

Canadians' perceptions of personal safety and crime, 2014

by Samuel Perreault
Canadian Centre for Justice Statistics

Release date: December 12, 2017



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 STATCAN.infostats-infostats.STATCAN@canada.ca

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

- Statistical Information Service 1-800-263-1136
- National telecommunications device for the hearing impaired 1-800-363-7629
- Fax line 1-514-283-9350

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.

Published by authority of the Minister responsible for Statistics Canada

© Minister of Industry, 2017

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.

Canadians' perceptions of personal safety and crime, 2014: Highlights

- The majority of Canadians are satisfied (50%) or very satisfied (38%) with their personal safety from crime.
- Canadians are among the citizens of Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development countries who feel safest.
- Generally, residents of the Atlantic provinces and Ontario were the most satisfied with their personal safety, while residents of the Prairies and the Territories were less satisfied.
- Residents of rural areas and small towns were more likely to be very satisfied with their personal safety than residents of agglomerations with a population of at least 10,000.
- Among census metropolitan areas with a population of more than 100,000, residents of Guelph, Kingston and Sherbrooke were the most satisfied with their personal safety, while residents of Abbotsford–Mission, Winnipeg and Saskatoon were the least satisfied.
- Among census agglomerations with a population between 10,000 and 100,000, residents of Centre Wellington, Owen Sound and Corner Brook were the most satisfied with their personal safety, while residents of Red Deer, Prince Albert and Moose Jaw were the least satisfied.
- Fewer Canadians feel that crime is increasing. In 2014, 1 in 10 Canadians (11%) felt that the level of crime in their neighbourhood had increased over the previous five years, compared with almost one-half (46%) in 1993.
- Victims of crime were less likely to feel safe. Sexual assault, robbery and breaking and entering are the crimes that most negatively impacted the sense of safety of victims.
- Women, especially young women, feel less safe than men. Overall, less than 4 in 10 women (38%) said they felt very safe walking alone in their neighbourhood after dark, compared with nearly two-thirds (64%) of men. Women were also more likely to take steps to protect themselves.
- Immigrants and visible minorities generally had a lower sense of safety than other Canadians. This was especially true for Arab and West Asian women (e.g., Iranian and Afghan), one-quarter of whom said they did not feel safe walking alone in their neighbourhood after dark, compared with 11% of other women.

Canadians' perceptions of personal safety and crime, 2014

by Samuel Perreault

A sense of personal safety has been intrinsically linked to a sense of well-being. Measures of safety are routinely included in key wellness indicators such as the Canadian Index of Wellbeing (University of Waterloo) and the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development's (OECD) Better Life Index. Several studies have also shown that a perceived lack of safety could have various adverse effects on individuals and communities. In particular, fear of crime can lead to withdrawal from community life and reduces social cohesion (Cobbina et al. 2008). It can also lead some people to adopt restrictive behaviours, such as avoiding certain places or not going out after a certain time. A sense of insecurity can also lead to increased spending to protect against crime or even be the reason that some people move away (Hale 1996). Finally, insecurity can have negative effects on physical and mental health and general well-being (Foster et al. 2014; Lorenc 2012; Adams and Serpe 2000).

Research on sense of safety—or on the fear of crime—has also shown personal safety to be associated with far more than just fear of being a victim of crime. A sense of insecurity is generally a wide-ranging fear or anxiety linked to many personal and environmental factors (Farrall et al. 2009).

Thus, a sense of safety is thought to be influenced by factors related to vulnerability: people whose risk of victimization is higher, or those who feel less able to defend themselves against or recover from the consequences of victimization (particularly women and the elderly) would have higher levels of fear (Sacco 1995; Covington and Taylor 1991; Killias 1990). The community in which a person lives can also have a significant impact on their sense of safety. There is general agreement that people who live in a place where neighbours know each other, help each other and trust each other have a greater sense of personal safety (Yuan and McNeeley 2017; Gibson et al. 2002; Sampson et al. 1997). Finally, the presence of social disorder and antisocial behaviours also seems to have an unsettling effect because these are indicators that more serious crimes might be committed or that the community or the police have been unable to adequately control deviant behaviour (Intravia et al. 2016; Fitzgerald 2008; Sampson et al. 1997).¹

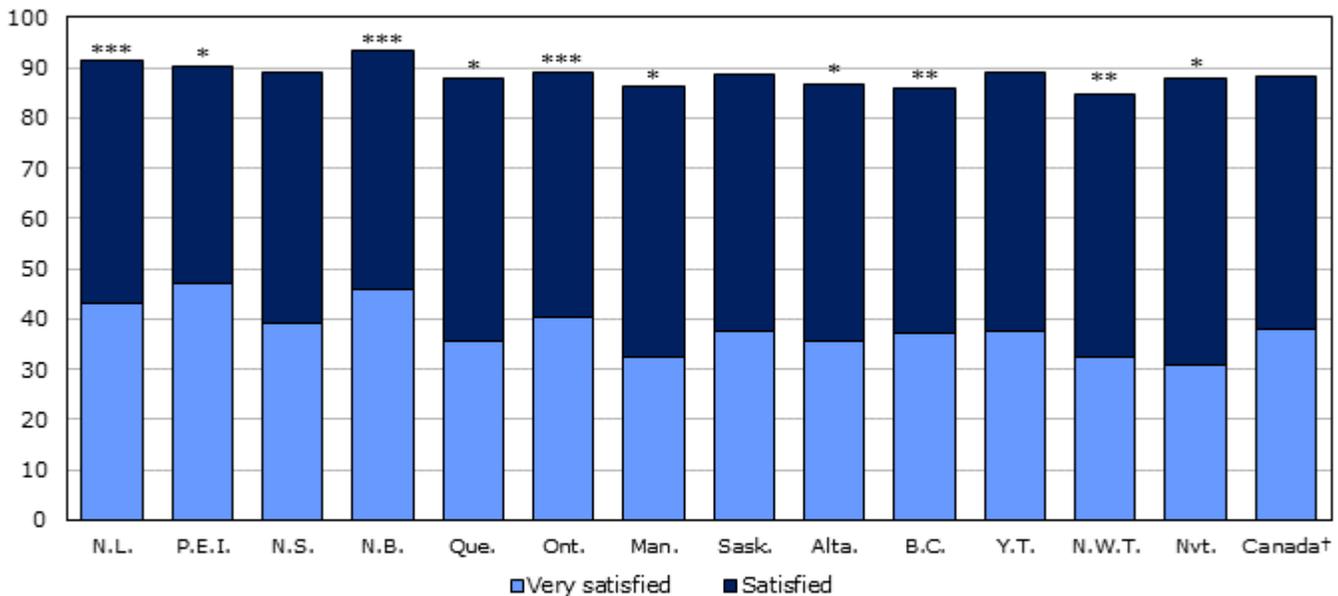
Since a sense of safety is only partly associated with actual levels of crime, it is important to measure it accurately and to understand factors that may contribute to a sense of safety. Research on the subject has shown that a sense of safety is a concept that can be expressed in different ways, and it is usually best to use more than one measure to better understand its nature, scope and key trends. This *Juristat* article outlines the main measures related to sense of safety included in the 2014 General Social Survey (GSS) on Canadians' Safety (Victimization) at the national, provincial, territorial, census metropolitan area and census agglomeration levels. It also presents the main characteristics associated with Canadians' sense of safety.

The majority of Canadians are satisfied with their personal safety from crime

In 2014, the majority (88%) of Canadians said they were either very satisfied (38%) or satisfied (50%) with their personal safety from crime. This proportion varied slightly among the Provinces and Territories, from 85% in the Northwest Territories to 93% in New Brunswick (Chart 1 and Table 1).²

Chart 1
Satisfaction with personal security from crime, by province or territory, 2014

percent



* value of the "Very satisfied" category significantly different from reference category ($p < 0.05$)

** value of the total for the "Very satisfied" and "Satisfied" categories significantly different from reference category ($p < 0.05$)

*** values of the "Very satisfied" category and the total for the "Very satisfied" and "Satisfied" categories significantly different from reference category ($p < 0.05$)

† reference category

Note: The answers "Don't know" and "Refusal" are included in the calculation of the percentages, but do not appear in the chart. The 2014 results should not be directly compared with data from previous survey cycles, since the response categories were modified in 2014 to include the category "Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied".

Source: Statistics Canada, General Social Survey.

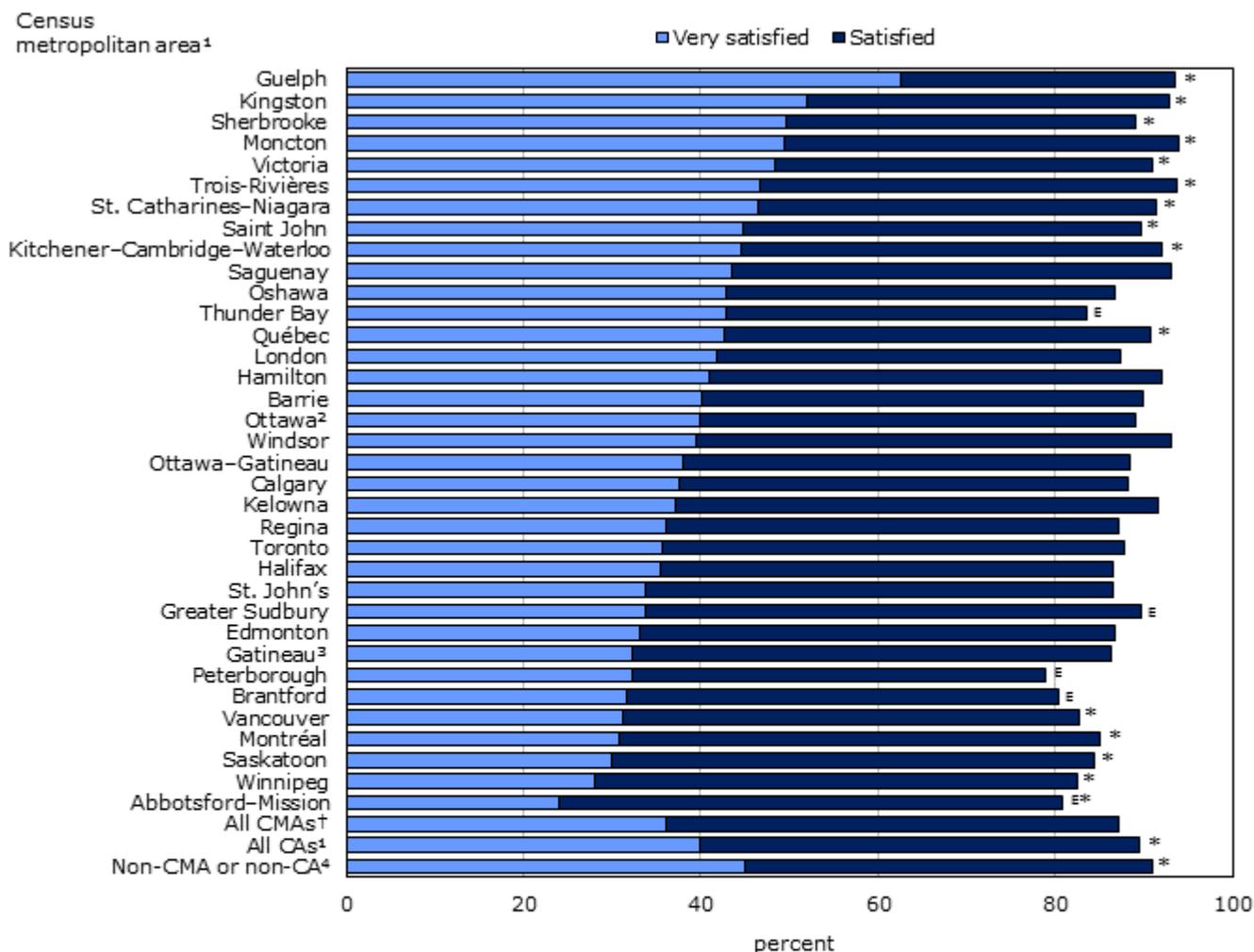
Differences between provinces and territories were somewhat more pronounced when it came to the proportion of people who were very satisfied with their personal safety, ranging from 31% in Nunavut to 47% in Prince Edward Island.

Overall, the variation across the country in the proportion of people who were very satisfied with their personal safety from crime reflects differences in police-reported crime rates across the country (see Boyce 2015). Thus, the highest proportions of people who were very satisfied were recorded in the Atlantic provinces and Ontario—the provinces with the lowest crime rates—while the lowest proportions of people who were very satisfied were posted in the Prairies and the Territories, where crime rates are higher.

Residents of census metropolitan areas are less likely to be very satisfied with their personal safety from crime

Canadians' sense of safety varies depending on where they live, and particularly on the size of their city. People living in a census metropolitan area (CMA) with a population of 100,000 or more³ were less likely to be very satisfied with their personal safety than residents of census agglomerations (CAs)⁴ (36% versus 40%). This difference was more pronounced compared with people living in rural areas and small towns (45%) (Chart 2). Crime in larger cities may be more common and so more visible to residents; although when taking population size into account, crime rates are generally not higher in CMAs or CAs than elsewhere.

Chart 2
Satisfaction with personal security from crime, by census metropolitan area, 2014



ε use with caution (very satisfied)

* value of the "Very satisfied" category significantly different from reference category (p < 0.05)

† reference category (very satisfied)

1. A census metropolitan area (CMA) or a census agglomeration (CA) is formed by one or more adjacent municipalities centred on a population centre (known as the core). A CMA must have a total population of at least 100,000, of which 50,000 or more must live in its core. A CA must have a core of at least 10,000. To be included in the CMA or CA, other adjacent municipalities must have a high degree of integration with the core, as measured by commuting flows derived from previous census data on place of work.

2. Ottawa refers to the Ontario part of the Ottawa-Gatineau CMA.

3. Gatineau refers to the Quebec part of the Ottawa-Gatineau CMA.

4. Represents rural areas and small towns.

Note: The answers "Don't know" and "Refusal" are included in the calculation of the percentages, but do not appear in the chart. The 2014 results should not be directly compared with data from previous survey cycles, since the response categories were modified in 2014 to include the category "Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied".

Source: Statistics Canada, General Social Survey.

The differences observed by size of city were mainly attributable to women. Less than one-third (30%) of women living in a CMA said they were very satisfied with their personal safety. This proportion increased slightly in CAs (33%) and much more in rural areas and small towns (41%). For men, these proportions were 42%, 48% and 49%, respectively.

Residents of Guelph, Kingston and Sherbrooke are the most satisfied with their personal safety

The proportion of people who reported being very satisfied varied from one census metropolitan area (CMA) to another. Similar to findings for the Provinces, the proportions of people who were very satisfied with their safety were higher in CMAs with low crime rates. For example, the highest proportions of people who were very satisfied with their safety were recorded in Guelph (63%), Kingston (52%) and Sherbrooke (50%), while the lowest were in Abbotsford-Mission (24%), Winnipeg (28%) and Saskatoon (30%) (Table 1).

Among census agglomerations, the highest proportions of people who were very satisfied with their personal safety were in Centre Wellington (76%), Owen Sound (66%), Corner Brook (63%) and Miramichi (59%),⁵ while the lowest were recorded in Red Deer (15%^E), Prince Albert (18%^E), Moose Jaw (22%^E) and Wood Buffalo (23%^E). Some studies have shown that significant structural changes related to resource based economies can negatively affect the sense of safety in small communities (Ruddell and Ortiz 2014; Scott et al. 2012), which could partially explain the lower levels of satisfaction with personal safety in some of these areas.

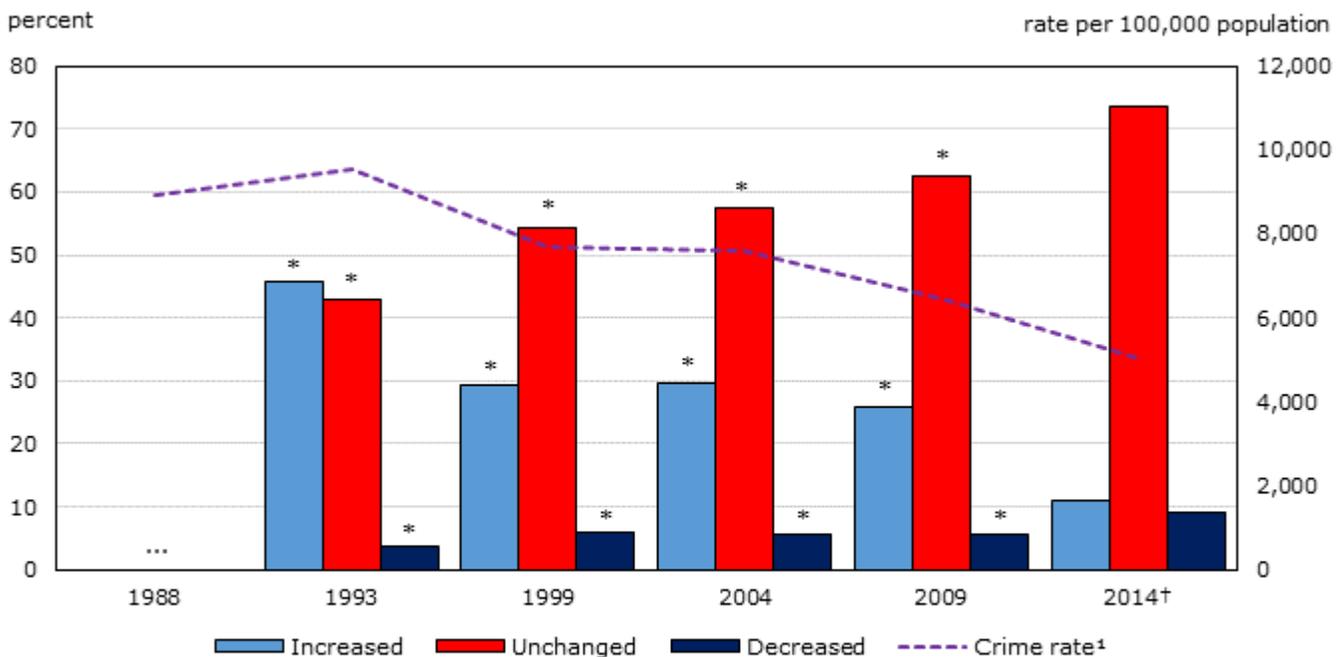
In general, the variations in the level of satisfaction with personal safety from one CMA to another seemed to correspond to the trend in police-reported crime rates, with some exceptions. For example, the proportion of Montréal residents who were very satisfied with their personal safety was below the average for CMAs (31% versus 36%), although the crime rate is relatively low. Similarly, while Toronto had the lowest crime rate among CMAs in 2014, its residents were no more likely than the average to be very satisfied with their personal safety (36%).

Several studies show that feelings of safety are only partially influenced by crime levels. Other factors, often more common in urban areas, such as signs of social or physical disorder, frequent interactions with strangers and low social cohesion, can also reduce the sense of safety (Gibson et al. 2002; Pain 2000; Sampson et al. 1997; Hale 1996). It should also be noted that feelings of safety are mostly influenced by the characteristics of the immediate environment of individuals (Breetzke and Pearson 2014). Therefore, within each city, a sense of safety could vary greatly from one neighbourhood to another.

The majority of Canadians in 2014 believed that the level of crime in their neighbourhood had remained unchanged over the previous five years

Since the early 1990s, the police-reported crime rate has been generally decreasing year after year in Canada.⁶ However, this does not correspond with the perceptions of most Canadians about crime trends in their neighbourhood. In 2014, the majority (74%) of Canadians believed that the level of crime in their neighbourhood had remained unchanged from five years earlier. Moreover, just over 1 in 10 Canadians believed that crime levels had increased and less than 1 in 10 believed they had declined (Chart 3).

Chart 3
Canadians' perception of changes in the level of crime in their neighbourhood over the previous five years, 1993 to 2014



... not applicable

* significantly different from reference category (p < 0.05)

† reference category

1. This rate is for all offences in the *Criminal Code*, except traffic offences. Includes the Territories. Only crime rates for the years in the table are included in the "crime rate" line. As a result, this is the general trend and does not account for annual variations. For the crime rate for each year, see CANSIM Table 252-0051.

Note: The answers "Don't know" and "Refusal" are included in the calculation of the percentages, but do not appear in the chart. The Territories are excluded from data on the perception of changes in the level of crime.

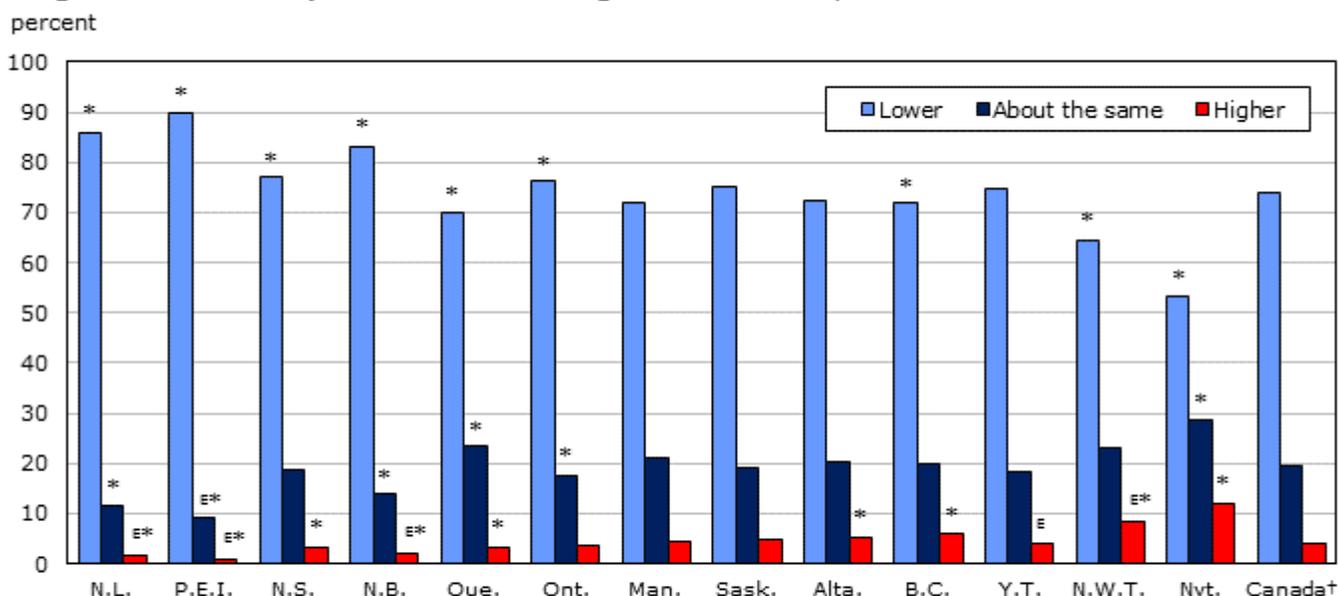
Source: Statistics Canada, General Social Survey and Uniform Crime Reporting Survey.

Although Canadian's perceptions of crime trends do not seem to match the police-reported crime trends, an examination of how these perceptions have changed over time shows that they partially do. For example, in 1993, when the crime rate peaked,⁷ nearly one-half (46%) of Canadians believed that crime levels had increased, a slightly lower proportion (43%) believed that they had remained stable and only 4% believed that they had decreased. Thus, fewer and fewer Canadians believe that the number of crimes is increasing, a shift that partly conforms to the trend of police-reported crimes.

Most Canadians believe that the number of crimes committed in their neighbourhood is lower than elsewhere in Canada

While few Canadians believe that crime in their neighbourhood has declined over the past five years, many believe that it is lower than elsewhere in the country. Nearly three-quarters (74%) of Canadians believe that the number of crimes committed in their neighbourhood is lower than in other areas of the country. Furthermore, 1 in 5 Canadians (20%) believe that the number of crimes committed in their neighbourhood is roughly the same as elsewhere in Canada and less than 1 in 20 (4%) believe that it is higher (Chart 4).

Chart 4
Canadians' perceptions of the number of crimes in their neighbourhood compared with other regions of Canada, 2014



‡ use with caution

* significantly different from reference category (p < 0.05)

† reference category

Note: The answers "Don't know" and "Refusal" are included in the calculation of the percentages, but do not appear in the chart.

Source: Statistics Canada, General Social Survey.

It is possible that the satisfaction of many Canadians with regard to their personal safety is related in part to the favourable perception they have of the crime level in their neighbourhood. For example, 92% of Canadians who believe that the number of crimes committed in their neighbourhood is lower than elsewhere in Canada reported that they were satisfied or very satisfied with their personal safety. This compares with 62% who believe that crime in their neighbourhood is higher than elsewhere.

Like the level of satisfaction with personal safety, the perception of the number of crimes committed in the neighbourhood compared with elsewhere in Canada varied across the country and generally followed the differences in crime rates. While the majority of people across Canada believe that the number of crimes is lower in their neighbourhood than elsewhere in the country, the most favourable perceptions were generally in the East and in Ontario, where crime rates are lower, and the least favourable perceptions were in the West and in the Territories.

The majority of Canadians say they take steps to protect themselves from criminal acts

Another way to measure Canadians' sense of safety is to consider the behaviours they adopt to protect themselves from crime. It is worth noting, however, that people who adopted protective measures in response to a sense of insecurity may actually have improved their sense of safety.

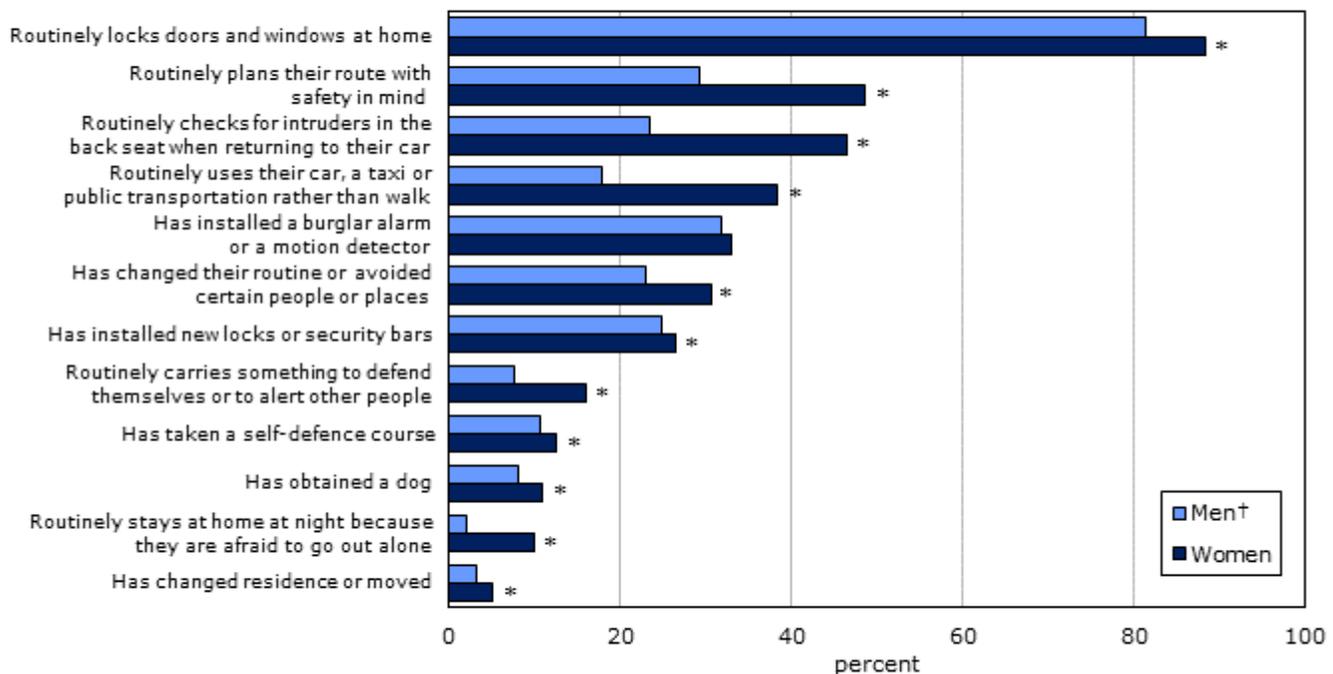
In 2014, the majority of Canadians (94%) said that they currently take or have already taken steps to protect themselves or their possessions against crime. The most common measure, adopted by 85% of Canadians, was to routinely lock the doors and windows at home.

Women were slightly more likely than men to report taking or having taken protective measures (96% versus 91%). Moreover, women usually reported taking more measures than men (an average of four measures for women compared with three for men).

Overall, women were generally much more likely than men to report taking measures to protect themselves rather than their property. For example, nearly one-half of women said that they plan their route with safety in mind (49%) and that they check the back seat for intruders when returning to a parked car (47%), while about one-quarter of men said they take these measures (29% and 23% respectively) (Chart 5).

Chart 5
Use of protective measures, by sex, Canada, 2014

To protect themselves
or their belongings
from criminal acts...



* significantly different from reference category (p < 0.05)

† reference category

Note: The answers "Don't know" and "Refusal" are included in the calculation of the percentages, but do not appear in the chart.

Source: Statistics Canada, General Social Survey.

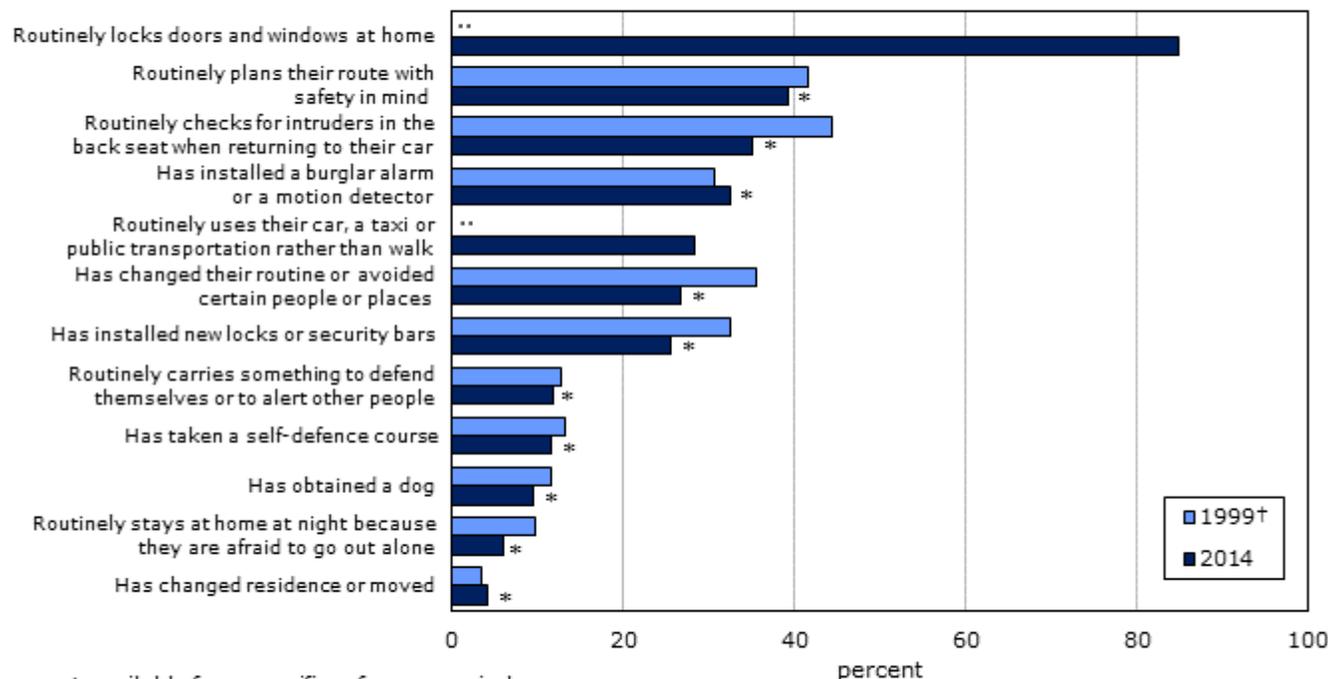
Similarly, women were more likely than men to report that, for their personal safety, they routinely take a taxi, their car or public transportation instead of walking (38% versus 18%) or stay at home at night (10% versus 2%). However, there was very little or no difference between men and women with regard to measures to protect property, such as installing a burglar alarm or new locks (Chart 5).

Perhaps reflecting the fact that they feel safer than before, Canadian men and women alike reported taking protective measures less often in 2014 than in 1999. The largest decreases were noted for checking the back seat of the car for

intruders (35% versus 44% in 1999), changing their routine or avoiding certain places (27% versus 36%) and installing new locks or security bars (26% versus 33%) (Chart 6).

Chart 6
Use of protective measures, all provinces, 1999 and 2014

To protect themselves
 or their belongings
 from criminal acts...



.. not available for a specific reference period
 * significantly different from reference category (p < 0.05)
 † reference category

Note: The answers "Don't know" and "Refusal" are included in the calculation of the percentages, but do not appear in the chart. Exclude data from the Territories.

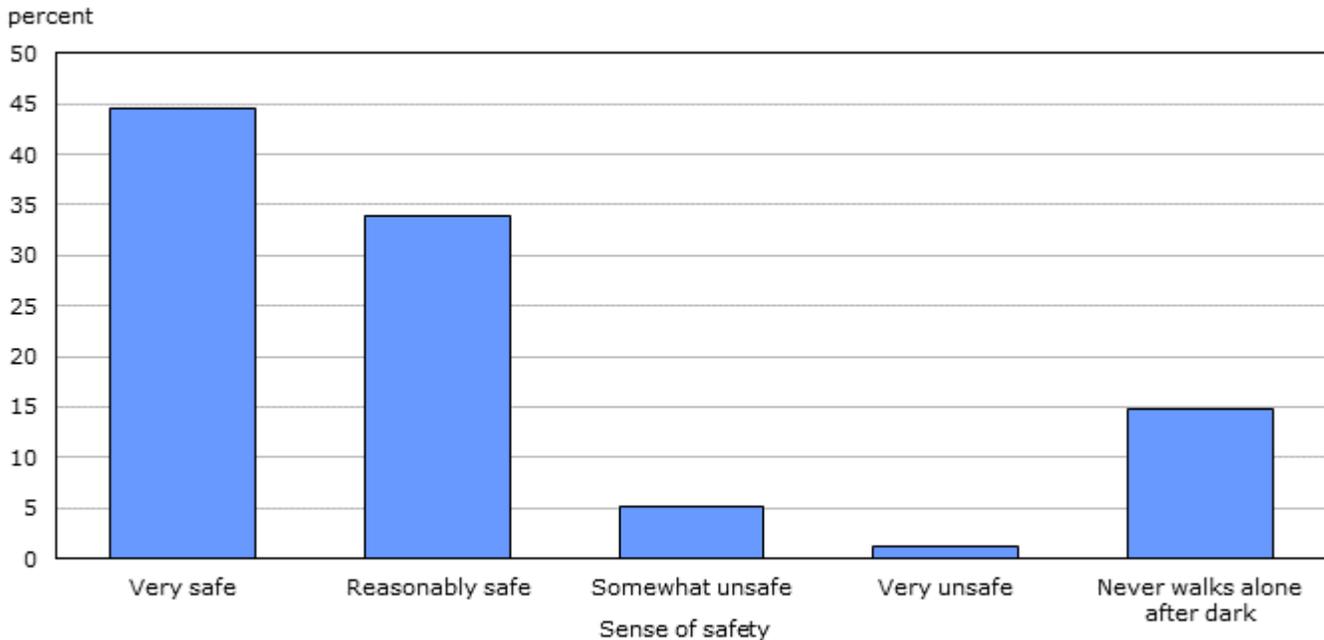
Source: Statistics Canada, General Social Survey.

About one half of Canadians feel very safe walking alone in their neighbourhood after dark

The 2014 General Social Survey on Canadians' Safety (Victimization) also asked Canadians about their sense of safety in specific situations, such as when they walk alone in their neighbourhood after dark, are home alone or use public transportation alone after dark. The majority of Canadians said they felt safe in these situations.

Just under one-half (44%) of Canadians said they felt very safe from crime when walking alone in their neighbourhood after dark (Chart 7). Excluding people who never walk alone after dark, this proportion rises to 52%, or 12 percentage points higher than in 1999 (40%). It should be noted that some people may choose to never walk alone after dark because they do not feel safe. Among those who reported never walking alone in their neighbourhood after dark, just under one-third (31%) said they would if they felt safer.⁹

Chart 7
Canadians' sense of safety from crime when walking alone in their neighbourhood after dark, 2014

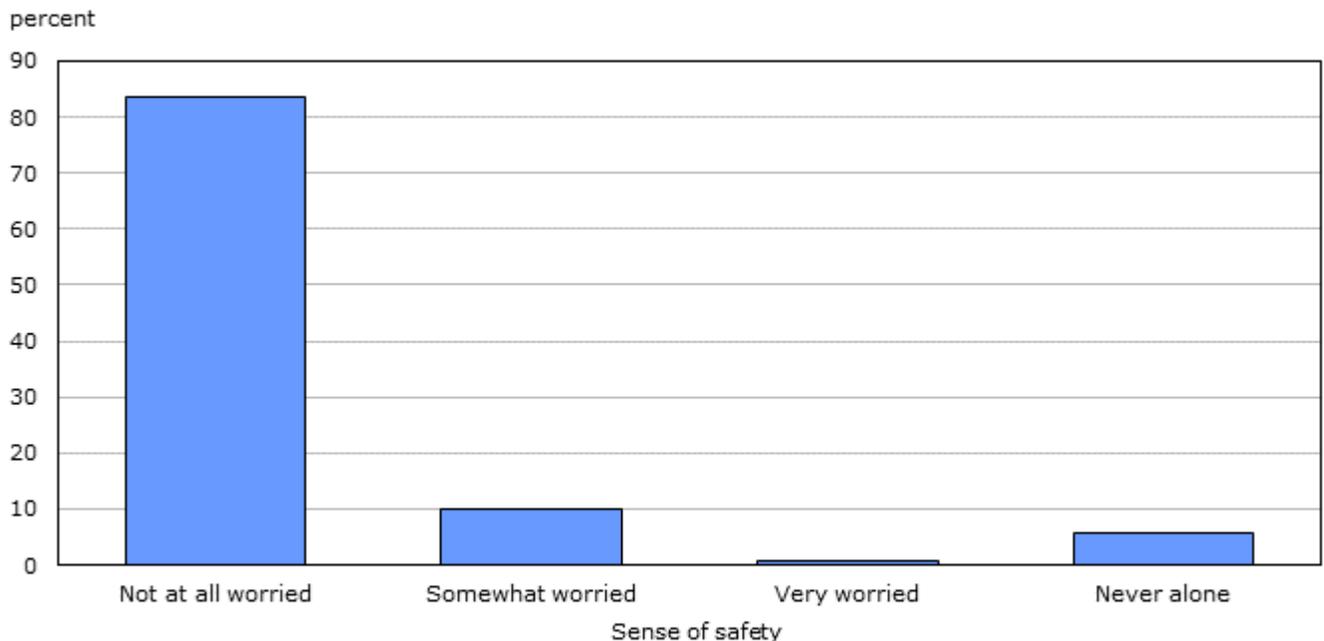


Note: The answers "Don't know" and "Refusal" are included in the calculation of the percentages, but do not appear in the chart.

Source: Statistics Canada, General Social Survey.

Similarly, 84% of Canadians said that they did not feel worried at all when home after dark (89% when excluding those who are never alone) (Chart 8).

Chart 8
Canadians' sense of safety from crime when home alone at night, 2014

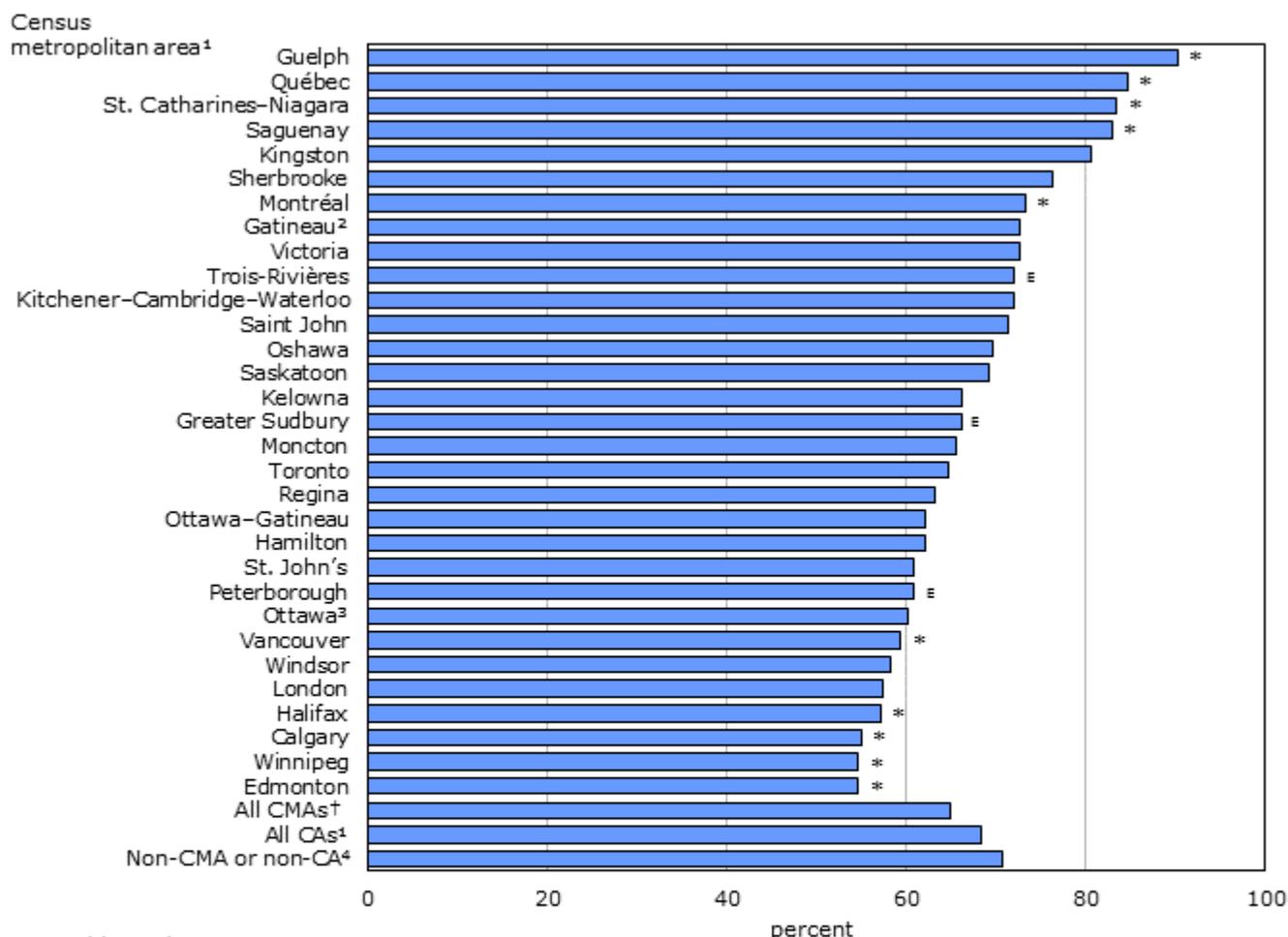


Note: The answers "Don't know" and "Refusal" are included in the calculation of the percentages, but do not appear in the chart.

Source: Statistics Canada, General Social Survey.

With regard to the sense of safety on public transportation, two-thirds (65%) of users⁹ said they were not at all worried about their safety when using this service alone after dark. However, this proportion was not the same across the country. For example, 90% of public transportation users in Guelph and 85% in Québec reported that they were not at all worried about their safety, compared with 55% in Edmonton, Winnipeg and Calgary (Chart 9).

Chart 9
Users of public transportation who report they do not feel worried about their security from crime when using public transportation, by census metropolitan area, 2014



E use with caution

* significantly different from reference category (p < 0.05)

† reference category

1. A census metropolitan area (CMA) or a census agglomeration (CA) is formed by one or more adjacent municipalities centred on a population centre (known as the core). A CMA must have a total population of at least 100,000, of which 50,000 or more must live in its core. A CA must have a core of at least 10,000. To be included in the CMA or CA, other adjacent municipalities must have a high degree of integration with the core, as measured by commuting flows derived from previous census data on place of work.

2. Gatineau refers to the Quebec part of the Ottawa–Gatineau CMA.

3. Ottawa refers to the Ontario part of the Ottawa–Gatineau CMA.

4. Represents rural areas and small towns.

Note: Excludes people who never use public transportation after dark. The answers "Don't know" and "Refusal" are included in the calculation of the percentages, but do not appear in the chart. The following CMAs are excluded from this chart because it was impossible to produce a reliable estimate: Brantford, Barrie, Thunder Bay, Abbotsford–Mission.

Source: Statistics Canada, General Social Survey.

Canadians are among the citizens of OECD countries who feel safest

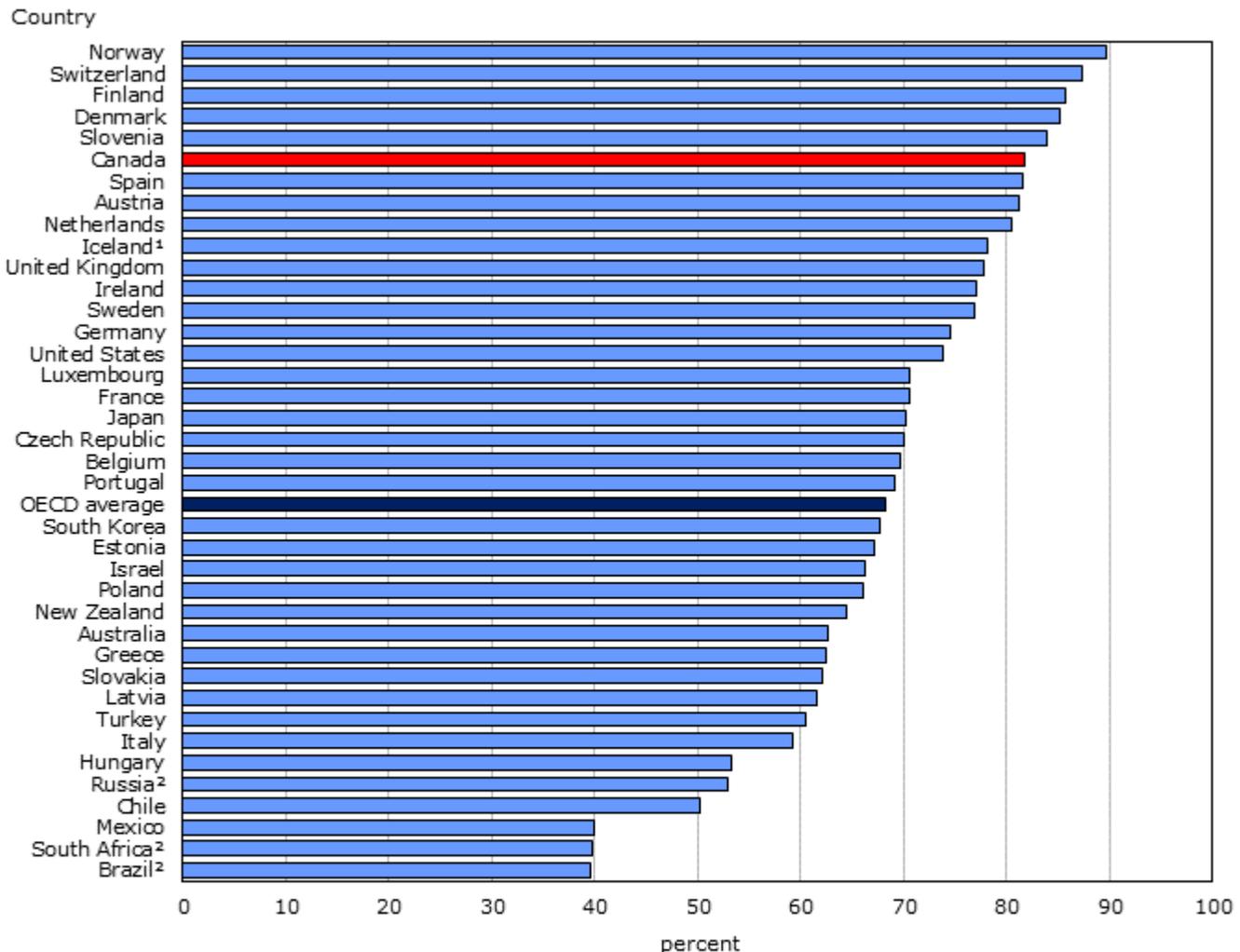
The General Social Survey (GSS) on Canadians' Safety (Victimization) is conducted only in Canada and therefore its results do not allow for a comparison of Canadians' sense of safety to that of residents of other countries. However, the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD)¹⁰ publishes data on sense of safety for its member countries. These

data are taken from the Gallup World Poll, which uses a similar question to the one used in the 2014 GSS to measure the sense of safety when walking alone in one's neighbourhood after dark.

The results show that Canadians are among those in OECD countries with the highest sense of safety, with 82% reporting feeling safe in this type of situation. Only residents of the Scandinavian countries (except Sweden), Switzerland and Slovenia were more likely to report feeling safe. Moreover, this proportion is significantly higher than the average for OECD countries (68%). By comparison, 78% of Britons, 74% of Americans and 71% of the French said they feel safe walking alone in their neighbourhood. Among OECD members, Mexicans were the least likely to say they felt safe (40%) (Chart 10).

Chart 10

Proportion of people who say they feel safe walking alone at night in their city or neighbourhood, by countries of the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development, 2015



1. The reference year for Iceland is 2013.

2. This country is not part of the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) and is therefore not included in the OECD average. However, data for this country are included in the data published by the OECD and are presented here for information purposes.

Note: Although the data presented in this chart and the General Social Survey data are quite similar, it is important to note that they are not directly comparable. There are several differences in the question used, the sample size and the methodology. The data represent the proportion of those who answered yes to the question "Do you feel safe when walking alone at night in your city or neighbourhood?"

Source: Data published by the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (Better Life Index 2016), collected by Gallup in the Gallup World Poll.

Text box 1**The various measures of sense of safety in Canada**

Most studies on sense of safety—or the fear of crime—acknowledge that it is a concept that is not frozen in time and can be expressed in many ways (Farrall et al. 2009). There are thus many ways to measure sense of safety. For example, the measures that Canadians take to protect themselves from crime can be reflective of a behavioural response to a certain sense of insecurity. Respondents can also be asked about their perception of the crime rate in their neighbourhood, which can provide somewhat of a cognitive assessment of the perceived risk. Finally, the survey can also ask about the sense of safety in specific situations or the fear of being the victim of specific crimes as a way to measure a more emotional aspect of the sense of safety.

Generally, there is agreement that it is better to examine more than one measure in order to produce a complete portrait of the sense of safety. In addition to questions about taking precautionary and preventive measures (see Chart 5), the 2014 General Social Survey on Canadians' Safety (Victimization) included the following questions to measure Canadians' sense of safety, each of which is touched on in this article:

1. In general, how satisfied are you with your personal safety from crime?
2. Compared with other areas in Canada, do you think your neighbourhood has a higher amount of crime, about the same or a lower amount of crime?
3. During the last five years, do you think that crime in your neighbourhood has increased, decreased or remained about the same?
4. While waiting for or using public transportation alone after dark, do you feel very worried, somewhat worried or not at all worried about your safety from crime?
5. When alone in your home in the evening or at night, do you feel very worried, somewhat worried or not at all worried about your safety from crime?
6. How safe do you feel from crime walking alone in your area after dark?

Responses to question 6 are used for analysis of the characteristics that influence the sense of safety, which appears in the next section. Not only this question, or a similar formulation, is used in most national victimization surveys, it is also one of the most used in studies on the sense of safety. Moreover, key well-being indexes rely on this measure. Focussing on this measure therefore facilitates links and comparisons with other studies.

Specifically, analysis of responses to “How safe do you feel from crime walking alone in your area after dark?” will focus on the people who responded that they felt very safe in that situation. The work of Farrall et al. (2009) has shown that there were many inconsistencies in individuals' responses, depending on the question asked. However, these inconsistencies are much rarer among those who said they felt very safe. Finally, people who responded that they never walk alone after dark are excluded from this analysis. Although some people may avoid walking alone precisely because they fear becoming victims, most studies agree that hypothetical issues (e.g., the sense of safety a person would have **if** they walked alone) lead to unreliable results (Farrall et al. 2009; Ferraro and LaGrange 1987).

Women feel much less safe than men

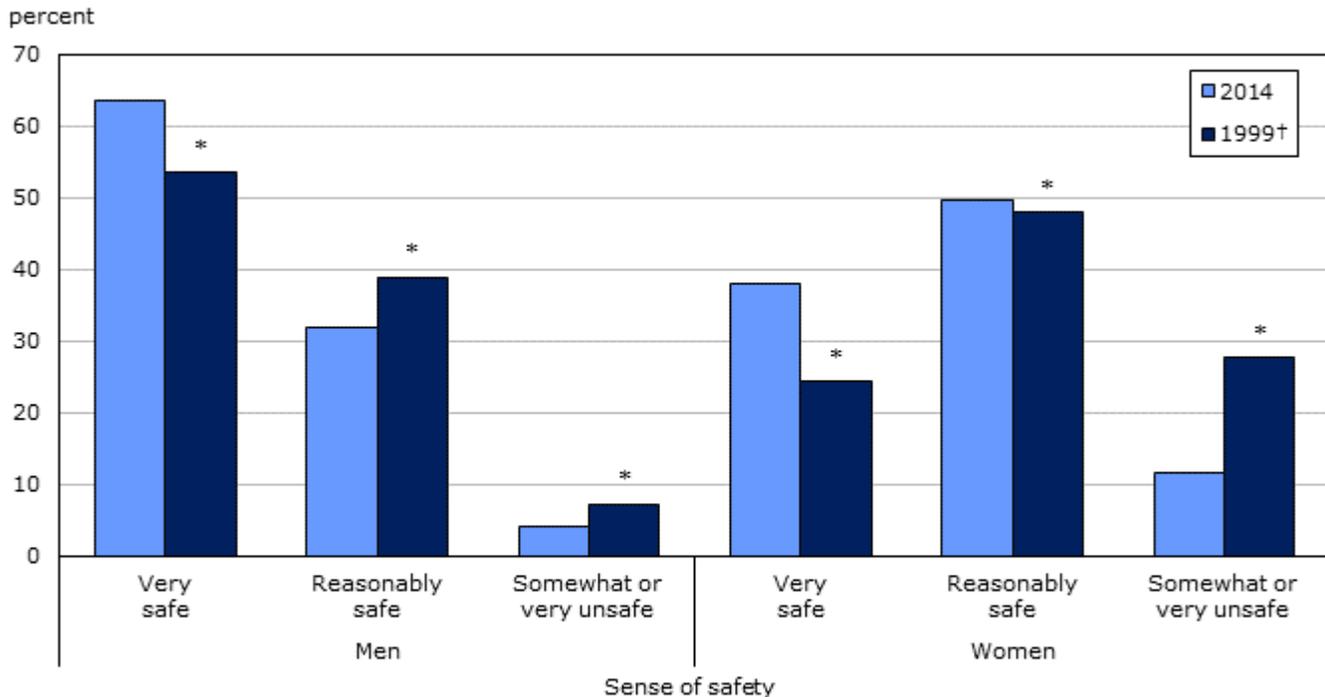
The feeling of safety when walking alone in one's neighbourhood after dark is one of the most frequently used measures in studies that look at the sense of safety. Although some people may choose to never walk alone after dark because they do not feel safe, most studies agree that it is best not to use a hypothetical measure, and therefore to consider only the sense of safety of people who engage in the activity in question (see Text box 1). The following sections address the sense of safety of people who walk alone after dark in their neighbourhood.

Of all the sociodemographic characteristics that influence the sense of safety, sex is likely the most important. For example, while almost two-thirds (64%) of men who walk alone in their neighbourhood after dark said they felt very safe, just over one-third (38%) of women said the same. On the other hand, women were three times more likely than men to say they felt somewhat or very unsafe when walking alone in their neighbourhood after dark (12% versus 4%) (Table 2).

Furthermore, this difference existed regardless of the measure of sense of safety. For example, one-half (50%) of females who use public transportation alone after dark do not feel worried at all when doing so, compared with more than three-quarters (78%) of their male counterparts. Also, 83% of women are not worried when alone at home in the evening or at night, compared with almost all (94%) men. In addition, women were more likely than men to report that they would walk alone more often (30% versus 18%¹¹) in their neighbourhood after dark if they felt safer.

However, the sense of safety has increased sharply among women in recent years. In 1999, less than one-quarter (24%) of women reported feeling very safe walking alone in their neighbourhood after dark and even more (28%) reported feeling somewhat or very unsafe. Fifteen years later, these proportions were 38% and 11%. Among men, 54% said they felt very safe and 7% did not feel safe in 1999, compared with 64% and 4% respectively in 2014 (Chart 11).

Chart 11
Canadians sense of safety when walking alone in one's neighbourhood after dark, by sex, 1999 and 2014



* significantly different from reference category ($p < 0.05$)

† reference category

Note: The answers "Don't know" and "Refusal" are included in the calculation of the percentages, but do not appear in the chart. Excludes individuals who reported never walking alone after dark. Excludes data from the Territories.

Source: Statistics Canada, General Social Survey.

In addition to sex, several other factors can affect the sense of safety, such as socioeconomic characteristics, neighbourhood characteristics or victimization history. However, even taking these other factors into account, differences between men and women remained (see Text box 2). This is a relatively consistent finding in studies on the sense of safety (Hale 1996). However, some studies suggest that the internalization of social roles expecting men to be strong and courageous lead some men to underestimate their sense of insecurity or, at least, to have difficulty admitting it. Consequently, the difference between men and women could be less pronounced than the findings suggest (Sutton et al. 2011; Sutton and Farrall 2005).

Young people, especially young women, are less likely to report feeling safe walking alone in their neighbourhood after dark

In 2014, young people aged 15 to 24 were slightly less likely than Canadians in any other age group to say they felt very safe walking alone in their neighbourhood after dark (44% versus 52% or more for other age groups) (Table 2).

Both young men and young women were less likely than their older counterparts to say they felt very safe walking alone in their neighbourhood after dark. The difference was particularly marked among women: just over one-quarter (28%) of women aged 15 to 24 said they felt very safe walking alone in their neighbourhood after dark, compared with 40% of women 25 years and older.

Young people aged 15 to 24 also have the highest victimization rates (Perreault 2015). Several studies suggest that the fear of crime among women is mostly related to the fear of being sexually assaulted (Pain 2000). Young women are, in fact, most likely to be victims of sexual assault and, unlike most other crimes which have decreased, sexual assault rates have remained relatively stable in recent years (Rotenberg 2017; Conroy and Cotter 2017; Perreault 2015). Young women are also more likely to be the targets of harassment or other inappropriate sexual behaviours, which may make them fear for their safety (European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights 2014; Pain 2000).

Despite saying that they feel less safe walking alone in their neighbourhood after dark, young adults nevertheless expressed equal levels of satisfaction with their personal safety as Canadians in most other age groups.

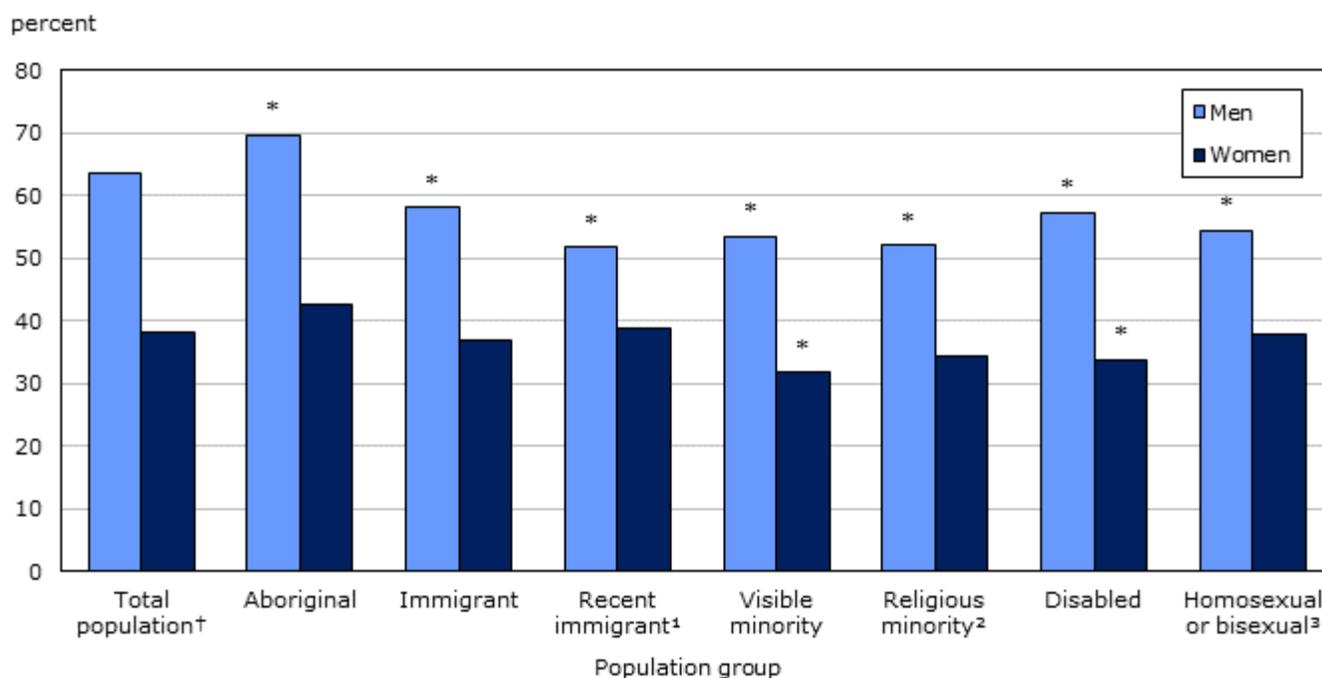
Some other characteristics closely related to age also influenced the sense of safety. For example, students (43%) were less likely than employed individuals (55%) to say they felt very safe walking alone after dark, as were single (48%) versus married or common-law (55%) people. However, after adjusting for other factors affecting the sense of safety, these characteristics no longer had a significant impact, unlike age (see Text box 2).

These results challenge the conventional wisdom that older people feel less safe (Killias 1990). At the same time, studies on the sense of safety have often reached conflicting results about the relationship between age and the sense of safety (Hale 1996), with some arguing that the way sense of safety is measured might be the cause of these contradictions (Ferraro 1987). Nevertheless, all measures available in the General Social Survey on Canadians' Safety (Victimization) (see Text box 1) indicate that people aged 65 and older feel as safe, if not safer, than people aged 15 to 24.

Feelings of safety are lower among immigrants and visible minorities

Overall, immigrants and people who reported belonging to a visible minority group were less likely than non-immigrants and persons not belonging to a visible minority group to say that they felt very safe walking alone in their neighbourhood after dark (Chart 12 and Table 3).

Chart 12
Canadians who say they feel very safe walking alone after dark in their neighbourhood, by sex and selected population groups, 2014



* significantly different from reference category (p < 0.05)

† reference category

1. Includes people who immigrated since 2005.

2. Includes people who said they belong to a non-Christian religion.

3. Excludes respondents under 18 years of age, since they were not asked the question on sexual orientation.

Note: The answers "Don't know" and "Refusal" are included in the calculation of the percentages, but do not appear in the chart. Excludes individuals who reported never walking alone after dark.

Source: Statistics Canada, General Social Survey.

These differences were more pronounced for people who had immigrated since 2005 (46% versus 54% of non-immigrants) and for certain visible minority groups, such as those identifying themselves as Chinese (38%), Filipino (41%) or Southeast Asian (40%) compared with those who do not self-identify with any visible minority group (54%).

Similarly, West Asians (e.g., Iranians and Afghans) and Arabs were more likely than non-visible minorities to say they felt somewhat or very unsafe walking alone in their neighbourhood after dark (16%^E, 15%^E and 7% respectively). Among these

groups, women felt particularly unsafe. Specifically, one-quarter (25%) of West Asian or Arab women reported feeling somewhat or very unsafe walking alone in their neighbourhood after dark. Similarly, among the largest religious groups, Muslims (14%), and especially Muslim women (21%), were also the most likely to report feeling somewhat or very unsafe.

Some studies suggest that hate crimes can affect the sense of safety of the entire community in question, and not only the direct victim (Perry 2014). The latest police-reported data show an increase in hate crimes against Arabs and the Muslim community (Leber 2017). This could partly explain why Arabs and West Asians are now more likely to report feeling unsafe walking alone after dark, while they were just as likely as any other Canadian belonging to a visible minority 10 years earlier.¹²

Furthermore, most people belonging to a minority group live in urban areas where other factors could adversely affect their sense of safety. For example, about two-thirds of immigrants live in one of the three largest census metropolitan areas, namely Toronto, Montréal or Vancouver (Statistics Canada 2013a), and immigrants and visible minorities are also overrepresented in low-income neighbourhoods (Statistics Canada 2013b). When other factors are considered, being an immigrant was not a significant factor affecting their sense of safety.¹³ However, being a visible minority or belonging to a religious minority was still associated with a lower sense of safety. A high proportion of recent immigrants in the neighbourhood,¹⁴ was also still a factor (see Text box 2).

Among other population groups, people who self-identified themselves to be homosexual or bisexual were somewhat less likely than heterosexuals to say they felt very safe walking alone in their neighbourhood after dark (46% versus 53%). The difference, however, was due solely to men since no difference was noted among women based on sexual orientation (Chart 12).

Aboriginal people feel safer than non-Aboriginal people

Overall, the rates of self-reported violent victimization of Aboriginal people are more than twice as high as the rates for non-Aboriginal people (Boyce 2016; Perreault 2015). They are also about seven times more likely to be homicide victims (Mulligan et al. 2016). Nevertheless, Aboriginal people showed a greater sense of safety than non-Aboriginal people: 58% said they felt very safe walking alone in their neighbourhood after dark, compared with 52% of non-Aboriginal people (Table 3). This difference was mainly due to men since the difference observed among women was not statistically significant.

Several reasons could explain the slightly higher sense of safety among Aboriginal people despite higher victimization rates. For example, compared with non-Aboriginal people, a smaller proportion of Aboriginal people live in large cities, where the sense of safety is lower. Some also argue that strong community ties of many Aboriginal people could serve as a protective factor, or that more pressing worries and concerns (for example economic ones) could take precedence over concerns related to safety (Weinrath 2000). In every case, the differences between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people no longer held after adjusting for other factors that affect sense of safety (see Text box 2), which supports the hypothesis that the greater sense of safety observed among Aboriginal people may be attributed to community factors.

Sense of safety is lower among people with a physical or mental disability

People with disabilities, or people who report a physical or mental condition that limits their daily activities, said that overall, they feel less safe walking alone in their neighbourhood than people without a disability (46% versus 54%). They also reported that they were generally less satisfied with their personal safety (Table 3).

Feeling unsafe was more common among those who reported a mental or cognitive disability, with 41% reporting feeling very safe walking alone after dark.

Some studies use vulnerability to explain some of the differences in the sense of safety (Hale 1996). According to this view, people who are less able—real or perceived—to defend themselves against a potential aggressor are believed to show lower levels of personal security. This vulnerability could at least partly explain the lower sense of safety observed among women overall and people with a disability.

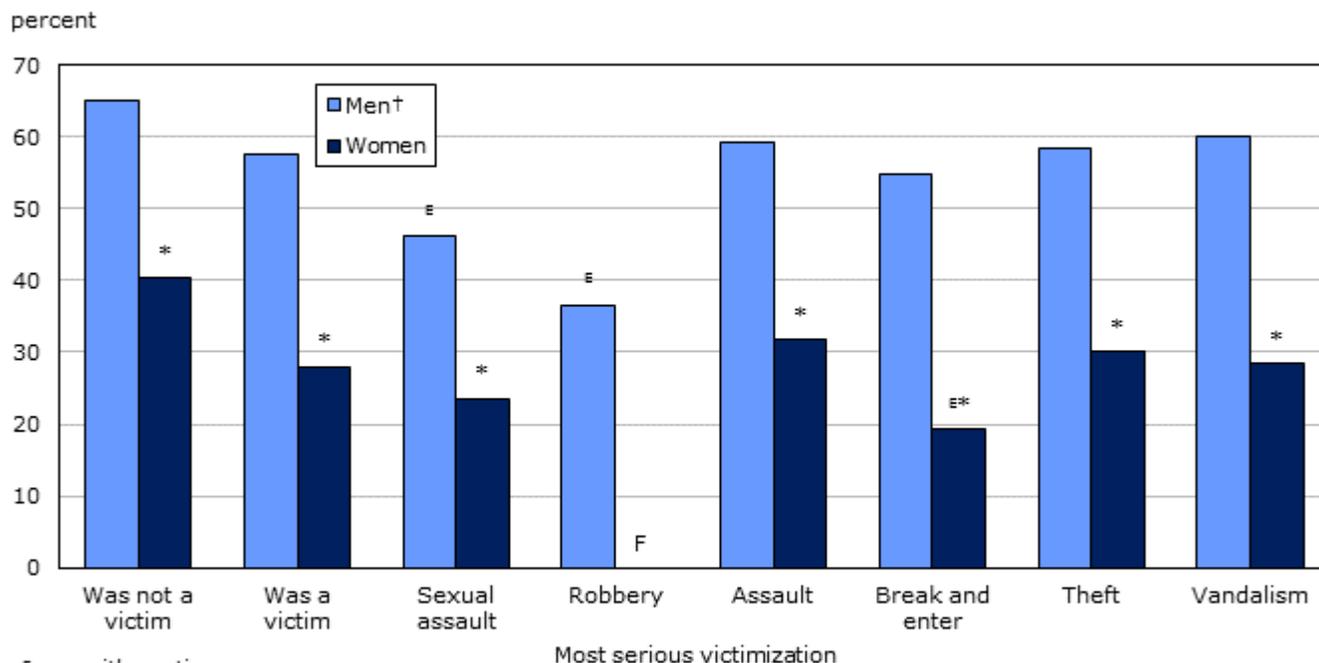
Crime victims feel less safe

Victims of crime can experience a loss of their sense of safety. This observation holds true for both victims of violent crimes and victims of property crimes. While more than one-half (54%) of people who have not been victims of any crime in the 12 months preceding the survey¹⁵ said they felt very safe walking alone in their neighbourhood after dark, this proportion decreased to 43% among people who have been victims of a single violent crime and to 41% among those who were victims

of more than one violent crime. Among the victims of household crimes, the corresponding proportions were 45% for victims of one household crime and 38% for victims of more than one household crime (Table 4).

Among specific crimes,¹⁶ victims of sexual assault (27%) were the least likely to report feeling very safe walking alone in their neighbourhood after dark. These were followed by victims of robbery (35%^E) and breaking and entering (38%). It is noteworthy that crimes against property, especially breaking and entering, seemed to have a more unsettling effect on women than men. Less than one in five women (19%^E) who were victims of breaking and entering reported feeling very safe when walking alone in their neighbourhood after dark, compared with more than one-half (55%) of their male counterparts (Chart 13).

Chart 13
Canadians who say they feel very safe walking alone after dark in their neighbourhood, by their experience of criminal victimization in the previous 12 months, 2014



^E use with caution

^F too unreliable to be published

* significantly different from reference category (p < 0.05)

† reference category

Note: The answers "Don't know" and "Refusal" are included in the calculation of the percentages, but do not appear in the chart. Excludes individuals who reported never walking alone after dark.

Source: Statistics Canada, General Social Survey.

Domestic violence also appears to have a negative impact on the sense of safety. For example, 44% of victims of domestic violence in the 12 months preceding the 2014 General Social Survey (on Victimization) reported feeling very safe walking alone in their neighbourhood after dark. This proportion is lower than for people who were not victims of domestic violence (55%). However, people who were victims of domestic violence in the five years preceding the 2014 GSS, but not in the previous 12 months, were just as likely to say they felt safe than people who had not been victims. These results suggest that, similar to what was observed by Russo and Roccato (2010), the negative effect of victimization might dissipate after a certain time. Some victims may also become more resilient by developing coping strategies (Calhoun and Tedeschi 2006).

Moreover, experiences of victimization during childhood¹⁷ had little impact on the sense of safety. This may suggest that, as was observed for domestic violence, the effect of victimization on the sense of safety could in many cases dissipate over time. A lower sense of safety was observed among people who were sexually abused in childhood, but this was explained by the fact that most of the victims were women. When accounting for sex, there were no significant differences in the level of the sense of safety between victims of sexual violence during childhood and people who had not been victims.

In addition to asking Canadians about their experiences with violent crime and property crime, the 2014 GSS also collected information on Canadians' experiences with harassment, cyberbullying and discrimination over the previous five years. In all cases, the people who had been victims reported a relatively low sense of safety (41%, 48% and 41% respectively) compared with the total population (52%).

Contrary to what was observed for domestic violence, people who had been victims of harassment in the previous five years, but not the last 12 months, reported feeling safe in a proportion similar to those who had been victims in the last 12 months (41% and 40% respectively), suggesting that harassment may have a somewhat more lasting effect on the sense of safety.

People living in buildings of five storeys or more feel less safe

Even though buildings of five storeys or more sometimes have security devices, and even security guards, and their tenants are less likely to be victims of property crimes (Perreault 2015), the inhabitants of these buildings were least likely to report feeling very safe walking alone in their neighbourhood after dark (38% compared with 56% among those living in a single-family dwelling) (Table 5).

Similarly, people living in a neighbourhood where there is a high proportion¹⁸ of apartments were less likely to say they felt very safe than people living in neighbourhoods where the proportion was lower (41% versus 62%).

In fact, lower sense of safety reported by people residing in buildings with five storeys or more might have more to do with the neighbourhood they live in than the type of building they live in, as they were also the most likely to report feeling safe when home alone at night (92% versus 88% of those living in a single-family dwelling). For example, this type of building is found more often in urban areas, where the sense of safety is generally lower. When other factors affecting the sense of safety were considered, the type of dwelling inhabited was no longer a significant factor. However, the proportion of such buildings in the neighbourhood remained a factor. In other words, it is not so much living in a multi-storey building that has an impact on the sense of safety as is living in an environment where there are many of these buildings.

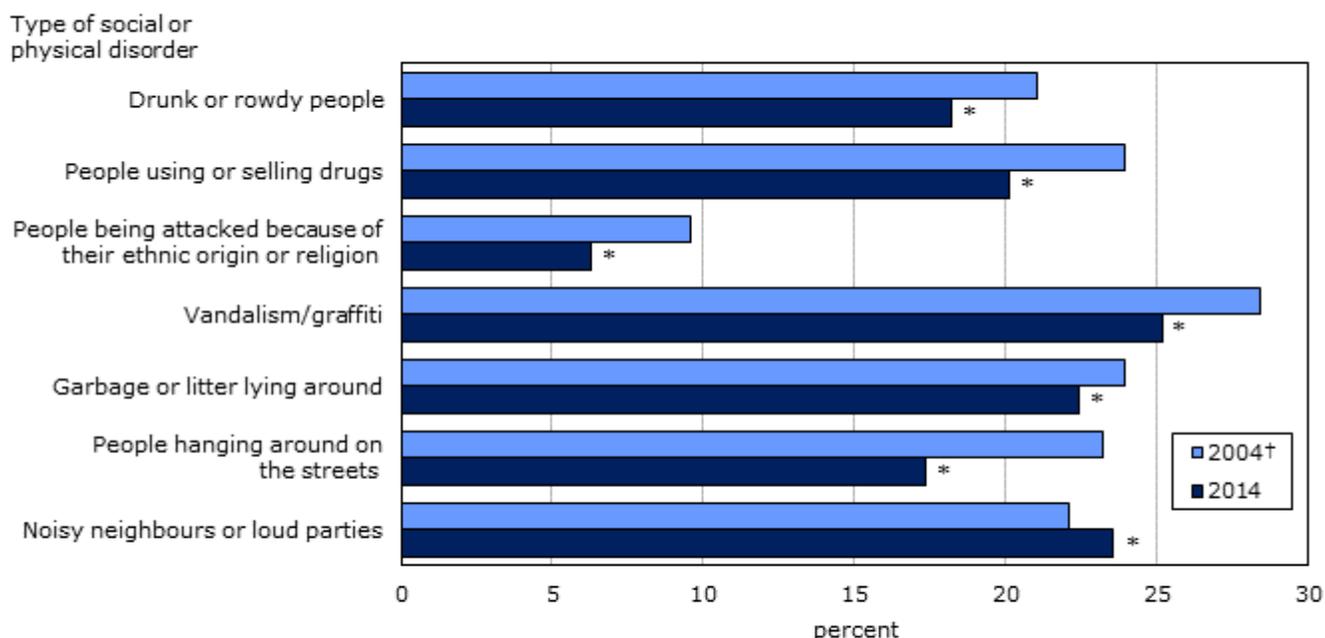
Several other neighbourhood characteristics had an impact on the sense of safety, including the proportion of lone-parent families and recent immigrants (Table 5 and Text box 2). The proportion of visible minorities and families living below the low-income threshold, as well as people living in the neighbourhood for less than five years, was also associated with the sense of safety, but this effect was not statistically significant after adjusting for other factors (see Text box 2).

The presence of physical or social disorder increases the level of insecurity

In the literature, there is a relative consensus that the presence of social or physical disorder is an important factor affecting the sense of safety (Hale 1996; LaGrange et al. 1992).

Results from the General Social Survey on Victimization point in the same direction. In 2014, just over one-half (53%) of Canadians reported the presence of at least one sign of social or physical disorder, the most common being the presence of graffiti or vandalism (Chart 14). Among people who reported the presence of social disorder in their neighbourhood in 2014, 44% said they felt very safe walking alone in their neighbourhood after dark, compared with almost two-thirds (63%) of those who did not report any kind of disorder. Among the different types of social or physical disorders, some seemed to have a greater impact on their sense of safety. For example, less than one-third of people who said that people in their neighbourhood are attacked or harassed because of ethnicity or religion (28%), or that there are people hanging around on the streets (31%), reported feeling very safe walking alone in their neighbourhood after dark (Table 6).

Chart 14
Proportion of Canadians reporting signs of social or physical disorder in their neighbourhood, 2004 and 2014



* significantly different from reference category ($p < 0.05$)

† reference category

Note: The answers "Don't know" and "Refusal" are included in the calculation of the percentages, but do not appear in the chart. The proportions of people who reported social disorder include individuals who reported that these situations were a small, moderate or big problem. Exclude data from the Territories.

Source: Statistics Canada, General Social Survey.

Moreover, the proportion of those who reported the presence of social or physical disorder in their neighbourhood has decreased since 2004 for almost all types of disorder. This could also partly explain why Canadians' sense of safety has improved since.

Trusted neighbours contribute to a better sense of safety

The relationships that Canadians have with their neighbours can greatly affect their sense of safety. For example, people who believe that their neighbours are trustworthy were twice as likely to report feeling very safe walking alone in their neighbourhood after dark than people who do not trust their neighbours (60% versus 31%) (Table 6).

Similarly, people who reported living in a welcoming community (54%) and who believe that their neighbours would call the police if they witnessed a crime (57%) had a higher sense of personal safety than people who believed the opposite (34% and 40% respectively).

People who trust the police feel safer

The 2014 General Social Survey on Victimization asked Canadians if they had confidence in their local police and to evaluate police on various aspects of their work. Previously published results (see Cotter 2016) have shown some link between trust in the police and sense of safety.

People who reported having a great deal of confidence in the police were more likely to report feeling very safe walking alone in their neighbourhood after dark than people who have little or no confidence in the police (59% compared with 49%). This difference remained significant even when other sociodemographic factors and neighbourhoods were considered (see Text box 2).

The nature of the relationship between confidence in the police and the sense of safety is, however, not clear. Some studies suggest that trust in the police may have a reassuring effect (Skogan 2009), and thus increase the sense of safety, while others argue that people with a low sense of safety will blame the police, and therefore will have less confidence in them (Farrall et al. 2009).

Text box 2

Multivariate analysis

As the analysis in this article has shown, many characteristics and factors are associated with a sense of safety. However, some of these factors are interrelated. For example, it has been shown that women and victims of harassment are less likely to feel safe. However, victims of harassment are also more likely to be women. As a result, does being a woman, being harassed, or both of these factors together influence the sense of safety? A multivariate analysis can help answer such questions (see the “Methods for multivariate analysis” section).

The results of the multivariate analysis undertaken show that women have significantly (3.5 times) less odds than men to feel very safe walking alone in their neighbourhood after dark, even when all other factors are taken into account (see Text box 2 table in the “Detailed data tables” section).

Multivariate analysis specifically by sex tells us even more about the factors that influence the sense of safety among men and women. In particular, sociodemographic characteristics had very little impact on women’s sense of safety. Only women aged 15 to 24 had 1.5 times less odds than their older counterparts to say they felt very safe. Women with a disability also had slightly lower odds to say they felt very safe walking alone in their neighbourhood after dark.

Moreover, having been the victim of a crime—except breaking and entering for women—or harassment no longer seems to have any effect on the fear of crime when other factors are taken into account. This could reveal that the link between victimization and the sense of safety is not direct. For example, being a crime victim could possibly affect confidence in the police and neighbours, or cause one to perceive a greater level of crime in the neighbourhood, which in turn would have a negative effect on one’s sense of safety. However, the people who share these perceptions—whether or not they have been victims—would likely have a similar sense of safety.

Unlike the situation among women, many sociodemographic characteristics continue to be associated with the sense of safety among men when other factors were held constant. In addition to characteristics that were associated with the sense of safety for both men and women, such as being young or having a disability, being retired, having a university degree or belonging to a visible or religious minority were also factors for men. However, knowing their neighbours did not influence the sense of safety among men, though it did for women.

Finally, for both men and women, the characteristics that seemed to have the greatest influence on their feeling of safety were perceiving social disorder in the neighbourhood (e.g., incivility and “petty crimes” such as drug dealing or vandalism) and the belief that the number of crimes in the neighbourhood is as high as or higher than elsewhere in Canada. While the relationship between crime rates, victimization and the sense of safety is not always clear or direct, the perceived level of crime seems at the very least to be a particularly determinant factor.

Summary

The vast majority of Canadians say they are satisfied (50%) or very satisfied (38%) with their personal safety. Moreover, Canadians are among those in developed countries who posted the strongest sense of safety, according to an Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development ranking.

Canadians also feel increasingly safer. Just over one-half said they felt very safe walking alone in their neighbourhood after dark, compared with 4 in 10 Canadians 15 years earlier. Paradoxically, the vast majority (74%) of Canadians believe that crime levels have remained stable over the past five years, even though the crime rate has been decreasing during that period. However, compared with what they said 20 years earlier, fewer Canadians believed that the crime rate had increased in the previous five years.

Across the country, people living in provinces where the crime rate was lower generally felt safer. The residents of the Atlantic provinces and Ontario posted the highest levels of satisfaction with their personal safety. These data suggest that the sense of safety is at least partly related to crime levels.

Furthermore, victims of a crime in the 12 months preceding the 2014 General Social Survey on Victimization were less likely to report feeling very safe walking alone after dark. Sexual assault, robbery and breaking and entering were the crimes that most negatively affected the sense of safety. People who had been victims of harassment also saw their sense of safety negatively affected.

However, while the sense of safety is partly linked to crime and victimization, other factors also had an influence. For example, even though their rates were not higher than average, residents of census metropolitan areas were less likely than

residents of rural and small communities to say they felt safe. Knowing one's neighbours and trusting them, among others, is thought to positively contribute to a sense of safety. This may also explain why Aboriginal people have a greater sense of safety than non-Aboriginal people, even though the former have significantly higher rates of victimization.

On the other hand, despite lower victimization rates, immigrants feel less safe overall. Arab and West Asian women were particularly likely to report feeling unsafe. This finding could be related to the increase in police-reported hate crimes against Arabs and Muslims. Several studies show that hate crimes are related to lower sense of safety not only for the direct victims, but for the entire community targeted.

Being a woman is by far the factor with the greatest impact on the sense of safety. In all population groups and in all circumstances, women reported a lower sense of safety than men. Particularly, women were more likely than men to take measures to protect themselves against criminal acts. Their sense of safety was also more likely than men's to be affected by sexual assault, harassment and property crimes. On the other hand, women's sense of safety has increased more than that of men in the past 15 years.

Methods for multivariate analysis

The influence of a factor is indicated by the odds ratio, which should be read in relation to the reference category. To make the results easier to read, these regressions model the probability of not reporting feeling very safe walking alone in one's neighbourhood after dark. An odds ratio greater than 1 indicates that the characteristic increases the odds for the variable of interest (in this case, not feeling very safe) and an odds ratio lower than 1 indicates that this odds decreases. For example, the logistic regression analysis shows that, all things being equal, women have odds 3.5 times higher than men to say they did not feel very safe walking alone in their neighbourhood after dark.

People who said they never walk alone in their neighbourhood after dark were excluded from these analyses. All the variables in tables 2 to 6 were considered, except sexual orientation (since the question was not asked of all respondents). Only variables that proved significant in the multivariate analysis were retained in the final models presented in this report.

In addition to a logistic regression analysis, a multilevel analysis was also conducted for this study (data not shown). Logistic regression analysis normally requires independent observations (respondents), which becomes problematic when the characteristics associated with the environment (e.g., the neighbourhood) are shared by several observations and influence the variable in question (in this case, the sense of safety). A multilevel analysis (or hierarchical linear model) can overcome this limitation. The General Social Survey (GSS) uses weights to generalize results to all Canadians. Bootstrap (replicate) weights are used to estimate variances – and hence establish statistical significance. However, GSS bootstrap weights are not designed to take neighbourhood level effects into account so a hierarchical analysis is not possible in this case. For this reason, only logistic regression results are presented.

Survey description

General Social Survey on Canadians' Safety (Victimization)

In 2014, Statistics Canada conducted the sixth cycle of the General Social Survey (GSS) on Canadians' Safety (Victimization). Previous cycles were conducted in 1988, 1993, 1999, 2004 and 2009. The purpose of the survey is to provide data on Canadians' personal experiences with eight offences, examine the risk factors associated with victimization, examine rates of reporting to the police, assess the nature and extent of spousal violence, measure fear of crime, and examine public perceptions of crime and the criminal justice system.

The 2014 GSS on Victimization was also conducted in the Yukon, Northwest Territories and Nunavut using a different sampling design. The GSS on Victimization was also conducted in the Territories in 2009 and was preceded by test collections in 1999 and 2004.

In 2009, comparisons between the data from the Territories and the Provinces were to be made with caution primarily because the Inuit population was underrepresented in the Territories. In 2014, as a result of advancements made to the frame and higher response rates, data in the Territories can be compared, or combined, with data for the Provinces. It is noteworthy, however, to keep in mind differences in survey methods and weighting strategies for the Provinces and Territories when analyzing GSS 2014 data at the Canada level. This report combined 2014 GSS on Victimization data from both the Provinces and Territories in order to report on the feelings of safety of the whole Canadian population. However, any trend analysis is limited to the Provinces.

The target population for the GSS on Victimization is the Canadian population aged 15 and older, living in the Provinces and Territories. Canadians residing in institutions are not included. Once a household was contacted an individual 15 years and older was randomly selected to respond to the survey.

In 2014, the sample size for the 10 provinces was 33,127 respondents. Of that number, 2,787 were from the oversample. In 2014, the sample size for the three Territories was 2,040 respondents.

Data collection

Provinces

Data collection took place from January to December 2014 inclusively. Responses were obtained by computer-assisted telephone interviews (CATI). Respondents were able to respond in the official language of their choice.

Territories

Data collection took place from August 2014 to January 2015 inclusively. The method of collection was a mixture of CATI and personal interviews (CAPI). Most cases started as CATI at the regional office and could be transferred to a CAPI-interviewer depending on the community and collection constraints. Respondents were interviewed in the official language of their choice.

Response rates

Provinces

The overall response rate in 2014 was 52.9%, down from 61.6% in 2009. Non-respondents included people who refused to participate, could not be reached, or could not speak English or French. Respondents in the sample were weighted so that their responses represent the non-institutionalized Canadian population aged 15 and older.

Territories

The overall response rate was 58.7%, up from 50.7% in 2009. Non-respondents included people who refused to participate, could not be reached, or could not speak English or French. Respondents in the sample were weighted so that their responses represent the non-institutionalized territories population aged 15 and older.

Data limitations

As with any household survey, there are some data limitations. The results are based on a sample and are therefore subject to sampling errors. Somewhat different results might have been obtained if the entire population had been surveyed. This article uses the coefficient of variation (CV) as a measure of the sampling error. Estimates with a high CV (over 33.3%) were not published because they were too unreliable. In these cases, the symbol "F" is used in place of an estimate in the figures and data tables. Estimates with a CV between 16.6 and 33.3 should be used with caution and the symbol "E" is used. Where descriptive statistics and cross-tabular analyses were used, statistically significant differences were determined using 95% confidence intervals.

References

- Adams, R. E. and R. T. Serpe. 2000. "Social integration, fear of crime, and life satisfaction." *Sociological Perspectives*. Vol. 43, no. 4. p. 605-629.
- Boyce, J. 2015. "Police-reported crime statistics in Canada, 2014." *Juristat*. Statistics Canada Catalogue no. 85-002-X.
- Boyce, J. 2016. "Victimization of Aboriginal People in Canada, 2014." *Juristat*. Statistics Canada Catalogue no. 85-002-X.
- Breetzke, G. D. and A. L. Pearson. 2014. "The fear factor: Examining the spatial variability of recorded crime on the fear of crime." *Applied Geography*. Vol. 46. p. 45-52.
- Calhoun, L. G. and R. G. Tedeschi. (Eds.). 2006. *Handbook of Posttraumatic Growth: Research and Practice*. Mahwah, N.J. Lawrence Erlbaum Associates Publishers.
- Chiricos, T., K. Padgett and M. Gertz. 2000. "Fear, TV news, and the reality of crime." *Criminology*. Vol. 38, no. 3.
- Cobbina, J. E., J. Miller and R. K. Brunson. 2008. "Gender, neighborhood danger, and risk avoidance strategies among urban African-American youths." *Criminology*. Vol. 46, no. 3. p. 673-709.

- Conroy, S. and A. Cotter. 2017. "Self-reported sexual assault in Canada, 2014." *Juristat*. Statistics Canada Catalogue no. 85-002-X.
- Cotter, A. 2016. "Public confidence in Canadian institutions." *Spotlight on Canadians: Results from the General Social Survey*. Statistics Canada Catalogue no. 89-652-X.
- Covington, J. and R. B. Taylor. 1991. "Fear of crime in urban residential neighborhoods: Implications of between-and within-neighborhood sources for current models." *Sociological Quarterly*. Vol. 32. p. 231-249.
- European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights. 2014. *Violence Against Women: An EU-Wide Survey. Main Results*. Luxembourg. Publications Office of the European Union.
- Farrall, S. D., J. Jackson and E. Gray. 2009. *Social Order and the Fear of Crime in Contemporary Times*. Oxford University Press.
- Ferraro, K. F. and R. L. Lagrange. 1987. "The measurement of fear of crime." *Social Inquiry*. Vol. 57, no. 1. p. 70-97.
- Fitzgerald, R. 2008. "Fear of crime and the neighbourhood context in Canadian cities, 2004." *Crime and Justice Research Paper Series*. No. 13. Statistics Canada Catalogue no. 85-561-M.
- Foster, S., M. Knuiemann, P. Hooper, H. Christian and B. Giles-Corti. 2014. "Do changes in resident's fear of crime impact their walking? Longitudinal results from RESIDE." *Preventive Medicine*. Vol. 62. p. 161-166.
- Gibson, C. L., J. Zhao, N. P. Lovrich and M. J. Gaffney. 2002. "Social integration, individual perceptions of collective efficacy, and fear of crime in three cities." *Justice Quarterly*. Vol. 19, no. 3. p. 537-564.
- Hale, C. 1996. "Fear of crime: A review of the literature." *International Review of Victimology*. Vol. 4, no. 2. p. 79-150.
- Intravia, J., E. A. Stewart, P. Y. Warren and K. T. Wolff. 2016. "Neighbourhood disorder and generalized trust: A multilevel mediation examination of social mechanisms." *Journal of Criminal Justice*. Vol. 46. p. 148-158.
- Killias, M. 1990. "Vulnerability: Towards a better understanding of a key variable in the genesis of fear of crime." *Violence and Victims*. Vol. 5. p. 97-108.
- LaGrange, R. L., K. F. Ferraro and M. Supanic. 1992. "Perceived risk and fear of crime: Role of social and physical incivilities." *Journal of Research in Crime and Delinquency*. Vol. 29, no. 3. p. 311-334.
- Leber, B. 2017. "Police-reported hate crime in Canada, 2015." *Juristat*. Statistics Canada Catalogue no. 85-002-X.
- Lorenc, T., S. Clayton, M. Whitehead, M. Petticrew, H. Thomson, S. Cummins, A. Sowden and A. Renton. 2012. "Crime, fear of crime, environment, and mental health and wellbeing: Mapping review of theories and causal pathways." *Health & Place*. Vol. 18. p. 757-765.
- Mulligan, L., M. Axford and A. Solecki. 2016. "Homicide in Canada, 2015." *Juristat*. Statistics Canada Catalogue no. 85-002-X.
- Pain, R. 2000. "Place, social relations and the fear of crime: A review." *Progress in Human Geography*. Vol. 24. p. 365-387.
- Perreault, S. 2015. "Criminal victimization in Canada, 2014." *Juristat*. Statistics Canada Catalogue no. 85-002-X.
- Perry, B. 2014. "Exploring the community impacts of hate crime." In Hall, N., A. Corb, P. Giannasi and J. Grieve (Eds). *The Routledge International Handbook on Hate Crime*. London. Routledge. p. 47-58.
- Rotenberg, C. 2017. "Police-reported sexual assaults in Canada, 2009 to 2014: A statistical profile." *Juristat*. Statistics Canada Catalogue no. 85-002-X.
- Ruddell, R. and N. R. Ortiz. 2014. "Boomtown blues: Long-term community perceptions of crime and disorder." *American Journal of Criminal Justice*. Vol. 40, no. 1. p. 129-146.
- Russo, S. and M. Roccato. 2010. "How long does victimization foster fear of crime: A longitudinal study." *Journal of Community Psychology*. Vol. 38, no. 8. p. 960-974.
- Sacco, V. F. 1995. "Fear and personal safety." *Juristat*. Statistics Canada Catalogue no. 85-002-X.
- Sampson, R. J., S. W. Raudenbush and F. Earls. 1997. "Neighborhoods and violent crime: A multilevel study of collective efficacy." *Science*. Vol. 277. p. 918-924.
- Scott, J., K. Carrington and A. McIntosh. 2012. "Established-outsider relations and fear of crime in mining towns." *Sociologia Ruralis*. Vol. 52, no. 2.
- Skogan, W. G. 2009. "Concern about crime and confidence in the police. Reassurance or accountability?" *Police Quarterly*. Vol. 12, no. 3. p. 301-318.
- Statistics Canada. 2013a. "Immigration and ethnocultural diversity in Canada." *National Household Survey: Immigration and Ethnocultural Diversity*. Statistics Canada Catalogue no. 99-010-X.
- Statistics Canada. 2013b. "Persons living in low-income neighbourhoods." *National Household Survey in Brief*. Statistics Canada Catalogue no. 99-014-X.

- Sutton, R. M. and S. Farrall. 2005. "Gender, socially desirable responding and the fear of crime: Are women really more anxious about crime?" *British Journal of Criminology*. Vol. 45, no. 2.
- Sutton, R. M., B. Robinson and S. Farrall. 2011. "Gender, fear of crime, and self-presentation: An experimental investigation." *Psychology, Crime and Law*. Vol. 17, no. 5.
- Weinrath, M. 2000. "Violent victimization and fear of crime among Canadian Aboriginals." *Journal of Offender Rehabilitation*. Vol. 30, no. 1. p. 107-120.
- Yuan, Y. and S. McNeeley. 2017. "Social ties, collective efficacy, and crime-specific fear in Seattle neighborhoods." *Victims & Offenders*. Vol. 12, no. 1. p. 90-112.

Notes

^E use with caution

1. In addition to these factors, some studies have hypothesized that mass media may have an impact on fear of crime (see for example Chiricos et al. 2000). However, the General Social Survey on Canadians' Safety (Victimization) does not collect data on media consumption and therefore, this aspect is excluded from this analysis.
2. All differences in this article are statistically significant ($p < 0.05$) unless otherwise indicated.
3. A census metropolitan area (CMA) is formed by one or more adjacent municipalities centred on a population centre (known as the core). A CMA must have a total population of at least 100,000, of which 50,000 or more must live in its core. To be included in the CMA, other adjacent municipalities must have a high degree of integration with the core, as measured by commuting flows derived from previous census data on place of work.
4. A census agglomeration (CA) is formed by one or more adjacent municipalities centred on a population centre (known as the core). A CA must have a core population of at least 10,000. To be included in the CA, other adjacent municipalities must have a high degree of integration with the core, as measured by commuting flows derived from previous census data on place of work.
5. Some census agglomerations posted higher proportions but were not noted here since the difference compared with the general population was not statistically significant ($p < 0.05$).
6. It should be noted that the police-reported crime rate represents only a part of all crimes. According to General Social Survey data on self-reported victimization, about one-third of crimes are reported to police. However, these data also show that in 2014 victimization rates were lower than the rates reported in 1999 (Perreault 2015).
7. The police-reported crime rate reached 10,342 cases per 100,000 inhabitants in 1991. This was the highest since comparable data began to be collected in 1962.
8. Excludes data from the Territories.
9. Excludes people who never use public transportation alone after dark.
10. The Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development defines itself as an organization dedicated to economic development and comprises 35 member countries, mostly democratic and economically developed countries.
11. The proportions exclude residents of the Territories, who were not asked this question. The proportions include all respondents (excluding the Territories), including those who reported never engaging in this activity. People who said they felt very safe walking alone in their neighbourhood after dark were not asked this question and we automatically consider that they would not engage in this activity more if they felt safer.
12. In 2004, 19% of Arabs and West Asians reported feeling somewhat or very unsafe walking alone in their neighbourhood after dark, similar to the proportion reported by other visible minorities (20%). This proportion was also similar for Muslims (19%).
13. The model considered people belonging to a visible minority group as a whole. Slightly different results may be produced for specific groups.
14. For this analysis, two types of multivariate models were produced: a logistic regression analysis (see Text box 2) and a multi-level analysis model (not shown). Generally speaking, the results of the logistic regression analysis and multilevel analysis were very similar. However, the proportion of recent immigrants was not a statistically significant factor ($p < 0.05$) in the multi-level analysis. For this reason, caution must be used with this result.
15. The violent crimes measured by the 2014 General Social Survey on Canadians' Safety (Victimization) are sexual assault, robbery and assault. The property crimes are breaking and entering, theft of motor vehicles, theft of personal property, theft of household property and vandalism.
16. Based on the most serious crime experienced by the victim in the preceding 12 months.
17. Childhood victimization is defined as acts of physical or sexual abuse of the person before the age of 15 by an adult.
18. A high proportion corresponds to neighbourhoods in the top quartile nationally.

Detailed data tables

Table 1

Sense of safety when walking alone in one's neighbourhood after dark, overall satisfaction with personal safety from crime and confidence in the police, by province, census metropolitan area or census agglomeration, 2014

Province, census metropolitan area or census agglomeration ¹	Safe when walking alone after dark ²	Very satisfied with personal safety percent	High confidence in the police
Newfoundland and Labrador	57*	43*	52*
St. John's	41*	34*	48
Bay Roberts	F	F	55 ^E
Grand Falls-Windsor	56	31 ^E	51 ^E
Corner Brook	71*	63*	66*
Prince Edward Island	66*	47*	56*
Charlottetown	63*	46*	50
Summerside	52	41	53
Nova Scotia	53	39	47*
Halifax	44*	35	49*
Kentville	68*	41	53
Truro	52	40	50
New Glasgow	53	38	45
Cape Breton	49	30*	38*
New Brunswick	63*	46*	53*
Moncton	57	49*	57*
Saint John	67*	45*	54*
Fredericton	57	44	57*
Bathurst	78*	53*	55
Miramichi	64	59*	51
Campbellton ³	56 ^E	38 ^E	52 ^E
Edmunston	76*	53 ^E	59 ^E
Quebec	53	36*	40*
Matane	F	F	51 ^E
Rimouski	43 ^E	25 ^E	46 ^E
Rivière-du-loup	F	48 ^E	48 ^E
Saguenay	61	44	44
Alma	50 ^E	44 ^E	48 ^E
Dolbeau-Mistassini	F	F	72*
Québec	58*	43*	45
Saint-Georges	50 ^E	F	44 ^E
Thetford Mines	56 ^E	32 ^E	33 ^E
Sherbrooke	58	50*	53
Victoriaville	60 ^E	46 ^E	67*
Trois-Rivières	69*	47	49
Shawinigan	54 ^E	49 ^E	48 ^E
Drummondville	54	47	52
Granby	46	45	43
Saint-Hyacinthe	55	44 ^E	44 ^E
Sorel-Tracy	45 ^E	40 ^E	43 ^E
Joliette	54 ^E	35 ^E	38 ^E
Saint-Jean-sur-Richelieu	50	30 ^E	52
Montréal	48*	31*	36*
Salaberry-de-Valleyfield	44 ^E	30 ^E	52 ^E
Rouyn-Noranda	63 ^E	F	34 ^E
Gatineau ⁴	46	32	35*

See notes at the end of the table.

Table 1 — continued

Sense of safety when walking alone in one's neighbourhood after dark, overall satisfaction with personal safety from crime and confidence in the police, by province, census metropolitan area or census agglomeration, 2014

Province, census metropolitan area or census agglomeration ¹	Safe when walking alone after dark ²	Very satisfied with personal safety percent	High confidence in the police
Ontario	51	40*	48*
Ottawa–Gatineau ^{4, 5}	49	38	50 [†]
Ottawa ⁵	50	40	55 [†]
Cornwall	59	33 ^E	42
Brockville	61	38 ^E	38 ^E
Pembroke	70	F	F
Kingston	62	52 [†]	51
Belleville	68 [†]	42	53
Peterborough	56	32 ^E	41
Kawartha Lakes	77 [†]	45	49
Centre Wellington	76 [†]	76 [†]	60 ^E
Oshawa	50	43	52
Toronto	44 [†]	36 [†]	46
Hamilton	50	41	51 [†]
St. Catharines–Niagara	61 [†]	46 [†]	43
Kitchener–Cambridge–Waterloo	55	44	47
Brantford	56	32 ^E	44
Woodstock	37 ^E	41 ^E	56 ^E
Norfolk	65	54 [†]	51
Guelph	57	63 [†]	51
Stratford	58 ^E	30 ^E	49 ^E
London	50	42	51 [†]
Chatham–Kent	55	47	53
Leamington	59 ^E	32 ^E	55 ^E
Windsor	58	39	43
Sarnia	63	45	49
Owen Sound	82 [†]	66 [†]	55 ^E
Collingwood	54 ^E	64 ^E	76 [†]
Barrie	53	40	49
Orillia	33 ^E	30 ^E	51 ^E
Midland	54 ^E	47 ^E	39 ^E
North Bay	55	41 ^E	56
Greater Sudbury	48	34 ^E	41
Timmins	67 ^E	39 ^E	F
Sault Ste. Marie	58	42 ^E	50
Thunder Bay	30 ^E *	43 ^E	45
Manitoba	53	32*	39*
Winnipeg	47 [†]	28 [†]	36 [†]
Steinbach	77 [†]	43 ^E	56 ^E
Brandon	47	45	47
Saskatchewan	56*	37	45
Regina	47	36	47
Yorkton	F	41 ^E	57 ^E
Moose Jaw	48 ^E	22 ^E *	39 ^E
Swift Current	63	49 ^E	65
Saskatoon	51	30 [†]	41
North Battleford	F	F	59 ^E
Prince Albert	40 ^E	18 ^E *	46
Estevan	56 ^E	41 ^E	F
Alberta	52	35*	46
Medicine Hat	48 ^E	42 ^E	41 ^E
Brooks	71 ^E	F	48 ^E
Lethbridge	60	42 ^E	45
Okotoks	56 ^E	F	55 ^E
High River	76 [†]	41 ^E	65 ^E
Calgary	52	38	54 [†]
Red Deer	37 ^E	15 ^E *	37 ^E
Camrose	55 ^E	50 ^E	46 ^E
Edmonton	48 [†]	33 [†]	43
Lloydminster ⁶	40 ^E	45 ^E	46 ^E
Grande Prairie	47 ^E	F	F
Wood Buffalo	38 ^E	23 ^E *	46 ^E

See notes at the end of the table.

Table 1 — end
Sense of safety when walking alone in one's neighbourhood after dark, overall satisfaction with personal safety from crime and confidence in the police, by province, census metropolitan area or census agglomeration, 2014

Province, census metropolitan area or census agglomeration ¹	Safe when walking alone after dark ²	Very satisfied with personal safety percent	High confidence in the police
British Columbia	50*	37	42*
Cranbrook	66 ^E	61 ^E	49 ^E
Penticton	63	53 ^E	51 ^E
Kelowna	52	37	43
Vernon	46 ^E	28 ^E	43 ^E
Kamloops	67†	49	40 ^E
Chilliwack	46 ^E	40 ^E	49 ^E
Abbotsford–Mission	34*	24 ^{E*}	56*
Vancouver	43†	31*	39†
Victoria	54	48*	51†
Duncan	55 ^E	49 ^E	30 ^E
Nanaimo	52	37 ^E	51
Parksville	49 ^E	50 ^E	60 ^E
Port Alberni	51 ^E	F	47 ^E
Courtenay	71†	41 ^E	46 ^E
Campbell River	65	57*	66*
Powell River	F	F	58 ^E
Prince George	60	28 ^E	33 ^E
Yukon	60*	38	36*
Whitehorse	59†	37	35*
Dawson ⁷	69	58 ^{E*}	42 ^E
Northwest Territories	48*	33	40
Yellowknife	33†	27*	45
Hay River ⁷	61	41 ^E	54
Inuvik ⁷	65	44 ^E	29 ^E
Nunavut	58*	31*	32*
Iqaluit ⁷	39†	25 ^{E*}	37
Rankin Inlet ⁷	36 ^E	21 ^{E*}	31 ^{E*}
Canada†	52	38	45

^E use with caution

F too unreliable to be published

* significantly different from reference category ($p < 0.05$)

† reference category

1. A census metropolitan area (CMA) or a census agglomeration (CA) is formed by one or more adjacent municipalities centred on a population centre (known as the core). A CMA must have a total population of at least 100,000, of which 50,000 or more must live in its core. A CA must have a core of at least 10,000. To be included in the CMA or CA, other adjacent municipalities must have a high degree of integration with the core, as measured by commuting flows derived from previous census data on place of work.

2. Includes persons who reported feeling very safe from crime when walking alone after dark in their neighbourhood. Individuals who reported never walking alone after dark were excluded from the calculation of the proportions.

3. Includes parts of the CA located in New Brunswick and Quebec.

4. Gatineau refers to the Quebec part of the Ottawa–Gatineau CMA.

5. Ottawa refers to the Ontario part of the Ottawa–Gatineau CMA.

6. Includes parts of the CA located in Alberta and Saskatchewan.

7. This community is shown in the table for information purposes since it is one of the most populous communities in the territory. However, it does not meet the criteria to qualify as a CA or CMA.

Note: The responses "Don't know", "Not stated" and "Refusal" are included in the calculation of percentages. These responses typically represent less than 2% of all responses.

Source: Statistics Canada, General Social Survey.

Table 2
Sense of safety, by selected sociodemographic characteristics, Canada, 2014

Selected sociodemographic characteristics	Sense of safety walking alone in one's neighborhood after dark ¹			Satisfaction with personal safety from crime			
	Very safe	Reasonably safe	Somewhat or very unsafe	Very satisfied	Quite satisfied	Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied	Dissatisfied or very dissatisfied
	percent						
Sex							
Male [†]	64	32	4	44	47	6	2
Female	38 [*]	50 [*]	12 [*]	32 [*]	53 [*]	10 [*]	3 [*]
Age group (years)							
15 to 24 [†]	44	44	11	38	51	8	2 ^E
25 to 34	52 [*]	40 [*]	8 [*]	36	49	11 [*]	3
35 to 44	53 [*]	40 [*]	6 [*]	37	51	9	2
45 to 54	54 [*]	39 [*]	6 [*]	37	51	9	3
55 to 64	54 [*]	39 [*]	7 [*]	38	51	7 [*]	3
65 to 74	56 [*]	37 [*]	6 [*]	41	49	6 [*]	3
75 and older	55 [*]	35 [*]	9	43 [*]	48	4 [*]	2
Marital status							
Married or common-law [†]	55	39	6	38	50	8	3
Widowed	49 [*]	38	12 [*]	37	52	5 [*]	3
Separated or divorced	51 [*]	40	9 [*]	38	48	9	4 [*]
Single	48 [*]	42 [*]	10 [*]	37	50	9 [*]	3
Household size							
One person [†]	50	39	10	38	49	8	4
Two people	55 [*]	38	7 [*]	38	50	8	3 [*]
Three or more people	51	41	7 [*]	38	51	8	3 [*]
Main activity							
Employed [†]	55	38	6	38	51	8	3
Looking for paid work	50	41	8 ^E	35	52	8 ^E	5 ^E
Going to school	43 [*]	46 [*]	11 [*]	39	50	9	2 ^{E*}
Retired	55	38	7	41 [*]	49	5 [*]	2
At home ²	43 [*]	46 [*]	10 [*]	32 [*]	51	11 [*]	5 [*]
Other	52	38	10 ^E	35	46	13 ^{E*}	4 ^E
Highest level of education							
No high school diploma [†]	53	38	9	37	52	6	4
High school diploma	52	40	8	37	51	8 [*]	3 [*]
College or trade diploma	54	39	7	35	52	9 [*]	3 [*]
University diploma	52	42 [*]	7 [*]	42 [*]	47 [*]	8 [*]	2 [*]
Household income³							
Less than \$60,000 [†]	49	39	11	37	51	7	4
\$60,000 to \$139,999	54 [*]	40	6 [*]	38 [*]	51	8	2 [*]
\$140,000 or more	54 [*]	41	5 [*]	43 [*]	47 [*]	7	1 ^{E*}
Income unknown	52	39	8 [*]	36	50	9 [*]	3
Total population	52	40	7	38	50	8	3

^E use with caution

* significantly different from reference category ($p < 0.05$)

[†] reference category

1. Individuals who reported never walking alone after dark were excluded from the calculation of the proportions.

2. Includes caring for children, household work, parental leave and long-term illness.

3. Excludes data from the Territories.

Note: Due to the responses "Don't know" and "Refusal" being included in the calculation of percentages but not displayed in the table, and due to rounding, figures may not add up to 100.

Source: Statistics Canada, General Social Survey.

Table 3
Sense of safety, by selected population groups, Canada, 2014

Selected population groups	Feeling of safety walking alone in one's neighbourhood after dark ¹			Satisfaction with personal security from crime			
	Very safe	Reasonably safe	Somewhat or very unsafe	Very satisfied	Quite satisfied	Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied	Dissatisfied or very dissatisfied
				percent			
Aboriginal identity							
Non-Aboriginal†	52	40	7	38	50	8	3
Aboriginal	58*	33*	8	37	48	8	6*
First Nations	57	33*	9 ^E	35	50	7 ^E	6 ^{E*}
Métis	59	34*	7 ^E	38	46	8 ^E	7 ^{E*}
Inuit	56	35 ^E	F	39 ^E	49	8 ^E	F
Immigrant status							
Non-immigrant†	54	39	7	39	49	8	3
Immigrant	49*	43*	9*	34*	54*	7*	3
Recent immigrant	46*	43	11*	30*	59*	6*	3 ^E
Immigrated before 2005	49*	42*	8	35*	53*	7	3
Visible minority status							
Non-visible minority†	54	39	7	40	49	8	3
Visible minority ²	44*	46*	10*	31*	56*	9	4 ^{E*}
South Asian	42*	48*	10 ^E	30*	56*	9 ^E	4 ^E
Chinese	38*	54*	9 ^E	27*	60*	8 ^E	4 ^E
Black	54	34	10 ^E	35	48	11*	4 ^E
Filipino	41*	48*	11 ^{E*}	22*	66*	7 ^E	F
Latin American	42*	47	10 ^E	38	52	8 ^E	F
Arab	49	36	15 ^{E*}	30*	54	10 ^E	3 ^E
Southeast Asian	40*	48*	13 ^{E*}	34	51	9 ^E	F
West Asian	44	40	16 ^{E*}	35	53	F	F
Korean	40 ^E	44 ^E	F	26 ^{E*}	64*	F	F
Japanese	43 ^E	50	F	42 ^E	49	F	F
Other	56	37 ^E	F	33 ^E	59	F	F
Multiple visible minority	49	43 ^E	F	32 ^E	45 ^E	F	F
Religion							
No religion†	56	37	7	40	47	9	3
Roman Catholic	49*	43*	7	37*	51*	8*	3
United Church	57	37	6	41	50	6*	2 ^E
Anglican	54	41	6 ^E	41	49	7*	3 ^E
Presbyterian	57	37	6 ^E	48*	44	5 ^{E*}	3 ^E
Lutheran	56	38	6 ^E	36	51	8 ^E	3 ^E
Baptist	52	40	8 ^E	39	48	10	2 ^E
Eastern Orthodox	49*	44	8 ^E	33*	58*	7 ^E	F
Jewish	49	46	4 ^E	48	42	5 ^{E*}	F
Islamic (Muslim)	45*	41	14*	34*	53*	8	4 ^E
Buddhist	38*	53*	9 ^E	28*	56*	7 ^E	7 ^E
Hindu	40*	47*	12 ^E	29*	58*	7 ^E	F
Sikh	46	46	8 ^E	25*	59*	12 ^E	F
Jehovah's Witness	42*	48*	9 ^E	20*	57	16 ^E	F
Pentecostal	63	29	8 ^E	37	47	10 ^E	F
Other	53*	39*	7	38	51*	8*	2
Sexual orientation³							
Heterosexual†	53	40	7	38	50	8	3
Homosexual	47	43	10 ^E	40	46	11 ^E	F
Bisexual	45*	40	16 ^{E*}	38	39*	16 ^{E*}	5 ^E
Disability							
No†	54	39	6	40	50	7	2
Yes	46*	42*	11*	33*	50	11*	5*
Physical disability	46*	43*	11*	33*	51	10*	5*
Mental/cognitive disability	41*	44*	14*	31*	48	15*	6*

^E use with caution

F too unreliable to be published

* significantly different from reference category (p < 0.05)

† reference category

1. Individuals who reported never walking alone after dark were excluded from the calculation of the proportions.

2. Respondents could report belonging to more than one group.

3. Excludes respondents under 18 years of age, since they were not asked the question on sexual orientation.

Note: Due to the responses "Don't know" and "Refusal" being included in the calculation of percentages but not displayed in the table, and due to rounding, figures may not add up to 100.

Source: Statistics Canada, General Social Survey.

Table 4
Sense of safety, by selected victimization experiences, Canada, 2014

	Sense of safety walking alone in one's neighbourhood after dark ¹			Satisfaction with personal security from crime			
	Very safe	Reasonably safe	Somewhat or very unsafe	Very satisfied	Quite satisfied	Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied	Dissatisfied or very dissatisfied
Victimization history	percent						
Victimization in the previous 12 months							
No†	54	39	6	40	50	7	2
Yes	45*	43*	12*	29*	52	14*	5*
Victim of violence							
Once	43*	42	15*	30*	48	14*	8*
Two or more times	41*	40	19*	26*	40*	23*	9 ^{E*}
Victim of a household crime							
Once	45*	42*	12*	27*	53*	14*	5*
Two or more times	38*	47*	15*	19*	51	20*	9*
Most serious incident of victimization							
Sexual assault	27*	47	25*	26*	41*	25*	8 ^{E*}
Robbery	35 ^{E*}	46	20 ^{E*}	23 ^{E*}	47	13 ^E	17 ^{E*}
Assault	50	39	11*	31*	48	12*	8 ^{E*}
Break and enter	38*	44	17*	20*	57*	15*	7 ^{E*}
Theft	46*	43*	10*	30*	52	13*	4*
Vandalism	47*	41	10 ^{E*}	31*	54	10*	3 ^{E*}
Victim of domestic violence (past five years)²							
No†	55	39	6	39	50	8	3
Yes	53	37	10*	38	44*	11*	6 ^{E*}
Over the past 12 months	44*	38	18 ^{E*}	32	47	12 ^E	F
Not in the past 12 months	57	36	6 ^E	41	42*	11	6 ^{E*}
Other types of victimization (past five years)							
Victim of harassment							
No†	53	40	7	39	50	7	2
Yes	41*	43*	15*	28*	47*	15*	9*
Over the past 12 months	40*	44	15*	27*	47	14*	12*
Not in the past 12 months	41*	43	16*	29*	47*	16*	8*
Victim of cyberbullying³							
No†	52	41	7	39	50	8	2
Yes	48*	39	12*	37	44*	13*	6*
Victim of emotional or financial abuse of seniors⁴							
No†	56	37	7	42	49	5	2
Yes	52	34 ^E	15 ^E	37	44	F	8 ^{E*}
Victim of discrimination							
No†	54	39	7	40	50	7	2
Yes	41*	45*	13*	29*	49	14*	6*
Victimization by an adult before the age of 15							
No†	53	40	7	39	50	7	2
Yes	51*	40	9*	36*	50	10*	3*
Physical abuse only	54	39	7	37*	51	9*	3*
Sexual abuse only	43*	46*	11*	35*	51	11*	3 ^E
Sexual and physical abuse	44*	41	15*	32*	46*	14*	6*
Total population	52	40	7	38	50	8	3

^E use with caution

F too unreliable to be published

* significantly different from reference category ($p < 0.05$)

† reference category

1. Individuals who reported never walking alone after dark were excluded from the calculation of the proportions.

2. Includes married or common-law people and people who have been in contact with an ex-spouse/partner (married or common-law) in the five years preceding the survey.

3. Includes individuals who used the Internet in the five years preceding the survey.

4. Includes persons aged 65 and older.

Note: Due to the responses "Don't know" and "Refusal" being included in the calculation of percentages but not displayed in the table, and due to rounding, figures may not add up to 100.

Source: Statistics Canada, General Social Survey.

Table 5
Sense of safety, by selected housing and neighbourhood characteristics, Canada, 2014

Selected housing and neighbourhood characteristics	Sense of safety walking alone in one's neighbourhood after dark ¹			Satisfaction with personal security from crime			
	Very safe	Reasonably safe	Somewhat or very unsafe	Very satisfied	Quite satisfied	Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied	Dissatisfied or very dissatisfied
percent							
Dwelling ownership							
Owned†	54	39	6	39	49	8	2
Rented	45*	42*	12*	33*	52*	9*	4*
Type of dwelling							
Single-family home (detached)†	56	38	6	40	49	7	2
Semi-detached or row house	46*	45*	8*	34*	52*	10*	3
Duplex	48*	39	12*	33*	52	10	5 ^{E*}
Apartment in building with fewer than five storeys	43*	43*	14*	31*	53*	9*	5*
Apartment in building with five storeys or more	38*	48*	14*	35*	52	9*	3 ^E
Other	58	35	6 ^E	38	48	7 ^E	5 ^{E*}
Location of dwelling²							
Census metropolitan area (CMA)†	48	43	8	36	51	9	3
Census agglomeration (CA)	56*	37*	7*	40*	49	7*	2
Non-CMA/CA	66*	29*	4*	45*	46*	6*	2
Proportion of area residents living in an apartment³							
Low†	62	35	3	43	47	6	2
Average	53*	40*	7*	38*	50*	8*	2
High	41*	46*	13*	33*	52*	10*	4*
Proportion of lone-parent families in the neighbourhood³							
Low†	61	35	4	44	47	6	2
Average	53*	40*	7*	38*	50*	8*	3*
High	41*	45*	13*	31*	53*	10*	4*
Proportion of recent immigrants in the neighbourhood³							
Low†	62	33	5	43	47	7	2
Average	52*	41*	7*	39*	50*	8*	2
High	41*	46*	12*	30*	54*	10*	4*
Proportion of neighbourhood residents belonging to a visible minority group³							
Low†	63	32	4	43	47	6	2
Average	51*	41*	7*	38*	50*	8*	3
High	41*	46*	12*	31*	54*	10*	4*
Proportion of owner-households in the neighbourhood³							
Low†	43	44	13	33	52	10	4
Average	53*	40*	7*	38*	50	8*	3*
High	59*	37*	4*	41*	49*	7*	2*
Proportion of neighbourhood families living below the low-income threshold^{3,4}							
Low†	58	37	5	42	48	7	2
Average	52*	41*	6*	38*	50*	8	3*
High	44*	43*	13*	32*	52*	9*	4*
Proportion of neighbourhood residents living at the same address as five years previously³							
Low†	44	45	11	33	53	10	4
Average	52*	40*	8*	37*	50*	8*	3*
High	60*	36*	4*	43*	48*	7*	2*

^E use with caution

* significantly different from reference category (p < 0.05)

† reference category

1. Individuals who reported never walking alone after dark were excluded from the calculation of the proportions.

2. A census metropolitan area (CMA) or a census agglomeration (CA) is formed by one or more adjacent municipalities centred on a population centre (known as the core). A CMA must have a total population of at least 100,000, of which 50,000 or more must live in its core. A CA must have a core of at least 10,000. To be included in the CMA or CA, other adjacent municipalities must have a high degree of integration with the core, as measured by commuting flows derived from previous census data on place of work.

3. The neighbourhood corresponds to the census tract in CMAs and largest CAs. In other regions, the neighbourhood is the census subdivision (municipality). A low proportion corresponds to the lower quartile, while a high proportion corresponds to the upper quartile.

4. Excludes data from the Territories.

Note: Due to the responses "Don't know" and "Refusal" being included in the calculation of percentages but not displayed in the table, and due to rounding, figures may not add up to 100.

Source: Statistics Canada, General Social Survey.

Table 6
Sense of safety, by selected neighbourhood and community perceptions, Canada, 2014

Selected neighbourhood and community perceptions	Sense of safety walking alone in one's neighbourhood after dark ¹			Satisfaction with personal security from crime			
	Very safe	Reasonably safe	Somewhat or very unsafe	Very satisfied	Quite satisfied	Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied	Dissatisfied or very dissatisfied
percent							
The neighborhood is a welcoming community							
Yes [†]	54	40	6	39	50	7	2
No	34 [*]	41	25 [*]	19 [*]	50	19 [*]	11 [*]
Sense of belonging to the local community							
Very strong [†]	66	29	5	51	42	5	2
Somewhat strong	50 [*]	43 [*]	7 [*]	36 [*]	53 [*]	8 [*]	2
Weak	42 [*]	45 [*]	12 [*]	28 [*]	53 [*]	13 [*]	5 [*]
No opinion	50 [*]	35	12 ^{E*}	30 [*]	52 [*]	6 ^E	4 ^{E*}
Trust in neighbours							
Can trust them [†]	60	36	4	45	47	5	2
More or less	41 [*]	48 [*]	10 [*]	27 [*]	57 [*]	12 [*]	3 [*]
Cannot trust them	31 [*]	45 [*]	23 [*]	17 [*]	54 [*]	17 [*]	10 [*]
Neighbours would call the police if they witnessed what seemed like criminal behaviour							
Very likely [†]	57	37	5	43	47	7	2
Somewhat likely	43 [*]	46 [*]	10 [*]	28 [*]	57 [*]	11 [*]	4 [*]
Not at all likely	40 [*]	46 [*]	13 [*]	26 [*]	50	13 [*]	10 [*]
Just moved into the area	55	31	12 ^{E*}	30 [*]	50	10 ^E	F
Confidence in the police							
A great deal of confidence [†]	59	35	5	49	45	4	1
Some confidence	46 [*]	45 [*]	9 [*]	29 [*]	56 [*]	10 [*]	3 [*]
Not very much or no confidence	49 [*]	37	13 [*]	25 [*]	44	17 [*]	12 [*]
Crime level in neighbourhood²							
Lower than elsewhere in Canada [†]	58	37	5	43	49	6	2
About the same as elsewhere in Canada	36 [*]	50 [*]	14 [*]	25 [*]	56 [*]	14 [*]	4 [*]
Higher than elsewhere in Canada	25 [*]	45 [*]	29 [*]	15 [*]	47	21 [*]	15 [*]
Presence of signs of social or physical disorder							
No [†]	63	33	3	46	47	4	1
Yes	44 [*]	45 [*]	11 [*]	31 [*]	53 [*]	11 [*]	4 [*]
Noisy neighbours or loud parties	38 [*]	49 [*]	12 [*]	27 [*]	54 [*]	13 [*]	5 [*]
People hanging around on the streets	31 [*]	51 [*]	17 [*]	22 [*]	53 [*]	16 [*]	7 [*]
Garbage or litter lying around	38 [*]	48 [*]	13 [*]	27 [*]	53 [*]	13 [*]	5 [*]
Vandalism, graffiti	39 [*]	47 [*]	14 [*]	27 [*]	52 [*]	14 [*]	6 [*]
People using or dealing drugs	36 [*]	47 [*]	16 [*]	26 [*]	52 [*]	14 [*]	7 [*]
People being drunk or rowdy in public places	36 [*]	47 [*]	16 [*]	25 [*]	53 [*]	14 [*]	7 [*]
People attacked because of their origin	28 [*]	48 [*]	23 [*]	18 [*]	53 [*]	16 [*]	12 [*]
Total population	52	40	7	38	50	8	3

^E use with caution

F too unreliable to be published

* significantly different from reference category (p < 0.05)

† reference category

1. Individuals who reported never walking alone after dark were excluded from the calculation of the proportions.

2. According to respondents' perception.

Note: Due to the responses "Don't know" and "Refusal" being included in the calculation of percentages but not displayed in the table, and due to rounding, figures may not add up to 100.

Source: Statistics Canada, General Social Survey.

Text box 2 table
Multivariate analysis models (logistic regression): Feeling unsafe when walking alone in one's neighborhood after dark, Canada, 2014

Sociodemographic characteristics	Women	Men	Total population
	odds ratio		
Age group (years)			
15 to 24	1.5***	1.3***	1.4***
25 and older	Reference category	Reference category	Reference category
Sex			
Female	3.5***
Male	Reference category
Retired			
Yes	n.s.	1.6**	1.4***
No	n.s.	Reference category	Reference category
Level of education			
No university diploma	n.s.	1.2*	n.s.
University diploma	n.s.	Reference category	n.s.
Visible minority status			
Visible minority	n.s.	1.5***	1.3**
Non-visible minority	n.s.	Reference category	Reference category
Religion			
Christian religion	1.5***	1.4***	1.4***
Non-Christian religion (religious minority)	1.2	1.8***	1.5***
No religion	Reference category	Reference category	Reference category
Physical or mental disability (activity limitation)			
Yes	1.2*	1.2*	1.2***
No	Reference category	Reference category	Reference category
Victimization characteristics			
Most serious victimization incident in the previous 12 months			
Sexual assault	1.5	n.s.	n.s.
Break and enter	2.1**	n.s.	n.s.
Other crime	1.2	n.s.	n.s.
Was not a victim	Reference category	n.s.	n.s.
Victim of discrimination over the previous five years			
Yes	1.2*	n.s.	1.1*
No	Reference category	n.s.	Reference category
Neighbourhood characteristics			
Location of dwelling¹			
Census metropolitan area (CMA)	1.9***	1.6***	1.7***
Census agglomeration (CA)	1.6***	1.3**	1.5***
Rural areas or small towns (non-CMA/CA)	Reference category	Reference category	Reference category
Knowledge of the residents in the neighbourhood			
Knows some, few or no residents	1.3**	n.s.	n.s.
Knows many residents	1.2*	n.s.	n.s.
Knows most of the neighbourhood's residents	Reference category	n.s.	n.s.
Neighbours are trustworthy			
No	1.7***	1.9***	1.8***
Somewhat	1.4***	1.5***	1.5***
Yes	Reference category	Reference category	Reference category
Sense of belonging to the community			
Weak	1.4***	1.7***	1.6***
Moderate	1.6***	1.7***	1.7***
Strong	Reference category	Reference category	Reference category
Neighbours would call the police if they witnessed what seemed like criminal behaviour			
More or less likely	1.3***	1.3***	1.3***
Very likely	Reference category	Reference category	Reference category
Confidence in the police			
Some or little confidence	1.4***	1.3***	1.3***
A great deal of confidence	Reference category	Reference category	Reference category
Presence of social disorder perceived in the neighbourhood			
Yes	1.6***	1.8***	1.7***
No	Reference category	Reference category	Reference category
Crime level in the neighbourhood			
Higher than elsewhere in Canada	2.6***	2.8***	2.7***
About the same as elsewhere in Canada	2.2***	2.0***	2.1***
Lower than elsewhere in Canada	Reference category	Reference category	Reference category
Proportion of the neighbourhood population who immigrated over the past decade			
High	1.3***	n.s.	1.2**
Medium or low	Reference category	n.s.	Reference category

See notes at the end of the table.

Text box 2 table — end
Multivariate analysis models (logistic regression): Feeling unsafe when walking alone in one's neighborhood after dark, Canada, 2014

Sociodemographic characteristics	Women	Men	Total population
	odds ratio		
Proportion of lone-parent family households in the neighbourhood			
High	n.s.	1.3***	1.2***
Medium or low	n.s.	Reference category	Reference category
Proportion of owner-households in the neighbourhood			
High	n.s.	0.8**	n.s.
Medium or low	n.s.	Reference category	n.s.
Proportion of apartments among all dwellings in the neighbourhood			
Low	0.8***	n.s.	0.8***
Medium to high	Reference category	n.s.	Reference category

... not applicable

* significantly different from reference category ($p < 0.05$)

** significantly different from reference category ($p < 0.01$)

*** significantly different from reference category ($p < 0.001$)

1. A census metropolitan area (CMA) or a census agglomeration (CA) is formed by one or more adjacent municipalities centred on a population centre (known as the core). A CMA must have a total population of at least 100,000, of which 50,000 or more must live in its core. A CA must have a core of at least 10,000. To be included in the CMA or CA, other adjacent municipalities must have a high degree of integration with the core, as measured by commuting flows derived from previous census data on place of work.

n.s. not significant, removed from the model.

Note: For more information, see the "Methods for multivariate analysis" section.

Source: Statistics Canada, General Social Survey.