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Canadian Centre for Justice Statistics Profile Series

Victimization and Offending in Canada's Territories

2004 and 2005



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Statistics Canada

Canadian Centre for Justice Statistics

Canadian Centre for Justice Statistics Profile Series

Victimization and Offending in Canada's Territories

2004 and 2005

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Note of appreciation

Canada owes the success of its statistical system to a long-standing partnership between Statistics Canada, the citizens of Canada, its businesses, governments and other institutions. Accurate and timely statistical information could not be produced without their continued cooperation and goodwill.

Preface

This series of profiles provides analysis on a variety of topics and issues concerning victimization, offending and public perceptions of crime and the justice system. The profiles primarily draw on results from the General Social Survey on victimization. Where applicable, they also incorporate information from other data sources, such as the Census of the Population and the Incident-based Uniform Crime Reporting Survey.

Examples of the topics explored through this series include: Victimization and offending in Canada's territories, Canadians' use of crime prevention measures and victimization of older Canadians. This is a unique periodical, of great interest to those who have to plan, establish, administer and evaluate justice programs and projects, or anyone who has an interest in Canada's justice system.

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Highlights

- According to the 2004 General Social Survey (GSS), residents of the territories were three times more likely than provincial residents to experience a violent victimization such as sexual assault, robbery or physical assault (315 versus 106 incidents per 1,000 population).
- Residents of the North experienced higher levels of spousal violence than their counterparts in the provinces. Approximately 12% of northern residents reported being the victim of some form of violence at the hands of a current and/or previous spouse or common-law partner in the 5 years preceding the survey. This compares to 7% of the population in the provinces.
- Residents of Nunavut were far more likely to have been victims of spousal violence (22%) than residents of the Northwest Territories (11%) and the Yukon Territory (9%).
- Similar to findings from the victimization survey, police-reported crime rates in the territories were substantially higher than rates in the rest of Canada. Specifically, in 2005, crime rates in the North were over four times higher than rates in the provinces (33,186 compared to 7,679 incidents per 100,000 population).
- In 2005, the Northwest Territories had the highest police-reported crime rate among the three territories at 41,245 incidents per 100,000 population. This rate was 1.3 times higher than the rate in Nunavut, 1.8 times higher than that in Yukon and nearly three times higher than that in Saskatchewan, the province with the highest provincial crime rate (14,320).

Introduction

In Canada, there are two primary sources of statistical information on the nature and extent of crime: police-reported surveys and victimization surveys. Until recently, self-reported victimization data were unavailable for Canada's northern territories, leaving legislators, program and policy makers having to rely solely on police-reported crime data to inform policy decisions related to justice issues. Police data are limited, in that they only include incidents that come to their attention. According to the 2004 General Social Survey (GSS), only about one-third of incidents are reported to the police.

For the first time, self-reported victimization data are available for the three northern territories from the 2004 General Social Survey on victimization. This survey instrument not only captures information about personal victimization experiences, it collects information on crimes that are both reported and not reported to the police.¹ Furthermore, the survey collects information on fear of crime, perceptions of the criminal justice system as well as measures taken by respondents to ensure their safety from crime. The survey also includes detailed measures on the impacts of criminal victimization on victims.

Using recent police-reported and self-reported data², this report provides a comprehensive profile of the nature and extent of crime in Canada's northern territories.

The report finds that northern residents experience higher rates of violent victimization and are more likely to be victims of spousal violence than residents in the rest of Canada. Furthermore, police-reported crime rates in the North are much higher than those in the provinces.

Profile of northern residents

Researchers have pointed to a number of demographic, social and economic factors which can elevate the risk of victimization and/or offending. Some of these factors are: being young (Lochner, 2004); living in lone-parent families (Stevenson et al., 1998); living common-law (Mihorean, 2005); having high levels of unemployment (Raphael and Winter-Ebmer, 2001); being an Aboriginal person (Brzozowski et al., 2006), and the consumption of alcohol (Vanderburg et al, 1995). The following profile demonstrates that these factors are all more prevalent in the North.

Northern residents, particularly those in Northwest Territories and Nunavut, tend to be younger in general than residents in the rest of Canada. For example, according to the 2001 Census, while the median age ranged between 35 and 40 years in the provinces, the median age in Nunavut was 22.1, compared to that in Northwest Territories (29.0) and Yukon Territory (36.9) (Statistics Canada, 2002a).

The territories have the highest proportions of lone-parent families in Canada. According to the 2001 Census, lone-parent families represented 26% of all families in Nunavut, 21% in Northwest Territories and 20% in Yukon. This compares to proportions of lone-parent families in the provinces ranging from between 15% and 17% of all families (Statistics Canada, 2002b).

Text Box 1 Surveying in the North³: Challenges and limitations

Compared to other areas in Canada, data collection in the territories poses additional challenges due to higher rates of incomplete telephone service and language difficulties. As a pilot test, the 2004 GSS on victimization was conducted by telephone in Yukon, Northwest Territories and Nunavut. In order to improve coverage and to attempt to produce reliable estimates of criminal victimization in the territories, the territorial sample was selected from the respondents to the 2003 Canadian Community Health Survey. This approach differs from the GSS sample in the ten provinces, which was selected using the random digit dialing method.⁴

In an evaluation report assessing the success of this pilot test collection, it was estimated that the data collected by the GSS in the North represented 60% of the population residing in the territories. This compares with a 96% representation of the population in the ten provinces. Specifically, the report identified that Aboriginal people and those living in rural areas were underrepresented in the sample for the territories. Adjustments to the weights were made to help correct for underrepresentation across these dimensions; however, the report further cautioned that there could also be unknown biases in the data. For these reasons, the victimization data in this report should be used with caution.

Common-law families in the North are also represented in higher proportions than in the provinces, comprising 31% of all families in Nunavut, 26% in Northwest Territories and 23% in Yukon. With the exception of Quebec, which also had a relatively high proportion of common-law families (25%), each of the other provinces had significantly lower proportions of common-law families, ranging between 9% and 13% of all families (Statistics Canada, 2002b).

Unemployment rates are higher in the North, compared to rates in most of the provinces. Among the territories, in 2001 Nunavut held the highest unemployment rate (17.4%), followed by Yukon (11.6%) and Northwest Territories (9.5%). By comparison, the overall Canadian unemployment rate was 7.4% (Statistics Canada, 2003a).

In the territories, Aboriginal people represent a significant proportion of the population. According to the 2001 Census, Aboriginal people in Nunavut represented 85% of the territory's total population, which was by far the highest concentration in the country. Aboriginal people represented more than half (51%) of the population in the Northwest Territories, and 23% of the population in the Yukon. By comparison, the provinces with the highest proportion of Aboriginal residents are: Saskatchewan (14%), Manitoba (14%) and Alberta (5%) (Statistics Canada, 2003b).

Residents of the territories are also more likely to report heavy drinking than provincial residents. The 2004 GSS asked respondents about the frequency in which five or more drinks were consumed at one sitting in a one-month period (used as a measure of heavy drinking). Territorial respondents were more likely to report having consumed five or more drinks on one or more occasion in the previous month compared to provincial respondents (53% compared to 37%).

Victimization in the northern territories

Residents of the North more likely to be victimized

According to results from the GSS, 37% of residents 15 years of age or older living in the northern territories reported being victimized at least once in the previous 12 months. This was much higher than the proportion of provincial residents who were victimized (28%) over the same time period.

Overall, territorial residents were also more likely than provincial residents to have been repeat victims of crime. Approximately 20% of residents from the territories reported being victimized multiple times compared to 11% for the rest of Canada.

Rate of violent victimization almost three times higher in the North⁵

The violent crime category within the GSS consists of three offences: sexual assault, robbery and physical assault. In 2004, for every 1,000 Canadians aged 15 years and over living in the territories, there were 315 incidents of violent victimization. This rate was almost three times the rate for residents in the rest of Canada (106).

Among the individual offence types, the rate of physical assault was almost four times higher in the North compared to the provinces (244 compared to 75, respectively). There was no statistically significant difference for sexual assault or robberies.

Factors influencing risks of violent crime

Rates of violent victimization highest among young, single, unemployed and students⁶

While there was no statistically significant difference in the rates of overall violent victimization between men and women, personal characteristics such as age, marital status and main activity were all found to elevate the risk of violent victimization.

Research has shown that young people are more vulnerable to crime (Gannon and Mihorean, 2005; Besserer and Trainor, 2000). The 2004 GSS found that young people in the north are no exception. In 2004, the rate for northern Canadians aged 15 to 24 years was 860 per 1,000, over 3 times greater than the rate for those aged 25 to 34 (276 per 1,000), 4 times greater than the rate for those aged 35 to 44 (209 per 1,000) and over 15 times greater than the rate for those aged 45 and over (56 per 1,000).

An individual's marital status has also been identified as a factor influencing the risk of violent victimization. Northern residents who were single had a violent victimization rate of 637 per 1,000, followed by those who were separated or divorced (282) and those who were living common-law (238).

The GSS also found that a person's main activity, such as working, looking for work, or going to school, could have an influence on his/her risk of violent victimization. Similar to findings in the provinces, northern residents who were going to school had the highest rates of violent victimization (761 incidents per 1,000 population). This rate was much higher than rates for those who were employed (176).

The higher victimization rates among those who were single and those who were students could be partly explained by the fact that these characteristics are more common among young people, who have the highest rates of violent victimization.

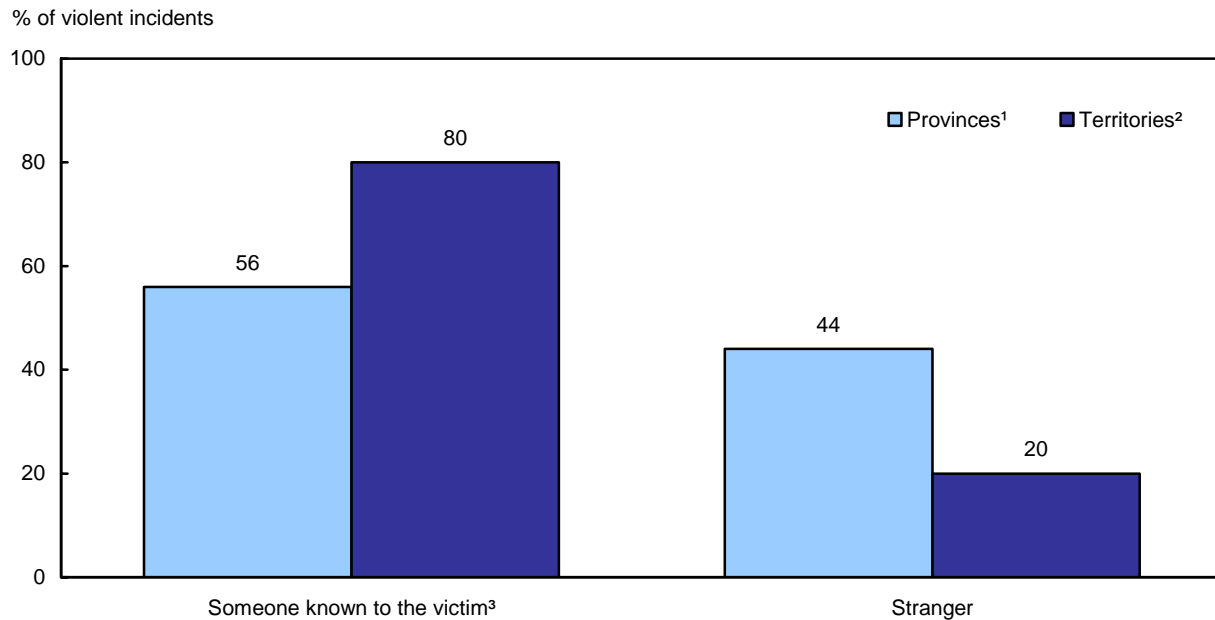
Profile of violent victimization incidents⁷

Research has shown that in general, when a crime is committed, it is likely that the police will not be notified (Gannon and Mihorean, 2005; Besserer and Trainor, 2000). In 2004, victims in the territories

reported 25% of violent incidents to police, a figure which was comparable to the population in the rest of the country.

Violent incidents committed against territorial residents were much more likely to be perpetrated by someone who was known to the victim⁸ (80%), such as a relative, friend, neighbour or acquaintance, compared to incidents committed against provincial residents (56%). In contrast, northern residents were victimized by a stranger in 20% of violent incidents, compared to 44% of incidents committed against provincial residents (Figure 1). This could be partially explained by the fact that northern residents tend to live in smaller communities where residents are more likely to know each other.

Figure 1
Violent incidents against northern residents more likely to be perpetrated by someone known to the victim, 2004



1. Provinces include Newfoundland, Prince Edward Island, Nova Scotia, New Brunswick, Quebec, Ontario, Manitoba, Saskatchewan, Alberta and British Columbia.

2. Territories include the Yukon Territory, the Northwest Territories and Nunavut.

3. Someone known to the victim includes relatives, friends, neighbours, acquaintances or any other known relationship.

Note: Includes incidents of spousal sexual and physical assault.

Source: Statistics Canada, General Social Survey, 2004.

Violent incidents committed against northern residents did not commonly involve the use of a weapon. In 2004, the accused had a weapon in 27% of violent incidents committed against northern victims, a figure which was not statistically different from that in the provinces. Furthermore, victims in the territories were injured in 43% of violent incidents committed against them compared to one quarter of violent incidents in the provinces. Victims from the territories and the provinces believed the incident was related to the accused's alcohol or drug use in over half of violent incidents committed against them (61% versus 52%).

Generally speaking, violent incidents are about twice as likely to occur in commercial or institutional establishments such as restaurants, bars, office buildings and shopping malls than in the victim's home or surrounding area (Gannon and Mihorean, 2005). Results from the GSS, however, show that there is no statistically significant difference with respect to violent incidents committed against northern residents. For example, 30% of incidents occurred in commercial or public institutions, compared to 27% at the victim's home. The difference could partly be explained by the fact that northern residents are more likely to be victimized by someone they know. Also, many northern residents tend to live in remote areas, which are less likely to be surrounded by commercial establishments.

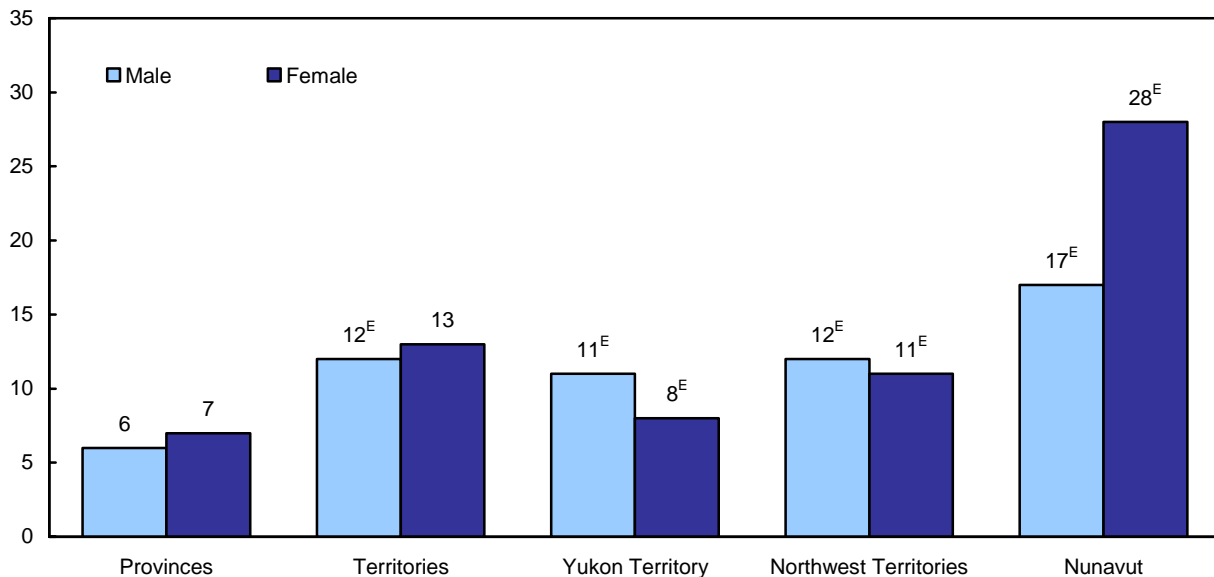
Spousal violence in the North

Northern residents experience higher levels of spousal violence

According to the GSS, residents of the North experienced higher levels of spousal violence than their counterparts in the provinces. Approximately 12% of northern residents in a current or previous marital or common-law relationship reported being the victim of some form of spousal violence in the 5 years preceding the survey. This compares with 7% of the population in the provinces. There was no statistically significant difference in the rate of spousal violence against men (12%) and women (13%) (Figure 2). Considering differences between the territories, residents of Nunavut were far more likely to have been victims of spousal violence (22%) than residents in Northwest Territories (11%) and Yukon (9%).

Figure 2
Northern residents experience higher levels of spousal violence, 2004

% of females and males aged 15 years and over



^E use with caution

Notes: Includes incidents of spousal sexual and physical assault. Excludes people who refused to state their marital status.

Source: Statistics Canada, General Social Survey, 2004.

Generally speaking, levels of spousal violence are much higher in previous relationships than in current unions (Mihorean, 2005). While this finding holds true for residents of the North, the difference between current and previous partner rates of violence is smaller. In 2004, approximately 20% of northern residents reported having experienced spousal violence by an ex-partner while 9% of residents suffered violence by a current partner. By comparison, 19% of provincial residents reported violence by an ex-spouse and 3% reported violence by a current spouse.

Female victims of spousal violence in the North were twice as likely as male northerners to suffer the most severe forms of spousal violence, such as being beaten, choked, threatened with or having had a gun or knife used against them, or sexually assaulted (57% compared with 23%). Women were also twice as likely to be injured as a result of the violence (59% versus 32%).

Victims of spousal violence from the territories were just as likely as victims from the provinces to say that their partner had been drinking at the time of the incident (37% compared with 35%).

Stalking in the North

Women more likely to be victims of stalking

The 2004 GSS asked a series of questions describing various stalking behaviours in order to determine the incidence and prevalence of stalking. Results show that 11% of the northern residents were victims of some form of stalking in the 5 years preceding the survey. This finding is consistent with the proportion of provincial residents who reported having been stalked in the previous 5 years. As was the case in the provinces, northern women were almost twice as likely as men to have been stalked (15% compared with 7%).

Fears, perceptions and attitudes toward the justice system

Northern residents feel safer than residents in the rest of Canada

The GSS asked a series of questions to measure respondents' satisfaction with their safety from criminal victimization and fear of crime in different situations. In 2004, 54% of northern residents said they were "very satisfied" with their personal safety compared to 44% of residents from the rest of Canada.

Respondents were also asked questions about whether they had ever taken any precautionary measures to protect themselves or their property from crime and whether they routinely employed measures to make themselves safer from crime. Measures ranged from changing one's routine activities or avoiding certain places to having obtained a gun. While a substantial proportion of northern residents reported having taken precautionary and safety measures, they were less likely than their provincial counterparts to have done so. For example, 64% of northerners reported the routine use of measures to make themselves safer from crime, compared to 76% of provincial residents. This could perhaps be related to the fact that northern residents were less fearful of crime than were provincial residents.

The most common routine measures taken by northern residents were: routinely locking the car doors when alone in a car (38%), routinely planning routes with safety in mind (36%) and routinely checking the back seat for intruders before getting in when alone and returning to a parked car (30%) (Table 1). Similar to what was found in the provinces, northern women were more likely than their male counterparts to routinely use measures to make themselves safer from crime (77% compared with 51%).

Text Box 2

Victimization among Aboriginal people in the North⁹

Research has shown that Aboriginal people are at a higher risk of being victimized than their non-Aboriginal counterparts (Brzozowski et al., 2006). Aboriginal people in the territories, however, were no more likely than non-Aboriginal people in the North to have reported being the victim of a crime in the 12 months preceding the GSS survey (34% and 39% respectively). Rates of violent victimization were also similar for both Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal northerners. The similarities between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal northerners could be attributed to the fact that in general, victimization rates in the North are higher than those in the provinces.

While Aboriginal people in the territories were no more likely to experience a general victimization, northern Aboriginal people reported significantly higher levels of spousal violence than their non-Aboriginal counterparts. Consistent with findings from the provinces, 19% of Aboriginal people in the North reported experiencing some form of spousal violence at the hands of a current or previous spouse in the past 5 years. This compares to 8% of non-Aboriginal northern residents who experienced spousal violence over the same time period.

Table 1
Precautionary measures taken by respondents, 2004

	Provinces ¹	Territories ²
	percentage	
Do you routinely ...		
Carry something to defend yourself or to alert other people?	13	12
Lock the car doors for your personal safety when alone in a car?	59	38
When alone and returning to a parked car, check the back seat for intruders before getting into the car?	43	30
Plan your route with safety in mind?	43	36
Stay at home at night because you are afraid to go out alone?	10	6
Have you ever...		
Changed routine, activities, or avoided certain places?	35	33
Installed new locks or security bars?	31	26
Installed burglar alarms or motion detector lights?	34	18
Taken a self-defense course?	13	17
Changed your phone number?	5	5 ^E
Obtained a dog?	9	13
Obtained a gun?	1	F
Changed residence or moved?	4	4 ^E

^E use with caution

F too unreliable to be published

1. Provinces include Newfoundland, Prince Edward Island, Nova Scotia, New Brunswick, Quebec, Ontario, Manitoba, Saskatchewan, Alberta and British Columbia.

2. Territories include the Yukon Territory, the Northwest Territories and Nunavut.

Source: Statistics Canada, General Social Survey, 2004.

Northern residents more likely to come into contact with the police

The 2004 GSS also looked at the proportion of respondents who reported coming into contact with police in the last twelve months. Overall, northern residents were more likely to have come into contact with the police than were provincial residents (47% compared with 35%).

Northern residents were also more likely than their provincial counterparts to come into contact with police for serious reasons like being a witness to a crime (13% compared with 6%) or being arrested (4% compared with 1%). The increased likelihood of police contact with Northern residents can be explained in large part, by the fact that the North has a higher number of police officers per capita compared to the provinces¹⁰ (Sauvé and Reitano, 2005).

By indicating whether each was doing a "good", "average" or "poor" job carrying out certain functions, respondents to the 2004 GSS were asked to rate the performance of four sectors of the criminal justice system: the police, the courts, the prison and parole systems. While the performance of the police was generally rated favourably, both in the provinces and in the territories, in some instances, residents of the North were less satisfied with police than were provincial residents. For example, residents in the territories were less likely than provincial residents to say their local police was doing a "good job" at enforcing the laws (48% compared to 59%) and ensuring the safety of citizens (54% compared to 61%).

Just like residents in the provinces, residents in the territories were more critical of the courts than police and reported similar levels of satisfaction with the criminal courts. For example, less than half of northern

and provincial respondents (44%, respectively) believed the courts were doing a good job of ensuring a fair trial for the accused.

According to the GSS, residents of the territories and the provinces had similar assessments of the performance of the prisons system and the parole system. For example, residents of the territories and the provinces were equally as likely to say that the prison system was doing a “good job” at supervising and controlling prisoners while in prison (31%, respectively) and helping prisoners become law-abiding citizens (17% versus 18%). Furthermore, similar proportions of residents said that the parole system was doing a “good job” at releasing offenders who are not likely to commit another crime (16% versus 17%) and supervising offenders on parole (18% versus 15%).

Northern residents more likely to report social disorder in their neighbourhoods

Respondents to the GSS were asked to indicate how problematic socially disruptive conditions were in their neighbourhood. These included noisy neighbours or loud parties, people loitering in the street, people sleeping on the streets, garbage, vandalism, harassment or attacks motivated by racial, ethnic or religious intolerance, drugs, public drunkenness and prostitution.

Generally speaking, northern residents were more likely than residents throughout the rest of Canada to identify socially disruptive conditions to be “very” or “fairly” big problems in their neighbourhood. For example, northern residents were twice as likely as residents from the provinces to say that people using or dealing drugs was a “very” or “fairly” big problem in their neighbourhood (23% versus 12%). They were also three times more likely to say that people being drunk or rowdy in public places was a “very” or “fairly” big problem in their neighbourhood (20% versus 7%).

Text Box 3 Perceptions of discrimination among residents of the North

In 2004, for the first time, the GSS attempted to measure respondents’ perceptions of their experiences of discrimination in the past five years, based on factors such as race, ethnicity, sex, religion, language, age, and sexual orientation.

The survey also asked about the types of situations in which perceived discrimination was experienced, such as: on the street, in a store, when applying for a job, when dealing with the police, while using public transportation, while attending school, while participating in sports, and in dealing with health care workers.

Overall, 20% of the northern population reported having experienced discrimination, compared with 14% of the population in the provinces. This difference could partly be explained by the fact that higher proportions of Aboriginal people reside in the territories, and Aboriginal people are more likely to report having experienced some form of discrimination (Brzozowski et al., 2006).

Victims of discrimination in the North were more likely to be women (23%) than men (17%). The most commonly reported reasons for discrimination were on the basis of race (12%), ethnicity (10%) and sex (8%). Just under half of respondents reported having experienced discrimination at work or when they applied for a job or a promotion, while 37% reported having experienced discrimination on the street, 28% in a store, bank or restaurant and 18% while attending school or classes.

About 10% of northern residents and 9% of provincial residents reported having experienced discrimination when dealing with the police or courts.

The nature and extent of police-reported crime in the North

The nature of crime in the North varies compared to the rest of Canada¹¹

In 2005, there were nearly 35,000 police-reported *Criminal Code* incidents in Canada's northern territories (Table 2), representing 1.4% of the national total. When these incidents were classified as either violent crimes, property crimes or other *Criminal Code* offences, almost two-thirds (65%) were other *Criminal Code* violations such as mischief and counterfeiting offences. Another 18% were property crimes, and the remaining 17% were classified as violent crimes.

Elsewhere in Canada, the breakdown of offence types differed substantially from that in the territories. *Criminal Code* incidents occurring in Canada's provinces were most frequently property crimes (49%), followed by 'other' *Criminal Code* violations (39%) and violent offences (12%).

Crime rates highest in the North¹²

Consistent with previous years, while the volume of crime in the North in 2005 was relatively low, when taking into account differences in population, crime rates in the territories were substantially higher than rates in the rest of Canada. Specifically, crime rates in the North were over four times higher than rates in the provinces (33,186 compared to 7,679 incidents per 100,000 population).

The Northwest Territories had the highest rate among the three territories at 41,245 incidents per 100,000 population. This rate was 1.3 times higher than the rate in Nunavut, 1.8 times higher than that in Yukon and nearly three times higher than that in Saskatchewan, the province with the highest provincial crime rate (14,320).

Violent crime

Violent crimes are characterized by the fact that they involve violence or the threat of violence or result in the deprivation of freedom. These crimes include homicide, attempted murder, assault, sexual assault, other assaults, other sexual offences, abduction and robbery. Territorial police services reported almost 6,000 violent offences in 2005, a substantial majority (88%) of which were

Text Box 4

Comparing victimization data from the General Social Survey and police-reported crime data from the Aggregate Uniform Crime Reporting Survey¹³

The GSS is a sample survey, which in 2004, surveyed about 1,300 northern residents and 24,000 provincial residents. Each sample was weighted so that responses represented the non-institutionalized population aged 15 years and older.

The aggregate UCR survey is a census of all incidents reported by police services across Canada. While the GSS captures information on 8 offences, the UCR survey collects data on over 100 categories of criminal offences.

The UCR survey captures actual criminal incidents that have come to the attention of the police as well as those that have been detected through police investigation while the GSS records respondents' personal account of criminal victimization incidents. Many factors can influence the UCR police-reported crime rate, including the willingness of the public to report crimes to the police; reporting by police to the UCR survey; and changes in legislation, policies or enforcement practices. For instance, when victims do not report incidents to police, those incidents will not be reflected in official crime statistics. Similarly, incidents that are reported to the police, but upon investigation are judged by police to be unfounded, are also excluded from official crime statistics.

One way to estimate the extent of crime that is not reported to police is through the GSS victimization survey. Because the GSS asks a sample of the population about their personal victimization experiences, it captures information on crimes whether or not they have been reported to police. The amount of unreported victimization can be substantial. For example, the 2004 GSS estimated that 88% of sexual assaults, 69% of household thefts, and 67% of personal property thefts were not reported to the police. As a result, victimization surveys usually produce much higher rates of victimization than police-reported crime statistics.

Despite the benefits of victimization surveys, they do have limitations. For one, they rely on respondents' perceptions and their ability to report events accurately. They are also only able to address certain types of victimization. They do not capture information on crimes that have no obvious victim (e.g., prostitution or impaired driving), where the victim is a business or school, where the victim is deceased (as in homicides), or when the victim is a child (anyone under the age of 15 in the case of the GSS).

classified as assaults (levels 1,2,3). In comparison, assaults made up 77% of the 298,000 violent crimes reported in the provinces.

Similar to results from the GSS, the police-reported violent crime rate in the North was much higher than in the provinces. Specifically, the violent crime rate in the territories was 5,687 per 100,000 population, seven times higher than that in the provinces. Among the three northern territories, the rate was the highest in Nunavut, followed closely by Northwest Territories (7,042 compared to 6,614 incidents per 100,000 population). With a rate that was less than half that of the other territories, Yukon's violent crime rate was still over 1.5 times higher than the highest provincial rate, held in Saskatchewan (3,088 compared to 1,983 incidents per 100,000 population). In spite of their higher rates of overall violent crime, robbery rates in the territories were among the lowest in Canada, and comparable to rates in the Atlantic provinces.

There were also some substantial variations in rates of individual violent offences between the three territories. For example, while Nunavut had the highest rates of assault and sexual assault, its robbery rate was much lower than that of both Yukon and Northwest Territories (Table 2).

Property crime

Property crimes, which are considered less serious than violent crimes, are committed with the intent to acquire property without violence or the threat of violence. The property crime category consists of thefts, break-ins, theft of motor vehicles and fraud. Generally speaking, property crimes are much more frequently committed than are violent offences. For example, in the provinces in 2005, the number of property-related crimes reported by police was four times higher than the number of violent crimes (about 1.2 million property crimes compared to 298,362 violent crimes). This however, was not the case for incidents committed in the territories, with property crimes only slightly more common than violent incidents (6,321 compared to 5,912, respectively).

Overall, property crime rates in the territories were higher than those in the provinces, however, when comparing individual provincial and territorial rates, there was one exception. Nunavut which had the lowest property crime rate among the territories (5,555 per 100,000 population) also had a lower rate than British Columbia (6,234). Nunavut's rate was similar to rates in Saskatchewan (5,484) and Manitoba (4,995).

Not unlike the territorial variations among individual violent offences, there were also differences in rates of individual property offences between the territories. For example, rates of break-ins and motor vehicle theft were much lower in Yukon than in the Northwest Territories and Nunavut. However, the rate of other types of theft in Yukon (3,588 per 100,000 population) was greater than in the Northwest Territories (3,106 per 100,000 population) and Nunavut (1,877 per 100,000 population).

Other Criminal Code offences

There are a number of offences which are neither classified as violent or property crimes. These are grouped as 'other' *Criminal Code* offences. Specifically, offences in this category predominantly include mischief, counterfeiting and disturbing the peace. Less commonly reported offences against the administration of justice, offensive weapons violations and arson are also included in this category.

Police services in the North reported approximately 22,000 'other' *Criminal Code* offences, with over 45% of these being classified as mischief offences.

Similar to violent and property crime rates, rates of 'other' *Criminal Code* offences were much higher in the territories than they were in the provinces (21,419 compared to 3,021 per 100,000 population). Considering each of the three territories individually, the rate was highest in the Northwest Territories (28,147) followed by Nunavut (20,185) and Yukon (13,283). By comparison, the highest provincial rates were considerably lower, with Saskatchewan recording a rate of 6,853, Manitoba at 5,149 and British Columbia at 4,498 incidents per 100,000 population.

While mischief was the most commonly reported 'other' *Criminal Code* offence, rates of mischief varied significantly between the territories. For example, the rate in Northwest Territories, (13,320) was more than twice the rate recorded in Yukon (5,673 incidents per 100,000 population).

Table 2
Selected *Criminal Code* incidents, Canada and the provinces/territories, 2005¹

	N.L.	P.E.I.	N.S.	N.B.	Que.	Ont.	Man.	Sask.
Population, 2005	515,961	138,113	937,889	752,006	7,598,146	12,541,410	1,177,556	994,126
Homicide								
number	9	0	20	9	100	218	49	43
rate	1.7	0.0	2.1	1.2	1.3	1.7	4.2	4.3
Assault (Levels 1,2,3)								
number	3,759	896	8,770	5,156	39,866	69,991	14,755	16,163
rate	729	649	935	686	525	558	1,253	1,626
Sexual assault (Levels 1,2,3)								
number	436	89	775	511	4,935	7,801	1,318	1,307
rate	85	64	83	68	65	62	112	131
Robbery								
number	149	17	707	246	6,754	9,918	2,007	1,243
rate	29	12	75	33	89	79	170	125
Violent crime - Total								
number	4,482	1,052	10,675	6,272	56,175	93,788	18,837	19,717
rate	869	762	1,138	834	739	748	1,600	1,983
Breaking & entering								
number	4,198	845	7,298	4,870	65,167	68,349	13,218	14,596
rate	814	612	778	648	858	545	1,122	1,468
Motor vehicle theft								
number	775	229	2,632	1,440	38,546	39,483	14,200	6,177
rate	150	166	281	191	507	315	1,206	621
Other theft								
number	6,806	3,256	19,228	11,762	113,397	196,871	27,951	28,079
rate	1,319	2,357	2,050	1,564	1,492	1,570	2,374	2,824
Property crime - Total								
number	13,078	4,790	34,005	20,476	238,033	352,127	58,815	54,514
rate	2,535	3,468	3,626	2,723	3,133	2,808	4,995	5,484
Counterfeiting ²								
number	137	89	1,096	560	59,019	73,987	657	1,123
rate	27	64	117	74	777	590	56	113
Mischief								
number	6,572	2,257	14,431	9,163	44,768	87,808	32,268	30,145
rate	1,274	1,634	1,539	1,218	589	700	2,740	3,032
Other <i>Criminal Code</i> offences - Total								
number	13,856	5,187	33,589	24,054	164,119	278,949	60,630	68,123
rate	2,685	3,756	3,581	3,199	2,160	2,224	5,149	6,853
<i>Criminal Code</i> - Total - without traffic offences								
number	31,416	11,029	78,269	50,802	458,327	724,864	138,282	142,354
rate	6,089	7,985	8,345	6,756	6,032	5,780	11,743	14,320

1. Rates are calculated on the basis of 100,000 population. The population estimates come from the *Annual Demographic Statistics, 2005* report, produced by Statistics Canada, Demography Division. Populations as of July 1st: preliminary postcensal estimates for 2005.

2. Due to an improved data collection methodology, RCMP was able for the first time in 2005 to report counterfeit bills deposited to banks. As a result, estimates were made for certain police services for 2004. Therefore please use caution when comparing these data with prior years.

Source: Statistics Canada, Canadian Centre for Justice Statistics, Uniform Crime Reporting Survey, 2005.

Table 2 – concluded
Selected *Criminal Code* incidents, Canada and the provinces/territories, 2005¹

	Alta.	B.C.	Total provinces	Yukon	N.W.T.	Nvt.	Total territories	Canada
Population, 2005	3,256,816	4,254,522	32,166,545	30,988	42,982	29,992	103,962	32,270,507
Homicide								
number	109	98	655	1	0	2	3	658
rate	3.3	2.3	2.0	3.2	0.0	6.7	2.9	2.0
Assault (Levels 1,2,3)								
number	28,567	41,603	229,526	857	2,554	1,792	5,203	234,729
rate	877	978	714	2,766	5,942	5,975	5,005	727
Sexual assault (Levels 1,2,3)								
number	2,246	3,415	22,833	56	175	239	470	23,303
rate	69	80	71	181	407	797	452	72
Robbery								
number	2,972	4,619	28,632	16	15	6	37	28,669
rate	91	109	89	52	35	20	36	89
Violent crime - Total								
number	35,693	51,671	298,362	957	2,843	2,112	5,912	304,274
rate	1,096	1,214	928	3,088	6,614	7,042	5,687	943
Breaking & entering								
number	29,037	49,611	257,189	497	982	853	2,332	259,521
rate	892	1,166	800	1,604	2,285	2,844	2,243	804
Motor vehicle theft								
number	21,231	34,800	159,513	148	275	164	587	160,100
rate	652	818	496	478	640	547	565	496
Other theft								
number	89,144	158,701	655,195	1,112	1,335	563	3,010	658,205
rate	2,737	3,730	2,037	3,588	3,106	1,877	2,895	2,040
Property crime - Total								
number	158,737	265,246	1,199,821	1,868	2,787	1,666	6,321	1,206,142
rate	4,874	6,234	3,730	6,028	6,484	5,555	6,080	3,738
Counterfeiting ²								
number	6,456	20,124	163,248	20	49	6	75	163,323
rate	198	473	508	65	114	20	72	506
Mischief								
number	54,680	61,727	343,819	1,758	5,725	2,653	10,136	353,955
rate	1,679	1,451	1,069	5,673	13,320	8,846	9,750	1,097
Other <i>Criminal Code</i> offences - Total								
number	132,014	191,354	971,875	4,116	12,098	6,054	22,268	994,143
rate	4,053	4,498	3,021	13,283	28,147	20,185	21,419	3,081
<i>Criminal Code</i> - Total - without traffic offences								
number	326,444	508,271	2,470,058	6,941	17,728	9,832	34,501	2,504,559
rate	10,023	11,947	7,679	22,399	41,245	32,782	33,186	7,761

1. Rates are calculated on the basis of 100,000 population. The population estimates come from the *Annual Demographic Statistics, 2005* report, produced by Statistics Canada, Demography Division. Populations as of July 1st: preliminary postcensal estimates for 2005.

2. Due to an improved data collection methodology, RCMP was able for the first time in 2005 to report counterfeit bills deposited to banks. As a result, estimates were made for certain police services for 2004. Therefore please use caution when comparing these data with prior years.

Source: Statistics Canada, Canadian Centre for Justice Statistics, Uniform Crime Reporting Survey, 2005.

Methodology

General Social Survey on Victimization

In 2004, Statistics Canada conducted the victimization cycle of the General Social Survey for the fourth time. Previous cycles were conducted in 1988, 1993 and 1999. The objectives of the survey are to provide estimates of the extent to which people experience incidences of eight offence types, examining risk factors associated with victimization, reporting rates to police, and measures fear of crime and public perceptions of crime and the criminal justice system.

Sampling

The 2004 GSS on victimization had a sample size of 24,000 households in the provinces that were selected using Random Digit Dialing (RDD). Once a household was chosen, an individual 15 years or older was selected randomly to respond to the survey. The use of telephones for sample selection and data collection means that the 2004 GSS sample in the provinces only covers the 96% of the population that had telephone service.

The 2004 GSS also included a test collection of telephone survey data in the northern territories. In an attempt to improve the coverage of the survey, the sample of 1,300 households was selected from the respondents to the 2003 Canada Community Health Survey rather than using RDD. It is estimated that a sample Selected and interviewed this way in the North only covers 60% of the population of the territories.

Data limitations

The 2004 GSS on victimization was conducted in Yukon, Northwest Territories and Nunavut as part of a pilot test. Compared to other areas in Canada, collection in the territories poses additional challenges, due to higher rates of incomplete telephone service and language difficulties. As a result, sampling and data collection are more difficult in the territories. The 2004 victimization data from the territories produce estimates with known biases and may include unknown biases. For example, the sample over-estimates the population with English as a household language and under-estimates the Aboriginal population whose mother tongue is not English. Between slippage and non-response, only 60% of the northern population is represented in the GSS-18 northern sample. It is unknown whether the other 40% are similar with respect to all characteristics. As a result the data contained in these files should be used with caution.

This profile uses the coefficient of variation (CV) as a measure of the sampling error. Any estimate that has a high CV (over 33.3%) has not been published because the estimate is too unreliable. An estimate that has a CV between 16.6 and 33.3 should be used with caution and the symbol 'E' is used.

When comparing estimates for significant differences, we test the hypothesis that the difference between two estimates is zero. We construct a 95% confidence interval around this difference and if this interval contains zero, then we conclude that the difference is not significant. If, however, this confidence interval does not contain zero, then we conclude that there is a significant difference between the two estimates.

Aggregate Uniform Crime Reporting Survey

The aggregate UCR survey records the number of incidents reported to the police. It includes the number of reported offences, actual offences, offences cleared by charge or cleared otherwise, persons charged (by sex and by an adult/youth breakdown) and those not charged. It does not include victim characteristics.

The aggregate UCR survey classifies incidents according to the most serious offence in the incident (generally the offence that carries the longest maximum sentence under the *Criminal Code*). In

categorizing incidents, violent offences always take precedence over non-violent offences. As a result, less serious offences are under-represented by the UCR survey.

The aggregate UCR survey scores violent incidents (except robbery) differently from other types of crime. For violent crime, a separate incident is recorded for each victim (i.e. if one person assaults three people, then three incidents are recorded; but if three people assault one person, only one incident is recorded). Robbery, however, is counted as if it were a non-violent crime in order to avoid inflating the number of victims (e.g. for a bank robbery, counting everyone present in the bank would result in an over-counting of robbery incidents). For non-violent crimes, one incident (categorized according to the most serious offence) is counted for every distinct or separate occurrence.

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Endnotes

1. The GSS on victimization captures information on eight types of victimizations. The survey does not capture information on crimes with no obvious victim (e.g., prostitution or impaired driving), when the victim is a business or school, when the victim is deceased (e.g. homicides), or when the victim is under the age of 15.
2. In this report, police-reported crime rates are calculated per 100,000 population while self-reported victimization rates are calculated per 1,000 population.
3. Throughout this report, the North includes Northwest Territories, Yukon and Nunavut.
4. Using this method, the telephone numbers in the sample are selected using the Elimination of Non-Working Banks technique. This sampling technique is a method in which an attempt is made to identify all working banks for an area (i.e., to identify all sets of 100 telephone numbers with the same first eight digits containing at least one number that belongs to a household). Thus, all telephone numbers within non working banks are eliminated from the sampling frame.
5. This section includes incidents of spousal physical and sexual assault. For more information, see Gannon and Mihorean, 2005.
6. This section provides descriptive socio-demographic characteristics associated with the risk of violent victimization. It does not, however, account for the possibility that these factors may be correlated with one another or with other factors that could further increase the risk of violent victimization.
7. This section excludes incidents of spousal physical and sexual assault because detailed information on each spousal incident is not available.
8. Includes only violent incidents committed by a single perpetrator.
9. It is recognized that those who identify themselves as Aboriginal people are characterized by diversity in their culture, language, legal status and the various geographic settings in which they live. However, due to sample size restrictions as well as pre-established survey categories, analysis in this section of the report is limited to considering Aboriginal people as one group.
10. In 2005, for every 100,000 residents, there were 387 police officers in Yukon, 402 in Northwest Territories and 403 in Nunavut. This compares to an average of under 200 police officers for every 100,000 residents in the provinces.
11. Figures may not add to 100% due to rounding.
12. Crime rates in the territories can be subject to greater fluctuations due to their relatively small populations.
13. For more detailed information, please refer to Ogrodnik, L. and C. Trainor. 1997. *Differences between Police-Reported and Victim-Reported Crime, 1997*. Catalogue no. 85-542. Ottawa: Statistics Canada.

Canadian Centre for Justice Statistics Profile Series Cumulative Index

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