



Offender Management Statistics Bulletin, England and Wales

Quarterly: October to December 2022, and Annual: calendar year 2022

Prison population: 31 March 2023

Main points

84,372 prisoners in England and Wales as at 31 March 2023



The total prison population was 6% higher than at the same point in the previous year.

16,422 first receptions into prison between October and December 2022



The number of first receptions represented a rise of 9% compared to the same period in 2021.

11,582 releases from sentences between October and December 2022



This was 5% lower than the same period in 2021. As the prison population shifts towards those serving longer sentences, we expect fewer releases in a given period.

41,171 adjudication outcomes between October and December 2022



This was a rise of 8% compared to the same period in 2021. Additional days were awarded as punishment on 716 occasions – this was 6% higher than the same period in 2021.

6,092 licence recalls between October and December 2022



This was a 6% increase on the same quarter in 2021.

240,431 offenders on probation at the end of December 2022



This number increased by 1% compared to the number of offenders supervised as at 31 December 2021.

This publication provides offender management quarterly statistics for the latest date available and provides comparisons to the previous year.

For technical detail please refer to the accompanying guide, '[Guide to offender management statistics](#)'.

Note regarding 'Restricted Patients' publication

Following user feedback as part of our review into statistics publications, from next year we will move the publication of restricted patients statistics to a new statistical collection on gov.uk. We will provide links to the new location as part of the OMSQ publication in April 2024. This change is intended to make it easier for users to find statistics they need on restricted patients in one place.

Statistician's comment

In this publication we are reporting on the prison population as at 31 March 2023, with comparisons to the same point in 2022. Over this 12-month period, the total prison population has risen by around 4,600 (which represents a 6% increase) to 84,372. This is the first quarter for which the prison population has exceeded pre-pandemic levels (for comparison, the 31 March 2020 prison population was 82,990).

The increasing remand population trend that we have seen since early 2020 has continued (an 14% increase between 31 March 2022 and 31 March 2023). There were increases over the past 12 months in both elements of the remand population - the 'untried' population increased by 20% and the 'convicted unsentenced' population increased by 5%. This likely reflects the impact of continuing court recovery following COVID-19 restrictions, resulting in an increase in the number of prisoners held on remand. The large increase in the 'untried' population this quarter has likely also been driven in part by strike action by the Criminal Bar Association during autumn 2022¹.

The remand prison population in late-2022 was the highest for at least 50 years. Since then, the total remand population has come down by around 230 but it still represents a near 'record high'.

The prisoner flows data in this publication cover the period October to December 2022 (with the comparison period being October to December 2021), together with additional annual data for the calendar year 2022. The number of prisoner first receptions from October to December 2022 was around 16,400 (9% higher than the equivalent period in 2021). This is still below the level of around 18,000 per quarter seen pre-pandemic.

Release on Temporary Licence (ROTL) continues to 'bounce back' following the large drop during the COVID-19 period. There were around 99,000 ROTL incidences between October and December 2022 – this is a 10% increase compared to the same quarter in 2021, but still some-way short of the pre-COVID levels of around 110,000 per quarter.

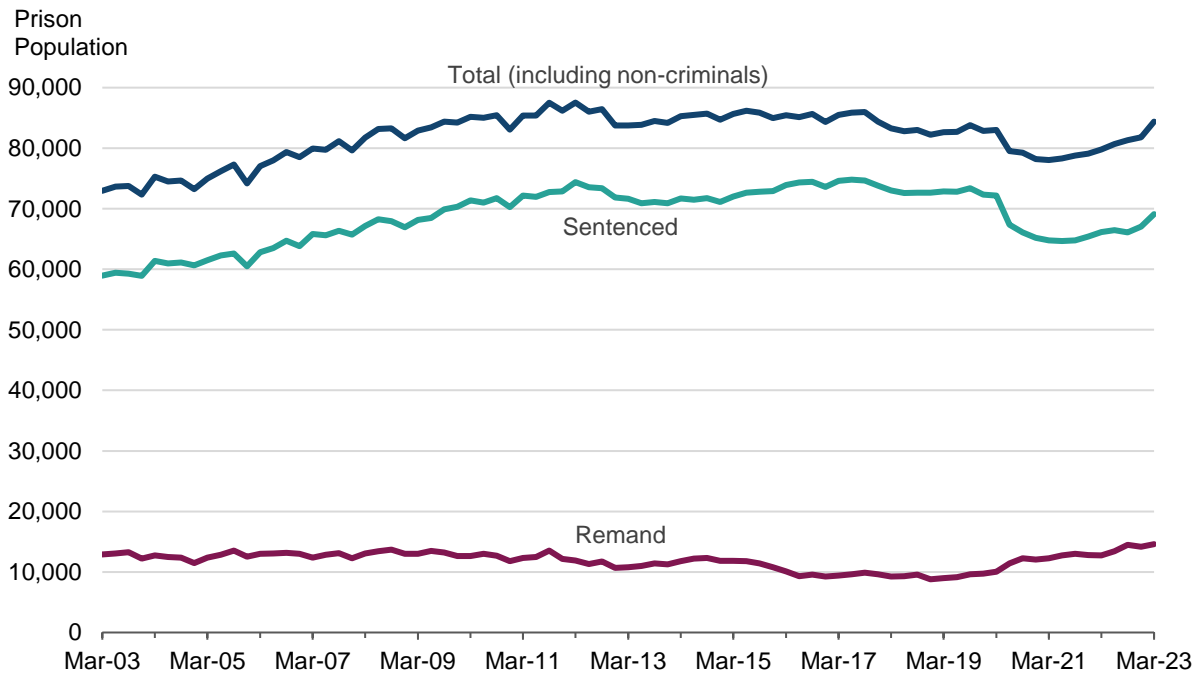
¹ Further contextual information regarding the impact of the Criminal Bar Association action on court cases can be found in the most recent Criminal Court Statistics publication here: <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/criminal-court-statistics-quarterly-october-to-december-2022>

1. Population

The prison population stood at 84,372 on 31 March 2023.

The sentenced prison population stood at 69,119 (82% of the total); the remand prison population stood at 14,591 (17%) and the non-criminal prison population stood at 662 (1%).

Figure 1: Prison populations, March 2003 to 2023 (Source: Table 1.1 and previous Offender Management Statistics Quarterly publications)



Remand prison population

The March 2023 remand population figure of 14,591 is 14% higher than in March 2022 and is the highest March figure in at least the last twenty years. The untried prison population rose by 20% (to 9,746) when compared to the end of March 2022 whilst the convicted unsentenced population rose by 5% (to 4,845) over the same period.

Most of those in custody on remand were being held for either: violence against the person (30% of the untried population and 20% of the convicted unsentenced population); or drug offences (24% of the untried population and 33% of the convicted unsentenced population).

While white prisoners make up 74% of the sentenced population, they make up only 65% of the remand population. All other reported ethnic groups have a larger proportional representation in the remand population than they do in the sentenced population.

Sentenced prison population²

The sentenced population was 69,119 which is a 4% increase from the same point 12 months earlier. This was primarily driven by changes in the Recall and Extended Determinate Sentence populations (see below).

Most prisoners under an immediate custodial sentence have been convicted of Violence against the person (31%) or Sexual offences (20%). Both offence groups have seen increases over the last year (7% and 10% respectively in the 12 months to 31 March 2023). The occurrence of these offence groups in the remand population has also increased over the same period so the trend in the sentenced population may be expected to continue for some time.

Extended Determinate Sentences (EDS)

EDS constitute a custodial term, the majority of which is served in prison, followed by an additional extended period of licence in the community. They can be imposed if the offender is found guilty of, or has a previous conviction for, a specific sexual, violent or terrorist offence. On 31 March 2023, 7,366 prisoners were serving such sentences; an 11% increase compared to the same time last year. Prisoners serving EDS account for 9% of the total prison population.

Indeterminate sentences

On 31 March 2023, there were 8,505 (8,177 male; 328 female) prisoners serving indeterminate sentences (Imprisonment for Public Protection (IPP) and life sentences). This represents a slight overall decrease (-1%) when compared with 31 March 2022.

The number of unreleased prisoners (7,150) serving life sentences has increased by 1% compared to one year ago whereas the number of unreleased IPP prisoners fell by 13% to 1,355. At point of sentencing, offenders are given a minimum time period ("tariff") that they must serve in prison before they can apply to the Parole Board for release. The majority (60%) of the remaining unreleased IPP prisoners have been held for at least nine years beyond the end of their tariff.

The number of recalled prisoners serving life sentences increased by 21% to 801 when compared to March 2022, whilst the number of recalled IPP prisoners saw a 12% increase to 1,561.

Recall to custody

The population recalled to custody (11,450 prisoners) has increased by 17% relative to the total a year earlier. The increasing recall population is likely driven by a combination of factors such as a longer-term increase in the average length of determinate sentences and an increase in the number of people serving indeterminate sentences or sentences with an extended licence.

Foreign National Offenders (FNOs)

There were 10,148 (3,132 remand, 6,405 sentenced and 611 non-criminal) foreign nationals held in custody on 31 March 2023; representing 12% of the total prison population. The number of FNOs in the prison population has increased by 5% compared to 31 March 2022. This is largely driven by the 19% increase in the FNO remand population which contributed more than two and a half times as many individuals as the 3% increase in the sentenced FNO population. The non-criminal FN population fell by 24% over the same period. The most common nationalities after British Nationals in prisons are Albanian (14% of the FNO prison population), Polish (8%), Romanian (8%), Irish (6%), Jamaican (4%), and Lithuanian (4%).

² The sharp fall (-54% compared to March 2022) in the summary non-motoring immediate custodial sentence population is believed to be associated with data quality improvement work which has updated the offence group for some prisoners that were previously recorded in this category.

Operation Safeguard

On the 28 February 2023 eleven male prisoners were being held in police cells rather than prisons. This was part of Operation Safeguard³, a measure implemented to help cope with prison capacity constraints.

³ <https://hansard.parliament.uk/Commons/2022-11-30/debates/520966EF-BB43-4380-8800-21C46222BE00/PrisonCapacity>

2. Prison receptions and admissions

Summary of annual statistics

63,536 individuals were received into custody as first receptions in 2022.

This represents a 7% increase year on year, and a 44% decrease compared to 10 years ago (112,774 first receptions in 2012).

First receptions

The number of annual first prison receptions was broadly stable during the 15-year period between 1994 and 2009 (with an average of around 129,200 each year). Since 2011 the number of annual first prison receptions had fallen year-on-year to a low of 59,440 in 2021. However, in 2022 the number of first reception increased again for the first time in the last 10 years, to 63,536. This figure remains below pre-pandemic levels.

First prison receptions of Foreign Nationals

Around 17% of the total first prison receptions in 2022 were of foreign nationals, this is a similar proportion to that of 2021 and 2020.

Five nationalities accounted for just under half (49%) of the total foreign national first prison receptions in 2022: Albanian (1,726), Romanian (1,380), Polish (1,199), Irish (514), and Lithuanian (489).

Prison admissions

In 2022, there were 31,187 untried prison admissions (i.e. for those on pre-trial remand); this is 13% higher than in 2021. Most untried prison admissions during 2022 were for an alleged violence against the person (VATP) or drug offence, with 41% untried prison admissions during 2022 being for one of those offences.

There were 19,080 convicted unsentenced entries to custody during 2022 (i.e. after having been found guilty at court but awaiting their sentencing hearing), similar to 2021. For convicted unsentenced admissions for males, around 2 in 5 prison admissions during 2022 was for a VATP or drug offence. For women, 2 in 5 convicted unsentenced prison admissions were for a VATP or theft offence.

There were 43,005 sentenced admissions to prison in 2022, as 2% rise compared to 2021. Half of sentenced admissions during 2022 were for sentences of less than 12 months.

Compared to 2021, there was a 2% increase in the numbers of immediate custodial (non-remand and non-fine defaulter) sentenced admissions. The largest proportionate increases occurred for theft offences and summary motoring with a 9% increase each. This marks the first time that immediate custodial sentenced admission for theft offences have increased (on an annual basis) since 2015.

After being released from custody, if an offender breaches their licence conditions, they can be recalled to custody. During 2022, there were 22,046 recall admissions to custody, this is a 4% increase compared to 2021; driven by a 16% increase in recall admissions from determinate sentences of less than 12 months. In 2022, recall admissions from determinate sentences of 12 months or more represented 60% of all recall admissions.

Summary of quarterly statistics

The number of first receptions between October and December 2022 was 9% higher than the same period in 2021 but remains below pre-pandemic levels.

Compared to October to December 2021, there were increases in remand admission types in the latest quarter (untried admissions rose by 16% and convicted unsentenced admissions rose by 6%). There was also an increase in the number of sentenced admissions, up 4% (to 11,431) compared with the same quarter in 2021.

Recall admissions increased by 6% compared to October to December 2021. Recall admissions from indeterminate sentences increased by 4%, while those from determinate sentences increased by 6%.

Former Members of the Armed Forces

When individuals are first received into custody, they complete a Basic Custody Screening (BCS) process. This serves to identify their needs in areas including employment, childcare and healthcare. As part of this process, they are asked whether they had served in the armed services.

Between October and December 2022, 151 matched individuals first received into custody answered that they had served in the armed services - this represented 2% of those who provided a response to the question at the point of their first reception during the latest quarter.

In October 2022, the MoJ published the latest release of 'Ex-Service Personnel in the Prison Population' – which included an estimate of the numbers and characteristics of ex-service personnel in the prison population. This was published as part of the Offender Management Statistics; April to June 2022 here: <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/offender-management-statistics-quarterly-april-to-june-2022>

3. Releases

Summary of annual statistics

46,034 offenders were released from custody during 2022.

45,569 releases from determinate sentences and 465 from indeterminate sentences.

Prison releases from custodial sentences

In 2022, there were 45,569 offenders released from determinate sentences, a fall of 2% from 2021.

There was a 12% fall in the number of releases from determinate sentences of '4 years or more', as compared to the previous year. Meanwhile, there was virtually no change in the number of releases from determinate sentences of 'less than 4 years'.

The number of males and females released from determinate sentences both fell by 2% between 2021 and 2022.

465 offenders were released from indeterminate sentences in 2022; an 11% decrease overall compared to 2021, with releases from IPP sentences down 10%, and releases from life sentences down 11%.

The mean sentence length for those released from determinate sentences in 2022 was 26.0 months (a fall from 26.6 months for those released in 2021), which ends the longer-term trend of annual increases which began in 2015. The equivalent median sentence length remained at 12.0 months for the third year running. Mean time served (including time spent on remand) also fell, ending a long-term rising trend, to 15.6 months. The equivalent median figure remained the same as in 2021, at 6.0 months.

Releases on Home Detention Curfew (HDC)

8,695 offenders were released on HDC in 2022, this is 7% lower than in 2021. The number of offenders potentially eligible for HDC (based on their sentence length) rose by 5% over the same period.

Of offenders released on HDC in 2021 (the latest year for which recall data is currently available), 17% were recalled, a slightly lower proportion than the previous year's 18%.

Releases on Temporary Licence (ROTL)

In 2022, there were 375,586 incidences of ROTL. This is 53% higher than in 2021 and reflects the lifting of COVID restrictions, allowing increased levels of normal prison activity (including ROTL). This figure is comparable to 2018 (376,343) but remained below 2019's figure (436,531).

The number of individuals released on temporary licence also rose from 2021, up 25% to 7,106, however this figure remains below that seen in both 2018 (7,737) and 2019 (8,740).

Prisoner transfers

As with ROTL above, the incidences of prisoner transfer have also increased compared to 2021, rising 13% to 73,455. This figure remains below that seen pre-pandemic, 14% lower than 2019's figure. The number of individuals who received at least one transfer in the period increased by 7%, which also remains below pre-pandemic levels (8% lower than in 2019).

Summary of quarterly statistics

11,582 offenders were released from custody in the latest quarter.

11,467 releases from determinate sentences and 115 from indeterminate sentences.

Prison releases from custodial sentences

The number of prisoner releases between October and December 2022 was 5% lower than the same quarter in 2021.

Between October and December 2022, there was an overall decrease, of 18%, in the number of prisoners released from sentences of 4 years or more (excluding indeterminate sentences), as compared to the same period in 2021. A 5% increase was seen for releases from indeterminate sentences compared to the same quarter in 2021, driven by a 25% increase in releases from life sentences.

Releases on Home Detention Curfew (HDC)

The number of offenders released on HDC in the latest quarter dropped to 2,007, a decrease of 14% compared to the same period last year. The number of offenders who might have been eligible for HDC (based on sentence length) over the same period was up 7% (10,333) compared to the same quarter in 2021.

Releases on Temporary Licence (ROTL)

Most ROTL was suspended for much of the pandemic period. HMPPS has, however, worked closely with public health authorities to re-introduce access to ROTL⁴ when and where it is safe to do so, and accounting for the changing national restrictions.

As a result of these changes to prison regimes, ROTL numbers have continued to increase. There were 98,884 incidences of ROTL during the quarter ending December 2022, which (as the post-COVID recovery continues) represents a 10% increase compared to the same quarter in 2021 but still remains below pre-pandemic levels. Of the ROTL incidences in the latest quarter, 67% were for 'Work Related' reasons.

The number of individuals receiving at least one incidence of ROTL between October and December 2022 continued to rise following the changes to prison regimes, up 4% from the same quarter in 2021. 4,255 individuals were released on temporary licence in the latest quarter.

There were 190 Temporary Release Failures (TRF) between October and December 2022. This represents a rate of around 1 TRF for every 520 incidences of ROTL.

Prisoner transfers

Between October and December 2022 there were 18,429 incidences of prisoner transfer, with 15,686 prisoners having at least one incidence of transfer. Both figures represent increases since the same period of 2021, with rises of 10% and 7% respectively, as transfers continue to recover towards pre-pandemic levels.

⁴ <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-national-framework-for-prison-regimes-and-services>

4. Adjudications

Summary of annual statistics

There were 155,832 adjudication outcomes in 2022.

66% of these adjudications were proven.

During 2022 there were 155,832 adjudications – this is a rise of 5% compared to 2021. Of these, proven adjudications increased from 100,696 to 102,791 (a 2% increase) over the same period, driven by a large increase in ‘unauthorised transactions’. This rise in adjudications can be seen across most demographic groups.

While periods of national lockdowns and COVID-19 restrictions saw decreases in the incidence of discipline breaches, this has been followed by a return towards previous incidence levels once lockdowns ended.

After a substantial fall observed in 2021, the total number of proven adjudications for ‘unauthorised transactions’ (those include possession of alcohol, drugs and other prohibited items), increased by 18% (to 29,644). The second-largest contributor is ‘violence’ offences, which increased by 2% (to 15,879). These offences account for 29% and 15% of the total respectively in 2022 and along with ‘disobedience / disrespect’ (34% of the total), these make up the three biggest offence groups.

The rise in ‘unauthorised transactions’ and ‘violence’ offences has been partially offset by a fall in ‘willful damage’ and ‘disobedience/disrespect’ offences, which decreased by 14% (to 10,380) and 3% (to 34,646) respectively in 2022.

Use of ‘Additional Days’ as punishment

The upward trend in the number of occasions where additional days were awarded reached a peak in 2018. Since then, there has been a continuous decline, with a fall from 2,586 occasions (2021) to 2,571 in the latest year.

Every time additional days were awarded as punishment in 2022, an average of 16 additional days were added (this has remained unchanged compared to 2021).

Summary of quarterly statistics

There were 41,171 adjudication outcomes between October and December 2022.

This is an increase of 8% on the same quarter in the previous year. Additional days were awarded as punishment on 716 occasions in this quarter.

Two thirds (64%) of adjudications were proven.

There was a 4% increase in the number of proven adjudications (to 26,440) from the same quarter in 2021. This in turn resulted in a 6% rise in the number of punishments (to 46,044). Offences of 'unauthorised transactions' were the largest contributors to the increases in proven adjudications and punishments described above.

A third (33%) of proven adjudications were for offences of 'disobedience and disrespect', with the next largest category being 'unauthorised transactions' (31%). The number of proven adjudications for 'unauthorised transactions' rose by 20% (to 8,130). This has been partially offset by a fall in other categories, in particular 'disobedience / disrespect', 'violence', and 'willful damage'. They fell by 2% (to 8,721), 5% (to 3,922) and 10% (to 2,551) respectively on the same quarter of the previous year.

The number of proven offences for 'violence' has decreased in the latest quarters of 2022, and quarterly averages are still lower than the figures recorded before the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic.

Additional days were awarded as punishment on 716 occasions between October and December 2022; this is a 6% rise compared with the same period in 2021. A total of 11,660 days were awarded in the latest quarter – this is a 13% rise compared with the same quarter in 2021 (10,299 days between October and December 2021).

While the overall number of adjudication outcomes increased by 8% in comparison to Q4 2021, this is still lower than pre-pandemic levels (of around 50,000 per quarter).

More information about the trends in Adjudications between 2011 and 2018 can be found in '[The Adjudications Story](#)' publication.

5. Licence Recalls

The number of licence recalls between October and December 2022 was 6,092, of which 317 were recalls from Home Detention Curfew (HDC).

The total number of recalls increased by 6% compared to the same quarter in 2021.

The total number of quarterly recalls trended upwards between October-December 2016 and July-September 2019. There was a marked increase in the number of quarterly recalls from early 2018 to July-September 2019, mostly due to increases in the number of HDC recalls and recalls of offenders from determinate sentences of 12 months or more. These numbers then began to fall, and the downward shift was accelerated by the introduction of COVID-19 restrictions. Following relaxation of COVID-19 restrictions in early 2021, the number of quarterly recalls has generally gone up – although the latest figure is a decrease of 2% from the previous quarter, it is an increase of 6% from a year ago. Nevertheless, the latest total number of recalls is lower than levels just before the onset of the COVID-19 Pandemic.

Following relative stability up to January-March 2020, the number of quarterly recalls of offenders released from a sentence of under 12 months noticeably began to fall, falling below 2,000 for the first time since July-September 2016, partly due to the introduction of COVID-19 restrictions. The relaxation of COVID-19 restrictions and the unification of the probation services in June 2021 (where these offenders are now recalled under a set of requirements different from that under the old Community Rehabilitation Companies) have contributed to increases in these numbers, with the latest figure (2,380) representing an increase of 11% from the previous quarter and an increase of 26% from a year ago.

The pattern in quarterly recalls of offenders with a sentence of 12 months or more (including those with indeterminate sentences) normally more closely mirrors that of the overall quarterly recalls as this group usually constitutes about 2/3 of overall recalls. Between October and December 2022, there were 3,712 recalls of such offenders, representing a decrease of 9% from the previous quarter and a decrease of 4% from a year ago.

Ethnicity proportions in quarterly recalls have remained relatively stable, with about 8 in 10 recalls being white, 8% being black and 5% being Asian in the latest figures.

There usually is more than one reason for recalling an offender on licence. Of recalls in October-December 2022, about 30% involved a charge of further offending, 72% involved non-compliance, 32% involved failure to keep in touch, and 26% involved failure to reside.

Between October and December 2022, 103 IPP prisoners and 42 prisoners serving a life sentence were rereleased, having previously been returned to custody for a breach of licence conditions. These together represent a decrease of 20% from the same quarter a year ago.

Offenders not returned to custody

Of all those released on licence and recalled to custody due to breaching the conditions of their licence between April 1999 and December 2022, there were 2,218 who had not been returned to custody by the end of March 2023.

A further 16 offenders had not been returned to custody as of March 2023 after recall between 1984 and April 1999, meaning the total number of offenders not returned to custody at the end of March 2023 was 2,234. These figures include some offenders believed to be dead or living abroad but who have not been confirmed as dead or deported.

Of the 2,234 not returned to custody by 31 March 2023, 355 had originally been serving a prison sentence for violence against the person offences and a further 64 for sexual offences.

6. Probation

Summary of annual statistics

The total number of offenders on probation (i.e., court orders and pre/post-release supervision) at the end of December 2022 was 240,431.

This represents a 1% increase compared to the end of December 2021 and an increase of 7% compared to December 2012.

In March 2020, operational restrictions were introduced in response to the COVID-19 pandemic. These measures, which included temporary court closures, led to a proportionally larger decrease in the number of offenders starting probation supervision in the period April to June 2020 compared to previous quarters. Although the pandemic continued to influence overall figures for 2021, the extent of this was reduced compared to the previous year, with more recent probation caseload figures in 2022 recovering towards pre-pandemic levels.

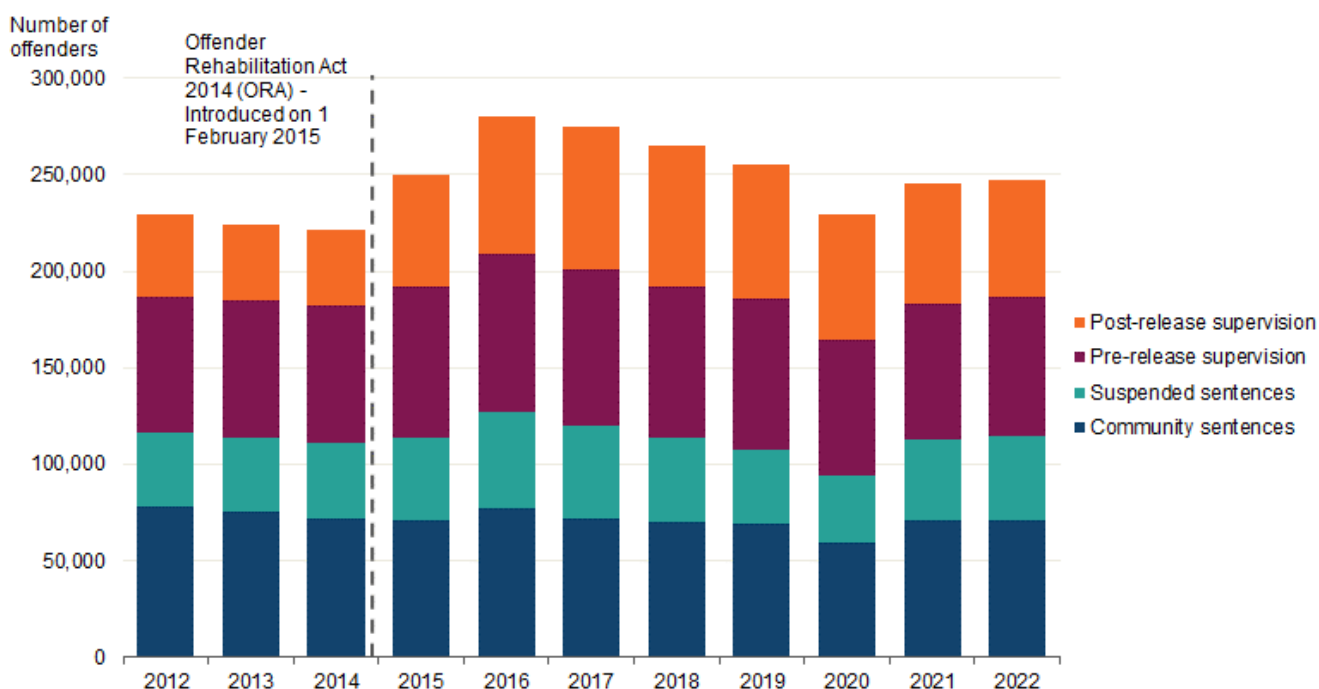
Following year on year decreases up to 2014, the number of offenders supervised by the Probation Service increased to 267,146 in 2016. However, at the end of December 2020, the total probation caseload stood at 223,973, representing a 10% decrease compared to the figure of 247,759 reported at the end of 31 December 2019 and a 16% decrease since 2016. By the end of December 2022, the probation caseload had risen to 240,431 (Figure 3), which is an increase of 7% since December 2020 and is only 3% below the figure recorded at the end of December 2019, showing signs that the caseload figures are recovering to pre-pandemic levels.⁵

The increase in the probation caseload between 2014 and 2016 can be explained by the implementation of the Offender Rehabilitation Act (ORA) in February 2015 under which all offenders on a custodial sentence are subjected to statutory supervision on release from prison. Previously, only adults sentenced to over 12 months in custody and all young offenders were subject to statutory supervision.

Between 2014 and 2016, the number of offenders supervised before or after release from prison increased by 37% to 149,522. At the end of December 2022, this figure stood at 132,078, representing a small increase of 0.1% compared to 2021, but still 10% and 2% below the figures recorded at the end of December 2019 and December 2020 respectively.

⁵ Total caseload as at 31 December 2019 (i.e., the last reporting period prior to the pandemic) stood at 247,759.

Figure 2: Number of offenders under Probation Service supervision, 31 December 2012 to 2022 (source: Table A4.13 of the annual probation tables)⁶



The total court order caseload decreased by 2% between 2012 and 2015 to 111,422 and then increased in 2016 by 12% to 124,643. Following a gradual decline between 2016 and 2019, it decreased over the next year by 12% to stand at 93,027 at the end of December 2020, and then rose by 19% to 110,965 in the year up to December 2021 and again to 112,851 at the end of December 2022; this is 6% higher than in 2019.

Following a 7% decrease in the number of offenders on a community order (CO) from 2012 to 2015, the number increased in 2016 before decreasing to 58,402 at the end of December 2020. This figure then increased by 20% to 70,371, the highest figure since 2017, but decreased slightly over the year 2022 to 70,051. Similarly, those on a suspended sentence order (SSO) with requirements decreased slightly between 2012 and 2013 to 38,227 before increasing in 2016 to 49,541. The number subsequently decreased again to stand at 35,198 at the end of December 2020, followed by increases of 19% and 6% to 41,892 and 44,258 in years 2021 and 2022 respectively.

The total number of offenders starting court order or pre-release supervision by the Probation Service in 2022 decreased by 7% to 136,754 compared with 2021, and this was primarily due to a 12% decrease in the number of offenders starting pre-release supervision.

Between 2012 and 2019, the number of court order starts decreased by 28% to 104,038 and then decreased by a further 23% to 79,621 in 2020. In 2021, they increased by 16% to 92,718, but subsequently decreased again by 3% to 89,885 in 2022. Specifically, 59,324 COs were started in 2022, representing a decrease of 3% since 2021 and a 12% increase since 2020. Following a similar trend, 31,997 SSOs with requirements were commenced in 2022, which was a decrease of 3% since 2021, but an increase of 19% compared to 2020.

⁶ The number of offenders on the probation caseload in 2020 was substantially reduced as a result of the operational restrictions that were put in place on the 23 March 2020 in response to the COVID-19 pandemic. While the impact of these operational restrictions continued into subsequent periods, figures in more recent periods have recovered to pre-pandemic levels.

The average length of COs starts decreased from 13.5 months in 2021 to 13.4 months in 2022. The average length of SSOs starts also decreased from 18.3 months to 18.0 months over the same period.

As a result of ORA being implemented in February 2015, the number of offenders starting pre-release supervision in custody increased by 114% from 45,063 in 2014 to 96,594 in 2016. Between 2019 and 2020, this figure decreased by 20% to 65,505 and then, unlike court order starts, which saw an increase in 2021, decreased by 8% to 60,226 in 2021, and by a further 12% in 2022 to 52,917.

Between 2012 and 2019, the total number of pre-sentence reports (PSRs) prepared by the Probation Service decreased by 47% to 103,004, reflecting the downward trend in the number of offenders sentenced in all courts over the same period.^{7, 8} This number then fell by 34% in 2020 to a series low of 68,077 before increasing by 30% in 2021 to 88,657,⁹ and then decreasing again in 2022 by 6% to 83,240.

Summary of quarterly statistics

Between October and December 2022, 38,675 offenders started court order or pre-release supervision by the Probation Supervision (Figure 4), representing an increase of 7% on the previous quarter, however, there is no change compared to the same quarter a year ago.

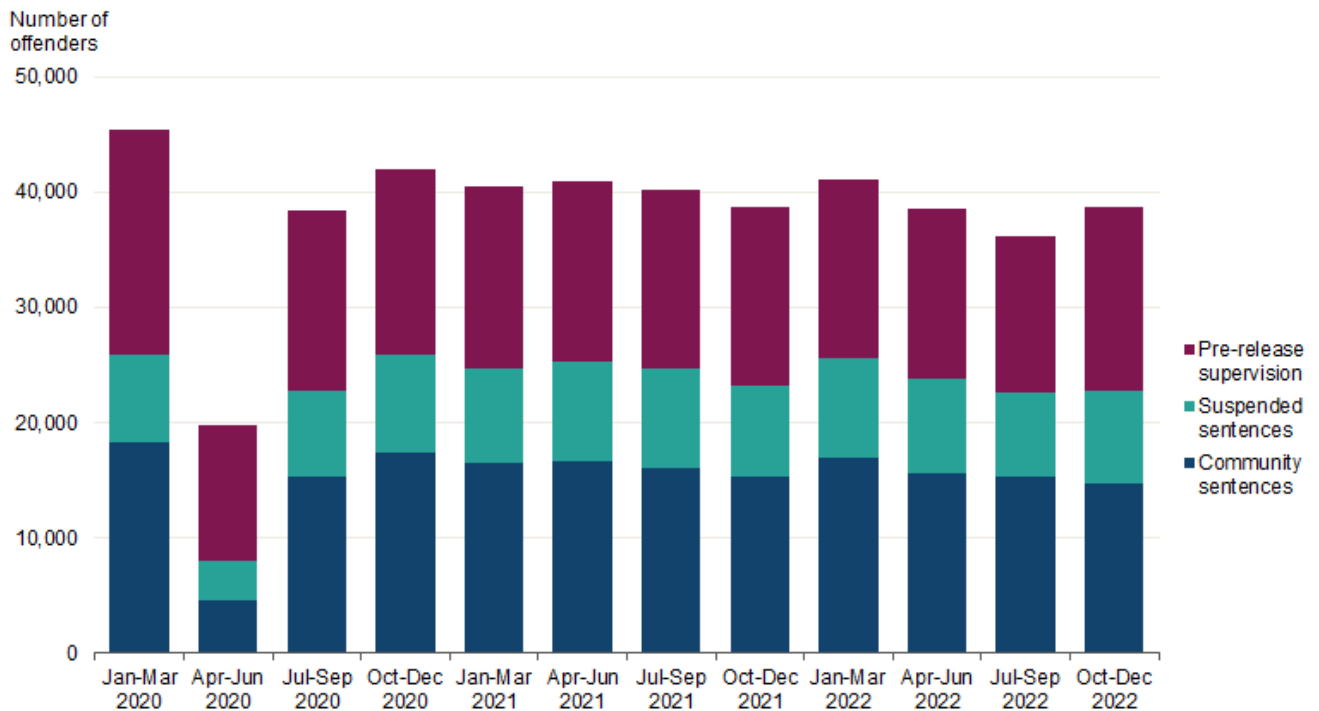
During the quarter October to December 2022, 14,557 offenders started COs, representing a 4% decrease compared to the previous quarter and a 4% decrease compared to the same quarter in the previous year. The number of offenders who started SSOs with requirements between October and December 2022 increased by 10% to 8,066 compared with the previous quarter and by 2% compared with the same quarter in the previous year. Those starting pre-release supervision increased by 17% in comparison with the last quarter and by 3% compared with the same quarter last year to 15,971.

⁷ Table Q5.1a in the Criminal Justice System Quarterly Statistics publication (www.gov.uk/government/statistics/criminal-justice-system-statistics-quarterly-june-2022) states the number of offenders sentenced at all courts in the 12 months ending June 2012 to the 12 months ending June 2022.

⁸ In the year ending June 2019, the number of offenders given sentences for community sentences, SSOs and custodial sentences decreased by 43%, 13% and 25% respectively compared to the year ending June 2012; a decrease of 35% was seen when comparing the combined number of these sentences across this period.

⁹ A sharp decrease in offenders sentenced between April and June 2020 caused by temporary court closures resulting from COVID-19 operational restrictions was followed by increases over the latter end of 2020 and into 2021 due to courts reopening and increasing workload again. The combined number of offenders sentenced to community sentences, SSOs and custodial sentences consequently increased by 6% between June 2020 and June 2021, potentially contributing to the rise in PSRs prepared over 2021.

Figure 3: Number of offenders starting supervision under the Probation Service, January to March 2020 to October to December 2022 (source: Table 4.1 of the quarterly probation tables)¹⁰



Overall, between October and December 2022, 23,296 requirements were started under COs and 14,501 under SSOs, representing a decrease of 4% and an increase of 3% respectively compared to the same period in the previous year. Rehabilitation remains the most common requirement included within a CO and SSO and, compared to the same quarter a year ago, the number of rehabilitation requirements started under COs rose by 2% to 10,148 and rose by 6% to 6,582 under SSOs. Within COs, mental health, alcohol abstinence and monitoring, and drug treatment requirements increased by 63% to 370, by 37% to 788, and by 10% to 913 respectively. Under SSOs, mental health, alcohol abstinence and monitoring, and drug treatment requirements increased by 108% to 241, by 26% to 412, and by 18% to 589 respectively.

In terms of the most frequently used combinations of requirements under COs, rehabilitation combined separately with alcohol abstinence and monitoring, drug treatment, and alcohol treatment requirements increased by 58%, 34% and 13% respectively in October to December 2022 compared to the same period a year ago. Conversely there was a 10% decrease over the same period for rehabilitation combined with accredited programmes and unpaid work requirements. Under SSOs, rehabilitation combined separately with alcohol abstinence and monitoring, drug treatment, and alcohol treatment requirements increased by 52%, 25%, and 25% respectively.

Of the 14,730 COs and 7,241 SSOs terminated between October and December 2022, 75% and 80% respectively were terminated successfully, i.e., ran their full course, or were terminated early for good progress.

In the quarter October to December 2022, the total number of PSRs prepared by the Probation Service increased by 6% to 21,771 compared to the previous quarter and by 1% compared to the same quarter in 2021.

¹⁰ Between April and June 2020, the number of cases processed at the criminal courts was substantially reduced as a result of the operational restrictions that were put in place on 23 March 2020 in response to the COVID-19 pandemic. While the impact of these operational restrictions continued into subsequent periods, figures in more recent periods have recovered to pre-pandemic levels.

Furthermore, 89% of immediate custodial sentences proposed in PSRs resulted in that sentence being given in the year ending December 2022; this continues to represent the highest concordance between sentence proposed and sentence given.

Further information

This publication presents quarterly and annual data trends.

Our statisticians regularly review the content of publications. Development of new and improved statistical outputs is usually dependent on reallocating existing resources. As part of our continual review and prioritisation, we welcome user feedback on existing outputs including content, breadth, frequency, and methodology. Please send any comments you have on this publication including suggestions for further developments or reductions in content.

Accompanying files

As well as this bulletin, the following products are published as part of this release:

- A 'Guide to Offender Management Statistics', which provides comprehensive information about data sources and quality, as well as key legislative changes.
- A document outlining the 'Users of Offender Management Statistics'
- A set of data tables, covering each section of this bulletin, including a prison population data tool.

National Statistics status

National Statistics status means that official statistics meet the highest standards of trustworthiness, quality, and public value. All official statistics should comply with all aspects of the Code of Practice for Official Statistics. They are awarded National Statistics status following an assessment by the Authority's regulatory arm. The Authority considers whether the statistics meet the highest standards of Code compliance, including the value they add to public decisions and debate.



It is the Ministry of Justice's responsibility to maintain compliance with the standards expected for National Statistics. If we become concerned about whether these statistics are still meeting the appropriate standards, we will discuss any concerns with the Authority promptly. National Statistics status can be removed at any point when the highest standards are not maintained and reinstated when standards are restored.

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