Accredited Official Statistics

Scottish Crime and Justice Survey 2024/25: Main Findings

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Scottish Government
Riaghaltas na h-Alba

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Scottish Crime and Justice Survey 2024/25: Main findings

Introduction

This publication presents a summary of findings from the latest Scottish Crime and Justice Survey (SCJS), based on interviews conducted between April 2024 and April 2025. For ease of reference, this period will be referred to as 2024/25 within this report.

These findings are based on a survey of 4,948 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.

This report is the second to include estimates on the prevalence and volume of fraud and computer misuse crimes experienced in Scotland, as well as information on their characteristics (such as victim demographics).

This release is being published alongside various supporting materials. The associated data tables page is where the data used in this statistical bulletin can be found, and the supporting documents page includes the questionnaire and technical report.

An Accredited Official 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.

More information about Scottish Government statistics is available on the Scottish Government website.

Official Statistics on fraud and computer misuse

The statistics on the prevalence and characteristics of fraud and computer misuse are currently badged as official statistics. This section was introduced into the Scottish Crime and Justice Survey in 2023/24, following consultation with users in 2021, which highlighted an interest in more detailed analysis on cyber crime. The Office for Statistics Regulation (OSR) will assess these statistics in 2026, with a view to awarding the accredited official statistics status.

Executive summary

The 2024/25 Scottish Crime and Justice Survey shows around one-in-five adults were a victim of at least one crime covered by the survey: property crime, violent crime or fraud and computer misuse.

Both property and violent crime have seen a large reduction in both prevalence and volume since 2008/09 but have been stable in recent years. However some differences are seen in the characteristics of crime, particularly violence, such as a long term increase in violence in the workplace.

The latest figures also show that while most people continue to feel safe in their local communities, most measures of confidence in the police and justice system show a decline in recent years, although many remain positive overall, most are similar to the position in 2008/09.

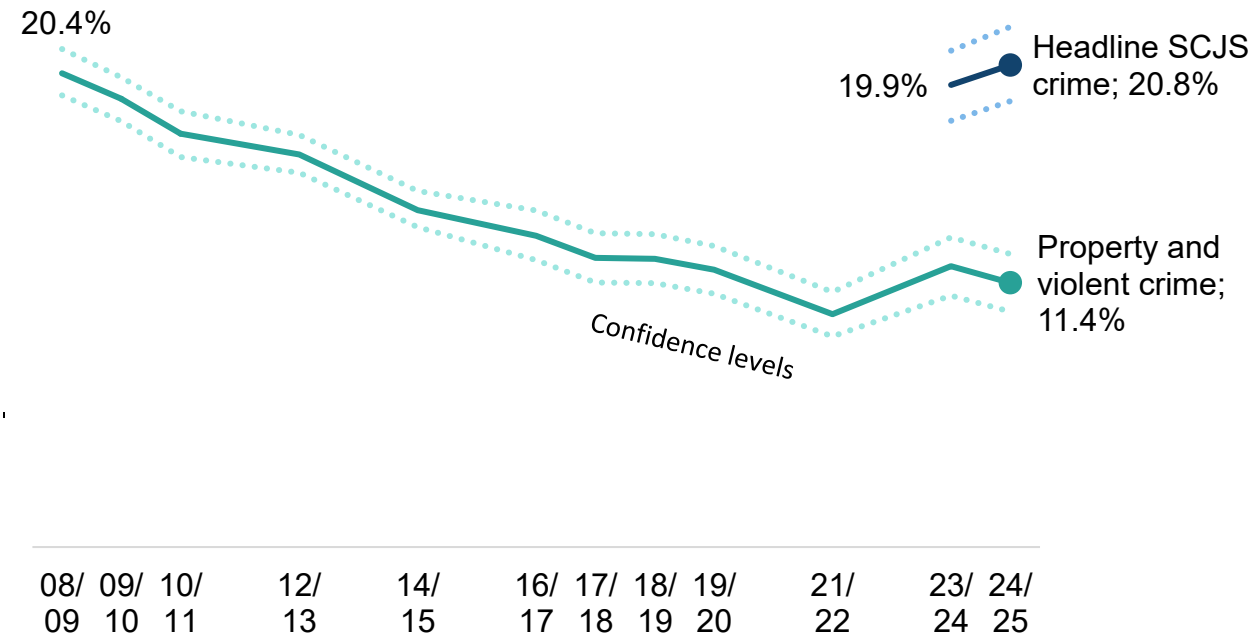
Around one-in-five adults were a victim of at least one SCJS crime

Most adults (79.2%) were not victims of any crime covered by the survey in 2024/25. The remaining 20.8% were estimated to have experienced at least one SCJS crime: violence, property crime or fraud or computer misuse.

The proportion of adults who experienced any SCJS crime, as well as for property and violent crimes individually, has remained at the same level as in 2023/24. Over one-in-ten adults (11.5%) experienced a fraud or computer misuse crime which has increased from 9.5% in 2023/24.

20.8%	9.4%	2.5%	11.5%
of adults experienced at least one headline SCJS crime in 2024/25	of adults experienced at least one property crime	of adults experienced at least one violent crime	of adults experienced at least one fraud or computer misuse crime

The victimisation rate and volume of property and violent crime has fallen over the long term but has stabilised in recent years



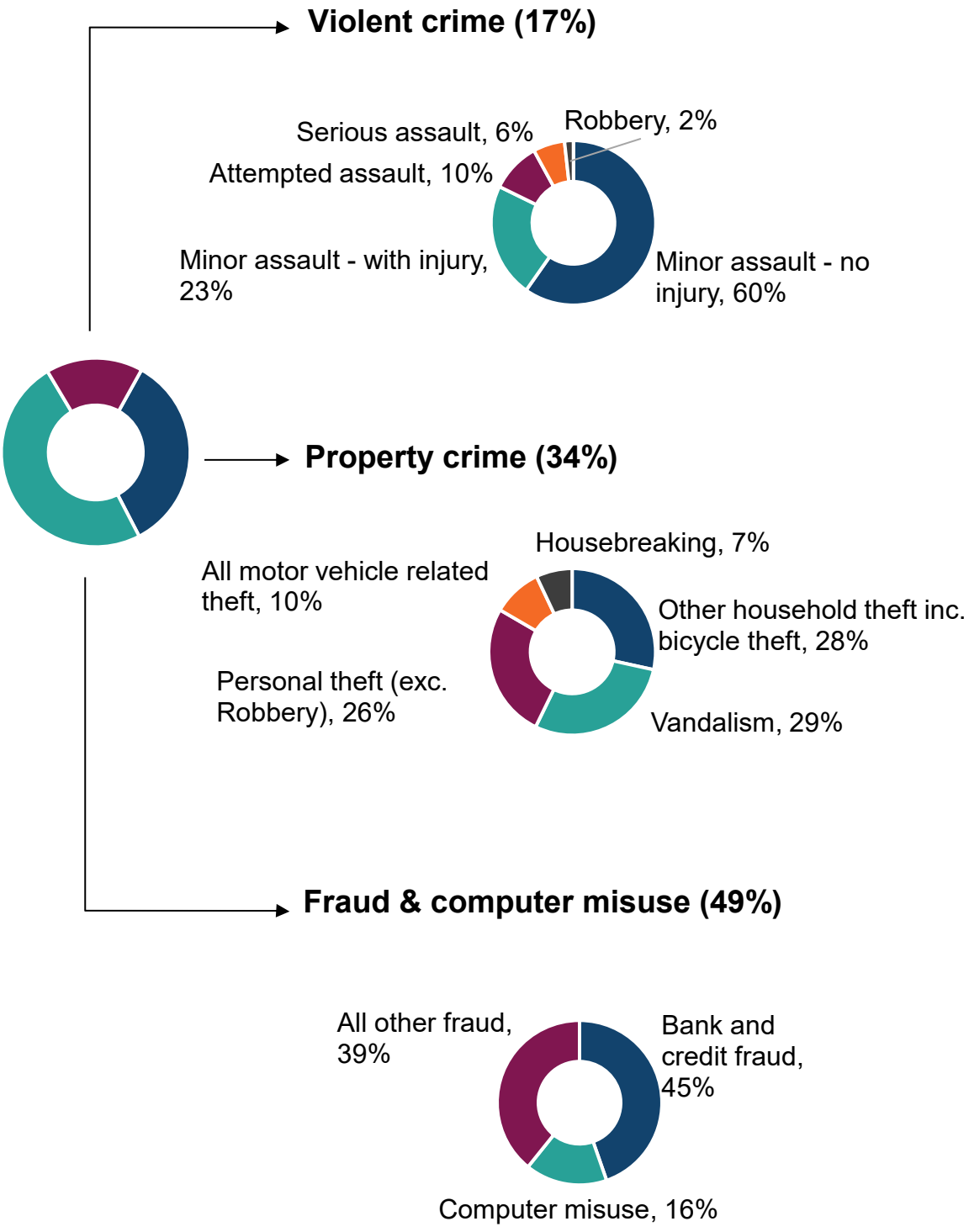
In 2024/25, 11.4% of adults experienced at least one property or violent crime. This has decreased from 20.4% in 2008/09 and has remained at a similar level for all surveys since 2019/20.

11.4% of adults experienced at least one property or violent crime in 2024/25	Decreased from 20.4% in 2008/09	No change from the pre-covid position in 2019/20	No change from the position in 2023/24

Around half of crimes in 2024/25 were fraud and computer misuse

The SCJS estimates that 1,199,000 crimes occurred in Scotland in 2024/25, including fraud and computer misuse. This remains at a similar level to 2023/24.

When looking at the number of crimes rather than number of victims: almost half (49%) were fraud and computer misuse, around a third (34%) were property crime and the rest (17%) were violent crime. Most property crime was either vandalism, other household theft (i.e. not housebreaking) or personal theft; while bank and credit card fraud accounted for 45% of fraud and computer misuse. The majority of violent crime, 60%, was minor assault with no injury.


Violent crime (17%)
Serious assault, 6%
Robbery, 2%
Attempted assault, 10%
Minor assault - with injury, 23%
Minor assault - no injury, 60%
Property crime (34%)
Housebreaking, 7%
All motor vehicle related theft, 10%
Other household theft inc. bicycle theft, 28%
Personal theft (exc. Robbery), 26%
Vandalism, 29%
Fraud & computer misuse (49%)
All other fraud, 39%
Bank and credit fraud, 45%
Computer misuse, 16%

611,000	↓ 42%	No change	No change
property and violent crimes were experienced by adults in 2024/25	decrease in the volume of these crimes since 2008/09	in the volume of these crimes since 2019/20	in the volume of these crimes since 2023/24

The estimated number of property and violent crime incidents continues to be lower than in 2008/09 (down 42%) but has remained at a similar level since 2019/20.

More information on this topic is provided in the Overview of crime in Scotland chapter.

The estimated volume of property and violent crimes individually have both fallen over the longer term, down 43% and 37% respectively since 2008/09. Both of these measures remain at a similar position to the previous survey in 2023/24.

199,000	↓ 37%	412,000	↓ 43%
violent crimes were experienced by adults in 2024/25	decrease since 2008/09 unchanged since 2023/24	property crimes were experienced by adults in 2024/25	decrease since 2008/09 unchanged since 2023/24

More information on these topics are provided in the Violent crime and Property crime chapters.

The nature of violent crime has changed in recent years, even while the overall volume has remained stable

Violent crime at the victim's workplace has steadily increased over time, from less than one in four (23%) in 2008/09 and around one in three (32%) in 2019/20; to now almost half (46%) in 2024/25. Additionally, 38% of violent crime took place in other public spaces and 16% took place in private spaces, mostly in or outside the respondent's home.

The proportion of violent crime offenders aged under 16 was 28%. This is similar to last year but has increased from the years before – up from 10% in 2019/20. Meanwhile, the proportion of perpetrators aged 16 to 24 was 11%, which has fallen in the long term from 46% in 2008/09.

For the first time, most perpetrators (56%) were not under the influence of alcohol or drugs, continuing a long-term rise from 24% in 2008/09 and 28% in 2019/20. Meanwhile, 30% of offenders were under the influence of alcohol, reflecting a long-term decline from 63% in 2008/09.

The vast majority (98%) of violent crime incidents were some form of assault or attempted assault, while remaining 2% was robbery. The volume of robbery has

fallen 82% since 2008/09 – the estimate for 2024/25 is the lowest recorded by the SCJS.

More information on this topic is provided in the Violent crime chapter.

Around one-in-sixteen adults experienced over half of all SCJS crimes

The majority of adults (79.2%) did not experience any crime measured by the SCJS (including fraud and computer misuse) in 2024/25. One-in-seven adults (14.9%) were victims of a single SCJS crime. Multiple victimisation (those experiencing two or more incidents) affected 5.8% of adults (one in sixteen), who collectively experienced 49% of all SCJS crimes.

5.8% of adults experienced more than one SCJS crime in 2024/25	0.9% of adults experienced more than one violent crime	2.4% of adults experienced more than one property crime	1.0% of adults experienced more than one fraud or computer misuse crime
accounting for 49% of all SCJS crimes.	accounting for 62% of all violent crimes.	accounting for 48% of all property crimes.	accounting for 18% of all fraud and computer misuse crimes.

Over one-in-ten adults were a victim of fraud or computer misuse

Over one-in-ten adults (11.5%) were a victim of at least one crime of fraud or computer misuse in 2024/25. The majority of the estimated 588,000 fraud and computer misuse crimes were fraud (494,000) with the remainder being computer misuse (95,000). Over two-fifths (45%) of all these crimes were bank and credit card fraud with around two-fifths (39%) being other types of fraud.

For fraud alone, this analysis shows that in Scotland:

- respondents who are disabled were more likely to be a victim compared to those who were not disabled (14.4% compared to 10.5% respectively) with no other demographic groups showing a significant difference
- there was contact between the victim and perpetrator in just over a fifth of cases (22%), with the most common means of contact being phone (40%), social media (25%) and email (14%)
- in over two-thirds of frauds (68%), the victim incurred the loss of money or property, with the vast majority of cases being money that was lost (93%)

More information on this topic is provided in the Fraud and computer misuse chapter.

Fewer than one-in-five SCJS crimes were reported to the police

Fewer than a fifth of all SCJS crimes (17%), including fraud and computer misuse, were estimated to have been reported to the police. When looking at property and violent crimes combined, 28% were reported to the police. This is unchanged from the position in 2023/24 but down from 2019/20 (40%).

17% of all SCJS crimes were reported to the police in 2024/25	27% of property crimes were reported to the police	30% of violent crimes were reported to the police	5% of fraud and computer misuse crimes were reported to the police

Public confidence in local policing has fallen in recent years

Public views on the overall performance of the police in their local area and their effectiveness across a range of measures show mixed results – many remain broadly positive, but they have been falling in recent years.

Fewer than half of adults in Scotland (45%) believed the police in their local area were doing an 'excellent' or 'good' job in 2024/25. While this remains unchanged from 2023/24 it has fallen over the longer term, down from 61% in 2008/09 and 49% in 2021/22.

 For police in local area:	45% thought they were doing an 'excellent' or 'good' job	↓ Decrease from 49% in 2021/22	Those aged 60 and over were less likely to agree (40%) than younger groups

Views on the public's confidence in police effectiveness across a range of measures including preventing crime, responding to incidents, and supporting victims of crime were generally positive in 2024/25.

43% of adults were confident in the police's ability to prevent crime	No change since 2023/24 ↓ 4 percentage point increase since 2021/22	63% of adults were confident in the police's ability to investigate incidents	No change since 2023/24 ↓ 3 percentage point decrease since 2021/22

Views on whether the police treat people fairly or focus on issues important to the community have remained at similar levels to 2009/10.

More information on this topic is provided in the Public perceptions of policing chapter.

Most adults feel that crime has decreased or stayed the same and continue to feel safe in their local area

The majority of adults (72%) thought the crime rate in their local area had decreased or stayed the same in the last couple of years; although this has fallen from 76% in 2021/22 back to a similar level to the pre-covid position in 2019/20.

Local crime rate	72% Thought it had stayed the same or reduced	24% Thought it had increased
National crime rate	43% Thought it had stayed the same or reduced	48% Thought it had increased

Around half of adults (48%) believed that crime had increased in Scotland overall in the last two years. This is higher than the quarter of adults (24%) who thought that crime in their local area had increased over the same period. In other words, people were much less likely to say crime had been stable or fallen nationally (43%) than in their local area (72%).

Most adults 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, however, males continue to feel safer than females.

More information on this topic is provided in the Public perceptions of crime and safety chapter.

76% of adults felt safe walking alone after dark in 2024/25	Increased from 2008/09 (66%) Unchanged since 2023/24	89% of males felt safe	65% of females felt safe

How does the SCJS compare to other sources on crime and victimisation?

In 2024/25, the proportion of adults in Scotland estimated to have experienced crime, including fraud and computer misuse, was higher than in England and Wales (20.8% compared to 17.1%). When looking at property and violent crime alone, the victimisation rate for both Scotland and England and Wales have fallen over the longer term to a similar position in 2023/24.

Since 2008/09, property and violent crimes recorded by the police in Scotland fell by 51% while the estimate of comparable SCJS crimes fell by 49%.

More information on comparisons with the Crime Survey for England and Wales and Recorded Crime in Scotland is provided in the Comparison with other statistical sources chapter.

What other information is included in this report?

Further chapters of this report detail findings from questions relating to the wider Scottish criminal justice system and other related areas such as respondents awareness and contact with the Crown Office and Procurator Fiscal Service (COPFS), and perceptions of prisons and community sentences. Other findings are provided from questions on experiences of harassment and discrimination and an analysis of the veteran status of respondents.

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 and the justice system. The survey is conducted in person, within respondents' homes. Sections addressing sensitive topics are filled out by the respondents themselves, using the interviewer's laptop or tablet.

This report presents the results for the twelfth SCJS, with interviews conducted between April 2024 and April 2025. The 2024/25 survey is based on 4,948 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, academic and third sector to help understand the nature of crime in Scotland, target resources and monitor the impact of initiatives since the 1980s.

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 following sections summarise the SCJS's background, the reliability of survey estimates, how uncertainty in results is addressed, and an overview of the report's content and supporting outputs.

Who is included and what does the SCJS cover?

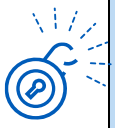
The SCJS does not aim to provide an absolute estimate for all crime and has some notable exclusions.

Who takes part in the survey?	Around 5,000 adults (aged 16 and over)	In private households (incl. rented accommodation)	Across Scotland
Who does not take part in the survey?	Children	Those living in group residences, institutions or those without a fixed address	Commercial or public sector bodies

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 that gathers data on adults' experiences with property and violent crimes and from 2023/24 onwards fraud and computer misuse, including those not reported to the police. However, it doesn't cover all crimes, such as those without a specific victim to interview (e.g., speeding, drug possession, homicide). Experiences of sexual offences are excluded from the main estimates and are collected separately through a self-completion section.

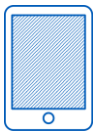
For more information on the questionnaire content and structure please refer to the Technical Report.

What is covered by the survey?	What is not covered by the survey
▶ Experiences of being a victim of: Violent crime, including: • Assault • Robbery Property crime, including: • Vandalism • Personal theft • Other household theft  Fraud and computer misuse, including: (from 2023/24 onwards) • Bank and credit card fraud • Other fraud (i.e. consumer and retail fraud) • Computer misuse	• 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)
▶ Public perceptions of: Crime The Police The Justice System	
Respondents also self-complete a questionnaire that covers partner abuse, sexual victimisation & stalking	

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 respondent's 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 partner abuse) is completed privately on a tablet computer

The design of the 2024/25 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 2023/24.

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

- Survey frequency: Since 2008/09, the SCJS frequency has varied slightly. It returned to an annual schedule in 2016/17. However, no survey was conducted in 2020/21 due to the COVID-19 pandemic halting fieldwork in March 2020. The 2024/25 SCJS is the latest annual survey, the third following the resumption of fieldwork in November 2021.
- 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 in the supplementary documents
- Fieldwork: Interviews were conducted on a rolling basis between April 2024 and April 2025, with roughly an equal number of interviews conducted across most months
- Interviews: A total of 4,948 interviews were conducted, from the original 5,000 target, with a response rate of 47.7%. This is similar to the previous two surveys (46.0% in 2023/24 and 47.3% in 2021/22) but still remains lower than surveys conducted prior to the COVID-19 pandemic.
- 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 24 months (from the start of April 2023 to the end of March 2025) 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. Further information on the process used to calculate estimates is contained within the Technical Report.

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).[1]

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%.[2] We advise using these results with careful consideration.

The long-term impact of changes to the survey design and plans for future work

When the SCJS started in it's current form in 2008/09 it had an annual target sample size of 16,000. Since then the sample size has reduced due to budget constraints to the current level of 5,000 target interviews for each survey year. Over the same period we have seen a reduction in response rates from 70% in 2008/09 to 48% in this report as well as a fall in both property and violent crimes (down 43% and 37% respectively). As a result of the smaller sample and the fall in the number of respondents reporting a crime in the scope of the survey, the number of completed victim forms has reduced significantly. For example, for violent crimes the number of completed victim forms has fallen from 622 in 2008/09 to 115 in the latest survey sweep.

As a result of the above factors, in recent years it has become more likely for a small number of people to account for a greater proportion of the estimated volume of crime than in previous years. This is due to a combination of a few highly weighted individuals experiencing multiple incidents. It's important to note that this impacts the estimated volume of crime and any characteristics derived from those estimates, but not any measure of victimisation (i.e. the proportion of the population estimated to have experienced a crime). This has a greater impact on violent crime where the volumes are typically lower than property crime, and more information can be found in the chapter detailing those crimes.

Analysts are considering future work to ensure that the SCJS continues to be a high value resource and presents an accurate picture of crime victimisation in Scotland

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

[2] 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.

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

The report is organised into chapters that cover various topics from the survey, 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.

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 deprivation[3] 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 'annex tables' excel workbook. In addition, we have also released a more comprehensive set of 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 from the SCJS's self-completion section (on stalking and harassment, partner abuse, and sexual victimisation) is collected over two survey years and published biennially. The latest findings, from the 2018/19 and 2019/20 surveys, were published in the 2019/20 Main Findings Report, with supporting data tables also published. Due to updates to the partner abuse module for the current survey questionnaire, the next set of results will be for the combined 2023/24 and 2024/25 years and is expected to be published later in 2026. Details on these changes were provided in Annex D of the 2021/22 Main Findings Report.

SCJS results at the Police Division level are available biennially, combining two survey years to enhance sample size and result precision. Key results from the 2018/19 and 2019/20 surveys were included in the 2019/20 Main Findings Report. This includes perceptions of the police and victimisation rates by division. Results can be accessed through the SCJS interactive data tool, which compares divisional data to national averages for specific years or over time. The next set of results will be for the combined 2023/24 and 2024/25 survey years. It is expected this data will be available later in 2026 (with users informed through the ScotStat network).

[3] Uses the Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation (SIMD).

How can I find out more about the SCJS?

The SCJS is utilised by various sectors, including government, public services, academia, and the third sector. Engaging with users helps keep the survey relevant and responsive to their needs.

To learn more about the SCJS or Scottish Government Statistics Group work:

- ScotStat: Register with the ScotStat mailing list to receive updates and participate in working groups on Scottish Official statistics, including publications and questionnaire development.
- The SCJS team are committed to continual improvement and welcome any feedback on any aspect of the survey. If you have any 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.

Acknowledgements

Thanks go to a number of people involved in the development, implementation and reporting of the 2024/25 Scottish Crime and Justice Survey (SCJS), in particular the 4,948 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.

Overview of crime in Scotland

Between 2008/09 and 2021/22, the headline crime measure of the Scottish Crime and Justice Survey (SCJS) was a product of two distinct groups being combined – property and violent crime.

Following consultation with users in 2021, work commenced to develop and test a new victim form for a third distinct group of crimes - specifically fraud and computer misuse. This new questionnaire was largely based on that used from 2015 onwards by the Crime Survey for England and Wales.[4] The new victim form was included within the 2023/24 survey questionnaire, with findings on the prevalence and characteristics of fraud and computer misuse in Scotland available from this year onwards.

From 2023/24 onwards, headline SCJS crime includes property and violent crime, as previously defined, and also now fraud and computer misuse (see section below). However, in addition to the new headline measure, we will continue to provide long-term comparisons of property and violent crimes combined, in line with the previous measurement.

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)

Fraud and computer misuse crimes includes the following distinct groups:

- bank and credit card fraud
- other types of fraud (including consumer, retail and advanced fee fraud)
- computer misuse

Further details on each of these groups is provided in the Technical Report.

[4] Nature of fraud and computer misuse in England and Wales - Office for National Statistics (ons.gov.uk)

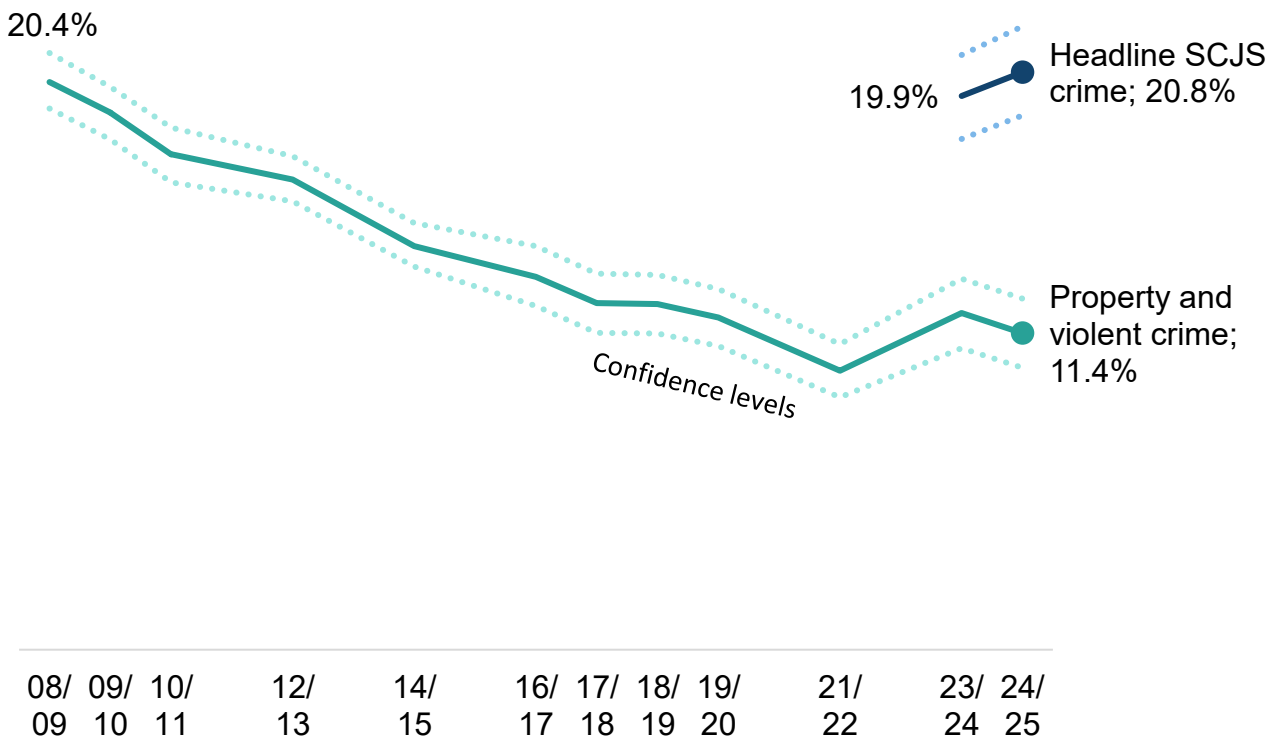
What was the prevalence of victimisation in Scotland in 2024/25?

In 2024/25, around one-in-five adults (20.8%) were estimated to have experienced at least one headline SCJS crime (including fraud and computer misuse). This percentage is the best estimate, with the actual figure between 19.2% and 22.4%. This remains unchanged from the position in 2023/24.

For property and violent crimes combined, 11.4% of adults experienced at least one crime in 2024/25. While the proportion of adults experiencing these crimes has decreased from 20.4% in 2008/09, the latest figure is unchanged from recent surveys including since the pre-covid position in 2019/20.

Figure 2.1: The proportion of adults experiencing any SCJS crime has remained unchanged since 2023/24 with those experiencing property and violent crimes falling over the longer term.

Proportion of adults experiencing any SCJS crime, 2008/09 to 2024/25.



Variable: PREVALLSCJSSURVEYCRIME, PREVTRADCRIME.

What was the estimated volume of crime in Scotland in 2024/25?

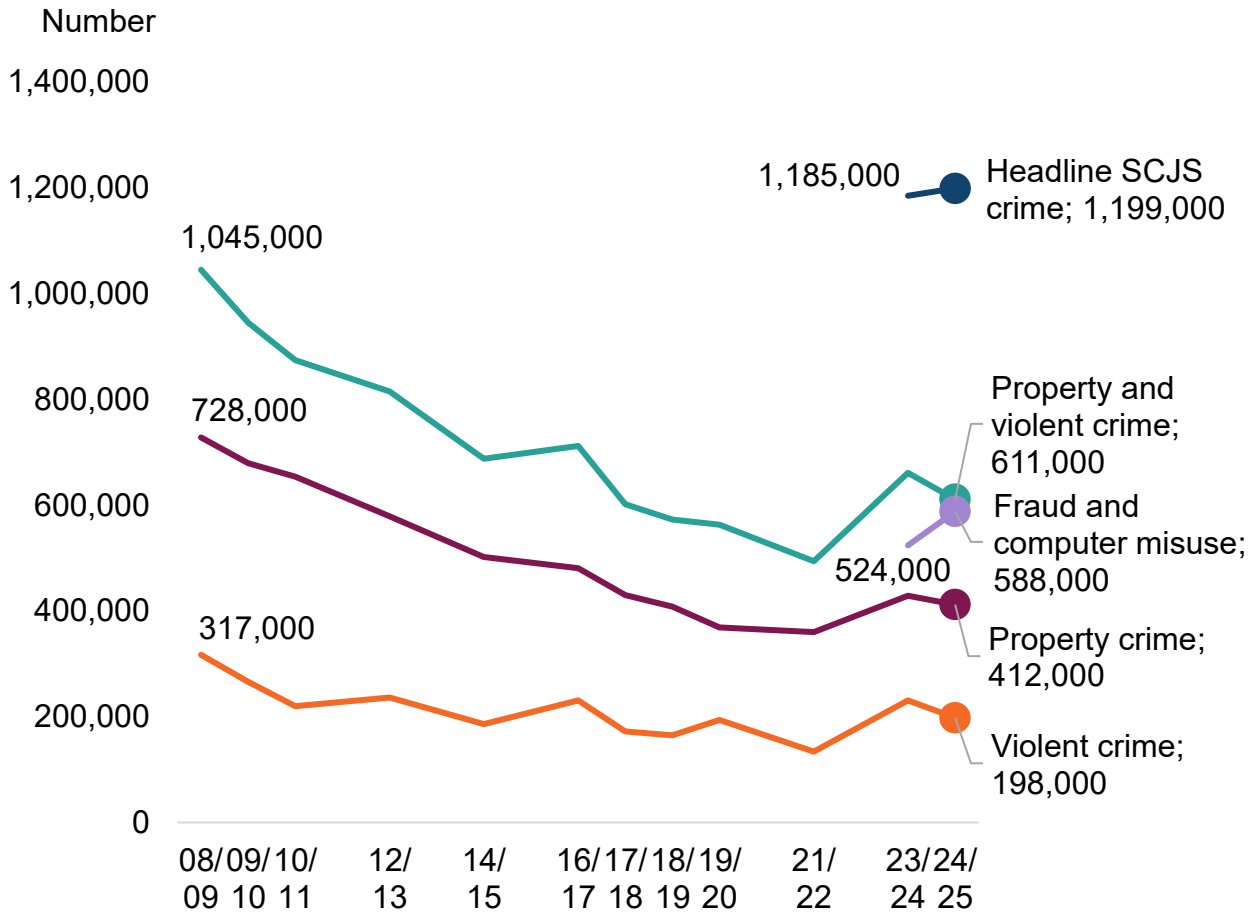
In 2024/25, the SCJS estimates that 1,199,000 crimes occurred in Scotland. This estimate comprises property and violent crime as well as, for the first time, fraud and computer misuse. As discussed in the Background chapter, this estimate is rounded to the nearest 1,000 and is subject to a margin of error, with the actual number of incidents likely between 1,081,000 and 1,317,000.

In terms of property and violent crimes combined, the SCJS estimates that 611,000 crimes occurred in Scotland in 2024/25, with the actual number of incidents likely to be between 515,000 and 706,000. Property and violent crimes continue to be significantly lower than in 2008/09 (down 42%). Despite an increase of 24% since 2021/22, the latest position is not significantly different from either the previous survey in 2023/24 or the pre-covid position in 2019/20.

Table 2.1 provides upper and lower estimates for overall crime, along with best estimates for property and violent crimes, which are detailed in later chapters. Further details on the estimation process are available in the Technical Report.

Figure 2.2: The level of property and violent crimes experienced by adults has fallen by 42% since 2008/09 but is unchanged from 2023/24.

Estimated number of incidents of SCJS crime, 2008/09 to 2024/25.



Variables: INCALLSCJSSURVEYCRIME, INCTRADCRIME, INCFRAUDANDCOMPMISUSE, INCPROPERTY, INCVIOLENT.

Table 2.1 looks at results from key comparator years[5] more closely and shows that the estimated number of incidents of overall property and violent crime experienced by adults:

- decreased by 42% between 2008/09 and 2024/25, from 1,045,000 to 611,000 – an estimated decrease of around 434,000 incidents
- increased by 24% since 2021/22 but remains at a similar level to the last survey in 2023/24, the apparent decrease from 661,000 is not statistically significant

Table 2.1: The estimated number of property and violent crimes has fallen by over two-fifths since 2008/09 but has remained a similar level in recent years.

Estimated number of incidents of SCJS property and violent crime (2008/09, 2023/24 and 2024/25) with percentage change, where significant, since 2008/09 and 2023/24.

	Estimated number of property and violent crimes			Change since	
	2008/09	2023/24	2024/25	08/09	23/24
Best estimate	1,045,000	661,000	611,000	Down 42%	No change
Lower estimate	974,000	566,000	515,000	-	
Upper estimate	1,116,000	755,000	706,000	-	
Number of respondents	16,000	4,970	4,950	-	

Variable: INCALLSCJSSURVEYCRIME.

What types of crime were most commonly experienced?

From 2024/25, the SCJS collects data on the adult population's experiences of three main types of crime – property crime, violent crime and fraud and computer misuse. It is estimated that almost half (49%) of all crime measured by the survey in 2024/25 was fraud and computer misuse, with over a third (34%) being property crime and under a fifth (17%) being violent crimes.

Figure 2.3 below shows the proportion of all crime accounted for by key sub-categories of crime. The largest individual group was bank and credit card fraud,

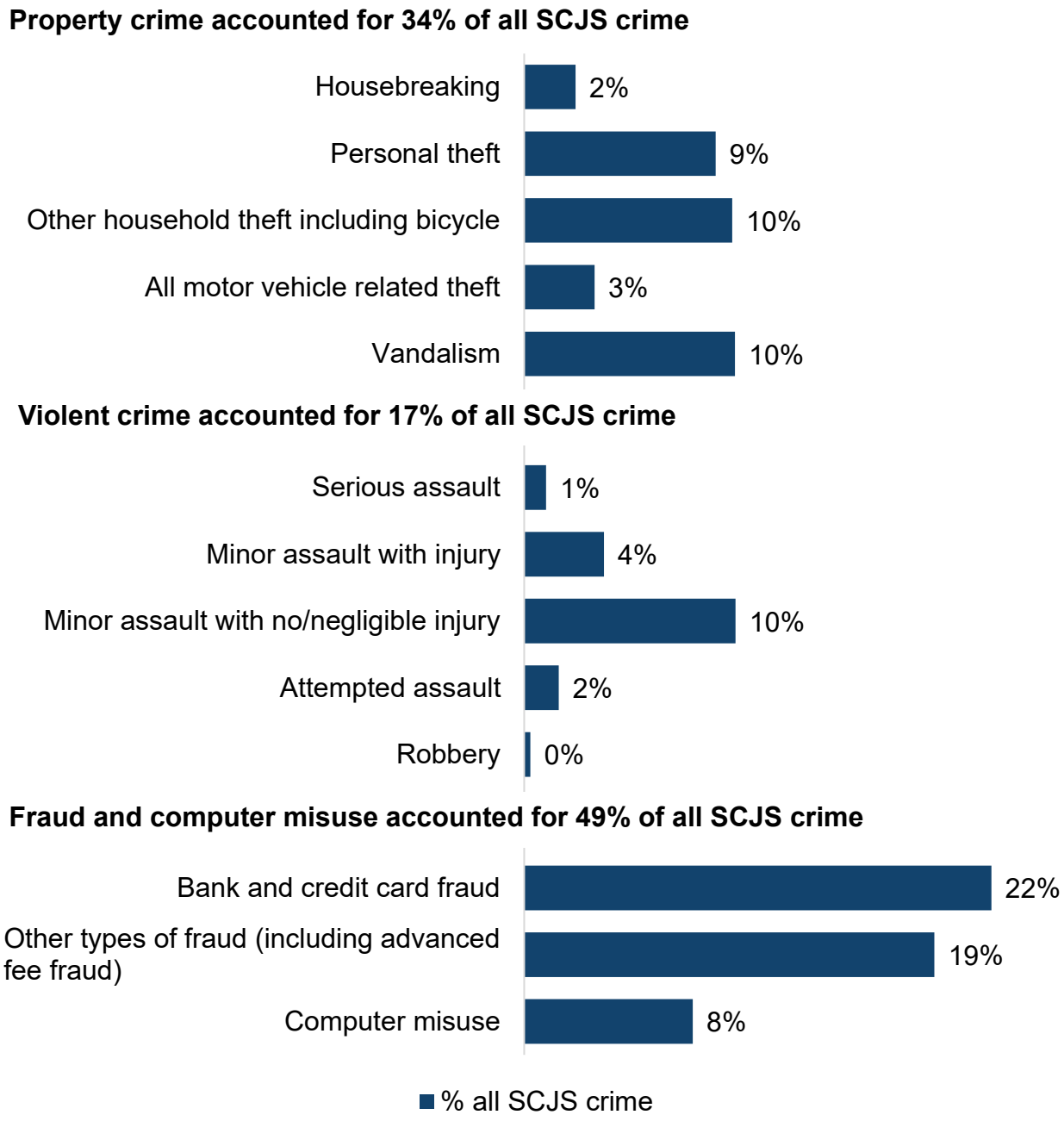
[5] Annex table A2 provides best estimates of the number of incidents of crime for each SCJS year since 2008/09.

which accounted for around a fifth (22%) of all crime measured by the 2024/25 survey. In terms of the main crime groups:

- vandalism, other household theft (including bicycle theft) and personal theft comprised over a quarter each (29%, 28% and 26% respectively) of all property crimes
- minor assault with no injury made up three-fifths (60%) of all violent crime
- bank and credit card fraud comprised over two-fifths (45%) of all fraud and computer misuse crime

Figure 2.3: Around half of crime in 2024/25 was fraud and computer misuse related, over a third was property crime and under one fifth violent crime.

Categories of crime in 2024/25 as proportions of all headline SCJS crime, split by property crime, violent crime, and fraud and computer misuse.



Variable: Prevalence (PREV) variables.

The SCJS has 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 9.4% of adults were victims of property crime in 2024/25, whilst 2.5% experienced violent crime. The prevalence of both property crime and violent crime have fallen since 2008/09. In 2024/25, 11.5% of adults experienced a fraud or computer misuse crime, which is higher than both property crime or violent crime.

More detailed results about the extent, prevalence and nature of violent crime, property crime, and fraud and computer misuse crimes experienced in Scotland in 2024/25, including how experiences varied across the population and trends over time are provided in the respective 'violent crime', 'property crime' and 'fraud and computer misuse' chapters of this report.

How did the likelihood of experiencing crime vary across the population?

The proportion of adults who were victims of any headline SCJS crime (including fraud and computer misuse) in 2024/25 varied according to demographic and geographic characteristics. For instance, as shown in Figure 2.4, the likelihood of experiencing crime in 2024/25:

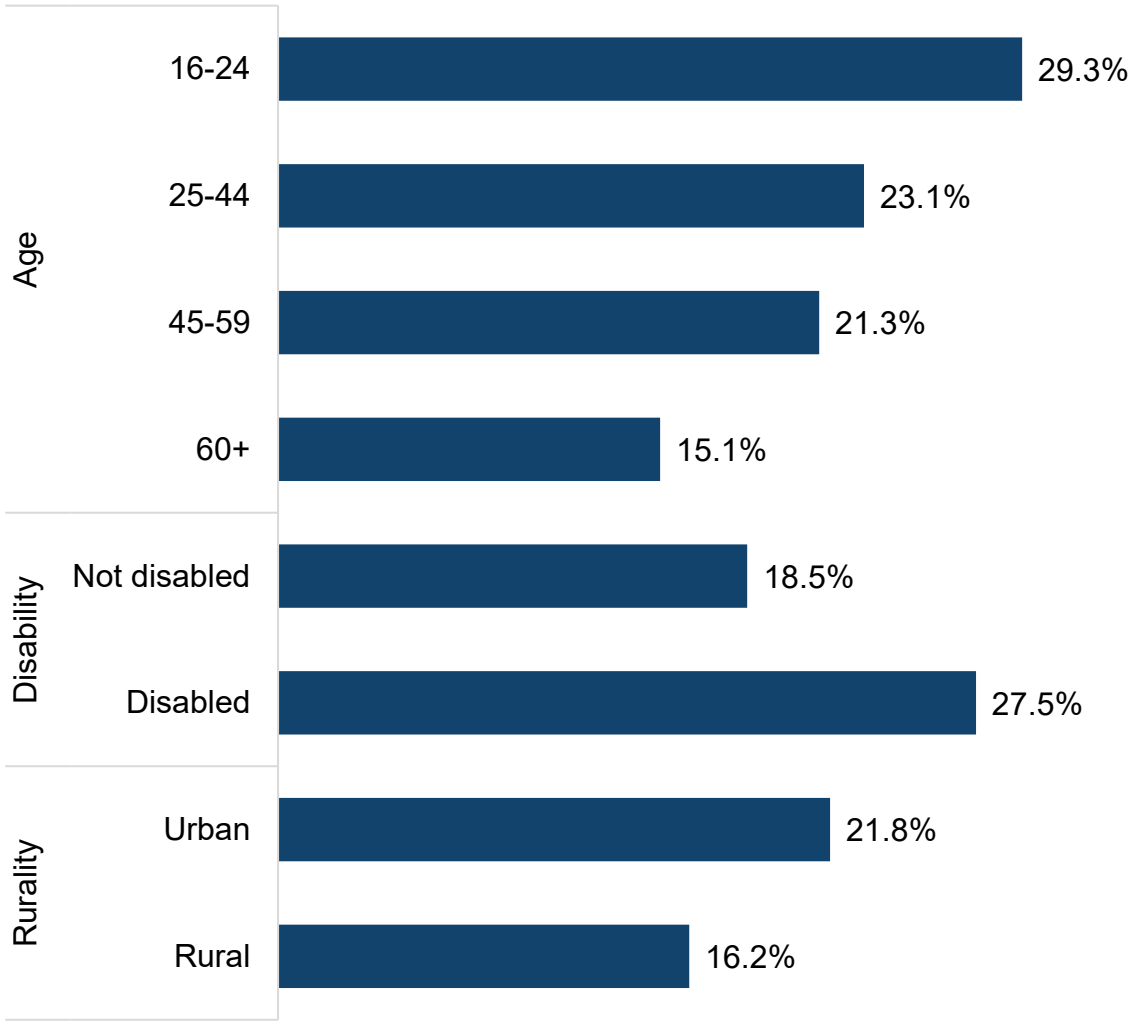
- was highest for those aged 16 to 24 and lowest for those aged 60 and over
- was higher in urban areas compared to rural locations
- was higher for disabled adults than those who are not disabled

There was no statistically significant difference in the proportion of males or females (20.7% in both cases), or those living in the 15% most deprived areas and the rest of Scotland (24.0% and 20.2% respectively) who were victims of any headline SCJS crime in 2024/25.

No demographic group examined here has seen any significant changes in victimisation since this new combined measure was introduced in the previous survey.

Figure 2.4: The likelihood of experiencing crime in 2024/25 was higher for those living in urban locations and for younger adults and those who are disabled.

Proportion of adults experiencing any crime measured by the SCJS in 2024/25, by demographic and area characteristics.



Variables: PREVALLSCJSSURVEYCRIME; TABAGE; TABQDISAB; TABURBRUR.

The victimisation rate for property and violent crime combined 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 locations and those who were and were not disabled.

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, two or more violent crimes or two or more fraud and computer misuse crimes (known as repeat victimisation), or have been victims of any of these 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 property, violent and fraud and computer misuse crimes are presented separately in the relevant 'violent crime', 'property crime' and 'fraud and computer misuse' chapters of this report.

What proportion of adults experienced multiple victimisation?

As discussed above, the majority of adults (79.2%) did not experience any crime measured by the SCJS (including fraud and computer misuse) in 2024/25.

In 2024/25, 14.9% of adults were victims of a single SCJS crime (including fraud and computer misuse), accounting for 51% of all crime. Multiple victimisation affected 5.8% of adults, who experienced 49% of all SCJS crime. On average, victims of any SCJS crime experienced 1.3 crimes each.

In 2024/25, 8.0% of adults were victims of a single property or violent crime, accounting for 43% of all property or violent crimes. Multiple victimisation for property and violent crimes affected 3.4% of adults, who experienced 57% of all of these crimes.

Table 2.2: 5.8% of adults experienced two or more crimes during 2024/25, including fraud and computer misuse, accounting for around half 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 (all SCJS crime)	% of all SCJS crime	% of population (property and violent crime)	% of property and violent crime
None	79.2%	0%	88.6%	0%
One	14.9%	51%	8.0%	43%
Two	3.7%	23%	1.8%	20%
Three	1.2%	12%	0.9%	17%
Four	0.3%	4%	0.2%	5%
Five or more	0.6%	10%	0.5%	16%
Two or more	5.8%	49%	3.4%	57%

Variables: INCALLSCJSSURVEYCRIME; PREVALLSCJSSURVEYCRIME.

Figure 2.5 explores trends in single and multiple victimisation over time for the previous headline measure of property and violent crime combined. It highlights that between 2008/09 and 2024/25 there were decreases in the proportion of adults experiencing:

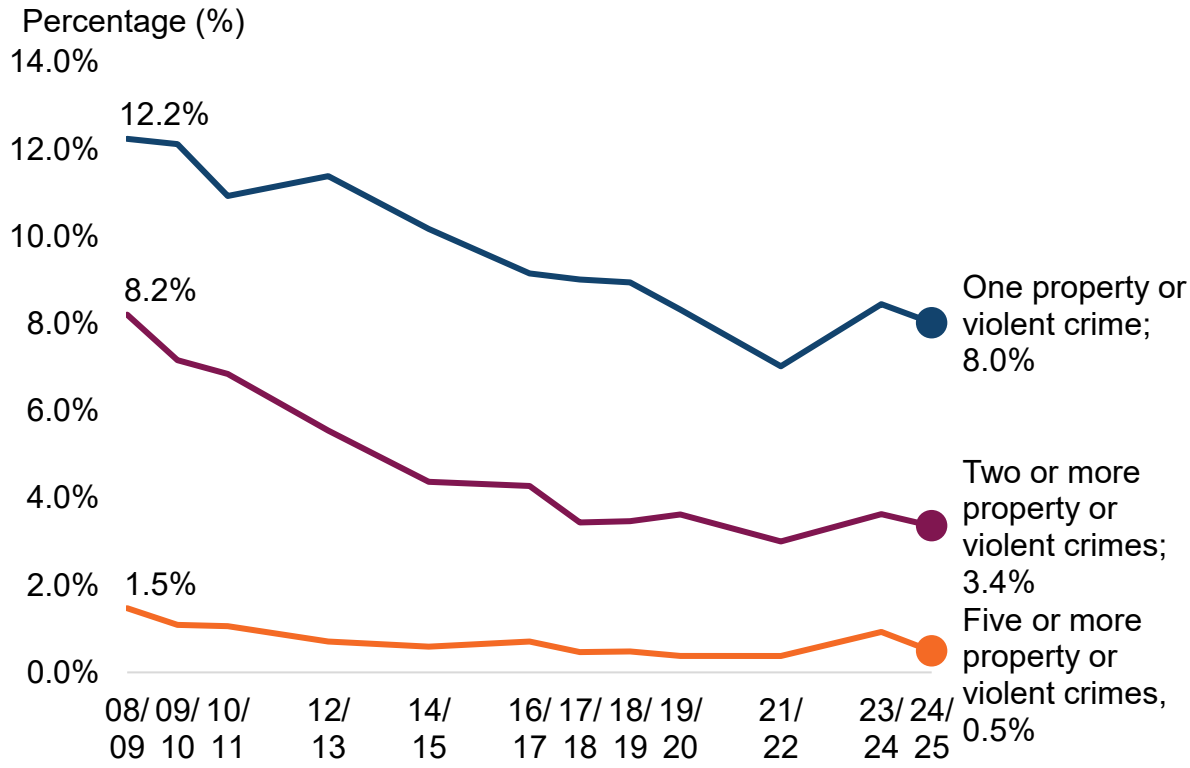
- single incidents of property or violent crime – from 12.2% to 8.0%
- multiple victimisation (two or more incidents of property or violent crime) – from 8.2% to 3.4%
- high frequency multiple victimisation (five or more incidents of property or violent crime crime) – from 1.5% to 0.5%

The fall in the various levels of property and violent crime victimisation since 2008/09 has occurred alongside a fall in the overall property and violent crime victimisation rate over this period, as discussed previously.

Since the last SCJS in 2023/24, the proportion of adults experiencing single victimisation for property and violent crimes has remained unchanged, the fall shown in Figure 2.5 is not statistically significant. There was also no change in the proportion of adults experiencing two or more or five or more incidents since 2023/24.

Figure 2.5: The proportion of adults experiencing multiple victimisation for property and violent crimes fell from 8.2% to 3.4% between 2008/09 and 2024/25 but remains unchanged in recent years.

Proportion of adults experiencing number of SCJS crimes.



Variables: INCTRADCRIME; PREVTRADCRIME.

In summary these findings show that, compared to 2008/09, adults in 2024/25 were less likely to be victims of:

- at least one property or violent crime
- one property or violent crime specifically
- more than one property or violent crime

What proportion of crime was reported to the police?

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 'Comparisons with other statistical sources of crime and victimisation' chapter of this report explores the differences and similarities between the SCJS and recorded crime (including trends over time) in more detail.

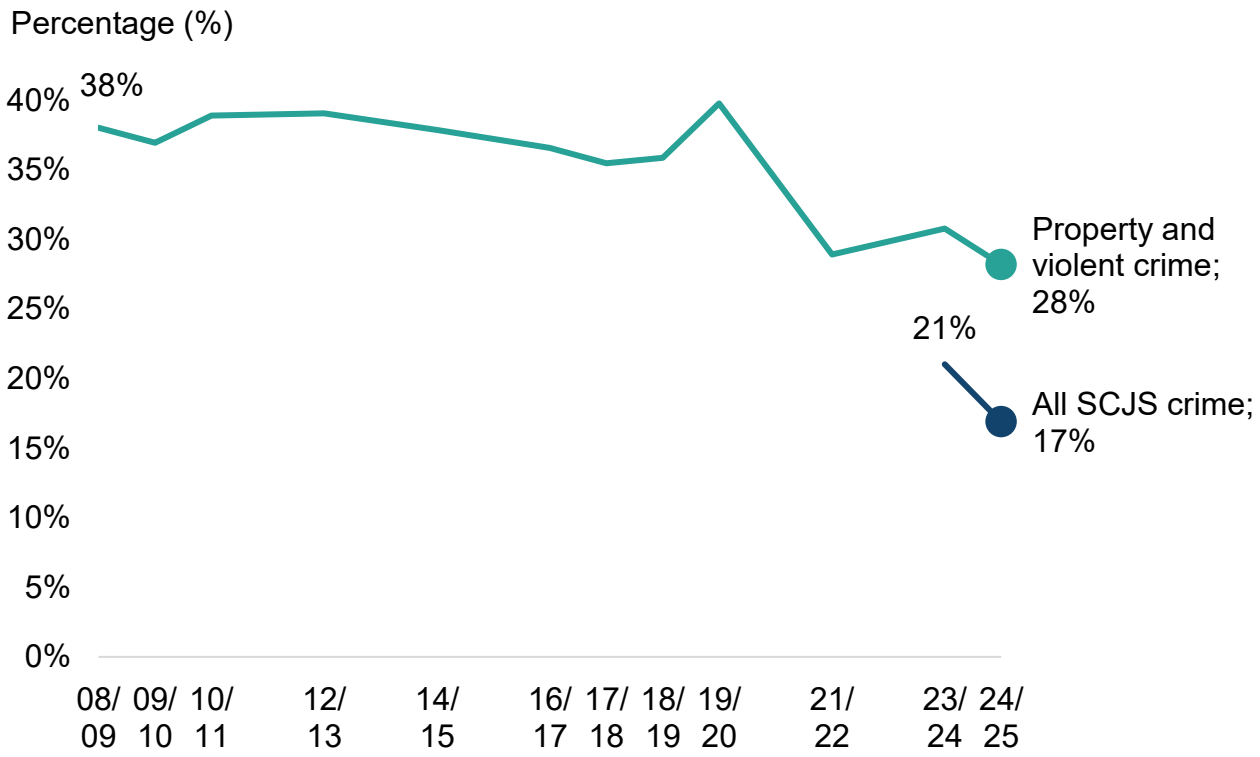
In 2024/25, the SCJS estimates that 17% of all headline crimes (including fraud and computer misuse) came to the attention of the police. This remains at a similar position to 2023/24, the fall shown in the chart below is not statistically significant. When looking at property and violent crimes alone, 28% of crimes were reported to

the police, this is unchanged from the position in 2023/24 and 2021/22 but remains down from 40% in 2019/20. Reporting rates were 27% for property crimes (unchanged since 2023/24 and 2021/22 but down from 36% in 2019/20) and 30% for violent crimes (unchanged from all surveys from 2019/20 onwards). In 2024/25, only one-in-twenty (5%) of crimes of fraud and computer misuse were reported to the police.

Further information on the reporting rates and the reasons behind non-reporting are presented in the 'violent crime', 'property crime' and 'fraud and computer misuse' chapters.

Figure 2.6: The proportion of property and violent crime reported to the police in 2024/25 remains unchanged since 2021/22.

The proportion of crime reported to the police between 2008/09 and 2024/25.



Variables: QPOL; FCOPSKNOW3.

Violent crime

High level summary

The overall level of violence in 2024/25 is lower than when the survey started in 2008/09 but stable in recent years - with no change compared to 2019/20 or the years since. However, underneath the headline figure, the previous survey (2023/24) showed changes in the nature of violent crime in Scotland, notably with increases in violence in the workplace and with perpetrators under the age of 16. The results from 2024/25 are broadly similar to what was seen in 2023/24.

Increased impact of fewer individuals on characteristics of violence and caution over year-to-year comparisons

As discussed in the background chapter, in recent years the SCJS has seen a greater impact on the estimated volume of violent crimes from a smaller number of highly weighted individuals who experienced a number of incidents. This has been driven over the longer term by falls in the target sample size and lower estimates of violent crime, compared to when the survey began in 2008/09.

In the latest year, one individual accounted for 15% of the estimated volume of violent crime. This is higher than in recent years, where, for example, in 2021/22 and 2023/24, the highest contributing individual accounted for between 4% and 6% of estimated violent crime. This issue impacts estimates of crime volumes, but not measures of crime victimisation. In this report we have decided not to report on changes which may have been disproportionately based on this one individual. It is possible this is just a single outlier but it we will monitor this in future years to see if it is a developing trend.

Given the above, we urge caution about interpretation of changes in the volume estimates of violent crime in Scotland, and suggest these are best done over the longer term (i.e. since 2008/09) and not short term, which can be prone to greater fluctuations between each survey sweep.

What was the extent and prevalence of violent crime in Scotland in 2024/25?

The Scottish Crime and Justice Survey (SCJS) estimates that 2.5% of adults were victims of violent crime[6] in 2024/25, within a margin of error between 1.9% and 3.1%.

As a sample survey of the general public, SCJS results on violence are estimates with wide margins of error, not exact counts. Analysis here is focused on the best estimates for each year of the survey. Further details are provided in the Background chapter and in the Technical Report.

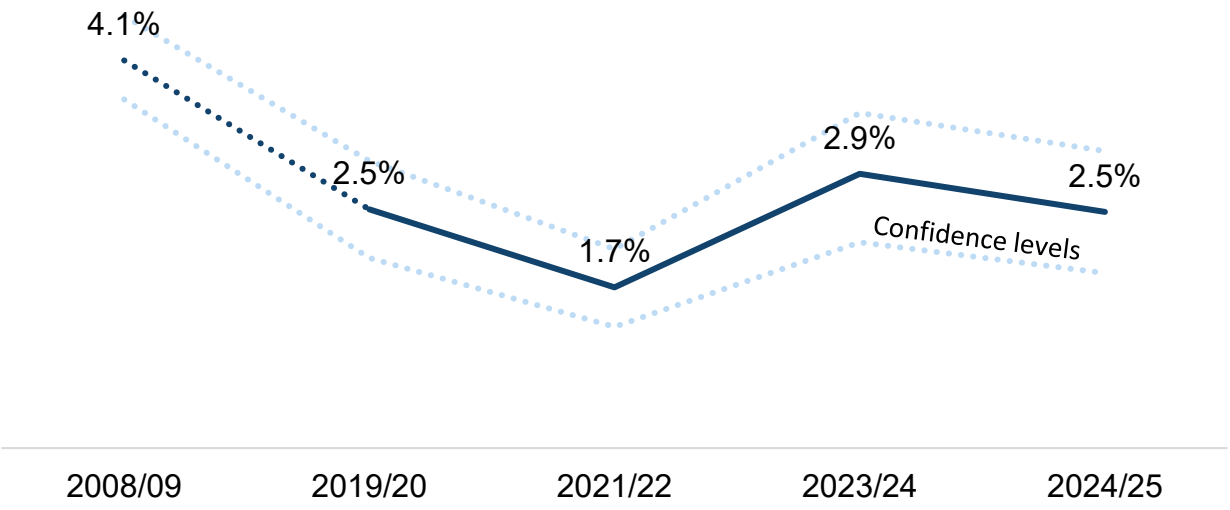
[6] Details on the specific crimes within the violence group are outlined in the 'Overview of crime' chapter.

Over the long term, violent crime victimisation is lower than 2008/09 – falling from 4.1% to 2.5% of adults being victims. However, most of that change was in the ten years following 2008. The results for 2024/25 show no change in victimisation from 2023/24 and are similar to results seen over the last decade (Figure 3.1).

In retrospect it looks likely that the 2021/22 survey was an outlier with lower crime estimates, as some of the reference period covered times when Covid restrictions were in place. For example, earlier analysis from the Scottish Victimisation Telephone Survey suggested that crime fell significantly during the first UK national lockdown.[7]

Figure 3.1: The proportion of adults experiencing violent crime in 2024/25 is lower than 2008/209 but similar to the surveys over the last five years.

Proportion of adults experiencing violent crime, 2008/09 and 2019/20 to 2024/25.



Variable: PREVVIOLENT.

The number of violent incidents in 2024/25 is estimated at 199,000[8],[9] between a lower estimate of 124,000 and an upper estimate of 274,000. This is 37% lower than 2008/09 but similar to results in recent years. (Figure 3.2 and Table 3.1).[10]

[7] Scottish Victimisation Telephone Survey 2020: main findings - gov.scot interviews in September and October 2020, so before the reference period of the 21/22 survey, showed that combined property and violent crime fell by approximately 35% during the first lockdown in 2020 compared to the six months before.

[8] Crime estimates are rounded to the nearest 1,000 crimes.

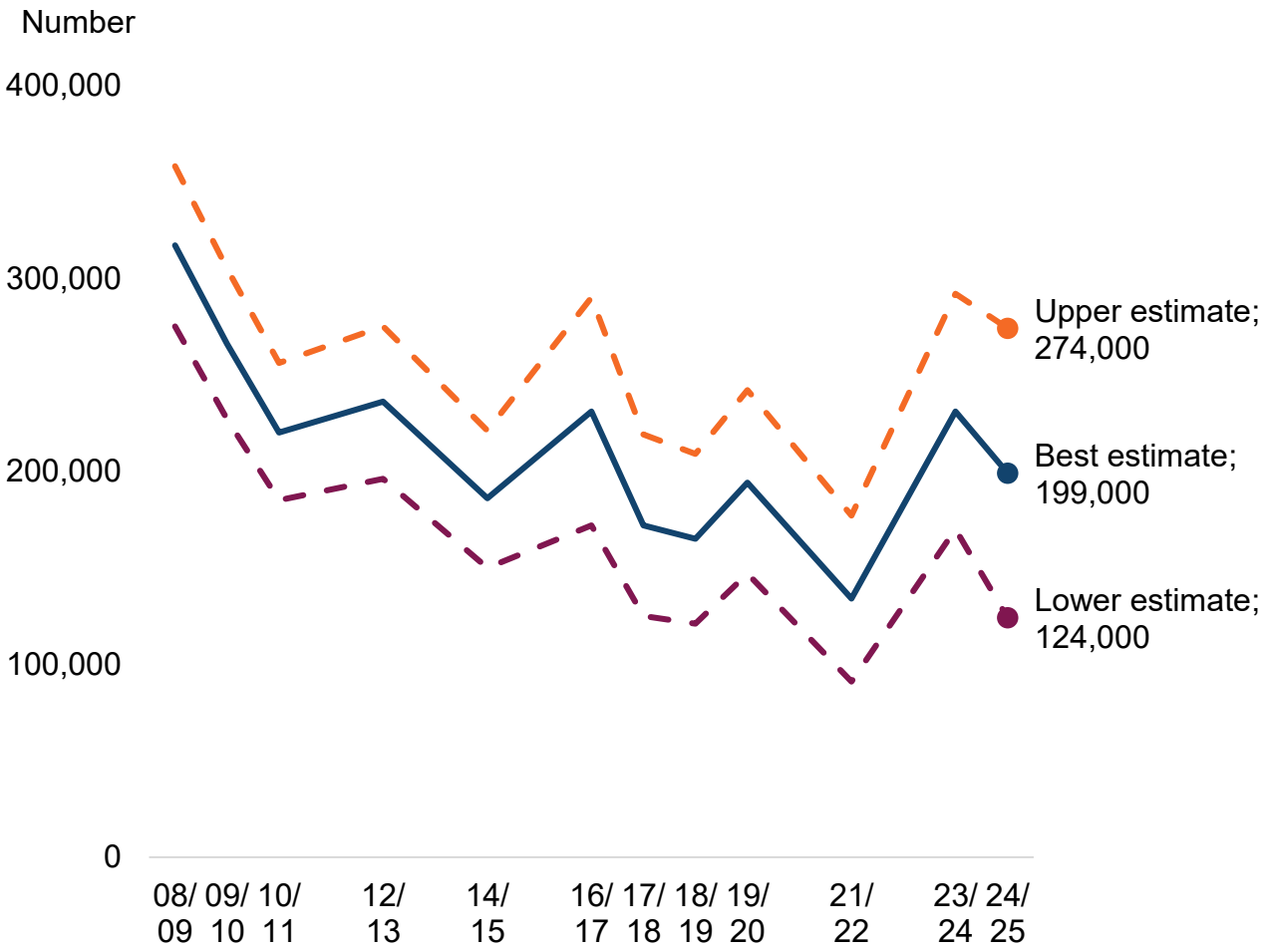
[9] For 2023/24 onwards, an edit was made to a small number of violent crime victim forms which has a negligible impact on the estimated volume of violent crimes for the latest year but no impact on the victimisation rate for violent crimes. See Section 7.3.1 in the Technical report for more details.

[10] Annex table A2 provides best estimates of the number of incidents of violent crime for each year of the SCJS since 2008/09.

Violent crime accounted for under one in five (17%) of all crime incidents estimated by the SCJS in 2024/25 – with the remainder being property crime, fraud, or computer misuse.

Figure 3.2: The estimated volume of violent crime in Scotland has decreased since 20008/09 but is similar to volumes seen in recent years.

Estimated number of violent incidents, 2008/09 to 2024/25.



Variable: INCVIOLENT.

Table 3.1: The estimated number of violent crimes is not significantly different from recent years, but has fallen by 37% since 2008/09.

Estimated number of incidents of violent crimes (2008/09, 2023/24, 2024/25) with percentage change, where significant, since 2008/09 and 2023/24).

	Estimated number of violent crimes			Change since	
	2008/09	2023/24	2024/25	08/09	23/24
Best estimate	317,000	231,000	199,000	Down 37%	No
Lower estimate	275,000	170,000	124,000	-	-
Upper estimate	358,000	292,000	274,000	-	-
Number of respondents	16,000	4,970	4,950	-	-

Variable: INCVIOLENT.

What types of violent crime were most commonly experienced?

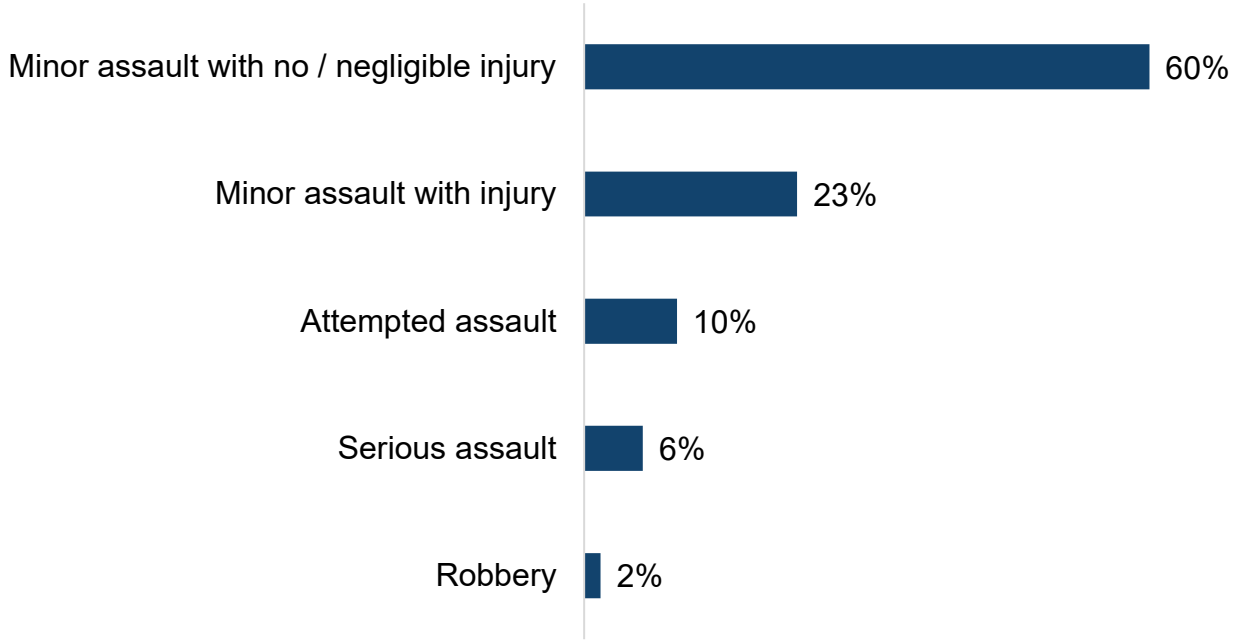
The vast majority (98%) of violent crime incidents were some form of assault or attempted assault. The most common category of violence is assault with no or negligible injury (three out of five crimes, 60%), followed by minor assault with injury (23%) and attempted assault (10%). Serious assault is less common, at 6% of all violent crime. Only 2% of violent crime is robbery. All of these are shown in Figure 3.3.

Over 93% of violent crime incidents have been assault since the SCJS began in 2008/09, so trends for assault and violent crime overall are usually similar. 2.4% of adults were victims of assault – which has decreased since 2008/09 but is higher than it was in 2021/22 (1.6%). It shows no change from either 2023/24 or the pre-covid rate in 2019/20. Recent victimisation rates for assault and robbery are shown in Figure 3.4.

In 2024/25 the estimated number of robberies (3,000) was the lowest since the SCJS began, and 82% lower than 2008/09.

Figure 3.3: The majority of violent incidents in 2024/25 involved minor assault resulting in no or negligible injury.

Categories of crime as proportions of violent crime overall, 2024/25.



Variables: INCMINORASSNOINJURY; INCMINORASSINJURY; INCATTEMPTASSAULT; INCSERASSAULT; INCROB.

For crime types which occur in lower volumes (but which may often result in more severe physical injuries), like serious assault, the strength of the SCJS is in 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 Table A2).

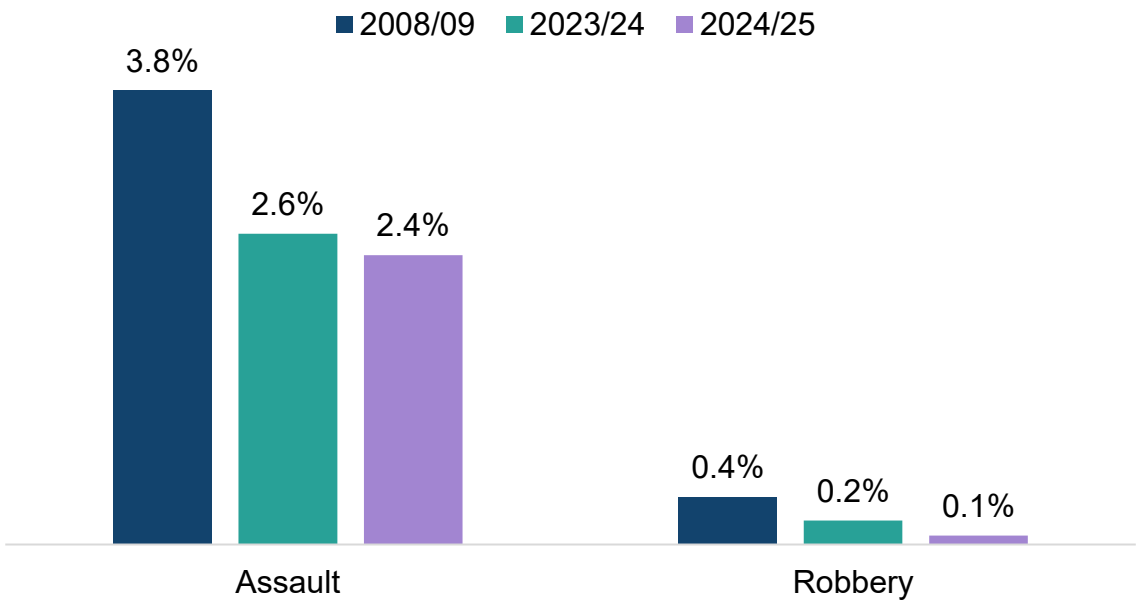
Sub-categories of violent crime such as robbery and serious assault represent small proportions of violence overall and are experienced by small proportions of the population and the SCJS sample, meaning they have large degrees of error around them.[11]

As (minor) assaults with less severe or no physical injuries account for the vast majority of violent crime, later sections looking at the characteristics of violent crime in general will also be mainly driven by these incidents.

[11] For example, the relative standard error (RSE) around the 2024/25 serious assault estimate is 42%. For more on the relative standard error, please see the Technical Report.

Figure 3.4: The proportion of adults experiencing assault and robbery are both similar to 2023/24 but have fallen since 2008/09.

Proportion of adults experiencing assault and robbery (2008/09, 2023/24, 2024/25).



Variables: PREVASSAULT; PREVROB.

How did experiences of violent crime vary across the population?

The likelihood of experiencing violence was highest for the youngest age groups and lowest for the oldest age group, as seen in previous years and shown in Figure 3.5. About 1 in 16 (6.3%) of those aged 16 to 24 experienced a violent crime, compared to fewer than 1 in 100 (0.8%) of those aged 60 and over.

There were higher levels of violent victimisation seen for people in urban areas (2.8%) compared to those in rural areas (1.0%), and disabled people (4.1%) compared to non disabled people (2.0%).[12]

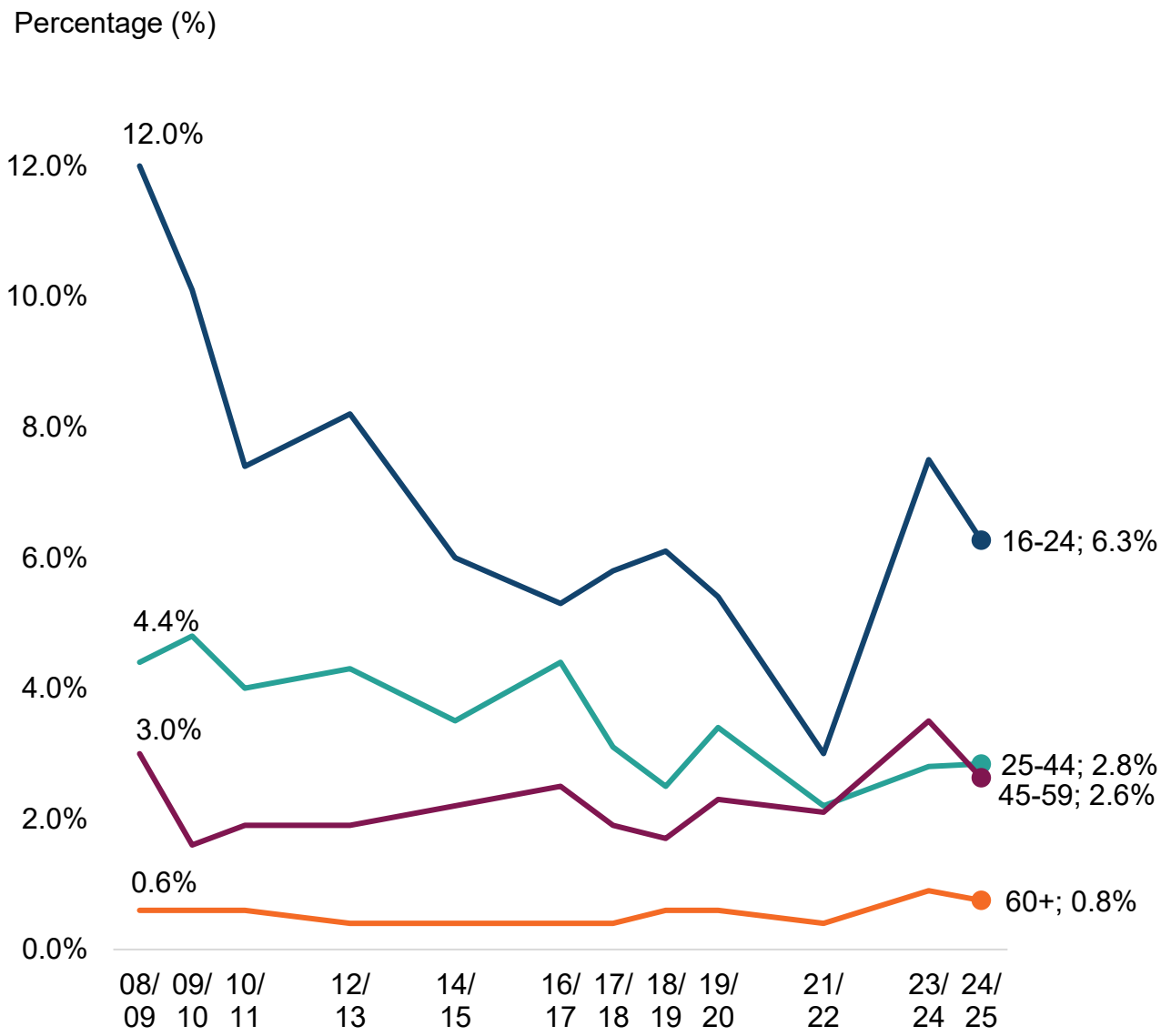
As in 2023/24, no difference is seen between males and females. In earlier years, males had significantly higher rates of violent victimisation than women, but whereas male victimisation has fallen compared to 2008/09, female victimisation has not.

No difference was seen between those living in the 15% most deprived areas and the rest of Scotland.

[12] Additional breakdowns are provided in Annex table A9 and the SCJS supporting data tables. For example, age within sex, disability status, and tenure.

Figure 3.5: No age groups show significant change in their experiences of violent crime since 2008/09.

Proportion of adults experiencing violent crime by age, 2008/09 to 2024/25.



Variables: PREVVIOLENT; QDAGE.

Very few statistically significant changes are seen compared to the last few years, with none of the standard breakdowns of different populations (e.g. age, sex) showing change from the pre-covid (2019/20) position. Changes with sub-groups are less likely to be significant as the sample size is smaller and therefore confidence intervals are higher.

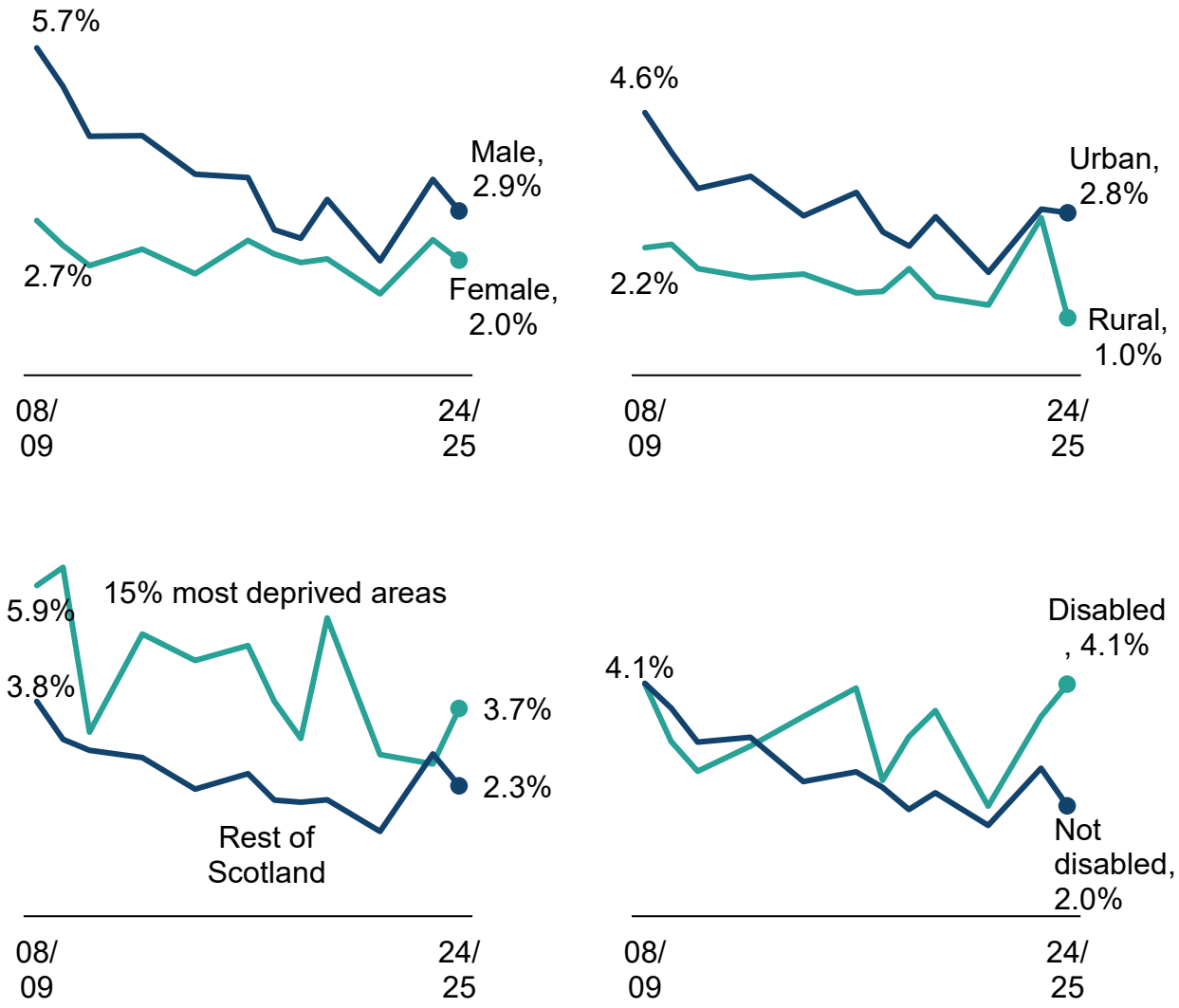
Over the longer term – between 2008/09 and 2024/25, many population groups saw a reduction in the proportion of adults experiencing violent crime, whereas others saw no change. No group saw an increase. Decreases were seen for: males, people living outwith the 15% most deprived areas, people living in both urban and rural areas, people who are not disabled, and people in owner occupied

accommodation. No change was seen for: women, any specific age groups, people living in the 15% most deprived areas, disabled people, and people living in private rented or social rented accommodation. Again, for some of these it may not be possible to see change due to the small breakdowns – such as where no age groups show a change despite a reduction in victimisation for the overall population.

Further information on how the prevalence of violence has changed over time for these sub-groups is shown in Figure 3.6 below.

Figure 3.6: Since 2008/09, the proportion experiencing violence has significantly decreased for males, people outwith the 15% most deprived areas, urban and rural areas, and non-disabled people; while their comparator groups haven't seen a change.

Proportion of adults experiencing violent crime by sex, area deprivation, rurality and disability status, 2008/09 to 2024/25.



Variables: PREVVIOLENT; TABQDGEN; TABSIMD_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 abuses as well as sexual assault) are answered in a self-completion element of the survey.

Self completion results for the combined years 2023/24-2024/25 is due to be published in a separate report later in 2026. This will be the first such publication[13] since the combined 2018/19 and 2019/20 years, 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).

What can the SCJS tell us about repeat victimisation?

The SCJS estimates that most adults did not experience violent crime in 2024/25 (97.5%), whilst 2.5% of the population were victims of at least one violent crime.

The survey can estimate the proportion of victims who experienced a particular type of crime more than once during a year[14] - known as 'repeat victimisation'.[15] However, this has higher uncertainty due to the small number of survey respondents who are repeat victims.

Less than 1 in every 100 adults (0.9%) were victims of repeated incidents of violence (i.e. two or more incidents), but their experiences accounted for the majority (62%) of violent crime in 2024/25.

Table 3.2 details repeat victimisation and the concentration of violent crime. It shows that 1.6% of adults were victims of a single violent incident in the year, while 0.9% experienced repeat victimisation (two or more incidents) and 0.2% of adults were high-frequency repeat victims, experiencing five or more incidents. Repeat victims averaged 3 violent crimes each.

[13] Findings from the self-completion module are based on two-years' worth of responses to increase the sample size and ensure sufficiently robust findings. Had the pandemic not occurred, data collected on stalking, harassment and partner abuse from the 2020/21 and 2021/22 surveys would have been combined but no SCJS was conducted in 2020/21 due to COVID-19.

[14] i.e. two or more experiences of violent crime.

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

Table 3.2: Around three in five of all violent crime incidents were experienced by repeat victims.

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

Number of crimes	% of population	% of violent crime
None	97.5%	0%
One	1.6%	38%
Two	0.5%	21%
Three	0.1%	6%
Four	0.1%	8%
Five or more	0.2%	27%
Two or more	0.9%	62%

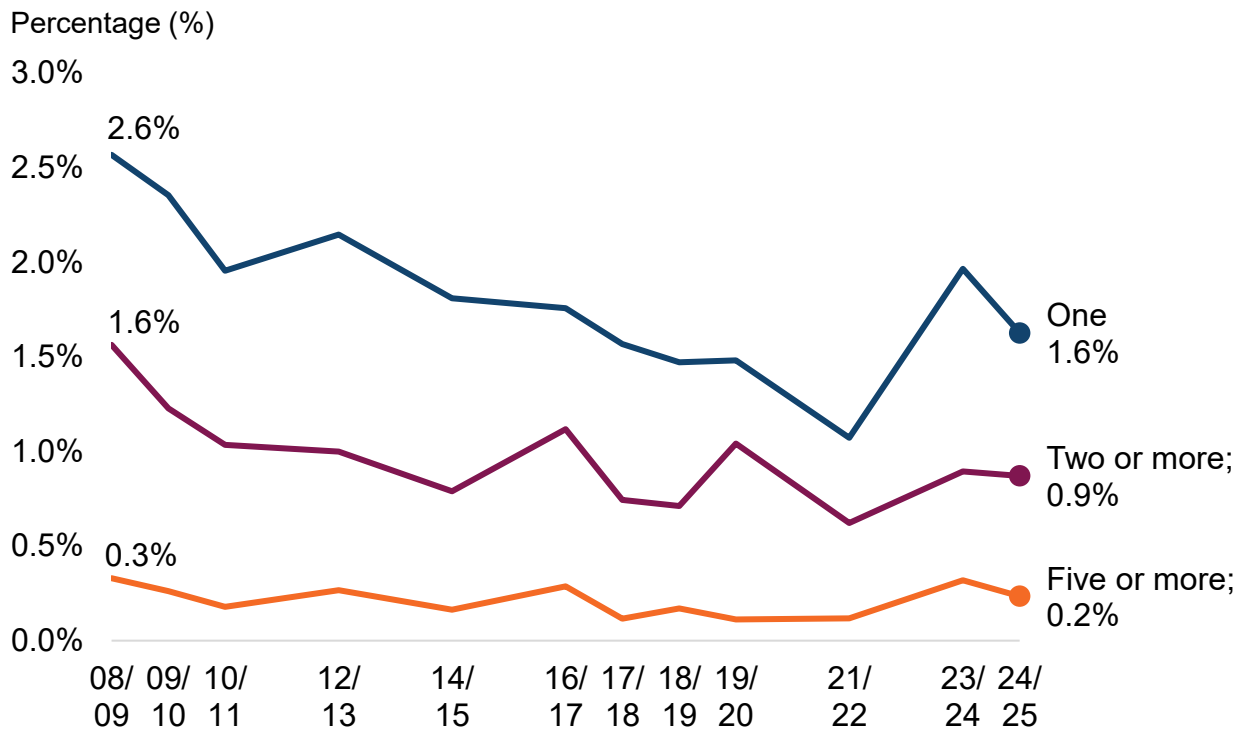
Variables: PREVVIOLENT; INCVIOLENT.

Figure 3.7 shows trends in single and repeat violent victimisation over time. It shows:

- the proportion of adults experiencing only one incident of violence, has fallen since 2008/09 but remains similar to recent years including 2023/24, 2021/22, and 2019/20.
- the number of repeat victims has decreased since 2008/09 but has not changed significantly in recent years
- the number of high-frequency repeat victims of five or more violent incidents (0.2%) is not significantly different from any previous survey years. With such a low figure the survey is unlikely to be able to detect a statistically significant result.

Figure 3.7: The proportion of adults experiencing two or more violent incidents is lower than 2008/09 but unchanged in recent years

Proportion of adults experiencing a number of violent crimes, 2008/09 to 2024/25.



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

What were the characteristics of violent crime?

The most commonly reported location was at the victim's work – estimated at a little less than half of violent incidents (46%) in 2024/25. This proportion has increased over the long term from less than one in four (23%) in 2008/09, though remains at a similar level to 2023/24.

38% of incidents happened in other public places[16] that weren't the victim's workplace. Up until the last survey (2023/24) this appeared to be decreasing but the 2024/25 results show no significant change over time. A more detailed breakdown is shown in Figure 3.8, and change over time is shown in Figure 3.9.

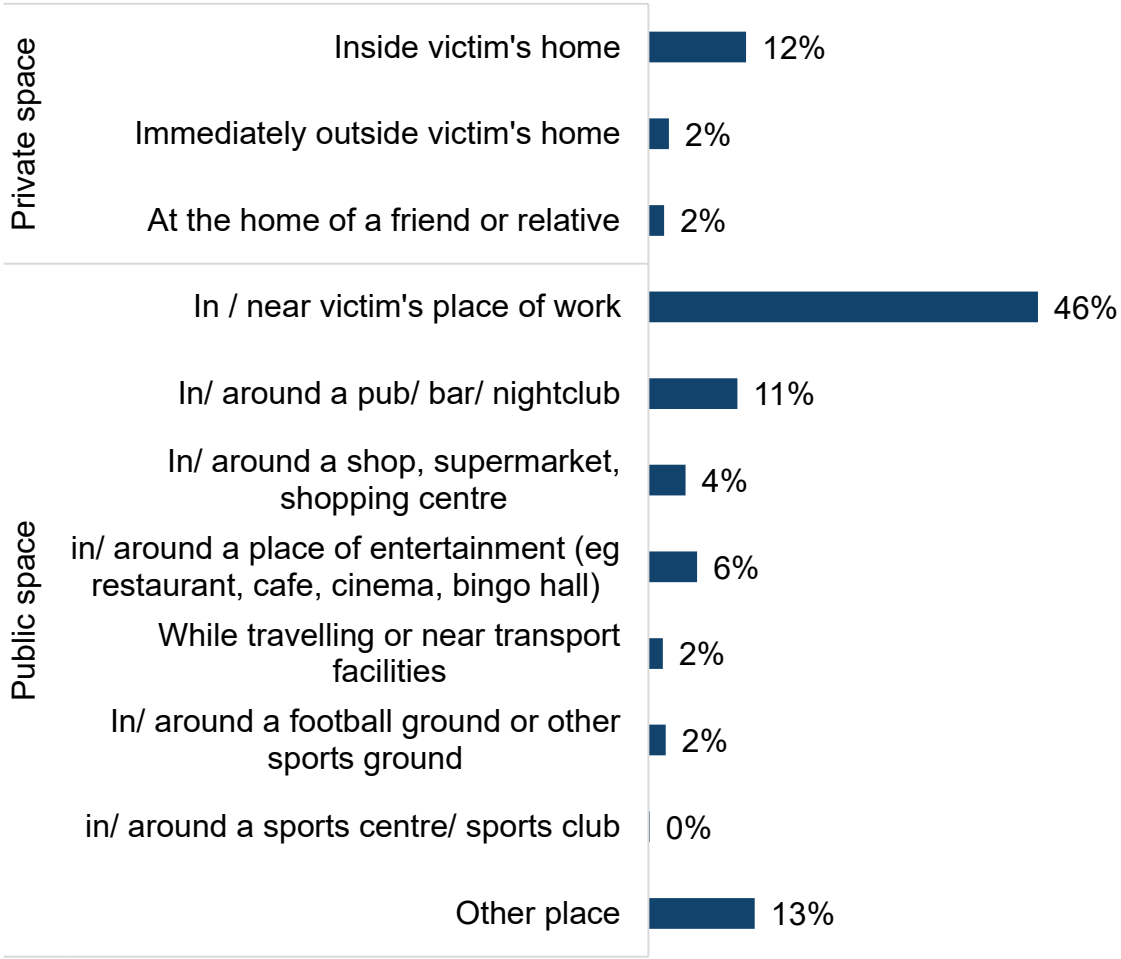
Around one in ten (12%) of violent incidents took place in the respondent's own home; which increases to 14% when also including immediately outside the

[16] 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.

respondent's home, and to 16% when including any private space such as the home of a friend or relative.

Figure 3.8: The majority of violent incidents occurred within a public space with in/near the victim's place of work as the largest category.

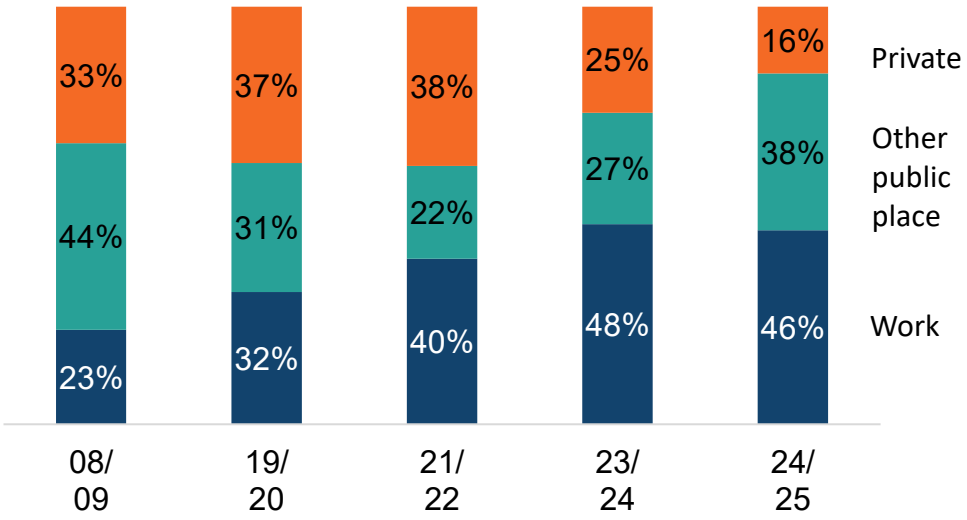
Proportion of violent crime incidents occurring in different locations, 2024/25.



Variables: QWH1; QWH3; QWH5; QWH7.

Figure 3.9: The proportion of violent crime in the workplace has increased since 2008/09, while other locations don't show change.

Proportion of violent crime incidents occurring in different locations, 2008/09 and 2019/20 to 2024/25.



Variables: QWH1; QWH5; QWH7.

Around a third (32%) of violent crime took place at the weekend, with the rest taking place during the week or the respondent didn't know. There has been a long term decrease in the proportion of violent crime taking place at the weekend, down from 55% in 2008/09.

What do we know about perpetrators of violent crime?

In 94% of violent incidents reported in 2024/25, respondents could provide details about the offender. Key findings include:

- 86% of violent crime involved at least one male offender, 15% involved at least one female offender, and 3% involved a mixed sex group of perpetrators, in line with findings in recent years [17]
- the proportion of perpetrators aged under 16 increased in the previous survey, from 8% in 2021/22 to its highest ever level of 31% in 2023/24. In 2024/25 it has remained at a similar higher level, 28%.
- the proportion of perpetrators age 16-24 has continued its long term decrease to 11%, the lowest level seen by this survey. It has decreased from 46% in 2008/09 and 34% in 2019/20 but has remained stable since then. Of the four age bands used to report perpetrator ages, the 16-24 group was the most common for perpetrators in 2008/09 and is now the smallest.

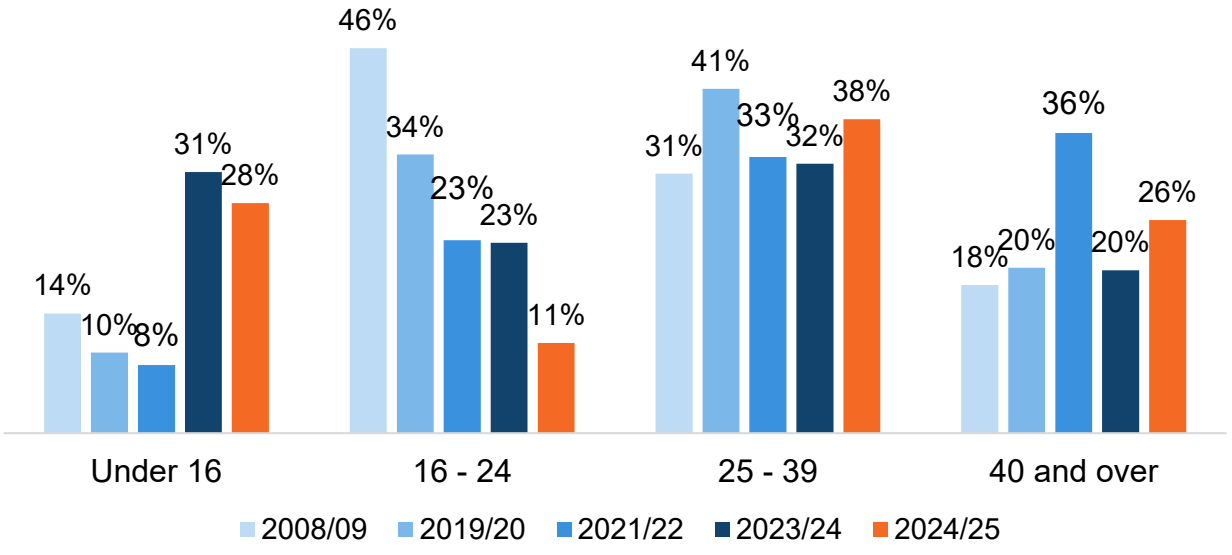
[17] These add up to more than 100% as incidents may involve multiple perpetrators.

- for the other two groups: 38% of perpetrators were 25-39, and 26% were 40 or over. Neither show significant change from previous surveys.
- incidents where the perpetrator was under 16 and took place at the victim's workplace, accounted for 22% of all violent crime in 2024/25. This is similar to the previous survey (23% in 2023/24) but these were an increase from earlier surveys – 5% for both 2019/20 and 2021/22
- the number of victims interviewed is too small to provide a further breakdown, but across the last two survey years it appears that these workplace-based violent crimes with perpetrators under 16 are mainly against workers in education or care roles. Being based on a relatively small number, this may fluctuate more each year depending on who happens to be interviewed
- therefore this result should be treated with some caution and compared with other available statistics, for example Changes over time in the Behaviour in Scottish schools: research report 2023 showed increases in physical aggression and physical violence reported by primary and secondary school staff between 2016 and 2023

Figure 3.10 illustrates the range of age groups involved in these crimes.

Figure 3.10: The proportion of perpetrators under 16 continues to be much higher than before 2023/24, while 16-24 shows a long term decrease.

Proportion of violent crime incidents involving offenders of each age group, 2008/09, 2019/20 to 2024/25.



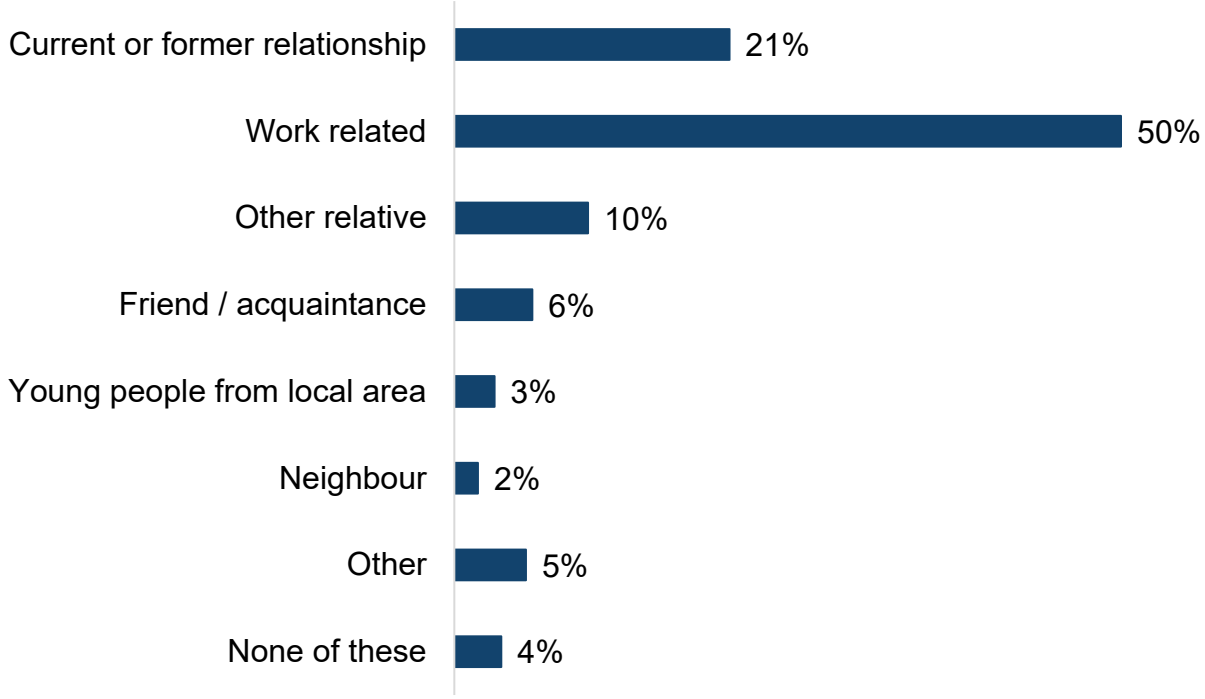
Variable: QAGE. Incidents can have more than one perpetrator so may add up to more than 100%.

More than half of violent incidents (55%) were committed by people who the victims knew well. This has increased from a third (33%) in 2008/09. When expanding this to look at incidents where victims knew or had seen the perpetrators before in some way this increases to 69%.

Those who said they knew the offender in some way were asked about their relationship to the offender.[18] Figure 3.11 shows the range of relationships between victims and offenders.

Figure 3.11: The most common relationship of violent offenders to the victim was 'work related'.

Relationship of offender to victim as a proportion of violent incidents where the offender was known in some way, 2024/25.[19]



Variable: QRE2.

This is based on 70 respondents in 2024/25. The small size means that the figures can fluctuate between years. They have wide confidence intervals which make it more difficult to track changes over time.

Looking at only incidents where the respondent knew or had seen the offender before: 50% were work related, an increase from 36% in 2008/09. 21% were a current or former partner and 10% were other household members[20]

[18] 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.

[19] '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.

[20] Recent surveys have had a high proportion of people answering 'other' to this question. For this survey year, the free text answer has been used to re-assign these responses in to existing groups

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.

These are reported with two survey years combined, with the survey years 2023/24 and 2024/25 due to be published later in 2026. The most recent published statistics are from the combined surveys of 2018/19 and 2019/20, 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, they reported:

For the first time, the majority of perpetrators (56%) were not under the influence of alcohol or drugs. This has shown a long term increase, from 24% in 2008/09 and 28% in 2019/20.

Just under one in three (30%) offenders were under the influence of alcohol. This has shown a long term decline, from almost two thirds (63%) in 2008/09. The proportion involving alcohol only (without drugs) has also fallen in the long term, from two in five (39%) to one in five (21%) in 2024/25. However it appears to have increased since 2023/24, from 4%, however the results from 2023/24 were unusually low so may be an outlier – this year's result is closer to what is normally seen.

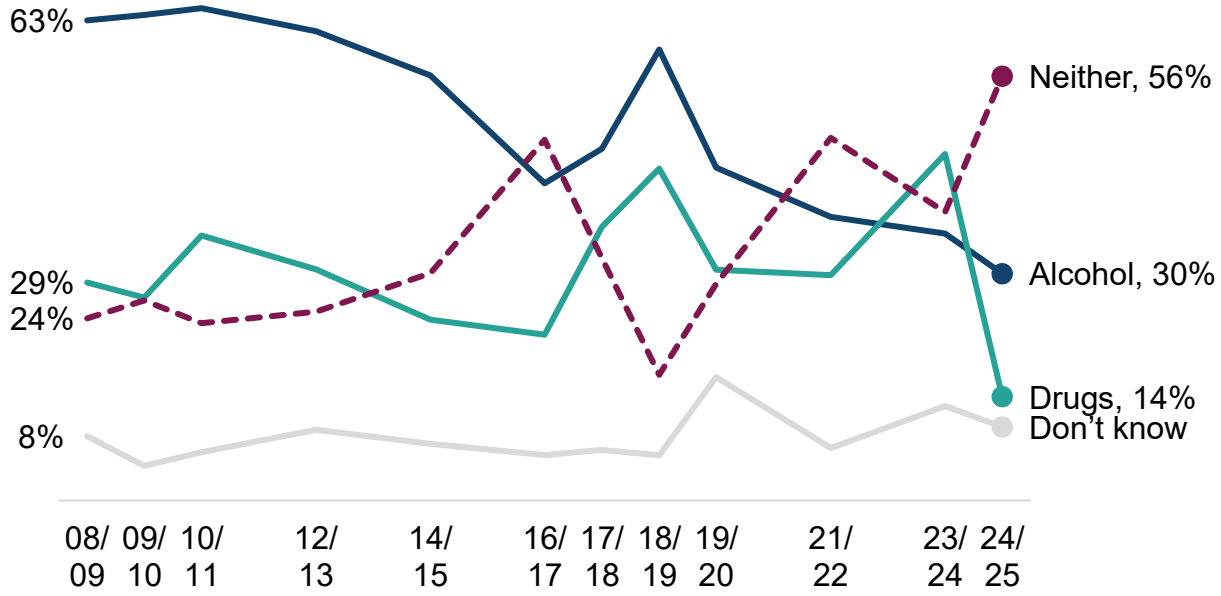
One in seven (14%) were under the influence of drugs, which is significantly lower than 45% in 2023/24 but similar to 2008/09. This year's result is unusually low, and last year's result was the highest ever seen, so it is likely some of these large changes are from fluctuation in survey results. As a result it is hard to determine a long term trend. 5% of violent incidents were reported to involve drugs only – without alcohol.

These results are shown in Figure 3.12 below. It also shows that in 10% 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 drugs or not.

– which are often work related. As recent survey years retain a high proportion of 'others', it is difficult to see if there have been changes. However, early survey years have a low proportion coded as 'other', so it is easier to report on changes from 2008/09 with confidence/

Figure 3.12: Violent crime where the offender was under the influence of alcohol has decreased since 2008/09[21].

Proportion of violent crime with offenders perceived to be under the influence of alcohol or drugs, 2008/09 to 2024/25.



Variable: QAL; QDR.

Where a violent incident involved someone seeing or hearing what was going on, just over one in four (27%) involved a perpetrator with a weapon. This result is not significantly different from any of the previous surveys.

What was the impact of violent crime?

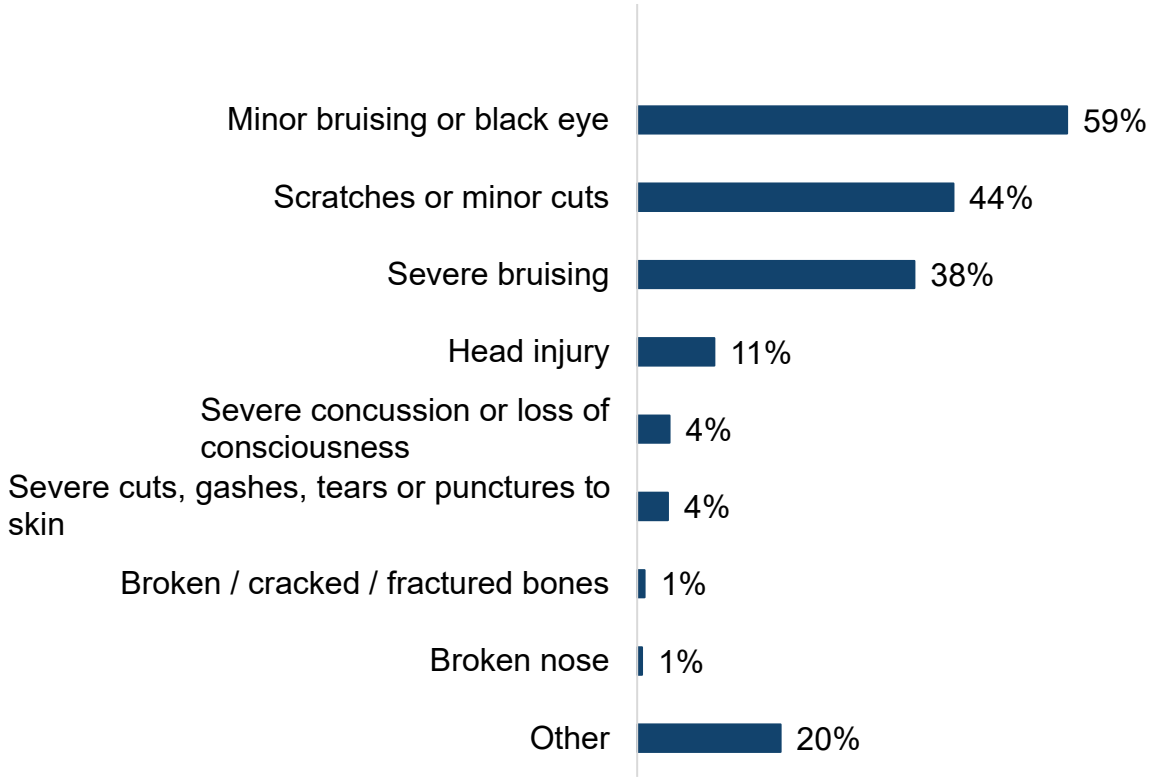
Where violent crime resulted in some sort of injury (58% of all violent incidents, 61% of incidents where force was used), the most common injury sustained was minor bruising or a black eye (59%). More serious injuries like broken bones and head injuries or severe concussion occurred much less frequently, as shown in Figure 3.13.[22] This comes from a small sample size of 50 participants, so confidence intervals are high.

[21] 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.

[22] 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 3.13: 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, 2024/25.



Variable: QINW.

How likely were victims to report a violent crime to the police, and what actions did they think should be taken?

The 2024/25 SCJS estimates that less than one in three violent incidents (30%) were brought to the attention of the police. This does not have a statistically significant difference to recent surveys, but has shown a decline from the highest recorded by the SCJS which was just over half (51%) in 2010/11.

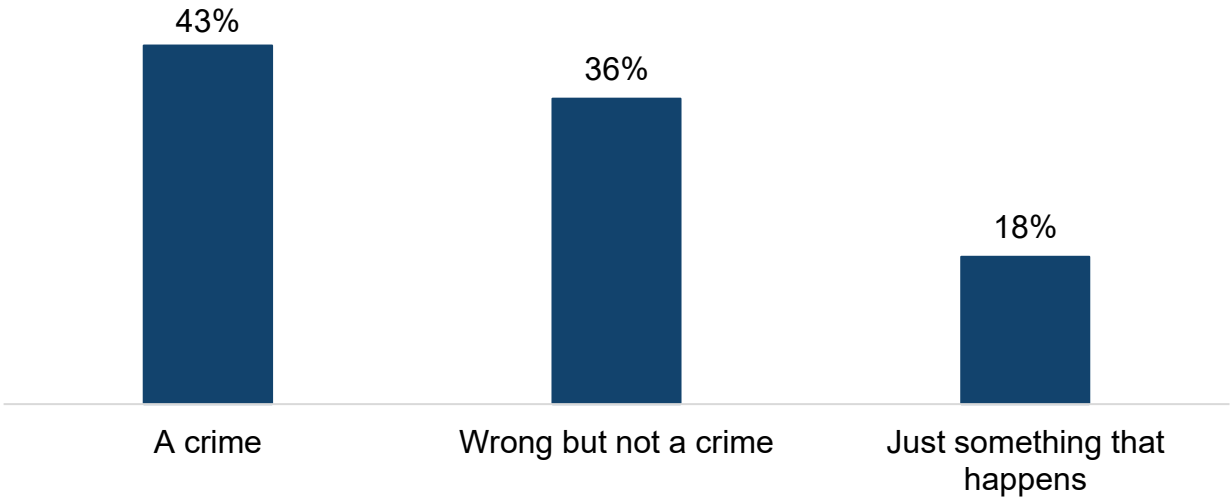
However, in 2012/13 three out of five (61%) victims thought what had happened was a crime, which has decreased to only 43% of victims in 2024/25 (see Figure 3.14 below).

When asked directly why they did not report their experience to the police, victims cited a variety of reasons. This is based on a small number of victims (60) and so it changes to a high degree from one year to the next. The most common reason given in 2024/25 was “the police could have done nothing”, with one in three (34%), followed by too trivial/not worth reporting (10%).

Regardless of police reporting, just over a third (35%) of victims felt the offender should have been prosecuted, down from over half (52%) in 2008/09

Figure 3.14: In less than half of incidents, victims thought their experience was a crime, with almost one in five thinking it was just something that happens.

Victim's description of violent crime incidents experienced, 2024/25.



Variable: QCRNO.

Among those not favouring court, reasons given included: Offender was not responsible for their actions in some way (22%), it's a common event / just something that happens (21%), personal / private matter / dealt with it ourselves (19%), courts are inappropriate for this offence (15%) and incident too trivial (15%).

Detailed views on the criminal justice system are covered in the Public Perceptions of the Scottish criminal justice system chapter.

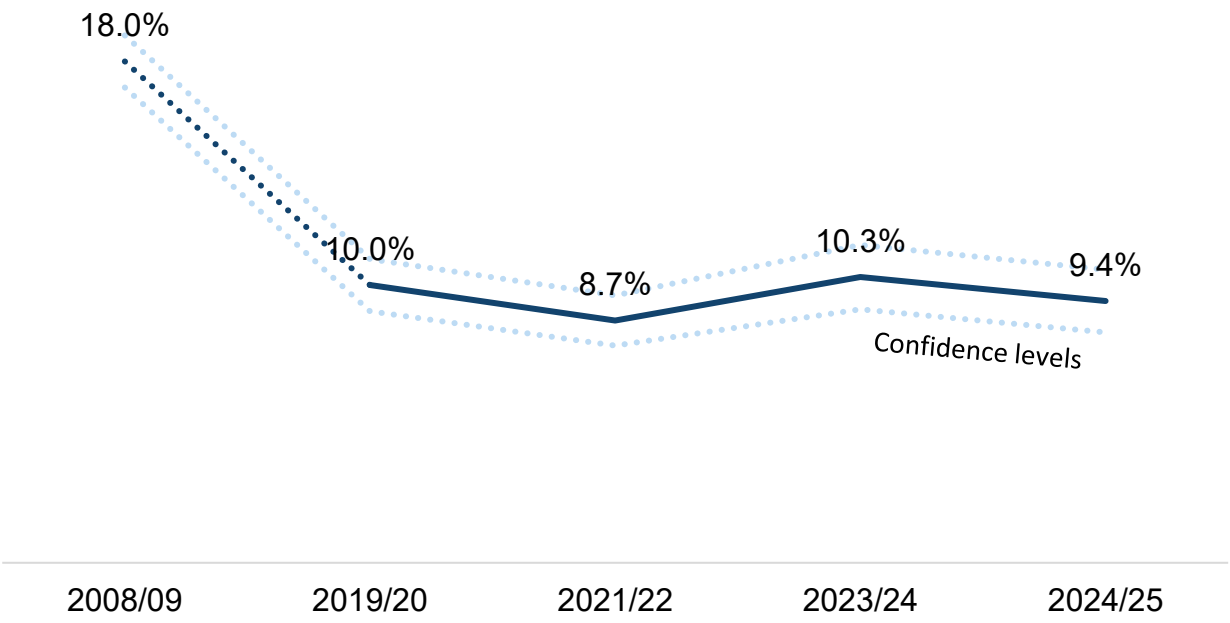
Property crime

What proportion of adults experienced property crime?

In 2024/25, 9.4% of adults experienced property crime. This proportion has fallen over the long term, from 18.0% in 2008/09, but has remained at similar levels in recent years. The latest figure, 9.4%, does not show a statistically significant difference to the previous year.

Figure 4.1: The proportion of adults experiencing property crime has fallen by 9 percentage points since 2008/09 but remains unchanged since 2023/24.

Proportion of adults experiencing property crime, 2008/09, 2019/20 to 2024/25.



Variable: PREVPROPERTY.

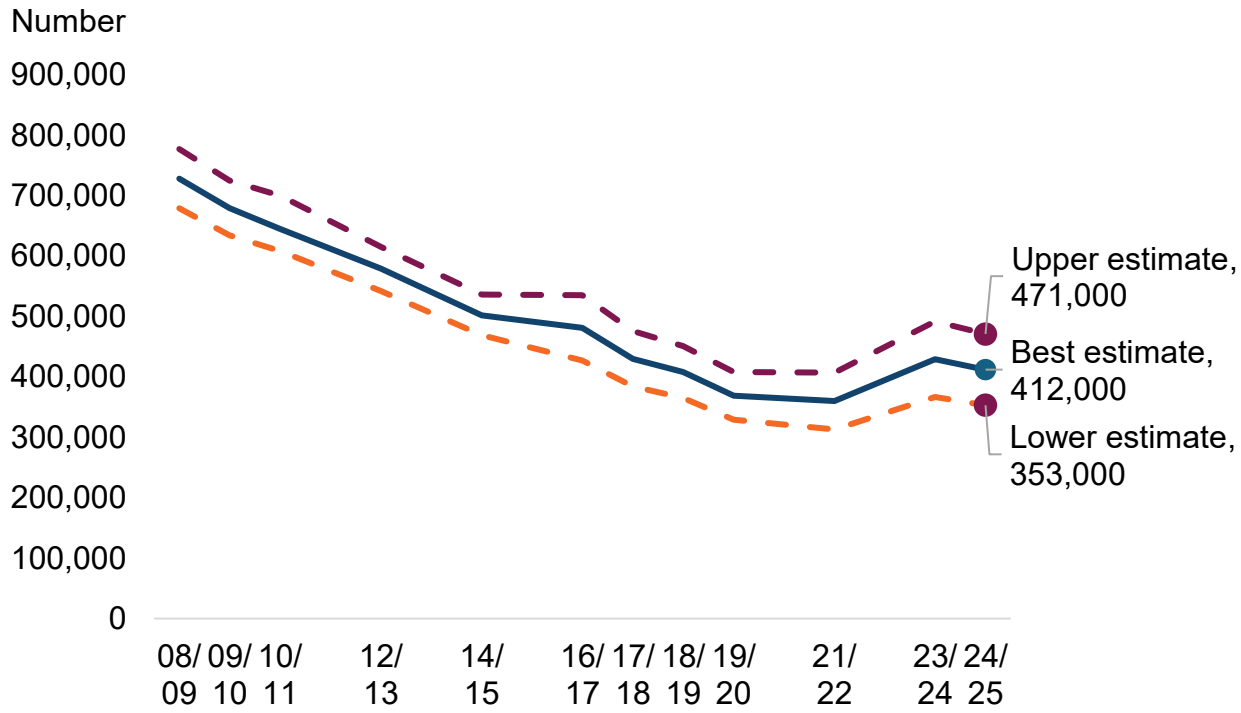
What was the estimated volume of property crime in Scotland in 2024/25?

The Scottish Crime and Justice Survey (SCJS) estimates that 412,000 incidents of property-related crime were experienced by adults in Scotland in 2024/25. As discussed in the Background chapter, this estimate is subject to a margin of error, with the actual number of incidents likely to be between 353,000 and 471,000, based on the survey's 95% confidence interval.

Looking at trends over time, the SCJS finds that the number of property crime incidents has decreased by 43% since 2008/09. Current levels remain similar to recent survey years, and any apparent change shown in Figure 4.2 is not statistically significant.

Figure 4.2: Property crime in Scotland has declined since 2008/09, but has remained stable in recent years and unchanged from 2023/24.

Estimated number of property crime incidents, 2008/09 to 2024/25.



Variable: INCPROPERTY.

Table 4.1: There has been a reduction in the number of property crimes across several categories since 2008/09.

Estimated number of incidents of property crimes (2008/09, 2023/24 and 2024/25) with percentage change, where statistically significant, since 2008/09.

Crime type	2008/09	2023/24	2024/25	Change since 2008/09	Change since 2023/24
All property crime	728,000	429,000	412,000	Down 43%	No change
Housebreaking	25,000	17,000	29,000	No change	No change
Personal theft	110,000	107,000	108,000	No change	No change
Other household theft including bicycle	173,000	139,000	117,000	Down 32%	No change
All motor vehicle related theft	70,000	35,000	40,000	Down 43%	No change
Vandalism	350,000	131,000	119,000	Down 66%	No change
Number of respondents	16,000	4,970	4,950	-	-

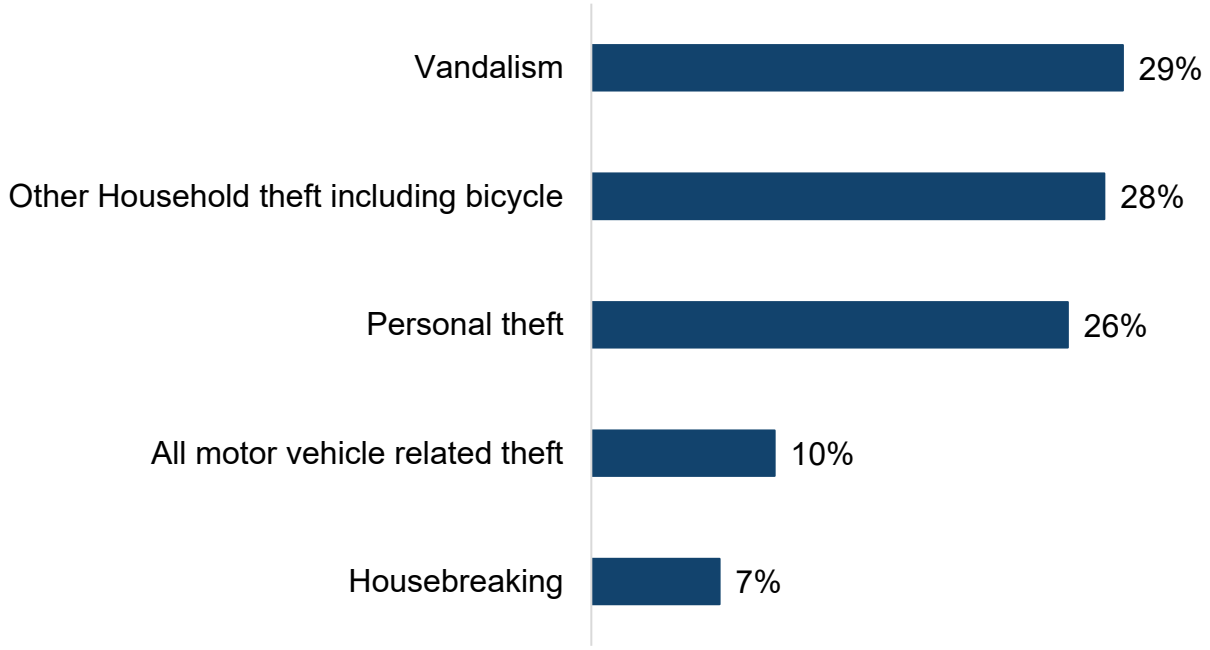
Variables: INCPROPERTY; INCHOUSEBREAK; INCPERSTHEFT; INCOTHERHOUSEHOLDTHEFTCYCLE; INCALLMVTHEFT; INCVAND.

What types of property crime were most commonly experienced?

In 2024/25, unlike last year vandalism accounted for the largest proportion of property crime incidents (29%). This was followed by household theft (including bicycle theft) (28%), personal theft (26%), all motor vehicle related theft (10%), and housebreaking (7%).

Figure 4.3: Vandalism, other household theft and personal theft comprise over four-fifths of all property crime.

Categories of crime as proportions of property crime overall in 2024/25.



Variables: INCVAND; INCPERSTHEFT; INCOTHERHOUSETHEFTCYCLE; INCALLMVTHEFT; INCHOUSEBREAK.

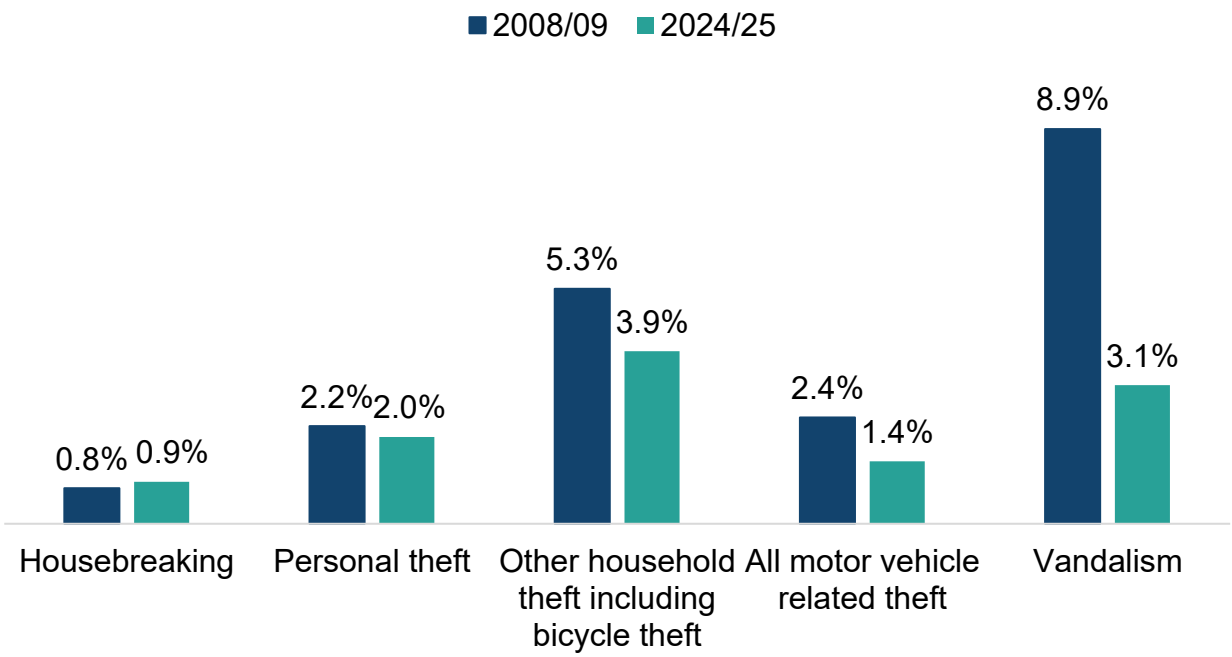
Since 2008/09, there have been notable reductions in vandalism (down 66%) motor vehicle related theft (down 43%), and Other household theft including bicycle (down 32%). The volume of vandalism in 2024/25 (119,000) is the lowest estimated by the SCJS.

Similar to the estimated number of incidents, the prevalence rates for vandalism, motor vehicle theft, and Other household theft (including bicycle theft) have all fallen between 2008/09 and 2024/25, as shown in Figure 4.4. For vandalism, the fall was more than half, from 8.9% to 3.1%, while household theft decreased from 5.3% to 3.9%.

The victimisation rates for all sub-categories of property crime were unchanged between 2023/24 and 2024/25.

Figure 4.4: The biggest change was seen for vandalism, falling from 8.9% of households to 3.1% between 2008/09 and 2024/25.

Proportion of adults/households experiencing types of property crime.



Variables: PREVHOUSEBREAK; PREVPERSTHEFT; PREVOTHERHOUSETHEFTCYCLE; PREVALLMVTHEFT; PREVVAND.

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

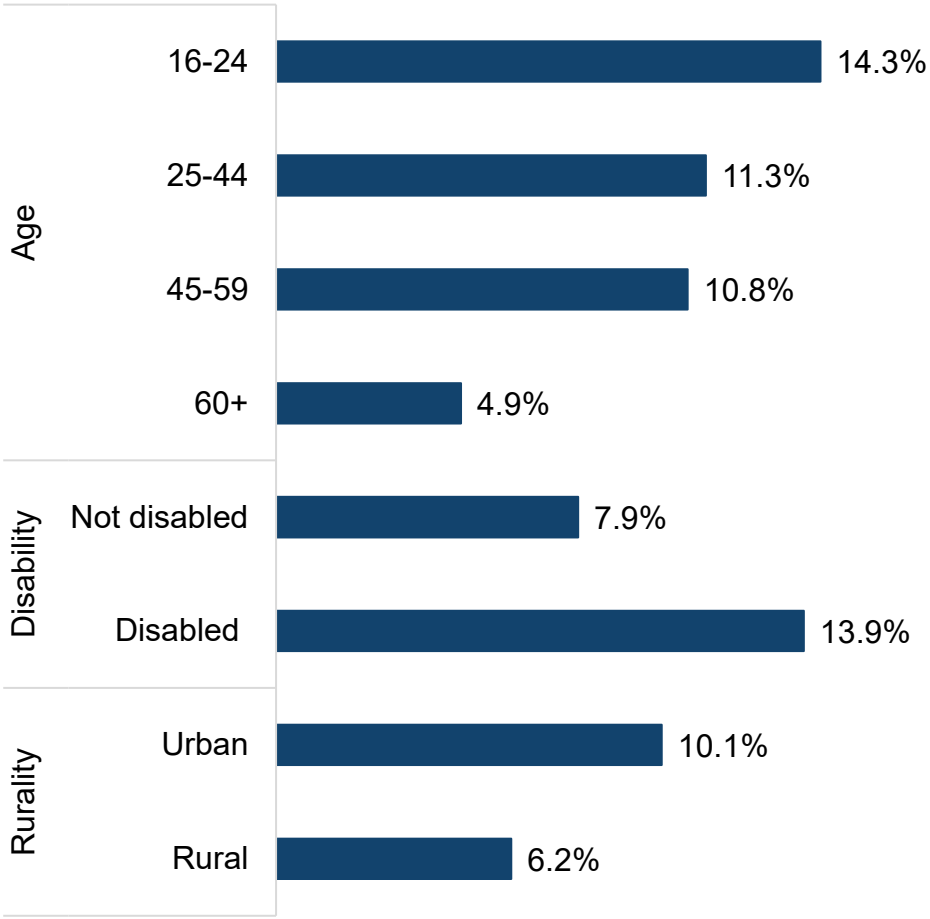
How did experiences of property crime vary across the population?

The SCJS found that victimisation for property crime was:

- lowest for those aged 60 and over
- greater for adults living in urban locations than rural locations
- greater for disabled adults compared to those who are not disabled
- there is no difference between males and females or between 15% most deprived and the rest of Scotland.

Figure 4.5: Property crime victimisation is higher for those living in urban areas and disabled people, and lower for people aged 60+.

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



Variables: PREVPROPERTY; TABAGE; TABSIMD_TOP; TABURBRUR.

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 above.

What can the SCJS tell us about repeat victimisation?

The SCJS estimates 9.4% of adults were victims of at least one property crime. It also shows the unequal concentration of crime among victims, with some being victims more than once, known as 'repeat victimisation'.

7.0% of adults were victims of only one property crime. Only 2.4% of adults experienced two or more, but these accounted for almost half (48%) of all property crime. On average this group is estimated to have experienced 1.8 property crimes each over the year.

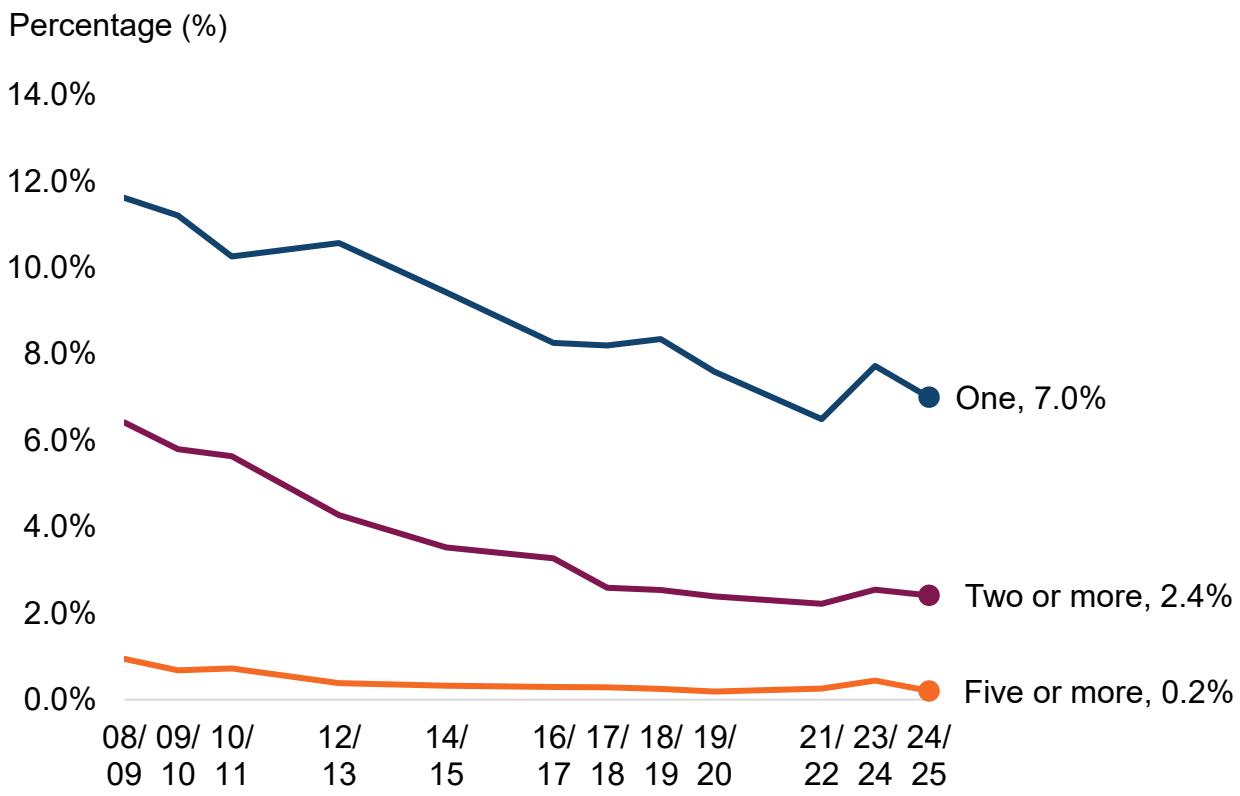
Figure 4.6 displays trends in single and repeat property crime victimisation over time. It shows that between 2008/09 and 2024/25 there were decreases in the proportion of adults experiencing:

- single incidents of property crime - from 11.6% to 7.0%
- repeat victimisation (two or more incidents of property crime) – from 6.4% down to 2.4%
- high frequency repeat victimisation (five or more incidents of property crime) – from 0.9% to 0.2%

The fall in the various levels of victimisation since 2008/09 have occurred in line with a decrease in the overall property crime victimisation rate over the same period.

Figure 4.6: The prevalence of single and repeat victimisation for property crimes has fallen since 2008/09.

Proportion of adults experiencing a number of property crimes, 2008/09 to 2024/25.



Variables: INCPROPERTY; PREVPROPERTY.

What do we know about the perpetrators of property crime?

Most victims of property crime couldn't provide details about offenders. Only a third (32%) of incidents included offender descriptions, compared to 94% for violent crimes. Where respondents could provide details, they reported that:

- most (87%) were male
- most offenders were under 40; only 17% were 40 or older. The largest group was under 16 (33%)

- around one-in-ten (13%) of offenders were known to the victim in some way, including 6% who were known well. Of these, neighbours made up the largest category of offenders (28%), followed by young people from the local area (23%)

Given the relatively low proportion of victims who could provide details on offenders, findings should be interpreted with caution and may not reflect all property crimes.

What was the cost of property crime?

Direct financial costs resulting from property crime were typically, but not always, of relatively low value. 56% of property crimes involved theft. Of these, 63% valued items at £100 or less, 28% were between £100 and £1000, 5% over £1000 and 5% unknown. Where property was damaged, 22% reported it being under £100, 34% reported £100 to £1000, 7% over £1000, and 38% respondents didn't know the value.

How did victims view the incident and what proportion was reported to the police?

The results show that 72% of property crime victims saw their reported experience as 'a crime', while 19% of respondents viewed it as 'wrong but not a crime,' and 9% as 'just something that happens'. Property crime incidents were more likely to be viewed as criminal by the victim compared to experiences of violent crime in 2024/25 (of which 43% of incidents were considered 'a crime').

However, only a quarter (27%) of property crimes were reported to police in 2024/25. This is unchanged from 2023/24 following a stable period in recent years after a fall from 36% in 2019/20.

The main reasons given by victims for not reporting their experience to the police were the perception that the police could do nothing (39%) or that the incident was too trivial (38%). 31% thought that the police would not have bothered/ not been interested, which has shown an increase over time from 14% in 2019/20.

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

Regardless of whether their experience was reported to the police, 48% of property crime victims in 2024/25 thought the offender should have been prosecuted in court. Of the respondents where they do not think the offender should have been prosecuted, the most common reason given was "incident was too trivial" (33%).

Where victims thought an incident should have resulted in a court prosecution, 12% thought the offender should be given a prison sentence, and 77% thought some other sentence. Of those who thought an alternative to prison should be given, the most common were:

- a community service or payback order where the offender carries out unpaid work in the community under supervision (27%)
- compensation order where the offender has to pay for any loss or damage caused to property as a result of their crime (28%)

Where respondents didn't think property crime offenders should have been prosecuted in court (or not sure), other alternatives were suggested. Most commonly agreed to were: given some kind of warning (26% of such incidents), apologised for their actions (21%), given some kind of help to stop them offending (16%), or made to pay them compensation (14%). Only 3% thought that 'nothing should have happened' (i.e. where they did not think the offender should have been prosecuted in court).

Fraud and computer misuse

Background to fraud and computer misuse in the SCJS

A user consultation in 2022 gathered feedback expressing a desire for the SCJS to collect more information on cyber-crime incidents – many of which are crimes of fraud.[23] In 2023/24, a new victim form was included in the SCJS questionnaire, with the aim of gathering information on crimes of fraud and computer misuse. For the first time, this allows us to estimate the volume and prevalence of these crimes in Scotland, as well as present information on their characteristics (such as victim demographics). This new victim form replaces the previous cyber-crime module.

Fraud is a complex and evolving crime category that encompasses a wide range of offences. The fraud data has been subdivided into more specific subtypes, allowing for more detailed analysis. As this is only the second year of collecting this data in this format, it remains in development, and we anticipate refining these categories in future reports based on emerging trends and user feedback.

For the purposes of this report, fraud and computer misuse is broken down into the following categories:

- bank and credit card fraud - for example gaining access to someone's bank account or using someone's bank details to make a payment
- other types of fraud - for example buying or selling goods online, investment fraud or door to door salespeople
- computer misuse - includes incidents of hacking, viruses or other types of computer misuse

As the SCJS is a survey of adults living in private residences, the results presented here do not include crimes against businesses, tax fraud or benefit fraud for example.

In addition to the specific crime groups mentioned above, it is also possible to discuss the characteristics of fraud in terms of the elements that are common to all subgroups. In this report, further breakdown is provided in the following ways:

- whether the crime involved any loss to the victim or not
- whether the crime involved the use of any cyber-technologies or not

The findings presented in this chapter represent a high-level summary of the information collected through these questions. The 2024/25 SCJS is the second year that this information is available. Given that there is only one comparison point for the most recent findings, it is important to view any changes presented here as not indicative of long term trends. Further data collection is necessary to better understand how these crimes may have changed over time.

[23] Accredited Official Statistics on Police recorded crime data shows that of the 14,120 estimated cyber crimes recorded by the police in 2024/25, 7,550 (53%) of these were frauds.

The analysis here indicates where any relevant statistically significant change over time has been detected, otherwise it can be assumed that figures shown in this chapter were found to be at a similar level to the previous results from 2023/24.

The statistics on the prevalence and characteristics of fraud and computer misuse are currently badged as official statistics. The Office for Statistics Regulation (OSR) will assess these statistics in 2026, with a view to awarding the accredited official statistics status.

What was the extent and prevalence of fraud and computer misuse in Scotland in 2024/25?

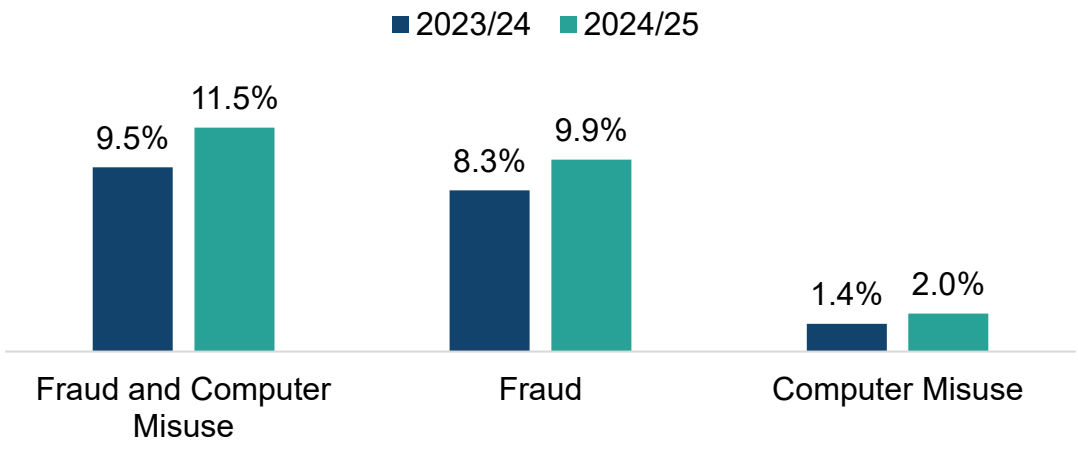
The SCJS estimates that 11.5% of adults in 2024/25 were victims of at least one crime of fraud or computer misuse, within a margin of error[24] between 10.3% and 12.8%.

As a sample survey of the public, SCJS results on fraud and computer misuse are estimates with wide margins of error, not exact counts. Analysis is focused on the best estimates for each year of the survey. Further details are provided in the Background chapter and in the Technical Report.

Between 2023/24 and 2024/25 there was a two percentage point increase in fraud and computer misuse victimisation, from 9.5% to 11.5% of adults. When these crime types are viewed separately, the victimisation rate was 9.9% for fraud and 2.0% for computer misuse. However, unlike the combined measure, these separate rates are at a similar level to 2023/24.

Figure 5.1: The proportion of adults experiencing fraud and computer misuse increased by two percentage points since 2023/24.

Proportion of adults experiencing fraud and computer misuse crime, 2023/24 to 2024/25.



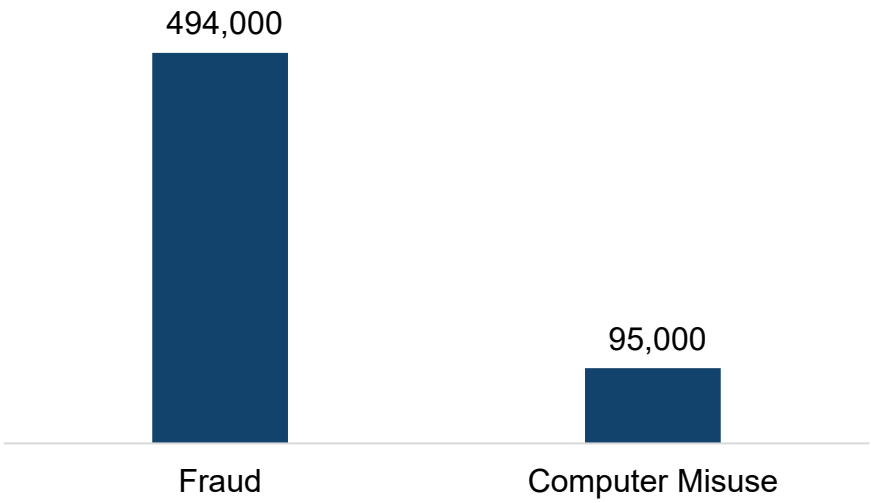
[24] As a sample survey of the general public, SCJS results on violence are estimates with wide margins of error, not exact counts. Analysis here is focused on the best estimates for each year of the survey. Further details are in the Technical Report.

Variables: PREVFRAUDANDCOMPMISUSE; PREVALLFRAUD; PREVCOMPUTERMISUSE

The estimated volume of crimes of fraud and computer misuse was 588,000, between a lower estimate of 520,000 and an upper estimate of 657,000. This is at a similar level to that seen previously in 2023/24. These account for just under half (49%) of all crime measured by the SCJS in 2024/25. As shown in Figure 5.2, most of these crimes were fraud (84% or 494,000 crimes) with the remaining 16% or 95,000 crimes being computer misuse.

Figure 5.2: Of the estimated 588,000 incidents of fraud and computer misuse in 2024/25, the majority (84%) of these cases were fraud.

Estimated number of fraud and computer misuse incidents, 2024/25.



Variables: INCALLFRAUD; INCCOMPUTERMISUSE.

What types of fraud were experienced by adults in Scotland?

As shown in Table 5.1, over two-fifths of fraud and computer misuse crimes experienced in 2024/25 (45%) were bank and credit card fraud with two-fifths being all other types of fraud (39%). When considering fraud in isolation, bank and credit card fraud comprise 53% of all frauds with all other types of fraud making up the other 47%. All of these figures are unchanged from 2023/24.

A similar proportion of adults experienced a bank or credit card fraud (5.3%) to any other type of fraud (4.8%).

Table 5.1: Around one in nine adults experienced a fraud or computer misuse crime in 2024/25.

Proportion of adults experiencing fraud and computer misuse crime and estimated volumes by crime category, 2024/25.

Crime category	Prevalence (% of adults)	Estimated volume	% of total fraud and computer misuse
All fraud and computer misuse	11.5%	588,000	100%
All fraud	9.9%	494,000	84%
Bank and credit card fraud	5.3%	263,000	45%
All other types of fraud	4.8%	231,000	39%
All computer misuse	2.0%	95,000	16%

Variables: (PREV/INC)FRAUDANDCOMPMISUSE, (PREV/INC)ALLFRAUD, (PREV/INC)BANKANDCREDITFRAUD, (PREV/INC)COMPUTERMISUSE

How did experiences of fraud and computer misuse vary across the population?

The SCJS finds that the only difference in victimisation rate between demographic groups was within disability, with disabled respondents more likely to be a victim (14.4%) than respondents without a disability (10.5%). There were no differences detected for any other demographic group or area characteristic such as age, sex, rurality or level of deprivation.

Most demographic groups remained at the same level seen in the previous survey in 2023/24. However, the victimisation rate for males increased from 7.5% to 11.4% in 2024/25, meaning it is now at a similar level to females where previously a difference was seen by sex. Those aged 60+ also saw an increase in the victimisation rate, from 8.0% to 10.8%.

The same differences between groups were observed when analysing fraud alone, where the only difference found was within disability (12.8% for disabled respondents and 8.9% for respondents without a disability). There were no significant differences detected between demographic groups for computer misuse.

What can the SCJS tell us about repeat victimisation of fraud and computer misuse?

The majority of adults (88.5%) were not a victim of either fraud or computer misuse in 2024/25.

The survey enables us to see what proportion of victims experienced a particular type of crime more than once during the year.[25] This is known as 'repeat victimisation'.[26]

It was found to be extremely rare that a respondent reported having experienced multiple incidents of computer misuse (0.1%), therefore this analysis focusses only on crimes of fraud.

The 2024/25 results show that fewer than 1 in 100 (0.6%) of adults were the victim of repeated incidents (i.e. two or more) and their experiences accounted for 14% of all frauds in 2024/25. Victims of fraud overall experienced 1.1 crimes each and repeat victims on average 2.4 crimes each. High frequency repeat victimisation (i.e. five or more incidents) was experienced by an extremely small proportion of the population, at less than one tenth of a percent (<0.1%). Table 5.2 explores the extent of repeat victimisation in more detail.

Table 5.2: Repeat victims made up about one in seven of all fraud victims in 2024/25.

Proportion of fraud experienced by victims, by number of crimes experienced.

Number of crimes experienced	% of population	% of fraud crime volume
None	90.1%	0%
One	9.2%	86%
Two	0.5%	9%
Three	0.1%	3%
Four	< 0.1%	1%
Five or more	< 0.1%	1%
Two or more	0.6%	14%

Variables: INCALLFRAUD.

[25] i.e. two or more experiences of fraud and computer misuse crime.

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

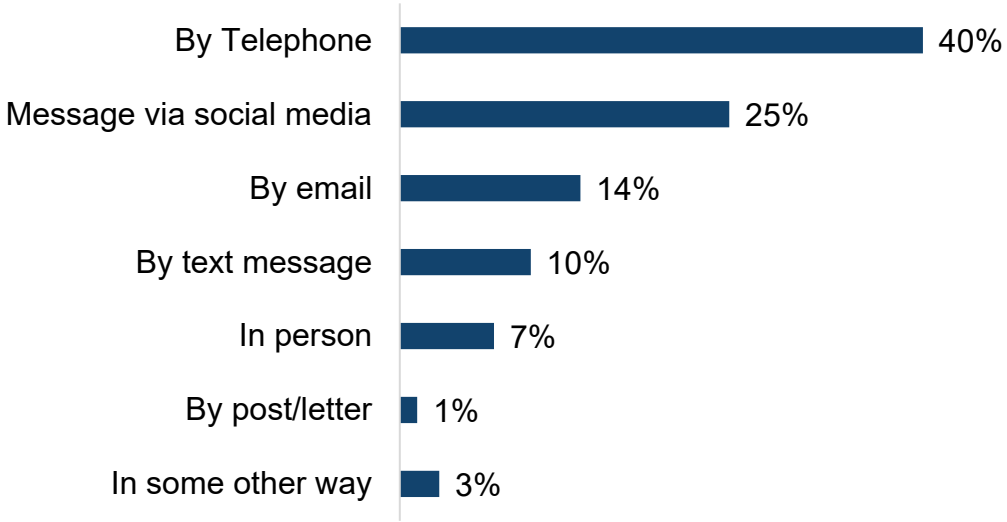
What kind of contact did victims of fraud have with the perpetrator?

The SCJS found that contact between the victim and the perpetrator only happened in a minority of frauds, just over a fifth of cases (22%) in 2024/25.

Where there was contact, Figure 5.3 shows that the most common means of contact were by phone (40%), social media (25%), email (14%) and text message (10%). Contact in person was less common, present in only 7% of frauds.

Figure 5.3: In over three quarters of frauds where there was contact between the victim and perpetrator, the contact was made through either telephone, social media or email.

Proportion of methods for contact between victim and perpetrators for incidents of fraud.



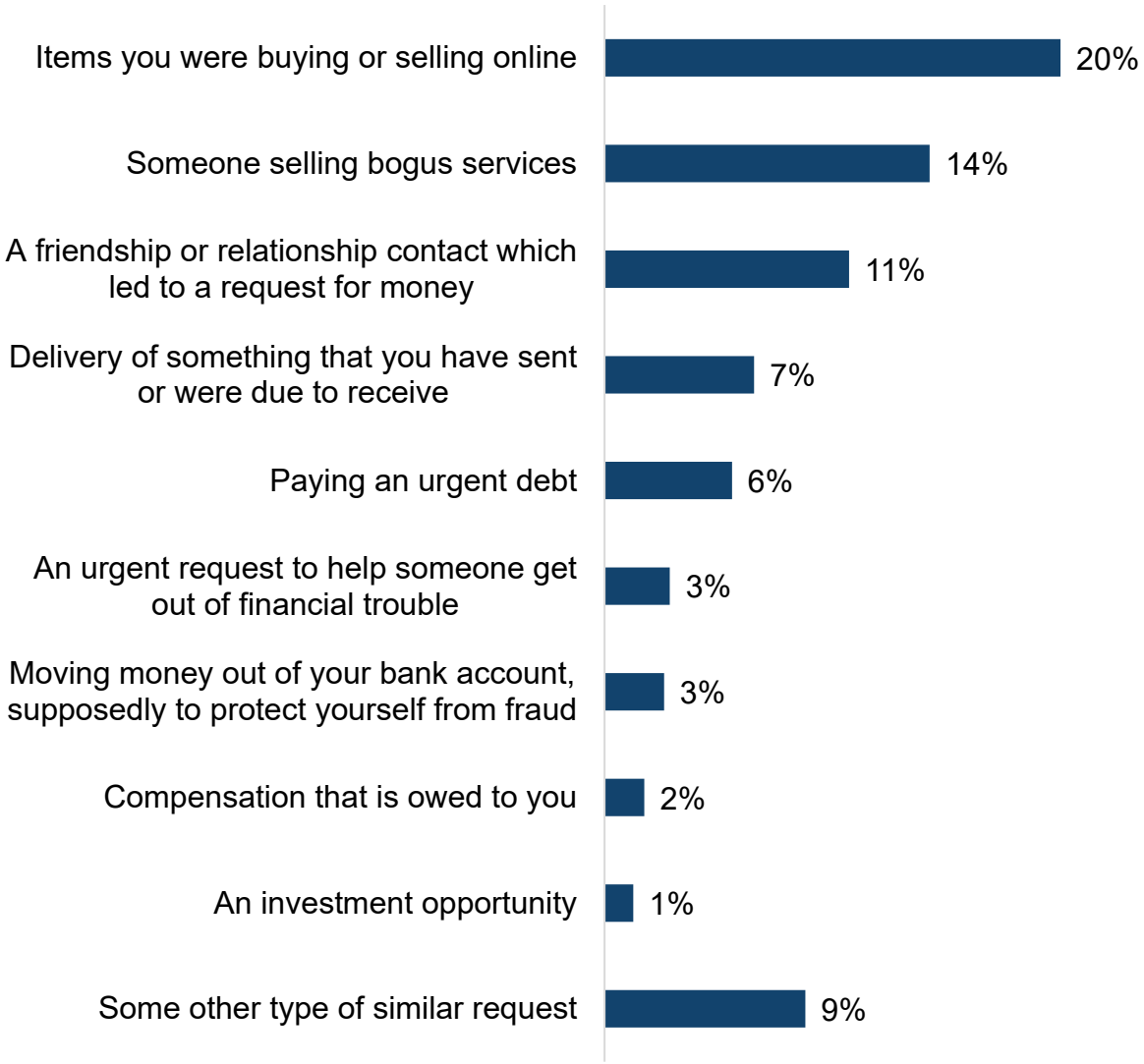
Variables: FHOWCONT2.

In terms of were the victim and perpetrator had contact, as shown in Figure 5.4, the most common reasons were:

- buying or selling online (20%)
- someone selling bogus services (14%)
- a friendship or relationship contact which led to a request for money (11%)

Figure 5.4: The most common reason for contact between the victim and perpetrator of fraud was for items being bought or sold online.

Proportion of reasons for contact between victim and perpetrators for incidents of fraud.



Variables: FMFRDTYP2_01 – FMFRDTYP2_17.

In fewer than one-in-ten cases (8%) the victim could say anything about the person who committed the crime. Given the small numbers involved it is not currently possible to provide any detailed information on the characteristics of perpetrators of fraud.

How much money or property did victims of fraud lose?

There are a range of ways in which a victim could have experienced loss. Examples include loss of personal information, money including cash or from bank accounts, or some form of property.

In some instances of fraud anything lost by the victim may be refunded. However, even in cases where the total loss was refunded in full, the SCJS still considers these crimes as having a loss associated with them.

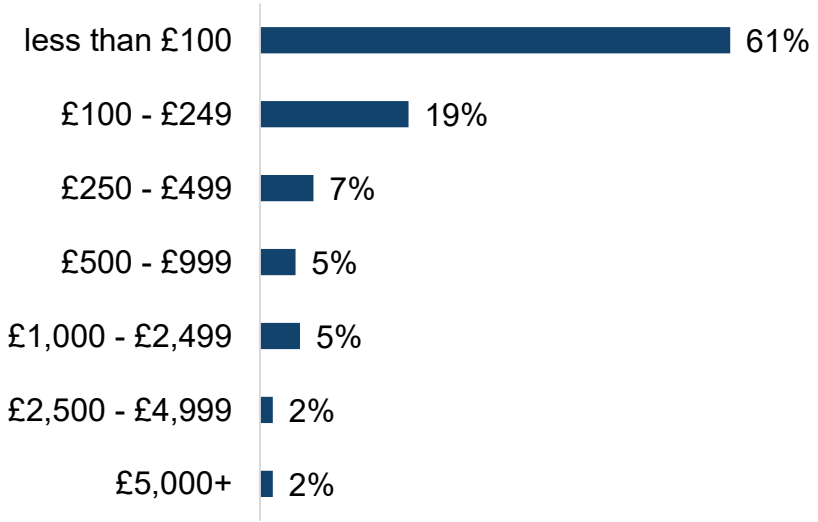
Overall, in over two-thirds (68%) of fraud in 2024/25, the victim incurred the loss of money or property. In most cases (93%), the victim said that it was money that was lost. This was followed by 11% who said they lost personal information and 3% who said they lost property.

As shown in Figure 5.5, where money was lost, in just over three-fifths (61%) of fraud, the victim lost less than £100. A further 31% lost between £100 and £999. While the remaining 9% of victims lost more than £1,000 including 2% who lost more than £5,000. The median amount lost in 2024/25 due to crimes of fraud was £65.

The proportion of people who lost less than £100 increased from 46% to 61% between 2023/24 and 2024/25. The increase in the overall victimisation rate of fraud and computer misuse can partially be explained by this increase in cases of fraud where the victim lost less than £100.

Figure 5.5: Where some money was lost in a fraud crime, just over three-fifths lost £100 or less, with one-in-ten losing more than £1,000.

Financial impact of fraud crimes where money was lost.



Variable: FQLOSS4_2.

Where victims lost money, the SCJS estimates that in the majority of cases (72%) they were refunded in full, and in 2% they were partially refunded. In just under a quarter (24%) of cases the victim was not refunded at all. In the remaining 1%, the cases had not yet been resolved at the time of interview.

What proportion of fraud was reported to the police or another organisation?

In 2024/25, one-in-twenty (5%) crimes of fraud were reported to the police. This rate was lower than both property (27%) and violent (30%) crimes in the latest year.

When asked why they did not report the incident to the police, the most commonly given reasons were:

- reported incident to other authority (e.g. the bank/financial institution) (35% of cases)
- the police could have done nothing (21%)
- thought incident would be reported by other authority (e.g. the bank/financial institution) (17%)
- the police would not have bothered/not been interested (13%)
- too trivial/not worth reporting (13%)
- dealt with the matter myself/ourselves (13%)

In 2024/25, it was found to be much more common for an incident of fraud to be reported to a bank than the police. Over three-quarters (78%) of all fraud crimes were reported to a bank, building society or credit card company.

How does fraud with loss compare to fraud without loss?

As mentioned earlier, in addition to comparing different types of fraud, it is also possible to discuss the characteristics of fraud in terms of the elements that are common to all subgroups. This allows us to ask questions such as whether there is a difference between fraud which involved a loss to the victim and those that didn't.

In most fraud incidents (68%), the victim experienced some form of loss, such as money or personal information, with the remaining 32% of victims experiencing no loss.

The victimisation rate for frauds that involved loss was higher (6.7%) compared to those without loss (1.7%). This was true for all demographic groups except for those aged between 16 and 24 where there was no difference.

As with fraud overall, respondents with a disability were more likely to experience fraud with loss than respondents without a disability (9.5% compared to 5.7% respectively). However, respondents with and without a disability were equally likely to experience frauds without loss.

How does cyber-enabled fraud compare to non cyber-enabled fraud?

Just under a third (31%) of fraud incidents in 2023/24 were cyber-enabled, with the majority (69%) being not cyber-enabled.

There were no significant differences founds between any demographic groups for the victimisation rate of either cyber-enabled fraud on non cyber-enabled fraud.

Overall, it was found that it was more common to be the victim of a non cyber-enabled fraud (6.9% of people) than a cyber-enabled fraud (3.1%). As above, this was true for all demographic groups except for respondents aged between 16 and 24 where there was no difference.

What can the SCJS tell us about incidents of computer misuse?

As the number of respondents who disclosed they were a victim of computer misuse was low (less than 100) it is difficult for us to provide a detailed analysis of the nature of these crimes such as victim demographics. What follows is an initial summary of the information collected through these questions. We will continue to review this data in future years to see what additional information can be provided.

Victims of computer misuse only had any form of contact with the perpetrator in 6% of cases detected by the SCJS in 2024/25, and in only 4% of incidents the victim was able to say something about the offender that did it.

The majority of victims (68%) believed that what happened to them was a crime, however, with just over 1% deciding to report the matter to the police.

When asked why they did not report it to the police, the most commonly given reasons were:

- too trivial/not worth reporting (36%)
- dealt with the matter themselves (30%)
- police could have done nothing (25%)
- police would not have bothered/not been interested (20%)

Comparisons with other statistical sources of crime and victimisation

What sources can the SCJS be compared to?

This chapter presents comparisons of the Scottish Crime and Justice Survey (SCJS) to two other main sources of crime victimisation data.

The first is Recorded Crime in Scotland, which provides information on the number of crimes and offences recorded by the police in Scotland.

The second is the Crime Survey for England and Wales (CSEW), which is similar to the SCJS with both following on from the British Crime Survey (BCS). 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.

How does the SCJS compare to Police Recorded Crime?

This section compares the Scottish Crime and Justice Survey (SCJS) and police recorded crime. It examines the scale of the difference between the volume of property and violent crimes that are recorded by the police and the level of those crimes that are estimated by the SCJS to be experienced by the adult population living in private households in Scotland.

A range of information is provided based on analysis of a sub-set of comparable property and violent crimes.[27] This sub-set is made up of three broadly comparable categories from both sources: violent crime, acquisitive crime and vandalism.[28] These crimes are coded in the survey in approximately the same way as they would be recorded by the police.

The comparable crime group excludes fraud and computer misuse as only a very small proportion (5.4% in 2024/25, as detailed in the Fraud and computer misuse chapter) of these incidents are reported to the police. This follows a similar approach to the Crime Survey for England and Wales.[29]

The first part of this chapter examines trends in these two sources over time, with a focus on each broad category. This is followed by a comparison of police recorded crime with the proportion of SJCS property and violent crimes estimated to have

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

[28] The Technical Report provides more information about the crime groups used in this report, including the comparable crime sub-set.

[29] Exploring diverging trends between the Crime Survey for England and Wales and police recorded crime - Office for National Statistics.

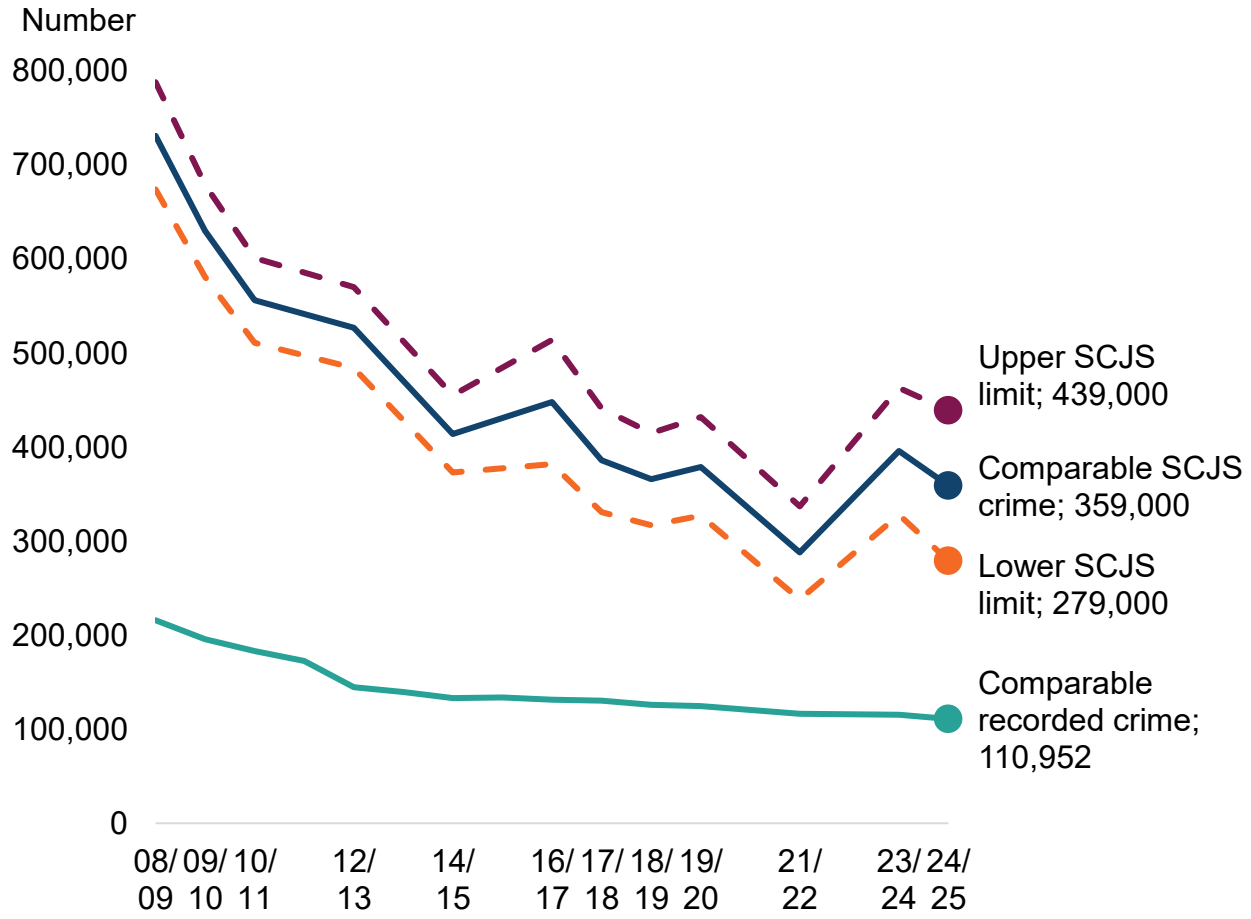
been reported to the police. A comparison of the strengths and weaknesses of each source is included at the end of this section.

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

Of the 611,000 property and violent crimes estimated by the 2024/25 SCJS, around three-fifths (359,000) can be compared with police recorded crimes. Figure 6.1 demonstrates the scale of the difference between the two series of crime statistics. In 2024/25, the police recorded 110,952 crimes and offences[30] in the comparable sub-set, representing approximately three-tenths (31%) of the number of crimes in the SCJS comparable sub-set.

Figure 6.1: Both the SCJS and police recorded crime show a long-term decrease in the number of crimes in the comparable subset, but the SCJS has remained at a similar level to 2023/24.

Comparable police recorded crime and SCJS estimates, 2008/09 to 2024/25.



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 because the survey is able to capture crime which does not come to the attention of

[30] Please see the Technical Report for more information on offence codes and crime groups.

the police. SCJS respondents were asked if the police came to know about an incident and found that over a third (36%) of all crime in the comparable sub-set came to the attention of the police in 2024/25.

Both the SCJS and police recorded crime provide evidence of large decreases in crime in Scotland over the longer term. As shown in Table 6.1, the SCJS estimates that the volume of comparable crime fell by 51% between 2008/09 and 2024/25, whilst comparable recorded crime is down by 49% over the same period.

Since 2023/24, comparable recorded crime fell 4% whilst SCJS comparable crime showed no change. This was also true when comparing to 2021/22, with recorded crime showing a 5% reduction and SCJS comparable crime showing no change.

Table 6.1: Since 2008/09 comparable SCJS and police recorded crime figures have both fallen by around a half but have shown more stability in recent years.

Comparable crime group estimates (2008/09, 2021/22 to 2024/25).

	Estimated number of comparable crimes				Change since		
	2008/09	**2021/22**	**2023/24**	**2024/25**	**08/09**	**21/22**	**23/24**
Comparable SCJS crime	731,000	288,000	396,000	359,000	Down 51%	No change	No change
Comparable recorded crime	215,901	116,547	115,276	110,952	Down 49%	Down 5%	Down 4%
SCJS acquisitive crime	64,000	29,000	33,000	42,000	Down 35%	No change	No change
Recorded acquisitive crime	27,527	13,049	12,952	11,204	Down 59%	Down 14%	Down 13%
SCJS violent crime	317,000	134,000	231,000	199,000	Down 37%	No change	No change
Recorded violent crime	82,855	63,018	64,449	64,022	Down 23%	Up 2%	Down 1%
SCJS vandalism	350,000	125,000	131,000	119,000	Down 66%	No change	No change
Recorded vandalism	105,519	40,480	37,875	35,726	Down 66%	Down 12%	Down 6%

Sources: SCJS; Police recorded crime

Note: changes in SCJS results specified were statistically significant.

Acquisitive crime

The acquisitive comparable crime group includes bicycle theft, housebreaking and theft of a motor vehicle. In 2024/25 the SCJS estimated that there were 42,000 acquisitive crimes (+/- 14,000, meaning that the true number of acquisitive crimes experienced by the population is estimated to be between 28,000 and 55,000[31]). The police recorded 11,204 acquisitive crimes in 2024/25.

Both SCJS estimates and recorded acquisitive crime figures decreased between 2008/09 and 2024/25 (by 35% and 59% respectively). Since 2023/24, the SCJS detects no change in the volume of acquisitive crime, and police recorded acquisitive crime decreased by 13%. 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 years.[32]

Violent crime

Violent comparable crime includes serious assault, minor assault[33] and robbery. In 2024/25, the SCJS estimates that there were 199,000 violent crimes (+/- 75,000, meaning that the true number of violent crimes experienced by the population is estimated to be between 124,000 and 274,000), while the police recorded 64,022.

Table 6.1 shows that the two sources of comparable violent crime data saw decreases over the longer term. Between 2008/09 and 2024/25, both SCJS estimates and police recorded violent crime figures have shown a decrease (37% and 23% respectively).[34] Since 2023/24, the SCJS detects no change in the volume of violent crime, and police recorded violent crime decreased by 1%. This was also true when comparing to 2021/22, where SCJS violent crime showed no change while police recorded violence increased by 2%.

Further information on SCJS violent crime is provided in the Violent crime chapter.

Vandalism

The vandalism comparable crime group includes motor vehicle vandalism and property vandalism. In 2024/25, the SCJS estimated that there were 119,000 instances of vandalism (+/- 29,000, meaning that the true number of vandalism

[31] Upper and lower estimates are calculated on unrounded figures, then rounded when presented.

[32] Comparable acquisitive crime is rarer than vandalism and violent crime (estimates of acquisitive crime are based on 55 victim forms in the 2024/25 SCJS sample, compared to 115 violent crime victim forms and 141 vandalism victim forms). Consequently, there is greater uncertainty around the SCJS estimate of acquisitive crime and less power to identify significant changes over time.

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

[34] Violent crime estimates are based on a relatively small number of respondents (115) who disclosed experiences of violent crimes in 2024/25.

crimes experienced by the population is estimated to be between 90,000 and 147,000), while the police recorded 35,726 vandalism crimes in 2024/25.

The trends in comparable crimes of vandalism across both the SCJS and police recorded crime between 2008/09 and 2024/25 are similar – with both showing a decrease of 66%. Since 2023/24, the SCJS detects no change in the volume of vandalism, and police recorded vandalism decreased by 6%. This was also true when comparing to 2021/22, where SCJS vandalism showed no change while police recorded vandalism decreased by 12%.

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

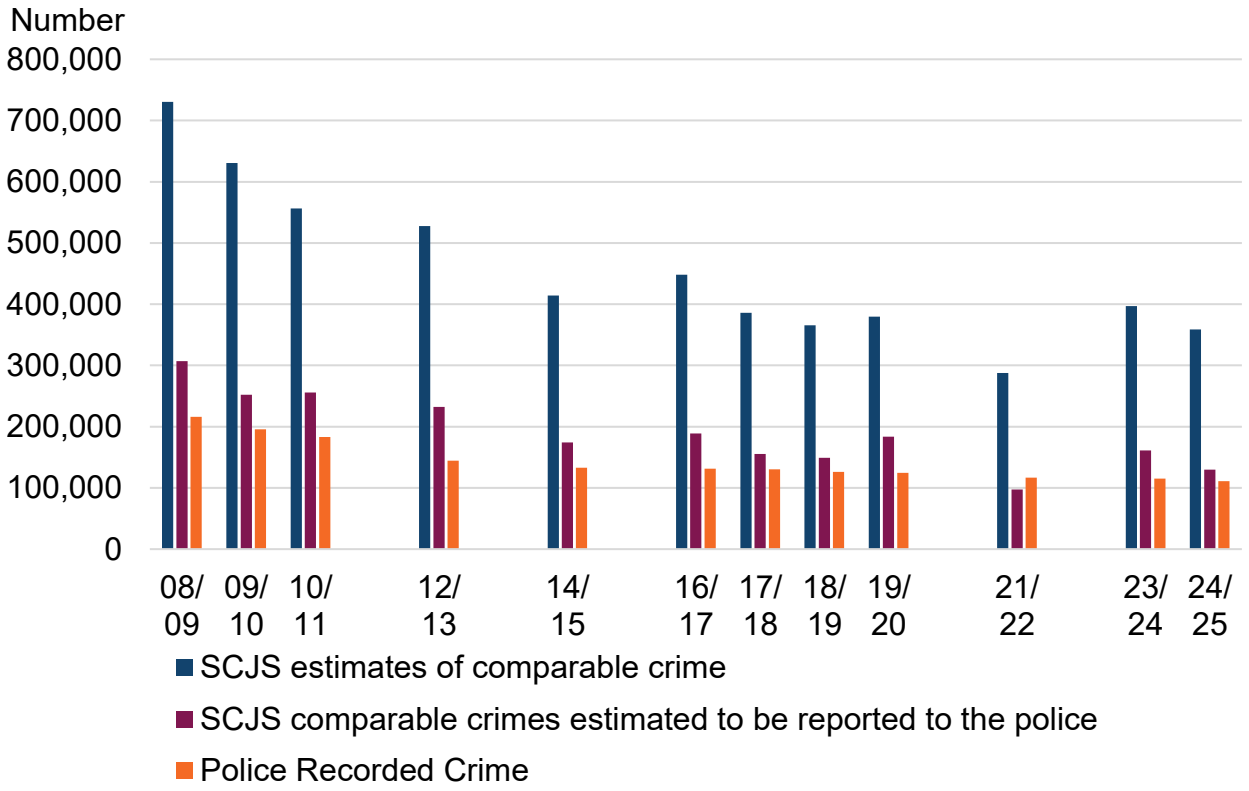
SCJS respondents are asked whether the police 'came to know about' the crime, either from them or somebody else. This allows comparisons to be made between comparable crime estimated to have been reported to the police in the SCJS (i.e. a sub-set of comparable crime), and police recorded crime figures.

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, as well as the broad relationship between police recorded crime figures and SCJS estimates.

Figures from the 2024/25 SCJS indicate that of the 359,000 property and violent crimes in the overall sub-set, around 130,000 (36%) were estimated to have been reported to the 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.

Figure 6.2: In 2024/25, the SCJS estimates that 85% of comparable crime reported to the police was recorded by the police.

Recorded crime, SCJS crime and SCJS crime reported to the police, in the sub-set of comparable crimes, 2008/09 to 2024/25.



Sources: SCJS, Police recorded crime

In 2024/25, the police recorded 110,952 crimes in the comparable category. It is therefore estimated that 85% of comparable SCJS crime estimated to be reported to the police was recorded by the police in 2024/25. This figure is similar to all survey years from 2008/09 with the exception of 2021/22, which ranged from 70% to 86%.

Strengths and limitations of the SCJS and police recorded crime data

There are a number of differences between the SCJS and police recorded crime data that are important to bear in mind when making comparisons between the two sources.

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 2024/25 SCJS includes crimes experienced by SCJS respondents over a 24 month 'reference period'.[35] The recorded crime dataset used for comparison is Recorded Crime in Scotland 2024/25, which covers crimes recorded between 1 April 2024 and 31 March 2025, making it the dataset which best aligns with the latest fieldwork period.

How does the SCJS compare with the Crime Survey for England and Wales?

Victimisation surveys are conducted globally to gather data on crime experiences, but comparing results can be challenging due to methodological differences. That said, the SCJS is similar to the Crime Survey for England and Wales (CSEW). 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 elements for the volume of crime experienced by the adult population, we assess that the results on 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.

Further information on the similarities and differences between the SCJS and CSEW are provided in the SCJS 2024/25 Technical Report.

In 2024/25, the latest comparable survey period, overall crime victimisation rates in Scotland (including fraud and computer misuse) were higher to those in England and Wales (20.8% and 17.1%). This is due to a higher rate of crime victimisation for fraud and computer misuse (11.5% compared to 8.2% in 2024/25).

When looking at property and violent crime alone, the victimisation rate for both Scotland and England and Wales have both fallen significantly over the longer

[35] 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 2024/25 extends over 24 months (from April 2023 to March 2025) 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.

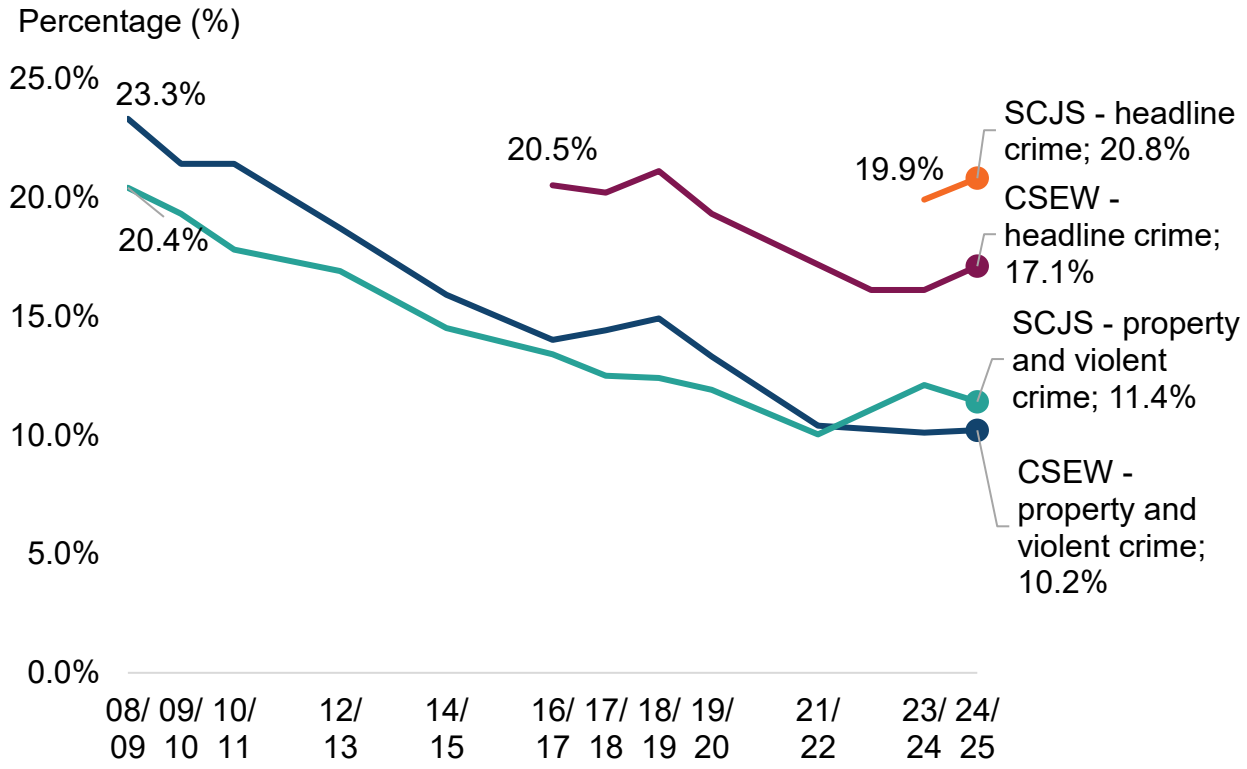
term, as shown in Figure 6.3. In 2024/25, the rate in Scotland was similar to that in England and Wales (11.4% compared with 10.2%). This differs from the position in 2023/24 when the figure for Scotland was higher but is more aligned to previous surveys where Scotland either had a similar or lower victimisation rate.

This is the second year we have included a measure of fraud and computer misuse victimisation, and on both occasions the resulting estimates for Scotland are higher than in England and Wales. Given the collection of this information is still at a relatively early stage compared to property and violent crime victimisation, future surveys will still be required to determine if this a long standing difference.

As part of the quality assurance process for the forthcoming third sweep (for 2025/26) we will also undertake a more detailed review of victim forms to determine if anything further can be provided to users about the nature of fraud and computer misuse victimisation in Scotland, and how it compares to England and Wales.

Figure 6.3: Victimisation 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 2024/25.



Sources: SCJS, CSEW.

CSEW prevalence – Base: year ending March 2025 (31,532)

Public perceptions of policing

High level summary

Public views on the overall performance of the police in their local area and their effectiveness across a range of measures show mixed results – many remain broadly positive but they have been falling in recent years. Views on whether the police treat people fairly or focus on issues important to the community are at similar levels to 2009/10 but have generally fallen since 2019/20.

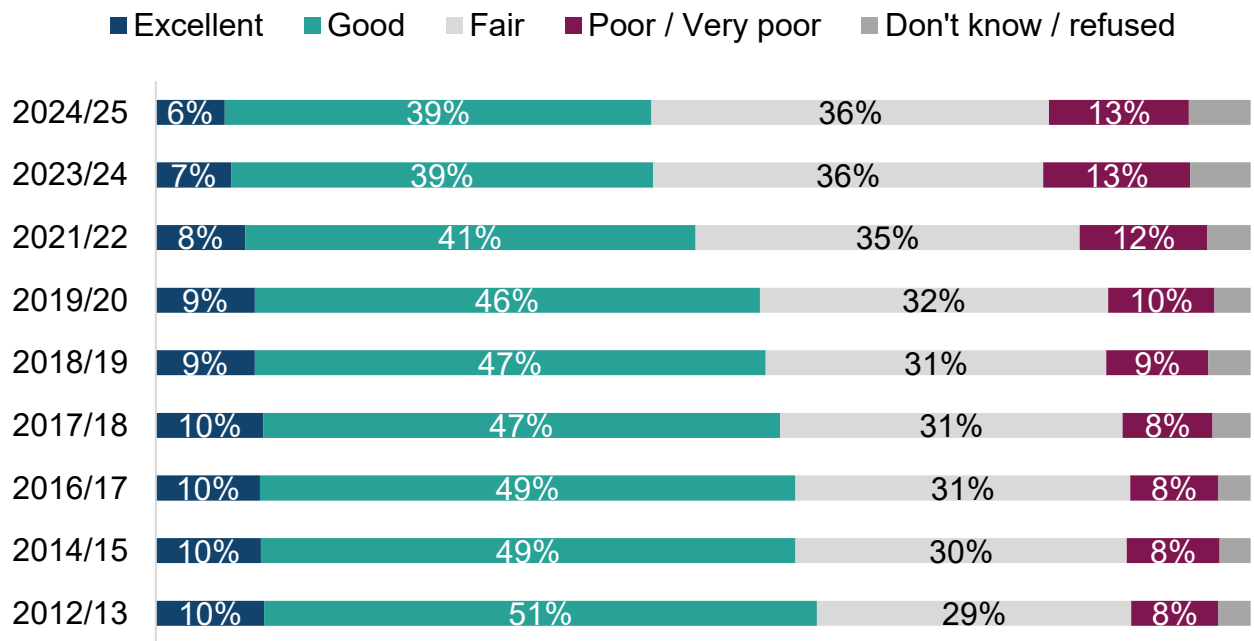
What did the public think about the overall performance of the police?

Fewer than half of adults in Scotland (45%) believed the police in their local area were doing an ‘excellent’ or ‘good’ job in 2024/25. This is a decrease from 61% when the question was first asked in 2012/13, however has remained the same since 2023/24.

The proportion of people saying the police were doing a poor or very poor job remains small but has increased over time: from 8% in 2012/13 to 13% in 2024/25. Meanwhile over one-third (36%) thought the police were doing a ‘fair’ job.

Figure 7.1: Fewer than half of adults in Scotland believed the police in their local area were doing an ‘excellent’ or ‘good’ job in 2024/25.

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



Variable: QRATPOL.

The only demographic difference identified for those who thought the police were doing an excellent or good job was by age, with aged 60 years and over less likely (40%) to agree the police were doing a good or excellent job compared with younger adults aged 16–24 (53%) and 25–44 (49%).

Since 2012/13, confidence in the police has decreased across all demographic groups covered by the survey, with the exception of the 16-24 age group. The largest decline was observed among those aged 60 and over, down by 24 percentage points from 64% in 2012/13 to 40% in 2024/25. Other groups experienced declines ranging from approximately 10 to 18 percentage points over the same period.

Further details of these changes in confidence levels over time can found in Annex table A13.

How confident were people in the ability of the police?

This section examines public confidence in the police's effectiveness across seven key areas, referred to as 'effectiveness measures':

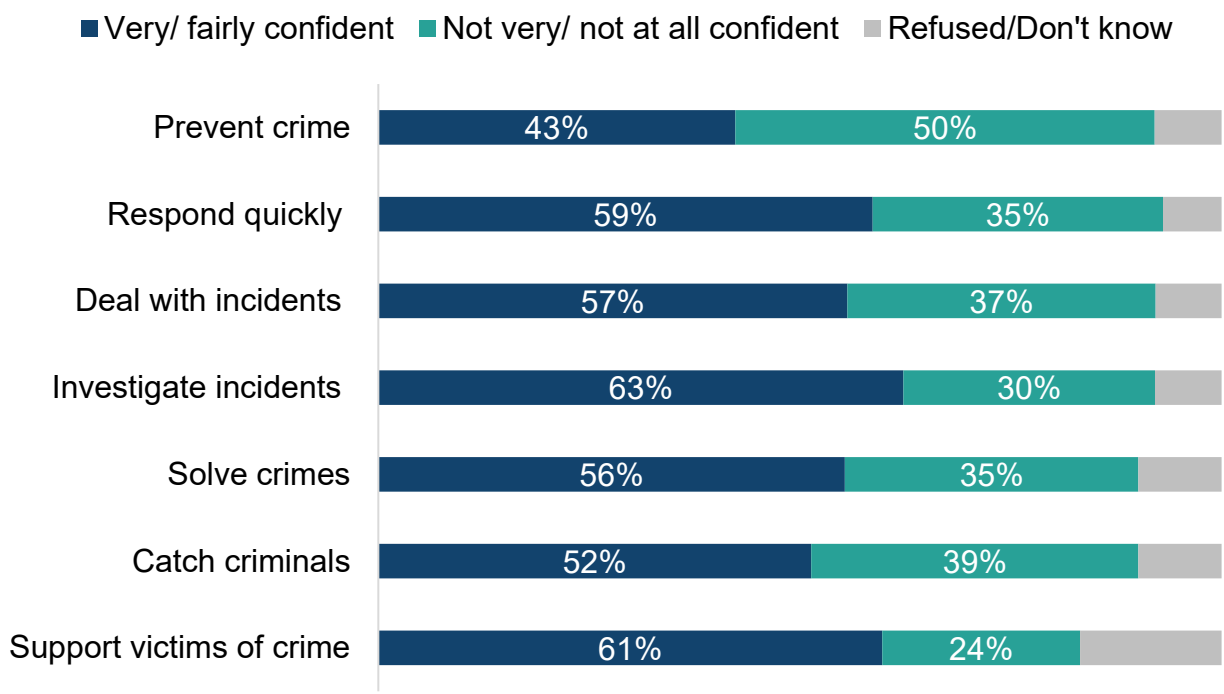
- preventing crime
- responding to calls and information
- dealing with incidents as they occur
- investigating incidents
- solving crimes
- catching criminals
- supporting victims of crime

The measure of confidence in the police's ability to support victims of crime was introduced in 2021/22, so data is only available from that year onward. As a result, trends over the longer term are only discussed for the six other measures introduced in 2008/09.

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 2024/25. Fewer than half of adults (43%) were very or fairly confident in the police's ability to prevent crime.

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.



QPOLCONF_01 – QPOLCONF_07.

As shown in Figure 7.3, when looking over the longer term, views of confidence in the ability of the police generally:

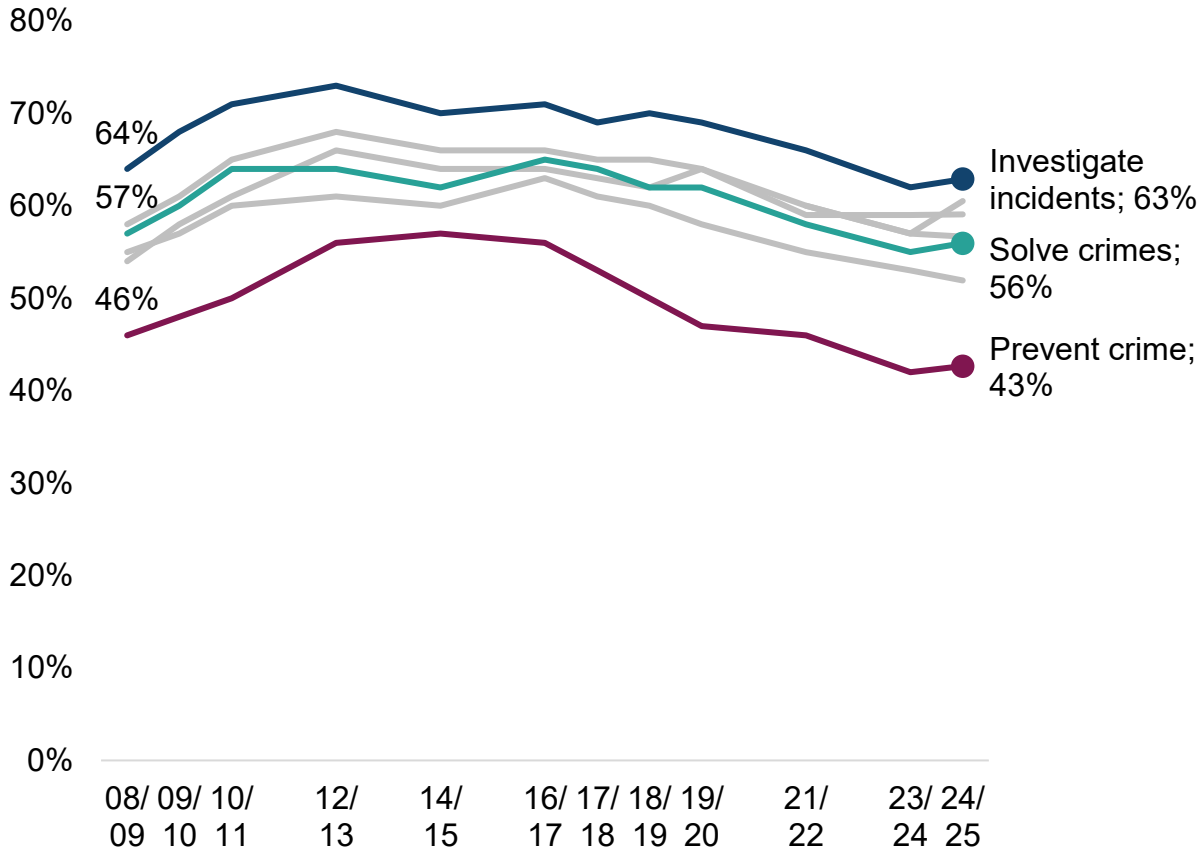
- increased between 2008/09 and 2012/13
- decreased between 2014/15 and 2023/24, with all measures decreasing since the pre-covid position in 2019/20

All six measures that were introduced in 2008/09 have remained stable since last year. The measure ‘support victims of crime’ has increased by 4% points since 2023/24 but is unchanged from when it was introduced in 2021/22.

The ability to prevent crime consistently received the lowest confidence rating, peaking at 57% in 2014/15 before falling to 42% in 2023/24, where it remains at a similar level in the most recent survey year.

Figure 7.3: Confidence in the ability of the police has decreased in recent years.

Proportion of adults who were very/fairly confident in the ability of the police to perform certain functions, with selected categories highlighted, 2008/09 to 2024/25.



Variables: QPOLCONF_01 – QPOLCONF_07.

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

Respondents[36] were asked whether they agreed or disagreed with eight statements about the police. These are grouped into three categories: 'fairness' (how fair the police are when carrying out their duties), 'community engagement' (how engaged the police are with the local community) and 'accountability' (are the police held to account for the services they provide).

For those who agreed with the statements introduced in 2009/10, most have remained at a similar position and showed no changed over this period. The exception is for 'police in this area are not dealing with the things that matter to people in this community' which has decreased by 7 percentage points (i.e. has improved) since 2009/10 but is unchanged in recent years. Three measures have

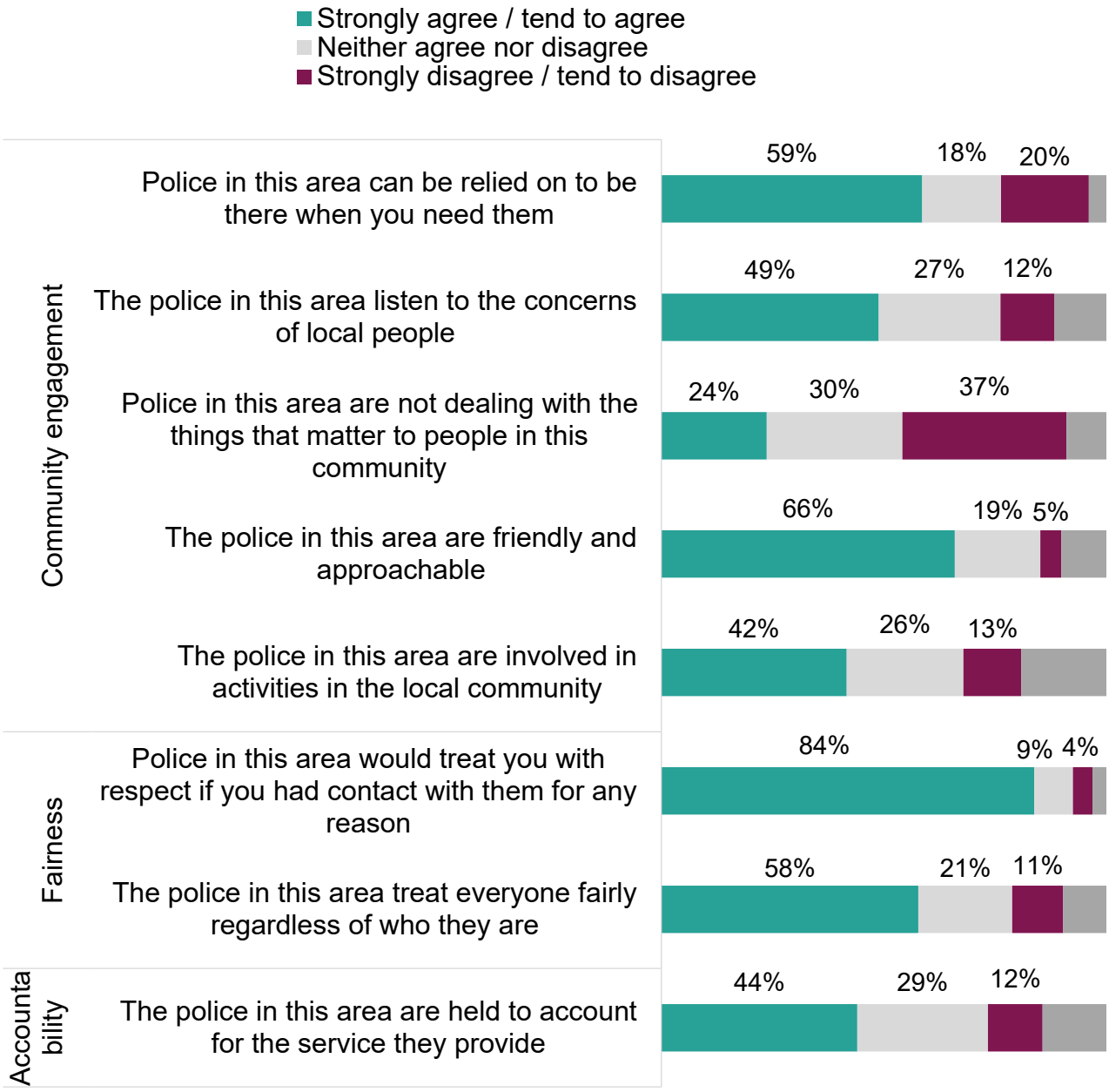
[36] The results presented below relate only to adults who are not in the police themselves, and who are not married to or living with a serving police officer.

decreased since 2019/20 – although these changes mostly took place between 2019/20 and 2021/22. All of these measures have been stable since 2023/24.

In terms of the three questions added in 2021/22, all three measures are unchanged between 2023/24 and the most recent survey year. However, when compared with when these questions were first introduced in 2021/22, two have increased (police are friendly and approachable, and police are involved in activities in the local community), while one (police are held to account for the service they provide) has shown no change over this period.

Figure 7.4: Respondents generally had positive or not strong views around how local police conducted their work.

Attitudes towards the police.



Variables: POLOPREL – POLOPACC

The Scottish Crime and Justice Survey collects information on the demographics of respondents. More information on how views on policing vary by age, sex, deprivation and rurality are available in Annex Tables A13 to A15.

Police presence and public awareness

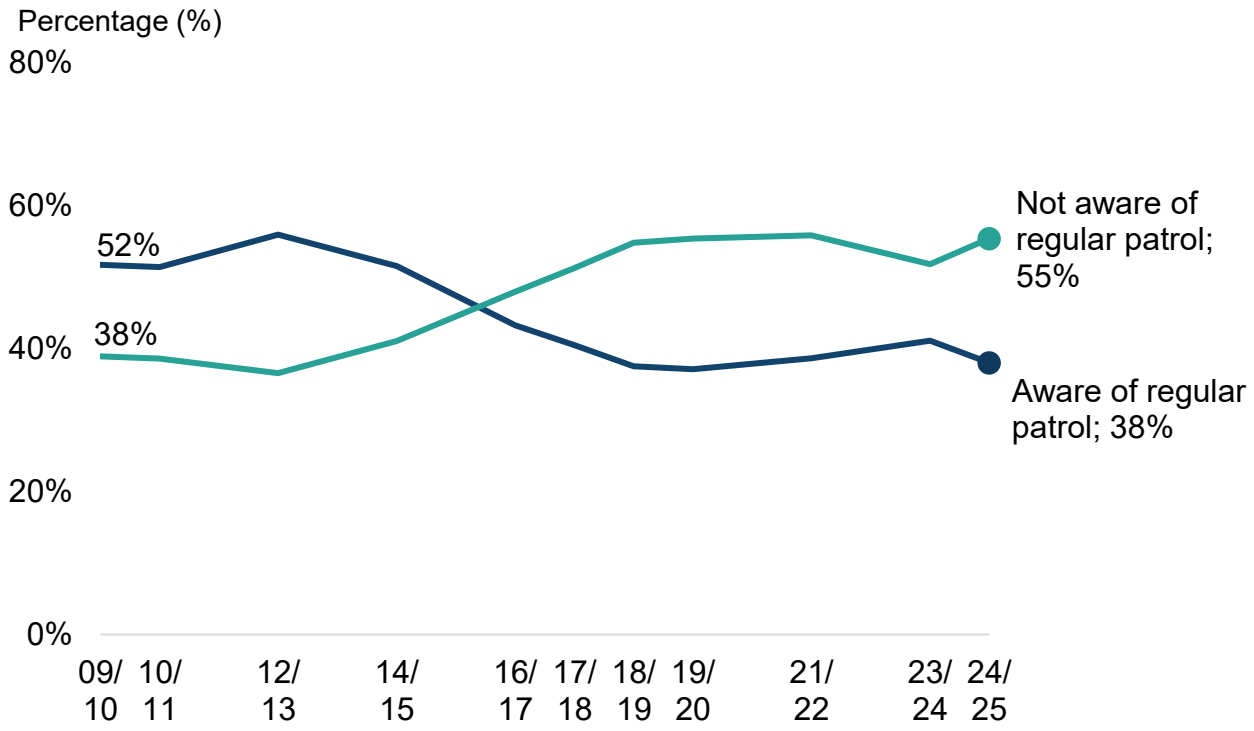
Over two-fifths of adults (44%) thought police presence was “about right”, while half (49%) felt it was insufficient. The proportion thinking it was “about right” was higher than in 2009/10 (38%), but has been stable in recent years. Perceptions of police presence varies:

- adults who were not disabled (49%) were more likely to believe the police presence is “about right” compared to those who were disabled (32%)
- those aged between 16 and 24 (70%) were more likely to believe the police presence is “about right” compared to those aged 60 and over (28%)
- the most common reason for believing police presence was insufficient was not seeing officers on foot (67%) or rarely seeing police at all (50%)
- those satisfied with police presence most often cited low crime levels (61%) or seeing police patrolling in cars (39%)

Almost two-fifths (38%) of adults were aware of police patrols in 2024/25. This declined from 52% in 2009/10, but is unchanged from last year.

Figure 7.5: The proportion of adults who were aware of regular patrols has fallen from a peak in 2012/13 but is unchanged in recent years.

Proportion of adults who said they were aware of regular police patrol in their area, 2009/10 to 2024/25.



Variable: POLPATR

How satisfied were people with their interactions with the police?

Most people who interacted with the police reported positive experiences, and most of these measures show little change since first asked in 2012/13. Some are worse than 2018/19 but that year had more positive estimates than other years so may be an outlier.

For people who had interaction with the police for any reason:

- 60% were satisfied with the way the police handled the matter - unchanged from recent surveys and 2012/13, however has fell from 70% since 2018/19
- 95% of respondents found the police polite, which is the same as last year
- 86% thought they were treated fairly by the police, which is unchanged from last year
- most people (72%) said their interaction with police did not change their view of the police at all. 11% had a less favourable view, and 17% had a more favourable view - both of which are unchanged from previous survey years

For victims of violent or property crime where police came to know about it, three in five (58%) respondents were satisfied. Satisfaction is unchanged from the first survey in 2008/09 and recent surveys in 2021/22 and 2023/24.

For other questions asked of these victims, most showed a positive view and no change from previous surveys since 2008/09, including:

- 76% agreed that police gave them an opportunity to explain what happened
- 48% agreed that the police gave them an opportunity to express views about how the case should be handled
- 69% agreed that the police dealt with the respondent fairly
- 57% agreed that overall the police dealt with the case fairly

Fewer than half (46%) received information or assistance from the police about the investigation (and the case). Though unchanged in recent years the latest figure remains 10 percentage points lower than the highest recorded figure in 2017/18 (56%).

Other public attitude surveys on policing

The Scottish Police Authority (SPA) also conducts regular polling of Scottish adults (aged 16 and over) on policing in Scotland and related topics. The latest report, the ninth wave of polling, was published in March 2026. In this survey, respondents are asked how much trust and confidence they have in the police on a scale from 0 (‘no confidence/trust at all’) to 10 (‘completely confidence/trust’). The latest survey found that:

- trust in the police in Scotland overall was 6.05. This is down from the previous wave (November 2025), which recorded scores of 6.44
- confidence in the police in Scotland had an average rating of 5.23, also down from 5.69 in the previous wave
- 30% of respondents believed the police were doing a good job keeping their local community safe, down from 39% in November 2025

Police Scotland's Your Police Survey and Local policing user experience survey (as part of their wider User Experience Surveys) indicate general satisfaction with police responses, aligning with SCJS findings.

Public perceptions of the Scottish criminal justice system

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

Three quarters (75%) of adults said they know nothing or not very much about the criminal justice system, consistent with previous years. Only 3% reported knowing a lot.

Despite low self-reported knowledge, most respondents expressed confidence in the system's performance for most measures. However, all are unchanged from 2023/24, and four of the measures show decreasing confidence since 2021/22. For example:

- 74% were confident the system provides fair trials, unchanged from 2023/24 and 2021/22
- 69% believed everyone can access the criminal justice system if needed, unchanged from 2023/24 but down from 74% in 2021/22
- 57% were confident that the criminal justice system was effective in bringing people who commit crimes to justice, unchanged from 2023/24 and 2021/22.
- 53% felt that the criminal justice system provides victims of crime with the services and support they need, unchanged from 2023/24 and 2021/22

However, two measures had low levels of confidence:

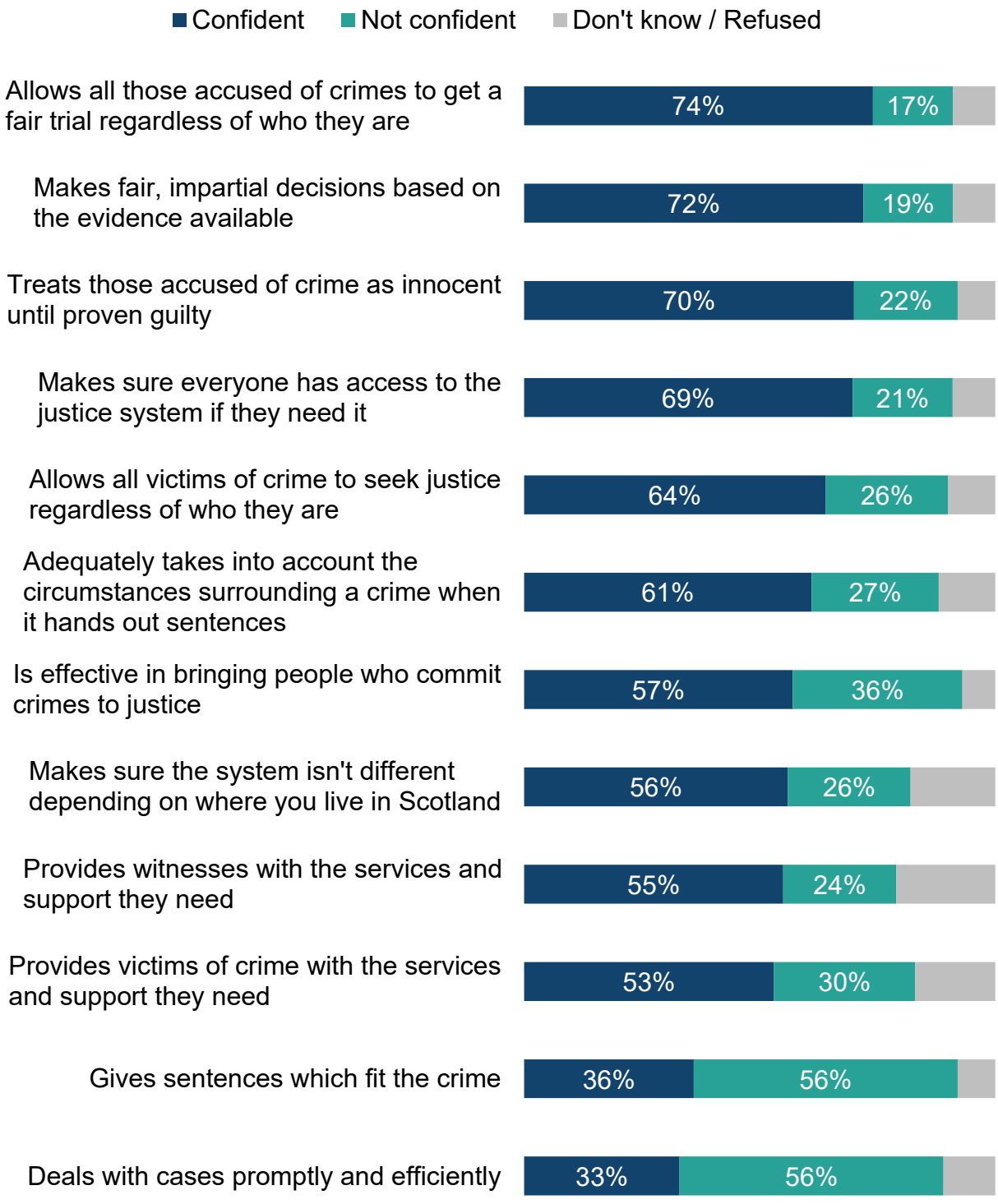
- 36% were confident that the criminal justice system gives sentences which fit the crime, unchanged from 2023/24 but down from 41% in 2021/22
- 33% were confident that it deals with cases promptly and efficiently, unchanged from 2023/24 but down from 41% in 2021/22

A significant proportion of respondents answered "don't know" to some questions, highlighting ongoing gaps in public understanding.

For a full breakdown of trends over time, see Annex Table A16.

Figure 8.1: The majority of adults 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.



Variables: QDCONF_01 – QDCONF_15.

Public awareness of the 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 is based on questions asked of one-third of the overall SCJS sample. Most of these results are not broken down for population sub-groups within this report, but full results for demographic and area characteristics are provided in the 2024/25 SCJS online data tables.

Did the public report knowing about the Crown Office and Procurator Fiscal Service?

The 2024/25 SCJS estimates that just under seven in ten adults (69%) in Scotland had heard of COPFS. This remains at a similar position to the previous survey in 2023/24 and when the questions were first asked in 2018/19. Awareness varied substantially by age, with younger adults much less likely to have heard of COPFS than older adults: around 34% of those aged between 16 and 24 reported awareness, compared with 79% of those aged 60 and over.

Among those who were aware of COPFS, around seven in ten (69%) reported knowing not very much or nothing at all about its work, while around three in ten (30%) said they knew a fair amount or a lot. Compared with earlier survey years, this represents a gradual shift towards higher self-reported knowledge, although most adults continue to report limited understanding of COPFS's work.

Do the public have an accurate understanding of the work of COPFS?

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 conduct against police officers.

Adults who said they were aware of COPFS were asked to indicate which roles they believed were carried out by COPFS, selecting multiple answers from a list of four options (two correct and two incorrect). In 2024/25, around seven in ten (72%) correctly identified COPFS's role in investigating and prosecuting crime, while just under half (47%) identified its role in investigating sudden and unexplained deaths.

However, misunderstandings about COPFS's responsibilities remain common. Over four in ten (44%) thought that COPFS decides on sentences for those found guilty of crime, and around 37% believed that COPFS represents victims of crime in court—neither of which are responsibilities of COPFS. Both of these measures have remained at a similar level since the questions were first introduced in 2018/19.

Have people had contact with COPFS and, if so, how satisfied were they with the way COPFS dealt with them?

Around one quarter (26%) of adults who had heard of COPFS reported that they had had contact with COPFS at some point, including for professional reasons. This has remained at a similar level since 2018/19 when the questions were first introduced.

The most common ways in which adults reported contact with COPFS in 2024/25 were:

- in another professional capacity (32%)
- as a witness of crime (30%)
- as a victim of crime (22%)
- as the accused (14%)

Other forms of contact are shown in Figure 9.1.

Among those who had contact with COPFS, around six in ten (63%) said they were satisfied with the way COPFS dealt with them the last time they had contact. Around one in five (22%) were dissatisfied, while around 14% said they were neither satisfied nor dissatisfied. Overall levels of satisfaction were broadly similar to recent survey years.

Figure 9.1. Three-fifths of adults who had contact with COPFS did so as either a witness or in another professional capacity.

Ways in which people had contact with COPFS.

Variable: QCOP5.

Public perceptions of prisons and community sentences

How did the public view the prison system?

The SCJS explores attitudes towards prisons and community sentences, assessing public perceptions of sentencing and rehabilitation.

In 2024/25, the majority of adults agreed that:

- only serious offenders should go to prison (55%)
- homeless prisoners should be helped to find a place to live after they leave prison (91%)
- prisons should help prisoners change their behaviour rather than punish them (93%), provide support in order to prevent people committing more crime (94%) and work with other organisations to help prisoners fit back into the community (94%)

All of these measures remain unchanged since 2023/24, while two have increased slightly since 2021/22 (prisons should provide support in order to prevent people committing more crime and prisons should work with organisations to help prisoners fit back into the community).

Table 10.1: The vast majority of adults agreed that prisons should help or support prisoners to change their behaviour, reduce re-offending, fit back into the community and find a place to live if they are homeless.

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	55%	13%	31%	1%
Prisons should help prisoners change their behaviour rather than just punish them	93%	4%	3%	0%
Prisons should provide support in order to prevent people committing more crime	94%	3%	2%	0%
Prisons should work with other organisations in the community to help prisoners fit back into the community	94%	3%	2%	1%
Homeless prisoners should be helped to find a place to live after they leave prison	91%	5%	3%	1%

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. In 2024/25, most adults supported community sentences, specifically:

- 92% believed offenders should receive support (e.g., addiction, mental health, literacy) to prevent reoffending.
- 87% saw community service as a better response to minor crimes than short prison sentences.
- 74% felt those who fail to comply with sentences would be held accountable.
- 23% believed community sentences pose a risk to the public.

Only 11% of adults were aware of unpaid work placements in their area, but 75% of those who were aware felt their community benefited. This has remained at a similar level in all years since 2017/18 when these questions were first introduced.

Public perceptions of crime and safety

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

Over two-thirds (72%) of adults in 2024/25 said that the crime rate in their local area had decreased or stayed the same over the last couple of years. This figure is unchanged from the position in 2023/24 but is higher than in 2008/09 (69%), as shown in Figure 11.1.

Overall, the majority (67% of adults) believed that the crime rate in their local area had 'stayed the same', higher than the 60% in 2008/09 but unchanged since 2023/24. Around a quarter of adults (24%) thought the amount of crime in their local area had increased in the last two years, unchanged from the position in 2023/24.

The proportion of adults saying the local crime rate had decreased or stayed the same varies across demographic groups – for instance:

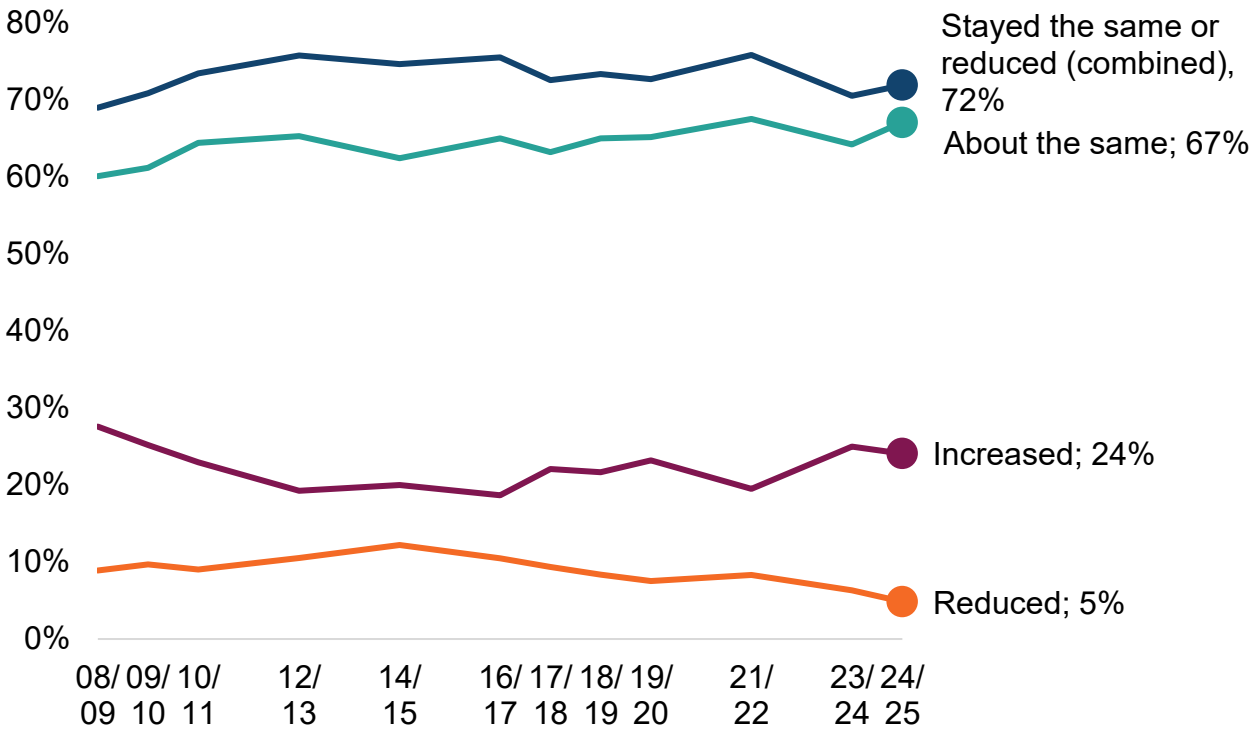
- fewer females than males (68% compared to 77%)
- fewer adults with disabilities than without disabilities (66% compared to 74%)
- fewer adults living in urban areas than those living in rural areas (71% compared to 78%)
- fewer victims of property or violent crimes than those who were not victims of these crimes (57% compared to 74%)[37]

Further breakdowns for demographic groups are provided in Annex Table A17. It shows most groups have remained at a similar level to 2023/24, with the exception of those living in the 15% most deprived areas (which increased from 62%). Since 2008/09, most groups are at a similar level with some increasing, specifically males, those without disabilities and those living in urban areas.

[37] The measure of feelings of safety for victims versus non-victims presented here includes only victims of property or violent crime and excludes fraud and computer misuse.

Figure 11.1: 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 fallen since 2021/22 and remains at a similar level to 2023/24.

Proportion of adults holding views on changes in the local crime rate in the last two years, 2008/09 to 2024/25.



Variable: QS2AREA.

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?

Around half of adults (48%) believed that crime had increased in Scotland overall in the last two years. This is higher than the quarter of adults (24%) who thought that crime in their local area had increased over the same period.[38] In other words,

[38] 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

respondents were much less likely to say crime had been stable or fallen nationally (43%) than in their local area (72%).

Table 11.1: The proportion of adults who thought the national crime rate had stayed the same or reduced over the last two years has fallen to a similar level to 2008/09.

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

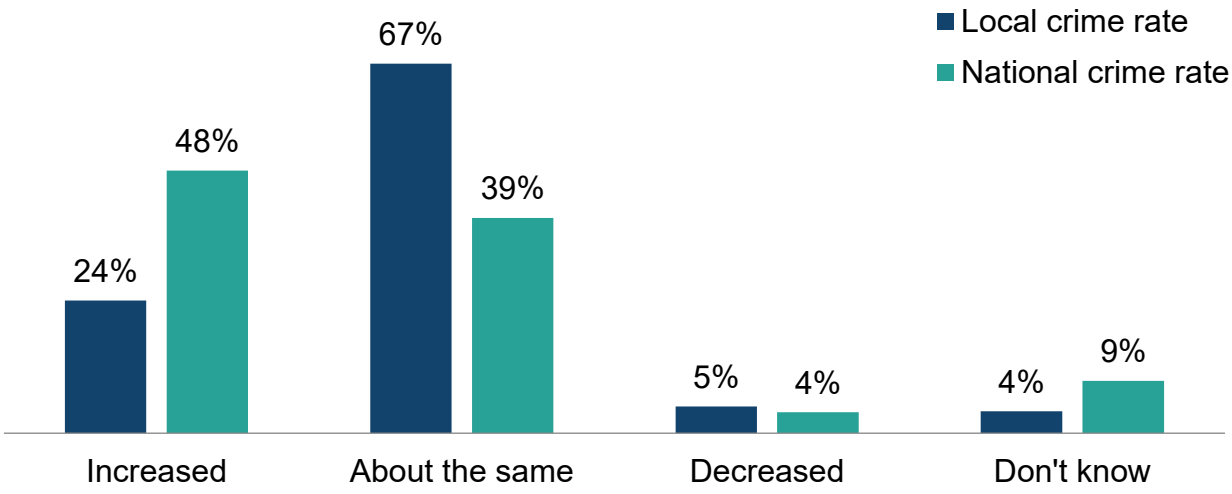
Percentage of adults holding view on change in national crime rate	2024/25	Change since 2008/09	Change since 2023/24
A lot more / a little more	48%	Down from 52%	No change
About the same	39%	Up from 36%	No change
A lot less / a little less	4%	No change	No change
Don't know / refused	9%	No change	No change
Combined: Less or same	43%	Up from 40%	No change
Number of respondents	4,950	16,040	4,970

Variable: QS2AREAS.

national crime perceptions, compared to using the full sample for such figures, therefore the full sample is used.

Figure 11.2: 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.



Variables: QS2AREA; QS2AREAS.

Further breakdowns and trends within groups over time are provided in Annex Table A18.

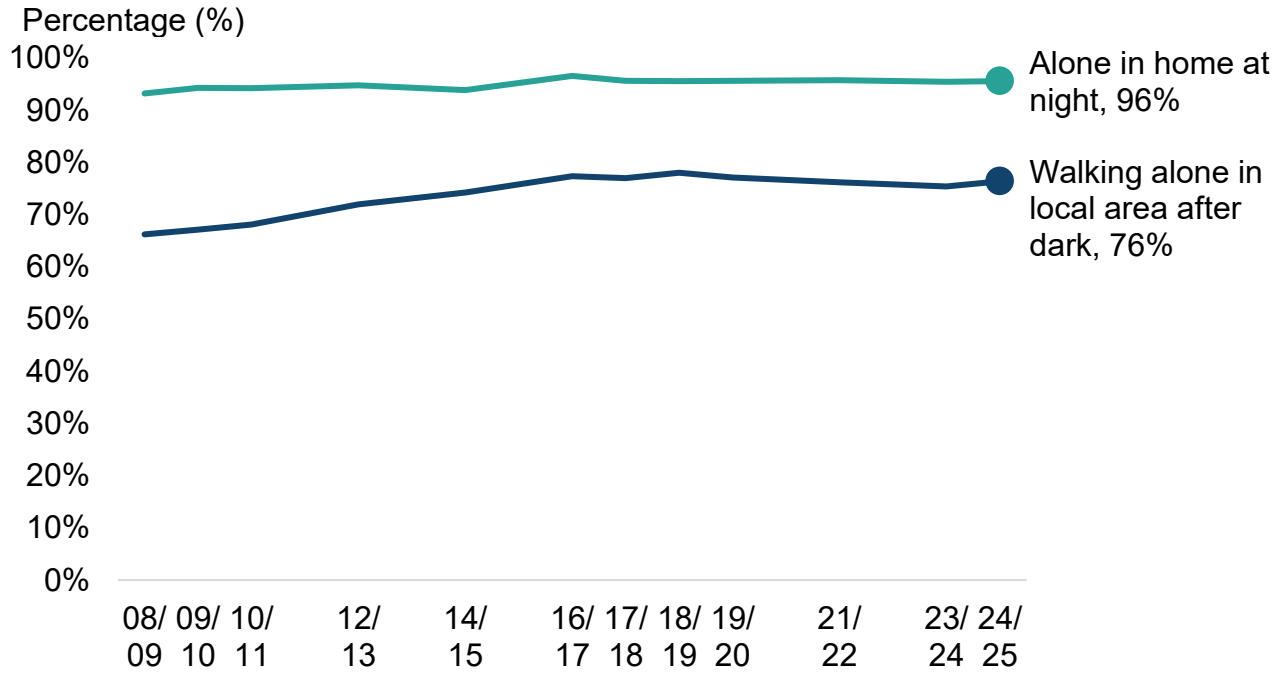
How safe did the public feel?

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 11.3 below.

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 11.3: 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 2024/25.



Variables: QSFDARK; QSFNIGH.

Latest figures from the Crime Survey for England and Wales found a similar proportion of adults (78%) felt safe walking alone at night in the year ending March 2025.[39]

As shown in Figure 11.4, while the majority of adults across a range of population subgroups reported feeling safe when walking alone in their local area after dark and despite increases across most groups since 2008/09, there continues to be variations by factors such as sex, age, area deprivation and rurality in 2024/25. In summary:

- females and those living in the most deprived areas of Scotland were less likely to feel safe than males and those living in the rest of Scotland, respectively
- those who are disabled were also less likely to feel safe than those who are not disabled, as were victims of property or violent crimes compared to non-victims[40] and those living in an urban area compared to a rural area

[39] Crime in England and Wales - Office for National Statistics (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 2024/25 SCJS, so the impact on the comparison highlighted would be minimal.

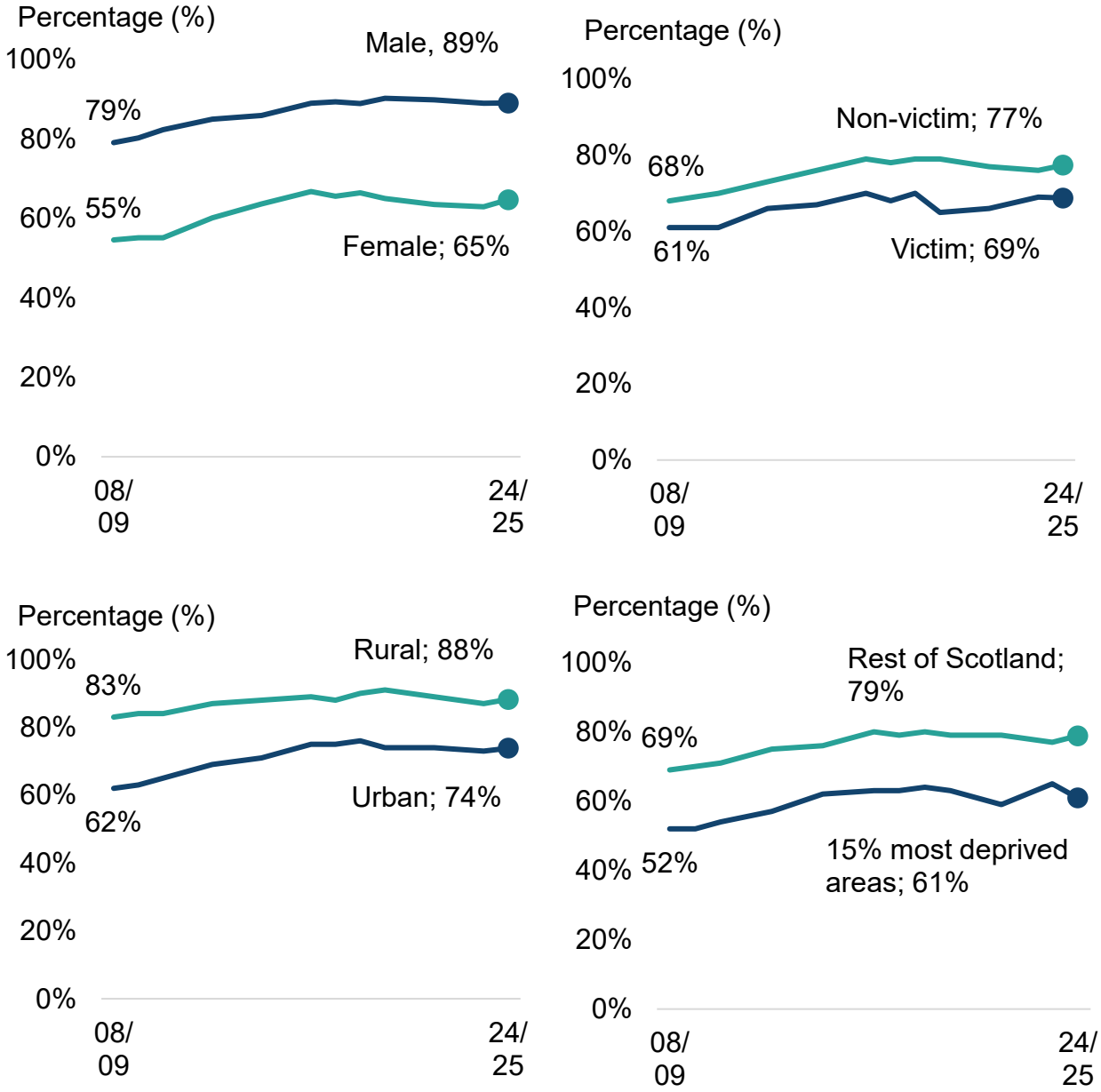
[40] The measure of feelings of safety for victims versus non-victims presented here includes only victims of property or violent crime and excludes fraud and computer misuse.

- those aged 60 or over were less likely to feel safe than any other age group

Full results for both questions with breakdowns for key groups, including over time, are provided in Annex Tables A19 and A20.

Figure 11.4: There have been long term improvements in feelings of safety across a wide range of demographic and area characteristics.

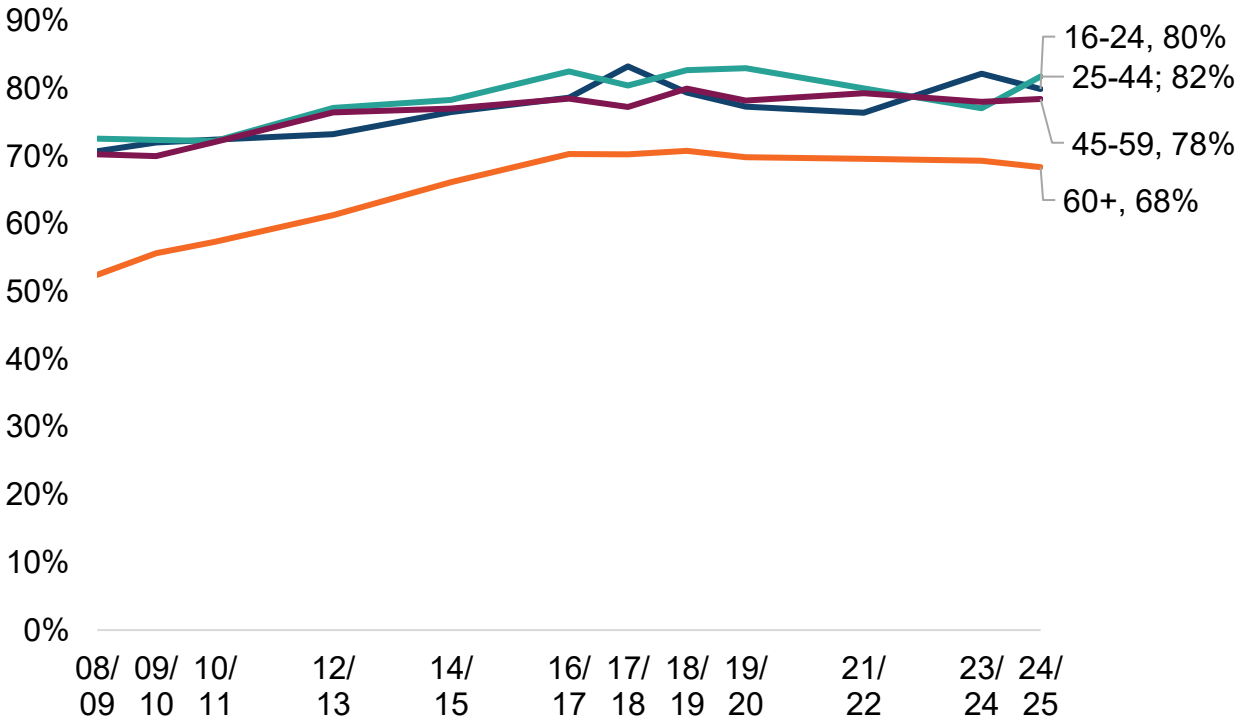
Feelings of safety when walking alone in the local area after dark by demographic and area characteristics, 2008/09 to 2024/25.



Variable: QSFDARK.

Figure 11.5: Adults aged 60 and older continue to feel less safe walking alone after dark compared to all other age groups, despite long term improvements in feelings of safety.

Feelings of safety when walking alone in the local area after dark, by age, 2008/09 to 2024/25.



Variable: QSFDARK.

Looking at how safe respondents feel when home alone at night, overall the overwhelming majority (96%) of respondents say that they feel safe. However, again, some differences exist amongst the various demographic or geographic categories. For example:

- 90% of victims of property or violent crimes reported feeling safe in their home alone (compared to 96% of those who were not victims of these crimes)
- 94% of females (compared to 97% of males)
- the following sub-groups were also less likely to feel safe when home alone at night: those living in the most deprived areas compared to the rest of Scotland; those living in urban areas compared to rural areas and disabled people compared to non-disabled people

Over the shorter-term, the SCJS detected no change in either measure of perceived safety between 2023/24 and 2024/25 amongst the population groups discussed above.

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 11.2 shows the issues asked about and the results for 2024/25.

Overall, most adults did not consider each issue to be a common occurrence in 2024/25, with some seen as more prevalent than others, for example:

- around half of adults (47%) noted street drinking / drunken behaviour or under age drinking as being very or fairly common. This remains unchanged from when the question was first asked in 2023/24.
- this was followed by drug dealing and drug abuse (45%) and then people behaving in an anti-social manner (37%)
- fewer people viewed various types of non-sexual violence as common, such as: violence between individuals or gangs (12%), people being physically assaulted (10%), people being mugged / robbed (6%), and people being physically attacked because of their skin colour, etc. (5%).

Table 11.2 also indicates that adults were generally either less or as likely to report problems as common in 2024/25 than when views were first collected on each matter. With the exception of the two measures discussed below, all have remained stable for all surveys since and including the pre-covid position in 2019/20.

Two measures have increased from the 2021/22 position, people behaving in an anti-social manner in public (from 32% to 37%) and people carrying knives (from 10% to 14%), they both remain similar to the pre-covid position in 2019/20 and the previous survey in 2023/24.

Full results for these questions with breakdowns for key groups, including over time, are provided in Annex Table A21.

Table 11.2: The perceived prevalence of various crime types is generally lower than in 2008/09, but has remained stable in recent years.

Percentage who thought issue was very or fairly common in their local area with percentage change, where significant, since 2008/09, 2021/22 and 2023/24.

		Change since		
Type of issue	**2024/25**	**2008/09**	**2021/22**	**2023/24**
Drug dealing and drug abuse	45%	No change	No change	No change
People behaving in an anti-social manner in public	37%	Down from 46%	Up from 32%	No change
Violence between groups of individuals or gangs	12%	Down from 26%	No change	No change
People being physically assaulted or attacked in the street or other public places	10%	Down from 19%	No change	No change
People having things stolen from their car or other vehicles	13%	Down from 20%	No change	No change
People having their car or other vehicles stolen	9%	Down from 15%	No change	No change
People being mugged or robbed	6%	Down from 10%	No change	No change
People being physically attacked because of their skin colour, ethnic origin or religion	5%	No change	No change	No change
People being sexually assaulted	5%	No change	No change	No change
	2024/25	**2009/10**	**2021/22**	**2023/24**
People carrying knives	14%	Down from 22%	Up from 10%	No change
	2024/25	**2012/13**	**2021/22**	**2023/24**
Deliberate damage to cars or other vehicles	14%	Down from 25%	No change	No change
Deliberate damage to people's homes by vandals	11%	No change	No change	No change
	2024/25	**2016/17**	**2021/22**	**2023/24**
People buying or selling smuggled or fake goods	13%	No change	No change	No change

Variable: QACO.

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

In 2024/25, four questions were introduced into the survey asking about other issues and whether they are common in the respondents local area. The first findings from these questions suggest that:

- 42% of adults said that rubbish or litter lying around was very or fairly common
- 41% said that animal nuisance such as noise or dog fouling was very or fairly common
- 30% said that people causing a nuisance with motorised vehicles (including cars, mopeds scooters) was very or fairly common
- 14% said that noisy neighbours or regular loud parties were very or fairly common
- 11% said that neighbour disputes were very or fairly common

How concerned were the public about experiencing crime?

In line with findings in previous years, in 2024/25 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.[41] More specifically, around half (52%) of adults said they were worried about someone using their credit or bank details to obtain money, goods or services, whilst two-fifths (43%) were worried about their identity being stolen. By comparison, 18% of adults were worried about being physically assaulted or attacked in the street or other public place, whilst 14% were concerned about being sexually assaulted.

In addition to the above issues, three further questions were included in the previous survey questionnaire for the first time. In 2024/25, the results of these questions were that:

- 24% of adults said they were worried about being followed by someone in a manner which caused fear, alarm or distress, up from 21% in 2023/24
- 23% of adults were worried about being threatened or verbally abused, up from 20% in 2023/24
- 10% of adults were worried about being physically attacked because of their skin colour, ethnic origin or religion, up from 7% in 2023/24

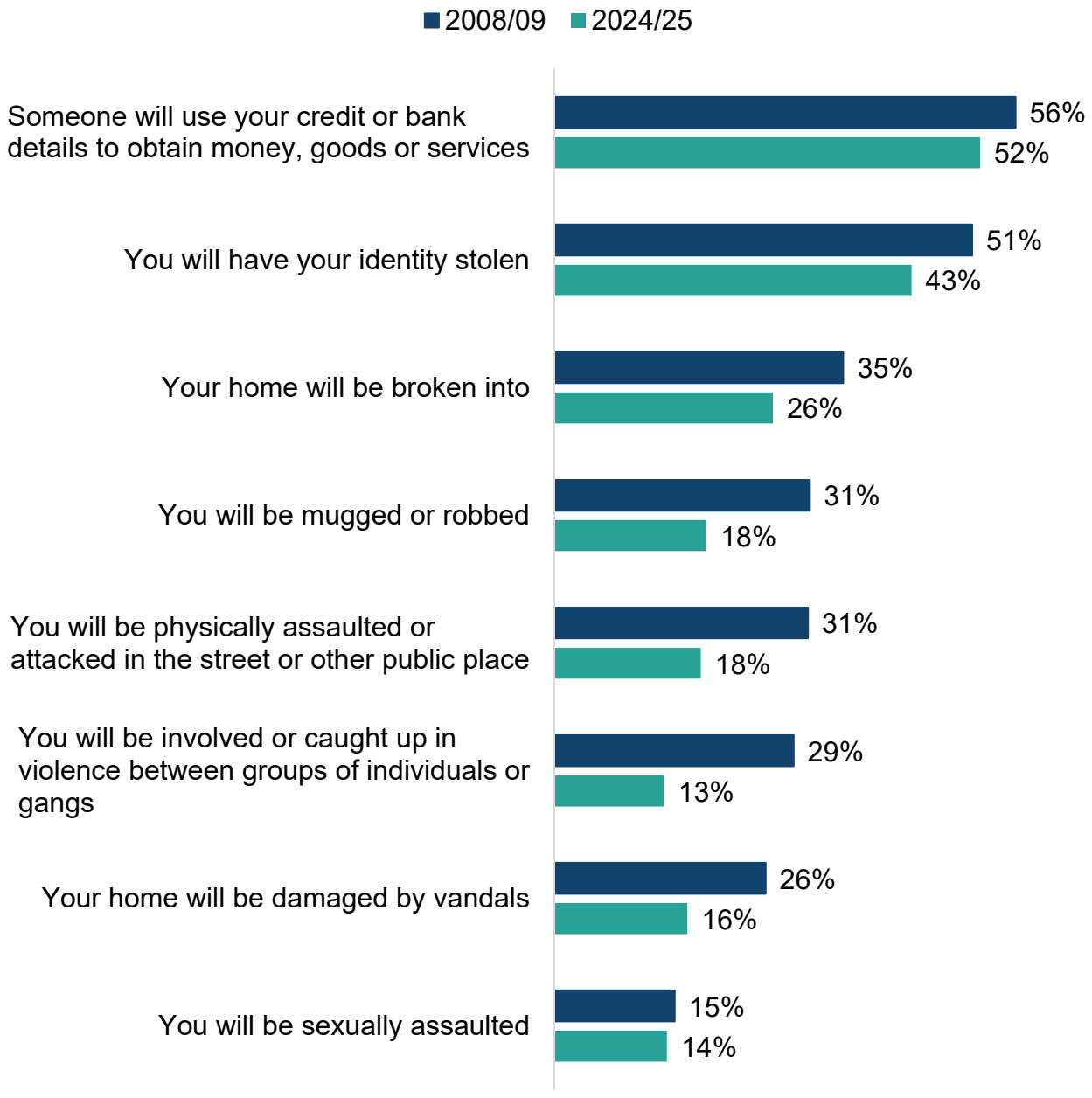
Figure 11.6 (and Annex Table A23) presents the results on worry about different crimes over time, for those questions which have been in the survey since 2008/09. It highlights that the proportion of adults who were very or fairly worried about experiencing most issues was lower in 2023/24 than the 2008/09 baseline, with the exception of being sexually assaulted which is at a similar level. Looking more

[41] Findings in relation experiences of fraud are also discussed in the 'Fraud and computer misuse' section of the report.

recently, all measures have either increased or shown no change since the last SCJS in 2023/24.

Figure 11.6: The proportion of adults who were very or fairly worried about experiencing specific issues fell for all categories, other than sexual assault, since 2008/09.

Proportion of adults worried about experiencing each issue, 2008/09 and 2024/25.



Variables: QWORR_04 – QWORR_11.

In addition to the results shown in Figure 11.6 in relation to all adults, the survey also explores worry about vehicle-related crime amongst adults in households with access to a vehicle. The 2024/25 SCJS found that:

- 31% of adults (in vehicle-owning households) were worried about their car or other vehicle being damaged by vandals, up from 27% in 2023/24
- 23% were worried about things being stolen from their car or other vehicle, unchanged from 2023/24
- 23% were worried about their car or other vehicle being stolen, up from 20% in 2023/24

Full results of these questions can be found in Annex Table A22.

In addition to the results shown above, the SCJS also asks respondents about their expectations around experiencing different crimes, the results from these questions are presented in Annex Table A25.

How were people affected by their concerns about crime?

Of those who reported being worried about experiencing some sort of crime, more than half (53%) reported that it did not prevent them from doing things they otherwise wanted to do ('at all'). In the latest survey, over one in three (36%) said they were prevented from doing things 'a little', whilst 8% said it affected them 'quite a lot'. Only 3% said that it affected them doing things 'a great deal'.

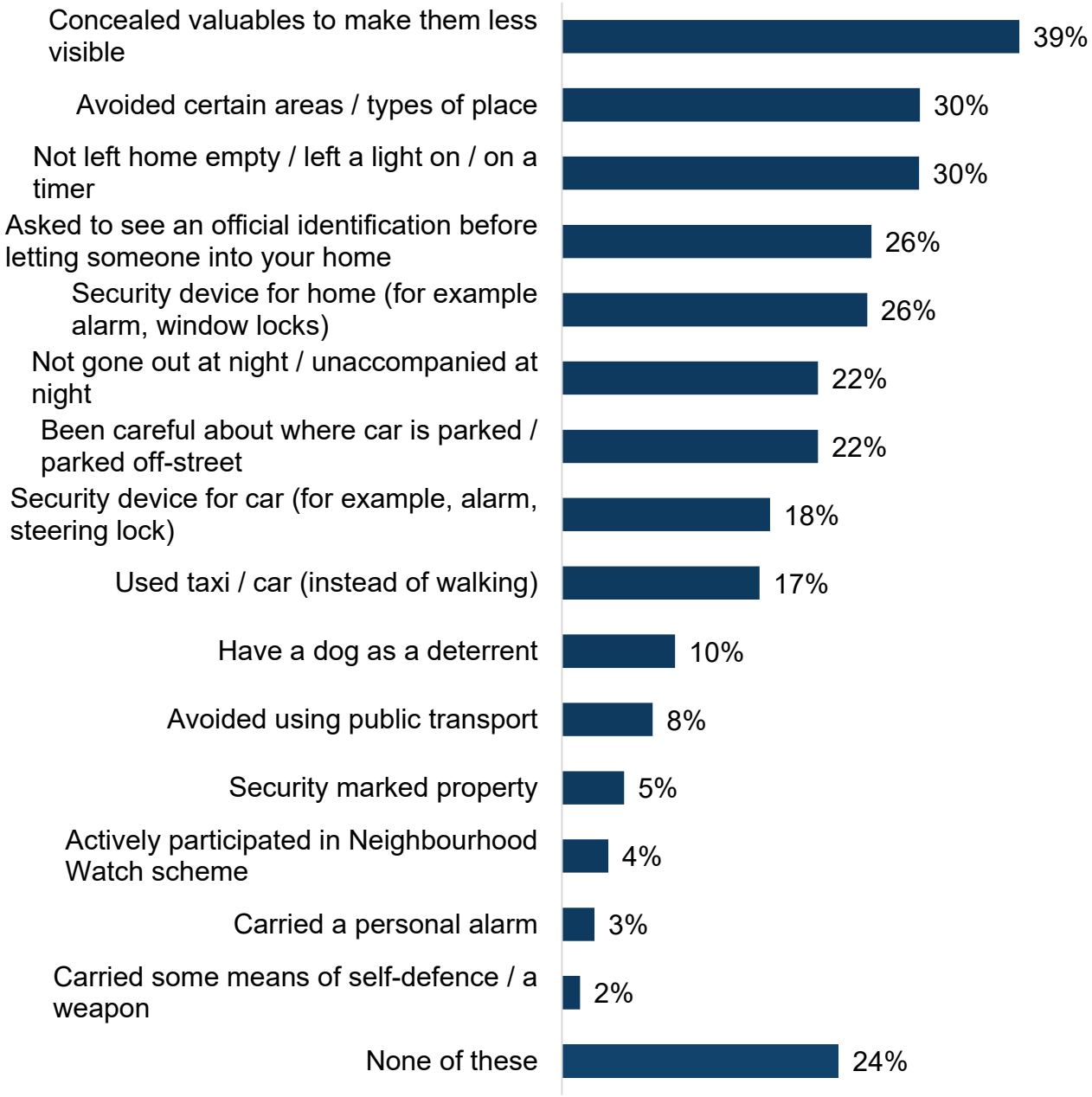
Some groups were more likely than others to be affected. For example, females (47%), those in urban locations (50%), victims of property or violent crimes (39%), people living in the 15% most deprived areas of Scotland (43%), and disabled people (41%) were all less likely than comparator groups to say that their concerns had not prevented them from doing things they wanted to.

What steps did people take to reduce their chances of experiencing crime?

Around three-quarters of adults (76%) reported adopting at least one preventative action to reduce their risk of becoming a victim of crime in 2024/25. As in previous years, the most commonly adopted precaution was concealing valuables to make them less visible (reported by 39%).

Figure 11.7: Nearly three-quarters of people have taken some preventative action to reduce their risk of being the victim of crime in 2024/25.

Actions taken to reduce the risk of experiencing crime in the last year.



Variable: QDONE.

All of these actions have either increased or remained stable since first collected in 2012/13 and all have remained at a similar level since 2023/24. The largest increases over the long term include:

- concealing valuables to make them less visible (from 27% in 2012/13 to 39% in 2024/25
- security device for home, for example alarm, window locks (16% in 2012/13 to 26% in 2024/25)

- avoiding certain areas (from 23% in 2012/13 to 30% in 2024/25)
- not gone out at night / unaccompanied at night (from 15% in 2012/13 to 22% in 2024/25)

What did people think about their local community and the collective effort to prevent crime in their neighbourhood?

As shown in Table 11.3 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.

Between 2008/09 and 2024/25, the results for all questions on local community have remained extremely consistent, and are shown to be at a similar level now to when they were first asked.

Table 11.3: 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%	6%	6%	1%
The people who live in my local area can be relied upon to call the police if someone is acting suspiciously	82%	8%	6%	4%
I have neighbours or other people in my local area I feel I could turn to for advice or support	84%	7%	7%	1%
People in this local area pull together to prevent crime	59%	25%	10%	6%
People in my local area cannot be trusted	12%	16%	69%	3%

Variables LCPEOP_01 – LCPEOP_05.

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 (92%) and willing to identify the person who had done it (89%) 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 (84%). The proportion of adults who said they would be willing to identify the person who had done it is at a similar level to 2017/18, slightly lower than in 2021/22 (92%) but at a similar level to 2023/24.

Focus on veterans

Since 2021/22 the Scottish Crime and Justice Survey has included questions to gather information on prevalence of veterans, as well as their experiences and views of crime and justice. All respondents were asked “have you previously served in the UK Armed Forces?”, and the options presented to respondents were: [42]

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.[43]

Summary

SCJS findings suggest that 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 (7.0% compared to 0.7%), and older adults (60+) are more likely than adults aged 25-44 (6.1% compared to 2.0%).

The victimisation rate was not found to be statistically different between veterans and non-veterans. Likewise, opinions on the change in local crime rate and access to justice did not show a difference between veterans and non-veterans.

Prevalence of veterans in the latest SCJS findings

When looking at veteran status of any kind, 3.8% of all respondents were veterans. The vast majority of respondents never served in the UK Armed Forces (96.1%). Just under one-in-thirty (2.9%) have previously served in the regular Armed Forces and around one-in-one-hundred (0.9%) have served in the reserve Armed Forces. Full results of this question are shown in Table 9.1 below. [44,45]

[42] Note that any respondent who is currently serving in the regular or reserve armed forces would answer ‘No’ to this question.

[43] 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%.

[44] 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.

[45] Due to small sample sizes of veterans, much of the analysis presented here combines regular and reserve armed forces into one single category.

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, 2024/25.

	No	Yes: regular Armed Forces	Yes: reserve Armed Forces	Yes: either	Number of respondents
All respondents	96.1	2.9	0.9	3.8	4,950
Female	99.1	0.4	0.4	0.7	2,560
Male	92.7	5.7	1.4	7	2,380
16-24	-	-	-	-	560
25-44	97.8	1.6	0.5	2	1,590
45-59	95.0	2.9	1.8	4.6	1,190
60+	93.7	5.3	0.9	6.1	1,610
Rural	94.6	4.3	1.1	5.4	890
Urban	96.4	2.6	0.8	3.4	4,060
Disabled	95.3	3.9	0.8	4.6	1,240
Non-disabled	96.3	2.6	0.9	3.5	3,710
15% most deprived	96.4	2.1	1.1	3.2	670
Rest of Scotland	96.0	3.1	0.8	3.9	4,270

Variable: QDVET.

As shown in Table 9.1, veteran status varied across the population. For example, veteran status was more commonly seen in males compared to females (7.0% compared to 0.7% respectively).

A higher proportion of older respondents were veterans: 6.1% for 60+ compared to 2.0% for 25-44. There were not enough veterans aged 16-24 identified in the survey to report a proportion for this group

The population subgroup with the highest proportion of veterans of any was males aged 60 and over, with around one-in-eight (12.4%) people in this group previously serving in the Armed Forces.

There was no statistically significant difference in veteran status found on the basis of deprivation, disability, or by urban/rural location.

Making comparisons between the veteran and non-veteran population

The information gathered from the recently 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

Overall, 20.8% of respondents were the victim of any type of crime within the scope of the survey in 2024/25. Of the three broad categories of crime picked up by the survey, 2.5% of respondents were victims of violent crime, 9.4% for property crime, and 11.5% for fraud and computer misuse.

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, property crime, and fraud & computer misuse 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.

Feelings and perceptions of saftety, crime and the justice system

Most respondents (76%) felt safe in their local area after dark. No difference was found between veterans and the rest of the population, and no difference was found when comparing veterans and non-veterans among males over 25.

A majority of individuals believe the local crime rate has either remained stable or decreased, with just under three-quarters (72%) of people answering this way. 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. Over two thirds (69%) of adults answered 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.

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 means[46]) by someone outwith their household in the year prior to interview.

These findings are based on questions asked to one-third of the overall sample.[47] As agreed with SCJS users, third-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 2024/25 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. Due to Covid disruption and contract changes the most recently published findings are for the combined years 2018/19 and 2019/20, presented in the 2019/20 Main Findings Report. The next set of results will be for the combined 2023/24 and 2024/25 survey years and is expected to be published later in 2026. Details on changes made to the questionnaire were published in Annex D of the 2021/22 Main Findings Report.

How common were experiences of harassment in Scotland in 2024/25?

In 2024/25, 17% 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 2023/24.

Across all of the population sub-groups focused on in this report, sex, age, area deprivation and urban/rural classification, there were no differences in the proportion that said they had been insulted, pestered or intimidated within those categories or when comparing with the previous year.

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 (92%) were insulted, pestered or intimidated 'in person', whilst 11% said this happened 'in writing via text, email, messenger or posts on social media'. This suggests that 'offline' experiences of harassment remain much more common than 'online'.

Most people who had experienced harassment said it had happened on more than one occasion in the previous year (46%), with 35% reporting only one incident. A

[46] Some other means includes writing and electronic communications.

[47] In 2024/25, 1,652 respondents answered the harassment and discrimination module of the survey. For more information on the questionnaire content and structure, please see the Technical Report.

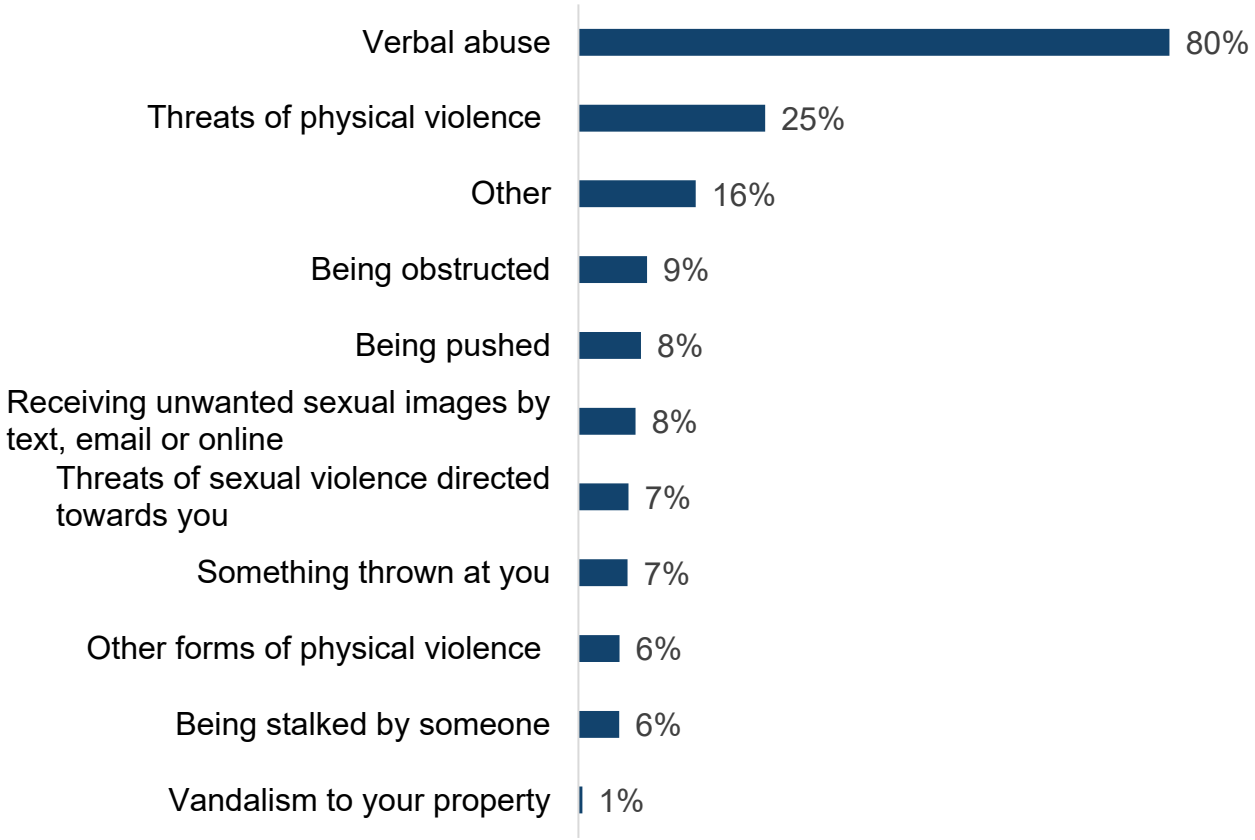
further tenth (9%) of people said they experienced harassing behaviour too many times to remember.

Verbal abuse was the most common type of harassment in 2024/25, experienced by 80% of the victims. Other types of harassment, particularly those involving physical contact, were much less commonly experienced, as shown in Figure 13.1. In 2024/25, 8% of people received unwanted sexual images by text, email or online.

More in-depth analysis about the extent and nature of violent incidents in 2024/25 is provided in the 'Violent crime' chapter.

Figure 13.1: The majority of victims of harassment experienced verbal abuse with a quarter experiencing threats of physical violence.

Proportion of harassment victims experiencing different kinds of behaviour in previous 12 months.



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 13.2 below.

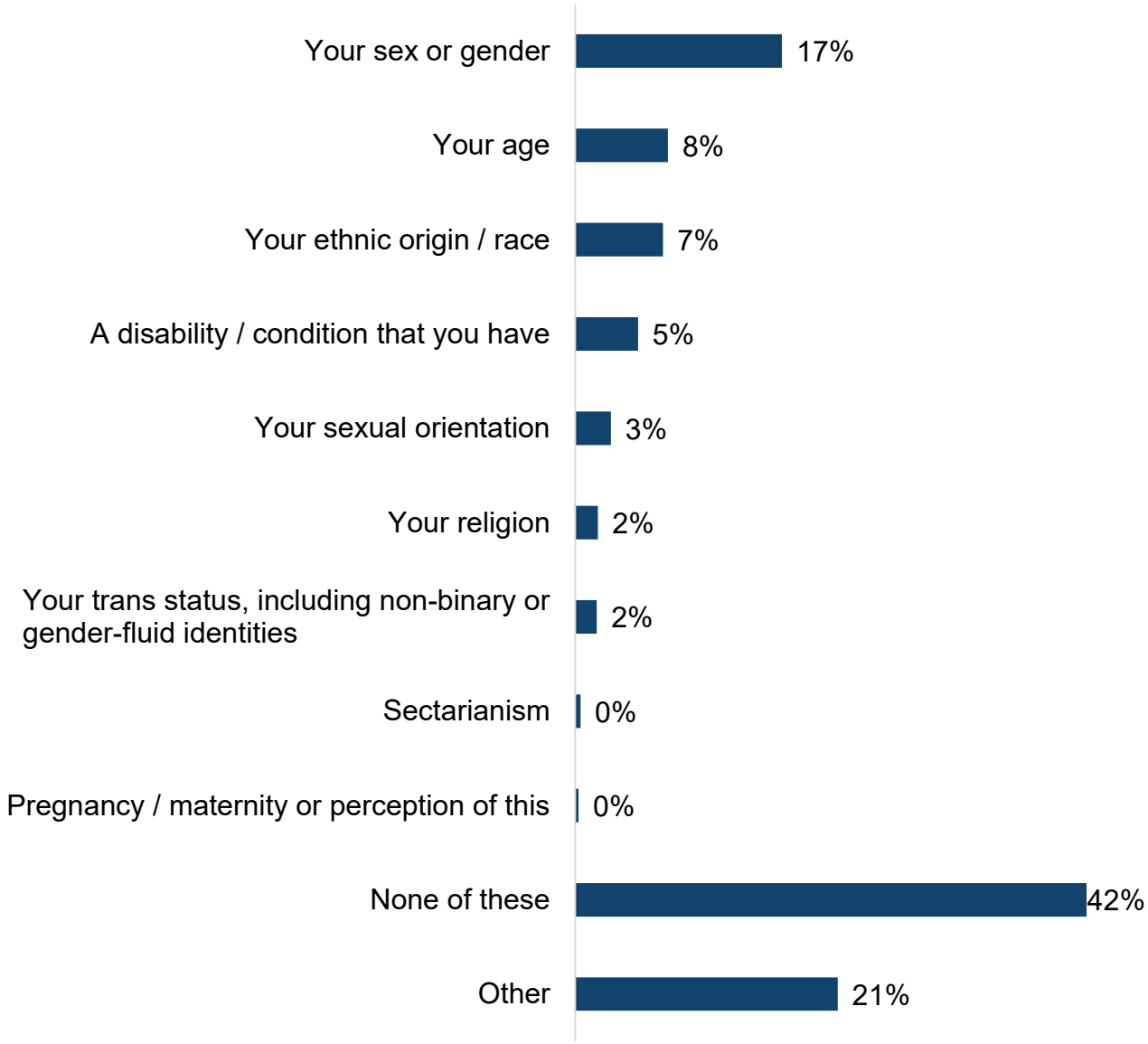
Around two-fifths (42%) did not think any of their characteristics were an influencing factor in their most recent (or only) experience of harassment. Nearly one in five (17%) thought that their sex or gender was a possible motivating factor, while 8%

believed their age and 7% believed their ethnic origin or race was a possible influence.

Since the last SCJS in 2021/22, there has been no change across all possible motivating factors.

Figure 13.2: Two-fifths 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.



Variable: QHDISCRIM1.

Annex A: Data tables

Overview

All tables referenced in the main text are available on the associated data tables webpage. These tables provide 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 A1) have the following structure:[48]

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

Fraud and computer misuse comprises the following groups:

- bank and credit card fraud
- other types of fraud (including consumer and retail fraud and advanced fee fraud)
- computer misuse

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 but excludes fraud and computer misuse. Three-fifths (60%) of property and violent crimes were classed as comparable with police

[48] See the Technical Report for more information on the groupings of crime.

recorded crime statistics, as discussed in the Comparisons with other statistical sources chapter. Further details about police recorded crime statistics are included in Chapter 12 of the Technical Report.

Notes

1. Upper and lower estimates are based on 95% confidence intervals.
2. In Annex tables A4 and A5 rates are quoted per 10,000 adults for the following crime groups: personal theft, theft from the person, other theft, violent crime and all fraud and computer misuse. The following crimes are quoted per 10,000 households: vandalism, motor vehicle theft, housebreaking, household theft and bicycle theft. All SCJS crime, property crime and comparable crime are presented using a combined rate of adults and households.
3. Columns showing percentage change or percentage point change for SCJS results over time only present statistically significant changes. Where an apparent increase or decrease over time is not statistically significant, this is described using the shorthand [ns] for 'not significant'.
4. For presentation purposes, some figures are shown as rounded. Estimated crime volumes are rounded to the nearest 1,000 and crime rates per 10,000 adults/households are rounded to the nearest 10. Percentage point changes and changes in estimated volumes are calculated on the unrounded figures.
5. The shorthand notation '[x]' is used where data is unavailable – this is largely because the relevant question had not yet been added to the 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, base size figures are also rounded to the nearest 10.

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 and published on a quarterly basis, by rolling 12 month periods	Survey conducted annually typically following each financial year with reference period extending around 24 months. Results previously published biennially, now annually.
Strengths	• 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	• 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 sexual victimisation) • 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 and stalking) - reported on biennially

Annex C: 2024/25 questionnaire structure

Main questionnaire (Section 1-2)	4,948 respondents • Perception of crime (Section 1) • Victim form screener (Section 2)
Victim forms (Section 3) Standard victim form	766 respondents – 1,073 completed forms • Incident dates • Incident details • Experiences of criminal justice system and related issues
Fraud and computer misuse victim form	690 respondents – 791 completed forms • Incident dates • Incident details • Contact with police / bank / other orgs
Full sample modules (Section 4)	4,948 respondents • Police • Courts
Third of sample modules (Section 5) Each participant is only asked questions from one module.	**Module A** 1,667 respondents • Local community • Perception of crime • Crown Office and Procurator Fiscal Service (COPFS)
	Module B 1,629 respondents • Sentencing (including community sentencing and prisons) • Police visibility
	Module C 1,652 respondents • Justice system overall • Harassment
Demographics (Section 6)	4,948 respondents
Self-completion questionnaire (Section 7–10)	4,415 respondents • Personal relationship screener (Section 7) • Stalking / harassment (Section 8) • Partner abuse (Section 9) • Sexual victimisation (Section 10)

Annex D: Changes to the survey questionnaire

Introduction

A key goal of the Scottish Crime and Justice Survey (SCJS) is to ensure that it continues to meet the needs of users by reflecting changes in crime, victimisation and public experience in Scotland. Each year, this can involve minor amendments to question wording, the removal or rotation of existing questions, or the development and inclusion of new topic areas. These changes are informed by policy priorities, stakeholder engagement, methodological considerations and emerging evidence gaps.

This annex summarises recent changes to the SCJS questionnaire and sets out confirmed changes introduced for the 2025/26 and 2026/27 survey years.

Questions on non-fatal strangulation

In response to growing public concern, increased media interest and engagement from victim support organisations and other stakeholders, a new set of survey questions was developed to better capture experiences of non-fatal strangulation.

The questions were developed in collaboration with external organisations, victims' groups and experts in survey design. Given the sensitive nature of the topic, additional quality assurance steps were undertaken. Internal and external stakeholders provided feedback, and the questions were cognitively tested with ten participants to assess understanding, acceptability and interpretation. The questions were refined in line with this feedback and included in the 2025/26 survey.

The questions measure:

- the proportion of adults who have experienced strangulation during sexual activity
- whether the experience involved coercion
- whether it occurred in the past 12 months
- any resulting impacts, including physical or mental or emotional harm

Findings from the self-completion module are typically published every two years. Initial results from these questions are expected to be included in the 2026/27 Main Findings Report, combining data from the 2025/26 and 2026/27 survey years, subject to analytical review.

Expanding questions on anti-social behaviour (ASB) for the 2026/27 questionnaire

An expanded set of questions on anti-social behaviour (ASB) has been included in the 2026/27 SCJS questionnaire, with fieldwork scheduled to begin in April 2026.

This update responds to sustained policy and stakeholder interest in strengthening the evidence base on perceptions and experiences of ASB, as well as recommendations from the Independent Working Group on Antisocial Behaviour.

The SCJS already includes a question (QAS) asking respondents how common different types of behaviours are in their local area. For the 2026/27 questionnaire, this question has been expanded to include two additional behaviours:

- vandalism, graffiti or other deliberate damage to property
- groups or individuals intimidating or harassing others

Building on this, a new set of follow-up questions have been introduced to provide a more comprehensive understanding of ASB. Respondents who identify that they have experienced or witnessed any of the behaviours included in the QAS question in the last 12 months are asked additional questions covering:

- which types of anti-social behaviours respondents have personally experienced or witnessed in their local area (using the same list as for the QAS question)
- the locations where these behaviours occurred (e.g. within the home, neighbourhood, public spaces, online, or workplaces)
- the extent to which these behaviours has negatively affected respondents' quality of life
- actions taken as a result of anti-social behaviour (e.g. behaviour changes, avoidance, protective measures, or impacts on health and wellbeing)
- whether incidents were reported, and if so, to which organisations (e.g. police, local authorities, housing providers)
- reasons for not reporting, including perceived barriers and attitudes towards reporting

Together, these additions provide a more detailed and nationally representative picture of ASB in Scotland, including its prevalence, impact, and how individuals respond to and report such behaviour.

Inclusion of new question life satisfaction in 2026/27

A new question on overall life satisfaction has also been developed and included in the 2026/27 SCJS questionnaire, with fieldwork commencing in April 2026.

Respondents will be asked:

- Overall, how satisfied are you with your life nowadays?

Responses will be recorded on a 10-point scale, consistent with Personal well-being user guidance - Office for National Statistics.

This question is intended to enable analysis of the relationship between crime victimisation and wellbeing outcomes, supporting regression-based analysis to estimate the reduction in wellbeing associated with being a victim of crime. This in turn contributes to estimates of the social and economic costs of crime.

The life satisfaction question is intended to be included for a limited number of survey years to allow sufficient data to be accumulated for robust analysis, rather than as a permanent addition to the survey.

Removal of local community questions (Section 5.1)

To accommodate the expanded ASB module while maintaining overall questionnaire length, the Local Community section has been removed. This includes the removal of the questions QWALL2, LCPEOP, LCKNOW, and QHAPP.

This change reflects a prioritisation of emerging evidence needs relating to ASB, while ensuring the overall survey remains within acceptable length constraints. Further consultation will be undertaken as part of any future survey development. If any user has any concerns regarding this change, please do get in touch via a method given in the Tell us what you think chapter.

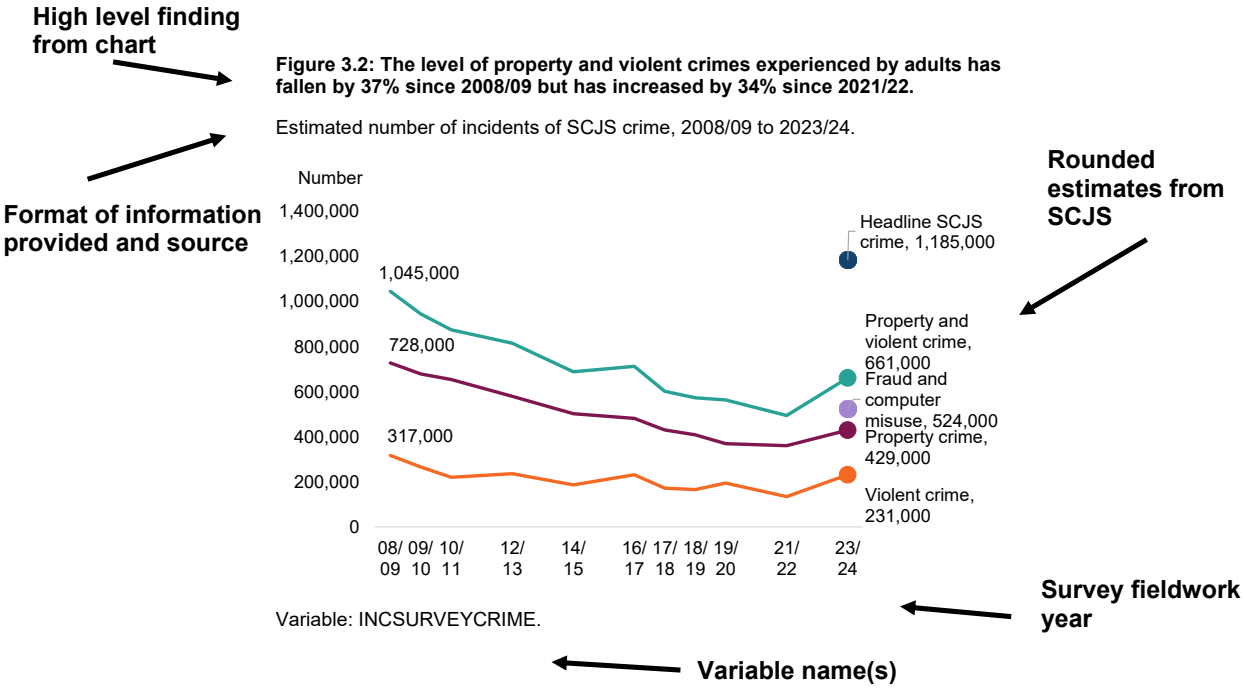
Annex E: Interpreting charts, tables and figures in this report

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, if relevant, the variable name(s). Unless otherwise stated the results are from 2024/25. 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 1.67 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



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, 2020/21 or 2022/23. These labels have been formatted as '24/25' 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 on.[49] 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

Table 3.1: The estimated number of SCJS property and violent crimes has fallen by over a third since 2008/09 but increased by a third since 2021/22.

Estimated number of incidents of SCJS property and violent crime (2008/09, 2019/20 to 2023/24) with percentage change, where significant, since 2008/09, 2019/20 and 2021/22.

Format of information provided and source

Test of statistical significance

	Estimated number of property and violent crimes				Change since		
	2008/09	2019/20	2021/22	2023/24	2008/09	2019/20	2021/22
Best estimate	1,045,000	563,000	494,000	661,000	Down 38%	No change	Up 34%
Lower estimate	974,000	501,000	428,000	566,000	-	-	-
Upper estimate	1,116,000	625,000	560,000	755,000	-	-	-
Number of respondents	16,000	5,570	5,520	4,970	-	-	-

Variable: INCSURVEYCRIME.

Variable name(s)

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 associated data tables).

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

[49] i.e. this is generally how many people were asked the question for the results being discussed.

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.

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