



Home Office

# Crime against businesses: Commercial Victimisation Survey (CVS) update

**Mark Bangs, Home Office Analysis and Insight**

**Contact:**

[Mark.Bangs@homeoffice.gov.uk](mailto:Mark.Bangs@homeoffice.gov.uk)



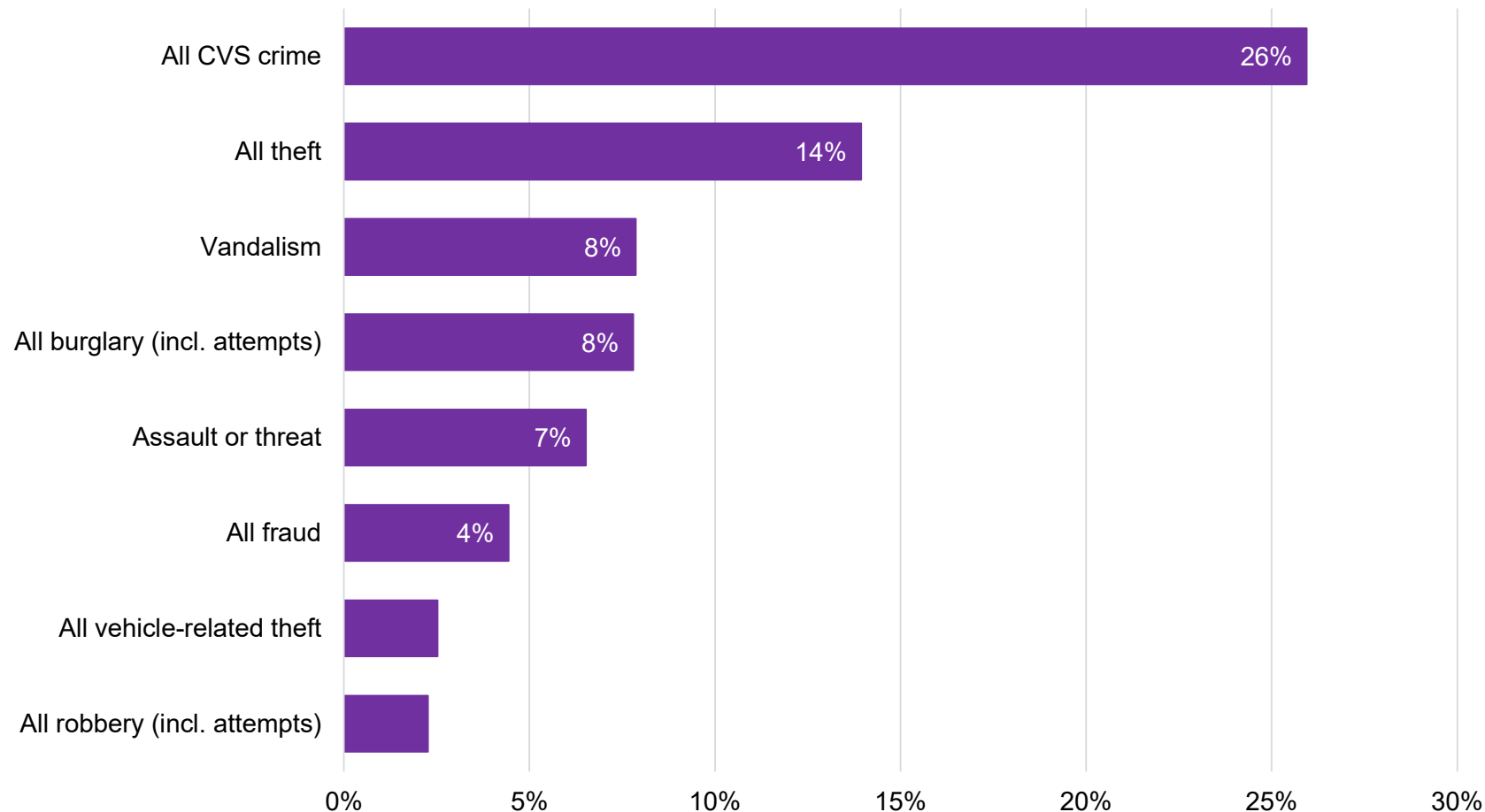
# CVS methods and coverage

- **The CVS is a premises-based crime survey, designed to measure prevalence and frequency of crime against business in England and Wales**
- **2023 CVS interviews took place between August and November 2023**, so crimes experienced can include any experienced back to August 2022.
- **Extended to cover all business sectors in 2022** (previously only selected sectors were covered) to give **better understanding of the extent of crime** affecting all commercial business premises in England and Wales
- **Second survey year of extended coverage – no long-term trend data for overall crime against business. Though does include comparisons against 2022 CVS.**
- **Includes data for the retail sector specifically.** This uses a combined dataset of 2022 and 2023 CVS to increase the reliability.

# Prevalence and frequency | All business

26% of business premises were a victim of crime in the last 12 months

Proportion of business premises which experienced at least one incident of crime in the previous 12 months, by crime type  
*Commercial Victimisation Survey 2023*



**Both customer theft and assaults and threats had the highest levels of repeat victimisation.**

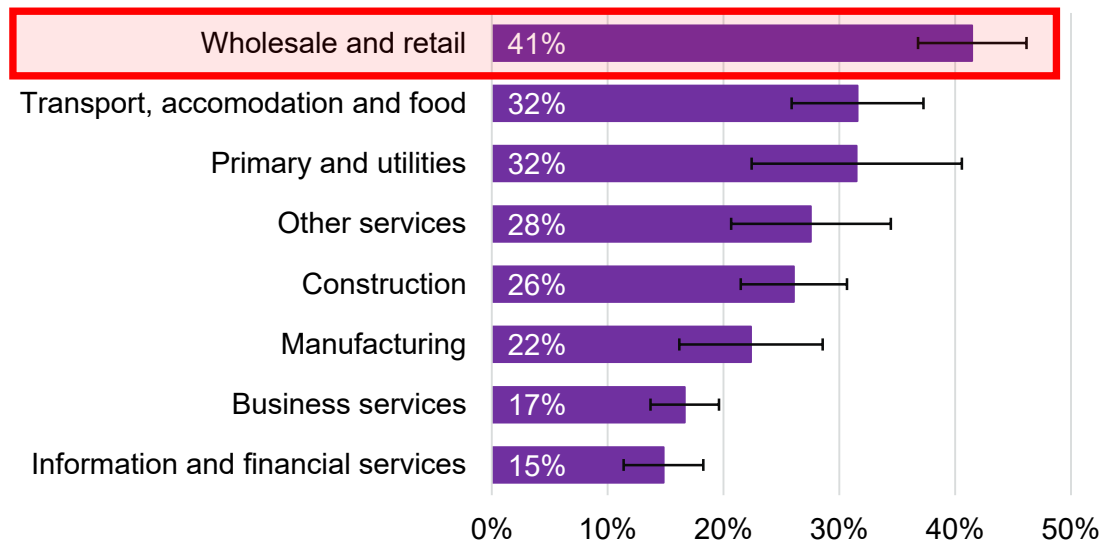
Customer theft 13% of all premises experienced them at least once a day.

Assaults and threats 24% experienced them at least once a month.

# Prevalence | Wholesale and retail

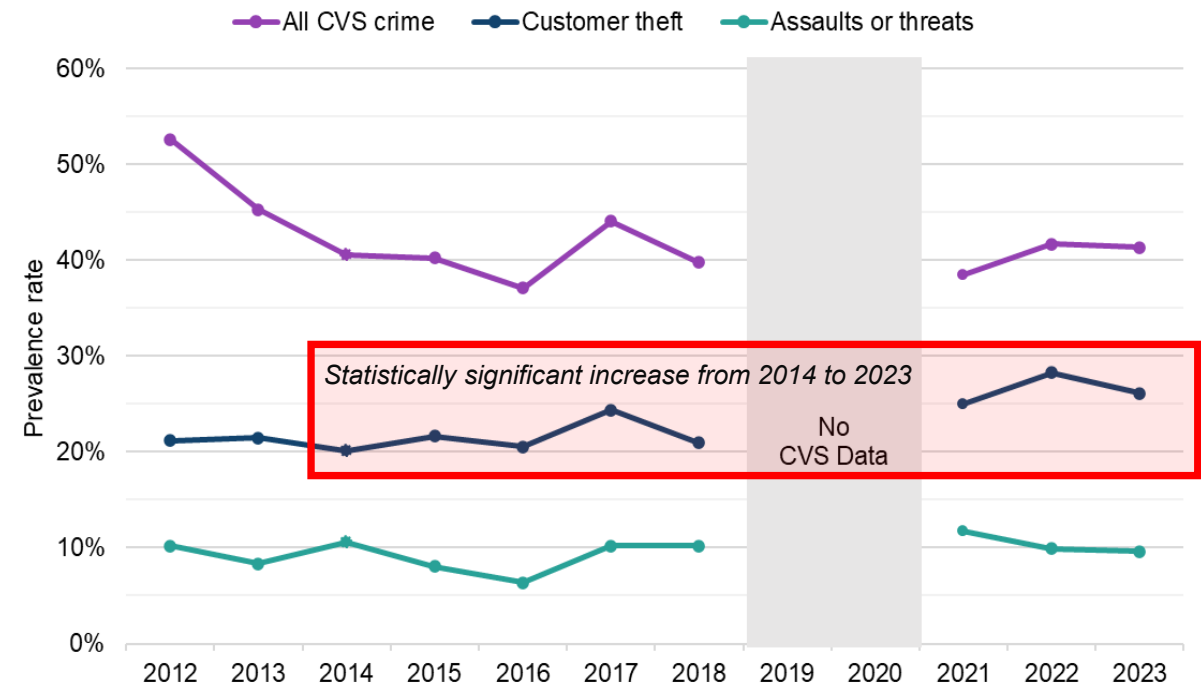
41% of premises in the Wholesale and retail sector were a victim of crime in the last 12 months

All CVS crime prevalence, by business sector, 2022 and 2023  
Commercial Victimization Survey 2022 and 2023



- The **Wholesale and retail sector** experienced a **higher prevalence of victimisation compared with most other commercial business sectors**.
- In the last 12 months premises experienced the following crimes:
  - Theft: 31% of premises
  - All burglary (Inc. Attempts): 11% of premises
  - Assault or threat: 10% of premises
  - **Most theft in the sector is Theft by a customer (27%)**

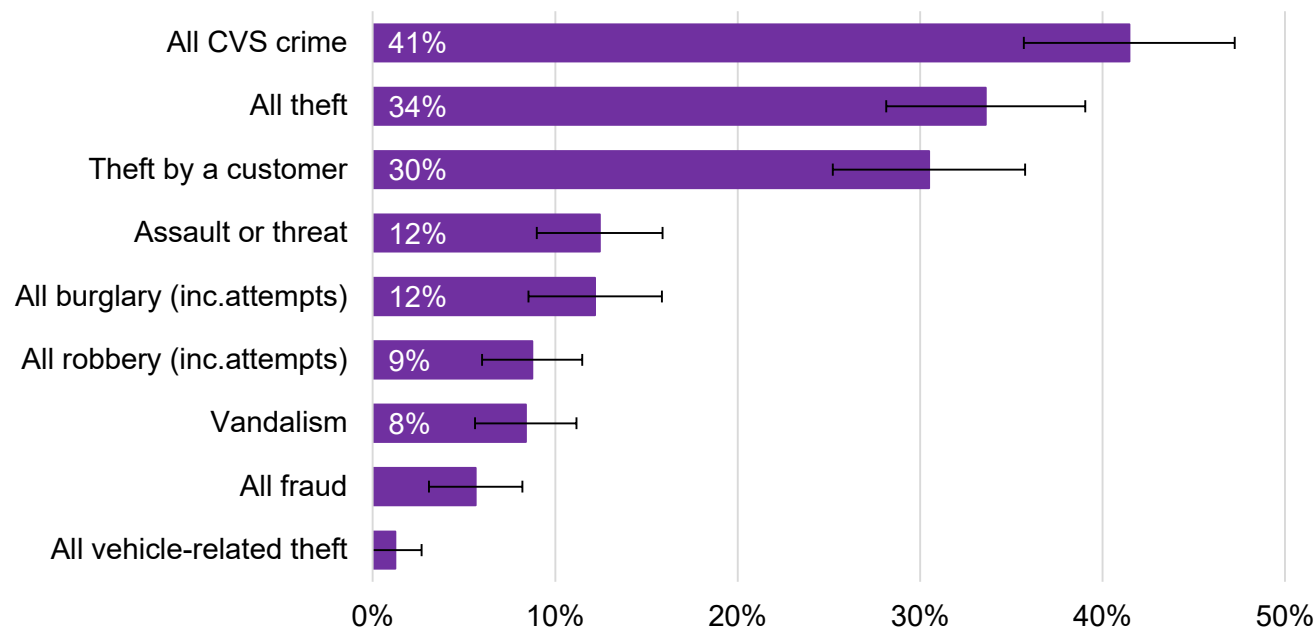
Crime prevalence trends in the Wholesale and retail sector over time. 2012 to 2023  
Commercial Victimization Surveys



# Prevalence and frequency | Retail

**Supermarkets experience notably higher levels of customer theft, assaults or threats and robbery than other retailers.**

**Proportion of business premises in the retail sector which experienced at least one incident of crime in the previous 12 months, by crime type**  
*Commercial Victimisation Survey 2022 and 2023*



**Proportion of premises in the Retail sector that were victims once or more (prevalence risks), by sub-sector, combined data for 2022 and 2023**  
*Commercial Victimisation Survey 2022 and 2023*

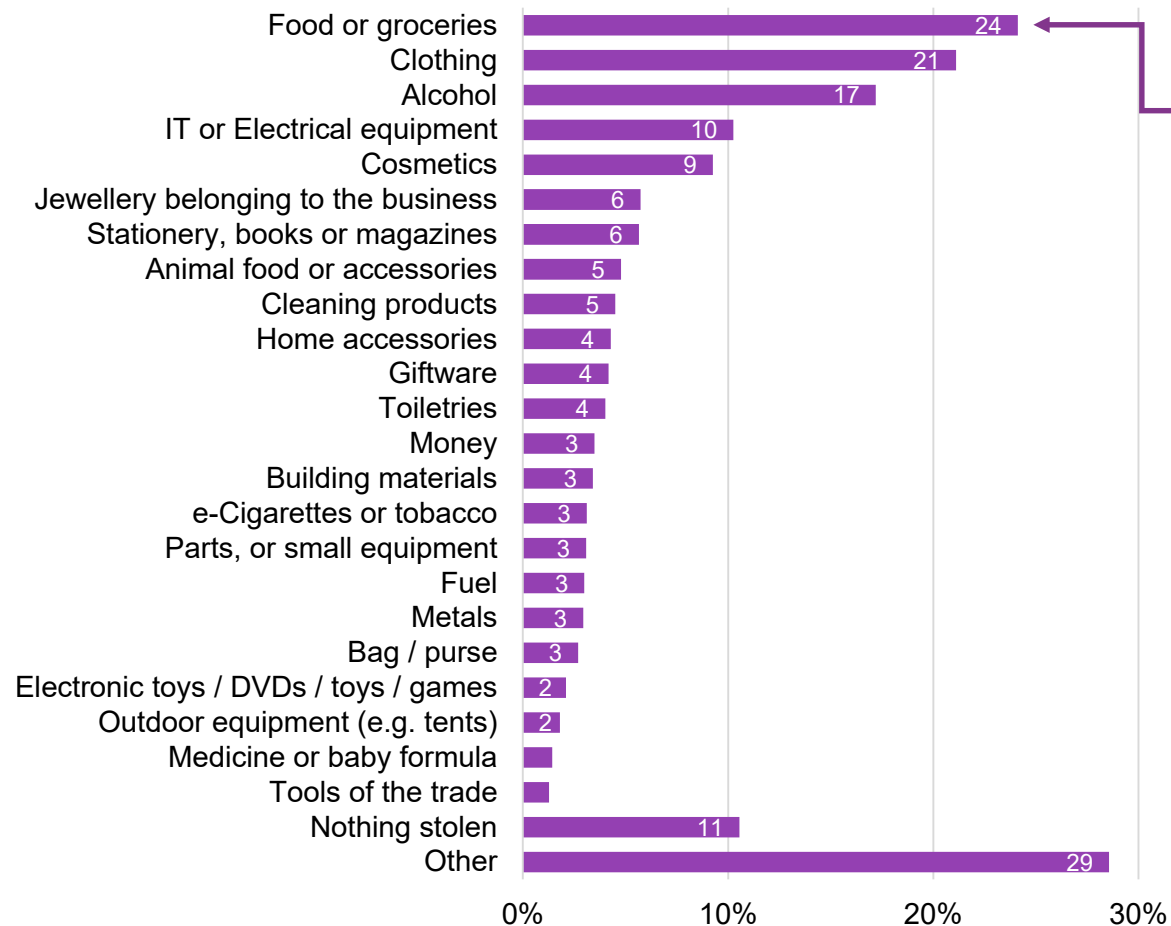
	Supermarket	Food & beverage	Clothing	Household goods
Customer theft	76%	17%	41%	20%
Assaults or threats	43%	10%	14%	6%
Robbery	40%	9%	4%	6%

# Impact and Reporting | Retail

In line with previous years the most commonly stolen items were food and groceries (24%)

Most commonly stolen items from businesses in the retail sector that were victims of theft in the last year

Commercial Victimisation Survey 2022 and 2023



- The items taken in thefts from retailers was diverse, but **the most commonly stolen item was food or groceries belonging to the business (24%).**

Other popular items include :

- Clothing (21%)
- Alcohol (17%)
- IT or electrical equipment (10%)
- Cosmetics (9%).

- **39% of retailers that were a victim of any crime never reported any incident to the police in the last 12 months.**

- **Premises, who did report at least one crime to the police, had mixed satisfaction**

- 43% were dissatisfied
- 35% were satisfied
- And 22% we're neither satisfied or dissatisfied

*However, for general satisfaction, more premises were satisfied than dissatisfied with how the police response to crime problems facing businesses in the local area. (51% satisfied compared with 32% dissatisfied)*

# Violent crime

Employees are physically attacked and injured at almost one in ten premises that experienced violence (8%)

## Type of violence experienced

- Almost three quarters of victims of violence experienced verbal abuse (73%) and 68% experienced threat or intimidation.
- However, **premises also experienced physical attack**
  - **21% without injury and;**
  - **8% with injury**

## Impact of violent incidents

- 6% experienced an employee being physically injured as a result and 7% experienced an employee having to take time off work.

## The mostly commonly cited circumstances of violence were diverse...

Perceived reason for violence in the last year  
*Commercial Victimisation Survey 2023*

Trigger	Premises
Encountering a store thief	19%
Customer complaint	17%
Confronting suspicious behaviour	14%
Price / Refusal to pay	11%
Under influence of drugs or alcohol	8%
Mental health episode	8%
Driving / traffic related / road rage	7%
Arguments over refunds	7%
Refusal to serve / sell / being asked to leave	7%

# Experience of the police



## Reporting of crimes to the police

- Almost half, 45% of all victims didn't report a crime to the police, the most common reason described, by 54%, was due to the incident being too trivial (very low value) or inappropriate for the police.

## Police response to crimes

- Where premises did report crimes, one fifth (20%) of premises described the police did nothing or very little to respond.

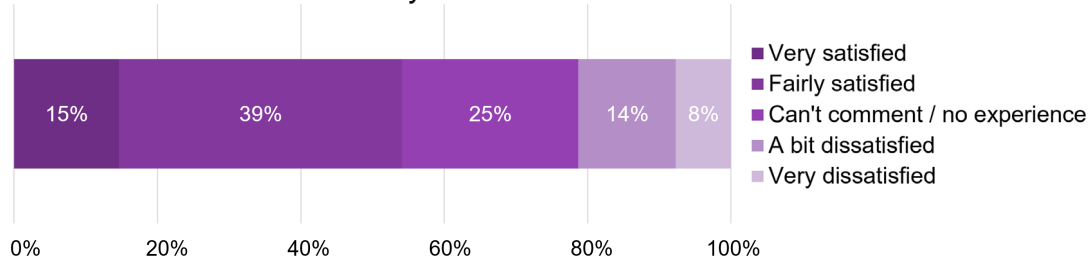
## Satisfaction with the police response

- Satisfaction was mixed and remained similar to last year's survey, with 41% of premises stating they were dissatisfied compared with 35% being satisfied.

# Perceptions of the police

## General satisfaction with the policing of crimes against businesses in the local area

Commercial Victimisation Survey 2023



## Satisfaction with the police generally

- Satisfaction with how the police deal with crime problems facing businesses in their local area was higher. Over half (54%) of premises were satisfied, compared with 21% being dissatisfied.

## Confidence with the police

- About two-thirds (68%) of premises were confident that the police would respond effectively if they experienced a crime in the next twelve months while the other third (32%) said they were not very or at all confident.



# Looking ahead | Commercial Victimisation Survey



- **No CVS run in 2024.** Currently reviewing options about a future survey / research to gather evidence on crime against business premises.



- **Declining participation** in the survey over recent years – lower response rates impacting on data quality and our ability to provide sector specific breakdowns.



- **Telephone mode** has proved increasingly challenging.
- Need to think creatively about **mode and broader methods**. Will be in touch with users.



- In the meantime, **2023 CVS microdata** are available via the UK data service.



Home Office

# Questions