New Zealand
Crime and Victims **survey**

HELP CREATE SAFER COMMUNITIES

Survey findings - Cycle 4 report

Section 3 – How much crime is there in New Zealand?

June 2022

Results drawn from Cycle 4 (2020/21) of the New Zealand Crime and Victims Survey

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2. Data collection was suspended during COVID-19 Alert Levels 4 and 3 (more detail is provided on page 4 of the full report).

3. This report contains highly aggregated data. No identifiable personal data is included in the report.

4. Count estimates in the text have been rounded to the nearest thousands or hundreds. Percentage and mean estimates have been rounded to the nearest whole number or one decimal place. Graphs and tables provide accuracy to one decimal place. Higher precision may be provided where it is important for the content.

5. Unfortunately, due to an error in data collection, this report does not include over 200 interviews from the Hawke's Bay area. Survey results were revised, amended and re-weighted to maintain accuracy and avoid bias.

Suggested citation

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This report contains many graphs and infographics that help to visualise key facts and findings. Only those graphs that support the key findings are included. All observations and graphs in the report are based on the **data tables** that accompany this report, which are available on the NZCVS resources and results web page.

If you are reading the report for the first time, it is recommended that you refer to "Cycle 4 Core report - Section 2 – About this report" to help with understanding and presentation of results.

Topic	Key findings
How much crime is there in New Zealand?	• 29% of adults were victimised once or more in the previous 12 months. This level of overall victimisation has remained stable over time (from Cycle 1 to Cycle 4).
	• The three most common offence types in Cycle 4 were harassment and threatening behaviour; burglary; and fraud and deception. Together, these made up more than half of all offences (51%).
	• The proportion of households that experienced burglaries fell significantly – from 12.1% in Cycle 1 to 9.3% in Cycle 4. However, the number of burglary incidents increased compared to Cycle 3. This indicates a growing concentration of burglaries. Burglaries are the only offence type with a statistically significant change from Cycle 3.
	• The above reduction in the prevalence rate of burglaries caused the overall significant reduction in the prevalence rate of household offences – from 20% in Cycle 1 to 18% in Cycle 4.
	• Apart from burglary, there were no other statistically significant changes in prevalence or incidence rates across individual offence types from Cycle 1 to Cycle 4.
	• There were no significant changes in prevalence or incidence rates across any broad offence groups from Cycle 1 to Cycle 4 (ie, fraud and cybercrime offences; interpersonal violence offences; theft and damage offences; or vehicle offences).

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3 How much crime is there in New Zealand?

What is included in this section?

The NZCVS provides a larger picture of crimes against New Zealand adults than administrative data because it captures crime both reported and not reported to the Police.

This section looks at the following four measures of victimisation, from Cycle 1 to Cycle 4:

1. the number of incidents of crime experienced by adults in a given cycle (**incidence**)
2. the number of offences per 100 adults or 100 households (**incidence rate**)
3. the number of adults or households victimised once or more (**prevalence**)
4. the percentage of adults or households victimised once or more (**prevalence rate**).

All measures relate to offences experienced during the previous 12 months. Differences in incidence rates and prevalence rates between Cycles 1 and 4 as well as Cycles 3 and 4 are indicated, following the approach described in section 2.2.

What did we find?

- 29% of adults were victimised once or more in the previous 12 months. This level of overall victimisation has remained stable over time (from Cycle 1 to Cycle 4).

- The three most common offence types in Cycle 4 were harassment and threatening behaviour; burglary; and fraud and deception. Together, these made up more than half of all offences (51%).

- The proportion of households that experienced burglaries fell significantly – from 12.1% in Cycle 1 to 9.3% in Cycle 4. However, the number of burglary incidents increased compared to Cycle 3. This indicates a growing concentration of burglaries. Burglaries are the only offence type with a statistically significant change from Cycle 3.

- The above reduction in the prevalence rate of burglaries caused the overall significant reduction in the prevalence rate of household offences – from 20% in Cycle 1 to 18% in Cycle 4.

- Apart from burglary, there were no other statistically significant changes in prevalence or incidence rates across individual offence types from Cycle 1 to Cycle 4.

- There were no significant changes in prevalence or incidence rates across any broad offence groups from Cycle 1 to Cycle 4 (ie, fraud and cybercrime offences; interpersonal violence offences; theft and damage offences; or vehicle offences).

3.1   Overall victimisation

Number of offences (incidence)

The estimated number of offences, or incidence, tells us how many offences happened to New Zealand adults. Because respondents tell us about the crimes they experienced in the 12 months before the interview, the estimates reflect victimisation over a 12-month period.

Results from Cycle 4 indicate there were around **1.74 million offences** against New Zealand adults during the previous 12 months (Figure 3.1). The estimated number of offences was unchanged since Cycle 1 (2018).
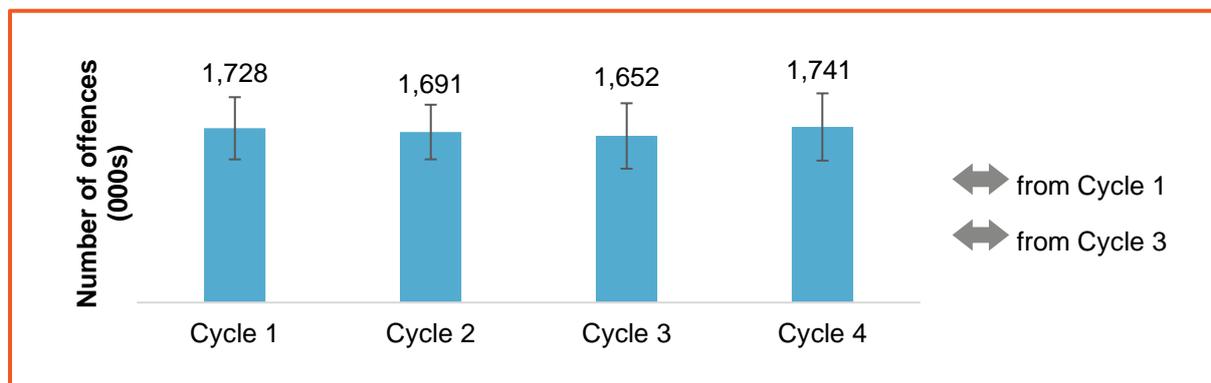
Figure 3.1   Number of offences (000s) in the previous 12 months, by cycle

Offences per 100 adults or 100 households (incidence rate)

The estimated number of offences, or incidence, does not account for population size. As such, we also use "incidence rates" to measure victimisation. These are the number of offences per 100 adults or 100 households. Incidence rates do not show how victimisation is distributed across the population.

Using data from Cycle 4, there were **61 offences per 100 adults** during the previous 12 months (Figure 3.2). This included both personal offences and household offences. Any adult living in a household that experienced a household offence was counted as a victim of that offence.

The number of offences per 100 adults slightly increased – from 60 in Cycle 1 to 61 in Cycle 4. However, this change over time was not statistically significant.

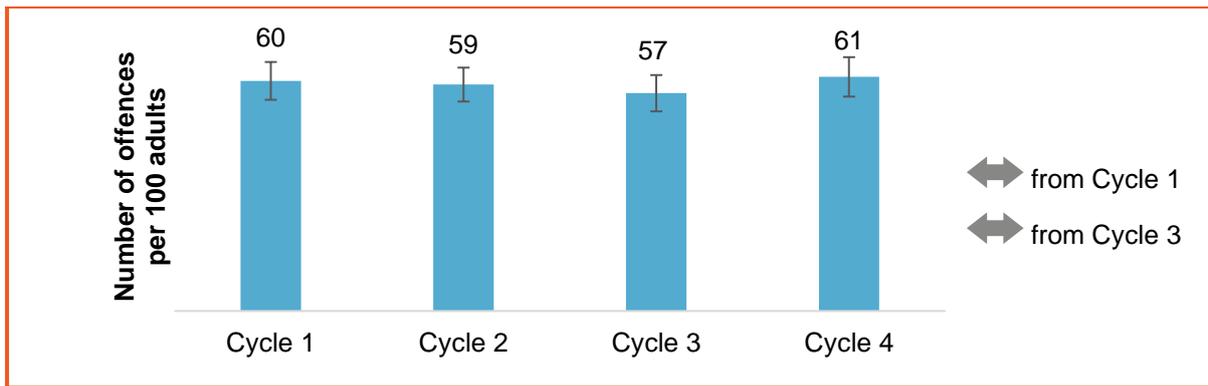**Figure 3.2   Number of offences per 100 adults in the previous 12 months, by cycle**

Number of victims (prevalence)

We can also estimate the prevalence of victimisation; that is, the number of households or adults that experienced one or more offences. This measure does not capture that some victims would have experienced only one offence while others experienced multiple offences.

Cycle 4 results indicate that about **1.2 million adults** were victims of at least one personal or household offence during the previous 12 months (Figure 3.3). This included adults who were victims of personal offences as well as those who lived in a household that experienced a household offence.

The result for Cycle 4 was similar to results from the previous two cycles. No statistically significant changes were observed.

Note that the number of victims is marginally reduced in Cycle 4 compared with Cycle 3, while the number of victimisations between Cycle 4 and Cycle 3 increased, although both changes are not statistically significant.
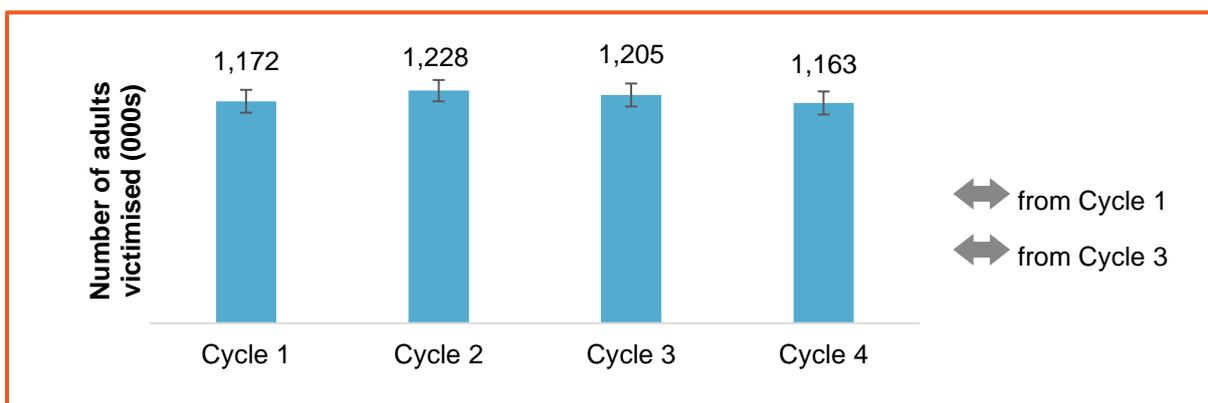
Figure 3.3   Number of adults victimised in the previous 12 months (000s), by cycle

Percentage of adults or households victimised (prevalence rate)

The percentage of households or adults who experienced one or more incidents in a given time period is known as the "prevalence rate". This measure tells us what proportion of the population was affected by one or more offences.

In Cycle 4, **29% of adults** had experienced one or more offences over the previous 12 months (Figure 3.4). In other words, almost 3 out of every 10 adults had been a victim of crime. This proportion is unchanged from Cycle 3.

While this prevalence rate was lower than in Cycle 1 (30%) or Cycle 2 (31%), these differences were not statistically significantly.
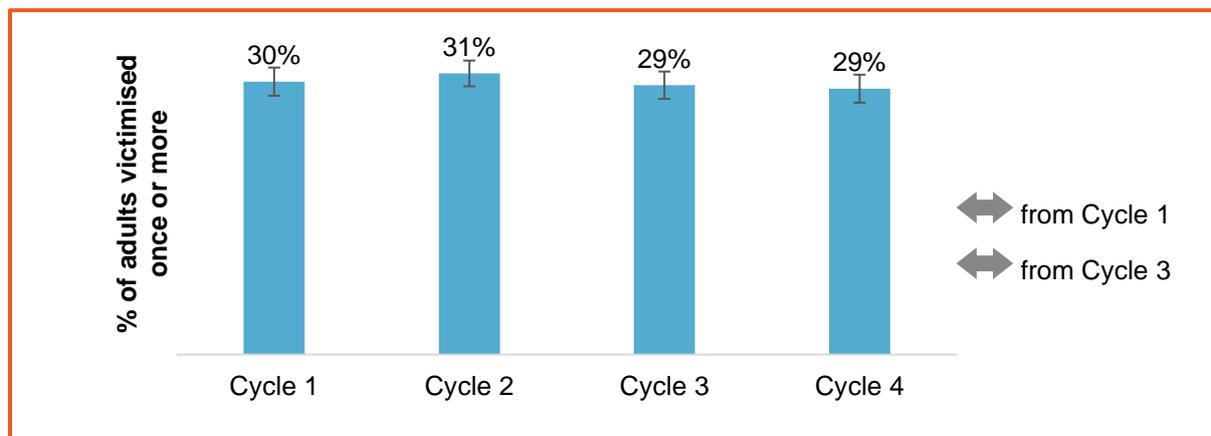
Figure 3.4   Percentage of adults victimised in the previous 12 months, by cycle

3.2   Offence types

This section looks at the scale of different offence types over time, from Cycle 1 to Cycle 4. The same four measures as above are used.

Number of offences (incidence)

Table 3.1 shows the number of personal offences, by offence type, and Table 3.2 shows the number of household offences, by offence type. The total volume of crime in Cycle 4 included about **1.2 million personal offences** and **more than half a million household offences** (1,180,000 and 561,000 respectively).

Table 3.1   Number of personal offences, by offence type

Offence type	Number of personal offences (000s)		
	Cycle 1	Cycle 3	Cycle 4
Harassment and threatening behaviour	282	255	306
Fraud and deception	272	353	288
Robbery and assault (except sexual assault)	234	233	209
Sexual assault	167	158	200
Cybercrime	123	86	100
Theft and property damage (personal)	84	69	78
All personal offences	1,162	1,153	1,180

Table 3.2   Number of household offences, by offence type

Offence type	Number of household offences (000s)		
	Cycle 1	Cycle 3	Cycle 4
Burglary	305	245	289
Trespass	41	49	64
Theft (except motor vehicles – household)	52	47	49
Damage to motor vehicles	41	37	43
Property damage (household)	45	33	39
Theft (from motor vehicle)	34	42	30
Theft of/unlawful takes/converts motor vehicle	29	28	30
Unlawful interference/getting into motor vehicle	11	10	12
Unlawful takes/converts/interferes with bicycle	9	S	5
All household offences	566	499	561

S = Suppressed because the percentage has a margin of error greater than or equal to 20 percentage points, or the count estimate/mean has a relative sampling error greater than or equal to 50%, which is considered too unreliable for general use.

Harassment and threatening behaviour was the most common offence type over the previous 12 months in Cycle 4. There were **306,000** harassment and threatening behaviour offences. This was 18% of offences overall.

Burglary was the second most common offence type in Cycle 4 and the most common household offence type. There were **289,000 burglaries** over the previous 12 months, making up 17% of all offences.

Fraud and deception was the third most common offence type in Cycle 4. There were about **288,000** offences of this type during the previous 12 months, which was 17% of all offences.

Together, harassment and threatening behaviour; fraud and deception; and burglaries made up more than half of all offences (51%).

Most common offence types

306,000
18% of all offences

Harassment and threatening behaviour

289,000
17% of all offences

Burglary

288,000
17% of all offences

Fraud and deception
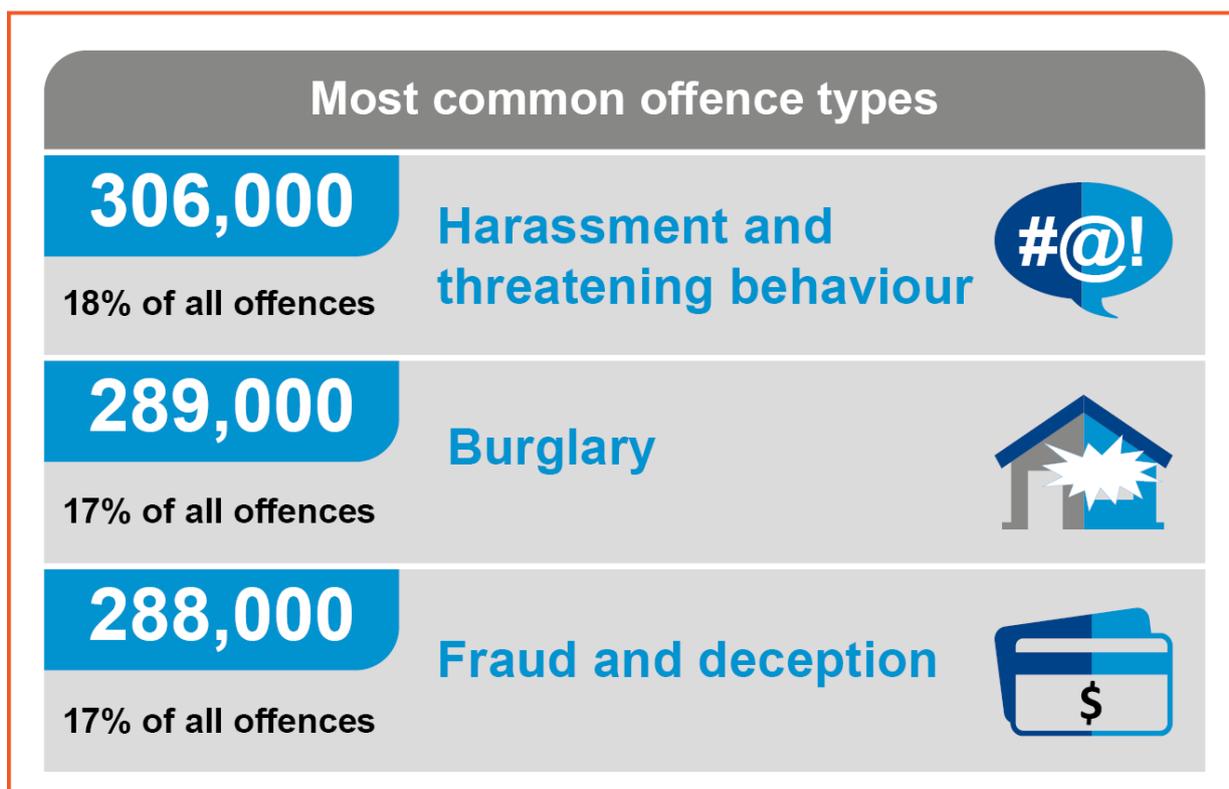
The fourth most common offence type was **robbery and assault** (excluding sexual assault). There were **209,000** of these offences, making up 12% of the total number.

Sexual assault was the fifth most common offence type. There were **200,000** sexual assaults, which was 11% of all offences.

Each of the remaining offence types made up no more than 6% of the total number of offences.

Looking at the overall makeup of offences in Cycle 4, we see that 68% were personal offences and 32% were household offences (Figure 3.5).
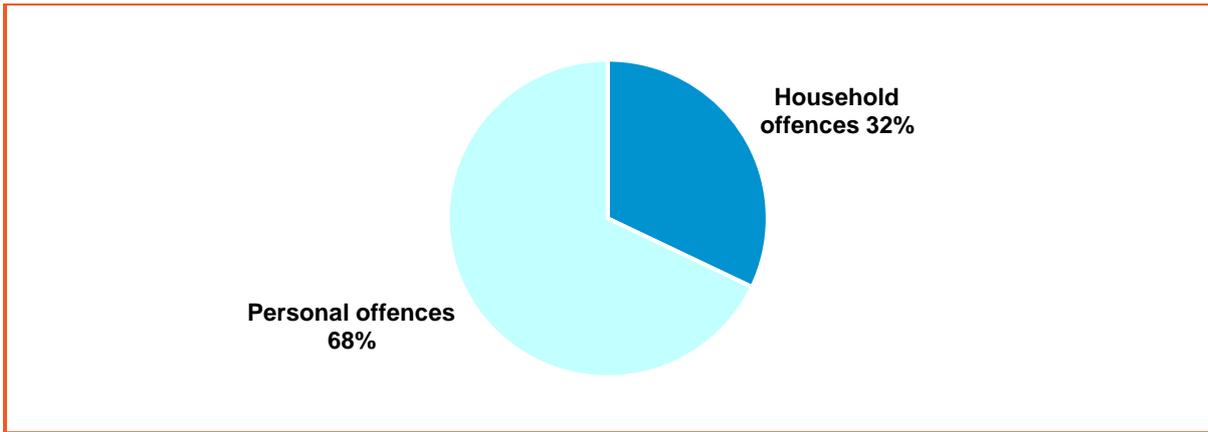
Figure 3.5   Percentage of household offences vs personal offences (Cycle 4)

Figure 3.6 shows the makeup of personal offences across the different personal offence types. More than a quarter (26%) of personal offences were harassment and threatening behaviour. The next most common personal offence type was fraud and deception offences (24%), followed by robbery and assault (18%) and sexual assault (17%).
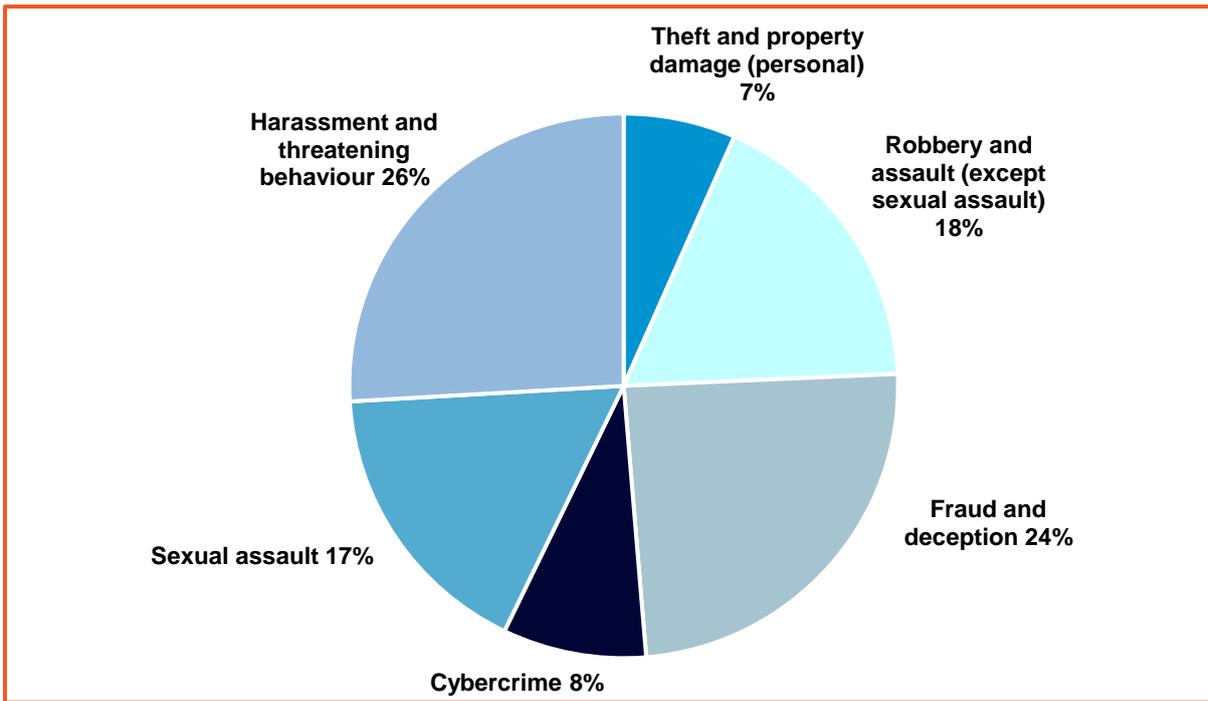

Figure 3.6   Makeup of personal offence types (Cycle 4)

Figure 3.7 shows the makeup of household offences across the different household offence types. More than half (52%) of household offences were burglaries. The next most common household offence type was trespass (11%), followed by theft (except motor vehicles) (9%).
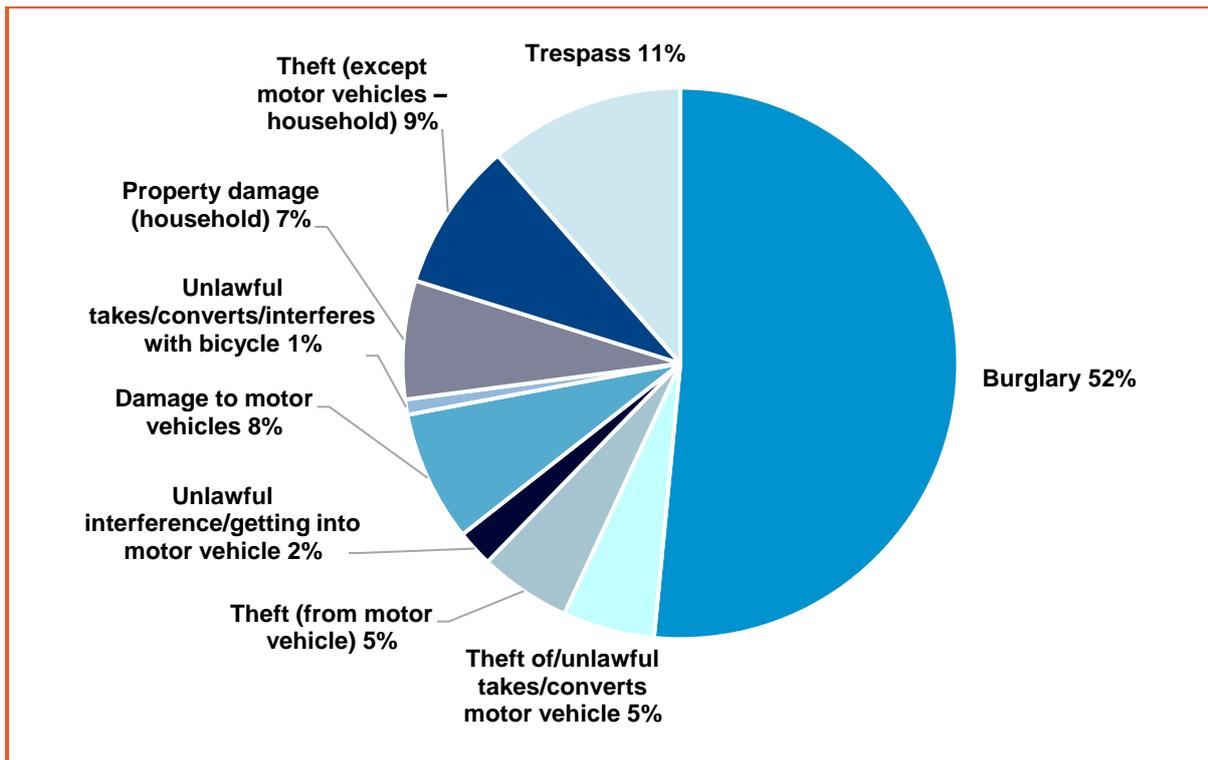
Figure 3.7   Makeup of household offence types (Cycle 4)

Note: Getting into motor vehicle includes unlawful interference. Theft of motor vehicle includes unlawful taking or converting a motor vehicle.

Offences per 100 adults or 100 households (incidence rates)

There were **29 personal offences per 100 adults** in Cycle 4. This figure slightly increased from 28 in Cycle 3, but this change was not statistically significant. There were also no statistically significant changes in the number of personal offences per 100 adults for any of the individual offence types.

Over the last 12 months there were **29** personal offences per 100 adults **31** household offences per 100 households

Table 3.3 summarises the number of personal offences per 100 adults, by offence type.

Table 3.3   Number of personal offences per 100 adults, by offence type

Offence type	Number of personal offences per 100 adults		
	Cycle 1	Cycle 3	Cycle 4
Harassment and threatening behaviour	7.1	6.2	7.6
Fraud and deception	6.9	8.6	7.2
Robbery and assault (except sexual assault)	5.9	5.7	5.2
Sexual assault	4.2	3.9	5.0
Cybercrime	3.1	2.1	2.5
Theft and property damage (personal)	2.1	1.7	1.9
All personal offences	29.4	28.0	29.0

Table 3.4 summarises the number of household offences per 100 households, by offence type. There were **31 household offences per 100 households** in Cycle 4. This is not a statistically significant reduction compared with 32 household offences per 100 households in Cycle 1.

Table 3.4   Number of household offences per 100 households, by offence type

Offence type	Number of household offences per 100 households		
	Cycle 1	Cycle 3	Cycle 4
Burglary	17.5	13.7	16.0
Trespass	2.3	2.7	3.5
Theft (except motor vehicles – household)	3.0	2.6	2.7
Damage to motor vehicles	2.3	2.0	2.4
Property damage (household)	2.6	1.9	2.2
Theft (from motor vehicle)	2.0	2.3	1.7
Theft of/unlawful takes/converts motor vehicle	1.7	1.6	1.7
Unlawful interference/getting into motor vehicle	0.6	0.5	0.6
Unlawful takes/converts/interferes with bicycle	0.5	S	0.3
All household offences	**32.5**	**27.8**	**31.0**

S = Suppressed because the percentage has a margin of error greater than or equal to 20 percentage points, or the count estimate/mean has a relative sampling error greater than or equal to 50%, which is considered too unreliable for general use.

The number of **burglaries fell from 18 per 100 households in Cycle 1 to 16 per 100 households in Cycle 4.** However, compared with Cycle 3 (14 burglaries per 100

households), the incidence rate of burglaries increased. This may reflect lesser influence of lockdowns on burglaries during Cycle 4 compared with Cycle 3 (Figure 3.8).
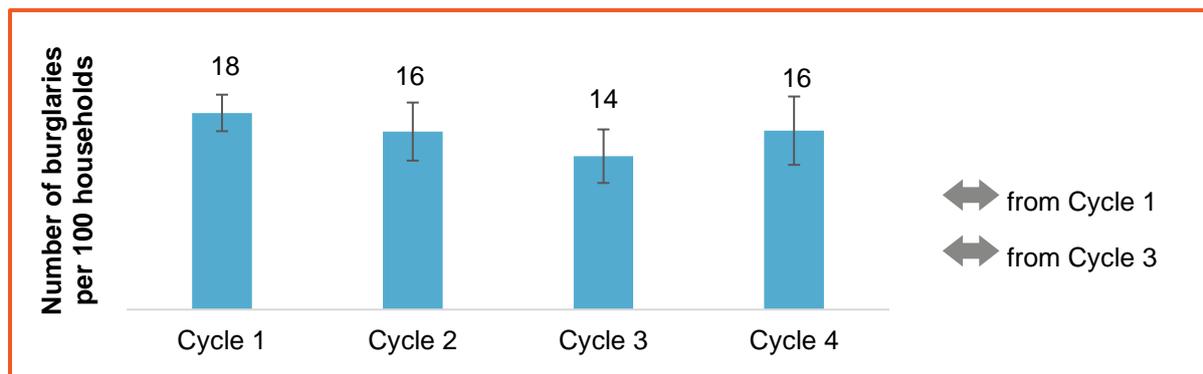

Figure 3.8   Number of burglaries per 100 households in the previous 12 months, by cycle

Number of adults or households victimised (prevalence)

About **592,000 adults** experienced one or more personal offences and about **320,000 households** experienced one or more household offences over the previous 12 months.

Table 3.5 shows the number of adults victimised once or more, by personal offence type. Similarly, Table 3.6 shows the number of households victimised once or more, by household offence type.

Note that the number of households that experienced burglary reduced in Cycle 4 compared with Cycle 3, while the number of burglary incidents increased between Cycle 3 and Cycle 4, although both changes are not statistically significant. A similar trend (driven by burglaries) was observed for overall household offences.

Table 3.5   Number of adults victimised once or more, by personal offence type

Offence type	Total number of adults victimised once or more (000s)		
	Cycle 1	Cycle 3	Cycle 4
Fraud and deception	208	273	248
Harassment and threatening behaviour	114	108	114
Robbery and assault (except sexual assault)	113	116	100
Sexual assault	80	71	84
Cybercrime	107	75	81
Theft and property damage (personal)	64	45	61
All personal offences	576	602	595

Table 3.6   Number of households victimised once or more, by household offence type

Offence type	Number of households victimised once or more (000s)		
	Cycle 1	Cycle 3	Cycle 4
Burglary	210	184	169
Damage to motor vehicles	36	35	42
Trespass	31	35	38
Theft (except motor vehicles – household)	35	34	37
Theft (from motor vehicle)	32	40	30
Theft of/unlawful takes/converts motor vehicle	26	28	28
Property damage (household)	34	26	26
Unlawful interference/getting into motor vehicle	9	10	11
Unlawful takes/converts/interferes with bicycle	8	S	5
All household offences	348	332	322

S = Suppressed because the percentage has a margin of error greater than or equal to 20 percentage points, or the count estimate/mean has a relative sampling error greater than or equal to 50%, which is considered too unreliable for general use.

Percentage of adults or households victimised (prevalence rate)

Over the previous 12 months about **15% of adults** experienced one or more personal offences, and **18% of households** experienced one or more household offences.

Table 3.7 shows the prevalence rates of each personal offence type, and Table 3.8 shows the prevalence rates of each household offence type.

Table 3.7   Percentage of adults victimised once or more, by personal offence type

Offence type	Percentage of adults victimised once or more		
	Cycle 1	Cycle 3	Cycle 4
Fraud and deception	5.3	6.6	6.2
Harassment and threatening behaviour	2.9	2.6	2.8
Robbery and assault (except sexual assault)	2.9	2.8	2.5
Sexual assault	2.0	1.7	2.1
Cybercrime	2.7	1.8	2.0
Theft and property damage (personal)	1.6	1.1	1.5
All personal offences	14.6	14.6	14.8

Table 3.8   Percentage of households victimised once or more, by household offence type

Offence type	Percentage of households victimised once or more			Change from Cycle 1	Change from Cycle 3
	Cycle 1	Cycle 3	Cycle 4		
Burglary	12.1	10.3	9.3	⬇	⬌
Damage to motor vehicles	2.1	2.0	2.3	⬌	⬌
Trespass	1.8	2.0	2.1	⬌	⬌
Theft (except motor vehicles – household)	2.0	1.9	2.1	⬌	⬌
Theft (from motor vehicle)	1.8	2.2	1.7	⬌	⬌
Theft of/unlawful takes/ converts motor vehicle	1.5	1.5	1.6	⬌	⬌
Property damage (household)	1.9	1.5	1.5	⬌	⬌
Unlawful interference/getting into motor vehicle	0.5	0.5	0.6	⬌	⬌
Unlawful takes/converts/ interferes with bicycle	0.5	S	0.3	⬌	⬌
All household offences	20.0	18.5	17.9	⬇	⬌

S = Suppressed because the percentage has a margin of error greater than or equal to 20 percentage points, or the count estimate/mean has a relative sampling error greater than or equal to 50%, which is considered too unreliable for general use.

The prevalence rate of overall personal offences in the adult population has been stable at around 15% between Cycle 1 and Cycle 4. The prevalence rate of overall household offences fell slightly, from 20% in Cycle 1 to 19% in Cycle 3 and 18% in Cycle 4. The change in households victimised between Cycle 1 and 4 was statistically significant.

The percentage of households that were victims of burglary has been on a gradual downward trend between Cycle 1 and Cycle 4 (Figure 3.9). Slightly above 9% of households

were victims of burglary in the previous 12 months in Cycle 4, compared with 12% in Cycle 1. This change was statistically significant.
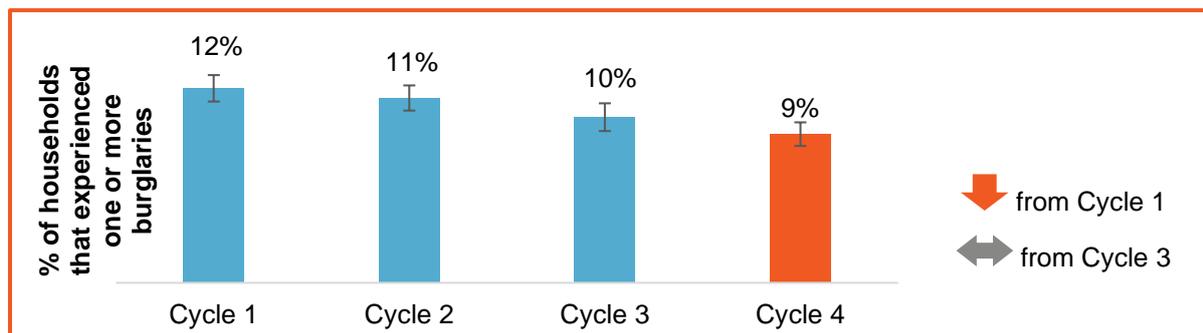

Figure 3.9   Percentage of households that experienced one or more burglaries in the previous 12 months, by cycle

Apart from household offences and burglary, there was no significant change in the prevalence rate of any other offence type between Cycle 1 and Cycle 4.

3.3   Broad offence groups

This section looks at the scale of victimisation across broad offence groups:

- fraud and cybercrime offences
- interpersonal violence offences
- theft and damage offences
- vehicle offences.

Table 3.9 summarises how individual offence types are combined into these broad offence groups.

Table 3.9   Broad offence grouping

Individual offence types	Broad offence grouping		
Fraud and deception	Fraud and cybercrime offences		
Cybercrime			
Sexual assault	Interpersonal violence offences[a]		
Harassment and threatening behaviour			
Other assault			
Robbery			
Property damage (personal)			
Property damage (household)		Theft and damage offences[b]	
Theft (except motor vehicles – personal)			
Theft (except motor vehicles – household)			
Unlawful takes/converts/interferes with bicycle			
Burglary			
Trespass			
Theft of/unlawful takes/converts motor vehicle	Vehicle offences		
Theft (from motor vehicle)			
Unlawful interference/getting into motor vehicle			
Damage to motor vehicles			

[a] "Interpersonal violence offences" is a group combining sexual assault; other assault; harassment and threatening behaviour; robbery; and damage of personal or household property if the offender is known to the victim.

[b] "Theft and damage offences" is a group combining theft (except motor vehicle theft); damage of household and personal property if the offender is unknown to the victim; and unlawful takes, converts or interference with bicycle.

Interpersonal violence offences and theft and damage offences each contain both personal and household offences.[1] All fraud and cybercrime offences are personal offences, and all vehicle offences are household offences.

These four broad offence groups together with burglary and trespass cover all crime recorded in the NZCVS.

Number of offences (incidence)

In all four cycles of the NZCVS, the most common broad offence group was interpersonal violence offences, followed by fraud and cybercrime offences, theft and damage offences, and vehicle offences.

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[1] We treat these offence groups like personal offences – that is, we consider the number (or percentage) of adults who experienced these offences, as opposed to the number (or percentage) of households.

For Cycle 4, it was estimated that during the previous 12 months there were:

- **745,000** interpersonal violence offences
- **388,000** fraud and cybercrime offences
- **247,000** theft and damage offences
- **115,000** vehicle offences.

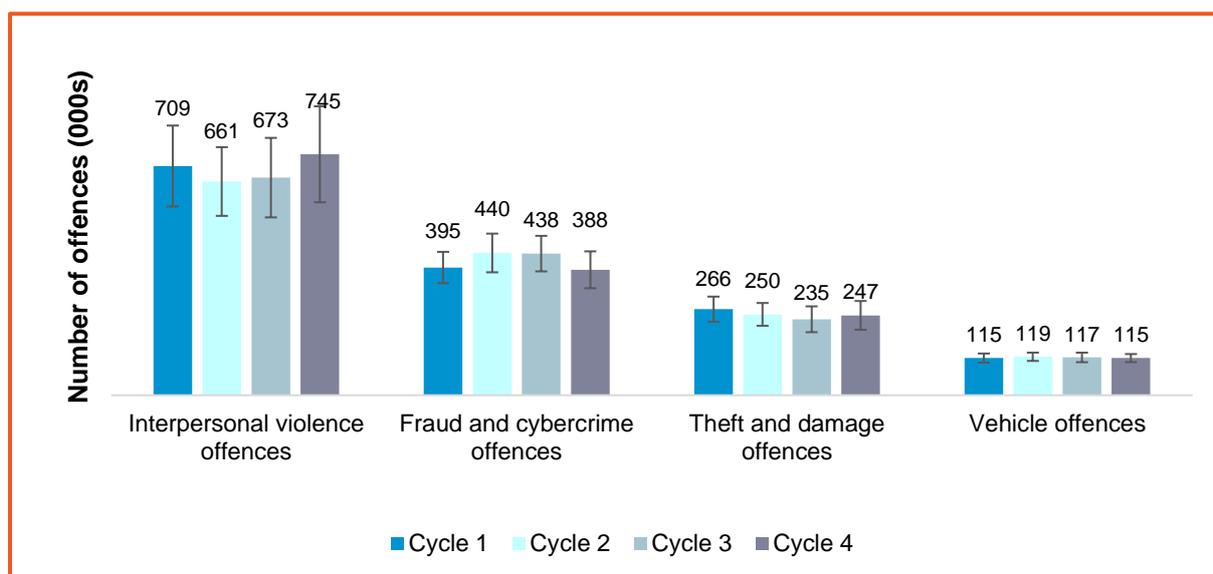Figure 3.10 shows the number of offences in each broad offence group over time.

Figure 3.10   Number of offences (000s) in the previous 12 months, by broad offence group and cycle

Offences per 100 adults or 100 households (incidence rates)

The number of offences per 100 adults or 100 households in the previous 12 months has been relatively stable for the four broad offence groups from Cycle 1 to Cycle 4 (Figure 3.11). The incidence rates for each group in Cycle 4 were not statistically different from those in Cycle 1.

For Cycle 4, it was estimated that in the previous 12 months there had been:

- **19** interpersonal violence offences **per 100 adults**
- **10** fraud and cybercrime offences **per 100 adults**
- **6** vehicle offences **per 100 households**
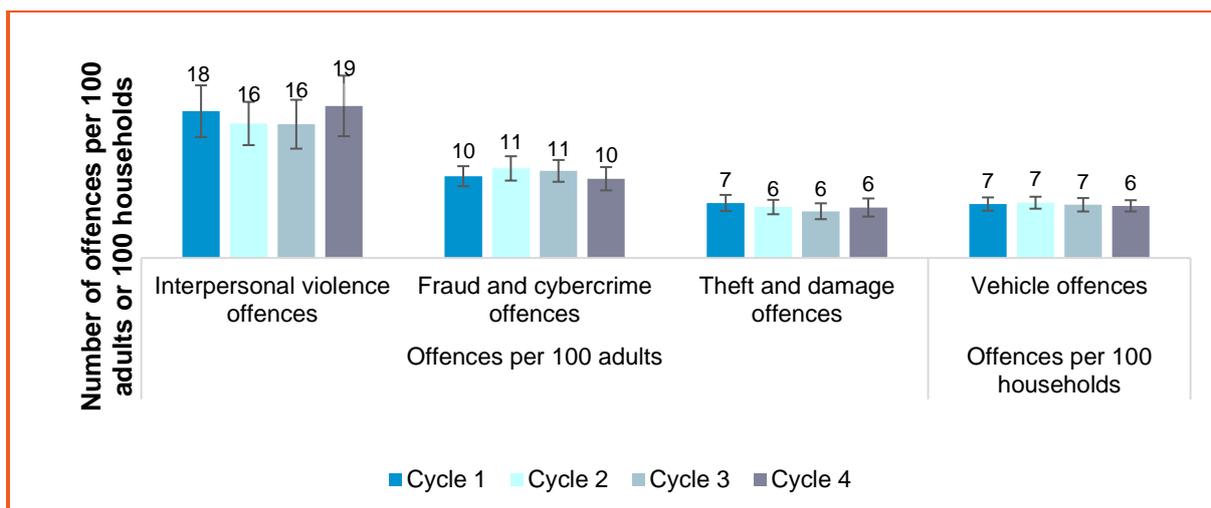- **6** theft and damage offences **per 100 adults**.

Figure 3.11   Number of offences per 100 adults or 100 households in the previous 12 months, by broad offence group and cycle

Number of adults or households victimised (prevalence)

The number of adults or households affected by each of the broad offence groups is shown in Figure 3.12. There were no significant changes over time.

Above we showed that there was a greater number of interpersonal violence offences than fraud and cybercrime offences. However, here we see that more adults were affected by fraud and cybercrime than by interpersonal violence. This means that although interpersonal violence was more common than fraud and cybercrime, it was concentrated on a smaller part of the population. More information on the distribution of victimisation is provided in section 8.

For Cycle 4, it was estimated that over the previous 12 months:

- **318,000 adults** were victims of fraud and cybercrime offences
- **292,000 adults** were victims of interpersonal violence offences
- **180,000 adults** were victims of theft and damage offences
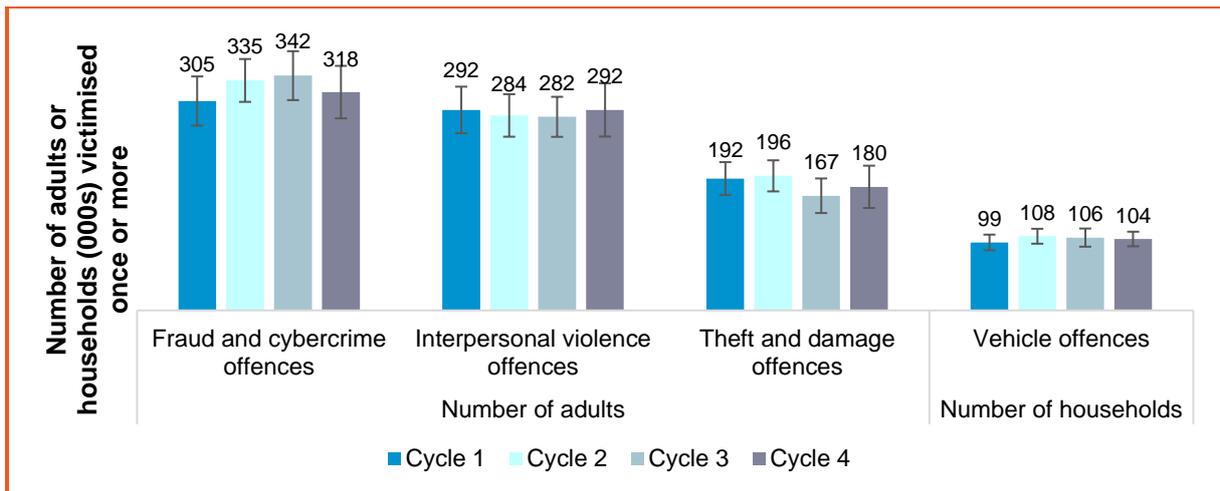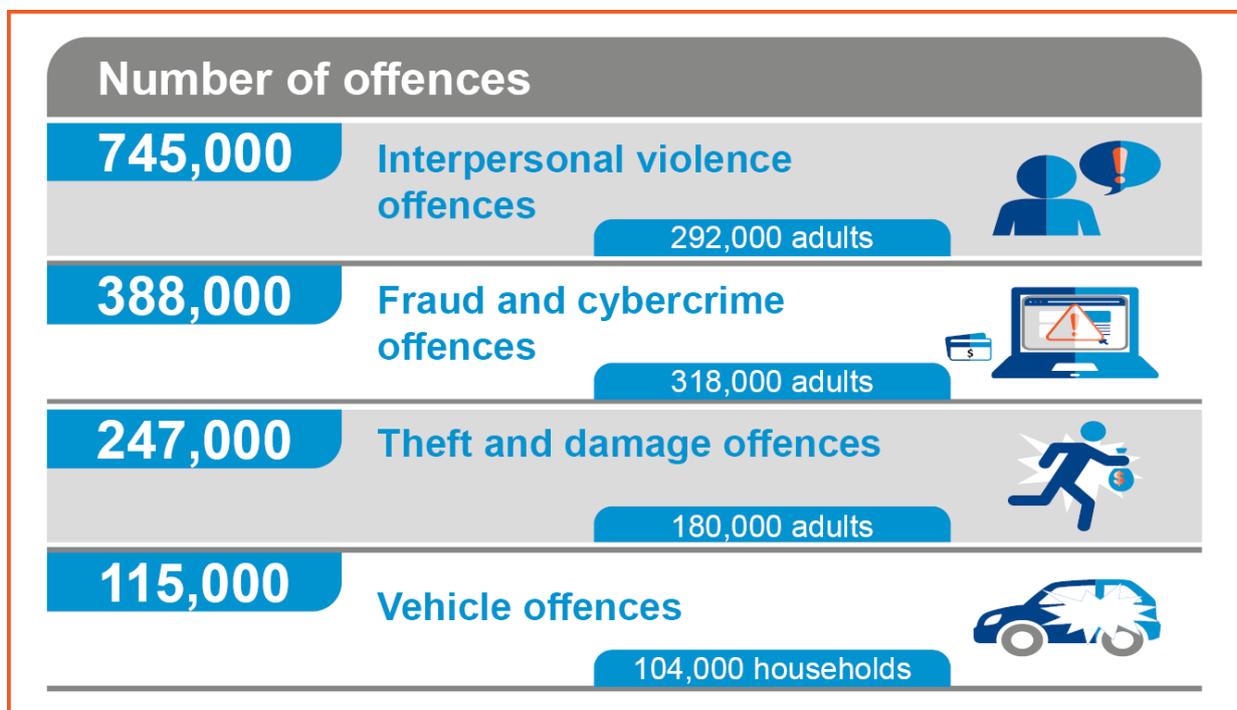- **104,000 households** were victims of vehicle offences.

Figure 3.12   Number of adults or households (000s) victimised once or more in the previous 12 months, by broad offence group and cycle

Percentage of adults or households victimised (prevalence rates)

There were no statistically significant changes in the prevalence rates of any of the four broad offence groups between Cycle 1 and Cycle 4 (Figure 3.13).

For Cycle 4, it was estimated that during the previous 12 months:

- **8.0% of adults** had been victims of fraud and cybercrime offences
- **7.3% of adults** had been victims of interpersonal violence offences
- **5.8% of households** had been victims of vehicle offences
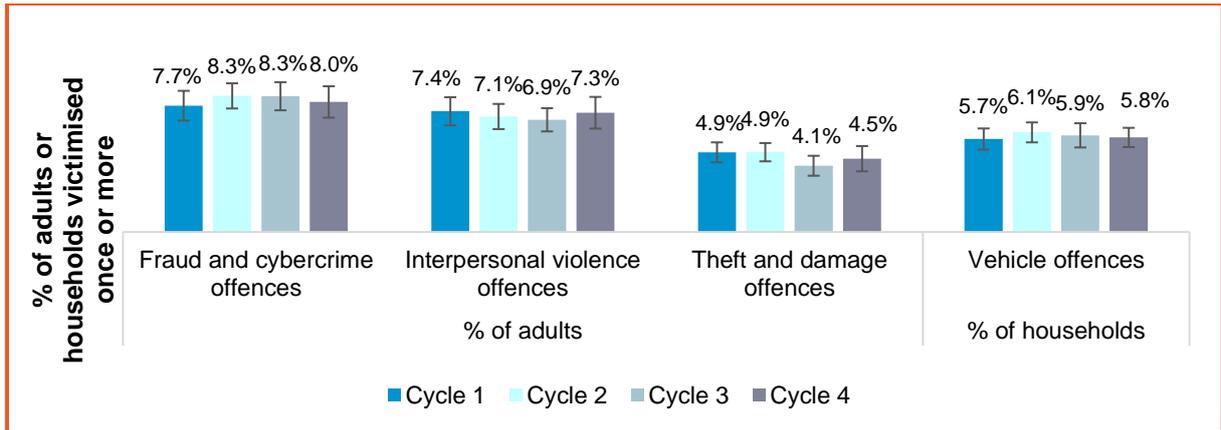- **4.5% of adults** had been victims of theft and damage offences.

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Figure 3.13   Percentage of adults or households victimised once or more in the previous 12 months, by broad offence group and cycle

The percentage of adults affected by interpersonal violence fell gradually between Cycle 1 and Cycle 3, but it has now returned back to almost the Cycle 1 level.