

CRIMINAL INVESTIGATION

1. Overview

A. Number of Penal Code Offenses Known to the Police (See Appendix 2)

In 2020, the number of penal code offenses known to the police was 614,231, a decrease of 134,328 (17.9%) from the previous year. After marking a postwar record high in 2002, it has continued to decrease since 2003. In 2020, the number is less than one-fourth of that in 2002.

Among the different types of offenses known to the police, the number of larcenies was 417,291, a decrease of 115,27 (21.6%) from the previous year. There has been a decreasing trend in the number of felonies (murder, robbery, arson, and forcible sexual intercourse) in recent years.

In addition, the number of intellectual offenses was 34,065, a decrease of 1,966 (5.5%) from the previous year.

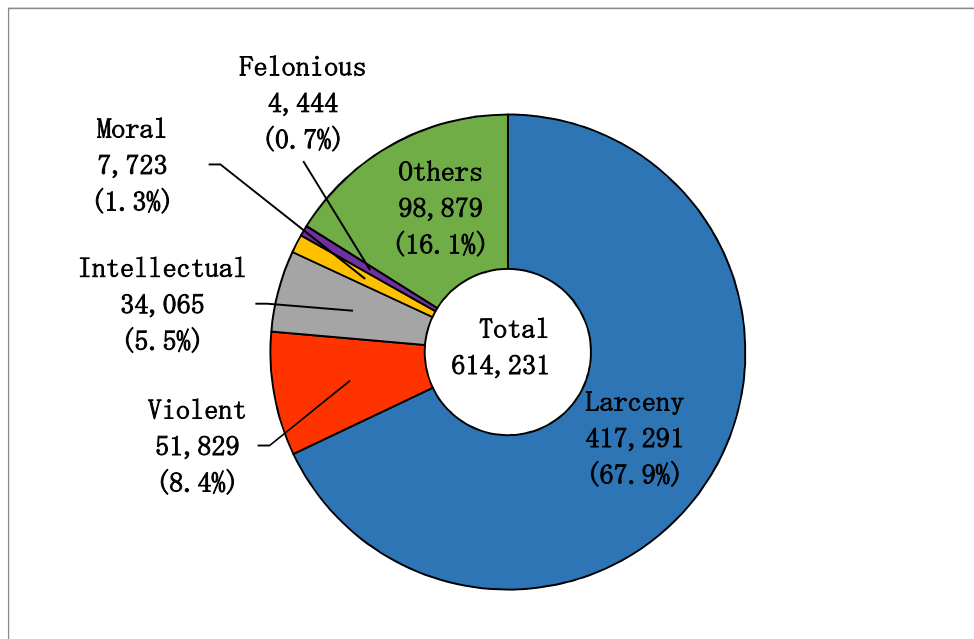
B. Number of Cleared Penal Code Offenses (See Appendix 2)

The number of cleared penal code offenses was 279,185, a decrease of 15,021 (5.1%) from the previous year, while the number of persons cleared was 182,582⁴, a decrease of 10,025 (5.2%) from the previous year.

The number of cleared larcenies was 170,687, a decrease of 10,210 (5.6%) from the previous year.

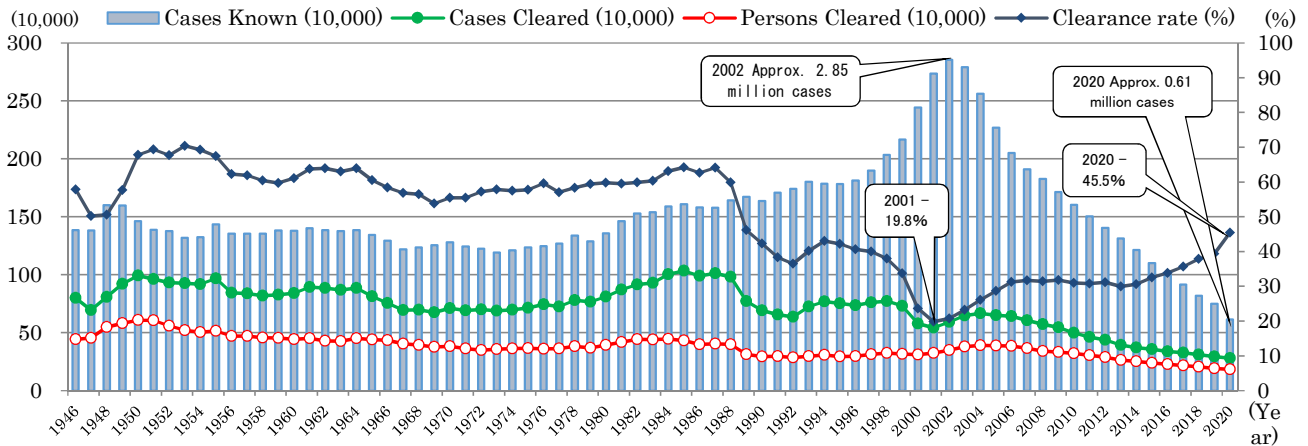
The number of cleared felonies was 4,268, an increase of 28 (0.7%) from the previous year.

The number of cleared intellectual offenses was 18,153, a decrease of 943 (4.9%) from the previous year.



⁴ This number includes not only persons arrested but also those against whom necessary investigations have been completed without detention.

Trends in Penal Code Offense Known and Cleared (1946 – 2020)



C. Countermeasures against Increasingly Sophisticated Crimes

The police make efforts to prevent crimes through coordination with relevant organizations and citizens. The police are developing expertise in new investigative methods in order to respond to crimes which are becoming increasingly sophisticated such as the so-called “Hey, it’s me” type of special frauds⁵. Also, the police are involved in development and international exchanges of advanced forensic science techniques.

D. Cooperation of Citizens



The understanding and cooperation of citizens is critical in crime investigation. The police call for information and assistance which could facilitate investigations from the public through its offline and online publications.

In addition, the police introduced the Special Reward System – a public reward system – in 2007, to encourage citizens to provide information for solving serious crimes.

E. Combating International Crime

The NPA is intensifying efforts to crack down on international crime in order to effectively respond to the threat from the transnational organized crime groups, whose members might be traveling to Japan among other visitors. In this regard, the NPA is promoting countermeasures such as improving intelligence capacity and collaboration with relevant agencies in Japan and abroad.

⁵ Collective term for crimes which are perpetrated without face-to-face contacts by abuse of communication tools such as the telephone to defraud many and unspecified victims of money, property or anything of value by diverse deceptive means including false instructions to have victims remit money to financial accounts designated by the perpetrators.