



## CRIME AND JUSTICE

# HOMICIDE IN SCOTLAND 2014-15

This bulletin presents statistics on crimes of homicide recorded by the police in Scotland in 2014-15. Statistics are presented on the number of homicide cases recorded in Scotland, where a single case of homicide is counted for each crime involving Murder or Culpable homicide (common law), irrespective of the number of victims or accused. Victim and accused data are then provided, followed by the circumstances associated with the homicide. Additional details relating to the method, motive and relationship between the victim and the accused are also shown.

## Key Points

- Between 2013-14 and 2014-15, the number of homicide cases recorded by the police in Scotland decreased by 2% (or 1 case) from 60 to 59. This is the lowest number of recorded homicide cases for a single twelve month period since 1976, the first year for which comparable data are available.
- Over the ten year period from 2005-06 to 2014-15, the number of homicide cases in Scotland fell by 36 (or 38%) from 95 to 59. Glasgow City accounts for half of this decrease. In 2014-15, 24% (or 14) out of the 59 national recorded homicide cases occurred within Glasgow City.
- In 2014-15, the police in Scotland recorded 59 victims of homicide, two less than the 61 victims recorded in 2013-14. As at 31 March 2015, no cases of homicide recorded in 2014-15 were unsolved.
- In 2014/15, 77 persons were accused of homicide and 91% (or 70) of them were male. Of the 59 victims, 76% (or 45) were also male.
- For each of the last ten years period, the most common method of killing was with a sharp instrument. In 2014-15, a sharp instrument was the main method of killing of 33 homicide victims (56%).

# Homicide in Scotland 2014-15



What can the data tell us about male and female victims of homicide?

**MALES**  
(2014-15)

**FEMALES**  
(2014-15)

most homicide victims are male

**76%**

**24%**

most of the accused are male

**91%** of those accused of homicide are male

**9%** of those accused of homicide are female

most victims are killed by someone they know

**49%** of male victims were killed by an acquaintance

**43%** of female victims were killed by their partner

the most common method is with a sharp instrument

**56%** of male victims were killed by a sharp instrument

**57%** of female victims were killed by a sharp instrument

most homicides take place in a dwelling.

**60%** of male victims were killed in a dwelling.

**93%** of female victims were killed in a dwelling

## Contents

<b>Key Points</b> .....	<b>1</b>
<b>Background</b> .....	<b>4</b>
<b>Commentary</b> .....	<b>5</b>
Homicide cases .....	5
Victims of homicide .....	7
Persons accused of homicide.....	8
Method .....	10
Relationship of main accused to victim .....	11
Main motive .....	13
Alcohol and drug status .....	14
Comparator and related statistics .....	15
<b>Annexes</b> .....	<b>17</b>
Data Quality Statement.....	17
Police Scotland Management Information.....	19
Stakeholder Consultation .....	19
Other Notes .....	20
Glossary.....	21
Statistics Designation .....	24

# Background

The statistics used in this bulletin refer to cases recorded as homicide by Police Scotland, as at 31 March 2015. The bulletin includes all crimes of Murder and Culpable homicide (common law), with these two crimes collectively referred to as Homicide throughout the bulletin. The associated tables to this bulletin, allowing the recreation of all graphs presented here, can be downloaded from the Scottish Government website.

A [Glossary](#) in the annex provides a full list of key variables used throughout this bulletin and what they mean.

The statistics on homicides are used to inform [National Outcome 9](#) – ‘we live our lives safe from crime, disorder and danger’ as well as [The Strategy for Justice in Scotland](#). These statistics are also used by a wide range of stakeholders to monitor trends, for policy research and development, and for research purposes. The ‘Homicide in Scotland’ statistical bulletin forms part of a series of bulletins produced by the Scottish Government on the criminal justice system.

The bulletin excludes cases of Causing death by dangerous driving, Causing death by careless driving while under the influence of drink or drugs, Causing death by careless driving, Illegal driver involved in fatal accident and Corporate homicide. The Scottish Government also publishes a bulletin on Recorded Crime in Scotland which contains data on the wider Homicide etc. category. This includes the crimes of Murder and Culpable homicide (common law) (as reported on in this Homicide Bulletin), as well as the crimes of Causing death by dangerous driving, Death by careless driving when under influence of drink or drugs, Causing death by careless driving, Illegal driver involved in fatal accident and Corporate homicide. The 2014-15 edition of the Recorded Crime in Scotland bulletin can be accessed [here](#).

The data in this bulletin are collected separately from the data included in the Recorded Crime in Scotland bulletin. For the crimes of Murder and Culpable homicide (common law), data are extracted from police recording systems at a different time point and so there may be discrepancies in the information presented here and the Recorded Crime in Scotland bulletin. In this bulletin homicide cases are included against the year in which the crime that led to the homicide is first recorded by the police. This is not necessarily the year in which the victim dies, the date of the homicide, the year in which the accused is brought to trial for the crime, or the year in which the case is finally disposed of by the courts. This may lead to minor differences between the figures reported in Recorded Crime in Scotland bulletin and this bulletin, as well as those published by the police.

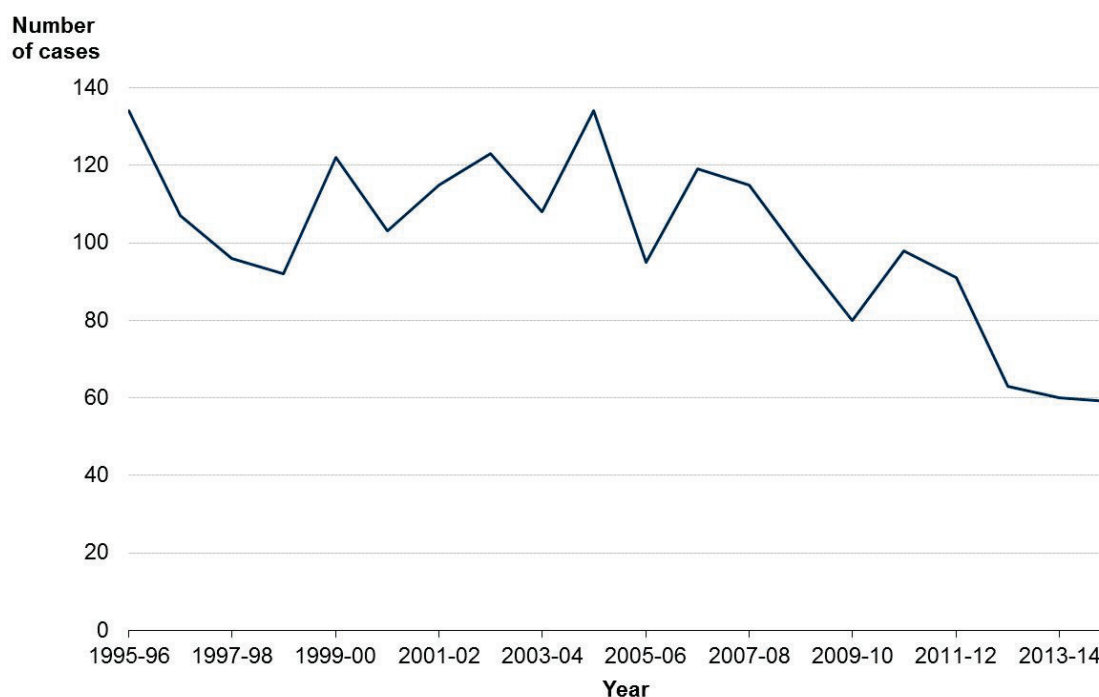
# Commentary

## Homicide cases

Table [1](#) and Charts [1](#), [2](#)

- [Chart 1](#) shows the twenty year time-series in homicide cases, starting in 1995-96. Between 2013-14 and 2014-15, the number of homicide cases recorded by the police in Scotland decreased by 2% (or one case) from 60 to 59. This is the lowest number of homicide cases for a single twelve month period since 1976, the first year for which comparable data are available.

**Chart 1: Cases recorded as homicide by the police, Scotland, 1995-96 to 2014-15**



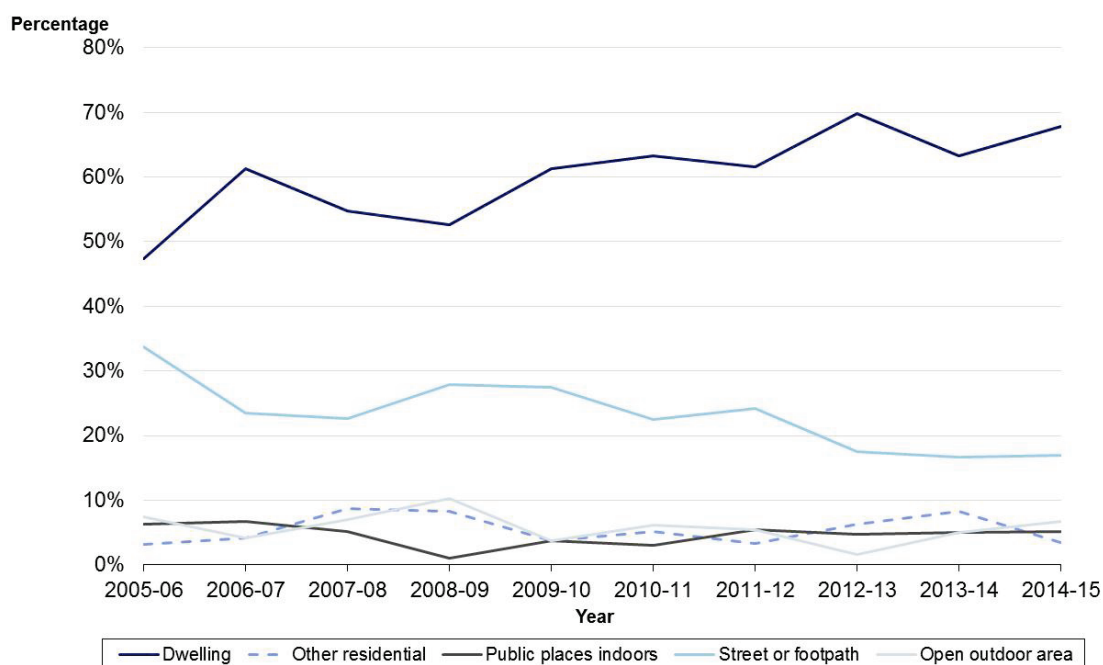
- [Table 1](#) shows that homicide cases involving more than one victim remain rare, and none were recorded in 2014-15. In total, there were only eight homicide cases involving multiple victims between 2005-06 and 2014-15. Of the 59 homicide cases recorded in 2014-15, 22% of them involved more than one accused person. There were a total of 77 accused persons connected with the 59 recorded homicide cases.

**Table 1: Summary table of homicide cases, victims and accused persons, Scotland, 2005-06 to 2014-15**

	2005-06	2006-07	2007-08	2008-09	2009-10	2010-11	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15
<b>Total number of cases</b>	<b>95</b>	<b>119</b>	<b>115</b>	<b>97</b>	<b>80</b>	<b>98</b>	<b>91</b>	<b>63</b>	<b>60</b>	<b>59</b>
Cases by number of victims:										
1	95	118	115	95	78	97	90	63	59	59
2+	-	1	-	2	2	1	1	-	1	-
<b>Total number of victims</b>	<b>95</b>	<b>120</b>	<b>115</b>	<b>99</b>	<b>82</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>93</b>	<b>63</b>	<b>61</b>	<b>59</b>
Cases by number of accused:										
1	68	90	88	67	53	68	66	45	46	46
2	12	14	16	19	20	19	13	11	8	9
3+	12	14	8	8	6	10	10	6	6	4
unsolved	3	1	3	3	1	1	2	1	-	-
<b>Total number of accused</b>	<b>141</b>	<b>169</b>	<b>149</b>	<b>132</b>	<b>121</b>	<b>142</b>	<b>127</b>	<b>85</b>	<b>89</b>	<b>77</b>

- In 2014-15, Glasgow City local authority had the highest number of homicide cases (14). While it is important to note victims may not necessarily reside in the local authority where the homicide took place, Glasgow City has the highest proportion of all homicide cases (24% of the Scottish total in 2014-15), which is more than double its share of the population (11% of the Scottish population<sup>1</sup>). Glasgow City has also witnessed a significant fall in homicides of 56% since 2005-06, contributing to half the overall national decrease.

**Chart 2: Location of homicide cases, where known, Scotland, 2005-06 to 2014-15**



<sup>1</sup> Population estimates are as at mid-year 2014 from the National Records of Scotland (<http://www.nrscotland.gov.uk/statistics-and-data/statistics/statistics-by-theme/population/population-estimates/mid-year-population-estimates>)



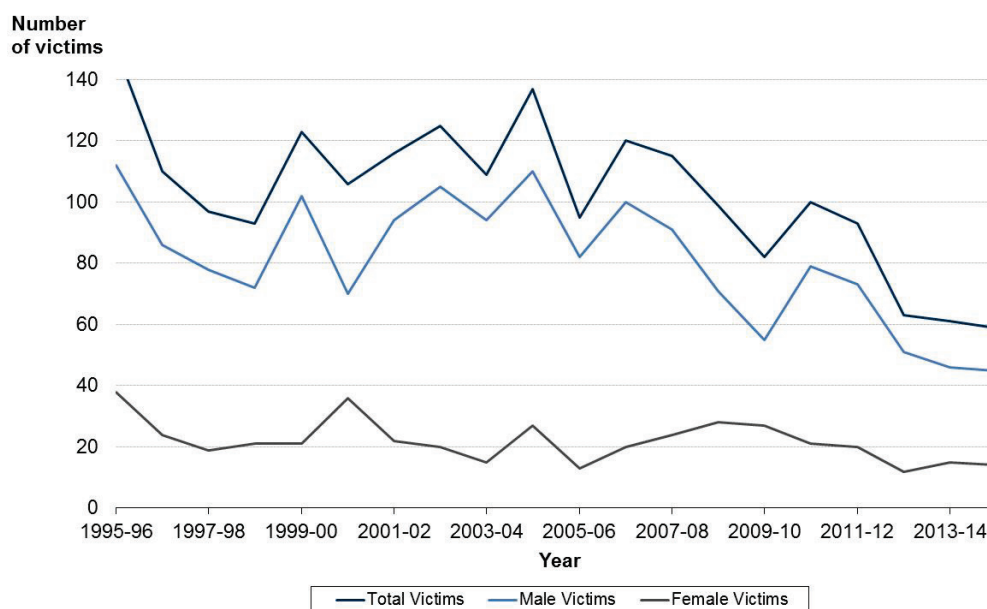
- In 2014-15, the most common location for homicides to occur was within a dwelling (68% of all cases) followed by a street or footpath (17% of all cases). In total, 71% of homicides occurred within a residential location, 24% in outdoor public places and 5% in indoor public places. [Chart 2](#) shows the distribution of homicide cases by location between 2005-06 and 2014-15. Both the number of homicide cases in residential locations and public places have fallen since 2005-06. However, the proportion of homicide cases occurring in residential locations has increased by an average of 2.3 percentage points per year since 2005-06, and the proportion of homicide cases occurring in outdoor public places decreased by an average of 1.9 percentage points per year.

## Victims of homicide

Charts [3](#), [4](#)

- [Chart 3](#) shows the number of victims of homicide for the last twenty years. Between 2013-14 and 2014-15, the number of homicide victims in Scotland decreased by 3% (or 2 victims) from 61 to 59. This is the lowest number of recorded homicide victims for a single twelve month period since 1976.

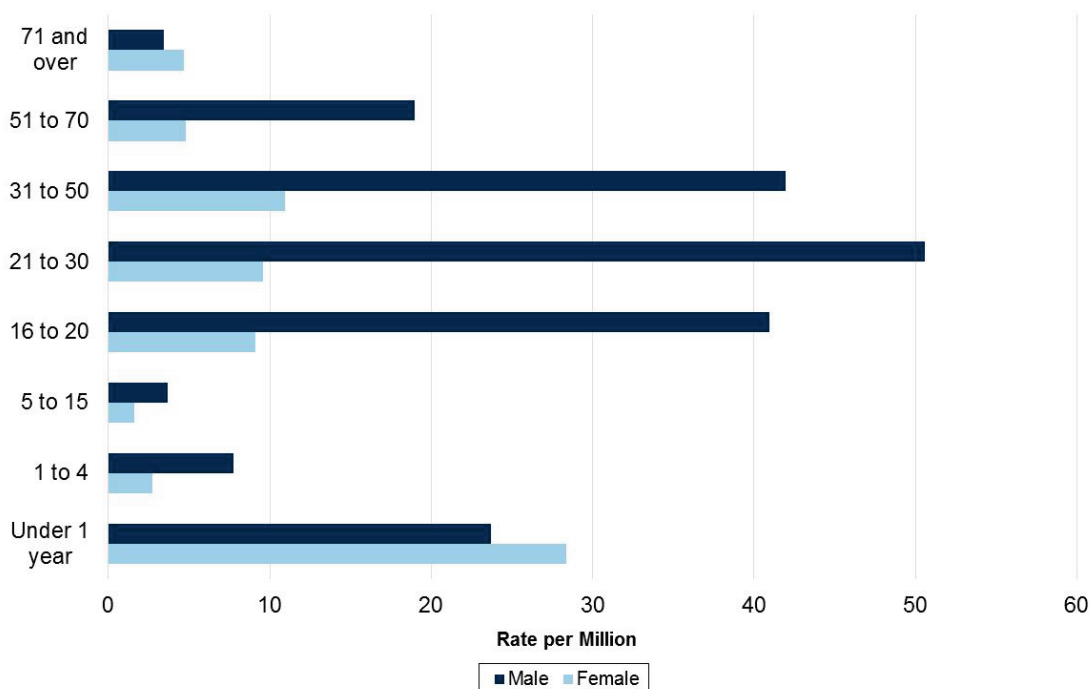
**Chart 3: Total Number of victims and total number of male victims, Scotland, 1995-96 to 2014-15**



- In 2014-15, there were 45 male victims, 76% of all homicide victims. The overall homicide rate for males was 17 victims per million population, over three times the rate for females which was five victims per million population.

- [Chart 4](#) shows that in nearly all age groups reported in this bulletin with the exception of those under 1 year and over 71 years, males have a higher victimization rates than females over the last ten years. The rate for males peaks in the 21 to 30 age group. Those in the under 1 year age group have the highest victimization rate of the female age groups, but these are relatively smaller numbers than other age groups.

**Chart 4: Age profile of homicide victimisation rate by gender, Scotland, 2005-06 to 2014-15**



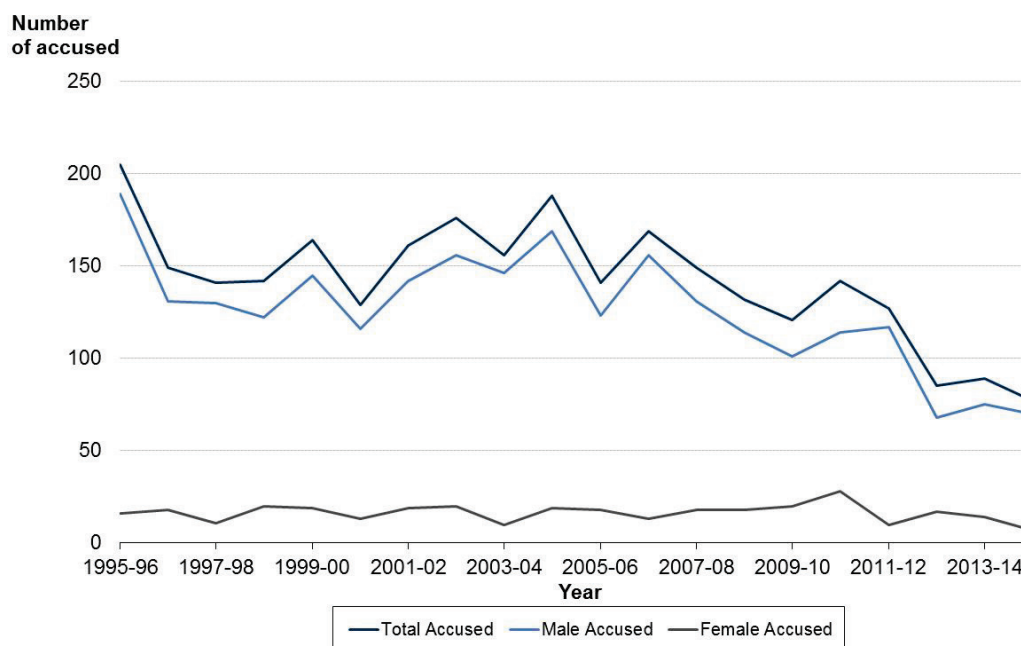
## Persons accused of homicide

*Chart 5,6*

- [Chart 5](#) shows the number of accused of homicide for the last 20 years. It shows that 2014-15 had the lowest number of persons accused of homicide over this time period.
- In the 59 homicide cases recorded in 2014-15, 77 persons have been accused, twelve less than in 2013-14. The vast majority of accused persons, in each year in the series, have been male. In fact, the proportion of the accused that are male has never fallen below 80% for the last ten years and was 91% in 2014-15.

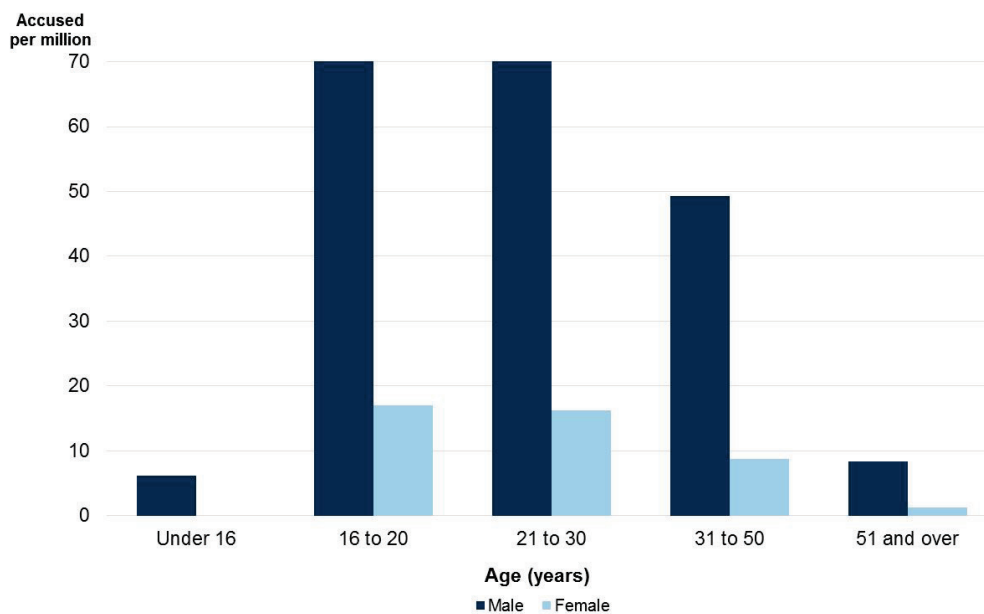


**Chart 5: Total number of accused and total number of male accused, Scotland, 1995-96 to 2014-15**



- In 2014-15, the total number of individuals accused of homicide equated to 14 per million population. This is the lowest rate recorded in the last ten years.
- The rate of accused males was highest for the 21 to 30 age group, and males aged 16 to 20 years, at 67 per million population. For females, the 21 to 30 age group was the highest rate of accused people, at 8 per million population.
- [Chart 6](#) shows that amongst all age categories the rates of males accused of homicide per million population were considerably higher than for females in the period from 2005-06 to 2014-15. As an example of the relative number of males accused of homicide during the period, more males aged 16 to 20 years old were accused of homicide than the total number of females accused of homicide (i.e. across all age categories).

**Chart 6: Person accused of homicide per million population by age and gender, Scotland, 2005-06 to 2014-15**

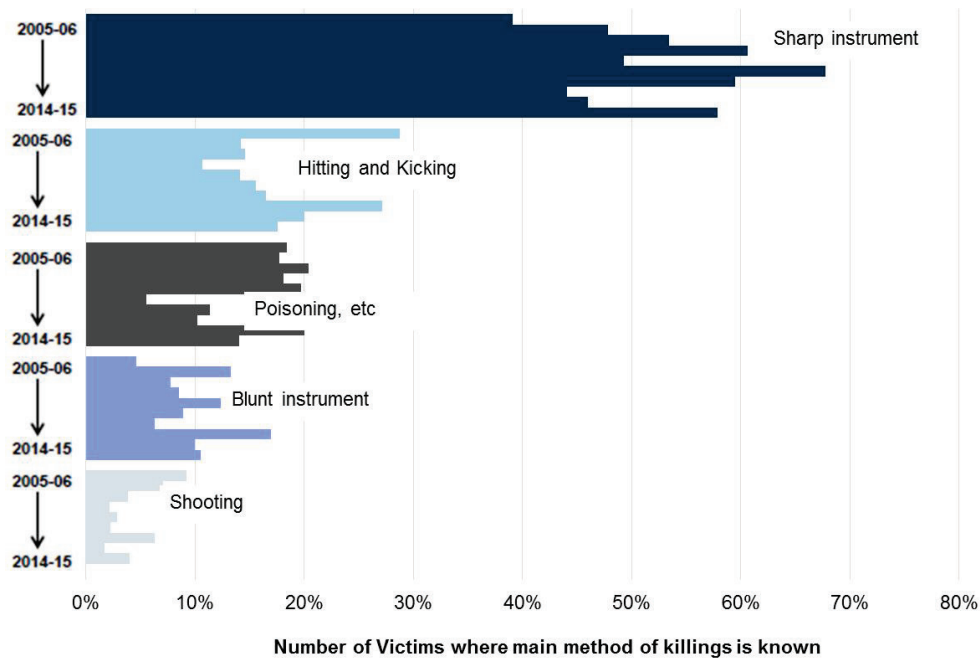


## Method

### Chart 7

- The most common main method of killing in each of the last ten years was with a sharp instrument. Of those reported to be killed with a sharp instrument, a knife was used in 82% of the cases. Shooting as the main method of killing occurred in a consistently small number of homicides over the period from 2005-06 to 2014-15.
- In 2014-15, a sharp instrument was the main method of killing for 33 (56%) of all homicide victims. Of these 33 victims, 27(82%) were killed with a knife. The next most common main method of killing, which in 2014-15 was hitting and kicking, accounted for ten (17%) of all homicide victims.
- [Chart 7](#) shows that sharp instruments were the most common method of killing for male victims. In 2014-15, 25 (56%) of male homicide victims were killed with sharp instruments. Throughout the ten-year period females were more likely to be killed by sharp instruments as well and in 2014-15, eight (57%) female homicide victims were killed by this method.

**Chart 7: Victims of homicide by main method of killing, 2005-06 to 2014-15**

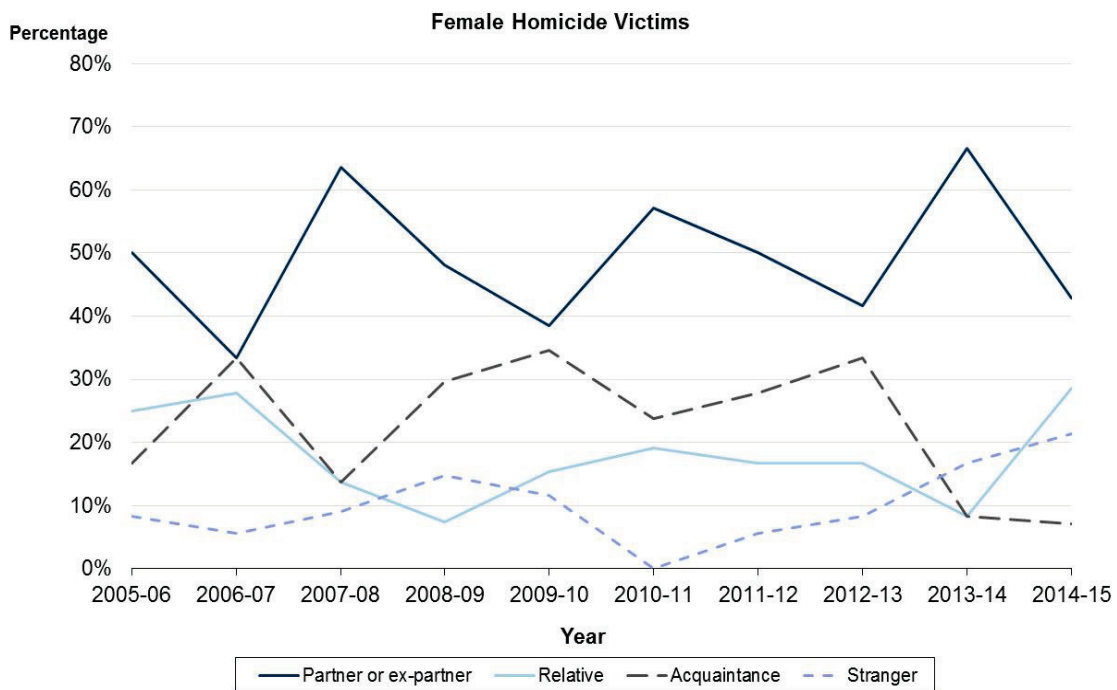
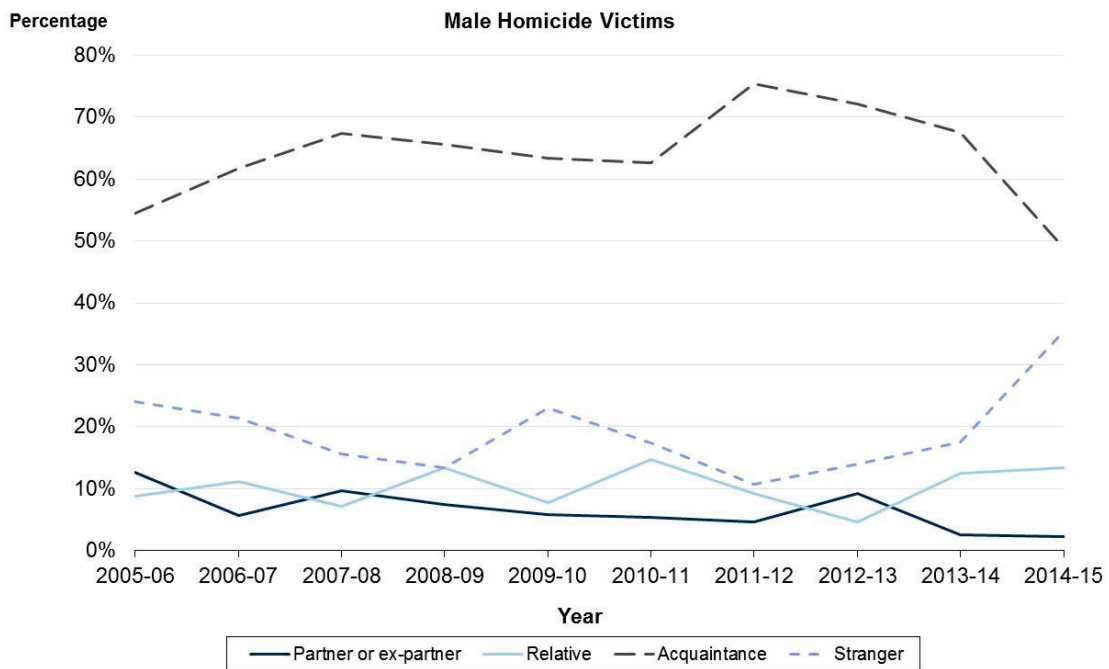


## Relationship of main accused to victim

Charts [8](#), [9](#)

- For 46 (78%) homicide victims in 2014-15, the victim and main accused were known to each other. The victim and accused were not known to each other in 13 cases (22%). Of those cases where the victim and accused were known to each other, 39% were Acquaintances and 12% were partners or ex-partners.
- [Chart 8](#) presents the time-series covering the last ten years in the percentage of homicides for male and female victims by their relationship to the main accused. The highest percentage of male victims was consistently those killed by an acquaintance. For female victims the largest percentage was almost always killed by a partner or ex-partner. There are greater fluctuations in the percentage of the relationships of the accused to female victims due to the smaller number of female victims compared to male victims.
- A total of 43 children under the age of 16 years were victims of homicide between 2005-06 and 2014-15 in cases where there was an accused person. Of these, 70% were killed by one of their parents. For the 14 victims aged under one year old, where there was an accused person, the main accused was a parent in all but one homicide case in that ten-year period.

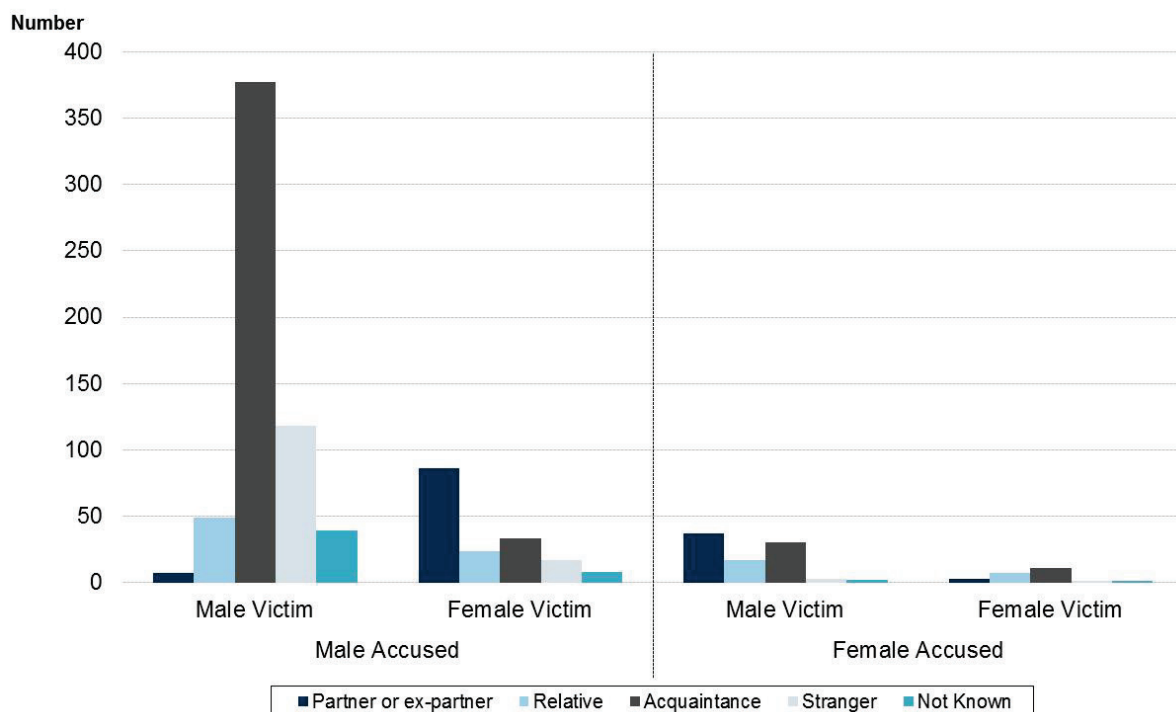
**Chart 8: Victims of homicide by gender and relationship to main accused, where relationship known, Scotland, 2005-06 to 2014-15**



- For all homicides recorded in the last ten years, just over half (53%) of the female victims aged between 16 and 70 years were killed by their partner or ex-partner, 26% were killed by an acquaintance and 8% were killed by a stranger. For male victims aged 16 to 70 years, only 7% were killed by their partner or ex-partner. Just under two thirds (62%) of male victims aged 16 to 70 years were killed by an acquaintance and 18% were killed by a stranger.

- Of the 24 people aged over 70 who were victims of homicide in the ten year period covered by this bulletin, 16 were female and eight were male. Older people were most likely to be killed by either their son or daughter (seven victims). Of the seven victims killed by their son or daughter, six were female.
- [Chart 9](#) shows that the majority of all homicide cases (68%) recorded between 2005-06 and 2014-15 involved males killing males. Cases where the main accused and main victim were both female accounted for just 3% of the total number of homicide cases recorded in this period.

**Chart 9: Relationship between main accused and victim, where relationship known, Scotland, 2005-06 to 2014-15**



## Main motive

- The most common reasons recorded for committing homicide in the ten year period between 2005-06 and 2014-15, were fight or quarrel, and rage or fury, with half (50%) of all victims killed in such circumstances. In 2014-15, this figure was 38 victims (64%), with 22 for whom the main motive was fight or quarrel.
- In 2014-15, the main motive in the killing of 36% of male victims was fight or quarrel. The next most common known motives for killing male victims was rage or fury accounting for a third (33%) of male victims. Throughout the last ten-year period, the main motive in the killing of females also tends to be

fight or quarrel, and in 2014-15 when combined with rage or fury, accounted for half (50%) of all female victims.

- In the period 2005-06 to 2014-15, 81% of all female victims were killed in dwellings, compared with 54% of males. The most common set of circumstances in which females become victims of homicide are in a dwelling, in a rage or fight with a partner or ex-partner (19% of female victims). Location is less of a factor for male victims, whose killings are more typically a result of a rage or fight with an acquaintance (34% of all male victims).
- Two victims were reported to have been killed in drug-related homicide cases in 2014-15, both of which were male. None of the homicides recorded in 2014-15 were reported to have had a homophobic or racial motivation. In all homicide cases in the ten years leading up to 2014-15, 3% of all homicide cases had a homophobic or racist motivation, and for 5% of cases the motivation was unknown.

## **Alcohol and drug status**

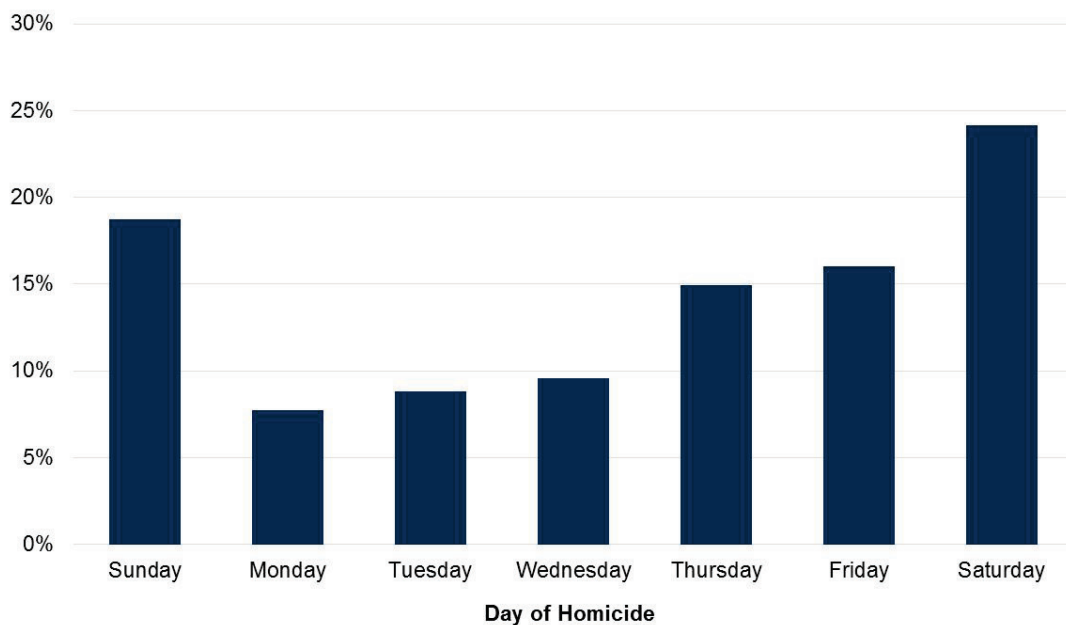
### *Chart 10*

- Over a third (38%) of the total of 77 persons accused in homicide cases in 2014-15 were reported to have been under the influence of alcohol and/or drugs at the time of the homicide. Of these 77, 11 (14%) were under the influence of alcohol, 2 (3%) were under the influence of drugs, and 16 (21%) were both. Ten accused persons (13%) were reported to have been neither under the influence of alcohol nor drugs at the time of the homicide.
- In 2014-15, the alcohol and drug status of the accused was unknown for 38 persons, nearly half (49%) of all accused.
- In the ten year period between 2005-06 and 2014-15, around half (51%) of all accused were reported to have been under the influence of alcohol and/or drugs at the time of the homicide. This follows a similar proportion of males (51%) and females (52%). The pattern across all age groups suggest that for the accused over 16 years of age, the proportion of the accused under the influence of drugs and alcohol falls with age (e.g., 54% of accused aged between 16 to 20 years, falling to 42% for those aged 51 and over). This pattern, though, is driven by the alcohol and drug status of accused men.
- In 2014-15, 78% of cases where the main accused was under the influence of alcohol and/or drugs, the victim was also known to have been under the influence of alcohol and/or drugs. Where the main motive for a homicide was a rage or fight, only in 11% of cases was the accused not under the influence of alcohol and/or drugs.



- [Chart 10](#) shows that over the last ten years 134 (24%) of homicides where the accused was suspected of being under the influence of alcohol occurred on a Saturday. Furthermore, nearly three fifths of those accused of homicide under the influence of alcohol (327, or 59%) occurred during the weekend as defined as Friday, Saturday and Sunday.

**Chart 10: Distribution of those accused of homicide under the influence of alcohol by day of the week 2005-06 to 2014-15**

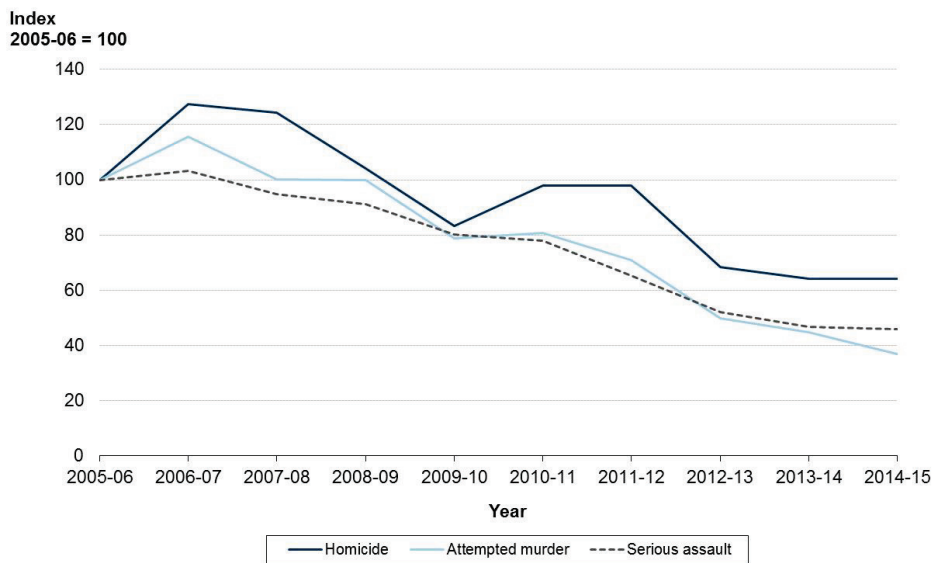


## Comparator statistics

### [Chart 11](#)

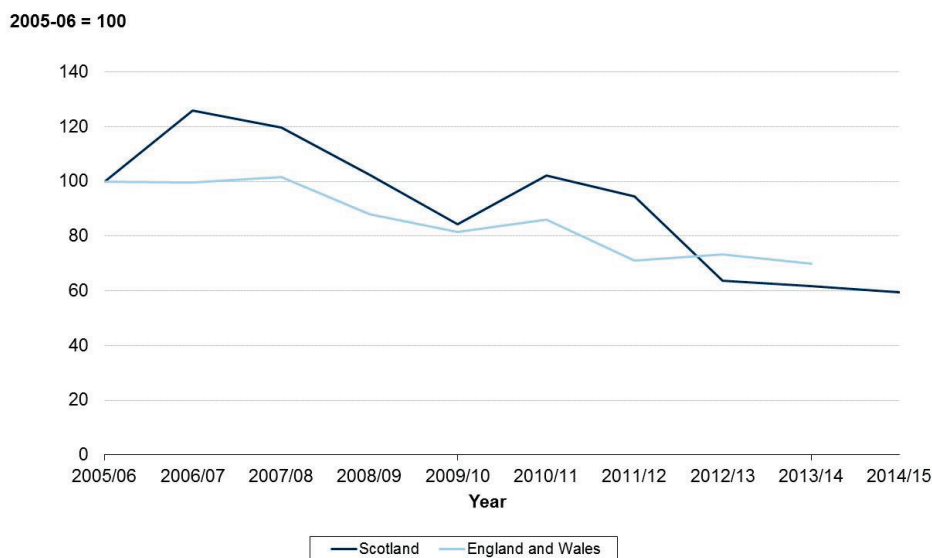
- This bulletin has shown a decreasing trend in homicides. To help validate these findings, we look at other comparable sources of data.
- [Chart 11](#) shows other recorded crimes taken from [Recorded Crime in Scotland, 2014-15](#) bulletin (including attempted murder and serious assault). The number of recorded homicides by the police has followed a downward pattern over the ten year period from 2005-06 to 2014-15 comparable to the number of attempted murders and serious assaults.

**Chart 11: Indices in selected crimes of violence, Scotland, 2005-06 to 2014-15 (Index 2005-06 = 100)**



- Chart 12 uses an index to evaluate the trends in the victimisation rates in Scotland and England & Wales<sup>2</sup> between 2005-06 and 2014-15 (Note that 2014-15 England & Wales data are not yet available). This does not compare homicide rates between Scotland and England & Wales, due to uncertainty around different counting conventions. The data do demonstrate that both Scotland and England & Wales are showing comparable downward trends in the ten-years leading up to 2014-15.

**Chart 12: Change in the victimisation rate in Scotland (2005-06 to 2014-15) and England and Wales (2005-06 to 2013-14)**



<sup>2</sup> Data England & Wales was taken from the 2013-14 Violent Crime and Sexual Offences bulletin: <http://www.ons.gov.uk/ons/rel/crime-stats/crime-statistics/focus-on-violent-crime-and-sexual-offences--2013-14/rpt-chapter-2.html>

# Annexes

## Data Quality Statement

The statistics presented in this bulletin are based on a snapshot of Police Scotland's live homicide database at an agreed date. Police Scotland maintain a continuously updated list of homicide cases that the Scottish Government uses to populate its own database of homicides in Scotland.

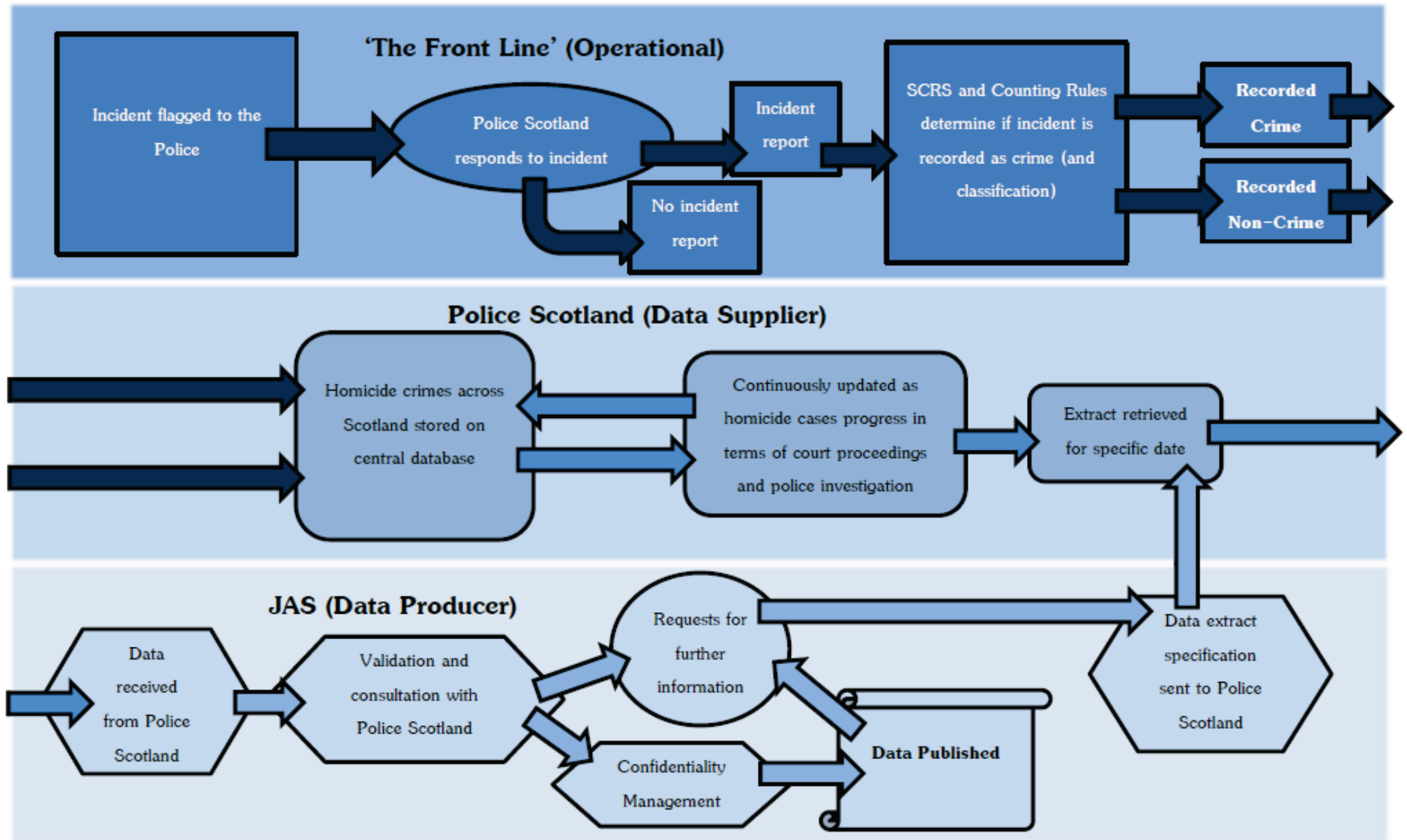
Since it is a 'live' system, amendments to Police Scotland's database can arise after the data has been submitted to the Scottish Government (for example, an attempted murder may be reclassified to a murder years after the crime was first recorded by the Police). Our current practice is to make revisions retrospectively to data for earlier years to allow for these changes. Going forward we will continue to formalise our revisions policy for this bulletin and will keep users informed of developments.

The data provided by Police Scotland go through a series of validation checks. Anything flagged through these checks is sent back to Police Scotland for explanation. This year, as we formalise our revision policy, we will also work to explaining any discrepancies between Police Scotland's historical data and the Scottish Government's historical data. This work will help identify and quantify potential data quality concerns that might be created using a snapshot as opposed to a live database.

A full process map of how data are collected for this publication is shown in [Chart 13](#), starting from incident reporting by police officers at an operational level to the publication of this bulletin.

Homicides are very high profile crimes, and – in many instances – discussed openly in public. Both Scottish Government statisticians and homicide specialists within Police Scotland consider it unlikely that any major errors exist (as opposed to the standard practice outlined above making revisions).

Chart 13: Homicide in Scotland data process, 2014-15



## **Police Scotland Management Information**

In addition to the National Statistics, Police Scotland publish management information on the number of homicides reported by the police. This is presented within their Quarterly Management Information Reports, which are available from the 'Our Performance' section of Police Scotland's website:

<http://www.scotland.police.uk/about-us/our-performance/>

These reports are produced to demonstrate Police Scotland's commitment to transparency (alongside other regular reporting activity to the Scottish Police Authority). The information within these reports is presented on a cumulative quarterly basis, with the first quarter of a reporting year containing 3 months of data (from April to June), the second containing 6 months of data (from April to September) etc. The reports are typically published within 2 months of the period to which they refer.

The Quarterly Management Information Reports make clear to users that the data they contain on recorded homicides is based on the administrative data available to Police Scotland at that time and not the Official Statistics. The annual National Statistics published by the Scottish Government on police recorded crime are based on management information which has undergone further quality assurance work, including additional dialogue with Police Scotland, in line with the Code of Practice for Official Statistics.

## **Stakeholder Consultation**

From April-June 2015, Justice Analytical Services conducted a consultation of stakeholders and users of the suite of publications based on returns from Police Scotland, which includes the Homicide in Scotland statistical bulletin series. The main objectives of this consultation were to: understand who the users are, what their requirements for data are and the benefits of any new suggested structure and content; guide the future strategy for how, when and what we publish regarding police data; and identify improvements that will ease and increase the use of police data in the future.

Reflecting our commitment to user engagement and to establishing a broad evidence base to inform our future publications, we used a variety of consultation methods to capture the views of both expert and non-expert users. This included one-to-one interviews, user group discussions, social media interaction and written surveys.

A report on the results of the consultation can be found at the link below:

<http://www.gov.scot/Topics/Statistics/Browse/Crime-Justice/scotstatcrime/StakeCon/RCUC2015>.

Justice Analytical Services has reflected on the feedback received from the consultation during the production of this bulletin. This includes the addition of new graphics to highlight the main points conveyed by these statistics.

This consultation builds on previous and on-going engagement around crime statistics, including:

- a user event held in October 2014. Further details, including a summary of the feedback following the event, can be found at <http://www.gov.scot/Topics/Statistics/Browse/Crime-Justice/scotstatcrime>.
- a user consultation via online survey, which was open from April-May 2014. Further details, including the results of the consultation, can be found at <http://www.gov.scot/Topics/Statistics/Browse/Crime-Justice/scotstatcrime/StakeCon/RCUC2014>.

We always welcome feedback on the content of our statistical bulletins and users are welcome to submit their comments to: [justiceanalysts@gov.scot](mailto:justiceanalysts@gov.scot).

If you would like to be kept informed about developments in crime statistics, we suggest registering with ScotStat: <http://www.gov.scot/Topics/Statistics/scotstat>.

## Other Notes

Justice Analytical Services publishes a work plan each year detailing the programme of work planned over the current financial year period. The work of the division covers both an agreed forward programme of analytical priorities, and routine analytical work particularly related to the compilation of National and Official Statistics, ongoing project management and knowledge transfer activity.

Analytical planning to develop a programme for the financial year 2015-16 followed a structured process of engagement with policy colleagues which was designed to closely align our analysis with current policy priorities and to the delivery of outcomes. The work plan is available via the following link: <http://www.gov.scot/Topics/Statistics/Browse/Crime-Justice/JASAP11-12>.

Clearly, only a limited selection of tables can be included in any statistical bulletin. Further analysis of homicides in Scotland can be supplied on request. In certain cases a fee is charged. For details of what can be provided, please telephone Alastair Greig on 0131 244 3707 or e-mail [JusticeAnalysts@gov.scot](mailto:JusticeAnalysts@gov.scot).



## Glossary

<b>Accused</b>	<p>(i) a person who has been arrested in respect of an offence initially classified as homicide and charged with homicide; or</p> <p>(ii) 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/being charged.</p>
<b>Accused - Co-accused</b>	<p>For those cases with multiple accused which are currently recorded as homicide, the co-accused are included in the statistics in this bulletin regardless of whether or not they were ultimately charged with homicide.</p>
<b>Accused - Main Accused</b>	<p>Where more than one person is accused of committing a homicide, the main accused is taken as the person who received the severest penalty. If more than one possible main accused is identified, then the first person recorded on the statistical returns that is submitted annually by Police Scotland is selected.</p>
<b>Alcohol Status</b>	<p>On 1 April 2013, Police Scotland changed their operational practices when reporting on the alcohol status of the accused and victim. Individuals are no longer referred to as being 'drunk' and are referred to as 'being under the influence of alcohol'.</p>
<b>Current and initial classification of Homicide</b>	<p>Some cases initially classified as homicide will, on the basis of criminal proceedings, no longer be classified as such at a later date.</p>
<b>Date</b>	<p>A homicide case is included against the year in which the crime that led to the homicide is first recorded by the police. This is not necessarily the year in which the victim dies, the year in which the accused is brought to trial for the crime, or the year in which the case is finally disposed of by the courts.</p>

<b>Homicide Case</b>	A single case of homicide is counted for each crime involving murder or culpable homicide (common law) irrespective of the number of victims or accused.
<b>Main Method</b>	Only one method of killing has been selected for each victim. The main method is taken to be the most serious of those methods recorded. Methods of killing have been ranked in the following order of priority: shooting, sharp instrument, blunt instrument, hitting and kicking, strangulation or asphyxiation, drowning, fire, poisoning and other or unknown.
<b>Main Method - Poisoning</b>	The main method of “poisoning” includes the use of drugs, gas and carbon monoxide poisoning.
<b>Main Method - Sharp instrument</b>	The term “sharp instrument” includes knives, broken bottles, swords, sharpened screwdrivers and any other pointed or edged weapons.
<b>Main Motive</b>	The motive behind committing a homicide is as determined by the police.
<b>Main Motive - Drug-Related</b>	A “drug-related” homicide is defined as a homicide motivated by a need to obtain drugs or money for drugs, a homicide of a consumer or supplier of drugs, a homicide committed in order to steal proceeds of the drugs trade or a homicide as a consequence of rivalry between users and/or dealers within the drugs trade.
<b>Relationship</b>	When considering the relationship of the main accused person to the victim, the term “partner or ex-partner” includes: spouse, separated or divorced spouse, cohabitee, lover, boy/girlfriend and ex-boy/girlfriend.
<b>Selected Crimes of Violence and Common Assault - Abduction</b>	As published in the Recorded Crime in Scotland bulletin series, includes Child Stealing and Abduction.

<b>Selected Crimes of Violence and Common Assault - Attempted Murder</b>	As published in the Recorded Crime in Scotland bulletin series, includes Serious Assault ("An assault or attack in which the victim sustains injury resulting in detention in hospital as an inpatient, for the treatment of that injury, or any of the following injuries whether or not detained in hospital; fractures, internal injuries, severe concussion, or any other injury which may lead to impairment or disfigurement").
<b>Selected Crimes of Violence and Common Assault – Common Assault</b>	As published in the Recorded Crime in Scotland bulletin series, includes Common Assault, Common Assault of an emergency worker.
<b>Selected Crimes of Violence and Common Assault - Homicide</b>	As published in the Recorded Crime in Scotland bulletin series, includes Murder and Culpable homicide (common law).
<b>Selected Crimes of Violence and Common Assault - Rape &amp; Attempted Rape</b>	As published in the Recorded Crime in Scotland bulletin series, includes Rape and Attempted Rape.
<b>Selected Crimes of Violence and Common Assault - Robbery</b>	As published in the Recorded Crime in Scotland bulletin series, includes Robbery and assault with intent to rob.
<b>Selected Crimes of Violence and Common Assault - Serious Assault</b>	As published in the Recorded Crime in Scotland bulletin series, includes Attempted Murder.
<b>Selected Crimes of Violence and Common Assault - Sexual Assault</b>	As published in the Recorded Crime in Scotland bulletin series, includes Contact Sexual Assault (13 to 15 year old or adult 16+), Sexually Coercive Conduct (13 to 15 year old or adult 16+), Sexual Offences against children under 13 years, Lewd and Libidinous Practices.
<b>Solved cases</b>	The distinction between “solved” and “unsolved” homicide cases is where an accused individual is attached to it (solved) and where an accused individual has not been identified (unsolved).
<b>Victim - Main Victim</b>	If a person is accused of killing more than one victim, the main victim is the person for whom the accused received the severest penalty for killing. Where more than one possible main victim can be identified, then the first person recorded on the statistical return is selected as the main victim.

## Statistics Designation

The United Kingdom Statistics Authority has designated these statistics as National Statistics, in accordance with the Statistics and Registration Service Act 2007 and signifying compliance with the Code of Practice for Official Statistics.

Designation can be broadly interpreted to mean that the statistics:

- meet identified user needs;
- are well explained and readily accessible;
- are produced according to sound methods; and
- are managed impartially and objectively in the public interest.

Once statistics have been designated as National Statistics it is a statutory requirement that the Code of Practice shall continue to be observed.

The Assessment Report, which was published in June 2011, can be accessed via the following link:

<http://www.statisticsauthority.gov.uk/assessment/assessment/assessment-reports/assessment-report-119---statistics-on-homicide--domestic-abuse--firearm-offences-and-firearm-certificates-recorded-by-the-police-in-scotland.pdf>

Under the Code of Practice for Official Statistics, the estimated costs of responding to statistical surveys and data collection are to be published.

The estimated cost of compliance for supplying and validating the data for this bulletin is: £2,300.

Details of the calculation methodology are available on the Scottish Government Crime and Justice website at:

<http://www.gov.scot/Topics/Statistics/Browse/Crime-Justice/costcalculation>.

## **A National Statistics publication for Scotland**

The United Kingdom Statistics Authority has designated these statistics as National Statistics, in accordance with the Statistics and Registration Service Act 2007 and signifying compliance with the Code of Practice for Official Statistics.

Designation can be interpreted to mean that the statistics: meet identified user needs; are produced, managed and disseminated to high standards; and are explained well.

### **Correspondence and enquiries**

For enquiries about this publication please contact:

Alastair Greig,  
Justice Analytical Services,  
Telephone: 01312445428,  
E-mail: [justiceanalysts@gov.scot](mailto:justiceanalysts@gov.scot)

For general enquiries about Scottish Government statistics please contact:

Office of the Chief Statistician, Telephone: 0131 244 0442,

E-mail: [statistics.enquiries@scotland.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:statistics.enquiries@scotland.gsi.gov.uk)

### **How to access background or source data**

The data collected for this statistical bulletin

- are available in more detail through Scottish Neighbourhood Statistics
- are available on the Scottish Government website
- may be made available on request, subject to consideration of legal and ethical factors. Please contact <email address> for further information.
- cannot be made available by Scottish Government for further analysis as Scottish Government is not the data controller.

### **Complaints and suggestions**

If you are not satisfied with our service or have any comments or suggestions, please write to the Chief Statistician, 3WR, St Andrews House, Edinburgh, EH1 3DG, Telephone: (0131) 244 0302, e-mail [statistics.enquiries@scotland.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:statistics.enquiries@scotland.gsi.gov.uk).

If you would like to be consulted about statistical collections or receive notification of publications, please register your interest at [www.gov.scot/scotstat](http://www.gov.scot/scotstat)  
Details of forthcoming publications can be found at [www.gov.scot/statistics](http://www.gov.scot/statistics)

ISBN 978-1-78544-698-6 (web only)

### **Crown Copyright**

You may use or re-use this information (not including logos) free of charge in any format or medium, under the terms of the Open Government License. See: [www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence/](http://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence/)