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Offender Management Statistics Bulletin, England and Wales

Quarterly: October to December 2018, and Annual (calendar year) 2018

Prison population: 31 March 2019

Main points

82,634 prisoners in England and Wales as at 31 March 2019



The total prison population is at a comparable level (less than 1% decrease) to the same point in the previous year.

76,450 first receptions into prison during 2018



The number of first receptions represents a fall of 9% compared to 2017.

69,622 releases from sentences in 2018



This is 3% lower than in 2017. As the prison population shifts towards those serving longer sentences, we would expect fewer releases in a given period.

204,715 adjudication outcomes in 2018



This is an increase of 7% compared to 2017. A total of 380,169 additional days were awarded as punishment during 2018.

6,413 licence recalls between October and December 2018



This is a 13% increase on the same quarter in 2017, driven in part by an increase in HDC recalls following the policy change in early 2018.

256,010 offenders on probation at the end of 2018



This number has fallen by 3% compared to the number supervised as at 31 December 2017.

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

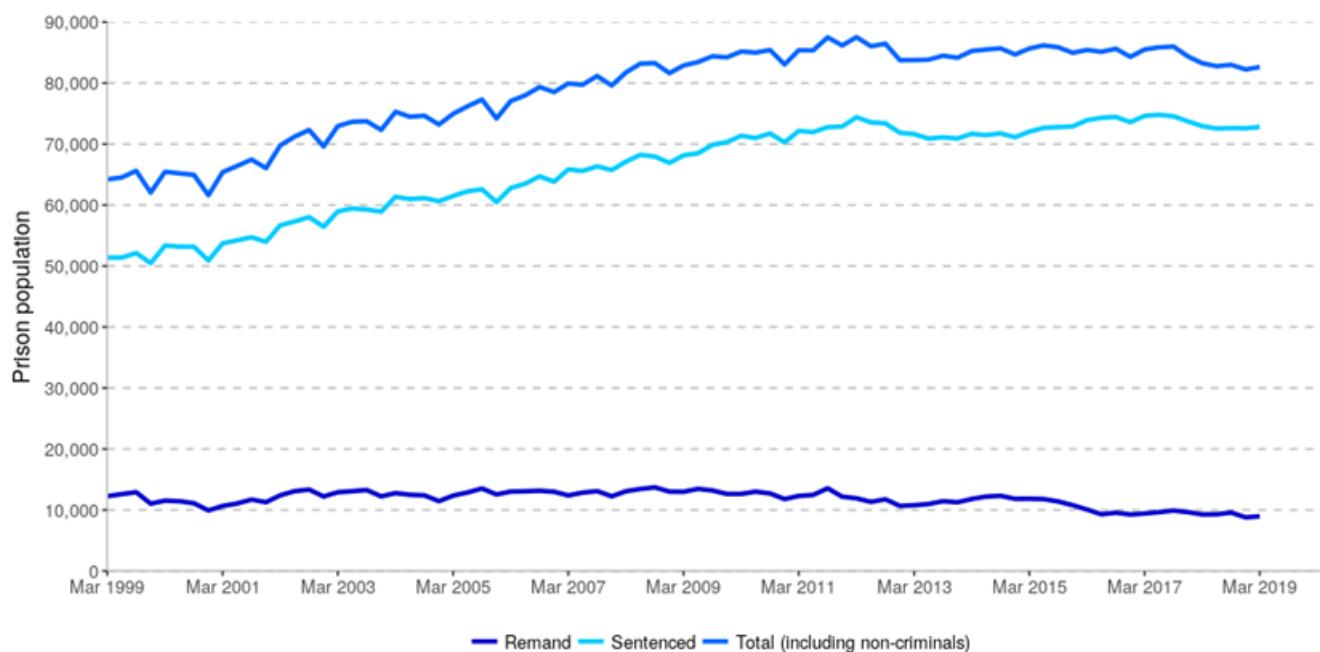
For technical detail please refer to the accompanying guide, '[Guide to offender management statistics](#)'.

1. Population

The prison population stood at 82,634 on 31 March 2019.

The sentenced prison population stood at 72,860 (88% of the prison population); the remand prison population stood at 8,957 (11%) and the non-criminal prison population stood at 817 (1%).

Figure 1: Prison population, March 1999 to 2019 (Source: Table 1.1)



Remand prison population

The remand population has decreased by 3% (306) compared with the same point 12 months earlier. The number of males in custody on remand decreased by 3% (to 8,437) whilst the number of females decreased by 8% (to 520).

More than half (55%) of those in custody on remand were being held for either:

Violence against the person (22% of the remand population), Drug offences (19%) or Theft Offences (14%).

Sentenced prison population

The sentenced population has remained stable in the year leading up to 31 March 2019. Figure 1 shows that the total prison population has increased in line with the growth of the sentenced prison population since March 1999, however in more recent years the sentenced and total prison population has remained as a relatively constant level. Broadly speaking, there have been decreases in the number of prisoners serving determinate sentences of less than 4 years and increases in those serving determinate sentences of 4 years or longer. The number of prisoners serving determinate sentences of 14 years or more has increased by 7% (to 4,171) in the 12 months to 31 March 2019.

Sex offenders

The rise in the long determinate sentenced population is in line with the increasing number of sentenced sexual offenders. However, there is evidence that this trend is levelling off, there was a 1% decrease in the sentenced sexual offender population in the 12 months to 31 March 2019. As at 31 March 2019 there were 13,359 prisoners serving sentences for sexual offences, which represented 18% of the sentenced prison population.

The number of prisoners serving immediate custodial sentences for sexual offences is now stabilising at around the highest level since at least 2002. This is consistent with the latest ONS '[Crime in England and Wales](#)' bulletin which reports on the number of sexual offences recorded by the police in the year ending September 2018.

'Violence Against the Person (VATP)' and 'Possession of Weapons' offences

One in every four (26%) sentenced prisoners is in prison for a VATP offence. This proportion has remained stable for the past 12 months. The number of those serving sentences for a 'Possession of Weapons' offence increased by 21% (to 2,967) compared to the same time last year. This substantial increase can be attributed to a range of factors, including more targeted police operations against knife crime. However, this offence group only accounts for 4% of the sentenced prison population.

Extended Determinate Sentences (EDS)

EDSs were made available for courts to impose from 13 April 2015. On 31 March 2019, 5,262 prisoners were serving such sentences; a 17% increase compared to the same time last year.

Indeterminate sentences

As at 31 March 2019, there were 9,441 (9,096 male; 345 female) indeterminate sentenced prisoners (those serving Imprisonment for Public Protection (IPP) sentences and life sentences) in the prison population. This represents an annual decrease of 6%.

There were 2,403 IPP prisoners as at 31 March 2019 which represents a decrease of 17% in the last 12 months. This figure has decreased by 60% since the June 2012 peak of 6,080, however the number of IPP prisoners who have been recalled to custody continues to increase; in the past year the recalled IPP population has grown by 26% (to 1,063).

The proportion of the IPP population who are post-tariff continues to increase; 91% of IPP prisoners were post-tariff as of 31 March 2019 compared to 88% at the same time the previous year.

The number of life sentenced prisoners (7,038) has decreased by 1% compared to 31 March 2018. There were 63 whole-life prisoners at the end of March 2019, with 3 additional life prisoners being treated in secure hospitals.

Recall to custody

The prison population who have been recalled to custody (7,179 prisoners) increased by 19% over the year leading up to 31 March 2019. This is linked to the increase in the numbers released on Home Detention Curfew (since the policy change in early 2018), with more of whom are being recalled to custody. Additionally, there have been increases in the numbers recalled from IPP sentences.

Foreign National Offenders (FNOs)

There were 9,079 (1,604 remand, 6,727 sentenced and 748 non-criminal) foreign nationals held in custody and the HMPPS-operated Immigration Removal Centres (IRC, at Morton Hall) as at 31 March 2019; representing 11% of the total prison population. The number of FNOs in the prison (and HMPPS IRC) population has decreased by 3% compared to 31 March 2018. The most common nationalities

after British Nationals in prisons are Albanian (9% of the FNO prison population), Polish (9%), Romanian (8%), Irish (8%) and Jamaican (5%).

2. Prison receptions and admissions

Summary of annual statistics

76,450 individuals were received into custody as first receptions in 2018.

This is 9% fewer than in 2017, and 43% fewer than in 2008.

First receptions – “fewer people are being received into custody”

The number of annual first prison receptions was broadly stable during the 15-year period between 1993 and 2008 (with an average of 129,000 each year). Over the last 10 years (since 2008) the number of annual first prison receptions has fallen by 43%, to around 76,000 in 2018.

First prison receptions of Foreign Nationals

Around 1 in 7 (15%) of the total first prison receptions in 2018 were of Foreign Nationals. This ‘1 in 7’ proportion has remained constant each year since the start of the timeseries in 2015.

Five nationalities accounted for around half (47%) of the total Foreign National first prison receptions in 2018: Romanians (1,635), Polish (1,453), Albanians (779), Irish (728) and Lithuanians (623).

Prison admissions

In 2018, there were 31,062 ‘untried’ prison admissions (i.e. for those on pre-trial remand); this is 9% lower than in 2017 and represents the lowest number since the start of the time series in 1990. One in every three untried prison admissions during 2018 was for an alleged Violence Against The Person (VATP) or Theft Offence.

A further 19,870 entered custody as a ‘convicted unsentenced’ prisoner in 2018 (i.e. after having been found guilty at court but awaiting their sentencing hearing). This is also at the lowest level since 1990.

There were 58,955 sentenced admissions to prison in 2018 (9% lower than in 2017). This also represents the lowest level since 1990. Around half (46%) of the sentenced admissions during 2018 were for short sentences of ‘less than or equal to 6 months’.

Compared to 2017, there were decreases in the numbers of immediate custodial (‘non-fine defaulter’) sentenced admissions for all offence groups apart from ‘Possession of Weapons’ (an 11% increase) and ‘Criminal Damage and Arson’ (8% increase).

After an offender has been released from custody, they will serve a period of time on licence. If they breach any of their licence conditions they can be recalled to custody. During 2018, there were 22,853 recall admissions to custody, this is an increase of 10% compared to 2017. This rise is likely due to increases in recalls from Home Detention Curfew (HDC), after the policy change in early-2018, which resulted in more people being released on HDC.

Summary of quarterly statistics

The number of first receptions between October and December 2018 was 9% lower than the same period in 2017. This is in line with the longer falling trend over the past 15 years.

There was a 12% decrease in the number of untried admissions (to 7,261), a 6% decrease in the number of convicted unsentenced admissions (to 4,812) and a 7% decrease in the number of sentenced admissions (to 14,365) compared with the same quarter in 2017.

Conversely there was an 11% increase in the number of recall admissions (to 5,958) in the latest quarter (compared to the same period in 2017). Of which, the number of recall admissions from determinate sentences increased by 11% and those from indeterminate sentences increased by 21%.

Following a few quarters of broadly stable numbers of recall admissions, there was a large increase during April to June 2018 (and this upward trend has continued). This change was driven by the change in Home Detention Curfew (HDC) release policy in early 2018, which resulted in more offenders released on HDC. The rise in the number of HDC releases has had a knock-on effect in increasing the numbers recalled.

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 2018, 342 matched individuals first received into custody answered that they had served in the armed services - this represented 3% of those who provided a response to the question at the point of their first reception during the latest quarter.

In October 2018, the MoJ published an Experimental Statistics release which included an estimate of the number of 'Ex-Service Personnel in the Prison Population'. This was published as part of the Offender Management Statistics; April to June 2018 here:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/offender-management-statistics-quarterly-april-to-june-2018>

3. Releases

Summary of annual statistics

69,622 offenders were released from custody during 2018.

68,683 releases from determinate sentences and 939 from indeterminate sentences.

In 2018, a total of 68,683 offenders were released from determinate sentences, a fall of 2% from 2017. The number of males released from determinate sentences fell by 2% between 2017 and 2018, whereas the number of females released decreased by 4%. Until the change of data source in 2015, the number of releases from determinate sentences had been falling since 2008. Much of this fall could be attributed to a falling number of prison receptions for shorter determinate sentences (less than 12 months) throughout the period. Though the figures taken from the new data source (2016 to 2018) are not directly comparable with pre-2015 data, the trend of falling numbers of releases from determinate sentences looks to be continuing.

939 offenders were released from indeterminate sentences in 2018; a 13% decrease compared to 2017. Of the indeterminate releases during 2018, 506 were from IPP sentences (down 18% compared to 2017) and 433 from life sentences (a decrease of 8% from 2017).

The average time served in prison (including time spent on remand) for those released from determinate sentences continued to increase, to 13.0 months (mean) and 4.6 months (median) for those released in 2018. Both the mean and median figures have been increasing each year since 2015.

Summary of quarterly statistics

17,215 offenders were released from custody in the latest quarter.

16,998 releases from determinate sentences and 217 from indeterminate sentences.

Prison releases from custodial sentences

The total number of releases during the quarter ending December 2018 represents a 5% decrease compared to the same quarter in 2017.

There were fewer releases from short sentences but more releases from longer determinate sentences compared to the same quarter in 2017 (7% fall in releases from sentences of less than 12 months; 2% increase in releases from determinate sentences of 4 years or more).

There were 217 releases from indeterminate sentences between October and December 2018, an 18% decrease from the same period in 2017 – of which, the number of IPP releases fell by 14% and Life sentence releases decreased by 22%.

While the number of IPP releases has tended to be around 130 IPP releases per quarter, in the period October and December 2018 the number fell to 109. As the numbers of serving IPP prisoners in the prison population declines, we would expect fewer IPP releases in future quarters.

Releases on Home Detention Curfew (HDC)

3,571 offenders were released on HDC during the latest quarter. The number of HDC releases increased by 44% compared to the same quarter in 2017. This large year-on-year increase is due to the change in HDC policy at the start of 2018.

Releases on Temporary Licence (ROTL)

There were 98,783 incidences of ROTL during the quarter ending December 2018, which is a 9% increase on the same quarter last year.

4,283 individuals were given at least one incidence of ROTL between October and December 2018 - an increase of 4% compared to the same quarter in 2017.

There were 142 recorded Temporary Release Failures (TRFs) between October and December 2018. This is an increase of 15 compared with the previous quarter and an increase of 46 compared with the same period the previous year. TRFs as a proportion of temporary release incidences remain at a low level, with approximately only 1 in every 695 incidences of temporary release resulting in a failure between October and December 2018.

Prisoner transfers

There was a total of 21,619 recorded incidences of prisoner transfer during the latest quarter (an annual fall of 3%). The majority of these (73%) were routine inter-prison transfers. 17,851 prisoners had at least one incidence of a transfer in quarter ending the December 2018.

4. Adjudications

Summary of annual statistics

There were 204,715 adjudication outcomes in 2018.

65% of these adjudications were proven.

During 2018 there were 204,715 adjudications – this is a rise of 7% compared to 2017. Of these, proven adjudications increased from 124,884 to 132,538 over the same period, a rise of 6%, continuing the increasing trend observed since 2013.

The total number of proven adjudications for ‘violence’ offences increased from 16,922 (in 2017) to 18,810 (in 2018), an increase of 11%. This has reached the highest level since 2015 and is consistent with the recent [‘Safety in Custody’ bulletin](#) that confirmed assaults and serious assaults have reached a record high.

More serious alleged breaches of prison rules are adjudicated upon by Independent Adjudicators (instead of Prison Governors). During 2018 there were 31,168 adjudications heard by an Independent Adjudicator, which represents a 6% rise compared to 2017. Despite this rise, the proportion of adjudications for ‘violence’ has remained fairly stable over recent years, accounting for between 14% and 16% of all adjudication hearings in each year since 2015.

The proportion of proven adjudications for unauthorised transactions (which includes possession of alcohol, drugs and other prohibited items) has continued to rise in recent years, increasing from 24% in 2015 to 31% in 2018. Conversely, the proportion of adjudications for disobedience and disrespect has decreased from 38% to 32% over the same period.

Use of ‘Additional Days’ as punishment

In terms of punishments, additional days were awarded on 22,365 occasions in 2018 (up from 21,081 in 2017). Across these 22,365 occasions, a total of 380,169 additional days were added to prisoners’ sentences in 2018 (up from 359,081 in 2017). Taking these two sets of figures together, every time additional days were awarded as punishment in 2018, an average of 17 additional days were added (this average is unchanged compared with 2017).

Summary of quarterly statistics

There were 54,260 adjudication outcomes between October and December 2018.

This is an increase of 10% on the same quarter in the previous year. Additional days were awarded as punishment on 5,834 occasions in this quarter.

64% of all adjudications were proven.

Around one in three (32%) of proven adjudications were for offences for unauthorised transactions, closely followed by offences of disobedience and disrespect (31%). Additionally, while the number of proven offences for disobedience rose by just 6% (to 10,885) on the same quarter of the previous year, proven unauthorised transactions increased by 15% (to 11,121) over the same period.

There was a 9% increase in the number of punishments (to 58,080). There was also a 16% rise in proven adjudications for violence to (5,114) from the same quarter in 2017.

Additional days were awarded as punishment on 5,834 occasions between October and December 2018; this is 11% higher than the same period in 2017. A total of 98,525 days were awarded in the latest quarter – this represents a rise of 9% from the same quarter in 2017 (90,520; October to December 2017).

The average number of punishments per offence was 1.67. This is broadly consistent with figures seen in the previous quarter.

5. Licence Recalls

The number of licence recalls between October and December 2018 was 6,413, of which 597 were recalls from Home Detention Curfew (HDC).

The total number of recalls increased by 13% compared to the same quarter in 2017.

The total number of quarterly recalls has been increasing since October-December 2016. The average number of quarterly recalls for 2018 has been higher than those for the previous two years, in part due to increased HDC recalls but also due to increased recall of offenders from determinate sentences of 12 months or more.

Between October and December 2018, the number of recalls of offenders released from a sentence of under 12 months (2,339), ORA recalls, represented an increase of 84 from the previous quarter and an increase of 33 from the same period in 2017.

After a fall in the number of non-ORA recalls from early 2016 to mid-2017, the number of these recalls (which include recalls of those with indeterminate sentences) has been increasing. These recalls are usually not fixed-term recalls, so offenders tend to stay in custody longer following a recall. Consequently, increases in non-ORA recalls tend to lead to more sustained increases in the recall prison population.

There usually is more than one reason for recalling an offender on licence. In recent quarters, about 4 in 10 recalls involved the offender recalled for facing further charges. Non-compliance was given as one of the reasons for recalling in about 7 out of 10 recalls in October-December 2018, consistent with recent quarters.

Between October and December 2018, there were 84 prisoners serving an IPP sentence and 48 offenders serving a life sentence who were re-released, having previously been returned to custody for a breach of licence conditions.

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 2018, there were 1,794 who had not been returned to custody by the end of March 2019.

A further 17 offenders had not been returned to custody as of 31 March 2019 after recall between 1984 and April 1999, meaning the total number of offenders not returned to custody at the end of March 2019 was 1,811. These figures include some offenders believed to be dead or living abroad but who have not been confirmed as dead or deported.

Of the 1,811 not returned to custody by 31 March 2019, 289 had originally been serving a prison sentence for violence against the person offences and a further 57 for sexual offences.

6. Probation

Summary of annual statistics

The total number of offenders on probation was 256,010 at the end of 2018.

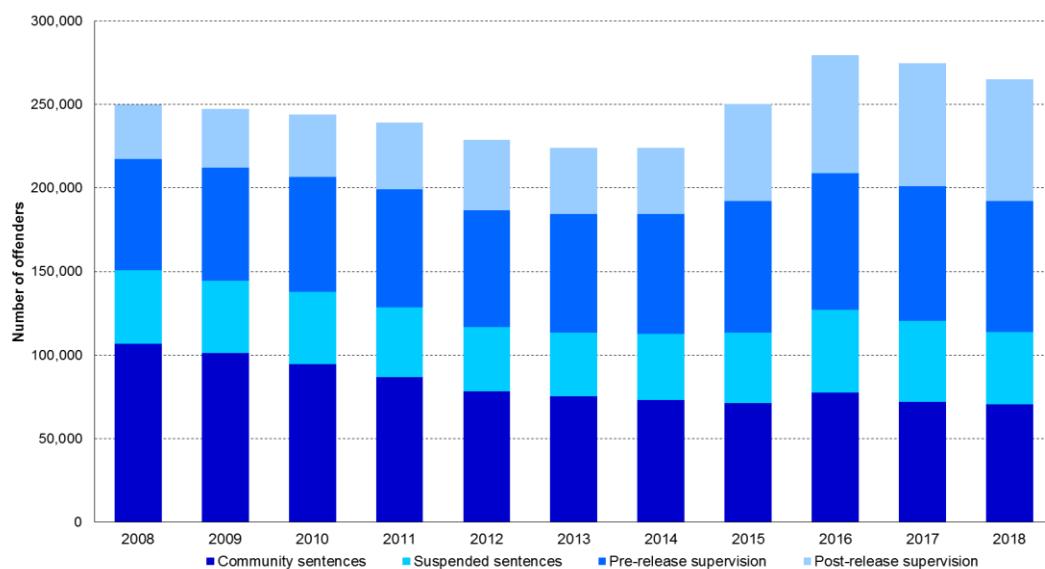
This was a 3% decrease in the total probation caseload (court orders and pre- and post-release supervision) compared with one year earlier and an increase of 5% compared to December 2008.

The total annual probation caseload increased by 39% between 2000 and 2008 to 243,434. Since then the probation caseload fell year on year, falling to 217,359 at the end of 2014. However, at the end of December 2018, the total caseload stood at 256,010. This rise in recent years is mainly due to statutory supervision on release from prison for all offenders given custodial sentences of more than one day.

The total court order caseload (offenders on community orders (COs) and suspended sentence orders (SSOs)) fell 17% between 2010 and 2015, largely reflecting the fall in the community order caseload. In 2016 the court order caseload rose by 12%, but has fallen again since and in 2018 stands at 111,788, very close to the level in 2015. For those starting supervision, the number of court order starts fell by 34% between 2010 and 2018. This largely reflects a fall in community orders given as a sentence by the courts in England and Wales over the past eight years.

The total number of court reports prepared by the Probation Service fell by 48% between 2009 and 2018 to 113,228, which is contributed to by the downward trend in the number of defendants being dealt with by the courts over this period.

Figure 2: Number of offenders under Probation Service supervision, 31 December 2008-2018
(Source: Table 4.13, annual tables)



Summary of quarterly statistics

The total number of offenders on probation was 256,010 at the end of December 2018.

There was a 3% decrease in the total number of offenders on probation (court orders and pre and post release supervision) compared with 31 December 2017.

Looking at the most recent quarterly trends, the court order caseload fell by 5% between the quarters ending December 2017 and 2018, with the Community Order (CO) caseload decreasing by 2% and the Suspended Sentence Order (SSO) caseload decreasing by 11%. The number of offenders starting COs increased by 4% over this period, while the number of offenders starting SSOs with requirements decreased by 24%. This may be caused by a recent instruction to probation officers not to recommend SSOs in Pre-Sentence reports, leading to more offenders being given COs in their place. The overall caseload of offenders supervised before or after release from prison fell by 2% between the end of December 2017 and 2018.

Regarding the number of requirements started under court orders, the latest quarter has seen a continued rise in the number of rehabilitation requirements, as well as a rise in the 'treatment' requirements (drug, alcohol and mental health) under COs, and in terms of combinations of requirements, rehabilitation combined with unpaid work and combined with drug treatment have seen significant rises under COs.

Of the court orders terminated in the quarter ending December 2018, 68% of community orders were terminated successfully (i.e. ran their full course or were terminated early for good progress); for the supervision periods of suspended sentence orders, 75% of all those terminated were terminated successfully over this period.

The number of Pre-Sentence court reports prepared by the Probation Service decreased by 10% between the quarter ending December 2018 and the same quarter in the previous year. Eighty-nine per cent of immediate custodial sentences proposed in Pre-Sentence Reports resulted in that sentence being given in the latest 12 month period.

Further information

This publication presents quarterly and annual data trends.

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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URL: <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/offender-management-statistics-quarterly>

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