



Briefing

Statistics about women in the UK

October 2010

Understanding and supporting
women and their organisations

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About the Women's Resource Centre

The Women's Resource Centre (WRC) is a charity which supports women's organisations to be more effective and sustainable. We provide training, information, resources and one-to-one support on a range of organisational development issues. We also lobby decision makers on behalf of the women's not-for-profit sector for improved representation and funding.

Our members work in a wide range of fields including health, violence against women, employment, education, rights and equality, the criminal justice system and the environment. They deliver services to and campaign on behalf of some of the most marginalised communities of women.

There are over ten thousand people working or volunteering for our members who support almost half a million individuals each year.

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About this briefing

In a 2009 survey of WRC members, 75% of respondents stated they would like WRC to produce a resource which brought together various key facts and figures about women and gender (in)equality in the UK. In response to members' needs, this briefing brings together statistics about women on a range of issues. Data sources are given at the end of the briefing.

However, research is constantly carried out and statistics of this nature can become quickly outdated. **If you have more up-to-date statistics, or data which is not included here, please contact us** on policy@wrc.org.uk so we can keep this briefing as current as possible.

Disclaimer

This briefing is not intended to provide a definitive list of data about women and gender equality in the UK. At the time of publication, all care was taken to ensure the information contained in this briefing was accurate and correct. However, data of this nature can become quickly outdated. Please always check information to ensure it is correct and up-to-date at time of use. The WRC cannot take responsibility for changes to references or information in this briefing.

Offending

Female prison population

- On 25 July 2008 the number of women in prison stood at 4,438 - 93 more than a year before. In the last decade the number of female prisoners has more than doubled. In 1995 the average female prison population was 1,998. In 1999 it stood at 3,355. In 2005, 12,275 women were in prison.¹
- Over the ten year period, 1997/98 – 2006/07, the average daily female prison population in Scotland had increased by 90%. From 2006/07, the female prison population was 353.²
- The total number of female foreign nationals who entered prison more than quadrupled between 1996 and 2007, from 303 to 1,336.³
- Most of the rise in the female prison population can be explained by magistrates and judges handing out harsher sentences. In 2007 a woman was seven times as likely to receive a custodial sentence in a magistrate's court as ten years previously.⁴
- At the end of September 2008, there were 933 women on remand, a fifth of the female prison population.⁵
- In 2003, young women prisoners accounted for 12% of the total female prison population and 5.3% of the total young prisoners' population.⁶
- As at 30 June 2006, 28% of the prisoners in the women's estate were from ethnic minorities in comparison to around 27% of prisoners in the male estate.⁷
- Over a fifth of women in prison are foreign nationals. 849 (19%) women and girls (all ages) in prison in September 2008 were foreign nationals compared to 13% for men.⁸

Crimes & sentencing

- Of the sentenced female prison population, the majority are held for non-violent offences. At the end of September 2008 the largest group of women (26%), were held for drug offences.⁹
- More women were sent to prison in 2007 for theft and handling stolen goods than any other crime. 2,470 women were received into custody for this offence. They accounted for almost a third (31%) of all women sentenced to immediate custody in 2007¹⁰.
- 58% of sentenced foreign national prisoners in September 2008 were being held for drug offences and 18% for fraud and forgery. The most common country of origin for female foreign nationals in custody was Nigeria (147), followed by Jamaica.¹¹
- A 2009 study reports that 28% of female offenders' crimes were financially motivated (compared with 20% men). 32% of women had significant work related problems, such as lack of employment history or qualifications compared to 20% of men. 93% of women identified as having offended due to employment needs had previous problems with their employment history.¹²

- 64.3% of women released from prison in 2004 were reconvicted within two years of release. This compares to fewer than four out of ten (38%) ten years ago.¹³
- Over a third of all adult women in prison had no previous convictions, more than double the figure for men (2006/2007).¹⁴
- The majority of women are in prison for very short sentences. In 2007 the average sentence length for female prisoners of all ages was 9.5 months.¹⁵
- A study in 2008 found that the majority of women in prison receive custodial sentences of less than 12 months, many women offenders report receiving conflicting messages on securing benefits and the return of their children.¹⁶

Women's health in prison

- It was reported in 2004 that women tend to place a greater demand on medical services than men, with approximately 20% of women prisoners asking to see a doctor or nurse each day, almost twice as many as male prisoners.¹⁷
- Research in 2009 found that 60% of women have problems recorded against emotional well-being (a proxy for psychological and psychiatric issues).¹⁸
- A study in 2006 found that women in custody are five times more likely to have mental health problems than women in the general population.¹⁹
- Research undertaken by the national evaluation of prison mental health in-reach services in August 2008 at a local establishment for young and adult women found that of all those screened (212), 51% (108) had severe and enduring mental illness, 47% (100) a major depressive order, 6% (12) any psychosis and 3% (6) schizophrenia.²⁰
- Data from the Safer Custody Group shows that in 2008 the number of incidents reported for women self-harming in prison is also four times higher than that of men.²¹ Although women make up just five per cent of the prison population in England and Wales, they account for more than half of all self-harming incidents.²²
- The number of women deliberately harming themselves in prison has almost doubled in five years. In 2008, officials recorded 12,560 cases of women prisoners injuring themselves (mainly by cutting and burning); equivalent to almost three incidents per inmate. In 2003, 6,437 instances of self-harm were recorded in English prisons, about 1.5 per inmate.²³
- The largest number of self-harm incidents by women prisoners in 2008 was in Eastwood Park prison, in Gloucestershire, where 2,584 instances were recorded, compared with 683 just five years earlier. High levels of self-harm also occurred in Styal, Cheshire (2,103 incidents last year), Holloway, north London (1,829), Bronzefield, west London (1,517) and Peterborough (1,337).²⁴
- Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Prisons (HMIP) reported that in 2006/07, a fifth (19%) of women had attempted suicide during the year before custody; nearly three times the rate reported for men.²⁵

Mothers & prison

- A 2008 Home Office study found that 66% of women in prison have children under the age of 18. Of those women, 34% had children under five, a further 40% aged from five to 10²⁶
- Women are often not prepared for the sentencing outcome by their lawyers and may be placed in custody without the opportunity to arrange for the care of their children.²⁷
- Nearly 18,000 children are separated from their mothers by imprisonment each year and only 5% of these children remain in the family home.²⁸
- Ministry of Justice figures show that between April 2005 and July 2008 an average of 1.7 babies were born behind bars. But between April and July of 2008, the rate had more than doubled to almost four a week and the total for 2008 was expected to reach 200 births..²⁹
- In 2003, forty-two women in Holloway prison had no idea who was looking after their children and 19 children less than 16 years of age were looking after themselves.³⁰
- Because of the relatively small number of women's prisons, and due to their geographical location, women tend to serve their sentences further from their homes than male prisoners. This can place additional pressure on important links with family.³¹
- It was reported in 2009 that female foreign nationals were particularly isolated from their children and were only provided with free phone use for five minutes per month to speak to their family.³²
- Imprisoning mothers for non-violent offences has a damaging impact on children and carries a cost to the state of more than £17million over a ten-year period³³.

Abuse & women in prison

- It was reported in 2004 that up to 50% of women in prison report having experienced physical, emotional or sexual abuse.³⁴
- A 2007 survey found that 50% of women in prison have been victims of domestic violence.³⁵

Homelessness & women in prison

- A 2007 study found that 41% of women did not have accommodation organised on release from prison.³⁶

Prostitution and sex trafficking

Prostitution

- There are estimated to be around 80,000 people involved in prostitution in the UK, (Home Office, 2009). However, many people believe that this figure is an underestimation.
- A report published in 2008 found women and girls to be disproportionately sexualised across the media and popular culture and that a driving factor behind this is the mainstreaming of the sex industries, in particular pornography, lap dancing and prostitution (Object, May 2008).
- Research compiled by the Home Office (Home Office, 2004b) shows that across the UK a significant percentage of women first become involved in prostitution before their 18th birthday. In Lambeth, at least 25% of the women interviewed as part of research in 2008 stated that they began working in prostitution aged 17 or under (Hough and Becky Rice, 2008).
- It is estimated that around 8,000 women work in off-street prostitution in London alone, 80% of whom are foreign nationals (House of Commons Home Affairs Committee 2008-09). Women involved in prostitution are some of the most vulnerable in our communities and are likely to be victims of serious physical and sexual violence. The Mayor's Violence Against Women Strategy (2010) estimates that women in prostitution in London suffer from a mortality rate that is 12 times the national average (quoting Home Office data from 2004).
- The most comprehensive mapping exercise of the commercial sex industry in London was carried out by Eaves Housing for Women in 2003. The findings estimated that there were between 2972 and 5861 women selling sex from flats, parlours and saunas; and between 1755 and 2221 women selling sex as escorts. Four out of five women working in London brothels were believed to be foreign nationals.³⁷

Trafficking for sexual exploitation

- The first attempt to quantify trafficking was undertaken for the Home Office in 2000. The Home Office study estimated that between 142 and 1,420 women had been trafficked into the UK in 1998 for sexual exploitation. More recent research cited in the Government's Action Plan on Tackling Human Trafficking has estimated that 4,000 women were trafficked into the UK for sexual exploitation in 2003.
- During 2008 and 2009 the Home Affairs Committee conducted an inquiry into human trafficking in the UK; its report highlighted the lack of accurate statistical information and estimated that there are at least 5,000 trafficking victims in the UK (including children and people trafficked for labour) (Home Affairs Committee, 2009).
- Operation Pentameter was the first co-ordinated effort to tackle human trafficking on a national scale and was the largest co-ordinated policing operation ever carried out in this country. The first campaign, launched in 2006, had a three-month operational phase campaign which sought to appeal directly to men who use prostitutes for help in providing information about women who were possibly being forced to work in the sex industry. As a

result, 84 women were identified as victims of trafficking, a total of 232 people were arrested and 134 were charged with a variety of offences.

- Less than 10% of the UK's massage parlours and brothels were visited during Pentameter. It is therefore estimated that several thousand more victims remain to be found. Operation Pentameter is the mere 'tip of the iceberg'. (Gloucestershire Constabulary July 2006³⁸)
- Pentameter 2 was launched in 2007 'to rescue and protect victims of trafficking for sexual exploitation and to identify, disrupt, arrest and bring to justice those involved in criminal activity'. 167 victims were identified during the investigation (13 were children with the youngest aged just 14) and 528 people were arrested (House of Commons Library, 2009).
- A Joseph Rowntree Report (2007) summarised recent research on child trafficking in the UK (2007). The report quotes UNICEF research, which estimated that; *'about 250 children were known to be trafficked into the UK over a five-year period but that "the real figure... is likely to be far higher'*.
- A Barnardo's report (2005) cites research that had been carried out into the extent of trafficking in London, which found there were documented cases of trafficking in 17 out of the 33 boroughs, but 32 out of the 33 London boroughs were concerned about other potential cases. Cases included trafficking for sexual exploitation, as well as domestic servitude, exploitation to obtain benefits, and exploitation through restaurant work and drug trafficking.
- In mid-2006, the Home Office commissioned research by the Child Exploitation and Online Protection Centre (CEOP) on child trafficking at a national level. Over a 9 month period the research team identified 330 children that were at risk of being trafficked: 140 were categorised as either low (70) or medium (70) probability of trafficking, 85 as high probability, and 105 as very high. 44 source countries were identified, but victims were mainly from the Far East, South East Asia, Central Asia, South Asia, West Africa, Eastern Europe and the Baltic states. Overall, just over half (56%) were girls, but there was a greater proportion of girls identified in the highest levels of probability.
- Of the 90 girls graded at a high probability of being trafficked, 59 (66%) were trafficked or suspected to have been trafficked for the purpose of sexual exploitation, 22 (24%) were trafficked or suspected to have been trafficked for the purpose of domestic servitude. The study cautioned that it should not be used to estimate the total number of children who have been trafficked into and within the UK, but only as a scoping exercise (CEOP, 2007).
- In 2009 CEOP published a Strategic Threat Assessment, which built on the work of the 2007 scoping exercise. This time 324 children were identified as being potential victims of trafficking or exploitation from data supplied covering the 12 month period from March 2007 to 29 February 2008. Of these, 159 cases were assessed as high likelihood that the child was trafficked, and 12 children were assessed at a very high likelihood. Children were identified as originating from a total of 52 separate countries, the most common being China, the UK, Afghanistan, Nigeria, Romania and Vietnam. (CEOP 2009)
- The data provided for the CEOP report was taken from the UK Human Trafficking Centre for 2008-09. During 2008-09, 219 arrests for human trafficking offences were recorded. Of these, 82 were for offences of trafficking for sexual exploitation, 26 for domestic servitude and 111 for forced labour. 80 defendants were prosecuted in 2008-09, for trafficking for sexual exploitation under the Sexual Offences Act 2003, half of whom were from the

European Union. 50 defendants were men and 28 defendants were found guilty. Of the 227 victims for all trafficking crimes, 140 were female and 87 were male. The majority were aged 21-25.

- The Mayor's Violence against Women Strategy (2010) quotes figures of between 1,000 and 10,000 women and girls that are trafficked into the UK each year for sexual exploitation, and notes that many are trafficked to or through London. Around 6,000 of the estimated 8,000 women involved in off-street prostitution in London's brothels, 'saunas' and 'massage parlours' are foreign nationals. It is believed that a significant number of them have been trafficked. Quoting Townsend (2007), the report highlights concern about the extent to which the 2012 Olympic and Paralympic Games will encourage trafficking.
- A recent survey by Barnardo's identified 76 young people who had been trafficked internally within the UK; nearly half of these young people had been trafficked into London. (Internal trafficking – final report, 2007)
- In 2003 the POPPY Project was set up as a pilot project with support from the Home Office to provide accommodation and support for women aged 18+ who have been trafficked to the UK, sexually exploited and forced to work in prostitution. In 2007 the Project established an outreach team to meet the increased demand for its services. To date more than 700 women have been referred to the POPPY Project (website accessed 11/01/10).
- In 2004 the POPPY Project conducted a survey of off-street prostitution (i.e. those working in flats, massage parlours and saunas) in London, where it found that 79% of such prostitutes were foreign nationals. Given that about 8,000 women are believed to work in off-street prostitution in London, POPPY's survey gives a figure of about 6,000 foreign nationals, a large percentage of whom the POPPY Project believes to have been trafficked (Dickson, 2004).

Prostitution & women's welfare

- A 2006 study found many of the identified gaps in service provision for sex workers (e.g. health, housing, welfare and legal advice) could be associated with current policy and immigration laws surrounding the legal rights and entitlements of migrants.³⁹
- A 2002 study found that 74% of women involved in prostitution cited poverty, the need to pay household expenses and support their children, as a primary motivator for entering sex work.⁴⁰
- It is estimated that each sex trafficker earns on average between £500 to £1,000 per woman per week (2008/09).⁴¹
- 75% of children who become involved in prostitution have interrupted or prematurely terminated educational careers (1999).⁴²
- A Home Office study in 2006 found that up to 70% of women in prostitution had spent time in care⁴³. A 2004 Home Office study found that the mortality rate for women in prostitution in London is 12 times the national average.⁴⁴
- Research carried out in London in 2004 and in 2006 found sexual health outreach provision for women to be severely lacking and where they did exist to be predominately based upon

harm minimisation/ reduction. Also, there were found to be a lack of strategies and resources in place to assist women to leave prostitution.⁴⁵

- A study mapping commercial sex in London in 2006 found inconsistent condom use. Exceptions to using condoms were mostly economically motivated, due to women being '*desperate for money due to a lack of clients*'. The study reports that the cost of sex in London had gone down over the previous four to five years.⁴⁶

Violence against women & prostitution

- A 2004 Home Office study estimates that more than half of UK women in prostitution have been raped and/or seriously sexually assaulted. At least three quarters of women in prostitution have been physically assaulted.⁴⁷
- 45% of women in prostitution reported sexual abuse and 85% reported experiencing physical abuse within their families.⁴⁸
- *A Hard Knock Life*, 2008 and Eaves Information Sheet: Prostitution, both cite studies which record the high level of violence experienced by women involved in prostitution. Six women involved in prostitution are murdered each year in the UK; this murder rate is 18 times higher than that of the general population. More than half of UK women in prostitution have been raped and/or seriously sexually assaulted. At least three-quarters have been physically assaulted (Home Office, 2004a). Other studies cited in *A Hard Knock Life* found: 63% of women reported experience of client violence over their lifetime; 37% had experienced a client attack in the last six months; 47% of women in street prostitution reported being kicked or punched; 28% reported attempted rape; 22% of the women in street prostitution in Leeds and Glasgow had been raped.

Crime & prostitution

- Despite the fact that a criminal record can have life-long consequences for young women, the Government maintains there are "compelling arguments" for maintaining criminal offences for sex workers under 18 years.⁴⁹
- The Government's own figures for 2002 show that there were 2,678 convictions for soliciting in comparison to only 993 convictions for kerb crawling.⁵⁰

Prostitution & the media

- A report published in 2009 found women and girls to be disproportionately sexualised across the media and popular culture and that a driving factor behind this is the mainstreaming of the sex industries, in particular pornography, lap dancing and prostitution.⁵¹

Political and public life

Profile of women in political and public life

- The annual index of women in positions of authority and influence in Britain was in its fifth year in 2008, yet the trend that has emerged is one of reversal or stalled progress. In 2008, in 12 of the 25 categories for which figures are available, there were fewer women holding the following top posts than the previous year (2007) Westminster MPs, Cabinet members, Members of the Scottish Parliament and Welsh Assembly, editors of national newspapers, people in public appointments, senior police officers and judges, health service chief executives, local authority chief executives, trade union general secretaries and heads of professional bodies.⁵²
- In June 2006, 3.3% of non-executive positions in national health related bodies were women from ethnic minority backgrounds. In June 2007, 36% of chairs of local NHS boards were women, 3.8% of whom were from ethnic minority backgrounds.⁵³

Women in Political life

- In 2007/08, only 19% of MPs, and 20% of the House of Lords were female. From 2006 to 2007/8, the number of female members of the cabinet fell from 35% in 2006 to 26%.⁵⁴
- In 2007/08 only 26% of Members of the European Parliament (MEPs) are women.⁵⁵
- In 2006 only one of the 26% of female MEPs was from a BME group.⁵⁶
- In 2006, 29% of local authority councillors were women and only 0.9% were women from an ethnic minority background. Between 1997 and 2006 the number of women councillors from an ethnic minority background rose by just 0.3%⁵⁷
- To date, no region has reached the threshold of one-third female councillors.⁵⁸
- In 2006, the Labour party has 31% women councillors; the Liberal Democrats have 32% and the Conservatives had 28%.⁵⁹
- There is significant disparity between individual councils, for example Redcar and Cleveland has more female councillors than male, while North West Leicestershire has just 13% female councillors (2006 figures).⁶⁰
- 41% of parliamentary candidates have said that selection committees in their parties look more favourably on male than female candidates.⁶¹
- The glass ceiling is much lower for ethnic minority women. In 2008, it was reported that there were:⁶²
 - 15 ethnic minority MPs, including two women
 - 28 ethnic minority peers, including eight women
 - 1 ethnic minority member of the National Assembly for Wales, who is male
 - 1 ethnic minority member of the Scottish Parliament, also male.

- In 2006, the estimated number of women councillors from an ethnic minority background was 168,⁶³ to be proportionally representational of these women; there should be 1,000 (more than a five fold increase).⁶⁴
- After the recent general election in May 2010, 142 women MPs were elected – an increase of 16 women compared to the last parliament. Women now make up 22% of the total number of MPs in parliament.⁶⁵
- In the new Liberal Democrat – Conservative coalition government, there are 4 women in the cabinet, compared to 6 women in the Labour government’s cabinet after the 2005 election.

Women in public life

- In 2007/08, women made up 0.4 in senior ranks in the armed forces, 27% in civil service top management, 21% of trade union General Secretaries or equivalent, 20% of local authority Chief Executives and only 14% of local authority Council Leaders.⁶⁶
- In 2007, there were 34.4% of women in public appointments and 6.5% women from ethnic minority women in Public Appointments.⁶⁷
- While nearly half of appointments and re-appointments in the National Health Service in 2006 were women, only 38% of women are executives and women are less likely than men to be appointed Chair.⁶⁸
- Of the 1,890 women in the public sector and civil service in 2005 earning over £45,000 per annum, only 100 were minority ethnic women, compared to 5,960 men.⁶⁹
- In 2007/8, only 10% of executive directors of top FTSE 100 companies were women. In the same year, only eight women of non-European ethnic backgrounds held one of the 46 directorships in the FTSE 100.⁷⁰
- There are 220 men with disabilities in the public sector and civil service, compared to 110 women with disabilities, who earn over £45,000 (2005 figures)⁷¹

Voting

- Black women are 8% less likely to vote than black men (2005 figures).⁷²
- WHEN Forty-two per cent WHO say there is only a 50-50 chance or less that they would vote in a Proportional Representation (PR) referendum despite strong support for a PR system amongst young women (with 79% in favour).⁷³

Asylum and Immigration

Seeking asylum

- The Independent Asylum Commission identified the following issues in its 2008 report:
 - A woman's claim may often, to her detriment, be made together with that of her husband or partner instead of being given independent consideration
 - There was a lack of understanding and recognition that women may have particular problems in accessing help and support
 - The Government's own gender guidelines were inconsistently observed
 - Women were being wrongly selected for detained fast track against the guidelines in the Asylum Policy Instructions
 - The detention of pregnant women has a negative impact on their health and well-being
 - Women's cases based on sexual violence were not properly presented under the fast-track system
 - Gender-specific claims for asylum such as Female Genital Mutilation and trafficking were not adequately addressed by the asylum system⁷⁴
- A report from The Independent Asylum Commission in 2008 received evidence of the inappropriate use of leading questions by government officials at interview and non-implementation of gender-guidelines when engaging with traumatized women seeking asylum.⁷⁵
- A 2004 study found that, although women's claims make up one third of all applications for asylum in Europe, gender issues were not fully addressed when dealing with female asylum seekers and refugees.⁷⁶
- A study in 2006 found there to be a lack of awareness of gender issues in dealing with asylum seekers and that the Home Office Gender Guidance issued in 2004 was not being followed.⁷⁷
- The 2006 study found 'a culture of disbelief' at the Home Office, when combined with ignorance or bias against women, had a particularly severe impact on fair decision making. The effects of trauma on recounting events were often not taken into account and in fact were occasionally held against women.⁷⁸

Background of women asylum seekers

- It was estimated in 2003 that over 50% of women refugee and asylum seekers in the UK, the majority of whom come from Africa, were fleeing rape - mostly perpetrated by soldiers, police or agents of the state.⁷⁹
- Women often find that if they are fleeing rape and other kinds of gender-related persecution, such as honour crimes, forced marriage and female genital mutilation, the Home Office will not see this as grounds for giving refugee status.⁸⁰

Lack of support for asylum seeker women

- The Independent Asylum Commission in 2008 found that some of those seeking sanctuary had additional vulnerabilities that were not appropriately addressed in the way children,

women, older, disabled, and lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT) asylum seekers, and torture survivors were treated.⁸¹

- A study conducted in 2003 found that refugee and asylum seeking women lived in constant fear of violence in the UK. Many felt so unsafe that 83% of women interviewed lived under self-imposed curfew. A third of interviewees walked everywhere because they could not afford public transport, adding to their feeling of vulnerability, and a further third had been verbally or physically abused, including being spat on or shouted at.⁸²
- During 2001, a Maternity Alliance study found that asylum seekers and their babies survived in a support system that fell far short of meeting their most basic needs for adequate food and safe shelter. Already lonely, disorientated and grieving, half of the women also experienced neglect, disrespect and racism from the maternity services.⁸³

Education

Women's position in education

- In 2007/08, only 14% of British university vice-chancellors, 31% of further education principles and 34% of secondary school head teachers (2006 figure) were female.⁸⁴
- Research in 2008 found that more women were going into teaching than eight years ago, but their pay and promotion prospects still trailed behind men's.⁸⁵ The study commissioned by the National Association of Schoolmasters Union of Women Teachers found that:
 - A fifth of male primary teachers with between five and nine years experience are in leadership roles, compared with 8.5% of their female colleagues.
 - After 20 years' service, 70% of men are on their way to becoming head teachers, compared to just 40% of women.
 - In secondary schools, 3.5% of men with five to nine years experience are in leadership roles, compared with 2% of their female colleagues.
 - The gulf widens when male teachers have more than 20 years service. 24% of male teachers with more than 20 years service are on their way to becoming head teachers, compared with 15.7% of their female colleagues.
 - The career structure in teaching is not set up for career breaks so women with children fail to progress or leave.

Educational attainment

- In 1996/7, men had higher rates of degree-level qualifications than women (21 per cent and 19 per cent respectively). By 2004/5, the two groups had the same rate (26 per cent each).⁸⁶
- Official statistics from 2005/06 show that the subjects selected for vocational qualifications differ between women and men. Men were more likely to study vocational qualifications for construction, planning and the built environment (with almost 100 % going to men), or engineering and manufacturing technologies (89% of all awards), whereas women were more likely to study health, public services and care related vocational qualifications (around 86% of all awards).⁸⁷
- The increase in qualifications gained by Black Caribbean men and Pakistani and Bangladeshi women from 1996/7 to 2004/5 were the least of all ethnic groups.⁸⁸
- During the period 1996/97 to 2004/05, disabled people's educational qualifications remain considerably less than those of non-disabled people. 15% of men and 17% of women achieved degree-level qualifications in 2004/5, compared with 28% of non-disabled men and women.⁸⁹
- People who reported being in same-sex relationships are more likely than those in heterosexual sex relationships to have degrees (48 per cent of men and 51 per cent of women in 2004/5).⁹⁰

Relationship between educational attainment & earnings

- In 2006, female graduates earned, on average, 15% less than their male counterparts at the age of 24; with this gender pay gap widening with age (increasing to 40.5% for women graduates aged 41-45).⁹¹
- A study in 2008 found that among Pakistani or Bangladeshi women, those who were highly educated found it easier to gain access to employment, higher incomes and a higher class position. Higher education tends to protect these women to a much greater extent than it protects White women or women from other ethnic groups in a relative sense.⁹²
- In 2004 it was reported that women graduates earn 15% less than men who have the same qualifications within five years of graduation.⁹³
- A study published in 2008 found that gender differences in gross weekly earnings reduced over the period 1996 to 2005, with women's average earnings increasing from 54% of men's in 1996/7 to 61 per cent in 2004/5. However, given that women's educational levels increased more than men's, their earnings levels became relatively worse over the period and they did not see the same returns from their education.⁹⁴

Girls, young women & education

- A 2003 study found that less than half of young pregnant women and young mothers were able to access a full curriculum.⁹⁵
- The same study found that 60% of teenage mothers had no qualifications by their early 20s compared with 25% of women who had become mothers after their teenage years.⁹⁶
- Because girls comprise just 17% of permanent exclusions, they have been largely overlooked in school exclusion prevention strategies and research. However, recorded permanent exclusions are a small proportion of the total number of girls excluded as many more are excluded either informally or for a fixed period. The remedial actions of many educational authorities are male based.⁹⁷

Gender & careers advice

- A 2009 report observed that teachers in schools were increasingly being asked to help pupils make decisions about learning and careers. However, teachers did not receive relevant training. As a result, they had not been taught how to ensure that they challenge gendered assumptions about jobs roles.⁹⁸

Employment

Employment & unemployment

- In the second quarter of 2008 the employment rate was 79 per cent for men and 70 per cent for women, which has remained unchanged since 1999.⁹⁹
- Men are more likely to be self-employed than women. Nearly three quarters of the 3.8 million self-employed people in 2008 were men, a proportion that has remained the same since early 1997.¹⁰⁰
- Research in 2009 found that Pakistani and Bangladeshi women have the highest rates of part-time working.¹⁰¹
- Most Bangladeshi and Pakistani women are not in paid work.¹⁰²
- In 1996/7 and 2004/05 ethnic minority groups were found to have significantly lower rates of paid employment than White people, with the lowest rates among Chinese men (58 per cent in 2004/5) and Pakistani / Bangladeshi women (23 per cent).¹⁰³
- Research in 2009 found that only about half of all ethnic minority women were in employment and just a quarter of Pakistani and Bangladeshi women compared to 70% of ethnic minority men and 73% of White women.¹⁰⁴
- In 2004, BME women were 44% of all unemployed women in London, yet represent 30% of the female population.¹⁰⁵
- It was reported in 2002 that 52% of working age women with long term disabilities were 'economically inactive' compared to 21% of all working age women.¹⁰⁶
- In 2005, women represented 50% of rural employees and 31% of the self-employed. There is no single strategic initiative to enable rural women to enter the labour market, although 40% of rural women of working age not in paid employment have said they would like to be.¹⁰⁷
- In 2004/05 people who reported being in same-sex relationships were more likely than people in non-same-sex relationships to be employed (87% of men and 84% of women).¹⁰⁸

Earnings

- In 2006 it was reported that the gender pay gap in the UK is one of the highest in Europe: women who work full-time earned 17% less per hour than men. Women working part-time earned 39% less per hour than men working full-time.¹⁰⁹
- In 2007, median weekly earnings of full-time employees for women of £394 were 21% less than those for men (£498).¹¹⁰
- It was reported in 2005 that minority ethnic women earn the least with a total income of £118 per week, or 59% of minority ethnic men's earnings and just 32% of white men's earnings.¹¹¹

- Black Caribbean and Indian women earned significantly more than White women. Pakistani and Bangladeshi women earned significantly less, at 71% of White women's earnings in 1996/7 and 76% in 2004/5.¹¹²
- Research in 2009 found that ethnic minority women were disproportionately likely to be working in temporary jobs, leading to patchy and insecure income.¹¹³
- Between 1996/97 to 2004/05 disabled women's earnings reduced from 87% to 84% of non-disabled women's earnings.¹¹⁴
- The earnings of women in same-sex relationships were 1.5 times higher in 2004/05 than those in non-same-sex relationships and were also higher when controlling for education levels.
- In 2004, nearly half of all teenage mothers were in the bottom fifth of income distributions. There are different minimum wage levels for young people.¹¹⁵

Gendered segregation of the labour market

- The services sector accounted for 74% of male employee jobs and 92% of female employee jobs in March 2008.¹¹⁶
- Men and women still follow very different career paths. Men are ten times more likely than women to be employed in skilled trades (19% compared with 2%) and are also more likely to be managers and senior officials. A fifth of women in employment do administrative or secretarial work compared with 4% of men. Women are also more likely than men to be employed in the personal services and in sales and customer services.¹¹⁷
- Research in 2009 found that fewer women than men study or work in the Science, Engineering and Technology (SET) sectors.¹¹⁸
- In 2006/7, only 2.6% of engineering apprentices were women. The limited number of women entering SET exacerbates skills shortages in these sectors, reducing the productivity of SET organisations and making it harder for them to compete on the international stage.¹¹⁹
- An Ofsted evaluation of Connexions in 2008 suggested that it is not always doing enough to challenge gender stereotypes.¹²⁰
- In 2004/5, 40% of men and 37% of women were in professional, higher administrative and managerial occupations (the salariat). This represented an increase of 3% for men and 5% for women over the 1996/7 period. The overall gap between men and women thus reduced over the period.¹²¹
- Pakistani and Bangladeshi men and women and Black Caribbean men were significantly less likely to be in the salariat in 2004/5; with a relatively slight improvement for Pakistani and Bangladeshi women.¹²²
- The proportions of disabled men and women in the salariat reduced slightly over the same period, by 0.7 and 2%.¹²³

- It was reported in 2005, that even in the voluntary sector, which is generally perceived to lead the way in promoting equality, women earn 87% of men's (full-time) wages with an average salary that lags more than £3,400 behind that of men.¹²⁴

Childcare & employment

- More than two thirds of working-age women with dependent children (68%) were in employment in the second quarter of 2008. But women without children were more likely to be in employment, at 73% over the same period. Conversely, men with dependent children are more likely than those without children to be in employment.¹²⁵
- Women are more likely than men to work part time, particularly if they have dependent children. Thirty eight per cent of women with dependent children worked part time compared with 22% of those without dependent children. Only 4% of men with dependent children and 7% of men without dependent children worked part time.¹²⁶
- The age of the youngest dependent child has an impact on the employment rate of lone mothers. 35% of those with a child aged under five were in employment compared with 59% of those with a child aged five to ten.¹²⁷ 57% of carers are women. Evidence from a report in 2009 suggests that many carers would like to combine caring with work or education but are unable to do so.¹²⁸
- A 2005 report states that women in full-time employment spend nearly 30% more time on childcare every day than men in full-time employment.¹²⁹
- The cost per year in inner London, for day nursery, for a child under two years is typically £8,700 or around £197 per week – compared with an average of £142 per week in Great Britain. Yet the extra costs associated with living in London are not reflected in tax credits (2006 figures).¹³⁰
- The childcare sector, which is overwhelmingly female, is the worst paid occupation in the UK - for example, nursery workers in private nurseries earned, on average, £8,000 per year in 2005.¹³¹
- Black mothers are most likely to be lone parents and in employment, but experience the lowest level of access to flexible working arrangements.¹³²
- Research in 2005 found that Black women had the least access to free childcare, use childminders more than other groups, and pay for all or part of this minding at twice the rate of the next highest paying group.¹³³
- Ethnic minority women, particularly Black women, are also more likely to work evenings or weekends and finding affordable childcare at these times is particularly difficult.¹³⁴

Pregnancy & employment

- In 2005 it was estimated that 30,000 women lose their jobs each year as a result of being pregnant¹³⁵. In 2009 those agencies which have helplines, or provide legal advice, reported clear evidence that this figure was set to rise based upon increased enquiries about pregnancy related redundancies.¹³⁶

- In 2003, EOC research found that more than 25% of employers cannot refer to a single statutory entitlement for pregnant women.¹³⁷
- In 2004 it was reported that the average award for injury to feelings in sex discrimination cases involving pregnancy related dismissal is £2,000 lower than in non-pregnancy related dismissal cases.¹³⁸
- An EOC's study in 2004 found that nearly 25% of women who made an employment tribunal claim had been dismissed within hours of telling their employer about their pregnancy and one in five women returning from maternity leave were given lower grade jobs.¹³⁹

Employment & educational attainment

- A study in 2008 found that highly qualified Pakistani or Bangladeshi women were only slightly less likely to be employed than their White peers (83 per cent) whereas poorly qualified Pakistani or Bangladeshi women were mostly jobless (18% of White women's employment rate).¹⁴⁰
- A study in 2008 found that Black African women at each level of education also reported the highest incidence of unfair treatment in employment.¹⁴¹
- Research in 2009 found that ethnic minority women were four times more likely than White women to have frequently taken a job for which they were over-qualified and were more likely to be in routine or semi-routine employment.¹⁴²
- It was reported in 2009 that women in their forties or older had on average fewer qualifications than their male counterparts. Prior to the 1990s, boys out-achieved girls at school and university and this historic difference in school and university achievement is evident amongst those currently in the workforce.¹⁴³

Housework

- A 2006 study identified that on average; women spent 180 minutes per day on housework; that's 78% more time than men who spent only 101 minutes per day.¹⁴⁴

Health

Mortality

- Deaths attributed to circulatory diseases became the second most common cause of death for females in 2006 after cancers.¹⁴⁵
- Cancers became the most common cause of death for females in 2006 and remained the second most common cause of death for males.¹⁴⁶
- It is estimated that, on average, gypsy and traveller women live 12 years less than women in the general population.¹⁴⁷
- Research in 2006 found that mothers of Gypsy and traveller communities are 20 times more likely to experience the death of a child than the rest of the population.¹⁴⁸

Morbidity

- Official statistics in 2006 showed that while women can expect to live longer than men, they are also more likely to spend more years in poor health or with a disability.¹⁴⁹
- Women are more likely to suffer from arthritis and rheumatism than men. In 2006 the rate of 229 per 1,000 women aged between 65 and 74 was much higher than the rate of 144 per 1,000 men (2006 statistics).¹⁵⁰
- Research in 2008 found that ethnic minority women were more likely to report ill-health than other groups in the population.¹⁵¹
- Research reported in 2007 found that Pakistani and Bangladeshi women appear to have particularly acute needs, and are three times as likely to report health problems.¹⁵²
- Caribbean women have a higher prevalence of cardio-vascular disease and they and Pakistani women are also 20% more likely to have high blood pressure and to be obese than other women in the general population.¹⁵³

Mental health

- The NHS reported in 2009 that more than one in five of the adult female population experiences depression, anxiety or suicidal thoughts. It found the proportion of women aged 16-64 with common mental disorders (CMDs) increased from 19.1% in 1993 to 21.5% in 2007, whereas the rate in men did not alter significantly.¹⁵⁴
- The NHS reported in 2009 that the largest increase in CMD rates, up 20% between 1993 and 2007, was among women aged 45-64. The proportion of women aged 16-74 reporting suicidal thoughts also increased from 4.2% in 2000 to 5.5% in 2007.¹⁵⁵
- Research in 2004 found that a high proportion of Irish women suffer from various mental health problems and Irish women have the highest rates of suicide and self-harm. Admission rates for depression amongst Irish women are 410 (per 100,000), compared with a rate of 166 amongst English women.¹⁵⁶

- Ethnic minority women are up to four times more likely than White women to be admitted to psychiatric hospital.¹⁵⁷
- Research in 2009 found that younger South Asian women have been found to be particularly vulnerable to self-harm and high rates of suicide.¹⁵⁸
- Research from 2003 shows that eight out of ten doctors said they prescribed more antidepressants than they should, many to women.¹⁵⁹
- A Luton University study in 2001 found that lesbian and bisexual women are more likely THAN WHO? to experience mental health problems and inaccurate health diagnoses and participate in self-harm.¹⁶⁰
- A study from 2002 showed that more than half (56%) of interviewees [refugee and asylum seeking women] suffered from depression, one in five found the first person they spoke to at the doctor's surgery unhelpful and only half had access to interpreters when visiting their doctor. Problems with communication were the main difficulty the interviewees experienced when visiting health services, with fewer than 17% of the study's participants describing their English as good or fluent.¹⁶¹
- At least half of all women in touch with mental health services have experienced violence and abuse, yet the level of awareness amongst mental health professionals appears low and women are rarely asked about their experiences of violence or sexual abuse.¹⁶²

Access to health services

- In a study in Scotland in 2002, female respondents were more likely to have experienced problems in accessing health information than males.¹⁶³
- A study in 2001 found that institutionalised homophobia contributes to the health inequalities experienced by lesbian and bisexual women. Lesbians and bisexual women can feel unsafe disclosing their sexuality to their GPs, because of fear of their reaction, leading to barriers accessing health services.¹⁶⁴
- Only 19% of Primary Care Trusts have women only community day services and 31% provide women only wards.¹⁶⁵

HIV & AIDs

- In 1992, 12% of people living with HIV and AIDS in the UK were women. By 1998, the proportion had grown to 35%. An overwhelming majority of those women were black African (at least 80%) and had been infected from a male partner. Violence against women is the common method of exposure to HIV.¹⁶⁶

Economic and social benefits

Pensions

- Many older people, especially women over 75, experience severe poverty due to institutional failure, as levels of state pensions are determined according to years of employment.¹⁶⁷
- In 2007 the income of retired women was less than 40% of that of retired men.¹⁶⁸
- One in five single women pensioners live in poverty. In 2004, almost 1.3 million older women lived below the poverty line and suffered significant financial disadvantage - compared with men of the same age, their average income in retirement is 57% of men's. Only 16% of recently retired women were entitled to a full basic state pension in their own right.¹⁶⁹
- In WHEN? Only 43% of women received a state pension based on their own National Insurance contributions (compared with almost all men) because their National Insurance contribution records were insufficient due to family/childcare interruptions and their low pay.¹⁷⁰
- Women have disproportionately low access to pension schemes with only 65% of full-time workers and 33% of part-timers as members of either an occupational/personal pension scheme, compared to 75% of male full-time workers.¹⁷¹
- In 2005 it was reported that only three out of ten women of working age were saving towards their retirement compared with more than half of men; half of the women who were saving stopped doing so when they had children.¹⁷²
- Security in old age is a particular problem for women, partly as a result of their lower and uneven income. Research in 2007 found evidence that women within couple households were relying on male partners to save for them.¹⁷³
- Research in 2006 found that ethnic minority women were particularly disadvantaged in their old age as a result of never having worked in the labour market. These women lacked access to pension schemes and their ability to save for retirement was extremely limited.¹⁷⁴
- Research in 2009 found that of employed women of working age in the UK, only 40% of White British/Irish women had an occupational or personal pension, and only a very small number of Pakistani (9%) and Bangladeshi (4%) women had such a scheme.¹⁷⁵

Low income

- At September 2008, single female pensioners and female lone parents were both more likely to be in low-income households than their male equivalents.¹⁷⁶
- At September 2008, the single women in low-income households were divided almost equally between pensioners, lone parents and single working-age women without children; whereas nearly half of all the men in low-income households are single working-age without children.¹⁷⁷
- At September 2008, women were more likely than men to be in a low-income household from the age of 16 to 40 and from 65 onwards, but not from 40 to 64.¹⁷⁸

- Research in 2009 found that ethnic minority women have some of the lowest rates of access to benefits.¹⁷⁹

Working Tax Credit

- The combination of low wages and the fact that the working tax credit (WTC) does not cover all childcare costs means that many mothers are financially disadvantaged when taking up paid employment. This can, in part, explain the low take up of the WTC in the London region, with only 14% of all families benefiting, compared to an average of 20% in England and Wales (2003 figures).¹⁸⁰
- Less than 25% of lone parent families in London were receiving the WTC in July 2003, compared with an average of over 41% in England and Wales.¹⁸¹

Young mothers

- In 2004 it was reported that 90% of teenage parents received some income support from the State. However, benefits were paid at different rates depending on the age of the mother. In 2004, the most a young mother under 18 years could claim was £44.05 per week (excluding housing).¹⁸²
- In 2004 it was reported that young pregnant women living away from home had less to spend on food than the minimum recommendation by the Food Commission (for a modest but adequate diet) of £20.25 per week.¹⁸³

Housing

- Amongst Bangladeshi households headed by women in London, 40% live in accommodation with more than one person per room (20 times the national average for all female headed households) and 17% live in accommodation with more than 1.5 persons per room (compared with an average of 1% amongst all households headed by women).¹⁸⁴
- Four in ten Asian (Indian, Pakistani or Bangladeshi) women and one third of black women nationally are "very worried" about racist attacks, yet racial harassment is seldom addressed in housing policy.¹⁸⁵

Lone parents

- In 2004, lone parents in London (92% of whom were women) were found to be most vulnerable to poverty for a range of reasons and were not necessarily better off in paid employment.¹⁸⁶

Maternity pay

- Research by the Equal Opportunities Commission (EOC) in 2007 showed, that ethnic minority women had less access to maternity pay than other women.¹⁸⁷

Debt

- Research in 2007 revealed that ethnic minority women had low levels of savings and high levels of debt, making them particularly vulnerable. Three quarters of Black women had less than £1,500 in savings, compared to half of all White women. Moreover, 24% of Black women were in arrears, compared to 9% of Asian and White women.¹⁸⁸

Financial exclusion

- Research in 2007 showed that ethnic minority women were more likely to face financial exclusion than ethnic minority men or the general population, with some for example not having access to a bank account.¹⁸⁹

Deprivation

- 70% of all people from black and minority ethnic communities live in the 88 most deprived local authority districts in the UK, compared with 40% of the greater population (reported in 2004).¹⁹⁰

The Law & the Criminal Justice System

Women in the legal profession

- Ethnic minority women are under represented among workers in the criminal justice system, for example, in 2004, there was only one ethnic minority woman in the senior judiciary.¹⁹¹
- A report on the criminal justice system in 2009, reported that a misunderstanding of equality as requiring same treatment for men and women has led to male defined practices and programme applied to women. The report provides evidence that throughout the criminal justice system, practices and attitudes continue to discriminate against women.¹⁹²
- Only 15.9% of partners in the UK's ten largest law firms were women in 2008.
- In 2004, At the top 30 sets of the UK bar there were only 42 female compared with 479 male silks.¹⁹³
- In 2008, just over 10% of the 109 High Court Judges were women and just over 8% of the 37 Court of Appeal Judges were female. There was only one female Law Lord.¹⁹⁴
- Only 3 High Court judges are from an ethnic minority group and only one of these is a woman.¹⁹⁵

Policing and prisons

- In 2003, women made up 7% of senior police officers in England and Wales. In London's Metropolitan Police, there were just 900 black police officers, 15% of whom were minority ethnic women (1% of the total number of police officers). None of these women were in the senior levels, despite the fact that there were almost 900,000 minority ethnic women over 16 years of age in London.¹⁹⁶
- In 2008, only 12% of police officers at Chief Inspector grade and above were female.
- In some police forces, the current uniform is based upon a 1950s military style uniform and the same male designed uniform is issued for both women and men. Shirts are ordered by collar size and stab vests have no shaping for women. There is little understanding that women come in different shapes and sizes to men and therefore need clothing tailored to their body form. This results in a very uncomfortable uniform for women in some forces.¹⁹⁷
- In 2008, less than a quarter of prison governors were female and fewer than one in four prison officers are women.¹⁹⁸

Legal aid

- The third Law Society Gazette Legal Aid Survey, undertaken in 2004, found that 74% of solicitors' firms offering legal aid had turned away clients from 2003-4, with the percentage rising to 86% in London. Almost 75% said they did not expect to be doing the same amount of legal aid work in five years time. In a letter to the Law Society Gazette, Rights of Women raised concerns about the worsening situation, suggesting that it would lead to real threats to the safety of women and children who were unable to get access to legal help.¹⁹⁹

- Family law provision is in particularly dire straits - of the 20% of respondents to the survey who had dropped an area of work, 19% had ceased doing family cases. Overall, 91% of respondents said they were dissatisfied with the system, with 88% feeling more pessimistic than they did last year.²⁰⁰

Childcare

- Women victims without access to support from family and friends to look after their children often have to bring their children to court. Yet courts have no facilities to assist mothers in this position.²⁰¹

Violence against Women (VAW)

Prevalence

- A 2005 report found that two women are killed every week by current or former partners.²⁰²
- Over 30 million women live in Britain. Each year, 3 million women in Britain experience rape, domestic violence, stalking or other violence, yet one in four local authority areas leave women who experience violence without any support.²⁰³
- An estimated 1 million women in England and Wales experienced abuse from a current or former partner in 2006.²⁰⁴
- The British Crime Survey of 2005 showed that 45% of women in the UK have experienced some form of domestic violence, sexual assault or stalking.²⁰⁵
- The 2008 British Crime Survey found that in the majority of incidents of domestic violence the victims were women (85%)²⁰⁶
- In 2005, 47% of male victims of domestic violence have experienced single incidents of abuse, compared to only 27% of female victims in the UK.²⁰⁷
- Research in 2007 found that just under a quarter of women (23%) reported having experienced stalking since the age of 16. Obscene or threatening phone calls or letters were the most common types of stalking behaviour experienced.²⁰⁸
- Research published in 2006 identified that women aged 16 or over are 5 times as likely as men to feel very unsafe walking alone in their area after dark.²⁰⁹
- Girls and young women are almost twice as likely to be on the child protection register for sexual abuse as boys and young men (2000).²¹⁰

Domestic violence

- The 2008/09 British Crime Survey self-completion module on intimate (domestic or sexual) violence showed that overall, more than one in four women (28%) had experienced any domestic abuse since the age of 16. This represents an estimated 4.5 million female victims of domestic abuse. Since the age of 16, partner abuse (non-sexual) was the most commonly experienced of the separate types of intimate violence among both women and men. About one in five (21%) women reported having experienced such abuse since the age of 16.
- The Home Office estimates that 6% of women had experienced any domestic abuse in 2009, equivalent to an estimated 1 million female victims of domestic abuse, which is nearly 20,000 women a week. (Home Office Statistical Bulletin 02/09).
- Statistics fail to show the full extent of abuse, because many victims suffer repeat attacks over many years. Approximately 42% of domestic violence victims have been victimised more than once. The British Crime Survey indicates that victims experience an average of 20 incidents of domestic violence in a year, which can often increase in severity each time. (Walby, S. and Allen, J., 2004)

- The British Crime Survey 2009 found that of all crimes domestic violence had the highest rate of repeat victimisation ((being a victim of the same type of crime more than once in the last year) at 38%. Repeat victimisation accounts for two-thirds (66%) of all incidents of domestic violence as measured by the BCS. 38% were victimised more than once and around one in five (21%) were victimised three or more times.
- The key UK research on teenage partner violence provides a detailed picture of the incidence and impact of this form of violence on the lives of young people. A third of teenage girls in a relationship suffered unwanted sexual acts and a quarter had suffered physical violence. Girls were also much more likely to report that the physical violence had occurred more than once, indicating that for girls this may represent a more established pattern of victimisation than is experienced by boys. Girls said they often felt powerless to stop the abuse because they felt scared, guilty or feared they would lose their boyfriend (Barter, C et al, 2009).
- London has higher rates of domestic violence than the average for England and Wales (Mayor's Violence Against Women Strategy 2010). The Mayor's Violence Against Women Strategy (2010), quoting figures from the Metropolitan Police Service, reports that there were 53,069 domestic violence crimes reported in London during the 12 months from March 2008 to March 2009 – a 4.4% increase on the previous year.

Sexual violence

- The British Crime Survey 2008-09 shows that 19% of women experienced any sexual assault (including attempts). Between 2-3% of women (aged 16-59) experienced a sexual assault (including attempts) between 2008 and 2009; the majority of this is accounted for by less serious sexual assault. Prevalence of serious sexual assault is low (0.5% of women experienced a serious sexual assault in the past year). Although the overall prevalence of domestic abuse had declined over the past five years (2004/05 and 2008/09) sexual assault has remained at a similar level (Povey, D. (ed.) Home Office Statistical Bulletin 02/09).
- At a national level, a total of 51,488 sexual offences were recorded by the police in 2008/09, 4% less than in the previous year and the lowest figure since the introduction of the National Crime Recording Standard (NCRS). 79% (40,787 and 2% less than in the previous year) were classified as most serious sexual crimes (encompassing rape, sexual assault, and sexual activity with children). Within this total, police recorded rapes of a female increased by 5% to 12,165 offences, and sexual assaults on a female fell by 4% to 19,740 offences. (Crime in England and Wales 2008/2009, Home Office).
- Other national statistics from various sources are as follows:
 - Every day, more than 2,000 women are sexually assaulted (*A Hard Knock Life*, 2008).
 - 23% of women experience sexual assault as an adult and 5% of women experience rape (Cross Government Action Plan on Sexual Violence and Abuse, 2007).
 - 3.7 million women in England and Wales have been sexually assaulted at some point since the age of 16.
 - Around 10,000 women are sexually assaulted and 2,000 women are raped every week. (research cited in the Home Office. Report: *Together we can end violence against women and girls: a strategy*, 2009)

- The Cross Government Action Plan on Sexual Violence and Abuse, 2007 found that 40% of adults who were raped told no one about it and 31% of children who were abused reach adulthood without having disclosed their abuse.
- The Mayor of London's Violence Against Women Strategy (2010) cites that on average, just 10% of rapes are reported to the police (Women's Resource Centre & Rape Crisis, 2008). A second problem is the failure of the justice system when dealing with rape cases: there is a conviction rate of just 6% (from Kelly, Lovett & Regan, 2005) in the UK.
- At a London level: there were 2,180 recorded rape offences in London for the 12 months between March 2008 and March 2009. This is an increase of 14.5 per cent over the last year. (Metropolitan Police Statistic - It should be noted that the increase in recorded rape offences in 2008 is compared to a particularly low level of offences in 2007).²¹¹
- The Mayor's Violence Against Women Strategy (2010), draws upon a range of studies to evidence the prevalence of sexual violence in London:
 - Women in London are more likely to report that they are worried about being raped (48.1%) and fear violent crime (70%).
 - 76% of the women refugees and asylum seekers at a single service in London had been raped.
 - There were 2,180 recorded rape offences in London for the 12 months between March 2008 and March 2009. This is an increase of 14.5% over the last year.
 - The London Ambulance Service is called to approximately 450 rape/sexual assault incidents per year.

Sexual violence against girls

- An NSPCC prevalence study in 2000 found that around 21% of girls surveyed experienced some form of child sexual abuse. The majority of children who experienced sexual abuse had more than one sexually abusive experience; only indecent exposure was likely to be a single incident. (Pat Cawson et al, 2000). An average of five girls a day (1,986) called Child Line last year regarding sexual abuse by their father. (NSPCC press release, 28.01.2010)
- The key UK research on teenage partner violence provides a detailed picture of the incidence and impact of this form of violence on the lives of young people. The report shows that girls were much more likely to encounter harmful behaviour in teenage relationships than boys - more than three in every four girls compared to one in ten boys - and at a younger age. The survey of 13 to 17-year-olds from England, Scotland and Wales found that of nearly nine out of ten girls had been in an intimate relationship, of these, one in six said they had been pressured into sexual intercourse and 1 in 16 said they had been raped (Barter, C et al, 2009).
- The NSPCC research also quotes the following:
 - More than 21,000 sex offences against children were recorded in 2008-09, the equivalent of 60 offences every day. The statistics show girls were six times more likely than boys to be the victims of a sex crime. And the number of incidents where the offender knew the victim was four times higher than those involving strangers (NSPCC Press Release, 25.01.10)

- Between 1980 and 2001 almost 70,000 crimes were reported involving gross indecency with a child and unlawful sexual intercourse with a female child. 'However, there is a concern that many instances of sexual abuse go unreported, with some estimates putting this as high as 95%'. (National Crime Intelligence Service (2005) UK threat assessment: the threat from serious and organised crime 2004/5 - 2005/6. NCIS).
- More than one third (36%) of all rapes recorded by the police are committed against children under 16 years of age. (Walker, A., Kershaw, C. and Nicholas, S., 2006)
- 60-70% of sex offenders against children target girls only, about 20-33% boys only, and about 10% children of either sex.

'The majority of perpetrators sexually assault children known to them, with about 80% of offences taking place in the home of either the offender or the victim'. Grubin, D. (1998)

- The Mayor's Violence Against Women Strategy (2010) cites evidence on the growing problem of rape within gangs. The London Teenage Sexual Health Forum commissioned research on the role of non-consensual sex in teenage pregnancy. It received anecdotal evidence of sexual bullying and coercion of teenage girls, often by groups of boys and young men. Girls are frequently seen as 'sexual accessories' by young men in gangs and can be passed around among group members. The strategy concludes: *'Rape and sexual assault, by individual gang members and by the whole group, is relatively common'*.
- One London project working with girls who are involved with gangs found that all of the girls they had contact with had been raped by male group members. The strategy says: 'Rape and sexual assault are increasingly used as a weapon in response to rivalries'; the assault of a female is used to assert power not only over the girl involved, but also over those who are associated with her. Senior gang members pass their girlfriends around to lower ranking members and sometimes to the whole group at the same time. In the past two years, there have been 176 reported gang rapes (involving three or more attackers) in London. These offences are likely to be highly under-reported because girls are extremely reluctant to talk about their experiences to anyone in authority for fear of reprisals and some girls don't perceive their experiences as rape'.
- Race on the Agenda (ROTA) published the report: *'The Female Voice in Violence'* which draws on face-to-face research with 352 friends, relatives, victims or perpetrators of gangs and gang violence across London. Ranging in age from 13-52, the experiences of these women and girls highlight lessons for policy makers and those working to prevent serious youth violence.
- The research highlighted concerns about the lack of appropriate services available to those females caught up in gangs, the use of sexual violence by gang members, and the impact of serious violence on their sexual and mental health. Key findings were:
 - Very little support is targeted at women and girls involved in gangs, with any female-specific services usually the initiative of individuals rather than planning or policy.
 - Girls involved with gang members often live outside of known gang-affected areas, and may hold firearms, drugs or money for their boyfriends.
 - Rape, sexual violence and exploitation are significant weapons used against women and girls associated with, or involved in, gangs.
 - Convicted female gang members are often held with boys outside of mainstream schools, severely limiting their ability to deal with their offending behaviour and reduce their victimisation.
 - There is little data to quantify the numbers of women and girls affected by gang violence.

Female genital mutilation

- At a global level, an estimated 100-140 million girls and women have experienced female genital mutilation and up to 3 million girls undergo some form of the procedure each year (WHO, 2008).
- In the 2008-09 British Crime survey FGM was categorised as a distinct offence. Previous surveys had categorised FGM under 'Less serious wounding' or 'Racially or religiously aggravated less serious wounding'. Comparisons over time are therefore not possible. 159 incidents were recorded in 2008-09.
- There have been no convictions for FGM since it was criminalised in 1985, compared to 100 in France (The Way Forward: A call for action to end violence against women). The Way Forward report describes how two doctors have been found guilty of serious professional misconduct by the General Medical Council. Although FGM is incorporated into child protection, at present no data has been collected on the number or type of social work cases involving FGM in the UK.
- The first and only major piece of prevalence research at a national level was undertaken by FORWARD in 2007, in collaboration with the London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine and the Department of Midwifery at City University, which was funded by the Department of Health. The study aimed to estimate from women and girls resident in England and Wales: the prevalence of FGM among women aged 15 and over; the number of registered pregnancies ending in a registrable live or stillbirth, to women who have undergone FGM; and the estimated numbers of girls aged below 15 at risk of FGM and the type of FGM.
- The authors used the 2001 Census to assess numbers of women born in practising countries. They noted that this method was not ideal as it omitted the second generation of women who were born in the UK but who may have undergone FGM, and assumed that the prevalence of FGM in practising migrant or refugee populations in the UK was the same as in their countries of origin.
- The research estimated that at least 66,000 women in England and Wales have undergone FGM, in the main before their arrival in the UK. It identified around 21,000 girls aged 8 or younger at high risk of FGM. In addition, over 11,000 girls aged 9 or above had a high probability of already having suffered FGM.
- The Mayor's Violence Against Women Strategy (2010) used the FORWARD research to evidence that an estimated 6.3% of pregnancies in inner London and 4.6% in outer London are to women with FGM.

Forced marriage

- The Forced Marriage Unit recorded 1,618 cases of forced marriage across the UK in 2008 (Mayor's Violence Against Women Strategy, 2010). This figure is made up of 1188 calls on the Forced Marriage Unit call register (from victims, friends, or agencies/NGOs etc who are handling cases and are asking for advice/support), 420 cases, and 10 Indefinite Leave to Remain (ILR) reports.

- The joint Home Office and Foreign and Commonwealth Office Forced Marriage Unit (FMU) was set up in 2005, and the following data is available on the number of cases of forced marriage (including both assistance and immigration cases dealt with by the FMU in the UK and overseas) handled since then:
 - 2005: 152
 - 2006: 182
 - 2007: 262
 - 2008: 420
 - 2009: 377 (for both assistance and immigration cases)
- In 2008 a more comprehensive system of record keeping was introduced which shows that in 2008 the FMU gave advice or support related to possible forced marriage in 1,618 instances, 420 cases, and 10 ILR reports. 85% of victims were female. 57% of cases were associated with Pakistan, the other main countries were: Bangladesh (13%), and India (7%) (Hansard - Written Answer, 30/11/2009).
- In 2008, 39% of all the overseas assistance cases dealt with by the FMU involved children under the age of 18, and in 14% of these cases children under 16 were involved (Home Office, 2009)
- During 2006-7, 5% of women resident in refuge accommodation were fleeing forced marriage - 870 women annually (Residents Questionnaire, Annual Survey 2007, taken from Women's Aid: Domestic Violence Topic: Forced Marriage).
- The Forced Marriage (Civil Protection) Act 2007 allows courts the power to make a Forced Marriage Protection Order (FMPO) on behalf of a victim of forced marriage.²¹² Within the first year of the introduction of the Forced Marriage Act, 86 Forced Marriage Protection Orders had been issued - the initial estimate by the Ministry of Justice was about 50.²¹³
- Department for Children, Schools and Families funded research gathered data from 58 local organisations across 10 selected local authorities and analysed it in conjunction with data from national organisations. Based on the data on the number of cases (either actual or threatened) encountered by local and key national organisations, the national prevalence of *reported* cases of forced marriage in England in 2008 was estimated to be between 5,000 and 8,000. This estimate excludes the potentially large number of victims who have not come to the attention of any agencies or professionals, since a large general population survey would be required to estimate the prevalence of these 'hidden' victims. (Anne Kazimirski et al, 2009).
- Calls to the Forced Marriage Unit are recorded London-wide and not by Boroughs (365 for 2009 and 339 for 2008). According to the Mayor's Violence Against Women Strategy (2010), the FMU provided advice or support relating to possible forced marriage in 1,618 instances across the UK in 2008, of these instances 339 were identified as coming from London.
- Since the legislation came into being in November 2008, 32 Forced Marriage orders have been issued by London Courts.

So called 'honour' crimes

- At a national level, honour crimes are not separated out from other forms of violence in official crime figures nor have been separately or comprehensively recorded by any agency, making it likely that they are even more under-reported than other forms of domestic violence.
- The Select Committee on Home Affairs Sixth report notes how Home Office figures suggest there are around 12 honour killings, the most extreme form of honour-based violence, a year, but as 'honour'-based violence is often a hidden problem with the criminal justice system, killings are often disguised as an accident or suicide, so this figure is almost certainly too low.
- The Iranian and Kurdish Women's Rights Organisation (IKWRO), a small London-based voluntary organisation, reported dealing with 14 cases of an individual threatened with death for reasons of honour in 2006. This number rose to 60 in 2007. In the year ending March 2008 IKWRO provided advice and support to 923 women from all over the UK: 345 of these required extensive casework. Of these 75 cases involved service users at risk of 'honour' based violence. The annual report notes: 'The majority of our clients were in the 16-35 age range, who represent an increased risk of forced marriage and 'honour'-based violence'.
- Organisations working with 'honour'-based violence victims also report that often families "drive" women to suicide (often setting themselves alight) by applying psychological pressure. The Metropolitan Police is undertaking a review of 109 cases of murder, suicide and missing persons over a 10 year period across the country. As of summer 2007, 12 cases of previously unrecognised honour killings had been identified. In the same way there are no reliable figures for non-fatal incidents of violence in the name of honour, but community-based organisation Karma Nirvana sees around 15 cases a week of 'honour' related violence, including forced marriage.
- The Metropolitan Police recorded 256 incidents linked to 'honour' in the year 2008/09, of which 132 were criminal offences. This is a 60 per cent rise for the year to April 2009 (Mayor's Violence Against Women Strategy, 2010).
- Five years ago the Iranian and Kurdish Women's Rights Organisation had fewer than 100 calls a year from women regarding fear of 'honour'-based violence on their advice line, they now have more than 1,000 a year. Around 420 of these involve women who need in-depth case work and advocacy, and 85 of them are at high risk of being killed (Nammi, 07.12.09).

Stalking

- The British Crime Survey 2008-09 shows that 20% of women have experienced stalking at some point since the age of 16, and within the last year 4.4% of women had been stalked. These figures are slightly lower (22% and 5.9% respectively) than those for the last survey in which data was collected on stalking (2006-07).
- In 2003 an estimated 1.2 million women were subjected to stalking (Walby & Allen, BCS, 2004)

VAW conviction rates

- Although in 2005, there were estimated to be 500,000 domestic violence related calls to the police annually, only around 7,000 incidents (1.4%) resulted in a prosecution.²¹⁴
- In 2005, convictions for rape of a female were only 5% of the number of offences recorded.²¹⁵
- In 2009, the Fawcett Society found that the 'postcode lottery' rape victims face when seeking justice has worsened despite huge government efforts, with women in some areas 11 times more likely to see assailants found guilty than in others.²¹⁶
- Although the conviction rate for rape rose slightly in 2007 to 7% across England and Wales from 2006, the figure fell in 16 out of 42 police forces, 12 of which had a conviction rate below 5%.²¹⁷
- Official 2007 data reveals that in the worst area for rape conviction, Dorset, fewer than one in 60 women who went to the police saw an attacker convicted of rape. In Warwickshire the figure was 2.9%, and Essex, Suffolk and Cambridgeshire all had a rate of 3.1%. The best performing area, Cleveland, had a rate of 18.1%, up from 13.2% the year before.²¹⁸

Access to services

- In 2004, an estimated 500 women every year experience violence from a partner and cannot access Housing Benefit and other support, including places in refuges, because they are subject to immigration control.²¹⁹
- Research in 2008 revealed that migrant women who have no recourse to public funds are at particular risk as they face harsh 'choices' between staying with abusive partners or living in destitution.²²⁰
- A 2009 report found '*understanding the needs of ethnic minority women who experience violence and appropriate support to be lacking*'; only one in ten local authorities have a specialised service for BAMER women.²²¹
- The problem for BAMER homeless women is particularly acute. A study on women in refuge accommodation in 2007 found that, on average, BAMER women stayed forty-four more days in specialist refuges than women who accessed mainstream refuges. Furthermore, twenty-one refuges turned away 2300 women who requested support, because they were full. This rejection figure was much higher for BAMER women who attempted to access specialist refuges.²²²
- Research in 2007 found that only 25 per cent of women who stayed in refuges went to council housing upon leaving the refuge.²²³
- Research in 2007 found that a woman victim of domestic violence has on average 11 contacts with agencies before getting the help she needs - this rises to 17 if she is Black.²²⁴
- It was reported in 2008 that 50% of specialist independent BAMER women's led organisations across the UK that existed five years ago have closed. For example in London there are now only 6 independent BAMER women's led services, 18 months ago this figure was 14.²²⁵ Check this

- Despite the different needs of women (such as women only accommodation for women who have experienced violence and abuse), there have been instances where local authorities have stipulated support services, such as refuges, must provide to men on a parity with women or lose their funding.²²⁶

Financial abuse

- A report in 2009 revealed that inequality within households has allowed the active abuse and control of ethnic minority women's access to money by their partners. For example, in one case a husband closed his wife's bank account without her permission. Financial abuse is connected with other forms of violence against women.²²⁷
- Research in 2008 found that financial abuse was also particularly common for disabled women, with carers often taking women's personal allowances and other money.²²⁸

Disabled women & abuse

- The disabled women who were interviewed for research in 2008 had experienced a wide range of abuse. The perpetrators included intimate partners, personal assistants, and family members, and some women had been abused by more than one person. All the respondents said that being disabled made the abuse worse, and also severely limited their capacity to escape or take other preventative measures.²²⁹
- Research in 2009 found that barriers to disabled women seeking help included: women not recognising their experience as abuse; blaming themselves; being unaware of any other options; fear of losing their independence or of being institutionalised; fear that their children would be taken away; and not trusting agencies to respond effectively.²³⁰

Lesbian women & abuse

- A 2002 report found that 75% of lesbians who had been assaulted felt unable to report the crime to the Police.²³¹

Cost of VAW

- A Home Office study of 2005 estimates the physical and emotional costs of rape, 'the most serious violent crime after homicide', to be £61,440 per incident.²³²
- In 2008, the cost of violence against women to the state was estimated to be forty billion pounds per year.²³³

Education about VAW

- A 2006 survey revealed that a sizeable minority of young people harbour attitudes that condone VAW, especially coercive sex. Moreover, more than three in four (77%) of 16-20 year-olds said they did not have enough information or support to deal with these issues.²³⁴
- 93 per cent (n+1,820) of young people surveyed by the NSPCC in 2006 had received no information about sexual abuse in sex education.²³⁵

VAW & mental health

- Research in 2003, evidences a direct link between women's experiences of domestic violence and heightened rates of depression, trauma symptoms, and self-harm.²³⁶
- The same research in 2003 found a number of practices to be unhelpful to women's recovery, including: the lack of recognition of trauma or provision of trauma services; making the abuser invisible by focusing on the womans' mental health rather than her experiences of abuse; blaming the victim; offering medication rather than counselling support; and the negative consequent effects on child contact and child protection proceedings if the woman is labelled with mental health problems.²³⁷

Miscarriage & still birth

- Domestic violence was identified as a prime cause of miscarriage or still-birth in a 2005 study.²³⁸

Abortion

Legal position

- In the UK, abortion was not legalised until 1967. However, the Abortion Act was never extended to Northern Ireland.²³⁹
- A woman in the UK do not have a right to abortion on request, even if she has been raped. In the UK, two doctors must confirm that continuing with the pregnancy would have a worse effect on her mental or physical health, or on that of her existing children., before the abortion can be carried out.²⁴⁰
- Abortion laws in the UK are more restrictive than in almost every other European country, where abortion on request is legal in the first three months of pregnancy.²⁴¹
- There is currently no UK law that requires the NHS to provide abortions. There are wide variations within the country of NHS-funded abortion provisions, ranging from more than 90% to less than 60% in others. About 25% of women having an abortion in England and Wales have to pay for them. There are no public funds available, specifically to help poorer women in these circumstances.²⁴²

Profile

- In 2008, for women residents in England and Wales:²⁴³
 - the total number of abortions was 195,296, compared with 198,499 in 2007, a fall of 1.6%
 - the age-standardised abortion rate was 18.2 per 1,000 resident women aged 15-44, compared with 18.6 in 2007
 - the abortion rate was highest at 36 per 1,000, for women age 19, the same as in 2007
 - the under-16 abortion rate was 4.2 and the under-18 rate was 18.9 per 1,000 women, both lower than in 2007
 - 90% of abortions were carried out at under 13 weeks gestation; 73% were at under 10 weeks
- Despite much recent media coverage, late abortions are extremely rare in the UK - indeed less than 1 per cent of all abortions are carried out after 22 weeks.²⁴⁴
- 76% of the UK population are pro-choice.²⁴⁵
- In 2008, 6,862 abortions that took place in Great Britain were to residents of other countries, 17% (1,173) were to women from Northern Ireland and 67% (4,600) to women from the Irish Republic.²⁴⁶
- There are 180,000 abortions a year in the UK. About 10,000 of these are for women from other parts of the world where abortion is illegal or difficult to obtain.²⁴⁷

Attitudes & impact on women

- In a study carried out by Marie Stopes International, one in five UK GPs (18%) considered themselves 'broadly anti-abortion' and two in five (39%) said that the decision to abort should lie not with the woman but with a doctor.²⁴⁸

- Several research studies have shown that the psychological and social consequences of refused abortion requests are frequently more serious than the consequences of abortion.²⁴⁹
- In the last few years a rise in bogus pregnancy advice centres has occurred in Ireland. In 2002 alone, Marie Stopes International reported that 10 women a month had fallen victim to these agencies.²⁵⁰

Substance misuse

Prevalence

- For women, the death rate from alcohol-related causes increased from 5.0 per 100,000 in 1991 to 8.8 per 100,000 in 2006.²⁵¹
- Official statistics show that overall, there continues to be a higher prevalence of smoking among men than among women. However, among young adults (aged 16-19) more women (26 per cent) smoke than men (23 per cent) (2006 figures)²⁵²
- In Great Britain, the proportion of young men and women aged 16 to 24 who binge drink is higher than among any other age group. In 2005, around 30 per cent of men and 22 per cent of women drank more than twice the recommended daily amount on at least one day in the previous week. In 2007, 24 per cent of men and 13 per cent of women drank over the weekly recommendations (21 units for men and 14 units for women).²⁵³

Abuse & substance misuse

- A 2002 study found that that 50 – 90% of women in substance abuse programmes had experienced current or past physical, emotional or sexual abuse.²⁵⁴
- In 2007 Women's Aid reported the following:²⁵⁵
 - Women experiencing domestic violence were up to 15 times more likely to misuse alcohol than women generally.
 - Women who reported domestic violence were up to nine times more likely to misuse drugs (including prescription drugs) than other women.
 - 42% of Asian women who sought treatment for alcohol misuse were experiencing domestic violence.
 - Between 50% and 90% of women who attended substance misuse services may have experienced abuse, either in childhood or adult life, or both.

Women prisoners & substance misuse

- A 2006 study of women prisoners found that the majority drank alcohol prior to imprisonment (86%) and just under two-thirds (61%) exceeded the recommended weekly units for women. 82% of women prisoners had used illegal drugs in the previous six months, 72% of which used at least two substances.²⁵⁶
- A study in 2006 of adult women prisoners found that three quarters had used illicit drugs.²⁵⁷
- In 2003, a Home Office study of women in prison found that 49% were dependent on at least one drug. The study found significantly higher rates of dependence among white women than black/mixed race women and white women were more likely to be dependent on opiates than any other drug, whereas black/mixed race women were more likely to be dependent on crack cocaine.²⁵⁸

Substance misuse, pregnancy & children

- In a 2003 study, 82% of maternity units reported an increase in the number of pregnant 'problem' drug users over the previous five years.²⁵⁹
- The same 2003 study found that only 64% of mothers with 'problem' drug use were still living with their children. The more serious the drug problem, the less likely it was for the parent still to be living with the child.

Prostitution & substance misuse

- A 2004 Home Office study estimates that up to 95% of women in prostitution are problematic drug users, including around 78% heroin users and rising numbers of crack cocaine addicts.²⁶⁰

Homelessness

Prevalence

- A 2003 report found that around 10 to 25% of single homeless people on the streets and in hostels are women. The proportion of women among young single homeless people is higher - 20 to 40%²⁶¹
- In 2006, 62% of respondents to a survey of homeless women had slept rough, more than had been in any other homelessness accommodation situation. However the same survey found that where women are concerned rough sleeping is not the 'visible face of homelessness'. In contrast, respondents tended to choose places to sleep where they would not be seen.²⁶²
- A survey in 2006 found that women's homelessness careers often began before they reached adulthood. Over one quarter of respondents had first become homeless before the age of 16. Yet homelessness services and temporary accommodation are rarely available to these young women.²⁶³

Homelessness, pregnancy & children

- Research in 2000 found that one in four young female hostel residents are pregnant in any given year.²⁶⁴
- Official statistics published in 2008 show that of the 15,000 households in England accepted as homeless in the first quarter of 2008, half were lone parent households. Of these, 46 per cent were headed by a female and 4 per cent by a male.²⁶⁵
- In the same period in England, 45% of households in temporary accommodation were female lone parent households with dependent children and 3% were male lone parent households with dependent children.²⁶⁶

Homelessness & vulnerability

- A survey in 2006 found that very vulnerable women were more likely to live in the most insecure and difficult situations. Care leavers, women with mental health issues and dependencies were all more likely to have slept rough, squatted, and stayed in emergency accommodation such as night shelters and B&Bs, than women without these vulnerabilities.²⁶⁷
- A survey in 2006 found that very vulnerable women – vulnerable by virtue of their age, and the traumatic childhoods many are escaping – are therefore most likely to stay in hidden homelessness situations, to be disengaged from services and unable to access temporary accommodation.²⁶⁸
- An 'alarming' number of the women interviewed for research in 2006 had engaged in unwanted sexual liaisons (paid and unpaid) in order to secure accommodation and in exchange for basic necessities such as food and clothing.²⁶⁹

Access to services & support

- Research conducted in 2009 shows that homeless women are particularly isolated and cut off from services and assistance:²⁷⁰
 - whilst 60% of homeless women have slept rough, only 12% had engaged with street outreach teams.
 - 40% of homeless women reported having been excluded from a service and 10 per cent were not using any service.
 - 20% had become homeless to escape violence from someone they knew, yet less than a third of women were accepted for housing by local authorities.

Homelessness & violence against women

- In 2004, 5% (6,160) of those accepted as statutory homeless and in priority need by Local Authorities in England were homeless because of domestic violence.²⁷¹
- A study in 2002 reported that domestic violence was “the single most quoted reason for women becoming homeless”.²⁷²

Homelessness & women prisoners

- In a 2004 study, 4% of women prisoners had no fixed abode and over 40% were experiencing housing related problems, such as being declared ‘intentionally homeless’, incurring rent arrears and lapsed benefit (2003 statistics).²⁷³

Women and Physical Activity

- A major survey in 2005/06 revealed that only 19% of females regularly participate in moderate intensity sport and active recreation (this is defined as taking part on at least 3 days a week in at least 30 minutes continuously in any one session). The figure for men's participation was 24%.²⁷⁴
- The many reasons for the gender gap in participation in sport have been grouped as practical, personal and social and cultural. For example, Women tend to have less leisure time than men as they take on the greater burden of responsibility for housework, childcare and care of elderly or infirm relatives. Some women therefore tend to be reluctant to sign up for anything over an extended period of time, believing it would be selfish to do so.²⁷⁵
- Teenage girls drop out of sport at a faster rate than boys. This was first identified by the Wolfenden Report in 1957 and is still the case today. Unless the sport sector takes specific action to address the reasons why girls drop out, it is unlikely to change for another 50 years.²⁷⁶
- Homophobia and bi-phobia are often targeted at any female who plays sport, regardless of whether she is lesbian, bisexual or heterosexual.²⁷⁷
- A survey in 2007 found that only 12.5% of Asian women do enough exercise each week to benefit their health compared to 18.8% of White women (3 x 30 minutes).²⁷⁸
- In a meta-analysis in 2007 of eight studies totalling over 173,000 participants, active commuting was found to have a robust protective effect against cardiovascular disease(38) (alone responsible for 37% of all deaths in the EU). This effect – up to an overall 11% reduction in risk – was more pronounced in women.²⁷⁹
- In 2007, 78% of all users said that the presence of the National Cycle Network in their community had helped them to increase the amount of physical activity they regularly take. This rises to 84% amongst women.²⁸⁰
- 42% of all journeys on the National Cycle Network in 2007 were made by women and journeys being made by women has increased year on year since 2000.²⁸¹
- 16% of users of the National Cycle Network are aged 16-24. In this age group three times as many trips are being made by females than males – the only age group in which journeys are made by women more than by men.²⁸²

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