



## Offender Management Statistics Bulletin, England and Wales

Quarterly: July to September 2019  
Prison population: 31 December 2019

### Main points

**82,868 prisoners in England and Wales as at 31 December 2019**



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

**18,806 first receptions into prison in the last quarter**



The number of first receptions represents a fall of 1% compared with the same quarter last year.

**15,699 releases from sentences in the latest quarter**



This is 8% lower than in the same quarter in 2018. As the prison population shifts towards those serving longer sentences, we would expect fewer releases in a given period.

**52,561 adjudication outcomes in the latest quarter**



This is a decrease of 4% on the same quarter of last year. Additional days were awarded as punishment on 4,585 occasions in this quarter – this is 24% lower than the same period in 2018.

**7,015 licence recalls between in the latest quarter**



This is a 12% increase on the same quarter in 2018, driven by increases in recalls from determinate sentences of more than 12 months.

**252,197 offenders on probation in the latest quarter**



This number of offenders on probation has fallen by 2% compared to the same point in 2018.

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

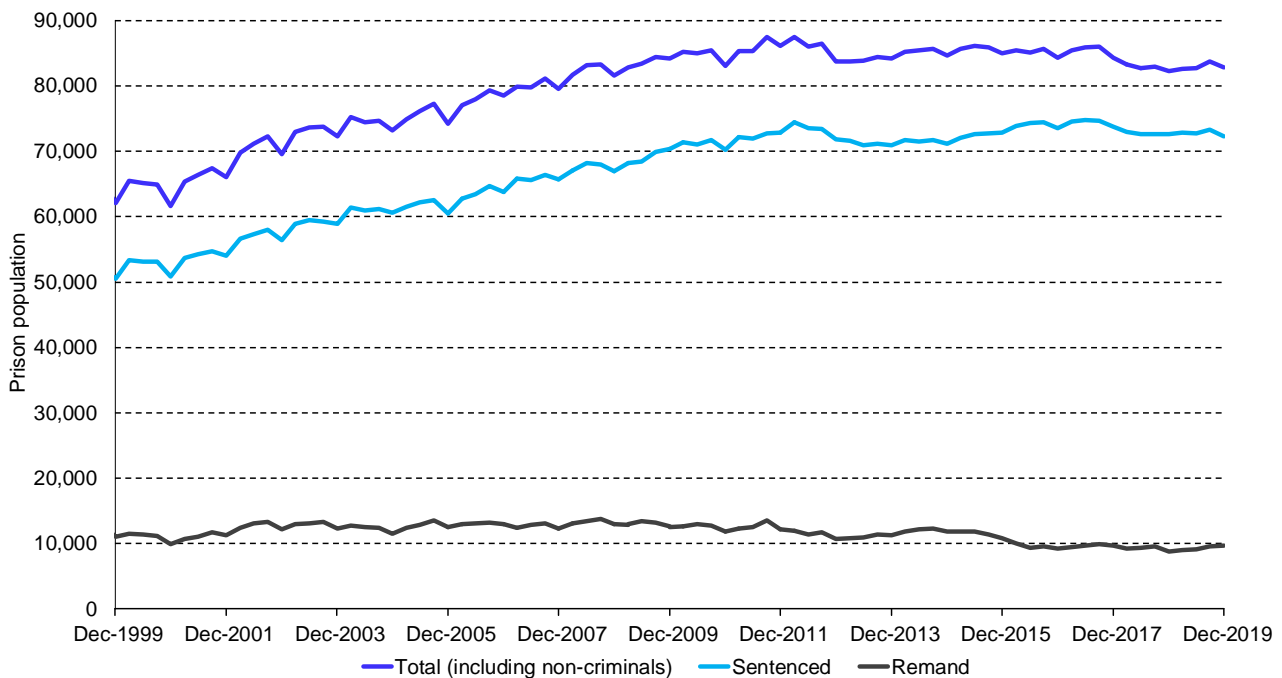
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**The prison population stood at 82,868 on 31 December 2019.**

The sentenced prison population stood at 72,353 (87% of the prison population); the remand prison population stood at 9,708 (12%) and the non-criminal prison population stood at 807 (1%).

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



## Remand prison population

As at 31 December 2019, the remand population was 10% higher than the same point 12 months earlier. The number of males in custody on remand increased by 10% (to 9,140) and the number of females held on remand increased by 21% (to 568).

This represents the highest 'end of year' remand population for four years (since 31 December 2015, when it was 10,779).

More than half (57%) of those in custody on remand were being held for either:

- Violence against the person (24% of the remand population)
- Drug offences (20%)
- Theft Offences (13%).

Of these three large remand populations, the 'Violence against the person' remand population increased by 15% year-on-year, and the 'Drug offences' remand population increased by 30% - whereas the Theft Offences remand population only increased by 1%.

The remand population for 'Criminal damage and arson' increased by 22% (to 504) between December 2018 and December 2019 – however, this group only represents around 5% of the total remand population.

## **Sentenced prison population**

The overall sentenced population is unchanged (less than 1% decrease) in the year leading up to 31 December 2019.

There was a 6% decrease in the number of prisoners serving sentences of less than 4 years, but this decrease was offset by a 21% rise in prisoners in custody following a licence recall (the 'recall population').

## **Sexual offenders**

In June 2018, the number of prisoners serving immediate custodial sentences for sexual offences reached its highest level since at least 2002, but has since been decreasing.

In the latest 12 month period the number of prisoners serving a sentence for sexual offences continues to fall (a 4% decrease between December 2018 and 2019). On a quarterly prison population basis, it is now at the lowest level for more than 3 years (since 30 September 2016).

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

One in every four (28%) sentenced prisoners is in prison for a VATP offence. This proportion has remained stable for the past 12 months.

Since the 'Possession of Weapons' offence group was added to the publication in 2015 there have been large year-on-year increases in the number of prisoners serving sentences for a 'Possession of Weapons' offence. However, this is the first 12 month period in which there has not been an increase (there was a less than 1% decrease, to 2,868).

## **Extended Determinate Sentences (EDS)**

EDSs were made available for courts to impose from 13 April 2015 for 'dangerous' offenders convicted of certain violent, sexual or terrorism offences. On 31 December 2019, 5,669 prisoners were serving such sentences; a 12% increase compared to the same time last year.

## **Indeterminate sentences**

As at 31 December 2019, there were 9,194 (8,848 male; 346 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 4%.

There were 2,134 IPP prisoners as at 31 December 2019 which represents a decrease of 14% in the last 12 months. This figure has decreased 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 24% (to 1,260).

The proportion of the IPP population who are post-tariff continues to increase; 93% of IPP prisoners were post-tariff as of 31 December 2019 compared to 91% at the same time the previous year.

The number of life sentenced prisoners (7,060) is unchanged (less than 1% decrease) compared to 31 December 2018. There were 64 whole-life prisoners in custody at the end of December 2019, with 2 additional whole-life prisoners being treated in secure hospitals.

## **Recall to custody**

The prison population who have been recalled to custody (8,434 prisoners) increased by 21% over the year leading up to 31 December 2019. This increase has been driven by an increase in those recalled from long determinate sentences (as these individuals would have a longer licence period in which they could be 'recalled'), with others also recalled from Home Detention Curfew and IPP sentences.

## **Foreign National Offenders (FNOs)**

There were 9,225 (1,865 remand, 6,623 sentenced and 737 non-criminal) foreign nationals held in custody and the HMPPS-operated Immigration Removal Centre (IRC, at Morton Hall) as at 31 December 2019; representing 11% of the total prison population.

The number of FNOs in the prison (and HMPPS IRC) population has increased by 1% compared to 31 December 2018. The most common nationalities after British Nationals in prisons are Albanian (11% of the FNO prison population), Polish (9%), Romanian (9%), Irish (8%) and Jamaican (5%).

## 2. Prison receptions and admissions

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**18,806 offenders were received into custody as first receptions in the latest quarter.**

10,349 remand first receptions, 8,400 sentenced first receptions and 57 civil non-criminal first receptions.

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### Offender first receptions

The total number of first receptions during Q3 2019 was 1% lower than the same quarter in 2018. This is in line with the longer falling trend over the past 15 years.

There were 2,790 first receptions of foreign nationals during Q3 2019 (unchanged compared with July to September 2018). The five foreign nationalities with the highest numbers of first receptions in the latest quarter were: Romanian (428), Polish (419), Albanian (276), Irish (157) and Lithuanian (140). When taken together, these five nationalities accounted for around half (51%) of the 2,790 first receptions of foreign nationals between July to September 2019.

### Prison admissions

There was a 1% decrease in the number of untried admissions (to 7,649), but the level of convicted unsentenced admissions increased (by 4%, to 5,186). The number of sentenced prisoner admissions was 3% lower than the same quarter in 2018 (to 14,022).

Conversely there was an 11% increase in the number of recall admissions (to 6,535) in the latest quarter (compared to the same period in 2018). Of which, the number of recall admissions from determinate sentences increased by 11% and those from indeterminate sentences increased by 27%.

Almost half of all sentenced admissions during the quarter were for sentences of six months or less (6,608, 47% of sentenced admissions). This sentence length band has seen a 2% decrease in the number of admissions when compared with the same quarter last year.

### 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 July to September 2019, 351 individuals first received into custody declared that they had served in the armed services. This represents 3% of those who provided a response to the question at the point of their first reception.

### 3. Releases

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#### **15,699 offenders were released from custody in the latest quarter.**

15,528 releases from determinate sentences and 171 from indeterminate sentences.

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#### **Prison releases from custodial sentences – “fewer prisoners are being released from custody”**

There were 8% fewer releases during the quarter ending September 2019 compared to the same quarter in 2018.

There were large decreases in the number of releases from short sentences (less than 4 years) but an increase (4%) in releases from longer determinate sentences (4 years or more) compared to the same quarter in 2018. This reflects the general trend in the prison population away from short sentenced offenders, to those serving longer determinate sentences.

There were 171 releases from indeterminate sentences (91 IPP, 80 Life) between July and September 2019, a 32% decrease from the same period in 2018. The number of IPP and life releases fell by 30% and 34% respectively.

While the number of IPP releases tended to be around 130 and above per quarter, in previous years, the number of released IPP prisoners is now declining, and is expected to continue in future quarters.

#### **Releases on Home Detention Curfew (HDC)**

3,249 offenders were released on HDC during the latest quarter – this represents a fall of 10% compared to the same quarter in 2018. This fall in the number released on HDC reflects the reduction in the size of the pool of offenders eligible for HDC (4% lower than the same period in 2018).

#### **Releases on Temporary Licence (ROTL)**

There were 117,576 incidences of ROTL during the quarter ending September 2019, which is a 21% increase on the same quarter last year.

5,134 individuals were given at least one incidence of ROTL between July and September 2019 - an increase of 19% compared to the same quarter in 2018.

There were 150 recorded Temporary Release Failures (TRFs) between July and September 2019. This is an increase of 3 compared with the previous quarter and an increase of 23 compared with the same period the previous year (though because of the increase in ROTL incidences over the previous year, the failure rate has decreased). TRFs as a proportion of temporary release incidences remain at a low level, with approximately only 1 in every 780 incidences of temporary release resulting in a failure between July and September 2019.

#### **Prisoner transfers**

There was a total of 22,108 recorded incidences of prisoner transfer during the latest quarter (2% increase from last year). The majority of these (72%) were routine inter-prison transfers. 18,200 prisoners had at least one incidence of a transfer in quarter ending September 2019.

## 4. Adjudications

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**There were 52,561 adjudication outcomes between July and September 2019.**

This is a decrease of 4% on the same quarter in the previous year. Additional days were awarded as punishment on 4,585 occasions in this quarter.

63% of all adjudications were proven.

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Around a third (32%) of proven adjudications were for offences of disobedience and disrespect, closely followed by unauthorised transactions (29%). The number of proven adjudications for disobedience and unauthorised transactions fell by 9% (to 10,486) and 12% (to 9,569) respectively on the same quarter of the previous year. The number of proven offences for violence has remained unchanged.

There was an 8% decrease in the number of proven adjudications (to 32,980) from the same quarter in 2018. This resulted in a 9% fall in the number of punishments (to 54,272).

Additional days were awarded as punishment on 4,585 occasions between July and September 2019; this is 24% lower than the same period in 2018. A total of 79,115 days was awarded in the latest quarter – this represents a decrease of 21% from the same quarter in 2018 (100,432; July to September 2018).

The average number of punishments per offence was 1.65. This has remained unchanged compared with figures seen in recent quarters.

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

## 5. Licence Recalls

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**The number of licence recalls between July and September 2019 was 7,015, of which 682 were recalls from Home Detention Curfew (HDC).**

The total number of recalls increased by 12% compared to the same quarter in 2018

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The total number of quarterly recalls has generally been increasing since October-December 2016. The number of recalls increased by 7% from the previous quarter and 12% from the same quarter a year ago. There has been a marked increase in the number of quarterly recalls since 2018, partly due to increased HDC recalls and recalls of offenders from determinate sentences of 12 months or more.

The number of quarterly recalls of offenders released from a sentence of under 12 months has been relatively stable in recent years, averaging about 2,250 each quarter since July-September 2017.

After a fall in the number of offenders recalled from a sentence of over 12 months from early 2016 to mid-2017, the number of these recalls (including recalls of those with indeterminate sentences) has continued to increase. Between July and September 2019, there were 4,390 offenders recalled from a sentence over 12 months, an increase of 17% in comparison to the same quarter in the previous year.

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 June-September 2019, consistent with recent quarters.

Between June and September 2019, 98 IPP prisoners and 50 prisoners serving a life sentence 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 September 2019, there were 1,936 who had not been returned to custody by the end of December 2019.

A further 17 offenders had not been returned to custody as of December 2019 after recall between 1984 and April 1999, meaning the total number of offenders not returned to custody at the end of December 2019 was 1,953. These figures include some offenders believed to be dead or living abroad but who have not been confirmed as dead or deported.

Of the 1,953 not returned to custody by 31 December 2019, 330 had originally been serving a prison sentence for violence against the person offences and a further 60 for sexual offences.



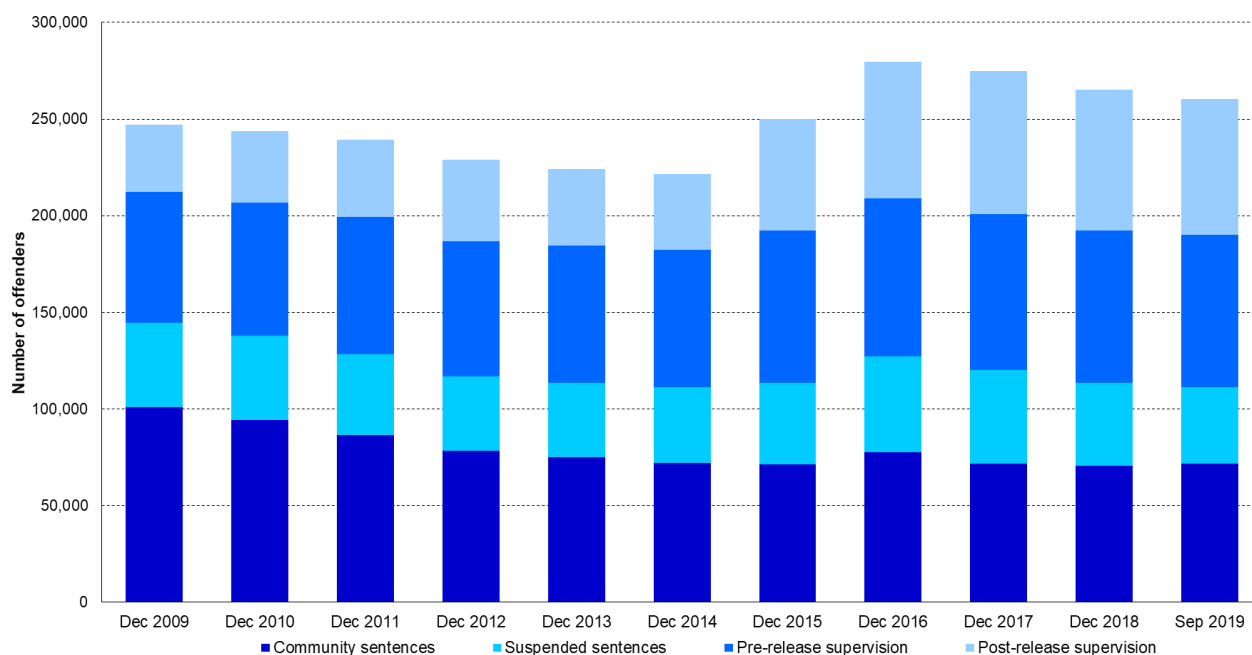
## 6. Probation

**The total number of offenders on probation (i.e. court orders and pre/post supervision) at the end of September 2019 was 252,197.**

This represents a 2% decrease compared to the end of September 2018.

As at 30 September 2019, there were 252,197 offenders supervised by the Probation Service (Figure 2), representing a 2% decrease compared to 30 September 2018. Overall, court order caseload decreased by 3% from 113,348 to 109,773 over the same period, with the number of offenders on a Community Order (CO) having increased by 3% and those on a Suspended Sentence Order (SSO) with requirements having decreased by 13%. The total caseload of offenders supervised before or after release from prison at the end of September 2019 was 147,912, signifying a decrease of 2% since the end of September 2018; those supervised under post-release alone decreased by 4% over the same period.

**Figure 2: Number of offenders under Probation Service supervision, 31 December 2009 to 2018 and 30 September 2019 (source for latest period: Table 4.6; source for years prior to 2018: Table A4.13 of the annual probation tables)**



During the quarter July to September 2019, 19,589 offenders started COs, representing a decrease of 3% compared to the same quarter in the previous year. The number of offenders who started SSOs with requirements remained at a similar level of 8,266 offenders between July and September 2019, whilst those starting pre-release supervision decreased by 5% over the same period.

Overall, 30,490 requirements were started under COs between July to September 2019, with alcohol and drug treatments increasing by 10% to 963 requirements and 4% to 1,326 requirements respectively since the same quarter in 2018. Also, 14,144 requirements were started under SSOs between July to September 2019, with rehabilitation and drug treatment increasing by 5% to 5,856 requirements and 6% to 654 requirements respectively since the same period in the previous year.

In terms of the most frequently used combinations of requirements under COs, rehabilitation combined with alcohol treatment increased by 6% to 538 requirements in July to September 2019 compared to the same quarter in 2018, whilst accredited programmes and rehabilitation combined

saw an 8% decrease to 675 requirements. Under SSOs, rehabilitation and curfew combined saw the largest increase at 18% to 328 requirements in July to September 2019, whilst accredited programmes and rehabilitation decreased by 11% to 481 requirements.

Of court orders terminated from July to September 2019, 68% of 17,834 COs and 75% of 8,270 SSOs (for the supervision period) were terminated successfully, i.e. ran their full course or were terminated early for good progress.

In the quarter July to September 2019, there was a 7% decrease in the number of pre-sentence reports (PSRs) prepared by the Probation Service compared to the same quarter in 2018. 89% of immediate custodial sentences proposed in PSRs resulted in that sentence being given in the year ending September 2019.

## Further information

This publication presents quarterly trends. For annual figures, and longer-term trends, please refer to our annual bulletin published in April each year.

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

Press enquiries should be directed to the Ministry of Justice press office:

Tel: 020 3334 3536

Email: [newsdesk@justice.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:newsdesk@justice.gsi.gov.uk)

Other enquiries about these statistics should be directed to the Justice Statistics Analytical Services division of the Ministry of Justice:

Nick Mavron, Head of Prison, Probation, Reoffending and PbR Statistics

Ministry of Justice, 102 Petty France, London, SW1H 9AJ

Email: [statistics.enquiries@justice.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:statistics.enquiries@justice.gsi.gov.uk)

**Next update:** 30 April 2020

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

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