



Ministry  
of Justice

# Justice Data Lab Statistics May 2014

8<sup>th</sup> May 2014



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of Justice**

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## **Introduction**

This report presents a summary of the requests for re-offending information through the Justice Data Lab for the period 2<sup>nd</sup> April 2013 to 30<sup>th</sup> April 2014. This report is published alongside the tailored reports which have been produced for individual organisations requesting information through the Justice Data Lab.

This report has been produced and published in line with the Code of Practice for Official Statistics. This report will be updated and published on the second Thursday of each month for the duration of the Justice Data Lab pilot.

### **What is the Justice Data Lab initiative and how does it work?**

The Justice Data Lab has been launched as a pilot from April 2013. During the pilot, a small team from Analytical Services within the Ministry of Justice (the Justice Data Lab team) is supporting organisations that provide offender services by allowing them easy access to aggregate re-offending data, specific to the group of people they have worked with. This service is intended to support organisations in understanding their effectiveness at reducing re-offending.

Participating organisations supply the Justice Data Lab with details of the offenders who they have worked with, and information about the services they have provided. The Justice Data Lab team matches these individuals to the re-offending datasets held within the Ministry of Justice and uses statistical modeling techniques to generate a matched control group of individuals with very similar characteristics. As a standard output, the Justice Data Lab supplies aggregate one year proven re-offending rates for the group of offenders the organisation has worked with, and those of the matched control group of similar offenders.

The re-offending rates for the organisation's group and the matched control group are also compared using statistical testing to assess the impact of the organisation's work on reducing re-offending. The results are then returned to the organisation with explanations of the key metrics, and any caveats and limitations necessary for interpretation of the results.

Finally, the tailored reports produced for each organisation are published on the Ministry of Justice website to promote transparency and ensure that findings produced through this service can be used by others to improve the rehabilitation of offenders.

## **Changes to this publication**

From this month's publication, the summary table at the end of this document will contain only findings being published this month. The Justice Data Lab findings from 2<sup>nd</sup> April 2013 to 30<sup>th</sup> April 2014 are presented in a separate file which accompanies this document. This file contains all findings to date, including those described in the summary table for the current month, but it is additionally organised by intervention type. We have intended this to be a more accessible version of all of our findings to date.

**Feedback from users on these changes, or any other any other aspects of our publications is welcomed. Please email your feedback to [justice.datalab@justice.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:justice.datalab@justice.gsi.gov.uk), or call us on 0203 334 4396.**

## Key Findings

### To date:

This publication reports on the Justice Data Lab requests received in the twelve months between the launch of the Justice Data Lab on the 2<sup>nd</sup> April 2013, and 30<sup>th</sup> April 2014. During this period there were 85 requests for re-offending information through the Justice Data Lab. Of these requests;

- 59 reports have been published previously. A further 2 are now complete and ready for publication, bringing the total of completed reports to 61. The headline finding of each request for this month is presented in Table 1 on the following pages, and a tailored report is also available for each, giving further detail about the analysis. All of these reports can be found at the following link: [www.gov.uk/government/organisations/ministry-of-justice/series/justice-data-lab-pilot-statistics](http://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/ministry-of-justice/series/justice-data-lab-pilot-statistics)
- 16 requests could not be answered as the minimum criteria for a Data Lab analysis had not been met.
- 1 request was withdrawn by the submitting organisation.
- The remaining requests will be processed in due course.

### This includes the following activity that has taken place this month:

- 2 requests have been fully answered.
- 3 requests were rejected as they did not meet the minimum criteria for a Data Lab analysis.

## **Caveats and Limitations**

The statistical methods used in the Justice Data Lab analysis are based on data collected for administrative purposes. While these data include details of each offender's previous criminal, benefit and employment history alongside more basic offender characteristics such as age, gender and ethnicity, it is possible that other important contextual information that may help explain the results has not been accounted for. Where any additional limitations specific to an analysis are relevant, these limitations will be clearly explained in the organisation's report.

The tailored reports contain information about re-offending behaviour only. The services or interventions to which these figures relate may have had an impact on other outcomes that have not been captured in these reports.

When matching to administrative datasets, it is likely that not all individuals will be matched. This is called attrition, and may be due to a variety of reasons, including sampling to select individuals whose intervention falls within a specific time period after release from custody or start of a non-custodial sentence. The Justice Data Lab is a service providing a new analysis of administrative data, and we know that matching between an organisation's individual level data, and the administrative data held by the Ministry of Justice will not be perfect. Reasons for the attrition are given below:

- The single largest reason for individuals being lost from analysis is that individuals have been selected where the intervention or service falls within a specific time period after release from custody or start of a non-custodial sentence. This selection criteria is imposed to make the analysis of the impact of that intervention more robust; including by supporting us in finding a matched control group of individuals with similar sentences within an equivalent time frame.
- The minimum criteria to match individuals has not been provided (name, date of birth, gender etc);
- The identifying information about the individual may not be the same as what is held on the administrative databases (name, date of birth, gender etc) meaning that we could not be confident about the match;
- There may be more than one individual with the same identifying information, and it is not possible to establish which identity is correct;
- Information about the sentence (including sentence type) does not match what is held on the administrative records to an extent where we cannot be confident that a re-offending follow up would be appropriate;
- Individuals who received the intervention or service in custody may have still been in custody after 31<sup>st</sup> December 2011;
- The individuals cannot be matched to offenders with similar characteristics.

Where possible, in each organisation's report we will detail how many individuals have been lost in the stages listed above, and any additional reasons which are relevant.

Table 1: Requests through the Justice Data Lab from 1<sup>st</sup> April 2014 to 30<sup>th</sup> April 2014. Requests are ordered alphabetically.

Organisation and Programme		Summary of Programme	Effect on the one year proven re-offending rate	Effect on the frequency of one year proven re-offending
1	The Prison Phoenix Trust	The Prison Phoenix Trust is a charity that encourages individuals in the development of their spiritual welfare, through the practices of yoga and meditation in their prison cells and in classes. Prisoners have the opportunity to correspond with volunteer letter writers, who have a yoga and meditation practice of their own. The writers support prisoners through correspondence, newsletters and free resource books and a CD. All these materials show how to practice yoga and meditation in a prison cell. This analysis relates to individuals who have corresponded at least three times with The Prison Phoenix Trust in prisons across England and Wales. These individuals have received one or more yoga and meditation books/CDs, and one or more letters between 2002 and 2010.	This analysis looked at the impact of receiving yoga and meditation materials provided by The Prison Phoenix Trust on re-offending. This analysis is currently inconclusive as the one year proven re-offending rate is between a 2 percentage point reduction, and a 25 percentage point increase compared to the matched control group.	The frequency of one year proven re-offending for 59 offenders who received yoga and meditation materials from The Prison Phoenix Trust was 1.69 offences per individual, compared with 1.12 per individual in the matched control group. Statistical significance testing has shown that this difference in the re-offending rates is not statistically significant.
2	Time for Families (second request)	Time for Families is a charity that specialises in providing relationship education. One of Time for Families' main areas of focus is prisons. The charity runs a six-day relationship education course for self-selected prisoners and their partners, focusing on strengthening their relationships and addressing their key issues. The aim of the course is to build a firm foundation for the future of the relationship, with the intention that strong relationships will hopefully lead to reduced re-offending. This analysis assessed the impact on re-offending of male prisoners that participated in a Building Stronger Families course provided by Time for Families whilst in prison, between 2005 and 2011, and includes those individuals from the previous Time for Families request published in January 2014.	This analysis looked at the impact of a relationship course provided by Time for Families on re-offending. This analysis is currently inconclusive as the one year proven re-offending rate is between a 5 percentage point reduction, and a 9 percentage point increase compared to the matched control group.	The frequency of one year proven re-offending for 197 offenders targeted by Time for Families was 0.93 offences per individual, compared with 1.03 per individual in the matched control group. Statistical significance testing has shown that this difference in the re-offending rates is not statistically significant.

## **Contact points for further information**

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For further guidance about the Justice Data Lab, and how to access the service, please refer to the guidance which can be found at the following link:

[www.justice.gov.uk/justice-data-lab](http://www.justice.gov.uk/justice-data-lab)

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