

Statistical bulletin

Domestic abuse in England and Wales overview: November 2023

Figures on domestic abuse from the Crime Survey for England and Wales, police recorded crime, and other organisations.

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1 . Main points

- The Crime Survey for England and Wales estimated that 2.1 million people aged 16 years and over (1.4 million women and 751,000 men) experienced domestic abuse in the year ending March 2023.
- There was no significant change in the prevalence of domestic abuse experienced in the last year compared with the previous year.
- The police recorded 889,918 domestic abuse-related crimes (excluding Devon and Cornwall) in the year ending March 2023, a similar number to the previous year.
- There were 51,288 domestic abuse-related prosecutions in England and Wales for the year ending March 2023, compared with 53,207 in the year ending March 2022.

2 . Explore the latest domestic abuse data

3 . Other pages in this release

- [Domestic abuse prevalence and trends, England and Wales: year ending March 2023](#)
- [Domestic abuse victim characteristics, England and Wales: year ending March 2023](#)
- [Partner abuse in detail, England and Wales: year ending March 2023](#)
- [Domestic abuse and the criminal justice system, England and Wales: November 2023](#)
- [Domestic abuse victim services, England and Wales: 2023](#)
- [Redevelopment of domestic abuse statistics: research update November 2023](#)
- [How domestic abuse data are captured through the criminal justice system](#)

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

4 . 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, take no further action, or recommend an out-of-court disposal.

Convictions

Cases where the defendant was convicted following a prosecution, comprising of either:

- a conviction after trial: cases in which the defendant pleaded not guilty, but was convicted after the evidence was heard
- a guilty plea: where the defendant pleaded guilty
- a proof in absence: cases comprising of lesser offences which were heard by the court in the absence of the defendant

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 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 completed making a decision on whether to charge, take no further action, recommend an out of court decision, record an outcome of pending response – further investigation or “other”.

Prosecutions

All cases where the defendant (or defendants) were charged, summonsed in court, or charged by way of a postal requisition during the period. This includes those proceeding to a trial or guilty plea, those discontinued and those which could not proceed.

5 . 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 \(QMI\)](#)
- our [Crime in England and Wales QMI](#)
- our [How domestic abuse data are captured through the criminal justice system article](#)

6 . Strengths and limitations

Domestic abuse statistics are produced separately by a number of 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.

The Crime Survey for England Wales (CSEW) statistics presented in this release for the year ending March 2023 are not badged as [National Statistics](#). They are based on eight months of data collection because of an error in the survey, which resulted in missing data. Caution should be taken when using these data because of the impact of the reduced data collection period on the quality of the estimates.

Police recorded crime and outcomes data from the Home Office are classified as [official 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. 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. 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.

7 . Related links

[Violence against women and girls: research update November 2023](#)

Article | Released 29 November 2023

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 2023](#)

Bulletin | Released 19 October 2023

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 2022](#)

Bulletin | Released 23 March 2023

Figures on sexual offences from the year ending March 2022 Crime Survey for England and Wales and crimes recorded by police.

[Statistics on so called "honour-based" abuse offences, England and Wales, 2022 to 2023](#)

Article | Released 19 October 2023

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

8 . Cite this statistical bulletin

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