

Crime and criminal justice (crim)

Reference Metadata in Euro SDMX Metadata Structure
(ESMS)

Compiling agency: Eurostat, the statistical office of the
European Union

Eurostat metadata

Reference metadata

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For any question on data and metadata, please contact: [EUROPEAN STATISTICAL DATA SUPPORT](#)

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1. Contact [Top](#)

1.1. Contact organisation	Eurostat, the statistical office of the European Union
1.2. Contact organisation unit	F1: Social indicators: Methodology and development; Relations with users
1.5. Contact mail address	2920 Luxembourg LUXEMBOURG

2. Metadata update [Top](#)

2.1. Metadata last certified	25/05/2016
2.2. Metadata last posted	27/05/2016
2.3. Metadata last update	27/05/2016

3. Statistical presentation [Top](#)

3.1. Data description

The figures on crime and criminal justice are collected through a joint Eurostat-UNODC data collection. This joint data collection replaces [earlier series published by Eurostat](#) and refers to the period 2008-2014.

It is available at country level for European Union Member States, EFTA countries, EU Candidate countries, and EU Potential Candidates.

Data on offences recorded by the police – intentional homicide, attempted intentional homicide, assault, kidnapping, sexual violence, rape, sexual assault, robbery, burglary, burglary of private residential premises, theft, theft of a motorized land vehicle and unlawful acts involving controlled drugs or precursors.

Data on intentional homicide and sexual offences (rape, sexual assault) are also available by legal status and sex of the person involved.

Data on intentional homicide victims are also available by victim-offender relationship (Family and relatives/Intimate partner) and sex, by age categories (0-14; 15-29; 30-44; 45-59; >60) and sex, and by sex in largest cities.

Data on intentional homicide offences are available in largest cities.

Data are available on suspects and offenders by legal status (suspected/prosecuted/convicted) and sex, by legal status and age (juvenile/adult), and by legal status and citizenship (reporting country/foreign country).

Data on personnel in the criminal justice system are available by sex – Professional Judges, Police officers and Adult/Juvenile Prison Staff.

Court data cover legal cases (criminal, civil and/or commercial, administrative, others) processed by legal status of the court process (brought to court/resolved/pending), and persons brought before criminal courts by legal status (convicted persons / acquitted) of the court process.

Prisons and prisoners characteristics are available on prisoners by offences (intentional homicide, rape, sexual assault) and sex, by age (adult/juvenile) and sex, by citizenship (reporting country / foreign country) and by legal status of the trial process (pre-trial/ sentence passed); prison capacity and number of persons held.

Data for the United Kingdom (England & Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland) appear separately owing to the existence of three separate jurisdictions.

Data are reported by official sources in the countries such as the Police, the Ministry of the Interior, the Ministry of Justice and the National Prison Administration. Data are compiled by the National Statistics Office. Calendar year or national financial year data are provided in absolute numbers. No seasonal statistical adjustments are carried out.

Historical regional data, based on a different earlier Eurostat data collection covering 2008, 2009 and 2010, are available in **crim_gen_reg** (in **crim_h**) on intentional homicide, robbery, domestic burglary and theft of a motor vehicle.

3.2. Classification system

The data are collected using the crime categories in the UN-CTS questionnaire and additional questions of particular interest for EU policy development. The crime categories have been mapped to [the International Classification of Crime for Statistical Purposes \(ICCS\)](#).

For the historical regional data in **crim_h**, the territorial classification of regional data is broken down to NUTS 3 level according to the [NUTS classification](#).

3.3. Coverage - sector

The data cover different stages of the criminal justice system - the reporting of crime to the police, prosecution, courts and prison.

3.4. Statistical concepts and definitions

Contact persons in each country are asked to adhere to standard definitions (offences, criminal justice personnel, courts and prison statistics) as far as possible and to provide details of any identified divergence. Details of any divergence from the standard definition are described in the Annex "Reference Metadata at Country Level" below. The joint data collection is based on common Eurostat-UNODC definitions and replaces the current Eurostat data series from 2008.

OFFENCES RECORDED BY THE POLICE

Intentional Homicide (country and largest city)

Definition: Unlawful death purposefully inflicted on a person by another person. Data on intentional homicide should also include serious assault leading to death and death as a result of a terrorist attack. It should exclude attempted homicide, manslaughter, death due to legal intervention, justifiable homicide in self-defence and death due to armed conflict.

Assault

Definition: Physical attack against the body of another person resulting in serious bodily injury, excluding indecent/sexual assault, threats and slapping/punching. 'Assault' leading to death should also be excluded.

Sexual Violence (Rape and Sexual Assault)**Rape**

Definition: Sexual intercourse without valid consent. In the current classification used by the UNODC, offences of statutory rape where the victim is below the age of consent are classified separately as sexual offences against children.

Sexual Assault

Definition: Sexual violence not amounting to rape. It includes an unwanted sexual act, an attempt to obtain a sexual act, or contact or communication with unwanted sexual attention not amounting to rape. It also includes sexual assault with or without physical contact including drug-facilitated sexual assault, sexual assault committed against a marital partner against her/his will, sexual assault against a helpless person, unwanted groping or fondling, harassment and threat of a sexual nature

Robbery

Definition: Theft of property from a person, overcoming resistance by force or threat of force. Where possible, the category "Robbery" should include muggings (bag-snatching) and theft with violence, but should exclude pick pocketing and extortion.

Kidnapping

Definition: Unlawfully detaining a person or persons against their will (including through the use of force, threat, fraud or enticement) for the purpose of demanding for their liberation an illicit gain or any other economic gain or other material benefit, or in order to oblige someone to do or not to do something. "Kidnapping" excludes disputes over child custody.

Theft

Definition: Depriving a person or organisation of property without force with the intent to keep it. "Theft" excludes burglary, housebreaking and robbery, which are recorded separately.

Theft of a Motorised Land Vehicle

Definition: Removal of a motor vehicle without the consent of the owner of the vehicle. Motor vehicles include all land vehicles with an engine that run on the road, such as cars, motorcycles, buses, lorries, construction and agricultural vehicles.

Burglary

Definition: Gaining unauthorised access to a part of building/dwelling or other premises, including by use of force, with the intent to steal goods (breaking and entering). "Burglary" should include, where possible, theft from a house, apartment or other dwelling place, factory, shop or office, from a military establishment, or by using false keys. It should exclude theft from a car, from a container, from a vending machine, from a parking meter and from fenced meadow/compound.

Burglary of Private Residential Premises (Domestic Burglary)

Definition: Burglary of a house, apartment or other dwelling place.

Unlawful Acts Involving Controlled Drugs or Precursors

Definition: Illegal possession, cultivation, production, supplying, transportation, importing, exporting, financing etc. of drug operations which are not solely in connection with personal use.

SUSPECTS AND OFFENDERS WITHIN THE CRIMINAL JUSTICE SYSTEM**Persons Brought into Formal Contact with the Police and/or Criminal Justice System**

Definition: May include persons suspected, or arrested or cautioned for a criminal offence, at the national level.

Persons Prosecuted

Definition: Alleged offenders against whom prosecution commenced in the reporting year. Persons may be prosecuted by the public prosecutor or the law enforcement agency responsible for prosecution, at the national level, irrespective of the case-ending decision.

Persons Convicted

Definition: Persons found guilty by any legal body authorized to pronounce a conviction under national criminal law, whether or not the conviction was later upheld. The total number of persons convicted should also include

persons convicted of serious special law offences but exclude persons convicted of minor road traffic offences, misdemeanours and other petty offences.

Persons Acquitted

Definition: Persons found not guilty of a criminal offence by any legal body authorized under national criminal law, whether or not the acquittal was later upheld, at the national level. The total number of persons acquitted should also include persons acquitted of serious special law offences but exclude persons acquitted of minor road traffic offences and other petty offences.

Persons Held

Definition: Persons held in Prisons, Penal Institutions or Correctional Institutions on a specified day and should exclude non-criminal prisoners held for administrative purposes - for example, persons held pending investigation into their immigration status or foreign citizens without a legal right to stay.

CRIMINAL JUSTICE PERSONNEL

Police Officers

Definition: Personnel in public agencies as at 31 December whose principal functions are the prevention, detection and investigation of crime and the apprehension of alleged offenders. Data concerning support staff (secretaries, clerks, etc.) are excluded.

Professional Judges

Definition: Both full time and part time official legal professionals as at 31 December authorised to hear civil, criminal and other cases, including in appeal courts, and to make dispositions in a court of law, who have been recruited and are paid to practise as a judge. This category excludes non-professional judges such as lay judges and lay magistrates.

Prison Personnel

Definition: All individuals employed in penal or correctional institutions as at 31 December, including management, treatment, custodial and other (maintenance, food service etc.) personnel.

CASES PROCESSED BY THE COURTS

Criminal Cases

Definition: Any cases processed under national criminal law

Civil/Commercial Cases

Definition: Any cases processed under national civil/commercial law.

Administrative Cases

Definition: Any cases processed under national administrative law.

Other Cases

Definition: Any other cases processed under national law.

Cases Brought to Court

Definition: Number of proceedings initiated in court during the reporting period that were not already under consideration by the court in the previous reporting period.

Cases Resolved

Definition: Number of proceedings finalised/disposed of by a court decision during the reporting period, whether through a decision on the merit, a withdrawal of the claim, a settlement or a rejection on formal grounds, and whether this decision is later upheld or not.

Cases Pending

Definition: Number of proceedings that are not finalized/disposed of as of 31 December.

PRISON CAPACITY

Official Prison Capacity

Definition: The intended number of places available as at 31 December without overcrowding, excluding places/capacity used for detention of persons on the basis of immigration status.

3.5. Statistical unit

Values are presented in absolute values as reported by the individual countries and as calculated rates per 100,000 inhabitants (resident population on 1 January according to the population figures published in the Eurostat database).

Rates are also calculated for the relevant age and sex group chosen in a table.

3.6. Statistical population

Statistical populations relate to criminal offences recorded by the police, number of victims of specific crimes, number of persons brought into formal contact with the police and/or criminal justice system, persons prosecuted, convicted, acquitted, or held in prison, number of persons working in specific roles within the criminal justice system, number of cases processed by the courts and the official capacity of prisons in terms of the number of places available without overcrowding.

3.7. Reference area

European Union Member States, EFTA countries (Iceland, Liechtenstein, Norway, Switzerland), EU Candidate countries (Montenegro, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Albania, Turkey, Serbia), and the EU Potential Candidate countries of Bosnia and Herzegovina and Kosovo*.

Some national data exclude statistics relating to national territories and more details are provided in the Annex.

**This designation is without prejudice to positions on status, and is in line with UNSCR 1244 and the ICJ Opinion on the Kosovo Declaration of Independence*

3.8. Coverage - Time

The Eurostat-UNODC data collection replaces earlier series published by Eurostat and refers to the period from 2008 onwards.

For years before 2008:

- Total crime - time series are available from 1950 for some countries (Denmark, Germany, Estonia, France, Ireland, the Netherlands, Poland, Finland, UK: England & Wales) and from 1980 for most other countries.
- Specific offences - time series are available from 1993.
- Police officers - time series are available from 1993.
- Prison population - time series are available from 1987.

3.9. Base period

Not applicable.

4. Unit of measure

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See above, 3.5 Statistical units.

Different units of measure can be used for the recording of criminal and criminal justice statistics. For instance a recorded criminal offence refers to the violation of the law as recorded by the police.

The unit of measure for victims, suspects and offenders within the criminal justice system as well as for criminal justice personnel is the person.

The proceedings against one or more defendants are usually counted as a case. One case can include several offences or various defendants.

The unit of measure for official prison capacity is the number of places.

5. Reference Period

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Crime offences - the standard reference period is the calendar year.

Criminal Justice Personnel – the standard reference date is 31 December.

Prison figures - the reference date in a given year differs across jurisdictions.

More details on national characteristics are provided in Annexes below.

6. Institutional Mandate

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6.1. Institutional Mandate - legal acts and other agreements

Countries submit data and metadata to Eurostat in compliance with a mandate to develop crime statistics established through:

a) The 2004 Hague Programme November: Strengthening freedom, justice and security in the European Union. The Hague Programme, OJ C 53 of 3.3.2005, p.11 at

[http://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=CELEX%3A52005XG0303\(01\)](http://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=CELEX%3A52005XG0303(01))

b) The Communication of the Commission of 7 August 2006, "Developing a comprehensive and coherent EU strategy to measure crime and criminal justice: an EU Action Plan 2006 – 2010".

COM/2006/437 finalat

<http://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=URISERV%3A133264>

c) The 2009 Stockholm Programme: An open and secure Europe serving and protecting citizens.

<http://eur-lex.europa.eu/JOHtml.do?uri=OJ:C:2010:115:SOM:EN:HTML>

d) The Communication from the Commission to the European Parliament and the Council, "Measuring Crime in the EU: Statistics Action Plan 2011-2015" COM (2011) 713 final

http://ec.europa.eu/home-affairs/doc_centre/crime/docs/1_EN_ACT_part1_v5.pdf

6.2. Institutional Mandate - data sharing

Not applicable.

7. Confidentiality

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7.1. Confidentiality - policy

[Regulation \(EC\) No 223/2009 on European statistics](#) (recital 24 and Article 20(4)) of 11 March 2009 (OJ L 87, p. 164), stipulates the need to establish common principles and guidelines ensuring the confidentiality of data used for the production of European statistics and the access to those confidential data with due account for technical developments and the requirements of users in a democratic society.

7.2. Confidentiality - data treatment

Not applicable.

8. Release policy

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8.1. Release calendar

In general, data are released approximately 18 months after the reference year.

8.2. Release calendar access

Not applicable.

8.3. Release policy - user access

In line with the Community legal framework and the [European Statistics Code of Practice](#) Eurostat disseminates European statistics on Eurostat's website (see item 10 - 'Accessibility and clarity') respecting professional independence and in an objective, professional and transparent manner in which all users are treated equitably. The detailed arrangements are governed by the [Eurostat protocol on impartial access to Eurostat data for users](#).

9. Frequency of dissemination

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Annual.

10. Accessibility and clarity

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10.1. Dissemination format - News release

Ad hoc news releases when required.

10.2. Dissemination format - Publications

"EU Trends in statistics on police-recorded crime and the criminal justice system, 2008-2013" - [Statistics in Focus Issue 3/2015 published December 2015](#)

"Trends in Crime and Criminal Justice" - [Statistics in Focus Issue 18/2013 published 01 August 2013](#)

"Crime and Criminal Justice" - [Statistics in Focus Issue 6/2012 published 18 January 2012](#)

"Crime and Criminal Justice" - [Statistics in Focus Issue 58/2010 published 29 November 2010](#)

"Crime and Criminal Justice" - [Statistics in Focus Issue 36/2009 published 29 May 2009](#)

"Crime and Criminal Justice" - [Statistics in Focus Issue 19/2008 published 12 March 2008](#)

"Crime and Criminal Justice" - [Statistics in Focus Issue 15/2007](#) published 23 November 2007

10.3. Dissemination format - online database

Tables are available on-line and are updated annually.

Data for the United Kingdom (England & Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland) appear separately owing to the existence of three separate jurisdictions.

10.4. Dissemination format - microdata access

Not applicable.

10.5. Dissemination format - other

The ["Statistics Explained" page](#) on the Eurostat website give information on general trends in crime and criminal justice.

10.6. Documentation on methodology

Data are reported by official sources in the countries such as the Police, the Ministry of the Interior, the Ministry of Justice and the National Prison Administration. Data are compiled by the National Statistics Office. All countries have procedures in place for the collection of crime statistics but there are many differences between the systems used.

More details are available in Annexes below.

10.7. Quality management - documentation

Not applicable.

11. Quality management

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11.1. Quality assurance

Data are provided to Eurostat by a network of national contact persons designated by each country. The contact persons are responsible for collating the data from various national sources and conducting some basic checks. Eurostat then performs additional validations checks on the final data.

More details are available in Annexes below.

11.2. Quality management - assessment

The quality of the data is under constant review and work is ongoing with the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime with respect to the coordination of data collection on crime in the EU and the harmonisation of definitions.

12. Relevance

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12.1. Relevance - User Needs

The need to provide information on the development of crime in the European Union was recognised in the Hague Programme adopted by the European Council in 2004. A more comparable system of crime and criminal justice statistics is being developed, as outlined in the Commission Communication of 18 January 2012, ["Measuring crime in the EU: Statistics Action Plan 2011-2015"](#) COM/2011/713 final.

12.2. Relevance - User Satisfaction

Following an evaluation of the implementation of the "EU Action Plan 2006 - 2010" ongoing user requirements were incorporated into the Statistics Action Plan 2011-2015 (see 12.1 above). Users, including researchers and policy makers, participate in the annual Eurostat Working Group on Crime and Criminal Justice Statistics.

12.3. Completeness

The data collection will be extended in the future, in line with policy requirements.

13. Accuracy

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13.1. Accuracy - overall

All the data come from official sources within each country. The quality of the data is affected by the different legal definitions and systems, counting methods, rates at which crimes are reported and recorded, and different reference dates.

13.2. Sampling error

Not applicable - data are from administrative records.

13.3. Non-sampling error

Not applicable - data are from administrative records.

14. Timeliness and punctuality

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14.1. Timeliness

Data are available within two years of the reference year.

14.2. Punctuality

Nearly all of the European Union Member States, the EFTA countries, EU Candidate countries and EU Potential Candidates are able to meet the request for data to be provided in the year following the reference year.

15. Coherence and comparability

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15.1. Comparability - geographical

Crime statistics are affected by many factors, mainly:

- different legal and criminal justice systems
- different recording practices (input/process/output statistics)
- different statistics counting rules
- different types of offences included in the specific offences categories.
- different reporting rates
- different criminal justice organisation and efficiency

For the above reasons, direct comparisons of crime levels in different countries should be avoided. As a general rule, comparisons should be based upon trends rather than upon levels, on the basis that the characteristics of the recording system within a country remain fairly constant over time. However, trends at a national level may also be affected by a change in national practice in a particular year. European Union trends have been calculated only to give an approximate indication of the change over time. For regional data for 2008-2010, comparability over time will be affected by breaks in the NUTS classification.

15.2. Comparability - over time

See 15.1 above.

15.3. Coherence - cross domain

The data are cross-checked with a number of sources including national websites and international publications such as the [Council of Europe](#) publications on prisons and the [European Sourcebook of Crime & Criminal Justice Statistics](#).

15.4. Coherence - internal

Totals for some categories may not equal the published total because information for some sub-categories is missing (e.g. totals may include unknown sex, age or citizenship).

For regional data (2008-2010) the data source or reference period may differ from those used for the national data collection.

16. Cost and Burden

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The main burden is on the Member States and the national contact persons who collate the data from various sources.

17. Data revision

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17.1. Data revision - policy

Revisions to the data are possible at any time.

17.2. Data revision - practice

Revisions are incorporated into the database as required.

18. Statistical processing	Top
18.1. Source data	
Contact persons in each country are responsible for collecting data and metadata from administrative sources, mainly from records maintained by the Police, the Ministry of the Interior, the Ministry of Justice and the National Prison Administration.	
18.2. Frequency of data collection	
Annual.	
18.3. Data collection	
The designated contact persons submit the data via eDAMIS for transmission to the Eurostat unit responsible for the data collection.	
18.4. Data validation	
Data trends are analysed and explanations for significant year on year changes are requested from countries. Inconsistencies in the data are investigated and additional metadata are requested from countries where necessary.	
18.5. Data compilation	
General trends over time for the EU are based on data from countries which have consistent series over a specified time period.	
18.6. Adjustment	
No adjustments are made.	

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None.	

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