

Crime Statistics in New Brunswick 2010

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STATISTICAL HIGHLIGHTS

- New Brunswick's overall crime rate decreased 2.3% in 2010 to 55.0 offences per 1,000 population, the lowest crime rate in four years.
- The Crime Severity Index (CSI) lists NB's 2010 CSI value as 69.0, 3% lower than NB's 2009 CSI value and 17% lower than Canada's 2010 CSI value of 82.7.
- The number of violent offences dropped 1.7% in 2010, resulting in a 2% decline in the violent crime rate (15.1 offences per 1,000 population).
- NB's violent crime rate in 2010 was greater than the national violent crime rate (12.8 offences per 1,000 population).
- NB had the second lowest violent CSI in the country in 2010 at 68.4, down 5% from the previous year.
- Property offences decreased 1.6% in 2010, resulting in a 1.9% drop in the property crime rate to 32.8 offences per 1,000 population, the lowest property crime rate in four years.
- NB had the second lowest non-violent CSI in Canada in 2010 at 69.2, down 1% from the previous year.
- Decreases were reported in all "other crime" categories in 2010 except child pornography, which remained unchanged since 2009. There was a corresponding decrease in total other offences by 4.8% in 2010 to a rate of 7.0 offences per 1,000 population.
- The number of impaired driving offences increased 8.3% in 2010 to a rate of 3.5 offences per 1,000 population, which was 40% greater than the national impaired driving rate of 2.5.
- Drug offences increased 10.4% in 2010 to a rate of 2.8 offences per 1,000 population. Half of all drug crimes were for possession and 70% of drug crimes were cannabis-related offences.
- NB's youth CSI was 97.6 in 2010, down 14% over the previous year, but 8% higher than Canada's 2010 youth CSI value of 90.5.
- NB had the third lowest violent youth CSI in the country in 2010 at 68.7, down 24% since 2009 and 27% less than the national 2010 violent youth CSI value of 93.7.
- NB's non-violent youth CSI was 119.5 in 2010, down 10% from 2009, but 36% greater than Canada's 2010 non-violent youth CSI value of 88.0.

OVERVIEW OF CRIME

In 2010, there were 41,320 *Criminal Code* offences (excluding traffic) in New Brunswick, 2.0% less than the 42,171 offences reported in 2009. Fluctuations in specific crimes in NB from 2007 to 2010 are shown in Table 1 on page 9.

As shown in Figure 1, 60% of offences were violations against property; 27% were violations against the person; and the remaining 13% were other non-violent *Criminal Code* violations.

New Brunswick's overall crime rate was 55.0 offences per 1,000 population in 2010, a decrease of 2.3% from the 56.3 offences per 1,000 population recorded in the previous year. Between 2008 and 2009, NB's crime rate dropped 1.3%. The national crime rate was 61.5 offences per 1,000 people in 2010.

In 2010, the national Crime Severity Index (CSI) was 82.7 while NB's value was 69.0, down 3% from 2009. New Brunswick ranked third with respect to the lowest crime severity across all provinces and territories in Canada in 2010. The only provinces to have lower total CSI's were Ontario and Prince Edward Island. New Brunswick, however, had the second lowest violent CSI in the country at 68.4 (down 5% from the previous year) and the second lowest non-violent CSI at 69.2 (down 1% from 2009). Canada's violent CSI was 88.9 in 2010, and the national non-violent CSI was 80.3, as shown in Table 2 on page 10.

In 2010, the national Youth Crime Severity Index was 90.5 while New Brunswick's value was 97.6, down 14% since 2009. New Brunswick ranked sixth with respect to lowest youth crime severity across all provinces and territories in 2010. New Brunswick had the third lowest violent youth CSI in the country at 68.7, down 24% from the previous year. The province's non-violent youth CSI was the seventh lowest in the country at 119.5, down 10% from 2009. Canada's youth violent CSI was 93.7 and the national youth non-violent CSI was 88.0 in 2010. See Table 3 on page 10 for the provincial, territorial, and national youth CSI values.

Figure 1. Criminal Code Offences in New Brunswick, 2010

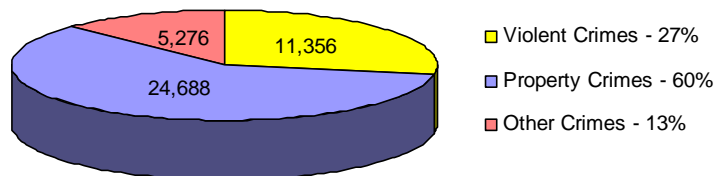


Figure 2. Number and Rate of Criminal Code Offences (excluding traffic) in NB, 2007-2010

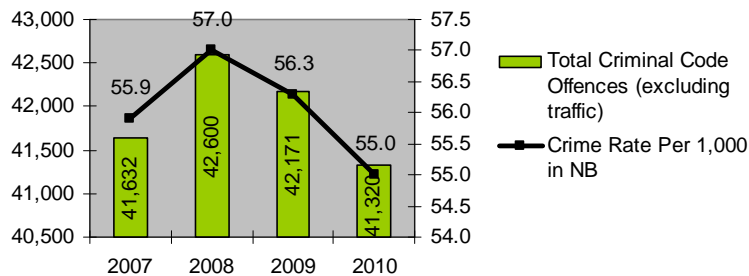
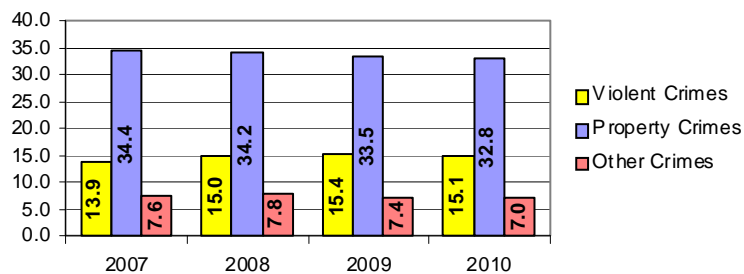


Figure 3. NB Crime Rate Per 1,000 by Category, 2007-2010



VIOLENT OFFENCES

Violent offences include homicide, attempted murder, sexual assaults, assaults, firearms offences, robbery, forcible confinement/kidnapping, abduction, and other violent offences.

In 2010, there were 11,356 violent offences reported in NB, representing a 1.7% decrease (-195 incidents) from the 11,551 offences reported in 2009. The number of violent offences in 2009 had increased 3.1% from 2008 when 11,208 violent crimes were reported to police.

In 2010, the violent crime rate was 15.1 offences per 1,000 people in NB, a decrease of 2.0% from the previous year when the violent crime rate was 15.4. Canada's violent crime rate was 12.8 offences per 1,000 population in 2010.

Between 2009 and 2010, increases were reported in attempted murder (+40.0%), other violations causing death (+50.0%), level 1 sexual assault (+5.4%), sexual violations against children (+36.2%), assaults against a peace officer (+58.5%), firearms offences (+72.2%), forcible confinement/kidnapping (+9.3%), criminal harassment (+9.3%), and threatening/harassing phone calls (+9.4%). Homicide (-25.0%), level 3 sexual assault (-100.0%), level 2 sexual assault (-25.0%), level 3 assault (-1.8%), level 2 assault (-15.8%), level 1 assault (-2.9%), other assaults (-35.7%), robbery (-27.9%), abduction (-60.0%), uttering threats (-3.6%), and other violent violations (-40.9%) decreased.

More than half (52%) of all violent crimes reported in NB in 2010 were assaults (levels 1, 2, & 3). There were 5,923 assaults in 2010, down 5.2% from the 6,247 assaults reported in 2009. The rate of assaults decreased 5.1%, from 8.3 in 2009 to 7.9 offences per 1,000 population in 2010. Common assault, or level 1 assault, is the least serious form of assault but the most frequently reported. Common assault made up 84% of all assaults in 2010 (4,946 incidents), a 2.9% decrease from 2009.

Figure 4. Number and Rate of Violent Crimes in NB, 2007-2010

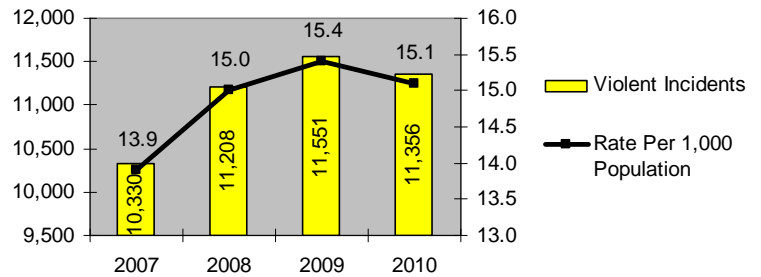


Figure 5. Number and Rate of Assaults in NB 2007-2010

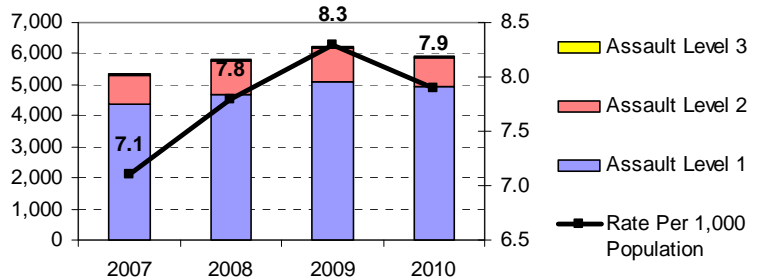
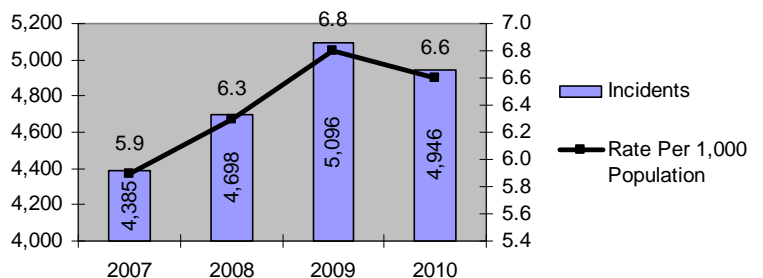


Figure 6. Number and Rate of Level 1 Assault in NB, 2007-2010



PROPERTY OFFENCES

Property crimes include the offence categories of theft, motor vehicle theft, possession of stolen property, break and enter, arson, mischief, fraud, identity theft, and identity fraud.

In 2010, there were 24,688 property offences reported in NB, a reduction of 1.6% (-389 incidents) from the 25,077 offences reported in 2009. The number of property crimes in 2009 had decreased 1.9% from 2008 when 25,569 property offences were reported to police.

In 2010, the property crime rate was 32.8 offences per 1,000 people in NB, a decrease of 1.9% from the previous year when the property crime rate was 33.5. The national property crime rate was 38.5 offences per 1,000 people in 2010.

Reductions were reported in every property crime category except break and enter (+4.7%) and theft (+4.0%) in 2010. Thefts accounted for 42% of all property crimes, and 25% of all *Criminal Code* offences. A total of 10,358 thefts were reported to police, for a rate of 13.8 offences per 1,000 population. The rate of thefts increased 3.8% between 2009 and 2010. Thefts under \$5,000 made up 98% of all thefts (10,116 offences), while theft over \$5,000 comprised the remaining 2% (242 offences).

The second most prevalent property crime reported in NB in 2010 was mischief at 29% of all property crimes. That year, 7,112 mischief offences were reported to police, down 9.0% from the 7,816 reported in 2009. The rate of mischief offences per 1,000 people in 2010 was 9.5, which was 9.3% less than the 2009 rate of 10.4.

Figure 7. Number and Rate of Property Crimes in NB, 2007-2010

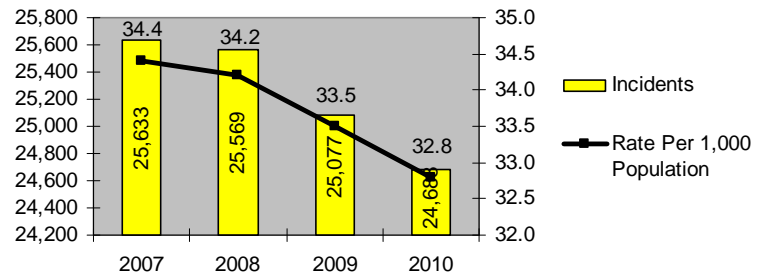


Figure 8. Number and Rate of Thefts in NB 2007-2010

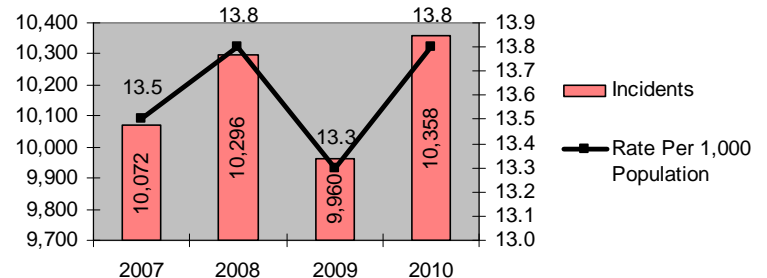
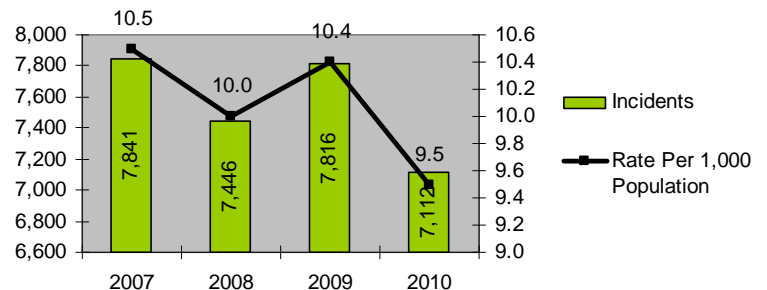


Figure 9. Number and Rate of Mischief Offences in NB, 2007-2010



OTHER OFFENCES

Criminal Code offences which are not violent or property-related are classified as other crimes. These include counterfeiting, weapons violations, child pornography, prostitution, disturbing the peace, administration of justice violations, and other non-violent *Criminal Code* violations.

In 2010, there were 5,276 other crimes reported in NB, a decrease of 4.8% (-267 incidents) from the 5,543 offences reported in 2009. The number of other crimes in 2009 had dropped 4.8% from 2008 when 5,823 other crimes were reported to police.

In 2010, the rate of other crimes was 7.0 offences per 1,000 people in NB, a decrease of 5.1% from the previous year when the other crime rate was 7.4. Canada's other crime rate was 10.2 offences per 1,000 population in 2010.

Decreases were reported in all "other crime" categories except child pornography in 2010, which remained unchanged since 2009. In both years, 36 child pornography offences were reported, for a rate of 4.8 per 100,000 population.

The largest category of other offences is administration of justice violations, with 2,590 offences representing 49% of other crimes in 2010. Since 2008, the rate of administration of justice violations has declined 8.1% from 3.7 offences per 1,000 people in 2008 to 3.4 in 2010. Administration of justice violations include, but are not limited to, breach of probation, failing to comply with an order, and failing to appear.

The second most frequently reported category of other crimes in 2010 was other non-violent *Criminal Code* violations, such as trespassing at night, obstructing a public or peace officer, and indecent acts. Offences within this category dropped 5.0% between 2009 and 2010.

Figure 10. Number and Rate of Other Crimes in NB, 2007-2010

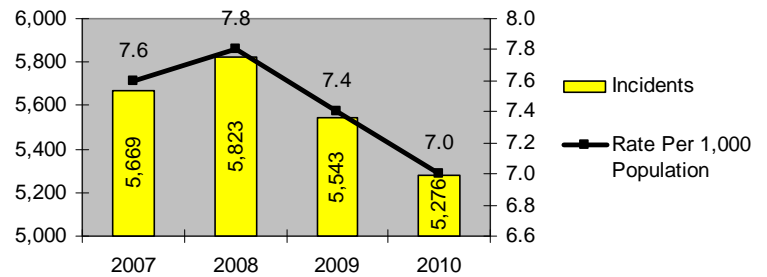


Figure 11. Other Crimes in New Brunswick 2007-2010

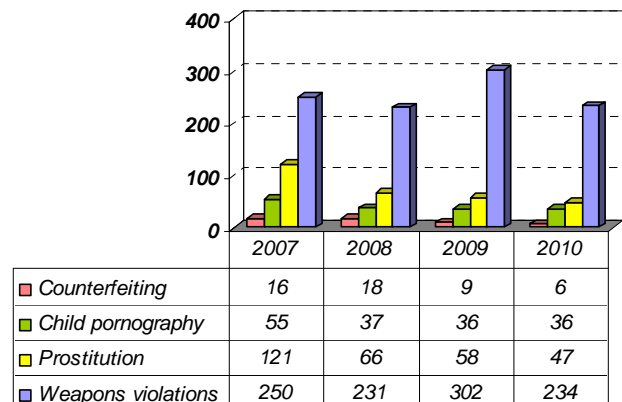
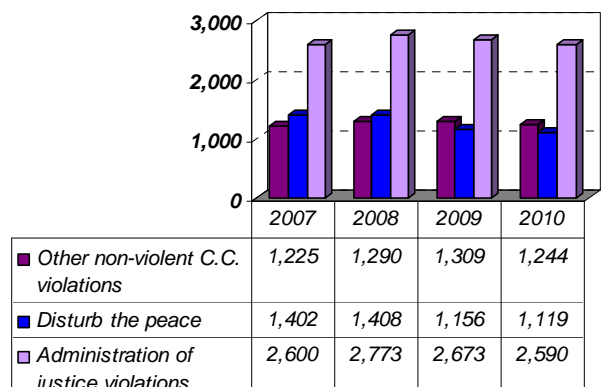


Figure 12. Other Crimes in New Brunswick 2007-2010



IMPAIRED DRIVING OFFENCES

Impaired driving crimes include the offence categories of impaired operation causing death; impaired operation (drugs) causing death; impaired operation causing bodily harm; impaired operation (drugs) causing bodily harm; impaired operation of a motor vehicle, vessel, or aircraft; impaired operation (drugs) of a motor vehicle, vessel, or aircraft; failure to provide a breath sample; failure to comply or refusal (drugs); failure to provide a blood sample; and failure to provide a blood sample (drugs).

In 2010, there were 2,628 impaired driving offences reported in NB, an increase of 8.3% from the 2,426 incidents in 2009. The rate of impaired driving was 3.5 offences per 1,000 people, an increase of 8.0% from the 2009 rate of 3.2. Canada's impaired driving rate was significantly smaller at 2.5 offences per 1,000 population in 2010.

The number of impaired driving by drug offences increased 281.5% in 2009, from 27 reported incidents in 2008 to 103 incidents in 2009. In 2010, 53 impaired operation by drug offences were reported, for a decrease of 48.5% over the previous year.

Ninety-one percent of all impaired driving related offences in 2010 were impaired operation (by alcohol) of a motor vehicle, vessel or aircraft. Police reported 2,391 of these incidents in 2010, up from 2,124 incidents in 2009, for a 12.6% increase.

Figure 13. Number and Rate of Impaired Driving Offences in NB, 2007-2010

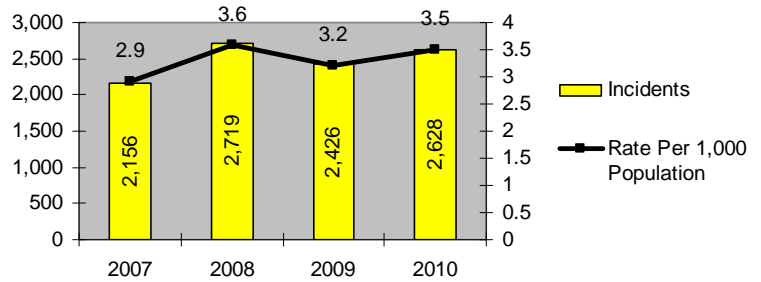


Figure 14. Number and Rate of Impaired Operation (Drugs) of a Motor Vehicle, Vessel or Aircraft in NB, 2007-2010

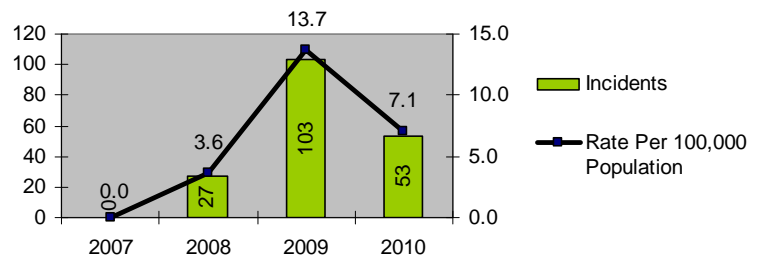
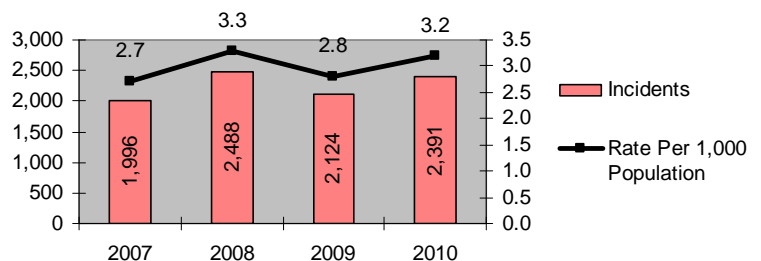


Figure 15. Number and Rate of Impaired Operation (Alcohol) of a Motor Vehicle, Vessel or Aircraft in NB, 2007-2010



DRUG OFFENCES

Drug crimes include possession, trafficking, production, and distribution (importation/exportation) related offences for cannabis, cocaine, heroin, methamphetamines (crystal meth), methylenedioxyamphetamines (ecstasy) and other drugs. The authority for these offences is within the *Controlled Drugs and Substances Act* and, as a result, drug crimes are not included in the overall crime rate.

In 2010, drug crimes increased 10.4%, from 1,926 incidents reported to police in 2009 to 2,127 incidents in 2010. Similarly, the drug crime rate rose from 2.6 in 2009 to 2.8 offences per 1,000 population in 2010. Between 2008 and 2009, drug crimes increased 5.9% and the drug crime rate grew 8.3% in New Brunswick. The national drug crime rate was 3.2 offences per 1,000 people in 2010.

In 2010, possession offences increased 13.7% while trafficking, production, and distribution offences increased 7.2%, over the previous year. Increases were reported in cannabis (+17.8%), heroin (+50.0%), crystal meth (+19.2%), and ecstasy (+275.0%) offences in 2010. Decreases were reported in cocaine (-14.6%) and other CDSA drug offences (-2.2%).

In 2010, cannabis offences (possession, trafficking, production, and distribution) accounted for 70% of all drug crimes, while other CDSA drugs made up 16%, cocaine comprised 10%, crystal meth – 1.5%, and heroin and ecstasy – 0.7% each. Possession of cannabis alone made up 41% of all drug offences. In 2010, police reported 879 cannabis possession offences, one more incident than in 2009.

Figure 16. Number and Rate of Drug Crimes in NB 2007-2010

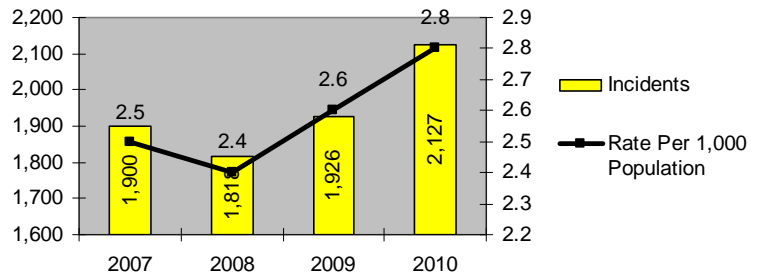


Figure 17. Drug Crimes in NB 2007-2010

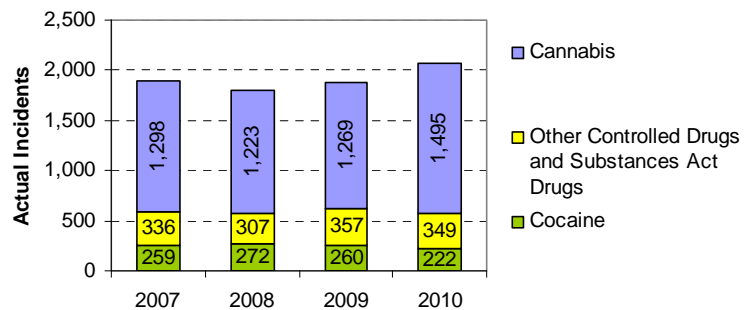


Figure 18. Drug Crimes in NB 2007-2010

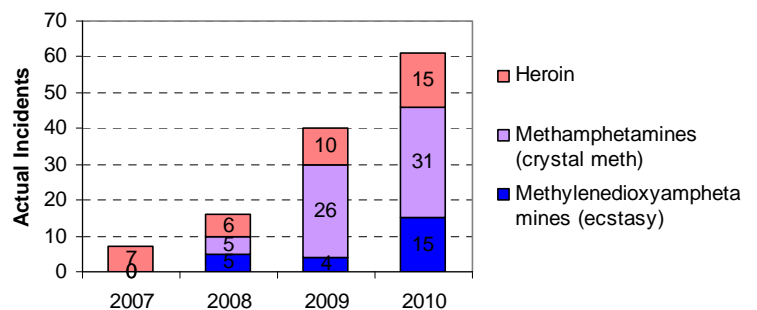


Table 1. Police-Reported Criminal Code, Impaired Driving, and Drug Offences - NEW BRUNSWICK

Crime Category	Number of Offences						Rate Per 1,000 Population					
	2007	2008	2009	2010	Vol Chg 09/10	% Chg 09/10	2007	2008	2009	2010	Vol Chg 09/10	% Chg 09/10
TOTAL CRIMINAL CODE	41,632	42,600	42,171	41,320	-851	-2.0	55.854	57.011	56.268	54.965	-1.303	-2.3
VIOLATIONS AGAINST THE PERSON	10,330	11,208	11,551	11,356	-195	-1.7	13.855	15.001	15.412	15.106	-0.306	-2.0
Homicide	8	3	12	9	-3	-25.0	0.011	0.004	0.016	0.012	-0.004	-25.0
Total Other Violations Causing Death	4	2	2	3	1	50.0	0.005	0.003	0.003	0.004	0.001	33.3
Attempted Murder	5	7	10	14	4	40.0	0.007	0.009	0.013	0.019	0.006	46.2
Sexual Assault, level 3, aggravated	2	6	3	0	-3	-100.0	0.003	0.008	0.004	0.000	-0.004	-100.0
Sexual Assault, level 2, weapon or bodily harm	7	9	4	3	-1	-25.0	0.009	0.012	0.005	0.004	-0.001	-20.0
Sexual Assault, level 1	498	563	552	582	30	5.4	0.668	0.754	0.737	0.774	0.037	5.0
Total sexual violations against children	10	51	94	128	34	36.2	0.013	0.068	0.125	0.170	0.045	36.0
Assault, level 3, aggravated	49	58	56	55	-1	-1.8	0.066	0.078	0.075	0.073	-0.002	-2.7
Assault, level 2, weapon or bodily harm	896	1,080	1,095	922	-173	-15.8	1.202	1.445	1.461	1.226	-0.235	-16.1
Assault, level 1	4,385	4,698	5,096	4,946	-150	-2.9	5.881	6.288	6.799	6.579	-0.220	-3.2
Total assaults against a peace officer	230	266	246	390	144	58.5	0.308	0.356	0.328	0.519	0.191	58.2
Total other assaults	16	24	14	9	-5	-35.7	0.021	0.032	0.019	0.012	-0.007	-36.8
Total firearms; use of, discharge, pointing	23	36	36	62	26	72.2	0.031	0.048	0.048	0.082	0.034	70.8
Total robbery	231	210	197	142	-55	-27.9	0.310	0.281	0.263	0.189	-0.074	-28.1
Forcible confinement or kidnapping	52	41	54	59	5	9.3	0.070	0.055	0.072	0.078	0.006	8.3
Total abduction	9	15	10	4	-6	-60.0	0.012	0.020	0.013	0.005	-0.008	-61.5
Extortion	10	14	11	11	0	0.0	0.013	0.019	0.015	0.015	0.000	0.0
Criminal harassment	467	596	603	659	56	9.3	0.626	0.798	0.805	0.877	0.072	8.9
Uttering threats	2,375	2,538	2,561	2,468	-93	-3.6	3.186	3.397	3.417	3.283	-0.134	-3.9
Threatening or harassing phone calls	843	786	721	789	68	9.4	1.131	1.052	0.962	1.050	0.088	9.1
Total other violent violations	210	205	171	101	-70	-40.9	0.282	0.274	0.228	0.134	-0.094	-41.2
VIOLATIONS AGAINST PROPERTY	25,633	25,569	25,077	24,688	-389	-1.6	34.381	34.222	33.460	32.840	-0.620	-1.9
Break and Enter	3,849	3,816	3,470	3,633	163	4.7	5.163	5.107	4.630	4.833	0.203	4.4
Possess stolen property	324	354	418	360	-58	-13.9	0.435	0.474	0.558	0.479	-0.079	-14.2
Motor vehicle theft	1,345	1,285	1,288	1,239	-49	-3.8	1.804	1.720	1.719	1.648	-0.071	-4.1
Theft	10,072	10,296	9,960	10,358	398	4.0	13.510	13.780	13.289	13.779	0.490	3.7
Fraud	1,774	1,914	1,668	1,471	-197	-11.8	2.379	2.562	2.226	1.957	-0.269	-12.1
Identity Theft	0	0	0	31	31	0.0	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.041	0.041	0.0
Identity Fraud	0	0	0	66	66	0.0	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.088	0.088	0.0
Mischief	7,841	7,446	7,816	7,112	-704	-9.0	10.517	9.966	10.429	9.461	-0.968	-9.3
Arson	428	458	457	418	-39	-8.5	0.574	0.613	0.610	0.556	-0.054	-8.9
OTHER NON-VIOLENT C.C. VIOLATIONS	5,669	5,823	5,543	5,276	-267	-4.8	7.604	7.794	7.396	7.018	-0.378	-5.1
Counterfeiting	16	18	9	6	-3	-33.3	0.021	0.024	0.012	0.008	-0.004	-33.3
Total weapons violations	250	231	302	234	-68	-22.5	0.335	0.309	0.403	0.311	-0.092	-22.8
Child pornography	55	37	36	36	0	0.0	0.074	0.050	0.048	0.048	0.000	0.0
Total prostitution	121	66	58	47	-11	-19.0	0.162	0.088	0.077	0.063	-0.014	-18.2
Disturb the peace	1,402	1,408	1,156	1,119	-37	-3.2	1.880	1.885	1.542	1.489	-0.053	-3.4
Total administration of justice violations	2,600	2,773	2,673	2,590	-83	-3.1	3.487	3.711	3.567	3.445	-0.122	-3.4
Total other non-violent Criminal Code violations	1,225	1,290	1,309	1,244	-65	-5.0	1.643	1.727	1.747	1.655	-0.092	-5.3
IMPAIRED DRIVING	2,156	2,719	2,426	2,628	202	8.3	2.892	3.639	3.237	3.496	0.259	8.0
Impaired operation, causing death	7	3	2	6	4	200.0	0.009	0.004	0.003	0.008	0.005	166.7
Impaired operation (drugs), causing death	0	0	0	0	0	0.0	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.0
Impaired operation, causing bodily harm	17	23	16	17	1	6.3	0.023	0.031	0.021	0.023	0.002	9.5
Impaired operation (drugs), causing bodily harm	0	0	0	0	0	0.0	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.0
Imp. Oper., of a motor vehicle, vessel or aircraft	1,996	2,488	2,124	2,391	267	12.6	2.677	3.330	2.834	3.181	0.347	12.2
Imp. Oper., (drugs) vehicle, vessel, aircraft	0	27	103	53	-50	-48.5	0.000	0.036	0.137	0.071	-0.066	-48.2
Imp. Oper., failure to provide breath sample	134	166	167	150	-17	-10.2	0.180	0.222	0.223	0.200	-0.023	-10.3
Failure to comply or refusal (drugs)	0	1	1	7	6	600.0	0.000	0.001	0.001	0.009	0.008	800.0
Imp. Oper., failure to provide blood sample	2	10	10	4	-6	-60.0	0.003	0.013	0.013	0.005	-0.008	-61.5
Failure to provide blood sample (drugs)	0	1	1	0	-1	-100.0	0.000	0.001	0.001	0.000	-0.001	-100.0
CONTROLLED DRUGS & SUBSTANCES ACT												
DRUG CRIMES	1,900	1,818	1,926	2,127	201	10.4	2.549	2.433	2.570	2.828	0.258	10.0
Cannabis	1,298	1,223	1,269	1,495	226	17.8	1.741	1.636	1.693	1.988	0.295	17.4
Cocaine	259	272	260	222	-38	-14.6	0.348	0.364	0.347	0.295	-0.052	-15.0
Heroin	7	6	10	15	5	50.0	0.009	0.008	0.013	0.020	0.007	53.8
Other Controlled Drugs and Substances Act	336	307	357	349	-8	-2.2	0.451	0.411	0.476	0.465	-0.011	-2.3
Methamphetamines (crystal meth)	0	5	26	31	5	19.2	0.000	0.006	0.035	0.041	0.006	17.1
Methylenedioxymphetamine (ecstasy)	0	5	4	15	11	275.0	0.000	0.007	0.005	0.020	0.015	300.0

Table 2.

Province and territory	Total Crime Severity Index		Violent Crime Severity Index		Non-violent Crime Severity Index	
	2010 Index	Percent change 2009 to 2010	2010 Index	Percent change 2009 to 2010	2010 Index	Percent change 2009 to 2010
Newfoundland and Labrador	80.2	10	70.2	13	84.1	10
Prince Edward Island	66.0	0	42.1	-5	75.1	1
Nova Scotia	83.5	-1	84.5	-6	83.1	2
New Brunswick	69.0	-3	68.4	-5	69.2	-1
Quebec	76.9	-6	76.5	-5	77.0	-6
Ontario	65.0	-6	77.7	-5	60.2	-6
Manitoba	127.8	-6	162.3	-8	114.5	-5
Saskatchewan	148.2	-1	153.9	-1	145.9	-1
Alberta	97.9	-8	98.1	-8	97.8	-7
British Columbia	102.4	-7	102.1	-8	102.5	-7
Yukon	171.2	-6	188.1	-6	164.7	-5
Northwest Territories	340.2	6	325.2	0	345.9	8
Nunavut	345.7	3	505.7	4	284.2	2
Canada	82.7	-6	88.9	-6	80.3	-6

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

Table 3.

Province and territory	Youth Crime Severity Index		Youth violent Crime Severity Index		Youth non-violent Crime Severity Index	
	2010 Index	Percent change 2009 to 2010	2010 Index	Percent change 2009 to 2010	2010 Index	Percent change 2009 to 2010
Newfoundland and Labrador	76.5	-12	54.0	-1	93.7	-17
Prince Edward Island	67.3	-7	38.8	-22	89.1	-1
Nova Scotia	119.3	-3	110.0	5	126.4	-7
New Brunswick	97.6	-14	68.7	-24	119.5	-10
Quebec	65.4	-6	71.5	-4	60.7	-7
Ontario	82.9	-7	96.4	-3	72.6	-10
Manitoba	171.3	-13	200.5	-16	149.1	-10
Saskatchewan	235.2	-5	190.6	3	269.3	-8
Alberta	99.5	-4	89.1	-5	107.4	-3
British Columbia	70.6	-5	70.0	0	71.0	-8
Yukon	222.7	-26	171.7	-35	261.6	-21
Northwest Territories	427.0	-2	182.3	-17	613.3	2
Nunavut	449.3	-1	330.4	30	539.9	-11
Canada	90.5	-6	93.7	-4	88.0	-8

Note: Refers to youth 12 to 17 years of age who were either charged (or recommended for charging) by police or diverted from the formal criminal justice system through the use of warnings, cautions, referrals to community programs, etc.
Source: Statistics Canada, Canadian Centre for Justice Statistics, Uniform Crime Reporting Survey.

NOTES ABOUT THE DATA

This report is based on police-reported crime data. Every municipal and regional police force in New Brunswick and the RCMP in the province participates in the Uniform Crime Reporting (UCR) Survey, which is managed nationally by the Canadian Centre for Justice Statistics (CCJS). The UCR forms the basis of crime data collection within the provinces/territories and across the country.

The UCR Survey is designed to collect aggregate data on the incidence of crime. This is the number of crimes known to police, whether officers discover the infractions themselves or they are reported to them. The UCR, and by implication this report, only includes what police know about crime. Not all crimes are detected, and some that are detected are never brought to the attention of police.

Although not discussed in this report, victim surveys, such as the General Social Survey (GSS) on victimization, and self-report surveys are alternative sources of data on the prevalence of crime. All of these surveys, including the UCR, are susceptible to several reporting factors and biases and are not directly comparable. However, they may be used in a complementary manner to obtain a more comprehensive understanding of the extent of crime in a population.

The UCR records three major components for each criminal incident: 1) the most serious offence within the incident by type and volume (generally the offence which carries the longest maximum sentence under the *Criminal Code of Canada*); 2) clearance (by charge or otherwise); and 3) persons charged in connection with the offence (by gender and adult/youth). Crimes are cleared in one of two ways: 1) when police file a report to Crown counsel recommending a charge be laid; or 2) where sufficient evidence to proceed with charges exists but the physical arrest of an offender is not possible because s/he has died or left the country, or police, given a certain set of circumstances, decide upon another course of action, e.g., diversion.

Police-reported crime is divided into three major categories of *Criminal Code* offences: 1) violations against the person (violent crimes); 2) violations against property (property crimes); and 3) other non-violent *Criminal Code* violations (other crimes). Offences under these three categories constitute total crimes. *Criminal Code* offences pertaining to traffic (impaired operation and other *Criminal Code* traffic violations) as well as drug crimes (offences under the *Controlled Drugs and Substances Act*) are discussed independent of total crimes.

This report is limited to a discussion of offences under the *Criminal Code of Canada* and the *Controlled Drugs and Substances Act*. It excludes *Criminal Code* traffic violations other than impaired operation offences; it excludes violations under other federal, provincial, and municipal statutes or bylaws as well.

This report presents crime data in four ways: 1) actual incidents; 2) rate per population; 3) percentage change between years; and 4) Crime Severity Index. Actual incidents are the raw numbers of offences reported to or discovered by police which, upon preliminary investigation, have been deemed to have occurred or been attempted. The rate is the number of *Criminal Code* offences or crimes reported for every 1,000 or 100,000 persons. A rate per 100,000 is used when the number of offences reported is small. The rate is a better measure of trends in crime than actual incidents because it allows for population differences. The percentage change enables comparisons in the amount of crime between years. Caution should be used in reviewing the percentage changes as minor increases in reported incidents can result in large percentage change increases when the number of reported incidents is small. For instance, there were 12 homicides in New Brunswick in 2009, nine more than the number reported in 2008 (3 homicides), which is a 300% increase. The Crime Severity Index (CSI) is a tool developed by Statistics Canada in 2009 to address the

issue of the overall crime rate being driven by high-volume, less-serious offences such as minor thefts, mischief and minor assaults. The CSI measures not only the volume of police-reported crime in Canada, but its severity as well. The CSI is designed to measure changes in the overall seriousness of crime, as well as relative differences in the seriousness of crime across the country. The seriousness of an offence is determined by assigning a 'weight' derived from court sentences to each offence. The more serious the average sentence, the higher the weight for that offence. All weighted offences are then added together and divided by the corresponding population total. Lastly, the CSI is standardized to "100" for Canada using 2006 as a base year. Ultimately, there are three CSIs: one to measure overall crime severity based on the total volume of police-reported *Criminal Code* and federal statute offences; the second, to measure police-reported violent crime; and a third, the non-violent CSI, to measure all crimes not considered violent (Dauvergne et al., 2010; Wallace, Turner, Matarazzo & Babyak, 2009). Statistics Canada also produces a CSI for offences committed by youth.

FACTORS AFFECTING POLICE-REPORTED CRIME STATISTICS

Many factors are believed to affect the prevalence of crime and the reporting of crime. Some of these factors include:

Demographics – The age distribution within a population, particularly the number of males between the ages of 15 and 24 years (the age group most likely to commit crime and be victimized by crime), can influence crime rates (Sauvé, 2005).

Social and economic factors – Inflation and economic hardship may affect the prevalence of financially-motivated crimes such as robbery, break and enter, and motor vehicle theft. Similarly, alcohol consumption and unemployment rates are correlated with homicide rates (Potti-Bunge, Johnson and Baldé, 2005). Access to socio-economic resources is associated with neighbourhood crime rates (Charron, 2009; Savoie, 2008). Other studies have found links between income and education levels and crime (Wallace, Wisener, and Collins, 2006).

Public reporting to police – The public's willingness to report crimes to the police impacts crime statistics. Changes in citizens' responses to and perceptions of certain crimes (such as sexual assault or spousal violence), sometimes the result of media portrayals of crime, can lead to differences in reporting rates to the police (Dauvergne and Turner, 2010). As well, strong partnerships between police and communities might encourage citizens to come forward and report more incidents to police (British Columbian, 2008).

Legislative or policy changes – Changes in legislation, such as an amendment to the *Criminal Code* to create a new offence or broaden the definition of an existing offence, will likely increase or decrease the number of incidents reported to police and by police. Similarly, when the *Youth Criminal Justice Act* was introduced in 2003, many police forces adjusted their policies to better reflect the principles set out in the *YCJA* to reduce youth contact with the formal criminal justice system, resulting in fewer police-reported criminal incidents by youth (Sauvé, 2005).

Technological change – Continual advances in technology have enabled opportunities for new, more complex crimes to develop, creating new challenges for police (Dauvergne et al., 2010).

It is most likely a combination of many factors, rather than a single factor, that accounts for changes in crime rates.

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