

### Definition and measurement

Crime comparisons between countries can be made via surveys designed to assess experience with actual criminal victimisation. Crime statistics shown here are based on the 2005 *International Crime Victim Survey*, run by a consortium coordinated by the United Nations Interregional Criminal Justice Research Institute (UNICRI) and the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC). ICVS data for European countries are drawn from the *European Survey on Crime and Safety*, organised by a consortium led by Gallup Europe (see [www.europeansafetyobservatory.eu/euics\\_rp.htm](http://www.europeansafetyobservatory.eu/euics_rp.htm) for detail). Data drawn on for changes is from a variety of years.

The ICVS focuses on ten types of “conventional” crimes (the distinction is that of the ICVS). Respondents are asked about victimisation by these conventional crimes that they themselves or their households experienced. These crimes cover vehicle-related crimes (theft of a car, from or out of a car, of a bicycle and motorcycle), burglary (completed and attempted), theft of personal property, and contact crimes (robbery, sexual offences – reported only for women, and assault or threat). Also covered are drug-related problems and “non-conventional” crimes such as, hate crime, street level corruption and consumer fraud (including internet-based fraud and credit card theft). The ICVS also provides information on reactions to crime, fears of crime, and use of preventive measures. While survey results are based on nationally representative samples, results are affected by design features such as mode of interviewing and period of fieldwork. Sample sizes are usually small (2000 people in most countries). Comparability problems and variable under-reporting may exist for crimes of intimate partner violence or of a sexual nature. Equally, people may experience crimes like fraud and corruption but may not realise it, again leading to under-reporting.

**One person in six in the OECD countries was a victim of a conventional crime (CO3.1).** In 2004-05 victimisation exceeded 20% in Ireland, New Zealand, Iceland

and the United Kingdom. Conversely, victimisation rates are below 10% in Japan and Spain.

**Victimisation rates have declined in the new millennium, at least for the ten categories of conventional crime.** There have been falls in 18 out of the 20 OECD countries for which information is available. The fall in the victimisation rate exceeds 5 points in Spain, Italy, Australia, Sweden and France. Small rises are recorded in Switzerland and Norway.

**Less severe crimes are the most frequent (CO3.2).** On average, across all OECD countries included in Table CO3.2, 3.7% of the population reported having experienced theft of personal property and pick-pocketing – with much higher levels in Ireland and much lower ones in Japan – while 3.1% reported bicycle theft and 2.9% experienced assaults or threats.

**Being a victim of a crime involving direct personal contact is comparatively rare.** The share of assault or threat victims ranges from around 5% or more in Iceland, Ireland and New Zealand, to less than 1% in Japan, Italy and Portugal. On average, around 1% of the population declared having been victim of a robbery, with much higher levels in Mexico and Ireland. Sexual offences against women are reported by around 1.8% of female respondents, and by 3% or more in Ireland, the United States, Sweden and Iceland.

**Unexpectedly, non-conventional crimes are more common than conventional ones.** On average, 11% of respondents declare having experienced some types of consumer fraud for example, ranging from close to 25% in Greece to less than 2% in Japan. The share of people reporting a personal experience of corruption is small on average, but much higher in Greece and Mexico than elsewhere in the OECD.

### Further reading

Van Djik J., J. Van Kesteren and P. Smit Paul (2008), “Criminal Victimization in International Perspective – Key Findings from the 2004-2005 International Crime Victims Survey and European Survey on Crime and Safety”, WODC Publication No. 257, January.

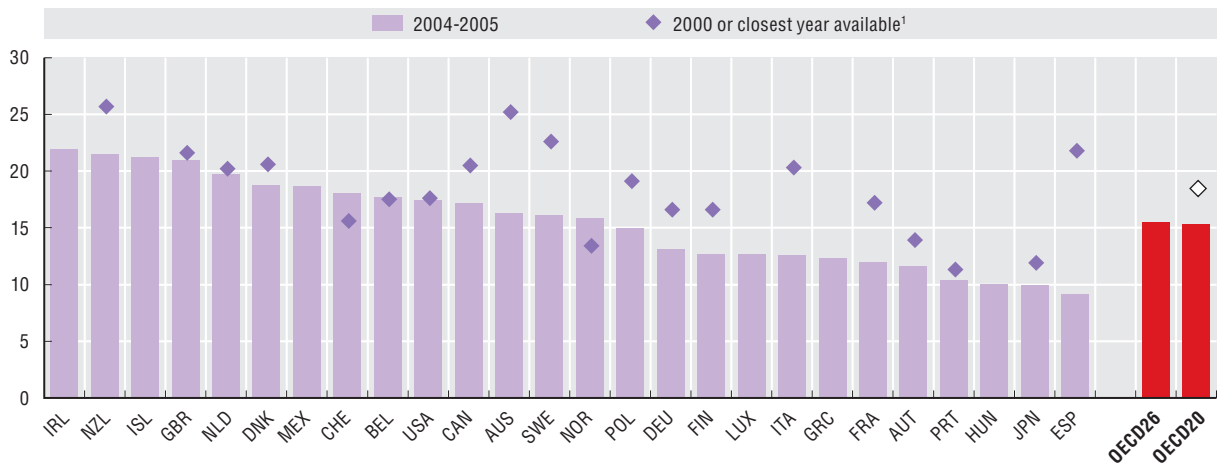
### Figure and table notes

Figure CO3.1: Note 1: 1996 for Austria, 1992 for Italy and New Zealand, and 1989 for Norway, Germany and Spain.

Table CO3.2: Sexual offences against women are rates for the female population only.

### CO3.1. Conventional crime is falling across the OECD, 2000 to 2004-05

Percentage of people reporting at least one of the ten categories over the previous 12 months



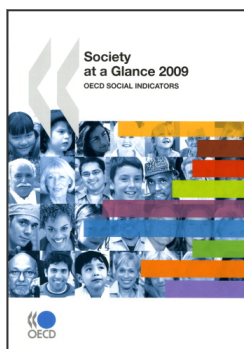
### CO3.2. Experience of different types of crimes and fear of crime

Percentage of people reporting experience over the previous 12 months, 2004-05

| All conventional victimisation | Victimisation by:      |                           |                   |               |                           |                    |   |                |                               |                         |            |             |                     | Fears of crime<br>Feeling unsafe or very unsafe on the street after dark |
|--------------------------------|------------------------|---------------------------|-------------------|---------------|---------------------------|--------------------|---|----------------|-------------------------------|-------------------------|------------|-------------|---------------------|--|
|                                | Conventional crimes    |                           |                   |               |                           |                    |   |                |                               | Non-conventional crimes |            |             |                     |  |
|                                | Vehicle-related crimes |                           |                   |               | Burglary and other thefts |                    |   | Contact crimes |                               | Consumer fraud          | Corruption |             |                     |  |
|                                | Theft of cars          | Theft from or out of cars | Motor-cycle theft | Bicycle theft | Burglary with entry       | Attempted burglary | Theft of personal property and pick-pocketing | Robbery        | Sexual offences against women |                         |            |             | Assaults or threats |  |
| Australia                      | 16.3                   | 1.1                       | 4.5               | 0.1           | 1.2                       | 2.5                | 2.4   | 3.6            | 0.9                           | ..                      | 3.4        | ..          | ..                  | 27.0   |
| Austria                        | 11.6                   | 0.1                       | 2.4               | 0.0           | 2.0                       | 0.9                | 1.4   | 3.4            | 0.4                           | 2.2                     | 1.8        | 8.1         | 0.6                 | 19.0   |
| Belgium                        | 17.7                   | 0.5                       | 4.2               | 0.1           | 4.2                       | 1.8                | 2.4   | 3.4            | 1.2                           | 0.9                     | 3.6        | 8.0         | 0.5                 | 26.0   |
| Canada                         | 17.2                   | 0.8                       | 4.8               | 0.2           | 2.7                       | 2.0                | 1.7   | 4.0            | 0.8                           | 2.3                     | 3.0        | 7.4         | 0.6                 | 17.0   |
| Denmark                        | 18.8                   | 1.3                       | 2.6               | 0.3           | 6.0                       | 2.7                | 1.6   | 3.3            | 0.9                           | 1.9                     | 3.3        | 15.7        | 1.0                 | 17.0   |
| Finland                        | 12.7                   | 0.4                       | 2.2               | 0.1           | 5.2                       | 0.8                | 0.5   | 2.3            | 0.3                           | 1.4                     | 2.2        | 5.2         | 0.0                 | 14.0   |
| France                         | 12.0                   | 0.6                       | 3.2               | 0.3           | 0.9                       | 1.6                | 1.2   | 3.3            | 0.8                           | 0.4                     | 2.1        | 10.2        | 1.1                 | 21.0   |
| Germany                        | 13.1                   | 0.2                       | 2.0               | 0.2           | 3.4                       | 0.9                | 1.3   | 3.0            | 0.4                           | 2.4                     | 2.7        | 11.7        | 0.6                 | 30.0   |
| Greece                         | 12.3                   | 0.3                       | 1.8               | 0.6           | 2.1                       | 1.8                | 1.7   | 5.3            | 1.4                           | 1.7                     | 2.4        | 24.7        | 13.5                | 42.0   |
| Hungary                        | 10.0                   | 0.2                       | 2.1               | 0.0           | 1.7                       | 1.7                | 0.8   | 3.0            | 0.9                           | 0.1                     | 1.2        | 19.7        | 4.9                 | 26.0   |
| Iceland                        | 21.2                   | 1.0                       | 3.8               | 0.1           | 4.6                       | 1.6                | 1.6   | 6.9            | 0.8                           | 3.0                     | 5.9        | 12.9        | 0.3                 | 6.0  |
| Ireland                        | 21.9                   | 1.2                       | 5.2               | 0.3           | 2.5                       | 2.3                | 1.7   | 7.2            | 2.2                           | 3.8                     | 4.9        | 8.0         | 0.3                 | 27.0   |
| Italy                          | 12.6                   | 1.0                       | 2.4               | 1.0           | 2.1                       | 2.1                | 2.5   | 2.4            | 0.3                           | 0.7                     | 0.8        | 5.9         | 0.4                 | 35.0   |
| Japan                          | 9.9                    | 0.1                       | 1.1               | 0.7           | 5.1                       | 0.9                | 0.7   | 0.3            | 0.2                           | 1.3                     | 0.6        | 1.9         | 0.2                 | 35.0   |
| Luxembourg                     | 12.7                   | 0.6                       | 2.8               | 0.0           | 1.6                       | 1.7                | 2.7   | 2.9            | 0.7                           | 0.6                     | 2.3        | 9.8         | 0.4                 | 36.0   |
| Mexico                         | 18.7                   | 0.9                       | 4.1               | 0.0           | 3.7                       | 3.0                | 3.0   | 4.3            | 3.0                           | 1.5                     | 2.2        | 7.2         | 13.3                | 34.0   |
| Netherlands                    | 19.7                   | 1.0                       | 3.9               | 0.4           | 6.6                       | 1.3                | 1.4   | 3.7            | 0.5                           | 1.9                     | 4.3        | 7.0         | 0.2                 | 18.0   |
| New Zealand                    | 21.5                   | 1.8                       | 6.6               | 0.1           | 1.4                       | 3.2                | 3.1   | 4.1            | 1.1                           | 2.5                     | 4.9        | 7.7         | 0.5                 | 30.0   |
| Norway                         | 15.8                   | 0.7                       | 2.6               | 0.3           | 4.2                       | 1.2                | 0.9   | 4.8            | 0.8                           | 2.5                     | 2.9        | 9.7         | 0.4                 | 14.0   |
| Poland                         | 15.0                   | 0.7                       | 3.9               | 0.1           | 2.6                       | 1.4                | 1.1   | 3.5            | 1.3                           | 1.3                     | 3.0        | 16.1        | 4.4                 | 33.0   |
| Portugal                       | 10.4                   | 1.5                       | 5.0               | 0.0           | 0.5                       | 1.4                | 0.8   | 1.6            | 1.0                           | 0.5                     | 0.9        | 8.2         | 1.0                 | 34.0   |
| Spain                          | 9.1                    | 1.0                       | 2.7               | 0.3           | 0.7                       | 0.8                | 0.4   | 2.1            | 1.3                           | 0.3                     | 1.6        | 10.8        | 0.3                 | 33.0   |
| Sweden                         | 16.1                   | 0.5                       | 4.2               | 0.6           | 5.0                       | 0.7                | 0.1   | 2.4            | 1.1                           | 3.3                     | 3.5        | 13.7        | 0.1                 | 19.0   |
| Switzerland                    | 18.1                   | 0.2                       | 2.9               | 0.6           | 4.6                       | 1.6                | 1.2   | 5.9            | 0.8                           | 2.9                     | 2.5        | 7.3         | 0.5                 | ..   |
| United Kingdom                 | 21.0                   | 1.8                       | 5.8               | 0.7           | 2.7                       | 3.3                | 2.6   | 5.7            | 1.3                           | 1.9                     | 5.4        | ..          | ..                  | 31.0   |
| United States                  | 17.5                   | 1.1                       | 5.2               | 0.0           | 2.9                       | 2.5                | 2.6   | 4.8            | 0.6                           | 3.6                     | 4.3        | 12.5        | 0.5                 | 19.0   |
| <b>OECD26</b>                  | <b>15.5</b>            | <b>0.8</b>                | <b>3.5</b>        | <b>0.3</b>    | <b>3.1</b>                | <b>1.8</b>         | <b>1.6</b>                                    | <b>3.7</b>     | <b>1.0</b>                    | <b>1.8</b>              | <b>2.9</b> | <b>10.4</b> | <b>1.9</b>          | <b>25.7</b>  |

Source: Van Djik J., J. Van Kesteren and P. Smit Paul (2008), "Criminal Victimization in International Perspective - Key Findings from the 2004-2005 International Crime Victims Survey and European Survey on Crime and Safety", WODC Publication No. 257, January.

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