



Offender Management Statistics Bulletin, England and Wales

Quarterly: January to March 2023

Prison population: 30 June 2023

Main points

85,851 prisoners in England and Wales as at 30 June 2023



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

17,139 first receptions into prison between January and March 2023



The number of first receptions represented a rise of 12% compared to the same period in 2022.

11,888 releases from sentences between January and March 2023



This was 5% higher than the same period in 2022.

45,705 adjudication outcomes between January and March 2023



This was a rise of 23% compared to the same period in 2022. Additional days were awarded as punishment on 895 occasions – this was 54% higher than the same period in 2022.

6,824 licence recalls between January and March 2023



This was a 23% increase on the same quarter in 2022.

239,518 offenders on probation at the end of March 2023



This number decreased by 1% compared to the number of offenders supervised as at 31 March 2022.

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](#)'.

This publication includes a note about the planned 'pausing' of Probation statistics. More information (including relevant contact information) can be found at the start of the Probation section (Chapter 6 of this report).

Statistician's comment

In this publication we are reporting on the prison population as at 30 June 2023, with comparisons to the same point in 2022. Over this 12-month period, the total prison population has risen by around 5,200 (which represents a 6% increase) to 85,851. The population as at 30 June 2023 was around 3,000 higher than 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 (a 16% increase between 30 June 2022 and 30 June 2023). There were increases over the past 12 months in both elements of the remand population - the 'untried' population increased by 16% and the 'convicted unsentenced' population increased by 15%. 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 as at 30 June 2023 was 15,523. This represents the highest level for at least 50 years (effectively a 'record high').

The prisoner flows data in this publication cover the period January to March 2023 (with the comparison period being January to March 2022). The number of prisoner first receptions from January to March 2023 was around 17,100 (12% higher than the equivalent period in 2022). This represents a recovery to the level of between 17,000 and 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 96,000 ROTL incidences between January and March 2023 – this is a 13% increase compared to the same quarter in 2022, but still some-way short of the pre-COVID levels of around 110,000 per quarter.

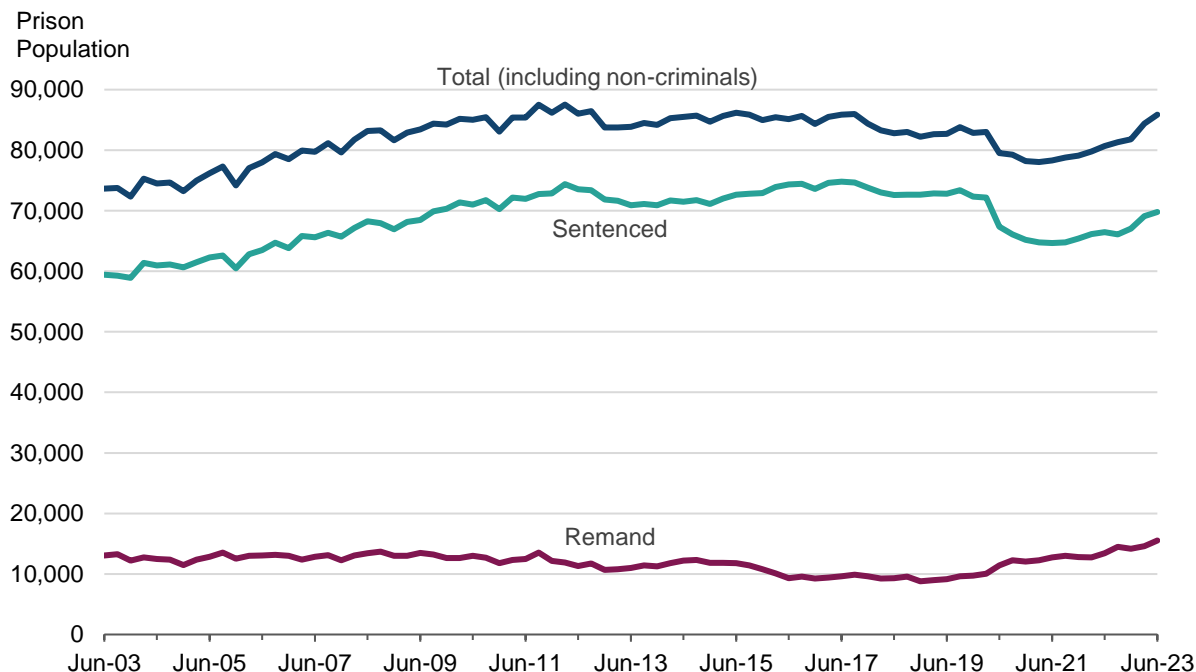
¹ Further contextual information regarding the impact of the Criminal Bar Association action on court cases can be found in the most recent Criminal Court Statistics publication here: <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/criminal-court-statistics-quarterly-october-to-december-2022>

1. Population

The prison population stood at 85,851 on 30 June 2023.

The sentenced prison population stood at 69,771 (81% of the total); the remand prison population stood at 15,523 (18%) and the non-criminal prison population stood at 557 (1%).

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



Remand prison population

The June 2023 remand population figure of 15,523 is 16% higher than in June 2022 and is the highest June figure in at least the last fifty years. The untried prison population rose by 16% (to 10,187) when compared to the end of June 2022 whilst the convicted unsentenced population rose by 15% (to 5,336) over the same period.

Most of those in custody on remand were being held for either: violence against the person (32% of the untried population and 20% of the convicted unsentenced population); or drug offences (22% of the untried population and 32% of the convicted unsentenced population).

While white prisoners make up 73% of the sentenced population, they make up only 66% 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 69,771 which is a 5% 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%), Sexual offences (20%) or Drug offences (17%). All three offence groups have seen increases over the last year (8%, 11%, and 9% respectively in the 12 months to 30 June 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 30 June 2023, 7,571 prisoners were serving such sentences; a 10% increase compared to the same time last year. Prisoners serving EDS account for 9% of the total prison population.

Indeterminate sentences

On 30 June 2023, there were 8,514 (8,185 male; 329 female) prisoners serving indeterminate sentences (Imprisonment for Public Protection (IPP) and life sentences). This represents a slight overall decrease (-1%) when compared with 30 June 2022.

The number of unreleased prisoners (7,202) serving life sentences has increased by 2% compared to one year ago whereas the number of unreleased IPP prisoners fell by 12% to 1,312. 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 (51%) of the remaining unreleased IPP prisoners have been held for at least ten years beyond the end of their tariff.

The number of recalled prisoners serving life sentences increased by 23% to 841 when compared to June 2022, whilst the number of recalled IPP prisoners saw a 11% increase to 1,597.

Recall to custody

The population recalled to custody (11,901 prisoners) has increased by 20% 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 10,321 (3,355 remand, 6,453 sentenced and 513 non-criminal) foreign nationals held in custody on 30 June 2023; representing 12% of the total prison population. The number of FNOs in the prison population has increased by 7% compared to 30 June 2022. This is largely driven by the 22% increase in the FNO remand population which contributed more than two and a half times as many additional individuals as the 4% increase in the sentenced FNO population. The non-criminal FN population fell by 29% over the same period. The most common nationalities after British Nationals in prisons are Albanian (14% of the FNO prison population), Polish (8%), Romanian (7%), Irish (6%), Jamaican (4%), and Lithuanian (4%).

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

Operation Safeguard

On the 31 May 2023 seven 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

17,139 offenders were received into custody as first receptions in the latest quarter.

11,109 were remand first receptions, 5,951 were sentenced first receptions and 79 were civil non-criminal first receptions.

Offender first receptions

The total number of first receptions between January and March 2023 was 12% higher than the same quarter in 2022. The number of first receptions is now back to similar levels to those observed pre-pandemic at around 17,000 to 18,000 first receptions per quarter.

There were 3,135 first receptions of foreign nationals between January and March 2023, which is 24% higher compared to the same period in 2022. The representation of foreign nationals amongst first receptions has remained the same since 2020, around 17%-18% of first receptions were foreign nationals. The five foreign nationalities with the highest numbers of first receptions in the latest quarter were: Albanian (537), Romanian (415), Polish (280), Irish (139), and Lithuanian (118). When taken together, these five nationalities accounted for just under half (47%) of the 3,135 first receptions of foreign nationals in Q1 (January to March) 2023.

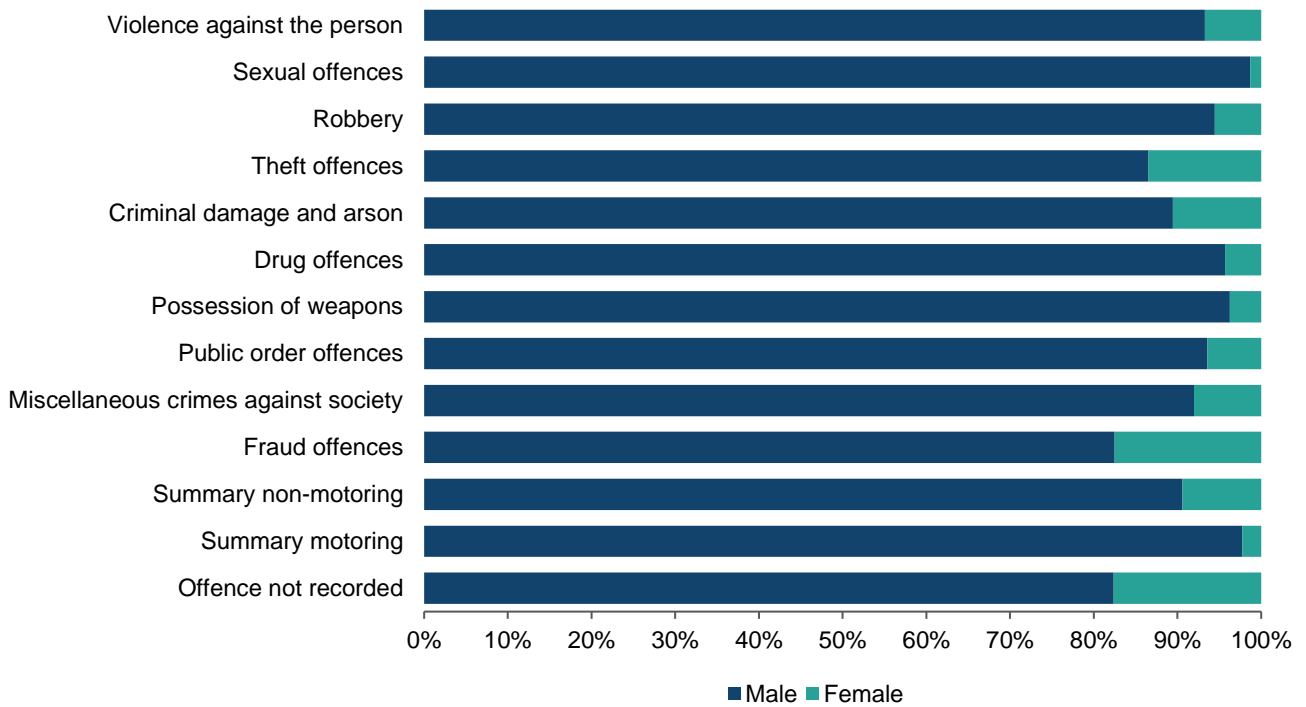
Prison admissions

As compared to the same quarter in 2022, the number of remand and recall admissions increased. Remand admissions can be split between untried and convicted unsentenced admissions, which increased by 19% and 7% respectively, while recall admissions increased by 17%.

When considering immediate custodial sentenced admissions, violence against the person had the largest number of sentenced admissions overall, accounting for 21% of all immediate custodial admissions. Admissions for sexual offences increased by the greatest proportion, 21%, when compared to the same period last year. The largest overall decrease occurred in the summary non-motoring group, down by 39%. As compared to females, males made up a larger proportion of sentenced receptions across each offence, but there are certain offences where this difference was more pronounced - sexual offences and summary motoring (see figure 2 below).

When compared with the same quarter last year, there were increases in sentenced admissions across all sentence length bands (except non-extended determinate sentences of 10 years or more). The largest increase was for Extended Determinate Sentences, up 36%.

Figure 2: Representation (percentage) of male and female immediate custodial sentenced prisoner admissions in each offence group between January and March 2023 (Source: Table 2.5b)



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 January and March 2023, 159 matched individuals first received into custody answered that they had served in the armed services - this represented just above 2% of those who provided a response to the question at the point of their first reception during the latest quarter.

3. Releases

11,888 offenders were released from custody in the latest quarter.

11,770 releases from determinate sentences and 118 from indeterminate sentences.

Prison releases from custodial sentences

The number of prisoner releases between January and March 2023 was 5% higher than the same quarter in 2022.

Compared to the same period in 2022, there were increases in releases from determinate sentences of less than 4 years, most notably a 22% increase in the number of releases from sentences of greater than 6 months to less than 12 months. There were decreases in releases from most longer determinate sentence lengths and a 6% decrease in releases from indeterminate sentences.

Releases on Home Detention Curfew (HDC)

The number of offenders released on HDC in the latest quarter dropped to 1,986, a decrease of 13% 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 9% (to 10,365) compared to the same quarter in 2022.

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 95,673 incidences of ROTL during the quarter ending March 2023, which (as the post-COVID recovery continues) represents a 13% increase compared to the same quarter in 2022. Of the ROTL incidences in the latest quarter, 66% were for 'Work Related' reasons.

The number of individuals receiving at least one incidence of ROTL between January and March 2023 continued to rise following the changes to prison regimes, up 6% from the same quarter in 2022. 4,234 individuals were released on temporary licence in the latest quarter.

There were 194 Temporary Release Failures (TRF) between January and March 2023. This represents a rate of around 1 TRF for every 493 incidences of ROTL.

Prisoner transfers

Between January and March 2023 there were 19,775 incidences of prisoner transfer, with 17,077 prisoners having at least one incidence of transfer. Both figures represent increases since the same period of 2022, with rises of 7% and 8% 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

There were 45,705 adjudication outcomes between January and March 2023.

This is an increase of 23% on the same quarter in the previous year. Additional days were awarded as punishment on 895 occasions in this quarter.

Two thirds (66%) of adjudications were proven.

There was a 21% increase in the number of proven adjudications (to 30,239) from the same quarter in 2022. This in turn resulted in a 21% rise in the number of punishments (to 52,533). Offences of 'unauthorised transactions' were the largest contributors to the increases in proven adjudications and punishments described above.

A third (32%) 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 31% (to 9,412). This was accompanied by a smaller rise across all other main offences, in particular the number of proven offences for violence and willful damage rose by 17% (to 4,327) and 16% (to 2,977) respectively on the same quarter of the previous year.

While the number of proven offences for violence has increased, quarterly averages are still lower than the figures recorded before the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic.

Additional days were awarded as punishment on 895 occasions between January and March 2023; this is a 54% rise compared with the same period in 2022. A total of 14,082 days were awarded in the latest quarter – this is a 53% rise compared with the same quarter in 2022 (9,218 days between January and March 2022).

While the overall number of adjudication outcomes increased by 23% in comparison to Q1 2022, 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 January and March 2023 was 6,824, of which 299 were recalls from Home Detention Curfew (HDC).

The total number of recalls increased by 23% compared to the same quarter in 2022.

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 with the latest figure being an increase of 12% from the previous quarter and an increase of 23% from a year ago. The latest figure is at a level last seen 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 (2,691) representing an increase of 13% from the previous quarter and an increase of 45% 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 January and March 2023, there were 4,133 recalls of such offenders, representing an increase of 11% from the previous quarter and an increase of 12% 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 January-March 2023, about 27% involved a charge of further offending, 64% involved non-compliance, 29% involved failure to keep in touch, and 24% involved failure to reside.

Between January and March 2023, 95 IPP prisoners and 55 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 21% 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 March 2023, there were 2,269 who had not been returned to custody by the end of June 2023.

A further 15 offenders had not been returned to custody as of June 2023 after recall between 1984 and April 1999, meaning the total number of offenders not returned to custody at the end of June 2023 was 2,284. These figures include some offenders believed to be dead or living abroad but who have not been confirmed as dead or deported.

Of the 2,284 not returned to custody by 30 June 2023, 355 had originally been serving a prison sentence for violence against the person offences and a further 73 for sexual offences.

6. Probation

Future probation statistics

We are starting the process of transitioning from legacy systems to more modern data processing methods to enable greater functionality that, in turn, can present further opportunities for more thorough, accurate and timely analysis and insight. We are also reviewing how we publish probation statistics, and where they should be located. As a consequence, we anticipate publishing probation data (covering the period up to the end of June 2023) in October 2023, as planned, but then there will be a pause in publishing these statistics for January 2024, with the final two quarters of 2023 to be published in April 2024. This will allow us to focus on transitioning our data processes, make improvements to our publication, and develop these statistics to meet new and developing user needs. Users can contact us via the email address probation-statistics-enquiries@justice.gov.uk if they have any queries. Note the pause in January 2024 will affect the probation statistics only. This decision has been discussed with both the Head of Profession for Statistics in the Ministry of Justice and the Office for Statistics Regulation. Moving to the new system retains our commitment to customer needs, delivering quality and value, and consolidating the trustworthiness of these statistics.

The total number of offenders on probation (i.e., court orders and pre/post-release supervision) at the end of March 2023 was 239,518.

This represents a 0.6% decrease compared to the end of March 2022 and an increase of 8% compared to March 2013.

Latest figures continue to show that the trends in probation starts and caseload volumes are at similar levels to those observed prior to the COVID-19 pandemic;⁵ this follows increases more broadly since operational restrictions,⁶ introduced in response to the pandemic, were lifted in late spring 2020.

Caseload

As of 31 March 2023, there were 239,518 offenders supervised by the Probation Service (Figure 3), representing a 0.6% decrease compared to 31 March 2022 and a 0.4% decrease compared to 31 December 2022.

Between the end of March 2022 and the end of March 2023, court order caseload decreased by 2% from 113,378 to 111,038, with the number of offenders on a community order (CO) decreasing by 5% and those on a suspended sentence order (SSO) with requirements increasing by 2%.

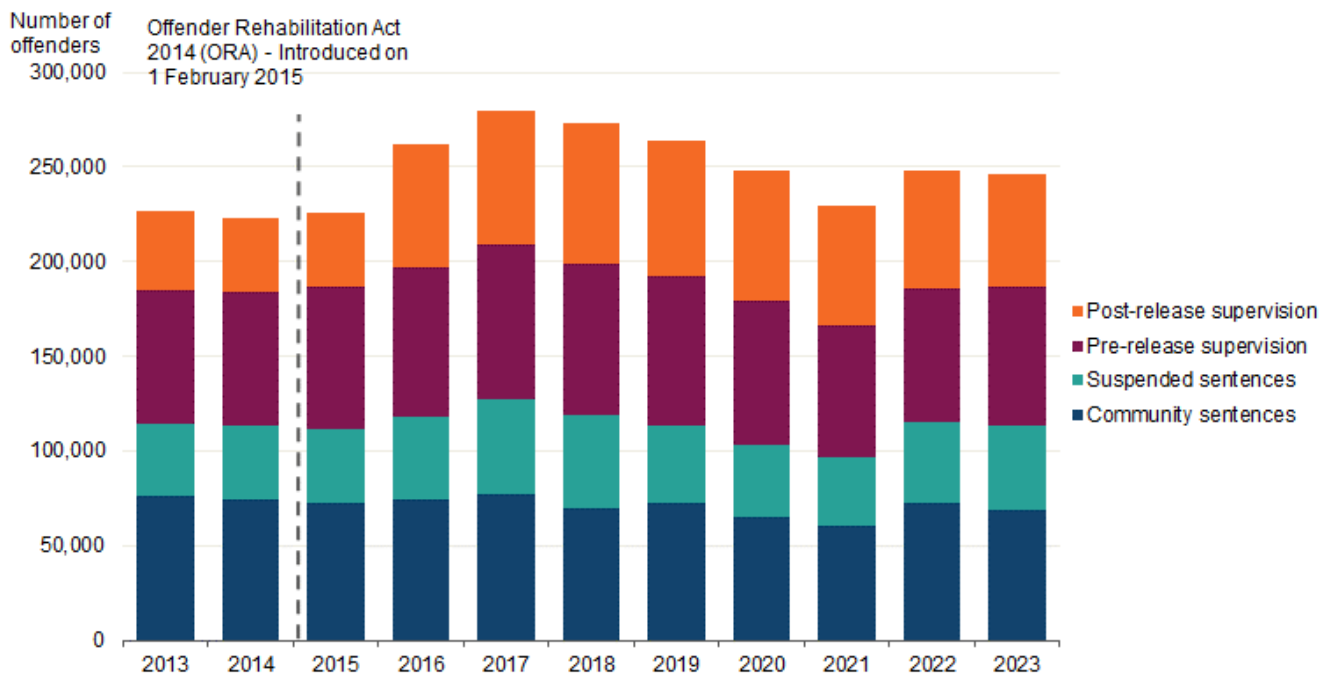
The total caseload of offenders supervised before or after release from prison at the end of March 2023 was 132,872, representing an increase of 1% compared to the end of March 2022.

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

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/981212/Probation_Q4_2020.ods

⁶ This included temporary court closures.

Figure 3: Number of offenders under Probation Service supervision, 31 March 2013 to 31 March 2023 (Table 4.6 is the source for figures from 2018, while Table 4.7 is the source prior to 2018) ⁷



Starts

Between January and March 2023, 41,042 offenders started court order or pre-release probation supervision (Figure 4), representing increases of 6% on the previous quarter and is roughly equivalent to the same quarter a year ago.

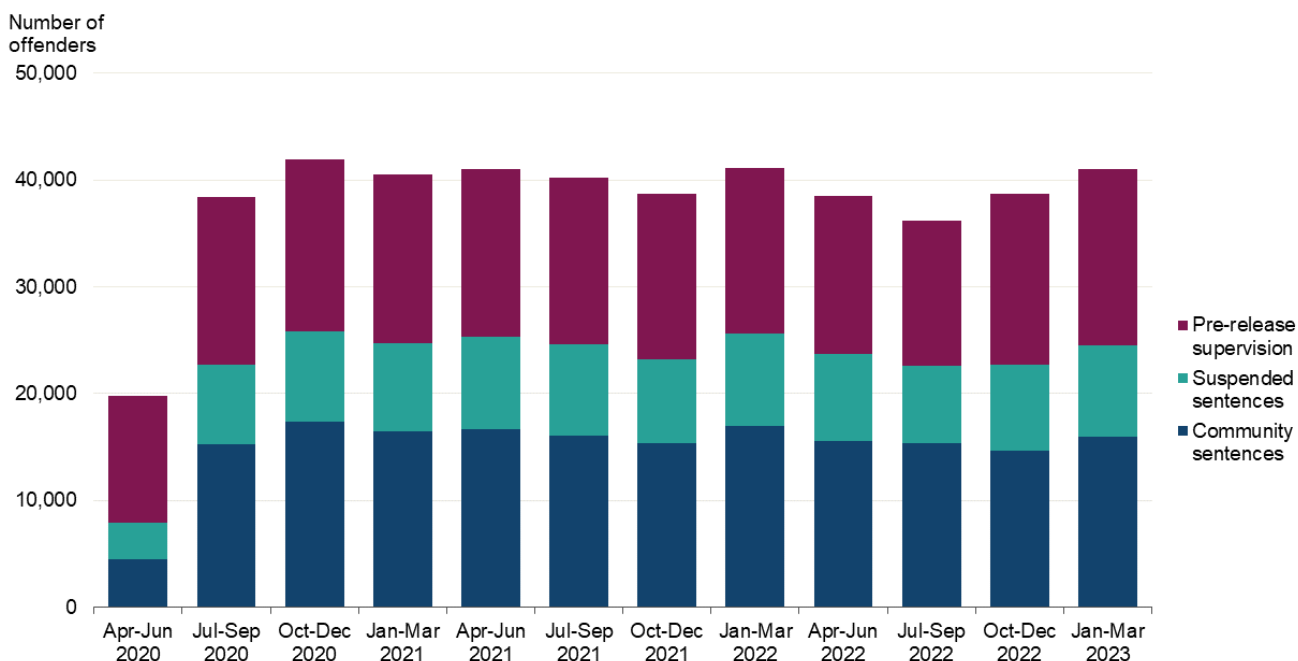
Between January to March 2023, the number of offenders starting court orders specifically, increased by 8% compared to the previous quarter, but decreased by 4% compared to the same quarter a year ago. The number of offenders starting COs increased 9% to 15,809 compared to the previous quarter and decreased by 6% compared to the same quarter a year ago.

Meanwhile, the number of offenders starting SSOs with requirements increased 6% to 8,564 compared to the previous quarter and decreased 1% compared to the same quarter in the previous year. Additionally, over the latest quarter, there was an increase of 4% in the number of offenders starting pre-release supervision compared to the previous quarter (from 15,971 to 16,554) and an increase of 7% compared to the same quarter in the previous year.

The numbers of offenders starting Probation Service supervision due to committing a violent offence against a person have seen increases for both COs and SSOs since January to March 2022, with those starting COs increasing by 10% to 2,508 and SSOs increasing by 14% to 1,891 in January to March 2023. Consequently, the number of offenders on the Probation Service supervision caseload for a violence against the person offence as of 31 March 2023 also increased by 23% to 10,191 for COs and by 15% to 9,033 for SSOs.

⁷ 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.

Figure 4: Number of offenders starting supervision under the Probation Service, April to June 2020 to January to March 2023 (source: Table 4.1) ⁸



Between January and March 2023, 25,578 requirements started under COs and 15,364 requirements started under SSOs, representing decreases of 4% and 1% respectively compared to the same period in the previous year. Over the same period, rehabilitation requirements started under COs and SSOs increased by 2% to 11,099 and by 3% to 7,013 respectively and remains the most common requirement included within a CO or SSO.

Under COs and SSOs, there were increases across most requirement types compared to the same quarter in 2022. The most notable increases under COs, were electronic monitoring (by 141% to 1,153), mental health requirements (by 102% to 506), and alcohol abstinence and monitoring (by 38% to 913). However, curfew requirements decreased by 99% to 17. Under SSOs, the most notable increases were also in electronic monitoring (195% to 702), mental health requirements (by 73% to 252) and alcohol abstinence and monitoring (by 25% to 478). However, curfew requirements decreased by 99% to 18.

The substantial increase in electronic monitoring in recent quarters, and decrease in curfew requirements, across COs and SSOs is likely due to a change in recording practices following the introduction of updated recording instructions to probation staff, rather than any real change in the imposition of these requirements. Specifically, from October 2022, the recording of curfew requirements (with and without electronic monitoring) has been reformed to more specifically, and correctly, categorise these as such.

The increase in mental health treatment requirements (MHTR) within COs and SSOs over recent quarters is linked to a scaling up of the availability to sentence to this requirement across the criminal courts of England. This follows the introduction of new MHTR services provided by NHS

⁸ 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.

England and is part of an initiative⁹ that aims to reduce reoffending and short custodial sentences by addressing the underlying mental health issues which may be contributing towards offending behaviours.

In terms of the most frequently used combinations of requirements, rehabilitation requirements combined separately with alcohol abstinence and monitoring, drug treatment, and alcohol treatment requirements increased by 45%, 36% and 15% respectively under COs in January to March 2023 compared to the same period a year ago. Under SSOs, rehabilitation requirements combined separately with alcohol abstinence and monitoring, alcohol treatment and drug treatment increased by 33%, 20% and 10% respectively.

Terminations

Of the 15,509 COs and 7,799 SSOs terminated between January and March 2023, 73% and 79% respectively were terminated successfully, i.e., ran their full course or were terminated early for good progress.

Pre-sentence reports

In the quarter January to March 2023, the total number of pre-sentence reports (PSRs) prepared by the Probation Service increased by 7% to 23,235 compared to the previous quarter and by 11% compared to the same quarter in 2022.

Furthermore, 88% of immediate custodial sentences proposed in PSRs resulted in that sentence being given in the year ending March 2023, representing the highest concordance between sentence proposed and sentence given.

⁹ The initiative started in 2017 in five areas, with a national roll out to be completed by mid-2024.

Further information

This publication presents quarterly 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.

Contact

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