

C. Loan Sharks

Loan sharks came to be recognized as a serious social issue around 2002. The police are cracking down on loan sharks in accordance with the Program to Remedy the Multiple Debt Problem. In addition, the police are requesting financial institutions to freeze bank accounts used by loan sharks and internet service providers to shut down websites advertising illegal money lending.

D. Intellectual Property Rights Violation



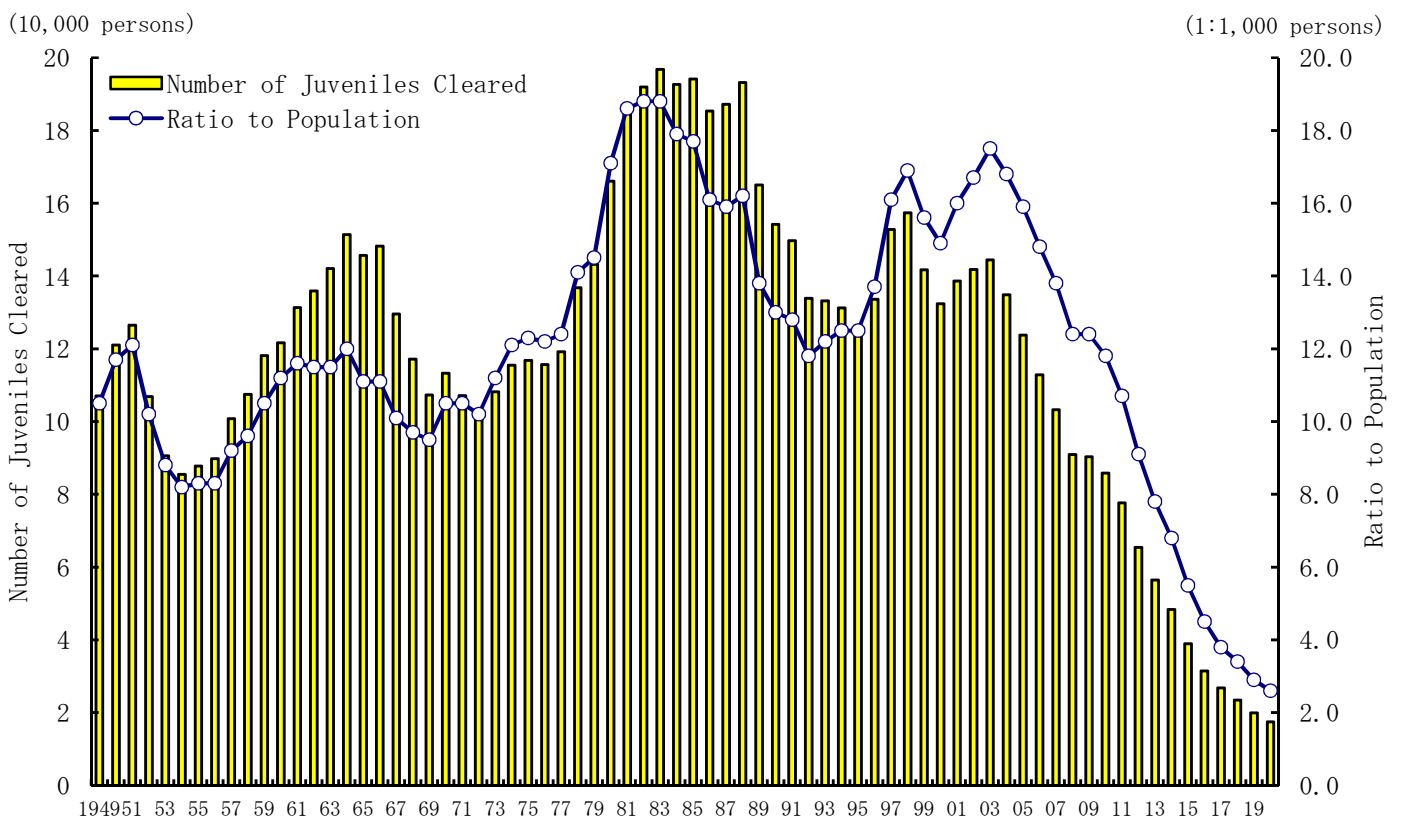
Violation of Intellectual Property Rights (IPRs) continues to be an issue. Examples of IPRs violation include uploading the copyrighted works (comics, books, papers, computer programs, etc.) onto the internet without the permission of the copyright holder, and trading the counterfeit products on websites. Counterfeit products are mostly smuggled from China and other Asian countries.

The police investigate these cases and promote public awareness on IPRs protection in cooperation with relevant ministries and organizations.

In addition, the police are cracking down on theft of trade secrets.

7. Prevention of Juvenile Delinquency and Sound Development of Youth

Number of Juveniles Cleared for Penal Code Offenses (1949-2020)



A. Juvenile Delinquency

Juveniles cleared for Penal Code Offenses

The total number of juveniles (aged 14 to 19) cleared for Penal Code offenses in 2020 was 17,466, a decrease of 2,448 (12.3%) from the previous year. The ratio of juveniles cleared for Penal Code offenses per 1,000 persons in the same age group was 2.6, decreasing 0.3 points from the previous year.

Among all the persons cleared for Penal Code offenses (both adults and juveniles) in 2020, 9.6% were juveniles. And among all the persons cleared for street crimes such as snatchings and street muggings in 2020, 35.5% were juveniles.

B. Juvenile Victimization

(1) Penal Code Offenses Victimizing Juveniles

In 2020, 64,679 Penal Code offenses that victimized juveniles were known to the police, a decrease of 31.0% from the previous year. By category, felonies (murder, robbery, arson, and forcible sexual intercourse) stand at 757, a decrease of 9.7%; violent offenses stand at 7,077, a decrease of 11.0%; and larcenies stand at 50,701, a decrease of 34.9% from the previous year.

(2) Offenses Harmful to Juvenile Welfare

Welfare offenses are crimes harmful to juvenile welfare such as sexual exploitation of children.

In 2020, a total of 5,129 juveniles were victimized by welfare offenses, a decrease of 9.7% from the previous year. High school students topped the number of victims, followed by junior high school students.

The use of the internet in welfare offenses has become a serious issue. The police are strengthening crackdown efforts on internet-related welfare offenses in order to prevent further harm to children, and working to protect the juvenile victims of such offenses.

(3) Child Sexual Exploitation



Child sexual exploitation is of grave concern to the international community in light of the protection of children's rights and development of youth.

In 2020, 564² persons were arrested for child prostitution in 637 cases. For child pornography, 1,965³ persons were arrested in 2,757 cases. Both numbers decreased from the previous year.

Child sexual exploitation continues to be serious. In view of this recognition, the "Basic Plan on Measures against Child Sexual Exploitation" was formulated in April 2017 at the Ministerial Meeting Concerning Measures Against Crime.

As the primary activities of the police, the plan includes strict measures such as strengthening crackdowns on crimes related to child sexual exploitation, development of comfortable environments for children and their parents/guardians for consultations, promotion of public relations and public awareness-raising activities to prevent victimization by child prostitution and child pornography, and measures against entities which operate social networking sites and online dating services. The police are promoting these countermeasures in cooperation with relevant institutions and organizations based on the plan.

² This number includes not only persons arrested but also those against whom necessary investigations have been completed without detention.

³ See note above.

For details, please see our portal site “STOP! Child Sexual Exploitation” (https://www.npa.go.jp/policy_area/no_cp/eng/).

(4) Child Abuse

Child abuse significantly infringes the rights of children and causes serious damages to their physical and psychological development as well as personality formation.

The police are making every effort to take appropriate measures to detect and protect victimized children at early stages of child abuse, while strengthening cooperation with the relevant organizations.

(5) Bullying

There were 142 incidents attributable to bullying in 2020, a decrease of 61 (30.0%) from the previous year.

The police are striving to identify bullying cases early on through actions such as counseling activities for juveniles and school supporters’ visits to schools, and developing appropriate measures while keeping close communication with schools.

(6) Support for Juvenile Victims

Juvenile guidance officials provide continuous counseling services and other support to juvenile victims of crimes such as bullying and child abuse, for supporting their recovery from psychological damages.

C. Prevention of Juvenile Delinquency and Promotion of Sound Development of Youth

(1) Various Preventive Measures against Juvenile Delinquency



A scene of street guidance activities

The police, in cooperation with community juvenile police volunteers, are making every effort to detect juvenile delinquents at early stages and provide guidance in a timely manner through on-the-spot protection and street guidance activities in crime-prone areas like entertainment districts and arcades.

In addition, the police not only contact juveniles who are likely to offend again but support their recovery through counseling activities, home visits, participation in community services, etc. Furthermore, by raising awareness of the community about the factors of juvenile delinquency, the police endeavor to develop a trend toward supporting juveniles.

Furthermore, in order to enhance systematic and expert support for juvenile delinquents and their families, and to strengthen assistance to minors harmed by crimes, Juvenile Support Centers are established in each PPH as specialized organizations for juvenile support and guidance, staffed by juvenile guidance officials as the key figures.

Additionally, in order to protect juveniles against welfare offenses caused by the use of the internet and to promote sound development of the youth, the police promote efforts such as guiding juveniles who posted inappropriate messages on the internet that could induce child prostitution.

(2) Clearing up the Environment Surrounding Juveniles

In an effort to clean up the social environment to safeguard juveniles, the police, in cooperation with the community, relevant organizations and public authorities, are trying to apply appropriate measures to shut out the influences of Boryokudan and control the flow of harmful information by sex-oriented entertainment establishments.

As the internet environment for juveniles has deteriorated recently, the police are making efforts to clean up the internet through implementation of cyber-patrol and promotion of filtering, and requesting the internet industry to provide self-restriction and other measures to safeguard juveniles.

(3) Counseling for Juveniles



A scene of juvenile counseling

The Young Telephone Corner is a service provided by the police that offers counseling for juveniles. It is staffed by experienced juvenile guidance officials and counseling specialists, who provide necessary advice and guidance to troubled juveniles. In 2020, the police handled 74,695 juvenile consultation cases.

D. International Cooperation (Countermeasures against Child Sexual Exploitation)

A collective action by the international community is necessary to counter sexual exploitation of children.

The NPA is exchanging information with foreign investigative authorities, arranging international cooperation in criminal investigation, and strengthening collaborative relationships through participating in the INTERPOL International Child Sexual Exploitation Database.

In February 2021 the NPA held "The 5th Meeting of Specialist Group on Child Sexual Exploitation" by involving domestic and international institutions and organizations. At the meeting, the NPA introduced the national government's efforts against child sexual exploitation, and shared information with the relevant institutions and organizations in order to strengthen mutual cooperation.

8. Countermeasures against Cybercrime

A. Cybercrime cases

The number of cybercrime cases cleared in 2020 was 9,875, an increase of 356 (3.7 %) from the previous year.

(1) Violations of the Act on Prohibition of Unauthorized Computer Access

The number of violations of the Act on Prohibition of Unauthorized Computer Access cleared in 2020 was 609, a decrease of 207 (25.4%) from the previous year.

(2) Crimes related to electromagnetic records with malicious commands and crimes targeting computers or electromagnetic records

The number of crimes related to the electromagnetic records with malicious commands and crimes targeting computers or electromagnetic records cleared in 2020 was 563, an increase of 127 (29.1%) from the previous year.

(3) Others

The number of crimes enabled by access to info-communications networks cleared in 2020 was 8,703, an increase of 436 (5.3%) from the previous year.