

# Crime and Criminal Justice Research Findings No. 51

## The 2000 Scottish Crime Survey: First Results

MVA Ltd

The 2000 Scottish Crime Survey (SCS) was the fifth in a series of national surveys carried out in Scotland. Crime surveys are a well established means of collecting information about the nature and extent of crimes experienced by individuals and households during the previous year. By asking people directly about their experiences crime surveys can provide information which is not available from other sources, such as whether or not the crime was reported to the police, and can offer an important complement to information from statistics of crime recorded by the police.

### Main Findings

- The SCS 2000 shows a fall of 13% between 1995 and 1999 in the number of crimes it measures across Scotland. Overall, since 1981, the number of crimes estimated by the SCS has fallen by nearly a third (29%).
- Over 60% of crimes experienced in 1999 were against property and of these about half involved motor vehicles. Vehicle related crime (vandalism, thefts and attempted thefts of and from cars) fell by 30% from approximately 337,600 crimes in 1995 to approximately 237,600 in 1999.
- Between 1995 and 1999 there was a very significant drop in relatively minor crimes of dishonesty. The crime categories of 'theft from a motor vehicle' and 'other household theft' fell to 56% of the 1995 level. This implies a decline of around 15% per year.
- Survey estimates suggest that the number of violent crimes (assault and robbery) increased by 33% between 1995 and 1999, although this increase was not statistically significant. Part of the increase was attributable to the addition of a new 'screener question' on domestic violence in the 2000 survey which increased the estimates of violent crime by approximately 10%.
- For all types of crime in the SCS, rates of victimisation were lower in Scotland than those recorded in England and Wales by the 2000 British Crime Survey (BCS). However, falling rates of housebreaking and personal crime in England and Wales since 1995 have narrowed this gap.
- Between 1996 and 2000, the public's level of concern about crime has fallen across all SCS measures.
- For those types of crime that can be compared, an estimated 33% of SCS crimes ended up in the police statistics on recorded crime. This was slightly below the proportion in 1995 (37%).
- The overall level of public satisfaction with police performance has remained high since the 1996 survey. Seventy two per cent of respondents said that the police in their area did a 'very good' or 'fairly good' job. Around three quarters (72%) of those who reported incidents to the police in 1999 said they were 'very' or 'fairly' satisfied with the way the police handled the matter, a similar proportion to 1995.

## Introduction

This paper presents key findings from the 2000 Scottish Crime Survey (SCS), a large scale household survey of public experiences and perceptions of crime, based on a core sample of 5,059 interviews with adults (aged 16 or over) throughout Scotland. As with all previous surveys, the 2000 SCS relates to crimes which happened during the previous year.

This is the fifth in the series of crime surveys in Scotland. In 1982 and 1988, Scotland participated in sweeps of the British Crime Survey (BCS), co-ordinated by the Home Office. Data collection was restricted to southern and central Scotland. The 1993 SCS, commissioned by The Scottish Office, was the first to cover the whole of mainland Scotland together with the larger islands. The 1996 and 2000 SCS had the same geographic coverage as the 1993 survey.<sup>1</sup>

## Why crime surveys?

It is widely accepted that victimisation surveys provide an important complement to the statistics compiled by the police. Not all crimes are reported to the police and, of those that are, not all are subsequently recorded. Crime surveys provide a fuller picture of the extent of, and trends in, most types of personal and household victimisation. Crime surveys also allow the opportunity to explore issues related to crime, such as the impact on victims, anxieties and concerns about crime, and attitudes to the police.

## Limitations of the Data

- The SCS cannot provide a complete picture of crime in Scotland. As a sample of adults in households, the SCS does not collect information about crimes against public or corporate bodies, individuals not resident in households and those aged under 16.
- The SCS depends on the willingness of people to take part in the survey and to remember incidents and report them accurately.
- Although care is taken to make the sample representative of individuals and households in Scotland, the SCS, like any sample survey, is subject to 'sampling error'. That is to say that those who respond may not always accurately reflect the Scottish population generally. The findings should therefore not be seen as exact measures but as indicators set within margins of error.
- The five Scottish survey sweeps were carried out in essentially the same way. However, when comparing survey results, the possibility should be recognised that public perceptions of crime and victimisation may have changed over the years, and that this may affect recall and the nature of how matters are reported.

The SCS does not claim, therefore, to measure the 'true' level of crime in Scotland. For many kinds of crime, however, including the most prevalent, it provides a better indicator of levels and trends in victimisation than police recorded crime statistics.

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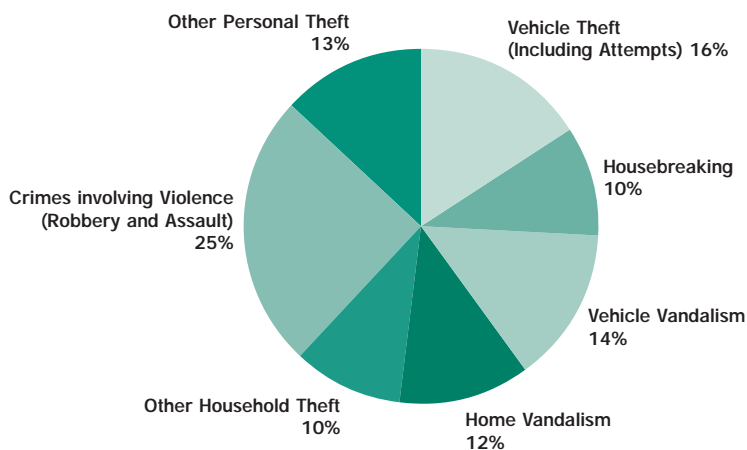
<sup>1</sup> To allow meaningful comparisons with earlier crime surveys, data showing trends are based on the subset of interviews carried out in Southern and Central Scotland only. This is necessary because lower rates of victimisation in Grampian and, particularly, the Highlands and Islands would otherwise tend to lower estimates of crime relative to earlier surveys. A total of 4,271 core survey interviews were conducted in Southern and Central Scotland in 2000. Respondents' statements about the nature or extent of crime in Scotland as a whole, and comparisons with the 1993 and 1996 SCS, are based on the wider geographic area covered.

## How much crime<sup>2</sup>?

From the 2000 SCS, it is estimated that just over 840,000 crimes were committed against individuals and households during 1999. This is a fall of about 13% from the number of crimes estimated for 1995 and a fall of 20% from the 1992 estimates<sup>3</sup>.

Figure 1 shows that 62% of the crimes reported to the survey were committed against property and just under a third of all crimes involved motor vehicles.

**Figure 1: Distribution of crime in 1999**



Source: 2000 SCS (All Scotland)

Crimes involving violence (robbery and assault) accounted for one quarter (25%) of crimes recorded by the 2000 survey. This is an increase from the 1996 SCS and the 1993 SCS, when these types of crime accounted for 16% of all crimes experienced. To a great extent, this reflects a fall in the level of other types of crime. For instance, between 1995 and 1999 there was a very significant drop in relatively

minor crimes of dishonesty. The crime categories of 'theft from a motor vehicle' and 'other household theft' (which includes attempted vehicle thefts and thefts from gardens and domestic garages) fell to 56% of the 1995 level. This implies a decline of around 15% per year. Looking at all vehicle related crimes together (vandalism, thefts and attempted thefts of and from cars) reveals a 30% drop in this type of crime, from approximately 337,600 crimes in 1995 to approximately 237,600 in 1999.

There has also been an increase in the number of violent crimes reported to the survey. Survey estimates suggest that the number of violent crimes increased by 33% between 1995 and 1999, although this increase was not statistically significant. Part of the increase was attributable to the addition of a new 'screener question' on domestic violence in the 2000 survey which encouraged people to report such incidents to the survey and increased the estimates of violent crime by approximately 10%<sup>4</sup>. Overall it appears that the increase in violent crimes picked up by the survey is largely due to a higher level of repeat victimisation in the sample, as the number of people affected has changed very little. As in 1995, only 3% of people in Scotland had been the victim of a violent crime in 1999.

One in five people (20%) had been the victim of at least one crime covered by the survey during 1999, while approximately 1 in 17 (6%) had been victims on two or more occasions. Certain groups of people were at more risk than others for specific types of crime. For example, those most at risk from violent street crime were young men, and those least at risk were older people.

2 Throughout this paper, the term 'crime' is used to refer to any incident of victimisation recorded by the survey. No technical distinction is made between 'crimes' and 'offences', as in the police recorded crime statistics.

3 The table in the Appendix shows survey estimates of crimes in central and southern Scotland 1981-1999, along with survey estimates for 1992 to 1999 and police recorded crime statistics for all of Scotland. The estimates of assault for 1999 include responses to the new domestic violence 'screener' question, which was not included in the previous surveys.

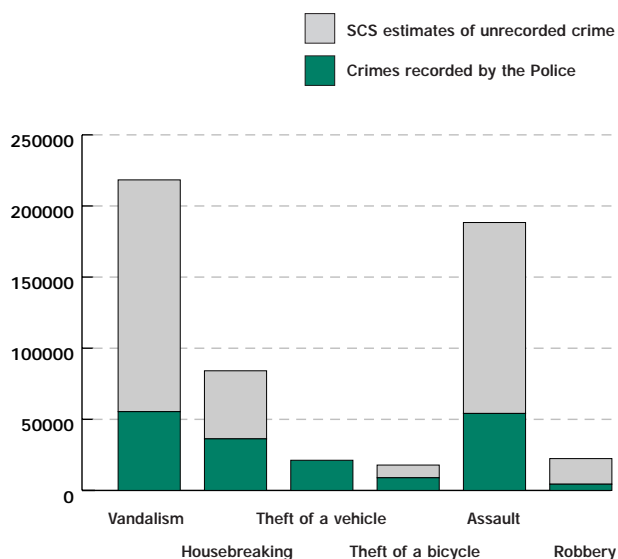
4 As the last question in a series of 'screener' questions which aim to identify whether an individual has been the victim of certain crimes in the last year, respondents were asked 'Apart from anything you may have already mentioned, in the time since the first of January 1999, has any member of your household (aged 16 or over) deliberately hit you with their fists, or with a weapon of any sort, or kicked you, or used force or violence on you in any way?'. Ten percent of those violent crimes reported to the survey in 1999 were the result of responses to this 'screener' question.

## Comparison with police recorded crime statistics

Because not all crimes are reported to the police and, of those that are, not all are subsequently recorded by them, there is a sizeable gap between SCS estimates of crime and the figures for police recorded crimes.

Only certain categories of crime are directly comparable between the SCS figures and the police statistics: vandalism, housebreaking, theft of a motor vehicle, theft of a bicycle, robbery and assault. These categories are collectively referred to as the 'comparable sub-set' of crimes. This sub-set accounts for 65% of all crimes reported in the survey<sup>5</sup>. Figure 2 shows, for each category, the number of crimes estimated in the SCS and the number recorded by the police.

**Figure 2: Levels of unrecorded and recorded crime**



Source: 2000 SCS (All Scotland).

Adjusted police recorded crime statistics

The number of comparable crimes recorded by the police in 1999 is only 33% of the total number of crimes estimated by the SCS. This proportion is slightly lower than the 37% recorded in 1995 and 1992.

## Reporting to the police

Victims of crimes were asked whether they had reported the crime(s) against them to the police. As Table 1 shows, although crime surveys have consistently shown reporting rates to be higher in Scotland than in England and Wales, trends have hitherto been similar with an increase in reporting up to 1992 which then tailed off. However, for Scotland the reporting rate for 1999 has increased beyond the 1992 level, whereas the level of reporting in England and Wales has remained relatively static.

**Table 1: Trends in reporting crime to the police 1981-1999**

	% of crimes reported to the police					
	1981	1987	1991	1992	1995	1999
Central and Southern Scotland	38	44	N/A	53	50	55
England and Wales	31	37	43	N/A	41	39

Source: 1982, 1988, 1992, 1996 & 2000 BCS; 1993, 1996 & 2000 SCS (Central and Southern Scotland only). All survey crimes.

<sup>5</sup> This is an increase from 54% in 1995, largely reflecting a sharp drop in some types of crime outside the comparable sub-set (in particular, other household theft and theft from motor vehicles).

Across Scotland as a whole, the crimes most likely to be reported in 1999 were theft of a motor vehicle (95%), housebreaking (69%), bicycle theft (66%) and theft from a motor vehicle (56%). Crimes such as theft in a dwelling (22%) and other personal theft (43%) were less likely to be reported, although the reporting of both of these crimes increased from the reporting levels of 1995 (11% and 26% respectively). Where crimes had not been reported to the police, the most common reasons, according to the victims, were that the incident was “too trivial” or “the police could have done nothing”.

One factor which may be associated with the likelihood of reporting an incident is insurance cover. Of those incidents of theft or damage where an insurance claim was made, 92% had been reported to the police, but only 45% of incidents where no insurance claim was made were reported.

## Crime trends

It is useful to look at how the SCS estimates compare with the police recorded crime statistics as this can shed light on whether crime rates are actually changing, or people are tending to report more or less crime, or police crime recording practices are changing.

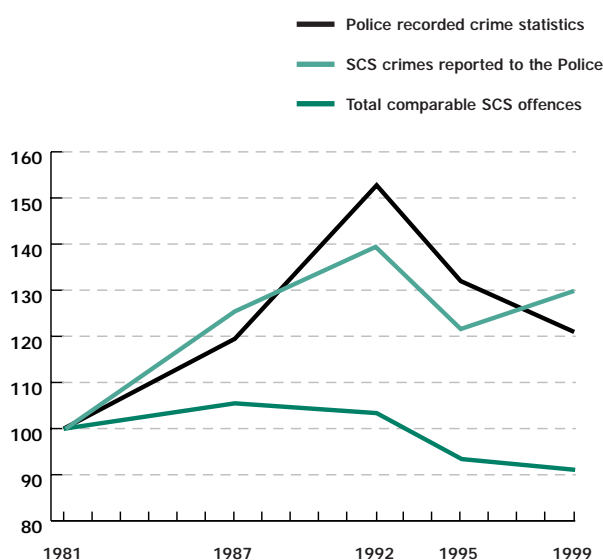
Figure 3 shows trends for all comparable crime between 1981 and 1999. The figures for 1981 are indexed at 100.

### Trends 1981 to 1999 (Southern and Central Scotland)

Over the full period covered by the Scottish Crime Surveys (1981-1999), the number of police recorded crimes rose by 20% and the number of SCS crimes reported to the police rose by 33%. However, the total number of SCS crimes whether reported to the police or not, actually fell by 9%<sup>6</sup>. Figure 3 shows in more detail what was happening over this period.

Between 1981 and 1992 police statistics showed a steep rise in the level of crime in Scotland (52%) followed by a drop between 1992 and 1995 (13%). However, SCS crimes increased by just 4% between 1981 and 1992, and declined similarly to the police statistics between 1992 and 1995 (10%). Over the same period, rates of reporting to the police increased substantially before dropping between 1992 and 1995. This suggests that it was largely increased reporting rates between 1981 and 1992 which accounted for the overall rise in police recorded crime rates, rather than a real increase in the level of crime over the period.

**Figure 3: Indexed trends in crime 1981-1999**



Source: police recorded crime statistics; BCS (Scotland) 1982, 1988; SCS 1993,1996,2000 (central and southern Scotland). Comparable sub-set of crimes only; 1981 figures =100.

The police statistics for 1999 show a further, although much smaller, drop in the recorded levels of crime since 1995 (8%), and there has been a smaller decrease in the total number of SCS comparable crimes (3%). However, the number of SCS crimes reported to the police actually rose 7% over the period. This implies a slight fall in the amount of reported crime recorded by the police in recent years.

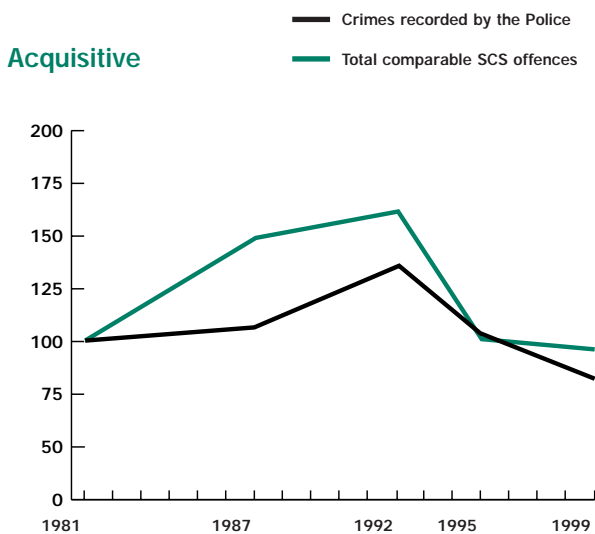
<sup>6</sup> This is less than the 29% fall noted on page 1 as the comparable sub-set excludes minor crimes of dishonesty such as ‘theft from a motor vehicle’ and ‘other household theft’ in which there have been major drops since 1992.

### Trends in different types of crime 1981 to 1999 (Southern and Central Scotland)

The pattern in trends varied considerably between different types of crime, as Figures 4 to 6 show.

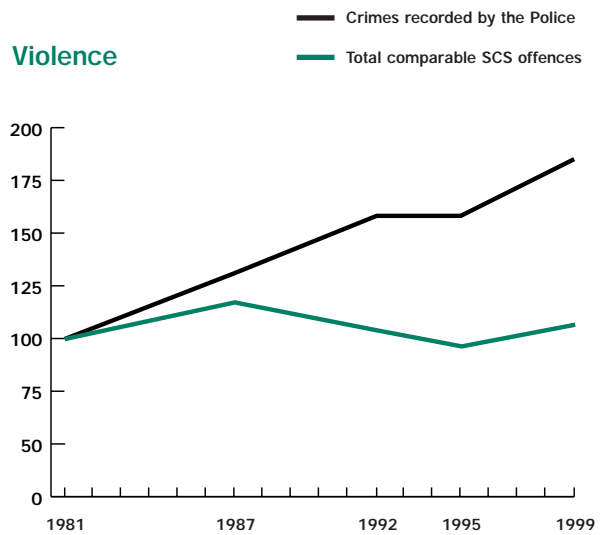
For acquisitive crime (housebreaking, theft of a motor vehicle and bicycle theft), survey trends are broadly in line with police statistics since 1981, but with a sharper rise between 1981 and 1992, and a sharper drop between 1992 and 1995.

**Figure 4: Indexed Trends in Acquisitive Crime - housebreaking, theft from a motor vehicle, bicycle theft**



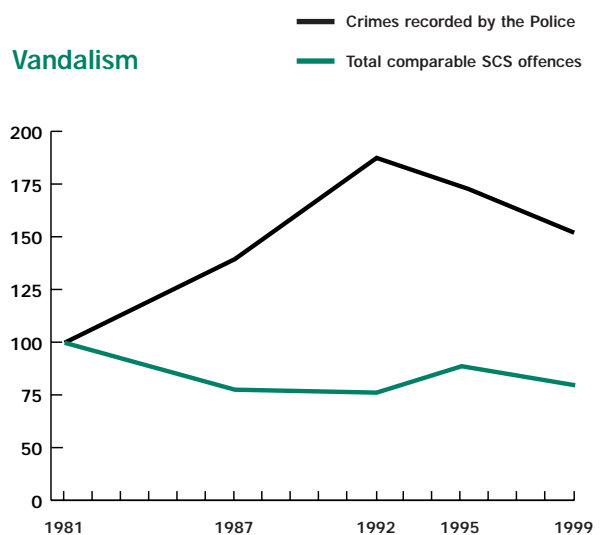
Survey estimates of violent crime (assault and robbery) rose between 1981 and 1987 but fell in 1992 and 1995, while the police statistics continued to rise. Police statistics show a 16% rise in violent incidents between 1995 and 1999 and the SCS estimates also show a rise, although it is slightly smaller (9%). This 9% rise in the SCS figures between 1995 and 1999 is smaller than the rise in the number of violent crimes reported elsewhere in this document, because comparisons with figures prior to 1992 are based on data for Central and Southern Scotland only, whereas comparisons with 1992 and 1995 use data from the whole of Scotland.

**Figure 5: Indexed Trends in Violent Crime - petty and serious assault and robbery**



SCS estimates of vandalism fell between 1981 and 1992, but rose in 1995. In contrast, during this period the police statistics on vandalism showed a considerable increase between 1981 and 1992, and then a decrease between 1992 and 1995. Between 1995 and 1999 both the SCS estimates of vandalism and the police statistics on vandalism show a drop of a similar size.

**Figure 6: Indexed Trends in Vandalism - vehicle and property vandalism**



Figures 4 - 6 source: Police Recorded Crime Statistics; BCS (Scotland) 1982, 1988; SCS 1993, 1996, 2000 (Central and Southern Scotland)

## Trends in different types of crime 1995-1999 (All Scotland)

In Scotland as a whole, between 1995 and 1999, police recorded crime fell by 7% and crime survey estimates (for the comparable subset of crimes) rose by 5%<sup>7</sup> (see Table 2). The increase in crime survey estimates for the comparable sub-set is the result of a large increase (33%) in violent crimes. The police recorded crime statistics also show an increase in violent crime, although a smaller one (16%).

**Table 2: Trends in crime 1995-1999**

% change in crime 1995-1999			
	Crimes recorded by the Police	Total comparable survey crimes	Survey crimes reported to the Police
Acquisitive	-18	-8	-8
Violence	+16	+33	+83
Vandalism	-11	-7	-7
Total	-7	+5	+13

Sources: Adjusted police recorded crime statistics 1995 and 1999; 1996 and 2000 SCS.

Changes in SCS comparable survey crimes are not statistically significant.

Within each crime category changes in police recorded crime were somewhat different to the estimated changes in SCS crimes reported to the police, especially in the case of violent crime<sup>8</sup>. For acquisitive crime and vandalism the level of survey crimes reported to the police fell slightly, compared with larger falls of 18% for acquisitive crime recorded by the police and 11% for vandalism.

## Comparisons with England and Wales

In 1981, crime survey victimisation rates in Scotland were similar to those in England and Wales. By 1987, Scotland was showing lower rates for most types of crime. The 1993 SCS showed that, when compared to the findings from the 1992 BCS in England and Wales, the gap had widened further and that Scottish victimisation rates were lower for all categories of crime. The findings of the 1996 SCS showed that the difference in crime rates between Scotland and England and Wales found in previous crime surveys had increased further for all types of crime.

The figures of the 2000 SCS show that although crime rates in Scotland are lower than those in England and Wales for all types of crime, the difference between crime rates has decreased since the 1996 SCS. In particular, falling crime rates for housebreaking and personal crime in England and Wales combined with static or increased crime rates in these categories in Scotland has meant that the gap in overall crime rates has narrowed between 1995 and 1999. Differences in the survey administration and design and recent changes in the method of compiling offence categories for the BCS may affect comparability between the two surveys. However, it is unlikely that these would account for these overall differences between the crime rates.

<sup>7</sup> This figure differs from that reported earlier as it refers to the whole of Scotland and not just Central and Southern areas.

<sup>8</sup> The estimated change in the rate of violent incidents reported to the police should be treated with caution as the way in which this is calculated by the SCS may tend to overestimate those reported to the police. There was a high level of repeat victimisation for violent crime and the SCS counts each repeat victimisation as having been reported to the police. In reality, not every incident may have been reported.

**Table 3: Comparison of Victimization Rates for Scotland and England and Wales 2000 SCS and BCS**

Offence Category	Scotland	England and Wales
Housebreaking	385	585
All vehicle thefts	534	1347
Theft from vehicle	323	825
Theft of vehicle	82	152
Attempted vehicle thefts	129	370
Bicycle thefts	82	181
Thefts from person*	47	146
Vandalism	999	1300
Vehicle vandalism	554	718
Household vandalism	445	582
Assault*	458	676
Robbery*	54	84
Other household thefts	375	874
Other personal thefts*	228	358
<b>Total household offences</b>	<b>2374</b>	<b>4287</b>
<b>Total personal offences*</b>	<b>788</b>	<b>1264</b>

Sources: 2000 BCS and 2000 SCS

The category 'Other household thefts' includes 'Theft in a dwelling'.

The rates are per 10,000 households with the exception of those indicated (\*) where the rates are per 10,000 adults aged 16 or over

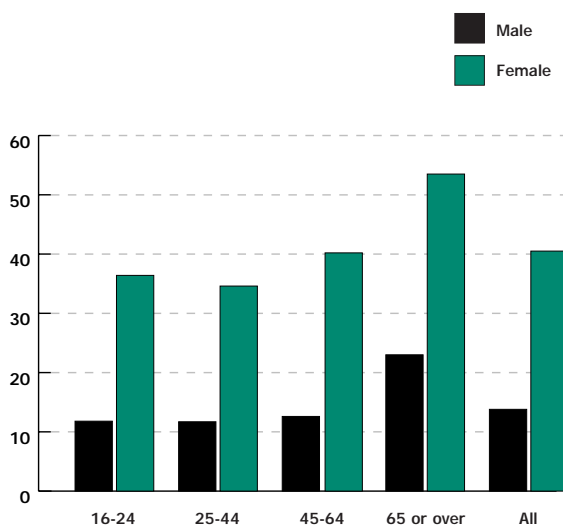
Totals may not be exact sums of constituent offence categories due to rounding

## Public Perceptions of Crime

When presented with a range of social problems 'in Scotland today' 82% of respondents identified crime as an 'extremely' (28%) or 'quite' (53%) serious problem. However, crime was not considered to be as serious a problem as it was in either 1996 SCS (90%) or 1993 SCS (92%). The proportion who said it was an 'extremely serious' problem has fallen significantly from 50% in the 1993 SCS and 44% in the 1996 SCS to 28% in 2000. Just under half (48%) of all respondents said that they worried that they or someone they lived with would become a victim of crime, a slight decline on the 50% seen in 1996 and 52% in 1993.

The proportion of respondents feeling unsafe walking alone in their area after dark has fallen from 39% in 1993 and 35% in 1996 to 28% in 2000. Women and the elderly were the most likely to feel unsafe (Figure 7).

**Figure 7: Percentage of respondents feeling 'a bit' or 'very' unsafe walking alone after dark**



Source : 2000 SCS

There was a further decrease between 1996 and 2000 in the proportion of respondents who were worried about specific types of crime. For example, the proportion who were 'very' or 'fairly' worried about becoming a victim of housebreaking fell from 59% in SCS 1993 to 45% in SCS 2000 (52% in SCS 1996). A similar drop was observed for other types of crime.

## Other Forms of Victimisation

The SCS also elicited information about a number of types of harassment to which respondents may have been subjected but which may not have been regarded as a crime.

Twelve per cent of respondents said that since the beginning of 1999 they had been annoyed, upset or frightened when they were out, by people following them on foot, following them by car, indecently exposing themselves, or making abusive or offensive comments. This compares with 14% in 1996 and 13% in 1993. As in 1995, young people were the most likely to have experienced at least one of these types of harassment. However, the proportion of 16-24 year olds who had experienced at least one of these types of harassment has fallen from 33% in 1995 to 22% in 1999.

Eight per cent of households in the 2000 SCS had received at least one offensive telephone call, the same as in 1996 SCS and below the 11% in 1993 SCS. However, of those who had received offensive telephone calls the proportion who had received three or more such calls had risen yet again, from 47% in the 1993 SCS to 63% in the 1999 SCS (57% in the 1996 SCS).

## Satisfaction with the Police<sup>9</sup>

The SCS included questions about respondents' views on the general performance of their local police. As Table 4 shows, overall views are the same as in 1996, with 72% saying that the police do a 'very good' or a 'fairly good job'. However, fewer respondents in the 2000 survey considered that the police did a 'very good' job.

**Table 4: Satisfaction with the Police**

	Would you say that the police in this area do a good or a poor job? (%)				
	1982	1988	1993	1996	2000
Very good	27	16	16	18	14
Fairly good	44	54	51	54	58
Fairly poor	7	12	12	11	13
Very poor	4	4	8	5	4
Don't know	18	14	12	12	12

Sources: 1982 & 1988 BCS and 1993, 1996 & 2000 SCS (central and southern Scotland only).

Totals may not sum to 100% due to rounding.

Attitudes towards the police vary according to the age of the respondent, with older people more likely to consider that the police are doing a 'very good' or a 'fairly good' job. However, there has been a fall in the proportion of those aged 60 and over saying that the police do a 'very good' job, from 21% in 1993 SCS to 16% in 1999 SCS (27% in 1996 SCS). During the same period the proportion of 16-24 year olds saying that the police do a 'very good' job has remained stable at around 9%.

Of those victims who had reported incidents to the police, just under three quarters said they were 'very' or 'fairly' satisfied with the way that the police handled the matter. Similar levels of satisfaction were reported in the 1988, 1993 and 1996 surveys.

<sup>9</sup> Analysis of satisfaction with police based on Central and Southern Scotland only.

## Appendix

### Survey Estimates of Crimes in Central and Southern Scotland 1981-1999 and Comparison of Survey Estimates for 1992 and 1999 with Police Recorded Crime Statistics (000's)

	Central and Southern Scotland					All Scotland			Police		
	1981	1987	1992	1995	1999	1992	1995	1999	1992	1995	1999
<b>Comparable with recorded crime</b>											
<b>Vandalism</b>	<b>228</b>	<b>178</b>	<b>172</b>	<b>201</b>	<b>182</b>	<b>212</b>	<b>234</b>	<b>218</b>	<b>65</b>	<b>62</b>	<b>55</b>
<b>Acquisitive crime</b>	<b>105</b>	<b>157</b>	<b>170</b>	<b>106</b>	<b>101</b>	<b>186</b>	<b>130</b>	<b>120</b>	<b>104</b>	<b>81</b>	<b>66</b>
Housebreaking	65	108	115	67	69	124	82	84	56	45	36
Theft of motor vehicle	25	24	33	21	15	36	23	18	36	25	21
Bicycle theft	15	25	22	18	16	26	25	18	11	11	9
<b>Violence</b>	<b>146</b>	<b>170</b>	<b>153</b>	<b>140</b>	<b>153</b>	<b>168</b>	<b>159</b>	<b>211</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>58</b>
Assault	133	160	140	126	131	155	142	188	44	46	54
Robbery	13	10	13	14	21	13	17	22	6	4	4
<b>Total comparable crimes</b>	<b>478</b>	<b>506</b>	<b>495</b>	<b>447</b>	<b>436</b>	<b>566</b>	<b>523</b>	<b>549</b>	<b>218</b>	<b>194</b>	<b>180</b>
<b>Other survey crimes</b>											
Theft from motor vehicle	133	151	135	121	59	150	136	71	*	*	*
Other household theft	131	139	182	155	88	208	181	110	*	*	*
Theft from the person	46	29	18	14	20	20	17	20	*	*	*
Other personal theft	155	112	94	93	69	111	112	94	*	*	*
<b>All survey crimes</b>	<b>942</b>	<b>938</b>	<b>924</b>	<b>830</b>	<b>671</b>	<b>1055</b>	<b>969</b>	<b>843</b>	<b>*</b>	<b>*</b>	<b>*</b>

#### Notes

1. Sources: 1982 and 1988 BCS (Central and Southern Scotland), 1993, 1996 and 2000 SCS, 1992, 1995, 1999 police recorded crime statistics.
  2. Acquisitive crimes: housebreaking, theft of a motor vehicle and bicycle theft. This definition differs from that of the BCS in England and Wales in that it excludes theft from a motor vehicle and theft from the person. This is because comparable Scottish Police statistics are not available for these categories.
  3. Violence: petty and serious assault and robbery.
  4. Survey estimates of the total number of crimes were derived by multiplying unrounded victimisation rates by the relevant multiplier for households and personal offences.
  5. The category 'other household theft' includes attempted thefts of and from vehicles and theft in a dwelling.
  6. Police recorded crime statistics have been adjusted to improve comparability with the SCS. For example crimes against public and corporately owned property have been excluded. The police recorded crime statistics shown here are for Scotland as a whole.
- \* No comparable police statistics on recorded crime available.



## METHADODOLOGICAL NOTES

The 2000 Scottish Crime Survey was based on face to face interviews throughout Scotland with a representative sample of 5,059 adults aged 16 or over. Interviews were carried out between January and May 2000 by representatives of MVA Ltd. Addresses for the survey were drawn at random from the small users Postal Address File. The survey had a response rate of 70.5%. Further methodological details can be found in the survey Technical Report.

The figures reported in this document are estimates of the true numbers. As the SCS is a sample survey, data are subject to sampling error. This means that there is a range around the survey findings within which we can be more or less confident the true figure lies. Because of these confidence intervals some apparent changes between years do not reach statistical significance. When considering estimates of total numbers of crimes and incidence rates, changes between 1995 and 1999 in theft from a motor vehicle, and other household theft are statistically significant. The others, including theft of a motor vehicle and violence, are not. This is not to say changes in theft of a motor vehicle and violence have not occurred, but rather that the current survey design does not allow us to estimate their extent with certainty.

An overview report on the results from the 2000 SCS will be published in due course. This will include more detailed results on victimisation rates, risks of victimisation and fear of crime. There will also be a series of modular reports on other topics covered by the survey including drug misuse, the impact of crime on victims, experiences of domestic violence and young people and crime.

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