

# Violence at Work statistics, 2019

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# Summary

The document can be found at: <https://www.hse.gov.uk/statistics/causinj/violence/index.htm>

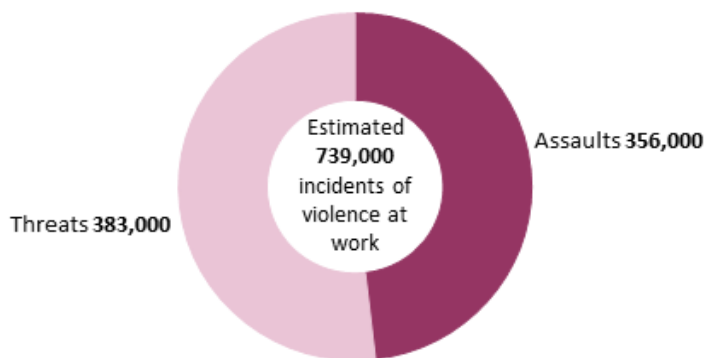
**739,000**

Incidents of violence at work in 2018/19  
(CSEW)

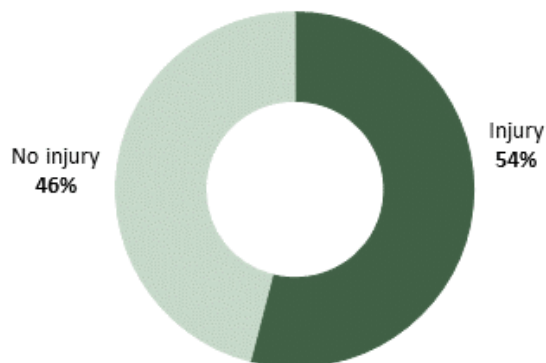
**344,000**

Adults experienced violence at work in  
2018/19  
(CSEW)

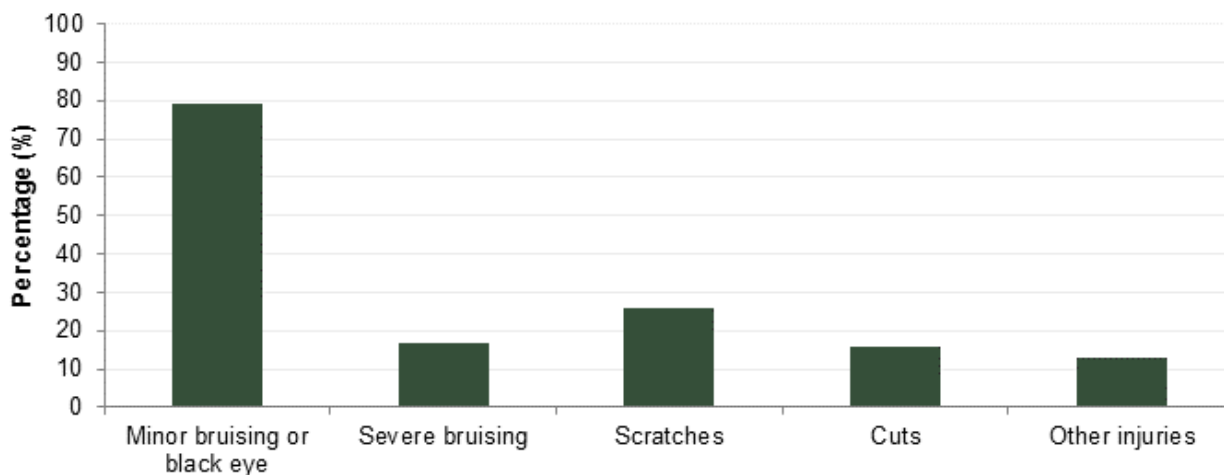
## Number of incidents of violence at work for adults of working age in employment, 2018/19



## Percentage of assaults on adults of working age in employment resulting in injury, 2018/19



## Types of injury resulting from assaults, 2018/19 (percentage of all assaults resulting in each injury type)



### Notes:

1. 'Other' includes puncture/stab wounds, broken bones, nose bleeds, broken nose, broken, lost or chipped teeth, dislocation, concussion or loss of consciousness, internal injuries, facial or head injuries or other injuries.
2. Figures may add to more than 100 as more than one type of physical injury may have been sustained.

Source: Crime Survey for England and Wales (CSEW) for year ended March 2019

# Violence at Work

In January 2019, ONS published the first Crime Survey for England and Wales (CSEW) estimates based on a new methodology for handling repeat victimisation. This methodological change also included a small refinement to the survey weighting. These are the first CSEW work-related violence estimates published based on the new methodology. Estimates from 2017/18 and earlier will therefore be different from those published previously, more information can be found within this [methodological note](#) and [slide pack](#).

The estimated number of violent incidents at work fluctuates on an annual basis with no clear trend. The findings from the 2018/19 CSEW show:

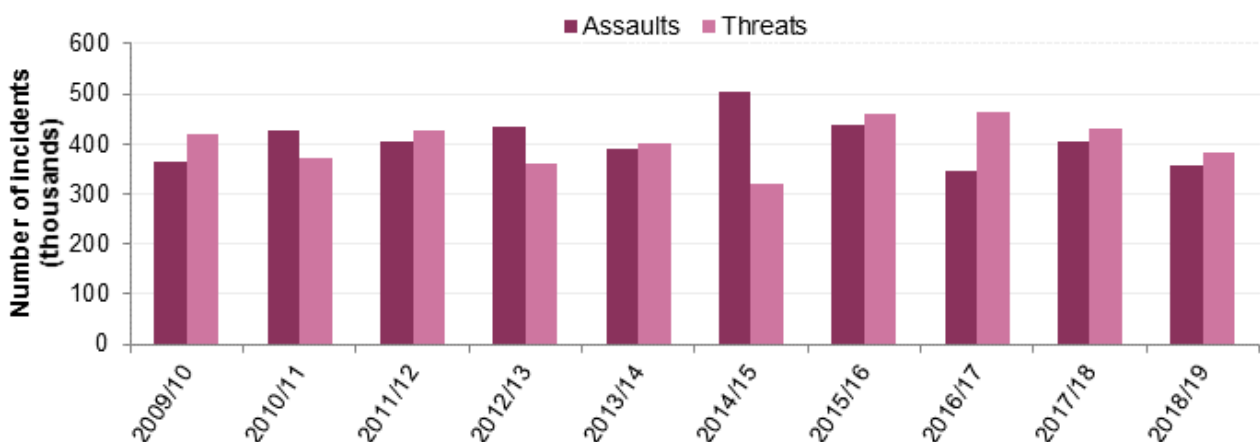
- The risk of being a victim of actual or threatened violence at work is similar to the last few years, with an estimated 1.3 % of working adults being the victim of one or more violent incidents at work.
- 344,000 adults of working age in employment experienced violence at work, including threats and physical assault.
- There were an estimated 739,000 incidents of violence at work, comprising of 356,000 assaults and 383,000 threats. This compares to an estimated 836,000 incidents in 2017/18.
- The 2018/19 CSEW found that 1.5% of women and 1.2% of men were victims of violence at work once or more during the year prior to their interview.
- 58% of work-place violence offenders were strangers. Among the 42% of incidents where the offender was known, they were most likely to be clients, or a member of the public known through work.
- The survey found 46% per cent of violence at work resulted in no physical injury. Of the remaining 54% of cases, minor bruising or a black eye accounted for the majority of the injuries recorded.

## The extent of violence at work

In order to aid the development of policies to reduce violence at work it is necessary to assess how frequently incidents occur and the risk of victimisation. Two main measures of the extent of violence at work are presented – the number of incidents and the number of victims.

The number of incidents of work-related violence in 2018/19 was estimated at 739,000 with assaults accounting for 356,000 of these and 383,000 threats to victims.

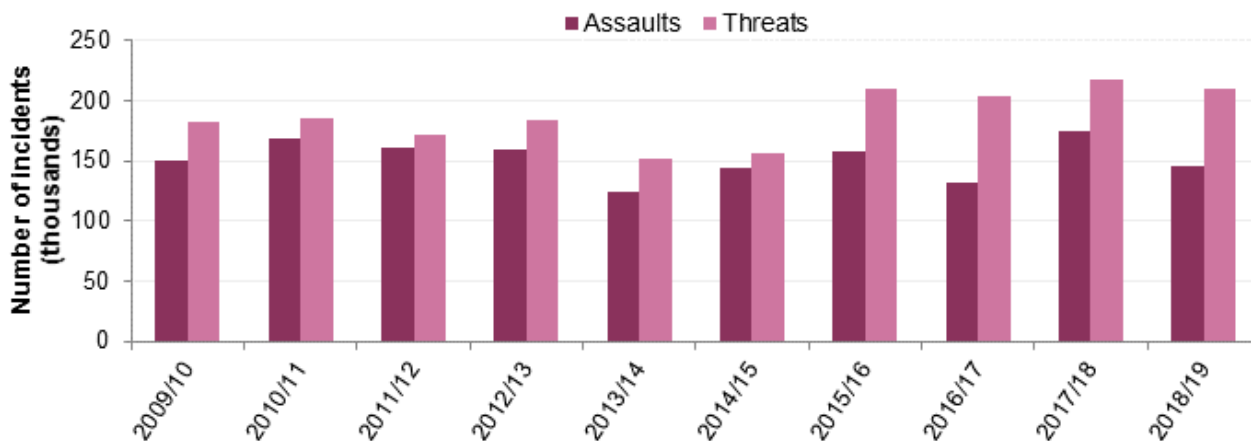
**Figure 1: Estimated number of incidents of violence at work for adults of working age in employment 2009/10 -2018/19**



**Source:** Crime Survey for England and Wales for year ended March 2019

The 2018/19 CSEW estimated that 1.3% of working adults were the victim of one or more violent incidents at work in the year before their interview of which 0.6% had been physically assaulted while they were working and 0.8% had suffered threats. This represents an estimated 344,000 workers who had experienced at least one incident of violence at work. 145,000 had been assaulted while they were working and 210,000 had suffered threats.

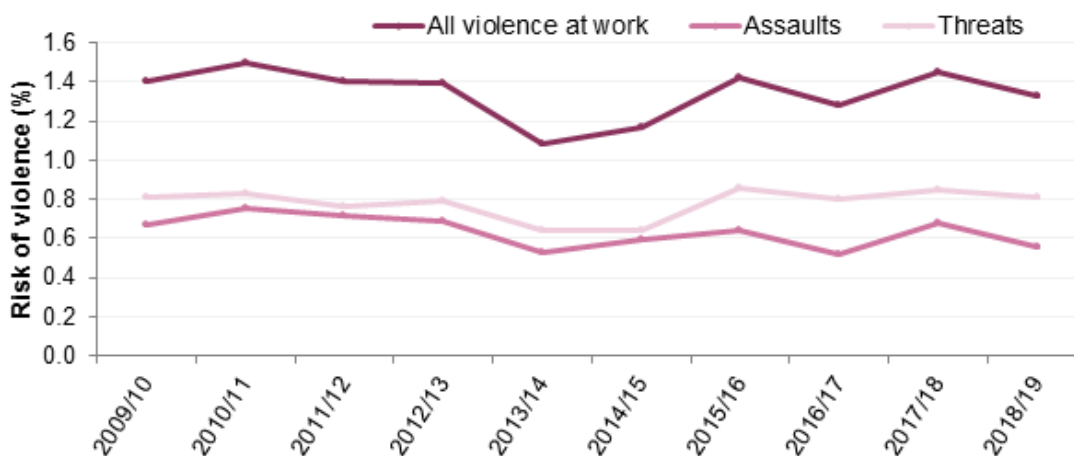
**Figure 2: Estimated number of victims of violence at work for adults of working age in employment, 2009/10 - 2018/19**



**Source:** Crime Survey for England and Wales for year ended March 2019

**Note:** The overall number of victims of violence does not equal the sum of assaults and threats as some victims will have experienced both assaults and threats within the previous year.

**Figure 3: Estimated risk of violence at work for adults of working age in employment 2009/10 – 2018/19**



**Source:** Crime Survey for England and Wales for year ended March 2019

The risk of violence at work for people of working age in employment has been broadly similar over recent years. The total number of violent incidents at work fluctuates on an annual basis with no clear trend.

## Occupation

The occupational data presented here is based on combined data from year ending March 2017 and year ending March 2018 of the Crime Survey for England and Wales. Due to the detailed nature of the occupational codes, it is necessary to use two years data to achieve sufficient sample sizes for meaningful analysis.

The CSEW assigns a Standard Occupational Classification (SOC) code to the current occupation of all respondents, or if they were not in work in the week prior to the interview, it will be assigned to their last main job (ONS, 2010). The individual SOC codes can be grouped into categories to allow analysis of occupational differences in risk.

The analysis uses the 25 sub-major occupational groups; for further details of the SOC classification, see [www.ons.gov.uk/methodology/classificationsandstandards/standardoccupationalclassificationsoc/soc2010](http://www.ons.gov.uk/methodology/classificationsandstandards/standardoccupationalclassificationsoc/soc2010)

Only respondents who were working in the week prior to their interview are included in the analyses presented in this chapter. Respondents may not have been in employment for the entire 12 months of which the risks are measured; however, the CSEW does not ask respondents how long they had been in the current job. The inclusion of people who had not worked throughout the year may lead to an underestimation of the level of risk. Furthermore, some respondents may have changed jobs during the year; no longer working within the occupation where the violent incident may have occurred. It is not possible to identify such cases as these details are not collected.

The CSEW shows that there is large variation in the risks at work across occupational groups. Overall, respondents in protective service occupations (such as police officers) faced by far the highest risk of assaults and threats while working, at 11.4% – 8 times the average risk of 1.4%.

Additionally, health and social care specialists and health professionals had higher than average risk at 5.1% and 3.3% respectively. These professions have consistently had higher than average risk rates over the last number of years.

Other professions with higher risk include other managers and proprietors at 2.3%.

**Table 1: Risk of violence at work for adults of working age in employment, by occupational category, for year ending March 2017 and year ending March 2018**

Percentages	Adults of working age in employment <sup>2</sup>			
	Assaults	Threats	All violence at work	Unweighted base
	% victims once or more			
<b>Managers, Directors and Senior Officials</b>	<b>0.6</b>	<b>1.4</b>	<b>2.0</b>	<b>4,064</b>
Corporate managers and directors	0.6	1.2	1.9	2,667
Other managers and proprietors	0.6	1.8	2.3	1,397
<b>Professional Occupations</b>	<b>0.6</b>	<b>1.1</b>	<b>1.5</b>	<b>6,872</b>
Science, research, engineering and technology professionals	0.1	0.4	0.5	1,822
Health professionals	1.4	2.0	3.3	1,583
Teaching and educational professionals	0.5	0.9	1.4	1,824
Business, media and public service professionals	0.5	1.0	1.2	1,643
<b>Associate Professionals and Technical Occupations</b>	<b>1.0</b>	<b>0.7</b>	<b>1.6</b>	<b>5,258</b>
Science, engineering and technology associate professionals	0.3	0.1	0.4	582
Health and social care associate professionals	2.8	2.5	5.1	588
Protective service occupations	9.4	3.2	11.4	378
Culture, media and sports occupations	0.1	0.4	0.4	858
Business and public service associate professionals	0.1	0.3	0.4	2,852
<b>Administrative and Secretarial Occupations</b>	<b>0.1</b>	<b>0.7</b>	<b>0.8</b>	<b>3,658</b>
Administrative occupations	0.1	0.6	0.7	2,928
Secretarial and related occupations	0.1	1.0	1.0	730
<b>Skilled Trades Occupations</b>	<b>0.2</b>	<b>0.4</b>	<b>0.5</b>	<b>3,925</b>
Skilled agriculture and related trades	0.1	0.6	0.7	360
Skilled metal and electrical and electronic trades	0.1	0.6	0.8	1,404
Skilled construction and building trades	0.2	0.2	0.5	1,357
Textiles, printing and other skilled trades	0.2	0.0	0.2	804
<b>Caring, Leisure and Other Service Occupations</b>	<b>0.9</b>	<b>0.7</b>	<b>1.7</b>	<b>3,755</b>
Caring personal service occupations	1.0	0.7	1.7	2,987
Leisure, travel and related personal service occupations	0.7	0.9	1.6	768
<b>Sales and Customer Service Occupations</b>	<b>0.6</b>	<b>1.1</b>	<b>1.5</b>	<b>2,399</b>
Sales occupations	0.7	1.1	1.6	1,903
Customer service occupations	0.1	1.2	1.3	496
<b>Process, Plant and Machine Operatives</b>	<b>0.5</b>	<b>0.8</b>	<b>1.3</b>	<b>2,648</b>
Process, plant and machine operatives	0.5	0.1	0.7	1,163
Transport and mobile machine drivers and operatives	0.6	1.4	1.9	1,485
<b>Elementary Occupations</b>	<b>0.8</b>	<b>0.5</b>	<b>1.3</b>	<b>3,424</b>
Elementary trades, plant and related occupations	1.0	0.0	1.0	467
Elementary administration and service occupations	0.7	0.6	1.3	2,957
<b>All</b>	<b>0.6</b>	<b>0.8</b>	<b>1.4</b>	<b>36,003</b>

Source: Crime Survey for England and Wales, Office for National Statistics

1. This data is based on combined data from year ending March 2017 to year ending March 2018.

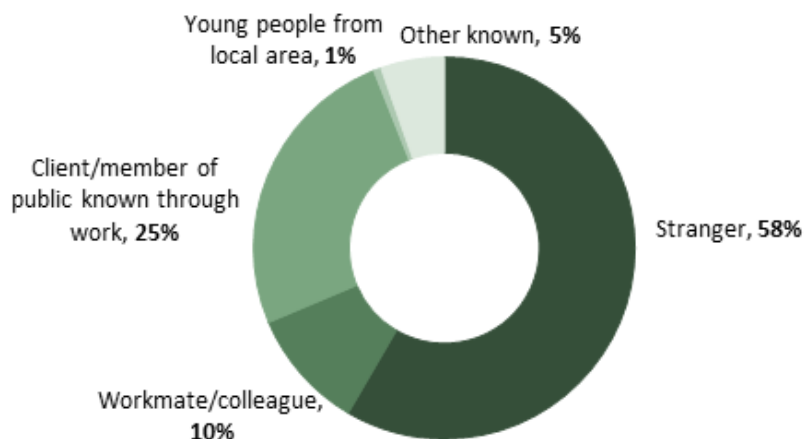
2. Men and Women aged 16-64 who were in employment in the last 7 days.

**Source:** Crime Survey for England and Wales for year ended March 2018

## Offender – Victim Relationship

The 2018/19 CSEW asserts that of all work-related violence the offender was unknown to the victim in 58% of incidents, whilst in 42% of incidents the offender was known to the victim. In cases where the offender was known, they were most likely to be either a client/member of the public known through work, workmate or colleague.

**Figure 4: Offender – Victim relationship for adults of working age in employment, 2018/19**

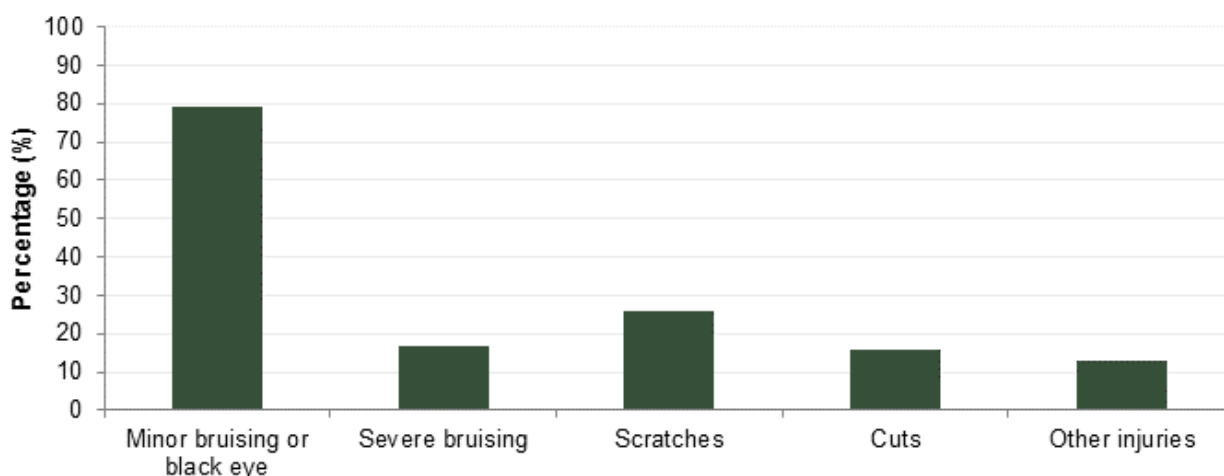


**Source:** Crime Survey for England and Wales for year ended March 2019

## The consequences of violence at work

Experiencing violence at work can have both physical and emotional consequences for victims and worry about workplace violence may impact upon people's health (Chappell and Di Martino (2006)). This section examines the physical injuries caused during incidents of workplace violence. Whilst the majority of injuries sustained in a violent incident are classified as minor injuries, a proportion is of a more serious nature that may cause longer term physical and psychological harm to the individuals involved.

**Figure 5: Types of injury resulting from assaults, 2018/19 (percentage of all assaults resulting in each injury type)**

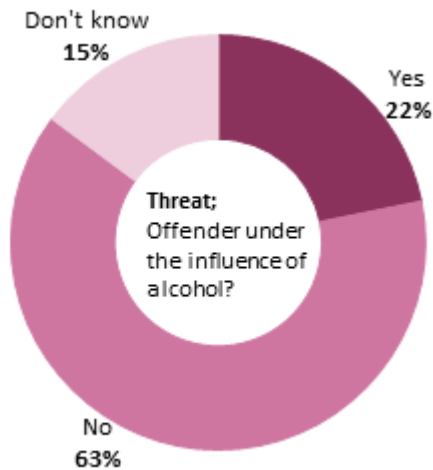


**Source:** Crime Survey for England and Wales for year ended March 2019

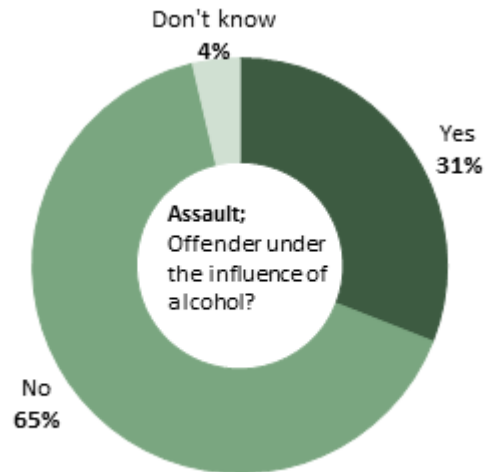
## Influence of drugs and alcohol

Victims reported the offender was under the influence of alcohol in an estimated 22% of threats and 31% of assaults at work.

**Figure 6: Threat; was the offender<sup>1</sup> perceived to be under the influence of alcohol, 2018/19**



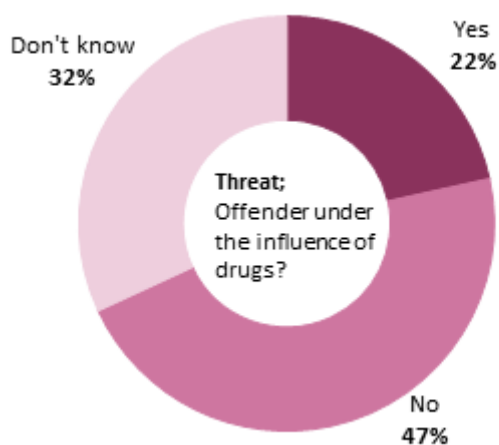
**Figure 7: Assault; was the offender<sup>1</sup> perceived to be under the influence of alcohol, 2018/19**



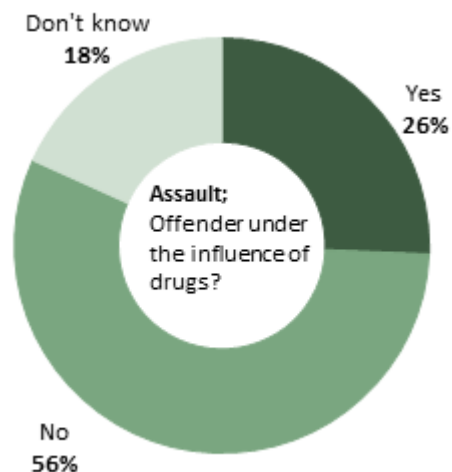
**Source:** Crime Survey for England and Wales for year ended March 2019

The respondents considered offenders to be under the influence of drugs in 22% of threats and 26% of assaults.

**Figure 8: Threat; was the offender<sup>1</sup> perceived to be under the influence of drugs, 2018/19**



**Figure 9: Assault; was the offender<sup>1</sup> perceived to be under the influence of drugs, 2018/19**



**Source:** Crime Survey for England and Wales for year ended March 2019

<sup>1</sup>. Questions asked only if the victim was able to say something about the offender(s), and if there was more than one offender, victims were asked if any of the offenders were perceived to be under the influence. Questions were not asked if any offender(s) were perceived to be under school age.



## Alternative measures of the extent of violence at work

An alternative measure of violence at work comes from the Labour Force Survey (LFS) which provides an estimate of the number of workers injured at work as a result of physical acts of violence. Latest estimates show that annually there were around 46,000 workers in Great Britain who sustained non-fatal injuries as a result of acts of physical violence at work in the 3 years up to 2018/19, accounting for about 8% of all workplace non-fatal injuries. Of these cases, around 10,000 were over 7-day absence injuries. (Source: Labour Force Survey annual average 2016/17-2018/19)<sup>2</sup>.

Another source of statistics on injuries sustained as a result of violence in the workplace comes from employer reports under the Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations (RIDDOR). RIDDOR requires employers to report certain workplace non-fatal injuries – these are generally the more serious (those that result in more than 7 days absence from work or specified on a pre-defined list of injuries). However, it should be noted that RIDDOR is under-reported, so does not fully capture the full scale of such cases<sup>3</sup>. Notwithstanding this, in 2018/19 there were 5,422 such reported cases to employees in Great Britain, accounting for 8% of all RIDDOR reported non-fatal injuries, a similar proportion to earlier years, and supporting results from the Labour Force Survey on the totality of workplace injuries accounted for by workplace violence.

Like the England and Wales Crime Survey, data from both the Labour Force Survey and RIDDOR shows that certain groups of workers are more at risk from workplace violence.

The Labour Force Survey shows that around 9 out of every 10 workers who sustain an injury resulting from violence at work (regardless of whether the injury resulted in time off work) are employed in public services (including human health and social work activities, education and public administration and defence<sup>4</sup>). RIDDOR shows a similar overall picture for reported injuries, although within public services RIDDOR shows a higher proportion occurring in the human health and social care sector and a lower proportion in education.

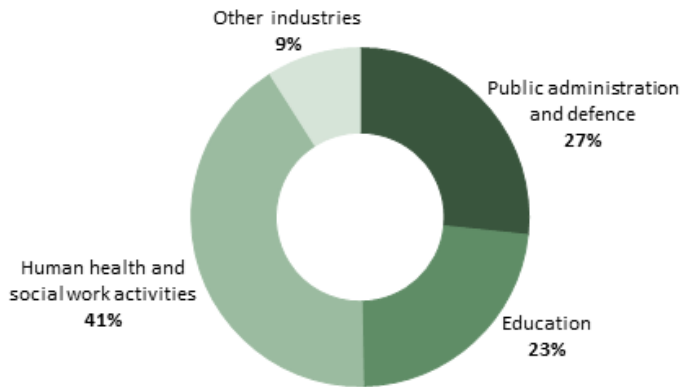
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<sup>2</sup> The LFS estimate of the extent of workplace injury differs to the estimate from EWCS in three main respects: (i) it is limited to those cases which result in injury; (ii) it is limited to the most recent injury sustained by a worker in the last 12 months, so where a worker has suffered more than one injury only the most recent injury contributes to the estimate, unlike the EWCS estimate which counts all cases, not just the most recent and; (iii) the LFS estimate relates to Great Britain

<sup>3</sup> While RIDDOR provides additional information for non-fatal injuries, it needs to be interpreted with care since it is known that non-fatal injuries are substantially under-reported, current levels of employer reporting of RIDDOR defined non-fatal injuries to employees is estimated at around a half; and the reporting of injuries to the self-employed a much lower proportion, though there are known variations in reporting levels by industry.

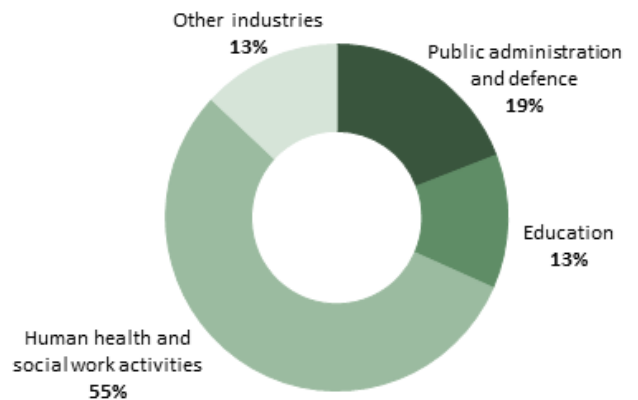
<sup>4</sup> Standard Industrial Classification, Section O, Public Administration and Defence; Compulsory Social Security - This section includes activities of a governmental nature, normally carried out by the public administration. This includes the enactment and judicial interpretation of laws and their pursuant regulation, as well as the administration of programmes based on them, legislative activities, taxation, national defence, public order and safety, immigration services, foreign affairs and the administration of government programmes. This section also includes compulsory social security activities. For further details please see [www.ons.gov.uk/methodology/classificationsandstandards/ukstandardindustrialclassificationofeconomicactivities/uksic2007](http://www.ons.gov.uk/methodology/classificationsandstandards/ukstandardindustrialclassificationofeconomicactivities/uksic2007)

**Figure 10: Estimated non-fatal injuries to workers as a result of acts of physical violence at work by industry, Great Britain**



Source: Labour Force Survey, averaged 2016/17-2018/19

**Figure 11: Non-fatal injuries to employees sustained as a result of acts of violence at work by industry, Great Britain**

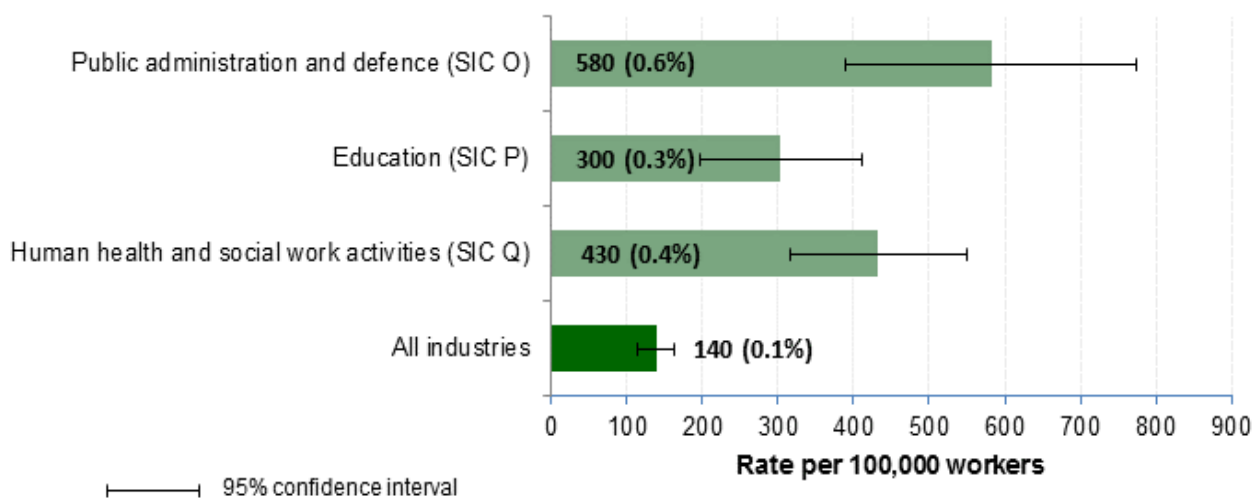


Source: RIDDOR 2018/19

While the number of non-fatal injuries due to violence at work shows us how the cases are spread across different industry groups, another way of looking at non-fatal workplace injuries due to physical acts of violence is to look at the non-fatal injury rate in terms of the number of injuries due to violence at work per 100,000 workers employed. The rate provides a better measure of variation in risk as it accounts for variation in employment levels between different groups.

Overall, across all industries, the non-fatal rate of injury due to physical acts of violence at work is 140 cases per 100,000 workers rate (or 0.1% of workers). However, the rate is statistically significantly higher in each of the 3 public service industries compared to the average rate across all industries, broadly supporting the findings from the CSEW in terms of the occupations most at risk from violence at work. Occupations highlighted in CSEW as being at greatest risk broadly align with these public service industries. (Source: Labour Force Survey, annual average 2016/17-2018/19).

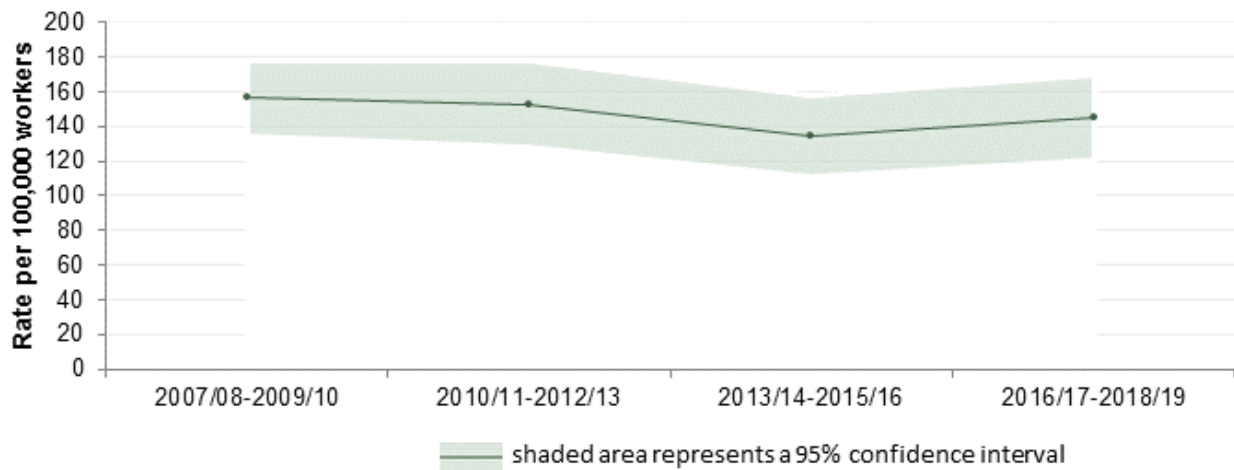
**Figure 12: Estimated rate (per 100,000 workers) of non-fatal injury due to physical acts of violence at work by selected industries, Great Britain**



Source: Labour Force Survey, averaged 2017/18-2018/19

LFS shows the rate of workplace violence to be broadly flat over the period from 2006/07 to 2017/18 (based on three-year average points).

**Figure 13: Estimated rate (per 100,000 workers) of self-reported workplace non-fatal injury due to physical acts of violence for people working in the last 12 months, Great Britain**



**Source:** Labour Force Survey, annual averages grouped by 3 years, from 2007/08 to 2018/19.

## Conclusion

The risk of work-related violence in the workplaces of England and Wales in 2018/19 was 1.3% (CSEW). Protective service is the occupational group with by far the highest risk of experiencing workplace violence. Occupations in health and health & social care also had a higher than average risk.

Non-fatal injuries presented from both the LFS and RIDDOR show that certain groups of workers are more at risk from workplace violence. The occupations highlighted in CSEW as being at greatest risk align with the public service industries highlighted within the LFS and RIDDOR data.

Whilst the majority of injuries sustained in a violent incident are classified as minor injuries, a proportion is of a more serious nature that may cause longer term physical and psychological harm to the individuals involved.

## ANNEX 1: Sources and definitions used

This report uses three main sources for violence at work: the annual Crime Survey for England and Wales (CSEW) carried out by the Office of National Statistics (ONS) and the statutory reporting system, Labour Force Survey (LFS) and The Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations (RIDDOR), which includes Scotland. The LFS and RIDDOR reporting system records physical violence only and does not include threats or other verbal abuse.

### **The Crime Survey for England and Wales (CSEW)**

The Crime Survey for England and Wales (CSEW) measures respondents' experiences of crime-related incidents and classifies these into offence types (including physical assaults and threats), and also collects detailed information about the nature of the victimisation. The CSEW defines violence at work on the basis of type of offence (assaults or threats); what the victim was doing at the time of the incident (at work or working); and the relationship between victim and offender (domestic violence is excluded).

The term violence is used in this report to refer to both assaults and threats. However, threats are not usually included in other CSEW measures of violence. Physical assaults include assault with minor injury, assault without injury and wounding. Threats include verbal threats made to or against the respondent.

Respondents were asked what they were doing at the time the incident happened. Included here are those incidents where the respondent said they were at work or working, including working at home.

Excluded are incidents in which there was a domestic relationship between the offender and victim (current or former partners, relatives or household members) as these cases are likely to be very different in nature from other experiences of violence at work.

Where stated, analysis is based on respondents of working age who said they were in paid work in the last seven days at the time of interview (either as an employee or self-employed). From 2010/11 onwards, "working age" includes men and women aged 16-64 years. Before 2010/11, it included women aged 16-59 years and men aged 16-64 years

The CSEW is a large, nationally representative, household survey that has been carried out since 1982. The main purpose of the survey is to measure the extent and nature of criminal victimisation against adults, aged 16 or over, living in private households in England and Wales. Respondents are also asked about their attitudes towards different crime-related issues.

The CSEW has run continuously since 2001/02 with each annual dataset reporting on interviews conducted throughout the year, covering incidents experienced by respondents in the 12 months prior to their interview. On behalf of the Office for National Statistics (ONS), TNS-BMRB carries out the fieldwork for the CSEW, which in 2016/17 had a sample of around 34,500 respondents.

Further details are contained in the CSEW Technical Report

[www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/crimeandjustice/methodologies/userguidetocrimestatisticsforenglandandwales](http://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/crimeandjustice/methodologies/userguidetocrimestatisticsforenglandandwales)

### **The Labour Force Survey (LFS)**

The Labour Force Survey (LFS) is an alternative source of workplace injury statistics. The LFS is based on the views of the individual worker, so unlike RIDDOR, is less affected by under-reporting. The LFS is able to provide estimates of all workplace injuries (not just those resulting in over-7-days off work), as well as the number of working days lost as a result of the accident.

For more details on LFS statistics, see [www.hse.gov.uk/statistics/sources.htm](http://www.hse.gov.uk/statistics/sources.htm)

### **The Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations (RIDDOR)**

Employers have a legal duty to report certain workplace accidents, required under RIDDOR (The Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations). RIDDOR applies where an accident to a

worker results in death; in a non-fatal specified injury (typically most bone fractures or amputations); or in over-7-days off work.

In relation to RIDDOR, an accident is a separate, identifiable, unintended incident, which causes physical injury. This specifically includes acts of non-consensual violence to people at work. Hence 'verbal' assault is excluded, even if it results in time off work. Physical assaults in the workplace that are not work-related are also excluded (for example, an assault over a domestic matter that takes place at work but is not over a work matter). Suicides and self-harm are excluded.

Non-fatal injuries reported under RIDDOR are known to be substantially under-reported. Currently it is estimated that just under half of all types of non-fatal reports that should be made, are actually reported. There is no separate estimate of whether violence-related RIDDOR incidents are differently reported than all types of injury.

For more details on:

- Reporting requirements under RIDDOR, see [www.hse.gov.uk/riddor/index.htm](http://www.hse.gov.uk/riddor/index.htm)
- Specific 'kinds of accidents', including workplace violence, see <http://www.hse.gov.uk/statistics/causinj/kinds-of-accident.pdf>

## ANNEX 2: List of tables and references

### List of tables

Further information can be found within the following tables:

Tables	Web Address (URL)
<i>Workplace injuries</i>	
LFSINJKND	<a href="http://www.hse.gov.uk/statistics/lfs/lfsinjknd.xlsx">www.hse.gov.uk/statistics/lfs/lfsinjknd.xlsx</a>
LFSINJVIO	<a href="http://www.hse.gov.uk/statistics/tables/lfsinjvio-19.xlsx">www.hse.gov.uk/statistics/tables/lfsinjvio-19.xlsx</a>
RIDKIND	<a href="http://www.hse.gov.uk/statistics/tables/ridkind.xlsx">www.hse.gov.uk/statistics/tables/ridkind.xlsx</a>

### References

Chappell D. and DiMartino V. (2006) Geneva, International Labour Office (3rd Edition)

## National Statistics

National Statistics status means that statistics meet the highest standards of trustworthiness, quality and public value. They are produced in compliance with the Code of Practice for Statistics, and awarded National Statistics status following assessment and compliance checks by the Office for Statistics Regulation (OSR). The last compliance check of these statistics was in 2013.

It is Health and Safety Executive's responsibility to maintain compliance with the standards expected by National Statistics. If we become concerned about whether these statistics are still meeting the appropriate standards, we will discuss any concerns with the OSR promptly. National Statistics status can be removed at any point when the highest standards are not maintained, and reinstated when standards are restored. Details of OSR reviews undertaken on these statistics, quality improvements, and other information noting revisions, interpretation, user consultation and use of these statistics is available from [www.hse.gov.uk/statistics/about.htm](http://www.hse.gov.uk/statistics/about.htm)

An account of how the figures are used for statistical purposes can be found at [www.hse.gov.uk/statistics/sources.htm](http://www.hse.gov.uk/statistics/sources.htm).

For information regarding the quality guidelines used for statistics within HSE see [www.hse.gov.uk/statistics/about/quality-guidelines.htm](http://www.hse.gov.uk/statistics/about/quality-guidelines.htm)

A revisions policy and log can be seen at [www.hse.gov.uk/statistics/about/revisions/](http://www.hse.gov.uk/statistics/about/revisions/)

Additional data tables can be found at [www.hse.gov.uk/statistics/tables/](http://www.hse.gov.uk/statistics/tables/).

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