

Exploring Criminal Justice in Quebec*

Rick Ruddell, University of Regina, and Jason Carmichael, McGill University

This supplement to *Exploring Criminal Justice in Canada* provides additional content about crime and the responses of the police, courts, and corrections that is specific to Quebec, including issues related to urban and rural crime and crimes that are distinctive to Quebec, as well as key cases, such as the results of a public inquiry into the treatment of Indigenous peoples in the justice system. In addition, there are examples of miscarriages of justice, changes in crime between 2008 and 2018, and the potential impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic on the criminal justice system. Altogether, these cases, events, and information specific to Quebec enable readers to better understand the provincial context that can't be covered in a textbook that focuses on the entire country.

QUEBEC: CRIME AT A GLANCE

Of the 10 provinces, Quebec has among the lowest rates of reported crime and victimization in Canada, and only Prince Edward Island had a lower Crime Severity Index (CSI), an indicator of the volume and seriousness of crime. Indeed, the CSI in Quebec (56.6) in 2018 was much lower than the average for all of Canada at 75 (Moreau, 2019, p. 51). Like the rest of Canada, rates of crime reported to the police have been dropping since the 1990s and the rate of violent and property crime offences per 100,000 residents in Quebec is lower today than rates in the 1970s. When people were asked about being victimized in the General Social Survey (GSS), researchers found that residents of Newfoundland and Labrador and Quebec reported the lowest rates of victimization in the country (Perreault, 2015, p. 7). Part of the good news for the province is that between 2008 and 2018, the overall CSI in Quebec dropped by almost one-third (32 per cent).

Exploring Criminal Justice described the inter-provincial differences in the CSI. Figures 1 through

5 show differences in the rates of homicide, violence toward women, levels of crime in Quebec's largest cities, and a comparison of youth crime in the provinces. While there is much to feel positive about in terms of crime reduction, serious crimes still occur, Figure 1 shows the homicide rate per 100,000 residents for 2018 for the provinces. Of the largest cities in Quebec, Roy and Marcellus (2019, p. 21) report that the murder rate per 100,000 residents was highest in Sherbrooke (2.0), which was followed by Trois-Rivières (1.3), Montreal (1.1), and Saguenay (0.60). Quebec City, with three murders in 2018, had one of the lowest homicide rates of all the big cities in Canada with 0.4 murders per 100,000 residents.

The National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls, which was initiated in 2016 and delivered its final report in 2019, has brought renewed attention to the issue of violence towards women. According to the Chief Public Health Officer of Canada (2016), more than 200 Canadians are victimized every day and a woman is killed by a family member every four days. With respect to family violence,

*The ten provincial summaries follow a common template and although the examples presented in this supplement differ from the other nine, some of the content is very similar or will have identical text.

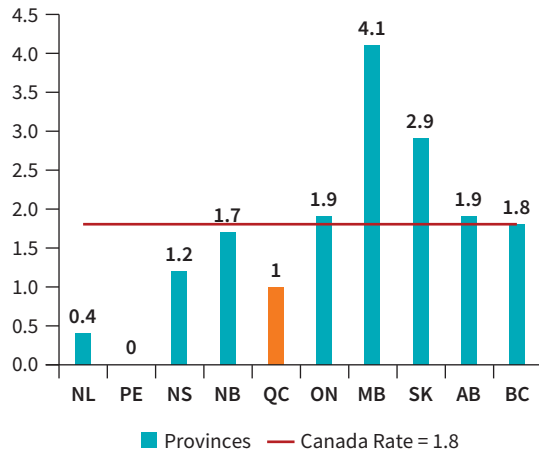


FIGURE 1 Provincial Homicide Rates (per 100,000 residents), 2018

Source: Adapted from Statistics Canada (2020a). Table: 35-10-0177-01

risks of victimization increase for women, Indigenous women, people with disabilities, and those who identify as lesbian, gay, bisexual, trans, or questioning (Chief Public Health Officer of Canada, 2016, p. 6). Self-report surveys such as the GSS show that most cases of family violence are never reported to the police. Burczycka (2016, p. 3) analyzed the 2014 GSS results and reported that “4 per cent of Canadians in the provinces with a current or former spouse or common-law partner reported having been physically or sexually abused by their spouse during the preceding 5 years.” We are awaiting the results of the 2019 GSS on victimization to see if this trend has continued and those results should be published by the Canadian Centre for Justice Statistics by 2021.

In terms of gender-based violence, Cotter and Savage (2019) found that 4.3 per cent of the Canadian women they surveyed had been sexually or physically assaulted in the previous year. Women in Quebec were less likely to be victimized than their counterparts in most provinces, and those results are shown in Figure 2. Despite that positive finding, Figure 3 shows that Quebec has rates of intimate partner violence (IPV)—which are assaults committed by current or former spouses or intimate partners—that were about the same as the national average in 2018.

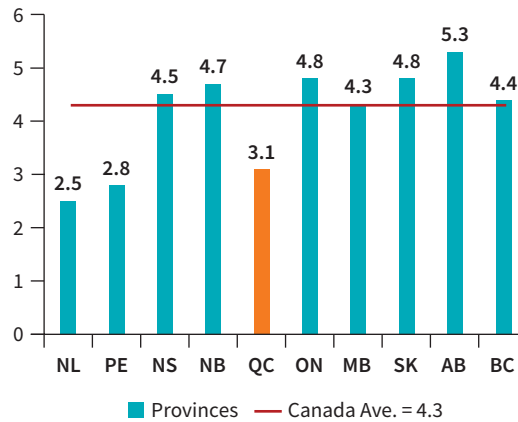


FIGURE 2 Total Violent Victimization, Women Survey Respondents, 2018

Source: Adapted from Cotter and Savage (2019)

There has been increased attention being paid to the issue of sexual violence since the start of the #Me Too movement in 2016 and 2017. As noted in *Exploring Criminal Justice* sexual offences are among the least reported crimes. Perreault (2015, p. 3) analyzed the results of the 2014 GSS and estimated that as few as 5 per cent of all sexual offences are reported to the police (and only a fraction of those cases resulted in convictions). Rotenberg and Cotter (2018) found that the number of sexual assaults reported to the police increased by 24 per

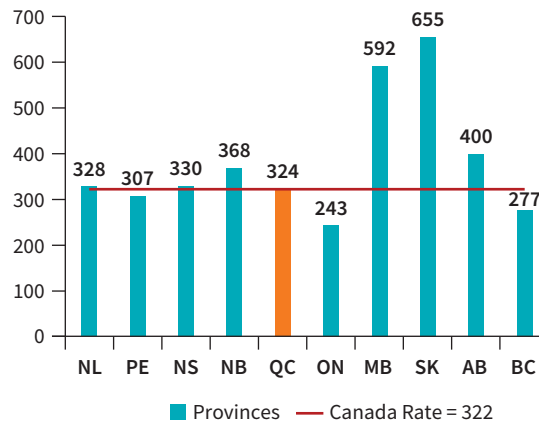


FIGURE 3 Intimate Partner Violence, Total Victims per 100,000 Residents, 2018

Source: Burczycka (2019)

cent after the #Me Too went viral on social media in October 2017, although the increase in Quebec (61 per cent) was several times higher than the national average. They found that the increases in reports to the police in the largest cities happened in Montreal (+76 per cent), Quebec (+78 per cent), Sherbrooke (+76 per cent), and Saguenay (+69 per cent). Despite those increases, Moreau (2019, p. 47) reports that the rate of sexual assaults reported to the police in Quebec is less than the national average (70 and 78 offences per 100,000 residents, respectively). Although crime statistics show that Quebec has rates of sexual violence somewhat less than the national average, we lack a full understanding of the true number of these offences or what happens in court to the persons accused of these crimes. For example: Are they convicted, and what types of sentences do they receive if they are found guilty? The results of the 2019 GSS on victimization will shed more light on this important issue.

With respect to overall crime trends, Moreau (2019, p. 7) reports that the overall CSI for Canada increased by 2 per cent while Quebec decreased by about 2 per cent between 2017 and 2018, with a lower number of break-and-enter offences responsible for that decrease. Figure 4

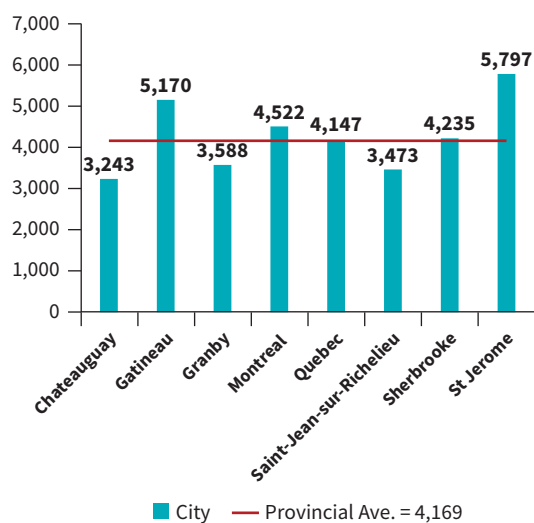


FIGURE 4 Total Crime Rate (per 100,000 residents), Largest Quebec Cities, 2018

Source: Adapted from Statistics Canada (2020b) Table 35-10-0179-01

shows the total crime rates for the largest cities for 2018, which indicate some variation in the amount of crime occurring in these places, although all were relatively close to the provincial average of 4,169 offences per 100,000 residents. One question that criminologists like to ask is why crime differs between these cities: Why is the crime rate in St Jerome 56 per cent higher than in Chateauguay?

For the most part, the crime-related information presented so far for Quebec has emphasized what is “going right,” and residents have a lot of reasons to be optimistic about the future. With respect to youth involvement in crime, a review of Statistics Canada (2020c) data shows that the youth CSI (persons aged 12 to 18 years) was close to the national average (see Figure 5). Youth involvement in crime tends to be similar to adult crime rates. As a result, in places where adult crime is high, youth crimes tend to follow the same pattern. These lower crime rates have an impact on the entire youth justice system, and the number of young people appearing before the courts decreased by about two-fifths between 2001-2 and 2017-18 (Statistics Canada, 2020d). Information about the number of youth admitted to custody facilities for Quebec is not available after 2010-11, but had been on a downward trend until that time (Statistics Canada, 2020d).

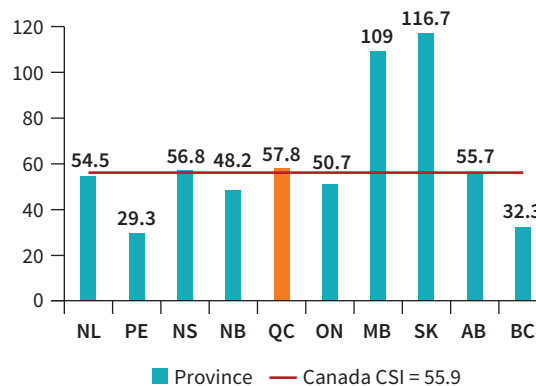


FIGURE 5 Youth Crime Severity Index by Province, 2018

Source: Adapted from Statistics Canada (2020c) Table 35-10-0026-01

Critical Thinking Questions

1. Why would Quebec have lower crime rates than other provinces?
2. What factors explain why some Quebec cities have higher crime rates?
3. Why is the youth CSI in Quebec about one-half of that reported in Manitoba or Saskatchewan?

A STORM IS COMING: COVID-19 AND CANADA'S CRIMINAL JUSTICE SYSTEM

Three months into the pandemic—in mid-May 2020—the media isn't reporting significant national-level increases in the volume or seriousness of crime, but the types of crimes being committed are changing due to the number of people who are self-isolating, out-of-work, low on spending money, and suffering from stress and uncertainty. Some criminologists say that it is irresponsible to make predictions about the impact of a one-time crisis on crime as there are few prior examples and too many unknowns. We do predict, however, that the crime-related impacts of the pandemic will differ throughout the nation. Some cities and provinces may be more resistant to the ill-effects of the economic downturn while parts of the country that were already suffering—such as Alberta or Newfoundland and Labrador—may be doubly disadvantaged.

The number of people turning to alcohol and drugs, committing suicide, and engaging in crime often increases in tough economic times. Police officials are reporting that the number of residential break and enters have decreased while commercial break-ins increased, as have domestic violence incidents and street robberies (Fitzpatrick, 2020; Howell, 2020). Hate crimes directed toward East Asian people are also said to have increased since the start of the pandemic (Hager, 2020).

We might not consider how some social and legal changes affect criminal activities. Wells

(2020) reports that closing the borders reduced the supply of illicit drugs coming into the country and prices increased; causing some users to turn to more lethal drugs. People involved in the sex trade can no longer sell their services due to the fear of transmitting the virus. Workers in some long-term care facilities in eastern Canada allegedly abandoned their clients and some elderly people died alone in these places. Furthermore, because schools have closed, it may be harder to detect cases of child abuse because teachers are no longer reporting these crimes. Last, although there are fewer cars on the road people are driving faster and the number of dangerous driving offences have increased in some provinces. We will not have a full accounting of the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic until the 2020 police-reported crime statistics are released in the summer of 2021.

All three parts of the justice system are adapting to the pandemic, and the following briefly describes some initial impacts on the police, courts, and corrections:

Police: Luscombe and McClelland (2020) found that some police services have enforced social distance bylaws more aggressively than others, and many people receiving tickets for violating these bylaws are already socially marginalized. It is proving difficult for some police services to strike a balance between ensuring public safety—including the health risks for officers and the people who get stopped, searched, and/or arrested—and resisting the expansion of police powers. Anecdotal accounts suggest that some police services directed their officers to ignore low-level crimes given the risks of contracting the COVID-19 virus in the interactions between suspects and officers.

Courts: Most courts closed because of social distancing and virtual and/or video hearings became more commonly used. Bail hearings were prioritized, although judges

were reluctant to detain accused persons in jail given the risks of contracting the virus. There was a growing backlog of cases that need to be heard sometime in the future and some predict that jury trials will not resume until 2021 (Powell, 2020). There is likely to be a backlog of family matters and civil cases that further tie up the courts given the number of lawsuits that will be launched due to broken contracts.

Corrections: The virus swept through correctional facilities and inmate deaths were reported throughout the country. In order to reduce the risks of spreading COVID-19, about one-quarter of provincial inmates were released from custody although Quebec released a far smaller proportion of inmates (Cherry, 2020). The federal and provincial prisoners who remain in custody say that tensions in these facilities have increased as the people living behind bars feel powerless to avoid the virus, and family visits—which reduce tensions—have been cut to avoid importing the virus into these facilities. As a result, family members have expressed fear that their loved ones might die behind bars without their support.

We know that the criminal justice system will weather the unpredictable future, but question the long-term impacts of the pandemic. By the time you read this summary, some of the issues we raised will have been resolved, but the long-term impact of the COVID-19 virus on the economy and jobs will shape the types of crimes that are occurring, and the operations of the police, courts, and corrections for years to come. As governments respond to manage a greater demand for services, their operating budgets may be cut because of the economic downturns. Prior research has shown that recessions often result in less funding for the police, courts, and corrections at the same time that crime increases and the people involved in the criminal justice system have a greater set of unmet needs.

RURAL CRIME

We tend to think of rural areas as having relatively low rates of crime and violence, but as noted in Chapter 2 of *Exploring Criminal Justice*, some rural places have higher levels of property and violent crime than any city. According to Statistics Canada (2019), almost 1.6 million Quebec residents (19.5 per cent of the population) live in rural areas (also called the countryside in this summary). Table 2.2 in *Exploring Criminal Justice* reports the results of research carried out by Perreault (2019) for Statistics Canada, which shows that the total crime rate in Quebec cities is almost the same as that reported for rural areas, although the violent crime rate is much higher in the rural areas (1,314 offences per 100,000 residents) than in the cities (979 offences). Just like other crime statistics, however, those averages will mask the fact that some rural Quebec communities have very high levels of crime—such as the Nunavik region in Northern Quebec, which is discussed later in this summary—while other places are very peaceful.

Life in the countryside presents some challenges, especially since the rural population is decreasing as farms become larger and young people are moving to the cities for better employment opportunities. Given the sparse populations, some residents feel vulnerable and fearful. Writing about the prairies Mandryk (2016) reports that “rural people are all too aware that their remoteness” and that the “scarcity of police makes them much more vulnerable.” The Sûreté du Québec (SQ), regional, and municipal police agencies serving rural areas are often spread thin and response times can be lengthy given the large distances that need to be patrolled, and inclement weather adds further delays to response times. As a result, when one calls 911 in a city the police can usually respond in minutes whereas in the countryside a response might take an hour, or much longer if the weather and road conditions are poor.

Some of the crimes happening in rural Quebec are committed by city residents who travel to

the countryside to steal agricultural equipment. Other rural crimes involve thefts of animals or crops from farmers and ranchers, and people have stolen entire hives of bees as well as cattle. In tough economic times, some farmers and landowners throughout the province also turn to growing marijuana without a licence, despite the fact that cannabis was legalized in October 2018. The long term impacts of the legalization of marijuana have yet to be determined, but we do know that the street price of illicit marijuana in Quebec of \$5.08 per gram is a fraction of the legal price of \$7.88 per gram plus taxes (see Statistics Canada, 2020d). Those lower street prices suggest that the illicit supply is plentiful, and there is always the risk of organized crime becoming involved in illegal drug sales.

Quebec was also home to the largest theft of agricultural products in Canadian history between 2011 and 2012 when almost 10,000 barrels of maple syrup, worth \$18.7 million, were stolen from a warehouse belonging to the Federation of Quebec Maple Syrup Producers in Saint-Louis-de-Blandford. Hamilton (2016) reports that the offence was the largest (in terms of value) ever investigated by the Sûreté du Québec in the agency's history. The investigation involved interviews of 300 persons, and officers from the Sûreté du Québec, the RCMP, the Canada Border Services Agency, and the US Immigration and Customs Enforcement participated in the investigation (Rakobowchuk & Panetta, 2012). It was later found that the syrup was sent to New Brunswick where it was relabelled as produced in that province (Montpetit, 2016).

Montpetit (2016) reports 26 persons were arrested for their roles in the thefts, and in November 2016 a jury found three men guilty of a number of charges including theft, fraud, and possession, while others "pleaded guilty, charges were dropped against others." At the trial it was disclosed that there is a black market of syrup buyers and sellers who do not want to abide by the quota system, and one of the convicted men was reputed to have said "stealing from thieves is not stealing" (as reported in Hamilton, 2016).

Four of the men who were found guilty were sentenced to prison and ordered to pay millions of dollars in restitution. In March 2020 the Quebec Court of Appeal reduced the severity of their sentences and lowered the amount of restitution that they were required to pay (Cumming, 2020). The arrest and sentencing of these individuals did not deter others from stealing maple syrup. In 2016, another roughly 13,000 litres of maple syrup worth \$150,000 were stolen from a cargo yard in Montreal, with the intent of sale in Japan, and Valiante (2016) called this syrup "liquid gold." Who knew that the syrup we put on our pancakes could be stolen and bought on the black market!

THE 2014–18 CRIME INCREASE

One of the key themes in Chapter 2 of *Exploring Criminal Justice in Canada* was that police-reported crime was at the lowest point in decades. Moreau (2019, p. 33) says that there were 11 years of decline between 2004 and 2014, but from 2014 to 2018 the CSI increased every year for the entire nation. Most of the national-level increase was due to a greater number of cases of sexual assault (level 1), drug offences (and specifically methamphetamine, ecstasy, heroin, and opioids such as fentanyl), shoplifting and fraud. But there are also substantial differences within the provinces. As noted above the total CSI in Quebec dropped by 32 per cent between 2008 and 2018, and the violent CSI dropped 1 per cent between 2017 and 2018 (Moreau, 2019, p. 51). Table 1 shows that each province and territory experiences some annual change and the specific violations driving the one-year changes in provincial CSI. Most criminologists would agree that we shouldn't read too much into a one-year increase or decrease in the overall crime rate as there are often yearly fluctuations. The four-year increase for the entire nation, however, is surprising and we wonder whether this trend will continue.

TABLE 1 Changing Crime Severity Index (CSI) in Canada, 2017-18

	% Change	Violations Driving the Change in CSI
Canada	+2	Increase in fraud, sexual assault (level 1), shoplifting and theft over \$5,000 (Decrease in B&E and robbery)
Newfoundland and Labrador	+4	Increase in weapons violations and fraud (Decrease in B&E)
Prince Edward Island	+17	Increase in B&E, sexual assault (level 1), and theft of \$5,000 or under.
Nova Scotia	-2	Decrease in homicide, child pornography, and B&E (Increase in sexual assault – level 1, and fraud)
New Brunswick	+4	Fraud (Decrease in B&E)
Quebec	-2	Decrease in B&E
Ontario	+6	Increase in fraud, B&E, homicide and sexual assault (level 1)
Manitoba	+6	Increase in robbery, fraud, shoplifting of \$5,000 and under, and B&E
Saskatchewan	-3	Decrease in administration of justice statistics and sexual violations against children (Increase in fraud and B&E)
Alberta	0	Increase in fraud (Decrease in homicide)
British Columbia	0	Increase in fraud, theft over \$5,000 and sexual assault (level 1) (Decrease in homicide)
Yukon	-7	Decrease in homicide (Increase in assault (level 2) and mischief)
Northwest Territories	+5	Increase in homicide, mischief, administration of justice violations and fraud (Decrease in cocaine related offences and sexual assault (levels 1 and 2))
Nunavut	+6	Increase in mischief, homicide, attempted murder, administration of justice violations and aggravated sexual assault (level 3) (Decrease in B&E).

Source: Adapted from Moreau (2019)

QUEBEC'S JUSTICE SYSTEM AT A GLANCE

The Police in Quebec

The previous pages described how Quebec's crime rates are among the lowest in all of Canada. On 1 July 2018, 15,884 police officers were employed in Quebec, or 1.89 officers for every 1,000 residents, which is slightly more than the average of 1.85 officers for all 10 provinces (Conor, Robson, & Marcellus, 2019). Most municipalities and several dozen First Nations have their own police services and the remainder of the province, including rural areas, is policed by the SQ. This approach is

different from the rest of Canada as Ontario and Quebec are the only provinces with provincial police and the remaining eight provinces contract with the Royal Canadian Mounted Police (RCMP) to police rural areas.

Altogether there were 45 municipal, regional, and First Nations police services in Quebec and the SQ employed 5,356 officers, and the RCMP deployed 912 officers in the province to carry out federal policing (Conor et al., 2019, p. 24). The largest 10 municipalities deploy the most officers, and Figure 6 shows they employed 7,350 officers in 2018—information for the number of officers in Laval was missing—and combined with the SQ

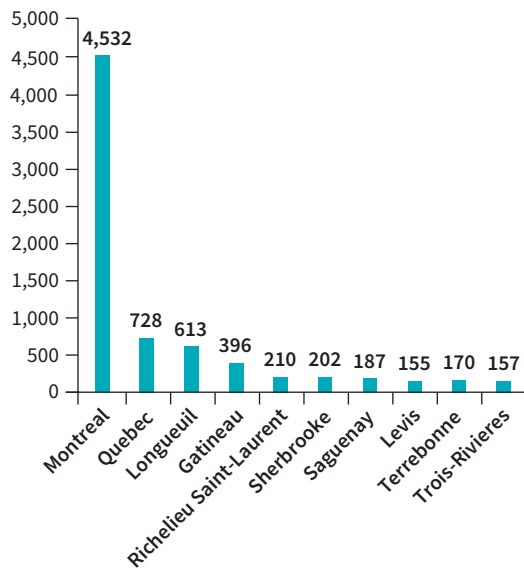


FIGURE 6 Officers in the Largest Quebec Municipal Police Services, 2018

Source: Adapted from Conor, Robson, and Marcellus (2019).

and RCMP officers they account for 86 per cent of all Quebec police officers. Said another way, almost 9 in 10 Quebec officers work for only 12 agencies, and the remainder work for small police services.

Some distinctive police agencies serve specific populations or places, and Indigenous police services (which are called self-administered police services), for example, are operated by tribal governments. First Nations provide the oversight for these police agencies, just like a municipal government, although the agency's operations are 100 per cent funded by the federal and provincial governments. In places where no self-administered Indigenous police services exist, the SQ provides policing services. Their staffing model is based on temporarily placing officers in these communities but none of them live in these places on a full-time basis. This is unlike the arrangements of the Ontario Provincial Police or RCMP, or officers employed by self-administered Indigenous police services who live and work in these communities on a full-time basis. Instead, the SQ officers are flown into these places for 7 to 10 days and then return to their regular assignments. Curtis (2013) interviewed residents from these Quebec communities and found

that these temporary officers were not there long enough to establish effective working relationships with the community members. As an SQ spokesperson says, "The staff is constantly changing." This staffing arrangement could be one reason for the shortcomings identified in policing Indigenous communities by the Public Inquiry Commission on Relations Between Indigenous Peoples and Certain Public Services in Quebec (2019; hereafter referred to as the Public Inquiry, 2019).

Table 2 shows the provincial police strength and the 2018 CSI and violent CSI for the provinces. Although the number of police officers for every 1,000 residents is similar across the provinces there is a lot more variation in crime rates. For example, while Quebec was tied with four other provinces for the most officers per thousand residents (1.9), it also had the second lowest total overall CSI in 2018. That suggests that officers in places

TABLE 2 Police Officers and Crime Severity Index (CSI) in Canada, 2018

	Police Officers per 1,000 Residents (2018)	Total CSI (2018)	Violent CSI (2018)
Newfoundland and Labrador	1.7	65.9	70.2
Prince Edward Island	1.4	53.7	48.1
Nova Scotia	1.9	65.2	78.2
New Brunswick	1.6	71.8	76.1
Quebec	1.9	56.6	71.8
Ontario	1.8	60.0	73.4
Manitoba	1.9	125.8	169.8
Saskatchewan	1.9	139.2	138.1
Alberta	1.7	112.1	97.1
British Columbia	1.9	87.7	73.4
Yukon	3.3	170.3	208.7
Northwest Territories	4.2	324.4	421.6
Nunavut	3.5	319.9	550.5

Sources: Adapted from Conor, Robson, and Marcellus (2019); Moreau (2019)

with higher CSI and the same number of officers for each 1,000 residents have higher workloads.

Public Security Quebec (2014) has a distinct approach to delivering police services to the public that depends on the size of the municipality, and places with fewer than 50,000 persons are served by the SQ unless they have their own municipal police service. Cities with over 50,000 residents, by contrast, must have their own police service and jurisdictions from 50,000 to over one million residents must provide specific levels of policing, investigative, emergency measures, and support services (that range from basic services at Level 1 to Level 6, which provides all services, including carrying out sophisticated international investigations).

Police Training in Quebec

The pathway to becoming a police officer in Quebec is somewhat different from the rest of Canada, and requires three distinct steps. All Indigenous, municipal, provincial, and regional police officers in Quebec attend the École nationale de police du Québec (ENPQ) in Nicolet. But to be accepted into the ENPQ, applicants must first have a three-year Diploma of College Studies in police technology from an accredited school, such as John Abbott College in the West Island of Montreal. Their program provides instruction in law and policing and requires the student to attend 1,665 hours of classes. Applicants into police technology programs are required to pass a basic medical exam in order to ensure they do not have any conditions that would later disqualify them from a policing career. Applicants must also undergo a background check prior to their admission into these programs to ensure they have no criminal convictions that would prevent them from working as police officers.

The second step in obtaining a policing job is to be admitted and graduate from the ENPQ. This involves a 15-week program where cadets live on campus and are taught the technical skills required for policing, such as use of force, firearms training, and emergency driving. There is an application fee and the tuition and living costs were

about \$9,000 in 2020-1. Indigenous students can attend a shorter college program, although after finishing those studies they must attend the same 15-week ENPQ program as any other cadet (see Public Inquiry, 2019), although some of these Indigenous students have also attended the Ontario Provincial Police academy.

The ENPQ program, which is delivered in French, focuses on developing the interpersonal skills required for policing. According to the Government of Quebec (2015), key skills learned during the academy program include: strategic patrol; intervening in regular, at-risk, and planned situations; and being able to use legal and technological knowledge in an ethical manner. Instructors at the academy have at least five years of experience as police officers, and in addition to teaching cadets the technical skills they need to be officers they provide coaching and support. At the end of the academy program each individual receives an attestation of achievement, which authorizes them to be a police officer in the province. These graduates can then apply for policing jobs. As a result, successfully obtaining a policing job depends somewhat on the job market (which agencies are hiring) and the graduate's willingness to move, and some bilingual graduates work in other provinces. Graduates who are unable to find policing jobs often end up in corrections or work in security positions or as special constables.

In addition to the formal police training, all police services require that newly appointed police constables serve a probationary period of 12 months. During this time, officers are paired with a field training officer who provides instruction on how to apply the academic training "to the streets." Once they have successfully passed their probationary period, all officers will participate in ongoing training, paid by their employers, for the remainder of their policing careers.

Quebec's Courts

The Court of Quebec has three divisions: (a) the Civil Division, which hears small claims of up to \$15,000, financial disputes of up to \$85,000 and cases related to confinement in health or social

service facilities; (b) Criminal and Penal Division, which hears criminal matters; and (c) Youth Division, which hears all cases related to youth protection and youth charged with offences under the federal *Youth Criminal Justice Act*. Most arrestees make their first appearances in these courts and most criminal cases are resolved in these courts, although all murder cases are heard in the superior courts. There are also 88 municipal courts that hear cases related to traffic, such as violations of the *Highway Safety Code*, and judges within these courts can also hear minor criminal matters being prosecuted as summary convictions.

Superior courts in Quebec deal with serious criminal matters and all cases of homicide or treason are automatically heard in these courts; and all jury trials are conducted in these courts. These superior courts can also hear appeals related to summary offences, such as theft or impaired driving (Justice Quebec, 2016). In addition to hearing criminal matters, the superior courts hear civil cases related to family matters, such as divorce, wills, and disputes of \$85,000 or more (Justice Quebec, 2016). The Court of Appeal is the highest level of court in the province and the 22 judges hear appeals in Montreal and Quebec City. Like other provincial courts, most matters are heard by three judges, although in exceptional cases five judges can sit on a case. According to Justice Quebec (2016), “in criminal and penal matters, the Court of Appeal hears appeal from verdicts of guilt or acquittal and sentences imposed under the Criminal Code or the Code of Penal Procedure.”

The number of adult criminal cases heard by Quebec courts has increased somewhat between

2002–2003 (60,189 cases) and 2017–2018 (67,431), whereas most provinces experienced a decrease during the same time. What is interesting about these statistics is that while the number of men appearing before the courts increased by four per cent during that time, the number of women appearing grew by 82 per cent. We don’t have any explanation for this difference: Is that increase due to women’s greater involvement in crime today, or does that finding mean that the police are more likely to arrest women today than in the past?

The median case processing time (not shown in Figure 7) has increased from 129 days in 2002–3 to 189 days in 2017–18, which is much greater than the median of 136 days for all 10 provinces. Those delays may have a significant impact on the administration of justice given the 2016 guidelines of the Supreme Court of Canada’s *Jordan* decision requiring that criminal cases be resolved within a set time frame. As a result of the *Jordan* decision, the prosecution of over 800 cases were thrown out due to unreasonable delays, and Russell (2019) reports that 214 of these cases were from Quebec. Because the province stopped counting the number of *Jordan* cases that were stayed after March 2018, that number is likely much higher today. According to Karam, Lukassen, Miladinovic and Wallace (2020) Quebec has the highest percentage of cases in Canada at risk of being stayed due to unreasonable delays.

Although the number of court cases and their processing time has increased, Quebec’s prosecutors drop fewer cases than in any other province. Figure 8 shows that 74 per cent of all charges in Quebec resulted in a guilty verdict in 2017–18, and this was the second highest in all of Canada as the

TABLE 3 Quebec’s Courts

Type	Judges*
Court of Quebec	One Chief Judge, a Senior Associate Judge, 4 associate chief judges, and 300 judges. Their work is supported by 36 presiding justices of the peace.
Superior Court	One Chief Justice, a Senior Associate Chief Justice, an Associate Chief Justice, and 147 judges who are all appointed by the government of Canada.
Court of Appeal	Chief Justice and 21 other judges appointed by the government of Canada.

*All three levels of courts also rely on supernumerary judges, who are appointed to work on a part-time basis: most are retired judges under 75 years of age.
Source: Adapted from: Court of Appeal of Quebec (2020); Court of Quebec (2020); Superior Court of Quebec (2020).

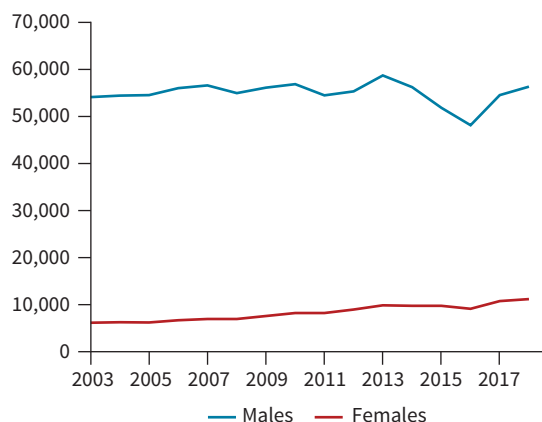


FIGURE 7 Criminal Cases Heard in Quebec Courts, 2002-3 to 2017-18

Source: Adapted from Statistics Canada (2020e) Table 35-10-0029-01

average for the entire nation was 62 per cent. One possible reason for low numbers of non-guilty verdicts is that prosecutors do not overcharge some suspects (where multiple charges are levied for one incident) and then some of those charges are later withdrawn; this is because charges are laid by the prosecutor and not the police in Quebec. One outcome of overcharging is some suspects are kept in a correctional centre awaiting court dates and this might contribute to overcrowding. If overcharging is occurring, it shows how decisions

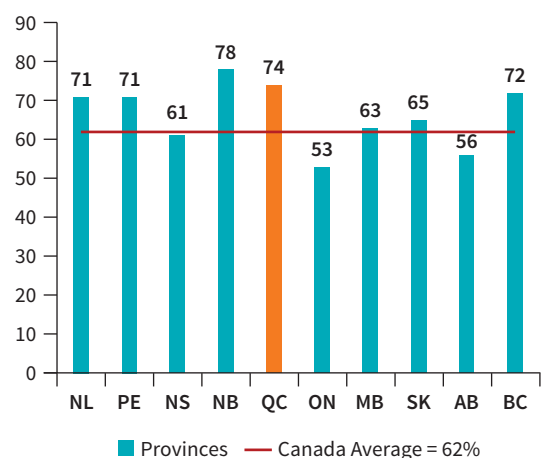


FIGURE 8 Percentage of Criminal Cases with Guilty Verdicts, by Province, 2018

Source: Adapted from Statistics Canada (2020f), Table 35-10-0027-01

in one part of the justice system (the prosecutors) can have an impact on the courts and corrections.

Quebec Corrections

There are 20 correctional centres operated by the Quebec government, and they hold persons remanded into custody (awaiting their next court dates) as well as incarcerated people sentenced to serve terms of less than two years. Most persons placed in correctional centres are remanded: Statistics Canada (2020h) reports that there were 45,380 adults admitted to Quebec facilities in 2017-18, and there were over two remands for each persons sentenced (29,140 and 12,682 respectively). Long sentences in provincial corrections are rare, and Table 4 shows the sentence length ordered for 8,666 persons sentenced in 2017-18 (cases with an unknown sentence length were excluded). Of these inmates, three-quarters serve less than three months, and only 7.1 per cent are incarcerated for more than one year. Even though most provincial sentences are short, an inmate can earn an early release for good behaviour and abiding by institutional rules; this is called earned remission.

A large proportion of sentenced inmates serve intermittent or weekend sentences, where they serve their sentences on Saturdays and Sundays. The Quebec Ombudsman (2018, p. 4) notes the

TABLE 4 Persons Sentenced to Provincial Custody, Quebec, 2017-18

Sentence Length Ordered	Number	Percentage
Total	8,666	100
One month or less	3,183	36.7
Greater than 1 month to 3 months	3,249	37.5
Greater than 3 months to 6 months	942	10.9
Greater than 6 months to 12 months	678	7.8
Greater than 12 to less than 24 months	525	6.1
Twenty-four months or more	89	1.0

Note: All cases with an unknown sentence length (n=2,918) were excluded from the table.

Source: Adapted from Statistics Canada (2020h) Table 35-10-0018-01

number of inmates on intermittent sentences nearly doubled between 2011 and 2017. These sentences are popular with inmates because it allows them to continue working or going to school, and maintaining their family life without disruption. However, the Ombudsman found that there were problems with these arrangements including contributing to crowding within the correctional centres and the number of people being admitted and discharged was disruptive to the institution's operations, which in turn had a negative impact on facility security.

As shown in Figure 9 the number of provincial inmates in custody has been increasing, which has led to overcrowding and the need for new facilities. The average daily number of sentenced provincial inmates increased from 3,531 in 2002–3 to 4,836 inmates in 2017–18 (a 37 per cent increase). That increase was also driven by admitting a larger number of remanded inmates, which increased by 57.7 per cent. This pattern is similar to what was happening in the rest of the country as the proportion of remanded inmates increased. In 2017–18 there were over 14,000 people supervised in the community and the number of these probationers has been more stable than custody populations and only increased by 15 per cent since 2002–3.

Incarcerating inmates is costly and Malakieh (2019) reports that the average daily cost to house an inmate in Quebec was \$251, which was slightly higher than the national average of \$233. These

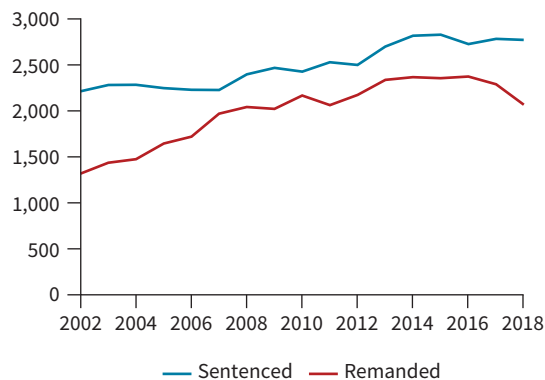


FIGURE 9 Quebec Adult Sentenced and Remanded Populations, 2002–3 to 2017–18

Source: Adapted from Statistics Canada (2020g), Table 35-10-0018-01

TABLE 5 Incarceration Costs, Quebec and Canada, 2018

	Daily Cost	Annual Cost
Cost to House an Inmate in a Provincial Facility in Quebec	\$251	\$91,615
Cost to House an Inmate in a Provincial Facility (Average: All Provinces)	\$233	\$85,045
Cost to House an Inmate in a Correctional Service of Canada Prison	\$330	\$120,450

Source: Adapted from Malakieh (2019).

costs, however, are less than housing a federal inmate—which cost \$330 per day in 2017–18 (Malakieh, 2019, p. 17). Phrased another way, it costs \$91,615 for one year in a Quebec facility whereas it costs \$120,450 to house a federal prisoner. While the public generally believes that incarceration is a good investment in public safety, it costs more to house a person in a federal prison than sending them to Harvard (tuition, room, and board costs \$101,866 CDN in the 2020–1 academic year: see Harvard University, 2020).

Federal Corrections

Federal prisoners are serving terms of imprisonment two years and longer and about one-quarter are lifers who will be under correctional supervision for the rest of their lives. There are 10 Correctional Service of Canada (CSC) facilities in Quebec. All but one of the facilities—the Joliette Institution—have all-male populations who are housed in minimum, medium, and maximum security settings and Table 6 shows the rated capacity of these institutions. Most of these prisons are medium security, although some facilities, such as the Archambault Institution at Sainte-Annes-Plaines, are multi-level, meaning that there is more than one security level. The Port-Cartier institution is a maximum security facility, and Canada's only special handling unit (which has the highest security) is at the Sainte-Anne-des-Plaines

TABLE 6 Federal Penitentiaries in Quebec

Facility	Bed Capacity
Archambault Institution (Sainte-Anne-des-Plaines)	499
Cowansville Institution	599
Donnacona Institution	451
Drummond Institution	369
Federal Training Centre	764
Joliette Institution for Women	132
La Macaza Institution	240
Port-Cartier Institution	237
Regional Reception Centre and Regional Mental Health Centre	288

Source: Adapted from Correctional Service of Canada (2018).

institution. The Archambault Institution, Regional Reception Centre, and Regional Mental Health Centre are on the same grounds.

The CSC also operates four community correctional centres (CCCs) in Montreal (the Ogilvy, Sherbrooke, Hochelaga, and Martineau centres) to house prisoners released on either day parole or conditional releases, and two additional CCCs are located in Quebec City (the Marcel-Caron facility) and St-Jerome (Laferriere). The CSC also contracts with non-governmental agencies, such as the St-Leonard Society, to provide housing for former prisoners who have been conditionally released or paroled to a community-based residential facilities; there were 46 of these facilities in Quebec in 2019 (Correctional Service of Canada, 2019).

Youth Corrections

Youth aged 12 to 18 years who have been remanded or sentenced to custody are placed in youth facilities operated by the Quebec government. The open custody youth are held in less restrictive conditions and they have more access to community activities, such as attending school or working. Youth sentenced to secure custody, by contrast, have generally pleaded guilty to more serious offences, or they have histories of escape from custody that make them less suited for a community-based open custody program. One of the shortcomings

in our knowledge about youth corrections in Quebec is that no data after 2011–12 for community populations (e.g., probation) or open or secure custody have been reported, so we don't know how many youth are incarcerated, although the custody numbers had decreased by over one-half between 2001–2 and 2011–12. The number of youth supervised in the community also fell during the same period, from an average of 4,813 youth on probation in 2000–1 to 4,493 youth in 2011–12. The decreased number of youth who were incarcerated or on probation is consistent with what happened in other provinces after the introduction of the *Youth Criminal Justice Act* and more youth were diverted from the formal court system. Webster, Sprott and Doob (2019) say that the drop in youth correctional populations was the result of:

- restraint in the use of imprisonment; which has been a core value for Canadians since the early 1900s
- political willingness to reject high youth imprisonment policies
- the introduction of the *Youth Criminal Justice Act* in 2003, which made it law to reduce the use of custody



FIGURE 10 Report Card for the Provinces and Territories

Source: Adapted from Perrin and Audas (2018).

Altogether, after the introduction of the *Youth Criminal Justice Act*, the provinces took steps to hold youth accountable in the least restrictive environment and youth were supervised in the community rather than incarcerating them.

REPORT CARD ON QUEBEC'S CRIMINAL JUSTICE SYSTEM

Perrin and Audas (2018) developed a report that graded provinces and territories on their performance on public safety, support for victims, cost and resources, fairness and access to justice, and efficiency, and these marks for the entire nation are shown in Figure 10. Six provinces, including

Quebec, earned a B, British Columbia and Saskatchewan earned a C+, and Manitoba earned a C grade. With respect to the territories, while Nunavut has a grade of C+, the Northwest Territories and Yukon were given a C grade. The report card for Quebec is shown in Table 7, and Perrin and Audas (2018, p. 27) gave the province high marks for having very low rates of violent and property crime, a high proportion of violent crimes that are cleared (solved), and having the lowest rates of failure to appear in Canada. Those researchers were critical, however, that Quebec had low clearance rates for non-violent crimes, a high number of accused persons who were unlawfully at large, and low public confidence in the police and justice system.

TABLE 7 Report Card on Quebec's Justice System

Objective of Justice System	Indicators	Quebec Overall Grade
Public Safety	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The fundamental purpose of the justice system is to protect society by holding offenders accountable, but also by providing supports to rehabilitate them. Measured by: (a) crime and clearance rates; and (b) public perceptions about police enforcing the law, ensuring safety, and satisfaction with safety. 	B
Support for Victims	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Victims have rights related to information, protection, participation, and restitution. Measured by: (a) proportion of offenders given restitution orders; (b) referrals to victim's services; and (c) public perceptions about police supplying information and being approachable. 	C+
Cost and Resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The justice system should be run in a cost-effective manner while meeting its core objectives. Measured by: (a) per capita cost of public safety; (b) per capita cost of corrections, (c) average daily inmate cost; and (d) number of police <i>per capita</i>. 	B
Fairness and Access to Justice	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The justice system must guarantee the constitutional rights of accused persons and provide them with fair and impartial trials, as guaranteed by the <i>Charter</i>. Measured by: (a) legal aid expenditures per crime; (b) percentage of trials with a guilty outcome; (c) proportion of Aboriginal persons in custody versus their prevalence in the population; and (d) public perceptions about the police being fair. 	C+
Efficiency	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A well-functioning criminal justice system should ensure prompt and thorough investigations and timely prosecutions and trials. Measured by: (a) Criminal Code incidents per police officer; (b) accused on remand per 1,000 crimes; (c) average criminal case processing time; (d) percentage of cases stayed or withdrawn; and (e) public perceptions about the police responding promptly. 	C+

Source: Adapted from Perrin and Audas (2018, p. 9).

Does Northern Quebec's Justice System Require a Separate Report Card?

While the Perrin and Audas (2018) report shows that the criminal justice system is generally responsive to the public, there are some places within the province where the services to victims and offenders are not as effective. For example, crime rates in Nunavik—the homeland of about 13,000 primarily Inuit people who live in Northern Quebec—are very high. Figure 11 shows the number of violent and property crimes committed in this region between 2013 and 2019. What is striking about these statistics is there are nearly three violent crimes for every property offence, whereas for all of Canada in 2018, there were about three property crimes for every violent offence (see Moreau, 2019, p. 40). Said another way, in 2019 there was almost one violent crime reported for every two Nunavik residents. Although the number of violent crimes dropped somewhat over the seven-year period, the 9 murders in 2019 is very high for a place with a population of only 13,000 residents. Montreal, by contrast, had 25 murders in 2019, but had a population of 1.78 million people. The police are also at high risk of victimization and between 2013 and 2019 there were an average of 421 assaults per year on Nunavik police officers (Nunavik Statistics, 2020).

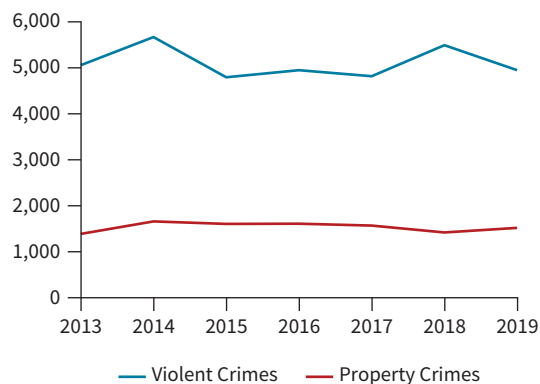


FIGURE 11 Violent and Property Crimes, Nunavik, Population 13,000 residents: 2013 to 2019

Source: Nunavik Statistics (2020).

Communities with high rates of violence are often plagued with other social problems, such as substance abuse, sexual abuse, suicides, unemployment, family break-downs and the effects of long-term poverty. Curtis (2016) describes how officers in the Kawawachikamach First Nation near the Quebec–Labrador border “responded to 64 suicide attempts in the last 12 months. In a community with a population of 850, that represents about one attempt for every 12 residents.” Anselmi (2019) reports that the suicide rate in some Nunavik communities is 10 to 15 times the national average. One of the challenges of responding to high levels of disorder and crimes is that the police services, courts, and correctional systems in the North are often underfunded and lack the ability to deliver effective public services. Many Indigenous police services, for example, contend that they were “set up to fail” and Kiedrowski, Jones, and Ruddell (2017) found that many of these police services were out-of-sight and out-of-mind by both the public and different levels of governments.

The Public Inquiry (2019) published a report on their investigation of public services, including police, court, and correctional services. They found that officers policing Indigenous communities were often short-staffed and were expected to manage high workloads in dangerous conditions (e.g., no timely back-up); which in turn increased the number of officers who quit their jobs within a year or two of starting work (Public Inquiry, 2019, p. 265). Many of these issues are related to a lack of adequate funding for these agencies and the commission provided examples of police officers using outdated equipment and some police services lacked detention facilities that are needed to ensure the safety of the officers and the people they brought into custody. The commission also addressed allegations of excessive use of force, police sexual misconduct, and a lack of supports for Northern residents to launch complaints against the police.

With respect to the justice system, the Public Inquiry (2019) found that Indigenous peoples often suffer from high rates of victimization and

mistrust both the police and courts. Victims and witnesses, who are often suffering the effects of experiencing trauma in their lives, sometimes say that the justice system has further re-traumatized them, and they may be reluctant to report their victimization in fear of being stigmatized. Some Indigenous peoples are also distrustful of a justice system that is built on punishment rather than restorative justice (see Chapter 2 in *Exploring Criminal Justice*). Other barriers to justice were related to language, or the geography of the North, as few people accused of crimes could spend much time with their lawyers when members of the courtroom work group (the judges, prosecutors, legal aid lawyers, and clerks) traveled to their communities. Many of the prosecutors and legal aid lawyers were also inexperienced and like the police officers, only spent a year or two in their jobs before leaving (Public Inquiry, 2019, p. 316).

The Public Inquiry (2019) was also critical that homeless and other poor defendants were incarcerated for not paying fines, and that Indigenous people were unnecessarily remanded to custody. When accused persons were granted bail, they often had to abide by numerous conditions (such as refraining from using alcohol) that were unrealistic and thereby set some up to fail. As noted in *Exploring Criminal Justice*, few Indigenous persons benefit from a *Gladue* report prior to their sentencing, which considers whether there were factors in that person's life that might warrant a mitigation of their sentence.

Residents of Northern Quebec who are remanded or sentenced to custody are transported to communities far from their homes. As a result, weekend or intermittent sentencing is not an option for them and this can disrupt their employment, schooling, and family life. If placed in a correctional centre, the Public Inquiry (2019, p. 343) found that they were transferred between facilities more often than non-Indigenous inmates. In addition to being disruptive, these transfers could be traumatizing to some because of the additional strip searches, being restrained during the transport, the potential loss of their personal belongings in the transport and "having to adapt to a new place, new correctional

personnel, new rules and methods, as well as new cellmates" (Public Inquiry, 2019, p. 344). Given that most of their families are poor and cannot afford to travel, there were few face-to-face visits and some inmates had no contact with their families once incarcerated.

With respect to the conditions within police detention facilities in Northern Quebec, the Ombudsman (2016) found they were often overcrowded, unsanitary, and often requiring maintenance. The Ombudsman also identified a number of additional problems for people residing in these facilities for more than a few hours, such as the quality of meals, the lack of access to the outdoors, inadequate phone access, and laundry services. Ultimately, the authorities in Nunavik find it difficult to provide safe conditions of confinement. Given those conditions, rates of self-harm and suicide attempts are higher with the residents from Northern Quebec than their counterparts from the Southern regions of the province (Public Inquiry, 2019).

Altogether, this section shows that Indigenous peoples in Northern Quebec who encounter the police, courts, and corrections may be at a significant disadvantage in their treatment and receive fewer positive outcomes when compared with people from the Southern part of the province facing the same charges. Chronic underfunding of the justice system in the North is a key factor that seems to underlie many of these challenges. Because people from the North are sometimes out-of-sight and out-of-mind we do not pay much attention to their circumstances. This must change in order to help these Northerners receive the same type of justice that residents of Southern Quebec expect.

Some politicians and researchers argue that people living in Montreal are also subject to systemic racism. In October 2019 a report was released on systemic bias by the Montreal police (the Service de Police de la Ville de Montreal [SPVM]). This report, commissioned by the City of Montreal and conducted by three independent researchers from Quebec universities, found that between 2014 and 2017 Black and Indigenous people were four to five times more likely than Whites to be stopped for a street check (where officers stop,

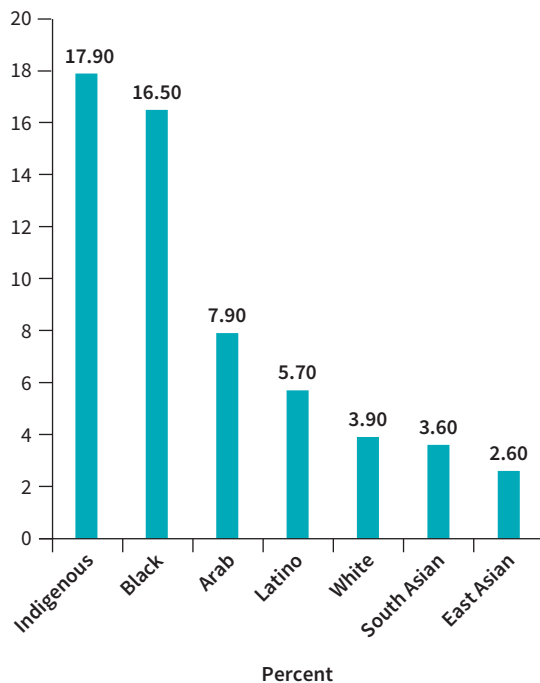


FIGURE 12 Police Checks of Racial Groups as Percentage of Population, Montreal: 2014 to 2017

Source: Armony, Hassaoui, and Mulone (2019)

question, and sometimes search people who have not necessarily committed an offence: see p. 105 in *Exploring Criminal Justice* by the SPVM (Armony, Hassaoui, & Mulone, 2019). The proportion of the population stopped by racial group is shown in Figure 12. The researchers found that Indigenous women were 11 times more likely to be stopped by police than White women and that young Arab people were four times more likely than young Whites to be stopped for a street check. Since the release of the report, there have been a number of policy changes made by the SPVM in an effort to reduce the biases that influence these practices.

WRONGFUL CONVICTIONS: REJEAN HINSE'S FIGHT TO CLEAR HIS NAME

When somebody is jailed, convicted, or punished for an offence that he or she didn't commit, it shakes the public's faith in the entire justice

system. Wrongful convictions date back to the start of justice systems, and as noted in *Exploring Criminal Justice* since 1993 at least 23 Canadians have been exonerated and released from prison due to wrongful convictions through the efforts of Innocence Canada (2020). In addition, other persons were exonerated but did not receive help from that organization. Almost 100 other prisoners have asked for help from Innocence Canada and five are from Quebec (Innocence Canada, 2020). Several other advocacy organizations, most often associated with law schools, educate the public and provide training to law students about wrongful convictions. The McGill Faculty of Law, for example, operates a legal clinic called Innocence McGill and they have been investigating cases of wrongful convictions in Quebec as well as the rest of Canada since 2006.

While many Canadians are familiar with the names of high-profile wrongfully convicted persons such as David Milgaard, individuals who have been wrongfully convicted in Quebec are less well known. Cases include Simon Marshall, who was imprisoned between 1997 and 2003 for a number of sexual offences. Analyses of DNA evidence later proved his innocence and he received \$2.3 million in compensation. Chris Bates was imprisoned for five-and-a-half years for the 1992 murder of a Cowansville store clerk, but was ultimately released when new evidence was considered, including "a lack of forensic evidence and conflicting, changing witness statements" (Edwards, 2014, para. 12). Moreover, the Supreme Court of Canada found that a vindictive prosecution had resulted in the 1991 conviction of Benoit Proulx for the murder of his ex-girlfriend in Ste-Foy. After spending two years in prison the Supreme Court of Canada found that "There was a flagrant disregard for the rights of the appellant, fuelled by motives that were clearly improper" (*Proulx v. Quebec (Attorney General)*) and ruled that the province compensate him for this wrongful conviction.

In order to shed light on wrongful convictions in Quebec we take a closer look at the case of Rejean Hinse, who was convicted of armed robbery

of a Mont-Laurier general store in December 1961. Five people participated in the robbery where the shopkeeper and his wife endured an hour-long assault that netted the robbers \$4,000 (Banerjee, 2011). Later arrested, Hinse was remanded in custody for almost three years and then was convicted in 1964 for his role in the robbery and sentenced to 15 years. Hinse was paroled in 1969 although he always maintained his innocence and argued that he was a victim of eyewitness misidentification. Hinse waged a 20-year battle with Quebec authorities to clear his name, arguing he was 200 kilometres away from Mont-Laurier at the time of the offence.

In 1994 the Quebec Court of Appeal set aside his conviction and entered a stay of proceedings. But that did not clear his name and Hinse continued his fight to the Supreme Court in 1997, which found that his conviction was wrongful (see *R. v. Rejean Hinse*). Although the courts found he was not guilty of the charge, he never received any apology or compensation. As a result, Hinse sued the Quebec and federal governments and was awarded \$13.1 million and he received \$4.5 million from Quebec. The federal government appealed that decision and the Supreme Court in 2015 found that the federal government acted in good faith and did not display malice (*Hinse v. Canada (Attorney General)*).

The Hinse case shows that determination can overcome bureaucracy as few of us would have waged a 30-year fight before being awarded any compensation. The fight for justice that Hinse conducted took up almost his entire lifetime as the initial robbery occurred in December 1961 and the Supreme Court of Canada issued its final ruling in June 2015. During that time his case was heard twice by the Supreme Court of Canada, which does show that the poor do have some access to Canada's highest court. The justice system also learns from these miscarriages of justice. A report, prepared by the Federal/Provincial/Territorial Heads of Prosecutions Committee (2011, p. 173) reports that since 2005 "all new prosecutors have been educated about the prevention of wrongful convictions." Seven

years later the Government of Canada (2018) reviewed the causes of wrongful convictions and highlighted steps that the police and prosecutors could take to reduce these errors. Despite taking those steps we also know that investigations and prosecutions are complex affairs and there will always be wrongful convictions. As a result the justice system needs mechanisms to review these cases and ensure that justice is being done.

Critical Thinking Questions

1. Rejean Hinse ultimately received \$4.5 million in compensation for his wrongful conviction and five years of imprisonment. Was that a fair amount of compensation given his imprisonment and how long he waited for exoneration and compensation?
2. How can we hold the persons who make miscarriages of justice accountable, such as the police and prosecutors involved in a case?
3. Campbell and Denov (2016) estimate that about half of one per cent of convictions in Canada are wrongful, or about 268 people in 2017–18 in Quebec (53,577 guilty verdicts x .005). What are some outcomes of those miscarriages of justice? Is that number troubling to you?

SUMMARY

The amount and seriousness of crime varies across the country and this supplement shows that Quebec has among the lowest rates of property and violent crime in Canada. Those provincial averages, however, mask the fact that some places have very high rates of crime, and some people are at high risk of being victimized. Because every province has different histories, population characteristics, levels of economic development, political values, and cultural beliefs, their crime control solutions will be different as well. As a result, the people working in Quebec's adult and youth justice systems may

respond to antisocial behaviour and crime in a slightly different manner from what occurs in neighbouring provinces or territories.

A report card on the operations of the justice system developed by Perrin and Audas (2018) suggests that some progress in the province is needed. A commission into the plight of Indigenous people in the criminal justice system suggests that

significant changes must take place in Northern Quebec. While the justice system will never eliminate crime, we can attempt to prevent crimes and protect those most at risk of victimization. Learning about the differences in crime problems and how we respond to them makes exploring criminal justice in Canada such an interesting undertaking.

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