

Accidents and violence 1988

Provisional data

18 January 1990

One Finn out of six was injured

To assess the incidence of accidents and violence in Finland in 1988, the Central Statistical Office collected information from nearly 14,000 Finns. One out of six 15-74-years-olds (620,000 persons) had during the year been injured in an accident or in an incident of violence. The largest number of injuries were caused by work accidents.

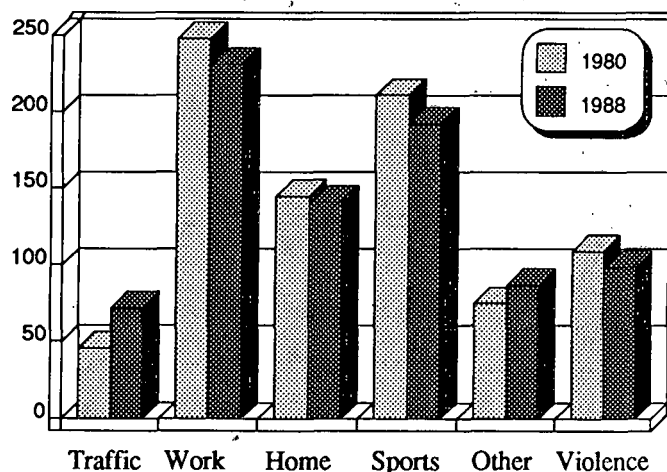
A. Accidents and violence resulting in injury: proportion of victims in the population aged 15-74 years (%) in 1980 and 1988, and the number of incidents in 1988.

	Victims		Total number of incidents
	1980	1988	
Total	17.1	16.7	822,000
Traffic accidents	1.3	1.8	72,000
Work accidents	5.8	5.2	231,000
Accidents at home	3.5	3.5	141,000
Sports accidents	4.4	4.0	192,000
Other accidents	1.9	2.1	87,000
Criminal violence	2.3	2.0	99,000

Traffic accidents resulting in injury have increased by 55 per cent since 1980. The number of accidents at home shows no change as compared with 1980. The incidence of

1. The incidence of accidents and violence resulting in injury 1980 ja 1988.

Thousands



work accidents and sports accidents has decreased slightly, as has the incidence of violence resulting in injury. The number of other leisure-time accidents has increased slightly.

Fewer cases of violence

According to the interview data, eight per cent of the population aged 15-74 fell victim to some kind of violence in 1988, violence being defined to cover not only incidents resulting in injury but also threats of violence and attempts to prevent someone from moving. In 1980 the corre-

sponding rate was 10 per cent. The percentage of victims of violence was thus one-fifth lower than eight years earlier. According to the interview data, incidents of violence in 1988 can be estimated at a minimum of 500,000.

B. The forms of violence, 1980 and 1988.

	1980 ¹	1988 ¹
Total	629,000	498,000
Threats, attempts to hit	191,000	146,000
Preventing from moving, pushing	255,000	178,000
Hitting, no visible marks	63,000	55,000
Hitting, bruises	58,000	51,000
Repeated kicking	10,000	7,000
Hitting, wounds or bone fractures	21,000	21,000
Armed violence	4,000	4,000
Other violence	27,000	36,000

As compared with 1980, incidents of the more lenient forms of violence in particular have decreased, such as threats and attempts to prevent someone from moving. There is also a slight fall in the number of incidents where the victim was hit but suffered nothing more serious than bruises. This is also the case with incidents of repeated kicking. No change is observed in armed violence or in incidents where the victim was hit and suffered wounds or bone fractures. "Other violence" stands mainly for lenient cases where no physical injury was caused.

In 1988, 53 per cent of incidents of violence involved men. In 1980, the corresponding figure was 58 per cent: the difference between men and women has shrunk considerably. Incidents of violence involving men have decreased by 27 per cent since 1980. The decrease for women is 12 per cent.

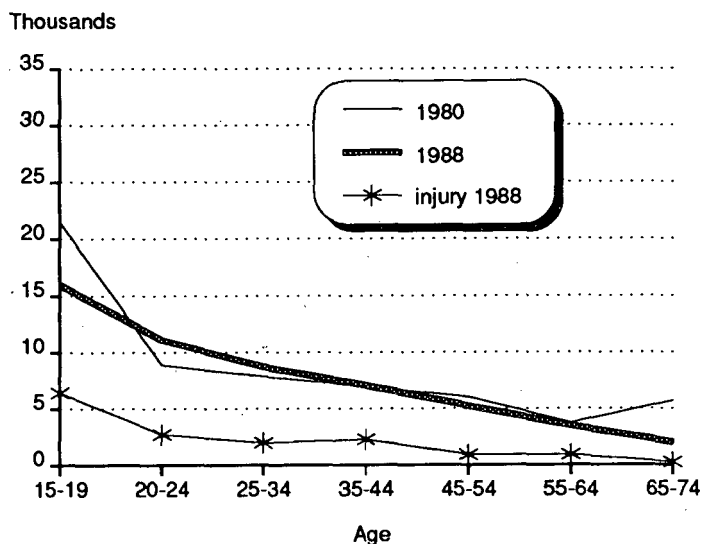
Young people are victimized more often than others. On the other hand, the decrease in experiences of violence has been most marked in the youngest age group, among men and women alike. The decrease in violence is due to, among other things, the diminishing of the young age groups and the aging of the postwar large age groups, the probability of victimization falling with age.

Street violence and violence between acquaintances (small group violence) in particular have decreased since 1980. The amount of domestic violence has remained at the 1980 level. Experiences of work-related violence have increased slightly.

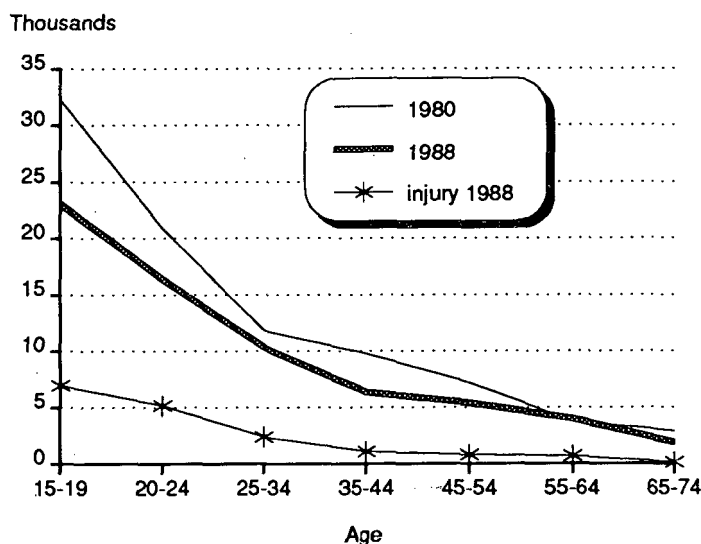
Violent crimes as recorded by the police and violence as depicted by victimization surveys have moved in opposite directions during the 1980s. From 1980 to 1988, assaults recorded by the police have increased by 32 per cent. The survey data, too, show that violent acts recorded by the police have increased since 1980 (by 12 per cent). Thus, as the incidence of violence as a whole has decreased, the number of recorded cases has increased.

In Sweden, violent crimes recorded by the police have increased in a similar manner as in Finland. However, in Sweden, too, victimization surveys show that assaults have decreased during the 1980s. Similarly, according to a Central Statistical Office survey of living conditions in Finland based on a representative population sample, the number of assaults has decreased from 1978 to 1986.

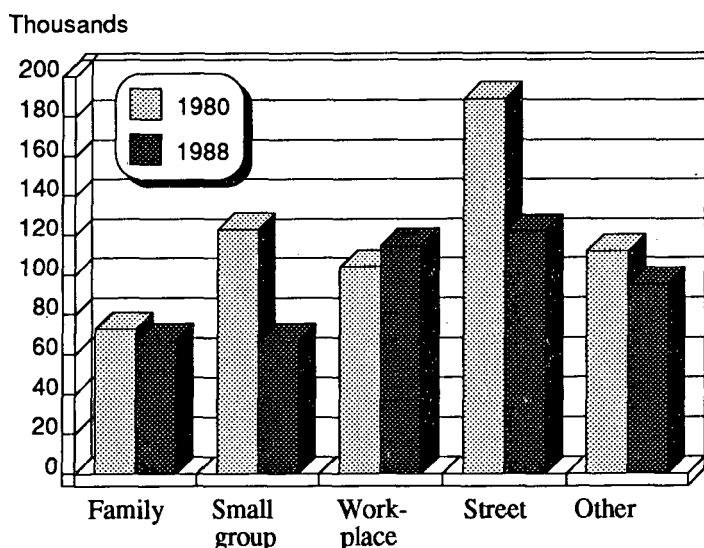
2a. Female victims of violence by age group per 100,000 population in 1980 and 1988.



2b. Male victims of violence by age group per 100,000 population in 1980 and 1988.



3. The venues of violence in 1980 and 1988.



¹ If the respondent had been victimized several times during the year, data were collected for the three most recent incidents.

No change in the number of accidents at home

Accidents at home numbered 141,000 in 1988 (145,000 in 1980). Of accidents at home, men accounted for 38 per cent in 1988, and for 36 per cent in 1980. The difference between men and women has thus narrowed slightly. Changes in time use, e. g. the decrease in the time women use for household work, may have contributed to the slight fall in the number of accidents women experienced at home. Men's home accidents have mostly occurred in repair and maintenance work, women's in household work.

The number of accidents at home has decreased since 1980 in the 15-19 age group, both among men and women. Women aged 20-34 showed a slight increase in accidents at home, as did men aged 25-34. Elderly women suffered, in proportion to the size of the population, more accidents at home than any other age-sex category. Even in their case, however, accidents at home have decreased since 1980.

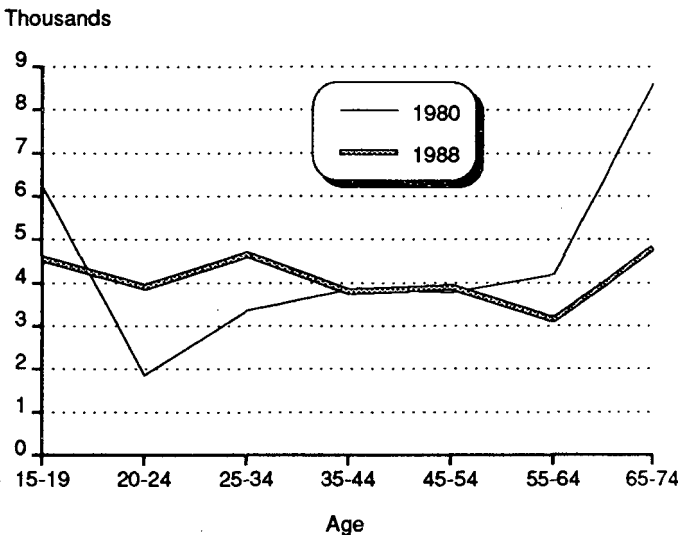
Fewer sports accidents

In 1988, sports accidents numbered 192,000, representing a decrease of nine per cent since 1980. For women, the decrease was 12 per cent, for men, seven per cent.

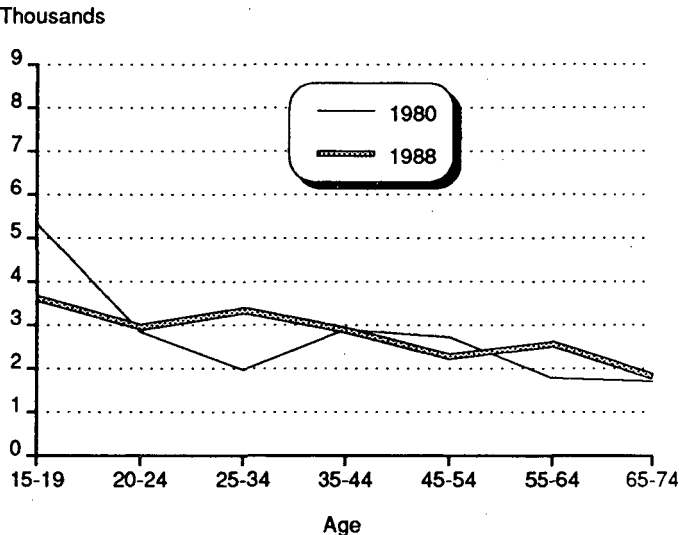
The same amount of time – half an hour per day – is spent on sports and exercise in all age groups. However, the incidence of sports accidents decreases with age. This is probably due to changes in the type of sports chosen. Younger people tend to participate in intensive team sports and in other physically more demanding activities.

Sports with the highest incidence of accidents were, for men, soccer, volley ball and ice hockey; for women, volley ball, jogging and gymnastics.

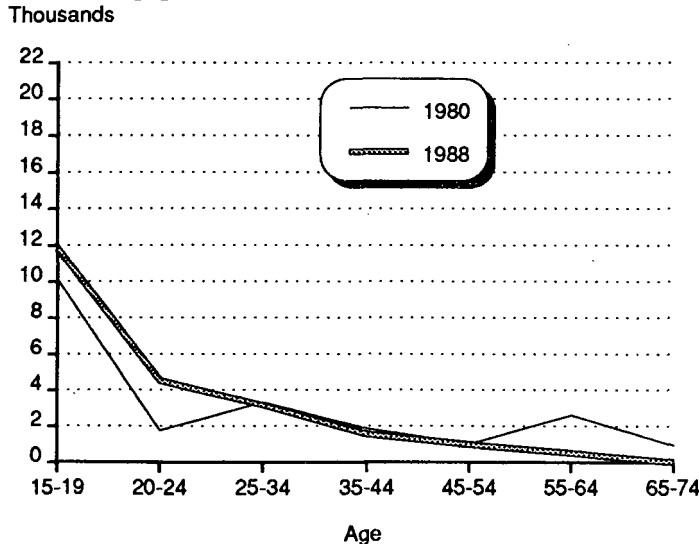
4a. Female victims of accidents at home by age group per 100,000 population, 1980 and 1988.



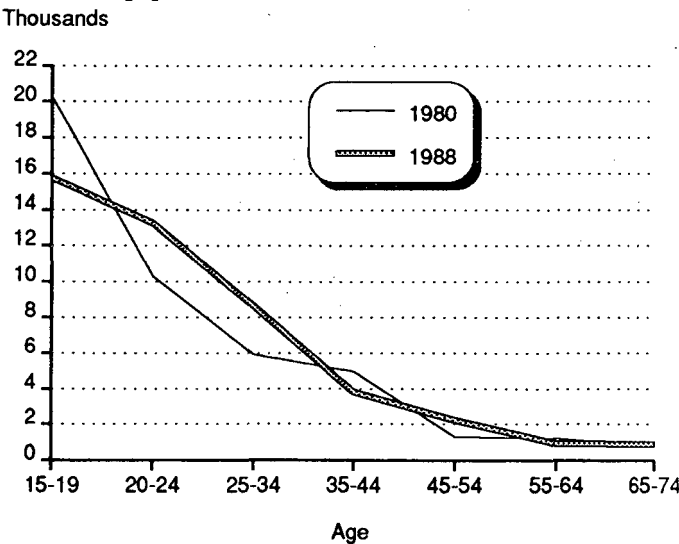
4b. Male victims of accidents at home by age group per 100,000 population, 1980 and 1988.



5a. Female victims of sports accidents by age group per 100,000 population, 1980 and 1988.



5b. Male victims of sports accidents by age group per 100,000 population, 1980 and 1988.



An increase in other leisure-time accidents

Other leisure-time accidents numbered 87,000. This category comprises accidents occurring in connection with shopping, amusements or various free-time activities which cannot be classified as accidents at home, traffic accidents or sports accidents.

The number of other leisure-time accidents increased by 17 per cent from 1980. These accidents were somewhat more common among women than among men.

Other leisure-time accidents were common among elderly women out shopping or otherwise on the move, and among young men during free time.

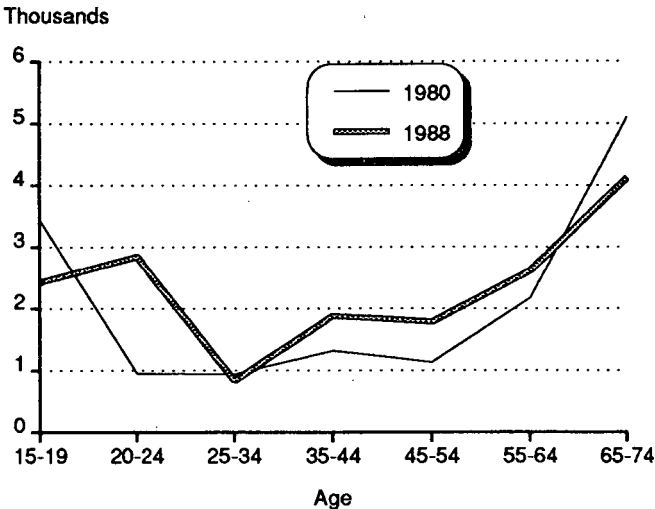
An increase in traffic accidents

The survey found 260,000 traffic accidents in 1988. Out of these, 72,000 resulted in injury. Traffic accidents have increased by more than 40 per cent since 1980. Traffic accidents resulting in injury have increased by 55 per cent since 1980. Traffic accidents have not, however, increased faster than the number of motor vehicles (+ 46 %) or the volume of traffic (+ 36 %).

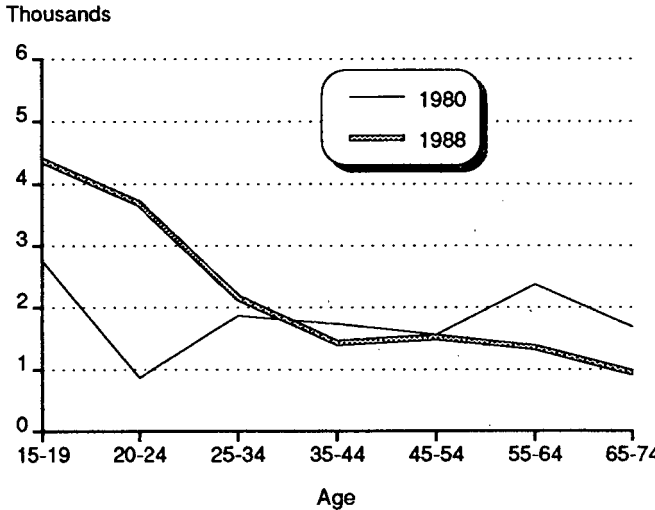
For men, the total number of traffic accidents has increased by 21 per cent. Women's traffic accidents have almost doubled (+ 92 %) in eight years. In 1988, 39 per cent of all traffic accidents and more than half of traffic accidents resulting in injury happened to women. The greatest increase is shown by single-party accidents; for women they have increased fourfold in eight years. Women's single-party accidents were mostly falls from a bicycle and cases of driving off the road with a motorcar.

Of traffic accident victims, 72 per cent were moving by car, 15 per cent by bicycle, and two per cent on foot.

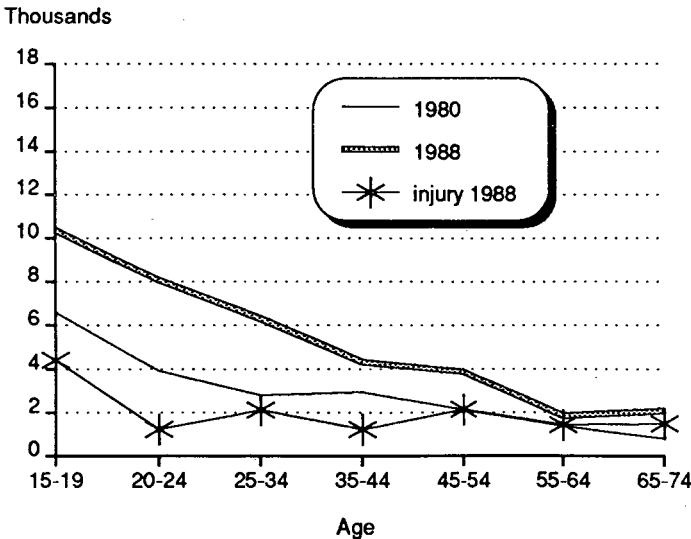
6a. Female victims of other leisure-time accidents by age group per 100,000 population, 1980 and 1988.



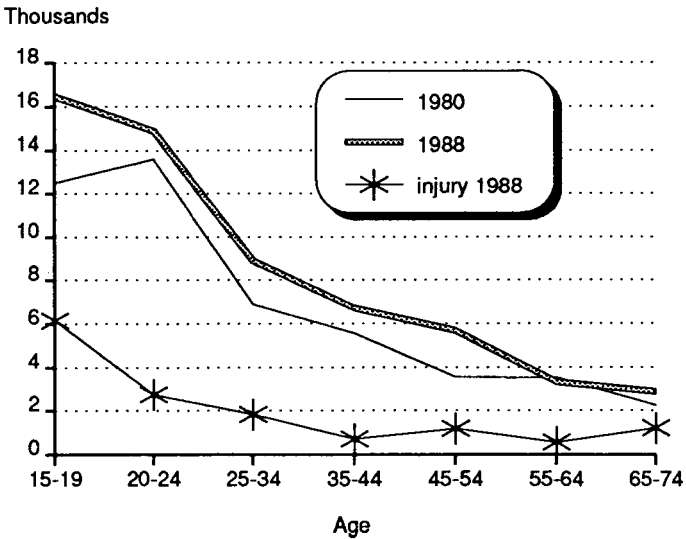
6b. Male victims of other leisure-time accidents by age group per 100,000 population, 1980 and 1988.



7a. Female victims of traffic accidents by age group per 100,000 population, 1980 and 1988.



7b. Male victims of traffic accidents by age group per 100,000 population, 1980 and 1988.



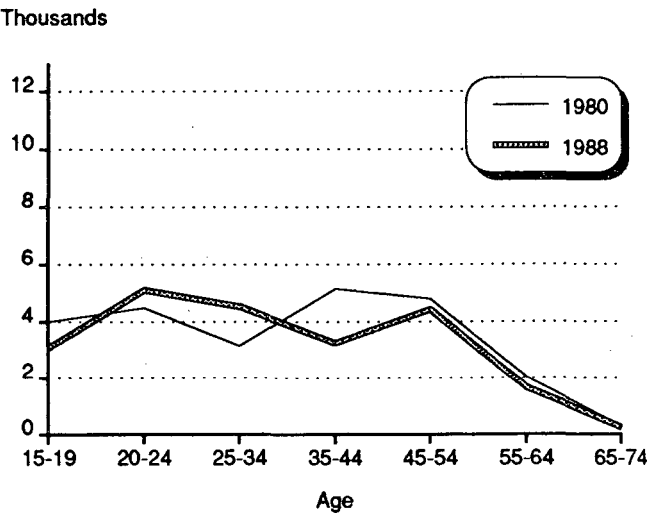
Fewer work accidents

The survey found 231,000 work accidents in 1988. Their number has fallen slightly since 1980: seven per cent for men, six per cent for women. The difference between men and women has remained unchanged; more than two-thirds of work accidents involved men.

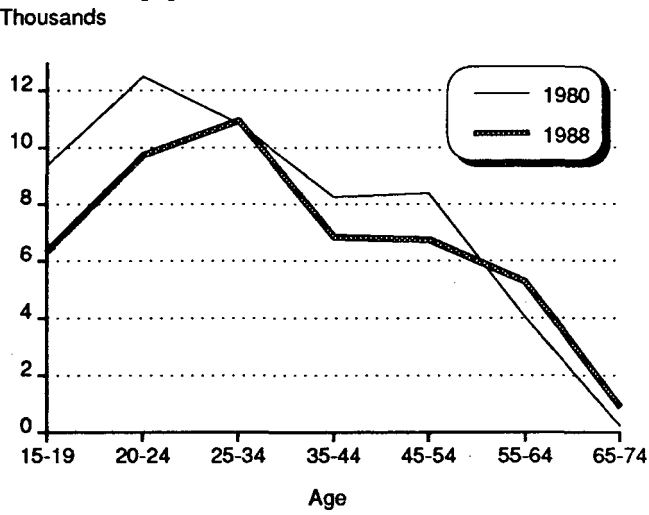
The greatest decrease from 1980 is shown by work accidents of young men. For women, work accidents have decreased slightly in the 35-44 age group, but increased in the 20-34 age group.

Work accidents are an accident type causing the most injuries. The injuries have become less severe: bone fractures and wounds in the body have decreased, minor injuries have increased.

8a. Female victims of work accidents by age group per 100,000 population, 1980 ja 1988.



8b. Male victims of work accidents by age group per 100,000 population, 1980 and 1988.



Background of the survey

The provisional results concerning accidents and violence presented in this publication are derived from an extensive interview survey describing the safety of life in Finland. Besides accidents and violence, the survey dealt with victimization by property crimes, hidden criminality, and fear of crime. The project also included a study of crime damage, the data of which were derived from the records of crimes kept by the police.

The executive group of the project had the following members: Göran Strengell (Chairman), Risto Lättilä, Marja Ojutkangas, Pentti Pietilä and Markku Heiskanen (Secretary) from the Central Statistical Office of Finland, Kauko Aromaa from the National Research Institute of Legal Policy, Olli Nieminen from the Ministry of the Interior, and Anneli Ruusinen from the National Board of Health.

The project group had the following members: Markku Heiskanen (Co-ordinator), Tuomo Niskanen and Jaana Ylinen (Secretary) from the Central Statistical Office of Finland, and Reino Sirén and Hannu Niemi from the National Research Institute of Legal Policy.

The interim report has been produced by a working group comprising Kauko Aromaa, Hannu Niemi and Reino Sirén

from the National Research Institute of Legal Policy, and Markku Heiskanen, Risto Lättilä and Tuomo Niskanen from the Central Statistical Office of Finland.

The survey is connected with the sector on personal safety and administration of justice of the OECD Social Indicator Development Program, which has studied, among other things, safety indicators and concepts related to physical safety.

Physical safety was measured by examining sudden, unexpected, externally caused events which had damaged the respondent's health. Such events were subdivided as follows:

- traffic accidents
- work accidents
- accidents at home
- sports accidents
- other leisure-time accidents
- criminal violence

Traffic accidents and violence were defined more broadly than other accident types. They also include cases where the respondent did not suffer any physical injuries.

Method of study

The data were collected in March-December 1988 by interviewing nearly 14,000 Finns aged 15 years or older who had been selected by random sampling. The respondents were asked questions about accidents and crimes which they had experienced during one year. The response rate was 87 per cent.

The figures presented have been arrived at by raising the sample data to correspond to the population aged 15–74. The interim report does not contain information on respondents more than 74 years old.

Sample surveys are always subject to random variation which influences the results. Therefore, the results should be interpreted as confidence intervals and not as exact figures. For example, the number of traffic accidents is, at a

probability of 90 per cent, between 246,000 and 274,000.

Besides the sampling error, the measurement contains uncertainty factors which probably lower the figures for accidents and violence somewhat below their real level. Such factors include, e.g., forgetting of minor accidents and, in the case of domestic violence, concealing of events. The final results may also contain corrections of interpretation and other errors.

The information content of the data corresponds to that of the 1980 interviews. Therefore, the results are comparable with the 1980 results.

Appendixes

Table 1. Accidents and incidents of violence by sex and age of victims, 1988.

Table 2. Victims of accidents and violence by sex and age, 1988.

Table 3. Victims of accidents and violence by sex and age per 100,000 population, 1988.

Table 4. Accidents and violence by sex of victim and type of injury, 1988.

Table 1. Accidents and incidents of violence by sex and age of victims, 1988.
The statistical unit is accident or incident of violence.

	Victimization category							
	Traffic	Traffic injury	Work	Home	Sports	Other	Violence	Violence injury
Total	259837	71518	231037	141303	192411	87392	498320	99176
Sex								
Male	158103	32635	162453	54301	135765	41519	265970	45211
Female	101734	38882	68584	87002	56646	45873	232350	53965
Age								
15-19	47707	17207	17948	14331	54113	12922	102531	24810
20-24	46976	9560	33962	12874	36222	13999	81123	16856
25-34	63076	15418	76629	33066	62012	12906	129919	23611
35-44	49293	8445	47510	30327	25074	14314	94010	20739
45-54	29904	10143	33885	19723	10063	9950	49777	6837
55-64	13249	5160	19198	15670	3587	10879	27464	5606
65-74	9633	5584	1906	15312	1341	12423	13496	717
Sex								
Male	30701	10658	13106	6506	31819	8380	60629	12273
	30396	5374	24639	5177	27345	8327	50958	10615
	37476	7162	54970	13734	46856	9477	69874	11497
	29712	2999	33185	12297	18871	6411	44736	5513
	17667	3332	21135	6449	7296	4301	24280	3044
	7957	1321	14101	6867	2237	3241	11397	1586
	4195	1789	1318	3272	1341	1382	4087	182
Female	17006	6549	4842	7825	22293	4542	41902	12036
	16579	4186	9324	7697	8877	5671	30155	6241
	25600	8256	21659	19333	15156	3429	60045	12114
	19581	5446	14325	18031	6204	7902	49274	15226
	12237	6811	12750	13273	2766	5649	25497	3793
	5292	3840	5096	8803	1350	7637	16067	4019
	5438	3795	588	12040		11041	9409	535

The figures in the tables have been arrived at by raising the sample data to correspond to the population aged 15-74. Sample size was 12,934.

Table 3. Victims of accidents and violence by sex and age per 100,000 population, 1988.
The statistical unit is person (victim).

	Sex	Age	Victimization category							Popu- lation aged 15-74
			Traffic	Traffic injury	Work	Home	Sports	Other	Violence injury	
Total			6367	1826	5228	3455	4080	2129	7917	3721600
Sex										
Male			7929	1710	7281	2803	5697	2080	8820	1827756
Female			4860	1938	3246	4085	2516	2177	7046	1893844
Age										
15-19			13492	5302	4744	4083	13821	3427	19577	6694
20-24			11544	2477	7462	3267	7538	3508	13765	3966
25-34			7620	1961	7813	3985	5957	1515	9530	2213
35-44			5545	955	5085	3333	2706	1652	6676	1672
45-54			4764	1654	5592	3087	1614	1658	5311	851
55-64			2596	1011	3355	2874	702	2028	3703	802
65-74			2396	1394	504	3652	354	2892	1937	189
Sex										
Male			16469	6156	6332	3626	15759	4381	23038	6966
15-19			14889	2735	9727	2950	13237	3680	16339	5153
20-24			8896	1823	10950	3340	8656	2165	10323	2412
25-34			6705	703	6837	2883	3821	1430	6345	1078
35-44			5666	1179	6759	2283	2249	1523	5388	768
45-54			3326	552	5270	2562	935	1355	3973	663
55-64			2878	1228	904	1831	920	948	1876	125
65-74										
Female			10374	4408	3082	4561	11793	2430	15952	6410
15-19			8075	1238	5114	3906	4513	2855	11096	2736
20-24			6288	2106	4535	4661	3137	837	8702	2007
25-34			4325	1221	3240	3809	1533	1886	7025	2299
35-44			3861	2130	4425	3893	979	1795	5235	934
45-54			1952	1417	1666	3150	498	2623	3465	926
55-64			2094	1500	253	4795	0	4112	1976	230
65-74										

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(continued)

(continued)

Table 4. Accidents and violence by sex of victim and type of injury, 1988.
The statistical unit is accident or incidence of violence.

Sex	Type of injury	Victimization category					Total
		Traffic	Work	Home	Sports	Other	
Male	No injury	125468	.	.	.	.	342192
	Concussion	243	1306	.	1211	304	3342
	Sprain, pulled muscle	6635	46631	8816	93639	13634	170314
	Bruises to head and face	2289	795	1805	1853	1178	26236
	Bruises to hands, limbs, body	5517	22324	3071	9430	3355	53545
	Wounds on face or head	3148	2721	2262	3303	1506	18367
	Wounds elsewhere on body	2720	33416	18830	1468	4716	62541
	Fractured bones - head	1165	836	.	256	319	3385
	Fractured or broken bones - elsewhere	5886	17979	9529	15299	9578	59227
	Dental injury	.	588	299	1116	702	3975
	Internal injury	.	2917	1215	3536	1792	9460
	Burn	.	4945	3855	.	904	9922
	Eye injury	.	15691	1888	593	1105	19919
	Other minor injury	4686	9174	2731	3503	1645	26733
	Psychical injury	.	.	.	.	4035	4035
	Other serious injury	.	1098	.	659	783	2539
	No data	348	2032	.	.	.	2379
Female	No injury	62851	.	.	.	.	218742
	Concussion	4191	1749	1335	800	602	9267
	Sprain, pulled muscle	8484	21949	21710	40232	18619	112183
	Bruises to head or face	3125	327	1836	581	1186	20408
	Bruises to hands, limbs, body	10556	9816	11927	1768	8588	67645
	Wounds on face or head	992	1397	1992	.	828	8772
	Wounds elsewhere on body	3281	12326	15167	816	1740	35883
	Fractured bones - head	.	.	521	.	204	976
	Fractured or broken bones - other	4098	6990	12306	6467	7325	37770
	Dental injury	245	.	.	339	292	876
	Internal injury	261	1390	351	602	845	3449
	Burn	.	4086	14691	215	1147	20139
	Eye injury	.	969	251	.	.	1923
	Other minor injury	3649	7328	3644	4491	4256	28916
	Psychical injury	22495	22495
	Other serious injury	.	.	319	335	263	917
	No data	.	257	951	.	271	1829



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