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Nationella trygghetsundersökningen

The Swedish Crime Survey 2013

Concerning exposure to crime, insecurity and confidence

Summary

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English summary of Brå report 2014:1

The Swedish National Council for Crime Prevention (Brå) – centre for knowledge about crime and crime prevention measures

The Swedish National Council for Crime Prevention (Brå) works to reduce crime and improve levels of safety in society by producing data and disseminating knowledge on crime and crime prevention work.

For more information about the Swedish Crime Survey 2013 please contact Thomas Hvitfeldt or Åsa Irlander, statisticians/researchers at Brå.

This report is a summary of the Swedish report *Nationella trygghetsundersökningen 2013. Om utsatthet, otrygghet och förtroende*, report no 2014:1. The Swedish report can be ordered from Brottsförebyggande rådet, info@bra.se

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URN:NBN:SE:BRA-550

Summary

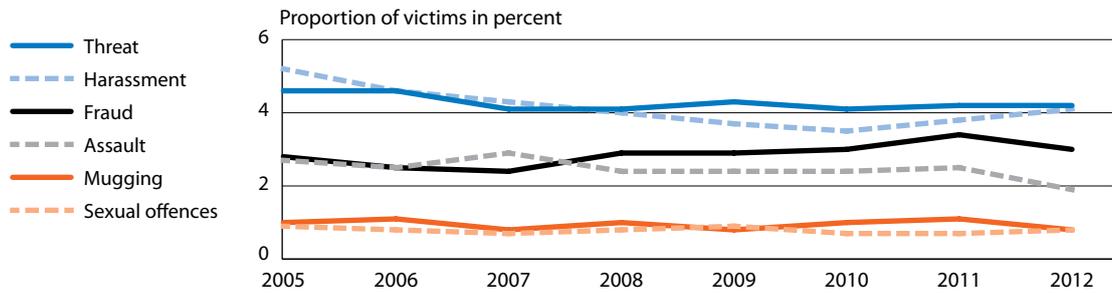
This is a report on the overall results of the Swedish Crime Survey (SCS) of 2013. Nearly 13,000 people responded to the survey, which means that the response rate for the survey was 64 per cent. Most of the participants were interviewed by telephone, however, a small number participated via a postal survey. There follows a summary of the report's results, divided up according to the areas investigated by the survey: *exposure to crime, insecurity, confidence in the criminal justice system and victims' contact with the criminal justice system.*

Exposure to crime

Crimes against individuals

- Of the respondents to the 2013 crime survey, 11.4 per cent state that in 2012 they were the victim of one or more of the crimes referred to in the report as offences against the person, i.e. assault, threat, sexual offences, mugging, fraud or harassment. The level of exposure to of these crimes has decreased somewhat since 2005 (when the percentage was 13.1)
- The most common crimes are threat and harassment, and the least common are sexual offences, serious assault and mugging.
- Around three out of ten (29 %) offences against the person reported in SCS 2013 are stated as having been reported to the police. Mugging has the highest reporting rate (48 %) and sexual offences the lowest (10 %). The proportion of reported incidents has increased somewhat since 2005, when 24 per cent of were stated as having been reported the police.
- The majority of those who had been the victims of offences against the person stated that they had been the victim once in 2012; however, 12 per cent (corresponding to 1.4 % of the population) stated that they had been the victim four times or more. This group has been exposed to more than half (54 %) of all incidents of offences against the person.
- 1.7 per cent of the respondents of working age (20–64 years old) state that, in 2012, they were exposed to assault, threat, mugging or sexual offences due to their work.

Figure 1 Section of the population that has been subject of different types of offences against the person 2005–2012.



Assault

- The proportion who stated that they have been the victims of assault has declined gradually, from 2.7 per cent in 2005 to 1.9 per cent in 2012.
- Men are more likely than women to have been the victims of assault, and the most common age group is 20–24.
- Most commonly, the crime is committed in public and the perpetrator is unknown to the victim.

Threat

- The exposure to threats has remained relatively unchanged in the last few years. In 2013 crime survey, 4.2 per cent of the respondents state that they were subjected to threats in 2012.
- Being subjected to threats is more common among women than among men, and the most common age group is 20–24.
- Most often, the crime is committed in public, and the perpetrator is unknown to the victim.

Sexual offences

- The rate of exposure to sexual offences has remained relatively unchanged in recent years. In SCS 2013, 0.8 per cent of respondents state that they were the victims of sexual offences in 2012.
- The victims of sexual offences are more frequently women than men, and the most common age group is 20–24.
- Most often, the crime is committed in a public place and the perpetrator is unknown to the victim.

Mugging

- The rate of exposure to mugging has remained relatively unchanged in recent years. In SCS 2013, 0.8 per cent of the respondents state that they were the victims of muggings in 2012.
- Men are more likely than women to be the victim of a mugging, and the most common age group is 20–24.

Fraud

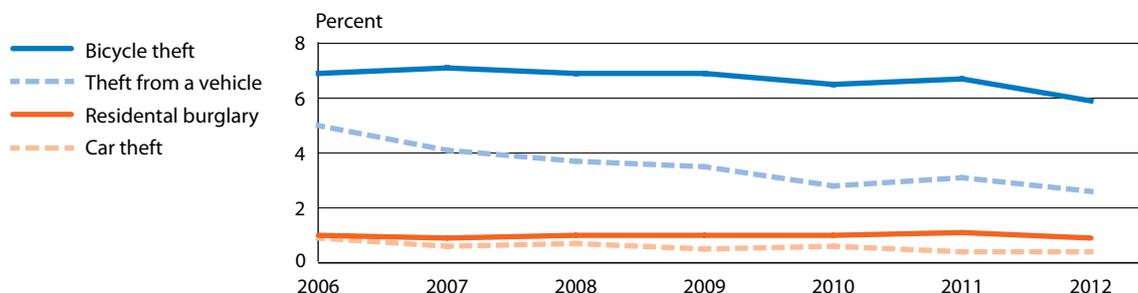
- The percentage who have been the victims of fraud has increased successively, from 2.5 per cent in 2006 to 3.0 per cent in 2012.
- Men are more likely than women to become the victims of fraud. The largest proportion of victims are in the 20–34 age group.

Harassment

- The proportion of respondents who had been the victims of harassment decreased between 2005 and 2010 (from 5.2 % to 3.5 %). There was a subsequent slight increase to 4.1 per cent in 2012.

- Women are more likely than men to become the victims of harassment, and it is most common among the youngest respondents (most common age group of all is 20–24).
- Most often the perpetrator is unknown to the victim

Figure 2 Number of households that have been subject to different types of property offences 2006–2012.



Domestic property offences

- The survey indicates that 9.2 per cent of households fell victim to car theft, theft from a vehicle, bicycle theft or residential burglary (also known as domestic property offences) in 2012. The rate of exposure to these crimes has decreased somewhat since 2006 (when the percentage was 12.6). The most common property offence is bicycle theft. The least common are residential burglary and car theft.
- Around half (51 %) of the domestic property offences reported in the SCS 2013 are stated as having been reported to the police. Burglary has the highest reporting rate (86 %) and bicycle theft the lowest (42 %). The number of reported incidents has been relatively stable since 2006.
- The overwhelming majority of those respondents who were the victims of domestic property offences state that this happened only once in 2012. Only 1 per cent of those households that were the victims of crime stated that they had fallen victim four times or more.

Residential burglary

- The rate of exposure to residential burglary has remained relatively unchanged since 2006. In SCS 2013, 0.9 per cent of households stated that they were the victims of burglary in 2012.

Car theft

- The proportion stating that they were the victims of car theft has declined sharply, from 0.9 per cent in 2006 to 0.4 per cent in 2012.

Theft from a vehicle

- The proportion of households that were the victims of theft from a vehicle has decreased, from 5.0 per cent in 2006 to 2.6 per cent in 2012.

Bicycle theft

- The proportion falling victim to bicycle theft has declined, from 6.9 per cent in 2006 to 5.9 per cent in 2012.

Anxiety and insecurity

Measuring insecurity and anxiety relating to crime is complicated. The Swedish Crime Survey captures some of the key aspects. The results vary a great deal, depending on the type of anxiety or insecurity investigated; for example, more respondents worry about their loved ones falling victim to crime than they do about themselves.

Feeling unsafe being out late at night

- The proportion of respondents who felt unsafe when they go out alone in their own neighbourhood late at night has decreased, from 21 per cent in 2006 to 15 per cent in 2013.
- It is significantly more common for women to feel unsafe than men. The proportion who stated they feel unsafe is the highest among the youngest and the oldest female respondents.

Anxiety about criminality in general

- The proportion of respondents anxious about criminality in general has decreased, from 29 per cent in 2006 to 19 per cent in 2013.
- It is more common for women to be anxious about criminality than men. The proportion of respondents anxious about criminality is lowest in the youngest age groups and highest in the oldest age groups.

Anxiety that loved ones will fall victim to crime

- The proportion anxious that their loved ones will fall victim to crime has decreased, from 32 per cent in 2006 to 24 per cent in 2013.
- Women are somewhat more likely than men to be anxious about their loved ones falling victim to crime. The proportion of both male and female respondents anxious about loved ones falling victim to crime is highest in the 45–54 age group.

Anxiety about falling victim to crime

- In 2013, 16 per cent stated that they are anxious about residential burglary; this level has remained relatively stable throughout the measurement period.
- It is somewhat more common for women than for men to be anxious about residential burglary. The proportion of anxious respondents is fairly evenly distributed across the different age groups, with the exception of the youngest age groups, where the proportion is lower than in the rest of the population.
- The proportion who are anxious about falling victim to assault has decreased, from 15 per cent in 2006 to 10 per cent in 2013.
- It is more common for women than for men to worry about being subjected to assault and physical abuse. However, the proportion of women anxious about this varies a great deal between age groups. The proportion is highest among women between the ages of 20 and 24.
- The proportion who are anxious about their vehicle being stolen or vandalised has decreased, from 22 per cent in 2006 to 12 per cent in 2013.
- The proportion who are worried about their vehicle being stolen or vandalised is basically the same among both women and men and is about the same in all age groups, with the exception of the youngest (16–19), where the proportion is significantly lower.

Consequences of insecurity

- A small group (3 per cent) of respondents stated that anxiety and insecurity has a large impact on their behaviour (i.e. the anxiety and insecurity prevent them undertaking certain activities or cause them to choose a different route or means of transport). This proportion has remained fairly constant since these measurements were introduced in 2006.
- Anxiety and insecurity are more likely to affect the behaviour of women than of men, but the differences between age groups is relatively small.
- The proportion who stated that the anxiety affects their quality of life has declined somewhat, from 11 per cent in 2006 to 8 per cent in 2013.
- This anxiety more commonly affects women's quality of life than men's, but the difference between age groups is relatively small.

Insecurity related to personal experience or attitudes

- The proportion of respondents who felt particularly insecure is higher among those who have been the victims of crime. The proportion of respondents who feel particularly insecure is also higher among those whose loved ones have fallen victim to serious crimes and among those who have witnessed a violent offence. These circumstances have remained relatively unchanged over time.
- The proportion of respondents who feel particularly insecure is higher among those who feel that crime rates have increased in the last three years, than among those who believe that crime rates have remained unchanged or have fallen.
- The proportion of respondents who feel particularly insecure is higher among those with a low level of confidence in the criminal justice system.

Confidence in the criminal justice system

Confidence in the criminal justice system and the authorities

- The results indicate that there is a relatively high level of confidence in the criminal justice system among the population as a whole; 61 per cent state that they have a high level of confidence in the criminal justice system as a whole. A high level of confidence in the police is about as common. There is a somewhat lower level of confidence in those authorities that are further along in the criminal justice system, those which the general public is less familiar with, e.g. prosecutors, the courts and the Swedish Prison and Probation Service.
- The proportion of respondents who had a high level of confidence in the criminal justice system as a whole has increased, from 54 per cent in 2006 to 61 per cent in 2013.
- The proportion of respondents who had a high level of confidence in the police has also increased, from 55 per cent in 2006 to 61 per cent in 2013.
- A similar increase has also been noted concerning prosecutors, with the proportion of respondents who had a high level of confidence in them increasing from 42 per cent in 2006 to 49 per cent in 2013.
- The proportion of respondents who have a high level of confidence in the courts has increased, from 43 per cent in 2006 to 51 per cent in 2013.

- The largest increase concerns the Swedish Prison and Probation Service, with the proportion of respondents having a high level of confidence increasing from 29 per cent in 2006 to 41 per cent in 2013.
- It is somewhat more common for women than for men to have a high level of confidence in the criminal justice system.
- The greatest proportion of those with a high level of confidence in the criminal justice system is found among the youngest respondents in the survey (ages 16–19), and the smallest proportion is found in the oldest age group.

Confidence that suspects are treated fairly

- The proportion who are confident that the criminal justice system as a whole treats suspects fairly has increased, from 45 per cent in 2006 to 52 per cent. About the same number (54 %) have a high level of confidence that the police treat suspects fairly, a percentage that has remained fundamentally unchanged since the question was introduced in 2008.
- Confidence that the criminal justice system and the police treat suspects appropriately is generally at the same level among women as among men.
- The largest proportion of those who have a high level of confidence that the criminal justice system treats suspects fairly is found among the youngest respondents, and the smallest proportion is found among the oldest.

Confidence that victims of crime are treated well

- The proportion of respondents who have a high level of confidence that the criminal justice system as a whole treats victims well has increased, from 30 per cent in 2006 to 42 per cent in 2013. Confidence that the police treat victims well has also increased somewhat, from 52 per cent when the question was introduced in 2008 to 55 per cent in 2013.
- It is somewhat more common for women than for men to have a high level of confidence that victims are treated well by the criminal justice system as a whole and by the police.
- The largest proportion of those who have a high level of confidence that the criminal justice system treats victims well is found among the youngest respondents to the survey, and the smallest proportion is found among the oldest.

Confidence in the criminal justice system related to personal experience or attitudes

- The proportion of respondents who have a high level of confidence in the criminal justice system is lower among those who have been the victims of crime. The same is true for those whose loved ones have fallen victim to serious crimes and among those who have been prosecuted for an offence. These circumstances have remained relatively unchanged over time.
- The proportion of respondents with a high level of confidence is lower among those who feel that crime rates have increased in the last three years than among those who believe that crime rates have remained unchanged or have fallen.

Victims' contact with the criminal justice system

Experience of the police

- Nearly one out of five (19 %) respondents say that they have been in contact with the police as the result of falling victim to a crime in the last three years. A little over half of the victims (57 %) stated that their experience of the police was generally positive, and nearly one in seven stated that the experience was negative. The proportion has been relatively constant since 2007.
- Women stated more often than men that their experience was positive.
- In those cases where the incident involved threat or violence, the experiences of the police are more likely to be negative than in other cases.
- When it comes to more specific aspects of contact with the police, there are mixed reviews. A significantly higher number are happy with the accessibility and attitude of the police, than with the information they received regarding the case and with the police investigation of the offence.

Trial experiences

- About 2 % stated that they have been in contact with prosecutors as the result of being the victim of an offence in the last three years. Half of these (50 %) stated that their experience was a positive one.
- 1.5 per cent of the population stated that they have participated in a trial as the injured party in the last three years. Six out of ten (60 %) were very satisfied or satisfied with the treatment they received in court. A majority (72 %) of those who had been the injured party stated that they felt it was very easy or easy to understand what was going on during the trial, and about the same proportion (69 %) felt they had been given sufficient information prior to the trial.
- Around six out of ten (58 %) of those who had participated in a trial had a counsel for an injured party. Out of these, 75 per cent describe their experience of their counsel for an injured party as positive.



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