

Trafficking in persons in Canada, 2022

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Nearly 4,000 incidents of human trafficking were reported by police services in Canada from 2012 to 2022, accounting for 0.02% of all police-reported crime during this time and representing an average annual rate of 1.0 incident per 100,000 population. Human trafficking is a gendered crime—the vast majority of victims are women and girls.

Trafficking in persons, or human trafficking, is a serious human rights violation that can occur domestically or transnationally with the crossing of international borders. It involves the recruitment, transportation or harbouring of a person and includes controlling or influencing their movements with the goal of exploiting, or facilitating the exploitation of, a person.

The *Juristat Bulletin—Quick Fact* article "[Trafficking in persons in Canada, 2022](#)," released today, uses data from the Uniform Crime Reporting Survey and the Integrated Criminal Court Survey to examine recent trends in incidents of human trafficking according to police and courts in Canada.

Number of police-reported human trafficking incidents decreases slightly in 2022

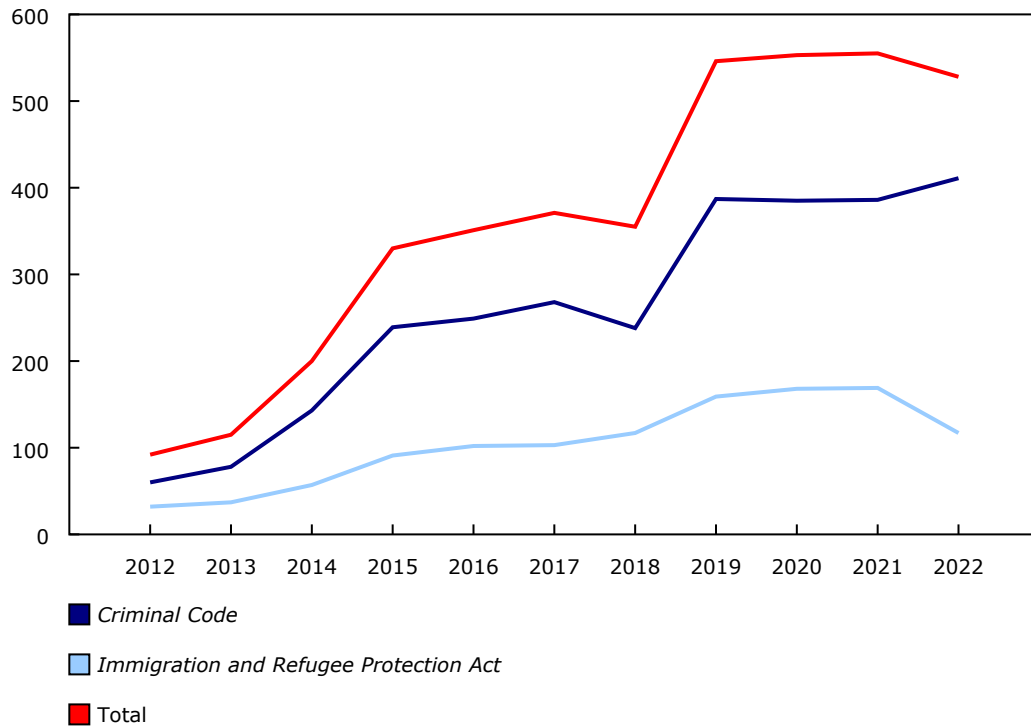
In 2022, there were 528 police-reported incidents of human trafficking, a slight decrease compared with 2021 (Chart 1). Likewise, the rate of human trafficking in 2022 (1.4 incidents per 100,000 population) decreased slightly from 2021 (1.5 incidents). Similar to 2021, the majority of human trafficking incidents were reported by police in census metropolitan areas in 2022.

From 2012 to 2022, Nova Scotia had the highest rate of human trafficking (3.1 incidents per 100,000 population), followed by Ontario (1.6 incidents). This pattern remained consistent in 2022 with Nova Scotia reporting 4.5 incidents per 100,000 population and Ontario reporting 2.3 incidents, both higher than the national rate (1.4 incidents).



Chart 1**Police-reported incidents of human trafficking, by statute, Canada, 2012 to 2022**

number of incidents



Note(s): This chart is based on aggregate data, and counts are based on the most serious violation in a criminal incident. The Uniform Crime Reporting Survey was amended partway through 2011 to allow police services to report the specific offence of human trafficking under the *Immigration and Refugee Protection Act*. Once the specific violation code was introduced, a small number of incidents which took place prior to this date were reported.

Source(s): Uniform Crime Reporting Survey (3302).

Vast majority of police-reported human trafficking victims are women and girls

Of the 3,103 detected victims of police-reported human trafficking in Canada from 2012 to 2022, the vast majority (94%) were women and girls, and were overwhelmingly young, with approximately 7 in 10 (69%) under the age of 25. More specifically, about one-quarter (24%) of female victims were under age 18 and nearly half (45%) were aged 18 to 24. The large majority (91%) of detected victims of human trafficking knew their accused trafficker, and about one-third (34%) of victims were trafficked by an intimate partner.

Over half of human trafficking incidents were unsolved

In 2022, 4 in 10 (40%) incidents of police-reported human trafficking resulted in the laying or recommendation of charges. Over half (56%) of human trafficking incidents were not solved, or cleared, by police. This could be due to several factors, including the incident still being under investigation, insufficient evidence available to proceed or no accused person identified.

Overall increase in charges and cases of human trafficking completed in court

There were 1,066 cases involving 3,523 human trafficking charges completed in adult criminal court from 2011/2012 to 2021/2022 in Canada. In general, the number of human trafficking cases has increased over this time.

About 1 in 10 completed human trafficking cases result in a finding of guilt

From 2011/2012 to 2021/2022, the most serious decision for the large majority (83%) of completed adult criminal court cases involving at least one human trafficking charge was a stay, a withdrawal, a dismissal, or a discharge. A small proportion of human trafficking cases resulted in a guilty decision (11%), an acquittal (5%), or another type of decision (1%) during this time.

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Note to readers

Police-reported data come from the Uniform Crime Reporting (UCR) Survey, and the category of human trafficking offences includes six provisions under the Criminal Code and one offence under the Immigration and Refugee Protection Act that targets international cross-border trafficking. Police services can report up to four violations for each criminal incident.

- *Criminal Code offences: trafficking in persons; trafficking in persons under 18 years; material benefit from trafficking in persons; material benefit from trafficking of persons under 18 years; withholding or destroying documents; and withholding or destroying documents to facilitate trafficking of persons under 18 years.*
- *Immigrant and Refugee Protection Act: trafficking in persons into Canada.*

In the UCR Survey, victim information is reported by police for Criminal Code incidents of human trafficking, but not for Immigration and Refugee Protection Act violations. As a result, there are fewer victims of police-reported human trafficking than there are incidents, and analysis of victim characteristics is based on Criminal Code human trafficking incidents only.

Data on human trafficking in courts come from the Integrated Criminal Court Survey, which collects statistical information on adult criminal and youth court cases involving Criminal Code and other federal statute offences. A 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. A case combines all charges against the same person having one or more key overlapping dates (date of offence, date of initiation, date of first appearance, date of decision, or date of sentencing) into a single case. The "guilty findings" category includes guilty of the charged offence, of an included offence, of an attempt of the charged offence, or of an attempt of an included offence. This category also includes guilty pleas, and cases where an absolute or conditional discharge has been imposed.

Definitions, data sources and methods: survey numbers 3302 and 3312.

The article "[Trafficking in persons in Canada, 2022](#)" is now available as part of the publication *Juristat Bulletin—Quick Fact* ([85-005-X](#)).

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 (statcan.mediahotline-ligneinfomedias.statcan@statcan.gc.ca).