Serious violence in context: Understanding the scale and nature of serious violence

A report by Crest Advisory

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September 2019
This programme of work
Funded by The Dawes Trust, Crest is undertaking a two-year programme of work over 2019/20 designed to investigate the drivers of serious violence. This has been informed by priorities set by the Home Office, and will conclude with a suite of practical and actionable policy recommendations for senior policymakers.

About Crest
We are crime and justice specialists - equal parts research, strategy and communication. From police forces to public inquiries, from tech companies to devolved authorities, we believe all these organisations (and more) have their own part to play in building a safer, more secure society. As the UK’s only consultancy with this focus, we are as much of a blend as the crime and justice sector itself.

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- Police Foundation
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- West Midlands Combined Authority
Executive summary
England and Wales is currently experiencing a rise in recorded violence. While some of that increase is thought to be due to changes in police recording practices, a subset of (high-harm) offences, such as homicide, robbery and knife crime, show real and substantial rises. Crest is undertaking a programme of research to systematically analyse what is driving these trends.

Previous research undertaken by Crest, and by the Home Office, suggests at least four important factors that require detailed investigation:

- **Changing drug markets**: particularly the increasing supply of cocaine, which is driving up demand and fuelling violence
- **The vulnerability of victims and offenders**: children ‘at risk’ of falling into violence – including children in care and children excluded from school as well as vulnerable adults
- **A decline in effective enforcement**: a weakening of police intelligence and a reduction in the proportion of offenders charged
- **Opportunity presented by social media**: which can rapidly escalate petty conflicts / spread the contagion of violence

Crest Advisory is undertaking a two-year programme of research to explore the underlying drivers of serious violence and test the potential for the implementation of more problem-oriented, preventative approaches. This is the first in a series of thematic reports, looking at the national and local context, exploring the state of existing knowledge, and working with areas to shine a light on what serious violence looks like across the country.
This report is the first in the series, setting out an overview of serious violence in England and Wales. We have used existing data and new research to assess whether we have a grip of the scale and nature of the problem. Key questions considered were:

- What are the key trends and patterns?
- How many people are at risk of violence and who are they?
- What do we know about the drivers and how they interact?
- How are safeguarding and criminal justice services responding?

### What are the key trends and patterns?

- **Rising homicide in England and Wales forms part of an increase in homicide across Europe.** Homicides enabled by knives in England and Wales are at the highest level since records began.
- **However, the headline rises in homicide, robbery and knife crime are the tip of the iceberg.** Crest’s analysis shows that the **presenting problem of serious violence is part of a wider picture of criminality**, including assaults with intent to cause harm, exploitation offences, sexual violence and drug dealing, which all sit underneath. All of these offences have been rising significantly since 2014.
- The **UK is a European outlier on robbery**, and is the only country to face significant rises over the past five years. Robbery with knives has risen by 45 per cent between March 2014 and March 2018 in England and Wales.
Executive summary (2)

How many people are at risk of violence and who are they?

Previous research to estimate the numbers of young people at risk has looked at the number in gangs and the number who carry a knife. New research for this report shows that those at risk of serious violence are likely to include a larger group of children. Our new estimates reveals a pipeline of children (10-17s) who are at risk of being caught up in violence: around 45,000 were victims of serious violence in 2018 whilst up to 269,000 may have been drawn into serious violence.

- There is a real blurring of the lines between victim and offender: children should be recognised as victims of violence and criminal exploitation, but this same exploitation makes them perpetrators of crime. This is a huge challenge for safeguarding, policing and criminal justice services where there are legal, policy and practical distinctions between victims and offender.

Violence tends to concentrate in very small areas - the socio-demographic factors in those areas therefore become key indicators.

What do we know about the drivers and how they interact?

- The key drugs driving street violence are crack cocaine and heroin through open drug markets and county lines. County lines has been driven by market saturation in urban centres.
- Policing appears to have had less focus on drugs in recent years and is now less sighted on drugs markets in general and the middle market in particular.
- Experience of domestic violence, exclusion from school, or being looked after have well-evidenced links to vulnerability. In turn, the systematic targeting and grooming of vulnerable children and adults in the supply and distribution of drugs increases their risks of being drawn into violence.
- Technology including social media is making it easier for organised crime groups and gangs to market drugs, recruit and control vulnerable people and compete for status at street level.
Policing, safeguarding and criminal justice services are struggling to respond:

- **The absence of deterrence**: Neighbourhood policing has been eroded and arrest and charge rates have collapsed. In the year ending March 2019, only 7.8 per cent of offences led to charge.
- **The systematic exploitation of children and young people** to commit crimes presents a significant challenge for policing and safeguarding services, predicated as they are on a clear victim/perpetrator distinction.
- **The prison system is struggling** with unprecedented levels of violence, an environment which is not conducive to rehabilitation. Violence in prison is known to be driven by drugs use and drug dealing, extending the cycle of violence.

Long-term budget cuts have reduced the ability of public services to grip and tackle the drivers of serious violence, which has allowed it to evolve in the spaces where public services have an increasingly fragile hold.
This report provides an overview of serious violence, examining the scale and nature of the problem, the state of existing knowledge and where there are gaps in our understanding. By bringing together key data and trends into one place, we hope to add greater context and understanding to the problem.

Serious violence is not an isolated phenomenon. The recent spike in homicides, knife crime and robbery is the tip of a much larger 'iceberg', the culmination of a set of personal and societal factors which have escalated into serious crime – thereby becoming the responsibility of the criminal justice system as the 'service of last resort'.

Those charged with tackling this phenomenon will struggle to deal with one component without recognising other interrelated components. The need to develop a public health approach to serious violence necessitates a multi-faceted view of the problem and an appreciation of the gaps in knowledge.

We hope this report will be of help to police, PCCs and Mayors charged with setting up violence reduction units (VRUs), to local authorities, and to all those interested in public health approaches.

Please get in touch if you are interested in our work and would like to work with us.
1. Introduction
Crest has embarked on a two year project to understand serious violence and investigate its drivers. In this report (the first in the series), we set out to examine the scale and nature of the problem.

- There has been a significant increase in some of the most serious and harmful types of violent crime since 2014, which is symptomatic of wider, less visible factors – yet the causes of this increase are not yet well understood.
- The symptoms and outcomes of this problem are devastating for those involved – victims and their families, neighbours, communities, work and school colleagues.
- There is a compelling need to get the problem analysis right. In order to do this, we have set out to provide an overview of serious violence with an enhanced understanding of the scale and nature of the problem based on existing and new evidence.
- This paper provides an assessment of the problem nationally, placed within an international context, and outlines insights, gaps in current knowledge and areas for further exploration, covering:
  - **the context for serious violence**: the state of the debate; key trends at a macro level; and our view of the problem.
  - **the drivers lying underneath this problem**: a changing drugs market; rising levels of vulnerability; developments in technology; changes in the criminal justice system (CJS); and shrinking public services.
Drawing on a mix of quantitative and qualitative data, and viewing serious violence through a variety of lenses, we have conducted a national assessment of serious violence and placed it within an international context

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Our approach</th>
<th>What we did</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| This report provides an overview of serious violence, examining the extent to which there is a clear understanding of the scale and nature of the problem. We have used new research and existing data to view serious violence through different lenses (drugs, vulnerability, technology and criminal justice and safeguarding responses), to evaluate the evidence linking these factors to serious violence. | ● Structured literature review (academic, government, think-tank reports)  
● Statistical analysis (nationally published data, FOIs, bespoke analysis of locally-held data)  
● Developed new estimates for assessing the size of the population at risk of serious violence (see pp. 25-26)  
● Stakeholder interviews and engagement  
● Expert input from advisors |
2. Context
While much of the increase in overall recorded violence can probably be attributed to changes in police recording practices, there has been a significant and real increase in serious violence offences such as stabbings and murders since 2014.

For overall measures of crime victimisation and offending, the Crime Survey for England and Wales (CSEW) gives the most accurate picture - one that has generally been declining...

When it comes to total violence, the Crime Survey is more likely to provide an accurate picture of trends than police recorded violence, which is subject to changes in recording practices and/or reporting.

... however, high-harm, less frequently occurring crimes such as homicides, knife crime, gun crime and robbery, are all better captured by police recorded crime (PRC) figures – and are rising.

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1 ONS - Crime in England and Wales: Appendix tables. 2 Offences involving the use of weapons (Tables 2 and 15). Recorded crime data at Police Force Area level, Appendix tables: Homicide in England and Wales (Table 1).

*Figures for homicide exclude the victims of exceptional/terror attacks. Figures for knife crime exclude West Midlands and Sussex for consistency.

Other crimes that are well captured by PRC such as kidnapping, attempted murder, assault with intent to cause serious harm (GBH) are also increasing.
The public debate about knife crime has intensified over the last two years but continues to generate single cause explanations, often overlooking the potential complexity and interconnectivity of the problem.

A range of single-cause explanations have been offered for rising violence in recent years, overlapping across five broad domains:

- **Austerity / public services**
  - Cuts to officer numbers (2010s)
  - Cuts to youth services (2010s)
  - School exclusions (early 2000s, late 2010s)
  - Poor mental health provision (2010s)

- **Culture, ethics and moral norms**
  - Absent fathers (early 2000s, early 2010s)
  - Family discipline (early 2010s)
  - So called “black culture” (2000s)

- **Music / technology**
  - Social media (late 2010s)
  - Drill music (2010s)
  - Grime (2000s)

- **Drugs / organised crime / gangs**
  - County lines (late 2010s)
  - Gangs (2010s)
  - Violent drug markets

- **Deterrence**
  - Reduced use of ‘stop and search’ (late 2010s)
  - Lack of deterrence in sentencing
The Home Office (HO) 2018 Serious Violence Strategy cited several possible drivers, but also treated serious violence as an isolated phenomenon, distinct from wider crime.¹ A similar pattern is reflected in Government funding for violence reduction.

The strategy was published in response to increases in knife crime, gun crime and homicide. We intend to broaden out this focus to spot interconnections between different forms of violence.

### Offending/ criminal behaviours

**Specific crime types:** the HO focus on homicide, knife crime, gun crime and also robbery (i.e. serious violence offences). In addition to these, we look at other serious violent crimes not included by the HO e.g. attempted murder and kidnapping, and explore the role of less violent/visible crimes e.g. drugs.

**Areas of criminality where serious violence or its threat is inherent:** the HO specifies gangs and county lines drug dealing. We look at wider manifestations of the drugs markets not addressed by the HO e.g. prison-based markets, as well as at areas of criminality excluded from the HO strategy e.g. domestic abuse, sexual abuse, modern slavery and violence against women and girls.

### Population

We include vulnerable adults in our analysis (e.g. their involvement via cuckooing, drug and alcohol addiction, domestic abuse), building on the HO focus on young people (under 18s) and young adults (up to 25).

### Drivers

We take a CJS lens to build on the HO four key drivers of SV: drugs and profit; effectiveness of the Criminal Justice System (CJS); character; opportunity. We look at changing drugs markets, the role of technology, the impact of rising vulnerabilities; the role of wider public services and the contagion of violence.

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Emergency investment targeted towards serious violence aims to tackle different strands of the problem, but approaches are not integrated, and there is an absence of strategy.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Event</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>March 2019</td>
<td><strong>Government announces £100m to support police forces with knife crime and setting up violence reduction units</strong> for the seven most affected forces – PCCs had asked for £200-300m</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>December 2018</td>
<td><strong>Government pledges extra £300m for policing</strong> to protect real-terms force budgets and fill a pensions gap &amp; £200m over ten years for Youth Endowment Fund</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>April 2018</td>
<td><strong>Serious Violence HO Strategy</strong> which included £22m (initially £11 million) for Early Intervention Fund and £3.6m for County Lines Coordination Centre</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The presenting problems of knife and other weapon-related attacks and murders are, in fact, the tip of the iceberg. Such violence grows from other offending, and as public services have retrenched, so too have their ability to stem the issue.

The most visible and prominent manifestation of the problem are high-harm serious violent crimes, but focusing on these alone misses the wider offending context, much of which is hidden.

Retreating public services have meant an absence of safe spaces, less support for those at risk and declining deterrence for offenders.

Against growing and changing demand on public services there have been reductions in youth services (including youth justice); reductions in community policing (which has reduced intelligence); and less enforcement (including stop and search), which have loosened constraints on those carrying weapons (many of whom do so for protection and as a result of fear), and those seeking to exploit the vulnerable.

In the following sections we explore each of these drivers, the trends, gaps in our knowledge and possible interactions to be able to draw a more detailed picture of the problem.
3. Trends in serious violence: what they tell us about the shape of the problem and who is at risk
This section explores trends in both crimes of serious violence (e.g. homicide, robbery, weapon-enabled crimes) and in related, less visible violent offences (e.g. possession of drugs), to understand the scale of the problem, and to quantify the size of the population at risk.

This chapter outlines trends in serious violence and other related offences. We draw on quantitative and qualitative data sources.

In chapter 4 we explore the wider drivers, factors and behaviours underpinning serious violence.
Because there is no single definition nor measure of “serious violence”, we have drawn on a range of different measures and/or used proxy indicators that are in the public domain to paint as full a picture as possible of the size and shape of the problem, and trends over time.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Benefits</th>
<th>Limitations &amp; Mitigations</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Volume</strong></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Police Recorded Crime (PRC) is generally the most reliable measure of high-harm offences which are less affected by recording practice change and are less frequent (but likely to be reported due to their high harm).</td>
<td>Not all offences are reported to the police. PRC is dependent on recording methods/practices, and there have been sizeable changes to these in recent years. However, we can account for recording practice changes as they are known. Also, crimes of serious violence have been less subject to this.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Crime Survey for England and Wales (CSEW) data is a better/more reliable measure of general offending and victimisation, because it is a representative household survey of victimisation and also captures underreported crimes.</td>
<td>Not as effective for measuring high-harm offences which are less frequent (so less likely to be picked up in a survey.) Also, as a household sample, groups that are harder to reach may be less well represented in findings.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Harm</strong></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Sentencing data such as severity/seriousness scores from ONS, CHI and indicators from CPS guidelines are useful to understand the perspectives of society and the criminal justice system on “harm”, and to define “serious”.</td>
<td>Nonetheless, these barometers are subjective and change with time. Some technical disagreements as well, e.g. sentencing guidelines (CHI) vs actual sentences (ONS). Neither fully reflect the full extent of resultant harms (e.g. on the more serious offence based on score may not be a relevant offence).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Health data like hospital admissions give a fuller picture of harm and provides an additional record of figures related to violence.</td>
<td>It does not match up with criminal justice system data, and detailed data can be hard to come by in the public domain.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Risk profile</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Demography allows us to examine age ranges and ethnicity.</td>
<td>The 2011 census is almost a decade out of date, but useful to link to criminal justice system data to contextualise (although not always possible).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Societal measures such as DFE, MHCLG reports and data provide a fuller picture of vulnerability, such as school exclusions or homelessness.</td>
<td>Often ad hoc so we need to cross reference with other sources.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Location data allows us to cross reference with other forms of vulnerability.</td>
<td>Limited published data is available so we focus on areas which may have specific circumstances e.g. London.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Recorded crime statistics show that harmful, less frequently-occurring serious violent crimes have seen substantial increases; knife-enabled homicides, knife-enabled crimes, robbery and crimes of exploitation are all on the up.

Over recent years, there have been increases in assaults, knife-enabled crime, homicide, attempted murder, and threats to kill.

There has been a 55% increase in knife-enabled crime in the past three years, and a 25% increase in all three categories since 2010/11, when recording began.

Threats to kill have increased 240% since they start to be recorded in 2008/09 – possibly a reflection of social media use. After a long-term decline, homicides are on the rise – in particular, knife-enabled homicides are up 45% in the past three years.

As this page demonstrates, all of the recorded crime elements forming a picture of serious violence have been rising significantly since 2014. Health data is explored on the next page, which offers corroboration given what we know about the limitations of PRC.

Modern slavery and trafficking for sexual exploitation (2003-2018, yrs ending March)¹

Drug possession, drug trafficking and robbery (2002/03-2018)¹

There has been a 380% increase in “exploitation offences” since 2015/16 which have displaced trafficking offences, possibly related to the introduction of the Modern Slavery Act.

A 60% increase in robbery since 2015 represents a meaningful rise in criminal activity. Trends in drugs trafficking (up 40% since 2002/03) and possession (down 4% since 2002/03) largely reflect police proactivity rather than levels of criminal behaviour.

¹ ONS, Crime in England & Wales, year ending December 2018 - Appendix tables.
The highest volumes of serious violence are recorded in urban areas, but recent trends reveal the spreading of violence into rural / mixed areas, though the form that that violence takes is less clear.

Rates of knife crime are highest in urban areas, but the largest percentage rises are occurring in other parts of the country.

British Transport Police have recorded a significant increase in serious violence offences, likely to reflect the pattern of county lives activity - extending urban drug markets to towns and rural areas.

According to the NCA, 35% of suspects in county lines activity encountered on the rail network had links to possession of weapons within the previous 6 months, and 3% with possession of firearms.

Large increases in drug use in rural areas highlight the phenomenon of county lines. According to the ONS, the rise in cocaine and class A use by rural residents is significant.

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1 ONS - Crime in England and Wales: year ending September 2018 (release), 2 3 Police Force Area data tables (year ending December 2018), Tables 2 and 5, 4 Home Office - Drug misuse: findings from the 2017 to 2018 CSEW: data tables, Table 3.12

*Excluding Northumbria due to changes in data quality.
Figures suggest that violence is getting more severe: serious crimes are increasingly weapon-enabled, and the most harmful forms of serious violence are rising fastest.

The rate of robbery is increasing as well as the severity of robbery, with an increasingly larger share enabled by knives.

Meanwhile, both homicide and attempted murder have sharply increased, with the growing gap between the two suggesting that the homicide figures could be higher were it not for more effective pre-hospital and hospital medical care.

There has been a significant increase in the number of knife-enabled homicides (now at a historic high), and in knife-enabled robbery offences, rising by 45 per cent between March 2014 and March 2018. This increase is greater than the comparable increase for all recorded robbery offences (33 per cent).

The increase is largely due to knife crime; between the years ending March 2011 and March 2018, knife-enabled attempted murder increased by 58 per cent in England and Wales.

The police having better first aid training is an example of better pre-hospital care.

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1. ONS - Offences involving the use of weapons: data tables (Tables 11 / 14), Crime in England and Wales: Appendix tables (Table 4).
2. Appendix tables: homicide in England and Wales (Table 1), Home Office - A summary of recorded crime data from 1898 to 2001/02

*The total for “Weapon-enabled” offences includes firearm-enabled robbery and knife / sharp instrument-enabled robbery, assumed to be discrete. The total for “non-weapon-enabled” offences is formed by subtracting weapon-enabled offences from total robbery.
Health and emergency service data largely mirror recorded and surveyed crime patterns, showing a decline in overall violence but an increase in harm caused by violent, knife enabled crime. Given recording and reporting issues with police data, these figures offer vital corroboration.

There are significant reporting gaps within recorded crime: according to the CSEW, only 60% of wounding incidents falling to 46% for violent incidents more generally. Thus we have triangulated our findings with health data, which show the same trend.

Trends demonstrate strong increases, but with anecdotal evidence suggesting that some victims are avoiding hospital for fear of being referred to support services, this rising trend may yet be an undercount.

1 NHS Digital, Hospital Admitted Patient Care Activity, 2017-18: External causes tables, November 2018 and earlier editions - via https://researchbriefings.parliament.uk/ResearchBriefing/Summary/SN04304
2 ONS - Crime in England and Wales: Annual Trend and Demographic Tables (year ending March 2019), Table D10
3 Hospital admissions data provide little information on those who attend A&E and are patched up and sent away. Cardiff University’s long-term study on patients requiring treatment for violence injuries at A&E also shows long-term declines...
Whilst homicide victims are spread amongst the age groups, there has been a sharp rise in the number of young victims suffering homicide by knives. This is backed up by hospital admissions data for assault by sharp object.

Over the last three years, there has been a sharp increase in the number of victims aged between 16 and 24 of homicide by sharp instrument. This has risen by 94 per cent since 2016.

The spike in young victims of homicide by knives and other sharp instruments is reflected in hospital data, which records a large increase in knife assault admissions for the 16-18 age group since 2015.

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1 ONS, Homicide in England and Wales: year ending March 2018.
Despite the high-profile nature of serious violence, there are no accurate figures for the number involved or affected. We have produced new estimates for the number of children at risk of suffering serious violence.

Existing research has looked at quantifying the number of children in gangs and the number of children who carry a knife...

A report by the Children’s Commissioner (2019) estimates that:
- 27,000 children in England identify as a gang member (only a fraction are known to children’s services)
- 34,000 children are either a known gang member or know a gang member and have been the victim of violent crime in the past 12 months

The Home Office analysis of indicators related to serious violence has associated weapon carrying with serious violence-linked behaviours and estimates:\(^2\)
- 25,000 14 year olds have carried/used a weapon

Given evidence from the Home Office (2019) that risk factors for knife carrying are slightly different to gang-related crime, we aim to add to existing research in this area by using available datasets to a wider scope and quantify the number at risk of serious violence, informed by evidence such as the narrower studies above.

... but our estimates acknowledges that those at risk of serious violence are likely to include a larger group of children – we will develop this over time to include adults.

We have estimated the number of 10-17 year olds who are at risk of experiencing serious violence in a given year, defining ‘serious violence’ as relating to the possibility of:
- becoming a victim of violence (with or without injury), robbery, sexual assault
- being a perpetrator of possession of weapons offences (as an indicator of heightened risk for those who carry and are prepared to use weapons against others)

We have quantified the size of certain groups in the population who possess characteristics that indicate they may be at risk, including:
- Suffering forms of serious violence (ranging from homicide to serious wounding); committing knife-related offences; gang membership; and being linked as a victim or perpetrator to a serious offence

More detail on our methodology can be found in Annex I
We know that at least 43,500 children (10-17) were victims of serious violence in 2018, but we estimate that as many as 269,805 children could have experienced some form of serious violence in this year.

In the absence of data collected for the purpose of quantifying the number of children at risk of serious violence, we have used proxy measures to estimate the size of different groups of the population at risk.

Various data sources help to quantify the size of strands of the population who possess a characteristic likely to represent those at risk. Different estimates are used to reflect the uncertain overlap between groups.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Group</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Size of Population</th>
<th>Percentage of 10-17 Population</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>Victims of serious violence (wounding)</td>
<td>43,500</td>
<td>0.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>Victims of serious violence (wounding) and homicide-related offences; self-identified gang members who carry a knife; self-identified members of street gang</td>
<td>108,458</td>
<td>2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>Victims of all violence with/without injury/wounding</td>
<td>145,000</td>
<td>2.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D</td>
<td>Victims of all violence; children linked to all serious offences; those linked to a knife/sharp object related offence; and those in group B</td>
<td>269,805</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Various trends suggest that victims and perpetrators of serious violence are predominantly male, but we know that female involvement is a blind spot. More work is necessary to understand how serious violence affects women and girls.

The statistics show that serious violence is largely a ‘male problem’, with men far more likely to be those presenting as victims and offenders of serious violent crimes.

However, evidence suggests that female involvement is prevalent but presents differently. Understanding this involvement is crucial to gaining a full picture on how to address serious violence.

- According to the Greater London Authority (GLA), 70 per cent of domestic violence victims of serious youth violence (SYV) are female, and though victims and perpetrators are predominantly male, a third of female victims are victims of domestic violence and abuse-related SYV.
- The National Crime Agency (NCA) believe that girls are underrepresented as victims and offenders in county lines, potentially due to gender bias on the part of law enforcement.
- A deep dive by the Centre for Social Justice in 2014 showed that women and girls are linked in multiple ways to gang members: short term / long term partners, gang members, and mothers and sisters. These links can lead to an increase in criminal activity and sexual exploitation, to the interruption of education, threats to themselves, to friends and to families.

“There’s a lot of exploitation. A lot of guys obviously use the females to carry weapons and drugs: they think they’re not going to get stopped as likely as what they are.” - Ex-gang member. Research by London South Bank University (2018)

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1 ONS, Appendix tables: homicide in England and Wales, Table 3

Boy’s are also more likely to claim to carry knives. In a recent Home Office study (2019), 71.3 per cent of weapon-carriers were male.
National figures show particularly high rates of homicide for black people. However, other evidence from national studies and local profiles of serious violence show a more complex and nuanced set of factors at play, which need to be better understood.

Over recent years the male homicide rate has been substantially higher for black victims than for any other ethnic group.

Demographics affect the profile of victimisation and offending in local areas, we will look to explore this and the importance of socio-demographic factors in local areas.

Rates per million population of homicide offences by ethnic appearance of male victims, England and Wales, annual average (2013/14 - 2015/16)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ethnicity</th>
<th>Total Known</th>
<th>Other</th>
<th>Asian</th>
<th>Black</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>6</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>12</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>9</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asian</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>12</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Black</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>65</td>
<td>52</td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Black homicide victims are significantly more likely to be killed with a sharp instrument than other ethnic groups (62% of black victims are killed in this way, compared to 33% of white victims and 42% of Asian victims). Whilst the most common homicide location for white victims (58%) and Asian victims (67%) is the home, for Black victims it is the street (40%).

Ethnicity of most serious young offenders (10-17) in a London borough versus ethnicity of total 10-17 London borough population, 2017/18

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ethnicity</th>
<th>Population %</th>
<th>Serious Young Offenders %</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>White</td>
<td>22%</td>
<td>11%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mixed/multiple ethnic group</td>
<td>9%</td>
<td>16%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asian/Asian British</td>
<td>33%</td>
<td>6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Black/African/Caribbean British</td>
<td>23%</td>
<td>9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other ethnic group</td>
<td>9%</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

There is clear disproportionality across broad ethnic categories, but within these, specific ethnic groups are overrepresented: for example, within Black/Black British the subcategory ‘Other Black’ makes up 7% of the 10-17 total population but 30% of the serious young offenders.

According to research by the Home Office (2019), socioeconomic status/social class is a significant indicator for behaviours relating to serious violence like gang membership, but not for weapon carrying/use. This adds to research which has found no significant relationship between ethnicity and weapon carrying/use.

Ministry of Justice - Race in the criminal justice system 2016: Victims tables. 2 Bespoke analysis of London Borough (anonymised) YOT data, most serious young offenders defined as those sentenced in 2017/18 for offences with a gravity score 6+. 3 Analysis of London-wide data (2019) identifies a significant relationship between serious youth violence victimisation and a range of public health factors, including poverty deprivation.
There is evidence to suggest that violence is concentrated in very small areas – a few streets or less. Larger geographical targeting may overlook particular circumstances and drivers.

**Domestic**

- According to Massey et al (2019), over two-thirds (69%) of knife-enabled homicides in London in 2017/2018 occurred in just 1.4% of all lower super output areas, whereas knife-enabled assault occurred in 42%. Areas where six or more knife-enabled assaults had been committed in the previous year were 14 times more likely than areas with only one assault to have a homicide the following year.
- Kearns et al (2019) found that a concentration of recently active offenders in an area has a positive effect upon the subsequent number of violent crimes committed by resident offenders both inside and outside of the neighbourhood.

**International**

- Braga et al (2010) found that gun violence in Boston is intensely concentrated in few street segments and intersections. Those sites with volatile trajectories of violence over time account for just three per cent of segments / intersections, but over half of violent gun incidents.
- A study in New Jersey conducted by Schnell et al (2018) found that street violence persistently concentrates at a few micro-places over time. Another study from 2017 found that most variability in violence was at street-level, rather than neighbourhood.
- Reviewing Chicago-based homicides, Morenoff et al (2001) concluded that: “spatial proximity to homicide is strongly related to increased homicide rates”, and that “spatial dynamics coupled with neighbourhood inequalities...are consequential for explaining urban violence”.

Research by Kirchmaier on a sample of 496 murders in London (2014-2018), shows heavy concentration around single estates and streets within London: ten were located on or near two single streets. This street-level concentration of violence is supported by research on the exponential decay of crime away from “gang areas” (i.e. the close relationship between levels of violent and sexual crime, and proximity to a gang).
Though subject to significant recording differences, international data suggests that a reversal in long-term declines for homicide is not a phenomenon specific to England and Wales.

In the early part of the current decade, the number of homicides fell in most selected countries...

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country</th>
<th>Change (%) in number of homicides by country, 2010 - 2014***</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Spain</td>
<td>-19%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Netherlands</td>
<td>-15%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>England and Wales</td>
<td>-12%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Italy</td>
<td>-10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Canada</td>
<td>-6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>US</td>
<td>-4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sweden</td>
<td>-4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Germany</td>
<td>-2%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

...however, this trend has since been reversed for most large Western countries, including France, Germany, and the US.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country</th>
<th>Change (%) in number of homicides by country, 2014 - 2018**</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Italy*</td>
<td>-23%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Finland</td>
<td>-16%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Denmark</td>
<td>-14%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scotland</td>
<td>-8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Australia</td>
<td>-6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spain*</td>
<td>-5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>France</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Netherlands*</td>
<td>4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Germany</td>
<td>7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>US*</td>
<td>13%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Canada*</td>
<td>22%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>England and Wales</td>
<td>33%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sweden</td>
<td>42%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*** [Domestic] ONS - Appendix tables: homicide in England and Wales (Table 1), (International) See Annex.

** For countries marked with an asterisk, percentage changes have been calculated from 2014 to 2017, due to 2018 data not yet being published.

*For a full breakdown of figures and methodology used to calculate figures for each country (including the list of offences included), please see Annex. Figures for Australia relate to the number of victims, rather than the number of individual offences.
However, the UK is an outlier for robbery, being the only major Western country to experience large rises over the last year five years.

### Change (% in number of robberies by country, 2010 - 2014***

- **Netherlands**: -52%
- **Scotland**: -40%
- **Australia**: -32%
- **Denmark**: -32%
- **Canada**: -31%
- **England and Wales**: -23%
- **Spain**: -16%
- **US**: -13%
- **Sweden**: -9%
- **France**: -6%
- **Germany**: -6%
- **Italy**: 16%

### Change (% in number of robberies by country, 2014 - 2018**

- **France**: -24%
- **Italy**: -22%
- **Denmark**: -21%
- **Germany**: -19%
- **Netherlands**: -14%
- **Spain**: -13%
- **US**: -1%
- **Finnland**: 1%
- **Australia**: 2%
- **Sweden**: 3%
- **Scotland**: 4%
- **Canada**: 9%
- **England and Wales**: 33%

This has been matched by sharp falls in the charge rate for robbery (see Chapter 4D).

---

1. (Domestic) ONS - Recorded crime at Police Force Area level (including pivot table), (International) See Annex.
2. For countries marked with an asterisk, percentage changes have been calculated from 2014 to 2017, due to 2018 data not yet being published.
3. For a full breakdown of figures and methodology used to calculate figures for each country (including the list of offences included), please see Annex. Figures for Australia relate to the number of victims, rather than the number of individual offences.
The reasons behind this exceptional position are unclear. However, it is noteworthy that the UK is also an outlier for prevalence of smartphones and in terms of the scale of police cuts.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Rank</th>
<th>Smartphone penetration (%)</th>
<th>Reduction in number of police officers (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>UK: 82.2</td>
<td>England and Wales: -11.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Netherlands: 79.3</td>
<td>Spain: -6.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Sweden: 78.8</td>
<td>Denmark: -4.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Germany: 78.8</td>
<td>Sweden: -1.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>USA: 77.0</td>
<td>Italy: -0.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>France: 76.0</td>
<td>Scotland: +0.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Spain: 72.5</td>
<td>Germany: +0.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Canada: 72.1</td>
<td>France: +13.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Australia: 68.6</td>
<td>Netherlands: +20.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>Italy: 58.0</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The data source Eurostat warn against making direct comparisons on reductions to police staff, and data is only available for the selected European countries. They are listed here for illustrative purposes.

Serious violence (including murder and attempted murder) is rising, and robbery (especially weapon-enabled forms) is increasing rapidly. Further work remains to ascertain a fuller picture of the scale of harm, the reasons for shifts, and the profile of those involved.

- What is the true scale of harm inflicted by serious violence, and how far do published statistics underestimate the true scale of the challenge?
- What is the profile of serious violence outside of London? How has this profile shifted over recent years?
- How might we improve our estimate of the number of individuals at risk of serious violence?
- What is the role of women and girls within serious violence, and how far is ethnic disproportionality a function of entrenched socioeconomic disadvantage?
- Why has the UK witnessed large increases in robbery in contrast with other major Western countries? What are the domestic factors driving this shift, and do they revolve around smartphone penetration or cuts to police numbers?
4. What the trends reveal about what is underneath the presenting problem
This section explores the dynamics underneath the presenting problem: digging into the drivers and what is known about the interaction between them.

This section explores the interactions in four key areas:

- **Drugs**: drugs market are changing, becoming associated with increasing exploitation and violence. The lack of enforcement and exploitation of technological advances has allowed these to grow.

- **Vulnerabilities**: we know more about vulnerabilities that increase risks of getting involved in violence and increase chances of criminal and other exploitation.

- **Technology**: and the role it plays as both an accelerant of violence and an enabler of it.

- **CJS effectiveness**: our CJS is failing at every stage, and it is increasingly apparent that organised groups are able to take advantage of this.

In the following slides we explore each of these areas, the trends, gaps in our knowledge and possible interactions to be able to draw a more detailed picture of the problem.
A. Drugs

The drugs market is changing and becoming increasingly associated with violence and exploitation.
Key indicators suggest that supply of cocaine and heroin is up, and purity is increasing. These are the drugs most associated with supply-side violence (especially crack cocaine).

With the price of cocaine and heroin is decreasing, the purity of both drugs has spiked rapidly since 2011.

Meanwhile, the number of seizures of class A and B drugs has fallen dramatically.

Production of cocaine in particular has expanded globally, with available of the drug across Europe “at an all-time high” (EMCDDA, 2019).

The NCA (2019) claim that increased controls on cutting agents may partially account for rising purity, though this appears unlikely given falling cost.

Though a higher quantity of cocaine is being seized, this does not imply more effective enforcement activity, as price/purity data suggest increased availability.
Meanwhile, consumption of these drugs is outstripping consumption of drugs more broadly, especially amongst young people and for crack cocaine. The UK has the highest rate of cocaine use amongst young adults of any country in Europe

Use of all drugs is increasing across all European countries, particularly amongst the young, and is particularly high in the UK

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Change (percentage points) over last five years (16-59 y/o)</th>
<th>Change (percentage points) over last five years (16-24 y/o)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Use of any illicit drug in the last 12 months¹</td>
<td>+0.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Use of a class A drug in the last 12 months</td>
<td>+0.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Use of cocaine (powder / crack) in the last 12 months</td>
<td>+0.3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Normalisation of cocaine usage? According to the EMCDDA (2019), the UK has the highest proportion of adults who have used cocaine at least once in their life (10.7% of adults in the UK vs 5.4% EU average) as well as young adults aged 15-34 (4.7% in the UK have used cocaine in the last year vs. 2.1% EU average).* Wastewater analysis revealed Bristol to have the highest concentration of cocaine in water residues of any city in Europe, doubling over the past five years.

Estimated number of opioid and/or crack cocaine users (OCUs), and rate per 1,000 population aged 15 to 64, England, 2004/05 to 2016/17

The number of OCUs has increased 5% since 2010. Increased use by 35-64 year olds outweighs overall declining use by younger fusers

Between 2011/12 and 2016/17, there was an 8.5 per cent rise in the number of crack cocaine users in England

¹ Home Office - Drug misuse: findings from the 2017 to 2018 CSEW: data tables (Tables 1.02, 1.06, 2.01).
*There is some variation between countries on age categories used in each case. In general, adult refers to the 15-65 age bracket, whilst young adult refers to the 15-34 age bracket.
Factors such as price and purity are affected by changing markets, especially in relation to cocaine. There is some evidence of streamlining in the supply process internationally, and a fragmentation in providers and retailers.

- There has been strong growth in the size of Europe’s cocaine market, affected by a range of factors including online markets and new technologies (e.g. cryptomarkets).

- “The fragmentation of the cocaine trade in Europe appears to have resulted in increased competition among OCGs for national and cross-border territories in cocaine supply and retail. One of the consequences has been an increase in violence and drug-related homicides in a number of European countries, such as Belgium, Italy, the Netherlands and the United Kingdom.” EMCDDA (2018)

- The National Crime Agency (NCA) claim that OCGs have a proven ability to adapt their operating methods and practices, especially over recent years; OCGs are thought to be establishing increased control over parts of the market, reducing retail costs by establishing relationships directly with suppliers and cutting out wholesalers. Recent police intelligence suggests that Albanian gangs in particular are sourcing cocaine from cartels at £17,000 per kilo less than rivals paid through wholesalers (The Guardian, 2019).

- The involvement of Albanian gangs / OCGs may have displaced domestic OCGs, accompanied by the ‘uberisation’ of parts of the market for class A drugs – ‘anytime, anywhere’ and ‘2-for-1’ offers.

"Some gangs evolve to be ‘sole suppliers’ in a given domain (drugs, firearms) and come to resemble OCGs"

"Evidence of market streamlining with OCGs / gangs (e.g. Albanian) negotiating directly with producers"

"We require further clarification on changes to the ‘middle’ market, especially surrounding the relationship between imports, OCGs, and gangs"

---

1 Whittaker, Dr Andrew (London South Bank University) (June 2018). From Postcodes to Profit: How gangs have changed in Waltham Forest; Metropolitan Police Service analysis
There is a well-established link between drugs markets and violence. Domestic research suggests that some street gangs have evolved into business-like enterprises focused on profits from the drugs trade, with violence an important currency to securing their business models.

Practitioners¹ reported their experience of very visible drug markets and violence: users and dealers alike are exposed to risky environments driven by the need to feed drug habits or sell drugs. Some areas have seen the resurgence of increasingly visible drugs markets, and it was suggested that this was linked to the volume of cocaine/heroin that has to be moved, necessitating more open dealing. Increased poverty may be expanding the pool of people willing to get involved for financial reasons and the emergence of younger dealers into these settings, who may have less self-regulation, could be increasing the propensity for violence.

Some expressed the view that the powder cocaine market - which targets a more affluent, less stigmatised, ‘customer’ - does not drive violence in the same way. However, there is minimal understanding as to why, relying as it does on an illicit economy which operates by the same rules as the crack cocaine market.

There is also an established and evidenced link² between violence and illicit economies, such as the sale of Class A drugs and as street groups/gangs evolve into more business-like models.

Some areas have seen the resurgence of increasingly visible drugs markets, and it was suggested that this was linked to the volume of cocaine/heroin that has to be moved, necessitating more open dealing. Increased poverty may be expanding the pool of people willing to get involved for financial reasons and the emergence of younger dealers into these settings, who may have less self-regulation, could be increasing the propensity for violence.

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¹ For this research, Crest engaged with law enforcement and police officers and analysts to examine drug markets trends and their relationship to serious violence. This research will be expanded in a subsequent report.

² Whittaker, Dr Andrew (London South Bank University) (June 2018). From Postcodes to Profit: How gangs have changed in Waltham Forest; other examples in: Home Office, Serious Violence Strategy (2018)
County lines as a model of drug distribution now affects most / all police force areas and – though small as a proportion of the total drugs market – is strongly associated with violence

- ‘County lines’ involves gangs / organised criminal networks exporting drugs into new markets around the country, facilitated through young individuals working from dedicated mobile phone / social media ‘lines’
- According to the NCA (2018), the tactic is popular among groups from large urban areas eager to expand out of saturated markets: 15 per cent of individual deal lines known to police originate from the Metropolitan Police, followed by the West Midlands Police (nine per cent)
- In 2017, evidence of county lines activity was detected in 37 out of 42 police forces, with 34 and 13 forces experiencing importing and exporting of county lines respectively
- There are c. 1,000 branded lines (2018), primarily supplying crack and heroin. These can be quite transient – emerging, disappearing, then returning
- An individual deal line can make profits exceeding £800,000 per year. Multiplying the number of branded lines (c. 1000) by £600,000 (scaled down by one-quarter) gives a profit value of £600 million. The overall size of the illicit drugs trade in 2008 (extending beyond profit) was estimated to be £5.3 billion
Changes in the structure of drugs markets, increased supply and a ruthless focus on economic profits appear to be affecting levels of serious violence. We will explore the relationship between this business model, the wider drugs market and serious violence in more depth.

- There appear to be shifts in the structure of the ‘middle’ market for some drugs – but to what extent is this driving violence, and for what reasons?

- Are changes in the ‘retail’ end of the drugs market driving violence through less organised, more entrepreneurial dealers, or is the retail end being operated by more organised, less visible ‘controlling’ hands exploiting young dealers? Or are both scenarios true?

- Practitioners agree that the key drugs driving street violence are crack cocaine and heroin through open drug markets and county lines; however, are increases in supply and demand of powder cocaine related to violence and exploitation?

- What is the distinction between organised crime groups (OCGs) and more ‘organised’ gangs?

- What is the profile of the criminals above those who are selling drugs, and those who immediately control more junior individuals?

*Note - The role of technology and social media in fuelling the demand and supply sides of the drugs market will be explored in Chapter 4.*
B. Vulnerabilities

Certain factors increase risks of getting involved in violence and the chances of criminal and other exploitation.
Children who are vulnerable are at higher risk of being exploited, victimised and/or associated with crime; trends in areas of known vulnerability indicate increasing numbers of young people could be at risk.

Evidence from the NSPCC (2018) suggests that vulnerability factors such as being in care and school exclusion are markers for increased risk of offending. Young people in these groups are at higher risk of being exploited.

Long-term declines in permanent school exclusions have begun to reverse, with rates creeping up to 2007/08 levels.

The number and rate of children who are looked after due to abuse or neglect is the highest on record in England.

Long-term increases in children subject to child protection - neglect is the most common reason followed increasingly by emotional abuse.

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3. Children looked after in England (including adoption).
A thematic review (2019) of 60 vulnerable adolescents in Croydon highlights the multitude of vulnerabilities, many from early life, experienced by the children in this sample: criminal activity and victimisation for most of these children take place side-by-side.

**Early life**
- 60/60 (100%) known to Children's Social Care – 52% before age 5 & 75% by 11
- 31 children in this cohort were exposed to a number of adverse experiences throughout their early years

**Multitude of issues with parents**
- 72% absent father
- 42% known domestic abuse in family home
- 37% parent or sibling with criminal convictions
- 27% absent mother
- 28% homelessness

**Primary school**
- 45/60 (75%) were looked after children at some stage in their childhood
- 56/60 (93%) children were previously reported missing – the average age for the first time missing was 13.9 years

**Secondary school/adolescence**
- 19 (31%) received a fixed term exclusion at primary school due to aggressive or disruptive behaviour. Poor transitions made to secondary school.
- 17 went on to receive fixed term exclusions in secondary school; all 19 went on to receive a criminal conviction
- 39/60 (70%) were referred to CAMHS across all ages, with peaks at ages 7 & 11
- 17 went on to receive fixed term exclusions in secondary school; all 19 went on to receive a criminal conviction
- 53% (32/60) attended a secondary Pupil Referral Unit or Alternative Provision setting for part of their education. 28/60 attended the Croydon PRU – average entry in years 9 and 10
- 50% (30/60) had been placed in Secure Units & Young Offender Institutions
- 50/60 (83%) had either cautions, criminal convictions, or both – most commonly drug possession (45/60), 40/60 (67%) suspected knife-related crime. 42/60 (70%) victim of crime, 14/37 victims of knife crime.

The links between adverse childhood experiences (ACEs) and violence:
A study conducted by Public Health Wales (2015) found that people with multiple (four or more) types of adversity were 14 times more likely to have been a victim of violence and 15 times more likely to have committed violence over the last year compared to people with no reported adverse childhood experiences.

Some individuals are obviously far more vulnerable than others, and boys and girls have distinct needs. How can we identify these and intervene?
Promises of wealth/belonging can be very persuasive when children are isolated, alone, sometimes miles from home. The power of grooming is no match for safeguarding, criminal justice or other services.

The growth in out of area placements for children in care (some of whom have been sent away to protect them from exploitation in their home area) increases risk of targeting.

The number of children looked after in children’s homes who went missing increased by 41% between 2015-2018 - largely driven by an increase in missing children in out of area placements (a 75% rise over the period).

An infographic produced by the Children's Society captures this cycle of exploitation.

‘County Lines is a job centre for underachieving young people’
Nequela, speech at the London Academy for Social Justice (16th July 2019)
The targeting of vulnerable children to move and supply drugs at street level turns victims of exploitation into offenders, and sometimes, violent offenders

According to FOI requests submitted by the Children’s Society (2019), the number of 10-17-year-olds arrested for intent to supply drugs – a significant indicator of county lines trafficking – has gone up by 49% outside London, with the number rising from 338 in 2015/16 to 505 in 2017/18.

Practitioners such as the Children’s Society highlight that young people are being pressured into violence to prove loyalty during the ‘testing phase’, and to distract police from higher-level activity (e.g. drug / weapons movement) elsewhere.

According to the Home Office (2015), Section 45 and Schedule 4 of the Modern Slavery Act 2015 make clear that exploited individuals are victims in this situation (backed up by guidance from the Director of Public Prosecutions). However, dealing with this in context remains a huge challenge for policing.

There has been a 50 per cent growth in referrals to the National Referral Mechanism (NRM) for criminal exploitation, possibly due to county lines.
Analysis of serious case reviews from across England and Wales indicates that not all victims of serious violence present to criminal justice agencies: the involvement of many individuals in serious violence may be hidden or haphazard, and may include those who are not visibly vulnerable (e.g. due to the presence of ACEs).

The search parameters for our serious case review analysis were any child over the age of 10 years old since 2014 who had died or was seriously harmed by any of the related factors: CSE, gun violence, knife injury, gang involvement, drug dealing, drug trafficking, homicide and county lines.

There were 16 cases that fit this criteria out of a possible 601.

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1 A total of 601 serious case reviews published between 2014 and 2019 are in the NPCC National case review repository [accessed online 29.07.19 - https://learning.nspcc.org.uk/case-reviews/national-case-review-repository/]

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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Early Life</th>
<th>Primary school</th>
<th>Secondary school/adolescence</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>75% known to Children’s Social Care: 12/16</td>
<td>25% looked after children at some stage in childhood: 4/16</td>
<td>19% placed in secure units &amp; YOIs: 3/16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>69% exposed to a number of adverse experiences throughout their early years: 11/16</td>
<td>31% received fixed term exclusion: 5/16</td>
<td>25% attended a secondary Pupil Referral Unit or alternative provision setting: 4/16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>81% had a multitude of parental issues: 13/16</td>
<td>50% referred to CAMHS: 8/16</td>
<td>25% subject to a Child Protection Plan: 4/16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>13% known to the police by the age of 9: 2/16</td>
<td>31% received cautions, criminal convictions or both: 5/16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>56% exposed to/victim of sexual abuse and exploitation: 9/16</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>37% perpetrator of violent or sexual behaviour/assault: 6/16</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>44% reported missing across all ages: 7/16</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
However children are not the only victims – there is evidence that organised crime groups make the exploitation of vulnerable adults integral to drug dealing operations.

There is a clear link between organised criminal activity, county lines and the exploitation of vulnerable adults.

Those running county line activity drive drug offences for profit and coerce victims to provide the services. Most potential victims referred currently are males aged 15–17, but young females and vulnerable adults are likely to be both underreported and exploited. In 2017, for example, virtually every force that reported the presence of a county line end-point reported cuckooing, more likely to involve vulnerable adults with housing than young people.

“The vulnerable adults targeted are predominantly class A drug addicts but also include the elderly, those with mental or physical health impairments, female sex workers and single mothers”

“County lines groups will target new premises by pursuing vulnerable individuals who attend recovery groups, dependency units and areas associated with those experiencing problems”

- NCA, National Briefing Report: County Lines Violence, Exploitation & Drug Supply 2017

Beyond county lines, victims are exploited in forced begging, cannabis cultivation, and low-value, high-frequency acquisitive crime.

Prominent class A drug addicts but also include the elderly, those with mental or physical health impairments, female sex workers and single mothers.

County lines groups will target new premises by pursuing vulnerable individuals who attend recovery groups, dependency units and areas associated with those experiencing problems.

- NCA, National Briefing Report: County Lines Violence, Exploitation & Drug Supply 2017

Although the number of rough sleepers decreased by 2% between 2017-18, since 2010 there has been a huge increase overall (+165%).

There is evidence that high-risk drug using is increasing (p. 38) and drug-related deaths are rising, with deaths related to heroin and cocaine having doubled since their low in 2011.

Criminals appear to be exploiting increasing levels of vulnerability to draw individuals into drug markets and violence. Further research will aim to improve understanding in this area, and develop appropriate policy to protect vulnerable groups (including girls)

- Given the blurring of the lines between victim and offender, do the legal, policy, practice and attitudinal barriers in policing, safeguarding and criminal justice services need to be reformed?

- Should strategies to deal violence against women and girls and domestic violence be made integral to violence reduction, given the significant experience of domestic violence of many of those caught up in violence?

- To what extent are vulnerable adults also being exploited and involved in serious violence?

- As perpetrators become ever more vigilant for opportunities to exploit and manipulate, might we see the growth of new engineered vulnerabilities?
C. Technology

Technology is enabling and accelerating the spread of serious violence
Technology has served to exacerbate certain behaviours that have fuelled recent rises in serious violence. This ranges from accelerated drug supply through to the amplification of rivalries and threats

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Amplifying threats</th>
<th>Accelerating supply</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>● Music videos on YouTube can be used to quickly amplify rivalries and threats between groups and individuals</td>
<td>● Online markets mean customers receive aggressive marketing and high-speed delivery, and can pick from multiple sellers (driving competition and rivalries)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>● Large viewership for taunts and threats can escalate the perceived impact on status, and the importance of the threat</td>
<td>● According to the Global Drugs Survey, it takes longer to receive a pizza than cocaine in the UK, driving higher consumption. “Rapid delivery may lead some people to use more cocaine more often and, hence, more easily losing control over their use”.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>● Individuals / gangs can communicate and play out rivalries at a quicker speed and with more intensity online, due to the reduced barriers (e.g. geographical) to interaction</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Enabling recruitment / exploitation</th>
<th>Avoiding enforcement</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>● Social media is increasingly used to recruit new gang members / drug sellers through glamourised imagery. This can take the form of music videos distributed through sometimes legitimate platforms</td>
<td>● Drug suppliers and users have adapted to changing law enforcement as well as tech landscapes: traditional (and risky) street dealing is no longer necessary</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>● Technology including tracking apps can allow more senior gang / OCG members to monitor and control juniors</td>
<td>● Encrypted phone technology is used by ‘county lines’ criminals, with WhatsApp and similar platforms limiting intelligence gathering opportunities through a lack of billing data. Similarly, contact details can be cloned/stored on cloud systems, limiting the impact of enforcement activity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>● Violence can be used to seize drug contacts – e.g. robbery of a SIM card turning into a double murder</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
An example of this relates to gangs in London, where academic research identifies ‘expressive’ and ‘instrumental’ advantages from social media, allowing members to secure status whilst facilitating drug supply through enhanced reputation and easier recruitment.

Research from Storrod and Densley (2017)\(^1\) found that London-based gangs involved in drug supply use social media to promote luxurious lifestyles.

This has clear links to established patterns in violence at every stage:

- According to Storrod and Densley, “gangs monitor online spaces much like physical territory”, enforcing reputation.
- Younger members are tracked via GPS to ensure compliance.
- Money from drug sale is laundered through the costs of music production, including paying cameramen.
- Images of train tickets are posted online to build status connected with county lines, including for recruitment.
- Social media is used to maintain / raise status for imprisoned members.
- Girls are given attention and exploited, e.g. to test new lines or punish boyfriends.

\(^1\) Storrod, Michelle L.; Densley, James A (2017). "'Going viral' and 'Going country': the expressive and instrumental activities of street gangs on social media". Journal of Youth Studies, 20(6), 677-696.

\(^2\) Moisi, Evangelina (2019). "County Lines: The Modern Cyber Slaves of Britain's Drug-Trafficking Networks".

Moisi (2019)\(^2\) supports this point within the area of county lines.
Technology is enabling and accelerating forms of serious violence in different ways, including through drug sale. We will seek to understand to what extent this represents a truly new threat, and how policy can react to a rapidly changing landscape.

- To what extent have developments in social media driven rises in serious violence, or is it simply a shift in *modus operandi* on the part of gangs and those involved in serious violence?

- How do new technologies intersect with turf wars? Do groups involved in county lines conflict with each other for territory online before meeting in person?

- To what extent have new technologies brought rival groups into contact with each other, and has this affected levels of inter-group violence?

- Has accelerated drug delivery simply been a market development, or has it affected violence in direct or indirect ways?
D. Safeguarding and criminal justice effectiveness

Safeguarding agencies and the CJS are struggling to respond to current threats
Policing and law enforcement are struggling to deal with changing demand. The de-prioritisation of drugs (that may feed serious violence further down the line) and shrinking frontline resources have led to diminishing levels of enforcement.

The NCA is overwhelmed
Despite an increased level of threat, the Strategic Priorities set by the Home Secretary for the NCA fail to explicitly emphasise significant challenges including the supply and demand for drugs.

Failure to strategically prioritise
Since 2012 only 8/42 (19%) forces listed drugs as a top priority.

Diminished levels of enforcement

Failure to strategically prioritise

Changing response approaches
In efforts to tackle demand, policing priorities have moved away from low-level offending to tackle complex crimes like cyber or sexual offences: leading to the deprioritisation of ‘lower-harm’ offences that may feed serious offending further down the line.

Shrinking frontline policing
With shrinking budgets, police numbers have fallen 20% in the last decade. Neighbourhood policing has collapsed, reducing the quality of local intelligence and prevention.

Fall in stop and search
Numbers of stop and searches have fallen as knife crime, gun crime and homicide have risen (although stop and searches also fell between 2010/11 and 2013/14, when knife crime was also falling).

Stretched police are responding to high harm, leaving low-level crime/offending to escalate?

1 Crest carried out bespoke analysis of Police and Crime Plans and looked at force strategies, where available in the public domain.
Stop and search has become highly politicised. As an enforcement tactic, its use has decreased over recent years, due to concerns about disproportionality in its application. Resultant arrests have also fallen.

The number of searches / arrests have fallen, though a greater proportion of searches are leading to arrest.

- Though use of stop and search powers was already falling, reforms to the code of practice in 2014 accelerated the decline. This began to impact on the number of arrests, including for serious offences; for example, arrests for offensive weapons under PACE fell by 5,768 between 2014 and 2018.

- The number of searches is likely to rise in 2019, due to increased use in London and reported rises in use by other forces (reported in The Guardian (2019)).

“We must get beyond the binary ... We don't have enough police officers out there and have not used stop and search adequately or sufficiently. And that has been significantly because of the politicisation of the power”

“My position on stop and search is clear: it saves lives. But it's not a long-term solution.”

- John Sutherland (former Chief Superintendent, Metropolitan Police). Islington Gazette (2018)

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1 Home Office - Stop and search statistics data tables: police powers and procedures year ending 31 March 2018
Charge and arrest rates have collapsed whilst the time from offence to charge has steadily increased, even for the most serious crime types, reducing both the ‘swiftness’ and ‘certainty’ of punishment...

...and the increasing time from offence to charge has added to rising court waiting times: painting a concerning picture within the context of additional police and investigatory demand.

In the year ending March 2018, only 12.7 per cent of total recorded crime led to arrest, whilst only 9.1 per cent of offences led to charge (falling to 7.8 per cent in 2019). This has fallen from 31.6 per cent and 16.2 per cent respectively in 2011.

Agencies face the challenge of rising investigatory complexity: the CPS highlight increased volumes of digital data as a factor behind declining charge rates and MPS Commissioner Cressida Dick has called for technological solutions to deal with rising complexity, including more violent and sexual assault cases (taking a long time to clear). Police are increasingly forced to deal with demand relating to mental health.

1 Home Office - Arrest statistics data tables: police powers and procedures, TA_01a; HO - Crime outcomes in England and Wales: data tables, T2.1 / 2.3; ONS - Recorded Crime Data at police force area level. *Arrest data for Lancashire has been excluded due to a lack of data for 2017/18.

Charge rates for serious violence are declining, with robbery at particularly low rates

Charge rates have declined across the different types of serious violence...

...and an already low charge rate for robbery decreases further when limited to personal robbery

Selected serious violent offences by % charged, years ending March 2015 - 2019

Charge rates have declined across the different types of serious violence, with robbery at particularly low rates.

The overwhelming majority of recorded robberies relate to the taking of personal, rather than business property. Whilst the overall charge rate is 7.4%, this falls to 6.2% for personal robbery, inflated by an 18.6% charge rate for business robbery.

An FOI to West Midlands Police starkly demonstrates how charge rates have plummeted: between 2013-18 recorded crimes of threats to kill increased by 232% (from 337 to 1,119) whilst the proportion charged fell from 37% to 14%. This falling charge rate is replicated nationally across different serious violent offences. Whilst some of this may be ascribable to delayed investigations (with recorded crime included for more recent years), this is unlikely to account for the continued and severe long-term falls.

1 Home Office - Outcomes open data tables (years ending March 2015 - 2019).
2 Home Office - Police recorded crime open data Police Force Area data tables from year ending March 2013.
The challenges experienced across the criminal justice system, as stripped back services attempt to deal with increasingly complex demand, are exemplified when looking at the state of prisons: increasingly unsafe and failing to rehabilitate.

Prisons act as a microcosm for the world of violence:
Assaults and rates of harm are at their highest since records began

In November 2018 the former Justice Secretary David Gauke said “prison walls alone are no longer effective in stopping crime - inside or outside of prison.”

Illegal drug use is rife and rising, affecting at least 1 in 5 prisoners – likely to be higher with the prevalence of Psychoactive Substances (PSs)

In 2018 the former Justice Secretary David Gauke said “prison walls alone are no longer effective in stopping crime - inside or outside of prison.”

Prisons are becoming increasingly unsafe: the number and rates of deaths have risen continuously

Deaths in prison custody and rate per 1,000 prisoners, 1978-2018

There has been more than a five fold increase in drug finds in prisons since 2011, whilst weapon finds have more than doubled in two years

The largest increases have been in finds of class A drugs, which have quadrupled between 2016 - 2018

Safeguarding services are also struggling, having seen a significant reorientation of resources, a historical lack of local leadership and social work practices which do not reflect real life circumstances: currently they are failing to prevent criminals exploiting vulnerable children.

Cuts to non-statutory children’s services make children more vulnerable

Social Work practices do not always fit the needs of the children, and safeguarding governance is not sufficiently robust

Agencies have insufficient understanding of the behaviours of exploited older children, leading to inadequate responses:

“We still found some cases when children’s social care teams closed children’s cases prematurely because children did not engage with professionals, even when there was clear evidence of exploitation and high levels of risk. Professionals need to understand the impact of exploitation and patterns of engagement and disengagement of older vulnerable children. They need to ‘stay with’ the child.”

- Joint inspection into the multi-agency response to child exploitation and children missing from home, care or education

LSCBs have been overhauled recently:

“LSCBs were essentially predicated on inter-familial child abuse and are not in a good position to deal effectively with a remit to coordinate services and ensure their effectiveness across a spectrum encompassing child protection, safeguarding and wellbeing. They have neither the capacity nor resources to do so.”

- Wood review of the role and functions of Local Safeguarding Children Boards

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There has been a major reorientation of spending on children’s services. Around half of total children’s services spending now goes on the 75,420 looked-after children (whose numbers have increased by 25 per cent since 2006).

LA spending on services for young people has decreased by 56%, and youth justice by 23%
Recognising and responding to criminal exploitation as a key MO of the drugs trade is vital to effective policing, criminal justice and safeguarding services. Mistakes in tackling CSE which left children and young adults exposed to horrifying violence and abuse, must not be repeated.

An independent inquiry found that in Rotherham, there were at least 1,400 victims of CSE between 1997 and 2013. The police and local authority were found to have systematically ignored abuse, with an embedded culture of denial and a belief that ‘it could not happen here’. Further analysis by Dame Louise Casey also found:

- A tendency to blame victims for their situation with families finding themselves also viewed as part of the problem
- A distinct lack of professional curiosity and a failure to use evidence of sexual abuse as intelligence to pursue perpetrators
- Failure to understand the grooming process as an absence of self-control; assuming children were capable of choosing a lifestyle on the margins of society, among adults who prey upon them
- Failure to use tools and powers available as a lever to stop behaviour
- Signs were not spotted – children going missing from education and from care homes were not identified as being at risk. Multiple missing episodes were treated less seriously than a single occurrence, precisely because the children caused concern so often

An HMICFRS thematic inspection into child sexual abuse (CSA) included an addendum on tackling criminal exploitation found evidence of similar attitudes and practices:

- Children are not always treated as victims
- Children are often groomed and/or tricked into working before they recognise the dangers… [and] often before parents or professionals realise what is happening
- The view in some areas: that ‘this does not happen here’, whereas county lines in which CCE is inherent is in all parts of the country
- Some services were not curious enough about this group of children: they had not shared and interrogated the intelligence they had about highly vulnerable children that would have helped them to see patterns of exploitation
- Highlighted the importance of police and others making good use of civil orders, such as community protection notices and child abduction warning notices, to safeguard vulnerable children

“We must ensure that the mistakes that some partners made in being slow to recognise the risk of child sexual exploitation are not repeated.”

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There are concerning signs that safeguarding and criminal justice services are struggling to meet the demands that serious violence places upon them. The scale of this struggle will be explored further, especially relating to potentially reduced deterrence.

- To what extent have the Home Office, police forces and / or PCCs “taken their eye off the ball” on drugs in recent years? If true, to what extent has this eroded police intelligence and allowed drug traffickers and dealers to develop their businesses?

- Is there a perceived absence of police presence – whether through declining numbers, falling arrest/charge rates or reductions in stop and search – and has this reduced deterrence?

- If police presence has reduced, what impact has this had on the number of children being referred to diversion, early help and statutory safeguarding support (given that the police tend to be a major referral route)?

- How can criminal justice and safeguarding services better deal with the crossover between victims and offenders, with children being exploited and manipulated into criminal behaviour?

- To what extent are unprecedented levels of violence in the prison system linked to broader serious violence, including through the effect on rehabilitation? How does this relate to drugs?

*I know I ain’t gonna get caught. They don’t even bother to come out no more*  
Sue Roberts, “The London killings of 2018”
4. Conclusions and next steps
Serious violence is the presenting issue but there are wider national policy, practice and societal changes which have created a perfect storm – serious violence finds fertile ground to evolve in the spaces where public services have an increasingly fragile hold.

The drugs market supply-side is changing – but in ways that are not clear; there is a growing market for drugs, through growing drug dependency and for recreational purposes, as barriers to access drugs are getting lower.

Violent robbery is also rising at an alarming rate, possibly acting an entry point for violent crime.

The systematic criminal exploitation of children and vulnerable people adds a further dimension to an already complex picture, making victims of people who are also committing crime: it challenges the concept of victimisation; children who need help don’t seek help; criminals can exploit their fear; and no-one reports.

The use of technology facilitates both the supply and demand for drugs and those involved in selling drugs and other criminality are able to use social media both to market themselves and to threaten others.

Years of austerity have left public services less able to respond including by providing safe spaces; they are also less able to support those at risk, and alongside reductions in youth services (including youth justice) the collapse of community policing has reduced intelligence.

There is less enforcement (including stop and search) which has loosened constraints on those tempted to carry weapons.

Policing has prioritised issues other than drugs over recent years with increases in public protection work.

Children and vulnerable adults are slipping through the net: the siloed nature of public services makes it hard to tackle this multifaceted problem which requires multi-agency approaches across disciplines and across geographical areas.

Violence tends to be very localised and often happens in communities where police are mistrusted due to historic over-policing and under-protection, making it harder to get to grips with the problem.
The next stages of our serious violence programme will examine the following questions and issues in greater depth (1/2)

What is the role of drugs markets?
- There appear to be shifts in the structure of the ‘middle’ market for some drugs – but to what extent is this driving violence, and for what reasons?
- Are changes in the ‘retail’ end of the drugs market driving violence through less organised, more entrepreneurial dealers, or is the retail end being operated by more organised, less visible ‘controlling’ hands exploiting young dealers? Or are both scenarios true?
- Practitioners agree that the key drugs driving street violence are crack cocaine and heroin through open drug markets and county lines; however, are increases in demand and supply of powder cocaine related to violence and exploitation?
- What is the distinction between organised crime groups (OCGs) and more ‘organised’ gangs?
- What is the profile of the criminals above those who are selling drugs, and those who immediately control more junior individuals?

Why are safeguarding and criminal justice services struggling to meet the demands that serious violence places upon them?
- Have the Home Office, police forces and PCCs “taken their eye off the ball” on drugs in recent years? And to what extent has this eroded police intelligence and allowed drug traffickers and dealers to develop their businesses?
- Has reduced police presence – whether through declining numbers, falling arrest/charge rates or reductions in stop and search – also reduced deterrence?
- To what extent are unprecedented levels of violence in the prison system linked to broader serious violence, including through the effect on rehabilitation? How does this relate to drugs?

How has technology created opportunities for criminals?
- To what extent have developments in social media driven rises in serious violence, or do they simply represent a shift in modus operandi on the part of gangs and those involved in serious violence?
- How do new technologies intersect with turf wars? Do groups involved in county lines conflict with each other for territory online before meeting in person?
- To what extent have new technologies brought rival groups into contact with each other, and has this affected levels of inter-group violence?
- Has accelerated drug delivery simply been a market development, or has it affected violence in direct or indirect ways?
The next stages of our serious violence programme will examine the following questions and issues in greater depth (2/2)

**Trends**

- What is the true scale of harm inflicted by serious violence, and how far do published statistics underestimate the true scale of the challenge?
- Why has the UK witnessed large increases in robbery in contrast with other major Western countries? What are the domestic factors driving this shift, and do they revolve around smartphone penetration or cuts to police numbers?
- What is the role of women and girls within serious violence, and how far is ethnic disproportionality a function of entrenched socioeconomic disadvantage?
- How might we improve our estimate of the number of individuals at risk of serious violence?

**Vulnerability**

- The blurring of the lines between victim and offender raise questions about the how the legal, policy and practice structures in policing, safeguarding and criminal justice facilitate or impede a more effective response to those affected.
- Has a reduced police presence also had an impact on the number of children being referred to diversion, early help and statutory safeguarding support (given that the police tend to be a major referral route)?
- To what extent are vulnerable adults also being exploited and involved in serious violence?
- Given the links between domestic violence growing up and subsequent involvement in violence, how should strategies to deal violence against women and girls and domestic violence be integrated?
- As perpetrators become ever more vigilant for opportunities to exploit and manipulate, might we see the growth of new engineered vulnerabilities?
Annex I: Methodology for estimating the population at risk
We set out to quantify how many children are at risk of becoming victims of serious violence, estimating the size of different groups within the general population who have a greater likelihood of victimisation are at risk of serious violence.

With no definition of serious violence or an estimate for the number at risk of it, we look to understand how many children (10-17) in a single year we think suffer from what we can measure to be serious violence.

Existing evidence of factors or characteristics that are known to be linked to those who experience serious violence have been used to identify existing data sets to quantify the size of different groups in the population who possess characteristics (or indicative risk factors.) We can use these to estimate the size of the group in the wider population who are at risk of becoming a victim of serious violence.

In lieu of a definition of either (a) serious violence or (b) being at risk, we have adopted the following terms to define serious violence:

a. “Serious violence” relates to the possibility of:
   - becoming a victim of violence (with/without injury), robbery, sexual assault
   - being a perpetrator of possession of weapons offences (as an indicator of heightened risk for those who carry and are prepared to use weapons against others.)

b. “Being at risk”
   - We use a series of empirical descriptors or ‘group characteristics’ to quantify the size of certain groups in the population who may be at more or less risk of serious violence. These are subcategories of risk (see table 1)

Based on existing data and evidence about risk, we have assumed and assigned a relative scale to different groups based on various characteristics: from 1 (10-17 population) to 10 (homicide victims)

At the very maximum, the population at risk is the total number of children in the UK. At a minimum those at risk must number those victims of homicide aged 10-17. Everyone in that set has suffered serious violence, but if we count just this population alone, we have missed those who we know from research or that we can postulate are at risk of serious violence that results in other injury or experience.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Group characteristic</th>
<th>Relative scale (1 - 10)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Base population (10-17)</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Excluded from school (temp or fixed)</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Child on a protection plan</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Know a member of a street gang</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Looked after child for 12+ months</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Looked after child and convicted offender</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Convicted offender</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Victims of any violence (CSEW)</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Victims of serious offences (PRC)</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Victims of knife-related offences (PRC)</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Victims of serious violence (wounding) (CSEW)</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Being a member of a gang</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Carry a knife as gang member</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Victims of homicide (and related) offences</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 1: Population categories and relative scale
Working from this scale, we used the size of the demographic groups to produce overall estimates for the number of those affected. We provide a set of different combinations to account for likely overlaps between the members of each group.

We have adapted data collected for other purposes, from a range of sources, to quantify the size of groups with specific characteristics and how they might overlap:

The groups are collected into two populations: one which incorporates those ranked 6 and above on the relative scale, and those ranked 7 and above. Below illustrates the population ranked 7 and above:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Group Ref</th>
<th>Group characteristic</th>
<th>Size</th>
<th>% of base population</th>
<th>Overlaps or potential overlaps?</th>
<th>Relative scale (1-10)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>Base population</td>
<td>5,400,000</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>AL</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>Excluded from school (temp or fixed)</td>
<td>326,925</td>
<td>3.0</td>
<td>B N D E B</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>Children on a protection plan</td>
<td>18,030</td>
<td>0.33</td>
<td>B N</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N</td>
<td>Know a member of a street gang</td>
<td>386,600</td>
<td>7.2</td>
<td>B C D E F G</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D</td>
<td>Looked after children for 12-months</td>
<td>36,770</td>
<td>0.88</td>
<td>E N</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E</td>
<td>Looked after children – convicted offenders</td>
<td>1,610</td>
<td>0.028</td>
<td>D J K</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>K</td>
<td>Risk associated to be an offender</td>
<td>44,763</td>
<td>0.83</td>
<td>E G H L M</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F</td>
<td>Victim of violence (wide definition)</td>
<td>145,000</td>
<td>2.99</td>
<td>G H I M K L</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H</td>
<td>Victims linked to serious offence</td>
<td>7,944</td>
<td>0.147</td>
<td>F G</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I</td>
<td>Victims linked to knife/short related offence</td>
<td>8,403</td>
<td>0.156</td>
<td>F G</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>G</td>
<td>Victim of violence (recorded)</td>
<td>43,500</td>
<td>0.8</td>
<td>M F G</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>L</td>
<td>Being a member of a gang</td>
<td>37,800</td>
<td>0.7</td>
<td>K</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M</td>
<td>Carrying knife as gang member</td>
<td>27,000</td>
<td>0.5</td>
<td>L J H G</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>J</td>
<td>Victims of homicide related offences (Murder, attempted murder, kidnapping, conspiracy to murder, manslaughter)</td>
<td>158</td>
<td>0.00093</td>
<td>F G</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Assumed minimum population size at risk assumes G, J, L and M all overlap. G: The number is at least the estimated number of victims of violence with wounding: 43,500.

Assumed maximum population size at risk assumes populations of G, J, L and M are distinct, and include different individuals, the estimated number is the aggregate figure of: 108,458.

J: Victims of homicide related offences (Murder, attempted murder, kidnapping, conspiracy to murder, manslaughter).

L: Number who identify as being a member of a street gang.

M: Number who carry knife as gang member.

Relative scale:
- Estimated population size (7 - 26)
- Aggregated: 108,458, 269,806
- Max: 43,500, 145,000
In particular, we identified two populations working from different boundaries on the relative scale. Within those populations, a lower estimate (assuming all groups in each population overlap) and a higher estimate (assuming all of the individuals in each group in the population are unique) are provided to account for data issues.

Using the available data combined with our relative scale, we can identify two populations using different lower boundaries on the relative scale: one encompasses groups with a mark of seven and above, and the other, a wider group of those with a mark of six and above.

The minimum and aggregate estimates are intended to account for data issues - the number at risk is likely to be somewhere between these estimates:

**Relative scale ≥7**
- **1a = minimum**: 43,500 (each risk population overlaps, the largest group is the minimum size)
- **1b = aggregate**: 108,458 (each risk population is distinct, equates to the combination of each)

**Relative scale ≥6**
- **2a = minimum**: 145,000 (each risk population overlaps, the largest group is the minimum size)
- **2b = aggregate**: 269,805 (each risk population is distinct, equates to the combination of each)
Thank you

For more information please contact
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