



Ministry  
of Justice



# **Offender Management Statistics Bulletin, England and Wales**

Quarterly – January to March 2015

**Ministry of Justice**  
Accompanying Information

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## Introduction

This document provides data information and discussion of policy impacts on key statistics relating to offenders who are in prison or under Probation Service supervision in England and Wales. The bulletin covers flows into these services (receptions into prison or probation starts) and flows out (releases from prison or probation terminations) as well as the caseloads at specific points in time. Latest figures for the quarter January to March 2015 are provided in the accompanying bulletin and compared to the same period in 2014. This is with the exception of the prison population where more recent data are available (30 June 2015).

The bulletin is published alongside two inter-related bulletins:

- **Proven Re-offending Statistics Quarterly:** provides proven re-offending figures for offenders who were released from custody, received a non-custodial conviction at court, received a caution, reprimand, warning or tested positive for opiates or cocaine in the 12 months ending September 2013.  
[www.gov.uk/government/collections/proven-reoffending-statistics](http://www.gov.uk/government/collections/proven-reoffending-statistics)
- **Safety in Custody Statistics Quarterly:** provides statistics on death, self harm and assault incidents whilst in prison custody.  
[www.gov.uk/government/collections/safety-in-custody-statistics](http://www.gov.uk/government/collections/safety-in-custody-statistics)

Taken together, these publications present users with a more coherent overview of offender management including re-offending among both adults and young people, and the safety of offenders whilst in prison custody.

The United Kingdom Statistics Authority has designated the statistics in this publication as National Statistics, in accordance with the Statistics and Registration Service Act 2007 and signifying compliance with the Code of Practice for Official Statistics.

Designation can be broadly interpreted to mean that the statistics:

- meet identified user needs;
- are well explained and readily accessible;
- are produced according to sound methods; and
- are managed impartially and objectively in the public interest.

Once statistics have been designated as National Statistics, it is a statutory requirement that the Code of Practice shall continue to be observed.

## **Appendix A – Data sources and quality**

The data presented in this publication are drawn from administrative IT systems. Although care is taken when processing and analysing the returns, the detail collected is subject to the inaccuracies inherent in any large scale recording system. While the figures shown have been checked as far as practicable, they should be regarded as approximate and not necessarily accurate to the last whole number shown in the tables. Where figures in the tables have been rounded to the nearest whole number, the rounded components do not always add to the totals, which are calculated and rounded independently.

### **Impact of data quality issues and revisions**

#### **Population data**

Routine data quality checks identified an issue with how offenders who are held post-sentence awaiting deportation are recorded within the population data. At any given time, around 300 offenders who should be recorded as non-criminals, wrongly remained recorded as sentenced prisoners. This issue has been resolved with effect from April 2013 and revised figures have been provided in all tables reporting the prison population by type of custody and offence.

While it was not possible to also carry out the data quality work on data prior to April 2013, it is likely that the impact would have been similar (around 300 non-criminal prisoners incorrectly recorded as sentenced prisoners at both points in time).

#### **Receptions data**

Following the introduction and phased roll-out of a new case management system for prisons (prison-NOMIS) from May 2009, data collection issues emerged that affected the supply of data for statistical purposes. The vast majority of issues were resolved in March 2010; however, prison receptions data for 2010 is unavailable due to problems in the supply of data for statistical purposes.

Analysis of the receptions data in early 2010 identified a problem with the way reception dates were being handled in the data extract used centrally (operations within prisons were unaffected). In terms of producing the statistics, this potentially affected the period for which a given reception was counted, for example Q3 2010 versus Q4 2010. Further analysis has shown that the issues predominantly affected 2010, with data from 2011 onwards impacted less.

While the data may not be accurate to the last digit, it is considered robust enough for analysis of broad trends; both over time, and between different types of reception.

## **Probation data**

From February 2013, there has been a phased introduction and rollout of a national case management information system across all Probation Trusts (n-Delius). As of 31 January 2014, all trusts have migrated to the new system.

As a result of that migration, there has been an increase in the number of offenders within the migrated trusts with tier of supervision recorded as 'Tier not stated'. Investigations are being undertaken to identify the source of this issue.

The Legal Aid, Sentencing and Punishment of Offenders Act 2012 introduced Suspended Sentence Orders (SSOs) without requirements attached. Offenders sentenced to such SSOs are not supervised by the National Probation Service as there are no requirements for the offender to meet, other than to not commit a further offence – they do not therefore appear on a Probation Trust's caseload. There have been increasing numbers of such orders given since they were introduced in December 2012, and their inclusion in the number of overall SSO starts resulted in a reversal of the general downward trend – this was seen for the first time in the quarter ending June 2013.

As the National Probation Service is not required to supervise offenders with stand-alone SSOs, we have taken steps to separate these orders out and they are reported separately in Table 4.1. All other tables containing starts of SSOs exclude stand-alone SSOs (Tables 4.2 to 4.6 of the quarterly tables and Tables 4.2 to 4.12 of the annual tables).

## **Pre-sentence court reports (PSR) data**

Evidence provided by Probation Trusts suggested that published statistics on the number of PSRs prepared by each trust were lower than those statistics produced by their internal case management systems.

The PSR data collection process in place until 31 March 2012 entailed each trust providing monthly data on the number of reports prepared that month, with the data extracted on or just after the 15<sup>th</sup> of the following month, e.g. data for July collected on 15<sup>th</sup> August. On investigation it emerged that many trusts, particularly those in large metropolitan areas, enter some PSRs onto case management systems after this date due to data collection practicalities. To address this issue, trusts were asked to submit each monthly return two months later than previously to allow time for additional reports to be recorded and the impact on the statistics was assessed.

This new extended data collection process has been introduced for data from April 2012, and we estimate that the statistics now capture between 1 and 3 per cent more PSRs per quarter as reported within Tables 4.12 and 4.13 (Quarterly tables).

Subsequent data quality work has shown that the introduction of a longer time lag between the date a PSR is prepared and when data is extracted from case management systems, i.e. more than two months, would capture more court report data (over and above the additional 1 to 3 per cent now included in the two most recent quarters). However, these further increases were mostly seen in the number of court reports prepared for breaches, court reviews and deferred sentences (see below). For standard and fast delivery pre-sentence reports, a two month time lag captures the vast majority of data and there are diminishing returns in extending the data collection period any further.

During the data quality work described above, it emerged that previously published data for court reviews, PSR breach reports and deferred sentences was incomplete in terms of coverage across all trusts and that there were inconsistencies between trusts in the coverage and content of the data extracted from their case management systems. This data has therefore been removed from Table 4.12 for all quarters (quarterly tables) and Table A4.25 (annual tables) – the estimated impact on the total number of reports written is a reduction of around 4,500 reports per quarter.

It is hoped that with the introduction and phased rollout of a national management information system (nDelius) for all Probation trusts and, since 1 June 2014, the National Probation Service (NPS), more accurate and complete data can be produced on PSR breach reports in future. This will be kept under review.

In addition, during routine data quality work carried out as part of production of last quarter's bulletin, it emerged that there were a large number of PSRs without completion rates in large metropolitan areas, London in particular. Migration to nDelius has introduced delays to logging of PSRs and their completion rates, the impact of which was a substantial fall in the number of PSRs prepared in the second half of 2013. Our assessment at the time was that data were not considered suitable for publication.

Significant data cleaning work has since been carried out and the data are now considered to be robust and of sufficient quality to resume publication.

Transforming Rehabilitation is a reform programme that is changing the way offenders are managed in the community. Key aspects of the reforms include creating a new public sector National Probation Service (NPS) to work with the most high-risk offenders, and forming 21 new Community Rehabilitation Companies (CRCs) to manage medium and low-risk offenders. The new NPS and 21 CRCs have been operational since 1 June 2014, and from that point Probation Trusts ceased to exist. Therefore the reporting period for this bulletin, covering January to December 2014, excludes statistics at Probation Trust level in the accompanying tables.

## HDC eligibility

In order to bring the coverage of HDC eligibility in line with all other prison population data, figures from 2011 onwards have been taken from a different source resulting in a break in series from 2011. To aid comparison, 2011 figures within Table A3.5 have been presented using both data sources. The impact of the change in data source is a 2 per cent increase in the number eligible for HDC which results in a slight fall in the release rate (down 1 percentage point).

The increase in the number of offenders identified as being eligible for HDC in the new data source is due to improved recording of release dates which enables more prisoners to be captured in the 'eligible' category. Using the previous data source, if the release date for an offender was missing, they would have been excluded from the eligible category as it would not have been possible to determine at which point they were eligible to be released under HDC.

## Indeterminate sentences for public protection

Information relating to tariffs for IPP and DPP prisoners and those serving life sentences is held by the Offender Management and Public Protection Group, NOMS, in the Public Protection Unit Database (PPUD).

## Licence recalls and returns to custody

**Returned to custody** – the figures for those returned to custody include people who have died or been deported by the UK Borders Agency as prior to 2007 this information was not collected separately. The information held centrally records whether or not recalled offenders are still wanted for return to custody but for those offenders no longer wanted for return to custody, information is not held on whether the recall was completed by actual return to custody or because the offender died or was deported.

**Not returned to custody** – this includes those offenders believed to be dead or living outside of the UK but who have not been confirmed as dead or deported.

## Symbols used

..	not available
0	Nil or less than half the final digit shown
-	not applicable
*	One or both of the comparison figures are less than 50
(p)	Provisional data
(r)	Revised data

## **Revisions policy**

Figures for prison receptions and releases for each of the first three quarters of the calendar year are generally revised alongside figures for quarter 4 in the October to December publication each year. Prison population, probation and licence recall figures are not routinely revised, but are corrected if an error is identified.

Any revisions will be accompanied by an explanation for the revision and its impact, along with – where appropriate - an assessment of whether the impact is in line with previous revisions.

## Appendix B – Users of Offender Management Statistics

The contents of the report will be of interest to the public, government policy makers, the agencies responsible for offender management at both national and local levels, and others who want to understand more about the prison population, probation caseload, licence recalls and returns to custody.

The statistics included in this publication are used extensively and meet a broad spectrum of user needs as shown below.

User	Summary of main statistical needs
MOJ Ministers	Use the statistics to monitor the prison population and capacity of the prison estate; monitor effectiveness of probation service and whether resources are deployed efficiently; assess policy impacts (e.g. changes to sentencing guidance)
MPs and House of Lords	Statistics are used to answer parliamentary questions – approximately 100 are answered each year using prison and probation data
Policy teams	Statistics are used to inform policy development, to monitor impact of changes over time and to model future changes and their impact on the system
Agencies responsible for offender management	Current and historical robust administrative data are used to support performance management information at national and local levels within each agency to complement their understanding of the current picture and trends over time
Academia, students and businesses	Used as a source of statistics for research purposes and to support lectures, presentations and conferences, e.g. data on female foreign national prisoners are included in 'The Criminalisation of Migrant Women' report published by the Institute of Criminology, University of Cambridge in July 2012
Journalists	Used as a compendium of robust data on offender management so that an accurate and coherent story can be told on the prison population and probation service
Voluntary sector	Data are used to inform policy work, responses to consultations and briefing papers by analysing trends and changes to the prison population, e.g. the Prison Reform Trust use published offender management data to compile the 'Bromley Briefing Prison Factfiles'
General public	Data are used to respond to ad-hoc requests and requests made under the Freedom of Information (FOI) Act: offender management data is used to answer around 100 FOIs each year

## Contact points

Press enquiries should be directed to the Ministry of Justice press office:

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Other enquiries about these statistics should be directed to:

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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](mailto:statistics.enquiries@justice.gsi.gov.uk)

General information about the official statistics system of the UK is available from [statisticsauthority.gov.uk/about-the-authority/uk-statistical-system](http://statisticsauthority.gov.uk/about-the-authority/uk-statistical-system)

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](http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Topics/Statistics/Browse/Crime-Justice)

[www.dojni.gov.uk/index/statistics-research/stats-research-publications.htm](http://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/publications/offender-management-statistics-quarterly--2](http://www.gov.uk/government/publications/offender-management-statistics-quarterly--2)

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