

Youth court statistics, 2013/2014

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Nearly 40,000 cases were completed in Canadian youth courts in 2013/2014, down 12% from the previous year. This was the lowest number of completed cases in youth courts since these data were first collected more than two decades ago.

All provinces and territories reported a lower number of completed cases in youth court, except Yukon (+17%) and the Northwest Territories (+2%). Prince Edward Island (-25%) recorded the largest annual decrease, followed by Nova Scotia (-24%) and Ontario (-16%).

Most completed youth court cases (71%) involved non-violent crime. The top five *Criminal Code* case types made up 42% of all completed cases in youth court: theft (12%), common assault (9%), breaking and entering (8%), failure to comply with an order (7%) and mischief (6%).

Almost all types of completed cases in youth court decreased from 2012/2013 to 2013/2014, with cases involving disturbing the peace (-35%), impaired driving (-25%) and robbery (-18%) recording some of the largest declines.

While violent offence cases decreased overall in 2013/2014, sexual assault (+8%), homicide (+6%), other sexual offences (+5%) and criminal harassment (+3%) all posted annual increases.

Youth aged 16 or 17 continued to account for the largest proportion of accused people in youth court, representing 62% of cases completed. Overall, males represented 78% of all accused people in youth court.

In 2013/2014, more than half (56%) of all cases completed in youth court resulted in a guilty finding. This was the lowest proportion since data were first collected in the early 1990s. Another 42% of completed cases were stayed or withdrawn, while about 2% were acquitted and less than 1% received another type of decision.

In determining the most appropriate sentence, judges must ensure meaningful consequences while balancing the principles of the *Youth Criminal Justice Act* (YCJA), the protection of society and the rehabilitative needs of the youth. Under the YCJA, there are more sentence types that may be imposed once a youth is found guilty, and often many youth court cases result in a combination of multiple types of sentences.

Custodial sentences were imposed in 15% of guilty youth court cases, either on their own or in combination with another type of sentence. Overall, the median length of a custodial sentence was 39 days. Almost half (48%) of all custody sentences were one month or less in length. Another 26% of custody sentences were between one month and three months, and the remaining 26% were longer than three months.

Probation was the most common type of sentence imposed in youth court cases, accounting for 58% of all guilty cases. The median length of probation was about a year (360 days) for all types of cases. A community service order (25%) was the second most common type of sentence imposed in youth court cases.

In 2013/2014, the median length of time taken to complete a youth court case was 120 days, or about four months, up from 114 days in 2012/2013.

A flow chart summarizing the movement of completed cases through the youth court system in 2013/2014 can be found in the *Juristat* article "[Youth court statistics in Canada, 2013/2014.](#)"

Note to readers

The data presented in this article are drawn from the youth portion of the Integrated Criminal Court Survey. People involved were aged 12 to 17 at the time of the offence. Youth court cases that involve more than one charge are represented by the most serious offence. A **completed case** is defined as one or more charges against an accused person or company that were processed by the courts at the same time and received a final decision.

Data for 2012/2013 are also now available.



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Available in CANSIM: tables [252-0064](#) to [252-0074](#).

Definitions, data sources and methods: survey number [3312](#).

The *Juristat* article "[Youth court statistics in Canada, 2013/2014](#)" ([85-002-X](#)), is now available. From the *Browse by key resource* module of our website under *Publications*, choose *All subjects*, then *Crime and justice*, and *Juristat*.

Additional data are available upon request.

For more information, or to enquire about the concepts, methods or data quality of this release, contact us (toll-free 1-800-263-1136; 514-283-8300; infostats@statcan.gc.ca) or Media Relations (613-951-4636; mediahotline@statcan.gc.ca).