

Compendium

Experimental Statistics 2: Domestic abuse offences recorded by the police, April to September 2015

Findings from analyses based on the Home Office Data Hub covering different aspects of domestic abuse offences recorded by the police.



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1 . Main points

- In the 6 month period April to September 2015, the police recorded 206,815 offences that were flagged as being domestic abuse related, accounting for 11% of all police recorded crimes recorded during this period.
- Over three-quarters of these offences (77%) were for violence against the person (160,259 offences).
- A third (33%) of violence against the person offences were domestic abuse related, the highest proportion for any offence group.
- Based on data collected from a subset of forces, in violence against the person offences where the victim was a woman, one half (50%) were domestic abuse related. This compares with 16% of violent offences being domestic abuse related when the victim was male.
- The proportion of violent offences that were domestic abuse related was highest for women aged 20 to 34 (60%). This proportion declined with age for women, with those aged 75 or over experiencing the lowest proportion of domestic abuse related violence (29%).
- In contrast, the proportion of violence offences that were domestic abuse related for male victims increased with age, with the highest proportion for men being for those aged 75 and older (24%).

2 . Summary

These experimental statistics provide new analysis of police recorded offences that have been flagged as being domestic abuse related. The collection of domestic abuse crimes from police forces began in April 2015, therefore data in this section do not relate to the same time period as the main chapters in Focus on: Violent Crime and Sexual Offences, year ending March 2015, and instead relate to the first 6 months of the collection (April to September 2015). They are presented as experimental statistics to highlight emerging and new analyses.

3 . Introduction

The police recorded crime series is based on the Notifiable Offence List¹. As domestic abuse is not a specific criminal offence, offences that are domestic abuse related will have been recorded under the respective offence that has been committed, for example, assault with injury. This means that while domestic abuse is part of the recorded crime series, it has not previously been possible to provide figures on how many crimes are domestic abuse related. To counter this, the Home Office has been collecting new data since April 2015 from the 43 police forces in England and Wales and the British Transport Police on whether offences are domestic abuse related. This data collection also responds to a recommendation in the HM Inspectorate of Constabulary (HMIC) report [Everyone's business: Improving the police response to domestic abuse](#), published in March 2014.

While police forces would have been recording whether offences are domestic abuse related for their own intelligence needs prior to April 2015, this is the first time that these data have been collected as part of the data that the police provide to the Home Office on a mandatory basis.

Data presented within this experimental statistics section relate to offences recorded by the police between April and September 2015, rather than the year ending March 2015.

Crimes are "flagged" as being "domestic abuse related" by the police if the offence meets the cross-governmental definition of domestic violence and abuse. The definition is:

Any incident or pattern of incidents of controlling², coercive³, threatening behaviour, violence or abuse between those aged 16 or over who are, or have been, intimate partners or family members regardless of gender or sexuality. The abuse can encompass, but is not limited to:

- psychological
- physical
- sexual
- financial
- emotional

Provisional headline data from the police have previously been published in the Crime in England and Wales quarterly releases⁴. These data, for April to September 2015, have now been reconciled with police forces. However, given that this is the first year of the collection further work will be conducted with police forces to ensure the consistency and comparability of domestic abuse related data before subsequent, more complete publications of the data become routine.

Notes for Introduction

1. The Notifiable Offence List includes all indictable and triable-either-way offences (which could be tried at a crown court) and a few additional closely related summary offences (which would be dealt with by a magistrate). For information on the classifications used for notifiable crimes recorded by the police, see Appendix 1 of the [User Guide](#).
2. Controlling behaviour is a range of acts designed to make a person subordinate and/or dependent by isolating them from sources of support, exploiting their resources and capacities for personal gain, depriving them of the means needed for independence, resistance and escape and regulating their everyday behaviour.
3. Coercive behaviour is an act or a pattern of acts of assault, threats, humiliation and intimidation or other abuse that is used to harm, punish, or frighten their victim.
4. Data for April to June 2015 was published in the [Crime Statistics, year ending June 2015](#) release; data for April to September 2015 was published in the [Crime in England and Wales, year ending September 2015](#).

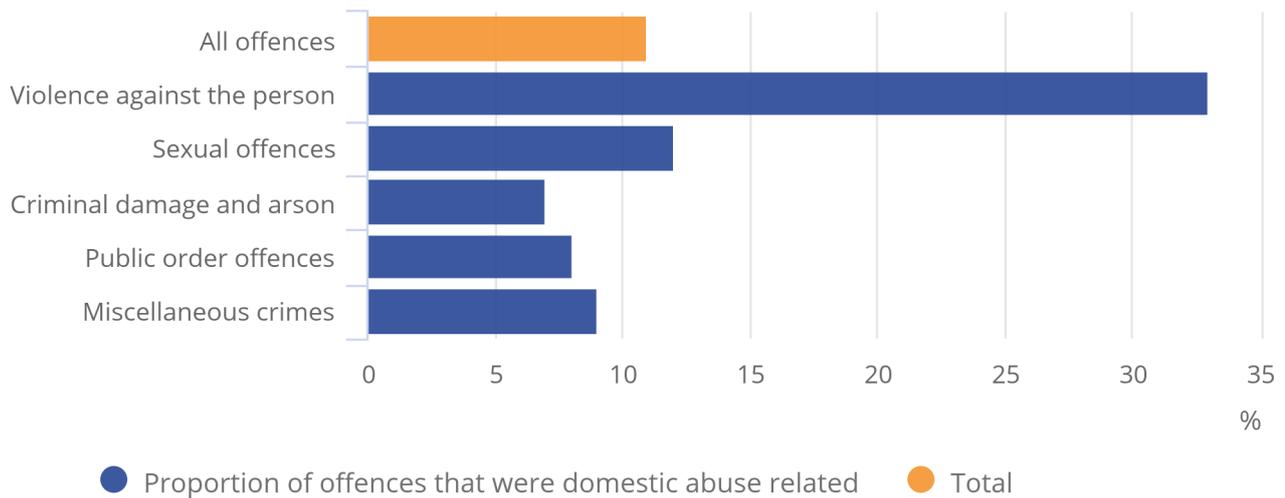
4 . Domestic abuse related offences

In the period April to September 2015, the police forces of England and Wales and British Transport Police recorded 206,815 offences that were domestic abuse related. Of these, 160,259 offences (77% of the total) were for violence against the person offences, 18,761 (9%) were for criminal damage and arson, 8,375 (4%) were for public order offences, 6,220 (3%) were for sexual offences and the remaining 13,200 were for various other notifiable offences (data not shown).

Overall, 11% of all offences recorded by the police were flagged as domestic abuse related. Violence against the person offences were the most likely to be domestic abuse related comprising a third (33%) of violence offences in the 6 month period. The offence group with the next highest proportion of offences being domestic abuse related was sexual offences (12%; Figure 6.1).

Figure 6.1: Proportion of offences recorded by the police in England and Wales which were flagged as domestic abuse related, selected offence groups, April to September 2015

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Source: Home Office Data Hub, Home Office

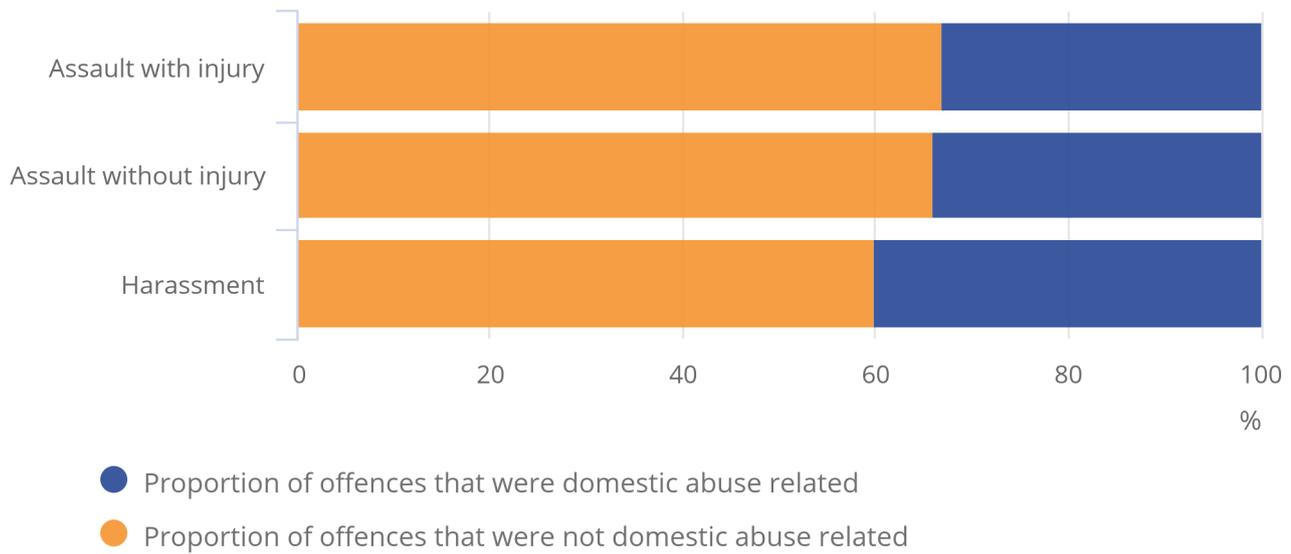
Notes:

1. Police recorded crime data are not designated as National Statistics.
2. Domestic abuse related offences are defined as any incidence of threatening behaviour, violence or abuse (psychological, physical, sexual, financial or emotional) between adults, aged 16 and over, who are or have been intimate partners or family members, regardless of gender or sexuality.

As stated previously, violence against the person offences were most likely to be domestic abuse related. The proportion of offences which were domestic abuse related for the 3 most commonly recorded violence against the person offences¹ are shown in Figure 6.2.

Figure 6.2: Proportion and number of offences recorded by the police in England and Wales which were flagged as domestic abuse related, selected offence groups, April to September 2015

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For other (smaller volume) offences within violence against the person (data not shown):

- there were 3,998 offences of threats to kill that were domestic abuse related (47% of the offences recorded)
- there were 2,176 offences of assault with intent to cause serious harm that were domestic abuse related (19%)
- 1,133 offences of domestic abuse related stalking (56%)

Information on the number of homicide offences that are domestic abuse related (for the year ending March 2015) can be found in the Homicide chapter.

Sexual offences had the second highest proportion of offences being domestic abuse related (after violence against the person), at 12%. Analysis in 'Experimental Statistics: New data on police recorded violent and sexual offences' shows that the majority of victims of these sexual offences will be female, with women and girls accounting for 89% of rape victims and 83% of other sexual offences in the year ending March 2015.

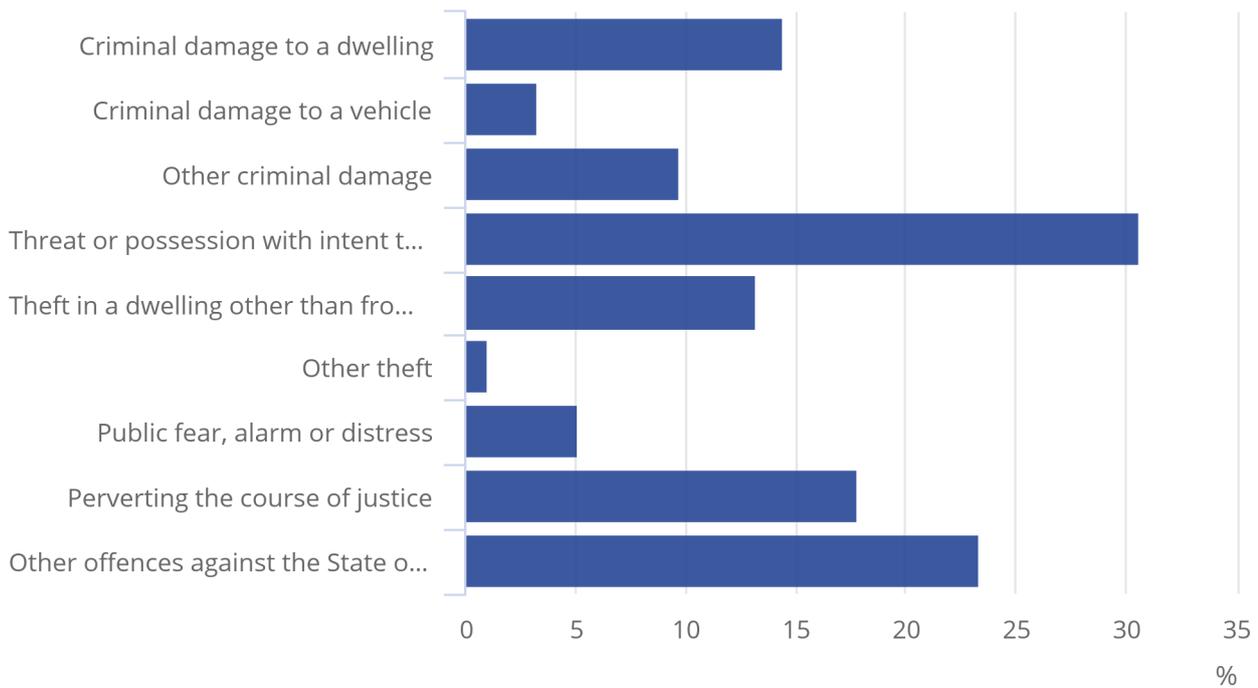
The majority of domestic abuse related sexual offences were either for rape of a female aged 16 and over (4,191 offences; 67%) or sexual assault on a female aged 13 and over (1,189 offences; 19%). In terms of proportions, 38% of rape of a female aged 16 and over and 9% of sexual assaults on a female aged 13 and over were offences that were domestic abuse related (data not shown).

Rapes and sexual assaults of males were less likely to be domestic abuse related than female rapes and sexual assaults. Of the 647 rapes of a male aged 16 and over recorded by the police in April to September 2015, 9% of these offences (57) were domestic abuse related. For sexual assaults on males aged 13 and over, 5% were domestic abuse related (84 of the 1,684 offences).

Across the other offence groups, there were a number of other crime types that either had a relatively high volume, or a high proportion, of offences that were domestic abuse related (Figure 6.3). For example, there were 8,924 criminal damage to a dwelling offences in April to September 2015 which were domestic abuse related, which accounts for 14% of all criminal damage to a dwelling offences. There were fewer threat or possession with intent to commit criminal damage offences (1,940), but a higher proportion of these offences were domestic abuse related (31%).

Figure 6.3: Proportion and number of offences recorded by the police in England and Wales which were flagged as domestic abuse related, selected offences, April to September 2015

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Notes for domestic abuse related offences

1. Assault with injury, assault without injury and harassment account for 90% of recorded violence against the person offences.

5 . Domestic abuse related offences by police force area

Information on the number of domestic abuse related offences recorded by the police by police force area can be found in the appendix tables accompanying this release ([Appendix Table 6.01](#)). This table shows that the proportion of violence against the person offences that were domestic abuse related is relatively similar between most forces, with 40 of the 44 forces reporting between 26% and 39% of violence against the person offences as being domestic abuse related.

Information is also provided on rates per population for domestic abuse offences. For England and Wales, there were 4 domestic abuse related offences per 1,000 population recorded by the police in April to September 2015 ([Appendix Table 6.02](#)).

6 . Further information on police recorded domestic abuse

The Home Office are continuing to implement an improved data collection system called the Data Hub which streamlines the process by which forces submit data. The Home Office Data Hub replaces the old system of aggregate returns with automated capturing of record level crime data via direct extracts from forces' own crime recording systems. This allows the police to provide more detailed information to the Home Office enabling a greater range of analyses to be carried out. The migration to the Data Hub is ongoing and for forces providing data via the Data Hub, it is possible to exploit this richer data and conduct a more in depth analysis of police recorded offences that were flagged as domestic abuse related.

Violent and sexual offences flagged as domestic abuse related have been analysed alongside the age and sex of victims. There were 12 forces¹ that supplied data of sufficient quality for these variables and are therefore included in the analysis in this section. These 12 forces account for 23% of crime recorded in England and Wales. It should be noted that the analysis therefore may not be representative of all forces in England and Wales. However, for these 12 forces, the proportion of violence against the person offences that were flagged as domestic abuse related was 32%, similar to the 33% for all the forces that have supplied headline police recorded domestic abuse data to the Home Office.

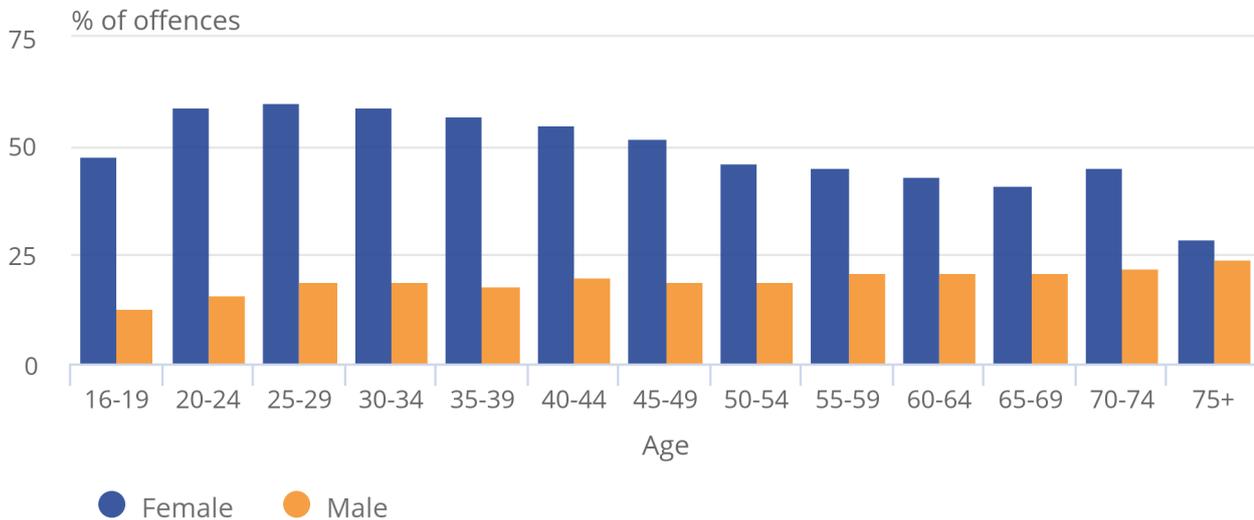
Information from the Home Office Data Hub for April to September 2015 shows that for these 12 forces, half (50%) of violence against the person offences where the victim was a woman were flagged as domestic abuse related compared with 16% of offences where the victim was a man (data not shown). This mirrors findings from the 'Intimate Personal Violence and Partner Abuse' chapter, where women were more likely to be the victim of domestic abuse than men.

For women, as the age of the victim increases, the proportion of offences that were domestic abuse related tends to decline. For women aged 20 to 34, around 60% of all police recorded violence was domestic abuse related, compared with 29% for those aged 75 and older (Figure 6.4). It is important to note that the actual number of offences for both domestic abuse and non-domestic abuse decreases by age.

In contrast, for male victims the proportion of violent offences that were domestic abuse related tends to increase with age, from 13% for 16 to 19 year old men to 24% for those aged 75 and over. This is partly due to the large decline in non-domestic abuse related violence by age for males, which declines at a faster rate than domestic abuse related violence. Therefore, the proportion of offences that are domestic abuse related increases with age for male victims.

Figure 6.4: Proportion of violence against the person offences recorded by the police in England and Wales which were flagged as domestic abuse related, by sex of victims, April to September 2015 (12 forces)

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Source: Home Office Data Hub, Home Office

Notes:

1. Data based on 12 forces that provided accurate data via the Home Office Data Hub.
2. Police recorded crime data are not designated as National Statistics.
3. Domestic abuse related offences are defined as any incidence of threatening behaviour, violence or abuse (psychological, physical, sexual, financial or emotional) between adults, aged 16 and over, who are or have been intimate partners or family members, regardless of gender or sexuality.

Information from the Home Office Data Hub also shows that women aged 20 to 34 were disproportionately more likely to be victims of domestic abuse related violence offences recorded by the police when compared with their population profile, particularly so for those in the 20 to 24 and 25 to 29 years age groups. For example, while 8% of the female population were aged 20 to 24, this age group accounted for 18% of police recorded domestic abuse offences (Figure 6.5).

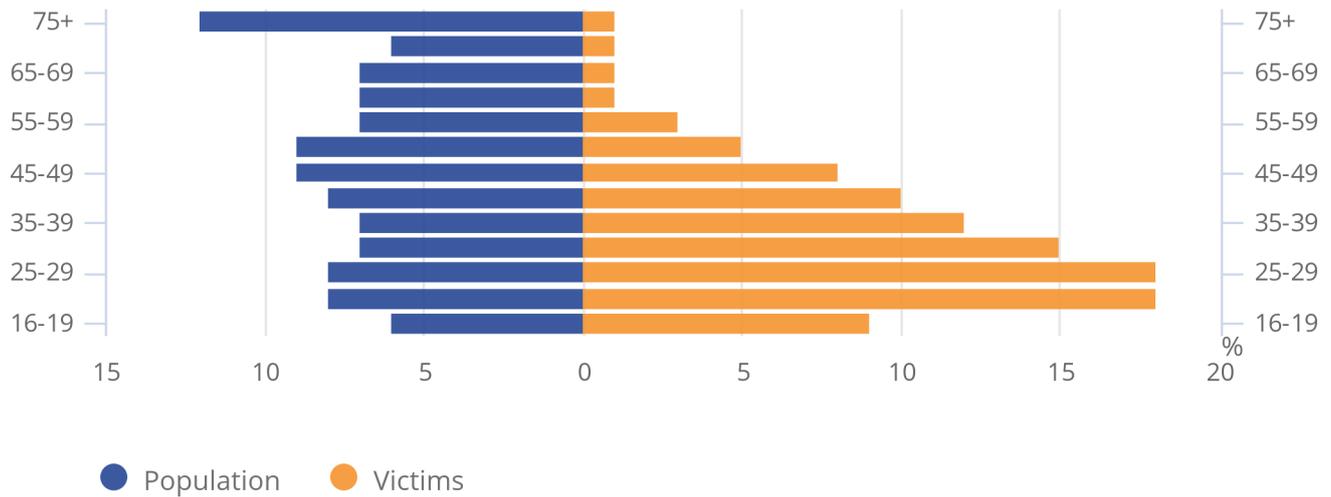
Men aged 20 to 34 were also disproportionately more likely to be victims when compared with their population profile, but not to the same extent (Figure 6.6). These patterns are similar to those shown for age groups in the 'Intimate Personal Violence and Partner Abuse' chapter of this release ([Appendix Table 4.10](#)).

Figure 6.5: Proportion of female domestic abuse related violence against the person offences by age compared to population, April to September 2015 (12 forces)

England and Wales

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England and Wales



Source: Home Office Data Hub, Home Office

Notes:

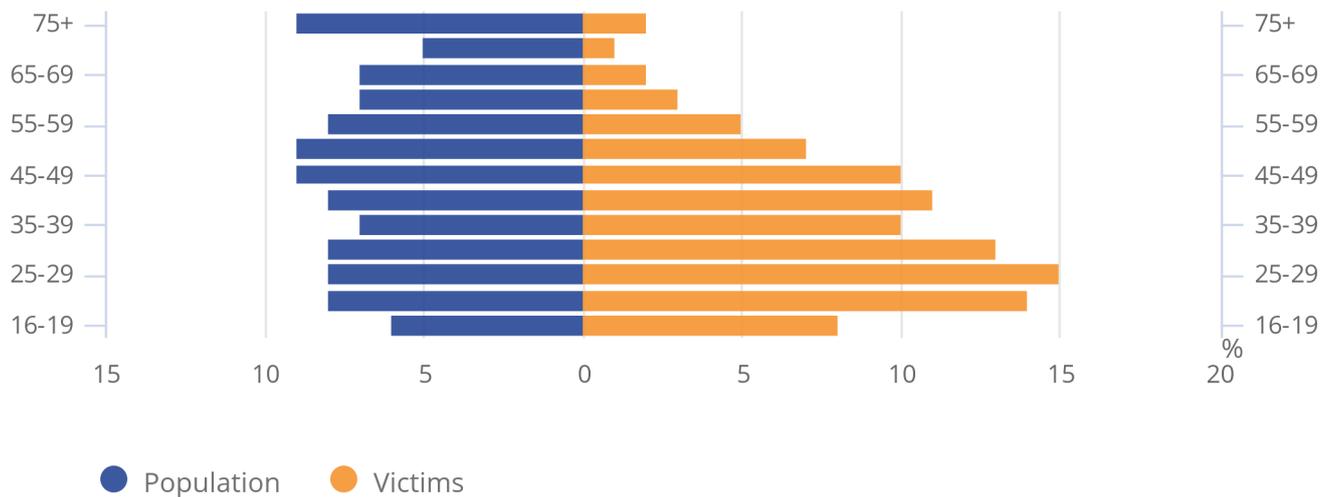
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4. The population figures are based on mid-2014 estimates from the Office for National Statistics.

Figure 6.6: Proportion of male domestic abuse related violence against the person offences by age compared to population, April to September 2015 (12 forces)

England and Wales

Figure 6.6: Proportion of male domestic abuse related violence against the person offences by age compared to population, April to September 2015 (12 forces)

England and Wales



Source: Home Office Data Hub, Home Office

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3. Data based on 12 forces that provided accurate data via the Home Office Data Hub.
4. The population figures are based on mid-2014 estimates from the Office for National Statistics.

Notes for further information on police recorded domestic abuse

1. The 12 forces were Bedfordshire, Cheshire, Cleveland, Devon and Cornwall, Gloucestershire, Greater Manchester, Lancashire, Merseyside, Norfolk, Northamptonshire, Staffordshire and Suffolk.

7. Background notes

1. Details of the policy governing the release of new data are available by visiting www.statisticsauthority.gov.uk/assessment/code-of-practice/index.html or from the Media Relations Office email: media.relations@ons.gsi.gov.uk

The United Kingdom Statistics Authority has designated these statistics as National Statistics, in accordance with the Statistics and Registration Service Act 2007 and signifying compliance with the Code of Practice for Official Statistics.

Designation can be broadly interpreted to mean that the statistics:

- meet identified user needs
- are well explained and readily accessible
- are produced according to sound methods
- are managed impartially and objectively in the public interest

Once statistics have been designated as National Statistics it is a statutory requirement that the Code of Practice shall continue to be observed.