

Compendium

Experimental statistics: Victims of police recorded violent and sexual offences

These analyses are based on a subset of forces that were able to supply detailed data of sufficient quality and are published as experimental statistics in advance of all forces being able to do so. They present data on violent and sexual offences recorded by the police in the year ending March 2016, broken down by age and sex of the victim. New data on the relationship between victims and suspects of these offences are provided for the first time. Information on the involvement of alcohol as a factor is also included.

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Release date:
9 February 2017

Next release:
To be announced

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1 . Main points

Based on a subset of police forces, in the year ending March 2016, these are the main findings.

Females were victims in 53% of violence against the person offences and 90% of rape offences recorded by the police.

Over a third (35%) of violence against the person offences against females were suspected to be committed by an intimate partner, compared with 10% of violent offences against males.

Young adults accounted for the highest proportion of victims of police recorded violence against the person offences, with 14% of victims aged 20 to 24. This declined with age, with less than 1% of violence against the person offences experienced by those aged 80 or over.

The majority of sexual offences recorded by the police (78%) involved a victim aged under 30.

Just under a third (30%) of rape offences against females were suspected to be committed by an intimate partner, compared with 5% of rape offences against males.

Of violence against the person offences recorded by the police, 16% were identified as alcohol-related, as were 9% of sexual offences.

2 . Things you need to know about this release

Police recorded crime figures provide information on the notifiable offences that have been reported to, and recorded by, the 43 territorial police forces in England and Wales, plus the British Transport Police. The police recorded crime collection has traditionally been based on the submission of aggregate returns from forces at the offence level. However, the Home Office has been working with forces to extract more detailed record level data from force crime recording systems, through the development of the Home Office Data Hub. This allows for a wider range of analyses to be carried out than previously. The Home Office are continuing to develop and implement this system across all 44 police forces in England and Wales.

Selected data on violent and sexual offences for the year ending March 2016 is provided from a subset of forces as [Experimental Statistics](#) in order to demonstrate to users some of the analyses possible in the future and to seek feedback to inform the future presentation of crime statistics. They are based on a subset of forces that were able to supply detailed data of sufficient quality and are published as Experimental Statistics in advance of all forces being able to do so:

- data for the age of victims are taken from 22 police forces that supplied data via the Data Hub ¹ ; these forces accounted for around 64% of violence against the person offences and 60% of sexual offences recorded in England and Wales in the year ending March 2016
- data on the sex of victims and newly published information on the relationship between victims and suspects are taken from 32 police forces; forces either provided the data via the Data Hub ² (9 forces) or in a separate manual collection ³ when they were unable to provide via the Data Hub (23 forces) ⁴, these forces accounted for around 87% of violence against the person offences and 86% of sexual offences in England and Wales in the year ending March 2016

The Home Office started collecting information on the relationship of the victim to the suspect in April 2015 based on 3 categories:

- intimate – all partner and ex-partner relationships, not just where the couple were married or in a civil partnership, but also including co-habiting partners and those considered in a relationship
- other family relative – comprised family members other than partners, including those who are in-laws, adopted, step or half relatives
- other – includes other sexual relationships such as casual sexual partners and sexual clients, acquaintances, strangers and cases where the relationship status has not been identified or where there is no known suspect

Information on the involvement of alcohol as a factor in violent and sexual offences is also available from the Data Hub. As the law does not specifically define alcohol-related offences, the aggregate police recorded crime data collection does not separately identify this type of crime. However, the Data Hub contains a field where police forces can identify a given set of aggravating factors related to an offence and one of these factors is whether the offence was “alcohol-related”. It was not mandatory for forces to populate this field in the year ending March 2016, and there was not a standard definition used across police forces⁵.

Analysis for alcohol-related violent and sexual offences is based on 30 forces providing data using the alcohol-related aggravating factor flag in the Data Hub, which is subject to continuing quality assurance⁶. These forces accounted for around 81% of violence against the person offences and 79% of sexual offences in England and Wales in the year ending March 2016. The analysis includes data from the Metropolitan Police, who alone recorded 24% of violence against the person offences and 20% of sexual offences in England and Wales in this year.

It should be noted that the analysis may not be representative of all forces in England and Wales and data have not been reconciled with forces and are therefore subject to revision. The Home Office continue to work with police forces to ensure the consistency and comparability of the victim information they supply to the Home Office.

Notes for: Things you need to know about this release

1. Those forces that supplied data of a sufficient quality to the Data Hub – sufficient quality deemed to be when a high proportion of violent and sexual offences recorded by the police force included the necessary information such as date of birth, event start date and sex.
2. Where data is supplied via the Data Hub there could be more than one relationship per crime due to multiple suspects. Approximately 2% of violent offences and 2% of sexual offences recorded in the Data Hub have an unknown victim sex – these data have been excluded from this analysis.
3. Where data is supplied via the manual collection there is only 1 relationship per offence for the principal suspect.
4. 12 forces are excluded from the analysis due to issues with data collection or data quality.
5. A standard definition for “alcohol-related crime” has since been introduced in April 2016.
6. Quality assurance involves establishing which forces are using the “alcohol-related” flag on their offences and how usage compares across forces.

3 . Age and sex of victims of violent offences

The victim was female in 53% of violence against the person offences recorded by the police in the year ending March 2016 and male in 47% of offences. This is notably different from the Crime Survey for England and Wales (CSEW) for the same period, which estimated that 60% of victims of violence were male, with 40% being female (data not shown).

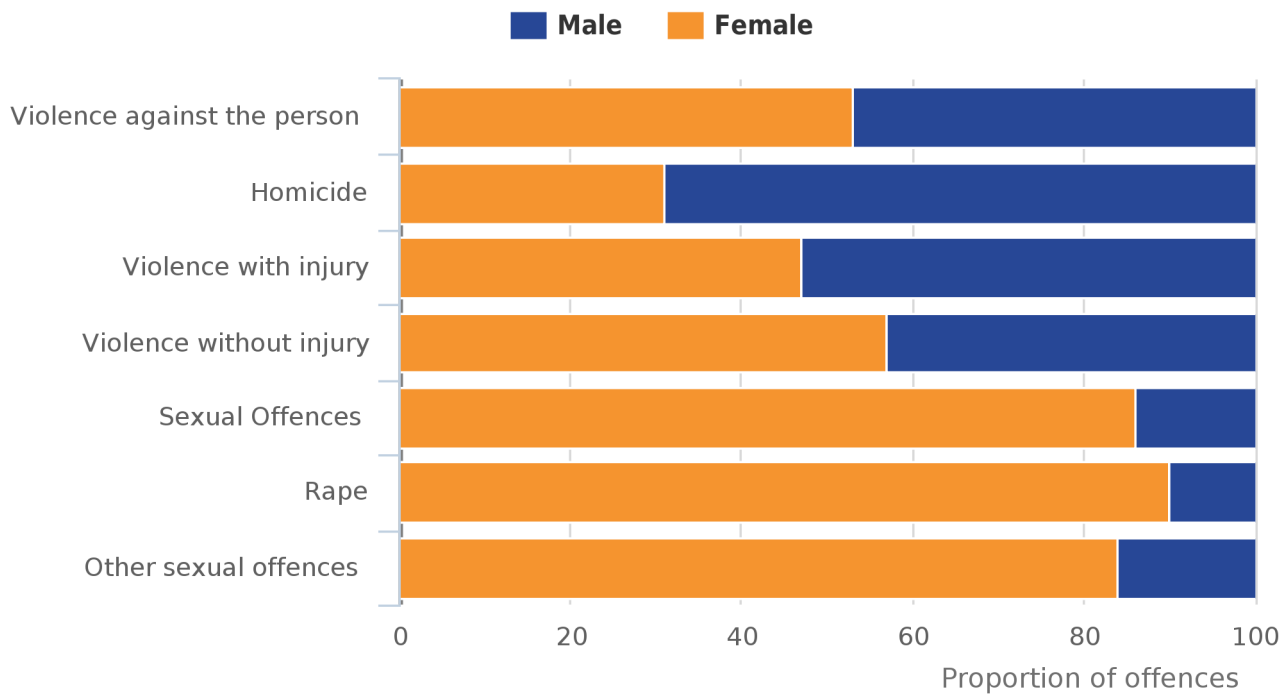
A likely reason for the difference between the sources is that 52% of intimate violence offences against female victims were domestic abuse-related compared with 18% against men, and while the CSEW provides good estimates of most crime types, it is known that the main face-to-face survey underestimates the number of domestic violence incidents, as explained in Chapter 4, the 'Domestic abuse, sexual assault and stalking' chapter of this release¹.

Analysis of reporting rates from the CSEW show that this may not be a large factor in the difference between sources. In the year ending March 2016, similar proportions of male and female victims of violence stated that they had reported the incidents to the police (49% and 56% respectively).

Violence against the person offences can be separated into those offences that resulted in an injury and those where no injury was suffered by the victim (Figure 5.1). Females accounted for a larger proportion of victims of police recorded violence without injury than males (57% compared with 43%), whereas males accounted for a larger proportion of victims of violence with injury (53% compared with 47%).

Figures for homicide by sex of the victim are also shown in Figure 5.1. These figures are taken from the Home Office Homicide Index and refer to all territorial police forces in England and Wales as well as the British Transport Police. In the year ending March 2016, 69% of homicide victims were male and 31% were female. More information on homicide offences can be found in Chapter 2, the 'Homicide chapter' of this release.

Figure 5.1: Proportion of violence against the person and sexual offences, by sex of victim, police recorded crime (32 forces) and Homicide Index (all forces), year ending March 2016



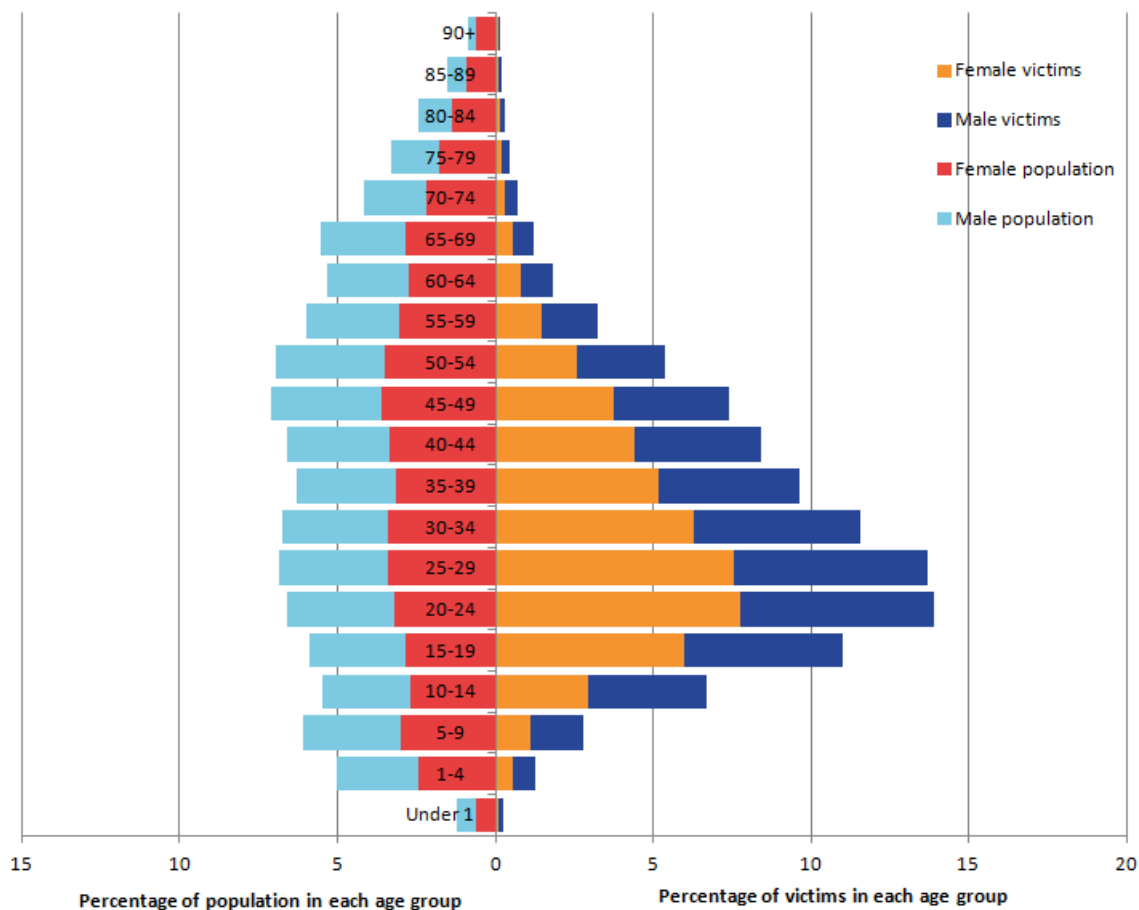
Source: Police recorded crime and Homicide Index, Home Office

Notes:

1. Police recorded crime data are not designated as National Statistics. In accordance with the Statistics and Registration Service Act 2007, figures from the Homicide Index have been re-assessed against the Code of Practice for Official Statistics and found to meet the required standard for designation as National Statistics.
2. Police recorded crime data based on 32 forces that provided accurate data via the Home Office Data Hub or in manual return.
3. Figures for Homicide are for all police forces in England and Wales (including British Transport Police) and are taken from the Home Office Homicide Index.

Information is also available on the age of victims of police recorded crimes from forces who have supplied data via the Data Hub (22 forces). Younger adults were more likely to be victims of violent crimes recorded by the police in the year ending March 2016 (Figure 5.2). For example, while those aged 20 to 29 made up around 13% of the population², they were victims in 28% of violence against the person offences recorded by the police. Within this age group, 56% of victims were female and 44% were male (data not shown). Older people and the very young were less likely to be victims of violent crime. For example, those aged 80 or older were victims in less than 1% of violent offences but made up around 5% of the population. Those aged under 10 accounted for 12% of the population but only 4% of victims.

Figure 5.2: Proportion of violence against the person offences, by age and sex of victim, Home Office Data Hub (22 forces), year ending March 2016



Notes for: Age and sex of victims of violent offences

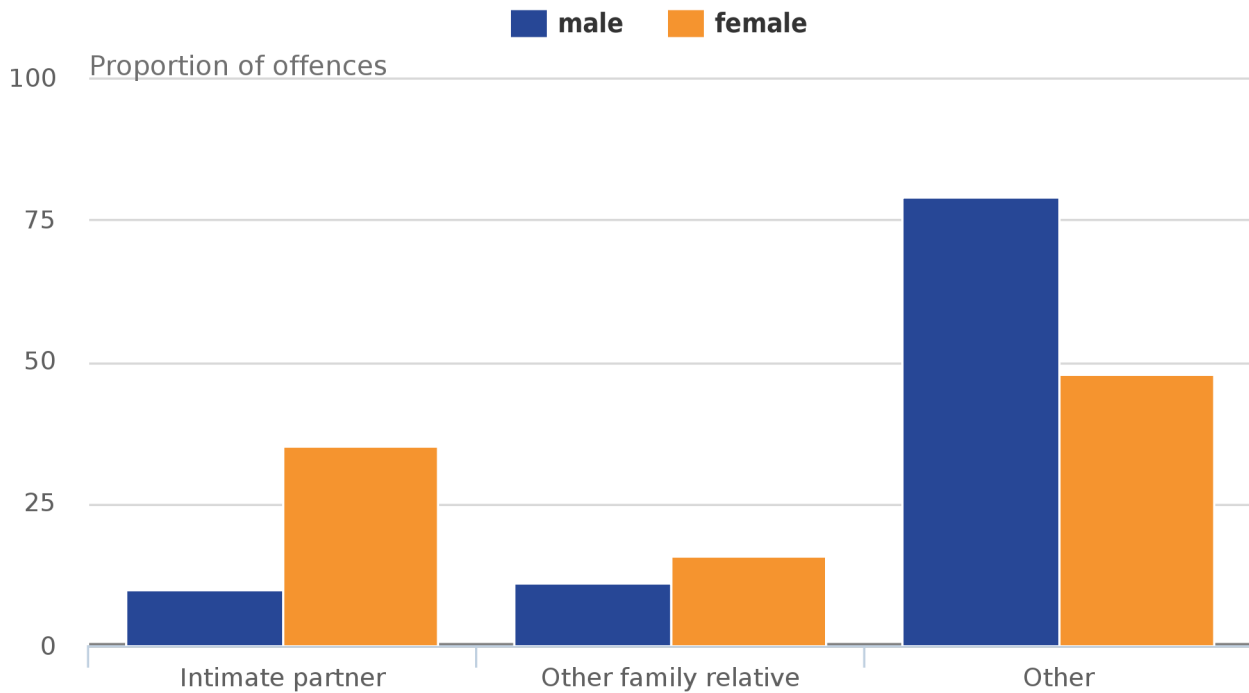
1. The prevalence of domestic abuse reported in the self-completion module is far higher than the prevalence of domestic violence reported in the face-to-face interview. This is due to the greater confidentiality provided by self-completion methods leading to increased reporting of sensitive issues.
2. Based on the ONS England and Wales population estimates.

4 . How are victims and suspects of violent offences related?

Over a third (35%) of female victims of violence against the person offences in the year ending March 2016 were victims of crimes suspected¹ to be committed by an intimate partner, compared with 10% of male victims of violent offences (Figure 5.3). There was also a higher proportion of violence against the person offences against females where the suspect was another family member, than against males (16% compared with 11%). This is likely to be due to a higher proportion of females being victims of domestic abuse than males (52% compared with 18%, see section 3).

For a large proportion of violence against the person offences the suspect was neither a partner or ex-partner nor a relative (“other” relationships), particularly for offences against men (79% compared with 48% against women). Further analysis, using a subset of forces², identified that for relationships classified as “other” the victim and suspect were known acquaintances in 47% of offences, had an unknown relationship (mainly because a suspect had not been identified) in 42% of offences, and were strangers in 11% of offences ([Appendix Table 5.01](#)).

Figure 5.3: Proportion of violence against the person offences, by sex of the victim and relationship of victim to suspect, police recorded crime (32 forces), year ending March 2016



Source: Police recorded crime

Notes:

1. Police recorded crime data are not designated as National Statistics.
2. Police recorded crime data based on 32 forces that provided accurate data via the Home Office Data Hub or in a manual return.

Notes on:

1. The Home Office collects data on the relationship between the victim and the principal suspect. Until a principal suspect is convicted, they are referred to as suspects rather than offenders.
2. Based on 9 forces who provided detailed relationship data via the Data Hub at a disaggregated level.

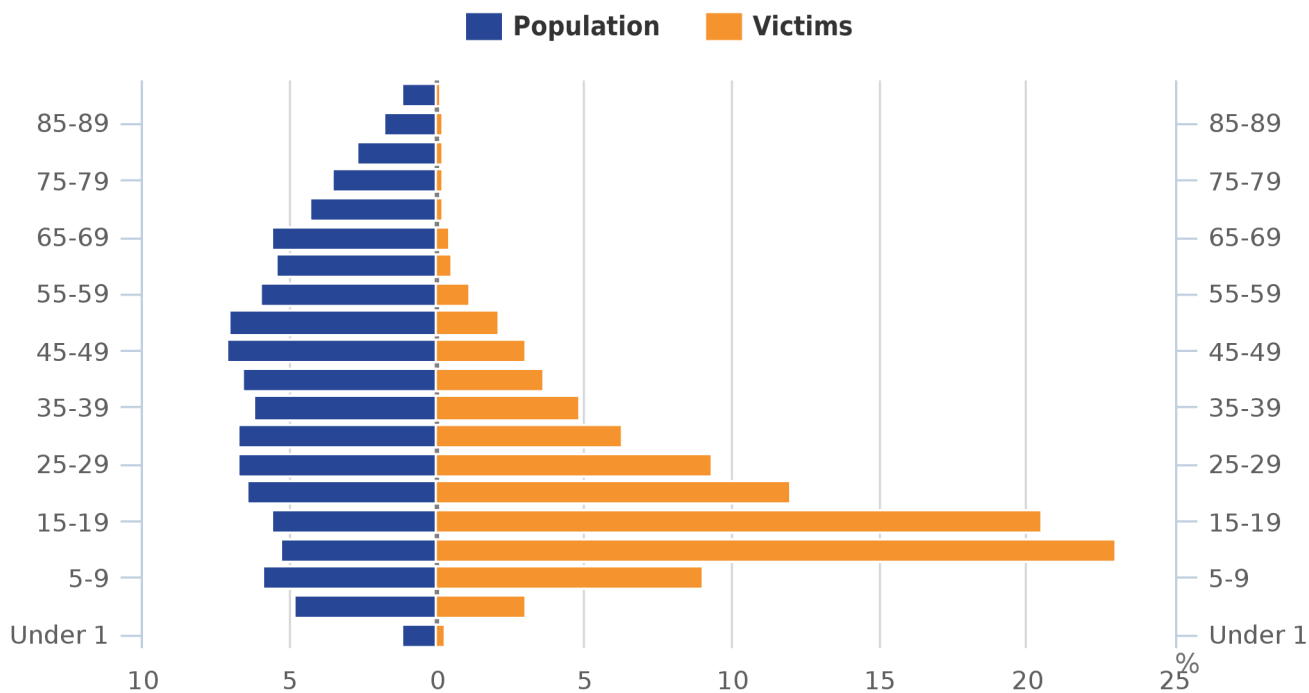
5 . Age and sex of victims of sexual offences

Police recorded sexual offences can be broken down into rape offences and other sexual offences (which includes offences such as sexual assaults, grooming, sexual exploitation). In the year ending March 2016, females were victims in 90% of rape offences, with the remaining 10% males¹ (Figure 5.1). Similarly, more victims of police recorded other sexual offences were female (84%) than male (16%).

The age profile of victims of sexual offences shows that victims are generally younger than those for violent offences. The majority of sexual offences recorded by the police (78%) involved a victim aged under 30, with just under half (49%) of victims being aged under 16 (data not shown).

Information from the Home Office Data Hub also shows that women aged 10 to 24 were disproportionately more likely to be victims of sexual offences recorded by the police, particularly those aged 10 to 14 and 15 to 19. For example, while 5% of the female population were aged 10 to 14, this age group accounted for 23% of police recorded sexual offences where the victim was female (Figure 5.4). Men aged 5 to 19 were also disproportionately more likely to be victims of sexual offences (Figure 5.5). For example, while 6% of the male population were aged 10 to 14, this age group accounted for 29% of police recorded sexual offences where the victim was male.

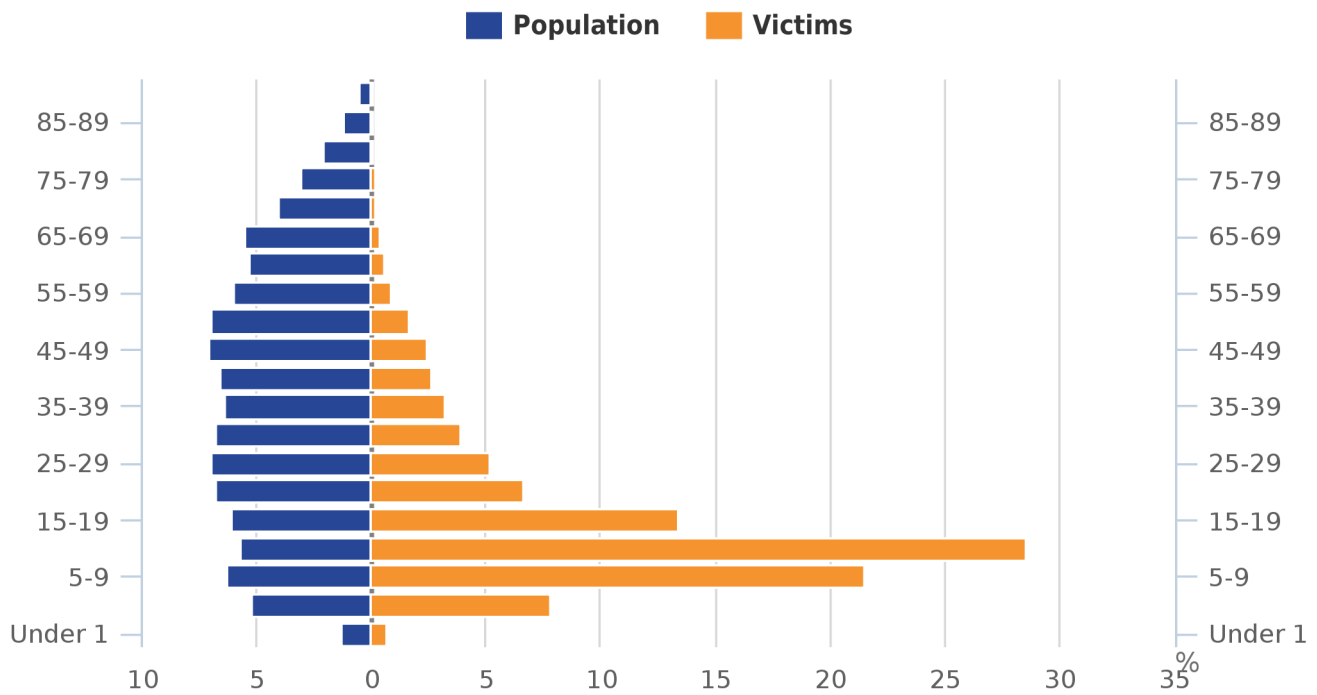
Figure 5.4: Distribution of female population and female victims of sexual offences, by age, Home Office Data Hub (22 forces), year ending March 2016



Notes:

1. Police recorded crime data are not designated as National Statistics.
2. Police recorded crime data based on 22 forces that provided accurate data via the Home Office Data Hub.
3. Population figures are based on the ONS population estimate for England and Wales.

Figure 5.5: Distribution of male population and male victims of sexual offences, by age, Home Office Data Hub (22 forces), year ending March 2016



Source: Home Office Data Hub

Notes:

1. Police recorded crime data are not designated as National Statistics.
2. Police recorded crime data based on 22 forces that provided accurate data via the Home Office Data Hub.
3. Population figures are based on the ONS population estimate for England and Wales.

Notes for: Age and sex of victims of sexual offences

1. Based upon [Table A4](#) in Crime in England and Wales, Year ending September 2016.

6 . How are victims and suspects of sexual offences related?

Analysis of the relationship between victims and suspects of sexual offences is provided here for the first time, representing data from 32 forces for the year ending March 2016.

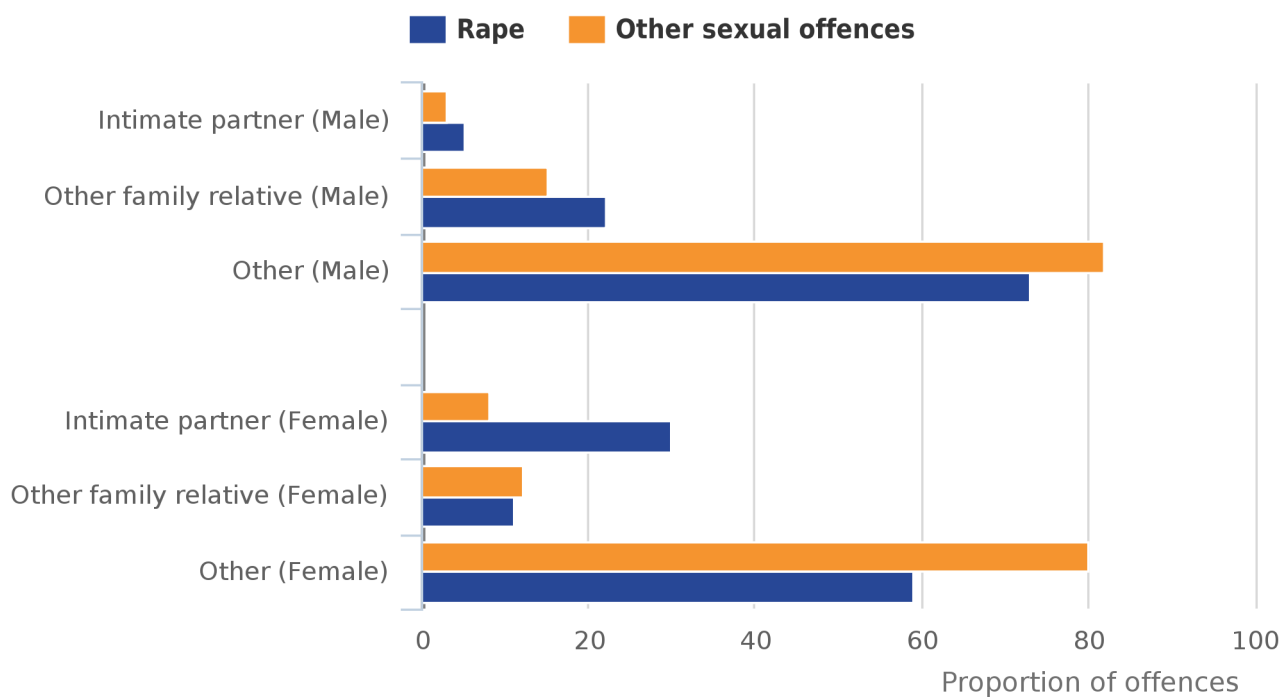
Just under a third (30%) of rape offences against females were (suspected to be) committed by an intimate partner, compared with 5% of rape offences against males (Figure 5.6). This is notably different from the Crime Survey for England and Wales (CSEW), which showed that almost half (47%) of serious sexual assaults against females were committed by a partner or ex-partner ([Appendix Table 4.13](#), Focus on violent crime and sexual offences, year ending March 2014)¹. This may be because rapes within a relationship are less likely to be reported to the police than rapes committed by strangers. For other sexual offences, the proportion of offences committed by an intimate partner where the victim was female was considerably lower than for rape offences (8% compared with 30% for rape) but similar for where the victim was male (3% compared with 5% for rape).

Rape by a family member accounted for a higher proportion of rape offences against males than against females (22% compared with 11%). For other sexual offences, the proportion of offences committed by a family member is similar for both male and female victims (15% and 12% respectively).

In the year ending March 2016, the majority of relationships between the victim and the suspect for rape offences were classed as “other”, particularly for male victims (73% compared with 59% for female victims). This category comprises other sexual relationships such as casual sexual partners, acquaintances, strangers and cases where the relationship status has not been identified or is unknown. Further analysis, using a subset of forces ² ([Appendix Table 5.01](#)), identified that for relationships classified as “other”, 46% were where the victim and suspect were known acquaintances, 14% were where the suspect was a stranger, and 40% were where the relationship between the victim and suspect was unknown (mainly because a suspect had not been identified).

The majority of relationships between the victim and the suspect for other sexual offences were also classed as “other” (82% for male victims and 80% for female victims). Further analysis, using a subset of forces ³, identified that for these relationships, 43% were where the victim and suspect were known acquaintances, 22% were where the suspect was a stranger and 35% were where the relationship between the victim and suspect was unknown ([Appendix Table 5.01](#)).

Figure 5.6: Proportion of rape and other sexual offences, by sex of victim and relationship of victim to suspect, police recorded crime (32 forces), year ending March 2016



Source: Police recorded crime

Notes:

1. Police recorded crime data are not designated as National Statistics.
2. Police recorded crime data based on 32 forces that provided accurate data via the Home Office Data Hub or in a manual return.

Notes for: How are victims and suspects of sexual offences related?

1. Data for the year ending March 2014 is the most up-to-date available as questions on the nature of sexual assault are not asked in the CSEW every year.
2. Based on 9 forces who provided detailed relationship data via the Data Hub at a disaggregated level.
3. Based on 9 forces who provided detailed relationship data via the Data Hub at a disaggregated level.

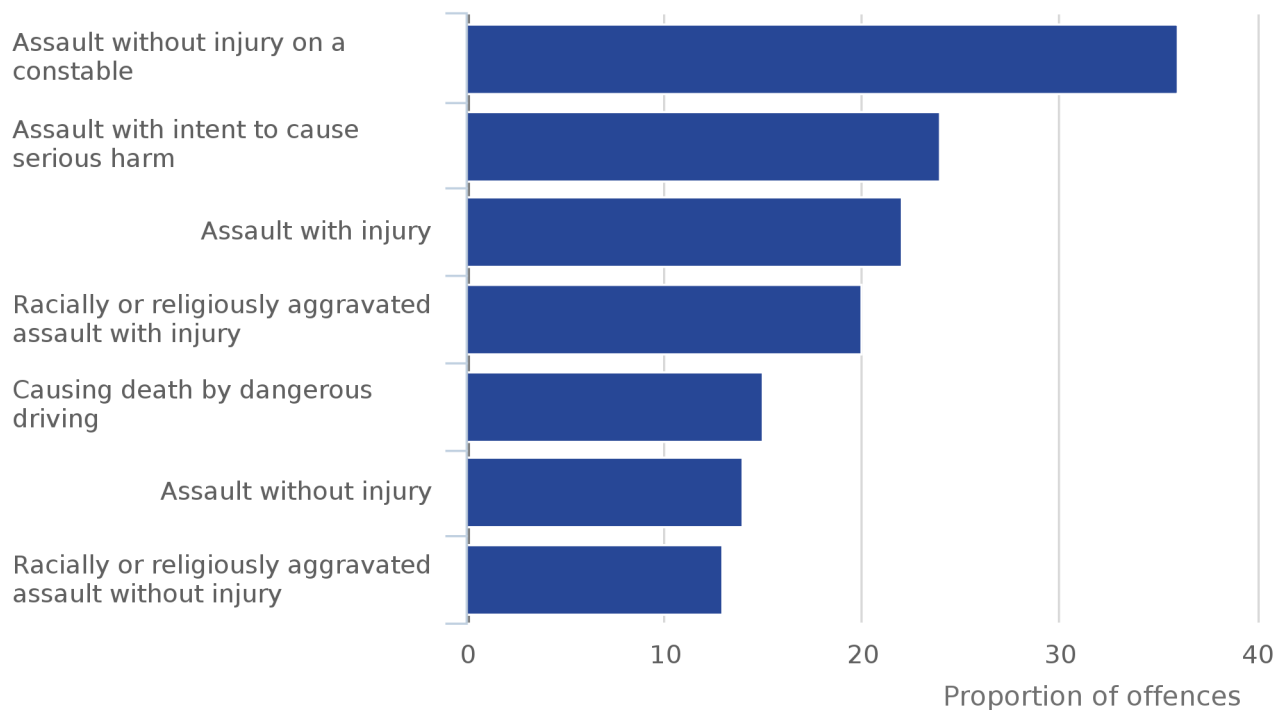
7 . Alcohol-related violent and sexual offences

In the year ending March 2016, 16% of violence against the person offences were flagged by the police as alcohol-related. The corresponding figure (as published last year¹) for the year ending March 2015 was 19%, however, the 2 years are not directly comparable as a different set of police forces were used in each year.

The proportion of alcohol-related violent offences recorded by the police in the year ending March 2016 is considerably lower than equivalent data derived from the CSEW. It should be noted that there are differences in the definitions. The CSEW defines crimes as “alcohol-related” if the victim perceived the offender(s) to be under the influence of alcohol. However, in the year ending March 2016, there was no standard definition for police recorded alcohol-related crime, and police forces were applying different definitions based on local needs and issues. The alcohol-related flag was not mandatory in this year.

The offence of “assault without injury on a constable” had the highest proportion of offences that were alcohol-related (36%), although it only accounted for 1% of violent offences. “Assault with injury” (22% of which were flagged as alcohol-related) and “assault without injury” (14%) were more common offences and respectively accounted for 40% and 35% of all police recorded violence. Violent offences most likely to be flagged as alcohol-related are shown in Figure 5.7^{2 3}.

Figure 5.7: Proportion of selected violence against the person offences recorded by the police which were ‘alcohol-related’, Home Office Data Hub (30 forces), year ending March 2016



Source: Home Office Data Hub

Notes:

1. Police recorded crime data are not designated as National Statistics.
2. Police recorded crime data based on 30 forces that provided accurate data via the Home Office Data Hub.
3. There are some violent offences with a high proportion of alcohol-related offences which have been excluded from this analysis due to very low volumes.
4. Selected violence against the person offences were those offences with the highest proportion of the alcohol-related flag.
5. Note that recording an alcohol-related factor for crimes was optional for forces in this year and a standard definition for usage was not introduced until April 2016. As such, we advise caution when interpreting these figures.

In the year ending March 2016, 9% of sexual offences were flagged as alcohol-related. This is similar to the 10% in the year ending March 2015 (as published last year⁴), however, the 2 years are not directly comparable as a different set of police forces were used in each year.

A higher proportion of rape offences (13%) were flagged as alcohol-related than other sexual offences (7%) in the year ending March 2016. The sexual offences most likely to be alcohol-related were “Rape of female victims aged 16 or over” (17%) and “Rape of male victims aged 16 or over” (14%).

The Home Office Data Hub can also capture the day and time when an offence took place. Previous analysis of these data for the year ending March 2015⁵ showed that a greater number of police recorded alcohol-related violent offences took place in the evening, especially on Fridays and Saturdays, compared with non alcohol-related violence, which occurred more uniformly throughout the day and week.

Notes for: Alcohol-related violent and sexual offences

1. Figures for the year ending March 2015 have been revised since they were published in [Focus on Violent Crime and Sexual Offences: Year ending March 2015](#).
2. There are some violent offences with a high proportion of alcohol-related offences which have been excluded from this analysis due to very low volumes.
3. Selected violence against the person offences were those offences with the highest proportion of the alcohol-related flag.
4. Figures for the year ending March 2015 have been revised since they were published in ' [Focus on Violent Crime and Sexual Offences: Year ending March 2015](#)'.
5. See Figure 5.7 in [Focus on Violent Crime and Sexual Offences: Year ending March 2015](#).