

Police Statistics on Homicide Victims in New Zealand for the period 2007 - 2012



A Summary of Statistics about Victims of Murder, Manslaughter, and Infanticide

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Introduction

Background

This report is released coincident with calendar year Official Statistics for recorded crime in New Zealand.

Official Statistics for recorded crime count the number of recorded and resolved offences as well as the number of apprehensions of offenders for the resolved offences. They provide demographic attributes of offenders, but do not include information about victims of crime.

While it is not currently feasible to produce comprehensive statistics on victims of crime from New Zealand Police records, since there are fewer than 100 homicides in New Zealand each year, it is possible to produce this report containing statistics about victims of this limited set of very serious offences.

Purpose

This report is not intended as a comprehensive study on the various contexts in which homicides occur. Rather, it provides some descriptive statistics that complement other sources of information such as:

- Official Statistics for Recorded and Resolved Offences,
- Official Statistics for Recorded Apprehensions,
- The New Zealand Crime and Safety Survey, and
- relevant research publications and government reports.

Specifically, this report presents simple descriptive statistics about:

- Who has been killed,
- The relationship of the victim to the offender,
- What type of location people were killed in, and
- What type of weapon (if any) was used.

The report does not include descriptions of offenders. Such information is provided in Police Official Statistics for Recorded Apprehensions. Neither does it describe either the contexts in which homicides occur or the policy implications for Police or other agencies. Such information is beyond the scope of this report.

Limitations of Homicide data

Police in New Zealand investigate all suspicious deaths. Such investigations can take many months or even years to conclude. Current statistics for 2013 and 2014 will therefore include many cases where an investigation is still continuing. Although a death may appear suspicious at first, investigations may conclude that the death was not homicide.

For this reason, the main body of this report only provides statistics from 2007 to 2012. Most investigations into homicides in these two years will have been completed and the data are therefore considered stable.

Statistics for recorded apprehensions for offences occurring during the 2014 calendar year are being published coincident with this report on 1 April 2015. To complement those apprehensions statistics, statistics about the victims of Homicide offences that occurred in 2014 have been included as an appendix to this report. However, the reader should note that these 2014 figures are not yet stable, as many of these investigations are still continuing, and Police records are still being updated with new information. Updated figures for both 2013 and 2014 will be included in the main body of future editions this report, after they have stabilised.

Queries Relating to this Report

Questions about this report can be directed to the Statistical Services Unit, Police National Headquarters through the following channels:

Email: statistics@police.govt.nz

Phone: 04 460 2999

Data

Offence type

As shown in Table 2.1 below, there were 65 homicide victims in 2012; 2 more than the year before. The majority of victims in all the years were murdered, and the majority of victims were male.

Table 2.1

	2010				2011			2012		
	M	F	U	2010	M	F	2011	M	F	2012
Murder	19	22	1	42	23	15	38	19	25	44
Manslaughter	23	11	0	34	18	7	25	15	6	21
TOTAL	42	33	1	76	41	22	63	34	31	65

	2007			2008			2009		
	M	F	2007	M	F	2008	M	F	2009
Murder	29	21	50	29	23	52	43	24	67
Manslaughter	10	7	17	13	6	19	20	6	26
TOTAL	39	28	67	42	29	71	63	30	93

Age of victim

Victims are spread across all ages. However, as shown in Table 2.2 below, this spread is not even. There were 9 homicide victims under five years of age.

Not explicitly shown in Table 2.2, 12 victims were under 18 over the period.

Table 2.2	2010				2011			2012		
	M	F	U	2010	M	F	2011	M	F	2012
Under 5 yr	2	3	1	6	6	4	10	2	7	9
Age 5- 9	0	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0
Age 10-14	0	0	0	0	1	3	4	0	0	0
Age 15-19	4	2	0	6	3	3	6	3	1	4
Age 20-29	11	7	0	18	6	4	10	9	6	15
Age 30-39	6	3	0	9	4	0	4	6	7	13
Age 40-49	6	6	0	12	10	5	15	1	6	7
Age 50-59	7	5	0	12	9	1	10	4	3	7
60 and above	6	6	0	12	2	2	4	9	1	10
TOTAL	42	33	1	76	41	22	63	34	31	65

	2007			2008			2009		
	M	F	2007	M	F	2008	M	F	2009
Under 5 yr	2	7	9	3	2	5	6	6	12
Age 5- 9	0	0	0	1	0	1	1	0	1
Age 10-14	0	1	1	1	1	2	1	0	1
Age 15-19	2	2	4	4	3	7	11	4	15
Age 20-29	15	6	21	9	8	17	12	5	17
Age 30-39	9	3	12	9	5	14	15	6	21
Age 40-49	6	2	8	6	4	10	11	8	19
Age 50-59	3	3	6	3	3	6	3	0	3
60 and above	2	4	6	6	3	9	3	1	4
TOTAL	39	28	67	42	29	71	63	30	93

Ethnicity of victim

As shown in Table 2.3, European is the most prevalent ethnic group of homicide victims, followed by Maori. Together these groups typically make up around three quarters of all homicide victims. European is the largest ethnic group within New Zealand. So, it does not follow that Europeans¹ are over-represented in these statistics.

It is, however, likely that Maori are over-represented in these statistics, as Maori make up approximately only one seventh of New Zealand's population.

Table 2.3

	2010				2011			2012		
	M	F	U ²	2010	M	F	2011	M	F	2012
Asian	1	1	0	2	4	0	4	1	1	2
European	14	17	0	31	18	9	27	19	14	33
Indian	1	2	0	3	1	2	3	0	1	1
Maori	16	8	0	24	12	6	18	10	4	14
Pacific Isle	3	1	0	4	4	2	6	1	2	3
Other / Unknown	7	4	1	12	2	3	5	3	9	12
TOTAL	42	33	1	76	41	22	63	34	31	65

	2007			2008			2009		
	M	F	2007	M	F	2008	M	F	2009
Asian	0	5	5	2	3	5	3	1	4
European	22	8	30	18	10	28	23	8	31
Indian	0	2	2	2	1	3	3	1	4
Maori	12	9	21	9	8	17	26	13	39
Pacific Isle	1	0	1	4	2	6	4	1	5
Other / Unknown	4	4	8	7	5	12	4	6	10
TOTAL	39	28	67	42	29	71	63	30	93

¹ New Zealand Police collects Ethnicity data according to different categories than does Statistics New Zealand. So, it is difficult to precisely estimate the proportion of New Zealand's population that makes up each ethnic group according to New Zealand Police categories.

² U: The gender of the victim was not recorded

Relationship of victim to offender³

Table 2.4 presents figures based on the victim's relationship to the offender. The offender is not always identified by police, or the victim's relationship to the offender was not clear or not recorded. In instances where the relationship between victim and offender is not recorded, this is likely to be because they are not closely related.

Across six years, the majority of homicide victims were not killed by partners or family members. Of the 162 who were, less than half were in a relationship as a couple. 61 of these 79 victims were female. This figure represents about 14% of all homicide victims.

Forty six victims were the Child of the offender. However, only nine victims were a Parent of the offender. All but one of these was the father of the offender.

Refer to Appendix B for the relationship definitions.

Table 2.4	2010				2011			2012		
	M	F	U	2010	M	F	2011	M	F	2012
Couple	4	10	0	14	2	9	11	3	14	17
Parent	2	1	0	3	1	0	1	1	0	1
Child	1	3	1	5	6	2	8	2	6	8
Other family	6	0	0	6	2	2	4	1	0	1
Not family but linked to family	1	0	0	1	0	1	1	1	1	2
Not family - other	28	18	0	46	22	6	28	19	5	24
Not recorded / unclear	0	1	0	1	8	2	10	7	5	12
TOTAL	42	33	1	76	41	22	63	34	31	65

	2007			2008			2009		
	M	F	2007	M	F	2008	M	F	2009
Couple	4	8	12	1	6	7	4	14	18
Parent	2	0	2	1	0	1	1	0	1
Child	0	5	5	3	3	6	8	6	14
Other family	2	4	6	3	1	4	7	1	8
Not family but linked to family	3	0	3	1	0	1	1	0	1
Not family - other	24	11	35	32	17	49	41	9	50
Not recorded / unclear	4	0	4	1	2	3	1	0	1
TOTAL	39	28	67	42	29	71	63	30	93

³ These data should not be interpreted as Family Violence statistics. Police classify certain reports as Family Violence for operational purposes. The Police operational definition of Family Violence differs from the definition in the Domestic Violence Act, and changes from time to time, so is not used in this report.

Weapon

Across five years, less than 10% of the Manslaughter victims were killed with a weapon. However, 68 Manslaughters and 3 Murders were traffic related. So, a vehicle was likely to be involved.

Only one in 11 homicides involved firearms.

Table 2.5

	2010			2011			2012		
	Mur	Man	2007	Mur	Man	2008	Mur	Man	2012
Firearm	7	1	8	3	0	3	3	1	4
Stabbing / Cutting Weapon	17	1	18	16	0	16	13	0	13
Other Weapon	7	3	10	5	1	6	11	1	12
No Weapon	11	29	40	14	24	38	17	19	36
TOTAL	42	34	76	38	25	63	44	21	65

	2007			2008			2009		
	Mur	Man	2007	Mur	Man	2008	Mur	Man	2009
Firearm	6	0	6	7	0	7	11	1	12
Stabbing / Cutting Weapon	16	0	16	14	1	15	17	0	17
Other Weapon	11	1	12	12	0	12	13	1	14
No Weapon	17	16	33	19	18	37	26	24	50
TOTAL	50	17	67	52	19	71	67	26	93

Location

Most homicides occurred either in dwellings or outdoor public places.

Table 2.6

	2010			2011			2012		
	Mur	Man	2010	Mur	Man	2011	Mur	Man	2012
Dwelling	31	9	40	30	9	39	28	10	38
Public Road / Street / Public Place	7	24	31	6	14	20	12	9	21
Other / Unknown	4	1	5	2	2	4	4	2	6
TOTAL	42	34	76	38	25	63	44	21	65

	2007			2008			2009		
	Mur	Man	2007	Mur	Man	2008	Mur	Man	2009
Dwelling	27	6	33	29	3	32	56	6	62
Public Road / Street / Public Place	16	9	25	18	13	31	9	18	27
Other / Unknown	7	2	9	5	3	8	2	2	4
TOTAL	50	17	67	52	19	71	67	26	93

Appendix A: Figures for the 2014 calendar year

The following tables present descriptive statistics about the victims of the homicides reported in the 2014 calendar year Official Statistics for recorded offences. These figures give a snapshot of data in Police systems as at 14 January 2015.

As discussed earlier in this report, Police investigations are still continuing into many of these cases. As a result, data in Police systems will continue to change. It is likely to take up to two years before figures stabilise. Caution should therefore be observed when comparing figures in this appendix with figures in the main body of the report.

Offence type

Table A.1	Male	Female	Total
Murder	29	13	42
Manslaughter	7	2	9
Total	36	15	51

Age of victim

Table A.2	Male	Female	Total
Under 5 years of age	2	2	4
Age 5-9	1	1	2
Age 10-14	0	0	0
Age 15-19	2	2	4
Age 20-29	9	1	10
Age 30-39	9	0	9
Age 40-49	5	2	7
Age 50-59	6	5	11
Age 60 and above	2	2	4
Total	36	15	51

Ethnicity of victim

Table A.3	Male	Female	Total
Asian	0	1	1
European	18	4	22
Indian	2	3	5
Maori	12	1	13
Pacific Island	2	1	3
Other/Unknown	2	5	7
Total	36	15	51

Relationship of victim to offender

Table A.4	Male	Female	Total
Couple	2	5	7
Parent	1	1	2
Child	3	3	6
Other family	1	0	1
Not family but linked to family	0	0	0
Not family – other	23	5	28
Not recorded / unclear	6	1	7
Total	36	15	51

Weapon

Table A.5	Murder	Manslaughter	Total
Firearm	6	0	6
Stabbing / Cutting Weapon	16	0	16
Other Weapon	6	0	6
No weapon	14	9	23
Total	42	9	51

Location

Table A.6	Murder	Manslaughter	Total
Dwelling	29	1	30
Public Road / Street / Public Place	5	6	11
Other / Unknown	6	2	10
Total	42	9	51

Appendix B: Relationship Definitions

Couple

'Couple' is defined as being where the victim and offender are or have been recognised by society/their associates, as a couple. It includes married, de facto, civil union, separated, divorced and boy/girl friend not living together. This definition does not take into account age, gender or sexual relationship. It would include, for example young adolescents whose school classmates consider them to be boy/girl friend. It would exclude people who are not a couple, but have had sexual intercourse, such as in prostitution, a one-off sexual encounter, or one or more illicit sexual encounters.

Parent

'Parent' is defined as being where the victim was a biological, adoptive or foster parent of the offender. It also includes the de facto partner of the offender's biological parent, provided the victim and offender live together, or have lived together when the offender was a child. It does not include the boy/girl friend of the offender's mother/father where the boy/girl friend does not live with the mother/father and offender.

Child

'Child' is defined as being where the victim was a biological, adopted or foster child of the offender. It also includes the biological child of the de facto partner of the offender, provided the victim and offender live together, or have lived together when the victim was a child. It does not include the child of the boy/girl friend of the victim's mother/father where the boy/girl friend does not live with the mother/father and victim. 'Child' in this table, refers to the relationship, not the age of the victim. It therefore includes adults.

Family

'Family' is defined as it would be colloquially understood internationally. It includes siblings, grandparents, grandchildren, aunts, uncles and cousins. It excludes friends of the victim/offender's parents who may be referred to as uncle/aunt.

Other Family

'Other family' excludes victims who have been counted in the categories of 'Couple', 'Parent', and 'Child'. Note: Boy/girl friend relationships, although counted in this report as 'Couple', may not necessarily be 'Family'. So, it is not possible from this report to determine how many victims were in the same 'Family' as their offender(s).

Not family but linked to family

'Not family but linked to family' is defined as the victim and offender not being 'Family', but each having one of the above four relationships to a third person. For example, this would include a victim who is killed by her spouse's ex-spouse. It would also include a victim who is the new boy/girl friend of the offenders mother/father.

Not family - other

'Not family - other' includes both victims who know their killer and those to whom the killer is a stranger.