

Firearms and violent crime in Canada, 2022

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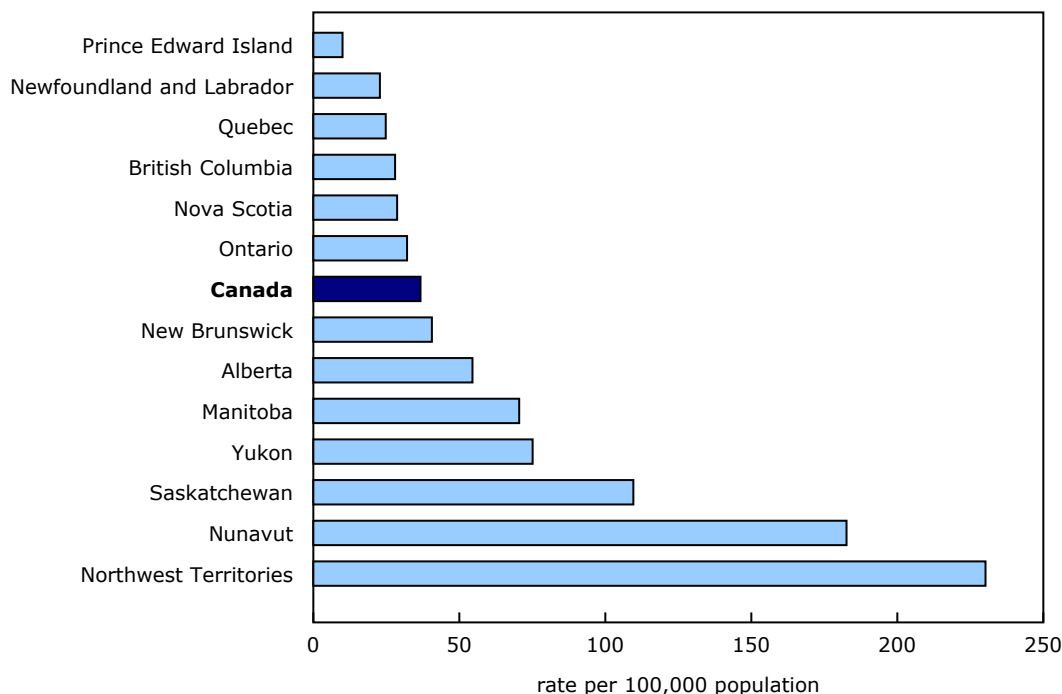
In 2022, slightly less than 3% of police-reported violent crimes in Canada (or approximately 14,000 violent crimes) involved a firearm. This corresponds to a rate of 36.7 firearm-related violent crimes per 100,000 population, an increase of 8.9% from the 2021 rate. The 2022 rate of firearm-related violent crime is the highest since comparable data were first compiled in 2009.

The *Juristat* article "[Firearms and violent crime in Canada, 2022](#)," published today, presents the most recent police-reported data on firearm-related violent crime in Canada, based on the Uniform Crime Reporting Survey and the Homicide Survey.

The increase in the firearm-related crime rate is largely driven by an increase in these crimes in Ontario

Police services in Ontario reported 4,791 firearm-related violent crimes in 2022, or 1,016 more incidents than the previous year. This represents about 70% of the increase in these incidents across Canada. The 2022 rate of firearm-related violent crime in Ontario (32.1 incidents per 100,000 population) was 24% higher than the previous year's rate.

Chart 1
Firearm-related violent crime rate, by province or territory, 2022



Note(s): Excludes data from the Saint John Police Service and from the Québec City Police Service. Rates are calculated on the basis of 100,000 population. Populations are based upon July 1 estimates from Statistics Canada, Centre for Demography.
Source(s): Uniform Crime Reporting Survey (3302).

The increase in firearm-related violent crime in Ontario was largely driven by an increase in the number of these crimes in Toronto. Although almost all census metropolitan areas (CMAs) in Ontario saw an increase in firearm-related violent crime, the increase in the number of these crimes was especially high in Toronto. After three

consecutive yearly declines, police services covering the Toronto CMA reported 2,576 firearm-related violent crimes, 725 more than in 2021. As a result, the 2022 rate (43.2 incidents per 100,000 population) was 36% higher than in 2021. Among Ontario CMAs, only Greater Sudbury (+65%), Kitchener–Cambridge–Waterloo (+53%) and Brantford (+39%) posted bigger increases in the rate of firearm-related violent crimes.

British Columbia and Alberta also contribute to the increase in the number of firearm-related violent crimes

British Columbia also contributed to the increase in the number of firearm-related violent crimes in Canada. In 2022, police reported close to 1,500 firearm-related violent crimes, almost 200 more than in the previous year. The rate (28.0 incidents per 100,000 population) was up 12% from 2021, but remains one of the lowest rates among the provinces and territories. The increase in the rate from 2021 was especially large in Abbotsford–Mission (+72%), though Victoria (+63%) and Vancouver (+24%) also posted significant increases.

In 2022, Alberta (54.5 incidents per 100,000 population) also recorded close to 200 more firearm-related violent crimes than in 2021. As in Ontario and British Columbia, this increase was mostly driven by the largest urban centres, with the rate increasing by 22% in Edmonton and by 5.1% in Calgary during this period.

In New Brunswick, police recorded 64 more incidents of firearm-related violent crime in 2022 than in 2021. The rate of firearm-related violent crime (40.6 incidents per 100,000 population) was up 24%, the second highest increase among the provinces and territories. The rate rose by 46% in Moncton during this period.

In Manitoba, the Northwest Territories, Yukon and Prince Edward Island, the number of firearm-related violent crimes rose slightly from 2021. For their part, some CMAs posted strong increases despite a decrease in their province. For example, Gatineau (+76%) saw the highest increase in firearm-related violent crime among the CMAs in 2022, while this rate decreased slightly in Quebec (-1.3%).

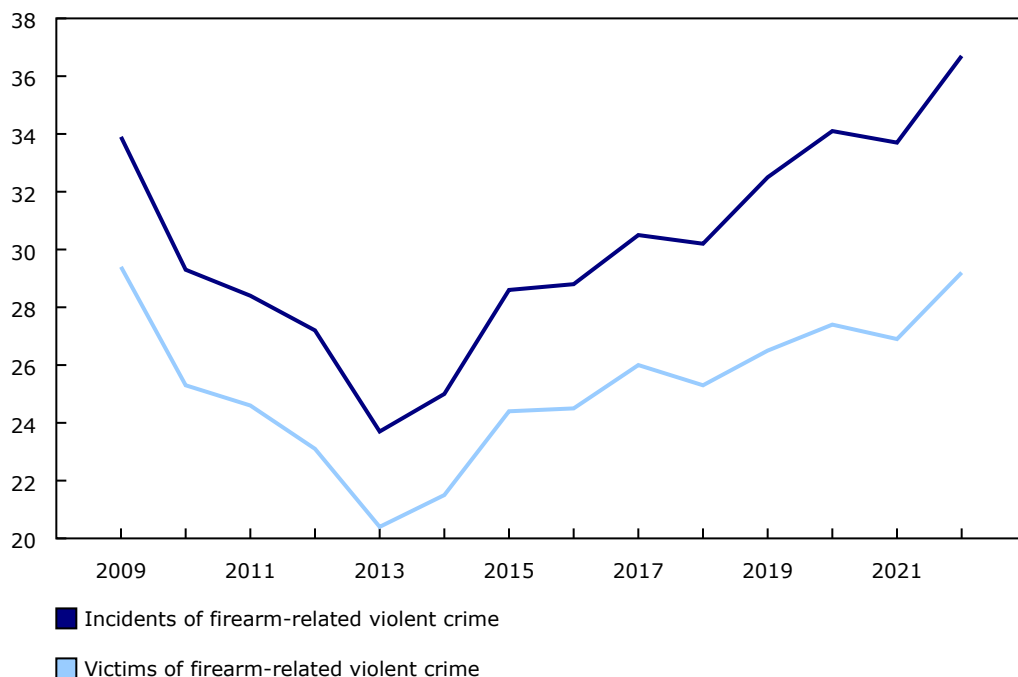
Despite a 7.0% decrease in firearm-related violent crimes from 2021, Saskatchewan continued to be the province with the highest rate in 2022 (109.6 incidents per 100,000 population). Among the country's CMAs, Regina posted the highest rate (83.0) and percentage (7.0%) of firearm-related violent crime.

The rate of firearm-related violent crime has generally been increasing since 2013, with the increase higher in rural areas

The increase in firearm-related violent crimes in 2022 is the continuation of an upward trend that began in 2013. Since then, the rate of firearm-related violent crime has increased 55%, which is larger than the increase in violent crime overall (+24%).

Chart 2
Incidents and victims of police-reported firearm-related violent crime, Canada, 2009 to 2022

rate per 100,000 population



Note(s): Rates are calculated on the basis of 100,000 population. Populations are based upon July 1 estimates from Statistics Canada, Centre for Demography.
Source(s): Uniform Crime Reporting Survey (3302).

Although the increase in firearm-related violent crime from 2021 to 2022 was mostly driven by increases in urban areas in the Provincial South, it was rural and northern regions that largely contributed to the increase from 2013 to 2022. For example, from 2013 to 2022, the rate of firearm-related violent crime increased 141% in rural regions of the Provincial North and 139% in the territories. By comparison, in southern urban areas, the rate increased by 45%.

Strong increase in incidents involving discharging a firearm with intent

Compared with 2013, the rate of firearm-related violent crime in 2022 was higher for most violent offences. In particular, firearm-specific violent crimes (discharging a firearm with intent, pointing a firearm, using a firearm in the commission of an offence) rose 120% from 2013 to 2022, primarily because of the increase in incidents of discharging a firearm with intent, the rate of which has more than tripled (+244%) since 2013.

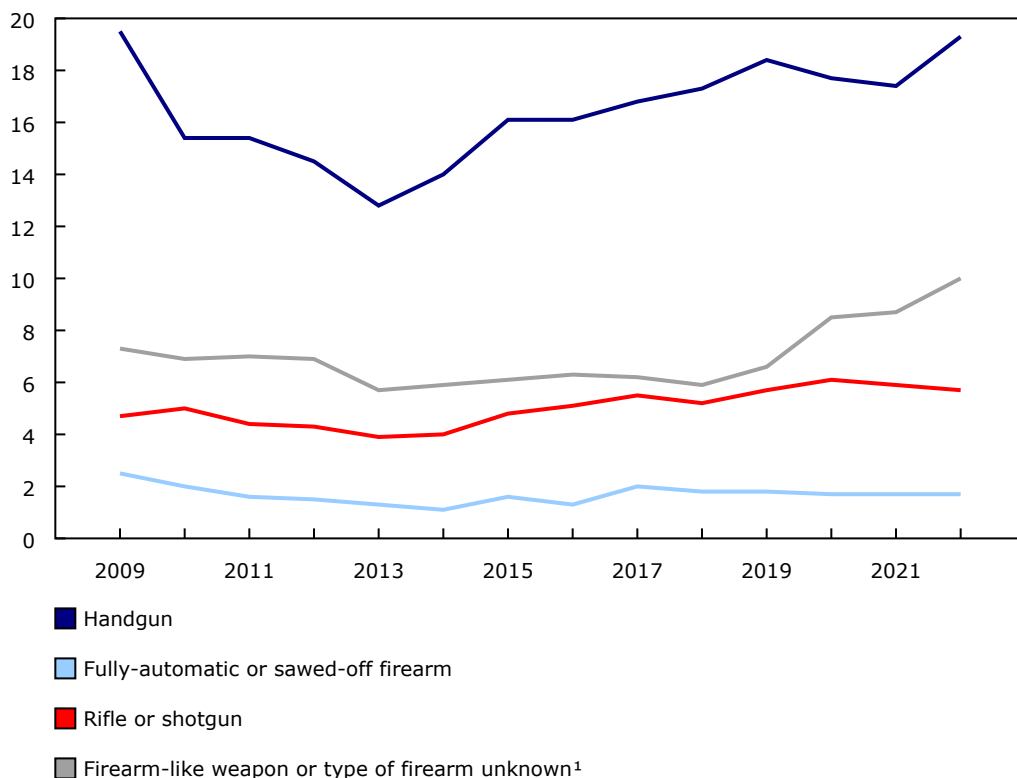
The homicide rate has increased 64% since 2013. In 2022, police reported 874 homicides, 342 of which were committed with a firearm. This was 44 more homicides committed with a firearm than in the previous year, and 208 more homicides committed with a firearm than in 2013. The rate of firearm-related homicide in 2022 (0.88 homicides per 100,000 population) was the highest rate since 1991.

The rate of handgun-related violent crime has increased by half since 2013

Since 2013, the rate of firearm-related violent crime has risen for all types of weapons. However, the increase was larger for crimes involving handguns (+50%) than for crimes involving rifles or shotguns (+45%) or for those involving fully automatic or sawed-off firearms (+35%). However, the category "firearm-like weapon or unknown type of firearm" posted the largest increase (+76%).

Chart 3
Police-reported incidents of firearm-related violent crime, by type of firearm, Canada, 2009 to 2022

rate per 100,000 population



1. Includes, for example, flare guns, pellet guns, BB guns, or starter's pistols.

Note(s): Incidents of firearm-specific violent offences in which police reported another type of weapon or an unknown weapon were recoded to "firearm - type unknown". Rates are calculated on the basis of 100,000 population. Populations are based upon July 1 estimates from Statistics Canada, Centre for Demography.

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

Table 1
Police-reported firearm-related violent crime incidents, by province or territory, urban and rural areas, and Provincial South and North, Canada, 2022

	2022	2022	2022	2022	2021	2021
	number	%	rate ¹	% change in rate from 2021	number	rate ¹
Newfoundland and Labrador	120	1.3	22.8	-8.7	130	25.0
Urban areas - South	88	1.8	29.4	18.8	73	24.8
Rural areas - South	25	0.9	12.6	-36.2	39	19.7
Rural areas - North	7	0.4	25.1	-61.3	18	64.8
Prince Edward Island	17	0.7	10.0	9.4	15	9.1
Urban areas - South	8	0.5	7.2	28.5	6	5.6
Rural areas - South	9	1.2	15.1	-3.2	9	15.6
Nova Scotia	291	1.8	28.7	-3.1	292	29.6
Urban areas - South	201	2.0	29.7	-7.1	209	32.0
Rural areas - South	90	1.5	26.6	6.7	83	24.9
New Brunswick²	300	2.3	40.6	23.7	236	32.8
Urban areas - South	163	2.2	35.8	32.7	119	27.0
Rural areas - South	137	2.5	48.2	14.8	117	42.0

Table 1 - continued

Police-reported firearm-related violent crime incidents, by province or territory, urban and rural areas, and Provincial South and North, Canada, 2022

	2022	2022	2022	2022	2021	2021
Quebec³	1,994	2.1	24.8	-1.3	1,999	25.1
Urban areas - South	1,620	2.2	25.8	1.2	1,586	25.5
Urban areas - North	52	1.1	16.6	-26.2	70	22.5
Rural areas - South	291	1.9	21.2	-9.1	315	23.3
Rural areas - North	31	1.9	43.4	10.4	28	39.3
Ontario	4,791	3.3	32.1	24.4	3,775	25.8
Urban areas - South	4,342	3.6	33.3	27.6	3,332	26.1
Urban areas - North	205	2.0	39.0	1.1	201	38.6
Rural areas - South	156	1.8	13.9	-2.9	158	14.3
Rural areas - North	88	1.6	34.8	3.3	84	33.7
Manitoba	961	2.9	70.5	0.1	948	70.4
Urban areas - South	506	3.2	52.9	-10.3	556	58.9
Urban areas - North	27	1.4	197.0	297.0	7	49.6
Rural areas - South	156	3.2	50.9	-12.0	175	57.8
Rural areas - North	272	2.8	318.5	29.0	210	246.9
Saskatchewan	1,282	4.4	109.6	-7.0	1,363	117.9
Urban areas - South	634	4.8	83.0	-6.7	670	89.0
Rural areas - South	339	3.7	92.6	-17.9	410	112.8
Rural areas - North	309	4.4	766.3	8.1	283	708.9
Alberta	2,481	3.6	54.5	5.9	2,292	51.5
Urban areas - South	1,546	3.4	42.4	8.5	1,388	39.1
Urban areas - North	105	2.3	65.8	2.7	102	64.1
Rural areas - South	341	3.7	69.1	1.7	333	67.9
Rural areas - North	489	5.5	194.4	3.4	469	188.0
British Columbia	1,488	1.8	28.0	12.5	1,294	24.9
Urban areas - South	1,175	1.9	26.0	20.2	954	21.6
Urban areas - North	122	1.8	53.0	-6.5	130	56.6
Rural areas - South	127	1.8	28.5	-2.8	129	29.3
Rural areas - North	64	1.7	54.9	-21.3	81	69.8
Yukon	33	1.5	75.1	4.6	31	71.8
Northwest Territories	105	1.9	230.2	8.2	97	212.7
Nunavut	74	1.5	182.6	-22.9	94	236.7
Canada	13,937	2.8	36.7	8.9	12,566	33.7
Urban areas - South	10,283	2.9	33.5	13.4	8,893	29.5
Urban areas - North	511	1.8	41.1	-0.4	510	41.3
Rural areas - South	1,671	2.4	33.5	-6.8	1,768	35.9
Rural areas - North	1,260	3.3	148.9	6.5	1,173	139.8
Territories	212	1.6	163.0	-5.7	222	172.8

1. Rates are calculated on the basis of 100,000 population. Populations are based upon July 1 estimates from Statistics Canada, Centre for Demography.

2. Excludes data from the Saint John Police Service.

3. In Quebec, the information management system used by a majority of police services generates a relatively high proportion of unknown values for the variable "most dangerous weapon present in the incident". Although firearm-related crimes are likely correctly recorded in the vast majority of cases, undercounting remains possible. Therefore, caution should be used when comparing data from Quebec to data from other provinces or territories. Excludes data from the Québec City Police Service.

Note(s): Rural police services are those where the majority of the population lives outside of a census metropolitan area (CMA) or census agglomeration (CA). Urban police services are those where the majority of the population lives within a CMA or CA. Provincial North encompasses the northern regions of Newfoundland and Labrador, Quebec, Ontario, Manitoba, Saskatchewan, Alberta and British Columbia (North and South — Variant of Standard Geographical Classification 2021).

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

Table 2
Police-reported firearm-related violent crime incidents, by census metropolitan area, Canada, 2022

	2022	2022	2022	2021	2021
	number	rate ¹	% change in rate from 2021	number	rate ¹
St. John's	76	35.6	18.5	63	30.0
Halifax	137	28.5	-12.0	149	32.4
Moncton	82	45.6	39.6	56	32.7
Saguenay ²	22	12.8	-27.4	30	17.6
Sherbrooke ²	33	15.5	35.5	24	11.4
Trois-Rivières ²	32	19.4	-12.4	36	22.1
Montréal ²	1,219	28.0	0.4	1,204	27.9
Gatineau ^{2,3}	115	33.1	75.5	65	18.9
Ottawa ⁴	264	23.2	4.9	247	22.1
Kingston	31	17.4	-17.8	37	21.2
Belleville	25	21.4	2.7	24	20.8
Peterborough	25	19.1	29.4	19	14.7
Toronto ⁵	2,576	43.2	36.4	1,851	31.7
Hamilton ⁶	230	38.5	32.3	171	29.1
St. Catharines–Niagara	112	22.6	-18.6	135	27.7
Kitchener–Cambridge–Waterloo	249	39.3	52.9	157	25.7
Brantford	61	40.0	38.6	43	28.9
Guelph	27	18.0	32.3	20	13.6
London	140	24.3	0.6	135	24.1
Windsor	103	31.6	10.7	91	28.5
Barrie	25	13.9	11.4	22	12.5
Greater Sudbury	62	36.2	65.3	37	21.9
Thunder Bay	40	32.1	17.6	34	27.3
Winnipeg	462	54.2	-11.4	514	61.2
Regina	223	83.0	-4.9	231	87.2
Saskatoon	190	54.3	-10.5	208	60.7
Lethbridge	35	26.6	-14.8	40	31.3
Calgary	692	43.0	5.1	638	40.9
Edmonton	621	40.8	22.2	496	33.4
Kelowna	55	23.5	-18.9	66	29.0
Abbotsford–Mission	86	40.5	72.1	49	23.5
Vancouver	672	23.6	23.8	528	19.1
Victoria	90	21.3	63.0	54	13.1

1. Rates are calculated on the basis of 100,000 population. Populations are based upon July 1 estimates from Statistics Canada, Centre for Demography.
2. In Quebec, the information management system used by a majority of police services generates a relatively high proportion of unknown values for the variable "most dangerous weapon present in the incident". Although firearm-related crimes are likely correctly recorded in the vast majority of cases, undercounting remains possible. Therefore, caution should be used when comparing data from Quebec to data from other provinces or territories.
3. Gatineau refers to the Quebec part of the Ottawa–Gatineau census metropolitan area.
4. Ottawa refers to the Ontario part of the Ottawa–Gatineau census metropolitan area.
5. Excludes the portions of Halton Regional Police Service and Durham Regional Police Service that police the Toronto census metropolitan area.
6. Excludes the portion of Halton Regional Police Service that polices the Hamilton census metropolitan area.

Note(s): A census metropolitan area (CMA) consists of one or more neighbouring municipalities situated around a major urban core. A CMA must have a total population of at least 100,000 of which 50,000 or more live in the urban core. To be included in the CMA, other adjacent municipalities must have a high degree of integration with the central urban area, as measured by commuting flows derived from census data. A CMA typically comprises more than one police service. The Oshawa CMA is not presented in this table due to the incongruity between police service jurisdictional boundaries and CMA boundaries. Excludes data from the Saint John Police Service and from the Québec City Police Service.

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

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Note to readers

The data in this article are mostly from the Incident-based Uniform Crime Reporting Survey (UCR2) trend database. Coverage of the UCR2 Survey for the period from 2009 to 2022 is estimated at 99% of the Canadian population. Only police services that have consistently participated in the UCR2 Survey are included so that comparisons can be made over time. In this article, data from the Service de police de la Ville de Québec are excluded due to concerns about the data quality for the variable "most serious weapon present." Analyses based on the UCR2 trend database also exclude data from the Saint John Police Force. Data on homicides are derived from the Homicide Survey, which has collected police-reported data on the characteristics of all homicide incidents, victims and accused persons in Canada since 1961.

For the purposes of this analysis, a firearm-related violent crime refers to a crime where a firearm was present during the commission of the offence and police determined that the firearm was relevant to the crime, whether or not it was used. Crimes involving a firearm-like weapon, such as an imitation weapon or a pellet gun, are also included in the analysis. Firearm-specific offences—such as discharging a firearm with intent, pointing a firearm and using a firearm during the commission of an offence—are also counted as crimes involving firearms, including cases in which information on the weapon was unknown. The number of incidents corresponds to the number of victims, in addition to the crimes for which the police did not provide a victim record. One incident may involve multiple offences. To ensure data comparability, the figures in this article are based on the most serious offence in the incident. Firearm-related crime data released in the past were generally based on the number of victims rather than the number of incidents; these data can therefore differ slightly from the data in this article.

For the purposes of the UCR Survey and the Homicide Survey, the different types of firearms are (presented in descending order of seriousness according to the hierarchy for determining the most serious weapon):

Fully automatic firearm: Any firearm that allows continuous and rapid firing of bullets with one pull of the trigger.

Sawed-off rifle or shotgun: Any rifle or shotgun with a barrel length that has been altered to less than 457 millimetres or with an overall weapon length of less than 660 millimetres.

Handgun: Any firearm designed to be held and fired by the action of one hand.

Rifle or shotgun: Any long-barrelled firearm with a barrel length equal to or greater than 457 millimetres or with an overall length of 660 millimetres or more.

Firearm-like weapon: Any weapon capable of propelling any object through a barrel by means of gunpowder, compressed carbon dioxide, pumped air, or any other means. Includes, for example, flare guns or pellet guns. For UCR data, this category also includes all unknown types of firearms.

In Quebec, the information management system used by most police services produces a relatively high proportion of unknown values for the variable "most serious weapon present." For this reason, Quebec data were excluded from previous articles on firearm-related violent crime. However, subsequent analyses have shown that this issue has no significant effect on reporting firearm-related crimes, and the data in this article include those for Quebec. Nonetheless, caution should be exercised when comparing Quebec data with data from the other provinces or territories.

Definitions, data sources and methods: survey numbers [3302](#) and [3315](#).

The article "[Firearms and violent crime in Canada, 2022](#)" is now available as part of the publication *Juristat* ([85-002-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).