed unfounded in rural areas**

Police-reported crime data include incidents the police have substantiated, i.e., where the police have determined that a *Criminal Code* incident did actually take place. However, among all the crimes reported to the police, a certain number are deemed unfounded, which means that the police conclude through investigation that no violation of the law took place, nor was there intent to commit an offence. Various reasons can lead police to deem an incident as unfounded. For more details, see Statistics Canada 2016b. In 2017, unfounded incidents—more specifically, the proportion of sexual assault incidents deemed unfounded—were the subject of widespread media coverage (Doolittle 2017). Following renewed interest in incidents deemed unfounded, several police services undertook to review these files. The police community, in conjunction with the Canadian Centre for Justice Statistics, also undertook to review the methods for analyzing data on unfounded criminal incidents to allow for regular publication of these data.¹⁰

Although the new standards have not yet been fully implemented, Statistics Canada has nevertheless resumed dissemination of data on unfounded incidents. In July 2018, a study revealed that more than 1 in 10 violent crimes (12%) in 2017 had been deemed unfounded. The proportion for sexual assaults was 14%, while criminal harassment, indecent and harassing communications, and uttering threats were the crimes most likely to be deemed unfounded (Greenland and Cotter 2018).

The proportion of unfounded crime was higher in rural areas than in urban areas. In 2017, 1 out of 5 (20%) violent crimes reported in rural areas was deemed unfounded, i.e., a proportion approximately twice as high as in urban areas (9%). The result was similar for sexual assaults, 20% of which were deemed unfounded in rural areas, compared with 12% in urban areas. In both cases, the proportions were nevertheless lower than the previous year (23% and 17%, respectively).

Robbery, an urban crime

Robbery is one of the violent crimes most often reported by police. It is also the most serious of the more common violent crimes. The weight of the Crime Severity Index (CSI) for robbery, assigned based on the sentences handed down by the courts, is nearly 18 times higher than the weight assigned to common assaults.

Although they are common across the country, these crimes are relatively rare in rural areas. While the 71 robberies per 100,000 population recorded in 2017 made this offence the fourth most common violent crime in urban areas, it ranked ninth in rural areas, where the rate was four times lower (18 robberies per 100,000 population) (Table 1). In rural areas, sexual assault, criminal harassment, indecent and harassing communications and sexual violations against children, in particular, were all offences reported by the police more often than robberies.

Those who perpetrate robberies generally target strangers, which was the case for three quarters of robberies in which an accused was identified in 2017. Robberies are also most often perpetrated in the street or another public area, or in a commercial building. However, there are generally fewer strangers in rural areas, and thus crimes involving a stranger are far less common there than in urban areas. In addition, crimes in rural areas are most often perpetrated in a private dwelling,

rather than in a public or commercial setting. These characteristics may account in part for the lower incidence of robberies in rural areas.

In addition to robberies, commodification of sexual activity and human trafficking offences are also more prevalent in urban areas than in rural areas. Proportionally, these were reported five times more often by urban police services than by rural police services. Extortion is also slightly more likely to occur in urban areas, where the rate recorded in 2017 was approximately 39%¹¹ higher than in rural areas.

Firearms offences are overrepresented in rural areas

In addition to physical assaults, uttering threats and sexual assaults, many other violent crimes, although less frequent, have higher rates in rural areas than in urban areas. More specifically, the rate of violent firearms offences, such as discharge of a firearm or pointing a firearm, was more than twice as high in rural areas than in urban areas in 2017 (13 incidents per 100,000 population compared with 6 incidents per 100,000 population) (Table 1). Moreover, these offences have risen sharply in rural areas, where the rate rose 60% between 2009 and 2017. Urban areas also saw a significant increase during this period, but on a smaller scale (+38%).

Among violent crimes, violent firearms offences make up the crime category with the most significant differences between the provinces. The rural rate in 2017 reached a maximum of 10 incidents per 100,000 population in all provinces except in the Prairies; in each of the Prairie provinces, in contrast, the rates were at least 25 incidents per 100,000 population (Table 5).

However, the rate of violent firearms offences was higher in urban areas than in rural areas in certain provinces. This was the case in Ontario (7 incidents per 100,000 population in urban areas versus 3 incidents per 100,000 population in rural areas), Prince Edward Island (6 incidents per 100,000 population versus 2 incidents per 100,000 population) and Newfoundland and Labrador (9 incidents per 100,000 population versus 6 incidents per 100,000 population).

It is important to note that this crime category only represents a small proportion of crimes that involved a firearm: namely, incidents in which it was the most severe offence. For example, many incidents classified as robbery or physical assault may have involved a weapon. In 2017, the police reported a total of 40 violent crimes committed with a firearm per 100,000 population in rural areas, compared with 31 in urban areas.

Higher number of sexual violations against children in rural areas than in urban areas

Sexual violations specific to children—for example, sexual exploitation, sexual interference, invitation to touching or luring a child—comprise another group of crimes for which the rate recorded in rural areas in 2017 was notably higher than in urban areas. In 2017, the combined rate for these offences in rural areas was more than double that recorded in urban areas (37 incidents per 100,000 population versus 18 incidents per 100,000 population) (Table 1). This difference was mainly due to the relatively high number of sexual interference incidents (28 incidents per 100,000 population) in rural areas compared with the police-reported number in urban areas (12 incidents per 100,000 population).

Moreover, although some variation between provinces was seen in the rate of sexual violations against children in rural areas, the rate for all rural areas in each province remained higher than the rate of 18 incidents per 100,000 population recorded for all combined urban areas. The lowest rate in rural areas in 2017 was observed in Prince Edward Island (21 incidents per 100,000 population) and the highest was recorded in Saskatchewan (58 incidents per 100,000 population) (Table 5).

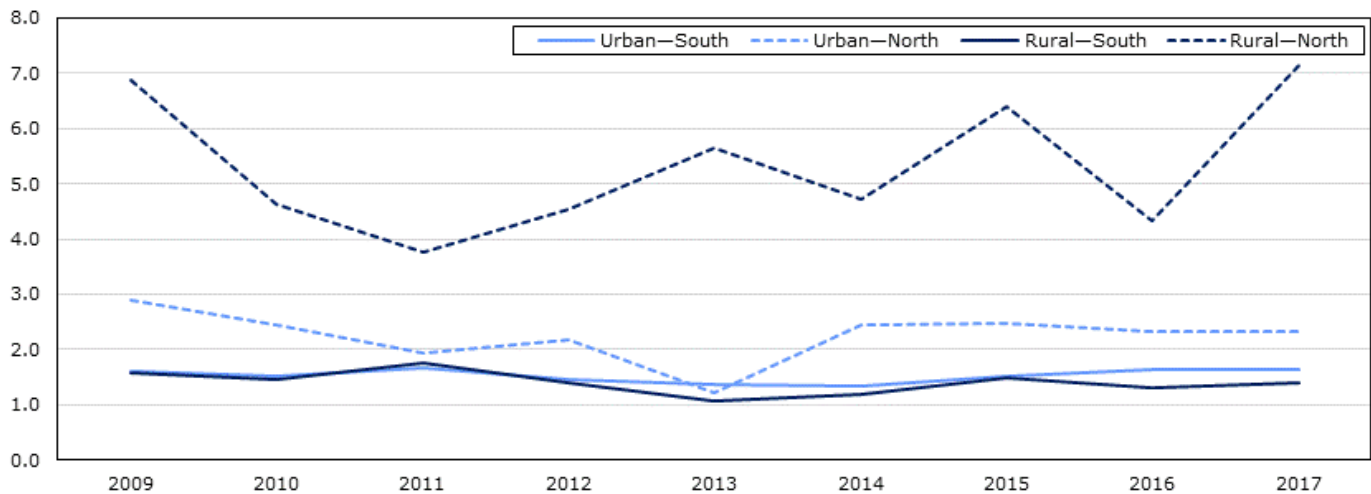
Homicide rate is higher in rural areas, but more attempted murders in urban areas

Homicide is a relatively rare crime in Canada. However, it is the most serious crime and one that carries the most severe sanctions and, consequently, the crime with the most significant weight in calculating the CSI. Compared with most other crimes, homicides are more consistently brought to the attention of the police and measured in a more uniform way. Thus, homicide data are a useful measure for comparing crime between different regions, despite providing only a partial picture.

From 2009 to 2017, rural police services reported a total of 1,078 homicides, representing an average annual rate of 2.02 homicides per 100,000 population. During the same period, approximately four times more homicides were committed in urban areas, i.e., 4,068. By taking into account the population size, this represents a rate of 1.55 homicides per 100,000 population, i.e., a rate that was 26% lower than in rural areas (2.02 per 100,000 population).¹² The homicide rate in rural areas was especially high in the Provincial North, where the average rate from 2009 to 2017 was 5.34 homicides per 100,000 population. While this rate is high compared with the rate in urban areas, it is comparable to that recorded in the United States, i.e., 5.4 homicides per 100,000 population (FBI 2018). In contrast, the homicide rate in rural areas in the Provincial South is slightly below the rate in urban areas; it averaged 1.41 homicides per 100,000 population from 2009 to 2017 compared with 1.52 in urban areas (Chart 9).

Chart 9**Homicide rates reported by urban and rural police services, by north and south region, all provinces, 2009 to 2017**

rate per 100,000 population



Note: The provincial North comprises the northern regions of British Columbia, Alberta, Saskatchewan, Manitoba, Ontario, Quebec, and Newfoundland and Labrador. Urban police services serve an area where the majority of the population lives within a census metropolitan area (CMA) or census agglomeration (CA). Rural police services serve an area where the majority of the population lives outside a CMA or CA. A CMA or a CA is comprised of one or more adjacent municipalities centred on a population centre (known as the core). A CMA must have a total population of at least 100,000, of which 50,000 or more must live in the core. A CA must have a core population of at least 10,000. To be included in the CMA or CA, adjacent municipalities must have a high degree of integration with the core, as measured by commuting flows derived from census data. A CMA or CA may have more than one police service. Rates are calculated per 100,000 population, and population counts are based on the July 1 estimates from Statistics Canada's Demography Division. Excludes data from the Royal Canadian Mounted Police's Canadian Police Centre for Missing and Exploited Children.

Source: Statistics Canada, Canadian Centre for Justice Statistics, Homicide Survey.

Although a proportionately higher number of homicides were committed in rural areas than in urban areas, the number of attempted murders was lower. From 2009 to 2017, a rate of 1.7 attempted murders per 100,000 population was recorded in rural areas, compared with 2.1 in urban areas.

When both homicides and attempted murders are taken into account, the rates observed in urban and rural areas are very similar. In other words, it is possible that victims of attempted murders in rural areas are more likely to succumb to injuries, particularly when access to emergency care is more limited or, more broadly, because the circumstances of these offences in rural areas may be more fatal.

Property crime

Both in rural areas and urban areas, property offences were the main type of crime. This crime category was also at the centre of recent discussions on rural crime and is an important element of authorities' strategy against rural crime (Seiden 2017). However—compared with other types of crime—overall, property crime rates were relatively similar between urban and rural areas. Overall, in 2017, the rate of police-reported property crimes was only 6% higher in rural areas compared with urban areas. Similar to violent crimes, however, there were significant differences between urban and rural areas in terms of the nature of the property crimes that occur there.

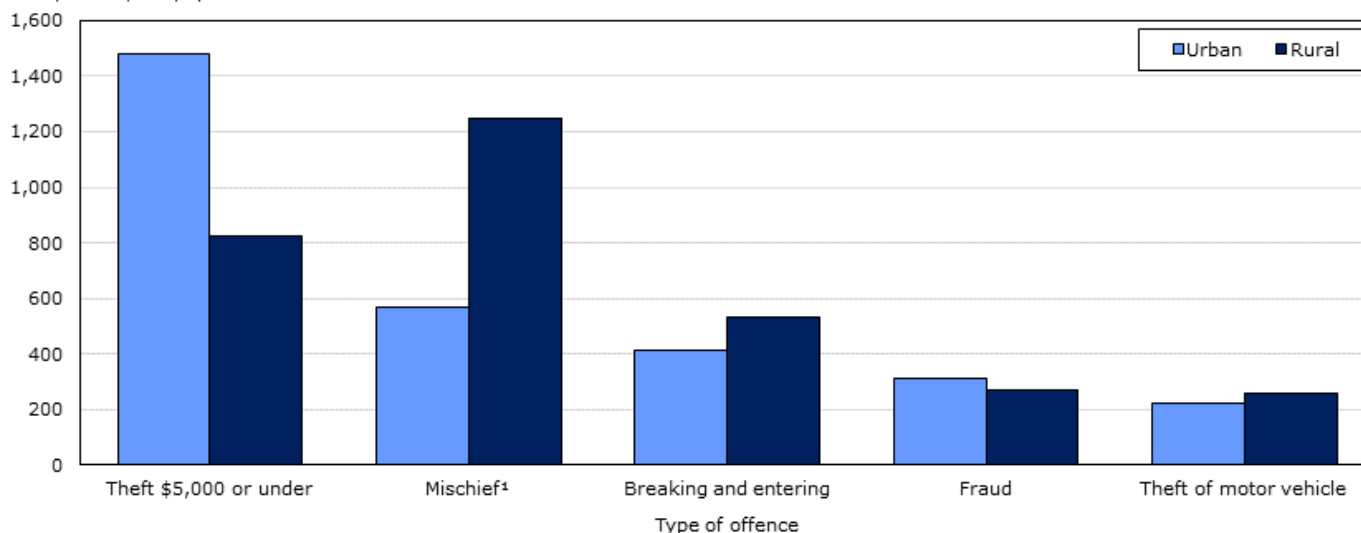
The most common crime in rural areas is mischief

Mischief is, by far, the crime most often reported by police in rural areas. In 2017, slightly over 75,000 incidents of mischief were reported by rural police services. By comparison, that year, police reported 50,000 thefts under \$5,000—the second most common crime in rural areas. Mischief is also a common crime in urban areas. In 2017, 173,000 police-reported incidents of mischief made it the second most common offence. Relatively speaking, mischief was nevertheless more than twice as common in rural areas than in urban areas, with rates of 1,248 incidents per 100,000 population, compared with 566 incidents per 100,000 population (Chart 10).

Chart 10

The five property crimes most often reported by urban and rural police services, all provinces, 2017

rate per 100,000 population



1. Includes altering, removing or destroying a vehicle identification number.

Note: Urban police services serve an area where the majority of the population lives within a census metropolitan area (CMA) or census agglomeration (CA). Rural police services serve an area where the majority of the population lives outside a CMA or CA. A CMA or a CA is comprised of one or more adjacent municipalities centred on a population centre (known as the core). A CMA must have a total population of at least 100,000, of which 50,000 or more must live in the core. A CA must have a core population of at least 10,000. To be included in the CMA or CA, adjacent municipalities must have a high degree of integration with the core, as measured by commuting flows derived from census data. A CMA or CA may have more than one police service. Rates are calculated per 100,000 population, and population counts are based on the July 1 estimates from Statistics Canada’s Demography Division. Excludes data from the Royal Canadian Mounted Police’s Canadian Police Centre for Missing and Exploited Children.

Source: Statistics Canada, Canadian Centre for Justice Statistics, Uniform Crime Reporting Survey.

Although incidents of mischief can be serious offences, some can also reflect less serious acts which can sometimes be handled through municipal by-laws instead of under the *Criminal Code*—especially in urban areas where such by-laws are in effect. For this reason, it is conceivable that the scope of mischief may be slightly underestimated in urban areas. Moreover, people accused of mischief in urban areas were more likely to have charges laid against them than their counterparts in rural areas (39% of accused persons in urban areas compared with 11% of them in rural areas). Thus, it is likely that many of the less serious cases, i.e., those less likely to lead to charges, were instead handled through other means in urban areas and are therefore not included in the statistics.

Furthermore, there are considerable variations in rates of mischief between different rural areas in the country. More specifically, the highest rate, recorded in Saskatchewan, was 12 times higher than that observed in Quebec (3,894 incidents per 100,000 population compared with 326 incidents per 100,000 population) (Table 5). Overall, the highest rates recorded were in the Prairie provinces and Newfoundland and Labrador. However, it is possible that differences in law enforcement practices, for example, whether municipal by-laws are used, account for part of this difference. For example, only 8% of people accused in rural Saskatchewan were charged, compared with 43% in Quebec.

Break and enter and motor vehicle theft highest in rural Alberta

Break-ins and thefts, especially motor vehicle thefts, have become an important concern in rural areas (Seiden 2017). As such, these offences have been at the centre of discussions on rural crime. Generally, rates of break and enter were 29% higher in rural areas compared to urban areas in 2017 (533 incidents per 100,000 population compared to 412 incidents per 100,000). Similarly, rates of motor vehicle thefts were 15% higher, with 259 incidents per 100,000 population in rural areas and 226 incidents per 100,000 population in urban areas (Table 1).

As with most property crimes, rates of break and enter and motor vehicle theft were higher in the Prairie provinces, especially Alberta. In 2017, police reported 978 break and enter incidents per 100,000 population in rural Alberta. This was four times higher than in rural Prince Edward Island, the province with the lowest break and enter rate in rural areas, and 48% higher than in urban Alberta. Similarly, police reported 747 incidents of motor vehicle theft per 100,000 population in rural Alberta, a rate 12 times higher than that recorded in rural Prince Edward Island and 38% higher than in urban Alberta.

Theft of \$5,000 or under more common in urban areas, theft over \$5,000 more common in rural areas

Unlike in rural areas, where the most common crime is mischief, the most common crime in urban areas is theft of \$5,000 or under. In 2017, police services in urban areas reported more than 450,000 thefts of this nature, which accounted for nearly half of the property crimes in urban areas. This represents a rate of 1,482 thefts of \$5,000 or under per 100,000 population. By comparison, the rate in rural areas was nearly one-half that in urban areas, i.e., 827 incidents per 100,000 population. In contrast, the rate of theft over \$5,000 was slightly higher in rural areas (50 incidents per 100,000 population versus 46 incidents per 100,000 population). In urban areas, shoplifting and thefts from motor vehicles were much more common than in rural areas. These types of thefts are often of relatively low value, and as such mostly contributed to the rate of theft of \$5,000 or under.

Although thefts were, overall, more common in urban areas, the rate of possession of stolen property was almost twice as high in rural than urban areas. This difference may be due to the higher rates of theft over \$5,000 and break and enters in rural areas than in urban areas.

Other *Criminal Code* offences

The “other *Criminal Code* offences” category includes all *Criminal Code* offences that are neither violent crimes nor property crimes. These crimes include serious¹³ offences such as terrorism offences,¹⁴ weapons trafficking or child pornography, as well as less serious offences such as disturbing the peace or failure to appear in court. *Criminal Code* traffic violations (e.g. impaired driving), which are not included in the calculation of traditional crime rates or in the standard “other *Criminal Code* offences” category, but are nevertheless offences under the *Criminal Code*, are also included in this section. Like those observed for violent crimes, the rates for all of these crimes are notably greater in rural areas. Significant differences are nevertheless observed depending on the specific crimes and by province.

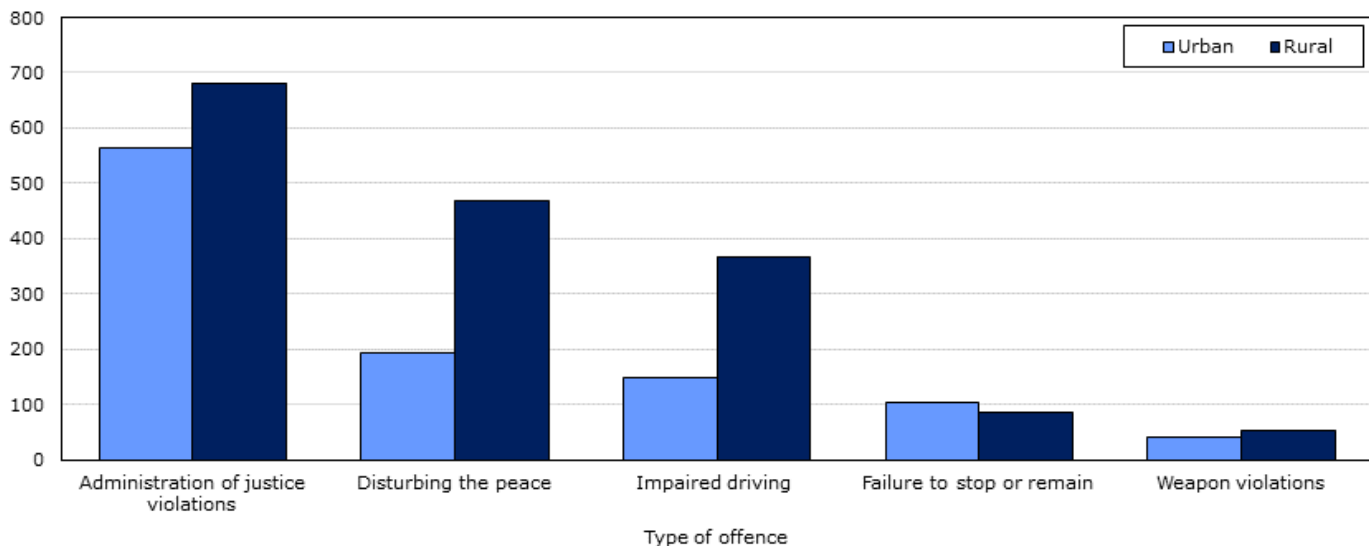
More offences against the administration of justice in rural areas

The category of offences against the administration of justice encompasses a group of criminal offences related to compliance with procedures and conditions imposed on an accused by the justice system. Among other things, it includes offences such as failure to appear, escape, being unlawfully at large, failure to comply with a court order or breach of probation. Overall, in 2017 the rate of these offences was slightly higher in rural areas than in urban areas (682 incidents per 100,000 population compared with 565 incidents per 100,000 population) (Chart 11).

Chart 11

The five other *Criminal Code* offences or *Criminal Code* traffic violations most often reported by urban and rural police services, all provinces, 2017

rate per 100,000 population



Note: Urban police services serve an area where the majority of the population lives within a census metropolitan area (CMA) or census agglomeration (CA). Rural police services serve an area where the majority of the population lives outside a CMA or CA. A CMA or a CA is comprised of one or more adjacent municipalities centred on a population centre (known as the core). A CMA must have a total population of at least 100,000, of which 50,000 or more must live in the core. A CA must have a core population of at least 10,000. To be included in the CMA or CA, adjacent municipalities must have a high degree of integration with the core, as measured by commuting flows derived from census data. A CMA or CA may have more than one police service. Rates are calculated per 100,000 population, and population counts are based on the July 1 estimates from Statistics Canada’s Demography Division. Excludes data from the Royal Canadian Mounted Police’s Canadian Police Centre for Missing and Exploited Children.

Source: Statistics Canada, Canadian Centre for Justice Statistics, Uniform Crime Reporting Survey.

Several studies have shown that people living in rural areas—especially those living in remote, isolated regions, far from large centres—experience additional challenges in terms of some of these offences, especially when faced with difficult or limited access to various elements of the justice system (Senate of Canada 2016; Aylwin and Moore 2015; Nuffield 2003). More specifically, distances and more limited access to different means of transportation can make it more difficult for an accused living in a remote region to appear in court, thereby increasing the likelihood of being accused of failure to appear. However, this reality is not clearly reflected in police-reported data. While the rate of failure to appear was slightly higher in urban areas (92 incidents per 100,000 population) than in rural areas (74 incidents per 100,000 population), the location of the offence reflected in these data is often based on the location of the court, and not where the accused person lives. As most judicial institutions are found in urban areas, this is also often where these offences are recorded.

Nevertheless, the rates of failure to appear are notably higher in the Provincial North, both in urban areas (163 incidents per 100,000 population in the North, compared with 89 in the South) and in rural areas (187 incidents per 100,000 population in the North, compared with 53 in the South). It is likely that institutions in the North are called on more often than institutions in the South to serve people living in remote and isolated communities.

As is the case for failure to appear, escape crimes and crimes related to being unlawfully at large are also influenced by the fact that justice institutions such as correctional facilities and halfway houses, are often found in urban areas. For both of these offences, the rate was more than double in urban areas than in rural areas.

In contrast, it is failure to comply with a court order and breach of probation that account for the higher rate of offences against the administration of justice in rural areas than in urban areas. These offences represent more than three-quarters of offences against the administration of justice, and the rates for these two offences are higher in rural areas. The difference was most significant for failure to comply with a court order, for which the rate in 2017 was 424 incidents per 100,000 population in rural areas, compared with 301 incidents per 100,000 population in urban areas. As is the case for failure to appear, it can sometimes be more difficult to comply with certain conditions in rural areas, especially in small, isolated communities: for example, when prohibited from travelling outside a certain radius or perimeter (Senate of Canada 2016) or issued a restraining, protection or no-contact order.

Proportion of offences related to disturbing the peace is more than double in rural areas

Overall, disturbing the peace is the second-most common offence among other *Criminal Code* offences, being surpassed only by failure to comply with a court order. It is the most common of these offences in rural areas. In 2017, police reported just over 28,000 incidents related to disturbing the peace in rural areas, representing a rate of 469 incidents per 100,000 population. This rate was more than double that recorded in urban areas that year (193 incidents per 100,000 population). Since 2009, the rate decreased more in rural areas (-30%) than in urban areas (-23%) (Table 1).

Disturbing the peace is an offence that is most often relatively minor.¹⁵ Thus, like mischief, it may sometimes be handled through municipal by-laws, particularly in urban areas—and therefore not included in police-reported statistics. Moreover, disturbing the peace is one of the crimes for which the largest variation between provinces was observed. More specifically, the 2017 rate recorded in rural Manitoba (1,535 incidents per 100,000 population) was 53 times higher than the rate observed in rural Quebec (29 incidents per 100,000 population) (Table 5).

Lastly, as with mischief, a high number of those accused see no charges filed or recommended against them. In 2017, 96% of those accused of disturbing the peace were not charged. This proportion was about the same in urban and rural areas.

Rate of non-violent weapons offences is higher in rural than urban areas

The non-violent weapons offences category brings together a group of offences such as unsafe storage, weapons possession contrary to an order, unauthorized importing or exporting, and weapons trafficking. Like violent firearms offences, the rate of these violations was higher in rural areas (52 incidents per 100,000 population) than in urban areas (41 incidents per 100,000 population), although the difference was less significant than with violent firearm offences (Table 1).

However, the difference between urban and rural rates seen at the national level was mainly based on the high rates in the Prairies, in both rural and urban areas. As the Prairies are home to a larger share of the rural population than of the urban population, the rate for all of rural Canada is more heavily influenced by the Prairies than is the rate for all of urban Canada. Thus, at the provincial level, the rural rate was only higher than the urban rate in New Brunswick, Quebec, Ontario and Alberta.

Impaired driving causing death is seven times higher in rural areas than in urban areas

Urban and rural areas are very different environments with respect to travel. According to the 2014 General Social Survey on Victimization, almost all households in rural areas own at least one motor vehicle, whereas this is the case for three-quarters of households in the largest urban centres. Cars are often the only rural travel option, while in urban areas, even people who own a car can count on many other options (Perreault 2016; Paré and Larochelle 2004).

These differences are reflected in impaired driving rates, with the rate being generally two and a half times higher in rural areas than in urban areas. However, this difference was slightly smaller for drug-impaired driving, i.e., 15 incidents per 100,000 population in rural areas, compared with 8 incidents per 100,000 population in urban areas. It could be that fewer drug recognition experts are available in rural settings (Perreault 2016; Asbridge and Ogilvie 2015), which may partly explain the smaller difference in relation to drug-impaired driving. Furthermore, since 2009, the rate of drug-impaired driving grew more quickly in urban areas (+151%) than in rural areas (+70%) (Table 1).

The difference between impaired driving rates in rural versus urban areas is accentuated when more serious offences are considered, i.e., those causing bodily harm or death. In 2017, the rate of impaired driving causing bodily harm was three and a half times higher in rural areas than in urban areas; the rate of impaired driving causing death was seven times higher. The greater distances and, sometimes, higher speed limits on rural roads could partly account for the larger differences in rates for the most serious impaired driving incidents (Perreault 2016; Paré and Larochelle 2004).

Among the provinces, Saskatchewan had the highest impaired driving rate in rural areas (939 incidents per 100,000 population); it was followed by Alberta (597 incidents per 100,000 population) and Manitoba (588 incidents per 100,000 population). In comparison, the lowest rate was posted in Ontario (187 incidents per 100,000 population), followed by Newfoundland and Labrador (192 incidents per 100,000 population).

Like impaired driving, the 2017 dangerous driving rate in rural areas was, overall, more than double the rate recorded in urban areas. On the other hand, the rate for failure to stop or remain at the scene of an accident was, overall, higher in urban areas, except for the most serious cases—those causing bodily harm or death—for which urban and rural rates were almost the same.

Other federal statute offences

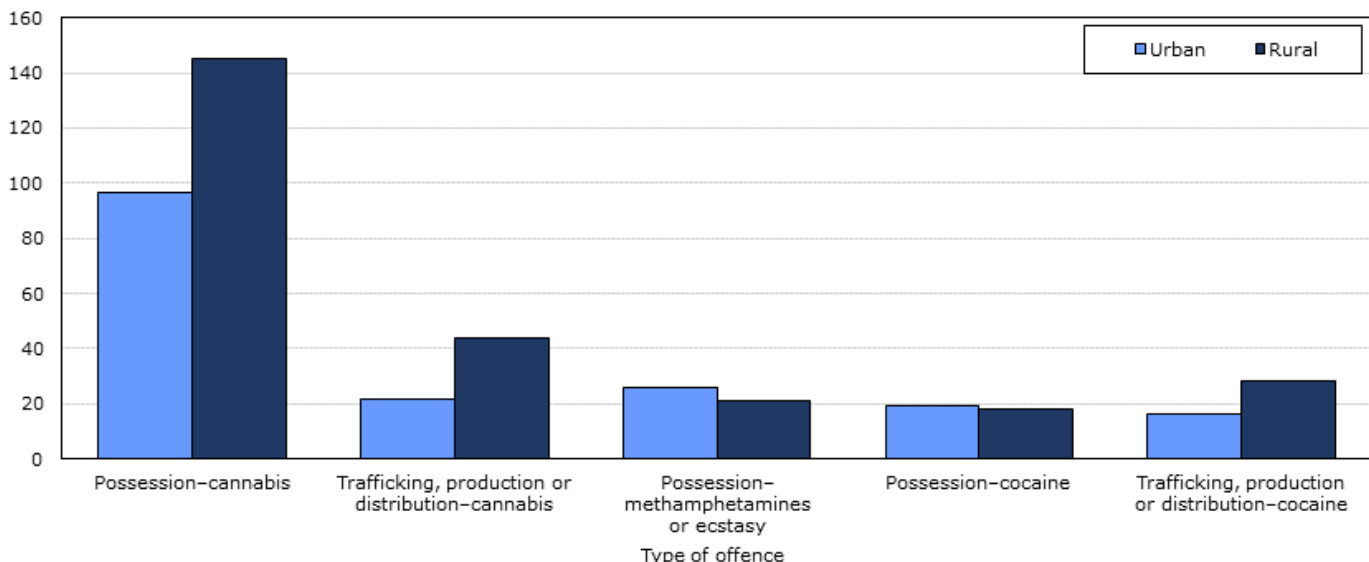
Drugs: Production in rural areas, import and export in urban areas

Among federal statutes other than the *Criminal Code*, the highest number of police-reported offences are with respect to the *Controlled Drugs and Substances Act* (where drug offences are codified). In 2017, police services reported just over 71,000 drug offences in urban areas (233 incidents per 100,000 population) and nearly 19,000 offences in rural areas (310 incidents per 100,000 population) (Table 1). The higher rate in rural areas was driven by a higher rate of cannabis possession, the most common drug offence (Chart 12). The gap noted between urban and rural drug offence rates may therefore decrease following the legalization of cannabis in October 2018.¹⁶

Chart 12

The five federal statute offences (other than *Criminal Code*) most often reported by urban and rural police services, all provinces, 2017

rate per 100,000 population



Note: Urban police services serve an area where the majority of the population lives within a census metropolitan area (CMA) or census agglomeration (CA). Rural police services serve an area where the majority of the population lives outside a CMA or CA. A CMA or a CA is comprised of one or more adjacent municipalities centred on a population centre (known as the core). A CMA must have a total population of at least 100,000, of which 50,000 or more must live in the core. A CA must have a core population of at least 10,000. To be included in the CMA or CA, adjacent municipalities must have a high degree of integration with the core, as measured by commuting flows derived from census data. A CMA or CA may have more than one police service. Rates are calculated per 100,000 population, and population counts are based on the July 1 estimates from Statistics Canada's Demography Division. Excludes data from the Royal Canadian Mounted Police's Canadian Police Centre for Missing and Exploited Children. In 2017, *Customs Act* offences were among federal statute offences most often reported by police, which was however specific to that year and not reflective of usual crime trends. As such, *Customs Act* offences are not shown in this chart.

Source: Statistics Canada, Canadian Centre for Justice Statistics, Uniform Crime Reporting Survey.

Although the higher rate of drug-related offences in rural areas is essentially due to cannabis possession, the rates of incidents related to the trafficking, production or distribution of most drugs were also higher in rural areas. This difference was primarily because drug production was more often reported by rural police services. More specifically, in 2017, the cannabis production rate was five times higher in rural areas (19 incidents per 100,000 population) than in urban areas (4 incidents per 100,000 population). The rate of incidents related to trafficking was also generally greater in rural areas. By comparison, the rate for all offences involving the import or export of drugs was seven times higher in urban areas (13 incidents per 100,000 population) than in rural areas (2 incidents per 100,000 population).

In addition to offences involving the import or export of drugs, the urban rates for possession of all drugs other than cannabis were also higher than rural rates. In 2017, the largest rate difference was for heroin possession, with a rate that was 77% lower in rural areas. The rates of possession of methamphetamine or ecstasy (-19%), cocaine (-8%) and other drugs (-12%) were also lower in rural areas than in urban areas (Table 1).

Finally, compared with other types of offences, the rates for drug-related offences may be more subject to influence by police practices—specifically, the varying priorities of different police services and the anti-drug operations they conduct. Thus, part of the variation between regions and over time could be the result of variations in law enforcement practices.

The rate of federal statute offences was five times higher in rural areas than in urban areas

Overall, the 2017 rate of offences under federal statutes other than the *Criminal Code* and the *Controlled Drugs and Substances Act* was five times higher in rural areas than in urban areas. However, this difference was much lower with respect to the *Youth Criminal Justice Act*, which is somewhat equivalent to youth offences against the administration of justice. The rate for these offences was 13% higher in rural areas than in urban areas.

The difference in rates between urban and rural areas in 2017 was mostly the result of a particularly high number of offences under the *Customs Act*. While this high number may have been an exception—due to the greater than usual influx of migrants at the Canada–United States Border in 2017¹⁷—the rates for offences under several other federal statutes were also notably higher in rural areas than in urban areas. More specifically, the rate of offences under the *Firearms Act* was six times higher in rural areas than in urban areas, whereas the rates of offences under the *Canada Shipping Act* and the *Excise Act* were four times higher.

Perceptions of police in rural areas

Canadians residing in rural areas have similar levels of confidence in their local police than their urban counterparts

Policing a wide territory with low population density can pose some challenges for rural police services, most notably in terms of responding quickly to calls (Weisheit et al. 1994). Despite these challenges, and despite generally higher crime rates, self-reported data from the 2014 General Social Survey on Victimization show that people residing in rural areas or small towns had similar levels of confidence in their local police than those residing in urban areas. Overall, 45% of Canadians¹⁸ said they had a great deal of confidence in their local police, and a similar proportion reported having some confidence. Those proportions were almost identical in rural and urban areas (Table 6).

However, this was not the case in all provinces. Compared to their urban counterparts, those residing in rural areas of Alberta were less likely to report having a great deal of confidence in their local police than those residing in urban areas (39% compared with 48%); the same was true in New Brunswick (59% versus 49%). On the other hand, those residing in rural areas of Prince Edward Island were more likely than their urban counterparts to report having a great deal of confidence in their local police (65% versus 51%). In Alberta, residents of rural areas were considerably less likely than their urban counterparts to say their local police was doing a good job in terms of enforcing the laws (50% in rural areas versus 61% in urban areas) and responding quickly to calls (47% versus 56%). Of note, while residents of rural areas in Saskatchewan reported similar levels of overall confidence in their local police as their urban counterparts, they were also less likely to rate favourably their local police in terms of enforcing the laws (48% versus 57%) and responding quickly to calls (44% versus 50%) (Table 6).

Summary

Overall in 2017, police services serving a predominantly rural population recorded a crime rate that was 23% higher than that observed by police services serving a predominantly urban population. This difference was slightly more marked for violent crimes and other *Criminal Code* offences, such as disturbing the peace and offences against the administration of justice. Although they are not included in the calculation of crime rates, the rural rates for *Criminal Code* traffic violations as well as other federal statute offences were also higher than in urban areas.

Certain offences were particularly overrepresented in rural areas in 2017. Notably, this was the case for physical assaults, sexual violations against children, mischief and disturbing the peace. By comparison, robberies and thefts under \$5,000 were more common in urban areas. The homicide rate (from 2009 to 2017) was also higher in rural areas, although the rate of attempted murder was higher in urban areas.

Rural crime is not the same everywhere, but differs widely by geography. Specifically, higher crime rates were mainly observed in the Prairie provinces and, to a lesser degree, in Newfoundland and Labrador. In the other provinces, the rural crime rate was either almost identical to or lower than the urban rate. Higher crime rates were also mainly observed in the Provincial North. In the South, rates were lower in rural areas than in urban areas in all provinces except Alberta. In fact, a larger proportion of the rural population than the urban population lives in an area where the crime rate is relatively low; however, we also find that a larger proportion of the rural population lives in an area where the crime rate is very high, most often in the Prairies or the Provincial North.

This analysis has provided an up-to-date picture of the overall extent of crime in rural areas. From the analysis, the fact emerges that rurality in Canada varies widely in terms of crime but also in a number of other ways such as sociodemographic, economic and geographic realities. For example, certain regions have an aging population while in others, the population is very young. Some rural regions experience a decline in economic vitality, while others experience very rapid growth, sometimes related to resource extraction. Some rural regions are found relatively close to urban centres and have better access to services and labour markets, whereas others are remote, isolated, and perhaps inaccessible by road. Some rural regions have an economy essentially centred on tourism, whereas others have more of an agricultural economy. Finally, some rural regions include communities with predominantly Indigenous populations, some of which face significant security and crime issues.

It is possible that one or more of these factors are in some way associated with rural crime. Analysis of the causes of rural crime was not part of the objectives of this report, but future work could address them to shed more light on crime in rural areas. For example, the Canadian Centre for Justice Statistics expects to soon publish an analysis of crime reported by police services serving predominantly Indigenous communities.

Survey description

Uniform Crime Reporting Survey

The Uniform Crime Reporting (UCR) Survey was established in 1962 with the co-operation and assistance of the Canadian Association of Chiefs of Police. The scope of the survey is *Criminal Code* offences and other federal statutes that have been reported to federal, provincial or municipal police services in Canada and that have been substantiated through investigation by these services.

Coverage of the UCR aggregate data reflects virtually 100% of the total caseload for all police services in Canada. One incident can involve multiple offences. In order to ensure comparability, counts presented in this article are based upon the most serious offence in the incident as determined by a standard classification rule used by all police services.

Data from the Uniform Crime Reporting Survey are used to calculate both the traditional crime rate and the Crime Severity Index (CSI). Both the traditional crime rate and the CSI are based on the aggregate count of criminal incidents. A criminal incident involves one or more related offences that are committed during a single criminal event and have been reported to and substantiated by police. Where there are multiple victims within a single criminal event, a separate aggregate incident is counted for each victim. For example, a single incident involving an assault on three victims at the same time and location is counted in the aggregate statistics as three incidents of assault.

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Notes

1. This study excludes the territories. Territory-specific data are presented in Text box 3.
2. In Canada, young offenders and adult offenders are dealt with differently by the justice system. Since this report does not specifically look at accused characteristics, accused numbers in this report include all accused aged 12 and older. Detailed analysis of incident and accused characteristics, including youth crime, will be included in a separate report.
3. The data in this report are based on the most serious offence in an incident. An incident can involve more than one offence. The most serious violation is determined by criteria in the following order of priority: violations against a person take precedence over violations not against a person; the greatest maximum penalty prescribed by law; violations causing death take precedence over other violations with the same maximum penalty; or, if the above rules do not break a tie, the police service uses discretion to determine which is the most serious violation in the incident.
4. Seriousness as per Crime Severity Index (CSI) weights, which are determined by the severity of sentences handed by courts for these offences (see CSI definition in Text box 1).
5. The crimes measured by the General Social Survey include sexual assault, robbery, physical assault (including uttering threats), break and enter, motor vehicle theft, theft of personal property, theft of household property and vandalism.
6. The difference between urban and rural areas with respect to federal statutes was especially high in 2017 due to a greater than usual number of *Custom Act* offences, which went from 897 incidents in 2016 to 9,489 in 2017. When excluding *Custom Act* offences, the rate of federal statute offences was still more than twice as high in rural areas compared to urban areas.
7. The crimes measured by the General Social Survey include sexual assault, robbery, physical assault (including uttering threats), break and enter, motor vehicle theft, theft of personal property, theft of household property and vandalism.
8. Calculation based on unrounded rates.
9. Due to the low reporting rate of sexual assaults, it is also relevant to analyze self-reported data taken from the General Social Survey on Victimization. In 2014, the rate of sexual assaults in rural areas was 25 sexual assaults per 1,000 population, compared with 21 sexual assaults per 1,000 population in urban areas. In 2009, these rates were, respectively, 26 and 24 sexual assaults per 1,000 population. However, none of these differences were statistically significant ($p < 0.05$).
10. Due to concerns about their quality, data on unfounded incidents stopped being published in 2004.
11. Calculation based on unrounded rates.
12. The location where a homicide is recorded is usually based on the location where it was discovered. Thus, it may be that a small number of homicides reported in rural areas are homicides committed in urban areas, but in which the victim's body was allegedly abandoned in a rural area, and vice versa.
13. Seriousness as per Crime Severity Index (CSI) weights, which are determined by the severity of sentences handed by courts for these offences (see CSI definition in Text box 1).
14. Includes offences such as, but not limited to, facilitate terrorist activity, harbour or conceal terrorist, participate in activity of terrorist group and commission or instructing to carry out terrorist activity.
15. This is one of the offences under the *Criminal Code* with the lowest weight in calculating the Crime Severity Index. Only a few offences related to gaming and betting, or prostitution carry a lower weight than disturbing the peace. By way of comparison, the weight for disturbing the peace is approximately 3 times lower than the weight for mischief and approximately 25 times lower than that for level 1 sexual assault.
16. The rate related to drugs other than cannabis is 121 incidents per 100,000 population in rural areas, i.e., a rate similar to that posted in urban areas (115 incidents per 100,000 population).
17. The crimes measured by the General Social Survey include sexual assault, robbery, physical assault (including uttering threats), break and enter, motor vehicle theft, theft of personal property, theft of household property and vandalism.
18. Excluding the territories.

Detailed data tables

Table 1
Selected police-reported crimes, urban and rural police services, all provinces, 2017

Type of offence	Urban			Rural		
	number	rate	% change 2009 to 2017	number	rate	% change 2009 to 2017
Total <i>Criminal Code</i> offences (excluding traffic) – crime rate	1,543,178	5,051	-19	374,441	6,210	-13
Total violent crime	302,527	990	-18	92,356	1,532	-11
Homicide	506	2	0	138	2.3	-5
Other offences causing death ¹	53	0	-36	25	0.4	-7
Attempted murder	707	2	-5	115	1.9	0
Aggravated sexual assault (level 3)	137	0	31	23	0.4	11
Sexual assault (level 2) - weapon or causing bodily harm	327	1	4	83	1.4	39
Sexual assault (level 1)	18,860	62	13	4,848	80	-4
Sexual violations against children ^{2, 3, 4}	5,625	18	...	2,255	37	...
Assault (level 3) - aggravated	2,432	8	-16	1,013	17	8
Assault (level 2) - weapon or bodily harm	38,612	126	-14	12,343	205	3
Assault (level 1)	116,857	383	-19	41,598	690	-13
Assault against a peace officer	8,102	27	-17	2,559	42	-9
Other assaults	1,664	5	-48	279	5	-49
Firearms - use of, discharge, pointing	1,888	6	38	801	13	60
Robbery	21,591	71	-38	1,092	18	6
Forcible confinement, kidnapping or abduction	3,221	11	-29	828	14	-18
Trafficking in persons ⁵	260	1	...	10	0.2	...
Extortion	2,735	9	60	387	6	127
Criminal harassment	15,382	50	-13	3,884	64	0
Uttering threats	45,736	150	-28	15,099	250	-27
Indecent or harassing communications ⁶	12,151	40	-37	3,711	62	-33
Non-consensual distribution of intimate images ⁷	1,183	4	...	269	4	...
Commodification of sexual activity ⁸	1,066	3	...	38	0.6	...
Other violent <i>Criminal Code</i> offences	3,432	11	16	958	16	-5
Total property crime	970,611	3,177	-22	202,282	3,355	-17
Breaking and entering	125,981	412	-30	32,127	533	-27
Possession of stolen property ⁹	17,634	58	-40	6,149	102	49
Motor vehicle theft	68,969	226	-32	15,635	259	-6
Theft over \$5,000 (non-motor vehicle)	14,192	46	-1	3,002	50	4
Theft \$5,000 or under (non-motor vehicle)	452,620	1,482	-17	49,851	827	-21
Fraud ¹⁰	96,202	315	27	16,321	271	67
Identity fraud ¹⁰	2,741	9	...	520	9	...
Identity theft ¹⁰	13,190	43	...	1,068	18	...
Mischief ¹¹	173,031	566	-39	75,218	1,248	-23
Arson	6,051	20	-46	2,391	40	-28

See notes at the end of the table.

Table 1 — continued
Selected police-reported crimes, urban and rural police services, all provinces, 2017

Type of offence	Urban			Rural		
	number	rate	% change 2009 to 2017	number	rate	% change 2009 to 2017
Total other <i>Criminal Code</i> offences	270,040	884	0	79,803	1,324	-8
Weapon violations	12,503	41	-3	3,135	52	-5
Child pornography ^{12, 13}	4,910	16	255	688	11	281
Prostitution ⁸	127	0	...	7	0.1	...
Terrorism ¹⁴	88	0	...	4	0.1	...
Disturbing the peace	58,851	193	-23	28,258	469	-30
Administration of justice violations	172,654	565	15	41,108	682	19
Counterfeiting	758	2	5	157	3	-8
Other offences	20,149	66	-23	6,446	107	-17
Total <i>Criminal Code</i> traffic violations	90,516	296	-22	32,731	543	-20
Alcohol-impaired driving ¹⁵	42,512	139	-34	21,229	352	-23
Drug-impaired driving ¹⁵	2,508	8	151	922	15	70
Other <i>Criminal Code</i> traffic violations	45,496	149	-9	10,580	175	-16
Total drug offences	71,239	233	-14	18,691	310	-17
Possession - cannabis	29,482	97	-29	8,762	145	-21
Possession - cocaine	5,973	20	-20	1,079	18	32
Possession - methamphetamines or ecstasy (MDA) ^{16, 17}	7,990	26	574	1,277	21	541
Possession - heroin	2,121	7	325	97	2	327
Possession - other drugs ¹⁸	6,795	22	20	1,183	20	-14
Trafficking, production or distribution - cannabis	6,692	22	-42	2,650	44	-55
Trafficking, production or distribution - cocaine	4,922	16	-48	1,706	28	23
Trafficking, production or distribution - methamphetamines or ecstasy (MDA) ^{16, 17}	1,959	6	234	705	12	260
Trafficking, production or distribution - heroin	959	3	171	54	1	274
Trafficking, production or distribution - other drugs ^{18, 19}	4,346	14	-4	1,178	20	-14
Total other federal statute violations	14,868	49	-37	15,751	261	51
Human trafficking violations under the <i>Immigration and Refugee Protection Act</i> ²⁰	98	0	...	6	0.1	...
Violations under the <i>Youth Criminal Justice Act</i>	4,427	14	-58	986	16	-64
Violations under other federal statutes	10,343	34	-20	14,759	245	92

See notes at the end of the table.

Table 1 — end
Selected police-reported crimes, urban and rural police services, all provinces, 2017

Type of offence	Urban			Rural		
	number	rate	% change 2009 to 2017	number	rate	% change 2009 to 2017
Total - all violations	1,719,801	5,629	-19	441,614	7,324	-13

... not applicable

1. Includes, for example, criminal negligence causing death.
2. Excludes sexual assaults against children and youth, which are reported as level 1, 2 or 3 sexual assault.
3. Sexual violations against children is a relatively new crime category with only partial data available prior to 2010. As a result, the percentage change from 2009 to 2017 is not shown.
4. Includes sexual interference, invitation to sexual touching, sexual exploitation, luring a child via telecommunications/agreement or arrangement, and making sexually explicit material available to a child for the purpose of facilitating sexual offences against children/youth, and the offences of parent or guardian procuring sexual activity, householder permitting prohibited sexual activity, agreement or arrangement of a sexual offence against a child, and bestiality in the presence of or inciting a child (*Criminal Code* s. 160 (3)). Incidents of child pornography are not included in the category of sexual violations against children.
5. Changes to the *Criminal Code*, including the introduction of new offences related to trafficking in persons, were made in 2005, 2010, 2012 and 2014. As a result, the percentage change from 2009 to 2017 is not shown.
6. Following the enactment of the *Protecting Canadians from Online Crime Act* in 2014, this offence was amended to include all means of communication, not only phone calls.
7. Non-consensual distribution of intimate images is a new offence in the *Criminal Code* that was added following enactment of the *Protecting Canadians from Online Crime Act* in 2014. As a result, the percentage change from 2009 to 2017 is not shown.
8. In December 2014, new legislation came into effect governing prostitution-related activities. The new legislation targets “the exploitation that is inherent in prostitution and the risks of violence posed to those who engage in it” (C.C. Chapter 25, preamble). New violations classified as “Commodification of Sexual Activity” under “Violent Crime” include: the purchasing of sexual services or communicating for that purpose, receiving a material benefit deriving from the purchase of sexual services, procuring of persons for the purpose of prostitution, and advertising sexual services offered for sale. In addition, a number of other offences related to prostitution continue to be considered non-violent offences and are classified under “Other *Criminal Code* offences.” These include communicating to provide sexual services for consideration, and stopping or impeding traffic for the purpose of offering, providing or obtaining sexual services for consideration. As a result, the percentage change from 2009 to 2017 is not shown.
9. Includes trafficking and the intent to traffic stolen goods.
10. In January 2010, the Uniform Crime Reporting Survey was modified to create new violation codes for identity fraud and identity theft. Prior to 2010, those offences would have been coded as fraud. As a result, the percentage change from 2009 to 2017 for fraud includes identity fraud and identity theft.
11. Includes altering/removing/destroying a vehicle identification number.
12. Due to the complexity of these cyber incidents, the data likely reflect the number of active or closed investigations for the year rather than the total number of incidents reported to police. Data are based on the police-reported incidents recorded in the record management systems of police services.
13. The category “Child Pornography” includes offences under section 163.1 of the *Criminal Code*, which makes it illegal to access, possess, make, print, or distribute child pornography. When the victim is not identified, this offence is classified in the UCR Survey as “Child Pornography,” being the most serious offence, which falls under the larger crime category of “Other *Criminal Code* offences.” In cases where a victim is identified, the police report the most serious offence as sexual assault, sexual exploitation or other sexual violations against children, which fall under the category of “Violent Crime,” and child pornography may be reported as a secondary violation.
14. Includes seven new terrorism violations which were introduced mid-year in 2013, as a result of the enactment of Bill S-7 (*An Act to amend the Criminal Code, the Canada Evidence Act and the Security of Information Act*). An additional terrorism violation code was introduced in late 2015, as a result of the enactment of Bill C-51 *Antiterrorism Act* (2015). As a result, the percentage change from 2009 to 2017 is not shown.
15. Includes impaired operation of a vehicle, impaired operation of a vehicle causing death or bodily harm, failure or refusal to comply with testing for the presence of alcohol or drugs, and failure or refusal to provide a breath or blood sample. In the event that driving is impaired by more than one substance, the offence is classified based on the main intoxicating substance. In some jurisdictions, impaired driving incidents that meet the elements of the *Criminal Code* may be processed under provincial legislation. Nevertheless, these offences may be recorded by the Uniform Crime Reporting Survey.
16. Includes substances such as methamphetamines (crystal meth), amphetamines (speed), and ecstasy.
17. In April 2008, the Uniform Crime Reporting Survey introduced a number of new violation codes relating to methamphetamines (e.g., crystal meth) and ecstasy (MDA or MDMA). As only partial data for these violation codes are available prior to 2010, the percentage change from 2009 to 2017 is not shown.
18. Includes all other drugs listed under the *Controlled Drugs and Substances Act*, such as prescription drugs, opioids such as fentanyl, barbiturates, LSD, and “date rape” drugs.
19. Includes the possession, production, selling or importing of anything (such as precursors) with the knowledge that it will be used in the production or trafficking of a controlled substance (as defined in section 2(1) of the *Controlled Drugs and Substances Act*).
20. Includes human trafficking and human smuggling violations under the *Immigration and Refugee Protection Act*. Data specific to these offences is not available prior to 2011. As a result, the percentage change from 2009 to 2017 is not shown.

Note: Urban police services serve an area where the majority of the population lives within a census metropolitan area (CMA) or census agglomeration (CA). Rural police services serve an area where the majority of the population lives outside a CMA or CA. A CMA or a CA is comprised of one or more adjacent municipalities centred on a population centre (known as the core). A CMA must have a total population of at least 100,000, of which 50,000 or more must live in the core. A CA must have a core population of at least 10,000. To be included in the CMA or CA, adjacent municipalities must have a high degree of integration with the core, as measured by commuting flows derived from census data. A CMA or CA may have more than one police service. Excludes data from the Royal Canadian Mounted Police’s Canadian Police Centre for Missing and Exploited Children. Police-reported statistics may be affected by differences in the way police services deal with offences. In some instances, police or municipalities might choose to deal with some offences using municipal by-laws or provincial legislation instead of *Criminal Code* provisions. Figures are based on the most serious offence in the incident. An incident can include more than one offence. Rates are calculated per 100,000 population, and population counts are based on July 1 estimates from Statistics Canada’s Demography Division. Percentage changes are based on unrounded rates.

Source: Statistics Canada, Canadian Centre for Justice Statistics, Uniform Crime Reporting Survey.

Table 2
Police-reported crime rates by offence group and province, urban and rural police services, 2017

Province	Violent crimes		Property crimes		Other <i>Criminal Code</i> offences		<i>Criminal Code</i> traffic violations		Drug offences	
	rate	% change 2009 to 2017	rate	% change 2009 to 2017	rate	% change 2009 to 2017	rate	% change 2009 to 2017	rate	% change 2009 to 2017
Newfoundland and Labrador										
Urban	1,386	-8	2,762	-41	1,038	24	394	-14	154	-42
Rural	1,228	-16	3,141	-9	1,397	37	256	-39	229	4
Prince Edward Island										
Urban	904	-38	2,776	-47	667	-13	354	-41	137	-18
Rural	869	-12	2,145	-26	534	-14	374	-36	166	23
Nova Scotia										
Urban	1,281	-27	2,961	-36	969	-17	297	-17	241	-18
Rural	1,194	-20	2,687	-21	816	-17	416	-19	345	15
New Brunswick										
Urban	1,299	-12	3,240	-11	1,078	37	276	-30	196	-15
Rural	1,203	-28	2,441	-11	728	14	381	-22	277	-11
Quebec										
Urban	979	-10	1,912	-46	466	-16	460	-6	283	18
Rural	1,314	19	1,544	-43	518	9	616	-12	311	-1
Ontario										
Urban	824	-18	2,435	-25	551	7	193	-24	158	-30
Rural	987	-11	2,092	-28	624	-7	247	-27	202	-37
Manitoba										
Urban	1,521	-10	5,142	-26	1,301	20	158	-29	145	-18
Rural	2,933	-11	5,405	-10	2,971	-11	718	-9	346	-1
Saskatchewan										
Urban	1,445	-28	5,735	-17	2,958	0	582	-26	255	-13
Rural	3,118	-6	7,179	-7	3,532	8	1,168	-8	339	22
Alberta										
Urban	1,158	-11	5,147	0	1,615	12	321	-33	238	-5
Rural	1,870	-24	6,858	13	2,236	-20	796	-30	392	-10
British Columbia										
Urban	1,070	-34	5,011	-12	1,464	-15	294	-36	397	-21
Rural	1,367	-35	3,293	-35	1,758	-28	484	-31	482	-43
All provinces										
Urban	990	-18	3,177	-22	884	0	296	-22	233	-14
Rural	1,532	-11	3,355	-17	1,324	-8	543	-20	310	-17

Note: Urban police services serve an area where the majority of the population lives within a census metropolitan area (CMA) or census agglomeration (CA). Rural police services serve an area where the majority of the population lives outside a CMA or CA. A CMA or a CA is comprised of or more adjacent municipalities centred on a population centre (known as the core). A CMA must have a total population of at least 100,000, of which 50,000 or more must live in the core. A CA must have a core population of at least 10,000. To be included in the CMA or CA, adjacent municipalities must have a high degree of integration with the core, as measured by commuting flows derived from census data. A CMA or CA may have more than one police service. Excludes data from the Royal Canadian Mounted Police's Canadian Police Centre for Missing and Exploited Children. Police-reported statistics may be affected by differences in the way police services deal with offences. In some instances, police or municipalities may choose to deal with offences using municipal by-laws or provincial legislation instead of *Criminal Code* provisions. Figures are based on the most serious offence in the incident. An incident can include more than one offence. Rates are calculated per 100,000 population, and population counts are based on the July 1 estimates from Statistics Canada's Demography Division. Percentage changes are based on unrounded rates.

Source: Statistics Canada, Canadian Centre for Justice Statistics, Uniform Crime Reporting Survey.

Table 3
Police-reported crime rates by province, *Criminal Code* offences (excluding traffic), violent crime and property crime, urban and rural police services, 2009 to 2017

Province	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017
	rate								
Newfoundland and Labrador									
Crime rate									
Urban	7,057	7,500	6,895	6,697	6,540	5,690	5,761	5,536	5,185
Rural	5,949	5,931	5,818	5,588	5,525	5,506	5,831	6,383	5,765
Violent crime									
Urban	1,512	1,636	1,504	1,600	1,522	1,244	1,423	1,314	1,386
Rural	1,468	1,443	1,483	1,434	1,293	1,272	1,311	1,337	1,228
Property crime									
Urban	4,706	4,911	4,468	4,171	4,186	3,604	3,437	3,204	2,762
Rural	3,464	3,410	3,326	3,148	3,094	2,976	3,321	3,568	3,141
Prince Edward Island									
Crime rate									
Urban	7,477	7,516	7,470	7,850	6,948	5,419	4,647	4,727	4,348
Rural	4,509	4,221	4,489	4,419	4,045	3,526	3,236	3,536	3,549
Violent crime									
Urban	1,455	1,364	1,243	1,300	1,031	859	763	838	904
Rural	991	897	1,014	973	813	822	693	694	869
Property crime									
Urban	5,253	5,310	5,257	5,615	5,140	3,926	3,315	3,207	2,776
Rural	2,898	2,844	2,987	2,940	2,790	2,245	2,054	2,340	2,145
Nova Scotia									
Crime rate									
Urban	7,533	7,466	6,829	6,348	5,611	5,579	5,066	4,897	5,211
Rural	5,897	6,121	5,937	6,379	5,702	5,305	4,926	4,878	4,696
Violent crime									
Urban	1,748	1,562	1,431	1,244	1,135	1,206	1,149	1,080	1,281
Rural	1,496	1,576	1,509	1,606	1,412	1,352	1,294	1,304	1,194
Property crime									
Urban	4,619	4,767	4,335	4,069	3,563	3,477	3,055	2,932	2,961
Rural	3,415	3,566	3,470	3,736	3,310	3,027	2,765	2,680	2,687
New Brunswick									
Crime rate									
Urban	5,888	5,839	5,443	5,763	5,073	4,841	5,339	5,079	5,618
Rural	5,069	4,821	4,953	4,940	4,331	3,885	4,234	4,087	4,373
Violent crime									
Urban	1,481	1,476	1,446	1,443	1,202	1,217	1,211	1,226	1,299
Rural	1,681	1,608	1,576	1,528	1,330	1,103	1,134	1,148	1,203
Property crime									
Urban	3,623	3,599	3,188	3,442	3,052	2,816	3,278	2,970	3,240
Rural	2,747	2,628	2,713	2,750	2,412	2,212	2,448	2,215	2,441

See notes at the end of the table.

Table 3 — continued
Police-reported crime rates by province, *Criminal Code* offences (excluding traffic), violent crime and property crime, urban and rural police services, 2009 to 2017

Province	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017
	rate								
Quebec									
Crime rate									
Urban	5,171	4,816	4,533	4,400	3,947	3,589	3,465	3,334	3,357
Rural	4,278	4,265	3,963	4,055	3,481	3,039	3,034	3,434	3,377
Violent crime									
Urban	1,084	1,049	1,028	1,013	955	927	932	940	979
Rural	1,107	1,135	1,093	1,215	1,096	1,008	1,074	1,297	1,314
Property crime									
Urban	3,533	3,220	2,967	2,806	2,440	2,193	2,090	1,934	1,912
Rural	2,697	2,621	2,332	2,271	1,884	1,665	1,611	1,603	1,544
Ontario									
Crime rate									
Urban	4,750	4,492	4,199	4,019	3,636	3,518	3,539	3,636	3,810
Rural	4,665	4,596	4,466	4,324	3,952	3,644	3,646	3,624	3,703
Violent crime									
Urban	1,000	978	932	880	808	763	767	783	824
Rural	1,109	1,114	1,159	1,142	1,042	975	967	947	987
Property crime									
Urban	3,233	2,992	2,776	2,659	2,375	2,297	2,300	2,327	2,435
Rural	2,886	2,780	2,634	2,521	2,220	2,060	2,088	2,059	2,092
Manitoba									
Crime rate									
Urban	9,757	8,339	7,643	7,239	6,227	6,214	6,720	7,522	7,964
Rural	12,626	13,484	12,118	13,068	12,186	11,153	11,819	11,554	11,309
Violent crime									
Urban	1,693	1,600	1,520	1,430	1,238	1,201	1,308	1,451	1,521
Rural	3,288	3,642	3,310	3,583	3,305	2,868	2,978	2,964	2,933
Property crime									
Urban	6,980	5,642	4,775	4,613	3,873	3,990	4,368	4,868	5,142
Rural	6,016	5,985	5,383	5,787	5,328	5,054	5,682	5,576	5,405
Saskatchewan									
Crime rate									
Urban	11,857	11,373	11,036	10,057	9,375	9,341	9,884	10,607	10,138
Rural	14,326	14,760	14,392	14,012	13,162	12,827	13,811	14,086	13,829
Violent crime									
Urban	2,011	2,023	1,853	1,661	1,482	1,486	1,511	1,492	1,445
Rural	3,329	3,404	3,231	3,109	2,865	2,821	2,954	3,008	3,118
Property crime									
Urban	6,891	6,382	6,282	5,553	5,207	5,204	5,601	6,057	5,735
Rural	7,718	7,762	7,640	7,281	6,639	6,543	7,448	7,601	7,179

See notes at the end of the table.

Table 3 — end
Police-reported crime rates by province, *Criminal Code* offences (excluding traffic), violent crime and property crime, urban and rural police services, 2009 to 2017

Province	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017
	rate								
Alberta									
Crime rate									
Urban	7,883	7,351	6,723	6,527	6,420	6,455	7,349	7,581	7,920
Rural	11,305	11,031	10,214	10,394	10,024	10,098	11,067	10,860	10,964
Violent crime									
Urban	1,295	1,254	1,191	1,155	1,083	1,077	1,125	1,088	1,158
Rural	2,452	2,361	2,271	2,356	2,165	2,062	2,114	2,092	1,870
Property crime									
Urban	5,150	4,654	4,114	3,996	4,011	4,037	4,867	5,011	5,147
Rural	6,045	5,889	5,381	5,535	5,505	5,701	6,680	6,473	6,858
British Columbia									
Crime rate									
Urban	9,016	8,496	7,948	7,826	7,367	7,640	7,868	7,863	7,546
Rural	9,614	9,134	8,657	8,445	7,733	7,009	7,329	6,708	6,418
Violent crime									
Urban	1,632	1,540	1,424	1,337	1,185	1,105	1,176	1,103	1,070
Rural	2,097	1,978	1,961	1,922	1,722	1,453	1,496	1,428	1,367
Property crime									
Urban	5,663	5,238	4,819	4,864	4,634	5,024	5,092	5,192	5,011
Rural	5,088	4,859	4,460	4,211	3,932	3,678	3,900	3,473	3,293
All provinces									
Crime rate									
Urban	6,199	5,831	5,445	5,266	4,852	4,752	4,896	4,966	5,051
Rural	7,176	7,148	6,798	6,826	6,311	5,952	6,218	6,276	6,210
Violent crime									
Urban	1,214	1,174	1,116	1,064	974	935	958	954	990
Rural	1,721	1,731	1,691	1,729	1,574	1,460	1,498	1,552	1,532
Property crime									
Urban	4,098	3,768	3,453	3,340	3,059	3,021	3,123	3,147	3,177
Rural	4,022	3,933	3,682	3,643	3,334	3,190	3,441	3,380	3,355

Note: Urban police services serve an area where the majority of the population lives within a census metropolitan area (CMA) or census agglomeration (CA). Rural police services serve an area where the majority of the population lives outside a CMA or CA. A CMA or a CA is comprised of or more adjacent municipalities centred on a population centre (known as the core). A CMA must have a total population of at least 100,000, of which 50,000 or more must live in the core. A CA must have a core population of at least 10,000. To be included in the CMA or CA, adjacent municipalities must have a high degree of integration with the core, as measured by commuting flows derived from census data. A CMA or CA may have more than one police service. Excludes data from the Royal Canadian Mounted Police's Canadian Police Centre for Missing and Exploited Children. Police-reported statistics may be affected by differences in the way police services deal with offences. In some instances, police or municipalities may choose to deal with offences using municipal by-laws or provincial legislation instead of *Criminal Code* provisions. Figures are based on the most serious offence in the incident. An incident can include more than one offence. Rates are calculated per 100,000 population, and population counts are based on the July 1 estimates from Statistics Canada's Demography Division.

Source: Statistics Canada, Canadian Centre for Justice Statistics, Uniform Crime Reporting Survey.

Table 4
Crime Severity Index by province, urban and rural police services, 2017

Province	Crime Severity Index	% change 2009 to 2017	Violent Crime Severity Index	% change 2009 to 2017	Non-violent Crime Severity Index	% change 2009 to 2017
	index	percent	index	percent	index	percent
Newfoundland and Labrador						
Urban	65.0	-24	78.6	20	59.9	-36
Rural	60.8	-2	59.8	4	61.0	-4
Prince Edward Island						
Urban	48.3	-37	41.0	-21	50.8	-41
Rural	38.7	-23	35.0	5	39.9	-29
Nova Scotia						
Urban	65.6	-30	82.8	-22	59.2	-33
Rural	66.4	-2	69.4	16	65.2	-8
New Brunswick						
Urban	71.5	-1	69.1	-2	72.2	-1
Rural	64.7	-3	70.3	-7	62.5	-1
Quebec						
Urban	56.6	-32	70.6	-17	51.5	-37
Rural	59.5	-21	77.7	29	52.9	-35
Ontario						
Urban	55.4	-21	69.5	-18	50.2	-22
Rural	52.5	-16	62.2	12	48.9	-25
Manitoba						
Urban	112.4	-18	155.9	-16	96.5	-19
Rural	130.1	-5	167.9	5	116.1	-10
Saskatchewan						
Urban	127.8	-13	120.4	-23	130.2	-9
Rural	165.7	5	180.2	15	160.1	1
Alberta						
Urban	103.4	2	92.0	-11	107.3	6
Rural	139.8	17	114.7	-2	148.5	23
British Columbia						
Urban	91.0	-19	75.3	-35	96.4	-14
Rural	73.2	-30	76.5	-20	71.9	-33
All provinces						
Urban	70.1	-19	77.2	-19	67.4	-19
Rural	82.1	-7	90.2	9	79.0	-12

Note: The Crime Severity Indexes are based on *Criminal Code* incidents, including traffic offences, as well as other federal statute violations. The base index was set at 100 for 2006 for Canada. Urban police services serve an area where the majority of the population lives within a census metropolitan area (CMA) or census agglomeration (CA). Rural police services serve an area where the majority of the population lives outside a CMA or CA. A CMA or a CA is comprised of or more adjacent municipalities centred on a population centre (known as the core). A CMA must have a total population of at least 100,000, of which 50,000 or more must live in the core. A CA must have a core population of at least 10,000. To be included in the CMA or CA, adjacent municipalities must have a high degree of integration with the core, as measured by commuting flows derived from census data. A CMA or CA may have more than one police service. Excludes data from the Royal Canadian Mounted Police's Canadian Police Centre for Missing and Exploited Children. Police-reported statistics may be affected by differences in the way police services deal with offences. In some instances, police or municipalities may choose to deal with offences using municipal by-laws or provincial legislation instead of *Criminal Code* provisions. Figures are based on the most serious offence in the incident. An incident can include more than one offence. Rates are calculated per 100,000 population, and population counts are based on the July 1 estimates from Statistics Canada's Demography Division. Percentage changes are based on unrounded rates.

Source: Statistics Canada, Canadian Centre for Justice Statistics, Uniform Crime Reporting Survey.

Table 5
Police-reported crime rates for select offences reported by rural police services, by province, 2017

Type of offence	N.L.	P.E.I.	N.S.	N.B.	Que.	Ont.	Man.	Sask.	Alta.	B.C.
	rate									
Total <i>Criminal Code</i> offences (excluding traffic) – crime rate	5,765	3,549	4,696	4,373	3,377	3,703	11,309	13,829	10,964	6,418
Total violent crime	1,228	869	1,194	1,203	1,314	987	2,933	3,118	1,870	1,367
Homicide	0.4	0.0	2.2	2.5	1.5	1.5	4.4	4.9	3.4	2.2
Other offences causing death ¹	0.0	0.0	0.3	0.0	0.5	0.1	0.9	1.2	0.0	0.9
Attempted murder	0.0	0.0	2.5	2.2	2.7	0.7	2.8	2.6	2.0	2.2
Sexual assault (levels 2 and 3)	1.6	0.0	1.2	1.1	1.6	1.9	2.8	2.1	2.2	0.9
Sexual assault (level 1)	60	47	65	53	83	78	116	109	75	71
Sexual violations against children ^{2, 3}	27	21	30	24	44	30	55	58	35	32
Assault (level 3) - aggravated	10	6	8	4	5	13	59	42	24	12
Assault (level 2) - weapon or bodily harm	126	98	106	111	158	110	547	509	267	148
Assault (level 1)	558	384	486	493	556	453	1,432	1,502	836	589
Assault against a peace officer	23	6	22	43	53	27	82	63	44	31
Other assaults	1	0	1	3	7	3	4	8	4	8
Firearms - use of, discharge, pointing	6	2	7	10	7	3	25	45	31	9
Robbery	14	0	12	13	10	12	35	46	32	14
Forcible confinement or kidnapping	10	2	10	7	13	11	19	19	16	11
Extortion	5	4	12	6	9	3	2	10	9	4
Criminal harassment	28	38	69	57	78	74	26	67	65	50
Uttering threats	266	162	227	293	236	137	396	456	305	243
Indecent or harassing communications ⁴	72	90	112	61	15	14	101	142	103	126
Non-consensual distribution of intimate images ⁵	7	0	14	8	2	4	3	9	3	2
Other violent <i>Criminal Code</i> offences	12	11	8	14	30	12	17	21	14	11
Total property crime	3,141	2,145	2,687	2,441	1,544	2,092	5,405	7,179	6,858	3,293
Breaking and entering	414	218	325	468	420	363	819	862	978	443
Possession of stolen property ⁶	17	8	27	35	22	32	48	182	500	62
Motor vehicle theft	87	60	103	182	171	123	323	487	747	197
Theft over \$5,000 (non-motor vehicle)	19	15	26	29	37	39	43	58	114	68
Theft \$5,000 or under (non-motor vehicle)	544	544	775	597	380	712	900	1,071	1,746	1,118
Fraud (excluding identity theft and fraud) ⁷	158	169	553	346	120	264	244	491	387	238
Identity fraud ⁷	13	15	7	9	16	1	4	11	10	6
Identity theft ⁷	14	15	19	19	12	5	20	29	40	26
Mischief ⁸	1,843	1,056	813	691	326	543	2,938	3,894	2,282	1,111
Arson	32	45	38	65	39	11	67	94	55	24

See notes at the end of the table.

Table 5 — continued
Police-reported crime rates for select offences reported by rural police services, by province, 2017

Type of offence	N.L.	P.E.I.	N.S.	N.B.	Que.	Ont.	Man.	Sask.	Alta.	B.C.
	rate									
Total other <i>Criminal Code</i> offences	1,397	534	816	728	518	624	2,971	3,532	2,236	1,758
Weapon violations	31	13	35	37	33	34	101	115	88	47
Child pornography ^{9, 10}	19	11	42	4	7	5	11	10	8	27
Disturbing the peace	690	228	242	171	29	88	1,535	1,090	906	962
Failure to comply with order	407	98	276	246	281	246	682	1,219	717	290
Failure to appear	18	8	6	27	15	49	12	353	180	77
Breach of probation	73	92	75	104	89	113	368	393	84	172
Other offences against the administration of law and justice	21	23	22	24	18	27	122	84	74	32
Other violations	137	62	118	116	46	62	140	268	179	151
Total <i>Criminal Code</i> traffic violations	256	374	416	381	616	247	718	1,168	796	484
Alcohol-impaired driving ¹¹	180	278	307	258	232	180	571	908	572	392
Drug-impaired driving ¹¹	12	17	22	15	12	7	17	31	25	17
Other <i>Criminal Code</i> traffic violations	64	79	88	108	372	60	130	229	199	75
Total drug offences	229	166	345	277	311	202	346	339	392	482
Possession - cannabis	120	75	164	152	141	92	115	115	171	316
Possession - cocaine	13	6	16	12	12	12	20	17	34	33
Possession - methamphetamines or ecstasy (MDA) ¹²	0	4	3	16	33	12	14	18	39	21
Possession - other drugs ¹³	12	15	15	16	9	31	16	13	24	44
Trafficking, production or distribution - cannabis	26	30	64	37	77	18	51	47	29	40
Trafficking, production or distribution - cocaine	34	17	50	18	13	10	73	74	48	12
Trafficking, production or distribution - methamphetamines or ecstasy (MDA) ¹²	0	4	2	7	17	2	25	25	21	5
Trafficking, production or distribution - other drugs ^{13, 14}	23	15	30	19	9	24	32	29	26	12

See notes at the end of the table.

Table 5 — end
Police-reported crime rates for select offences reported by rural police services, by province, 2017

Type of offence	N.L.	P.E.I.	N.S.	N.B.	Que.	Ont.	Man.	Sask.	Alta.	B.C.
	rate									
Total other federal statute violations	53	28	23	45	622	57	196	622	80	246
<i>Youth Criminal Justice Act</i>	1	4	6	5	3	8	44	97	11	18
<i>Firearms Act</i>	4	17	1	9	1	1	14	36	25	30
<i>Customs Act</i>	5	0	0	7	615	2	80	9	4	3
<i>Canada Shipping Act</i>	2	0	1	0	1	38	38	4	0	146
Other federal statutes	42	8	15	23	2	8	21	476	39	49
Total - all violations	6,304	4,117	5,480	5,075	4,926	4,208	12,568	15,958	12,233	7,630

1. Includes, for example, criminal negligence causing death.

2. Excludes sexual assaults against children and youth, which are reported as level 1, 2 or 3 sexual assault.

3. Includes sexual interference, invitation to sexual touching, sexual exploitation, luring a child via telecommunications/agreement or arrangement, and making sexually explicit material available to a child for the purpose of facilitating sexual offences against children/youth, and the offences of parent or guardian procuring sexual activity, householder permitting prohibited sexual activity, agreement or arrangement of a sexual offence against a child, and bestiality in the presence of or inciting a child (*Criminal Code* s. 160 (3)). Incidents of child pornography are not included in the category of sexual violations against children.

4. Following the enactment of the *Protecting Canadians from Online Crime Act* in 2014, this offence was amended to include all means of communication, not only phone calls.

5. Non-consensual distribution of intimate images is a new offence in the *Criminal Code* that was added following enactment of the *Protecting Canadians from Online Crime Act* in 2014. As a result, the percentage change from 2009 to 2017 is not shown.

6. Includes trafficking and the intent to traffic stolen goods.

7. In January 2010, the Uniform Crime Reporting Survey was modified to create new violation codes for identity fraud and identity theft. Prior to 2010, those offences would have been coded as fraud. As a result, the percentage change from 2009 to 2017 for fraud includes identity fraud and identity theft.

8. Includes altering/removing/destroying a vehicle identification number.

9. Due to the complexity of these cyber incidents, the data likely reflect the number of active or closed investigations for the year rather than the total number of incidents reported to police. Data are based on the police-reported incidents recorded in the record management systems of police services.

10. The category "Child Pornography" includes offences under section 163.1 of the *Criminal Code*, which makes it illegal to access, possess, make, print, or distribute child pornography. When the victim is not identified, this offence is classified in the UCR Survey as "Child Pornography," being the most serious offence, which falls under the larger crime category of "Other *Criminal Code* offences." In cases where a victim is identified, the police report the most serious offence as sexual assault, sexual exploitation or other sexual violations against children, which fall under the category of "Violent Crime," and child pornography may be reported as a secondary violation.

11. Includes impaired operation of a vehicle, impaired operation of a vehicle causing death or bodily harm, failure or refusal to comply with testing for the presence of alcohol or drugs, and failure or refusal to provide a breath or blood sample. In the event that driving is impaired by more than one substance, the offence is classified based on the main intoxicating substance. In some jurisdictions, impaired driving incidents that meet the elements of the *Criminal Code* may be processed under provincial legislation. Nevertheless, these offences may be recorded by the Uniform Crime Reporting Survey.

12. Includes substances such as methamphetamines (crystal meth), amphetamines (speed), and ecstasy.

13. Includes all other drugs listed under the *Controlled Drugs and Substances Act*, such as prescription drugs, opioids such as fentanyl, barbiturates, LSD, and "date rape" drugs.

14. Includes the possession, production, selling or importing of anything (such as precursors) with the knowledge that it will be used in the production or trafficking of a controlled substance (as defined in section 2(1) of the *Controlled Drugs and Substances Act*).

Note: Urban police services serve an area where the majority of the population lives within a census metropolitan area (CMA) or census agglomeration (CA). Rural police services serve an area where the majority of the population lives outside a CMA or CA. A CMA or a CA is comprised of one or more adjacent municipalities centred on a population centre (known as the core). A CMA must have a total population of at least 100,000, of which 50,000 or more must live in the core. A CA must have a core population of at least 10,000. To be included in the CMA or CA, adjacent municipalities must have a high degree of integration with the core, as measured by commuting flows derived from census data. A CMA or CA may have more than one police service. Excludes data from the Royal Canadian Mounted Police's Canadian Police Centre for Missing and Exploited Children. Police-reported statistics may be affected by differences in the way police services deal with offences. In some instances, police or municipalities might choose to deal with some offences using municipal by-laws or provincial legislation instead of *Criminal Code* provisions. Figures are based on the most serious offence in the incident. An incident can include more than one offence. Rates are calculated per 100,000 population, and population counts are based on July 1 estimates from Statistics Canada's Demography Division.

Source: Statistics Canada, Canadian Centre for Justice Statistics, Uniform Crime Reporting Survey.

Table 6
Perceptions of police performance, by area of residence, all provinces, 2014

Province	Proportion of people who believe the local police are doing a good job of...						Proportion of the population who have a great deal of confidence in the police
	Enforcing the laws	Promptly responding to calls	Being approachable and easy to talk to	Providing information on ways to prevent crime	Ensuring safety of citizens	Treating people fairly	
	percent						
Newfoundland and Labrador							
Urban†	57	49	72	62	64	64	51
Rural	55	55*	77	60	67	69	53
Prince Edward Island							
Urban†	60	63	74	58	68	70	51
Rural	70*	71*	79	67	74	77	65*
Nova Scotia							
Urban†	57	57	71	55	66	61	47
Rural	58	56	73	58	67	66*	48
New Brunswick							
Urban†	68	62	73	61	73	69	56
Rural	58*	56	70	58	67*	67	49*
Quebec							
Urban†	68	65	64	58	73	67	40
Rural	69	67	67	63*	73	73*	40
Ontario							
Urban†	62	54	65	54	66	59	48
Rural	60	52	70*	57	66	63*	49
Manitoba							
Urban†	52	44	62	51	58	54	37
Rural	55	52*	72*	54	66*	67*	42
Saskatchewan							
Urban†	57	50	68	56	62	58	45
Rural	48*	44*	67	45*	57	62	45
Alberta							
Urban†	61	56	67	58	65	62	48
Rural	50*	47*	65	53	59	57	39*
British Columbia							
Urban†	58	54	66	53	63	59	42
Rural	57	52	70	50	63	62	44
All provinces							
Urban†	62	57	65	55	67	61	45
Rural	60*	56	69*	57	67	66*	45

† reference category

* significantly different from reference category ($p < 0.05$)

Note: An urban area is defined as a census metropolitan area (CMA) or a census agglomeration (CA). Rural areas are all areas outside CMAs and CAs. A CMA or a CA is formed by one or more adjacent municipalities centred on a population centre (known as the core). A CMA must have a total population of at least 100,000, of which 50,000 or more must live in the core. A CA must have a core population of at least 10,000. To be included in the CMA or CA, adjacent municipalities must have a high degree of integration with the core, as measured by commuting flows derived from census data. A CMA or CA may have more than one police service. Responses of "Don't know" and "Refusal" are included in the calculation of percentages.

Source: Statistics Canada, General Social Survey.