

# **UK Missing Persons Bureau**

## Missing Persons High Level Data Report 2013-14

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**Leading the UK's fight to cut serious and organised crime**

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## Glossary

### **Absent**

A person not at a place where expected or required to be. From April 2014 the absent category was developed to include the term 'no apparent risk'.

### **Command and Control System**

A system used for the recording and management of information relating to incidents received by a police service control room and the subsequent allocation and management of police resources.

### **COMPACT**

A missing persons case management system in use in 22 police services.

### **Duration missing**

The time between the report of a person first recorded as missing by the police and the time the police are notified that a person has been found or has returned.

### **Found Reports**

Reports completed by the police when a missing person is found or has returned. The content of the found report is based on information from the previously missing person derived from safe and well checks or return home interviews.

### **Harm suffered**

Details of emotional or physical harm including being a victim of crime drawn from found reports in case management systems.

### **Incident**

A single episode of someone being reported missing or absent to the police which is recorded by the police.

### **Individuals**

A person who has been reported missing which is recorded by the police. One person may be recorded as being missing on more than one incident.

### **Missing**

Anyone whose whereabouts cannot be established and where the circumstances are out of character or the context suggests the person maybe subject of a crime or at risk of harm to themselves or another.

### **Missing Persons System**

A case management system used by the police to manage the investigation of missing person cases.

### **Niche**

A Resource Management System also used as a missing persons case management system in use in 8 police services.

## Executive Summary

This high level data report has been produced to provide an overview of *missing*<sup>a</sup> and *absent* person cases for the financial year 2013-14. A full data analysis report and assessment is being prepared and will be published before the end of March 2016.

The data used to produce this report has been taken from both police service *command and control systems* and *missing person systems*. Data has been obtained from 44 services in England, Wales and Scotland. Data from Police Service Northern Ireland (PSNI) is not available<sup>b</sup>.

The changes to the definition of a missing person and the introduction of the absent category were introduced in April 2013. 16 police services were using the absent category by the end of 2013-14.

Preliminary analysis of data provided for 2013-14 shows a total of 307,172 missing incidents recorded by the police in England, Wales and Scotland. This represents a small increase in the number of missing person incidents, in comparison with the previous year. There were 1,054 more calls recorded in 2013/14 than in 2012/13 a difference of 0.3%.

This is the first year in the last four years where an increase has been noted. The full report will include an analysis and an assessment of the reasons for this increase.

For the first time every police service has been able to provide data on people going missing as well as missing *incidents*. A detailed demographic breakdown of the missing picture is possible with police services providing data relating to child and adults. As in previous years, the gender split shows that overall more men and boys (53%) go missing than women and girls (46%)<sup>c</sup>. Looking at the under 18 year olds, it can be seen that the reverse applies with 52% of missing children being girls and 48% boys.

An introduction to *duration missing*, *harm suffered* and *absent* is provided in this high level data report.

In the harm suffered table the number of sexual offence victims is shown as 109 in a population of 55,623 cases, 0.2%. It is considered that this figure is well below current estimates of missing children linked to child sexual exploitation.

The missing persons data used in this report is continually being received and reviewed, so could potentially differ when the full report is published.

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<sup>a</sup> Words in *italics* are explained in the glossary

<sup>b</sup> There is no statutory requirement for PSNI to submit data but it does fully engage with the work of the Missing Persons Bureau. On this occasion it was not possible for PSNI to provide a validated data return in the very short turnaround time required.

<sup>c</sup> The remaining 1% are unknown or transgender

## Missing Incidents

**307,172** The number of calls recorded by the police regarding a missing or absent person.

**270,699** The number of calls recorded by police in England and Wales

A decrease compared with last year (273,319)

**36,473** The number of calls recorded by Police Scotland

An increase compared with last year (32,799)<sup>d</sup>

**Table 1: Calls made to a police service in England, Wales and Scotland regarding missing or absent persons 2010 – 2014**

Financial year	Total Missing Incidents
2010/11	326,764 (39,197) <sup>e</sup>
2011/12	313,019 (32,662)
2012/13	306,118 (32,799)
2013/14	307,172 (36,473)

**196,560** The number of incidents created on police service missing persons case management systems, 43 police services provided data.

**132,237** The number of individuals recorded missing on police service missing persons case management systems. 43 police services provided data.

<sup>d</sup> Police Scotland has changed the method in which the yearly figure is calculated. The figures are not directly comparable year on year

<sup>e</sup> Police Scotland total calls

**Table 2: Breakdown of calls, incidents recorded on case management systems and individuals recorded by the police, by police services and by child and adult, in England, Wales and Scotland**

Police Service	Total Calls	Total Adult Incidents	Total Child Incidents	Total Incidents	Total Adult Individuals	Total Child Individuals	Total Individuals
Avon and Somerset	9,252	1,969	1,940	3,909	1,756	1,242	2,998
Bedfordshire	2,449	153	168	321	151	139	290
Cambridgeshire <sup>1</sup>	2,991	367	681	1,048	294	545	839
Cheshire	4,178	1,205	2,530	3,735	1,132	1,648	2,780
City of London	151	23	6	29	23	6	29
Cleveland	3,023	658	2,286	2,944	719	2,204	2,923
Cumbria	1,169	409	555	964	375	410	785
Derbyshire	4,305	853	1,432	2,285	747	842	1,589
Devon and Cornwall	9,201	3,582	4,385	7,967	3,041	2,444	5,485
Dorset	2,071	327	335	662	314	244	558
Durham	1,942	304	743	1,047	292	438	730
Dyfed Powys	2,347	423	511	934	349	339	688
Essex	3,222	1,558	1,785	3,343	1,442	1,108	2,550
Gloucestershire	2,220	884	1,019	1,903	746	596	1,342
Greater Manchester	19,567	7,400	12,486	19,886	6,412	5,701	12,113
Gwent <sup>2</sup>	3,280	592	1,983	2,575	1,646	1,099	2,745
Hampshire	8,516	2,355	5,158	7,513	2,093	2,950	5,043
Hertfordshire	2,704	949	1,060	2,009	803	557	1,360
Humberside	5,042	755	1,423	2,178	539	821	1,360
Kent	10,599	2,973	5,331	8,304	2,393	2,628	5,021
Lancashire	7,607	1,937	7,284	9,221	1,713	2,667	4,380
Leicestershire	3,438	948	1,629	2,577	863	871	1,734
Lincolnshire	2,947	441	435	876	406	297	703
Merseyside	8,268	1,617	3,496	5,113	1,467	1,778	3,245
Metropolitan <sup>5</sup>	44,172	18,382	25,790	44,172	15,275	12,749	28,024
Norfolk	3,432	1,109	1,168	2,277	981	815	1,796
North Wales	3,342	724	993	1,717	666	619	1,285
North Yorkshire	3,653	990	1,943	2,933	847	1,018	1,865
Northamptonshire	2,926	802	1,193	1,995	657	712	1,369
Northumbria	14,864	2,666	3,840	6,506	2,325	1,810	4,135
Nottinghamshire	4,749	1,800	2,980	4,780	1,598	1,690	3,288
South Wales <sup>3</sup>	7,146	2,789	4,357	7,146	2,370	2,362	4,732
South Yorkshire <sup>4</sup>	6,684	982	2,222	3,204	873	1,093	1,966
Staffordshire	2,848	1,200	1,795	2,995	978	979	1,957
Suffolk	2,532	1,070	1,298	2,368	979	870	1,849
Surrey	1,099	543	541	1,084	528	348	876
Sussex	12,070	978	1,326	2,304	828	775	1,603
Thames Valley	9,445	3,822	5,120	8,942	3,390	2,943	6,333
Warwickshire	1,565	394	502	896	326	337	663
West Mercia	4,548	1,150	1,322	2,472	1,006	814	1,820
West Midlands	15,155	3,433	1,722	5,155	2,879	1,232	4,111
West Yorkshire	7,528	1,009	1,570	2,579	925	1,065	1,990
Wiltshire	2,452	689	1,003	1,692	635	650	1,285
<b>Total E&amp;W</b>	<b>270,699</b>	<b>77,214</b>	<b>119,346</b>	<b>196,560</b>	<b>67,782</b>	<b>64,455</b>	<b>132,237</b>
<b>Total Police Scotland <sup>6</sup></b>	<b>36,473</b>						
<b>Total</b>	<b>307,172</b>			<b>196,560</b>			<b>132,237</b>

<sup>1</sup> A joint figure was provided by Cambridgeshire for child and adult incidents/individuals. Figures calculated based on 65% of reported incidents are related to children

<sup>2</sup> Total calls figure slightly lower than actual figure due to changeover by Gwent from *COMPACT* to *Niche* in quarter 4

<sup>3</sup> The total call figures are the same as total incidents as the police service has direct entry onto *Niche*

<sup>4</sup> The total call figure is an average, as South Yorkshire could only provide quarter 4 (previous data had expired)

<sup>5</sup> Metropolitan Police figures adjusted to removed duplicates created by multiple entries into MPS CAD system. Additional work required with Metropolitan Police to confirm data

<sup>6</sup> Police Scotland is only able to provide a figure for total incidents. A further breakdown is not available at present

## Demographics

### Gender and Age

42 police services provided data for the age of the missing person. Men and boys are more likely to go missing (53%).

**Table 3: Gender of Missing Incidents by age group (n=174,558)**

	Male	Female	Total	%
<b>0-4yrs</b>	638	488	1,153	0.66%
<b>5-8yrs</b>	1,156	562	1,726	0.99%
<b>9-11yrs</b>	2,836	1,104	3,968	2.27%
<b>12-14yrs</b>	17,659	19,315	37,106	21.26%
<b>15-17yrs</b>	27,884	33,168	61,191	35.05%
<b>18-21yrs</b>	5,158	4,890	10,090	5.78%
<b>22-39yrs</b>	17,501	10,669	28,323	16.23%
<b>40-59yrs</b>	12,464	6,411	18,984	10.88%
<b>60-79yrs</b>	4,545	2,290	6,882	3.94%
<b>80+yrs</b>	1,791	1,158	2,962	1.70%
<b>Unknown</b>	905	988	2,173	1.24%
<b>Total</b>	92,537	81,043	<b>174,558</b>	
<b>%</b>	<b>53%</b>	<b>46%</b>		

*Note that the remainder of % is either unknown or transgender categories*

### Under 18

For those under 18 years old, girls (52%) are more likely to go missing than boys.

Of any age grouping, 12-17 year olds are most likely to go missing; this age group accounts for 56% (n=98,297) of all missing child and adult incidents, where age is recorded in the reported data (n=174,558).

**Table 4: Gender of Missing Incidents under 18 years (n=105,144)**

	Male	Female	Total	%
<b>0-4yrs</b>	638	488	1,153	1.10%
<b>5-8yrs</b>	1,156	562	1,726	1.64%
<b>9-11yrs</b>	2,836	1,104	3,968	3.77%
<b>12-14yrs</b>	17,659	19,315	37,106	35.29%
<b>15-17yrs</b>	27,884	33,168	61,191	58.20%
<b>Total</b>	50,173	54,637	<b>105,144</b>	
<b>%</b>	<b>48%</b>	<b>52%</b>		



## Duration Missing

### ***74% of missing people are found within 24hours***

This figure is based on the 22 police areas which use the COMPACT system to record information on the length of time for which people go missing. It should be noted that this data represents a partial picture, as in some cases if a missing person is found or returns within a short period of time the case is not transferred onto a COMPACT system from the service's command and control system. However the findings are consistent with those in previous years in that the majority of missing people return or are located within 48 hours with only 5% outstanding for longer than a week (compared to 2% in 2012/13).

**Table 7: Number of incidents broken down by time missing**

	Duration Missing						Total
	0 - 8 hrs	8 - 16 hrs	16 - 24 hrs	24 - 48 hrs	2 - 7 days	7+ days	
<b>Total</b>	<b>20,452</b>	<b>11,875</b>	<b>5,372</b>	<b>5,831</b>	<b>4,739</b>	<b>2,624</b>	<b>50,893</b>

Duration	Total	
Within 24hrs	37,699	<b>74%</b>
Within 48hrs	43,530	<b>86%</b>
Over a week	2,624	<b>5%</b>

## Harm suffered

### ***96% of missing people are found safe and well***

Data is taken from 19 police areas which use the COMPACT system to record their missing data.

It should be noted that there are limitations to this data: as it is based on an officer's interpretation; and, the accuracy with which the found report is completed. In addition it relies on the disclosure by the missing person during the return interview/ safe and well check as to whether they came to any harm while missing.

**Table 8: Number of incidents, broken down by type of harm suffered.**

	Accidental harm	Emotional harm	Found deceased	Physical injury	Self harmed	Sexual offence victim	No harm suffered	Unspecified	Total
<b>Total</b>	<b>153</b>	<b>46</b>	<b>234</b>	<b>743</b>	<b>821</b>	<b>109</b>	<b>53,508</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>55,623</b>
<b>Percentage</b>	<b>0.3%</b>	<b>0.1%</b>	<b>0.4%</b>	<b>1.3%</b>	<b>1.5%</b>	<b>0.2%</b>	<b>96.2%</b>	<b>0.0%</b>	

Category	Total
<b>Found safe and well</b>	<b>96.2%</b>
<b>Hurt or harmed<sup>f</sup></b>	<b>3.2%</b>
<b>Sexual offence victim</b>	<b>0.2%</b>
<b>Found deceased</b>	<b>0.4%</b>
<b>Unspecified</b>	<b>0.0%</b>

In the harm suffered table the number of sexual offence victims is shown as 109 in a population of 55,623 (0.2%). This is almost identical to the figure seen in 2012/13 where the number of sexual offence victims is shown as 105 in a population of 55,792 (0.2%). Please note police services can report more than one category of harm for each incident.

The Office of the Children's Commissioner reported in November 2015 that the extent of child sexual abuse in England has been vastly underestimated. Its study claims around 50,000 cases were recorded in the two years to March 2014 but the true number could be nearer 450,000<sup>g</sup>.

<sup>f</sup> Hurt or harmed includes Accidental harm, Emotional harm, Physical injury and Self harmed

<sup>g</sup> [www.childrenscommissioner.gov.uk/protecting-children-harm](http://www.childrenscommissioner.gov.uk/protecting-children-harm)

## Absent

16 police services have implemented the new category of absent; of which 10 police areas have provided complete incident data for the reporting year. Figures provided range from data for one quarter through to all four quarters. The ratio of absent child to adult is 3:1. The overall number of absent incidents at 21,383 will feature as part of the total calls to the police (307,172).

**Table 5: Incident and individual data for absent people**

	Adult Incidents	Child Incidents	Adult Individuals	Child Individuals
Police Service	Total	Total	Total	Total
Cambridgeshire	30	88	29	58
Cheshire	54	380	51	210
City of London	29	1	29	1
Cleveland	56	125	56	125
Greater Manchester <sup>1 2</sup>	2,468	4,584	0	0
Gwent <sup>1 2</sup>	211	393	0	0
Hampshire	802	4,360	678	1,935
Leicestershire <sup>1 2</sup>	412	766	0	0
Merseyside	4	21	4	20
Norfolk	204	216	204	216
Northamptonshire	252	586	208	343
Staffordshire <sup>2</sup>	78	842	73	0
Surrey <sup>1 2</sup>	285	528	0	0
Sussex <sup>1 2</sup>	964	1,790	0	0
West Yorkshire	105	174	92	136
Wiltshire	1	574	1	351
Total	5,955	15,428	1,425	3,395
Total	21,383		4,820	
Complete data provided				

<sup>1</sup> A joint figure was provided by service for child and adult incidents. Child and adult figure calculated based on 65% of reported incidents are related to children

<sup>2</sup> Services unable to provide data for child and/or adult individuals