

Review

The extent of stalking. A population study 2017-2018

Background and objectives:

- The aim of the report is to contribute with new knowledge about the extent and the character of stalking.
- The report covers the experience of the population. There is not necessarily any accordance between the experiences and the legal definition of stalking.

Research design:

- Statistics Denmark collected the data between June 2017 and April 2018 as part of its omnibus survey. The total number of respondents was 6,479.
- The most severe cases might not be included because victims have the opportunity to get an ex-directory telephone number and a secret address, which makes it difficult for Statistics Denmark to contact them to carry out a telephone interview.

Findings:

- 2 per cent of Danes aged between 18 and 74 were victims of stalking in the past year. When statistical uncertainty is taken into account, this means that between 67,000 and 98,000 people experience stalking every year.
- Women are more often victims of stalking than men.
- A larger share of the victims have a low income compared to the general population.
- Singles with children are at greater risk of being victimised compared to persons living in other family structures.
- 28 per cent have had a close relationship with the stalker, 40 per cent have been stalked by a friend or an acquaintance and just under one third have been stalked by a stranger.
- The character of the stalking varies from texts and phone calls to violence, threats and different types of surveillance. The most common types are texts, emails, phone calls etc.
- The victims who have a close relationship with their stalker perceive the stalking to be more severe, they feel more unsafe and they feel that the events have affected them and their life.
- 43 per cent have been forced to change their routines.
- Just under one fifth have contacted a physician, psychologist or the like.
- Just under one fourth have contacted the police. The most common reason for not involving the police is that the victims do not consider the stalking sufficiently severe.

