

3 Violent and sexual crime

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3.1 SUMMARY

This chapter presents findings from the British Crime Survey (BCS) and police recorded crime. Both sources show that the number of violent crimes has decreased in the past year.

- After little change in recent years, the number of BCS violent crimes experienced by adults has decreased by 12 per cent between 2006/07 and 2007/08 BCS interviews. Police recorded violence against the person fell by eight per cent between 2006/07 and 2007/08, resulting in the lowest figure since 2002/03.
- Within violence against the person, the most serious offences recorded by the police have fallen markedly: 16,939 offences of most serious violence against the person were recorded in 2007/08, 12 per cent fewer than in 2006/07, and the smallest total seen for nine years.

Longer-term trends from the BCS show that violent crime increased since the first BCS results in 1981 to peak in 1995, followed by a gradual decline then stability in recent years.

- The number of violent incidents has fallen by half (48%) since 1995, representing an estimated two million fewer incidents and around three-quarters of a million fewer victims; violent crime is now at a similar level to 1981.

The degree of violence varies considerably between incidents:

- Just over half (51%) of all violent incidents reported to the BCS did not result in any injury to the victim. A similar proportion (52%) of all police recorded violence against the person in 2007/08 involved no injury.
- Weapons were used in a quarter (24%) of violent crimes as measured by the 2007/08 BCS (this figure has been stable over the past decade). Hitting implements were used in seven per cent of violent crimes, knives in six per cent, glasses/bottles in four per cent and firearms in one per cent of incidents.
- The number of police recorded offences involving firearms rose by two per cent between 2006/07 and 2007/08; this follows a 13 per cent fall in the previous year.

Risk of victimisation varies by personal characteristics, with men, and in particular young men, being at greatest risk of victimisation according to the BCS.

- The risk of being a victim of violent crime in the 2007/08 BCS was 3.2 per cent. Men (4.1%) were almost twice as likely as women (2.3%) to have experienced some sort of violence in the year prior to interview. The risk for men aged 16 to 24 was highest at 13.4 per cent.
- Not only did men have the highest risk of violent crime victimisation, but 87 per cent of violent incidents involved male offenders.

3.2 BRITISH CRIME SURVEY AND POLICE MEASURES OF VIOLENT AND SEXUAL CRIME

This chapter presents information about violence against the person, sexual offences and robbery. Violence against the person contains the full spectrum of assaults, from pushing and shoving that result in no physical harm, to murder. Even within the same offence classification, the degree of violence varies considerably between incidents and in around half of incidents identified in both BCS and police statistics, the violence results in no injury (see Section 3.9). There are differences in the range of offences that the BCS and police recorded crime covers (see Box 3.1), however, a 'comparable subset' of offences can be used to compare the two series (see Chapter 2).

The BCS provides a generally more reliable trend measure of violent crime, enabling better comparisons over time for the types of violence that it routinely covers. This is because the BCS is not affected by changes in reporting, police recording and local policing activity, and has been measured in a consistent way since the survey began measuring crime in 1981. Nonetheless, police statistics remain important for showing the mix of violent crimes dealt with, and recorded, by the police. They are an important measure of activity locally and a source of operational information to help identify and address local crime problems, at a lower geographical level than is possible using the BCS. Police statistics also provide more reliable information on rarer crimes, such as robbery, and are the only source of data on homicides, violent crimes against under 16s, and those not living in private households.

Trends in police recorded violent crime can be very difficult to interpret, as they have been distorted by a number of factors. It is important to consider the following issues when interpreting trends.

(i) Police recorded crime data are subject to changes in the levels of public reporting of incidents. The proportion of violent crimes estimated to be reported to the police has increased from the first BCS results in 1981, but has been reasonably stable since 2002/03 (see Chapter 2).

(ii) Local policing activity and priorities affect the levels of reported and recorded violent crime. Where the police are proactive in addressing low-level violence and anti-social behaviour, this can lead to more of these crimes being brought to their attention and being recorded. For example, research by the Cardiff Violence Research Group showed an association between the introduction of CCTV surveillance and increased police detection of violence (Sivarajasingam *et al.*, 2003).

(iii) Police recorded crime data are subject to changes in police recording practices, including those relating to national counting rules and crime recording standards. The 1998 changes to the Home Office Counting Rules had a very significant impact on the recording of violent and sexual crime; the number of violence against the person offences recorded by the police increased by 118 per cent as a result of the 1998 changes (Povey and Prime, 1999). Much of this increase resulted from a widening of the offence coverage to include assaults with little or no physical injury, and offences of harassment (again with no injury).

The National Crime Recording Standard (NCRS), introduced in April 2002, again resulted in increased recording of violent and sexual crimes particularly for less serious offences, as well as for some other offences. There was an estimated NCRS effect of 23 per cent on violence against the person offences in the first 12 months of implementation (Simmons *et al.*, 2003).

Audits undertaken by the Audit Commission on behalf of the Home Office indicate substantial improvements in crime recording across forces in the two to three years following NCRS introduction, which would particularly impact on violence against the person and result in increases in recorded crimes for this category (see Introduction for more details).

Box 3.1 Violent and sexual crime – offences covered by the BCS and police recorded crime

Violence against the person

In order to address the wide range of seriousness, police recorded violence against the person is separated into two sub-categories:

- Most serious violence against the person (including homicide, attempted murder and more serious wounding).
- Other violence against the person (including less serious wounding, threat or conspiracy to murder, harassment and assault without injury).

All categories also include attempts and threats to commit those offences (apart from attempted murder and threat/conspiracy to murder which are themselves separate categories) that may not involve injury (see Section 3.4 for fuller descriptions, and Appendix 3 for a full list of offences).

The BCS covers wounding, assault with minor injury and assault with no injury.

- BCS wounding includes offences that correspond to police recorded more serious wounding and part of less serious wounding.
- BCS assault with minor injury broadly corresponds to the remaining part of police recorded less serious wounding.
- BCS assault with no injury corresponds to police recorded assault without injury.

Sexual offences

Police recorded sexual offences cover different types of unlawful sexual activity, including rape and sexual assault. Some of the offences do not necessarily involve violence: unlawful sexual intercourse with a person under 16 or with a mental disorder, for example. As with violence against the person, the range of seriousness is addressed by creating two sub-categories:

- Most serious sexual crime (including rapes, sexual assaults, and sexual activity with children).
- Other sexual offences (including soliciting, exploitation of prostitution, and other unlawful sexual activity between consenting adults).

Due to the small numbers of sexual offences picked up by face-to-face BCS interviews, results are too unreliable to report (for more information see Box 3.2).

Robbery

As with violence against the person, police recorded robberies cover a wide range of seriousness from armed bank robberies to muggings for mobile phones or small amounts of money. In certain circumstances, there is a fine distinction between robbery and theft; this is detailed in the Glossary.

The BCS covers robberies against adults living in private households. However, as one of the rarer crimes, the number of robbery victims interviewed is too low to provide robust estimates for individual years; therefore police statistics provide a better measure of trends. Any BCS figures relating to robbery in this chapter should be treated with caution due to the low number of victims.

BCS violence type

Violent crime as measured by the BCS can alternatively be divided into four types, broadly based on the relationship between the victim and offender.

- **Domestic violence** – assaults and woundings which involve partners, ex-partners, other relatives or other household members.
- **Stranger violence** – assaults and woundings in which the victim did not have any information about the offender(s), or did not know and had never seen the offender(s) before.
- **Acquaintance violence** – assaults and woundings in which the victim knew one or more of the offenders, at least by sight.
- **Mugging** – robbery, attempted robbery, and snatch theft from the person (note, snatch theft is not included in the overall violence measure).

Respondents may not wish to disclose sensitive information relating to domestic violence in a face-to-face interview, so self-completion modules are included in the BCS to better capture this information. These results are published separately (see Box 3.2 for more information).

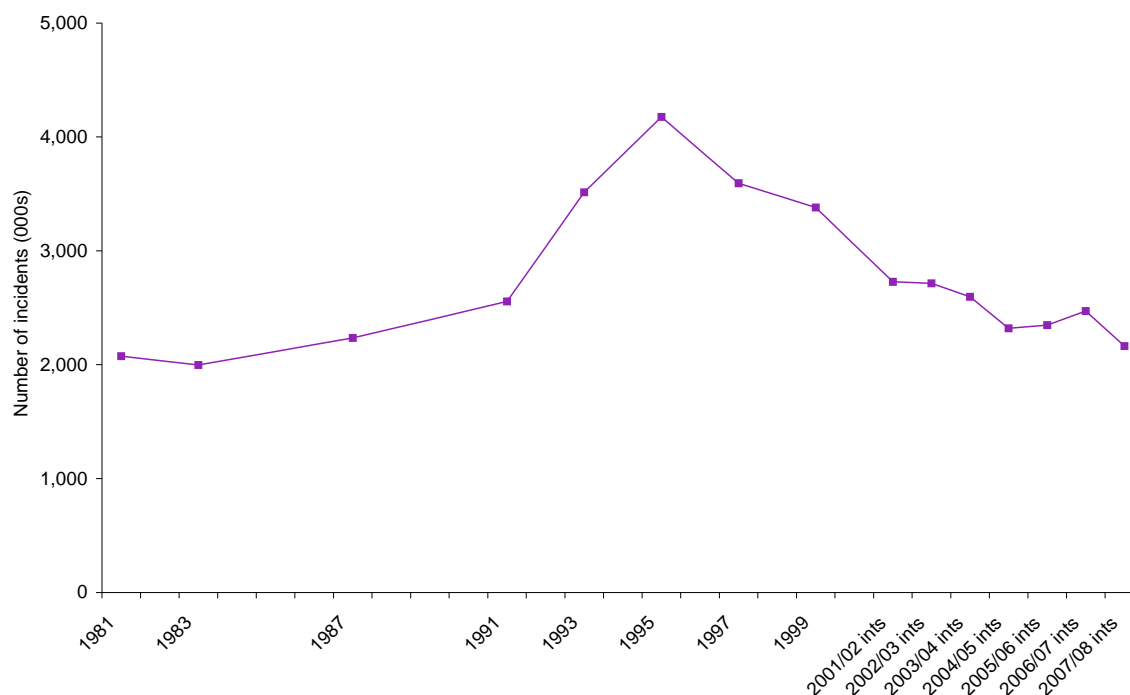
3.3 EXTENT AND TRENDS

This chapter presents findings from the British Crime Survey (BCS) and police recorded crime. Both sources show that the number of violent crimes has decreased in the past year.

- After little change in recent years, the number of BCS violent crimes experienced by adults has decreased by 12 per cent between 2006/07 and 2007/08 BCS interviews. Police recorded violence against the person fell by eight per cent between 2006/07 and 2007/08, to the lowest figure seen for five years (Tables 2.01 and 2.04).
- The 2007/08 BCS estimates that there were 2,164,000 violent incidents against adults in England and Wales (Table 2.01).¹

Longer-term trends in violence from the BCS show that the number of violent crimes increased since the first BCS results in 1981: gradually through the 1980s and then sharply after 1991 to reach a peak in the mid-1990s. Substantial declines have been noted subsequently (although levels in recent years have appeared more stable) and the number of violent incidents is now at a similar level to 1981. Incidents of violent crime reported to the BCS have fallen by half (48%) since 1995, representing an estimated two million fewer incidents and around three-quarters of a million fewer victims (Figure 3.1 and Table 2.01).

Figure 3.1 All violent crime, 1981 to 2007/08 BCS

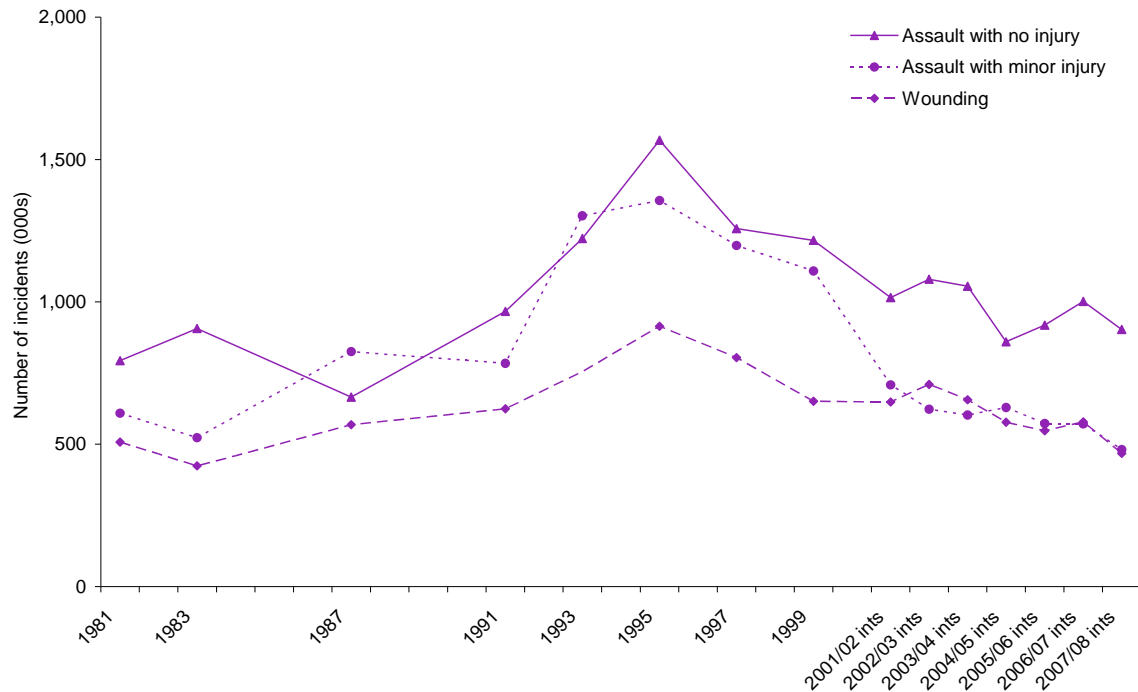


- The trend in the number of incidents of BCS wounding has shown a similar pattern, and after the gradual and then sharp rise between 1981 and 1995, there has been a notable decrease since 1995 but with stability seen in recent years. There were 467,000 incidents of wounding estimated by the 2007/08 BCS, representing half (49%) the number of incidents in 1995 (Figure 3.2 and Table 2.01).
- Again following a similar pattern since 1981, incidents of BCS assault with minor injury have decreased significantly since 1995 by around two-thirds (65%). The estimated number of assaults with minor injury was 481,000 based on the 2007/08 BCS.

¹ 'All violence' includes wounding, assault with minor injury, assault with no injury and robbery. For more information see the Glossary.

- The BCS shows a steep increase in numbers of assaults with no injury between 1987 and 1995, reaching a peak of 1,567,000 incidents. In the 2007/08 BCS there were 903,000 assaults resulting in no injury, a decrease of 42 per cent since 1995, after generally downward fluctuations and then stability in the past few years.

Figure 3.2 Trends in violence by offence type, 1981 to 2007/08 BCS



- There were 961,188 offences of violence against the person recorded by the police in 2007/08, eight per cent fewer than in the previous year and the lowest figure since the introduction of the National Crime Recording Standard (NCRS) in April 2002. There were also falls in sexual offences, down seven per cent to 53,540, and robberies, down 16 per cent to 84,706, the lowest number for eight years (Table 2.04).

Although recorded violence against the person has fallen in the last two years, it rose in each of the previous three years following the introduction of the NCRS. BCS trends in violence did not mirror the recorded crime increases following NCRS introduction, indicating that improved police recording practices and proactive policing are responsible for a large part of these earlier increases in recorded violence against the person.

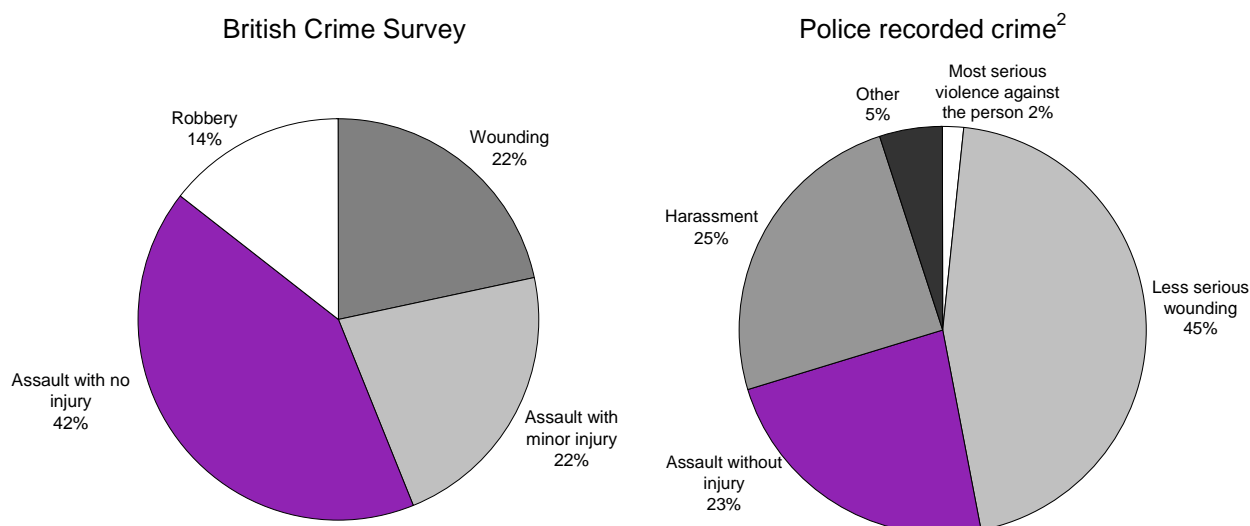
3.4 VIOLENCE AGAINST THE PERSON

All BCS violence includes wounding, assault with minor injury, assault with no injury and robbery. The BCS violence categories were changed in 2006/07 with snatch thefts being removed from overall violence, and the former common assault category being split into assault with minor injury and assault with no injury, to mirror the recorded crime offence classifications. Due to the relatively small numbers of serious woundings experienced by BCS respondents, separate figures for serious woundings cannot be provided.

- The latest figures for woundings show a statistically significant decrease of 19 per cent between the 2006/07 and 2007/08 BCS. The categories of assault with minor injury and assault with no injury have remained stable between the 2006/07 and 2007/08 BCS (the apparent falls are not statistically significant, Table 2.01).
- Continuing a similar pattern in previous years, assaults with no injury accounted for 42 per cent of all violence in the 2007/08 BCS. Assaults with minor injury and woundings accounted for just under a quarter each (22% for both categories), and robberies for 14 per cent of all violence (Figure 3.3).

- Less serious wounding accounted for the largest proportion (45%) of police recorded violence against the person in 2007/08, followed by harassment (25%) and assaults without injury (23%). Most serious violence against the person accounted for two per cent (Figure 3.3).

Figure 3.3 BCS and police recorded violence, 2007/08



Not all violent crimes are reported to the police (see Chapter 2 for more information). The BCS shows that the proportion of incidents of comparable violence³ reported to the police has been stable over the last few years at around two in five (43%, 2007/08 BCS). Longer-term trends show that reporting rates for BCS assault with minor or no injury and BCS wounding increased between 1981 and 2007/08 (from 25% to 37% and 40% to 59% respectively) (Table 2.10).

Most serious violence against the person

This grouping comprises violent offences recorded by the police where the injury inflicted or intended is life threatening. This includes offences resulting in death, regardless of intent; homicide; and causing death (by either dangerous driving, careless driving when under the influence of drink or drugs, or aggravated vehicle taking). It also includes offences where serious injury was intentionally caused or attempted: attempted murder, and more serious wounding or acts endangering life (e.g. wounding, poisoning and use of weapons and explosives, all with intent to cause serious injury) (see Chapter 2, Box 2.2).

Offences of most serious violence against the person will tend to provide a more reliable measure of trends than overall violence recorded by the police as they are more immune to changes in reporting and recording. The Audit Commission audits (see Chapter 1) indicated that in many forces it took two or three years for the full effects of NCRS to bed in. In 2004/05, the third year following NCRS implementation, the number of most serious violence against the person offences was 16 per cent higher than in 2001/02, the year immediately prior to implementation. This is a much smaller rise than that of 62 per cent in other violence against the person over the same period.

- Most serious violence against the person offences accounted for two per cent of all recorded violence against the person offences in 2007/08, and 0.3 per cent of all police

² Recorded crime pie-chart in Figure 3.3 includes violence against the person only: most serious violence against the person; and other violence against the person (less serious wounding, assault without injury, harassment, other). Robbery is excluded.

³ Comparable violence includes wounding, assault with minor injury, assault with no injury and robbery; it is therefore consistent with BCS figures for 'All violence' presented in this chapter.

recorded crime. There were 16,939 recorded offences compared with 19,150 in 2006/07, a decrease of 12 per cent and the smallest total seen for nine years (Figure 3.3 and Table 2.04).

- The most serious violent crime is homicide⁴; further analysis of 2007/08 homicides will be published when complete data are available early in 2009. Provisional data show that the police recorded 784 incidents, three per cent more than the 759 recorded in 2006/07. There were 620 attempted murder offences recorded in 2007/08, two per cent fewer than in 2006/07.
- The majority of offences of most serious violence against the person recorded by the police are more serious wounding or other acts endangering life (15,094 offences). These offences decreased by 13 per cent in 2007/08, and represent two per cent of all recorded violence against the person. There were also 418 offences of causing death by dangerous driving or by careless driving while under the influence of drink or drugs, nine per cent fewer than in 2006/07.
- Most serious violence against the person is concentrated in a small number of geographical areas. The average rate for England and Wales was 0.3 offences per 1,000 population in 2007/08. A comparison of local authority rates shows that the 21 authorities with rates more than twice the average for England and Wales represent ten per cent of the population but account for 26 per cent of offences of most serious violence against the person (Figure 3.4).

Other violence against the person

This grouping includes offences recorded by the police involving less serious injury: in particular, the offence of less serious wounding. It also includes certain offences that involve no physical injury: some involving serious intent, such as threats to kill, and others that are generally viewed less seriously by the courts, such as assault without injury and harassment.

- These other violence against the person offences accounted for 98 per cent of all recorded violence against the person in 2007/08 and 19 per cent of all police recorded crime. There were 944,249 offences in 2007/08 compared with 1,027,018 in 2006/07, representing an eight per cent fall (Table 2.04).
- Within this total, the police recorded 435,483 offences of less serious wounding⁵ in 2007/08, a decrease of 11 per cent from 2006/07. There were 9,977 offences of threat or conspiracy to murder, down 22 per cent on 2006/07, although some of this reduction may be influenced by changes in recording.⁶
- The police recorded 223,525 assaults without injury⁷ in 2007/08, two per cent fewer than in 2006/07 (228,801 offences). Two per cent of these assaults without injury in 2007/08 were racially or religiously aggravated. Assaults without injury accounted for 23 per cent of recorded violence against the person in 2007/08.
- Police recorded harassment (which does not involve physical injury to the victim) accounted for 25 per cent of police recorded violence against the person in 2007/08. The police recorded 236,533 harassment offences in 2007/08, eight per cent fewer than in 2006/07 (257,130 offences). Eleven per cent of harassment offences were racially or religiously aggravated.
- Possession of weapons offences⁸ that fall within the violence against the person category decreased by seven per cent, from 34,689 in 2006/07 to 32,397 in 2007/08.

⁴ The police statistics for the number of homicides include murders, manslaughters and infanticides that come to the attention of the police. Deaths that are not initially believed to be suspicious may be re-categorised as homicides at a later date. The police record such incidents at the time of re-classification, not the year of death.

⁵ Including racially or religiously aggravated offences.

⁶ In April 2008 the Home Office Counting Rules reiterated guidance issued in 2005 that clarified the legal definition of threats to kill, especially around the intent of the offender.

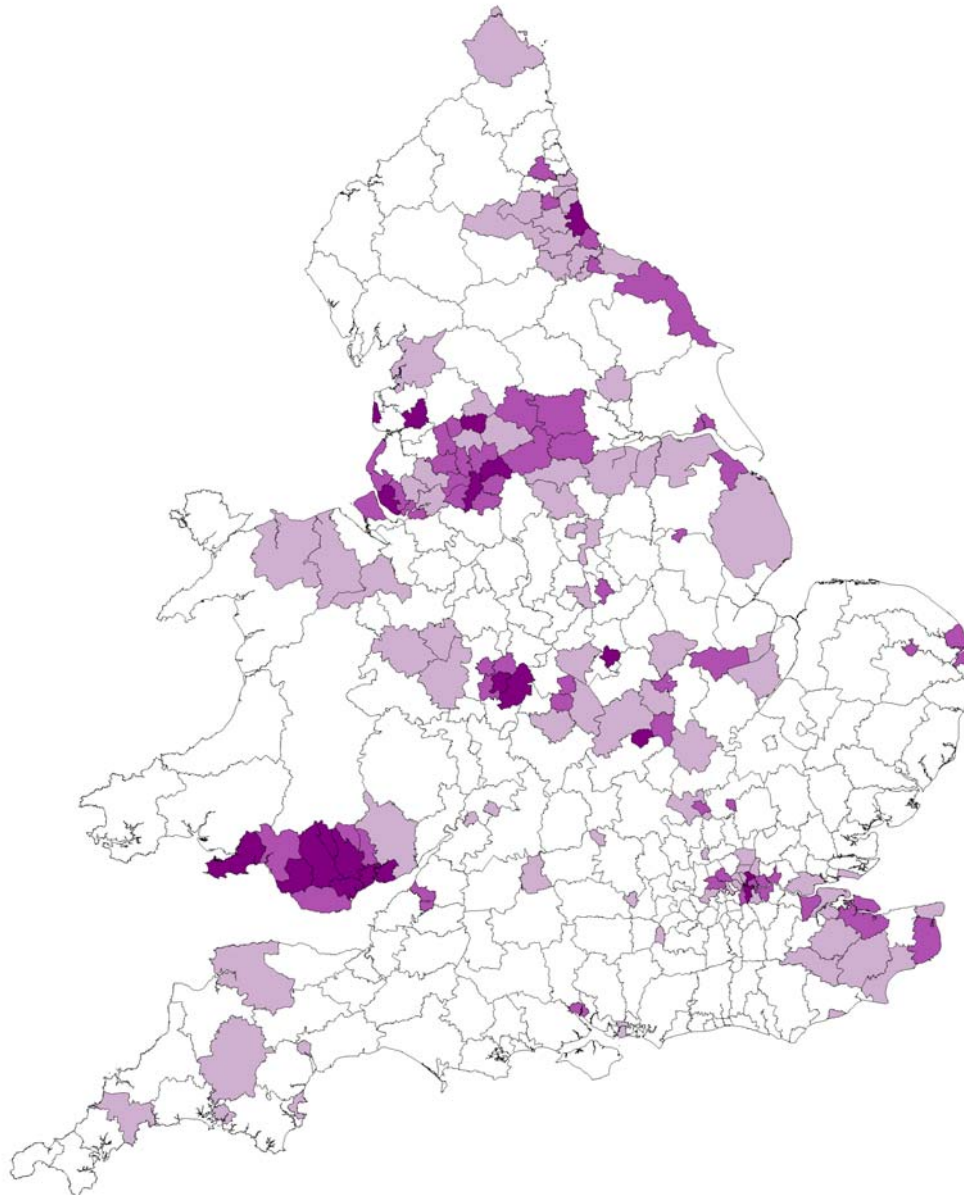
⁷ Including assault without injury on a constable and racially or religiously aggravated assault without injury.

⁸ Mainly possession with intent. Simple possession offences are not included in violence against the person.

Figure 3.4 Police recorded offences of most serious violence against the person: rates by population at local authority level, 2007/08

- Local authorities more than twice the average rate (10% of population)
- Above the average group, but less than twice the average rate (21% of population)
- Average group* (20% of population)
- Below the average group (49% of population)

*Local authorities classified within the 'average group' include those up to 20 per cent above or below the most serious violence against the person rate for England and Wales as a whole.



3.5 SEXUAL OFFENCES

Most serious sexual crime

This group encompasses rape, sexual assault, and sexual activity with children. The sensitivity of these offences has resulted in under-reporting, and work is ongoing to improve this (e.g. through the opening of more sexual assault referral centres).⁹ Additionally, the Sexual Offences Act 2003, introduced in May 2004, altered the definitions of all three categories. For these reasons, comparisons around this time should be made with caution. A fuller description of the legislative changes appears in Appendix 3.

- The police recorded 41,460 most serious sexual offences in 2007/08, five per cent fewer than the 43,738 recorded in 2006/07. These offences accounted for 77 per cent of total sexual offences and just under one per cent of all recorded crime in 2007/08.
- Within this total, rapes of a female fell by eight per cent to 11,648 offences, and rapes of a male fell by 13 per cent to 1,006 offences. Sexual assaults on a female fell by four per cent to 20,534 offences, and sexual assaults on a male also fell by four per cent to 2,642 offences.

Other sexual offences

This group covers unlawful sexual activity, mostly involving consenting adults. It includes exploitation of prostitution and soliciting, but not prostitution itself.¹⁰ The Sexual Offences Act 2003, introduced in May 2004, introduced certain offences such as sexual grooming which is included here.

- The police recorded 12,080 other sexual offences in 2007/08, 12 per cent fewer than in 2006/07. Within this total there were falls in incest or familial sexual offences (16% to 1,125 offences) and soliciting for the purposes of prostitution (2% to 1,258 offences).
- Based on the 2006/07 BCS self-completion module on intimate violence (see Box 3.2), approximately three per cent of women and one per cent of men had experienced a sexual assault (including attempts) in the previous 12 months. The majority of these are accounted for by less serious sexual assaults. Less than one per cent of both women and men reported having experienced a serious sexual assault (Povey *et al.*, 2008).

Box 3.2 Interpreting BCS statistics on intimate violence

The issue of willingness to disclose incidents is very important for intimate violence (the collective term used to describe domestic violence, sexual assault and stalking). Respondents may not wish to disclose such sensitive information face-to-face and so interviews since 2004/05 (and prior to this in 1996 and 2001) have included self-completion modules on intimate violence asked of those aged 16 to 59 years.

Domestic violence figures published in this report relate only to incidents reported in face-to-face BCS interviews, so any changes should be treated with caution. Prevalence rates for domestic violence derived from the 2005/06 self-completion module were around five times higher for adults than those obtained from the face-to-face interviews. Due to the small numbers of sexual offences identified by the main BCS, findings are published solely from the self-completion module.

*The self-completion figures are published separately from the annual volume (Mirrlees-Black, 1999; Walby and Allen, 2004; Finney, 2006; Coleman *et al.*, 2007; and Povey *et al.*, 2008). Analysis of self-completion data from the 2007/08 BCS is planned for publication early in 2009.*

⁹ The Government's approach to tackling sexual violence is detailed in the Sexual Violence Action Plan (<http://www.crimereduction.homeoffice.gov.uk/sexualoffences/finalsvaap.pdf>).

¹⁰ Prostitution in itself is not a criminal offence; trafficking for sexual exploitation is included in most serious sexual crime.

3.6 ROBBERY

Robbery is an offence in which force or the threat of force is used either during or immediately prior to a theft or attempted theft. It covers a wide variety of different incidents including bank robbery, mobile phone robbery and street robbery, regardless of the amount of money or property stolen. The BCS covers robberies against adults living in private households but the number of robbery victims interviewed is too low to provide robust estimates for individual years (see Box 3.1).

- The police recorded 84,706 robberies in 2007/08, 16 per cent fewer than the 101,376 in 2006/07. While this follows two years of increases, the 2007/08 total was still 30 per cent below the 2001/02 peak of 121,359. Eighty-nine per cent of robberies in 2007/08 were of personal property, compared with 91 per cent in the previous three years. The smaller proportion is due to robberies of personal property falling at a faster rate in 2007/08 (18% to 75,565) than those of business property (3% to 9,141).

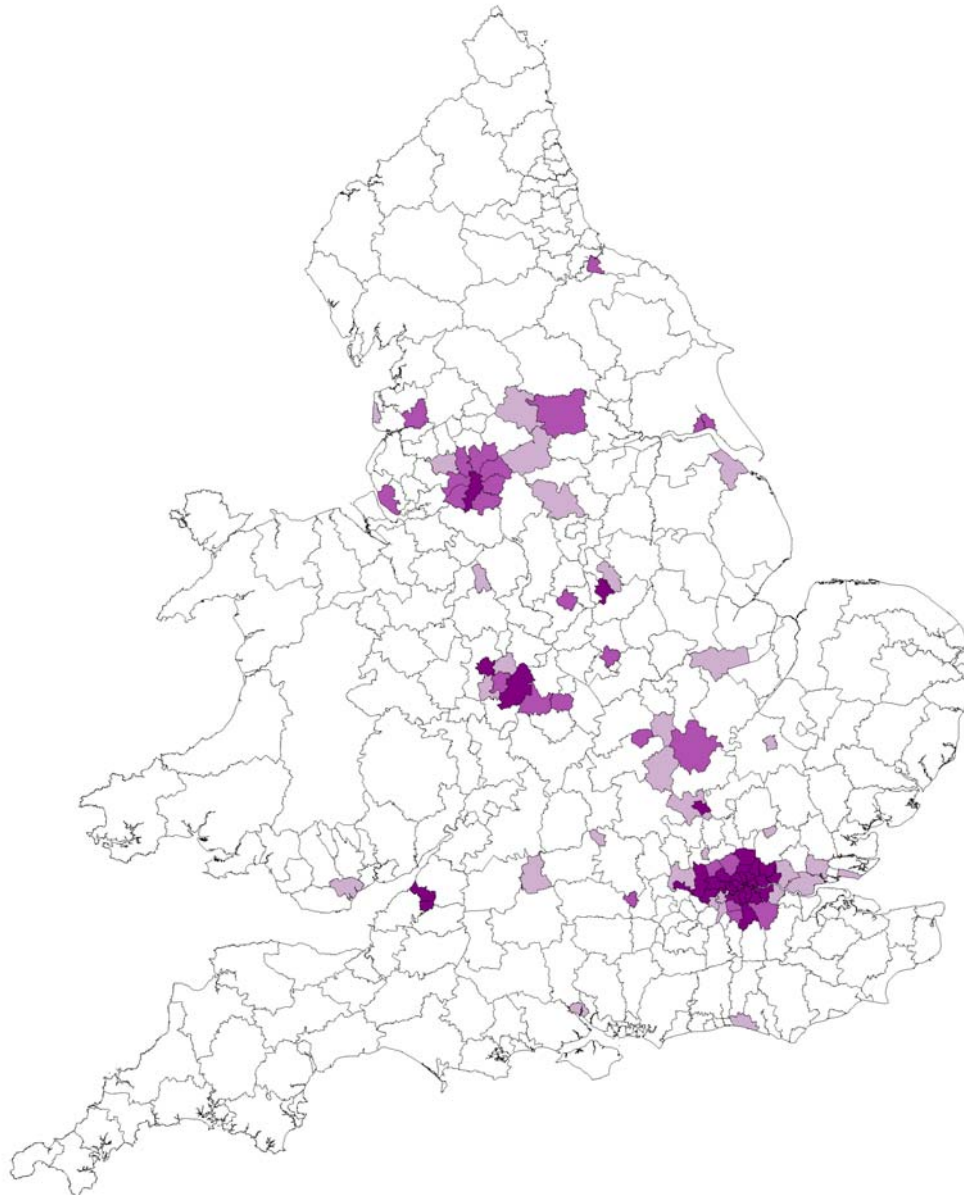
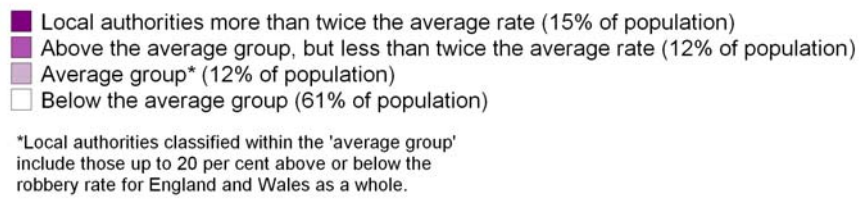
All crime tends to be geographically concentrated, but this is particularly the case for robberies.

- In 2007/08, 62 per cent of robberies in England and Wales were recorded by three forces: the Metropolitan Police, Greater Manchester and West Midlands (Table 6.11). This concentration is more acute at the local level (Figure 3.5). The average rate for England and Wales was 1.6 offences per 1,000 population in 2007/08. A comparison of local authority rates shows that the 29 authorities with rates more than twice the average for England and Wales represent 15 per cent of the population but account for 53 per cent of robbery offences. All but three of these authorities are in the three forces listed above.

From 2007/08 the Home Office is collecting supplementary data on the taking of vehicles during robberies (often termed car-jacking).

- Data were received for 42 of the 44 police forces in England and Wales and these showed that overall three per cent of robberies in 2007/08 involved the taking of a vehicle. The proportion was slightly higher for instances of robbery of business property (at 5%) compared with the robbery of personal property (3%).

Figure 3.5 Police recorded offences of robbery: rates by population at local authority level, 2007/08



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3.7 RISKS OF BECOMING A VICTIM OF VIOLENT CRIME

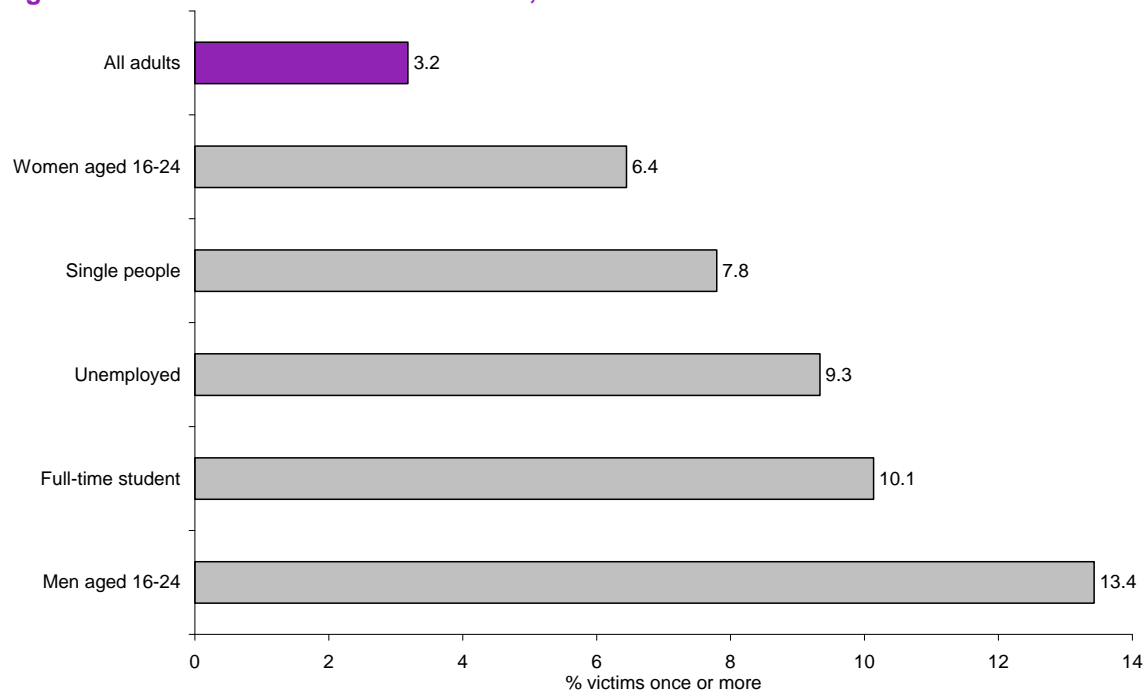
According to the BCS, risk of victimisation varies by personal characteristics, with men, and in particular young men, being at greatest risk of victimisation. In general, the characteristics of adults with the highest risk of being a victim of violent crime have not changed over the past few years.

- The risk of being a victim of violent crime in the 2007/08 BCS was 3.2 per cent. Men were almost twice as likely as women (4.1% compared with 2.3%) to have experienced one or more violent crimes in the year prior to interview (Figure 3.6 and Table 3.01).
- Risk was highest for men aged 16 to 24 (13.4%) and then decreased with increasing age, with risk levels at less than one per cent for men aged 65 and older. For women the pattern was similar; those aged 16 to 24 had the highest risk (6.4%) with a decline in risk as age increased (Table 3.01).
- Single people had the highest risk of violent crime (7.8%) compared with all other marital status groups. Conversely, people who were widowed or married had the lowest risk (0.4% and 1.3% respectively). Single people in particular have a higher risk of stranger and acquaintance violence which is likely to reflect differences in their social interactions compared with other groups.
- Unemployed people (9.3%) had a higher risk of becoming victims of violence compared with employed or economically inactive people (3.3% and 2.7% respectively). At 10.1 per cent, students had the highest risk of violent crime compared with other occupational classifications, at considerably higher risk than those in managerial and professional occupations for example (2.4%); this level of risk is likely to reflect the younger age of students.
- People who visited pubs or wine bars more than once a week in the month prior to interview had a higher risk of violent crime (5.3%) than those who had visited pubs or wine bars less than once a week on average (2.9%) or not at all (2.2%). Spending seven or more hours out of the home on an average weekday was also associated with increased risk of violence victimisation.

Risk of victimisation also varies by key household and area characteristics.

- People living in houses (3.0%) rather than flats/maisonettes (4.5%) had a lower risk of violence victimisation; for those in detached houses the risk was half (2.1%) that of people living in flats/maisonettes. Single adults living in a household with children (6.5%) had a higher risk of violence victimisation than people in other household types, for example in households with more than one adult with children (3.7%) (Table 3.02).
- People living in areas with relatively low levels of physical disorder (3.1%), in rural areas (2.3%) and in Wealthy Achievers ACORN areas (1.9%) also had lower risks of victimisation.

A full breakdown of risk of violent crime victimisation by personal, household and area characteristics is shown in Tables 3.01 and 3.02.

Figure 3.6 Adults most at risk of violence, 2007/08 BCS**Box 3.3 Factors strongly associated with higher risk of violence**

Multivariate analysis (logistic regression) carried out on the 2007/08 BCS shows that after the influence of other characteristics is taken into account, many of the relationships between socio-demographic factors and risk of victimisation still hold true.

The factors most strongly independently associated with higher risk of violence were:

- being young, in particular aged 16-24;
- not being married; and
- being male.

The model explains around 13 per cent of the variation in the risk of being a victim of violent crime based only on the factors described here (see the Glossary for more information).

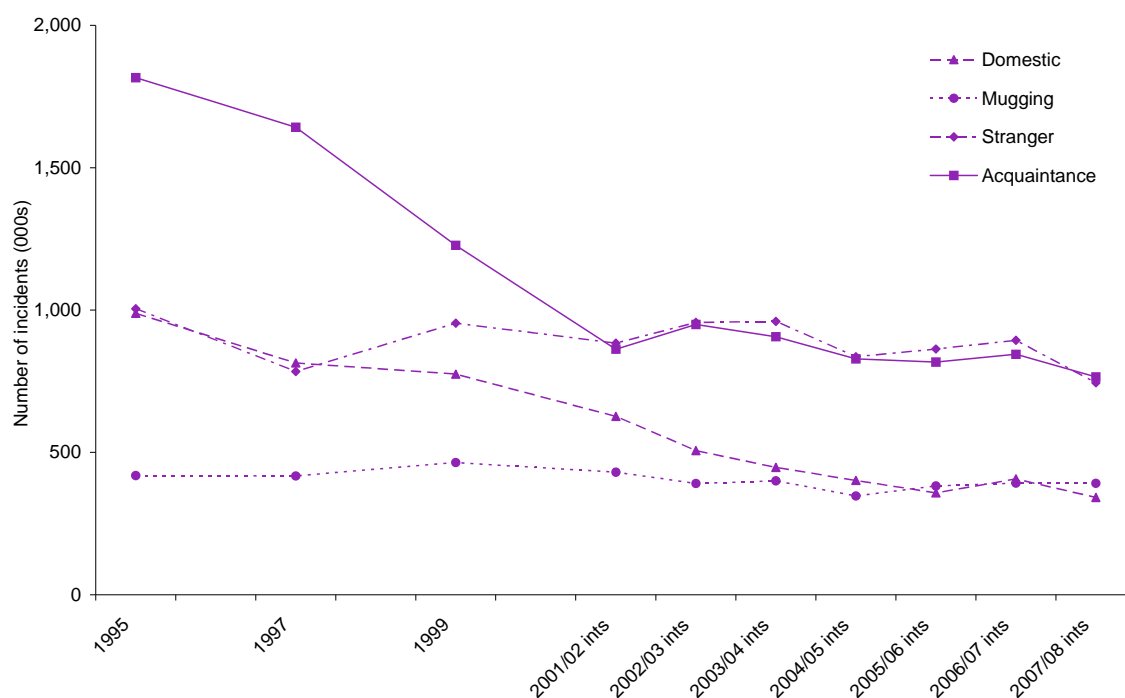
3.8 VICTIM-OFFENDER ASSOCIATION

Violent crime measured by the BCS can be subdivided into four types, broadly on the basis of the relationship between the offender(s) and victim (see Box 3.1). In the vast majority of cases, victims were able to say something about the offender(s).

- Around a third of the estimated 2,164,000 violent incidents recorded by the BCS in 2007/08 were incidents of stranger violence, and a further third were incidents of acquaintance violence. Domestic violence accounted for about one in six violent incidents as measured on the main BCS (Table 3.03).
- Domestic violence was the only category of violence for which the risk for women (0.6%) was significantly higher than for men (0.2%). Risk of stranger and acquaintance violence was substantially greater for men than for women; 2.1 per cent of men were victims of stranger violence, compared with 0.6 per cent of women based on 2007/08 interviews (Table 3.01).
- Violence against men is much more likely to be stranger violence: 45 per cent of violent incidents against men were stranger violence, compared with 19 per cent of incidents against women. Conversely, 33 per cent of violent incidents against women were domestic violence, compared with four per cent of incidents against men.

- In the majority of incidents of domestic violence the victims were women (85%) while for incidents of stranger violence most victims were men (78%, Table 3.03).
- Similar to the 2006/07 BCS, over half of violent incidents involved a sole offender (54%) but in a quarter of incidents there were four or more offenders. This varied within type of violence, with there being a sole offender in 97 per cent of domestic violence incidents (Table 3.04).
- Not only did men have the highest risk of violent crime victimisation, but men were also most likely to be the offender (87% of incidents involved male offenders).
- In just over half of violent incidents the offender was believed to be aged between 16 and 24 years (52%). The proportion of robberies involving offenders aged 16 to 24 was higher at around three-quarters (71%) compared with other violence types (around 50%).
- The increase seen in overall violence between 1981 and the mid-1990s was reflected in increases in the number of incidents for each type of BCS violence (apart from mugging). Following the peak in 1995 there have been large and statistically significant falls in domestic, acquaintance and stranger violence (65%, 58% and 26% respectively). The largest part of this reduction occurred between 1995 and the 2001/02 BCS but there was a decrease in the number of incidents of stranger violence between the 2006/07 and 2007/08 BCS. The number of muggings has remained relatively stable over the entire period from 1981 to 2007/08 (Figure 3.7 and Table 2.01).

Figure 3.7 Trends in violent crime by type of violence, 1995 to 2007/08 BCS



3.9 INJURIES AND VIOLENCE

- According to the 2007/08 BCS, just over half (51%) of all violent incidents resulted in no injury to the victim, showing no change since the previous year (Table 3.05).

- There was also no injury in at least 52 per cent of all police recorded violence against the person offences in 2007/08 (Table 2.04).¹¹
- According to the BCS, the most common injuries sustained in violent incidents were minor bruising or a black eye (28%), followed by severe bruising (15%) and cuts (13%) (Table 3.05).
- The 2007/08 BCS shows that in 12 per cent of violent incidents the victim received some form of medical attention; around one in ten victims received attention from a doctor (9%). Around one per cent of all violent incidents resulted in an overnight hospital stay.
- After increases up to a peak in the mid-1990s, the BCS shows that the substantial falls in violent crime since 1995 are evident for both violence with injury (57% decrease) and violence with no injury (37% decrease). In fact, BCS interviews in 2007/08 show the number of violent crimes with injury is now at a slightly lower level than that first reported by the BCS in 1981 (Table 2.01).

Further evidence on trends in serious violent crime is provided by the Violence and Society Research Group at Cardiff University (Sivarajasingam *et al.*, 2008) from a study covering a sample of 29 Accident and Emergency departments in England and Wales. The report indicated that:

- There was an overall fall of 12 per cent in serious violence in 2007 compared with 2006, continuing an overall downward trend observed between 2000 and 2006 according to this Health Service data.
- Those at highest risk of violence-related injury were males and people aged 18 to 30; there were national decreases in violence affecting males, females and all age groups but an increase affecting children aged ten and under.

3.10 OFFENCES INVOLVING WEAPONS

The BCS provides an indication of weapons¹² used in violent offences, and an estimate of the trends in weapon use over time.

- Weapons were used in a quarter (24%) of violent crimes as measured by the BCS in 2007/08, no change from the 2006/07 BCS, and this proportion has been stable over the past decade (Table 3.06).
- The most common types of weapons used were hitting implements¹³ (used in 7% of all violent incidents), knives (6%) and glass or bottles (4%). The use of different types of weapons has remained similar between 2006/07 and 2007/08.

Offences involving firearms

Provisional statistics are available for police recorded crimes in 2007/08 involving firearms other than air weapons (referred to as 'firearm offences' in the remainder of this section). Firearms are taken to be involved in an incident if they are fired, used as a blunt instrument against a person, or used in a threat.

The figures presented here relate to types of weapon used and the degree of injury caused. Last year, in 2006/07, there was a concentration of firearm offences (55%) in just three forces: the Metropolitan Police, Greater Manchester and West Midlands. However, 2007/08

¹¹ The 'no injury' offences comprise assault without injury, assault on a constable, harassment, possession of weapons, and the specific offences against children within other violence against the person. The percentage is likely to be higher if one also includes threats to kill, which is currently included within threat or conspiracy to murder, also in other violence against the person.

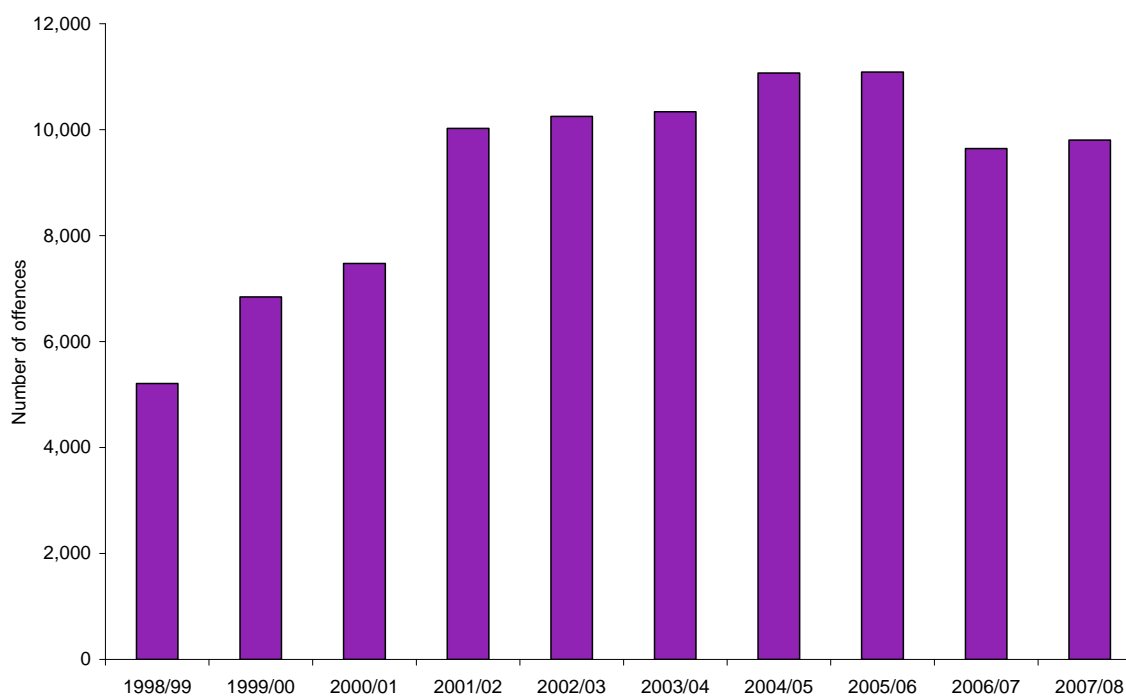
¹² BCS 'weapons' include bottles/drinking glasses, knives, screwdrivers/stabbing implements, hitting implements, firearms, stones and syringes.

¹³ This category includes sticks, clubs and other hitting implements.

figures for offence type and police force area will not be published until complete data are available in January 2009.

- In 2007/08 there were a provisional 9,803 firearm offences recorded in England and Wales, a two per cent increase on 2006/07. This follows a 13 per cent fall in the previous year. Prior to this, firearms offences rose sharply between 1998/99 and 2001/02, but the increases slowed from 2002/03. The 2007/08 total is two per cent lower than that of 2001/02. (Figure 3.8, Table 3.07).

Figure 3.8 Trend in recorded crimes involving firearms other than air weapons



- Just over two-thirds of firearm offences in 2007/08 involved no physical injury. There were 5,036 threats to commit a firearm offence, broadly similar to the 2006/07 total, and another 1,550 were actual offences where no injury ensued, three per cent less than in 2006/07 (Table 3.07).
- Less than two per cent of injuries from firearm offences were fatal and another 13 per cent were serious. Firearms were used in 52 homicides, i.e. the offence resulted in a fatal injury. This is four offences (or 7%) fewer than the 56 recorded in 2006/07. In addition there were 403 offences resulting in serious injuries, two per cent (or 9 offences) down on 2006/07.
- Of the firearm offences which involved injury, 86 per cent (or 2,762 offences) resulted in slight injury, representing nine per cent more slight injury offences than in 2006/07. Many of these slight injuries were caused by imitation weapons (some of which fire plastic pellets).
- Handguns were used in 4,151 offences during 2007/08, one per cent (or 22 offences) fewer than in 2006/07. Shotguns were used in 594 offences, down three per cent (or 18 offences) (Table 3.08).
- Imitation weapons were used in 2,523 offences in 2007/08, broadly similar to the previous year but this total is 25 per cent lower than the peak of 3,373 offences in 2004/05.

Further analysis of 2007/08 firearm offences is planned for publication early in 2009 when complete data are available. Additional information from the BCS on the use of firearms is also available:

- In the 2007/08 BCS, the use of a firearm¹⁴ in violent incidents has remained stable at one per cent compared with 2006/07. Between 1995 and 2007/08, the proportion of violent incidents where a firearm was used has remained stable at or below one per cent (Table 3.06).

Offences involving knives

In 2007/08, the Home Office started collecting additional statistics on certain serious violent offences involving the use of a knife or sharp instrument (referred to as 'offences involving knives' in the remainder of this section). A sharp instrument is any object that pierces the skin (or in the case of a threat, is capable of piercing the skin), e.g. a broken bottle. Knives are taken to be involved in an incident if they are used to stab or cut or as a threat.

The violent offences included in the 2007/08 collection comprise: attempted murder; wounding with intent to do grievous bodily harm (GBH); wounding or inflicting grievous bodily harm (i.e. without intent); robbery of business property; and robbery of personal property (see Appendix 3 for a fuller description of these offences). They were selected as the serious violent offences most likely to involve the use of knives. They will therefore give a higher proportion of offences involving knives than violent crime overall.

Only data for 2007/08 have been collected so far and, in the absence of trend data, it is not possible to say whether the figures quoted below are higher or lower than previous years.

Homicide was not included in this list, as the Home Office collects sharp instrument homicide data separately as part of its Homicide Index collection. However, figures for 2007/08 are not yet available (planned for publication in January 2009). Therefore, 2006/07 figures are quoted in this section for homicide and 2007/08 figures are quoted for all other offences.

- For the selected serious violence categories, 19 per cent or 22,151 offences involved knives in 2007/08. Generally speaking, more urban forces tended to record higher proportions involving knives than the more rural ones, although the 18 per cent recorded by the Metropolitan Police was slighter below the England and Wales average.
- Wounding with intent to do GBH accounted for the largest number of recorded offences involving knives in 2007/08, with 5,248 offences recorded in this subset of serious offences. This represents 37 per cent of all recorded wounding with intent to do GBH offences. The offence category of wounding or inflicting GBH (i.e. without intent) produced a smaller proportion of offences involving knives: 2,785 offences or 15 per cent of offences (Table 3.09).
- Attempted murder is a far less common offence than the two GBH categories, but 37 per cent or 231 offences involved knives. Homicides are also far less common but a sharp instrument is the most common method used, with 258 offences or 35 per cent of the 734 recorded in 2006/07. Full details of methods and circumstances of homicides recorded in 2006/07 were published in January 2008 (Povey *et al.*, 2008).
- Within robbery, robberies of business property were less numerous in total, but they produced a higher proportion of offences involving knives: 2,359 or 26 per cent of the 9,141 offences recorded, compared with 11,528 or 15 per cent of the 75,565 robberies of personal property.

Some additional information on the use of knives is available from the BCS and also from the Offending Crime and Justice Survey (OCJS), which is a survey of 10 to 25 year olds (Roe and Ashe, 2008).

¹⁴ Including pistol, rifle, shotgun, airgun, air rifle, and any gun which could not be identified.

- The use of knives in violent incidents in the 2007/08 BCS (6%) is not statistically significantly different from the 2006/07 BCS (7%). The proportion of violent incidents where a knife was used has remained at or below eight per cent since 1995 (Table 3.06).
- Combining the BCS categories including the use of a 'knife' or 'stabbing implement' better compares with police recorded crime categorisation; in total these were used in seven per cent of violent incidents in the 2007/08 BCS. This proportion is expected to be lower than that for police recorded crime as the BCS figure is based on a much wider range of violent offences.
- The 2006 OCJS showed that overall three per cent of young people aged 10 to 25 had carried a knife with them in the last 12 months for their own protection (the most common reason), for use in crimes, or in case they got into a fight. Just over half (54%) of these young people had only carried a knife once or twice in this period and the most commonly carried knife was a pen knife (46%).

Box 3.4 Knife enabled crime recorded by the Metropolitan Police

The Metropolitan Police's own recorded crime collection includes a measure of knife enabled crime. This means offences where a knife is used to injure, threaten or intimidate. It covers a broader range of offences than the Home Office's collection: violence against the person (excluding possession of weapons), robbery, sexual offences and burglary. However, unlike the Home Office's collection, it covers only knives and not other sharp instruments.

The Metropolitan Police figures show 10,220 knife enabled crimes recorded in 2007/08, 16 per cent fewer than in the previous year. This follows a four per cent fall in 2006/07.

Within the 2007/08 total, there were 5,148 violence against the person offences (down 13%), and 4,713 robberies (down 19%). To compare Metropolitan Police figures with the Home Office collection requires combining figures for robbery and grievous bodily harm (within violence against the person), giving a total of 6,080 knife enabled crimes in 2007/08, down 17 per cent on 2006/07. The corresponding total in the Home Office collection is 7,428, but this also covers attempted murder and offences involving other sharp instruments.

3.11 INFLUENCE OF ALCOHOL AND DRUGS¹⁵

- According to the 2007/08 BCS, victims believed the offender(s) to be under the influence of alcohol in 45 per cent of all violent incidents, similar to the level in the 2006/07 BCS (46%). In 19 per cent of incidents the victim believed the offender(s) to be under the influence of drugs, again no statistically significant change since 2006/07 (17%, Table 3.10).
- Offenders were most likely to be perceived to be under the influence of alcohol in incidents of stranger violence (58% of incidents), and most likely to be under the influence of drugs for acquaintance violence (28%). Comparing violent offence types, victims believed the offender(s) to be under the influence of alcohol or drugs most often in incidents of assault with minor injury (61% and 24% of incidents respectively).
- Based on the 2007/08 BCS, there were 947,000 violent incidents where the victim believed the offender(s) to be under the influence of alcohol and 383,000 incidents where the offender(s) were perceived to be under the influence of drugs. These figures are similar to the levels in 2006/07 (the apparent differences are not statistically significant) (Table 3.11).

¹⁵ Questions asked if the victim was able to say something about the offender(s), and if there was more than one offender, victims were asked if any of the offenders were perceived to be under the influence. Questions were not asked if any offender(s) were perceived to be under school age.

- Longer-term trends show there have been significant decreases since 1995 in the number of violent incidents believed by victims to involve offender(s) under the influence of either alcohol or drugs. The fall in incidents is related to the overall fall in the number of violent crimes as the proportion of alcohol and drug-related incidents has remained relatively stable over this period.
- Recently published research evaluating the effect of the Licensing Act 2003 on levels of crime and disorder suggested that the overall volume of crime and disorder remains unchanged, but that some people are drinking later into the night (Hough *et al.*, 2008).

Table 3.01 Proportion of adults who were victims of violence by personal characteristics

Percentages		Type of offence					Type of violence				
	All violence ¹	Wounding	Assault with minor injury	Assault with no injury	Robbery	Domestic	Acquaintance	Stranger	Mugging (robbery + snatch theft)	Unweighted base	
		% victims once or more				% victims once or more					
Men	4.1	1.0	1.0	1.7	0.7	0.2	1.4	2.1	0.9	21,331	
16-24	13.4	3.7	3.8	4.9	2.7	0.1	4.9	6.7	3.0	1,825	
25-34	5.7	1.4	1.6	2.2	0.9	0.5	1.8	2.8	1.1	2,994	
35-44	2.7	0.7	0.3	1.5	0.3	0.2	0.9	1.4	0.5	4,095	
45-54	2.5	0.5	0.5	1.3	0.4	0.1	0.8	1.2	0.5	3,582	
55-64	1.1	0.2	0.2	0.5	0.2	0.0	0.3	0.6	0.3	3,716	
65-74	0.8	0.1	0.0	0.5	0.2	0.0	0.1	0.5	0.3	2,859	
75+	0.3	0.0	0.0	0.1	0.2	0.0	0.1	0.0	0.2	2,260	
Women	2.3	0.5	0.6	1.0	0.3	0.6	0.8	0.6	0.5	25,572	
16-24	6.4	1.4	1.7	2.8	1.2	0.9	2.9	1.8	1.7	2,137	
25-34	3.3	0.8	0.9	1.4	0.3	1.2	1.0	0.9	0.5	3,713	
35-44	2.4	0.8	0.5	1.0	0.3	0.7	0.7	0.8	0.3	4,806	
45-54	1.6	0.2	0.4	0.9	0.2	0.6	0.5	0.4	0.4	3,875	
55-64	0.8	0.1	0.2	0.5	0.1	0.3	0.3	0.2	0.3	4,179	
65-74	0.4	0.0	0.0	0.1	0.2	0.1	0.0	0.1	0.3	3,484	
75+	0.2	0.0	0.0	0.1	0.2	0.1	0.0	0.0	0.2	3,378	
Ethnic group											
White	3.1	0.8	0.8	1.4	0.5	0.4	1.2	1.3	0.6	43,756	
Non-White	3.5	0.8	0.6	1.3	1.2	0.3	0.7	1.6	1.3	3,139	
Marital status											
Married	1.3	0.3	0.2	0.7	0.1	0.2	0.4	0.6	0.2	22,314	
Cohabiting	3.8	0.9	1.1	1.6	0.5	0.5	1.5	1.5	0.6	4,115	
Single	7.8	2.0	2.1	3.0	1.5	0.7	2.8	3.3	1.9	9,591	
Separated	3.8	1.2	0.8	1.4	0.5	2.0	0.8	0.7	0.6	1,403	
Divorced	3.3	0.8	0.7	1.3	0.6	0.7	1.1	0.9	0.7	4,098	
Widowed	0.4	0.0	0.0	0.2	0.1	0.0	0.1	0.1	0.3	5,366	
Respondent's employment status											
In employment	3.3	0.8	0.8	1.5	0.4	0.4	1.1	1.6	0.6	26,310	
Unemployed	9.3	3.0	2.6	4.1	1.3	1.2	4.4	3.4	1.5	792	
Economically inactive	2.7	0.6	0.6	0.9	0.6	0.4	0.9	0.8	0.8	19,659	
Student ²	11.1	2.3	2.4	3.4	3.6	0.1	3.7	4.1	4.1	1,078	
Looking after family/home	3.2	0.9	0.9	1.3	0.2	1.4	1.1	0.5	0.3	2,772	
Long-term/temporarily sick/ill	3.8	1.2	1.0	1.0	0.9	0.8	1.7	0.6	1.3	2,130	
Retired	0.5	0.0	0.1	0.3	0.1	0.0	0.1	0.2	0.2	13,130	
Other inactive	5.7	2.2	1.6	2.3	0.4	0.8	3.0	2.0	0.9	549	
Respondent's occupation											
Managerial and professional occupations	2.4	0.4	0.5	1.2	0.3	0.3	0.6	1.2	0.6	15,608	
Intermediate occupations	2.0	0.4	0.6	0.8	0.3	0.3	0.6	0.8	0.4	9,459	
Routine and manual occupations	3.1	1.0	0.8	1.3	0.4	0.4	1.3	1.2	0.5	18,393	
Never worked and long-term unemployed	3.7	1.1	1.2	1.7	0.3	0.9	1.6	0.9	0.3	1,406	
Full-time students ²	10.1	2.0	2.4	3.5	2.9	0.3	3.3	4.1	3.4	1,814	
Not classified	8.5	1.5	2.1	3.4	1.5	1.8	2.0	3.7	1.5	223	
Highest qualification											
Degree or diploma	2.9	0.6	0.6	1.5	0.5	0.3	0.8	1.4	0.7	14,226	
Apprenticeship or A/AS level	4.3	1.0	1.1	1.8	0.7	0.3	1.4	2.2	0.9	7,964	
O level/GCSE	4.4	1.3	1.1	1.7	0.8	0.6	1.8	1.5	0.9	9,302	
Other	1.9	0.6	0.4	0.7	0.2	0.3	0.6	0.8	0.4	2,024	
No qualifications	1.8	0.4	0.6	0.6	0.3	0.4	0.7	0.5	0.4	13,226	
Long-standing illness or disability											
Long-standing illness or disability	2.5	0.7	0.5	1.1	0.4	0.3	1.1	0.9	0.6	13,337	
Limits activities	2.5	0.7	0.5	1.1	0.4	0.4	1.1	0.7	0.5	9,282	
Does not limit activities	2.3	0.6	0.5	1.0	0.3	0.2	0.9	1.1	0.6	4,048	
No long-standing illness or disability	3.4	0.8	0.8	1.4	0.6	0.4	1.1	1.5	0.7	33,463	
Hours out of home on an average weekday											
Less than 3 hours	1.7	0.4	0.4	0.8	0.3	0.4	0.6	0.5	0.3	13,849	
3 hours less than 7 hours	3.2	0.8	0.9	1.3	0.6	0.5	1.2	1.1	0.8	12,382	
7 hours or longer	3.9	0.9	0.9	1.7	0.6	0.3	1.3	1.9	0.8	20,549	
evening evening during last month											
None	2.2	0.5	0.4	0.9	0.5	0.3	0.8	0.6	0.6	23,236	
Less than once a week	2.9	0.7	0.7	1.2	0.5	0.4	0.9	1.3	0.7	12,712	
Once a week or more often	5.3	1.4	1.4	2.4	0.6	0.4	2.0	2.6	0.9	10,950	
ALL ADULTS	3.2	0.8	0.8	1.4	0.5	0.4	1.1	1.3	0.7	46,686	

1. 'All violence' includes wounding, assault with minor injury, assault with no injury and robbery. For more information see the Glossary.

2. Base sizes for the student categories differ as they are based on different classifications. Economically inactive students exclude those who are in employment, or in other ways economically active, but full-time students are recognised as such within the occupational coding. For more information see the Glossary (NS-SEC and Employment Status).

3. See the Glossary for definitions of personal characteristics.

Table 3.02 Proportion of adults who were victims of violence by household and area characteristics

Percentages											2007/08 BCS
	Type of offence					Type of violence					
	All violence ¹	Wounding	Assault with minor injury	Assault with no injury	Robbery	Domestic	Acquaintance	Stranger	Mugging (robbery + snatch theft)	Unweighted base	
		% victims once or more				% victims once or more					
Household type:											
Household reference person under 60:											
Single adult & child(ren)	6.5	2.1	2.1	1.9	0.7	3.4	1.6	0.9	1.0	2,414	
Adults & child(ren)	3.7	0.9	1.0	1.6	0.6	0.5	1.6	1.3	0.8	10,352	
No children	4.1	1.0	1.0	1.8	0.7	0.3	1.3	2.0	0.9	17,230	
Head of household 60 or over	0.9	0.2	0.1	0.5	0.2	0.1	0.3	0.4	0.3	16,865	
Household income											
Less than £10,000	3.8	1.0	0.9	1.4	0.9	0.9	1.4	0.9	1.1	7,422	
£10,000 less than £20,000	2.6	0.8	0.5	1.1	0.3	0.5	0.9	0.9	0.4	8,247	
£20,000 less than £30,000	3.3	0.7	0.8	1.4	0.5	0.4	1.5	0.9	0.6	6,458	
£30,000 less than £40,000	2.9	0.5	0.7	1.6	0.3	0.2	1.0	1.6	0.4	4,988	
£40,000 less than £50,000	3.2	0.7	1.0	1.4	0.4	0.2	0.9	1.8	0.6	3,510	
£50,000 or more	2.9	0.5	0.7	1.5	0.5	0.3	1.0	1.3	0.8	5,639	
Tenure											
Owner occupiers	2.2	0.5	0.5	1.0	0.3	0.2	0.7	1.0	0.5	33,018	
Social renters	4.7	1.4	1.2	1.6	0.9	1.0	1.9	1.3	1.2	7,777	
Private renters	5.8	1.4	1.4	2.5	1.0	0.6	2.0	2.6	1.3	5,891	
Accommodation type											
Houses	3.0	0.7	0.7	1.3	0.5	0.4	1.0	1.3	0.6	38,871	
Detached	2.1	0.4	0.5	1.2	0.2	0.2	0.7	1.1	0.4	11,726	
Semi-detached	3.1	0.7	0.9	1.3	0.5	0.4	1.0	1.3	0.6	14,710	
Terraced	3.7	0.9	0.9	1.5	0.6	0.4	1.4	1.5	0.8	12,435	
Flats/maisonettes	4.5	1.1	1.0	2.0	0.9	0.5	1.6	1.8	1.2	5,274	
Other accommodation	1.2	0.6	0.0	0.6	0.0	0.0	0.4	0.8	0.0	216	
ACORN category											
Wealthy Achievers	1.9	0.4	0.5	1.0	0.2	0.3	0.7	0.8	0.3	12,793	
Urban Prosperity	4.7	0.6	0.8	2.4	1.2	0.1	1.1	2.5	1.8	3,542	
Comfortably Off	2.7	0.7	0.7	1.1	0.3	0.3	0.9	1.3	0.4	14,726	
Moderate Means	3.7	0.8	1.1	1.2	0.7	0.6	1.4	1.1	0.9	6,424	
Hard Pressed	4.6	1.4	1.1	1.8	0.8	0.7	1.8	1.6	1.0	9,317	
Area type											
Urban	3.4	0.8	0.8	1.4	0.6	0.4	1.1	1.4	0.8	34,926	
Rural	2.3	0.5	0.6	1.2	0.2	0.4	1.0	0.9	0.3	11,977	
Level of physical disorder											
High	5.1	1.5	1.7	1.3	0.9	0.9	2.0	1.4	1.0	2,480	
Not high	3.1	0.7	0.7	1.4	0.5	0.4	1.0	1.4	0.7	41,666	
ALL ADULTS	3.2	0.8	0.8	1.4	0.5	0.4	1.1	1.3	0.7	46,686	

1. 'All violence' includes wounding, assault with minor injury, assault with no injury and robbery. For more information see the Glossary.
2. See the Glossary for definitions of household and area characteristics.

Table 3.04 Offender characteristics in violent incidents

Percentages	Type of offence					Type of violence			
	All violence ¹	Wounding	Assault with minor injury	Assault with no injury	Robbery	Domestic	Acquaintance	Stranger	Mugging (robbery + snatch theft)
Able to say something about offender(s)	100	99	100	100	99	100	100	99	96
<i>Unweighted base</i>	1,490	367	344	584	195	257	508	528	255
Number of offenders									
One	54	58	61	55	33	97	52	43	40
Two	13	8	10	12	27	1	10	15	25
Three	8	8	8	7	14	1	7	12	13
Four or more	25	26	21	26	26	1	30	30	22
Sex of offender(s)									
Male(s)	76	79	72	72	87	77	68	79	86
Female(s)	13	11	20	12	8	20	13	11	9
Both	11	10	8	16	5	3	18	10	6
Age of offender(s)²									
School age and under	13	7	8	17	15	3	19	10	14
Aged 16 to 24	52	48	48	51	71	23	53	59	67
Aged 25 to 39	31	38	36	29	16	46	31	28	20
Aged 40 or older	13	17	14	14	1	29	15	8	2
<i>Unweighted base (victim was able to say something about offender)³</i>	1,476	362	344	579	191	257	507	519	239
Relationship to victim⁴									
Stranger	44	34	36	43	75	0	0	100	77
Known by sight or to speak to	26	22	27	29	21	1	62	0	19
Known well	30	45	37	28	5	99	38	0	4
<i>Unweighted base (victim was able to say something about offender)⁵</i>	1,528	368	359	599	202	260	521	545	251

1. 'All violence' includes wounding, assault with minor injury, assault with no injury and robbery. For more information see the Glossary.

2. Figures add to more than 100 as more than one offender could be involved.

3. Figures here are based on incidents in which the victim could say something about the offender(s); base given is for the question asking about number of offenders, other bases are similar.

4. The relationship to the offender(s) is classified as: 'stranger' if the victim did not have any information about the offender(s), or did not know and had never seen the offender(s) before; 'known by sight or to speak to' if at least one offender falls into either category; and 'known well' if at least one offender falls into this category (for multiple offenders this takes priority over any less well-known offenders).

5. All victims were asked about their relationship to the offender(s).

Table 3.05 Injuries sustained in violent incidents

Percentages	Type of offence					Type of violence			
	All violence ¹	Wounding	Assault with minor injury	Assault with no injury	Robbery	Domestic	Acquaintance	Stranger	Mugging (robbery + snatch theft)
Sustained physical injury²	49	100	100	0	31	69	49	47	25
Type of injury²									
Minor bruise/black eye	28	29	85	n/a	16	37	27	29	13
Severe bruising ³	15	58	2	n/a	11	28	12	13	9
Cuts	13	51	0	n/a	13	18	11	13	10
Scratches	11	24	19	n/a	11	15	11	9	9
Concussion or loss of consciousness	2	8	0	n/a	3	2	2	2	2
Broken bones	2	7	0	n/a	1	0	2	2	1
Other	2	4	3	n/a	0	3	2	1	0
Facial or head injuries (no bruising)	1	4	2	n/a	0	1	2	2	0
Broken nose	1	5	0	n/a	0	1	1	2	0
Broken or lost teeth	1	3	0	n/a	0	0	1	1	0
Chipped teeth	1	3	0	n/a	0	0	1	1	0
No physical injury	51	0	0	100	69	31	51	53	75
Some form of medical attention⁴	12	40	9	2	6	15	12	14	6
Medical attention from a doctor	9	31	5	2	5	11	9	10	5
Hospital stay ^{4,5}	1	4	0	0	0	1	2	1	0
Unweighted base⁶	1,547	376	360	606	205	260	521	559	268

1. 'All violence' includes wounding, assault with minor injury, assault with no injury and robbery. For more information see the Glossary.

2. Figures may add to more than 100 as more than one type of physical injury may have been sustained. By definition, all incidents of wounding and assault with minor injury will involve a physical injury; conversely assault with no injury does not include any incidents where a physical injury was sustained.

3. A small proportion of assaults with minor injury involved severe bruising – these incidents have been coded as such based on additional information provided by the victim.

4. Asked of victims where force or violence was threatened or used.

5. This question asks whether the victim stayed in hospital for at least one night and is asked of those who sought medical attention (excluding dentists); base is victims of all violent incidents.

6. The base given is for the question about injury sustained in violent incidents; base sizes for overnight hospital stay will be lower as not all victims were asked this question.

Table 3.06 Use of weapons in violent incidents

Percentages		2007/08 BCS							
		Type of violence							
All violence ¹		Type of offence							
		Wounding	Assault with minor injury	Assault with no injury	Robbery	Domestic	Acquaintance	Stranger	Mugging (robbery + snatch theft)
Weapon used	24	26	17	27	23	13	29	24	18
No weapon used	76	73	83	73	77	87	71	75	77
Not known (not able to say anything about offender/no contact)	0	1	0	0	1	0	0	1	5
Knife	6	8	1	5	15	6	6	4	12
Hitting implement ²	7	11	5	8	5	4	9	8	4
Glass/bottle	4	6	3	4	0	2	5	5	0
Stabbing implement ³	0	1	0	0	1	0	1	0	0
Firearm ⁴	1	0	0	3	1	1	3	1	0
Stones	2	3	1	3	1	0	4	2	0
Syringe	1	0	2	0	0	0	1	0	0
Other	4	2	5	6	0	1	6	5	0
Unweighted base	1,477	364	343	582	188	257	506	524	248

1. 'All violence' includes wounding, assault with minor injury, assault with no injury and robbery. For more information see the Glossary.

2. Includes sticks, clubs and other hitting implements.

3. Includes screwdrivers and other stabbing implements.

4. Includes pistol, rifle, shotgun, airgun, air rifle, and any gun which could not be identified.

5. Figures may add to more than 100 as more than one weapon could be used.

Table 3.07 Firearm offences (excluding air weapons) by level of injury

Numbers and percentage changes Nature of Injury	Recorded crime		
	2006/07	2007/08	% change
	<i>Numbers</i>		
Fatal injuries ¹	56	52	-7
Serious injuries	412	403	-2
Slight injuries	2,543	2,762	9
Total injuries	3,011	3,217	7
Threats	5,042	5,036	0
No injuries	1,592	1,550	-3
Total	9,645	9,803	2

1. Because of the small number of fatal injuries the percentage change should be treated with caution.

Table 3.08 Firearm offences (excluding air weapons) by type of weapon

Numbers and percentage changes Type of weapon	Recorded crime		
	2006/07	2007/08	% change
	<i>Numbers</i>		
Shotgun	612	594	-3
Handgun	4,173	4,151	-1
Rifle ¹	69	72	4
Imitation firearm ²	2,516	2,523	0
Unidentified firearm	1,276	1,334	5
Other firearm ³	999	1,129	13
Total	9,645	9,803	2

1. Because of the small number of offences involving rifles the percentage change should be treated with caution.

2. Imitation handguns, which are converted to fire bullets like handguns, are counted as handguns.

3. Other firearms include CS gas, disguised firearms, machine guns, pepper spray, stun guns and other specified weapons (the majority being paintball guns).

Table 3.09 Knife and sharp instrument offences recorded by the police for selected offences 2007/08¹

Police force area and region	Total of selected serious offences ³			Attempted murder			Wounding with intent to do GBH			Wounding or inflicting GBH (i.e. without intent) ⁴			Robbery of business property			Robbery of personal property		
	Number	%	Offences involving a knife	Number	%	Offences involving a knife	Number	%	Offences involving a knife	Number	%	Offences involving a knife	Number	%	Offences involving a knife	Number	%	Offences involving a knife
Cleveland	169	20	4	40	76	38	17	12	16	40	56	12	40	56	12	40	56	
Durham	83	16	2	67	53	27	8	4	13	45	17	11	13	45	17	11	13	
Northumbria	351	22	1	20	140	43	64	13	45	34	101	15	34	45	101	15	34	
North East Region	613	20	7	39	269	48	89	11	74	37	174	14	89	174	14	89	174	
Cheshire	224	23	1	17	64	32	26	13	68	50	65	15	68	50	65	15	68	
Cumbria	2	28	2	100	20	45	21	21	6	35	10	23	6	35	10	23	6	
Greater Manchester	2,294	20	2	20	600	43	315	14	373	30	986	16	373	30	986	16	373	
Lancashire	361	18	3	44	138	26	41	9	46	35	128	19	46	35	128	19	46	
Merseyside	757	22	8	9	312	35	52	7	153	35	237	19	153	35	237	19	153	
North West Region	3,709	21	34	21	1,134	37	474	12	641	33	1,426	16	641	33	1,426	16	641	
Humber	267	17	2	40	55	23	34	10	29	31	147	13	29	31	147	13	29	
North Yorkshire	66	12	1	20	4	2	4	2	12	40	28	16	12	40	28	16	12	
South Yorkshire	381	20	6	43	111	33	43	14	45	29	176	16	45	29	176	16	45	
West Yorkshire	915	21	10	45	306	32	113	12	133	32	411	16	133	32	411	16	133	
Yorkshire and the Humber Region	1,629	19	19	41	493	32	156	11	199	31	762	16	199	31	762	16	199	
Derbyshire	187	15	2	22	49	32	28	10	24	28	84	12	24	28	84	12	24	
Leicestershire	294	19	5	45	99	33	25	14	16	16	149	15	16	16	149	15	16	
Lincolnshire	71	18	0	0	29	20	9	12	11	39	22	16	11	39	22	16	11	
Northamptonshire	216	17	3	27	83	42	10	5	19	18	101	18	19	18	101	18	19	
Northhamptonshire	548	21	5	42	122	51	27	9	56	28	338	18	56	28	338	18	56	
East Midlands Region	1,316	19	15	33	382	37	99	10	126	26	694	16	126	26	694	16	126	
Staffordshire	219	13	1	25	34	50	75	9	36	39	73	12	36	39	73	12	36	
Warrickshire	160	26	2	17	41	39	14	11	31	31	72	26	31	31	72	26	31	
West Mercia	144	15	1	17	43	27	20	8	19	25	61	13	19	25	61	13	19	
West Midlands	2,303	22	14	26	561	45	370	22	192	29	1,166	17	370	29	1,166	17	370	
West Midlands Region	2,826	20	18	27	679	43	479	17	278	30	1,372	16	278	30	1,372	16	278	
Bedfordshire	316	22	4	57	67	38	14	25	32	35	199	18	32	35	199	18	32	
Cambridgeshire	100	11	3	50	21	13	10	11	14	16	46	8	14	16	46	8	14	
Essex	289	16	6	89	30	7	16	7	30	17	154	14	30	17	154	14	30	
Hertfordshire	222	19	8	89	46	26	35	15	21	24	112	17	35	24	112	17	35	
Norfolk	67	12	1	100	22	15	13	12	7	23	24	9	13	23	24	9	13	
Suffolk	118	22	2	50	33	48	42	22	11	31	30	13	42	31	30	13	42	
East of England Region	1,112	17	24	57	278	45	130	15	115	23	565	14	130	23	565	14	130	
London, City of	19	22	1	100	3	25	2	11	1	50	12	23	1	50	12	23	1	
Metropolitan Police	7,409	18	59	50	878	48	869	32	612	18	4,981	15	869	48	4,981	15	869	
London Region	7,428	18	60	51	881	48	871	32	613	18	5,003	15	871	48	5,003	15	871	
Hampshire	388	18	7	50	88	36	108	14	33	27	152	16	33	27	152	16	33	
Kent	327	18	10	327	94	25	32	12	43	33	148	15	43	33	148	15	43	
Surrey	114	17	6	60	25	29	18	12	29	29	36	12	29	29	36	12	29	
Sussex	274	20	2	274	62	47	84	24	27	29	99	12	27	29	99	12	27	
Thames Valley	329	11	31	63	63	28	30	5	47	19	180	10	47	19	180	10	47	
South East Region	1,432	16	34	46	332	31	272	13	179	25	615	13	179	25	615	13	179	
Avon and Somerset	360	14	3	30	85	26	27	6	17	228	13	16	17	228	13	16	17	
Devon and Cornwall	288	25	5	56	127	45	45	14	33	45	78	17	33	45	78	17	33	
Dorset	47	9	0	0	20	31	11	5	3	11	13	6	11	11	13	6	11	
Gloucestershire	85	18	33	17	15	17	4	4	14	38	51	20	14	38	51	20	14	
Wiltshire	140	25	6	86	43	22	17	14	22	17	52	14	22	17	52	14	22	
South West Region	920	17	15	43	290	34	104	9	89	31	422	14	89	31	422	14	89	
England total	20,985	19	226	37	4,738	37	2,674	16	2,314	26	11,033	15	2,314	26	11,033	15	2,314	
Dyfed-Powys	74	21	3	75	31	53	31	12	3	50	6	15	3	50	6	15	3	
Gwent	130	17	1	50	79	22	8	5	10	37	32	14	10	37	32	14	10	
North Wales	108	26	1	33	56	41	25	18	0	26	0	19	0	26	0	19	0	
South Wales	585	28	0	333	333	38	46	29	46	29	177	23	46	29	177	23	46	
Wales total	897	25	5	38	499	35	110	12	42	41	241	21	42	41	241	21	42	
British Transport Police	269	23	0	0	11	17	1	2	3	100	254	24	3	100	254	24	3	
ENGLAND AND WALES	22,151	19	231	37	5,248	37	2,785	15	2,359	26	11,528	15	2,359	26	11,528	15	2,359	

1. Other offences exist that are not shown in this table that may include the use of a knife or sharp instrument. In this table 'offences involving a knife' refers to the use of a knife or sharp instrument.
 2. Offences involving a knife or sharp instrument as a percentage of all recorded offences for that offence type.
 3. Total of selected serious offences only include the five offence types shown in this table.
 4. Includes racially or religiously aggravated wounding or inflicting GBH.

Table 3.10 Proportion of violent incidents where the victim believed the offender(s) to be under the influence of alcohol or drugs

Percentages		2007/08 BCS							
		Type of offence			Type of violence				
All violence ¹		Wounding	Assault with minor injury	Assault with no injury	Robbery	Domestic	Acquaintance	Stranger	Mugging (robbery + snatch theft)
Offender(s) perceived to be under influence of alcohol²									
Yes	45	48	61	44	19	37	48	58	17
No	45	42	32	47	63	61	46	28	63
Don't know	10	10	7	9	19	2	7	14	20
Offender(s) perceived to be under influence of drugs²									
Yes	19	15	24	20	14	12	28	14	13
No	56	60	49	56	58	82	51	47	58
Don't know	25	25	27	24	28	6	21	39	29
<i>Unweighted base</i>		362	342	581	192	256	507	520	241

1. 'All violence' includes wounding, assault with minor injury, assault with no injury and robbery. For more information see the Glossary.

2. Questions asked only if the victim was able to say something about the offender(s), and if there was more than one offender, victims were asked if any of the offenders were perceived to be under the influence. Questions were not asked if any offender(s) were perceived to be under school age.

Table 3.11 Violent incidents where the victim believed the offender(s) to be under the influence of alcohol or drugs, 1995 to 2007/08

Percentages and numbers (000s)		BCS										
		Statistically significant change										2006/07 to 2007/08
		1995	1997	2001/02	2002/03	2003/04	2004/05	2005/06	2006/07	2007/08	1995 to 2007/08	2006/07 to 2007/08
		<i>Proportion of all violent incidents¹</i>										
		<i>Number of violent incidents (000s)</i>										
Offender(s) perceived to be under the influence of:²												
Alcohol	41	43	48	45	51	49	45	46	45	45		
Drugs	16	18	21	20	20	18	23	17	19	19		
<i>Unweighted base</i>	1,078	915	1,285	1,397	1,398	1,455	1,512	1,658	1,477			
Offender(s) perceived to be under the influence of:²												
Alcohol	1,656	1,457	1,244	1,177	1,299	1,105	1,023	1,087	947	**		
Drugs	655	603	549	544	474	390	531	398	383	**		
<i>Unweighted base</i>	16,348	14,947	32,824	36,479	37,931	45,120	47,729	47,138	46,903			

1. 'All violence' includes wounding, assault with minor injury, assault with no injury and robbery. For more information see the Glossary.

2. Questions asked only if the victim was able to say something about the offender(s), and if there was more than one offender, victims were asked if any of the offenders were perceived to be under the influence. Questions were not asked if any offender(s) were perceived to be under school age.