



## CRIME AND JUSTICE

# DOMESTIC ABUSE RECORDED BY THE POLICE IN SCOTLAND, 2016-17

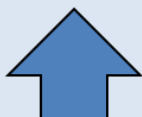
This bulletin presents statistics on domestic abuse, based on details of incidents and recorded crime supplied by Police Scotland in 2016-17. Incidents of domestic abuse recorded by the police do not reveal all incidents of domestic abuse in Scotland as not all incidents are reported to the police. The figures are used to inform policy and, in conjunction with the Scottish Crime and Justice Survey (see [Chapter 4](#)), are used to assess the extent and nature of domestic abuse in Scotland.

The definition of domestic abuse used by Police Scotland is:

**'Any form of physical, sexual or mental and emotional abuse [that] might amount to criminal conduct and which takes place within the context of a relationship. The relationship will be between partners (married, cohabiting, civil partnership or otherwise) or ex-partners. The abuse can be committed in the home or elsewhere'.**

### Key points on Incidents of Domestic Abuse

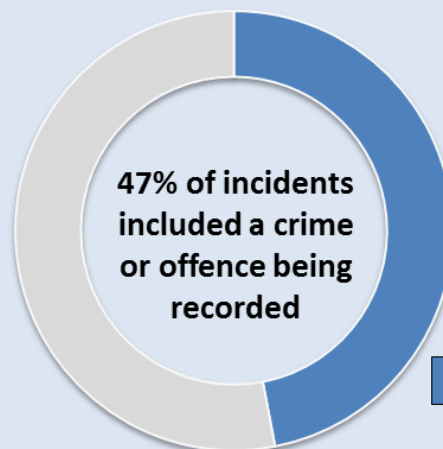
2016-17 - 58,810



Recorded incidents up  
1% over last year



2015-16 - 58,104



 Crime or Offence

# Key Points

- In 2016-17 there were 58,810 incidents of domestic abuse recorded by the police in Scotland, an increase of 1% from 2015-16. Levels of domestic abuse recorded by the police have remained relatively stable since 2011-12 at around 58,000 to 60,000 incidents a year.
- In 2016-17, 47% of incidents of domestic abuse recorded by the police in Scotland included the recording of at least one crime or offence.
- Common assault was the most common crime or offence recorded as part of a domestic abuse incident in 2016-17, being recorded in 37% of incidents that included a crime or offence being recorded. This was followed by Breach of the peace etc. which was recorded in 33% of such incidents.
- There were 109 incidents of domestic abuse recorded by the police in Scotland per 10,000 population in 2016-17. At a local authority level, West Dunbartonshire (155) and Dundee City (153) recorded the highest incident rates per 10,000 population. The Orkney Islands (47) and Shetland Islands (50) recorded the lowest rates per 10,000 population.
- Where gender information was recorded, 79% of all incidents of domestic abuse in 2016-17 had a female victim and a male accused (the same as in 2015-16). Looking over the longer term this percentage share has fallen from 85% in 2007-08.
- The proportion of incidents with a male victim and a female accused (where gender was recorded) was 18% in 2016-17 (the same as in 2015-16). Over the longer term this percentage share has risen from 13% in 2007-08.
- In 2016-17, the 26-30 years old age group had the highest incident rate for both victims (274 incidents recorded per 10,000 population) and those accused (265 incidents recorded per 10,000 population).
- Incidents of domestic abuse recorded were more common at weekends with 36% of all incidents in 2016-17 occurring on a Saturday or Sunday.
- In 2016-17, 88% of all domestic abuse incidents occurred in a home or dwelling.

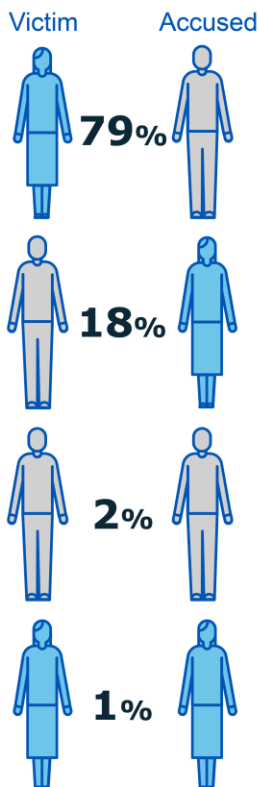
# DOMESTIC ABUSE RECORDED BY THE POLICE IN SCOTLAND, 2016-17



**58,810 Incidents**

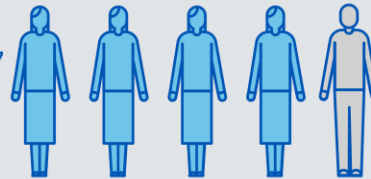
## WHAT was the gender of the victims and accused?

The majority of incidents involved a female victim and male accused

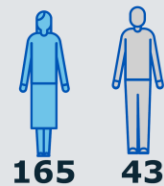


## WHO Were the victims?

4 in 5 of the victims in 2016-17 were female

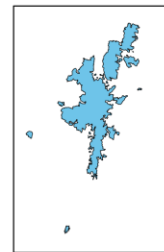
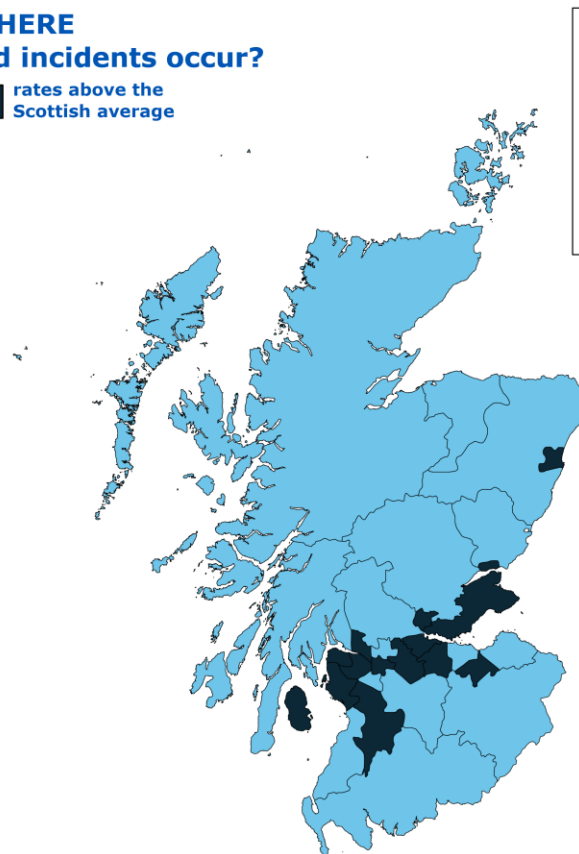


Victimisation rate per 10,000 population



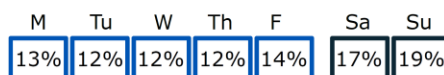
## WHERE did incidents occur?

rates above the Scottish average



**88%** of domestic abuse occurred in a dwelling  
42% occurred in the victim's home

## WHEN did incidents occur?



**36%** of domestic abuse incidents occurred on either a Saturday or a Sunday

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# 1. Structure of Bulletin

- 1.1. This bulletin presents Official Statistics on the number of incidents of domestic abuse recorded by the police in Scotland.
- 1.2. [Key Points](#) on incidents of domestic abuse in Scotland are on pages 1 to 3.
- 1.3. [Chapter 2](#) provides a summary of the background to incidents of domestic abuse recorded by the police in Scotland. This includes details of how the data was collected.
- 1.4. [Chapter 3](#) presents statistics on domestic abuse and includes details on incidents, the victims and those accused, by change over time and analysis at local authority level.
- 1.5. [Chapter 4](#) presents information on 'Putting Domestic Abuse in Context'. It highlights some of the other data sources available on domestic abuse in Scotland.
- 1.6. [Chapter 5](#) presents information on incidents of domestic abuse in Scotland through a series of tables. Further tables are available at [www.gov.scot/Topics/Statistics/Browse/Crime-Justice/PubDomesticAbuse](http://www.gov.scot/Topics/Statistics/Browse/Crime-Justice/PubDomesticAbuse).
- 1.7. [Annexes](#) provide further information on the process of collecting these statistics on incidents of domestic abuse in Scotland. These include:
  - Data sources and definitions;
  - Quality of the statistics;
  - Auditing of data by Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary in Scotland (HMICS);
  - Comparisons with England & Wales and Northern Ireland;
  - Stakeholder consultations & users of the statistics;
  - Future considerations; and
  - Other Notes (including contact details for further analysis).

## 2. Background

- 2.1 Statistics on domestic abuse are used to inform the Scottish Government's [Justice Vision and Priorities](#), and [National Outcome 9 – 'we live our lives safe from crime, disorder and danger'](#).
- 2.2 These statistics are also used by a wide range of stakeholders to monitor trends, for policy research and development, and for research purposes. Further information on users and uses of the statistics is available in [Annex 5](#) of this bulletin.
- 2.3 The 'Domestic Abuse Recorded by the Police in Scotland' annual statistical bulletin forms part of a series of bulletins produced by the Scottish Government on the criminal justice system, which can be found at <http://www.gov.scot/Topics/Statistics/Browse/Crime-Justice/Publications>.
- 2.4 The Police Service of Scotland (referred to throughout this report as Police Scotland) is responsible for operational policing in Scotland and is held to account by the Scottish Police Authority. [The Police and Fire Reform \(Scotland\) Act 2012](#) changed the policing landscape in Scotland, replacing the previous eight police forces, the Scottish Police Services Authority and the Scottish Crime and Drug Enforcement Agency from 1<sup>st</sup> April 2013.
- 2.5 The creation of Police Scotland has altered the way in which domestic abuse data has been captured. Prior to 1<sup>st</sup> April 2013, each legacy force had a bespoke system to collect the data required. Between 1<sup>st</sup> April 2013 and 31<sup>st</sup> March 2014, a new VPD (Vulnerable Person Database) system was rolled out to the then 14 Police Divisions in Scotland. At this time this was referred to as the interim Vulnerable Persons Database but is now simply referred to as the Vulnerable Persons Database. From 1<sup>st</sup> April 2014 onwards, all domestic abuse data was collected through the VPD. In summary:
  - 2012-13 (and previous years) – Data collected from the eight legacy force systems
  - 2013-14 – Data collected from the VPD (approx. 15%) and from legacy force systems (approx. 85%)
  - 2014-15 onwards – Data collected from the VPD
- 2.6 Due to the modification in data collection, elements of this publication have changed in recent editions.
- 2.7 All tables and charts, including additional tables, can be accessed online via the following link: <http://www.gov.scot/Topics/Statistics/Browse/Crime-Justice/PubDomesticAbuse>.

### 3. Main Findings: Incidents of Domestic Abuse in Scotland

#### Incidents of Domestic Abuse

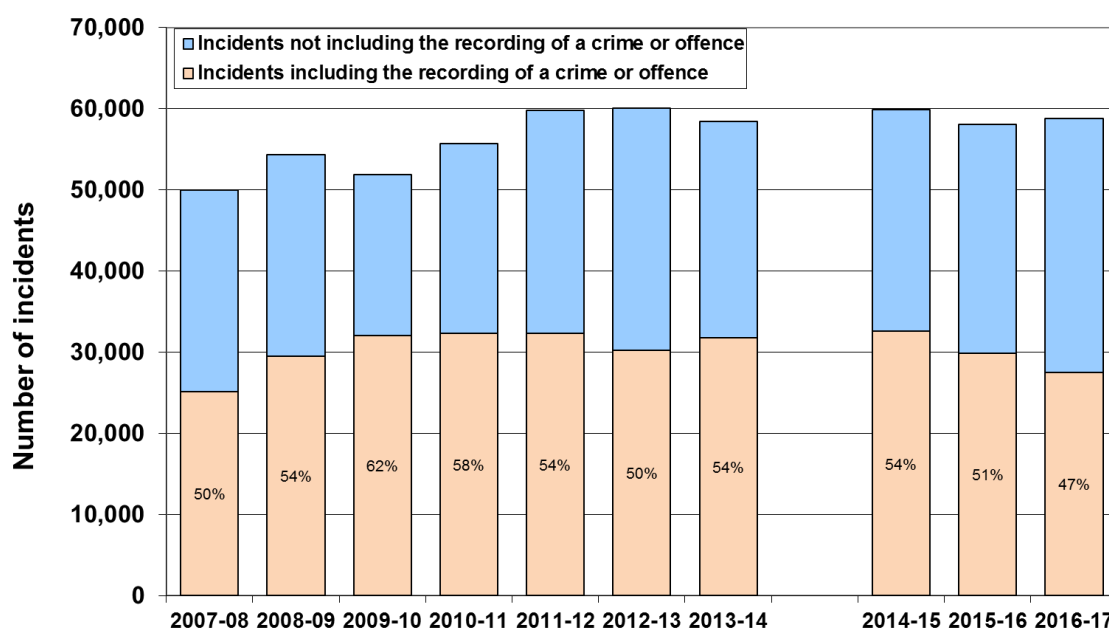
3.1 In 2016-17 there were 58,810 incidents of domestic abuse recorded by the police in Scotland, an increase of 1% from 2015-16 when 58,104 incidents were recorded.

Over the past six years, the number of incidents of domestic abuse recorded by the police has remained relatively stable since 2011-12 at around 58,000 to 60,000 incidents a year. This follows large rises in recorded incidents between 1999-00 and 2011-12 ([Chart 1](#) & [Table 1](#)).

In 2016-17, 47% (27,496) of domestic abuse incidents led to the recording of at least one crime or offence. The proportion in 2015-16 was 51% (29,906) ([Table 1](#) & [Chart 1](#)). Over the past 10 years this percentage has fluctuated between 47% (this year) and 62% (in 2009-10), with no obvious trend over the longer term.

Of the 35,086 crimes or offences recorded as part of a domestic abuse incident in 2016-17 Common assault was the most common recorded in 37% (12,897) of incidents. The second most common was Breach of the peace etc. which was recorded in 33% (11,610) of such incidents ([Table 2](#))

**Chart 1: Incidents of domestic abuse recorded by the police, 2007-08 to 2016-17 \***



\* Chart has been displayed with a gap in the time series to highlight the changes in data collection. See [Section 6.4](#) for more details.

3.2 In 2016-17, 53% (31,314) of domestic abuse incidents within the Vulnerable Person Database (VPD) did not include the recording of at least one crime or offence. This reflects that the VPD aims to collate disparate pieces of information about incidents into a single file, allowing officers to build a narrative about people who have reported or been involved in an incident with a potential domestic abuse element. The VPD itself is not a crime recording system, and as noted above the definition of domestic abuse used by Police Scotland is not restricted to behaviour where criminal conduct has been identified and recorded.

### **Further information into Incidents which did not include a crime or offence**

3.3 Scottish Government statisticians reviewed a sample of those domestic abuse incidents from 2016-17 that did not include the recording of at least one crime or offence. Four hundred incidents were randomly selected from the VPD and a synopsis of each case was recorded. No personal or sensitive details (names, dates of birth, etc.) were collected. This research was undertaken to give users additional information on the circumstances of these incidents. The findings of this exercise are summarised below, and should be treated as a broad indication of the characteristics of those domestic abuse incidents in 2016-17 which don't include a crime or offence, rather than an exact measure (given the associated possibility of sampling error and wide range of behaviours covered).

Where gender information was recorded, 78% of those domestic abuse incidents that did not include the recording of at least one crime or offence had a female victim in 2016-17. This was a slightly lower proportion than for those incidents that did include the recording of at least one crime of offence (83% of which had a female victim).

### **Summary of Incidents that exclude the recording of a Crime or Offence**

3.4 Around half of these incidents (52%) were based on some form of argument between partners or ex-partners that excluded any reference to a physical confrontation or threatening behaviour. Of these specific cases, around two-thirds include one of the partners/ex-partners contacting the police, whilst in around 30% of cases a third party or other witness did so. A quarter of cases that refer to some form of argument include one of the parties contacting the police as they wanted the other person to leave.

Around a fifth of these incidents (19%) were based on concern about the communication or attempted communication of one partner/ex-partner towards the other (excluding any reference to an argument or a specific crime or offence). In almost all these cases it was one of the partners/ex-partners that contacted the police. This involved a range of different incidents, including frequent references to unwanted communication or attempted communication, which could be through electronic means



(text-messages, phone calls etc.) or in person. This category also includes incidents where one party is concerned about what their partner/ex-partner has said about them (sometimes to third parties).

Beyond the incidents described above, the other cases cover a diverse range of situations. Some included the police being contacted for advice or an individual raising concerns without reference to any specific incident (7% of the sample). In some instances the police were contacted by one partner/ex-partner out of concern for the well-being of the other party (3%) or by someone wishing to retrieve their belongings from a partner/ex-partner (3%).

Finally, some incidents in the VPD are best described as situations in which it is inferred that a crime or offence may have taken place (13% of the sample). In most of these cases (11% of the sample) further investigation determined either that a crime or offence had not occurred (for example by the police reviewing the content of text messages that were alleged to be threatening) or there was insufficient evidence for the police to record a crime or offence. In the other cases (2% of the sample), further discussion with Police Scotland determined that these incidents did include a crime or offence. This splits into cases where a crime or offence had been recorded in Crime Management systems but not added to the VPD or where no crime or offence could be found in Crime Management systems.

### **Local Authority Analysis**

3.5 Across Scotland, 16 out of 32 local authorities recorded a decrease in the number of incidents of domestic abuse recorded by the police between 2015-16 and 2016-17 ([Table 3](#)).

In 2016-17, the highest percentage of incidents of domestic abuse that included at least one crime or offence also being recorded was in Dumfries & Galloway (65%) and Moray (61%).

### **Incidents of Domestic Abuse per 10,000 Population**

3.6 Taking the population of Scotland as at mid-year 2016, there were 109 recorded incidents of domestic abuse per 10,000 population in 2016-17. At a local authority level, West Dunbartonshire (155) and Dundee City (153) recorded the highest incident rates per 10,000 population. The Shetland Islands (50) and Orkney Islands (47) recorded the lowest rates per 10,000 population ([Chart 3](#) & [Table 5](#)).

### **Victim & Accused Characteristics**

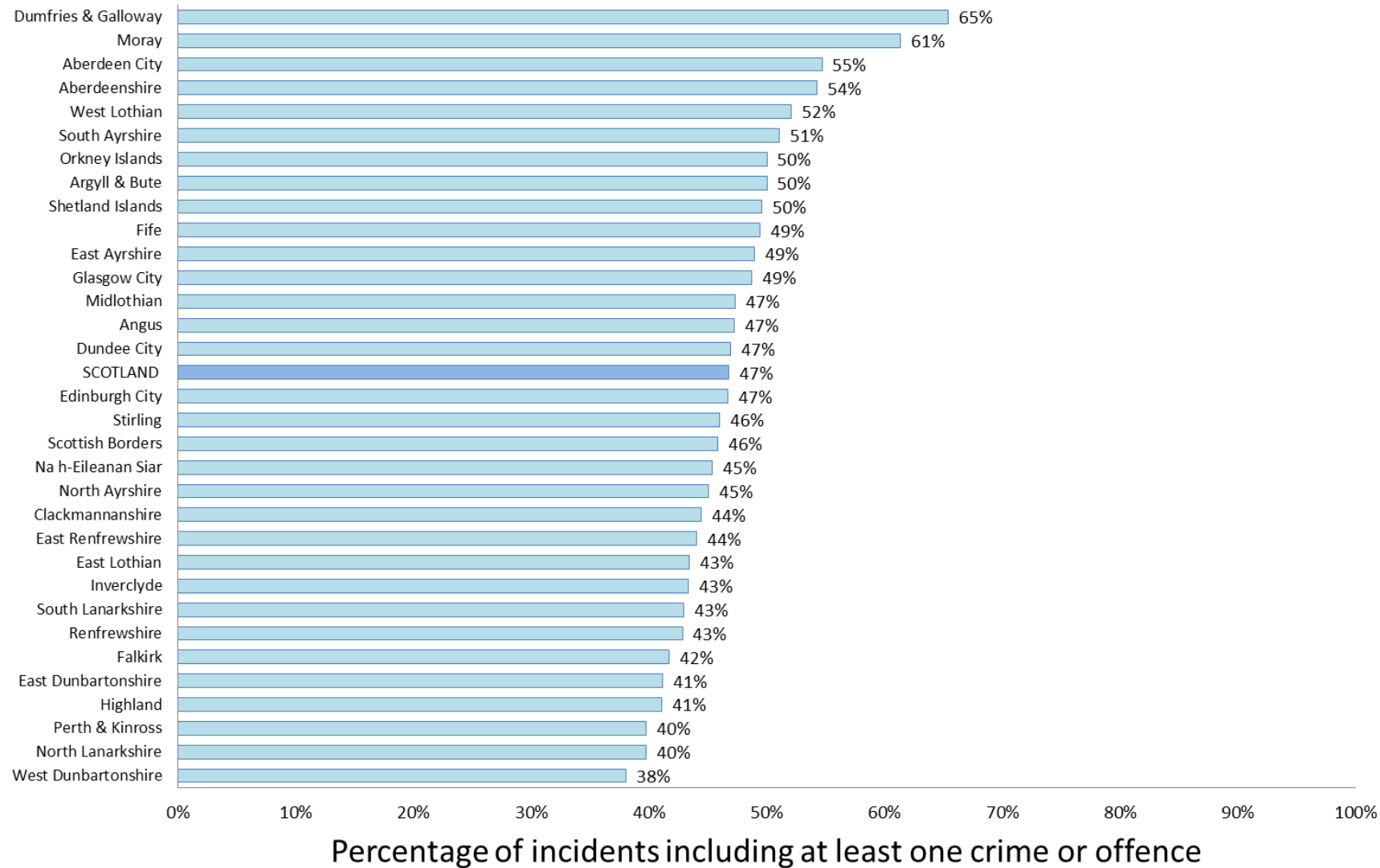
3.7 In 2016-17, females made up the majority (80%) of the victims in incidents of domestic abuse recorded by the police, where the gender of the victim is known. This percentage increases to 83% if you only consider incidents that included the recording of at least one crime or offence.

Where gender information was recorded, 79% of all incidents of domestic abuse in 2016-17 had a female victim and a male accused (the same as in 2015-16). Looking over the longer term this percentage share has fallen from 85% in 2007-08. The proportion of incidents with a male victim and a female accused (where gender was recorded) was 18% in 2016-17 (the same as in 2015-16). Again looking over the longer term this percentage share has risen from 13% in 2007-08 ([Chart 4](#) & [Table 6](#)).

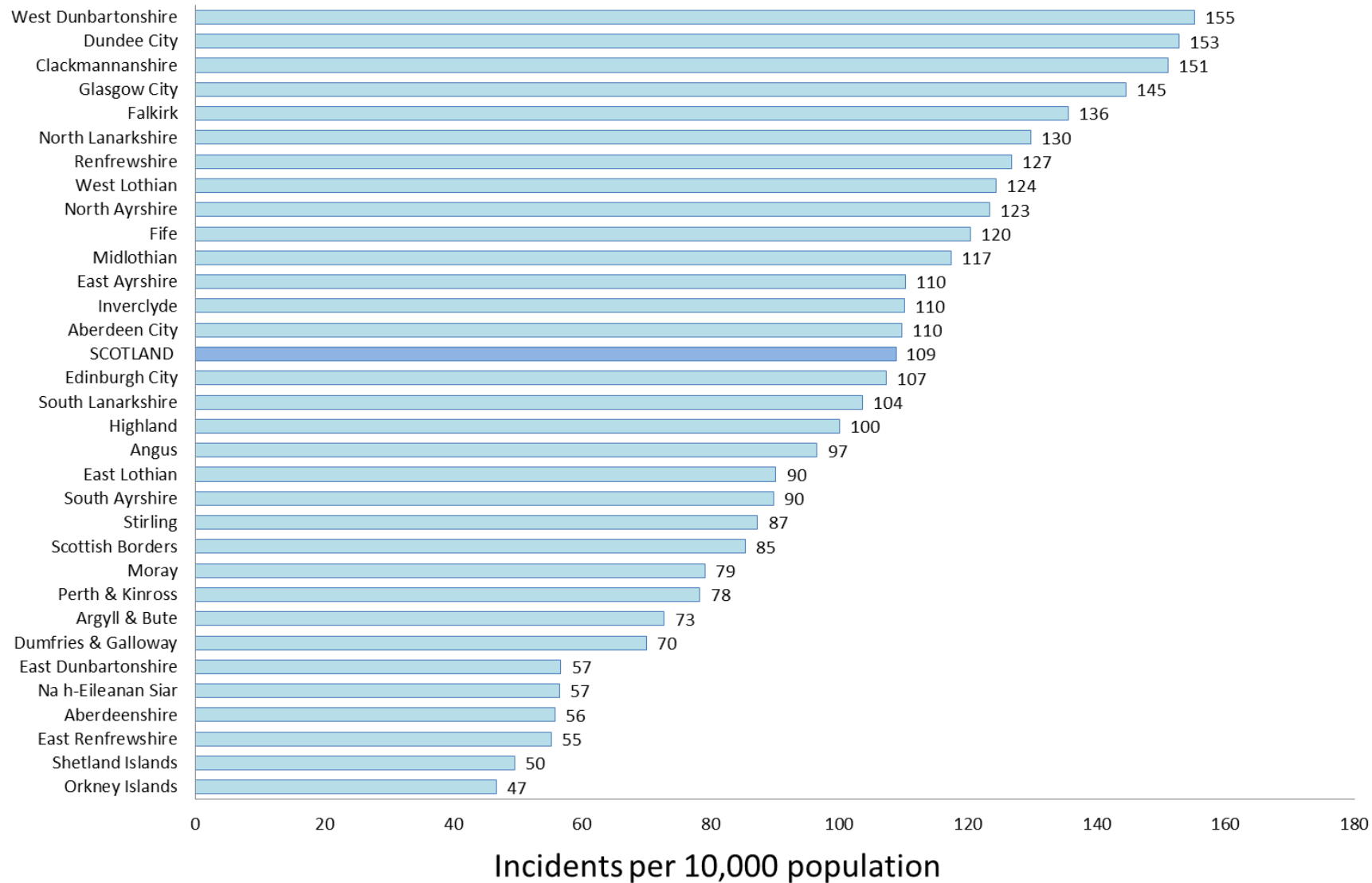
### **Relationship between Victim & Accused**

- 3.8 In 2016-17, over half (55%) of domestic abuse incidents (where the relationship between the victim and accused is known) were between current partners. Of the remaining incidents, 44% involved ex-partners ([Table 7](#)).

**Chart 2: Percentage of incidents of domestic abuse recorded by the police that included at least one crime or offence being recorded, by local authority, 2016-17**

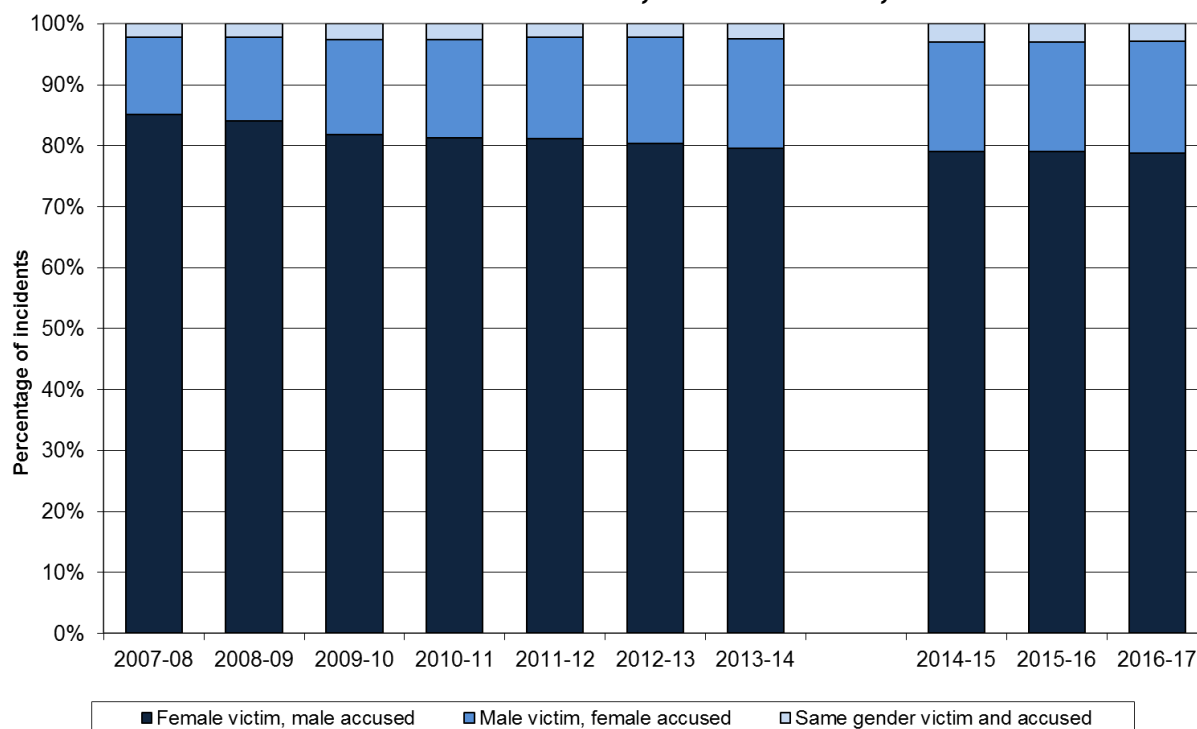


**Chart 3: Incidents of domestic abuse recorded by the police per 10,000 population<sup>1</sup>, by local authority, 2016-17**



1. Population estimates are at mid-year 2016 published by the National Records of Scotland (<http://www.nrscotland.gov.uk/statistics-and-data/statistics/statistics-by-theme/population/population-estimates/mid-year-population-estimates>)

**Chart 4: Gender of victim and accused, where known, 2007-08 to 2016-17**



\* Chart has been displayed with a gap in the time series to highlight the changes in data collection. See [Section 6.4](#) for more details.

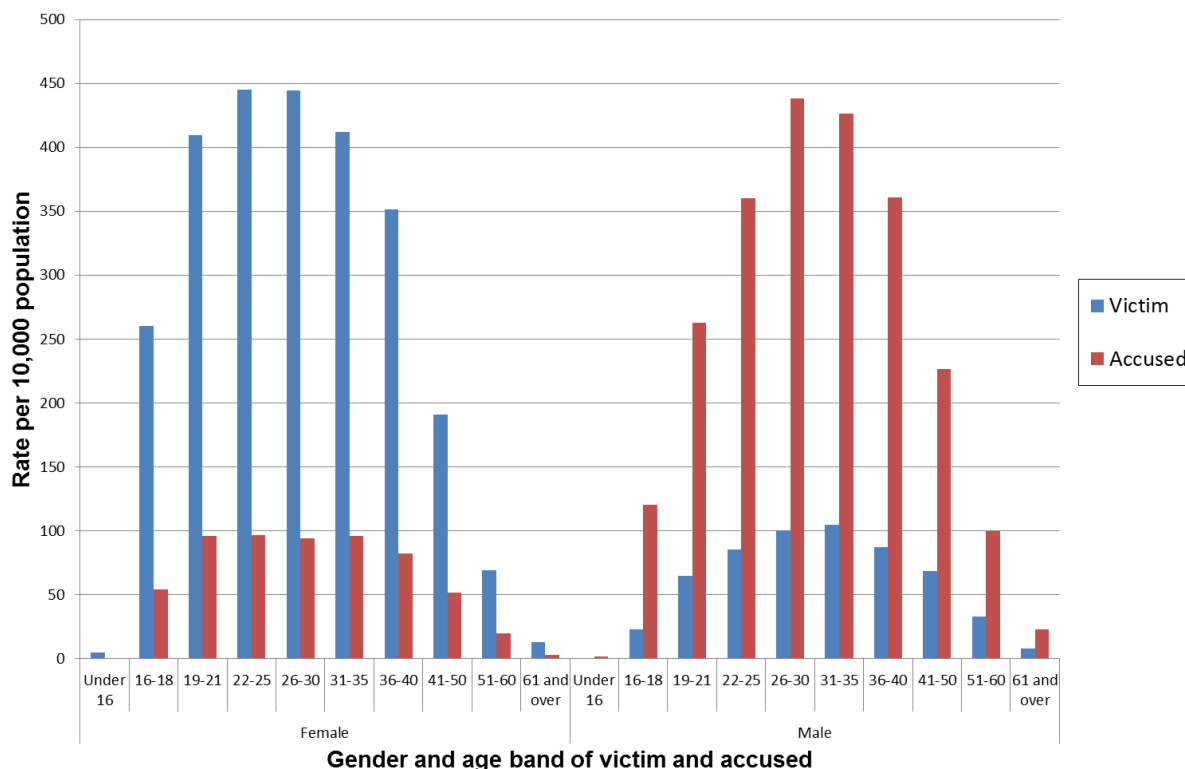
\* Chart only displays incidents where gender of victim and accused is known. See [Section 6.17](#) for more details on missing data.

3.9 In 2016-17, the 26 to 30 year old age group had the highest rate per 10,000 population for both victims (274 incidents recorded per 10,000 population) and those accused (265 incidents recorded per 10,000 population) ([Table 8](#) & [Table 9](#)).

In 2016-17, female victims aged 22 to 25 and 26 to 30 had the joint highest rate (445) of incidents of domestic abuse recorded by the police per 10,000 population. Among male victims, the highest rate of incidents of domestic abuse recorded per 10,000 population, was for those aged 31 to 35 years, where the rate was 105 incidents recorded per 10,000 population ([Chart 5](#) & [Table 8](#)).

In 2016-17, among male accused, the 26 to 30 year old age group had the highest rate of domestic abuse (438 incidents recorded per 10,000 population). Among female accused, the 19 to 21, 22 to 25 and 31-35 year old age groups had the joint highest rate (96) of incidents per 10,000 population ([Chart 5](#) & [Table 9](#)).

**Chart 5: Gender of victim and accused, where known, 2016-17**



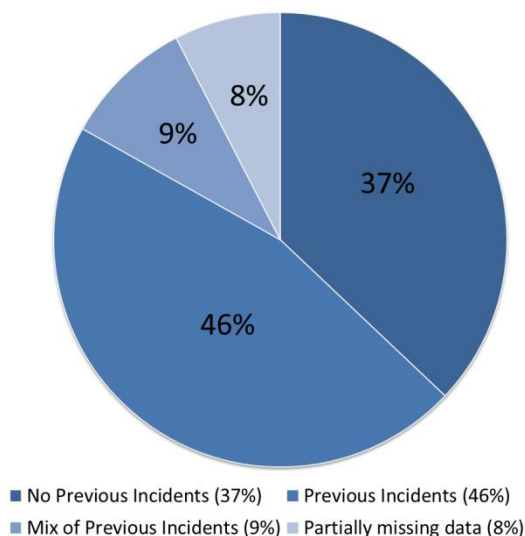
### Victim & Accused Repeat Analysis

3.10 The Vulnerable Persons Database (VPD) database (referred to in [Paragraph 2.5](#) above) enables the identification of a victim or accused that has previously been entered into the system for domestic abuse. A victim or accused can appear multiple times in the database in any one year, each classified as a separate incident.

The VPD was introduced, and rolled out across the then 14 police divisions during 2013-14. Therefore, the first and any subsequent reference to any victim or accused in the repeat categories below only refers to whether they were involved in an incident of domestic abuse from 2013-14 (part year depending on divisional roll-out) and not in any years prior to the introduction of the VPD.

In 46% (27,098) of incidents of domestic abuse recorded by the police in 2016-17 both the victim and accused had previously been recorded in an incident of domestic abuse. For 37% (21,786) of incidents, neither the victim or accused were found on the VPD and in 9% (5,457) incidents there was a mix of results for the victim and accused (i.e. only of the victim or accused had previously been recorded). Of the remaining 8% of incidents it was unknown whether at least one of the victim or accused had previously been recorded in an incident of domestic abuse ([Table 10](#) & [Chart 6](#)).

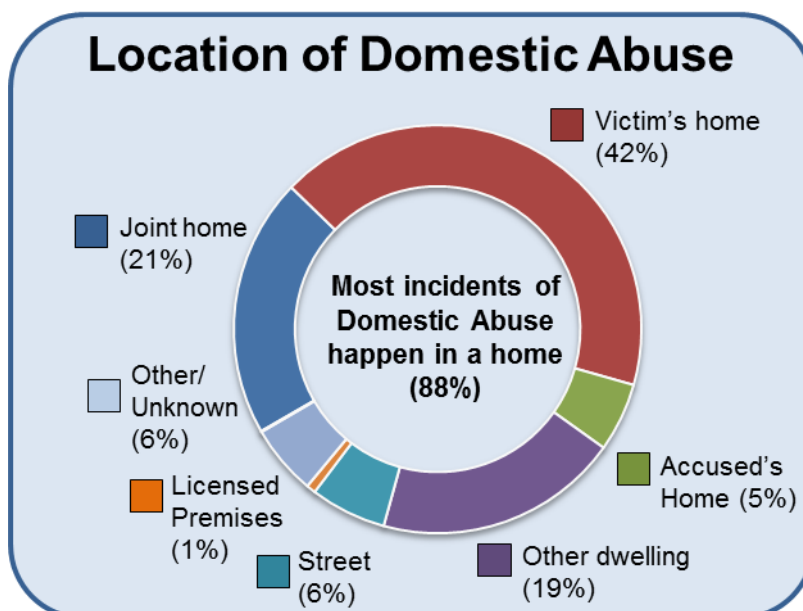
**Chart 6: Incidents of domestic abuse recorded by the police, by repeat victim/accused analysis, 2016-17**



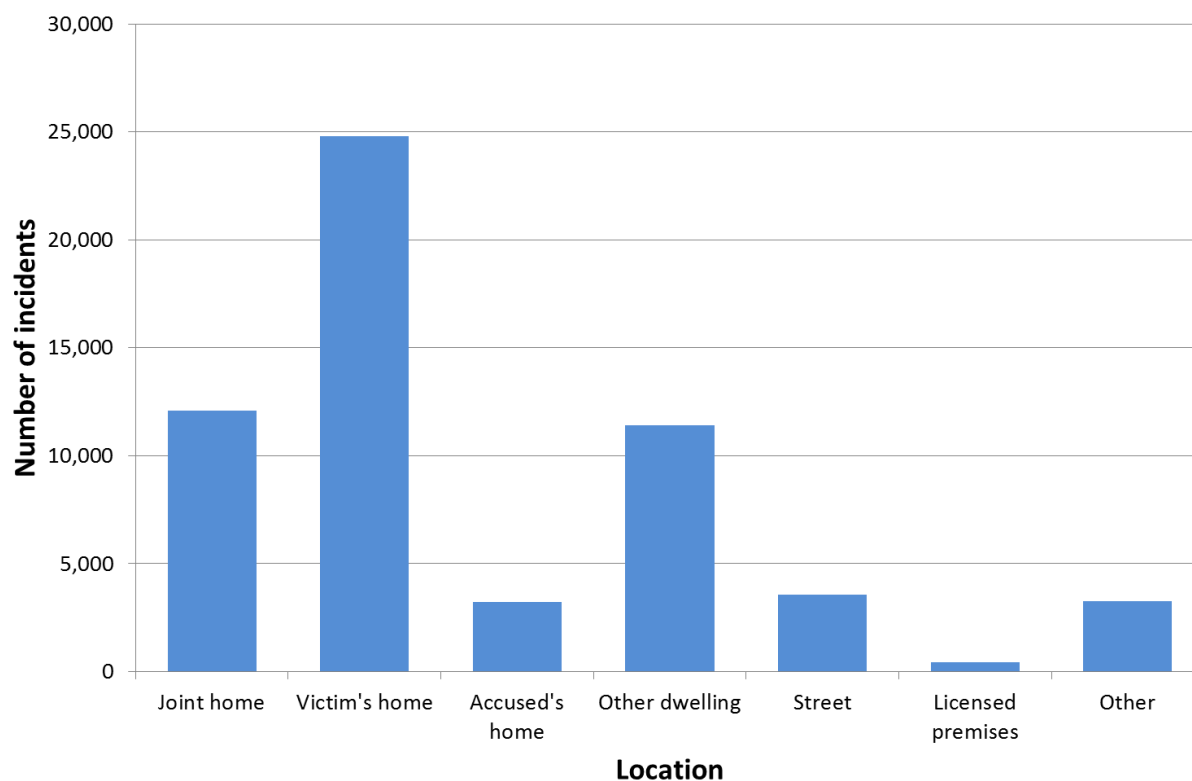
### Location of Incidents

3.11 In 2016-17, 88% of incidents occurred in a home or dwelling. This can be further split into 42% of incidents of domestic abuse that occurred within the victim’s own home and 21% occurred within a joint home. A further 5% occurred in the accused’s home while 19% occurred in an ‘other dwelling’.

The remaining 12% of incidents occurred in the street (6%), licensed premises (1%) or an ‘Other’ location (6%) ([Table 11](#) & [Chart 7](#)).



**Chart 7: Incidents of domestic abuse recorded by the police, by location, 2016-17**



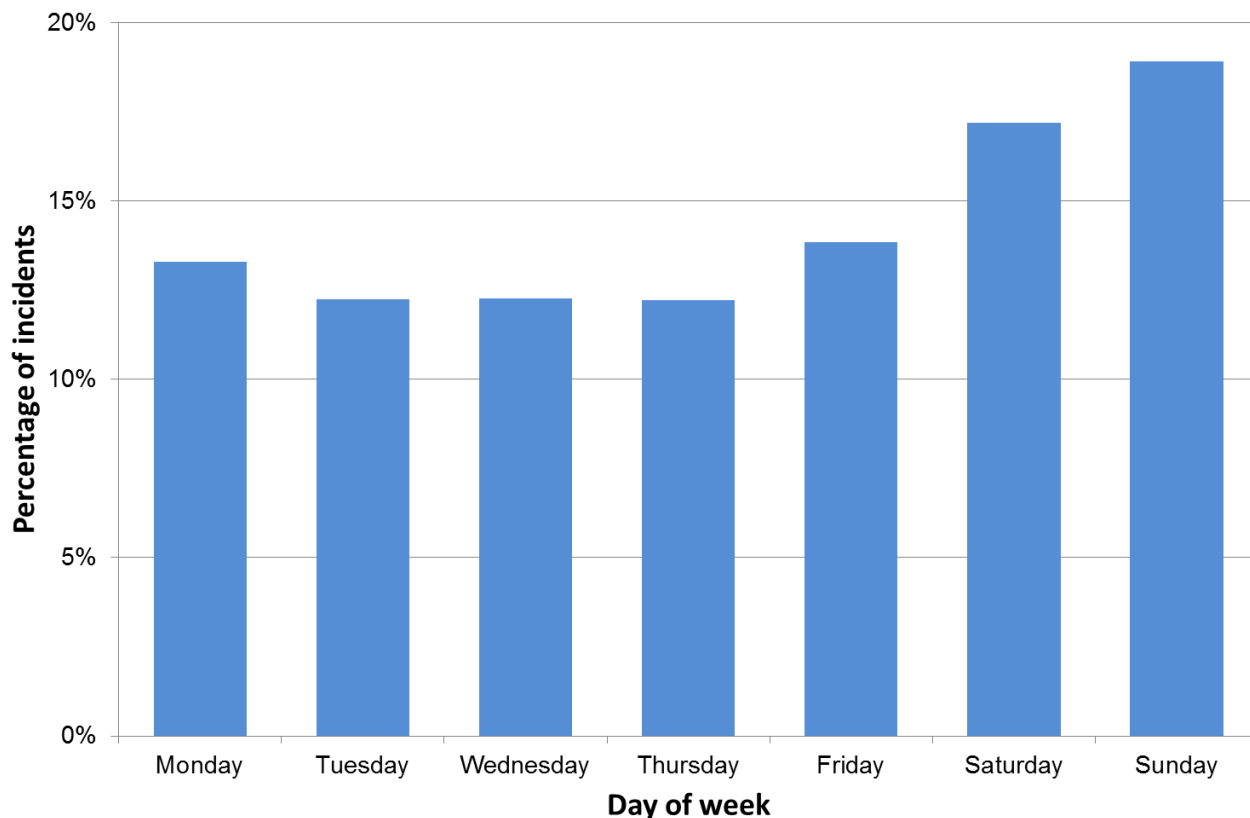
### **Day/Month of Occurrence**

3.12 The following section is based on the date the incident of domestic abuse occurred, rather than when it was recorded by the police.

Incidents of domestic abuse recorded by the police in Scotland are more likely to occur at the weekend with 36% of incidents in 2016-17 occurring on a Saturday or a Sunday. The remaining 64% is spread fairly evenly from Monday to Friday. This pattern has been consistent over the past 10 years.



**Chart 8: Incidents of domestic abuse recorded by the police, by day of the week incident occurred, 2016-17**



When looking at the month that incidents of domestic abuse recorded by the police occurred in 2016-17, no clear pattern emerges from the data, with incidents reasonably spread out across the year.

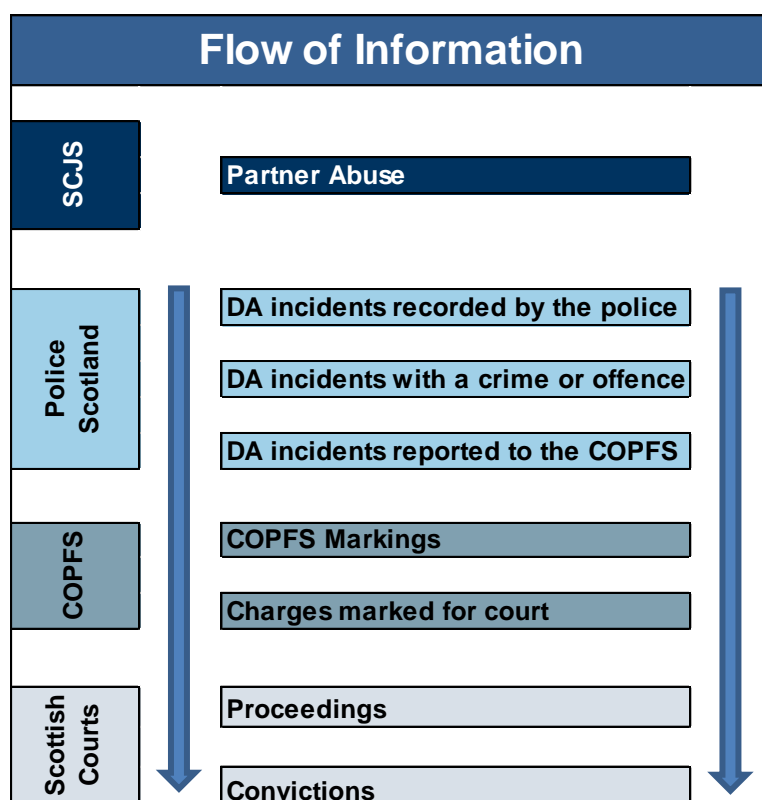
Tables for Day/Month are available online:

<http://www.gov.scot/Topics/Statistics/Browse/Crime-Justice/PubDomesticAbuse>

## 4. Putting Domestic Abuse in Context

4.1 There are a number of data sources which collect information on domestic abuse in Scotland.

- The Scottish Crime and Justice Survey (SCJS) provides information on Partner Abuse.
- As detailed in this publication, Police Scotland record the number of incidents reported to them on domestic abuse.
- The Crown Office & Procurator Fiscal Service (COPFS) have information on Procurator Fiscal markings and how many charges are reported to courts
- The Scottish Government publish statistics on proceedings and convictions, which take place in the Scottish courts, through their [Criminal Proceedings in Scotland](#) publication.



4.2 The Scottish Crime and Justice Survey (SCJS) is a large-scale survey measuring people's experience and perceptions of crime in Scotland. The survey is conducted annually and based on a representative sample of adults (aged 16 and over), living in private households in Scotland.

The SCJS also provides results on the prevalence and nature of partner abuse in Scotland. The data on partner abuse is collected through a self-completion module of the survey. The 2014-15 survey, published in May

2016, is the fifth sweep of the SCJS to include a partner abuse questionnaire, with previous data sweeps conducted in 2008-09, 2009-10, 2010-11 and 2012-13.

It should be noted that even though the SCJS has a similar definition of domestic abuse to police recorded incidents, there are several differences that will affect the comparability of the data.

- Most incidents of domestic abuse go unreported to the police for a variety of reasons.
- The SCJS is a sample of those aged 16+ and in private households. For example adults staying in Care Homes or those aged under 16 will not be in the estimates.
- The SCJS is capturing the victim's experience of partner abuse. Although the survey is self-completion, some respondents may choose not to disclose information on particular incidents.

### Results from the 2014-15 Partner Abuse Module:



Between 2008-09 and 2014-15, the overall risk of experiencing any partner abuse in the last 12 months decreased from 4.2% to 2.9%. The risk of partner abuse in the last 12 months did not change between the 2012-13 and 2014-15 survey sweeps. A higher proportion of women than men experienced partner abuse in the last 12 months, at 3.4% and 2.4% respectively.

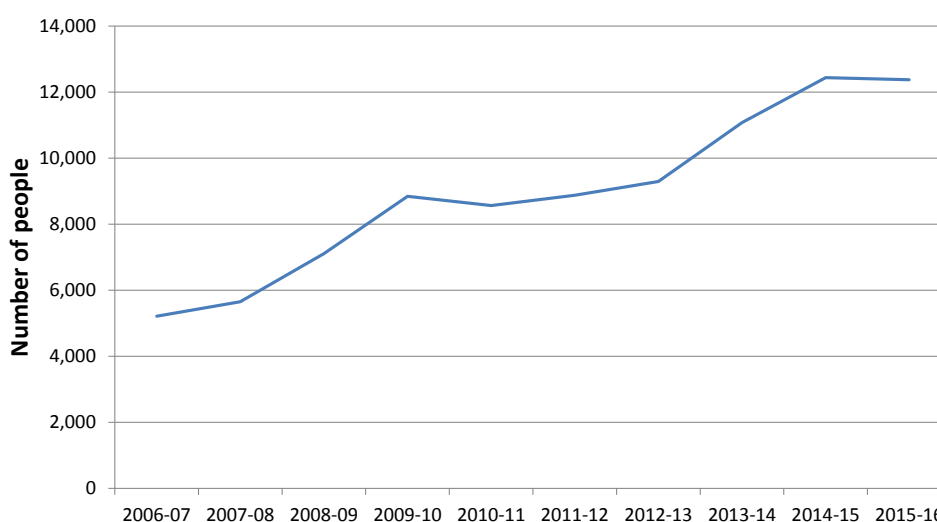
More detailed information, along with explanatory notes, is available at: <http://www.gov.scot/Topics/Statistics/Browse/Crime-Justice/crime-and-justice-survey/publications>

4.3 The **Crown Office and Procurator Fiscal Service (COPFS)** publish management information on the number of charges reported to COPFS and taken forward to the courts with a domestic abuse aggravator attached.

More detailed information, along with explanatory notes, is available at: <http://www.crownoffice.gov.uk/publications/statistics>.

4.4 The Scottish Government publishes statistics on proceedings and convictions, which take place in the Scottish courts, through their Criminal Proceedings in Scotland publication. These statistics are derived from data held on the Criminal History System (CHS), a central database used for the recording of information on persons accused and/or convicted of committing a criminal act. Aggravator codes can be recorded on the CHS to provide additional information relating to the nature of a charge – one of these aggravator flags is entitled ‘Domestic’ referring to ‘Domestic Abuse’.

**Chart 9: People convicted with a Domestic Abuse aggravator recorded against the main charge, Scotland, 2006-07 to 2015-16**



Statistics on aggravators have been revised in the 2015-16 publication and now show the number of people convicted with an aggravator recorded, based on the main charge in a proceeding. In previous years aggravator statistics related to all charges included in a proceeding and therefore the revised figures are lower than in previous publications. There were 12,374 convictions where a domestic abuse aggravator was recorded against the main charge, a decrease of 1% from 2014-15 (12,440 convictions). This represents a stabilisation following four consecutive annual increases, with the figures in 2015-16 being 44 per cent higher than in 2010-11 (8,566 convictions). The longer term increase has been driven by an increase in breach of the peace convictions, particularly offences of “threatening or abusive behaviour” or stalking.

The increase since 2010-11 may also be reflective of a strengthened emphasis on tackling domestic abuse in Scotland by both Police Scotland and the COPFS. The increase does not necessarily mean that domestic abuse is

occurring at a greater level than in previous years but may be due, in part, to increases in reporting these types of crimes and improvements in the recording of domestic abuse cases on the CHS.

More detailed information, along with explanatory notes, are available from:

<http://www.gov.scot/Topics/Statistics/Browse/Crime-Justice/PubCriminalProceedings>.

## 5. Tables

### List of Tables

Table 1: Incidents of domestic abuse recorded by the police, Scotland, 1999-00 to 2016-17

Table 2: Crimes and offences recorded by the police as part of incidents of domestic abuse where a crime or offence has been recorded, Scotland, 2016-17

Table 3: Incidents of domestic abuse recorded by the police, by local authority, 2007-08 to 2016-17

Table 4: Incidents of domestic abuse recorded by the police and whether they included a crime or offence, by local authority, 2016-17

Table 5: Rate of incidents of domestic abuse recorded by the police per 10,000 population, by local authority, 2007-08 to 2016-17

Table 6: Incidents of domestic abuse recorded by the police, by sex of victim & accused, Scotland, 2007-08 to 2016-17

Table 7: Incidents of domestic abuse recorded by the police, by relationship between victim and accused Scotland, 2016-17

Table 8: Incidents of domestic abuse recorded by the police, by age and gender of victim, Scotland, 2016-17

Table 9: Incidents of domestic abuse recorded by the police, by age and gender of accused, Scotland, 2016-17

Table 10: Incidents of domestic abuse recorded by the police, by whether the victim/accused has previous history of domestic abuse, Scotland, 2016-17

Table 11: Incidents of domestic abuse recorded by the police, by location of incident, Scotland, 2016-17

### Additional Tables

All tables and charts, including additional tables, can be accessed online via the following link:<http://www.gov.scot/Topics/Statistics/Browse/Crime-Justice/PubDomesticAbuse>

**Table 1: Incidents of domestic abuse recorded by the police, Scotland, 1999-00 to 2016-17<sup>1, 2</sup>**

	<b>Number</b>									
	<b>1999-00</b>	<b>2000-01</b>	<b>2001-02</b>	<b>2002-03</b>	<b>2003-04</b>	<b>2004-05</b>	<b>2005-06</b>	<b>2006-07</b>	<b>2007-08</b>	<b>2008-09</b>
<b>Incidents including the recording of a crime or offence</b>	14,653	13,950	13,926	15,669	21,593	21,829	23,506	23,832	25,127	29,526
Crimes	1,884	2,296	2,304	2,817	3,612	4,679	4,876	5,235	5,639	6,416
Offences	12,769	11,654	11,622	12,852	17,981	17,150	18,630	18,597	19,488	23,110
<b>Incidents not including the recording of a crime or offence</b>	18,534	21,175	21,322	20,208	19,642	21,804	21,825	25,052	24,822	24,405
<b>TOTAL INCIDENTS</b>	<b>33,187</b>	<b>35,125</b>	<b>35,248</b>	<b>35,877</b>	<b>41,235</b>	<b>43,633</b>	<b>45,331</b>	<b>48,884</b>	<b>49,949</b>	<b>53,931</b>
	<b>2009-10</b>	<b>2010-11</b>	<b>2011-12</b>	<b>2012-13</b>	<b>2013-14</b>		<b>2014-15</b>	<b>2015-16</b>	<b>2016-17</b>	
<b>Incidents including the recording of a crime or offence</b>	32,066	32,370	32,369	30,259	31,769		32,569	29,906	27,496	
Crimes	6,630	7,161	7,710	7,488	-		-	-	7,623	
Offences	25,436	25,209	24,659	22,771	-		-	-	19,873	
<b>Incidents not including the recording of a crime or offence</b>	19,860	23,328	27,478	29,821	26,670		27,313	28,198	31,314	
<b>TOTAL INCIDENTS</b>	<b>51,926</b>	<b>55,698</b>	<b>59,847</b>	<b>60,080</b>	<b>58,439</b>		<b>59,882</b>	<b>58,104</b>	<b>58,810</b>	

Please see [Notes for Tables](#) at end of Chapter 5.

**Table 2: Crimes and offences recorded by the police as part of incidents of domestic abuse (where a crime or offence has been included), Scotland, 2016-17<sup>7</sup>**

	Number & percentage	
	2016-17	
	Number	Percentage
<b>Non-sexual Crimes of Violence</b>	<b>681</b>	<b>2%</b>
Homicide	9	0%
Attempted murder & serious assault	463	1%
Robbery	61	0%
Other violence	148	0%
<b>Sexual Offences</b>	<b>796</b>	<b>2%</b>
Rape and attempted rape	465	1%
Sexual assault	209	1%
Other sexual offences	122	0%
<b>Dishonesty</b>	<b>1,067</b>	<b>3%</b>
Housebreaking	58	0%
Theft by opening lockfast places	21	0%
Theft of motor vehicle	99	0%
Shoplifting	1	0%
Other theft	798	2%
Fraud	88	0%
Other dishonesty	2	0%
<b>Fire-raising, vandalism etc.</b>	<b>2,123</b>	<b>6%</b>
Fire raising	28	0%
Vandalism, etc.	2,095	6%
<b>Other Crimes</b>	<b>3,623</b>	<b>10%</b>
Crimes against public justice	3,543	10%
Handling offensive weapons	46	0%
Other	34	0%
<b>Miscellaneous offences</b>	<b>26,687</b>	<b>76%</b>
Common assault	12,897	37%
Breach of the peace etc.	11,610	33%
Drunkenness & other disorderly conduct	2	0%
Other misc. offences	2,178	6%
<b>Motor Vehicles Offences</b>	<b>109</b>	<b>0%</b>
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>35,086</b>	<b>100%</b>

Please see [Notes for Tables](#) at end of Chapter 5.



**Table 3: Incidents of domestic abuse recorded by the police, by local authority, 2007-08 to 2016-17<sup>1</sup>**

	Number										
	2007-08	2008-09	2009-10	2010-11	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	
Aberdeen City	2,138	2,388	2,415	2,323	2,449	2,648	2,487	3,088	2,570	2,522	
Aberdeenshire	707	639	584	550	605	787	886	1,408	1,330	1,463	
Angus	852	983	947	969	1,187	1,154	1,241	1,329	1,226	1,125	
Argyll & Bute	481	517	503	521	563	536	556	643	653	634	
Clackmannanshire	629	720	707	833	792	713	782	704	698	776	
Dumfries & Galloway	1,204	1,306	1,176	1,407	1,291	1,411	1,272	1,230	1,146	1,047	
Dundee City	1,937	2,135	2,305	2,366	2,440	2,525	2,442	2,525	2,365	2,266	
East Ayrshire	1,253	1,252	1,273	1,387	1,430	1,413	1,509	1,567	1,535	1,348	
East Dunbartonshire	596	642	537	661	650	665	623	572	658	610	
East Lothian	729	926	902	970	929	1,023	1,025	1,000	903	938	
East Renfrewshire	394	382	421	481	555	551	463	535	491	518	
Edinburgh City	5,081	5,103	4,923	5,233	5,287	5,313	5,231	5,730	5,541	5,445	
Falkirk	1,885	2,107	1,862	2,019	2,080	1,997	2,014	1,951	2,142	2,162	
Fife	3,926	3,987	4,055	3,847	4,519	4,800	4,621	4,200	4,070	4,457	
Glasgow City	8,975	9,664	8,866	10,160	11,116	10,220	9,559	8,974	8,596	8,888	
Highland	995	1,006	879	1,451	1,872	2,102	2,047	2,247	2,312	2,350	
Inverclyde	918	821	640	773	951	896	811	889	812	872	
Midlothian	777	917	933	860	1,036	1,125	1,124	1,103	1,116	1,040	
Moray	561	443	389	593	694	620	377	749	730	760	
Na h-Eileanan Siar	82	94	58	102	114	94	124	145	154	152	
North Ayrshire	1,468	1,639	1,770	1,791	1,897	1,820	1,837	1,830	1,725	1,677	
North Lanarkshire	3,197	4,068	4,157	3,662	3,680	3,996	3,900	3,963	4,006	4,406	
Orkney Islands	24	21	44	107	108	95	107	114	138	102	
Perth & Kinross	880	930	956	1,060	1,162	1,236	1,351	1,529	1,221	1,180	
Renfrewshire	1,902	2,045	1,658	2,179	2,431	2,333	2,304	2,235	2,151	2,230	
Scottish Borders	592	665	808	760	801	930	864	911	915	978	
Shetland Islands	51	42	37	70	103	101	86	107	134	115	
South Ayrshire	1,147	1,105	1,208	1,245	1,265	1,292	1,253	1,296	1,126	1,010	
South Lanarkshire	2,379	2,959	2,717	2,920	3,166	3,064	3,026	3,085	3,253	3,285	
Stirling	759	782	834	850	833	790	768	785	826	818	
West Dunbartonshire	1,642	1,602	1,362	1,485	1,709	1,518	1,460	1,220	1,358	1,395	
West Lothian	1,788	2,041	2,000	2,063	2,132	2,312	2,289	2,218	2,203	2,241	
<b>SCOTLAND</b>	<b>49,949</b>	<b>53,931</b>	<b>51,926</b>	<b>55,698</b>	<b>59,847</b>	<b>60,080</b>	<b>58,439</b>	<b>59,882</b>	<b>58,104</b>	<b>58,810</b>	

Please see [Notes for Tables](#) at end of Chapter 5.

**Table 4: Incidents of domestic abuse recorded by the police and whether they included a crime or offence, by local authority, 2016-17<sup>2</sup>**

	Number & Percentage		
	2016-17		
	No of Incidents	% of Incidents including a crime or offence	% of Incidents <u>not</u> including a crime or offence
Aberdeen City	2,522	55%	45%
Aberdeenshire	1,463	54%	46%
Angus	1,125	47%	53%
Argyll & Bute	634	50%	50%
Clackmannanshire	776	44%	56%
Dumfries & Galloway	1,047	65%	35%
Dundee City	2,266	47%	53%
East Ayrshire	1,348	49%	51%
East Dunbartonshire	610	41%	59%
East Lothian	938	43%	57%
East Renfrewshire	518	44%	56%
Edinburgh City	5,445	47%	53%
Falkirk	2,162	42%	58%
Fife	4,457	49%	51%
Glasgow City	8,888	49%	51%
Highland	2,350	41%	59%
Inverclyde	872	43%	57%
Midlothian	1,040	47%	53%
Moray	760	61%	39%
Na h-Eileanan Siar	152	45%	55%
North Ayrshire	1,677	45%	55%
North Lanarkshire	4,406	40%	60%
Orkney Islands	102	50%	50%
Perth & Kinross	1,180	40%	60%
Renfrewshire	2,230	43%	57%
Scottish Borders	978	46%	54%
Shetland Islands	115	50%	50%
South Ayrshire	1,010	51%	49%
South Lanarkshire	3,285	43%	57%
Stirling	818	46%	54%
West Dunbartonshire	1,395	38%	62%
West Lothian	2,241	52%	48%
<b>SCOTLAND</b>	<b>58,810</b>	<b>47%</b>	<b>53%</b>

Please see [Notes for Tables](#) at end of Chapter 5.

**Table 5: Rate of incidents of domestic abuse recorded by the police per 10,000 population<sup>3</sup>, by local authority, 2007-08 to 2016-17<sup>1</sup>**

	Rate per 10,000 population <sup>3</sup>									
	2007-08	2008-09	2009-10	2010-11	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17
Aberdeen City	101	112	111	106	110	118	110	135	112	110
Aberdeenshire	29	26	23	22	24	31	34	54	51	56
Angus	75	86	82	84	102	99	107	114	105	97
Argyll & Bute	53	58	56	59	63	62	63	73	75	73
Clackmannanshire	124	141	138	162	154	139	152	138	136	151
Dumfries & Galloway	80	86	78	93	85	94	85	82	77	70
Dundee City	135	148	159	162	166	171	165	170	160	153
East Ayrshire	104	103	104	113	117	115	123	128	126	110
East Dunbartonshire	57	61	51	63	62	63	59	54	62	57
East Lothian	76	95	92	98	93	101	101	98	88	90
East Renfrewshire	44	43	47	53	61	61	51	58	53	55
Edinburgh City	111	111	106	111	111	110	107	116	111	107
Falkirk	124	137	121	130	133	127	128	124	135	136
Fife	109	111	112	106	124	131	126	114	111	120
Glasgow City	157	168	152	173	187	172	160	150	142	145
Highland	44	44	38	63	80	90	88	96	99	100
Inverclyde	112	100	78	95	117	111	101	111	102	110
Midlothian	97	112	114	104	124	134	133	128	128	117
Moray	61	48	42	63	74	67	40	79	76	79
Na h-Eileanan Siar	30	34	21	37	41	34	45	53	57	57
North Ayrshire	107	119	128	130	137	132	134	134	127	123
North Lanarkshire	97	122	124	109	109	118	115	117	118	130
Orkney Islands	12	10	21	50	50	44	50	53	64	47
Perth & Kinross	62	65	66	73	79	84	91	103	81	78
Renfrewshire	111	118	96	125	139	134	132	128	123	127
Scottish Borders	53	59	71	67	70	82	76	80	80	85
Shetland Islands	23	19	16	30	44	44	37	46	58	50
South Ayrshire	102	98	107	111	112	114	111	115	100	90
South Lanarkshire	77	95	87	93	101	97	96	98	103	104
Stirling	86	88	94	95	92	87	84	86	89	87
West Dunbartonshire	180	176	150	164	189	168	163	136	152	155
West Lothian	106	119	116	119	122	131	130	125	123	124
<b>SCOTLAND</b>	<b>97</b>	<b>104</b>	<b>99</b>	<b>106</b>	<b>113</b>	<b>113</b>	<b>110</b>	<b>112</b>	<b>108</b>	<b>109</b>

Please see [Notes for Tables](#) at end of Chapter 5.

**Table 6: Incidents of domestic abuse recorded by the police, by gender of victim & accused, Scotland, 2007-08 to 2016-17<sup>1, 4</sup>**

	Number & Percentage										
	2007-08	2008-09	2009-10	2010-11	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14		2014-15	2015-16	2016-17
Female victim, male accused	41,833	44,961	41,927	44,951	46,439	45,916	42,120		39,483	43,158	42,759
<i>% of total known</i>	85	84	82	81	81	80	80		79	79	79
Male victim, female accused	6,199	7,361	7,938	8,889	9,569	9,946	9,435		8,901	9,845	9,957
<i>% of total known</i>	13	14	15	16	17	17	18		18	18	18
Female victim, female accused	565	640	682	736	566	605	612		671	743	737
<i>% of total known</i>	1	1	1	1	1	1	1		1	1	1
Male victim, male accused	530	548	666	693	659	677	724		854	877	835
<i>% of total known</i>	1	1	1	1	1	1	1		2	2	2
Not recorded or other <sup>4</sup>	822	421	713	429	2,614	2,936	5,548		9,973	3,481	4,522
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>49,949</b>	<b>53,931</b>	<b>51,926</b>	<b>55,698</b>	<b>59,847</b>	<b>60,080</b>	<b>58,439</b>		<b>59,882</b>	<b>58,104</b>	<b>58,810</b>

Please see [Notes for Tables](#) at end of Chapter 5.

**Table 7: Incidents of domestic abuse recorded by the police, by relationship between victim and accused Scotland, 2016-17**

Relationship between victim and accused	Number & percentage	
	2016-17	
	Number	Percentage (where relationship known)
Spouse/Civil Partner	7,303	13%
Co-habitee	11,504	20%
Partner	12,254	22%
Ex-spouse/Civil Partner	2,192	4%
Ex-partner	22,758	40%
Other	598	1%
Unknown	2,201	-
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>58,810</b>	<b>100%</b>

**Table 8: Incidents of domestic abuse recorded by the police, by age and gender of victim, Scotland, 2016-17<sup>3, 4, 5</sup>**

Age Group of Victim	Number & Rate per 10,000 population <sup>3</sup>				Rate per 10,000 population <sup>3</sup>		
	Gender of victim			TOTAL	Female	Male	TOTAL
	Female	Male	Not recorded or other <sup>4</sup>				
Under 16	209	27	-	236	5	1	3
16-18	2,237	208	1	2,446	260	23	138
19-21	4,156	667	1	4,824	409	64	235
22-25	6,783	1,289	1	8,073	445	85	266
26-30	8,230	1,834	2	10,066	445	100	274
31-35	7,388	1,794	4	9,186	412	105	262
36-40	5,745	1,381	-	7,126	352	87	221
41-50	7,337	2,478	2	9,817	191	69	132
51-60	2,723	1,230	-	3,953	69	33	52
61 and over	877	438	-	1,315	13	8	11
Not Recorded	24	12	1,732	1,768	-	-	-
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>45,709</b>	<b>11,358</b>	<b>1,743</b>	<b>58,810</b>	<b>165</b>	<b>43</b>	<b>109</b>

Please see [Notes for Tables](#) at end of Chapter 5.

**Table 9: Incidents of domestic abuse recorded by the police, by age and gender of accused, Scotland, 2016-17<sup>3, 4, 5</sup>**

Age Group of Accused	Number & Rate per 10,000 population <sup>3</sup>				Rate per 10,000 population <sup>3</sup>		
	Gender of Accused			TOTAL	Female	Male	TOTAL
	Female	Male	Not recorded or other <sup>4</sup>				
Under 16	28	89	1	118	1	2	1
16-18	464	1,089	1	1,554	54	120	88
19-21	973	2,718	2	3,693	96	263	180
22-25	1,469	5,439	-	6,908	96	360	228
26-30	1,744	7,995	4	9,743	94	438	265
31-35	1,723	7,301	3	9,027	96	426	258
36-40	1,343	5,715	1	7,059	82	361	219
41-50	1,976	8,190	5	10,171	51	226	136
51-60	782	3,716	-	4,498	20	100	59
61 and over	204	1,290	1	1,495	3	23	12
Not Recorded	72	251	4,221	4,544	-	-	-
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>10,778</b>	<b>43,793</b>	<b>4,239</b>	<b>58,810</b>	<b>39</b>	<b>167</b>	<b>109</b>

Please see [Notes for Tables](#) at end of Chapter 5.

**Table 10: Incidents of domestic abuse recorded by the police, by whether the victim/accused has previous history of domestic abuse, Scotland, 2016-17<sup>6</sup>**

	Accused History			Number
	No Previous Incidents	Previous Incidents	Not Recorded	Total
<b>Victim's history</b>				
No Previous Incidents	21,786	2,733	1,333	25,852
Previous Incidents	2,724	27,098	1,405	31,227
Not Recorded	137	136	1,458	1,731
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>24,647</b>	<b>29,967</b>	<b>4,196</b>	<b>58,810</b>

Please see [Notes for Tables](#) at end of Chapter 5.

**Table 11: Incidents of domestic abuse recorded by the police, by location of incident, Scotland, 2016-17**

	Number & percentage	
	2016-17	%
Joint home	12,101	21%
Victim`s home	24,798	42%
Accused`s home	3,212	5%
Other dwelling	11,408	19%
Street	3,553	6%
Licensed premises	435	1%
Other	3,266	6%
Unknown	37	0%
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>58,810</b>	<b>100%</b>

Please see [Notes for Tables](#) at end of Chapter 5.

## Notes for Tables

1. Incidents earlier than 2014-15 were collated using a different system. See [Section 2.5](#) for more details.
2. Prior to the change in data collection during 2013-14 (see [Paragraph 6.3](#) in Annex 1) legacy police forces recorded domestic abuse information in different systems. Police practice in deciding when behaviour justifies the recording of a crime or offence may also differ. These differences influenced the number of incidents and the proportion of incidents which led to the recording of a crime or offence.
3. Population estimates are as at mid-year from the National Records of Scotland (NRS) (<http://www.nrscotland.gov.uk/statistics-and-data/statistics/statistics-by-theme/population/population-estimates/mid-year-population-estimates>).
4. 'Not Recorded & Other' includes both incidents gender has not been recorded and is therefore unknown (almost 100% of cases) and incidents where the victim or accused was recorded as transgender.
5. Due to data with no age and gender, rates per 10,000 population, will be lower than expected. See [Section 6.17](#) for more details of missing data.
6. A victim/accused can appear in the VPD multiple times in one reporting year. See [Section 3.10](#) in bulletin for more details on definition of repeat victims and accused.
7. More than one crime or offence may be recorded in one incident.

Additional tables can be accessed online via the following link:  
<http://www.gov.scot/Topics/Statistics/Browse/Crime-Justice/PubDomesticAbuse>



## 6. Annexes

### Annex 1: Data Sources and Definitions

#### Domestic Abuse

- 6.1 A statistical collection on domestic abuse (previously referred to as domestic violence) was introduced in 1999. The definition of domestic abuse used by Police Scotland and the Crown Office and Procurator Fiscal Service (COPFS) is:

**‘Any form of physical, sexual or mental and emotional abuse [that] might amount to criminal conduct and which takes place within the context of a relationship. The relationship will be between partners (married, cohabiting, civil partnership or otherwise) or ex-partners. The abuse can be committed in the home or elsewhere’.**

#### Data Collection:

- 6.2 The main Scottish Government Statement of Administrative Sources covers all sources of administrative data used by Scottish Government statisticians. This statement can be found on the Scottish Government website at: <http://www.gov.scot/Topics/Statistics/About/StatementAdminSources>.

A separate statement of administrative sources is available for police statistics via the following link:

<http://www.gov.scot/Topics/Statistics/Browse/Crime-Justice/AdminSourcesPolice>.

- 6.3 The creation of Police Scotland has altered the way in which domestic abuse data has been collected. Prior to 1<sup>st</sup> April 2013, each legacy force had a bespoke system to collect the data required. Between 1<sup>st</sup> April 2013 and 31<sup>st</sup> March 2014, a new VPD (Vulnerable Person Database) system was rolled out to the then 14 Police Divisions in Scotland. At this time this was referred to as the interim Vulnerable Persons Database but is now simply referred to as the Vulnerable Persons Database. From 1<sup>st</sup> April 2014 onwards, all domestic abuse data was collected through the VPD. In summary:
- 2012-13 (and previous years) – Data collected from the eight legacy force systems
  - 2013-14 – Data collected from the VPD (approx. 15%) and from legacy force systems (approx. 85%)
  - 2014-15 onwards – Data collected from the VPD

- 6.4 Due to the changes in Data Collection, tables and figures are presented with clear breaks in the time series between 2013-14 and 2014-15. As such, some caution should be exercised in interpreting the statistics on the number of incidents recorded across years.

### **Police Scotland Quarterly Management Information Reports:**

- 6.5 Police Scotland publishes management information on the number of incidents of domestic abuse recorded by the police. This is presented within their Quarterly Management Information Reports, which are available from the 'Our Performance' section of Police Scotland's website: <http://www.scotland.police.uk/about-us/our-performance/>.
- 6.6 These reports are produced to demonstrate Police Scotland's commitment to transparency (alongside other regular reporting activity to the Scottish Police Authority). The information within these reports is presented on a cumulative quarterly basis, with the first quarter of a reporting year containing 3 months of data (from April to June), the second containing 6 months of data (from April to September) etc. The reports are typically published within 2 months of the period to which they refer.
- 6.7 The Quarterly Management Information Reports make clear to users that the data they contain on incidents of domestic abuse is based on the Administrative Data available to Police Scotland at that time and not the Official Statistics. The annual Official Statistics published by the Scottish Government on domestic abuse are based on management information which has undergone further quality assurance work, including additional dialogue with Police Scotland, in line with the Code of Practice for Official Statistics.

### **Data Definitions:**

- 6.8 In one criminal incident, several crimes or offences may occur - e.g. an accused may assault their spouse and damage their car in the process. In this example, crimes of vandalism and assault would be recorded. Statistics in this bulletin either relate to the number of incidents recorded or the number of incidents with at least one crime or offence committed.
- 6.9 Incidents in this bulletin are counted against the year in which they are recorded by Police Scotland on the VPD system. Not all incidents are reported to the police immediately following their occurrence. As such each year's figures on incidents of domestic abuse will include a proportion of incidents committed in earlier years.

### **Recording Crimes & Offences:**

- 6.10 Contraventions of Scottish criminal law are divided for statistical purposes into crimes and offences. The term "crime" is generally used for the more serious criminal acts; the less serious are termed "offences". The distinction is made only for statistical reporting purposes and has no impact on how the

police investigate reports of criminal activity. The "seriousness" of the offence is generally related to the maximum sentence that can be imposed.

## **Annex 2: Quality of the Statistics**

### **Improvements to Domestic Abuse Statistics:**

6.11 The previous edition of this bulletin highlighted data collection issues that affected the range of data that could be published. More information on these issues can be found here: <http://www.gov.scot/Publications/2016/10/2442>.

Since the change of data collection, Police Scotland have been taking forward actions to improve the data, including enhancements VPD database.

6.12 As a result of this work, this bulletin (2016-17) now includes information about the relationship between victims and offenders and the crime/offences recorded as part of these incidents.

### **Reporting and Quality Assurance of Domestic Abuse Statistics:**

6.13 The statistics reported in this bulletin do not reveal the incidence of all domestic abuse committed since not all incidents are reported to the police. In conjunction with the Scottish Crime and Justice Survey (SCJS), the statistics help to assess the extent and impact of domestic abuse in Scotland. A number of reasons have been found for such under reporting. For example, victims experience fear and shame as common effects of domestic abuse. In addition, under reporting may also be caused by an accused physically preventing a victim reporting the domestic abuse.

6.14 Police Scotland and COPFS have domestic abuse as a high priority. As such, they have a Joint Protocol outlining the procedures and practices to follow when dealing with incidents of domestic abuse. The protocol can be obtained from Police Scotland website: [http://www.scotland.police.uk/assets/pdf/keep\\_safe/175573?view=Standard](http://www.scotland.police.uk/assets/pdf/keep_safe/175573?view=Standard).

6.15 The data provided by Police Scotland go through a process of quality assurance in which data received are checked against previous years and comparable sources. Anything unusual or which we feel requires further explanation is then fed back to Police Scotland for their attention. Any amendments are carried out and the final data is used to produce a set of data tables which can be used to check the final dataset.

6.16 During the quality assurance checking process, it is possible for errors to be found in data for previous years. While we do not routinely revise figures, we are committed to correcting errors in the data and providing suitable explanations for any changes made to previously published data.

- 6.17 Whilst Police Scotland record complete information for all incidents, there is some challenge in retrieving and linking the captured information to meet the full data requirements for this publication. As a result some values for certain variables are marked 'missing'.
- 6.18 The statistics provided in this data return over the years have highlighted the different ways in which police legacy forces recorded information. In particular, police practice in deciding when the behaviour justifies the recording of a crime or offence may differ. For example, some legacy forces had ruled that no crime or offence should be recorded if no further action was taken e.g. because the victim did not wish any action to be taken. Other forces may have recorded this as a crime or offence.
- 6.19 With all Police Divisions now using the same VPD system to record incidents of Domestic Abuse and following the same Police Scotland guidance, inconsistencies in approach may minimise over time.

### **Changes in Methodology**

- 6.20 2009-10 was the first year in which data was submitted based on the date the incident was recorded. Prior to this, data was returned based on the number of incidents which occurred during that time period. As historic data has never been revised in this publication series, any incidents which occurred in a different time period to the date in which the incident was recorded will have been excluded from the returns.

For example, if an incident occurred during 2007-08 but was recorded during 2008-09, it would have been excluded from 2008-09 (since the date committed is not in the relevant time period), but it would also have been missed out of the 2007-08 data as the submitted data would not have been updated. Hence, the incident would not be reported in the statistics in this publication series and hence contributed to an underestimate. Although this publication series has never revised this information, some legacy forces may have updated their own collections and prepared refreshed data in response to bespoke requests.

- 6.21 The number of incidents in the bulletins from 2009-10 onwards, is based on the date the incident was recorded. This should give a better reflection of police activity relating to incidents of domestic abuse. By reporting on the date the incidents were committed, we get a snapshot account of the number of incidents of domestic abuse occurring within a particular period. However, by analysing the data based on the date recorded, we can see the trend in reporting incidents of domestic abuse to the police. Hence, if there was an increase in the number of victims who report incidents of domestic abuse to the police some time after they occurred, this should be reflected in the statistics.

## Legislation

6.22 There have been no major legislative changes throughout 2016-17 which impact on the comparability of the statistics.

6.23 As well as common law, some of the main legislation applicable to domestic abuse is as follows:

- [Family Law \(Scotland\) Act 2006](#) (Section 31 of this Act introduced the concept of “domestic interdicts” into the 1981 Act, which applies to unmarried cohabitants (either opposite-sex or same-sex). Domestic interdicts have much the same effect in relation to cohabitants as matrimonial interdicts have for married couples as is defined in section 10 of this Act, which amends section 14 of the 1981 Act to extend the scope of matrimonial interdicts to include not only a matrimonial home, but also any other home owned by the applicant, the applicant’s place of work and the school attended by any child in the applicant’s care)
- [Protection from Abuse \(Scotland\) Act 2001](#)
- [Crime and Disorder Act 1998](#)
- [Protection from Harassment Act 1997](#)
- [Family Law Act 1996](#)
- [Matrimonial Homes \(Family Protection\) \(Scotland\) Act 1981](#)

## Mid-year Population Estimates

6.24 The mid-year estimates used in this publication to calculate the rates per 10,000 population were obtained from the National Records of Scotland (NRS). Further information about these estimates can be found on the NRS website:

<http://www.nrscotland.gov.uk/statistics-and-data/statistics/statistics-by-theme/population>.

## **Annex 3: Auditing of Data by Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary in Scotland (HMICS)**

### **HMICS Crime Audit 2013**

- 6.25 Following the creation of Police Scotland in April 2013, HMICS carried out a review of incident and crime recording for a number of crime types including crimes with a domestic abuse aggravation flag. HMICS sampled a number of records across the then 14 divisions in Police Scotland to establish the accuracy of the reporting and to assess compliance with the Scottish Crime Recording Standard (SCRS). The review involved qualitative research with a range of people involved in the crime recording process, including interviews and focus groups with officers and staff. Thirty incidents in each of the 14 divisions were sampled. The sample size was not large as it was only intended to serve as an indicator of recording practice across Scotland.
- 6.26 Compliance rates varied across division and crime type; however crimes with a domestic abuse flag achieved a high compliance rate of 99%. The report states: “the compliance rate for Domestic Abuse incidents (99%) illustrates what can be achieved when a focussed and robust approach is taken to attending, investigating and recording a particular crime type”.
- 6.27 The full report, including key findings, recommendations and improvement actions, can be accessed from the HMICS website:  
<https://www.hmics.scot/publications/review-incident-and-crime-recording>
- 6.28 It should be noted that the audit was carried out before the implementation of the VPD to all Police Divisions. However the audit does imply that the front line officers and call handlers were well trained and knowledgeable when it came to recording domestic abuse issues, and that users of domestic abuse statistics can have reasonable confidence that crimes associated with domestic abuse are being recorded correctly.
- 6.29 It should also be noted that as the audit is based on a sample survey of incident and crime records (rather than all records), the true value may differ slightly from the results in the audit. This is because sampling in this way is always subject to a range of quantifiable and non-quantifiable error.

## Annex 4: Comparisons with England & Wales and Northern Ireland

### England & Wales

- 6.30 In England and Wales, domestic violence (abuse) data is not comparable with Scotland's statistics on domestic abuse due to differences in definition. The definition of domestic violence in England and Wales is:

'Any incident or pattern of incidents of controlling, coercive, 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'

More details of the definition can be accessed here:

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/domestic-violence-and-abuse>

The definition used by Police Scotland does not include family members, with the data collected only including domestic abuse between partners (married, cohabiting, civil partnership or otherwise) or ex-partners. The definition used by Police Scotland also has no age restrictions upon it.

- 6.31 Differences in legislation and common law also have to be taken into account when comparing the crime statistics for England & Wales and Scotland.
- 6.32 Domestic violence statistics are published by the Office for National Statistics (ONS) and the Home Office and included in Crime Statistics bulletins. The latest Crime Statistics for England & Wales can be accessed from the following link:  
<http://www.ons.gov.uk/ons/rel/crime-stats/crime-statistics/index.html>.

## Northern Ireland

- 6.33 Similar to the issues above with England & Wales, statistics on domestic violence (abuse) in Northern Ireland are not directly comparable. The definition of domestic violence in Northern Ireland is:

The Police Service of Northern Ireland has adopted the definition of domestic abuse as outlined in the Northern Ireland Government Strategy 'Stopping Domestic and Sexual Violence and Abuse in Northern Ireland' as:

'an incident of threatening, controlling, coercive behaviour, violence or abuse (psychological, virtual, physical, verbal, sexual, financial or emotional) inflicted on anyone (irrespective of age, ethnicity, religion, gender, gender identity, sexual orientation or any form of disability) by a current or former partner or family member'.

The following will assist in the application of this definition:

- (a) '**Incident**' means an incident anywhere and not confined to the home of one of the partners/family members;
- (b) '**Family members**' include mother, father, son, daughter, brother, sister, grandparents, whether directly or indirectly related, in-laws or stepfamily.
- (c) '**Intimate partners**' means there must have been a relationship with a degree of continuity and stability. The relationship must also have had (or reasonably supposed to have had) a sexual aspect, such as in the relationship between husband and wife or between others generally recognised as a couple including same sex couples.

Again the main difference between the definitions is that the definition used by Police Scotland does not include family members, with the data collected only including domestic abuse between partners (married, cohabiting, civil partnership or otherwise) or ex-partners.

- 6.34 Statistics from the Police Service of Northern Ireland can be accessed here: <https://www.psni.police.uk/inside-psni/Statistics/domestic-abuse-statistics/>



## Annex 5: Stakeholder Consultations & Users of the Statistics

- 6.35 These statistics are used by a large number of stakeholders within central government, the police and other public bodies for a variety of purposes.
- 6.36 Domestic abuse statistics are also used by a variety of external stakeholders, including:
- Victim support groups
  - National and local journalism;
  - Academics; and
  - Students and school pupils writing dissertations and carrying out projects.
- 6.37 From April-June 2015, Justice Analytical Services conducted a consultation of stakeholders and users of the suite of publications based on returns from Police Scotland, which includes incidents of 'Domestic Abuse Recorded by the Police in Scotland' statistical bulletin series. The main objectives of this consultation were to: understand who the users are, what their requirements for data are and the benefits of any new suggested structure and content; guide the future strategy for how, when and what we publish regarding police data; and identify improvements that will ease and increase the use of police data in the future.

A report on the results of the consultation can be found at the link below:  
<http://www.gov.scot/Topics/Statistics/Browse/Crime-Justice/scotstatcrime/StakeCon/RCUC2015>.

- 6.38 This consultation builds on previous and ongoing engagement around crime statistics, details of which can be found at:  
<http://www.gov.scot/Topics/Statistics/Browse/Crime-Justice/scotstatcrime/StakeCon>.
- 6.39 Official statistics are a tool used in decision making both inside and outside government, and for this tool to be effective it must be designed to meet the needs of users. We always welcome feedback on the content and the uses made of our statistical bulletins and users are invited to submit their comments and any suggestions for improvement to:  
[justiceanalysts@gov.scot](mailto:justiceanalysts@gov.scot).

If you would like to be kept informed about developments in crime statistics, we suggest registering with ScotStat:  
<http://www.gov.scot/Topics/Statistics/scotstat>.

## Annex 6: Other Notes

- 6.40 Under the Code of Practice for Official Statistics, the estimated costs of responding to statistical surveys and data collection are to be published.

The estimated cost of compliance for supplying and validating the data for the 2016-17 bulletin was £2,200.

- 6.41 Justice Analytical Services publishes a work plan each year detailing the programme of work planned over the current financial year period. The work of the division covers both an agreed forward programme of analytical priorities, and routine analytical work particularly related to the compilation of National and Official Statistics, ongoing project management and knowledge transfer activity.

Analytical planning to develop a programme for the financial year 2017-18 followed a structured process of engagement with policy colleagues which was designed to closely align our analysis with current policy priorities and to the delivery of outcomes. The work plan is available via the following link: <http://www.gov.scot/Topics/Statistics/Browse/Crime-Justice/JAS-Programme-2017-18>.

- 6.42 Only a limited selection of tables can be included in any statistical bulletin. Further analysis of domestic abuse statistics can be supplied on request subject to Disclosure Control. In certain cases a fee is charged. For details of what can be provided, please contact [justiceanalysts@gov.scot](mailto:justiceanalysts@gov.scot).

## **An Official Statistics publication for Scotland**

Official and National Statistics are produced to high professional standards set out in the Code of Practice for Official Statistics. Both undergo regular quality assurance reviews to ensure that they meet customer needs and are produced free from any political interference.

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e-mail: [statistics.enquiries@gov.scot](mailto:statistics.enquiries@gov.scot)

### **How to access background or source data**

The data collected for this statistical bulletin:

- are available in more detail through Scottish Neighbourhood Statistics
- some limited additional information may be made available on request, subject to consideration of legal and ethical factors. Please contact [statistics.enquiries@gov.scot](mailto:statistics.enquiries@gov.scot) for further information.
- detailed information cannot be made available by Scottish Government for further analysis as Scottish Government is not the data controller.

### **Complaints and suggestions**

If you are not satisfied with our service or have any comments or suggestions, please write to the Chief Statistician, 3WR, St Andrews House, Edinburgh, EH1 3DG, Telephone: (0131) 244 0302, e-mail [statistics.enquiries@gov.scot](mailto:statistics.enquiries@gov.scot).

If you would like to be consulted about statistical collections or receive notification of publications, please register your interest at [www.gov.scot/scotstat](http://www.gov.scot/scotstat)  
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