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The role and importance of crime victimization surveys
in a system of crime statistics and their role in reporting
on SDG 16

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Part I: The role of Victimization surveys in crime and criminal justice statistics



Data on crime and criminal justice

1. Administrative data

- Police-recorded crime
- Prosecution/court data
- Prison data, etc.

2. Sample Survey data

- Victimization surveys
- Corruption surveys
- Self-reporting surveys, etc.





Administrative vs. Survey data on crime

Administrative data on crime provide information on:

“**Reported Crimes**” = offences reported to judicial authorities.

There is a gap between the number of reported crimes and the “**actual crime level**”.

Actual crime level includes offences which go undetected and unreported to the police and/or the judicial authorities.

This gap is called the “dark figure of crime”

To measure the dark figure, and to understand crime in its entirety, we need victimization surveys

The “dark figure of crime”

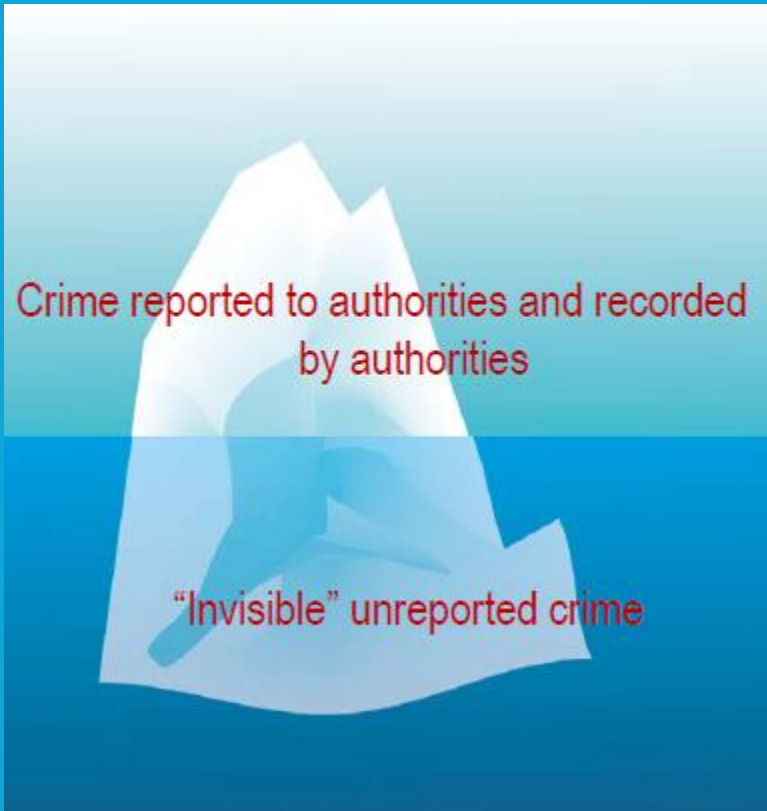
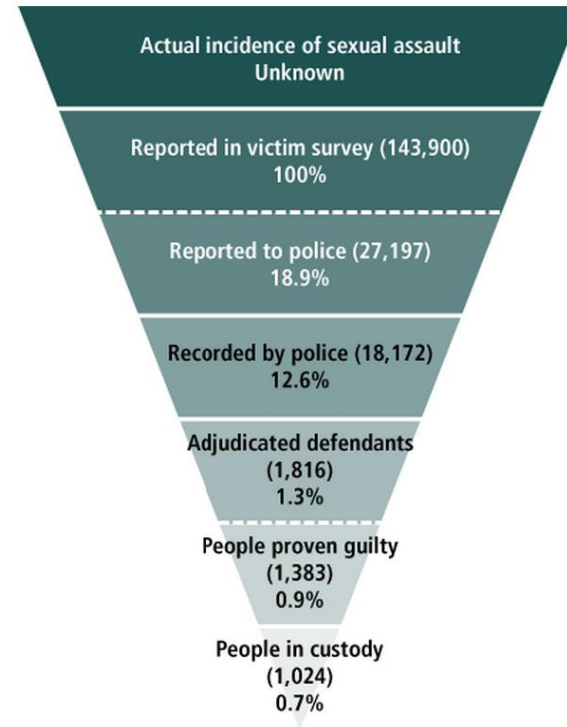


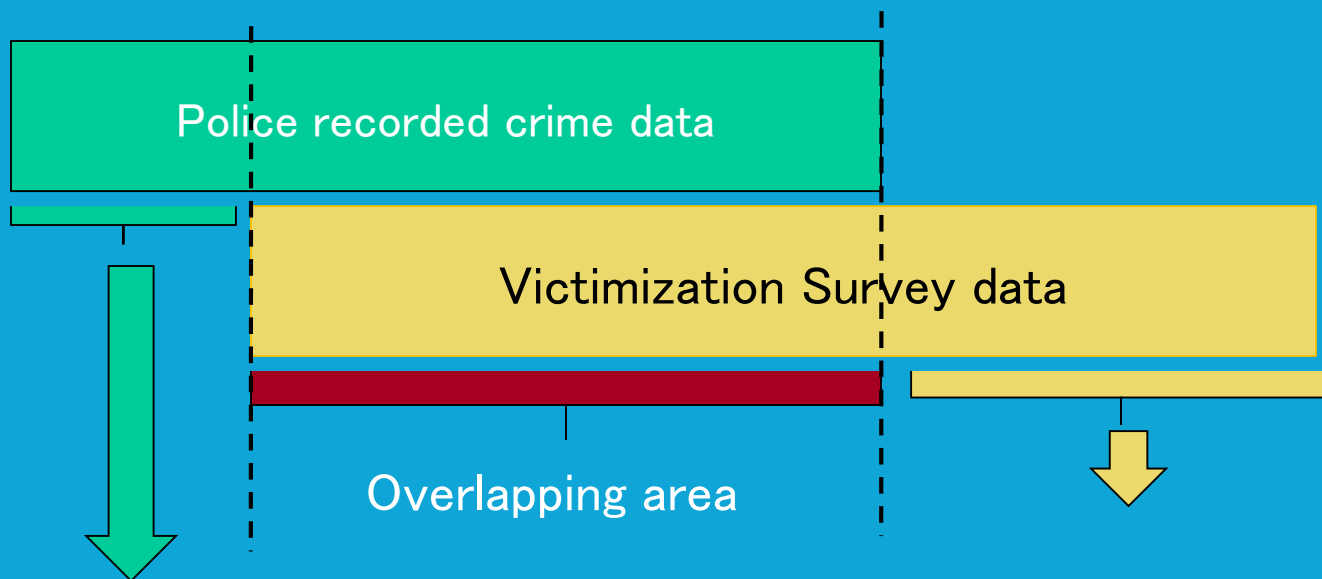
Figure 1: Attrition of sexual assault cases from the criminal justice system



Source: Gelb (2008), p.4



Victimization surveys vs. Police-recorded crime statistics I



Not covered in survey:

- Rare crimes, homicides (?)
- Victimless crimes (state, businesses,..)
- Victims aged <18 and >64
- Non-residents

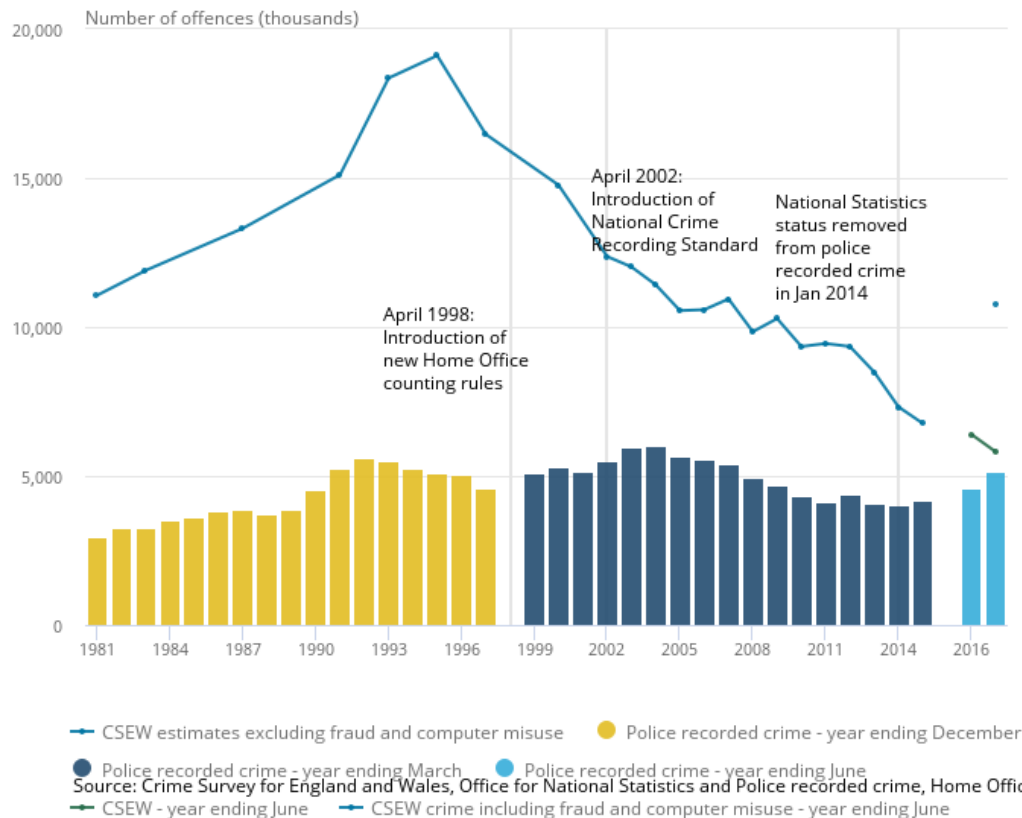
Not covered in police data:

- Crimes not reported to police
- Crimes not recorded by police
- Crimes recorded as misdemeanours, etc.
- Crimes that happened abroad..

Victimization surveys vs. Police-recorded crime statistics II

Figure 1: Crime estimated by the survey has fallen considerably from the peak levels seen in 1995, but crime dealt with by the police has begun to rise in recent years

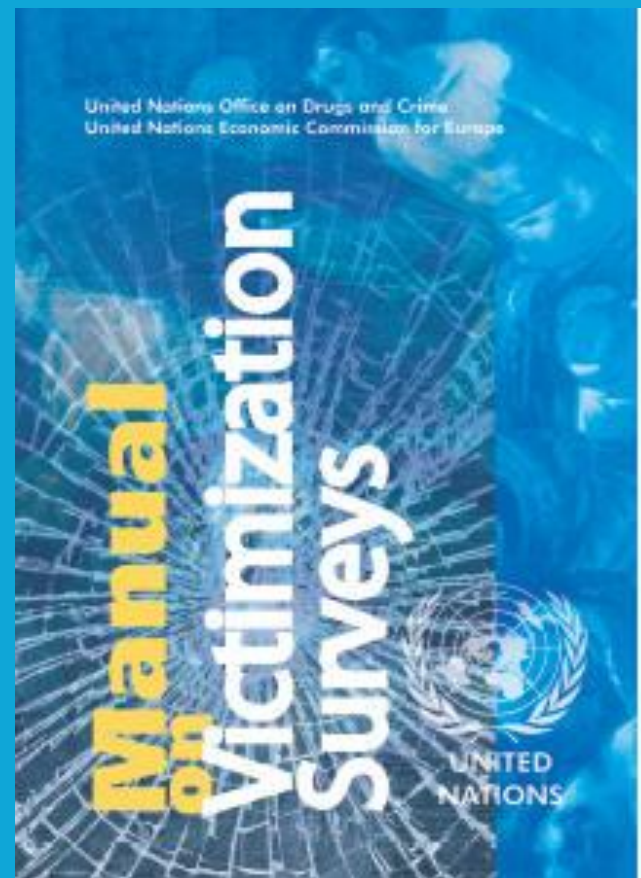
England and Wales, year ending December 1981 to year ending June 2017





Method and purpose of victimization surveys

- Victimization surveys are sample surveys of a relevant population that help to measure:
 - Levels and trends in crime
 - Fear of crime and perceptions of safety
 - Impact of crime on society and on high-risk/vulnerable groups
 - Acceptance of the criminal justice system and trust in CJ actors (police, courts, agencies, etc.)





Main features of victimization surveys

- Focus is on individuals and their experience as victims (and not cases/incidents)
- Focus is on actual experience (and not reported crime)
- Additional aspects covered: security/ fear, reporting to police, security precautions
- Some limitations: non-response, rare crimes,..



Main advantages of victimization surveys

- Consolidated methodology
- Independent from national laws and institutions
- Information on victims and vulnerable groups
- Can reliably measure crime trends, despite changes in reporting rates
- Comparability at international level (if common methodology)
- Can measure also the tendency to report crime
- Can measure trust in the police and criminal justice system
- Can measure fear of crime



Questions for Crime Prevention and Programming

- How much crime is there and what are its characteristics?
- Has the level of crime changed over time?
- What are the characteristics of victims and perpetrators?
- What are the risks of becoming a victim?
- Have perceptions of risk and safety changed over time?
- How much crime is reported to authorities and if not, why not?
- Are crime prevention policies working?



National, regional and global resources for CVS

- International Crime Victimization Survey (ICVS) carried out in five waves, data online at <http://wp.unil.ch/icvs/>
- Many national Surveys (Crime Survey for England and Wales (CSEW), NCVS in USA, Australia, Mexico,...) – see Atlas on Victimization surveys of the UNODC-INEGI Centre of Excellence:
<http://www.cdeunodc.inegi.org.mx/index.php/en-2/>
- CVS supported by UNODC: Kenya, Ghana, Egypt, Tanzania, Uganda, Ruanda, Cape Verde, Western Balkans, Afghanistan, Iraq, Nigeria, Panama, Argentina,..
- UNODC and Centre of Excellence developed the Latin America and Caribbean Crime Victimization Survey Initiative: LACSI
<http://www.unodc.org/unodc/en/data-and-analysis/statistics.html>
- UNODC training for Asia-Pacific on CVS:
<http://www.unodc.org/unodc/en/data-and-analysis/statistics/cvstraining.html>



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Part II: Victimization survey data for SDG monitoring



In which SDGs are victimization survey data most needed?





SDG indicators and the CTS 2017

- SDG indicators in the area of crime and criminal justice covered by the UN-CTS:

Administrative sources

- 16.1.1: Victims of intentional homicide by sex and age
- 16.3.2: Unsentenced detainees as a proportion of overall prison population

Victimization survey sources

- 16.1.3: Proportion of population subjected to physical, psychological or sexual violence
- 16.1.4: Proportion of population that feel safe walking alone
- 16.3.1: Proportion of victims of violence who reported their victimization to authorities
- 16.5.1: Proportion of persons who had at least one contact with a public official and who were asked to pay or who paid a bribe to a public official
- 16.5.1: Proportion of businesses who had at least one contact with a public official and who were asked to pay or who paid a bribe to a public official
- 11.7.2: Proportion of persons victim of physical or sexual harassment

SDG indicators not covered include Tier III indicators where no methodology has been established: illicit financial flows, seizures of small arms and light weapons,..



SDG indicators in the CTS 2017

- Indicators based on Victimization survey data in the UN-CTS 2017

7 - Victimization Survey			National Statistical Office or other authority responsible for Victimization Surveys				
Annual variables			2013	2014	2015	2016	Additional Comments
			Reported	Revised	Reported	Revised	
7.1	Prevalence Rate						
7.11	Percentage of population that feel safe walking alone around the area they live in						
7.12	Burglary						
7.13	Motor-vehicle theft						
7.14	Bribery	Males and Females					
7.14a		Males					
7.14b	Females						
7.15	Bribery among businesses						
7.16	Physical violence	Males and Females					
7.16a		Males					
7.16b	Females						
7.17	Robbery						
7.18	Physical assault						
7.19	Sexual violence	Males and Females					
7.19a		Males					
7.19b	Females						
7.10	Sexual assault						
7.11	Rape						
7.112	Psychological violence	Males and Females					
7.112a		Males					
7.112b	Females						
7.113	Physical or sexual violence	Males and Females					
7.113a		Males					
7.113b	Females						
7.114	Psychological, physical or sexual violence	Males and Females					
7.114a		Males					
7.114b	Females						
7.115	Physical or sexual harassment	Males and Females					
7.115a		Males					
7.115b	Females						

7.2 Reporting Rate		
7.2.1	Physical violence	Males and Females
7.2.1a		Males
7.2.1b	Females	
7.2.3	Robbery	
7.2.4	Physical assault	
7.2.5	Sexual violence	Males and Females
7.2.5a		Males
7.2.5b	Females	
7.2.6	Sexual assault	
7.2.7	Rape	
7.2.8	Physical or sexual violence	Males and Females
7.2.8a		Males
7.2.8b	Females	



What indicators – how to measure them?

- Goal 16. Promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, provide access to justice for all and build effective, accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels
- Target 16.1 Significantly reduce all forms of violence and related death rates everywhere
- Indicator 16.1.3 Proportion of population subjected to physical, psychological or sexual violence in the previous 12 months
- Indicator 16.1.4 Proportion of population that feel safe walking alone around the area they live



What indicators – how to measure them?

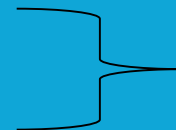
- Indicator 16.1.3 Proportion of population subjected to physical, psychological or sexual violence in the previous 12 months
- Source: Victimization Surveys – prevalence rate of various forms of violent crime:

- Prevalence rate of robbery
- Prevalence rate of physical assault



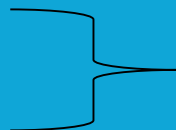
Prevalence rate of physical violence

- Prevalence rate of sexual assault
- Prevalence rate of rape



Prevalence rate of sexual violence

- Prevalence rate of threats?
- Prevalence rate of ..?



Prevalence rate of psychological violence ?



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CRIME, VICTIMIZATION AND JUSTICE**

What indicators – how to measure them?

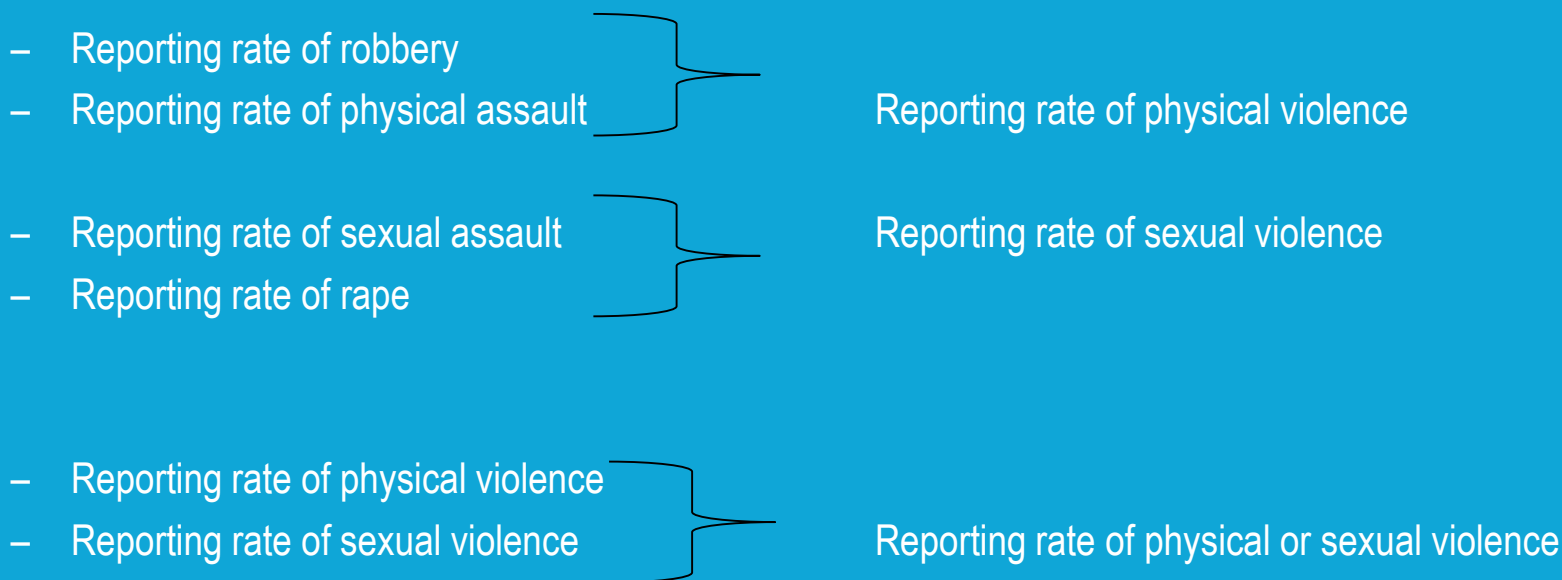
- Indicator 16.1.4 Proportion of population that feel safe walking alone around the area they live
- Source: Victimization Surveys – perception of safety
 - Recommended question: How safe do you feel walking alone in your neighbourhood after dark?



What indicators – how to measure them?

- Target 16.3 Promote the rule of law at the national and international levels and ensure equal access to justice for all
- Indicator 16.3.1 Proportion of victims of violence in the previous 12 months who reported their victimization to competent authorities or other officially recognized conflict resolution mechanisms

Source: Victimization Surveys – Reporting rate of various forms of violent crime:





What indicators – how to measure them?

- Target 16.5 Substantially reduce corruption and bribery in all their forms
- Indicator 16.5.1 Proportion of persons who had at least one contact with a public official and who paid a bribe to a public official, or were asked for a bribe by those public officials, during the previous 12 months
- Source: Victimization Surveys – Prevalence rate of bribery (population):
- Recommended: Methodology of corruption survey or survey module on corruption .

- Basic question: Screening A: contact?
- Could you tell me if over the past twelve (12) months that is, between [month/year] and [month/year], have you been in direct contact with personnel from the following institutions? For example, to do an administrative procedure, request a service or request information.

- Basic question: Screening B: bribe paid?
- And over the past twelve (12) months that is, between [month/year] and [month/year], excluding official fees, did you have to give any gift or pay extra money, directly or indirectly, to the personnel of this institution?



What indicators – how to measure them?

- Target 16.5 Substantially reduce corruption and bribery in all their forms
- Indicator 16.5.2 Proportion of businesses that had at least one contact with a public official and that paid a bribe to a public official, or were asked for a bribe by those public officials, during the previous 12 months
- Source: Victimization Surveys – Prevalence rate of bribery (businesses):
- Recommended: Methodology of business corruption survey or business survey module on corruption .

- Basic question: Screening A: contact?
- In the last 12 months (since ..), have you or somebody from your business entity ever had CONTACTS WITH any of the following CIVIL SERVANTS or PUBLIC OFFICIALS, including through an intermediary, for example to use a public service, to ask for information/assistance, to request a document, or while processing an administrative procedure for your business entity? *(please mark each row)*

- Basic question: Screening B: bribe paid?
- [If YES to previous question]: Now think about the < TYPE OF PUBLIC OFFICIAL >. In the last 12 months (since ..), did you or somebody from your business entity have to give him/her some gift, a counterfavour or some extra-money, including through an intermediary, with the exclusion of the correct amount of official fees?



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Thank you
for your attention

<https://www.unodc.org/unodc/en/data-and-analysis/crime-and-criminal-justice.html>

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