

Rt Hon Caroline Nokes MP
Chair, Women and Equalities Select Committee
House of Commons
London
SW1A 0AA

18 September 2023

Dear Ms Nokes,

I write in response to the Women and Equalities Select Committee's call for evidence for their inquiry into *the escalation of violence against women and girls*.

As the Committee will be aware, the Office for National Statistics (ONS) is the UK's National Statistical Institute and largest producer of official statistics. We aim to provide a firm evidence base for sound decisions and develop the role of official statistics in democratic debate.

In this written evidence, we have outlined the ONS's sources for crime statistics, our most recent publications on violence against women and girls (VAWG), and our plans to address known gaps in the data currently available.

Sources of ONS crime data

Our publications and data concern crime as it is experienced by victims, or as it is recorded by police. The ONS Centre for Crime and Justice publish figures on the levels and trends of crime in England and Wales primarily based on two sets of crime statistics: The Crime Survey for England and Wales (CSEW) which is a face-to-face victimisation survey, and police recorded crime data which is sent to us from the Home Office.

ONS crime publications and data

We regularly provide insight into the latest evidence and data on VAWG. Our latest figures for the year ending March 2023¹ show that, in the last year:

- 5.7% of women compared with 3.2% men aged 16 years and over experienced domestic abuse;
- 3.2% of women compared with 0.9% of men aged 16 and over experienced sexual assault;
- 4.4% of women compared with 2.4% men aged 16 and over experienced stalking.

¹ [Crime in England and Wales: Annual supplementary tables](#)

We also produce a number of dedicated releases on a range of crime topics linked to VAWG. For example, we included some questions on the Opinions and Lifestyle Survey (OPN) which asked people about their perceptions of personal safety and experiences of harassment in the last 12 months². The latest data from 2022 show that:

- more women (27%) than men (16%) reported they had experienced at least one form of harassment in the previous 12 months;
- women felt less safe than men in all settings after dark; 82% of women reported feeling very or fairly unsafe after dark “in a park or other open space, compared with 42% of men”.

Data from the Home Office Homicide Index for the year ending March 2019 to the year ending March 2021 also showed that 72.1% of victims of domestic homicide were female.

We also publish a number of detailed articles on domestic abuse³ and data tables⁴ which include figures on the prevalence of domestic abuse from the CSEW, police recorded crime and data from victim services. Our domestic abuse and the criminal justice system article⁵ contains data from the Ministry for Justice and Crown Prosecution Service (CPS) on the responses to and outcomes of domestic abuse-related cases in the criminal justice system.

Our annual homicide article⁶ and data tables⁷ include analyses of information held within the Home Office Homicide Index and contains detailed record-level information about each homicide recorded by police in England and Wales. The data tables include details on victims of domestic homicide.

We also publish a sexual offences publication⁸ and data tables⁹ which includes victimisation data from the CSEW, police recorded crime, and victim services.

Evidence and gaps

We work with a range of data suppliers, including victim services, to bring together data to provide an overall picture of victims and their experience, as well as to understand the evidence gaps. Our article “*The lasting impact of violence against women and girls*”¹⁰, brought together VAWG data from various sources and victim testimonies to demonstrate the profound long-term effects of VAWG on survivors and people close to them.

² [Perceptions of personal safety and experiences of harassment, Great Britain: 16 February to 13 March 2022](#)

³ [Domestic abuse in England and Wales overview: November 2022](#)

⁴ [Data related to Domestic abuse in England and Wales overview: November 2022](#)

⁵ [Domestic abuse and the criminal justice system, England and Wales: November 2022](#)

⁶ [Domestic abuse in England and Wales overview: November 2022](#)

⁷ [Data related to Homicide in England and Wales: year ending March 2022](#)

⁸ [Sexual offences in England and Wales overview: year ending March 2022](#)

⁹ [Data related to Sexual offences in England and Wales: year ending March 2022](#)

¹⁰ [The lasting impact of violence against women and girls](#)

To support the UK Government's Tackling Violence Against Women and Girls Strategy¹¹, we published a violence against women and girls (VAWG) data landscape¹². The landscape is a single comprehensive list of data and evidence relating to VAWG from a range of different sources from across government, academia, and the voluntary sector. The landscape can be used to identify available data sources relating to a particular topic (e.g., perpetrators or honour-based abuse) as well as to identify the evidence gaps in the data.

We have also published a research update¹³ that provides a summary of our current and future research and publications relating to VAWG.

The ONS plans to release an update to both the VAWG data landscape and the research update in November 2023. We will share this with the Committee when it is published.

I hope this evidence is useful to the Inquiry. Please let us know if there is anything further we can provide.

Yours sincerely,



Mike Keohan

Deputy National Statistician for Economic, Social and Environmental Statistics

¹¹ <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/tackling-violence-against-women-and-girls-strategy>

¹² <https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/crimeandjustice/datasets/violenceagainstwomenandgirlsdatalandscape>

¹³ <https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/crimeandjustice/articles/violenceagainstwomenandgirls/researchupdatenovember2022>

Field Code Changed