



Swedish Crime Survey 2017

Swedish Crime Survey 2017

English summary of Brå report 2018:1

**The Swedish National Council for Crime Prevention (Brå) –
centre for knowledge about crime and crime prevention measures**

The Swedish National Council for Crime Prevention (Brå)
works to reduce crime and improve levels of safety in society
by producing data and disseminating knowledge on crime
and crime prevention work.

This report is a summary of the Swedish report Hatbrott 2016, report no 2017:11.

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Summary

This summary presents the overall results of the standard Swedish Crime Survey (SCS) for 2017. The results of the report are summarised, broken down into the following areas of enquiry: *victimisation, unsafety, confidence in the criminal justice system, and crime victims' contacts with the criminal justice system.*

In 2017, two parallel Swedish Crime Surveys were conducted, the SCS – Standard and the SCS – Local. The SCS – Standard has been conducted with the same data collection method and sample as previously, while the SCS – Local has been conducted with a different method, involving another sample, revised questionnaires, and different data collection method. The technical report (Brå 2018) contains detailed accounts of the ways in which the surveys were conducted. As from 2018, the method which is used in what is presently called the SCS – Local will be the new standard method.

This summary refers only to results from the SCS – Standard, although this year's report also comprises results from the SCS – Local. This is because the summary focuses on trends over time and the SCS – Local has only been conducted once. In general, however, a comparison of the two shows the SCS – Local reflects higher levels of victimisation and unsafety than the SCS – Standard. In addition, the SCS – Local indicates that a smaller percentage of the population has a high degree of confidence in the criminal justice system as well as positive experience from contacts with the criminal justice system than is indicated by the SCS – Standard.

The SCS – Standard has been conducted since 2006. In 2017, approximately 11,600 persons responded to the questions in the SCS – Standard, which is a 59 per cent response rate to the survey. Most participated in the SCS – Standard through telephone interviews, but a smaller percentage participated through posted questionnaires or internet questionnaires.

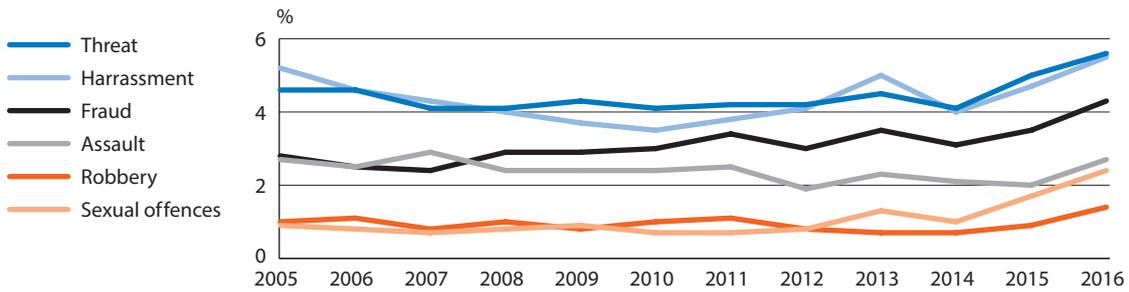
Victimisation

Victimisation was investigated for the calendar year preceding the date on which the question was asked. This means that the victimisation reported in the 2017 SCS – Standard reflects victimisation during 2016. Victimisation in terms of *offences against an individual* is reported as the percentage of victims, unlike victimisation in terms of *property offences against households*, which is reported as the percentage of victimised households.

Offences against an individual

- Of those who answered the questions in the 2017 SCS – Standard, 15.6 per cent state that during 2016, they were a victim of one or more of the types of offences referred to in the report as offences against an individual: assault, threats, sexual offences, robbery, fraud, and harassment. This is an increase as compared with the preceding year (in 2015 the percentage was 13.3 %). Victimisation in terms of offences against an individual remained at a relatively stable level from 2005-2014 (11.3 %–13.1 %) but the most recent two years show an increase. The offences against an individual which have increased most clearly in recent years are harassment, fraud, and sexual offences (see figure 1).
- The most common types of offences were threats and harassment, while robbery and serious assault were the least common.
- Of those offences against an individual reported in the 2017 SCS – Standard, 29 per cent were reported to the police. The total reporting rate increased from 24 per cent in 2005 to 31 per cent in 2013. It then decreased somewhat and was 26 per cent during 2014 and 2015; it subsequently increased to 29 per cent in 2016. The greatest reporting rate is for serious assault (65%) and the lowest is for sexual offences (11%).
- Most persons who have been a victim of offences against an individual state that they were victims once during 2016, while 17 per cent of such persons (corresponding to 2.7% of the population ages 16-79) state that they were victims four times or more. Individuals in this group were victims of two-thirds (66%) of all incidents of offences against an individual.

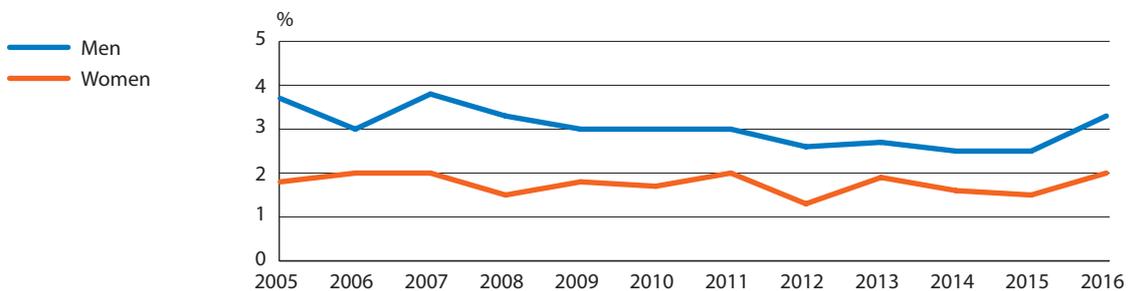
Figure 1. Victims of various types of offences against an individual. Percentage of the population (ages 16–79), 2005–2016 according to the SCS – Standard.



Assault

- The percentage of individuals who state that they were a victim of assault in 2016 is 2.7 per cent. The level is higher than in 2015, when 2.0 per cent were a victim of assault. The trend for the period 2005–2015 was one of a weak decline, but the increase in 2016 returns the percentage of victims to the same level as in 2005. It is too early to say whether the most recent increase is the beginning of an upward trend or whether it is a temporary deviation from a trend that is otherwise one of weak decline.
- Men were victims of assault more often than women (see figure 2) and victims of assault were most commonly in the 20–24 age bracket.

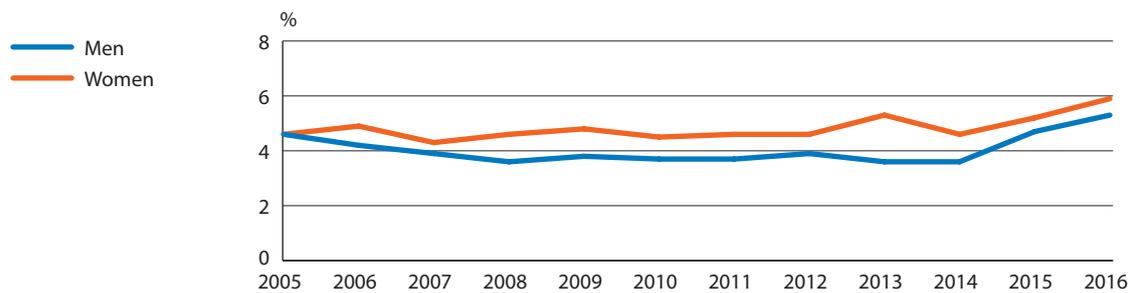
Figure 2. Victims of assault. Percentage for each gender, 2005–2016, according to SCS – Standard.



Threats

- For 2016, 5.6 per cent of persons state that they were a victim of threats, which is an increase compared with 2015 (5.0%). Threat offences remained at a relatively stable level (between 4.1% and 4.6%) for most of the measurement period (2005–2014), and it is too early to say whether the increase in the most recent two years is the beginning of a new trend.
- Women were victims of assault more often than men (see figure 3) and victims of assault were most commonly in the 20–24 age bracket.

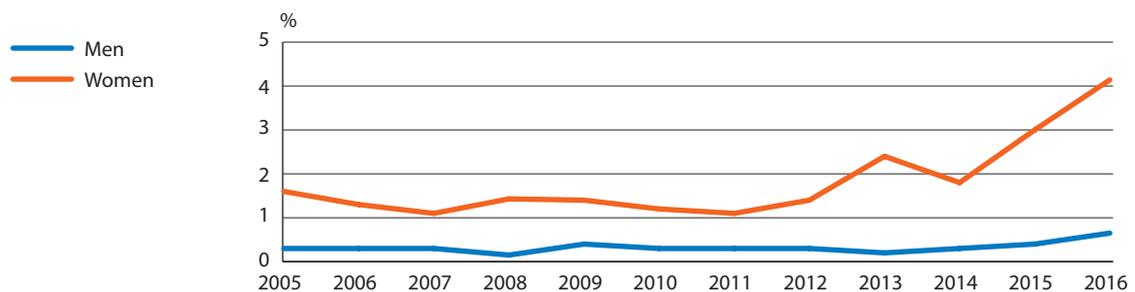
Figure 3. Victims of threats. Percentage for each gender, 2005–2016, according to SCS – Standard.



Sexual offences

- For 2016, 2.4 per cent of persons state that they were a victim of sexual offences. This is an increase compared with 2015, when 1.7 per cent had been victims. Sexual offences remained relatively stable level for the period 2005–2012 with approximately 1 per cent victimisation, and an increase occurring thereafter.
- Women were victims of sexual offences significantly more often than men (see figure 4) and, for each gender, victims were most commonly in the 16–24 age bracket.

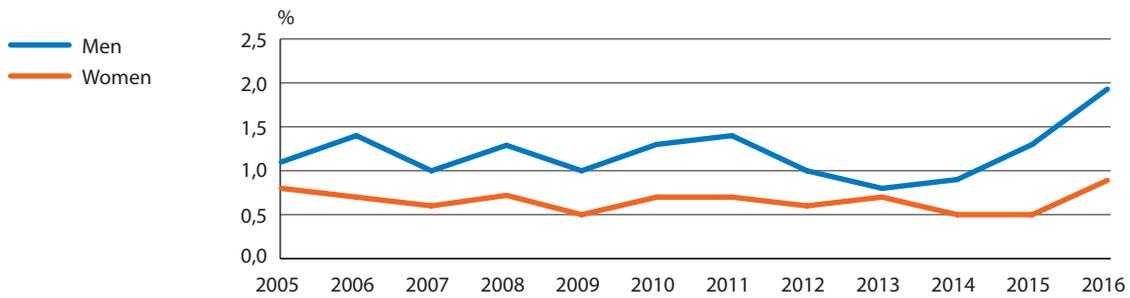
Figure 4. Victims of sexual offences. Percentage for each gender, 2005–2016, according to SCS – Standard.



Robbery

- For 2016, 1.4 per cent of persons state they were a victim of robbery. This is a higher level than 2015, when the percentage of victims was 0.9 per cent. Previously, the percentage of victims was at a relatively stable level hovering around 1 per cent. It remains to be seen whether the most recent increase is the beginning of an upwards trend or a deviation from an otherwise relatively stable level.
- Men were victims of robbery more often than women (see figure 5) and victims were most commonly in the 20–24 age bracket.

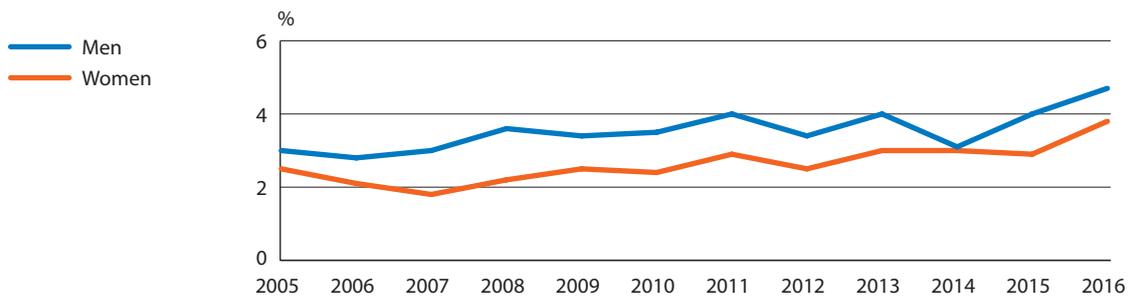
Figure 5. Victims of robbery. Percentage for each gender, 2005–2016, according to SCS – Standard.



Fraud

- For 2016, 4.3 per cent of persons state that they were victim of fraud. The percentage is greater than 2015, when 3.5 per cent stated that they had been victims. During the measurement period, fraud offences show an increasing trend (in 2005, the percentage of victims was 2.8%).
- Men were victims of fraud more often than women (see figure 6). The greatest percentage of victims was in the 45–54 age bracket.

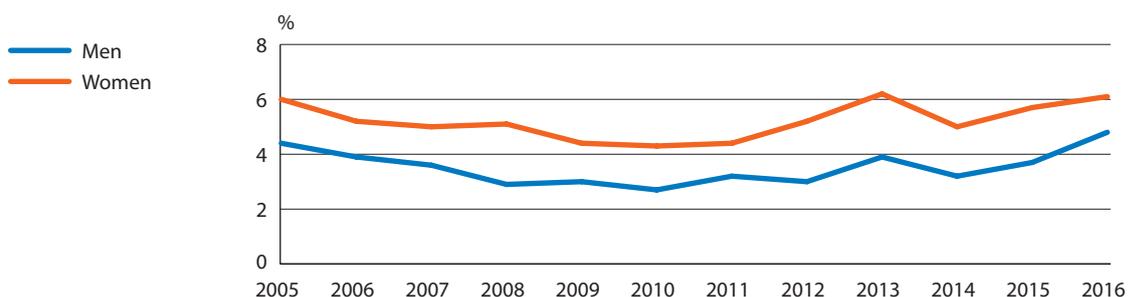
Figure 6. Victims of fraud. Percentage for each gender, 2005–2016, according to SCS – Standard.



Harrassment

- For 2016, 5.5 per cent of persons state that they were victims of harassment. This is an increase compared with the preceding year, when 4.7 per cent stated that they had been victims. Between 2005 and 2010, the percentage of victims decreased gradually from 5.2 per cent to 3.5 per cent. Victimization has increased thereafter.
- Women were victims of harassment more often than men (see figure 7) and victims were most commonly among the youngest age bracket (ages 16–19).

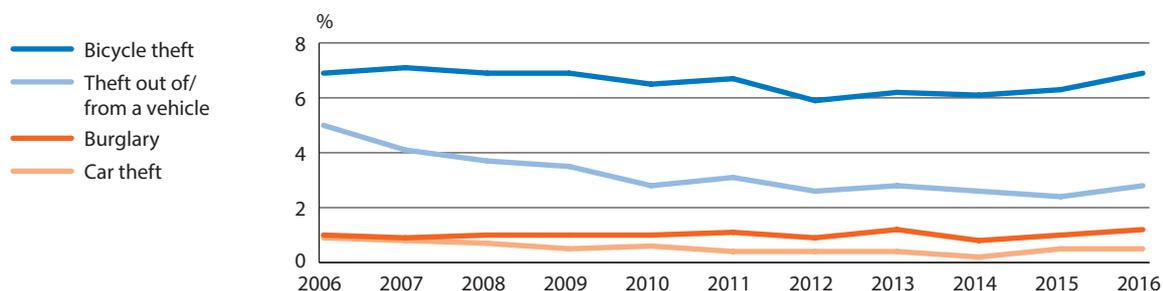
Figure 7. Victims of harassment. Percentage for each gender, 2005–2016, according to SCS – Standard.



Property offences against households

- The SCS – Standard shows that 10.3 per cent of households were victims of car theft, theft out of or from a vehicle, bicycle theft, or burglary (all referred to as property offences against households) during 2016. This is a somewhat greater percentage than 2015 (when the percentage of victimised households was 9.5%). The percentage has, however, decreased over time, down from 12.6 per cent in 2006. The most common property crime is bicycle theft, while vehicle theft occurs least (see figure 8).
- Of the property crimes against households which are reported in the SCS – Standard, approximately one-half (56%) were reported to the police. The highest reporting rate is for burglary (89%), while the lowest is for bicycle theft (42%).
- Like burglary, car theft is a type of offence which has a high rate of police reporting. The percentage of households that were victims of car theft during recent years has, however, been so small that the percentage of car thefts reported to the police has not been reported since 2008.
- An overwhelming majority of those who were victims of property offences against households state that they were victims once in 2016, while a smaller percentage of the victimised households (3%) stated that they were victims four times or more.

Figure 8. Victims of various types of property offences. Percentage of victimised households nationwide, 2006–2016 according to the SCS – Standard.



Burglary

- In 2016, 1.2 per cent of households were victims of burglary. This is an increase compared to last year, when 1.0 per cent of households were victims. Since the survey was commenced in 2006, the percentage of households that were victims of burglary has been relatively stable at approximately 1 per cent.

Car theft

- In 2016, 0.5 per cent of households were victims of car theft. This is the same level as 2015. In essence, the percentage of households that were victims of car theft during 2006–2011 was almost halved (from 0.9% to 0.4%) and has thereafter remained relatively unchanged.

Theft out of or from a vehicle

- The percentage of households that were victims of theft out of or from a vehicle was 2.8 per cent in 2016, which corresponds to approximately 118,000 households in Sweden. This is a greater percentage than 2015, when 2.4 per cent of households were victims. During the period 2006-2010, the percentage of households that were victims of theft out of or from a vehicle declined dramatically (from 5.0% to 2.8%) and victimisation has thereafter remained at a relatively stable level.

Bicycle theft

- In 2016, 6.9 per cent of households were victims of bicycle theft. This is an increase compared with last year, when 6.3 per cent of households were victims. The percentage of victimised households remained relatively stable between 2006 and 2011. In 2012, the percentage declined somewhat and remained relatively stable until the increase in 2016. It remains to be seen whether the increase in the most recent survey is the beginning of a new trend.

Concern for crime and unsafety

Measuring feelings of unsafety and concern for crime is complicated, but the SCS can contribute by providing a number of key indicia on the subject. The reference periods reflected in the chapter on unsafety and concern for crime vary, depending on the type of question. Questions about concern for various types of offences refer to the most recent twelve months (from the time of interview). The more comprehensive questions refer to the perception one had at the time the question was asked (2017).

Feeling unsafe outdoors late at night

- A total of 19 per cent of people state that they feel very unsafe or quite unsafe when going outdoors alone at night or that, as a consequence of feeling unsafe, they avoid going out alone at night; this is the same level as 2016. The percentage decreased between 2006 and 2010 (from 21% to 15%) and was thereafter at a stable level until the increase in 2016 (see figure 9).
- It is significantly more common for women to feel unsafe than for men (see figure 10). The percentage of persons who feel unsafe is particularly high among the youngest and oldest women in the survey.

Figure 9. Feeling unsafe (very unsafe/quite unsafe) in own neighbourhood when going out late at night, as well as those who refrain from going out due to feelings of unsafety. Percentage of population (ages 16-79), 2006-2017, according to SCS – Standard.

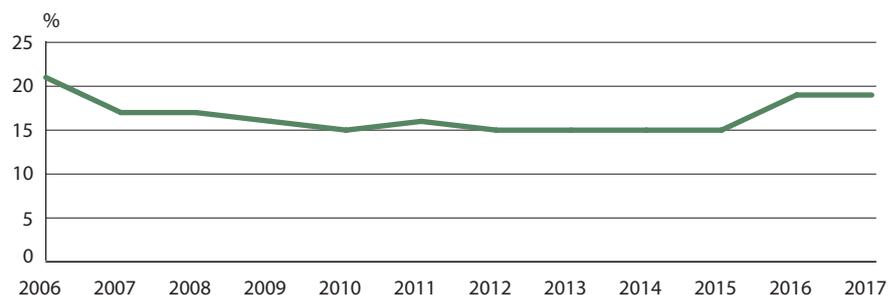
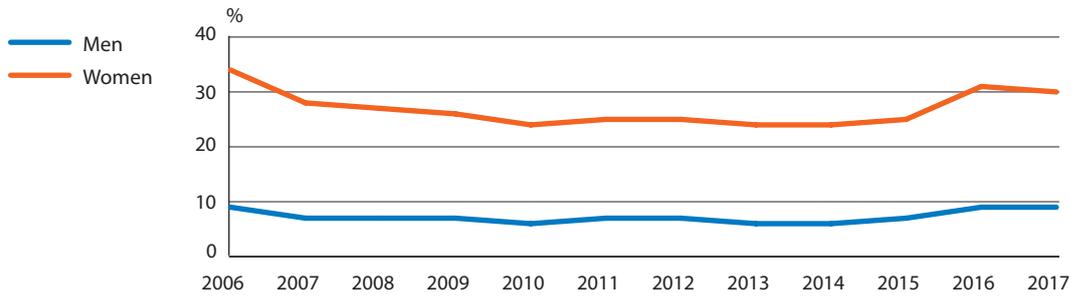


Figure 10. Feeling unsafe (very unsafe/quite unsafe) in own neighbourhood when going out late at night, as well as those who refrain from going out due to feelings of unsafety. Percentage for each gender, 2006–2017, according to SCS – Standard.



Concern for crime in society

- Three-fourths (75%) of persons believe that criminality in Sweden has increased during the past three years, which is an increase of 3 percentage points over 2016. Since 2006, when the SCS was conducted for the first time, the percentage has decreased by 6 percentage points.
- Almost one-third of the population (29%) have great concern over criminality in society. This is an increase since last year, when 25 per cent experienced great concern for criminality. Leading up to 2011, the percentage who experienced great concern decreased, but a clear increase is apparent as from 2014 and the percentage now is the same as when it was first measured in 2006.
- It is more common for women to have great concern about crime in society than for men. In addition, a greater percentage of older persons experience concern than younger persons. Among the youngest age bracket (ages 16–19), 13 per cent feel great concern, while the corresponding percentage is 35–37 percent in the 45–74 age bracket.

Concerns about being a victim of crime

- Almost three out of ten persons (29%) in 2017 state that they feel concerned, very often or quite often, that someone close to them will be subject to crime; this is the same level as the preceding year.
- It is more common for women to be concerned, very often or quite often, that friends or family will be subject to crime than for men. Concern that friends or family will be subject to crime is most common for persons 45–54 years of age (38%). The least concerned groups are the youngest and oldest groups (ages 16–19 and ages 75–79, specifically 20% for each group).
- In 2017, 20 per cent state that they are concerned about burglary, which is a continuation of a weak increase which has been ongoing since 2011 (see figure 11).
- It is more common for women to be concerned about burglary than men (see figure 12). The percentage concerned about burglary, among both men and women, is greatest in the 35–64 age brackets.
- The percentage of persons stated that they are concerned very often or quite often about being a victim of an attack/assault is 16%. Concerns about attack or assault increased tangibly between 2015 and 2016 (from 11% to 15%) and is at approximately the same level this year (see figure 11).

- It is significantly more common for women to be concerned about being a victim of an attack or assault than for men (see figure 13). However, the percentage of women who are concerned varies a great deal depending on the age bracket. The highest percentage is among women ages 20–24.
- Among the respondents who stated that someone in the household owns a car, 16 per cent are concerned that the household’s car will be stolen or vandalised. This is an increase of 2 percentage points over the preceding year (14% in 2016). The percentage who are worried about the household’s car being stolen or vandalised decreased between 2006 and 2013 (from 22% to 12%) but has increased gradually since 2014 (see figure 11).
- The percentage concerned about theft or vandalism of vehicles is, in principle, equally high for women and men (see figure 14). In respect of age, concern for vehicle-related offences is greatest among persons ages 25–54, among both women and men.

Figure 11. Concern (very often/quite often) for being a victim of various crimes. Percentage of population (ages 16–79), 2006–2017, according to SCS – Standard.

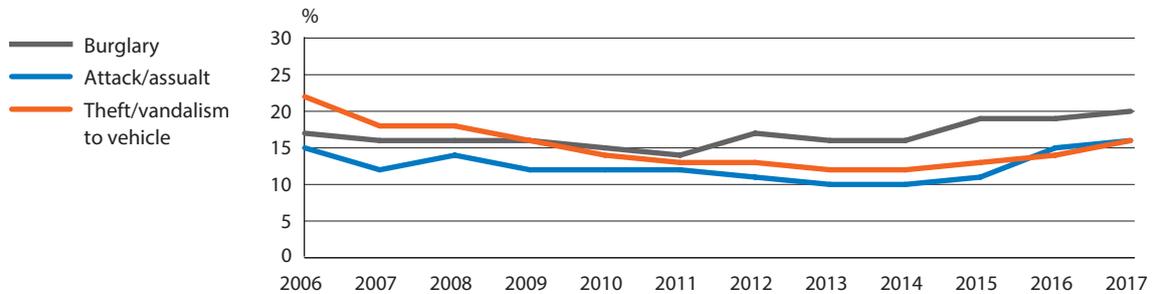


Figure 12. Concern (very often/quite often) for being a victim of burglary. Percentage for each gender, 2006–2017, according to SCS – Standard.

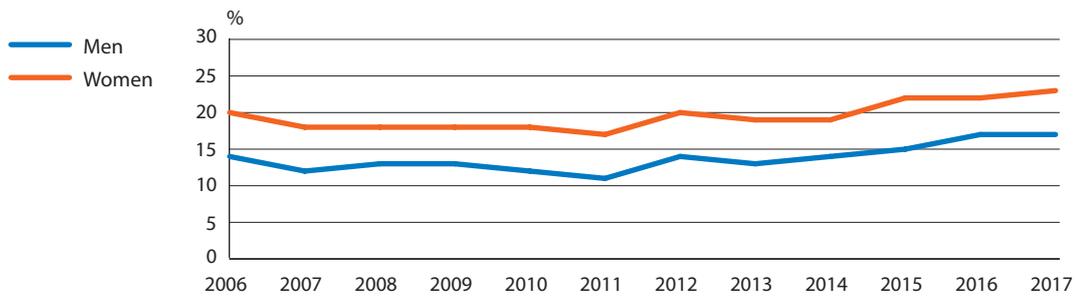


Figure 13. Concern (very often/quite often) for being a victim of attack/assault. Percentage for each gender, 2006–2017, according to SCS – Standard.

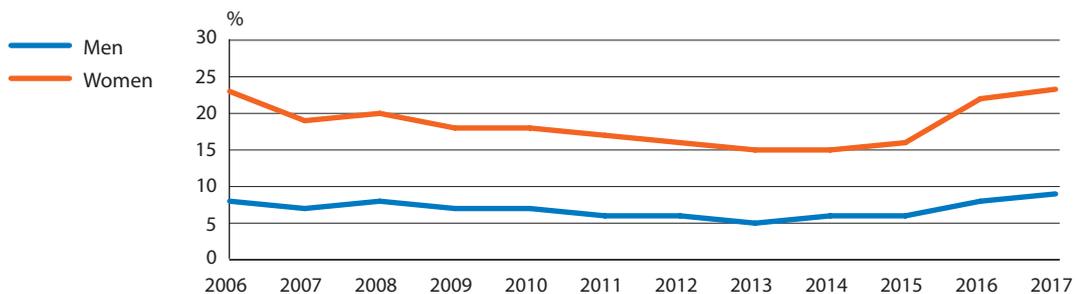
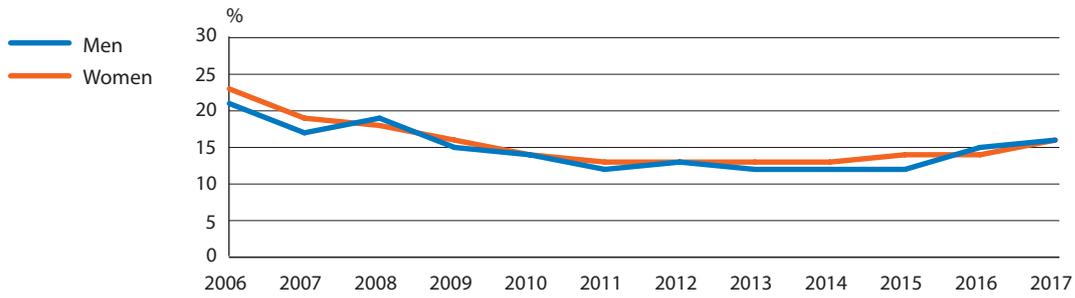


Figure 14. Concern (very often/quite often) for being a victim of theft/vandalism of vehicle. Percentage for each gender, 2006–2017, according to SCS – Standard.



Consequences of feeling unsafe

- Approximately one in three persons (35%) state that at some point during the year they chose another route or another means of transportation as a result of concern about being a victim of crime, while almost one in eight (13%) refrained from an activity as a result of this concern.
- Approximately one in five persons (22%) believe that their quality of life is affected as a result of unsafety.

Confidence in the criminal justice system

The criminal justice system comprises several different public agencies and the SCS asks questions about the criminal justice system as a whole, as well as more specific questions regarding four of its agencies – the police, public prosecutors, the courts, and the prison and probation service. The chapter on confidence in the criminal justice system reflects the interview subject's perception at the time of the interview (2017).

Confidence in the criminal justice system and the different agencies

- Slightly more than one-half (55%) of the population (ages 16–79) have a high degree of confidence, either very high or quite high, in the criminal justice system as whole, which is a decline by 6 percentage points since 2016. Confidence increased until 2015 but has thereafter clearly declined, and the current level of persons with a high degree of confidence is back at the same level as when it was first measured in 2006 (see figure 15). It is too early to say whether the decline over the last two years is the start of a new trend.
- Confidence in the police is almost the same as for the criminal justice system as a whole (54%) which is 7 per cent less than the preceding year. Confidence increased until 2015 but has clearly declined in the last two years, and the current level is the same as when it was first measured in 2006. It is too early to say whether the decrease over the last two years is the start of a new trend.
- Less than one-half of the population (ages 16–79) has a very high degree of confidence in public prosecutors (44%), which is less than the preceding year (50%). The percentage of persons with a high degree of confidence in public prosecutors increased until 2009 and then remained stable until the decline in 2017. It is too early to say whether the reduction is a change of direction for an otherwise stable trend.
- Slightly less than one-half of the population (ages 16–79) have a very high degree of confidence in the courts (47%), which is lower than the preceding year (52%). The percentage with a very high degree of confidence in the courts increased until 2009 and then remained stable until the reduction in 2017. It is too early to say whether the reduction is a change of direction for an otherwise stable trend.
- The percentage with a very high degree of confidence in the prison and probation service is less than for the other agencies; slightly fewer than

four of ten persons (39%) have a very high degree of confidence, which is decrease of 5 percentage points from the preceding year. The percentage with a very high degree of confidence in the prison and probation service increased over the period 2006–2016, particularly during the first part of the period. It is too early to determine whether the most recent year’s reduction is the start of a downwards trend.

- It is somewhat more common for women to have a high degree of confidence in the criminal justice system than for men (see figure 16). The youngest persons surveyed (ages 16–19) reflected the greatest percentage of individuals with a high degree of confidence in the criminal justice system and for each agency.

Figure 15. High (very/quite) degree of confidence in the criminal justice system. Percentage of the population 16–79), 2006–2017, according to the SCS – Standard.

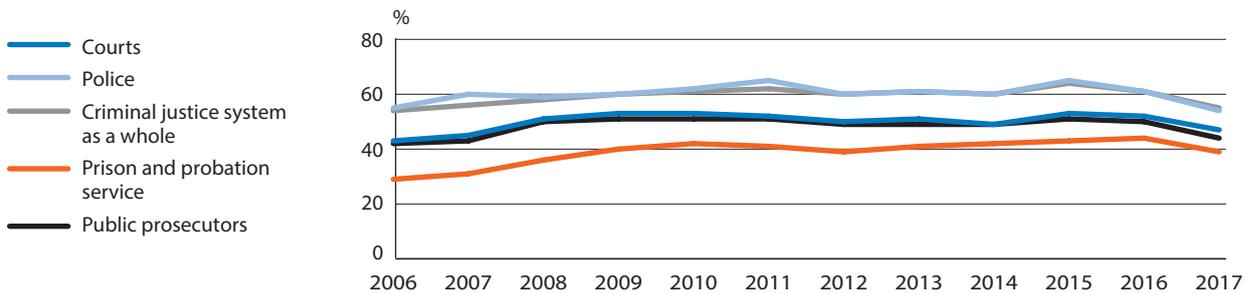
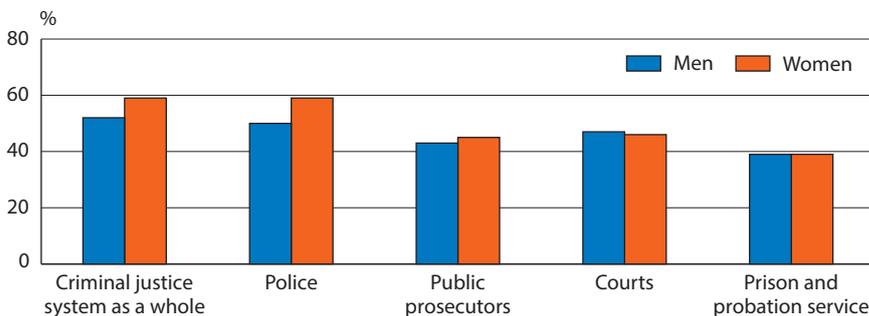


Figure 16. High (very/quite) degree of confidence in the criminal justice system. Percentage for each gender 2017, according to SCS – Standard.



Confidence that the criminal justice system treats suspects fairly

- The SCS – Standard shows that slightly less than one-half (48%) of the population (ages 16–79) have a high degree of confidence that the criminal justice system, as a whole, treats those suspected of offences fairly, which is a reduction of 4 percentage points since 2016. The percentage of persons with a high degree of confidence that the criminal justice system, as a whole, treats suspected persons fairly increased until 2010 and was thereafter stable until the reduction in 2017. According to the SCS – Standard, the percentage with a high degree of confidence that the police treat suspects fairly is 53 per cent, which is approximately the same level as 2016, when the corresponding figure was 54 per cent. The percentage with a high degree of confidence has been relatively stable since the question was first posed in 2008.
- A greater percentage of men than women have a high degree of confidence that suspected persons are treated fairly by the criminal justice

system as a whole and by the police. The greatest percentage of persons with a high degree of confidence that suspects are treated fairly by the criminal justice system as a whole, as well as by the police, is reflected in the youngest age bracket (ages 16–19), while the oldest age bracket (ages 75–79) has the lowest degree of confidence.

Confidence that the justice system treats crime victims in a good way

- According to the SCS – Standard, fewer than four of ten persons (39%) have a high degree of confidence that the criminal justice system, as a whole, treats crime victims well. This indicates a slight decrease in confidence since 2016 (when the corresponding figure was 41%). However, the percentage with a high degree of confidence has increased by 9 percentage points since they were first measured in 2006. More than one-half of the respondents (54%) perceive the police as treating crime victims well which is, in principle, the same level as 2016, when 53 per cent had a high degree of confidence, and the percentage has been stable since the question was first asked in 2008.
- It is, in principle, equally common for women and men to have a high degree of confidence that crime victims are treated well by both the police and the criminal justice system. The percentage of persons with the highest degree of confidence in the criminal justice system and police treating victims well is highest among the youngest age bracket (ages 16–19) and lowest among the oldest age brackets (65–74 years of age).

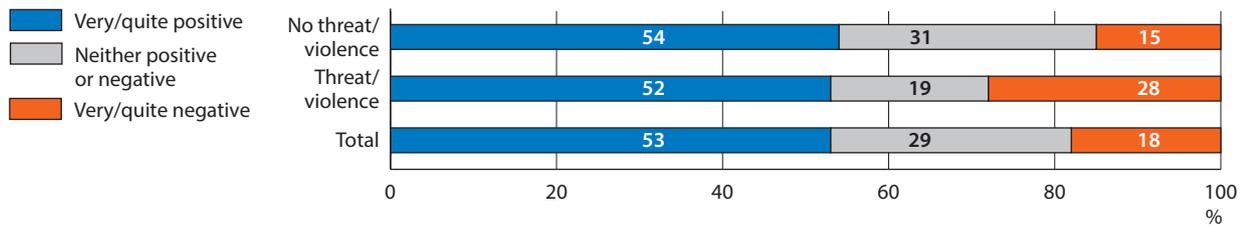
Crime victims' contacts with the criminal justice system

When a person who has been a victim of an offence decides to report the incident to the police, they come in contact with, and gain experience of, one or more of the agencies within the criminal justice system. The experience is customarily limited to the person's contact with the police in connection with the police report, but may also comprise contact with public prosecutors, counsel for injured parties and, in the event the offence comes to trial, courts. The chapter on crime victims' contacts with the criminal justice system reports experiences from the most recent three years (as of the date of the question).

Experience of the police in connection with reporting a crime to the police

- One-fifth (20%) of the population (ages 16-79) state that during the last three years, they were a victim of some crime which was reported to the police. Slightly more than one-half (53%) of these persons state that overall, their experience with the police was very positive or quite positive, and 18 per cent state that they had a very negative or quite negative experience (see figure 17). The percentage of those who state that they have positive experience with the police has been relatively constant since 2007.
- Women state that they have positive experience of the police more often than men, and this difference can be observed throughout the entire measurement period. The difference between the genders was 10 percentage points in 2017.
- In those cases where the incident involved threats or violence, the experience with the police was more negative than in other cases.
- Results are mixed in respect of more specific aspects of contact with the police. Significantly more persons are satisfied with police accessibility and interaction than with the information they received about the matter and police effectiveness in investigating the crime.

Figure 17. Experience with the police in connection with being a victim of crime during the most recent three years. Both total and broken down into whether (the most recent) event included or did not include threat or violence. Percentage for each group 2017, according to SCS – Standard.



Experience with public prosecutors or courts

- Approximately 2.3 per cent of the population state that they have been in contact with public prosecutors as a result of having been a victim of crime sometime during the last three years, even if the investigation did not subsequently lead to trial. Approximately one-half of these individuals (48%) state that they experienced their contact with public prosecutors positively.
- Of the population aged 16–79, 1.7 per cent state that they have participated as an injured party in a trial during the most recent three years. Of these persons, 59 per cent state that they are satisfied with the way they were treated in court.
- Slightly more than one-half (58%) of those who participated in trial had a so-called counsel for the injured party. Of these persons, 71 per cent describe their experience of the counsel for the injured party as positive.
- Three-fourths (75%) of those who were asked state that they felt that it was very easy or fairly easy to understand what happened during the trial, and the same percentage felt that they received sufficient information prior to the trial.

Figures

Victimisation

Figure 1. Victims of various types of offences against an individual. Percentage of the population (ages 16-79), 2005–2016 according to the SCS – Standard.

Figure 2. Victims of assault. Percentage for each gender, 2005–2016, according to SCS – Standard.

Figure 3. Victims of threats. Percentage for each gender, 2005–2016, according to SCS – Standard.

Figure 4. Victims of sexual offences. Percentage for each gender, 2005–2016, according to SCS – Standard.

Figure 5. Victims of robbery. Percentage for each gender, 2005–2016, according to SCS – Standard.

Figure 6. Victims of fraud. Percentage for each gender, 2005–2016, according to SCS – Standard.

Figure 7. Victims of harassment. Percentage for each gender, 2005–2016, according to SCS – Standard.

Figure 8. Victims of various types of property crime. Percentage of victimised households nationwide, 2006–2016, according to the SCS – Standard.

Concern for crime and unsafety

Figure 9. Feeling unsafe (very unsafe/quite unsafe) in own neighbourhood when going out late at night, as well as those who refrain from going out due to feelings of unsafety. Percentage of population (ages 16-79), 2006–2017, according to SCS – Standard.

Figure 10. Feeling unsafe (very unsafe/quite unsafe) in own neighbourhood when going out late at night, as well as those who refrain from going out due to feelings of unsafety. Percentage for each gender, 2006–2017, according to SCS – Standard.

Figure 11. Concern (very often/quite often) for being a victim of various crimes. Percentage of population (ages 16-79), 2006–2017, according to SCS – Standard.

Figure 12. Concern (very often/quite often) for being a victim of burglary. Percentage for each gender, 2006–2017, according to SCS – Standard.

Figure 13. Concern (very often/quite often) for being a victim of attack/assault. Percentage for each gender, 2006–2017, according to SCS – Standard.

Figure 14. Concern (very often/quite often) for being a victim of theft/vandalism of vehicle. Percentage for each gender, 2006–2017, according to SCS – Standard.

Confidence in the criminal justice system

Figure 15. High (very/quite) degree of confidence in the criminal justice system. Percentage of the population 16-79), 2006–2017, according to the SCS – Standard.

Figure 16. High (very/quite) degree of confidence in the criminal justice system. Percentage for each gender 2017, according to SCS – Standard.

Crime victims' contacts with the criminal justice system

Figure 17. Experience with the police in connection with being a victim of crime during the most recent three years. Both total and broken down into whether (the most recent) event included or did not include threat or violence. Percentage for each group 2017, according to SCS – Standard

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