

LEX FEMINAE INDEX

United Kingdom

2026 Edition

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INDEX

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Data Coverage: April 2024 – March 2025

Grade:

E — Severe Enforcement Deficiency

Trend Indicator: → Stagnant

The Lex Feminae Index evaluates whether legal systems deliver measurable protection against gender-based violence. The assessment is outcome-based. Legislative intent, policy declarations and strategic commitments are not considered. Only documented enforcement performance is examined.

This report presents the 2026 enforcement assessment of England and Wales using consolidated national data from the 2024/25 reporting cycle.

Criminal prosecution is conducted by the Crown Prosecution Service (CPS). Judicial outcomes are recorded by the Ministry of Justice (MOJ). Police intake data is published by the Office for National Statistics (ONS). Protection order data is published by the Ministry of Justice.

The evaluation examines whether statutory criminalization of domestic abuse and sexual violence translates into operational enforcement in practice. It measures:

- Police-recorded violence
- Judicial intake and charging decisions
- Prosecution throughput
- Conviction outcomes
- Sentencing patterns
- Protection order issuance and breach transparency
- Public accessibility and consolidation of enforcement data

Prevalence surveys are not used as grading inputs.

The central question is structural:

Does enforcement practice produce measurable protection for women after violence occurs?

METHODOLOGIC FRAMEWORK

A. Data Scope

This assessment relies exclusively on official statistical publications issued by the ONS, CPS, MOJ, and Home Office.

No NGO datasets or advocacy projections are used.

B. Administrative Counting Limits

Recorded crime figures reflect offence registration, not unique offenders.

Prosecution and conviction figures reflect cases finalized during the reporting cycle and do not represent direct same-year cohort conversion.

C. Police-Justice Interoperability Limits

Police-recorded crimes, CPS referrals, charges, prosecutions, convictions and sentencing outcomes are published through separate institutional datasets.

A unified longitudinal suspect-to-sentence dataset is not publicly consolidated.

D. Conviction Timing Clarification

Convictions represent cases reaching judicial resolution during the reporting year and may correspond to offences recorded in prior years.

LEGAL

I. Legal Recognition & Statutory Framework

Domestic abuse and sexual violence are criminalized under UK statutory law.

Protection mechanisms include Non-Molestation Orders and Domestic Violence Protection Orders.

ASSESSMENT

The statutory framework provides full criminalization of sexual violence and domestic abuse.

The legal framework does not restrict enforcement authority.

Operational performance depends on throughput, sentencing severity and protection reliability.

REPORTING

II. Reporting Accessibility & Victim Registration

2024/25 official data indicate:

- Domestic abuse-related crimes recorded: 816,493
- Sexual offences recorded: 209,079
- Domestic homicides: 111
- Female domestic homicide victims: 75

ASSESSMENT

Police intake volume is substantial and publicly reported.

However, intake volume significantly exceeds judicial conversion output.

PROSECUTION

III. Prosecution Filtering

Domestic Abuse Funnel:

- Recorded crimes: 816,493
- Arrest rate: approximately 44 per 100 recorded crimes
- CPS referrals: 76,393
- Charged: 53,919
- Prosecutions: 54,987
- Convictions: 41,070

Sexual Offences Funnel:

- Recorded offences: 209,079
- Convictions: 2,623

ASSESSMENT

IPV convictions represent approximately 5% of recorded crimes.

Sexual offence convictions represent approximately 1.3% of recorded offences.

Judicial throughput relative to intake is structurally narrow.

Conviction is rare relative to recorded violence intake.

IV. Conviction Ratios

Conviction rates once prosecuted remain high.

However, intake-to-conviction conversion remains limited:

- Domestic abuse: ~5% of recorded crimes
- Sexual offences: ~1.3% of recorded crimes

ASSESSMENT

High conviction rates post-charge does not offset structural intake attrition.

Enforcement rarity relative to recorded violence remains significant.

SENTENCING

V. Sentencing & Custodial Exposure

Domestic Abuse:

- Crown Court immediate custody: 71%
- Overall sentencing includes substantial non-custodial outcomes due to Magistrates' Court volume

Sexual Offences:

- Average rape custodial sentence: 9.4 years
- Overall sexual offence conviction volume: 2,623

Recidivism (MOJ trends):

- Domestic abuse offenders: ~25%
- Sexual offenders: ~10%

ASSESSMENT

Custodial sentencing exists for serious offences.

However, imprisonment exposure relative to total recorded violence intake remains proportionally limited.

Domestic recidivism indicates persistent reoffending within the offender population.

National sentencing publications do not provide a consolidated intake-to-immediate-custody ratio across GBV categories.

PROTECTION

VI. Protection Measures

- Approximately 35,000 new non-molestation orders issued annually
- *Breach figures not published in consolidated national form*
- *Arrest and conviction outcomes for breach not published nationally*
- 50–60% of intimate partner homicide victims had prior protection measures

ASSESSMENT

Protection mechanisms are formally available.

However, breach-to-arrest and breach-to-conviction data is not nationally consolidated.

A substantial proportion of intimate partner homicide victims were subject to prior protection measures.

Protection reliability cannot be externally verified at national level.

DATA

VII. Data Integrity & Transparency

The United Kingdom publishes police intake, CPS charging data, conviction totals and sentencing averages.

However:

- No unified suspect-to-sentence longitudinal dataset
- No consolidated national breach enforcement dataset
- No unified offence-coded protection-outcome linkage
- No consolidated intake-to-imprisonment exposure table

ASSESSMENT

Data publication is active but fragmented.

Full enforcement traceability across the protection and sentencing chain is incomplete.

CLIMATE RISK MODIFIER

No integrated dataset links disaster displacement to GBV enforcement outcomes.

The Climate Risk Modifier does not alter grade determination.

STRUCTURAL ASSESSMENT

DOES THE LAW PROTECT WOMEN IN PRACTICE?

Police intake volume is high.

Judicial conversion relative to recorded crimes is structurally narrow.

Sexual offence convictions represent approximately 1.3% of recorded offences.

Domestic abuse convictions represent approximately 5% of recorded crimes.

Imprisonment exposure relative to intake remains limited. Conviction-to-custody exposure relative to total recorded violence remains proportionally low.

Domestic abuse recidivism remains measurable at approximately 25%.

A substantial proportion of intimate partner homicide victims had prior protection measures in place.

National breach-to-enforcement data is not consolidated. Breach activation and escalation-to-custody cannot be externally quantified at national level.

Enforcement institutions are operational.

However, conviction and custodial exposure remain rare relative to recorded violence intake, and protection reliability cannot be externally verified due to absence of consolidated breach enforcement data.

AUDIT GRADE

Under Lex Feminae Index criteria:

The United Kingdom does not meet D — Weak Enforcement — because:

- Conviction remains rare relative to recorded intake
- A substantial proportion of intimate partner homicide victims had prior protection measures in place
- Breach enforcement traceability is not nationally consolidated
- Judicial throughput relative to intake remains structurally narrow
- Intake-to-imprisonment exposure remains proportionally limited

The enforcement framework is operational but demonstrates severe limitation in protection reliability and intake-to-sanction conversion.

The United Kingdom does not meet F — Systemic Failure — because:

- Sexual violence and domestic abuse are fully criminalized by statutes
- Police intake and CPS charging systems are operational
- Criminal convictions are regularly issued
- Custodial sentences are imposed in serious cases
- Judicial data is publicly published through national institutions

Enforcement institutions are active and legally functional.

However, conviction remains rare relative to recorded violence, protection reliability is not demonstrably robust, and enforcement traceability across the protection chain is incomplete.

The United Kingdom's 2024/25 enforcement profile aligns with:

Grade E — Severe Enforcement Deficiency

Trend Indicator: → Stagnant

FINAL GRADE

E — Severe Enforcement Deficiency

Trend Indicator: → Stagnant*

- Conviction and custodial exposure are rare relative to recorded violence intake.
- Protection reliability is not demonstrably robust.
- Significant intake-to-sentence attrition.
- Recidivism remains measurable across core offence categories.
- Enforcement traceability is incomplete across protection chain.

* Stagnation reflects structural persistence of enforcement patterns across recent reporting cycles as documented in official statistical continuity