



**Justice Center**

THE COUNCIL OF STATE GOVERNMENTS

# **Violent Crime and Accountability Trends in Maryland**

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# Justice Center

THE COUNCIL OF STATE GOVERNMENTS

We are a national nonprofit, nonpartisan organization that combines the power of a membership association, serving state officials in all three branches of government, with policy and research expertise to develop strategies that increase public safety and strengthen communities.

## How We Work

- We bring people together.
- We drive the criminal justice field forward with original research.
- We build momentum for policy change.
- We provide expert assistance.

## Our Goals

- Break the cycle of incarceration.
- Advance health, opportunity, and equity.
- Use data to improve safety and justice.

# Part of our work explicitly focuses on improving public safety and outcomes for youth in the juvenile justice system.

July 2014

## Measuring and Using Juvenile Recidivism Data to Inform Policy, Practice, and Resource Allocation

### BACKGROUND

Juvenile arrest rates, including for violent crimes, fell by approximately 50 percent from 1997 to 2011, to their lowest level in more than 30 years.<sup>1</sup> In combination with this sharp drop in arrests, state and local reforms have had an extraordinary impact: from 1997 to 2011, youth confinement rates declined by almost half.<sup>2</sup> The juvenile justice field deservedly celebrates this success and continues to push for further reductions in confinement rates. Many states are also striving to ensure that youth who have been diverted from confinement, as well as those returning home after time spent in a facility, receive supervision and services that reduce recidivism and improve other youth outcomes. As such, policymakers are eager to know more about what happens to youth after they have been in contact with the juvenile justice system. What are their rearrest and reincarceration rates? How do they fare in terms of education, employment, and other important outcome measures while they are under juvenile justice supervision and afterward?

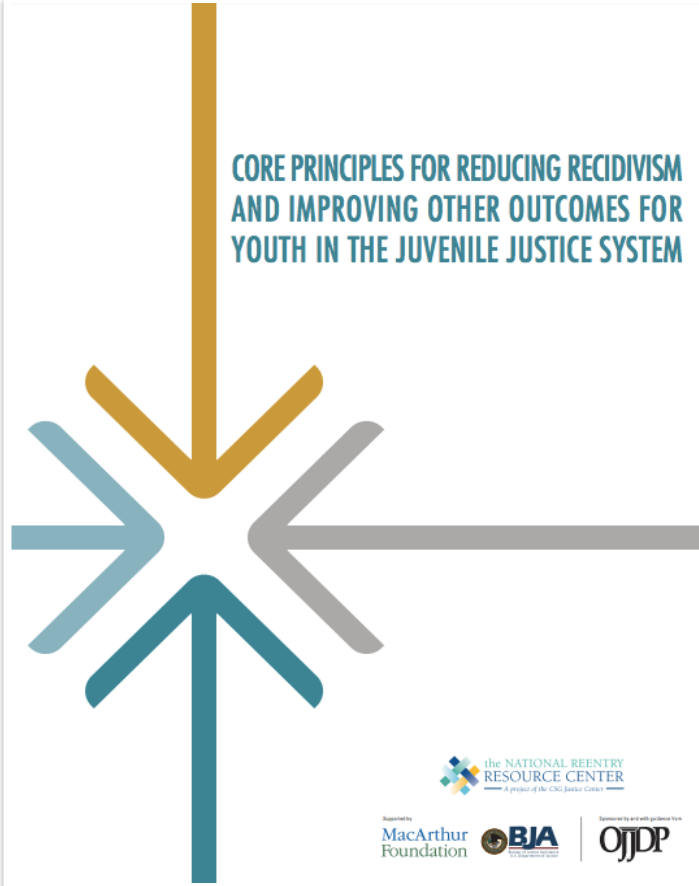
To understand to what extent states currently track recidivism data for youth involved in the juvenile justice system and use that information to inform policy and funding decisions, the Council of State Governments Justice Center, The Pew Charitable Trusts' Public Safety Performance Project,<sup>3</sup> and the Council of Juvenile Correctional Administrators surveyed juvenile correctional agencies in all 50 states.<sup>4</sup> This issue brief highlights the key findings of the survey and provides state and local policymakers with five recommendations for improving their approach to the measurement, analysis, collection, reporting, and use of recidivism data for youth involved with the juvenile justice system. In addition, examples are provided of how select states have translated these recommendations into policy and practice.

### The Importance of Measuring Outcomes beyond Recidivism for Youth Involved with the Juvenile Justice System

Juvenile justice systems can use a number of metrics to track outcomes for youth under system supervision, including educational attainment, behavioral health improvements, or skill development and employment, all of which are critical to ensuring a youth's long-term success. The survey focused primarily on the measurement of recidivism, and the recommendations presented here reflect that focus. The survey results did, however, indicate that only half of all state juvenile correctional agencies measure youth outcomes beyond whether youth commit future delinquent acts, and only 20 percent of states track these outcomes for youth after they are no longer on supervision. Policymakers and juvenile justice agency leaders should strongly consider including a priority set of positive youth outcomes in the evaluation of system success to determine not only whether the juvenile justice system is helping to prevent youth's subsequent involvement in the system, but also whether it is helping youth transition to a crime-free and productive adulthood.



## CORE PRINCIPLES FOR REDUCING RECIDIVISM AND IMPROVING OTHER OUTCOMES FOR YOUTH IN THE JUVENILE JUSTICE SYSTEM



the NATIONAL REENTRY RESOURCE CENTER  
A project of the CSG Justice Center



### ON TRACK

How well are states preparing youth in the juvenile justice system for employment?

#### INTRODUCTION

Perhaps the goal of young people is to move beyond their current status in the juvenile justice system. More than 20,000 youth are released in the United States every year<sup>1</sup> and more than 120,000 are placed on some form of probation.<sup>2</sup> Increasingly, these youth are older and seeking to enter the workforce—as of 2010, approximately 75 percent of juveniles released<sup>3</sup> and 85 percent of all youth adjudicated to any level of supervision<sup>4</sup> were age 16 and over. Yet, these youth are disproportionately likely, compared to their peers, to be unemployed in the public system. In fact, an array of barriers to transitioning to a crime-free, productive adulthood.

These barriers can include lack of proficiency in math and reading skills, which often fall significantly below grade level; substance use disorders; mental health and emotional/behavioral issues; and HIV, if they lack experience in employment skills. These young people also often struggle simultaneously with a range of individual challenges, such as mental health and substance use issues, and community-level challenges, such as access to transportation and affordable housing. This combination of challenges can significantly undermine a youth's ability to access viable employment.<sup>5</sup> Finally, these youth may also experience institutional barriers in the form of reduced opportunities for education, which occur from requirements to complete their juvenile records on college and employment applications—which may adversely affect their admission to institutions and eligibility for public housing, financial aid, and careers in specific professions.<sup>6</sup> To begin to address these myriad challenges, federal, state, and local governments and other organizations targeted at youth in the juvenile justice system will, more generally, young people age 16–24 who are in either school or work get a better idea of "opportunities youth" have for a successful, strong career structure.

#### What is workforce development and career and technical education?

Offering the appropriate workforce development services can set youth in the justice system on a path to fulfilling their educational and career goals. These services include the assessment of a youth's career interests and skills as well as the provision of career and technical education (CTE) courses, training in employability skills, real or simulated work experiences, apprenticeships, internships, and other efforts to prepare youth to obtain and sustain meaningful employment. Increasingly, jurisdictions are striving to integrate these services through a career pathway model intended to develop youth's academic, technical, and employability skills, provide them with ongoing education and training, and place them in high-demand jobs to growth industries.

**The public is concerned about crime and distrustful of the justice system.**

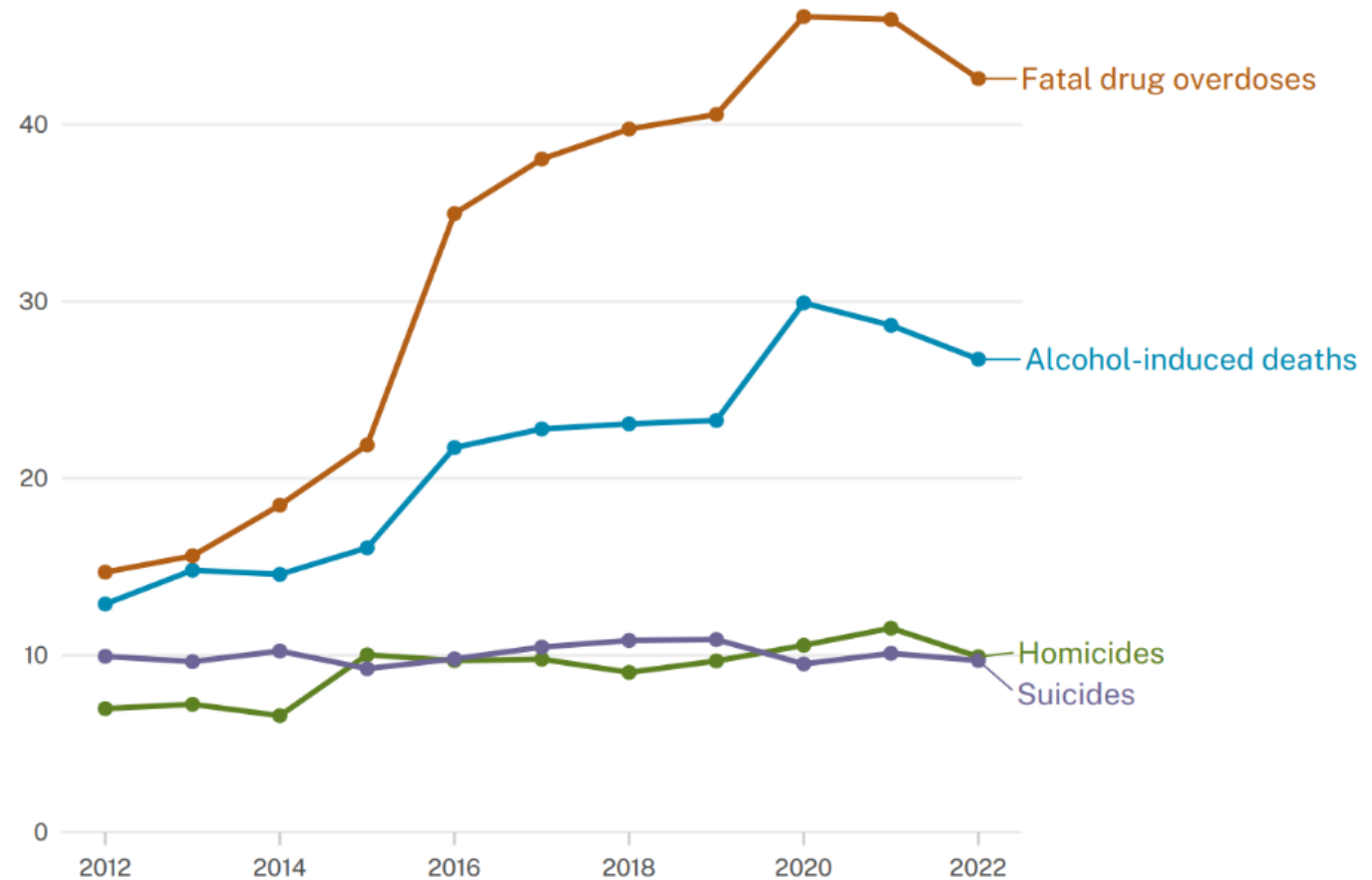
**78%** of people think there is **more crime across the United States** than in previous years.

**40%** of people are “very dissatisfied” with **policies to control or reduce crime.**

**17%** of people have “a great deal” or “quite a lot” of **trust in the justice system.**

# Despite increasing concerns about violent crime, far more people in Maryland die due to alcohol and drugs than homicide.

Cause of death  
Rate per 100k, Maryland

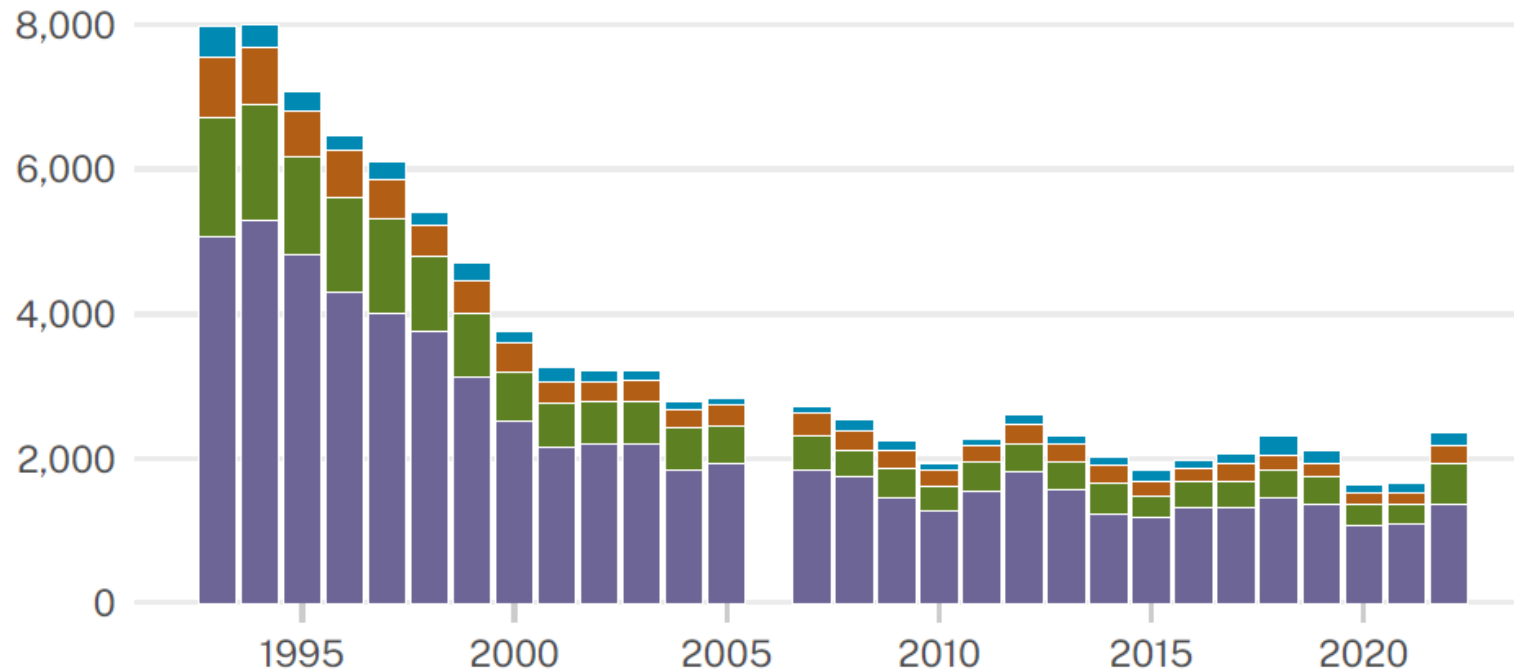


# The rate of violent victimizations in 2022 was 70 percent lower than in 1993.

## Violent victimizations

Rate per 100k residents, United States

Simple assault Aggravated assault Robbery Rape



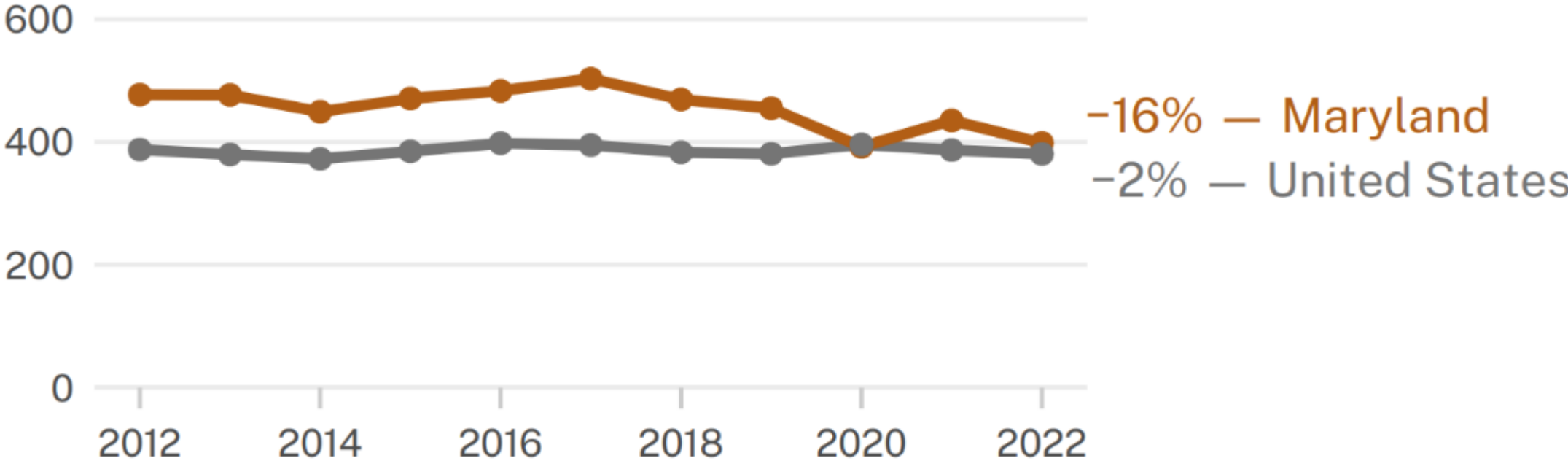
BJS National Crime Victimization Survey





# Overall violent crime in Maryland has decreased 16 percent since 2012.

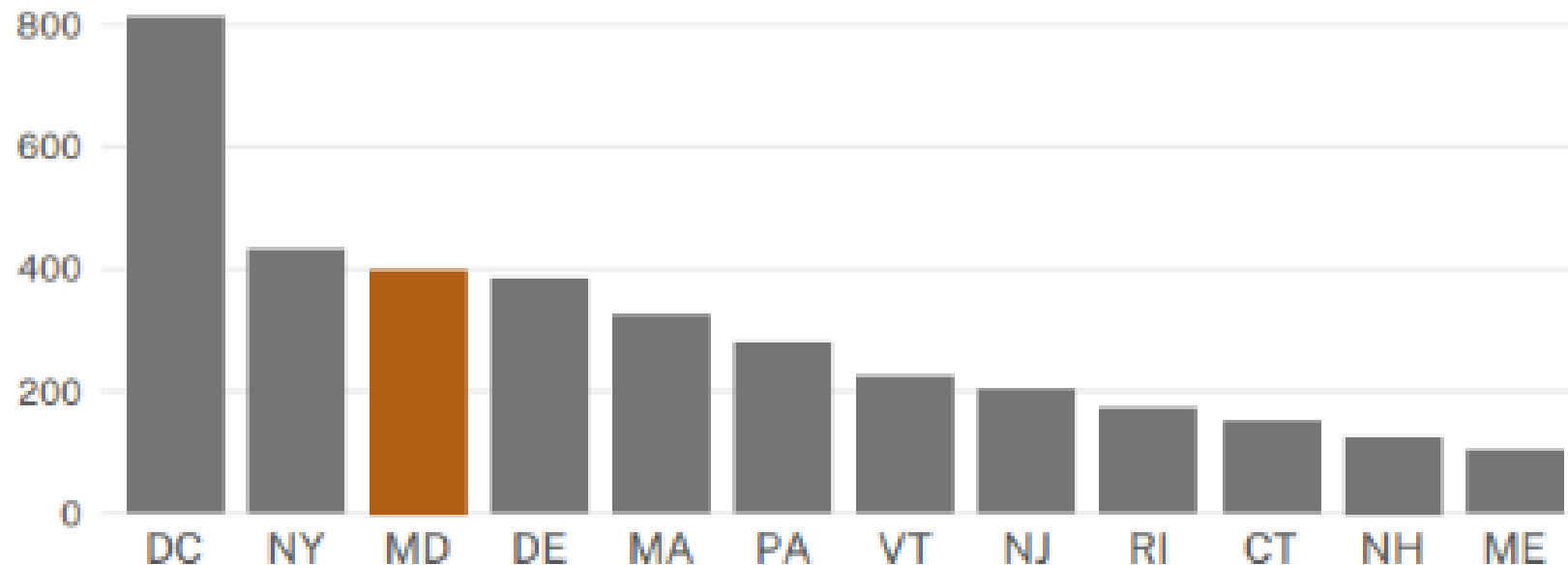
Violent index crime reported to police  
Rate per 100k residents





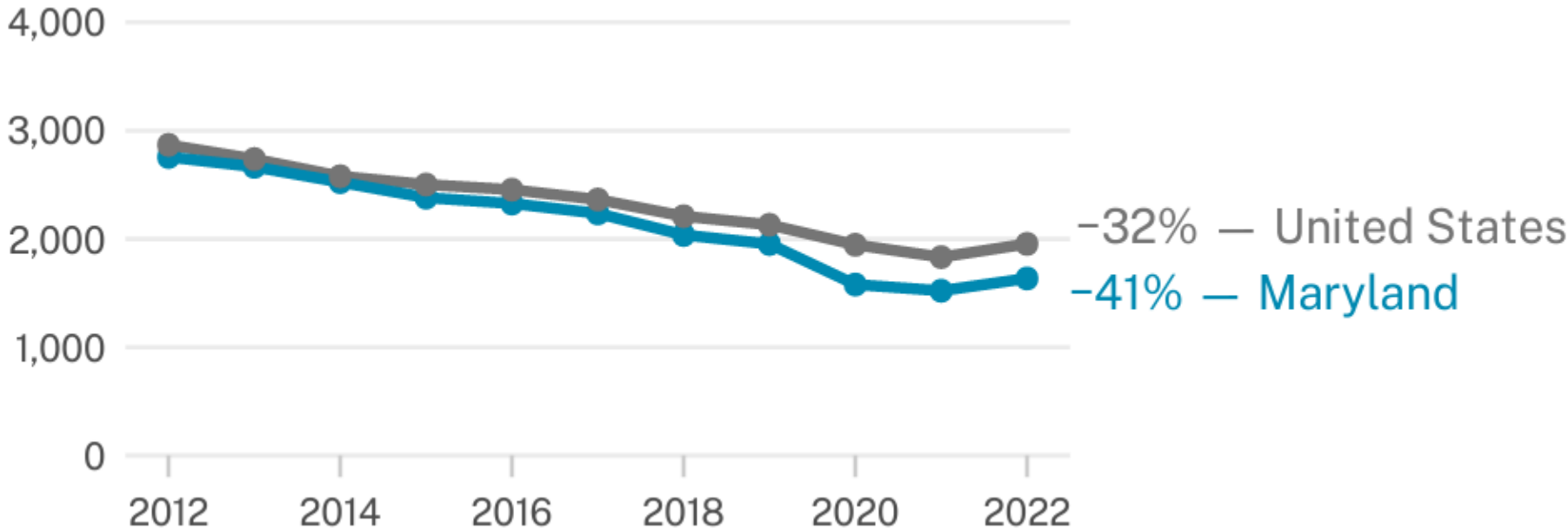
In 2022, Maryland had the **3rd-highest** violent crime rate in the region and the **21st-highest** violent crime rate in the country.

Violent index crime reported to police  
Rate per 100k residents, Eastern Region, 2022



# The property crime rate in Maryland decreased 41 percent from 2012 to 2022.

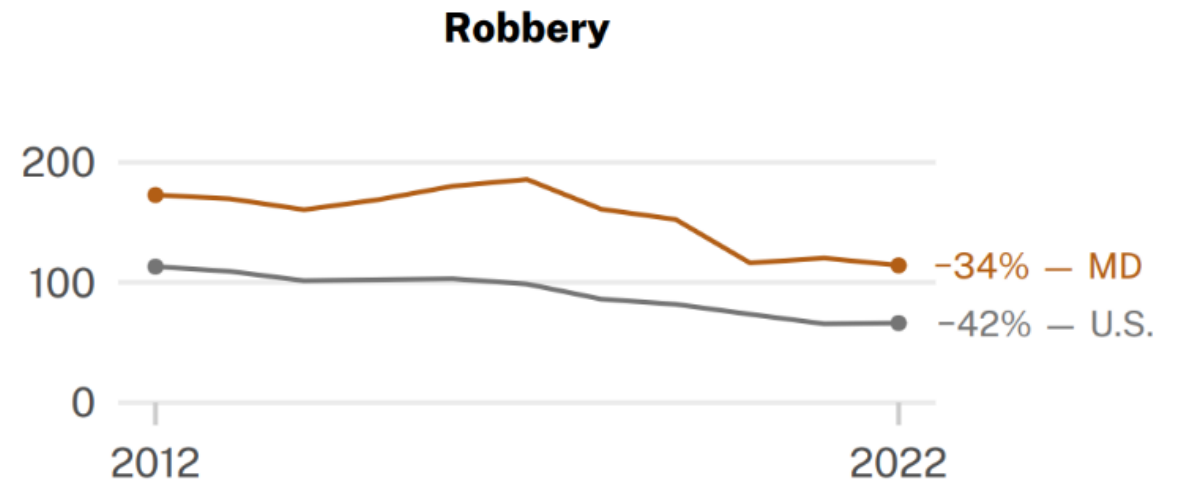
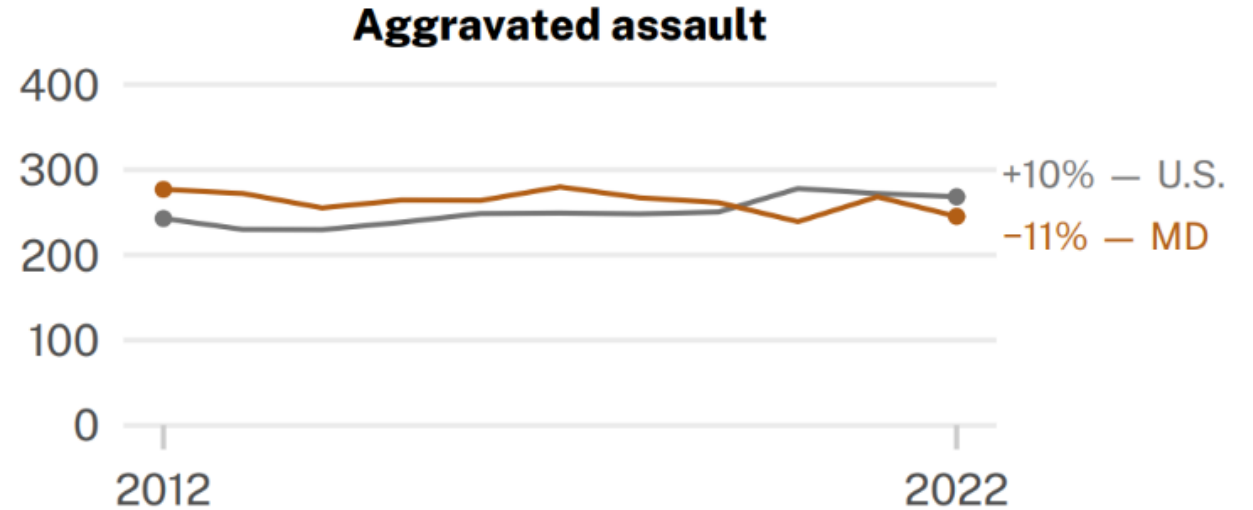
Property index crime reported to police  
Rate per 100k residents





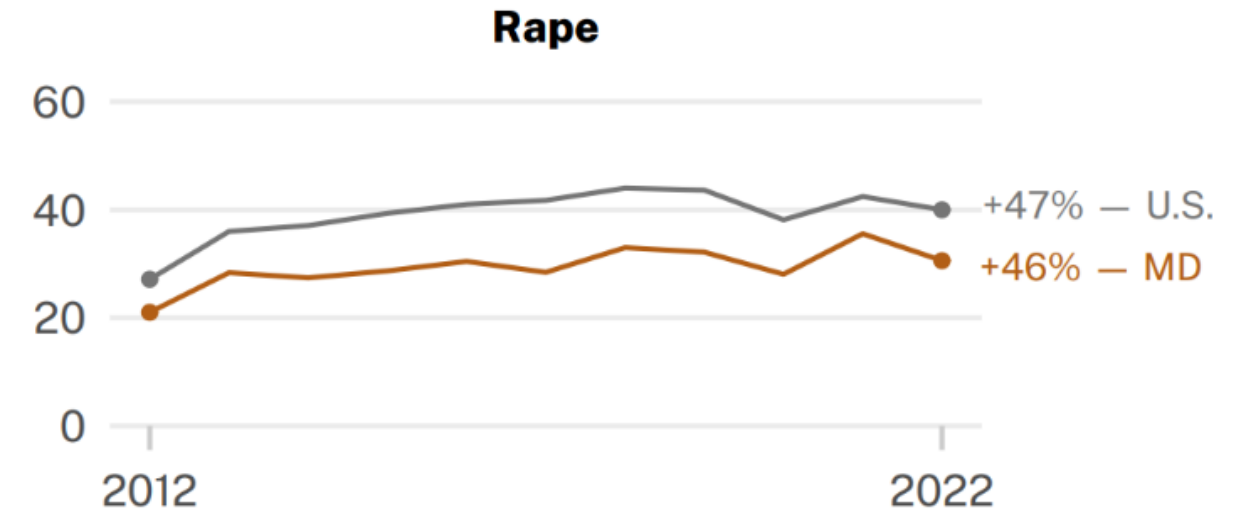
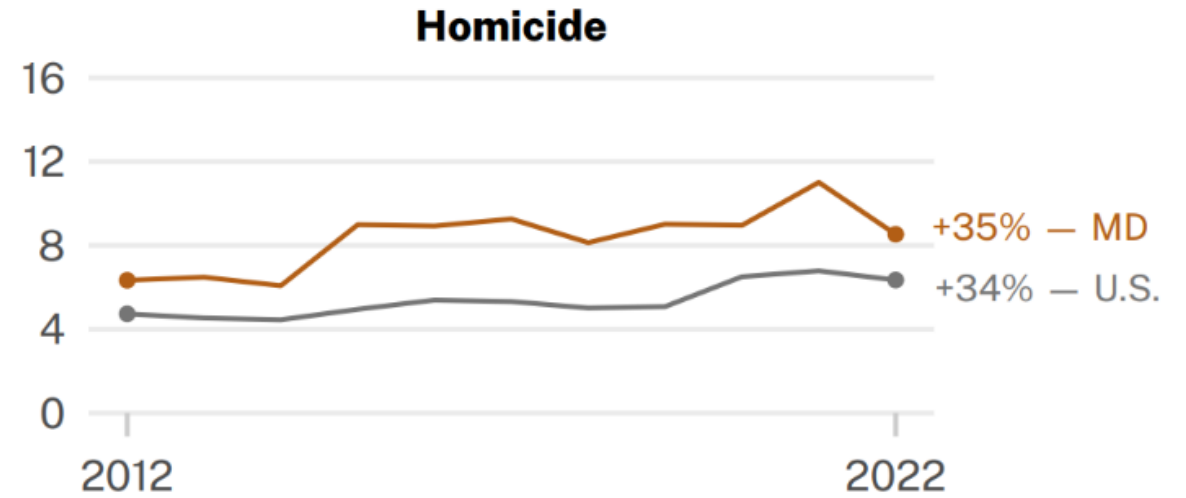
The decline in Maryland's violent crime rate is primarily driven by decreases in aggravated assault and robbery.

Violent index crime reported to police by offense  
Rate per 100k residents



There has been a 35 percent increase in homicide rates in Maryland since 2012.

### Violent index crime reported to police by offense Rate per 100k residents



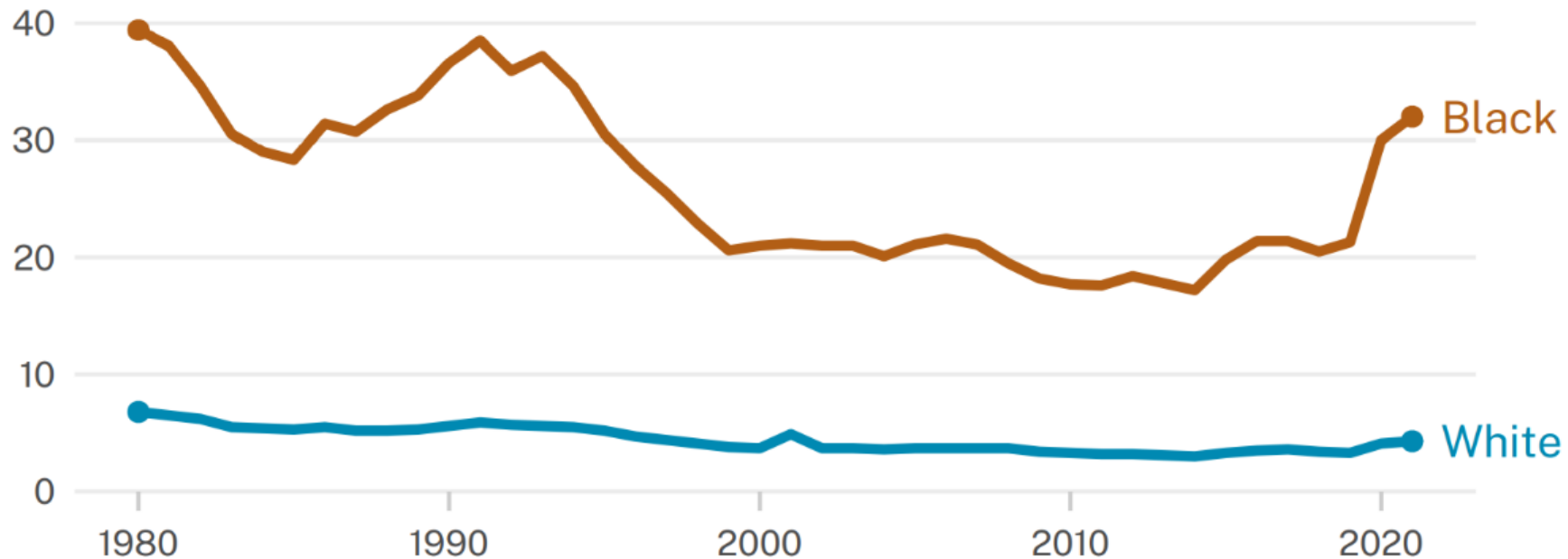
# These are the Maryland law enforcement agencies with the highest homicide rates in 2022.

Maryland law enforcement agencies with the highest homicide rates, 2022

Agency	Number of homicides	Homicide rate per 100k
Baltimore Police Department <i>Large city</i>	287	50.3
Hagerstown Police Department <i>Small city</i>	8	18.4
Prince George’s County Police Department <i>Suburban</i>	82	11.2
Charles County Sheriff’s Office <i>Suburban</i>	11	6.9
Cecil County Sheriff’s Office <i>Suburban</i>	5	6.5

# The national homicide rate of Black victims has been persistently higher than the rate of White victims, but the disparity grew between 2019 and 2021.

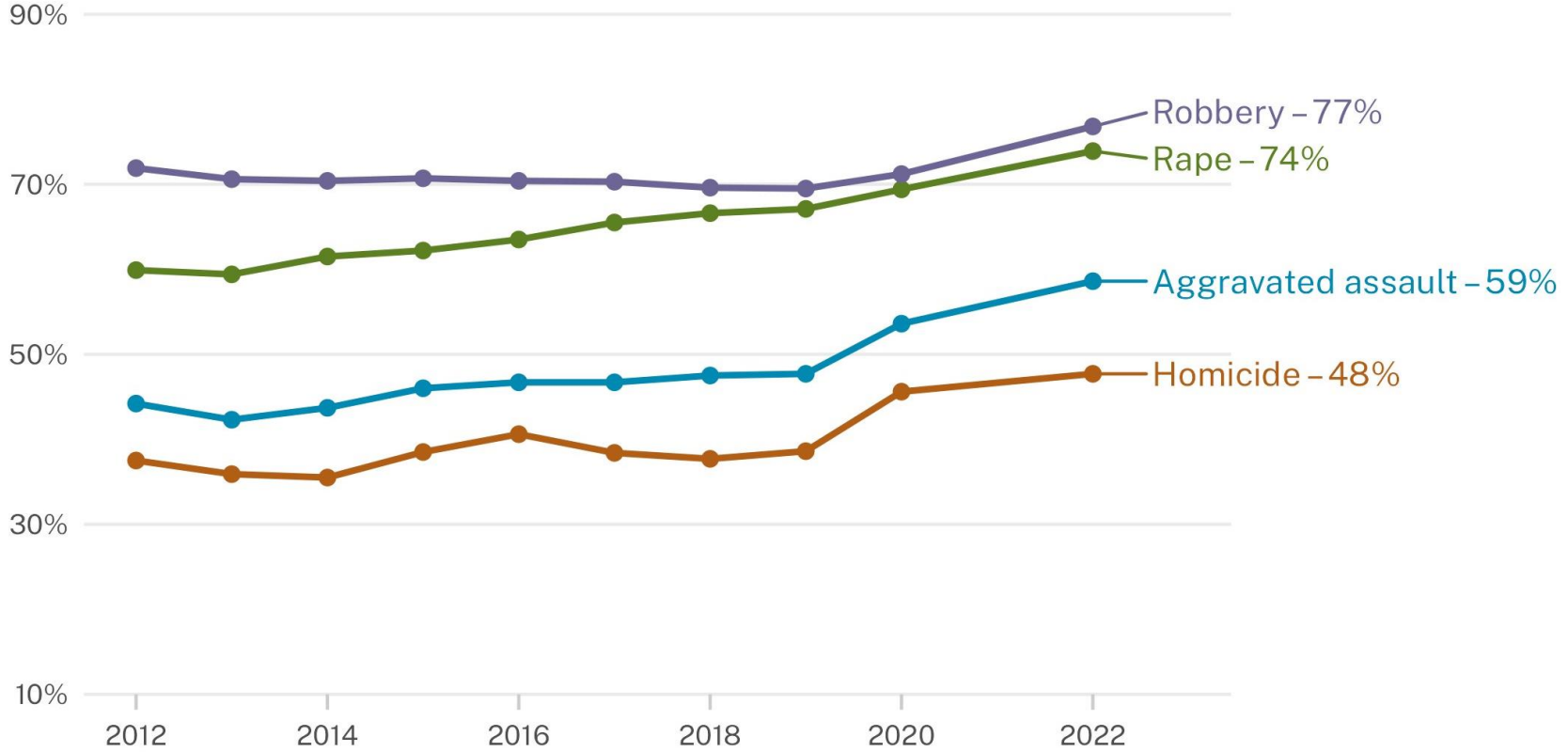
Age-adjusted homicide deaths by race of victim  
Rate per 100k residents, United States





# Nationally, the percentage of violent crimes reported to police that were not solved **increased 10 percent** over the last decade.

National unsolved rate of violent crime by offense, 2012–2022



Change rate unsolved by offense, 2012–2022:

- +10% Homicide
- +14% Aggravated Assault
- +14% Rape
- +5% Robbery

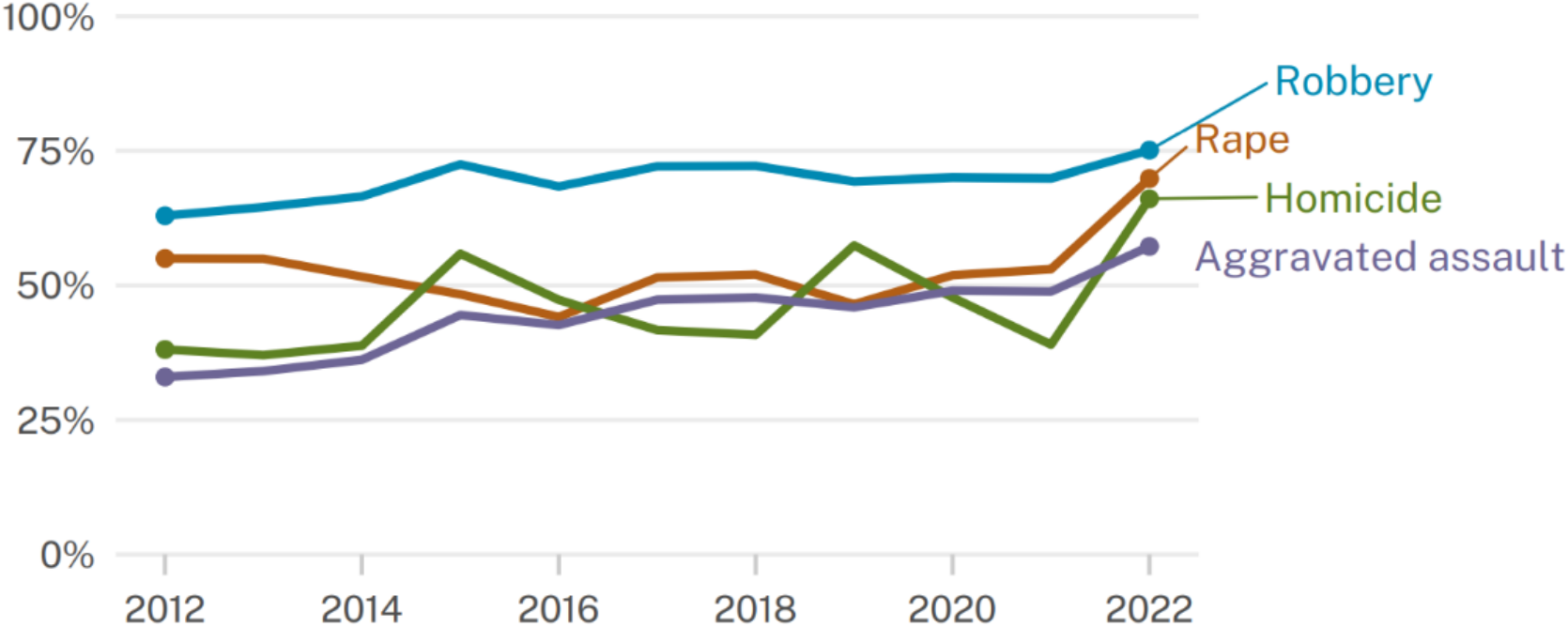
FBI Crime in the United States, Table 25

**In Maryland, 64 percent of violent crimes reported to police were not solved in 2022.**

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# All violent crimes in Maryland are more likely to go unsolved today than a decade ago.

Maryland unsolved rate of violent crime reported to police, 2012–2022



Percent of Crime Unsolved in 2022

66%  
Homicide

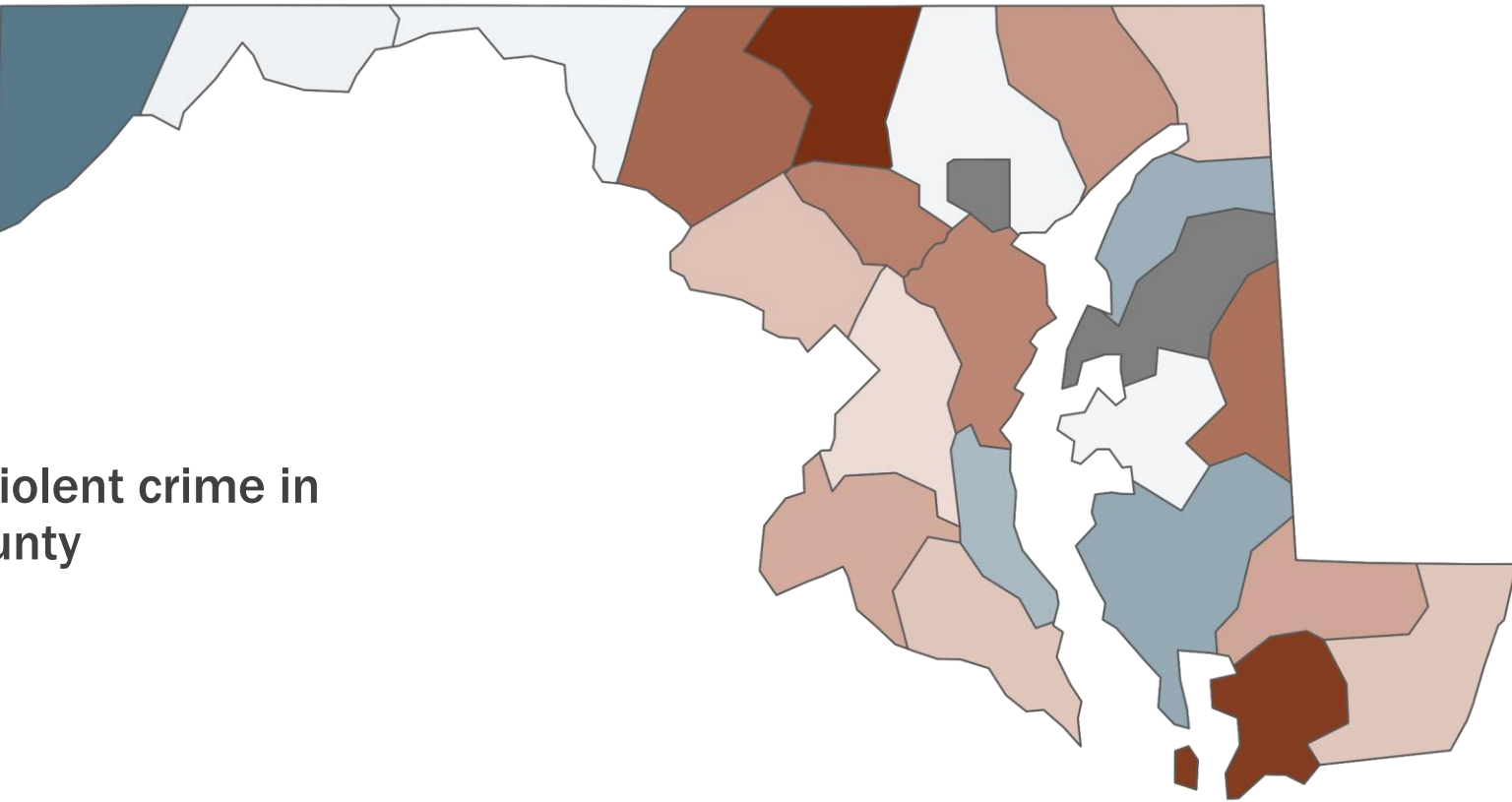
57%  
Aggravated  
Assault

70%  
Rape

75%  
Robbery

# From 2019 to 2022, the percentage of violent crimes that went unsolved increased in over half of Maryland counties.

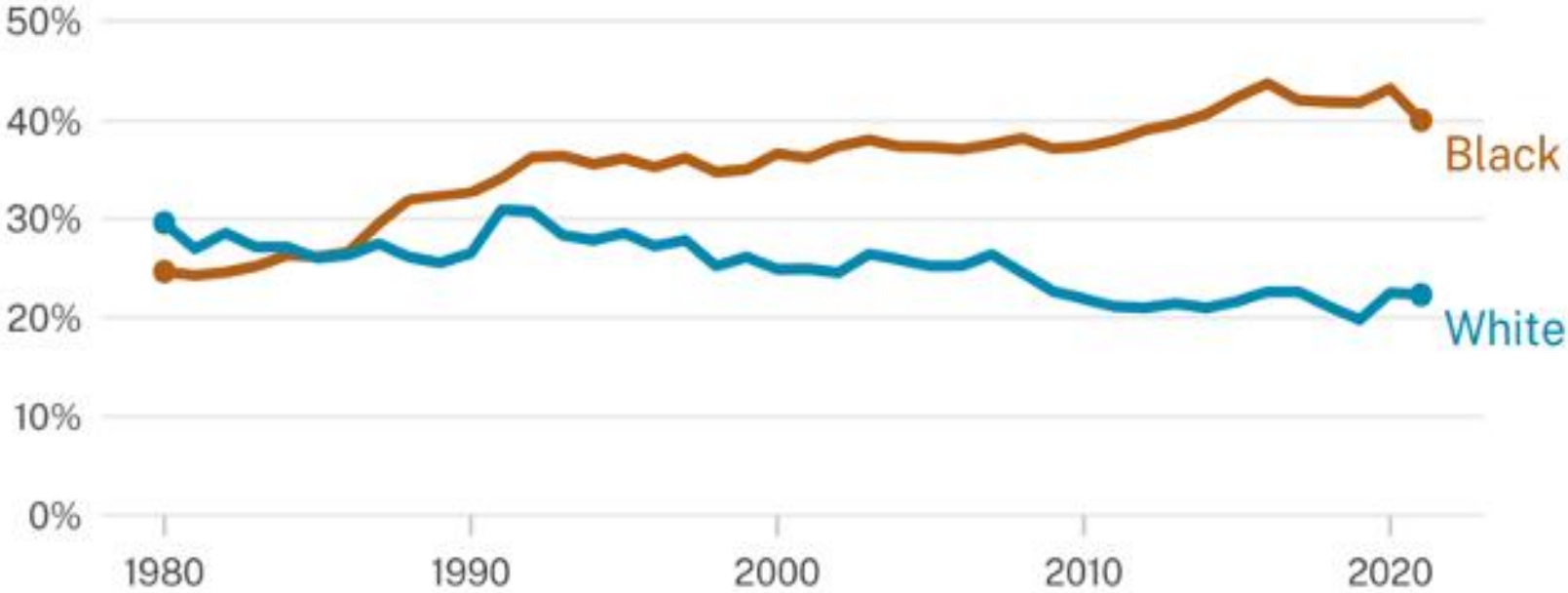
Percent change in unsolved violent crime in Maryland 2019–2022, by county



Analysis of Maryland unsolved rates by county conducted by CSG Justice Center staff, January 2024.

# Nationally, there are significant and increasing disparities in who receives justice when harmed.

National percentage of unsolved homicides by race of victim

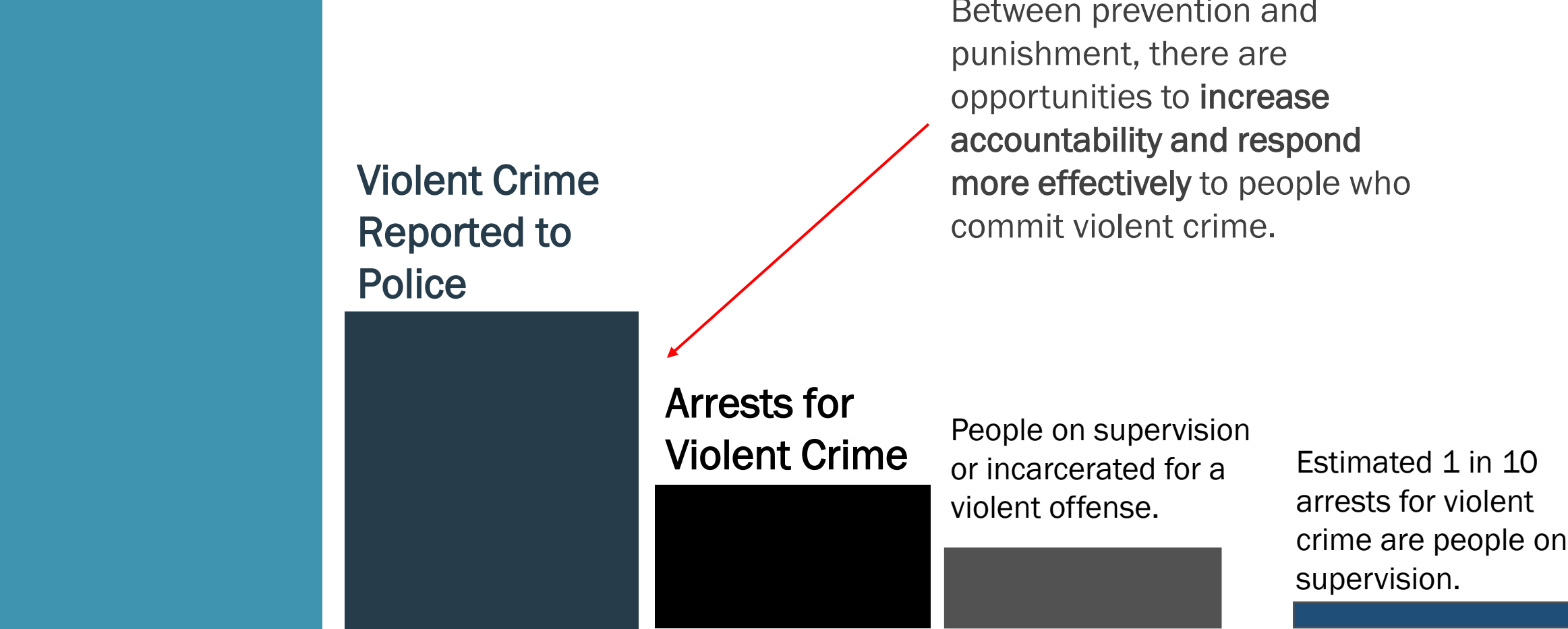


Murder Accountability Project

Homicides of Black victims are **about twice as likely to go unsolved** as homicides of White victims.

# What do unsolved rates tell us about our violent crime strategy?

## Violent Crime



# Failing to solve violent crimes leads to...

**Less safety**  
for victims  
and  
communities

More risk of  
retaliatory  
violence

**Less justice** for  
victims and  
their families  
who have been  
harmed

**Less deterrence**  
from the criminal  
justice system as  
a whole

People committing  
violence feeling  
emboldened and  
free to commit  
further violence

**Less trust** in the  
justice system's  
ability to protect  
and respond



# Research is clear that the certainty—not severity—of punishment is what deters crime.

For policymakers, this means that **investing in increasing accountability can do more to reduce crime** than investing in increasing punishment.



# With focus and resources, police are solving more violent crime.



Boston boosted its homicide solve rate **from 47 to 66 percent** after focusing on staff resources, training, use of best practices, and leadership and prioritization.



Denver created a special unit to solve nonfatal shootings, applying the same level of effort and resources as for solving homicides. Within 7 months, solve rates went **from 39 to 65 percent**.



Omaha's solve rate for homicide went from **32 percent in 2010 to 100 percent in 2023** through a comprehensive, community-driven violence-reduction effort.

# States can help solve more violent crimes with targeted support and assistance.

## Data & Expertise

- Identify localities with low solve rates.
- Provide training and TA to help local agencies.

## Funding

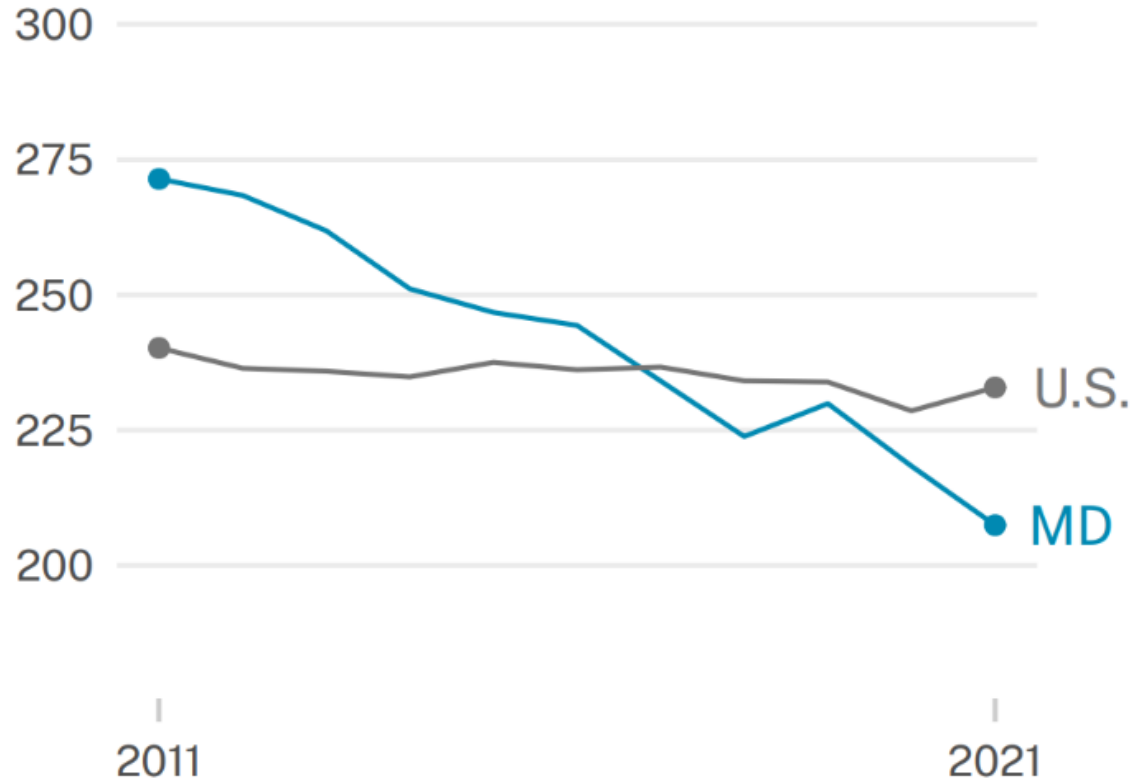
- Support victims and witnesses of violent crime to address trauma and help them cooperate with investigations.

## Capacity

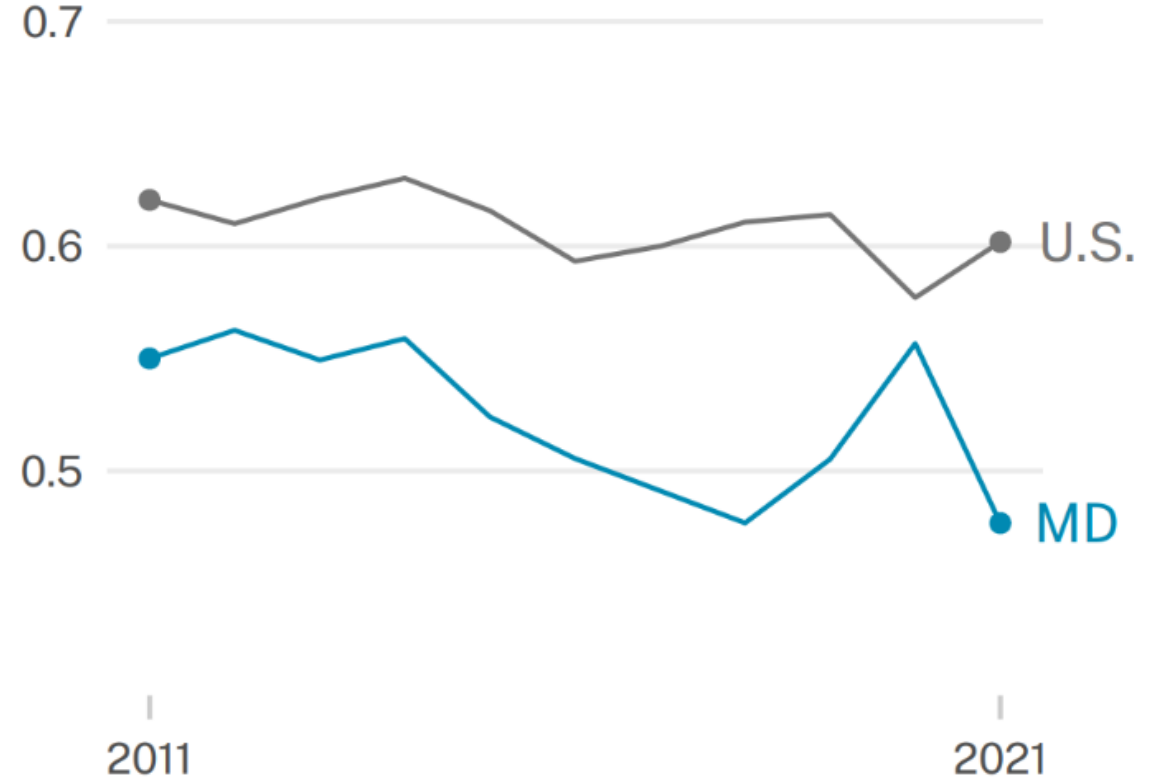
- Reduce backlogs and delays at state crime labs to processing evidence.
- Reduce caseloads of detectives with funding and/or state “cold case” units.

# What is the capacity of Maryland law enforcement to address violent crime?

Maryland police officers and detectives employed  
Rate per 100k residents



Maryland police officers and detectives per  
violent crime  
Rate per reported violent crime incidents



# States like New York and Arkansas are supporting local law enforcement to solve violent crime.



2023

New York Governor Hochul launched a new initiative to help police and prosecutors in five jurisdictions **solve non-fatal shootings and prevent retaliatory gun violence.**



2023

Arkansas **established the Violent Crime Clearance Grant Fund** to provide law enforcement agencies with resources to solve more violent crime.

## **5 Ways States Can Reduce Violent Crime**

- 1. Solve more violent crimes to increase accountability and deter future violence.**
- 2. Make data-driven investments in violence prevention.**
- 3. Address trauma to prevent trauma.**
- 4. Commit to a statewide recidivism-reduction goal.**
- 5. Safety and justice deserve better data.**



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