

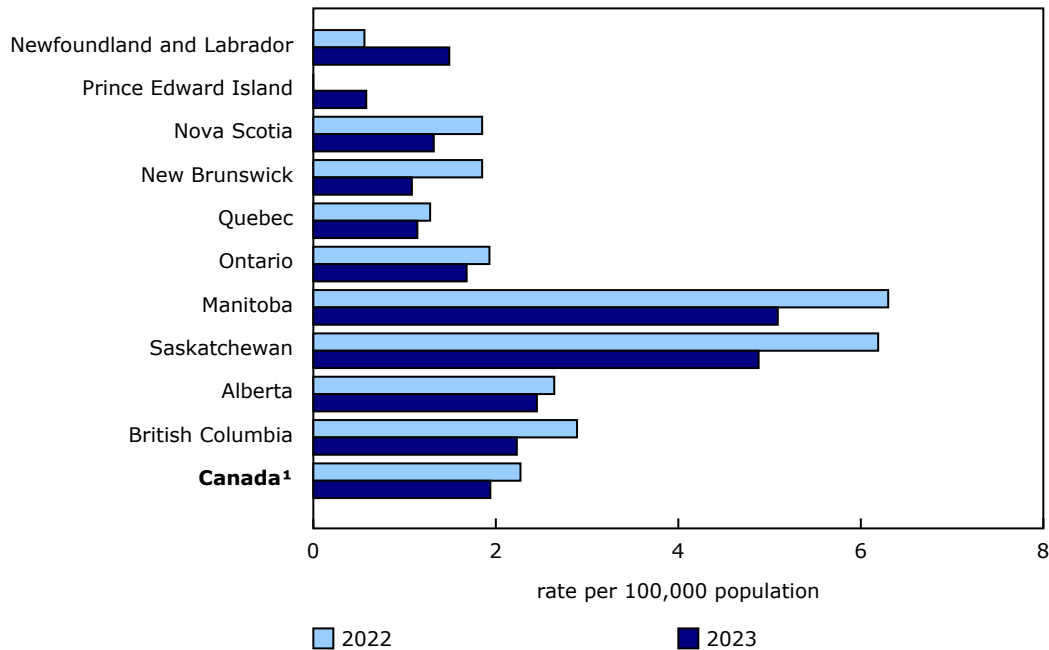
Homicide trends in Canada, 2023

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Homicides remain a relatively rare occurrence in Canada, constituting 0.1% of all police-reported violent crimes in 2023. Despite their low frequency, homicide rates serve as a key indicator of overall societal violence. When considered alongside other measures like violent crime rates and the Violent Crime Severity Index, homicide rates provide a more comprehensive picture of violence trends in Canada.

In 2023, police services reported 778 homicides across the country, 104 fewer victims than the previous year. As a result, the national homicide rate decreased by 14%, from 2.27 to 1.94 homicides per 100,000 population. Gang-related homicides and intimate partner homicides all experienced declines, contributing to the overall reduction in the national homicide rate. Significant decreases in homicide rates in Canada's three largest census metropolitan areas (CMAs)—Toronto, Montréal and Vancouver—also contributed to the overall reduction. This marks the first time since 2019 that the rate was below two homicides per 100,000 population.

Chart 1
Rate of homicides, by province, 2022 and 2023



1. Includes the territories.

Note(s): Populations are based upon July 1, 2021, estimates from Statistics Canada, Centre for Demography.

Source(s): Homicide Survey (3315).

Most provinces recorded decreases in their homicide rates in 2023

In 2023, eight provinces saw reductions in their homicide rates. The largest decline was in New Brunswick (-42%), while Nova Scotia (-29%) and British Columbia (-23%) also saw notable declines.

In contrast, with five more homicides in 2023 (8) than in 2022 (3), the homicide rate for Newfoundland and Labrador increased 163%, from 0.56 per 100,000 population in 2022 to 1.49 homicides per 100,000 population in 2023. Prince Edward Island also reported an increase in its homicide rate, as no homicides were reported in the province in 2022 and one was reported in 2023.

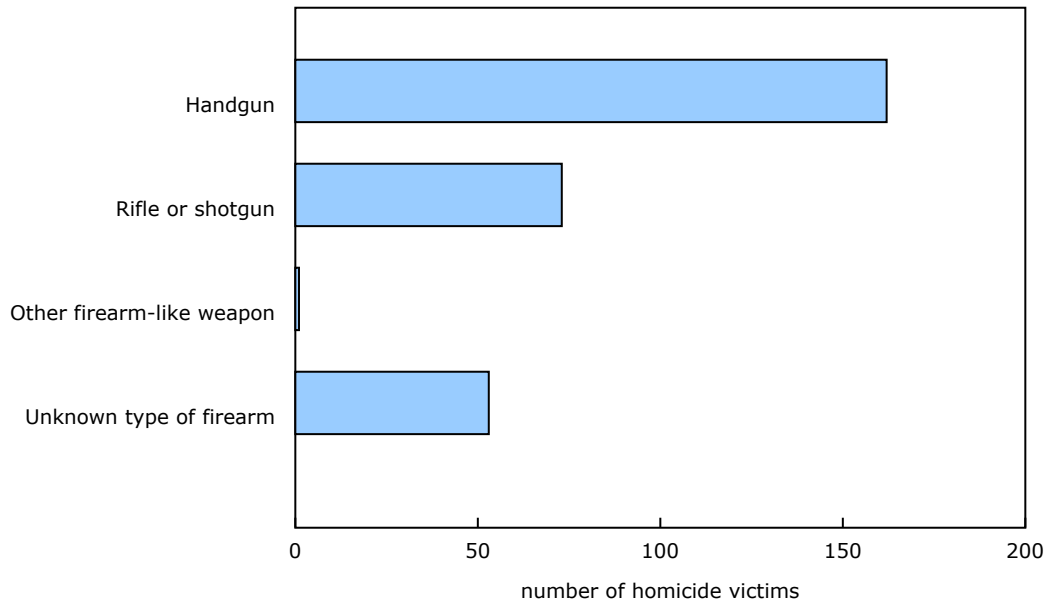
Among Canada's CMAs, Thunder Bay recorded the highest homicide rate in 2023, despite a 54% decrease in the number of homicides compared with the previous year. Thunder Bay's homicide rate stood at 5.39 per 100,000 population, followed by Winnipeg (5.04) and Chilliwack (4.77).

Aligning with the general downward trend in the homicide rate, 26 of Canada's 42 CMAs recorded declines in their homicide rate from 2022 to 2023 (Table 2). The three largest CMAs—Toronto (-14%), Montréal (-21%) and Vancouver (-37%)—experienced significant reductions in homicide rates in 2023.

Close to 6 in 10 firearm-related homicides committed with a handgun

Similar to 2022, nearly 4 in 10 (39%) homicides were committed with a firearm in 2023. Consistent with recent years, handguns were the most common firearm used in these crimes, accounting for 56% of firearm-related homicides in 2023. Rifles and shotguns were used in 25% of firearm-related homicides, while the remainder involved unknown types of firearms (e.g., firearms where the exact method used to fire the lethal projectile cannot be identified) or firearm-like weapons (including fully automatic firearms and improvised firearms).

Chart 2
Number of homicide victims, by type of firearm used to commit the homicide, 2023



Note(s): Other firearm-like weapon includes weapons such as nail guns, pellet guns and flare guns.
Source(s): Homicide Survey (3315).

For the purposes of the Homicide Survey, an incident is defined as the occurrence of one or more homicides during a single, distinct event. If there are multiple victims or multiple accused people, the homicides must occur at the same location and at the same time if they are to be included within the same incident. If this is not the case, they are recorded as separate incidents.

Approximately one-quarter of homicides are gang-related

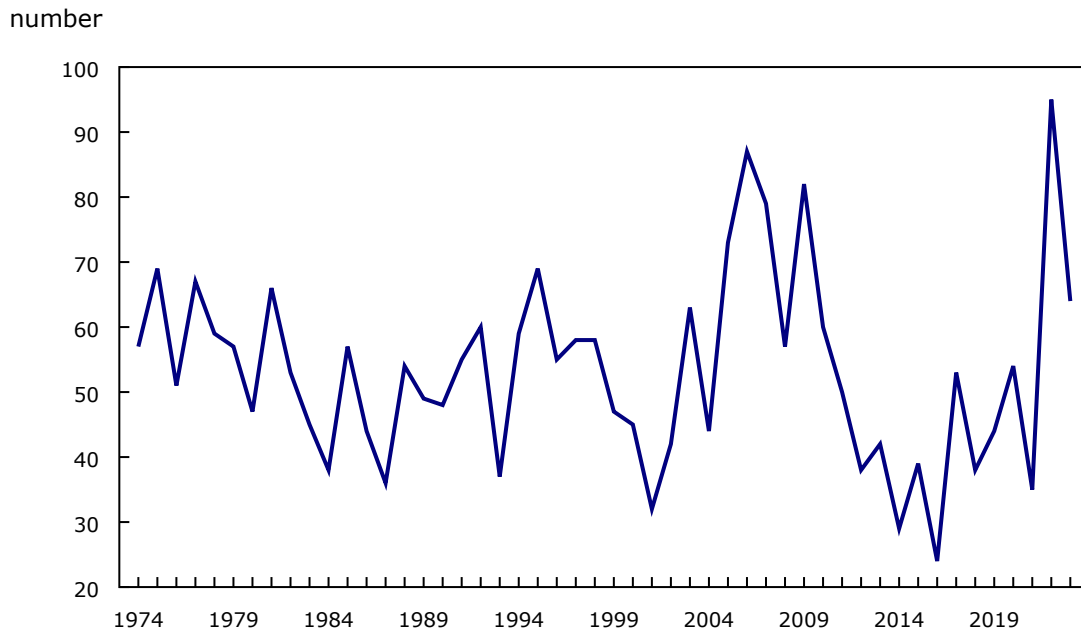
Gang-related violence remains a contributor to Canada's homicide rate. Despite a decrease in gang-related homicides in 2023 compared with 2022, they still accounted for approximately one-quarter of all homicides in 2023. Specifically, 173 gang-related homicides were committed in 2023, 31 fewer than the previous year, corresponding to a rate of 0.43 per 100,000 population.

Number of youth accused of homicide declined in 2023

Overall, the number of youth under the age of 18 who were accused of committing a homicide decreased in 2023. Among cleared homicides, police services reported that 64 youths were accused of homicide in 2023, compared with 95 in 2022. The rate of youth accused of homicide decreased from 1.29 per 100,000 youths in 2022 to 0.85 per 100,000 youths in 2023.

However, the proportion of gang-related homicides committed by youth increased. Over 31% of homicides committed by youth were gang-related in 2023, compared with 16% in 2022.

Chart 3
Number of youths accused of homicide, 1974 to 2023



Note(s): Anyone below the age of 18 is considered a youth.
Source(s): Homicide Survey (3315).

Indigenous peoples continue to be overrepresented as homicide victims

Indigenous peoples in Canada face a disproportionate risk of homicide. This heightened risk is deeply rooted in the ongoing effects of colonization, including systemic discrimination, poverty and a legacy of trauma.

In 2023, just over one in four (26%) homicide victims were Indigenous, despite representing 5% of the overall population. Similarly, in 2022, 27% of homicide victims were Indigenous. This overrepresentation translates to a homicide rate of 9.31 per 100,000 Indigenous people, a figure more than six times higher than the rate for non-Indigenous Canadians.

Nearly one in three homicide victims belong to a racialized group

Racialized individuals in Canada are disproportionately involved in the criminal justice system. They may face challenges at various stages, both as victims and as accused. These challenges can include discriminatory treatment and systemic barriers, which can exacerbate existing inequalities.

In 2023, 30% of all homicide victims (235) were identified as belonging to a racialized group. The overall rate of homicide for racialized victims (1.98 victims per 100,000 population) was higher than the homicide rate for non-racialized victims (1.90 per 100,000 population).

Among all homicide victims identified as racialized, the most represented groups were Black (39%) and South Asian (20%) individuals.

Nearly one-third of individuals charged with committing a homicide in the past five years were in custody or under community supervision at the time of the incident

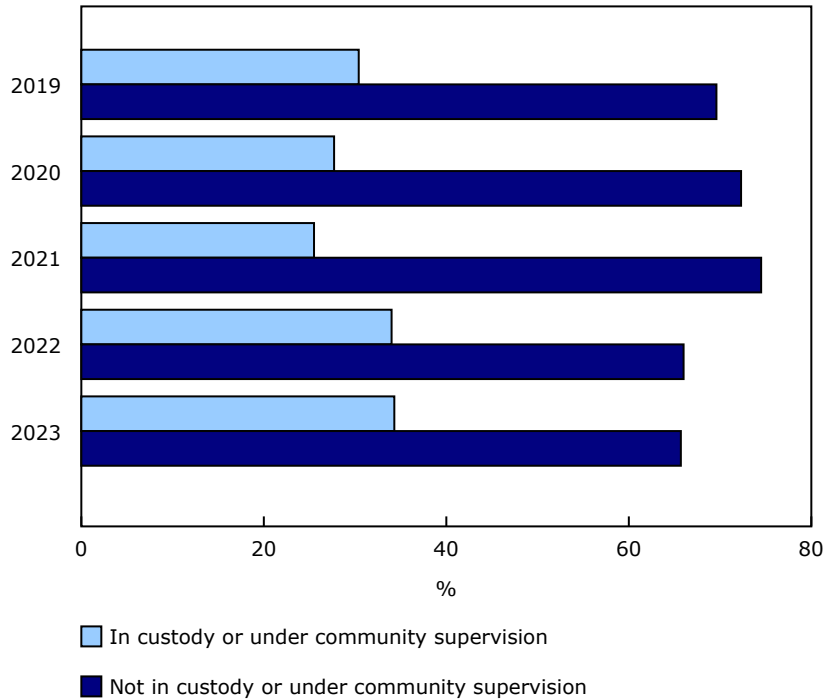
Lawmakers, prosecutors and courts across the country recently requested a bail reform to enhance public safety and maintain public confidence in the criminal justice system. The most recent reforms, which came into effect on January 4, 2024, make it more difficult for individuals accused of serious violent offences involving weapons, specific firearm offences and intimate partner violence to be granted bail (see the Note to readers for additional details on bail reform).

From 2019 to 2023, the custody status of individuals involved in homicides varied. For those individuals for whom the information was available, the proportion of the accused in custody or under community supervision at the time the homicide was committed ranged from 30% in 2019 to 34% in 2023.

It is important to note that these results are based on individuals who were in custody or under community supervision, which encompasses a broader range than those on bail, including those on remand, sentenced to custody or probation.

Chart 4

Proportion of people accused of homicide in custody or under community supervision at the time of the homicide, 2019 to 2023



Note(s): Excludes homicides where it was unknown whether the charged/suspect-chargeable was in custody or under community supervision at the time of the homicide.

Source(s): Homicide Survey (3315).

Missing persons as victims of homicide

While the overall number of homicides decreased in 2023, the number of homicide victims who had been missing at the time of their death increased.

In 2023, approximately 6% of homicide victims (or 43 victims) were reported as missing at the time of their death. This represents an increase from 4% (or 39 victims) in 2022. Among homicide victims in 2023, women (7%) were more likely than men (5%) to have been reported as missing at the time of their death. Among Indigenous homicide victims, 10% of Indigenous women were reported as missing at the time of their death, compared with 4% of Indigenous men.

Women continue to be disproportionately affected by intimate partner homicide

As has historically been the case, women accounted for a disproportionate number of victims of intimate partner homicide in 2023. This includes homicides committed by a current or former legally married or common-law spouse, dating partner, or other intimate partner. While there were 36 fewer victims of intimate partner homicides in 2023 (67 victims, down from 103 in 2022), women accounted for 73% of victims.

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Table 1
Number of homicides, by province and territory, 2014 to 2023

	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
	number of victims									
Canada	525	612	619	669	664	691	765	801	882	778
Newfoundland and Labrador	2	3	8	4	2	5	4	8	3	8
Prince Edward Island	3	1	0	2	0	2	1	1	0	1
Nova Scotia	6	12	13	21	11	6	37	23	19	14
New Brunswick	11	11	11	10	13	17	14	11	15	9
Quebec	72	79	67	93	84	78	87	90	111	101
Ontario	156	174	206	198	272	253	244	284	292	262
Manitoba	45	48	43	47	55	74	62	62	89	74
Saskatchewan	24	46	57	38	35	55	64	71	73	59
Alberta	107	133	116	119	83	100	143	119	119	115
British Columbia	89	96	90	121	92	91	100	125	155	123
Yukon	3	1	4	8	3	1	0	4	2	4
Northwest Territories	3	6	3	2	6	2	6	1	3	6
Nunavut	4	2	1	6	8	7	3	2	1	2
Difference in Canada number from previous year	14	87	7	50	-5	27	74	36	81	-104

Note(s): There may be a small number of homicides in a given year's total that occurred in previous years. Homicides are counted according to the year in which they are reported to Statistics Canada.

Source(s): Homicide Survey ([3315](#)).

Table 2
Rate of homicides, by province and territory, 2014 to 2023

	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
	rate ¹									
Canada	1.48	1.71	1.71	1.83	1.79	1.84	2.01	2.09	2.27	1.94
Newfoundland and Labrador	0.38	0.57	1.51	0.76	0.38	0.95	0.76	1.52	0.56	1.49
Prince Edward Island	2.08	0.69	0.00	1.34	0.00	1.28	0.63	0.62	0.00	0.58
Nova Scotia	0.64	1.28	1.38	2.21	1.14	0.61	3.74	2.30	1.85	1.32
New Brunswick	1.45	1.45	1.44	1.30	1.69	2.19	1.79	1.39	1.85	1.08
Quebec	0.88	0.97	0.81	1.12	1.00	0.92	1.02	1.05	1.28	1.14
Ontario	1.15	1.27	1.48	1.41	1.90	1.74	1.65	1.91	1.93	1.68
Manitoba	3.52	3.71	3.27	3.52	4.07	5.40	4.49	4.45	6.30	5.09
Saskatchewan	2.16	4.10	5.02	3.31	3.03	4.72	5.48	6.08	6.19	4.88
Alberta	2.62	3.21	2.76	2.81	1.93	2.30	3.24	2.69	2.64	2.45
British Columbia	1.89	2.01	1.85	2.45	1.83	1.78	1.93	2.39	2.89	2.23
Yukon	8.08	2.65	10.38	20.24	7.43	2.43	0.00	9.31	4.56	8.89
Northwest Territories	6.84	13.56	6.72	4.48	13.47	4.50	13.48	2.24	6.71	13.34
Nunavut	11.12	5.48	2.70	15.93	20.88	18.02	7.60	4.99	2.47	4.92
Percent change in rate for Canada from previous year	1.7	15.7	0.0	6.8	-2.2	2.6	9.5	4.1	8.1	-14.3

1. Rates are calculated per 100,000 population using revised July 1 population estimates from Statistics Canada, Centre for Demography.

Note(s): There may be a small number of homicides in a given year's total that occurred in previous years. Homicides are counted according to the year in which they are reported to Statistics Canada.

Source(s): Homicide Survey (3315).

Table 3
Counts and rates of homicides, by census metropolitan area¹, 2013 to 2023

	2023	2023	2023	2022	2022	Difference from 2022	Difference from 2022	Average from 2013 to 2022	Average from 2013 to 2022
	count	rate ²	population	count	rate ²	number	% change in rate	count	rate ²
Canada	778	1.94	40,097,761	882	2.27	-104	-14.34	674	1.83
CMA total	507	1.70	29,866,239	594	2.06	-87	-17.53	446	1.69
500,000 and over population									
Toronto	116	1.73	6,716,214	131	2.02	-15	-14.38	105	1.70
Montréal	54	1.19	4,550,129	66	1.49	-12	-20.53	46	1.10
Vancouver	48	1.62	2,971,838	73	2.56	-25	-36.88	49	1.86
Calgary	24	1.43	1,683,659	29	1.83	-5	-21.94	29	1.99
Edmonton	48	3.06	1,569,315	36	2.39	12	28.04	41	2.90
Ottawa ³	18	1.45	1,241,001	16	1.33	2	8.92	13	1.25
Winnipeg	45	5.04	892,650	53	6.21	-8	-18.84	33	4.00
Québec	7	0.81	864,047	5	0.59	2	36.43	5	0.56
Hamilton	11	1.36	808,136	5	0.63	6	117.32	12	1.54
Kitchener–Cambridge–Waterloo	5	0.74	675,227	7	1.10	-2	-32.50	6	0.99
London	7	1.15	610,582	7	1.19	0	-3.63	8	1.48
Oshawa	9	1.65	544,467	14	2.64	-5	-37.50	8	1.71
St. Catharines–Niagara	12	2.28	525,352	9	1.77	3	29.12	5	1.03
Halifax	8	1.54	519,270	10	2.00	-2	-23.12	8	1.81
100,000 to less than 500,000 population									
Windsor	5	1.07	467,765	4	0.88	1	20.89	5	1.42
Victoria	2	0.46	434,577	5	1.17	-3	-60.71	4	0.96
Saskatoon	13	3.63	358,395	16	4.67	-3	-22.34	10	3.19
Gatineau ⁴	5	1.41	355,833	2	0.57	3	145.86	4	1.05
Barrie	1	0.35	285,571	4	1.45	-3	-75.92	2	0.97
Regina	10	3.67	272,459	8	3.05	2	20.32	9	3.75
Kelowna	5	2.04	245,214	8	3.36	-3	-39.26	4	1.89
St. John's	3	1.34	224,352	2	0.92	1	45.96	3	1.24
Sherbrooke	2	0.90	221,117	0	0.00	2	...	1	0.59
Abbotsford–Mission	4	1.88	212,530	10	4.82	-6	-60.94	5	2.53
Greater Sudbury	5	2.65	188,943	11	5.96	-6	-55.57	3	1.77
Moncton	5	2.67	187,287	2	1.13	3	137.13	2	1.30
Kingston	0	0.00	186,182	8	4.39	-8	-100.00	3	1.59
Saguenay	0	0.00	173,940	2	1.17	-2	-100.00	1	0.42
Brantford	0	0.00	168,913	7	4.30	-7	-100.00	4	2.41
Trois-Rivières	1	0.60	166,908	3	1.83	-2	-67.29	2	0.95
Guelph	4	2.55	156,773	2	1.31	2	95.43	1	0.92
Peterborough	4	2.85	140,393	3	2.22	1	28.57	2	1.18
Saint John	2	1.44	138,744	2	1.48	0	-2.59	2	1.51
Lethbridge ⁵	1	0.75	134,171	3	2.30	-2	-67.62	...	...
Thunder Bay	7	5.39	129,788	15	11.72	-8	-54.00	8	6.17
Fredericton ⁶	1	0.79	126,820	1	0.82	0	-3.45	...	...
Chilliwack ⁶	6	4.77	125,884	3	2.45	3	94.23	...	...
Nanaimo ⁶	3	2.40	125,093	4	3.26	-1	-26.34	...	...
Belleville–Quinte West ^{5,7}	1	0.82	122,478	1	0.83	0	-1.71	...	...
Kamloops ⁶	4	3.28	122,121	3	2.51	1	30.43	...	...
Drummondville ⁶	0	0.00	112,867	0	0.00	0	...	...	...
Red Deer ⁶	1	0.92	109,234	4	3.80	-3	-75.93	...	...
Non-CMA total	271	2.65	10,231,522	288	2.86	-17	-7.27	228	2.17

... not applicable

1. 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. It is important to note that while official police-reported data on crime from the Uniform Crime Reporting Survey use Statistics Canada's standard CMA names, the boundaries for the policing-based CMAs do not always fully align with the standard CMA geographic units used for disseminating information about the Census of Population.
2. Rates are calculated per 100,000 population using revised July 1st population estimates from Statistics Canada, Centre for Demography.
3. Ottawa refers to the Ontario part of the Ottawa–Gatineau CMA.
4. Gatineau refers to the Quebec part of the Ottawa–Gatineau CMA.
5. Belleville and Lethbridge became CMAs in 2016.
6. Fredericton, Chilliwack, Nanaimo, Kamloops, Drummondville and Red Deer became CMAs in 2023.
7. The census metropolitan area (CMA) of Belleville-Quinte West was formerly known as Belleville.

Note(s): There may be a small number of homicides included in a given year's total that occurred in previous years. Homicides are counted according to the year in which they are reported to Statistics Canada.

Source(s): Homicide Survey (3315).

Note to readers

Because of the relatively small population sizes in the territories, variations in year-over-year homicide rates need to be interpreted with caution. Therefore, the territories are included in the overall national rate but not displayed separately.

The amendments made to strengthen Canada's bail system can be found at [Amendments to strengthen Canada's bail system](#).

The results exclude homicides where it was unknown whether the charged/suspect-chargeable was in custody or under community supervision at the time of the homicide. In 2023, this unknown status accounted for 0.7% of individuals involved in homicides.

Definitions, data sources and methods: survey number 3315.

The infographic "[Homicide in Canada, 2023](#)" (11-627-M) is now available.

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