Home Office

Football-related arrests and banning order statistics,
England and Wales, 2018/19 Season

This release presents official statistics on football-related arrests and football banning orders, and experimental statistics on reported incidents of football-related anti-social behaviour, violence and disorder.

Football banning orders

As at 1 August 2019, **1,771 football banning orders** were in force, a **decrease of 3%** compared with those as at 1 August 2018. There has been a **steady decline** in football banning orders in force since 2011.

-3%

Arrests

-10%

In the 2018/19 season, there were **1,381 football-related arrests**, under Schedule 1 of the Football Spectators Act 1989 (as amended), a **10% decrease** on the previous season.

Of these, the most common offence types were public disorder (38%) and violent disorder (19%).

Clubs with the highest number of supporters arrested were **Stoke City** (80 arrests), **Leeds United** (49 arrests) and **Aston Villa** (42 arrests).

In addition, there were 155 arrests by British Transport Police and **347 other (non-Schedule 1) arrests** at football matches in the 2018/19 season.

Experimental statistics: Reported incidents at football fixtures

In the 2018/19 season, there were **1,007 football fixtures with reported incidents**. This is a decrease of 4% from 1,050 reported in the previous season.

-4%

The most reported types of incidents were **pyrotechnics** (at 33% of matches where incidents were reported), **throwing of missiles** (30%) and **pitch incursion** (19%).

Contents

1   Introduction

This release presents official statistics on football-related arrests and football banning orders. Following user feedback, the age and gender of those who have been issued football banning orders is included for the first time in Section 2 of the release.

New 'experimental statistics' are included on other arrests at football matches and reported incidents of football-related anti-social behaviour, violence and disorder involving supporters of English and Welsh clubs, playing in England and Wales. These experimental statistics can be found in Section 3 and Section 4.

Football banning order:
A preventative measure imposed by a court following a football-related offence, with the aim to prevent violence or disorder at or in connection with regulated football matches. See the user guide for further information.

Football-related arrests are those to which **Schedule 1** of the Football Spectators Act 1989 (as amended) applies.

These experimental statistics are published for the first time in this release, covering the 2017/18 and 2018/19 seasons. Experimental statistics are new official statistics undergoing evaluation. The statistics are experimental as the underlying matched data source is new and the methodology to create it may be improved. More information about experimental statistics can be found on the UK Statistics Authority website by clicking here. As the Home Office continues to report on these new figures in future years, it will aim to develop its quality assurance procedures, with a view to increasing confidence in the quality of the data.

The user guide provides additional information on the coverage of the data, quality and methodology, and information on the conventions used in the statistics, and relevant legislation.

The 'Football-related arrests and banning order statistics, England and Wales, 2018/19 season' data tables provide supplementary data to those presented in this release.

The 'Football-related arrests and banning order statistics' release is an Official Statistics output produced to the highest professional standards and free from political interference. It has been produced by statisticians working in the Home Office Analysis and Insight Directorate in accordance with the Home Office's 'Statement of compliance with the Code of Practice for Official Statistics' which covers our policy on revisions and other matters. The Chief Statistician, and the Head of Profession, report to the National Statistician with respect to all professional statistical matters and oversees all Home Office Official Statistics products with respect to the Code of Practice, being responsible for their timing, content and methodology.

2   Football banning orders

Football banning orders may be made by the courts to help prevent violence or disorder at, or in connection with, any regulated football matches. An individual subject to a banning order is prevented from attending all regulated matches in the United Kingdom and may be required to surrender their passport to the police before overseas matches and tournaments. Banning orders are issued either following a conviction for a football-related offence or following a complaint by a local police force, British Transport Police (BTP), or the Crown Prosecution Service (CPS). The statutory duration of a football banning order is a minimum period of 3 years and no more than 5 years. In cases where a custodial sentence was imposed for the original offence a minimum period of 6 years and no more than 10 years applies. For more information, see the user guide.
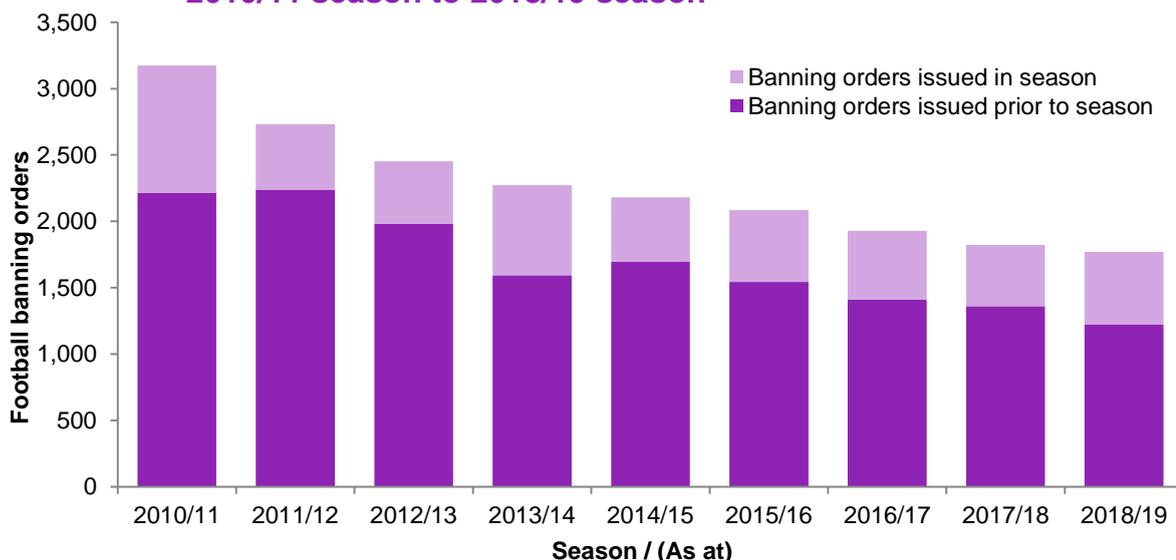
The total number of football banning orders in force is decreasing

As at 1 August 2019, there were 1,771 football banning orders in force representing a decrease of 3% from 1,822 (as at 1 August 2018). This continues the downward trend seen in the number of football banning orders in force, as shown in Figure 1, falling by 44% from 3,174 on 29 November 2011.

An individual can have multiple bans, therefore the **number of bans is not equal to the number of individuals** who have a ban.

The number of new football banning orders in force in the 2018/19 season increased by 19% (+89) when compared with the previous season. Just under a third (31%; 549) of bans in force as at 1 August 2019 had been issued during the 2018/19 season (between 1 August 2018 to 31 July 2019).

Figure 1:   Number of football banning orders in force in England and Wales, from 2010/11 season to 2018/19 season

Source: Home Office, Football-related arrests and banning order statistics, England and Wales, 2018/19 season, Tables 2 and 4.
Notes: Caution should be taken when making season-on-season comparisons as the date the new football banning orders data were extracted varied from year to year. See the data tables for data extraction dates.

Of the 1,771 banning orders in force as at 1 August 2019, almost all (99.7%; 1,765) were issued to males and around three-quarters (73%; 1,298) were issued to those aged between 18 and 34. Around 3% (52) were issued to under 18s.

In the 2018/19 season, the clubs with the highest number of football banning orders in force were consistent with previous season, as shown in Table 1. A banning order may be imposed by a court in the season after the incident occurred.

Table 1:   Clubs with highest number of football banning orders, 2018/19 season compared to 2017/18 season

Football club	2017/18 season		2018/19 season	
	Football banning orders	Ranking	Football banning orders	Ranking
Newcastle United	79	1	71	1
Grimsby Town	50	5 (joint)	61	2
Birmingham City	50	5 (joint)	57	3
Sheffield United	53	3	54	4 (joint)
West Ham United	52	4	54	4 (joint)

Source: Home Office, Football-related arrests and banning order statistics, England and Wales, 2018/19 season, Table 1.

In the 2018/19 season, Stoke City (46) and Port Vale (31) supporters were issued the highest number of new football banning orders.
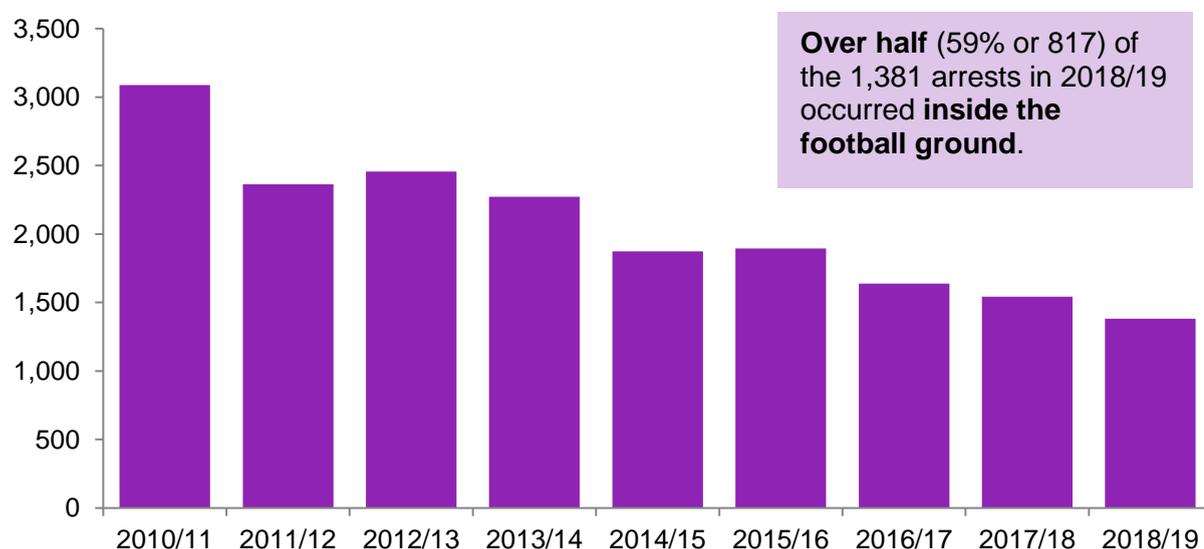
3   Football-related arrests

Statistics on football-related arrests are submitted by the 43 police forces in England and Wales, and BTP to the United Kingdom Football Policing Unit (UKFPU). For the purpose of these statistics, 'football-related arrests' means arrests for offences specified in Schedule 1 to the Football Spectators Act 1989 (as amended) – these include football-specific offences (such as pitch incursion and throwing missiles inside a stadium) and a range of wider offences committed in connection with a regulated football match.

In addition, a person may be arrested at a football match which is not covered by Schedule 1, which can include possession of drugs and theft. For the purpose of this release, these arrests will be termed 'other arrests'. Statistics on other arrests are categorised as experimental and are published for the first time in this release, covering the 2018/19 season.

Schedule 1 football-related arrests continue to decrease

During the 2018/19 season, there were 1,381 football-related arrests (excluding BTP arrests, see section below) in connection with regulated international and domestic football matches involving English and Welsh clubs and the national teams. This is a 10% decrease (-161) compared with the previous season and continues the overall downward trend over the last 8 seasons, with the number of football-related arrests falling by 55% since the 2010/11 season (from 3,089 to 1,381).

Figure 2:   **Schedule 1 Football-related arrests, from 2010/11 season to 2018/19 season**

Over half (59% or 817) of the 1,381 arrests in 2018/19 occurred **inside the football ground**.

Source: Home Office, Football-related arrests and banning order statistics, England and Wales, 2018/19 season, Table 7.
Notes: Figures include arrests at all regulated international and domestic football matches involving English and Welsh clubs and the national teams, playing in the UK and overseas.
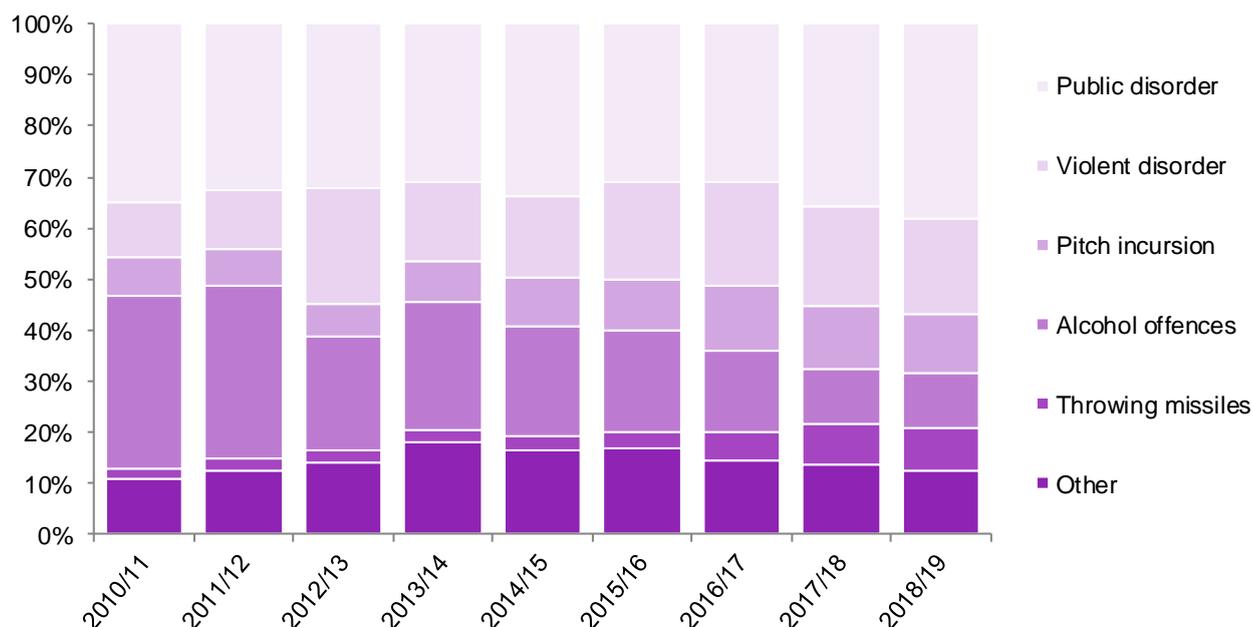
During the 2018/19 season, there were 18 football-related arrests at England and Wales national team matches; of which, 6 (33%) occurred outside of England and Wales. During the same period, the UKFPU were informed of 69 football-related arrests at European

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matches (i.e. matches where an English or Welsh team played a European team, excluding the national teams); of which 15 (22%) occurred outside of England and Wales.

Most common football-related offence type was public disorder

The most common offence types were public disorder (38%), violent disorder (19%) and pitch incursion (11%), as shown in Figure 3.

Figure 3: **Football-related arrests by offence type, from 2010/11 season to 2018/19 season**

Source: Home Office, Football-related arrests and banning order statistics, England and Wales, 2018/19 season, Table 6.
Notes: Figures include arrests at all regulated international and domestic football matches involving English and Welsh clubs and the national teams, playing in the UK and overseas.

For clubs in the top 5 divisions, just over half (53%; 690) of the 1,307 football-related arrests were at away games. The club with the highest number of supporters arrested in the 2018/19 season was Stoke City, as shown in Figure 4. Of the 80 Stoke City supporter arrests, 62 of these were linked to one away fixture against Port Vale in December 2018.

Figure 4:   Clubs with the highest number of supporters arrested, 2018/19 season

1) Stoke City

80 arrests

6% at home games

Most common offence type: throwing missiles (33 arrests)

2) Leeds United

49 arrests

53% at home games

Most common offence type: pitch incursion (15 arrests)

3) Aston Villa

42 arrests

55% at home games

Most common offence type: public disorder (21 arrests)

4) Sheffield United

41 arrests

51% at home games

Most common offence type: public disorder (14 arrests)

5) Manchester City

39 arrests

49% at home games

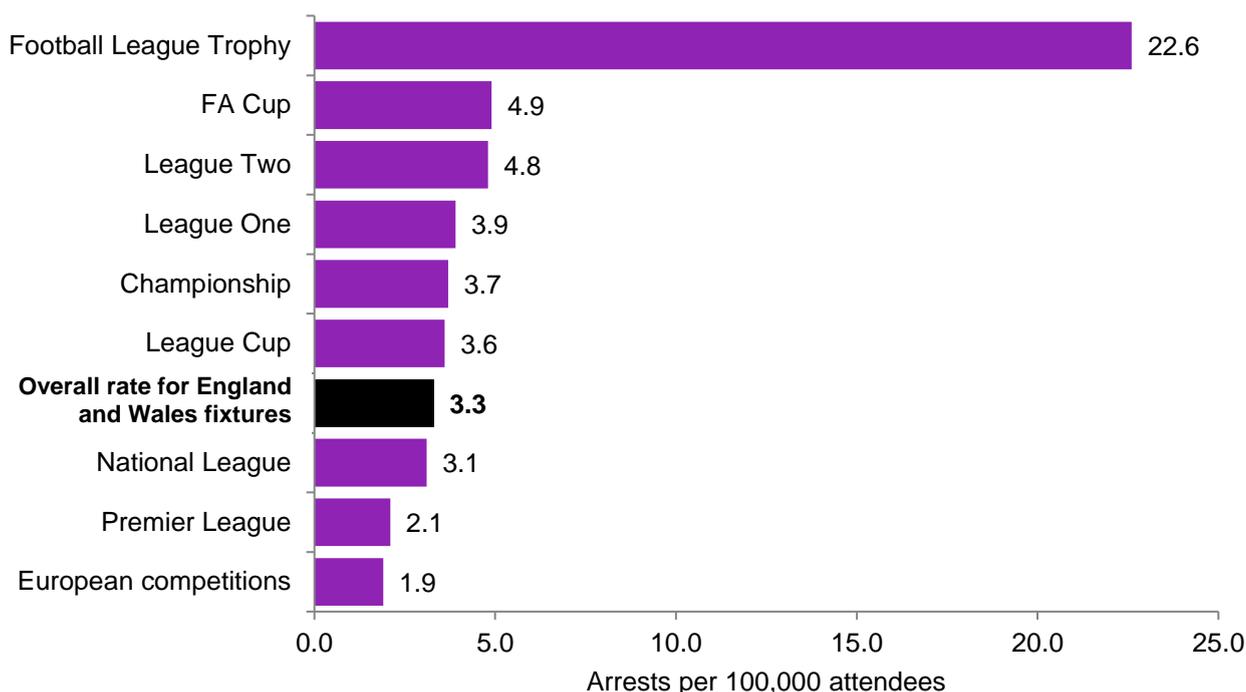Most common offence type: public disorder (11 arrests)

Source: Home Office, Football-related arrests and banning order statistics, England and Wales, 2018/19 season, Table 5.

There were 3.3 football-related arrests per 100,000 attendees

The football-related arrest rate[1] in the 2018/19 season was 3.3 arrests per 100,000 attendees. Of all competitions with 30 arrests or more, the Football League Trophy had the highest arrest rate of 22.6 per 100,000 attendees (Stoke City had 62 of the 70 arrests in this competition); whilst European club competitions had the lowest arrest rate of 1.9 arrests per 100,000 attendees.

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[1] Football-related arrests rate excludes 'other' competitions which include Community Shield, Under-21 internationals and pre-season friendlies.

Figure 5:   Football-related arrest rate per 100,000 attendees by competition, 2018/19 season

Competition	Arrests per 100,000 attendees
Football League Trophy	22.6
FA Cup	4.9
League Two	4.8
League One	3.9
Championship	3.7
League Cup	3.6
Overall rate for England and Wales fixtures	**3.3**
National League	3.1
Premier League	2.1
European competitions	1.9

Source: Home Office, Football-related arrests and banning order statistics, England and Wales, 2018/19 season, Table 11 and © The Football Yearbook 2019-2020 in association with The Sun (Attendance figures). **Notes:** Figures include arrests at all regulated international and domestic football matches involving English and Welsh clubs and the national teams, playing in the UK and overseas. Excludes 'other' competitions which include Community Shield, Under-21 internationals and Pre-season friendlies. Excludes competitions with less than 30 arrests.

Football-related arrests by British Transport Police increased by 28%

In the 2018/19 season, there were an additional 155 football-related arrests by BTP in connection with regulated international and domestic football matches involving English and Welsh clubs and the national teams. This represents a 28% (34) increase from 121 in the previous season. The most common offence type continues to be public disorder (50%).

However, compared with the recent peak in the 2015/16 season, the total number of BTP football-related arrests has fallen by 55% (-193).

Experimental statistics: Other arrests

Following user feedback, this section provides new experimental statistics which are in the testing phase and have not yet been fully developed.

A person may be arrested at a football match for an offence not covered by Schedule 1, which can include possession of drugs and theft. For the purpose of this release, these arrests will be termed 'other arrests'.

In 2018/19 season, there were an additional 347 other arrests at football matches, recorded on the Home Office's football database. A breakdown of other arrests by offence type is not available due to missing data on the database. For more information, see the user guide.

4   **Experimental Statistics:** Reported incidents at football fixtures

The following statistics are being published for the first time, following user feedback and to provide further evidence about the nature of disorder at English and Welsh football matches played in England and Wales.

These new statistics are classed as 'experimental' and should be considered an estimate of the number of reported incidents at football fixtures.

Reported incidents include football-related anti-social behaviour, violence and disorder involving supporters of English and Welsh clubs, playing in England and Wales. Reports of incidents are submitted to UKFPU by police dedicated football officers (DFOs). These reports may be informed by information obtained from partner organisations such as The Football Association and Kick It Out.

Experimental statistics are new official statistics undergoing evaluation. The statistics are experimental as the underlying matched data source is new and the methodology to create it may be improved. More information about experimental statistics can be found on the UK Statistics Authority website by clicking here. Home Office statisticians aim to improve the quality of the data in future releases by, in part, developing the quality assurance procedures and working with DFOs through UKFPU.

Figures presented in this section relate to the number of football fixtures where an incident was reported to have occurred and not the number of individual incidents. Multiple incidents may be reported per match.

Incidents were reported at around one-third of football fixtures in the 2018/19 season

In the 2018/19 season, there were 1,007 football fixtures with reported incidents, in connection with regulated domestic football matches involving English and Welsh clubs, playing in England and Wales. This is a decrease of 4% from 1,050 reported in the previous season.

Overall, incidents were reported at a third of all domestic matches (33% of 3,022 matches) in the 2018/19 season.

Reported incidents at football fixtures by match category

A standardised set of categories is used by the police to highlight the risk of disorder associated with individual football events. Fixtures are allocated a category in advance of the match and take into account the potential for disorder throughout the whole event area, for example, inside, outside and away from the stadium.

In the 2018/19 season, category A (low risk) fixtures had the largest number of incidents (381), but higher risk fixtures had the highest proportion of incidents, with incidents occurring at 31 of the 36 (86%) matches categorised as being of increased risk of disorder due to specific concerns (category C-IR) pre-match.

Police-free fixtures had the lowest proportion of fixtures with an incident (9%). The police are less likely to be present at these fixtures and therefore could not witness an incident themselves; therefore, incidents reported at police-free fixtures may come from a variety of sources, for example partner organisations such as The Football Association and Kick It Out.

Reported incidents by type

Figures on reported incidents are available by type of incident. More than one incident type may be reported at each match, so the sum of the incident types is greater than the number of incidents.

The most commonly reported types of incident involved pyrotechnics (at 335 matches) and throwing missiles (at 302 matches).

There were 292 matches where youth risk supporters were regarded as posing a possible risk to public order or anti-social behaviour; whether planned or spontaneous, at or in connection with a football event. This is lower than the 340 matches with youth risk supporters reported in 2017/18.

In the 2018/19 season, the number of matches where hate crime was reported increased by 47%, from 131 matches to 193 matches. Some of the increase is likely due to improvements in recording. Of the 193 matches, 79% of the hate crime incidents related to race.

Supporter drug use or possession was reported at 127 matches in 2018/19. The majority (83%) of the incidents of drug use or possession involved cocaine.

For more information on reported incidents at football fixtures, see Tables E1 to E3.

5   User guide

FOOTBALL BANNING ORDERS AND FOOTBALL-RELATED ARRESTS

Uses of the statistics

Uses of the football-related arrests and banning orders are listed below using the standard categorisation for official statistics.

a)   Informing the general public's choices:

- about the state of the economy, society and the environment – figures are used by national and local media in reports of the behaviour of football supporters

- about the activity of the police – figures are requested via Parliamentary Questions and Freedom of Information requests.

b)   Government policy making and monitoring:

Statistics are used to inform government policy and operational decisions by the police to mitigate the risk of future football-related disorder.

c)   Resource allocation – typically by central and local government:

Statistics on football-related arrests and banning orders demonstrate the scale of football disorder; and the Police and CPS activities.

Definitions and legislation

A football banning order (FBO) is a civil order which may be made by a court to help prevent violence or disorder at or in connection with regulated football matches. An individual subject to an FBO is prevented from attending regulated football matched in the UK. In addition, during a 'control period' for an overseas regulated football match or tournament, the enforcing authority (Football Banning Orders Authority, FBOA) can issue a notice to a person subject to an FBO requiring that they report to a local police station and surrender their passport. An FBO may impose any additional requirements the court sees fit in relation to any regulated football matches.

The court must make an FBO where an offender has been convicted of a relevant offence (i.e. an offence specified in Schedule 1 to the Football Spectators Act 1989) and it is satisfied that there are reasonable grounds to believe that making an FBO would help to prevent violence or disorder at or in connection with any regulated football matches. If the court is not satisfied, it must state that fact and give its reasons. The police, BTP or Crown Prosecution Service may make an application to the court to make an FBO in respect of a person who has at any time caused or contributed to violence or disorder, whether in the United Kingdom or elsewhere.

An FBO lasts a minimum of 3 years and a maximum of 10 years. The Breach of an order is a criminal offence punishable by a maximum sentence of 6 months in prison, an unlimited fine, or both.

Although in general one FBO equates to one individual, the number of existing banning orders is not necessarily the same as the number of individuals subject to FBOs, as an individual can be subject to more than one banning order. Furthermore, a banned individual may follow more than one football club so their FBO would appear more than once in the figures; however, the number that this applies to is likely to be small.

An individual may be made subject to an FBO in one of two ways: either following a conviction for a football-related offence or on application from the police or CPS (in which case the individual will not necessarily have been arrested).

In addition, the time from an arrest to the imposition of an FBO can vary in length given an order may only be imposed by a court. For example, an individual arrested during the 2017/18 season would be included in the 2017/18 arrest figures but may not be made subject to an FBO until sometime later, meaning the FBO would form part of the figures of a future year's release.

Data coverage

Statistics on banning orders were taken from the FBOA (part of Home Office UKFPU) records.

The total banning orders dates are as at: 29 November 2011; 9 November 2012; 20 September 2013; 3 September 2014; 8 September 2015; 1 August 2016; 7 August 2017; 1 August 2018 and 1 August 2019.

Caution should be taken when making season-on-season comparisons as the date the new banning orders data were extracted varied from year to year.

Statistics on football-related arrests are submitted by the 43 police forces in England and Wales, and BTP to the UKFPU. Football-related arrests are those to which Schedule 1 of the Football Spectators Act 1989 (as amended) applies. This includes football-specific offences (such as pitch incursion and throwing missiles inside a stadium) and a range of generic criminal offences committed in connection with a football match (at any place within a period of 24 hours either side of a match).

Statistics on football-related arrests cover the 2018/19 season (1 July 2018 to 30 June 2019) and information on all banning orders in force is reported as at 1 August 2019 (data reference dates for new banning orders issued in the 2018/19 season was 1 August 2018 to 31 July 2019).

Data collection and preparatory work

Throughout the season, football-related arrests and banning order data are collected and submitted to UKFPU by police forces in England and Wales and the BTP.

Banning orders are submitted to the FBOA, as enforcing authority, by courts in England and Wales or the CPS. Following the court making an FBO, it is required to notify FBOA, who administer the banning order.

Once all data have been received and collated by UKFPU, officials carry out a sense check and query any outliers or anomalies with the respective Dedicated Football Officer (DFO).

The data are then supplied to Home Office statisticians by UKFPU. Following this, the data undergo further scrutiny by Home Office statisticians, including validation and variance checks as part of their quality assurance process, for example to ensure that the number of banning orders issued in the 2018/19 season do not exceed the total number of banning orders as at 1 August 2019.

Data which still appear to be outliers or anomalies are sent to UKFPU for further investigation and where necessary are followed up with the relevant DFO.

OTHER ARRESTS

Definition

The data collected is on 'other arrests' at football matches which are not covered by Schedule 1 of the Football Spectators Act 1989 (as amended). This can include possession of drugs and theft.

Data source

The data are extracted from the Home Office's football database and derived from arrests submitted by the 43 police forces in England and Wales to the UKFPU.

Data quality

As this section of data is newly established and subject to data quality issues (detailed below), these statistics are currently designated as Experimental Statistics. Statisticians in the Home Office will work with UKFPU to improve the quality of these statistics as the collection continues.

Home Office statisticians' preparatory and quality assurance exercises have shed light on various issues with the collection which limit how the data may be used or interpreted. A breakdown on other arrests by offence type is not available due to missing data on the football database.

Quality and process checks carried out

These statistics are compiled by Home Office statisticians. They have worked closely with the UKFPU to quality assurance the data. These checks include:

- ensuring the data provided is complete, or as close as possible, given the recording capacity of the database (for example ensuring home and away teams are specified);
- querying contradictory data (for example where the team supported contradicts location of game, incorrect offence types) and working with UKFPU to correct the data where possible.

These issues in recording and data quality issues are not uncommon, and it is expected that the quality of the data will improve as the collection continues.

Improvements to data quality

Statisticians in the Home Office will work with UKFPU to improve the quality of these statistics as the collection continues. This will include, for example, consulting individual DFOs to address areas of their data collection to rectify errors or missing data.

Rounding

Data are provided unrounded in the accompanying data tables of 'Football-related arrests and banning orders, England and Wales' publication. This is to promote transparency and allow users to exploit the data further. However, caution should be taken when comparing small differences between time periods as figures are not necessarily accurate to the last digit.

Percentages in the release are rounded to the nearest per cent using the round-half-away-from-zero method. For example, 23.5 per cent will be rounded to 24 per cent, and -23.5 per cent will be rounded to -24 per cent.

Where data are rounded, they may not sum to the totals shown, or, in the case of percentages, to 100% because they have been rounded independently.

REPORTED INCIDENTS OF FOOTBALL-RELATED ANTI-SOCIAL BEHAVIOUR, VIOLENCE AND DISORDER

Definition

The data collected is on **reported** incidents of football-related anti-social behaviour, violence and disorder involving supporters at English and Welsh matches. The data includes football clubs competing in the top five English divisions and includes the English Cup competitions, European Cup and International Team fixtures played in England/Wales, and pre-season friendlies. It excludes International away fixtures; European away fixtures; BTP; Pre-season away games; Scottish fixtures; U21 fixtures and Women's football fixtures. Incidents may occur inside or outside of the football stadium.

The incidents may be related to arrests and/or banning orders, but it is not possible to link the data using the underlying data sources.

Data source

The data are extracted from the Home Office's football database and derived from reports of incidents submitted by police dedicated football officers (DFOs). Where the DFO is not present at a football match, for example at 'Police Free' matches, the DFO will gather information from a variety of sources, for example partner organisations such as The Football Association and Kick It Out.

Data quality

As this section of data is newly established and subject to data quality issues (detailed below), these statistics are currently designated as Experimental Statistics[2] . Statisticians in

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[2] The UK Statistics Authority defines experimental statistics as 'newly developed or innovative statistics'.

the Home Office will work with UKFPU to improve the quality of these statistics as the collection continues.

Home Office statisticians' preparatory and quality assurance exercises have shed light on various issues with the collection which limit how the data may be used or interpreted. **Figures presented in this report relate to the number of football fixtures where an incident was reported to have occurred and not the number of individual incidents.** Multiple incidents may take place at one match.

Quality and process checks carried out

These statistics are compiled by Home Office statisticians; they have worked closely with the UKFPU to quality assurance the data. These checks include:

- identifying duplicate data;

- ensuring the data provided is complete, or as close as possible, given the recording capacity of the database (for example ensuring each record has incident and match details) and working with UKFPU to correct the data where possible;

- sampling 200 records (100 for each year) to compare the free text report summary against the incidents details;

- investigating the proportion of matches with a report incident.

- sampling 200 records (100 for each year and different to those supplied above) to compare the free text report summary against the high, medium and low match categories.

These issues in recording and data quality issues are not uncommon, and it is expected that the quality of the data will improve as the collection continues.

Improvements to data quality

Statisticians in the Home Office will work with UKFPU to improve the quality of these statistics as the collection continues. This will include, for example, consulting individual DFOs to address areas of their data collection to rectify errors or missing data. In preparation for the collection of data for future seasons, updates and improvements will be made to the football database which should improve the coverage and completeness of incoming data.

6   Further information

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