

Article

Domestic abuse victim characteristics, England and Wales: year ending March 2024

Characteristics of victims of domestic abuse based on findings from the Crime Survey for England and Wales and police recorded crime.

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Table of contents

1. [Other pages in this release](#)
2. [Main points](#)
3. [Understanding domestic abuse](#)
4. [Sex](#)
5. [Age](#)
6. [Ethnicity](#)
7. [Disability](#)
8. [Marital status](#)
9. [Employment status](#)
10. [Household structure](#)
11. [Area](#)
12. [Domestic homicide](#)
13. [Data on domestic abuse in England and Wales](#)
14. [Glossary](#)
15. [Data sources and quality](#)
16. [Related links](#)
17. [Cite this article](#)

1 . Other pages in this release

- [Domestic abuse in England and Wales overview: November 2024](#)
- [Domestic abuse prevalence and trends, England and Wales: year ending March 2024](#)
- [Domestic abuse and the criminal justice system, England and Wales: November 2024](#)

2 . Main points

The Crime Survey for England and Wales (CSEW) for year ending (YE) March 2024 shows:

- An estimated 1.6 million women and 712,000 men aged 16 years and over experienced domestic abuse in the last year; a prevalence rate of approximately 6.6% of women and 3.0% of men.
- A higher percentage of people aged 16 to 19 years were victims of domestic abuse in the last year compared with those aged 55 years and over.
- A higher proportion of people aged 16 years and over with a disability experienced domestic abuse in the last year than those without.

Crimes recorded by the police show the following trends:

- The victim was female in 72.5% of domestic abuse-related crimes in YE March 2024.
- 65.4% of victims of domestic homicide were female compared with 12.3% of victims of non-domestic homicide between YE March 2021 and YE March 2023.

Crime Survey for England and Wales (CSEW) data presented in this release for the YE March 2024 are based on a split sample because new domestic abuse questions are being tested on the survey from April 2023. Caution should be taken when using these data because of the impact of the reduced sample sizes on the quality of the estimates. For more information, see our [Domestic abuse QMI](#).

Police recorded crime data do not provide a measure of domestic abuse prevalence. Caution should be taken when comparing domestic abuse-related police recorded crime data with previous years because of changes in police recording practices. For more information see our [How domestic abuse data are captured through the criminal justice system article](#).

3 . Understanding domestic abuse

Domestic abuse is often a hidden crime that is not reported to the police. Therefore, data held by the police can only provide a partial picture of the actual level of domestic abuse experienced. Many cases will not enter the criminal justice process as they are not reported to the police. One of the strengths of the Crime Survey for England and Wales (CSEW) is that it covers many crimes that are not reported to the police and provides reliable estimates of domestic abuse.

On 4 October 2021, face-to-face interviewing for the CSEW resumed after it was suspended on 17 March 2020 because of the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic. Crime Survey estimates for year ending March 2022 are based on six months of interviews and are not [accredited official statistics](#) (formerly National Statistics).

The Home Office collects data on the number of domestic abuse-related incidents and crimes recorded by the police. Police recorded crime data, in isolation, do not provide a measure of prevalence to understand the true extent of domestic abuse. Caution should be taken when comparing domestic abuse-related police recorded crime data with previous years because of changes in police recording practices.

4 . Sex

The Crime Survey for England and Wales estimated that 1.6 million women and 712,000 men aged 16 years and over experienced domestic abuse in year ending (YE) March 2024. This equates to approximately 7 in 100 women and 3 in 100 men (Figure 1).

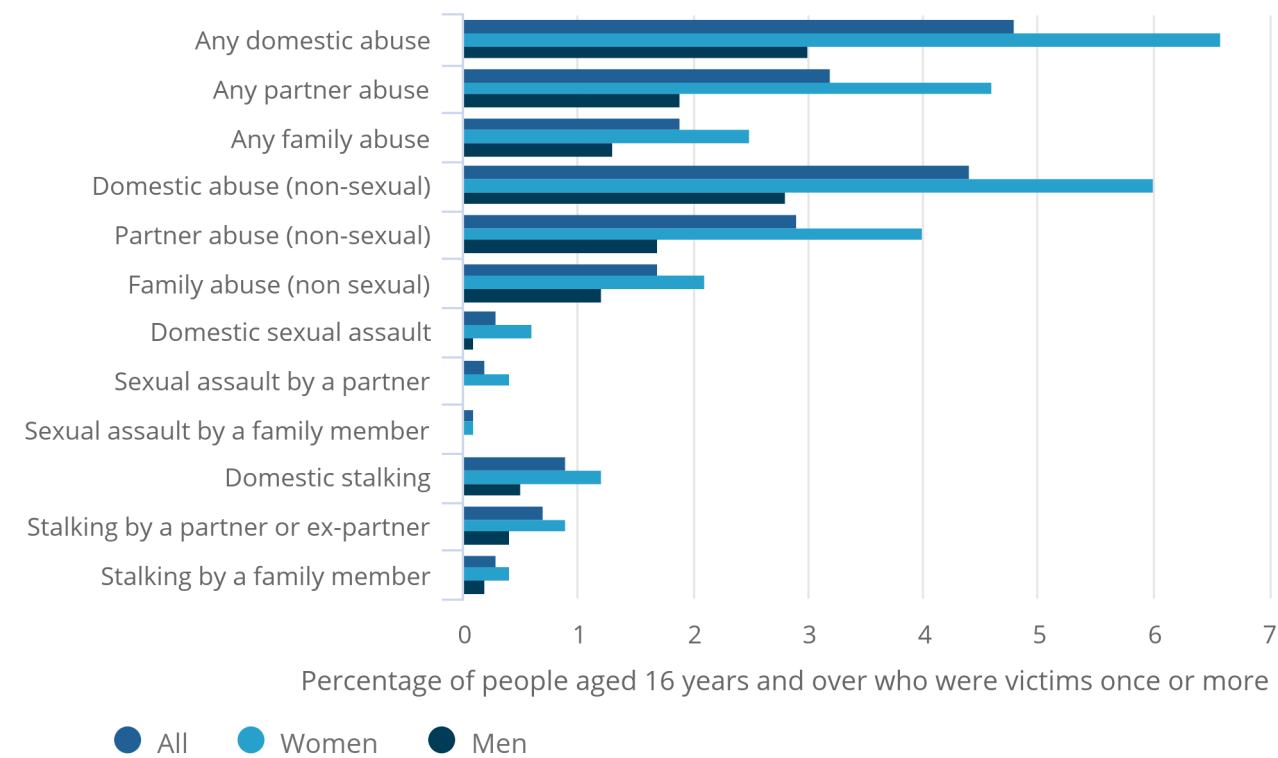
A significantly higher proportion of women were victims of each of the overarching types of abuse than men.

Figure 1: A higher percentage of women than men were victims of domestic abuse in the last year

Prevalence of domestic abuse in the last year for people aged 16 years and over, by sex and type of abuse, England and Wales, year ending March 2024

Figure 1: A higher percentage of women than men were victims of domestic abuse in the last year

Prevalence of domestic abuse in the last year for people aged 16 years and over, by sex and type of abuse, England and Wales, year ending March 2024



Source: Crime Survey for England and Wales (CSEW) from the Office for National Statistics

Notes:

1. Sexual assault categories include attempts.
2. The sum of the overarching domestic abuse categories is not the sum of the subcategories, as victims who have experienced more than one type of abuse will be included in multiple categories.
3. Estimates for “Sexual assault by a family member” for men are unavailable because of disclosure constraints.
4. Data for year ending March 2024 are based on a split sample. Caution should be taken because of the impact of the reduced sample size on the quality of the data.

Following the removal of the upper age limit for survey respondents in October 2021, when analysing data over time, we use the 16 to 59 years age range to give a comparable data time series.

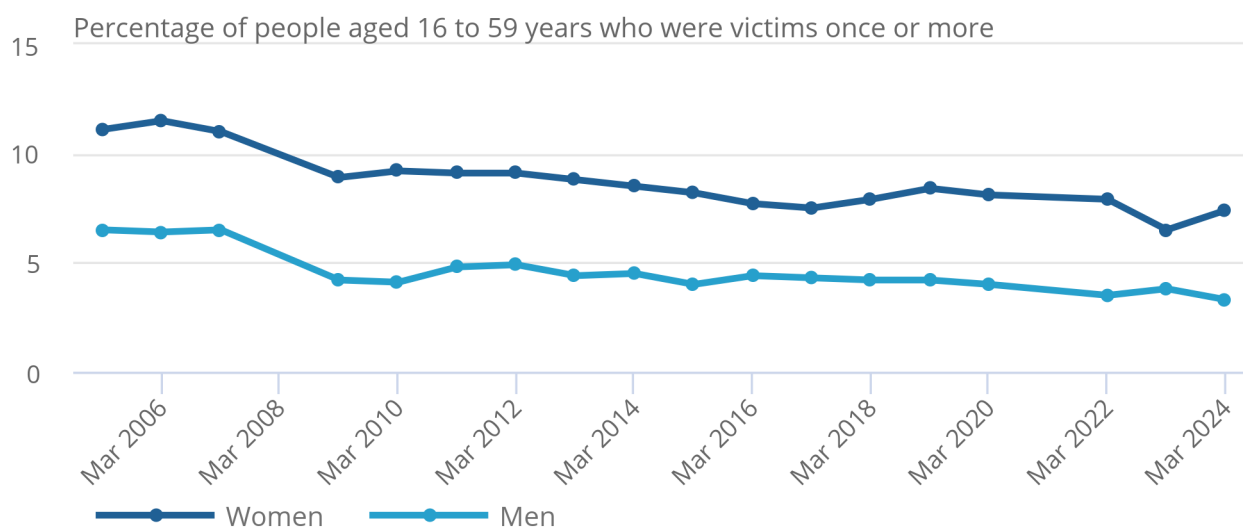
The prevalence of domestic abuse experienced by women and men aged 16 to 59 years has not changed significantly in YE March 2024 compared with YE March 2023. In YE March 2024, 7.4% of women and 3.3% of men aged 16 to 59 years had experienced domestic abuse, compared with 6.5% of women and 3.8% of men in YE March 2023 (Figure 2).

Figure 2: There was no significant change in the prevalence of domestic abuse for both men and women in YE March 2024, compared with YE March 2023

Prevalence of domestic abuse in the last year for people aged 16 to 59 years, by sex, England and Wales, year ending (YE) March 2005 to YE March 2024

Figure 2: There was no significant change in the prevalence of domestic abuse for both men and women in YE March 2024, compared with YE March 2023

Prevalence of domestic abuse in the last year for people aged 16 to 59 years, by sex, England and Wales, year ending (YE) March 2005 to YE March 2024



Source: Crime Survey for England and Wales (CSEW) from the Office for National Statistics

Notes:

1. The fall in prevalence between YE March 2007 and YE March 2009 which is seen across multiple abuse types should not be interpreted as a real decrease and likely reflects changes in the survey.
2. No data point is available for YE March 2008 because comparable questions on stalking, an offence that makes up the domestic abuse category, were not included in that year.
3. No data are available for YE March 2021 because the Crime Survey for England and Wales was suspended because of the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic.
4. Data for YE March 2024 are based on a split sample. Caution should be taken because of the impact of the reduced sample size on the quality of the data.

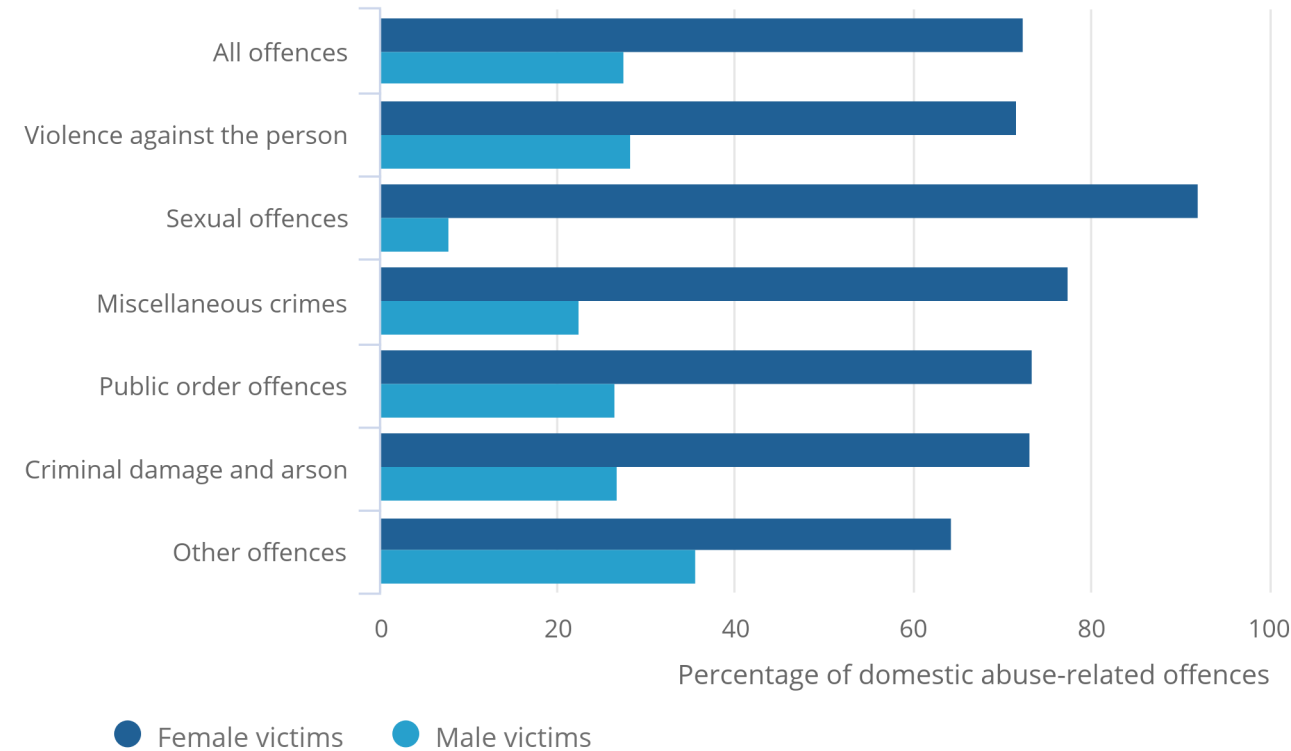
Data supplied from 29 police forces showed that the victim was female in 72.5%, and male in 27.5%, of domestic abuse-related crimes recorded by the police in YE March 2024. This proportion was similar for most offence categories. For domestic abuse-related sexual offences, the proportion of female victims was 92.1%, compared with 7.9% for males (Figure 3). These findings follow trends seen over previous years.

Figure 3: There were more female than male victims of domestic abuse-related crimes recorded by the police

Percentage of domestic abuse-related offences recorded by the police, by sex of the victim and selected offence group, England and Wales, year ending March 2024

Figure 3: There were more female than male victims of domestic abuse-related crimes recorded by the police

Percentage of domestic abuse-related offences recorded by the police, by sex of the victim and selected offence group, England and Wales, year ending March 2024



Source: Police recorded crime from the Home Office

Notes:

- 1. Police recorded crime data are not designated as accredited official statistics.
- 2. Estimates are based on 29 forces with adequate data.

5 . Age

Crime Survey for England and Wales estimates showed that a significantly higher proportion of people aged 16 to 19 years were victims of any domestic abuse (8.7%) compared with those in age categories of 55 years and over (Figure 4), for year ending (YE) March 2024. The percentage of people aged 20 to 24 years who were victims of any domestic abuse (7.1%) was higher than those aged 55 to 59 years (3.8%). For those aged 75 years and over, the percentage of victims was significantly lower than all other age groups (2.1%).

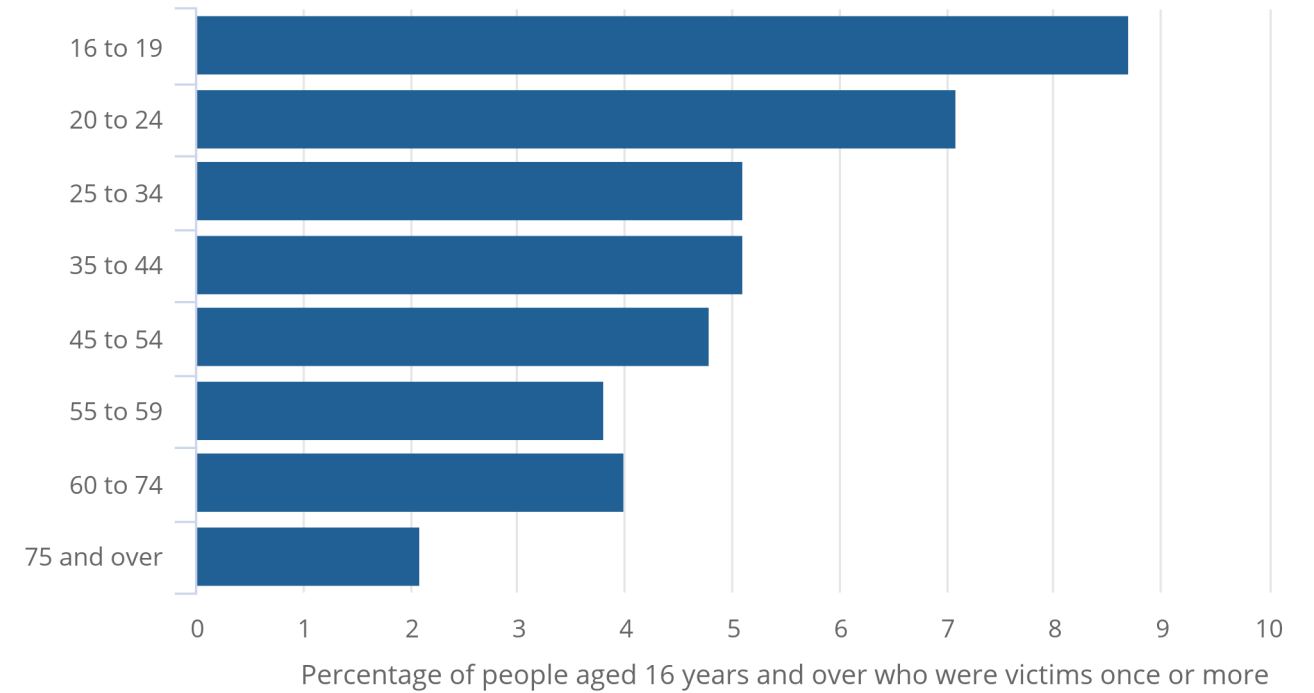
The percentage of women who experienced domestic abuse in the last year was significantly higher than men for the majority of age groups. The exceptions were those aged 24 years and under and those aged 55 to 59 years, where there was no [statistically significant](#) differences in the prevalence of domestic abuse between women and men.

Figure 4: A higher percentage of people aged 16 to 19 years were victims of domestic abuse in the last year than those aged 55 years and over

Prevalence of domestic abuse in the last year for people aged 16 years and over by age, England and Wales, year ending March 2024

Figure 4: A higher percentage of people aged 16 to 19 years were victims of domestic abuse in the last year than those aged 55 years and over

Prevalence of domestic abuse in the last year for people aged 16 years and over by age, England and Wales, year ending March 2024



Source: Crime Survey for England and Wales (CSEW) from the Office for National Statistics

Notes:

1. Data for year ending March 2024 are based on a split sample. Caution should be taken because of the impact of the reduced sample size on the quality of the data.

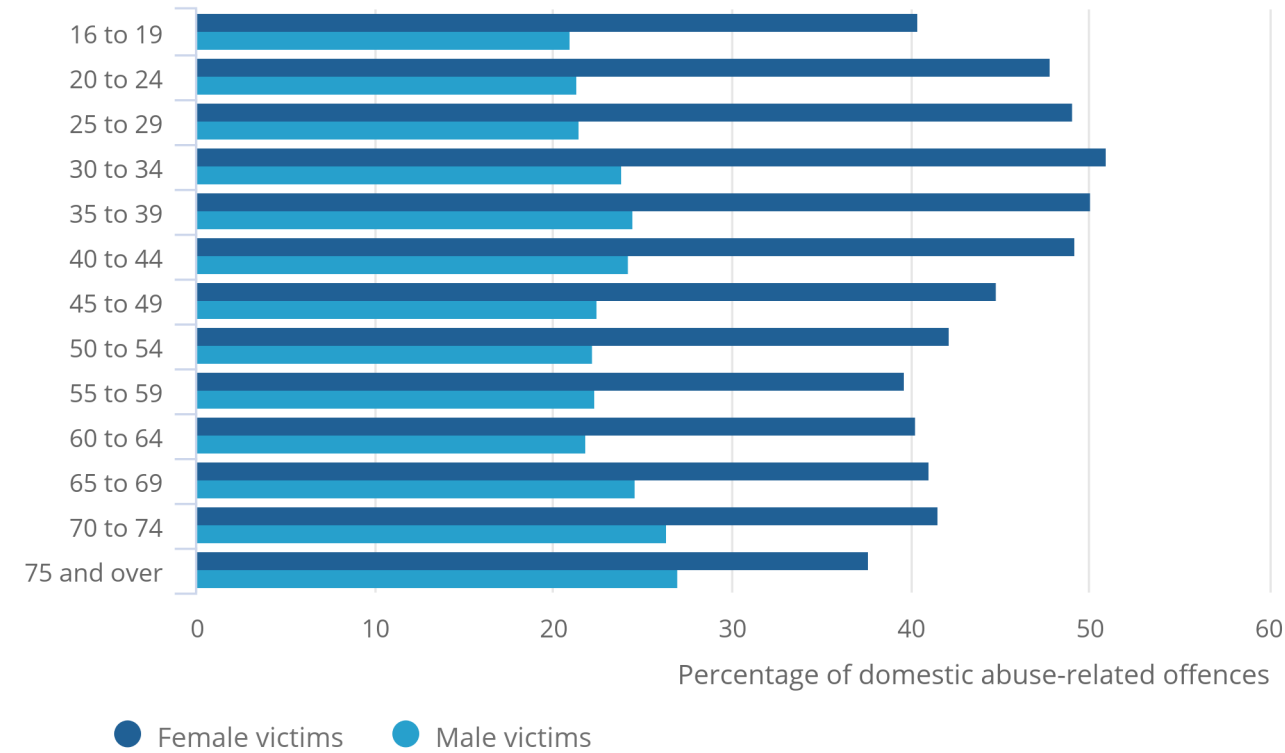
Data supplied from 29 police forces showed that half of police recorded violence against the person offences against women in age groups between 20 and 44 years were domestic abuse-related (between 47.8% and 50.9%). The proportion of violence against the person offences against men that were domestic abuse-related was between 20.9% and 27.0% for all age groups (Figure 5).

Figure 5: Approximately half of violence against the person offences were identified as domestic abuse-related for women aged between 20 and 44 years

Proportion of violence against the person offences recorded by the police, which were identified as domestic abuse-related, by age and sex of victims, England and Wales, year ending March 2024

Figure 5: Approximately half of violence against the person offences were identified as domestic abuse-related for women aged between 20 and 44 years

Proportion of violence against the person offences recorded by the police, which were identified as domestic abuse-related, by age and sex of victims, England and Wales, year ending March 2024



Source: Police recorded crime from the Home Office

Notes:

- 1. Police recorded crime data are not designated as accredited official statistics.
- 2. Estimates are based on 29 forces with adequate data.

6 . Ethnicity

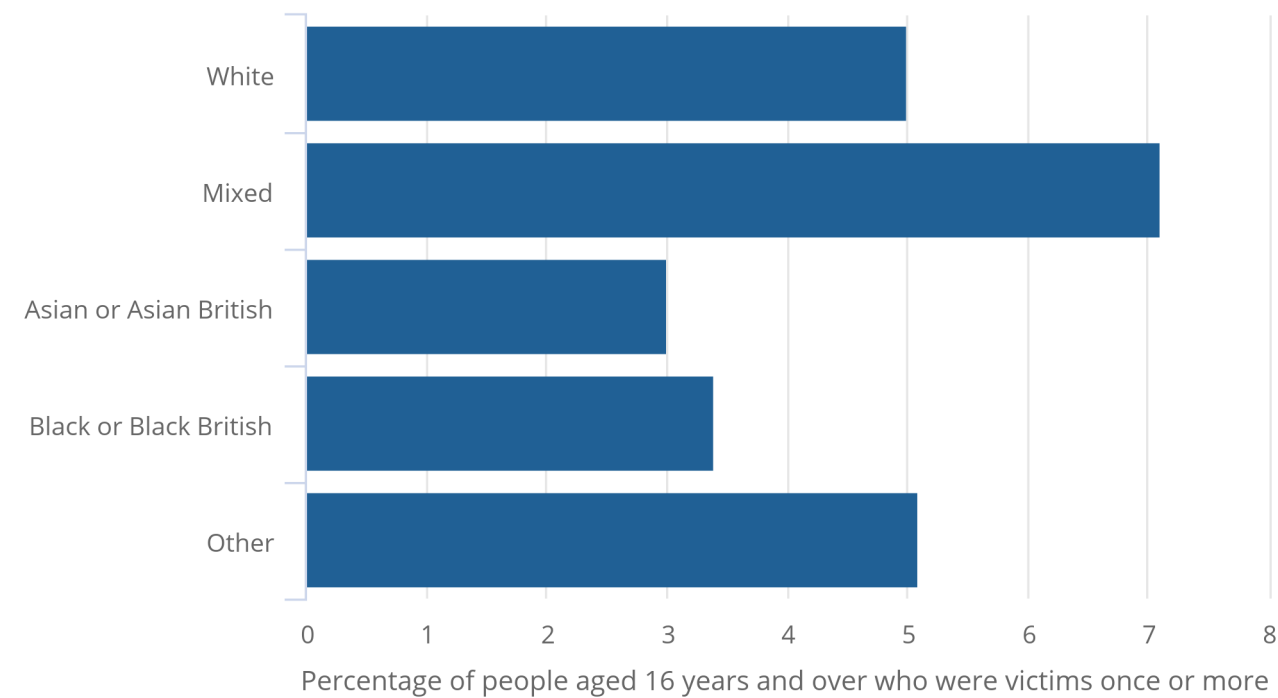
For year ending (YE) March 2024, differences between any domestic abuse estimates across different ethnic groups from the Crime Survey for England and Wales were found not to be significant (Figure 6).

Figure 6: There were no statistically significant differences between ethnic groups in YE March 2024

Prevalence of domestic abuse in the last year for people aged 16 years and over, by ethnicity, England and Wales, year ending (YE) March 2024

Figure 6: There were no statistically significant differences between ethnic groups in YE March 2024

Prevalence of domestic abuse in the last year for people aged 16 years and over, by ethnicity, England and Wales, year ending (YE) March 2024



Source: Crime Survey for England and Wales (CSEW) from the Office for National Statistics

Notes:

1. Data for year ending March 2024 are based on a split sample. Caution should be taken because of the impact of the reduced sample size on the quality of the data.

7 . Disability

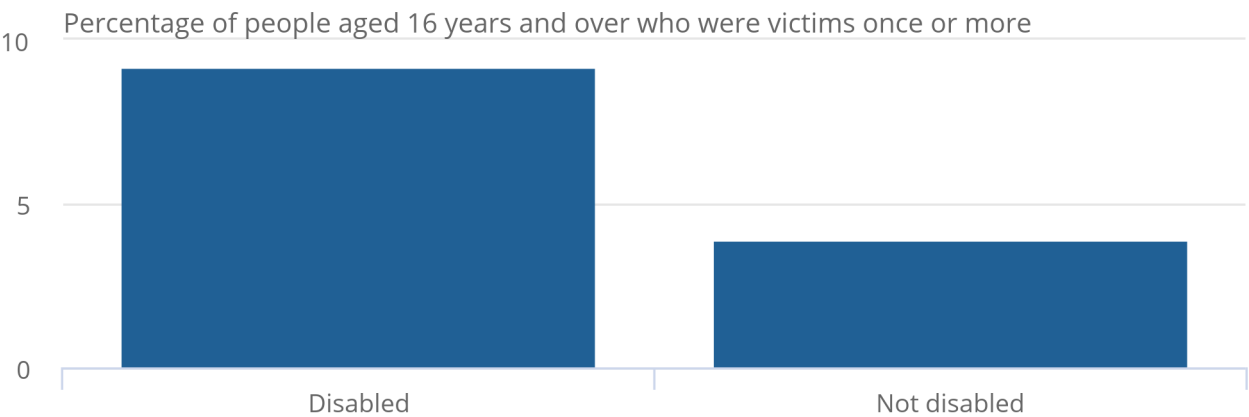
The Crime Survey for England and Wales showed that a significantly higher percentage of adults with a disability experienced domestic abuse in the last year than those without (Figure 7), for year ending (YE) March 2024.

Figure 7: A higher percentage of people with a disability experienced domestic abuse than those without

Prevalence of domestic abuse in the last year for people aged 16 years and over, by disability, England and Wales, year ending March 2024

Figure 7: A higher percentage of people with a disability experienced domestic abuse than those without

Prevalence of domestic abuse in the last year for people aged 16 years and over, by disability, England and Wales, year ending March 2024



Source: Crime Survey for England and Wales (CSEW) from the Office for National Statistics

Notes:

1. The definition of disability used is consistent with the core definition of disability under the Equality Act 2010. A person is considered to have a disability if they have a long-standing illness, disability or impairment which causes difficulty with day-to-day activities.
2. Data for year ending March 2024 are based on a split sample. Caution should be taken because of the impact of the reduced sample size on the quality of the data.

8 . Marital status

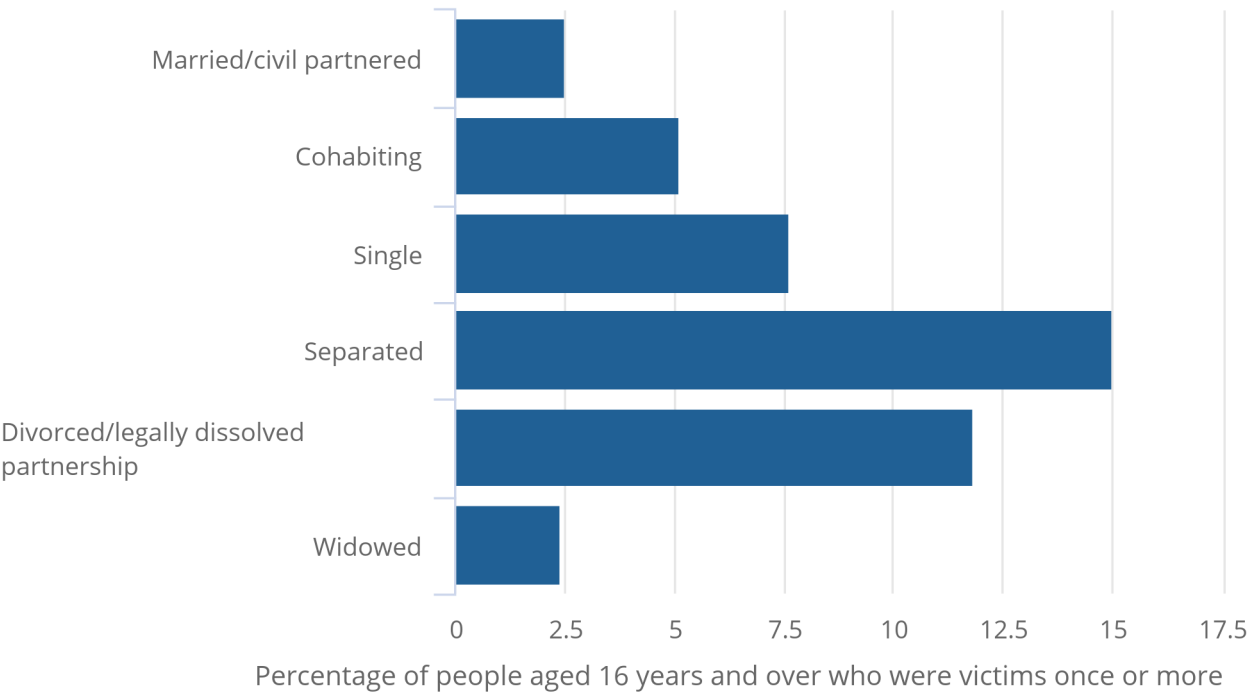
Crime Survey for England and Wales estimates showed that a significantly higher proportion of people aged 16 years and over who were separated or divorced experienced domestic abuse in the last year than those who were married or civil partnered, cohabiting, single or widowed (Figure 8), for year ending (YE) March 2024. However, marital status may have changed as a result of the abuse experienced.

Figure 8: Separated or divorced people were more likely to experience domestic abuse in the last year

Prevalence of domestic abuse in the last year for people aged 16 years and over, by marital status, England and Wales, year ending March 2024

Figure 8: Separated or divorced people were more likely to experience domestic abuse in the last year

Prevalence of domestic abuse in the last year for people aged 16 years and over, by marital status, England and Wales, year ending March 2024



Source: Crime Survey for England and Wales (CSEW) from the Office for National Statistics

Notes:

1. Marital status may have changed as a result of the abuse.
2. Data for year ending March 2024 are based on a split sample. Caution should be taken because of the impact of the reduced sample size on the quality of the data.

9 . Employment status

The Crime Survey for England and Wales showed that a lower percentage of those who were employed (4.6%) experienced domestic abuse in the last year compared with those who had a long-term or temporary illness (12.9%), students (9.9%) and those who were looking after their family and home (8.4%) (Figure 9), for year ending (YE) March 2024.

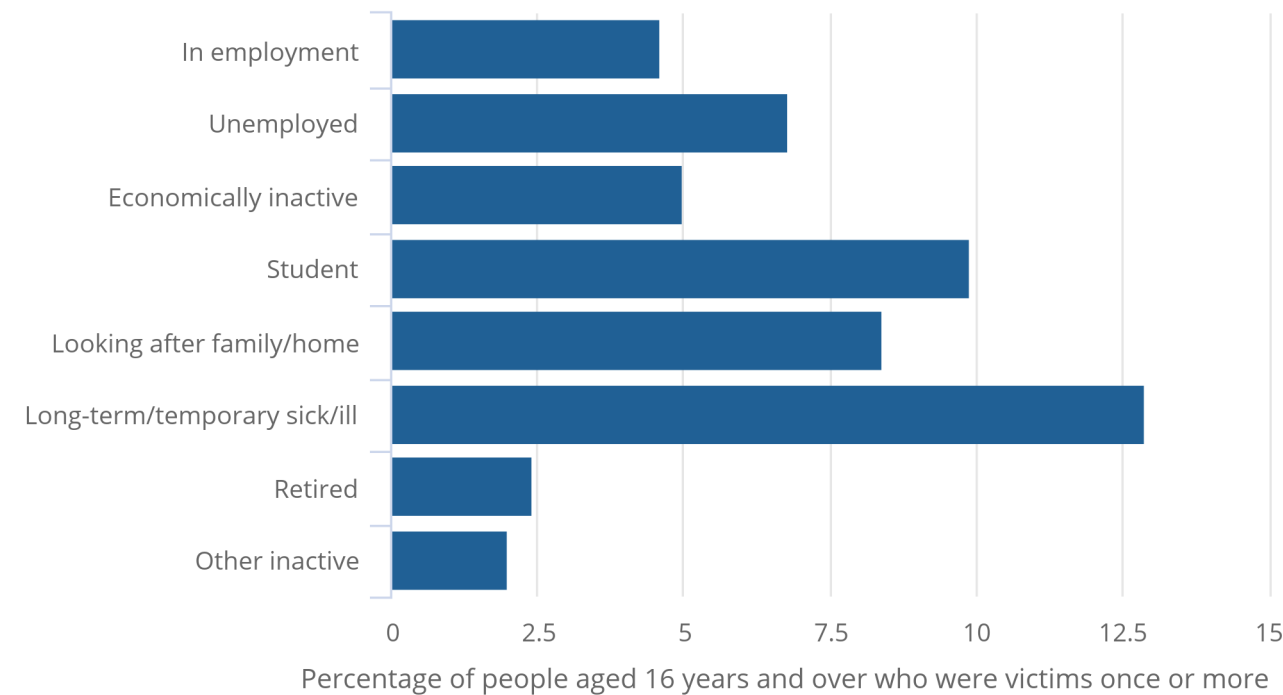
However, those who were retired experienced a lower proportion of domestic abuse in the last year compared with those who were employed. It is likely that differences seen by occupation type are also linked to age.

Figure 9: A higher percentage of domestic abuse victims had long-term or temporary illness, were students or were looking after their family or home than those who were employed

Prevalence of domestic abuse in the last year for people aged 16 years and over by employment status, England and Wales, year ending March 2024

Figure 9: A higher percentage of domestic abuse victims had long-term or temporary illness, were students or were looking after their family or home than those who were employed

Prevalence of domestic abuse in the last year for people aged 16 years and over by employment status, England and Wales, year ending March 2024



Source: Crime Survey for England and Wales (CSEW) from the Office for National Statistics

Notes:

- 1. Employment status may have changed as a result of the abuse.
- 2. Data for year ending March 2024 are based on a split sample. Caution should be taken because of the impact of the reduced sample size on the quality of the data.

10 . Household structure

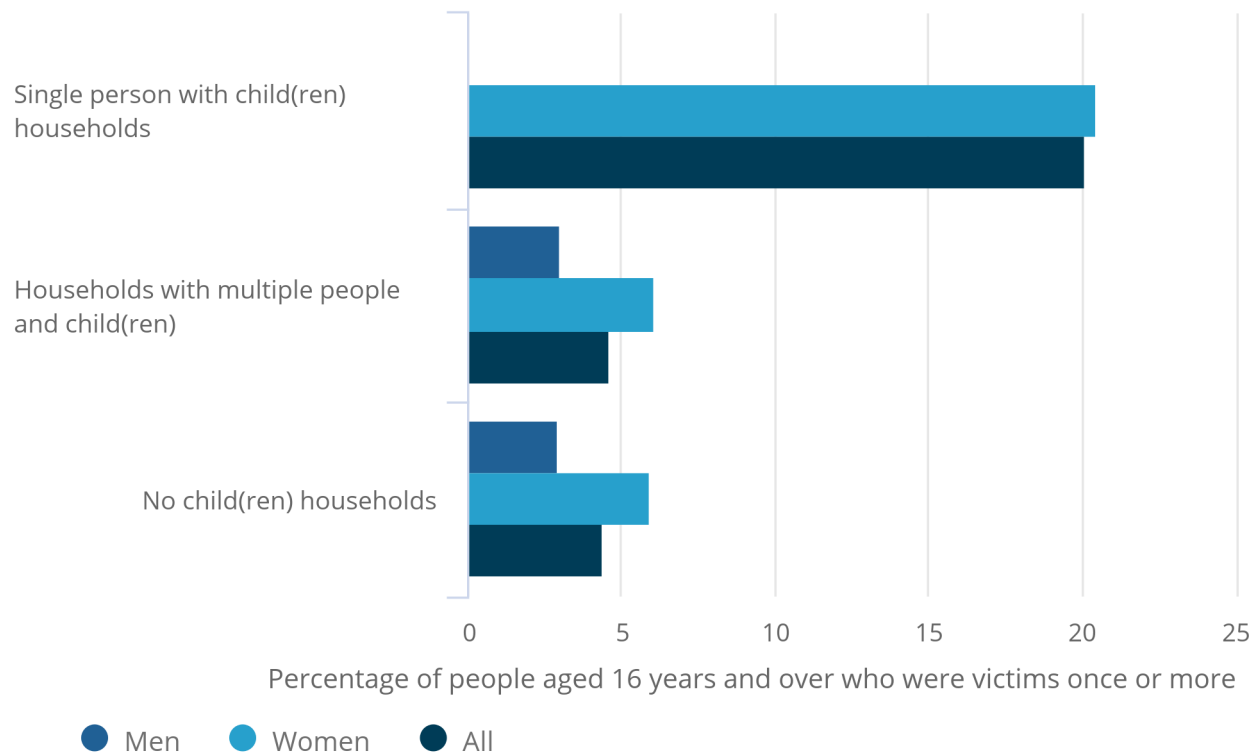
Crime Survey for England and Wales estimates showed that the proportion of domestic abuse experienced in the last year was higher in households composed of a single person with one or more children (20.1%), compared with households with no children (4.4%) and households with multiple people and one or more children (4.6%) (Figure 10), for year ending (YE) March 2024. However, household structure may have changed as a result of the abuse experienced.

Figure 10: A higher proportion of people who were victims of domestic abuse in the last year were living in single-parent households

Prevalence of domestic abuse in the last year for people aged 16 years and over by household structure, and sex, England and Wales, year ending March 2024

Figure 10: A higher proportion of people who were victims of domestic abuse in the last year were living in single-parent households

Prevalence of domestic abuse in the last year for people aged 16 years and over by household structure, and sex, England and Wales, year ending March 2024



Source: Crime Survey for England and Wales (CSEW) from the Office for National Statistics

Notes:

- 1. Household structure may have changed as a result of the abuse.
- 2. Data for year ending March 2024 are based on a split sample. Caution should be taken because of the impact of the reduced sample size on the quality of the data.
- 3. Estimates for male victims who identified as a single person with child(ren) households are unavailable because of disclosure constraints.

11 . Area

The Crime Survey for England and Wales showed that English region estimates followed the national trend, with a higher percentage of women being victims of domestic abuse in the last year compared with men, for year ending (YE) March 2024. The exceptions were the East of England, London, and the South East, where there were no [statistically significant](#) differences in the prevalence of domestic abuse between women and men.

For English regions and Wales, differences between sex were largest in Wales, where 9.9% of women were victims of domestic abuse in the last year, compared with 3.8% of men (Figure 11). This was followed by Yorkshire and The Humber (7.7% of women and 2.2% of men in the last year).

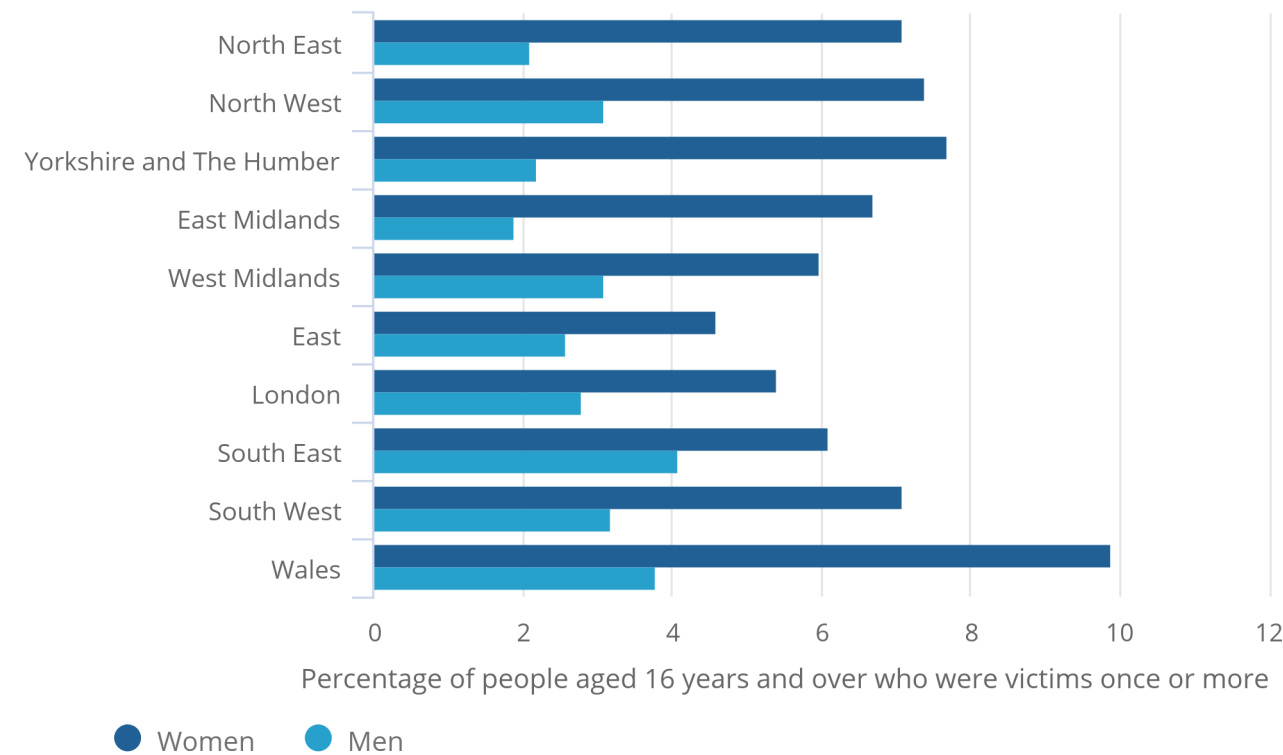
The proportion of all people who were victims of domestic abuse in the last year was significantly higher in Wales compared with London and the East of England. Caution should be taken as area of residence may have changed as a result of the abuse.

Figure 11: A significantly higher percentage of women were victims of domestic abuse compared with men in most English regions

Prevalence of domestic abuse in the last year for people aged 16 years and over, English regions and Wales, by sex, year ending March 2024

Figure 11: A significantly higher percentage of women were victims of domestic abuse compared with men in most English regions

Prevalence of domestic abuse in the last year for people aged 16 years and over, English regions and Wales, by sex, year ending March 2024



Source: Crime Survey for England and Wales (CSEW) from the Office for National Statistics

Notes:

- 1. Area of residence may have changed as a result of the abuse.
- 2. Data for year ending March 2024 are based on a split sample. Caution should be taken because of the impact of the reduced sample size on the quality of the data.

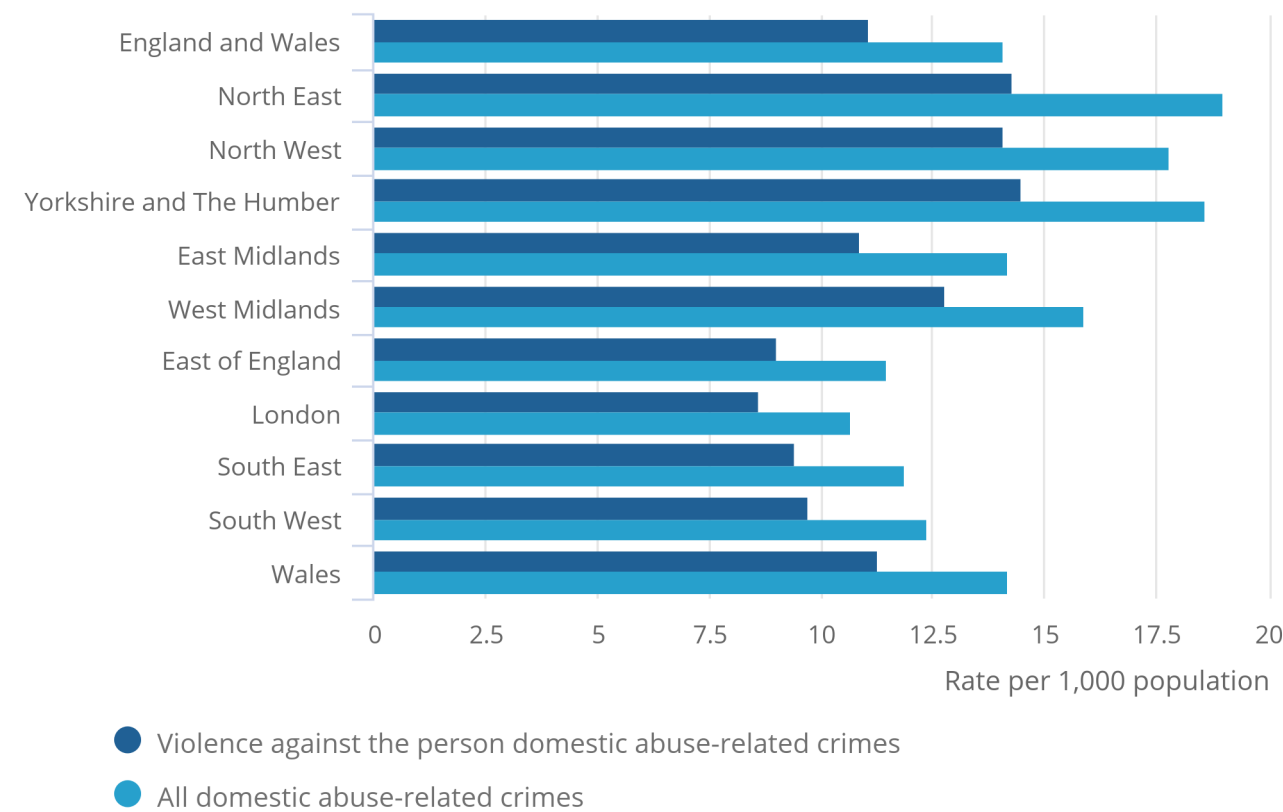
The highest rate of domestic abuse-related crimes recorded by the police was in the North East (19.0 per 1,000 population) in YE March 2024. The lowest rate was in London (10.7 per 1,000 population) (Figure 12). Although this could reflect differences in the rates of domestic abuse across regions, it could also reflect regional differences in the reporting of domestic abuse to the police and how the police subsequently record these offences.

Figure 12: The North East had the highest recorded rates of domestic abuse-related crimes

Rate of domestic abuse-related crimes recorded by the police, English regions and Wales, year ending March 2024

Figure 12: The North East had the highest recorded rates of domestic abuse-related crimes

Rate of domestic abuse-related crimes recorded by the police, English regions and Wales, year ending March 2024



Source: Police recorded crime from the Home Office

Notes:

1. Police recorded crime data are not designated as accredited official statistics.
2. The population figures used are the 2021 Census population data provided by the Office for National Statistics.
3. Domestic abuse-related offences are defined as any incidence of threatening behaviour, violence or abuse (psychological, physical, sexual, financial or emotional) between adults, aged 16 years and over, who are or have been intimate partners or family members, regardless of gender or sexuality.
4. Numbers will be affected by the size of the resident population relative to the transient or visiting populations and may therefore over-represent the number of crimes relative to the real population of potential victims.
5. Total rate for England and Wales includes offences recorded by British Transport Police. However, no rates are given for British Transport Police as their data are not provided for specified geographical areas.

12 . Domestic homicide

Analysis on data from the Homicide Index within this publication combines data for a three-year period (year ending (YE) March 2021 to YE March 2023) to account for the year-to-year variability in the volume of homicides. More information can be found in our [How domestic abuse data are captured through the criminal justice system: November 2024 article](#).

Homicide Index data show that 65.4% of the victims of domestic homicide were female, for YE March 2021 to YE March 2023. This contrasts with non-domestic homicides where the majority of victims over the same time period were male (87.7%).

Of the 231 female domestic homicide victims, the suspect was male in the majority of cases (224). For male domestic homicide victims, the suspect was female in 39 cases out of 122 (Table 1). In the majority of female domestic homicides, the suspect was a male partner or ex-partner (74.9%), whereas in the majority of male domestic homicides, the suspect was a male family member (62.3%).

Further information on domestic homicides and suspected victim suicides can be found in the latest [Domestic Homicide Project report](#).

Table 1: Number of domestic homicide victims by type of relationship and sex, by sex of victim and suspect
Combined data for year ending March 2021 to year ending March 2023, England and Wales

Suspect sex and relationship type	Female victims of domestic homicides	Male victims of domestic homicides
All females	7	39
Female partner or ex-partner	0	33
Female family member	7	6
All males	224	83
Male partner or ex-partner	173	7
Male family member	51	76

Source: Homicide Index data from the Home Office

Notes

1. Home Office Homicide Index combines data for a three-year period to account for the year-to-year variability in the volume of homicides.
2. As at 12 December 2023; figures are subject to revision as cases are dealt with by the police and by the courts, or as further information becomes available.
3. A suspect in a homicide case is defined as either: a person who has been arrested in respect of an offence initially classified as homicide and charged with homicide, including those who were subsequently convicted, or a person who is suspected by the police of having committed the offence but is known to have died or committed suicide prior to arrest or being charged.
4. Family members include parents, sons and or daughters, siblings or other relatives.

13 . Data on domestic abuse in England and Wales

[Domestic abuse prevalence and victim characteristics](#)

Dataset | Released 27 November 2024

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

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

Dataset | Released 27 November 2024

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

14 . Glossary

Domestic abuse

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

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

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

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

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

Domestic abuse-related crimes

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

Domestic abuse-related incidents

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

Domestic homicide

An offence of murder or manslaughter where the relationship between a victim aged 16 years and over and the perpetrator falls into one of the following categories:

- spouse
- common-law spouse
- cohabiting partner
- boyfriend or girlfriend
- ex-spouse
- ex-cohabiting partner or ex-boyfriend or girlfriend
- adulterous relationship
- son or daughter (including step and adopted relationships)
- parent (including step and adopted relationships)
- brother or sister
- other relatives

Homicide suspect

A suspect in a homicide case is defined as either a person who has been arrested in respect of an offence initially classified as homicide and charged with homicide, including those who were subsequently convicted, or a person who is suspected by the police of having committed the offence but is known to have died or committed suicide prior to arrest or being charged.

Stalking

Defined in the Crime Survey for England and Wales (CSEW) as two or more incidents (causing distress, fear, or alarm) of:

- receiving obscene or threatening unwanted letters, emails, text messages or phone calls
- having had obscene or threatening information about them placed on the internet
- waiting or loitering around home or workplace
- following or watching

15 . Data sources and quality

Further quality and methodology information can be found in our [Domestic abuse in England and Wales overview bulletin](#).

Crime Survey for England and Wales (CSEW)

More information about the CSEW can be found in:

- our [User guide to crime statistics for England and Wales](#)
- our [Domestic abuse Quality and Methodology Information](#)
- our [How domestic abuse data are captured through the criminal justice system: November 2024 article](#)

Work to improve the data collected to measure domestic abuse from the CSEW is ongoing. More information can be found in our latest [Redevelopment of domestic abuse statistics research update](#).

How the police measure domestic abuse

The Home Office collects data on the number of domestic abuse-related incidents and the number of domestic abuse-related crimes.

Police recorded crime data, in isolation, do not provide a measure of prevalence to understand the true extent of domestic abuse. Caution should be taken when comparing domestic abuse-related police recorded crime data with previous years because of changes in police recording practices. For example, in May 2023, changes were made to the [Home Office Counting Rules](#) for conduct crimes (stalking, harassment and coercive and controlling behaviour).

In addition, from April 2023, police forces began using a new methodology, the National Data Quality Improvement Service (NDQIS), to help identify whether an offence was domestic abuse-related or not. The NDQIS tool automatically flags offences involving domestic abuse-related offences rather than relying on a manually-added marker. At the time of publishing, 36 forces have used NDQIS and further forces will be moving to the new methodology in future releases.

More information on domestic abuse-related incidents and crimes can be found in our [Domestic abuse Quality and Methodology Information](#) and our [How domestic abuse data are captured through the criminal justice system: November 2024 article](#).

Home Office Homicide Index

The Home Office Homicide Index provides data on whether homicides are "domestic". The Homicide Index contains detailed record-level information about each homicide recorded by police in England and Wales.

Analysis on data from the Homicide Index within this publication combines data for a three-year period (year ending March 2021 to year ending March 2023) to account for the year-to-year variability in the volume of homicides. More information can be found in our [How domestic abuse data are captured through the criminal justice system: November 2024 article](#).

16 . Related links

[Domestic abuse quality and methodology information \(QMI\)](#)

Article | Released 27 November 2024

Quality and Methodology Information for domestic abuse detailing the strengths and limitations of the data, methods used, and data uses and users.

[How domestic abuse data are captured through the criminal justice system: November 2024](#)

Article | Released 27 November 2024

Information on the stages of the criminal justice process in England and Wales, and how data are captured at each stage.

[Redevelopment of domestic abuse statistics: research update December 2024](#)

Article | Released 3 December 2024

Update on the ongoing research to redevelop statistics on domestic abuse from the Crime Survey for England and Wales.

[Domestic abuse victim services, England and Wales: 2023](#)

Article | Released 24 November 2023

Information on services that are available to victims of domestic abuse in England and Wales.

[Partner abuse in detail, England and Wales: year ending March 2023](#)

Article | Released 24 November 2023

The amount, type and nature of partner abuse experienced in the last year; information from the Crime Survey for England and Wales (CSEW).

17 . Cite this article

Office for National Statistics (ONS), released 27 November 2024, ONS website, article, [Domestic abuse victim characteristics, England and Wales: year ending March 2024](#)