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URBAN VIOLENT CRIME REPORT

A look at Canada's
MAJOR CITIES

Dave Snow and Richard Audas



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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY • SOMMAIRE

In recent years there has been a surge in violent crime across Canada as a whole. However, not much is known about short- and long-term violent crime trends in specific urban areas. Because most Canadians interact with crime in their local communities, there needs to be more focus on violent crime at the local level.

In this report, we analyze 10 years of police-reported violent crime data (2014–2023) on homicide, aggravated assault, sexual assault, and robbery in order to explore violent crime trends in nine major cities that comprise one-third of the Canadian population: Vancouver, Calgary, Edmonton, Winnipeg, Peel Region, Toronto, York Region, Ottawa, and Montreal.

We draw three main conclusions about violent crime in Canadian cities. First, violent crime rates for certain crimes – most notably sexual assault and robbery – are rising nearly everywhere. In particular, sexual assault rates are consistently trending upward over the long- and short-term, with increases in every major city except Ottawa. Trends for homicide and aggravated assault are more mixed and depend on the city and the time period.

Second, general trends can mask striking differences between cities. For instance, Edmonton and especially Winnipeg have crime rates that far exceed those of other cities. By contrast, violent crime is much lower in York, Peel, and Ottawa. Generally speaking, crime in Canada’s major cities follows a westward tilt: Western cities (and Toronto) typically experience the highest rates of violent crime.

Third, the cities in which violent crime is increasing are not necessarily those that have the highest overall violent crime rates. York, Montreal, and Winnipeg have experienced the most consistent growth in violent crime rates over the last decade, yet these cities share little in common in their crime rates: York is low and Winnipeg high. Edmonton, meanwhile, has experienced increases in some violent crimes and decreases in others despite having high rates overall.

Our report also documents the challenges of collecting, verifying, and analyzing urban violent crime data in Canada. The publication of consistent, transparent, and timely crime data is essential to a well-performing justice system. However, through

conversations with police services, we discovered a general lack of coordination and consistency in reporting practices, even among cities submitting data to shared databases with supposedly uniform reporting requirements.

This should not be happening in Canada where we have a single Criminal Code whose provisions are uniform across the country. To that end, this report makes a number of recommendations to improve the quality and comparability of violent crime data. These include harmonizing reporting methods, clearly specifying variation in reporting methods where they are unavoidable, and ensuring uniform definitions are used for all violent crime data regardless of the city.

Finally, this report demonstrates that Canadian cities need to do a better job of collaborating and sharing quarterly crime data in a centralized repository. Insofar as most police services are already collecting and reporting on their quarterly data, other Canadian cities should also try to contribute violent crime data to a shared repository that can report such data in a timely, transparent, and accessible manner.

We hope this report provides the impetus for more and better data-sharing among Canadian cities. The legitimacy of our criminal justice system depends on it. [MLI](#)

Au cours des dernières années, le nombre de crimes violents a augmenté dans l'ensemble du Canada. Toutefois, on sait peu de choses sur les tendances à court et à long terme de la criminalité violente dans certaines zones urbaines. Or, comme pour la plus grande partie de la population, la criminalité se manifeste d'abord au sein des communautés locales, il convient d'insister davantage sur les crimes violents à l'échelle locale.

Dans ce rapport, nous analysons dix années de données sur les crimes violents signalés à la police (2014-2023) : les homicides, les voies de fait graves, les agressions sexuelles et les cambriolages. Ces données permettent de circonscrire les tendances de la criminalité violente dans neuf grandes villes (ou municipalités), qui représentent à elles seules le tiers de la population canadienne : Vancouver, Calgary, Edmonton, Winnipeg, Peel, Toronto, York, Ottawa et Montréal.

Nous tirons trois grandes conclusions sur la criminalité violente dans les villes canadiennes. Premièrement, les taux pour certains crimes – notamment les agressions sexuelles et les cambriolages – ont augmenté presque partout. C'est le cas, en particulier, des agressions sexuelles, en hausse constante, à long terme comme à court terme, dans toutes les grandes villes à l'exception d'Ottawa. Les tendances pour les homicides et les voies de fait graves sont partagées et dépendent de la ville et de la période.

Deuxièmement, les tendances générales peuvent masquer des différences frappantes entre les villes. Par exemple, Edmonton et tout particulièrement Winnipeg connaissent des taux de criminalité bien supérieurs à ceux des autres villes. En revanche, la criminalité violente est bien moindre à York, à Peel et à Ottawa. En général, la criminalité dans les grandes villes canadiennes augmente d'est en ouest : les villes de l'ouest du pays (et Toronto) enregistrent les taux les plus élevés.

Troisièmement, les villes où la criminalité violente est en augmentation ne sont pas nécessairement celles qui affichent les taux globaux les plus élevés. Alors que York, Montréal et Winnipeg ont connu la croissance la plus constante des taux de criminalité violente au cours de la décennie écoulée, ces villes partagent peu de points communs : les taux sont bas à York, mais élevés à Winnipeg. Parallèlement, Edmonton a enregistré des augmentations pour certains crimes violents et des baisses pour d'autres, malgré des taux élevés dans l'ensemble.

Notre rapport fait également état des défis posés par la collecte, la vérification et l'analyse des données sur la criminalité violente dans les centres urbains au Canada. La publication de données cohérentes, transparentes et actuelles sur la criminalité est essentielle au bon fonctionnement du système de justice. Toutefois, grâce à des entretiens avec les services de police, nous avons constaté un manque général de coordination et de cohérence entre les pratiques de déclaration, même parmi les villes qui alimentent des bases de données partagées dotées d'exigences prétendument uniformes en matière de déclaration.

Ces lacunes ne devraient pas exister au Canada, un pays qui ne possède qu'un seul Code pénal et peut ainsi compter sur des dispositions uniformes en tout lieu. À ce titre, le présent rapport formule un certain nombre de recommandations pour améliorer la qualité et la comparabilité des données sur la criminalité violente, notamment l'harmonisation de méthodes de déclaration qui précisent clairement quelles sont les variations inévitables et comprennent des définitions uniformes, indépendamment de la ville.

Enfin, ce rapport démontre la nécessité pour les villes canadiennes de collaborer et de communiquer plus efficacement leurs données trimestrielles à des fins d'intégration dans un registre central. Dans la mesure où la plupart des services de police recueillent et fournissent déjà des données trimestrielles, le reste des villes canadiennes doit aussi s'efforcer de contribuer à un registre de données actuelles, accessibles et transparentes sur les crimes.

*Nous espérons que ce rapport donnera l'élan nécessaire en vue de renforcer et d'élargir l'échange de données entre les villes canadiennes. La légitimité de notre système de justice pénale en dépend. **MLI***

INTRODUCTION

Hardly a day passes without a heartbreaking story of some violent crime in at least one of Canada’s major cities. Over a few short days in June 2024, for instance, a high-profile murder-suicide in Toronto was followed by a tragic double-murder involving a toddler in York Region (Humphreys 2024; Bawaan 2024). As we showed in the Macdonald-Laurier Institute’s third *Report on the Criminal Justice System*, between 2018 and 2022 there was a surge in violent crime across every province, with notable growth in the Violent Crime Severity Index and rates of homicide and sexual assault (Snow and Audas 2024; Statistics Canada 2023e). Recently-released Statistics Canada data show that Canada’s violent crime rate and violent crime severity index both increased again in 2023 (Statistics Canada 2024c, 2024d).

However, these national and provincial trends can obscure what is happening at the local level. Because Canadians interact with the criminal justice system primarily in their local communities, there needs to be more focus on violent crime at the local level to enable us to explore local trends. To that end, this report provides an analysis of police-reported violent crime data on homicide, aggravated assault, sexual assault, and robbery from the nine municipalities – Vancouver, Calgary, Edmonton, Winnipeg, Peel Region, Toronto, York Region, Ottawa, and Montreal – that report to the Major Cities Chiefs Association (MCCA). We combine these data with Statistics Canada’s population estimates to determine the extent of urban violent crime over the last decade (2013–2024). In addition to outlining broader trends, this report contains a “Municipal Snapshot” for each city that explores long-term, medium-term, and short-term crime rates, rankings, and trends using three-year rolling averages.

This report draws four main conclusions about violent crime in Canada’s largest cities. First, violent crime rates, especially sexual assault rates, are increasing

in many cities. Between 2022 and 2023, the three-year rolling average for sexual assault rates¹ increased in all nine cities included in this study, while robbery rates increased in eight of the nine cities during the same period. Over the longer-term, sexual assault is the one violent crime that has been consistently trending upward over the last decade, with rates increasing in every city except Ottawa.

Second, crime rates vary considerably between cities. Winnipeg and Edmonton typically far exceed the crime rates of all other major cities; indeed, Winnipeg's crime rates are often multiple times higher than those of most other large cities. At the other end, York, Peel, and Ottawa consistently have the lowest rates of violent crime. This reflects a general east-west trend across Canada's largest cities: the cities with lower rates of violent crime (Peel, York, and Ottawa) are in Ontario, whereas those with the highest rates of violent crime (Edmonton, Winnipeg, and to a lesser extent Vancouver) are in Western Canada. The major exception is Canada's largest city, Toronto, which tends to have higher rates of violent crime than most other major cities, especially for homicide.

Third, the trend in some cities is moving in the wrong direction while the crime rate in other cities is dropping. Interestingly, high violent crime rates do not correspond to increasing violent crime rates in that some cities with comparatively low rates are experiencing a greater growth in violent crime. York, Montreal, and Winnipeg have experienced the most consistent growth in violent crime rates in the short-, medium-, and long-term, yet these cities share little in common in their comparative crime rates: York consistently has the lowest violent crime and Winnipeg the highest.

Our final point concerns the data collection and publication process itself. Far more needs to be done to coordinate data-sharing among municipal police services in Canada to ensure accuracy, comparability, and timeliness. Even when police services submit their data to a centralized database, there is considerable variation in the methods, techniques, and timelines for reporting violent crime. This makes the analysis of violent crime data far more difficult than it should be. All violent crime data will be imperfect, but we are confident that the data we present here are nonetheless comparable and comprehensive. However, we call on all stakeholders – police services, the MCCA, Statistics Canada, and other municipalities – to do a better and more transparent job of coordinating the data they share on violent crime. We hope that this report provides the catalyst for such improvements.

CALCULATING AND COMPARING VIOLENT CRIME RATES

This report uses data reported in the “Violent Crime Reports” section of the Major Cities Chiefs Association (MCCA) website. The MCCA is an organization composed of police executives from the largest cities in Canada and the United States that “provides a unique forum for urban chiefs, sheriffs and other law enforcement executives to share ideas, experiences and strategies” (MCCA 2024a). Currently 70 American municipalities and nine Canadian municipalities participate in the MCCA: Vancouver, Calgary, Edmonton, Winnipeg, Toronto, Regional Municipality of Peel (which includes Brampton and Mississauga), Regional Municipality of York (which includes Vaughn, Richmond Hill, and Markham), Ottawa, and Montreal. Quebec City reported data to the MCCA until 2016 but is no longer listed as a member. Together these cities – nine of the most populous municipalities in Canada² – comprise approximately one-third of the entire Canadian population. Our data analysis is limited to these nine Canadian cities.

The MCCA’s website contains violent crime reports, which include preliminary quarterly data on four crimes committed for each of the 79 cities: homicide, robbery, aggravated assault, and rape (for American cities) or the broader category of sexual assault (for Canadian cities). Each report provides a comparison with previous years’ quarterly figures, which allows for both year-over-year comparisons and the ability for municipalities to update their data a year later. Unless otherwise noted, we use the most recent updated data in this report. To calculate crime rates per capita, we applied the raw MCCA data³ from 2014–2023 to Statistics Canada’s population estimates for each of the nine Canadian cities in those years. We reconciled any discrepancies between reported data, updated data, and outliers by referring to

the municipal police services' crime reports and by directly contacting the police services themselves.

Appendix A contains a detailed description of the data collection and verification process. We note two important issues of divergence here. The first concerns the method of reporting crimes. Six of the nine Canadian cities – Vancouver, Winnipeg, Calgary, Edmonton, Montreal and Ottawa – appear to use the “most serious offences” (MSO) method of reporting, which only counts the most serious offence against each victim in a violent criminal incident. This is the same method used by Statistics Canada in its annual incident-based crime reports. By contrast, Peel, Toronto, and York use the “all offences” method, which includes up to four violent offences in a criminal incident as separate offences.

All else being equal, the MSO method undercounts violations relative to the “all offences” method, which would thereby inflate the numbers for Peel, Toronto, and York. However, based on correspondence with several police departments and a cross-comparison with Statistics Canada data (which uses the MSO), we are confident the undercounting of concurrent offences within the same criminal incident are rare, and that MCCA data remain comparable, if imperfectly so. To ensure that the trends and numbers were consistent, we cross-referenced the MCCA-reported raw data and our calculated crime rates with Statistics Canada data and rates from 2014–2023. Appendix A provides a more detailed discussion of the different methods of reporting, while Appendix B provides comparison tables of MCCA and Statistics Canada data. These tables show very similar trendlines within municipalities and rankings between municipalities, regardless of whether MCCA or Statistics Canada data are used.

The second and more problematic issue for comparison concerns sexual assault in Vancouver. MCCA reports state that the “Canadian definition of Sexual Assault [is] used to determine Rape numbers for Canadian agencies except Vancouver PD.” Our correspondence with the Vancouver Police Department confirmed that Vancouver’s MCCA-reported data counts a crime as a sexual assault when it corresponds to the definition of rape used by many American cities rather than the Canadian definition of sexual assault. The Canadian definition includes level 1, level 2, and level 3 sexual assault in the Criminal Code, which is what other police services use for their MCCA-reported data. This means that Vancouver’s MCCA-reported sexual assault

data are not comparable with data from other Canadian cities. For this reason, we omit Vancouver from comparisons (and rankings) of sexual assault data in the municipal snapshots.

We note two additional points about the data.

First, this report relies on police-reported data, which has its limitations. In particular, such data may not capture subtle variations in reporting practices, different policing trends between cities, changing policing practices within individual cities, and high rates of charges relative to actual criminal convictions (see Williams 2017). While no violent crime reporting method is perfect, other forms of data collection such as victimization surveys can and should be used to supplement our understanding of violent crime trends (see Ariel and Bland 2019; Cotter 2021).

Second, changes in violent crime rates stem from a variety of factors, and we do not make causal claims about the reasons behind increasing or decreasing crime rates. To use one example, our results show a consistent long-term and short-term increase in sexual assault across nearly every Canadian city in the report. This could reflect an absolute increase in the number of sexual assaults, but it could also reflect increased police focus on sexual assault, a greater propensity to report sexual assault, and/or changing societal norms surrounding consent and sexual assault. Likewise, a city's crime rate is affected by various historical, demographic, economic, and institutional factors; Winnipeg's higher crime rate does not mean that Winnipeg police are inherently worse than others at performing their job. The purpose of this report, as with our *Report Card on the Criminal Justice System* (Snow and Audas 2024), is not to justify or explain differences between jurisdictions or changes to crime rates. We simply seek to report the data and let it speak for itself.

SNAPSHOT SERIES 1

Violent crime rates in Canada, 2014–2023

This section explores changing crime rates for the four major crimes reported to the MCCA: homicide, sexual assault, aggravated assault, and robbery. We track three-year rolling averages to prevent annual fluctuations from skewing the data. Any description of “rate” below refers to the rolling three-year average rate. For example, when we refer to the “2023 homicide rate,” that reflects the average of the homicide rates from 2021, 2022, and 2023. While the data begin in 2014, the first (rolling) data point in each chart is from 2016.

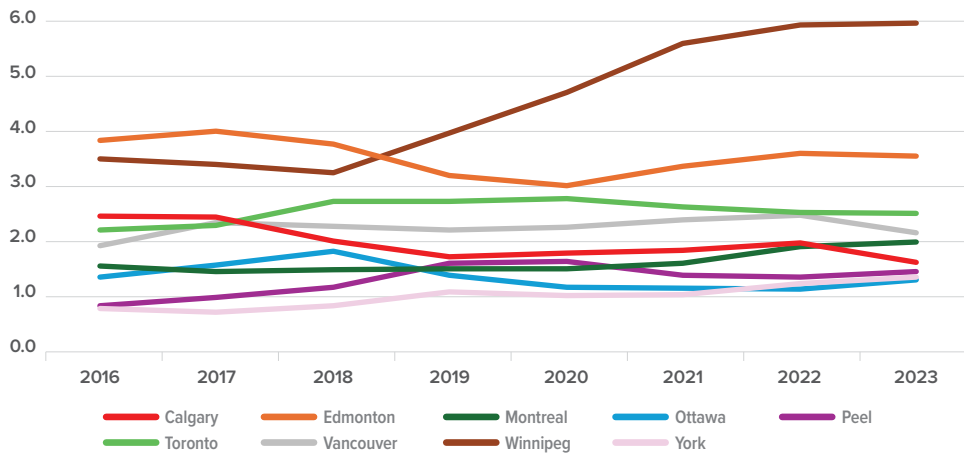
The summary tables include the three-year rolling averages for 2022 (2020–2022) and 2023 (2021–2023) and rank each municipality out of nine for both years. The lowest rates of crime get the highest rank; 1 is the best, and 9 the worst. Because Vancouver’s data for sexual assault accords with the narrower definition of rape, Vancouver is excluded from the rankings for sexual assault. As with all data in the report, all rates are per 100,000 population.

Each table also includes a description of the direction of three “trends” – short-term, medium-term, and long-term – using three-year rolling averages. The short-term trend is the one-year change in the rolling average (comparing 2020–2022 to 2021–2023). The medium-term trend compares the rolling average from 2017–2019 to 2021–2023. This trend largely reflects the pre-pandemic vs. post-pandemic trendline, insofar as these two rolling averages largely map onto the period immediately preceding the COVID-19 pandemic and the period immediately after its worst phase. The long-term trend (comparing the average rates from 2014–2016 to 2021–2023) is the longest trendline available using the MCCA data. Each of the three trends are described simply in binary terms: “up” or “down” and are colour-coded accordingly (“up” is red as a rising rate is negative; “down” is green as a dropping rate is positive).

Homicide

	2023 RATE	2022 RANK	2023 RATE	2023 RANK	SHORT- TERM	MEDIUM- TERM	LONG- TERM
Calgary	1.98	5 of 9	1.63	4 of 9	▼	▼	▼
Edmonton	3.61	8 of 9	3.56	8 of 9	▼	▲	▼
Montreal	1.91	4 of 9	2.00	5 of 9	▲	▲	▲
Ottawa	1.13	1 of 9	1.30	1 of 9	▲	▼	▼
Peel	1.37	3 of 9	1.46	3 of 9	▲	▼	▲
Toronto	2.53	7 of 9	2.52	7 of 9	▼	▼	▲
Vancouver	2.48	6 of 9	2.17	6 of 9	▼	▼	▲
Winnipeg	5.94	9 of 9	5.97	9 of 9	▲	▲	▲
York	1.25	2 of 9	1.36	2 of 9	▲	▲	▲

Homicide rates per 100,000 population (3-year rolling average):



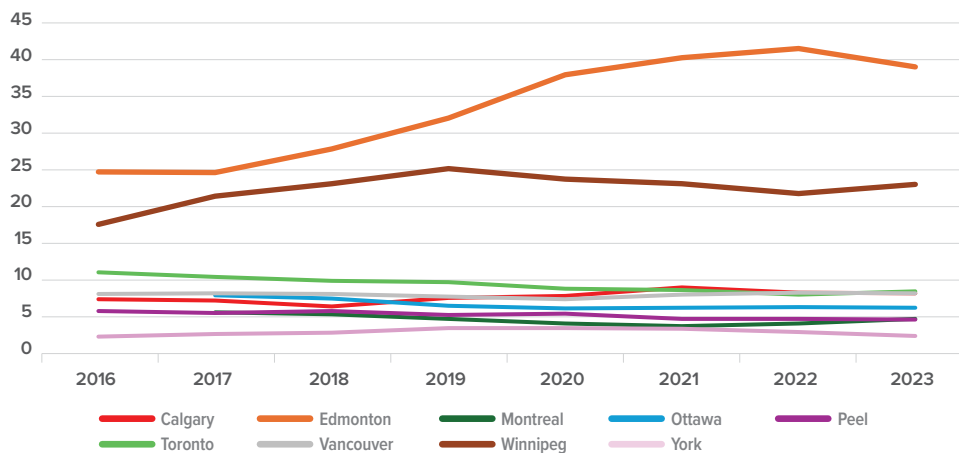
There is considerable variation in both the three-year rolling averages and the general trends for homicide rates across the nine Canadian cities. As with most other violent crime, Winnipeg’s homicide rate is by far the highest and is more than double that of every other city except Edmonton. Winnipeg has had the highest homicide rate for five years in a row, and its rate has been increasing every year since 2018. Edmonton has had the second-highest homicide rate for five years in a row, although it decreased slightly over the last year. Ottawa has had the lowest homicide rate for two years in a row. In recent years, Ottawa, York, and Peel have consistently had the lowest homicide rates of the nine cities that report to the MCCA.

The trend for each of Winnipeg, Montreal, and York has been one of sustained growth in homicide rates over the short-, medium-, and long-term. Of these three cities, Winnipeg’s homicide rate increase has been most pronounced, although York’s current rolling average (1.46 homicides per 100,000) is nearly double its 2016 rolling average (0.80 per 100,000). Calgary, Edmonton, Toronto, and Vancouver each experienced a short-term drop in their homicide rates between 2022 and 2023. Calgary is the only city whose homicide rate has dropped in the short-, medium-, and long-term. Between 2016 and 2023, Calgary’s rate dropped by one-third, from 2.46 to 1.63 per 100,000.

Aggravated assault

	2022 RATE	2022 RANK	2023 RATE	2023 RANK	SHORT-TERM	MEDIUM-TERM	LONG-TERM
Calgary	8.16	7 of 9	8.10	6 of 9	▼	▲	▲
Edmonton	41.14	9 of 9	38.72	9 of 9	▼	▲	▲
Montreal	4.01	2 of 9	4.61	3 of 9	▲	▲	▼*
Ottawa	6.15	4 of 9	6.07	4 of 9	▼	▼	▼*
Peel	4.62	3 of 9	4.52	2 of 9	▼	▼	▼
Toronto	7.85	5 of 9	8.29	7 of 9	▲	▼	▼
Vancouver	8.14	6 of 9	8.05	5 of 9	▼	▲	▲
Winnipeg	21.53	8 of 9	22.81	8 of 9	▲	▼	▲
York	2.86	1 of 9	2.31	1 of 9	▼	▼	▲

Aggravated assault rates per 100,000 population (3-year rolling average):



Winnipeg and Edmonton have aggravated assault rates that are much higher than those in every other major city. Edmonton’s rate is especially high; at 38.7 incidents per 100,000, its rate is more than four times higher than that for every major Canadian city apart from Winnipeg. While Edmonton’s rate dropped slightly in 2023, the trend has been consistently rising over the last decade. At the other end of the spectrum, York has had the lowest aggravated assault rate every year since 2016, and that rate has dropped over both the medium- and short-term. Peel has the second-lowest rate, while Montreal has the third-lowest.

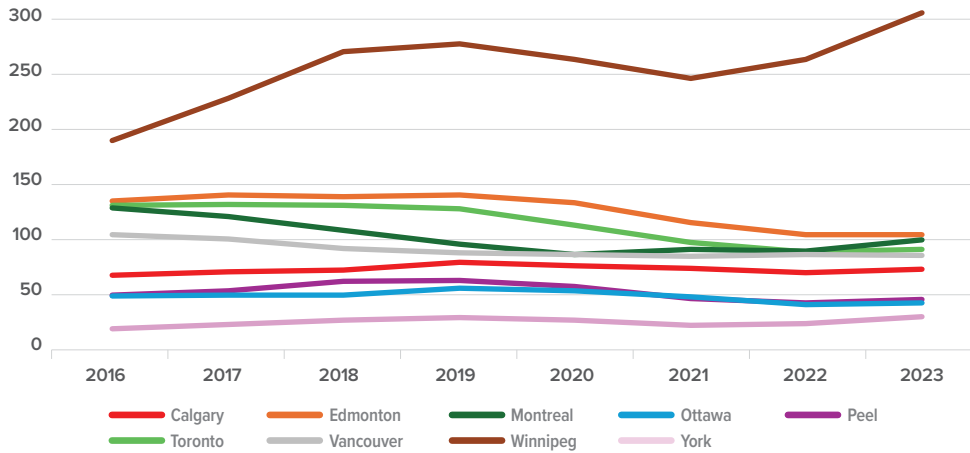
Six of the nine cities we examined showed drops in their short-term 2023 aggravated assault rates. Ottawa and Peel have seen sustained decreases in their aggravated assault rates over the last decade, with those rates dropping over the short-, medium-, and long-term. Montreal is the only city whose aggravated assault rate has increased over both the short- and medium-term. Although Toronto’s rate increased slightly in the short-term, Canada’s largest city has experienced a considerable decline in its aggravated assault rate over the last decade, with its current rolling average (8.29 per 100,000) more than 20 percent lower than its 2016 rolling average (10.88 per 100,000).

*The long-term trend for Ottawa and Montreal compares the 2021–2023 rolling average with that of 2015–2017 rather than 2014–2016 due to the unavailability of comparable 2014 data. See Appendix A for details.

Robbery

	2022 RATE	2022 RANK	2023 RATE	2023 RANK	SHORT-TERM	MEDIUM-TERM	LONG-TERM
Calgary	71.16	4 of 9	74.44	4 of 9	▲	▼	▲
Edmonton	105.42	8 of 9	106.01	8 of 9	▲	▼	▼
Montreal	90.84	7 of 9	100.92	7 of 9	▲	▲	▼
Ottawa	42.84	2 of 9	43.99	2 of 9	▲	▼	▼
Peel	44.19	3 of 9	47.12	3 of 9	▲	▼	▼
Toronto	89.90	6 of 9	92.03	6 of 9	▲	▼	▼
Vancouver	87.46	5 of 9	87.05	5 of 9	▼	▼	▼
Winnipeg	263.59	9 of 9	305.82	9 of 9	▲	▲	▲
York	25.68	1 of 9	31.66	1 of 9	▲	▲	▲

Robbery rates per 100,000 population (3-year rolling average):



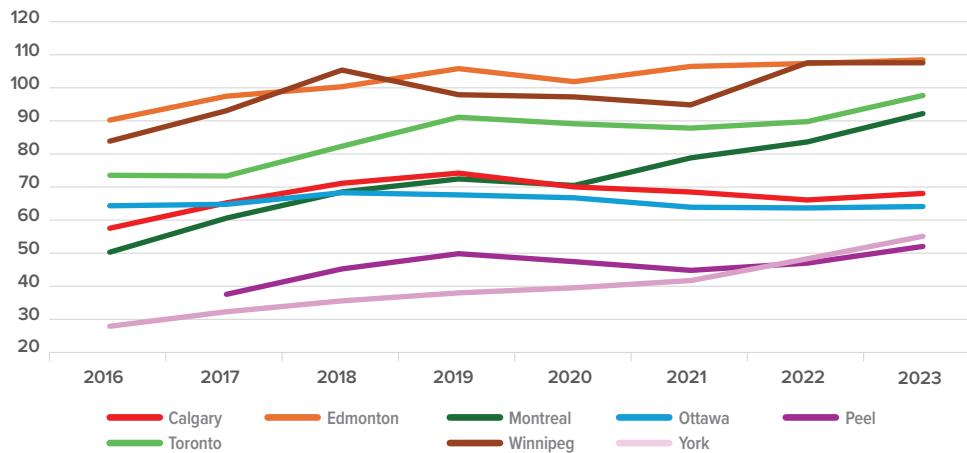
Winnipeg’s 2023 robbery rate of 305.9 per 100,000 is nearly triple every other major city; moreover, the rate has been rising consistently over the last decade, with increases in the short-, medium-, and long-term. At the other end of the spectrum, York’s robbery rate is consistently the lowest, although it has increased over the last decade. While Edmonton has had the second-highest robbery rate for the duration of the dataset (2016–2023), it has experienced a considerable long-term decrease since 2016, as has Toronto.

Over the last decade the robbery trend in all of Canada’s major cities has been similar. In nearly every city, individual annual (i.e., non-rolling) robbery rates dipped considerably around 2020 and 2021, the years of the COVID-19 lockdowns. The robbery rates – and rolling averages – have increased in recent years, particularly in the short-term. Vancouver is the only city where robberies are down in all three periods; by contrast, York, and Winnipeg have seen increases in robberies over short-, medium-, and long-term.

Sexual assault

	2022 RATE	2022 RANK	2023 RATE	2023 RANK	SHORT-TERM	MEDIUM-TERM	LONG-TERM
Calgary	66.12	4 of 8	68.21	4 of 8	▲	▼	▲
Edmonton	107.58	7 of 8	108.64	8 of 8	▲	▲	▲
Montreal	83.79	5 of 8	92.23	5 of 8	▲	▲	▲
Ottawa	63.76	3 of 8	64.21	3 of 8	▲	▼	▼
Peel	46.92	1 of 8	52.15	1 of 8	▲	▲	▲**
Toronto	89.95	6 of 8	97.81	6 of 8	▲	▲	▲
Vancouver*	20.99	N/A	22.07	N/A	▲	▲	▲
Winnipeg	107.75	8 of 8	107.76	7 of 8	▲	▲	▲
York	48.32	2 of 8	55.21	2 of 8	▲	▲	▲

Sexual assault rates per 100,000 population (3-year rolling average)



The table tells a simple story: sexual assault rates are rising in all nine cities. They are up for every city in the short term, and for nearly every city over the medium- and long-term. Only Ottawa saw a decline in its long-term rolling sexual assault rate (2016 to 2023). Vancouver’s MCCA data, which reports the narrower definition of rape and is not comparable to other Canadian cities (see Appendix A), is also increasing.

The increase in the sexual assault rate in York is perhaps the starkest; since 2016, its rate has nearly doubled, from 28.0 to 55.2 per 100,000. While York previously had the lowest sexual assault rate of the nine cities, Peel is now the lowest. However, Peel has also seen an increase of nearly 30 percent in its sexual assault rate, up from 38 per 100,000 people in 2016 to 52 per 100,000 in 2023. The increase has been similar in Montreal since 2020, with its rolling average moving from 71 to 92 per 100,000 people.

* Vancouver is excluded from this figure due to the incomparability of data.

** The long-term trend for Peel compares the 2021–2023 rolling average with that of 2015–2017 rather than 2014–2016 due to the unavailability of 2014 data. See Appendix A for details.

SNAPSHOT SERIES 2

Nine major Canadian cities

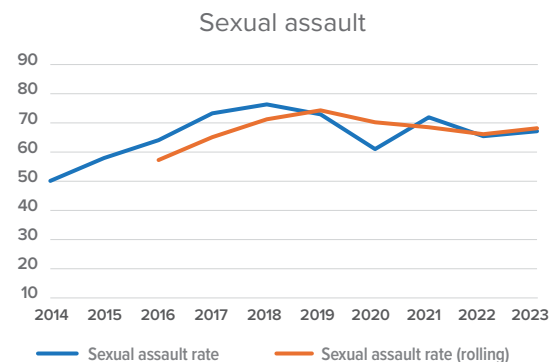
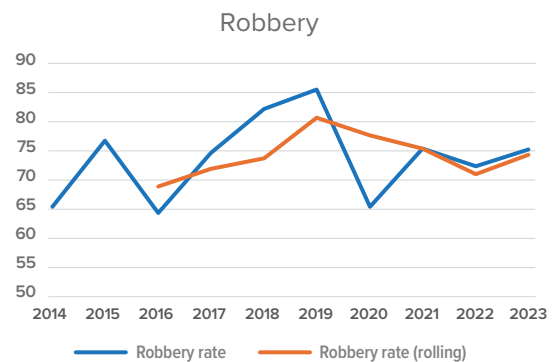
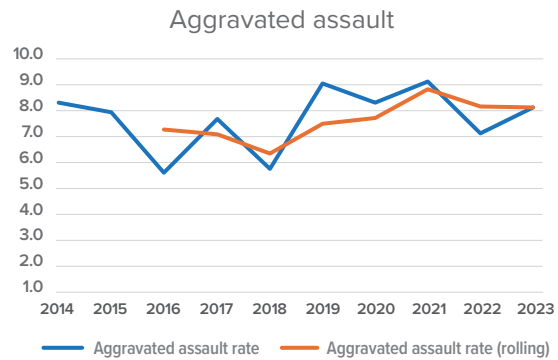
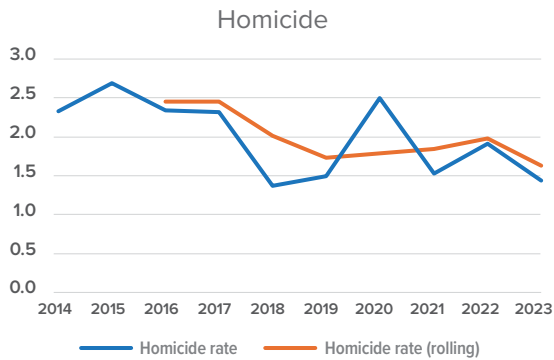
Each municipal snapshot contains three items: a summary table itemizing violent crime rates and rankings using three-year rolling averages; figures showing the rates for each of the four violent crimes from 2014–2023; and a written summary of the trends, both within the municipality and compared to other cities. When comparing crime rates, a higher ranking reflects a lower crime rate (1 is the best, 9 is the worst).

Although the data analysis in the written summary discusses trends as rolling averages, we understand that some readers may nevertheless be more interested in the specific annual (non-rolling) rates. For that reason, each figure within the snapshot includes both three-year rolling crime rates and the annual (non-rolling) rates. The table at the beginning of each snapshot and the written summary at the end of each snapshot refer to three-year rolling averages.

The short-term, medium-term, and long-term trends in the tables also use rolling averages. Short-term trends cover one-year changes in rolling averages (comparing 2020–2022 to 2021–2023); medium-term trends cover four-year changes in rolling averages (comparing 2017–2019 to 2021–2023); and long-term trends compare seven-year rolling average changes (comparing 2014–2016 to 2021–2023). In instances where 2014 data were not available, the long-term trend compares 2015–2017 to 2021–2023 data. A downward trend reflects a decrease in crime and is coloured green; an upward trend reflects an increase in crime and is coloured red.

Calgary

	2022 RATE	2022 RANK	2023 RATE	2023 RANK	SHORT-TERM	MEDIUM-TERM	LONG-TERM
Homicide	1.98	5 of 9	1.63	4 of 9	▼	▼	▼
Aggravated assault	8.16	7 of 9	8.10	6 of 9	▼	▲	▲
Robbery	72.43	4 of 9	74.44	4 of 9	▲	▼	▲
Sexual assault	65.43	4 of 8	68.21	4 of 8	▲	▼	▲

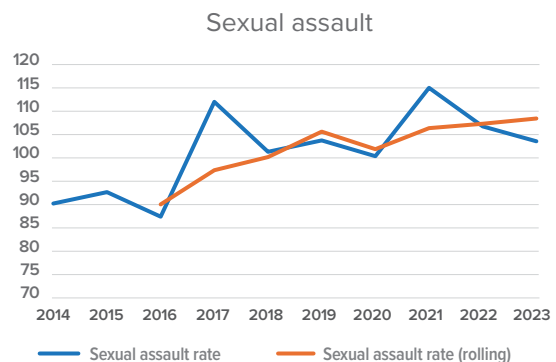
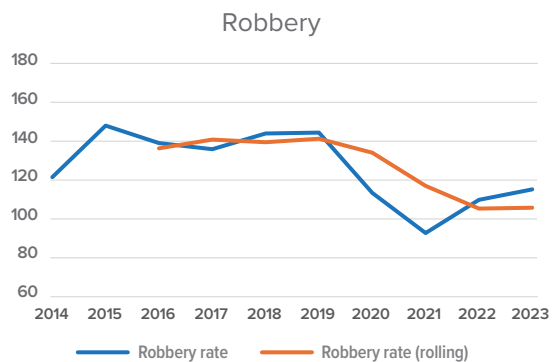
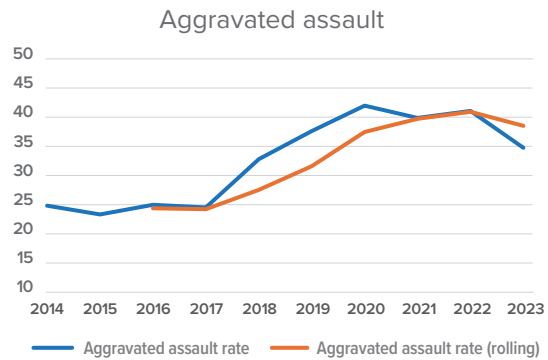
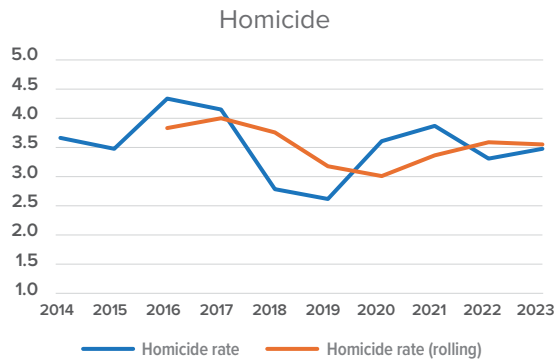


Compared to other cities in this report, Calgary is in the middle of the pack, consistently ranking between fourth and sixth for each of the four crimes. Calgary’s homicide ranking improved over the last year (from fifth to fourth) as did its aggravated assault rank (from seventh to sixth). Of the four Western Canadian cities in the dataset, Calgary had the highest ranking – that is, the lowest three-year rolling average – in each of the four categories in 2023.

Calgary’s rolling homicide rate has been dropping consistently in recent years, from a high of 2.46 per 100,000 people in 2016 to its current rate of 1.63, a decline of approximately a third. Indeed, Calgary’s post-pandemic rolling average (2021–2023) is down from its pre-pandemic rolling average (2017–2019) in three of the four crimes: homicide, robbery, and sexual assault. However, Calgary’s rolling averages for both robbery and sexual assault rose over the last year.

Edmonton

	2022 RATE	2022 RANK	2023 RATE	2023 RANK	SHORT-TERM	MEDIUM-TERM	LONG-TERM
Homicide	3.61	8 of 9	3.56	8 of 9	▼	▲	▼
Aggravated assault	41.14	9 of 9	38.72	9 of 9	▼	▲	▲
Robbery	105.42	8 of 9	106.01	8 of 9	▲	▼	▼
Sexual assault	107.58	7 of 8	108.64	8 of 8	▲	▲	▲

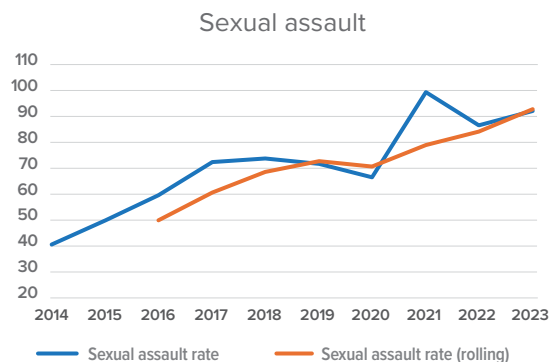
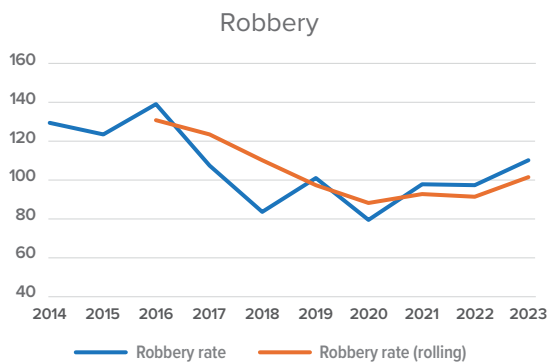
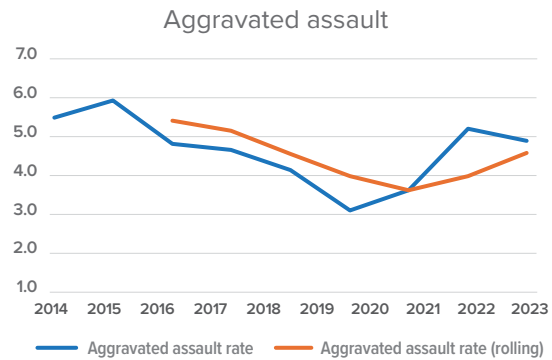
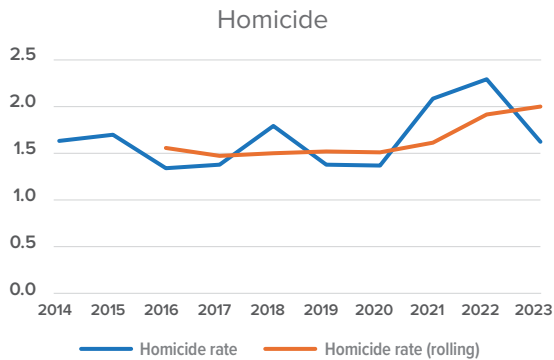


Edmonton’s violent crime rates are very high compared to every major city apart from Winnipeg. Its rolling average for aggravated assault has been the highest every year in the dataset (2016–2023); at 38.72, it is more than four-and-a-half times higher than the third-highest city (Toronto). Edmonton consistently has the second-highest robbery and homicide rate, and its sexual assault rate is currently the highest of the nine cities analyzed. Along with Winnipeg, Edmonton has had the highest or second-highest rolling violent crime rate for all four categories since 2020.

The trends for Edmonton are mixed. Edmonton’s rolling sexual assault rate is up over the short-, medium-, and long-term. However, Edmonton’s short-term homicide and aggravated assault rates are down; indeed, Edmonton’s three-year homicide rate is lower in 2023 than it was in 2016. In terms of aggravated assault, Edmonton’s three-year rate dipped slightly in 2023, but its current rate (38.72 per 100,000) is well above its pre-pandemic rate (31.80 per 100,000). The opposite is true of robbery, which had been dropping; while Edmonton’s three-year robbery rate rose slightly in 2023, it is still 25 percent lower than it was in 2016. Overall, Edmonton’s violent crime rates are very high compared with most major cities, but recent trends show some signs of improvement.

Montreal

	2022 RATE	2022 RANK	2023 RATE	2023 RANK	SHORT-TERM	MEDIUM-TERM	LONG-TERM*
Homicide	1.91	4 of 9	2.00	5 of 9	▲	▲	▲
Aggravated assault	4.01	2 of 9	4.61	3 of 9	▲	▲	▼
Robbery	90.84	7 of 9	100.92	7 of 9	▲	▲	▼
Sexual assault	83.79	5 of 8	92.23	5 of 8	▲	▲	▲



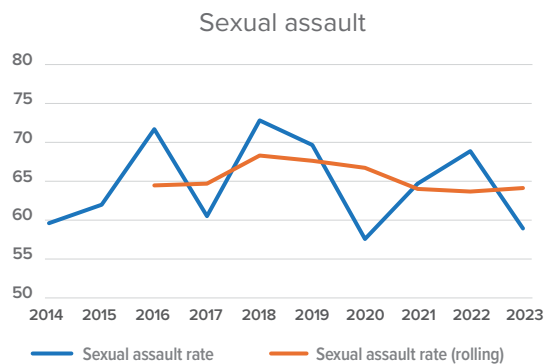
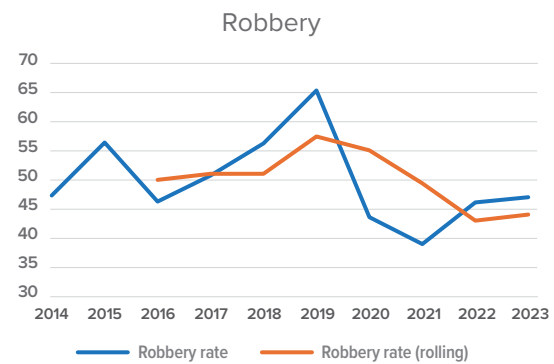
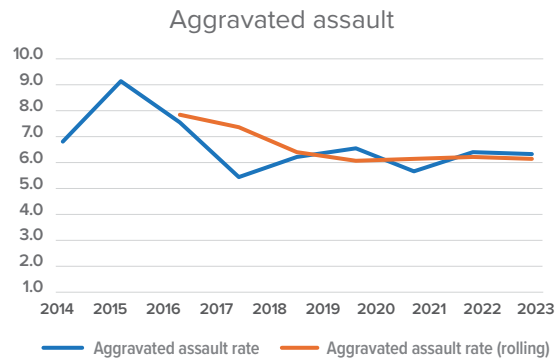
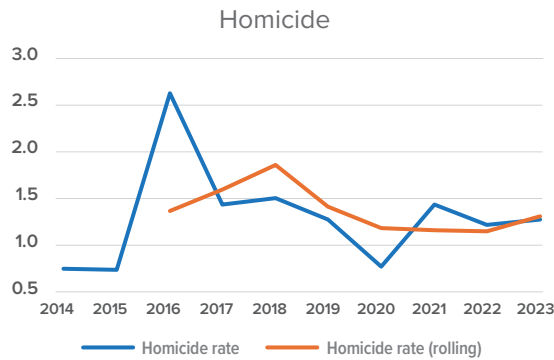
Compared to other major cities, Montreal’s violent crime rates vary the most. It ranked third-lowest in aggravated assault, but fifth in homicide, fifth (of eight) in sexual assault, and seventh in robbery. Montreal’s ranking dropped in the short-term for both homicide and aggravated assault. Compared to other cities, Montreal has lower rates of aggravated assault, with the second- or third-lowest rolling rate every year between 2017 and 2023.

However, Montreal’s short- and medium-term trends are not positive. Its three-year rolling average showed an increased trend for all four crimes between 2022 and 2023, and the same is true in the medium-term. Montreal’s sexual assault rate has been rising consistently, with its three-year rolling average in 2023 (92.23 per 100,000) nearly double what it was in 2016 (64.47 per 100,000). Its homicide rate has also risen consistently over the last several years, although Montreal did see a significant one-year drop in its (non-rolling) homicide rate in 2023. Rates for robbery and aggravated assault have risen in the short- and medium-term, though both rates are down over the long-term.

* Montreal’s long-term trend for aggravated assault compares 2021–2023 to 2015–2017 data, as data were not available for 2014.

Ottawa

	2022 RATE	2022 RANK	2023 RATE	2023 RANK	SHORT-TERM	MEDIUM-TERM	LONG-TERM*
Homicide	1.13	1 of 9	1.30	1 of 9	▲	▼	▼
Aggravated assault	6.15	4 of 9	6.07	4 of 9	▼	▼	▼
Robbery	42.84	2 of 9	43.99	2 of 9	▲	▼	▼
Sexual assault	63.76	3 of 8	64.21	3 of 8	▲	▼	▼



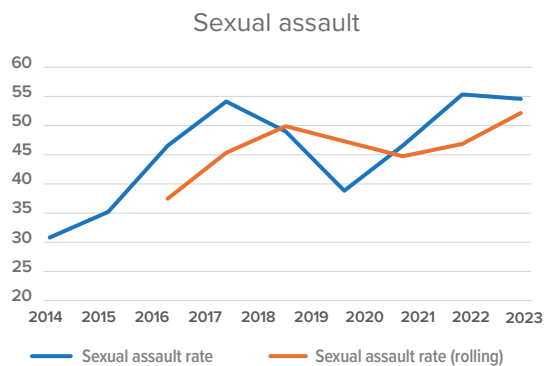
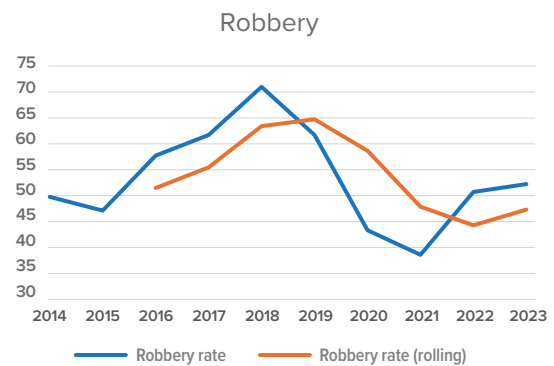
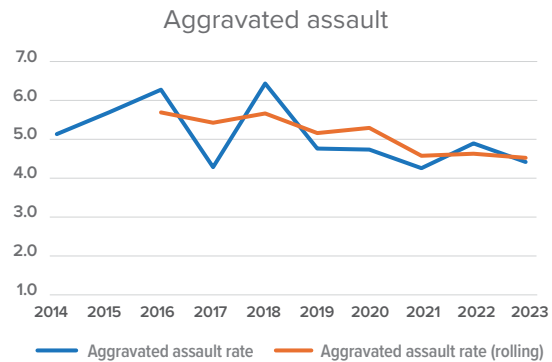
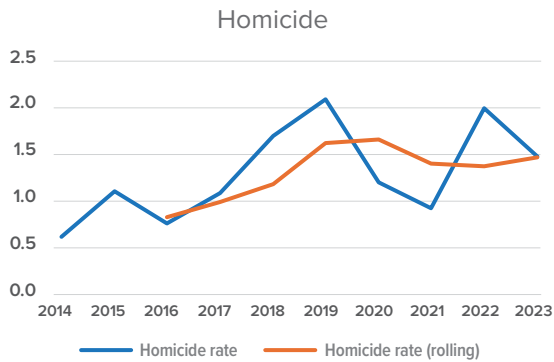
Compared to the other municipalities in this report, Ottawa’s violent crime rates are consistently quite low. Its three-year rolling homicide rate has been the lowest of all nine cities for the last two years. Ottawa also has generally lower rates of robbery, for which it has had the second-lowest rolling rate for every year except 2020. On aggravated assault and sexual assault, Ottawa is closer to the middle of the rankings, though still in the top half.

Ottawa’s long-term and medium-term trends are all positive, with its rates for all four violent crimes declining during the last decade. However, its rolling average for three of the four crimes – homicide, robbery, and sexual assault – all increased between 2022 and 2023. While Ottawa’s homicide and aggravated assault rates have been relatively flat over the last few years, its (non-rolling) sexual assault rate has fluctuated considerably, reflecting a flatter three-year rolling average.

* Ottawa’s long-term trend for aggravated assault compares 2021–2023 to 2015–2017 data, as data were not available for 2014.

Peel

	2022 RATE	2022 RANK	2023 RATE	2023 RANK	SHORT-TERM	MEDIUM-TERM	LONG-TERM*
Homicide	1.37	3 of 9	1.46	3 of 9	▲	▼	▲
Aggravated assault	4.62	3 of 9	4.52	2 of 9	▼	▼	▼
Robbery	44.19	3 of 9	47.12	3 of 9	▲	▼	▼
Sexual assault	46.92	1 of 8	52.15	1 of 8	▲	▲	▲



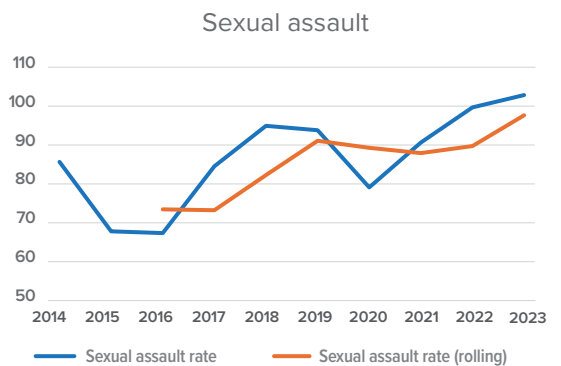
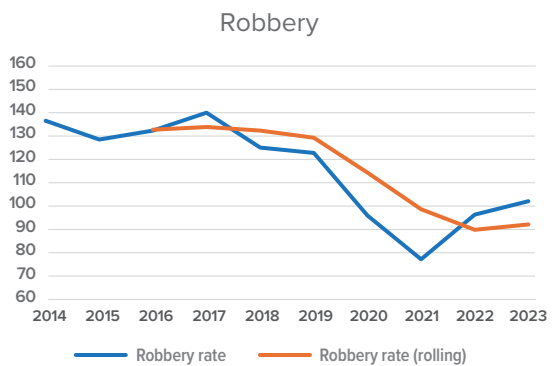
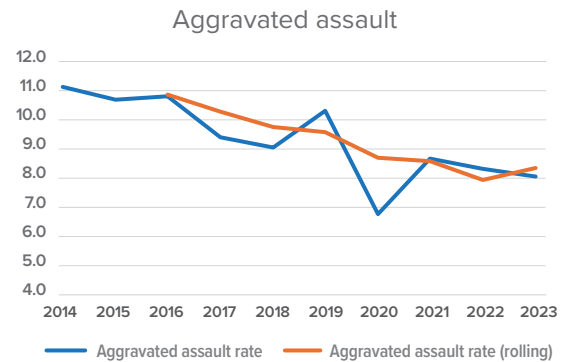
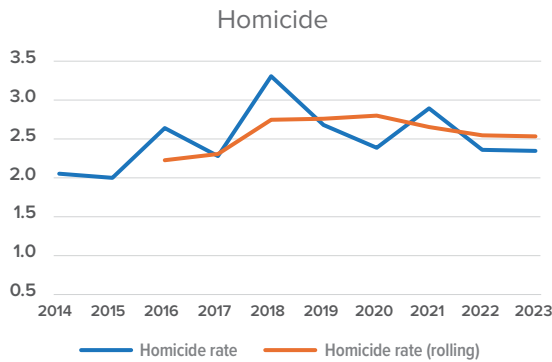
Peel's crime rates are consistently among the lowest of the nine major cities. For its three-year rolling averages, Peel currently has the lowest rate of sexual assault, the second-lowest rate of aggravated assault, and the third-lowest homicide and robbery rates. Along with York, Peel has consistently had one of the two lowest sexual assault rates throughout the period of study (2014–2023). Its aggravated assault ranking improved from 2022 to 2023, moving Peel from third-lowest to second-lowest.

However, between 2022 and 2023, Peel's three-year rolling averages for homicide, robbery, and sexual assault all increased. Its aggravated assault rate has been on a steady decline since 2016 and is currently at its lowest level in the observation period. Likewise, while Peel's robbery rate increased in 2023, it has generally been on a downward trajectory, and has declined 25 percent since 2019. Sexual assault rates, by contrast, have increased steadily, and have risen in the short-, medium-, and long-term. Since before the pandemic, however, Peel's crime rates have generally improved, with Peel experiencing declines in three of the four categories (not including sexual assault) over the medium-term.

* Peel's long-term trend for sexual assault compares 2021–2023 to 2015–2017 data, as data were not available for 2014.

Toronto

	2022 RATE	2022 RANK	2023 RATE	2023 RANK	SHORT-TERM	MEDIUM-TERM	LONG-TERM
Homicide	2.53	7 of 9	2.52	7 of 9	▼	▼	▲
Aggravated assault	7.85	5 of 9	8.29	7 of 9	▲	▼	▼
Robbery	89.90	6 of 9	92.03	6 of 9	▲	▼	▼
Sexual assault	89.95	6 of 8	97.81	6 of 8	▲	▲	▲

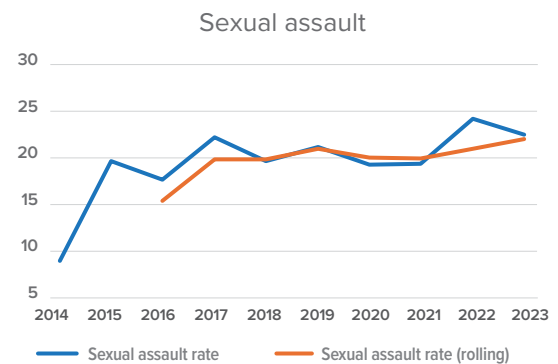
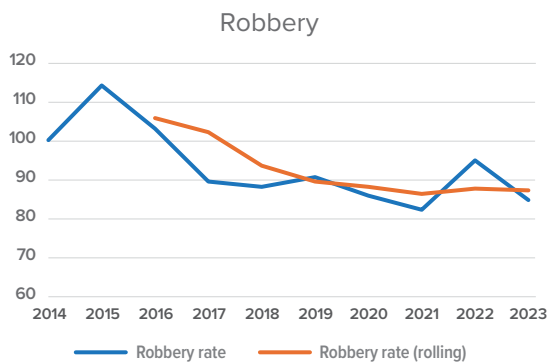
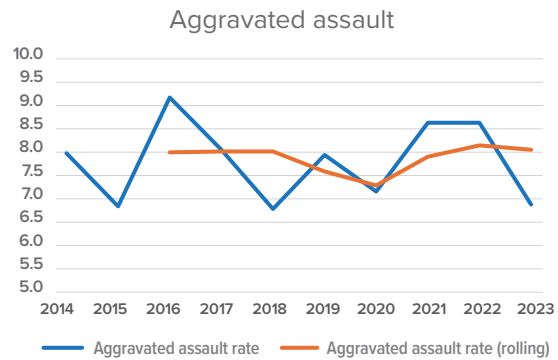
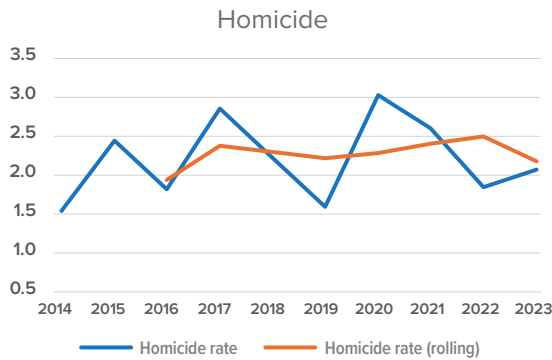


Of the five cities in Central Canada analyzed in this report, Toronto’s violent crime rates are the highest. It has the third-highest three-year rolling homicide and aggravated assault rates, the fourth-highest robbery rate, and the third-highest sexual assault rate (the latter rank excludes Vancouver). Throughout the period covered by this report, Toronto’s rankings compared to other municipalities have remained more or less steady; for example, its three-year rolling homicide rate has been the third highest every year from 2018 to 2023.

Toronto is showing some positive trends. Its rolling homicide rate dropped between 2022 and 2023 and its long-term aggravated assault and robbery rates have dropped significantly. In particular, Toronto’s aggravated assault rolling average has dropped by more than 20 percent, from 10.9 per 100,000 people in 2016 to 8.3 per 100,000 in 2023. Its robbery rate is also trending down over the long-term. However, Toronto’s sexual assault rate is up over the short-, medium-, and long-term. The city’s current three-year rolling average for sexual assault (97.8 per 100,000 people) is one-third higher than it was in 2017 (73.3 per 100,000).

Vancouver

	2022 RATE	2022 RANK	2023 RATE	2023 RANK	SHORT-TERM	MEDIUM-TERM	LONG-TERM
Homicide	2.48	6 of 9	2.17	6 of 9	▼	▼	▲
Aggravated assault	8.14	6 of 9	8.05	5 of 9	▼	▲	▲
Robbery	87.46	5 of 9	87.05	5 of 9	▼	▼	▼
Sexual assault*	20.99	N/A	22.07	N/A	▲	▲	▲



Vancouver’s comparative position in the municipal rankings has remained consistent; for example, Vancouver has had the sixth-highest rolling homicide rate every year since 2017 and the fifth-highest robbery rate for seven of the eight years since 2016. Because Vancouver reports a different definition of sexual assault (rape) to the MCCA, it cannot be compared with other cities. However, in terms of the Statistics Canada data on sexual assault, Vancouver had the fifth-highest rate of the nine municipalities in 2023, which is consistent with its other comparative violent crime rankings (see Appendix B). Vancouver’s rank for aggravated assault improved between 2022 and 2023, moving from sixth to fifth.

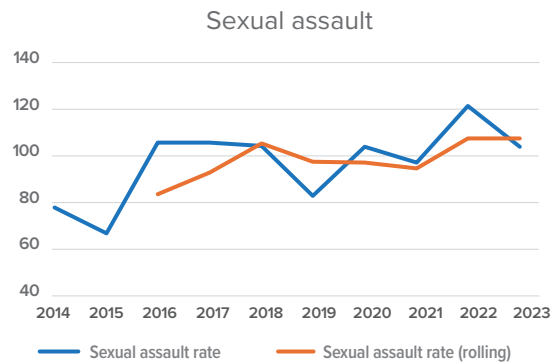
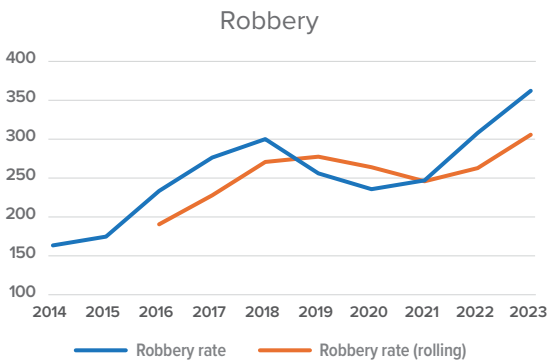
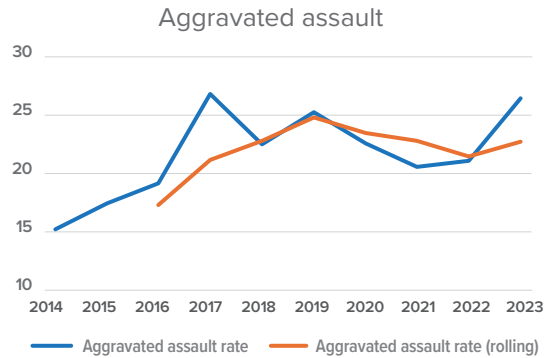
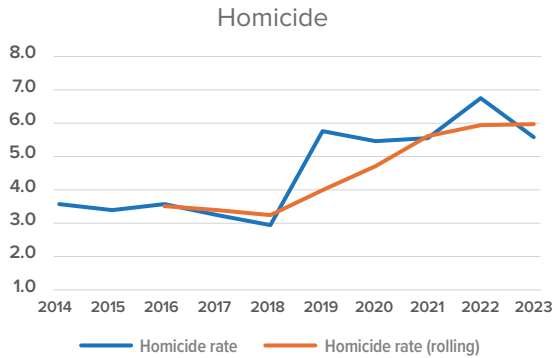
In terms of rolling averages, Vancouver’s homicide, aggravated assault, and robbery rates all improved between 2022 and 2023, while its rolling average for rape has increased in the short-, medium-, and long-term. Vancouver’s long-term trends for homicide, aggravated assault, and rape are all rising; however, Vancouver’s three-year rates for these three crimes have been fairly level since 2019. Robbery rates, by contrast, have declined considerably since 2017.

* Vancouver’s sexual assault numbers accord with the FBI definition of “rape” and are not comparable with other Canadian municipalities.

Winnipeg

	2022 RATE	2022 RANK	2023 RATE	2023 RANK	SHORT-TERM	MEDIUM-TERM	LONG-TERM
Homicide	5.94	9 of 9	5.97	9 of 9	▲	▲	▲
Aggravated assault	21.53	8 of 9	22.81	8 of 9	▲	▼	▲
Robbery	263.59	9 of 9	305.82	9 of 9	▲	▲	▲
Sexual assault	107.75	8 of 8	107.76	7 of 8	▲	▲	▲

Snapshot series 2: Nine major Canadian cities

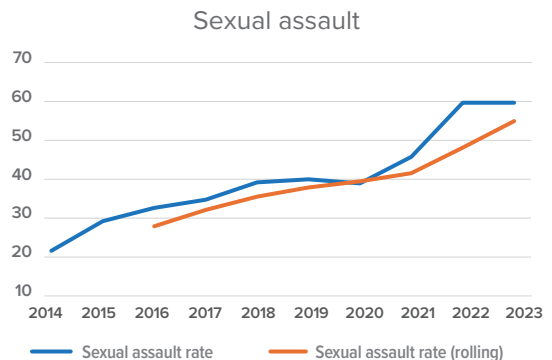
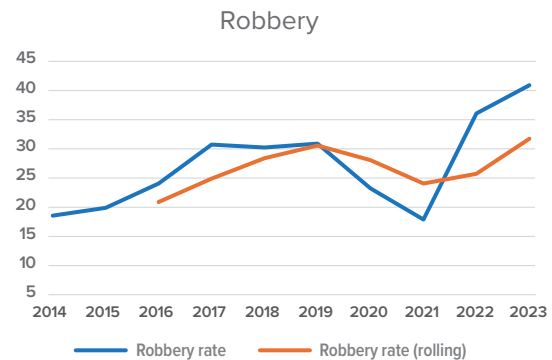
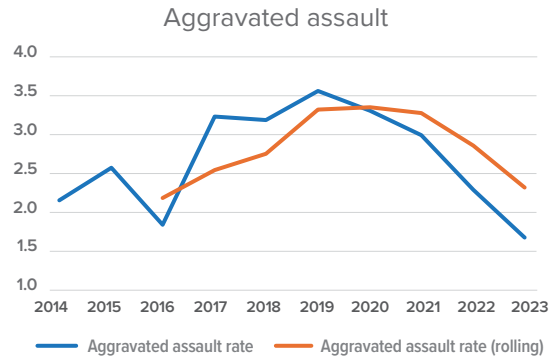
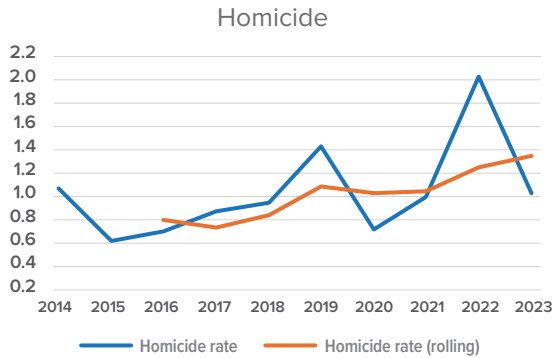


Of the nine cities studied in this report, Winnipeg has the highest violent crime rates. Its three-year rolling homicide rate has been the highest every year since 2019. It has had the highest rolling average rate for robbery every year from 2016 to 2023, and the second-highest rolling aggravated assault rate (behind Edmonton) every year since 2017. Winnipeg’s sexual assault rate has always been highest or second-highest. These high violent crime rates are consistent; Winnipeg has had the highest or second-highest three-year rolling average rate for all four crimes every year in our dataset (2016–2023).

Yet even these rankings do not describe the full scope of Winnipeg’s violent crime. Its 2023 three-year rolling homicide rate (5.97 per 100,000) dwarfs those of the next highest cities (3.56 for Edmonton and 2.52 for Toronto). Its 2023 three-year rolling average rate for robbery (305.8 per 100,000) is nearly triple the rate for the next-highest city (Edmonton at 106.0 per 100,000). Although Winnipeg has the second-highest aggravated assault rate (22.8 per 100,000), that rate is nearly triple that of the third-highest municipality (Toronto at 8.3 per 100,000). Winnipeg’s violent crime rates are also uniformly rising; all four crimes are on a long-term upward trajectory. Rolling three-year averages increased for all four crimes in the short-term. Homicide, sexual assault, and robbery are all higher in Winnipeg today than they were immediately before the pandemic. Violent crime in Winnipeg is high, rising, and showing no signs of slowing down.

York

	2022 RATE	2022 RANK	2023 RATE	2023 RANK	SHORT- TERM	MEDIUM- TERM	LONG- TERM
Homicide	1.25	2 of 9	1.36	2 of 9	▲	▲	▲
Aggravated assault	2.86	1 of 9	2.31	1 of 9	▼	▼	▲
Robbery	25.68	1 of 9	31.66	1 of 9	▲	▲	▲
Sexual assault	48.32	2 of 8	55.21	2 of 8	▲	▲	▲



Whether York’s level of violent crime is considered high depends on whether it is being measured against other major Canadian cities or against itself. Compared with other cities, York’s violent crime rates are low – the lowest of the nine major cities. It has had the lowest rolling aggravated assault and robbery rates for the last two years, and the second-lowest homicide rate during that same period. It has had the lowest robbery and aggravated assault rolling average rates throughout the entire period covered in the study (2016–2023), and the lowest homicide rate every year except 2022–2023 (owing to a spike in homicides in 2022). York also had the lowest rolling average rate of sexual assault every year from 2016–2021, before its rate increased above Peel in 2022 and 2023. York’s rankings remained the same for all four categories between 2022 and 2023.

However, York’s violent crime trends are mostly moving in the wrong direction. Its long-term trends for all four crimes are up, as are its short- and medium-term trends for every crime except aggravated assault. Sexual assaults in particular have been on a steady rise over the long-term. Robbery and homicide rates have also been trending up in recent years. The one positive trend for York is aggravated assault, which has been declining. Apart from that, however, York’s story is generally one of rising violent crime rates over the past several years.

CONCLUSION

In our *Report Card on the Criminal Justice System* published earlier this year, we identified the need for independent monitoring and performance measurement of the criminal justice system: “The presentation of longitudinal trends,” we concluded, “enables jurisdictions to see where they have been improving, and where they have been failing” (Snow and Audas 2024, 26–27). This report is our first attempt to understand how violent crime rates are reported for major Canadian cities, and to identify trends and comparisons between major cities.

To explore trends in urban violent crime in Canada, we examined data from the Major Cities Chiefs Association (MCCA) for nine major cities that comprise one-third of the Canadian population. Using three-year rolling averages, we found that violent crime was increasing in many cities in the short-term, most notably for sexual assaults and robberies. Any dip in urban crime that occurred during the pandemic in 2020 has largely dissipated. Long-term crime rates are more nuanced, with the rates of violent crime over the last decade increasing in some major cities and decreasing in others.

As this report shows, general trends can mask striking differences between municipalities. For instance, Winnipeg and Edmonton have by far the highest violent crime rates of the major Canadian cities, with both experiencing rates of homicide, sexual assault, aggravated assault, and robbery well above those of their peers. In particular, Winnipeg’s crime rate is often several multiples higher than that in other major Canadian cities. At the other end of the spectrum, York, Peel, and Ottawa tend to have considerably lower crime rates than their peers. With that said, a given city’s position in the crime rate “rankings” does not tell the full story of what is happening within it. Winnipeg, Montreal, and York – which have comparatively high, moderate, and low rates of crime

respectively – are each grappling with increasing rates of most of the violent crimes measured here, whether measured in the short-, medium-, or long-term.

In addition to giving us a better understanding of violent crime trends, this report has also enabled us to look more closely at the challenges of collecting, verifying, and analyzing urban violent crime data in Canada (see Appendices A and B). We believe that the publication of consistent and transparent crime data is crucial if we are to better understand our justice system. Yet the general lack of coordination and consistency in reporting means that it is difficult for the public to fully understand their own local crime rates. This is not only an issue with the MCCA: numerous police departments have expressed uncertainty about how Statistics Canada data were reported for their cities and could not explain divergences between their own data and Statistics Canada data. This should not be happening in Canada, which has a single Criminal Code with provisions that are uniform across the country.

“*The sheer scope of the challenge in collecting, verifying, and comparing municipal violent crime data has left us with several suggestions for improvement in MCCA reporting.*”

The sheer scope of the challenge in collecting, verifying, and comparing municipal violent crime data has left us with several suggestions for improvement in MCCA reporting. First and foremost, the MCCA should specify in its reports which municipal police services use the “all offences” method versus the “most serious offence” method. Second, municipal police services should attempt to harmonize this method of data reporting to ensure comparability. Third, when municipalities see that their initial data reporting fluctuates frequently in subsequent updates due to methods of data reporting (this is most notably the case for Calgary), those fluctuations should be noted in the MCCA report. Fourth, Vancouver should follow other Canadian municipalities by reporting sexual assault (levels 1, 2, and 3) to the

MCCA, rather than reporting the more narrowly defined rape. While the latter provides comparability with American cities, Canadian jurisdictions ought to first and foremost be concerned with data comparisons within their own country.

Finally, this report demonstrates that more Canadian cities need to collaborate and share quarterly crime data in a centralized repository. Nine cities comprising one-third of the Canadian population is a good start, but it is not nearly enough. We see no reason why other populous Canadian cities such as Halifax, Hamilton, Laval, Quebec City, London, Saskatoon, Regina, and Surrey should not be contributing their quarterly data to a collaborative venue, whether that be the MCCA or another institution altogether.⁴ Insofar as most police services already collect and report their quarterly data, other Canadian cities should make efforts to contribute their data to a shared repository so that violent crime rates and trends can be assessed and analyzed in a timely, transparent, and accessible manner.

While there is room for improvement, the raw data reported to the MCCA will continue to be valuable for analysts when comparing trends between and within the American and Canadian municipalities. Future researchers should build on this report to explore trends in the quarterly data (including seasonal crime trends), and to compare Canadian and American cities. We hope this report provides the impetus for greater collaboration, transparency, and information-sharing among Canadian municipalities, including those that are not currently members of the MCCA. Doing so would be an important contribution to increasing the transparency and legitimacy of our criminal justice system. [MLI](#)

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APPENDIX A

Data and limitations

This report uses data from the Major Cities Chiefs Association Violent Crime Reports (MCCA 2024b). Nine Canadian municipal police services contribute data to these reports for four violent crimes: homicide, sexual assault, aggravated assault, and robbery. The MCCA website provides annual data for all nine participating Canadian cities from 2014–2023, and quarterly data from 2019 to Q1 2024 (MCCA 2024b). Our report only examines year-end (annual) data, which is available from 2014–2023. Each MCCA report provides a comparison with the previous years’ numbers, which allows for both year-over-year comparisons and for data updates. Unless otherwise stated, we use the most recent version of the updated data (e.g., for 2022 data, we use the reported numbers from the 2023 annual report). All 2023 data are preliminary and will not be updated until the 2024 annual report.

The MCCA is not the only location where municipal violent crime numbers are reported. Each Canadian municipal police service provides some data on their websites, and violent crime data are eventually reported in Statistics Canada’s provincial incident-based crime statistical tables (see Statistics Canada 2024e for British Columbia). However, the MCCA data have several advantages as a resource. First, the MCCA data are publicly accessible in a centralized location and are not separated by province. Second, the MCCA data are reported quarterly, whereas Statistics Canada data are only reported annually. Third, MCCA data are published relatively quickly after the end of a quarter, whereas Statistics Canada data are subject to a considerable publication time lag. Fourth, MCCA data enables analysts to compare Canadian data with the 70 American cities included in the report.

Finally, the MCCA data come directly from municipal police services whereas Statistics Canada numbers often incorporate slightly different geographical boundaries and/or include additional offences reported by other agencies. Municipal police services provided us with three different examples of this variation. York Regional Police informed us that Statistics Canada’s data for York Region include offences reported by the Toronto North Detachment of the Royal Canadian Mounted Police (RCMP). Edmonton Police Services informed us that Statistics Canada data include surrounding communities such as Sherwood Park and St. Albert. The Vancouver Police Department explained that Statistics Canada data include any offences that originate from agencies operating in the City of Vancouver. This would include, for example, a robbery committed on a Sky Train within Vancouver that is investigated by the Transit Police (and would not appear in VPD’s data reported to the MCCA).

Appendix B contains a comparison of MCCA data with Statistics Canada data from 2014–2023. Our calculations also show that Statistics Canada appeared to use a slightly greater population for Montreal in its calculation of crime rates in its “Incident-based crime statistics” table than it did in its own population estimates up to 2022 (see Statistics Canada 2023a, 2023d). Sexual assault numbers include all three levels of sexual assault (1, 2, and 3). As Statistics Canada reports these sexual assault numbers independently, Statistics Canada’s sexual assault rates in Appendix B were calculated by the authors using the population estimates described below.

Population estimates and rolling averages

We calculated changing crime rates from 2014–2023 by applying the raw MCCA data to Statistics Canada’s population estimates for each of the nine Canadian cities from 2014–2023. To determine the population of each municipality, we used estimates based on Statistics Canada’s definition of “census subdivision,” which best corresponds to each geographical area over which the police service has jurisdiction. Seven of the nine municipalities were available in Statistics Canada’s “Population estimates, July 1, by census subdivision, 2016 boundaries” up to 2022 (Statistics Canada 2023a). These estimates do not include the regional municipalities of Peel and York. For Peel, we used the census population estimates from the Peel Region’s data portal (Peel Region 2024).

For York, we added the population estimates from the nine municipalities included in the region (Aurora, East Gwillimbury, Georgina, King, Markham, Newmarket, Richmond Hill, Vaughan, and Whitchurch-Stouffville) included in Statistics Canada’s census subdivision population estimates (Statistics Canada 2023a).

At the time of writing, population estimates for census subdivisions were unavailable for all nine cities for 2023. We thus applied a uniform estimate of population growth to each municipality based on Statistics Canada’s overall national population estimates for 2023. Because Statistics Canada’s municipal population estimates are from July 1 of each year, we examined the national population growth rate between July 1, 2022, and July 1, 2023, and applied that growth percentage equally across municipalities. Statistics Canada estimated that the population on July 1, 2023, was 40,097,761, a growth rate of 2.976 percent from July 1, 2022 (Statistics Canada 2023b; Statistics Canada 2024a). The 2023 population of each municipality used in this paper is thus the 2022 Statistics Canada estimate multiplied by 1.02976.⁵

In our presentation and analysis of the data, we primarily rely on three-year rolling averages to determine crime rates to prevent individual annual fluctuations from skewing the data. Unless otherwise stated, when a year’s “rate” or “rank” is listed, we are referring to the three-year rolling average, of which that year is the final year. For example, Edmonton’s “2023 robbery rate” is an average of Edmonton’s robbery rates from 2021, 2022, and 2023, while Edmonton’s “2022 robbery rate” is an average of its robbery rates from 2020, 2021, and 2022. For those interested in the annual (non-rolling) rates, Appendix B contains tables with the annual rates (2014–2013) and three-year rolling averages (2016–2023) for each crime. Charts in each “municipal snapshot” also contain rolling and non-rolling rates for each crime. All rates are per 100,000 people.

Each table also includes a description of the direction of three “trends” – short-term, medium-term, and long-term – using three-year rolling averages. The short-term trend is the one-year change in the rolling average (comparing 2020–22 to 2021–23). The medium-term trend compares the rolling average from 2017–19 to 2021–23. The long-term trend, comparing the average rates from 2014–16 to 2021–23, is the longest trendline available using the MCCA data. For the three instances in which MCCA-reported 2014 data were either unavailable or incorrect (sexual assault in Peel and aggravated assault in Ottawa

and Montreal), the long-term trend compares average rates from 2015–17 to 2021–23. Each trend is described as binary “up” or “down” and are colour-coded accordingly (red for up, green for down).

Data collection issues

We did experience issues with incomplete, unexplained, or incomparable data. Annual data were missing for sexual assaults in Peel (2014) and all four crimes in Winnipeg (2016 and 2017). We were able to obtain the 2016 and 2017 data from Winnipeg’s annual crime reports, which the Winnipeg Police Service provided to us on request. We verified that these numbers are broadly consistent with those that Winnipeg submitted to the MCCA in subsequent years. We also corresponded with the nine municipal police services to clarify outlying or missing data and received responses from all except the Service de Police de la Ville de Montréal (SPVM). Edmonton provided us with corrected homicide data for 2017. The Calgary Police Service, meanwhile, provided us with updated data for sexual assault, aggravated assault, and robbery for every year between 2014–2022. Although most of Calgary’s updates to the MCCA data were minor, we used the data the Calgary Police Service provided us directly rather than the MCCA data, as the former is the most accurate.

We also chose to exclude Montreal and Ottawa police service data on aggravated assaults from 2014. These data, which were an order of magnitude higher than the numbers in subsequent years and from other municipalities (2,502 reported aggravated assaults in Montreal in 2014 compared to between 57 and 103 in the years from 2015 to 2023, and 2,761 reported aggravated assaults in Ottawa compared to 54 to 88 every other year between 2015 and 2023) likely reflected either a change in the police services’ definition or a data reporting error. Indeed, the 2016 Q3 MCCA report, on file with the authors, notes that “Montreal Police Service’s number for aggravated assaults was adjusted to closer align with other Canadian cities.”

As noted in the report, Vancouver’s sexual assault numbers are not comparable to data from other municipalities. The MCCA uses the term “rape” for American municipalities and “sexual assault” for Canadian municipalities. All recent MCCA reports also contain a footnote explaining that the “Canadian definition of Sexual Assault [is] used to determine Rape numbers for Canadian agencies except Vancouver PD.” This stems from a

pre-existing Vancouver Police Department decision to report numbers that closely correspond to the American municipalities' definition of rape, which means that Vancouver data cannot be compared to that from other Canadian cities. Appendix B contains a comparison of Vancouver's MCCA-reported rape data to Vancouver's level 1, level 2, and level 3 "sexual assault" numbers published by Statistics Canada (2024e). However, because Statistics Canada's numbers often rely on slightly different reporting or geographical boundaries, we do not compare MCCA data to Statistics Canada data in this report. We thus omit Vancouver from comparisons (and rankings) of sexual assault data in the municipal snapshots.

Finally, all 2023 data should be viewed as preliminary, as it has not yet been "updated" in the subsequent annual report. Multiple police services have informed us that such preliminary data can change due to several factors including changes in the circumstances of the victim at an incident (e.g., a victim's subsequent death turns an aggravated assault into a homicide) or a lag in reporting time. In particular, Calgary's data often is subject to considerable changes when updated the following year; correspondence with the Calgary Police Service confirmed that this is often due to a lag in the application of Uniform Crime Reporting (UCR) codes for crimes near the end of a quarter.

Incident counts vs. victim counts

This report uses data that reflects criminal "incidents" reported by police, not criminal cases that have been through the courts and for which someone has been found guilty. Statistics Canada defines a criminal "incident" as follows:

Incident refers to the occurrence of one (or more) criminal offence(s) during one single, distinct event, regardless of the number of victims. If there are multiple victims or multiple accused persons, the offences must occur at the same location and at the same time if they are to be included within the same incident. The incident count will normally be lower than the victim count due to incidents involving multiple victims. (Statistics Canada 2023c)

Through our correspondence with municipal police services and verification of annual police-reported municipal crime data, we discovered that municipalities were reporting data to the MCCA using slightly different

methods. To understand this difference, it is first important to distinguish between methods of reporting a crime, namely an “incident count” versus a “victim count.”

An “incident count” records criminal offences by incident – which is, as described above, a “single, distinct event, regardless of the number of victims” (Statistics Canada 2023c). By contrast, a “victim count” records a separate criminal incident for each victim. For violent crimes, Statistics Canada’s Uniform Crime Reporting (UCR) methodology uses the victim count, also known as the “victim-based” model of reporting. As an example of how a victim count works in practice, if “one person assaults three people, then three incidents are recorded. If three people assault one person, only one incident is recorded” (Statistics Canada Undated, 1).

When we corresponded with municipal police services, several mentioned the fact that the MCCA changed from using an “incident count” to a “victim count” in either 2018 or 2019. However, when queried about this change, the MCCA informed us that it had neither changed nor adjusted how it collected information for its violent crime reports. Regardless of whether it made any formal change, the 2018 and 2019 data do not appear to show any discernibly different trend from previous years. All municipal police services with which we corresponded confirmed that their data on homicide, sexual assault, and aggravated assault use a victim count (or victim-based) model of reporting.

The one exception to general victim-based reporting is the crime of robbery. Every Canadian municipal police service with which we corresponded indicated that they submitted “incident-based” robbery statistics to MCCA. The rationale for using an incident count for robbery is best explained by Statistics Canada:

Unlike all other violent offences, one occurrence of robbery is equal to one incident, regardless of the number of victims. The reason for this exception is that robbery can involve many people who could all be considered victims. In a bank robbery with 5 tellers and 20 customers present, 25 incidents of robbery would be counted if the normal scoring rule for violent incidents were applied. This would seriously overstate the occurrence of robbery. (Statistics Canada Undated, 1)

According to Statistics Canada’s own UCR method of crime reporting, robbery is equal to one incident regardless of the number of victims (Statistics Canada Undated, 1). Curiously, however, there was typically a wide divergence between the cities’ MCCA-reported robbery data and Statistics Canada’s robbery data, with Statistics Canada’s robbery count much higher in every city except Edmonton and Toronto (see Appendix B). Several municipal police services suggested that this was because the Statistics Canada incident tables use a victim count for robbery, even though the UCR guidelines state that it should be using an incident count. We were unable to independently confirm this with Statistics Canada.

Methods of reporting: most serious offence (MSO) vs. all offences

Within this victim-based UCR definition, there are two different ways to count violent criminal incidents. The first is the “most serious offence” (MSO) method, which only counts the most serious offence against the victim in a violent criminal incident. For example, if an attempted murder and an aggravated assault both took place against a victim, only the attempted murder would be counted in the data. Statistics Canada uses the MSO method in its annual UCR reporting tables (see Statistics Canada 2023c). By contrast, the “all violations” or “all offences” method of counting violent criminal offences involves counting up to four violent offences in a criminal incident as separate offences. Using the example above, if an attempted murder and an aggravated assault both took place against a victim, both offences would be counted in the data using the “all violations” method of counting (see Toronto Police Service 2019).

Through correspondence with police services, analysis of police services’ annual and quarterly reports, and comparison of MCCA data with Statistics Canada data, we have concluded that six cities (Vancouver, Winnipeg, Calgary, Edmonton, Ottawa, Montreal and Ottawa) use the “most serious offences” method of reporting their MCCA data, while three (Peel, York, and Toronto) use the “all offences” method. The only police service from which we did not receive independent confirmation was Montreal. However, Montreal’s quarterly reporting states that “For all criminal statistics presented, only the most serious offense is counted” (SPVM 2022, 4). Because all other polices

services who responded to inquiries indicated that their MCCA data uses the method that corresponds to their online crime reports, it appears Montreal uses the MSO method.

All else being equal, the MSO method *undercounts* violations relative to the “all offences” method. As Statistics Canada notes, the MSO is “not a census of all violations of the law that come to the attention of police”; for violent crimes, it is “equal to the number of victims of violent crimes (other than robberies)” (Statistics Canada Undated, 1). This suggests that York, Peel, and Toronto are slightly *overcounting* criminal incidents compared with the other six municipalities. However, when asked about the difference between the MSO and “all offences” method, multiple police services replied that the undercounting of concurrent offences within the same criminal incident under the MSO were rare, and that the vast majority of offences would still be counted using MSO. Moreover, because York and Peel almost always have the lowest violent crime rates amongst the nine municipalities, this would not affect their rankings in the municipal snapshots as any overcounting on their part would suggest their violent crime rates would be even lower using the MSO method. For all four crimes, Toronto’s 2023 rates were sufficiently higher than the next-highest city to provide us with confidence that its method of reporting would not affect this ranking. Nevertheless, these differences should be considered for Peel, York, and Toronto.

To ensure comparability, we cross-referenced the MCCA-reported data with Statistics Canada data, which uses the “most serious offence” method but also often includes incidents beyond those reported by the municipal police department. The tables comparing MCCA and Statistics Canada data are contained in Appendix B. Based on similarities of trends within municipalities and rankings between municipalities from these two data sources, we are confident the MCCA data are comparable for all nine cities – except for sexual assault in Vancouver. Nevertheless, the variations in reporting methods speak to a greater (and unfortunately familiar) issue: there is a lack of uniformity in municipal crime reporting.

APPENDIX B

MCCA and Statistics Canada data

MCCA data tables by crime*

Homicide rate (per 100,000) – annual

	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
Calgary	2.33	2.70	2.35	2.32	1.37	1.50	2.50	1.53	1.91	1.44
Edmonton	3.68	3.49	4.36	4.17	2.79	2.63	3.63	3.88	3.31	3.48
Montreal	1.64	1.69	1.34	1.38	1.79	1.38	1.37	2.08	2.29	1.63
Ottawa	0.74	0.74	2.59	1.42	1.49	1.27	0.77	1.43	1.21	1.27
Peel	0.63	1.11	0.77	1.09	1.68	2.07	1.20	0.93	1.98	1.47
Toronto	2.04	2.00	2.62	2.27	3.29	2.67	2.38	2.88	2.35	2.34
Vancouver	1.53	2.43	1.81	2.84	2.21	1.59	3.00	2.59	1.84	2.06
Winnipeg	3.55	3.37	3.58	3.24	2.92	5.77	5.47	5.56	6.77	5.58
York	1.07	0.62	0.70	0.87	0.95	1.44	0.71	0.99	2.04	1.03

Homicide rate (per 100,000) – Three-year rolling average

	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
Calgary	2.46	2.45	2.01	1.73	1.79	1.84	1.98	1.63
Edmonton	3.84	4.01	3.77	3.20	3.02	3.38	3.61	3.56
Montreal	1.56	1.47	1.50	1.52	1.51	1.61	1.91	2.00
Ottawa	1.36	1.58	1.84	1.39	1.18	1.15	1.13	1.30
Peel	0.83	0.99	1.18	1.62	1.65	1.40	1.37	1.46
Toronto	2.22	2.30	2.73	2.74	2.78	2.64	2.53	2.52
Vancouver	1.92	2.36	2.29	2.21	2.27	2.39	2.48	2.17
Winnipeg	3.50	3.40	3.25	3.98	4.72	5.60	5.94	5.97
York	0.80	0.73	0.84	1.09	1.03	1.05	1.25	1.36

* For all tables, Calgary's numbers from 2014–2022 reflect updated data sent by CPS to the authors in June 2024.

Aggravated assault rate (per 100,000) – annual

	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
Calgary	8.29	7.93	5.55	7.66	5.72	9.05	8.30	9.11	7.07	8.11
Edmonton	24.91	23.40	25.20	24.72	32.99	37.69	42.10	40.02	41.30	34.84
Montreal	N/A	5.55	5.99	4.87	4.71	4.18	3.13	3.66	5.25	4.93
Ottawa	N/A	6.75	9.13	7.52	5.37	6.14	6.51	5.61	6.34	6.25
Peel	5.11	5.68	6.26	4.29	6.40	4.75	4.73	4.25	4.88	4.42
Toronto	11.15	10.68	10.82	9.36	9.01	10.29	6.67	8.63	8.26	7.99
Vancouver	7.98	6.83	9.18	8.06	6.78	7.94	7.15	8.64	8.64	6.88
Winnipeg	15.34	17.57	19.28	26.87	22.58	25.29	22.68	20.70	21.20	26.54
York	2.14	2.56	1.83	3.22	3.19	3.55	3.31	2.98	2.29	1.67

Aggravated assault rate (per 100,000) – three-year rolling average

	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
Calgary	7.26	7.05	6.31	7.47	7.69	8.82	8.16	8.10
Edmonton	24.50	24.44	27.64	31.80	37.60	39.94	41.14	38.72
Montreal	N/A	5.47	5.19	4.59	4.01	3.65	4.01	4.61
Ottawa	N/A	7.80	7.34	6.35	6.01	6.09	6.15	6.07
Peel	5.68	5.41	5.65	5.15	5.29	4.58	4.62	4.52
Toronto	10.88	10.29	9.73	9.56	8.66	8.53	7.85	8.29
Vancouver	8.00	8.03	8.01	7.59	7.29	7.91	8.14	8.05
Winnipeg	17.40	21.24	22.91	24.91	23.52	22.89	21.53	22.81
York	2.18	2.54	2.75	3.32	3.35	3.28	2.86	2.31

Robbery rate (per 100,000) – annual

	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
Calgary	65.62	76.90	64.58	74.74	82.26	85.52	65.59	75.46	72.43	75.42
Edmonton	121.41	148.37	139.16	135.90	144.32	144.54	113.71	92.53	110.01	115.50
Montreal	128.09	122.45	137.84	106.60	83.10	100.39	79.09	96.98	96.46	109.33
Ottawa	47.33	56.41	46.15	50.72	56.33	65.44	43.56	38.86	46.09	47.02
Peel	49.62	47.00	57.54	61.46	70.80	61.42	43.35	38.57	50.66	52.14
Toronto	135.90	128.00	131.69	139.35	124.51	122.20	95.74	77.68	96.28	102.13
Vancouver	99.75	113.72	102.84	89.29	87.87	90.34	85.66	81.95	94.76	84.45
Winnipeg	163.51	174.53	234.14	277.17	300.41	256.20	235.78	247.24	307.75	362.48
York	18.30	19.70	24.03	30.81	30.14	30.95	23.14	17.72	36.19	41.09

Robbery rate (per 100,000) – three-year rolling average

	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
Calgary	69.03	72.07	73.86	80.84	77.79	75.52	71.16	74.44
Edmonton	136.31	141.14	139.79	141.59	134.19	116.93	105.42	106.01
Montreal	129.46	122.30	109.18	96.70	87.53	92.15	90.84	100.92
Ottawa	49.96	51.09	51.07	57.50	55.11	49.29	42.84	43.99
Peel	51.38	55.33	63.27	64.56	58.52	47.78	44.19	47.12
Toronto	131.87	133.01	131.85	128.68	114.15	98.54	89.90	92.03
Vancouver	105.44	101.95	93.33	89.17	87.95	85.98	87.46	87.05
Winnipeg	190.73	228.62	270.57	277.93	264.13	246.41	263.59	305.82
York	20.68	24.85	28.33	30.64	28.08	23.94	25.68	31.66

Sexual assault rate (per 100,000) – annual

	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
Calgary	50.24	58.19	64.04	73.27	76.39	72.96	60.96	71.96	65.43	67.25
Edmonton	90.43	92.88	87.52	112.20	101.56	103.92	100.54	115.24	106.97	103.70
Montreal	41.26	50.22	59.68	72.16	73.68	71.62	66.42	98.67	86.30	91.72
Ottawa	59.66	62.00	71.76	60.59	72.85	69.73	57.64	64.70	68.95	58.98
Peel	N/A	30.85	35.20	46.62	54.09	49.04	38.89	46.54	55.34	54.58
Toronto	85.68	67.90	67.50	84.61	94.93	93.85	79.25	90.84	99.75	102.83
Vancouver*	9.05	19.74	17.77	22.25	19.76	21.21	19.31	19.44	24.22	22.56
Winnipeg	78.13	67.31	106.19	105.98	104.65	83.35	104.27	97.42	121.57	104.29
York	21.60	29.42	32.85	34.81	39.27	40.17	39.22	45.95	59.79	59.89

Sexual assault rate (per 100,000) – three-year rolling average

	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
Calgary	57.49	65.16	71.23	74.21	70.10	68.63	66.12	68.21
Edmonton	90.28	97.53	100.43	105.89	102.01	106.56	107.58	108.64
Montreal	50.38	60.69	68.51	72.49	70.57	78.90	83.79	92.23
Ottawa	64.47	64.78	68.40	67.72	66.74	64.02	63.76	64.21
Peel	N/A	37.56	45.31	49.92	47.34	44.82	46.92	52.15
Toronto	73.69	73.33	82.34	91.13	89.35	87.98	89.95	97.81
Vancouver*	15.52	19.92	19.92	21.07	20.09	19.99	20.99	22.07
Winnipeg	83.88	93.16	105.61	97.99	97.42	95.01	107.75	107.76
York	27.96	32.36	35.65	38.09	39.55	41.78	48.32	55.21

* Vancouver's sexual assault numbers accord with the FBI definition of "rape" and are not comparable with other Canadian municipalities.

Ranks and trends (2022 and 2023): all cities and crimes

	2022 RATE	2022 RANK	2023 RATE	2023 RANK	SHORT TERM	MEDIUM TERM	LONG TERM
CALGARY							
Homicide	1.98	5 of 9	1.63	4 of 9	▼	▼	▼
Aggravated assault	8.16	7 of 9	8.10	6 of 9	▼	▲	▲
Robbery	72.43	4 of 9	74.44	4 of 9	▲	▼	▲
Sexual assault	65.43	4 of 8	68.21	4 of 8	▲	▼	▲
EDMONTON							
Homicide	3.61	8 of 9	3.56	8 of 9	▼	▲	▼
Aggravated assault	41.14	9 of 9	38.72	9 of 9	▼	▲	▲
Robbery	105.42	8 of 9	106.01	8 of 9	▲	▼	▼
Sexual assault	107.58	7 of 8	108.64	8 of 8	▲	▲	▲
MONTREAL							
Homicide	1.91	4 of 9	2.00	5 of 9	▲	▲	▲
Aggravated assault	4.01	2 of 9	4.61	3 of 9	▲	▲	▼
Robbery	90.84	7 of 9	100.92	7 of 9	▲	▲	▼
Sexual assault	83.79	5 of 8	92.23	5 of 8	▲	▲	▲
OTTAWA							
Homicide	1.13	1 of 9	1.30	1 of 9	▲	▼	▼
Aggravated assault	6.15	4 of 9	6.07	4 of 9	▼	▼	▼
Robbery	42.84	2 of 9	43.99	2 of 9	▲	▼	▼
Sexual assault	63.76	3 of 8	64.21	3 of 8	▲	▼	▼
PEEL							
Homicide	1.37	3 of 9	1.46	3 of 9	▲	▼	▲
Aggravated assault	4.62	3 of 9	4.52	2 of 9	▼	▼	▼
Robbery	44.19	3 of 9	47.12	3 of 9	▲	▼	▼
Sexual assault	46.92	1 of 8	52.15	1 of 8	▲	▲	▲

TORONTO								
Homicide	2.53	7 of 9	2.52	7 of 9	▼	▼	▲	
Aggravated assault	7.85	5 of 9	8.29	7 of 9	▲	▼	▼	
Robbery	89.90	6 of 9	92.03	6 of 9	▲	▼	▼	
Sexual assault	89.95	6 of 8	97.81	6 of 8	▲	▲	▲	
VANCOUVER								
Homicide	2.48	6 of 9	2.17	6 of 9	▼	▼	▲	
Aggravated assault	8.14	6 of 9	8.05	5 of 9	▼	▲	▲	
Robbery	87.46	5 of 9	87.05	5 of 9	▼	▼	▼	
Sexual assault*	20.99	N/A	22.07	N/A	▲	▲	▲	
WINNIPEG								
Homicide	5.94	9 of 9	5.97	9 of 9	▲	▲	▲	
Aggravated assault	21.53	8 of 9	22.81	8 of 9	▲	▼	▲	
Robbery	263.59	9 of 9	305.82	9 of 9	▲	▲	▲	
Sexual assault	107.75	8 of 8	107.76	7 of 8	▲	▲	▲	
YORK								
Homicide	1.25	2 of 9	1.36	2 of 9	▲	▲	▲	
Aggravated assault	2.86	1 of 9	2.31	1 of 9	▼	▼	▲	
Robbery	25.68	1 of 9	31.66	1 of 9	▲	▲	▲	
Sexual assault	48.32	2 of 8	55.21	2 of 8	▲	▲	▲	

* Vancouver's sexual assault numbers accord with the FBI definition of "rape" and are not comparable with other Canadian municipalities.

MCCA vs. Statistics Canada data

Calgary*

HOMICIDE

	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
MCCA total	29	34	30	30	18	20	34	21	27	21
StatCan total	32	36	30	29	18	19	34	20	26	21
MCCA rate	2.33	2.70	2.35	2.32	1.37	1.50	2.50	1.53	1.91	1.44
StatCan rate	2.58	2.85	2.35	2.25	1.38	1.43	2.52	1.47	1.86	1.42

AGGRAVATED ASSAULT

	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
MCCA total	103	100	71	99	75	121	113	125	100	118
StatCan total	96	97	70	96	75	120	112	121	96	123
MCCA rate	8.29	7.93	5.55	7.66	5.72	9.05	8.30	9.11	7.07	8.11
StatCan rate	7.73	7.69	5.47	7.45	5.75	9.03	8.30	8.92	6.88	8.30

ROBBERY

	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
MCCA total	815	970	826	966	1079	1144	893	1035	1024	1098
StatCan total	931	1144	937	1117	1285	1341	1013	1195	1122	1205
MCCA rate	65.62	76.90	64.58	74.74	82.26	85.52	65.59	75.46	72.43	75.42
StatCan rate	74.94	90.68	73.28	86.73	98.53	100.92	75.09	88.11	80.43	81.3

SEXUAL ASSAULT

	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
MCCA total	624	734	819	947	1002	976	830	987	925	979
StatCan total	582	666	660	804	989	963	811	967	865	947
MCCA rate	50.24	58.19	64.04	73.27	76.39	72.96	60.96	71.96	65.43	67.25
StatCan rate	46.86	52.80	51.60	62.20	75.40	71.99	59.56	70.50	61.18	65.05

* Calgary's MCCA numbers from 2014–2022 reflect updated data sent by CPS to the authors in June 2024.

Edmonton

HOMICIDE

	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
MCCA total	34	33	42	41*	28	27	38	41	36	39
StatCan total	35	30	38	41	29	26	39	42	32	42
MCCA rate	3.68	3.49	4.36	4.17*	2.79	2.63	3.63	3.88	3.31	3.48
StatCan rate	3.79	3.18	3.94	4.17	2.90	2.54	3.74	4.00	2.98	3.72

AGGRAVATED ASSAULT

	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
MCCA total	230	221	243	243	331	387	441	423	449	390
StatCan total	231	222	244	238	321	380	431	414	455	392
MCCA rate	24.91	23.40	25.20	24.72	32.99	37.69	42.10	40.02	41.30	34.84
StatCan rate	25.01	23.50	25.28	24.23	32.08	37.13	41.29	39.39	42.37	34.73

ROBBERY

	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
MCCA total	1121	1401	1342	1336	1448	1484	1191	978	1196	1293
StatCan total	1121	1395	1342	1337	1449	1484	1188	975	1194	1305
MCCA rate	121.41	148.37	139.16	135.90	144.32	144.54	113.71	92.53	110.01	115.50
StatCan rate	121.38	147.69	139.04	136.14	144.79	145.02	113.80	92.77	111.20	115.61

SEXUAL ASSAULT

	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
MCCA total	835	877	844	1103	1019	1067	1053	1218	1163	1161
StatCan total	828	891	847	931	1010	1070	1057	1220	1165	1187
MCCA rate	90.43	92.88	87.52	112.20	101.56	103.92	100.54	115.24	106.97	103.70
StatCan rate	89.67	94.36	87.83	94.70	100.67	104.21	100.92	115.43	107.16	106.03

* Edmonton's 2017 homicide number was reported to MCCA as 26, but correspondence with Edmonton Police Service confirmed this was an error, and the number should be 41.

Montreal

HOMICIDE

	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
MCCA total	28	29	23	24	32	25	25	37	41	30
StatCan total	28	30	24	25	32	25	26	38	40	33
MCCA rate	1.64	1.69	1.34	1.38	1.79	1.38	1.37	2.08	2.29	1.63
StatCan rate	1.44	1.54	1.22	1.26	1.58	1.21	1.26	1.89	1.97	1.55

AGGRAVATED ASSAULT

	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
MCCA total	N/A	95	103	85	84	76	57	65	94	91
StatCan total	114	110	103	99	94	95	61	93	116	122
MCCA rate	N/A	5.55	5.99	4.87	4.71	4.18	3.13	3.66	5.25	4.93
StatCan rate	5.86	5.65	5.25	4.99	4.64	4.61	2.96	4.61	5.70	5.74

ROBBERY

	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
MCCA total	2192	2097	2372	1860	1482	1825	1442	1724	1728	2017
StatCan total	2533	2557	2420	2274	1924	2116	1677	1671	1985	2333
MCCA rate	128.09	122.45	137.84	106.60	83.10	100.39	79.09	96.98	96.46	109.33
StatCan rate	130.11	131.27	123.42	114.63	95.07	102.76	81.33	82.89	97.53	109.80

SEXUAL ASSAULT

	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
MCCA total	706	860	1027	1259	1314	1302	1211	1754	1546	1692
StatCan total	818	871	1000	1258	1323	1341	1228	1691	1628	1774
MCCA rate	41.26	50.22	59.68	72.16	73.68	71.62	66.42	98.67	86.30	91.72
StatCan rate	47.80	50.86	58.11	72.10	74.18	73.77	67.35	95.13	90.87	96.16

Ottawa

HOMICIDE

	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
MCCA total	7	7	25	14	15	13	8	15	13	14
StatCan total	7	7	24	14	16	13	8	15	16	16
MCCA rate	0.74	0.74	2.59	1.42	1.49	1.27	0.77	1.43	1.21	1.27
StatCan rate	0.74	0.74	2.49	1.42	1.59	1.26	0.76	1.41	1.48	1.44

AGGRAVATED ASSAULT

	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
MCCA total	N/A	64	88	74	54	63	68	59	68	69
StatCan total	64	72	97	81	57	71	72	68	69	72
MCCA rate	N/A	6.75	9.13	7.52	5.37	6.14	6.51	5.61	6.34	6.25
StatCan rate	6.81	7.59	10.05	8.22	5.65	6.88	6.84	6.40	6.37	6.46

ROBBERY

	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
MCCA total	445	535	445	499	566	671	455	409	494	519
StatCan total	506	573	512	603	639	742	519	460	554	578
MCCA rate	47.33	56.41	46.15	50.72	56.33	65.44	43.56	38.86	46.09	47.02
StatCan rate	53.85	60.44	53.06	61.16	63.34	71.93	49.33	43.31	51.11	51.87

SEXUAL ASSAULT

	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
MCCA total	561	588	692	596	732	715	602	681	739	651
StatCan total	507	505	582	628	774	748	650	714	797	678
MCCA rate	59.66	62.00	71.76	60.59	72.85	69.73	57.64	64.70	68.95	58.98
StatCan rate	53.92	53.24	60.35	63.84	77.03	72.95	62.23	67.84	74.36	61.43

Peel

HOMICIDE

	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
MCCA total	9	16	11	16	25	31	18	14	30	23
StatCan total	9	17	11	15	25	31	17	14	30	23
MCCA rate	0.63	1.11	0.77	1.09	1.68	2.07	1.20	0.93	1.98	1.47
StatCan rate	0.68	1.27	0.81	1.09	1.78	2.16	1.17	0.98	2.07	1.53

AGGRAVATED ASSAULT

	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
MCCA total	73	82	90	63	95	71	71	64	74	69
StatCan total	75	77	86	58	88	70	62	62	66	60
MCCA rate	5.11	5.68	6.26	4.29	6.40	4.75	4.73	4.25	4.88	4.42
StatCan rate	5.63	5.73	6.33	4.21	6.26	4.88	4.29	4.32	4.56	4.00

ROBBERY

	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
MCCA total	709	678	827	903	1051	918	651	581	768	814
StatCan total	875	816	980	1,058	1,232	1,095	770	673	912	945
MCCA rate	49.62	47.00	57.54	61.46	70.80	61.42	43.35	38.57	50.66	52.14
StatCan rate	65.65	60.73	72.1	76.71	87.69	76.33	53.22	46.91	63.06	62.98

SEXUAL ASSAULT

	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
MCCA total	N/A	445	506	685	803	733	584	701	839	852
StatCan total	432	470	479	619	728	663	491	638	786	740
MCCA rate	N/A	30.85	35.20	46.62	54.09	49.04	38.89	46.54	55.34	54.58
StatCan rate	30.23	32.58	33.33	42.13	49.04	44.36	32.70	42.35	51.85	47.40

Toronto

HOMICIDE

	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
MCCA total	57	56	74	65	96	79	71	85	71	73
StatCan total	58	54	74	63	105	77	72	86	71	74
MCCA rate	2.04	2.00	2.62	2.27	3.29	2.67	2.38	2.88	2.35	2.34
StatCan rate	2.09	1.94	2.62	2.21	3.62	2.62	2.44	2.95	2.38	2.38

AGGRAVATED ASSAULT

	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
MCCA total	311	299	305	268	263	305	199	255	250	249
StatCan total	268	281	280	251	255	282	203	219	211	209
MCCA rate	11.15	10.68	10.82	9.36	9.01	10.29	6.67	8.63	8.26	7.99
StatCan rate	9.66	10.08	9.92	8.79	8.78	9.59	6.88	7.51	7.07	6.72

ROBBERY

	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
MCCA total	3791	3582	3713	3989	3633	3621	2857	2296	2913	3182
StatCan total	3567	3358	3632	3849	3511	3499	2640	2109	2697	2845
MCCA rate	135.90	128.00	131.69	139.35	124.51	122.20	95.74	77.68	96.28	102.13
StatCan rate	128.52	120.51	128.68	134.74	120.90	119.04	89.42	72.28	90.34	91.45

SEXUAL ASSAULT

	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
MCCA total	2390	1900	1903	2422	2770	2781	2365	2685	3018	3204
StatCan total	1841	1710	1692	1818	2225	2203	1796	2060	2430	2519
MCCA rate	85.68	67.90	67.50	84.61	94.93	93.85	79.25	90.84	99.75	102.83
StatCan rate	66.00	61.11	60.01	63.51	76.25	74.34	60.19	69.69	80.31	80.85

Vancouver

HOMICIDE

	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
MCCA total	10	16	12	19	15	11	21	18	13	15
StatCan total	10	16	13	19	15	12	20	19	13	15
MCCA rate	1.53	2.43	1.81	2.84	2.21	1.59	3.00	2.59	1.84	2.06
StatCan rate	1.53	2.42	1.95	2.83	2.20	1.72	2.85	2.72	1.84	2.04

AGGRAVATED ASSAULT

	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
MCCA total	52	45	61	54	46	55	50	60	61	50
StatCan total	66	54	67	60	48	59	55	62	71	62
MCCA rate	7.98	6.83	9.18	8.06	6.78	7.94	7.15	8.64	8.64	6.88
StatCan rate	10.10	8.18	10.05	8.93	7.04	8.47	7.82	8.89	10.03	8.44

ROBBERY

	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
MCCA total	650	749	683	598	596	626	599	569	669	614
StatCan total	770	881	752	656	685	690	700	639	763	703
MCCA rate	99.75	113.72	102.84	89.29	87.87	90.34	85.66	81.95	94.76	84.45
StatCan rate	117.84	133.40	112.81	97.60	100.54	99.09	99.58	91.58	107.81	95.73

RAPE/ SEXUAL ASSAULT*

	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
MCCA total (rape)	59	130	118	149	134	147	135	135	171	164
StatCan total	495	490	488	525	577	569	494	557	536	556
MCCA rate (rape)	9.05	19.74	17.77	22.25	19.76	21.21	19.31	19.44	24.22	22.56
StatCan rate	75.96	74.40	73.48	78.39	85.06	82.11	70.65	80.22	75.92	76.48

* Vancouver's MCCA numbers are much lower because of the VPD's decision to report data to the MCCA that accord with the FBI definition of rape. See Appendix A for details.

Winnipeg

HOMICIDE

	2014	2015	2016*	2017*	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
MCCA total	25	24	26	24	22	44	42	43	53	45
StatCan total	25	22	24	24	22	44	41	41	53	44
MCCA rate	3.55	3.37	3.58	3.24	2.92	5.77	5.47	5.56	6.77	5.58
StatCan rate	3.55	3.09	3.30	3.24	2.92	5.76	5.34	5.31	6.75	5.39

AGGRAVATED ASSAULT

	2014	2015	2016*	2017*	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
MCCA total	108	125	140	199	170	193	174	160	166	214
StatCan total	137	148	140	202	174	211	175	157	167	218
MCCA rate	15.34	17.57	19.28	26.87	22.58	25.29	22.68	20.70	21.20	26.54
StatCan rate	19.47	20.80	19.25	27.24	23.09	27.63	22.79	20.33	21.27	26.73

ROBBERY

	2014	2015	2016*	2017*	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
MCCA total	1151	1242	1700	2053	2262	1955	1809	1911	2410	2923
StatCan total	1308	1453	1817	2092	2378	2298	1892	1953	2442	2969
MCCA rate	163.51	174.53	234.14	277.17	300.41	256.20	235.78	247.24	307.75	362.48
StatCan rate	185.87	204.23	249.81	282.08	315.55	300.91	246.36	252.87	311.05	364.03

SEXUAL ASSAULT

	2014	2015	2016*	2017*	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
MCCA total	550	479	771	785	788	636	800	753	952	841
StatCan total	708	656	774	773	796	836	796	845	993	895
MCCA rate	78.13	67.31	106.19	105.98	104.65	83.35	104.27	97.42	121.57	104.29
StatCan rate	100.58	92.18	106.60	104.36	105.71	109.56	103.75	109.32	126.80	110.99

* Winnipeg's 2016 and 2017 numbers were taken from the Winnipeg Police Service's annual report, as its numbers were not reported to the MCCA.

York

HOMICIDE

	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
MCCA total	12	7	8	10	11	17	8	12	25	13
StatCan total	12	7	8	10	11	16	9	12	22	12
MCCA rate	1.07	0.62	0.70	0.87	0.95	1.44	0.71	0.99	2.04	1.03
StatCan rate	1.07	0.62	0.70	0.87	0.94	1.34	0.74	0.98	1.79	0.96

AGGRAVATED ASSAULT

	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
MCCA total	24	29	21	37	37	42	37	36	28	21
StatCan total	24	30	21	36	34	38	31	25	18	17
MCCA rate	2.14	2.56	1.83	3.22	3.19	3.55	3.31	2.98	2.29	1.67
StatCan rate	2.14	2.65	1.84	3.13	2.91	3.19	2.56	2.05	1.46	1.36

ROBBERY

	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
MCCA total	205	223	275	354	350	366	259	214	443	518
StatCan total	238	276	341	452	411	448	305	252	540	701
MCCA rate	18.30	19.70	24.03	30.81	30.14	30.95	23.14	17.72	36.19	41.09
StatCan rate	21.18	24.34	29.81	39.26	35.22	37.58	25.18	20.64	43.89	56.18

SEXUAL ASSAULT

	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
MCCA total	242	333	376	400	456	475	439	555	732	755
StatCan total	242	269	347	371	409	439	397	506	664	735
MCCA rate	21.60	29.42	32.85	34.81	39.27	40.17	39.22	45.95	59.79	59.89
StatCan rate	21.60	23.77	30.32	32.29	35.22	37.13	35.47	41.90	54.24	58.30

ENDNOTES

- 1 Vancouver’s sexual assault numbers reflect a narrower definition of rape to accord with American cities reporting to the MCCA. See the section “Calculating and Comparing Violent Crime Rates” and Appendix A for an explanation of Vancouver’s definition.
- 2 Peel and York are technically classified as “upper-tier municipalities” in Ontario. Statistics Canada organizes population by “census subdivision” and separates out the various cities within Peel Region (including Mississauga and Brampton) and York Region (including Markham and Vaughan). When counted as individual cities, York Region and Peel Region comprise two of the nine most populous cities in Canada.
- 3 Some data was updated based on conversations with municipal police services, including all of Calgary’s data for three of the four violent crimes (sexual assault, aggravated assault, and robbery). See Appendix A.
- 4 The MCCA membership application states “member applicant must have a residential population of at least 1.5 million and a minimum of 1,000 sworn law enforcement officers,” which would seem to exclude any additional Canadian cities from joining (MCCA 2023). However, insofar as only three cities currently reporting to the MCCA (Toronto, Montreal, and Peel) would meet this 1.5 million residency requirement, there may be room for others to join.
- 5 After this report was completed, Statistics Canada provided its population estimates for 2023 and updated its estimates for previous years to accord with 2021 census subdivision boundaries (Statistics Canada 2024b). Those new estimates are reflected in Statistics Canada’s crime rates in the tables in Appendix B (apart from sexual assault rates, which were calculated by the authors).

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