

Scottish Crime and Justice Survey 2021/22: Main Findings



A National Statistics publication for Scotland

CRIME AND JUSTICE

Contents

Scottish Crime and Justice Survey 2021/22: Main findings	7
Introduction	7
An Accredited National Statistics Publication for Scotland.....	7
Executive summary	8
How did the SCJS adapt to the COVID-19 pandemic?	8
What does the survey tell us about trends in overall crime?	8
What does the survey tell us about violent crime?	10
What does the survey tell us about property crime?	11
What does the survey tell us about perceptions of the police?	12
What does the survey tell us about perceptions of the justice system?	13
What does the survey tell us about perceptions of crime and safety?.....	13
How does the SCJS findings compare to other sources of information?	14
What other information is included in this report?.....	14
1. Background to the Scottish Crime and Justice Survey	15
What is the SCJS and what purpose does it serve?	15
What do I need to know when reading this report?	15
Who is included and what does the SCJS cover?	16
How is the survey delivered?.....	18
How reliable are SCJS results?	19
What findings are included in this report and where can I access additional results?	20
How can I find out more about the SCJS?	21
Acknowledgements	22
2. Impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on the SCJS	23
Response to the COVID-19 pandemic	23
Resumption of interviewing and changes to the survey design	23
Summary of comparability analysis.....	24
Implications for quality and designation of latest SCJS findings	25
Limitations on the self-completion data	25
3. Overview of crime in Scotland	27
Crime groups measured by the Scottish Crime and Justice Survey	27
What was the estimated volume of crime in Scotland in 2021/22?	27
What was the prevalence of victimisation in Scotland in 2021/22?	29

What type of crime was experienced in Scotland in 2021/22?	31
How did the likelihood of experiencing crime in 2021/22 vary across the population?	32
What can the SCJS tell us about multiple victimisation?	34
What proportion of adults experienced multiple victimisation in Scotland in 2021/22?	34
What proportion of crime was reported to the police in 2021/22?	36
How did the likelihood of experiencing crime in Scotland compare to England and Wales?	38
4. Focus on violent crime	40
What was the extent and prevalence of violent crime in Scotland in 2021/22? ..	40
What types of violent crime were most commonly experienced in 2021/22?	44
Expanding the evidence on violent crime.....	46
How did experiences of violent crime vary across the population?	47
What can the SCJS tell us about repeat victimisation?	51
Expanding the evidence on repeat violent victimisation	53
What were the characteristics of violent crime?	54
What do we know about perpetrators of violent crime?	56
What do we know about the role of alcohol, drugs and weapons in violent crime?	58
What was the impact of violent crime?	60
What proportion of violent crime was reported to the police?	61
What consequences did victims believe offenders should have faced?	62
5. Focus on property crime.....	63
What was the extent and prevalence of property crime in 2021/22?	63
What is the proportion of adults experiencing property crime?	65
What types of property crime were most commonly experienced?	66
How did experiences of property crime vary across the population?	69
What can the SCJS tell us about repeat victimisation?	71
What do we know about the characteristics of property crime?	73
What do we know about the perpetrators of property crime?	74
What was the impact of property crime?	75
What proportion of property crime was reported to the police?	76
What consequences did victims believe property crime offenders should have faced?	77
6. Bringing together crime statistics	79

Why are there two sources of crime statistics?	79
What are the trends in comparable SCJS and police recorded crime?	80
Acquisitive crime	82
Violent crime.....	83
Vandalism	83
Comparing police recorded crime against volume of SCJS crime estimated to have been reported to the police	84
7. Public perceptions of police and the justice system	86
Perceptions of the police.....	86
Results at Police Division level and other geographies.....	86
Understanding and measuring confidence in the police.....	87
What did the public think about the overall performance of the police?	87
How confident were people in the ability of the police?.....	89
Did the public feel the police conducted their work fairly and were engaged with their community?	91
New questions on perceptions of the police	93
How did perceptions of the police vary amongst the population?.....	94
How did perceptions of the police vary by age?	97
How did perceptions of the police vary by rurality and sex?	97
How did perceptions of the police varied over time?	97
What did the public think about the level of police presence locally?	99
How satisfied were people with their interactions with the police?	102
Other surveys on public attitudes to policing	102
Selected publications on factors that drive public confidence in the police	103
What did the public think about the criminal justice system in Scotland?.....	104
How did views of the criminal justice system vary across the population?.....	106
How did the public view the prison system?	106
How did the public view community sentences?	108
Attitudes to Police Scotland	109
8. Public perceptions of crime and safety	110
How did the public think the level of crime in their local area had changed in recent years?.....	110
How did views on local and national crime trends differ in 2021/22?	112
How safe did the public feel in 2021/22?	115
Using feelings of safety as an analytical variable	119
How common were specific crimes believed to be?	119

How concerned were the public about crime?	121
How did perceptions of crime vary amongst the population?	124
How did perceptions of crime vary by age and sex?	124
How did perceptions of crime vary by victim status?	127
How did perceptions of crime vary by deprivation and rurality?	128
Wider perceptions of safety	131
How were people affected by their concerns about crime?	132
What steps did people take to reduce their chances of experiencing crime? ...	133
What did people think about their local community and the collective effort to prevent crime in their neighbourhood?	135
How would people respond to witnessing crime?	136
9. SCJS topical reports	137
9.1. Cyber crime in Scotland	138
What is cyber crime?	138
How did the 2021/22 SCJS collect data about cyber crime in Scotland?	138
Cyber fraud and computer misuse questions	139
Fraud and computer misuse	140
How common were experiences of cyber fraud or computer misuse in 2021/22?	141
Which types of cyber fraud and computer misuse were most common?	142
How did experiences of cyber fraud and computer misuse vary amongst the population?	142
What impact did cyber fraud and computer misuse have on victims, and how did these experiences affect their online behaviours?	143
Did victims report cyber fraud and computer misuse and which authorities were the crimes reported to?	148
Why did most victims of cyber fraud and computer misuse not report the incident to the police?	149
What else can the SCJS tell us about fraud in 2021/22?	149
What can the 2021/22 SCJS tell us about concerns about fraud?	150
To what extent did property and violent crimes have a cyber element in 2021/22?	153
Cyber elements in stalking and harassment	153
To what extent were people insulted or harassed online in 2021/22?	154
Widening the focus: How does wider analytical work complement the evidence provided by the SCJS on cyber crime?	154
Computer misuse and fraud in the Crime Survey for England and Wales	154

Police recorded cyber crime	155
9.2. Focus on harassment and discrimination.....	157
How common were experiences of harassment in Scotland in 2021/22?	157
What can the SCJS tell us about the nature of harassment?	157
9.3. Focus on Crown Office and Procurator Fiscal Service	160
Did the public report knowing about the Crown Office and Procurator Fiscal Service?	160
Have people had contact with COPFS and, if so, how satisfied were they with the way COPFS dealt with them?	161
9.4. Focus on civil law	163
How common were experiences of civil law problems?	163
How long had problems lasted and what steps did people report having taken to resolve matters?	165
9.5: Focus on veterans	166
Prevalence of veterans in the latest SCJS findings	166
Making comparisons between the veteran and non-veteran population	168
Rate of victimisation amongst veterans	168
National Performance Framework indicators	169
Feelings of safety	169
Perception of crime in their local area	170
Fear of crime	171
Summary	172
Annex A: Data tables	173
Overview	173
Notes.....	174
Annex B: Overview of police recorded crime and SCJS	175
Annex C: 2021/22 questionnaire structure	177
Annex D: Changes to the survey for 2023/24.....	178
Introduction	178
Development of a new fraud and computer misuse victim form	178
Development of a new partner abuse module	179
Improvements made to questions relating to Violence Against Women and Girls (VAWG)	179
Questions removed or rotated out of the survey.....	180
Annex E: Interpreting charts, tables, and figures in this report.....	182

What do I need to know to help me understand the charts and tables in this report?	182
Charts	182
Tables	183
Tell us what you think.....	185
Comments and suggestions	185
Feedback survey	185
Enquiries.....	185
Join our mailing list.....	185
Future publications.....	185
Cover Information	186

Scottish Crime and Justice Survey 2021/22: Main findings

Introduction

This publication presents a summary of findings from the latest Scottish Crime and Justice Survey (SCJS), based on interviews conducted between November 2021 and December 2022. For ease of reference, this period will be referred to as 2021/22 within this report.

These findings are based on a survey of around 5,520 adults (aged 16 or over) living in private households in Scotland. The survey asks respondents about their experiences and perceptions of crime and the justice system.

An Accredited National Statistics Publication for Scotland

These statistics are [accredited official statistics](#). The Office for Statistics Regulation has independently reviewed and accredited these statistics as complying with the standards of trustworthiness, quality, and value in the [Code of Practice for Statistics](#).

These statistics were designated as National Statistics in March 2018, more information on this can be found on the [Office for Statistics Regulation](#) website.

Accredited official statistics are called National Statistics in the [Statistics and Registration Service Act 2007](#).



Scottish Government statistics are regulated by the Office for Statistics Regulation (OSR). OSR sets the standards of trustworthiness, quality and value in the [Code of Practice for Statistics](#) that all producers of official statistics should adhere to.

Executive summary

The 2021/22 Scottish Crime and Justice survey shows that the overall level of crime and the likelihood of being a victim of crime has fallen over the last 15 years or so. The latest findings also show that people feel safer in their local communities though there has been a fall in confidence in the police across a range of measures.

How did the SCJS adapt to the COVID-19 pandemic?

In order to help prevent the spread of COVID-19, the Scottish Government suspended face-to-face interviewing for the SCJS and the other household surveys on 17th March 2020. As a result, no interviews took place in the 2020/21 survey year. Interviewing restarted in November 2021 and was completed in December 2022, initially using a 'knock-to-nudge' approach with in-home, face-to-face, interviewing resuming in April 2022, when restrictions allowed.

More information on how the survey was adapted during the pandemic and how the latest findings compare with previous years can be found in [Chapter 2](#).

What does the survey tell us about trends in overall crime?

The survey finds the volume of crime in Scotland, including incidents not reported to the police, has fallen by 53% over the last 15 years or so – from an estimated 1,045,000 incidents in 2008/09 to 494,000 in 2021/22.

494,000 crimes were experienced by adults in 2021/22	↓ 53% decrease in crime volume since 2008/09	10% of adults experienced crime in 2021/22	↓ 10.4 percentage point decrease in adults experiencing since 2008/09
--	--	--	---

The survey estimates that the number of incidents experienced in 2021/22 was lower than those reported in any year between 2008/09 and 2017/18. However, it indicates no change compared to the subsequent years (2018/19 and 2019/20).

Most adults (90%) were not victims of any crime in 2021/22 and victimisation has become less common over the last 15 years or so – the proportion of adults experiencing crime decreased from one-in-five (20.4%) to one-in-ten (10%) between 2008/09 and this latest year (2021/22). Since the last SCJS (2019/20), the proportion of adults experiencing crime has fallen from 11.9% to the lowest level since the SCJS began in its current form in 2008/09.

Despite the large reduction in overall crime in Scotland, victimisation rates continued to vary among the population in 2021/22. For example, the likelihood of experiencing any crime was higher among those living in the 15% most deprived areas and urban areas of Scotland, and lowest for those aged 60 and over.

Higher victimisation rates are seen for:

Younger people

15.4% for 16-24

Disabled people

12.9% for disabled people

Deprived areas

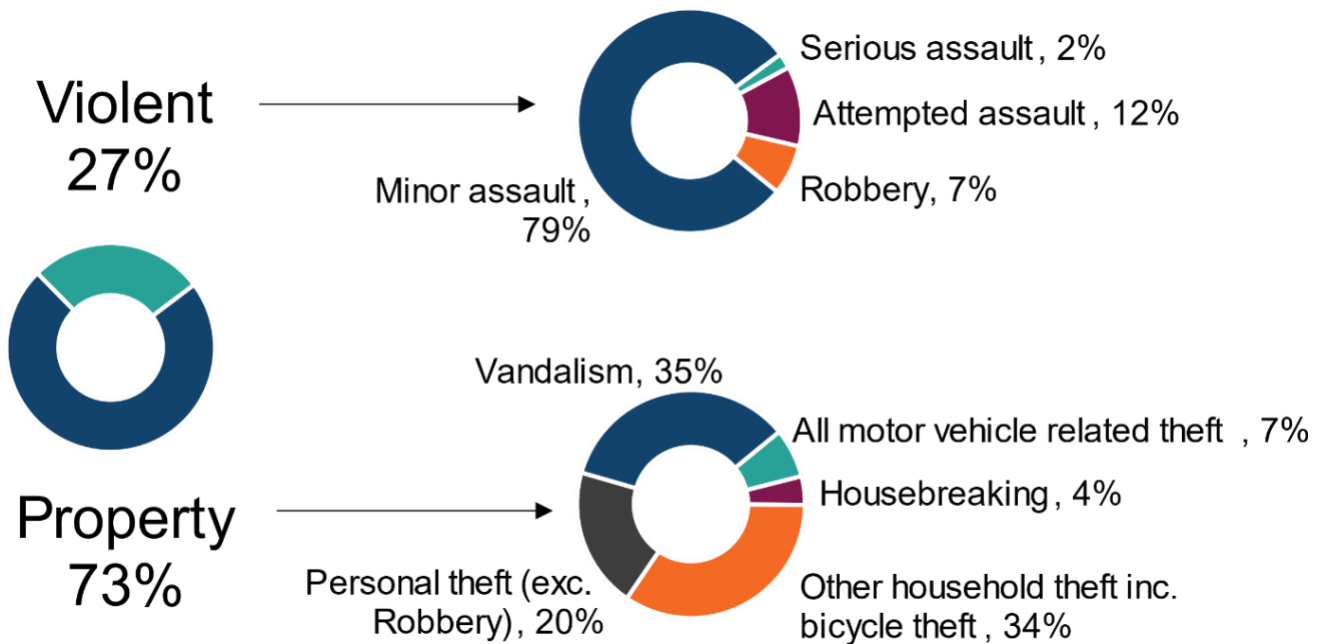
13.7% for those in 15% most deprived areas

Urban areas

10.8% for those in urban areas

As in previous years, crime was concentrated among victims of multiple victimisation – 3% of adults were victims of two or more incidents and this group experienced around three fifths (59%) of all crime in the year.

As in previous years, violent crime (accounting for 27% of all crime) was less common than property crime (73%), with the long-term decrease in overall crime underpinned by large falls in both categories.



The SCJS estimates that the police became aware of 29% of crime in 2021/22, which was lower than 38% in 2008/09 and 40% in 2019/20. However, when examining categories of crime which are comparable across the SCJS and police recorded crime statistics, both show a long-term decrease in the level of crime experienced in Scotland.

More information on overall crime in Scotland is provided in [Chapter 3](#).

What does the survey tell us about violent crime?

The volume of violent crime has fallen by nearly three-fifths since 2008/09 (down by 58%). Since 2016/17, the volume of violent crime has fallen by 42% with more stability seen in recent years, suggesting that the volume of violent crime in Scotland has continued on a downward trend over the last fifteen years or so.

The proportion of adults experiencing violence has fallen from 4.1% in 2008/09 to 1.7% in 2021/22. This suggests that violent victimisation in Scotland has remained relatively uncommon since 2008/09, and has become an even less prevalent experience over the last 15 years or so.

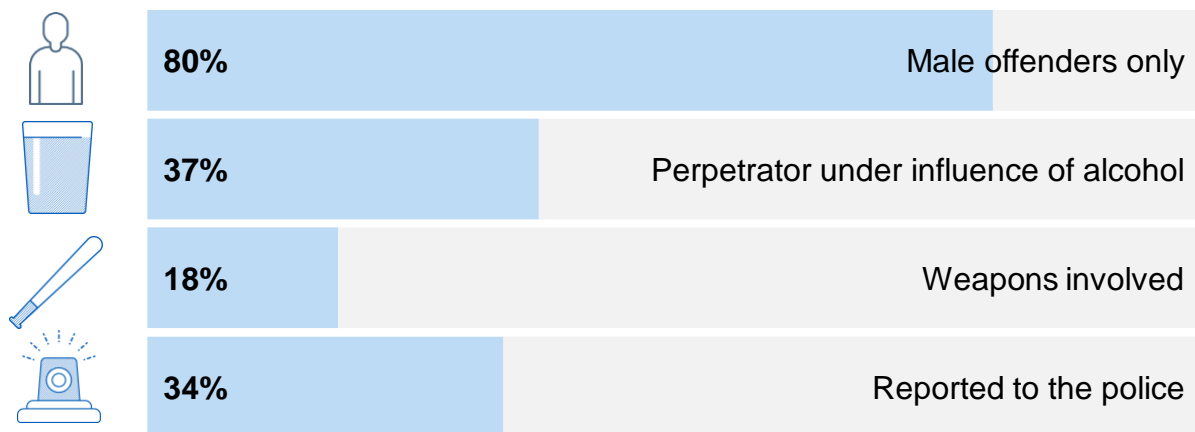
134,000 violent crimes were experienced by adults in 2021/22	↓ 58% decrease in violent crimes since 2008/09	1.7% of adults experienced violent crime in 2021/22	↓ 2.4 percentage point decrease in adults experiencing violent crime since 2008/09
---	--	--	---

Consistent with previous years, the majority of violent incidents were cases of minor assault resulting in no or negligible injury (69%), with instances of serious assault (2%) and robbery (7%) remaining relatively uncommon.

Unlike in previous years, no difference was found in the likelihood of experiencing violent crime by sex, disability, whether the respondent lived in a rural or urban area or between those living in the 15% most deprived areas and the rest of Scotland. However, similar to 2019/20, the likelihood of experiencing violence in 2021/22 was lowest for those aged 60 and over compared to other age groups.

The concentration of violent crime among repeat victims (those experiencing two or more violent crimes) was particularly pronounced. Whilst less than one-in-every-hundred adults (0.6%) was a repeat victim, their experiences of violence accounted for almost two-thirds (63%) of violent crime in 2021/22.

Consistent with previous years, the 2021/22 results show that most violent crimes involved offenders who were male, under the age of 40 and known (or previously seen) by the victim. Offenders being under the influence of alcohol or drugs was lower than 15 years ago, 46% in 2021/22 compared to 68% in 2008/09, but unchanged since 2019/20. Of violent incidents which involved someone seeing or hearing what was going on (i.e. the victim themselves or another witness, which was the case in 97% of incidents), 18% were said to have involved perpetrators with weapons, unchanged from 2010/11 and from 2019/20.



More information on violent crime in Scotland is provided in [Chapter 4](#).

What does the survey tell us about property crime?

The proportion of adults experiencing property crime has fallen from 18.0% in 2008/09 to 8.7% in 2021/22, with the estimated number of incidents occurring down by 51% over the same period. Both the volume of property crime and victimisation rate have shown stability since the 2019/20 survey.

360,000 property crimes were experienced by adults in 2021/22	↓ 51% decrease in property crimes since 2008/09.	8.7% of adults experienced property crime in 2021/22	↓ 9.3 percentage point decrease in adults experiencing property crime since 2008/09
---	--	--	--

Vandalism continued to be the most common form of property crime experienced in Scotland (accounting for 35% of incidents) but has more than halved in volume since 2008/09. Other household theft (including bicycle theft) (34%) and personal theft (20%) were the next largest categories.

Similar to overall crime victimisation rates, experiences of property crime in 2021/22 were more common among people living in the 15% most deprived areas and urban locations, as well as disabled people, whilst people aged 60 and over were least likely to be victims. The 2021/22 SCJS found no difference in the likelihood of experiencing property crime by gender.

Higher victimisation rates for property crime are seen for:

Younger people

13.5% for 16-24

Disabled people

11.3% for disabled people

Deprived areas

11.3% for those in 15% most deprived areas

Urban areas

9.4% for those in urban areas

More information on property crime in Scotland is provided in [Chapter 5](#).

What does the survey tell us about perceptions of the police?

Nearly half of adults (49%) said the police in their local area do an excellent or good job. This is a decrease from 61% in 2012/13 and from 55% in 2019/20. Victims of crime and those living in the 15% most deprived areas of Scotland were less likely to feel positively about the police than comparator groups.



For police in local area:

49%

Thought they were doing an 'excellent' or 'good' job

↓ **Decrease**
from 55% in 2019/20

Victims (40%) and people living in deprived areas (43%) were less likely to agree

The survey also looks at attitudes towards, and experiences of, more specific elements of policing (including policing effectiveness, community engagement and fairness). A majority of adults were confident in the ability of the local police for most aspects of police 'effectiveness' covered in the survey such as dealing with incidents as they occur and solving crime. An exception was in preventing crime where 46% of adults were confident in the police. These measures of confidence in police effectiveness decreased from a high in 2014/15.

Measures of police community engagement and fairness were less positive than effectiveness measures and, in line with those, they have also seen reductions in recent years.

The proportion of adults aware of the police regularly patrolling their area has fallen from 56% in 2012/13 to 39% in 2021/22 but is unchanged from 2019/20.

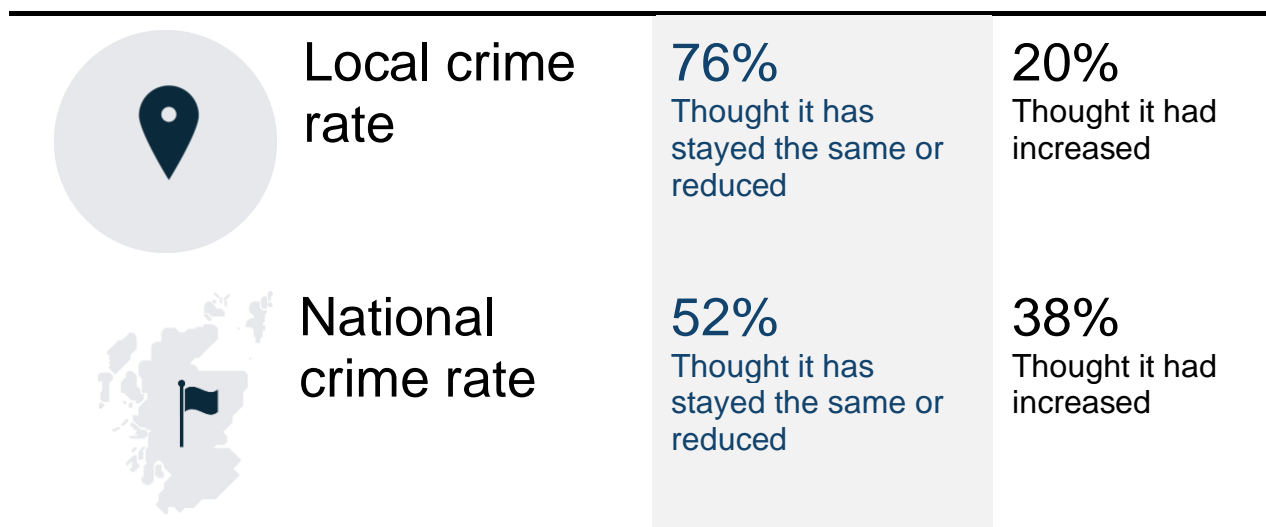
What does the survey tell us about perceptions of the justice system?

Consistent with previous years, the majority of adults knew little about the criminal justice system but were fairly confident about its operation. For example, around three-quarters of adults were confident that the system allows all those accused of crimes to get a fair trial and that everyone is able to access the justice system if they need it (76% and 74%, respectively). However, adults were less confident on other measures, for example, less than half (41%) were confident about the efficiency of the system and that appropriate sentences are given which fit the crime (40% confident).

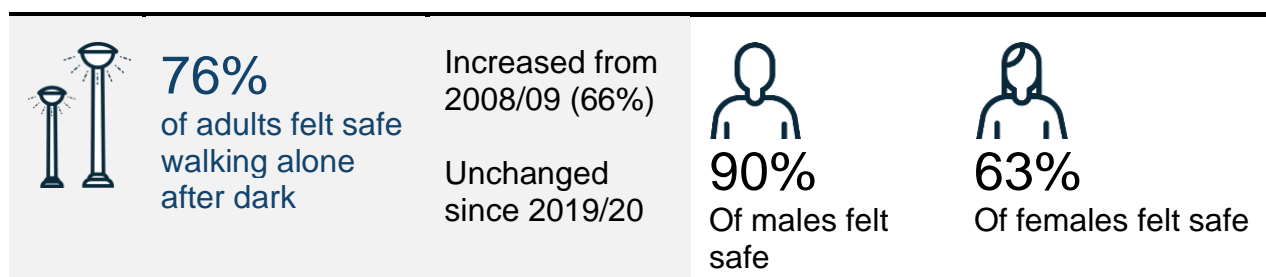
More information on public perceptions of the police and the justice system is provided in [Chapter 7](#).

What does the survey tell us about perceptions of crime and safety?

Three-quarters (76%) of respondents thought that the local crime rate had stayed the same or reduced in the two years prior to interview, up from 73% in 2019/20 and 69% in 2008/09. A majority of people (52%) now think the national crime rate has decreased or stayed the same, up from 45% in 2019/20 and 40% in 2009/10.



People were more likely to feel safe in their communities than they were 15 or so years ago – the proportions reporting feeling safe when walking alone in their local area or on their own at home during the night were higher in 2021/22 than in 2008/09, but are unchanged in the last few years.



Despite general improvements in perceptions of crime and feelings of safety since 2008/09, differences remain in the population. For example, females, disabled people, people living in the 15% most deprived areas, those living in urban areas, and victims of crime were less likely to feel safe, more likely to be worried about specific types of crime, and more likely to think they would experience crime in the coming year.

More information on public perceptions of crime and safety is detailed in [Chapter 8](#).

How does the SCJS findings compare to other sources of information?

In 2021/22, the proportion of adults in Scotland estimated to have experienced crime was similar to that in England and Wales (10.0% compared to 10.4%). Since 2008/09, crimes recorded by the police in Scotland fell by 46% while the estimate of comparable SCJS crimes fell by 61%.

More information on comparisons with the Crime Survey for England and Wales and Recorded Crime in Scotland can be found in [Chapter 3](#) and [Chapter 6](#) respectively.

What other information is included in this report?

[Chapter 9](#) of this report details findings from questions on experiences of cyber crime, harassment and discrimination, awareness and contact with the Crown Office and Procurator Fiscal Service (COPFS) and experiences of civil law problems. This chapter also details, for the first time, findings from a new question on veteran status of respondents including their demographics, victimisation rates and responses to key indicators and how these compare to the non-veteran population.

1. Background to the Scottish Crime and Justice Survey

What is the SCJS and what purpose does it serve?

The Scottish Crime and Justice Survey (SCJS) is a large-scale social survey which asks people about their experiences and perceptions of crime. The survey is conducted in person, within the respondents' homes. Sections addressing sensitive topics are filled out by the respondents themselves, using the interviewer's laptop or tablet as part of the primary interview session.

This report presents the results for the tenth SCJS, with interviews conducted between November 2021 and December 2022. The 2021/22 survey is based on around 5,600 face-to-face interviews with adults (aged 16 or over) living in private households in Scotland.

The main aims of the SCJS are to:

- enable people in Scotland to tell us about their experiences of, and attitudes to, a range of issues related to crime, policing and the justice system; including crime not reported to the police
- provide a valid and reliable measure of adults' experience of crime, including services provided to victims of crime
- examine trends over time in the number and nature of crimes in Scotland, providing a complementary measure of crime to police recorded crime statistics
- examine the varying risk and characteristics of crime for different groups of adults in the population

Findings from crime surveys in Scotland have been used by policy makers across the public sector, academia and third sector to help understand the nature of crime in Scotland, target resources and monitor the impact of initiatives since the 1980s. The results of this survey provide evidence to inform progress against the Scottish Government's [National Performance Framework](#) (NPF)¹ and a range of other metrics used across the justice system.

What do I need to know when reading this report?


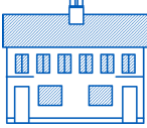




Detailed information about the history, design and methodology of the SCJS is provided in the accompanying [Technical Report](#) to help you understand the strengths and limitations of the survey's results. [Annex E](#) also provides guidance on how to interpret the figures and tables contained in this report. The sections below

¹ The framework measures Scotland's progress against the National Outcomes. To do this, it uses 'National Indicators'. The SCJS informs three National Indicators: Crime victimisation, Perceptions of local crime rate and Access to justice.

provide summary information on: the background to the SCJS, the reliability of survey estimates and how uncertainty around results is explained, as well as an overview of the content of this report and other SCJS supporting outputs.






Who is included and what does the SCJS cover?

The SCJS does not aim to provide an absolute estimate for all crime and has some notable exclusions.

<p>Who takes part in the survey?</p>	 <p>Around 5,600 adults (aged 16 & over)</p>	 <p>In private households (incl. rented accommodation)</p>	 <p>Across Scotland</p>
<p>Who does not take part in the survey?</p>	 <p>Children</p>	 <p>Those living in group residences, institutions or those without a fixed address</p>	 <p>Commercial or public sector bodies</p>

The SCJS is a survey of adults living in private residential households (including private and social rented housing) and therefore does not provide information on crimes against adults living in other circumstances (for example, tourists and those living in institutions or communal residences, such as prisons or hospitals, military bases and student accommodation). The survey also excludes people under the age of 16 and crimes against businesses. Further details on the sampling approach is outlined in the accompanying [Technical Report](#).

The SCJS is primarily a victimisation survey which captures information on adults' experiences of violent crime and property crime, including those not reported to the police. However, it does not capture data on all crimes – for example, crimes with no direct or specific victim to interview (e.g. speeding, drug possession and homicide). Experiences of sexual offences are not included in the main estimates and are instead collected in the self-completion section and reported separately. For more information on the questionnaire content and structure please refer to the [Technical Report](#).

What is covered by the survey?	What is not covered by the survey
<p>► Experiences of being a victim of:</p> <p>Violent crime including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assault • Robbery  <p>Property crime including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Vandalism • Personal theft • Other household theft 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Crime without a specific victim (e.g. drug possession, speeding) • Crimes against businesses (e.g. shoplifting) • Crime without a victim to interview (e.g. homicide)
<p>► Public perceptions of:</p> <div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-around; align-items: center;"> <div style="text-align: center;">  <p>Crime</p> </div> <div style="text-align: center;">  <p>The Police</p> </div> <div style="text-align: center;">  <p>The Justice System</p> </div> </div>	
<p>Respondents also self-complete a questionnaire that covers drug use, partner abuse, sexual victimisation & stalking</p>	

Throughout the report, the term ‘SCJS crime’ (or just ‘crime’) is used to refer to any in-scope incident recorded by the survey, occurring during the interview reference period and in Scotland, in which the respondent or their household as a whole was the victim.

The survey also explores perceptions of the police, the justice system and safety in Scotland.

How is the survey delivered?



1. A sample of households are randomly selected



2. An interviewer visits the respondents home



3. Participation is voluntary but is important in helping us make representative estimates for Scotland



4. Interviews last approximately 40 minutes



5. The main survey questions are answered verbally and the interviewer inputs information into a computer



6. An additional section on sensitive issues (such as drug use) is completed privately on a tablet computer

The design of the 2021/22 SCJS was broadly similar to the approach used since 2008/09. Therefore, when examining changes over time, this report generally compares the latest findings to those in 2008/09 and the last SCJS in 2019/20.

Other summary points to note on the methodology are outlined below.

- Survey frequency: Since 2008/09 the frequency of the SCJS has varied a little. In 2016/17, the SCJS reverted to being conducted on an annual basis. Due to suspension of fieldwork in March 2020 (as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic), no survey was conducted for the 2020/21 reporting year. The 2021/22 SCJS is the latest annual survey, following the restart of fieldwork in November 2021. More information on how the pandemic impacted this survey is available in the [Impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on the SCJS](#) chapter
- Sample: The sample is designed to be representative of all private residential households across Scotland. A systematic random selection of private residential addresses was produced from the Royal Mail's Postcode Address File (PAF) and allocated in batches to interviewers. Interviewers called at

each address and then selected one adult (aged 16 or over) at random from the household members for interview

- Questionnaire: The questionnaire consists of a modular design completed by the interviewer using Computer-Assisted Personal Interviewing (CAPI). When face-to-face interviewing was either not possible or respondents were not willing to let an interviewer into their home, a telephone or video-interview option was available, conducted with the interviewer using the same CAPI script. A self-completion section covering sensitive crimes was administered using Computer-Assisted Self Interviewing (CASI), or a web or paper survey when the main interview was conducted by telephone or video. [Annex C](#) gives an overview of the questionnaire structure and general topics, and the most recent questionnaire is available on the [SCJS website](#)
- Fieldwork: Interviews were conducted on a rolling basis between November 2021 and December 2022, with roughly an equal number of interviews conducted across most months
- Interviews: 5,516 interviews were conducted by professional interviewers from an original target of 6,000. The achieved response rate was 47.3%. This is the lowest response rate for any SCJS survey since 2008/09, for example the rate achieved for 2019/20 and 2018/19 was 63.4% in both cases
- More information on how the pandemic impacted this survey is available in the [Impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on the SCJS](#) chapter
- Interview length: An average interview lasted around 40 minutes, though there was variation in interview length, depending on the respondent's reported experience of crime
- Time period covered: Respondents were asked about incidents experienced in the 12 months prior to the month of interview (the reference period). The time period covered by the data on experiences of crime included in this report extends over 25 months (from the start of November 2020 to the end of November 2022) so is not directly comparable with any calendar year
- Weighting: The results obtained were weighted to correct for the unequal probability of selection for interview caused by the sample design and for differences in the level of response among groups of individuals

How reliable are SCJS results?

The SCJS gathers information from a sample rather than from the whole population and, although the sample is designed carefully, survey results are always estimates, not precise figures. This means that the results are subject to a margin of error which can have an impact on how changes in the numbers should be interpreted, especially in the short-term.

To indicate the extent of uncertainty, this report presents key results on the extent and prevalence of crime using both best estimates and lower/upper estimates. The best estimate is the mean figure drawn from the sample. The lower and upper

estimates are for the 95% confidence interval. Aside from these key findings, the majority of the analysis provided in the report focuses on best estimates.

Because of sampling variation, changes in reported estimates between survey years or between population sub-groups may occur by chance. We therefore use standard statistical tests to examine whether differences are likely to be due to chance. Only differences that are statistically significant at the 95% confidence level are described as differences or changes within this report.

Where no statistically significant change has been found between two estimates, this has been described as showing 'no change' (or equivalent). The presentation of uncertainty and change in this report reflect best practice guidance produced by the Government Statistical Service (GSS)².

Uncertainty can be particularly high around some crime incidence estimates, often where experiences are less common and incident numbers are derived from the experiences of a relatively small number of victims in the sample. We assessed the uncertainty for crime incidence figures in this report by computing the relative standard error (RSE) around the results and have flagged results which have RSE values greater than 20%³. We advise using these results with careful consideration.

What findings are included in this report and where can I access additional results?

The report is divided into chapters which focus on presenting data for the majority of topics covered by the survey questionnaire including: the extent, prevalence and nature of crime in Scotland; perceptions of the police and justice system, and consideration of how evidence from the SCJS compares to and complements [police recorded crime statistics](#) in Scotland. The report does not include in-depth, multivariate statistical analysis that would explore the more complex underlying relationships within the data.

This report contains a range of demonstration tables and figures within the body of each chapter. Further information on how to interpret figures, tables and data presented in this report is provided in [Annex E](#). Many of these tables and figures include breakdowns by respondent characteristics such as sex, age, victim status (where available), area deprivation⁴ and rurality. Further detail on many of these tables, for example with additional breakdowns, and full time series results, are provided in the data tables presented in [Annex A](#).

All tables referred to throughout the bulletin are available in the '[additional tables](#)' excel workbook. In addition, we have also released a more comprehensive set of

² [GSS \(2018\) Communicating quality, uncertainty and change: Guidance for producers of official statistics](#)

³ The relative standard error is equal to the standard error of a survey estimate divided by the survey estimate, multiplied by 100. For more information, see the [Technical Report](#).

⁴ Uses the Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation (SIMD).

SCJS online [data tables](#) alongside this report which present further breakdowns of results, from a wide range of survey questions, by geographic, demographic, attitudinal or experiential characteristics of respondents.

The raw survey data files and survey documentation will be available soon after publication of this report from the [UK Data Service](#).

Data collected by the self-completion element of the SCJS (on drug use, stalking and harassment, partner abuse and sexual victimisation) is collated over two survey years and published biennially. Key findings on each of the self-completion topics from SCJS interviews conducted in 2018/19 and 2019/20 (described where relevant as 2019/20) can be found in the [2019/20 Main Findings Report](#). Supporting [data tables](#) have also been published to provide additional findings from these questionnaire sections. Due to improvements made to the partner abuse questionnaire for the 2023/24 survey sweep, analysts are currently developing plans on how to publish the findings for the standalone 2021/22 year. Further background to these changes are detailed in [Annex D: Changes to the survey for 2023/24](#), and users will be informed of future plans through the ScotStat network.

SCJS results provided to Police Division level are available biennially (as they have been since 2012/13), with two survey years combined to increase the sample size and precision around results with effect from 2016/17. Therefore, key results at Police Division level from SCJS interviews conducted in 2018/19 and 2019/20 are also available in the [2019/20 Main Findings Report](#)⁵. Findings released include perceptions of the police, as well as wider SCJS results such as victimisation rates, within each Division. They are most easily accessed in the [SCJS interactive data tool](#) which has been developed to show divisional results relative to the national average for a chosen year or over time⁶.

How can I find out more about the SCJS?

The SCJS is used in multiple ways and by a range of users across government, public services, academia and third sector. Engaging effectively with users is important in ensuring that the SCJS meets their needs

If you want to find out more about the Scottish Crime and Justice Survey or any other work undertaken by the Scottish Government Statistics Group, you can access information in the following ways:

⁵ As the Police Division level results for 2018/19-2019/20 combine two survey years of data, the national average figure in those outputs has been produced on the same basis for comparative purposes. It is recommended that the single year figures presented in each individual survey years' outputs are used if national level figures are being reported in isolation.

⁶ Key 2018/19-2019/20 results have also been published in data tables for users who prefer to access findings in this way.

SCJS User Group:

- the SCJS team have established a user group to ensure that user engagement is an on-going part of each survey cycle. Members are drawn from government, academia, the justice system and third sector. The user group is an essential way to ensure that the survey remains relevant and able to respond to changing needs – for example, in helping to determine and design questionnaire content. If you would like to become involved in the user group, please [contact us](#)

ScotStat:

- register with the [ScotStat mailing list](#): a network for users and providers of Scottish Official statistics. It aims to improve communication amongst those interested in particular statistics and facilitate the setting up of working groups on specific statistical issues. For example, we provide updates about upcoming publications and on-going questionnaire development work via ScotStat

Acknowledgements

Thanks go to a number of people involved in the development, implementation and reporting of the 2021/22 Scottish Crime and Justice Survey (SCJS), in particular the 5,516 people across Scotland who took the time to provide their thoughts and opinions in the survey, as well as the interviewers and support staff who carried out the interviews. Thanks also go to colleagues at Ipsos and ScotCen for their support.

2. Impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on the SCJS

Response to the COVID-19 pandemic

In order to help prevent the spread of COVID-19, the Scottish Government suspended face-to-face interviewing for the SCJS and the other household surveys on 17th March 2020.

The [last findings for the SCJS](#), produced from interviews which took place before the suspension came into force, were published in March 2021 and covered the 2019/20 survey year (as well as biennial self-completion results for 2018/19 and 2019/20 combined). These results were not significantly impacted by the suspension of face-to-face interviewing due to COVID-19 as the fieldwork suspension was at the very end of the fieldwork period (note the SCJS fieldwork typically begins in April and runs for 12 months).

To fill the evidence gap created by the suspension of the SCJS, the Scottish Victimisation Telephone Survey (SVTS) was developed. This was a standalone survey of experiences and perceptions of crime, safety and policing in Scotland during the COVID-19 pandemic. The results were based on around 2,700 telephone interviews conducted in September and October 2020. This survey was a discrete and additional collection to the SCJS and not a replacement. More information on the background and findings from this survey can be found on the [SVTS website](#).

No Scottish Crime and Justice Survey interviews took place in the 2020/21 survey year and as a result no data were published for that year.

Resumption of interviewing and changes to the survey design

Due to the relaxation of COVID-19 restrictions, it was possible for SCJS fieldwork to resume in late 2021 (with interviews conducted between November 2021 and December 2022). The results of this fieldwork sweep are presented in this report.

While restrictions had been relaxed, at the start of the fieldwork period, it was still not possible to conduct interviews face-to-face in respondents' home, the approach used pre-pandemic. Instead, interviews were carried out remotely, either by telephone or video. This approach was in line with public health measures in place at the time. Limited adaptations were made to the questionnaire to accommodate telephone interviewing.

Between November 2021 and April 2022, interviews were conducted entirely using a 'knock-to-nudge' approach. This involved interviewers initially calling at sampled addresses to introduce the survey on the doorstep, randomly select and adult to take part, encourage them to do so and arrange a time for the interview to be conducted remotely (by phone or video chat). In-home, face-to-face interviewing

resumed in April 2022. Despite this, respondents were still offered the option of a remote interview, if that was preferred given any ongoing concerns about risks of infection.

The [2021/22 questionnaire](#) was largely left unchanged from the [2019/20 questionnaire](#) with the exception of a few amendments:

- a reduced self-completion section
- the amendment of the format of some questions for telephone interviewing
- the introduction and removal of a small number of questions

The sampling approach for the SCJS remained broadly the same as previous years, with one member of the household randomly selected by the interviewer to take part in the survey. Assumptions around response rate were revised.

Summary of comparability analysis

It is important to consider whether the change in approach to interviewing had an impact on the comparability of the findings presented here with earlier years. For example, was there a significant shift in the profile of individuals responding to the survey? To examine this, analysis was conducted by Ipsos on behalf of the Scottish Government to examine:

- variation in response rates across key geographic variables (i.e. deprivation, urban/rural and police division)
- change in the profile of respondents pre- and post-pandemic
- differences in the respondent profile and victimisation rates between the two fieldwork stages and the different modes of interview

A summary of their findings are provided below and the full report, entitled ‘Scottish Crime and Justice Survey: Analysing the effects of using a mixed-mode approach to adapt to COVID-19 challenges’, can be read on the [supplementary documents](#) page.

Between 2019/20 and 2021/22, response rates fell from 64% to 47%. While this represents a large fall, the pattern of the reduction was consistent across different areas of Scotland. For example, the most and least deprived areas fell from 57% and 66% to 43% and 49% respectively, with a similar trend seen between urban and rural areas.

Secondly, the composition of the achieved sample in the post-pandemic wave was compared against that of the pre-pandemic wave across a range of estimates. These included 20 geographic measures, household level characteristics, individual level characteristics and various substantive measures. Overall, for most variables that we would expect to be relatively stable, the differences between the pre- and post-pandemic waves (after weighting) were relatively small. However, for a limited number of key variables, the changes in estimates may be more than expected. These included tenure and educational attainment:

- owner-occupation increased by 2 percentage points
- respondents with no educational qualifications decreased by 5.5 percentage points

This means that non-response bias might have impacted the post-pandemic slightly more than the pre-pandemic wave. However, the scale of this is likely to be small, especially on key substantive measures such as victimisation.

Finally, across a wide range of estimates the differences across modes and between the different stages were small. There were a small number of estimates where there were differences by mode and stage, the analysis did not find any evidence of change to how people answer questions. This suggests that the move from interviewing face-to-face in-home to remote interviewing did not have a major impact on the results in relation to measurement error and are unlikely to have introduced discontinuity into the data series for the SCJS.

Implications for quality and designation of latest SCJS findings

In July 2022, the Office for Statistics Regulation supported a proposal by the Office for National Statistics to temporarily suspend the National Statistics status of the Crime Survey for England and Wales (CSEW)⁷. This precautionary action was primarily taken due to the shorter fieldwork period (taking place over 6 rather than 12 months). ONS also note that while they saw improvements in the response rate, they were still to return to pre-pandemic levels and the spread of interviews across the year was uneven⁸.

It is important to acknowledge the impact that the COVID-19 pandemic had on the SCJS, both in terms of the need to take a mixed mode approach to interviewing and the overall reduced response rate. However, we do not expect that the small shifts described above will have had a significant impact on the comparability of these results with earlier years. As such we have taken the decision to maintain the National Statistics designation for this 2021/22 sweep of the survey. We will continue to monitor the measures described above as part of producing the 2023/24 survey. As the interviews for this sweep will be almost entirely conducted face-to-face, there should be less of an impact than what was seen in 2021/22.

Limitations on the self-completion data

The self-completion aspect of the survey asks respondents about particularly sensitive topics and therefore respondents answer this section confidentially either online or via a paper questionnaire (where a telephone or video interview was conducted) or using the interviewer's tablet (when an in-home interview was

⁷ [Ed Humpherson to Liz McKeown: Temporary suspension of National Statistics status for estimates from the Crime Survey for England and Wales – Office for Statistics Regulation \(statisticsauthority.gov.uk\)](#)

⁸ [Liz McKeown to Ed Humpherson: Temporary suspension of National Statistics status for estimates from the Crime Survey for England and Wales – Office for Statistics Regulation \(statisticsauthority.gov.uk\)](#)

conducted). The consequences of the COVID-19 disruption to SCJS quality and designation outlined above also apply to the survey's self-completion section, however, there is the added challenge that fewer respondents complete the self-completion modules compared with the main survey and, there is a requirement to have two-years of self-completion data for standard results (and due to suspension of fieldwork in 2020, we only have one). Therefore, statisticians are continuing to review the collected self-completion data for 2021/22 and will inform users through SCOTSTAT what might be published from this data in 2024.

3. Overview of crime in Scotland

In this report, overall crime measured by the Scottish Crime and Justice Survey (SCJS) is a product of two distinct groups being combined – violent and property crime⁹ (see section below).

Crime groups measured by the Scottish Crime and Justice Survey

Violent crime includes the following distinct groups:

- assault (includes serious assault, minor assault with injury, minor assault with no or negligible injury, and attempted assault)
- robbery

Property crime includes the following distinct groups:

- housebreaking
- personal theft (excluding robbery)
- other household theft (including bicycle theft)
- all motor vehicle related theft (including theft and attempted theft of and from a vehicle)
- vandalism (including motor vehicle and property vandalism)

Further details on each of these groups is provided in the [Technical Report](#).

What was the estimated volume of crime in Scotland in 2021/22?

The SCJS provides an estimate of the number of crimes (or incidence) occurring within Scotland, rounded to the nearest 1,000 crimes. Taking property and violent crime together, the SCJS estimates that overall there were 494,000 crimes experienced by adults in Scotland in 2021/22.

As a sample survey of the general public, SCJS results are estimated values with margins of error, rather than exact counts. Further information on the process used to calculate estimates is contained within the [Technical Report](#). Taking into account confidence intervals, the SCJS estimates that there were between 428,000 and 560,000 incidents of crime in Scotland in 2021/22. The analysis which follows below is focused on the best estimates across each survey year¹⁰.

The SCJS estimates that the level of crime experienced in Scotland has fallen by 53% since 2008/09. Figure 3.1 displays the trend in the estimated number of SCJS crimes since 2008/09, highlighting a marked decline in crime over the last 15 or so

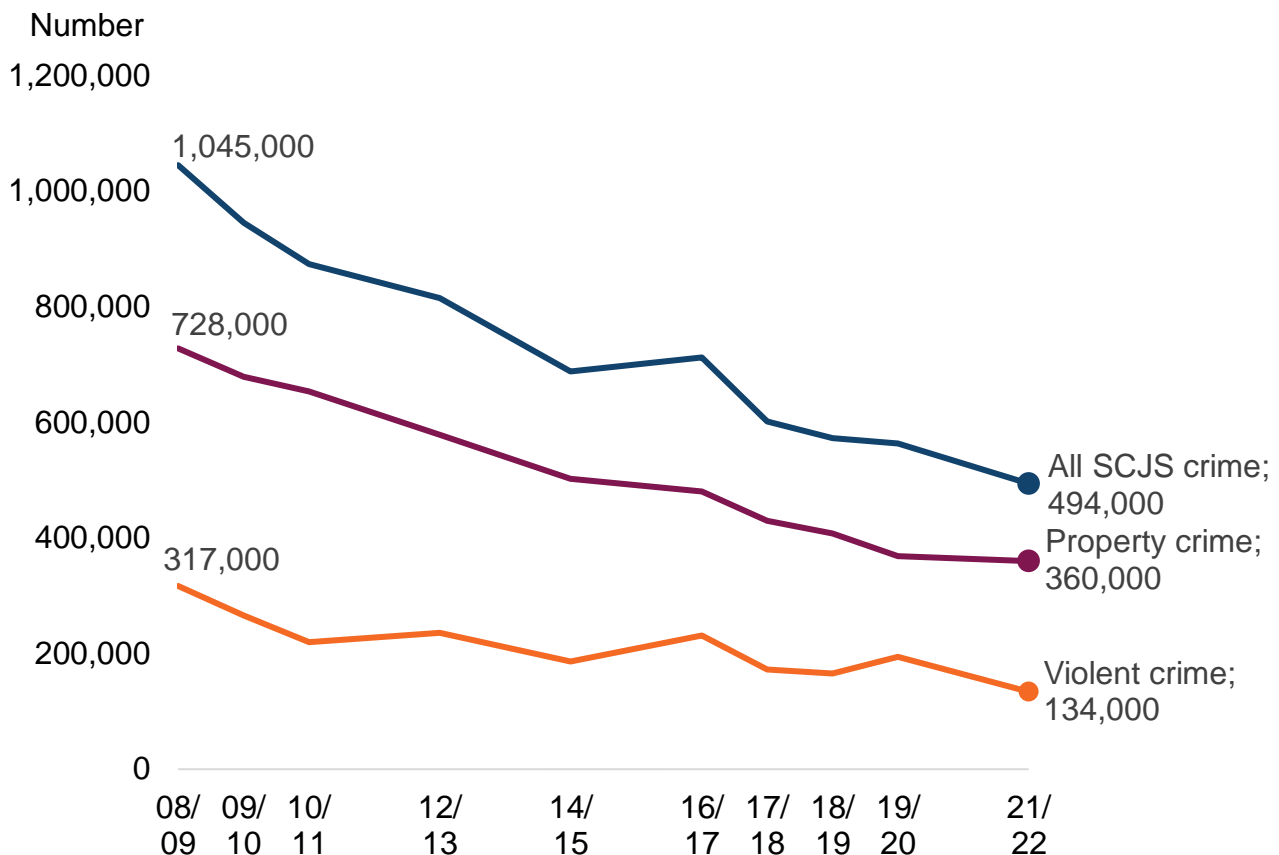
⁹ Throughout this report the types of violent and property crime are listed in accordance with the priority ladder in the SCJS [Offence Coding Manual](#).

¹⁰ Please see the [Background to the SCJS](#) chapter for definitions of best, upper and lower estimates.

years¹¹. Table 3.1 shows the relevant upper and lower estimates for SCJS crime and the best estimates for violent crime and property crime, which are discussed in more detail in later chapters.

Figure 3.1: The level of crime experienced by adults has fallen by 53% since 2008/09 but is unchanged since 2019/20.

Estimated number of incidents of SCJS crime, 2008/09 to 2021/22.



Base: SCJS 2008/09 (16,000); 2009/10 (16,040); 2010/11 (13,010); 2012/13 (12,050); 2014/15 (11,470); 2016/17 (5,570); 2017/18 (5,480); 2018/19 (5,540); 2019/20 (5,570); 2021/22 (5,520). Variable: INCSURVEYCRIME.

Table 3.1 looks at results from key comparator years¹² more closely and shows that the estimated number of incidents of overall crime experienced by adults:

- decreased by 53% between 2008/09 and 2021/22, from 1,045,000 to 494,000 – an estimated decrease of around 551,000 incidents

¹¹ The increase in confidence interval shown by the greater difference between the lower and upper estimates from 2016/17 onwards is due to a reduction in the target survey sample size. More information is provided in the [Technical Report](#).

¹² [Annex table A1.2](#) provides best estimates of the number of incidents of crime for each SCJS year since 2008/09.

- has shown no change since the last SCJS in 2019/20 – the apparent decrease from 563,000 incidents is not statistically significant

Table 3.1: The estimated number of SCJS crimes has fallen by over half since 2008/09 but is unchanged since 2019/20.

Estimated number of incidents of SCJS crime (2008/09, 2019/20 and 2021/22) with percentage change since 2008/09 and 2019/20.

Number of SCJS crimes	2008/09	2019/20	2021/22	Change since 2008/09	Change since 2019/20
Best estimate	1,045,000	563,000	494,000	Down 53%	No change
Lower estimate	974,000	501,000	428,000	-	-
Upper estimate	1,116,000	625,000	560,000	-	-
Number of respondents	16,000	5,570	5,520	-	-

Base: SCJS 2008/09 (16,000); 2019/20 (5,570); 2021/22 (5,520). Variable: INCSURVEYCRIME.

While no change was found in overall crime since 2019/20, this is not an unusual finding from an annual survey like the SCJS. Where crime estimates are based on the experiences of a relatively small number of people, it can often be challenging to detect significant changes between adjacent survey years. That said, where they exist, the SCJS can often identify significant changes and trends over the medium and longer-term.

Looking over a slightly longer period, the estimated number of incidents of overall crime experienced by adults has decreased by 18% since 2017/18, falling from 602,000 incidents to 494,000 in 2021/22. The estimated number of incidents of SCJS crime was lower in 2021/22 than all years between 2008/09 and 2017/18 however has shown no change compared to the years since (2018/19 and 2019/20), suggesting that more recently the decreasing trend in overall crime may have started to level off.

What was the prevalence of victimisation in Scotland in 2021/22?

Consistent with previous years, the SCJS results show that most adults were not victims of any crime in 2021/22, with 10.0% estimated to have experienced at least one SCJS (property or violent) crime.

As with incident numbers, crime prevalence rates are also estimates derived from a sample survey of the population with associated margins of error around them. Taking into account these confidence intervals, between 9.1% and 11.0% of the

adult population were estimated to have experienced at least one SCJS crime in 2021/22, with 10.0% representing the best estimate¹³.

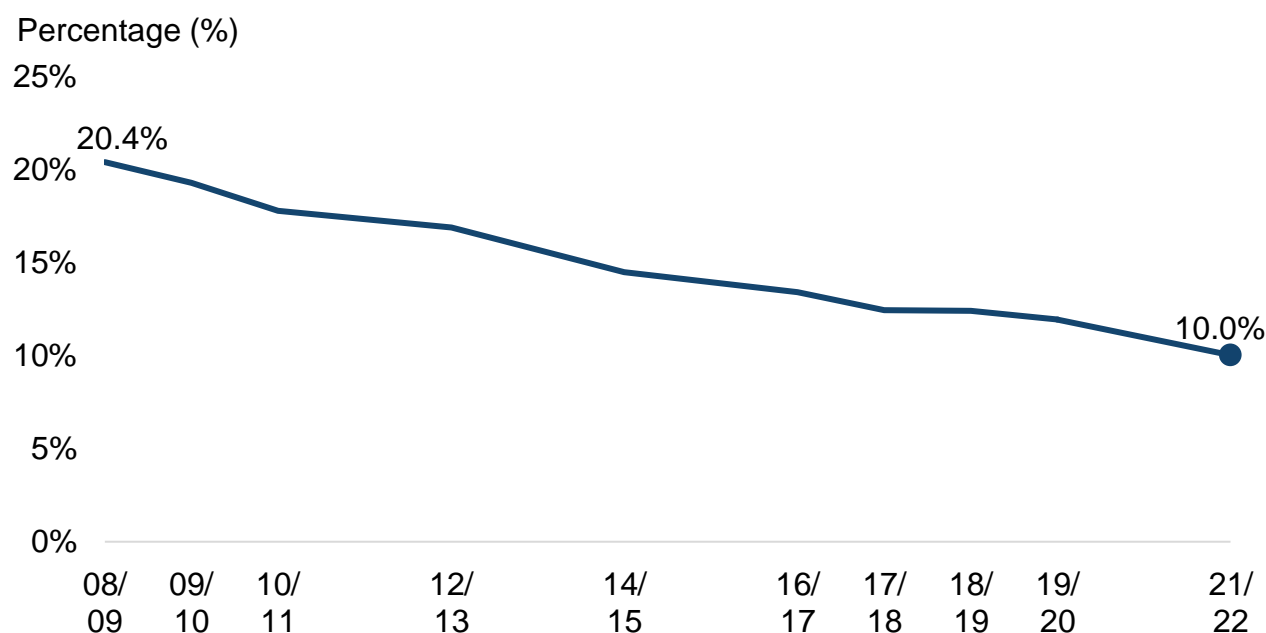
Again, as with incident counts, analysis from this point onwards will focus on the best estimates for results across the survey for each year¹⁴.

The proportion of adults experiencing crime has fallen from 20.4% in 2008/09 to 10.0% in 2021/22. In other words, around one-in-ten adults were victims of crime in 2021/22 compared to one-in-five in 2008/09.

Since the last SCJS, the proportion of adults experiencing crime has fallen from 11.9% in 2019/20 as shown in Figure 3.2 to the lowest level in the last 15 or so years.

Figure 3.2: The proportion of adults experiencing crime fell by 10.4 percentage points since 2008/09 and 1.9 percentage points since 2019/20.

Proportion of adults experiencing any SCJS crime, 2008/09 to 2021/22.



Base: SCJS 2008/09 (16,000); 2009/10 (16,040); 2010/11 (13,010); 2012/13 (12,050); 2014/15 (11,470); 2016/17 (5,570); 2017/18 (5,480); 2018/19 (5,540); 2019/20 (5,570); 2021/22 (5,520). Variable: PREVSURVEYCRIME.

¹³ Please see the [Background to the SCJS](#) chapter for definitions of best, upper and lower estimates.

¹⁴ Confidence intervals around other survey results can be derived using the [data tables](#) and the [statistical testing tool](#) available on the SCJS website.

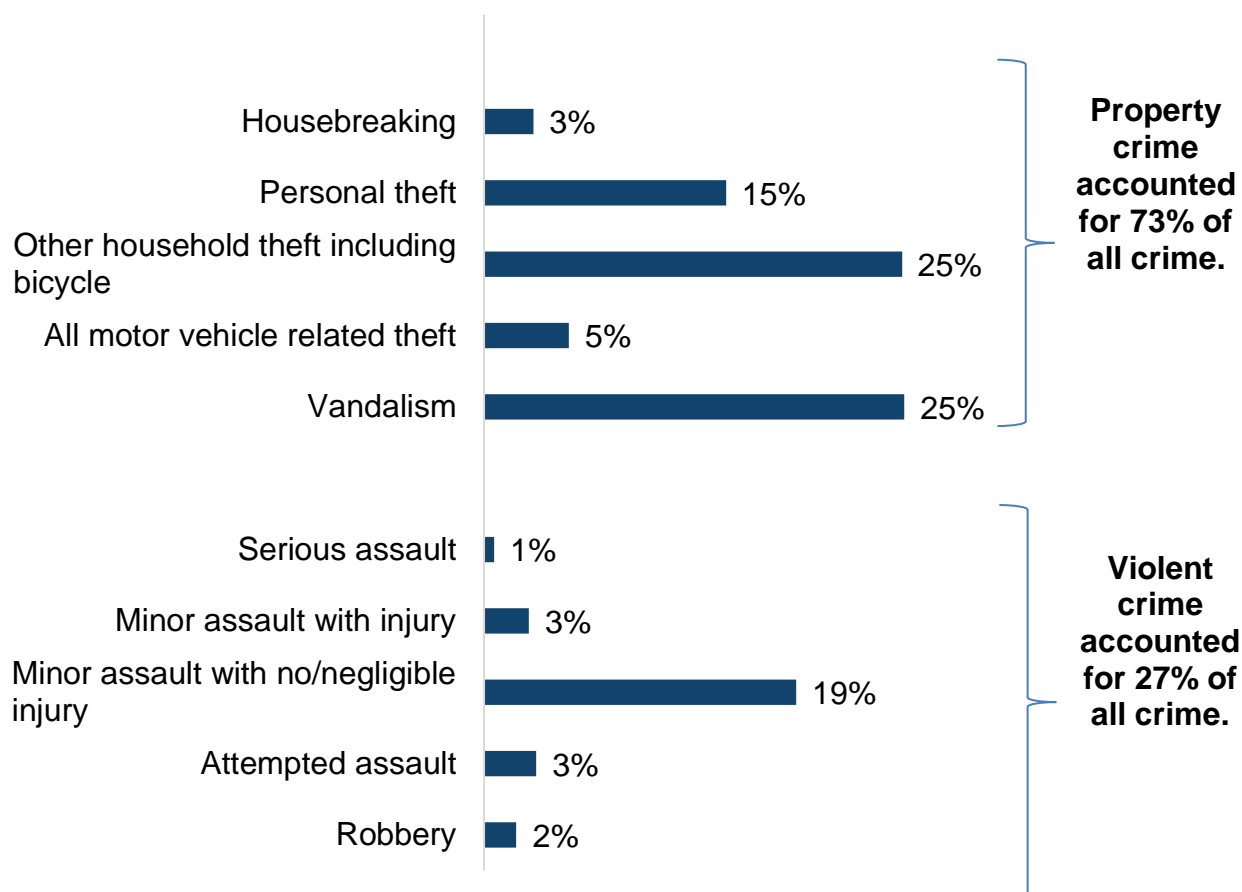
What type of crime was experienced in Scotland in 2021/22?

The SCJS collects data on the adult population's experiences of two main types of crime – property and violent crime. It is estimated that 73% of all crime measured by the survey in 2021/22 was property-related, with the remaining 27% being violent incidents. This differs from 66% and 34%, respectively, in 2019/20 but is similar to both 2017/18 and 2018/19 (29% and 71% respectively in both years). The majority of violent incidents are from 'lower-harm' categories.

Figure 3.3 below shows the proportion of all crime accounted for by key sub-categories of property and violent crime. Vandalism accounted for one-quarter (25%) of all crime measured by the 2021/22 SCJS, with a further quarter (25%) relating to Other household theft, including bicycle theft. Minor assault with no or negligible injury represented one-fifth of all incidents (19%). Other forms of violence represented relatively small proportions of all crime in Scotland.

Figure 3.3: Almost three-quarters of crime in 2021/22 was property related with half comprising other household theft and vandalism combined.

Categories of crime in 2021/22 as proportions of all SCJS crime, split by property and violent crime.



Base: 2021/22 (5,520). Variable: Prevalence (PREV) variables.

The SCJS has also consistently shown that adults in Scotland are much more likely to have experienced property crime than violent crime in any given year. It is estimated that 8.7% of adults were victims of property crime in 2021/22, whilst 1.7% experienced violent crime. The prevalence of both property crime and violent crime have fallen since 2008/09.

More detailed results about the extent, prevalence and nature of violent and property crime experienced in Scotland in 2021/22, including how experiences varied across the population and trends over time are provided in the respective [‘Focus on violent crime’](#) and [‘Focus on property crime’](#) chapters of this report.

How did the likelihood of experiencing crime in 2021/22 vary across the population?

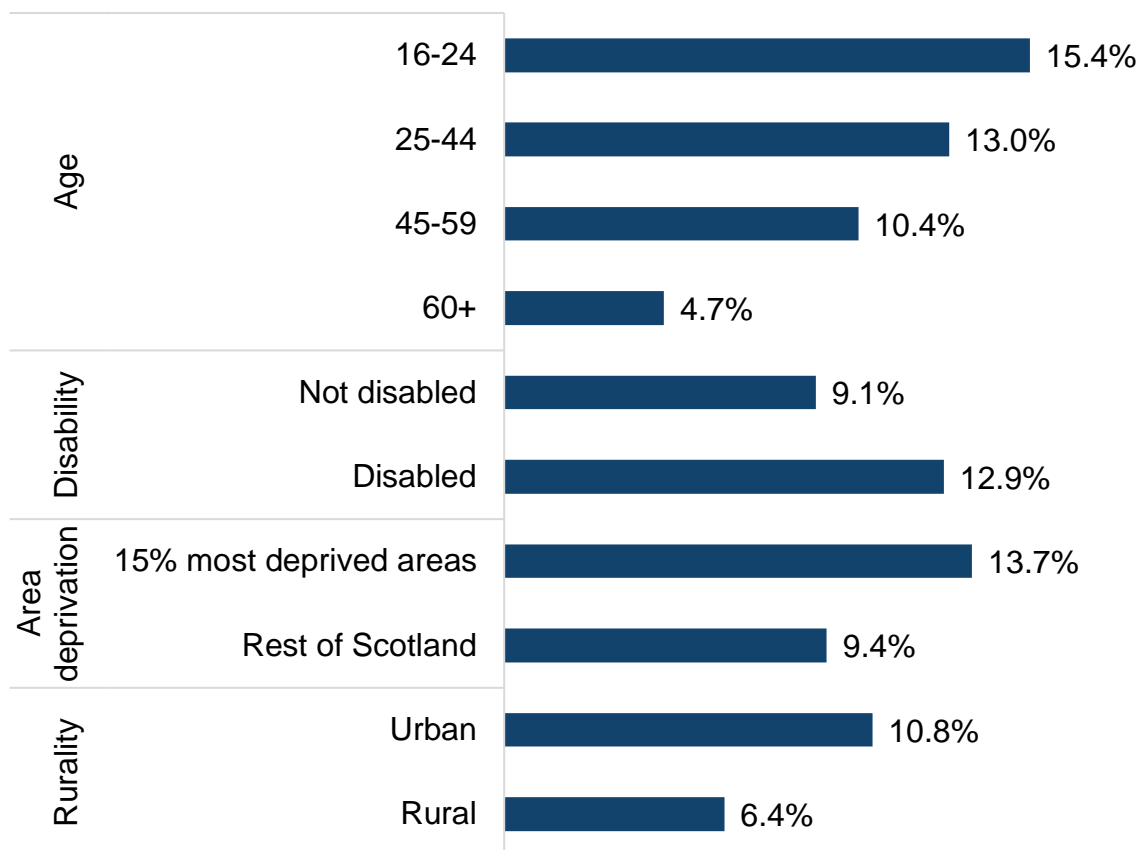
The proportion of adults who were victims of any SCJS crime in 2021/22 varied according to demographic and geographic characteristics. For instance, as shown in Figure 3.4, the likelihood of experiencing crime in 2021/22:

- was highest for those aged 16 to 24 and lowest for those aged 60 and over
- was greater for adults in the 15% most deprived areas compared to those living in the rest of Scotland
- was higher in urban areas compared to rural locations
- was higher for disabled adults than those who are not

There was no significant difference in the proportion of males and females who were victims of SCJS crime in 2021/22, at 10.2% and 9.9% respectively.

Figure 3.4: The likelihood of experiencing crime in 2021/22 was higher for those living in both deprived and urban locations and for younger adults.

Proportion of adults experiencing any crime measured by the SCJS, by demographic and area characteristics.



Base: 2021/22 (5,520). Variables: PREVSURVEYCRIME, QDAGE, SIMD_TOP, URBRUR.

The crime victimisation rate has decreased since 2008/09 across many key groups in the population – including both males and females; all age groups shown above; those living in the most deprived areas as well as those living elsewhere in Scotland, and adults in both urban and rural locations¹⁵ and those who were and were not disabled.

For example, the proportion of those in the 15% most deprived areas experiencing crime has fallen from 26.0% in 2008/09 to 13.7% in 2021/22. Over the same period, the prevalence rate for those living elsewhere in Scotland dropped from 19.4% to 9.4%.

The SCJS detected a decrease compared to 2019/20 in the overall likelihood of being a victim of crime amongst females (from 12.3%), those aged 60 or over (from

¹⁵ Please see [Annex table A1.6](#) for relevant results and the SCJS supporting [data tables](#) for additional breakdowns.

6.9%), and those not living in the 15% most deprived areas in Scotland (from 11.2%).

What can the SCJS tell us about multiple victimisation?

The SCJS also enables us to further explore how experiences varied amongst victims and examine the concentration of crime, including what proportion of victims experienced more than one crime (of any type) during the year. This is known as 'multiple victimisation'. Further information about the approach taken to process and derive SCJS results, including on multiple victimisation, is provided in the [Technical Report](#).

Multiple victimisation examines the proportion of the population that experienced two or more property crimes or two or more violent crimes (known as repeat victimisation), or have been victims of both crime types (i.e. two or more incidents of any crime).

Repeat victimisation is a sub-set of multiple victimisation, the proportion of adults who have been the victim of the same type of crime more than once (e.g. repeat property crimes). Findings on the extent of repeat victimisation for violent and property crime are presented separately in the relevant '[Focus on violent crime](#)' and '[Focus on property crime](#)' chapters of this report.

What proportion of adults experienced multiple victimisation in Scotland in 2021/22?

As discussed [above](#), the majority of adults (90.0%) did not experience any crime measured by the SCJS in 2021/22, and conversely 10.0% were victims of at least one property or violent crime.

Examining the volume of crime experienced by individual victims more closely reveals that under one-in-ten adults (7.0%) were victims of a single incident of SCJS crime in 2021/22, accounting for 41% of all crime.

It is therefore estimated that multiple victimisation affected 3.0% of the adult population in 2021/22, and that this group experienced around three fifths (59%) of all SCJS crime during the survey year. These victims are estimated to have experienced two crimes each on average.

Table 3.2: 3% of adults experienced two or more crimes during 2021/22, accounting for three-fifths of all SCJS crime over the year.

Proportion of all SCJS crime experienced by victims, by number of crimes experienced.

Number of crimes	% of population	% of SCJS crime
None	90.0%	0%
One	7.0%	41%
Two	1.8%	24%
Three	0.5%	9%
Four	0.3%	9%
Five or more	0.4%	16%
Two or more	3.0%	59%

Base: SCJS 2021/22 (5,520). Variables: INCSURVEYCRIME, PREVSURVEYCRIME.

Figure 3.5 explores trends in single and multiple victimisation over time. It highlights that between 2008/09 and 2021/22 there were decreases in the proportion of adults experiencing:

- single incidents of SCJS crime – from 12.2% to 7.0%
- multiple victimisation (two or more incidents of SCJS crime) – from 8.2% to 3.0%
- high frequency multiple victimisation (five or more incidents of SCJS crime) – from 1.5% to 0.4%

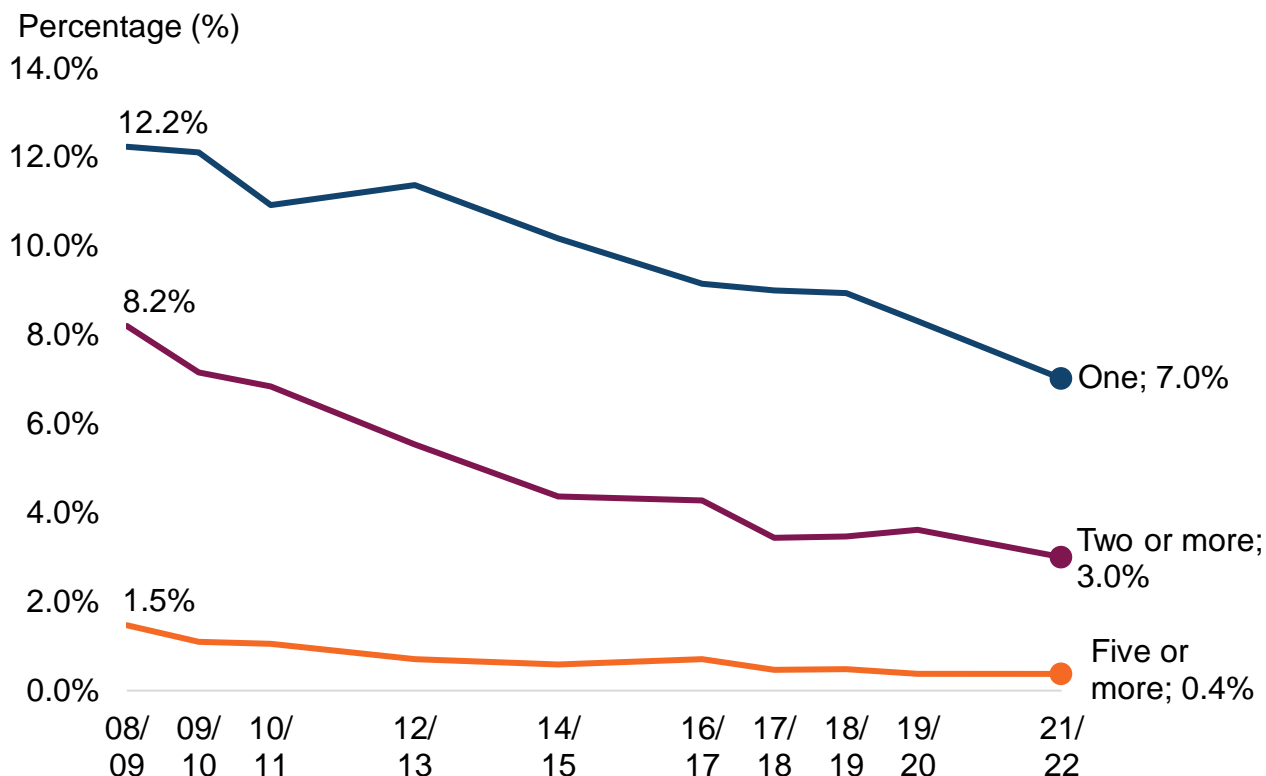
The fall in the various levels of victimisation since 2008/09 has occurred alongside a fall in the overall SCJS crime victimisation rate¹⁶ over this period, as discussed [previously](#).

Since the last SCJS in 2019/20, there was a significant decrease in the proportion of adults experiencing single victimisation (from 8.3% to 7.0%). There was no change in the proportion experiencing multiple victimisation – any apparent differences shown in Figure 3.5 are not statistically significant.

¹⁶ i.e. the proportion of adults experiencing at least one crime over the year.

Figure 3.5: The proportion of adults experiencing multiple victimisation fell from 8.2% to 3.0% between 2008/09 and 2021/22 and high frequency multiple victimisation more than halved over this period.

Proportion of adults experiencing number of SCJS crimes.



Base: SCJS 2008/09 (16,000); 2009/10 (16,040); 2010/11 (13,010); 2012/13 (12,050); 2014/15 (11,470); 2016/17 (5,570); 2017/18 (5,480); 2018/19 (5,540); 2019/20 (5,570); 2021/22 (5,520). Variables: INCSURVEYCRIME, PREVSURVEYCRIME.

In summary these findings show that, compared to 2008/09, adults in 2021/22 were less likely to be victims of:

- at least one SCJS crime
- one SCJS crime specifically
- more than one SCJS crime

What proportion of crime was reported to the police in 2021/22?

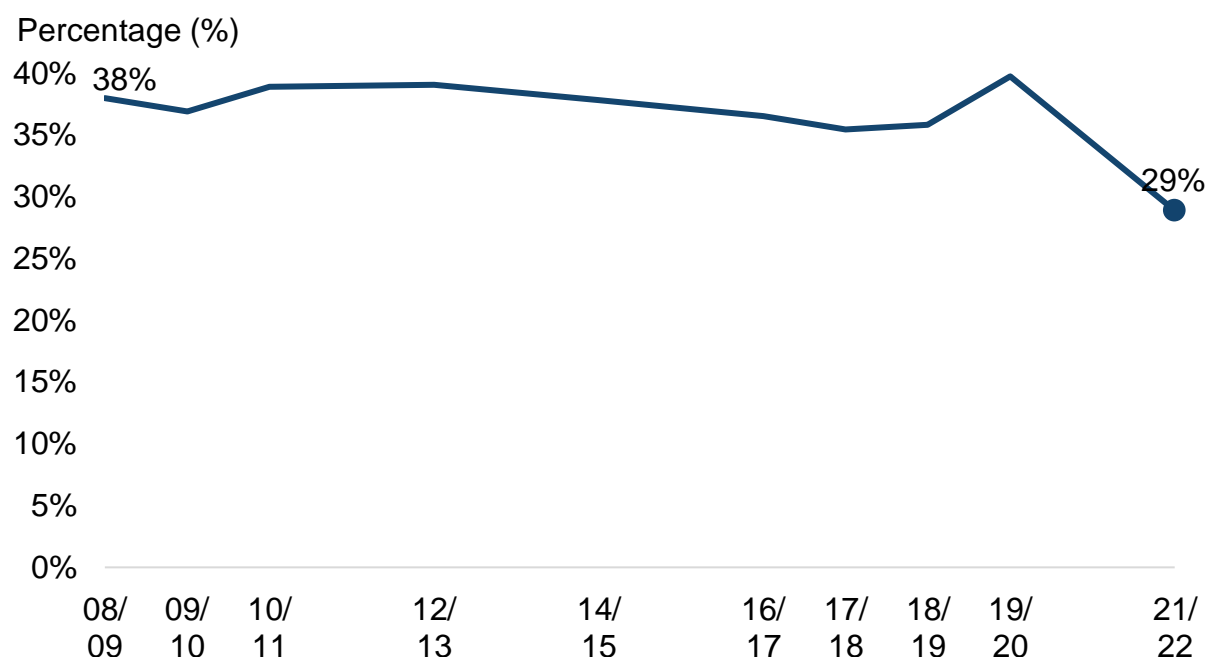
One of the key strengths of the SCJS is that it provides evidence on the extent of crime experienced by the population, including incidents which are not reported to the police. For this reason, the SCJS and [police recorded crime statistics](#) are complementary sources that, together, present a fuller picture of crime in Scotland. The [‘Bringing together crime statistics’](#) chapter of this report explores the

differences and similarities between the SCJS and recorded crime (including trends over time) in more detail.

The SCJS estimates that 29% of all SCJS (property and violent) crime in 2021/22 came to the attention of the police. This proportion has fallen from 38% in 2008/09 and 40% in 2019/20. It is estimated that 27% of property crimes were reported to the police in 2021/22, compared to 34% of violent crimes – showing a smaller difference between the two than was seen in 2019/20. However this was closer than the difference seen between these groups in both 2014/15 and 2018/19. Further information on the reporting rates and the reasons behind non-reporting are presented in the [‘Focus on violent crime’](#) and [‘Focus on property crime’](#) chapters.

Figure 3.6: The proportion of crime reported to the police in 2021/22 is at the lowest level since 2008/09.

The proportion of crime reported to the police between 2008/09 and 2021/22.



Base: SCJS 2008/09 (3,790); 2009/10 (3,330); 2010/11 (2,610); 2012/13 (2,290); 2014/15 (1,930); 2016/17 (860); 2017/18 (760); 2018/19 (760); 2019/20 (730); 2021/22 (640). Variables: QPOL.

When considered alongside some of the reductions in measures of confidence in the police (see [Chapter 7](#)), the drop in the proportion of crimes reported to the police in 2021/22 may signal a fall in people’s willingness to do this. However, it is important to note that this finding is based on a single year and future surveys will be required to determine if this represents a new trend. There are also additional factors which suggest some caution should be exercised in interpreting the above reduction in crimes reported to the police, including;

- given the fall in victimisation rates over the longer term, there is a smaller number of crimes experienced by people on which to base estimates of the

proportion reported to the police, and therefore greater potential for volatility in the year-to-year findings

- as discussed in [Chapter 1](#), the reference period for 2021/22 extends from November 2020 to November 2022, which includes some months that were heavily impacted by the Covid pandemic. For example, those respondents interviewed near the start of the survey year will have been asked to recall events which occurred during restrictions in place to limit the spread of infection (including mainland Scotland going into a second lockdown in January 2021). In those circumstances, it is possible that some individuals may have applied a higher threshold to whether they informed the police about a crime than in earlier years
- finally, the [Recorded Crime in Scotland statistics](#) show that the number of comparable crimes recorded by the police fell by 6% between 2019/20 and 2021/22. We might have expected to see a larger decrease within the recorded crime statistics if the proportion of crimes being reported to the police had fallen by the amount implied by the survey (from 40% to 29%). Further information on this comparison is available in [Chapter 6](#)

How did the likelihood of experiencing crime in Scotland compare to England and Wales?

Victimisation surveys take place in many jurisdictions across the world to obtain information on the relevant population's experience of crime. However comparisons between surveys can often be challenging due to methodological differences.

That said, the SCJS is similar to the [Crime Survey for England and Wales](#) (CSEW), with both surveys following on from the British Crime Survey (BCS)¹⁷. Although there are some differences between the surveys, for example the coding of crimes varies between the SCJS and the CSEW to reflect the different criminal justice systems in which they operate, the overall results on the proportion of adults experiencing crime have offered a broad comparison point over the years.

Following [updates to the methodology](#) used in the CSEW to produce estimates for the volume of crime experienced by the adult population, we assess that the results on the overall victimisation rate remain broadly comparable between the two surveys. A short [methodological paper](#) is available which confirms the approach currently taken to produce crime estimates in the SCJS and its relative strengths and limitations.

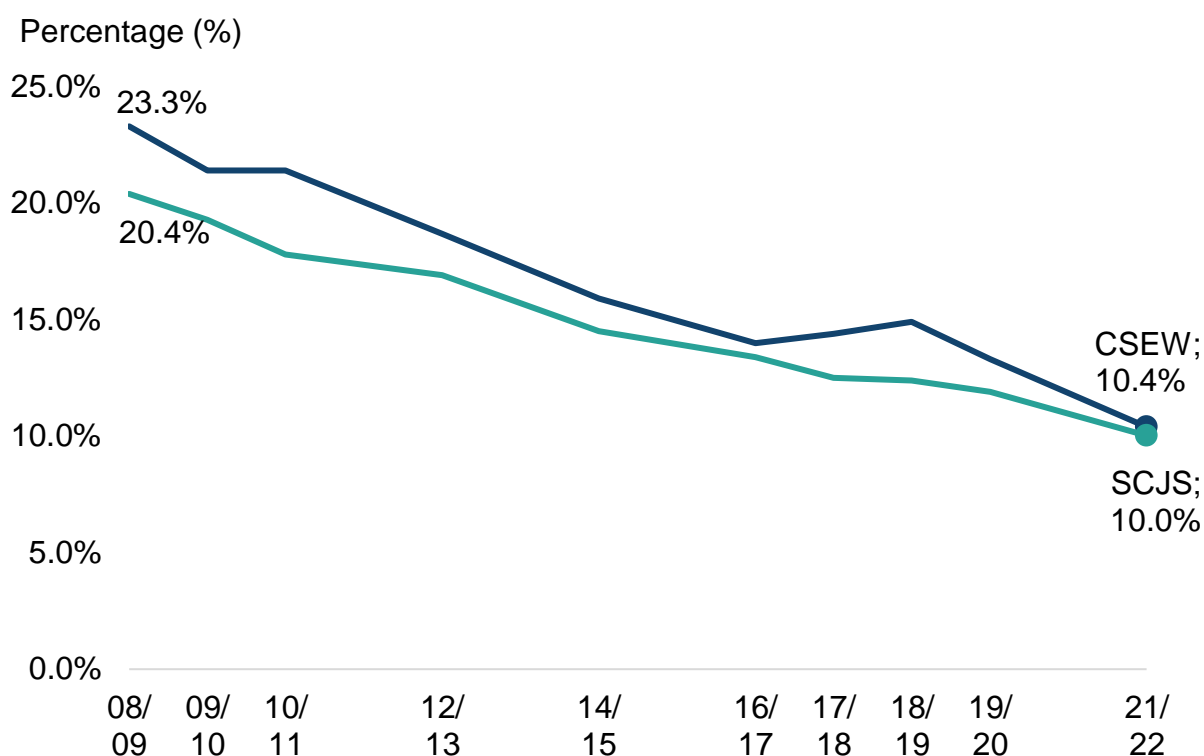
¹⁷ The British Crime Survey (BCS) was launched in 1982 and covered England, Wales and central and southern Scotland. The BCS ceased to include Scotland in its sample in the late 1980s, when a separate survey for Scotland was introduced. From 2012, the BCS has been known as the Crime Survey for England and Wales (CSEW) to better reflect its geographical coverage. For more information on the history of crime surveys in Great Britain refer to the [SCJS User Guide](#).

Further information on the similarities and differences between the SCJS and CSEW are provided in the SCJS 2021/22 [Technical Report](#).

Looking at the overall crime victimisation rates and the closest comparable survey periods¹⁸, the proportion of adults in Scotland estimated to have experienced crime was similar to that in England and Wales (10.0% compared to 10.4%). This differs from the position in 2019/20 where adults in Scotland were less likely to have experienced crime, with 11.9% being victims compared to 13.3% in England & Wales. However, as shown by Figure 3.7 the prevalence rate has been lower in Scotland in the past. It will be important to continue monitoring these figures going forward.

Figure 3.7: Victimization rates in Scotland and England & Wales have both fallen over the long term to similar levels in the latest comparable period.

Proportion of adults experiencing crime measured by SCJS and CSEW, 2008/09 to 2021/22.



SCJS prevalence – Base: 2008/09 (16,000); 2009/10 (16,040); 2010/11 (13,010); 2012/13 (12,050); 2014/15 (11,470); 2016/17 (5,570); 2017/18 (5,480); 2018/19 (5,540); 2019/20 (5,570); 2021/22 (5,520). Variable: PREVSURVEYCRIME.

[CSEW prevalence](#) – Base: Year ending December 2022 (26,621).

¹⁸ For the CSEW, the most comparable period is the [year ending December 2022](#) which is referred here as 2021/22 for consistency. More information of the latest fieldwork year for the SCJS is provided in the [Background to the SCJS](#) chapter.

4. Focus on violent crime

What was the extent and prevalence of violent crime in Scotland in 2021/22?

The Scottish Crime and Justice Survey (SCJS) estimates that 134,000 incidents¹⁹ of violent crime²⁰ were experienced by adults in Scotland in 2021/22. This figure accounts for over a quarter (27%) of all crime measured by the SCJS in 2021/22; with the remainder being [property-related](#).

As a sample survey of the general public, SCJS results on the extent of violence are estimated values which have relatively wide margins of error around them, rather than exact counts. Further information on the process used to calculate estimates is contained within the [Technical Report](#). Taking into account these margins of error, the SCJS estimates that there were between 91,000 and 177,000 incidents of violent crime in Scotland in 2021/22. The following analysis is focused on the best estimates for each year of the survey.

The SCJS estimates that the number of violent crimes in Scotland has fallen by nearly three-fifths (58%) since 2008/09. Figure 4.1 displays the number of violent incidents estimated to have taken place by each year of the SCJS since 2008/09, and shows a downward trend over the longer-term²¹.

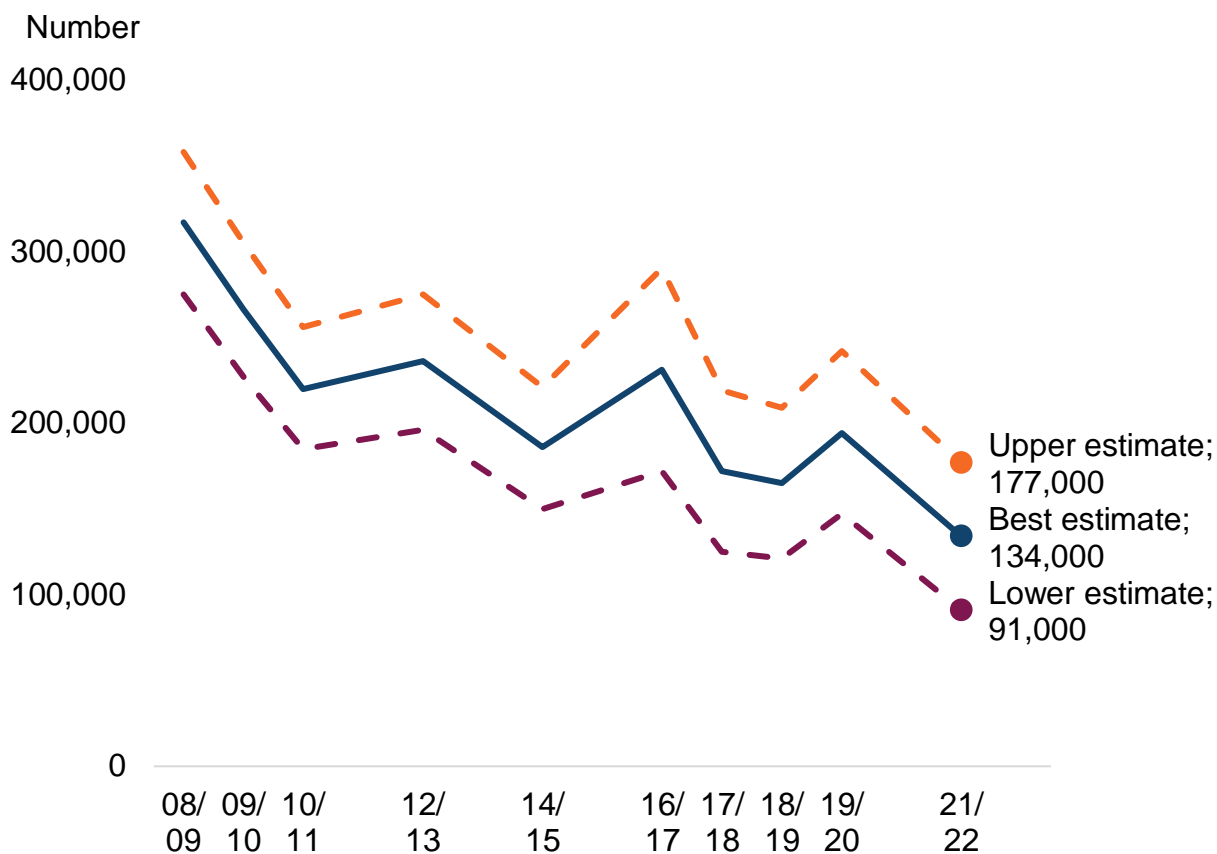
¹⁹ Crime estimates are rounded to the nearest 1,000 crimes.

²⁰ Details on the specific crimes within the violence group are outlined in the [‘Overview of crime’ chapter](#).

²¹ The increase in confidence interval shown by the greater difference between the lower and upper estimates from 2016/17 onwards is due to reduction in the target survey sample size. Please see the [Background to the SCJS](#) chapter for definitions of best, upper and lower estimates.

Figure 4.1: The volume of violent crime in Scotland has fallen by 58% since 2008/09, but is unchanged since 2019/20.

Estimated number of violent incidents, 2008/09 to 2021/22.



Base: SCJS 2008/09 (16,000); 2009/10 (16,040); 2010/11 (13,010); 2012/13 (12,050); 2014/15 (11,470); 2016/17 (5,570); 2017/18 (5,480); 2018/19 (5,540); 2019/20 (5,570); 2021/22 (5,520). Variable: INCVIOLENT.

Table 4.1 examines results from key comparator years²² and shows that the estimated amount of violent crime experienced by adults:

- has fallen by 58% since the 2008/09 baseline, from 317,000 to 134,000 incidents in 2021/22
- has shown no change since the last SCJS in 2019/20 – the apparent decrease from 194,000 violent incidents is not statistically significant

²² [Annex table A1.2](#) provides best estimates of the number of incidents of violent crime for each year of the SCJS since 2008/09.

Table 4.1: The estimated number of violent crimes has fallen by almost three-fifths since 2008/09 but is unchanged since 2019/20.

Estimated number of incidents of violent crimes (2008/09, 2019/20 and 2021/22) with percentage change since 2008/09 and 2019/20.

Number of SCJS crimes	2008/09	2019/20	2021/22	Change since 2008/09	Change since 2019/20
Best estimate	317,000	194,000	134,000	Down 58%	No change
Lower estimate	275,000	147,000	91,000	-	-
Upper estimate	358,000	242,000	177,000	-	-
Number of respondents	16,000	5,570	5,520	-	-

Variable: INCVIOLENT.

Violent crime estimates derived from the SCJS are based on a relatively small number of respondents who disclose experiences of such issues in the survey in any given year²³. As a result, analysis of findings between adjacent surveys are often less likely to identify statistically significant changes. For example, all of the apparent year to year fluctuations shown from year to year since 2010/11 in Figure 4.1 are not statistically significant.

However, where they exist, the SCJS can often identify significant changes and trends over the longer-term (such as since 2008/09 as discussed above). Taking this into account, a more detailed examination of changes in the level of violent crime over the last 15 or so years finds that the estimated number of violent incidents:

- fell markedly (by 30%) between 2008/09 and 2010/11
- fell more gradually (39%) over the decade or so that followed between 2010/11 and 2021/22 with a 42% fall since 2016/17
- was more stable since 2017/18, the apparent falls in violence seen over this period are not statistically significant

Therefore, overall the SCJS suggests that the level of violence experienced by adults in Scotland has continued on a downward trend over the last 15 years or so.

²³ For instance, 95 respondents in 2021/22.

Looking at the victimisation rate²⁴, the SCJS estimates that 1.7% of adults were victims of at least one violent crime in 2021/22. In comparison, an estimated [8.7% of adults experienced property crime](#) over the same period.

However, like incident numbers, it is worth noting crime prevalence rates are also estimates with associated margins of error around them as they are derived from a sample survey of the population. Taking into account these confidence intervals, between 1.3% and 2.1% of the adult population were estimated to have experienced violent crime in 2021/22, with 1.7% representing the best estimate²⁵.

Again, as with incident counts, analysis from this point onwards will focus on the best estimates for each survey year²⁶.

Looking at trends over time, the proportion of adults experiencing violent crime has fallen from 4.1% in 2008/09 to 1.7% in 2021/22. Overall, this suggests that violent victimisation in Scotland has been relatively uncommon since 2008/09 and has become an even less prevalent experience over the last 15 years or so.

However, as noted earlier, the SCJS is often better able to identify trends and changes, where they exist, over longer time periods. For example, looking further back reveals that the proportion of adults experiencing violence in 2021/22 (1.7%) was lower than the 3.6% in 2009/10 (and 2008/09), and has declined further in the latest year following a period of stability between 2017/18 and 2019/20.

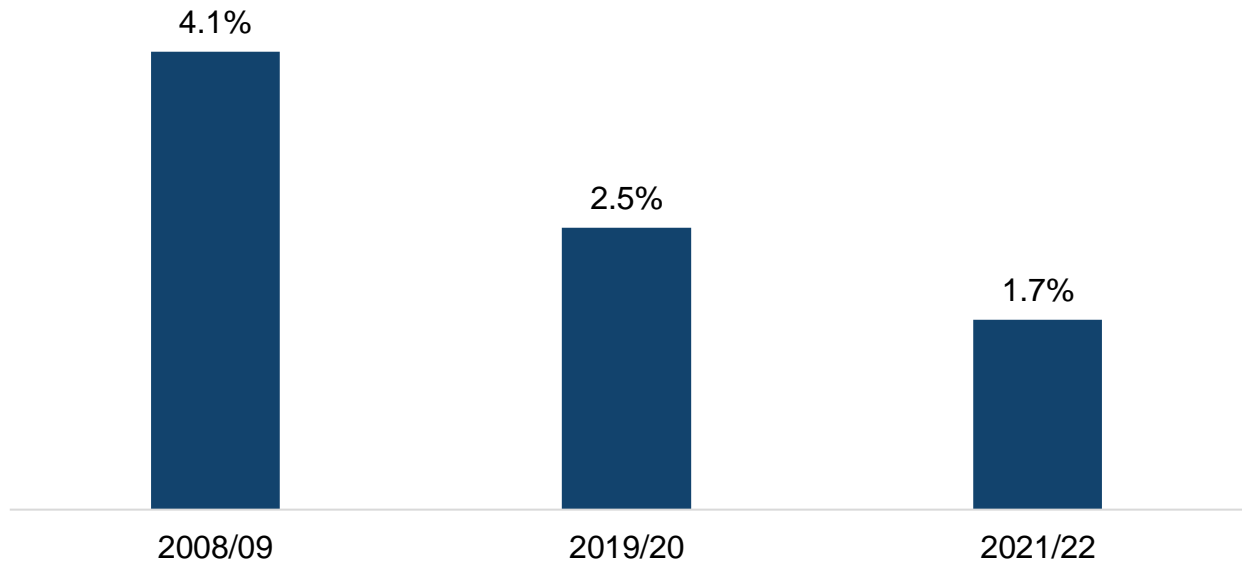
²⁴ Whilst the SCJS produces crime estimates which make it possible to examine trends in the volume of crime experienced over time, a particular strength of the survey is its ability to provide findings on the proportion of adults (also known as the victimisation rate) experiencing crime in any one year with a good level of precision.

²⁵ Please see the [Background to the SCJS](#) chapter for definitions of best, upper and lower estimates.

²⁶ Confidence Intervals around other survey results can be derived using the [data tables](#) and [user statistical testing tool](#) available on the SCJS website.

Figure 4.2: The proportion of adults experiencing violent crime has decreased both since 2008/09 and 2019/20.

Proportion of adults experiencing violent crime (2008/09, 2019/20, 2021/22).



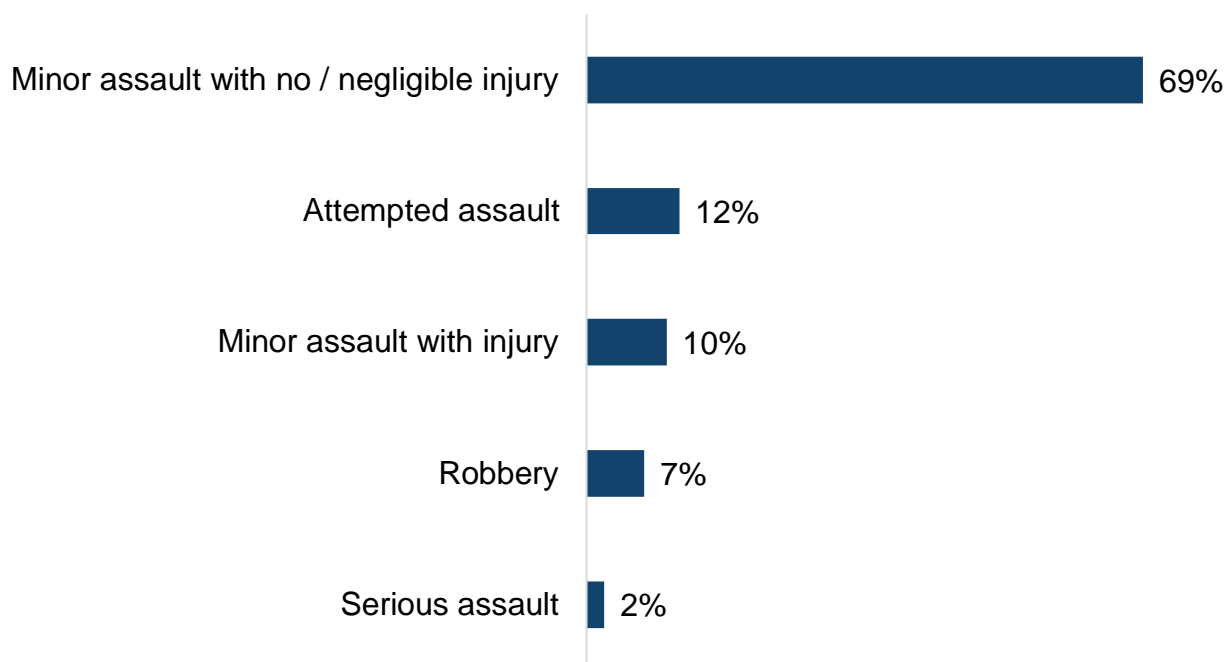
Base: SCJS 2008/09 (16,000); 2019/20 (5,570); 2021/22 (5,520). Variable: PREVIOLENT.

What types of violent crime were most commonly experienced in 2021/22?

Over two-thirds (69%) of violent incidents in 2021/22 were cases of minor assault with no or negligible injury to the victim, as shown in Figure 4.3. By comparison, 2% of violent incidents in 2021/22 were serious assaults and 7% were robberies. Taken together, all categories of assault (including attempted) accounted for 93% of violent crime.

Figure 4.3: The majority of violent incidents in 2021/22 involved minor assault resulting in no or negligible injury.

Categories of crime as proportions of violent crime overall, 2021/22.



Base: 2021/22 (100). Variables: INCMINORASSNOINJURY; INCMINORASSINJURY; INCATTEMPTASSAULT; INCSERASSAULT; INCROB.

Between 2008/09 and 2021/22, the SCJS has consistently estimated that assaults (including attempted, minor and serious assaults) have accounted for at least 93% of violent crime experienced by adults. As such, trends over time in the number of assaults very closely mirror wider trends in violence. The number of assaults has fallen by 58% since 2008/09 (from an estimated 297,000 incidents to 124,000), the same as overall violent crime which fell by 58% in the same time period.

The strength of the SCJS lies in looking at the prevalence of rare events, such as robbery and serious assault, rather than estimating the number of incidents.

Whilst sub-categories of violent crime such as robbery and serious assault are important events for victims, these crimes represent small proportions of violence overall and are experienced by small proportions of the population (and therefore of the SCJS sample), and so this means they have relatively large degrees of error around them²⁷.

As such, for crime types which occur in lower volume (but which may often result in more severe physical injuries) like serious assault, the strength of the SCJS is in

²⁷ For example, the relative standard error (RSE) around the 2021/22 serious assault estimate is 36%. For more on the relative standard error, please see the [Technical Report](#).

examining how prevalent such experiences are in the population (i.e. demonstrating that a relatively small proportion of the population are affected), rather than estimating the number of incidents of these types of crime that occur in a single year or over time. Therefore, the main body of the SCJS report focuses on the prevalence of such crimes. Estimates of the extent of these crimes are provided in the Annex tables (see [Annex Table A1.2](#)).

As (minor) assaults account for the vast majority of violent crime, it is worth noting that the later sections, which look at the characteristics of violent crime in general, will also be mainly driven by the nature of these incidents i.e. higher volume crimes that often result in less severe or no physical injuries.

Expanding the evidence on violent crime

To enhance the wider evidence base on serious assault and robbery, Scottish Government statisticians have carried out two further in-depth studies. The first, published in 2018, examined a random sample of almost 1,000 police recorded crimes of robbery, providing insights into how the characteristics of robbery have changed in Scotland between 2008/09 and 2017/18. Full details and findings can be found [on the Scottish Government website](#).

The second, published in 2019, used a similar approach to explore the changing characteristics of police recorded attempted murder and serious assault between 2008/09 and 2017/18. This report can be accessed via the [Scottish Government website](#).

To collate the evidence on violent crime in Scotland, the Scottish Government published a [report on non-sexual violence in Scotland](#). This report brought together official data from a range of Scottish sources – both Criminal Justice and Health (including SCJS and police recorded crime data) – to better understand the profile and problem of non-sexual violence in Scotland. The report was published in September 2019 and, as such, features 2017/18 SCJS data, although many of the key findings will remain unchanged with the latest SCJS data.

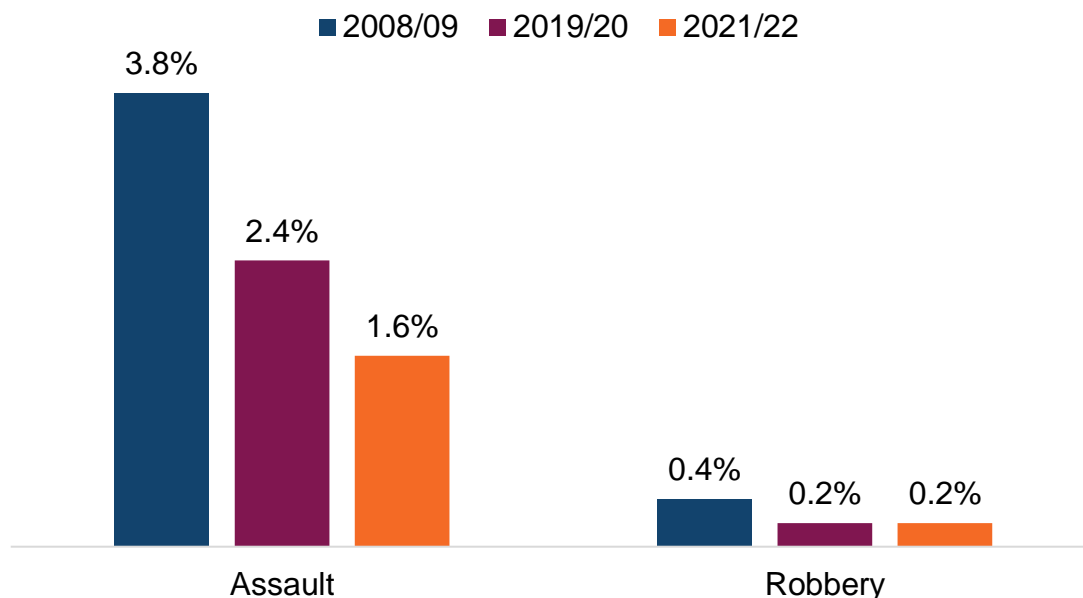
Two reports on violence prevention have recently been published – [What Works to Prevent Violence Against Women and Girls: A Summary of the Evidence](#) and [What Works to Prevent Youth Violence: A Summary of the Evidence](#).

Returning to SCJS findings, as in previous years, the prevalence rate for different categories of violent crime varied. An estimated 1.6% of adults were victims of any sort of assault in 2021/22, whilst 0.2% experienced robbery.

Examining trends over time, the SCJS finds that the prevalence of assault has fallen from 3.8% in 2008/09 and from 2.4% in 2019/20, again demonstrating a similar trend to violence overall. The proportion of adults experiencing robbery has fallen from 0.4% since 2008/09, but was unchanged since 2019/20, as shown in Figure 4.4.

Figure 4.4: The proportion of adults experiencing assault fell by 2.2 percentage points since 2008/09 and by 0.9 percentage points since 2019/20.

Proportion of adults experiencing types of violent crime (2008/09, 2019/20, 2021/22).



Base: SCJS 2008/09 (16,000); 2019/20 (5,570); 2021/22 (5,520). Variables: PREVASSAULT; PREVROB.

Whilst a small proportion of adults were victims of any sort of assault in 2021/22, experiences of more serious forms of violence were rarer still. This is in line with the [finding](#) that the vast majority of violent crime was accounted for by minor assaults. For instance, a greater proportion of adults experienced minor assault with no or negligible injury (1.1%) than minor assault resulting in injury (0.3%) or serious assault (0.1%).

How did experiences of violent crime vary across the population?

The SCJS enables us to examine how experiences of violent crime varied across the population and area characteristics. Similar to 2019/20, the likelihood of experiencing violence in 2021/22 was lowest for those aged 60 and over. Unlike in 2019/20, no significant difference was found in the likelihood of being a victim of violence by sex or disability status.

No significant difference was found between those aged 16 to 24 and 25 to 44, the only time in the past five years a difference was detected between these groups was in 2018/19. Those aged 60 and over continued to be the age group least likely to be victims of violence, with fewer than 1 in 100 experiencing violence in this age group, in 2021/22 compared to around 1 in 30 of those aged 16 to 24.

The 2021/22 SCJS detected no difference in the likelihood of experiencing violence between adults living in the 15% most deprived areas and the rest of Scotland. This

contrasts with the 2019/20 finding, where a significance difference was found between these two groups, but is back in line with 2018/19.

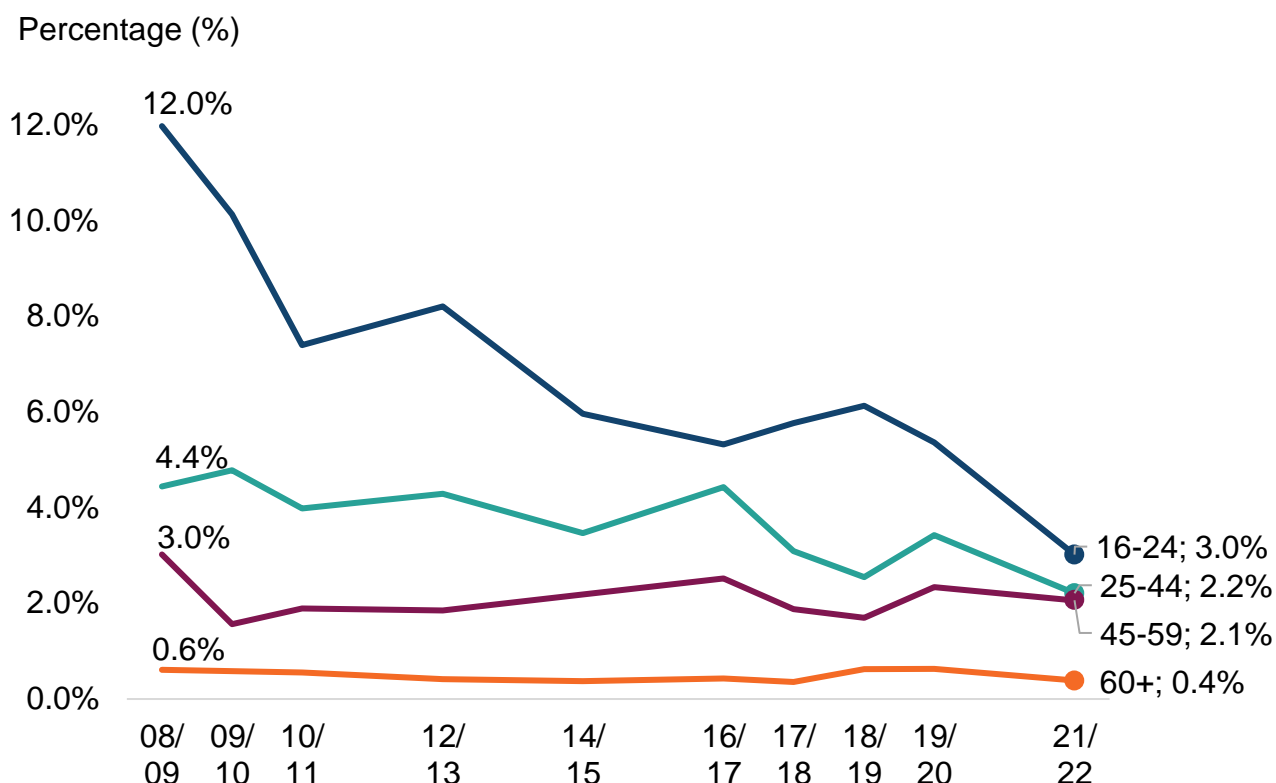
The 2021/22 SCJS also found no difference in the likelihood of experiencing violence by rurality. This is similar to 2018/19 and 2017/18 but differs from 2019/20²⁸.

Looking at trends over time, the proportion of those aged 16 to 24 who were victims of violence decreased by three quarters since 2008/09, from 12.0% to 3.0% in 2021/22 and those aged 25 to 44 halved from 4.4% to 2.2% over the same period. In contrast, the prevalence rates for 45 to 59 year olds and for those aged 60 and over have shown no change over this time (Figure 4.5).

²⁸ Additional breakdowns are provided in [Annex table A1.7](#) and the SCJS supporting [data tables](#). For example, age within sex, disability status, and tenure.

Figure 4.5: Adults aged between 16 and 24 have shown the largest decrease in victimisation rate since 2008/09.

Proportion of adults experiencing violent crime by age, 2008/09 to 2021/22.



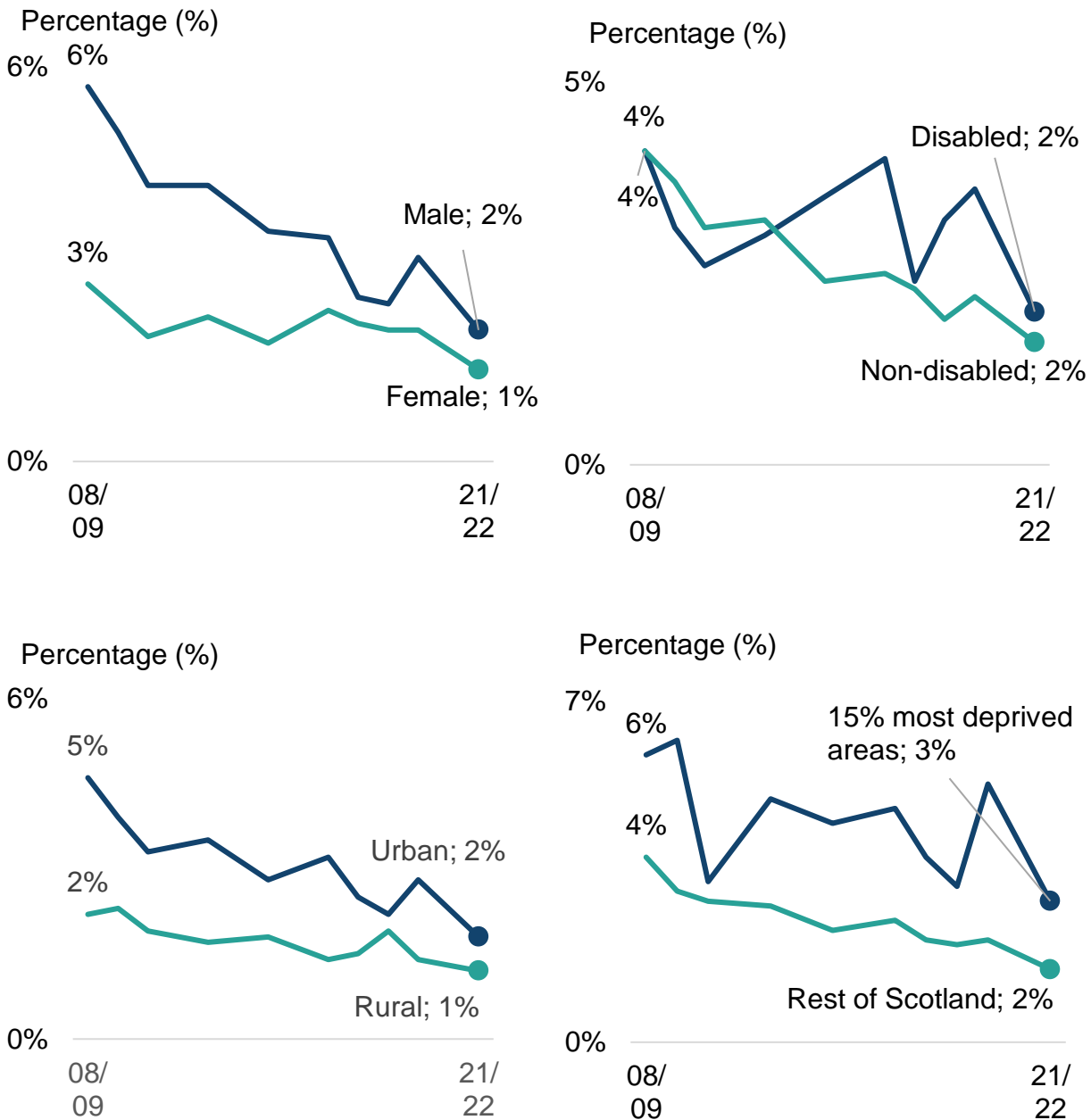
Base: SCJS 2008/09 (16,000); 2009/10 (16,040); 2010/11 (13,010); 2012/13 (12,050); 2014/15 (11,470); 2016/17 (5,570); 2017/18 (5,480); 2018/19 (5,540); 2019/20 (5,570); 2021/22 (5,520). Variables: PREVVIOLENT; QDAGE.

Between 2008/09 and 2021/22, the proportion experiencing violence has decreased for all population sub-groups. The only exceptions are people aged 45-59 and people aged 60+, as well as those living in a rural area, which are unchanged from the position in 2008/09.

In the shorter term, since 2019/20 the proportion experiencing violence has decreased for: males; disabled people; those living in the 15% most deprived areas of Scotland; and those living in an urban area. Full information on how the prevalence of violence has changed over time for these sub-groups is shown in Figure 4.6 below.

Figure 4.6: Since 2008/09, the proportion experiencing violence has significantly decreased for both males and females, both 15% most deprived areas and rest of Scotland, both urban and rural areas, and both disabled and non-disabled people.

Proportion of adults experiencing violent crime by sex, area deprivation, rurality and disability status, 2008/09 to 2021/22.



Base: SCJS 2008/09 (16,000); 2009/10 (16,040); 2010/11 (13,010); 2012/13 (12,050); 2014/15 (11,470); 2016/17 (5,570); 2017/18 (5,480); 2018/19 (5,540); 2019/20 (5,570); 2021/22 (5,520). Variables: PREVVIOLENT; TABQDGEN; SIMD_TOP; TABURBRUR; TABQDISAB.

When considering findings by sex, it is important to note that victims of partner abuse may not report such experiences through the face-to-face element of the SCJS which produces the main survey prevalence rates. As such, questions on experiences of partner abuse (covering both physical and psychological abuse) are answered in a self-completion element of the survey – with the latest key findings on this topic from 2018/19 and 2019/20 combined presented in the [2019/20 Main Findings Report](#). These figures showed that in the 12 month period prior to interview, experiences of partner abuse were more common for females than males (3.7% and 2.6%, respectively). Due to improvements made to the partner abuse questionnaire for the 2023/24 survey sweep, analysts are currently developing plans on how to publish the findings for the standalone 2021/22 year. Further background to these changes are detailed in [Annex D: Changes to the survey for 2023/24](#), and users will be informed of future plans through the ScotStat network.

What can the SCJS tell us about repeat victimisation?

The SCJS estimates that most adults did not experience violent crime in 2021/22, whilst 1.7% of the population were victims of at least one violent crime.

The survey also enables us to further explore how experiences varied amongst victims and examine the concentration of crime, including what proportion of victims experienced a particular type of crime more than once during the year²⁹. This is known as ‘repeat victimisation’.

Further information about the approach taken to process and derive SCJS results, including on repeat victimisation, is provided in the [Technical Report](#).

Less than 1 in every 100 adults were victims of repeated incidents of violence, but their experiences accounted for almost two-thirds of violent crime in 2021/22.

Table 4.2 explores the volume of crime experienced by victims in more detail to outline the extent of repeat victimisation and further unpack the concentration of violent crime amongst the adult population. It shows that 1.1% of adults were victims of a single violent incident over the year, with a smaller proportion of the population (0.6%) experiencing repeat victimisation (two or more violent crimes). These repeat victims are estimated to have experienced on average 3.0 violent crimes each during 2021/22, whilst together this group of adults are estimated to have experienced almost two-thirds (63%) of all violent crime committed against adults over this period. The table also highlights that an even smaller proportion of the population (0.1%) were high frequency repeat victims, who experienced five or more incidents each.

²⁹ i.e. two or more experiences of violent crime.

Table 4.2: Almost two-thirds of all violent crime was experienced by repeat victims, who experienced an average of 3.0 incidents each.

Proportion of all SCJS crime experienced by victims, by number of crimes experienced.

Number of crimes	% of population	% of violent crime
None	98.3%	0%
One	1.1%	37%
Two	0.4%	27%
Three	0.1%	9%
Four	0.0%	4%
Five or more	0.1%	24%
Two or more	0.6%	63%

Base: SCJS 2021/22 (5,520). Variables: PREVIOLENT; INCVIOLENT.

The proportion of adults experiencing only one incident of violence, those experiencing two or more incidents, and those experiencing five or more incidents were all lower in 2021/22 than in 2008/09. Whilst this means repeat violent victimisation for two or more incidents was less prevalent in 2021/22 than 15 years ago, findings comparing single years should be interpreted with caution and be considered in the context of broader trends over that period.

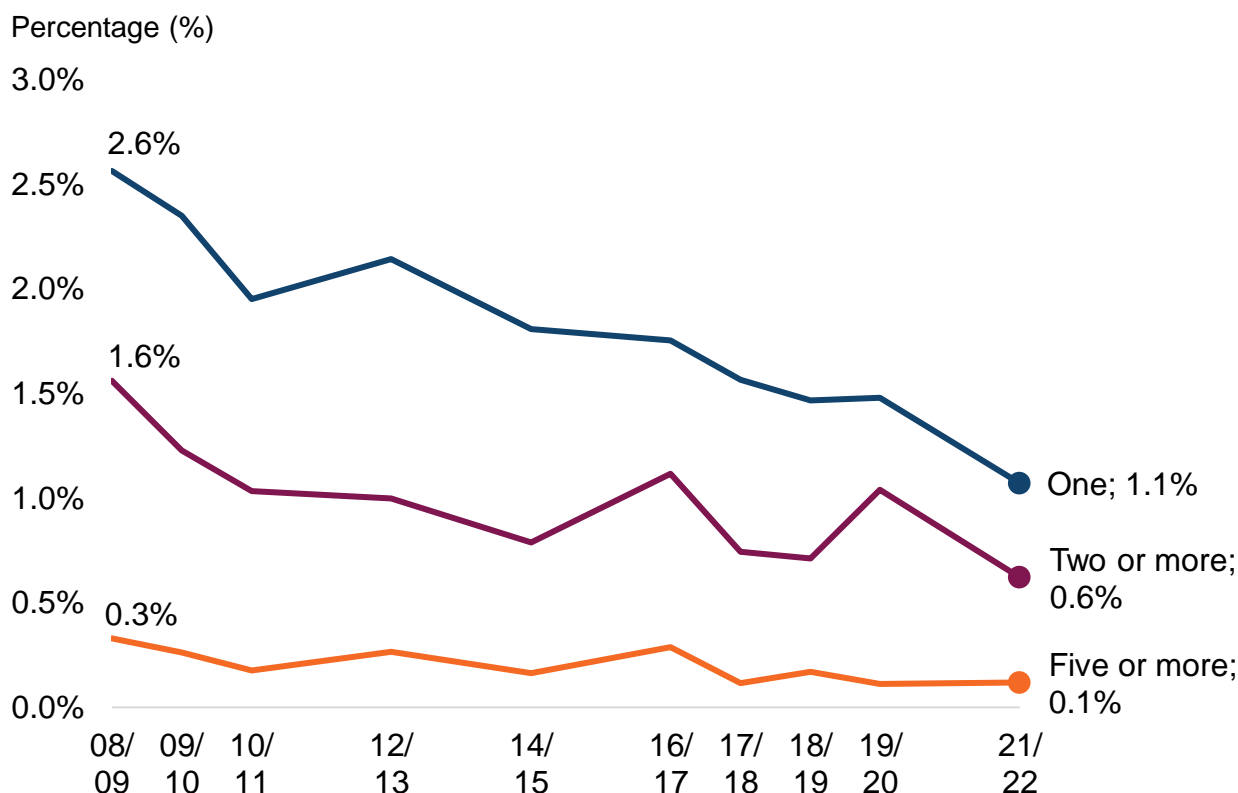
Looking more closely, with the exception of 2016/17, the proportion experiencing two or more violent crimes has been below the 2008/09 baseline (1.6%) since 2010/11. In 2016/17, the 1.1% estimate was not significantly different to the 2008/09 figure.

Although high frequency victimisation is consistently rare, as stated above, the proportion of adults experiencing five or more incidents in 2021/22 was lower than in 2008/09. This is in line with the previous years findings.

Figure 4.7 shows trends in single and repeat violent victimisation over time. It shows decreases since 2008/09, while the apparent differences for single and high frequency victimisation since 2019/20 are not statistically significant.

Figure 4.7: The proportion of adults experiencing multiple violent victimisation fell from 1.6 to 0.6% between 2008/09 and 2021/22.

Proportion of adults experiencing a number of violent crimes, 2008/09 to 2021/22.



Base: SCJS 2008/09 (16,000); 2009/10 (16,040); 2010/11 (13,010); 2012/13 (12,050); 2014/15 (11,470); 2016/17 (5,570); 2017/18 (5,480); 2018/19 (5,540); 2019/20 (5,570); 2021/22 (5,520). Variables: PREVIOLENT; INCVIOLENT.

Note: the 'five or more' category is a sub-set of the 'two or more' category.

Expanding the evidence on repeat violent victimisation

The Scottish Government published a [rapid evidence review on repeat violent victimisation](#) in April 2019, which informed the commissioning of a qualitative study to better understand repeat violent victimisation in Scotland, in late 2019. The study resumed in March 2022 following the lifting of COVID-19 restrictions on face-to-face research and completed in summer 2023. It is the first quantitative study of repeat violence in Scotland.

The research explored the views and experiences of 62 people with lived and living experience of repeat violence via in-depth qualitative interviews, alongside 33 community stakeholders who support them. The research was centred in distinct, geographically defined communities: Urban, Town and Rural areas characterised by high levels of deprivation and violent victimisation. The research focused on (but was not limited to) interpersonal, physical non-sexual violence.

The final report, [Repeat Violence in Scotland: A Qualitative Approach](#), was published in September 2023, alongside three briefing papers: [alcohol-related and community violence](#); [poverty, violence and the drug economy](#); and [gendered violence and victimisation](#).

The research highlights the detrimental impact of violence on the everyday lives of those who experience it. The research has unpacked patterns of repeat violence and addressed an important knowledge gap, providing a detailed insight into:

- factors that increase vulnerability to repeat victimisation amongst high-risk groups, including people living in deprived areas, people with convictions, and people defined as having complex needs
- the lived experience of repeat violence and related forms of psychological trauma and social harm, including violent offending
- the support needs and experiences of people who experience repeat violence, who tend to be less likely to seek and access police and victim services

The research is being used to inform the implementation of the published [Violence Prevention Framework](#) for Scotland.

What were the characteristics of violent crime?

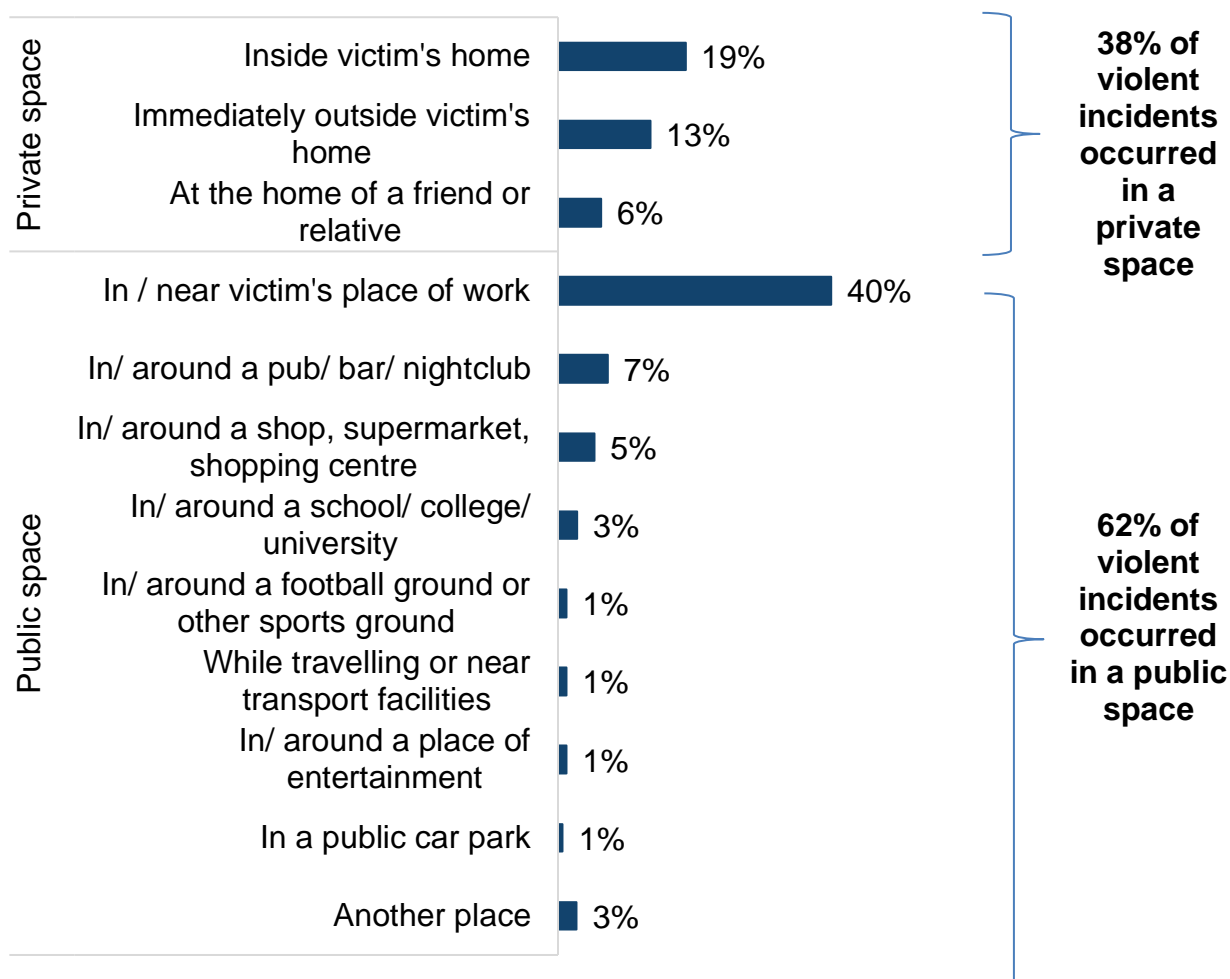
When locations are combined into broader categories³⁰, the SCJS estimates that over three-fifths (62%) of violent incidents in 2021/22 occurred in a public setting, with the remainder taking place in a private space. This is similar to the finding in both 2008/09 and 2019/20 (67% and 63% respectively), where violent incidents were also more likely to take place in public settings. However, this has increased from 2018/19 where 46% of incidents were estimated to take place in public settings.

Figure 4.8 looks at particular locations more closely and demonstrates that violent crime was experienced in a variety of settings in 2021/22.

³⁰ For the purposes of analysis, 'private space' includes the respondent's home, immediately outside their home (includes gardens, driveways, sheds and the street) and the homes of friends and relatives. The definition of outside the victim's home may mean that some of these crimes could be viewed as taking part in a public setting instead – although it is not possible to separate those cases. 'Public space' refers to incidents taking place elsewhere.

Figure 4.8: The majority of violent incidents occurred within a public space with in/near the victim’s place of work as the largest category.

Proportion of violent crime incidents occurring in different locations, 2021/22.



Base: Violent crime incidents (100). Variables: QWH1 / QWH3 / QWH5 / QWH7.

Where respondents provided details about when an incident occurred³¹, a higher proportion occurred during the week (65%) than at the weekend³² (35%).

Although the SCJS did not ask directly about hate crime, respondents who had experienced violent crime were asked if they believed the incident was, or might have been, motivated by a range of motivating factors³³. The majority (83%) of violent crimes in 2021/22 were thought to have been motivated by none of these factors. Harassment and discrimination is discussed in more detail in [Section 9.2](#).

³¹ i.e. excluding those who said don't know or refused to give a time, which was the case for 11% of violent crime in 2021/22.

³² Weekends were defined as 6 pm on Friday to Sunday midnight.

³³ These motivating factors were their ethnic origin/race; religion; sectarianism; gender/gender identity or perception of this; disability/condition they have; sexual orientation; age; and pregnancy/maternity or perception of this.

Respondents who had experienced violent crime were asked if the incident involved the internet, any type of online activity or an internet enabled device. This question was first asked in the 2018/19 SCJS. In 2021/22, 3% of violent crime incidents involved a cyber element, a similar level to 2019/20. Cyber crime is discussed in more detail in [Section 9.2](#).

What do we know about perpetrators of violent crime?

In 90% of violent incidents reported in 2021/22, respondents were able to provide some information about the offender. The section below presents headline results on the details provided³⁴. All findings are proportions of cases where respondents were able to say something about the person or people who carried out the offence, unless otherwise stated.

The SCJS results highlight that the majority of violent crimes in 2021/22 (80%) were carried out by male offenders only – a consistent finding over the years. A further 13% of incidents involved female offenders only, whilst in 6% of cases both males and females were responsible³⁵.

Figure 4.9 shows that violent crimes involved people from a range of age groups and suggests that perpetrators tend to be from younger cohorts³⁶, while only 36% involved any offenders aged 40 or over. This finding is consistent with previous years, though the proportion of incidents involving people from the individual age categories tends to show fluctuation from year to year.

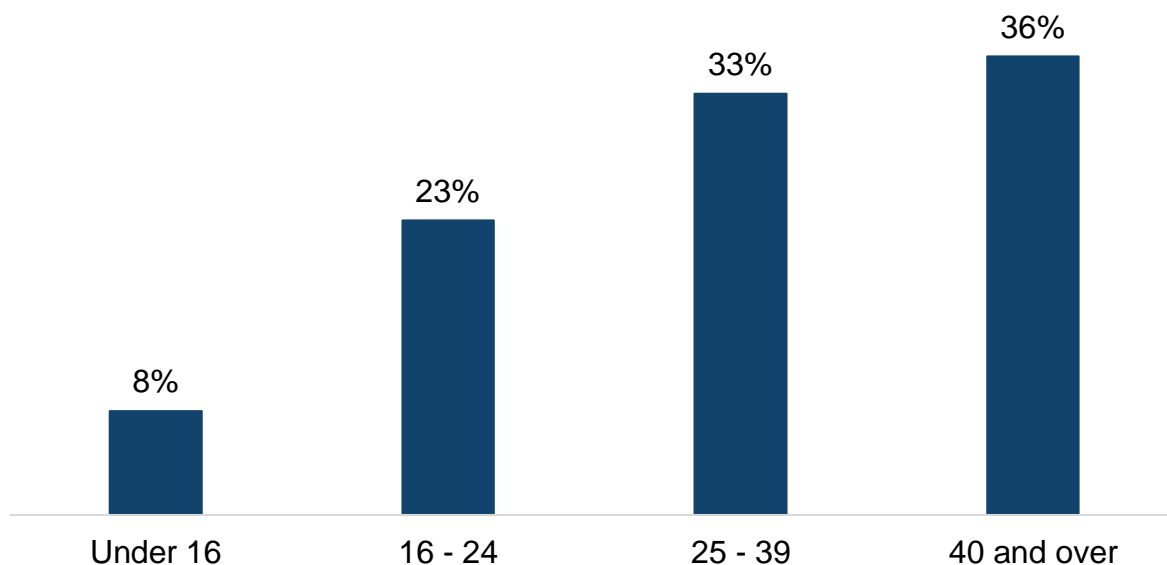
³⁴ Additional results are available in the supporting [data tables](#). The analysis presented is based on a relatively small number of incidents (n=103). As such, results have relatively large margins of error around them meaning that they should be interpreted with caution.

³⁵ 1% of respondents answered 'Don't know' to this question.

³⁶ It is important to note that individual incidents may have involved offenders from different age groups. For instance, a proportion of the 23% of cases involving offenders aged 16-24 may have also involved perpetrators from other age groups.

Figure 4.9: The majority of offenders in 2021/22 were aged 25 or over.

Proportion of violent crime incidents involving offenders of each age group, 2021/22.



Base: Violent crime incidents where respondent could say something about offender (100). Variable: QDAGE.

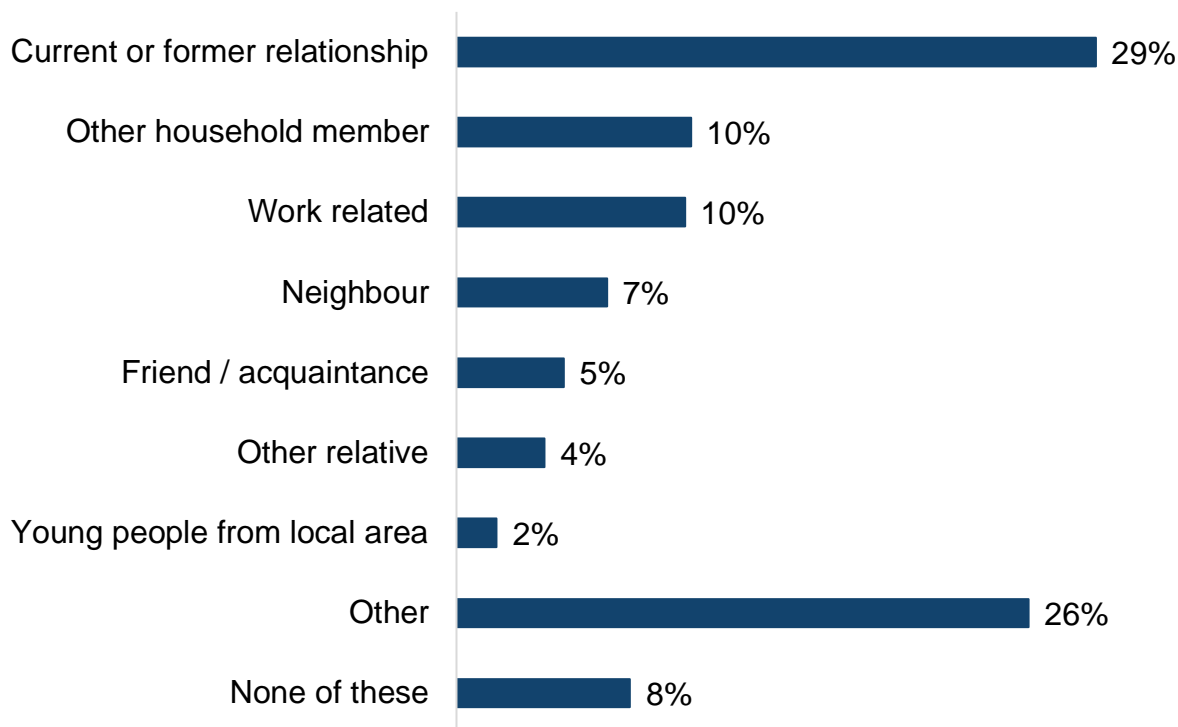
Most violent incidents (64%) in 2021/22 were committed by people who the victims knew or had seen before. Where offenders were known by the victim, just over two-thirds of incidents (70%) were said to have involved people 'known well'.

Those who said they knew the offender in some way were asked about their relationship to the offender³⁷. Figure 4.10 shows the range of relationships between victims and offenders.

³⁷ An amendment was made to the questionnaire in 2018/19 which meant this question was asked of all respondents who said they knew the offender, whereas previously just those who said they were 'known well' were asked this question.

Figure 4.10: Violent incidents the offender was either a current or former partner or an ‘other’ relationship were most common.

Relationship of offender to victim as a proportion of violent incidents where the offender was known in some way, 2021/22.



Base: Violent crime incidents where respondent knew the offender (80). Variable: QRE2.

Note: ‘Current or former partner’ includes any current or former husband, wife, partner, boyfriend or girlfriend. ‘Other relative’ includes any son or daughter (in law) or other relative. ‘Work related’ includes any client or member of the public contacted through work, or a workmate/colleague.

When considering these findings, it is important to note that victims of partner abuse may not report such experiences through the face-to-face element of the SCJS. As such, questions on experiences of partner abuse (covering both physical and psychological abuse) are answered in a self-completion element of the survey – with the latest key findings on this topic from 2018/19 and 2019/20 combined presented in the [2019/20 Main Findings Report](#).

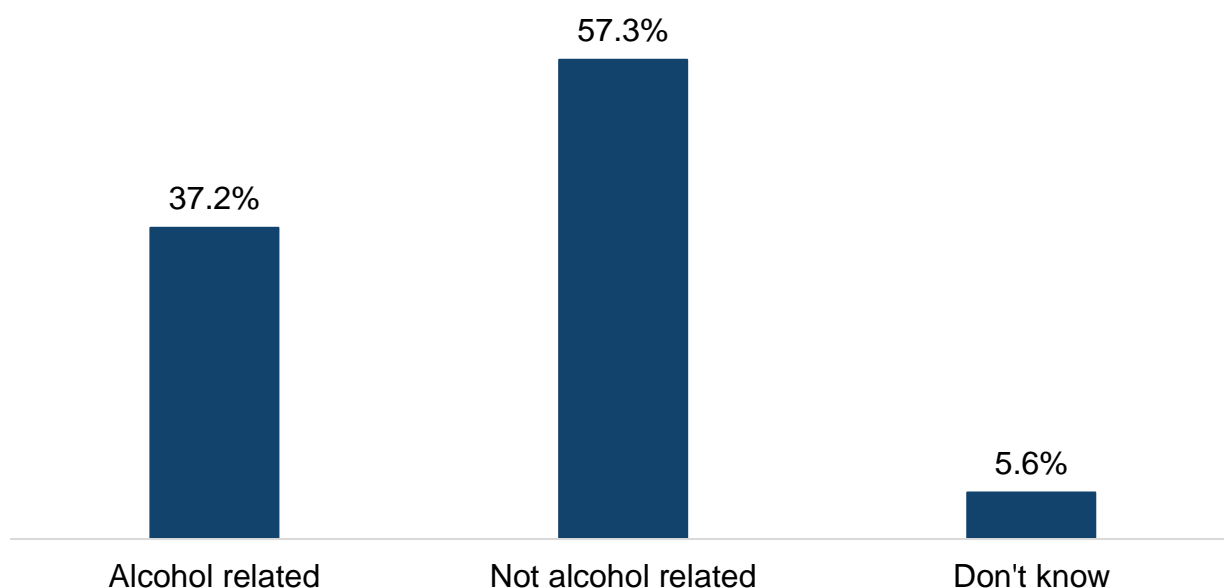
What do we know about the role of alcohol, drugs and weapons in violent crime?

Where the victims were able to say something about the offender in 2021/22, almost two-fifths (37%) believed them to be under the influence of alcohol. This figure is lower than the estimate in 2008/09 (63%) but unchanged from 2019/20.

As shown in Figure 4.11 below, it should be noted that in 6% of violent incidents (where victims were able to say something about the offender) the victim did not know if the offender was under the influence of alcohol or not.

Figure 4.11³⁸: Almost two-fifths of violent crime involved offenders perceived to be under the influence of alcohol.

Proportion of violent crime with offenders perceived to be under the influence of alcohol, 2021/22.



Base: Violent crime incidents where respondent could say something about offender (100). Variable: QAL.

Relatedly, victims reported that under one-in-three violent crimes (30%) involved offenders who were thought to be under the influence of drugs in 2021/22, unchanged from 2008/09 and 2019/20.

Combining this data, in 2021/22 it was found that offenders were believed to be under the influence of alcohol and/or drugs in just under half (46%) of violent incidents where the victims were able to say something about the offender. This is a decrease on both the proportion in 2008/09 (68%) but unchanged since 2019/20. This will be an area to monitor in the future.

Where a violent incident involved someone seeing or hearing what was going on (i.e. the victim themselves or another witness, which was the case in 97% of incidents), further questions were asked about the presence of a weapon. In

³⁸ These findings are based only on incidents where the respondent could say something about the offender(s). This follows an updated analytical approach first adopted in 2016/17 to focus only on incidents where victims could provide information about the perpetrator(s) and has been applied to the full time-series.

2021/22, 18% of such incidents were said to have involved perpetrators with weapons, unchanged from 2010/11 (when the wording of this question was updated to its current format) and from 2019/20.

When combining categories (in a similar way to the [police recorded crime statistics](#)) the SCJS found that bladed/pointed articles³⁹ were used in 7% of violent incidents where someone saw or heard what was happening, unchanged from 2019/20. However, due to the small sample sizes, the sub-groups of this category are prone to fluctuations. For example, whilst in 2018/19 the SCJS found 4% of these crimes involved a screwdriver, no such crimes were detected in 2019/20 or 2021/22, and conversely, no knife crimes were detected in the 2018/19 SCJS, while 7% involved a knife in 2021/22.

What was the impact of violent crime?

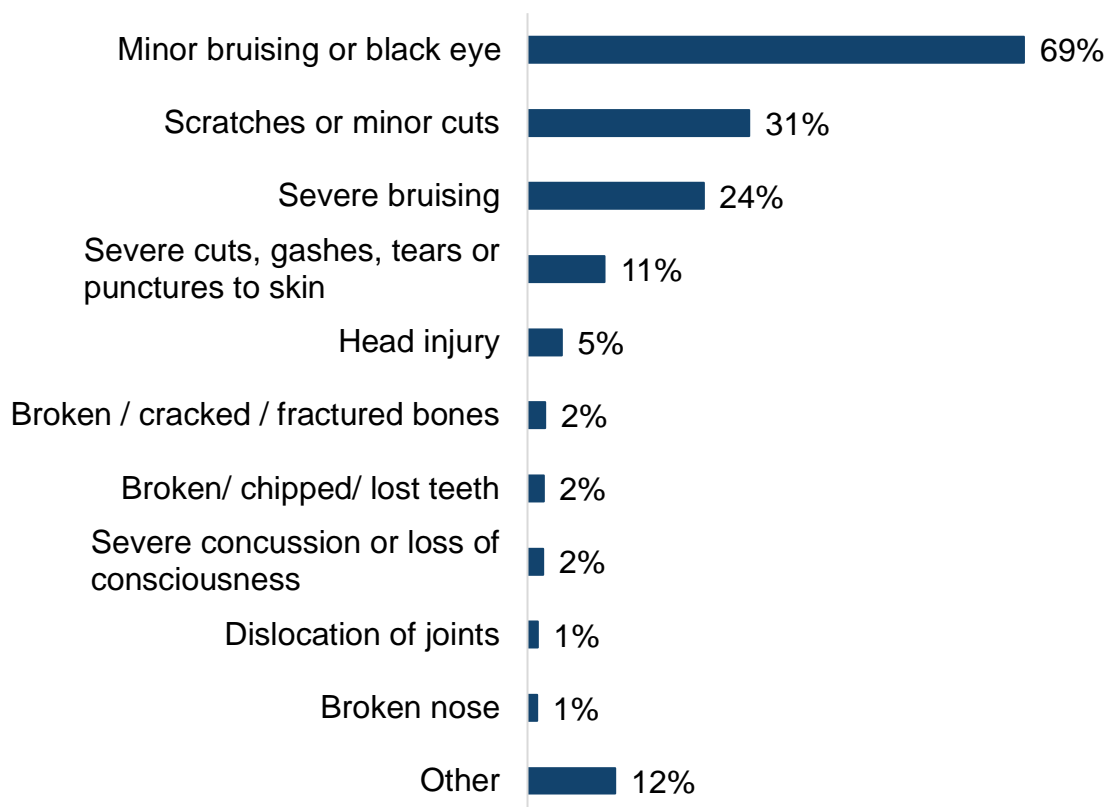
Where violent crime resulted in some sort of injury (56% of incidents), the most common injury sustained was minor bruising or a black eye (69%). More serious injuries like broken bones and internal injuries occurred much less frequently, as shown in Figure 4.12⁴⁰.

³⁹ Bladed/pointed articles includes knives, screwdrivers and syringes.

⁴⁰ Other injuries are collected as open text responses to capture injuries like bite marks, sore hands and scraped knuckles which cannot be coded under existing categories.

Figure 4.12: The injuries commonly reported by victims are consistent with the finding that the majority of violent incidents are cases of minor assault resulting in no or negligible injury.

Type of injuries sustained as a proportion of violent incidents resulting in injury, 2021/22.



Base: Violent crime incidents where respondent was injured (60). Variable: QINW.

In just over half of incidents, the emotional impacts reported by victims of violent crime in 2021/22 were annoyance (reported in 51% of violent incidents), anger (46%) and shock (34%). Victims in just over a tenth of incidents (12%) said they experienced no emotional impacts, similar to the level in 2008/09 (10%) and in 2019/20 (12%).

What proportion of violent crime was reported to the police?

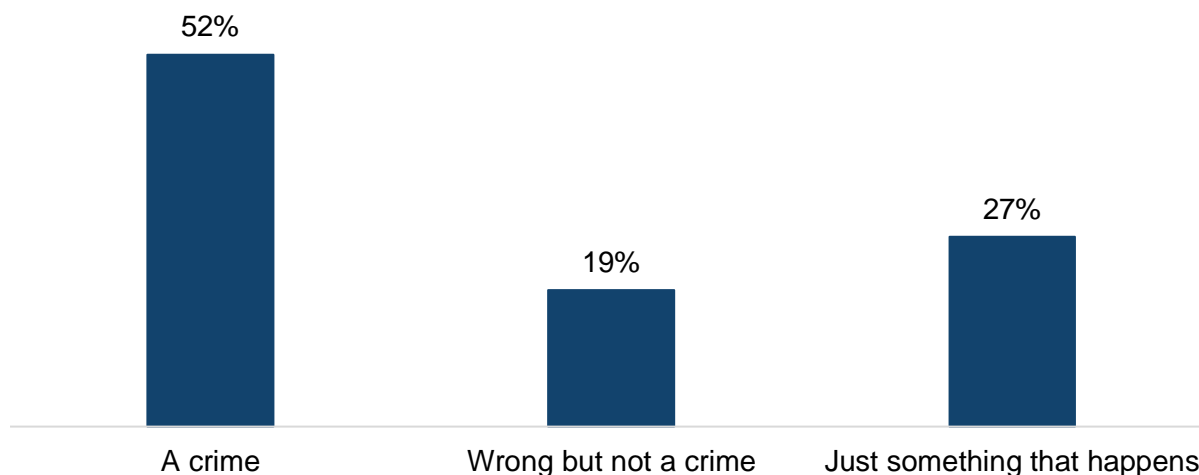
The 2021/22 SCJS estimates that just over a third of violent incidents (34%) were brought to the attention of the police. This is unchanged from the position in both 2008/09 and 2019/20, and also not significantly different than the [reporting rate for property crime](#) in 2021/22.

There can be a range of factors which influence whether or not an individual reports a crime to the police, not least how the victim views their own experience. The SCJS found that in just over half of violent incidents in 2021/22 (52%) victims thought their experience should be described as ‘a crime’, as shown in Figure 4.13

below. Over half (57%) of incidents which victims considered to be a crime were brought to the attention of the police in 2021/22.

Figure 4.13: In over half of incidents, victims thought their experience was a crime, with over a quarter thinking it was just something that happens.

Victim's description of violent crime incidents experienced, 2021/22.



Base: Violent crime incidents (100). Variable: QCRNO.

When asked directly why they did not report their experience to the police, victims cited a range of reasons. These included that:

- the matter was dealt with personally by the victim (40%)
- the issue was considered a private, personal or family matter (23%)
- the police would not have been bothered/ not interested (20%)
- the victim had previous bad experience with the police (17%)

In addition to the options listed in the survey, 'other' reasons were cited in 8% of cases.

What consequences did victims believe offenders should have faced?

Regardless of whether the incident was reported to the police, victims in 44% of violent crimes thought the offender should have been prosecuted in court. This proportion has shown no significant change since 2008/09 or in the previous year, and is similar to the [proportion of property crime victims](#) in 2021/22 who thought offenders should have been prosecuted in court.

Over one-in-four (26%) of those who did not think court was appropriate said they should have been given some kind of help to stop them offending, whilst just under one-in-four (24%) thought the offender should have apologised for what they had done and around one-in-five (21%) thought they should have been given some kind of warning. Respondents' views of the criminal justice system are discussed in more detail in [Chapter 7](#).

5. Focus on property crime

What was the extent and prevalence of property crime in 2021/22?

The Scottish Crime and Justice Survey (SCJS) estimates that 360,000 incidents⁴¹ of property-related crime⁴² were experienced by adults in Scotland in 2021/22. This represents 73% of all crime measured by the SCJS in 2021/22; the remainder being violent incidents.

As a sample survey of the general public, SCJS results are estimated values with margins of error, rather than exact counts of criminal incidents. Further information on the process used to calculate estimates is contained within the [Technical Report](#). Taking into account confidence intervals, the SCJS estimates that there were between 313,000 and 407,000 incidents of property crime in Scotland in 2021/22. Analysis from this point onwards will focus on the best estimates for results across the survey for each survey year.

Looking at trends over time, the SCJS finds that the number of property crime incidents has decreased by 51% since 2008/09. Figure 5.1 displays the number of property incidents estimated to have taken place by each year of the SCJS since 2008/09, demonstrating a large fall over the past 15 years or so⁴³.

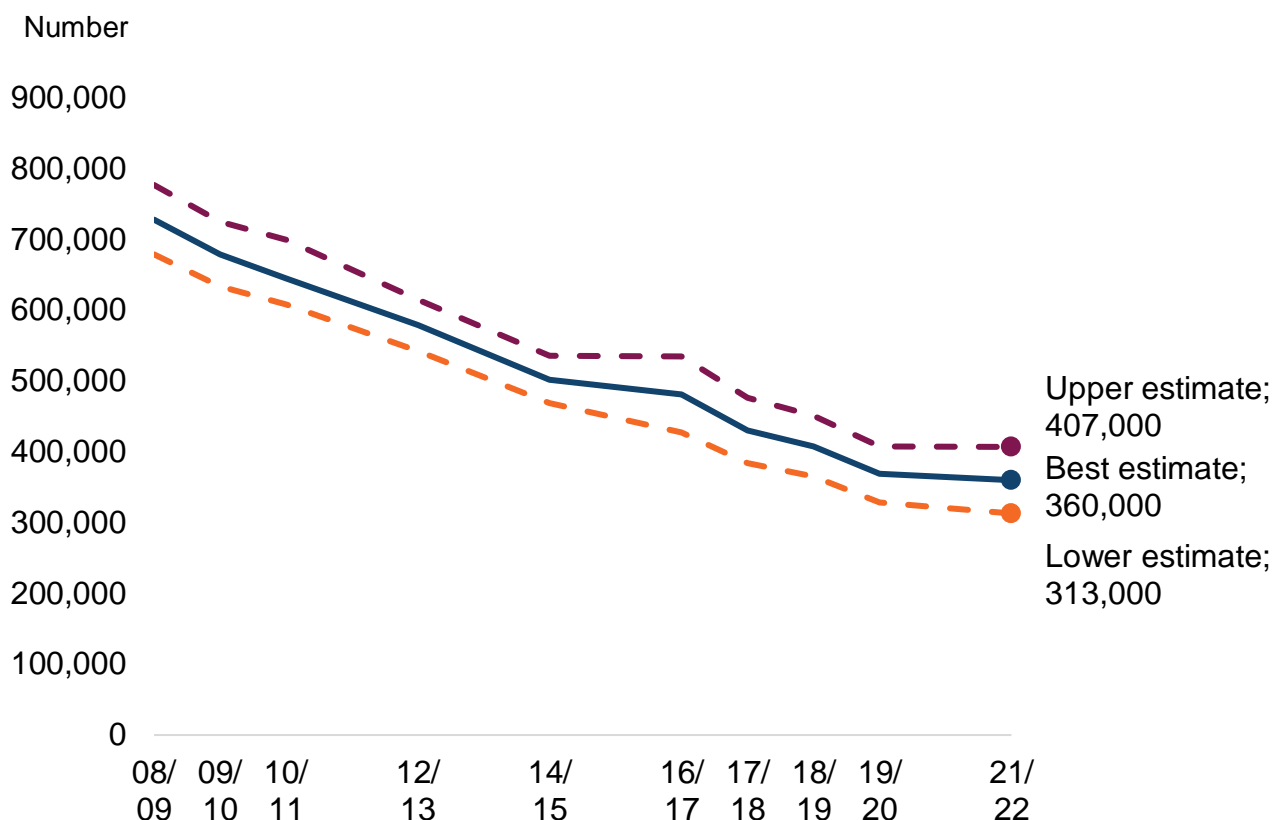
⁴¹ Crime estimates are rounded to the nearest 1,000 crimes.

⁴² Details on the specific crimes included within the property crime group are outlined in the [‘Overview of crime’ chapter](#).

⁴³ The increase in confidence interval shown by the greater difference between the lower and upper estimates from 2016/17 onwards is due to a reduction in the target survey sample size. Please see the [Background to the SCJS](#) chapter for definitions of best, upper and lower estimates.

Figure 5.1: Property crime in Scotland has shown a declining trend since 2008/09, but is unchanged since 2019/20.

Estimated number of property crime incidents, 2008/09 to 2021/22.



Base: SCJS 2008/09 (16,000); 2009/10 (16,040); 2010/11 (13,010); 2012/13 (12,050); 2014/15 (11,470); 2016/17 (5,570); 2017/18 (5,480); 2018/19 (5,540); 2019/20 (5,570); 2021/22 (5,520). Variable: INCPROPERTY.

Table 5.1 examines results from key comparator years⁴⁴ more closely and shows that the estimated number of incidents of property crime experienced by adults has:

- halved (by 51%) since 2008/09, from 728,000 to 360,000– the decrease of almost 370,000 incidents is statistically significant
- shown no change since the last SCJS in 2019/20 – the apparent decrease from 369,000 in 2019/20 is not statistically significant

⁴⁴ [Annex Table A1.2](#) provides best estimates of the number of incidents of property crime for each year of the SCJS since 2008/09.

Table 5.1: The estimated number of property crimes has fallen by around a half since 2008/09 but unchanged since 2019/20.

Estimated number of incidents of property crimes (2008/09, 2019/20 and 2021/22) with percentage change since 2008/09 and 2019/20.

Number of SCJS crimes	2008/09	2019/20	2021/22	Change since 2008/09	Change since 2019/20
Best estimate	728,000	369,000	360,000	Down 51%	No change
Lower estimate	679,000	329,000	313,000	-	-
Upper estimate	777,000	408,000	407,000	-	-
Number of respondents	16,000	5,570	5,520	-	-

Variable: INCPROPERTY.

Whilst the SCJS has detected no change in the level of property crime since 2019/20, it does find evidence that property crime has continued to fall in recent years with a significant decrease of 16% detected between 2017/18 and 2021/22. Given that it is often more challenging to find significant changes between adjacent survey years, this decrease over the last few years provides some indication that property crime has remained on a declining trend despite the lack of change detected since the 2019/20 SCJS.

What is the proportion of adults experiencing property crime?

The proportion of adults experiencing property crime has also fallen since 2008/09. The SCJS results show that, as in previous years, most adults were not victims of any crime in 2021/22, with 8.7% experiencing property crime. Adults were around five times more likely to have experienced property crime than [violent crime](#) in 2021/22, which was experienced by 1.7% of the population.

As with incident numbers, crime prevalence rates are also estimates derived from a sample survey of the population which have associated margins of error around them. Taking into account this margin of error, between 7.8% and 9.6% of the adult population were estimated to have experienced property crime in 2021/22, with 8.7% representing the best estimate⁴⁵. Again, as with incident counts, analysis from

⁴⁵ Please see the [Background to the SCJS](#) chapter for definitions of best, upper and lower estimates.

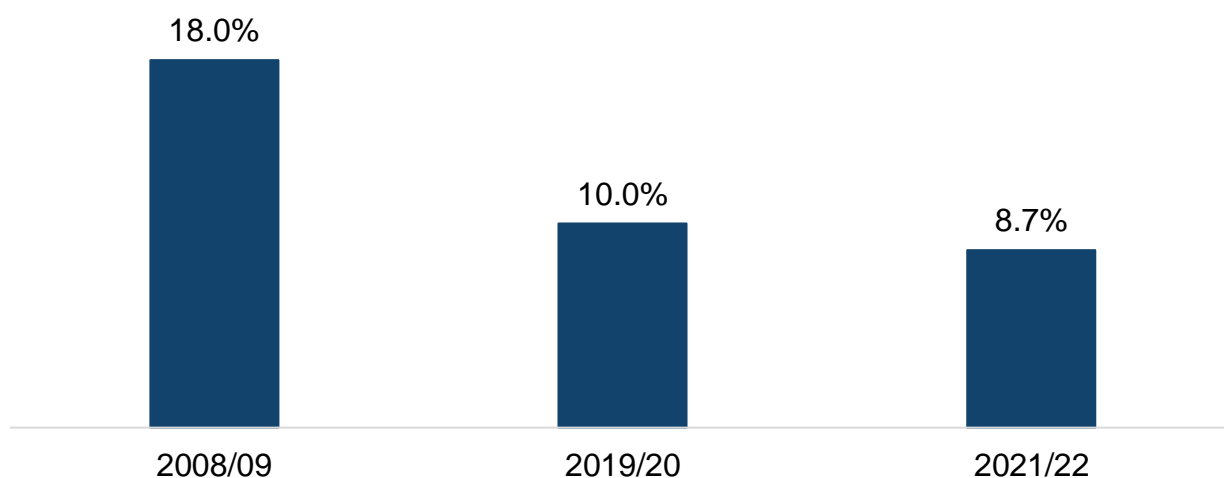
this point onwards will focus on the best estimates for results across the survey for each survey year⁴⁶.

Looking at trends over time, the proportion of adults who were victims of property crime has fallen in the last 15 years or so from 18.0% in 2008/09 to 8.7% in 2021/22, as shown in Figure 5.2.

The SCJS detected no change in experiences of property crime comparing results for 2021/22 with 2019/20. Although it is often more difficult to find significant changes between adjacent surveys of the SCJS, the fact that there was a significant difference when comparing 2021/22 to both 2018/19 and 2017/18 suggests that property crime victimisation has fallen in recent years.

Figure 5.2: The proportion of adults experiencing property crime has fallen by 9 percentage points since 2008/09 but is unchanged since 2019/20.

Proportion of adults experiencing property crime (2008/09, 2019/20, 2021/22).



Base: SCJS 2008/09 (16,000); 2019/20 (5,570); 2021/22 (5,520). Variable: PREVPROPERTY.

What types of property crime were most commonly experienced?

As shown in Figure 5.3, a range of different types of property crime⁴⁷ were experienced in Scotland in 2021/22. As in previous years, incidents of vandalism accounted for the largest proportion of property crime incidents (35%), followed by other household theft (including bicycle theft) (34%), and personal theft (20%)⁴⁸.

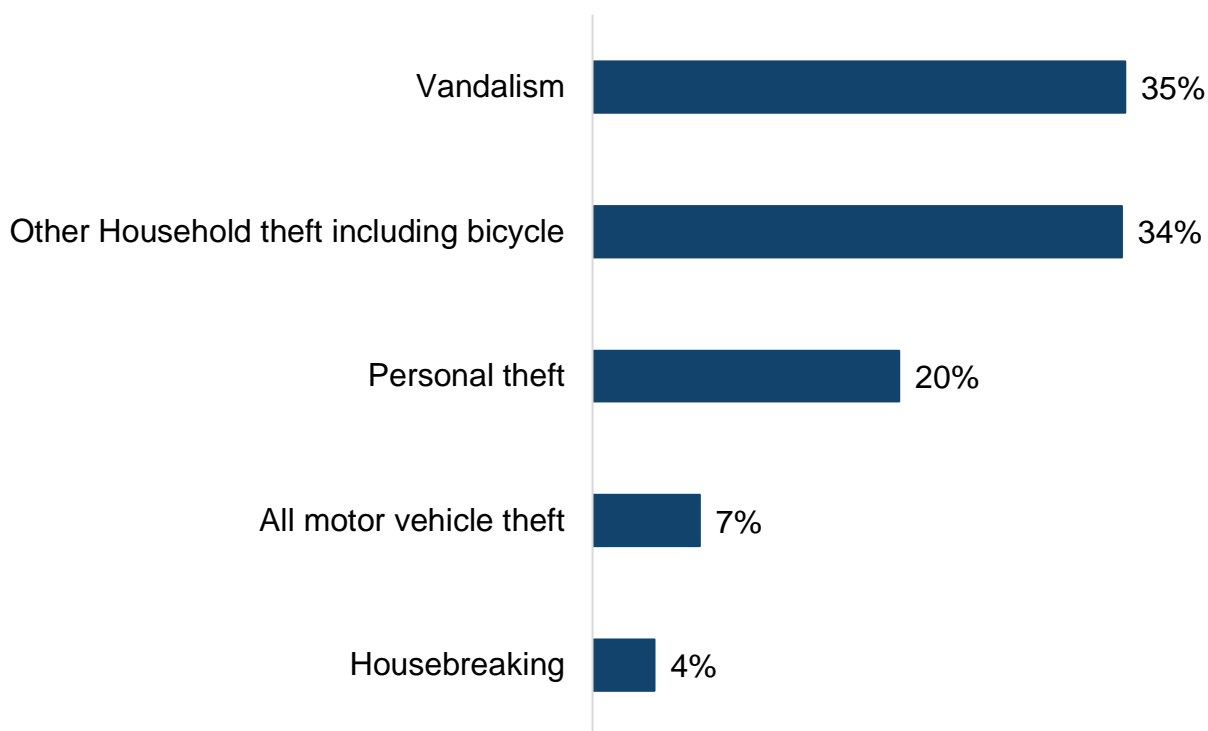
⁴⁶ Confidence Intervals around other survey results can be derived using the [data tables](#) and [users statistical testing tool](#) available on the SCJS website.

⁴⁷ Throughout this chapter the types of property crime are listed in accordance with the priority ladder in the [SCJS offence coding manual](#).

⁴⁸ Further details on the categories of property crime are provided in the [Background to the SCJS](#) chapter and the [Technical Report](#).

Figure 5.3: Vandalism and other household theft together comprise over two-thirds of all property crime.

Categories of crime as proportions of property crime overall.



Base: SCJS 2021/22 (540). Variables: INCVAND; INCPERSTHEFT; INCOTHERHOUSETHEFTCYCLE; INCALLMVTHEFT; INCHOUSEBREAK.

There have been notable reductions in the number of incidents of vandalism, motor vehicle related theft, other household theft and personal theft since 2008/09, as Table 5.2 below outlines. For example, the SCJS finds that the amount of vandalism in Scotland has fallen by almost two-thirds (64%) since 2008/09, from an estimated 350,000 incidents to 125,000.

Since 2019/20, all sub-categories of property crime have shown no change in the number of incidents.

Table 5.2: There has been a reduction in the number of property crimes across all categories since 2008/09 but no change since 2019/20.

Estimated number of incidents of types of property crime (2008/09, 2019/20, 2021/22).

Crime type	2008/09	2019/20	2021/22	Change since 2008/09	Change since 2019/20
All property crime	728,000	369,000	360,000	Down 49%	No change
Housebreaking	25,000	21,000	15,000	Down 43%	No change
Personal theft	110,000	80,000	72,000	Down 35%	No change
Other household theft including bicycle	173,000	98,000	124,000	Down 28%	No change
All motor vehicle related theft	70,000	30,000	25,000	Down 64%	No change
Vandalism	350,000	139,000	125,000	Down 64%	No change
Number of respondents	16,000	5,570	5,520		

Variables: INCPROPERTY; INCHOUSEBREAK; INCPERSTHEFT; INCOTHERHOUSEHOLDTHEFTCYCLE; INCALLMVTHEFT; INCVAND.

Looking at the prevalence of different categories of property crime reveals that some sub-types were more commonly experienced than others in 2021/22, as outlined in Figure 5.4⁴⁹.

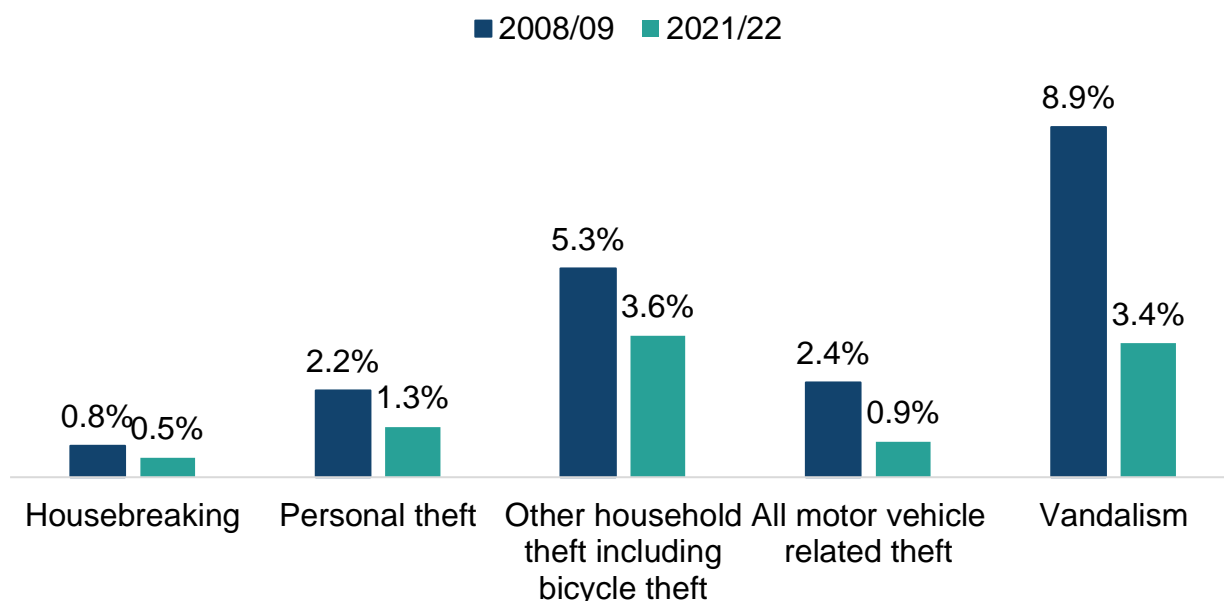
Similar to the estimated number of incidents, the prevalence rates for vandalism, other household theft, motor vehicle related theft, personal theft and housebreaking have all fallen since 2008/09. For example, like the incident count, the prevalence rate for vandalism more than halved between 2008/09 and 2019/20 (from 8.9% to 3.4%).

⁴⁹ It is worth noting that prevalence rates for sub-categories of property crime (e.g., vandalism) are considered to be 'household crimes' and are presented as proportions of households victimised. The one exception is personal theft which is a 'personal crime' and therefore relates to the proportion of adults affected.

The prevalence rate for all sub-categories of property crime were unchanged between 2019/20 and 2021/22.

Figure 5.4: Under 1 in 25 households (3.6%) experienced other household theft in 2021/22, whilst 0.5% were victims of housebreaking.

Proportion of adults/households experiencing types of property crime.



Base: SCJS 2008/09 (16,000); 2021/22 (5,520). Variables: PREVHOUSEBREAK; PREVPERSTHEFT; PREVOTHERHOUSETHEFTCYCLE; PREVALLMVTHEFT; PREVAVAND.

Note: Prevalence rates for vandalism, other household theft, motor vehicle related theft and housebreaking are presented as proportions of households experiencing each crime type.

How did experiences of property crime vary across the population?

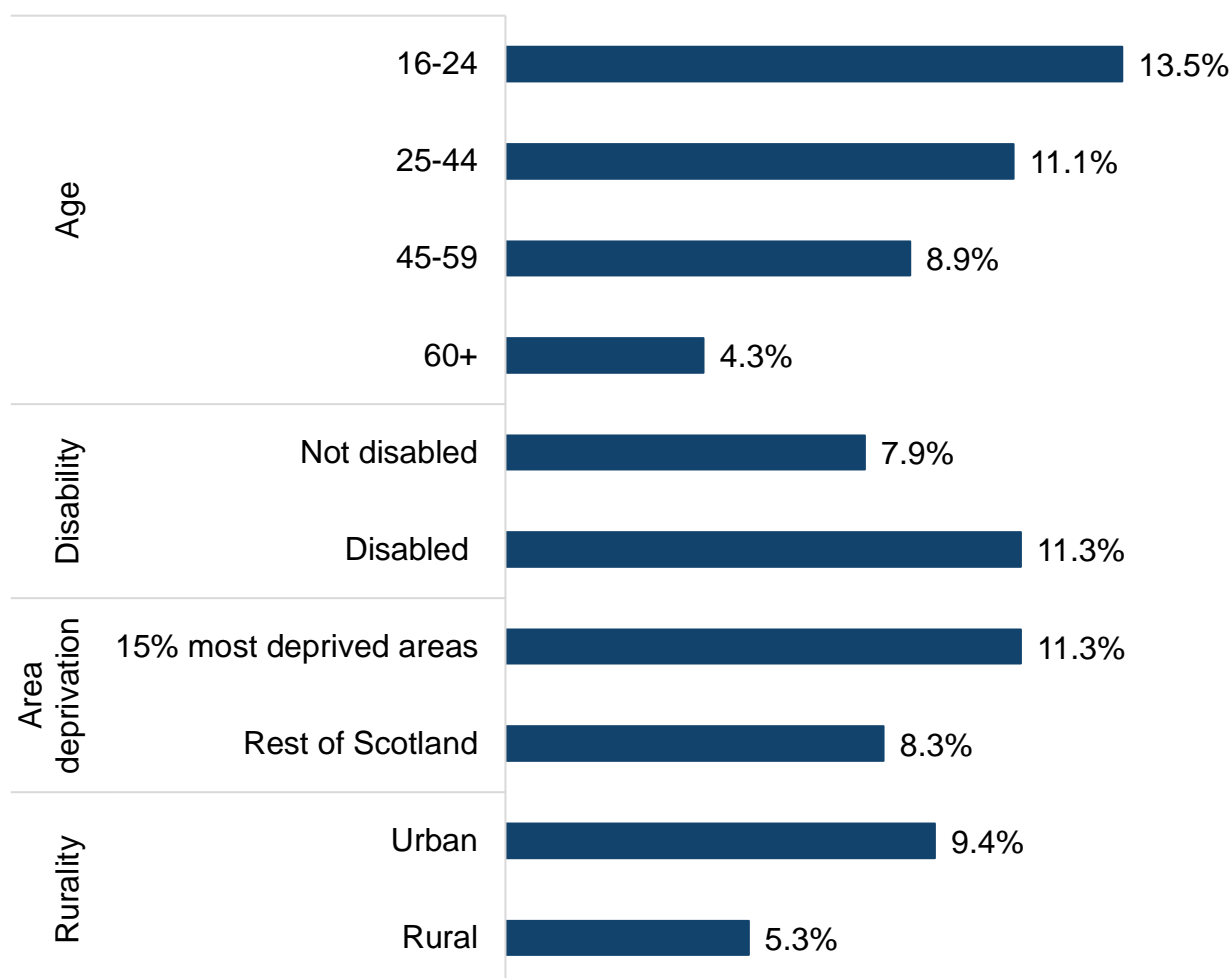
The SCJS enables us to examine how experiences of property crime in 2021/22 varied across the population according to demographic and area characteristics. For example, as shown in Figure 5.5, the likelihood of being a victim of property crime in 2021/22 was:

- lowest for those aged 60 and over – with no differences detected amongst different categories of younger adults
- greater for those living in the 15% most deprived areas in Scotland
- greater for adults living in urban locations than rural locations
- greater for disabled adults compared to those who are not

The 2021/22 found no difference in the likelihood of experiencing property crime by sex. This is in line with previous survey years, however differs from the 2018/19 SCJS, where females were found to have a higher likelihood than males.

Figure 5.5: The likelihood of being a victim of property crime is higher for those living in more deprived and urban areas.

Proportion of adults experiencing property crime, by demographic and area characteristics.



Base: 2021/22 (5,520). Variables: PREVPROPERTY; QDGEN; QDAGE; SIMD_TOP; URBRUR.

Looking at trends over time reveals that the prevalence of property crime victimisation has decreased significantly since 2008/09 across most key groups in the population – including across all the demographic and area characteristics discussed above⁵⁰.

With the exception of adults over 60 years old, whose rate of victimisation decreased by 2.1 percentage points, the SCJS detected no change in the

⁵⁰ Please see the [Annex tables](#) for relevant results and the SCJS supporting [data tables](#) for additional breakdowns.

prevalence rates for any of the above population groups between 2019/20 and 2021/22.

What can the SCJS tell us about repeat victimisation?

As outlined in [Chapter 3](#), the SCJS estimates that the majority of adults did not experience any crime in 2021/22 and 8.7% of the population were victims of at least one property crime. However, the survey also enables us to further explore how experiences varied amongst victims and examine the concentration of crime, including what proportion of victims experienced a particular type of crime more than once during the year⁵¹. This is known as [‘repeat victimisation’](#).

Further information about the approach taken to process and derive SCJS results, including on repeat victimisation, is provided in the [Technical Report](#).

Looking at the volume of crime experienced by individual victims in more detail shows that 6.5% of adults were victims of only one property crime whereas 2.2% of adults experienced two or more property crimes in 2021/22, accounting for over half of all property crime.

Table 5.3 highlights the extent of different levels of repeat property victimisation and the proportion of property crime accounted for by each group. For instance, over half (51%) of all property crime in Scotland in 2021/22 was experienced by the 2.2% of the population who were repeat victims. On average this group is estimated to have experienced 1.8 property crimes each over the year.

⁵¹ i.e. two or more experiences of property crime.

Table 5.3: 12% of all property crime was experienced by just 0.3% of the adult population who were victims of five or more incidents over the year.

Proportion of all property crime experienced by victims, by number of crimes experienced.

Number of crimes	% of population	% of property crime
None	91.3%	0%
One	6.5%	49%
Two	1.3%	21%
Three	0.5%	12%
Four	0.1%	5%
Five or more	0.3%	12%
Two or more	2.2%	51%

Base: SCJS 2021/22 (5,520). Variables: PREVPROPERTY; INCPROPERTY.

Figure 5.6 displays trends in single and repeat property crime victimisation over time. It shows that between 2008/09 and 2021/22 there were decreases in the proportion of adults experiencing:

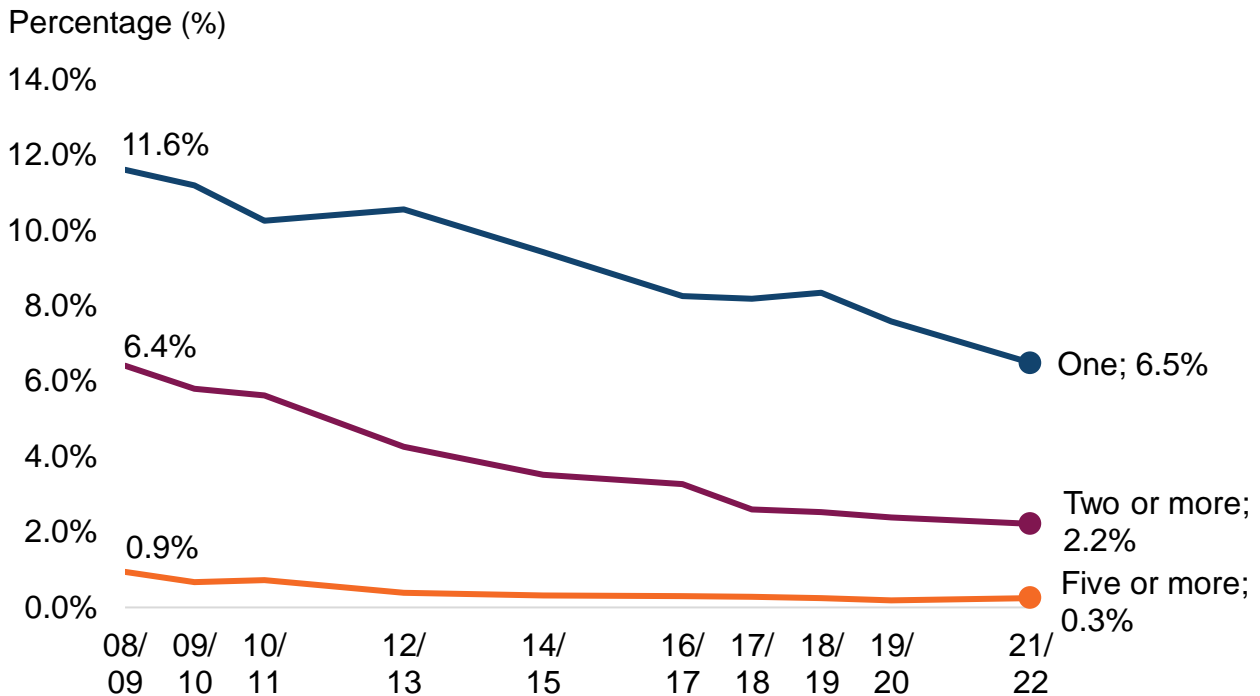
- single incidents of property crime – from 11.6% to 6.5%
- repeat victimisation (two or more incidents of property crime) – from 6.4% to 2.2%
- high frequency repeat victimisation (five or more incidents of property crime) – from 0.9% to 0.3%

The fall in the various levels of victimisation since 2008/09 have occurred in line with a decrease in the overall property crime victimisation rate⁵² over the same period, as discussed [previously](#).

⁵² i.e. the proportion of adults experiencing at least one property crime over the year.

Figure 5.6: The prevalence of repeat victimisation has fallen since 2008/09.

Proportion of adults experiencing a number of property crimes, 2008/09 to 2021/22.



Base: SCJS 2008/09 (16,000); 2009/10 (16,040); 2010/11 (13,010); 2012/13 (12,050); 2014/15 (11,470); 2016/17 (5,570); 2017/18 (5,480); 2018/19 (5,540); 2019/20 (5,570); 2021/22 (5,520). Variables: INCSURVEYCRIME; PREVSURVEYCRIME.

Note: the 'five or more' category is a sub-set of the 'two or more' category.

Since the last SCJS in 2019/20 there has been no change in the level of single, repeat or high frequency repeat property crime victimisation – any apparent falls shown in Figure 5.6 are not statistically significant.

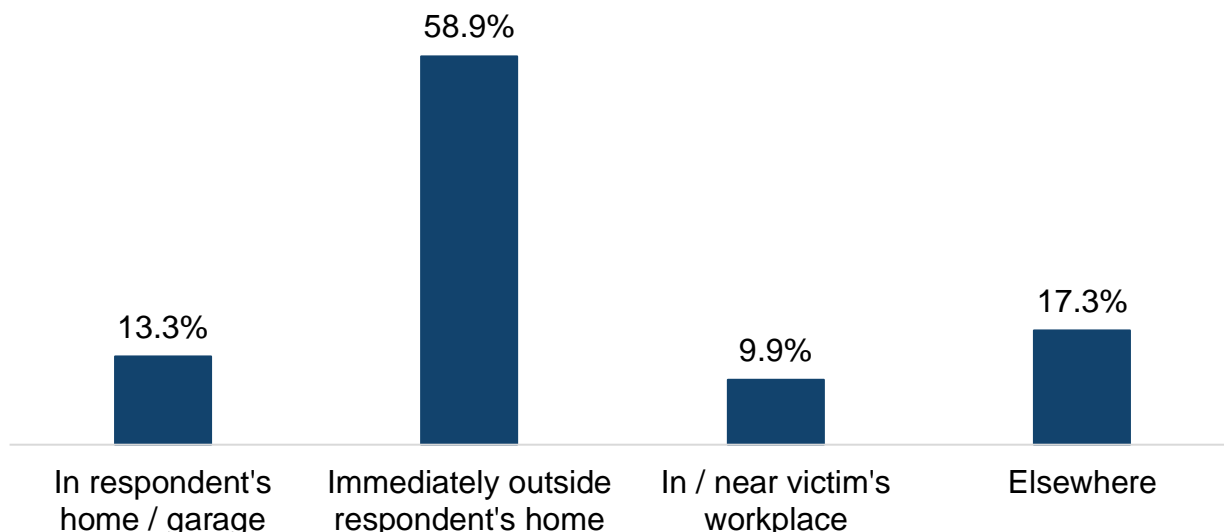
What do we know about the characteristics of property crime?

Most property crime incidents occurred in or near the home of the victim. Almost three-quarters of property crime incidents in 2021/22 (72%) took place in and around the victim's home. The most common specific location was immediately outside the respondent's home⁵³, representing more than half of all property crime in 2021/22 (59%).

⁵³ Immediately outside the respondent's home includes gardens, sheds, driveways and the street outside the respondents' home.

Figure 5.7: The majority of property crimes were noted as having taken place immediately outside the respondent’s home.

Proportion of property crime incidents occurring in different locations.



Base: Property crime incidents (540). Variables: QWH1 / QWH3 / QWH5 / QWH7.

The majority of property crime incidents took place on weekdays. Where respondents provided details about when an incident occurred⁵⁴, around two-thirds of all property crimes in 2021/22 (66%) were said to have taken place during the week, with the remainder (34%) occurring at weekends⁵⁵.

Most property crime did not involve a cyber element. Respondents who had experienced property crime were asked if the incident involved the internet, any type of online activity or an internet enabled device. In 2021/22, only 1% of property crime incidents involved a cyber element, unchanged since 2019/20 (1%), when this question was asked for the first time. Cyber crime is discussed in more detail in [Section 9.1](#).

What do we know about the perpetrators of property crime?

Victims were unable to provide any details about the offender(s) in most instances. Compared to [violent crime incidents](#), victims of property crime are generally much less likely to report being able to say something about the offender in the incident(s) they experience. Respondents were able to provide any relevant information about the offender for one-third of incidents (33%) in 2021/22, compared to 90% of violent incidents.

⁵⁴ i.e. excluding those who said don't know or refused to give a time.

⁵⁵ Weekends were defined as 6 p.m. on Friday to Sunday midnight.

As such, the section below presents a summary of the sort of information provided by victims, although these findings should be interpreted with caution as they are not necessarily representative of all property crime incidents. This is particularly the case if comparing with findings from previous years⁵⁶. Further results are available in the supporting [data tables](#).

Where respondents were able to say something about the person or people who carried out the offence, victims noted that property crimes in 2021/22:

- were mostly committed by males. 61% of incidents involved male offenders only, while 10% involved female only perpetrators, and 24% involved perpetrators of both sexes. In 5% of incidents the respondent did not know the sex of the offenders
- most commonly involved offenders under the age of 40. Whilst property crimes were committed by people from a range of age categories, only 16% of incidents were noted as having involved offenders aged 40 or over
- often involved perpetrators known by the victims. In incidents where the respondent could say anything about the offender, most incidents (58%) were committed by offenders who the victims knew or had seen before. Where offenders were known by the victim, almost half of incidents (39%) were said to have involved people 'known well'
- respondents who said that someone saw or heard what was going on, or had some form of contact with the offender (the case in 22% of property crime incidents) were asked additional questions about their experience, including the presence of weapons. In 2021/22, 3% of such incidents⁵⁷ were said to have involved perpetrators who possessed weapons

What was the impact of property crime?

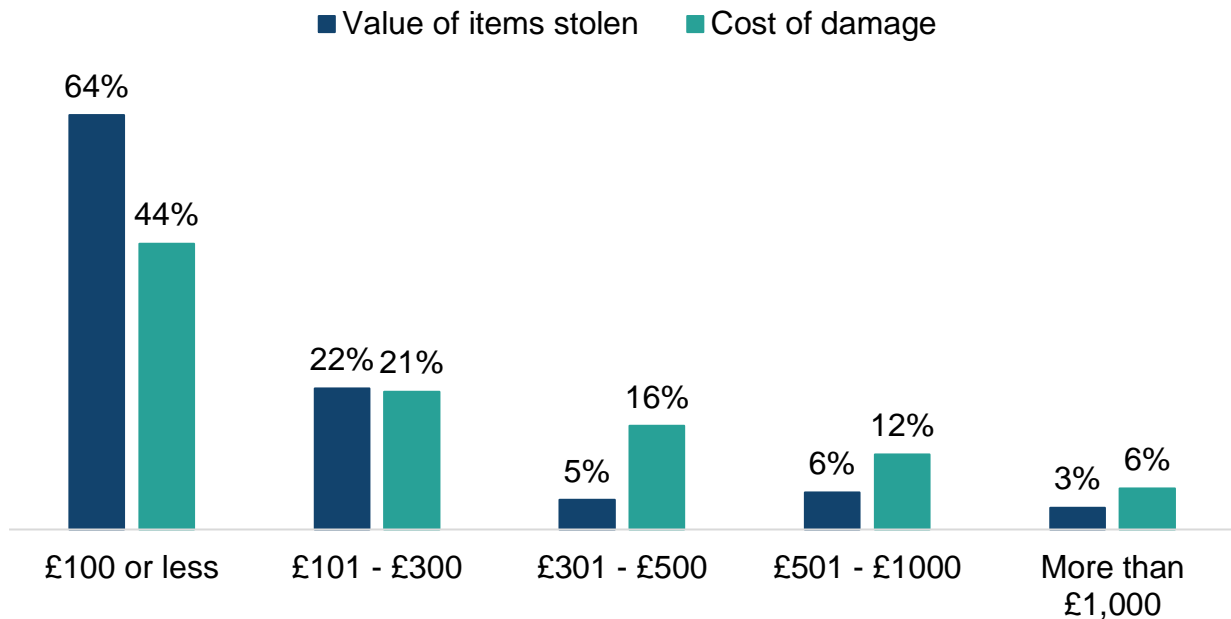
Direct financial costs resulting from property crime were typically of relatively low value – but the impact of such costs will vary for each victim. Victims of property crime where something was stolen (56% of property crimes) were asked to provide the approximate value of the items concerned. As Figure 5.8 shows, in almost two-thirds of incidents (64%) where the victim was able to provide an estimate, the total value of items stolen was £100 or less. The total value was over £1,000 in less than 3% of incidents.

⁵⁶ Where a similarly low proportion of respondents were able to tell us about offenders involved in property crimes. Results from previous years are accessible on the [SCJS website](#).

⁵⁷ i.e. incidents where someone saw or heard what was happening or had contact with the offender.

Figure 5.8: Almost two thirds of items stolen were valued at £100 or less.

Financial impact of property crime where victims could estimate cost.



Base: Property crime incidents where something was stolen (290) or damaged (170); Variables: QSVAB; QDVAB. Excludes those who said 'don't know' or 'refused' to the value of items lost or cost of damage.

Consistent with previous years, the most frequent emotional responses to experiences of property crime were annoyance (75% of incidents) and anger (49% of incidents).

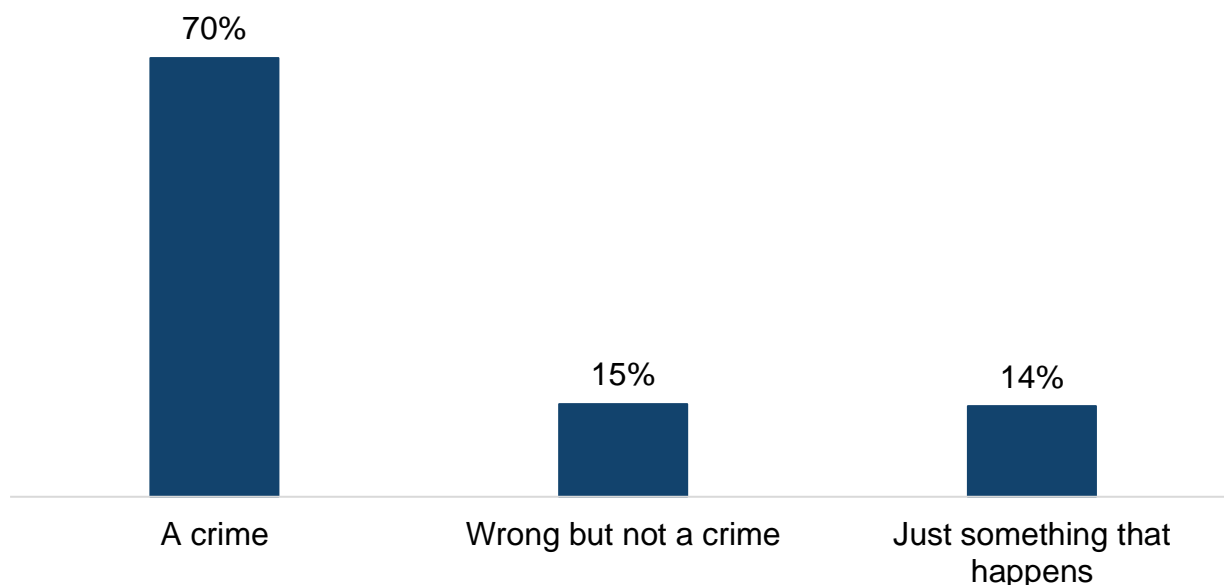
What proportion of property crime was reported to the police?

Victims of property crime described their experience as 'a crime' in over two-thirds of incidents (70%), with 15% of incidents said to be 'wrong but not a crime' and 14% viewed as 'just something that happens'. These results are shown in Figure 5.9. Property crime incidents were more likely to be viewed as criminal by the victims compared to experiences of [violent crime](#) in 2021/22 (of which 52% of incidents were considered to be 'a crime').

However, the SCJS estimates that only just over one-in-every-four property crimes (27%) were reported to the police in 2021/22. The reporting rate for property crime was stable from 2008/09 (36%) until 2019/20 (36%) but has seen a significant reduction for the year 2021/22. The 2021/22 reporting rate, however, was not different from the [reporting rate for violent crime](#) (34%).

Figure 5.9: In over two-thirds of incidents, victim's described their experience as a crime.

Victim's description of property crime incidents experienced.



Base: Property crime incidents (540); Variable: QCRNO.

Incidents were more likely to be reported if any damaged or stolen goods were insured (44%), compared to cases where items were not covered (22%).

The most common reasons given by victims for not reporting their experience to the police was that the incident was perceived to be too trivial or not worth reporting (45%) and that it was believed the police could have done nothing about the incident (29%).

Where crimes were brought to the attention of the police, victims received information or assistance about the investigation and the case (where relevant) from the police in relation to almost two-fifth of all incidents (39%). Information or assistance was provided by the Witness Service/Victim Support Scotland in 7% of such cases, whilst in under one-in-four incidents (24%) victims said they did not receive information or assistance from any organisation.

What consequences did victims believe property crime offenders should have faced?

Victims believed the majority of cases should have been prosecuted in court, although prison sentences were not considered appropriate in most incidents. Regardless of whether their experience was reported to the police, victims in over half (52%) of incidents of property crime in 2021/22 thought the offender should have been prosecuted in court; this is in line with 2019/20. This is not significantly different to the equivalent figure for [violent crime](#) in 2021/22 (44%).

Where victims thought an incident should have resulted in a court prosecution, a prison sentence was considered a suitable outcome in relation to just under one-in-every-six cases (15%).

Respondents who did not think property crime offenders should have been prosecuted in court (and those who were not sure) were asked about alternatives to prosecution and whether any other course of action should have taken place. Victims mentioned a range of alternatives, including that offenders should have:

- been given some kind of warning (32% of such incidents)
- apologised for their actions (18% of such incidents)
- been given some kind of help to stop them (12% of incidents)

Notably, victims said that 'nothing should have happened' in relation to only 4% of these property crime incidents (i.e. where they did not think the offender should have been prosecuted in court). This compares to 13% of violent incidents (where prosecution in court was deemed unnecessary by victims).

6. Bringing together crime statistics

Why are there two sources of crime statistics?

This chapter compares the Scottish Crime and Justice Survey (SCJS) and police recorded crime to help assess whether and to what extent they show consistent trends. It examines the scale of the difference between the volume of crime that is recorded by the police and the level of crime that is estimated by the survey to be experienced by the adult population living in households in Scotland. This builds on an [analytical paper](#) published in 2014.

A range of information is provided based on analysis of a sub-set of comparable crimes⁵⁸. The two sources of crime statistics are reviewed briefly first, then the chapter looks at trends in these two sources over time, including a specific focus on three broadly comparable sub-groups: violent crime, acquisitive crime and vandalism⁵⁹. Finally this chapter compares police recorded crime with the proportion of SCJS crime estimated to have been reported to the police.

[Police recorded crime](#) captures a broad range of crimes that are recorded by the police. It provides a good measure of crimes that are reported to and recorded by the police and is particularly useful for lower volume crimes that are challenging for sample surveys of the population to capture. Police recorded crime is used to develop and evaluate measures put in place to reduce crime, and to assess the performance of policing and criminal justice organisations. However, this data is sensitive to changes in recording practices and police activity, and does not include information about crimes that are not reported to, or recorded by, the police.

Crime surveys allow a wider assessment of the overall level of crime and likelihood of experiencing crime. They also provide a range of additional information, for example on the characteristics of crime, the relative likelihood of experiencing crime across the population and on repeat victimisation. However, surveys are often not as good at picking up some rarer crimes, crimes where there is no specific victim (for example, speeding), or where the victim is not covered by the survey sample (for example, crimes against businesses and children).

As well as these differences, the SCJS and police recorded crime also cover different timescales. The [Recorded Crime in Scotland](#) statistics cover crimes recorded by police over a 12 month period whereas the 2021/22 SCJS includes crimes experienced by SCJS respondents over a 25-month 'reference period'⁶⁰.

⁵⁸ This sub-set should not be used to assess the overall level of crime in Scotland.

⁵⁹ Chapters 8 and 12 of the [Technical Report](#) provide more information about the crime groups used in this report, including the comparable crime sub-set.

⁶⁰ Respondents were asked about incidents experienced in the 12 months prior to the month of interview (the 'reference period'). The time period covered by the SCJS in 2021/22 extends over 25 months (from start of November 2020 to end of November 2022) so is not directly comparable with any calendar year. However, results in the 2014 [analytical paper](#) showed consistent results using different methods to make comparisons over time.

Using the same approach to the comparisons with the CSEW discussed previously, the recorded crime data set used to compare is the [year ending December 2022](#), as this best aligns with the latest fieldwork period, but is referred to here as 2021/22 for consistency.

Overall, the two sources each feature relative strengths and limitations, making them more appropriate in different contexts and for different purposes⁶¹. Taking account of these differences, comparisons between recorded crime and SCJS data can be made by examining a broadly comparable sub-set of crimes which are covered by each source. This sub-set of crimes are made up of those crimes that are coded in the survey in approximately the same way as they would be recorded by the police. Around three-in-five (58%) of 'all SCJS crime', as measured by the 2021/22 SCJS, fall into categories that can be compared with police recorded crime.

What are the trends in comparable SCJS and police recorded crime?

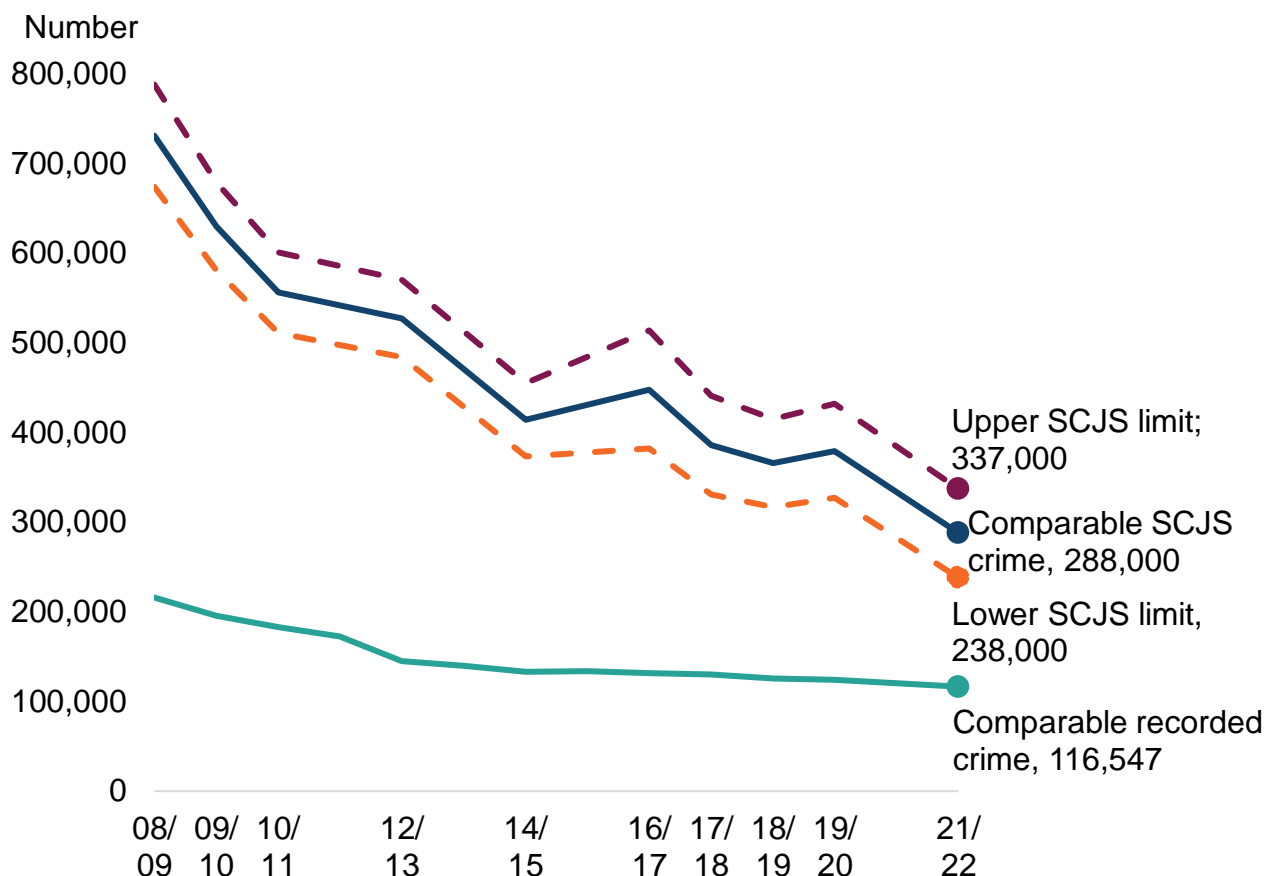
Of the 494,000 crimes estimated by the 2021/22 SCJS, around three-in-five (288,000) can be compared with police recorded crimes. Figure 6.1 demonstrates the scale of the difference between the two series of crime statistics. In 2021/22, the police recorded 116,547 crimes and offences⁶² in the comparable sub-set, representing approximately two-in-five (41%) of the number of crimes in the SCJS comparable sub-set.

⁶¹ [Annex B](#) provides an overview of the main differences to bear in mind when making comparisons between the two sources.

⁶² Please see the [Technical Report](#) for more information on offence codes and crime groups.

Figure 6.1: Both key sources of crime statistics in Scotland show a downward trend in the level of crime since 2008/09.

Comparable recorded crime and SCJS estimates, 2008/09 to 2021/22.



Sources: SCJS, Police recorded crime

There are a number of reasons for the difference between these two sources, including that SCJS estimates tend to be higher than recorded crime figures, even in the comparable category, because the survey is able to capture crime which does not come to the attention of the police. SCJS respondents were asked if the police came to know about an incident, just over a third (34%) of all crime in the comparable sub-set came to the attention of the police in 2021/22.

Both the SCJS and police recorded crime provide evidence of large decreases in crime in Scotland over the last 15 years or so. As shown in Table 6.1, the SCJS estimates that the volume of comparable crime fell by 61% between 2008/09 and 2021/22, whilst comparable recorded crime is down by 46% over the same period.

Table 6.1: Since 2008/09 SCJS estimates comparable crime fell by 61% while comparable recorded crime fell by 46%.

Comparable crime group estimates (2008/09, 2019/20, 2021/22).

Crime type	2008/09	2019/20	2021/22	Change since 2008/09	Change since 2019/20
Comparable SCJS crime	731,000	379,000	288,000	Down 61%	Down 24%
Comparable Recorded Crime	215,901	124,500	116,547	Down 46%	Down 6%
SCJS Acquisitive crime	64,000	46,000	29,000	Down 54%	Down 37%
Recorded acquisitive crime	27,527	15,919	13,049	Down 53%	Down 18%
SCJS violent crime	317,000	194,000	134,000	Down 58%	No change
Recorded violent crime	82,855	63,421	63,018	Down 24%	Down 1%
SCJS vandalism	350,000	139,000	125,000	Down 64%	No change
Recorded vandalism	105,519	45,160	40,480	Down 62%	Down 10%

Sources: SCJS; Police recorded crime; SCJS Base: 2008/09 (16,000); 2019/20 (5,570); 2021/22 (5,520).

Note: changes in SCJS results specified were statistically significant.

Since 2019/20, the SCJS found a 24% decrease in the level of comparable crime, whilst comparable recorded crime fell by 6%.

In March 2021, Her Majesty’s Inspectorate of Constabulary in Scotland (HMICS) published the results from their 2020 [audit of incidents and crimes recorded by Police Scotland](#), with the report stating that ‘the results show that compliance is generally good, however there is still room for improvement’.

The following section looks at comparable acquisitive crime, violent crime and vandalism in more detail.

Acquisitive crime

The acquisitive comparable crime group includes bicycle theft, housebreaking and theft of a motor vehicle. In 2021/22 the SCJS estimated that there were 29,000 acquisitive crimes (+/- 8,000, meaning that the true number of acquisitive crimes experienced by the population is estimated to be between 21,000 and 37,000⁶³). The police recorded 13,049 acquisitive crimes in 2021/22.

⁶³ Upper and lower estimates are calculated on unrounded figures, then rounded when presented.

Both SCJS estimates and recorded acquisitive crime figures decreased between 2008/09 and 2021/22 (by 54% and 53% respectively). Since 2019/20 police recorded acquisitive crime has decreased by 18%, and the SCJS found a 37% decrease in acquisitive crime. Where SCJS estimates are based on the experiences of a relatively small number of people, it can often be challenging to detect significant changes between adjacent survey years⁶⁴.

Violent crime

Violent comparable crime includes serious assault, minor assault⁶⁵ and robbery. In 2021/22, the SCJS estimated that there were 134,000 violent crimes⁶⁶ (+/- 43,000, meaning that the true number of violent crimes experienced by the population is estimated to be between 91,000 and 177,000), while the police recorded 63,018 violent crimes.

Table 6.1 shows that the two sources of comparable violent crime data both show large decreases over the longer term, while the SCJS shows no significant change since 2019/20. Between 2008/09 and 2021/22, both SCJS estimates and police recorded violent crime figures have shown a decrease (by 58% and 24% respectively)⁶⁷. Since 2019/20, comparable police recorded violent crime has shown a small decrease (down 1%), while the SCJS found no change in violent crime.

Vandalism

The vandalism comparable crime group includes motor vehicle vandalism and property vandalism. In 2021/22 the SCJS estimated that there were 125,000 instances of vandalism (+/- 22,000, meaning that the true number of vandalism crimes experienced by the population is estimated to be between 103,000 and 147,000). The police recorded 40,480 vandalism crimes in 2021/22.

The trends in comparable crimes of vandalism across both the SCJS and police recorded crime between 2008/09 and 2021/22 are similar – with the SCJS showing a decrease of 64% and police recorded crime showing a decrease of 62%. Since 2019/20 there has been no change in the SCJS estimate of vandalism, while crimes of vandalism recorded by the police have fallen by 10%.

⁶⁴ Comparable acquisitive crime is rarer than vandalism and violent crime (estimates of acquisitive crime are based on 59 victim forms in the 2021/22 SCJS sample, compared to 103 violent crime victim forms and 187 vandalism victim forms). Consequently, there is greater uncertainty around the SCJS estimate of acquisitive crime and less power to identify significant changes over time.

⁶⁵ The crime of 'minor assault' discussed in this report is referred to as 'common assault' within the [Recorded Crime in Scotland National Statistics](#).

⁶⁶ Further information on SCJS violent crime is provided in the '[Focus on violent crime](#)' chapter.

⁶⁷ Violent crime estimates are based on a relatively small number of respondents (103) who disclosed experiences of violent crimes in 2021/22.

Comparing police recorded crime against volume of SCJS crime estimated to have been reported to the police

SCJS respondents are asked whether the police ‘came to know about’ the crime, either from them or somebody else. This allows comparisons to be made between comparable crime estimated to have been reported to the police in the SCJS (i.e. a sub-set of comparable crime), and police recorded crime figures.

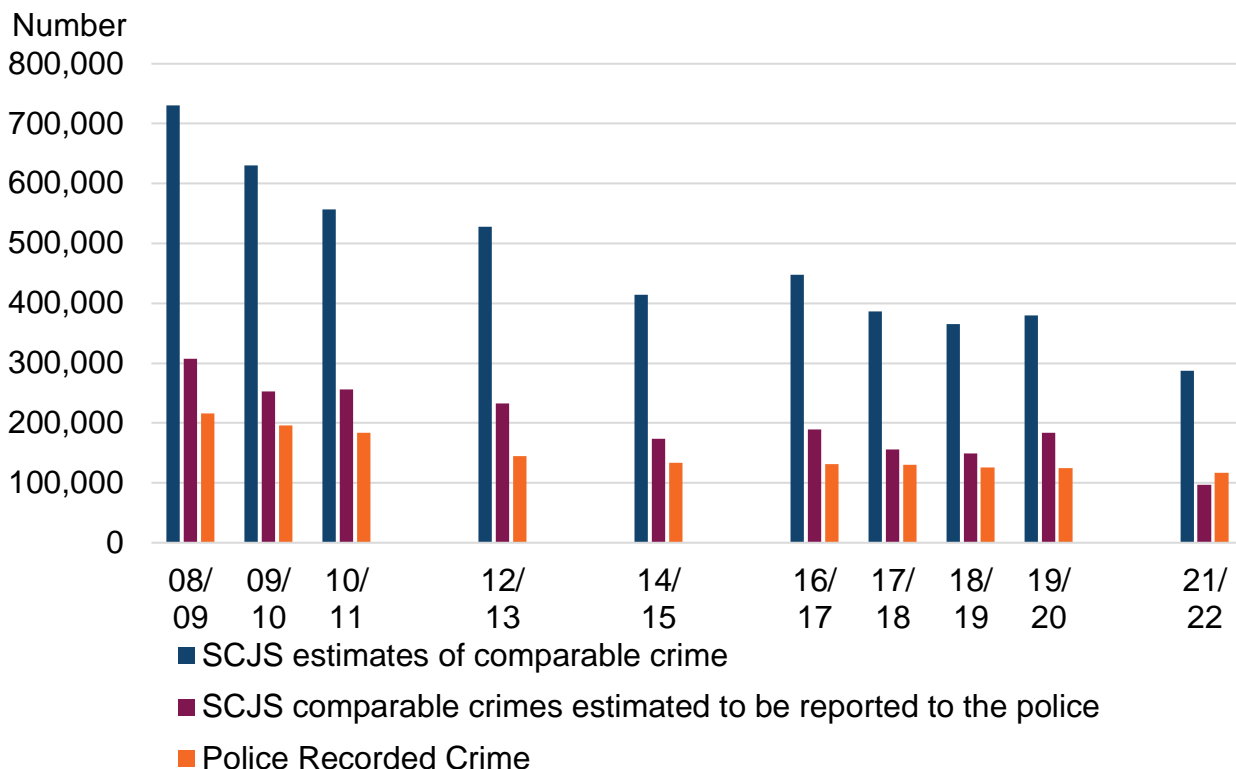
The previously cited [analytical paper](#) published in 2014, outlined two methods for calculating this; the first, comparing the (at that time) biennial SCJS to annual recorded crime figures and the second comparing the biennial SCJS against two reporting years of averaged police recorded crime data. This section updates the information using the first method, to compare now annual SCJS estimates to annual recorded crime figures⁶⁸. Although it is not possible to determine on an individual basis whether a crime that the police ‘came to know about’ was captured in police recorded crime data, this type of analysis can give an indication of the level of crime that goes unrecorded, and the broad relationship between police recorded crime figures and SCJS estimates.

Figures from the 2021/22 SCJS indicate that of the 288,000 crimes in the overall comparable sub-set, around 97,000 incidents (34%) were estimated to have been reported to police. Figure 6.2 displays the difference by volume between SCJS comparable crimes estimated to be reported to the police (as a sub-set of all SCJS crime) and police recorded crime for all years since 2008/09.

⁶⁸ A comparison of the two methods highlights a *lag effect*, suggesting that when using the second method, the difference between recorded crime and SCJS crime estimated to be reported to the police is likely to be less than that derived from using the first method presented in this section.

Figure 6.2: In 2021/22, for the first time, the number of crimes recorded by the police was higher than the number of comparable crimes estimated to have been reported to the police.

Recorded crime, SCJS crime and SCJS crime reported to the police, in the sub-set of comparable crimes, 2008/09 to 2021/22.



Sources: SCJS, Police recorded crime.

In 2021/22, the police recorded 116,547 crimes in the comparable category. Figure 6.3 shows that, for the first time since 2008/09, this is greater than our estimate of the number of comparable crimes that were reported to the police (97,157). The primary driver for this difference is likely to be the reduction in the proportion of crimes that came to the attention of the police, which fell from 48% of comparable crime reported in 2019/20 to 34% in 2021/22. As discussed in [Chapter 3](#) there are a number of reasons why caution should be taken with this figure such as:

- a greater chance of volatility given falling victimisation rates over the longer term
- the impact of the covid pandemic, specifically for those respondents interviewed near the start of the latest sweep of fieldwork
- a smaller reduction in police recorded crime (down 6%) that might be expected if the proportion of crimes being reported to the police had fallen by the amount implied by the survey

We will continue to monitor this to see if this becomes an emerging trend in the future surveys.

7. Public perceptions of police and the justice system

This chapter reports on public confidence in, and attitudes towards, the police and criminal justice system in Scotland. The majority of this chapter focuses on the perceptions of the general public about policing, with some results on those who have had direct contact with the police and their satisfaction with relevant encounters in the latter part of the section. The chapter then explores knowledge of, and attitudes towards, the wider criminal justice system in Scotland.

Perceptions of the police

This report typically assesses how Scottish Crime and Justice Survey (SCJS) results in 2021/22 compare to findings from the 2008/09 (or the first year the question was asked in the survey) and 2019/20 results. However, when considering time trends across the SCJS, this chapter also presents findings in comparison to 2012/13 as the last survey prior to the formation of Police Scotland. As such, where key changes are detected as having occurred between 2012/13 and 2021/22, they are also highlighted within this chapter⁶⁹.

As well as national level results, this chapter provides key findings broken down for demographic and area characteristics (including deprivation and urban/rural status).

In 2019, the Scottish Government's Justice Analytical Services worked in collaboration with a range of stakeholders to develop the public confidence in policing module. This module development involved significant stakeholder engagement informed by a [desk-based review of the strengths and weaknesses](#) of the SCJS in measuring public confidence in the police. This review compared the SCJS with other surveys internationally (including Northern Ireland, New Zealand, Canada and England and Wales), and presented options and opportunities to develop the policing module. The newly developed and updated questions were included in the 2021/22 SCJS and results are discussed below, more information about the development of these questions is available within this [SCJS questionnaire development update](#); page 6 outlines changes to the public confidence in the police module.

Results at Police Division level and other geographies

SCJS results at Police Division level are available biennially (as they have been since 2012/13), with two survey years of data combined to increase the sample size and precision around results with effect from 2016/17. The most recent findings available at this level are from 2018/19-2019/20⁷⁰, and include perceptions of the

⁶⁹ [Annex tables A1.15 to A1.22](#) present key results on policing from each SCJS since 2008/09.

⁷⁰ We are considering options on how best to publish the Police Division level data from the 2021/22 survey.

police as well as wider SCJS results such as victimisation rates, within each Division. These results can be accessed via the [data tables](#). Alternatively, Police Division level data is available through the [SCJS interactive data tool](#) which has been developed to show divisional results relative to the national average for a chosen year or over time.

SCJS measures on confidence in the ability of the police also formed part of the Scottish Surveys Core Questions (SSCQ) between 2012 and 2017 and again, after a short break, in 2022 (which includes the 2021/22 SCJS). The SSCQ combines selected data from the three large Scottish Government population surveys⁷¹ to offer larger sample sizes to facilitate further analysis for smaller geographies and population sub-groups. Further details about the SSCQ are available on the [Scottish Government website](#).

Understanding and measuring confidence in the police

The SCJS includes a range of questions to capture public perceptions of different aspects of policing.

Views on overall confidence in the police can be examined using a single measure asking people about how they would rate the performance of their local police, with confidence itself being driven in part by perceptions and experiences of particular aspects of policing. Particularly prominent factors influencing overall confidence (and captured within the SCJS) have been shown to be perceptions of:

- the ability or effectiveness of the police
- their level of community engagement
- how fair the police are when carrying out duties

This chapter initially focuses on the overall confidence measure and confidence in the effectiveness of the police. Following this, there is a focus on perceptions of aspects of community engagement and fairness, recognising their importance in driving wider confidence. A list of selected publications on factors that drive public confidence in the police is available at the [end of this section](#).

What did the public think about the overall performance of the police?

Nearly half of adults in Scotland (49%) believed the police in their local area were doing an 'excellent' or 'good' job in 2021/22. This is a decrease from 61% in 2012/13⁷² and a decrease from 55% in 2019/20.

Just over one-third (35%) thought the police were doing a 'fair' job in 2021/22, whilst just over one-in-ten (12%) said the police were doing a poor or very poor job. Of these two categories, 'poor' and 'very poor', only the 'poor' category has shown

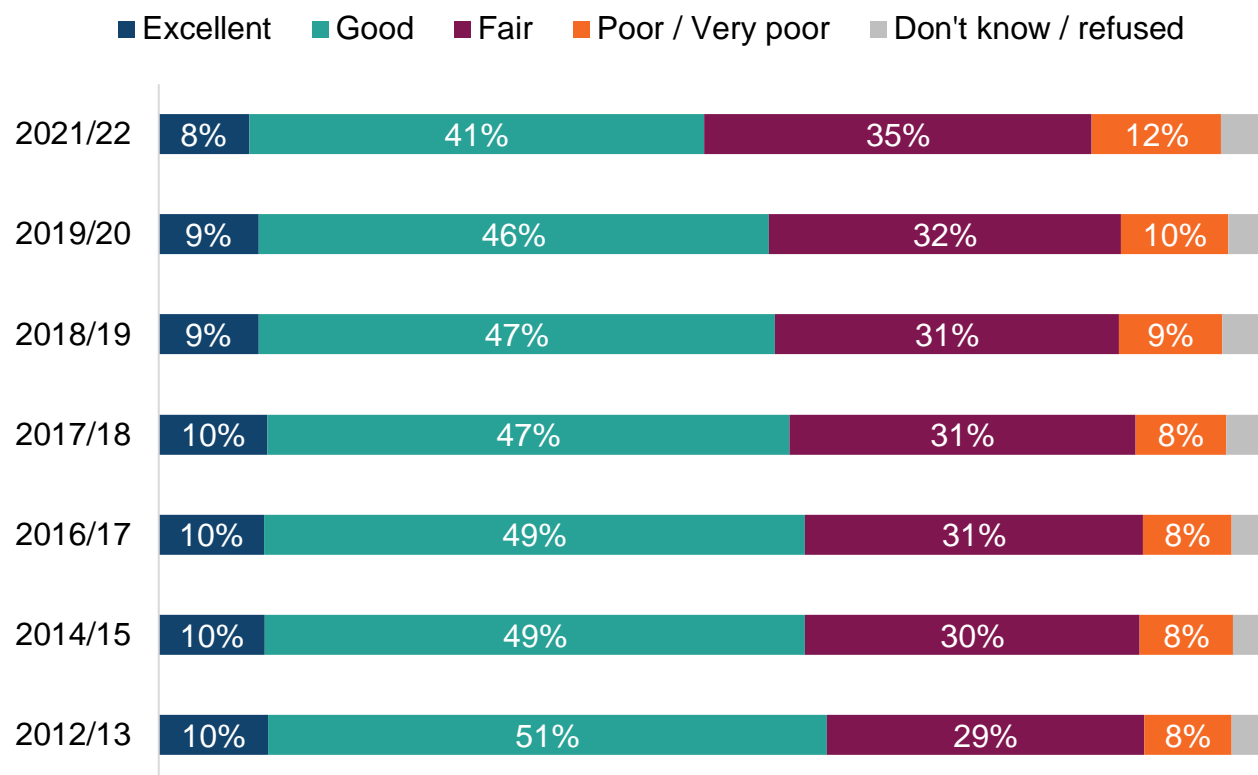
⁷¹ These surveys are: [The Scottish Crime and Justice Survey](#), [The Scottish Household Survey](#) and [The Scottish Health Survey](#).

⁷² This question (QRATPOL) was first included in the 2012/13 SCJS.

a change in the past year, increasing by 1.6 percentage points and it has also shown a change since 2012/13, increasing by 3.3 percentage points.

Figure 7.1: Nearly half of adults in Scotland believed the police in their local area were doing an ‘excellent’ or ‘good’ job in 2021/22.

Views on the overall performance of the police in the local area.



Base: All adults (2012/13: 12,050; 2014/15: 11,470; 2016/17: 5,570; 2017/18: 5,480; 2018/19: 5,540; 2019/20: 5,570; 2021/22: 5,520); Variable: QRATPOL.

In 2021/22, victims of crime were less likely than non-victims to say the police were doing a good or excellent job (40% compared with 50%, respectively). Likewise, a smaller proportion of those living in the 15% most deprived areas of Scotland described the local police’s performance as good or excellent compared to adults in the rest of Scotland (43% compared with 50% respectively).

Looking at this measure over time, there has been a decrease in the proportion saying the police are doing an excellent or good job across a range of demographic groups since 2012/13. Specifically, at a national level, confidence decreased among the following groups:

- both males and females
- people aged 25-44, 45-59 and people aged 60 and over
- both people who were a victim and not a victim of crime in the year prior to interview

- people in both the 15% most deprived areas and the rest of Scotland
- people in both urban and rural areas

Other than the category of those aged 60 and over (which has decreased from 64% in 2012/13 to 48% in 2021/22), all of the other decreases highlighted above have been around 10-13 percentage points.

Further details of these changes in confidence levels over time can found in [Annex table A1.15](#).

How confident were people in the ability of the police?

This section considers public perceptions of the effectiveness of the police, by asking respondents how confident they were in the ability of the police in their local areas to undertake seven particular components of work:

- preventing crime
- respond quickly to appropriate calls and information from the public
- deal with incidents as they occur
- investigate incidents after they occur
- solve crimes
- catch criminals
- supporting victims of crime

For convenience, these results are often referred to as ‘effectiveness measures’ below.

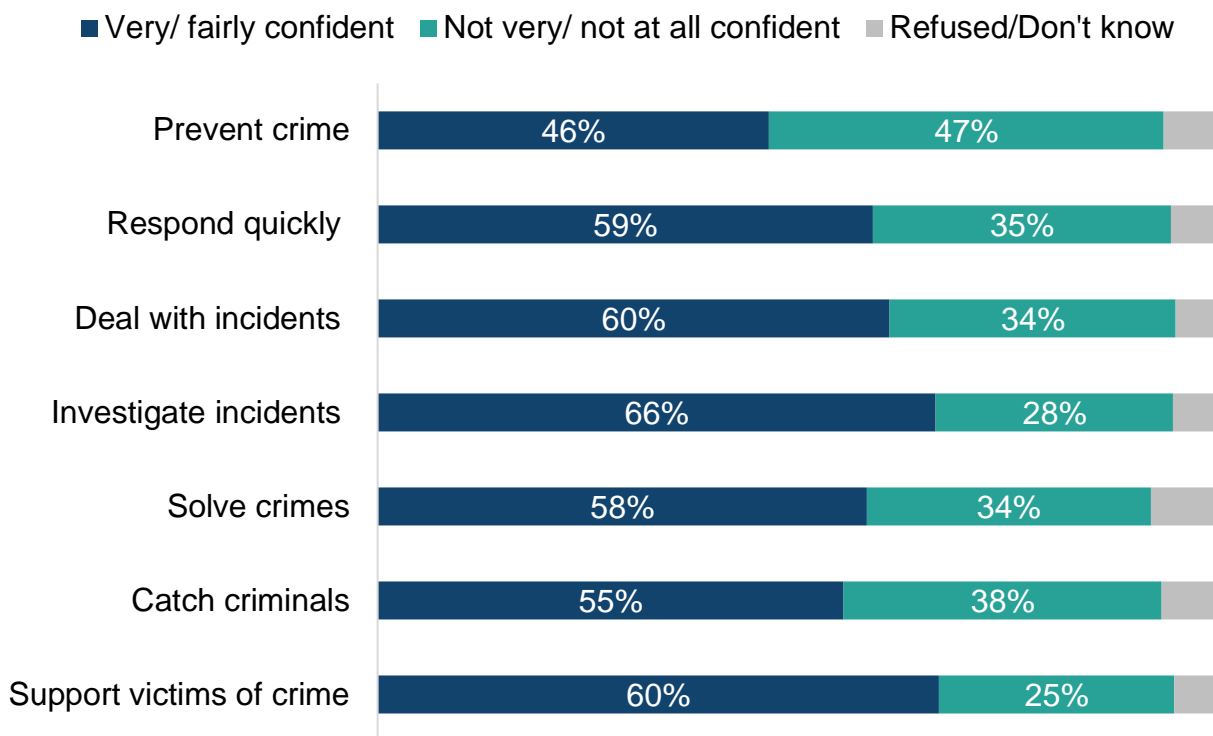
As shown in Figure 7.2, a majority of adults in Scotland were confident in the ability of the police across six of the seven effectiveness measures in 2021/22. Fewer than half of adults (46%) were very or fairly confident in the police’s ability to prevent crime.

Only six of the seven effectiveness measures currently include comparisons over time as the seventh measure (confidence in the police’s ability to support victims of crime) was included for the first time in this latest survey year (2021/22).

Of the six effectiveness measures that can be compared over time, five of them found confidence in the ability of the police to be lower in 2021/22 than in 2019/20 and all six of the measures were lower in 2021/22 compared to 2012/13.

Figure 7.2: The majority of adults were confident in the police across six of the seven effectiveness measures.

Proportion of adults who were confident in the ability of the local police to carry out various aspects of police work.



Base: All adults (5,570); Variables: QPOLCONF_01 – QPOLCONF_07.

Looking more closely at the trends over time for six of the indicators reveals that generally confidence in the ability of the police:

- increased in the years between 2008/09 and 2012/13
- all measures decreased since 2014/15 with three of the six (prevent crime, solve crime and catch criminals) showing no difference from the 2008/09 baseline

Five of the six measures which can be compared over the long term showed a decrease between 2019/20 and 2021/22: respond quickly (64% to 59%); deal with incidents (64% to 60%); investigate incidents (69% to 66%); solve crimes (62% to 58%) and, catch criminals (58% to 55%). Confidence in the ability of the police to prevent crime was the only measure not to show a significant change. This aspect of policing has consistently shown the lowest level of confidence across the six measures over the years. The measure has decreased from a peak of 57% in 2014/15, and is now in line with the 2008/09 baseline of 46%.

Did the public feel the police conducted their work fairly and were engaged with their community?

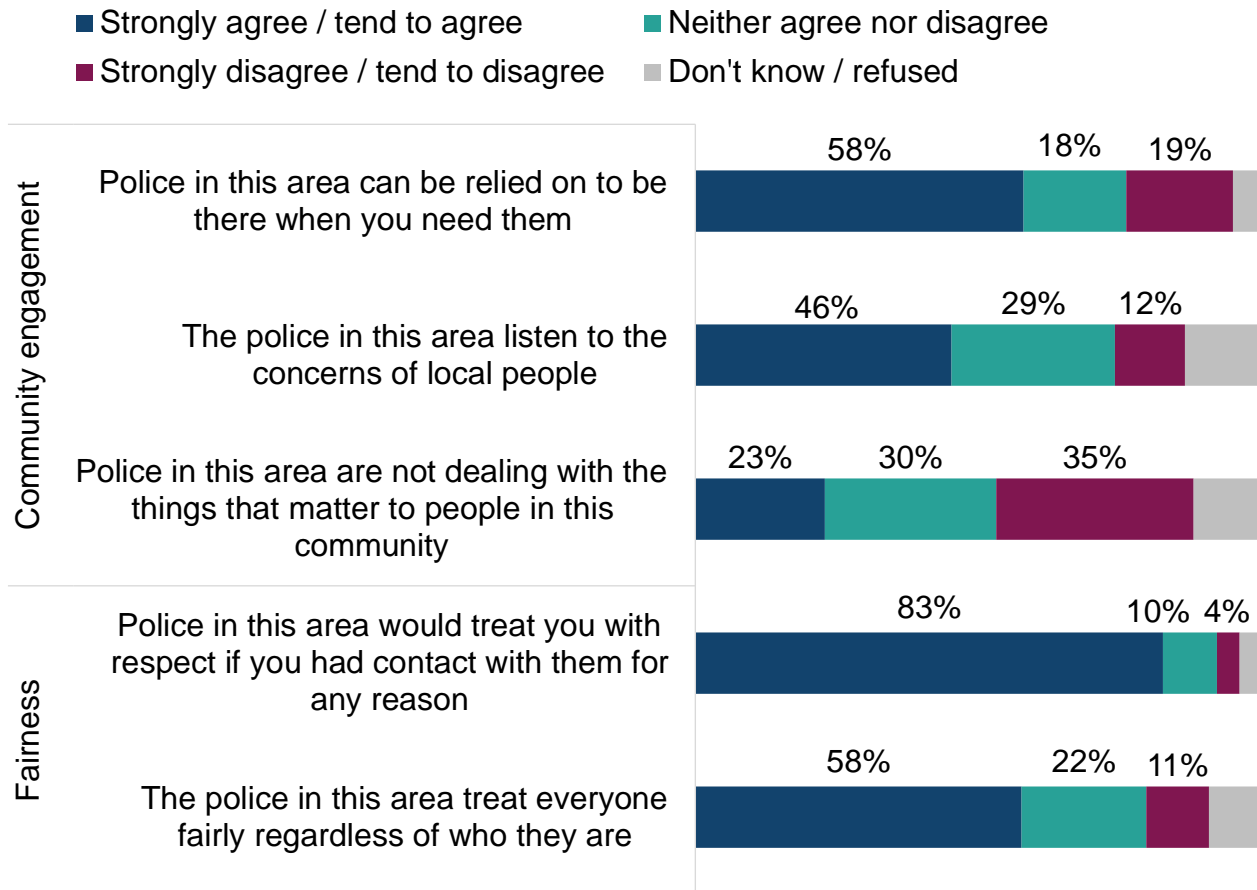
In 2021/22 adults in Scotland were generally positive about the way the police in their local area carried out their work and engaged with the public.

As well as looking at confidence in the ability of the police, the SCJS explores whether respondents believe the police treat people fairly and with respect, and whether the service is focused on the issues which matter to particular communities. The following section reports on the existing package of 'community engagement' and 'fairness' measures, those questions that have been in the survey since 2009/10. Three new questions that ask respondents about the perception of the police were added into the 2021/22 SCJS, and as these have only been included in one survey sweep, they are discussed separately in [the next section](#).

Respondents were asked whether they agreed or disagreed with a series of statements about the police in their area, with adults in 2021/22 mostly providing positive responses or saying they did not have a strong view, as shown in Figure 7.3 below. These have been grouped into measures which can be considered to be related to perceptions of how engaged the police are with the community and how fair the police are when carrying out duties respectively (hereafter generally referred to as 'fair treatment' or 'fairness' and 'community engagement'). Overall, these findings suggest that people largely hold favourable views on the approach of their local police, and this is in line with the finding that nearly half of adults are confident in the police and views on the effectiveness of the police are generally positive. To note, the measure 'community relations with the police in this local area are poor', which previously was one of the community engagement measures, was not included in the 2021/22 questionnaire and therefore is no longer reported.

Figure 7.3: Respondents generally had positive or not strong views around how local police conducted their work.

Attitudes towards the police.



Base: Adults who are not a serving police officer, married to or living with serving police officer (5,430); Variables: POLOPREL – POLOPCOM.

Compared to 2009/10 (when these questions were first included in the survey) the public held broadly unchanged views in 2021/22 across four of the five above measures which examine perceptions of fair treatment and community engagement. The exception is ‘police in this area are not dealing with the things that matter to people in this community’ which has decreased by 8 percentage points from 31% in 2009/10 to 23% in 2021/22, this tell us that the public now feel the police are more focused on issues that matter to local communities. Improvements generally occurred between 2009/10 and 2012/13, with more stability and short-term fluctuation shown in the years since then, with decreases in 4 of the 5 measures over the last year. The section below presents these fair treatment and community engagement measures in turn.

Views on the two fair treatment measures have both remained stable since these questions were first asked in 2009/10⁷³, but have both decreased in the latest year:

- 83% in 2021/22 agreeing with the statement that the police would treat you with respect, in line with 83% in 2009/10 and down from 89% in 2019/20
- 58% in 2021/22 agreeing that the police treat everyone fairly regardless of who they are, in line with 58% in 2009/10 and down from 63% in 2019/20

These results can be seen in full in [Annex table A1.22](#).

Turning to community engagement measures⁷⁴, since their introduction in 2009/10 results on these measures have been generally positive. However, since 2012/13 some aspects of community engagement have shown trends which are worth monitoring. For example:

- the proportion of people who think that the police listen to the concerns of local people fell from 54% in 2012/13 to 50% in 2014/15 and has since dropped further (to 46% in 2021/22); this is lower than the 2009/10 baseline
- the proportion of people who think that the police can be relied on to be there when you need them had remained largely stable since 2012/13 when it was 66%, but fell from 65% in 2019/20 to 58% in 2021/22. This is in line with the 2009/10 baseline

The proportion of people thinking that the police are not dealing with issues which matter to the community has remained stable since 2012/13 (when 25% of people felt this way), just under one-fifth thought this was the case in 2021/22 (23%).

These results suggest that both the fairness and community engagement indicators should continue to be monitored into the future.

New questions on perceptions of the police

For 2021/22, three new questions were added to the SCJS to better understand respondents' views of the police. These asked about the police being friendly and approachable, being involved in activities in the local community and whether they are held to account for the service they provide. As this is the first year these questions have been asked, we cannot compare to previous years. As such these measures have not been subsumed into the existing 'community engagement', 'fairness' or 'effectiveness' indicators.

⁷³ The results presented above relate only to adults who are not in the police themselves, and who are not married to or living with a serving police officer.

⁷⁴ In 2019, the Scottish Government's Justice Analytical Services, in collaboration with stakeholders, conducted a review of the public confidence in the police module. This review identified two measures in this grouping which spoke to public perceptions of the police generally, rather than being explicitly linked to confidence in the police's ability to engage with communities. These measures were: overall, people have a lot of confidence in the police in this area and community relations with the police in this local area are poor.

Around three-thirds (61%) of respondents agreed that police in their area are friendly and approachable. The levels of agreement were higher for those aged 16-24 (compared to other age groups), and for those living in rural areas but lower for those in the 15% most deprived areas, (56% compared to 61% for those living in the rest of Scotland).

When asked if they agreed that local police in their area were involved in activities in the local community (for example, activities for children, presentations at schools, cultural or sporting events, or local committees), 36% of respondents agreed and 14% disagreed. Levels of agreement and disagreement were broadly similar across all demographic groups.

Respondents were also asked if they agreed that police in their area are held to account for the service they provide, with 43% agreeing and 12% disagreeing. Those aged 16-24 were more likely than other age groups to agree, however, the remaining demographic groups were broadly similar.

How did perceptions of the police vary amongst the population?

The SCJS enables us to examine how views on the ability of the police, their level of community engagement and fairness in their approach varied across the population according to demographic and geographic characteristics, as well as whether individuals had experienced crime or not in the year prior to interview. The section below explores results for selected breakdowns, with key results and additional breakdowns presented in more detail in the [Annex tables](#) (for effectiveness measures) and online [data tables](#).

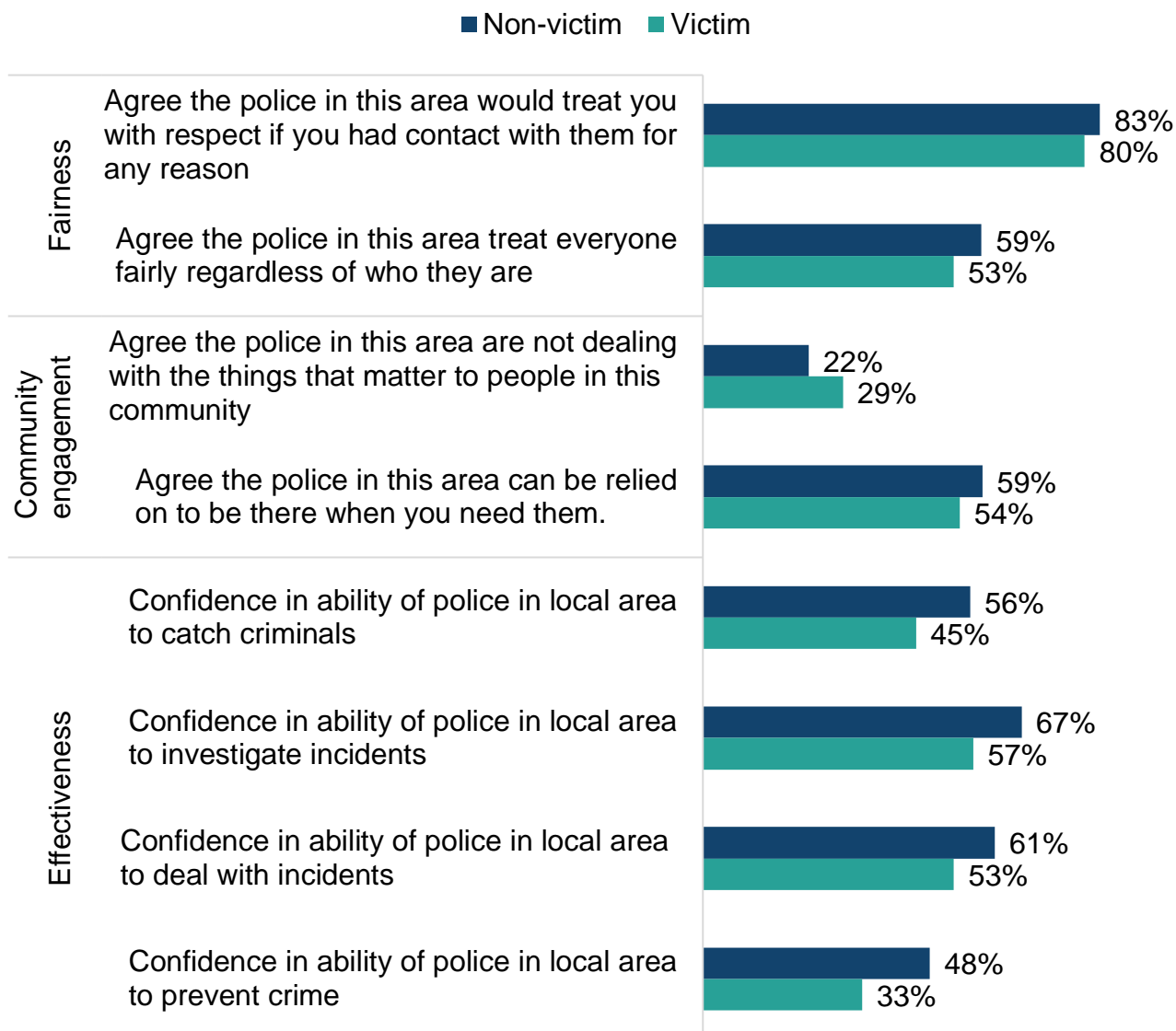
Overall, in line with the national average, views on the police were positive amongst population sub-groups in 2021/22 across the range of effectiveness, community engagement and fairness measures.

However, notwithstanding the overall positive perceptions of the police, views in 2021/22 varied between victims of crime and non-victims. Victims of crime held less positive opinions on the police across a selection of the metrics looking at effectiveness, community engagement and fairness.

Significant differences are outlined in Figure 7.4 below, with all other measures showing no difference between these comparator groups.

Figure 7.4: Views on the police were less positive amongst victims of crime across a number of indicators, whilst remaining largely positive in an absolute sense.

Variation in perceptions of the police, by victim status.



Base: Effectiveness: Victims (530); Non-victims (4,980). Community engagement/fairness: Victims (510); Non-victims (4,830). Variables: QPOLCONF_01 – QPOLCONF_06; POLOPREL – POLOPCOM.

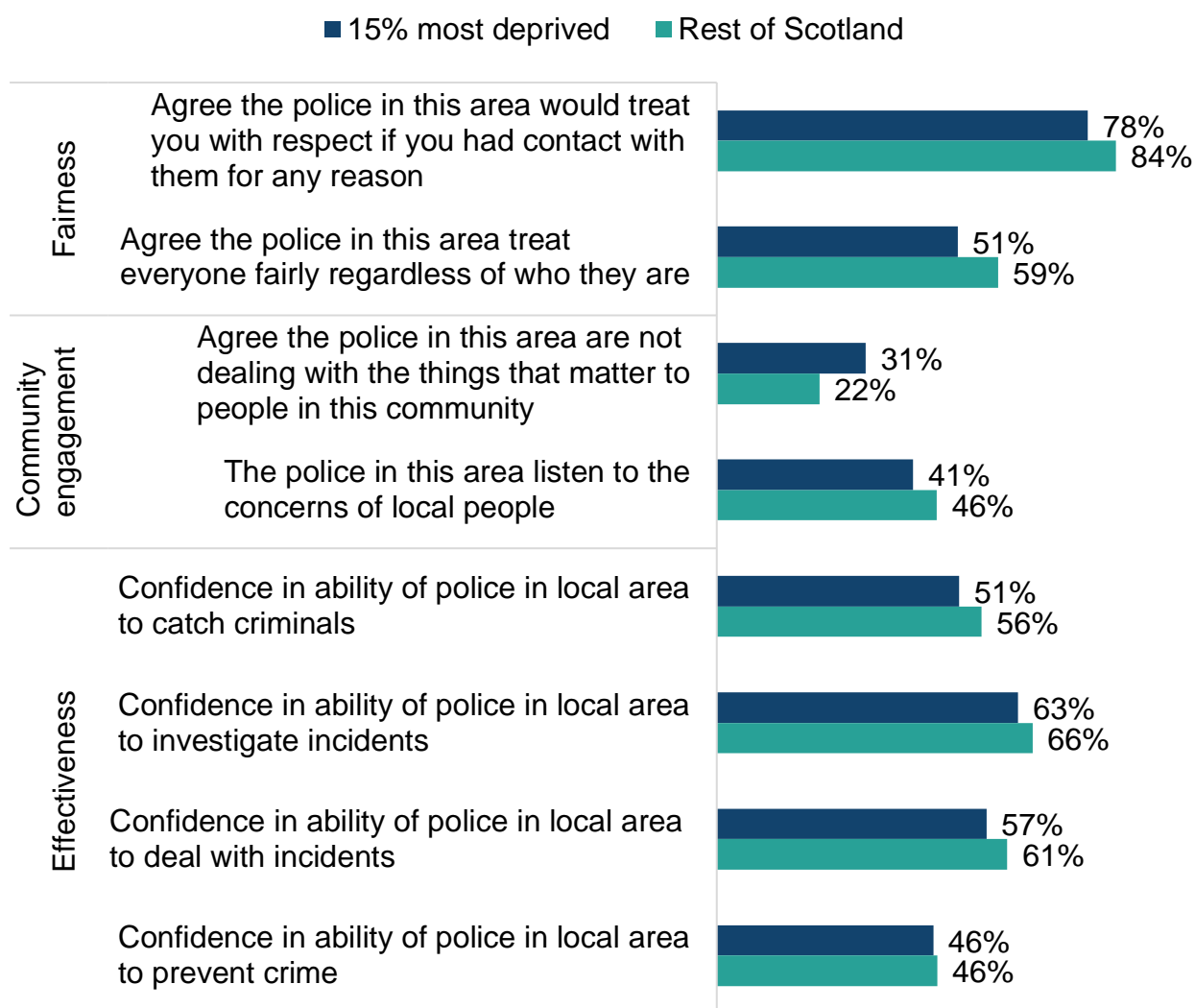
In previous years, the SCJS has seen differing views on the police between those in the most deprived areas compared to those living elsewhere. However, in 2021/22 there were no significant differences identified between those living in the 15% most deprived areas and the rest of Scotland in their confidence in the police across four of the seven effectiveness measures. The effectiveness measure ‘catch criminals’ was 5% lower for those living in the 15% most deprived areas.

Those living in the 15% most deprived areas of Scotland did tend to hold less positive opinions on the police across a selection of community engagement and fairness measures, however.

Significant differences are outlined in Figure 7.5 below, with all other measures showing no difference between these comparator groups.

Figure 7.5: Those living in the 15% most deprived areas of Scotland tended to hold less positive opinions on the police across a selection of community engagement and fairness measures in 2021/22.

Variation in perceptions of the police, by area deprivation.



Base: Effectiveness: 15% most deprived areas (770); Rest of Scotland (4,740). Community engagement/fairness: 15% most deprived areas (760); Rest of Scotland (4,590). Variables: QPOLCONF_01 – QPOLCONF_07; POLOPREL – POLOPCOM.

How did perceptions of the police vary by age?

Looking at confidence in the police by age, in 2021/22 those aged 16 to 24 had higher levels of confidence across the seven effectiveness measures than adults of all other age categories. People aged 25 to 44 were more likely than those aged 60 or over to have higher confidence levels across all seven effectiveness measures, which suggests that in general those in the younger two age categories (16 to 24 and 25 to 44) had more confidence in the police than older adults (45 to 59 and 60 or over).

Turning to views on how good a job the police are doing, fair treatment and community engagement by age, there is a less clear picture. For example: people aged 16 to 24 were more likely than those aged 45 to 59 and those aged 60 or over to say the police were doing an excellent or good job. There was no difference between those aged 25-44, 45-59 and 60 or over.

- adults aged 16 to 24 were more confident that the police would treat them with respect if they had contact with them than adults aged 25-44 (87% compared to 79%), however, there was no difference between 16 to 24 year olds, 45 to 59 year olds and those aged 60 and over
- detailed breakdowns by age groups in 2021/22 and over time can be found in the [online data tables](#)

How did perceptions of the police vary by rurality and sex?

Views across all of the effectiveness indicators were similar in urban and rural areas. However, there were some differences across the community engagement and fairness indicators. Those in urban areas had less confidence than those in rural areas that the police listen to the concerns of local people (45% compared to 50%, respectively), they were also less confident that the police in their area treat everyone fairly regardless of who they are (56% compared to 67%, respectively).

For only one of the effectiveness, fairness and community engagement indicators was there a difference in the views of males and females in 2021/22. The SCJS found that males were more likely than females to think that police in their area treat everyone fairly regardless of who they are (61% compared to 55%, respectively).

Additionally, it is worth noting that there was no difference both between those in urban and rural areas and between males and females in the proportions who thought the police were doing a good or excellent job in 2021/22 (49% and 50%, and 49% and 49%, respectively).

How did perceptions of the police varied over time?

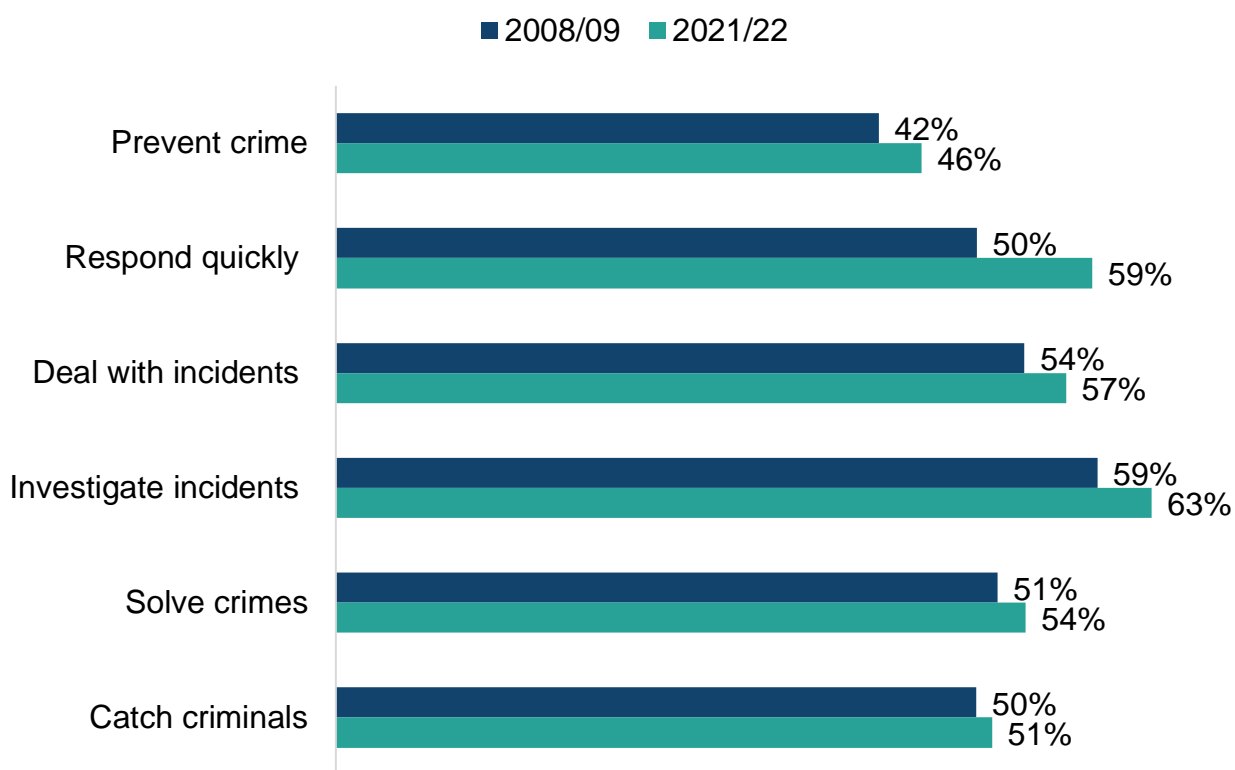
Looking at trends over time the SCJS finds that perceptions of the police have remained stable or improved since 2008/09 (or 2009/10 where relevant) for many key groups in the population.

For instance, the proportion of adults who felt very or fairly confident in the ability of the police to take forward each of the six components of police work in terms of effectiveness was stable or higher in 2021/22 compared to 2008/09 amongst those aged 16 to 24 and 25 to 44, people living in the most deprived areas of Scotland and people living in urban areas. These results are shown in full in [Annex Tables A1.16 to A1.21](#)⁷⁵. The tables also show that results across these measures have broadly remained stable since 2019/20 for those living in the most deprived areas and rural areas, but have fallen for those living elsewhere in Scotland and urban areas.

Figure 7.6 provides a closer look at perceptions amongst people in the most deprived areas by way of example. It outlines how confidence in the ability of the police has increased over time between 2008/09 and 2019/20.

Figure 7.6: The confidence in the ability of the police by respondents living in the 15% most deprived areas has generally been stable or increased over time.

Proportion of adults who were very/fairly confident in the ability of the police in the 15% most deprived areas of Scotland, 2008/09 and 2021/22.



Base: Adults living in 15% most deprived areas (2008/09: 2,440; 2021/22: 770); Variables: QPOLCONF_01 – QPOLCONF_06.

⁷⁵ These results are also available for further breakdowns, such as tenure, for each SCJS year since 2008/09 in [supplementary data tables](#), along with the results on perceptions of community engagement and fairness.

Measures looking at perceptions of community engagement and fairness have also generally remained stable or shown improvements in the 15% most deprived areas of Scotland since 2009/10⁷⁶.

Across three of the six effectiveness measures, views improved in urban areas between 2008/09 and 2021/22 with the additional three remaining stable. Views in rural locations showed only one change, a significant decrease (down 4.6 percentage points) in confidence in the ability of police to catch criminals.

What did the public think about the level of police presence locally?

The SCJS includes a series of questions which explore the public's views on the importance and awareness of police patrolling respondents' local area⁷⁷.

The proportion of adults who said they were aware that their area was regularly patrolled⁷⁸ has fallen from a peak of 56% in 2012/13 to 39% in 2021/22 (unchanged from 2019/20), as shown in Figure 7.7.

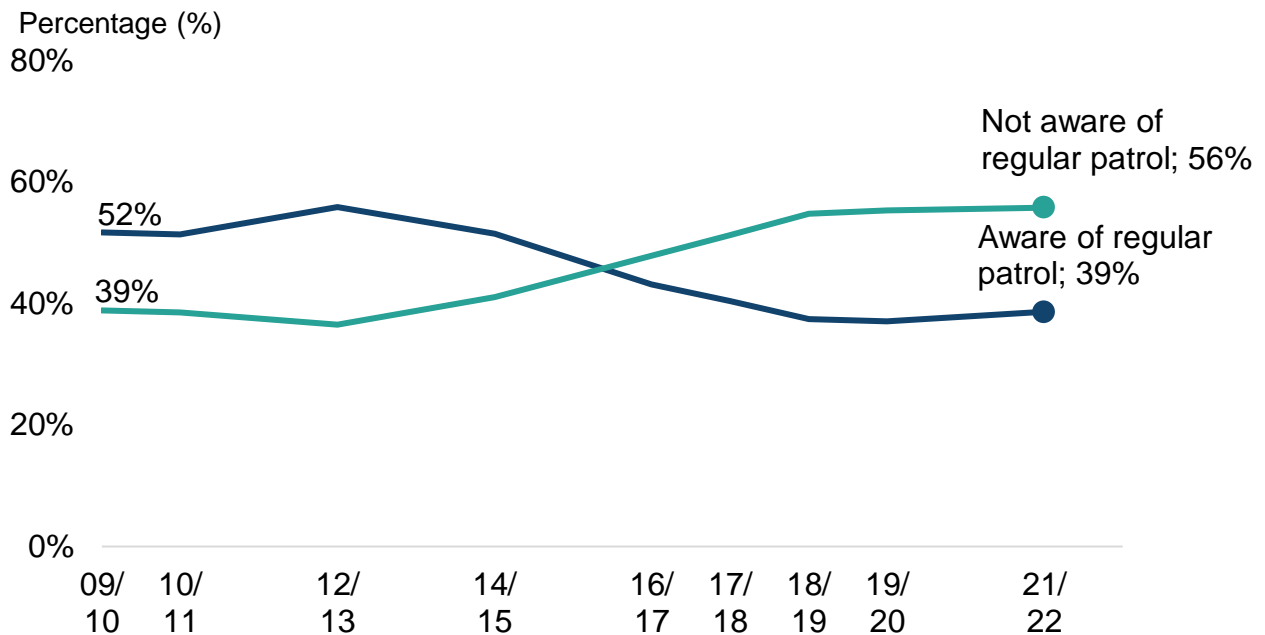
⁷⁶ The only measure not to show improvement was the proportion agreeing that the police listen to the concerns of local people, which showed no change.

⁷⁷ The results presented below relate only to adults who are not in the police themselves, and who are not married to or living with a serving police officer.

⁷⁸ Either by foot, bike or car.

Figure 7.7: The proportion of adults who were aware of regular patrols has fallen from a peak in 2012/13 but is unchanged since 2019/20.

Proportion of adults who said they were aware of regular police patrol in their area, 2009/10 to 2021/22.



Base: Adults who are not a serving police officer, married to or living with serving police officer (2009/10: 3,890; 2010/11: 3,180; 2012/13: 11,520; 2014/15: 11,180; 2016/17: 5,420; 2017/18: 5,360; 2018/19: 5,410; 2019/20: 5,450; 2021/22: 5,340); Variable: POLPATR.

As in previous years, Table 7.1 shows that adults living in the 15% most deprived areas were more likely than those in the rest of Scotland to report being aware of their area being patrolled regularly.

Table 7.1: Adults living in the most deprived areas were more likely to report being aware of police patrolling in their local area.

Public awareness of police patrolling in the local area.

Percentage of respondents aware of police patrol (including how patrolled)	15% most deprived areas	Rest of Scotland
Yes – total	52%	36%
Yes – on foot	12%	8%
Yes – by bicycle	3%	2%
Yes – by car	50%	35%
No	43%	58%
Number of respondents	760	4,590

Base: Adults who are not a serving police officer, married to or living with serving police officer; Variable: POLPATR.

In 2021/22, the population remained divided about whether the police presence in their area was sufficient. When asked about whether they thought the local police presence was sufficient, there was no significant difference between those who believed it was ‘about right’ and those who said it was ‘not enough’. Very few respondents typically report there is ‘too much’ of a police presence – for example, less than 1% in 2021/22.

The proportion of adults who felt the level of police presence was insufficient (‘not enough’) fell from 56% in 2009/10 to 46% in 2012/13, it then increased slightly before beginning to decrease from 2018/19 onwards, reaching 49% in 2021/22 which is 2% lower than 2019/20.

Those living in the 15% most deprived areas of Scotland were less likely to believe that the police presence in their local area was ‘about right’, with 38% feeling this way compared to 49% in the rest of Scotland.

Those in rural locations were more likely to feel that the level of police presence was ‘about right’ (56% compared to 45% in urban areas). This may suggest that rural communities have different experiences and expectations of local policing.

At a national level, the most frequently cited reasons mentioned by those who thought that the level of police presence was insufficient were related to respondents not personally seeing the police enough on foot (73%), rarely seeing the police at all (52%), only ever seeing the police in cars (44%) and that there used to be more police around (34%).

In contrast, the most common reasons for saying the level of police presence was ‘about right’ related to a (perceived) lack of crime in the area, with some

respondents also being content with seeing them in cars and feeling reassured by seeing the police at the current regularity.

How satisfied were people with their interactions with the police?

As noted in this chapter's introduction, there has been a focus on the perceptions of the general public about policing. In this section, results from those who have had direct contact with the police are presented.

The SCJS explores experiences of contact respondents have had with the police in the last year. Follow-up questions to understand how individuals feel they were treated during their engagement are asked of respondents whose most recent contact with the police involved:

- reporting a crime
- contact through work
- being approached by the police while they carried out routine enquiries
- being questioned or searched
- reporting other matters

As with general attitudes towards the police, the quality of any contact with the police and individuals' perceptions of whether they have been treated appropriately are amongst the factors which are likely to influence the level of confidence held in the police.

In 2021/22, the majority of people were fairly positive about their engagement with the police in relation to their most recent contact with the service. For example:

- 93% said they were dealt with in a very or fairly polite manner⁷⁹
- 85% felt they were treated fairly
- 67% believed the police showed as much interest as they should have in what respondents had to say
- 60% were very or quite satisfied with the way the police handled the matter

These results are consistent with previous years, showing no change from 2019/20.

Other surveys on public attitudes to policing

Police Scotland conduct two surveys on public opinions of policing:

- [Your Police survey](#)
- [User Experience Survey \(UES\)](#) – previously the User Satisfaction Survey (USS). This is conducted using a sample of people who have contacted the police to report a crime or incident

⁷⁹ This question is asked of all respondents with any contact with the police in the last year.

Although results are not directly comparable, results in recent years have shown the majority of respondents are satisfied with the response received and that they had been treated fairly and with respect, similar to the SCJS. More information on both these surveys can be found in the [Quarter 1 2023/24 Performance report from Police Scotland](#).

The Scottish Police Authority (SPA) has also recently started independent polling of public trust and confidence in the police. The results from the third wave of polling, conducted in July 2023, are available in a paper presented to the SPA Policing Performance Committee. These findings show that, of questions asked on both public trust and public confidence in the police, police in their local area received the highest level of response but both have seen a decrease compared to a year earlier (polling conducted in July 2022). More information is available on the [SPA website](#).

Selected publications on factors that drive public confidence in the police

Scottish Crime and Justice Survey (2019), [Questionnaire Development: Policing Review](#) for a concise summary of how public confidence in the police is understood across relevant literature.

Bradford, B. and Myhill, A. (2015). Triggers of change to public confidence in the police and criminal justice system: Findings from the Crime Survey for England and Wales panel experiment. *Criminology and Justice*, 15(1), pp. 23-43.

Bradford, B., Jackson, J. and Stanko, E.A., (2009). Contact and confidence: Revisiting the impact of public encounters with the police. *Policing & society*, 19(1), pp. 20-46.

Stanko, E.A., Bradford, B. (2009). Beyond Measuring 'How good a job' Police are Doing: The MPS Model of Confidence in Policing. In *Policing*. Volume 3. Number 4, pp. 322-330.

What did the public think about the criminal justice system in Scotland?

The SCJS also collects information on public knowledge of and attitudes towards the criminal justice system in Scotland, as well as people's contact with different organisations operating within the system⁸⁰.

Consistent with previous SCJS results, in 2021/22 three-quarters (75%) of adults said they did not know very much or anything at all about the criminal justice system in Scotland. By contrast, only 3% said they knew a lot.

Regardless of their self-reported knowledge, respondents were asked about their confidence in the criminal justice system as a whole through a range of statements about the operation and performance of the system. As shown in Figure 7.8 below, the majority of people were either very or fairly confident about the delivery of the criminal justice system across a range of considerations.

For example, around three-quarters of adults were confident that the system allows all those accused of crimes to get a fair trial and that everyone is able to access the justice system if required (76% and 74%, respectively).

However, less than half (41%) were confident about the efficiency of the system and that appropriate sentences are given which fit the crime (41% confident).

Notwithstanding wording changes in the latter measure in recent years, it is important to note that confidence in both these indicators has increased since they were first included in the survey. For example, in 2008/09, 35% were confident the system deals with cases promptly and efficiently, compared to 41% in 2021/220.

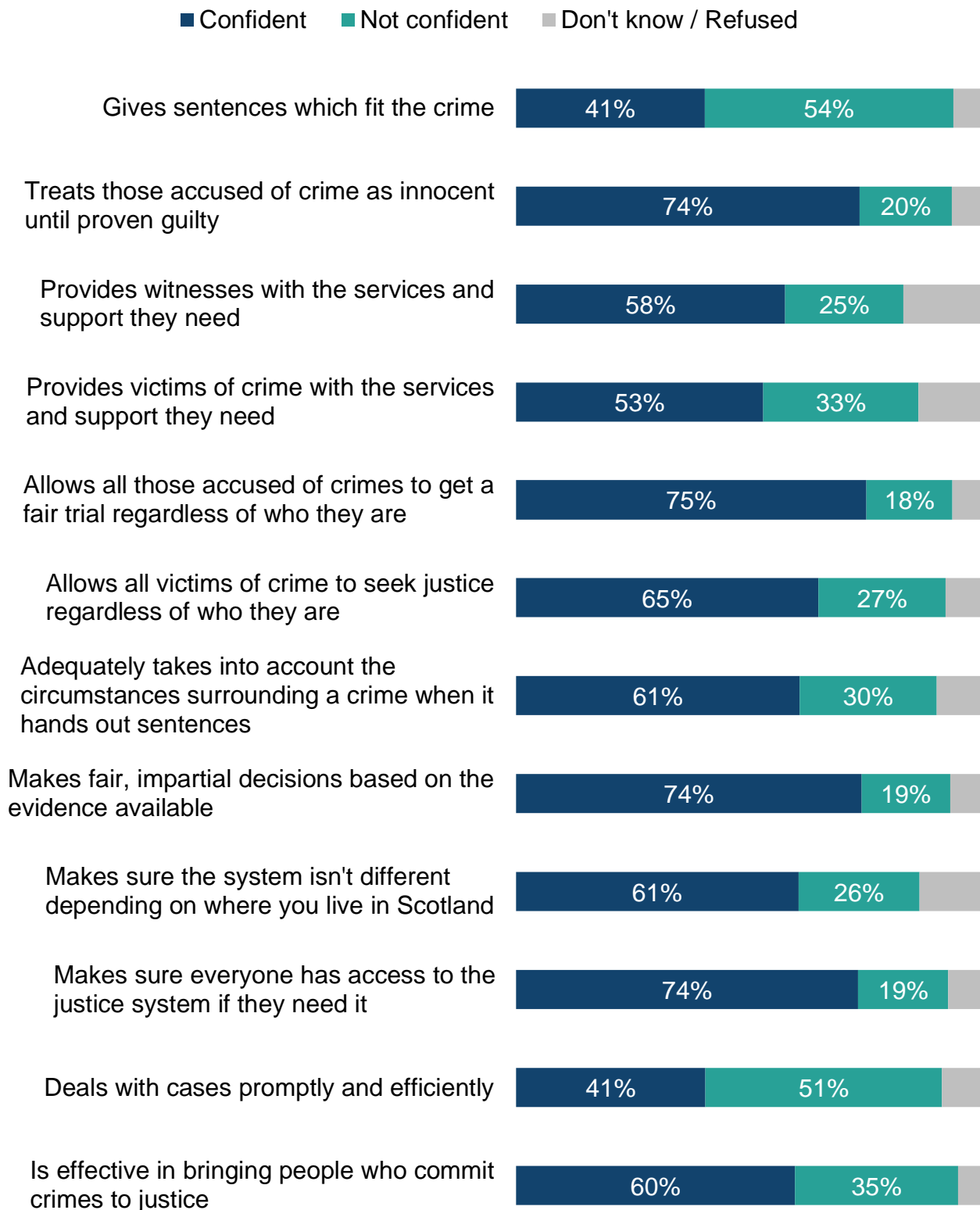
More generally, Figure 7.8 shows the proportions who said they were confident or not confident in the criminal justice system, as well as those who responded don't know – which represents a sizeable minority of respondents for some questions.

The full time-series showing fluctuations from year to year in results for confidence in the justice system are shown in [Annex table A1.24](#).

⁸⁰ Relatedly, [Section 9.3](#) also presents data on the Crown Office and Procurator Fiscal Service (COPFS).

Figure 7.8: The majority of people were either very or fairly confident about the delivery of the criminal justice system across a range of considerations.

Confidence in the operation of the criminal justice system.



Base: All adults (5,520); Variables: QDCONF_01 – QDCONF_15.

Confidence in the criminal justice system was stronger across most of the measures in 2021/22, or had otherwise shown no change compared to the first time each question was asked⁸¹.

The level of confidence that everyone has access to the justice system if they need it was adopted as a National Indicator in the Scottish Government's refreshed [National Performance Framework](#) in 2018. The proportion of adults confident in this element of the justice system has increased from 70% in 2008/09 to 74% in 2021/22, with the latest result unchanged from the position in 2019/20.

How did views of the criminal justice system vary across the population?

For most of the measures exploring views on the justice system, younger adults (those aged 16 to 24) were more likely to be confident than those aged 60 and over. For example, 80% of those aged 16 to 24 were confident that the system makes sure everyone has access to the justice system if they need it, in comparison to 70% of those aged 60 and over.

Those living in the 15% most deprived areas of Scotland (compared to those living elsewhere) were less likely to be confident in the justice system. For instance, 66% of adults living in the 15% most deprived areas were confident that the justice system makes fair, impartial decisions based on the evidence available compared to 76% of those living elsewhere.

Females were also less likely to be confident in the justice system than males, with a lower proportion who said they were confident on eight of the twelve measures.

In 2021/22, seven of the twelve confidence questions related to the criminal justice system showed a difference between victims of crime and non-victims. In these measures victims had less confidence than non-victims.

These results differ from findings in 2019/20, which showed little variation between these two groups and their confidence in the justice system however are in line with findings from previous years which have tended to detect lower confidence in the criminal justice system amongst victims of crime compared to non-victims.

How did the public view the prison system?

The SCJS also gathers information on attitudes towards prisons and community sentences to understand what the public thinks about processes to sentence and rehabilitate offenders. The specific wording used over time has changed in a

⁸¹ Four of the current measures were first asked in 2008/09, the rest have only been asked in their current form since 2012/13, with one further amendment in 2017/18. These changes are visible within [Annex table A1.24](#).

number of the questions on this topic, limiting the ability to examine some trends over time⁸².

In addition, it is important to note that questions on attitudes towards prisons and community sentences within the SCJS are asked without reference to specific crime circumstances or offender backgrounds which may influence opinions about what constitutes a suitable sentence or approach. For example, findings from a [Scottish Sentencing Council \(2019\) report on Public Perceptions of Sentencing](#) showed how individuals' awareness of mitigating circumstances or specific offences can shape how punitive a respondent is when asked about sentencing⁸³.

The SCJS has previously sought to understand the public's confidence in the effectiveness of prisons, however these questions were updated with effect from 2017/18 to now explore attitudes about what adults in Scotland believe prisons should do.

Table 7.2 shows that in 2021/22 the vast majority of adults agreed that prisons should provide support to prisoners to help them address any underlying issues, reduce re-offending and help them fit back into the community. Just over half (54%) agreed that only those who commit the most serious crimes should be put in prison.

The proportion agreeing that only those who commit the most serious crimes should be put in prison increased between 2019/20 and 2021/22 (from 48% to 54%) and a lower proportion of adults agreed that prisons should provide support in order to prevent people committing more crime (92% in 2021/22 compared to 94% in 2019/20).

⁸² Results from each year of the SCJS are available in [data tables](#), whilst [questionnaire documentation](#) available online also outlines the specific questions asked. This section has not provided results by comparator groups, full breakdowns are also available within these data tables.

⁸³ Full results and additional breakdowns by group are presented in more detail within the online [data tables](#).

Table 7.2: The vast majority of adults agreed that prisons should provide support to prisoners to help them address any underlying issues, reduce re-offending and help them fit back into the community.

Attitudes towards the role of prisons.

Proportion of adults	Strongly/ slightly agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Strongly/ slightly disagree	Don't know/ refused
Only those who have committed the most serious crimes should be put in prison	54%	12%	32%	2%
Prisons should help prisoners change their behaviour rather than just punish them	90%	5%	3%	2%
Prisons should provide support in order to prevent people committing more crime	92%	5%	2%	2%
Prisons should work with other organisations in the community to help prisoners fit back into the community	90%	5%	2%	2%
Homeless prisoners should be helped to find a place to live after they leave prison	90%	5%	3%	2%

Base: All adults (1,360); Variables: QPRIS3_01 – QPRIS3_05.

How did the public view community sentences?

The current questions on whether respondents agreed or disagreed with a series of statements relating to the purpose and operation of community sentences were developed in 2017/18. Results in 2021/22 show that:

- the vast majority of adults (89%) believed that people serving community sentences should be given support (such as help with addiction or mental health problems, or numeracy or literacy difficulties) to reduce the likelihood of them committing more crime in the future
- most people (82%) believed that people helping their community as part of a community sentence is an appropriate response for a minor offence rather than a short prison sentence
- over two-thirds (70%) believed that people who do not comply with the terms of their community sentence will be held to account
- around a quarter (24%) of adults believed that people who serve community sentences put the public at risk of crime

Respondents were also asked about their awareness and perceptions of unpaid work placements which can be completed as part of a community sentence. Just 14% of adults were aware of unpaid work placements being carried out in their area, although amongst those who were aware of them, 73% agreed that their area had benefitted. Further research could explore public awareness of unpaid work placements.

Attitudes to Police Scotland

A number of questions were added into the 2021/22 SCJS in order to give us a snapshot of respondents' attitudes to Police Scotland.

Respondents were asked to think about policing overall in Scotland and to rate how good a job they thought Police Scotland was doing, 45% rated them either 'excellent' or 'good', whilst 39% rated them 'fair'. Adults aged 16-24 were more likely to rate Police Scotland 'excellent' or 'good' (57%) when compared with those aged 25-44 (47%), aged 45-59 (43%) and those aged 60 and over (40%). A majority (81%) of respondents stated that they were 'very confident' or 'fairly confident' in the ability of the police in Scotland to keep people safe at large public events. When asked what had affected their view on how good a job Police Scotland are doing, respondents were most likely to answer 'news programmes' (40%), word of mouth/information from other people (38%) and 'relatives' and/or friends' experiences (32%).

Respondents were also asked about Police Scotland's use of social media. 73% said it was 'very' or 'fairly' important that Police Scotland communicated with the public using social media but only 38% said they had seen either a 'great deal' or 'fair amount' of information provided to the public on social media, whilst 60% said they had seen 'not very much' or 'none at all'.

Due to the development of the new Fraud and Computer misuse victim form, discussed further in [Annex D](#), it was necessary to make reductions elsewhere in the survey. The decision was taken to remove these questions from the 2023/24 questionnaire. The content of the questionnaire is reviewed on an annual basis and decision to include these questions in future years will be based on user needs.

8. Public perceptions of crime and safety

In addition to measuring the extent and prevalence of crime, the Scottish Crime and Justice Survey (SCJS) also enables us to understand public perceptions of crime and safety and how these have changed over time. It is important to note that a variety of factors will influence perceptions of crime in local communities and the country as a whole, so opinions or concerns may not reflect wider trends in victimisation. Moreover, what respondents consider when asked about crime may go beyond the categories of victimisation captured by the SCJS.

How did the public think the level of crime in their local area had changed in recent years?

One of the indicators in the Scottish Government's National Performance Framework is the public's perception of the crime rate in their local area. The SCJS is used to evidence this indicator which tracks the proportion of adults who believe that the crime rate has stayed the same or reduced⁸⁴ in the past two years in their local area⁸⁵.

Around three-quarters (76%) of adults in 2021/22 said that the crime rate in their local area had decreased or stayed the same over the last couple of years. This figure has improved from 73% in 2019/20 and from 69% in 2008/09, as shown in Figure 8.1.

Looking more closely at trends over time reveals that the growth in the 'stayed the same or reduced' combined measure over the last 15 years or so has been driven by more people believing the crime rate in their local area has 'stayed the same' which has consistently accounted for most of this group, increasing from 60% of adults in 2008/09 to 68% in 2021/22. On the other hand, in the latest survey around one-in-twelve (8%) thought the crime rate had decreased, unchanged from the position in 2019/20 and 2008/09.

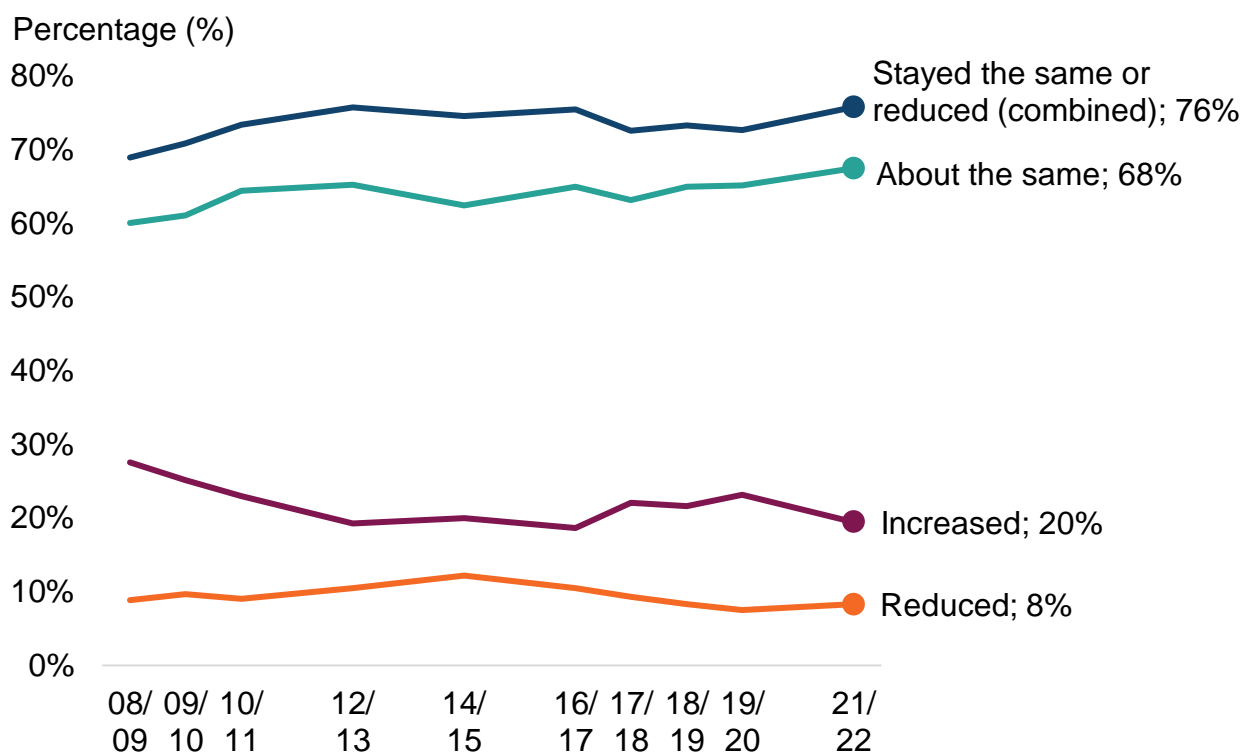
Taken together, these findings mean that fewer people thought the amount of crime in their local area had increased in the two years prior to interview in 2021/22 (19.5%) than in 2019/20 (23.2%) or in 2008/09 (28%). However, this is not a continuous downward trend as similar results to 2021/22 were also seen in 2016/17 (18.7%).

⁸⁴ The 'reduced' category combines those saying there has been a 'little less' or a 'lot less' crime, whilst the 'increased' group contains those who thought there was a 'little more' or a 'lot more' crime.

⁸⁵ The question is only asked of adults who have lived in their local area for two or more years at the time of interview (n=4,860).

Figure 8.1: The proportion of adults who thought the crime rate in their local area had stayed the same or reduced over the last two years has increased over time.

Proportion of adults holding views on changes in the local crime rate in the last two years, 2008/09 to 2021/22.



Base: All adults who have lived in local area for two years or more – SCJS 2008/09 (14,210); 2009/10 (14,380); 2010/11 (11,700); 2012/13 (10,640); 2014/15 (10,050); 2016/17 (4,830); 2017/18 (4,770); 2018/19 (4,820); 2019/20 (4,920); 2021/22 (4,860) Variable: QS2AREA.

In 2021/22, most adults (typically around 70-80%) in each population group thought the volume of local crime had stayed the same or reduced in the previous two years. However, the proportion in each group holding this view did vary - for instance:

- fewer females than males (73% compared to 79%)
- fewer people with disabilities than without disabilities (67% compared to 79%)
- fewer victims of crime than non-victims (60% compared to 77%)

Further breakdowns and time-series analyses are provided in [Annex table A1.11](#). It reveals improvements in perceptions since 2008/09 across a number of population breakdowns, although the latest survey results were unchanged from the baseline position for people aged 25 to 44 years old, victims of crime, those in the most deprived areas, and those in rural locations.

Whilst the SCJS is the preferred source for national results on perceptions of the local crime rate, this question is currently part of the Scottish Surveys Core Questions (SSCQ), which sees a selection of measures collected in the same way across the three large household surveys in Scotland - the Scottish Health Survey (SHeS), the Scottish Household Survey (SHS), and the SCJS. Results from the three surveys on the core questions are pooled together each year to offer a larger sample size, enabling more precise and granular breakdowns of results for equality groups and at local level. More on the SSCQ, including the latest results available on the local crime rate indicator from the three surveys combined, can be found on [the SSCQ website](#).

How did views on local and national crime trends differ in 2021/22?

Whilst the previous section looked at views on crime rates in respondents' local areas, the SCJS also collects data on perceptions of national crime trends. As in previous years, adults were more likely to think crime had risen across the country as a whole than in their local area in the two years prior to interview.

In 2021/22, almost two-fifths of adults in Scotland (38%) believed that crime had increased across the country as a whole in the two years prior to interview. However, the SCJS estimates that the actual overall level of crime in Scotland has shown no change since 2018/19 and is lower than in 2017/18.

The proportion of adults who thought crime had increased in the latest survey was smaller than the 52% who felt this way in 2009/10, and the 45% who felt this way in 2019/20.⁸⁶ However, this proportion has increased from a low of 34% in 2014/15 (Table 8.1).

⁸⁶ The question on the national crime rate was first included in 2009/10.

Table 8.1: The proportion of adults who thought the national crime rate had stayed the same or reduced over the last two years has increased over time.

Public perceptions on how the national crime rate has changed in the two years prior to interview.

Percentage of adults holding view on change in national crime rate	2021/22	Change since 2008/09	Change since 2019/20
A lot more / a little more	38%	Down from 52%	Down from 45%
About the same	43%	Up from 36%	Up from 39%
A lot less / a little less	8%	Up from 4%	Up from 6%
Don't know / refused	10%	Up from 8%	No change
Combined: Less or same	52%	Up from 40%	Up from 45%
Number of respondents	5,520	16,040	5,570

Variable: QS2AREAS.

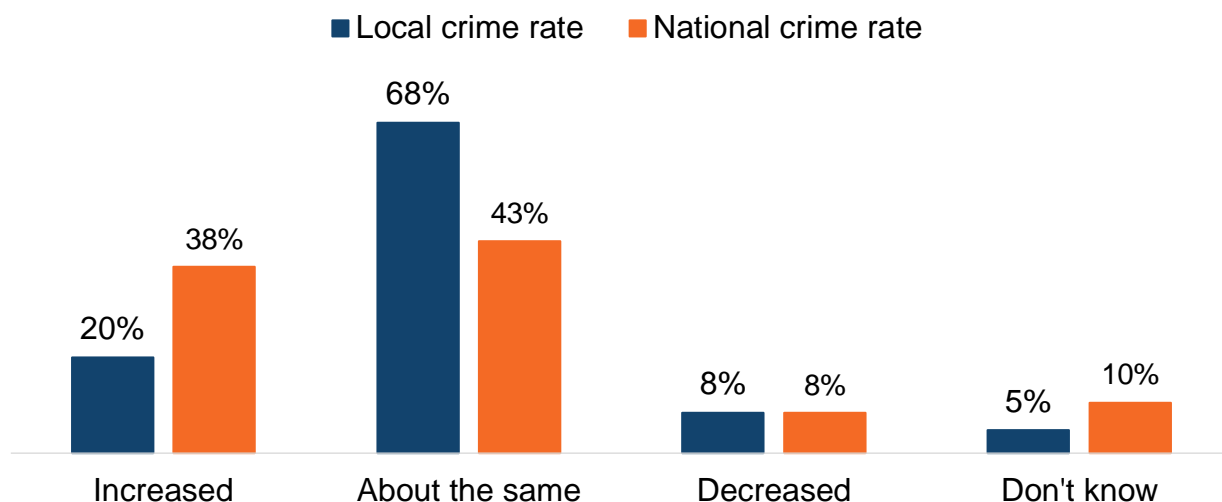
Comparing local and national perceptions, the proportion of adults in 2021/22 believing crime had increased in Scotland overall (38%) was much greater than the 20% who thought the level of crime in their local area had grown in recent years.⁸⁷ In other words, people were much less likely to say crime had been stable or fallen nationally (52%) than in their local area (76%). This variation in perceptions across geographic levels has been identified consistently by the SCJS over the years and by other surveys across the UK - notably the [Crime Survey for England and Wales](#) (CSEW) and the [Northern Ireland Safe Community Survey](#) (NISCS).

Looking more closely, Figure 8.2 highlights that the difference in those believing crime has increased in Scotland compared with their local area is mostly accounted for by people being much less likely to think the crime rate has been stable in Scotland overall.

⁸⁷ Only those who have lived at their current address at least two years are asked for their views on the local crime rate. Analysis of the national crime rate data for only those resident at their address for at least two years indicates a fairly small impact on the comparison between local and national crime perceptions, compared to using the full sample for such figures, therefore the full sample is used.

Figure 8.2: A higher proportion of adults thought the crime rate had increased nationally compared to the crime rate in their local area.

Perceptions of changes in the crime rate locally and nationally in the two years prior to interview.



Base: Local crime rate: All adults who have lived in local area for two years or more (4,860); National crime rate: All adults (5,520); Variables: QS2AREA; QS2AREAS.

Views on the national crime rate also varied by demographic characteristics. For example, females were less likely to think crime had been stable or fallen across the country as a whole than males (48% compared to 55%, respectively). This finding is similar to the pattern in views on the local crime rate.

The perception of the national crime rate also varied with age, with older people less likely to believe it had been stable or fallen in the last two years (for example 41% of those aged 60 and over compared to 65% of those aged 16 to 24). This was not seen for local crime rates, where the perceptions of the different age groups were similar.

Disabled people were also less likely to think the national crime rate had been stable or fallen compared to non-disabled people (44% compared to 54%).

Those in urban areas were more likely than those in rural areas to believe the national crime rate had been stable or fallen in the last two years (53% compared to 47%, respectively).

In contrast to perceptions of the local crime rate, the 2021/22 SCJS detected no difference in views on the trend in the national crime rate between victims of crime and non-victims, and those living in the most deprived areas of Scotland compared to the rest of Scotland.

Further breakdowns and trends within groups over time are provided in [Annex table A1.12](#).

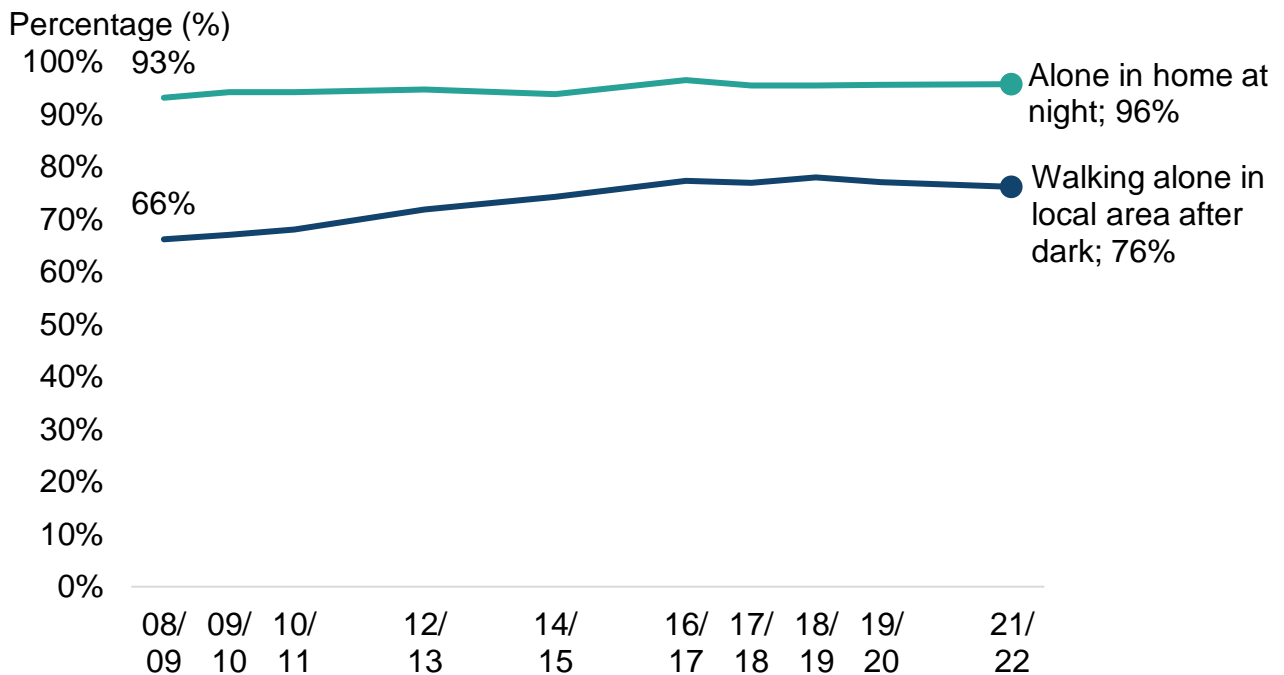
How safe did the public feel in 2021/22?

To aid understanding about public perceptions of safety and fears about crime, SCJS respondents were asked how safe they felt when walking alone in their local area after dark. This question has also been used elsewhere, such as in the Crime Survey for England and Wales, to explore similar issues. An additional question also asked respondents how safe they feel when on their own at home at night.

In 2021/22, the majority of adults in Scotland said they felt very or fairly safe walking alone in their local area after dark (76%) and when in their home alone at night (96%). Both these measures of feelings of safety have increased from their 2008/09 baseline position, as shown in Figure 8.3 below. Over the shorter-term, a closer examination of the data shows that both the proportion feeling safe walking alone in their local area after dark and the proportion feeling safe in their home at night increased from 2008/09 to 2016/17, but has been stable over the latest years since then.

Figure 8.3: The proportion of adults who felt safe in the local area or at home alone has increased since 2008/09 but has been more stable lately.

Proportion of adults feeling very/fairly safe in local area and at home alone, 2008/09 to 2021/22.



Base: All adults - SCJS 2008/09 (16,000); 2009/10 (16,040); 2010/11 (13,010); 2012/13 (12,050); 2014/15 (11,470); 2016/17 (5,570); 2017/18 (5,480); 2018/19 (5,540); 2019/19 (5,570); 2021/22 (5,520). Variable: QSFDARK; QSFNIGH.

Latest figures from the Crime Survey for England and Wales found a similar proportion of adults (79%) felt safe walking alone at night in the year ending March 2023.⁸⁸

Despite perceptions improving over the last 15 years or so, feelings of safety continued to vary by factors such as sex, age, area deprivation, and rurality in 2021/22.

As shown in Figures 8.4 and 8.5, in 2021/22, the majority of adults in the population sub-groups examined reported feeling safe when walking alone in their local area after dark. There have also been improvements in feelings of safety within most groups since 2008/09, with the exception of victims (where the apparent increase from 61% to 66% is not significant) and females aged 16-24 (which is unchanged from 2008/09 at 59% but is lower than 76% recorded in 2017/18). Most apparent changes in the latest year are not statistically significant, with the exception of males aged 25-44 which decreased from 95% to 91%.

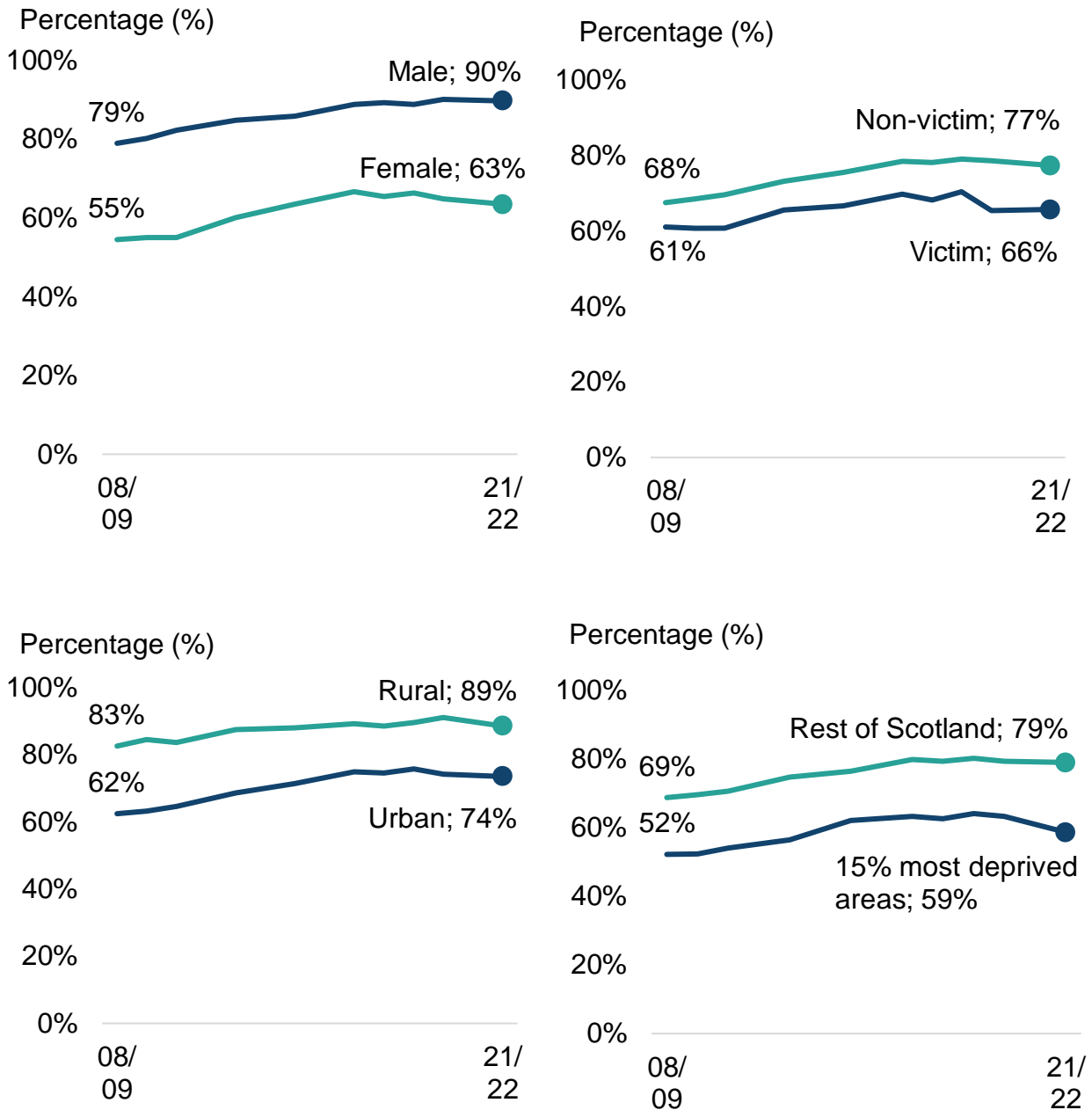
However, notwithstanding generally positive trends in groups over time, in 2021/22 there continued to be notable differences in relative feelings of safety amongst population groups as depicted. For example, whilst more females and people living in the most deprived areas of Scotland felt more safe in 2021/22 than 15 or so years ago, they were still less likely to feel safe than males and people living in the rest of Scotland, respectively. Furthermore, disabled people were less likely to feel safe than non-disabled people, as did victims compared to non-victims and people living in an urban area compared to a rural area.

Furthermore, as improved perceptions have been experienced fairly equally amongst the population since 2008/09, the size of the relative gap in feelings of safety between comparator groups has typically shown little change over the last 15 years.

⁸⁸ [Crime in England and Wales - Office for National Statistics \(ons.gov.uk\)](https://www.ons.gov.uk): The CSEW typically excludes don't know and refusal responses from analysis, whereas the SCJS does not. However, it is worth noting that only 1% of respondents said don't know or refused in the 2021/22 SCJS, so the impact on the comparison highlighted would be minimal.

Figure 8.4: There have been long term improvements in feelings of safety across a wide range of demographic and area characteristics.

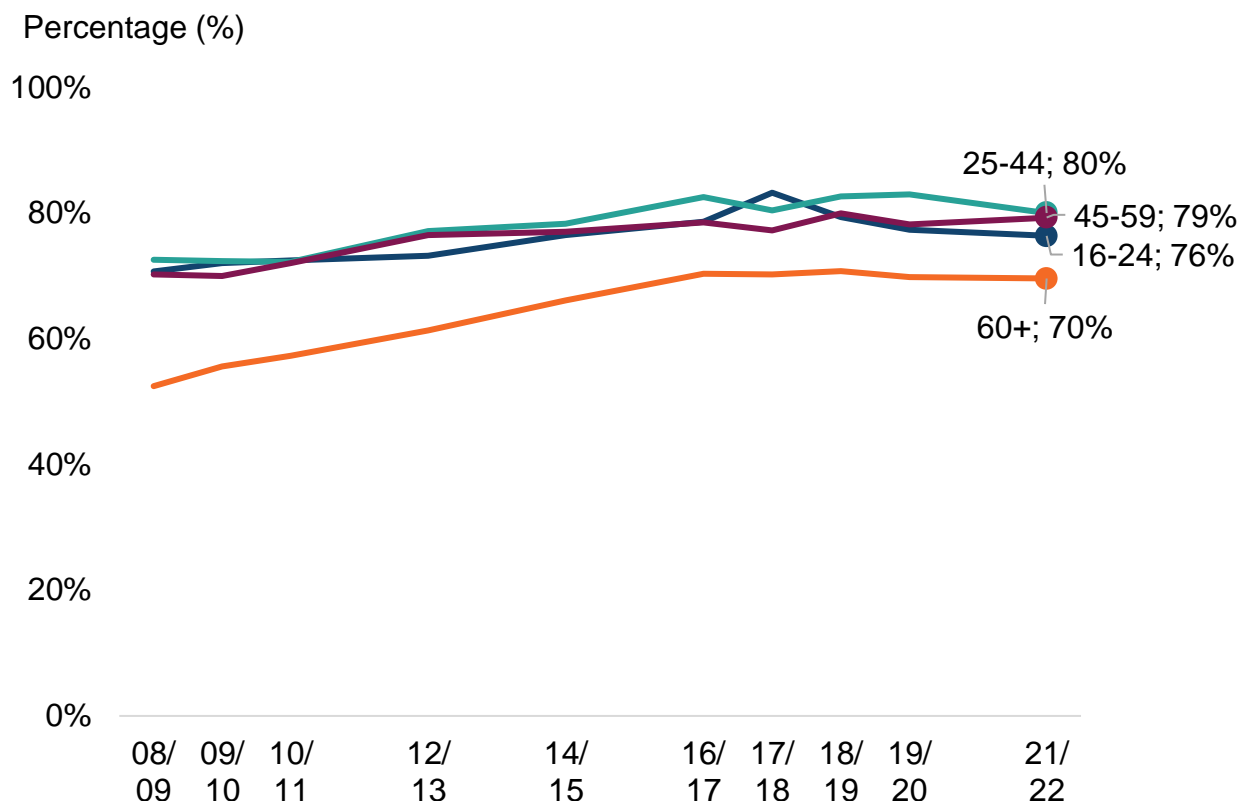
Feelings of safety when walking alone in the local area after dark by demographic and area characteristics, 2008/09 to 2021/22.



Base: All adults - SCJS 2008/09 (16,000); 2009/10 (16,040); 2010/11 (13,010); 2012/13 (12,050); 2014/15 (11,470); 2016/17 (5,570); 2017/18 (5,480); 2018/19 (5,540); 2019/20 (5,570); 2021/22 (5,520). Variable: QSFDARK.

Figure 8.5: Improvements in feelings of safety were experienced by all age groups between 2008/09 and 2016/17 but has remained stable since.

Feelings of safety when walking alone in the local area after dark, by age, 2008/09 to 2021/22.



Base: All adults - SCJS 2008/09 (16,000); 2009/10 (16,040); 2010/11 (13,010); 2012/13 (12,050); 2014/15 (11,470); 2016/17 (5,570); 2017/18 (5,480); 2018/19 (5,540); 2019/20 (5,570); 2021/22 (5,520). Variable: QSFDARK.

Looking at perceptions when home alone at night, although generally over nine-in-ten adults across all demographic and geographic categories reported feeling safe, again some differences exist amongst the population. For example, 92% of victims reported feeling safe in their home alone (compared to 96% of non-victims), as did 94% of females (compared to 98% of males). Further, the following sub-groups were also less likely to feel safe when home alone at night: people living in the most deprived areas compared to the rest of Scotland; people living in urban areas compared to rural areas; and disabled people compared to non-disabled people. Unlike the measure exploring views when walking alone after dark, no difference was found between different age groups in relation to feeling safe when home alone.

Over the shorter-term, the SCJS detected no change in either measure of perceived safety between 2019/20 and 2021/22 amongst the population groups discussed above, with the exception of males aged 25 to 44, which reduced from 95% to 91% (walking alone at night), and victims of crime which increased from

87% to 92% (home alone at night). Full results for both questions with breakdowns for key groups, including over time, are provided in [Annex tables A1.13 and A1.14](#).

Using feelings of safety as an analytical variable

Responses to the question about whether adults feel safe walking alone in their local area after dark can also be used to categorise respondents into a group who felt 'safe' and another of those who felt 'unsafe'. These groups can then be used as an analytical breakdown for exploring other measures around perceptions of crime to understand how wider feelings of safety are associated with more specific concerns and opinions. Key findings utilising this breakdown are presented in the sections which follow and this analytical variable is also featured in all SCJS [online data tables](#).

How common were specific crimes believed to be?

As well as being asked about the local and national crime rates, respondents were asked how common they thought a range of crimes and behaviours were in their area. Table 8.2 shows the issues asked about and the results for 2021/22.

Overall, most adults did not consider each issue to be a common occurrence in 2021/22, though some problems were seen as prevalent by a greater proportion of the population than others. Consistent with SCJS findings in recent years, drug dealing and drug abuse was the problem most frequently noted as being very or fairly common, with 45% of adults believing this to be the case in 2021/22. This is unchanged from 2008/09, but has increased from 36% in 2016/17.

A third of adults (32%) thought people behaving in an anti-social manner was common. Fewer people viewed various types of non-sexual violence as common, such as: violence between individuals or gangs (13%), people being physically assaulted (11%), people being mugged / robbed (6%), and people being physically attacked because of their skin colour, etc (5%).

Table 8.2 also indicates that adults were generally less likely to report problems as common in 2021/22 than when views were first collected on each matter, with perceptions showing stability since the previous SCJS in 2019/20.⁸⁹ The most notable outlier in this long term trend is the perceived prevalence of sexual assault, which has shown an increase since the 2008/09 SCJS from 3% to 6%.

Another Scottish Government population survey, the Scottish Household Survey (SHS), also collects information on perceptions of a range of neighbourhood issues including further types of anti-social and nuisance behaviour, alongside a suite of measures exploring wider opinions on the local area. Relevant results are available in the [SHS Annual Report](#) and have also found a relationship between increasing area deprivation and an apparent higher prevalence of neighbourhood problems.

⁸⁹ [Annex table A1.24](#) outlines the full time series of results.

As questions are asked in a different survey context, any similar measures should not be directly compared to SCJS findings.

Table 8.2: The perceived prevalence of various crime types is lower than it was in 2008/09, however few changes have been detected from the most recent year.

Perceived prevalence of various crime types in the local area.

Percentage of adults who thought issue was very or fairly common in their local area	2021/22	Change since 2008/09	Change since 2019/20
Drug dealing and drug abuse	45%	No change	No change
People behaving in an anti-social manner in public	32%	Down from 46%	No change
People having things stolen from their car or other vehicles	12%	Down from 20%	No change
People being physically assaulted or attacked in the street or other public places	5%	Down from 7%	No change
Violence between groups of individuals or gangs	13%	Down from 26%	No change
People having their car or other vehicles stolen	9%	Down from 15%	No change
People being sexually assaulted	6%	Up from 3%	No change
People being mugged or robbed	6%	Down from 10%	No change
People being physically attacked because of their skin colour, ethnic origin or religion	5%	Down from 7%	No change
Percentage of adults who thought issue was very or fairly common in their local area	2021/22	Change since 2009/10	Change since 2019/20
People carrying knives	10%	Down from 22%	No change
Percentage of adults who thought issue was very or fairly common in their local area	2021/22	Change since 2012/13	Change since 2019/20
Deliberate damage to cars or other vehicles	15%	Down from 25%	No change

Deliberate damage to people's homes by vandals	10%	Down from 14%	No change
Percentage of adults who thought issue was very or fairly common in their local area	2021/22	Change since 2016/17	Change since 2019/20
People buying or selling smuggled or fake goods	10%	Down from 13%	Down from 13%

Base: All adults - SCJS 2008/09 (4,030); 2009/10 (4,000); 2012/13 (3,020); 2016/17 (1,390); 2017/18 (1,380); 2018/19 (1,400); 2019/20 (1,440); 2021/22 (1380). Variable: QACO.

Note: comparisons are made to the year in which questions were first asked.

How concerned were the public about crime?

The SCJS also captures data on how worried the public are about specific types of crime and how likely they think they are to experience them. Whilst the analysis in this section summarises key findings from the questions on these topics, it is important to note that the impact of 'worry' and the perceived likelihood of victimisation will vary from one individual to another. Moreover, even if someone claims they are not worried about a particular crime or do not think they are likely to be a victim, it does not necessarily mean they believe that they are at no risk.

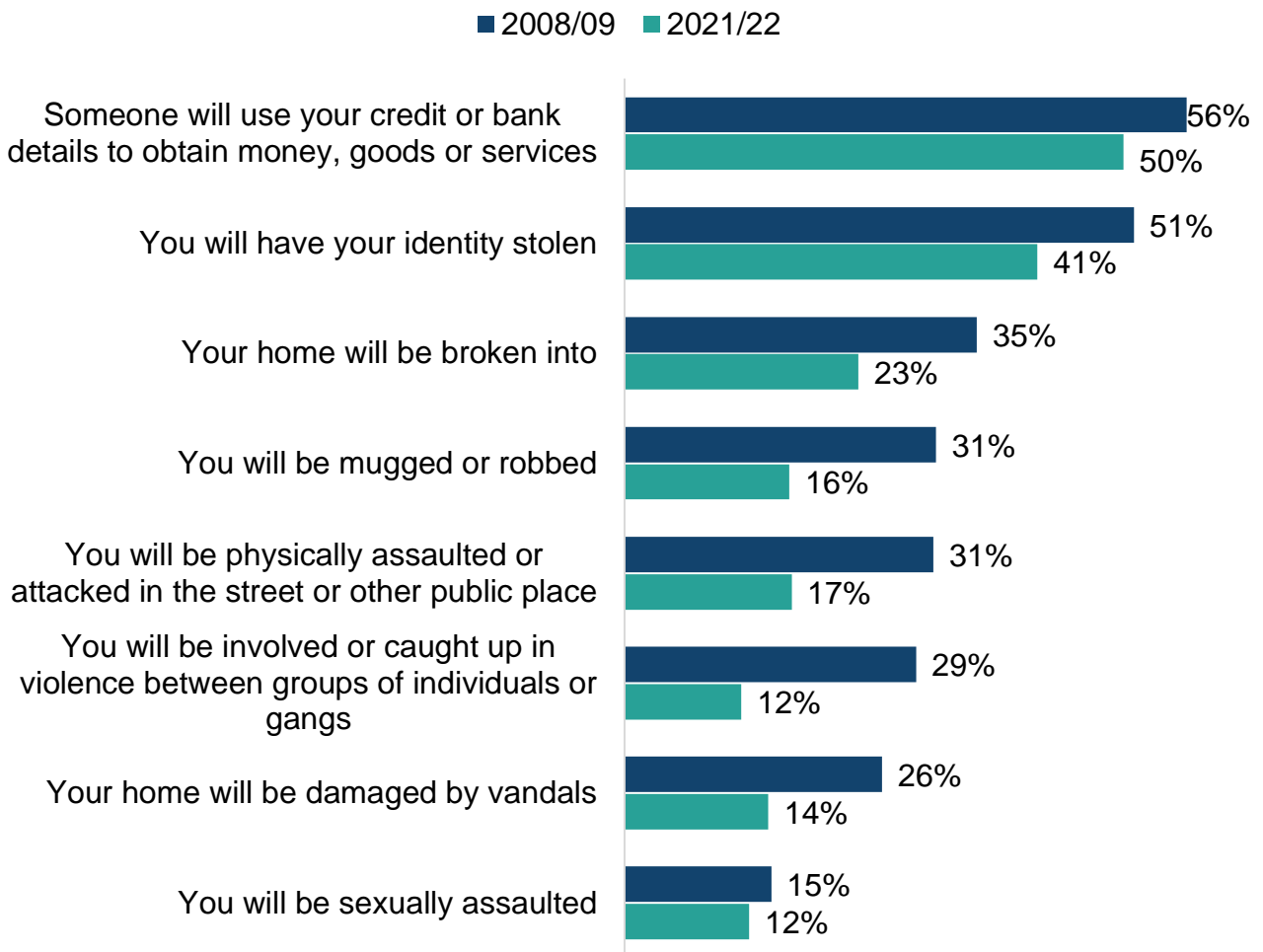
In line with findings in previous years, in 2021/22 the crimes which the public were most likely to say they were very or fairly worried about (from those asked about) were fraud-related issues.⁹⁰ More specifically, half (50%) of adults said they were worried about someone using their credit or bank details to obtain money, goods or services, whilst two-fifths (41%) were worried about their identity being stolen. By comparison, 17% of adults were worried about being physically assaulted or attacked in the street or other public place, whilst 12% were concerned about being sexually assaulted.

Figure 8.6 (and [Annex table A1.25](#)) presents the results on worry about different crimes over time. It highlights that the proportion of adults who were very or fairly worried about experiencing each specific issue was lower in 2021/22 than the 2008/09 baseline. Looking more recently, most measures have been stable or decreased since the last SCJS in 2019/20, apart from worry about being sexually assaulted and about identity being stolen, which both saw a small increase.

⁹⁰ Findings in relation to perceptions but also experiences of fraud are also discussed in the ['Cyber Crime in Scotland'](#) section of the report.

Figure 8.6: The proportion of adults who were very or fairly worried about experiencing specific issues fell for all categories since 2008/09.

Proportion of adults worried about experiencing each issue, 2008/09 and 2021/22.



Base: All adults - SCJS 2008/09 (16,000); 2021/22 (5,520); Variables: QWORR_04 – QWORR_11.

In addition to the results shown in Figure 8.6 in relation to all adults, the survey also explores worry about vehicle-related crime amongst adults in households with access to a vehicle. The 2021/22 SCJS found that:

- 27% of adults (in vehicle-owning households) were worried about their car or other vehicle being damaged by vandals
- 21% were worried about things being stolen from their car or other vehicle
- 19% were worried about their car or other vehicle being stolen

A small change to questionnaire routing and the response options⁹¹ for the questions relating to worry about vehicle crime in 2016/17 means that this year now forms the baseline for these questions, with worry about vandalism decreasing from 31% but worries about theft remaining unchanged. Prior to this questionnaire update, the three indicators had shown decreasing levels of worry between 2008/09 and 2014/15, as [Annex table A1.25](#) shows.

Whilst the majority of adults did not think they were likely to experience any crime in the year after interview, just over a quarter (26%) thought it was likely they would be victims of banking or credit fraud.

Building on the questions exploring worry about crime, SCJS respondents were also asked which of the issues covered, if any, they thought they were likely to experience in the following 12 months. In 2021/22, 57% of adults did not think they were likely to experience any of the crimes covered in the next 12 months, up from 48% in 2008/09 and 50% in 2018/19, but showing no change from 2019/20.

This means that 41% of adults in 2021/22 thought they would experience at least one of the listed crimes in the year following their interview⁹².

Looking at specific issues, the crime type which adults thought they were most likely to experience was someone using their bank or card details to obtain money, goods or services, echoing the pattern seen in the results on worry about crime. Around one-in-four (26%) thought this would happen to them in the next year. This is up from 14% in 2008/09, and from 24% in 2019/20. Relatedly, 14% of adults thought they would have their identity stolen, up from 12% in 2008/09 but remaining relatively stable since 2016/17.

To put perceptions about fraud into context, looking ahead to the year following interview:

- around one-in-eight adults (12%) thought their car or other vehicle would be damaged by vandals⁹³
- one-in-twenty (6%) thought they would be physically assaulted in the street or other public place
- one-in-thirty (3%) thought it was likely that they would be sexually assaulted

[Annex table A1.26](#) presents results on expectations around experiencing different crimes over time.

⁹¹ The 'not applicable' response option to the worry questions, previously included as a possible response, was removed with effect from 2016/17, with the questions now only asked of respondents from households with access to a vehicle. As such, results up to 2014/15 and from 2016/17 onwards are not directly comparable. See [Annex table A1.25](#) for more information.

⁹² The remaining proportion is accounted for by the small number of respondents who refused to answer or said they did not know.

⁹³ This figure only relates to respondents living in vehicle-owning households.

How did perceptions of crime vary amongst the population?

This section brings together data on the perceived prevalence of crime, worry about specific crime and respondents' views on how likely they are to experience particular issues in the 12 months following interview to explore whether and how findings differ amongst population groups. In summary, it outlines that, where differences were detected, concerns about crime:

- were generally higher amongst females, victims of crime, people in deprived areas, adults in urban areas and people who felt unsafe when walking alone in their neighbourhood after dark than direct comparator groups
- showed a more complicated picture with regards to differences by age group

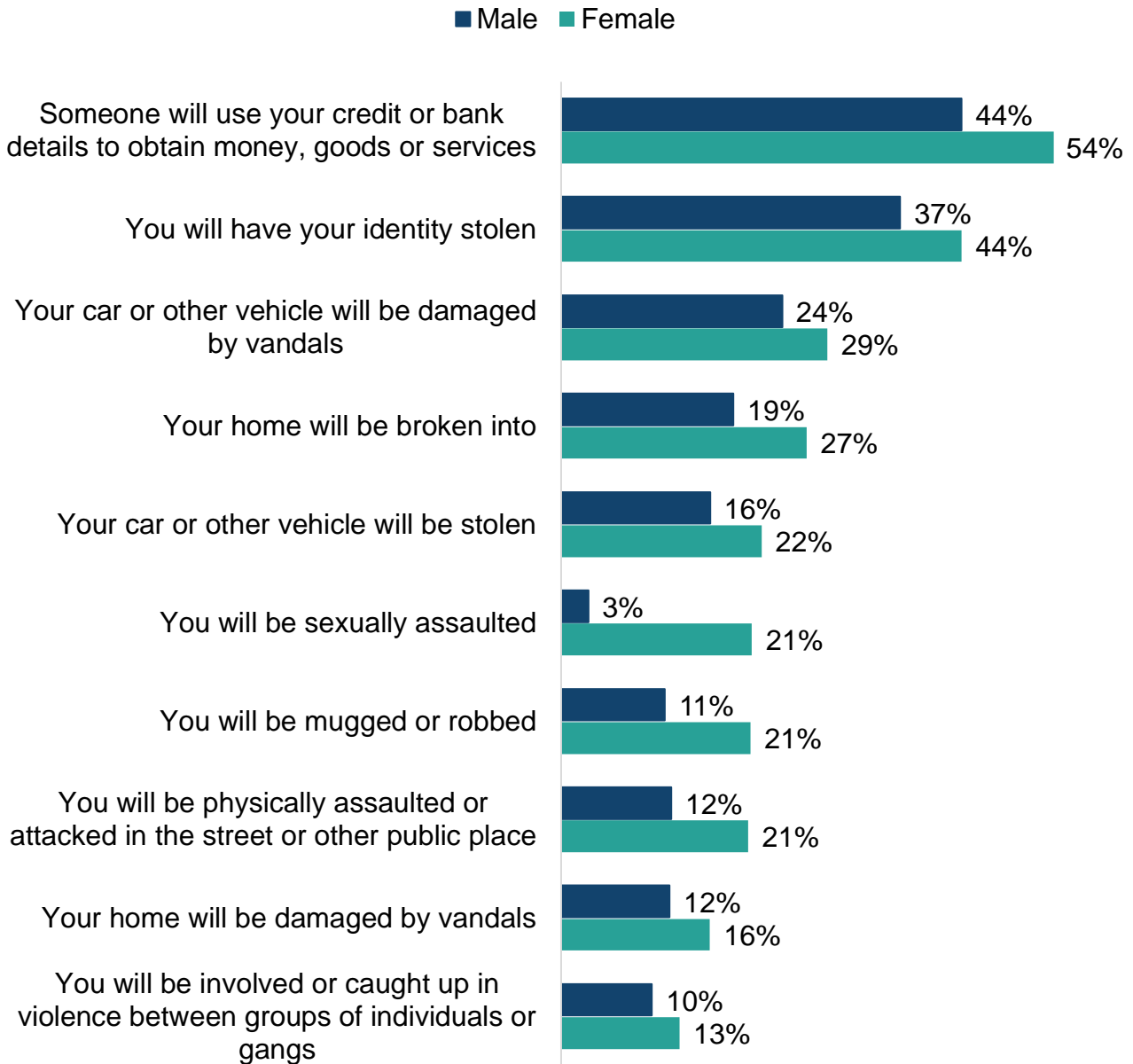
Each demographic and area breakdown is explored in more detail below.

How did perceptions of crime vary by age and sex?

Females were more worried than males about experiencing all of the specific crime types which respondents were asked about in 2021/22. This is in line with the finding highlighted previously that females were less likely to feel safe walking alone in their neighbourhood after dark. These results are shown in Figure 8.7.

Figure 8.7: Females were more worried than males about experiencing all of the specific crime types which respondents were asked about in 2021/22.

Proportion of adults worried about each crime type, by sex.



Base: Questions on vehicle theft/damage only asked of those who have access to or own vehicle – male (1,980), female (2,250); all other questions asked of all adults – male (2,490), female (3,020); Variables: QWORR_04 –QWORR_14.

Additionally, a greater proportion of females than males thought that, in the next year, it was likely that their car or other vehicle would be stolen (7% compared to 4% of males), their home would be broken into (9% compared to 6% of males), they would be mugged or robbed (5% compared to 3% of males) and that they would be sexually assaulted (5% compared to less than 1% of males).

For perception of different types of crime in the local area, females were more likely than males to think they are common, for example physical and sexual assault, people having their vehicle stolen, violence between group of individuals or gangs and people carrying knives.

The 2021/22 SCJS found perceptions of crime and safety showed a complex pattern with respect to views by age groups across the range of issues explored.

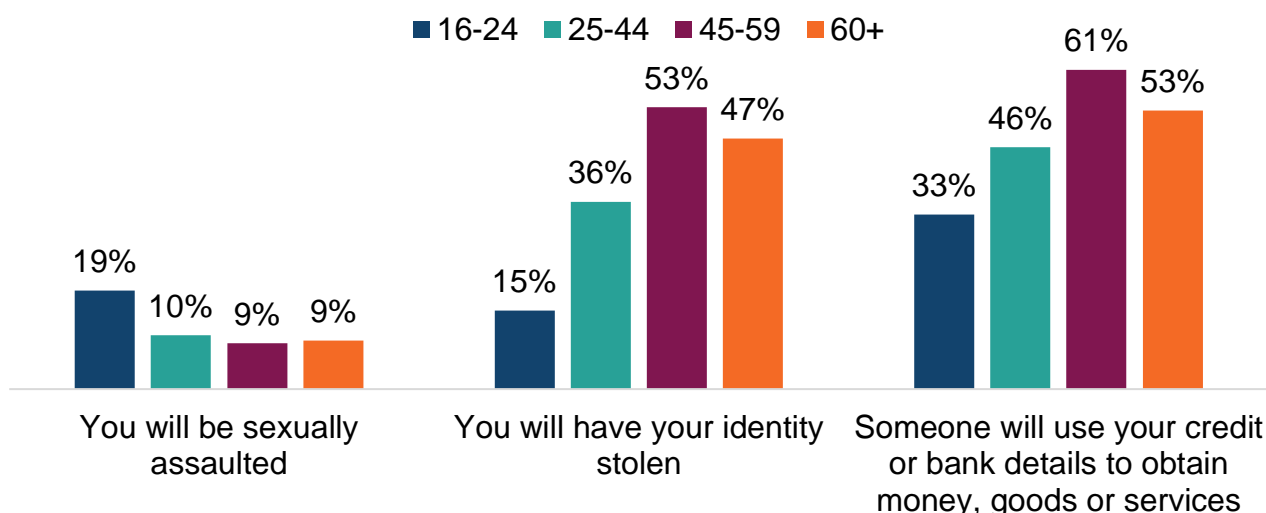
Although those aged 60 and over were much less likely than other age groups to report feeling safe walking alone in their local area after dark as highlighted earlier, the relationship between age and concerns about specific crime types was more complex.

The 2021/22 SCJS did not find a particularly strong relationship between age and worry about most specific types of crime. That said, there were some differences in particular areas. For example, worry about sexual assault was highest amongst 16 to 24 year olds (22%), as shown in Figure 8.8 below. On the other hand, worry about fraud and identity theft:

- was lowest amongst 16 to 24 year olds
- increased with age to the 45 to 59 age group
- either remained similar or fell again amongst those over 60 (but remained higher than the worry levels of those under the age of 45)

Figure 8.8: While no strong relationship between age and fear of crime was found in the 2021/22 SCJS overall, 16-24 year olds were more likely to be worried about being sexually assaulted than all other age groups.

Proportion of adults worried about experiencing each issue, by age.



Base: 16-24 (330), 25-44 (1,540), 45-59 (1,360), 60+ (2,280); Variables: QWORR_09 – QWORR_11.

Results also varied with respect to age across some issues when we turn to respondents' perceived likelihood of experiencing crime in the coming year, but not in all cases. For example, those aged 16 to 24 were more likely than other age groups to think they would experience physical assault (in the street or other public place) or that they would be sexually assaulted.

Finally, those aged 60 and over were often the group least likely to view crimes and related issues as common occurrences in their local area, with generally no difference found between those in younger age categories. For example, a smaller proportion of people aged 60 and over thought issues such as violence between individuals or gangs, anti-social behaviour and drug dealing and abuse were prevalent issues in their neighbourhoods, compared to those in other age groups.

Similar to the trends of worry and perceived likelihood, those aged 16 to 24 were more likely than all other age groups to believe that being sexually assaulted was common in their area (21%, compared to 6% of 25 to 44 year olds, 3% of 45 to 59 year olds and 2% of those aged 60 and over).

How did perceptions of crime vary by victim status?

Recent victims of crime were typically more likely to be worried about experiencing crime again in the future and think they were likely to do so, as well as to view issues as common in their local area.

Across the range of measures, those who had experienced crime in the 12 months prior to interview were generally more likely than non-victims to report worry about crime, think that they were likely to experience types of crime, and that problems were common in their area. A notable area where there was no difference between victims and non-victims in relation to worry about crime and perceived likelihood of experiencing the crime was identity theft.

Table 8.3 below shows how recent prior victimisation had a strong association with views on the likelihood of experiencing crime in future, with each comparison shown representing a statistically significant difference. For example, whilst 59% of non-victims in 2021/22 said they did not think they would experience any of the listed crimes in the coming year, this was true for only 33% of victims. In other words, the majority of people who had been victims of crime in the previous 12 months, expected to become victims (of some sort of crime) again in the following year.

Table 8.3: The majority of people who had been victims of crime in the previous 12 months expected to be the victim of some sort of crime again in the next year.

Proportion of adults who thought it was likely they would experience each issue in the 12 months after interview, by victim status.

Perceived likelihood of experiencing crime type	Victim in 2021/22	Non-victim in 2021/22
Someone will use your credit or bank details to obtain money, goods or services	31%	25%
Your car or other vehicle will be damaged by vandals	30%	10%
Your home will be broken into	17%	7%
You will be physically assaulted in the street or other public place	16%	5%
Your home will be damaged by vandals	13%	4%
Things will be stolen from your car or other vehicle	11%	6%
Your car or other vehicle will be stolen	10%	5%
You will be involved or caught up in violence between groups of individuals or gangs	9%	2%
You will be mugged or robbed	8%	3%
You will be sexually assaulted	6%	3%
None of the above	33%	59%

Base: Results on vehicle theft/damage only includes respondents in households with access to their own vehicle – victims (410), non-victims (3,830); all other results shown for all adults – victims (530), non-victims (4,980); Variables: QHAPP.

How did perceptions of crime vary by deprivation and rurality?

Reported awareness of and concerns about crime were generally more common amongst adults in the most deprived areas of Scotland.

Where differences were detected, those living in the 15% most deprived areas were typically found to have higher levels of concern about crime than people living elsewhere in Scotland and were more likely to consider issues to be common in their local area.

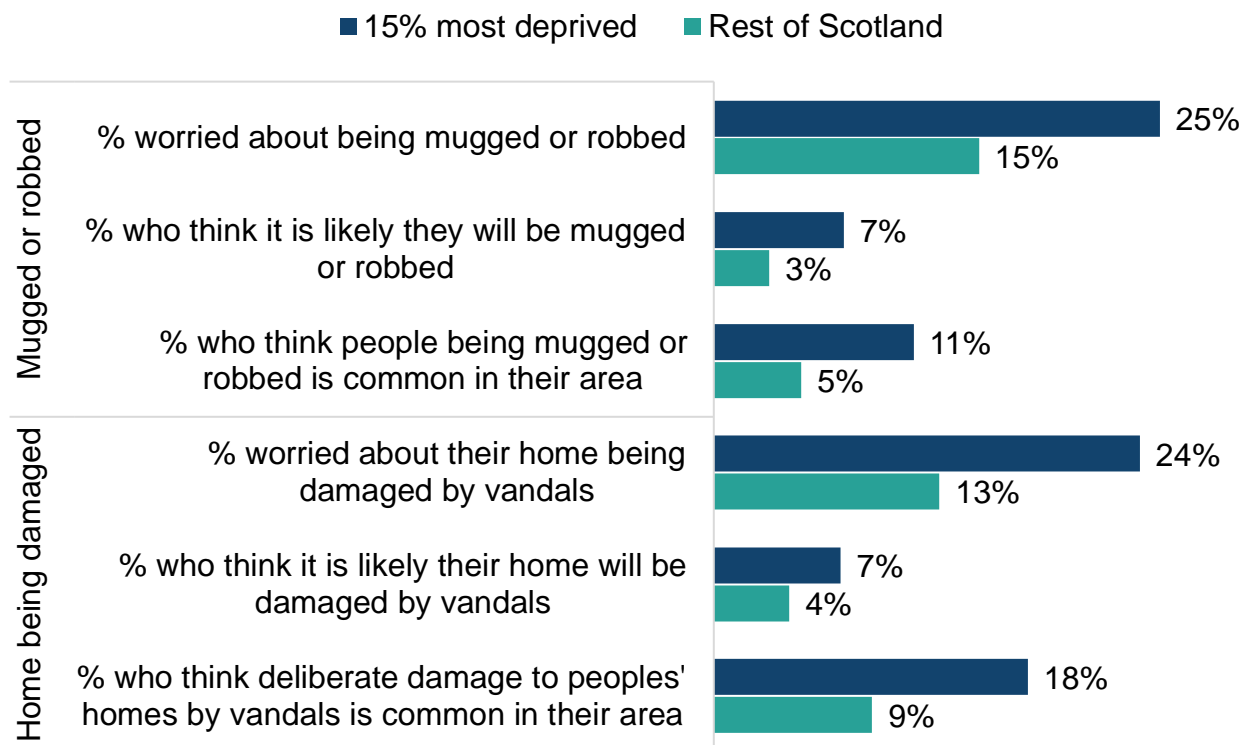
For example, greater proportions of people in the most deprived areas were worried about experiencing physical violence, being mugged or robbed, and their home being damaged. Those in deprived areas were also more likely to view these

matters as common occurrences in their neighbourhood and think they were likely to experience them in the coming year. Figures 8.9 and 8.10 show the results.

However, for identity theft and credit card theft, worry was equal or higher in the rest of Scotland compared to the 15% most deprived.

Figure 8.9: Those living in the 15% most deprived areas typically had higher levels of concern about crime than people living elsewhere in Scotland.

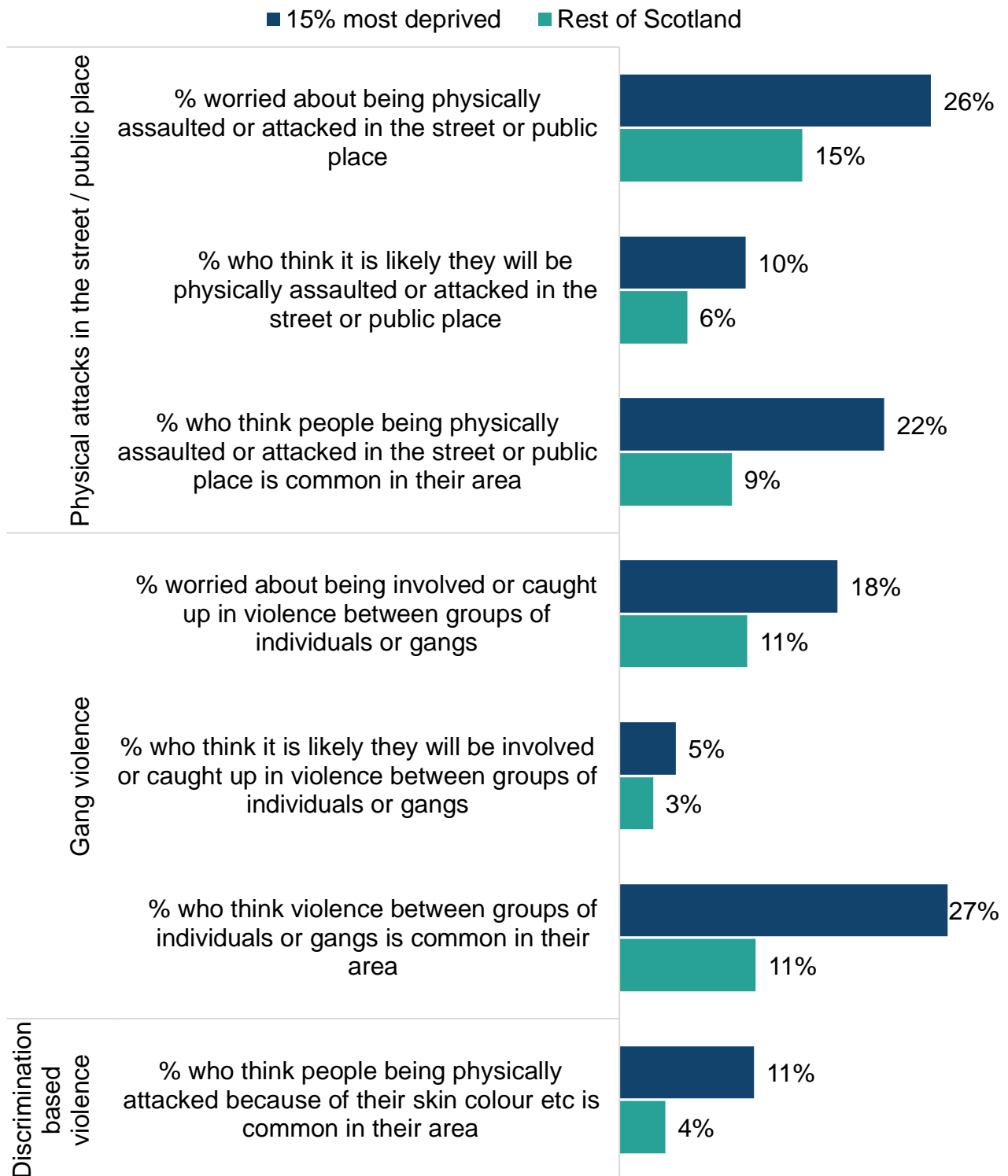
Proportion of adults holding view on each issue, by area deprivation.



Base: Worry and likelihood - all adults: 15% most deprived (770), Rest of Scotland (4,740); Perceived commonness - all adults: 15% most deprived (180), Rest of Scotland (1,200); Variables: QWORR_04, 06; QHAPP; QACO_05, 14.

Figure 8.10: Those living in the 15% most deprived areas typically had higher levels of concern about violent crime than people living elsewhere.

Proportion of adults holding view on violence issues, by area deprivation.



Base: Worry and likelihood – all adults: 15% most deprived (770), Rest of Scotland (4,740); Perceived commonness – all adults: 15% most deprived (180), Rest of Scotland (1,200); Variables: QWORR_07, 08; QHAPP; QACO_06, 07, 11.

Looking at the perceived prevalence of wider issues in the neighbourhood, almost half of those living in the most deprived areas (46%, down from 63% in 2019/20) considered people behaving in an anti-social manner in public to be a prevalent issue compared to only 30% elsewhere in Scotland. Likewise, drug dealing and abuse (58% compared to 43%) and knife-carrying (25% compared to 8%) were believed to be more prevalent in local neighbourhoods amongst those living in the 15% most deprived areas.

Where differences were found, the perceived prevalence of and worry about specific crimes was higher in urban areas.

Respondents living in urban areas were more worried than those in rural locations about experiencing the range of crimes listed, with the exception of identity theft which was of more concern to people in rural places.

Likewise, greater proportions of people in urban areas tended to think various crimes and problems were common issues in their local area for all types of crime asked about in the survey. For instance, issues such as drug dealing and abuse (48% compared to 28%), people behaving in an anti-social manner in public (36% compared to 10%), and people being mugged or robbed (7% compared to below 1%) were all seen as more common by people living in urban areas than in rural locations, respectively.

Turning to the perceived likelihood of experiencing crime in the year after interview, the proportion of people in rural areas compared to those in urban areas that thought they would not be victims of any of the issues covered did not have a statistically significant difference (59% compared to 56%, respectively). However, those in urban areas thought they were more likely to experience some of the particular issues listed, including physical violent crime and their home being broken into or vandalised. For example, in urban areas:

- 7% believed it was likely they would be physically assaulted or attacked in the street or another public place, compared to 2% of rural dwellers
- 3% said they thought they would be involved or caught up in violence between groups of individuals or gangs, compared to 1% of adults in rural locations

However, people living in rural areas were more likely to think that they will be a victim of banking fraud in the next year compared to those living in an urban area (29% compared to 25%, respectively).

Wider perceptions of safety

The SCJS found a strong association between more general anxieties about safety (measured by whether people felt safe or unsafe walking alone in their local area after dark, as discussed previously) and concern about specific types of crime.

Those who said they felt unsafe walking alone in their local area after dark were much more likely to worry about experiencing each issue covered by the SCJS than

those who felt safe. For example, 38% worried about being mugged or robbed (compared to 10% of those feeling safe), whilst more than four times as many were worried about being physically assaulted or attacked in the street or other public place (41% compared to 9%).

Similarly, people who felt unsafe were typically more likely to view each issue as prevalent in their neighbourhood and were more prone to think they would experience most specific types of crimes in the 12 months after interview. For instance, 16% of those who felt unsafe thought it was likely their home would be broken into during the following year, compared to 5% of those who reported feeling safe. The perceived likelihood of having their identity stolen was similar between the two groups, but for all other measures there was a higher perceived likelihood and worry for people who felt unsafe.

It is interesting however to note that despite those aged 60 years old and over being more likely to feel unsafe, they were often less likely to see criminal issues as prominent. The relationship would appear to be more consistent for females, those in deprived areas and victims of crime, as noted above.

How were people affected by their concerns about crime?

Following on from exploring worry about and perceptions of crime, the SCJS gathers information on the impact of such feelings on individual behaviour in order to help put findings in context.

Of those who reported being worried about experiencing some sort of crime, more than half (56%) reported that it did not prevent them from doing things they otherwise wanted to do ('at all'). This is lower than 2019/20 (61%) and the baseline position when this measure was first collected in 2012/13 (60%).

In the latest survey, one in three (36%) said they were prevented from doing things 'a little', whilst 7% said it affected them 'quite a lot'. Only 2% said that it affected them doing things 'a great deal'.

Some groups were more likely than others to be affected. For example, females (49%), those in urban locations (54%), victims of crime (57%), people living in the 15% most deprived areas of Scotland (46%), and disabled people (45%) were all less likely than comparator groups to say that their concerns had not prevented them from doing things they wanted to. Likewise, whilst 65% of those who said they felt safe walking alone in their local area after dark reported that their concerns did not prevent them doing things at all, this figure halved to 32% amongst those who said they felt unsafe. There was also a difference by age, with 45% of 16-24 year olds reporting that their concerns did not prevent them doing things at all compared to 60% of those aged 60+.

What steps did people take to reduce their chances of experiencing crime?

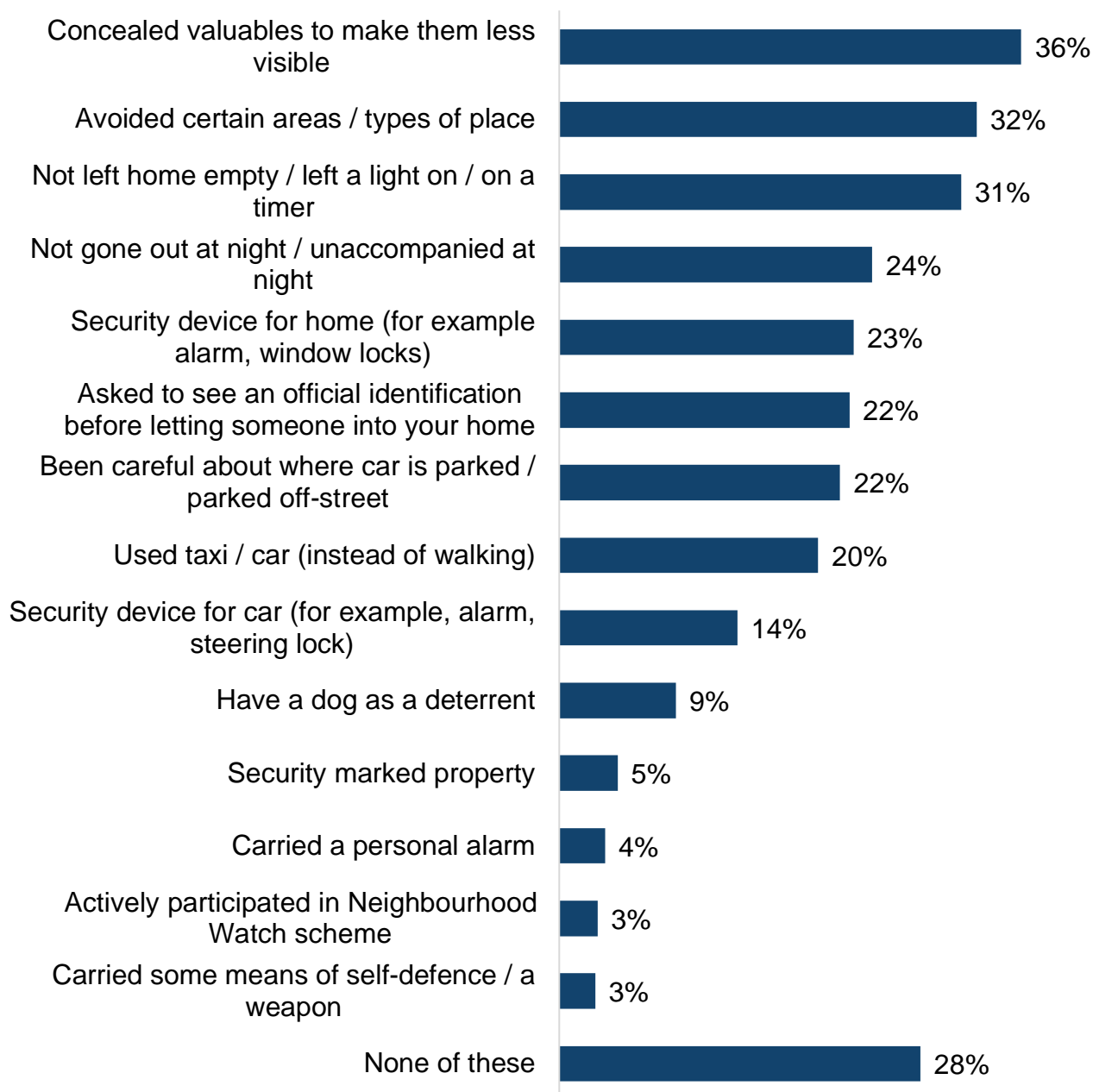
Respondents were asked which precautions (from a list of potential options) they had taken or had in place in the last year to reduce their risk of becoming a victim of crime, with results shown in Figure 8.11 below.

Almost three-quarters of adults (72%) reported adopting at least one preventative action in 2021/22, with 58% taking two or more actions. Just under a fifth (19%) said they had taken five or more of the listed actions, whilst 28% said they had not taken any of the listed actions.

As in previous years, the most commonly adopted precaution was concealing valuables to make them less visible (reported by 36%).

Figure 8.11: Nearly three-quarters of people have taken some preventative action to reduce their risk of being the victim of crime in 2021/22.

Actions taken to reduce the risk of experiencing crime in the last year.



Base: All adults (1,380); Variable: QDONE.

Most actions have either increased or remained stable since first collected in 2012/13 and since 2019/20. The largest increases include:

- not leaving their home empty or leaving a light on (from 26% in 2012/13 to 31% in 2021/22)
- not gone out at night / unaccompanied at night (from 15% in 2012/13 and 20% in 2019/20, to 24% in 2021/22)

- avoiding certain places (from 23% in 2012/13 and 27% in 2019/20, to 32% in 2021/22)
- security device for home, for example alarm, window locks (16% in 2012/13 to 23% in 2021/22)

What did people think about their local community and the collective effort to prevent crime in their neighbourhood?

Respondents were also asked a series of questions which explored perceptions of neighbourhood cohesion and community support in relation to potential crime and safety issues in the local area.

As shown in Table 8.4 below, most adults gave a positive account of people in their area and their efforts to prevent crime. For example, the vast majority of respondents indicated they had people nearby they could rely on to keep an eye on their home and that people would call the police if someone was acting suspiciously.

Table 8.4: The majority of adults feel positively about the people in their local area and their efforts to prevent crime.

Adults' views on people and support in local area.

Percentage of adults	Agree (strongly / slightly)	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree (strongly / slightly)	Don't know / refused
If my home was empty, I could count on one of my neighbours or other people in this area to keep an eye on it	87%	4%	8%	1%
The people who live in my local area can be relied upon to call the police if someone is acting suspiciously	82%	10%	6%	2%
I have neighbours or other people in my local area I feel I could turn to for advice or support	84%	7%	8%	1%
People in this local area pull together to prevent crime	58%	25%	12%	5%
People in my local area cannot be trusted	15%	14%	69%	2%

Base: All adults (1,380); Variable LCPEOP_01 – LCPEOP_05

Results for different demographic and area breakdowns are provided in the online data tables. They show, for example, that those in deprived areas were less likely to hold positive views than those living elsewhere across all of the indicators.

The Scottish Household Survey report chapter cited earlier, which explores perceptions of neighbourhood problems, also contains a range of information about views on community cohesion and similar matters which may be of interest for wider evidence in this area.

A further SCJS question asked respondents whether they thought broken glass in a park or playground would be removed fairly quickly. In 2021/22, 50% thought this would be the case with 31% disagreeing, and the remainder (26%) giving no clear view or saying don't know. However, whilst respondents are asked to consider how such a problem would be dealt with 'either by local agencies such as the council or residents', the question does not provide information on who respondents feel should be primarily responsible for dealing with this and therefore who they think should be responsible for maintaining or improving the situation described. The proportion agreeing in 2021/22 was in line with the baseline position from 2012/13 and the 2019/20 result.

How would people respond to witnessing crime?

The vast majority of people said they would phone the police and help to identify the perpetrator if they saw someone being robbed.

To explore potential individual level responses to witnessing crime and subsequent actions, survey respondents were asked how they would act in a scenario where they saw a man pushed to the ground and his wallet stolen.

Over nine-in-ten adults said they would be likely to call the police (93%) and willing to identify the person who had done it (92%) were they to witness such an event. A slightly smaller proportion, but still the vast majority, of people would be willing to give evidence against the accused in court (85%). The proportion of adults who said they would be willing to identify the person who had done it has increased slightly since 2012/13 (89%). However the rest of these findings were all unchanged compared to 2012/13, when the questions were first included, and all have shown no change since 2019/20.

9. SCJS topical reports

In addition to exploring the extent and prevalence of crime, perceptions of the police, criminal justice system and crime more generally, the Scottish Crime and Justice Survey (SCJS) also collects data on a range of other justice related topics.

This chapter presents key findings from the 2021/22 SCJS on:

- [Cyber crime](#)
- [Harassment and discrimination](#)
- [Crown Office and Procurator Fiscal Service](#)
- [Civil law](#)
- [Veterans](#)

9.1. Cyber crime in Scotland

What is cyber crime?

Cyber crime can be understood as either cyber-enabled or cyber-dependent crime.

Defining cyber crime is complex, with no agreed upon definition of the term. The main debate centres around the extent to which cyber technology⁹⁴ needs to be involved for the crime to be termed 'cyber crime'.

For the purposes of the SCJS and the results in this section of the report, a broad definition of cyber crime is adopted that includes crimes in which cyber technology is in any way involved. This ranges from offences which would not be possible without the use of cyber technology, known as 'cyber-dependent crimes' (such as the spreading of computer viruses), to 'traditional' offences which can be facilitated by the use of cyber technology, known as 'cyber-enabled' crimes (such as online harassment).

How did the 2021/22 SCJS collect data about cyber crime in Scotland?

Internet users were asked about what types of cyber fraud and computer misuse they had experienced in the previous 12 months. Additionally, violent and property crimes which involved online activity or internet-enabled devices were marked with a 'cyber flag'.

The SCJS asked respondents about their experiences of a range of different types of cyber fraud and computer misuse, which are listed below. These questions were asked for the first time in 2018/19 following a [review and development of the questionnaire](#).

As this is only the third year these questions have been included in the survey, any changes between years should be treated with caution as no trend can be identified at this stage.

It is important to note that the findings from these questions are not included in the main SCJS crime estimates, and are not comparable with them. However, following extensive user consultation and questionnaire development, the questions presented here have been incorporated into a new victim form designed to estimate the prevalence of fraud and computer misuse victimisation in Scotland. More information on the background and next steps of this work is detailed in [Annex D](#).

In terms of the findings presented here, only SCJS respondents who had accessed the internet in the 12 months prior to their interview were asked about their experiences of cyber fraud and computer misuse (91% of respondents).

⁹⁴ Technology relating to computers, computer networks such as the Internet and/or other forms of Information and Communication Technology (ICT).

Respondents were asked about what types (not how many individual incidents) of cyber fraud and computer misuse they had experienced in the previous 12 months while accessing their own internet-enabled devices (thus excluding, for example, workplace-owned devices). Up to three types of cyber fraud and computer misuse were recorded per individual and it is possible that certain crimes might relate to the same experience: for example, a specific incident could involve both a scam email and a virus.

Furthermore, when collecting information about people's experiences of cyber fraud and computer misuse, the survey does not seek to capture instances in which a crime was only attempted (for example, when a scam email was received but the person simply deleted it).

A 'cyber flag' question was also first added to the victim form section of the questionnaire in 2018/19. This is central to understanding what proportion of property and violent crime involved the internet, any type of online activity, or an internet-enabled device.

Finally, the SCJS also collects information about stalking and harassment, which may also include a cyber element, for example if taking place on a social media website, or via email.

Drawing on the data collected across the survey, this section of the report presents results from the 2021/22 SCJS on the extent to which cyber technology is involved in a wide range of offences in Scotland. It is divided into four main sections:

- fraud and computer misuse
- cyber elements in property and violent crime
- cyber elements in stalking and harassment
- widening the focus: How does wider analytical work complement the evidence provided by the SCJS on cyber crime?

It is important to note that the data presented in this section comes from the analysis of the SCJS results. Police Scotland also collect data about cyber crime. More information on the police's recording of cyber crime can be found towards the [end of this section](#).

Cyber fraud and computer misuse questions

Respondents were asked if any of the following had happened to them in the previous 12 months:

- had their personal details (e.g. their name, address, date of birth or National Insurance number) stolen online and used by someone else to open bank/credit accounts, get a loan, claim benefits, obtain passport/driving license etc., hereafter defined as "personal details stolen online"

- had their devices infected by a malicious software, such as a virus or other form of malware, hereafter defined as “virus”
- had their social media, email or other online account accessed by someone without their consent for fraudulent or malicious purposes, hereafter defined as “online account accessed for fraudulent purposes”
- were locked out of their computer, laptop or mobile device and asked to make a payment to have it unlocked (known as ransomware), hereafter defined as “ransomware”
- had their credit card, debit card or bank account details (e.g. account number, sort code) stolen online and used to make one or more payments, hereafter defined as “card/bank account details stolen online”
- received a scam email claiming to be from their bank or another organisation (e.g. HMRC), and they provided their bank details or made a payment as a result, hereafter defined as a “scam email”
- received a phone call or message from someone claiming there was a problem with their computer or mobile device, and let them access their device and/or paying them a fee, only to find out it was a scam, hereafter defined as “phone scam”
- were victim of online dating fraud (e.g. sending money to someone they had been chatting to, or were in a relationship with, online but then discovering that their dating profile was fake, or never heard from them again), hereafter defined as “online dating fraud”

Fraud and computer misuse

Fraud involves a person dishonestly and deliberately deceiving a victim for personal gain of property or money, or causing loss or risk of loss to another⁹⁵. While ‘traditional’, face-to-face fraud persists, a large number of incidents of fraud have moved online in recent years, with new types of fraud having been developed which can only be carried out online, such as some types of email scams. On the other hand, computer misuse crimes always include the use of cyber technology, and are set out in the [Computer Misuse Act 1990](#). They include offences such as the spread of malicious software.

Most types of cyber crime covered by the SCJS questions are types of fraud, with the exception of the questions relating to malware and ransomware, which are types of computer misuse.

This section first explores fraud and computer misuse in Scotland through the analysis of the newer cyber crime questions. It then explores fraud levels from another perspective, by presenting the analysis of the longer-standing questions in the SCJS about identity and card theft. While it may be reasonable to assume that a large

⁹⁵ [Nature of fraud and computer misuse in England and Wales - Office for National Statistics \(ons.gov.uk\)](https://ons.gov.uk)

proportion of identity and card theft happen online⁹⁶, the extent of cyber involvement is unknown in these latter questions.

How common were experiences of cyber fraud or computer misuse in 2021/22?

The 2021/22 SCJS found that the vast majority (83.6%) of internet users in Scotland did not experience cyber fraud or computer misuse in the 12 months prior to interview.

When asked about their experiences, one-in-six (16.1%) said they had experienced at least one type of cyber fraud or computer misuse in 2021/22⁹⁷. This is an increase from 13.9% in 2019/20 but down from 20.4% in 2018/19.

In 2021/22, under one-in-twenty (4.4%) internet users experienced more than one type⁹⁸.

As this is only the third year these questions have been included in the survey any changes between years should be treated with caution as no trend can be identified.

For context, the Crime Survey for England and Wales (CSEW) estimates that 6.5% of adults were victims of fraud and that 1.3% were victims of computer misuse in the year ending December 2022⁹⁹. However, the CSEW and SCJS data are not directly comparable, as the two surveys ask notably different questions and follow different processes.

For example, the CSEW captures detailed information about specific incidents, which enables them to be examined by specially trained coders and recorded as a crime in a similar way to how other crimes are recorded by each survey.

In contrast, the cyber fraud and computer misuse questions in the SCJS are newer and designed to provide relatively high level and indicative information about the extent of reported victimisation in order to start building up evidence on cyber crime in Scotland (they do not include detailed follow up questions). This means that, for example, some incidents might be included where only an attempt was made, where it involved a workplace-owned device or where the incident occurred prior to the 12 month period asked about.

⁹⁶ [The CSEW estimated that 61% of fraud crimes in the year ending March 2022 were cyber-related.](#)

⁹⁷ 0.3% of respondents said 'Don't know' in answer to this question.

⁹⁸ Respondents were asked about what types, but not how many individual incidents of cyber fraud and computer misuse they had experienced. Up to three types of cyber fraud and computer misuse were recorded per individual and it is possible that certain crimes might relate to the same experience: for example, a specific incident could involve both a scam email and a virus.

⁹⁹ [Crime in England and Wales: year ending December 2022](#)

Which types of cyber fraud and computer misuse were most common?

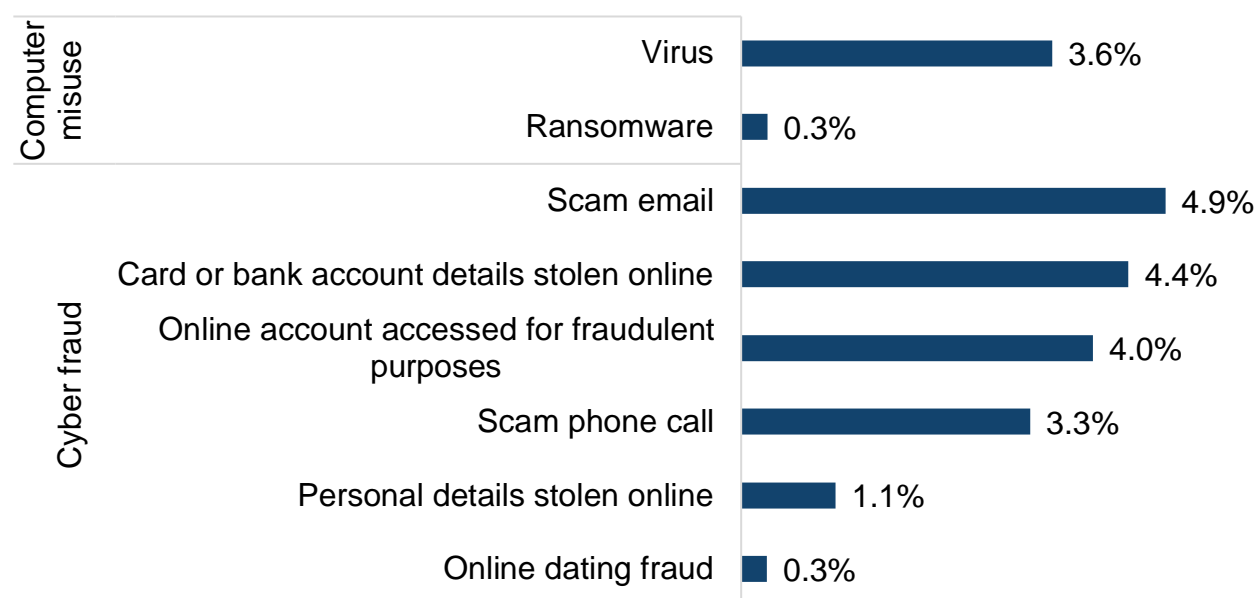
In 2021/22, the types of cyber fraud and computer misuse that people were most likely to have experienced were receiving a scam email and providing bank details or making a payment, and having card or bank details stolen online.

The 2021/22 SCJS found that just under one-in-twenty people received a scam email and provided bank details or made a payment (experienced by 4.9% of internet users), and 4.4% of internet users experienced having card or bank details stolen online.

Figure 9.1 shows the proportion of people experiencing each type of cyber fraud and computer misuse. Overall, when combining categories into fraud or computer misuse¹⁰⁰, online fraud was a more common occurrence than computer misuse offences.

Figure 9.1: The most common form of computer misuse experienced virus, and the most common form of cyber fraud was receiving a scam email.

Proportion of people having experienced types of cyber fraud and computer misuse.



Base: All internet users (4,830) Variable: CYBER2.

How did experiences of cyber fraud and computer misuse vary amongst the population?

The 2021/22 survey found there was no difference in the overall likelihood of experiencing cyber fraud and computer misuse between males and females. However, when looking at individual types, males were more likely to have

¹⁰⁰ Computer misuse includes virus and ransomware; all other categories are types of online fraud.

experienced a device being infected by malicious software (4.2% compared to 2.9%, respectively), and males were more likely to have been the victim of online dating fraud (0.5% compared to 0.1%, respectively).

Overall, variation in the likelihood of being a victim of any type of cyber fraud or computer misuse with age did not show a clear pattern in 2021/22. This is similar to findings in 2019/20 but contrasts 2018/19 where the SCJS found that those aged 60 and over were least likely to experience cyber fraud and computer misuse. As previously noted, it's not recommended to make definitive assessments regarding trends over time since these questions were initially introduced in 2018/19.

When looking at specific types of cyber fraud and computer misuse, the 2021/22 SCJS found that for instances where someone accessed social media, email or another online account for fraudulent purposes, those aged 60 and over were less likely to have experienced this than those aged 16-24 and 45-59 (2.5% compared to 7.2% and 4.4%, respectively).

The 2021/22 SCJS found no difference in experiences of cyber fraud or computer misuse overall by area deprivation, or between those living in urban and rural areas.

Area deprivation and rurality were not found to impact on the likelihood of becoming a victim of cyber fraud or computer misuse overall. However, internet users in urban areas were more likely to have experienced an incident where someone accessed an online account for fraudulent purposes than those living in rural areas (4.3% compared to 2.7%, respectively).

What impact did cyber fraud and computer misuse have on victims, and how did these experiences affect their online behaviours?

Victims were asked about the impact of their experience of cyber fraud and computer misuse crime, and whether the incident led to them modifying their online behaviours.

Respondents were presented with a list of possible impacts and behaviour changes, and were able to choose more than one option. These impacts and behaviour changes are listed below. This section presents figures for each type of cyber fraud and computer misuse individually¹⁰¹.

The survey found that in 2021/22 a large proportion of cyber fraud and computer misuse victims said their experience had no impact on them¹⁰² (73% of scam phone

¹⁰¹ Due to the nature of the way the cyber fraud and computer misuse questions are asked, and the fact that follow up questions are only asked for a maximum of three types of cyber fraud and computer misuse experienced, it is not meaningful to create an overall figure for cyber fraud and computer misuse experiences for the follow up questions in the survey. Personal details stolen online, ransomware, and online dating fraud are not included due to small sample sizes.

¹⁰² By choosing the "none of these" option from the list of potential impacts.

call victims; 67% of scam email victims; 51% of people who had their online account accessed for fraudulent purposes; 45% of virus victims). The most notable outlier was in the case of people who had their card or bank account stolen online, with the majority (70%) saying that the incident led to them losing their money, but that they were able to get it back in full.

The survey also found that the vast majority of cyber fraud and computer misuse victims said their experience caused them to change at least one behaviour (89% of people who had their online account accessed for fraudulent purposes; 87% of virus victims; 78% of people who had their card or bank account details stolen online; 67% of scam email victims).

Figure 9.2 presents commonly reported impacts for each type of cyber fraud and computer misuse, alongside commonly reported behaviour changes. The results for the full list of reported impact and behaviour changes (listed below) can be found in the online [data tables](#).

Impact of cyber fraud and computer misuse:

- you lost money, which you did not get back or did not get back in full
- you lost money, but you were able to get it back in full
- you were unable to access your computer, laptop, mobile device, or the internet
- your mental health was affected (e.g. anxiety, depression etc.)
- you lost confidence in going online/using the internet
- other (specify)
- none of these

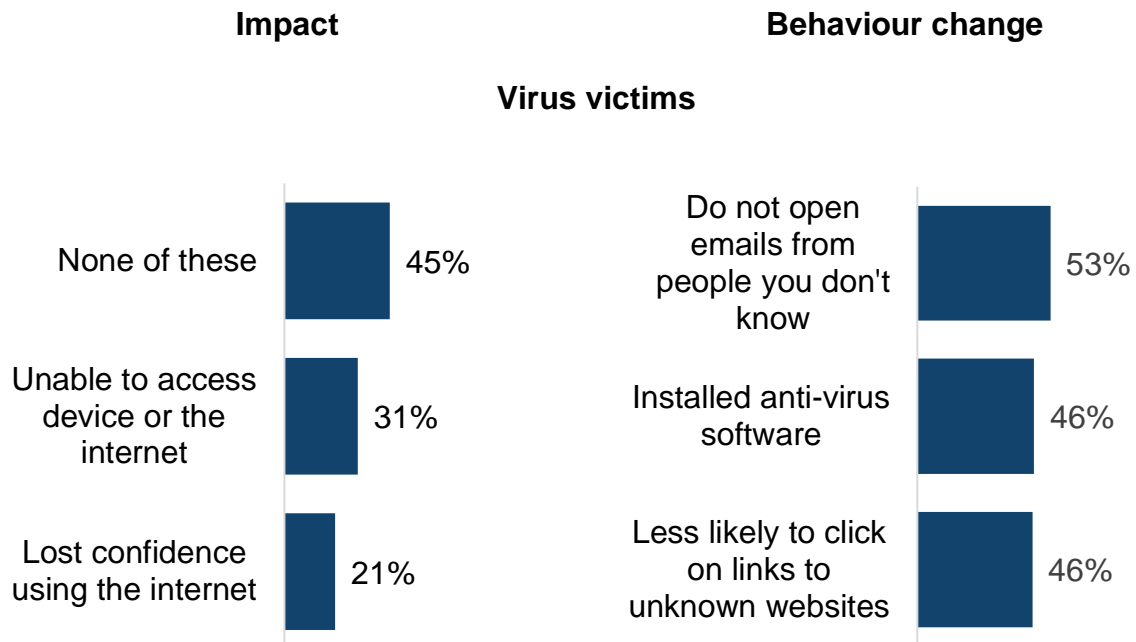
Behaviour changes as a result of cyber fraud and computer misuse:

- less likely to buy goods online
- only buy goods from websites with the padlock symbol
- less likely to bank online
- less likely to give personal information on websites generally
- only visit websites you know and trust
- only use your own computer/mobile device to access the internet
- installed anti-virus software
- automatically update systems and software when prompted to do so
- more likely to back up data
- less likely to click on links to unknown websites (e.g. in adverts, emails etc.)
- less likely to share/send links to friends etc.
- do not open emails from people you don't know

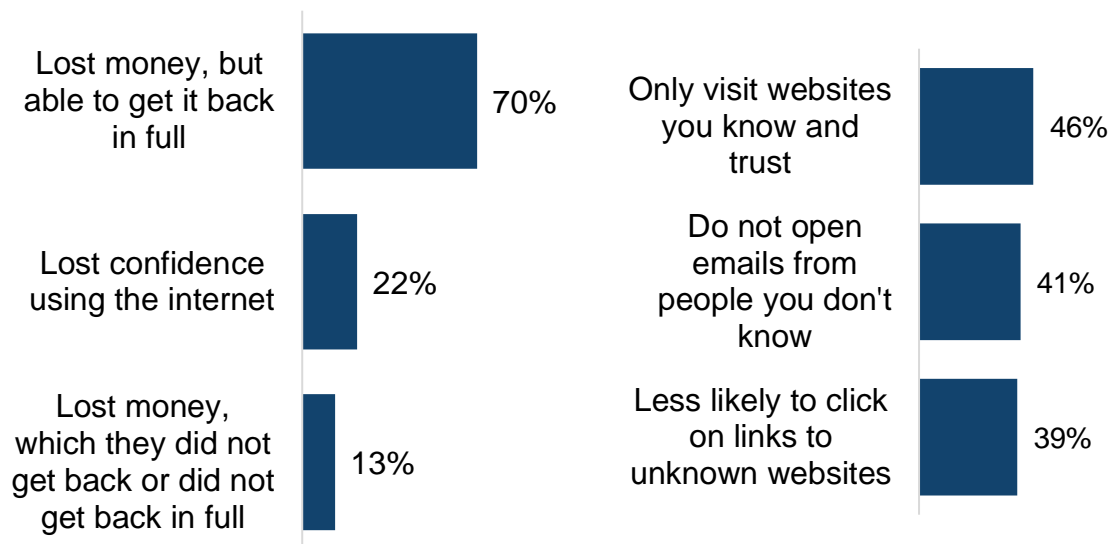
- use different passwords for different websites
- regularly change your passwords
- took steps to learn more about online safety
- other (specify)
- none of these

Figure 9.2: Aside from card or bank account fraud, most often victims said the incident had no impact on them, but did lead them to change their behaviour.

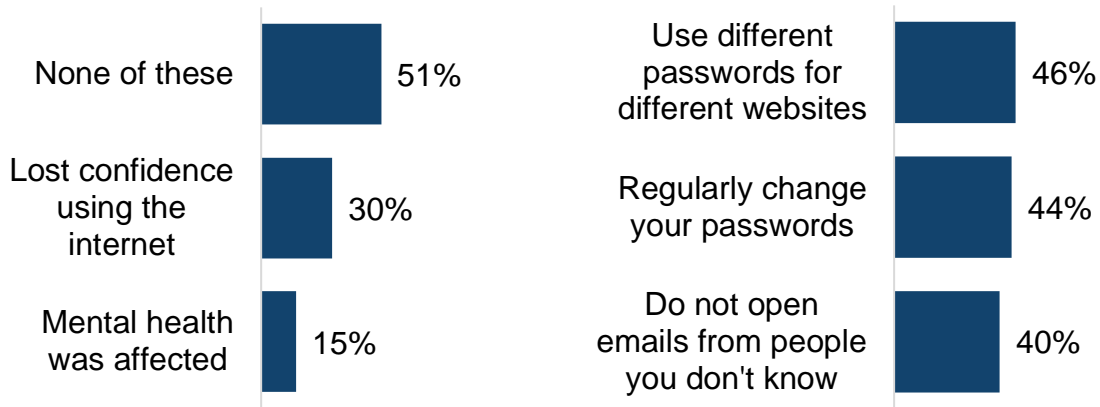
Reported impact and behaviour changes following experience of cyber fraud and computer misuse.



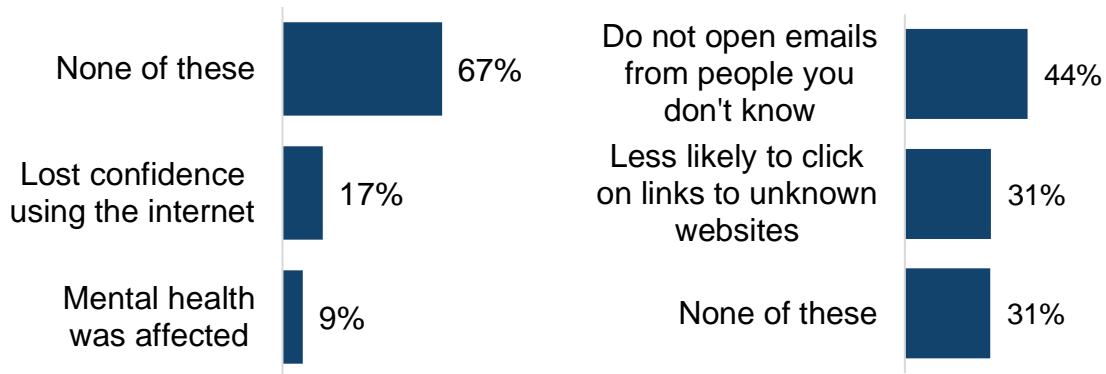
Victims whose card/bank account details were stolen online



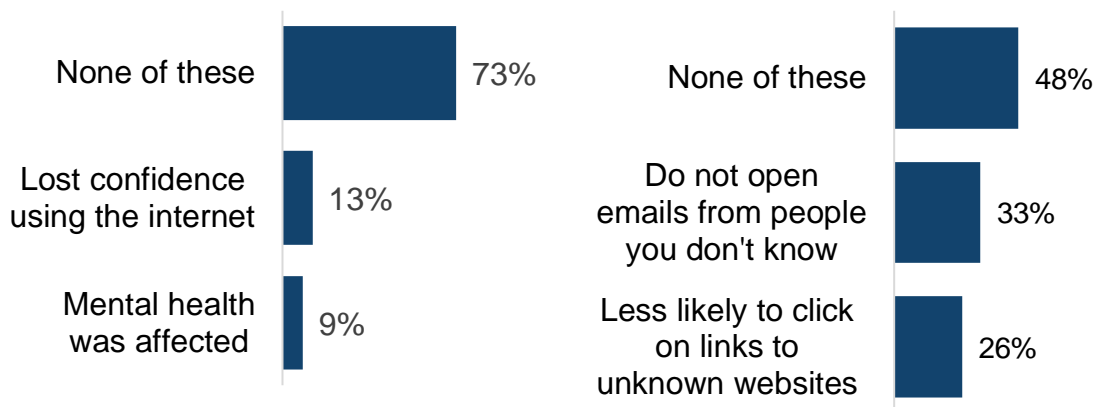
Victims whose online account was accessed for fraudulent purposes



Scam email victims



Scam phone call victims



Base: All victims of: virus (180); card or bank account details stolen online (210); someone accessed online account fraudulently (180); scam email (230); Scam phone call (160). Variables: CYBER3_2; CYBER3_3; CYBER3_5; CYBER3_6; CYBER3_7; CYBER4_2; CYBER4_3; CYBER4_5; CYBER4_6; CYBER4_7.

Did victims report cyber fraud and computer misuse and which authorities were the crimes reported to?

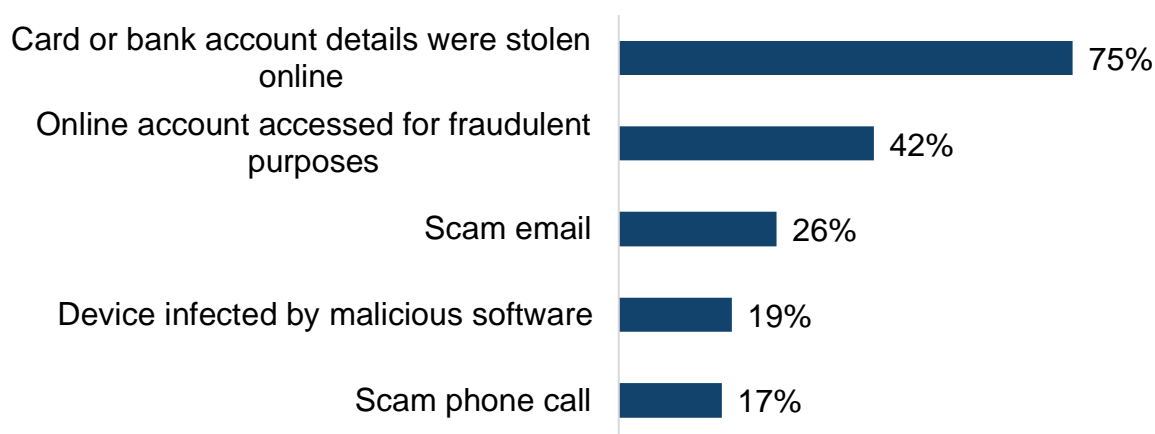
The majority of victims of most types of cyber fraud and computer misuse did not report the incident to the authorities. When the incident was reported, victims rarely turned to the police.

The SCJS also asked victims whether they reported the incident they experienced, and if they did, to whom¹⁰³. If people had experienced more than one incident of a particular issue, they were asked to answer in relation to the most recent incident of that type of cyber fraud or computer misuse.

Overall, the majority of victims of most types of cyber fraud and computer misuse did not report the incident they experienced. The only type of cyber fraud and computer misuse which was reported by most victims was the online theft of a bank card or bank account details (reported by 75% of victims)¹⁰⁴.

Figure 9.3: The majority of victims of most types did not report the incident they experienced. The only type which was reported by most victims was the online theft of a bank card or bank account details.

Proportion of cyber fraud and computer misuse reported to anyone.



Base: All victims of: card or bank account details stolen online (210); online account accessed for fraudulent purposes (180); scam email (230); virus (180); scam phone call (160). Variables: CYBER5_2; CYBER5_3; CYBER5_5; CYBER5_6; CYBER5_7.

¹⁰³ Apart from the police, respondents were given the following options: bank/building society/credit card company; Crimestoppers; Action Fraud; The National Crime Agency; internet service provider; email provider; software provider website/App administrator (e.g. the retailer, social media platform etc.); Get Safe Online; Other (specify). Respondents were given the opportunity to choose more than one option, therefore the final percentages may not add up to 100%.

¹⁰⁴ Note that the responses of victims of online dating fraud, online theft of personal details and ransomware are not shown in this section, as the samples are too small to allow further breakdowns.

Only a small proportion of victims reported the incidents to the police (6.6% of those having their card or bank account details stolen online, 4.2% of those who had an online account accessed for fraudulent purposes, 3.8% who experienced a virus, 2.1% who experienced a scam email and 1.8% a scam phone call).

A full breakdown of other authorities that victims reported incidents of cyber fraud and computer misuse to can be found in the online [data tables](#).

Why did most victims of cyber fraud and computer misuse not report the incident to the police?

Many victims did not report cyber fraud or computer misuse to the police. A reason was that the incident was too trivial or not worth reporting (47% of people who had an account accessed for fraudulent purposes; 39% who experienced a virus; 37% who received a scam email; 36% who received a scam phone call).

Another common reason was that respondents dealt with the matter themselves (37% of people who experienced a virus; 35% who had an online account accessed for fraudulent purposes; 26% who received a scam email; 20% who received a scam phone call).

The most commonly cited reason for not reporting their card or bank account details being stolen to the police was that the victim thought that the incident would be reported to the police by the first authority¹⁰⁵ they had turned to (27%). This is in line with the finding that the majority (70%) of victims of card or bank account fraud who reported the incident turned to their bank.

A full list of the reasons why incidents were not reported to the police can be found in the [data tables](#).

What else can the SCJS tell us about fraud in 2021/22?

Indicative findings suggest that just over one-in-twenty adults had their credit/bank card details stolen and around one-in-one-hundred had their identity stolen, however the extent of cyber involvement is unknown.

In addition to the cyber fraud and computer misuse questions, since 2008/09 the SCJS has captured evidence on people's experiences of certain types of fraud, as well as their perceptions of fraud.

It is important to note that, unlike the cyber fraud and computer misuse questions, these are asked to all adults, not only to internet users. Furthermore, these questions provide indicative findings only, as respondents are not asked for full details of the incidents that would enable them to be coded into valid/invalid¹⁰⁶ SCJS crimes in the

¹⁰⁵ With the "other authority" being the Bank, Action Fraud, the website administrator, the software provider, the Internet service provider, or "other".

¹⁰⁶ Valid crimes are incidents which occurred in Scotland, during the reference period and concern crimes that are within the scope of the SCJS. Any incident that does not meet all of these criteria is invalid. More details on this are available in the [Technical Report](#).

way that other ‘traditional’ SCJS crime incidents are. Nevertheless, the data remains valuable for time-series analysis purposes. It is reasonable to assume that a number of the fraud experiences being recorded by the SCJS have a cyber component, however, the extent to which this is the case is unknown. The 2023/24 questionnaire includes a new victim form which will allow for the prevalence of fraud and computer misuse in Scotland for the first time. More details on this and other future changes to the survey are provided in [Annex D](#).

The SCJS found that 5.9% of adults in 2021/22 reported that they had their credit or bank card details used fraudulently in the previous 12 months. This is unchanged from 2019/20, and has increased from 3.6% in 2008/09. Identity theft was less common, with 1.0% of adults reporting experiences of such incidents in 2021/22, unchanged from both 2019/20 and 2008/09¹⁰⁷.

Although the findings from the SCJS are only indicative, it is notable that the CSEW finds relatively similar results on prevalence using a more expansive set of questions added in recent years to robustly capture experiences of fraud. The CSEW figures for the year ending December 2022¹⁰⁸ show incidents of fraud (excluding computer misuse) were experienced by 6.5% of adults in England and Wales.

What can the 2021/22 SCJS tell us about concerns about fraud?

As in recent years, respondents in 2021/22 were most likely to report being worried about acts of fraud, as well as thinking these incidents were likely to happen to them in the next year, compared to other types of crime.

The SCJS also asks respondents which crime types they worry about happening, or think are likely to happen to them.

In 2021/22, half (50%) of adults in Scotland were worried about their bank/credit card details being used to obtain money, goods or services¹⁰⁹. As in previous years, the next most worried about crime type was identity theft¹¹⁰ with 41% of adults worrying about this issue in 2021/22. Levels of worry about these two types of fraud were higher than for all other crime types asked about in 2021/22. Looking over time, worry about both types of fraud has fallen since 2008/09. Worry about identity theft has slightly increased since 2019/20, up from 39% to 41% (worry about someone using their credit or bank details fraudulently has shown no change).

As in previous years, worry about both of these acts in 2021/22 varied by demographic characteristics. The SCJS found that females were more likely to be worried about fraud than males (54% of females worried about their credit or bank

¹⁰⁷ Variable names: CARDVIC2 and IDTHEF3. Base: 2021/22 (5,520), 2019/20 (5,570), 2008/09 (3,980). These questions have changed slightly since 2008/09 but results are still broadly comparable.

¹⁰⁸ [Crime in England and Wales: year ending December 2022](#)

¹⁰⁹ Variable name: QWORR. Base: 2021/22 (5,520), 2019/20 (5,570), 2008/09 (16,000).

¹¹⁰ Where criminals obtain personal information e.g. name, date of birth, address without consent in order to steal a person’s identity, they often use these details to take out bank accounts, credit cards, loans etc.

details being used fraudulently, compared to 44% of males, and 44% of females worried about identity theft, compared to 37% of males).

People between the ages of 16 and 24 were also less worried than all other age groups about having their identity stolen (16%) and about someone using their credit or bank details fraudulently (30%)¹¹¹.

People living in the 15% most deprived areas were less likely to be worried about credit fraud than those living in the rest of Scotland (45% compared to 50%, respectively). The same is true for worry about identity fraud (37% compared to 42%, respectively).

People living in urban areas were less likely to be worried about credit fraud than those living rural areas (49% compared to 52%, respectively). As with deprivation, the same is true for worry about identity fraud (40% compared to 45%, respectively).

In 2021/22, over half of respondents (57%) did not think it was likely that they would experience any of the crimes listed in the next 12 months¹¹². However, the crime that respondents most commonly thought would happen to them was someone using their credit card/bank details fraudulently (26%). As with worry about crime, this was followed by people thinking their identity would be stolen (14%). The perceived likelihood of both credit card/bank details being used fraudulently, as well as identity theft, has increased since 2019/20 and since 2008/09. Worry and the perceived likelihood of experiencing a range of other crimes is discussed in more detail in [Chapter 7](#).

While there was no difference in perceived likelihood of being a victim of identity theft between females and males, a higher proportion of females than males thought it was likely they would have their credit/bank details stolen (27% compared to 24%).

Age also played a role in defining people's beliefs about the likelihood of being the target of fraud, with young people least likely to report thinking they would become a victim of identity theft (4%) or of card/bank account fraud (15%)¹¹³. In contrast, for those aged 45-59, one-in-five (20%) report thinking they would become a victim of identity theft, and one-in-three (33%) a victim of credit/bank account fraud.

Respondents living in the 15% most deprived areas of Scotland were less likely than respondents in the rest of Scotland to think that their credit/bank card details would be used to fraudulently buy goods/services (17% and 27%) and that their identity would be stolen (10% and 15%) in the next year.

Respondents living in urban areas were less likely to think that they would be the victim of credit card fraud compared to those living in rural areas (25% compared to

¹¹¹ For detailed breakdowns and figures for other age groups see the [data tables](#).

¹¹² Variable name: QHAPP. Base: 2021/22 (5,520), 2019/20 (5,570), 2008/09 (16,000).

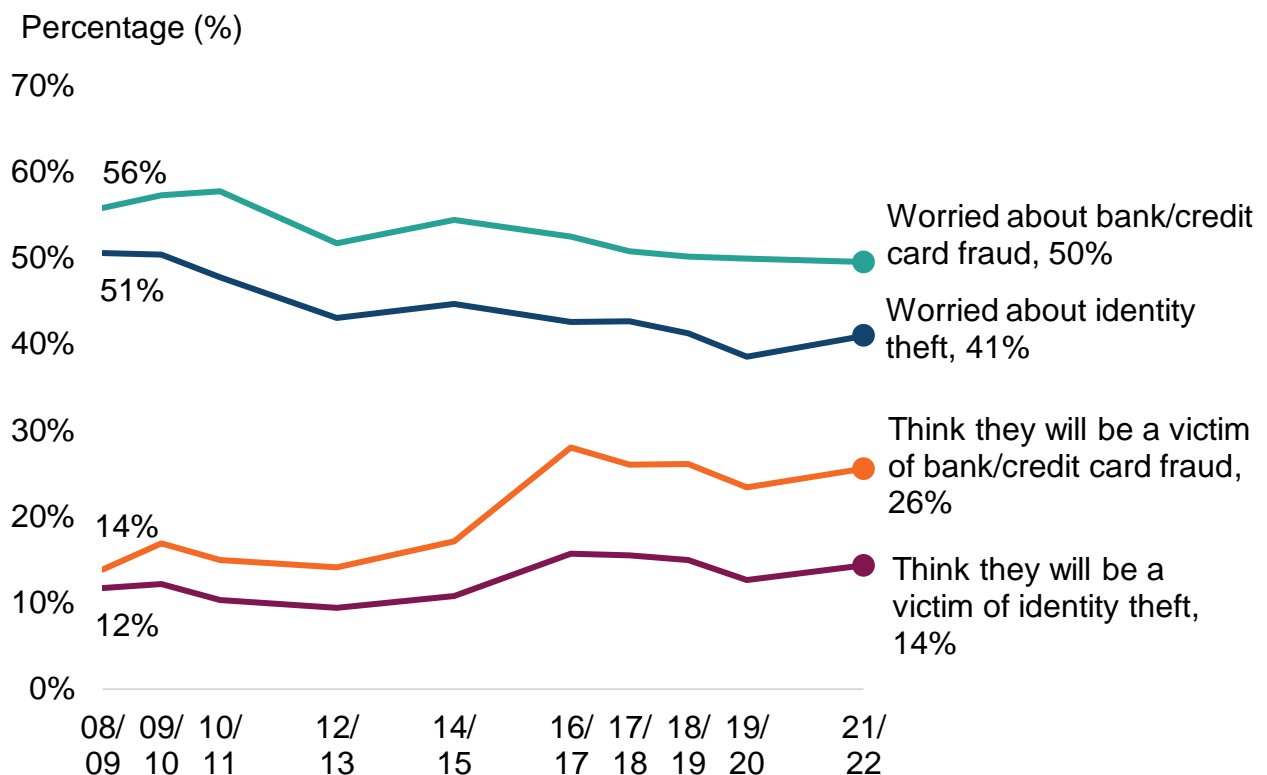
¹¹³ For detailed breakdowns and figures for other age groups see the [data tables](#).

29%, respectively). There was no difference between these groups in the perceived likelihood of identity theft.

It is interesting to note that while the perceived likelihood of becoming a victim of fraud has increased over time, worry about fraud has decreased over the same period as shown in Figure 9.4. Please note that the extent to which people’s levels of concern for fraud related to cyber fraud incidents is unknown.

Figure 9.4: The perceived likelihood of experiencing fraud in the next year has increased since 2008/09, while worry about fraud has decreased since 2008/09.

Proportion of adults concerned about fraud and identity theft, 2008/09 to 2021/22.



Base: All adults 2008/09 (16,000); 2009/10 (16,040); 2010/11 (13,010); 2012/13 (QWORR identity theft: 12,010; card theft: 12,020; QHAPP: 12,050), 2014/15 (11,470); 2016/17 (5,570); 2017/18 (5,480); 2018/19 (5,540); 2019/20 (5,570); 2021/22 (5,520). Variables: QWORR; QHAPP.

To what extent did property and violent crimes have a cyber element in 2021/22?

In 2018/19, a 'cyber flag'¹¹⁴ was added to the survey questionnaire in order to enable the SCJS to examine the proportion of property and violent crime traditionally picked up by the survey with a cyber element¹¹⁵.

The 2021/22 SCJS found that 3% of violent crime and 1% of property crime had a cyber element. The proportion of both violent crime and property crime with a cyber element is unchanged since 2019/20.

The SCJS also asks victims of violent crime whether the crime was recorded for instance on a mobile phone or camera, or by CCTV¹¹⁶. In 2021/22, 6% of violent crimes experienced by adults were recorded on a device, unchanged from the previous year.

Cyber elements in stalking and harassment

The SCJS asks respondents about their experiences of being stalked or harassed. Firstly, in the main survey a quarter of the whole sample are asked if they have been insulted, pestered or intimidated in any way by someone outwith their household in the year prior to interview. More detailed findings for the year 2021/22 are provided in the [Focus on harassment and discrimination](#) section.

Later, the whole sample is invited to complete the self-completion module on stalking and harassment¹¹⁷, which asks respondents if they have experienced any of the following behaviours more than once: the receiving of unwanted letters or cards; receiving of unwanted messages by text, email, messenger or posts on social media sites; receiving unwanted phone calls; loitering outside their home or workplace; being followed; and/or having intimate pictures of them shared without consent, for example by text, on a website, or on a social media site¹¹⁸. Key findings on each of the self-completion topics from SCJS interviews conducted in 2018/19 and 2019/20 (described where relevant as 2019/20) can be found in the [2019/20 Main Findings Report](#). Supporting [data tables](#) have also been published to provide additional findings from these questionnaire sections. Due to improvements made to the partner abuse questionnaire for the 2023/24 survey sweep, analysts are currently developing plans on how to publish the findings for the standalone

¹¹⁴ The following 'cyber flag' question was added to the victim form section of the questionnaire: 'As far as you are aware, was the internet, any type of online activity or any internet-enabled device related to any specific aspect of the offence?'

¹¹⁵ A similar approach is used by the CSEW, which found that 3.6% of robberies, 0.2% of theft offences and 0.1% of criminal damage incidents were flagged as being cyber-related in the year ending March 2018. [Proportion of incidents of crime, by type, which were flagged as cyber and non-cyber crimes, year ending March 2018, Crime Survey for England and Wales](#).

¹¹⁶ Variable name: QFOREC. Base: 2021/22 (110), 2019/20 (150).

¹¹⁷ Due to the sensitive nature of questions in the self-completion module, participation is voluntary.

¹¹⁸ Having intimate pictures of them shared without consent does not have to have happened more than once to be included.

2021/22 year. Further background to these changes are detailed in [Annex D: Changes to the survey for 2023/24](#), and users will be informed of future plans through the ScotStat network.

To what extent were people insulted or harassed online in 2021/22?

The vast majority of adults (86%) did not experience being insulted, pestered, or intimidated in 2021/22, but among those who did encounter such behaviour, in-person experiences continued to be more common than online.

In 2021/22, 14% of adults said they had been insulted, pestered or intimidated in any way by someone outwith their household. This was unchanged from 2019/20¹¹⁹. Of those adults that said they experienced harassment in the year prior to interview, the vast majority (80%) were insulted, pestered or intimidated 'in person', whilst 21% encountered such behaviour 'in writing via text, email, messenger or posts on social media sites'¹²⁰ (unchanged from 2019/20¹²¹).

Widening the focus: How does wider analytical work complement the evidence provided by the SCJS on cyber crime?

A number of published strategies emphasise the challenges and risks of cyber crime, including the [Strategic Framework for a Cyber Resilient Scotland](#), with an [update of the progress made](#) published in October 2023. [Scotland's Scams Prevention, Awareness & Enforcement Strategy](#) is another document that has been produced by the Scottish Government, laying out a strategic framework to tackle scams in Scotland.

To inform this on-going strategic work, a range of analytical work is being carried out with the aim of developing the evidence base around cyber crime. The sections below briefly highlight where the Crime Survey for England and Wales and Police Scotland's cyber marker can tell us more about the involvement of cyber technology in sexual crimes, computer misuse and police recorded crime.

Computer misuse and fraud in the Crime Survey for England and Wales

As discussed previously, the Crime Survey for England and Wales (CSEW) has developed and included a substantial module to robustly capture experiences of fraud and computer misuse since October 2015. The questions provide estimates on the incidence, prevalence and nature of these crimes and also the proportion of fraud and computer misuse incidents that are cyber related.

The CSEW estimates that in the year ending in March 2022, there were 4.5 million fraud offences in the Telephone-operated Crime Survey for England and Wales (TCSEW), a 25% increase compared with the CSEW year ending March 2020.

¹¹⁹ Variable name: QAINSUL2. Base: 2021/22 (1,410), 2019/20 (1,340).

¹²⁰ Respondents were given the opportunity to choose more than one option, therefore the final percentages may not add up to 100%.

¹²¹ Variable name: QATHME2. Base: 2019/20 (160), 2018/19 (150).

Further, they estimate that 61% of fraud offences were cyber-enabled in the year ending March 2022, up from 53% in the year ending March 2020, suggesting that much of the increase in fraud offences was because of increases in cyber-related fraud.

The TCSEW estimated that there were 1.6 million incidents of computer misuse in the year ending March 2022, up 89% from the year ending March 2020. Additionally, it estimates that 3.1% of people were the victim of a computer misuse offence in the year ending March 2022, a figure which has doubled in two years (1.6% in the year ending March 2020)¹²².

Police recorded cyber crime

Crimes recorded by the police provide a very valuable contribution to the evidence base on cyber crime in Scotland.

Since the introduction of cyber crime markers on crime recording systems in April 2016, Police Scotland has continued to develop its marking practices across other Police Scotland recording systems and databases. This activity is being undertaken by the Cybercrime Capability Programme under Police Scotland's '[Policing 2026 Strategy](#)'. According to a [Police Scotland report](#) in 2020, the tagging, marking, and logging of cyber crime has risen significantly in April-December 2019/20 compared to the same period last year, mostly as a result of the "Tag it, Mark it, Log it" campaign launched in October 2018 with the aim of improving Police Scotland's ability to identify occurrences of cyber crime. As this marker becomes fully embedded across Police Scotland systems, it should provide a valuable evidence source of police recorded crimes involving a cyber element.

Scottish government statisticians have conducted a number of studies based on samples of police recorded crimes to enhance the wider evidence base on cyber crime. The findings are published annually in the [Recorded Crime in Scotland national statistics bulletin](#). In 2022-23, an estimated 14,890 cyber-crimes were recorded by the police in Scotland. This is similar to the estimated volume recorded for both 2020-21 and 2021-22 (14,860 and 14,280 respectively), but remains significantly above the pre-pandemic year of 2019-20 (with 7,710 cyber-crimes).

The findings estimate that at least 5% of crimes recorded by the police in Scotland in 2022-23 were cyber-crimes. This includes an estimated 26% of Sexual crimes, 8% of Crimes of dishonesty, 3% of Non-sexual crimes of violence and less than 1% of Damage and reckless behaviour.

Further statistical studies into specific crime types recorded by the police can also provide more information about cyber crime in Scotland.

Published in January 2023, a [study into police recorded hate crimes](#) estimated the number of hate crimes that were cyber enabled. It found that in 2020/21, 9% of hate crimes were cyber-enabled. Transgender aggravated hate crimes and disability

¹²² [Nature of fraud and computer misuse in England and Wales - Office for National Statistics \(ons.gov.uk\)](#)

aggravated hate crimes were most likely to be cyber-enabled (27% and 18%, respectively).

Additionally, Scottish Government analysts studied a sample of police recorded sexual crimes from 2013/14 and 2016/17 and included consideration of the influence of cyber technology on sexual crime in Scotland¹²³. This research found that both the scale and nature of sexual crime has been impacted by cyber technology in Scotland in recent years. For example:

- the research estimated that a rise in cyber-enabled 'other sexual crimes' has contributed to around half of the growth in all police recorded sexual crimes in Scotland between 2013/14 and 2016/17
- it is estimated that the internet was used as a means to commit at least 20% of all sexual crimes recorded by the police in 2016/17

¹²³ [Recorded crime in Scotland: 'Other sexual crimes', 2013-2014 and 2016-2017.](#)

9.2. Focus on harassment and discrimination

This section reports on adults' experiences of harassment and discrimination, by examining whether they had any incidents in which they were insulted, pestered or intimidated in any way (in person or by some other means¹²⁴) by someone outwith their household in the year prior to interview.

These findings are based on questions asked to one-quarter of the overall sample¹²⁵. As agreed with SCJS users, quarter-sample results are generally not broken down within the report for population sub-groups. However, some breakdowns are presented here for illustration. All results for demographic and area characteristics are provided in the 2021/22 SCJS online [data tables](#).

Additional information on other experiences of stalking and harassment are captured in the self-completion element of the SCJS with the below summary focusing on key findings on this topic from the main (face-to-face) survey. Key findings on each of the self-completion topics from SCJS interviews conducted in 2018/19 and 2019/20 (described where relevant as 2019/20) can be found in the [2019/20 Main Findings Report](#). Due to improvements made to the partner abuse questionnaire for the 2023/24 survey sweep, analysts are currently developing plans on how to publish the findings for the standalone 2021/22 year. Further background to these changes are detailed in [Annex D: Changes to the survey for 2023/24](#), and users will be informed of future plans through the ScotStat network.

How common were experiences of harassment in Scotland in 2021/22?

In 2021/22, 14% of adults said that they had been insulted, pestered or intimidated in the previous year, in line with the proportion of respondents who experienced such incidents in 2008/09 and 2018/19.

Across two of the population sub-groups focused on in this report, sex and SIMD, there was no differences in the proportion that said they had been insulted, pestered or intimidated in the previous year. However the proportion was higher among victims than non-victims (25% compared to 12%, respectively), higher among urban dwellers than those living rurally (15% compared to 7% respectively), and, higher amongst those aged 16-24 when compared with those aged 60+ (24% compared to 7% respectively).

What can the SCJS tell us about the nature of harassment?

Of those who said they had experienced harassment in the year prior to interview the vast majority (80%) were insulted, pestered or intimidated 'in person', whilst 21% said this happened 'in writing via text, email, messenger or posts on social media'. This suggests that 'offline' experiences of harassment remain much more

¹²⁴ Some other means includes writing and electronic communications.

¹²⁵ In 2021/22, 1,408 respondents answered the harassment and discrimination module of the survey. For more information on the questionnaire content and structure, please see the [Technical Report](#).

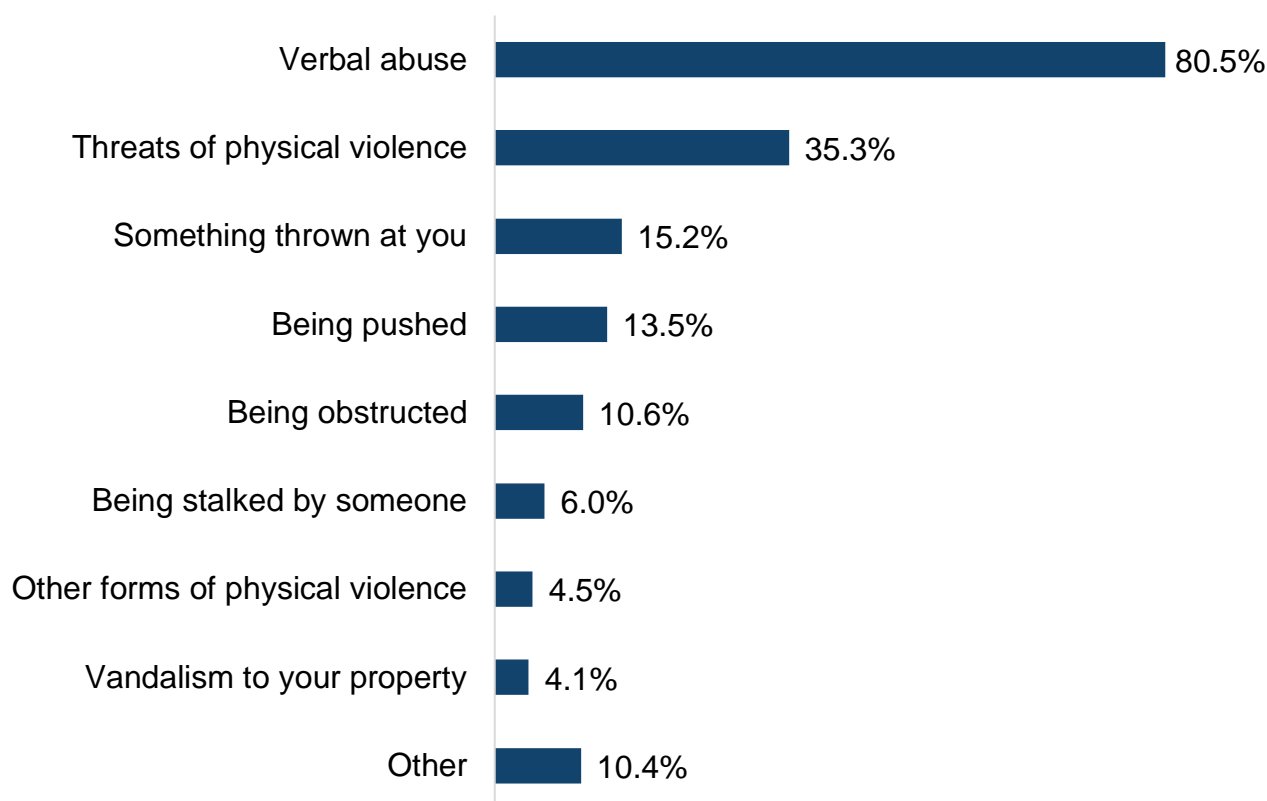
common than 'online'. However electronic communication does play a role in a sizeable proportion of cases of harassment. Further details on the insights the 2021/22 SCJS is able to shed on the relationship between the internet and crime are outlined in the '[Cyber crime in Scotland](#)' section.

Most people who had experienced harassment said it had happened on more than one occasion in the previous year (68%), with 27% reporting only one incident. A further tenth (9%) of people said they experienced harassing behaviour too many times to remember.

Verbal abuse was the most common type of harassment in 2021/22, experienced by 80% of the victims. Other types of harassment, particularly those involving physical contact, were much less commonly experienced, as shown in Figure 9.5. More in-depth analysis about the extent and nature of violent incidents in 2021/22 is provided in the '[Focus on violent crime](#)' chapter.

Figure 9.5: The majority of victims of harassment experienced verbal abuse with over a third experiencing threats of physical violence.

Proportion of harassment victims experiencing different kinds of behaviour in previous 12 months.



Base: All respondents who had been insulted, pestered or intimidated in previous 12 months (170). Variable: QHWHAT2.

To explore whether incidents may have been related to discrimination, respondents who experienced harassment in the previous 12 months were asked whether they

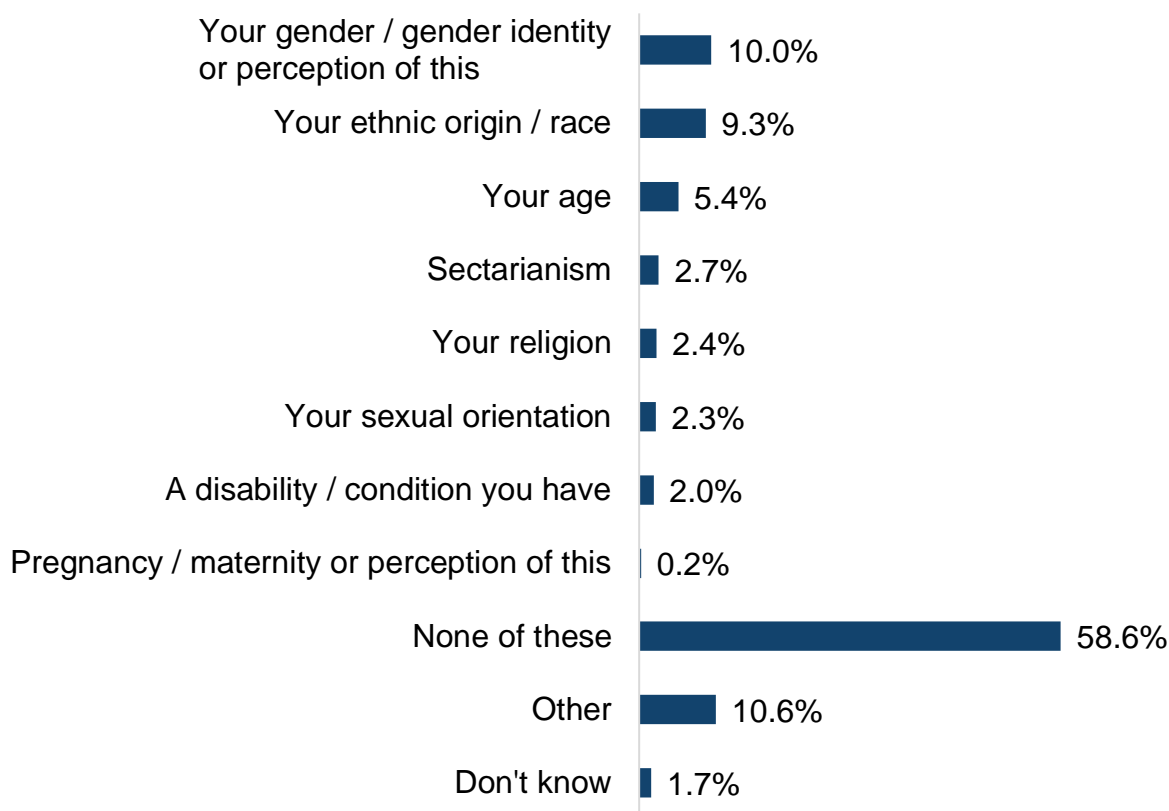
thought any particular - perceived or actual - characteristic they hold may have motivated the offender in any encounters. A range of possible reasons in relation to the most recent (or only) experience are outlined in Figure 9.6 below.

Around three-in-five (59%) did not think any of their characteristics were an influencing factor in their most recent (or only) experience of harassment. One in ten (10%) thought that their gender, gender identity or perception of this was a possible motivating factor, while 5% believed their age and 9% believed their ethnic origin or race was a possible influence.

Since the last SCJS in 2019/20, there has been no change across all possible motivating factors.

Figure 9.6: The majority of victims did not think any of their characteristics were an influencing factor in their most recent harassment experience.

What victims thought their most recent (or only) experience of harassment in last year was or may have been motivated by.



Base: All respondents who had been insulted, pestered or intimidated in previous 12 months (170). Variable: QHDISCRIM1.

9.3. Focus on Crown Office and Procurator Fiscal Service

[The Crown Office and Procurator Fiscal Service \(COPFS\)](#) is the independent public prosecution service for Scotland and one of the organisations which form the Scottish Criminal Justice System.

This section provides results on adults' reported awareness of COPFS, any contact they had with the organisation, and their level of satisfaction with the way they were treated.

These findings are based on questions asked of one-quarter of the overall SCJS sample¹²⁶. As agreed with SCJS users, these results are generally not broken down within the report for population sub-groups. However, some breakdowns are presented here for illustration. All results for demographic and area characteristics are provided in the 2021/22 SCJS online [data tables](#).

Did the public report knowing about the Crown Office and Procurator Fiscal Service?

The 2021/22 SCJS estimates that around three-quarters (76%) of adults in Scotland had heard of COPFS, with younger adults less likely to have heard of COPFS than older adults (51% of 16-24 year olds compared to 76% of 25-44 year olds, 84% of 45-59 year olds and 82% of people aged 60 and over).

Of those who were aware of COPFS, three-fifths (60%) reported not knowing very much about its work, with a further 12% knowing nothing at all. Around a quarter (24%) reported knowing a fair amount and only 4% reported knowing a lot.

The roles and responsibilities of COPFS are to investigate, prosecute and disrupt crime; establish the cause of sudden, unexplained or suspicious deaths; and investigate allegations of criminal conducts against police officers¹²⁷.

Adults who said they were aware of COPFS were asked to indicate what roles they believed are carried out by COPFS, choosing multiple answers from a list of four options (where two were correct and two incorrect)¹²⁸. Almost three-quarters (73%) identified the correct role of COPFS in investigating and prosecuting crime and almost half (46%) identified the correct role in investigating sudden and unexpected deaths. However, almost over two-fifths said they thought COPFS decided on sentences for those found guilty of crime (42%) and 36% thought COPFS

¹²⁶ In 2021/22, 1,408 respondents answered the COPFS module of the survey. For more information on the questionnaire content and structure, please see the [Technical Report](#).

¹²⁷ Detailed description of COPFS's values and objectives available on the [COPFS website](#).

¹²⁸ 'Investigating allegations of criminal conduct against police officers' was not included in the list of options in the 2018/19 or 2019/20 questionnaire. As a result the impact on the proportion of adults correctly identifying the roles of COPFS which may have been caused by including this role in the list of possible answers cannot be assessed.

represented the victims of crime in court, neither of which are responsibilities of COPFS.

Have people had contact with COPFS and, if so, how satisfied were they with the way COPFS dealt with them?

Respondents were asked if they had personally ever had any contact with COPFS, including for professional reasons.

Around a quarter (26%) of adults that had heard of COPFS said they have had contact with COPFS at some point.

The most common ways in which adults had contact with COPFS included:

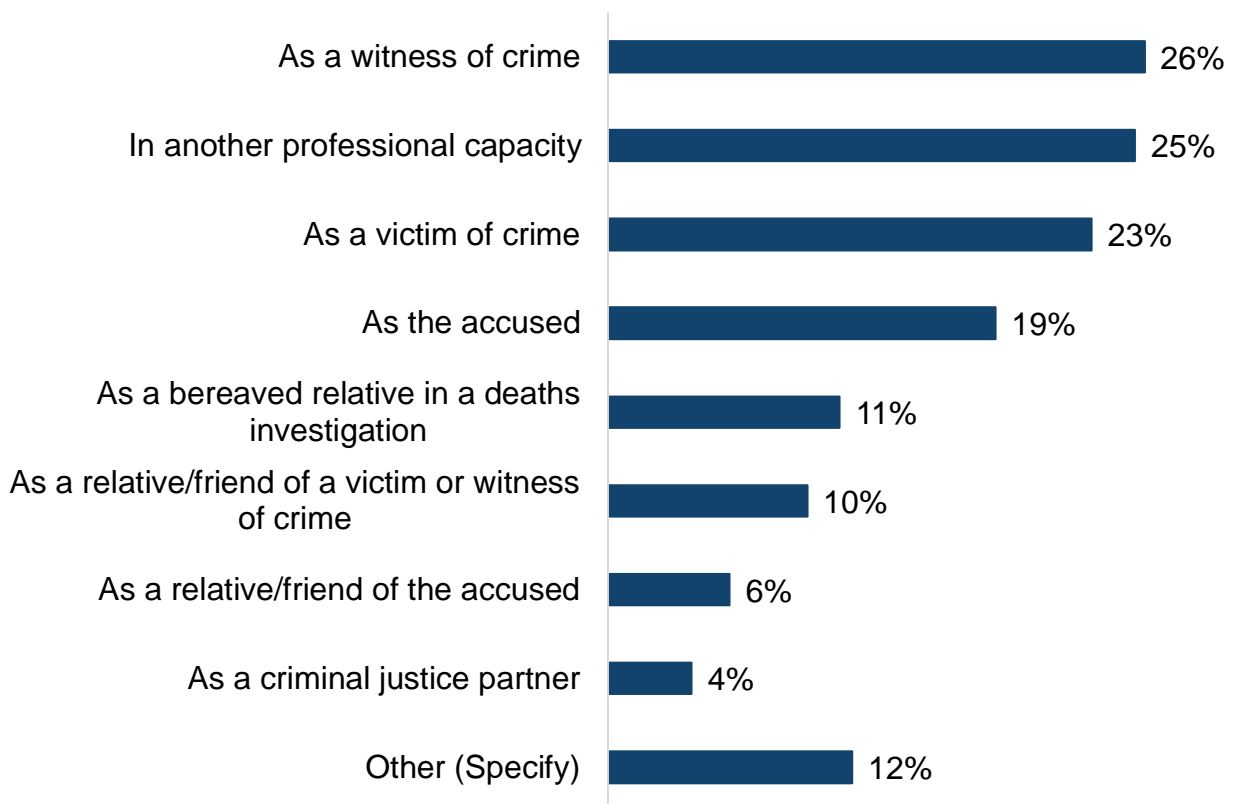
- as a witness of crime (26%)
- in another professional capacity (25%)¹²⁹
- as the victim of a crime (23%)

Other ways in which contact was made are shown in Figure 9.7.

¹²⁹ 'Another professional capacity' refers to someone who was involved in a professional capacity but not as a criminal justice partner.

Figure 9.7. Around half of people who had contact with COPFS did so as either a witness or in another professional capacity.

Ways in which people had contact with COPFS.



Base: All adults who have had contact with COPFS (290); Variable: QCOP5.

Of those who have had contact with COPFS at some point, males and females were equally likely to have had contact as a victim. However, males were more likely than females to have had contact with COPFS as the accused (23% compared to 7%).

Adults who have had contact with COPFS were also asked about how satisfied or dissatisfied they were in the way COPFS dealt with them the last time they had contact.

Around two-thirds (64%) of respondents said they were satisfied with the way COPFS dealt with them the last time they had contact, 21% were dissatisfied and 14% were neither satisfied nor dissatisfied.

9.4. Focus on civil law

This section provides results on adults' experience of problems in different areas of their life, referred to as civil law problems, and their response to such problems.

These findings are based on questions asked to one-quarter of the overall SCJS sample¹³⁰. As agreed with SCJS users, these results are generally not broken down within the report for population sub-groups. However, some breakdowns are presented here for illustration. All results for demographic and area characteristics are provided in the 2021/22 SCJS online [data tables](#).

More details on civil justice statistics in Scotland, including data on civil law cases and information on court procedures, is provided in the [Civil Justice Statistics publication](#).

How common were experiences of civil law problems?

Adults were asked if they had experienced one or more of a range of possible civil law problems in the three years prior to interview. The problem areas covered were:

- home or family living arrangements
- money, finances or anything paid for
- unfair treatment
- health and well-being

The 2021/22 SCJS estimates that around three-in-ten (28%) adults in Scotland experienced at least one civil law problem in the previous three years. This is in line with the proportions who experienced such problems in 2008/09¹³¹ and 2018/19.

This proportion varied amongst certain population sub-groups. For example, victims of crime were more likely to have experienced civil law problems than non-victims (45% compared to 26%, respectively). Those aged 60 and over were less likely than the other age categories to have experienced civil law problems (17%, compared to 36% of 16-24 year olds, 37% of 25-44 year olds and 26% of 45-59 year olds). Those living in urban areas were more likely than those living in rural areas to have experienced civil law problems (29% compared to 20%).

Overall, problems around home or family living arrangements were the most common, experienced by 17% of adults. This was followed by problems with money, finances or anything paid for (9%), unfair treatment (6%), and problems around health and well-being (6%).

Each of these broad categories contain a range of more specific individual problems, as shown in Figure 9.8. Consistent with previous years, the most

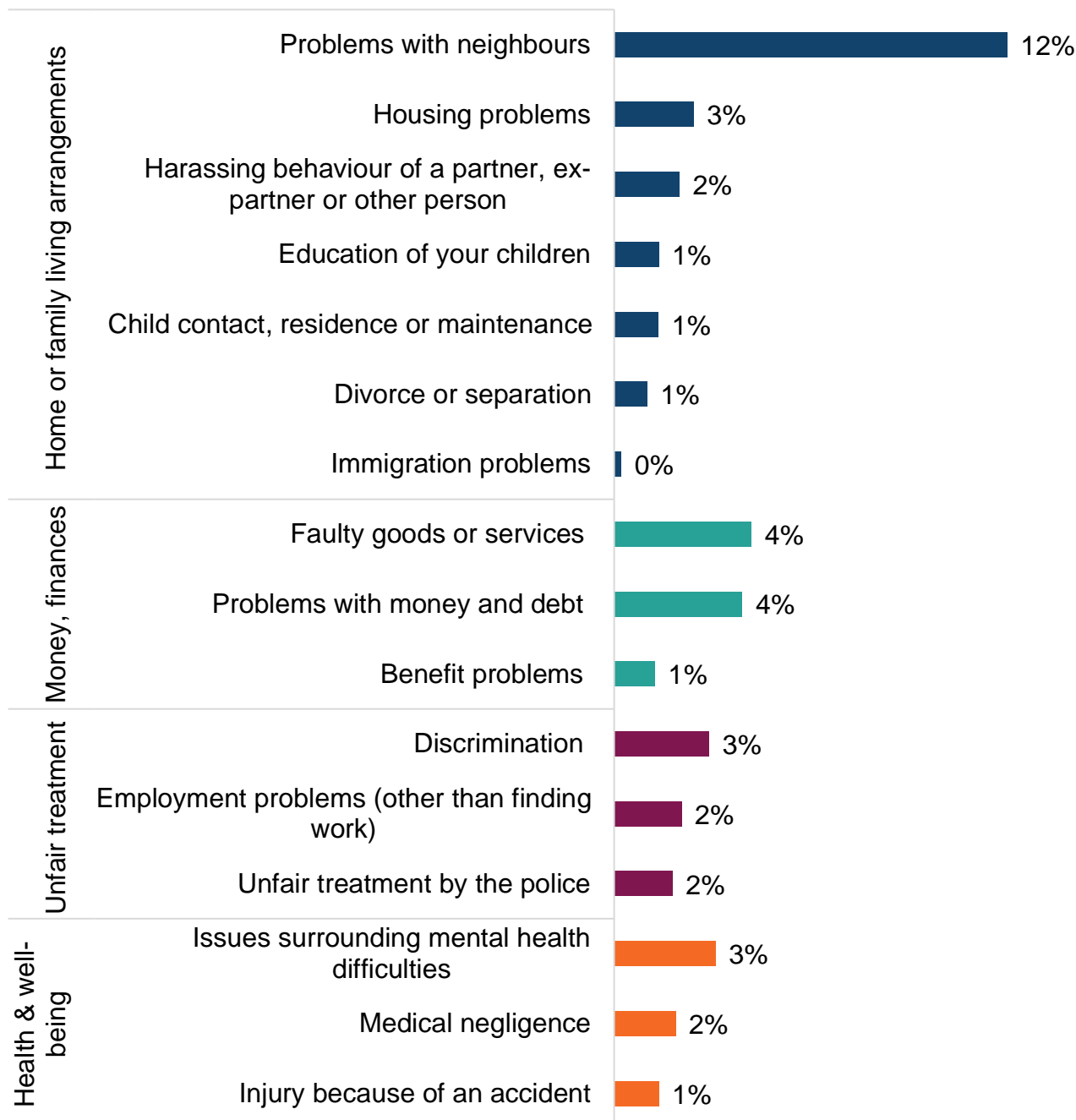
¹³⁰ In 2021/22, 1,371 respondents answered the civil law module of the survey. For more information on the questionnaire content and structure, please see the [Technical Report](#).

¹³¹ There have been some question updates and additional answer options in the questionnaires since 2008/09, however the results are still broadly comparable.

common single problem involved issues to do with neighbours¹³². In 2021/22, 12% of adults said they had encountered such issues in the three years prior to interview, in line with the proportions in 2008/09 and 2019/20.

Figure 9.8: Problems with neighbours was the most common single problem encountered in the three years prior to interview.

Experience of civil law problems in the last three years.



Base: All adults (1,370); Variable: QVJUS1 – QVJUS4.

¹³² Problems with neighbours include for example noise, boundary or parking disagreements.

Among those who had experienced at least one civil law problem in the last three years, 33% said that a problem concerning neighbours was their most important (or only) problem to solve.

How long had problems lasted and what steps did people report having taken to resolve matters?

Once respondents had identified their most important (or only) civil law problem, they were asked when it started and whether they have attempted to solve it.

Around three in ten (31%) of these problems began less than a year ago, and 22% started over a year but less than two years ago. The remainder of these problems were older, with 23% starting over two years but less than three years ago and 24% starting over three years ago.

Just under two-fifths of adults (38%) had solved the problem, while just over a third (35%) were still trying to solve it. A further 13% had tried to solve the problem but had to give up and 11% were not planning to do anything about it.

9.5: Focus on veterans

The 2021/22 Scottish Crime and Justice Survey introduced, for the first time, a question to gather information on veteran status of respondents. Specifically, all respondents were asked “have you previously served in the UK Armed Forces?”, and the options presented to respondents were¹³³:

1. No
2. Yes, previously served in regular Armed Forces
3. Yes, previously served in reserve Armed Forces

As with other questions in the survey, respondents could choose to answer ‘don’t know’ or refuse to answer.¹³⁴

This was introduced in order to provide a source of evidence to understand the prevalence of veterans in the population, as well as learn other factors about veterans – for example, demographic characteristics such as sex and age, or other socio-economic characteristics such as deprivation.

This can also be used to analyse how the experiences of veterans differ from the rest of the population on a range of measures included in the SCJS. For example, differences in the likelihood of experiencing victimisation as well as attitudinal questions such as feelings of safety or fear of crime.

This section provides an initial exploratory analysis of:

- demographics of veterans who responded to the latest survey
- their victimisation rates
- their responses to selected indicators and how these compared with the non-veteran population

Given this question has only been introduced for the first time in this survey, it is not possible to provide any comparisons or trends over time. Additionally, it is not possible to determine whether the results seen in this survey will be reflective of the results from future surveys, therefore caution should be exercised when interpreting any of the results presented in this section.

Prevalence of veterans in the latest SCJS findings

The findings of the 2021/22 survey show that the vast majority of respondents never served in the UK Armed Forces (95.9%). Just under one-in thirty (3.1%) have previously served in the regular Armed Forces and less than one-in-one-hundred

¹³³ Note that any respondent who is currently serving in the regular or reserve armed forces would answer ‘No’ to this question.

¹³⁴ It is possible for a respondent to answer that they have previously served in both the regular and reserve Armed Forces. Therefore, the percentages presented will not necessarily add up to 100%.

(0.9%) have served in the reserve Armed Forces, with less than one percent refusing to answer the question (0.3%). When looking at veteran status of any kind, the 2021/22 SCJS finds that 3.8% of all respondents were veterans.^{135,136} Full results of this question are shown in Table 9.1 below.

Table 9.1: The vast majority of SCJS respondents have not previously served in the UK Armed Forces, but veteran status varies across the population.

Percentage of people who previously served in the UK Armed Forces, 2021/22.

	No	Yes: regular Armed Forces	Yes: reserve Armed Forces	Yes: combined	Refused	Number of respondents
All respondents	95.9	3.1	0.9	3.8	0.3	5,520
Male	92.7	5.8	1.7	7.1	0.2	2,490
Female	98.9	0.6	0.1	0.7	0.4	3,020
16-24	98.9	0.0	0.1	0.1	0.9	330
25-44	98.2	1.4	0.3	1.7	0.1	1,580
45-59	95.9	3.4	1.1	4.2	0.2	1,360
60+	92.9	5.7	1.7	7.0	0.1	2,280
Urban	96.2	2.9	0.7	3.5	0.4	4,460
Rural	94.7	3.8	1.7	5.3	0.0	1,060
Disabled	95.1	4.2	0.8	4.7	0.1	1,570
Non-disabled	96.2	2.7	0.9	3.5	0.4	3,940
15% most deprived	96.1	2.3	0.9	3.1	0.8	770
Rest of Scotland	95.9	3.2	0.9	3.9	0.2	4,740

Base: 2021/22 (5,520); Variable: QDVET.

As shown in Table 9.1, veteran status varied across the population in the 2021/22 SCJS results. For example, veteran status was more commonly seen in males compared to females (7.1% compared to 0.7% respectively).

¹³⁵ As mentioned above, due to the fact that respondents are able to answer that they have served in both the regular and reserve Armed Forces, combined veteran status will not necessarily be a simple sum of both categories.

¹³⁶ Due to small sample sizes of veterans, much of the analysis presented here combines regular and reserve armed forces into one single category.

A clear pattern was observed between age and veteran status. The youngest age group, 16-24 year olds, were the least likely to be veterans at 0.1%. The prevalence of veterans increased with each older age category, with those aged 60 and over being the category with the highest proportion of veterans (7.0%).

The population subgroup with the highest proportion of veterans of any was males aged 60 and over, with over one-in-eight (13.5%) people in this group previously serving in the Armed Forces.

Those living in a rural area were more likely to be a veteran than those living in an urban area (5.3% compared to 3.5%, respectively).

There was no difference in veteran status found on the basis of deprivation, or disability when looking at the combined veteran status category. However, if restricting the analysis to just those who served in the regular Armed Forces, a higher proportion of disabled people (4.2%) were veterans than non-disabled people (2.7%).

Making comparisons between the veteran and non-veteran population

The information gathered from the newly introduced veteran status question can be used to further analyse other questions from the SCJS and investigate whether the experiences and opinions of veterans differs from the rest of the population.

However, as demonstrated above, the prevalence of veterans varies significantly across different population groups. The biggest differences seen are in sex and age, where males are more likely to be veterans than females, as are older people compared to younger people.

Due to this, any attempt to compare veterans to non-veterans is likely to be influenced by these other demographic differences mentioned. While it might be useful to frame the analysis like this in the most simple terms, it is unlikely to show any effect of veteran status in isolation.

To partially overcome this issue, the analysis presented in the following sections will also provide a comparison of two groups that share some demographic similarities - namely males over the age of 25 who are veterans and males over the aged of 25 who are not veterans. This allows other demographic differences to be controlled for and may provide a better estimation of the effect of veteran status to be presented.

Rate of victimisation amongst veterans

The design of the SCJS makes it a very good tool for estimating the prevalence of victimisation across the population. Overall, the 2021/22 SCJS found that 10.0% of respondents were the victim of any type of crime within the scope of the survey.

The two broad categories of crime picked up by the survey are violent and property crime, with the estimated prevalence in 2021/22 being 1.7% and 8.7% respectively.

When analysing the victimisation rates for all veteran respondents, it was found that there was no difference in the rates between veterans and non-veterans for overall crime, as well as for violent crime and property crime individually.

Even when using the approach outlined above to restrict the analysis to more comparable subsections of the population (i.e. male respondents aged 25 and over), there was still no difference found in the victimisation rates between veterans and non-veterans.

Therefore, findings from this sweep of the SCJS indicate that the likelihood of being a victim of crime does not vary by veteran status.

National Performance Framework indicators

Alongside the overall prevalence of victimisation, the SCJS is used by Scotland's [National Performance Framework](#) for two other indicators: perceptions of local crime rate; and access to justice.

The perceptions of local crime rate indicator asks people how they think the crime rate in their local area has changed in the last two years prior to the interview. The general overview indicates that a majority of individuals believe the crime rate has either remained stable or decreased, with just over three-quarters (75.8%) of people answering this way in 2021/22. Veteran status was found to have no effect on how people perceived changes in the crime rate in their local area, and this remained true when comparing only veterans and non-veterans who were males aged 25 or over.

The access to justice indicator asks respondents how confident they are that the Scottish criminal justice system makes sure everyone has access to the justice system if they need it. Just under three-quarters (73.6%) of all people answer that they are very or fairly confident for this question. As with the other indicators, no difference was detected between veterans and non-veterans here, and again this remained true when comparing only veterans and non-veterans who were male and over the age of 25.

Feelings of safety

The SCJS asks two questions of respondents regarding feelings of safety. The first asks people how safe they feel walking alone after dark in their local area. Overall, the majority of respondents in 2021/22 reported feeling very or fairly safe (76.2%). In this instance, veteran respondents were more likely to feel safe than the rest of the population (85.6% compared to 75.9%, respectively).

However, when only comparing veterans and non-veterans who were male and over the age of 25, no differences between these groups were detected. This suggests that the difference seen between veterans and the rest of the population was driven by other demographic factors that differentiate these groups, rather than being an effect of veteran status alone.

For example, the analysis above shows that veterans are far more likely to be male than female, and the 2021/22 survey results show that males overall are more likely to feel safe walking alone after dark in their area than females (90% compared to 63%, respectively). This could explain why a difference is seen between all veterans and all non-veterans, but not for the comparison of males aged 25 and over.

The second question on feelings of safety asks how safe respondents feel alone in their home at night. For this question, the vast majority of people feel very or fairly safe (96.7%), and no differences were found on the basis of veteran status.

Perception of crime in their local area

Respondents to the SCJS are asked a series of questions around how common specific crimes are in their local area.

Overall, how prevalent an issue is perceived to be can vary significantly. For example, drug dealing and drug abuse is the issue that people are most likely to perceive as common (44.7%), and people being physically attacked because of their skin colour etc. was the least likely to be perceived as common (4.8%). A full breakdown of peoples' perceptions of local issues can be found in the [supplementary tables](#).

Table 9.2 below outlines issues where it was found that the perception of veterans and non-veterans was significantly different. In each of the issues listed in the table, veterans were less likely to perceive something as common compared to the rest of the population. For those issues not listed in the table, there was no difference found between veterans and non-veterans.

However, for some measures these differences disappeared when restricting the analysis to only veterans and non-veterans who are male and over the age of 25. A difference in perception was still detected between veterans and non-veterans who were male and over the age of 25 for three of the crime types.

Therefore, it is not possible to determine if these differences are due to the effect of being a veteran or whether there are other demographic factors driving the observed differences.

Table 9.2: Veterans were less likely than non-veterans to think a range of issues were common in their local area.

Percentage of people who think each issue is common in their local area, 2021/22.

	Overall Population (% Net: common)	Difference between all veterans and the rest of the population?	Difference between veterans and non-veterans who are male and over the age of 25?
Deliberate damage to people's homes by vandals?	10.1	Yes – veterans lower	No
People being mugged or robbed?	5.7	Yes – veterans lower	No
People being physically assaulted or attacked in the street or other public places?	10.9	Yes – veterans lower	Yes – veterans lower
People being sexually assaulted?	5.9	Yes – veterans lower	Yes – veterans lower
Violence between groups of individuals or gangs?	13.3	Yes – veterans lower	No
People carrying knives?	10.2	Yes – veterans lower	No
People buying or selling smuggled or fake goods?	9.5	Yes – veterans lower	Yes – veterans lower

Base: 2021/22 (1,380). Variable: QACO.

Fear of crime

The SCJS asks people how worried they are about a range of issues happening to them. Overall, a majority of people are not worried about any of the things asked about happening to them, the issue that people are most worried about is being a victim of banking fraud, with 49.5% of people being very or fairly worried about this. The issue that people are least worried about is being involved or caught up in violence between groups of individuals or gangs, with only 11.6% of people worried about this issue.

Analysis of the 2021/22 survey finds that for almost all types of crime asked about, there was no difference in how worried veterans were compared to non-veterans. The only exceptions were for worry about being sexually assaulted and fear of being a victim of banking fraud. In both of these cases, veterans were less worried than non-veterans.

Just over one-in-twenty (5.4%) veterans were either very or fairly worried about being sexually assaulted, this compares to just over one-in-eight (12.7%) of all non-veterans. However, this is not the case when only looking at males over the age of 25, where there is no difference detected between veterans and non-veterans. This suggests that the difference seen between veterans and all non-veterans could be driven by other demographic factors present in these groups.

For fear of being a victim of banking fraud, veterans were also less worried than non-veterans (42.3% compared to 49.9%, respectively). Similarly, this finding was not present when only looking at males over the age of 25, where there was no difference found between veterans and non-veterans.

Respondents who answer that they are worried about any crime happening to them are asked to what extent their fear of crime prevents them from doing things they would otherwise want to do. In 2021/22 the majority of people (55.6%) answered that their fear of crime affects them to no extent, and this showed no difference on the basis of veteran status.

Summary

In 2021/22, the SCJS introduced a question on veteran status of respondents. These first findings suggest that just under one-in-twenty-five (3.8%) respondents have previously served in either the regular or reserve UK Armed Forces. Veteran status was found to vary significantly across the population, in particular males are more likely to have served than females (7.1% compared to 0.7%), and older people (60+) are more likely than younger people (16-24) (7% compared to 0.1%).

The victimisation rate, as well as how individuals responded to the National Performance Framework indicators, was not found to be statistically different between veterans and non-veterans. While some differences were detected between veterans and non-veterans for questions around feelings of safety, these differences were not detected when comparing only males aged 25 or over. Similarly for perceptions of the local area and fear of crime, many of the apparent differences detected between veterans and non-veterans were no longer present when comparing between more similar groups and controlling for some of the demographic differences seen.

We will continue to monitor the data collected using this question going forward and will consider the best options to present the findings in future reports.

Annex A: Data tables

Overview

All table referenced in the main text are available on the [associated data tables webpage](#). These tables data for some of the key measures of the survey, including trend data for past crime surveys in Scotland. Information on how to read and interpret these tables is presented below.

Tables displaying different groupings of crime (e.g. Table A 1.1) have the following structure¹³⁷:

All SCJS crime includes all crimes measured by the survey except threats and sexual offences.

Property crime comprises the following groups:

- vandalism
- all motor vehicle theft related incidents
- housebreaking
- other household thefts (including bicycle theft)
- personal theft (excluding robbery)

Violent crime comprises the following groups:

- assault
- robbery

Further sub-groups are also shown - for example vandalism is further broken down into motor vehicle vandalism and property vandalism.

For analysts using the SPSS data files (which will be available from the UK Data Archive), variable names which correspond to the crime groups displayed in the data tables are provided in Annex 10 of the [Technical Report](#).

Comparable crime is a sub-set of all SCJS crime that can be compared with [police recorded crime statistics](#). This comparable sub-set comprises vandalism, acquisitive crime and violent crime. Around two-thirds (67%) of crime was classed as comparable with police recorded crime statistics, as discussed in [Chapter 6](#). Further details about police recorded crime statistics are included in Chapter 12 of the [Technical Report](#).

¹³⁷ See the [Technical Report](#) for more information on the groupings of crime.

Notes

1. Upper and lower estimates are based on 95% confidence intervals.
2. In Annex tables [A1.3](#) and [A1.4](#) rates are quoted per 10,000 adults for the following crime groups: all SCJS crime, property crime, personal theft (excluding robbery), theft from the person, other personal theft, violent crime, assault, serious assault, and robbery. For all other crime groups rates are quoted per 10,000 households.
3. Columns showing percentage change or percentage point change for SCJS results over time only present statistically significant changes, using up and down arrows to demonstrate the direction of change. Where an apparent increase or decrease over time is not statistically significant, this is described as 'No change'.
4. Figures in the tables are presented as integers (with exception of [Tables A1.5 to A1.8](#)). Percentage point changes are calculated on the unrounded figures.
5. 'N/A' denotes where data are unavailable (e.g. [Table A1.25](#) displays some categories that were included after the 2008/09 SCJS).
6. The tables detail the overall base size number of respondents. Base sizes for demographic and geographic breakdowns are available in the SCJS online [data tables](#).

Annex B: Overview of police recorded crime and SCJS

	Recorded Crime	Scottish Crime and Justice Survey
Where do the data come from?	Administrative police records	Face-to-face interviews with residents from a nationally representative sample of the household population
Basis for inclusion	Crimes recorded by the police in Scotland, governed by the Scottish Crime Recording Standard	Trained coders determine whether experiences of victimisation in the last 12 months constitute a crime and assign an offence code
Frequency	Collected by financial year rolling 12 month periods. Statistics released on a quarterly basis.	Survey conducted annually for each financial year with reference period extending around 25 months. Results previously published biennially, now annually.
Strengths	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Covers the full range of crimes and offences • Provides data at a local level • A good measure of rarer, more serious crimes that are well reported • Measure of long-term trends • Good measure of crime that the police are faced with 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Good measure of trends since 2008/09 • Captures further information about crimes that are and are not reported to the police (including sensitive issues such as domestic abuse or drug abuse) • Analyses crime for different demographic groups and victim-offender relationships • Provides information on multiple and repeat victimisation (up to 5 incidents in a series) • Provides attitudinal data (e.g. fear of crime or attitudes towards the criminal justice system)

Limitations

- Partially reliant on the public reporting crime
- Reporting rates may vary by the type of crime (e.g. serious crime is more likely to be reported or housebreaking if a crime number is required for insurance purposes)
- Trends can be affected by legislation; public reporting practices; police recording practices
- Does not cover all crimes (e.g. homicide or crimes without specific victims, such as speeding)
- Does not cover the entire population (e.g. children, homeless people or people living in communal accommodation)
- Less able to produce robust data at lower level geographies
- Difficult to measure trends between survey years, especially in rarer forms of crime (such as more serious offences)
- Estimates are subject to a degree of error (confidence intervals)

What other data are collected

- Additional statistical bulletins published, including on homicides, firearm offences, drug seizures, hate crime and domestic abuse incidents
 - Public perceptions about crime
 - Worry about crime and the perceived likelihood of being a victim
 - Confidence in the police and the criminal justice system
 - Prevalence estimates on 'sensitive' topics (partner abuse, sexual victimisation, stalking and drug use). Reported on biennially
-

Annex C: 2021/22 questionnaire structure

Main questionnaire (Section 1-2)	5,516 respondents <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Perception of crime (Section 1)• Victim form screener (Section 2)
Victim form (Section 3)	770 respondents – 1,090 completed forms <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Incident dates• Incident details• Experiences of criminal justice system and related issues
Full sample modules (Section 4)	5,516 respondents <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Justice System• Police• Experience of being convicted of a crime• Experience of cyber crime
Quarter sample modules (Section 5)	Module A 1,377 respondents <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Local community• Perception of crime• Experience of cyber crime
Each participant is only asked questions from one module.	Module B 1,360 respondents <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Sentencing
	Module C 1,371 respondents <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Civil law• Crown Office and Procurator Fiscal Service (COPFS)
	Module D 1,408 respondents <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Harassment
Demographics (Section 6)	5,516 respondents
Self-completion questionnaire (Section 7–10)	2,429 respondents <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Risk factors (Section 7)• Illicit drug use (Section 8)• Stalking / harassment and partner abuse (Section 9)• Sexual victimisation (Section 10)

Annex D: Changes to the survey for 2023/24

Introduction

The re-procurement of the SCJS contract in 2022 provided an opportunity to refresh the existing SCJS questionnaire. The goal of this was to ensure that the SCJS kept pace with the changing nature of crime, and continued to meet user needs. The questionnaire was amended in two key ways: firstly, new modules were introduced and amendments were made to existing questions and modules and, secondly, some existing questions and modules were either removed or rotated out of the survey.

The entire 2021/22 questionnaire has been reviewed as part of this work stream. However, development work around question amendments and additions has focused on cyber crime, partner abuse and violence against women and girls (VAWG). These areas were selected on the basis of user engagement carried out as part of the [SCJS re-procurement](#). This user engagement began with a [consultation](#) which ran from September to December 2021, and was followed by a series of [user workshops](#) in January 2022. Both the consultation and user workshops gave users and stakeholders the opportunity to comment on the questionnaire and how it might be adapted to keep pace with the changing nature of crime.

The following sections provide more details on the ways in which the questionnaire has been adapted. This new questionnaire is currently out in field, with fieldwork expected to be completed in Spring 2024 and results published in 2025. Users will be kept informed as to when the first results will be published through the ScotStat network.

As discussed in [Chapter 2](#), the Scottish Government re-introduced face-to-face fieldwork in April 2022. As such, the 2023/24 SCJS will be undertaken mostly via face-to-face interviews in the respondent's home. Respondents will continue to be given the opportunity to take part in the survey remotely should that be required.

Development of a new fraud and computer misuse victim form

Since 2018/19, the SCJS has included questions on cyber fraud and computer misuse. These questions provided a first and important step in furthering our understanding of the nature of how these crimes are experienced in Scotland. As discussed in the [Cyber crime chapter](#), these questions provided information on the kinds of cyber fraud and computer misuse experienced by respondents, what the impact was and whether it resulted in any changes in behaviour. However, as they stood, these questions were unable to provide an estimate of the prevalence of these crimes or the specific details on who experienced these crimes (unlike the findings presented in the [violent](#) and [property](#) crime chapters).

Following [consultation with users in 2021](#), the SCJS team started extensive work to develop and test a new victim form focused on fraud and computer misuse. This new questionnaire was largely based on that included in the Crime Survey for

England and Wales which was first introduced in 2015¹³⁸. This new victim form will allow, for the first time, the prevalence of these crimes to be estimated in Scotland. This new module will collect detailed information on each incident of fraud or computer misuse and will go through similar coding checks as the traditional victim form to ensure only valid incidents are included. The victim form includes detailed questions on the involvement of any cyber element within fraud and computer misuse incidents, and will provide a fuller picture of cyber crime in Scotland.

Development of a new partner abuse module

One aspect of the questionnaire development work stream has been producing a new and improved partner abuse module that sits within the self-completion part of the questionnaire. The key objective when developing this module has been to more effectively capture experiences of coercive control, including patterns of ongoing control and their impacts on victims. To achieve this, the SCJS has moved away from asking respondents about specific instances of physical and psychological abuse and instead asks respondents about their experiences of types, or themes, of abuse (e.g. financial, physical, sexual etc.) that broadly reflect the themes within the Domestic Abuse (Scotland) Act 2018. These changes do mean an end to the existing time series.

Due to the sensitive nature of these questions additional quality assurance steps were taken during the questionnaire development process. The proposed questions were shared with both internal and external stakeholders who were invited to share their expertise and provide feedback. Once the questions had been refined they were cognitively tested to assess the acceptability and understanding of the new questions. Cognitive interviews were conducted with 20 participants, the majority of these participants had experienced abusive behaviours from a partner or ex-partner. The questions were then amended in line with the feedback received during the cognitive interviews. The finalised questions, alongside the entire SCJS questionnaire, were then piloted with 102 participants prior to being rolled out in full.

Improvements made to questions relating to Violence Against Women and Girls (VAWG)

There are questions that relate to VAWG throughout the survey questionnaire, they are not contained in a single module. The changes made relate to questions on perceptions of crime, harassment, stalking, less serious sexual assault and more serious sexual assault. The changes aim to increase the types of crime respondents are able to report as well as the locations in which these occurred. Furthermore, some specific changes to the sexual assault modules – namely, removing the word ‘forced’ from sexual victimisation questions - ensures that the survey is in line with the current thinking and legislation.

As with the cyber crime victim form and the partner abuse module, the proposed changes were informed by discussions with Scottish Government policy colleagues

¹³⁸ [Nature of fraud and computer misuse in England and Wales - Office for National Statistics \(ons.gov.uk\)](https://ons.gov.uk)

as well as the feedback received from users via our consultation and user workshops. Survey users were given a further opportunity to comment on the proposed question changes before these were then piloted and, finally, rolled out.

Questions removed or rotated out of the survey

The SCJS interview length is currently at the upper limit of what we would consider a fair burden on participants, around 40 minutes long on average. While it is desirable to capture more information and continuously add questions to the survey, each question added to the survey increases the interview duration - particularly for those that have suffered repeat victimisation. Therefore, it is crucial that the current SCJS interview length is maintained. To achieve this, some existing questions have been removed to make space for new questions and some modules have become partial sample modules. Changes to the survey questionnaire are made annually and future decisions on what will and will not be included within the questionnaire will be based on user need. The infographic below details the changes made for the 2023/24 SCJS questionnaire:

Table D1: Summary of changes, including sections removed or added, between the 2021/22 and 2023/24 questionnaires.

2021/22 questionnaire	2023/24 questionnaire
Section 1: Perceptions of crime [1]	Section 1: Perceptions of crime [1]
Section 2: Victim form screener [1]	Section 2: Victim form screener [1]
2.1 Victim of crime: home or vehicle 2.2 Victim of crime: personal 2.3 Series or single incidents	2.1 Victim of crime: home or vehicle 2.2 Victim of crime: personal 2.3 Series or single incidents
Section 3: Victim form [1]	Section 3: Victim form
3.1 Personal and property crime	3.1 Personal and property crime 3.2 Fraud and computer misuse
Section 4.1 Justice System	Section 4.1 Policing
4.1.1 System overall [2] 4.1.2 Confidence in the police 4.1.3 Courts	4.1.1 Confidence in the police 4.1.2 Attitudes to policing in local area 4.1.3 Police contact
Section 4.2 Police	Section 4.2 Courts
4.2.1 Police visibility [2] 4.2.2 Attitudes to policing in local area 4.2.3 Attitudes to Police Scotland [4] 4.2.4 Police contact	
Section 4.3: Cyber crime [3]	
Quarter sample modules	Third sample modules

Module A	Module A
5.1. Local community	5.1. Local community
5.2 Perceptions of crime	5.2 Perceptions of crime
Module B	Module B
5.3.1. Sentencing: community sentencing	5.3.1. Sentencing: community sentencing
5.3.2 Sentencing: prisons	5.3.2 Sentencing: prisons
	5.3.3 Police visibility
Module C	Module C
5.4 Civil law	5.4 Justice system overall
Module D	5.5 Harassment [1]
5.5 Crown Office and Procurator Fiscal Service [4]	
5.6 Harassment [1]	

Section 6: Demographics	Section 6: Demographics
Section 7: Introduction to self-completion	Section 7: Introduction to self-completion
Section 8: Stalking / harassment & partner abuse	Section 8: Stalking / harassment & partner abuse
8.1 Stalking / harassment [1]	8.1 Stalking / harassment [1]
8.2 Partner abuse [1]	8.2 Partner abuse [1]
8.3 Perceived victim	8.3 Perceived victim
Section 9: Sexual assault	Section 9: Sexual assault
9.1 Less serious sexual assault [1]	9.1 Less serious sexual assault [1]
9.2 More serious sexual assault [1]	9.2 More serious sexual assault [1]
Section 10: Illicit drug use [4]	
10.1 Used drugs in the last 12 months	

Key to proposed changes

[1] Additions / amendments to questions

[2] Section moved to third sample modules

[3] Questions moved into Section 3: victim form

[4] Removed from the 2023/24 survey questionnaire

Annex E: Interpreting charts, tables, and figures in this report

What do I need to know to help me understand the charts and tables in this report?

The information provided alongside figures and tables includes a title, the data source (survey year etc.), a base definition and the unweighted rounded (to the nearest 10) number of respondents and, if relevant, a variable name. Unless otherwise stated the results are from 2021/22. Examples of a chart and a table are shown below.

Where changes are referenced, either between groups or over time, this is only when a result is statistically significant at the 95% confidence level. This is due to the fact that the findings are based on a sample of respondents and therefore some level of uncertainty is associated with each measure. When testing for significance, a design effect of 1.19 is applied to the confidence intervals or each estimate, this is to account for the fact that the sample design of the SCJS is not completely random, and is stratified at police division level.

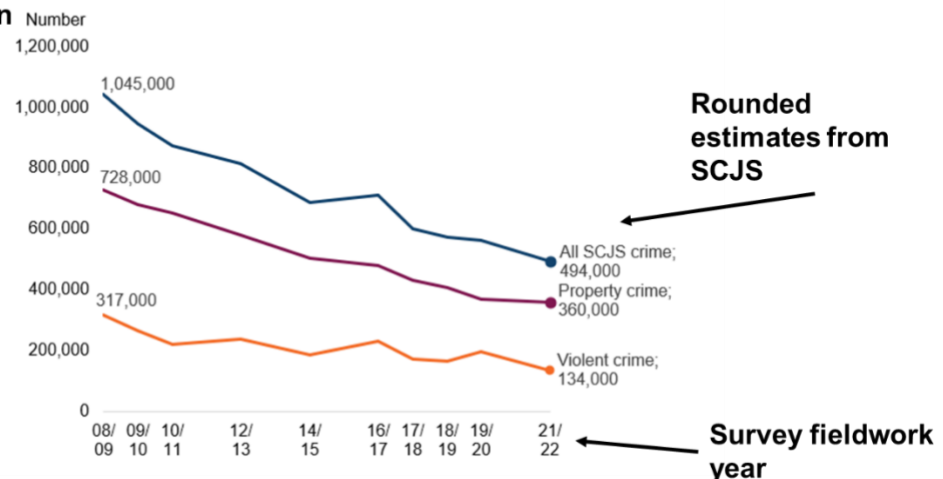
Charts

High level finding from chart

Figure 3.1: The level of crime experienced by adults has fallen by 53% since 2008/09 but is unchanged since 2019/20.

Estimated number of incidents of SCJS crime, 2008/09 to 2021/22

Format of information presented



Charts and graphs presented in the report are a useful way to visualise trends over time or summarise and highlight differences between groups. Each chart features a title which provides the main key message from the information, or highlights a notable or significant finding. The subheading explains how the data is presented and what time period is covered, if no time period is stated then the data will refer to the most recent survey year. Figures presented in charts are based on weighted

data unless otherwise stated, some may show the number of respondents which is the unweighted base.

Where change over time is displayed, the horizontal axis shows the period in which the SCJS fieldwork took place. Labels on the horizontal axis are only included in years in which there was SCJS fieldwork conducted, i.e. there was no survey covering 2011/12, 2013/14, 2015/16 or 2020/21. The time periods typically refer to a 12 month period covering the financial year, however as mentioned elsewhere in the report, the fieldwork for 2021/22 ran from November 2021 to December 2022. These labels have been formatted as ‘21/22’ etc. to increase the size and readability for all users.

Tables

All SCJS percentages and rates presented in the figures and tables are based on weighted data (see Chapter 9 of the accompanying [Technical Report](#) for details on survey weighting). However, figures and tables show the unweighted base which represents the number of respondents/households in the specified group or the numbers of crimes that the analysis is based on¹³⁹. In tables and figures these are rounded to the nearest multiple of 10 (unrounded numbers are provided in [data tables](#) released alongside this report).

Title and high level finding

Format of information presented and source

Table 3.1: The estimated number of SCJS crimes has fallen by over half since 2008/09 but unchanged since 2019/20.

Estimated number of incidents of SCJS crime (2008/09, 2019/20 and 2021/22) with percentage change since 2008/09 and 2019/20.

Test of statistical significance

Number of SCJS crimes	2008/09	2019/20	2021/22	Change since 2008/09	Change since 2019/20
Best estimate	1,045,000	563,000	494,000	Down 53%	No change
Lower estimate	974,000	501,000	428,000	-	-
Upper estimate	1,116,000	625,000	560,000	-	-
Number of respondents	16,000	5,570	5,520	-	-

Base: SCJS 2008/09 (16,000); 2019/20 (5,570); 2021/22 (5,520). Variable: INCSURVEYCRIME.

Variable name

Unweighted number of respondents

Most results presented in this report are rounded to whole numbers, but are available to multiple decimal places in the data tables released alongside this report. The prevalence estimate results presented in this report are provided to one decimal place which can sometimes be helpful where results are low. However, it should be noted that these results are estimates with associated ranges of uncertainty around them, which are taken account of in the statistical testing used in this report (and available more generally by using the [users statistical testing tool](#) published online alongside the [supplementary data tables](#)).

¹³⁹ i.e. this is generally how many people were asked the question for the results being discussed.

Note: table row or column percentages may not sum to 100% due to rounding.

Percentages presented in tables and figures, where they refer to the percentage of respondents, households or crimes that have the attribute being discussed, may not sum to 100%. Respondents have the option to refuse answering any question they did not wish to answer and the majority of questions have a 'don't know' option. Percentages for these response categories are generally not shown in tables and figures. In a small number of instances, to aid interpretation of the results, analysis is also presented based on data with 'don't know' and 'refused' responses removed.

A percentage may be quoted in the report text for a single category that is identifiable in the figures/tables only by summing two or more component percentages. In order to avoid rounding errors, the percentage has been recalculated for the single combined category and therefore may differ slightly (i.e. by one or two percentage points) from the sum of the percentages derived from the figures/tables shown.

Also, percentages quoted in the report may represent variables that allow respondents to choose multiple responses. It is not possible to sum these categories when a respondent can choose multiple options. These percentages will not sum to 100% with the other percentages presented. They represent the percentage of the variable population that selected a certain response category.

The footer of each table features the variable name that was used. This name is as it appears in the SPSS datasets that are available on the [UK Data Service](#).

Tell us what you think

We are always interested to hear from our users about how our statistics are used, and how they can be improved.

Comments and suggestions

We are committed to continual improvement and would welcome any comments or suggestions on how the SCJS Main Findings Report could be improved or adapted in future.

If you have enquiries on aspects of the survey development then we welcome your opinions and questions. Please contact the SCJS Project Team via scjs@gov.scot.

Feedback survey

We'd appreciate it if you would complete our short [feedback survey](#) on this publication.

Enquiries

For enquiries about this publication please contact:

Mark Bell
Justice Analytical Services, The Scottish Government
E-mail: scjs@gov.scot
Telephone: 0131 244 3012

For general enquiries about Scottish Government statistics please contact:

Office of the Chief Statistician
e-mail: statistics.enquiries@gov.scot

Join our mailing list

If you would like to receive notification about statistical publications, or find out about consultations on our statistics please join the [ScotStat mailing list](#).

Future publications

Details of future publications can be found on our [forthcoming publications](#) page.

A National Statistics publication for Scotland

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

Designation can be interpreted to mean that the statistics: meet identified user needs; are produced, managed and disseminated to high standards; and are explained well.

Correspondence and enquiries

For enquiries about this publication please contact:

Anna Saunders,

Justice Analytical Services, The Scottish Government,

Telephone: 0131 244 3012,

email: scjs@gov.scot

For general enquiries about Scottish Government statistics please contact:

Office of the Chief Statistician, Telephone: 0131 244 0442,

email: statistics.enquiries@gov.scot

How to access background or source data

The data collected for this statistical publication:

are available via the [UK Data Service](#)

may be made available on request, subject to consideration of legal and ethical factors.

Please contact scjs@gov.scot for further 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, email: 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

Details of forthcoming publications can be found at www.gov.scot/statistics

ISBN 978-1-83521-568-5 (web only)

Crown Copyright

You may use or re-use this information (not including logos) free of charge in any format or medium, under the terms of the Open Government Licence. See:

www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence/

Produced for The Scottish Government by APS Group Scotland, 21 Tennant Street, Edinburgh EH6 5NA
PPDAS1379314 (11/23)