

## The Victim

### Who?

- **Street crime is a predominately male crime in terms of victimisation.** Smith (2003) concluded that three-quarters (76%) of all victims are male<sup>1</sup>.
- **In general, the street crime victim is most likely to be 16 to 20 years old (23%),** closely followed by 11 to 15 year olds (22%)<sup>2</sup>. Smith (2003) also noted that there is a “significant minority” of older victims (61 years and older) that are being victimised by young offenders<sup>3</sup>.
- **Metropolitan Police data on personal robbery also suggests that younger people are increasingly being victimised:** 11-20 year old victims increased threefold between 1993 and 2003<sup>4</sup>.
- **For females, the most vulnerable age category for street crime is 20-24, whereas males are most likely to be victimised between the ages of 15-19<sup>5</sup>.** However, when over 61, women are much more likely to be victimised (14%) than men of the same age (2%)<sup>6</sup>.
- **There is a large variation within the country in the average ages of victims:** For example, victims are more likely to be 16 years old or younger in Stockport (46%), but 60 years old or older

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<sup>1</sup>Smith, J (2003) *Op. Cit.*

<sup>2</sup>*Ibid.*, at p. 18.

<sup>3</sup>*Ibid.*

<sup>4</sup>*Ibid.*, at p. 20.

<sup>5</sup>Tilley, N., Smith, J., Finer, S., Erol, R., Charles, C. and Dobby, J. (2003) *Problem-solving Street Crime: Lessons from the Street Crime Initiative*. London: Home Office, p. 26.

<sup>6</sup>Smith, J (2003) *Op. Cit.*, p.20.

in Blackpool (15.4%)<sup>7</sup>. This variation in age most likely reflects the difference in the local population's age structure, because this is obviously where the offenders draw their victims from<sup>8</sup>.

- **As with age, the victim's ethnicity usually reflects no more than the local demography<sup>9</sup>**, although in Smith's study (2003), the vast majority of victims were white. However, the London Underground saw the highest proportion of Asian victims (21%), and Lambeth and Birmingham the highest proportion of black victims (16% and 13% respectively).

## Where and when?

- In 2005-6, theft from the person (incorporating snatch and stealth theft) was most likely to occur on the street (20%), in a shop/supermarket (16%), or on public transport (13%)<sup>10</sup>. Other theft of personal property occurred most frequently at work (24%), in another public building (17%) or inside a pub (14%)<sup>11</sup>.
- The most vulnerable time period for theft from the person to occur is on a weekday (58%) and in the daytime (70%), but particularly the afternoon (45%)<sup>12</sup>.

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<sup>7</sup> *Ibid.*, at p.19.

<sup>8</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>9</sup> Hallsworth, S. (2005) *Street Crime*. Cullompton: Willan; Smith, J. (2003) *Op. Cit.*

<sup>10</sup> Home Office (2007) 'Crime in England and Wales 2005/06: Supplementary Tables: Nature of burglary, theft, criminal damage, vehicle and violent crime' (Table 3.02). Available from: [http://www.homeoffice.gov.uk/rds/crimeew0506\\_tables\\_bvv.html#personaltheft](http://www.homeoffice.gov.uk/rds/crimeew0506_tables_bvv.html#personaltheft) [Accessed 12<sup>th</sup> December 2007]

<sup>11</sup> *Ibid.*, at Table 3.03.

<sup>12</sup> *Ibid.*, at Table 3.01.