Crime and Victimization

The National Crime Victimization Survey reports that in 2003, U.S. residents age 12 or older experienced an estimated 24.2 million violent and property victimizations. (Bureau of Justice Statistics. 2004. *Criminal Victimization, 2003*. Washington, D.C.: U.S. Department of Justice.)

In 2003, there were an estimated 18.6 million property crimes to persons and their households including burglary, motor vehicle theft, and theft; an estimated 5.4 million violent crimes including rape, sexual assault, robbery, aggravated assault and simple assault; and an estimated 185,000 personal thefts such as pocket picking and purse snatching. (Ibid.)

There were an estimated 596,130 robberies, 1,101,110 aggravated assaults and 3,505,630 simple assaults in 2003. (Ibid.)

There were an estimated 198,850 rapes, attempted rapes and sexual assaults to people age 12 and older in 2003, down from 247,730 in 2002. (Ibid.)

In 2003, there were 1,032,470 thefts of motor vehicles. (Ibid.)

Youths between the ages of 16 and 19 experienced the highest rate of overall violent victimization in the 2002-2003 period at a rate of 55.6 per 1,000 persons. (Ibid.)

During 2003, 48 percent of all violent crimes were reported and 38 percent of all property crimes were reported. (Ibid.)

African Americans experienced more overall violence, robbery, aggravated assault, and personal theft in 2003 than whites or persons of other races. (Ibid.)

Rapes and sexual assaults were experienced at rates higher among persons age 20 to 24 than other age groups in 2003. (Ibid.)

The Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) reports that there was a decrease in every kind of violent crime but murder in 2003, compared with 2002. Forcible rapes were down 1.9 percent; robbery was down 1.8 percent; and aggravated assaults were down 3.8 percent. (Federal Bureau of Investigation. 2004. *Crime in the United States, 2003*. Washington, D.C.: U.S. Department of Justice.)

According to the FBI, the number of murders increased by 1.7 percent in 2003, increasing in cities with 100,000 to 249,999 inhabitants by 6.8 percent and increasing in towns under 10,000 by 20 percent. (Ibid.)

According to the FBI, where information on weapon type was provided, firearms were used in 71 percent of murders in 2002. (Federal Bureau of Investigation. 2003. *Crime in the United States, 2002*. Washington, D.C.: U.S. Department of Justice.)

In 2002, 15 percent of U.S. households experienced one or more violent or property crimes. If vandalism is included in the overall measure of crime in households, the total percentage of victimizations rose to 18 percent. (Bureau of Justice Statistics. 2004. *Crime and the Nation's Households*, 2002. Washington, D.C.: U.S. Department of Justice.)

Adolescents and adults in three percent of U.S. households experienced one or more violent crimes in 2002. Simple assault was the most common violent crime sustained by households. Members age 12 or older of an estimated 2.5 million households experienced simple assaults. (Ibid.)

In 2002, 12.5 percent of U.S. households experienced one or more property crimes. Ten percent of U.S. households experienced at least one incident of theft, the most common property crime. (Ibid.)

Urban households continue to experience non-homicide violent crime and property crime at higher rates than suburban and rural households. Nineteen percent of U.S. households in urban areas experienced a violent and/or a property crime in 2002, compared with 13 percent of suburban households and 11 percent of rural households. (Ibid.)

Between 1994 and 2002, the percentage of households that experienced crime declined from one in four households to one in seven households. (Ibid.)

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