

**Documentation of statistics for  
Reported criminal offences 2023**

## 1 Introduction

The statistics analyze the number of criminal offences in violation of the criminal code and the special laws (except those contained in the Danish Road Traffic Act) to the police. The statistics on reported criminal offences date back to 1921. Until 1990, Statistics Denmark received monthly copies of the offence reports from the police for registration. Since 1 January 1990, Statistics Denmark has received data both quarterly and annually from the Central Register of Reported Offences, a register administered by the National Commissioner of the Danish Police.

## 2 Statistical presentation

The statistics show the number of offences of criminal code and special laws/legislation reported to the police or discovered by the police itself.

The statistics on reported criminal offences form part of the Danish System of Criminal Statistics. The System of Criminal Statistics includes data on criminal cases from the reported offences and charges to the convictions plus arrests and imprisonments.

### 2.1 Data description

The statistics on reported criminal offences form part of the Danish System of Criminal Statistics. The System of Criminal Statistics includes data on criminal cases from the reported offences and charges to the convictions plus arrests and imprisonments. The statistics on reported criminal offences is a case statistics and shows the number of offences of criminal code and special laws/legislation (except the Road Traffic Act) reported to the police plus a further specification if charges have been raised in connection with the reported offence. The reported offence is identified by a journal number which can be used by linking to other areas of the crime statistics. Other key variables are the code number of the reported criminal offence, the date and place (municipality) of the criminal offence and the data of charge, if a charge has been raised against a person or a firm.

### 2.2 Classification system

These statistics are divided by municipalities and regions plus grouping of the codes of the criminal offences. A distinction is made between the criminal code and special law/legislation.

The criminal code is divided into four subgroups: Sexual offences, Crimes of violence, Offences against property and Other offences. The most special laws/legislation are referred to as single acts, while the rest are categorized as *Other special laws/legislations*. The grouping can be found under [Violations of the penalcode](#).

The provisions of the Danish Criminal Code regarding sexual offences went through essential amendments taking effect from 1 July 2013. The amendments resulted in e.g. more categories of sexual offences than previously being placed under the provisions about rape (section 216). See more: [Rape](#)

### 2.3 Sector coverage

Not relevant for these statistics.

## 2.4 Statistical concepts and definitions

Reported criminal offence: A violation of the law which has been reported or by other ways has come to the knowledge of the police.

Type of offence: Type of offence describes the kind of the reported offence. The criminal offences are divided into the criminal code and special law/legislation. Violations of the criminal code are grouped in sexual offences, crimes of violence, offences against property and other offences. The most special laws/legislation are referred to as single acts, while the rest are categorized as *Other special laws/legislations*. The grouping can be found under [Violations of the penalcode](#).

Criminal charge: A reported criminal offence is termed a *criminal offence with a charge*, when the police has raised a charge, regardless of the later legal outcome of the charge.

## 2.5 Statistical unit

The unit in the statistics is the criminal case - here as a reported criminal offence. A violation of the law committed by more than one person is registered as one offence only - and if a violation of the law includes more than a single victim it will also be registered as one offence. If more than one person has reported the violation of the law to the police, more than one reported criminal offence can in exceptional cases be registered.

## 2.6 Statistical population

Violations of the criminal code and the special laws (except the Road Traffic Act) in Denmark (except the Faroe Islands and Greenland), which has been reported or discovered by the police itself.

## 2.7 Reference area

Denmark, except the Faroe Islands and Greenland.

## 2.8 Time coverage

The statistics has been produced on the present basis since 1995.

## 2.9 Base period

Not relevant for these statistics.

## 2.10 Unit of measure

Number

## 2.11 Reference period

01-01-2023 - 31-12-2023

## **2.12 Frequency of dissemination**

The statistics are published annually.

## **2.13 Legal acts and other agreements**

The Act on Statistics Denmark § 6. There is no EU Regulation related to the statistics on reported criminal offences

## **2.14 Cost and burden**

There is no response burden as the data are collected via registers.

## **2.15 Comment**

Reported criminal offences have a [Subject page](#)

## **3 Statistical processing**

The source of the statistics is The Central Register of Reported Criminal Offences - administered by the National Commissioner of the Danish Police. Data are delivered yearly via System-to-system transmission.

The data go through a probability check in form of a comparison with data from the previous year, key variables are checked for valid values and irrelevant offences are deleted.

### **3.1 Source data**

The Central Register of Reported Criminal Offences - administered by the National Commissioner of the Danish Police.

### **3.2 Frequency of data collection**

Annual

### **3.3 Data collection**

System-to-system transmission

### **3.4 Data validation**

The data go through a probability check in form of a comparison with data from the previous year. Explanations of possible big deflections in the distribution of key variables are looked for, possible by contacting the National Police.

### **3.5 Data compilation**

Key variables are checked for valid values. Irrelevant offences are deleted, e.g. offences committed at Greenland or the Faroe Islands. The code numbers of the reported criminal offences are converted to a Statistics Denmark-code, which is hierarchically constructed.

### **3.6 Adjustment**

No further corrections of data than mentioned in "Data validation" and "Data compilation" are done.

## **4 Relevance**

The statistics are used broadly by the authorities, organizations, researchers, the press etc. The tables in the statbank.dk are used frequently. Views and suggestions from key users are taken into consideration in the preparation of the statistics.

### **4.1 User Needs**

Users: Ministries (especially the Ministry of Justice), the local police authorities, courts, municipalities and counties, different organizations, educational institutions, research or scientific institutions, the media, private firms and private individuals. Applications: Public and private planning, education, research/science and public debate.

### **4.2 User Satisfaction**

The statistics on convictions are often used by the press and the tables on <http://www.statbank.dk> are used frequently. In connection with the preparation of the annual publication Kriminalitet (Criminality) a consulting meeting with key users of the statistics is held. Forwarded views and suggestions are taken into consideration in the planning of the statistics.

### **4.3 Data completeness rate**

Not relevant for these statistics.

## **5 Accuracy and reliability**

The accuracy of the statistics on reported criminal offences is considered to be good. The data come from a single administrative register system storing information on all reported crimes. Analyses have shown that approximately 5 percentages of the crimes registered in a calendar year, are committed in an earlier year. Corresponding approximately 5 percentages of all crimes reported committed in a calendar year are not registered until a following year. The statistics do not include information on the hidden criminality, i.e. committed criminal offences not reported to the police.

## 5.1 Overall accuracy

The accuracy of the statistics on reported criminal offences is considered to be good. The data come from a single administrative register system storing information on all reported crimes. Analyses have shown that approximately 5 percentages of the crimes registered in a calendar year, are committed in an earlier year. Corresponding approximately 5 percentages of all crimes reported committed in a calendar year are not registered until a following year. A general problem in respect of the statistics on reported criminal offences is hidden criminality, which concerns crimes which do not come to the knowledge of the police. It is difficult to give an exact figure for the level of hidden criminality, because it depends among other things on the nature of the crime and the inclination to report crimes. The Ministry of Justice and others regularly conduct victimization surveys, where the respondents are asked whether an experienced criminal offence was reported to the police or not. From these surveys it appears that e.g. 55 percentage of violence incidents in 2022 were not reported to the police. The latest victimization surveys can be found here (in Danish): [Offerundersøgelserne 2005-2022](#)

There will often be a time lag between the time where someone submits a report and the time where someone presses a charge. To ensure that as many charges as possible are included in the statistics – also for reports submitted at the end of the calendar year – the data extraction for Statistics Denmark is supplemented with information about charges submitted during the first month of the following calendar year. However, there will be a number of charges pressed after this time. In order to assess the extent of these charges, Statistics Denmark has coupled the information from the register of reports to the Danish Police (Rigspolitiets Anmeldelsesregister) with the information about charges that Statistics Denmark receives from a central register of criminal offences (Kriminalregisteret). You can see the result of this for the years 2011-2020 here [Reports and charges](#)

## 5.2 Sampling error

There is no sampling errors as the statistics are compiled on the basis of registers.

## 5.3 Non-sampling error

Analyses have shown that approximately 5 percentages of the crimes registered in a calendar year, are committed in an earlier year. Corresponding approximately 5 percentages of all crimes reported committed in a calendar year are not registered until a following year.

## 5.4 Quality management

Statistics Denmark follows the recommendations on organisation and management of quality given in the Code of Practice for European Statistics (CoP) and the implementation guidelines given in the Quality Assurance Framework of the European Statistical System (QAF). A Working Group on Quality and a central quality assurance function have been established to continuously carry through control of products and processes.

## 5.5 Quality assurance

Statistics Denmark follows the principles in the Code of Practice for European Statistics (CoP) and uses the Quality Assurance Framework of the European Statistical System (QAF) for the implementation of the principles. This involves continuous decentralized and central control of products and processes based on documentation following international standards. The central quality assurance function reports to the Working Group on Quality. Reports include suggestions for improvement that are assessed, decided and subsequently implemented.

## 5.6 Quality assessment

The accuracy of the statistics on reported criminal offences is considered to be good. The data come from a single administrative register system storing information on all reported crimes. Analyses have shown that approximately 5 percentages of the crimes registered in a calendar year, are committed in an earlier year. Corresponding approximately 5 percentages of all crimes reported committed in a calendar year are not registered until a following year.

A general problem in respect of the statistics on reported criminal offences is hidden criminality, which concerns crimes which do not come to the knowledge of the police. It is difficult to give an exact figure for the level of hidden criminality, because it depends among other things on the nature of the crime and the inclination to report crimes. The Ministry of Justice and others regularly conduct victimization surveys, where the respondents are asked whether an experienced criminal offence was reported to the police or not. From these surveys it appears that e.g. 55 percentage of violence incidents in 2022 were not reported to the police. The latest victimization surveys can be found here (in Danish): [Offerundersøgelserne 2005-2022](#)

## 5.7 Data revision - policy

Statistics Denmark revises published figures in accordance with the [Revision Policy for Statistics Denmark](#). The common procedures and principles of the Revision Policy are for some statistics supplemented by a specific revision practice.

## 5.8 Data revision practice

Only final figures are published and are not later revised.

## 6 Timeliness and punctuality

The publishing time for the statistics is about 2 months. The statistics are usually published without delay in relation to the scheduled date.

### 6.1 Timeliness and time lag - final results

Only final figures are published and are no later revised. The publishing time for the statistics is approximately 2 months. Time of publication the last 5 years has been between 1 months and 17 days and 1 months and 28 days.

### 6.2 Punctuality

The statistics are usually published without delay in relation to the scheduled date.

## 7 Comparability

The statistics have been prepared on the same basis since 1990. Due to changes in the grouping of the criminal offences and changes in the 'clear-up-concept' caution should be shown by comparing figures over time before this year.

Eurostat collects annual data from the member states on reported criminal offences and publishes statistics based on this. However, according to the Eurostat metadata, the range of items included in the different groups of crime differs between countries and comparisons based upon absolute figures are therefore misleading.

### 7.1 Comparability - geographical

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### 7.2 Comparability over time

The statistics have been prepared on the same basis since 1990. In general the statistics is therefore comparable since that. Due to the introduction of the new penal code in 1933, it has only been possible to make comparisons with earlier estimations (back to 1921) at group level, e.g. the groups of Sexual offences, Crimes of violence, Offences against property and Other (penal code) offences.

The definition of violent crime was changed in 1979. Violent crime is henceforward only to include acts which are intentional physical attacks or threats, while other types of violent crime should be included in the category 'Other crimes'. The change resulted in a decrease in the number of violent crimes of approximately 800 and a corresponding increase in the number of 'Other crimes'.

In 1981, the classification of the groups Sexual offences and Other crimes was changed.

As a consequence of law amendments or wishes for more information on specific kind of offences the division of type of offences has been altered during the years.

Among major changes are: In 1986, offences against public decency was divided into a number of more specific types of offences. In 1989, amendments to the penal code took effect which concerned the crimes of violence especially in respect of sections 244-246. This caused a break in the statistics which it is difficult to assess the extent of. Lack of registration of vehicle and offences against departmental order regarding registration of vehicles were until 2012 classed with the Road Traffic Act. Hereafter with the Tax Act. It caused an increase of 2,-4,000 annual reported criminal offences. Section 265 regarding restraining order in the Penal Code is replaced by the law on expulsion, restraining order and ban on stay in 2012.

The provisions of the Danish Criminal Code regarding sexual offences went through essential amendments taking effect from 1 July 2013. The amendments resulted in e.g. more categories of sexual offences than previously being placed under the provisions about rape (section 216). See more: [Rape](#)

A new concept of consent regarding rape is taking effect from 1st of January 2021 which has resulted in new ways for the police to register offences regarding rape. This has to be taken into account when comparing data over time.



A new concept regarding stalking is taking effect from 1st of January 2022. Stalking is included in the category 'Coercive control etc'. The increasing number of offences in this category is due to this new concept.

The year 1979 also saw the introduction of a new concept of clear-up, as the statistics replaced a subsequent 'charges raised' with a preliminary 'charges raised', but kept the term 'cleared up reported crime' for the new condition. The reported crimes and their charges were now connected directly, so henceforward there can only be a single charge for each reported crime. The changes implied a lower clear-up rate.

Since 1 January 1990, the reports have been issued by the Central Register of Reported Offences. Furthermore, a new bicycle register was set up in mid-1990, which has meant an increase in the number of thefts of bicycles with charges. From 1990, cases in which the crime was committed by a minor (under 15 years of age) have also been included, even though it is in principle not possible to raise charges against a minor. This and the theft of bicycles resulted in an increase of about 1.5 per cent in the number of reported offences with charges from 1989 to 1990. From 1993, the annual extract was extended to include charges from the first weeks in the following year, to ensure that most of the charges relating to the reported offences would be included in the statistics. Since the autumn 1999, the statistics on reported criminal offences have stopped using the term 'clear-up'. Instead, the statistics now use the term 'charges'. The background for the change was the above-mentioned change in 1979 of 'the clear-up concept'. Until 1979, the clear-up of a case meant that a charge had been brought, that the public prosecutor had drafted an indictment and that the police investigation had ended/finished. After 1979, the term of 'clear-up' only implied that a charge had been raised (a suspect has been found), i.e. that there was no charge in the form of an 'indictment', and the police investigation could be far from finished. The term 'reported criminal offence with charge' was therefore introduced as the term which best described the actual situation.

On January 1, 2018, the special burglary-section 276a was introduced into the Criminal Code. The new section meant that the removal of things from a foreign house was now also termed burglary, only the presence in the house had been unjustified. It was therefore no longer a condition for the presence to be obtained by force for example by breaking up windows or doors. In practice, it meant that a large number of reported crimes that were previously theft were now categorized as burglaries.

### **7.3 Coherence - cross domain**

The statistics on reported criminal offences are also published quarterly. On account of its function as an administrative register, the reported criminal offence register is continuously updated and there will consequently be some variation in the number of annually reported criminal offences depending on whether the figure is computed as the sum of the quarterly extracts or the annual extract. The annual statistics exceeded the sum of the four quarters by 5.9 per cent in 2023.

Besides Statistics Denmark, the statistics on reported criminal offences are also published by the National Commissioner of the Danish Police. There could be small differences in the figures, because Statistics Denmark excludes, e.g., administrative information, which cannot be defined as real 'reported criminal offences'.

Statistics Denmark and the Danish Police calculate the charge percentage differently. Statistics Denmark calculates the charge percentage as the share of reports in a given year that has resulted in one or more charges being pressed. The Danish Police takes a production approach to the calculation of the charge percentage as the ratio between the reports of criminal offences for the year and the charges pressed for the year. In addition, if a report has resulted in more than one charge, this counts as several charges in the calculation by the Danish Police, whereas it only counts as one report including charge in the calculation method applied by Statistics Denmark.

#### **7.4 Coherence - internal**

Data are internally consistent.

### **8 Accessibility and clarity**

These statistics are published yearly in a Danish press release. In the StatBank, these statistics can be found under [Reported criminal offences](#). For further information, go to the [subject page](#).

#### **8.1 Release calendar**

The publication date appears in the release calendar. The date is confirmed in the weeks before.

#### **8.3 User access**

Statistics are always published at 8:00 a.m. at the day announced in the release calendar. No one outside of Statistics Denmark can access the statistics before they are published.

#### **8.2 Release calendar access**

The Release Calendar can be accessed on our English website: [Release Calendar](#).

#### **8.4 News release**

These statistics are published yearly in a Danish press release.

#### **8.5 Publications**

These statistics feature in the [Statistical Yearbook](#).

#### **8.6 On-line database**

The statistics are published in the StatBank under [Reported criminal offences](#) in the following tables:

- [STRAF20](#): Reported criminal offences and charges by type of offence, reported criminal offences and charges
- [STRAF22](#): Reported criminal offences and charges by region, type of offence, reported criminal offences and charge
- [STRAF24](#): Reported criminal offences per 100.000 inhabitants by type of offence

#### **8.7 Micro-data access**

Data on reported criminal offences are kept as ready-made files containing basic information at journal number level. Researchers and other analysts from authorized research institutions, can be granted access to the underlying microdata by contacting [Research Services](#).

## 8.8 Other

Information on recorded offences in Denmark are delivered annually to Eurostat. Statistics from member countries can be found in Eurostat's [database](#). However, caution should be applied when comparing absolute figures, as there may be major differences in the member states' definitions of different types of offenses.

These statistics micro data are available for service tasks against payment. Read more about [Customized Solutions](#) or get more information by contacting *DST Consulting*.

## 8.9 Confidentiality - policy

[Data Confidentiality Policy](#) for Statistics Denmark is applied.

## 8.10 Confidentiality - data treatment

The statistics on reported criminal offences does not include information identifying persons or enterprises. Therefore no aggregation or similar is done to secure confidentiality. However, the classification of the criminal offences is very detailed. Hence, they are grouped in the publishing in order to improve clarity.

## 8.11 Documentation on methodology

Documentation on methodology are only available in Danish.

## 8.12 Quality documentation

Results from the quality evaluation of products and selected processes are available in detail for each statistics and in summary reports for the Working Group on Quality.

## 9 Contact

The administrative placement of these statistics is in the division of Population and Education. The contact person is Iben Birgitte Pedersen, tel.: + 45 2360 3711, and e-mail: [IPE@dst.dk](mailto:IPE@dst.dk).