Finding Crime Data from Statistics Canada

Statistics Canada has a unit called the Canadian Centre for Justice Statistics (CCJS) which is the main producer of crime and justice statistics in Canada. It gathers data every year from sources such as police departments, courts, and correctional facilities using surveys such as the Uniform Crime Reporting Survey (UCR). Every five years, it also conducts a crime victimization survey called the General Social Survey (GSS).

Results from most of these surveys are compiled into data tables, which are published online. These tables are used to calculate things like the crime rate and the Crime Severity Index. Experts at the CCJS also analyze the results and write up articles which are published in the journal called Juristat, as well as other Statistics Canada reports.

Start with The Daily

Every time Statistics Canada releases information, or completes a study, it posts a brief article in its online newsletter called The Daily. I strongly recommend that you start by looking for a recent article on your topic in The Daily because it will:

- briefly summarize the findings of a survey or study in plain language
- link to more in-depth analytical reports and articles from that study (e.g. a Juristat article),
- clearly identify the source of the data (i.e. which survey was used, e.g. UCR or GSS), and
- link to more detailed data tables so you can do your own number-crunching

1. From the Statcan homepage, click on the link to The Daily.

2. Click on the magnifying glass to open the search box:

3. Enter your search keyword(s), e.g. crime rate
Police-reported crime statistics, 2017

12-page summary of key results from Uniform Crime Reporting Survey, including the crime rate and the Crime Severity Index. See screenshot below.

Canadians’ perceptions of personal safety and crime, 2014:
3-page summary of key results from the General Social Survey on Victimization.

Screenshot of the start of an article in The Daily:

Police-reported crime statistics, 2017

Released: 2019-07-23

Police-reported crime in Canada, as measured by both the crime rate and the Crime Severity Index (CSI), increased for the third consecutive year in 2017. The national crime rate rose 1%, while the police-reported CSI increased 2%. This was the third consecutive increase in the CSI following an 11-year downward trend from 2003 to 2014. The CSI is a measure of police-reported crime that takes into account both the volume and severity of crime.

Most of Canada’s provinces and territories reported increases in their CSI in 2017. The exceptions were Newfoundland and Labrador, Prince Edward Island, Saskatchewan, and British Columbia. From 2016 to 2017, more than half of Canada’s census metropolitan areas (CMAs) reported increases in their CSI.

The 2% increase in the national CSI from 2016 to 2017 was the result of increases in numerous offences. Most notably, were increases in the rate of police-reported incidents of sexual assault (level 1) (+13%), possession of stolen property (+15%), motor vehicle theft (+8%), and homicide (+7%). Combined, these offences accounted for just under half of the increase in the CSI.

Overall, Canadian police services reported over 1.9 million Criminal Code incidents (excluding traffic) in 2017, almost 45,300 more incidents than in 2016.

Detailed information is provided in the new Juristat article released today, “Police-reported crime statistics in Canada, 2017,” and the accompanying infographic, “Police-Reported Crime in Canada, 2017.”

The police-reported crime rate and CSI include only those incidents that come to the attention of police, either through reporting by the public or proactive policing. Results from the 2014 General Social Survey (GSS) on Victimization found that just under one-third (31%) of violent and non-violent incidents were reported to the police in 2014.

Note: see pages 4 to 6 for instructions on how to work with these customizable data tables.

Includes links to customizable data tables. See examples below.

Includes link to more in-depth, 50-page article in the Statcan journal called Juristat. See page 3 for more info on Juristat.

The PDF version includes page numbers which are handy if you want to cite this source.

CRIM 1100 - Finding Crime Data from Statistics Canada
Prepared by Chris Burns (Fall 2018)
The article in *The Daily* was 12-pages long. It links to a more in-depth, 50-page article available in the *Juristat* journal called “Police-reported crime statistics in Canada, 2017”. This is an excellent source for an in-depth analysis of crime trends.

Browsing the Statistics Canada site by subject

The Statistics Canada website can be overwhelming. One way to navigate through the mass of information is to browse the collection by Subject.

From the Statcan home page, click on the ‘Subjects’ tab at the top of the site, and then click on Crime and Justice. You should now see this screen:

You can focus on specific sub-topics from this list of Crime & Justice subjects, e.g. crime rates

**Data tab:** choose this if you want to view a Data Table which you can customize.

**Analysis tab:** choose this if you want to read an article or report on that subject, written by Statcan experts.
Data Tables

Many of the charts and graphs in both *The Daily* and *Juristat* articles link you to **data tables** which provide a more detailed breakdown of the statistics. Each data table tracks a certain type of data over many years, and you can customize the tables in a variety of ways. Each table has a unique number which you would include in your citation.

Note: The **Canadian Community Crime Tracker** is a cool new map-based tool which lets you find some crime-related data at the police detachment level. However, it is not detailed enough for your assignment.

Basic data table display

The basic display for each data table shows broad categories of data from the last 5 years.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Geography</th>
<th>Violations</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Canada</td>
<td>Total, all violations [0000]</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Number</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Actual incidents</td>
<td>2,096,776</td>
<td>2,052,925</td>
<td>2,118,681</td>
<td>2,161,927</td>
<td>2,204,812</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rate per 100,000 population</td>
<td>5,970.51</td>
<td>5,777.13</td>
<td>5,612.73</td>
<td>5,661.53</td>
<td>6,006.34</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Percentage change in rate %</td>
<td>-7.56</td>
<td>-5.24</td>
<td>2.35</td>
<td>0.83</td>
<td>0.75</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Customizing the data table display

You have a limited number of options on the basic display to customize your table. In this case, you can use the drop down menus to choose a different geographic area (one at a time), or change which specific violation is displayed.

To make any other changes, you need to click on the ‘Add/Remove data’ tab.

Use the check boxes under each tab to select the specific data you want to include in your table. Note: if there is an arrow beside an item, you can click on it to display more detailed options.

After you have made all of your selections, click on the **Apply** button to generate your customized table.
End result: Customized table

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statistics</th>
<th>Reference period</th>
<th>Canada (map)</th>
<th>British Columbia (map)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Actual incidents</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2013</td>
<td>209</td>
<td>37</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2014</td>
<td>230</td>
<td>34</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2015</td>
<td>273</td>
<td>42</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2016</td>
<td>286</td>
<td>35</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2017</td>
<td>305</td>
<td>63</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rate per 100,000 population</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2013</td>
<td>0.59</td>
<td>0.81</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2014</td>
<td>0.65</td>
<td>0.73</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2015</td>
<td>0.76</td>
<td>0.80</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2016</td>
<td>0.79</td>
<td>0.74</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2017</td>
<td>0.83</td>
<td>1.31</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

You can download your customized table and use Excel (or other software) to generate charts and graphs. Choose the “CSV: Download as displayed” option.

Victimization data

The UCR only gathers data on incidents that are reported to the police. Every 5 years, Statistics Canada uses its General Social Survey (GSS) to survey thousands of Canadians on their experiences of victimization which may NOT have been reported to the police. The most recent victimization survey was done in 2014.

Data from this survey that would be useful for your assignment are ONLY available through articles in The Daily and Juristat. See the main articles listed below. (The only data tables that Statcan released are related to public impressions of police service.)

The Daily article: “Self-Reported Victimization, 2014”
Juristat article: “Criminal victimization in Canada, 2014”

Both of these reports are listed on the library guide for this class: [http://libguides.kpu.ca/crim/1100/norgaard](http://libguides.kpu.ca/crim/1100/norgaard)
How to cite Statistics Canada sources in APA style:

The Daily


Juristat article

*Juristat* is an unusual journal. Most journals publish a fixed number of issues each year (with separate issue numbers), and each issue contains several articles. *Juristat* publishes individual articles, one at a time, online. Every article in a given year has the same volume and issue number. When you cite *Juristat*, you can treat it either like a journal or like a government report; it is both.


Customized data table

Note: Since we don’t know exactly when the data was posted on the Statcan website, we indicate that there is “no date” of publication (n.d.), but we include the *time period* covered by our customized table in a customized subtitle which is enclosed in square brackets because this “title” did not appear on the Statcan website. We created it. Notice also that you also specify the *content* that is included in the table: which violations and statistical measures. You indicate that this is a customized table by saying that you “adapted” the data. You note the date you created the table because it’s from a dynamic database which could change by the time your reader checks the website.

CRIM 1100 Practice Exercise: Generating a Statistics Canada Table

Work in pairs to figure out how to create a copy of the following table:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Reference period</th>
<th>Canada (^6) (map)</th>
<th>British Columbia (^5) (^7) (map)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Crime severity index</td>
<td>Percent change in crime severity index</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Index</td>
<td>Percent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2013</td>
<td>68.78</td>
<td>-8.82</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2014</td>
<td>66.72</td>
<td>-3.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2015</td>
<td>70.14</td>
<td>5.13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2016</td>
<td>71.71</td>
<td>2.24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2017</td>
<td>72.67</td>
<td>1.62</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Think about:

- What are you looking for data about? (i.e. what is the subject?)
  - ____________________________

- Which data source (i.e. which table) would you use?
  - ____________________________

- Which geographic area(s) do you need to include?

- Which specific measurements (“statistics”) do you need?
  - ____________________________

- What time frame do you need?

- How should you set up your table to make it look like this? (i.e. which pieces of information should display as columns or rows)

Cite your table in APA format:

_____________________________________________________________________________________
_____________________________________________________________________________________
_____________________________________________________________________________________
_____________________________________________________________________________________
_____________________________________________________________________________________
_____________________________________________________________________________________

TIP: look at the sample citation on page 7 of the class handout (also posted on the CRIM 1100 library guide at [https://libguides.kpu.ca/crim/1100/norgaard](https://libguides.kpu.ca/crim/1100/norgaard))
Statistics Canada. (n.d.) *Table 35-10-0026-01: Crime Severity Index and weighted clearance rates:*

[Crime Severity Index and percent change in Crime Severity Index, for Canada and British Columbia, 2013-2017]. Adapted October 1, 2018, from

https://www150.statcan.gc.ca/t1/tbl1/en/tv.action?pid=3510002601