

Offender Management Statistics Quarterly Bulletin, England and Wales

July to September 2014

Ministry of Justice
Statistical Bulletin

29 January 2015

Introduction

This bulletin provides the latest statistics relating to offenders who are in prison or supervised in the community in England and Wales. It covers flows into these services (receptions into prison or probation starts) and flows out (releases from prison or probation terminations) as well as the caseload of both services at specific points in time. The figures are presented in detail, with commentary, in the following sections of the bulletin.

Further information about background, data definitions, data quality issues and users of the statistics are available in the accompanying document.

The next edition of this bulletin, covering the period October to December 2014, will be published on 30 April at 9.30am.

Key Findings

- The prison population has continued to increase, at an annual growth of around 1%. This continues to be driven by increases in the remand population, and a greater number of adult sentenced sex offender prisoners.
- The prison population serving an Indeterminate Sentence for Public Protection continues to decrease, but an increasing number and proportion of prisoners in this population are now post-tariff.
- Sentenced prison receptions and releases from prison decreased across all sentence lengths, apart from receptions for long determinate sentences of four years or more and indeterminate receptions, which increased over the last year.
- The number of individuals released on temporary licence (ROTL) continued to fall, with nearly a third less individuals being released in the most recent quarter compared to the same time last year. This follows the written [ministerial statement](#) on ROTL policy on 10 March 2014.
- Both the total probation caseload and the court order caseload remained stable between the quarters ending September 2013 and September 2014, each falling by less than 1%.
- The number of offenders starting community orders fell by 7% over this period, whilst starts of suspended sentence orders with requirements attached increased by 2%. The fall in community order starts is consistent with quarter on quarter trends seen over the past couple of years, and with the trends in court sentencing statistics over the same period.
- The proportion of offenders not returned to custody following a licence recall over the whole period 1999 to the end of December 2014 remained constant with only 6 in 1,000 prisoners not being returned to custody.

Prison population

The prison population grew rapidly between 1993 and 2008, at an average of 4% a year. This rapid rise was driven by:

- Increases in the number of people sentenced to immediate custody from 1993 to 2002;
- Increases in the average custodial sentence length and increased use of indeterminate sentences; and
- Increases in the number of offenders recalled to prison following breaches of their licence conditions, along with increases in the average length of time these offenders spent in prison once recalled.

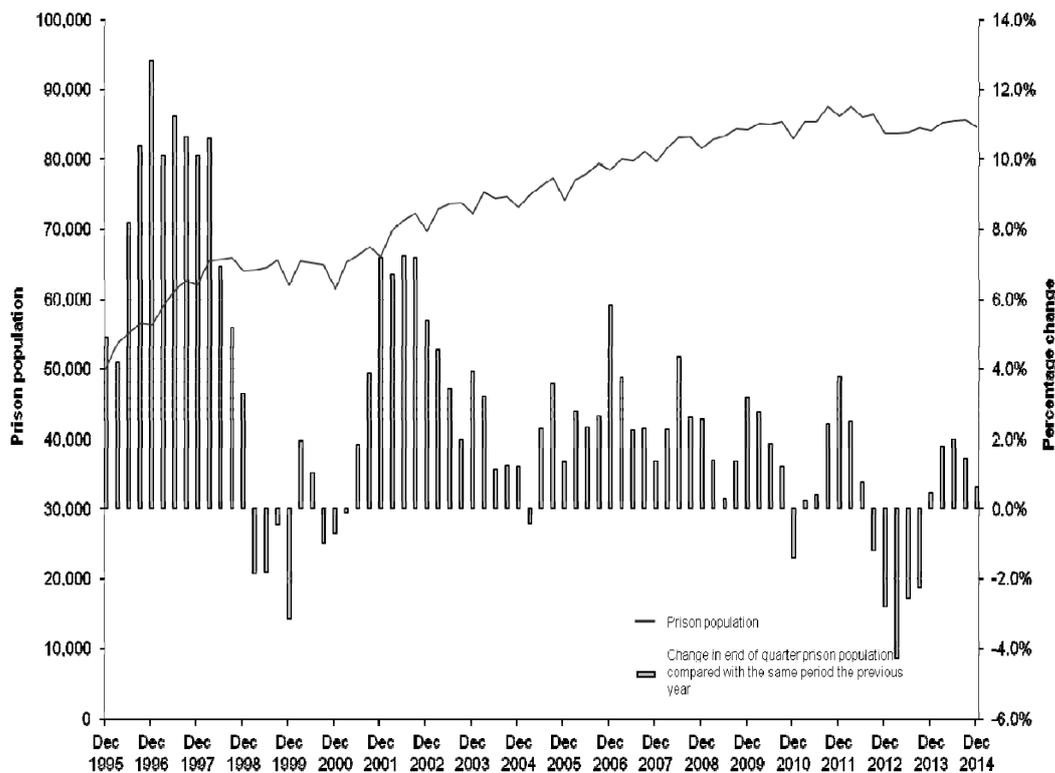
The rise in the prison population slowed considerably from the summer of 2008, in part due to the introduction of the [Criminal Justice and Immigration Act 2008](#), which changed sentencing and offender management in ways which helped to reduce growth in the prison population.

This flatter trend continued until the public disorder seen in UK cities from 6 to 9 August 2011 which had an immediate but temporary impact on the prison population. During 2012 and into 2013, the prison population began to fall due to a falling remand population and a continued decline in the number of under 18s in custody. The falling remand population during 2012 reflected falling volumes going through the courts plus the introduction of the [Legal Aid, Sentencing and Punishment of Offenders \(LASPO\) Act](#) in December 2012. This Act restricted the use of remand for offenders who would be unlikely to receive a custodial sentence.

The [‘Story of the Prison Population 1993 to 2012’](#) is an in-depth look at what happened to the prison population between 1993 and 2012 and the major factors contributing to the changes.

Following the LASPO Act in December 2012, and up until the end of June 2013, the prison population stabilised. In particular, by March 2013 the remand population stopped falling as it had done since August 2011. After settling at a lower level the remand population then began to rise again from August 2013, and contributed to the sharp rise in the prison population seen between the end of August and October 2013. Overall, since June 2013 the prison population has increased, albeit at a slower rate than in previous years, typically growing at 1% a year.

Figure 1: Quarterly prison population and annual percentage change, England and Wales, December 1995 to December 2014



Over the twelve months to December 2014, the total prison population increased by 1%, principally driven by a rising remand population and a greater number of adult sentenced sex offender prisoners. The sentenced population remained broadly stable, increasing only slightly, and offsetting the decrease seen in the non-criminal population which fell over the same time period.

The remand population increased by 5% over the year; this was mainly due to a rising trend in the adult remand population that continued over the 12 months, up 6% on the same time last year. This has been attributed to an increase in demand on the courts, which in some cases has led to longer waiting times.

Whilst the sentenced population remained stable, its composition changed, with more prisoners serving determinate sentences of four years or more and, to a lesser extent, an increase in recalls. Over the twelve months to December 2014 the number of prisoners serving these long determinate sentences increased by 5%. Much of this increase is due to the LASPO Act which abolished the Indeterminate Sentence for Public Protection (IPP), and introduced the new Extended Determinate Sentence (EDS), which is now available for offenders who would previously have received an IPP. As at the end of December 2014 there were 1,502 prisoners serving an EDS, which is

more than double the number (656 prisoners) who were serving these sentences twelve months ago at the end of December 2013. The remainder of the increase reflects the number of offenders being received into custody with other longer determinate sentence lengths.

The number of prisoners serving indeterminate sentences (IPP or life) was down 3% on the previous year, to 12,360. This decrease is explained entirely by the abolition of the IPP sentence; offenders are no longer receiving these sentences and prisoners are only being released from this population. Compared to last year, whilst the number of prisoners serving IPP sentences fell from 5,335 at the end of December 2013 to 4,894 at the end of December 2014, the population has become increasingly post-tariff. In particular, the entire IPP population with a tariff of less than two years is now post-tariff.

The number of life prisoners remained stable. There were 50 whole life prisoners at the end of December 2014, with five additional life prisoners being treated in secure hospitals.

The number of sentenced adult sex offenders continued to increase, and at the end of December 2014 was at 11,360, which is 7% (or 751) higher than twelve months before. This is consistent with the increasing number of sex offenders being given custodial sentences by the courts and, more broadly, with the recent ['Crime in England and Wales'](#) bulletin from the Office for National Statistics that reported the highest number of sexual offences recorded by the police since 2002/03, for the year ending September 2014.

Consistent with this, over the long term, an increasing proportion of sentenced prisoners are serving sentences for more serious offences – the proportion serving sentences for sexual offences increased from 10% in 2000 to 16% at the end of December 2014. Similarly, 27% of the sentenced population had committed violence against the person offences, up from 21% in 2000.

Due to problems with data quality, reporting on the populations in the 'Burglary' and 'Theft and Handling' offence groups had been disrupted between 1 July and 31 December 2014. This is because, for statistical purposes only, some prisoners have been mis-allocated between these two offence groups. This has been clearly footnoted in the affected tables (Tables 1.2a, and 1.2b), and these data points are replaced with symbols for this edition (..). The reporting of these figures has been further postponed until the next edition of OMSQ in April 2015.

The female prison population grew by 1% over the 12 months to December 2014, consistent with the increase in the prison population as a whole. However, the female sentenced population saw increases in shorter sentences and decreases in longer sentences, in contrast to what has happened in the male sentenced population.

There was a decrease in the foreign national population in custody, which was down 2% on the previous year to 10,503 on 31 December 2014 (representing 12% of the prison population). However, this is an increase on the previous

quarter ending 30 September 2014, which was the lowest quarter ending number since March 2006. This was driven by an increase in the foreign national remand population, as the foreign national sentenced population continued to fall. The fall in the last twelve months predominantly reflects a revised agreement with Home Office to reduce the number of immigration detainees in the prison estate, which reduced the non-criminal population by 12% over the period. Additionally, in August 2014 an exercise was undertaken to improve the recording of the nationality of prisoners. This resulted in around 100 foreign national prisoners being removed from this group after having their nationality information updated.

Prison receptions

First receptions count prisoners the first time they appear in prison from court. A prisoner's reception type is counted each time they are first received into custody as untried, convicted unsentenced and sentenced prisoners from court. This means that prisoners can be counted in more than one of these categories if their custody status changes as they progress through the Criminal Justice System in the reporting period.

First receptions fell 5% to 26,391, with decreases in both remand and sentenced receptions compared to the same time last year. There was an increase in untried receptions for drugs offences (17%) and sexual offences (5%), but decreases in untried receptions for fraud and forgery (24%), theft and handling (24%), robbery (15%) and motoring offences (14%). Similar falling trends were seen in the convicted unsentenced receptions. There was a continued increase in sentenced receptions for sexual offences (13%) and burglary (4%), but decreases in receptions for all other offence groups, in particular, theft and handling (13%), robbery (10%) and motoring (9%).

There were decreases in juvenile and young adult receptions for remand and determinate sentences of less than four years. For adults, there were decreases in convicted unsentenced remand receptions (6%) and short sentence receptions. Increases in longer sentenced receptions of four years or more are consistent with the aforementioned population trends for these sentence lengths.

Prison releases

A total of 18,444 offenders were released from custody in the quarter ending September 2014, a fall of 7% on the same quarter last year. This has been

driven by a decrease in male releases of 8%, whereas there has been a 3% increase in the number of female prisoners released from determinate sentences.

There were 103 prisoners released from an IPP and a further 74 from a life sentence, making up a 17% decrease in releases from indeterminate sentences when compared to the same period last year. In addition, 18 indeterminate sentenced prisoners were removed under the Tariff Expired Removal Scheme (TERS) in the latest quarter. This scheme allows indeterminate sentenced foreign national prisoners, who are liable to removal from the UK, to be deported from the country on or after the date of their tariff expiry without reference to the Parole Board. The scheme began in May 2012, and by the end of September 2014 there had been 274 removals in total.

Average sentence lengths of those released from determinate sentences remained stable across all sentence bands. Average time served fell slightly when all sentence bands are taken together, however increases in time served were seen for shorter sentences of greater than 6 months to less than 12 months.

The number of releases on Home Detention Curfew (HDC) fell by 14% to 2,185 between the quarters ending September 2013 and September 2014. To be considered for release under HDC an offender must be serving a sentence of less than 4 years, and the number of offenders serving such sentences has been falling (see earlier population section). The decrease of 11% in the eligible population will have a direct impact on the number that can be considered for HDC release and the number that are subsequently released.

Between July and September 2014, there were 108,877 releases on temporary licence (ROTL) from prisons in England and Wales. This is a 23% decrease since July to September 2013; with all types of licence showing decreases. This fall follows the written [ministerial statement](#) on ROTL policy on 10 March 2014 which set out a more thorough assessment of the risks before temporary release is authorised and a more consistent and robust response for prisoners who fail to comply with their licence. The number of release incidences for females decreased by 8%, compared to a 24% decrease for males over the same period. The number of individuals given at least one instance of ROTL between July and September 2014 was 4,409, which represents a 29% decrease over the year. Of the individuals given at least one instance of ROTL, 15% were on an indeterminate sentence.

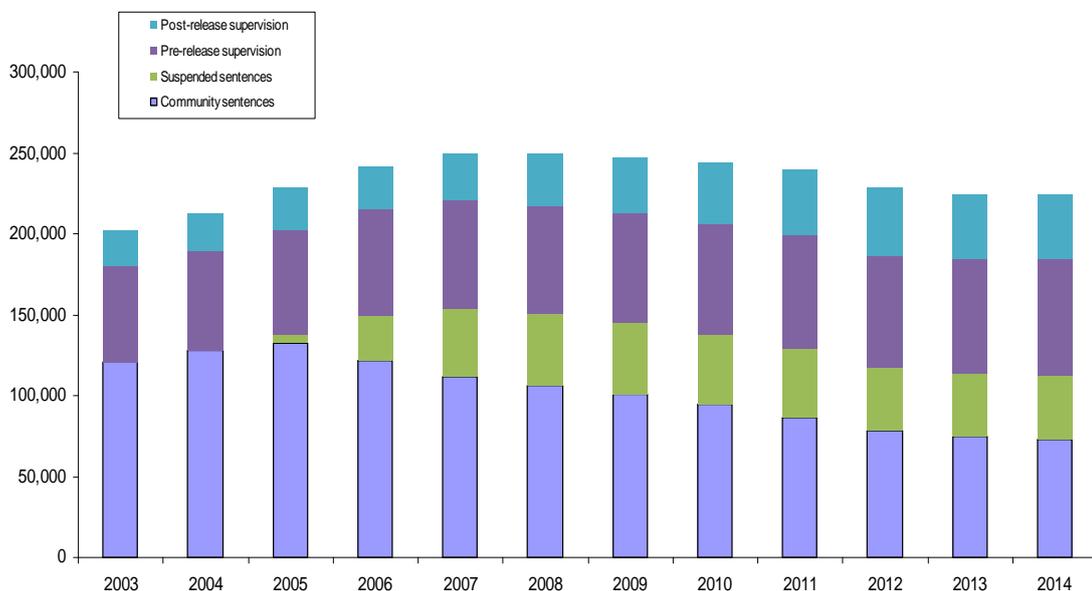
The number of recorded temporary release failures (TRFs) between July and September 2014 was 61, which represents a 33% decrease over the year. The number of recorded failures has shown a decrease every quarter since April to June 2013. This quarter we have introduced a rate of TRF per 100,000 releases to the temporary release tables. This failure rate also decreased over the last year.

Probation

Transforming Rehabilitation is a reform programme that has changed the way offenders are managed in the community. On the 1st June 2014, Probation Trusts were replaced by the National Probation Service (NPS), which manages the most high-risk offenders across seven divisions; and 21 Community Rehabilitation Companies (CRCs), which manage medium and low-risk offenders. At the end of September 2014, the point at which this bulletin reports on offender caseload in the community, the probation caseload was still in transition with some cases held, both in the NPS and CRCs, pending transfer to the other organisation for reasons relating to effective risk management.

The total annual probation caseload (court orders and pre and post release supervision) increased by 39% between 2000 and 2008 to 243,434. Since then the probation caseload has fallen year on year, reaching 219,588 at the end of 2013, down 2% from the previous year. The caseload has remained relatively stable since then and stood at 219,778 at the end of September 2014.

Figure 2: Number of offenders under Probation Service supervision (at end December), 2003-2013¹ and September 2014



1) Between 2003 and 2013, the number of offenders supervised in the community refers to the annual caseload ending December of each year. For 2014, the number of offenders supervised in the community corresponds to the caseload ending September 2014.

The court order caseload (offenders on community orders (COs) and suspended sentence orders (SSOs)) fell slightly (less than 1%), with the CO

caseload falling 2% but the SSO caseload rising by 3% between the quarters ending September 2013 and September 2014.

The caseload of offenders supervised before or after release from prison remained stable between the quarters ending September 2013 and September 2014, but those supervised under post release fell by 3%, consistent with the falling trend in prison releases. The number of pre-release supervision starts also remained stable over this period.

The number of offenders *starting* community orders fell by 7% over this period, whilst starts of SSOs with requirements attached increased by 2%. The fall in community order starts is consistent with quarter on quarter trends seen over the past couple of years.

In addition, in the quarter ending September 2014 there were over 2,000 starts of SSOs without requirements attached. This brings the total number of stand-alone SSO starts to more than 8,350 since they were introduced under the LASPO Act 2012 (see data sources and quality section).

With regard to the number of requirements started under court orders, there were again notable rises in curfews, and standalone curfews in particular. This may reflect the continuing impact of a mandatory punitive requirement in every community order, introduced from December 2013 under the Crime and Courts Act 2013. The combination of supervision and unpaid work requirements made under both community orders and suspended sentence orders also showed a significant rise over the latest quarterly period.

Of the court orders terminated in the quarter ending September 2014, more than two-thirds (68 per cent) were terminated successfully (either ran their full course or terminated early for good progress). This was true for both COs and SSOs, and is relatively stable over time.

The number of court reports prepared continued to fall – a total of 35,350 court reports were prepared in the quarter ending September 2014, 10% down on the quarter ending September 2013, reflecting the continuing downward trend in the number of cases being completed by the courts.

In general, courts follow the sentences proposed in pre-sentence reports (PSRs), particularly where an immediate custodial sentence has been recommended - 88% of such proposed sentences in PSRs resulted in immediate custody.

Licence recalls

A key element of public protection is that offenders released on licence should be effectively supervised in the community and swiftly recalled to custody if they breach their licence or if their behaviour gives cause for concern. It is explained to offenders at the outset that they are liable to be recalled to custody if they breach any of the conditions of their licence. There are various reasons why offenders are recalled to custody for breaching their licence conditions besides committing a further offence. For example, an offender may be recalled if there is any deterioration in behaviour which leads the National Offender Management Service (NOMS) to conclude that there is an increased risk of the offender committing further offences.

Over the period 1999 to September 2014, a total of 689,000 offenders were released from prison on licence supervision. Between April 1999 and September 2014, 181,926 of those released on licence were recalled to custody for breaching the conditions of their licence, e.g. failing to report to their probation officer. Of all those recalled, 99.4% were returned and 1,122 had not been returned to custody by the end of December 2014. The proportion of prisoners not returned to custody over this period is 0.6% and this is a relatively constant figure when compared to previous years. This total includes some offenders believed to be dead or living abroad but who have not been confirmed as dead or deported.

Of the 1,122 not returned to custody by 31 December 2014, 141 had originally been serving a prison sentence for violence against the person offences and a further 37 for sexual offences.

During the quarter ending 30 September 2014, a total of 4,697 offenders were recalled to custody and 126 had not been returned by 31 December 2014. This number is likely to decrease over time as police have more opportunity to locate and arrest these offenders.

Accompanying this quarter's bulletin there is a consultation on the licence recalls tables. This is part of the wider review of the Offender Management Statistics Quarterly bulletin to ensure it continues to meet our user's needs. Alongside this consultation document there is also a proposed set of new licence recalls tables. These tables demonstrate how we propose to present these statistics in the future in light of the changes to supervision in the community as part of the Transforming Rehabilitation reform programme. In this edition of OMSQ, we recommend that users continue to refer to main licence recalls tables; the proposed tables are provisional and their purpose is for consultation only.

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General enquiries about the statistical work of the Ministry of Justice can be e-mailed to: statistics.enquiries@justice.gsi.gov.uk

General information about the official statistics system of the UK is available from www.statistics.gov.uk

Ministry of Justice publishes data relating to offender management in England and Wales. Equivalent statistics for Scotland and Northern Ireland can be found at:

www.scotland.gov.uk/Topics/Statistics/Browse/Crime-Justice

www.dojni.gov.uk/index/statistics-research/stats-research-publications.htm

This publication and associated spreadsheet files of the tables contained in this document and detailed information of definitions, sources and key legislative changes are available for download at

www.gov.uk/government/collections/offender-management-statistics-quarterly

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