

Catalogue no. 85-002-X
ISSN 1209-6393

Juristat

Youth court statistics in Canada, 2013/2014

by Sarah Alam
Canadian Centre for Justice Statistics

Release date: September 28, 2015



Statistics
Canada

Statistique
Canada

Canada

How to obtain more information

For information about this product or the wide range of services and data available from Statistics Canada, visit our website, www.statcan.gc.ca.

You can also contact us by

email at infostats@statcan.gc.ca

telephone, from Monday to Friday, 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m., at the following toll-free numbers:

- Statistical Information Service 1-800-263-1136
- National telecommunications device for the hearing impaired 1-800-363-7629
- Fax line 1-877-287-4369

Depository Services Program

- Inquiries line 1-800-635-7943
- Fax line 1-800-565-7757

Standards of service to the public

Statistics Canada is committed to serving its clients in a prompt, reliable and courteous manner. To this end, Statistics Canada has developed standards of service that its employees observe. To obtain a copy of these service standards, please contact Statistics Canada toll-free at 1-800-263-1136. The service standards are also published on www.statcan.gc.ca under “Contact us” > “Standards of service to the public.”

Note of appreciation

Canada owes the success of its statistical system to a long-standing partnership between Statistics Canada, the citizens of Canada, its businesses, governments and other institutions. Accurate and timely statistical information could not be produced without their continued co-operation and goodwill.

Standard table symbols

The following symbols are used in Statistics Canada publications:

- . not available for any reference period
- .. not available for a specific reference period
- ... not applicable
- 0 true zero or a value rounded to zero
- 0^s value rounded to 0 (zero) where there is a meaningful distinction between true zero and the value that was rounded
- ^P preliminary
- ^r revised
- X suppressed to meet the confidentiality requirements of the *Statistics Act*
- ^E use with caution
- F too unreliable to be published
- * significantly different from reference category ($p < 0.05$)

Published by authority of the Minister responsible for Statistics Canada

© Minister of Industry, 2015

All rights reserved. Use of this publication is governed by the Statistics Canada [Open Licence Agreement](#).

An HTML version is also available.

Cette publication est aussi disponible en français.

Youth court statistics in Canada, 2013/2014: highlights

- In 2013/2014, Canadian youth courts (involving 12- to 17-year-old accused) completed almost 40,000 cases, representing a 12% decline from the previous year. The number of completed cases in youth courts was the lowest number of completed youth court cases since these data were first collected more than two decades ago.
- Most provinces and territories reported a decline in the number of completed cases, with the exception of Yukon (+17%) and the Northwest Territories (+2%), which reported increases. Prince Edward Island recorded the largest decrease (-25%) in youth court cases.
- The majority of completed youth court cases in 2013/2014 involved non-violent crime (71%).
- The most common *Criminal Code* youth court cases were theft (12%), common assault (9%), and break and enter (8%).
- Almost all types of completed youth court cases decreased between 2012/2013 and 2013/2014. Some of the largest declines were for cases involving disturbing the peace (-35%), impaired driving (-25%) and robbery (-18%).
- Males represented 78% of all accused persons appearing in youth court in 2013/2014. In addition, regardless of gender, most (62%) youth court cases involved those aged 16 or 17 years at the time of the alleged offence.
- In 2013/2014, 56% of all cases completed in youth court resulted in a finding of guilt. New Brunswick had the highest proportion of guilty findings (77%), while Ontario had the lowest (45%).
- Custody sentences were imposed in 15% of guilty youth court cases in 2013/2014, which is down from 22% in 2003/2004. The imposition of custodial sentences has been offset somewhat by sentences to deferred custody and supervision (imposed in 5% of cases in 2013/2014), since the latter was introduced as a sentencing option in 2003 with the introduction of the *Youth Criminal Justice Act* (YCJA).
- The median length of custodial sentences was 80 days for violent offence cases, 45 days for property offences, and 18 days for administration of justice offences. Only 2% of cases received a custody sentence of one year or more.
- Probation continued to be the most common type of youth court sentence (58%) in 2013/2014. The median length of probation sentences was about 1 year (360 days).
- The median length of time taken to complete a youth court case increased to 120 days (about 4 months) in 2013/2014, while it was 114 days the previous year.

Youth court statistics in Canada, 2013/2014

by Sarah Alam

In Canada, to achieve the goals of rehabilitation, accountability, and public safety, accused youth are processed through youth courts which operate separately from the adult court system. The *Youth Criminal Justice Act (YCJA)*, the legislation currently in place that applies to youth aged 12-to-17 years accused of a crime, has several objectives: to provide clear and coherent principles to improve decision-making in the youth justice system; to achieve more appropriate use of the courts, maintain fairness in sentencing, reduce the use of custody so that the most serious interventions are reserved for the most serious crimes; to have clear distinctions between serious violent offences and less serious offences; and to effectively reintegrate youth into the community (Department of Justice Canada 2013).

Using data from the Integrated Criminal Court Survey, this article presents information on youth court cases completed in Canada in 2013/2014. It highlights youth court key indicators, including the number of completed charges and cases, characteristics of youth who appear in court, case decisions, sentencing outcomes, and the length of time it takes to complete youth court cases. In addition, trends over time in completed youth court cases will also be presented.

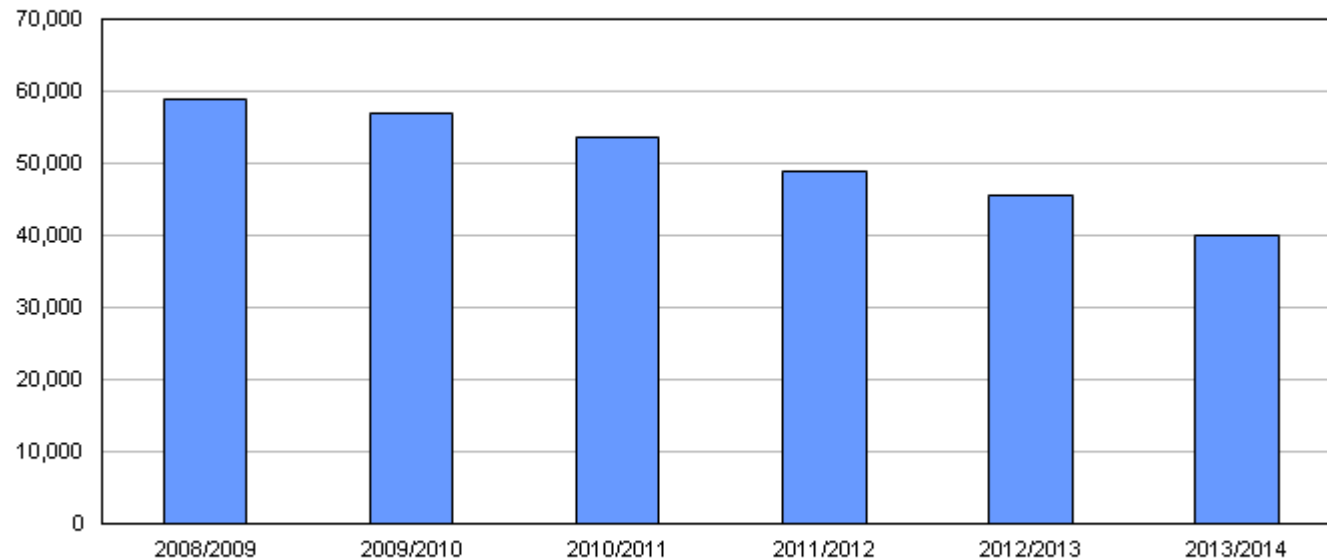
Decrease in completed cases in youth court in 2013/2014

In 2013/2014, Canada's youth courts completed 39,901 cases involving 138,713 charges related to *Criminal Code* and other federal statute offences, including offences related to the *Youth Criminal Justice Act (YCJA)* (Table 1). The number of completed youth court cases declined by 12% from the previous year which constitutes the fifth consecutive annual decline, and the lowest number of completed youth court cases since these data were first collected by Statistics Canada in 1991/1992 (Chart 1).

Chart 1

Cases completed in youth court, Canada, 2008/2009 to 2013/2014

number of cases



Note: A case is 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.

Source: Statistics Canada, Canadian Centre for Justice Statistics, Integrated Criminal Court Survey.

The decrease in the number of completed youth court cases occurred throughout most of the country. Most provinces and territories reported a decline in the number of completed cases, with the exception of Yukon (+17%) and the Northwest Territories (+2%), which both experienced year-over-year increases. Prince Edward Island (-25%) recorded the largest year-over-year decrease in youth court cases, followed by Nova Scotia (-24%) and Ontario (-16%) (Table 2).¹

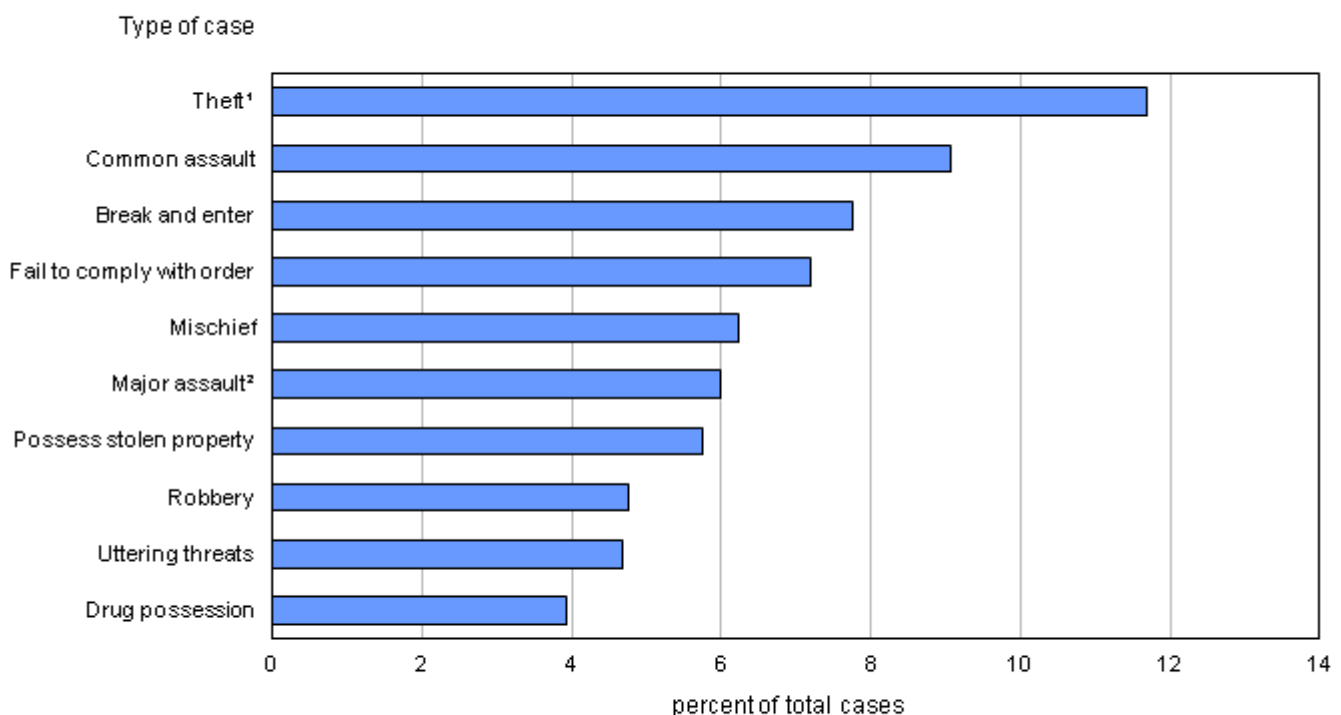
The volume and characteristics of cases heard in youth courts may be affected by regional differences in the reporting of criminal incidents to police, in procedures and eligibility requirements for police diversion and extrajudicial measures

programs, and differences in provincial policy directing Crown discretion. Pre-charge screening by the Crown is mandatory in New Brunswick, Quebec and British Columbia and is meant to keep less serious cases out of the court system and reduce court workload. It is important to consider these factors when making comparisons between provinces and territories (Thomas 2008).

Almost all types of completed youth court cases decreased in 2013/2014

Most youth court cases in 2013/2014 involved non-violent crime, representing 71% of all completed cases. This trend has been consistent over time, and reflects what is also seen in police-reported crime statistics where most criminal offences are non-violent (Boyce et. al 2014). The top five *Criminal Code* case types made up 42% of all completed cases in youth court and they were cases involving theft (12%),² common assault (9%), break and enter (8%), failure to comply with an order (7%), and mischief (6%) (Chart 2).³

Chart 2
Ten common offences for cases completed in youth court, Canada, 2013/2014



1. Includes, for example, theft over \$5,000, theft \$5,000 or under, as well as motor vehicle theft.

2. Includes, for example, assault with a weapon (level 2) and aggravated assault (level 3).

Note: A case is 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. Cases that involve more than one charge are represented by the most serious offence.

Source: Statistics Canada, Canadian Centre for Justice Statistics, Integrated Criminal Court Survey.

Almost all types of completed youth court cases decreased between 2012/2013 and 2013/2014 (Table 3). Declines were observed for cases involving property offences (-15%), followed by administration of justice offences (-12%), other federal statute offences (-12%) and violent offences (-8%).

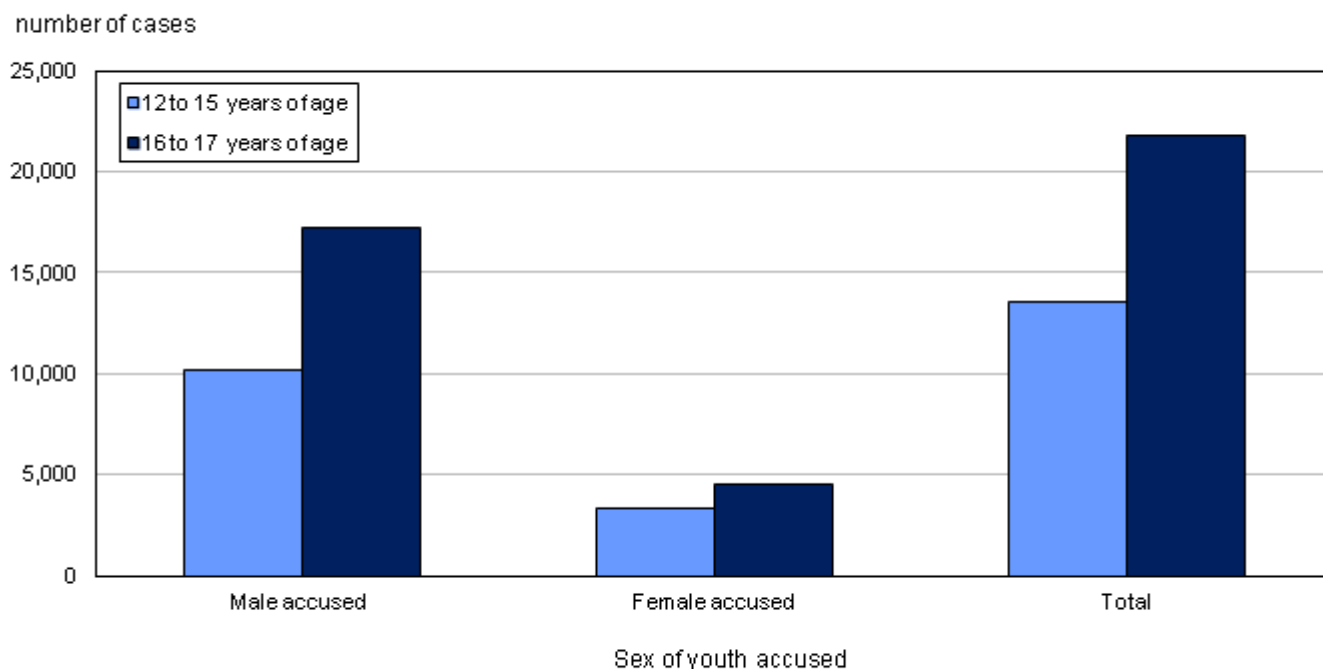
Some of the largest declines were for cases involving disturbing the peace (-35%), impaired driving (-25%) and robbery (-18%). Drug possession offences and those against the *Youth Criminal Justice Act (YCJA)* (e.g. contempt against youth court, failure to comply with sentence or disposition) decreased by 15%, while other drug offences, including drug trafficking, production, importing and exporting decreased by 8%. In addition, offences involving the use of a weapon decreased by 7% in 2013/2014.⁴

While cases of violent offences decreased overall in 2013/2014, there were exceptions, specifically sexual assault (+8%), homicide (+6%), other sexual offences(+5%), and criminal harassment (+3%) all experienced year-over-year increases.

Most youth court cases involve 16- and 17-year-olds

Police-reported data consistently show that crime rates tend to peak during late adolescence and early adulthood (Brennan 2012); courts data also illustrate a similar trend. In fact in 2013/2014, 16- and 17-year-olds continued to make up the largest proportion of accused persons, representing 62% of cases completed in youth court, while 12- to 15-year-olds accounted for 38%⁵ (Chart 3).

Chart 3
Cases completed in youth court, by sex and age group of the accused, Canada, 2013/2014



Note: Includes information on accused persons aged 12 to 17 years of age at the time of the offence. Excludes cases in which the age and/or the sex of the accused was unknown. A case is 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. Information on the sex of the accused is not available from Manitoba as of 2005/2006.

Source: Statistics Canada, Canadian Centre for Justice Statistics, Integrated Criminal Court Survey.

The larger proportion of older youth held consistent for all case types, with the exception of cases involving criminal harassment, sexual assault and other sexual offences. Youth accused aged 12- to 15-years have a higher proportion than 16- and 17-year-olds for sexual assault and other sexual offences (Table 4).

Overall, males represented 78% of all accused persons in youth court.⁶ The representation of females was highest among cases for failure to appear (41%), prostitution (40%) and fraud (36%). The representation of females was lowest among cases for sexual assault (2%), other sexual offences (3%) and attempted murder (7%).

More than half of completed youth cases result in guilty finding

Cases completed in youth court typically result in one of three outcomes. First, cases may result in a guilty finding wherein the accused pleads guilty or is found guilty by the court. Second, cases may be stayed (suspended for up to 1 year), withdrawn, dismissed or discharged as a result of proceedings being stopped or interrupted. Third, cases may result in an acquittal when the accused is found not guilty of the charge.^{7,8}

In 2013/2014, more than half (56%) of all cases completed in youth court resulted in a guilty finding. This proportion is the lowest since data was first collected in the early 90s.

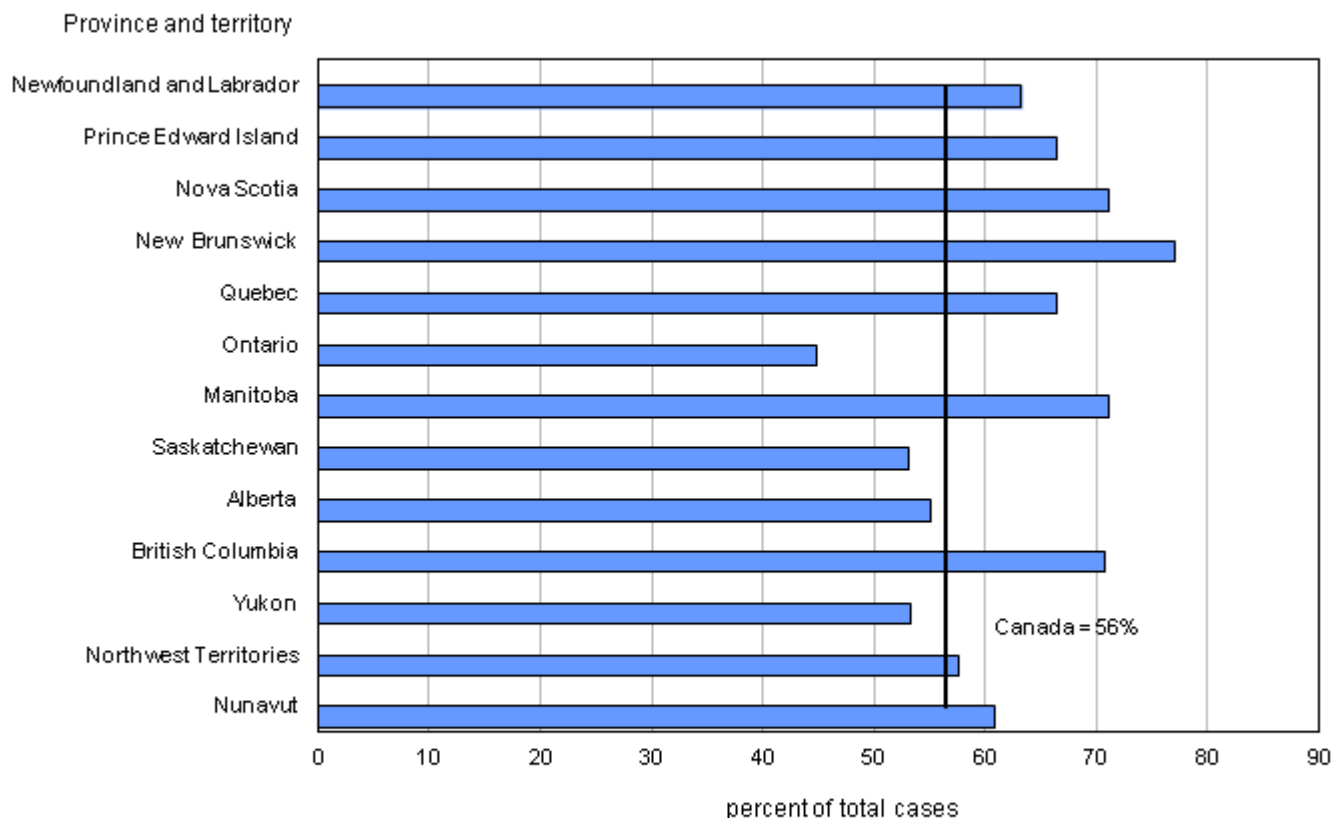
There were some case types that resulted in a finding of guilt more or less often than others. Unlawfully at large (85%), *Youth Criminal Justice Act* (80%), and impaired driving cases (79%) had the highest proportion of guilty findings, while drug possession (28%) and prostitution (27%) had the lowest, with stayed or withdrawn being their main disposition (Table 5).

For youth courts, slightly more than 4 in 10 of all completed cases were stayed or withdrawn, whereas for adult criminal courts in 2013/2014, slightly more than 3 in 10 of all completed cases were stayed or withdrawn (Maxwell 2015). This variation between adult and youth courts is consistent with data observed since 2008/2009. The larger proportion of stayed or withdrawn cases found in youth courts could be related to the use of extrajudicial measures. Depending on a number of factors, courts may stay a case while the youth participates in a program or completes community work. This is something that the *YCJA* encourages, and when the conditions have been satisfied, the charge(s) may be withdrawn by the Crown.⁹

In addition, about 2% of cases were acquitted, and less than 1% received another type of decision.

Guilty findings vary across provinces and territories. For example, in 2013/2014, guilty findings ranged from a high of 77% in New Brunswick to a low of 45% in Ontario (Chart 4).

Chart 4
Guilty cases in youth court, by province and territory, 2013/2014



Note: A case is 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. There are many factors that may influence variations between jurisdictions, therefore, comparisons should be made with caution.

Source: Statistics Canada, Canadian Centre for Justice Statistics, Integrated Criminal Court Survey.

There are several possible factors that influence variations in the proportion of cases found guilty.¹⁰ First, some jurisdictions use diversion programs to a greater extent which may reduce the number and types of cases that proceed to court. Second, the use of stays and withdrawals varies across the country. Cases that are stayed or withdrawn are often indicative of charges set aside pending completion of extrajudicial/alternative measures or diversion programs. For example, more than one-half (54%) of cases were stayed, withdrawn or dismissed in Ontario, compared with 20% in New Brunswick. Third, the use of pre-charge screening by the Crown, which occurs in New Brunswick, Quebec, and British Columbia, may also affect the percentage of convictions through increased vetting of charges (Thomas 2008).

Youth court cases sentenced to custody increase for some violent offences

In determining the most appropriate sentence, judges must ensure meaningful consequences while balancing the principles of the *YCJA*, including the protection of society and the rehabilitative needs of the youth.¹¹ 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. The most severe sentence according to the YCJA is a custody sentence. This sentence is reserved for the most serious of crimes committed by youth.

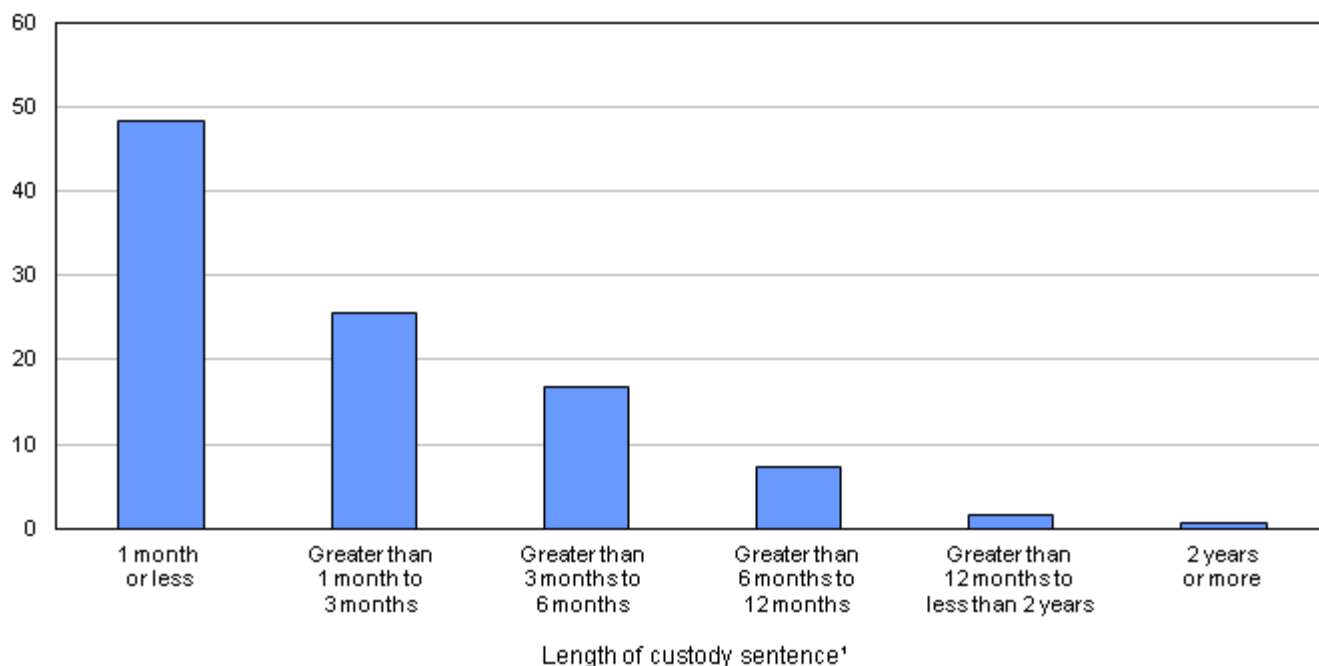
In 2013/2014, custodial sentences were imposed in 15% of guilty youth court cases (Table 6). A custody sentence was most often imposed in homicide cases (81%) and attempted murder cases (78%). The proportion of custody sentences imposed in homicide and attempted murder cases has increased since 2012/2013, where custodial sentences were imposed in fewer homicide cases (48%) and fewer attempted murder cases (44%), and the proportion of custody sentences imposed has generally increased in the last five years for these two types of cases. Custodial sentences were imposed the least for cases involving impaired driving and drug possession.

Overall, the median length of a custodial sentence in 2013/2014 was 39 days.¹² The median length of custody was 80 days for violent offence cases, 45 days for property offences, and 18 days for administration of justice offences. Of the cases that had the highest proportion of guilty cases sentenced to custody, the median length of custody for homicide cases was the longest at 1,090 days (about 3 years), followed by attempted murder cases at 710 days (about 2 years).

Almost half of all custody sentences were one month or less (48%). Another 26% of custody sentences were greater than one month to three months, and the remaining 26% were greater than three months (Chart 5).

Chart 5
Guilty cases in youth court, by length of custody sentence, Canada, 2013/2014

percent of cases sentenced to custody



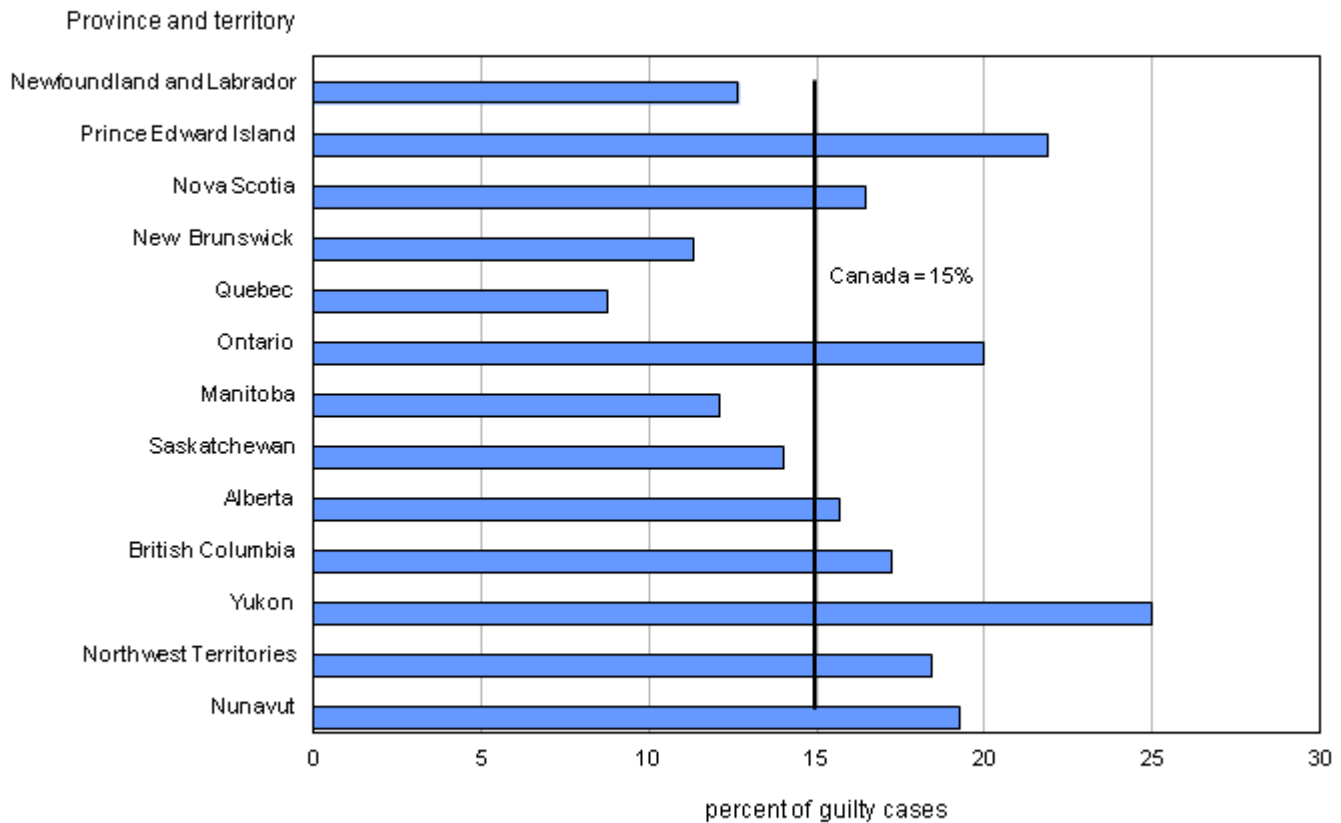
1. Length of custody data are not available for Manitoba data as of 2005/2006.

Note: Custodial sentence lengths exclude time spent in custody prior to sentencing and/or the amount of credit awarded for time spent in pre-sentence custody. Excludes cases in which the length of the custody sentence was unknown. A case is 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.

Source: Statistics Canada, Canadian Centre for Justice Statistics, Integrated Criminal Court Survey.

The number of youth court cases sentenced to custody varies across the provinces and territories.¹³ The proportion of guilty cases with custody sentences was highest in Yukon (25%) and lowest in Quebec (9%) (Chart 6).

Chart 6
Guilty cases in youth court sentenced to custody, by province and territory,
2013/2014

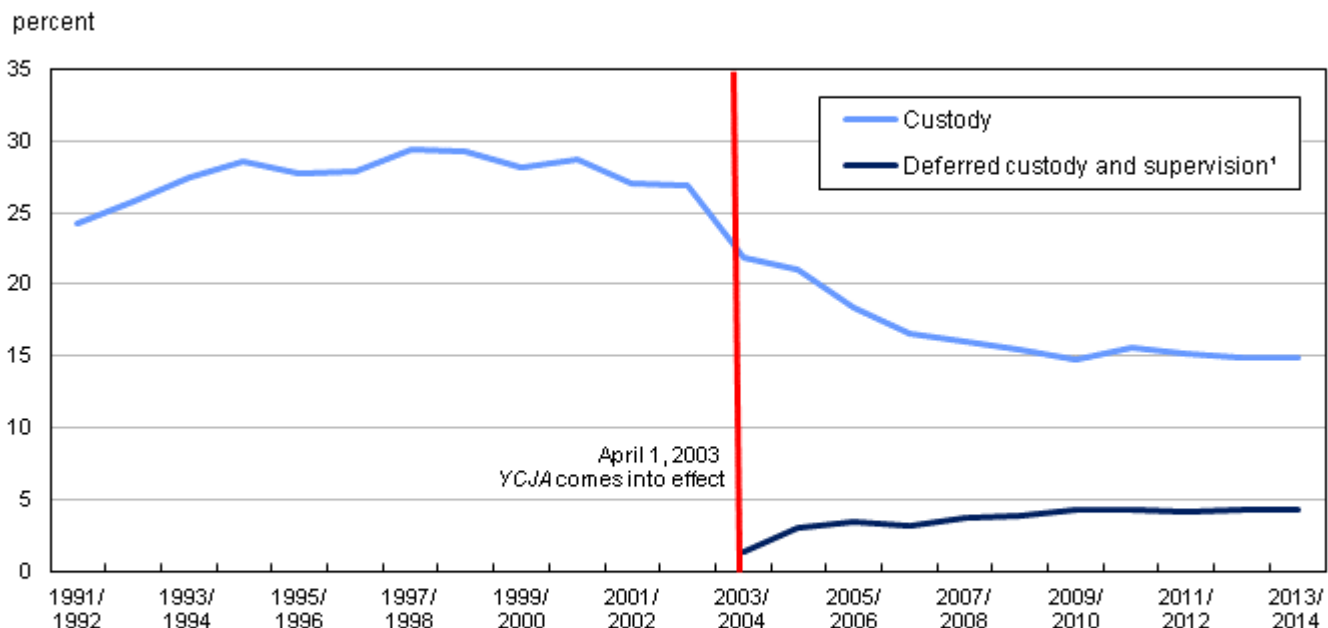


Note: A case is one or more charges against an accused person or company that were processed by the courts at the same time and received a final decision. There are many factors that may influence variations between jurisdictions, therefore, comparisons should be made with caution.

Source: Statistics Canada, Canadian Centre for Justice Statistics, Integrated Criminal Court Survey.

Since the implementation of the *YCJA* in 2003, the proportion of youth court cases resulting in a sentence to custody has decreased. In 2013/2014, 15% of guilty youth court cases resulted in a custody sentence which has declined since 2003/2004 when it was reported at 22%. The deferred custody and supervision sentence, introduced in 2003 under the *YCJA*, is considered an alternative to custody. This type of sentence is served in the community under a set of strict conditions which, if violated, can result in the young person being sent to custody to serve the balance of the sentence (Chart 7).¹⁴

Chart 7
Guilty cases completed in youth court, by selected sentence, Canada,
1991/1992 to 2013/2014



1. Deferred custody and supervision is a sentence under the *Youth Criminal Justice Act (YCJA)* effective April 1, 2003.

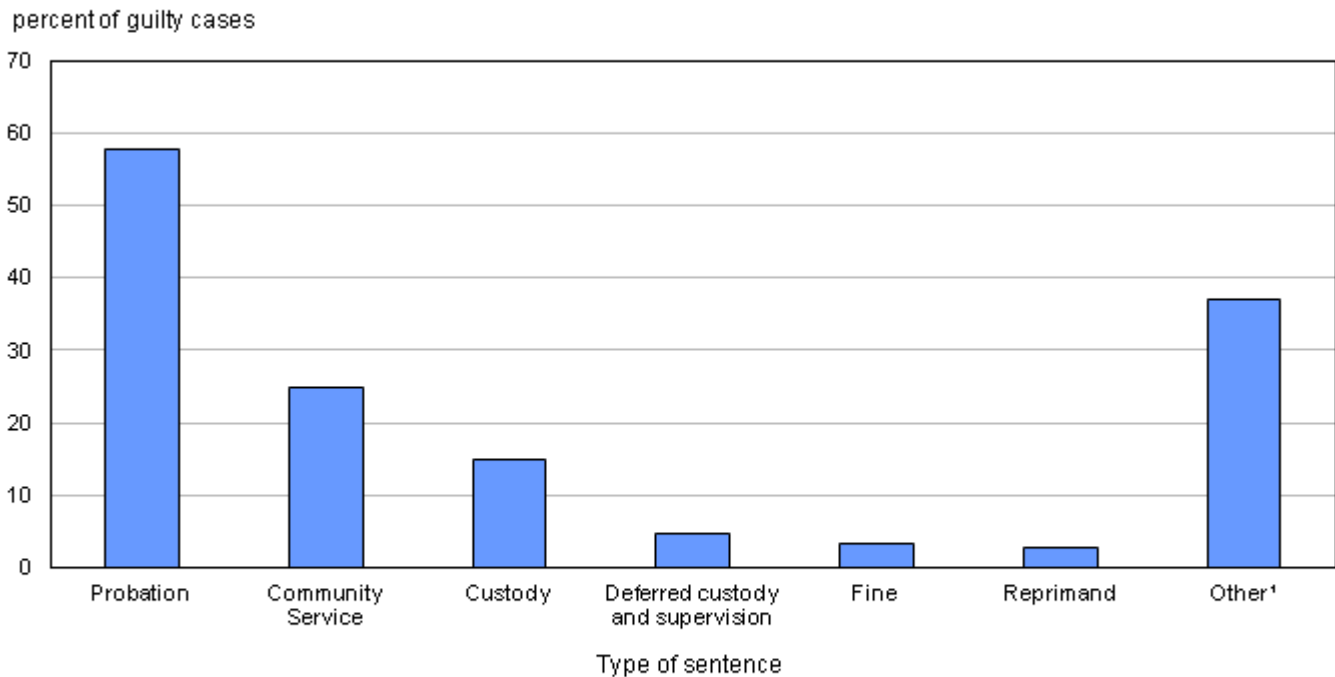
Note: A case is one or more charges against an accused person or company that were processed by the courts at the same time and received a final decision. There are many factors that may influence variations between jurisdictions, therefore, comparisons should be made with caution. Deferred custody and supervision excludes Saskatchewan due to the unavailability of data for certain years.

Source: Statistics Canada, Canadian Centre for Justice Statistics, Integrated Criminal Court Survey.

Probation remains the most common sentence imposed in youth court

In 2013/2014, as has been the pattern since the data was first collected in 1991/1992, probation was the most common type of sentence imposed in youth court cases, either on its own or in combination with another type of sentence, at 58% of all guilty cases (Chart 8). A probation sentence requires the offender to remain in the community and be subject to particular conditions, such as keeping the peace, reporting to a probation officer and to appear in court as required.

Chart 8
Guilty cases in youth court, by type of sentence, Canada, 2013/2014



1. Includes, for example, absolute and conditional discharge, suspended sentence, seizure, forfeiture, compensation, pay purchaser, essays, apologies, counseling programs, and prohibition order.

Note: Cases may involve more than one type of sentence, therefore, percentages do not total 100%. A case is 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.

Source: Statistics Canada, Canadian Centre for Justice Statistics, Integrated Criminal Court Survey.

The median length of probation in 2013/2014 was about a year (360 days) for all case types.¹⁵ The median length of probation was similar between broad offence categories, including violent offences, property offences, administration of justice offences, other *Criminal Code* offences, and *Criminal Code* traffic offences. Among guilty cases, the median length of probation for homicide cases was the longest (about 24 months) followed by sexual assault cases (about 18 months).

A community service order was the second most common type of sentence imposed in youth court cases (25%), either on its own or in combination with another type of sentence. Community service requires a youth to perform unpaid work.

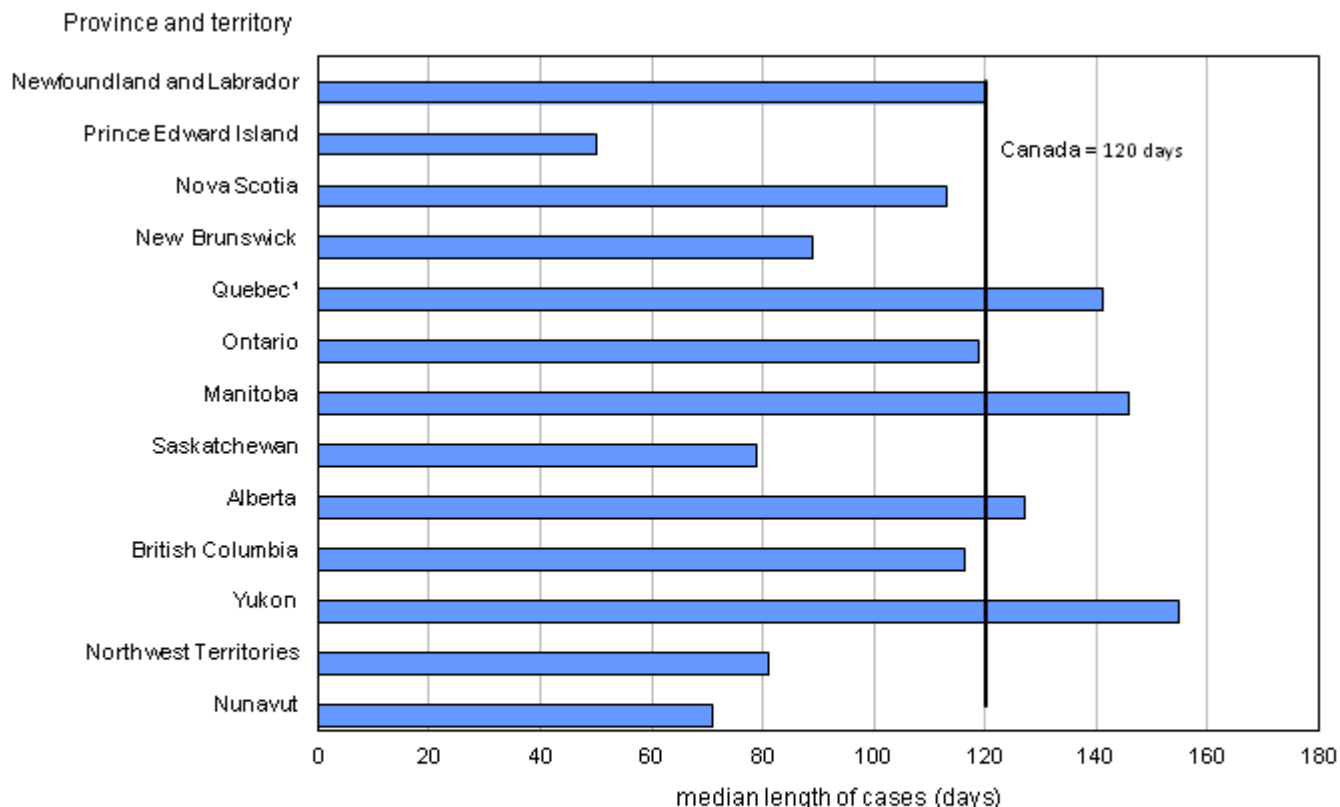
Processing time to complete youth cases increases

The YCJA stipulates that the measures taken against young persons who commit an offence should be administered within a timely manner. The issue of reasonable elapsed time between charges being laid and the accused being brought to trial was considered in the Supreme Court decision *R. v. Askov* [1990], and then further examined in *R. v. Morin* [1992]. While a specific time frame is not stated, in general, an 8- to 10-month period is considered acceptable.¹⁶ For cases involving a trial, an additional 6-to-8 months is considered acceptable.¹⁷

In 2013/2014, the median length of time taken to complete a youth court case was 120 days, or about 4 months. This represents an increase from 2012/2013, when the median length of time to complete a youth court case was 114 days.

In 2013/2014, Prince Edward Island had the shortest median case elapsed time (50 days) while Yukon had the longest (155 days) (Chart 9).¹⁸

Chart 9
Median length of cases completed in youth court, by province and territory,
2013/2014



1. The median length of case completion in Quebec may be over-estimated given that data from municipal courts, which tend to handle the least serious matters, are unavailable.

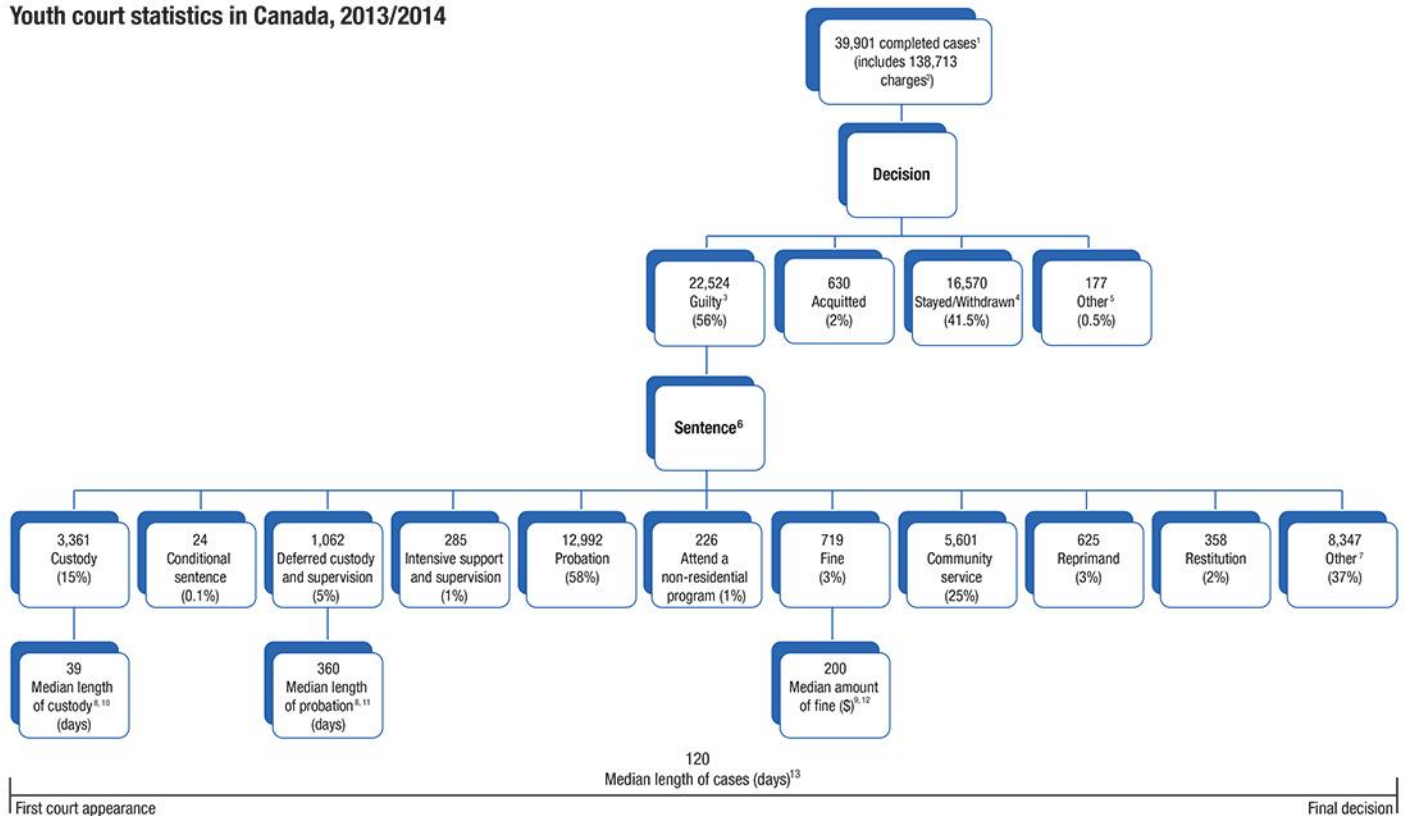
Note: Case lengths are calculated based on the number of days it takes to complete a case, from first appearance to final decision. The median is the point at which half of all cases had longer case lengths and half had shorter case lengths. A case is one or more charges against an accused person or company that were processed by the courts at the same time and received a final decision. There are many factors that may influence variations between jurisdictions, therefore, comparisons should be made with caution.

Source: Statistics Canada, Canadian Centre for Justice Statistics, Integrated Criminal Court Survey.

Cases involving more serious offences often take longer than others to complete. In 2013/2014, homicide cases took the longest and were the only offence type with a median length greater than one year (611 days). The median length of time to complete homicide cases has increased since 2012/2013, when it was reported as 448 days, and it has been increasing for the last decade. Sexual assault cases followed homicide cases in length of time to complete the case (median of 256 days), followed by attempted murder cases (median of 248 days) (Table 3). Cases involving a trial often require a significant amount of time and resources to hear all of the evidence, as well as witness testimonies and victim impact statements. Cases involving juries also tend to take longer due to the jury selection process. All of these factors impact the timeliness of court cases.

Completed youth court cases in 2013/2014 at a glance

Youth court statistics in Canada, 2013/2014



1. A case is 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.
 2. A charge refers to a formal accusation against an accused person or company involving a federal statute offence that has been processed by the courts and received a final decision.
 3. Guilty findings include guilty of the offence, of an included offence, of an attempt of the offence, or of an attempt of an included offence. Also includes guilty pleas, and cases where an absolute or conditional discharge has been imposed.
 4. Includes stays, withdrawals, dismissals and discharges at preliminary inquiry as well as court referrals to alternative or extrajudicial measures.
 5. Includes final decisions of found not criminally responsible and waived out of province or territory. Also includes any order where a conviction was not recorded, the court's acceptance of a special plea, cases that raise *Charter* arguments and cases where the accused was found unfit to stand trial.
 6. Cases may involve more than one type of sentence, therefore, percentages do not total 100%.
 7. "Other" sentences include, for example, absolute and conditional discharge, suspended sentence, seizure, forfeiture, compensation, pay purchaser, essays, apologies, counseling programs, and prohibition order.
 8. The median is the point at which half of all cases had longer sentence lengths and half had shorter sentence lengths.
 9. The median is the point at which half of all cases had higher sentence amounts and half had lower sentence amounts.
 10. Custodial sentence lengths exclude time spent in custody prior to sentencing and/or the amount of credit awarded for time spent in pre-sentence custody. Excludes cases in which the length of the custody sentence was unknown or indeterminate. Length of custody data are not available for Manitoba data as of 2005/2006.
 11. Data exclude cases in which the length of the probation sentence was unknown. Length of probation data are not available for Manitoba data as of 2005/2006.
 12. Data exclude cases in which the amount of the fine was unknown. Amount of fine data are not available for Manitoba data as of 2005/2006.
 13. Case lengths are calculated based on the number of days it takes to complete a case, from first appearance to final decision. The median is the point at which half of all cases had longer case lengths and half had shorter case lengths.
Note: For youth sentences, the *Youth Criminal Justice Act* stipulates a maximum fine of \$1,000.
Source: Statistics Canada, Canadian Centre for Justice Statistics, Integrated Criminal Court Survey.

Survey description

The Integrated Criminal Court Survey (ICCS) is administered by the Canadian Centre for Justice Statistics (Statistics Canada) in collaboration with provincial and territorial government departments responsible for criminal courts in Canada. The survey collects statistical information on adult and youth court cases involving *Criminal Code* and other federal statute charges. Data contained in this article represent the youth court portion of the survey. The individuals involved are persons aged 12 to 17 years (up to the 18th birthday) at the time of the offence. All youth courts in Canada have reported data to the youth component of the survey since the 1991/1992 fiscal year.

The primary unit of analysis is a case. 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.

A case that has more than one charge is represented by the charge with the "most serious offence" (MSO). The most serious offence is selected using the following rules. First, court decisions are considered and the charge with the "most serious decision" (MSD) is selected. Court decisions for each charge in a case are ranked from most to least serious as follows: 1) guilty, 2) guilty of a lesser offence, 3) acquitted, 4) stay of proceeding, 5) withdrawn, dismissed and discharged, 6) not criminally responsible, 7) other, and 8) transfer of court jurisdiction.

Second, in cases where two or more charges result in the same MSD (e.g., guilty), *Criminal Code* sentences are considered. The charge with the most serious offence type is selected according to an offence seriousness scale, based on actual sentences handed down by courts in Canada.¹⁹ Each offence type is ranked by looking at (a) the proportion of guilty charges where custody was imposed and (b) the average (mean) length of custody for the specific type of offence. These values are multiplied together to arrive at the final seriousness ranking for each type of offence. If, after looking at the offence seriousness scale, two or more charges remain tied then information about the sentence type and duration of the sentence are considered (e.g., custody and length of custody, then probation and length of probation, etc.).

Cases are counted according to the fiscal year in which they are completed. Each year, the ICCS database is considered final at the end of March for the production of court statistics pertaining to the preceding fiscal year. However, these counts do not include cases that were pending an outcome at the end of the reference period. If a pending outcome is reached in the next fiscal year, then these cases are included in the completed case counts for that fiscal year. However, if a one-year period of inactivity elapses, then these cases are deemed complete and the originally published counts for the previous fiscal year are subsequently updated and reported in the next year's release of the data. Historically, updates to a previous year's counts have resulted in an increase of about 2%.

References

- Boyce, J., A. Cotter and S. Perreault. 2014. "Police-reported crime statistics in Canada, 2013." *Juristat*. Statistics Canada Catalogue no. 85-002-X.
- Brennan, S. 2012. "Police-reported crime statistics in Canada, 2011." *Juristat*. Statistics Canada Catalogue no. 85-002-X.
- Cotter, A. 2014. "Firearms and violent crime in Canada, 2012." *Juristat*. Statistics Canada Catalogue no. 85-002-X.
- Department of Justice Canada. 2013. *The Youth Criminal Justice Act: Summary and Background*. Ottawa. (accessed June 10, 2015).
- Maxwell, A. 2015. "Adult criminal court statistics in Canada, 2013/2014." *Juristat*. Statistics Canada Catalogue no. 85-002-X.
- Thomas, J. 2008. "Youth court statistics, 2006/2007." *Juristat*. Vol. 28, no. 4. Statistics Canada Catalogue no. 85-002-XIE.

Notes

1. In general, jurisdictions with smaller completed case counts tend to see more fluctuations in year-over-year percentage changes.
2. Includes, for example, theft over \$5,000, theft \$5,000 or under, as well as motor vehicle theft.
3. Unless otherwise stated, youth court cases that involve more than one charge are represented by the most serious offence. For further information, see Survey description section.
4. Over the past couple of years, new legislation has come into force surrounding weapons, and in particular the use of a firearm in the commission of an offence. This legislation introduced mandatory minimum custodial sentences for individuals who commit particular offences with a firearm (Cotter 2014).
5. The analysis of youth court cases by age is based upon the accused person's age at the time the alleged offence was committed. Excludes cases for which the age of the accused was unknown.
6. The analysis of youth court cases by sex excludes Manitoba due to the unavailability of information. Also excludes cases for which the sex of the accused was unknown.
7. In Newfoundland and Labrador, the terms "acquittal" and "dismissed" are used interchangeably, resulting in an under-count of the number of acquittals in that province. In other provinces, the number of acquittals may be over-counted due to administrative practices.
8. A small proportion of cases result in other outcomes, such as not criminally responsible, waived in/out of province, a mistrial, the court's acceptance of a special plea (e.g., *autrefois acquit* where the defendant claims to have been previously acquitted of the same offence on substantially the same evidence, and that he or she therefore cannot be tried for it again), cases that raise *Charter* arguments, and cases where the accused was found unfit to stand trial following a fitness hearing.
9. *Youth Criminal Justice Act*, section 10(5).

10. There are many factors that may influence variations between jurisdictions such as Crown and police charging practices, offence distributions, and various forms of diversion programs. Therefore, comparisons between jurisdictions should be interpreted with caution.

11. *Youth Criminal Justice Act*, section 38(1) and (2).

12. The analysis of youth court cases by length of custody excludes Manitoba due to the unavailability of information. Median custodial sentence lengths exclude time spent in custody prior to sentencing and/or the amount of credit awarded for time spent in pre-sentence custody. Also excludes cases in which the length of custody sentence was unknown.

13. See note 10.

14. The analysis of youth court cases by deferred custody and supervision excludes Saskatchewan due to the unavailability of data for certain years.

15. The analysis of youth court cases by length of probation excludes Manitoba due to the unavailability of information.

16. See *R. v. Askov* [1990], 2 S.C.R. 1199.

17. See *R. v. Morin* [1992], 2 S.C.R. 1199.

18. See note 10.

19. The offence seriousness scale is calculated using data from both the adult and youth components of the Integrated Criminal Court Survey from 2006/2007 to 2010/2011.

Detailed data tables

Table 1
Charges and cases completed in youth court, Canada, 2008/2009 to 2013/2014

Year	Total charges ¹		Total cases ²	
	number	percent change from previous year	number	percent change from previous year
2008/2009	194,142	..	58,968	..
2009/2010	189,494	-2.4	56,859	-3.6
2010/2011	181,835	-4.0	53,494	-5.9
2011/2012	171,264	-5.8	48,952	-8.5
2012/2013	159,702	-6.8	45,441	-7.2
2013/2014	138,713	-13.1	39,901	-12.2

.. not available for a specific reference period

1. A charge refers to a formal accusation against an accused person or company involving a federal statute offence that has been processed by the courts and received a final decision.

2. A case is 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.

Source: Statistics Canada, Canadian Centre for Justice Statistics, Integrated Criminal Court Survey.

Table 2
Cases completed in youth court, by province and territory, 2012/2013 and 2013/2014

Province/territory	2012/2013		2013/2014		Percent change in number of cases 2012/2013 to 2013/2014	Difference in median length of cases 2012/2013 to 2013/2014
	number	median length of case (days) ¹	number	median length of case (days) ¹		
Canada	45,441	114	39,901	120	-12	6
Newfoundland and Labrador	507	104	502	120	-1	16
Prince Edward Island	212	22	158	50	-25	28
Nova Scotia	1,328	127	1,010	113	-24	-14
New Brunswick	880	85	755	89	-14	4
Quebec	8,206	136	7,646	141	-7	5
Ontario	17,338	112	14,617	119	-16	7
Manitoba	3,311	134	3,067	146	-7	12
Saskatchewan	4,197	78	3,755	79	-11	1
Alberta	6,390	127	5,701	127	-11	0
British Columbia	2,682	120	2,304	117	-14	-3
Yukon	64	105	75	155	17	50
Northwest Territories	129	78	132	81	2	3
Nunavut	197	64	179	71	-9	7

1. Case lengths are calculated based on the number of days it takes to complete a case, from first appearance to final decision.

The median is the point at which half of all cases had longer case lengths and half had shorter case lengths.

Note: A case is 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. There are many factors that may influence variations between jurisdictions, therefore, comparisons should be made with caution.

Source: Statistics Canada, Canadian Centre for Justice Statistics, Integrated Criminal Court Survey.

Table 3
Cases completed in youth court, by type of offence, Canada, 2012/2013 and 2013/2014

Type of offence ¹	2012/2013		2013/2014		Percent change in number of cases 2012/2013 to 2013/2014	Difference in median length of cases 2012/2013 to 2013/2014
	number ²	median length of case (days) ³	number ²	median length of case (days) ³	percent	days
Violent offences	12,792	161	11,720	166	-8	5
Homicide	31	448	33	611	6	163
Attempted murder	21	316	20	248	-5	-68
Robbery	2,336	184	1,904	201	-18	17
Sexual assault	696	252	750	256	8	4
Other sexual offences ⁴	635	232	667	240	5	8
Major assault ⁵	2,715	168	2,396	164	-12	-4
Common assault	3,878	127	3,613	134	-7	7
Uttering threats	2,029	134	1,867	143	-8	9
Criminal harassment	186	163	192	174	3	11
Other crimes against persons	265	203	278	184	5	-19
Property offences	15,723	113	13,370	120	-15	7
Theft ⁶	5,476	100	4,658	102	-15	2
Break and enter	3,606	137	3,100	141	-14	4
Fraud	474	131	465	115	-2	-16
Mischief	2,948	108	2,489	113	-16	5
Possess stolen property	2,779	111	2,294	120	-17	9
Other property crimes	440	138	364	155	-17	17
Administration of justice offences	4,893	84	4,290	82	-12	-2
Fail to appear	281	71	246	69	-12	-2
Breach of probation	128	52	117	83	-9	31
Unlawfully at large	306	8	258	7	-16	-1
Fail to comply with order	3,230	91	2,875	91	-11	0
Other administration of justice	948	92	794	92	-16	0
Other Criminal Code offences	2,424	148	2,160	146	-11	-2
Weapons	1,555	155	1,451	147	-7	-8
Prostitution	6	249	11	174	83	-75
Disturbing the peace	132	102	86	103	-35	1
Residual <i>Criminal Code</i>	731	141	612	153	-16	12
Criminal Code (excluding traffic)	35,832	127	31,540	130	-12	3
Criminal Code traffic offences	828	113	646	120	-22	7
Impaired driving	424	79	318	116	-25	37
Other <i>Criminal Code</i> traffic	404	129	328	122	-19	-7

See notes at the end of the table.

Table 3 — continued
Cases completed in youth court, by type of offence, Canada, 2012/2013 and 2013/2014

Type of offence ¹	2012/2013		2013/2014		Percent change in number of cases 2012/2013 to 2013/2014	Difference in median length of cases 2012/2013 to 2013/2014
	number ²	median length of case (days) ³	number ²	median length of case (days) ³		
Total Criminal Code offences	36,660	126	32,186	130	-12	4
Other federal statute offences	8,781	64	7,715	69	-12	5
Drug possession	1,844	92	1,568	92	-15	0
Other drug offences ⁷	718	141	662	141	-8	0
<i>Youth Criminal Justice Act</i>	4,542	37	3,841	42	-15	5
Residual federal statutes	1,677	103	1,644	99	-2	-4
Total offences	45,441	114	39,901	120	-12	6

1. Cases that involve more than one charge are represented by the most serious offence.

2. A case is 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.

3. Case lengths are calculated based on the number of days it takes to complete a case, from first appearance to final decision. The median is the point at which half of all cases had longer case lengths and half had shorter case lengths.

4. Includes, for example, sexual interference, invitation to sexual touching, child pornography, luring a child via a computer and sexual exploitation.

5. Includes, for example, assault with a weapon (level 2) and aggravated assault (level 3).

6. Includes, for example, theft over \$5,000, theft \$5,000 or under, as well as motor vehicle theft.

7. Includes drug trafficking, production, importing and exporting.

Source: Statistics Canada, Canadian Centre for Justice Statistics, Integrated Criminal Court Survey.

Table 4
Cases completed in youth court, by type of offence, age group, and sex of the accused,
Canada, 2013/2014

Type of offence ¹	Male					Female					Total youth
	12 to 15 years of age		16 to 17 years of age		Total males	12 to 15 years of age		16 to 17 years of age		Total females	
	number ²	percent	number	percent		number ²	percent	number	percent		
Violent offences	3,540	44	4,507	56	8,047	1,160	47	1,303	53	2,463	10,510
Homicide	4	24	13	76	17	1	33	2	67	3	20
Attempted murder	3	21	11	79	14	1	100	0	0	1	15
Robbery	541	36	971	64	1,512	98	47	111	53	209	1,721
Sexual assault	404	64	226	36	630	14	93	1	7	15	645
Other sexual offences ³	375	63	223	37	598	14	70	6	30	20	618
Major assault ⁴	581	38	951	62	1,532	208	40	308	60	516	2,048
Common assault	873	42	1,205	58	2,078	532	46	636	54	1,168	3,246
Uttering threats	599	47	688	53	1,287	243	53	216	47	459	1,746
Criminal harassment	68	48	73	52	141	34	81	8	19	42	183
Other crimes against persons	92	39	146	61	238	15	50	15	50	30	268
Property offences	3,895	42	5,405	58	9,300	1,214	45	1,514	55	2,728	12,028
Theft ⁵	1,206	41	1,718	59	2,924	602	45	745	55	1,347	4,271
Break and enter	1,070	46	1,250	54	2,320	160	51	156	49	316	2,636
Fraud	59	21	220	79	279	32	20	126	80	158	437
Mischief	802	44	1,040	56	1,842	180	46	212	54	392	2,234
Possess stolen property	633	38	1,038	62	1,671	213	45	258	55	471	2,142
Other property offences	125	47	139	53	264	27	61	17	39	44	308
Administration of justice offences	699	27	1,860	73	2,559	402	39	631	61	1,033	3,592
Fail to appear	36	29	90	71	126	30	35	56	65	86	212
Breach of probation	7	17	34	83	41	3	27	8	73	11	52
Unlawfully at large	42	21	161	79	203	16	42	22	58	38	241
Fail to comply with order	490	29	1,202	71	1,692	273	40	411	60	684	2,376
Other administration of justice offences	124	25	373	75	497	80	37	134	63	214	711
Other Criminal Code offences	604	36	1,064	64	1,668	94	44	118	56	212	1,880
Weapons	428	38	692	62	1,120	46	43	61	57	107	1,227
Prostitution	0	0	6	100	6	2	50	2	50	4	10
Disturbing the peace	14	23	46	77	60	12	63	7	37	19	79
Residual Criminal Code offences	162	34	320	66	482	34	41	48	59	82	564
Criminal Code (excluding traffic)	8,738	41	12,836	59	21,574	2,870	45	3,566	55	6,436	28,010
Criminal Code traffic offences	62	13	408	87	470	19	16	97	84	116	586
Impaired driving	6	3	207	97	213	9	12	64	88	73	286
Other Criminal Code traffic offences	56	22	201	78	257	10	23	33	77	43	300

See notes at the end of the table.

Table 4 — continued
Cases completed in youth court, by type of offence, age group, and sex of the accused,
Canada, 2013/2014

Type of offence ¹	Male					Female					Total youth
	12 to 15 years of age		16 to 17 years of age		Total males	12 to 15 years of age		16 to 17 years of age		Total females	
	number ²	percent	number	percent		number ²	percent	number	percent		
Total Criminal Code offences	8,800	40	13,244	60	22,044	2,889	44	3,663	56	6,552	28,596
Other federal statute offences	1,418	26	3,961	74	5,379	491	36	874	64	1,365	6,744
Drug possession	291	23	984	77	1,275	51	23	171	77	222	1,497
Other drug offences ⁶	91	19	396	81	487	17	19	73	81	90	577
Youth Criminal Justice Act	575	25	1,680	75	2,255	299	37	511	63	810	3,065
Residual federal statute offences	461	34	901	66	1,362	124	51	119	49	243	1,605
Total offences	10,218	37	17,205	63	27,423	3,380	43	4,537	57	7,917	35,340

1. Cases that involve more than one charge are represented by the most serious offence.

2. A case is 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.

3. Includes, for example, sexual interference, invitation to sexual touching, child pornography, luring a child via a computer and sexual exploitation.

4. Includes, for example, assault with a weapon (level 2) and aggravated assault (level 3).

5. Includes, for example, theft over \$5,000, theft \$5,000 or under, as well as motor vehicle theft.

6. Includes drug trafficking, production, importing and exporting.

Note: Includes information on accused persons aged 12 to 17 years of age at the time of the offence. Excludes cases in which the age and/or the sex of the accused was unknown. A case is 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. Information on the sex of the accused is not available from Manitoba as of 2005/2006.

Source: Statistics Canada, Canadian Centre for Justice Statistics, Integrated Criminal Court Survey.

Table 5
Cases completed in youth court, by type of offence and decision, Canada, 2013/2014

Type of offence ¹	Guilty ²		Stayed/ withdrawn ³		Acquitted		Other decisions ⁴		Total cases	
	number	percent	number	percent	number	percent	number	percent	number	percent
Violent offences	6,482	55	4,783	41	395	3	60	1	11,720	100
Homicide	21	64	11	33	0	0	1	3	33	100
Attempted murder	9	45	10	50	1	5	0	0	20	100
Robbery	1,040	55	806	42	55	3	3	0	1,904	100
Sexual assault	457	61	226	30	57	8	10	1	750	100
Other sexual offences ⁵	407	61	211	32	45	7	4	1	667	100
Major assault ⁶	1,478	62	835	35	71	3	12	1	2,396	100
Common assault	1,858	51	1,663	46	77	2	15	0	3,613	100
Uttering threats	987	53	791	42	77	4	12	1	1,867	100
Criminal harassment	80	42	108	56	2	1	2	1	192	100
Other crimes against persons	145	52	122	44	10	4	1	0	278	100
Property offences	6,469	48	6,735	50	108	1	58	0	13,370	100
Theft ⁷	2,083	45	2,528	54	34	1	13	0	4,658	100
Break and enter	1,890	61	1,170	38	24	1	16	1	3,100	100
Fraud	255	55	204	44	4	1	2	0	465	100
Mischief	1,067	43	1,388	56	27	1	7	0	2,489	100
Possess stolen property	971	42	1,291	56	16	1	16	1	2,294	100
Other property crimes	203	56	154	42	3	1	4	1	364	100
Administration of justice offences	2,723	63	1,518	35	28	1	21	0	4,290	100
Fail to appear	110	45	130	53	0	0	6	2	246	100
Breach of probation	74	63	41	35	0	0	2	2	117	100
Unlawfully at large	219	85	39	15	0	0	0	0	258	100
Fail to comply with order	1,776	62	1,066	37	25	1	8	0	2,875	100
Other administration of justice	544	69	242	30	3	0	5	1	794	100
Other Criminal Code offences	1,317	61	804	37	25	1	14	1	2,160	100
Weapons	856	59	573	39	17	1	5	0	1,451	100
Prostitution	3	27	8	73	0	0	0	0	11	100
Disturbing the peace	37	43	49	57	0	0	0	0	86	100
Residual <i>Criminal Code</i>	421	69	174	28	8	1	9	1	612	100
Criminal Code (excluding traffic)	16,991	54	13,840	44	556	2	153	0	31,540	100
Criminal Code traffic offences	494	76	135	21	15	2	2	0	646	100
Impaired driving	251	79	57	18	9	3	1	0	318	100
Other <i>Criminal Code</i> traffic	243	74	78	24	6	2	1	0	328	100

See notes at the end of the table.

Table 5 — continued
Cases completed in youth court, by type of offence and decision, Canada, 2013/2014

Type of offence ¹	Guilty ²		Stayed/ withdrawn ³		Acquitted		Other decisions ⁴		Total cases	
	number	percent	number	percent	number	percent	number	percent	number	percent
Total Criminal Code offences	17,485	54	13,975	43	571	2	155	0	32,186	100
Other federal statute offences	5,039	65	2,595	34	59	1	22	0	7,715	100
Drug possession	435	28	1,123	72	3	0	7	0	1,568	100
Other drug offences ⁸	354	53	306	46	1	0	1	0	662	100
Youth Criminal Justice Act	3,086	80	729	19	14	0	12	0	3,841	100
Residual federal statutes	1,164	71	437	27	41	2	2	0	1,644	100
Total offences	22,524	56	16,570	42	630	2	177	0	39,901	100

1. Cases that involve more than one charge are represented by the most serious offence.

2. Guilty findings include guilty of the offence, of an included offence, of an attempt of the offence, or of an attempt of an included offence. Also includes guilty pleas, and cases where an absolute or conditional discharge has been imposed.

3. Includes stays, withdrawals, dismissals and discharges at preliminary inquiry as well as court referrals to alternative or extrajudicial measures.

4. Includes final decisions of found not criminally responsible and waived out of province or territory. Also includes any order where a conviction was not recorded, the court's acceptance of a special plea, cases that raise *Charter* arguments and cases where the accused was found unfit to stand trial.

5. Includes, for example, sexual interference, invitation to sexual touching, child pornography, luring a child via a computer and sexual exploitation.

6. Includes, for example, assault with a weapon (level 2) and aggravated assault (level 3).

7. Includes, for example, theft over \$5,000, theft \$5,000 or under, as well as motor vehicle theft.

8. Includes drug trafficking, production, importing and exporting.

Note: A case is 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.

Source: Statistics Canada, Canadian Centre for Justice Statistics, Integrated Criminal Court Survey.

Table 6
Guilty cases completed in youth court, by type of offence and select sentence, Canada, 2013/2014

Type of offence ¹	Total guilty cases		Custody ²			Probation ³		Community Service Order	
	number	number	percent	median length (days)	number	percent	median length (days)	number	percent
Violent offences	6,482	1,054	16	80	4,302	66	365	1,292	20
Homicide ⁴	21	17	81	1,090	4	19	730	1	5
Attempted murder	9	7	78	710	3	33	360	0	0
Robbery	1,040	359	35	120	737	71	365	235	23
Sexual assault	457	63	14	180	320	70	540	42	9
Other sexual offences ⁵	407	33	8	180	291	71	450	73	18
Major assault ⁶	1,478	265	18	60	997	67	365	299	20
Common assault	1,858	131	7	20	1,114	60	365	337	18
Uttering threats	987	132	13	40	670	68	360	240	24
Criminal harassment	80	9	11	24	58	73	365	21	26
Other crimes against persons	145	38	26	150	108	74	365	44	30
Property offences	6,469	743	11	45	4,141	64	360	1,757	27
Theft ⁷	2,083	212	10	30	1,201	58	360	584	28
Break and enter	1,890	266	14	90	1,387	73	365	497	26
Fraud	255	35	14	50	156	61	365	75	29
Mischief	1,067	78	7	30	612	57	365	261	24
Possess stolen property	971	128	13	40	633	65	360	280	29
Other property crimes	203	24	12	60	152	75	365	60	30
Administration of justice offences	2,723	574	21	18	1,172	43	365	485	18
Fail to appear	110	13	12	3	42	38	365	18	16
Breach of probation	74	9	12	15	30	41	365	16	22
Unlawfully at large	219	157	72	20	40	18	365	22	10
Fail to comply with order	1,776	302	17	12	779	44	365	311	18
Other administration of justice	544	93	17	20	281	52	365	118	22
Other Criminal Code offences	1,317	202	15	60	836	63	360	333	25
Weapons	856	156	18	54	511	60	365	129	15
Prostitution	3	1	33	360	3	100	180	0	0
Disturbing the peace	37	1	3	14	21	57	270	6	16
Residual <i>Criminal Code</i>	421	44	10	120	301	71	360	198	47
Criminal Code (excluding traffic)	16,991	2,573	15	40	10,451	62	365	3,867	23
Criminal Code traffic offences	494	47	10	80	224	45	365	89	18
Impaired driving	251	2	1	235	69	27	363	40	16
Other <i>Criminal Code</i> traffic	243	45	19	80	155	64	365	49	20

See notes at the end of the table.

Table 6 — continued
Guilty cases completed in youth court, by type of offence and select sentence, Canada, 2013/2014

Type of offence ¹	Total guilty cases		Custody ²			Probation ³		Community Service Order	
	number	number	percent	median length (days)	number	percent	median length (days)	number	percent
Total Criminal Code offences	17,485	2,620	15	42	10,675	61	365	3,956	23
Other federal statute offences	5,039	741	15	20	2,317	46	270	1,645	33
Drug possession	435	5	1	20	196	45	360	92	21
Other drug offences ⁸	354	39	11	90	258	73	365	71	20
Youth Criminal Justice Act	3,086	657	21	16	1,161	38	270	900	29
Residual federal statutes	1,164	40	3	80	702	60	180	582	50
Total offences	22,524	3,361	15	39	12,992	58	360	5,601	25

1. Cases that involve more than one charge are represented by the most serious offence.

2. Custodial sentence lengths exclude time spent in custody prior to sentencing and/or the amount of credit awarded for time spent in pre-sentence custody. Also excludes cases in which the length of the custody sentence was unknown or indeterminate. Length of custody data are not available for Manitoba as of 2005/2006.

3. Excludes cases in which the length of the probation sentence was unknown. Length of probation data are not available for Manitoba as of 2005/2006.

4. The number of custody sentences for homicide may be under-reported due to the unavailability of information on credit for time served in pre-sentence custody.

5. Includes, for example, sexual interference, invitation to sexual touching, child pornography, luring a child via a computer and sexual exploitation.

6. Includes, for example, assault with a weapon (level 2) and aggravated assault (level 3).

7. Includes, for example, theft over \$5,000, theft \$5,000 or under, as well as motor vehicle theft.

8. Includes drug trafficking, production, importing and exporting.

Note: Cases may involve more than one type of sentence and/or other sentences not shown, therefore, percentages do not total 100%. A case is 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. The median is the point at which half of all cases had longer sentence lengths and half had shorter sentence lengths.

Source: Statistics Canada, Canadian Centre for Justice Statistics, Integrated Criminal Court Survey.