

Crime Situation in 2020

1 Situation

Number of Penal Code Offenses Known to the Police

Among the indicators for measuring the crime situation in our country, the total number of known cases of penal code offenses has decreased consistently since 2003. In 2020, the number was 614,231, the smallest since the end of the Second World War, following the previous year. In 2020, the rate of decrease was 17.9% over the previous year, which was greater than that of the previous year. (In 2019, the rate of decrease was 8.4% over the previous year.)

Looking at the breakdown of the decline in the number of known cases, the number of street crimes and invasion crimes, which account for a large proportion of the total number, has consistently decreased since 2003. Against the backdrop of a unified promotion of comprehensive anticrime measures by police and civilians, the dissemination of crime prevention equipment, and various other changes in the social situation continued. (It was down 87.3% from 2002, when the number of known cases of penal code crimes reached the highest level after the Second World War.) Last year, the decrease in the number of known cases of street crimes was particularly high. Although many different factors can cause an increase or decrease in the number of crimes, one factor in the decrease is believed to be the decrease in the number of people out of doors due to those self-restraints on going out to prevent infection from the spread of COVID-19.

On the other hand, COVID-19-related crimes such as the burglary of closed stores and fraudulent collection of subsidies associated with measures to counter the spread of the coronavirus, are also occurring in response to the confusion caused by the spread of the infection.

Effects from the change in social modes accompanying the spread of coronavirus may continue to appear.

Reference 1 Emergency measures based on the Act on Special Measures against Novel Influenza, etc. were implemented from April 7 through May 25 2020. Since April of the same year, there has been a significant decrease in the number of reported street crimes over the previous year. (April-December 2019 was down 11.8% year-on-year, and April-December 2020 was down 32.2% year-on-year.)

Special Fraud

The number of known cases of special fraud in 2020 was 13,550, the lowest in the last five years, as a result of promoting a number of different measures. For example, we worked together with prominent “influencers” who have power to affect public opinion in public awareness campaigns based on the “Plan for Countermeasures against “It’s Me” Fraud” determined at the Ministerial Conference on Countermeasures against Crime in June 2019. However, while the total number of penal code offenses known to the police has consistently decreased since 2003, the number of known special fraud cases has remained at a high level: 2.0 times that in 2010, which was the lowest since statistics have been compiled. Members and affiliates of organized crime groups are seen involved in special fraud in leadership positions (the percentage of

members and affiliates of organized crime groups to total central suspects cleared was 45.0%).

Since 2018, there have also been many ways to target ATM cards such as ATM card fraud and misappropriation, and the manner of crime is becoming more diverse and sophisticated. Furthermore, a more stringent situation ongoing since 2019 involves cases of seniors who incur damage from theft after being questioned over the phone about their assets.

Reference 2 According to a questionnaire conducted by the NPA in September 2020 (a survey of 10,000 males and females aged 15 or older nationwide, conducted over the internet so that the ratio of respondents by age, gender, and prefecture is based on 2015 census results), the percentage of respondents indicating they experienced vulnerability to special fraud in the past year was 11.0% (1,098 persons), and the percentage of respondents indicating they had experienced special fraud in the past year was 1.3% (126 persons).

Threats in Cyberspace

Looking at indicators other than the number of known cases of penal code offenses, the number of cleared cybercrime cases continues to increase, and the number of unexpected connection attempts the NPA detects in cyberspace as apparent scanning activities is also trending higher. The upward trend in the number of unexpected connection attempts is believed to be due to factors such as an increased number of targets available for attack due to the popularization of IoT devices and the constant appearance of new malware. Also, the number of cases and amounts of damage in relation to online banking fraud, which had been trending lower since 2016 due to enhanced security measures at financial institutions, increased dramatically in 2019. Although both decreased from the previous year in 2020, the number of incidents remains high. The number of child victims of crimes arising from social networking services had also been trending higher since 2013 but decreased from the previous year. However, the trend stayed at a high level due to cases of people who fell victim to crime when they became acquainted with others in cyberspace and so forth.

Although it is difficult to use these indicators to accurately understand the state of incidents, the threat in cyberspace continues to be a serious situation, given the wide variety of cybercrime and cyber-attacks occurring both within and outside Japan in recent years.

Reference 3 In the survey above, the percentage of people who responded that they had experienced the risk of cybercrime damage in the past year was 21.8% (2,175 persons), and the percentage of those who responded that they had been victimized by cybercrime in the past year was 9.5% (949 persons).

Stalking, Domestic Violence, and Child Abuse

Despite a decrease in the number of consultations about stalking from the previous year, the number of cases cleared has increased. Although the number of cleared cases for domestic violence has decreased from the previous year, the number of consultations has increased, and both indicators continue to remain at a high level. Regarding child abuse, both the number of notifications of abuse cases and the number of arrest cases have been on an increasing trend.

Although it is difficult to use these indicators to accurately understand the state of incidents, the situation of stalking, domestic violence, and child abuse should continue to be closely monitored.

Reference 4 In the survey above, 2.0% of respondents (203 persons) answered that they had suffered damages from shadowing or stalking in the past year and 0.8% of respondents (80 persons) answered that they had suffered damage due to domestic violence in the past year.

Summarization

As described above, the total number of penal code offenses known to the police, against the backdrop of various changes in the social situation, has been continuously decreasing in recent years, primarily for the types of offenses and modus operandi that make up a large percentage of the total. In 2020, the number of penal code offenses known to the police drastically decreased compared to the previous year as a result of the spread of COVID-19, etc. However, the crime situation is still difficult, given that it is not necessarily understood from changes in the number of known cases and impacts from changed social conditions resulting from the spread of COVID-19.

Reference 5 In the above survey, the percentage of people who are concerned about damage caused by crimes, such as cybercrime is still large (for example, 75.3% (7,531 people) responded that they “Am concerned” or “feel somewhat uneasy” about the danger of cybercrime), and the percentage of people who answered “it’s not improving” or “it’s not really improving” about the recent security situation is 56.2% (5,620 people), larger than the 34.4% (3,435 people) who answered “it’s improving” or “it’s somewhat improving.”

2 Future Actions

In response to countermeasures, the modus operandi of crimes that are highly anonymous and involve offenses by a perpetrator without face-to-face contact with victims, such as the special fraud and cybercrimes continuing to produce high levels of damage in recent years, are constantly changing. It's also possible to repeat offenses in a way that makes it difficult for traces of the crime to remain and increases the risk of spreading damage.

Moreover, it is necessary to take measures against crimes such as stalking, domestic violence, and child abuse that frequently occur in family and other private relationships, considering that the nature of such crime creates a tendency to suppress them.

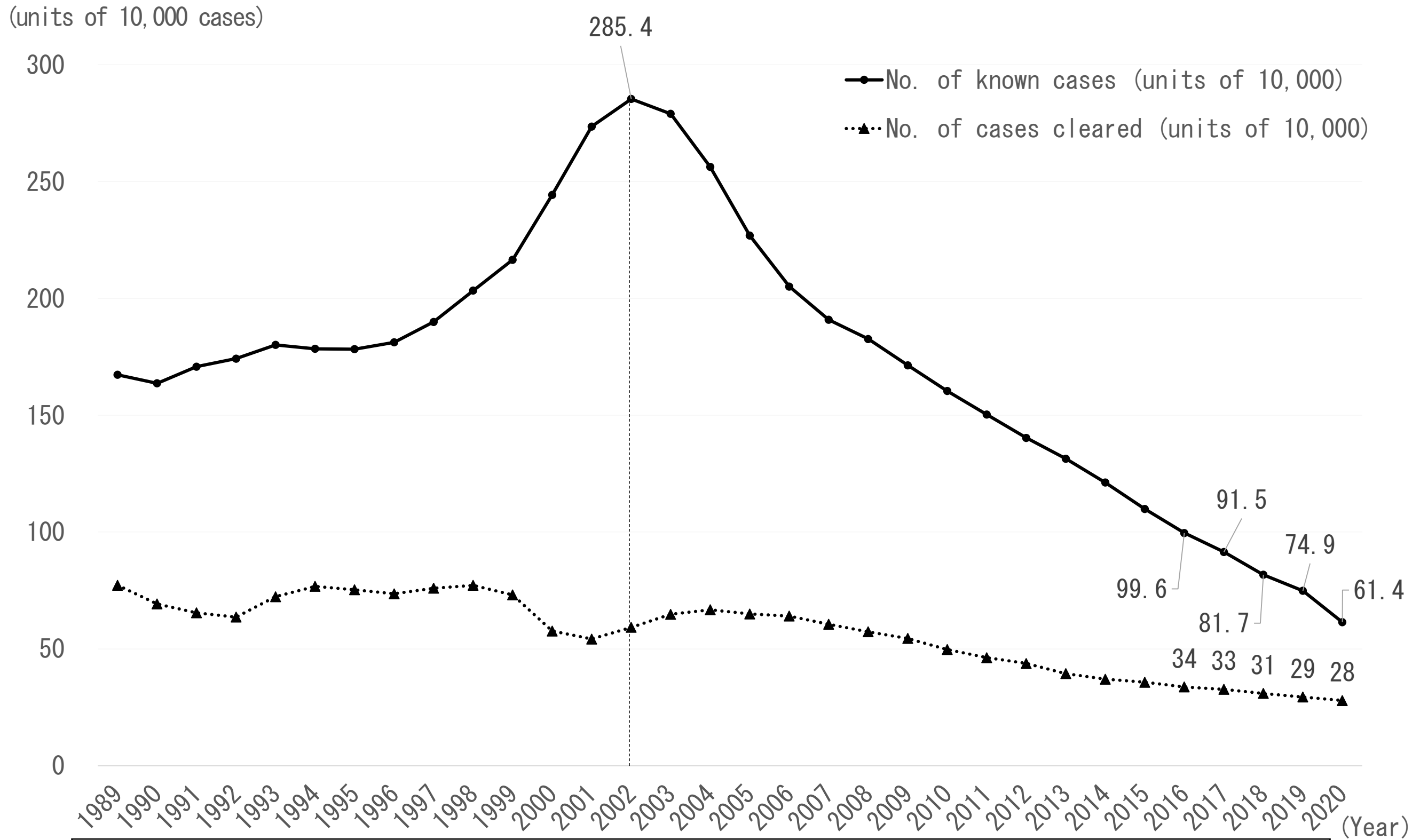
In addition, new lifestyle approaches established to prevent infection, the impact of the spread of infection on the economy, and other changes in the social situation associated with the spread of COVID-19 will continue to affect the crime situation.

Considering these criminal trends and social conditions, the police should not only promote accurate investigations of incidents that occur, but also foster close cooperation by sharing information on the occurrence of harm and criminal tactics with relevant organizations and businesses and implement measures against criminal tools. It is also necessary for the police to implement thorough measures such as effectively raising public awareness to prevent damage before it occurs, including by promptly warning people and quickly responding to consultations while keeping in mind the possibility that damage may be concealed.

Moreover, in order to continue effective and efficient measures against crime in a constantly changing modern society, the police must continue to accurately grasp changes in social conditions from multiple indicators and improve analysis of the crime situation, and to develop and use effective measures tailored to the subject and based on such analysis.

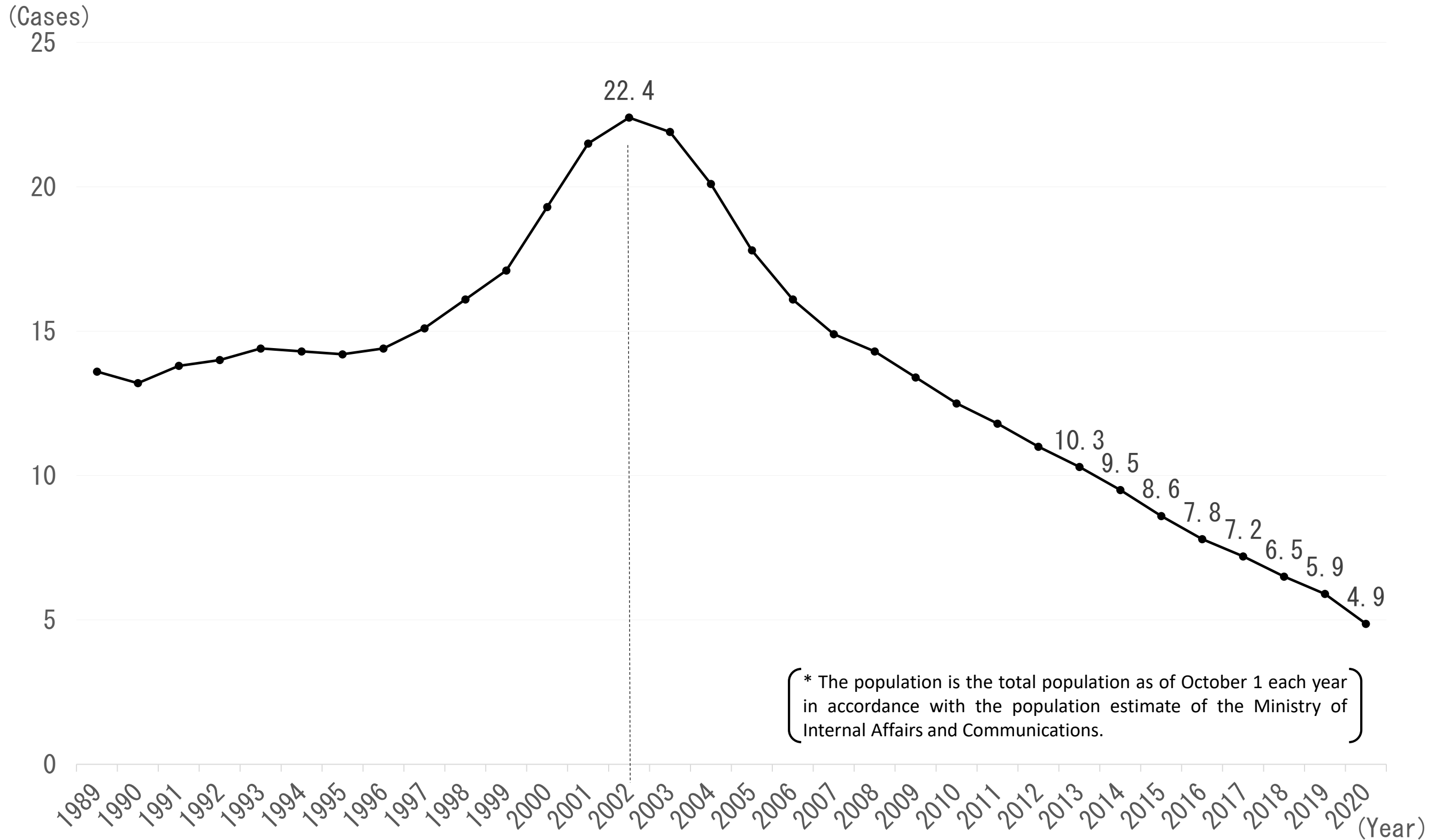
Reference 6 For example, in the survey described above, more than 60% responded that they spent less time on weekdays "Going out to restaurants, shopping, entertainment facilities, etc." and that they spent more time "At home". Also, more than 30% responded that they did "Make more use of the internet to buy items and settle payments", and "Opportunities to use cash decreased, while the use of cashless services increased". This illustrates a situation in which many were actually aware of self-restraints in order to prevent COVID-19 infection.

Graph 1 No. of Penal Code Offenses Known to the Police



The number of known cases of penal code offenses in 2020 was 614,231, which was even lower than in 2019, the lowest in the post-war period. The number of cases cleared for penal code offenses was 279,185, which was lower than in 2019.

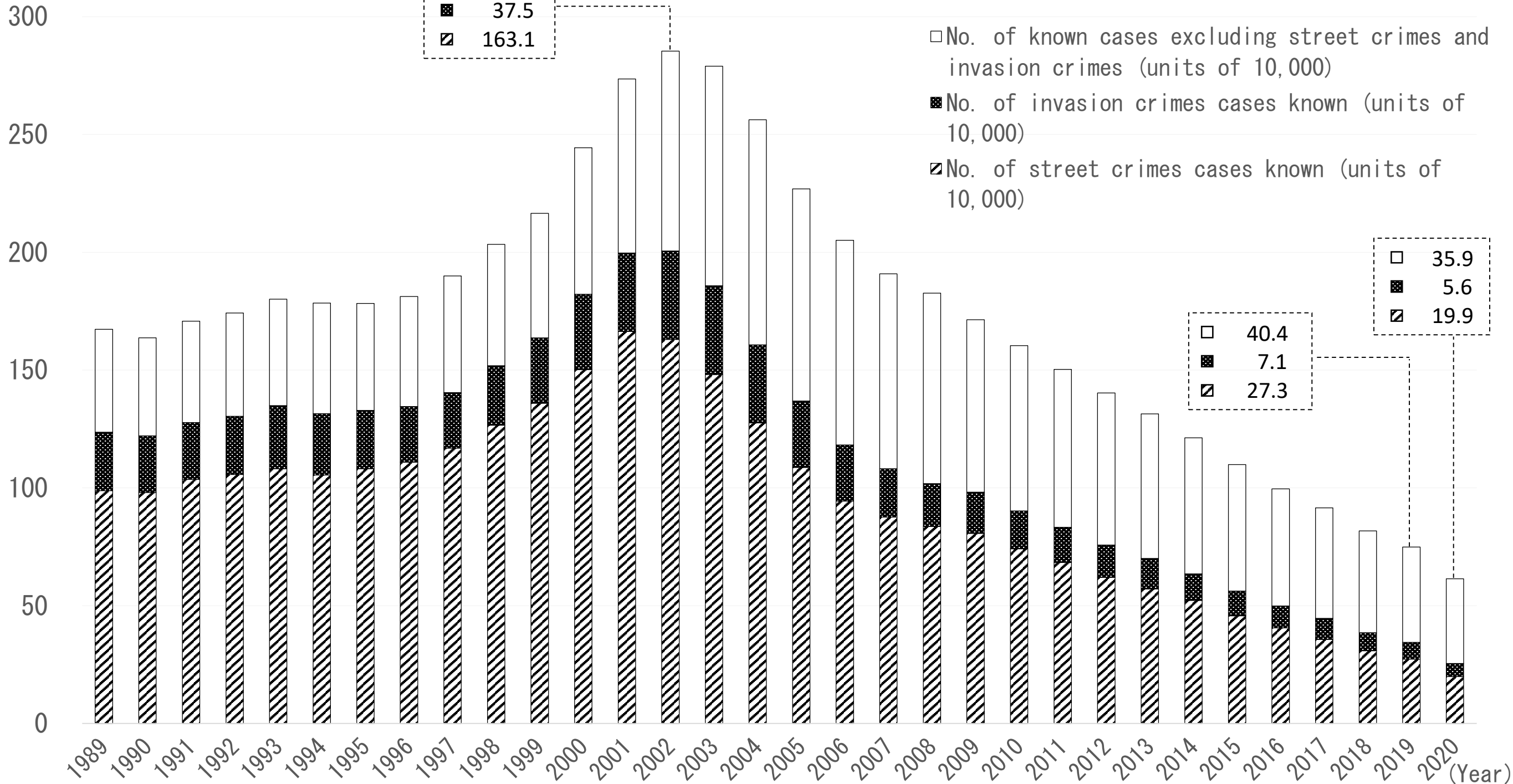
Graph 2 No. of Penal Code Offenses Known to the Police per Thousand Population



The number of known penal code offenses per thousand population in 2020 was 4.9, falling further below 2019 (5.9 cases), the lowest in the post-war period.

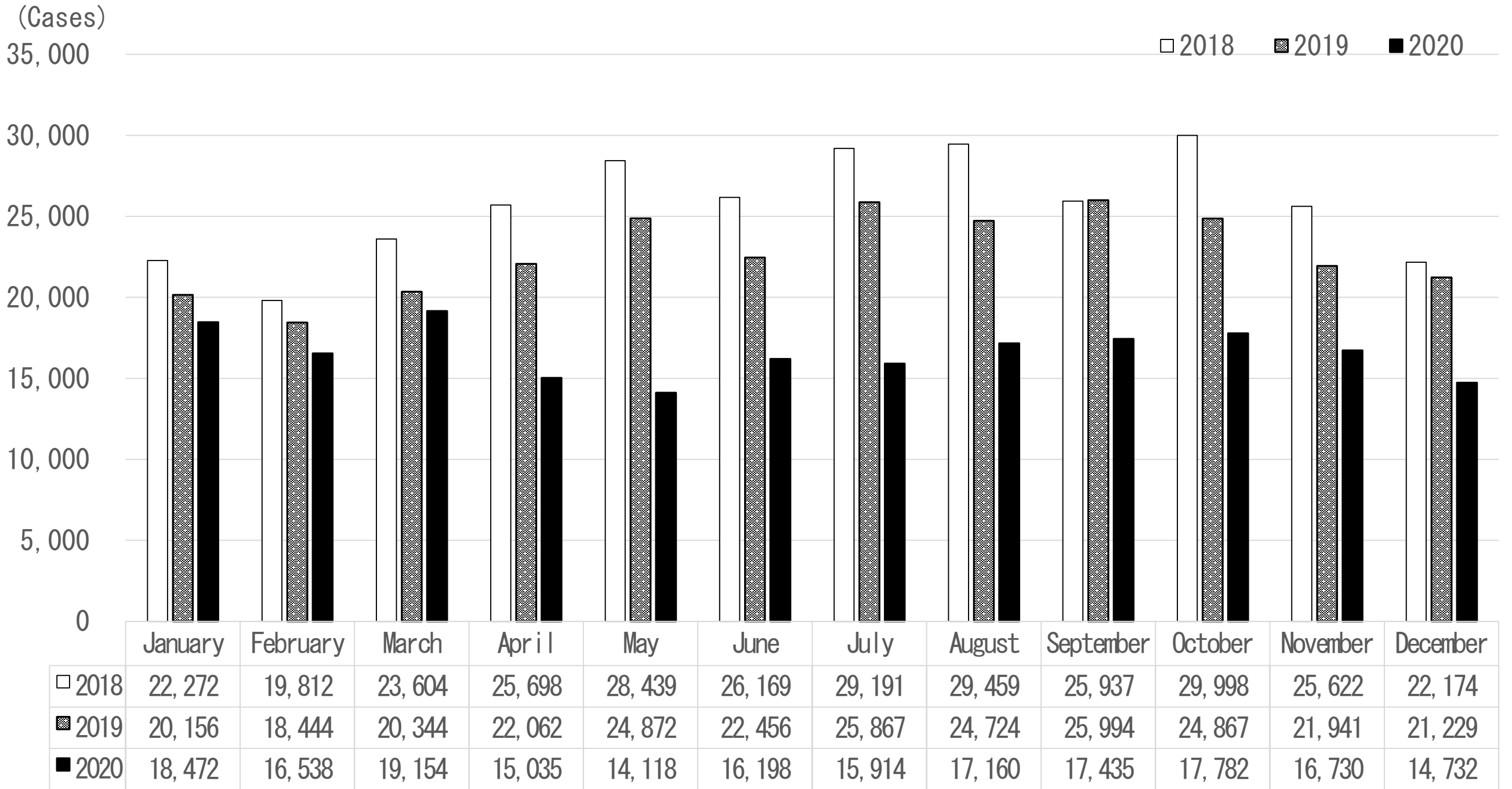
Graph 3 No. of known cases of street crimes and invasion crimes

(units of 10,000 cases)



The rate of decrease in the number of known cases of street crimes and invasion crimes since 2002, when the number of penal code offenses known to the police reached its highest since the end of World War II, was 87.3%. (The rate of decrease since 2002 for cases excluding the number of known cases of these crimes was 57.6%.) The number of known cases of street crimes was 199,268 in 2020, down 27.0% from 272,956 in 2019. The number of known cases of invasion crimes was 55,515, down 21.9% from 71,122 in 2019.

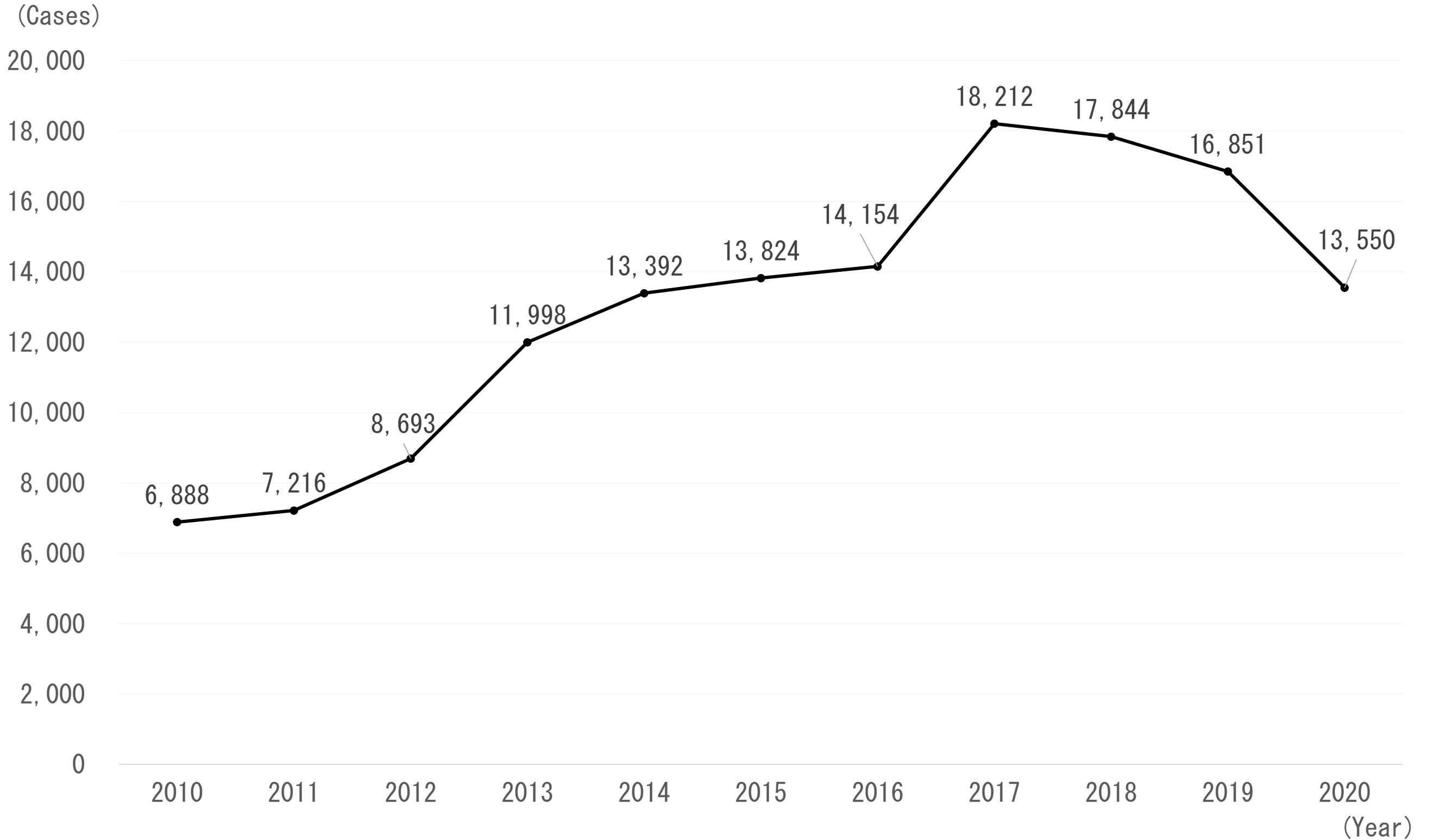
Graph 4 No. of known cases of street crime (by month)



Year-to-year comparison	2019	-9.5%	-6.9%	-13.8%	-14.1%	-12.5%	-14.2%	-11.4%	-16.1%	0.2%	-17.1%	-14.4%	-4.3%
	2020	-8.4%	-10.3%	-5.8%	-31.9%	-43.2%	-27.9%	-38.5%	-30.6%	-32.9%	-28.5%	-23.8%	-30.6%

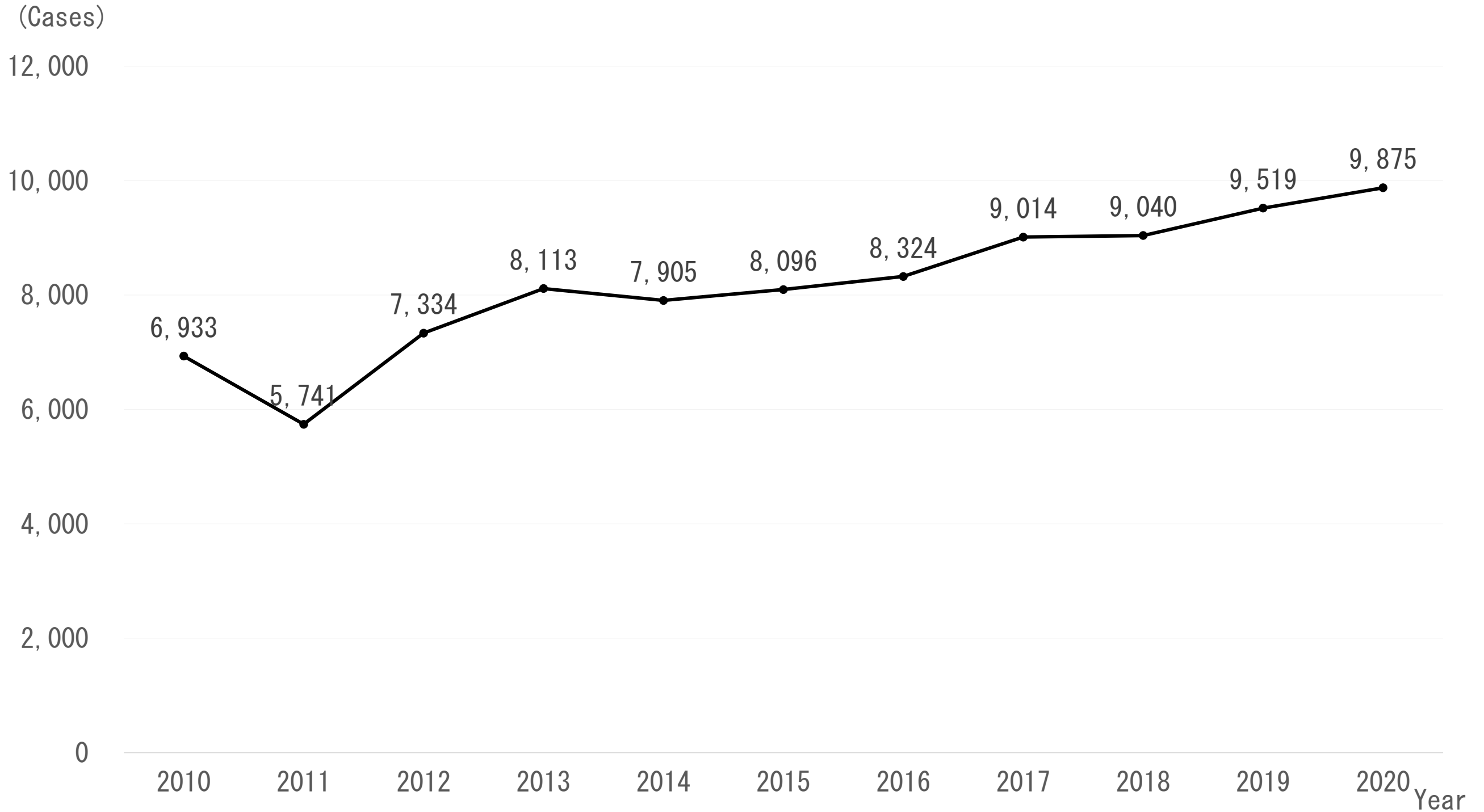
Looking at the number of known cases of street crimes by month in 2020, the decline in and after April was particularly large compared with the same period of the previous year.

Graph 5 No. of known cases of special fraud



The number of known cases of special fraud in 2020 was down 19.6% from the previous year to 13,550. This figure is 2.0 times that of 2010, which was the lowest since statistics began to be collected in 2004, and remains at a high level.

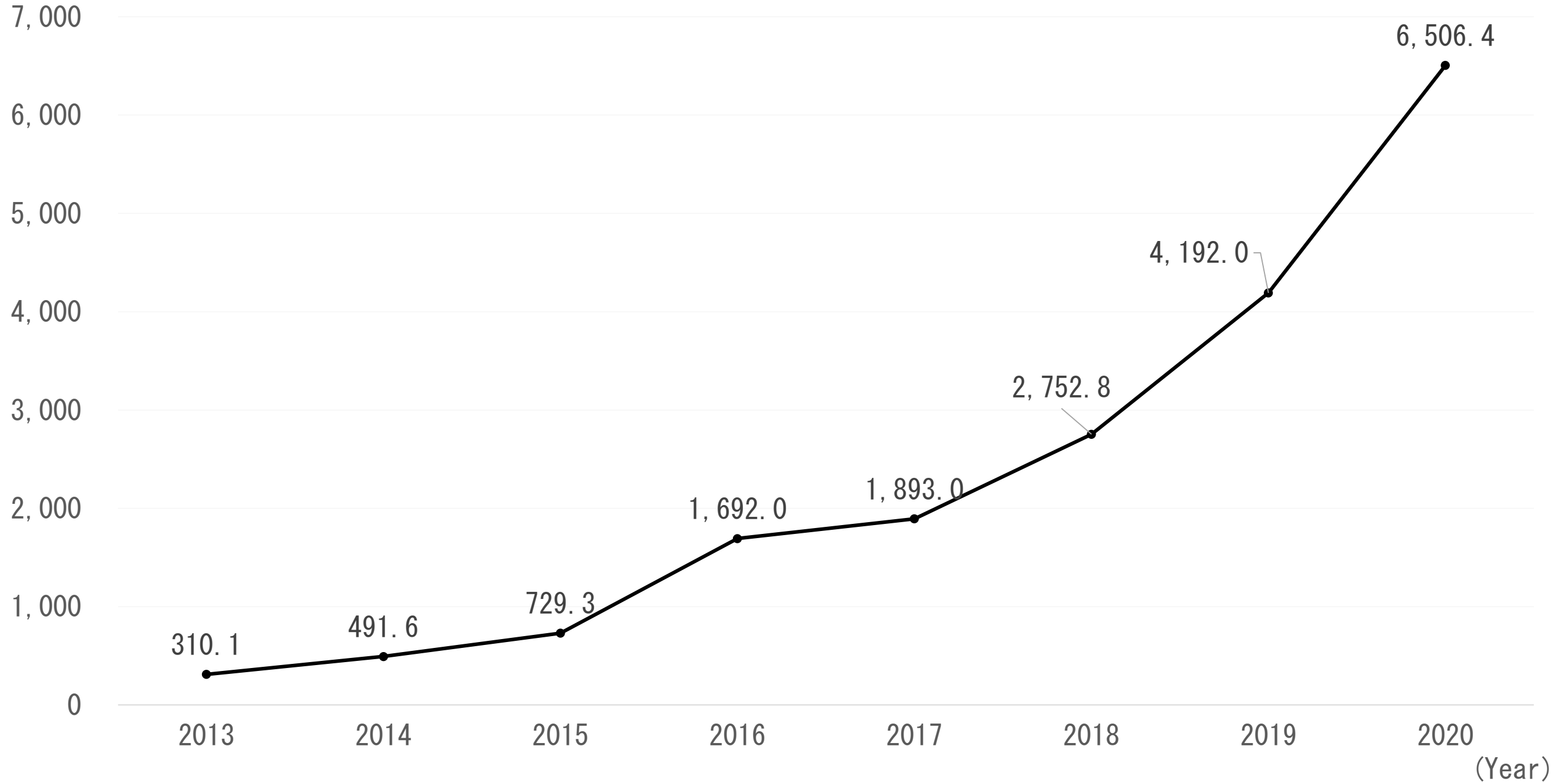
Graph 6 No. of cybercrime cases cleared



The number of cybercrime cases cleared began to increase in 2012. It reached 9,875 in 2020, up 3.7% from the previous year, and has increased 18.6% in the past five years since 2016.

Graph 7 No. of unexpected connection attempts detected at the sensors as apparent scanning activities in cyberspace

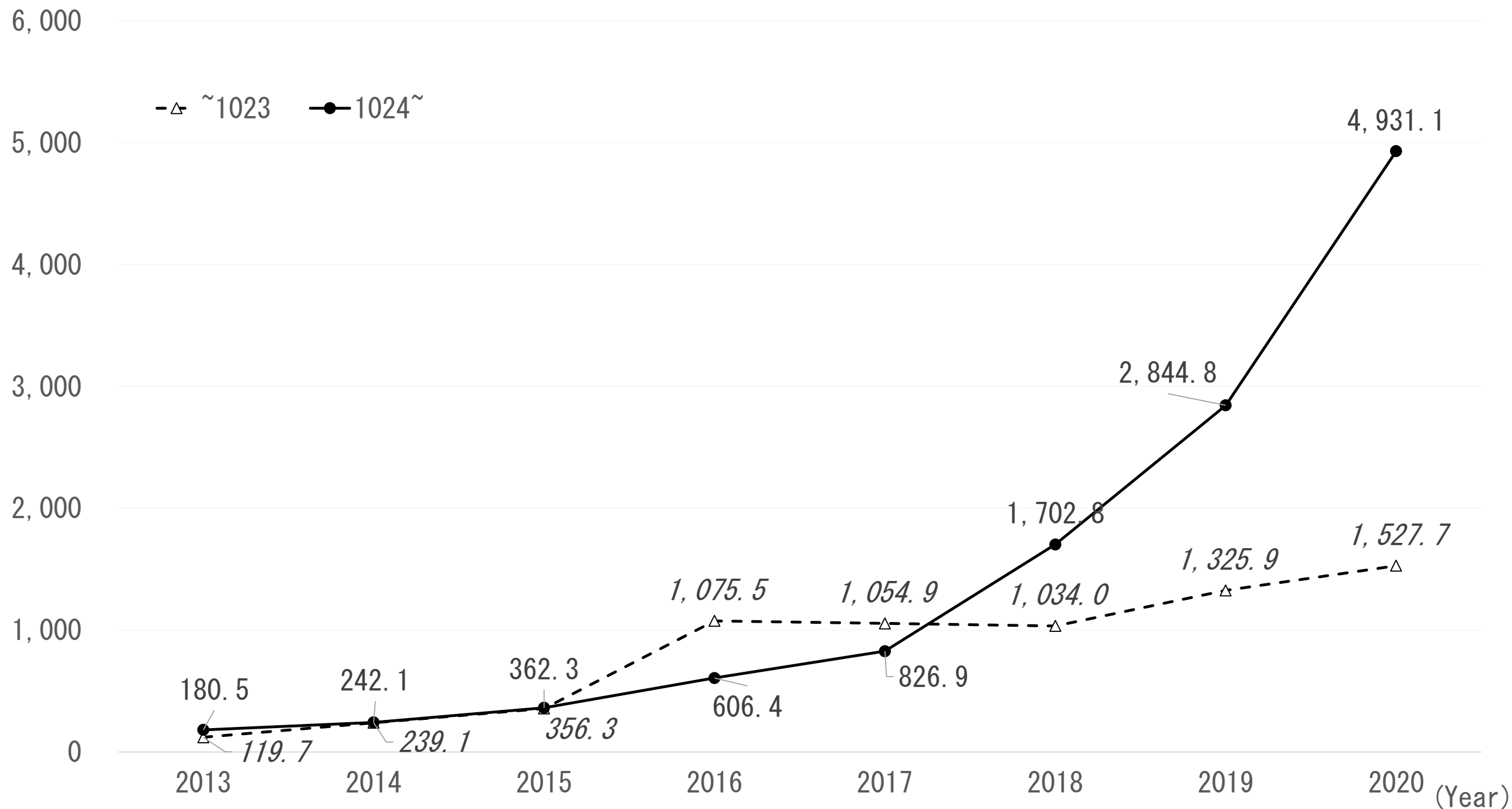
(Count / day/ IP address)



The number of unexpected connection attempts detected at the sensors as apparent scanning activities in cyberspace is trending higher since 2013. In 2020, the number of suspicious connection attempts detected at the sensors per IP address per day is 6,506.4, an increase of 55.2% over the previous year.

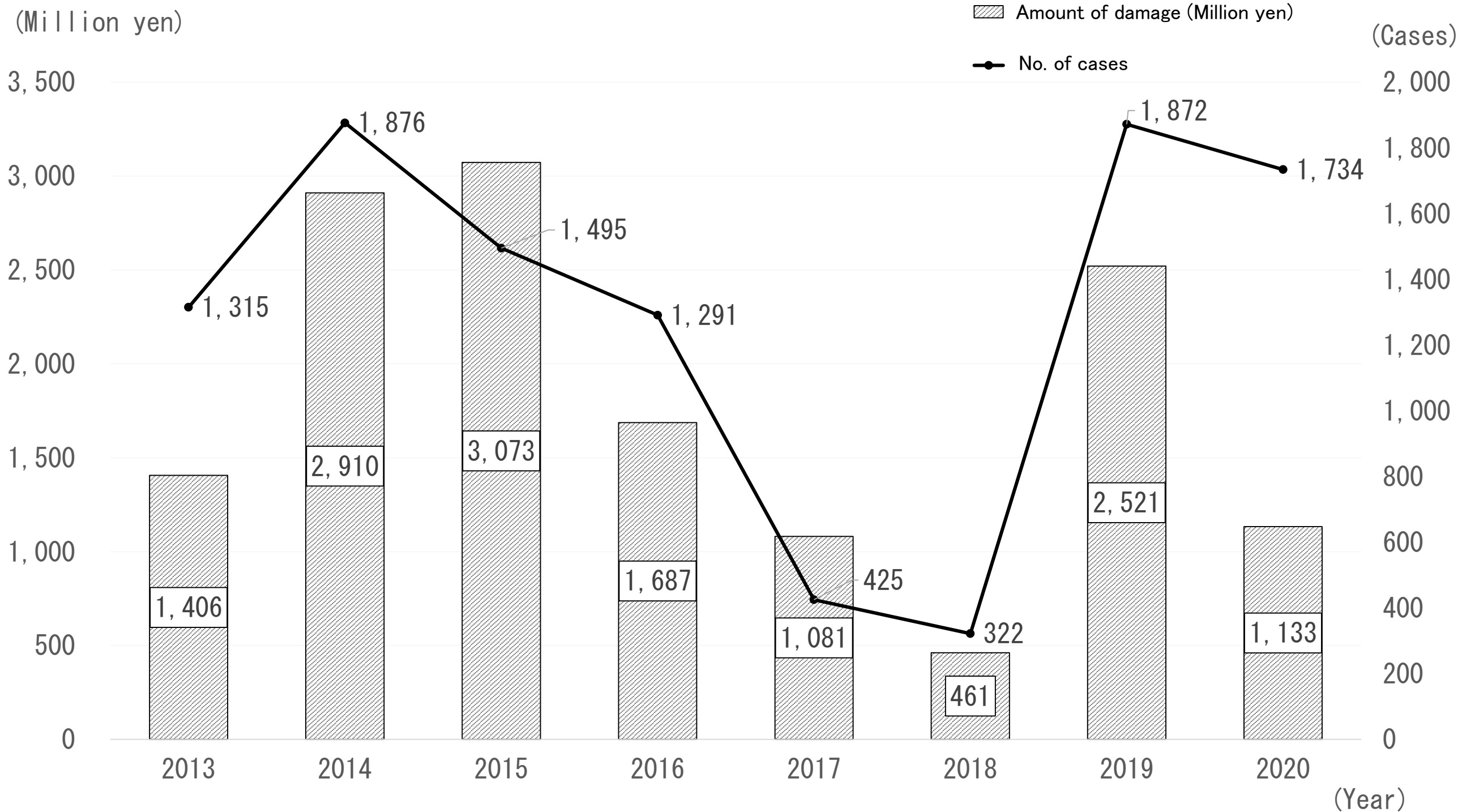
Graph 8 No. of unexpected connection attempts detected at the sensors as apparent scanning activities in cyberspace (by destination port)

(Count / day/ IP address)



With regard to unexpected connection attempts detected at the sensors as apparent scanning activities in cyberspace, the amount of increase is remarkable for ports used for IoT devices, etc. (numbered 1024 and above) compared to ports widely used for sending and receiving emails or accessing websites, etc. (numbered 1023 and below). The number of suspicious connection attempts to the ports numbered 1024 and above per sensor per day in 2020 was 4,931.1, which has increased 8.1 times the number in the past five years since 2016.

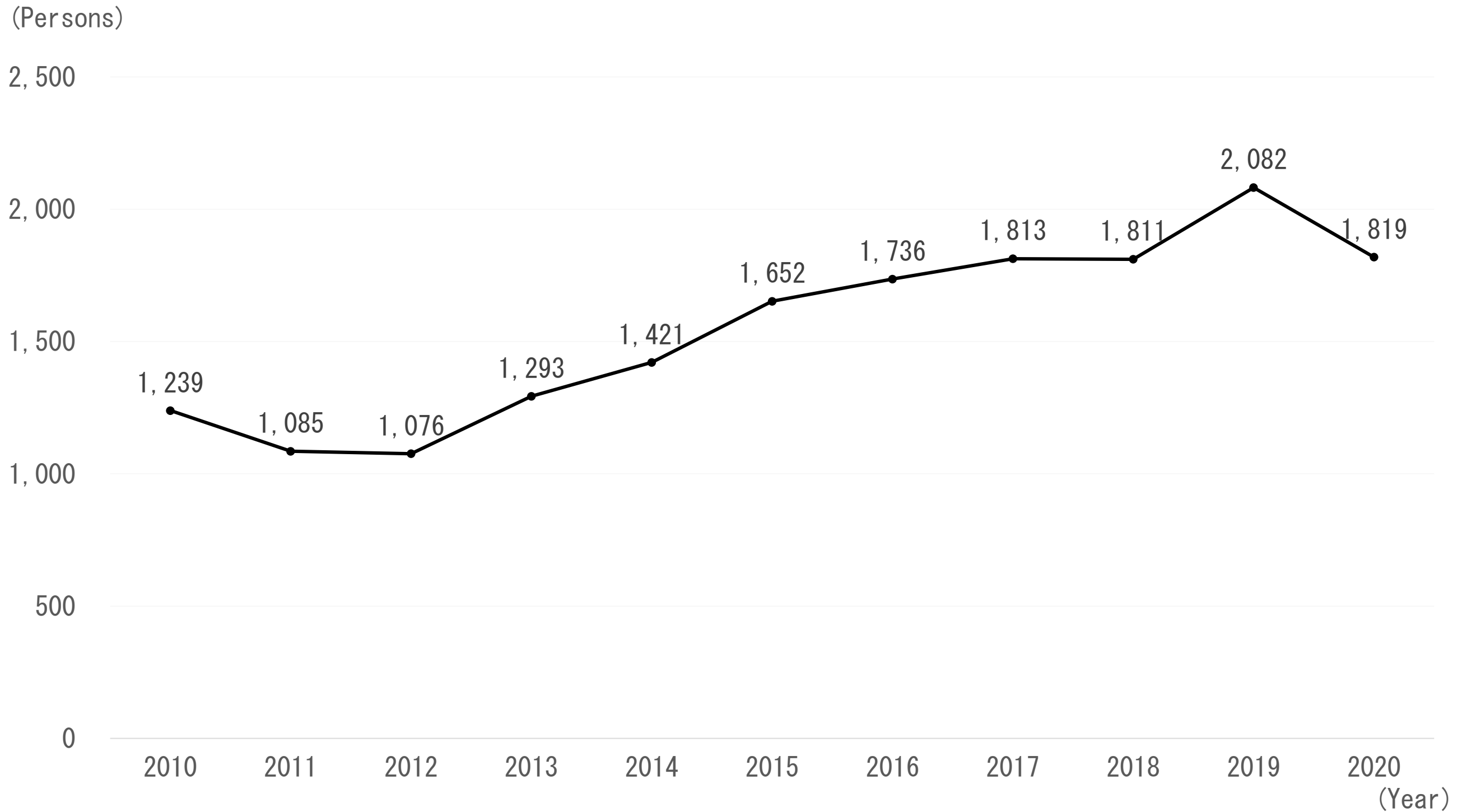
Graph 9 Online banking fraud



The number of cases of online banking fraud increased to 1,872 in 2019, an increase of 5.8 times the previous year, with the amount of damages increased from about 5.5 times from the previous year to about 2,521 million yen. In 2020, damages amounted to about 1,133 million yen, a decrease of about 55.1% from the previous year, but incidents numbered 1,734, remaining at a high level in spite of a decrease of 7.4% from the previous year.

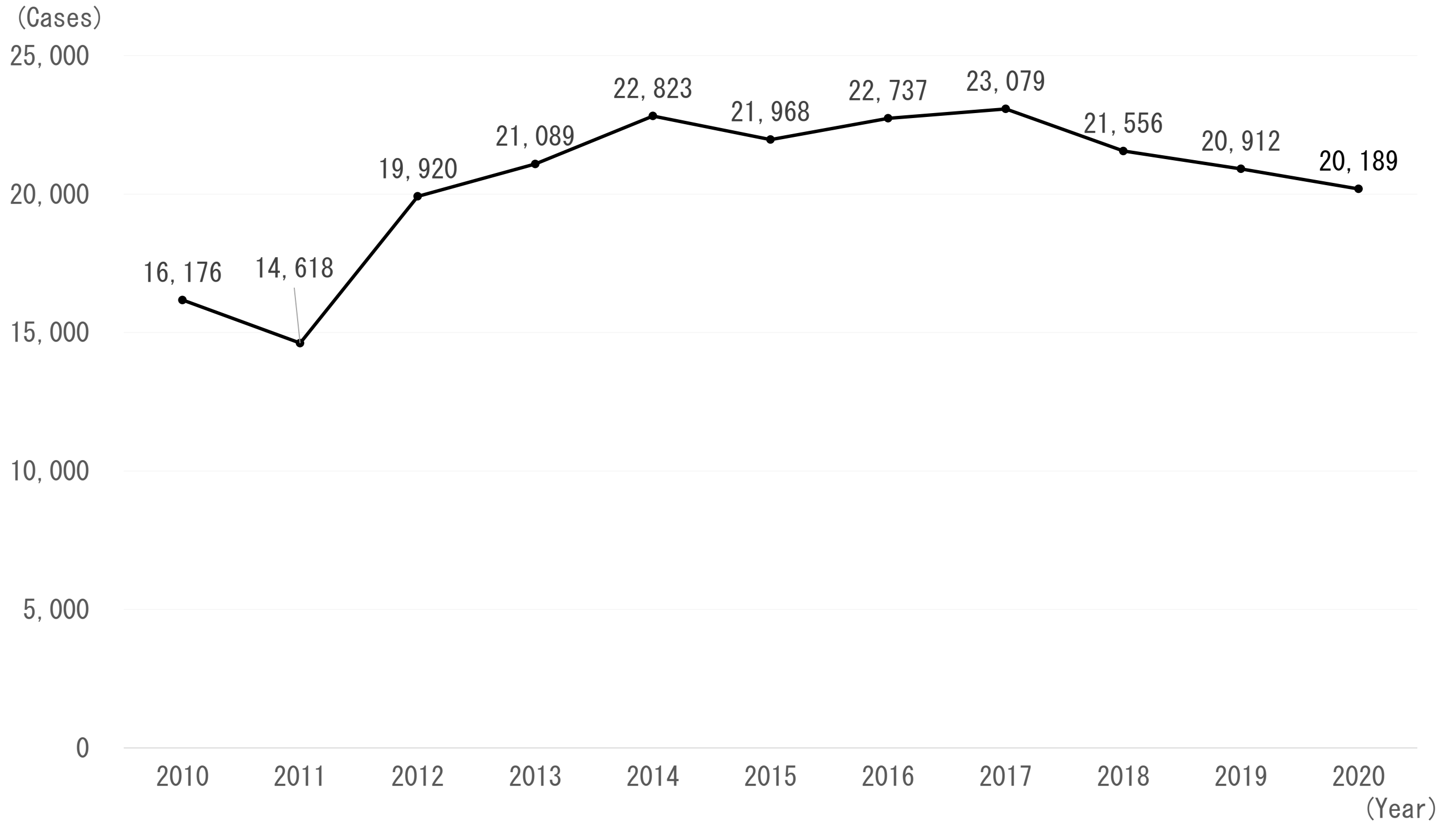
Graph 10 No. of child victims of crimes arising from social networking services

* The term "child" means a person under 18 years of age. The same applies hereafter.



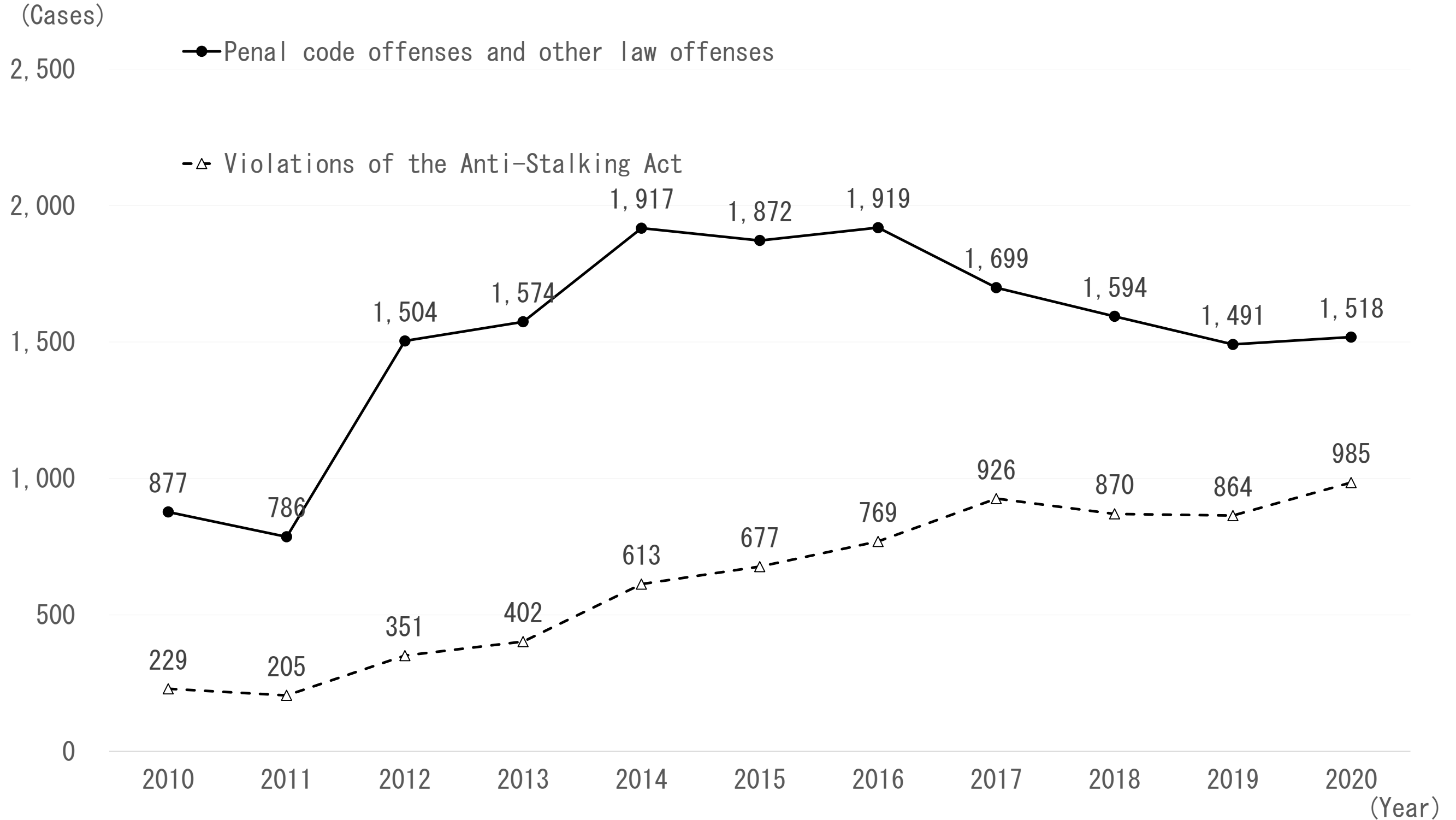
Although the number of child victims arising from social networking services was 1,819 in 2020, a decrease by 12.6% from the previous year, the number trended higher starting in 2013, and has increased by 4.8% in the past five years since 2016.

Graph 11 No. of consultations on stalking



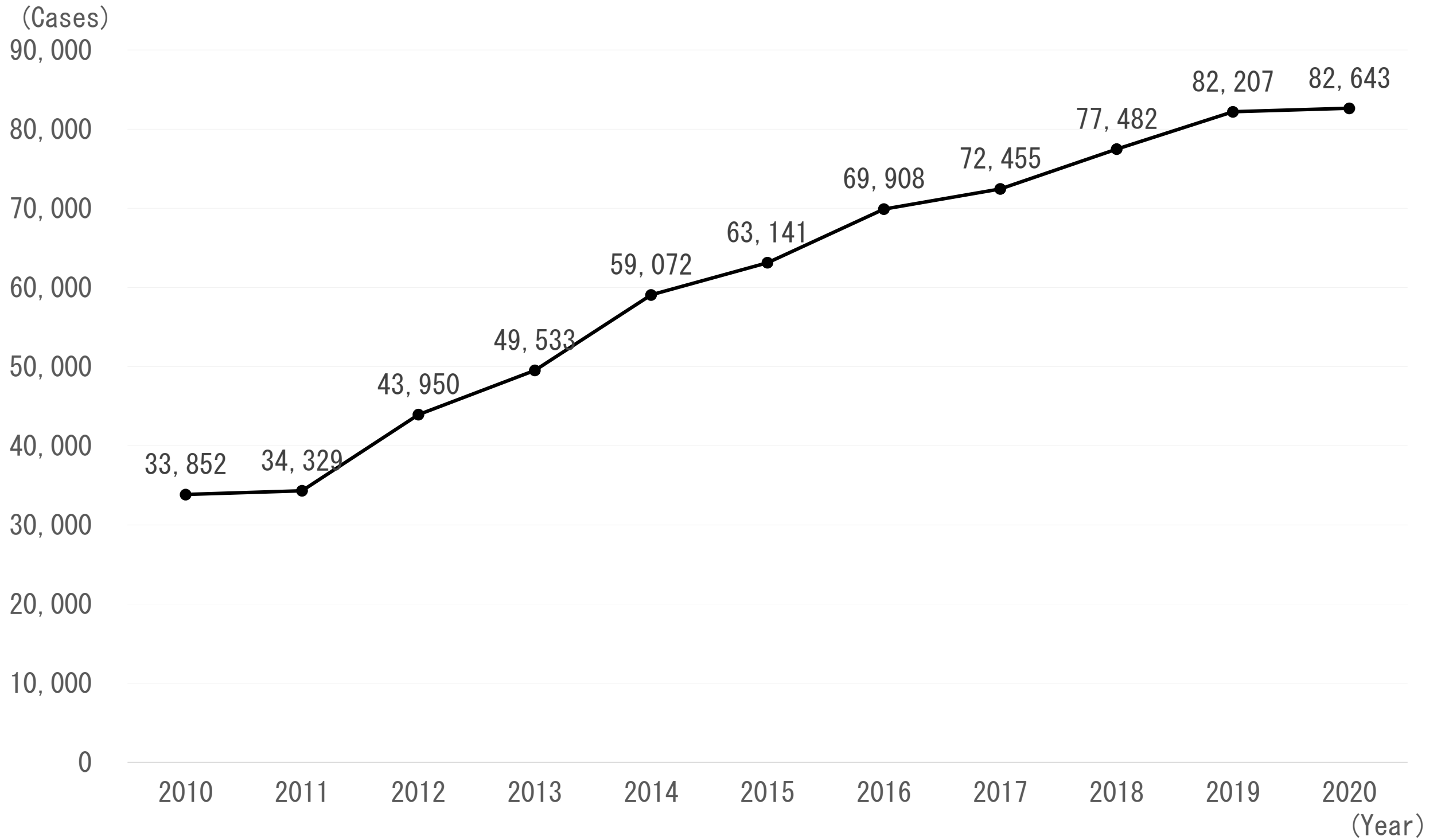
Although the number of consultations on stalking decreased by 3.5% over the previous year, it has remained at a high level, exceeding 20,000 cases since 2013.

Graph 12 No. of stalking cases cleared



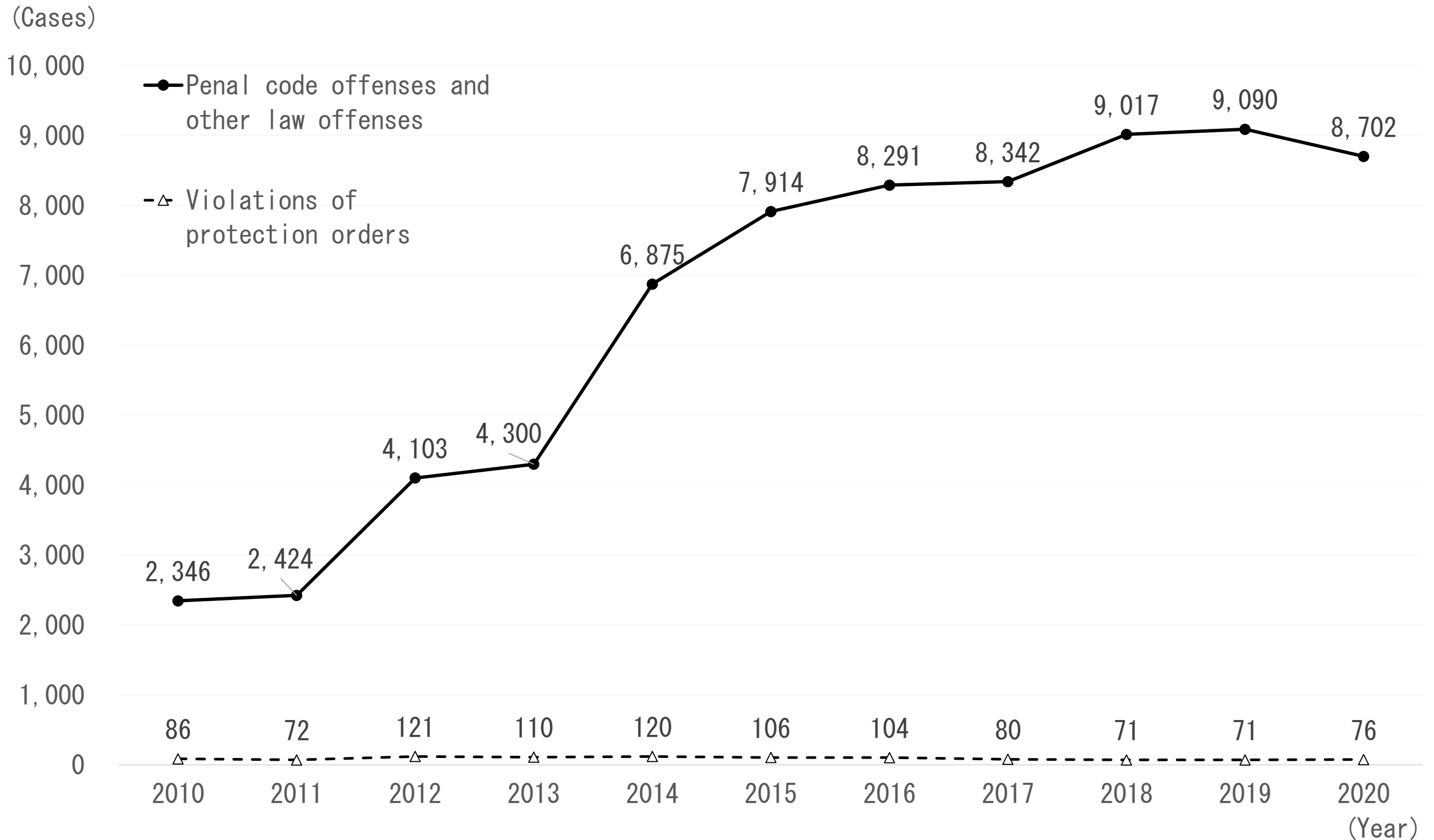
The number of cases cleared for violation of the Anti-Stalking Act was 985 in 2020, a 14.0% increase over the previous year and has increased 28.1% in the past five years since 2016. The number of cases of penal code offenses and other law offenses was 1,518 in 2020, which increased 1.8% over the previous year and 73.1% over 2010 and has remained at a high level.

Graph 13 No. of consultations on spousal violence



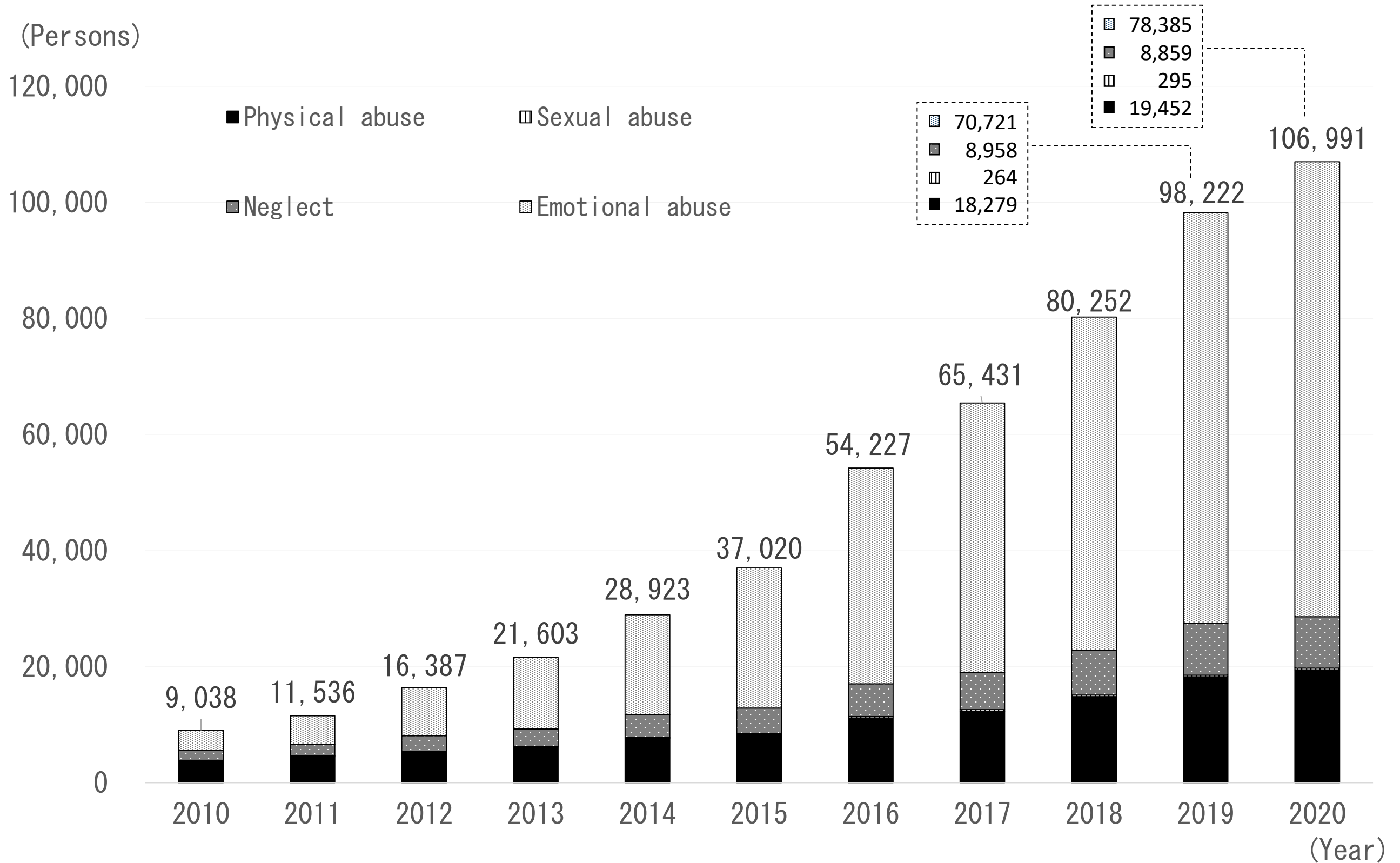
The number of consultations on spousal violence cases has increased consistently since 2010 to become 82,643 in 2020, up 0.5% from the previous year, and has increased 18.2% in the past five years since 2016.

Graph 14 No. of cleared spousal violence cases



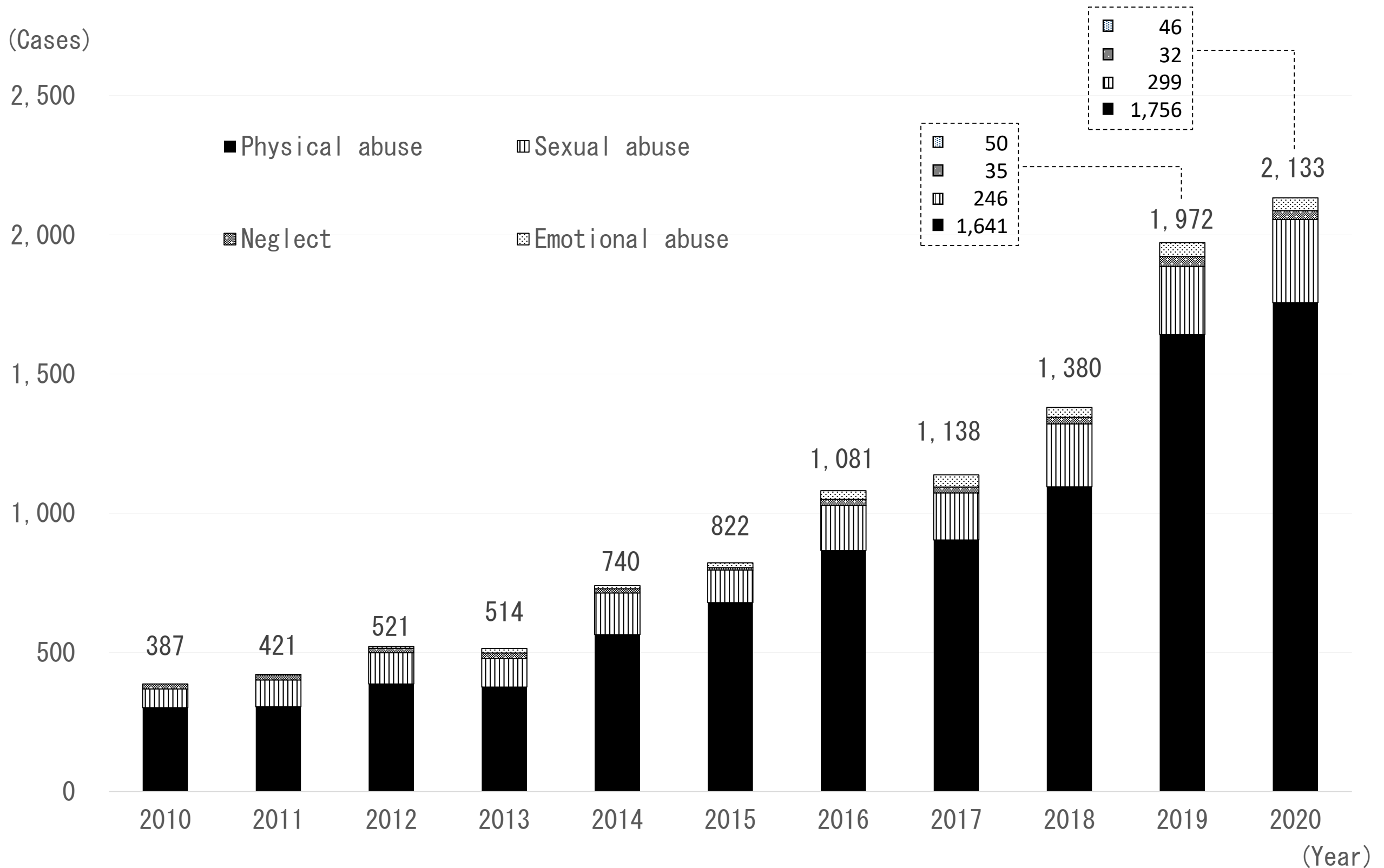
The majority of the number of spousal violence cases cleared are cases cleared for penal code offenses and other law offenses that totaled 8,702 in 2020, a decrease of 4.3% from the previous year, but that has increased 5.0% in the past five years since 2016.

Graph 15 No. of children notified to child guidance centers by the police in child abuse cases



The number of children notified to child guidance centers for child abuse cases has consistently increased since 2010, reaching 106,991 in 2020, an increase of 8.9% over the previous year. The statistic has increased by 2.0 times in the past five years since 2016.

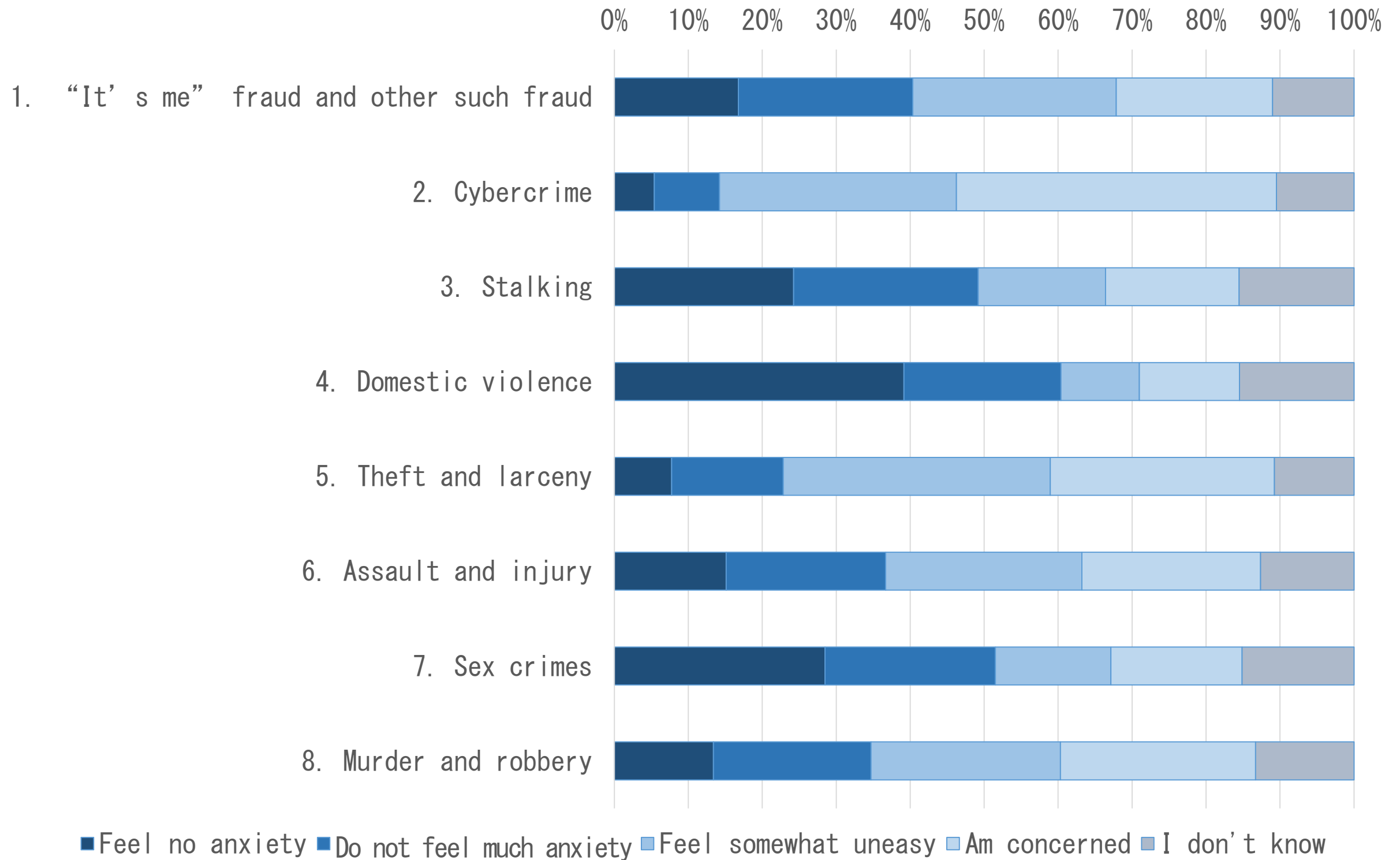
Graph 16 No. of child abuse cases cleared



The number of child abuse cases cleared trends towards increase, with 2,133 cases in 2020, an increase of 8.2% over the previous year. The statistic has increased by 2.0 times in the past five years since 2016.

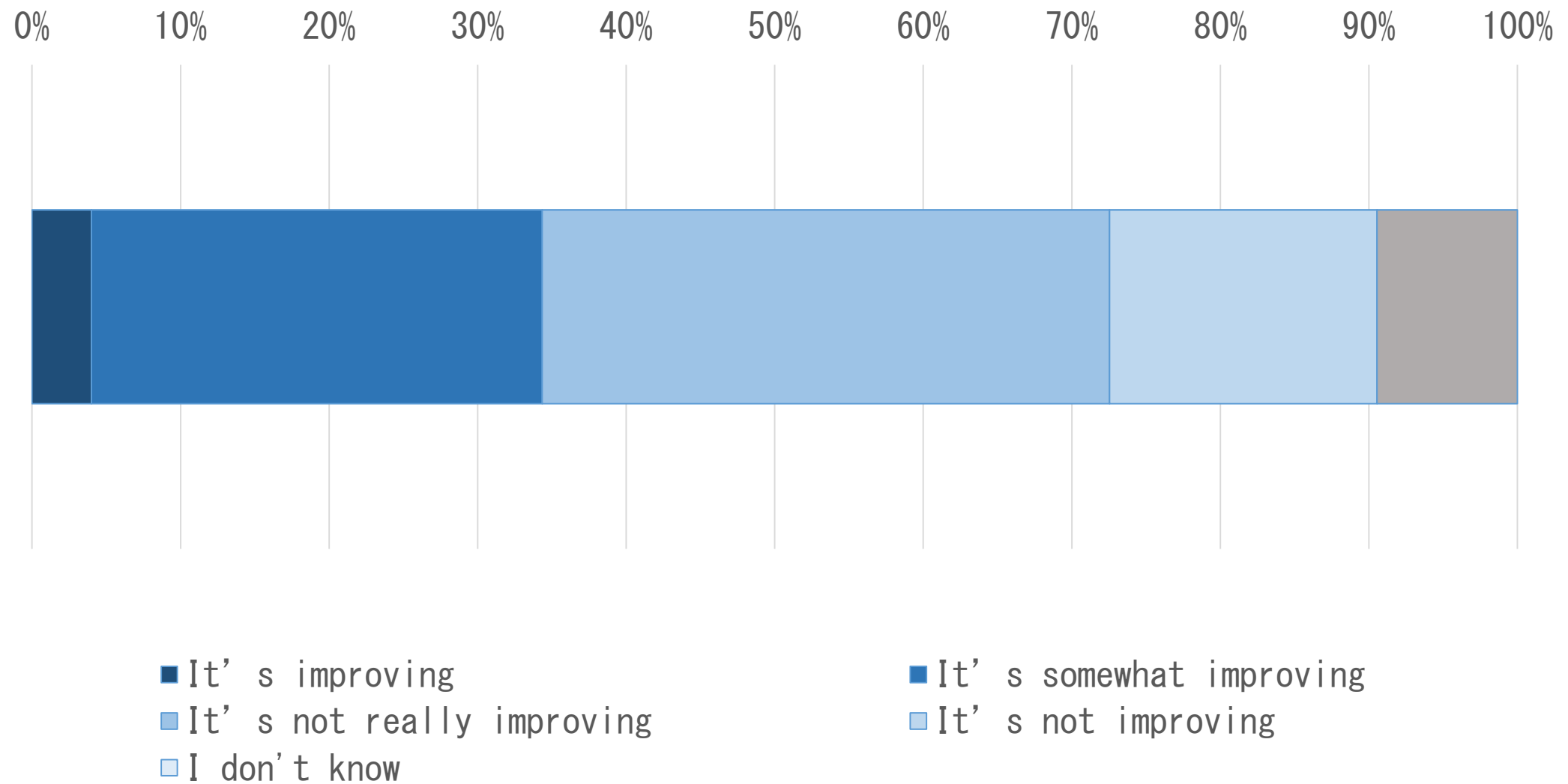
Questionnaire Results

Level of concern about suffering damage from crime



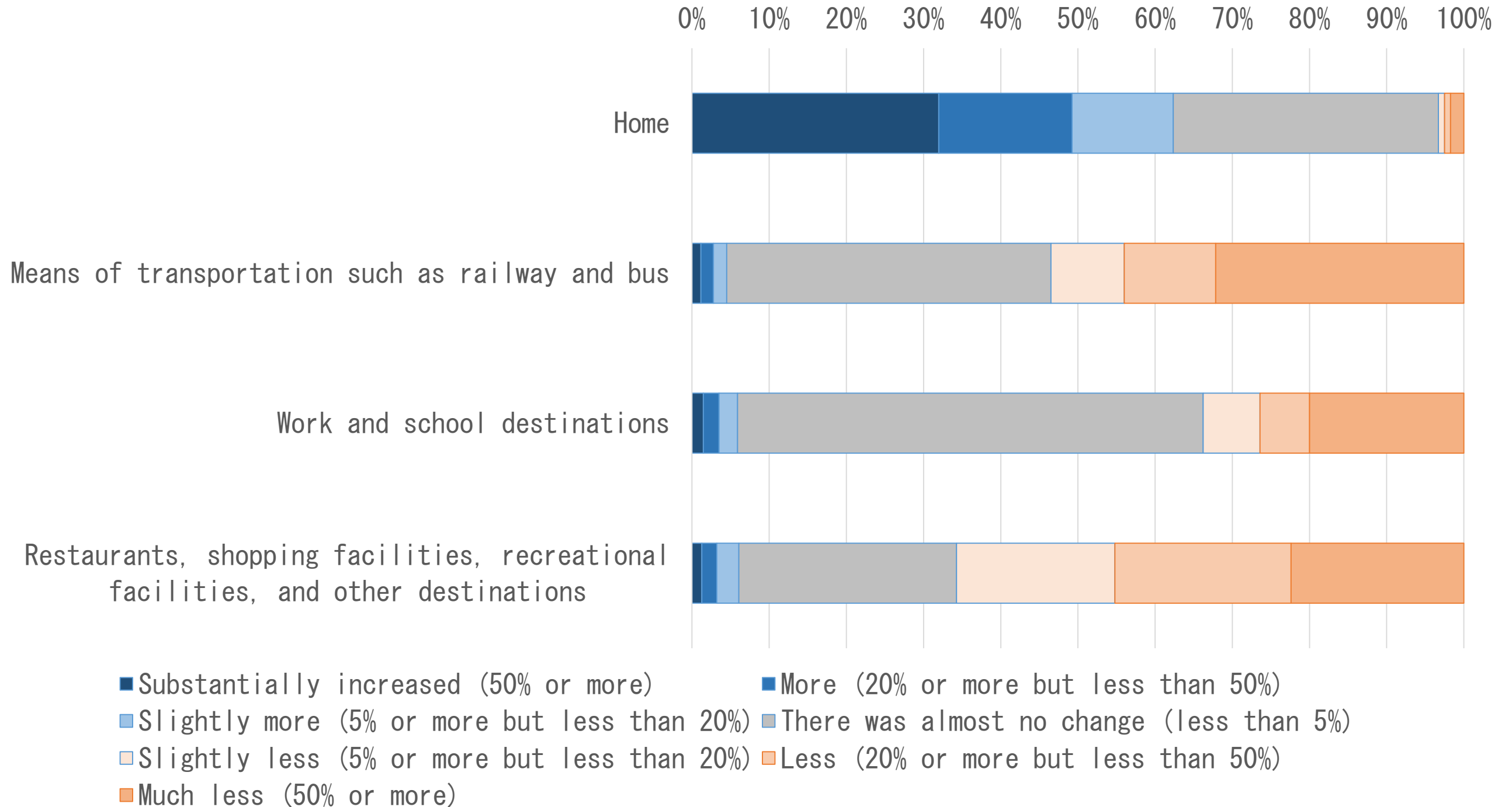
Questionnaire Results

Do you think that Japan's security is improving (becoming safer and more secure)?



Questionnaire Results

How much more or less time per day (Monday–Friday) did you spend in each location during the spread of COVID–19 compared to before the outbreak?



Questionnaire Results

Activities that you believe changed in your life due to the spread of COVID-19 (Multiple responses)

