

Statistical bulletin

# Domestic abuse in England and Wales overview: November 2022

Figures on domestic abuse from the Crime Survey for England and Wales, police recorded crime and a number of different organisations.

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# 1 . Other pages in this release

This release brings together data on domestic abuse from a range of different organisations. Commentary is split into a number of separate publications:

- [Domestic abuse prevalence and trends, England and Wales: year ending March 2022](#)
- [Domestic abuse victim characteristics, England and Wales: year ending March 2022](#)
- [Partner abuse in detail, England and Wales: year ending March 2022](#)
- [Domestic abuse and the criminal justice system, England and Wales: November 2022](#)
- [Domestic abuse victim services, England and Wales: 2022](#)
- [Redevelopment of domestic abuse statistics: research update November 2022](#)
- [How domestic abuse data are captured through the criminal justice system](#)

This release supports the [UN 16 Days of Activism against Gender-Based Violence Campaign](#) and the statistics are used to monitor progress towards the [Sustainable Development Goals \(SDGs\)](#).

## 2 . Main points

- The Crime Survey for England and Wales (CSEW) estimated that 5.0% of adults (6.9% women and 3.0% men) aged 16 years and over experienced domestic abuse in the year ending March 2022; this equates to an estimated 2.4 million adults (1.7 million women and 699,000 men).
- Approximately 1 in 5 adults aged 16 years and over (10.4 million) had experienced domestic abuse since the age of 16 years.
- There was no significant change in the prevalence of domestic abuse experienced by adults aged 16 to 59 years in the last year, compared with the year ending March 2020; a year largely unaffected by the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic and the last time the data were collected.
- The number of police recorded domestic abuse-related crimes in England and Wales increased by 7.7% compared with the previous year, to 910,980 in the year ending March 2022; this follows increases seen in previous years and may reflect increased reporting by victims.
- The Crown Prosecution Service (CPS) domestic abuse-related charging rate in England and Wales increased for the first time in four years to 72.7% in the year ending March 2022 but remains below the year ending March 2018 (75.9%).
- The National Domestic Abuse Helpline delivered 50,791 support sessions through phone call or live chat in the year ending March 2022, a similar number to the previous year.

Crime Survey for England and Wales (CSEW) data presented in this release for the year ending March 2022, are not badged as [National Statistics](#). They are based on six months of data collection between October 2021 and March 2022. Caution should be taken when using these data due to the impact of the reduced data collection period and lower response rates on the quality of the estimates.

### 3 . Crime Survey for England and Wales

The face-to-face Crime Survey for England and Wales (CSEW) was suspended on 17 March 2020 because of the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic. Although the Telephone CSEW (TCSEW) allowed us to carry on providing estimates for certain crimes, concerns around confidentiality and respondent safeguarding led to domestic abuse questions being excluded.

Data collection for the face-to-face CSEW resumed on 4 October 2021. Data based on six months of CSEW interviews, rather than 12 months, have been used in our [articles for the year ending March 2022](#). CSEW data presented in this release are not badged as [National Statistics](#) and caution should be taken when using these data due to the impact of the reduced data collection period and lower response rates on the quality of the estimates. On the return of face-to-face CSEW interviewing, the upper age limit of respondents completing the self-completion module was removed.

For more information on domestic abuse by age group following the removal of the upper age limit, see section 5 of the [Domestic abuse victim characteristics, England and Wales: year ending March 2022](#).

## Domestic abuse in the last year

The CSEW estimated 2.4 million adults aged 16 years and over experienced domestic abuse in the year ending March 2022 (1.7 million women and 699,000 men). This equates to a prevalence rate of approximately 5.0% of adults (6.9% women and 3.0% men).

Figure 1 shows a higher percentage of adults experienced domestic abuse by a partner or ex-partner (3.5%) than by a family member (2.1%) in the last year. Of those who experienced partner abuse, 84.3% experienced non-physical abuse, 12.9% experienced any sexual assault and 20.8% experienced stalking.

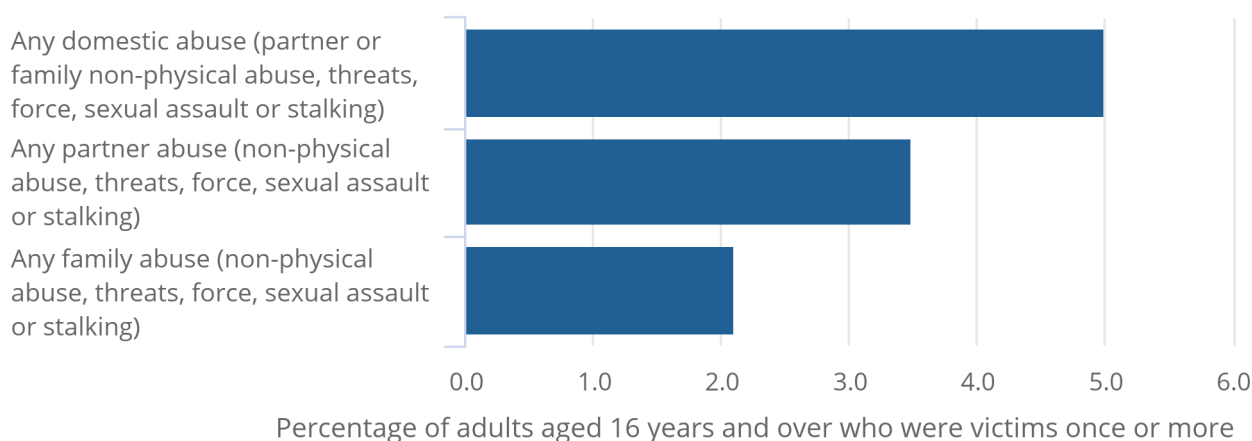
For more information on partner abuse measured by the Crime Survey for England and Wales, see the [Partner abuse in detail: England and Wales, year ending March 2022](#) article and [accompanying tables](#).

### Figure 1: One in 20 adults experienced domestic abuse in the year ending March 2022

Prevalence of domestic abuse in the last year for adults aged 16 years and over, by perpetrator-relationship, England and Wales, year ending March 2022

#### Figure 1: One in 20 adults experienced domestic abuse in the year ending March 2022

Prevalence of domestic abuse in the last year for adults aged 16 years and over, by perpetrator-relationship, England and Wales, year ending March 2022



Source: Office for National Statistics - Crime Survey for England and Wales

#### Notes:

1. Data for the year ending March 2022 are not badged as National Statistics. They are based on six months of data collection from the face-to-face Crime Survey for England and Wales between October 2021 and March 2022. Caution should be taken when using these data due to the impact of the reduced data collection period and lower response rates on the quality of the estimates.
2. Partner abuse refers to abuse carried out by a partner or ex-partner.
3. Some victims may have experienced both partner and family abuse in the last year.

Following the removal of the upper age limit for survey respondents in October 2021, when analysing data over time, we use the 16 to 59 years age range to give a comparable time series for analysis. In the year ending March 2022, for adults aged 16 to 59 years, the prevalence rate of domestic abuse was 5.7%. This was not significantly different to the year ending March 2020, a year largely unaffected by the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic and the last time data were collected (Figure 2).

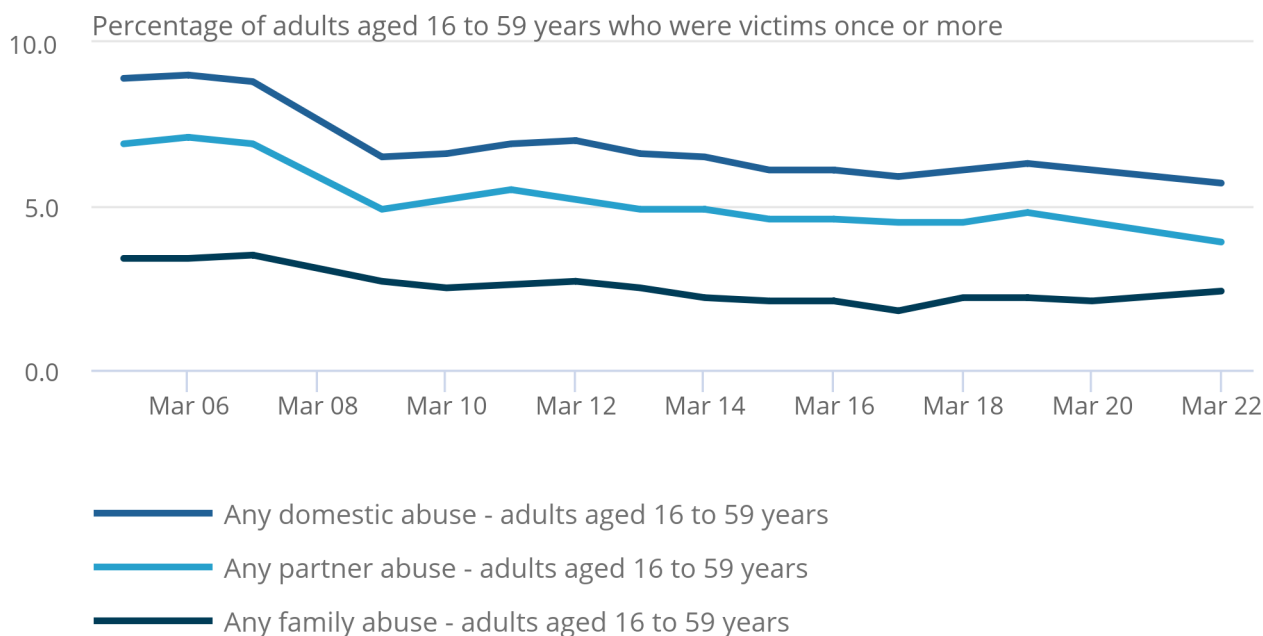
The prevalence of partner abuse has remained similar in recent years with no significant change seen in the year ending March 2022 (3.9%) compared with the year ending March 2020 (4.5%). Similarly, there has been little change in the prevalence of family abuse.

**Figure 2: Domestic abuse prevalence has not changed significantly compared with the year before the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic**

Prevalence of domestic abuse in the last year among adults aged 16 to 59, year ending March 2005 to year ending March 2022

Figure 2: Domestic abuse prevalence has not changed significantly compared with the year before the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic

Prevalence of domestic abuse in the last year among adults aged 16 to 59, year ending March 2005 to year ending March 2022



Source: Office for National Statistics - Crime Survey for England and Wales

Notes:

1. Data for the year ending March 2022 are not badged as National Statistics. They are based on six months of data collection from the face-to-face Crime Survey for England and Wales between October 2021 and March 2022. Caution should be taken when using these data due to the impact of the reduced data collection period and lower response rates on the quality of the estimates.
2. No data is available for the year ending March 2021 because the Crime Survey for England and Wales was suspended due to the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic.
3. No data is available for the year ending March 2008 because comparable questions on any domestic abuse, any partner abuse and any family abuse were not included in that year.
4. Partner abuse refers to abuse carried out by a partner or ex-partner.

## Domestic abuse since the age of 16 years

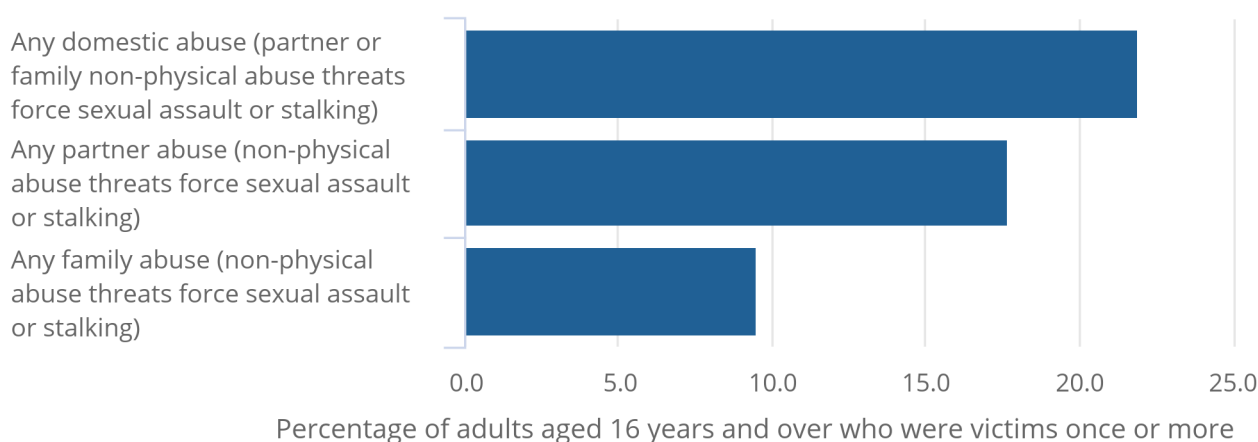
The year ending March 2022 CSEW showed an estimated 10.4 million adults aged 16 years and over had experienced domestic abuse since the age of 16 years. This equates to a prevalence rate of 21.9%, or approximately one in five adults (Figure 3).

### Figure 3: Approximately one in five adults had experienced domestic abuse since the age of 16 years

Prevalence of domestic abuse since the age of 16 years for adults aged 16 years and over, by perpetrator-relationship, England and Wales, year ending March 2022

### Figure 3: Approximately one in five adults had experienced domestic abuse since the age of 16 years

Prevalence of domestic abuse since the age of 16 years for adults aged 16 years and over, by perpetrator-relationship, England and Wales, year ending March 2022



Source: Office for National Statistics - Crime Survey for England and Wales

#### Notes:

1. Data for the year ending March 2022 are not badged as National Statistics. They are based on six months of data collection from the face-to-face Crime Survey for England and Wales between October 2021 and March 2022. Caution should be taken when using these data due to the impact of the reduced data collection period and lower response rates on the quality of the estimates.
2. Partner abuse refers to abuse carried out by a partner or ex-partner.
3. Some victims may have experienced both partner and family abuse since the age of 16 years.

## 4 . Police recorded crime

The police recorded 1,500,369 domestic abuse-related incidents and crimes in England and Wales in the year ending March 2022. Around two in five (39.3%) of these were domestic abuse-related incidents that cover reports where, after initial investigation, the police have concluded that no notifiable crime was committed.

In the year ending March 2022 there were 589,389 domestic abuse-related incidents recorded by the police in England and Wales. This was a decrease from 613,929 in the previous year, and a return to a similar number seen before the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic. The number of domestic abuse-related crimes recorded by the police increased by 7.7% to 910,980 compared with the year ending March 2021. This continues the trend of increases seen over recent years which may, in part, be driven by increased willingness of victims to come forward to report domestic abuse.

Since the year ending March 2019, the number of domestic abuse-related crimes recorded by the police in England and Wales has exceeded the number of domestic abuse-related incidents (Figure 4).

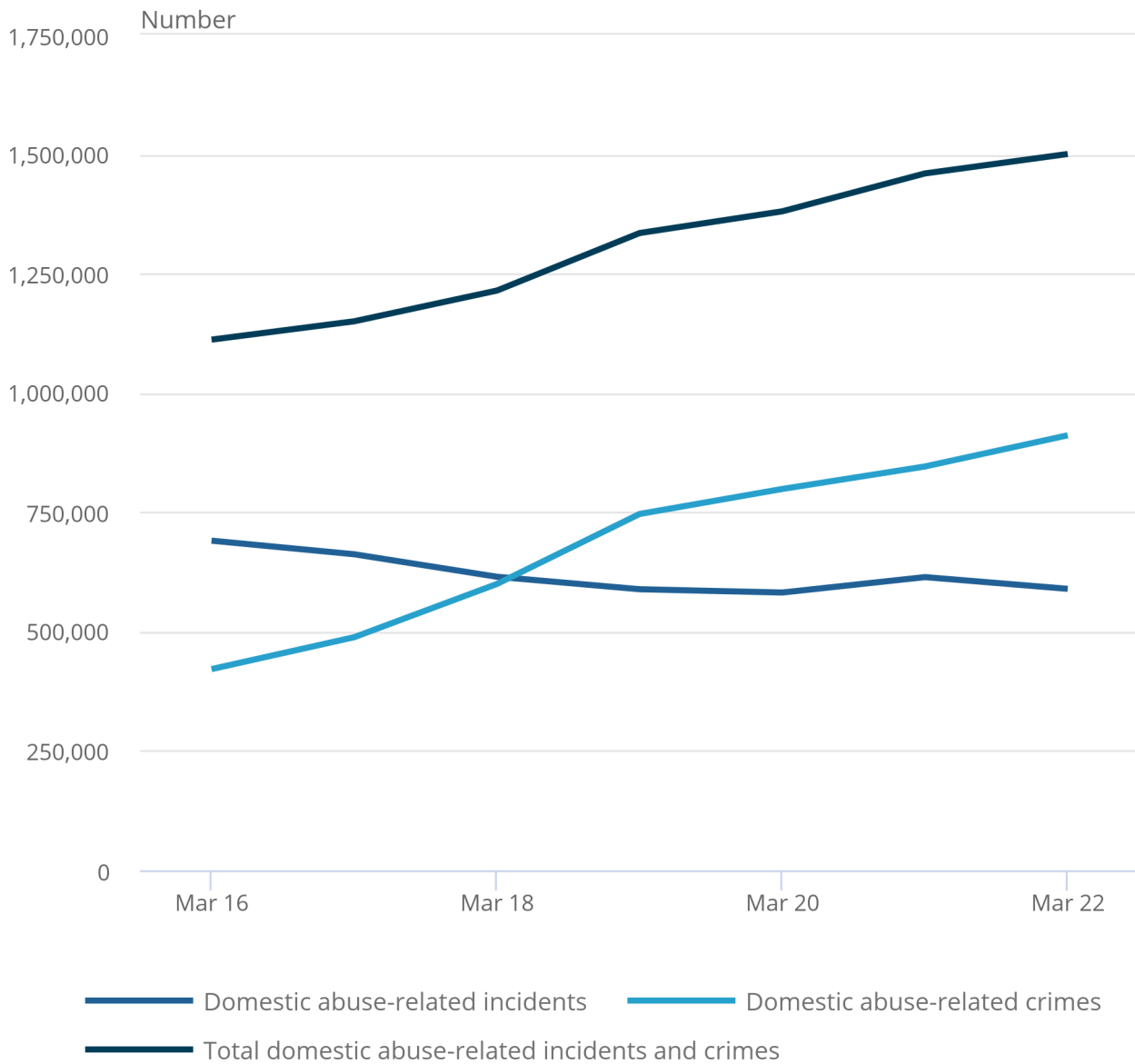
Of all crimes recorded by the police in the year ending March 2022, 17.1% were domestic abuse-related which remained similar to the year ending March 2021 (18.3%) and year ending March 2020 (15.1%).

**Figure 4: The number of domestic abuse-related incidents decreased to a similar level seen before the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic**

Number of domestic abuse-related incidents recorded by the police, England and Wales, year ending March 2016 to year ending March 2022

Figure 4: The number of domestic abuse-related incidents decreased to a similar level seen before the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic

Number of domestic abuse-related incidents recorded by the police, England and Wales, year ending March 2016 to year ending March 2022



Source: Home Office – Police recorded crime

Notes:



1. Police recorded crime data are not designated as National Statistics.
2. Domestic abuse related crimes 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.
3. The number of incidents refers to how many domestic abuse-related incidents did not get recorded as a crime.

## 5 . Criminal justice system

Among the 41 police forces that supplied data in both years, the police made 31.3 arrests per 100 domestic abuse-related crimes in the year ending March 2022, a decrease from 32.6 in the previous year.

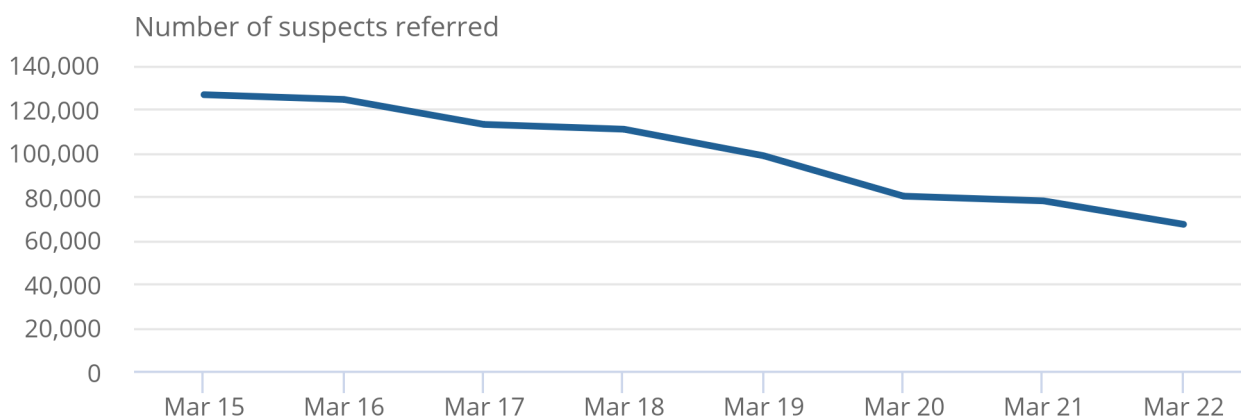
The number of suspects of domestic abuse-related crimes referred by the police to the Crown Prosecution Service (CPS) for a charging decision decreased from 77,812 in the year ending March 2021 to 67,063 in the year ending March 2022, mirroring the decrease in arrests. The decrease in referrals continues the trend since the year ending March 2015 (Figure 5).

### Figure 5: The number of suspects of domestic abuse-related crimes referred by the police to the Crown Prosecution Service (CPS) for a charging decision continued to decrease

The number of suspects of domestic abuse-related crimes referred by the police to the CPS for a charging decision, England and Wales, year ending March 2015 to year ending March 2022

#### Figure 5: The number of suspects of domestic abuse-related crimes referred by the police to the Crown Prosecution Service (CPS) for a charging decision continued to decrease

The number of suspects of domestic abuse-related crimes referred by the police to the CPS for a charging decision, England and Wales, year ending March 2015 to year ending March 2022



Source: Crown Prosecution Service

#### Notes:

1. Data from the Crown Prosecution Service (CPS) are not designated as official statistics.
2. In 2019, CPS altered their data collection methodology to include cases from Central Casework divisions in the figures for England and Wales. This change has been applied to all historic data, therefore data may differ slightly from figures previously published.
3. These data are referred to by the CPS as the pre-charge receipt of cases. The number of pre-charge receipts referred by the police relies on the police identifying and flagging the cases, by suspect, prior to being referred to the CPS. It also relies on the CPS administrators identifying and flagging those cases on the CPS case management system when they are first registered.

In contrast, the CPS domestic abuse-related [charging rate](#) in England and Wales increased for the first time in four years to 72.7% in the year ending March 2022, but remains below the year ending March 2018 (75.9%).

Over three-quarters (76.4%) of domestic abuse-related prosecutions were successful in securing a conviction in the year ending March 2022. This decreased to a similar proportion seen in the year ending March 2018.

More detail can be found in our [Domestic abuse and the criminal justice system, England and Wales: November 2022](#) article and [accompanying tables](#).

## 6 . Victim services

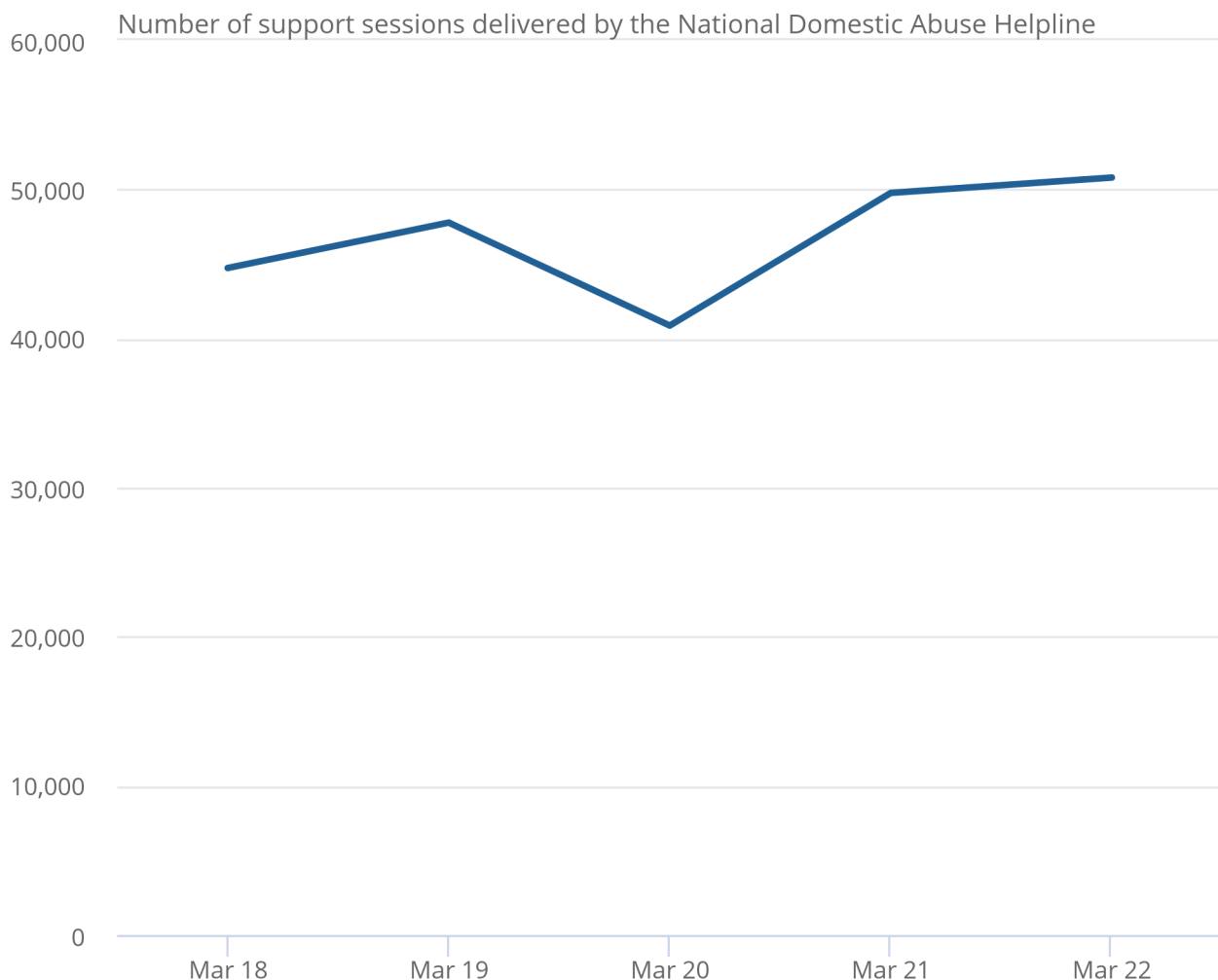
In the year ending March 2022, the National Domestic Abuse Helpline, run by Refuge, delivered 50,791 support sessions through phone call or live chat (Figure 6). This remained similar to the year ending March 2021, a year affected by the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic.

**Figure 6: The number of support sessions delivered by the National Domestic Abuse Helpline increased for the second year**

Number of support sessions delivered by the National Domestic Abuse Helpline in England, year ending March 2018 to year ending March 2022

Figure 6: The number of support sessions delivered by the National Domestic Abuse Helpline increased for the second year

Number of support sessions delivered by the National Domestic Abuse Helpline in England, year ending March 2018 to year ending March 2022



Notes:

1. Refuge data are not classified as official statistics.
2. The 24-hour freephone National Domestic Abuse Helpline (run by Refuge) is available on 0808 2000 247, 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.
3. Data from the year ending March 2020 should be treated with caution, due to a period of change in the delivery of the service. The contract to run the service was retendered with a period of implementation of a new model from November 2019 to March 2020.
4. A support session is defined as a phone conversation or live chat conversation provided by the National Domestic Abuse Helpline in response to an incoming contact. In addition, the Helpline offers support via email and follow-up calls.

More detail can be found in our [Domestic abuse victim services, England and Wales: 2022](#) article and [accompanying tables](#).

## 7 . Domestic abuse in England and Wales data

### [Domestic abuse prevalence and victim characteristics](#)

Dataset | Released 25 November 2022

Domestic abuse numbers, prevalence, types and victim characteristics, based upon findings from the Crime Survey for England and Wales and police recorded crime.

### [Domestic abuse and the criminal justice system](#)

Dataset | Released 25 November 2022

Data from across the government on responses to and outcomes of domestic abuse cases in the criminal justice system.

### [Domestic abuse victim services](#)

Dataset | Released 7 September 2022

Data from different organisations on the availability of domestic abuse services and the characteristics of service users.

### [Domestic abuse in England and Wales - Data tool](#)

Dataset | Released 25 November 2022

An interactive Excel-based data tool for domestic abuse statistics. It allows users to explore data for their police force area in more detail and compare with other areas.

### [Stalking: findings from the Crime Survey for England and Wales](#)

Dataset | Released 25 November 2022

Data from the Crime Survey for England and Wales on stalking including numbers, types and victim characteristics.

### [Partner abuse in detail](#)

Dataset | Released 25 November 2022

Data from the Crime Survey for England and Wales on the prevalence and nature of partner abuse.

## 8 . Glossary

## Charging rate

The charging rate is the number of suspects of Crown Prosecution Service (CPS) domestic abuse-flagged cases that were charged as a proportion of all those that resulted in a legal decision to charge, prosecute, or issue an out-of-court disposal.

## Domestic abuse

Domestic abuse is not limited to physical violence and can include a range of abusive behaviours. It can also be experienced as repeated patterns of abusive behaviour to maintain power and control in a relationship. The [Domestic Abuse Act 2021](#) defines domestic abuse as any incident or pattern of incidents between those aged 16 years and over who:

- are a partner
- are an ex-partner
- are a relative
- have, or there has been a time when they each have had, a parental relationship in relation to the same child

The Domestic Abuse Act 2021 outlines the following behaviours as abuse:

- physical or sexual abuse
- violent or threatening behaviour
- controlling or coercive behaviour
- economic abuse
- psychological, emotional, or other abuse

The Domestic Abuse Act 2021 recognises children under the age of 18 years who see, or hear, or experience the effects of the abuse, as a victim of domestic abuse if they are related or have a parental relationship to the adult victim or perpetrator of the abuse.

## Domestic abuse-related crimes

Incidents of domestic abuse that resulted in a crime being recorded by the police and are included in police recorded crime.

## Domestic abuse-related incidents

Incidents of domestic abuse that were reported to the police, but following investigation, do not amount to a crime or offence according to the National Crime Recording Standards. These can be added to domestic abuse-related crimes to create a total picture of the demand that domestic abuse puts on the police.

## Police recorded crime

Police recorded crime data are supplied by the Home Office, who are responsible for the collation of recorded crime data supplied by the 43 territorial police forces of England and Wales, plus the British Transport Police. The data are an important indicator of police workload but, unlike the Crime Survey for England and Wales (CSEW), do not include crimes that have not been reported to the police or incidents that the police decide not to record as crimes.

## Pre-charge decisions

Of all the suspects referred by the police, pre-charge decisions are those where the CPS has decided whether to charge, take no further action, recommend an out of court decision, record, and outcome of pending response - further investigation or "other".

## 9 . Measuring the data

The domestic abuse data included in this release are sourced from the Crime Survey for England and Wales (CSEW), police recorded crime, other government organisations and domestic abuse services.

The [User guide to crime statistics for England and Wales](#) provides detailed information about the crime survey and police recorded crime data.

More quality and methodology information on strengths, limitations, appropriate uses, and how the data were created is available in our:

- [Domestic abuse quality and methodology information \(QMI\)](#)
- [Crime in England and Wales QMI](#)
- [How domestic abuse data are captured through the criminal justice system article](#)

## 10 . Strengths and limitations

Statistics on domestic abuse are produced separately by many different organisations in England and Wales. When taken in isolation, these statistics may not provide the context required to understand the national and local picture of domestic abuse.

Crime Survey for England and Wales (CSEW) data presented in this release for the year ending March 2022 are not badged as [National Statistics](#). They are based on a six-month collection period from the face-to-face CSEW, between October 2021 and March 2022. Caution should be taken when using these data due to the impact of the reduced data collection period and lower response rates on the quality of the estimates.

Police recorded crime and outcomes data from the Home Office are classified as official statistics. [National Statistics](#) are a subset of [official statistics](#) that have been certified by the UK Statistics Authority as compliant with its Code of Practice for Statistics. All other data included in this release are sourced from administrative datasets that do not fall within the scope of official statistics.

The way in which data on domestic abuse are collected differs between sources and organisations. The data are not directly comparable, since they are collected on different bases (for example, victims, crimes, suspects, or defendants) and may not cover the same cohort because of variation in the time taken for cases to progress through the criminal justice system. As such it is necessary to look at the data presented in its entirety as each individual stage of the system is, in part, influenced by activity at a prior stage.

Alongside this release we have published a [data tool](#) that allows users to explore domestic abuse data for police force areas in more detail and compare these with similar areas within England and Wales.

## 11 . Related links

[Violence against women and girls: research update November 2022](#)

Article | Released 25 November 2022

An update of our current and future research and publications relating to violence against women and girls (VAWG).

[The lasting impact of violence against women and girls](#)

Article | Released 24 November 2021

Violence against women and girls can lead to significant and long-lasting impacts such as mental health issues, suicide attempts and homelessness, ONS analysis shows.

[Crime in England and Wales: year ending June 2022](#)

Bulletin | Released 27 October 2022

Crime against households and adults using data from police recorded crime and the Crime Survey for England and Wales (CSEW).

[Sexual offences in England and Wales overview: year ending March 2020](#)

Bulletin | Released 18 March 2021

Figures on sexual offences from the year ending March 2020 Crime Survey for England and Wales and crimes recorded by police.

[Statistics on so called 'honour-based' abuse offences, England and Wales, 2021 to 2022](#)

Article | Released 20 October 2022

Home Office release containing statistics about so called 'honour based' abuse (HBA) related offences and incidents recorded by the police in England and Wales.

## 12 . Cite this statistical bulletin

Office for National Statistics (ONS), released 25 Month 2022, ONS website, statistical bulletin, [Domestic abuse in England and Wales overview: November 2022](#)