

English summary of Brå report 2015:1



The Swedish Crime Survey 2014

Concerning exposure to crime, insecurity and confidence

brå

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The Swedish National Council for Crime Prevention (Brå) – centre for knowledge about crime and crime prevention measures

The Swedish National Council for Crime Prevention (Brå) works to reduce crime and improve levels of safety in society by producing data and disseminating knowledge on crime and crime prevention work.

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Summary

This report presents the overall results of the 2014 Swedish Crime Survey (NTU). Approximately 12,000 persons have answered the questions, giving a response rate of 61 per cent. The vast majority have participated in telephone interviews, but a few have replied via a mailed questionnaire. Below is a summary of the report's results, divided into the following areas: *exposure to crime, insecurity, trust in the criminal justice system and the victims' contacts with the justice system.*

Exposure to crime

The exposure to crime investigated concerns the calendar year preceding the date of the questioning. This means that the exposure reported in the 2014 NTU is the figure for 2013. The exposure to *offences against individual persons* is presented as the share of exposed persons, unlike exposure to *offences against households*, which is presented as a share of exposed households. Offences included in the “property offences” category do not have exposure data for 2005.

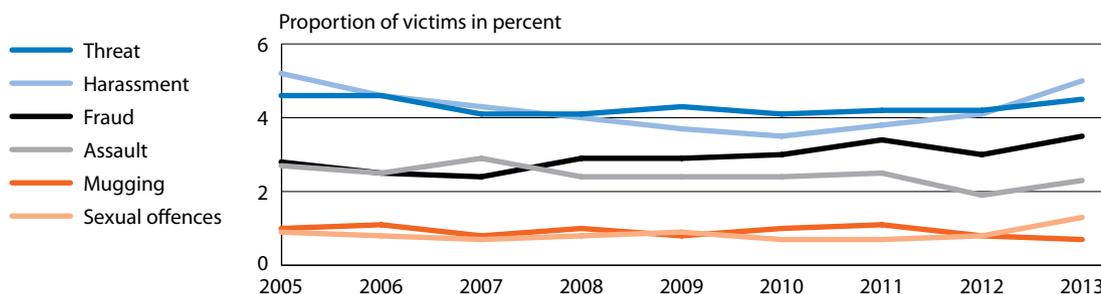
Offences against individual persons

- Of those answering the 2014 NTU, 12.7 per cent state that in 2013 they were exposed to one or more types of offences categorised in the report as offences against individual persons: assault, threats, sexual offences, mugging, fraud or harassment. This is an increase compared to previous years (in 2012 the number was 11.4 per cent) and a return to roughly the same level as the first survey in 2005.
- The most common types of offences are threats and harassment, while the least common types are sexual offences, gross assaults and mugging.
- Of the offences against individual persons reported in the 2014 NTU, approximately three in ten (31 per cent) are reported to the police. The highest reporting rate is for mugging (60 per cent) and the lowest is for sexual offences (12 per cent). The percentage of reported incidents has increased somewhat since 2005, when the report rate was 24 per cent.
- Most persons who have been exposed to offences against individual persons state that they were exposed to crime on one occasion in 2013, but 15 per cent (which corresponds to 1.5 per cent of the total population between 16 and 79 years of age) state that they were

exposed four or more times. This group has been exposed to more than half (60 per cent) of all recorded offences against individual persons.

- 2.4 per cent of persons of working age (20–64 years) state that in 2013 they were subjected to assault, threats, mugging or sexual offences due to their profession.

Figure 1 Section of the population that has been subject of different types of offences against the person 2005–2013.



Assault

- The percentage of persons stating that they were the victims of assault increased from 1.9 per cent in 2012 to 2.3 per cent in 2013. However, the 2012 figure was unusually low, and the 2013 figure marks a return to a level that has been fairly constant since 2008.
- Exposure to assault is more common among men than among women, and is most common in the 20–24 age bracket.
- The most common crime scene is a public place, with the perpetrator being unknown to the victim.

Threats

- The percentage of persons exposed to threats was 4.5 per cent in 2013, which is a slight increase compared to the previous year (4.2 per cent) but in line with the first surveys conducted in 2005 and 2006.
- Exposure to threats is more common among women than among men, and is most common in the 20–24 age bracket.
- The most common crime scene is a public place, with the perpetrator being unknown to the victim.

Sexual offences

- In 2013 the percentage of people reporting that they were the victim of sexual offences was 1.3 per cent. This is an increase compared to 2012, when the percentage was 0.8 per cent, a level which is essentially unchanged since 2005.
- Exposure to sexual threats is significantly more common among women than among men, and is most common in the 16–19 and 20–24 age brackets.

- The most common crime scene is a public place, with the perpetrator being unknown to the victim.

Muggings

- Exposure to mugging has been relatively unchanged over the past few years. In the 2014 NTU 0.7 per cent of respondents state that they were mugged in 2013.
- Exposure to mugging is more common among men than among women, and is most common in the 16–19 and 20–24 age brackets.

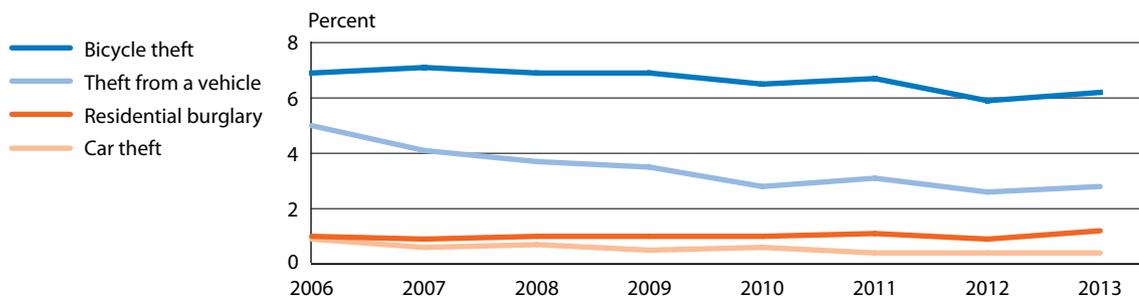
Fraud

- The percentage of people exposed to fraud has gradually increased from 2.5 per cent in 2006 to 3.5 per cent in 2013.
- Exposure to fraud is more common among men than among women. The most cases of fraud are found in the 20–24 and 34–44 age brackets.

Harassment

- The percentage of persons exposed to harassment in 2013 was 5.0 per cent. This is an increase both compared to the previous year (4.1 per cent) and to 2010 (3.5 per cent). However, the five years before this (2005–2010) saw a decrease in harassment of roughly the same degree (from 5.2 to 3.5 %).
- Exposure to harassment is more common among women than among men, and is most common in the survey’s youngest age brackets (especially ages 16–19 and 20–24).
- The perpetrator is usually not known to the victim.

Figure 2 Number of households that have been subject to different types of property offences 2006–2013.



Property offences against households

- The answers show that 9.7 per cent of households were exposed to car theft, the theft of something kept in a vehicle, bicycle theft or burglary (referred to as property offence against a household) in 2013. Exposure to these crimes has decreased somewhat since 2006 (when the number was 12.6 per cent). The most common property offence is bicycle theft, while the least common are burglary and car thefts.

- Of the property offences against households reported in the NTU, approximately half (53 per cent) are reported to the police. The highest reporting rate is for burglary (84 per cent) and the lowest is for bicycle theft (40 per cent). Car theft, like burglary, has a high report rate. The percentage of reported incidents has been relatively stable since 2006.
- An overwhelming majority of those exposed to property offences against households state that they were only exposed to once such incident in 2013. Only 3 per cent of the exposed households were exposed to four or more incidents.

Burglary

- Exposure to burglary has been relatively unchanged since 2006. In the 2014 NTU, 1.2 per cent of households report that they were burgled in 2013.

Car theft

- The percentage of households exposed to car theft has decreased significantly, from 0.9 per cent in 2006 to 0.4 per cent in 2013.

Theft from a vehicle

- The percentage of households exposed to theft from a vehicle has decreased from 5.0 per cent in 2006 to 2.8 per cent in 2013.

Bicycle theft

- The percentage of households exposed to bicycle theft has decreased from 6.9 per cent in 2006 to 6.2 per cent in 2013.

Anxiety and insecurity

Insecurity and anxiety about crimes are complicated phenomena to measure. The NTU captures some central aspects. The results vary depending on the type of anxiety or insecurity in question; for example, more people worry that persons close to them will be subjected to crimes than that they themselves will be subjected to crimes.

Insecurity outdoors late at night

- The percentage of people who do not feel safe when they are outdoors alone late at night in their own neighbourhood has decreased from 21 per cent in 2006 to 15 per cent in 2014.
- It is significantly more common for women to feel unsafe than for men to do so. The percentage of people feeling unsafe is highest among the youngest and oldest women in the survey.

Anxiety about crime in society

- The percentage of persons worrying about crime in society has decreased from 29 per cent in 2006 to 19 per cent in 2014.
- It is more common for women to worry about crime in society than for men to do so. The percentage of people worrying is lowest in the youngest age brackets and highest in the oldest age brackets.

Anxiety that persons close to you will be victims of crime

- The percentage of persons worrying about persons close to them being victims of crime has decreased from 32 per cent in 2006 to 22 per cent in 2014.
- It is more common for women to worry about persons close to them being victims of crime than for men to do so. For both men and women the percentage is highest in persons aged 45–54.

Anxiety about being exposed to crime

- In 2014, 16 per cent state that they are worried about burglary, and this level has been fairly stable throughout the whole of the measured period.
- It is slightly more common for women to worry about burglary than for men to do so. The percentage of people that worry is fairly evenly spread across age brackets, except for the youngest age brackets where the percentage is lower compared to the other brackets.
- The percentage of persons worrying about being the victims of assault has decreased from 15 per cent in 2006 to 10 per cent in 2014.
- It is significantly more common for women to worry about being the victim of an assault than for men to do so. However, the percentage of worried women varies significantly across age brackets. The highest percentage is found among women aged 20–24.
- The percentage of persons worrying about being the victims of theft or vandalism to their vehicles has decreased from 22 per cent in 2006 to 12 per cent in 2014.
- The percentage of people worried about theft or vandalism to their vehicles is fairly even among women and men and across age brackets, apart from the youngest age bracket (16–19 years) where the percentage is significantly lower.

Consequences of insecurity

- A small group in the survey (3 per cent) state that their anxiety and insecurity affect their behaviour (that the anxiety and insecurity make them abstain from activities or choose another route or mode of transport) to a significant degree. This percentage has been fairly constant since measurements began in 2006.
- The percentage of persons stating that their anxiety affects their quality of life has decreased from 11 per cent in 2006 to 8 per cent in 2014.
- It is more common for insecurity and anxiety to affect the behaviour and quality of life of women than men, but the differences between age brackets are fairly small.

Insecurity related to own experiences and attitudes

- The percentage of those who are especially insecure is higher among people who have been the victims of crime. The percentage of especially insecure is also higher among persons where persons close to them have been exposed to serious offences and among persons who have witnessed violence. These links have been fairly unchanged over time.
- The percentage of especially insecure persons is higher among those who perceive crime as having increased over the past three years than among those who believe that crime has remained unchanged or decreased.
- The percentage of those who are especially insecure is higher among people who have a low degree of trust in the criminal justice system.

Trust in the criminal justice system

The criminal justice system comprises several government agencies and the NTU includes questions regarding both the respondents' attitudes towards the criminal justice system in general and four of its authorities specifically – the police, the public prosecutors, the courts and the prison and probation service.

Trust in the criminal justice system and the different authorities

- The results show that trust in the criminal justice system is fairly high among the public, 16–79 years, with 60 per cent stating that they have a high degree of trust in the criminal justice system as a whole. A similar percentage have a high degree of trust in the police.
- The percentage of persons with a high degree of trust in the criminal justice system as a whole has increased from 54 per cent in 2006 to 60 per cent in 2014.
- As far as the police is concerned, the percentage with a high degree of trust has also increased, from 55 per cent in 2006 to 60 per cent in 2014.
- A similar increase can be noted for the public prosecutors, where the percentage with a high degree of trust has increased from 42 per cent in 2006 to 49 per cent in 2014.
- The percentage of persons with a high degree of trust in the courts has increased from 43 per cent in 2006 to 49 per cent in 2014.
- The greatest increase is recorded for the prison and probation service, where the percentage with a high degree of trust has increased from 29 per cent in 2006 to 42 per cent in 2014.
- It is slightly more common for women to have a high degree of trust in the criminal justice system than for men to do so.
- The largest percentage of people with a high degree of trust in the criminal justice system can be found in the youngest age bracket (16–19 years), and the lowest percentage can be found among the oldest age brackets.

Trust in suspects being treated fairly

- The percentage of people with a high degree of trust in the criminal justice system treating suspects fairly has increased, from 45 per cent in 2006 to 51 per cent in 2014. A similar percentage (52 per cent) has a high degree of trust in the police treating suspects fairly. This figure has been mostly unchanged since the question was introduced in 2008.
- Trust in the criminal justice system and the police, respectively, treating suspects fairly is similar amongst women and men.
- The largest percentage of people with a high degree of trust in the criminal justice system treating suspects fairly can be found among the youngest respondents and the lowest percentage with a high degree of trust can be found among the oldest respondents.

Trust that victims are treated well

- The percentage of people with a high degree of trust in the criminal justice system treating victims well has increased from 30 per cent in 2006 to 40 per cent in 2014.
- Trust in the police treating victims well has been stable since the question was introduced in 2008, and was 53 per cent in 2014.
- It is slightly more common for women to have a high degree of trust in the police treating victims well.
- The largest percentage of people with a high degree of trust in the criminal justice system treating victims well can be found among the youngest respondents, and the lowest percentage with a high degree of trust can be found among the oldest respondents.

The victims' contacts with the criminal justice system

When a person who has been the victim of a criminal offence chooses to report the incident to the police, this means that they come into contact with and gain experience of one or more of the authorities that make up the criminal justice system. The experiences are usually limited to the contact you get with the police in connection with filing a police report, but they can also include contact with public prosecutors, counsels for injured parties and the courts, in the event that the case leads to a trial.

Experiences of the police

- One in five persons between the age of 16 and 79 (20 per cent) state that they have been in contact with the police due to being the victim of a crime in the last three years. Slightly more than half of the victims (55 per cent) state that, overall, they have had positive experiences of the police, whilst almost one in six state that they have had negative experiences. The percentages have been fairly constant since 2007.
- Women more often have positive experiences than men.

- Experiences of the police were more negative in cases involving threats or violence than in other cases.
- As far as more specific aspects of the contact with the police are concerned, the results are mixed. There are significantly more people who are satisfied with the availability and attitude of the police than those who are satisfied with the information they received about their case and the manner in which the police investigated the offence.

Experiences of trials

- Approximately 2.5 per cent state that they have been in contact with a public prosecutor due to being the victim of a crime in the last three years. Almost half (48 per cent) state that they have positive experiences of these contacts.
- 1.8 per cent of the public between ages 16 and 79 state that they have participated as the injured party in a trial in the last three years. Almost two out of three (65 per cent) are satisfied or very satisfied with the way in which they were treated in court.
- The majority (74 per cent) of those who have acted as injured parties felt that it was very easy or fairly easy to understand what happened during the trial and roughly the same number (71 per cent) felt that they received enough information prior to the trial.
- Approximately six out of ten (61 per cent) of those who had participated in a trial had what is known as a counsel for the injured party. Of these, 60 per cent describe their experiences of their counsel as positive.



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