

UK Missing Persons Unit

Missing Persons High Level Data Report 2017/18

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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 they are expected or required to be. Police guidance, issued in early January 2017, discontinued the use of the absent category and required all cases to be classified as missing under four categories: high, medium, low and no apparent risk. Not all police forces were able to comply with the new guidance immediately. For this report, absent and no apparent risk are treated as one category, and any data on absent cases has been added to the missing cases reported by a police force.

Call

A call is a report of a missing person received by a police force and logged onto a command and control system.

Command and control (C&C) system

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

COMPACT

A missing persons case management system in use in 21^a police forces.

Duration missing

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

Gender identity

The gender of a missing person used by the police is as assessed and provided by the person reporting the incident, and recorded by the call handler. Gender is not classified by police officers. Note that 'men' include boys and 'women' include girls, unless specifically mentioned by category. Transgender cases are also shown, and note that the term is used to incorporate all transgender identities.

Harm suffered

Details of emotional or physical harm, including being a victim of crime, and 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.

Individual

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.

^a Number of police forces using Compact or Niche based on data supplied in 2017/18 return.

Missing

Anyone whose whereabouts cannot be established will be considered as missing until they have been located and their well-being or otherwise confirmed.

Missing persons system

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

Niche

A records management system also used as a missing persons case management system in 13^a police forces.

Risk

All reports of missing people sit within a continuum of risk, from 'no apparent risk' through to high-risk cases that require immediate, intensive action. The 2017 College of Policing Authorised Professional Practice on missing persons (police guidance) states the following for each risk level:

- No apparent risk - actions to locate the subject and/or gather further information should be agreed with the informant and a latest review time set to reassess the risk
- Low risk - proportionate enquiries should be carried out to ensure that the individual has not come to harm
- Medium risk - this category requires an active and measured response by the police and other agencies in order to trace the missing person and support the person reporting
- High risk - this category almost always requires the immediate deployment of police resources and involvement from senior management.

Executive Summary

This high-level data report has been produced to provide an overview of *missing*^b and *absent* person cases reported to the police during the financial year 2017/18.

The data used to produce this report has been taken from both police force command and control systems and missing person systems. Data has been obtained from 43^c police forces in England and Wales (E&W). Data from Police Scotland and Police Service Northern Ireland (PSNI)^d is provided where possible to give a fuller picture. However, this data is not directly comparable, as data collections, systems and processes differ from those in police forces in E&W.

- In E&W, the number of calls related to missing persons has slowed relative to previous rises
- In E&W, there was an increase in the total number of missing person incidents by 0.3% (1,058) in 2017/18 relative to 2016/17
- In E&W, missing person incidents for children had dropped by 1% (-2,117) relative to the 2016/17 numbers. However, for adults, a slight increase by 3% was seen compared to 2016/17. It must be noted that these percentages are based on each person group totals (i.e. child or adult) and not on all incidents, as in the previous bullet point
- When considering the numbers of missing individuals in E&W, there was a decrease of 11% for children and 16% for adults compared to 2016/17
- As in the previous year, a common pattern across the UK was that there were more reported missing incidents involving men. In 2017/18 missing incidents involving men comprised 54% of all incidents in E&W, 58% in Scotland and 60% in Northern Ireland
- In E&W, when considering the number of reported missing incidents broken down by age (295,229), 61% related to children aged 12–17 years (179,260 incidents). The second most common age group was adults aged 18–39 years at 21% (or 62,095 incidents)
- In E&W, when we considered the number of reported missing incidents grouped by gender and age, we found that 67% (84,055) of all missing incidents involving women related to girls aged 12–17 years, compared with 56% (88,669) of boys among all men
- In E&W, when missing incidents were broken down by the ethnicity of those involved, 81% were recorded by police forces as White, 13% as Black, 5% as Asian and the remainder comprised smaller 'other ethnic minority' groups. These percentages were calculated after excluding approximately 24% of all

^b Words in italics are explained in the glossary.

^c Warwickshire and West Mercia provided a single data return so there were 42 data returns.

^d There is no statutory requirement for PSNI to submit data, however it does fully engage with the work of the Missing Persons Unit. Where possible, data provided by PSNI is integrated into this report.

incidents that were reported as 'Other/unknown': these unknowns related to incidents in police forces that were unable to provide data by ethnicity

- The Black ethnicity group was over-represented in the data compared with the general population of the UK (3%). This disparity may reflect, in part, that areas of the country with higher Black populations, such as London, West Yorkshire and Greater Manchester, have relatively large numbers of missing people reports
- Across the UK, most missing incidents were risk-rated by police call handlers as medium: E&W (57%), Scotland (51%) and Northern Ireland (85%). Correspondingly, incidents where the risk was rated high were much smaller: E&W (12%), Scotland (5%) and Northern Ireland (8%). These percentages included 12% of incidents assessed to be 'absent/no apparent risk' in E&W, and 33% that were not graded in Scotland
- Most missing person incidents were resolved within 2 days of being reported (86% in E&W, 89% in Scotland and 94% in Northern Ireland)
- Nearly all reported missing cases (96%) resulted in no harm (excluding incidents that were categorised as 'harm unspecified'). There were more 'no harm' missing children incidents reported (98%) compared to adults (93%)
- Missing individuals in E&W who were adults were twice as likely to suffer from physical harm and almost eight times more likely to suffer from self-harm than those who were children. Although the number of missing incidents related to victims of sexual offences was low, they were slightly more common among children (0.3%) than adults (0.2%)
- In E&W, 5% of all missing child incidents and 16% of all adult incidents had a mental health flag^e attributed. Boys and girls were equally represented in mental health-related incidents. However, among adults, 62% of incidents related to men and 37% to women
- In E&W, 11% (22,786) of all child incidents had a Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE) flag associated with them. Of these, 70% (16,002) involved girls, 26% (5,918) involved boys and 4% were unknown
- In E&W, there were more missing person incidents, on average, per individual for those from a care setting than from those individuals outside of the care system. For children, on average there were six incidents per individual in a care setting, compared to two incidents per individual in a non-care setting. For adults, on average there were two incidents per individual in a care setting compared to one incident per individual in a non-care setting
- In E&W, for people in care, 92% of all reported missing person incidents related to children and 8% to adults

^e Flags are markers placed in missing person case management systems to alert a user to particular vulnerabilities.

- In the UK overall, there were 856 reported fatal outcomes for missing persons in 2017/18 compared with 711 in 2016/17. This is a 20% increase, most of which was reported by four police forces, as shown in Table E4. There is insufficient data to determine the exact reasons for such a large increase in fatalities.

Methodology and Data Limitations

This report is produced to highlight some key statistics related to missing and absent persons. Separate data tables are available with this report, covering some of the data collected in the 2017/18 Data Return.

While national guidance changed the classification of missing and absent categories towards a four-tier risk continuum, some police forces have continued to report absent and missing separately. For this report, these have been combined and are reported as missing. Note that in previous reports, absent and missing were treated as two separate categories. Additionally, repeat incidents of missing or absent have not been collated and are not reported.

The data in this report has been generated from a standard template of questions that police forces throughout England and Wales had been asked to complete. Police Scotland and PSNI produce their own independent reports on missing persons and, where possible, appropriate data extracts have been included.

The Data Return template asked 43 police forces in England and Wales to provide key statistics on missing person incidents over the 2017/18 financial period, covering the areas below:

- The name of their *command and control* (C&C) and missing person systems
- The numbers of closing and opening codes related to missing persons
- The total number of *incidents* and *individuals* by person group, i.e. child or adult
- The total number of fatal outcomes; the number of outstanding missing *individuals* and the number of long-term missing *individuals*
- Total numbers of *incidents* broken down by the following demographics: gender, age group and ethnicity
- The number of incidents by risk assessments made, split by gender and person group, i.e. child or adult
- The number of incidents by gender and person group for people with mental health vulnerabilities or with CSE markers
- The number of incidents by the types of harm suffered and person group
- The breakdown of the *duration of missing incidents* by person group, i.e. child or adult
- The number of *incidents and individuals* by person group, i.e. child or adult, and how many were identified as being in care or not.

For the purpose of this report, when referring to calls, the numbers of closing codes reported by a police force have been used. Police forces may initially assess a call to be a missing person report and so use an opening code for this. However, subsequently it is possible that the call may not be closed as a missing person incident.

To ensure a degree of consistency across data tables, the UK Missing Persons Unit (UKMPU) has made some adjustments or estimates in the total figures provided by police forces, where necessary. These are indicated in the summary tables and the adjustments were mostly negligible with a worst-case adjustment of less than 2%

of all incidents reported by a police force. Where differences had been reported between the total number of incidents and the number of incidents by demographic groups, the largest number of reported incidents has been used, that is, under-reported figures grossed up or an appropriate adjustment made by adding to the unknown category.

While every effort has been taken to standardise the reporting of data to the UKMPU and to allow year-on-year comparisons, changes to reporting practices in some police forces mean that year-on-year comparisons should be considered with caution.

There are several other reasons why standardisation of reporting is limited, and these include:

- Police forces operate with different systems, processes and procedures, and not all were able to provide data on the required areas
- Some police forces were unable to provide breakdowns by person groups (i.e. adult or child) or demographics (i.e. age, gender or ethnicity)
- Some reporting in police forces may have resulted in duplication, and as highlighted above, reasonable adjustments have been made to provide a degree of consistency
- Year-on-year comparisons in some areas would have to be considered, with a recognition that definition changes have resulted in some large differences in reporting across financial years. For example, while most police forces have now implemented the reporting of absent and missing as missing, there were some that continued to record them as separate categories. While these have been merged into the missing category this year, in previous years' reporting these were done separately. Hence, when looking at data prior to 2016/17, there will be some under-reporting and data that is not directly comparable; absences have not been retrospectively merged and included in the missing figures, as in this report.

Key Statistics: Calls, Missing Incidents and Individuals

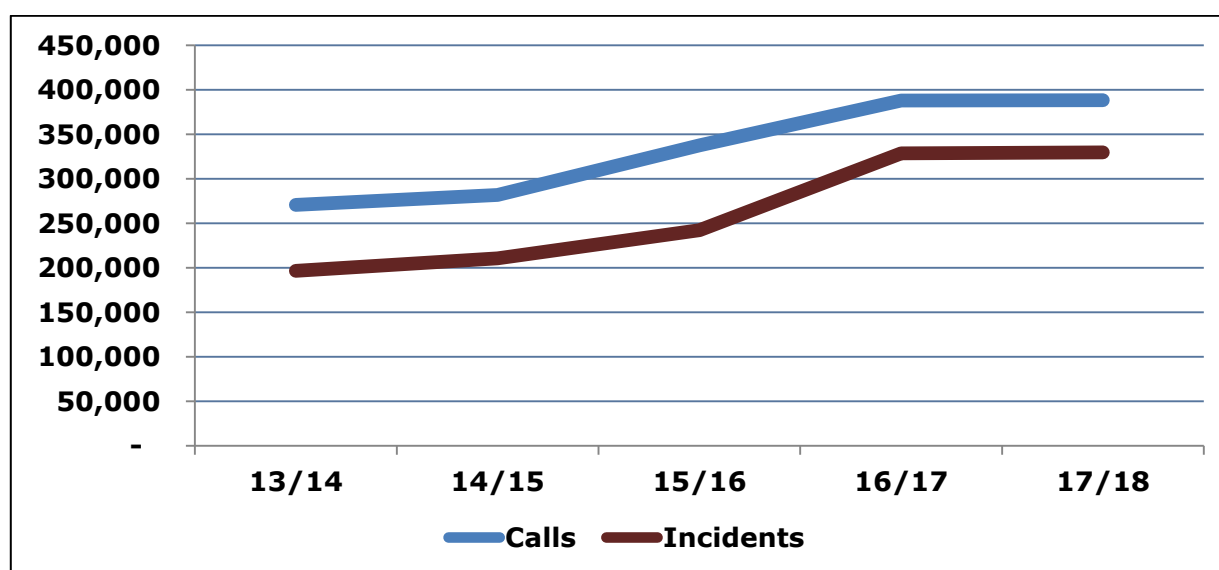
388,412

The total number of calls made to a police force regarding a missing person. This equates to 6.6 calls per 1000 population in England and Wales.

Table 1: Calls made to a police force in England, Wales and Scotland regarding missing or absent persons 2013–2018

Financial Year	Total Number of Missing Calls in E&W	% Yearly Difference	Total Number of Missing Incidents in E&W	% Yearly Difference	Total Number of Missing Calls in Scotland
2013/14	270,699	-1%	196,560	-28%	36,473
2014/15	282,066	4%	210,632	7%	39,926
2015/16	337,649	20%	242,317	15%	40,070 ^f
2016/17	387,930	15%	328,690	36% ^g	21,989
2017/18	388,412	0%	329,748	0%	22,966

There is a plateauing in the number of calls received in England and Wales after substantial increases in previous financial years. The numbers of incidents have also followed a similar pattern.



Data for calls made to PSNI were unavailable.

329,748

The total number of incidents created on a police force missing persons management system; 42 police forces within England and Wales provided data. This was a 0% increase compared with last year (328,690).

^f Police Scotland total calls; changes in recording system resulted in reduced calls recorded in 2016/17.

^g Absent and missing previously reported separately but only combined for 2016/17 onwards, resulting in a large percentage difference and some under reporting in figures prior to 2015/16.

158,033

The number of individuals recorded missing on a police force missing persons management system; 42 police forces within England and Wales provided data. This was a decrease of 6% compared with last year (168,251).

Table 2: Total number of calls, incidents and individuals reported

Police Force	Total Calls	Child Incidents	Adult Incidents	Unknown Incidents	Total Incidents	Child Individuals	Adult Individuals	Unknown Individuals	Total Individuals
Avon and Somerset	10,163	4,254	3,770	379 ^b	8,403	1,817	2,921	64	4,802
Bedfordshire	6,125	3,012	1,096	0	4,108	819	881	0	1,700
Cambridgeshire	2633 ^a	1,749	884	0	2,633	697	737	0	1,434
Cheshire	6,414	4,517	1,891	6 ^b	6,414	1,613	1,568	4	3,185
City of London	111	7	100	4 ^b	111	8	101	2	111
Cleveland	4,939	3,712	1,226	1	4,939	1,237	939	1	2,177
Cumbria	2,749	1,959	1,237	0	3,196	1,075	1,079	0	2,154
Derbyshire	5,109	1,253	557	0	1,810	460	463	0	923
Devon and Cornwall	13,501	6,141	3,734	0	9,875	1,970	2,902	0	4,872
Dorset	5,249	2,959	2,502	37	5,498	984	1,878	35	2,897
Durham	1652 ^a	1,134	518	0	1,652	423	448	0	871
Dyfed-Powys	2,751	1,193	1,162	26	2,381	674	963	0	1,637
Essex	7,919	5,084	2,848	0	7,932	1,840	2,267	0	4,107
Gloucestershire	2,354	1,415	1,094	0	2,509	387	657	0	1,044
Greater Manchester	35,007	17,614	14,530	0	32,144	4,851	9,094	0	13,945
Gwent	5,987	3,882	875	27 ^b	4,784	850	731	0	1,581
Hampshire	13,865	7,666	3,237	187 ^b	11,090	2,558	2,435	17	5,010
Hertfordshire	4,790	3,155	1,988	0	5,143	1,206	1,618	0	2,824
Humberside	5,667	4,471	1,048	0	5,519	1,197	861	0	2,058
Kent	13,161	8,490	3,301	0	11,791	3,650	2,899	0	6,549
Lancashire	13,674	7,106	2,382	0	9,488	2,612	1,812	0	4,424
Leicestershire	5,563	2,649	1,575	0	4,224	854	1,208	0	2,062
Lincolnshire	3,532	2,195	1,337	0	3,532	897	1,048	0	1,945
Merseyside	10,451	8,522	2,757	0	11,279	2,118	2,124	0	4,242
Metropolitan	75,455	32,695	21,187	0	53,882	12,245	15,742	0	27,987
Norfolk	3,182	2,512	1,590	0	4,102	936	1,204	0	2,140
North Wales	2,739	1,482	755	0	2,237	631	673	0	1,304
North Yorkshire	3,215	2,525	674	16	3,215	771	588	11	1,370
Northamptonshire	2,831	1,226	742	0	1,968	696	666	0	1,362
Northumbria	13,380	5,084	3,486	0	8,570	1,408	2,434	0	3,842
Nottinghamshire	7,040	2,381	1,074	0	3,455	1,045	885	0	1,930
South Wales	8,206	5,606	3,268	9 ^b	8,883	1,557	2,459	0	4,016
South Yorkshire	9497 ^a	6,187	3,285	25	9,497	-	-	-	-
Staffordshire	5,312	3,672	1,535	0	5,207	1,199	1,198	0	2,397
Suffolk	4,513	2,832	1,256	0	4,088	860	1,032	0	1,892
Surrey	5,681	2,878	2,474	219	5,571	1,145	1,904	18	3,067
Sussex	9,641	2,535	1,270	0	3,805	870	1,087	0	1,957
Thames Valley	13,818	8,456	6,004	0	14,460	3,329	4,558	0	7,887
Warwickshire and West Mercia	8,278	5,097	3,042	0	8,139	1,990	2,535	0	4,525
West Midlands	7,880	5,137	2,743	0	7,880	1,884	2,285	0	4,169
West Yorkshire	21,266	13,570	7,754	74	21,398	4,353	5,696	65	10,114
Wiltshire	3,112	1,945	971	20 ^b	2,936	744	769	7	1,520
E&W Totals	388,412	209,959	118,759	1,030	329,748	70,460	87,349	224	158,033
PSNI	-	6,425	5,574	-	11,999	-	-	-	-
Scotland	-	14,698	8,268	-	22,966	-	-	-	12,462

a. Estimated values based on total number of missing incidents reported.

b. Figures adjusted to match higher number of incidents reported under demographics data

- Data unavailable

Table 3: Total number of incidents by police force and gender identity

Police Force	Male	Female	Trans	Unknown	Total	Male %	Female %
Avon and Somerset	4,570	3,503	0	330	8,403	54%	42%
Bedfordshire	1,906	1,930	0	272	4,108	46%	47%
Cambridgeshire	1,435	1,067	0	131	2,633	55%	41%
Cheshire	3,756	2,646	0	12	6,414	59%	41%
City of London	77	34	0	0	111	69%	31%
Cleveland	3,013	1,924	0	2	4,939	61%	39%
Cumbria	1,745	1,451	0	0	3,196	55%	45%
Derbyshire	903	906	1	0	1,810	50%	50%
Devon and Cornwall	5,695	4,164	16	0	9,875	58%	42%
Dorset	3,058	2,432	0	8	5,498	56%	44%
Durham	-	-	-	1,652	1,652	-	-
Dyfed-Powys	1,331	1,049	1	0	2,381	56%	44%
Essex	4,455	3,447	29	1	7,932	56%	43%
Gloucestershire	1,220	1,287	2	0	2,509	49%	51%
Greater Manchester ¹	17,509	11,279	0	3356	32,144	54%	35%
Gwent ²	2,388	2,386	2	8	4,784	50%	50%
Hampshire ²	6,496	4,555	0	39	11,090	59%	41%
Hertfordshire	3,031	2,101	8	3	5,143	59%	41%
Humberside	3,133	2,385	1	0	5,519	57%	43%
Kent	6,579	5,053	1	158	11,791	56%	43%
Lancashire ³	5,259	4,229	0	0	9,488	55%	45%
Leicestershire ³	2,231	1,752	1	240	4,224	53%	41%
Lincolnshire	1,912	1,620	0	0	3,532	54%	46%
Merseyside	6,556	4,723	0	0	11,279	58%	42%
Metropolitan	29,962	23,824	71	25	53,882	56%	44%
Norfolk	2,392	1,688	21	1	4,102	58%	41%
North Wales	1,277	960	0	0	2,237	57%	43%
North Yorkshire	1,784	1,421	0	10	3,215	55%	44%
Northamptonshire	798	1,054	1	115	1,968	41%	54%
Northumbria	5,220	3,345	0	5	8,570	61%	39%
Nottinghamshire	1,718	1,728	3	6	3,455	50%	50%
South Wales	4,725	4,141	2	15	8,883	53%	47%
South Yorkshire	-	-	-	9,497	9,497	-	-
Staffordshire	3,171	2,026	9	1	5,207	61%	39%
Suffolk	2,395	1,686	7	0	4,088	59%	41%
Surrey	2,713	2,624	23	211	5,571	49%	47%
Sussex	1,832	1,969	4	0	3,805	48%	52%
Thames Valley	8,476	5,942	0	42	14,460	59%	41%
Warwickshire and West Mercia	4,599	3,523	13	4	8,139	57%	43%
West Midlands	3,892	3,970	14	4	7,880	49%	50%
West Yorkshire	11,756	9,440	0	202	21,398	55%	44%
Wiltshire ²	1,471	1,465	0	0	2,936	50%	50%
England and Wales Total	176,439	136,729	230	16350	329,748	54%	41%
PSNI	7,190	4,580	11	218	11,999	60%	38%
Scotland	13,232	9,672	62	-	22,966	58%	42%

1. Estimated values as demographic data provided based on individuals and not incidents.
 2. Figures adjusted to match higher total number of incidents reported under demographics data.
 3. Demographic figures grossed up to match total number of incidents.
- Gender data unavailable so total number of incidents reported added to unknown gender.

Demographics: Gender, Age and Ethnicity

Gender (Table C1, Base = 329,748)

- Across E&W, and as in previous years, there were more men and boys reported as missing persons, 54% (176,439) compared with 42% (136,729) of incidents involving women and girls. These proportions are of a similar order to 2016/17, when there were 55% (166,423) of incidents involving men and boys compared with 44% (132,132) involving women and girls. The difference in total numbers of incidents between 2016/17 and 2017/18 is due to some police forces being unable to provide a gender breakdown for all recorded incidents in 2016/17. In 2017/18, the lower female percentages may be due to a greater percentage of unknown gender incidents (5%) reported compared with only 0.8% in 2016/17
- In Police Scotland and PSNI, the percentages were higher for men and boys. Police Scotland reported 58% (13,232) of missing persons investigations involving men and boys in comparison with 42% (9,672) for women and girls. PSNI reported 60% (7,190) and 38% (4,580), respectively
- 0.1% of all incidents in E&W (230) and PSNI (11) were reported to be related to transgender individuals. Police Scotland reported three times as many transgender investigations at 0.3% (62) of all investigations
- 5% of all incidents in E&W were recorded with an unknown gender.

Age (Table C2, Base = 295,229)

- Across E&W, children aged 12-17 years were the largest group to go missing, 179,260 (61%)
- Adults aged 18-39 years were the second largest group to go missing (62,095, 21%) followed by the 40-59 years group (28,190, 10%)
- Children aged 12-17 years were nearly three times more likely to go missing than adults aged 18-39 years
- Almost 4% of all incidents related to children aged 0-11 years and nearly 5% to those that were aged 60 or more.

Ethnicity (Table C3: Base= 251,951)

Table 4: Distribution of incidents in E&W by ethnicity and across years

Ethnicity	White - North European	White - South European	Black	Asian	Chinese, Japanese & SE Asian	Middle Eastern	Other/ unknown	Total
E&W 2016/17	77.4	3.2	13.0	5.0	0.4	1.0	Excluded	100.0
E&W 2017/18	77.8	3.1	12.7	5.0	0.4	1.0	Excluded	100.0

The proportions of missing incidents by ethnicity in 2017/18 and 2016/17 were mostly similar. Most notably the Black ethnicity at 13% is over-represented compared with 3% in the general population. It is assessed that this disparity may be due to higher black and ethnic minority population areas such as London, West Yorkshire and Greater Manchester generating a high number of missing people.

Age and Gender (Table C4, Base = 286,460)

When considering the percentages of all missing incidents across E&W by gender, and grouping those by age, it is noted that:

- Girls aged 12-17 years represented 67% of all female missing incidents; boys in the same age group represented 56% of all male incidents
- For all other age groups, the pattern is reversed as more males went missing than females.

Ethnicity and Gender (Table C5: Base = 286,460)

Table 5: Distribution of incidents by ethnicity and gender across years in England and Wales^h

Ethnicity (E&W)	2016/17					2017/18				
	Female percentages	Male percentages	Trans percentages	Unknown percentages	Total Incidents in E&W	Female percentages	Male percentages	Trans percentages	Unknown percentages	Total Incidents in E&W
White - North European	45.0	54.6	0.1	0.3	194,682	44.6	55.1	0.1	0.2	191,541
White - South European	45.2	54.2	0.1	0.5	7,555	41.4	58.2	0.1	0.3	7,768
Black	42.7	57.0	0.2	0.2	32,279	42.8	56.9	0.1	0.2	31,734
Asian	43.5	55.5	0.1	0.9	12,180	43.2	55.9	0.2	0.7	12,396
Chinese, Japanese & SE Asian	50.8	48.7	0.1	0.4	1,012	50.9	47.4	0.3	1.4	877
Middle Eastern	25.1	74.4	0.0	0.4	2,452	32.7	66.9	0.0	0.4	2,335
Other/ unknown	41.9	55.7	0.1	2.3	37,675	42.0	55.2	0.1	2.7	39,809
Total	35.5	63.7	0.1	0.7	246,702	43.8	55.5	0.1	0.6	286,460

^h Data for Northern Ireland and Scotland is not available.

The proportions of women to men missing incidents within the White, Black, Asian, and Other/unknown groups are similar in 2017/18. The patterns of gender distributions are also very similar for the largest groups between years.

The gender percentages of missing incidents from those individuals that were Chinese, Japanese & SE Asian, although different to other ethnic groups, remained the same across the years.

There was a greater percentage of missing incidents from Middle Eastern women (32.7%) reported in 2017/18 compared with 2016/17 (25.1%).

Missing from Care

The data in this section is based on full data supplied by 24 police forces: as already highlighted, not all police forces have systems or reporting capability to provide this data. Police forces that had provided partial data have been excluded but are included in Table F2.

Table 9: Total numbers of incidents and individuals by care

Incident / Individual	In Care	In Care %	Not in care	Not in Care %	Grand Total
Incidents	50,090	30%	116,198	70%	166,288
Individuals	10,749	13%	72,428	87%	83,177
Ratio	5	-	2	-	2

- Of the total numbers of incidents provided by 24 police forces, 30% of these were related to a care setting and these represented 13% of all individuals who were reported missing during the year.

Table 10: Number of incidents and individuals by care and person group

Person	Incident / Individual	In Care	In Care %	Not in care	Not in Care %	Grand Total
Adults	Incidents	3,803	8%	53,182	46%	56,985
	Individuals	2,469	23%	42,593	59%	45,062
	Ratio	2	-	1	-	1
Child	Incidents	46,287	92%	63,016	54%	109,303
	Individuals	8,280	77%	29,835	41%	38,115
	Ratio	6	-	2	-	3

- For E&W, 77% of all individuals in care who went missing were children and 92% of all reported missing person incidents for people in care related to children
- On average, there were six incidents for each individual child in care compared with just two for adults in a care.

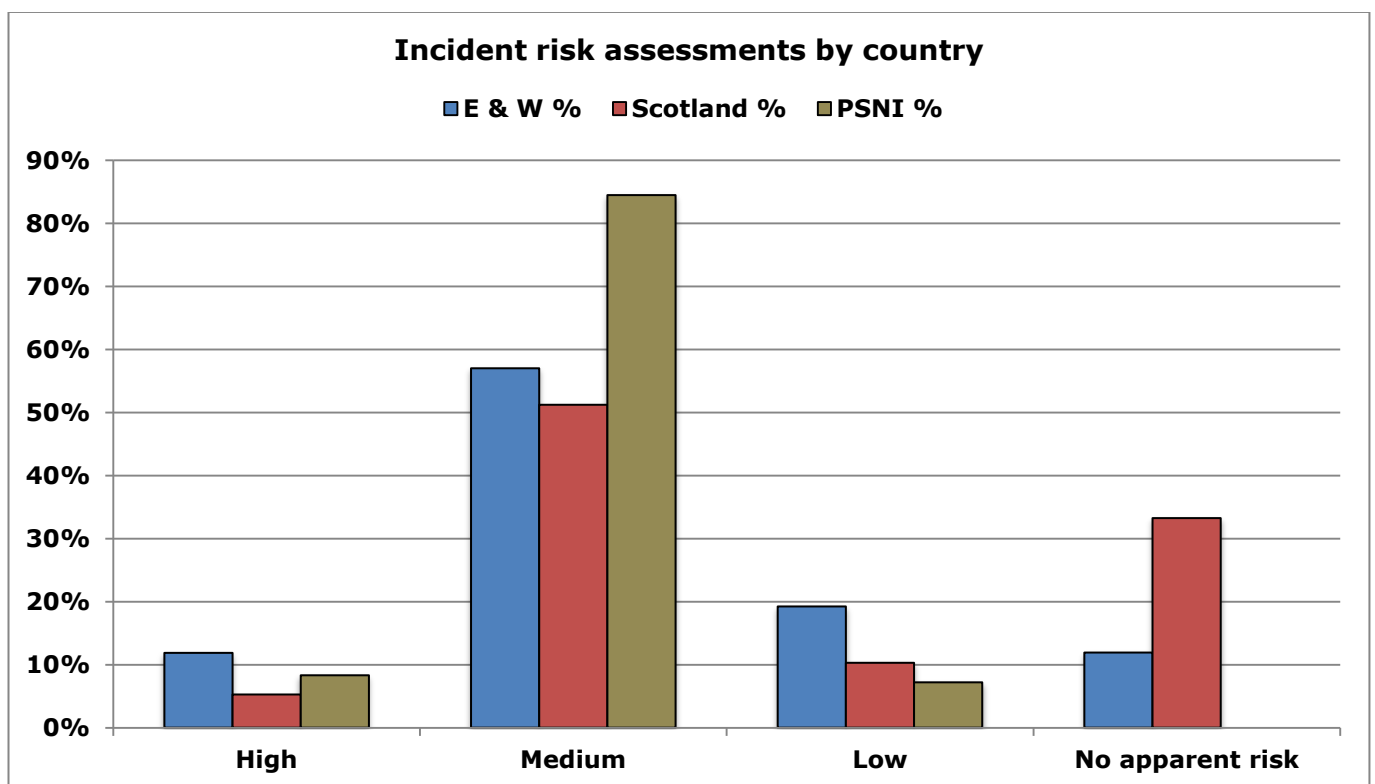
Risks

In E&W, only 12% of all missing person incidents were risk assessed at a high level, with most incidents (57%) assessed as medium risk (based on data supplied by 41 police forces, and includes 12% of all reported missing incidents that were assessed as 'absent/no apparent risk').

For Police Scotland and PSNI, missing person investigations/reports that were rated as high risk, stood at 5% and 8%, respectively.

For Police Scotland and PSNI, most investigations were also assessed to be medium risk, with Police Scotland reporting 51% at this risk level and PSNI 85%.

Table 6: Proportion of incidents and reported assigned risk assessments



Duration Missing

In England and Wales, 76% of missing people were found within 24 hours after being reported missing and 86% were found within 48 hours. These figures are based on the number of incidents and the 32 police forces that were able to provide the data as required.

PSNI reported 87% of missing people were found within 24 hours and 94% were found within 48 hours.

Police Scotland reported that 76% of missing people were found within 24 hours, 89% within 48 hours and 97% within 7 days.

Table 7: Number of incidents broken down by time missing (Table E1)

Duration Missing	England & Wales	England & Wales %	PSNI	PSNI %	Scotland % ⁱ
Within 24hrs	172,443	76%	9,168	87%	76%
Within 48hrs	196,594	86%	9,875	94%	89%
Within 7 days	219,274	96%	10,381	98%	97%
Over a week	8,442	4%	169	2%	3%

Duration Missing	England & Wales	England & Wales %	PSNI	PSNI %
0-8 hrs	117,704	52%	6,858	65%
8-16 hrs	34,020	15%	1,583	15%
16-24 hrs	20,719	9%	728	7%
24-48 hrs	24,151	11%	707	7%
2-7 days	22,680	10%	506	5%
7+ days	8,442	4%	169	2%
Total	227,716	100%	10,550	100%

ⁱ Scotland collated data using a different timeframe, and so excluded from detailed summary.

Harm Suffered

In E&W, 96% of all reported missing person incidents were recorded under the category of no harm suffered.

Note, we have excluded from the analysis 5,586 incidents that were reported under the category of unspecified. This is because the nature of harm associated with these incidents was unverifiable and had the potential to over inflate the harm figures; we do not know what the nature was in those harm incidents or if they were harm incidents. The data was based on responses from 22 police forces that were able to provide data broken down by harm suffered and person type. These figures should not be extrapolated to the remaining police forces due to varying regional differences, as indicated in the methodology. Numerous other factors can impact on harm associated with missing incidents (for example, environmental, social, health, financial, education, employment, cultural, criminality, and so on).

Additionally, these figures should not be considered with respect to the total number of missing incidents, as multiple harm outcomes could have been reported for a single incident.

As a result, exact comparisons on harm with the previous year and across regions should be considered with caution. However, the overall order of harm is on a similar basis to 2016/17, when it was seen that over 90% of incidents resulted in no harm. In 2017/18, 98% of children missing incidents and 93% of adult missing incidents are reported as resulting in no harm.

Table 8: Number of incidents by type of harm suffered

Type	Child	% Child	Adult	% Adult	Overall	Overall %
No Harm Suffered	71,702	97.9%	33,437	93.1%	105,139	96.3%
Accidental Harm	134	0.2%	250	0.7%	384	0.4%
Emotional Harm	85	0.1%	136	0.4%	221	0.2%
Physical Injury	751	1.0%	859	2.4%	1,610	1.5%
Self-Harmed	335	0.5%	1,154	3.2%	1,489	1.4%
Sexual Offence Victim	213	0.3%	70	0.2%	283	0.3%
Unspecified	4,111	-	1,475	-	5,586	-
Grand Total	73,220	100.0%	35,906	100.0%	109,126	100.0%

- In E&W, there was a greater proportion of no-harm-suffered missing person incidents involving children (97.9%) compared with adults (93.1%)
- Adults were twice as likely to suffer from physical injury compared to children

- A greater proportion of adult incidents were reported with self-harm (3.2%) than children (0.5%)
- A slightly greater prevalence of sexual offence victims can be seen among missing children (0.3%) compared to adults (0.2%).

Vulnerabilities: Mental Health and CSE Markers

Mental Health

- For children, there were 10,964 reported missing incidents with a mental health flag. This represented 5.2% of all missing children incidents in E&W (209,959)
- For adults, there were 19,231 reported missing incidents with a mental health flag. This represented 16.2% of all adult missing incidents in E&W (118,759)
- Boys (41%) and girls (40%) were almost equally represented in mental health incidents, with the remaining 18% of unknown gender
- Men accounted for 62% of all missing adult incidents with mental health markers compared with 37% women
- These figures are based on data provided by 28 police forces for children and 29 police forces for adults (Table F1): not all police forces were able to provide this data due to system limitations.

Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE)

- There were 22,786 recorded incidents with a CSE flag, based on data from 32 police forces
- This equated to 10.9% of all missing children incidents reported in the UK (209,959)
- 70.2% (16,002) of these incidents involved girls and 26% (5,918) boys.

Fatal Outcomes

- In E&W there were 16 child fatal outcomes in 2017/18 compared to 20 in 2016/17
- However, for adults there were 672 fatal outcomes in 2017/18 compared to 557 in 2016/17
- Overall, in E&W there were 728 cases with fatal outcomes compared with 593 in 2016/17, an increase of 23%. 36 police forces in E&W provided data in both 2017/18 and 2016/17. In 2017/18, 40 fatalities were included without an age group, that is, child or adult
- For PSNI, fatal outcomes of adults associated with missing persons had increased from 27 in 2016/17 to 32 in 2017/18. There were no fatal outcomes reported for children
- Police Scotland also had an increase in 5 fatal outcomes overall (91 in 2016/17 to 96 2017/18; data was unavailable for child and adult breakdown).

Currently, there is insufficient data to explain the increase in the number of fatalities. It may be assessed that this increase is a pattern similar to those highlighted by recent Office of National Statistics releases, as referenced below:

- In 2018, there were 6,507 suicides registered in the UK, an age-standardised rate of 11.2 deaths per 100,000 population; the latest rate is significantly higher than that in 2017 and represents the first increase since 2013^j
- The UK suicide rate for men of 17.2 deaths per 100,000 represents a significant increase from the rate in 2017; for women, the UK rate was 5.4 deaths per 100,000, consistent with the rates over the past 10 years^j.

There may be some or all of these factors that contributed to increases in missing person fatalities, over the 2017/18 period.

^j Suicides in the UK: 2018 registrations,
<https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/birthsdeathsandmarriages/deaths/bulletins/suicidesintheunitedkingdom/2018registrations>