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| Ministry of Justice | Disclosure Team  Ministry of Justice  102 Petty France  London  SW1H 9AJ  [data.access@justice.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:data.access@justice.gsi.gov.uk)  January 2018 |

**Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) Request –** 171113023

Thank you for your request in which you asked for the following information from the Ministry of Justice (MoJ):

*the information I am requesting is:*

*1. The number of people in the datashare who had had at least one prison spell*

*2. The number of people in the datashare who had had at least one prison spell and who were in P45 employment on 1 December 2012.*

Your request has been handled under the FOIA.

I can confirm that the MoJ holds the information that you have requested and I have provided it below. All information comes from the 2013 The Department for Work and Pensions (DWP), Her Majesty's Revenue and Customs (HMRC), Ministry of Justice (MoJ) data share, which is the source of analysis outlined in the publication “Experimental statistics from the 2013 MoJ /DWP /HMRC data share” published in January 2014, referred to in your correspondence. In line with the tables published alongside this publication all volumes have been rounded to the nearest 1,000.

There were 481,000 individuals in the DWP/HMRC data share who had at least one prison spell, in England and Wales. This data share, however, is limited in scope. As stated in my response to your previous FOI (FOI ref: 171019003), the DWP/HMRC/MOJ data share only holds information for those individuals who were cautioned or convicted for a recordable offence between 2000 to early 2013. It only includes information on prison spells for these individuals over the same period. Therefore we do not hold information outside of these dates. As mentioned in the publication, we only have actual prison spell data from January 2008 to June 2011 and outside of this the spells had to be estimated from Police National Computer data.

The answer provided includes:

* individuals who have had recent convictions/cautions; i.e. after 01/12/12
* individuals who were convicted early in this period but have not been convicted of an offence since;
* individuals convicted/cautioned for multiple offences in this period

The answer to your second question is that the number of these same individuals who were in P45 employment on 1 December 2012 is 137,000. These individuals could have been in prison at any time covered by the data, i.e. from 2000 to early 2013, so potentially there may have been many years between the prison spell and 01/12/2012, or it could possibly have fallen after that date.

The data is restricted to those aged 18 or over at the start of the sentence, and aged 62 or under at the end of the sentence. This is to ensure that the analysis is restricted solely to those of working age, and therefore able to be in P45 employment or on working age benefits, for at least a two-year period either side of the prison sentence. This is consistent with the approaches taken in the other employment-focused tables produced alongside the publication.

It should also be noted that the analysis in the publication which focuses on the 2010/11 tax year, uses the first relevant conviction, caution or release from prison for each individual in that tax year. Consequently, the figures do not include all those who were released from prison in that tax year, only those released from prison who had not been convicted or cautioned of an earlier offence within the tax year for which they did not receive a custodial sentence. No such condition has been imposed in the figures provided in this response.

As per the publication all numbers released based on the data share should be treated as experimental and provisional. Full details about the data share, its scope, process, caveats and data issues are outlined in the 2014 publication. As with any large-scale recording system, the data are subject to possible errors with data entry and processing. For example, it should be noted that P45 employment does not include self-employment and some low paid employment may also be excluded.

We are clear that prisons must become places of discipline, hard work and self-improvement. Our reforms will help deliver a system that is focused on getting prisoners the education they need to live law-abiding lives when they are released. We are empowering our governors, who will take control of budgets for education, employment and health and they will be held to account for getting people off drugs, into jobs and learning English and maths. This will help reduce the £15 billion annual cost of reoffending and create safer communities.

Yours sincerely

Statistician

Data Linking Team | Justice Statistics Analytical Services