

# Experiences of violent victimization and discrimination reported by minority populations in Canada, 2014

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## Immigrants and visible minorities less likely to report experiencing violent victimization

According to the most recent data from the General Social Survey on Canadians' Safety (Victimization), immigrants—regardless of citizenship or how long they have resided in Canada—were less likely than the Canadian-born population to report being victims of violent crime. In 2014, immigrants reported experiencing violent victimization—sexual assault, robbery or physical assault—at a rate of 39 incidents per 1,000 population, compared with a rate of 86 incidents per 1,000 people among the Canadian-born population. Similarly, individuals who self-identified as belonging to a visible minority group were less likely than their non-visible minority counterparts to report experiencing violence (55 versus 81 per 1,000 population). In terms of religious affiliation, individuals who reported a religion other than Christianity experienced violent victimization at a rate similar to people affiliated with Christianity (72 versus 67 per 1,000 population), the most commonly reported religious affiliation.

Today, three *Juristat* articles focusing on the self-reported experiences of violent victimization and discrimination among three populations of interest—immigrants, visible minorities and persons with a religious affiliation—are available. While each article discusses a specific population, they are not mutually exclusive. For example, according to Census of Population data, 65% of immigrants in Canada are visible minorities, 63% of visible minorities are immigrants, and 78% of people affiliated with a religion other than Christianity are visible minorities.

In general, the characteristics of violent incidents did not differ significantly according to immigrant status, visible minority status or religious affiliation. For example, the majority of incidents involved a single offender and, in most cases, the offender was male. Among the immigrant population specifically, recent immigrants (those who immigrated to Canada within the previous 10 years) and established immigrants (those who immigrated 10 or more years prior) reported similar rates of violent victimization. However, recent immigrant victims of violence were significantly more likely to report that the offender was a stranger (83%, compared with 31% of established immigrant victims).

## Some populations more likely to report experiencing discrimination

While members of the immigrant and visible minority populations reported relatively low rates of violent victimization compared with their Canadian-born and non-visible minority counterparts, they were significantly more likely to report experiencing some form of discrimination on the basis of, for example, their ethnicity or culture, or race or skin colour.

In 2014, approximately one in six (17%) immigrants reported that they had experienced discrimination in the five years preceding the survey, compared with 12% of the Canadian-born population. More specifically, recent immigrants were more likely to have reported experiencing discrimination than established immigrants (20% versus 16%). More than four in ten (42%) of those recent immigrants who experienced discrimination indicated that it was due to their language, compared with just over one-quarter (27%) of established immigrants.

In terms of visible minority status, one in five (20%) of those who self-identified as a member of a visible minority group reported experiencing some form of discrimination in the preceding five years. This compared with 12% of the non-visible minority population. Among the visible minority population who reported experiencing discrimination, more than three in five (63%) believed that they were discriminated against because of their race or skin colour. Individuals who identified as Arab (29%), Black (27%) or Latin American (26%) were the most likely to report experiencing discrimination.



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When it came to religious affiliation, individuals who reported an affiliation with a religion other than Christianity were more likely to report experiencing discrimination on the basis of their religion. More than 1 in 10 (11%) people who were affiliated with a religion other than Christianity reported experiencing discrimination on the basis of their religion, compared with 1% of people affiliated with a Christian religion.

### **Immigrants and visible minorities report experiencing discrimination at Canadian border**

Regardless of immigrant status or visible minority status, Canadians most often reported experiencing discrimination at work, when applying for a job or promotion, or when they were in a store, bank or restaurant. There were no significant differences between immigrants and the Canadian-born population when it came to experiencing discrimination when dealing with the police. However, immigrants were significantly more likely than the Canadian-born population to indicate that they experienced some form of discrimination when crossing the border into Canada (12% versus 4%).

Visible minorities were nearly twice as likely as non-visible minorities to report experiencing discrimination when dealing with the police (13% versus 7%) and three times more likely when crossing the border into Canada (12% versus 4%).

### **Decline in reported experiences of discrimination among minority populations**

Although immigrants and visible minorities were more likely than their Canadian-born and non-visible minority counterparts to report experiencing discrimination, the overall prevalence of perceived discrimination among these populations has declined in recent years. Specifically, among immigrants, the proportion of people who reported experiencing discrimination declined slightly from 19% in 2004 to 17% in 2014. A larger decline was observed within the visible minority population, down from 28% in 2004 to 20% in 2014.

### **Some groups feel less safe from crime**

Most individuals were generally satisfied with their personal safety from crime—regardless of immigrant status, visible minority status or religious affiliation. There were, however, some notable differences in the degree to which people felt safe. For example, immigrants, visible minorities and individuals who were affiliated with a religion other than Christianity felt less safe from crime when home alone at night and when walking alone in their neighbourhood after dark.

#### **Note to readers**

*Today, three Juristat articles are released on the violent victimization and discrimination experiences of individuals from diverse population groups, and their perceptions of safety and the justice system. These articles use data from the 2014 General Social Survey (GSS) on Canadians' Safety (Victimization), which includes people 15 years of age and older in the provinces and territories, excluding residents of institutions. With funding from Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada, and Public Safety Canada, an oversample of immigrants and youth was added to the 2014 GSS for a more detailed analysis of these groups.*

*Data on discrimination presented in these articles refer to an individual's perception of discrimination. The GSS on Victimization asked respondents whether or not they had experienced discrimination or had been treated unfairly by others in the past five years (because of their sex, ethnicity or culture, race or skin colour, religion, sexual orientation, age, disability, language or any other reason). Respondents were able to select more than one type of discrimination and type of situation in which they had experienced discrimination.*

*The GSS on Victimization was conducted in English and French, and did not include those who did not speak either official language. While a minority of individuals (6.8% of immigrants and 6.6% of visible minorities) are affected by this limitation, it is nonetheless important to note that these articles may not give a full picture of the experiences and perceptions of this portion of Canada's population.*

**Definitions, data sources and methods: survey number 4504.**

The *Juristat* articles "Violent victimization, discrimination and perceptions of safety: An immigrant perspective, Canada, 2014," "Violent victimization and discrimination among visible minority populations, Canada, 2014" and "Violent victimization and discrimination, by religious affiliation in Canada, 2014" (85-002-X) are now available.

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; [STATCAN.infostats-infostats.STATCAN@canada.ca](mailto:STATCAN.infostats-infostats.STATCAN@canada.ca)) or Media Relations (613-951-4636; [STATCAN.mediahotline-ligneinfomedias.STATCAN@canada.ca](mailto:STATCAN.mediahotline-ligneinfomedias.STATCAN@canada.ca)).