

Digest 4

Chapter 2 - Victims

The data contained in some of the charts in this chapter, are accessible by clicking below. You will need Excel 4.0 or later installed on your computer to be able to view the spreadsheets.

Crimes measured in 1997 by the British Crime Survey

Proportion of households victims of burglary in 1997, by characteristics,

Risks of violence(1): Proportion victimised once or more

Prevalence for domestic violence

Relationship between rape suspects and victims 1996

Offences currently(1) recorded as homicide by relationship of victim to principal suspect and sex of victim

People offered help by Victim Support

People offered support by the Crown Court Witness Service in 1997/98

Offenders ordered to pay compensation

Applications to and monetary awards from the Criminal Injuries Compensation Board



Introduction

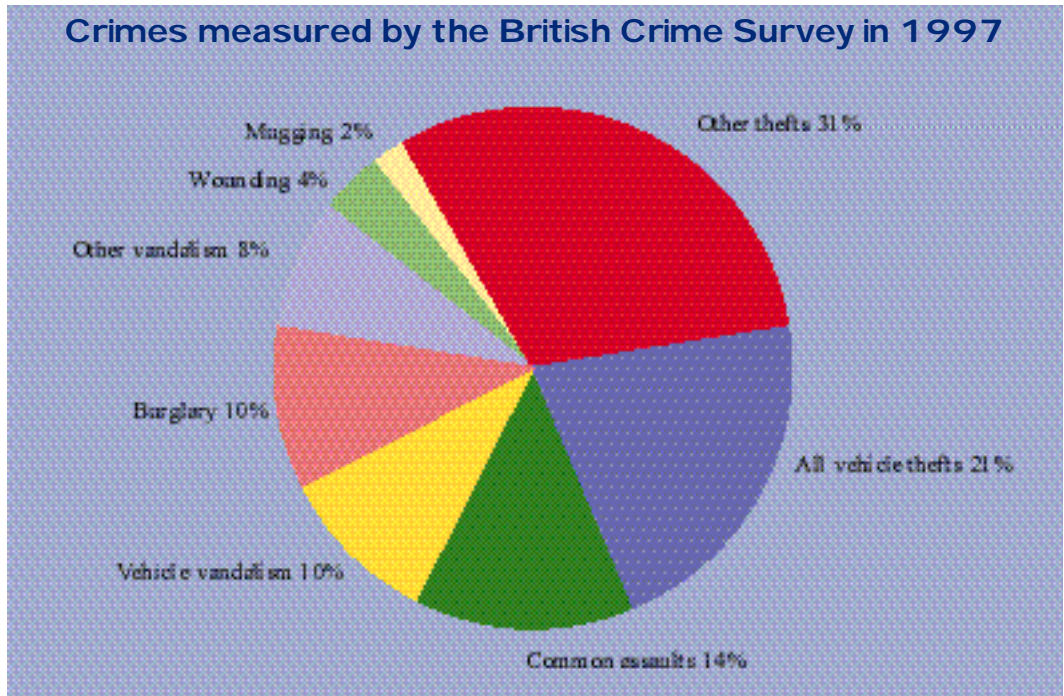
The Home Office conducted the first sweep of the British Crime Survey (BCS) in 1982. The survey provides more information about the victims of crime, showing how risks of crime differ in terms of age, gender and area, for instance. Such results have informed recent policy improvements which have taken place in the way that criminal justice agencies deal with victims and keep them informed about the progress of investigations. A number of charters or sets of service standards have been produced, including the Victim's Charter published by the Home Office in February 1996.

Summary

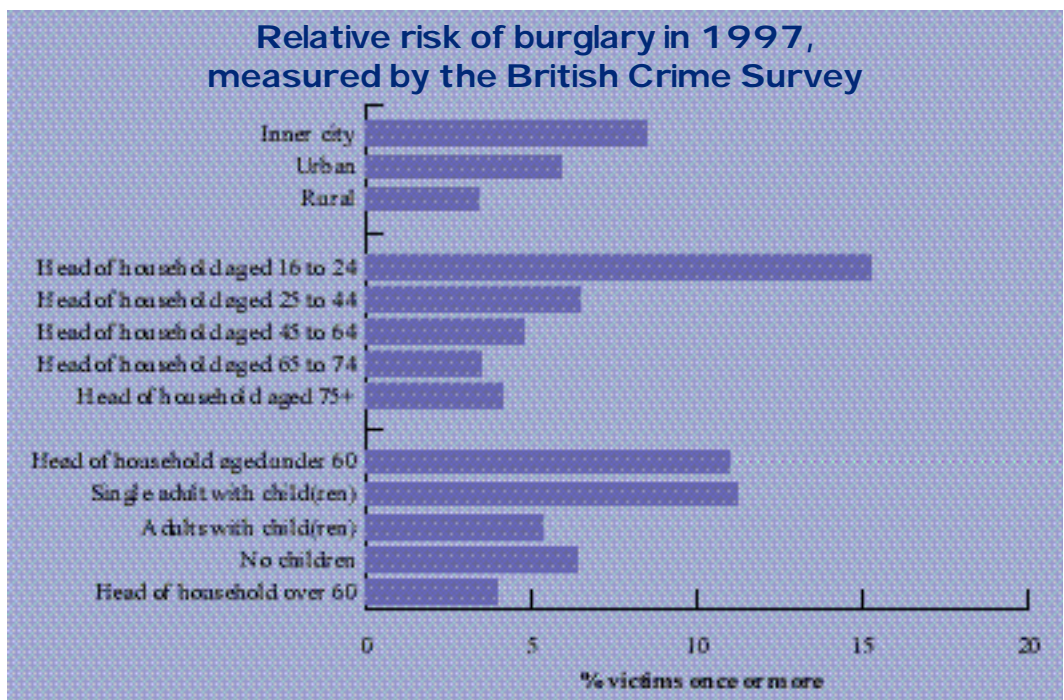
- ④ The risk of burglary is highest in inner city areas.
- ④ Young people, particularly young men, are most prone to being the victim of violence. People aged 65 and over have the lowest risk.
- ④ The most serious offences of violence (e.g. homicide and rape) are more likely to result from an assault by a member of the family or someone known to the victim, rather than a stranger.
- ④ 23% of women and 15% of men aged 16 to 59 said they had been physically assaulted by a current or former partner at some time.
- ④ In the 14 years since Victim Support schemes were started the annual number of referrals has grown to over 1 million.
- ④ The Criminal Injuries Compensation Authority received 75,030 applications during 1996/97 (their first year of operation).

Victims of property crime: characteristics

- ④ Nearly one-third of all incidents counted in the 1998 British Crime Survey involved vehicle-related thefts (thefts of, from and attempts) or damage to vehicles. Burglaries accounted for 10% of crimes and other thefts for a further 31%.



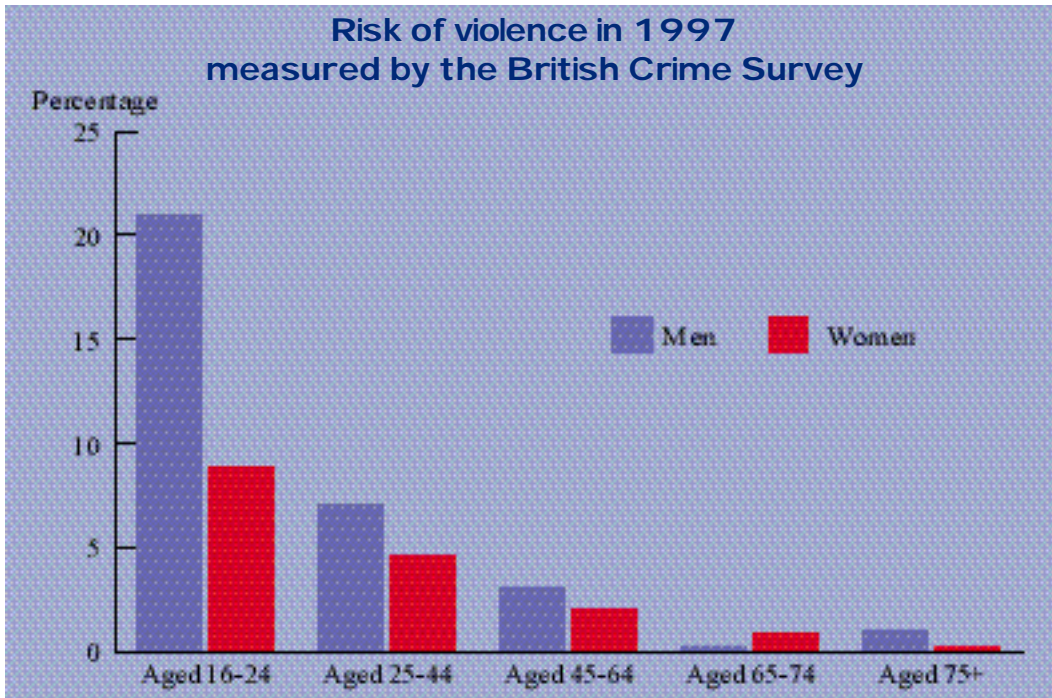
- ④ The risk of burglary (including attempts) was much higher for households in inner city areas (8.5%). The lowest risk was in rural areas where 3.4% of households were victims in 1997.
- ④ Young households, single-parent households and those in inner cities or areas with high physical disorder were particularly at risk of burglary.



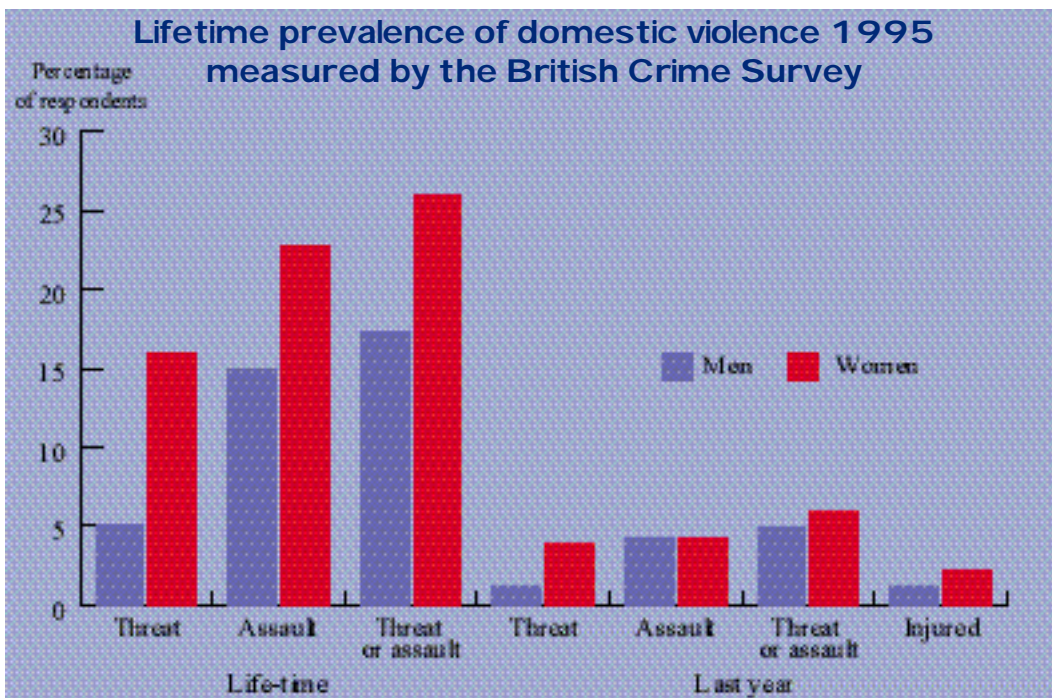
Source: *The 1998 British Crime Survey, England and Wales (Home Office Statistical Bulletin 21/98).*

Victims of violent crime: age and gender

- Overall, the risks of being the victim of violence are greater for men (6.1%) than women (3.6%).
- Among both men and women, the young are more at risk than older people. Young men aged 16 to 24 are most at risk.
- Men and women aged 65 or older have the lowest risk.



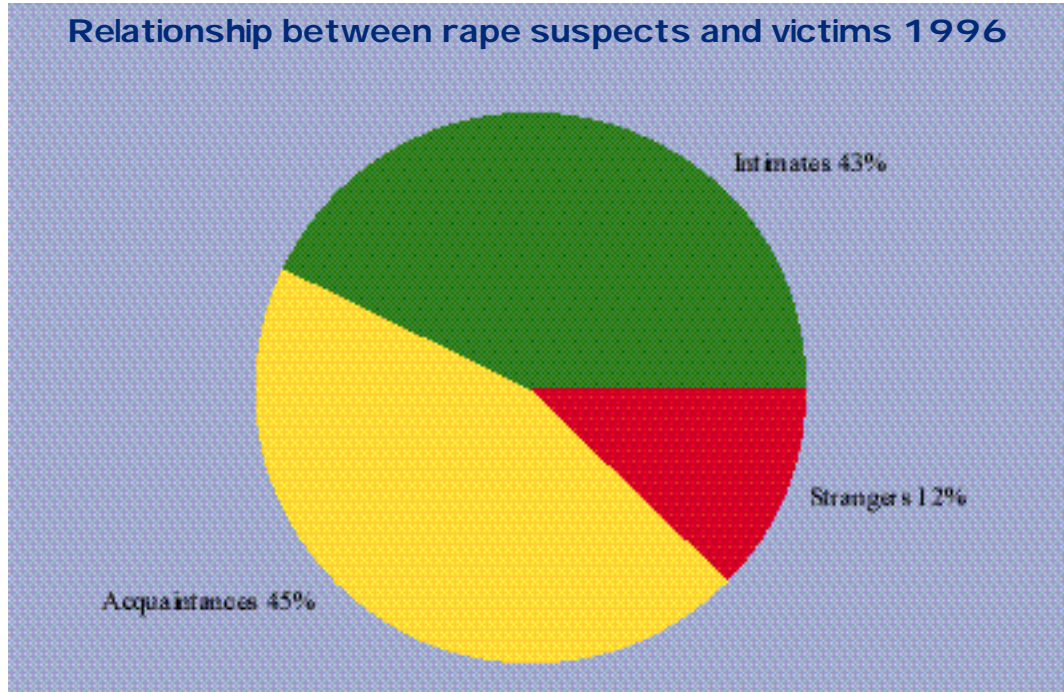
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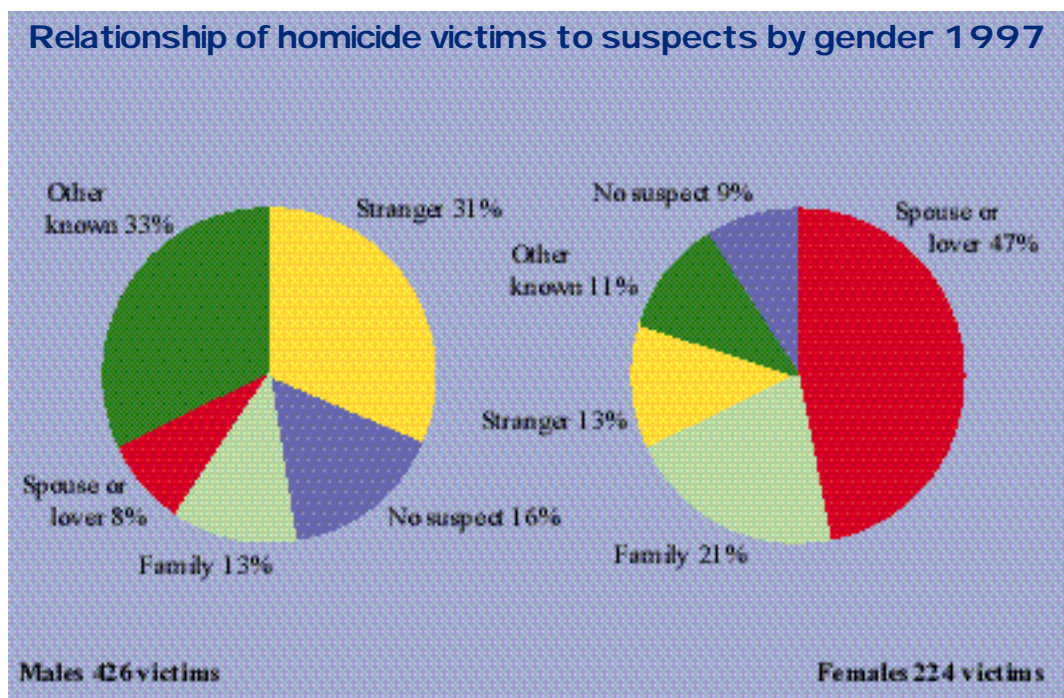
Sources: *The 1998 British Crime Survey, England and Wales (Home Office Statistical Bulletin 21/98)* and *Domestic Violence: Findings from a new British Crime Survey self-completion questionnaire (Home Office Research Study No. 191)*.

Victims of violent crime: rape and homicide

- ④ The most serious offences of crime (e.g. homicide and rape) are more likely to result from an assault by a member of the family or someone known to the victim, than by a stranger.
- ④ A survey of rapes recorded by the police in 1996 showed that only 12% were by a person unknown to the victim.



- ④ The majority of homicide victims knew the main or only suspect before the offence took place (54% of males and 79% of females).
- ④ 47% of female victims were killed by current or former partners or lovers.
- ④ 12% of female victims were killed by strangers. The figure for male victims was 31%.



Source: *A question of evidence? Investigating and prosecuting rape in the 1990s* (Home Office Research Study No. 196) and *Criminal statistics, England and Wales, 1997* (The Stationery Office).

Victim Support

- ④ The first Victim Support Scheme was launched in 1974, and by 1998 there were 386 schemes in England, Wales and Northern Ireland.
- ④ There were 15,310 volunteers working for Victim Support in 1997/98 (including 10,060 volunteers who visit victims and 1,110 Witness Service volunteers).
- ④ In 1997/98, Victim Support offered help to the victims of 1,164,500 crimes (an increase of nearly 5% over the previous year).



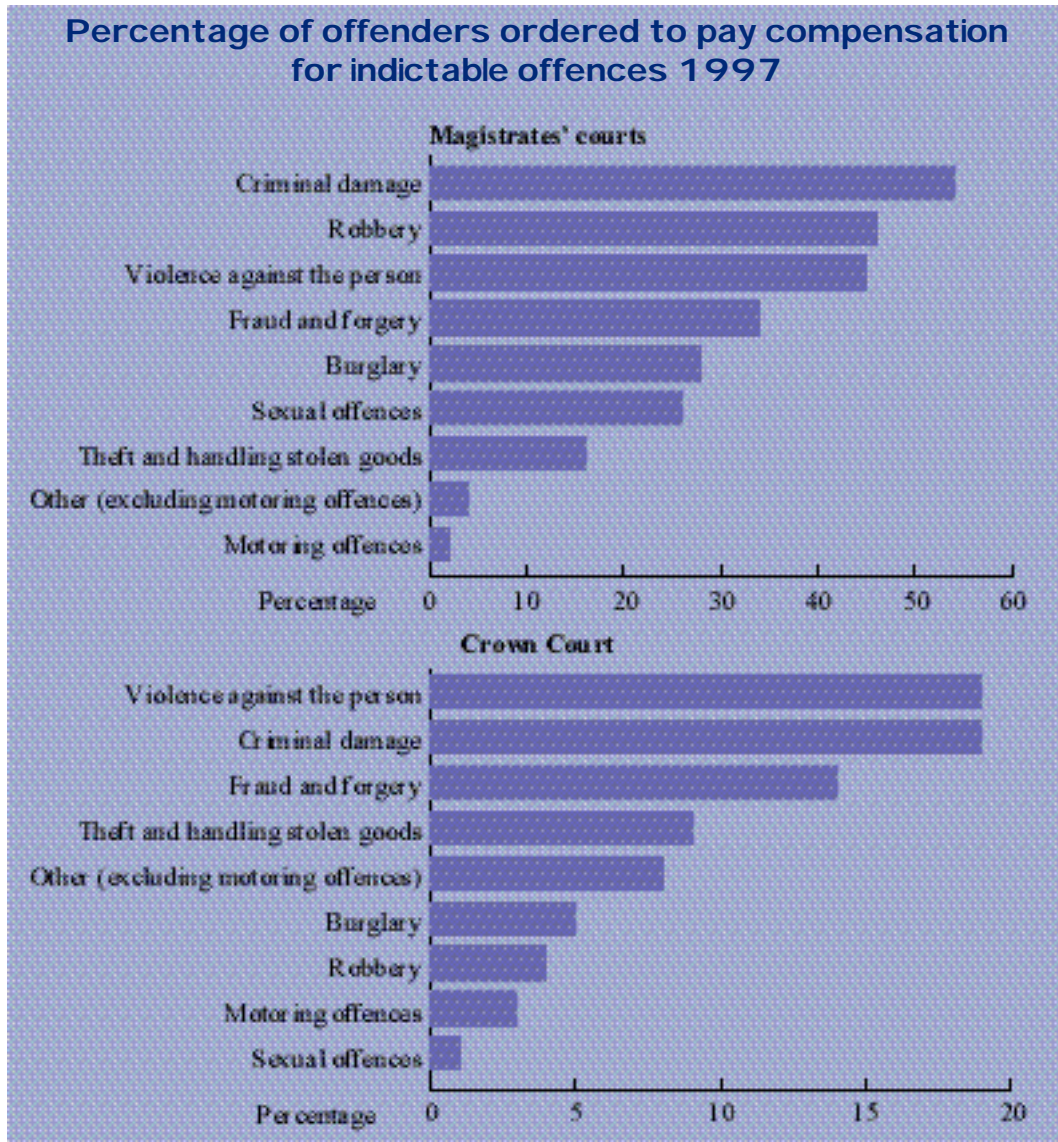
- ④ There are Witness Services in all 86 Crown Court centres providing support for people attending court before, during and after trial.
- ④ In 1997/98, the Witness Service offered support to 120,550 people (24% more than the previous year).



Compensation for victims

Courts are required to consider compensation for all offences involving injury, loss or damage.

- ④ At magistrates' courts in 1997, 90,700 offenders were ordered to pay compensation to victims; 42,900 offenders for indictable offences. 18% of offenders sentenced for indictable offences were ordered to pay compensation in 1997 compared with 26% in 1992. The average amount of compensation for an indictable offence was £196.
- ④ In 1997, 45% of offenders convicted of an offence of violence against the person were ordered to pay compensation at magistrates' courts, 46% for robbery and 54% for criminal damage.

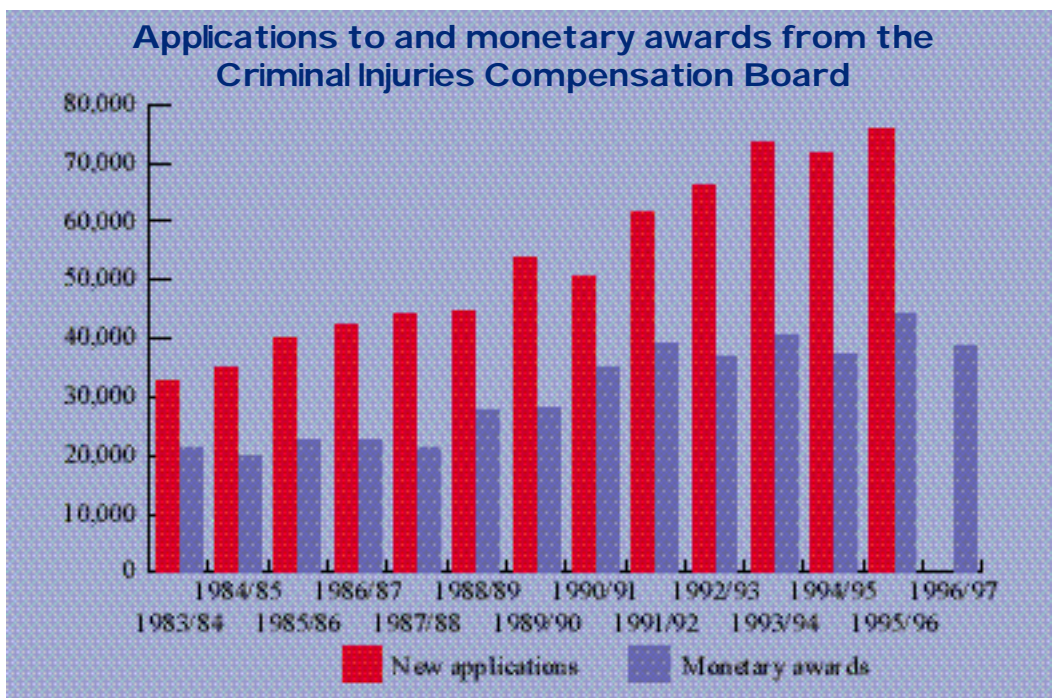


- ④ At the Crown Court in 1997, 6,500 offenders were ordered to pay compensation to victims i.e. 8% of offenders sentenced compared with 10% in 1992. Compensation is used less frequently at the Crown Court since it is not combined with a custodial sentence or used in cases where the victim obtained compensation from the Criminal Injuries Compensation Board. The average amount of compensation for an indictable offence was £998.
- ④ In 1997, 19% of offenders convicted of an offence of violence against the person and 19% convicted for criminal damage at the Crown Court were ordered to pay compensation.

Source: *Criminal statistics, England and Wales 1997 (The Stationery Office)*.

Criminal Injuries Compensation Board and Authority

- ④ Applications for compensation by victims in England, Wales and Scotland received by the Criminal Injuries Compensation Board rose from 44,000 in 1987/88 to 75,670 in 1995/96. The number of awards rose from 21,250 to 44,040 over the same period.



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Criminal Injuries Compensation Authority

- ④ The Criminal Injuries Compensation Authority came into existence on 1 April 1996. All applications received on or after that date are its responsibility. In 1996/97 it received 75,030 applications from victims for compensation and made 7,290 awards.

