Criminal Victimisation in Seventeen Industrialised Countries

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Onderzoek en beleid

De reeks Onderzoek en beleid omvat de rapporten van door het Wetenschappelijk Onderzoek- en Documentatiecentrum van het ministerie van Justitie verricht onderzoek. Opname in de reeks betekent niet dat de inhoud van de rapporten het standpunt van de minister van Justitie weergeeft.

Key findings from the 2000 International Crime Victims Survey

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Preface

The International Crime Victims Survey (ICVS) began development in 1987 to further international comparative research. The first survey in 1989 was restricted to fifteen industrialised countries and the cities of Surabaja (Indonesia) and Warsaw (Poland). With the second round of the ICVS, in 1992, its scope expanded through the involvement of UNICRI (the United Nations Interregional Criminal Justice Research Institute), which has developed the survey into a global project covering all continents.

The ICVS has two main features. First, it is a formidable instrument for monitoring crime and perceptions of crime and criminal justice across the world in a standardised way, independently of information from official sources. The results of the ICVS have in many instances provided balance to what has sometimes been ideologically slanted national discourse on crime and criminal justice. The unique value of the ICVS is reflected in the growing interest that key international organisations take in it – for instance the World Health Organisation, the World Bank, the European Commission and the World Society of Victimology. From its first charting of crime in industrialised countries, it moved into Eastern Europe countries in transition from centrally guided to free market economies. Here, it provided crucial research-based information on changes in crime and perceptions of it in a transitional period. In several countries, including Poland, ICVS participation evolved into fully-fledged national crime surveys. The ICVS has had a similar influence in Africa, Asia and Latin America – and its potential here is likely to grow more.
The second main feature of the ICVS is that it provides a wealth of data for researchers interested in the patterns, contours and effects of victimisation in both the developed countries and the rest of the world – which had previously gained less attention. The ICVS has unquestionably both deepened and broadened the empirical of victimology.

This is the first of a number of reports on the 2000 ICVS. A report will follow from UNICRI focussing on Central and Eastern European countries and how they compare with Western Europe. After this, UNICRI will report on Southern Africa.

The ICVS Working Group

The Working Group has changed composition somewhat over time as the survey has developed. Jan van Dijk was the key member of the original ICVS Working Group and

Acknowledgements

Many different organisations and individuals have played a part in the ICVS. Thanks are due first to the Dutch Ministry of Justice for funding the overall organisation of the ICVS and data management. Fieldwork in each of the seventeen countries in the 2000 ICVS has been financed by their Criminal Justice ministries or research institutes. We are grateful to them.

The surveys were overseen by national co-ordinators who prepared translations of the English-based questionnaire and carried the burden of work in getting the survey into the field and supervising progress. Their support was invaluable.

We are also much indebted to Interview-NSS, the overall contractor for the majority of the ICVS 2000 surveys, as they were in 1989, 1992 and 1996. The research team consisted of Peter Willems, Marco Sodderland, Ambika Lucassen and Nefta Helderop. They did a great deal of work rigorously checking questionnaires and preparing the computer-programmed version of these. They also supervised the performance of sub-contracted local firms, and oversaw data preparation and the production of technical reports. The expertise and experience of Interview-NSS as regards the ICVS has played crucial role in its success.

Our thanks also extend to the numerous the interviewers involved in the 2000 sweep, and to all the respondents – nearly 40,000 – who agreed to take part.

A large number of colleagues from many countries have helped in developing the ICVS over the years. Special thanks are due to Anna Alvazzi del Frate from UNICRI. Her work on the methodology of the face-to-face surveys outside the industrialised world has been invaluable. Furthermore, her enthusiasm for the ICVS project as a whole has been inspiring.

We are also thankful to Gerben Bruinsma, Marita Kok, Marianne Sampiemon, Huub Simons and Antonia Verweij who played a valuable part in preparing this report.

The authors

Summary

The International Crime Victimisation Survey (ICVS) is the most far-reaching programme of fully standardised sample surveys looking at householders' experience of crime in different countries. The first ICVS took place in 1989, the second in 1992, the third in 1996 and the fourth in 2000. Surveys have been carried out in 24 industrialised countries since 1989, and in 46 cities in developing countries and countries in transition. This report deals with seventeen industrialised countries which took part in the 2000 ICVS.

The reason for setting up the ICVS was the inadequacy of other measures of crime across country. Figures of offences recorded by the police are problematic due to differences in the way the police define, record and count crime. And since victims report most crimes the police know about, police figures can differ simply because of differences in reporting behaviour. It is also difficult to make comparisons of independently organised crime surveys, as these differ in design and coverage.

For the countries covered in this report, interviews were mainly conducted by telephone (with samples selected through variants of random digit dialling). The overall response rate in the 17 countries was 64%. Samples were usually of 2,000 people, which mean there is a fairly wide sampling error on the ICVS estimates. The surveys cannot, then, give precise estimates of crime in different countries. But they are a unique source of information and give good comparative information.

Each participating country paid for its own fieldwork. The Dutch Ministry of Justice also provided financial assistance for overheads. Technical aspects of the surveys in many countries were co-ordinated by a Dutch company, Interview-NSS, who subcontracted fieldwork to local survey companies. The NSCR and Leiden University managed survey results.

The results in this report relate mainly to respondents' experience of crime in 1999, the year prior to the 2000 survey. Those interviewed were asked about crimes they had experienced, whether or not reported to the police. The main results follow.

Overall victimisation

— The ICVS allows an overall measure of victimisation which is the percentage of people victimised once or more in the previous year by *any* of the eleven crimes covered by the survey. This prevalence measure is a simple but robust indicator of overall proneness to crime. The countries fall into three bands.
  - Above 24% (victim of any crime in 1999): Australia, England and Wales, the Netherlands and Sweden

  - 20%-24%: Canada, Scotland, Denmark, Poland, Belgium, France, and USA
  - Under 20%: Finland, Catalonia (Spain), Switzerland, Portugal, Japan and Northern Ireland.
- For countries in previous sweeps of the ICVS, the present results generally mirror previous ones as regards relative rankings.
- In terms of the *number* of crimes experienced per 100 people (an incidence rate), the picture is slightly different. The USA fares relatively worse on incidence rates than on prevalence rates. In contrast, the position of Denmark and Canada slip down somewhat. Incidence rates are highest in England and Wales, Australia and the Netherlands.

Car-related crime

- The risk of having a car stolen was highest in England and Wales (2.6% of owners had a theft), Australia (2.1%), and France (1.9%). Japan, Switzerland, Catalonia, the USA, Finland, and the Netherlands show risks of 0.5% or less.
- Those in Poland, Japan, Belgium and the Netherlands were least likely to get their cars back – indicating proportionately more professional theft. Recovery rates were above 80% in Sweden, Australia, and the USA – indicating more thefts for 'joyriding'. In the eleven countries with surveys in 1996 and 2000, there is little change in the proportion of stolen cars recovered, but it is now lower than it was in 1992, probably indicating a general move towards more professional theft since then.
- Having something stolen *from* a car (e.g., luggage, radios, car mirrors etc.) was more common. Highest risks were in Poland (9% of owners had one or more theft), England and Wales (8%), Australia (7%) and the USA (7%). Risks were lowest in Denmark, Finland, the Netherlands, Switzerland and Japan: 4% or less were victimised.
- Car vandalism was most common in Scotland (12% of owners had their car damaged), Poland, England and Wales, the Netherlands and Australia (about 10%-11%). Risks were low in Northern Ireland, Japan, Denmark and Switzerland (less than 5%). Countries with higher rates of car vandalism generally had higher rates of thefts from cars, but the association between vandalism and thefts of cars was weaker.

Motorcycle theft

- Highest risks of motorcycle and moped theft were in Denmark and England and Wales (4% of owners were victimised). Although Japan has low risks for most crimes, thefts of motorcycles was comparatively high (3%).

Bicycle theft

— For bicycle theft, the highest risks were in Japan, Sweden, the Netherlands and Denmark (about 8% of owners had a bicycle taken).
— The 2000 ICVS results suggest – as in previous years – that bicycle theft is highest in countries where there are most bicycles owned: ie, a plentiful supply of targets encourages rather than dampens theft demand. Also, where bicycle theft is common, stealing cars occurs less often – though the relationship is rather less strong than in earlier ICVS sweeps.

Burglary

— The proportion of households who had a completed or attempted burglary was highest in Australia (7%), England and Wales (5%), Canada, Denmark and Belgium (all 4%).
— The pattern of relative risk is reasonably similar whether the focus is on burglary with entry or attempts. Where burglars are successful in gaining entry, they are also more active in trying to do so.
— Nonetheless, the proportion of burglaries that involved attempts varied somewhat by country. More attempts at entry failed in Finland, France, Belgium, Scotland, the Netherlands, England and Wales, Switzerland and the USA (all had above 50% attempts). With the exception of Finland, the ICVS evidence suggests that homes in these countries are better protected by security devices. This may explain why burglars more often fail to gain entry.

Theft of personal property

— Thefts of personal property will be heterogeneous in nature, but the highest risks were in Australia, Sweden, and Poland (about 5%-6% of people were victimised).
— In roughly a third of thefts, the victim was carrying what was stolen – termed 'pickpocketing'. Risks of pickpocketing were most common in Poland (4%). Risks were also comparatively high in Belgium, the Netherlands, Denmark, Catalonia, and England and Wales (about 2%). As previous sweeps have found, risks were lowest outside Europe: in Japan, Canada, and the USA.

Contact crime

— An overall measure of contact crime was taken as robbery, assaults with force, and sexual assaults (against women only). The highest risks were in Australia, England and Wales, Canada, Scotland and Finland: over 3% were victims. This

was more than double the level in USA, Belgium, Catalonia, Portugal, and Japan (all under 2%). In Japan the risk of contact crime was especially low (0.4%).

Robbery

- Robbery was comparatively uncommon in all countries. Risks were highest in 1999 in Poland (1.8%), England and Wales, and Australia (both 1.2%). By far the lowest risks were in Japan and Northern Ireland (0.1%).
- On average, just over a third of victims of robbery said the offender(s) carried a weapon of some sort – in most cases a knife. There was a higher than average use of weapons in the USA, Catalonia, Scotland, and Portugal. Although not very statistically robust, the data indicate that guns were used relatively more often in Catalonia and the USA.

Sexual incidents

- Two types of sexual incidents were measured: offensive sexual behaviour and sexual assault (i.e. incidents described as rape, attempted rape or indecent assaults). For all countries combined, just over one per cent of women reported offensive sexual behaviour. The level was half that for sexual assaults.
- Women in Sweden, Finland, Australia and England and Wales were most at risk of sexual assault. Women in Japan, Northern Ireland, Poland and Portugal were least at risk. Many of the differences in sexual assault risks across country were small. Generally, the relative level of sexual assault in different countries accorded with relative levels of offensive sexual behaviour – though there were a few differences.
- Women know the offender(s) in about half of the all sexual incidents: in a third they were known by name, and in about a sixth by sight. (More assaults involved offenders known by name than did incidents of offensive sexual behaviour.) Most sexual incidents involved only one offender. Weapons were very rarely involved.

Assaults and threats

- Taking all countries together, 3.5% were victims once or more of assaults or threats in 1999. Risks were highest in Australia, Scotland, England and Wales (about 6%) and Canada (5%). Risks were lowest in Japan, Portugal, (under 1%) and Catalonia (1.5%).
- Offenders were known in about half the incidents overall. Men were less likely to know offenders than women. Weapons (especially knifes) were said to have been used (if only as a threat) in just under a quarter of incidents.

Country profiles of crime

— Taking all countries together, car vandalism forms a full quarter of crimes experienced by ICVS respondents. Car vandalism – together with thefts of and from cars – means that over 40% of ICVS crimes involve cars.
— Contact crimes comprise about a quarter of the crimes measured, most of them assault and threats. Motorcycle and bicycle theft, burglaries, and thefts of personal property each contributed just over 10% overall. The largest difference between countries was with regard to the bicycle theft 'share', reflecting varying ownership rates.
— The make-up of crime differs across country. Catalonia and Portugal stand out against the norm in having a crime problem dominated by incidents involving cars: rather more than 60% of all the crimes counted. Japan was also unusual in that 40% of the crime counted by the ICVS involved thefts of two-wheelers. The distinctive feature of Finland was the unusually high share of all crime that sexual incidents accounted for (over a quarter).

Crime seriousness

— Victims were asked to assess the seriousness of what happened. Mean seriousness scores were computed for different offence types. Car thefts where the car was not recovered were viewed most seriously. Next most serious were sexual assaults, then car thefts even if the car was recovered, and robbery involving a weapon. Assaults with force were scored much on a par with burglaries with entry. The least serious crimes were car vandalism, theft from cars, and bicycle theft. Results in previous ICVS sweeps were similar.
— Overall mean score did not differ much by country. This suggests that people in different countries have similar attitudinal thresholds about the seriousness of different crimes. It also suggests people do not differ very greatly in the *types* of incidents they tell interviewers about. The *ranking* of offences in seriousness terms were also very similar, again indicating a high degree of consensus about the import of conventional crimes.
— We corrected the victimisation rates for crime seriousness to see how countries fared on a crime count taking seriousness into account. It did not greatly alter the 'burden of crime' picture from other measures. Australia, England and Wales, the Netherlands and Sweden still remain most pressured by crime. However, Denmark and Canada fall back in the relative order when seriousness is taken into account, while the USA and Northern Ireland go higher up the list.

Trends in crime

— Generally speaking, the ICVS suggests that crime rose between 1988 and 1991, stabilised of fell in 1995, then fell back more in 1999. This is the dominant pattern in many individual countries.
— The picture in North America differs from that in Europe. Crime levels are lower than in 1988. In the three European countries with four ICVS measures (England and Wales, Finland, and the Netherlands), crime levels are still higher than in 1988. Compared to 1991, risks also fell more in North America than in five of the seven European countries showing falls.
— Since 1995, there has been more consistent falls in property crime. Changes in violent crime are variable.

Differences in risks of crime

— Risks for different social groups were examined using multivariate analysis. All 17 countries were taken together.
— Those in the *largest conurbations* (of populations over 100,000) were most at risk. Net of other effects, risks were 60% higher in the most urban areas compared to the least urbanised ones. The biggest differentials were for sexual incidents and thefts of and from cars ('car thefts').
— Households with *higher incomes* were more at risk those poorer ones – by a third. The biggest differential was for car thefts. The difference for burglary was lowest (higher income households were about 10% more at risk). The analysis here is focused on *individual* risks rather than area ones. In poorer neighbourhoods, households *in general* might have higher risk, but more affluent households nonetheless emerge as the most vulnerable. They may offer more 'criminal 'rewards'.
— *Younger respondents* were more at risk than older ones. Risks of all ICVS crimes were well over double than for those aged 55 or more.
— *Those who went out more* frequently were rather more vulnerable – by about 20%.
— Those who were *unmarried* were also more at risk, net of other effects. Risks of contact crime were double than those for people in permanent relationships.
— For robbery and assaults and threats *men* were about 20% more at risk than women were.

Reporting to the police

— Nearly all cars and motorcycles stolen were reported, as were burglaries with entry. About two-thirds of thefts from cars and bicycle thefts were reported, but

on average only nearly half of attempted burglaries and robberies were. Reporting rates for other crime types were lower.

— We took six crime types to look at differences in reporting levels. The highest reporting rates were in Denmark and Sweden, Northern Ireland, the Netherlands (60% or just under). Reporting was also relatively common in Belgium, England and Wales, Switzerland, France and Scotland (above 50%). Crimes were least often reported in Portugal, Japan, Catalonia, and Poland (less than 40%).

— The most common reason for *not* reporting in all countries was that the incident was 'not serious enough' or there was 'no loss'. (Five crimes were considered.) The idea that the police could do nothing about what happened also featured fairly frequently. Few victims mentioned fear or dislike of the police as a reason for reporting, though it was more common in relation to contact crime.

— Victims were also asked why they *did* report. Victims of sexual incidents and assaults and threats were most concerned to stop what happened being repeated. For burglaries with entry and thefts from cars, more than a third reported because they wanted help in getting property back, and a third did so for insurance reasons. Four in ten victims referred to the civic obligation to notify the police.

Victim support

— The majority of victims were satisfied with how the police responded to their crime report. Highest levels of satisfaction were in Denmark, Catalonia and Switzerland. The police response was considered least good in Portugal, Poland, France and Japan.

— The main reason for being unhappy with the police response was that they 'they did not do enough': half complained about this. About a third felt that the police 'were not interested'.

— Some victims were asked whether they got help from a specialised victim support agency. Support was more often given to victims of contact crimes (10% were offered help) than to victims of burglary (5%). Victims in the UK were offered most support. There were also comparatively high level of support in the Netherlands, Canada, Sweden, the USA, and Denmark. Least support seems to have been available to victims in Portugal, Japan, Finland, France and Poland.

— In most countries, around one in three burglary victims who had not been given help would have welcomed some. Four in ten victims of contact crime felt this too.

Police performance

— People were asked to say whether or not the police did a good job in controlling crime in their area, and whether the police were helpful. Police performance was most favourably judged in the USA and Canada. Satisfaction levels were also comparatively high in Scotland and Australia. The poorest judgements were from this in Portugal, Poland the Netherlands, Japan and Catalonia.
— In most countries, police performance was judged less favourably after 1988. But compared to the 1996 ICVS, police performance was rated more highly in 2000 in all but one (Sweden) of 11 countries with measures for both years.

Anxiety about burglary

— On average, nearly a third of people felt they were likely or very likely to be burgled in the coming year. Those in Portugal (58%), Belgium, and France (about 45%) were most pessimistic. There was least concern in the Scandinavian countries, the USA, and the Netherlands (under 20% thought a burglary was likely).
— Concern about burglary rose between the 1989 and 1992 ICVS, and has since fallen – although a few countries are exceptions. Falling perceptions of the likelihood of burglary broadly match trends in ICVS burglary levels.

Safety on the streets

— When asked how safe they feel walking alone in their area after dark, on average just under a quarter felt very or a bit unsafe. Those in Catalonia, Australia and Poland were most anxious (about a third felt a bit or very unsafe). Next highest levels were in Portugal and England and Wales. Feelings of vulnerability were lowest in the USA and Sweden, although there were several other countries with only marginally higher figures.
— Whereas anxiety about burglary to some extent matches national risks, feelings about street safety are not consistently related to levels of 'street trouble'. The lack of much relationship between anxiety and risks of street crime has been evident in previous ICVS results. It may mean that fear of street crime is determined by specific 'cultural' pressures.

Safety at home

— A new question in the 2000 ICVS asked about safety at home. A much smaller proportion felt unsafe at home (6% overall felt a bit or very unsafe). Those in Poland felt most insecure (15%), followed by Portugal, Japan and Belgium.

Home security

— Summary measures of home security were taken as the proportion of homes with burglar alarms and special door locks. The highest alarm ownership was in England and Wales, Australia, Scotland, the USA, Canada, and Belgium. Generally, countries with highest alarm ownership also had more homes with special door locks
— The use of preventive measures is increasing in most countries.

Attitudes to punishment

— People were asked about the most appropriate sentence for a recidivist burglar aged 21. A community service order was seen the most appropriate sentence overall: 41% recommended it. But there was a wide spread of opinion. It was the first choice in half of the 16 countries considered, with support strongest in France, Catalonia (two-thirds recommending it), Belgium, Poland and Portugal (over half). Fewer than 30% opted for a community sentence in the UK, and fewer still in Japan and the USA.
— Imprisonment was recommended by 34% of respondents overall, and was the first choice in eight countries. Support for imprisonment in 2000 was strongest in the USA, the UK, and Japan (all with about half or more choosing it). Those in Catalonia and France were least in favour of imprisonment.
— The 2000 ICVS shows a general hardening of attitudes towards punishment, with increasing proportions supporting imprisonment. The most marked changes have been in Canada, England and Wales, Scotland, the Netherlands, and Sweden.

1

Introduction

1.1 Background to the International Crime Victims Survey

The International Crime Victims Survey (ICVS) is now the most far-reaching programme of fully standardised surveys looking at householders' experience of crime in different countries. This chapter starts by looking at the rationale for the ICVS, and how it has developed. It then explains the methodology of the surveys conducted in 2000 in the 17 industrialised countries with which this report deals. Along the way here, it assesses the technical limitations of the survey, arguing that these need to be set against the value of the information the ICVS has provided.

The ICVS was set up to serve three main aims – and they remain as pertinent now as when the project started.

— *To provide an alternative to police information on levels of crime.* Offences recorded by the police are problematic for comparing crime in different countries. First, victims report the vast majority of incidents the police know about, and any difference in the propensity of victims to report undermines comparisons of the amount of crime counted by the police in different counties. Secondly, there may well be differences in the amount of reported crime which is actually recorded by the police in different countries. Thirdly, official police statistics vary because of differences in legal definitions, recording practices and rules for classifying and counting offences. These limitations are well-established (see, e.g., Council of Europe (1999) for a recent illustration).

— *To harness crime survey methodology for comparative purposes.* Over the past 20 years a number of countries have developed 'crime' or 'victim' surveys to assess national or local crime problems. They ask representative samples of the general public about selected offences they have experienced recently, whether or not they reported what happened to the police. For the offences they cover, then, they provide a 'truer' picture of how many people are affected by crime than the more filtered count from police statistics. For comparative purposes, though, these independently organised surveys are of limited use. The number of countries with appropriate surveys is limited, and comparisons are difficult anyway because of differences in survey design and administration, the types of victimisation measured, how exactly victimisation is asked about, and many other factors. A crucial feature of the ICVS is the use of a fully *standardised* questionnaire, as well as carefully controlled data management and analysis procedures.

Moreover, as the intention was to repeat the ICVS over time, it promised additional information in trends in crime in different countries.

— *To extend information on who is most affected by crime.* By collecting social and demographic information on respondents who take part, the ICVS also aimed to assess how crime risks vary for different groups, in terms of age, income levels and so on. Police statistics, generally speaking, provide little in the way of documenting the characteristics of victims. Moreover, with its cross-national perspective, the ICVS allows us to see how far the determinants and consequences of victimisation are the same in different jurisdictions, or whether country differences are evident.

1.2 The ICVS to date

The ICVS has been organised by an International Working Group of criminologists with expertise in victim survey methodology. The group was set up in 1987.[1] Additional national co-ordinators in each country have been responsible for the conduct of fieldwork, and where necessary for ensuring a sound translation of the questionnaire. (A list of national co-ordinators is in Appendix 1, paragraph 1.) In the main, each industrialised country has met its own survey costs, with much of the administrative overheads borne by the Dutch Ministry of Justice. The technical management of most of the surveys in industrialised countries has been carried out by InterView-NSS, a Dutch survey company. They sub-contracted fieldwork to survey companies in the participating countries, maintaining responsibility for the questionnaire, sample selection and interview procedures. The data from the surveys have been integrated and processed by researchers at Leiden University.

There have now been four main rounds of the ICVS in industrialised countries. Table 1 shows which countries have participated.

— *The 1989 sweep.* The first round of the ICVS took place in 1989, giving a measure of crime in 1988 (since respondents are principally asked about their experiences in the year preceding the interview). It covered 15 industrialised countries. These were mainly in Western Europe, but also covered Japan, Australia,

1 The Working Group has changed somewhat over time. The initial Group comprised Jan van Dijk (overall coordinator) of the Dutch Ministry of Justice, Pat Mayhew (of the British Home Office), and Martin Killias (University of Lausanne). Since the second sweep, there were two additional members: Ugljesa Zvekic and Anna Alvazzi del Frate, both of the United Nations Interregional Criminal Justice Research Institute (UNICRI) in Rome. For the fourth (2000) sweep of the ICVS, Gerben Bruinsma and Paul Nieuwbeerta of the Netherlands Institute for the Study of Criminality and Law Enforcement (NSCR) in Leiden joined the Working Group. John van Kesteren of the Leiden University has been in effect a 'de facto' member of the Working Group for some time, having had responsibility for managing the ICVS data.

Table 1 **National ICVS surveys in industrialised countries**

	1989	1992	1996	2000
Australia	•	•		•
Austria			•	
Belgium	•	•		•
Canada	•	•	•	•
Catalonia (Spain)				•
Denmark				•
England & Wales	•	•	•	•
Finland	•	•	•	•
France	•		•	•
Germany (West)	•			
Italy		•		
Japan[1]	•	•		•
Netherlands	•	•	•	•
New Zealand		•		
Northern Ireland	•		•	•
Norway	•			
Poland[2]		•	•	•
Portugal				•
Scotland	•		•	•
Spain	•			
Sweden		•	•	•
Switzerland	•		•	•
USA	•	•	•	•

1 Not all data are available for Japan.

2 Results for Poland were not reported in the report of the third ICVS in industrialised countries.

the USA and Canada. Key findings from the first sweep are reported in Van Dijk et al., 1990.

— *The 1992 sweep.* The second survey was in 1992 (measuring victimisation in 1991). Thirteen industrialised countries took part, including Czechoslovakia (see Van Dijk and Mayhew, 1992). At the same time, UNICRI (United Nations Interregional Criminal Justice Research Institute) in Rome started ICVS-compatible face-to-face surveys in non-industrialised countries. (For the most part, these surveys were at city level because elsewhere sampling frames were often inadequate, fieldwork was more difficult, and some of the victimisation questions (e.g., relating to car crime) less relevant.) UNICRI was keen to sensitise local governments to the dimensions and extent of crime in their urban areas,

especially as police data on crime was often poor.[2] (Key results are in Alvazzi del Frate et al., 1993, and Zvekic and Alvazzi del Frati, 1995.)

— *The 1996 sweep.* The third survey in industrialised counties was in 1996 (measuring victimisation in 1995). Twelve countries took part, eleven of them having taken part at least once before (see Mayhew and Van Dijk, 1997).[3] In tandem, city surveys in other parts of the world expanded further (see, e.g., Alvazzi del Frate, 1998, Hatalak et al., 1998, and Zvekic, 1998).

— *The 2000 sweep.* The fourth round of surveys in industrialised countries was in 2000 (measuring victimisation in 1999). Seventeen countries took part, fourteen of them having taken part at least once before. Alongside, there was further development of city surveys in non-industrialised countries. Table 2 in Appendix 1 shows the countries in which city surveys have been carried out to date outside industrialised countries.

At the time of writing, then, the ICVS had been conducted over a period of 12 years in 24 industrialised countries, with more than one sweep in many of them. Over a slightly shorter time span, there have also been surveys in 46 cities elsewhere around the world. All told, there have been about 140 singular surveys of the ICVS around the world. These have involved interviews with over 200,000 respondents, of which 110,000 were interviewed in industrialised countries.
Outside the management of the Working Group, the ICVS questionnaire has also been used in several other countries. We estimate that about 10 to 15 countries have done ' ICVS-type' surveys over the years where the ICVS questionnaire was used – albeit with possible changes in sampling procedures, survey administration, and precise wording of the questions.[4]

1.3 The content of the ICVS

The ICVS is similar to most crime surveys of householders with respect to the crime it covers. It is confined to counting crimes against clearly identifiable individuals, excluding children. (Crime surveys cannot easily cover organisational victims, or victimless crimes such as drug abuse.) For the crimes it covers, the ICVS asks about incidents that by and large accord with legal definitions of offences. In essence, it accepts respondents' accounts of what happened – or at least the accounts they are prepared to give to interviewers. In this respect, it applies a broader definition of

2 Surveys in developing countries and East and Central Europe were mostly funded by the Dutch government, the UK Home Office, and the United Nations on an ad-hoc bases.

3 Malta also had a national surveys in 1996, although no results were presented in the main 1996 survey report (Mayhew and Van Dijk, 1997).

4 Some items of the ICVS questionnaire have also been included in the Eurobarometer in 1996, at the request of the European Commission's Secretary General (INRA, 1996).

crime than the police – who, if incidents are reported to them, are likely to filter out those which may not be felt to merit the attention of the criminal justice system, or meet legal or organisational demands for reasonable evidence.

Respondents are asked about eleven main forms of victimisation. Household crimes (such as burglary) are those which can be seen as affecting the household at large, and respondents report on all incidents known to them. For personal crimes, they report on what happened to them personally. Respondents are asked first about their experience of crime over the last five years. Those who mention an incident of any particular type are asked when it occurred: in the current year (2000), in the last year (in this case 1999), or before that. Those who reported incidents in 1999 were asked how many times it had occurred. All those who said they had been victimised over the five-year period were asked a number of follow-up questions about what happened – whether the police were notified for instance. These questions were posed in relation to the 'last incident' if there had been more than one victimisation of a particular type. A few other crime-related questions are also included, asked of all respondents. They cover for instance, concern about crime, attitudes to the police, and what respondents would recommend as a sentence for a recidivist burglar. An overview of the main topics covered in the 2000 ICVS is in Table 2. Because of the longitudinal aspect of the ICVS, changes to the questionnaire have been a minimum. The most important change to the questionnaire for industrialised countries are:

— In 2000, an additional 'screener' question was added for assaults and threats. Respondents who, at the first screener question, said they had not been victimised were asked again if they have been attacked or threatened by someone they know. Since these incidents can be identified, it is possible to compare data from 2000 to previous sweeps.
— A question about consumer fraud was added in 1992 to broaden the base of crimes counted.
— Respondents were asked about their experiences of 'street level' corruption in the 1996 and 2000 sweeps. This was mainly to set the experience of those in industrialised countries alongside countries elsewhere, where corruption at street level is a greater problem. (For consumer fraud and corruption, respondents were simply asked about their experiences in the last year; they were not asked how often it occurred.)

A summary of the ICVS questionnaires and any changes between them is given in Appendix 3. This also shows the 2000 questionnaire in full. The English versions of the 1989, 1992, 1996 and 2000 questionnaires are available on the internet: http://www.icvs.nscr.nl.

Table 2 **Overview of questions asked in the ICVS**

Victimisation in last 5 years	When (last year)	How often (last year)	Where	Reported to the police?	Details of report[a]	Reported to others?	Victim support	Seriousness	Additional crime specific questions
Household crimes									
Theft of car	•	•	•	•				•	•b
Theft from car	•	•	•	•	•			•	
Car vandalism	•	•	•	•				•	
Motorcycle / moped theft	•	•	•	•				•	
Bicycle theft	•	•	•	•				•	
Burglary	•		•	•	•		•	•	•c
Attempted burglary	•		•	•				•	
Personal crimes									
Robbery	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•d
Theft of personal property	•	•	•	•				•	•e
Sexual incidents	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•f
Assaults / threats + second screener	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•f

a Details of reports to the police are: why did you report; why did you not report; were you satisfied with the way the police dealt with the matter; why were you not satisfied.
b Was the car recovered
c Was something stolen; value of property stolen; was something damaged; value of damage
d Was anything stolen; number of offenders; whether offender known; whether weapons used; what weapon.
e Whether pickpocketing
f What happened; was it considered a crime; number of offenders; whether offenders known; who was offender; was weapon used; what weapon

Other offences

Consumer fraud	Last year (no 5 year data)	Type of fraud	Reported to police, other reports
Corruption	Last year (no 5 year data)	Who was corrupt	Reported to police, other reports

Items on police, prevention and protection

Do police do a good job in local area
Are the police helpful
Recommended sentence for burglar, and length of prison detention
Firearm ownership, type of firearm and reason for ownership
Security measures against burglary

Attitudes towards crime

Perceived likelihood of being burgled
Feelings of safety outside after dark
Feelings of safety at home after dark
Causes of juvenile crime

Personal and household information

Age
Gender
Household size
Town size
Type of house
Vehicle ownership
Occupation
Years of formal education
Income level
Satisfaction with income
Marital status
Social (going out) behaviour

Table 3 **Overview of methodology of the 2000 ICVS in industrialised countries**

	Sample size	Response rate	Method*	International co-ordination
Australia	2,005	58	CATI	NSCR - Leiden Univ
Belgium	2,402	56	CATI	Interview-NSS
Canada	2,078	57	CATI	Interview-NSS
Catalonia (Spain)	2,909	73	Telephone	NSCR - Leiden Univ
Denmark	3,007	66	CATI	Interview-NSS
England & Wales	1,947	57	CATI	Interview-NSS
Finland	1,783	77	CATI	NSCR - Leiden Univ
France	1,000	45	CATI	Interview-NSS
Japan	2,211	74	Face-to-face	NSCR - Leiden Univ
Netherlands	2,001	58	CATI	Interview-NSS
Northern Ireland	1,565	81	Face-to-face	Interview-NSS
Poland	5,276	78	Face-to face	NSCR - Leiden Univ
Portugal	2,000	56	CATI	Interview-NSS
Scotland	2,040	58	CATI	Interview-NSS
Sweden	2,000	66	CATI	Interview-NSS
Switzerland	4,234	65	CATI	NSCR - Leiden Univ
USA	1,000	60	CATI	Interview-NSS

* CATI is Computer Assisted Telephone Interviewing.

1.4 The methodology of the ICVS 2000 in industrialised countries

Fieldwork

Fieldwork for the ICVS 2000 in eleven of the industrialised countries was organised by Interview-NSS, who sub-contracted interviewing work to survey organisations in each country albeit maintaining standardisation of the questionnaire and procedures. Fieldwork in the other six countries was organised by the national co-ordinators working closely with the University of Leiden to ensure standardisation. After fieldwork was completed, data from all surveys were checked by the University of Leiden, and merged into a single database.

Table 3 summarises how the 2000 ICVS was organised. It also shows sample sizes, the response rate, and mode of interview (there are further details below). Appendix 1 gives details of the national co-ordinators, and the agencies that provided funding.

Sampling procedure

In each country, a regionally well spread, random sample of households was taken. (In the case of countries using telephone interviews, this was by means of variants

of random dialling to landlines.) Within each household, one randomly selected respondent aged 16 or more was questioned.[5]

Sample sizes

To keep costs in check and encourage as full participation as possible, samples in all sweeps of the ICVS have been relatively modest by the standards of most national crime surveys. In the 17 surveys in industrialised countries in 2000, most had samples of 2,000 (see Table 3), although there were larger ones in Poland, Switzerland and Denmark, and smaller ones in the USA and France. The decision to accept relatively modest samples was carefully made. It was considered unrealistic to assume sufficient countries would participate if costs were too high (especially as some countries had their own national victimisation surveys). The value of the ICVS rests on the breadth of countries participating; this would have been considerably reduced if costs had been higher.

Modest sample sizes produce relatively large sampling error, but for straightforward comparisons of national risks, samples of 1,000 or more suffice to judge broad variations in levels of crime across country. (There is further discussion of statistical significance in Chapter 2.) Modest samples, however, restrict the scope for analysing issues about which a small proportion of the sample provides information.

Mode of interview

Most surveys in the 2000 ICVS were done by telephone. Interviewers used computers from which they read the questions and recorded answers – a procedure known as computer assisted telephone interviewing (CATI).[6] Telephone interviewing, and the CATI variant of it, has been increasingly used in victimisation surveys – for example, in Canada, the Netherlands, Switzerland, the USA, and England and Wales. For the ICVS, CATI was accepted as a sound technique for countries where telephone penetration is high. Cost is a major consideration. As important, though, is that CATI allows much tighter standardisation of questionnaire administration (see Killias, 1993).

In three countries, interviews were done face-to-face. In Poland and Northern Ireland, low telephone penetration was the reason for this. Face-to-face interviewing in Japan was chosen as the language is very visually oriented, and response cards offering choices of answer are particularly appropriate (Hamai, 2000).

5 Respondents were generally selected by the Troldahl-Carter method. No substitution of the selected respondent was allowed.

6 Up to five attempts on different times of the day were made to reach respondents. Those who made a 'soft refusal' were called back after about two weeks. Interviewers judged whether refusals were 'soft' or 'hard'.

One issue, for countries using telephone interviewing, is whether there is bias because non-telephone owners are omitted. At the time of the 2000 sweep, telephone penetration in the countries taking part was high. It was slightly lower in some countries at the time of the first ICVS. This allowed the possibility of bias both as regards counting victimisation and measuring attitudes over time. It is impossible to say for definite whether this was the case, but levels of telephone ownership in the 1989 ICVS did not relate to the experience of different crimes in any consistent way (Van Dijk et al., 1990). It is also the case that the characteristics of non-telephone owners (most of which will be related to income) may be more akin to those of respondents with whom it is harder to achieve a personal interview (cf. Aye Maung, 1995).

Another methodological issue is whether telephone interviews produce different results from face-to-face (personal) interviews. Methodological work has generally shown little difference in responses to telephone and face-to-face interviews (see Leeuw and Zouwen (1988) for a review of 28 studies). With respect to crime victimisation, Smith (1989) has argued that telephone interviews provide a higher degree of confidentiality and minimise interviewer effects for sensitive topics. The more general consensus is that the two modes produce similar results, as long as the same standards of fieldwork are applied.[7]

Response rates

Where telephone interviewing was used in the 2000 ICVS, the response rate was on average 66%. The lowest response was in France (45%), and the highest in Finland (77%). In the three countries where face-to-face interviews were done, responses rates were 81% (Northern Ireland), 78% (Poland), and 74% (Japan). Overall, the 2000 ICVS had a reasonably high response rate of 64%.[8] Response rates in all four sweeps of the ICVS are in Table 1 in Appendix 1.

A methodological issue, then, is how far respondents who are successfully interviewed differ from those who refuse to co-operate, or who cannot be reached. A related issue is to what extent cross-national variability in response levels upsets comparability. The issues are not straightforward. First, good (or poor) response may simply reflect survey company performance, saying little about the nature of those who are (or not) interviewed in terms of crime risks. Second, response rates may also reflect the willingness of those in different countries to be interviewed by

7 Tests in the context of the ICVS have produced mixed results about the 'productivity' of telephone versus personal interviews, but they have not provided any overriding strong evidence that victimisation counts are affected by interview mode. It cannot entirely be discounted, however, that some differences in results across country reflect differences in the acceptability of being questioned by phone.

8 This is much higher that the average response rate for the first sweep in 1989 and similar to the response rates in 1992 and 1996. Furthermore, the differences between countries in response rates are somewhat smaller.

phone (or face-to-face). Again this may be of little relevance in terms of the characteristics of those who are or who are not interviewed.

Third, though, there is the possibility that when response is low, bias is introduced. The effect could be in two opposing ways depending on whether low response is due to high non-contract rates, or high refusals rates.

— Where low response is due to high rates of *non-contact*, people are omitted who may be more liable to victimisation because they are residentially more unstable, or simply away from home more. Victims therefore could be *under-represented*, with the effect that victimisation risks in countries where non-contact is high is understated. The ICVS does not, however, allow a good test of contact rates and measured victimisation, since the meaning of non-contact with random digit dialling is diverse. Studies outside the victimisation field, though, indicate that non-contacts to telephone surveys register higher on 'negative' social indicators such as ill-health (e.g., Groves and Lyberg, 1988). Sparks et al.'s (1977) London crime survey, too, found that those who had reported crimes to the police were more difficult to locate for interview than those who did not report a crime.

— Surveys with low response rates due to high rates of *refusals*, on the other hand, may simply pick up people 'with more to say' (refusers having 'less to say'). On this view, victims would be *over-represented*, with the effect that victimisation risks in countries where refusal rates are higher are overestimated relative to those where response is better. A challenge to this comes from a test made in the context of the 1996 British Crime Survey. In this, people who said they did not want to be interviewed were pressed by interviewers to give some very short answers about the extent of their victimisation over the last year. (Most agreed to do so.) Comparing their 'crude' victimisation rates with those of respondents who agreed to be interviewed showed no consistent difference (Lynn, 1997).

As a test with the ICVS, leaving aside the distinction between refusals and non-contact, overall response rates in 54 sweeps were correlated with overall victimisation rates. There was a very slight tendency for risks to be lower in surveys with higher response rates, but the result was statistically insignificant ($r=-0.19$; ns). It cannot be ruled out, though, that response effects work differently in different countries (such that a low response rate in one country influences the victimisation count in a way that does not occur in another). But the burden of the ICVS evidence is that countries with low response levels have neither inflated or deflated counts of victimisation relative to other countries.

Weighting

Results in this report are based on data which have been weighted to make the samples as representative as possible of national populations aged 16 or more in

terms of gender, regional population distribution, age, and household composition. The weighting procedures in the 2000 ICVS are the same as in previous sweeps. Details are in Appendix 1.

Response error

Crime surveys are prone to various response errors. For one, certain groups (e.g., the better educated) seem more adept at remembering and articulating incidents of victimisation. Second, and more important, respondents may forget to report less serious incidents, or they may 'telescope in' the more serious incidents which happened outside the period they are asked about – although in the ICVS, this telescoping effect should be reduced by asking about experience over the past five years. Third, some people may fail to realise an incident is relevant, or may be reticent to talk about some incidents, for instance sexual incidents, or those involving people they know. On balance, the ICVS will undercounts crime for these reasons. It will certainly only measure crimes that respondents are prepared to reveal to interviewers.

There is no way of knowing whether response errors are constant across country. The tendency to forget more trivial incidents of crime may be relatively universal, as may 'forward telescoping' of more salient incidents. Some types of differential 'response productivity' may also be constant, at least within the industrialised world. However, whether respondents differ across countries in preparedness to talk to interviewers about victimisation is possibly more questionable. Cultural sensitivity may apply most to some forms of assaults, and to sexual incidents (Travis et al., 1995; Koss, 1996). It may also be that respondents in different countries have different cultural thresholds for defining certain behaviours as crime (cf. Bruinsma et al., 1992). For industrialised countries, one might optimistically contend that common cultural and legal backgrounds, and the globalisation of markets and mass media information, result in fairly universal definitions about most conventional crimes (e.g., Gottfredson and Hirschi, 1990). Certainly, the ICVS shows that victims in industrialised countries hold strikingly similar views about the relative seriousness of different offence types about which they are asked (see Van Dijk and Van Kesteren (1996), and the analysis in Chapter 2).

1.5 Outline of the report

This report presents an overview of the key findings of the 2000 ICVS in the 17 industrialised countries that took part. Reference is made to results from earlier sweeps, if available and where appropriate. Results from other industrialised countries not participating in the 2000 ICVS are generally omitted in discussion, but they are included in the tables in Appendix 4.

Chapter 2 presents rates of victimisation for the main offence categories, and for all offences together (the overall rate of victimisation). There is some discussion of how the general profile of crime in different countries differs, taking account of varying rates of victimisation for different offences. An assessment is also made of how the seriousness of victimisation differs, using victims' own ratings of seriousness. The chapter ends with trends over time in those countries that have participated before.

Chapter 3 looks at how victimisation varies for different groups – e.g., those in larger conurbations as against smaller ones, and for younger respondents as against older ones. The picture is presented for all countries combined.

Chapter 4 looks at reporting to the police: how reporting levels vary for different offences; how reporting varies between countries; why offences were generally not reported; and why they were. Satisfaction with the police response when a crime was reported is also considered, as is whether victims got help from a specialised Victim Support agency, and if they did not, whether they would have liked help. Mention is also made of general attitudes to the police.

Chapter 5 deals with concern about crime. It looks at differing perceptions of the likelihood of being burgled, and at feelings of safety on the streets and at home. It also presents some findings about the precautions people take against crime, and about how those in different countries vary in the sentence they recommend for a 21 year old recidivist burglar.

Chapter 6 concludes with a discussion of the key findings.

2

Victimisation rates

2.1 Introduction

Risks of victimisation can be expressed in two main ways. *Prevalence rates* are the percentage of those aged 16 or more who experienced a specific crime once or more. *Incidence rates* express the number of crimes experienced by each 100 people in the sample. These count all incidents against victims who may have experienced more than one incident. Use is made of both 'last year' (1999) incidence and prevalence rates in this chapter, but the latter are mainly chosen to compare levels of victimisation. Although prevalence rates do not reflect the number of times people are victimised, they are a simple and valid measure of the distribution of crime across national populations.

The ICVS allows prevalence rate estimates for both the calendar year preceding the survey, and for the last five years. Incidence rates can only be calculated for 'last year' incidents (see Chapter 1). Findings about the last year (1999 in the case of the 2000 ICVS) will be most accurate, because less serious incidents which took place some time ago tend to be forgotten.[9]

This chapter focuses on:

— Prevalence risks for the eleven main types of victimisation measured by the ICVS. (Full details of prevalence and incidence risks for 1999 are in Tables 1 to 6 in Appendix 4. Also shown are risks in the industrialised countries that have taken part in earlier sweeps of the ICVS.)
— Results from a limited number of questions about consumer fraud and corruption.
— A measure of overall risk in 1999 (based on the eleven key ICVS crimes).
— Country profiles of victimisation, seeing how different types of offences contribute to the overall picture of victimisation in different countries.
— The seriousness of crimes as perceived by their victims, and whether the picture of risk differs when seriousness is taken into account.
— An assessment of trends in crime as measured by the ICVS since the first survey in 1988.

9 Memory loss explains the fact that five year victimisation rates are only three and a half times higher than calendar year rates.

A broad distinction can be drawn between property and contact crime. All of the former, with the exception of 'theft of personal property', are what were described in Chapter 1 as 'household crimes' (i.e., respondents were asked about the experience of the household as a whole). For some crimes, sub-divisions are possible by drawing on questions about the nature of what happened. Details are below.

Property crime	**Contact crime**
Theft of cars	Robbery
Theft from cars	Sexual incidents
Vandalism to cars	– Sexual assaults
Motorcycle theft	– Offensive sexual behaviour
Bicycle theft	Assaults and threats
Burglary with entry	– Assaults with force
Attempted burglary	– Threats
Theft of personal property	

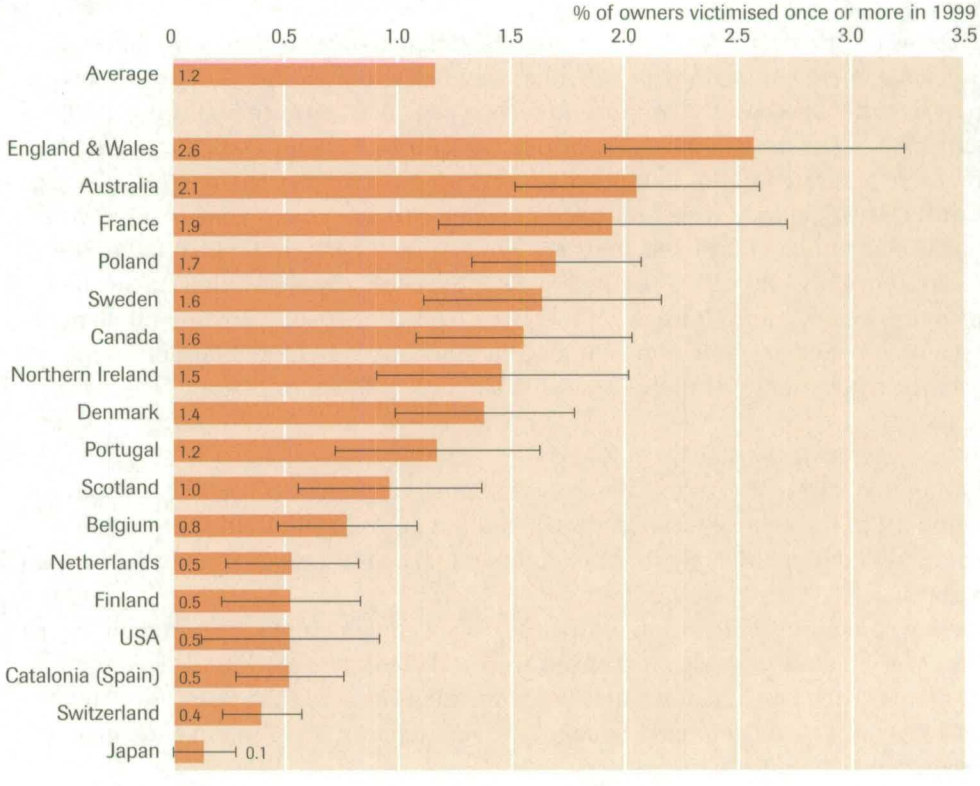
The relatively small sample sizes in the ICVS mean that it is often a matter of statistical chance which country, among those with high levels, emerges with the highest rate on any particular type of crime. However, it is almost always the case that countries with the highest rates of victimisation have rates that are statistically significantly higher than countries with the lowest rates. As a broad indication of which countries have relatively high or low rates of victimisation, then, the graphs which follow provide a sound enough guide. In some charts, error bars are shown to reflect the fact that samples of the population are taken. The error bars are set at the 10% confidence level. In other words, they show the range of risk within which there is a 90% chance that the true level of victimisation lies. (Further details of sampling error are in Appendix 2.)

2.2 Car-related crime

The ICVS questions here relate to cars, vans and trucks (called 'cars' for simplicity hereafter). The relevant crimes are (i) theft of a car, (ii) theft from or out of a car, and (iii) vandalism to cars. Risks are best considered for those who said they owned cars since although ownership levels in the seventeen countries were high, there was some variation.[10]

10 Ownership was highest in Australia (93%), the USA (90%), Canada (88%), and France (88%). It was lowest in Poland (61%), Scotland (76%) and Portugal (77%). The picture of risks on a full population base is very similar to owner risks – e.g., the Spearman correlation is 0.97 ($p<0.05$; $n=17$) for thefts of cars. Details of population-based prevalence risks are in Appendix 4, Table 1; population incidence risks are in Appendix 4, Table 2; and owner-based risks are in Appendix 4, Table 3.

Figure 1 **Theft of cars**



Theft of cars

Risks for car owners were highest in England and Wales, where 2.6% had a car stolen in 1999. Risks are next highest in Australia (2.1%) and France (1.9%). Those facing lowest risks were in Japan (0.1%), Switzerland (0.4%), Catalonia, the USA, Finland, and the Netherlands (all 0.5%). Details are in Figure 1. Relatively few victims had a car stolen more than once, so the picture for incidence risks is very similar.[11]

Cars are usually thought to be stolen for two main reasons: either for 'joyriding' (when the car is usually recovered), or for extended personal use, resale or stripping (e.g., Clarke, 1991, Fijnaut, et al., 1998). On average, seven in ten stolen cars were eventually recovered. Recovery rates were highest in Sweden (97%), Denmark (96%), Portugal (88%), Australia (85%) and the USA (80%), indicating more thefts for 'joy-riding', or higher penetration perhaps of tracking devices. Those in Poland (47%), Japan (61%), Belgium (65%) and the Netherlands (65%) were least likely to get their

11 The Spearman correlation was 0.98 ($p<0.05$; $n=16$).

cars back. These patterns are very consistent over time for countries in previous ICVS sweeps.

There was little change in the proportion of stolen cars recovered between 1996 and 2000 for 11 countries with two measures. But in the European countries taking part in earlier sweeps, the proportion recovered is now lower than it was in 1992 and 1989.[12] The drop is consistent with a trend towards more 'professional' theft that was suggested in the 1996 ICVS – albeit not one that has seemingly continued further. The demand for second-hand or stolen cars in Eastern Europe since the opening of borders may have increased professional thefts in the first half of the 1990s. Certainly other ICVS results indicate that generally few victims of car theft in countries in Eastern Europe get their cars back (e.g., Zvekic, 1996). And, here, Poland is a good example of this. It may be that better police and border patrol activities have stemmed these somewhat since 1996 (Fijnaut, 1998).

Thefts from cars

Respondents were also asked about thefts from a car, van or truck. These covered items left in the vehicle (such as coats), equipment from within it (such as audio equipment and mobile telephones), and parts taken off it (such as wing mirrors and badges).

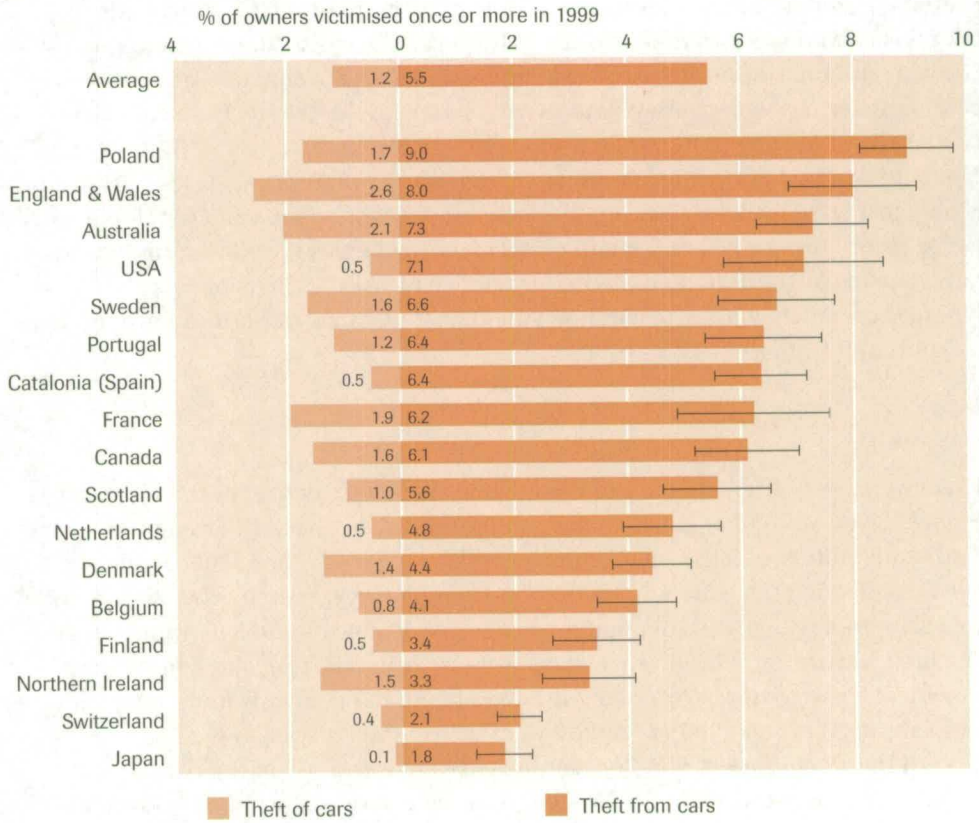
Having something stolen from or out of a car was much more common than having the car itself stolen. Those most at risk were in Poland (9% of owners had a theft from their car), England and Wales (8%), Australia (7%), and the USA (7%). The lowest risks were in Denmark, Finland, the Netherlands, Switzerland and Japan: 4% or less were victimised.

The pattern of relative risks of thefts of and from cars across the different countries is not too dissimilar, although there are some differences. For instance, while car owners in Northern Ireland fare slightly worse than average in risks of thefts of their cars, thefts from cars are lower than average. In France, too, risks of thefts of cars are comparatively high, but thefts from cars only just above the average. In contrast, risks for owners in the USA of having their car taken are relatively very low, but thefts from their cars are quite high. There is a similar picture in Catalonia. Figure 2 shows risks of thefts from car, contrasting them with risks of thefts of cars.

The pattern of where thefts took place is broadly similar to thefts of cars. On average, over half of victims (54%) said the theft from their car took place at or near home – slightly less home-based than thefts of cars (60%). This will reflect the fact that cars will be parked there longest. About one in five thefts happened elsewhere

12 This is so even excluding Poland where there has been a marked drop in recovery rates since 1989. For instance, in five European countries in the 1992 and 2000 ICVS the proportion of cars recovered fell from 78% to 68%; or from 78% to 73% without Poland. For six European countries in the 1989 and 2000 sweeps, the proportion of cars recovered fell from 74% to 69%.

Figure 2 **Thefts from and of cars**



Countries are sorted by 'theft from cars'.

in the city or town where people lived. Two per cent of incidents of both types took place abroad. Drawing on previous ICVS results here too (as numbers are small), the proportion of those with cars stolen abroad was higher in Belgium, Finland, and the Netherlands. Travel patterns might be a factor here.

Vandalism to cars

The highest car vandalism levels were in Scotland, Poland, England and Wales, the Netherlands, and Australia: in each, 10% or more owners had some damage to their cars in 1999. Levels were 5% or less in Northern Ireland, Japan, Denmark, Switzerland and Finland. In general, car vandalism occurs about half as often again as thefts from cars.

The relative ranking of countries with respect to vandalism and thefts from cars is relatively similar: countries with higher levels of thefts from car also tend to have

higher levels of car vandalism.[13] There are a few exceptions however. Owners in Scotland and the Netherlands are relatively much more prone to car vandalism, with risks about twice as those for thefts from cars. In contrast, owners in the USA, Canada, and the Nordic countries (Finland, Sweden and Denmark) fare better comparatively speaking with regard to car vandalism than thefts from cars, with risk levels for each broadly similar.

The relationship between levels of car vandalism and theft *of* cars is less strong and is only just statistically significant.[14] Scotland, the Netherlands and Catalonia had a worse record on vandalism than on thefts of cars, whereas the Nordic countries, Canada and Northern Ireland did better relative to risks of thefts of cars.

Where the vandalism took place shows an almost identical pattern as for theft of a car and theft from a car.

2.3 Motorcycle theft

There were very different levels of motorcycle ownership in the seventeen countries. Highest levels were in Japan (33% had a motorised two-wheeler), Sweden, Switzerland, Catalonia, the Netherlands, France, and Portugal (all about 20% or slightly more). Reflecting the generally small proportion of owners, theft rates for owners are substantially higher than population rates (see Tables 1 and 3 in Appendix 4). The highest risks for motorcycle owners were in Denmark, England and Wales: 4% of owners had a motorcycle stolen. Although Japan has generally low victimisation levels for most crime, thefts of motorcycles were comparatively high (3%).

In 11 of the 17 countries, risks for motorcycle were greater than the risk of a car being stolen for car owners. (In Sweden, risks were very similar). Generally, motorcycle thefts were most common where motorcycles were more frequently owned.[15] In other words, a more plentiful supply of targets appears to encourage rather than dampen theft 'demand'. One reason for this may be simply that more offenders are able to ride motorcycles. However, reflecting the small numbers here, the relationship between ownership and risk was not exact. Risks were higher in England and Wales, Scotland and Denmark relative to ownership levels. Switzerland had fewer thefts than ownership levels might predict.

13 The Spearman correlation is 0.68 ($p<0.10$; $n=17$).

14 The Spearman correlation between car vandalism and thefts of cars is 0.44 ($p<0.10$; $n=17$).

15 The Spearman correlation between levels of motorcycle ownership and population victimisation rates was 0.66 ($p<0.05$; $n=17$).

2.4 Bicycle theft

There was a similar relationship between levels of bicycle ownership and levels of bicycle theft. The highest theft risks were in Japan, Sweden, the Netherlands and Denmark. In each, about 8% of owners had a bicycle taken, and each had much higher than average ownership levels. The lowest risks were in Catalonia, Portugal and Northern Ireland, France and Australia: 3% of owners or fewer were victimised.

For all countries, bicycle owners were more likely to have a bicycle stolen (average risk 4.7%) than a car owner was to have a car stolen (average risks 1.2%). The same held for motorcycle theft (average risk 1.9%), although the difference in risks for bicycle owners and motorcycles owners was narrower in England and Wales, Portugal and the USA.

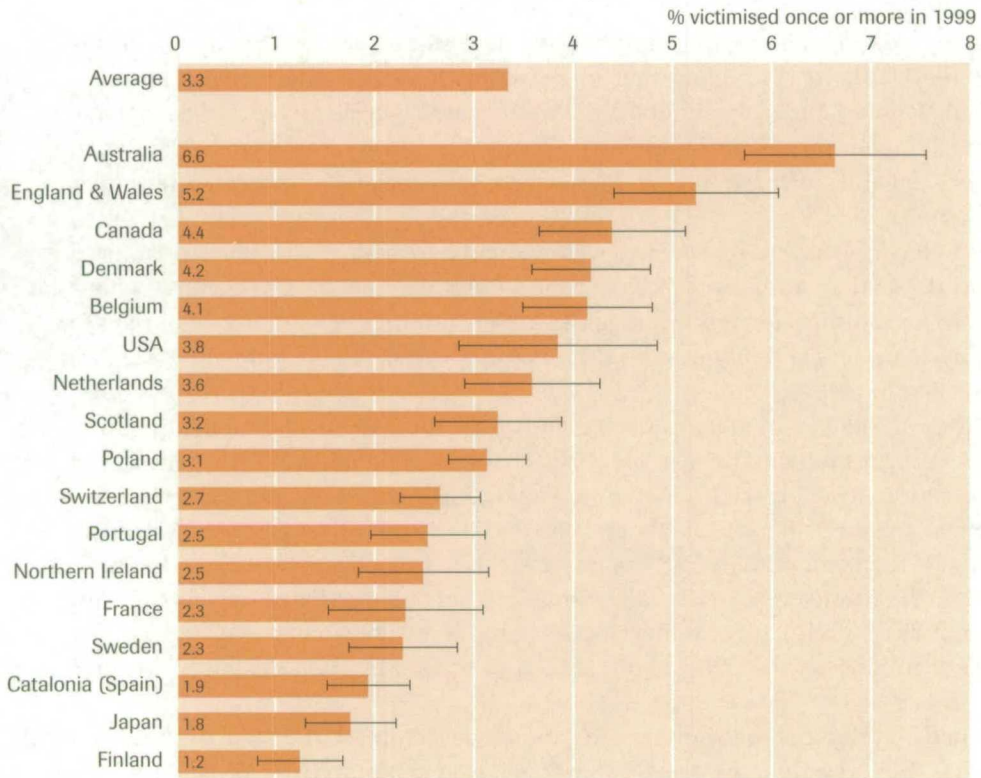
Previous analysis of ICVS results has shown a strong inverse relationship between rates of car theft and rates of bicycle theft, even when multivariate analysis has taken into account the level of urbanisation, GDP, and levels of other crime for instance (Van Dijk, 1991; Mayhew, 1991). Thus, in countries where bicycle ownership is high and bicycle theft common, stealing cars occurs less often. In the 2000 ICVS, the results were in the same direction, but slightly less strong. Of the eight countries with the highest bicycle ownership levels, seven of them were among the eight countries with highest bicycle theft rates, and five had the lowest car theft rates.

Since bicycles and motorcycles are generally used for short distances, it is no surprise that they are most often stolen from close to home (two-thirds were). About a quarter were stolen elsewhere than where people lived (with the highest figures in the Netherlands, Denmark and Japan where cycling is a common means of travel). In total, 9% of thefts took place at work, elsewhere in the country, or abroad.

2.5 Burglary

There was a fairly broad range in the proportion of households in 1999 that experienced one or more burglary (whether with entry, or an attempt). The highest risks were in Australia (6.6%) and England and Wales (5.2%). The lowest rates were in Catalonia, Japan, and Finland (see Figure 3). Relative positions in terms of incidents per 100 households were very similar, although the USA fared slightly worse when burglary was measured in terms of incidence, as has been found before in the ICVS. In contrast, Northern Ireland and Denmark fell back on incidence risks relative to prevalence ones.

Figure 3 **Burglary and attempts**

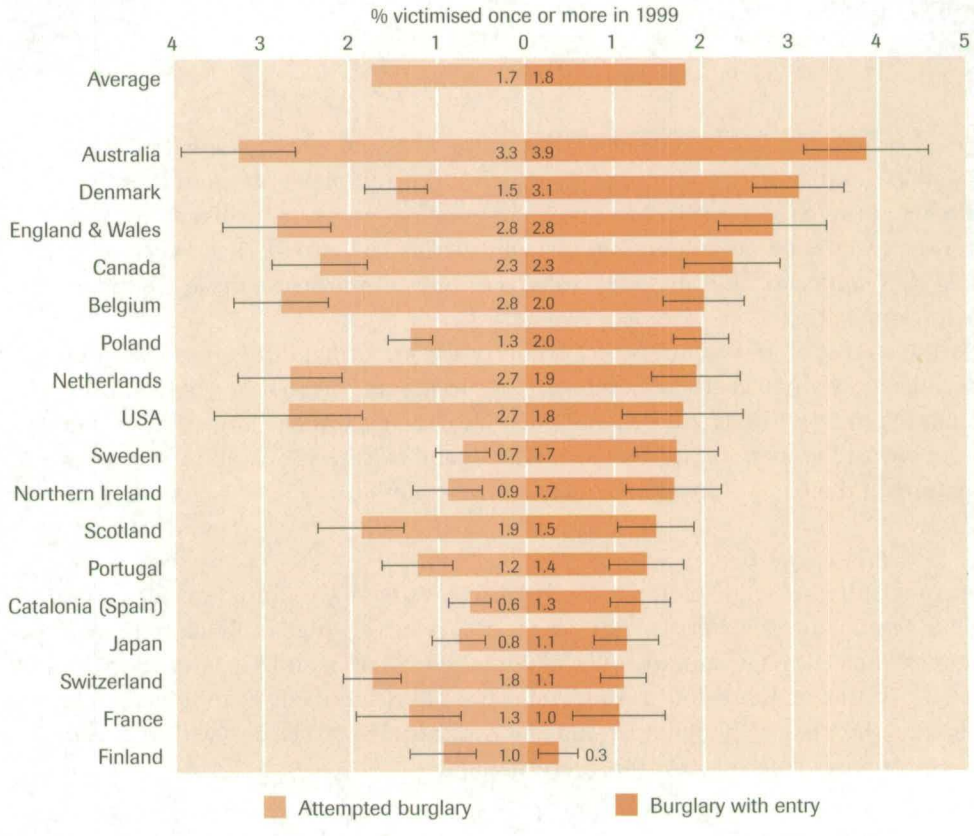


The pattern of relative risk across country is reasonably similar whether the focus is on burglary with entry or attempts.[16] The main difference is that, compared to their position with respect of burglary with entry, Finland, France, Scotland, and the USA fared relatively rather worse for attempts (Figure 4). In contrast, compared with the levels of attempts, the level of burglary with entry was relatively higher in Denmark, Sweden and Poland.

Nonetheless, the proportion of burglaries that involved attempts varied somewhat by country. The figures were highest in Finland (72%), France, Belgium, Scotland, the Netherlands, Switzerland, England and Wales, and the USA (all above 50%). (With the exception of Switzerland, this is similar to the results from the 1996 sweep for those countries which took part then.) In contrast, most burglars in Sweden,

16 That is, countries with a higher rate of burglary with entry also tend to have a higher rate of attempted burglaries. (The Spearman correlation was 0.69 ($p<0.10$; $n=17$).)

Figure 4 **Burglary with entry and attempted burglary**



Countries are sorted by 'burglary with entry'.

Denmark, Catalonia and Northern Ireland got into houses: only about a third or fewer burglaries involved attempts.

Where there are proportionately more attempted burglaries, this might suggest that householders are better protected by security devices, so that burglars more often fail to gain entry. In the past, the ICVS results have lent some support to this.[17] The same pattern broadly holds in the current sweep, although the relationship was weaker due in particular to Finland, which had the highest percentage of attempted burglaries, but one of the lowest levels of security. Another outlier was Australia.

17 This draws on questions which ask householders about the precautions they take against burglary (see Chapter 5). A measure of 'high' security is based on those who said they had one or more of: a burglar alarm or special door locks.

Here, the level of security was relatively high, but more burglars got into homes than would be predicted.[18]

2.6 Theft of personal property

The residual category of property crime in the ICVS is theft of personal property (such as a purse, wallet, clothing, sports or work equipment). Most of these crimes are perceived less seriously. Most thefts of personal property involved no contact between victim and offender. But in roughly a third of cases on average, the victim said they were carrying what was stolen. For present purposes, these are called cases of 'pickpocketing'.[19]

National rates of thefts of personal property are somewhat difficult to interpret because they are likely to be heterogeneous in nature. Taken as a whole, those in Australia (6.5%), Sweden (5.8%) and Poland (5.3%) experienced most thefts. Levels were lowest in Japan (0.5%), Portugal (1.9%), and Northern Ireland (2.2%). The picture on the basis of incidence rates was very similar.

Pickpocketing

Pickpocketing was most common in Poland (4.0% were victimised once or more), echoing previous ICVS results. Rates were also relatively high in Belgium (2.1%), the Netherlands (1.9%), Denmark and Catalonia (both 1.8%), and England and Wales (1.7%). In line with previous results, rates were lowest outside Europe (i.e., in Japan, Canada, the USA), although Australia had near average levels, and within Europe, risks were particularly low in Northern Ireland.

2.7 Contact crimes

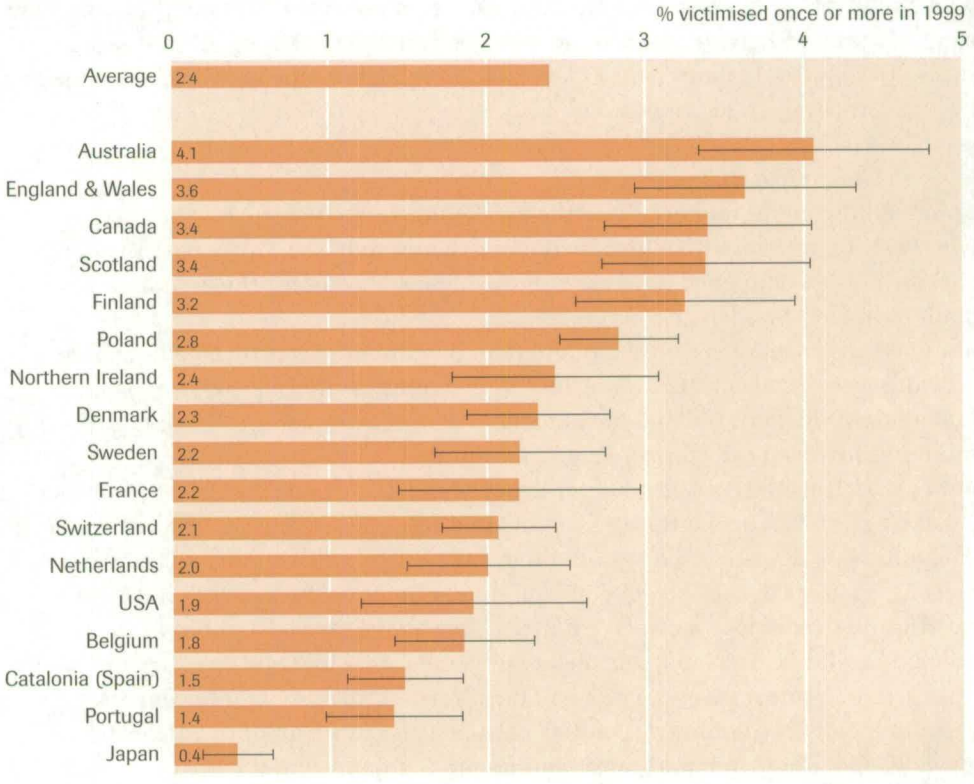
The three contact crimes in the ICVS are robbery, sexual incidents, and assaults and threats. Sexual incidents divide into sexual assault and what victims described as offensive sexual behaviour. Assaults and threats can be separated into assaults with forces and threats only.

We take first a summary measure of aggressive contact crime: robbery, sexual assaults and assaults with force (Figure 5). There is then some discussion of the

18 Taking 20 individual countries since the 1992 sweep to maximise range, the proportion of attempted burglaries was 53% in the seven countries with appreciably higher security levels, but 43% in the other countries. The Spearman correlation between the proportion of attempts and the security measure was 0.57 ($p<0.10$; $n=19$, Finland excluded). The security measure here is the percentage of homes with a burglar alarm or special door locks. Incidence rates are taken to measure the proportion of attempted burglaries.

19 Information on pickpocketing was not available for Switzerland. Details of how pickpocketing rates are calculated are in Table 6, in Appendix 4.

Figure 5 **Selected contact crime (robbery, sexual assault and assault with force)**



three full contact crimes in turn, since the pattern of national risks differs somewhat for each. It should be borne in mind that risks are relatively low for each type of contact crime. Firm conclusions about relative vulnerability are therefore hard to draw.

The highest rates of aggressive contact crime were for those in Australia (4.1% were victimised once or more). The next highest risks were in England and Wales, Canada and Scotland (around 3.5%). There were very low risks in Japan, Portugal, and Catalonia (1.5% or less).

Robbery

The risk of robbery was comparatively low in all countries. On the face of it, risks were highest in 1999 in Poland (1.8%), Australia (1.2%), England and Wales (1.2%), Portugal (1.1%) and France (1.1%) – levels which will be statistically indistinguishable. By far the lowest risks were in Japan and Northern Ireland (0.1%).

There was some similarity in the picture of risks of robbery and pickpocketing, which may reflect fairly similar offending patterns. However, Finland, Denmark, the Netherlands and Belgium ranked rather higher on pickpocketing than they did with regard to robbery. In contrast, robbery risks were higher relative to pickpocketing in Portugal, Australia and Canada.[20]

The details of robbery

Approaching half of robberies and pickpocketing happen in the city or town whether victims live, with a fifth happening nearer to home. Of robbery incidents specifically, 9% happened abroad, with the highest figures for those from Switzerland, Denmark, Sweden and Japan.

About six in ten victims said that more than one offender was involved – similar to previous sweeps. According to the 2000 ICVS, multiple offenders were most common in Belgium, Northern Ireland, Poland and Scotland, although the small number of robberies involved calls for considerable caution.[21]

Robbery victims were asked whether the offender(s) carried a weapon of some sort. On average, in just over a third of victims said they did – similar to the 1996 ICVS. Weapons were actually used in about four in ten incidents where a weapon was present, again as in the 1996 sweep. The small numerical base makes it difficult to draw out differences between countries. But on the face of it, those in the USA, France, Catalonia, Scotland, Portugal and Canada were most likely to say a weapon was carried. In most cases, a knife had been carried (the average was one in two weapon incidents). Robbery offenders carried a gun in a fifth of incidents on average. The use of guns was most common in Catalonia and the USA.

Sexual incidents

The question put to female respondents was:

> 'First, a rather personal question. People sometimes grab, touch or assault others for sexual reasons in a really offensive way. This can happen either at home, or elsewhere, for instance in a pub, the street, at school, on public transport, in cinemas, on the beach, or at one's workplace. Over the past five years, has anyone done this to you? Please take your time to think about this.'

Measuring sexual incidents is extremely difficult in victimisation surveys, since perceptions as to what is unacceptable sexual behaviour may differ across country, as well as readiness to report incidents to an interviewer on the phone. The ICVS 2000 measures, then, need a light touch.

20 The correlation between robbery and pickpocketing was r=0.45 ($p<0.10$; n=16).

21 The same pattern was not evident for instance for Belgium in 1992, and Scotland in 1996.

Sexual assaults

Sexual assaults (i.e., incidents described as rape, attempted rape or indecent assaults) were less common than offensive sexual behaviour. For all countries combined, just over one per cent of women (1.3%) reported offensive sexual behaviour, but only 0.6% reported sexual assaults.

About one in a hundred women in Sweden, Finland, Australia and England and Wales reported assaults, and differences between them are statistically negligible. Women in Japan, Northern Ireland, Poland and Portugal were least at risk, though again, the differences in risk are statistically weak compared to other countries at the middle level.

Offensive sexual behaviour

More women in Australia, Finland, the Netherlands, and Denmark (over 2%) reported offensive sexual behaviour than elsewhere. (Risks of sexual assault in these countries were also comparatively high, with the exception of Denmark.) There were low risks in Poland, France, Portugal, Catalonia and Northern Ireland. Again, the position with regard to sexual assaults was similar, except that rankings for sexual assaults were higher in France and Northern Ireland.

Looking at what women said about the 'last incident' that had occurred, and taking all countries together since numbers are small, offenders were known in about half of the incidents described as both offensive behaviour and sexual assault. (In a third they were known by name, and in about a sixth by sight.) In sexual assaults, partners, ex-partners, boyfriends, relative or friends were involved in one in five incidents of assault, but in a smaller proportion of incidents involving offensive behaviour – about one in ten. These results are very similar to those from the 1996 ICVS.

Most sexual incidents involved only one offender. Weapons were very rarely involved in sexual assaults.

Assaults and threats

The question asked of respondents to identify assaults and threats was:

> 'Apart from the incidents just covered, have you over the past five years been personally attacked or threatened by someone in a way that really frightened you, either at home or elsewhere, such as in a pub, in the street, at school, on public transport, on the beach, or at your workplace?'

Overall, 3.5% of respondents indicated that they have been a victim of an assault with force or a threat of force. (Details by country are in Appendix 4, Tables 1, 2 and 6.) There were higher than average rates in Australia, Scotland, England and Wales (about 6%), and Canada (5%).

The 2000 questionnaire included an additional screening question which prompted that assaults and threats could have involved a partner, family member or a close

friend. Although the initial question does *not exclude* such incidents, the additional item did lead to more responses. For a fair comparison with the earlier sweeps, these additional responses have been excluded from assaults and threats, and from the discussion of overall victimisation. The additional responses are included though in details of incidents discussed below. On average the extra prompting lead to 0.8% more victims in 1999 (overall, 4.4% were victimised). It was somewhat higher in the Netherlands and Australia, but less in Japan, France and the USA.

As with sexual incidents, differences in definitional thresholds cannot be ruled out in explaining the pattern of ICVS results. However, this should not be overstated. When asked to assess the seriousness of what had happened, there is fair consistency across country in how seriously incidents are viewed (see Table 8 in Appendix 4, and later discussion in this chapter).

Assaults with force

For the sub-set of incidents which are described as amounting to more than a threat of force, risks were highest in Scotland and England and Wales (about 3% reported having been victimised once or more). Following closely behind were Australia, Canada, Finland and Northern Ireland. Risks were lowest in Japan, Portugal and Catalonia (0.5% or less).

Looking at what was said about the 'last incident', and again taking all countries together, offenders were known in about half the incidents of both assaults and threats. Men, though, were less likely to know the offender(s) (about four in ten knew them) than women (about six in ten).

Taking assaults and threats together again, for all countries combined, weapons were said to have been used (if only as a threat) in just under a quarter of incidents. The figure was higher with male victims than females. In more than 40% of incidents in which a weapon was used, victims mentioned a knife, and in nearly 10% a gun.

Just over a third of assaults and threats and sexual incidents happened at or near home, with the proportions somewhat higher for the assaults and threats than for the sexual incidents. 16% of incidents happened at work, the most reported in the Netherlands and Sweden.

2.8 Consumer fraud

The ICVS asked about consumer fraud for the first time in the 1992 sweep in industrialised countries. People were asked whether someone – when selling something to them, or delivering a service – cheated them in terms of quantity or quality of the goods or services. Although the question does not exclude serious incidents of fraud, most of the incidents reported probably amounted to cheating.

On average, 7.5% of respondents said they experienced some type of consumer fraud in 1999. Poland, Denmark, the USA, Finland, and Sweden had relatively high rates, i.e. about 10% of more were victimised. Levels of fraud were low in Japan, Northern Ireland, the Netherlands, France, and Scotland (less than 5%). For countries in previous sweeps, results were largely similar.[22]
Many victims (about 45% overall) did not specify where the fraud had taken place, but just over a third mentioned shops, and about one in ten mentioned building or construction work. Few incidents were reported to the police, but other agencies were notified about rather more incidents. Details by country are given in Table 5 in Appendix 4.

2.9 Corruption

The 1996 ICVS, introduced a question on corruption, chiefly to set the experience of those in industrialised countries alongside countries elsewhere in the world. People were asked:

> 'In some countries, there is a problem of corruption among government or public officials. During 1999, has any government official, for instance a customs officer, a police officer or inspector in you country asked you, or expected you to pay a bribe for his or her services?'

Whereas on average nearly one in five people in the developing world reported incidents involving corruption, and about one in eight in Eastern European countries (Zvekic, 1998), corruption was very uncommon in the industrialised countries. In 13 of the 16 countries, less than 0.5% reported any incident, with the figures only marginally higher in France and Portugal (just over 1%). As had been the case in the 1996 sweep, those in Poland stood out (5%), with government officials and police officers being cited most often.[23] Details for all countries are in Table 4 in Appendix 4.

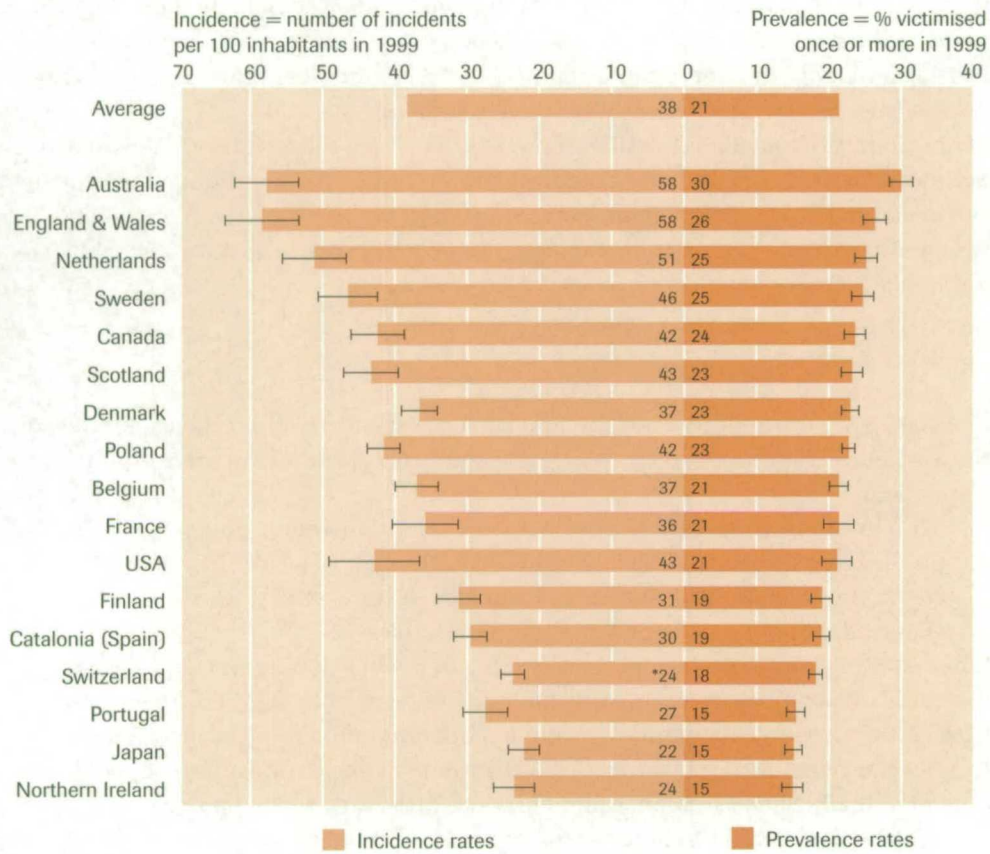
2.10 Overall risks

We offer two measures of the overall impact of crime in the seventeen countries. The first is the percentage of people victimised once or more in the past year by any of the eleven crimes covered – a prevalence risk. The second is the number of crimes of

22 There was no information for Switzerland in 2000. In the previous survey, there was average experience of consumer fraud.

23 There was no information for Switzerland in 2000. In the previous survey, very few indeed (0.2%) reported any incident of corruption.

Figure 6 **Overall victimisation**



Countries are sorted by prevalence rates.

* Incidence rates for Switzerland are estimated.

all types per 100 respondents – an incidence risk. They are complementary measures of risk, and are presented in Figure 6.[24]

The six countries with the highest overall prevalence victimisation rates are Australia (30% of people were victimised once or more), England and Wales (26%), the Netherlands (25%) and Sweden (25%), Canada (24%) and Scotland (23%). They have significantly higher overall victimisation rates (in a statistical sense at the 10% probability level) than the average of all ICVS countries. Northern Ireland, Japan,

24 Prevalence risks for the eleven crimes are in Table 1 in Appendix 4. Incidence risks for ten crimes are in Table 2, Appendix 4. Ten crimes are shown here as incidence rates for attempted burglary are not available for 1988. Incidence risks for Switzerland for 2000 are estimated on the basis of the relationship between prevalence and incidence risks in previous sweeps.

Portugal, Switzerland and Catalonia had risks on the prevalence measure significantly lower than the average. And Northern Ireland, Japan and Portugal report significantly lower prevalence rates than any other country.

The picture on the basis of the number of crimes experienced (incidences risks) is somewhat different. Most notably, the USA fares relatively worse on incidence risks (in sixth position) than on prevalence risks (eleventh position). In contrast, Denmark and Canada fare rather better on incidence risks – although the change in positions is not as marked as with the USA. Incidence risks are highest in England and Wales, and Australia. Both have 58 incidents per 100, with risks that are statistically higher than all other countries except the Netherlands (51) with the next highest incidence risks.

On the face of it, the two measures indicate that where incidence is high relative to prevalence, there is more concentration of crime among those who are victimised. In Switzerland, Japan, Northern Ireland, Catalonia, Portugal, Finland, and Denmark, the gap between prevalence and incidence risks is narrowest, suggesting a more even spread of crime. In England and Wales, Australia, the Netherlands, Sweden and the USA, the gap is widest, suggesting that when people are victims they are more prone to repeated victimisation. A more geographical concentration of crime may be a factor.

2.11 Country profiles of crime

The 'make-up' or profile of crime in different countries will reflect the pattern of victimisation risk and the frequency of one type of victimisation relative to another. It does not say much about relative levels of victimisation, but it is a useful way of showing how the burden of crime in quantitative terms differs across country. Table 4 shows the main patterns. (The analysis is done on incidence rates, with the total number of crimes set to 100%.) Switzerland is omitted.[25] A fuller breakdown of all offence types, and for other sweeps is in Table 7 in Appendix 4. We start with an overview for all 16 countries combined, and then consider the features of the make-up of crime in individual countries.

The general profile

The main features of the average profile of crime are that:

— Contact crime comprises about a quarter of all crimes, with assaults and threats making up about two-thirds of these (or 15% of all crime). Robbery forms a very small proportion of contact crime, and this applies to all countries.

25 No incidence rates were available for 2000 to assess its country profile.

Table 4 **The profile of crime in different countries: (percentage of all offences: total = 100%): 2000 ICVS[1]**

	Thefts from and of cars	Car vandalism	Motorcycle and bicycle theft	Burglary with entry and attempts	All contact crime[2]	Theft of personal property
Australia	18	20	4	15	29	14
Belgium	14	23	15	17	19	13
Canada	20	15	10	13	27	15
Catalonia (Spain)	25	38	4	7	14	12
Denmark	14	13	26	13	21	12
England & Wales	19	23	6	12	30	10
Finland	11	16	19	6	36	13
France	23	31	6	8	24	9
Japan	8	26	40	13	11	2
Netherlands	12	26	21	10	19	12
Northern Ireland	20	25	10	11	22	11
Poland	21	23	10	10	20	16
Portugal	29	33	4	13	14	8
Scotland	16	30	6	9	28	12
Sweden	19	14	21	7	24	16
USA	20	22	7	15	20	16
Average	18	24	13	11	22	12

1 Based on incidence rates. Percentages add to 100%.
2 Based on robbery, sexual incidents, and assaults and threats.

— Car vandalism also makes up nearly a quarter of the incidents experienced overall.
— Theft of and from cars together comprise rather less a fifth of all crimes (18%), with thefts from cars having by far the larger share (15%).
— The largest difference between countries is with regard to theft of bicycles, which reflects varying ownership rates.

The overall profile of crime according to the 2000 ICVS is very similar to that from previous ICVS sweeps, when countries taking part in each are compared.

Australia

Compared to the overall picture, crime in Australia comprises proportionately more contact crime and burglary. Compared to elsewhere, thefts of motorcycles and bicycle ('two-wheelers') are a relatively insignificant problem. This profile is similar to the 1992 survey, although there were proportionately more assaults and threats in the 1992 survey, but less car damage.

Belgium

Burglary in Belgium was proportionately more important in its crime make-up than elsewhere. Car-related thefts were relatively rather less significant, as was contact crime. In other respects, Belgium fits the average victimisation pattern reasonably well. Compared to 1992, car-related thefts have become a rather smaller problem, but at the expense of a greater share for contact crime.

Canada

Compared to the average picture, the crime profile in Canada is weighted rather more towards contact crime and thefts of personal property, and rather less towards car vandalism. The profile in the 1996 ICVS was fairly similar.

Catalonia (Spain)

The make-up of crime in Catalonia does not mirror the overall picture. There was proportionately much more car-related theft and car vandalism (over 60% percent of all crimes). Theft of two-wheelers formed a smaller than average proportion of all crimes, although Catalonia was unusual in having similar rates for both motorcycle and bicycle thefts, whereas elsewhere bicycle thefts predominate. Burglary and contact crime also formed a much smaller proportion of crime than elsewhere.

Denmark

The profile of crime in Denmark is reasonably average, although bicycle theft takes a larger than average share (about a quarter of all crimes), while offences involving cars are a relatively small problem compared to elsewhere, especially car vandalism.

England and Wales

The crime make-up in England and Wales is again fairly average. The main differences are that thefts of two-wheelers have a smaller share of all crime, while contact crime has a rather larger one. Since the 1996 sweep, the proportion of car-related thefts has gone down, while the proportion of contact crime has increased.

Finland

Finland is unusual in that over a third of all crimes are contact crimes, with the proportion of sexual incidents particularly high. There are also proportionally more thefts of two-wheelers. In contrast, burglary comprises only 6% of all crime in Finland, about half the average proportion. Car related crimes are also less dominant. The profile of crime in Finland in 1996 was almost identical.

France

All forms of car crime are relatively more common in France than the averige profile. As against this, thefts of two-wheelers, burglary, and thefts of personal

property comprise a smaller proportion of all crimes than they tend to elsewhere. Since 1996, car vandalism has featured even more in the make-up of crime in France, and thefts of two-wheelers bicycle even less. Assaults and threats now also comprise rather more of all crime than in the 1996 sweep.

Japan

The make-up of crime in Japan is singular. Four in ten crimes were thefts of bicycles or motorcycles (overwhelmingly the former). Some other forms of crime were relatively average in terms of their share, but car-related thefts, thefts of personal property, and assaults and threats were comparatively insignificant. (The notion that any cultural 'response effect' contributes to the low figures for assaults and threats runs somewhat counter to the fact that the proportion of sexual incidents was near average.)

The Netherlands

The picture in the Netherlands is not dissimilar to Denmark. Bicycle theft accounts for about a fifth of all crimes, while the proportion of thefts of and from cars is relatively low. Other crimes are similar to the general profile. The make-up of crime in the 1996 and 2000 sweeps was very similar.

Northern Ireland

Northern Ireland's crime profile very much fits the overall average. (Car-related thefts have a very slightly higher share and thefts of two-wheelers slightly less.) Compared to the 1996 sweep, there was proportionately more car vandalism in 2000, bringing the figures more in line with the average. Thefts of two-wheelers have also increased in share, again nearer to the average.

Poland

Again, the make-up of crime in Poland is reasonably average. (There is a slightly higher proportion of car-related thefts, and thefts of personal property.) Compared to the 1996 sweep, there was proportionately more car vandalism in 2000, and even more so than in 1992. Car-related thefts have also increased relative to 1996, alongside a fall in the proportionate share for contact crime.

Portugal

The profile of crime in Portugal was similar to that in Catalonia in many respects, and thus unusual. Over 60% of all offences involved cars, while thefts of two-wheelers were very low relatively in terms of share. However, the proportion of burglaries of all crime was nearer to the average in Portugal than Catalonia, while personal thefts were proportionately lower than in Catalonia.

Scotland

Compared to most other countries, car vandalism accounts for a larger part of all crime in Scotland. The same applies to assaults and threats. Thefts of two-wheelers were proportionately unimportant compared to many other countries. There was a fair degree of similarity with England and Wales in the make-up of crime in Scotland. However, England and Wales was only average in relation to car vandalism, unlike Scotland. And car-related thefts and burglary were a bit more dominant in England and Wales than in Scotland in terms of the share of all crime.

In 1996, car-related thefts in Scotland were above average in terms of proportionate share, whereas in 2000 they are below average. In contrast, contact crime (particularly assaults and threats) comprise a larger share of all crime in 2000 compared to other countries, whereas in 1996 the opposite was true.

Sweden

Like Finland, thefts of two-wheelers made up a much bigger share of overall crime (21%) than in many other countries – although the differences was even greater in 1996 (26%). Car vandalism featured less in the profile of crime in Sweden than elsewhere (again similar to Finland). The same was true of burglary. Contact crime was only slightly above (24% of all crimes) the average level (22%). In this respect Sweden differed from Finland where contact crime was a full 26% of all crime in Finland.

As regards changes over time, there were proportionately fewer thefts of two-wheelers in Sweden in the 2000 sweep than in 1996, relative to other countries. The share that car-related thefts made was nearer the average in 2000, whereas it had been lower than average in 1996.

USA

Burglaries and thefts of personal property feature rather more in the make-up of crime in the USA than in other countries. Thefts of two-wheelers, in contrast, take a smaller share of crime. Otherwise, deviations from the average are not pronounced. Since 1996, thefts of personal property and car vandalism both increased in their share of all offences. This goes in tandem with a smaller share for assaults and threats.

An overview

In sum, these country profiles may be of most interest to the countries concerned as a guide to where their dominant crime problems lie in quantitative terms. But some points are worth highlighting of more general interest. In doing so, we anticipate some of the findings in the following section on the seriousness of crime.

— On average, car vandalism forms a full quarter of the crimes experienced by ICVS respondents in industrialised countries. And the figure was higher in Catalonia,

Portugal, France and Scotland. As will be seen in the next section, though, these incidents are not usually regarded as very serious.

— Assaults and threats are not an insignificant part of the crime profiles overall: as said, they comprised 15% of the incidents mentioned. Assaults with force were regarded more seriously than threats. But threats that respondents brought into the survey count were considered on average more seriously than thefts from cars or pickpocketing.

— Catalonia and Portugal stand out against the norm in having a crime problem dominated by incidents involving cars: rather more than 60% of all the crimes counted. Japan was also unusual in that 40% of the crime counted by the ICVS involved thefts of two-wheelers. The distinctive feature of Finland was the unusually high share of all crime that sexual incidents accounted for (over a quarter).

Changes in the profile of crime in particular countries over the ICVS sweeps give a pointer to local agencies as to how the nature of crime is changing. It does not, though, necessarily point to where the biggest changes in *risk* have occurred. For instance, car-related thefts in Poland are now a more dominant feature of its 2000 crime profile than in the 1996 sweep, although there is no evidence of an actual increase in risks. This is because the balance of relative levels of victimisation has changed.

2.12 Seriousness of crime

In assessing the burden of crime, overall victimisation rates take no account of the nature of what happened. This means that serious crimes such as robbery are given the same weight in counting victimisation experience as more minor ones (such as bicycle theft) – even though, as shown, some countries have proportionately more minor crimes than others do. This section draws on a question, introduced in the 1992 ICVS, which asks victims to assess the seriousness of what happened. The question asked was: 'Taking everything into account, how serious was the incident for you (or your household). Was it very serious, fairly serious or not very serious.'

The question on seriousness is used below in three ways:

— *Overall seriousness ranking:* to look at which ICVS crimes were typically felt to be the most serious, and the most minor.

— *Differences in seriousness ratings across countries:* to see whether people in different countries generally view the seriousness of different offences in a similar way.

— *A seriousness index:* to create an index of overall victimisation that takes account of both the profile of crime in different countries and how seriously it is rated.

Table 5 **Seriousness of crimes according to victims in 17 countries: 2000 ICVS**

	Very serious %	Fairly serious %	Not very serious %
Car theft: not recoverd	57	31	11
Sexual assaults	54	30	16
Car theft: recovered	46	38	17
Robbery with weapon	45	34	21
Assault	41	34	25
Burglary with entry	40	34	25
Theft of motorcycle or moped	34	40	26
Robbery without weapon	32	38	30
Other theft of personal property	27	41	32
Threats	27	37	36
Offensive sexual behaviour	21	30	49
Attempted burglary	20	31	49
Pickpocketing	20	35	45
Bicycle theft	15	37	48
Theft from car	14	34	52
Car vandalism	13	31	56

Crimes are sorted by 'very serious'.

Overall seriousness ranking

Table 5 shows what proportion of ICVS crimes were considered very, fairly and not very serious, taking all 17 countries as a whole. Certain crimes are sub-divided (for instance thefts of cars are divided according to whether or not the car was recovered).

Car thefts where the owner did not get the car back were regarded most seriously (57% of incidents were felt to be very serious). Next most serious were sexual assaults (54%), and then car thefts even if the car was recovered (46%). The seriousness accorded to car theft is likely to reflect the sheer inconvenience of having a car taken, as well as the generally large monetary value of the loss, even though there may be compensation from insurance.

Robbery involving weapon use (45% of incidents were considered very serious) was rated on virtually the same level as thefts of recovered cars (although taking very and fairly seriously together, car thefts were considered more serious). Assaults with force (41%) were much on a par with burglaries in which someone entered the home. The least serious crimes were car vandalism (only 13% were considered very

serious), theft from cars (14%) and bicycle theft (15%). These results are similar to previous ICVS findings.

Differences in seriousness ratings across countries

The next issue is whether seriousness ratings for different types of offence vary across country in a way that might suggest different tolerance or attitudinal thresholds to different crimes. To analyse current results, each incident mentioned by victims in different countries was scored for seriousness. (The scores were based on a three-point scale with 'very serious' scored as 3, 'fairly serious' as 2 and 'not very serious' as 1.) The best overall measure of whether seriousness ratings for different types of offences differ across country is to look at the average scores for the 11 ICVS crimes taken together. In computing this average, each of the eleven types of crime was given equal weigh so that differences between countries are not affected by variations in victimisation rates. (Full results are in Table 8 in Appendix 4.)

The mean scores for the 11 crimes did not differ very greatly by country. Ten of the seventeen countries had mean scores falling within 10% of the overall average. The general similarity of mean scores suggest that people in different countries have similar attitudinal thresholds as to the seriousness of different crimes. It also suggests that people do not differ very greatly in the *types* of incidents they are prepared to tell interviewers about.

The relatively small variations in seriousness ratings in the 2000 ICVS centred on there being comparatively high mean scores in Northern Ireland (2.2), Catalonia, Japan, England and Wales, and Poland (all 2.1). Lowest scores were found in Denmark (1.6), and Finland (1.7). These differences could reflect possible differences in the nature of crime experienced (which are not particularly well measured in the ICVS) – or some degree of variation in attitudes to crime. They could also be due to differences in connotation of the word 'serious'.

Another issue is whether the *relative* ranking of the seriousness of different crimes differs across country. The 2000 ICVS results (see Table 8 in Appendix 4) show that people in different countries judged the relative seriousness of different crimes with a fair degree of consistency, again suggesting a wide consensus about the import of conventional crime. This is in line with previous analyses on the 1992 survey (Van Dijk and Van Kesteren, 1996) and the 1996 one (Mayhew and Van Dijk, 1997). For 2000, the main results are:[26]

— Car theft was considered by victims as the most serious offence in half of the 16 countries (i.e., the mean scores were highest), and the second or third most serious in all the rest except Denmark.

26 Motorcycle thefts are excluded from these comparisons because of particularly small numbers of victims.

— Burglary with entry was rated most seriously in four countries, and second most serious in a further six.
— Robbery was considered the most serious offence in four countries and second most serious in another four.
— In virtually all countries, car vandalism was rated as least serious, after which thefts from cars, and then bicycle theft had the lowest mean seriousness scores.

An index of crime in relation to the seriousness

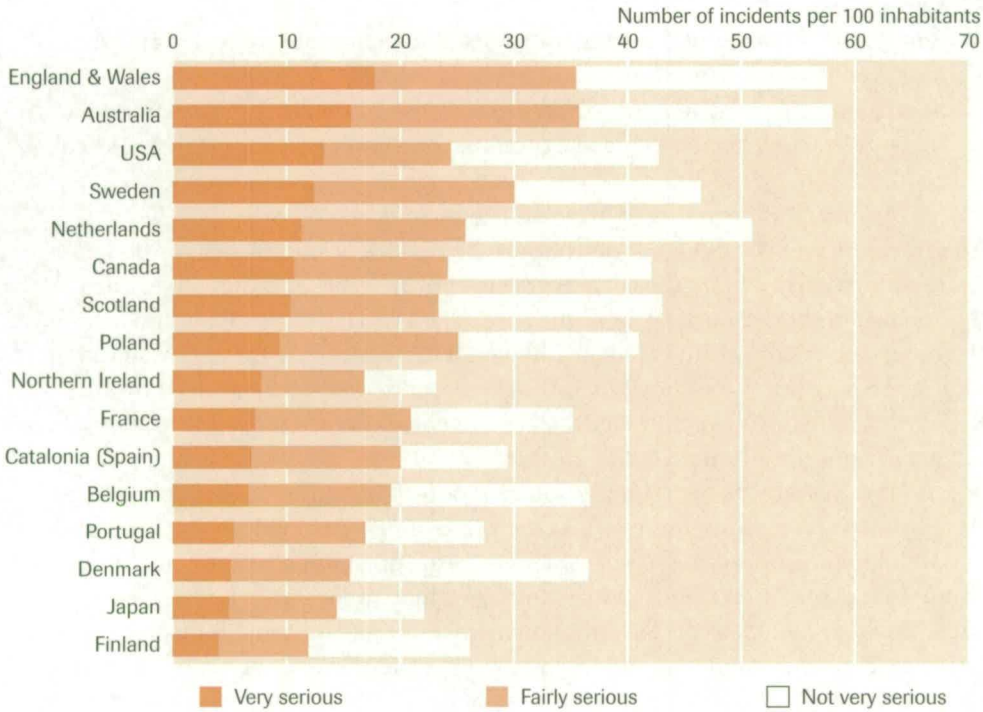
Finally, we turn to the question of whether the picture of the overall 'burden of crime' shown earlier in Figure 6 on the basis of prevalence and incidence rates changes when the seriousness of crimes as judged by victims is taken into account. The approach taken was to calculate an overall incidence rate for each country taking into account the seriousness of each component crime as judged by local victims.[27, 28] The results are in Figure 7, where countries are ranked by the number of 'very serious' crimes per 100 inhabitants.

How do the corrections for crime seriousness alter the 'burden of crime' picture? Most countries remain in more or less the same rank order position as in relation to overall incidence or prevalence risks. Thus, these still stand as reasonable indicators. Comparing overall prevalence risks with risks adjusted for crime seriousness, Australia, England and Wales, the Netherlands and Sweden still remain most pressured by crime. However, Denmark and Canada fall back in the relative order of countries when seriousness is taken into account. In contrast, the USA goes a fair degree higher in the list. The picture is generally similar, too, when unadjusted *incidence* risks are compared with a crime count taking seriousness into account. The USA still moves up, but less so than with the comparison with prevalence rates since it already fared worse on unadjusted incidence rates. Northern Ireland also fares rather worse when seriousness is taken into account.

27 This approach is different from that in the 1996 ICVS analysis, when overall incidence rates were weighted according to seriousness of each component crime as judged the average for the 14 countries in the 1996 analysis. The current approach allows for differences in seriousness perceptions between countries. Since these were modest, however, the general thrust of the 2000 ICVS results is similar to that from 1996.

28 Thus, for instance the 9.4 bicycle thefts per 100 inhabitants in Sweden break down into a rate of 1.6 thefts considered 'very serious' (17% of 9.4), a rate of 3.7 'fairly serious' thefts (39% of 9.4), and a rate of 4.1 'not very serious' thefts (44% of 9.4). The 2.3 burglaries per 100 inhabitants break down into a rate of 1.11 'very serious' (49% of 2.3), 0.68 'fairly serious' (30% of 2.3) and 0.46 'not very serious' (20% of 2.3). The same procedure is applied to all other crimes, and these are then added to produce an overall incidence rate divided into three seriousness levels. In Sweden, the result was a rate 12.4 'very serious' crimes per 100 inhabitants, a rate of 17.6 'fairly serious' crimes, and a rate of 16.4 'not very serious' crimes. This total is the same as the 46.4 crimes per 100 reported on earlier in the chapter.

Figure 7 **Incidence rates for 16 crimes by seriousness**



Countries are sorted by number of very serious crimes.

2.13 Trends in crime

Countries that have taken part in the ICVS more than once have usually done so to align themselves with others in the ongoing sweep rather than to provide any solid indicator of trends over time – for which sample sizes are small. What the ICVS shows in terms of trends nonetheless bears inspection.

Table 6 shows results, based on incidence rates which provide the most complete measure of all crimes experienced. Attempted burglary has been excluded as there was no measure in 1989. Offensive sexual behaviour and threats are also omitted. This is because (i) they are more likely to be susceptible to changes over time in the propensity to report to interviewers; and (ii) they were omitted in trend analysis done on the basis of the 1996 ICVS sweep. Trends in individual crime will be insufficiently reliable, but some mention is made of trend differences for property crime (all thefts and car vandalism) and violent crime (robbery, sexual assault and assault with force). The risk levels mentioned are for the year prior to the survey.

Table 6 Trends in crime

	1988	1991	1995	1999
Australia	46.3	49.5	.	↓ 44.0
Belgium	27.5	27.7	.	29.7
Canada	41.7	44.8	↓ 38.0	33.9*↓
England & Wales	27.1	↑ 47.7	49.5	46.1
Finland[1]	20.7	↑ 28.5	25.5	24.1*↓
France	29.4		↑ 38.9	↓ 29.7
Netherlands	41.3	↑ 49.7	51.0	↓ 42.3
Northern Ireland	21.1	.	23.1	20.7
Poland	.	37.1	36.3	36.3
Scotland	27.2		↑ 38.4	35.3*↑
Sweden	.	31.2	↑ 38.1	39.4
Switzerland[2]	21.3		↑ 36.3	↓ 18.4
USA[3]	51.0	45.5	39.5*↓	34.2*↓
7 countries	36.5	41.9		
7 countries		40.6	39.7	
11 countries			37.7	32.7

1 Finland estimate used for theft from car (2000).
2 Estimates used for crimes against property (2000).
3 Estimates used for all 10 offences (1992).

↑ and ↓ indicate that the difference compared to the *previous survey* is statistically significant (t-test; $p<0.10$)
↑ indicates an increase over the previous sweep; ↓ denotes a decrease.
* indicates, where appropriate, that the difference with one survey in between is statistically significant (t-test, $p<0.10$).

We start with some broad conclusions, and then provide more detail. The broad conclusions are:

— Generally speaking, the ICVS suggests that crime rose between 1988 and 1991, stabilised or fell in 1995, then fell back more in 1999. This is the dominant pattern in many individual countries.
— The picture in North America differs from that in Europe. The USA has shown consistent drops in crime since 1988. Canada had a modest increase in 1991, but lower figures in 1995 as well as in 1999, leaving overall crime levels lower than in 1988. In the three European countries with four ICVS measures (England and Wales, Finland and the Netherlands), crime levels are still higher than in 1988, despite a fall in risks in 1999. Compared with 1991, risks fell more in North America than in five of the seven European countries showing falls.
— Trends in property crime and violence differ somewhat. Overall, both increased between 1988 and 1991. Between 1991 and 1995, there are indications that

violent crime rose marginally more than property crime in four out of seven countries, though elsewhere there was little proportionate difference. Since 1995, there been a much more consistent fall in property crime. Changes in violence are variable.

Trends between 1988-1991

For the seven countries that can be compared here, there was an average increase from 37 incidents per 100 people in 1988 to 42 in 1991. (The increase was more marked excluding the USA.) Five of the seven countries experienced higher crime levels: England and Wales (with the highest increase), the Netherlands, Finland, Australia, and Canada. (The first three increases were statistically significant.) Crime in Belgium showed no change, and it fell in the USA (ns).

Trends between 1991-1995

There are again comparisons possible for seven countries. On average, crime stabilised at around 40 incidents per 100 inhabitants, but this conceals some differences. In the USA and Canada, as said, risks fell over this period, and there was a less marked fall in Finland. In Sweden, there was a statistically significantly *increase* (of 26%) in incidence rates. In the other countries, shifts were not marked, or statistically robust.

France, Scotland, Switzerland and Northern Ireland did not participate in the 1992 survey but did so in 1989. In the first three countries there were significantly higher victimisation rates in 1995 than in 1988, with the increase in Switzerland largest. Risks in Northern Ireland also rose, but the change was not statistically robust.

Trends between 1995-1999

Eleven countries can be compared here. On average, risks fell from 38 incidents per 100 in 1995 to 33 in 1999. There were falls in most countries. Exceptions were Sweden and Poland, where there was little change. The most statistically robust falls were in France, the Netherlands and Switzerland.

Variations in property crime and violence

Between 1988 and 1991, there were no very evident or consistent differences as regards trends in property crime and violence. Between 1991 and 1995, there are indications that violent crimes rose marginally more than property crime in four out of seven countries that can be compared, while elsewhere there was little proportionate difference. Of the four countries that can be compared with 1989, all showed bigger increases in violence than property crime.

Between 1995 and 1999, nine of the eleven countries with available comparisons registered a decrease in property crimes (albeit some of them small), while in two (Poland and Sweden) there was little change. For violent crime, risks rose in five

3

Individual risk factors

3.1 Introduction

So far in this report we have focused on *average* levels of victimization in particular countries, looking at how these compare with other countries, and over time. However, a wealth of victimological literature suggests that, *within* countries, some people will be more at risk than others. This chapter examines these differences in risk. It uses information collected in the ICVS about the respondent's personal characteristics (such as age and marital status), the income level of the household, and the size of the locality in which it is placed.

The variables used are regularly included in victimological risk analysis. Larger independent surveys with more risk-related variables allow more refined analysis of course. Nonetheless, the ICVS measures are among the key ones usually brought into play within the dominant, and closely related, theoretical perspectives on risk – which centre on lifestyle; routine activities; and opportunity structures (see, e.g., Felson, 1998; Van Dijk, 1994; Wittebrood and Nieuwbeerta, 2000). Between them, they highlight the following factors as heightening risks:

— *Where people live.* Those in more urban localities are assumed to live nearer to high offending populations. Also the daily routines of urban dwellers may leave targets less 'socially well guarded' and bring people into contact with each other in relatively anonymous settings. Urbanisation, too, may undermine social cohesiveness. The ICVS measure taken here is simply size of locality.

— *A risky lifestyle* – or more frequent self-exposure to criminal opportunities. This is measured here by an ICVS question on how often the respondent usually goes out in the evening.[29]

— *Target attractiveness* – either of the individual and/or their belongings. This is measured here by household income.

— *Weak guardianship.* This assumes that risks are increased when many activities take place outside the home and when people are, for instance, frequently in the company of strangers. The analysis below employs marital status as a proxy measure of this (with those who are married assumed to be likely to stay at home more). The frequency of going out in the evening is also relevant, which is itself likely to be related to age.

29 Other measures sometimes used for instance are the frequency of visiting pubs and clubs, or using public transport regularly.

Differences in risk are examined below in relation to various types of victimisation. These are divided into two main groups. The first is *property crime:* thefts of and from cars (labelled 'car thefts' for convenience); burglary; and so-called 'petty crimes' (car vandalism, bicycle theft, and thefts of personal property. The second group is *contact crime:* (robbery together with assaults and threats; and sexual incidents (asked of women only)). It should be borne in mind that within the property crime group, all offences with the exception of thefts from personal property are 'household crimes' about which the respondent answers on behalf of the household at large. Consequently, *individual* respondent characteristics, such as age and evening lifestyle, do not necessarily describe very well the dominant household type. (For instance a young, socially active respondent can be living with 'stay at home' middle-aged parents.)

3.2 The effects of individual risk factors on victimisation

Three analyses are presented below. The first (Table 7) shows straightforward prevalence risks of victimisation in terms of the available ICVS measures.[30] The second analysis (Table 8) presents a summary measure of the effects on risks of each *individual* risk factor (e.g., gender or age). The summary measure is expressed as an 'odds-ratio', which is explained more below. The third analysis (Table 9) takes account of the fact that some risk characteristics are themselves related to others (for instance, unmarried people are likely to be younger and to have a more socially active lifestyle). This final analysis, therefore, looks at the *independent* effect of any particular risk characteristic, net of its overlap with related characteristics.
Table 7 shows that there were higher risks of victimisation, compared to the average, for:

— Those in the *largest conurbations* (of populations over 100,000). Differences were most pronounced in relation to car thefts and sexual incidents. For all ICVS crimes, those in the most urban areas have approaching double the risk of victimisation as those in the least urban areas.
— Households with *higher incomes.* The differences were most marked for car thefts, petty crime, and sexual incidents. This result on the face of it might seem at odds with conventional criminological wisdom that more socially deprived areas face higher risks of crime. The explanation is likely to be that the current analysis is a 'micro' rather than a 'macro' one (see, e.g., Ellingworth et al., 1997). In other words, it is looking at *individual* risks rather than *area* ones. In poorer neighbourhoods, households in general might have higher risk, but within (and

30 Each country is given equal weight in the analyses in this Chapter. This is to avoid countries with larger samples unduly influencing results.

Table 7 **Differences in risks of victimisation in 1999: 2000 ICVS (16 countries combined)[1]**

	Crimes against property				Contact crimes			Any crime
	Car thefts[2] (owners)	Burglary and attempts	'Petty crimes'[3]	All property crimes	Robbery, assaults & threats	Sexual incidents (women)	All contact crimes	
	% victimised once or more in 1999							
Average risk	6.3	3.3	12.8	18.3	4.1	1.7	4.7	21.4
Town size								
<10,000	4.7	2.7	9.6	14.2	2.9	0.9	3.3	16.4
10-100,000	6.0	3.2	13.5	18.8	4.6	1.9	5.2	22.4
>100,000	8.8	4.2	15.6	22.6	4.9	2.6	5.7	26.2
Income[4]								
Lower	4.7	3.1	10.0	14.3	3.6	1.4	4.2	17.4
Higher	7.2	3.5	14.7	21.1	4.4	2.0	5.1	24.3
Age								
55+	3.6	3.0	7.5	11.6	2.0	0.2	2.1	13.1
25-54	6.5	3.2	13.8	19.7	4.2	1.7	4.7	22.9
16-24	10.2	4.2	19.0	26.0	7.4	4.8	9.2	32.0
Going out[5]								
Not often	5.1	2.9	10.4	15.1	3.0	1.0	3.4	17.5
Often	7.5	3.8	15.1	21.4	5.2	2.6	6.0	25.3
Married								
Yes	5.3	2.8	11.5	16.6	2.7	0.9	3.0	18.7
No	8.1	4.2	14.7	20.8	6.1	2.9	7.2	25.5
Education[6]								
Lower	5.1	2.9	10.2	14.6	3.3	1.1	3.6	17.2
Higher	7.0	3.6	14.5	20.8	4.6	2.2	5.4	24.4
Gender								
Female	5.9	3.4	12.3	17.6	3.6	1.7	4.9	20.9
Male	6.7	3.3	13.2	18.9	4.5	na	4.5	21.9

1 Victimisation percentages are computed after listwise deletion of cases. This means that if any information on a risk factors was missing (e.g. the respondent answered 'don't know', refused to answer, or the questions were not asked), the case was omitted from analysis. Average victimisation risks may therefore differ somewhat from those mentioned elsewhere in this report. Switzerland is omitted completely.

2 Car thefts are thefts of and from cars. Motorcycle thefts are included in 'all crimes'.

3 'Petty crimes' covers car vandalism, bicycle theft, and thefts of personal property.

4 Those on 'lower' incomes have an income less than average in each country. Those on 'higher' incomes earn more than average.

5 The 'going out' variable is based on answers to a question about how many times people usually go put in the evening. Those counted as 'often' indicated to go out at least once a week or more. Those counted as 'not often' go out less frequently.

6 Those with 'lower' education are in the lower half of the educational distribution. Those with 'higher' education are in the upper half of the distribution.

outside them) more affluent households could be the most vulnerable (probably because they offer a greater abundance of 'criminal rewards').
— *Younger respondents* – particularly in relation to the two contact crimes, and car thefts.
— *Those who went out more frequently.* The differences here were most pronounced for contact crimes.
— Those who were *unmarried,* particularly again with respect to contact crime.
— Those with a *higher educational status,* particularly for sexual incidents. It cannot be ruled out that there is some 'response effect' in operation here, such that the more literate and numerate perform better at the task of remembering victimisation. More likely, though – and later results endorse this – is that higher educational status is itself related to other things, such as being younger and less home-bound.
— *Males.* For property crime, the differences were relatively slight, and this will reflect sampling procedurse whereby either a man or women could answer on behalf of the household. For robbery, the male: female difference was larger.

Table 8 presents 'odds-ratio' for any one particular risk variable, such as size of locality. An odds- ratio is (a) the odds of someone in a certain group (e.g., in the largest conurbation) being victimised as against them not being victimised, divided by (b) the odds for someone in the 'base' (or reference) group. In all cases, the base group has been taken as those at lowest risk. (In the case of size of locality, for instance, this is those in areas with less than 10,000 population.) The higher the odds-ratio, the stronger the effect of the particular risk factor on victimisation.
The calculation of the odds-ratios is straightforward. Table 7 shows, for instance, that 5.2% of those who go out more frequently were victims of robbery and assaults and threats once or more in 1999. The risk for the less socially active is 3.0%. The odds-ratio – or the 'relative risks' for the socially active as against the rest – is computed as [5.2 / (100 - 5.2] / [3.0 / (100 - 3.0]: 1.77. Thus, the risk of robbery and assaults and threats is 1.77 times (or nearly 80%) higher for those who go out once a week or more as against those who go out less often.
By far the biggest differences in Table 8 emerge for sexual incidents, where the youngest women (aged 16-24) are 25 times more at risk than women aged 55 or older. Being younger also has a strong effect on risks of robbery and assaults and threats, and car thefts. Those who are not married face higher risks than those who are married – for instance by a factor of 2.3 for robbery and assaults and threats, and for women by a factor of 3.3 for sexual incidents.

Table 8 **Uncontrolled effects of risk factors (odds-ratios) on victimisation in 1999: 2000 ICVS (16 countries combined)[1]**

	Crimes against property				Contact crimes			Any crime
	Car thefts[2] (owners)	Burglary and attempts	'Petty crimes'[3]	All property crimes	Robbery, assaults & threats	Sexual incidents (women)	All contact crimes	
	% victimised once or more in 1999							
Town size (Base = <10.000)								
10-100,000	1.29	1.19	1.47	1.40	1.61	2.13	1.61	1.47
>100,000	1.96	1.58	1.74	1.76	1.73	2.94	1.77	1.81
Income[4] (Base = Low)								
High	1.57	1.13	1.55	1.60	1.23	1.44	1.23	1.52
Age (Base = 55+)								
25-54	1.86	1.07	1.97	1.87	2.15	8.63	2.30	1.97
16-24	3.04	1.42	2.89	2.68	3.92	25.16	4.72	3.12
Going out[5] (Base = Not often)								
Often	1.51	1.32	1.53	1.53	1.77	2.64	1.81	1.60
Married (Base = Married)								
Not married	1.57	1.52	1.33	1.32	2.34	3.29	2.51	1.49
Education[6] (Base = Low)								
High	1.40	1.25	1.49	1.54	1.41	2.02	1.53	1.55
Gender (Base = Female)								
Male[7]	1.15	0.97	1.08	1.09	1.26	-	-	1.06

1 The odds-ratios are based on prevalence risks in 1999 (% victimised once or more). 'Uncontrolled' means that each category (e.g., town size) is considered independently of any association with another category.

2 Car thefts are thefts of and from cars. Motorcycle thefts are included in 'all crimes'.

3 'Petty crimes' covers car vandalism, bicycle theft, and thefts of personal property.

4 Those on 'lower' incomes have an income less than average in each country. Those on 'higher' incomes earn more than average.

5 The 'going out' variable is based on answers to a question about how many times people usually go put in the evening. Those counted as 'often' indicated to go out at least once a week or more. Those counted as 'not often' go out less frequently.

6 Those with 'lower' education are in the lower half of the educational distribution. Those with 'higher' education are in the upper half of the distribution.

7 Comparing men and women on all contact crime is somewhat inappropriate since men were not asked about sexual incidents. The odds-ratio for men was 0.91.

3.3 Multivariate analyses

Multivariate analysis allows more sensitive measurement of which *particular* characteristics are important in determining vulnerability to crime. This is because, as said, it takes account of the overlap between different characteristics. Table 9 presents odds-ratios for individual risk factors, controlling for any overlap with others.

The main features of Table 9 are as follows:

— As one would expect, odds-ratios for particular variables are usually smaller than when they are considered in tandem with other variables than when they are not (i.e., as in Table 8). Nonetheless, most risk factors examined have odds-ratios larger than one in relation to most victimisation types. This indicates that each has some independent effects on risks. One main exception was that gender was relatively unimportant in relation to property crime, contrary to the earlier analyses.

— Two of the biggest changes in the profile of risks (when overlaps with other risk factors are taken into account) are in relation to the *frequency of going out* and *educational status*. A more socially active lifestyle still heightened risks, but much less so. This either suggests that 'lifestyle' *per se* is less important than basic social characteristics (such as being young, and an urban dweller). Or more probably, it indicates that cursory measures of lifestyle used in the ICVS and other victimisation surveys do not do justice to the nuances of exposure to risky situations. Having a *higher educational status* also seemed less important after other risk variables were controlled for. This is likely to reflect the fact, for instance, that younger people now have more educational qualifications.

— Net of other effects, *urbanisation* continued to be an influential risk factor. Risks of property crime, for instance, were 60% higher in the most urban areas compared to the least urbanised ones. The biggest reduction in the 'urbanisation effect', when other things were taken into account, was in relation to contact crime. This is likely to be because the highest risk victims according to Table 7 (e.g., young single people) more often live in the most urbanised areas.

— *Income* also continued to be of importance, although for sexual incidents it was less so when other risk dimensions were controlled for. This might well be because higher-income women more often live in more urbanised areas.

— *Being younger* also remained important. But it was rather less so having taken account of other variables (e.g., that the young go out more).

— *Being married* also still heightened risks, but again less so than when other things related to being married were taken into account. The differential in risks of sexual incidents for unmarried women, for instance, was much weaker after other factors were accounted for (e.g., simply being younger).

Table 9 **Controlled effects of risk factors (odds-ratios) on victimisation in 1999: 2000 ICVS (16 countries combined)[1]**

	Crimes against property				Contact crimes			Any crime
	Car thefts[2] (owners)	Burglary and attempts	'Petty crimes'[3]	All property crimes	Robbery, assaults & threats	Sexual incidents (women)	All contact crimes	
	% victimised once or more in 1999							
Town size (Base = <10.000)								
10-100.000	1.26	1.14	1.39	1.33	1.48	1.96	1.53	1.39
>100.000	1.81	1.43	1.58	1.60	1.47	2.51	1.57	1.64
Income[4] (Base = Low)								
High	1.42	1.11	1.33	1.39	1.16	1.17	1.14	1.33
Age (Base = 55+)								
25-54	1.66	1.00	1.73	1.61	1.92	8.05	2.15	1.72
16-24	2.34	1.04	2.27	2.04	2.51	15.48	3.05	2.31
Going out[5] (Base = Not often)								
Often	1.18	1.17	1.21	1.22	1.25	1.45	1.28	1.23
Married (Base = Married)								
Not married	1.27	1.47	1.15	1.18	1.99	2.40	2.00	1.29
Education[6] (Base = Low)								
High	1.02	1.10	1.07	1.11	1.01	0.96	1.04	1.10
Gender (Base = Female)								
Male[7]	1.10	0.96	1.01	1.02	1.19	-	-	0.99

1 The odds-ratios are based on prevalence risks in 1999 (% victimised once or more). 'Controlled' means that each category (e.g., town size) is considered controlling for associations with all other categories.

2 Car thefts are thefts of and from cars. Motorcycle thefts are included in 'all crimes'.

3 'Petty crimes' covers car vandalism, bicycle theft, and thefts of personal property.

4 Those on 'lower' incomes have an income less than average in each country. Those on 'higher' incomes earn more than average.

5 The 'going out' variable is based on answers to a question about how many times people usually go put in the evening. Those counted as 'often' indicated to go out at least once a week or more. Those counted as 'not often' go out less frequently.

6 Those with 'lower' education are in the lower half of the educational distribution. Those with 'higher' education are in the upper half of the distribution.

7 Comparing men and women on all contact crime is somewhat inappropriate since men were not asked about sexual incidents. The odds-ratio for men was 0.85.

4

Reporting crime and the police

4.1 Introduction

This section concentrates mainly on the issue of reporting victimisation to the police. It considers how reporting rates vary across offence types, and across country. The reasons for *not* reporting are then considered: how these differ for different types of victimisation, and whether those in different countries react differently in their decisions not to report. After this, we look at reasons *for* reporting to the police – again in relation to different offence types, and in relation to country differences. The chapter then moves onto what victims who reported felt about the police response: how many were satisfied with it, and if they were not, why not. After this, there is some analysis of how many victims said they received help from a specialised victim support agency, and if they did not, whether they felt such help would have been useful. Finally, we consider how people in general – both victims and non-victims – feel about the performance of the police in their local area, and about how helpful in general they feel the police are.

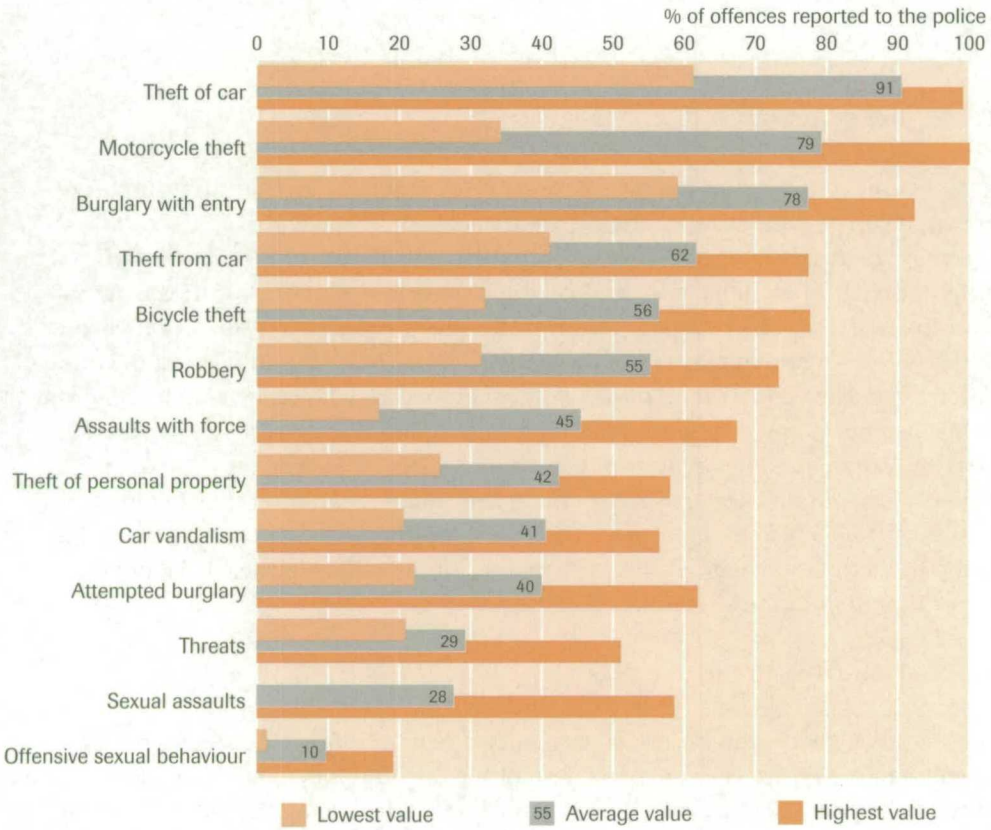
4.2 Reporting to the police

The frequency with which victims (or relatives and friends on their behalf) report offences to the police is strongly related to the type of offence involved. Figure 8 shows average reporting rates in all 17 countries in the 2000 ICVS.[31] Details are also shown of the highest and lowest reporting rates in the 17 countries. For instance, the proportion of burglaries with entry reported ranged from 59% in Portugal to 92% in Belgium, with an average value for all 17 countries of 77%.

There are differences in reporting rates for different types of offences. In most countries, almost all cars and motorcycles stolen were reported, as well as most burglaries with entry. About two-thirds of thefts from cars were reported, and rather more than half of bicycle thefts and robberies. Only about a third of all assaults and threats were drawn to the attention of the police, although the figure was higher for assaults with force (45%) than for threats (29%). Sexual incidents mentioned to interviewers were least frequently reported (on average 15% were). Where sexual

31 The figures refer to the last incident reported to the police over the previous five years. Reporting rates for corruption and consumer fraud are not given since victimisation rates were insufficiently high (see Chapter 2). Details of the few incidents reported to the police and other authorities are given in Appendix 4, Tables 4 and 5.

Figure 8 **Percentage of offences reported to the police (highest, lowest and average values): 17 countries**



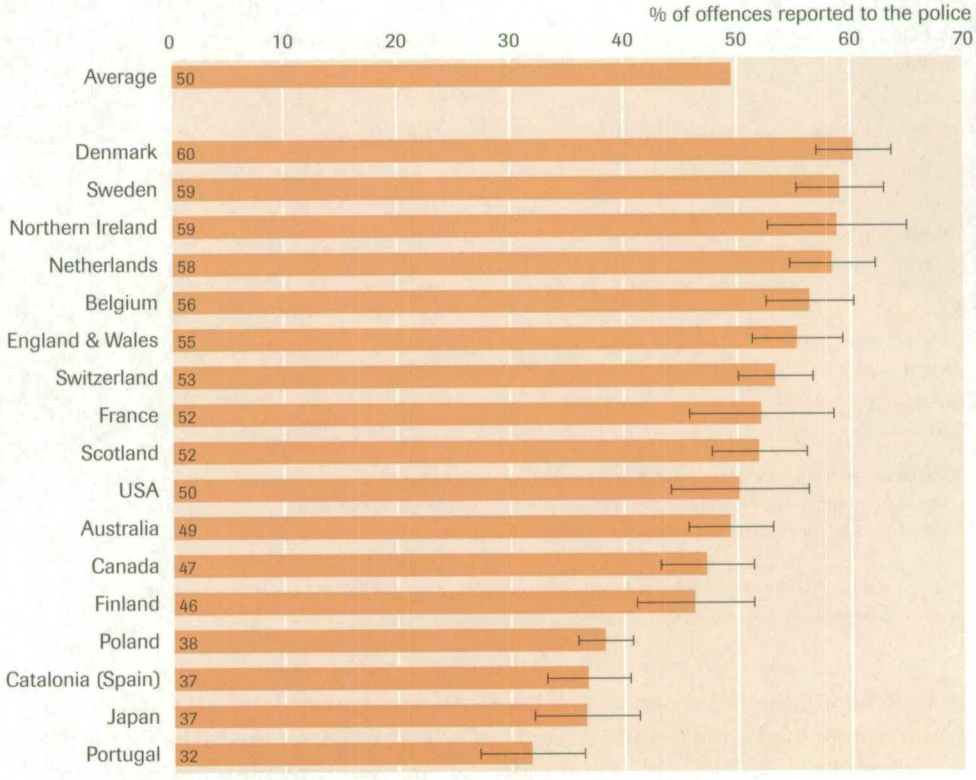
Crimes are sorted by average percentage.

assault was mentioned, though, 28% of incidents were reported; where simply offensive behaviour was involved, only 10% were drawn to police attention.

There was more variation in reporting rates for some crimes than others. One of the largest apparent differences is in relation to motorcycle theft, although this is likely to reflect the small number of victims involved. Relatively large differences across countries are also evident for sexual assaults (with a very low reporting rate in Finland and a very high one in Scotland), and for assaults with force (with a low reporting rate in Japan, but high ones in the Netherlands and Northern Ireland). The small numerical base again, though, needs to be borne in mind.

In considering relative propensities to report crime in different countries, the overall proportion of *all* offences reported is not a sound measure. This is because, as seen,

Figure 9 **Percentage of offences reported to the police: overall figure for six types of offences**



reporting levels vary by offence type, so overall reporting levels will be influenced by the make-up of crime in each country. Figure 9 offers a compromise by showing reporting levels for six offences for which levels of reporting are most variable and/or experience of victimisation is comparatively high.[32] The offences are thefts from cars, car vandalism, bicycle theft, burglary with entry, attempted burglary and thefts of personal property. (The reporting rates relate to the last incident reported over the previous five years.) A full breakdown of reporting rates, including results from previous ICVS sweeps is given in Table 9 in Appendix 4.

In the 17 countries as a whole, exactly half of the six crimes were reported to the police. The highest reporting rates (around 60%) were in Denmark, Sweden, North-

32 Omitted are car and motorcycle thefts (which are usually reported and are relatively uncommon), and robbery (for which numbers per country are small). Also, omitted are sexual incidents and assaults/threats. Here, the proportion reported will be influenced by, respectively, the ratio of sexual assaults to offensive sexual behaviour, and assaults to threats.

Table 10 Percentage of offences reported to the police[1, 2]

	1989	1992	1996	2000
Australia	49	↓ 43		↑ 47
Belgium	51	↑ 68		↓ 56
Canada	51	51	50	47
England & Wales	56	58	55	55
Finland	50	↓ 44	↑ 50	46
France	53		48	52
Netherlands	54	57	55	58
Northern Ireland	39		↑ 50	↑ 59
Poland		32	32	↑ 38
Scotland	64		↓ 56	↓ 52
Sweden		58	56	59
Switzerland	62		↓ 54	53
USA	55		53	50

1 Based on theft from cars; car vandalism; bicycle theft; burglary with entry; attempted burglary; and theft of personal property. Based on last incident reported over the previous five years.

2 Countries that participated less than three times are omitted.

↑ and ↓ indicate that the difference compared to the previous survey is statistically significant (t-test; $p<0.10$).

↑ indicates an increase over the previous sweep; ↓ denotes a decrease.

ern Ireland and the Netherlands. The lowest were in Portugal, Japan, Catalonia and Poland, where only about a third or more of crimes were reported. The figures for Portugal and Catalonia are consistent with the low reporting rates for the South European countries – Spain and Italy – from earlier surveys.

Trends in reporting over time

Thirteen countries have participated in at least three rounds in the ICVS. Reporting rates over time for the six crimes taken are shown in Table 10. There are two things of note:

— First, there is no evidence that reporting rates have changed much over the years in most of the countries. The average reporting rates for the six crimes has been within a narrow range of 51% to 53% for the countries taking part at least three times.

— Secondly, *relative* levels of reporting are very broadly consistent over the sweeps, and where there are changes they are not always statistically robust. The most marked change in position is in relation to Northern Ireland. The level of reporting in 2000 was comparatively high, whereas in 1996 it had been comparatively low. One explanation for this may be the change in the profile of crime, with a larger proportion of the total count of crime comprising burglaries with entry

and thefts from cars, which have higher reporting levels than some other offences. Reporting has also increased in Poland, but there is no evident change in the profile of crime that explains this. In Scotland, reporting has gone down since 1989, and this is consistent with there being proportionately fewer crimes in 2000 with higher reporting rates (e.g., burglary with entry). There is a similar fall in reporting in Switzerland, and here again changes in the profile of crime may be more an issue than a change in the propensity to report. Reporting rates in Belgium have also fluctuated somewhat, but there is less change in the profile of crime to explain this.[33]

4.3 Reasons for not reporting to the police

Victims who did not report were asked why not in relation to five crimes – burglary with entry, thefts from cars, robbery, sexual incidents, and assaults and threats. (The last three are termed 'contact crimes'). More than one reason could be given. Those who *did* report were also asked to say why they had done so, and this is discussed later.

Table 11 shows reasons for not reporting the five crimes for all 17 countries together. That the incident was 'not serious enough' was by far the most important reason for not bringing in the police. About four in ten non-reporters mentioned this, and even more when thefts from cars went unreported. A quarter of victims felt it was inappropriate to call the police, or said they or the family solved it. The idea that the police could do nothing was mentioned fairly frequently (e.g., by one in five victims of thefts of cars who did not report). Few victims mentioned fear or dislike of the police as a reason for not reporting, although it was slightly more often mentioned in relation to contact crime. Fear of reprisals was also infrequently mentioned, though it was rather more often mentioned in relation to contact crime than the two property crimes.

Some response categories are fairly close in meaning. For instance, an incident considered as 'inappropriate for the police' might be one that the victim felt was not worth troubling the police about, or in which someone known to the victim was involved. There is also some ambiguity in some of the reasons for not reporting. For instance, 'the police could do nothing' might mean that the harm, loss or damage cannot be rectified; that there was insufficient proof of what happened; or that it seems impossible that an offender could be apprehended.

33 There was an unusually high proportion of victims in Belgium in the 2000 ICVS compared to 1992 who did not report to the police because they felt they could not or would not do anything about. On the face of it, this may signify lower confidence in the police, although general attitudes to police performance in Belgium actually improved between the 1992 and 2000 sweeps.

Table 11 Reasons for not reporting to the police: all countries (percentages)[1]

	Theft from car[2]	Burglary with entry	Robbery	Sexual incidents	Assault & threats	All five crimes
Not serious / no loss	53	34	39	38	34	42
Solved it ourselves / inappropriate for the police[3]	14	26	21	31	29	24
Police could do nothing	19	13	16	13	13	14
Police wouldn't do anything	16	10	12	7	10	11
Fear of reprisals	<1	2	7	8	7	5
Fear / dislike of the police	1	3	4	4	4	3
Reported to other authorities	1	2	2	4	4	3
No insurance	3	1	1	<1	<1	1
Other / don't know	18	25	23	24	23	22

1 Multiple responses were allowed, so percentages may add to more than 100%. Based on last incident over the previous five years.
2 Reasons for not reporting thefts from cars was not asked in Switzerland.
3 'Solved it myself', 'My family solved it' and 'Not appropriate for the police' are taken together.

There was a clear pattern in which, as one would expect, crimes that were rated as serious by victims were reported most often (72% were). Of incidents judged to be 'somewhat serious', 56% were reported. Of those judged 'not very serious', a much lower 37% were drawn attention to the police.

Assessments of seriousness made most difference to reporting levels for threats and sexual incidents: very few incidents were reported which were considered not very serious. For burglaries, thefts of cars, motorcycles or bicycles, seriousness judgements certainly made a difference, but to a lesser degree. This is probably because other factors also exerted an influence (such as wanting property back, or needing to make an insurance claim).

Reasons for not reporting differed somewhat across country. This will in part reflect the relative weight of different crimes among the five types considered. Table 12 shows details of why respondents said crimes were not brought to the attention of the police. (Tables 10, 11 and 12 in Appendix 4 show results in more detail for all five crimes.)

A technical issue needs mentioning first in relation to Table 12. This is that the number of answers respondents gave in Belgium was greatly in excess of that in other countries; the same aplied to Poland, although to a lesser extent. (Survey

Table 12 **Reasons for not reporting to the police, five crimes: by country (percentages)[1]**

	Not serious / no loss	Solved it ourselves / inappropriate for the police [3]	Police could do nothing	Police wouldn't do anything	Fear of reprisals	Fear / dislike of the police	Reported to other authorities	No insurance	Other / don't know
Australia	47	14	9	6	<1	<1	4	<1	34
Belgium	52	45	42	35	4	4	6	4	18
Canada	41	22	6	5	2	2	3	1	36
Catalonia (Spain)	51	12	10	17	<1	<1	2	2	16
Denmark	42	31	9	6	1	1	2	1	24
England & Wales	34	21	12	11	3	3	3	1	28
Finland	55	23	7	6	<1	<1	4	1	13
France	39	24	8	10	1	1	<1	1	19
Japan	48	22	18	8	3	3	6	<1	30
Netherlands	32	21	9	9	<1	<1	1	<1	34
Northern Ireland	37	24	17	8	8	8	4	<1	10
Poland	46	24	39	31	7	7	2	3	6
Portugal	41	23	13	10	2	2	1	<1	12
Scotland	37	18	6	7	3	3	3	<1	34
Sweden	34	33	11	11	2	2	1	2	17
Switzerland[2]	36	22	9	4	2	2	<1	<1	13
USA	27	24	17	9	6	6	6	<1	24
All countries	42	24	14	11	3	3	3	1	22

1 Multiple responses were allowed, so percentages may add to more than 100%. Based on last incident over the previous five years.

2 Reasons for not reporting thefts from cars was not asked in Switzerland.

3 'Solved it myself', 'My family solved it' and 'Not appropriate' are taken together.

company practice is likely to explain this.) Results from these two countries, then, need to be interpreted with this in mind.[34]

That the matter was inappropriate for the police or solved privately was far the most frequently mentioned in Belgium. It was also mentioned relatively frequently in Sweden (as was the case in the 1992 ICVS) and Denmark. This was also true in

34 In Belgium, there were about 2.3 reasons coded per respondent for not reporting the five crimes, and 1.7 in Poland. The average for the other countries was 1.1.

relation to contact crimes in Northern Ireland and Poland. The feeling that the police could or would not be able to help was most often cited in Belgium and Poland (though note the technical issue mentioned above). Those in Catalonia, Japan, the USA and Northern Ireland were also slightly more likely to mention the police response. Fear and dislike of the police was most often mentioned (though even then not often) by those in Northern Ireland, Poland and in the USA (in relation to contact crime only).

4.4 Reasons for reporting to the police

The 1996 ICVS introduced the question why victims *did* report. Table 13 shows first the results from the 2000 ICVS for all countries combined for the five crimes the question was asked about. (Multiple responses were allowed.)

The reasons why sexual incidents and assaults/threats were reported differed somewhat from those for other offences. Victims here were especially concerned to stop what happened being repeated. More also wanted help. For the two property offences and robbery, more than a third were reported because assistance was sought in recovering property. When a burglary or theft from a car was involved, about a third were reported for insurance reasons. About four in ten victims overall referred to the obligation to notify the police, either because they felt a crime such as theirs should be reported, or because what happened had been serious. Retributive motives – the hope that offenders would be caught and punished – weighed with nearly as many victims, though this was less evident when thefts from cars were involved. Results from the 1996 ICVS were fairly similar when the comparison is restricted to the countries in each sweep.

The patterns across country are broadly in line with the overall picture. Tables 13, 14 and 15 in Appendix 4 show results for the five crimes together, for burglary with entry, thefts from cars, and for contact crime. However, close comparisons are difficult for three reasons. First, there will be some variation because of the small number of incidents involved in some cases. Second, the 'mix' of offences reported in different countries will make a difference. (For instance, wanting an offender caught and punished was more an issue with burglary than with thefts from cars, while wanting to stop an incident happening again was more common a reason for reporting for sexual incidents than other contact crimes.) Thirdly, as was the case with reasons for *not* reporting, simply more responses were given in Belgium, Poland and (in this case) Japan.[35] For these countries, then, high values on any particular reason for reporting may well simply reflect this technical difference.

35 In Belgium, there were about 4 reasons coded per respondent for reporting the five crimes, 3 in Poland, and 2.3 in Japan. The average for the other countries was 1.6.

Table 13 Reasons for reporting to the police: all countries (percentages)[1]

	Theft from car[2]	Burglary with entry	Robbery	Sexual incidents	Assault & threats	All five crimes
Should be reported / serious	38	44	38	25	35	39
Retribution	27	38	40	43	39	35
To recover property	41	35	38		3	30
To stop it	21	27	26	53	39	28
Insurance reasons	36	33	12		4	27
To get help	7	12	15	26	23	12
Compensation	7	8	7	9	7	7
Other / don't know	11	13	17	21	15	12

1 Multiple responses were allowed, so percentages may add to more than 100%.
2 Reasons for reporting for theft from car was not asked in Switzerland.

4.5 Victim's satisfaction with the police response

If they had reported to the police, victims were asked whether they were satisfied with the police response.[36] Figure 10 shows the results for the two property crimes, and for the three contact crimes taken together. (Further details are in Appendix 4, Table 16, which also shows results from the 1996 sweep.

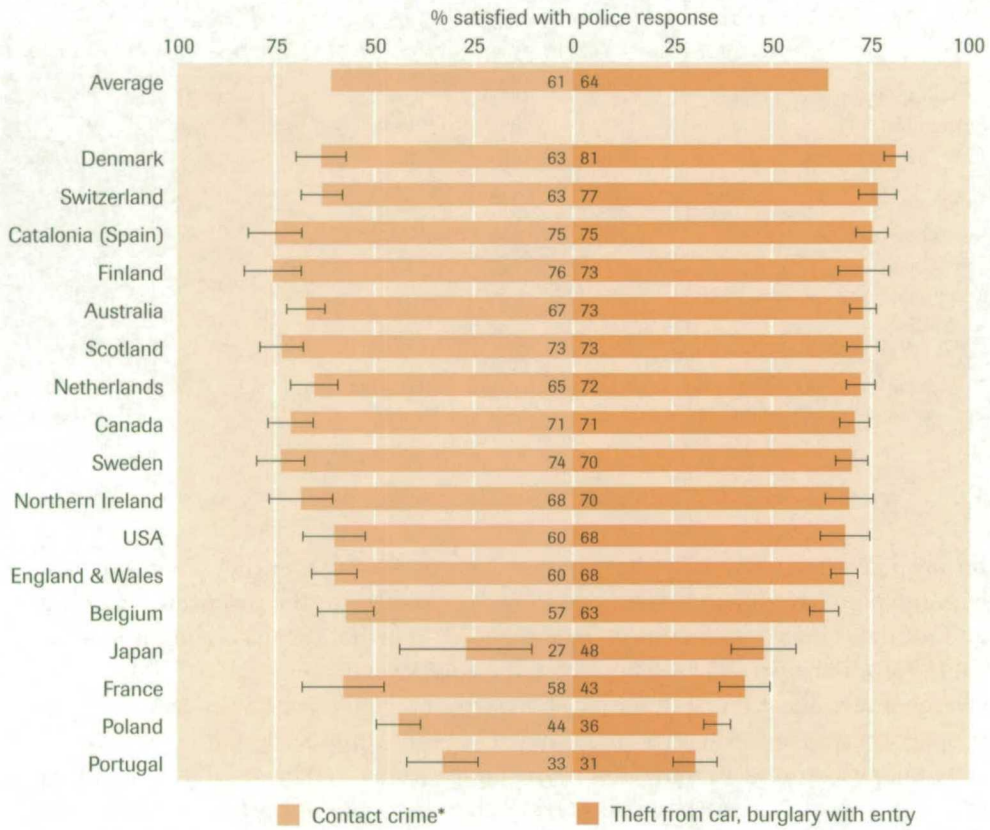
Overall, there is not much difference between how victims felt when they reported property crimes as against contact crime. For both, about six in ten felt satisfied. But looking at countries individually, the police were rated lower in their handling of contact crime in more countries (eight) than they were for property crime (five); there was little difference in the rest.

Those in Denmark (81%), Switzerland (77%) and Catalonia (75%) were most satisfied after reporting burglaries and thefts from cars, although figures in several other countries were not far behind. Victims of contact crime in Denmark and Switzerland, however, were relatively less satisfied when reporting contact crime. Those in Sweden ranked higher in their assessment of how the police handled contact crimes reported than they did property crimes. The police response was considered least good in Portugal, Poland, France, and Japan (particularly for contact crime).

Levels of satisfaction with the police after reporting were lower when crimes were rated as serious (59% were satisfied) than when they were judged 'somewhat serious' (67%), or 'not very serious' (72%). On the face of it, this might suggest that the police do a poorer job when 'serious' crimes are reported. More likely, probably, is that vic-

36 This question was asked for the same five crimes as questions about reporting to the police: burglary with entry, thefts from cars, robbery, sexual incidents, and assault and threats.

Figure 10 **Percentage satisfied with police response after reporting**



Countries are sorted by 'theft from car and burglary with entry'.

* 'Contact crime': robbery, sexual incidents and assaults and threats.

tims have higher expectation of the police when they report crime incidents which they judge to be more serious.

Trends over time in satisfaction with the police response

For the 11 countries in the 1996 sweep of the ICVS, the picture was generally similar with respect to *relative* levels of satisfaction with the police on reporting. Those in Poland and France, for instance, ranked comparatively low in assessments of police performance in 1996, as they did in 2000; those in Finland ranked police performance relatively highly in both years. The main changes were confined to three countries. In England and Wales, victims who reported were rather less happy with the police response in 2000 than in 1996. In Switzerland and Northern Ireland, in contrast, satisfaction with the police response was higher in 2000 than in 1996.

Table 14 **Reasons for dissatisfaction with the police after reporting: all countries (percentages)[1]**

	Theft from car[2]	Burglary with entry	Robbery	Sexual incidents	Assault & threats	All five crimes
Did not do enough	41	49	50	49	51	47
Were not interested	36	33	35	34	31	34
Did not find offender	27	22	21	22	13	22
Did not recover goods	26	22	13		3	18
Gave no information	14	17	8	20	12	15
Impolite	13	15	16	17	22	15
Were slow to arrive	9	16	7	11	15	11
Other / don't know	18	19	20	23	19	21

1 Multiple responses were allowed, so percentages may add to more than 100%.
2 Reasons for dissatisfaction when reporting thefts from car was not asked in Switzerland.

Reasons for dissatisfaction with the police

Those respondents who indicated that they were not satisfied with the way the police handled the matter were asked why not. (Multiple responses were again allowed). Results for all five crimes for the 17 countries combined are in Table 14.

Overall, the main reason for dissatisfaction was that the police 'did not do enough'. This held across all five crimes, and was the complaint of about half those who answered. The second cause for dissatisfaction was that the 'police were not interested' - mentioned by about a third. For four of the five crimes, the next most common complaint overall was that no offender had been caught. The exception was assaults and threats, where impoliteness on the part of the police was more often mentioned. An explanation for this might be that the police think that some assault incidents involve a degree of victim responsibility. For theft from cars and burglary with entry, around a quarter were dissatisfied because the police did not recover any stolen goods. Victims were most dissatisfied with lack of feedback information from the police when they reported sexual incidents. The relative importance of different reasons for dissatisfaction in the current ICVS sweep was the same as in the 1996 survey.

Results for individual countries are in Table 17, Appendix 4. One needs to bear in mind, though, the small numerical base since answers are based only on those who (a) were victim of one of the five crimes; (b) reported to the police; and (c) were not satisfied. Also, as was the case with reasons for reporting, more responses were given in Belgium, Poland and Japan. Thus, high values on any particular reason why victims were dissatisfied will reflect this.

That the police did not do enough was the most common complaint everywhere except Catalonia, England and Wales and Finland – where as many were unhappy that the police were not sufficiently interested. Those in Portugal were particularly dissatisfied with the effort the police put in. Dissatisfaction with the amount of information the police gave was particularly high in Northern Ireland and the USA, while rather more victims in Catalonia and Sweden mentioned police impoliteness. There was some indication that in Sweden and Northern Ireland, more victims felt that the police were slow to arrive. Some but not all of these findings were also evident in the 1996 ICVS, where comparisons across sweeps can be made.

4.6 Victim support

Some victims who had reported to the police were also asked whether they had received support from a specialised victim support agency. The victims covered were those who has experienced four crimes: burglary with entry, robbery, sexual incidents, and assaults and threats. Because of the small numerical base, the last three are taken together below as 'contact crime'. Those who had not received any help were asked whether they would have appreciated help in getting information, or practical or emotional support. Results are in Table 15, with further details in Tables 18 and 19 in Appendix 4.

Victims offered support

Overall, support is more frequently offered to victims of contact crimes (10% were offered help, as against 5% of burglary victims). Victims in the UK – where the victim support movement is strong – were most often offered help, with relatively little difference between victims of burglary and contact crime. For the four crimes together, a full 21% of victims were supported in Northern Ireland, 18% in England and Wales and 12% in Scotland. Elsewhere, there were comparatively high levels of support for victims in the Netherlands (13%), Canada (12%), Sweden (12%), the USA (9%) and Denmark (8%). Least support seems to have been available in Portugal, Japan, Finland, France, and Poland.

Comparing figures from the 2000 ICVS with those from countries in the previous sweep, there was little change that was statistically robust in the proportion of victims contacted by support agencies after they reported to the police. More victims in Northern Ireland, though, seemed supported on 2000 (21%) than in 1996 (11%). The *relative* amount of support offered in different countries was much the same in the two sweeps of the survey.

Victims wanting support

On the question of whether victims *wanted* help, about one in three burglary victims overall felt it would have been useful, with the proportion rather higher for

Table 15 **Percentage of victims who received, or would have appreciated receiving help from a specialised agency: 2000 ICVS[1]**

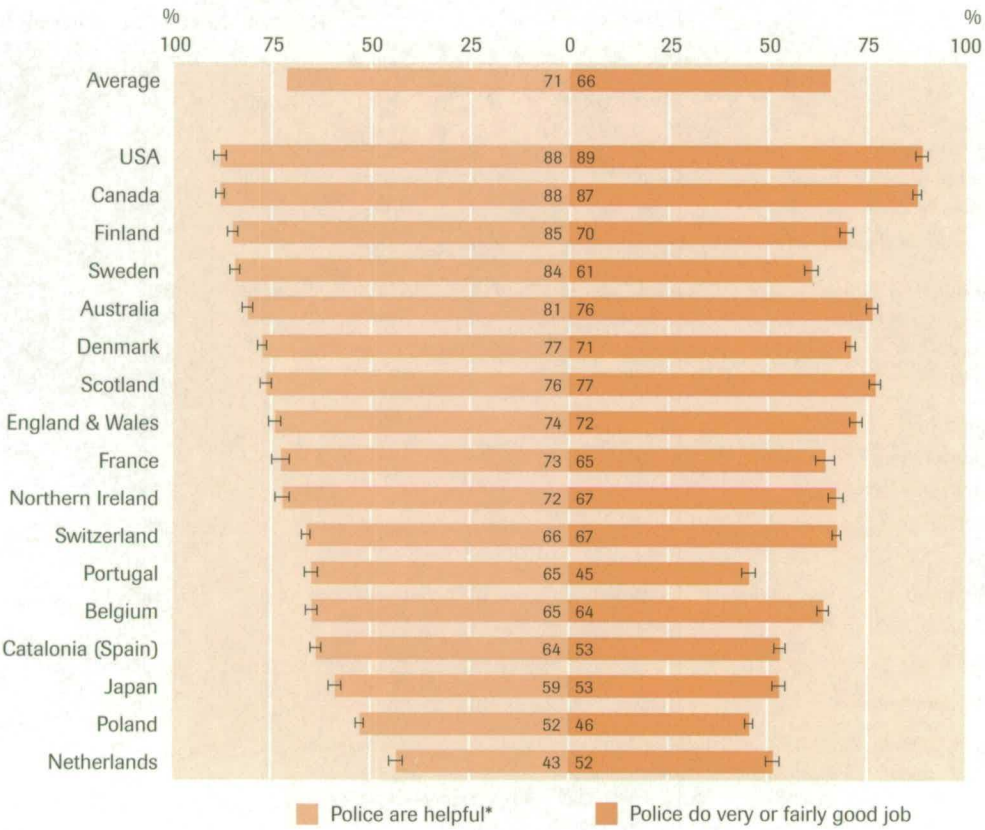
	Received help[2]		Help would have been useful[3]	
	Burglary with entry	Contact crime[4]	Burglary with entry	Contact crime[4]
Australia	3	7	21	33
Belgium	3	7	22	34
Canada	3	22	30	31
Catalonia (Spain)	7	3	49	59
Denmark	1	19	26	40
England & Wales	16	20	29	36
Finland	-	2	35	35
France	-	3	14	24
Japan	-	-	39	48
Netherlands	9	16	13	23
Northern Ireland	18	23	41	45
Poland	na	4	na	51
Portugal	-	-	52	48
Scotland	12	12	36	35
Sweden	5	16	29	29
USA	5	12	33	38
All countries[5]	5	10	31	41

1 Results for Switzerland are not available; nor are results for burglary in Poland.
2 Asked of victims who reported to the police.
3 Asked of victims who reported to the police but did not receive victim support.
4 Based on robbery, sexual incidents, and assaults and threats.
5 Poland omitted from the average for all countries.

contact crime (four out of ten). Most need was expressed by those in Catalonia, Poland, Portugal, Japan, and Northern Ireland (despite the relatively high level of support already given).

Comparing figures from the current and previous ICVS for countries in both, there was generally little change in the amount of help wanted. There was rather less demand in Sweden, England and Wales, and France, but changes in the nature of incidents reported could explain this. For countries in the current and previous sweep, the *relative* amount of help needed was similar. For example, there was the highest level of demand in Poland and Northern Ireland in both sweeps.

Figure 11 **Percentage thinking the police (a) do a good job in controlling crime in their area, and (b) are helpful**



Countries are sorted by 'police are helpful'.

* 'Police helpful' based on those fully and tending to agree the police are helpful.

4.7 General attitudes to the police

All respondents were asked to give a judgement on the overall performance of the police. The question asked was:

> 'Taking everything into account, how good a job do you think the police do in your area in controlling crime. Do you thing they do a very good job, a fairly good job, a poor job or a very poor job?'

In the 2000 ICVS, there was also a new question:

> 'And what about the helpfulness of the police. How far do you agree that the police do everything they can to help people and be of service? Do you fully agree, tend to agree, tend to disagree or totally disagree?'

Figure 11 shows results from the two questions (More detailed results are in Tables 20, 21 and 22 in Appendix 4.)

Generally, in those countries where people feel the police do a good job, the police are also considered helpful, and *vice versa*.[37] The most satisfied were in the USA and Canada, where nearly nine out of ten thought both the police performed well, and were helpful. (There were also high levels of satisfaction in the USA and Canada in the 1996 ICVS.) Police performance was also rated relatively highly in Scotland (77%), as it was in 1996, and in Australia (76%). The helpfulness of the police was also rated highly Finland and Sweden. The poorest judgements of police performance were in Portugal, Poland, the Netherlands, Japan and Catalonia. (Figures for Poland and the Netherlands in 1996 showed the same picture). The police were considered relatively unhelpful in these countries too, though not especially so in Portugal.

Trends over time in attitudes to the police

Several countries have taken part in at least three sweeps of the ICVS. Table 16 shows results.

Four things are of note.

— First, the rank order position of countries participating in two or more sweeps is very stable. Countries with relatively high figures in one sweep tend to have relatively high figures in other sweeps, and vice versa. For instance, in the four countries with measures of attitudes to police performance in all four sweeps of the ICVS, the rank order positions were identical.

— Secondly, there was a general shift downwards in assessments of police performance after 1989, bearing in mind that some of the changes are not particularly statistically robust. For instance, all but one (Finland) of the six countries with measures for 1989 and 1992 had lower figures in 1992. And of nine countries with measures for 1989 and 1996, six had lower figures in 1996 and one (Northern Ireland) had the same.

— Thirdly, police performance was rated more highly in 2000 than in 1996 in all but one of the 11 countries with measures for both years. (The exception was Sweden, where there was little change.) There is good reason, though, to be cautious about this result. This is because – to improve sensitivity of measurement – respondents in the 2000 ICVS were offered four alternatives to judge police performance: that the police did a *very good* job; a *fairly good* job; a *fairly poor* job, and a *very poor* job. In previous sweeps, these were truncated into two: that the police did a *good* job, or a *poor* job. The consistent upward trend in assessments

37 The Spearson correlation between the two measures is 0.82 ($p<0.05$; $n=17$).

Table 16 **Percentage thinking the police do a good job in controlling crime in their area**

	1989	1992	1996	2000[1]
Australia	73	72		↑ 76
Belgium	53	↓ 48		↑ 64
Canada	89	↓ 82	80	↑ 87
England & Wales	70	↓ 66	68	↑ 72
Finland[2]	64	66	68	70
France	62		↓ 56	↑ 65
Netherlands	58	↓ 50	↓ 45	↑ 52
Northern Ireland	63		63	↑ 67
Poland		38	↓ 27	↑ 46
Scotland	71		69	↑ 77
Sweden		58	62	61
Switzerland	50		↑ 55	↑ 67
USA	81		↓ 77	↑ 89

1 For 2000, the categories 'very good job' and 'fairly good job' are taken together.

2 The differences in Finland between the consecutive years is not statistically significant, but the four-year upward trend is (test for linear association, $p<0.07$).

↑ and ↓ indicate that the difference compared to the previous survey is statistically significant (t-test; $p<0.10$).
↑ indicates an increase over the previous sweep; ↓ denotes a decrease.

of police performance in 2000 suggests that this coding change is probably more at issue than any 'real' change in attitudes to the police.

— Bearing in mind the probable 'technical inflation' of the 2000 results, there have been some notable changes in attitudes to the police over time. The most prominent improvements between 1992 and 2000, for instance, were in Poland, Finland, Switzerland, the USA and Belgium. There was a different pattern in the Netherlands however. Satisfaction with the police dropped after 1989, and although it improved in 2000, the percentage feeling the police do a good job is still lower than in 1989.

5

Attitudes to crime

The ICVS includes some questions on people's anxiety about crime, and the precautions they take. It also asks about attitudes to sentencing someone who has committed burglary. This chapter deals with these. In considering them, some attention is paid to how the various attitudes relate to national levels of victimisation, and to individual victimisation experience.

5.1 The likelihood of burglary

The ICVS provides a measure of concern about burglary through a question which asks respondents how likely they think it is that they will be burgled in the coming year. Figure 12 shows the percentage of people who rated the chance of burglary as 'very likely' or 'likely'. (Table 23 in Appendix 4 gives details across the survey sweeps.) Those in Portugal (58%), Belgium, and France (about 45%) were most pessimistic. There was least concern in the Scandinavian countries (under 20%), the USA, and the Netherlands.[38]

Relationship with national burglary risks and victimisation experience

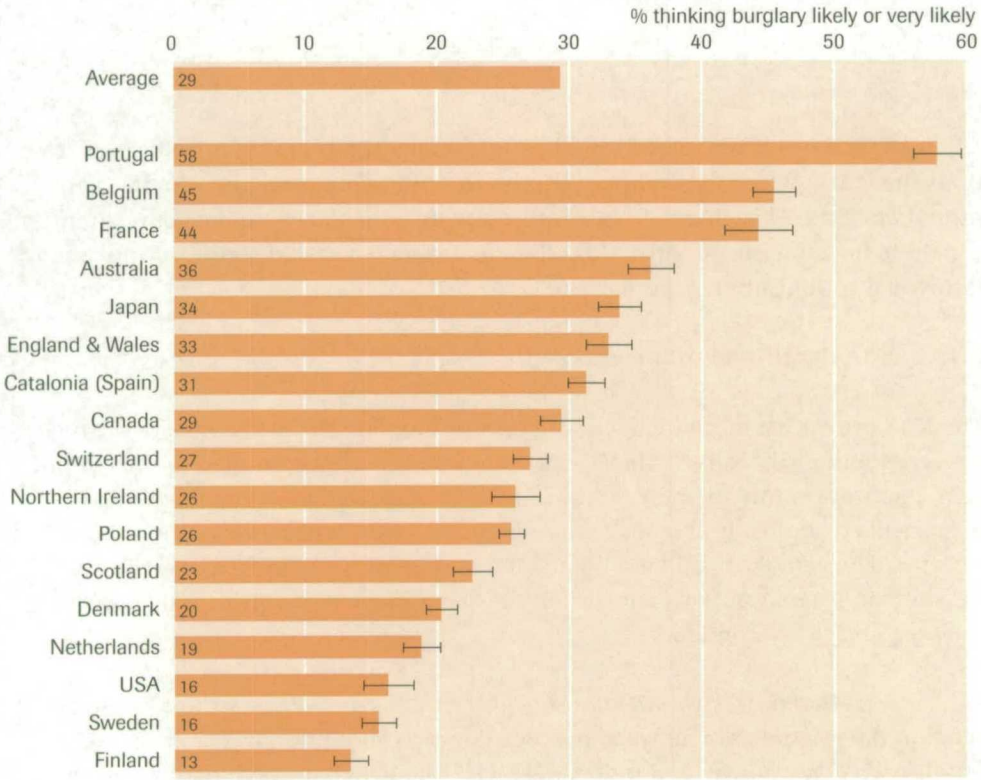
What of the relationship between people's concern about burglary and actual burglary risks at country and individual level? The ICVS has previously found that perceptions of the likelihood of burglary at national level are strongly related to national ICVS *risks* of burglary: i.e., countries where the highest proportion feel vulnerable to burglary in the coming year are those where risks are highest. In the 2000 sweep, the relationship was less strong when national burglary risks were compared with the proportion thinking those burglary was likely or fairly likely. This was mainly because there was comparatively higher levels of concern in Catalonia, France, Japan, and Portugal than the rankings on actual burglary levels. The relationship, however, was much stronger on the basis of those thinking burglary very likely.[39]

Whether there is undue wariness in countries where perceptions of risk are highest is not straightforward however. First, it is difficult to translate what people mean by

38 Taking those who thought burglary was 'very likely' gives a fairly similar picture. However, on this more restricted measure, concern in France was not quite as high relatively speaking, while in contrast those in the USA and the Netherlands ranked higher than on the broader-based measure. The same was true in Scotland (as was the case in 1996).

39 The Spearman correlation was 0.73 ($p<0.05$; $n=16$, based on incidence risks for burglary with entry and attempts).

Figure 12 **Perception of the risk of burglary in the coming year**



'very likely' or 'likely' into a quantified risk. For instance, the ICVS indicates that 3.6% of householders in the Netherlands in 1999 had a burglar get in, or try to get in their home, representing annual average odds for the 'typical' household of 1 in 28. But whether this equates with an assessment of 'very likely' or 'fairly likely' is simply unknown. Moreover, the proportion thinking that there is a fair chance they will be burgled is an overall national figure. There is no reliable way of assessing risks simply for the most anxious. The ICVS identifies a number of factors that influence risks (see Chapter 3), but it cannot accurately predict the likelihood of burglary for *particular* individuals whose residential and social circumstances might heighten vulnerability, or reduce it.

At the individual level, the 2000 ICVS results are in line with a considerable body of evidence from victim surveys conducted locally in different countries that personal experience of victimisation raises anxiety (see e.g. Killias and Clerici, 2000). Thus, taking all countries together, 27% of those who had *not* been burgled in the past five years said they thought they were likely to be burgled in the coming year. But this

Table 17 **Perceptions of the risk of burglary: percentage thinking burglary very likely or likely in the next year[1]**

	1989	1992	1996	2000
Australia	44	↑ 47		36
Belgium	28	↑ 31		↑ 45
Canada	33	33	30	29 ↓ *
England & Wales	35	↑ 45	↓ 41	↓ 33
Finland	9	↑ 14	↓ 11	↑ 13
France	36		↑ 53	↓ 44
Netherlands	28	28	27	19
Northern Ireland	23		↑ 29	↓ 26
Poland		40	↓ 24	26 ↓ *
Scotland	30		↓ 28	↓ 23
Sweden		34	↓ 16	16
Switzerland	46		↓ 29	27
USA	31		↓ 23	↓ 16

1 Countries that participated less than three times are omitted.

↑ and ↓ indicate that the difference compared to the previous survey is statistically significant (t-test; $p<0.10$).
↑ indicates an increase over the previous sweep; ↓ denotes a decrease.
* indicates, where appropriate, that the difference with the 1992 survey is statisically significant (t-test, $p<0.10$).

rose to 47% for those who had been burgled once in 1999, and to a full 62% for those who had been burgled more than once. These results are shown at the end of this chapter in Table 20. (This also shows other relationships between victimisation experience and the various attitudes to crime considered in the chapter.) Table 28 in Appendix 4 also shows results for individual countries. The effect of burglary victimisation on concern about burglary is evident in each country (although results for France are a bit less clear-cut).

Trends over time

Table 17 shows results on feelings about the likelihood of burglary for countries that have participated in the ICVS at least three times. The ranking of countries is reasonably stable over the years. For example, those in France and England and Wales have been consistently more worried about the likelihood of burglary, as have those in Canada and Australia. Finland in contrast has shown relatively consistent low levels of worry, as has the USA at least in 1996 and 2000.

Concern about burglary has changed over time – essentially rising in general between 1989 and 1992, then falling. An exception is Belgium where there has been a statistically significant increase in concern, moving Belgium from a relatively aver-

age position to a high one in 2000. Another is Finland, where the trend has not been consistent, but where concern remains relatively low nonetheless.
Relating ICVS trends in national burglary levels to trends in worry about burglary shows a few inconsistencies at the level of individual countries, and sampling error could explain this to a degree. But the general tenor of results is that perceptions of the likelihood of burglary broadly match trends in ICVS burglary levels. Thus, for instance, there was a drop in concern about burglary between 1996 and 2000 in nine of the eleven countries with two relevant measures (with concern staying the same in Sweden and rising in Finland). In the nine countries in which concern fell, the actual likelihood of burglary also fell. Moreover, in the countries in which there was the strongest fall in concern since 1989, actual levels of burglary also fell more than on average.

5.2 Feelings of safety on the streets

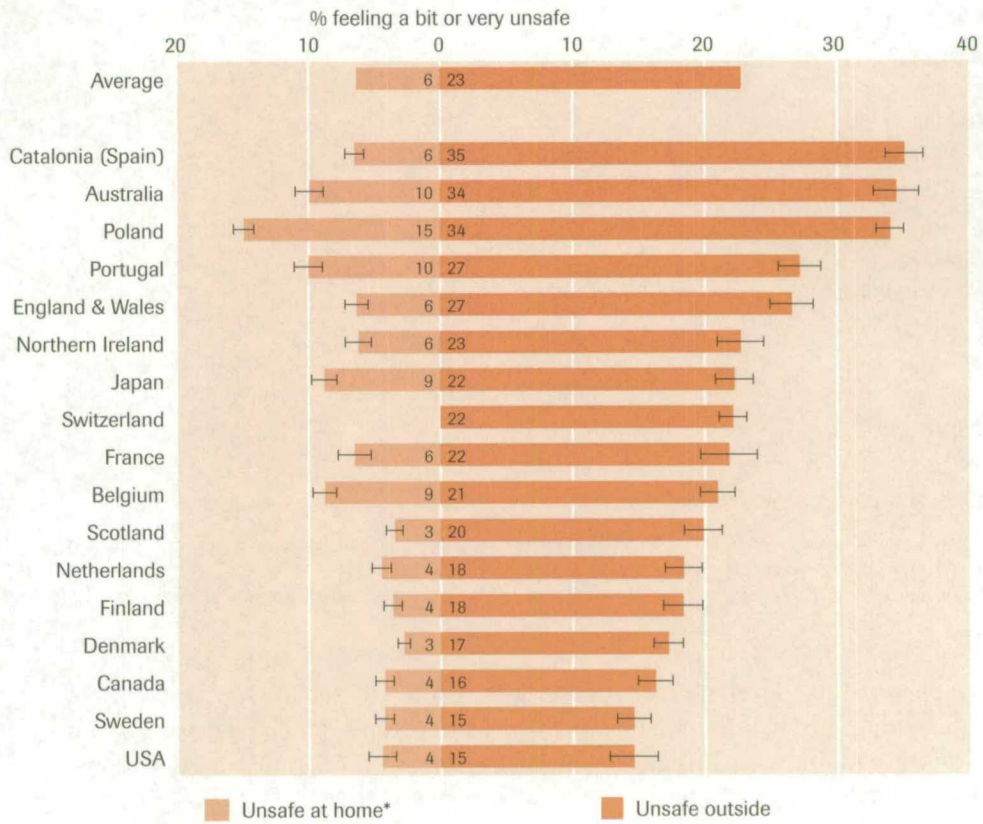
Since 1992, the ICVS has asked the question below, often used in other crime surveys, to measure vulnerability to street crime:

> 'How safe do you feel walking alone in your area after dark? Do you feel very safe, fairly safe, a bit unsafe or very unsafe?'

This question has typically been shown to paint a different picture of 'fear of crime' to that from questions which, for instance, ask about perceptions of risk. Typically, women and the elderly emerge as most fearful on this 'street safety' question. This may be because for some people the prospect of being out after dark evokes anxiety about a greater range of mishaps (e.g., accidents as well as crime). The question is also hypothetical for those who are rarely alone outside after dark – although interviewers were instructed to ask 'how safe *would you* feel ...' in such circumstances. For cross-country comparisons, though, exactly what the 'street safety' question measures is secondary insofar as it is likely to be similarly interpreted.
On average, just under a quarter felt very or a bit unsafe. Details are in Figure 13, which also shows results from a new question on safety at home – discussed below.
Those in Catalonia, Australia and Poland were most anxious about being out alone at night: about a third felt very unsafe or a bit unsafe. The next most fearful were those in Portugal, and England and Wales. By contrast, feelings of vulnerability on the streets at night were lowest in the USA, and Sweden, although there were several other countries with only marginally higher figures.[40]

40 The position as regards those who said they felt 'very unsafe' is reasonably similar. The main differences are that those in Catalonia, Portugal and Japan were relatively less fearful on this measure, while those in Switzerland and France were more so.

Figure 13 **Concern about being out alone and at home after dark**



Countries are sorted by 'unsafe outside'.

* Results on safety at home are not available for Switzerland.

Relationship with national risks and victimisation experience

As has been the case in previous sweeps of the ICVS, this measure of street safety is not consistently related to levels of contact crime (robbery, sexual incidents, and assaults and threats).[41] In Catalonia and Portugal, for instance, risks are low, but fear of street is much higher than in Canada and Sweden, say, where actual national risks of contact crime are greater. One implication of the lack of much relationship between anxiety and risks is that fear of street crime may be influenced by specific 'cultural' pressures, such as media presentations of violent crime.

41 The Spearman correlation between the current measure of contact crime (prevalence risks) and the proportion feeling a bit or very unsafe on the streets is low (r=-0.31; ns; n=17).

Table 18 **Percentage feeling a bit or very unsafe alone after dark in their area[1]**

	1992	1996	2000
Australia	31		↑ 34
Belgium	20		21
Canada	20	↑ 26	↓ 16 ↓ *
England & Wales	33	32	↓ 27
Finland	17	17	18
France		20	22
Netherlands	22	20	↓ 18
Northern Ireland		22	23
Poland	43	↓ 34	34 ↓ *
Scotland		26	↓ 20
Sweden	14	↓ 11	↑ 15
Switzerland		17	↑ 22
USA		25	↓ 15

1 Countries that participated at least once before. This question was introduced in the 1992 survey.

↑ and ↓ indicate that the difference compared to the previous survey is statistically significant (t-test; $p<0.10$).
↑ indicates an increase over the previous sweep; ↓ denotes a decrease.
* Indicates, where appropriate, that the difference with the 1992 survey is statistically significant (t-test, $p<0.10$).

At the individual level, there is some evidence of increased anxiety about street safety among victims of violence, but the relationship is much less strong than is the case with burglary discussed above. One reasons for this may be that while women and the elderly register most concern about street safety (Skogan, 1993), it is younger people and males who most often fall victim (see Chapter 3). Details are in Table 20, where the measure of contact crime is robbery, sexual incidents and assaults and threats.

Trends over times

There are several countries for which trends can be examined since 1992 (Table 18). The ranking of countries is relatively stable over the years.[42] Those in Poland, England and Wales and Australia consistently show the highest levels of unease, whereas those in Sweden and Finland show the least. The most pronounced changes between 1996 and 2000 have been in Canada, the USA and Scotland, where residents have become less fearful than they were previously compared to other countries. In contrast, Switzerland has moved from a low position to a relatively high one.

42 The Spearman correlation between levels of fear in 1992 and 1996 was 0.94 ($p<0.05$; $n=6$). Between 1992 and 2000 it was 0.81 ($p<0.05$; $n=8$). It was weakest between 1996 and 2000 (0.43 ($p=0.19$); $n=11$).

Overall, there has been a small fall in concern about street safety based on a comparison for six countries in three sweeps, and for 11 countries in the two most recent ones.[43] Since 1992, unease has fallen most in Poland, England and Wales, and albeit rather less so in Canada and the Netherlands. Since 1996, unease has fallen in the USA and Scotland, although it has risen in Switzerland.

There is little justification for relating these changes at country level to ICVS risks in contact crime since, as said, feelings of street safety do not relate well to measured risks. Moreover, the ICVS measure of contact crime over time is not especially robust due to low victimisation levels, and possible changes in the propensity of respondents to tell interviews about interpersonal crime. This said, there is some evidence that falls in feelings of insecurity have tracked falls in contact crime in Canada, Poland and the USA. In England and Wales, the Netherlands and Scotland, however, falls in fear have not been matched by falls in risks.

5.3 Safety at home

The 2000 ICVS introduced a new question about feelings of safety at home alone after dark; it was asked in all countries except Switzerland. The question was:

> 'How safe do you feel when you are at home alone after dark? Do you feel very safe, fairly safe, a bit unsafe or very unsafe?'

A much smaller proportion of people feels unsafe at home after dark (6%) than they do on the streets (23%) – see Figure 13. Those in Poland felt most insecure at home (15% felt a bit or very unsafe), followed by Portugal, Japan, Australia and Belgium (9% to 10%).

At country level, there was a fairly close correspondence between feeling unsafe at home and on the streets.[44] The main differences were that those in Belgium were rather more afraid at home relative to other countries than was the case on the streets. In contrast, in Catalonia and Scotland, unease on the streets was higher compared to other countries than was unease at home.

Relationship with national risks and victimisation experience

There is perhaps some question as to what types of victimisation the safety at home question is measuring. Some people may be thinking of a burglar intruding. Others possibly have in mind domestic incidents, when a partner comes home late and the worse for wear. In any event, there was no statistically significant association at country level between national burglary risks and feelings of safety at home. The

43 The average proportion of those feeling very or a bit unsafe in the six countries in all three sweeps was 25% in 1992, 23% in 1996 and 21% in 2000. The average for the 11 countries in 1996 was 23%, falling to 21% in 2000.

44 The Spearman correlation is 0.84 ($p<0.05$; $n=15$).

ICVS does not allow a robust enough measure of domestic violence at country level to test this.

At individual level, though, the proportion feeling unsafe at home was higher among victims of burglary than among non-victims – albeit the differential was less strong that with experience of burglary and perceiving burglary to be likely in the near future. For instance, 7% of non-victims felt unsafe at home after dark, but this rose to 13% for those who had been burgled once in 1999, and to 19% for the few who had been burgled more than once (see Table 20). There was also some increase in unease at home according to experience of contact crime.

5.4 Security precautions

Since the 1992 ICVS, there has been a fairly consistent set of questions on measures taken against household property crime, in particular burglary. In all, eight home security issues were asked about in the 2000 ICVS (full details are in Table 26 in Appendix 4).

For some items, residential differences may play a bigger part than deliberate precautionary behaviour. For instance, very few householders in Denmark, Sweden, Japan and Poland said they had a 'high fence', whereas about a third in England and Wales and Australia did so. Having a caretaker or security guard on the premises was also more common in Belgium, Canada, Finland, and France (about 10% mentioned them), but was much less common in many other countries. Special grilles on doors and windows were also asked about, but this too may reflect 'architectural culture'. Grilles were uncommon for instance in Poland, Japan, and the Scandinavian countries, whereas they were said to be very common in Australia, England and Wales, and Scotland.

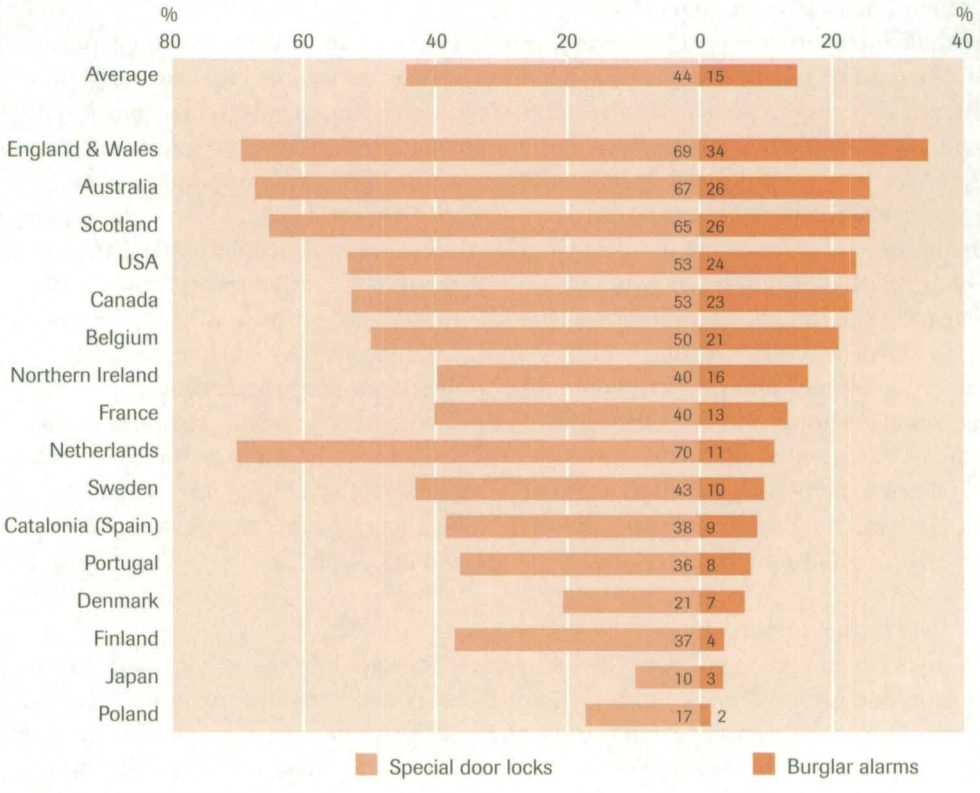
For this reason, we focus here on two items to assess the 2000 ICVS results: whether a burglar alarm was installed, and whether special (high-grade) door locks had been installed. The figures given are often high (see Table 26 in Appendix 4). It cannot be ruled out that some people claimed they had the security measures on account of residual mistrust about the credentials of the survey, or at least wariness about admitting to unknown interviewers that their homes were vulnerable.

Figure 14 shows that a full 34% of householders in England and Wales claimed they had a burglar alarm.[45] There were also above average levels of alarm ownership in Australia, Scotland, the USA, Canada and Belgium. Alarm ownership was very low in Poland, Japan, and Finland.

Approaching half (44%) of householders on average said they had special door locks. In general, householders in countries with the comparatively high alarm ownership

45 This is a higher figure than the 26% in the 2000 British Crime Survey (Kershaw et al., 2000).

Figure 14 **Percentage of homes with burglar alarms and special door locks**



Countries are sorted by 'burglar alarms'.

also ranked comparatively high on special door locks. However, the Netherlands in particular was out of line. It had the highest proportion having special door locks, but a below average figure for alarms.

Relationship with national risks and victimisation experience

As has been the case in previous ICVS sweeps, levels of precaution at national level were positively related to national burglary risks:[46] i.e., those in countries facing higher risks were generally more likely to have alarms and special locks. The main differences were that Denmark and Poland came fairly low in terms of precautions taken, although burglary risks were comparatively high. In contrast,

46 The Spearman correlation was 0.64 ($p<0.10$; $n=16$).

those in Northern Ireland and Scotland were comparatively well-protected relative to their position on burglary risks.

To look at current levels of household protection in terms of victimisation experience would be misleading, because victims are likely to improve their protection directly as a response to having been burgled. Rather, one needs to take account of what level of security was in place at the time of a burglary. A set of questions in the 1996 ICVS (not repeated in 2000) addressed this in relation to burglar alarms.[47] For those with alarms installed at the time of the offence, 1.1% had a burglar enter the house, as against 1.8% of those without alarms – a statistically robust difference. For attempted burglaries, the picture was different. The level of risk for those with alarms at the time of an attempt was higher (2.1%) than for those without alarms (1.8%). This was taken to suggest that homes with alarms were likely to be more attractive targets, and thus targeted more often on that account. However, the figures also show that entry is more often thwarted. For those with an alarm at the time of the offence, entry was achieved in 35% of incidents, whereas for those without alarms the figures was higher, at 50% (Mayhew and Van Dijk, 1997). A similar relationship between countries with the highest security levels having a higher proportion of attempted burglaries was reported in Chapter 2.

Trends over time

There is reasonable stability in the figures over ICVS sweeps as regards relative levels of protection in different countries. But is clear that security has increased in most. For instance, in six countries in the last three ICVS sweeps, average alarm ownership increase from 8% in 1992, to 11% in 1996, and to 14% in 2000. There have been particularly steep increases since 1992 in England and Wales, Australia, Canada and Belgium. The proportion of homes with special door locks has also generally increased since 1992, particularly in Belgium, Finland, Canada, and the Netherlands.

5.5 Attitudes to punishment

The ICVS asked respondents what sentence they considered most appropriate for a recidivist burglar – a man aged 21 who is found guilty of burglary for the second time, having stolen a colour television. Table 19 shows the percentage opting for different sanctions. (Table 27 in Appendix 4 also shows results for other sweeps). A community service order was seen as the most appropriate sentence in the 16 countries overall providing results in the 2000 ICVS: 41% of respondents recom-

47 The questions allowed those who had a burglary at a previous address to be identified. These were deleted from analysis since it was not known whether an alarm was installed at those premises. A further simplification was to restrict analysis to those who had one burglary or attempt only, since to ascertain an 'alarm condition' for each victimisation would have been complex.

Table 19 **Sentence preference for a young recidivist burglar (percentages): 2000 ICVS[1]**

	Fine	Prison	Community service	Suspended sentence	Other sentence	Don't know	Average length of imprisonment (months)[2]
	%	%	%	%	%	%	
USA	9	56	20	1	8	6	31
Northern Ireland	8	54	30	4	2	3	21
Scotland	11	52	24	5	4	4	21
Japan	17	51	19		1	13	38
England & Wales	7	51	28	5	4	5	24
Canada	9	45	32	4	7	3	23
Netherlands	11	37	30	10	5	6	19
Australia	8	36	46	3	3	4	27
Sweden	11	31	47	4	3	4	11
Portugal	9	26	54	1	6	4	23
Belgium	11	21	57	5	3	3	17
Poland	10	21	55	6	4	5	31
Denmark	9	20	50	13	4	4	7
Finland	15	19	46	16	2	2	8
France	8	12	69	5	2	5	14
Catalonia (Spain)	15	7	65	1	3	9	23
Average	11	34	41	6	4	5	34

1 Countries are ranked based on the percentage in favour of 'sending to prison'

2 Asked if prison sentence was recommended.

mended it.[48] It was the first choice of sentence in half of the countries, with particularly strong support in France (69% opting for it), Catalonia (65%) Belgium, Poland and Portugal (over 50%). There was, however, a fairly wide divergence of opinion: a community sentence was seen as most appropriate by only about 20% in Japan and the USA, and by under 30% in the UK.[49]

Imprisonment was recommended by 34% of respondents overall, and was the first choice in eight countries. There was again a wide divergence across countries. Support was highest in the USA, where 56% opted for it. Over 50% also favoured imprisonment in the UK, and Japan. Those in Catalonia (7%) and France (12%) were least in favour of imprisonment.

The length of sentence recommended did not track preference for having *some* prison sentence particularly well. Although those in the USA were both keenest on

48 There was no information for Switzerland. In 1996, the Swiss gave strong support to a community service order (61% opted for it), and weak support for imprisonment (9%).

49 The percentage opting for a community service order in Finland increased markedly after 1989, when they were introduced in Finland, suggesting that formal sentencing change can increase support for alternatives to imprisonment. Support has fallen back somewhat since 1992, although it is still higher than in 1989.

imprisonment and opted for the longest sentence (an average of 2.5 years), elsewhere there were divergences. For instance, those in Poland were not particularly supportive of imprisonment comparatively speaking, but those who favoured it recommended relatively long sentences. In Catalonia, too, the small proportion that favoured imprisonment also favoured long sentences. In the Scandinavian countries, on the other hand, those who favoured imprisonment tended to opt for a relatively short time in prison.

Relationship with national burglary risks and victimisation experience

ICVS results to date have shown that popular support for imprisonment is generally stronger in countries with higher risks of burglary. This was not evident from the 2000 ICVS results, although it remains so on the basis of 'meta' analysis in which the full range of industrialised countries in all sweeps is included (n=52). In 2000, the countries most out of line were Japan and Northern Ireland. Here, there was more support for imprisonment than national burglary levels would suggest. The same applied to Scotland, though to a lesser extent.[50]

As regards personal experience of burglary, there was a modest increase in support for imprisonment among those who had been a victim of burglary over the past five years (Table 20). Previous ICVS analysis has shown the same result, although in multivariate analysis being in an 'anglophone' country was of more import, as was a lower standard of education (Kuhn, 1993; Mayhew and Van Dijk, 1997).

Trends over time

For countries for which sentencing preferences can be examined over time, there is much consistency in opinion. For instance, of the ten countries with measures for both 1989 and 2000, rank order positions on support for imprisonment were near identical – with 'anglophone' countries most supportive (the USA, the UK, Australia and Canada). Comparing results for 1992 and 2000 (possible for eight countries), the picture is much the same, although those in Poland are relatively less in favour of imprisonment than they were, and those in the Netherlands more so. Country positions in 1996 and 2000 were generally similar (ten countries).

Community service shows slightly more shift over time. For instance, those in the Netherlands in 2000 were less in favour of a community sentence than they were in 1989. In contrast, there was more support in Belgium and Finland in 2000 than in 1989. Between the 1996 and 2000 ICVS sweeps, though, there was little change.

Leaving aside changes in *relative* levels of support for different sentencing options, the 2000 ICVS show a general hardening of attitudes towards punishment. For instance, average support for imprisonment increased from 35% favouring it in

50 In contrast, given relative rankings on national burglary risks, the proportion favouring imprisonment was relatively low in Belgium, Australia, and Denmark.

Table 20 **Reactions to crime, by victimisation experience: 2000 ICVS, all countries[1]**

	Perceiving burglary as likely[2]	Feeling unsafe outside after dark[3]	Feeling unsafe at home after dark[3]	In favour of prison sentence for burglar
	%	%	%	%
Victim of burglary				
Non-victims[4]	27*	23*	7*	31*
Victims 2-5 years ago	44+	32+	12+	34
Victims once in 1999	47•	34•	13•	35
Victims more than once, 1999	62	40	19	37
Victim of contact crime				
Non-victims[4]	28*	23*	7*	31*
Victims 2-5 years ago	35	32+	10+	33
Victims once in 1999	36	31•	11	36
Victims more than once, 1999	36	38	13	36

1 For Switzerland only data on feeling unsafe outside was available. Other columns are based on 16 countries.
2 'Very likely' and 'fairly likely'.
3 'Very unsafe' and 'a bit unsafe'.
4 Not been victimised in the last five years.

* Indicates that differences between any victim and non-victims are statistically significant.
\+ Indicates that differences between victims 2-5 years ago and victims last year are statistically significant.
• Indicates that differences between single and multiple victims last year are statistically significant (χ^2 tests, $p<0.10$, df=1).

1989, to 42% in 1996, and to 45% in 2000. (This is on the basis of seven countries in each sweep). Between 1996 and 2000, support for imprisonment increased from 34% to 38% (ten countries). The most marked switch since 1989 has been in Canada, England and Wales, Scotland, and the Netherlands. Support for imprisonment has also increased in Sweden since 1992.

Increase in support for imprisonment goes alongside a general decline in support for community sentences. For instance, community sentences were preferred by 36% in 1989 on average, down to 33% in 1996, and to 30% in 2000 (seven countries in each sweep). Between 1996 and 2000, support for a community service order fell from 41% to 38% (ten countries).

6

Conclusions

This report has presented the main findings of the 2000 International Crime Victims Survey (ICVS) in 17 industrialised countries: Australia, Belgium, Canada, Catalonia (Spain), Denmark, England & Wales, Finland, France, Japan, the Netherlands, Northern Ireland, Poland, Portugal, Scotland, Sweden, Switzerland and the USA. This is the fourth sweep of the ICVS in industrialised countries. Fourteen countries reported on here have taken part at least once before. Catalonia (Spain), Portugal and Denmark were countries fresh to the 2000 ICVS. The standardised nature of the ICVS makes it a unique calibrator of crime in different countries. Standardisation involves the use of the same questionnaire, similar methods of sampling, and co-ordination of data management and analysis.

There was a summary of main findings at the beginning of this report. This chapter expands on a few particular ones: (i) the nature and level of victimisation in the industrialised countries covered here; (ii) trends in victimisation; (iii) reporting to the police; and (iv) services to victims. It finishes by considering (v) results from industrialised countries alongside those in developing countries and countries in transition; (vi) the status of the ICVS in the context of other approaches to international comparisons; and (vii) developments for the future.

6.1 Victimization in industrialised countries

Country positions

Chapter 2 put emphasis on what are conventionally called 'league tables'. Although points about the reliability of the ICVS, discussed fully in Chapter 1, need to be borne in mind here, we make only modest apology for this. Criminologists tend to want comparative research to take forward theories about crime, and those involved with the ICVS are counted among them. But the public, and local criminal justice administrators (the main funders of the ICVS) have a simpler agenda: to assess their own performance on crime in comparison with others.

One notable finding of the ICVS is the general consistency in country positions across sweeps for those countries that have participated more than once. The main patterns are:

— Countries that have consistently ranked high relative to others are Australia, the Netherlands, and England and Wales – although the England and Wales position in the first (1989) ICVS was more favourable.

— Countries that have consistently ranked lowest are Japan, Northern Ireland and Finland. Switzerland has also had a low ranking, though less so in 1995.

— Only Canada and the USA have changed position markedly. They had comparatively high crime rates in 1989, but falls in victimisation mean that they now have lower rates, comparatively speaking.

The general consistency of country positions over sweeps adds to the credibility of the ICVS, despite relatively small sample sizes (usually 2,000 in each country).

The make-up of crime

An important feature of the ICVS is that it shows the contours of 'normal' victimisation against households. This has implications for preventive policies, especially those concerned more with alleviating the commonplace nuisance of crime than with reducing the number of 'headline' offences that more often appears in police statistics because of higher reporting and recording levels. Thus, Chapter 2 showed for instance that:

— Taking all countries together, car vandalism forms a full quarter of crimes experienced by ICVS respondents – and more in Catalonia, Portugal, France and Scotland. In truth, incidents are not regarded as particularly serious, though victims will still want them not to have happened. They are relatively infrequently brought to police attention (overall, only four incidents in ten were).

— Policies focused on preventing car crime as a whole will make a substantial impact on the burden of ordinary victimisation on householders. Car vandalism, theft from cars, and thefts of cars (the most frequently reported) comprise over 40% of ICVS crimes measured, and much more in Catalonia and Portugal.

— Bicycle theft is generally not well reported to the police, but it comprises a significant part of the crime problem in countries with high bicycle ownership. Those concerned with crime policy in Japan, Denmark and the Netherlands in particular should accept the challenge of reducing this particularly common type of theft.

— Contact crime – robbery, sexual incidents and assault and threats – comprise about a quarter of the crimes measured. Most of them are assaults and threats. These offences will feature much less in the police count of crime, despite the fact that their victims regard even threats moderately seriously.

Poland

To date, Poland has been mainly included within Central and Eastern Europe 'countries in transition' in analysis of ICVS results. It was covered as one of the 17 industrialised countries here as results were available, it is economically advanced, and it has adopted the ICVS questionnaire and methodology at national level. Its inclusion has added breadth. Results for Poland worth singling out are:

— Victimization rates are relatively high, particularly for car-related crime, thefts of personal property (including pickpocketing), and robbery.

— Recovery of stolen cars was the lowest observed, with fewer than half of victims getting their car back – a different pattern from the dominant one.
— Since 1992, overall risks have stayed much the same, whereas there have generally been falls elsewhere.
— The level of reporting to the police is still relatively very low, despite an increase in reporting since 1992. Among those who did report, satisfaction with the police response was poor, and both victims and non-victims assessed overall police performance less favourably than in most other countries (albeit attitudes have become more favourable since 1996).
— Concern about street safety was very high relatively speaking – though again with some improvement since 1992. And those in Poland had by far the most disquiet about safety at home after dark.
— Levels of home security were low compared to other countries, although risks of burglary were no more than average.
— Poland was the only country where corruption was mentioned with any frequency (by one in twenty).

Some other points about ICVS findings for industrialised countries in general compared to countries in transition and developing countries are returned to later.

6.2 Trends in crime victimization

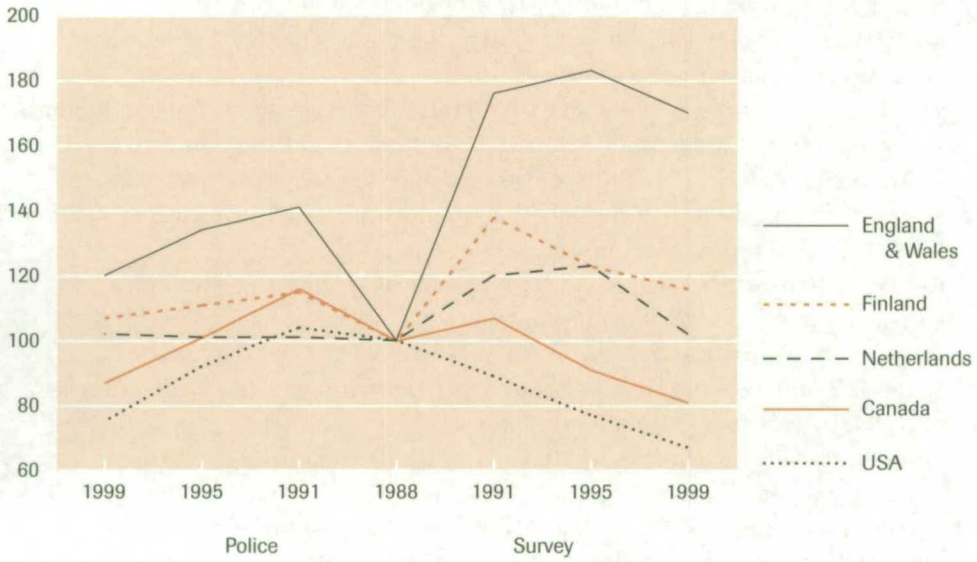
The ICVS has been carried out more than once in the majority of the seventeen industrialised countries considered here. Countries have re-entered the survey to align with others in the ongoing sweep rather than to provide any solid indicator of trends over time. ICVS information on trends nonetheless merits inspection.

The main points from Chapter 2 were that:

— Generally speaking, the ICVS suggests that crime rose between 1988 and 1991, stabilised or fell in 1995, then fell back more in 1999. This is the dominant pattern in many individual countries.
— The picture in North America differs from that in Europe. Crime levels are lower than in 1988. In the three European countries with four ICVS measures (England and Wales, Finland, and the Netherlands), crime levels are still higher than in 1988. Compared to 1991, risks also fell more in North America than in five of the seven European countries showing falls.
— Since 1995, there has been more consistent falls in property crime. Changes in contact crime are variable.

We return to trends here by looking at the picture of crime recorded by the police as well as the ICVS. The per capita rate of *all* offences recorded by the police is taken. The constituents of this rate will vary by country, but for considering trends this is not important as long as the constituent parts have not changed over time, and

Figure 15 **Police and survey trends, five countries: 1988-1999 (index 1988=100)**



changes in recording practices can be accounted for. Thirteen countries are considered who have taken part in the ICVS at least three times.

For this analysis, we use ICVS incidence risks since they are a more complete measure of all crimes experienced. They cover crimes covered by all four sweeps, excluding threats (from within the assaults and threats category) and offensive sexual behaviour (from within the sexual incidents category). This is because (i) these are unlikely to be counted as 'crimes' by the police, and (ii) they are more likely to be susceptible to changes in the propensity to report to interviewers over time. This has involved some estimation.[51]

We look first at the five countries that have taken part in all four sweeps. We then turn to four other countries that have measures for 1988, 1995 and 1999. (As explained, ICVS risk levels are for the year prior to the survey.) Finally, mention is made of countries with an ICVS measure for 1999 and other variants of previous years.

51 The ICVS does not allow for precise 'last year' incidence risks of sexual assaults (ie, sexual incidents less offensive sexual behaviour) or assaults with force, (ie, assaults, less threats). Results on the ratio of the prevalence levels for (i) sexual assaults to all sexual incidents, and (ii) assaults with force to all assaults and threats were applied to incidence level risk for the two categories taken as a whole. Some additional estimation has also been applied for the USA in 1992 for which incidence level data were not available. Estimates for seven crimes in Switzerland in 2000 were also made.

Five countries: 1988, 1991, 1995, and 1999

Figure 15 presents changes in crime between 1989 and 1999 in England and Wales, Finland, Netherlands, Canada, and the USA according to both police figures and the ICVS. Both police and survey figures are indexed at 100 for 1988 to ease comparisons.

There is some symmetry in the trends since 1988 in the five countries. On both measures, crime levels rose between *1988 and 1991*, the USA being an exception on surveys figures, and the Netherlands on police figures. The steepest rise was in England and Wales, according to both measures.

Between *1991 and 1995*, police figures fell in all countries except the Netherlands, where they were stable. The fall in Finland too was fairly marginal. On ICVS figures, risks in the USA, Canada and Finland fell, and they stabilised somewhat in England and Wales and the Netherlands.

Between *1995 and 1999*, police figures fell in all countries, except the Netherlands where they remained the same. The ICVS indicates falls in all countries. (Figures for England and Wales for 1999 have been adjusted to take account of an inflationary effect of changes to police 'counting rules' introduced in 1998.)

One would not necessarily expect exact correspondence between the two sets of figures.

— For one, the ICVS profile of offences is rather different from that in police figures, with the ICVS including a greater proportion of less serious and less often reported offences.

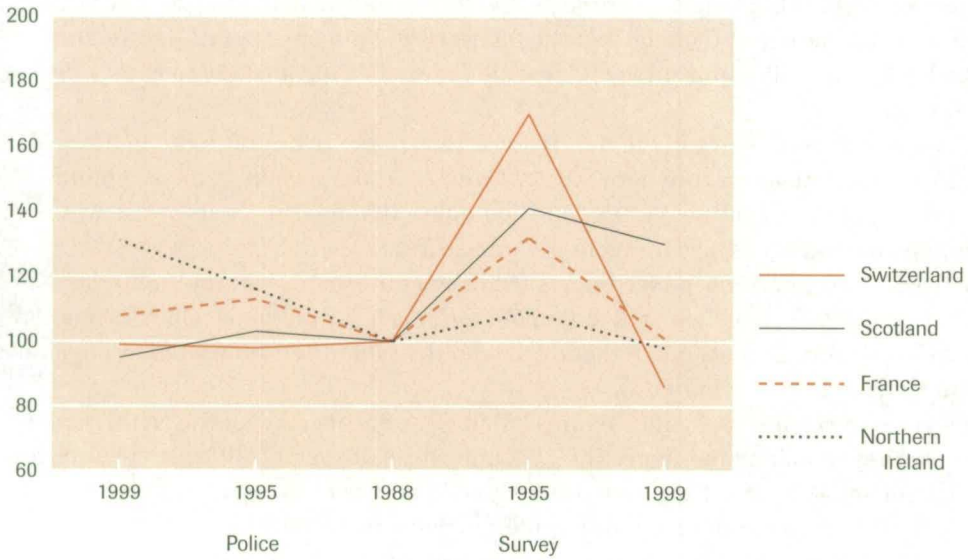
— Secondly, the rather less marked swings in police figures may reflect a greater number of recorded violent crimes. In the 13 countries considered in this section, violence has increased over the 1990s in all except Canada and the USA.[52] This may signify a 'real' increase, although it may also reflect the fact that the police in many countries are *recording* more violence (especially related-party incidents). Police figures for the Netherlands, for instance, show a drop of more than 20% in burglary since 1995, whereas violent crime has risen by a third.

— Thirdly, the less marked swings in police figures may also reflect some degree of change in reporting behaviour by victims.[53]

52 Violence here is a combination of figures for violence against the person, sexual offences and robbery, taken together. They have been largely on statistics compiled by Barclay and Tavares (2001).

53 For instance, the ICVS showed a drop in reporting to the police between 1991 and 1995 in the Netherlands, which is consistent with the much flatter trend in police figures – ie, the police may have fewer crimes known to them to record. Reporting levels have also fallen in England and Wales since 1991 (in line with British Crime Survey results).

Figure 16 **Police and survey trends, four countries: 1988-1999 (index 1988=100)**



Four countries: 1988, 1995 and 1999

There are three ICVS measures for Switzerland, Scotland, France, and Northern Ireland – for 1988, 1995 and 1999. Figure 16 shows the trends, with figures for 1988 again indexed at 100. Because of missing information, it is not possible of course to judge whether there were higher crimes levels in 1991 (as was shown in Figure 15 for the other five countries), with the 1995 levels representing a fall from that date. Nonetheless, a notable feature of Figure 16 is the falls in survey-measured risks since 1995, and the falls in police measures in Scotland and France.

Northern Ireland and Switzerland merit comment. The increase in police figures in *Northern Ireland* between 1995 and 1999 are out of line with other countries. However, police recording changes may be an issue. Adjustments were made to account for changes to police 'counting rules' introduced in 1998 (as in England and Wales). It is not possible, though, to take as full account of all the inflationary effect of these changes as in England and Wales – so some are likely to remain. The larger increase in recorded crime between 1988 and 1995 than in the ICVS is consistent with a rise in reporting to the police. Reporting continued to increase between 1995 and 1999, and this may be another factor in the rise in police figures in 1999.

Switzerland shows a very high ICVS count in 1995, and a much lower one in 1999. This was mainly due to a sharp drop in motorcycle and bicycle thefts – common in Switzerland The pattern in not reflected in the police figures. However, crime recording is not standardised throughout the country and for parts of Switzerland

only reflect cleared cases. Killias et al. (2000) show police data for theft of personal property, bicycle theft and burglary also show higher crime rates for 1995, although not as extreme as in the ICVS.

One factor behind the rise in victimisation in Switzerland in the mid-1990s may have been the high prevalence of drug-related crime. Since then, a new drug policy (making methadone and heroin available to perhaps three-quarters of heroin users) has been shown in local studies to have considerably cut offending among addicts. Moreover, Switzerland experienced gangs operating from Eastern Europe during the mid 1990s, though these have now declined due probably to changing conditions in Eastern retail markets.

Trends for other countries are commented upon next.

Australia and Belgium: 1988, 1991 and 1999

According to the ICVS, risks increased in *Australia* in 1991 in line with most other countries) and then fell back in 1999 (by about 10% on 1991) – again consistent with the dominant picture. Police figures also increased between 1998 and 1991, but unlike many countries elsewhere have further increased since. Increased reporting levels according to the ICVS are at least consistent with this.

In *Belgium*, ICVS risks were much the same in 1991 as in 1988, but they then rose fairly modestly (by 7%) in 1991. Substantial changes to the collection of police figures in Belgium in the mid-1990s make comparisons over time difficult.

Poland and Sweden: 1991, 1995 and 1999

ICVS risks in *Poland* have remained much the same since 1991 (the fractional fall not being statistically robust). Recorded crime in Poland has risen substantially since 1991, although better police administrative systems cannot be ruled out.

Sweden is singular in ICVS terms in having had a fairly sharp increase in crime between 1991 and 1995, and a continuing – though much shallower – one since. (Risks are 26% higher in 1999 than in 1991 on the current measure.) Police figures are more in line with the picture from other countries, with levels lower in 1995 than in 1991, albeit no further decrease in 1999.

In sum, then, there is not an *entirely* neat picture as regards trends in crime in these 13 industrialised countries, either as regards ICVS measures themselves, or their correspondence with crimes recorded by the police. Nonetheless, the broad picture is striking. Both ICVS and police figures suggest that overall levels of crime seem to have peaked in many countries in the early 1990s, and fallen since then. Because of volatility in ICVS measures of violent crime due to small numbers, no attempt has been made to differentiate trends in violence as opposed to property crime – though certainly the picture for property crime alone is more consistently downward. Police figures for violence, as said, have increased over the 1990s in all except Canada and the USA – although some recording 'inflation' may an issue here. Figures for

domestic burglary have fallen since 1993, for instance, in all 13 countries except Switzerland and Australia. Thefts of motor vehicles have fallen in six out of eleven countries for which there are figures.

It is clearly difficult to explain these widespread falls coming as they do after fairly universal upswings in property crime during the 1970s and 1980s. There is little insight as yet (indeed few criminologists have so far even acknowledged the differing pattern – though see Killias and Aebi, 2000). The drop in crime in America, which has been sharper and started earlier than in Europe, has attracted more scrutiny, but no real consensus. Blumstein and Wollman (2000) provide elegant explanations for the drop in violence in the USA since the early 1990s – focussing for instance on gun control efforts, the decline of crack cocaine, increasing imprisonment rates, and economic buoyancy. But their analysis lacks any international dimension – even for instance reference to the fact that violence trends in Canada have been favourable (though not as favourable) against a rather different backcloth. Moreover, the drop in violence is not set within the context of the longer-term fall in property crime in the USA, which would demand consideration of a rather different set of explanatory variables.

There is no parsimonious explanation of the broader trends considered above, but some of the factors worth considering are mentioned briefly (and in some cases speculatively) below:

— *Demographics factors.* There has been a general 'ageing' of populations in Western Europe and North American with a drop in the number of young men in the most crime-prone age groups. The general consensus is that demographic effects play only a part in influencing crime trends, but some part nonetheless.
— *Improved security.* The ICVS has shown clear evidence that the penetration of household security measures has increased, particularly since the 1992 survey. This may be very pertinent to the fairly consistent and marked drops in burglary in police figures mentioned above. Similar improvements in security measures and precautionary behaviour taken against other forms of crime (e.g., bicycle theft) would be consistent with falling risks as most crimes recorded by the police and registered by the ICVS involve property. Householder's behaviour is of course not the only issue. There has been more attention to 'designing out' crime from physical environments, both by social landlords and others (e.g., car manufacturers). A challenge to this argument is that one would have expected security to have increased as much before 1991 as after it, given the increasing crime levels of the late 1980s. It may be, though, that there has been a 'step change' sufficiently large to make an impact.
— *Police performance.* Police performance in many countries could have improved substantially recently – although again this might have to be a 'step change'

since many current policing strategies were also evident in the 1980s, when crime trends were less favourable. Different countries are likely to have employed different techniques, but to the extent that they share a common base of more targeted and pro-active policing, and better technological solutions such as CCTV and forensic science for instance, a contribution from policing cannot be ruled out.

— *Sanctions.* That harsher criminal justice policies underlie the international experience seems hard to sustain. Thus, while some US commentators have held the floor in seeing the US record as due to a substantial increase in imprisonment rates, Europe provides a counter to this since there have been marked variations in imprisonment trends not particularly consistent with the idea that heavier sanctions underlie the reduction in property crime (Aebi et al., 1999). Imprisonment apart, Killias and Aebi (2000) compute a European average for changes in the probability of conviction for offenders known to the police between 1990 and 1996. This shows that the likelihood of conviction has fallen for most offences in most countries (Killias and Aebi, 2000). This again offers little support for the idea that reducing crime levels have come about because of criminal justice system activities.

— *Economic effects.* The current favourable economic climate in North America and Western Europe, with low levels of unemployment and relatively high economic growth may also have depressed levels of property crime, by reducing the need for the proceeds of crime (cf. Field, 1990). It might also be that the tradable value of some stolen goods has declined because of a fall in the price in real terms of items such as TVs, videos and in-car entertainment systems.

— *Drugs.* The use of illegal drugs in the general population is slowly increasing in Europe (EMCDDA, 2000), although this largely involves growing recreational use of cannabis. Bennett's research with arrestees in the UK suggests that cannabis use is associated with a slight inflation in criminal involvement, but the relationship is fairly weak and might be confounded by other factors. Rather, the rise in use of cannabis alongside the drop in property crime would support the notion that regular cannabis use blunts the attractions of offending. This is a 'long shot' but not entirely without empirical support (Johnson et al., 2000). The link between use of hard drugs and offending is much more clearly attested. One issue here, then, is whether the falling street price of hard drugs has dampened criminal demand, as less money needs to be raised to sustain a drug habit.

— *Culture change.* Finally, and most speculatively of all, it is conceivable that intricate cultural and social change is at work. It is tall order to document this, but not preposterous to wonder whether change is operating in some way to 'civilise' at least at the margins those who in the past would have offended, or whether crime is simply becoming a less fashionable pursuit for high-risk age groups.

6.3 Reporting to the police

Non-reporting

Across the 17 industrialised countries overall, only half of the offences that ICVS victims experienced were reported to the police. The proportion reported was highest for stolen vehicles, and nearly eight out of ten burglaries with entry were made known to the police. About two-thirds of thefts from cars and bicycle thefts were reported, but on average only nearly half of attempted burglaries and robberies were. About four in ten incidents of theft of personal property, car vandalism and attempted burglary were reported, and about three in ten incidents of threats and sexual assaults.

There is, then, a substantial 'dark figure' of crime not captured in police statistics simply because many offences are not drawn to police attention at all. The varying reporting rates *across* offence types means, of course, that the picture of crime drawn by police statistics will differ from the picture of 'crime on the ground'. Results in Chapter 3 showed that offences regarded more seriously by their victims were more often reported. The police picture, then, will better reflect these, although not completely by any means since more than a quarter of offences rated most seriously were *not* reported.

Variations in reporting

The 'dark figure' of unreported crime in different countries will differ given variations in reporting levels in the industrialised countries. On the basis of six crime types taken to look at differences, reporting rates varied fairly considerably.[54] About 60% of incidents were reported in Denmark and Sweden, Northern Ireland, and the Netherlands, about 50% in Belgium, England and Wales, Switzerland, France and Scotland, but less than 40% in Portugal, Japan, Catalonia, and Poland. To some extent this might be due to differences in the types of crimes experienced in the countries. But it may also reflect other factors to do with confidence in the police and public perceptions of how far they are likely to help. High reporting rates improve effective crime prevention and control since the chances of arresting offenders and obtaining a conviction largely depend on information supplied by victims.

54 The six crime types were: thefts from cars, car vandalism, bicyle theft, burglary with entry, attempted burglary, and thefts of personal property. These were chosen as reporting rates were variable, and/or experience of victimisation was comparatively high.

6.4 Servicing victims

The police

A feature of criminal justice policy in many countries over the past two decades has been increasing recognition of the interests, rights and needs of victims. One consequence of this has been that many police agencies have tried to improve their response when victims report crime. There is good sense in this as for the vast majority of victims the police is the single most important agency representing the criminal justice system, and indeed the only one with which most victims will they have contact. Another development has been the growth of specialised support agencies.

In many countries, about seven in ten victims were satisfied with the police response when they reported property crime, although the figure was somewhat lower when contact crime was involved. This may be because, having been at the scene, victims felt more involvement. It could also be, though, that reporting property crime has often rather more to do with insurance considerations than with expectations that the police would or could be able to do much.

But there was disparity in satisfaction levels. Highest levels were in Denmark, Catalonia and Switzerland, with figures in several other countries not far behind. Satisfaction was lowest in Portugal, Poland, France and Japan. Different cultural expectations of the police may be one factor here, but a more obvious one is real differences in the demeanour and efficiency of the police.

Another finding of note was that victims who reported crimes they rated most seriously said the police response was less good than victims reporting less serious crimes. Van Dijk (2000b) has also shown that repeat victims are also more dissatisfied. It seems unlikely that the police actually do a poorer job when 'serious' or repeat crimes are reported. More likely is that victims have higher expectations of how the police should have reacted. Nonetheless, there are lessons for the police here in understanding which types of crime are most seriously regarded: namely, car thefts, sexual and other assaults, robberies with weapons, and burglary with entry.

In general there was relatively little change in satisfaction levels between the 1996 and 2000 ICVS sweeps. This may mean either that there has been no improvement. Or, more probably, it could indicate that the police have to 'run to stand still' to cope with increasing expectations from service users. The main complaint, as in previous ICVS sweeps, was that the police 'did not do enough', and 'were not interested'. The message is clear for police agencies everywhere.

Victim support

There has been an undoubted growth in specialised services to victims since the early 1980s, and previous sweeps of the ICVS have indicated an increasing proportion of victims receiving help. This round of the survey did not show further

evidence of this (Northern Ireland was an exception), although ICVS estimates are somewhat too fragile to mount a strong case that there is stagnation in victim support.

As before, support was more often given to victims of contact crimes (10% were offered help across the 17 countries overall) than to victims of burglary (5%). And as before again, victims in the UK seemed best provided for – although there was also comparatively good support for victims in the Netherlands, Canada, Sweden, the USA, and Denmark. Services to those in Portugal, Japan, Finland, France and Poland lagged most behind.

Many more than actually received help said they would have welcomed it (around one in three burglary victims, and four in ten victims of contact crime). Most need was expressed by those in Catalonia, Poland, Portugal, Japan, and Northern Ireland (despite the relatively high level of help actually given). In many counties the gap between provision and expressed need was greater for burglary than contact crime: exceptions were the UK and Catalonia, where more burglary victims were helped than average.

6.5 Comparisons with countries in transition and developing countries

There is no attempt here to provide anything like a full account of ICVS results to date regarding patterns and levels of victimisation from a global perspective (sources for this are Alvazzi del Frate et al., 2000; Van Dijk, 2000a and 2000b; Van Dijk and Kangaspunta, 2000; and Zvekic, 1998 and 2000.) Rather, we simply give a flavour of how the present results from industrialised countries sit in broader context. The comparisons draw on results for industrialised and other countries prior to the 2000 ICVS sweep.

A broader ICVS perspective is important since most theories of crime and people's responses to it have been generated from crime dynamics in the industrialised world. Countries in transition and developing countries have in the nature of things added rather little because of lack of reliable information. The various disparities between industrialised countries and the rest of the world are also important in strengthening the case for criminal justice assistance to countries with poorer resources.

Thus, ICVS results for world global regions have shown for instance that:[55]

55 These analyses have typically taken the world 'regions' of: Western Europe, the New World (the USA, Canada, Australia and New Zealand); Central and Eastern Europe, Latin America, and Africa. Results from counting within these regions have usually been combined. All countries are usually given equal statistical weight. To enable comparisons between national and city surveys, the former are restricted to respondents living in localities of 100,000 or more inhabitants.

— The highest victimisation risks across a range of offences were generally in Latin American and (sub Saharan) Africa. Risks in countries in transition were higher than in the industrialised countries, but there was some variation within them. Risks in Asia were lowest of all.
— Thus, the ICVS overturns much traditional literature on 'crime and modernisation' – based on police counts – which posits that property crime is higher in developed countries because of greater volume and value of material goods, which itself generates property crime (e.g., Shelley, 1981). This idea clearly needs revisiting. The burden of ICVS results is that less developed countries have lower rates of property crime because of less police efficient recording systems, and less frequent reporting by victims (see below).
— The gender difference in risks of interpersonal assaultive crime is much wider in less developed countries where women are substantially more at risk than men – especially in Latin American, Africa and Asia. A number of analyses have related ICVS findings here to measures of gender inequality and economic hardship among young men.
— Repeat victimisation, which has attracted much criminological and policy interest in developed countries recently, is common worldwide. It is particularly pronounced in Latin America and Africa (van Dijk, 2000b).
— While not a significant problem in industrialised countries, as seen, street level corruption (attempts at bribery by public officials) is highest in Latin America and Asia, with countries in transition on a par with Africa.[56]
— Victims in industrialised countries are more likely to report to the police. Reporting levels are generally lowest of all in Latin American countries (Argentina being an exception), followed by Asia, Central and Eastern Europe, and then Africa. The greatest disparity in reporting levels between the developed countries and the rest is with regard to property crime. Lack of insurance – and the need to report to the police to facilitate claims – may be one issue here.
— Differences in reporting levels underscore the point that police figures on crime levels in developing countries and countries in transition seriously underestimate real levels of crime. The 'dark figure' of property crime would seem to be especially large.
— Satisfaction with the police after reporting crime was considerably lower outside the industrialised world. One reason for this may be that with lower insurance levels, the police bear more of the brunt of victims' frustration about financial losses. General assessments of police performance were also considerably lower

56 Additional questions were added to the 2000 ICVS questionnaire for countries in transition and developing countries These focus on who was told about the attempts at corruption, why victims did not report, and whether those who did were satisfied. There was also more specificity about the type of official involved, and whether corruption levels have changed compared to ten years ago.

outside the industrialised world. There was the least confidence in the police in Latin America and countries in transition.

— Compared to developed countries, expressed need for specialised victim support was extremely high in Asia and Africa. It was also higher in countries in transition and Latin America. While some victims of property crime in less affluent countries may see support as an avenue of financial redress, the fact that the pattern is similar for contact crime suggests other underlying deficiencies in the responses of the police and other agencies.

6.6 The current status of the ICVS

The ICVS is by now an established criminological data source, covering 24 industrialised countries, and another 46 cities in Eastern and Central Europe and developing countries. Certainly, many of the surveys have been small in scale, and have been done at varying times since 1989. Nor has complete standardisation been achieved in all surveys – particularly those in less developed countries where the potential value of new information has led local sponsors to substitute their own victim survey agenda at the expense of strict ICVS consistency. Nonetheless, the breadth of ICVS coverage is striking.

The value of the ICVS is reflected in growing interest from key international agencies. ICVS results, for instance, have featured in the *European Sourcebook of Crime and Criminal Justice Statistics*, sponsored by the Council of Europe (Council of Europe, 1999). They have also featured in HEUNI's ambitious attempt to construct a multi-source picture of crime in different countries drawing on the ICVS, the United Nations World Crime Survey, and a number of other data sources (see Newman, 1999; Kangaspunta et al., 1998).[57] The World Health Organisation's *Global Atlas of Violence* has also drawn on ICVS results (WHO, 1999). ICVS information on levels of street corruption has been linked to (and found to be highly correlated with) other data from Transparency International and the International Institute for Management Development, which collects information on improper business practices.

Both the Council of Europe and HEUNI initiatives try to document the extent of *non-standardisation* in administrative crime statistics – through, for instance, explaining in detail how offences are defined, and how offence coverage differs. This does much to highlight the hazards of comparing police *levels* of crime in different countries – hazards that apply across a broad range of offences, even those (such as burglary) that might seem relatively unproblematic. It also helps more informed comparisons

57 HEUNI is the European Institute for Crime Prevention and Control affiliated with the United Nations. The World Crime Survey information used was that from the Fifth United Nations Survey on Crime Trends and Operations of Criminal Justice Systems 1990-1994.

of *trends* over time using police statistics insofar as changes in offence definitions, counting practices etc are pointed out.

International comparisons of police statistics may in the future, then, be better explained to researchers and others, and thus less liable to mislead. The ICVS survey-based approach will nonetheless continue to be vital as an alternative comparative measure since (i) consistency will be maintained in measuring victimisation; (ii) it covers both unreported and unrecorded offences; and (iii) offers pointers as to change in levels of reporting by victims, which will of course have a bearing on how much crime the police have available to them to record. The ICVS will also remain the best survey-based approach to international comparisons since there is no evidence that independently organised national victimization surveys are being brought more into line: indeed, if anything the opposite is true.

6.7 The future

Country coverage

The ICVS in industrialised countries has now settled into a 4-year cycle. The next target, then, is for a repeat in 2004. If the ICVS continues to be energetically sustained, it will for one provide good coverage of the European Union. To date, all but three of the fifteen member states have participated in the ICVS at national level, albeit some not recently. And of the thirteen Central and Eastern European countries waiting to join, there have been ICVS sweeps in eleven: eight at city level, and three at national level.[58]

One issue for the future is what countries should be included in the industrialised group. The issue of 'grouping' of countries might be formalised by adopting major world aggregates from international organisations. (According to the United Nations, for example, 'industrialised' countries include all European, North American and CIS countries, plus Australia, Japan and New Zealand (a total of 47 countries). Another approach might be the adoption of the developmental perspective, using the UNDP classification that ranks countries as high, medium and low on the Human Development Index.

More globally, while the ICVS has taken reasonably firm hold in industrialised countries, there is more progress to be made in developing countries that account for such as sizeable proportion of the world's population. This is a particular challenge for the future since survey methodology is poorly developed, and local funding is scarce.

58 Of the current member states, Greece, Luxembourg and Ireland have not been in the ICVS. Of the countries waiting to join, there has been no coverage of Cyprus, Turkey or Luxembourg. The three countries with national surveys are the Czech Republic, Estonia and Slovenia.

Links with other comparative information

In the same way that other databases of international information on crime have drawn on the ICVS, so too should the ICVS be fully cognisant of other data sources. It would be useful for the main ICVS database to have as many related crime indices as possible included. Some analyses of ICVS results have already drawn on 'external' social and economic indicators, such as GDP, and women's employment rates. These could be usefully expanded. (The proportion of one-parent families might be one interesting measure. Police per capita and likelihood of conviction might be others – the latter, though, much more problematic than the former.)

There are plans in hand for a comparative International Violence Against Women Survey (IVAWS) drawing on the administrative and data management lessons of the ICVS, as well as the content of 'bespoke' surveys of victimisation of women recently developed for instance in Canada, Australia, and the USA. The IVAWS, to be co-ordinated by HEUNI, UNICRI and Statistics Canada, will clearly be an important counterpoint to the ICVS as regards the level and nature of assaultive crime that women experience.

The ICVS content

Maintaining consistency of measurement in the ICVS is a significant constraint on changing the questionnaire. Another is the need to keep the length of interviews within reasonable bounds, both to prevent increases in fieldwork costs, and to maintain response rates. This said, there is probably some scope for considering whether all questions are 'earning their keep', and if they are not, what might be better substitutes.

Probably the most problematic area of measurement in the ICVS concerns assaults and sexual victimisation – though in truth this applies to most other national and local surveys. One change was made in the 2000 ICVS by adding an additional screener question involving assaults involving people well known to the victim. How far additional improvements could be made would need careful consideration. A markedly different approach to screening for assaultive offences might indeed produce more valid estimates. The cost would be the loss of trend information and comparisons with past ICVS surveys for countries entering for the first time. The IVAWS initiative might be a better route to reliable international comparisons – at least as regards the experiences of women.

Better measures for 'lifestyle' are another candidate. One criminologically attractive – but very high risk – addition would be to ask respondents' about their own offending, given its link to higher victimisation levels (e.g., Mayhew and Elliott, 1990). Respondents' alcohol consumption would be useful in the light of its strength in predicting victimisation risks in other independent surveys (see, e.g., Mirrlees Black et al., 1998; Wittebrood and Nieuwbeerta, 2000). Regularity and type of journeys made on public transport might be another contender. The main

constraint as regards expanding lifestyle questions is the difficulty of doing justice, with limited questionnaire space, to the nuances of lifestyle or 'routine activities' that might impact on risk.

Methodological tests

Chapter 1 rehearsed the evidence as regards possible biases in ICVS results due to varying response rates, and different modes of interview (i.e., telephone as against face-to-face interviews). While it did not indicate a great deal of room for concern, there is nonetheless scope for further tests of mode and response effects. One possibility might be to assess non-response levels among different groups – for instance by linking non-responding telephone numbers to post (or zip) codes and thereafter to the socio-economic indicators that can be attached to these. It would also be helpful to do more by way of qualitative research to see whether particular ICVS questions are subject to different cultural interpretations.

Forthcoming reports

Further reports will emerge from the 2000 ICVS. For one, the Dutch Ministry of Justice and countries who took part in the 2000 ICVS are sponsoring the Netherlands Institute for the Study of Criminality and Law Enforcement (NSCR) to hold a workshop in June 2001. Researchers from a number of countries have been invited to present their analyses of the data, which have been made available to them. Publications are likely to merge from the best of these.

UNICRI intends to update results from Central and Eastern Europe cities, comparing them with the respondents in urban area in Western Europe. Another report will focus on results from the latest surveys held in Asia, South America, and Africa. (The University of South Africa has been active in promoting surveys in eight countries in southern Africa.) In due course, too, all the latest ICVS results are likely to be brought together again to look afresh at victimisation and responses to it from a global perspective.