Inspecting policing in the public interest

Rape Monitoring Group

Adult and child rape data for 2012/13

Northumbria Police

Police recorded crimes, sanction detections and 'no crime' rate for 2012/13

Produced by Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary on behalf of the Rape Monitoring Group:

Academics
Association of Chief Police Officers
Attorney General's Office
Child Exploitation and Online Protection Agency
College of Policing
Crown Prosecution Service
Her Majesty's Crown Prosecution Service Inspectorate
Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary
Home Office
Ministry of Justice
The policing body for Greater London
Voluntary sector

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DATA ABOUT RAPE IN ENGLAND AND WALES

Introduction

The police service collects data about rape in England and Wales. Broadly speaking, these data set out how many rapes were recorded by the police and the outcomes.

Good quality data are important, not only to inform the public about the outcomes of this type of offending, but to ensure that victims receive the right protection and services. Accurate and comprehensive data enable the force to obtain valuable intelligence and improve opportunities to identify perpetrators of rape.

Understanding data about rape: a word of caution

The police service work to **prevent** and therefore reduce crime, including rape. At the same time the police service wants to **encourage** more victims to come forward and report rapes, so that actions can be taken by a wide range of agencies to help them, and bring the perpetrators to justice. 'Prevention' and 'encouragement' are not mutually exclusive activities. Both are necessary if rape is to be tackled more effectively, but relying exclusively on the available data without further detailed analysis and interpretation may provide a misleading picture of how effectively rape is being tackled locally. In particular, improving the police's ability to investigate, solve and prosecute cases of rape is dependent upon attending to, and improving, many elements of rape investigations.

The numbers, of course, can never tell the full story. For example, rises in the numbers of rapes being recorded may mean that victims feel more confident in reporting what happened to them. We know that in the wake of publicity associated with the late Jimmy Savile, more people have come forward to tell the police about sexual abuse. Falls in the number of recorded rapes may therefore mean that victims are losing confidence in the authorities to treat them sensitively or, conversely, that the police have successfully taken action to reduce rape offending.

It is also widely recognised that rape is under-reported by up to 85%,[1] with many more rapes committed than are recorded by the police. The data held by the police can therefore only provide a partial picture of the prevalence of rape. The processes and systems the police have in place to record and manage data also vary from force to force. This can affect the way reports of rape are recorded and analysed.

[1] www.gov.uk/government/publications/an-overview-of-sexual-offending-in-england-and-wales

Monitoring rape data

The force digests are published by the national Rape Monitoring Group (RMG),[2] so that Police and Crime Commissioners (PCCs) have a data set to enable a full and thorough analysis of how rape is dealt with in their force area. The RMG will regularly review these digests with a view to enhancing the quantity and quality of the information they contain, so that the right questions and interventions can be made in driving improvements in this important area of work.

In the absence of a more comprehensive means of understanding the police response to rape offending, data provide a good starting point. For this reason, the RMG regularly examines data on rape recorded by the police in order to identify trends in performance and recording/offending.

The data the RMG uses for this purpose are presented as ‘force digests’ – which pull together a range of police data in one place.

The force digests:

- show rates for recorded crimes, sanction detections and 'no crimes';
- allow data from each police force to be compared with the data from other forces in England and Wales; and
- show trends in the data over time.

The data used in the digest is for the financial year 2012/13 as this is the latest period for which all the data is available for each of the three areas above. (Note that more up to date recorded crime data, for the year to 30 September 2013, is available but not used here.)

Framing the right questions

The force digests use published statistics and do not contain “new” data. These digests, when considered alongside local information, however, will trigger important questions for each force. For example:

- What action is being taken to understand the nature and scale of rape in local communities, as well as regional and national trends?
- When forces are compared with each other, why are there wide variations in the data?
- How is targeted prevention work being taken forward?
- What action is being taken by the police and other agencies to encourage victims of rape to come forward? Do staff understand that victims incapacitated by drink or drugs may have been selected because of their vulnerability?
- How are resources deployed to tackle rape effectively and efficiently?
- What are the training and experience profiles of staff who are required to deal with rape? In particular, do staff receive training on the issue of consent?

[2] The RMG is chaired by Her Majesty’s Inspectorate of Constabulary, and comprises those with an interest in the effective management of rape from across criminal justice agencies, inspectorates, the voluntary sector, academics and local policing bodies.

- What intelligence analysis takes place on rapes, in particular, the 'no criming' of rape?
- What checks are in place to ensure that ALL reports of rapes are being recorded properly and on a timely basis, regardless of how they come to the attention of the force and fully in accordance with the National Crime Recording Standard?
- What plans does the force have to train officers in the new sentencing guidelines on sexual offences?
- Does officer training include contributions from survivors of rape and specialist support agencies such as Rape Crisis and the Survivors Trust?
- What do victims think of the service they receive? How do their views influence the way victims are treated?
- Are investigations and prosecutions sufficiently robust?
- What action has been taken to implement new policy initiatives to improve the criminal justice response to rape?
- Are the numbers of rape cases being sent to the Crown Prosecution Service increasing or decreasing and why?
- What partnership arrangements are in place to support victims of rape?
- What good practice exists that can be shared more widely?

This is not an exhaustive list. In addition (and depending on the interpretation of the data and local information for any particular force area), other, more specific questions may also need to be asked.

Looking for answers

There is a variety of information that forces may supply to respond to these questions, for example:

- rape problem profiles[3] (and/or serious sexual offences problem profiles), as set out in the National Intelligence Model (NIM);
- numbers of cases going forward for prosecution;
- pathways for reporting rape both directly to the force and through a third party (these should be readily available through the force website);
- approaches to signposting victims to help and support; and
- arrangements for partnership working, for example, with local authorities, health providers, Sexual Assault Referral Centres (SARCs), Independent Sexual Violence Advisors, Rape Support or Crisis Centres and Victim Support.

Again, this list is not intended to be exhaustive and other more specific local responses may be available.

[3] Note that problem profiles produced in line with the National Intelligence Model are unpublished, restricted documents.

READING THE FORCE DIGEST

Contents and structure

The force digests are set out in two sections. The first section consists of a summary of the force's recorded crime, sanction detection and no crime rates for offences against adults. The second shows the same breakdown for offences against children:[4]

- the number of recorded rapes – how many adult and child rapes were recorded by the police in the force area in the 12 months to the end of March 2013;
- sanction detections for rape – how many adult and child rapes were solved by the police in the 12 months to the end of March 2013 where a formal criminal justice sanction was applied to the offender; and
- 'no criming' of recorded rape – how many adult and child rapes were initially recorded as rapes, but then declassified in the 12 months to the end of March 2013 (see Annex A for a more complete definition).

The force's data for the most recent five years are shown, along with a comparison with other forces in England and Wales.

Useful links

Readers may find the following sources of information useful:

- Call To End Violence Against Women and Girls: Strategic Vision. Home Office, 2010. Available from:
  www.gov.uk
- Violence against Women and Girls: Crime Report, 2012-2013. Available from:
  www.cps.gov.uk
- Forging the Links: Rape investigation and prosecution. HMIC and HMCPSI, 2012. Available from:
  www.hmic.gov.uk.
- Introduction to Intelligence-led Policing. ACPO, 2007. Available from:
  www.acpo.police.uk
- Responding to the Challenge of Rape Myths in Court. Burrowes, N., 2013. Available from:
  nb-research.co.uk
- The Public Health Outcomes Framework includes indicators for rape and are available from:
  www.gov.uk
- Crown Prosecution Service data on prosecutions of rape. Available from:
  http://www.cps.gov.uk/publications/docs/cps_vawg_report_2013.pdf (page 65)

[4] See Annex A for more details on what Adult and Child mean in this context.

Analysis of police recorded data on ADULT rape in Northumbria

This page provides a summary of how the force's recorded crime, sanction detection and 'no crime' rates for adult rape compare with other forces. Each rate is then examined individually in the following pages.

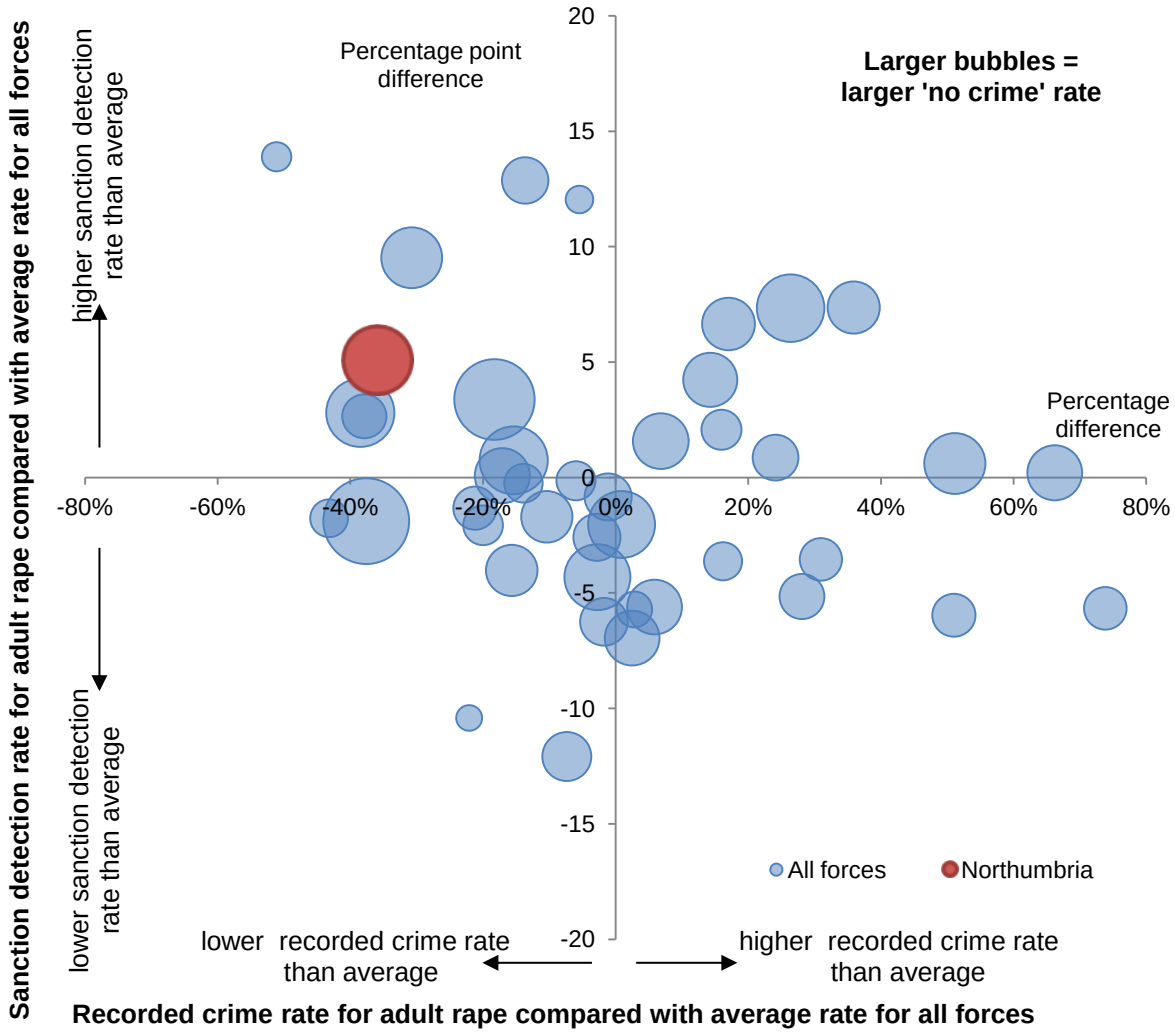
Please note that the England and Wales total is NOT the same as the average used in the figure below. **Annex A and the accompanying note on the methodology contain details of all the calculations used and a guide on how to interpret Figure 1.**

Table 1

12 months to end of March 2013	**Recorded crime rate***	**Sanction detection rate**	**'No crime' rate**
Northumbria	12.9	23%	20%
England & Wales	*22.0*	*18%*	*12%*

*per 100,000 population aged 16 or over taken from the 2011 Census.

Figure 1: Relative recorded crime rate, sanction detection rate and 'no crime' rate for adult rape for the 12 months to the end of March 2013



It is useful to look at how each force compares with the average and which other forces share similar characteristics. The data for the 12 months to the end of March 2013 on ADULT rape shows that, compared with other other forces in England and Wales, Northumbria had:

- a recorded crime rate that is below the average;
- a sanction detection rate that is in line with the average;
- a 'no crime' rate that is above the average;
- a similar recorded crime rate, sanction detection rate and 'no crime' rate to one other force:
  Hertfordshire;
- a similar recorded crime rate and sanction detection rate but different 'no crime' rate to one other force:
  Dyfed-Powys;
- a similar recorded crime rate and 'no crime' rate but different sanction detection rate to no other forces;
- a similar sanction detection rate and 'no crime' rate but different recorded crime rate to one other force:
  Cleveland.

Note that the above summary is intended as a guide only; forces have been divided into three groups for each rate (above, in line with and below average), and these groups have then been used to match forces. For more details, see the accompanying methodological note.

ADULT rape

Crimes recorded in Northumbria

Figure 2: Number of adult rape offences recorded for the 12 months to the end of March

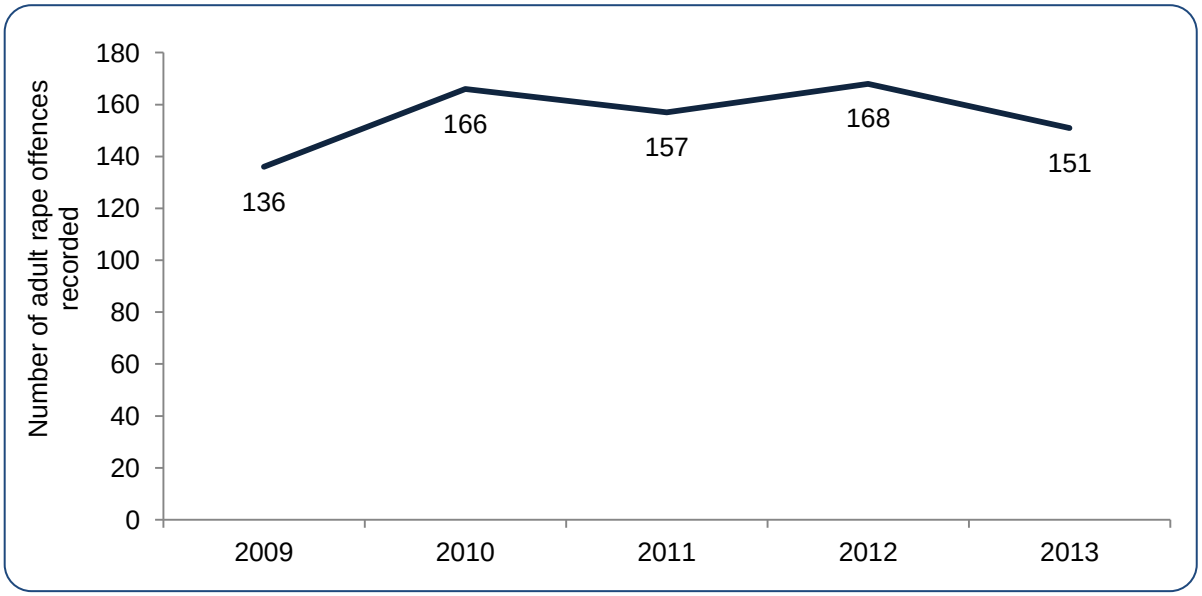
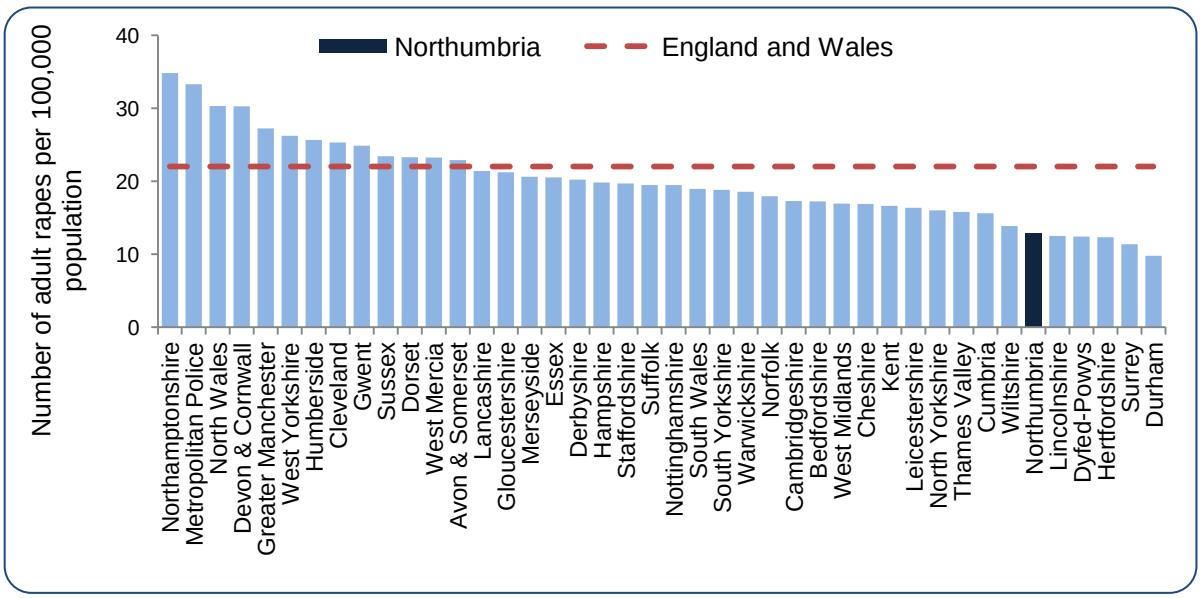


Figure 3: Number of adult rapes recorded per 100,000 adult population for 12 months to the end of March 2013



ADULT rape

Sanction detections per crime recorded in Northumbria

Figure 4: Sanction detection rates for adult rape for the 12 months to the end of March

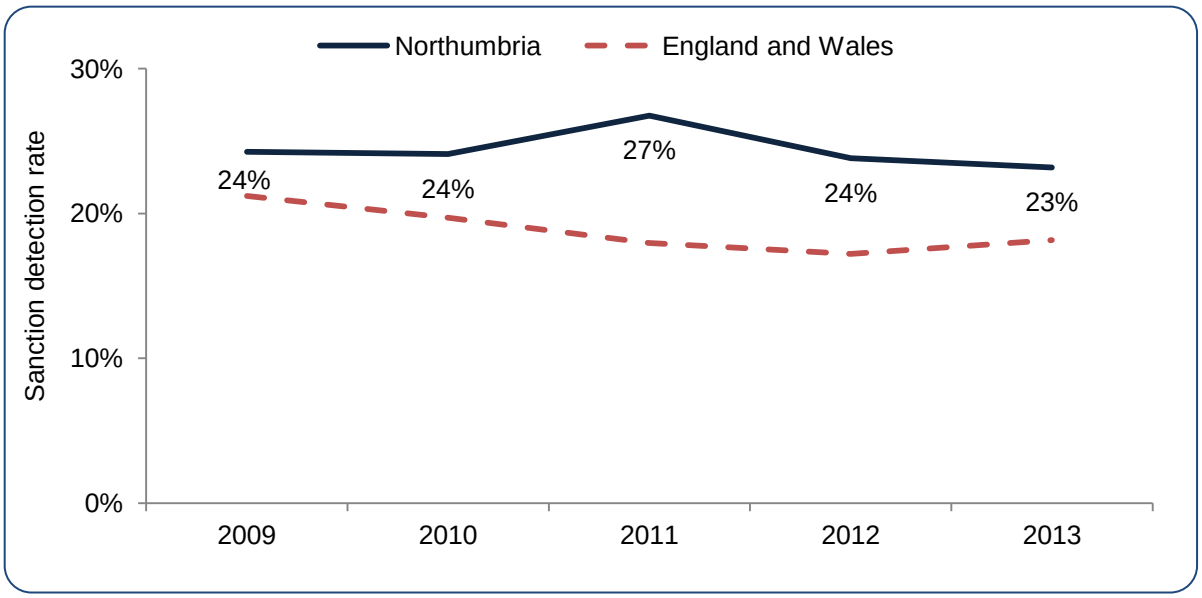
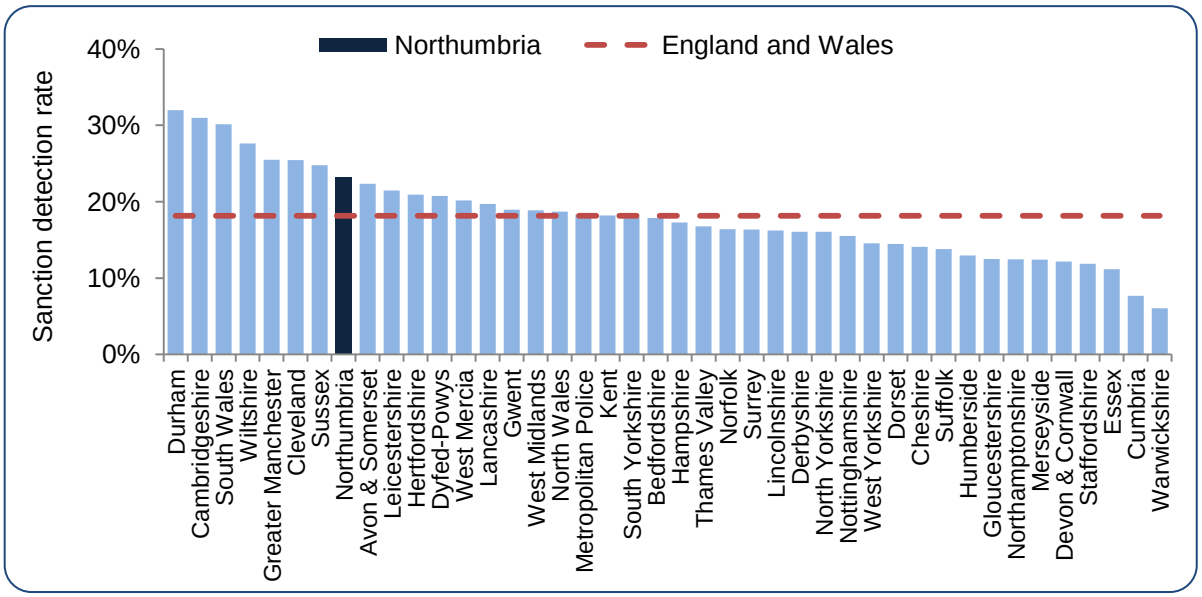


Figure 5: Sanction detection rate for adult rape for the 12 months to the end of March 2013



ADULT rape
'No crimes' per crime recorded in Northumbria

The 'no crime rate' is the number of 'no crimes' recorded in the period divided by the sum of the number of crimes and 'no crimes' recorded in the same period. Please note that for the 12 months to March 2009, 2010 and 2011, 'no crime' data were not published and so the data have not been verified with forces. To highlight this, these three years are given in brackets on the chart axis and in the table.

Figure 6: 'No crime' rates for adult rape for the 12 months to the end of March

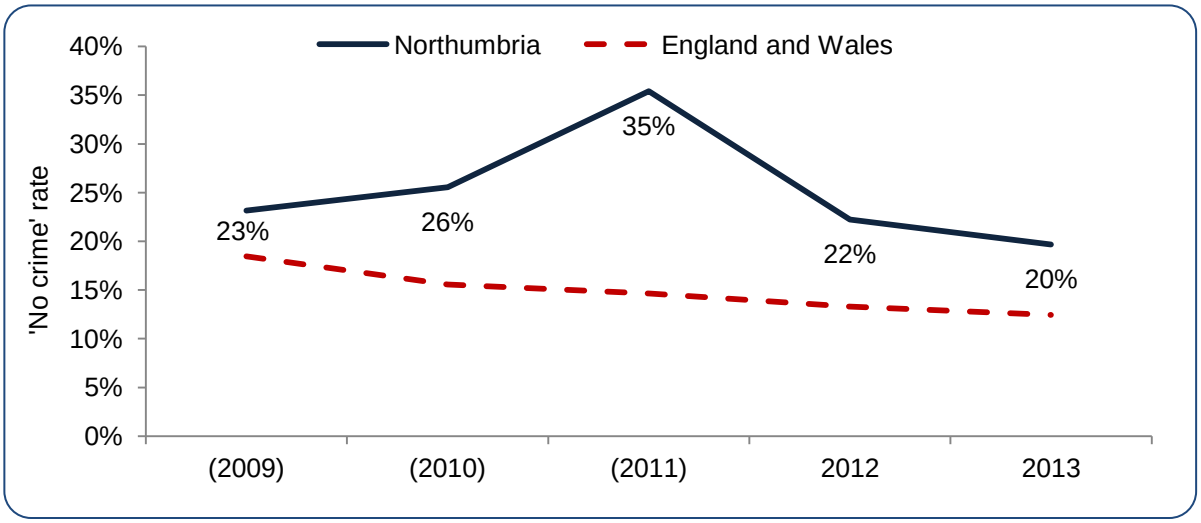
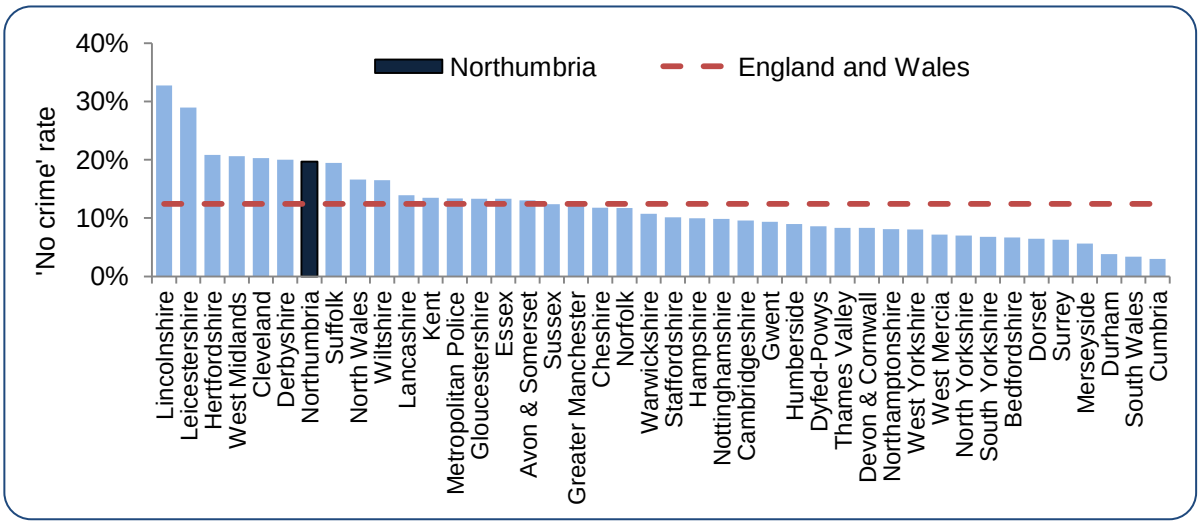


Figure 7: 'No crime' rate for adult rape for the 12 months to the end of March 2013



Since the volume of recorded crimes and 'no crimes' in some forces are small, the rates given above are likely to be volatile year-on-year. The data should then be seen in the context of the **volume** of 'no crimes' given in the table below:

Table 2

	Number of 'no crimes' ('no crime' rate)				
12 months to end of March	**(2009)**	**(2010)**	**(2011)**	**2012**	**2013**
Northumbria	41 (23%*)	57 (26%)	86 (35%)	48 (22%*)	37 (20%*)

*Particular care should be taken when examining the rate since the number of 'no crimes' is small.

Analysis of police recorded data on CHILD rape in Northumbria

This page provides a summary of how the force's recorded crime, sanction detection and 'no crime' rates for adult rape compare with other forces. Each rate is then examined individually in the following pages.

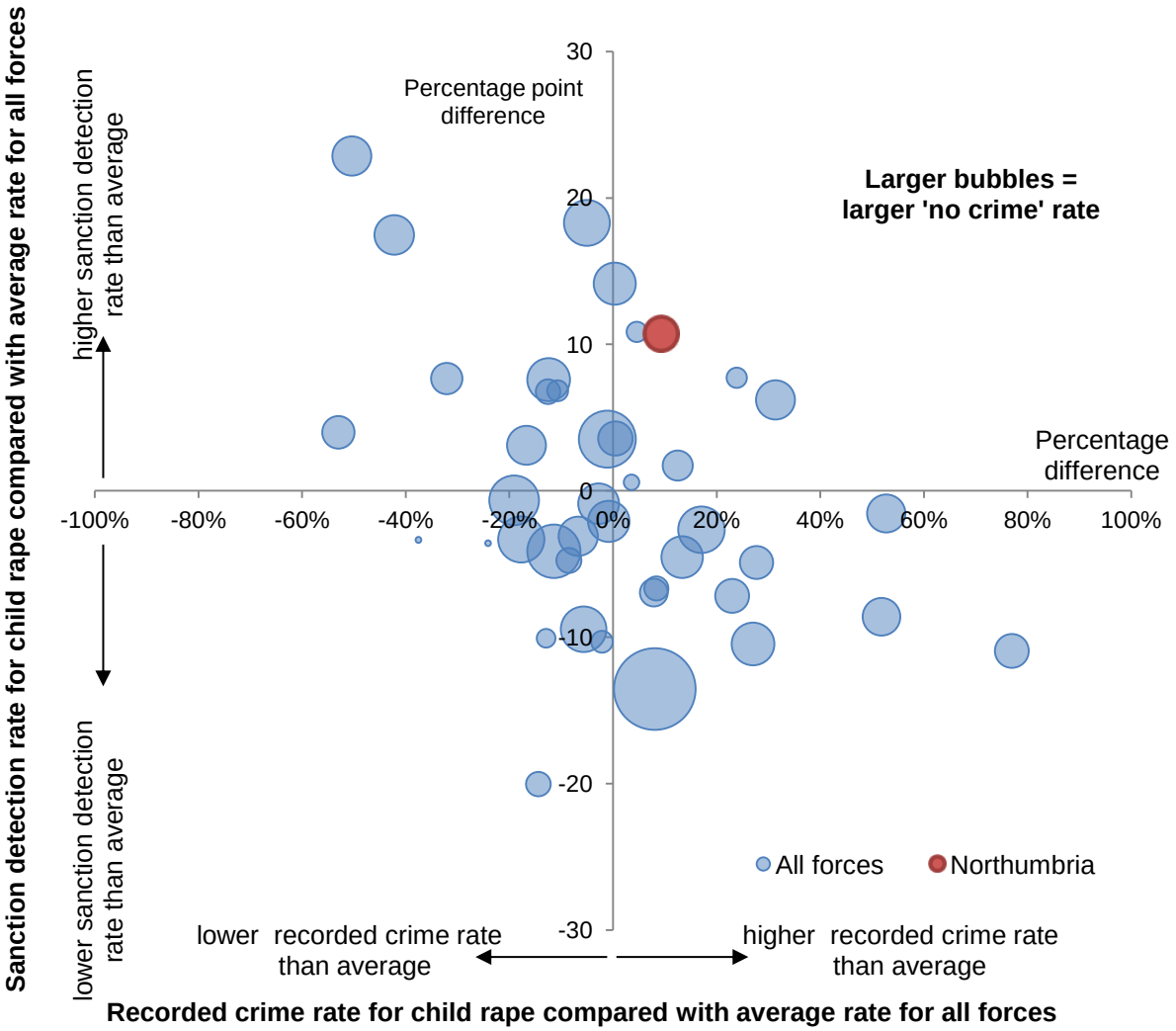
Please note that the England and Wales total is NOT the same as the average used in the figure below. **Annex A and the accompanying note on the methodology contain details of all the calculations used and a guide on how to interpret Figure 8.**

Table 3

12 months to end of March 2013	**Recorded crime rate***	**Sanction detection rate**	**'No crime' rate**
Northumbria	65.5	43%	3%
England & Wales	*59.5*	*31%*	*5%*

*per 100,000 population aged under 16 taken from the 2011 Census.

Figure 8: Relative recorded crime rate, sanction detection rate and 'no crime' rate for child rape for the 12 months to the end of March 2013



It is useful to look at how each force compares with the average and which other forces share similar characteristics. The data for the 12 months to the end of March 2013 on CHILD rape shows that, compared with other other forces in England and Wales, Northumbria had:

- a recorded crime rate that is in line with the average;
- a sanction detection rate that is above the average;
- a 'no crime' rate that is in line with the average;
- a similar recorded crime rate, sanction detection rate and 'no crime' rate to no other forces;
- a similar recorded crime rate and sanction detection rate but different 'no crime' rate to two other forces:
  Lancashire and Wiltshire;
- a similar recorded crime rate and 'no crime' rate but different sanction detection rate to four other forces:
  Durham, Dyfed-Powys, Suffolk and Sussex;
- a similar sanction detection rate and 'no crime' rate but different recorded crime rate to three other forces:
  Gloucestershire, South Yorkshire and West Mercia.

Note that the above summary is intended as a guide only; forces have been divided into three groups for each rate (above, in line with and below average), and these groups have then been used to match forces. For more details, see the accompanying methodological note.

CHILD rape
Crimes recorded in Northumbria

Figure 9: Number of child rape offences recorded for the 12 months to the end of March

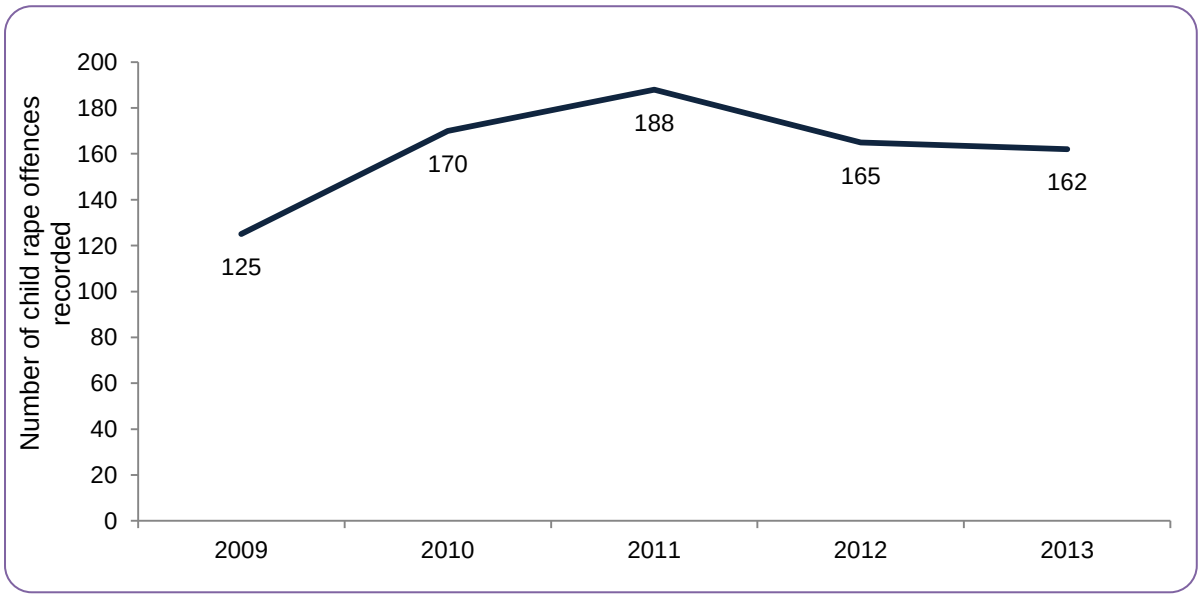
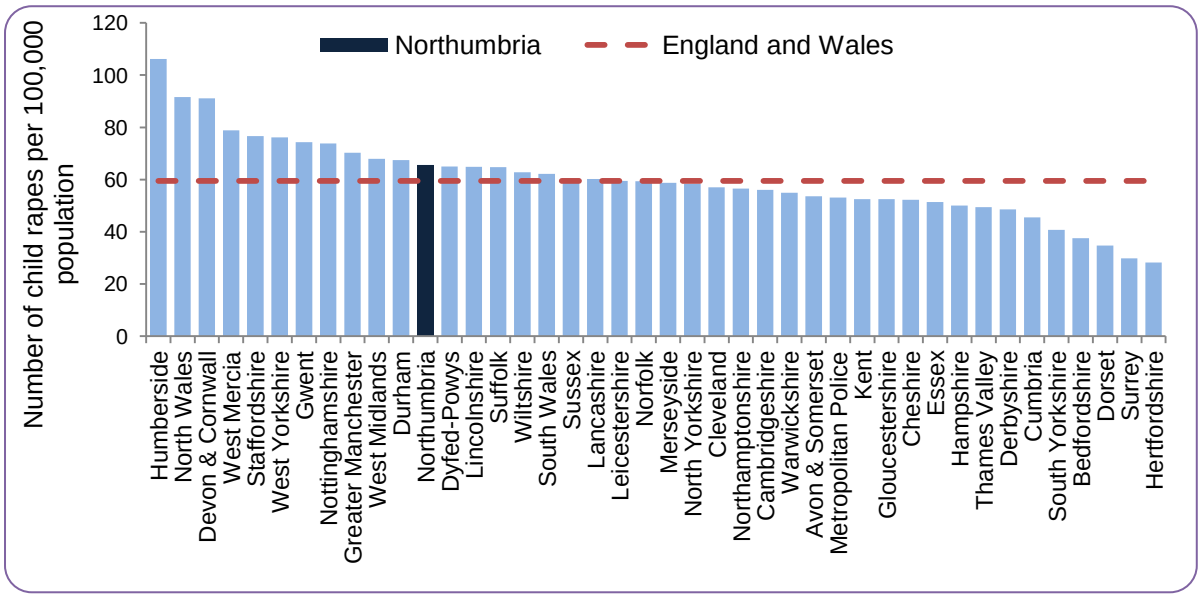


Figure 10: Number of child rapes recorded per 100,000 child population for 12 months to the end of March 2013



CHILD rape
Sanction detections per crime recorded in Northumbria

Figure 11: Sanction detection rates for child rape for the 12 months to the end of March

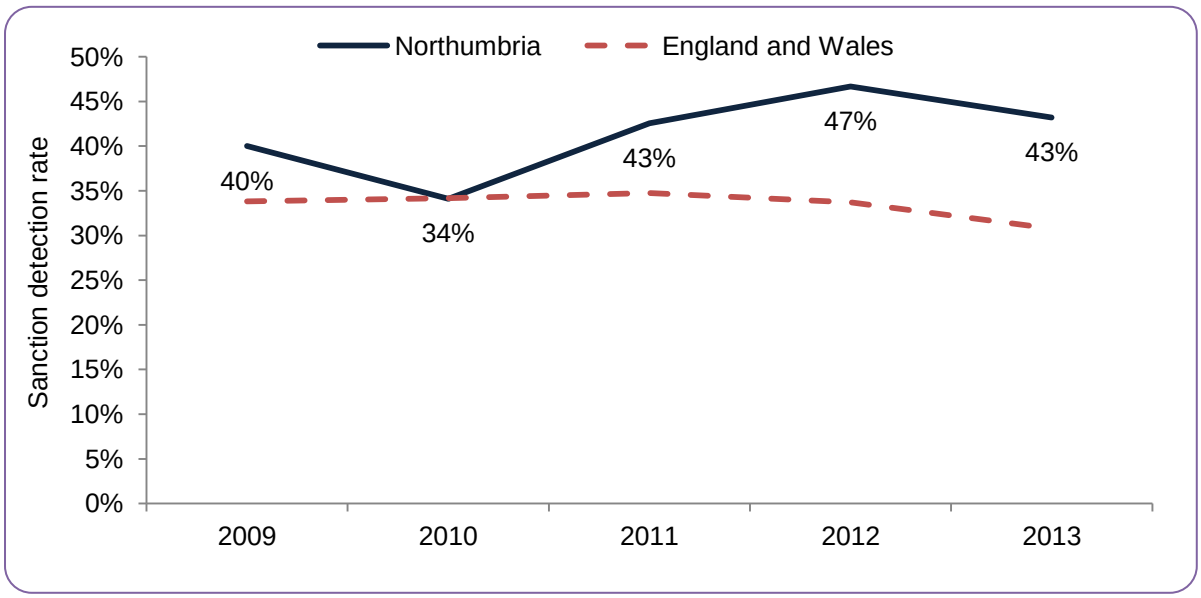
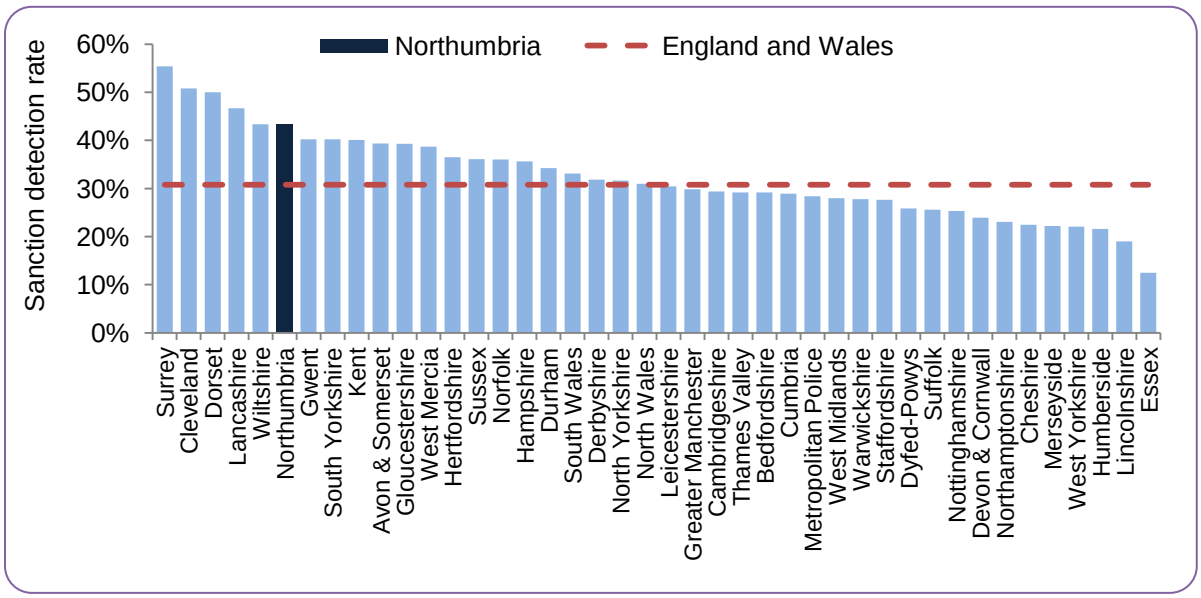


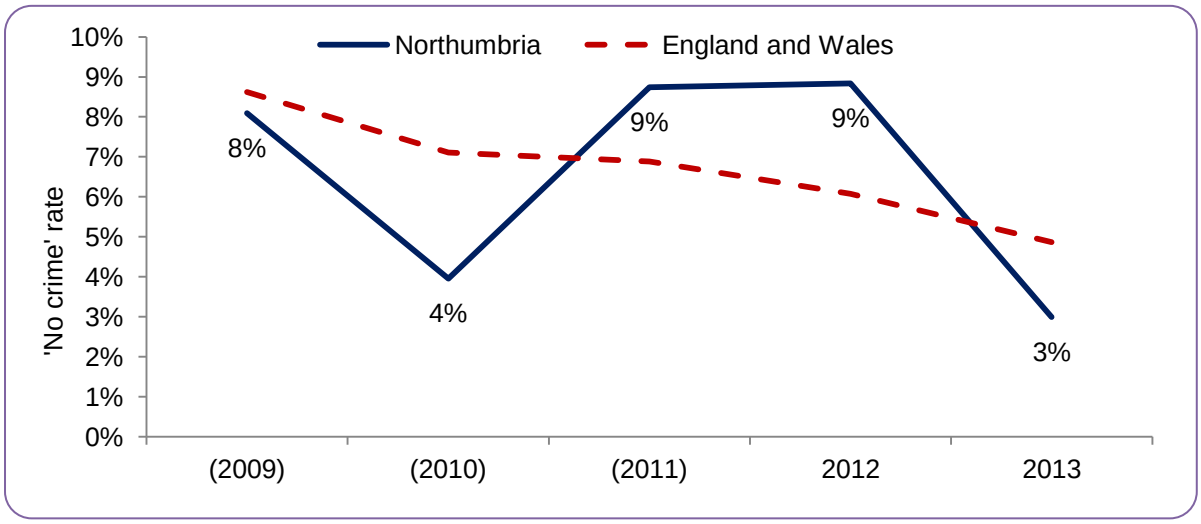
Figure 12: Sanction detection rate for child rape for the 12 months to the end of March 2013



CHILD rape
'No crimes' per crime recorded in Northumbria

The 'no crime rate' is the number of 'no crimes' recorded in the period divided by the sum of the number of crimes and 'no crimes' recorded in the same period. Please note that for the 12 months to March 2009, 2010 and 2011, 'no crime' data were not published and so the data have not been verified with forces. To highlight this, these three years are given in brackets on the chart axis and in the table.

Figure 13: 'No crime' rates for child rape for the 12 months to the end of March



Since the volume of recorded crimes of child rape and 'no crimes' in most forces are small, the rates given above are likely to be volatile year-on-year. A comparison bar chart showing all forces' values is not, therefore, given and the data should be seen in the context of the **volume** of 'no crimes' outlined in the table below:

Table 4

	Number of 'no crimes' ('no crime' rate)				
12 months to end of March	**(2009)**	**(2010)**	**(2011)**	**2012**	**2013**
Northumbria	11 (8%*)	7 (4%*)	18 (9%*)	16 (9%*)	5 (3%*)

*Particular care should be taken when examining the rate since the number of 'no crimes' is small.

ANNEX A - DEFINITIONS AND DATA SOURCES AS REFERENCED IN THE HOME OFFICE COUNTING RULES 2013[5]

'Adult' and 'child'

Throughout the digest, ‘adult’ refers to a male or female aged 16 or over and ‘child’ as a male or female under the age of 16 years in accordance with the definitions as set out in the Sexual Offences Act 2003.[6] Recent reports of rape that occurred in the past when the victim was under 16 years of age are recorded as a child rape regardless of the age of the victim at the time the report was made.

Sanction detection rate

Detected crimes are those that have been ‘cleared up’ (or ‘solved’) by the police. Not every case where the police know, or think they know, who committed a crime can be counted as a detection and some crimes are counted as detected when the victim might view the case as far from solved. For any crime to be counted as detected sufficient evidence must be available to claim a detection and all of the following conditions must be met:

- a notifiable offence has been committed and recorded;
- a suspect has been identified and has been made aware that they will be recorded as being responsible for committing that crime and what the full implications of this are; and
- one of the methods of detection listed in the Home Office Counting Rules applies.

The police may use one of several methods to count a crime as detected. They fall into two broad categories; sanction and non-sanction detections (which includes no further action being taken). The overwhelming majority of detections recorded for rape (98% for the 12 months to the end of March 2013) are sanction detections.

Sanction detections[7] include offences that are cleared up through a formal sanction to the offender. Not all sanction detections will necessarily result in a subsequent conviction. In cases detected by charge or summons, the Crown Prosecution Service (CPS) may not take forward proceedings, or the offender might be found not guilty. A detection can be recorded when an offender has:

- Been charged or summonsed - an offence is deemed to be detected if a person has been charged or summonsed for the crime (irrespective of any subsequent acquittal at court). The overwhelming majority of detections recorded for rape relate to the charge or summons of an offender.

[5] www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/224119/count-general-july-2013.pdf

[6] Readers should be aware that different ages are applied to the definition of a child dependent upon the offence. For example, under the Children Act 1989, a child is defined as a person under 18 years of age.

[7] For data, see detected open data police force area tables (Home Office, 23 January 2013).

- Been cautioned, reprimanded or given a final warning - an offence is deemed to be detected if an offender has been cautioned by the police (including conditional cautions) or given a reprimand or warning under the Crime and Disorder Act 1998. Very few rapes are detected with this outcome.

Other types of sanction detection ('had an offence taken into consideration', 'received a Penalty Notice for Disorder', and 'received a warning for cannabis possession') do not apply to rape offences.

The sanction detection rate shows the ratio between the number of police-recorded rapes where the offender has received a formal sanction of some kind, and the total number of rapes recorded in the time period covered.[8]

Please note that the use of the sanction detection rate to indicate the outcome of crimes following action by the police changed in April 2013 and in future a fuller set of 'crime outcome' data will be available. To align with the terminology used in the publications from which the data used is drawn, 'sanction detections' are used in the digests. Future issues of these data will be presented to reflect the change to 'crime outcomes'. For more information, see
https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/crime-outcomes-consultation

Recorded crime and associated data

'Recorded crimes' are all crimes that must be notified to the Home Office. In general, attempting, conspiring, aiding, abetting, causing or permitting a crime is classified under the heading of the crime itself, though in certain cases it is shown separately.

Recorded crime covers all indictable (and therefore includes all offences of rape) and triable-either-way offences and a small number of summary only offences. A comprehensive list of offences, together with key legal definitions and explanatory notes, appears on the Counting Rules for Recorded Crime pages on the Home Office website.[9]

A crime (including those of rape) should be recorded where the circumstances as reported by or on behalf of the victim amount to that crime as defined in law and where there is no credible evidence to the contrary.

The timing of recording should be as soon as the reporting officer is satisfied that it is more likely than not that a crime has been committed. In cases of rape mere suspicions as to the reliability of the victim should not usually be a factor in the reporting officer's considerations. Recording should be the earliest that the police force's crime recording system allows. It is a national requirement that an incident should be recorded as a crime within a standard timescale of 3 x 24 hour periods from the time the incident is first logged. A maximum of seven days is allowed (to cater for situations outside of the control of the police such as where victims are unavailable), providing the explanation for the delay is clear on the log.

[8] Readers should note that crimes detected in a given period are not necessarily the same crimes that were recorded in that given period. There may be a time lag between the recording of the crime and the detection being made.

[9] www.gov.uk/government/publications/counting-rules-for-recorded-crime

Recording should not be delayed in order to wait for further details. The Home Office, supported by the national policing lead, has made clear that in respect of more serious crimes such as rape, recording should take place as soon as possible and should not usually be delayed whilst the matter is subject of investigation. These practices are governed by the Home Office Counting Rules for Recorded Crime. The expectation is that allegations of rape will usually be recorded as crimes in a significantly shorter timescale than the 3 x 24 hour period set out above.

Data on recorded crime, sanction detections and 'no crime' are presented, for both adult and child rapes, for the financial years 2008/09 to 2012/13, for 42[10] of the Home Office funded forces in England and Wales.[11]

Please note that, in 2008/09 only, additional offence codes were used to record a very small number of rapes. It is not possible, however, to distinguish which of these small numbers of rapes related to an adult or child. For this reason, these data have been omitted.

The digest uses the latest data, published by the ONS on the 23 January 2014,[12] for the 12 months to the end of March 2013. Data for recorded crime is available up to the end of September 2013 but is excluded so that comparisons can be made to sanction detections and 'no crimes'.

Recorded crime rates

Recorded crime rates[13] are calculated as the number of rapes of adults/children recorded by the police, divided by the population of adults/children. Police record the crime in the year that it is reported to them, which is not necessarily the year the offence took place, as above.

Please note in the majority of published crime data it is common practice to express crime rates as per 1,000 population. However, due to the relatively small numbers of recorded rape offences, the offending rate of rape crime is expressed per 100,000 population.

Reporting and recording rape

A report of rape must be recorded as a crime in accordance with the provisions of the Home Office Counting Rules. **Where a victim provides details but declines to support the investigation a crime of rape must still be recorded.**

A report of rape must be recorded as a crime in the following instances:

- the victim provides personal details and seeks a police investigation; or
- the victim (whether anonymous or not) provides details of the allegation to be passed to the police but decides not to pursue the allegation; or

[10] Readers should note that City of London police are excluded from the data because the low number of offences does not allow for meaningful comparison with forces.

[11] Not all forces are funded by the Home Office, for example, British Transport Police.

[12] www.gov.uk/government/publications/police-recorded-crime-open-data-tables

[13] Source of the data: Police recorded crime open data police force area tables from 2007 to 2008 onwards (Home Office, 23 January 2014) and age by local authorities in England and Wales (2011 Census, Office of National Statistics).

- the victim undergoes a forensic examination with samples submitted to the police for analysis (whether or not personal details are passed to the police).

A report of rape received via a third party or from a SARC should be recorded as a crime-related incident in the following instances:

- the victim wishes to remain anonymous and does not want details of the allegation passed to police (if any information at all received by police); or

- the victim undergoes a forensic examination and samples are frozen at the SARC in case the victim decides to pursue the case at a later date (forensic samples are not passed to the police).

'No crime' definition and data

A recorded crime can be 'no-crimed' where **additional verifiable information** determines that no crime has been committed, or for administrative reasons (i.e. it is a duplicate crime for one already recorded).

'No crime' data refer to the number of rapes of adults/children which have been recorded and then later 'no crimed', compared with the total number of rapes initially recorded. It is calculated as the number of child/adult 'no crimes' recorded divided by the number of child/adult rapes recorded during the same time period and the number of 'no crimes' added together. Again, this does not necessarily mean that, in a given year, the same crimes recorded are the ones that are 'no crimed.'

Data on the 'no crime' for rape is published[14] but is not broken down to separate adult and child rape. Data in this digest were obtained directly from the Home Office's data system and therefore may differ slightly from the aggregated published numbers. These differences are caused by updates in the data provided by police forces since publication.

Given the relatively low number of recorded crimes and 'no crimes' for child rape, small changes to the data could have a large impact on forces' 'no crime' rates. While the data are used to give some descriptive context to each force's position, a bar chart showing the rate for all forces is not shown as direct comparisons are not statistically valid.

For further information on the analytical approach used in the digests, please see the methodological note available at:

http://www.hmic.gov.uk/publication/rape-monitoring-group-digests-data-and-methodology-2014/

[14] Number of offences initially recorded, recorded and 'no crimed' by police force area 2012 to 2013 (Home Office, 18 July 2013).