

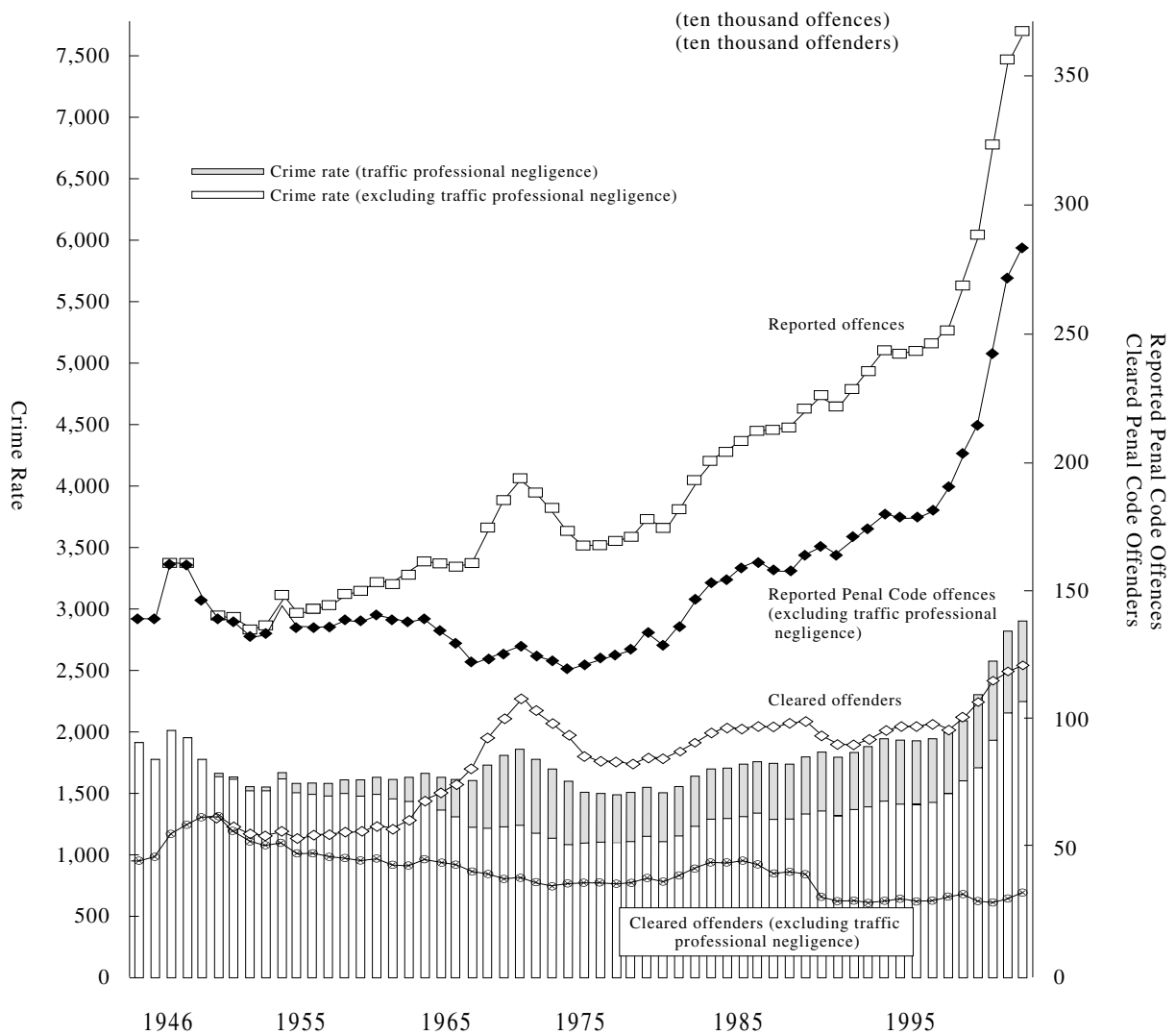
CHAPTER 2 CRIME TRENDS¹⁴

I. PENAL CODE OFFENCES

A. Trends in Penal Code Offences

Figure 1 shows the number of Penal Code offences reported by the police, the number of Penal Code offenders cleared by the police (the number of Penal Code offenders detected or identified by the police) and the crime rate (the number of reported offences per 100,000 people) for Penal Code offences from 1946 to 2002.

Figure 1 Trends in the Number of Reported Penal Code Offences, Cleared Penal Code Offenders and Crime Rate (1946 - 2002)



Note: The Crime rate is the rate of reported crimes per 100,000 people

Source: Crime Statistics by the National Police Agency and Population Data by the Statistics Bureau, Ministry of Public Management, Home Affairs, Posts and Telecommunications (now known as the Ministry of Internal Affairs and Communications)

¹⁴ White Paper on Crime 2003.

The number of Penal Code offences peaked in 1970 due to an increase in traffic accidents, when the number reached over 1,900,000. Afterwards there was a slight decrease in the number of Penal Code offences. However from 1975 there was a continuous increase and in 2002, the number of Penal Code offences hit a record high of 3,693,928, increasing 3.1 percent over the previous year. The number of Penal Code offences, other than traffic accidents with professional negligence causing death or bodily injury and gross negligence causing death or bodily injury (hereinafter these are referred to as “traffic professional negligence”), also hit a record high of 2,853,739 in 2002.

Of the Penal Code offences reported in 2002, larceny was the most prevalent offence amounting to 64.4 percent of the total, followed by traffic professional negligence amounting to 22.7 percent of the total. These two offences together accounted for approximately 87 percent of the total Penal Code offences for ten consecutive years.

The number of Penal Code offenders also peaked in 1970, when they reached over 1,700,000. After a slight fluctuation, the number has been increasing for several years and in 2002 reached 1,219,564, increasing 2 percent over the previous year. The number of Penal Code offenders, other than those of traffic professional negligence, also increased to 347,558 in 2002.

Of the Penal Code offenders cleared in 2002, traffic professional negligence offenders were the most numerous, amounting to 71.5 percent of the total, followed by larceny offenders amounting to 14.8 percent. These two offenders together comprised more than 85 percent of the total Penal Code offenders cleared in 2002.

As for the breakdown by gender of the number of cleared Penal Code offenders other than traffic professional negligence offenders, male offenders numbered 272,984 comprising 78.5 percent of the total and female offenders numbered 74,574, comprising 21.5 percent of the total.

Table 1 Number of Reported and Cleared Penal Code Offences and Offenders Cleared by the Police and Clearance Rate, by Major Offences (2002)

Offence	Reported Penal Code Offences	Cleared Penal Code Offences	Cleared Penal Code Offenders	Clearance Rate	Balance over the Previous Year	
					Reported Penal Code Offenders	Cleared Penal Code Offenders
Total	3,693,928	1,432,548	1,219,564	38.8	112,407 (3.1)	44,524 (3.2)
Homicide	1,396	1,336	1,405	95.7	56 (4.2)	75 (5.9)
Robbery	6,984	3,566	4,151	51.6	591 (9.2)	451 (14.5)
Larceny	2,377,488	403,872	180,725	17.0	36,977 (1.6)	36,229 (9.9)
Fraud	49,482	31,547	9,507	63.8	6,378 (14.8)	1,530 (5.1)
Embezzlement	73,933	71,743	73,467	97.0	8,163 (12.4)	7,465 (11.6)
Traffic Professional Negligence	840,189	840,189	872,006	100.0	Δ5,720 (0.7)	Δ5,720 (0.74)
Others	344,456	80,295	78,303	23.3	65,962 (0.4)	494 (5.9)

Notes: Figures in parentheses show the rate of increase or decrease. Δ indicates a decrease.

Source: Crime Statistics provided by the National Police Agency.

B. Trends in Some Major Crimes

For several years after World War II, the number of reported homicides each year stayed at a high level of 2,700 to 3,000, peaking at 3,081 in 1954. Then the number of homicides started to decrease, continuing until 1991, when the number dropped to 1,215. Since 1992, the number has increased and was 1,396 in 2002. In the same year, the number of cleared homicides was 1,336 (6.0 percent increase over the previous year), the number of cleared homicide offenders was 1,405 (5.3 percent increase over the previous year).

As for robbery, the number of reported cases, the number of cleared cases and the number of cleared offenders has tended to increase sharply since 1995, and in 2002, the figures were 6,984 (0.9 percent increase over the previous year), 3,566 (14.5 percent increase over the previous year) and 4,151 (1.3 percent increase over the previous year) respectively.

As for larceny, the number of reported cases, the number of cleared cases and the number of cleared offenders have increased recently and in 2002, those were 2,377,488 (1.6 percent increase over the previous year), 403,872 (9.9 percent increase over the previous year) and 180,725 (7.0 percent increase over the previous year), respectively.

II. SPECIAL LAW OFFENCES

The total number of Special Law offenders newly received by the public prosecutors offices in 2002 was 976,232 (3.3 percent decrease over the previous year). Among that number, Road Traffic Law violators were the largest, accounting for 861,143 offenders (88.2 percent of the total), followed by violations of the Stimulant Drugs Control Law, 24,801 (2.5 percent of the total). The third largest are violations of the Law on Securing Vehicle Parking Spaces, etc., 21,069 (2.2 percent of the total). Violations of the Road Traffic Law and the Law on Securing Vehicle Parking Spaces, etc., (hereinafter “road traffic violations”) together comprised more than 90 percent of the total number of Special Law offenders newly received. Of the Special Law offences, excluding road traffic violations, drug offences, such as violations of the Stimulant Drugs Control Law and violations of the Law for Control of Poisonous and Powerful Agents, were the most numerous, comprising 35.8 percent, followed by offences against public security (12.6 percent) such as violations of the Firearms and Swords Control Law, and then followed by violations of laws regulating foreigners (12.0 percent) such as violations of the Immigration Control and Refugee Recognition Act.