

# Gangs in the Caribbean



# Gangs in the Caribbean

Edited by

Randy Seepersad and Ann Marie Bissessar

**CAMBRIDGE  
SCHOLARS**

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P U B L I S H I N G

Gangs in the Caribbean,  
Edited by Randy Seepersad and Ann Marie Bissessar

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## PREFACE

The proliferation of “gangs” and what is now referred to as “gang culture” is one of the most critical challenges facing governments throughout the world. In the United States of America for instance, the Federal Bureau of Investigation has indicated that there are 33,000 violent street gangs, motorcycle gangs, and prison gangs with about 1.4 million members criminally active in the United States today. In the case of Mexico, the number of criminal gangs has continued to proliferate as the trade in illegal drugs continues to grow. In the case of Jamaica, in 2011 the island nation of 2.7 million inhabitants saw 1,500 murders and 272 police killings, ranking it as one of the leading countries in murders per capita, along with South Africa and Colombia. In the first three months of 2008, there were over 300 homicides in Jamaica. Similarly, in the case of most of the islands in the Caribbean, the number of criminal gangs has continued to increase.

To researchers, the increase in the number of criminal gangs and in the intensity of criminal activity continues to stimulate a number of research questions. Anthropologists focus on the nature of the gang and gang culture. Political scientists focus their research on the public policies and the legislation that have been introduced to deal with this problem, while criminologists focus on the nature of gangs, their formation, and the age of groups, as well as the casual factors responsible for gang formation and continuance.

The papers assembled in this volume address some of the many issues and fears raised by the increase in criminal gangs in the Caribbean and elsewhere. Questions relating to the causal factors, the demographics of the gang, and the socio-economic environment, as well as social and psychological factors are examined. The papers were selected from among those presented at a conference held at the Department of Behavioural Sciences, the University of the West Indies, St Augustine Campus, Trinidad and Tobago, West Indies, in 2011. The special trajectory of this conference was its emphasis on Gangs, Violence and Governance.

The book is divided into two sections. Section one, which consists of chapters one through eight, aims to offer insight into the nature of gangs in the Caribbean. Very little published research exists on the topic, and indeed, the present book is the first on the topic. This section offers an in-depth examination of gangs in a number of Caribbean countries and contains studies which are based on quantitative data, as well as other studies

of a qualitative nature. Section two, which consists of chapters nine through eleven, is devoted to interventions and policy prescriptions.

Randy Seepersad in Chapter One sets the context for a study of gangs in the Caribbean by looking at comparative crime statistics from across the region. He suggests that while there are many perceptions about the crime situation in the Caribbean, an understanding of the relationship between gangs and crime cannot be gained in the absence of objective data on crime in the region. He notes that official statistics represent only one among other equally useful measures of crime and that victimization surveys and self-report studies represent other equally valid sources of information and indicate that official statistics underestimate the true extent of criminal offending.

Sheridon Hill's paper focuses on the factors that give rise to gang violence in the Caribbean. Using both quantitative and qualitative data, his paper reviews gang activities in the English-speaking CARICOM countries focusing on the countries of Jamaica, St Kitts and Nevis, Belize and Trinidad and Tobago. He offers a brief historical background of the factors that lead to gang violence, and assesses the impact of gangs on crime and murder rates. He then examines the responses of the ministries of national security and related law enforcement agencies to curb or minimize criminal gangs and their related activities. He concludes by offering recommendations.

Clifford Griffin's chapter argues that while the international literature on gangs provides useful insights, the nature and extent of crime and gang-related violence in the region can only be understood within the context of a more structural foundation which is relevant to the Caribbean region. This chapter describes, contextualizes, and summarizes the causes of crime and violence in the region; conceptualizes and contextualizes the gang phenomenon; and offers a structural model which argues that increasing crime and violence in the Caribbean is largely a function of organized gangs with deep, historical roots and with connections to the dominant political parties.

In Chapter Four, Janice Joseph looks specifically at the small nation of St Kitts and Nevis. The islands of St Kitts and Nevis are no more than 269 square miles in size with an estimated population of no more than 50,314 persons. Professor Joseph notes that while there are no empirical data to indicate what the socio-demographic characteristics of street gang members are in this country, there are two prominent gangs, the Blood and the Crips. She also notes that these islands have a high intensity of gang violence. Her chapter accordingly examines the phenomena of gangs and gang violence in St Kitts and Nevis and assesses the attempts by the gov-



ernment of these islands to combat gangs. She too offers recommendations at the conclusion of her chapter.

In Chapter Five, Ann Marie Bissessar addresses the issue of gangs in Trinidad and Tobago from another perspective. She argues that while a voluminous literature has been written on gangs and the predicators that give rise to gangs, in the case of a small, vulnerable society such as Trinidad and Tobago, the phenomenon of gangs emerged as a critical issue only after the introduction of structural adjustment measures imposed by the IMF and the World Bank on the country during the 1980s. Her paper contends that the primary predisposing factor that led to the proliferation of gangs was the downturn in the economy and the concomitant expansion of the drug trade.

Dylan Kerrigan and Nirmala Sookoo, in Chapter Six take an alternative perspective on the phenomenon of gangs in the Caribbean. According to the writers, instead of the practice of studying down, they borrow the anthropological idea of studying up. Their anthropological perspective on crime reflects historical contexts, class, and power differentials related to resource access and economic and political motives for defining criminality.

In Chapter Seven, Simon Alexis offers deep qualitative insight into the gang. Using an account of a mother he looks at one member of a gang. Using the mother's narrative he constructs in his paper a profile of a young man from a prestige school who turns to the gang. He notes that while this particular gang leader was loved by some he was hated by others. The author suggests that power, control and charity were associated with the leadership of this young man and argues that encounters with the law did not deter him from his pursuits. Inevitably, the young man "lived fast and died young".

Wendell Wallace in his chapter attempts an exploratory study on the association of females with gangs in Trinidad. He used primary and secondary data sources as he examined the roles and motivations of women in gangs in Trinidad as well as the possible changing paradigm of women who were affiliated with gangs and gangsters. His findings suggest that in the modern gang landscape in Trinidad, females are operating in quasi-gangs as well as engaging in illegal economic pursuits as partners, with or for their partners and sometimes for an entire gang. The changing role of female gang involvement, according to Wallace, appears to be influenced by females' increased involvement in crime and other illicit money-making activities.

Anthony Bryan in Chapter Nine argues that street gangs in the Northern Triangle (Honduras, Guatemala and El Salvador), such as the *Mara*

*Salvatrucha* and violent Mexican-based paramilitary groups like *Los Zetas*, have carved out geographic areas where national governments are essentially powerless to intervene. Transnational criminal organizations—many of which are Mexican and Colombian drug cartels—have the finances, organizational structures, geostrategic influence and illegally obtained firepower to potentially destabilize many Central American communities. Street gangs in the service of the transnational criminal organizations contribute to high levels of citizen insecurity and pose a threat to democratic governance by funding political parties, interfering with justice systems, and providing alternative governance within existing national territories. The evolution of Central American gangs, major differences in their *modus operandi*, their changing dynamics, and the responses of the individual governments trying to manage the security crisis posed by the gangs, is the subject of this chapter. The author tries to determine whether or not the experiences in the Northern Triangle are of relevance to the Caribbean.

Tarik Weekes in Chapter Ten examines how peacebuilding activities can be applied as a strategy to reduce gang violence in Jamaica. He argues that conflict resolution strategies must go beyond initial dialogue and mediation activities, and must make the transition to a conflict reduction path. The author argues that certain Jamaican communities have deep-seated conflict and that there must be an institutionalization of peacebuilding to effectively achieve a conflict reversal. In arguing for the use of a peacebuilding framework, the chapter examines group violence, peacebuilding characteristics and potentials, and the presence of defensive gangs and the conflict they present. The chapter concludes by asking for the scaling-up of some key resource areas to facilitate greater peacebuilding and a greater degree of policy coordination and partnership between state and non-state actors.

Kathy-Ann Felix-John and Dianne Williams in the concluding chapter suggest that mediation may well be the technique to resolve challenges with respect to gangs. They suggest that mediation is widely used in all sorts of disputes ranging from divorces and civil lawsuits to very complex public policy problems and international conflicts. They accordingly look at the issue of mediation and the advantages and disadvantages of employing this technique to reduce gang conflict and violence.

The various chapters of the present book bring together a range of expertise, and offer important insights into the nature of gangs in a number of Caribbean countries. The Caribbean is not a homogenous region, and likewise, the gang problem differs in each country. The present book draws upon what is known about gangs in the Caribbean, and offers a

number of recommendations for dealing with this issue. This issue has become a priority in recent times, and if not dealt with in a timely manner, may escalate to the point where public security agencies are unable to eliminate violent gangs from within the region. The policy recommendations offered call for a mix of preventative as well as suppressive strategies. Preventative strategies are required so that youths in the Caribbean feel that they have other alternatives open to them, and are not pulled by the lure of gangs. At the same time, the persistence of criminal gangs requires a range of approaches in addition to those which are preventative in nature. Research on gangs in the Caribbean is in its infancy. The present volume attempts to initiate the dialogue on this topic.

## ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Many of these articles represent papers presented at a conference entitled *Gangs, Violence and Governance*, hosted by the Department of Behavioural Sciences, The University of the West Indies, St Augustine, Trinidad and Tobago.

The editors would like to acknowledge the contributions of a number of persons involved in the putting together of this book: firstly, Mr. Omardath Maharaj, former Administrative Assistant in the Department of Behavioural Sciences, who wrote the proposal requesting funding for the conference; Mr Solomon Ioannou, Programme Manager, who facilitated the request to the European Union to fund this conference; Ms. Tanika Riley, Research Assistant, who was responsible for communication with authors and ensuring that all materials were submitted in a timely manner; Ms. Marlene Eversley who gave so much of her time in the copyediting of this book; The Office of Graduate Studies and Research, who provided funding for the preparation of this book; anonymous reviewers from the University of the West Indies and other institutions, as well as reviewers from Cambridge Scholars Publishing—your comments and feedback were invaluable, and served to improve the quality of the chapters in this book.

The editors also wish to sincerely thank the authors who contributed to this book. Their chapters represent the culmination of many months of hard work and dedication. Without their input this book would not have been possible.

Randy Seepersad  
Ann Marie Bissessar

**SECTION ONE:**  
**UNDERSTANDING GANGS AND VIOLENCE**  
**IN THE CARIBBEAN**

# CHAPTER ONE

## CRIME IN THE CARIBBEAN

### RANDY SEEPERSAD<sup>1</sup>

#### **Abstract**

Chapter one sets the context for a study of gangs in the Caribbean by looking at comparative crime statistics from across the region. While there are many perceptions about the crime situation in the Caribbean, an examination of the relationship between gangs and crime cannot be conducted in the absence of objective data on crime in the region. Caribbean crime data are notoriously difficult to gather. As such, the present chapter serves as a resource material for scholars of gangs as well as scholars who are interested in crime and violence. Data from 1990 to 2010 were examined, with a focus on murders, shootings, robbery, rape, burglary and house-breaking, and kidnapping. Official data are examined and are compared to victimization survey data which capture crimes not reported to the police.

#### **Introduction**

While there are many perceptions about the crime situation as well as the importance of gangs as a contributory factor to the level of crime in the Caribbean, the relationship between gangs and crime cannot be determined without objective data on crime in the region. At the same time, it must be acknowledged that official statistics represent only one among other equally useful measures of crime. Victimization surveys and self-report studies represent other equally valid sources of information, and typically indicate that official statistics underestimate the true extent of criminal offending. The present chapter benefits from the availability of both official crime statistics and victimization survey data. Official data were sourced from

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<sup>1</sup> The author thanks Sheridon Hill for his efforts in collecting the official crime data on which this chapter draws. The author also thanks the regional ministries of National Security and police services for supplying this data.

the various ministries of national security or their equivalents across the region, while victimization data derive from a United Nations Development Programme survey in which a standardized victimization survey was administered to 11,208 respondents in seven countries across the region. A secondary purpose for examining crime data is that the current volume aims to be a source of information on crime in the Caribbean. No previous publication has as complete and as extensive a range of crime data from the Caribbean region. The present chapter includes the raw data to facilitate the dissemination of this information. These data were gathered in March 2012, and represent the most up-to-date information available as of the time of publication of this book.

In examining crime statistics from different countries it must be borne in mind that many factors can impact on the available data. One of the most important is definition. Various countries may have different definitions for various crimes, or may even have different classifications (e.g. first degree murder vs. second degree murder). Another issue is the size and efficiency of the police service as well as the level of confidence in the police. These factors can affect the proportion of crimes which get into the official records. Cultural factors which may facilitate or hinder reporting are another such issue. Social stigma attached to some crimes such as rape and domestic violence may hinder reporting, thus depressing official statistics. Conversely, in cultures where such stigma may be minimal or absent there is a greater likelihood that people will report such activities. Data collection mechanisms and means of collating statistics from different geographical regions in a given country are other factors which may affect the accuracy of official crime statistics. Where there are variations in recording practices in different regions of a country, and where data are not computerized and must be tallied manually, there is the potential for human error in computing national statistics. While the above factors affect the comparability of crime statistics, many countries in the Caribbean, with the help of CARICOM and other regional bodies, have attempted to systematize their data collection procedures. These efforts have improved the accuracy and timeliness of available data, and help to facilitate comparability across the region.

## **Murder**

Murder statistics represent one of the most reliable indicators of violent crime in any country. It is typically the case that murder statistics have a higher degree of accuracy than statistics for any other type of crime. This is the case since murder is typically considered to be the most serious

crime, and it is a crime which is very unlikely to go unreported. While it is the case that murders can be incorrectly classified, this misclassification occurs in only a very small proportion of all murders. Murder statistics are presented in table 1-1.

**Table 1-1: Statistics for murder in Caribbean countries**

	Trinidad & Tobago	Jamaica	Barbados	Grenada	St. Lucia	St. Vincent & Grenadines	St. Kitts & Nevis	The Bahamas	Dominica	Belize	Guyana	Antigua & Barbuda
2000	120	887	20	15	20	20	6	74	2	47	74	4
2001	151	1139	25	6	33	12	6	43	1	64	79	7
2002	171	1045	25	14	33	20	5	52	10	87	142	9
2003	229	975	33	8	28	11	10	50	8	67	206	6
2004	261	1471	22	6	36	21	11	44	8	79	131	7
2005	386	1674	29	11	37	24	8	52	8	81	142	6
2006	371	1340	35	11	39	13	17	61	5	92	163	14
2007	391	1583	25	11	27	36	16	78	7	97	115	19
2008	547	1618	23	16	36	27	23	73	7	103	158	14
2009	506	1682	19	7	37	20	27	86	13	97	117	16
2010	473	1428	31	10	44	25	20	94	11	132	139	7
<b>Average</b>	<b>328</b>	<b>1349</b>	<b>26</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>34</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>64</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>86</b>	<b>133</b>	<b>10</b>
<b>Average increase</b>	<b>35.3</b>	<b>54.1</b>	<b>1.1</b>	<b>-0.5</b>	<b>2.4</b>	<b>0.5</b>	<b>1.4</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>0.9</b>	<b>8.5</b>	<b>6.5</b>	<b>0.3</b>
<b>Average rate</b>	<b>26.0</b>	<b>51.7</b>	<b>9.7</b>	<b>10.1</b>	<b>21.5</b>	<b>19.1</b>	<b>29.2</b>	<b>21.2</b>	<b>10.4</b>	<b>35.8</b>	<b>17.8</b>	<b>12.9</b>
<b>Rate increase</b>	<b>2.8</b>	<b>2.1</b>	<b>0.4</b>	<b>-0.5</b>	<b>1.5</b>	<b>0.5</b>	<b>3.0</b>	<b>0.7</b>	<b>1.3</b>	<b>3.5</b>	<b>0.9</b>	<b>0.4</b>

The data in table 1-1 indicate that, for the period 2000-2010, Jamaica had the highest average annual number of murders (1349) followed by Trinidad and Tobago (328), Guyana (133), Belize (86) and the Bahamas (64). It is not necessarily the case, however, that the risk of becoming a victim of murder is higher in countries with the highest number of murders. An examination of murder rates allows for the comparison of risk



since this takes into account the size of a country’s population and is an expression of the risk of victimization.<sup>2</sup>

Figure 1-1 indicates that where murder rates were concerned, the countries of the Caribbean could be divided into four groups. The murder rate for Jamaica (an annual average of 51.7 murders per 100,000 inhabitants) far exceeded those of any other Caribbean country, and placed Jamaica in a group by itself. Belize, St. Kitts/Nevis, and Trinidad and Tobago placed in group two with murder rates which ranged between 26 and 35.8 murders per 100,000 inhabitants. Group three comprised St. Lucia, the Bahamas, St. Vincent and the Grenadines, and Guyana. For the time period under consideration, the murder rate of countries in group three was approximately 20 per 100,000 inhabitants. The countries with the lowest murder rates in the Caribbean were Antigua and Barbuda, Dominica, Grenada, and Barbados.

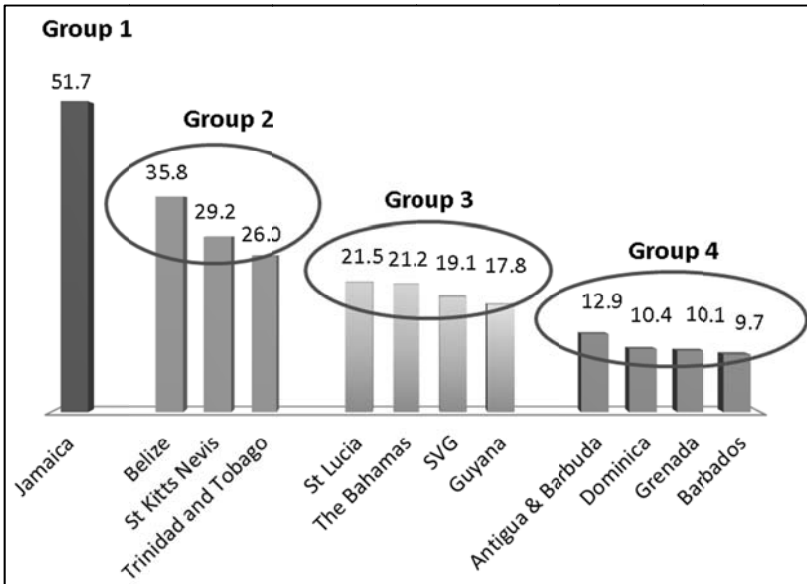


Fig. 1-1 Average murder rates (2000-2010)

<sup>2</sup> All rates are calculated using the following official population statistics: Census year 2000 (Bahamas 303611, Barbados 268792, Belize 240204, Dominica 69625, Jamaica 2607632, St Kitts/Nevis 46325, Trinidad/Tobago 1262366); Census year 2001 (Antigua/Barbuda 76886, Grenada 103137, St Lucia 156734, St Vincent/Grenadines 109022); Census year 2002 (Guyana 751223).

The majority of countries in table 1-1 exhibited an increasing number of murders. For the majority of countries, however, this increase was relatively small. For Barbados, St. Lucia, St. Vincent and the Grenadines, St. Kitts and Nevis, the Bahamas, Dominica, and Antigua and Barbuda, the increase ranged between 0.3 and 2.4 murders per year, with an average increase across the countries of 1.2 murders per year. In the case of Grenada, there was a small decline in the number of murders over time. The countries with the greatest increases were Jamaica (in which there was an average annual increase of 54 murders), Trinidad and Tobago (35), Belize (8.5) and Guyana (6.5). Table 1-1 also indicates the average change in the murder rates across Caribbean countries. For the period under consideration, the countries with the most rapid increases in murder rates were Belize, St. Kitts and Nevis, Trinidad and Tobago, and Jamaica (see figure 1-2). Countries with negligible increases in murder rates were Barbados, Grenada, St. Lucia, St. Vincent and the Grenadines, the Bahamas, Dominica, Guyana, and Antigua and Barbuda. These data indicate that the number of murders as well as the risk of victimization was increasing at a rapid rate in Belize, Trinidad and Tobago, and Jamaica, while in the case of St. Kitts and Nevis, although the absolute increase in the number of murders from year to year was small, the risk of victimization was increasing at a rapid rate.

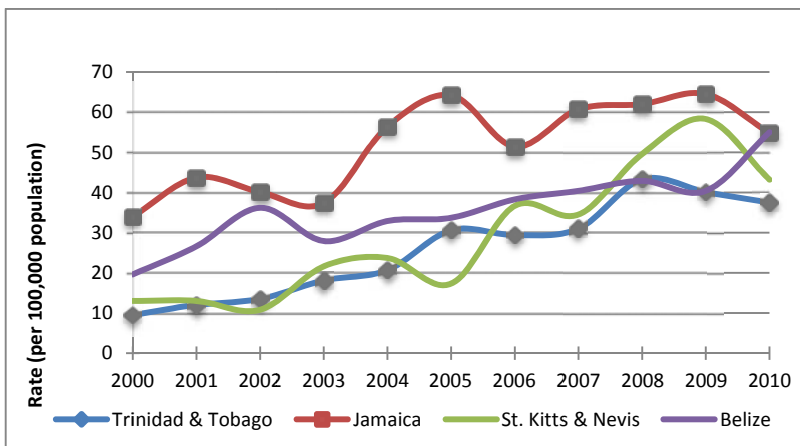


Fig. 1-2 Murder rates for countries with the most rapid increases over time

Overall, when all countries were weighted equally, there was an increase in murder rates across the region (see figure 1-3). In 2000, the aver-

age murder rate for the region stood at 14.3 per 100,000 inhabitants. This increased to 28.1 per 100,000 in 2010, an increase of 196 per cent. For the entire period under consideration, the average murder rate for the Caribbean was 22 murders per 100,000 inhabitants, and the rate increased by an average of 1.4 murders per 100,000 inhabitants per year.

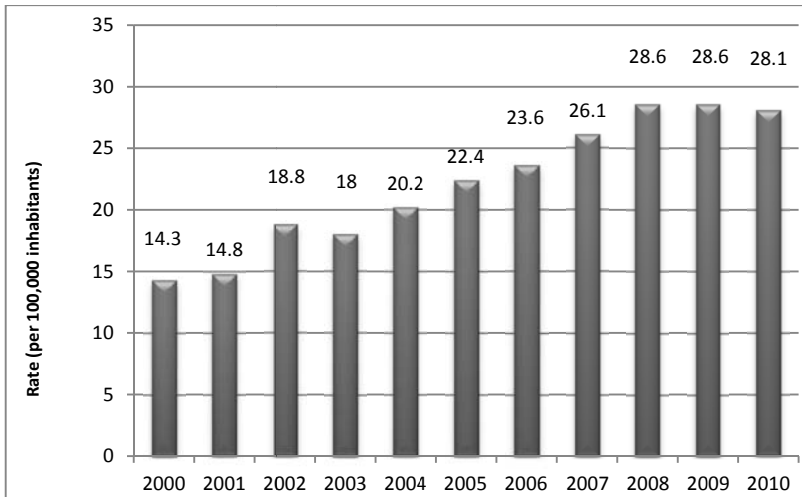


Fig. 1-3 Average murder rates for the Caribbean (2000-2010)

## Shootings

Shooting statistics for the period 2000-2010 appear in table 1-2. The two countries with the highest quantum of murders, Trinidad and Tobago and Jamaica, also had the highest average number of shootings. For the period under consideration, Trinidad and Tobago had an average of 653 shootings per year, while Jamaica had an average of 1,401. Other countries with comparably high average annual numbers of shootings included Barbados (105) and the Bahamas (86). The most rapid increases in shootings for the period under consideration occurred in Jamaica (an average annual increase of 48.5 shootings) and Trinidad and Tobago (23.6), with a notable increase also occurring in the Bahamas (11.5). While Barbados had a high average annual number of shootings, the incidence of shootings in Barbados was declining by an average of 7.8 per year.

**Table 1-2: Statistics for shootings in Caribbean countries**

	Trinidad & Tobago	Jamaica	Barbados <sup>a</sup>	St. Lucia	St. Vincent & Grenadines	St. Kitts & Nevis	The Bahamas	Dominica	Guyana	Antigua and Barbuda
2000	387	1012	156	33	30	14	38	2	15	-
2001	499	1183	135	33	14	3	64	0	28	-
2002	655	1270	142	57	43	4	55	2	33	11
2003	784	1145	97	98	25	6	72	1	20	9
2004	643	1675	96	108	22	18	72	2	28	15
2005	795	1646	84	73	25	11	55	7	28	10
2006	657	1341	118	48	30	7	84	2	24	13
2007	680	1448	63	37	31	12	131	7	28	35
2008	771	1528	100	27	27	39	120	6	15	33
2009	689	1667	86	41	27	36	97	10	8	11
2010	623	1497	78	48	42	33	153	-	-	22
<b>Average</b>	<b>653</b>	<b>1401</b>	<b>105</b>	<b>55</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>86</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>18</b>
<b>Average increase</b>	<b>23.6</b>	<b>48.5</b>	<b>-7.8</b>	<b>1.5</b>	<b>1.2</b>	<b>1.9</b>	<b>11.5</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>-0.8</b>	<b>1.4</b>
<b>Average rate</b>	<b>51.7</b>	<b>53.7</b>	<b>39.1</b>	<b>35.0</b>	<b>26.3</b>	<b>35.9</b>	<b>28.2</b>	<b>5.6</b>	<b>3.0</b>	<b>23.0</b>
<b>Rate increase</b>	<b>1.9</b>	<b>1.9</b>	<b>-2.9</b>	<b>1.0</b>	<b>1.1</b>	<b>4.1</b>	<b>3.8</b>	<b>0.9</b>	<b>-0.8</b>	<b>2.2</b>

a Referred to as 'firearms crimes'

Average rates of shootings for Caribbean countries appear in figure 1-4. The countries with the highest average rates of shootings for the period 2000 to 2010 were Jamaica, with an average annual rate of 53.7 shootings per 100,000 inhabitants, and Trinidad and Tobago with an average annual rate of 51.7. Barbados, St. Kitts and Nevis, St. Lucia, the Bahamas, St. Vincent and the Grenadines, and Antigua placed in group two in figure 1-4, and had average annual rates which ranged from 23.0 to 39.1 shootings per 100,000 inhabitants. The countries with the lowest rates of shootings in the Caribbean for the period under consideration were Dominica and Guyana.

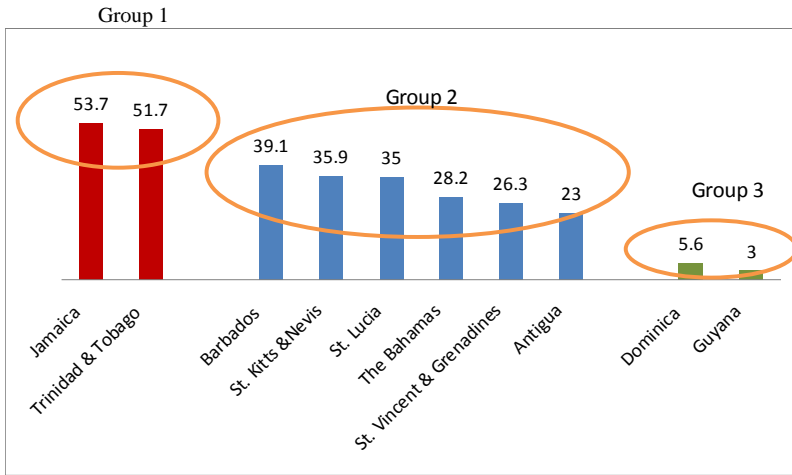


Fig. 1-4 Average shooting rates (2000-2010)

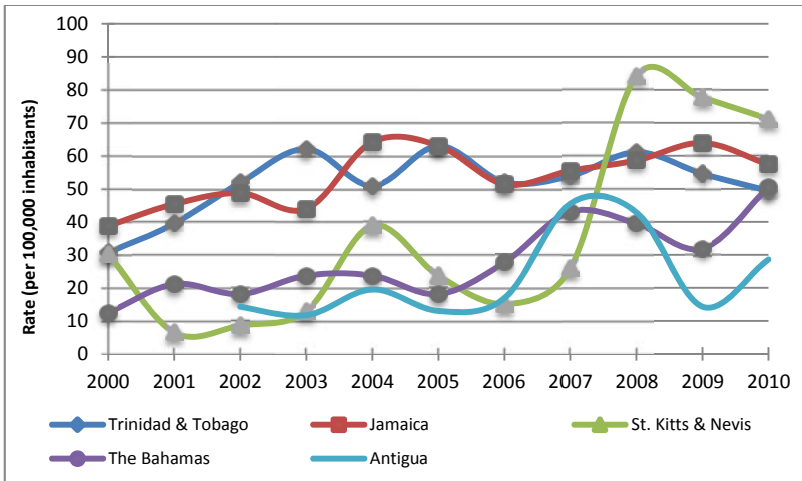


Fig. 1-5 Shooting rates for the countries with the most rapid increases

For the period 2000 to 2010, the countries with the most rapid increases in rates of shootings were St. Kitts and Nevis (with an average annual increase of 4.1 shootings per 100,000 inhabitants), the Bahamas (3.8), Antigua and Barbuda (2.2), Trinidad and Tobago (1.9) and Jamaica (1.9).

Rates of shootings for these countries for the period 2000 to 2010 appear in figure 1-5. All countries concerned exhibited a fluctuating but increasing incidence of shootings. In the case of St. Kitts and Nevis, the most pronounced increase occurred between 2006 and 2008 when the rate rose from 15.1 to 84.2 shootings per 100,000 inhabitants.

Accessibility to firearms in the Caribbean at present has led to a situation where a substantial proportion of murders are being committed with the use of firearms. In the case of Trinidad and Tobago, for the period 2004 to 2010, a total of 2,935 murders were committed. Of these, 2,043 or 69.6% were committed with a firearm (see table 1-3). Prior to 2000, firearms were used in less than one third of all murders in Trinidad and Tobago, whereas after 2000, firearm usage in homicides increased to the point where firearms represented by far the predominant weapon of choice. In the case of Jamaica, for the period 2004 to 2010, a total of 10,796 murders were committed, of which 8,269 or 76.6% were committed with a firearm.

**Table 1-3: Murder involving firearms: Jamaica and Trinidad and Tobago**

		2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010
<b>Jamaica</b>	Total no. of murders	1471	1674	1340	1583	1618	1682	1428
	No. committed with firearms	1111	1278	1008	1249	1253	1290	1080
	Percentage	75.5	76.3	75.2	78.9	77.4	76.7	75.6
<b>Trinidad and Tobago</b>	Total no. of murders	261	386	371	391	547	506	473
	No. committed with firearms	180	272	269	303	432	232	355
	Percentage	69.0	70.5	72.5	77.5	79.0	45.8	75.1

The average rate of shootings across the Caribbean increased over the period 2000 to 2010 by an annual average of 2 shootings per 100,000 inhabitants (see figure 1-6). For the entire period under consideration, the average rate of shootings for Caribbean countries was 31 shootings per 100,000 inhabitants. For the period under consideration, the rate of shootings reached its highest point in 2010; this figure was 44.4 shootings per 100,000 inhabitants.

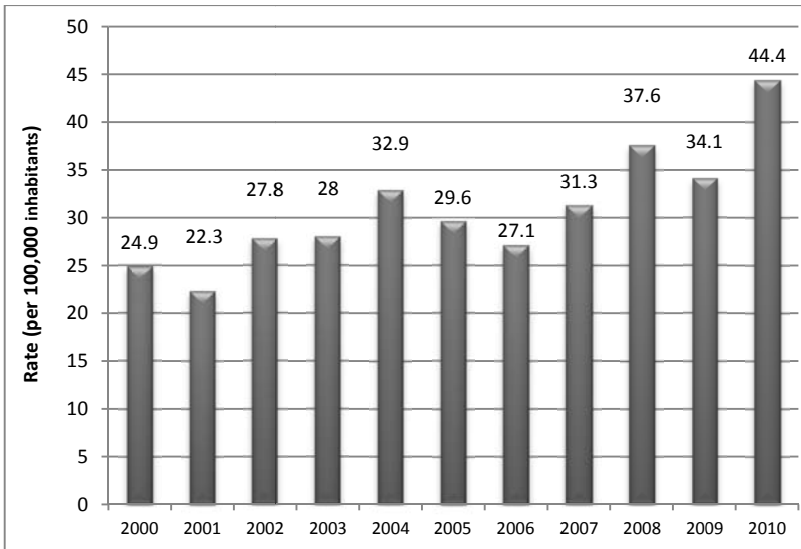


Fig. 1-6 Average shooting rates for the Caribbean (2000-2010)

## Robbery

Table 1-4 shows the number of robberies in Caribbean countries for the period 2000-2010. By far, the countries with the highest annual average number of robberies were Trinidad and Tobago (an average of 4,832 robberies per year), Jamaica (2,239) and Guyana (1,939). These were followed by Belize (an average of 529), St. Lucia (388), Barbados (368), the Bahamas (235), and Antigua and Barbuda (108). Each of the other countries listed in table 1-4 had on average fewer than one hundred robberies per year. It is noteworthy and troubling that, in addition to having the highest number of robberies, the rates of increase in robberies for Trinidad and Tobago, Jamaica and Guyana were far higher than those for the other countries examined. In Trinidad and Tobago for the period 2000 to 2010, the number of robberies increased by an average of 98 per year, while in Jamaica the number of robberies increased by 52 per year, and in Guyana there was an increase of 96 robberies per year. While there were increases in the number of robberies for the other countries listed in table 1-4, these increases were negligible compared to the increases in Trinidad and Tobago, Jamaica and Guyana.

**Table 1-4: Robbery statistics for Caribbean countries**

	<b>T&amp;T</b>	<b>Ja</b>	<b>Bar</b>	<b>Gre</b>	<b>Luc</b>	<b>SVG</b>	<b>SKN</b>	<b>Bah</b>	<b>Dom</b>	<b>Bel</b>	<b>Guy</b>	<b>Ant</b>
2000	4094	2331	428	50	290	81	69	219	57	574	1715	58
2001	4269	2109	312	31	299	101	43	206	104	546	1832	40
2002	4675	2021	350	85	352	74	63	207	103	571	2440	61
2003	4590	1710	316	44	324	63	54	258	73	441	1596	93
2004	3885	2103	289	38	385	62	52	199	80	442	1669	78
2005	4883	2210	330	45	419	73	90	198	104	653	1982	73
2006	5633	2009	367	50	375	79	75	188	76	526	2060	148
2007	4965	1601	392	60	380	56	119	194	71	514	1685	198
2008	5043	2660	394	43	490	47	102	262	71	-	1833	153
2009	6040	3021	383	43	601	68	108	316	79	545	2582	164
2010	5075	2850	487	71	348	117	84	336	67	477	-	120
<b>Average</b>	<b>4832</b>	<b>2239</b>	<b>368</b>	<b>51</b>	<b>388</b>	<b>75</b>	<b>78</b>	<b>235</b>	<b>80</b>	<b>529</b>	<b>1939</b>	<b>108</b>
<b>Avg. increase</b>	<b>98</b>	<b>52</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>-11</b>	<b>96</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>Avg. rate</b>	<b>383</b>	<b>86</b>	<b>137</b>	<b>49</b>	<b>247</b>	<b>68</b>	<b>169</b>	<b>77</b>	<b>116</b>	<b>220</b>	<b>258</b>	<b>140</b>
<b>Rate increase</b>	<b>7.8</b>	<b>2.0</b>	<b>2.2</b>	<b>2.1</b>	<b>3.7</b>	<b>3.3</b>	<b>3.2</b>	<b>3.9</b>	<b>1.4</b>	<b>-4</b>	<b>12.9</b>	<b>8.1</b>

KEY: Ant-Antigua; Guy-Guyana; Bel-Belize; Dom-Dominica; Bah-Bahamas; SKN-St Kitts/Nevis; SVG-St Vincent & Grenadines; Luc-St Lucia; Gre-Grenada; Bar-Barbados; JA-Jamaica; T&T-Trinidad and Tobago



While the number of robberies as well as the annual increase in robberies in the majority of countries was small, this must be considered in the context of the size of the populations of these countries. A small number of robberies in a small population can still create conditions where the risk of robbery victimization is high. The average rates per 100,000 inhabitants at which people fall victim to robbery are shown in figure 1-7. While the risk of robbery victimization was highest in Trinidad and Tobago (383 per 100,000 inhabitants per annum on average), the risk of victimization in several countries was higher than in Jamaica, despite the comparatively higher number of robberies in the latter country. Countries with robbery rates which exceeded that of Jamaica include Guyana, St. Lucia, Belize, St. Kitts and Nevis, Antigua and Barbuda, Barbados and Dominica. An examination of the average robbery rates in the Caribbean indicated that the various countries could be placed into four groups (see figure 1-7). Group one comprised Trinidad and Tobago with the highest robbery rate. Group two contained Guyana, St. Lucia and Belize, each with average annual robbery rates which exceeded two hundred. St. Kitts and Nevis, Antigua and Barbuda, Barbados, and Dominica placed in group three, and had rates which exceeded one hundred. The countries with the lowest average robbery rates in the Caribbean were Jamaica, the Bahamas, St. Vincent and the Grenadines, and Grenada.

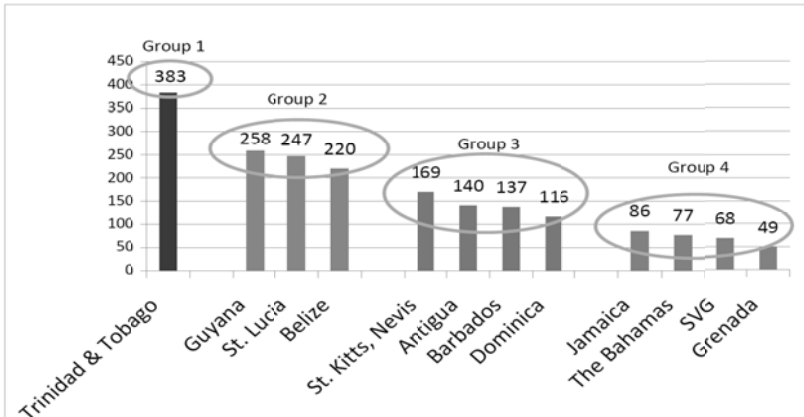


Fig. 1-7 Average robbery rates (2000-2010)

The countries with the highest average annual increases in robbery rates were Guyana (an average increase of 12.9 robberies per 100,000 inhabitants per year), Antigua (8.1), Trinidad and Tobago (7.8), the Baha-

mas (3.9) and St. Lucia (3.7). The robbery rates for these countries for the period 2000 to 2010 appear in figure 1-8.

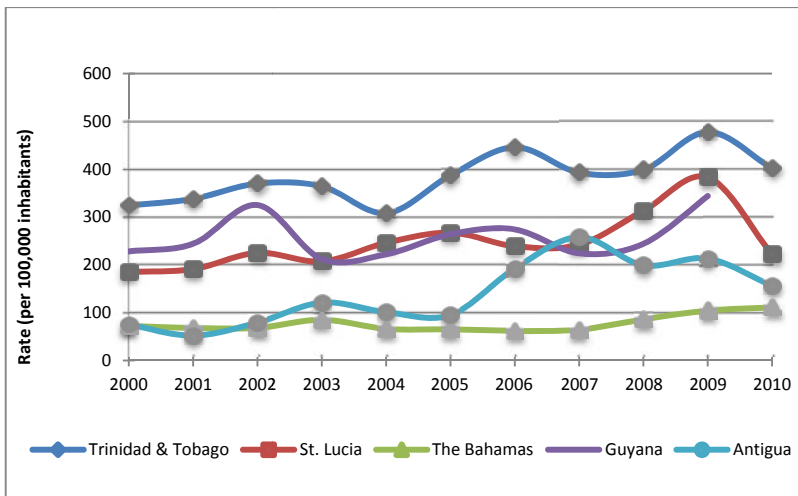


Fig. 1-8 Robbery rates for the countries with the most rapid increases

## Rape

Table 1-5 shows the number of rapes in Caribbean countries for the period 2000 to 2010. The highest average number of rapes occurred in Jamaica (an annual average of 806 rapes), Trinidad and Tobago (279), the Bahamas (117) and Guyana (114). The other countries in table 1-5 had an average of fewer than one hundred rapes occurring annually.

While many Caribbean countries recorded comparatively small annual numbers of rapes when population size was taken into account, the risk of rape victimization was comparably high in many of the countries. The countries with the highest rates were St. Vincent and the Grenadines (48.7 rapes per annum per 100,000 inhabitants), the Bahamas (38.7), St. Lucia (32.4), and Jamaica (30.9). These were followed by Antigua and Barbuda, Grenada, Dominica, Barbados, St. Kitts and Nevis, and Trinidad and Tobago, all of which had rates which exceeded 20 rapes per annum per 100,000 inhabitants. The only countries with rates lower than these were Belize and Guyana.

**Table 1-5: Statistics for rape in Caribbean countries**

	<b>T&amp;T</b>	<b>Ja</b>	<b>Bar</b>	<b>Gre</b>	<b>Luc</b>	<b>SVG</b>	<b>SKN</b>	<b>Bah</b>	<b>Dom</b>	<b>Bel</b>	<b>Guy</b>	<b>Ant</b>
2000	261	870	68	21	40	49	14	101	24	78	117	-
2001	274	912	71	21	35	51	17	111	20	56	117	-
2002	302	875	95	29	37	43	12	150	23	54	137	13
2003	317	931	79	32	48	60	6	114	14	50	122	15
2004	305	860	84	19	52	66	9	89	23	33	154	16
2005	334	746	77	23	49	87	11	82	22	47	169	22
2006	259	707	75	22	65	50	10	72	9	44	124	17
2007	317	712	72	30	69	60	7	134	17	38	82	30
2008	236	851	62	31	45	36	13	118	18	38	58	46
2009	247	702	68	57	53	54	14	126	25	30	62	32
2010	215	704	63	32	66	28	14	205	19	21	-	8
<b>Average</b>	<b>279</b>	<b>806</b>	<b>74</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>51</b>	<b>53</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>117</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>46</b>	<b>114</b>	<b>22</b>
<b>Avq. increase</b>	<b>-4.6</b>	<b>-16.6</b>	<b>-0.5</b>	<b>1.1</b>	<b>2.6</b>	<b>-2.1</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>10.4</b>	<b>-0.5</b>	<b>-5.7</b>	<b>-6.1</b>	<b>-0.6</b>
<b>Avq. rate</b>	<b>22.1</b>	<b>30.9</b>	<b>27.5</b>	<b>27.9</b>	<b>32.4</b>	<b>48.7</b>	<b>24.9</b>	<b>38.7</b>	<b>27.9</b>	<b>19.3</b>	<b>15.2</b>	<b>28.8</b>
<b>Rate increase</b>	<b>-0.4</b>	<b>-0.6</b>	<b>-0.2</b>	<b>1.1</b>	<b>1.7</b>	<b>-1.9</b>	<b>0.0</b>	<b>3.4</b>	<b>-0.7</b>	<b>-2.4</b>	<b>-0.9</b>	<b>-0.9</b>

KEY: Ant-Antigua; Guy-Guyana; Bel-Belize; Dom-Dominica; Bah-Bahamas; SKN-St Kitts/Nevis; SVG-St Vincent & Grenadines; Luc-St Lucia; Gre-Grenada; Bar-Barbados; JA-Jamaica; T&T-Trinidad and Tobago

Figure 1-9 offers a graphic representation of rape rates, where countries were classified into three groups. St. Vincent and the Grenadines, and the Bahamas were in group one with the highest rates, while Belize and Guyana were in group three, with the lowest rates. All the other countries were in group two. While rape rates were high in many countries, the incidence of rape was declining in the majority of Caribbean countries. The only countries with increases in their rape rates were the Bahamas (an average annual increase of 3.4 rapes per 100,000 inhabitants), St. Lucia (1.7) and Grenada (1.1).

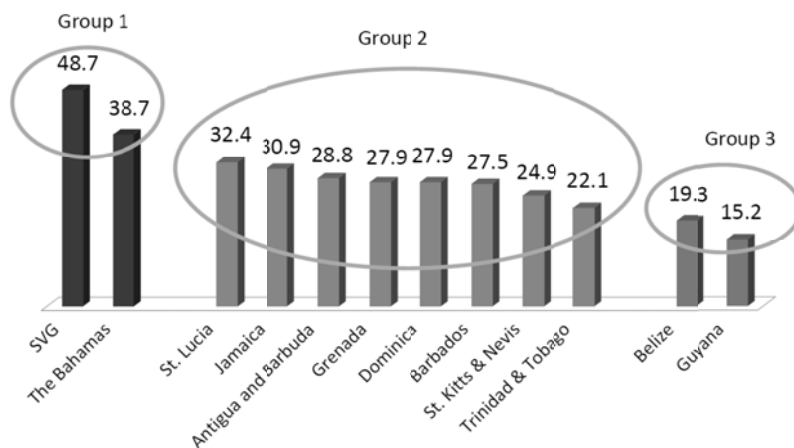


Fig. 1-9 Average rape rates (2000-2010)

## Burglary and Housebreaking Offences

Burglary and housebreaking offences for the period 2000 to 2010 appear in table 1-6. In the case of Barbados, the statistics given included residential burglary, commercial burglary, and other burglary, while for Grenada, St. Lucia, and St. Vincent and the Grenadines, data are for housebreaking offences. In the case of Guyana, the data given are for burglary, housebreaking and larceny.

A number of countries stand out as locations with comparatively large numbers of burglaries and housebreakings; these include Trinidad and Tobago, which has an annual average of 5,085 burglaries, the Bahamas (2,477), Guyana (2,305), Jamaica (2,203), Antigua and Barbuda (2,197), and Barbados (2,077). The annual average number of burglaries for the

other countries in table 1-6 does not exceed two thousand, with the number in Grenada and St. Kitts and Nevis not exceeding one thousand per annum.

**Table 1-6: Statistics for burglaries/housebreakings in Caribbean countries**

	T&T	Ja	Bar	Gre	Luc	SVG	SKN	Bah	Dom	Bel	Guy	Ant
2000	5623	2426	2861	1098	2072	1759	941	2434	1297	1852	3083	2145
2001	5016	2184	2574	583	2211	2172	733	1803	1286	1942	2518	2178
2002	4930	1769	2693	1069	2030	1691	896	2137	1551	1986	2589	2194
2003	4863	1401	1949	849	1887	1501	695	2581	1175	1713	2590	1880
2004	5214	2044	1883	861	1875	1563	585	2019	1012	1660	2588	2701
2005	4548	1653	1833	990	2049	1492	719	2255	1002	1758	2279	2784
2006	4973	1297	1846	1012	2102	1301	758	2628	1106	1514	1959	2607
2007	1958	1493	1594	879	1621	1144	735	2534	1004	1256	1813	2725
2008	4855	2449	1889	1008	2224	1107	761	2726	1019	-	1826	1873
2009	5744	3786	1808	1158	2124	1527	692	2668	1015	1286	1800	1635
2010	5207	3734	1919	1125	1680	1724	786	3133	935	1018	-	1445
<b>Average</b>	<b>5085</b>	<b>2203</b>	<b>2077</b>	<b>967</b>	<b>1989</b>	<b>1544</b>	<b>755</b>	<b>2447</b>	<b>1127</b>	<b>1599</b>	<b>2305</b>	<b>2197</b>
<b>Avg. increase</b>	<b>-42</b>	<b>131</b>	<b>-94</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>-39</b>	<b>-4</b>	<b>-16</b>	<b>70</b>	<b>-36</b>	<b>-108</b>	<b>-143</b>	<b>-70</b>
<b>Avg. rate</b>	<b>403</b>	<b>84</b>	<b>773</b>	<b>937</b>	<b>1269</b>	<b>1416</b>	<b>1629</b>	<b>806</b>	<b>1619</b>	<b>665</b>	<b>307</b>	<b>2858</b>
<b>Rate increase</b>	<b>-3</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>-35</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>-25</b>	<b>-3</b>	<b>-33</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>-52</b>	<b>-45</b>	<b>-19</b>	<b>-91</b>

KEY: Ant-Antigua; Guy-Guyana; Bel-Belize; Dom-Dominica; Bah-Bahamas; SKN-St Kitts/Nevis; SVG-St. Vincent & Grenadines; Luc-St Lucia; Gre-Grenada; Bar-Barbados; JA-Jamaica; T&T-Trinidad and Tobago

Almost invariably, the number of burglaries and housebreakings was declining across the Caribbean, with the greatest declines occurring in Guyana (an average annual decrease of 143), Belize (108), Barbados (94) and Antigua and Barbuda (70). These decreases may have been the result of better guardianship, which might include a range of security devices as well as personnel. Such decreases could also signal the possibility that burglars were becoming more violent and resorting to robbery as a means of property acquisition. The Bahamas and Jamaica were the only countries with notable increases in the number of burglaries and housebreakings. In the case of the Bahamas, there was an annual increase of 70 burglaries and housebreakings, and in the case of Jamaica there was an annual increase of 131 such offences. These increases translated into increases in the average annual rate of burglaries in each country. For the Bahamas, the burglary and housebreaking rate increased by an average of 23 such offences per 100,000 inhabitants per annum for the period under consideration, while for Jamaica, the corresponding increase was 5 burglaries and housebreakings per 100,000 inhabitants per annum.

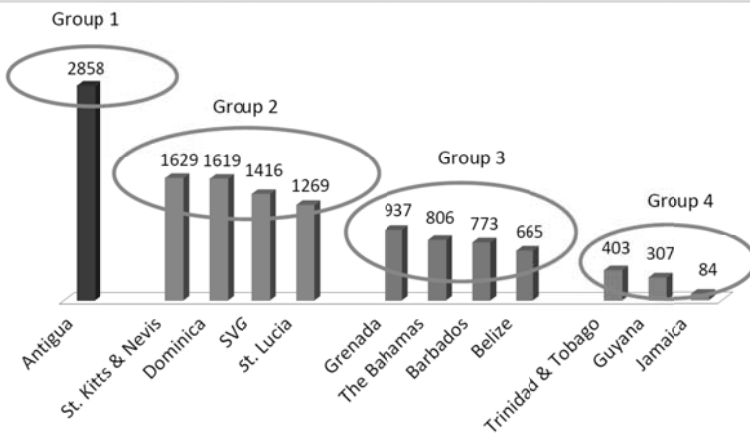


Fig. 1-10 Average burglary/breaking rates (2000-2010)

The average burglary rate of a number of countries was in excess of one thousand burglaries per one hundred thousand inhabitants, with that of Antigua and Barbuda almost approaching three thousand (see figure 1-10). The burglary rates for St. Kitts and Nevis, Dominica, St. Vincent and the Grenadines, and St. Lucia were 1629, 1619, 1416, and 1269 burglaries per 100,000 inhabitants respectively. The average annual burglary rate for