

CRIME AND JUSTICE

Recorded Crime in Scotland, 2020-21

This bulletin presents National Statistics on crimes and offences recorded by the police in 2020-21. Statistics on crimes and offences recorded by the police provide a measure of the volume of criminal activity with which the police are faced. Crimes recorded by the police do not reveal the incidence of all crime committed since not all crimes are reported to the police. For a definition of crimes recorded, refer to [Annex 1](#).

The nationwide lockdowns and other measures put in place to limit social contact during the Coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic are very likely to have had a significant impact on the type and volume of crime recorded in the 2020-21 figures. However, some caution is advised before necessarily attributing all of the changes to this situation. For example, longer term trends in some types of offending, which existed prior to the pandemic, may remain a factor.

Key Points from Recorded Crime in Scotland

Between 2019-20 and 2020-21, crimes recorded by the police in Scotland remained almost unchanged, decreasing by just 5 crimes from 246,516 to 246,511. The 2020-21 figures include 20,976 crimes recorded under Coronavirus related legislation, compared to just 107 towards the end of 2019-20. All other crimes collectively decreased by 8%. The recording of crime remains at one of the lowest levels seen since 1974.

Other changes between 2019-20 and 2020-21:

- Non-sexual crimes of violence decreased by 4%, from 9,316 to 8,972. This includes the recording of 1,641 crimes under the Domestic Abuse (Scotland) Act 2018 in 2020-21, the second year this legislation has been in place.
- Sexual crimes decreased by 2% from 13,364 to 13,131. Whilst this follows a decrease in 2019-20, these crimes remain at the third highest level seen since 1971, the first year for which comparable groups are available.

- Crimes of dishonesty decreased by 19%, from 111,409 to 89,731. The recording of these crimes is at the lowest level seen since 1971.
- Fire-raising, vandalism etc. decreased by 10% from 47,731 to 42,964. The recording of these crimes is at the lowest level seen since 1975.
- Other crimes increased by 10% from 64,589 to 70,737. Most of these crimes relate to drug possession, crimes against public justice or handling offensive weapons.

Offences recorded by the police in Scotland decreased by 4% from 250,662 to 240,174.

- Miscellaneous offences decreased by 4%, from 128,755 to 124,120.
- Motor vehicle offences decreased by 5% from 121,907 to 116,054.

Police recorded cyber-crime in Scotland

This bulletin also includes a [new chapter](#) which presents an estimate of how many cyber-crimes were recorded in Scotland during 2019-20 and 2020-21.

Key points:

- In 2020-21, an estimated 14,130 cyber-crimes were recorded by the police in Scotland. This has almost doubled (increasing by 95%) compared to the estimated 7,240 cyber-crimes recorded in 2019-20.
- Part of this increase may be due to the significant impact of the Coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic, including behavioural changes such as increased online shopping.
- Cyber-crimes accounted for an estimated one-in-three sexual crimes (33%) in 2020-21, and around one-in-ten of both Non-sexual crimes of violence and Crimes of dishonesty (12% and 10% respectively).
- A procedural change was made to the recording of international crime in 2020-21, whereby cases carried out by a perpetrator who was likely to be outside the UK are now included. This change resulted in an estimated 1,160 additional crimes being recorded, which represents less than 1% of all crime recorded this year.

Official Statistics on Clear up rates

In addition to the National Statistics on police recorded crimes and offences, this bulletin also presents Official Statistics on crimes and offences cleared up by the police in 2020-21.

Clear up rates measure the percentage of recorded crimes that have been cleared up. For further information on the statistical designation of this data and a definition

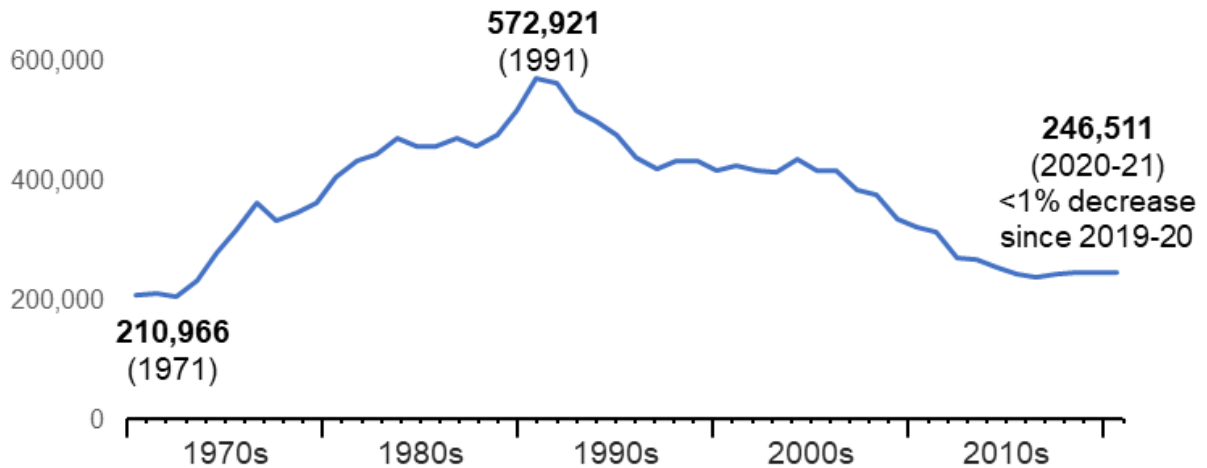
of clear up rates, please refer to [Chapter 4](#). Crimes recorded under Coronavirus related legislation are excluded from these statistics, as a bespoke and separate data collection is used by police to capture these cases.

The clear up rate in 2020-21 was 56.3%, the highest since comparable records began in 1976, and up 4.8 percentage points from 51.5% in 2019-20.

This increase is the largest one year change on record, and likely reflects the impact of the Coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic on the types of crime recorded. The number of Crimes of dishonesty and Fire-raising, vandalism etc., which have relatively lower clear up rates, fell much more in 2020-21 than Non-sexual crimes of violence and Sexual Crimes, which have relatively higher clear up rates. Further to this, the volume of Other Crimes recorded in 2020-21 (which traditionally have the highest clear up rates) increased by 10%.

Recorded Crime in Scotland, 2020-21

The number of crimes recorded by the police rose steadily from the 1970s to the early 1990s. Since then crime has generally fallen.



Change in Crimes

Since 2011-12, most types of crime have fallen, though Sexual crime has increased.



Changes since: 2011-12 2019-20

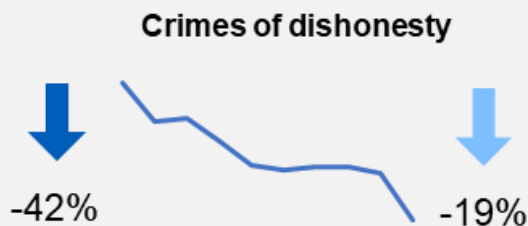
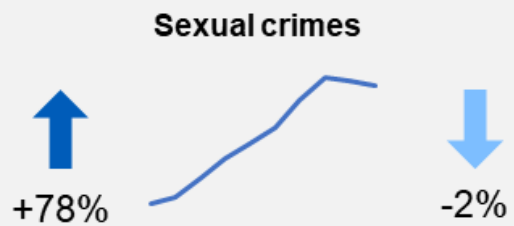
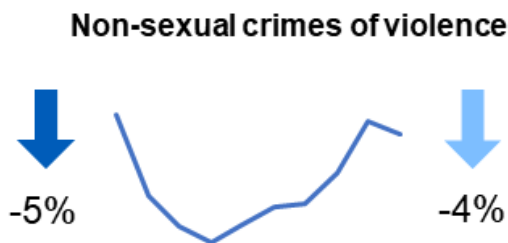


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1. Background

Statistics on recorded crimes and offences inform the Scottish Government's Justice Vision and Priorities - available via the following link:

<http://www.gov.scot/Topics/Justice/justicestrategy>.

These statistics are also used by a wide range of stakeholders. Further information on users and uses of the statistics is available in [Annex 5](#) of this bulletin and in the User Guide to Recorded Crime Statistics in Scotland, available via the following link: <https://www.gov.scot/publications/recorded-crime-user-guide/>.

The 'Recorded Crime in Scotland' annual statistical bulletin forms part of a series of bulletins produced by the Scottish Government on the criminal justice system, which can be found on the Scottish Government website: [Recorded Crime in Scotland - gov.scot \(www.gov.scot\)](#)

Contraventions of Scottish criminal law are divided for statistical purposes into crimes and offences. The term "crime" is generally used for the more serious criminal acts; the less serious are termed "offences". The distinction is made only for statistical reporting purposes and has no impact on how the police investigate reports of criminal activity. The "seriousness" of the offence is generally related to the maximum sentence that can be imposed. This distinction has been consistently used in the Recorded Crime in Scotland bulletins since publication began in 1983 and, prior to this, in the Criminal statistics publication dating back to the 1920s.

A further distinction, although not absolute, is that the numbers of offences recorded by the police generally tends to be affected more by police activity and operational decisions than the numbers of crimes.

For further information on crime and offence groups, see [Figure 1](#) and the [User Guide](#).

Figure 1: Breakdown of crime and offence groups

Crimes	1 Non-sexual crimes of violence 2 Sexual crimes 3 Crimes of dishonesty 4 Fire-raising, vandalism etc. 5 Other crimes Coronavirus restriction crimes (new group since 2019-20)
Offences	6 Miscellaneous offences 7 Motor vehicles offences

The [Scottish Crime Recording Board](#) ran a consultation in 2019 on how these National Statistics are presented. This included inviting user views on potential changes to the grouping structure outlined above. The consultation closed on 30th November 2019 and a full [Summary of Responses](#) can be accessed online. Following a pause in this work due to the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic, a follow up consultation of users on a new and revised set of crime groups is planned for the Autumn of 2021 (alongside wider views being invited on the production of the recorded crime statistics). Users will be kept informed of developments relating to the consultation through the [ScotStat](#) network.

Given the clear user support demonstrated in the 2019 consultation for such a change, a new [cyber-crime chapter](#), presenting the latest available information on recorded cyber-crime in Scotland, has been added. This includes an estimate of the proportion of recorded crime which is cyber-crime (based on the review of a random sample of crime records).

Crimes are presented in this bulletin against the year in which they are recorded by the police. Not all crimes are reported to, and recorded by, the police immediately following their occurrence. As such each year's figures on police recorded crime will include a proportion of crimes committed in earlier years. The basis on which we receive the data means we are generally unable to identify which crimes were committed in earlier years.

The [Scottish Crime and Justice Survey \(SCJS\) 2019-20](#) provides a complementary measure of crime to police recorded crime statistics. The survey provides information on the criminal justice system, people's experience of civil justice problems and people's perceptions of crime. A detailed analytical comparison between recorded crime and the SCJS is provided in [Chapter 5](#).

In September 2016 the [Office for Statistics Regulation](#) (at the time known as the UK Statistics Authority) designated Recorded Crime in Scotland as National Statistics, which means that they meet the highest standards of trustworthiness, quality and public value. A more recent [compliance check](#) in December 2019 confirmed this status, with some recommendations for further improvement going forward. Work on these recommendations was paused as statisticians took on new work in relation to COVID-19, however work to meet these recommendations has recently recommenced. An updated [User Guide](#) has been produced and a consultation is planned for the Autumn on the future of recorded crime and police activity statistics.

The statistics on recorded crime clear up rates ([Chapter 4](#)) remain published as Official Statistics (i.e. on the same basis as since 2013-14). The Office for Statistics Regulation will re-visit the statistical designation of this information once an audit has been carried out and the [Scottish Crime Recording Board](#) has considered any implications for the quality of these data.

Change to the recording of International Crimes

A procedural change was made to the recording of international crime in 2020-21, whereby cases carried out by a perpetrator who was likely to be outside the UK are now included. This change resulted in an estimated 1,160 additional crimes being recorded, which represents less than 1% of all crime recorded in Scotland this year. Further information on this change is available in the [Cyber-crime chapter](#)).

Coronavirus restrictions crimes

This year's bulletin contains a significant number of crimes relating to Coronavirus restrictions, which were recorded under specific coronavirus legislation. Whilst Police Scotland have stated that enforcement would be used when faced with non-compliance and only as a last resort (after they have attempted to engage, explain and encourage compliance), there were 20,976 crimes relating to Coronavirus restrictions in 2020-21. These crimes are included within the total recorded crime figure for Scotland, though are presented separately to the existing five crime groups.

Impact of Coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic on recorded crime

The nationwide lockdowns and other measures put in place due to limit social contact during the Coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic are very likely to have had a significant impact on the type and volume of crime recorded in the 2020-21 figures. However, some caution is advised before necessarily attributing all

of the changes to this situation. For example, longer term trends in some types of offending, which existed prior to the pandemic, may remain a factor

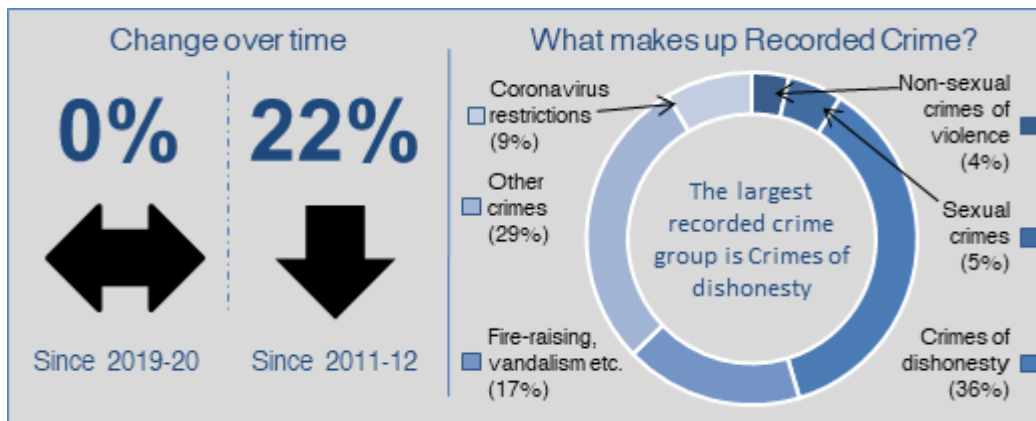
To inform users about the volume and type of crimes and offences recorded in Scotland during the pandemic, the Scottish Government introduced a new monthly series of Official Statistics from April 2020 onwards. These can be accessed at: <https://www.gov.scot/collections/recorded-crime-in-scotland/>

This annual National Statistics bulletin remains the primary source of information on crimes and offences recorded by the police.

Other legislative changes, and changes to classifications can be found in the User Guide to Recorded Crime Statistics in Scotland, available at: [Recorded crime in Scotland: user guide - gov.scot \(www.gov.scot\)](https://www.gov.scot/publications/user-guide-to-recorded-crime-statistics-in-scotland/pages/introduction.aspx)

2. Main Findings: Recorded Crimes and Offences in Scotland

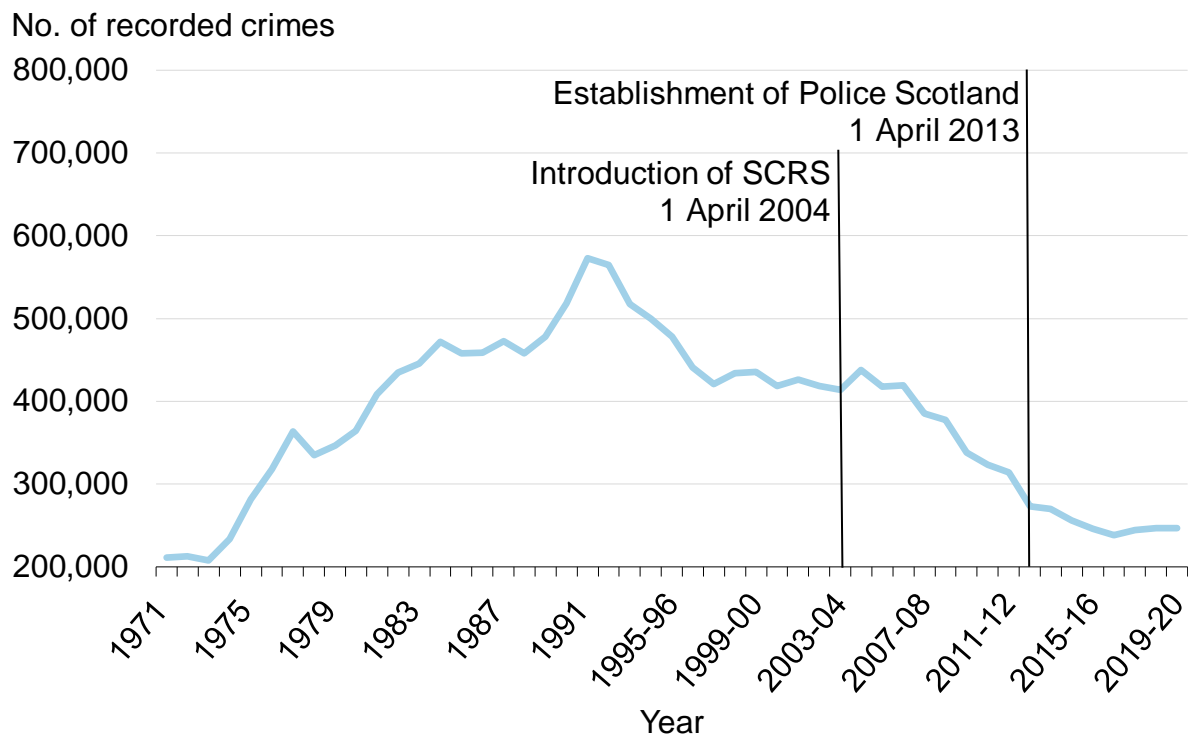
Total Recorded Crime



The recording of crime remains at one of the lowest levels seen since 1974. The total number of crimes recorded by the police in Scotland in 2020-21 was 246,511. This is 5 crimes (or less than 1%) lower than the level recorded in 2019-20 ([Chart 1](#) and [Table 1](#)).

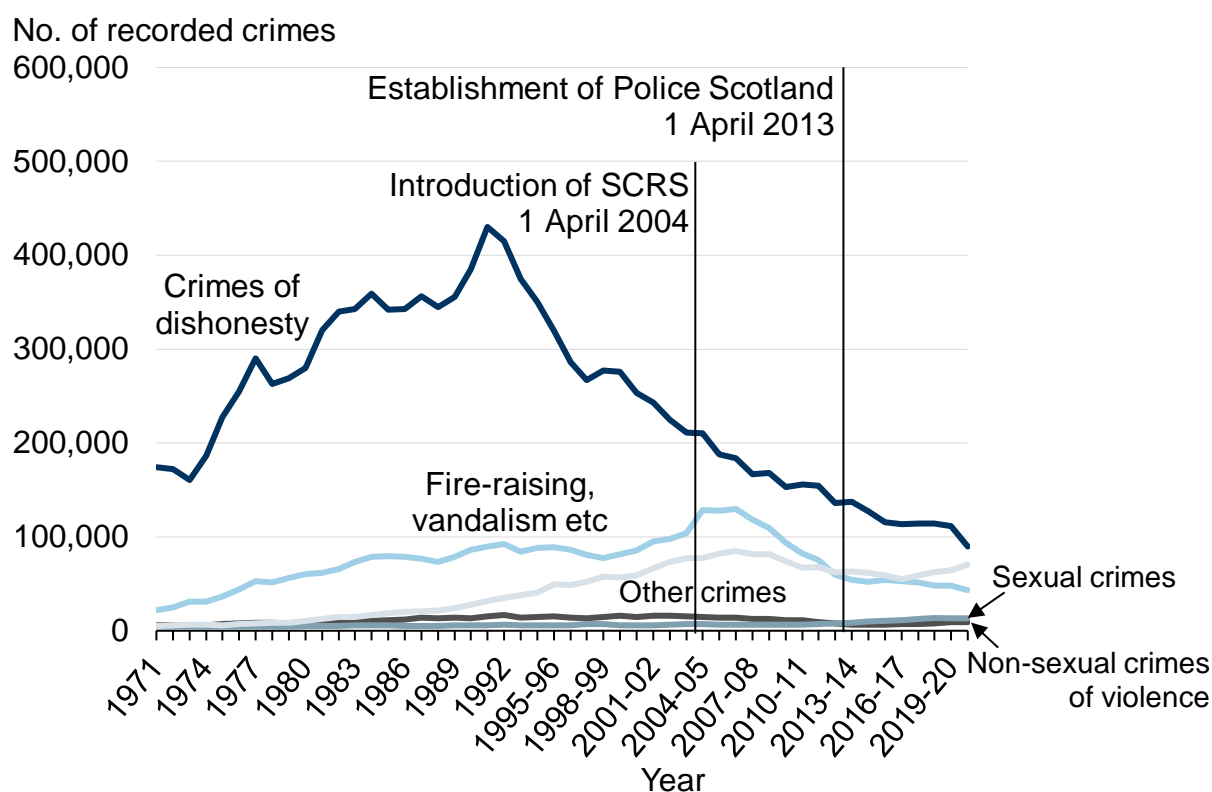
Over the past ten years, total recorded crime in Scotland has decreased by 22%, though has remained very stable since 2017-18. This is set against a generally decreasing trend in recorded crime over the longer term, from a peak in 1991 when crime reached a record high of 572,921.

Chart 1: Total crimes recorded by the police, 1971 to 1994 then 1995-96 to 2020-21 ([Table 6](#))



[Chart 2](#) shows the number of recorded crimes in each of the five crime groups since 1971 and gives an indication of the scale of each crime group. Crimes of dishonesty are the largest group, accounting for 36% of all recorded crime in 2020-21. This was followed by Other crimes (29%), Fire-raising, vandalism etc. (17%), Sexual crimes (5%) and Non-sexual crimes of violence (4%). Crimes relating to coronavirus restrictions (not shown in the chart as only commenced in 2019-20) accounted for 9% of all recorded crime in 2020-21. These individual groups will be discussed in more detail in the sections which follow.

Chart 2: Crimes recorded by the police by crime group, 1971 to 1994 then 1995-96 to 2020-21 ([Table 6](#))



Local Authority analysis

Eighteen local authorities showed an increase in total recorded crime between 2019-20 and 2020-21. One showed very little change, with the remaining thirteen showing a decrease from the previous year ([Chart 3](#)).

Notwithstanding that year-on-year figures can vary across local authorities, the long term trend of decreasing crime is broadly the same across Scotland. [Chart 4](#) shows that since 2011-12, twenty nine out of thirty two local authorities have seen a reduction in recorded crime. The other three (Dumfries and Galloway, Dundee City and East Lothian) have seen an increase.

In 2020-21 the largest number of crimes recorded were in Glasgow City (see [Table 5](#)), which includes 12% of Scotland's population but accounted for 18% of all recorded crime in Scotland. It should be noted that Glasgow's daily population will be higher than its resident population as people travel into the city from surrounding local authority areas for work, leisure and other purposes. Crimes are recorded in terms of where they occur and not the home residency of the victim (where the two places are different locations). The comparison described above for overall crime levels should be viewed in this context – which will also likely apply to Scotland's other city based local authorities.

Further explanation of these trends is set out in the following sections for each crime group. Please note that further local authority level data for Tables 1-4 can be accessed online via dropdown menus in the excel spreadsheet (see 'Supporting files' at the top right hand side of the webpage): [Recorded Crime in Scotland, 2020-21](#)

Chart 3: Change in total recorded crime between 2019-20 and 2020-21, by local authority area

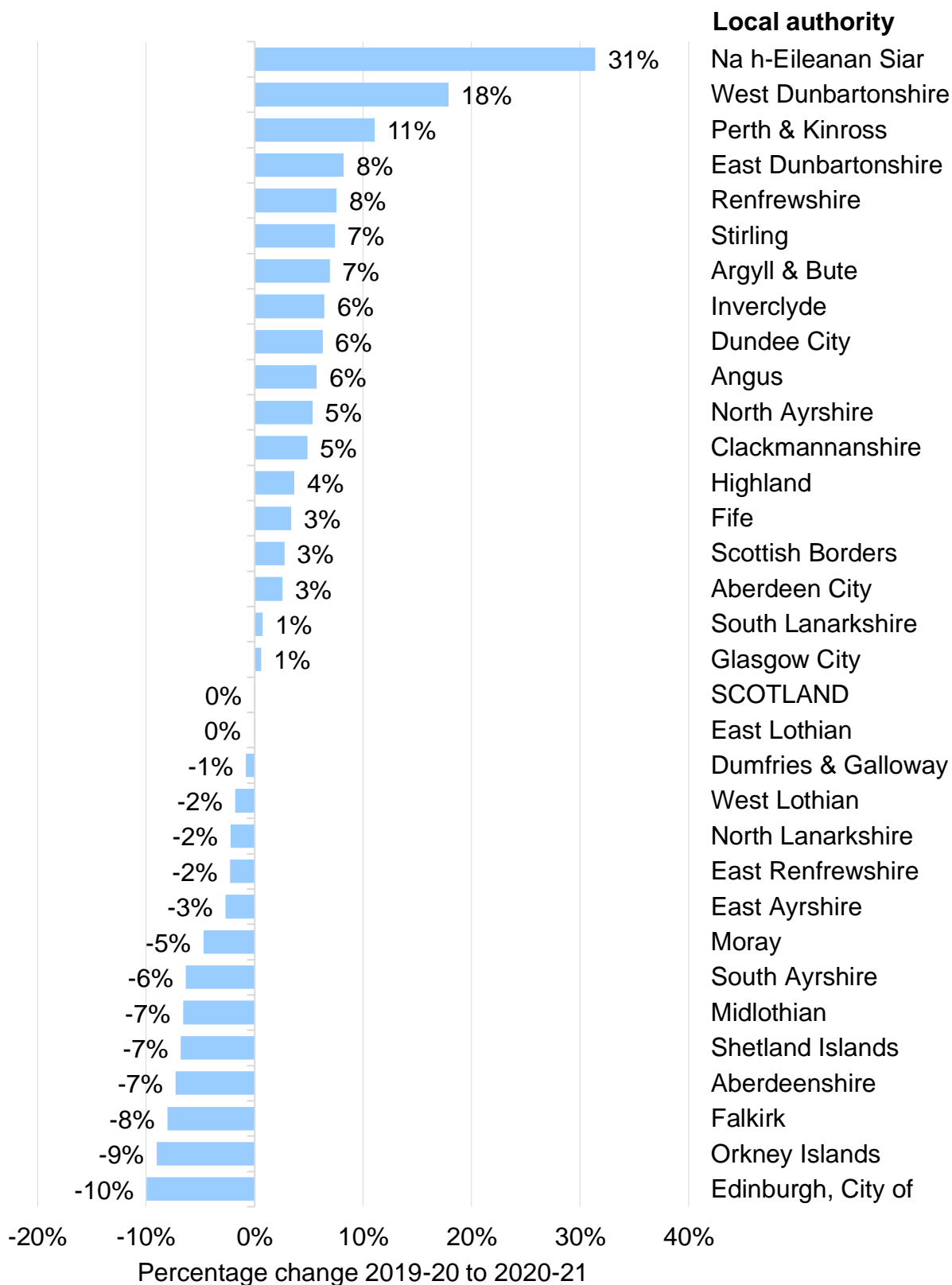
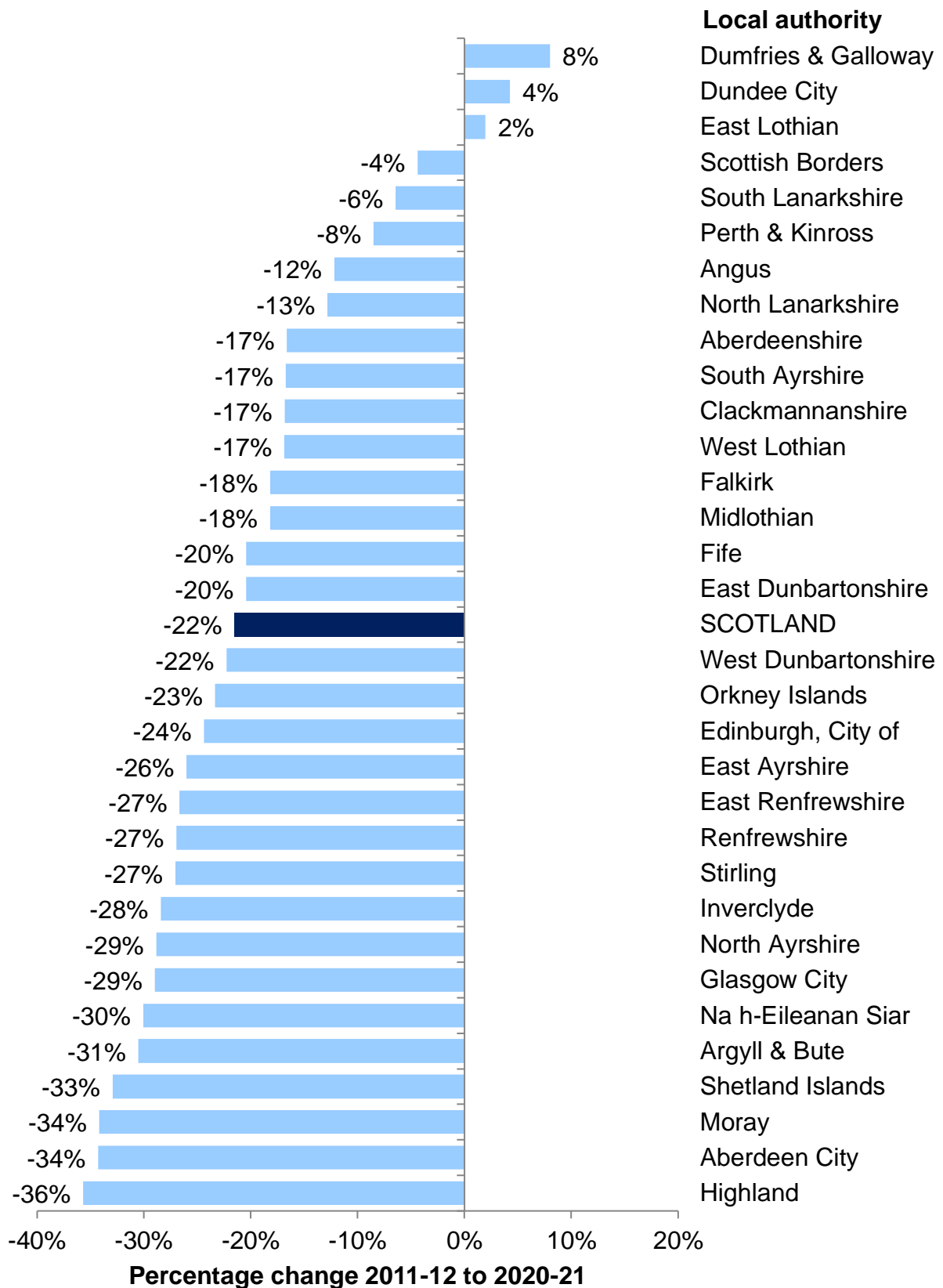


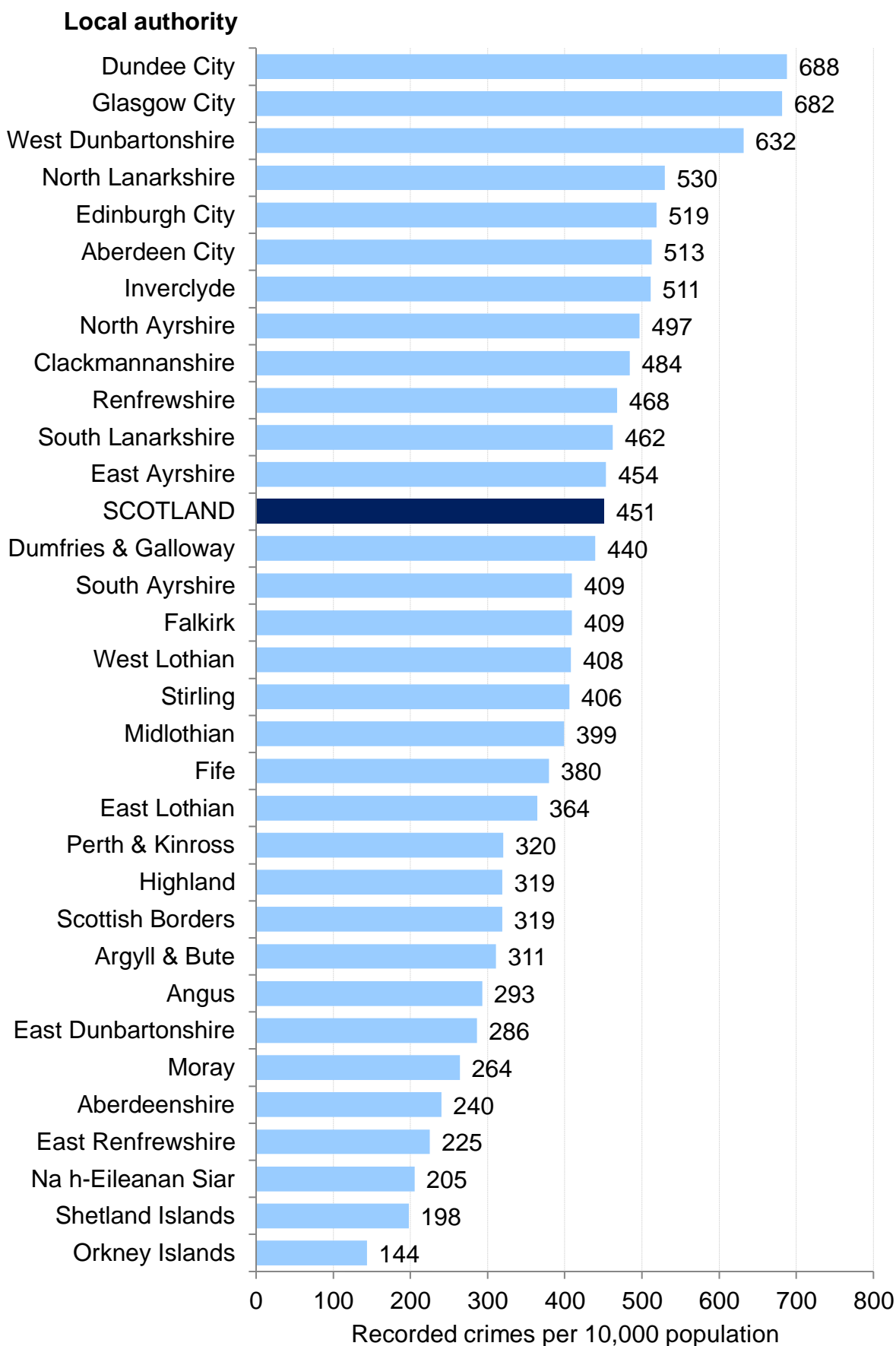
Chart 4: Change in total recorded crime between 2011-12 and 2020-21, by local authority area



Crime rate per 10,000 population

There were 451 recorded crimes per 10,000 population in 2020-21, with two of Scotland's city based areas recording the highest rates; Dundee City (688 per 10,000 population) and Glasgow City (682 per 10,000 population). This was followed by West Dunbartonshire (632 per 10,000 population), reflecting a high rate of Coronavirus restrictions crimes per 10,000 population (see [Table 4](#) in 'Supporting files').

Chart 5: Total number of recorded crimes per 10,000 population¹, 2020-21



¹ Population estimates are as at mid-year 2019 from the National Records of Scotland ([Mid-Year Population Estimates | National Records of Scotland \(nrscotland.gov.uk\)](https://www.nrscotland.gov.uk)).

Data considerations

As well as the new crimes being recorded under (i) the Coronavirus restrictions legislation and (ii) as a result of a procedural change to the recording of international crime (referred to above in the Background to this bulletin), previous legislative changes and changes to recording will have some effect on the longer term time series.

Domestic Abuse (Scotland) Act 2018

The Domestic Abuse (Scotland) Act 2018 came into force on 1st April 2019. The Act created a new offence of abusive behaviour as a course of conduct towards a partner or ex-partner. Prior to the 1st April 2019, any criminal act which formed part of a domestic abuse incident (such as a Common assault or Threatening or abusive behaviour) was included within the statistics under the relevant crime or offence. Where there is evidence of a course of conduct, new crime codes of Domestic abuse (Scotland) Act 2018 (against a male or female victim) have been created. In general, existing common law and statutory offences will continue to be recorded where appropriate, in addition to the new crimes. There are some limited exceptions (in particular Threatening and abusive behaviour), which will no longer be recorded when occurring as part of a course of conduct for Domestic Abuse. However these exceptions all relate to activity in Group 6 Miscellaneous Offences and therefore this change does not create a discontinuity within the total recorded crime figure for Scotland (which is based on Groups 1 to 5).

Changes in 2017-18 to the recording of handling offensive weapons

Changes in recorded crime from 2017-18 should be treated with some caution due to the addition of newly recorded crimes of handling an offensive weapon. Further information on this procedural change and its impact on the statistics is available in the chapter on [Group 5 - Other crimes](#). This change will have an impact on the comparability of recorded crime statistics for all years prior to 2017-18. However the impact will be smaller for earlier years (for example comparisons with 2011-12) when set against the long term changes in total crime recorded by the police and other legislative and procedural changes made to the recording of crime during this period.

Data validation

HMICS Crime Audit 2020: Background

This bulletin reports on the number of crimes and offences recorded by the police in Scotland. In 2020, Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary in Scotland (HMICS) published an audit which assessed the extent to which police

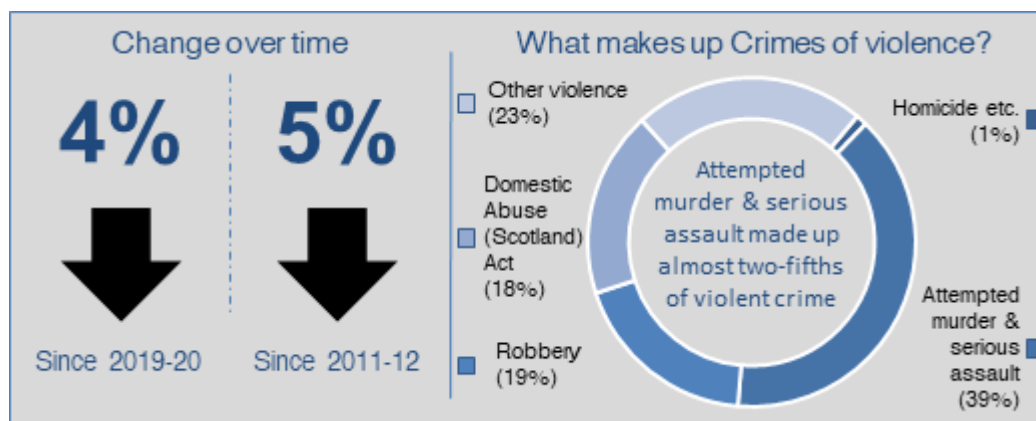
recording practices complied with the Scottish Crime Recording Standard and Counting Rules: <https://www.hmics.scot/publications/crime-audit-2020>.

This audit found no systemic data quality issues around the recording of crimes and offences, with the resulting report stating that 'Police Scotland's compliance with the Scottish Crime Recording Standard and Counting Rules is generally good at over 90%'. 91.4% of incidents were closed correctly¹ and 90.8% of crime was counted and classified correctly.

For a more detailed discussion of the results of the audit and its relation to recorded crime, please see the User Guide: [Recorded crime in Scotland: user guide - gov.scot \(www.gov.scot\)](http://www.gov.scot/publications/recorded-crime-in-scotland/user-guide)

¹ Correct closure means either that (a) the incident was closed as non-crime related and contained sufficient information to dispel any inference of criminality; or (b) the incident indicated a crime had occurred and a crime record was traced

Group 1 – Non-sexual Crimes of Violence

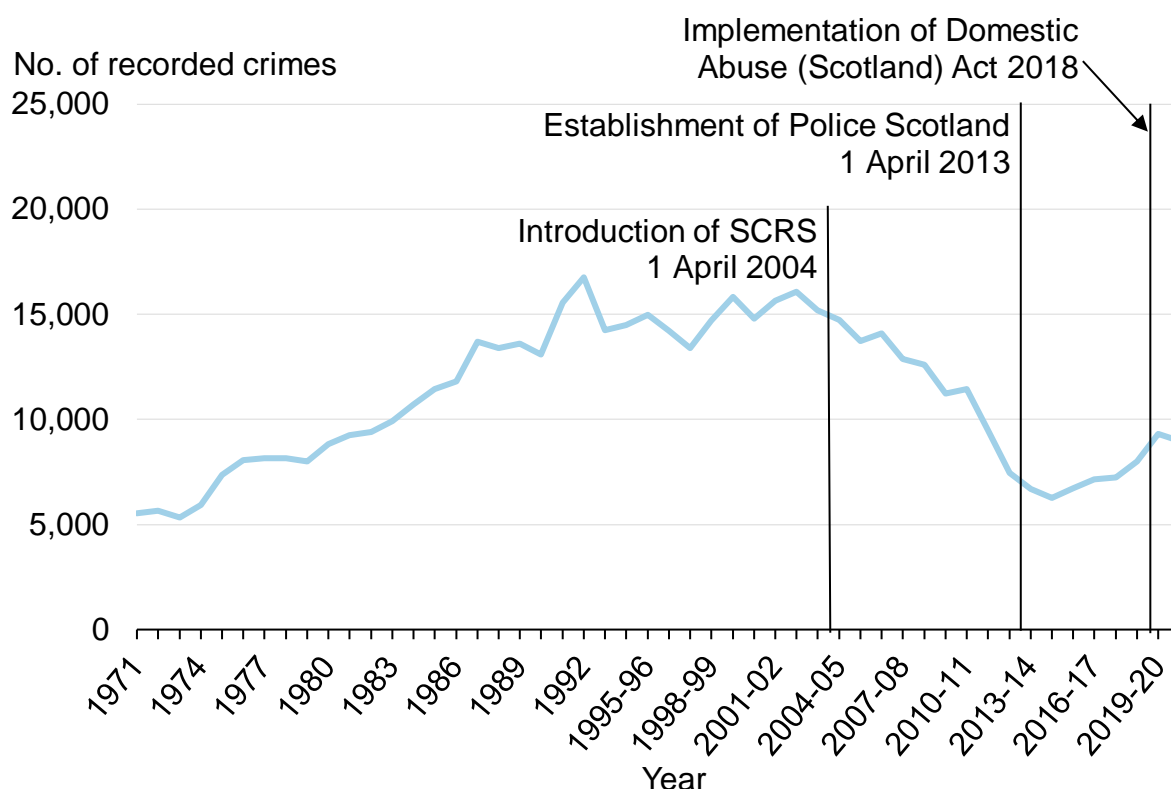


Number of Non-sexual crimes of violence recorded in 2020-21

Non-sexual crimes of violence account for 4% of all crimes recorded in Scotland in 2020-21. Between 2019-20 and 2020-21, the number of Non-sexual crimes of violence recorded by the police in Scotland decreased by 4%, from 9,316 to 8,972.

[Chart 6](#) below shows the number of Non-sexual crimes of violence from 1971 onwards. Levels of violent crime increased for a long period, before entering a downward trend in 2002-03. Until 2020-21 there have been more recent increases, although the 2019-20 increase was due to new crimes being recorded under the Domestic Abuse (Scotland) Act 2018 following its enactment on the 1st April 2019. There has been a 41% reduction in Non-sexual crimes of violence since 2002-03.

Chart 6: Non-sexual crimes of violence recorded by the police, 1971¹ to 1994 then 1995-96 to 2020-21 ([Table 6](#))

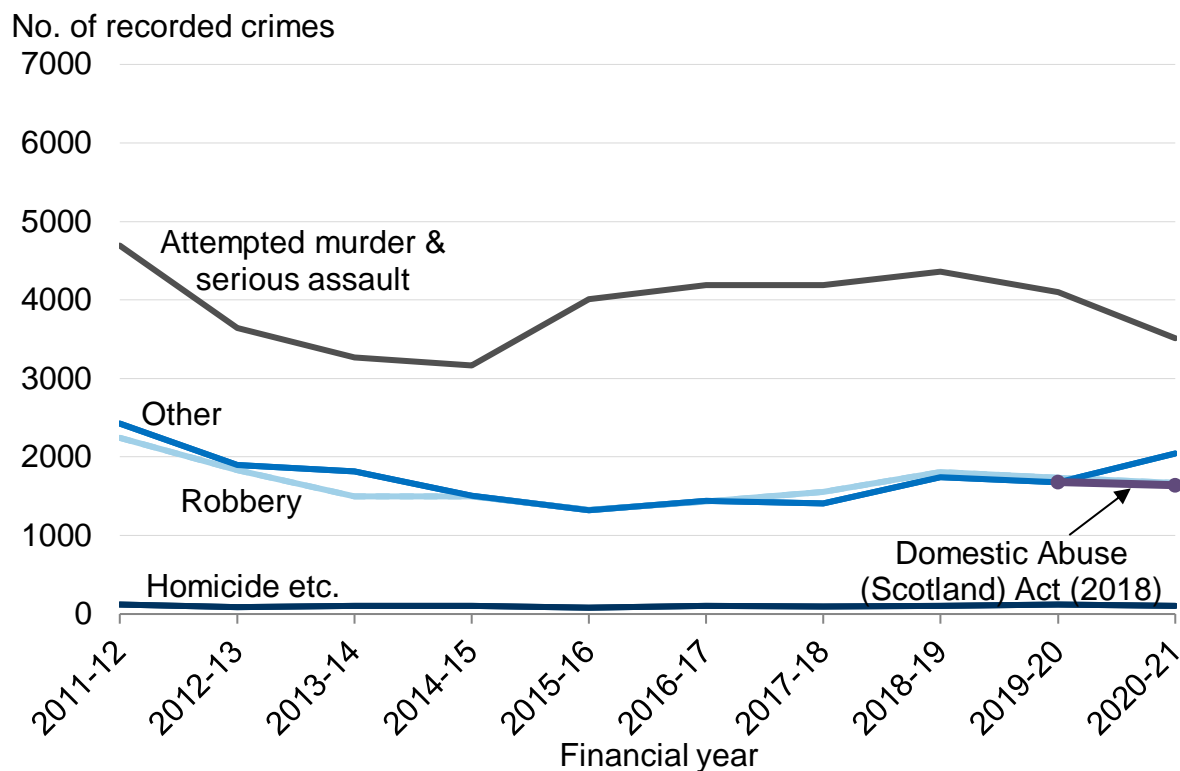


¹Crimes recorded for the present crime groups are not available prior to 1971.

In 2020-21, the national rate of recorded Non-sexual crimes of violence decreased from 17 to 16 crimes per 10,000 population (see [Tables 4](#) and [7](#)).

[Chart 7](#) shows the five categories within Non-sexual crimes of violence over the last ten years, and gives an indication of the trend and scale of each category. In 2020-21, the volume of recorded crimes of Attempted murder and serious assault made up 39% of all Non-sexual crimes of violence. Crimes of Robbery and Other violence accounted for 19% and 23% respectively. Crimes under the Domestic Abuse (Scotland) Act 2018 accounted for 18% of the total number of Non-sexual crimes of violence. Homicide etc. continues to contribute a very small proportion (1%) to the total.

Chart 7: Non-sexual crimes of violence in Scotland, 2011-12 to 2020-21



Attempted murder & serious assault

Attempted murder and serious assault is the largest category in Group 1, accounting for 39% of all Non-sexual crimes of violence. This category experienced a decrease of 14% between 2019-20 and 2020-21. Over the ten year period from 2011-12 to 2020-21, this category has seen a decrease of 25%. These crimes fell between 2011-12 and 2014-15, before rising sharply in 2015-16 and then more gradually in the years that followed, until the decrease over the past two years. At least part of the increase in 2015-16 has been attributed by Police Scotland to the introduction of enhanced guidance for recording serious assault in January 2015.

For the definition of Serious assault and the distinction between Serious assault and Common assault please see [Paragraph 7.17](#) within Annex 1.

We earlier published the findings of a separate study into Attempted murder & serious assault. Further information is available via the following link: <https://www.gov.scot/publications/recorded-crime-scotland-attempted-murder-serious-assault-2008-09-2017-18/>

Data Comparisons: Emergency Hospital Admissions as a result of Assault

As highlighted above, there has been a 25% decrease in the number of attempted murders and serious assaults recorded by the police between 2011-12 and 2019-20, from 4,693 to 3,511. Another source of statistics on assault is Public Health Scotland's annual publication on hospital admissions due to unintentional injuries. This includes the number of emergency hospital admissions for assault.

The latest figures (2019-20) are available at: [Unintentional injuries - Hospital Admissions: Year ending 31 March 2020 - Public Health Scotland](#)

It is not possible to make direct comparisons between the two sources for various reasons (for example not all who attend hospital with assault injuries will report what has happened to the police). However, as these sources both generally relate to how Scotland's emergency services respond to the most serious types of assault, it would be anticipated that both should show similar trends over time.

There were 2,280 emergency hospital admissions as a result of assault in 2019-20, of which 541 were due to assault with a sharp object and 1,750 were other assaults². This represents 48% fall in the total number of emergency admissions due to assault since 2011-12, including a 42% reduction in the number of emergency admissions due to assault with a sharp object. This comparison confirms that the reduction in police recorded crimes of attempted murder and serious assault over the past 10 years has also been broadly reflected in statistics for emergency admissions to hospital. Whilst the reduction in hospital admissions appears to be larger than that for recorded crime, the change in guidance for crimes classed as serious assaults in 2015 may have had an impact on these figures.

Robbery

Robbery accounted for 19% of Non-sexual crimes of violence. Over the ten year period from 2011-12 to 2020-21, this category has seen a decrease of 25%. Following increases between 2016-17 and 2018-19, there have been decreases for the past two years.

We earlier published the findings of a separate study into Robbery. Further information is available via the following link:

² Total may not equal the sum of individual injuries as a person may be admitted with more than one type of injury.

<https://www.gov.scot/publications/recorded-crime-scotland-robbery-2008-09-2017-18/>

Homicide etc.:

As well as Murder and Culpable homicide (common law), the Homicide etc. category included in this bulletin contains the crimes of:

- Causing death by dangerous driving;
- Causing 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.

Homicide etc. accounted for 1% of Non-sexual crimes of violence. This category decreased by 17% from 121 crimes in 2019-20 to 100 crimes in 2020-21. Most categories experienced a decrease, however the biggest contributor was in driving related homicides, which fell by 16 crimes (from 55 to 39).

Data comparisons: Homicide

A separate Homicide in Scotland bulletin is produced by the Scottish Government which contains more detailed information on the crimes of Murder and Culpable homicide (common law). This bulletin presents characteristics of victims and accused, such as age and gender, as well as the circumstances of the homicide. We therefore recommend that users interested in Homicide statistics should refer directly to the Homicide in Scotland bulletin series, which can be accessed at: <https://www.gov.scot/collections/homicide-in-scotland-statistics/>.

The next Homicide in Scotland statistical bulletin will contain data for 2020-21 and will be published on October 26th 2021.

Domestic Abuse (Scotland) Act 2018

There were 1,641 crimes recorded under the Domestic Abuse (Scotland) Act 2018 in 2020-21, the second year this legislation has been in place. Of those crimes, 94% (or 1,545) involved a female victim and 6% (or 96) had a male victim, the same proportions as the previous year.

It should be noted that crimes under the Domestic Abuse (Scotland) Act relate to a course of conduct only and therefore do not include all crimes relating to domestic abuse. For more information on separate analysis of domestic abuse incidents reported to the police, please see the separate [Domestic abuse: statistics](#)

[recorded by the police in Scotland](#) Official Statistics bulletin. This is produced by the Scottish Government and contains details of domestic abuse incidents and crimes recorded by Police Scotland, including characteristics of victims and perpetrators, such as their age and gender.

The next Domestic abuse recorded by the police in Scotland bulletin will contain data for 2020-21 and will be published in November 2021.

Data validation: Domestic Abuse

The HMICS Crime Audit 2020 examined 3,150 incidents relating to domestic abuse, 1,001 of which resulted in a crime record. HMICS found that the compliance was good overall, as:

- 94.6% of domestic abuse incidents were closed correctly, which is a higher compliance rate than the other categories examined.
- 92.6% of domestic abuse crime records were counted and classified correctly.
- 95.2% of domestic abuse crimes were recorded within 72 hours of the incident being reported to the police, with ten of the thirteen divisions achieving over 95% compliance.

The full findings and analysis from this audit can be found in the HMICS Crime Audit 2020 publication: [HMICS | Crime Audit 2020](#)

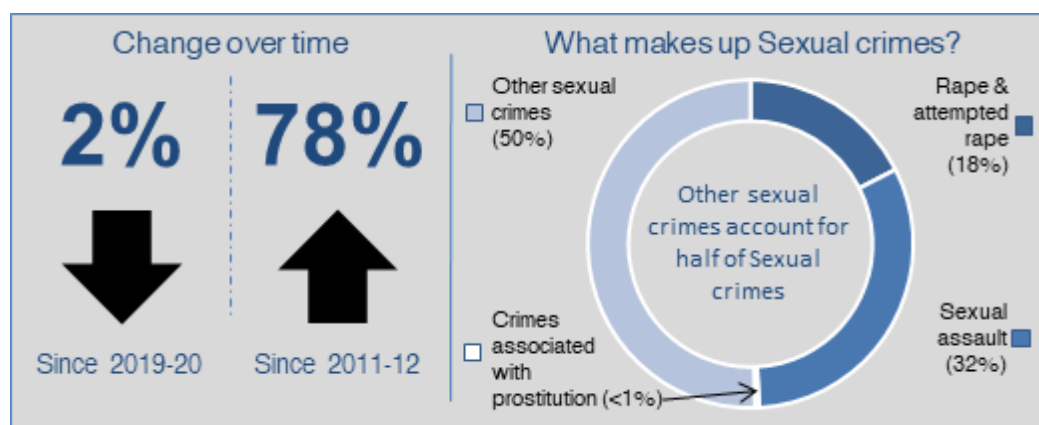
Other non-sexual violence

The Other violence category includes crimes such as Cruelty to & unnatural treatment of children, Threats & extortion and Abduction, which together account for 87% of the crimes within this category. More detail is provided in the [User Guide](#).

Crimes recorded as Other violence account for 23% of Non-sexual crimes of violence. Over the ten year period from 2011-12 to 2020-21 this category has seen a decrease of 16%, however there was an increase of 22% from 1,679 in 2019-20 to 2,047 in 2020-21.

This increase was primarily due to a rise in crimes of Threats & extortion, over three-quarters of which were estimated to be cyber-crimes in 2020-21 (further information on this change is available in the [Cyber-crime Chapter](#)).

Group 2 – Sexual Crimes



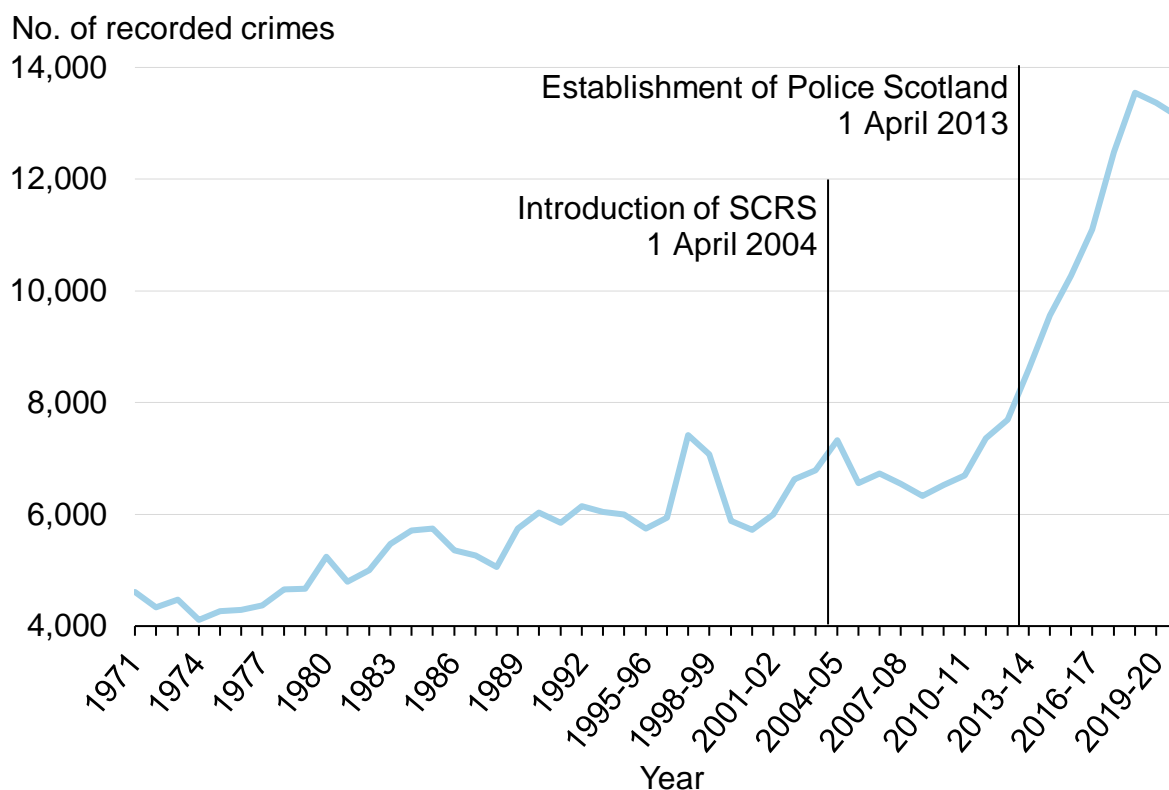
Number of Sexual crimes recorded in 2020-21

Sexual crimes account for 5% of all crimes recorded in Scotland in 2020-21. The number of Sexual crimes recorded by the police in Scotland decreased by 2% from 13,364 in 2019-20 to 13,131 in 2020-21.

[Chart 8](#) below shows the number of Sexual crimes from 1971 onwards. Sexual crimes have been on a long-term upward trend since 1974, with some fluctuations. Prior to the small decrease in 2019-20, there had been increases each year since 2008-09.

The national rate of recorded Sexual crimes remained at 24 crimes per 10,000 population in 2020-21 (see Tables [4](#) and [7](#)).

Chart 8: Sexual crimes recorded by the police, 1971¹ to 1994 then 1995-96 to 2020-21 (Table 6)

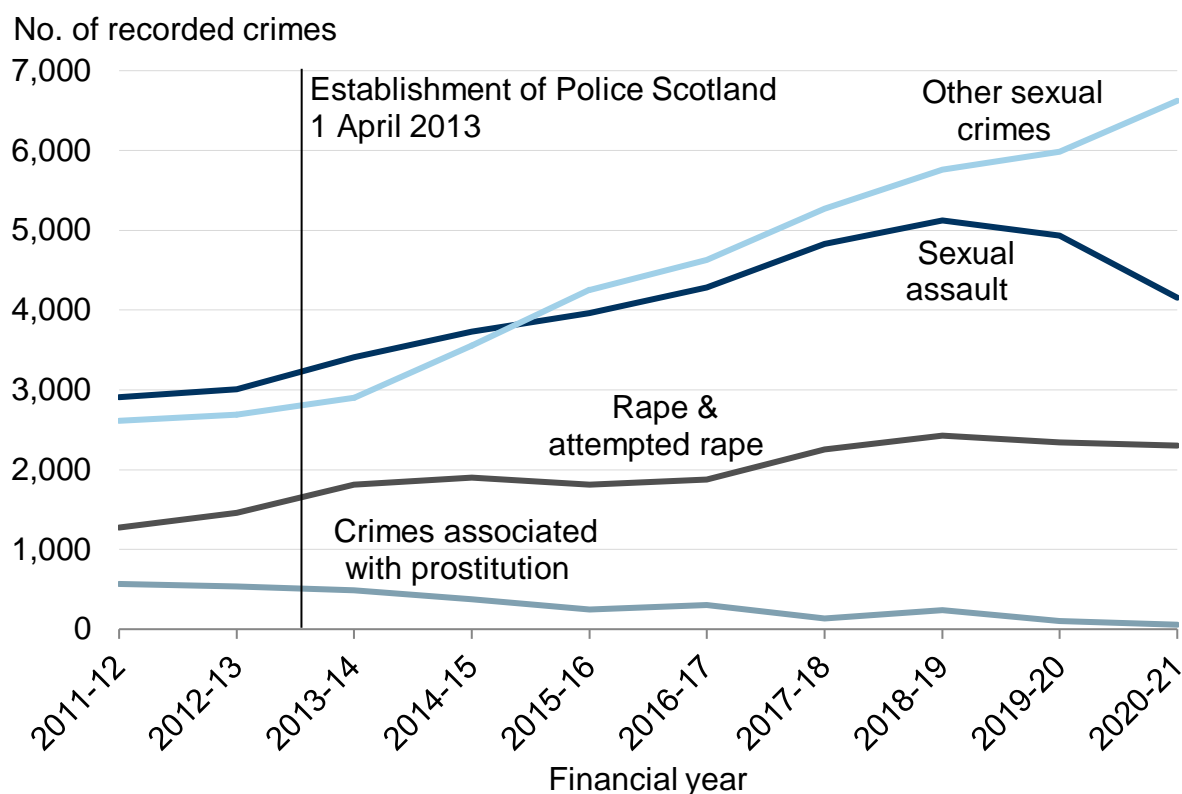


¹ Crimes recorded for the present crime groups are not available prior to 1971.

Whilst the specific age of the victim cannot generally be determined from the data supplied by Police Scotland, many of the sexual crime codes used by the police to record crime make it clear when the victim was aged under 18 (for example, Sexual assault of older male child (13-15 years))³. By adding up all these crime codes, we know that at least 39% of the 13,131 sexual crimes recorded in 2020-21 by the police related to a victim under the age of 18. This proportion is similar to recent years.

³ Although the crime of Lewd and libidinous practices does not identify the age of the victim by its name, this crime code is specific to victims of historical (non-recent) crimes that were under 16 years of age. We have therefore included these crimes in our calculations.

Chart 9: Sexual crimes in Scotland by category, 2011-12 to 2020-21



[Chart 9](#) shows the four categories within Sexual crimes over the last ten years, and gives an indication of the trend and scale of each category. In 2020-21, Other sexual crimes made up 50% of all Sexual crimes. Sexual assault and Rape and attempted rape accounted for 32% and 18% respectively of sexual crimes. At less than 1%, Crimes associated with prostitution continue to represent a very small proportion of the total.

The number of recorded crimes in the Other sexual crimes and Sexual assault categories have changed markedly over time. They almost converged after 2010, which coincides with the implementation of the Sexual Offences (Scotland) Act 2009. They both increased during the years that followed, with Other sexual crimes overtaking Sexual assault as the largest category. Information on the impact of the Sexual Offences (Scotland) Act 2009 is available under '[Data Considerations](#)' below.

[Table A1](#) contains more detailed breakdowns for Sexual crimes.

Sexual assault

Sexual assault accounted for 32% of Sexual crimes in 2020-21. This category was on an upward trend since 2011-12, having increased by 76% between then and 2018-19. Sexual assaults then fell in both of the latest years, including a 16% decrease from 4,936 in 2019-20 to 4,154 in 2020-21.

Rape & attempted rape

Rape & attempted rape accounted for 18% of Sexual crimes. Similar to Sexual assault, after an upward trend from 2011-12 to 2018-19, there have been decreases over the past two years, including a 2% decrease from 2,343 in 2019-20 to 2,298 in 2020-21.

Crimes associated with prostitution

Crimes associated with prostitution account for less than 1% of Sexual crimes. Over the ten year period from 2011-12 to 2020-21, these crimes have seen a large fall of 90%, including a 45% decrease since 2019-20. This year's figure (56 crimes) is the lowest over the last ten years.

Almost half (48%) of the crimes recorded in 2020-21 were in the Glasgow City area, with a further 21% recorded in Aberdeen City.

Other sexual crimes

The Other sexual crimes category includes crimes such as Communicating indecently; Taking, possessing and distributing indecent photos of children; Sexual exposure, Public indecency and Causing to view sexual images or activity. From 2017-18 onwards it also includes Disclosing or threatening to disclose an intimate image.

The implementation of the Abusive Behaviour and Sexual Harm (Scotland) Act 2016 has had an impact on any comparisons with data prior to 2017-18. The Act led to new crimes of Disclosing or threatening to disclose an intimate image being recorded from 2017-18 onwards, with 780 being recorded in 2020-21 (this is part of an increasing trend). As such, part of the increase in Other sexual crimes since 2016-17 is due to this legislative change. Further information is available in the '[Data Considerations](#)' section below.

Other sexual crimes are the largest category in Group 2, accounting for 50% of Sexual crimes. This category has been on an upward trend for some time, with crimes increasing by 154% since 2011-12 (from 2,612 to 6,623), including an 11% increase from 5,984 in 2019-20.

We earlier published the findings of a research project into Other sexual crimes, which suggests that cyber enabled Other sexual crimes (i.e. where the internet has been used as a means to commit the crime) contributed around half to the total growth in all recorded Sexual crimes between 2013-14 and 2016-17.

Further information is available via the following link:

<https://www.gov.scot/publications/recorded-crime-scotland-sexual-crimes-2013-14-2016-17/>

More recently, the number of Other Sexual Crimes that are cyber-crimes has continued to grow. An estimated 66% of this category were cyber-crimes in 2020-21, compared to 54% in 2019-20 (further information on this change is available in the [Cyber-crime Chapter](#)).

Data considerations

A number of legislative and procedural changes should be kept in mind when reviewing trends in sexual crime over the longer term.

Sexual Offences (Scotland) Act 2009

The implementation of the Sexual Offences (Scotland) Act 2009 on 1st December 2010 resulted in a number of changes to the recording of sexual crimes, including a redistribution of Group 2 crimes among the subcategories and a widened definition of rape. A number of crimes which may have been recorded as Breach of the peace prior to the implementation of the Act would also not have shown up as sexual crimes before December 2010. Comparisons with data prior to 2010-11 for these categories should therefore be treated with caution.

Taking, distribution etc. indecent photos of children

In 2010-11, incidents of Taking, distribution etc. indecent photos of children were transferred from Group 6 Miscellaneous offences to Group 2 Sexual crimes and back-revised to 2009-10. Whilst these crimes represent a small proportion of sexual crimes (5% of all Group 2 Sexual crimes in 2020-21), it has resulted in a small discontinuity in the time series for any analysis that spans 2009-10.

Communications Act (2003) Sexual

In 2017-18, Communications Act 2003 (Sexual) offences were transferred from Group 6 Miscellaneous offences to Group 2 Sexual crimes.

This change involved reclassifying some activity from an offence group to a crime group, and so resulted in a small increase in total recorded crime, with 354 recorded in 2020-21. Statistics for 2016-17 were back-revised within the 2017-18 bulletin, to ensure time series continuity was not affected. There will be some discontinuity for earlier years as Communications Act 2003 offences with a sexual element were not separately identifiable within the statistics until 2016-17.

Abusive Behaviour and Sexual Harm (Scotland) Act 2016

Finally, the implementation of the Abusive Behaviour and Sexual Harm (Scotland) Act 2016 on 3rd July 2017 resulted in new crimes of Disclosing or threatening to disclose an intimate image being recorded. This has contributed to the increase in Other sexual crimes. Whilst some of these cases may have been recorded as a different crime or offence had they occurred prior to the Act, it is likely the majority of them would not have been classified as a Sexual crime. The enactment of this legislation also extended the criminal law to criminalise certain conduct that previously may not have been illegal.

There were 780 crimes of Disclosing or threatening to disclose an intimate image in 2020-21.

Historical (non-recent) reporting

In addition to the legislative and procedural changes outlined above, the issue of historical reporting of sexual crime also continues to play a role in the latest statistics. Further information from Police Scotland suggests that just over a quarter (26%) of sexual crimes in 2020-21 were recorded at least one year after they occurred and that this figure is similar to the previous year. Furthermore, as discussed below the use of specific codes to record sexual crime also highlights where these cases are historical.

[Table A1](#) reports 905 crimes of Lewd and libidinous practices in 2020-21. These crimes should all relate to offences which occurred prior to the implementation of the Sexual Offences (Scotland) Act 2009 on 1 December 2010, as the Act replaced Lewd and libidinous practices with specific sexual assault crimes. As a result, we know that these are historical (non-recent) offences. Similarly, there were 211 crimes of Sexual assault committed prior to 1 December 2010.

Data comparisons

This segment includes information that should be considered to widen contextual understanding of the data provided on Group 2 - Sexual crimes. Detail is provided on limited comparisons with recorded crime in England & Wales and Northern Ireland. Further detail on the type of information available from the SCJS on sexual crime is also included.

Comparisons with England & Wales and Northern Ireland

While recorded crime in Scotland is not directly comparable with England & Wales or Northern Ireland due to differences in legislation and counting rules, there are some tentative signs that the previous long-term upward trend for sexual crimes across the UK may be slowing down. Over the past two years, sexual crimes recorded by police in England & Wales⁴ have decreased and this year in Northern Ireland⁵ sexual crime decreased for the first time since 2011/12. This compares to a 2% decrease in Scotland, although the pandemic may have had an impact on this year's figures.

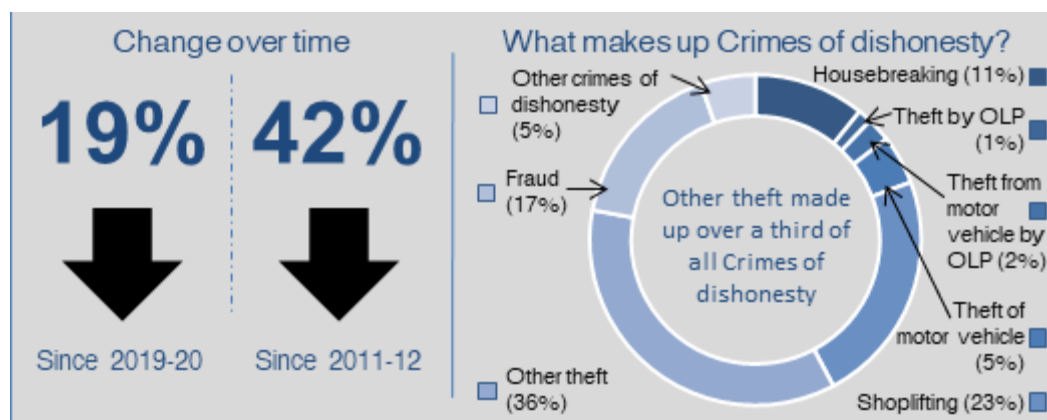
Scottish Crime and Justice Survey (SCJS)

Detailed information on the victims of sexual crime is not collected in the main SCJS survey. Information on sensitive topics is collected through a number of additional self-completion sections. Some of these sections include information on sexual crime; for example, the self-completion elements of the 2018-19 and 2019-20 surveys included questions on sexual victimisation, stalking and harassment, and partner abuse. The findings are included in the [2019-20 SCJS Main Findings report](#).

⁴[Crime in England and Wales - Office for National Statistics \(ons.gov.uk\)](https://www.ons.gov.uk/crime-and-justice/crime-in-england-and-wales)

⁵<https://www.psni.police.uk/globalassets/inside-the-psni/our-statistics/police-recorded-crime-statistics/2021/march/crime-bulletin-mar-21.pdf>

Group 3 – Crimes of Dishonesty

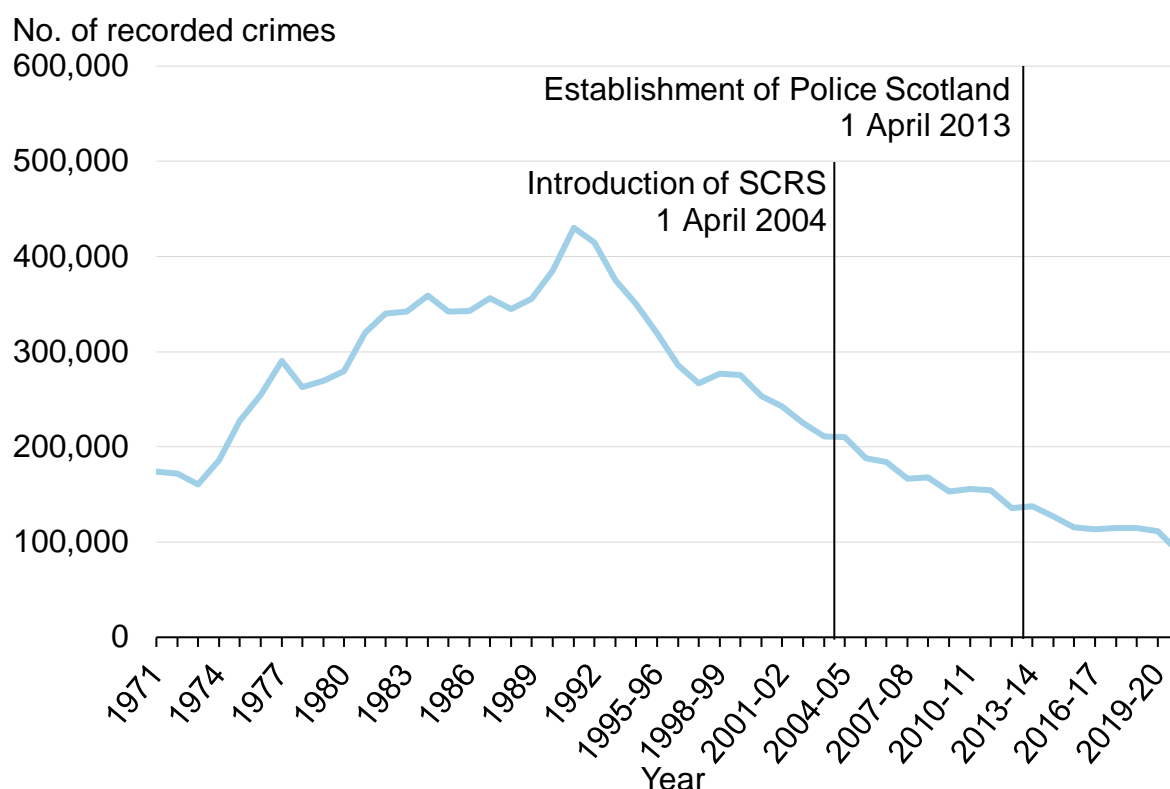


Number of Crimes of dishonesty recorded in 2020-21

Crimes of dishonesty accounted for over a third (36%) of all crime recorded in Scotland in 2020-21. Between 2019-20 and 2020-21, the number of Crimes of dishonesty recorded by the police in Scotland decreased by 19%, from 111,409 to 89,731.

[Chart 10](#) below shows the number of Crimes of dishonesty from 1971 onwards. Crimes of dishonesty increased for a long period between 1971 and 1991. Since then there has been a long-term decreasing trend, with a decrease of 79% between 1991 and 2020-21. These crimes are at their lowest level since 1971, the first year for which comparable crime groups are available.

Chart 10: Crimes of dishonesty recorded by the police, 1971¹ to 1994 then 1995-96 to 2020-21 ([Table 6](#))

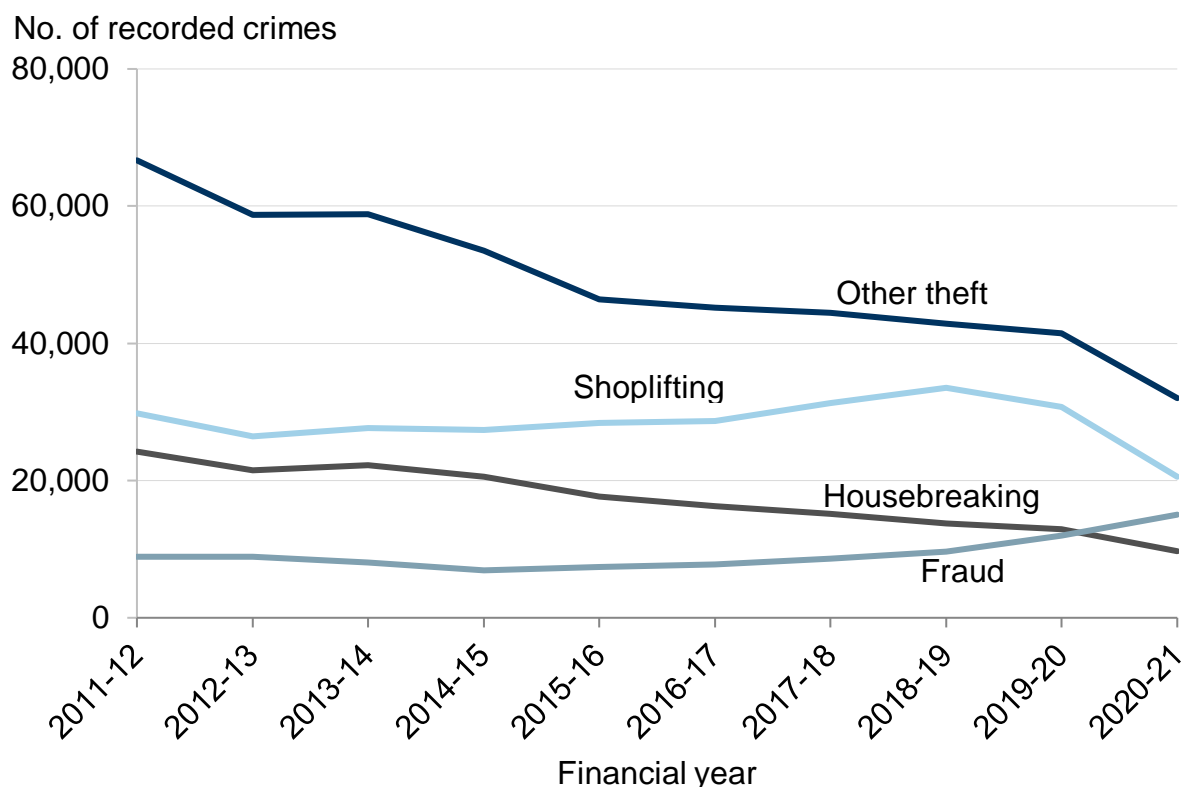


¹ Crimes recorded for the present crime groups are not available prior to 1971.

The national rate of recorded Crimes of dishonesty fell from 204 to 164 per 10,000 population in 2020-21 (see [Tables 4](#) and [7](#)).

[Chart 11](#) shows the four largest categories within Crimes of dishonesty over the last ten years, and gives an indication of the trend and scale of each category. Other theft has consistently been the biggest contributor to Crimes of dishonesty, although this is experiencing a downward trend. Other theft and Housebreaking fell by 52% and 60% respectively between 2011-12 and 2020-21. Shoplifting also fell, by 31%, although this is likely to have been heavily influenced by the pandemic related restrictions. Fraud is the only category to have experienced an increase over the past ten years (up 69% since 2011-12). While not displayed in [Chart 11](#), the numbers of Theft by opening a lockfast place (OLP), Theft from a motor vehicle by OLP and Theft of a motor vehicle have decreased over the ten years from 2011-12 to 2020-21 ([Table 1](#)).

Chart 11: Crimes of dishonesty (showing four largest categories) in Scotland, 2011-12 to 2020-21



Other theft

Other theft consists of Theft of pedal cycles, Theft from a motor vehicle not elsewhere classified and Theft not elsewhere classified (excl. motor vehicles).

This category is the largest in Crimes of dishonesty, accounting for 36% of these crimes. Over the ten year period from 2011-12 to 2020-21, Other theft has seen a decrease of 52%, including a 23% decrease from 41,421 in 2019-20 to 32,017 in 2020-21.

Shoplifting

Shoplifting accounted for 23% of Crimes of dishonesty. Shoplifting decreased by 33% from 30,688 in 2019-20 to 20,557 in 2020-21. This follows an increasing trend since 2014-15 and is likely to be mainly due to the pandemic related restrictions. The number of Shopliftings recorded in 2020-21 was 31% lower than in 2011-12.

Housebreaking

Housebreaking accounted for 11% of Crimes of dishonesty. Over the ten year period from 2011-12 to 2020-21 this crime group has decreased by 60%, including a 25% decrease from 12,903 in 2019-20 to 9,706 in 2020-21.

Fraud

Crimes of Fraud account for 17% of Crimes of dishonesty. After a relatively stable period between 2010-11 and 2013-14 and a decrease in 2014-15, crimes of fraud experienced an upward trend since 2014-15. Crimes of fraud increased by 69% since 2011-12, including a 26% increase between 2019-20 and 2020-21.

This latest increase was due to a rise in the number of Frauds that were cyber-crimes, estimated to be over half (57%) of all recorded Fraud in 2020-21. Further information on this change is available in the [Cyber-crime Chapter](#).

Theft from a motor vehicle by opening a lockfast place (OLP)

Theft from a motor vehicle by OLP accounted for 2% of Crimes of dishonesty. Over the ten year period from 2011-12 to 2020-21 this crime has seen a large decrease of 77%, including a 29% decrease from 2,982 in 2019-20 to 2,108 in 2020-21.

Theft of a motor vehicle

Theft of a motor vehicle accounted for 5% of Crimes of dishonesty. Over the ten year period from 2011-12 to 2020-21 this crime has seen a decrease of 39%, including a decrease of 14% or 691 crimes from 5,002 crimes in 2019-20 to 4,311 crimes in 2020-21.

Other crimes of dishonesty

Other crimes of dishonesty includes Reset, Corruption, Embezzlement and other crimes of forgery which are not classified elsewhere.

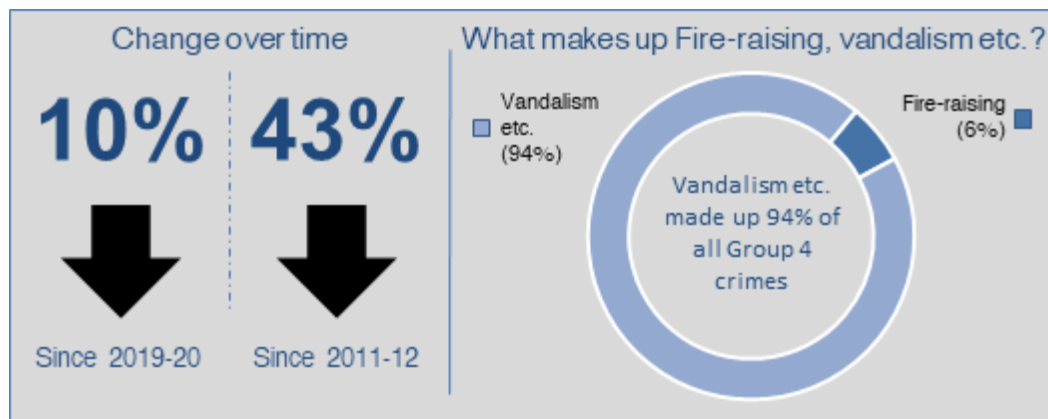
Other crimes of dishonesty account for 5% of total Crimes of dishonesty. Over the ten year period from 2011-12 to 2020-21 this crime has seen a decrease of 8%, however there was a 1% increase from 4,746 in 2019-20 to 4,794 in 2020-21.

Theft by opening a lockfast place (OLP)

Theft by opening a lockfast place (OLP) accounted for 1% of Crimes of dishonesty in 2020-21. Over the ten year period from 2011-12 to 2020-21, this

crime has seen a decrease of 66%, and there has been a large decrease of 30% from 1,728 in 2019-20 to 1,207 in 2020-21.

Group 4 – Fire-raising, Vandalism etc.



Number of crimes of Fire-raising, vandalism etc. recorded in 2020-21:

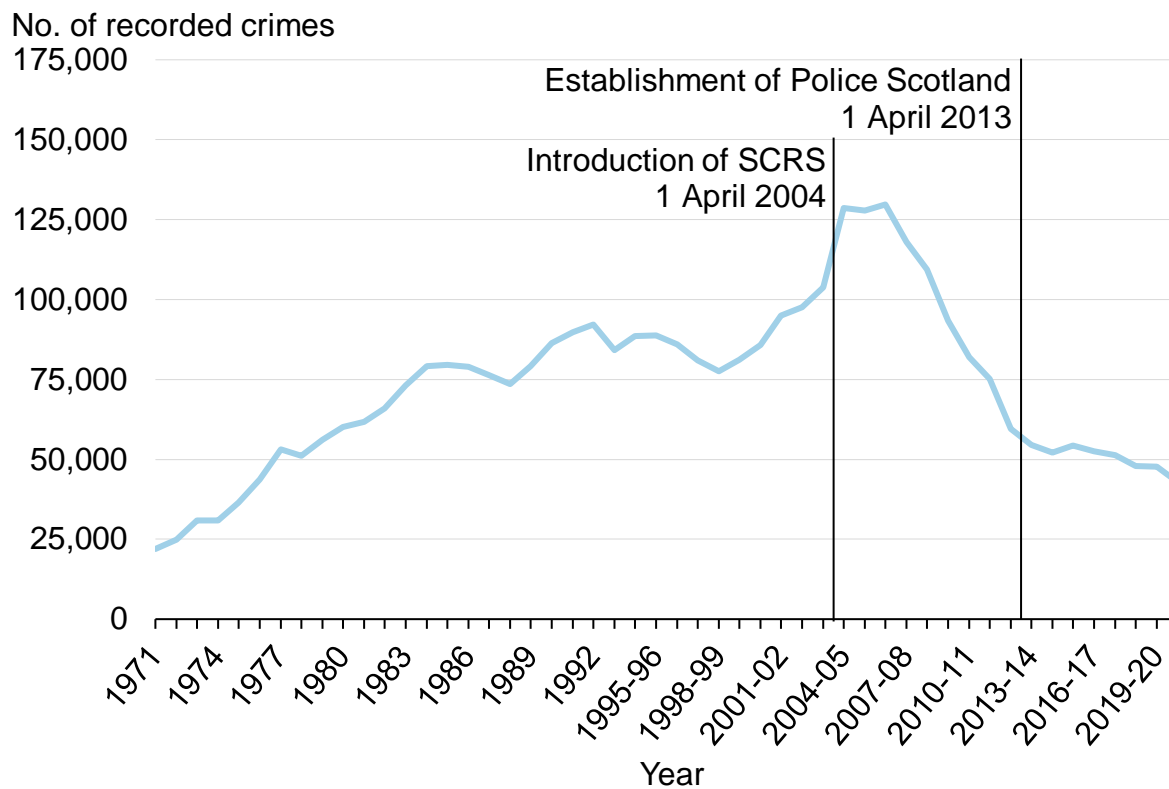
Fire-raising, vandalism etc. accounted for 17% of all crime recorded in Scotland in 2020-21. Between 2019-20 and 2020-21, the number of crimes of Fire-raising, vandalism etc. recorded by the police in Scotland decreased by 10%, from 47,731 to 42,964. The recording of these crimes is at the lowest level seen since 1975.

[Chart 12](#) shows the number of crimes of Fire-raising, vandalism etc. from 1971 onwards. Levels of Fire-raising, vandalism etc. increased for a long period, but there was a sharp downward trend since they peaked in 2006-07, including a 43% fall since 2011-12.

The national rate of recorded crimes of Fire-raising, vandalism etc. fell from 87 to 79 crimes per 10,000 population in 2020-21.

Due to the difference in scale of recorded crimes of Vandalism etc. and Fire-raising, [Charts 13](#) and [14](#) show these two categories separately to better highlight the similar downward trends they have followed over the last ten years.

Chart 12: Crimes of Fire-raising, vandalism etc. recorded by the police, 1971¹ to 1994 then 1995-96 to 2020-21 ([Table 6](#))



¹ Crimes recorded for the present crime groups are not available prior to 1971.

Chart 13: Fire-raising in Scotland, 2011-12 to 2020-21

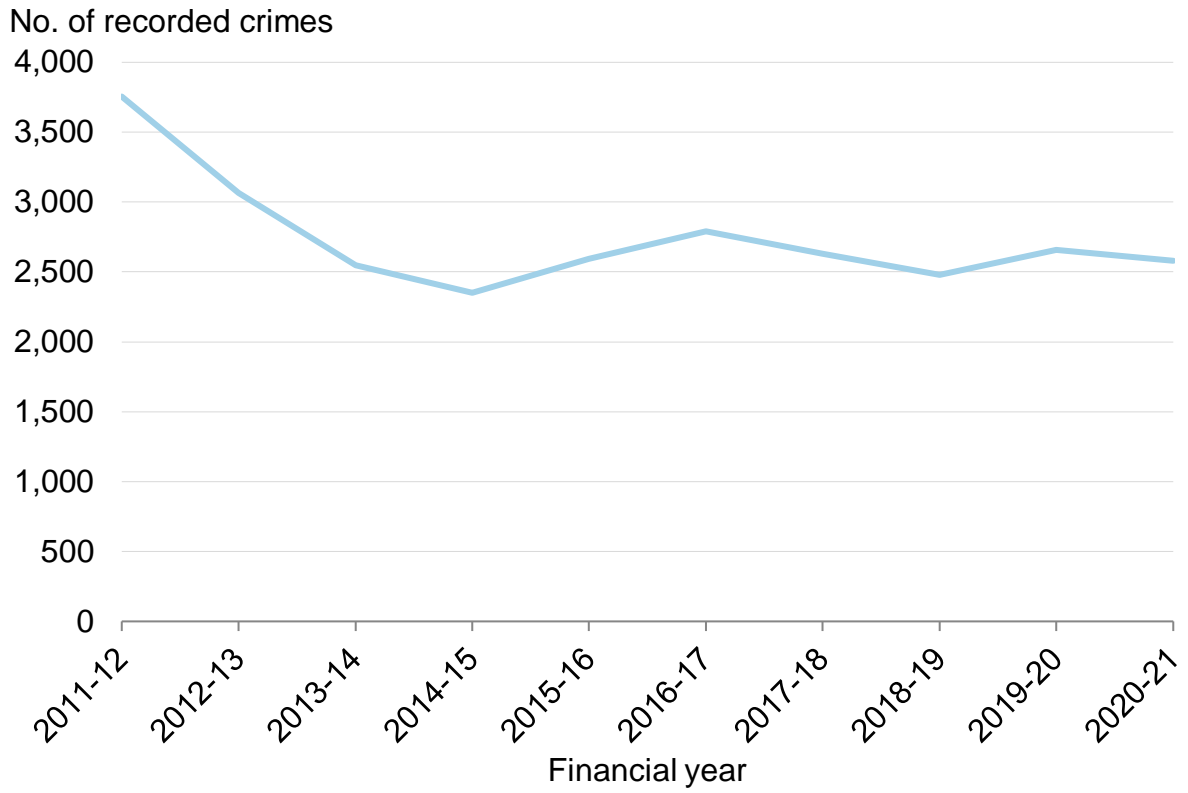
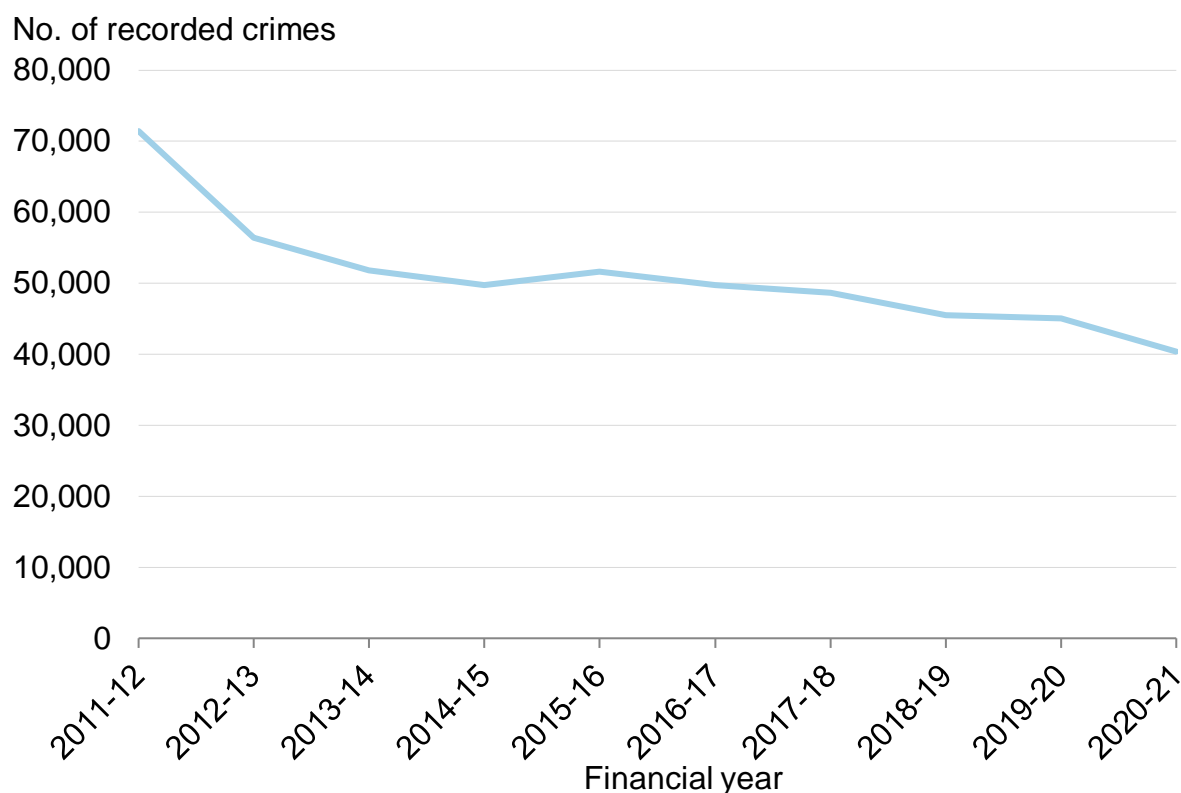


Chart 14: Vandalism etc. in Scotland, 2011-12 to 2020-21



Vandalism etc.

Vandalism etc. accounted for 94% of crimes of Fire-raising, vandalism etc. These crimes have decreased by 10% from 45,074 in 2019-20 to 40,384 in 2020-21. The longer term trend has also been downwards, with the number of crimes recorded decreasing by 43% between 2011-12 and 2020-21.

The Vandalism etc. category includes crimes recorded under the Computer Misuse Act 1990. There were 72 such crimes recorded in 2020-21, up from 21 in 2019-20. Further information on this change is available in the [Cyber-crime Chapter](#).

Fire-raising

Fire-raising accounted for 6% of crimes of Fire-raising, vandalism etc. These crimes have decreased by 3% from 2,657 in 2019-20 to 2,580 in 2020-21. Fire-raising has decreased by nearly a third (31%) over the ten year period from 2011-12 to 2020-21.

Data comparisons: Fire-raising

Another source of statistics on fires in Scotland is an annual publication covering the number of fires attended by the Scottish Fire and Rescue Service (SFRS). The latest figures (for 2019-20) are available at:

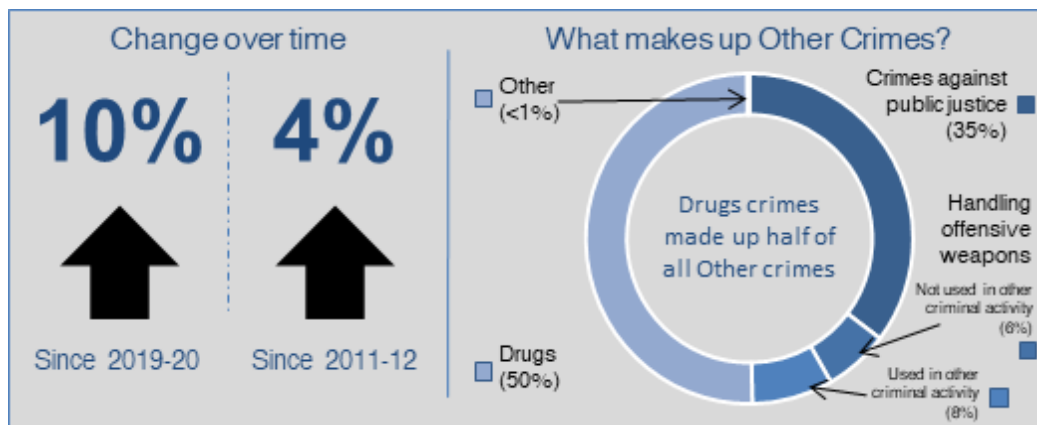
<http://www.firescotland.gov.uk/about-us/fire-and-rescue-statistics.aspx>.

It is not possible to make direct comparisons between the two sources, as many fires are caused accidentally rather than as a result of a crime, and the police are not called to all deliberate fires. Furthermore, not all police recorded crimes of fire-raising may result in the attendance of the SFRS. However as these sources both relate to how Scotland's emergency services respond to fires, it would be anticipated that both should show similar trends over time.

A total of 24,472 fires were attended by the SFRS in 2019-20, down 9% on the previous year. Over half (58%) were started deliberately.

Between 2010-11 and 2019-20, there has been a 37% fall in the total number of fires attended and a 45% decrease in the number of deliberate fires. This comparison suggests that the overall reduction in police recorded crimes of fire-raising over the past 10 years has also been broadly reflected in statistics for the SFRS.

Group 5 – Other crimes

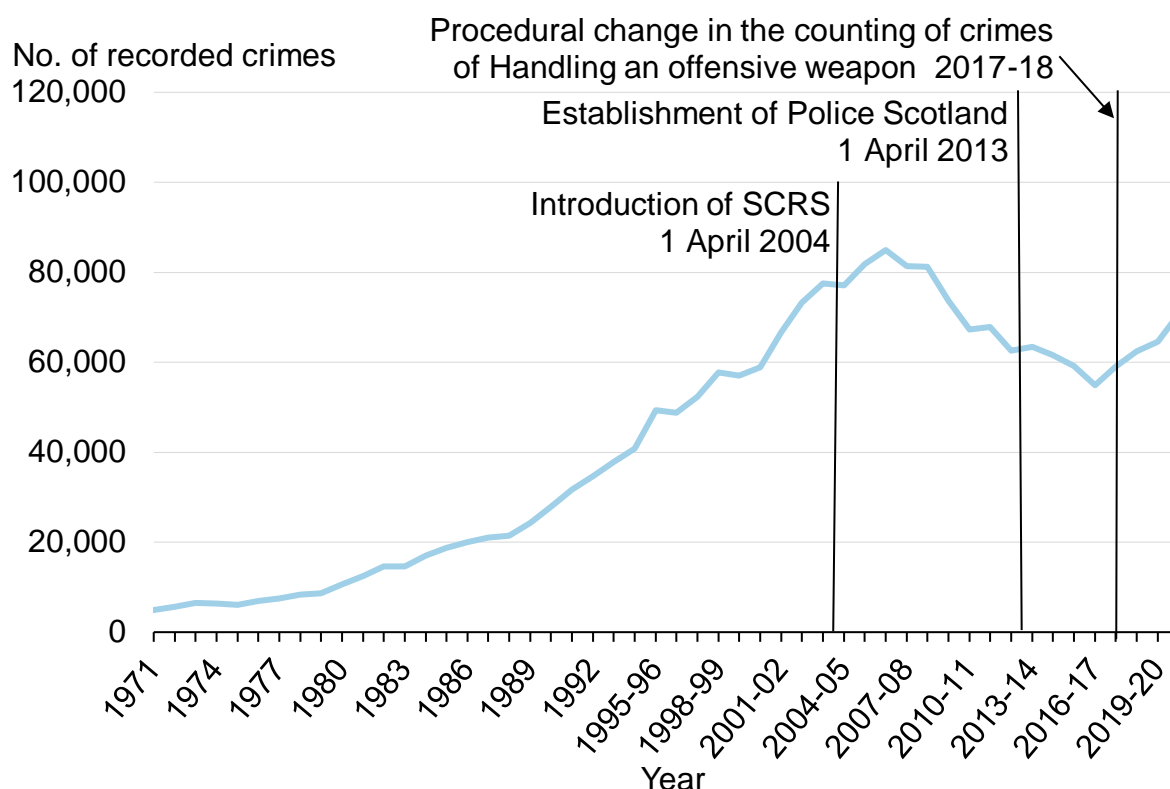


Number of Other crimes recorded in 2020-21

Other crimes account for 29% of all crimes recorded in Scotland in 2020-21. Between 2019-20 and 2020-21, the number of Other crimes recorded by the police increased by 10%, from 64,589 to 70,737.

[Chart 15](#) below shows the number of Other crimes from 1971 onwards. After increasing for a long period up to 2006-07, they decreased until 2016-17, before rising again. It should be noted that over a third (36%) of the overall increase in Other crimes from 54,946 in 2016-17 to 70,737 in 2020-21 is due to a procedural change in the recording of crimes of handling an offensive weapon (see later in this section for further information).

Chart 15: Other crimes recorded by the police, 1971 to 1994 then 1995-96 to 2020-21 (Table 6)

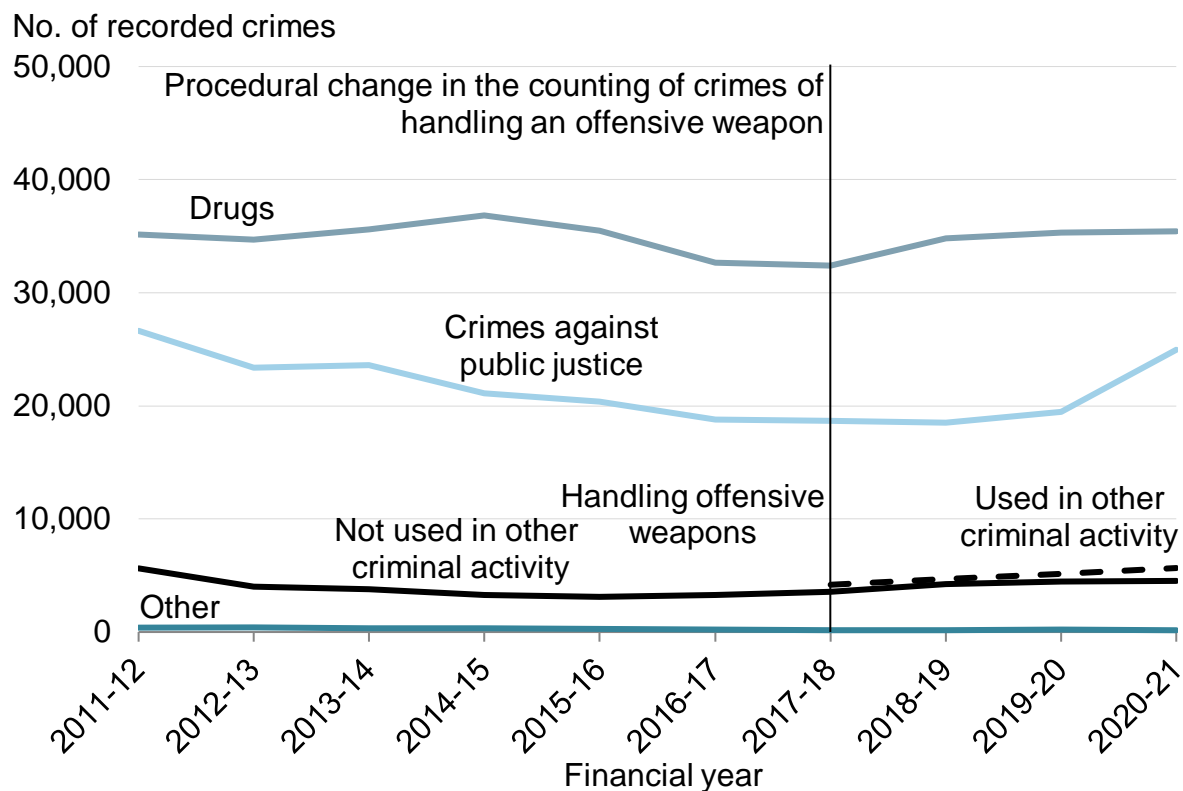


¹ Crimes recorded for the present crime groups are not available prior to 1971.

The national rate of recorded Other crimes increased from 118 to 129 crimes per 10,000 population in 2020-21 (see Tables 4 and 7).

Chart 16 shows the four categories within Other crimes over the last ten years, and gives an indication of the trend and scale of each category. Drugs crimes have consistently been the biggest contributor, accounting for 50% in 2020-21. A further 35% were Crimes against public justice and 14% were crimes of Handling offensive weapons.

Chart 16: Other crimes in Scotland by category, 2011-12 to 2020-21



*There was a procedural change to the counting of crimes of Handling an offensive weapon in 2017-18. As such the significant rise in the total number of recorded crimes of Handling an offensive weapon shown for that year, does not represent a real increase in these crimes.

Drugs

Drug crimes account for 50% of Other crimes. Over the ten year period from 2011-12 to 2020-21 this crime has increased by 1%, including a small increase from 35,303 crimes in 2019-20 to 35,410 in 2020-21.

Most of these crimes (86%) are for drug possession, where the quantity of drugs seized is small enough to be considered for personal use (as opposed to crimes of drug supply).

Crimes against public justice

Crimes against public justice account for 35% of Other crimes and include Bail offences, Resisting arrest and General attempts to pervert the course of justice. Over the ten year period from 2011-12 to 2020-21 this crime has decreased by 6%, although there was an increase of 29% from 19,441 in 2019-20 to 24,985 in 2020-21. This increase is likely to be due to circumstances caused by the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic and the resulting actions to limit social contact. This led to greater numbers of individuals on bail for longer periods of time than in previous years (due to trial delays and backlogs in the court system).

Handling offensive weapons

In 2017-18 the Scottish Crime Recording Board made a procedural change to how some crimes of handling an offensive weapon were recorded. This has had an impact on the comparability of the recorded crime statistics before and after this point.

Prior to 2017-18, statistics on handling offensive weapons in public places only include incidents where the perpetrator did not commit further crimes with the weapon. If they had, the specific crime of handling an offensive weapon was considered an aggravation of the crime it was used to commit (for example an aggravated assault) and would not have been included in the statistics.

From the 1st April 2017, crimes of handling offensive weapons in public places are no longer treated as an aggravation where they are used to commit other crimes or offences against a person. As such both the crime of handling an offensive weapon in a public place and any crime or offence committed with it are now both included in the statistics. This change was made to improve consistency between the recording of these crimes and the criminal law.

As a result of this amendment to recording practice, crimes of handling an offensive weapon have been substantially higher since 2017-18. This does not represent a real increase in recorded crime, and this change will continue to have an impact on the comparability of recorded crime statistics for all years prior to 2017-18.

Not used in other crimes or offences

From 2017-18 onwards, crimes of Handling an offensive weapon in Scotland can be counted in two different ways. The first is to use the pre-existing statistics, where the offensive weapon hasn't been used to commit another crime or offence against a person in a public place. These crimes account for 6% of Other crimes in 2020-21.

Over the ten year period from 2011-12 to 2020-21 this category decreased by 20%. However, there was a 1% increase from 4,484 in 2019-20 to 4,524 in 2020-21, the fifth year-on-year increase following a prolonged decrease in these crimes.

In 2020-21, 123 crimes of handling an offensive weapon (not used) occurred within a prison and a further 74 occurred within a school. This compares to 89 occurring in a prison and 146 occurring in a school in 2019-20.

Used in other crimes or offences

In addition to the above measure, figures are also available for where the offensive weapon was used to commit another crime or offence against a person in a public place. These crimes account for 8% of Other crimes in 2020-21. There was a 10% increase from 5,160 in 2019-20 to 5,660 in 2020-21.

In 2020-21, 81 crimes of handling an offensive weapon (used) occurred within a prison and a further 36 occurred within a school. This compares to 62 occurring in a prison and 61 occurring in a school in 2019-20.

In June 2018 a report was published that presented more detailed information on the handling of offensive weapons within public places in Scotland. This included findings on the characteristics of these cases, based on a random sample of 1,500 crimes recorded by the police for the first six months (April to September) of 2013 and 2017.

More information can be found by accessing the 'Recorded Crime in Scotland: Handling Offensive Weapons' publication:

<https://www.gov.scot/publications/recorded-crime-scotland-handling-offensive-weapons/>

Other

The Other category within Other crimes includes Treason; Conspiracy; Explosive offences; Wrecking, piracy and hijacking; and Crimes against public order.

This category accounted for less than 1% of Other crimes in 2020-21. Over the past 10 years this type of crime decreased by 59%, including a 21% decrease from 201 in 2019-20 to 158 in 2020-21.

Coronavirus restrictions crimes

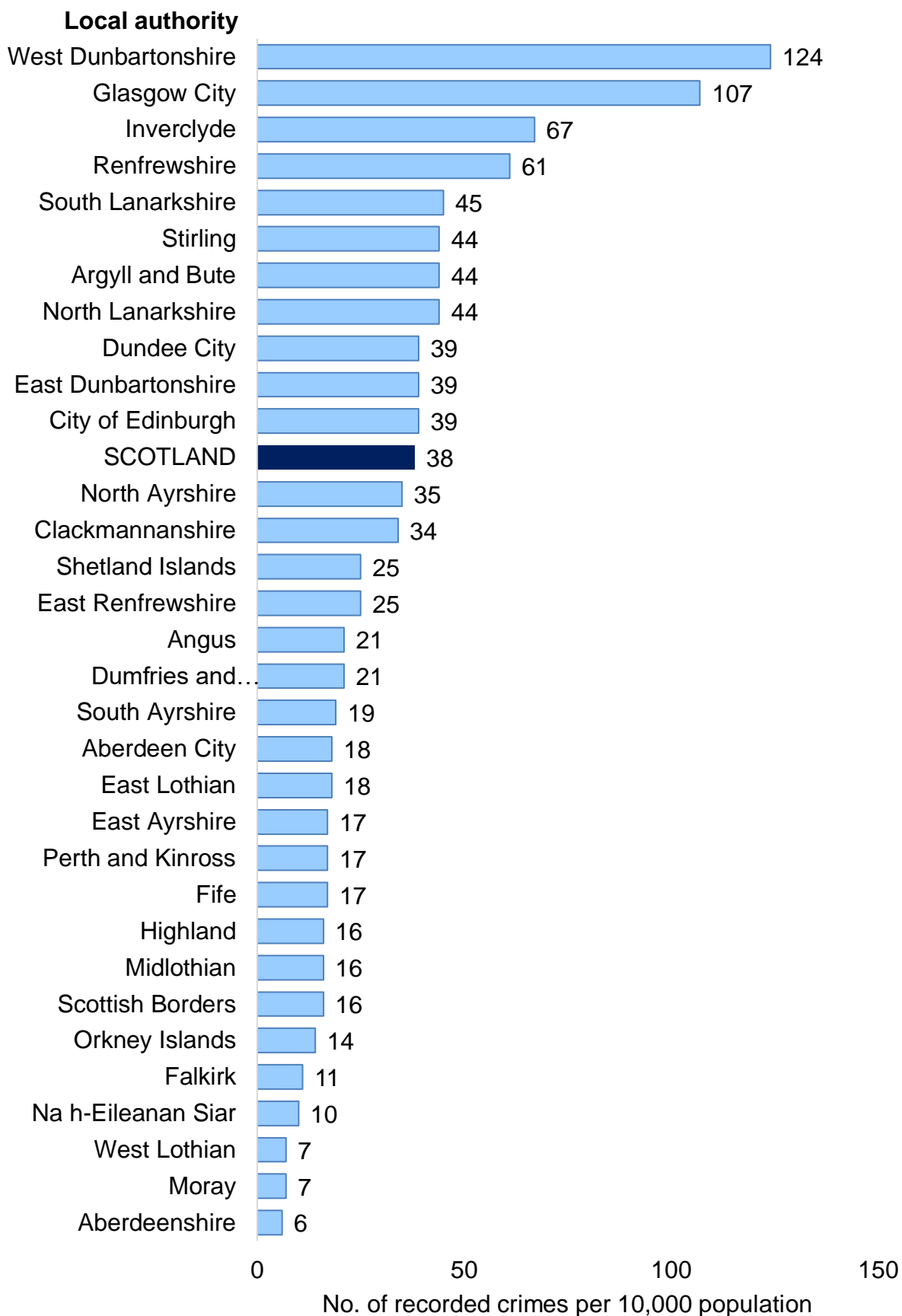
The enactment of legislation such as the [Coronavirus Act 2020](#) and [Health Protection \(Coronavirus\) \(Restrictions\) \(Scotland\) Regulations 2020](#) (implemented on 25th March and 27th March 2020 respectively) has led to new and additional crimes being recorded within these statistics. For example, where someone, who had left the place they were living during lockdown, did not have a reasonable excuse for this when asked by a police officer, and failed to comply with police advice or instruction to return there. Further [legislation in respect of local travel restrictions](#) came in to force on 2 November 2020.

Given the rapid pace of these changes, Police Scotland have used a bespoke data collection to capture information on the number of new crimes recorded under Coronavirus related legislation.

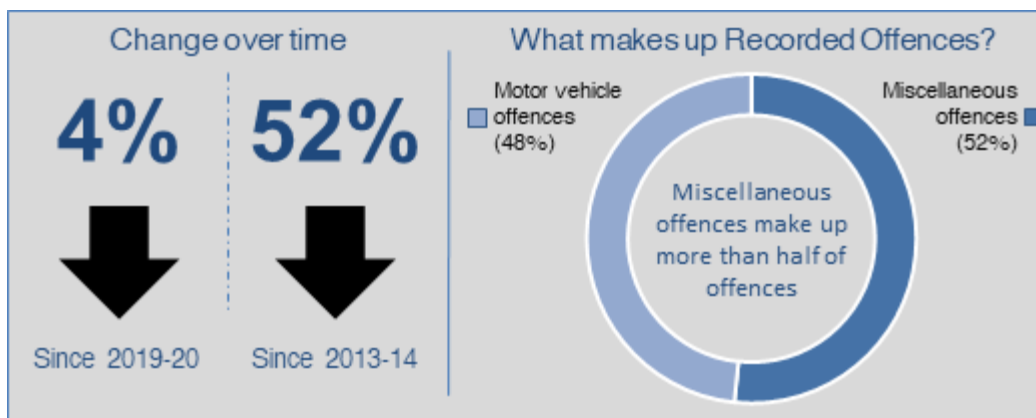
Whilst many incidents will have been dealt with by police without the need for enforcement, 20,976 Coronavirus restrictions crimes were recorded in 2020-21, accounting for 9% of all crime recorded in Scotland this year. This compares to 107 equivalent crimes recorded towards the end of 2019-20.

The national rate of recorded Coronavirus restriction crimes was 38 per 10,000 population in 2020-21. However this varied from 124 per 10,000 population in West Dunbartonshire and 107 per 10,000 population in Glasgow City to 6 per 10,000 population in Aberdeenshire and 7 per 10,000 population in Moray and West Lothian ([Chart 17](#)). It should be noted that crimes are recorded in terms of where they occur and not the home residency of the perpetrator (where the two places are different locations).

Chart 17: Coronavirus restrictions crimes per 10,000 population, 2020-21



Total Recorded Offences



Total number of offences recorded in 2020-21:

Due to anomalies in the data for Motor vehicle offences, statistics for total recorded offences by the police are only comparable from 2013-14 onwards. Further detail on these anomalies can be found later in this section and in [Annex 2](#).

The total number of offences recorded has fallen by around a half since 2013-14, including a 4% decrease from 250,662 in 2019-20 to 240,174 in 2020-21 ([Table 2](#)).

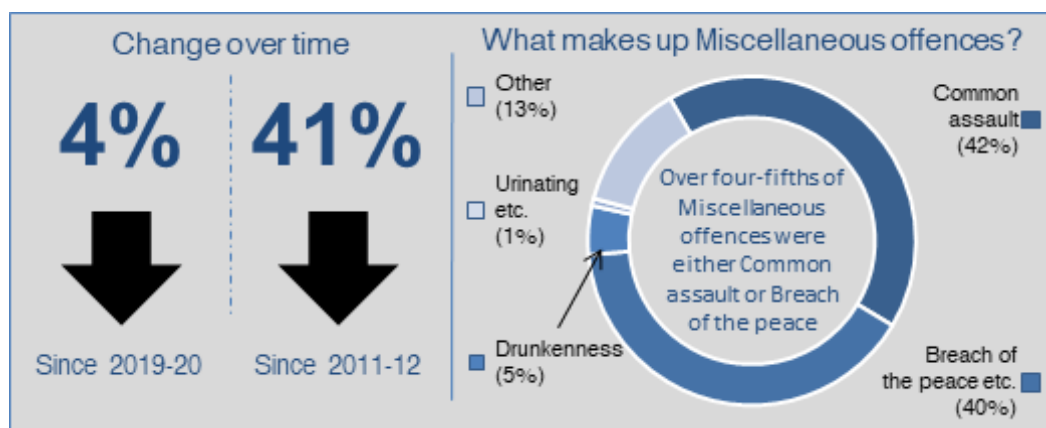
Miscellaneous offences and Motor vehicle offences account for fairly equal proportions of total offences, compared to 2013-14 when Motor vehicle offences accounted for almost 60% of the total.

It should be noted that the number of offences recorded by the police generally tends to be affected to a greater extent by police activity and operational decisions than the number of crimes.

Due to a number of offence codes being non-comparable over time, Motor vehicle offences and hence the overall figures on Offences (based on Miscellaneous offences and Motor vehicle offences combined) are only comparable from 2013-14 onwards.

The Scottish Government produced a [Technical Report](#) in 2014 which detailed the quality assurance work it carried out in reaching this conclusion.

Group 6 – Miscellaneous Offences



Number of Miscellaneous offences recorded in 2020-21:

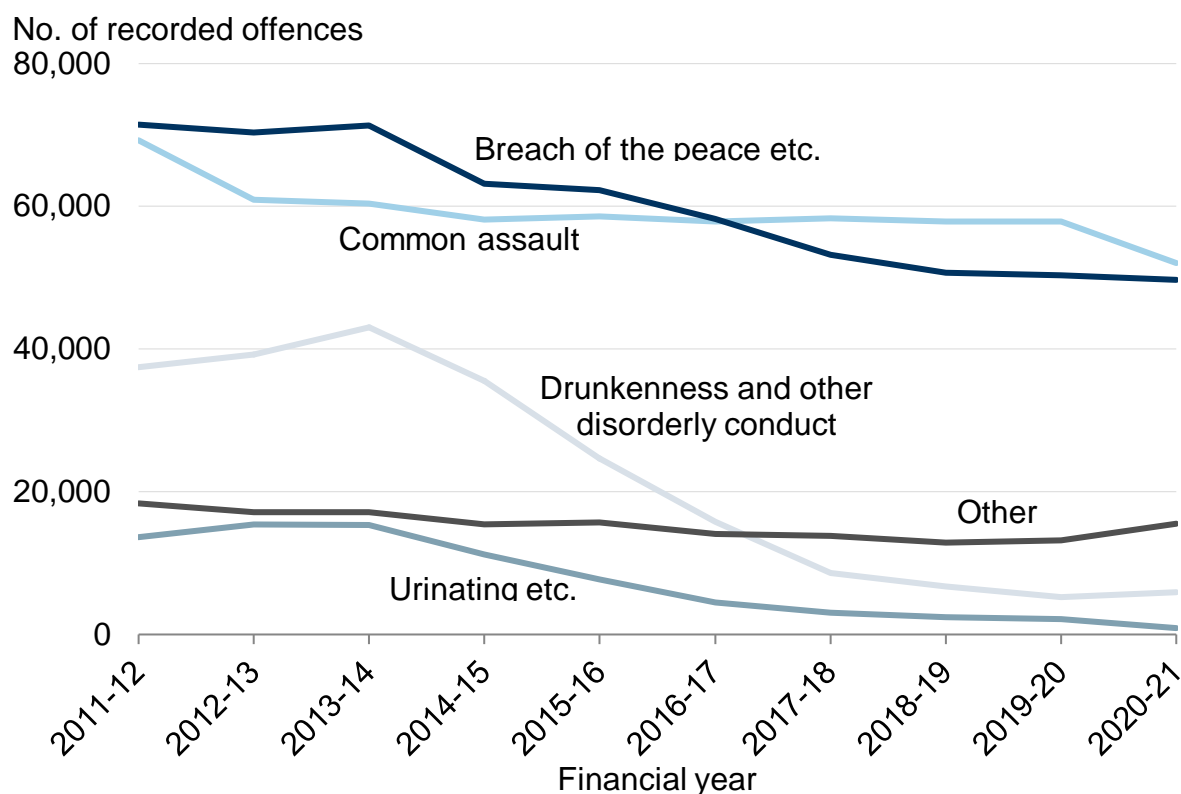
Miscellaneous offences account for around half (52%) of all offences recorded in Scotland in 2020-21. Between 2019-20 and 2020-21, the number of Miscellaneous offences recorded by the police in Scotland decreased by 4%, from 128,755 to 124,120.

Due to a number of anomalies in the data for Miscellaneous offences, this group is only comparable from 2008-09 onwards. Further information on the comparability of Group 6 is available in [Annex 2](#).

The national rate of recorded Miscellaneous offences decreased from 236 offences per 10,000 population in 2019-20 to 227 offences per 10,000 population in 2020-21 (see [Table 4](#)).

[Chart 18](#) shows the five categories within Miscellaneous offences over the last ten years. This chart gives an indication of the trend and scale of each category. Common assault and Breach of the peace etc. have consistently been the biggest categories within Miscellaneous offences.

Chart 18: Miscellaneous offences in Scotland, 2011-12 to 2020-21



Common assault

Common assault is the largest category in Miscellaneous offences, accounting for 42% in 2020-21. Over the ten year period from 2011-12 to 2020-21, this category has fallen by a quarter (25%). There was a 10% decrease from 2019-20 to 2020-21 (from 57,833 to 52,052).

Of the 52,052 offences recorded in 2020-21, 8,118 (16%) related to common assault of emergency workers, an increase of 8% since 2019-20 and 14% since 2011-12 (see [Table A8](#)).

Breach of the peace etc.

Breach of the peace etc. includes Breach of the peace, Threatening or abusive behaviour and Stalking. A further breakdown of Breach of the peace etc. into its component parts is available in [Table A6](#).

Breach of the peace etc. is the second largest category in Miscellaneous offences, accounting for two-fifths (40%) in 2020-21. Over the ten year period from 2011-12 to 2020-21, this category has fallen by almost a third (30%), including a 1% decrease from 50,327 in 2019-20 to 49,696 in 2020-21.

It should be noted that some offences which had previously been recorded under Breach of the peace etc. (primarily Threatening or abusive behaviour and

Stalking) are no longer recorded when occurring as part of a course of conduct for which a crime has been recorded under the Domestic Abuse (Scotland) Act 2018 legislation. This means there is a discontinuity in the time series for Breach of the peace etc. offences and is likely to be part of the reason why there was a fall in Stalking offences from 1,304 in 2018-19 to 871 in 2019-20. In 2020-21, 889 Stalking offences were recorded.

Drunkenness and other disorderly conduct

Drunkenness and other disorderly conduct includes offences such as Drunk and incapable, Disorderly on licensed premises and Consumption of alcohol in designated places, byelaws prohibited. For further information on the classification of crimes and offences, please see the [User Guide](#).

Drunkenness and other disorderly conduct accounted for 5% of Miscellaneous offences in 2020-21. Despite some fluctuation, there has been an 84% fall between 2011-12 and 2020-21. However, there was a 14% increase from 5,234 in 2019-20 to 5,961 in 2020-21.

Urinating etc.

Urinating etc. accounted for 1% of Miscellaneous offences in 2020-21. There has been a 93% decrease in these offences since 2011-12, including a 58% fall from 2,153 in 2019-20 to 894 in 2020-21 (this may have been affected by the closure of licensed premises at various times during the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic).

Other miscellaneous offences

The Other miscellaneous offences category includes a wide range of offences, including Racially aggravated harassment, Racially aggravated conduct (see section below), False/hoax calls, Offences involving children and Offences involving animals/plants. For further information on the classification of crimes and offences, please see the [User Guide](#).

Other miscellaneous offences account for 13% of Miscellaneous offences in 2020-21. These offences increased by 17% from 13,208 in 2019-20 to 15,517 in 2020-21.

It should be noted that the Other miscellaneous offences category is not considered comparable for years prior to 2008-09. Further information on quality issues is available in the '[Data Considerations](#)' section below, and in [Annex 2](#).

Racially aggravated harassment and conduct

[Table A7](#) shows these offences for the last ten years. In 2020-21 there were 76 offences of Racially aggravated harassment and 1,706 offences of Racially aggravated conduct. While these include specific racially aggravated offences under section 50A of the Criminal Law (Consolidation) (Scotland) Act 1995, they do not account for all criminal behaviour which may have had a racial motivation. For example, Threatening or abusive behaviour or Common assault with a racial aggravation.

In February 2021, the Scottish Government published a study of the characteristics and circumstances of police recorded hate crime, based on a review of crime records: <https://www.gov.scot/publications/study-characteristics-police-recorded-hate-crime-scotland/>

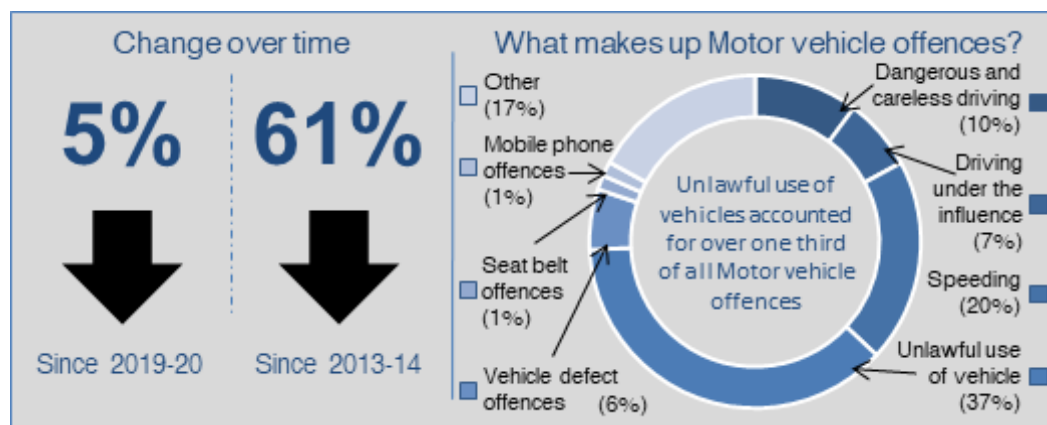
Data considerations

Due to changes in police recording systems, comparisons for the Drunkenness and other disorderly conduct and Other miscellaneous offences categories in Group 6 should only be made for 2008-09 onwards. The comparability of the remaining three categories in Group 6 (Common assault; Breach of the peace etc. and Urinating etc.) are not affected.

HMICS Crime Audit 2020

It should be noted that in the [HMICS audit report](#), violent crime includes common assault. Please refer to the [Group 1 - Non-sexual crimes of violence](#) section. Further information on this audit, including definitions of terminology and tests used, can be found in the [User Guide](#).

Group 7 – Motor Vehicle Offences



Number of Motor vehicle offences recorded in 2020-21

Motor vehicle offences account for 48% of all offences recorded in Scotland in 2020-21. Between 2019-20 and 2020-21, the number of Motor vehicle offences recorded by the police decreased by 5% from 121,907 to 116,054. There has been an overall decrease of 61% since 2013-14.

Due to a number of anomalies in the data as a result of inconsistencies with legacy data reporting, Motor vehicle offences recorded by the police are only comparable from 2013-14 onwards. Further information on the comparability issues can be found in [Annex 2](#).

The national rate of recorded Motor vehicle offences decreased from 223 per 10,000 population in 2019-20 to 212 per 10,000 population in 2020-21 (see [Table 4](#)).

Unlawful use of vehicle

The Unlawful use of vehicle category includes offences such as Driving while disqualified, Driving without a licence, Driving without insurance, and Driving without a test certificate. Further detail can be found in the [User Guide](#).

Unlawful use of vehicle is the largest category in this group, accounting for 37% of Motor vehicle offences. This category increased by 11% from 39,022 in 2019-20 to 43,309 in 2020-21.

Speeding

Speeding accounted for a fifth (20%) of Motor vehicle offences. This category decreased by 20% from 28,758 in 2019-20 to 22,963 in 2020-21. There has been an overall decrease of 72% since 2013-14.

These figures do not include any offences recorded as a result of the Scottish Safety Camera Programme. These are excluded as no police resources are used in the recording of an offence by this programme and the National Statistics on Recorded Crime focuses solely on crimes and offences faced by the police and not other organisations.

Dangerous and careless driving

Dangerous and careless driving accounted for 10% of Motor vehicle offences. This category increased by 5% from 11,246 in 2019-20 to 11,771 in 2020-21. Numbers have fluctuated since 2011-12, but the level is currently 19% higher than in 2011-12.

Driving under the influence

Driving under the influence accounted for 7% of Motor vehicle offences. This category increased by 23% from 6,594 in 2019-20 to 8,097 in 2020-21. Over the longer term, driving under the influence has increased by 9% since 2011-12.

Changes to the Road Traffic Act 1988 which introduced new offences of driving or being in charge of a motor vehicle with concentration of a specified controlled drug above a specified limit came into force on 21st October 2019. 616 of these new offences were recorded in 2019-20, and 2,491 offences were recorded in 2020-21, the first full year of the legislation being in force. While offences of driving or being in charge of a motor vehicle while impaired through alcohol or drugs already existed, evidence of impaired driving is not required for the new offences. This has resulted in additional offences being recorded in relation to drug driving and has therefore played a part in the increase in Driving under the influence offences.

Vehicle defect offences

Vehicle defect offences account for 6% of Motor vehicle offences. This category decreased by 7% from 7,346 in 2019-20 to 6,839 in 2020-21. There has been an overall decrease of 67% since 2013-14.

Seat belt offences

Seat belt offences account for 1% of Motor vehicle offences. This category decreased by 42% from 2,800 in 2019-20 to 1,632 in 2020-21. These offences had previously been on a generally upward trend between 2009-10 and 2013-14, before decreasing by 96% between 2013-14 and 2020-21.

Mobile phone offences

Mobile phone offences account for 1% of Motor vehicle offences. This category decreased by 34% from 2,450 in 2019-20 to 1,629 in 2020-21. These offences increased from 2011-12 to a peak in 2013-14, but have decreased each year since. There has been an overall decrease of 94% since 2011-12 and 95% since 2013-14.

Other motor vehicle offences

The Other motor vehicle offences category includes offences such as Accident offences and Parking offences. Further detail can be found in the [User Guide](#).

Other motor vehicle offences account for 17% of Motor vehicle offences. This category decreased by 16% from 23,691 in 2019-20 to 19,814 in 2020-21. There has been an overall decrease of 53% since 2013-14.

It should be noted that the Other motor vehicle offences category is not considered comparable for years prior to 2013-14. Further information on quality issues is available in [Annex 2](#).

3. Police recorded cyber-crime in Scotland

This new chapter within the Recorded Crime bulletin presents an estimate of how many cyber-crimes were recorded in Scotland during 2019-20 and 2020-21. It also considers the impact on these statistics of a recent procedural change to the recording of cyber-crime, whereby cases are now included for those incidents where the perpetrator was likely to be based outside the United Kingdom (UK).

The information provided below relates to cyber-crimes which have come to the attention of the police. It does not provide information on the characteristics of all cyber-crime committed in society, as not all of these crimes are reported to the police.

Background

Defining cyber-crime is complex, with no agreed upon definition of the term. The main debate centres around the extent to which cyber technology needs to be involved for the crime to be termed 'cyber-crime'. For the purposes of recorded crime (as defined in the Scottish Crime Recording Standard), a broad definition of cyber-crime is adopted that includes crimes in which cyber technology is in any way involved. This ranges from crimes where a digital system, infrastructure or Information and Communication Technology (ICT) device is the target as well as the principal or sole method of attack, known as 'cyber-dependent' crimes (such as the spreading of computer viruses), to 'traditional' crimes where the internet has been used as a means to commit the crime, known as 'cyber-enabled' crimes (such as online fraud or sexual crime). Throughout this chapter, both 'cyber-dependent' and 'cyber-enabled' crimes are referred to collectively as 'cyber-crimes'.

A procedural change was made in April 2020 to how crimes which could involve a victim and a perpetrator in different physical locations (e.g. cyber-crimes) are recorded. Prior to the 1st April 2020, these statistics excluded any crime with a victim in Scotland and a perpetrator who was confirmed by the police to be outside the UK when the crime took place. Following a recommendation by Her Majesty's Chief Inspectorate for Constabulary in Scotland (HMICS) to review recording practice in this area⁶, the Scottish Crime Recording Board approved a change so that from the 1st April 2020 these crimes are now included in the

⁶ [HMICS | Crime Audit: 2016](#)

statistics. It should be noted that those cases with only a suspicion or insufficient evidence to confirm that the perpetrator was outside the UK were always included.

This change led to the recording of additional crimes for those types of crime which could be committed using digital technologies. As such, one of the aims of this analysis was to estimate the extent to which the procedural change has impacted the levels of recorded crime in Scotland.

The estimates provided in this chapter are based on a review of crime records, whereby a random sample of cases was drawn across Scotland for those types of crime that could in theory involve a cyber-element. The review considered which proportion, by crime type, actually were cyber-crimes in 2019-20 and 2020-21, along with how many may have been newly recorded in 2020-21 as a result of the procedural change discussed above.

As this analysis is based on a sample of police records (rather than all police records), it should be seen as providing a broad estimate of the volume and type of cyber-crime recorded in Scotland, rather than an exact count. The exception to this are crimes under the Computer Misuse Act 1990 (within the Fire-raising, vandalism etc. crime group) where all crimes were reviewed due to their relatively low volume recorded.

Estimated volume of cyber-crimes

In 2020-21, an estimated 14,130 cyber-crimes were recorded by the police in Scotland. This has almost doubled (increasing by 95%) compared to the estimated 7,240 cyber-crimes recorded in 2019-20 ([Table A9](#)).

It should be noted that whilst the estimated volume of cyber-crime has almost doubled over 2020-21, at least part of this increase may be due to the significant impact of the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic and government instructions to limit social contact. For example, in their 'Crime in England and Wales: year ending March 2021'⁷ release, the Office for National Statistics noted that an increase in fraud and computer misuse offences could reflect perpetrators taking advantage of behavioural changes during the pandemic, such as increased online shopping.

We estimate that at least 6% of crimes recorded by the police in Scotland in 2020-21 were cyber-crimes, compared to 3% in 2019-20. This includes an estimated one-in-three Sexual crimes (33%) in 2020-21, up from around a

⁷ [Crime in England and Wales - Office for National Statistics \(ons.gov.uk\)](#)

quarter (24%) in 2019-20. In addition, around one-in-ten of both Non-sexual crimes of violence and Crimes of dishonesty (12% and 10% respectively) were estimated to be cyber-crimes in 2020-21, compared to 6% and 3% in 2019-20. Less than 1% of crimes of Fire-raising, vandalism etc. were estimated to be cyber-crimes in 2020-21, unchanged from 2019-20.

It is important to note that whilst the sample of crime records reviewed for this analysis was designed to capture the main types of crime that could involve a cyber-element, this may not have included every relevant type of crime. As such, these figures should be taken as estimates. Going forward statisticians will keep the types of crime reviewed for this chapter under consideration, to ensure any additional types (beyond those discussed below) that may involve a cyber-element are included.

Impact of change to the recording of international crimes

As a result of the procedural change outlined [above](#), an estimated 1,160 additional crimes were recorded in 2020-21 (i.e. cases where the perpetrator was likely to be outside the UK when the crime was committed) ([Table A10](#)). These additional crimes represent less than 1% of all crime recorded this year.

Fraud was by far the biggest contributor to this increase, with an estimated 900 additional crimes being recorded due to this change. This equates to around one-in-six of the estimated increase in crimes of cyber fraud between 2019-20 and 2020-21 (Tables [A10](#) and [A12](#)). Although the impact of the procedural change was greatest for crimes of Fraud, this still equated to less than 1% of all Crimes of dishonesty recorded in 2020-21.

Cyber-crimes within Non-sexual crimes of violence

This analysis looked specifically at crimes of (i) Threats and extortion and (ii) those recorded under the Domestic Abuse (Scotland) Act 2018.

In 2020-21, an estimated 730 crimes of Threats and extortion were cyber-crimes, an increase of 152% from the estimated 290 recorded in 2019-20. Around one-in-four of the additional crimes of Threats and extortion were as a result of the procedural change discussed above. In the latest year, over three-quarters (77%) of recorded threats and extortion were cyber-crimes, an increase from two-thirds (66%) in 2019-20.

In 2020-21, an estimated 360 crimes under the Domestic Abuse (Scotland) Act 2018 were cyber-crimes, an increase of 33% from the 270 recorded in 2019-20. There was no impact on these crimes as a result of the procedural change. In

the latest year, over a fifth (22%) of recorded crimes under the Domestic Abuse (Scotland) Act 2018 were cyber-crimes, an increase from around one-in-six (16%) in 2019-20. It should be noted that as a course of conduct type offence, some of the Domestic Abuse cyber-crimes highlighted in 2019-20 and 2020-21 may have involved a mix of cyber-based and in-person activity, rather than occur exclusively online.

Cyber-crime within Sexual crimes

This analysis looked specifically at those types of Other sexual crimes that could have a cyber-element. For example, crimes of Communicating indecently, Cause to view sexual activity or images, Indecent photos of children, Disclosing or threatening to disclose intimate images and Voyeurism.

In 2020-21, an estimated 4,390 Other sexual crimes recorded by the police were cyber-crimes, an increase of 37% since the estimated 3,210 recorded in 2019-20 ([Table A11](#)). The estimated volume of Other sexual crimes that were cyber-crimes has gradually increased over the longer term from 1,100 in 2013-14⁸.

In the latest year, two-thirds (66%) of recorded Other sexual crimes were estimated to be cyber-crimes. The proportion of Other sexual crimes that were cyber-crimes has gradually increased over recent years from 38% in 2013-14, to 51% in 2016-17 and 54% in 2019-20. Part of the increase after 2017-18 will likely relate to new crimes of Disclosing or threatening to disclose intimate images being recorded under the Abusive Behaviour and Sexual Harm (Scotland) Act 2016, which was implemented on 3rd July 2017. However the clear majority of this increase will be due to other factors.

Figures on the proportion of specific types of Other sexual crimes that are cyber-crimes should be treated with some caution due to the small base sizes in the sample. Despite this, it is likely that the majority of several types of Other sexual crimes, including Communicating indecently, Cause to view sexual activity or images, Indecent photos of children and Disclosure or threaten to disclose intimate images are cyber-crimes ([Table A11](#)).

The analysis also suggests an estimated 2,080 Other sexual crimes recorded in 2020-21 were both cyber-crimes and had a victim under the age of 16. This increased by 7% from the equivalent estimate of 1,950 for 2019-20. Over the

⁸ [Recorded crime in Scotland: 'Other sexual crimes', 2013-2014 and 2016-2017](#)

same period the estimated number of cases which were both cyber-crimes and had a victim aged 16 or over increased by 87% from 1,110 to 2,080.

Cyber-crime within Crimes of dishonesty

This analysis specifically covers the crime of Fraud, which includes a wide range of criminal activity such as bank card fraud, failure to pay for goods and services (either online or in person such as taxi fares and meals at restaurants), fraudulent sales, bogus workmen, phishing, banking scams etc.

In 2020-21, an estimated 8,580 frauds recorded by the police were cyber-crimes, which more than doubled (increasing by 149%) from the estimated 3,450 recorded in 2019-20. As such, it is the increase in cyber fraud that contributed the most to the estimated doubling of recorded cyber-crime between 2019-20 and 2020-21.

Over the same period, we find that there has been a fall of around two-fifths (39%) in the estimated volume of recorded frauds which were not cyber-crimes, from 8,480 in 2019-20 to 5,120 in 2020-21 ([Table A12](#)).

In the latest year, over half (57%) of recorded frauds were estimated to have been cyber-crimes. The proportion of fraud estimated to be cyber-crimes has increased from 28% and 29% in 2018-19 and 2019-20 respectively.

As highlighted above, we estimate around 900 additional frauds were recorded as a result of the procedural change. Therefore, only around one-in-six of the estimated increase in cyber-crime frauds in 2020-21 was as a result of the change to the crime recording rules.

4. Official Statistics on clear up rates

This section presents statistics on recorded crime clear up rates in Scotland during 2020-21. Whereas the rest of this bulletin presents recorded crime statistics that have been produced as National Statistics (following the then UKSA's decision to re-designate this information as National Statistics in 2016) – these clear up rate statistics remain published as Official Statistics.

The Office for Statistics Regulation will re-visit the statistical designation of this information once an audit has been carried out and the Scottish Crime Recording Board has considered any implications for the quality of the data.

The definition of 'cleared up' is noted below. This definition came into force with effect from 1 April 1996.

A crime or offence is regarded as cleared up where there exists a sufficiency of evidence under Scots law, to justify consideration of criminal proceedings notwithstanding that a report is not submitted to the procurator fiscal because either:

(i) by standing agreement with the procurator fiscal, the police warn the accused due to the minor nature of the offence, or

(ii) reporting is inappropriate due to the non-age of the accused, death of the accused or other similar circumstances.

For some types of crime or offence the case is cleared up immediately because the offender is 'caught in the act', e.g. motor vehicle offences. In Scots law, the confession of an accused person to a crime would not in general be sufficient to allow a prosecution to be taken, as corroborative evidence is required. Thus, a case cannot be regarded as 'cleared up' on the basis of a confession alone. In some cases there is sufficient evidence but a prosecution cannot be brought, for example, because the accused has left the country. In such cases, the offender is said to have been traced and the crime is regarded as cleared up. The other terms in the definition describe the various actions that must be taken by the police against offenders.

Clear up rates are calculated as follows:

$$\frac{\text{number of crimes cleared up in year } y}{\text{total number of crimes recorded in year } y} \times \frac{100}{1}$$

Clear up rates presented are rounded to one decimal place.

Crimes or offences recorded by the police as cleared up in one financial year, year y, may have been committed and therefore recorded in a previous year, e.g. year y-1. This means that the number of crimes or offences cleared up are being expressed as a percentage of a different set of crimes or offences, and as such clear up rates in excess of 100% can arise in a given year.

As the number of crimes cleared up in a year may include crimes recorded in a previous year, this is not a perfect measure of crimes cleared up, particularly since this method can result in clear up rates of over 100%. The best method would be to take the number of crimes recorded and the subset of those which have been cleared up by the police. However due to the aggregate way in which the data is currently obtained, it is not possible to do this at present. Going forward, we will investigate any improvement that could be made to the measurement of clear up rates, and will consult with users on any possible change.

Clear up rates for the Motor vehicle offences group are not included in the bulletin since many of these crimes are offences for which the offender is 'caught in the act'.

A new system of recorded warnings – known as the Recorded Police Warning (RPW) scheme, was introduced by Police Scotland on 11th January 2016. The scheme allows police officers to make greater use of their discretion when dealing with minor crimes and offences, and replaces the Formal Adult Warning system. Some crimes and offences in this 2020-21 bulletin (as with previous bulletins) will have been dealt with by a RPW.

This scheme should not impact on clear up rate statistics as a RPW can only be issued where there is sufficient evidence to report a matter to the Crown (and hence meet the criteria for a 'cleared-up' crime or offence). To date there has been no evidence of any impact of RPWs on clear up rate statistics.

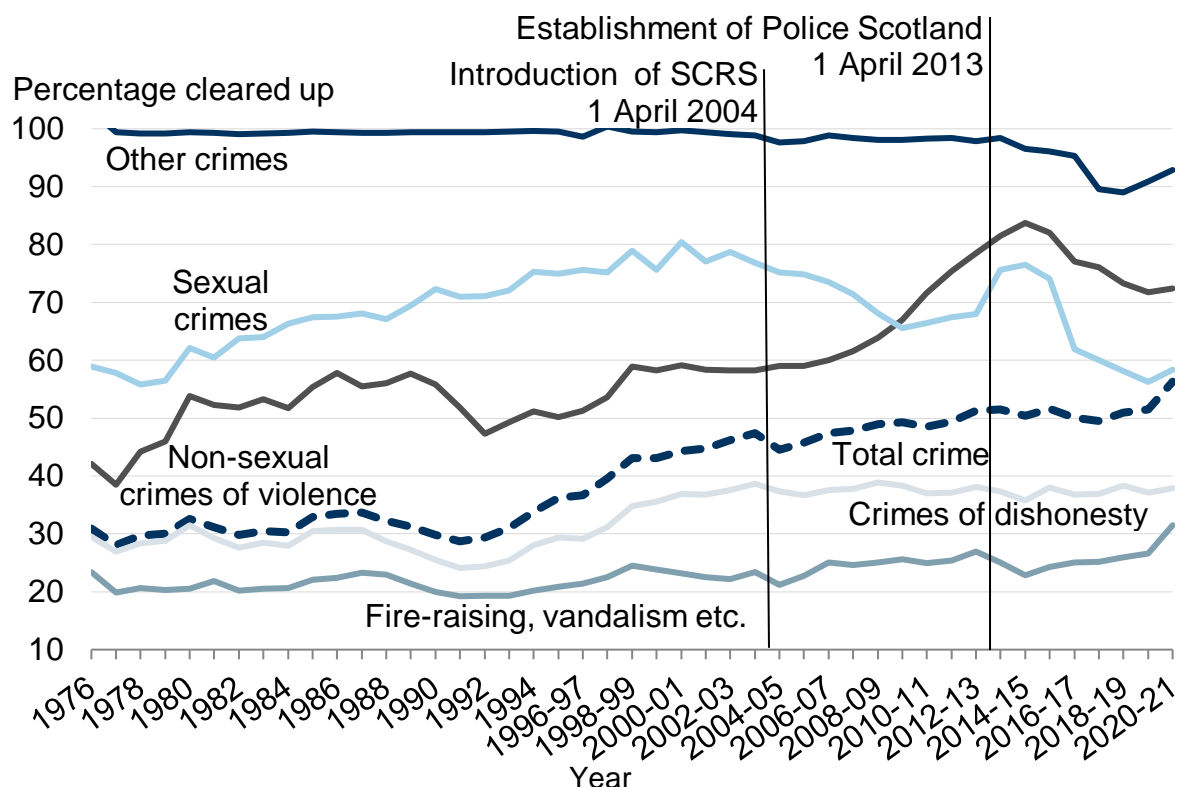
Total recorded crime

The clear up rate for total recorded crime increased by 4.8 percentage points (based on unrounded figures) from 51.5% in 2019-20 to 56.3% in 2020-21. This increase is the largest one year change on record, and likely reflects the impact of the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic on the types of crime recorded. The number of Crimes of dishonesty and Fire-raising, vandalism etc., which have relatively lower clear up rates, fell much more in 2020-21 than Non-sexual crimes of violence and Sexual Crimes, which have relatively higher clear up rates. Further to this, the volume of Other Crimes recorded in 2020-21 (which traditionally have the highest clear up rates) increased by 10%.

Prior to 2020-21, clear up rates had been relatively stable over the last decade following a generally upward trend since 1976, the first year for which comparable clear up rates are available, as shown by [Chart 19](#) below ([Table 3](#)).

There now follows an analysis of clear up rates by crime group. It should be noted that rates of over 100% can occur when crimes are cleared up in a different reporting period to the year in which they were recorded.

Chart 19: Clear up rates for crimes recorded by the police by crime group, 1976¹ to 1994 then 1995-96 to 2020-21



¹ Comparable clear up rates for the present crime groups are not available prior to 1976.

Non-sexual crimes of violence

The clear up rate for Non-sexual crimes of violence increased by 0.7 percentage points from 71.7% in 2019-20 to 72.4% in 2020-21.

Between 2019-20 and 2020-21, clear up rates for Homicide etc. decreased by 0.3 percentage points from 98.3% to 98.0%. Clear up rates for Attempted murder and serious assault increased over the same period, from 77.2% to 79.9%. Clear up rates for Robbery increased by 8.9 percentage points from 70.5% to 79.4%, whilst clear up rates for Other violence fell by 8.6 percentage points from 60.6% to 52.0%. Clear up rates for crimes under the Domestic Abuse (Scotland) Act 2018 increased by 4.2 percentage points from 68.9% in 2019-20 to 73.1% in 2020-21, the first year for which there is a comparison.

Sexual crimes

The clear up rate for Sexual crimes increased by 2.2 percentage points in 2020-21, from 56.3% to 58.4%. (Note: the difference is calculated prior to rounding.)

Clear up rates for Rape and attempted rape increased by 6.0 percentage points, from 53.1% to 59.1%. The rate for Sexual assault rose 5.0 percentage points from 55.3% to 60.3%. Clear up rates for Other sexual crimes and Crimes associated with prostitution both decreased, from 58.0% to 57.0% and from 76.2% to 60.7% respectively.

Crimes of dishonesty

The clear up rate for Crimes of dishonesty increased by 0.8 percentage points in 2020-21, from 37.1% to 37.9%. Despite slight fluctuation year to year, this clear up rate has remained relatively stable over the ten year period since 2011-12.

Clear up rates increased for all categories except Shoplifting and Fraud, which experienced decreases of 0.6 and 5.7 percentage points respectively.

Fire-raising, vandalism etc.

The clear up rate for Fire-raising, vandalism etc. increased by 4.9 percentage points in 2020-21, from 26.6% to 31.5%. Crimes of Fire-raising, vandalism etc. consistently have the lowest clear up rate of the five crime groups, although there have been consistent increases since 2014-15.

The clear up rate for Fire-raising increased by 3.0 percentage points between 2019-20 and 2020-21, while the rate for Vandalism etc. increased by 5.1 percentage points.

Other crimes

Clear up rates for Other crimes were previously closer to 100% since these consist of many crimes for which someone is 'caught in the act', however there was a consistent decrease in clear up rates between 2013-14 and 2018-19. The clear up rate for Other crimes has increased over the past two years, including an increase of 1.3 percentage points in 2020-21, from 90.9% to 92.2%.

All categories within Other crimes experienced an increase between 2019-20 and 2020-21.

Coronavirus restrictions crimes

Police Scotland have used a bespoke data collection to capture information on the number of new crimes recorded under coronavirus related legislation and as a result it has not been possible to obtain information on the number of Coronavirus restrictions crimes which have been cleared up. These crimes are therefore not included in the clear up rate analysis. It is likely that the vast majority of these crimes were cleared up since many of these crimes are offences for which the offender is 'caught in the act' (similar to Motor vehicle offences).

5. Putting recorded crime in context – A comparison with the Scottish Crime and Justice Survey (SCJS)

The preceding sections of this bulletin contain information on the volume and types of crime recorded by the police in Scotland in 2020-21. As highlighted earlier in this report, crime in Scotland is also measured by the [SCJS](#), a national survey of adults (aged 16 and over) living in private households, which asks respondents about their experiences and perceptions of crime.

The SCJS and police recorded crime cover different populations and different timescales, and the SCJS does not cover the entire range of crimes and offences that the police are faced with. These and other differences mean that making direct comparisons between the two sources is not straightforward. However, the two sources present complementary information on crime occurring in Scotland, so it is therefore helpful and informative to look at these sources together⁹. This chapter will look at police recorded crime and SCJS findings in two ways:

- National trends of overall crime captured by police recorded crime and by the SCJS.
- Comparable crime groups; a grouping of crimes specifically constructed to allow comparison between the SCJS and police recorded crime statistics for a set of crimes that are covered by both sources.

Scottish Victimization Telephone Survey

Due to the COVID-19 global pandemic, all Scottish Government face-to-face interviewing, including the SCJS, was suspended on 17th March 2020. Whilst the suspension came before the end of the 2019-20 fieldwork year, SCJS results of comparable quality to earlier years were still produced (<https://www.gov.scot/publications/scottish-crime-justice-survey-2019-20-main-findings>). Due to the ongoing length of the suspension, we were unable to produce results for the subsequent 2020-21 fieldwork year. A telephone-based survey was launched on the 11th September 2020 to fill some of this evidence

⁹ Information about crime in Scotland is also available from other sources: for example, other Scottish Government reports, which provide data on anti-social behaviour, harassment and discrimination, the [Scottish Household Survey](#), and other sources, such as [Police Scotland](#) and the [Scottish Police Authority](#).

gap, with findings available at: <https://www.gov.scot/publications/scottish-victimisation-telephone-survey-2020-main-findings/pages/1/>.

The time period covered by the data on experiences of crime included in this report extends over 13 months (from the start of September 2019 to the end of September 2020). Due to various differences in the methodologies used, this is not a like-for-like replacement for the SCJS, nevertheless it does provide some additional information about the extent of crime during the interim period.

Key findings of the Scottish Victimisation Telephone Survey

The SVTS estimates that overall there were 445,000 crimes experienced by adults in Scotland between the start of September 2019 and the end of September 2020.

It is estimated that crime fell significantly after the start of the UK's first national lockdown. Incidents of crime were classified as having occurred before or after the UK's first national lockdown on the 23rd March 2020 (two periods of almost equal length). There was an estimated fall in crime of approximately 35% over this time period.

Around two-in-five (41%) crimes came to the attention of the police. It is estimated that 38% of property crime and 46% of violent crime came to the attention of the police.

Comparable crime

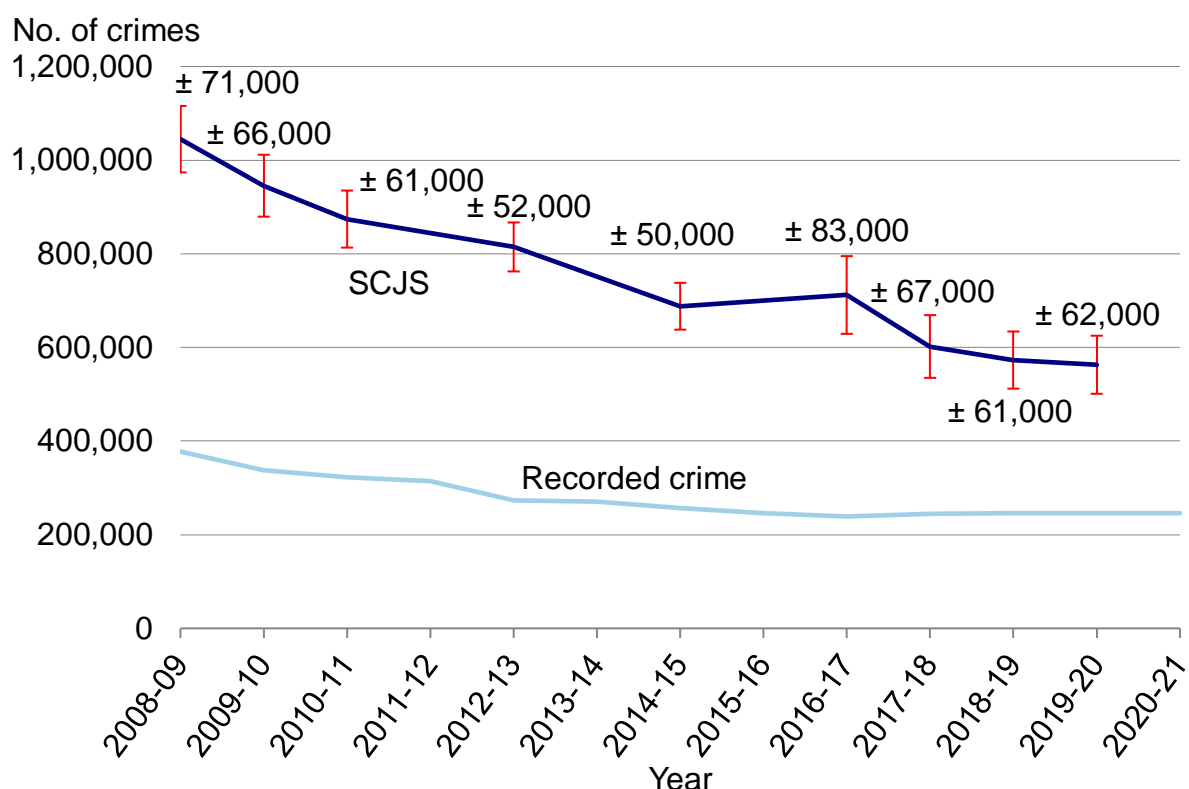
Of the 445,000 crimes estimated by the SVTS, a little over two-thirds (68%, 300,000) can be compared with police recorded crimes (three broadly comparable sub-groups: violent crime, acquisitive crime, and vandalism).

Whereas comparable police recorded crime fell by 5% after the UK's first national lockdown, the SVTS found no significant difference in the number of comparable crimes experienced by adults over a similar period. This suggests that any changes that may have occurred in comparable crime across Scotland during this period, were insufficient to be identified by the SVTS.

Overall trends - Police Recorded Crime and the SCJS, 2008-09 to 2019-20

[Chart 20](#) highlights the scale of the difference between the number of crimes estimated by the SCJS and the level recorded by the police. There are a range of reasons for this difference, however the main factor is that the SCJS captures crimes that do not come to the attention of the police, and therefore are not included in recorded crime figures. While the SCJS is useful for estimating the likely range of crime in the underlying population (and the level of uncertainty around such estimates), the police recorded crime data highlights the level of crime with which the police are faced.

Chart 20: Overall number of crimes in Scotland - Police Recorded Crime and the SCJS, 2008-09 to 2020-21*



* The red bars show the upper and lower estimates.

The 2019-20 SCJS estimated that of the 563,000 incidents of crime (related to property or violence), 40% came to the attention of the police. In 2019-20, where crime was not reported to the police, the most common reasons SCJS respondents gave for not reporting crime were that the victim perceived the incident to be too trivial to involve the police (32%), or that the victim felt that the police could have done nothing (32%). Where crime was reported to the

police it was mostly because the victim felt that it was the right thing to do (52%) or in the hope that offenders would be caught and punished (34%).

Figures from both sources ([Chart 20](#)) show a decreasing trend in the overall level of crime over the past decade. The survey finds the volume of crime in Scotland, including incidents not reported to the police, has fallen by 46% over the last decade or so – from an estimated 1,045,000 incidents in 2008-09 to 563,000 in 2019-20. The amount of overall crime has remained stable compared to the last survey in 2018-19.

Similarly, crimes recorded by the police in 2019-20 decreased by 35% compared to 2008-09 and remained stable compared to 2018-19.

Comparing SCJS estimates and Recorded Crime

As noted elsewhere in this report, recorded crime figures are grouped into five crime groups (Non-sexual crimes of violence, Sexual crimes, Crimes of dishonesty, Fire-raising, vandalism etc., and Other crimes) and two offence groups (Miscellaneous offences and Motor vehicle offences). However the SCJS presents information in two broad crime categories: Property Crime and Violent Crime (outlined in [Figure 2](#) below).

Figure 2: SCJS Crime Types

Property crime	Violent crime
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Vandalism (including motor vehicle and property vandalism) • All motor vehicle theft related incidents (including theft and attempted theft of and from a motor vehicle) • Housebreaking (termed burglary in England & Wales) • Other household thefts (including bicycle theft) • Personal theft (excluding robbery) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assault (includes serious assault, attempted assault, minor assault with no-negligible and minor injury) • Robbery

There are a number of reasons that the SCJS crime categories do not match the recorded crime groups: principally this is because the SCJS is a victimisation survey and does not collect data on all of the crimes and offences that the police are faced with (e.g. homicide, crimes against business i.e.

shoplifting, and motor vehicle offences). This means that making direct comparisons is not straightforward. Comparisons can be made by examining a broadly comparable subset of crimes which are covered by each source and can be consistently coded in the SCJS in the same way as the police would do. Comparisons are made in the following three broad crime groups:

- Vandalism (other household crime including motor vehicle vandalism and property vandalism).
- Acquisitive crime (including bicycle theft, housebreaking and theft of motor vehicles).
- Violent crime (including serious assault, common assault and robbery).

The following section provides an overview of the level of crime and trends in the comparable subset from 2008-09 to 2019-20. Note that this data does not use the most recent year's recorded crime data in order to allow 'like-for-like' comparison with the SCJS.

This analysis has been extended further in the 2019-20 SCJS report, 'Bringing Together Scotland's Crime Statistics', available from:

<https://www.gov.scot/publications/scottish-crime-justice-survey-2019-20-main-findings/pages/9/>

Comparable Crime - Overall Comparison

Of the 563,000 crimes estimated by the 2019-20 SCJS, around two-thirds (379,000) can be compared with police recorded crimes ([Figure 4](#)). The police recorded 124,496 crimes and offences in the comparable sub-set, representing approximately one third (33%) of the number of crimes in the SCJS comparable sub-set. The extent of overall comparable crime in both the SCJS estimates and the recorded crime figures decreased between 2008-09 and 2019-20 (by 48% and 42% respectively). The reduction in estimated SCJS comparable crime from 731,000 in 2008-09 to 379,000 in 2019-20 is a statistically significant change.

Figure 3: Comparable crime group estimates, 2008-09 to 2019-20

	2008-09	2018-19	2019-20	% change 2008-09 to 2019-20 ⁹	% change 2018-19 to 2019-20 ⁹
Crime					
Comparable Recorded Crime	215,901	125,953	124,496	-42%	-1%
Comparable SCJS Crime	731,000	366,000	379,000	-48%	No change
Acquisitive crime					
Recorded Acquisitive Crime	27,527	16,644	15,919	-42%	-4%
SCJS Acquisitive Crime	64,000	46,000	46,000	-28%	No change
Violent crime					
Recorded Violent Crime	82,855	63,771	63,417	-23%	-1%
SCJS Violent Crime	317,000	165,000	194,000	-39%	No change
Vandalism					
Recorded Vandalism	105,519	45,538	45,160	-57%	-1%
SCJS Vandalism	350,000	155,000	139,000	-60%	No change

⁹ SCJS changes are specified when statistically significant.

Comparable Crime - by Comparable Crime Sub-groups

This section summarises findings for the comparable crime sub-groups: Acquisitive crime, Violent crime and Vandalism.

Acquisitive Crime

The acquisitive comparable crime group includes bicycle theft, housebreaking and theft of a motor vehicle. In 2019-20, the SCJS estimated that there were 46,000 acquisitive crimes (+/- 11,000, meaning that the true number of acquisitive crimes experienced by the population is estimated to be between 35,000 and 57,000¹⁰). The police recorded 15,919 acquisitive crimes in 2019-20.

¹⁰ Comparable acquisitive crime is rarer than vandalism and violent crime (estimates of acquisitive crime are based on 87 victim forms in the 2018-19 SCJS sample, compared to 116 violent crime victim forms and 251 vandalism victim forms). Consequently, there is greater uncertainty around the SCJS estimate of acquisitive crime and less power to identify significant changes over time.

Both SCJS estimates and recorded acquisitive crime figures decreased between 2008-09 and 2019-20 (by 28% and 42% respectively). Since 2018-19 police recorded acquisitive crime has decreased by 4%, while the SCJS found no change in acquisitive crime. This is likely to be due in part to the smaller sample sizes involved, which means it can be more challenging to identify significant changes between adjacent survey years.

Violent crime

Violent comparable crime includes serious assault, minor assault¹¹ and robbery. In 2019-20 the SCJS estimated that there were 194,000 violent crimes¹² (+/- 47,000, meaning that the true number of violent crimes experienced by the population is estimated to be between 147,000 and 242,000), while the police recorded 63,417 violent crimes.

[Figure 3](#) shows that the two sources of comparable violent crime data both show large decreases over the longer term, but broadly stable figures since 2018-19. Between 2008-09 and 2019-20, both SCJS estimates and police recorded violent crime figures have shown a decrease (by 39% and 23% respectively). Since 2018-19, comparable police recorded violent crime has shown a small decrease (-1%), while the SCJS has found no change in violent crime.

Vandalism

The vandalism comparable crime group includes motor vehicle vandalism and property vandalism. In 2019-20, the SCJS estimated that there were 139,000 instances of vandalism (+/- 23,000, meaning that the true number of vandalism crimes experienced by the population is estimated to be between 117,000 and 162,000). (Note: these are rounded figures.) The police recorded 45,160 vandalism crimes in 2019-20.

The trends in comparable crimes of vandalism across both the SCJS and police recorded crime between 2008-09 and 2019-20 are very similar – with the SCJS showing a decrease of 60% and police recorded crime showing a decrease of 57%. Since 2018-19, there has been no change in the SCJS estimate of vandalism, while crimes of vandalism recorded by the police have fallen by 1%.

Conclusion

¹¹ The crime of 'minor assault' discussed here, is referred to as 'common assault' within the [Recorded Crime in Scotland National Statistics](#).

¹² Violent crime estimates are based on a relatively small number of respondents who disclosed experiences of 119 violent crimes in 2019-20.

This chapter has brought together the two main sources of crime statistics in Scotland: the Scottish Crime and Justice Survey and Police Recorded Crime statistics. Although each source has a different purpose, by comparing them where possible we can provide a more accurate picture of current crime levels in Scotland.

The latest results from both sources point towards a downward trend over the long term in overall comparable crime, with a more stable pattern over the shorter term.

Figure 4: Strengths and limitations of Police Recorded Crime and the SCJS

	Recorded Crime	Scottish Crime and Justice Survey
Where do the data come from?	Administrative police records	Face to face interviews with residents from a nationally representative sample of the household population
Basis for inclusion	Crimes recorded by the police in Scotland, governed by the Scottish Crime Recording Standard and Counting Rules.	Trained coders determine whether experiences of victimisation in the last 12 months constitute a crime and assign an offence code.
Frequency	Collected by financial year. Statistics released in an annual publication.	Survey conducted annually for each financial year with reference period extending over 25 months. Results previously published biennially, now annually.
Strengths	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Covers the full range of crimes and offences. • Provides data at a local level (and can be used for performance monitoring). • A good measure of rarer, more serious crimes that are well reported. • Good measure of long-term trends. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Good measure of trends since 2008-09. • Captures information about crimes that are not reported to the police (including sensitive issues such as domestic abuse or drug use). • Provides information on multiple and repeat victimisation (up to 5 incidents in a series). • Analyses risk for different demographic groups and victim-offender relationships. • Provides attitudinal data (e.g. fear of crime or attitudes towards the criminal justice system).

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Figure 4 (Cont.): Strengths and limitations of Police Recorded Crime and the SCJS

<p>Limitations</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Partially reliant on the public reporting crime. • Reporting rates may vary by the type of crime (e.g. crimes more likely to be reported include serious crime and crimes such as housebreaking where recording is required for insurance purposes). • Trends can be affected by legislation; public reporting practices; police recording practices. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Does not cover all crimes (e.g. homicide or crimes without a direct victim to interview such as speeding). • Does not cover the entire population (e.g. children, homeless people or people living in communal accommodation). • Less able to produce robust data at lower level geographies. • Difficult to measure/detect changes between survey sweeps for rarer forms of crime (such as more serious offences). • Estimates subject to a degree of error (confidence intervals).
<p>What other data are collected?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Additional data on homicides, racist incidents, domestic abuse incidents and firearm offences. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Public perceptions about crime. • Worry about crime and the perceived likelihood of being a victim. • Confidence in the police and the criminal justice system. • Prevalence estimates on 'sensitive' topics (partner abuse, sexual victimisation, stalking and drug use).

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Table 1: Crimes recorded by the police, Scotland, 2011-12 to 2020-21²

Crime group	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18 ¹⁶	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21	Number & Percentage	
											% change 19-20 to 2020-21	% change 11-12 to 2020-21
Total Crimes	314,188	273,053	270,397	256,350	246,243	238,921	244,504	246,480	246,516	246,511	0	-22
Non-sexual crimes of violence	9,484	7,468	6,686	6,272	6,737	7,164	7,251	8,008	9,316	8,972	-4	-5
Homicide etc. ³ (incl. causing death by driving)	121	91	106	105	81	105	98	102	121	100	-17	-17
Attempted murder & serious assault ⁴	4,693	3,643	3,268	3,166	4,007	4,186	4,189	4,359	4,097	3,511	-14	-25
Robbery	2,244	1,832	1,499	1,497	1,327	1,435	1,556	1,807	1,738	1,673	-4	-25
Domestic Abuse (Scotland) Act	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1,681	1,641	-2	
Other violence	2,426	1,902	1,813	1,504	1,322	1,438	1,408	1,740	1,679	2,047	22	-16
Sexual crimes⁵	7,361	7,693	8,604	9,557	10,273	11,092	12,487	13,547	13,364	13,131	-2	78
Rape & attempted rape	1,274	1,462	1,808	1,901	1,809	1,878	2,255	2,426	2,343	2,298	-2	80
Sexual assault	2,908	3,008	3,405	3,727	3,963	4,281	4,826	5,123	4,936	4,154	-16	43
Crimes associated with prostitution	567	534	490	374	247	303	136	235	101	56	-45	-90
Other sexual crimes	2,612	2,689	2,901	3,555	4,254	4,630	5,270	5,763	5,984	6,623	11	154
Crimes of dishonesty	154,337	135,899	137,324	126,857	115,789	113,205	114,474	114,506	111,409	89,731	-19	-42
Housebreaking ⁶	24,222	21,515	22,272	20,607	17,637	16,299	15,130	13,777	12,903	9,706	-25	-60
Theft by opening a lockfast place (OLP)	3,529	3,239	3,218	2,879	2,193	1,940	2,027	1,684	1,728	1,207	-30	-66
Theft from a motor vehicle by OLP	8,988	6,159	6,189	5,816	4,684	3,888	3,734	3,532	2,982	2,108	-29	-77
Theft of a motor vehicle	7,060	5,731	5,976	5,423	5,028	5,216	5,024	4,950	5,002	4,311	-14	-39
Shoplifting	29,758	26,449	27,693	27,364	28,424	28,650	31,321	33,523	30,688	20,557	-33	-31
Other theft	66,681	58,704	58,794	53,539	46,419	45,173	44,437	42,880	41,421	32,017	-23	-52
Fraud	8,892	8,898	8,088	6,913	7,400	7,811	8,628	9,675	11,939	15,031	26	69
Other dishonesty	5,207	5,204	5,094	4,316	4,004	4,228	4,173	4,485	4,746	4,794	1	-8

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Table 1 (Cont.): Crimes recorded by the police, Scotland, 2011-12 to 2020-21²

Crime group	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18¹⁶	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21	% change 19-20 to 20-21	% change 11-12 to 20-21
Fire-raising, vandalism etc.	75,201	59,479	54,418	52,091	54,226	52,514	51,322	47,997	47,731	42,964	-10	-43
Fire-raising	3,755	3,066	2,549	2,351	2,595	2,793	2,632	2,481	2,657	2,580	-3	-31
Vandalism etc.	71,446	56,413	51,869	49,740	51,631	49,721	48,690	45,516	45,074	40,384	-10	-43
Other crimes	67,805	62,514	63,365	61,573	59,218	54,946	58,970	62,422	64,589	70,737	10	4
Crimes against public justice	26,635	23,401	23,610	21,100	20,361	18,795	18,679	18,512	19,441	24,985	29	-6
Handling offensive weapons							7,733	8,896	9,644	10,184	6	n/r
<i>Not used in other criminal activity</i>	5,631	4,015	3,795	3,289	3,111	3,271	3,570	4,216	4,484	4,524	1	-20
<i>Used in other criminal activity</i>	-	-	-	-	-	-	4,163	4,680	5,160	5,660	10	-
Drugs	35,157	34,688	35,616	36,836	35,479	32,641	32,399	34,831	35,303	35,410	0	1
Other	382	410	344	348	267	239	159	183	201	158	-21	-59
Coronavirus restrictions	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	107	20,976		n/r

Please see [Notes for Tables](#) at end of Chapter 6.

Table 2: Offences recorded by the police, Scotland, 2011-12 to 2020-21²

Offence group	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18 ¹⁶	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21	Number & Percentage	
											% change 19-20 to 2020-21	% change 11-12 to 20-21
Total offences¹⁰			501,281	379,498	339,193	288,691	264,027	247,791	250,662	240,174	-4	-
Miscellaneous offences⁷	210,135	203,063	207,190	183,513	168,896	150,523	137,012	130,686	128,755	124,120	-4	-41
Common assault ⁴	69,253	60,955	60,357	58,178	58,596	57,861	58,335	57,915	57,833	52,052	-10	-25
Breach of the peace etc. ⁸	71,451	70,301	71,288	63,205	62,233	58,235	53,187	50,708	50,327	49,696	-1	-30
Drunkenness and other disorderly conduct ⁷	37,458	39,238	43,043	35,524	24,639	15,796	8,635	6,724	5,234	5,961	14	-84
Urinating etc.	13,602	15,420	15,361	11,216	7,700	4,505	3,044	2,466	2,153	894	-58	-93
Other ⁷	18,371	17,149	17,141	15,390	15,728	14,126	13,811	12,873	13,208	15,517	17	-16
Motor vehicle offences¹⁰			294,091	195,985	170,297	138,168	127,015	117,105	121,907	116,054	-5	-
Dangerous and careless driving	9,853	10,530	11,524	10,773	12,057	11,693	10,722	10,989	11,246	11,771	5	19
Driving under the influence	7,445	6,433	6,079	5,218	5,458	5,917	5,863	5,847	6,594	8,097	23	9
Speeding ¹⁰			82,382	60,926	54,419	34,371	29,223	27,368	28,758	22,963	-20	-
Unlawful use of vehicle ¹⁰			57,779	40,855	41,470	45,978	43,871	36,848	39,022	43,309	11	-
Vehicle defect offences ¹⁰			20,923	15,593	13,070	8,385	7,049	7,107	7,346	6,839	-7	-
Seat belt offences ⁷	31,505	33,047	37,880	15,619	8,059	4,502	3,134	2,921	2,800	1,632	-42	-95
Mobile phone offences ⁷	29,110	30,875	35,764	17,978	10,085	6,709	3,173	2,895	2,450	1,629	-34	-94
Other ¹⁰			41,760	29,023	25,679	20,613	23,980	23,130	23,691	19,814	-16	-

Please see [Notes for Tables](#) at end of Chapter 6.

Table 3: Percentage of crimes / offences cleared up¹ by the police, Scotland, 2011-12 to 2020-21²

Crime / Offence group	Percentage									
	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21
Total crimes	49.4	51.3	51.5	50.4	51.6	50.0	49.5	51.0	51.5	56.3
Non-sexual crimes of violence	75.4	78.5	81.5	83.7	82.0	77.1	76.1	73.3	71.7	72.4
Homicide etc. ³ (incl. causing death by driving)	96.7	104.4	101.9	107.6	101.2	99.0	104.1	94.1	98.3	98.0
Attempted murder & serious assault ⁴	73.9	77.8	81.5	83.3	84.4	78.6	78.9	76.3	77.2	79.9
Robbery	61.6	65.9	71.8	77.2	78.3	76.2	73.7	72.4	70.5	79.4
Domestic Abuse (Scotland) Act	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	68.9	73.1
Other violence	89.8	90.5	88.4	89.5	77.6	71.7	68.3	65.3	60.6	52.0
Sexual crimes⁵	67.5	68.0	75.6	76.5	74.1	61.9	60.0	58.1	56.3	58.4
Rape & attempted rape	56.9	61.8	73.0	74.2	76.3	59.6	54.6	52.7	53.1	59.1
Sexual assault	62.3	61.8	70.6	76.6	70.8	57.4	58.4	57.7	55.3	60.3
Crimes associated with prostitution	95.9	95.9	96.7	97.3	96.4	92.1	83.1	86.8	76.2	60.7
Other sexual crimes	72.2	72.7	79.4	75.5	74.9	65.1	63.3	59.5	58.0	57.0
Crimes of dishonesty	37.2	38.1	37.4	35.8	38.0	36.7	36.9	38.3	37.1	37.9
Housebreaking ⁶	24.5	24.8	23.2	25.0	26.7	22.5	23.9	26.4	28.3	31.5
Theft by opening a lockfast place (OLP)	21.7	19.5	16.8	15.2	21.2	17.5	18.5	18.2	18.5	23.4
Theft from a motor vehicle by OLP	17.2	20.1	16.2	15.1	19.3	16.5	15.8	19.2	19.9	31.3
Theft of a motor vehicle	45.2	47.6	43.1	39.3	41.8	39.9	40.8	41.7	37.5	51.5
Shoplifting	78.7	79.7	78.8	74.6	72.9	71.6	67.4	67.4	66.3	65.7
Other theft	20.6	21.0	20.5	18.6	19.9	19.3	19.2	20.2	20.3	24.1
Fraud	55.3	52.2	55.8	50.6	44.7	39.9	39.1	35.5	28.3	22.6
Other dishonesty	73.9	72.1	71.1	66.6	62.1	60.3	60.8	55.5	56.7	65.3

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Table 3 (Cont.): Percentage of crimes / offences cleared up¹ by the police, Scotland, 2011-12 to 2020-21²

Crime / Offence group	Percentage									
	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21
Fire-raising, vandalism etc.	25.4	27.0	25.1	22.8	24.3	25.1	25.2	25.9	26.6	31.5
Fire-raising	23.9	25.9	27.2	25.1	28.2	25.7	27.5	26.9	23.0	26.0
Vandalism etc.	25.5	27.0	25.0	22.7	24.1	25.0	25.1	25.9	26.8	31.8
Other crimes	98.4	97.9	98.4	96.5	96.0	95.3	89.6	89.0	90.9	92.2
Crimes against public justice	97.6	97.6	98.0	97.5	97.5	96.7	96.3	96.7	96.0	96.1
Handling offensive weapons							80.7	80.3	78.1	80.1
Not used in other criminal activity	97.3	97.0	97.8	96.6	96.5	96.7	91.9	90.1	90.9	92.5
Used in other criminal activity	-	-	-	-	-	-	71.1	71.4	66.9	70.2
Drugs	99.2	98.2	98.8	95.9	95.1	94.4	87.8	87.1	91.6	92.9
Other	90.6	94.6	97.7	95.1	97.0	96.2	89.9	95.6	86.1	95.6
Miscellaneous offences⁷	83.9	85.5	87.5	86.3	84.3	80.3	77.7	76.6	75.9	77.1
Common assault ⁴	71.4	72.6	75.9	76.2	75.9	70.8	69.1	68.6	68.9	71.9
Breach of the peace etc. ⁸	86.8	87.8	89.2	87.8	86.5	84.8	84.0	83.3	82.3	82.6
Drunkenness and other disorderly conduct ⁷	99.8	99.9	99.9	99.8	99.8	99.6	99.5	99.3	100.0	99.8
Urinating etc.	99.7	99.8	100.0	99.8	99.7	99.6	99.6	99.4	98.5	96.9
Other ⁷	75.5	76.0	78.9	76.9	74.9	72.5	71.3	69.9	69.3	67.4

Please see [Notes for Tables](#) at end of Chapter 6.

Table 4: Crimes and offences recorded in Scotland per 10,000 population¹¹, 2011-12 to 2020-21²

Crime / Offence group	Rate per 10,000 population									
	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18 ¹⁶	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21
Total crimes	593	514	508	479	458	442	451	453	451	451
Non-sexual crimes of violence	18	14	13	12	13	13	13	15	17	16
Homicide etc. ³ (incl. causing death by driving)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Attempted murder & serious assault ⁴	9	7	6	6	7	8	8	8	7	6
Robbery	4	3	3	3	2	3	3	3	3	3
Domestic Abuse (Scotland) Act									3	3
Other violence	5	4	3	3	2	3	3	3	3	4
Sexual crimes⁵	14	14	16	18	19	21	23	25	24	24
Rape & attempted rape	2	3	3	4	3	3	4	4	4	4
Sexual assault	5	6	6	7	7	8	9	9	9	8
Crimes associated with prostitution	1	1	1	1	0	1	0	0	0	0
Other sexual crimes	5	5	5	7	8	9	10	11	11	12
Crimes of dishonesty	291	256	258	237	216	209	211	211	204	164
Housebreaking ⁶	46	40	42	39	33	30	28	25	24	18
Theft by opening a lockfast place (OLP)	7	6	6	5	4	4	4	3	3	2
Theft from a motor vehicle by OLP	17	12	12	11	9	7	7	6	5	4
Theft of a motor vehicle	13	11	11	10	9	10	9	9	9	8
Shoplifting	56	50	52	51	53	53	58	62	56	38
Other theft	126	110	110	100	86	84	82	79	76	59
Fraud	17	17	15	13	14	14	16	18	22	27
Other dishonesty	10	10	10	8	7	8	8	8	9	9

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Table 4 (Cont.): Crimes and offences recorded in Scotland per 10,000 population¹¹, 2011-12 to 2020-21²

Crime / Offence group	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18 ¹⁶	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21
Fire-raising, vandalism etc.	142	112	102	97	101	97	95	88	87	79
Fire-raising	7	6	5	4	5	5	5	5	5	5
Vandalism etc.	135	106	97	93	96	92	90	84	83	74
Other crimes	128	118	119	115	110	102	109	115	118	129
Crimes against public justice	50	44	44	39	38	35	34	34	36	46
Handling offensive weapons							14	16	18	19
Not used in other criminal activity	11	8	7	6	6	6	7	8	8	8
Used in other criminal activity	-	-	-	-	-	-	8	9	9	10
Drugs	66	65	67	69	66	60	60	64	65	65
Other	1	1	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0
Coronavirus restrictions	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	0	38
Miscellaneous offences⁷	396	382	389	343	314	279	253	240	236	227
Common assault ⁴	131	115	113	109	109	107	108	106	106	95
Breach of the peace etc. ⁸	135	132	134	118	116	108	98	93	92	91
Drunkenness and other disorderly conduct ⁷	71	74	81	66	46	29	16	12	10	11
Urinating etc.	26	29	29	21	14	8	6	5	4	2
Other ⁷	35	32	32	29	29	26	25	24	24	28
Motor vehicle offences¹⁰			552	366	317	256	234	215	223	212
Dangerous and careless driving	19	20	22	20	22	22	20	20	21	22
Driving under the influence	14	12	11	10	10	11	11	11	12	15
Speeding ¹⁰			155	114	101	64	54	50	53	42
Unlawful use of vehicle ¹⁰			108	76	77	85	81	68	71	79
Vehicle defect offences ¹⁰			39	29	24	16	13	13	13	13
Seat belt offences ⁷	59	62	71	29	15	8	6	5	5	3
Mobile phone offences ⁷	55	58	67	34	19	12	6	5	4	3
Other ¹⁰			78	54	48	38	44	43	43	36

Please see [Notes for Tables](#) at end of Chapter 6.

Table 5: Crimes and offences recorded by local authority area, 2020-21

Local authority area							Number
	Non-sexual crimes of violence	Sexual crimes	Crimes of dishonesty	Fire-raising, vandalism, etc.	Other crimes	Coronavirus restrictions	Total crimes
Aberdeen City	487	668	4,635	1,938	3,598	418	11,744
Aberdeenshire	271	455	2,332	1,057	1,996	153	6,264
Angus	162	327	1,209	712	739	245	3,394
Argyll & Bute	85	202	644	469	882	373	2,655
Clackmannanshire	139	120	729	594	727	174	2,483
Dumfries & Galloway	191	467	2,248	1,174	2,134	304	6,518
Dundee City	507	671	3,875	1,847	2,752	585	10,237
East Ayrshire	164	284	2,099	1,085	1,673	211	5,516
East Dunbartonshire	92	125	1,125	483	861	427	3,113
East Lothian	101	235	1,607	777	1,017	195	3,932
East Renfrewshire	76	111	850	399	490	238	2,164
Edinburgh, City of	850	1,287	12,923	4,526	5,737	2,056	27,379
Falkirk	267	295	2,243	1,330	2,265	173	6,573
Fife	640	1,163	5,637	2,772	3,369	619	14,200
Glasgow City	1,613	1,787	13,560	6,365	13,216	6,790	43,331
Highland	297	479	2,288	1,382	2,682	385	7,513
Inverclyde	136	98	1,281	567	1,337	520	3,939
Midlothian	113	198	1,550	724	983	151	3,719
Moray	133	215	864	488	761	65	2,526
Na h-Eileanan Siar	17	52	123	117	209	26	544
North Ayrshire	194	263	2,694	1,226	1,827	469	6,673
North Lanarkshire	538	827	5,839	3,323	6,058	1,485	18,070
Orkney Islands	7	39	68	62	114	32	322
Perth & Kinross	213	372	1,986	859	1,178	260	4,868
Renfrewshire	260	385	2,667	1,428	2,557	1,093	8,390
Scottish Borders	142	283	1,284	767	1,016	183	3,675
Shetland Islands	14	58	74	76	172	58	452
South Ayrshire	140	194	2,096	813	1,140	208	4,591
South Lanarkshire	510	629	4,950	2,607	4,703	1,430	14,829
Stirling	152	217	1,353	643	1,037	417	3,819
West Dunbartonshire	157	211	1,429	856	1,828	1,098	5,579
West Lothian	304	414	3,469	1,498	1,679	135	7,499
SCOTLAND	8,972	13,131	89,731	42,964	70,737	20,976	246,511

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Table 5 (Cont.): Crimes and offences recorded by local authority area, 2020-21

Local authority area	Number			
	Miscellaneous offences	Motor vehicle offences	Total offences	Total crimes and offences
Aberdeen City	5,030	6,406	11,436	23,180
Aberdeenshire	2,675	4,596	7,271	13,535
Angus	1,935	3,084	5,019	8,413
Argyll & Bute	1,532	2,289	3,821	6,476
Clackmannanshire	1,298	750	2,048	4,531
Dumfries & Galloway	3,909	7,006	10,915	17,433
Dundee City	4,768	6,093	10,861	21,098
East Ayrshire	2,891	2,190	5,081	10,597
East Dunbartonshire	1,473	905	2,378	5,491
East Lothian	1,778	1,556	3,334	7,266
East Renfrewshire	944	756	1,700	3,864
Edinburgh, City of	11,219	7,062	18,281	45,660
Falkirk	3,989	3,114	7,103	13,676
Fife	8,340	5,791	14,131	28,331
Glasgow City	22,956	16,666	39,622	82,953
Highland	3,534	7,269	10,803	18,316
Inverclyde	1,547	1,158	2,705	6,644
Midlothian	1,801	1,320	3,121	6,840
Moray	1,568	1,932	3,500	6,026
Na h-Eileanan Siar	309	472	781	1,325
North Ayrshire	3,293	2,496	5,789	12,462
North Lanarkshire	9,890	6,945	16,835	34,905
Orkney Islands	183	318	501	823
Perth & Kinross	2,237	6,433	8,670	13,538
Renfrewshire	3,810	3,539	7,349	15,739
Scottish Borders	2,186	1,521	3,707	7,382
Shetland Islands	195	353	548	1,000
South Ayrshire	2,179	1,673	3,852	8,443
South Lanarkshire	7,920	5,101	13,021	27,850
Stirling	1,755	1,820	3,575	7,394
West Dunbartonshire	2,773	2,531	5,304	10,883
West Lothian	4,203	2,909	7,112	14,611
SCOTLAND	124,120	116,054	240,174	486,685

Table 6: Number of crimes recorded by the police, Scotland, 1971 to 2020-21

							Number
Year	Non-sexual crimes of violence	Sexual crimes	Crimes of dishonesty	Fire-raising, vandalism, etc.	Other crimes	Coronavirus restrictions	Total crimes
1971	5,532	4,611	173,940	21,962	4,921		210,966
1972	5,642	4,333	171,904	24,934	5,716		212,529
1973	5,334	4,471	160,527	30,939	6,507		207,778
1974	5,920	4,111	186,304	30,835	6,385		233,555
1975 ¹²	7,353	4,263	227,264	36,517	6,088		281,485
1976	8,056	4,290	254,880	43,757	6,894		317,877
1977	8,154	4,368	290,245	53,125	7,490		363,382
1978	8,168	4,653	262,576	51,148	8,412		334,957
1979	7,988	4,673	269,193	56,138	8,688		346,680
1980	8,821	5,244	279,793	60,121	10,608		364,587
1981	9,266	4,794	320,003	61,725	12,416		408,204
1982	9,408	4,996	340,070	66,013	14,594		435,081
1983	9,926	5,474	342,452	73,060	14,583		445,495
1984	10,706	5,710	359,196	79,054	16,977		471,643
1985	11,456	5,741	342,349	79,545	18,808		457,899
1986	11,818	5,354	342,522	78,891	20,020		458,605
1987	13,686	5,266	356,527	76,444	21,024		472,947
1988	13,384	5,057	344,509	73,518	21,453		457,921
1989	13,606	5,742	355,525	79,062	24,273		478,208
1990	13,098	6,034	385,152	86,457	27,781		518,522
1991	15,562	5,844	430,153	89,726	31,636		572,921
1992	16,764	6,150	414,992	92,237	34,747		564,890
1993	14,252	6,047	374,937	84,194	37,817		517,247
1994	14,492	5,998	350,346	88,543	40,731		500,110
1995-96	14,981	5,740	319,269	88,839	49,310		478,139
1996-97	14,233	5,941	285,785	86,025	48,703		440,687
1997-98	13,394	7,414	266,886	81,036	52,272		421,002
1998-99	14,693	7,071	276,974	77,624	57,734		434,096
1999-00	15,831	5,882	275,557	81,197	57,014		435,481
2000-01	14,812	5,727	253,295	85,781	58,879		418,494
2001-02	15,653	5,994	242,878	94,944	66,719		426,188
2002-03	16,074	6,623	224,785	97,598	73,201		418,281
2003-04	15,187	6,785	211,004	103,732	77,506		414,214
2004-05	14,728	7,325	210,365	128,566	77,139		438,123
2005-06	13,726	6,558	187,798	127,889	81,814		417,785
2006-07	14,099	6,726	183,760	129,734	84,938		419,257
2007-08	12,874	6,552	166,718	118,025	81,340		385,509
2008-09	12,612	6,331	167,812	109,430	81,248		377,433
2009-10	11,228	6,527	153,256	93,443	73,670		338,124

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Table 6 (Cont.): Number of crimes recorded by the police, Scotland, 1971 to 2020-21

Year	Non-sexual crimes of violence	Sexual crimes	Crimes of dishonesty	Fire-raising, vandalism, etc.	Other crimes¹⁶	Coronavirus restrictions	Total crimes¹⁶
2010-11	11,437	6,696	155,870	82,020	67,224		323,247
2011-12	9,484	7,361	154,337	75,201	67,805		314,188
2012-13	7,468	7,693	135,899	59,479	62,514		273,053
2013-14	6,686	8,604	137,324	54,418	63,365		270,397
2014-15	6,272	9,557	126,857	52,091	61,573		256,350
2015-16	6,737	10,273	115,789	54,226	59,218		246,243
2016-17	7,164	11,092	113,205	52,514	54,946		238,921
2017-18	7,251	12,487	114,474	51,322	58,970		244,504
2018-19	8,008	13,547	114,506	47,997	62,422		246,480
2019-20	9,316	13,364	111,409	47,731	64,589	107	246,516
2020-21	8,972	13,131	89,731	42,964	70,737	20,976	246,511

Please also see [Notes for Tables](#) at end of Chapter 6.

Table 7: Crimes per 10,000 population¹¹, Scotland, 1971 to 2020-21

Rate per 10,000 population

Year	Non-sexual crimes of violence	Sexual crimes	Crimes of dishonesty	Fire-raising, vandalism, etc.	Other crimes*	Coronavirus restrictions	Total crimes	Population
1971	11	9	332	42	9		403	5,235,600
1972	11	8	329	48	11		406	5,230,600
1973	10	9	307	59	12		397	5,233,900
1974	11	8	355	59	12		446	5,240,800
1975 ¹²	14	8	434	70	12		538	5,232,400
1976	15	8	487	84	13		607	5,233,400
1977	16	8	555	102	14		695	5,226,200
1978	16	9	504	98	16		643	5,212,300
1979	15	9	517	108	17		666	5,203,600
1980	17	10	539	116	20		702	5,193,900
1981	18	9	618	119	24		788	5,180,200
1982	18	10	658	128	28		842	5,164,540
1983	19	11	665	142	28		865	5,148,120
1984	21	11	699	154	33		918	5,138,880
1985	22	11	668	155	37		893	5,127,890
1986	23	10	670	154	39		897	5,111,760
1987	27	10	699	150	41		928	5,099,020
1988	26	10	679	145	42		902	5,077,440
1989	27	11	700	156	48		942	5,078,190
1990	26	12	758	170	55		1,020	5,081,270
1991	31	11	846	177	62		1,127	5,083,330
1992	33	12	816	181	68		1,111	5,085,620
1993	28	12	736	165	74		1,016	5,092,460
1994	28	12	687	174	80		980	5,102,210
1995-96	29	11	626	174	97		937	5,103,690
1996-97	28	12	561	169	96		865	5,092,190
1997-98	26	15	525	159	103		828	5,083,340
1998-99	29	14	546	153	114		855	5,077,070
1999-00	31	12	543	160	112		859	5,071,950
2000-01	29	11	500	169	116		827	5,062,940
2001-02	31	12	480	187	132		842	5,064,200
2002-03	32	13	444	193	144		826	5,066,000
2003-04	30	13	416	205	153		817	5,068,500
2004-05	29	14	414	253	152		862	5,084,300
2005-06	27	13	367	250	160		818	5,110,200
2006-07	27	13	358	253	165		817	5,133,100
2007-08	25	13	322	228	157		746	5,170,000
2008-09	25	13	320	227	156		725	5,202,900
2009-10	24	12	321	209	155		646	5,231,900

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Table 7 (Cont.): Crimes recorded per 10,000 population¹¹, Scotland, 1971 to 2020-21

Year	Non-sexual crimes of violence	Sexual crimes	Crimes of dishonesty	Fire-raising, vandalism, etc.	Other crimes*	Coronavirus restrictions	Total crimes¹⁶	Population
2010-11	21	12	291	178	140		614	5,262,200
2011-12	22	13	294	155	127		593	5,299,900
2012-13	18	14	290	142	128		514	5,313,600
2013-14	14	14	255	112	117		508	5,327,700
2014-15	13	16	257	102	118		479	5,347,600
2015-16	12	18	236	97	115		458	5,373,000
2016-17	13	21	209	97	102		442	5,404,700
2017-18	13	23	211	95	109		451	5,424,800
2018-19	15	25	211	88	115		453	5,438,100
2019-20	17	24	204	87	118	<1	451	5,463,300
2020-21	16	24	164	79	129	38	451	5,466,000

Please see [Notes for Tables](#) at end of Chapter 6.

Table A1: Sexual crimes⁵ recorded by the police, Scotland, 2011-12 to 2020-21

	Number & Percentage										
	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21	1 Year % change
Sexual crimes	1,274	1,462	1,808	1,901	1,809	1,878	2,255	2,426	2,343	2,298	-2
Rape & attempted rape	1,274	1,462	1,808	1,901	1,809	1,878	2,255	2,426	2,343	2,298	-2
Rape	1,183	1,372	1,690	1,797	1,692	1,755	2,136	2,293	2,213	2,176	-2
Attempted rape	91	90	118	104	117	123	119	133	130	122	-6
Sexual assault	2,908	3,008	3,405	3,727	3,963	4,281	4,826	5,123	4,936	4,154	-16
Sexual assault including against children	2,056	2,166	2,449	2,713	2,892	2,954	3,625	3,929	3,820	3,249	-15
Sexual assault committed prior to 1 December 2010	288	316	358	347	344	378	346	288	278	211	-24
Sexual assault against an adult 16+	1,139	1,149	1,323	1,434	1,597	1,615	2,021	2,296	2,222	1,789	-19
Sexual assault against a child aged 13-15	245	312	372	457	462	423	626	661	645	597	-7
Sexual assault against a child under 13	384	389	396	475	489	538	632	684	675	652	-3
Lewd and libidinous practices	852	842	956	1,014	1,071	1,327	1,201	1,194	1,116	905	-19
Crimes associated with prostitution	567	534	490	374	247	303	136	235	101	56	-45
Crimes relating to prostitution	344	348	295	179	146	194	65	50	13	2	-85
Soliciting services of person engaged in prostitution	149	133	117	138	64	58	22	139	42	11	-74
Brothel keeping	36	28	32	36	17	14	18	10	13	13	0
Immoral traffic	26	14	32	13	7	26	21	31	23	23	0
Procuration	12	11	14	8	13	11	10	5	10	7	-30

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Table A1 (Cont.): Sexual crimes⁵ recorded by the police, Scotland, 2011-12 to 2020-21

Sexual crimes	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21	1 Year % change
Other	2,612	2,689	2,901	3,555	4,254	4,630	5,270	5,763	5,984	6,623	11
Other sexually coercive conduct	719	875	1,038	1,624	2,168	2,461	2,718	3,202	3,320	3,620	9
Other sexually coercive conduct against an adult 16+**	306	391	425	906	1,358	1,501	1,750	1,995	1,987	2,239	13
Other sexually coercive conduct against a child aged 13-15	181	256	365	333	350	408	392	548	566	573	1
Other sexually coercive conduct against a child under 13	232	228	248	385	460	552	576	659	767	808	5
Other sexual crimes involving 13-15 year old children	516	429	434	417	485	452	391	393	399	371	-7
Taking, distribution, possession etc. of indecent photos of children	375	595	621	603	645	649	658	554	584	660	13
Threaten to disclose / disclose intimate image	~	~	~	~	~	~	421	596	655	780	19
Incest	18	16	11	7	8	5	4	7	8	7	-13
Illegal homosexual acts	46	45	53	56	78	111	80	110	92	66	-28
Indecent exposure	894	680	682	784	726	523	506	494	469	468	0
Other sexual crimes	44	49	62	64	144	429	492	407	457	651	42
Total Sexual crimes⁵	7,361	7,693	8,604	9,557	10,273	11,092	12,487	13,547	13,364	13,131	-2

Please see [Notes for Tables](#) at end of Chapter 6.

~ = The relevant legislation for this category was implemented in 2017-18.

** Some crimes may be against children aged 13-15 where they did not consent to communications.

Table A2: Theft by Housebreaking¹³ (including attempts and housebreaking 'with intent'), Scotland, 2011-12 to 2020-21

Crime category	Number & Percentage										% change 19-20 to 2020-21
	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21	
Domestic:	17,375	15,656	16,334	15,166	13,051	12,036	10,893	9,573	9,191	6,910	-25
Dwelling	12,198	10,767	10,732	9,590	8,854	8,169	7,204	6,993	6,671	4,398	-34
Non-dwelling	5,177	4,889	5,602	5,576	4,197	3,867	3,689	2,580	2,520	2,512	0
Other	6,847	5,859	5,938	5,441	4,586	4,263	4,237	4,204	3,712	2,796	-25
Total Housebreaking	24,222	21,515	22,272	20,607	17,637	16,299	15,130	13,777	12,903	9,706	-25
Percentage Domestic	72%	73%	73%	74%	74%	74%	72%	69%	71%	71%	

Please see [Notes for Tables](#) at end of Chapter 6.

Table A3: Theft of, and from, motor vehicles recorded by the police, Scotland, 2011-12 to 2020-21

Crime category	Number & Percentage										% change 19-20 to 2020-21
	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21	
Theft from motor vehicle of which:	16,906	13,323	13,821	12,933	11,081	10,162	9,397	9,114	8,731	6,335	-27
Theft by opening a lockfast place (OLP)	6,386	4,404	4,450	4,173	3,285	2,715	2,495	2,275	1,875	1,112	-41
OLP with intent to steal	1,792	1,198	1,152	1,119	964	733	753	733	596	425	-29
Attempted theft OLP	810	557	587	524	435	440	486	524	511	571	12
Other theft	7,918	7,164	7,632	7,117	6,397	6,274	5,663	5,582	5,749	4,227	-26
Theft of motor vehicle	6,087	5,149	5,340	4,866	4,597	4,696	4,594	4,558	4,648	4,008	-14
Attempted theft of motor vehicle	973	582	636	557	431	520	430	392	354	303	-14
Total Motor vehicle theft	23,966	19,054	19,797	18,356	16,109	15,378	14,421	14,064	13,733	10,646	-22

Table A4: Crimes of Handling offensive weapons recorded by the police, Scotland, 2011-12 to 2020-21

Crime category	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18 ¹⁶	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21	Number & Percentage	
											% change 19-20 to 2020-21	
Handling offensive weapons - Not used in other criminal activity	5,631	4,015	3,795	3,289	3,111	3,271	3,570	4,216	4,484	4,524	1	
Possession of an offensive weapon	2,820	1,863	1,728	1,380	1,149	1,156	1,213	1,483	1,612	1,706	6	
Restriction of an offensive weapon	19	17	6	17	11	23	17	24	33	14	-58	
Having in a public place an article with a blade or point	2,792	2,135	2,061	1,892	1,951	2,092	2,340	2,709	2,839	2,804	-1	
Handling offensive weapons - Used in other criminal activity	-	-	-	-	-	-	4,163	4,680	5,160	5,660	10	
Possession of an offensive weapon	-	-	-	-	-	-	2,520	2,771	3,211	3,751	17	
Having in a public place an article with a blade or point	-	-	-	-	-	-	1,643	1,909	1,949	1,909	-2	
Total Handling offensive weapons							7,733	8,896	9,644	10,184	6	

Please see [Notes for Tables](#) at end of Chapter 6.

Table A5: Drug crimes recorded by the police, Scotland, 2011-12 to 2020-21

Crime category	Number & Percentage										
	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21	% change 19-20 to 2020-21
Illegal importation of drugs	19	24	27	21	52	64	70	56	106	59	-44
Illegal cultivation of drugs	1,242	1,251	1,185	1,066	1,036	822	780	622	610	710	16
Possession of drugs with intent to supply	5,423	3,861	3,594	3,700	3,976	3,531	3,877	3,973	3,841	3,953	3
Possession of drugs	28,326	29,150	30,451	31,632	29,929	27,766	27,171	29,843	30,469	30,344	0
Drugs, other offences, money laundering	147	402	359	417	486	458	501	337	277	344	24
Total Drug crimes	35,157	34,688	35,616	36,836	35,479	32,641	32,399	34,831	35,303	35,410	0

Table A6: Breach of the peace etc. offences recorded by the police, Scotland, 2011-12 to 2020-21

Crime category	Number & Percentage										
	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21	% change 19-20 to 2020-21
Breach of the peace	33,710	25,072	21,755	14,636	12,178	8,751	6,604	5,669	4,778	3,137	-34
Threatening or abusive behaviour ¹⁴	37,223	44,429	48,521	47,210	48,456	47,850	45,064	43,731	44,678	45,670	2
Offence of stalking ¹⁴	495	605	875	1,251	1,435	1,372	1,376	1,304	871	889	2
Offensive behaviour at football ¹⁵	22	154	126	102	152	247	140	3	0	0	n/r
Threatening communications ¹⁵	1	41	11	6	12	15	3	1	0	0	n/r
Total Breach of the peace etc.	71,451	70,301	71,288	63,205	62,233	58,235	53,187	50,708	50,327	49,696	-1

Please see [Notes for Tables](#) at end of Chapter 6.

Table A7: Racially aggravated offences, Scotland, 2011-12 to 2020-21

	Number & Percentage										
	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21	% change 19- 20 to 2020-21
Racially aggravated harassment	171	155	128	130	75	66	74	108	92	76	-17
Racially aggravated conduct	3,315	2,748	2,584	2,326	2,057	1,927	1,847	1,636	1,645	1,706	4
Total	3,486	2,903	2,712	2,456	2,132	1,993	1,921	1,744	1,737	1,782	3

Table A8: Common assault offences recorded by the police, Scotland, 2011-12 to 2020-21

	Number & Percentage										
	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21	% change 19- 20-2021
Common assault	62,146	54,441	53,544	51,698	52,182	51,352	51,331	50,817	50,314	43,934	-13
Common assault of an emergency worker	7,107	6,514	6,813	6,480	6,414	6,509	7,004	7,098	7,519	8,118	8
Total	69,253	60,955	60,357	58,178	58,596	57,861	58,335	57,915	57,833	52,052	-10

Table A9: Cyber-crimes, estimated volume and as a proportion of total crimes, by crime type, 2019-20 and 2020-21

Crime type	Estimated volume ¹⁷		As a % of total ¹⁸		% change 2019-20 to 2020-21 ¹⁹
	2019-20	2020-21	2019-20	2020-21	
Total cyber-crimes	7,240	14,130	3%	6%	95%
Non-sexual crimes of violence²⁰	560	1,090	6%	12%	-
Domestic Abuse (Scotland) Act 2018	270	360	16%	22%	33%
Threats and extortion	290	730	66%	77%	152%
Sexual crimes²⁰	3,210	4,390	24%	33%	-
Other sexual crimes	3,210	4,390	54%	66%	37%
Crimes of dishonesty²⁰	3,450	8,580	3%	10%	-
Fraud	3,450	8,580	29%	57%	149%
Fire-raising, vandalism etc.²⁰	20	70	<1%	<1%	-
Computer Misuse Act 1990	20	70	95%	96%	250%
<i>Sample size²¹</i>	<i>710</i>	<i>852</i>			

Please see [Notes for cyber-crime tables](#) at end of Chapter 6.

Table A10: Estimated additional crimes recorded following procedural change to recording of international crimes²², 2020-21

Crime type	Estimated number of crimes	Perpetrator likely to be outwith UK (percentage)²³
Total	1,160	<1%
Other sexual crimes	140	2%
Fraud	900	6%
Threats and extortion	110	12%
Computer Misuse Act 1990	*	4%
<i>Sample size²⁴</i>	<i>802</i>	

* Estimated to be fewer than 5 crimes.

Please see [Notes for cyber-crime tables](#) at end of Chapter 6.

Table A11: Volumes and proportions of cyber Other sexual crimes, by crime type, 2013-14 to 2020-21²⁵

Crime type	2013-14		2016-17		2019-20		2020-21	
	Estimated volume ²⁶	%	Estimated volume ²⁶	%	Estimated volume ²⁶	%	Estimated volume ²⁶	%
Other sexual crimes	1,100	38%	2,360	51%	3,210	54%	4,390	66%
Communicating indecently ²⁷	320	53%	840	58%	1,090	64%	1,470	78%
Cause to view sexual activity or images	140	63%	730	71%	900	62%	1,210	78%
Indecent photos of children	600	97%	630	98%	520	89%	630	95%
Disclose or threaten to disclose images	~	~	~	~	530	81%	700	90%
Voyeurism	*	*	40	20%	30	9%	230	53%
<i>Sample size</i>	<i>800</i>		<i>1,188</i>		<i>198</i>		<i>200</i>	

* Estimated to be fewer than 5 crimes.

~ = The relevant legislation for this category was implemented in 2017-18.

Please see [Notes for cyber-crime tables](#) at end of Chapter 6.

Table A12: Volumes and proportions of cyber Fraud, 2018-19 to 2020-21

Crime type	2018-19		2019-20		2020-21	
	Estimated volume	%	Estimated volume	%	Estimated volume	%
Cyber Fraud	2,690	28%	3,450	29%	8,580	57%
Non-cyber Fraud	6,640	72%	8,480	71%	5,120	43%
<i>Sample size</i>	<i>500</i>		<i>318</i>		<i>317</i>	

Please see [Notes for cyber-crime tables](#) at end of Chapter 6.

Notes for Tables

1. The definition of cleared up can be found in [Chapter 4](#).
2. This table can be accessed at local authority level online via the excel spreadsheet contained in the 'Supporting files' (top left of the webpage): <https://www.gov.scot/ISBN/978-1-80004-109-7>.
3. Includes Murder and Culpable homicide (common law), which includes 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.
4. For the definition of Serious assault and the distinction between Serious assault and Common assault please see [Paragraph 7.18](#) within Annex 1.
5. Implementation of the Sexual Offences (Scotland) Act on 1 December 2010 affected the comparability of the breakdown of Sexual crimes over time. For further information please see the '[Data Considerations](#)' section under Sexual crimes within Chapter 2.
6. Includes dwellings, non-dwellings and other premises. For a more detailed definition see [Paragraph 7.23](#) within Annex 1.
7. Due to comparability issues, it is not possible to compare data with years prior to 2008-09.
8. Includes Breach of the peace and Threatening or abusive behaviour, offence of Stalking, Offensive behaviour at football and Threatening communications (Offensive Behaviour at Football and Threatening Communications Act 2012).
9. SCJS statistically significant changes (at 95% confidence interval) shown in bold.
10. Due to comparability issues, it is not possible to compare data with years prior to 2013-14.
11. [Population estimates are as at mid-year 2020](#) from the National Records of Scotland.
12. Data for 1975 are incomplete due to local government reorganisation.
13. For a detailed definition of Housebreaking see [Paragraph 7.22](#) within Annex 1.

14. Offence introduced in October 2010; therefore caution should be exercised when comparing 2010-11 with the rest of this time series as 2010-11 does not comprise a full year of data.

15. Offence introduced in March 2012; therefore caution should be exercised when comparing 2011-12 with the rest of this time series as 2011-12 does not comprise a full year of data. The Offensive Behaviour at Football and Threatening Communications (Scotland) Act 2012 was repealed by the Scottish Parliament on 19th April 2018.

16. Part of the change in Total crime and Other crimes in 2017-18 was due to additional crimes of handling an offensive weapon. Further information on this procedural change and its impact on the statistics are available in the section on [Group 5](#) crimes.

Notes for cyber-crime tables

Figures on estimated volume of cyber-crimes are rounded to the nearest 10 (Table A9 to A12).

17. 'Estimated volume' represents the estimated number of cyber-crimes, by crime type. It is calculated based on the proportion of cyber-crimes identified in the sample.

18. 'As a % of total' represents the proportion of crimes in the sample which are cyber-crimes out of all the crimes sampled, by crime type.

19. '% change' over time is calculated as the change in the estimated volume.

20. As not all crimes under each crime group have been sampled, the percentage of those crimes which were cyber-crimes represents a minimum estimate of the prevalence of cyber-crime in Scotland. As such, these figures should be seen as providing a broad estimate rather than an exact count.

21. Group 5 - Other Crimes are not included as no type of crime in this group was likely to include a significant proportion of cyber-crime.

22. A procedural change was made in April 2020 to how crimes which could involve a victim and a perpetrator in different physical locations (e.g. cyber-crimes) are recorded. Prior to the 1st April 2020, these statistics excluded any crime with a victim in Scotland and a perpetrator who was confirmed by the police to be outside the United Kingdom when the crime took place. From the 1st April 2020 these crimes are now included in the statistics.

23. Figures calculated as a proportion of all crime, by crime type.

24. Crimes under the Domestic Abuse (Scotland) Act 2018 have not been included as the review of crime records did not identify any impact by the procedural change.

25. The data for the 2013-14 and 2016-17 financial years comes from the [Recorded crime in Scotland: 'Other sexual crimes', 2013-2014 and 2016-2017](#) research, published in 2017.

26. The sum of subgroups does not add up to total as other crimes have been removed due to small sample sizes. Please treat any year-on-year changes in the subgroups with caution, due to small sample sizes.

27. For the purposes of this research the Communicating indecently category also includes crimes recorded under the Communications Act 2003, which were sexual in nature.

7. Annexes

Annex 1: Data Sources and Definitions

Data collection

- 7.1. National Statistics on total recorded crime are based on data which Police Scotland extract from their data repository (called the Source for Evidence Based Policing (SEBP)) and submit to the Scottish Government. Prior to 2020/21, the data was collected from a different Police Scotland IT system (called the Scottish Operational and Management Information System (ScOMIS)).
- 7.2. Scottish Government statisticians, with support from Police Scotland, conducted a comparative analysis between ScOMIS and SEBP. This analysis considered the impact of changing the source of recorded crime statistics from ScOMIS to SEBP and found that there is strong alignment between both administrative systems, with just minor discrepancies. The outcomes of this work are discussed in more detail in [Annex 3](#).
- 7.3. Prior to 2013-14 and the establishment of Police Scotland, the Scottish Government collected recorded crime data from the eight legacy forces, who in turn extracted the data from their own systems. Despite the change in method of collection, the data presented in this section on total recorded crime (which comprises of Crime Groups 1 to 5) remains comparable both before and after 1st April 2013. The Scottish Government produced a Technical Report in 2014 which detailed the quality assurance work it carried out in reaching this conclusion: [Technical Report on the Comparability of Recorded Crime Data \(webarchive.org.uk\)](http://webarchive.org.uk)
- 7.4. On 1 April 2004, the Scottish Crime Recording Standard (SCRS) was introduced to help maintain a victim orientated approach to crime recording. It was anticipated that this might increase the number of minor crimes recorded such as vandalism and minor thefts. It can be seen from [Chart 1](#) that this did cause a slight increase in 2004-05 as expected, but that the downwards trend returned following this change to recording practice.
- 7.5. The detailed classification of crimes and offences used by the Scottish Government to collect criminal statistics contains around 500 codes. Further information on how the crime codes are grouped can be found in the User Guide to Recorded Crime Statistics in Scotland, available via the following link: [Recorded crime in Scotland: user guide - gov.scot \(www.gov.scot\)](http://www.gov.scot)
- 7.6. The statistical return from which most of the figures in this bulletin are taken is a simple count of the numbers of crimes and offences, for each local authority, which the police have recorded and cleared up. Returns of quarterly data are submitted by Police Scotland and are used to produce a national total.
- 7.7. Amendments to crime and offence records will always arise after data has been submitted by Police Scotland to the Scottish Government.

- 7.8. As with our analysis in previous bulletins, this comparison confirms that the extent of further amendment to police crime and offence records following the original submission of data continues to be minimal at the Scotland level. This gives users confidence that the published statistics for 2013-14 to 2019-20 recorded crimes and offences are reliable. On a proportional basis the biggest impact is on Group 3 Crimes of Dishonesty, where a net 1,949 fewer crimes have been recorded following no-criming and reclassification between groups. This has reduced the number of Crimes of Dishonesty by 1.7% from 111,409 to 109,460.

Table A13: Revisions of crimes recorded by the police, Scotland, 2019-20

Crime or Offence Group	2019-20 Reporting Year			Number & Percentage
	Submitted in April 2020	Submitted in April 2021	Difference	% Difference
Total Crime and Offences	497,071	494,162	-2,909	-0.6%
Total Crime	246,409	244,116	-2,293	-0.9%
Group 1 Non Sexual Violent Crime	9,316	9,313	-3	0.0%
Group 2 Sexual Crime	13,364	13,506	142	1.1%
Group 3 Crimes of Dishonesty	111,409	109,460	-1,949	-1.7%
Group 4 Fire Raising / Vandalism etc.	47,731	48,175	444	0.9%
Group 5 Other Crimes	64,589	63,662	-927	-1.4%
Total Offences	250,662	250,046	-616	-0.2%
Group 6 Miscellaneous Offences	128,755	128,634	-121	-0.1%
Group 7 Motor Vehicle Offences	121,907	121,412	-495	-0.4%

- 7.9. Despite the fact that only a very small proportion of records are amended following their original submission to the Scottish Government, it is important for National Statistics purposes that time series comparisons between 2013-14 to 2020-21 are on a like-for-like basis. As such the 2013-14 to 2019-20 data used in this bulletin remains that which was submitted immediately following each of these years, to ensure this is consistent with the timetable being followed for the submission of data for 2020-21 (i.e. the same amount of time has elapsed for amendments to records for each reporting year based on ScOMIS/SEBP).
- 7.10. This analysis demonstrates that a more up-to-date set of figures are available from ScOMIS for 2013-14 to 2019-20 than is included in this National Statistics publication. Given this, we asked the Scottish Crime Recording Board¹³ to assess whether any amendment to our revisions policy should be made before the 2015-16 publication. In light of the minimal level of change following the original submission of data, the Board concluded in December 2015 that no changes were necessary to our revisions policy as our current approach was simple to understand and kept open the possibility of future publications coming out earlier in the year.

¹³ <https://www.gov.scot/groups/scottish-crime-recording-board/>

- 7.11. Information on the data source used in the Recorded Crime bulletin series and supporting metadata can be found in the User Guide which is available via the following link: [Recorded crime in Scotland: user guide - gov.scot \(www.gov.scot\)](https://www.gov.scot/Recorded-crime-in-Scotland-user-guide)
- 7.12. Information is also collected from the British Transport Police and the Ministry of Defence Police, but these figures have not been included in the main body of this bulletin. The following crimes and offences were recorded by these two organisations:

Table A14: Crimes and offences recorded and cleared up (as a percentage of those recorded) by the British Transport Police and Ministry of Defence Police, Scotland, 2020-21

	Crimes	Crime clear up rate	Offences	Offence clear up rate	Number & Percentage
Total recorded by British Transport Police	1,396	49.6%	3,332	33.2%	
Total recorded by Ministry of Defence Police	62	19.4%	-	-	

Please see [Notes for Tables](#) at end of Chapter 6.

New series of monthly Official Statistics

- 7.13. To inform users about the volume and type of crimes and offences recorded in Scotland during the pandemic, the Scottish Government introduced a new monthly series of Official Statistics from April 2020 onwards. These can be accessed at: <https://www.gov.scot/collections/recorded-crime-in-scotland/>

Data publication in Police Scotland Quarterly Management Information Reports

- 7.14. In addition to the National Statistics, Police Scotland publish management information on the number of crimes and offences recorded 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/>.

For more information on these statistics please see the [User Guide](#).

Data Definitions:

- 7.15. In one criminal incident, several crimes or offences may occur - e.g. a house may be broken into and vandalised, and the occupants assaulted. In this example, crimes of housebreaking (which would include the vandalism) and assaults would be recorded. In multiple offence incidents, more than one offence may be counted rather than one for the incident as a whole; that is, the counting system is offence based rather than incident based.
- 7.16. An offence may have more than one victim - for example in robberies - and be committed by more than one offender – e.g. some assaults and housebreakings (note that for Murder, Attempted murder and Culpable homicide, the number of crimes recorded is equal to the number of victims). Thus the statistics in this bulletin are not directly comparable with statistics on action taken against offenders, as one offence may lead to several persons being charged. Equally, an offender may be charged with several offences.
- 7.17. In Scotland, assault is a common law offence. In order to distinguish between Serious and Common assaults, Police Scotland use a common definition for 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 (the breaking or cracking of a bone. Note – nose is cartilage not bone, so a ‘broken nose’ should not be classified unless it meets one of the other criteria)
 - Internal injuries
 - Severe concussion
 - Lacerations requiring sutures which may lead to impairment or disfigurement
 - Any other injury which may lead to impairment or disfigurement.”
- 7.18. When HMICS published an earlier audit of crime recording in 2013, they recommended that the definition used for serious assault within the Scottish Crime Recording Standard (SCRS) be reviewed and clarified, as some police officers sought greater clarity from the existing guidance. In response to this, enhanced guidelines as to the interpretation of serious assault were introduced in January 2015.
- 7.19. When publishing their Management Information report for Quarter 4 2015-16 in June 2016, Police Scotland advised that this action may have resulted in some crimes that would have been seen previously as common assaults now falling into the category of serious assault. This in turn may have led to an increase in overall levels of Group 1 non-sexual violent crime in 2015-16 (the first full year following the introduction of enhanced guidelines). Crimes of Violence were included in HMICS’s 2020 audit.
- 7.20. Attempts to commit an offence are included in the statistics, in general in the same group as the substantive offence.

- 7.21. Housebreaking can be broken down into different building types: dwelling, non-dwelling and other property. Where 'domestic dwelling' is presented in the statistics, this refers to dwellings and non-dwellings only.
- 7.22. Dwelling is defined as a house which is being used for (or fit to be used for) residential purposes. Non-dwelling is defined as all roofed buildings used for domestic purposes other than dwellings (for example garages, garden huts, outhouses, etc.). Other property is defined as all roofed buildings not used for residential or domestic purposes (for example commercial premises). Further information on the different types of building included under each of these headings is available in the [Scottish Crime Recording Standard](#) (the manual that details rules and guidance for how crimes should be recorded).

Annex 2: Quality of the Statistics

Governance of Data Quality for Police Recorded Crime:

- 7.23. The Police Service of Scotland (referred to throughout this report as Police Scotland) is responsible for operational policing in Scotland and is held to account by the Scottish Police Authority. The Police and Fire Reform (Scotland) Act 2012 changed the policing landscape in Scotland, replacing the previous eight police forces, the Scottish Police Services Authority and the Scottish Crime and Drug Enforcement Agency from 1 April 2013.
- 7.24. The recording of crime by the police and the subsequent publication of information through this statistical bulletin is undertaken by those who are professionally independent of wider decision-making and performance processes within their organisations. Within Police Scotland, the Crime Registrars ensure that crimes in Scotland are recorded ethically. They sit within the corporate services business area so that they are removed from direct operational activity and investigation. In turn, the production of the National Statistics on recorded crime is managed in an impartial and objective way, in the public interest, by Scottish Government statisticians.
- 7.25. A Scottish Crime Recording Board supports the production of accurate and objective statistics on crime in Scotland. It takes into account the needs of both users and providers in the production of crime statistics and ensures that this process is undertaken in a manner consistent with the Code of Practice for Official Statistics. The Board is chaired by the Justice Analytical Services division of the Scottish Government and a wide range of organisations are represented including Police Scotland, the Scottish Police Authority, Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary in Scotland (HMICS) and the Crown and Procurator Fiscal Service (COPFS). Information on the remit and functions of the Board, its actions and outcomes, is available from the following link: [Scottish Crime Recording Board - gov.scot \(www.gov.scot\)](http://www.gov.scot/Scottish-Crime-Recording-Board).
- 7.26. In general, this statistical bulletin covers the ten year period from 2011-12 to 2020-21, the entirety of which is subject to the Scottish Crime Recording Standard (SCRS) introduced in 2004-05. The SCRS has helped maintain a consistent approach to recording crime and is maintained and developed by the Scottish Crime Recording Board. A copy of the manual can be accessed from the Board's webpages: [Scottish Crime Recording Board: crime recording and counting rules - gov.scot \(www.gov.scot\)](http://www.gov.scot/Scottish-Crime-Recording-Board:crime-recording-and-counting-rules)
- 7.27. The User Guide documents the steps undertaken to quality assure data that is captured and published as management information by Police Scotland, and analysed and produced as National Statistics by the Scottish Government. This includes a summary of the quality checks made at each stage of the data journey, from capture to publication. The User Guide is available via the following link: [Recorded crime in Scotland: user guide - gov.scot \(www.gov.scot\)](http://www.gov.scot/Recorded-crime-in-Scotland:user-guide)

Annex 3: Qualitative assessment of switching the source for the Recorded Crime in Scotland National Statistics

Background

- 7.28. Between 2013-14 and 2019-20, the National Statistics on Recorded Crime in Scotland were produced using data extracted from a single Police Scotland IT system, called the Scottish Operational and Management Information System (ScOMIS). This data was then provided to the Scottish Government on a quarterly basis for the production of the National Statistics (see Annex 1 for more information).
- 7.29. In 2019, Police Scotland developed a new data repository called the Source for Evidence Based Policing (SEBP). This was designed, in part, to replace ScOMIS and therefore become the new official source of information for the recorded crime National Statistics.
- 7.30. At the March 2021 Crime Board, members approved the switch from ScOMIS to SEBP for the production of the National Statistics. This commenced with the 2020-21 reporting year.
- 7.31. Since then, Justice Analytical Services, with support from Police Scotland analysts, have completed a technical review of the impact this switch in sources had on the 2020-21 crime data, – with a summary provided below.

Methods

- 7.32. Police Scotland analysts provided a comparable dataset extracted from both ScOMIS and SEBP. These datasets included the number of crimes both recorded and cleared up, by local authority for the 2020-21 financial year. As these were drawn from a live operational database at a different time from the extract used for the National Statistics, the findings below are based on 2020-21 figures that will differ slightly from those presented elsewhere in the bulletin.

Total recorded crimes

- 7.33. There was a strong degree of alignment between ScOMIS and SEBP for recorded crime in 2020-21. The technical review found that a very small number of additional crimes (representing just 0.2% of all crimes recorded in 2020-21) were included in SEBP but not ScOMIS. Both sources also showed strong alignment in terms of clear-up rates for recorded crimes. In 2020-21, the clear-up rate recorded by ScOMIS was 56.6%, whilst for SEBP it was 56.7%, a difference of 0.1 percentage points. As such the impact on time-series analysis of changing sources to SEBP is negligible at the Scotland level.
- 7.34. This minimal difference largely related to some additional crimes of Vandalism etc. being recorded in SEBP rather than ScOMIS. As such the inclusion of those crimes in SEBP represents a small improvement to the administrative processes used by Police Scotland to capture crime data for statistical purposes.

Total recorded offences

- 7.35. There was also a strong degree of alignment between ScOMIS and SEBP for recorded Miscellaneous offences in 2020-21. This technical review found that a very small number of these cases (representing just 0.2% of all crimes recorded in 2020-21) were included in SEBP but not ScOMIS. As such the impact on time-series analysis of changing sources to SEBP for Miscellaneous offences is also negligible at the Scotland level.
- 7.36. The largest identified difference between the two sources was for Group 7 – Motor vehicle offences, where some offence types such as Unlawful use of a motor vehicle, Speeding etc. had additional offences recorded in SEBP but not ScOMIS. This discrepancy represented only 3% of all Motor vehicle offences recorded in 2020-21 and as such the alignment between the two sources was still considered to be good.

Summary of findings

- 7.37. As highlighted above, this 2020-21 technical review on the impact of changing from ScOMIS to SEBP, found strong alignment between both administrative systems for recorded crime. Some small discrepancies were identified, specifically around crimes of vandalism (some of which appear in SEBP but haven't been drawn through within ScOMIS). Whilst they have a small to negligible impact at the national level, they are concentrated amongst particular crime types within specific local authorities and therefore may have a slightly greater impact in these areas.
- 7.38. Further information on this change in sources for the National Statistics, including the analysis underpinning the above summary, is available to users on request (JusticeAnalysts@gov.scot) .

Annex 4: Comparisons with England & Wales and Northern Ireland

- 7.39. Recorded crime statistics for England & Wales and Northern Ireland are not directly comparable with those in Scotland. The main principles when a crime should be recorded, are similar in all four nations. However, there are various differences between the respective Counting Rules which specify different approaches for counting the number of crimes that should be recorded as a result of a single incident.
- 7.40. Differences in legislation and common law also have to be taken into account when comparing the crime statistics for England & Wales, Northern Ireland and Scotland.
- 7.41. Further detail on the comparability of crime data can be found in the User Guide to Recorded Crime Statistics in Scotland, available from:
[Recorded crime in Scotland: user guide - gov.scot \(www.gov.scot\)](http://www.gov.scot/Recorded-crime-in-Scotland-user-guide)

Annex 5: User Engagement

- 7.42. These statistics are used by a large number of stakeholders within central government, the police and other public bodies for a variety of purposes.
- 7.43. We will continue to consult with the users of the National Statistics in order to get a better understanding of who the users are and what their requirements are for both the data and the presentation of these statistics.
- 7.44. As part of this work, we ran a consultation in 2019 on behalf of the Scottish Crime Recording Board. This focused on how the National Statistics are presented and invited user views on some potential changes in approach to the grouping structure outlined above in the [Background](#) chapter. The full [Summary of Responses](#) to the 2019 consultation can be accessed online.
- 7.45. Following a pause in this work due to the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic, a follow up consultation of users on a new and revised set of crime groups is planned for the Autumn of 2021 (alongside wider views being invited on the production of the recorded crime statistics). Users will be kept informed of developments relating to the consultation through the ScotStat network. .
- 7.46. Further information on previous user consultations can be found in the user guide: [Recorded crime in Scotland: user guide - gov.scot \(www.gov.scot\)](#)
- 7.47. We always welcome feedback on the content and the uses made of our statistical bulletins and users are invited to submit their comments and any suggestions for improvement to: justiceanalysts@gov.scot.
- 7.48. If you would like to be kept informed about developments in crime statistics, we suggest registering with ScotStat: [Scottish Government Subscriptions - Login | ScotStat](#).
- 7.49. Further information on users and uses of the statistics is available in the User Guide to Recorded Crime Statistics in Scotland, which can be found at: [Recorded crime in Scotland: user guide - gov.scot \(www.gov.scot\)](#)

Annex 6: Upcoming Coding Changes and Future Considerations

Changes to the Coding of Recorded Crimes and Offences:

- 7.50. Changes made to the rules governing the coding and counting of crimes and offences within the Scottish Crime Recording Standard (SCRS) must be approved by the Scottish Crime Recording Board (SCRB) ([Annex 2](#) provides background information on the role of the Board).

Future Considerations

Offensive Weapons Act

- 7.51. The Offensive Weapons Act received Royal Assent in May 2019. The Act will make it illegal to possess dangerous weapons in private, and will make it a criminal offence to dispatch bladed products sold online without verifying the buyer is over 18. The Act also makes it an offence to possess a corrosive substance in a public place, and has updated the definition of a flick knife to reflect changing weapons design. The Scottish Crime Recording Board will continue to monitor the implementation of this Act and users will be informed of what impact these changes will have on the presentation of the National Statistics.

Protection of Workers Act

- 7.52. The Protection of Workers (Retail and Age-restricted Goods and Services) (Scotland) Act 2021 was enacted from 24 August 2021. The Act makes it an offence for a person to assault, threaten or abuse another person who is a retail worker and who is engaged, at the time of the offence, in retail work. Committing this offence while a retail worker is enforcing a statutory age restriction also constitutes an aggravation.
- 7.53. We are always keen to hear users' views on our products. If you have any comments or suggestions on how you would like to access information please contact us at JusticeAnalysts@gov.scot.

Annex 7: Other Notes

- 7.54. Under the Code of Practice for Official Statistics, the estimated costs of responding to statistical surveys and data collection are to be published.
- 7.55. The estimated cost of compliance for supplying and validating the data for this bulletin is: £750.
- 7.56. Details of the calculation methodology are available on the Scottish Government Crime and Justice website at:
[Calculation of estimated costs of responding to statistical surveys \(webarchive.org.uk\)](http://www.webarchive.org.uk)
- 7.57. Clearly, only a limited selection of tables can be included in any statistical bulletin. Further analysis of recorded crime statistics can be supplied on request. This includes available information relating to time periods other than those covered in the bulletin. In certain cases a fee is charged. For details of what can be provided, please contact JusticeAnalysts@gov.scot.

A National Statistics publication for Scotland

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Correspondence and enquiries

For enquiries about this publication please contact:

Justice Analytical Services,

e-mail: 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@gov.scot

How to access background or source data

The data collected for this statistical bulletin:

are available in more detail through statistics.gov.scot.

may be made available on request, subject to consideration of legal and ethical factors. Please contact JusticeAnalysts@gov.scot for further information.

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