

# Statistics Release

A National Statistics Publication for Scotland

December 16, 2008



## HOMICIDE IN SCOTLAND, 2007-08

Scotland's Chief Statistician today published the latest figures on the number of homicides recorded by Scottish Police Forces. There were 114 victims of homicide recorded in 2007-08, 5 fewer than in 2006-07.

Summary information on homicides recorded in 2007-08, as known to the Scottish Government on 28 November 2008, is given below. (The full statistical bulletin **Homicide in Scotland** is published every two years and will next be published at the end of 2009).

### Number of Cases and Victims of Homicide (Table 1)

In 2007-08, there were 114 cases currently recorded as homicide by the police. These cases resulted in the death of 114 victims, 5 fewer than in 2006-07. The number of homicide victims per million population was 22 in 2007-08, compared with 23 in 2006-07.

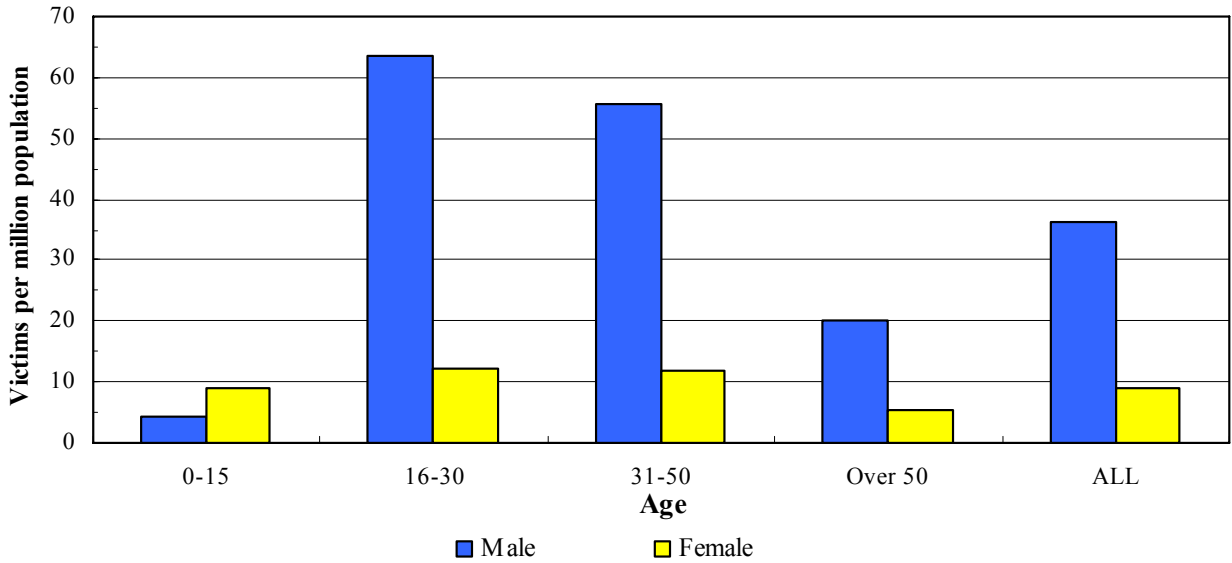
### Homicide Cases by Police Force Area (Table 2)

The largest decrease in the number of homicide cases between 2006-07 and 2007-08 was in Strathclyde, from 76 in 2006-07 to 66 in 2007-08. Fifty-eight per cent of homicide cases recorded in 2007-08 took place in the Strathclyde Police Force area. In other police force areas the number of homicide cases remained similar to 2006-07 levels, with increases or decreases of 3 or fewer cases.

### Sex and Age of Victims (Table 3 and Chart 1)

The rate of homicides for males – 36 victims per million population – was four times the rate for females – 9 per million population. There were 90 male victims of homicide in 2007-08, 79 per cent of the total. Male victims in the 16 to 30 year age group represented the highest rate with 64 homicides per million population.

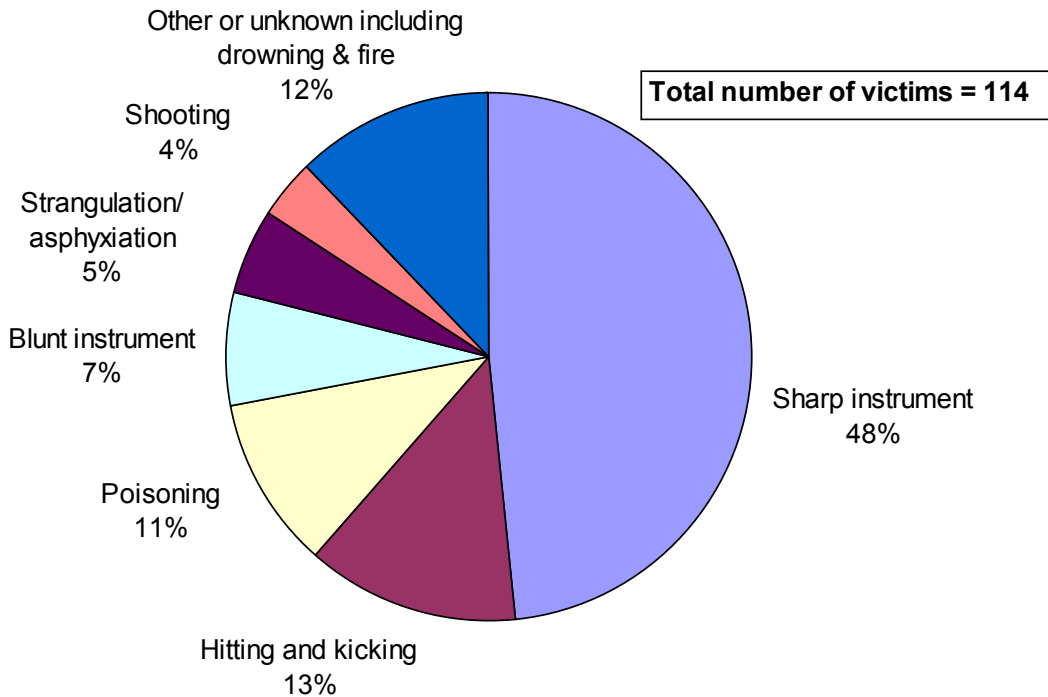
**Chart 1: Homicide victims per million population, by age and sex, 2007-08**



**Method of Killing (Table 4 and Chart 2)**

Fifty-five homicide victims were killed by the use of a sharp instrument in 2007-08. These victims represented nearly a half (48 per cent) of all homicide victims.

**Chart 2: Homicide victims, by method of killing, 2007-08**



**Relationship of Main Accused to the Victim (Table 5)**

For 111 of the 114 homicide victims in 2007-08, one or more accused persons have been identified. The main accused was known to four-fifths of these victims: 20 per cent of victims were presumed to have been killed by a partner or ex-partner; 8 per cent by a relative; and 52 per cent by an acquaintance. The proportion of victims who were killed by a stranger or where the relationship between the victim and accused was unknown, was 20 per cent, a decrease from 27 per cent in 2006-07.

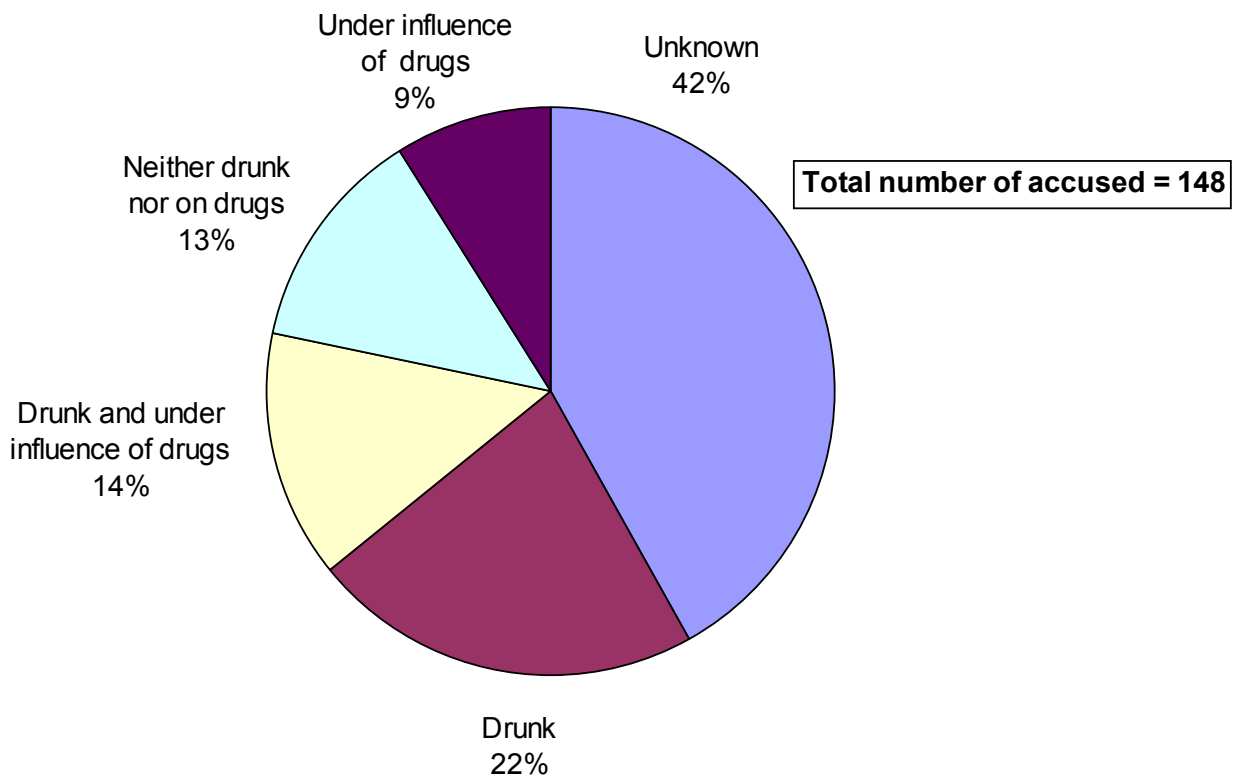
### Sex and age of accused (Table 6)

A total of 148 accused persons had been identified for the homicide cases recorded in 2007-08. As in previous years most (88 per cent) of these were male. Nearly half (47 per cent) of all accused were males aged 16 to 30.

### Drink/drugs (Table 7 and Chart 3)

Forty-five per cent of the total of 148 persons accused in homicide cases in 2007-08 were reported to have been drunk or on drugs at the time (22 per cent were drunk, 9 per cent were on drugs and 14 per cent were both drunk and on drugs). Nineteen accused persons (13 per cent) were reported not to have been under the influence of drink or drugs. The drink/drug status was not known for the remaining 62 persons accused (42 per cent).

**Chart 3: Drink/drug status of accused, 2007-08**



In 2007-08 17 victims (15 per cent of all homicide victims) were reported to have been killed in a drug related homicide, i.e. a homicide motivated by the need to obtain drugs (or money for drugs), homicide of a supplier or consumer of drugs in order to steal proceeds of drug trade or homicide as a consequence of rivalry within the trade/between users or dealers.

**Cases and victims currently<sup>(1)</sup> recorded as homicide by the police in Scotland, 1998-99 to 2007-08**

**Table 1**

	1998-99	1999-00	2000-01	2001-02	2002-03	2003-04	2004-05 <sup>(2)</sup>	2005-06	2006-07	2007-08
Number of cases	92	122	104	112	123	107	134	94	118	114
Number of victims	93	123	107	113	125	108	137	94	119	114
Number of victims per million population	18	24	21	22	25	21	27	18	23	22
Number of accused	142	164	130	158	176	155	187	140	167	148

(1) At 28 November 2008.

(2) Includes a case where the 6 victims recorded in 2004-05 were killed in separate years previous to this date.

**Cases currently<sup>(1)</sup> recorded as homicide, by police force, 2003-04 to 2007-08**

**Table 2**

<b>Police Force (and selected councils)</b>	<b>2003-04</b>	<b>2004-05</b>	<b>2005-06</b>	<b>2006-07</b>	<b>2007-08</b>
<b>Scotland</b>	<b>107</b>	<b>134</b>	<b>94</b>	<b>118</b>	<b>114</b>
Central	1	6	2	3	3
Dumfries & Galloway	3	3	3	-	1
Fife	3	3	2	5	6
Grampian (Aberdeen City)	6 (4)	9 (5)	3 (2)	9 (5)	6 (4)
Lothian & Borders (City of Edinburgh)	16 (6)	22 (11)	10 (9)	16 (11)	19 (11)
Northern	1	5	4	5	6
Strathclyde (Glasgow City)	73 (33)	82 (39)	62 (32)	76 (33)	66 (30)
Tayside (Dundee City)	4 (2)	4 (2)	8 (6)	4 (3)	7 (2)

(1) At 28 November 2008.

**Victims currently<sup>(1)</sup> recorded as homicide victims, by sex and age, 2003-04 to 2007-08 Table 3**

Sex and age of victim	2003-04		2004-05		2005-06		2006-07		2007-08	
	Number	Rate per million population	Number	Rate per million population	Number	Rate per million population	Number	Rate per million population	Number	Rate per million population
<b>All persons</b>	<b>108</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>137</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>94</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>119</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>114</b>	<b>22</b>
Under 16	8	8	12	13	4	4	5	5	6	7
16-30	37	39	53	56	29	30	49	50	38	38
31-50	46	31	48	32	48	32	44	29	49	33
Over 50	17	10	24	14	13	8	21	12	21	12
<b>All males</b>	<b>94</b>	<b>39</b>	<b>110</b>	<b>45</b>	<b>81</b>	<b>33</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>90</b>	<b>36</b>
Under 16	5	10	10	21	2	4	3	6	2	4
16-30	34	72	45	95	23	48	44	89	32	64
31-50	42	58	40	55	44	61	36	50	40	56
Over 50	13	17	15	20	12	16	17	22	16	20
<b>All females</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>9</b>
Under 16	3	7	2	4	2	4	2	4	4	9
16-30	3	6	8	17	6	13	5	10	6	12
31-50	4	5	8	10	4	5	8	10	9	12
Over 50	4	4	9	10	1	1	4	4	5	5

(1) At 28 November 2008.

**Victims currently<sup>(1)</sup> recorded as homicide victims, by main method of killing, 2003-04 to 2007-08**

**Table 4**

Main method of killing <sup>(2)</sup>	2003-04		2004-05		2005-06		2006-07		2007-08	
	Number	Percentage	Number	Percentage	Number	Percentage	Number	Percentage	Number	Percentage
<b>All victims</b>	<b>108</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>137</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>94</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>119</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>114</b>	<b>100</b>
Shooting	2	2	8	6	8	9	8	7	4	4
Sharp instrument	55	51	72	53	34	36	54	45	55	48
Blunt instrument	5	5	8	6	4	4	15	13	8	7
Hitting and kicking	22	20	14	10	24	26	16	13	15	13
Strangulation/asphyxiation	5	5	10	7	4	4	3	3	6	5
Drowning	-	-	1	1	-	-	-	-	2	2
Fire	3	3	1	1	3	3	3	3	1	1
Poisoning	7	6	12	9	9	10	13	11	12	11
Other or unknown	9	8	11	8	8	9	7	6	11	10

(1) At 28 November 2008.

(2) See note 8.

Victims currently<sup>(1)</sup> recorded as homicide victims, by relationship of main accused to victim, 2003-04 to 2007-08

Table 5

Relationship of main accused to victim	2003-04	2004-05	2005-06	2006-07	2007-08
<b>All victims</b>	<b>108</b>	<b>137</b>	<b>94</b>	<b>119</b>	<b>114</b>
<b>Victims - solved cases</b>	<b>107</b>	<b>134</b>	<b>91</b>	<b>118</b>	<b>111</b>
Son/daughter	6	1	5	5	5
Parent	3	6	2	2	2
Partner/ex-partner	5	14	16	11	22
Other relative	5	5	3	8	2
Acquaintance:					
Friend/social acquaintance	35	39	20	33	31
Business/criminal associate	5	5	3	3	4
Rival gang member	2	6	2	5	2
Other known person	15	26	19	19	21
Stranger	23	23	20	20	15
Unknown	8	9	1	12	7
<b>Victims - unsolved cases</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>3</b>

(1) At 28 November 2008.

Persons accused in homicide cases<sup>(1)</sup> by sex and age, 2003-04 to 2007-08

Table 6

Sex and age of accused	2003-04		2004-05		2005-06		2006-07		2007-08	
	Number	Rate per million population	Number	Rate per million population	Number	Rate per million population	Number	Rate per million population	Number	Rate per million population
<b>All persons</b>	<b>155</b>	<b>31</b>	<b>187</b>	<b>37</b>	<b>140</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>167</b>	<b>33</b>	<b>148</b>	<b>29</b>
Under 16	4	4	8	9	4	4	7	8	3	3
16-30	98	105	105	111	89	93	108	111	82	83
31-50	48	32	62	41	43	29	41	27	54	36
Over 50	5	3	12	7	4	2	11	6	9	5
<b>All males</b>	<b>146</b>	<b>60</b>	<b>168</b>	<b>69</b>	<b>122</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>154</b>	<b>62</b>	<b>130</b>	<b>52</b>
Under 16	4	8	8	17	4	8	7	15	3	6
16-30	91	194	96	203	78	162	101	205	70	139
31-50	46	63	54	74	37	51	36	50	49	68
Over 50	5	7	10	13	3	4	10	13	8	10
<b>All females</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>7</b>
Under 16	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
16-30	7	15	9	19	11	23	7	15	12	25
31-50	2	3	8	10	6	8	5	6	5	6
Over 50	-	-	2	2	1	1	1	1	1	1

(1) Currently (as at 28 November 2008) recorded as homicide.

**Persons accused in homicide cases<sup>(1)</sup>, by whether drunk and/or under influence of drugs, 2003-04 to 2007-08**

**Table 7**

Drink/drug status of accused	2003-04		2004-05		2005-06		2006-07		2007-08	
	Number	Percentage	Number	Percentage	Number	Percentage	Number	Percentage	Number	Percentage
All accused	155	100	187	100	140	100	167	100	148	100
Drunk	54	35	49	26	57	41	50	30	33	22
On drugs	18	12	16	9	13	9	14	8	13	9
Drunk and on drugs	11	7	11	6	21	15	15	9	21	14
Neither drink nor on drugs	11	7	26	14	25	18	20	12	19	13
Not known	61	39	85	45	24	17	68	41	62	42

(1) Currently (as at 28 November 2008) recorded as homicide.

## NOTES

1. This Statistics Release (and the biennial bulletins) gives details on cases of homicide - that is murder and culpable homicide. Causing death by dangerous driving and causing death by careless driving while under the influence of drink or drugs are excluded. (In 2007-08 there were 24 such crimes recorded by the police, including 1 of causing death by careless driving while under the influence of drugs or alcohol.)
2. The summary figures presented are derived from information provided by the police, on each case they initially record as homicide. A single case of homicide is counted for each act of murder or culpable homicide, irrespective of the number of perpetrators or victims.
3. A homicide case is included against the year in which it is recorded by the police. This is not necessarily the year in which the offence took place, the year in which the accused is brought to trial for the crime, or the year in which the case is finally disposed of by the courts.
4. A single case of homicide is counted for each incident involving murder or culpable homicide irrespective of the number of perpetrators or victims. Where more than one person is accused of killing one or more victims, the main accused for the purposes of these analyses is the one who received the severest penalty. If more than one possible main accused is identified, then the first recorded on the statistical return is selected. Similarly if a person is accused of killing more than one victim, the main victim is the one for which the accused received the severest penalty, or where more than one possible main victim can be identified the first one recorded on the statistical return is selected.
5. The figures given in this Statistics Release are as known to the Scottish Government on 28 November 2008. The initial classification of a case as homicide is made by the police; this will generally be murder. This classification may be altered as a result of decisions taken in the course of criminal proceedings. Some cases initially classified as homicide will, on the basis of criminal proceedings, no longer be classified as such at a later date. This happens in cases where it is found that a homicide had not in fact taken place at all, for example where the main accused person is found guilty of a lesser offence, such as serious assault; or where the decision has been made not to proceed with the case, for example if it is concluded that the victim committed suicide. For these reasons, and as a result of continual data checking, the figures for 2007-08 and for previous years which will appear in the next bulletin may differ slightly from those given here.
6. For those cases with multiple accused which are currently recorded as homicide, the co-accused are included in the statistics in this bulletin regardless of whether or not they were ultimately charged with homicide. For example if the main accused person is found guilty of homicide by the court but the co-accused are found guilty of serious assault then the co-accused continue to be counted as persons accused of cases currently recorded as homicide.

7. In considering the relationship of the main accused person to a victim, partner includes: spouse, separated or divorced spouse, cohabitee, lover, boy/girlfriend but not necessarily ex-boyfriend/girlfriend pre-2000/01, as these may have been recorded as simply acquaintances. Partner figures for 2000/01 onwards do include ex-boyfriend/girlfriend.
8. The motive is as determined by the police. For homicides recorded before 2000 information was collected on up to two motives. For simplicity of presentation, only one motive for killing has been selected for each accused person. Where more than one motive was recorded, the first one given has been selected as the main motive unless it was a rage or quarrel, in which case the second one given has been selected. Similarly only one method of killing has been selected for each victim. The main method is taken to be the most serious of those methods recorded, in the following order of priority: shooting, sharp instrument, blunt instrument, hitting and kicking, strangulation, other. The main method of poisoning includes the use of drugs, gas and carbon monoxide poisoning.
9. The population data used to calculate the rate figures given in Tables 1, 3 and 6 and in Chart 1 are the relevant mid-year population estimates prepared by the General Register Office for Scotland.
10. The percentage figures given in tables and charts have been independently rounded, so they may not always sum to the relevant sub-totals or totals.
11. Further information on Crime and Justice statistics within Scotland can be accessed at: <http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Topics/Statistics/Browse/Crime-Justice>
12. Official statistics are produced by professionally independent statistical staff – more information on the standards of official statistics in Scotland can be accessed at: <http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Topics/Statistics/About>

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## Correspondence and enquiries

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Current contact points, e-mail addresses and the publications listed below as well as a range of other statistical publications can be found on the Scottish Government Web site at [www.scotland.gov.uk/stats](http://www.scotland.gov.uk/stats)

Further information on the General Register Office for Scotland is available on the website [www.gro-scotland.gov.uk](http://www.gro-scotland.gov.uk)

### Most recent Justice Statistical Publications relating to the Crime and Justice theme

Ref no.	Title	Last published
978 0 7559 7189 9	Prison Statistics Scotland, 2007/08	August 2008
978 0 7559 7231 9	Recorded Crime in Scotland, 2007/08	September 2008
978 0 7559 7281 4	Recorded Crimes and Offences Involving Firearms, Scotland, 2007-08	October 2008
978 0 7559 7327 9	Scottish Prison Population Projections: 2008-2009 to 2017-2018	November 2008
978 0 7559 7310 1	Domestic Abuse Recorded by the Police in Scotland, 2007-08	November 2008
978 0 7559 7342 2	Police Officer Quarterly Strength Statistics Scotland, 30 September 2008	December 2008

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