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Crime and the Nation's Households, 2002

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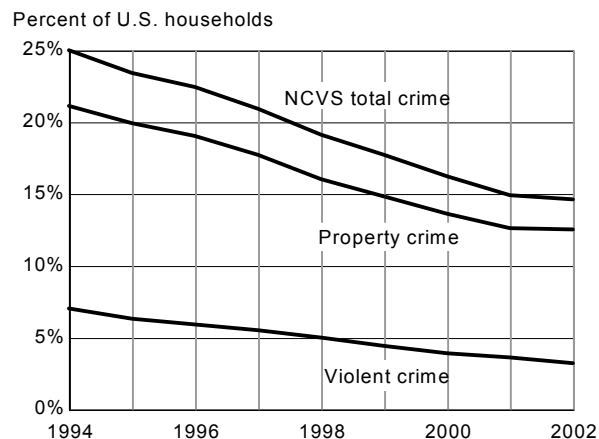
In 2002, 15% of the households in the United States, accounting for 16 million households, experienced 1 or more violent or property crimes as measured by the National Crime Victimization Survey (NCVS). These crimes include rape/sexual assault, robbery, aggravated and simple assault, purse snatching and pocket picking, household burglary, motor vehicle theft, and theft.

In 2002, 3% of households had a member age 12 or older who experienced one or more violent crimes. Simple assault was the type of violent crime most often sustained. Thirteen percent of households experienced one or more property crimes, with theft the most frequent type.

Measuring crime by counting the affected households gives an understanding of the dispersion of crime in the Nation. Some households account for multiple victimizations. When interpreted in relation to the criminal victimization statistics reported in the annual BJS Bulletin (such as *Criminal Victimization, 2002*, <<http://www.ojp.usdoj.gov/bjs/abstract/cv02.htm>>), the households-victimized-by-crime indicator sharpens the focus on who is more likely to experience crime.

Highlights

In 1994 a quarter of all U.S. households experienced a violent or property crime. By 2002 the percentage of households victimized had dropped to 15%



- In 2002 a violent crime against a person age 12 or older occurred in 3% of U.S. households. In 1994, 7% of households had a member who experienced one or more incidents of violence.
- About 4% of U.S. households in 2002 (half the 1994 percentage) were either burglarized or had a member who was a victim of a violent crime committed by a stranger.

- In both 1994 and 2002, less than 1% of households included a member victimized by an intimate partner. In 2002 intimate partner violence occurred in about 423,700 households.
- About 5% of households were vandalized at least once during 2002.

10% of U.S. households had one or more thefts in 2002

About 16 million households experienced 1 or more of the victimizations measured by the NCVS, an ongoing household survey that collects information about crimes both unreported and reported to the police. Victimized households sustained some kind of property crime or had a member age 12 or older who was victimized by violence. These households constituted about 15% of the 110.3 million households in the United States. Theft, affecting 1 in 10 households, was the most frequent crime.

About 3% of households had an adolescent or adult member who was victimized by one or more incidents of violence during the year. (NCVS relies on interviews with household members and does not estimate victimizations of children younger than 12.) Simple assault was the most frequent type of violence encountered. About 2½ million households experienced simple assault, which does not result in serious injury and does not involve a weapon.

In 2002 less than 1% of households had members victimized by more than one type of violence, including rape, sexual assault, robbery, and aggravated assault.

For this prevalence measure, households that experienced the same type of crime more than once were counted only once for that victimization. For example, a household with two members victimized by a simple assault was counted once for simple assault. Similarly, a household burglarized twice during the year was counted once for burglary.

About 1% of households were victimized by both violent and property crimes. Such households were counted once in the violent crime measure, once in the property crime measure, and once in the overall measure.

Table 1. Households experiencing crime in 2002

Type of victimization	Households	
	Number	Percent
Any NCVS crime	16,080,430	14.6%
Personal crime	3,624,440	3.3
Violent crime*	3,520,360	3.2%
Rape	107,600	0.1
Sexual assault	69,190	0.1
Robbery	392,280	0.4
Assault	3,073,250	2.8
Aggravated	753,330	0.7
Simple	2,456,660	2.2
Purse snatching/pocket picking	117,680	0.1
Property crime	13,778,470	12.5%
Household burglary	2,695,820	2.4
Motor vehicle theft	935,590	0.8
Theft	10,902,680	9.9

Note: Detail does not add to total or crime subtotals because of overlap in households experiencing various crimes. There was a total of 110,323,840 households in 2002. If vandalism is included among the victimizations, a total of 19,855,490 households (18%) experienced at least one crime in 2002.

*Violent crime does not include homicide.

In 2002 “crimes of high concern” occurred in 3.9% of households

About 1 in every 26 households sustained violence by a stranger or a household burglary during 2002 (figure 1). The portion of households affected by these NCVS crimes, often cited as among the most fear provoking, has fallen steadily since 1994.

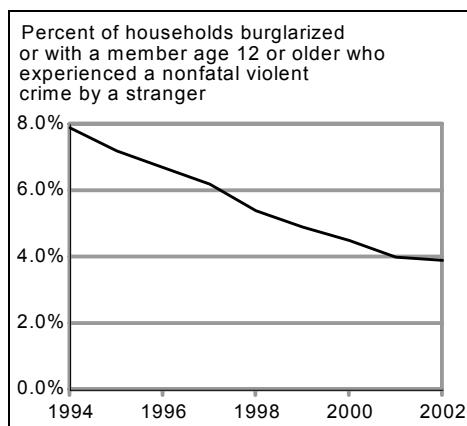


Figure 1

Intimate partner violence affected about 4 households in 1,000 during 2002

Intimate partner violence, which is committed by a current or former spouse, boyfriend, or girlfriend, was experienced by members of less than 1% of all households (figure 2). Because the household indicator counts a household only once for each type of crime, it does not measure repeated victimizations or victimizations of more than one household member during the year.

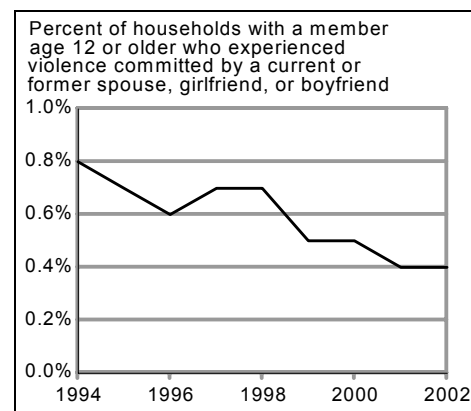


Figure 2

Prevalence of crime higher for households of Hispanics, urbanites, and residents in the West

Households headed by Hispanics (19%) were more likely than those of non-Hispanics (14%) to be victimized by crime in 2002.

	Percent of households	
	Hispanic head of household	Non-Hispanic head of household
Any NCVS crime	19.3%	14.1%
Violent crime	4.2	3.1
Property crime	16.8	12.0
Violence by strangers or burglary	4.6%	3.8%
Intimate partner violence	0.4%	0.4%

Households in urban areas (19%) were more likely to experience one or more crimes than suburban households (13%) and rural households (11%) in 2002 (table 2).

Compared to other regions, households in the West were more likely to be victims of measured crimes (19%). In the Midwest and South 14% of

households had members who were victims of crimes, and in the Northeast, 11%.

	Percent of households
Northeast	
Any NCVS crime	11.4%
Violent crime	2.6
Property crime	9.5
Midwest	
Any NCVS crime	14.3%
Violent crime	3.5
Property crime	12.0
South	
Any NCVS crime	13.6%
Violent crime	2.8
Property crime	11.7
West	
Any NCVS crime	19.4%
Violent crime	4.1
Property crime	16.9

Household size affected the likelihood of experiencing criminal victimization in 2002 (table 3). Twenty-six percent of households with six or more persons and 21% of households made up of four or five persons experienced one or more crimes, compared to 14% of households with two or three persons and 10% of one-person households.

Vandalism of residences or other property owned by an individual

Over 5.4 million households, 4.9% of all U.S. households, had at least one incident of vandalism in 2002. First compiled by the NCVS in 2001, vandalism is not included in the overall measure of households experiencing victimization. If vandalism is included in the overall measure, the total percentage of households experiencing a crime rises from 15% to 18%.

Prevalence of crime in households decreased from 1994 to 2002

Between 1994 and 2002 the extent to which households experienced crime declined. About 1 in 7 households experienced one or more crimes in 2002, compared to 1 in 4 households in 1994. The percentage of households experiencing either violent or property crime also declined. In 2002, 3% of households had a member who experienced at least one violent crime, compared to 7% in 1994. For property crimes, 12% of households were affected in 2002, compared to 21% in 1994.

	Percent of households	
	1994	2002
Any NCVS crime	25.0%	14.6%
Violent crime	7.0	3.2
Property crime	21.1	12.5
Violence by strangers or burglary	7.9%	3.9%
Intimate partner violence	0.8%	0.4%

Number of households

Experiencing some type of crime	25,103,670	16,080,430
U.S. total	100,544,570	110,323,840

Table 2. Households that experienced crime, by urban, suburban, and rural location, 2002

	Percent of households		
	Urban	Suburban	Rural
Any NCVS crime	19.1%	13.3%	10.9%
Violent crime	4.3	2.8	2.4
Property crime	16.3	11.4	9.3
Violence by strangers or burglary	5.5%	3.3%	2.8%
Intimate partner violence	0.6%	0.3%	0.3%

Note: Murder and vandalism are not measured.

Table 3. Households that experienced crime, by household size, 2002

	Percent of households, by number of members			
	1 member	2-3	4-5	6 or more
Any NCVS crime	9.9%	13.9%	21.2%	25.9%
Violent crime	1.9	3.0	4.6	7.3
Property crime	8.4	11.9	18.4	21.6
Violence by strangers or burglary	3.1%	3.7%	5.1%	6.1%
Intimate partner violence	0.3%	0.4%	0.4%	0.4%

Note: Murder and vandalism are not measured.

Methodology

Households-victimized-by-crime measures count each household once, regardless of the number of times a household experienced a particular crime in a calendar year. For the overall indicator, household-based crime estimates are derived from NCVS statistics on rape/sexual assault, robbery, assault, personal theft, household burglary, household theft, and motor vehicle theft. A household is counted if anyone in the household experienced one or more of any of these crimes within the year. For categories such as violent crime by a stranger or intimate partner crime, a household is counted if person(s) in the households were victimized one or more times by that particular type of crime.

First collected in 2001, vandalism is excluded from the overall estimate. When vandalism is included, 18% of households experienced a measured crime in 2002.

Comparisons presented in this report were determined to be statistically significant at the 95% confidence level, meaning that the estimated difference is greater than twice the standard error.

Detailed information about survey methodology and the construction of this prevalence measure, as well as data about households in prior years, is available in *Crime and the Nation's Households, 2000, With Trends, 1994-2000*, <<http://www.ojp.usdoj.gov/bjs/abstract/cnh00.htm>>. For formulas and more explanation about estimates of standard errors, see the BJS Bulletin *Criminal Victimization, 2002*, <<http://www.ojp.usdoj.gov/bjs/abstract/cv02.htm>>.

The Bureau of Justice Statistics is the statistical agency of the U.S. Department of Justice. Lawrence A. Greenfeld is director.

Patsy A. Klaus, BJS statistician, wrote this report under the supervision of Michael R. Rand. Cathy T. Maston, BJS, provided the statistical review. Tom Hester produced and edited the report.

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