

# 24 Crime

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## Crime and Law Enforcement

Public safety in Japan has been deteriorating. The number of Penal Code offenses almost doubled in two decades to reach 3.69 million in 2002, marking a new postwar high for seven straight years, while the rate of cases cleared, which hovered around 70% until the late 1980s, dropped to 38.8%. The clearance rate excluding traffic violations plummeted to 20.8%, about one-third of the 1980s' level.

The situation has gradually improved since then, however, and in 2005 the number of Penal Code offenses decreased 8.8% from 2004 to 3.13 million. The rate of cases cleared also improved 3.5 points to 48.2% (28.6% excluding traffic violations). Of the total Penal Code offenses, 55.2% were larcenies, and 27.4% were traffic offenses. The number of crimes excluding traffic offenses also dropped 11.4% from 2004 to 2.27 million.

There were 1,392 homicides in 2005, down 1.9% from the previous year, 5,988 robberies (down 17.9%), and 2,076 rapes. Recently Japan has seen an increasing number of computer- and Internet-related crimes, and 4,425 such cases were cleared in 2006, up 230.5% from 2001. People arrested for child abuse, another social problem, numbered 242 in 222 criminal cases in 2005. The figures had climbed 86.2% and 85.0%, respectively, from 1999.

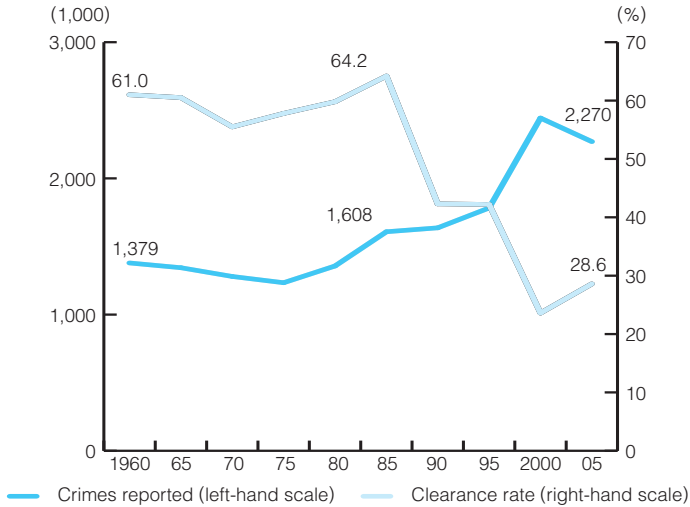
There is a debate on Japan's present system of capital punishment. A Diet members' group and other civilian groups are actively calling for the abolition of the death penalty, as well as for the disclosure of information about each execution. In 2006 four prisoners were executed.

### Number of Crimes, Arrests, and Clearance Rate

	1960	1970	1980	1990	2000	2004	2005
Crimes reported (1,000)	1,496	1,932	1,813	2,218	3,256	3,428	3,125
Excluding traffic offenses	1,379	1,280	1,357	1,637	2,443	2,563	2,270
Persons arrested (1,000)	561	1,073	870	900	1,160	1,532	1,505
Excluding traffic offenses	443	381	392	293	310	668	650
Crimes per 100,000 population	1,601	1,863	1,549	1,794	2,565	2,684	2,446
Excluding traffic offenses	1,476	1,234	1,160	1,324	1,925	2,007	1,777
Clearance rate (%)	64.1	70.5	69.9	57.4	42.7	44.7	48.2
Excluding traffic offenses	61.0	55.5	59.8	42.3	23.6	26.1	28.6

Source: Ministry of Justice, *Hanzai hakusho* (White Paper on Crime), 2006.

## Trends in Number of Crimes and Clearance Rate



Source: Ministry of Justice, *Hanzai hakusho* (White Paper on Crime), 2006.

Note: Figures exclude traffic offenses.

## Number of Penal Code Offenses, Offenders, and Clearance Rate, 2005

	Reported Penal Code offenses	Cleared Penal Code offenses	Cleared Penal Code offenders	Clearance rate (%)
Homicide	1,392	1,345	1,338	96.6
Robbery	5,988	3,269	3,844	54.6
Physical injury	34,484	23,304	27,130	67.6
Assault	25,815	13,703	13,970	53.1
Menace	2,479	1,638	1,522	66.1
Extortion	10,978	5,376	6,439	49.0
Larceny	1,725,072	429,038	194,119	24.9
Fraud	85,596	29,384	11,648	34.3
Embezzlement	97,867	92,350	92,417	94.4
Rape	2,076	1,443	1,074	69.5
Indecent assault	8,751	3,797	2,286	43.4
Arson	1,904	1,361	791	71.5
Bribery	102	104	217	102.0
Abduction	277	204	176	73.6
Traffic professional negligence	855,644	855,644	891,245	100.0
<b>Total</b>	<b>3,125,216</b>	<b>1,505,426</b>	<b>1,278,479</b>	<b>48.2</b>

Source: Ministry of Justice, *Hanzai hakusho* (White Paper on Crime), 2006.

## Crime and Arrest Rates in Major Countries

	Crimes per 100,000 population		Arrest rate (%)	
	Homicide	Theft	Homicide	Theft
Japan	1.2	1,552	94.5	22.6
UK <sup>a</sup>	3.0	5,158	82.5	13.4
Germany	3.0	3,588	96.1	29.8
France	3.5	3,475	85.3	10.9
USA	5.5	3,517	62.6	16.5

Source: Ministry of Justice, *Hanzai hakusho* (White Paper on Crime), 2006.

Note: Figures are for 2004.

a. England and Wales only.

## Sentences Passed on Persons Charged

	Death	Indeterminate sentence <sup>a</sup>	Term <sup>a</sup>	Fine	Not guilty	No sentence <sup>b</sup>	Total
1995	3	35	59,157	971,918	52	551	1,031,716
1996	3	34	62,219	1,010,392	45	534	1,073,227
1997	4	32	64,207	1,034,779	58	487	1,099,567
1998	7	45	65,926	1,009,757	57	537	1,076,329
1999	4	48	69,680	1,020,336	59	574	1,090,701
2000	6	59	76,071	910,088	46	644	986,914
2001	5	68	78,585	887,801	44	635	967,138
2002	3	82	83,711	839,896	73	609	924,374
2003	2	117	88,917	787,289	80	665	877,070
2004	14	115	90,030	746,567	94	708	837,528
2005	11	134	88,924	692,801	66	535	782,471

Source: Ministry of Justice, *Hanzai hakusho* (White Paper on Crime), 2006.

a. Imprisonment.

b. Case dismissed before sentence hearing, etc.

## Types and Numbers of Penal Institutions, 2006

Prison	59
Juvenile prison	8
Detention house	7
Juvenile training school	53
Juvenile classification home	52

Source: Ministry of Justice, *Hanzai hakusho* (White Paper on Crime), 2006.

Note: Figures are as of April 1.

## Average Daily Population of Penal Institutions

	Total	Convicted prisoners	Condemned prisoners	Unconvicted prisoners	Confinement in a workhouse	Others
1950	103,170	85,254	76	17,259	581	n/a
1960	75,821	63,330	54	11,922	470	45
1970	49,209	40,917	73	8,010	189	20
1980	50,596	42,142	24	8,285	135	11
1990	48,243	41,141	43	6,952	99	8
1995	46,535	38,013	57	8,283	178	4
2000	58,747	47,683	53	10,637	366	7
2005	77,932	65,780	73	11,131	943	4

Source: Ministry of Justice, *Hanzai hakusho* (White Paper on Crime), 2006.

## Organized Crime

Members of organized crime groups (*boryokudan*) as of the end of 2006 numbered about 41,500, a decrease of 1,800 (4.2%) from the previous year. In addition, there were 43,200 associate members, up 200 (0.5%) over 2005. It was the first time that associate members outnumbered regular members since the statistics began in 1958.

The police stepped up their efforts to crack down on organized crime in 1992 by introducing the Law Concerning Prevention of Unjust Acts by Boryokudan Members, the so-called anti-*boryokudan* law, the first law defining the *boryokudan* as antisocial organizations. Groups conforming to certain conditions are cited as designated *boryokudan*, and the law is enforced on their members. As of the end of 2006, there were 21 designated *boryokudan* throughout Japan.

To strengthen measures to combat organized crime, a set of three laws was enacted in 1999, enabling law-enforcement authorities to wiretap communications during investigations and expanding the punishment for laundering and concealment of profits from crime.

## Organized Crime Members Arrested

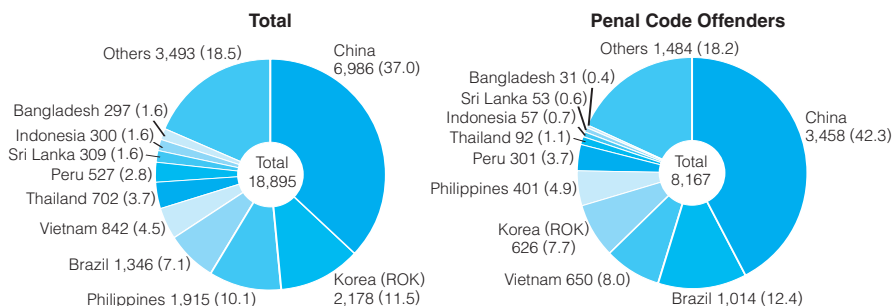
Year		Year		Year	
1970	42,815	1985	48,213	2000	31,054
1975	53,058	1990	34,599	2005	29,626
1980	52,247	1995	33,011	2006	28,416

Source: National Police Agency.

## Crimes Committed by Foreigners

As the number of foreigners entering Japan increased from 3.50 million in 1990 to 8.11 million in 2006, so the number of crimes committed by foreigners rose. In 2006, 18,895 foreign nationals were arrested in 40,126 criminal cases, increases of 296% and 532%, respectively, over the 1990 figures, although the figures dropped slightly from the previous year. Of the 18,895, 37.0% were Chinese, followed by Koreans (11.5%), Filipinos (10.1%), and Brazilians (7.1%). Those arrested for violent crimes (homicide, robbery, arson, and rape) decreased 24.8% from 2004 to 297. Recently Japan has seen a growing presence of foreign criminal organizations, including those from China, Russia, Colombia, and Korea (ROK).

## Foreign Nationals Arrested by Country/Region of Origin, 2006



Source: National Police Agency.

Note: Figures in parentheses are percentage of total.

Figures for 2006 are provisional, as of January 2007.

## Juvenile Delinquency

In 2005, 178,972 juvenile delinquents were arrested, a ratio of 14.2 delinquents for every 1,000 youths. This represents a 43.6% decrease from a peak in 1983, or 3.0 fewer delinquents per 1,000 youths. Recently, however, violent crimes committed by juveniles have been on the rise. In 2005, 1,172 juveniles were arrested for robbery, 153 for rape, 73 for homicide, and 245 for arson. The number of juveniles arrested for these crimes topped 2,000 for the first time in 1997 and remained over 2,000 for seven years. However, the number started to decrease in 2004, reaching 1,643 in 2005.

## Arrests for Criminal Offenses

	Juveniles		Adults		Share of juveniles in total (%)
	Number of arrests	Per 1,000 population	Number of arrests	Per 1,000 population	
1950	158,426	9.2	458,297	10.1	25.7
1955	121,753	6.7	437,104	8.6	21.8
1960	196,682	9.7	413,565	7.4	32.2
1965	234,959	11.7	515,963	8.3	31.3
1970	224,943	13.3	883,254	12.6	20.3
1975	196,974	12.1	668,802	8.7	22.8
1980	269,769	15.7	653,958	8.1	29.2
1985	304,088	16.0	722,296	8.4	29.6
1990	244,122	13.2	683,688	7.5	26.3
1995	193,308	12.1	799,759	8.3	19.5
2000	193,260	13.8	987,359	9.8	16.4
2005	178,972	14.2	1,120,026	10.8	13.8

Source: Ministry of Justice, *Hanzai hakusho* (White Paper on Crime), 2006.

Note: Juveniles are persons aged between 10 and 19 years; adults are persons aged 20 years and over.

## Drug Abuse

The import, possession, and use of narcotics and stimulant drugs, except under a doctor's supervision, is forbidden in Japan. Since the early 1970s, however, the abuse of stimulant drugs has become a problem. Previously members of gangs that engaged in drug smuggling accounted for more than half of drug-related arrests, but ordinary citizens, particularly young people, have been showing a higher share of arrests in recent years.

The number of people arrested for stimulant drug offenses hovered at around 15,000 in the early 1990s, but it jumped to over 17,000 in 1995, then to nearly 20,000 in 1997. This upward trend was seen as the third wave of stimulant drug abuse, following the first wave that peaked in 1954 and the second in 1984. The number was 13,346 in 2005, an increase of 9.2% over the previous year.

## Number of People Arrested for Drug Offenses

	Stimulant drugs	Marijuana	Narcotics	Opium
1955	32,140	52	1,753	181
1960	476	10	1,987	315
1965	735	259	1,090	902
1970	1,682	733	245	230
1975	8,422	909	232	140
1980	20,200	1,433	158	264
1985	23,344	1,273	138	443
1990	15,267	1,620	240	111
1995	17,364	1,555	334	172
2000	19,156	1,224	254	67
2005	13,549	2,063	606	13

Source: Ministry of Justice, *Hanzai hakusho* (White Paper on Crime), 2006.

## Police System

Japan's police system consists of separate prefectural forces guided and coordinated by the National Police Agency. Prefectural police forces perform the daily functions of law enforcement under the administration of prefectural public safety commissions. The National Police Agency, which operates under the administration of the National Public Safety Commission, supervises police training programs, procures equipment, compiles crime statistics, and provides criminal identification services on a nationwide basis.

From April 2006, new emergency services using third-generation mobile phones started. With this new system, when a person calls 110 (police department), 119 (fire department), or 118 (Japan Coast Guard), the location of the mobile phone will be tracked down immediately. This system was introduced to cut down the time it takes to arrive at the site; however, some people are uneasy about the protection of their privacy.

Employees of Japan's police forces in fiscal 2006 numbered 288,451, of whom about 12,100 were female police officers and 7,524 worked for the National Police Agency. The ratio of citizens to police in Japan is high compared with that of most industrial nations, and law enforcement is aided by an extensive network of neighborhood police boxes (*koban*), which number 6,362 nationwide. In 2005 it took the police an average of 7 minutes 3 seconds to reach the scene of a crime after receiving an emergency call.