



Proven reoffending statistics quarterly bulletin, England and Wales, January 2018 to March 2018

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Main points

This bulletin provides key statistics on proven reoffending for adult and juvenile offenders who were released from custody, received a non-custodial conviction at court, or received a caution in the period **January to March 2018**. The proven reoffending methodology changed in October 2017. For more information about the changes see the [October 2017 publication](#).

<p>The overall proven reoffending rate was 28.7% for the January to March 2018 offender cohort</p>	<p>↓</p> <p>This represents a decrease of 0.5 percentage points from the same quarter in 2017. While this is the lowest reoffending rate in the twelve-year timeseries, the rate has remained broadly flat over time, fluctuating between 28.7% and 31.8% over that period.</p>
<p>Adult offenders had a proven reoffending rate of 28.0%</p>	<p>↓</p> <p>This is a decrease of 0.4 percentage points since the same quarter in 2017. While this represents the lowest rate in the twelve-year timeseries, it has remained broadly flat over time, fluctuating between 28.0% and 30.6%.</p>
<p>Juvenile offenders had a proven reoffending rate of 39.2%</p>	<p>↓</p> <p>The juvenile reoffending rate decreased by 0.7 percentage points since the same quarter in the previous year. Over the years, the rate has fluctuated between 36.3% and 43.6%.¹ However, for context, the number of offenders in the cohort has fallen by 87% since April to June 2006 creating a more volatile series.</p>
<p>Adults released from custody or starting court orders had a proven reoffending rate of 36.7%</p>	<p>↓</p> <p>This represents a 1.0 percentage point decrease since the same quarter in the previous year and a decrease of 3.2 percentage points since the same quarter in 2011. The rates have fluctuated between 36.3% and 42.9% since 2006, with a more gradual decrease seen in recent years.</p>
<p>Adults released from custodial sentences of less than 12 months had a proven reoffending rate of 62.7%</p>	<p>↓</p> <p>This is a decrease of 1.4 percentage points from the same quarter in the previous year. Those released from sentences of less than or equal to 6 months had a proven reoffending rate of 64.8%, which is also a decrease, of 2.0 percentage points, since the same quarter in the previous year.</p>

This bulletin, associated tables and data tools present the proportion of offenders who reoffend (proven reoffending rate) and the number of proven reoffences by offender history, demographics, individual prisons, probation area, local authorities and youth offending teams. For technical details please refer to the accompanying [guide to proven reoffending statistics](#).

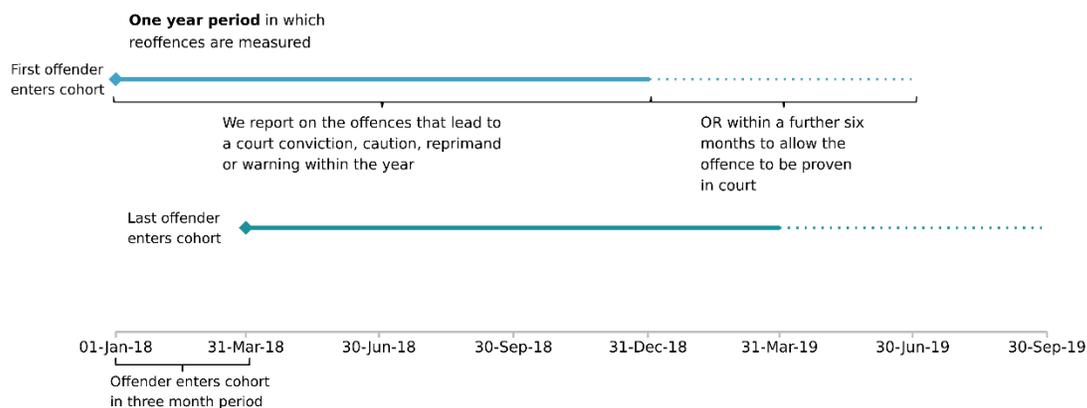
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¹ The new reoffending measure, however, is likely to be more variable from quarter to quarter due to the smaller size of the cohorts.

How is proven reoffending measured?

An offender enters the cohort if they were released from custody, received a non-custodial conviction at court, or received a caution in a three-month period. It is important to note that this is not comparable to publications prior to the October 2017 proven reoffending publication, which reported on a 12-month offender cohort.

A proven reoffence is defined as any offence committed in a one-year follow-up period that leads to a court conviction, caution, reprimand or warning in the one-year follow-up or within a further six-month waiting period to allow the offence to be proven in court as shown in the diagram below. Offenders who appear multiple times in the cohort are only counted once. Only those reoffences recorded on the Police National Computer are included.



The timeseries presented in this publication spans the April to June 2006 offender cohort through to the January to March 2018 offender cohort.

Users should be cautious when making any comparisons between cohorts before and after October 2015. This is because there was a change in data source from October 2015 onwards. In addition, given the smaller cohort size, users should be cautious when comparing the 3-monthly cohorts to one another (e.g. January to March 2018 to October to December 2017) as these are likely to be more variable than the previous 12-month cohort measure of reoffending. For further details on this, and how proven reoffending is measured, please see the [guide to proven reoffending statistics](#) and 'How the measure of proven reoffending has changed and the effect of these changes'.

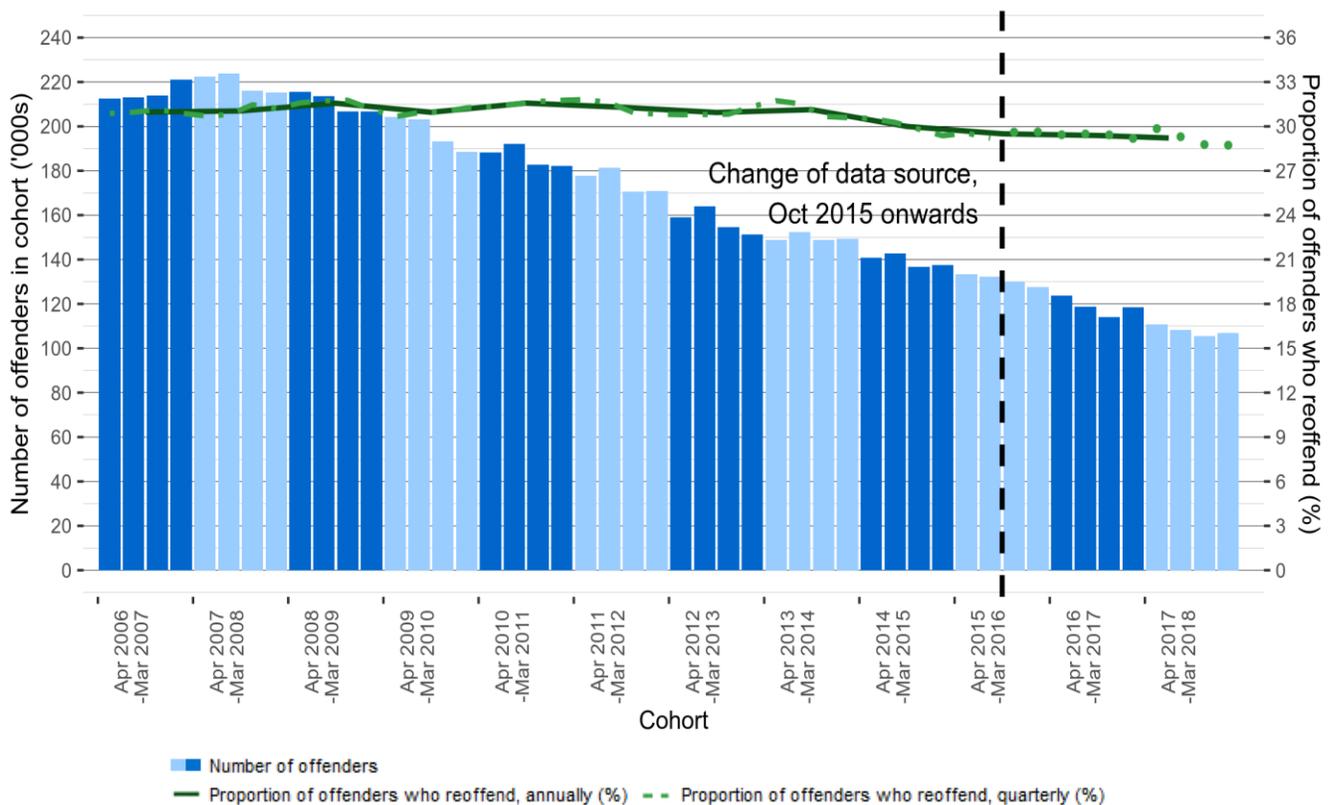
1. Overall – adult and juvenile offenders

The overall proven reoffending rate was 28.7% for the January to March 2018 offender cohort

This represents a decrease of 0.5 percentage points from the same quarter in 2017. While this is the lowest reoffending rate in the twelve-year timeseries, the rate has fluctuated between 28.7% and 31.8% over that period.

Based on just under 107,000 adult and juvenile offenders (made up of 94% adults and 6% juveniles)² in the January to March 2018 cohort, the reoffending rate was 28.7%. This represents a 0.5 percentage point decrease since the same quarter in 2017 and the lowest rate in the twelve-year timeseries. Almost 31,000 of these offenders committed just over 123,000 proven reoffences over a one-year follow-up period. In terms of the frequency of reoffending, this was equivalent to an average of 4.02 reoffences per reoffender, a 0.8% decrease compared to the same quarter in 2017.

Figure 1: Proportion of adult and juvenile offenders who commit a proven reoffence and the number of offenders in each cohort, England and Wales, April 2006 to March 2018 (Source: Table A1)



² A certain proportion of offenders who could not be matched to the Police National Computer (PNC) are excluded from the offender cohort. Therefore, this number does not represent all proven offenders. This means that the number of offenders in this bulletin will be different from the numbers published in Offender Management Statistics Quarterly and Criminal Justice Statistics. Please refer to the [guide to proven reoffending statistics](#) for further information.

The overall proven reoffending rate has remained broadly stable over time, with small fluctuations between 28.7% and 31.8% (figure 1). In contrast, the average number of reoffences per reoffender has steadily increased from 3.12 since April to June 2009. The increasing frequency rate, along with the decreasing number of proven reoffenders generally, show that a higher number of reoffences are gradually being committed by a smaller number of individuals.

Of the January to March 2018 offender cohort, 83% were male and 17% were female, with the gender split remaining reasonably stable over time. Although the reoffending rate amongst male offenders over the last two quarters was at its lowest since 2006, male offenders reoffended at a higher rate of 29.9% compared to female offenders who reoffended at a rate of 23.1%. Since 2006, these rates have fluctuated between 29.9% and 33.9% for males and 21.5% to 24.4% for females.

2. Adult offenders

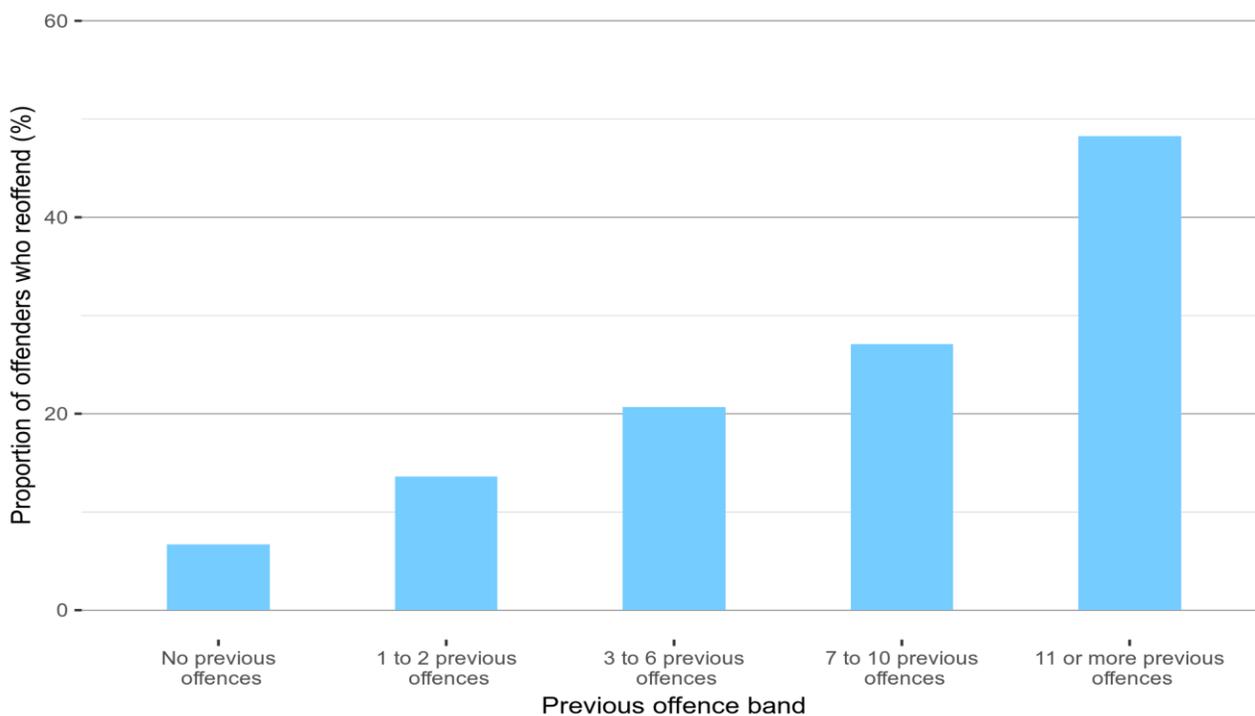
Adult offenders had a proven reoffending rate of 28.0%

This is a decrease of 0.4 percentage points since the same quarter in 2017 and represents the lowest rate in the twelve-year timeseries. However, the rate has remained broadly flat over time, fluctuating between 28.0% and 30.6%.

The adult reoffending rate for the January to March 2018 cohort was 28.0% and, mirroring the overall rate, represents the lowest rate in the twelve-year timeseries. Of approximately 100,000 adult offenders in the latest offender cohort, around 28,000 individuals committed almost 113,000 proven reoffences over the one-year follow-up period. Those that reoffended committed on average 4.02 reoffences, representing a 1.2% decrease compared to the same quarter in 2017.

Overall, the proven reoffending rate has remained broadly flat over time, fluctuating between 28.0% and 30.6%. However, in line with the overall frequency trend, the number of reoffences per adult reoffender has risen steadily since 2009.

Figure 2: Proportion of adult offenders who commit a proven reoffence, by number of previous offences, England and Wales, January to March 2018 (Source: Table A5a)



Over the years, offenders with more extensive criminal histories (i.e. a larger number of previous offences) have consistently had a higher rate of proven reoffending compared to those with fewer previous offences. In the January to March 2018 cohort, the proven reoffending rates for adults ranged from 6.7% for offenders with no previous offences to 48.2% for offenders with 11 or more previous offences (figure 2). These latest figures represent a 0.4 percentage point increase and a 1.2 percentage point decrease respectively compared to the same quarter in the previous year.

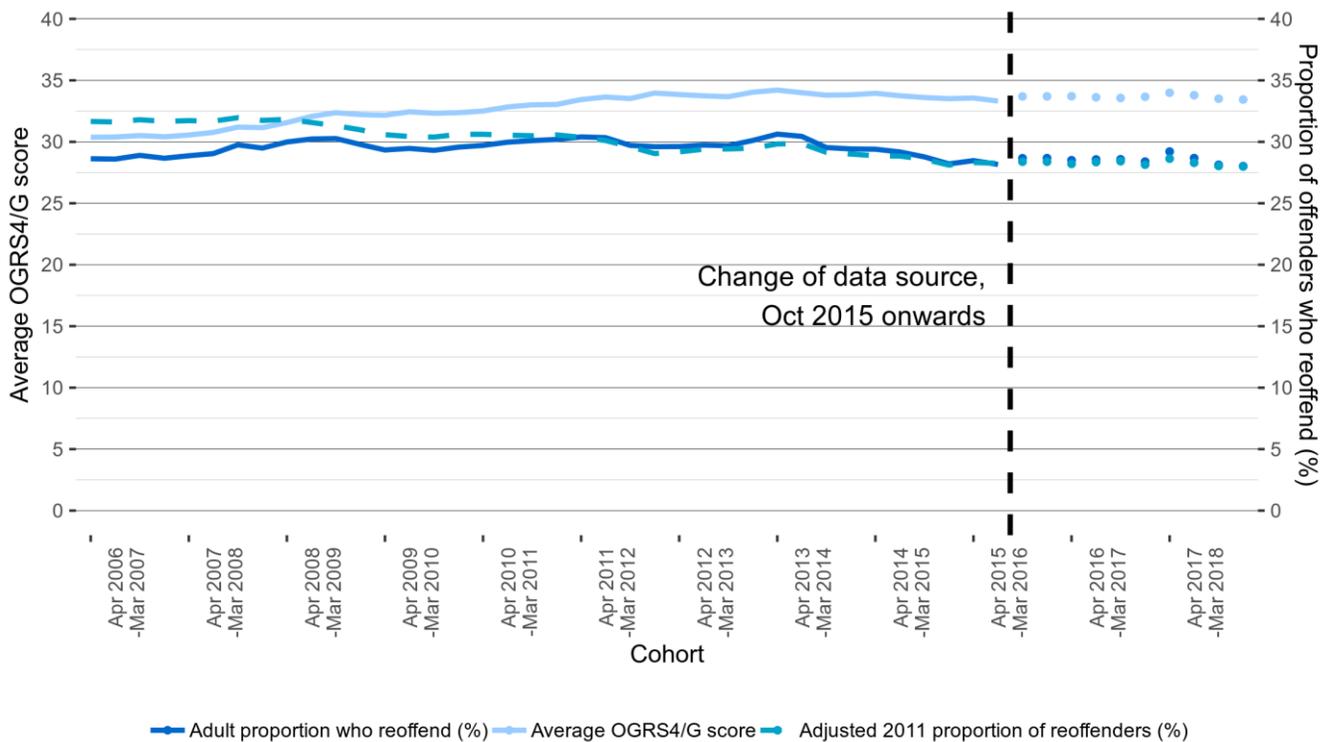
3. Adjusted reoffending rates for adult offenders

When controlling for offender characteristics, 28.0% of adult offenders in the cohort reoffended within a year

This represents a decrease of 0.1 percentage points compared to the same quarter in 2017 and the lowest rate in the timeseries.

The actual reoffending rate provides users with sufficient information on what the level of reoffending is and how it is changing over time. However, as proven reoffending is related to the characteristics of offenders, the actual rate will depend, in part, on the characteristics of offenders coming into the system. The raw proven reoffending rates have also been adjusted against the 2011 calendar year, in line with the Payment by Results (PbR) statistics.³ These adjusted rates (for adults only) are calculated by ‘the proportion of offenders who reoffend’ (i.e. the proven reoffending rate) for the cohort plus any difference between the average Offender Group Reconviction Scale (OGRS4/G) score in that cohort and the 2011 cohorts.⁴ This takes into account the influence that differences in the offender mix can have on the reoffending rates.

Figure 3: The proportion of offenders who reoffend, the average OGRS scores and the adjusted proven reoffending rate for adults, England and Wales, April 2006 to March 2018 (Source: Table A1)



³ Refer to [Payment by results statistics](#) for proven reoffending statistics for adult offenders being managed by Community Rehabilitation Companies, under PbR arrangements, and by the National Probation Service.

⁴ OGRS4 is based on a well-established, peer-reviewed methodology for assessing and representing reoffending risk. It applies to adult offenders only. Refer to [A compendium of research and analysis on the Offender Assessment System \(OASys\)](#) for details.

Between 2006 and 2011 the average OGRS score increased, but since 2011 it has remained relatively flat (figure 3). This indicates that, between 2006 and 2011, the cohort had an increasing propensity to reoffend, but since 2011 this has levelled off. As a result, the raw reoffending rates for adults are adjusted upwards between 2006 and 2011 reflecting the lower propensity to reoffend when compared to later cohorts. Following 2011, the raw rates and the adjusted rates have tracked each other more closely, with the raw reoffending rate and the adjusted rate for adults in the January to March 2018 cohort period both being 28.0%.

4. Juvenile offenders⁵

Juvenile offenders had a proven reoffending rate of 39.2%

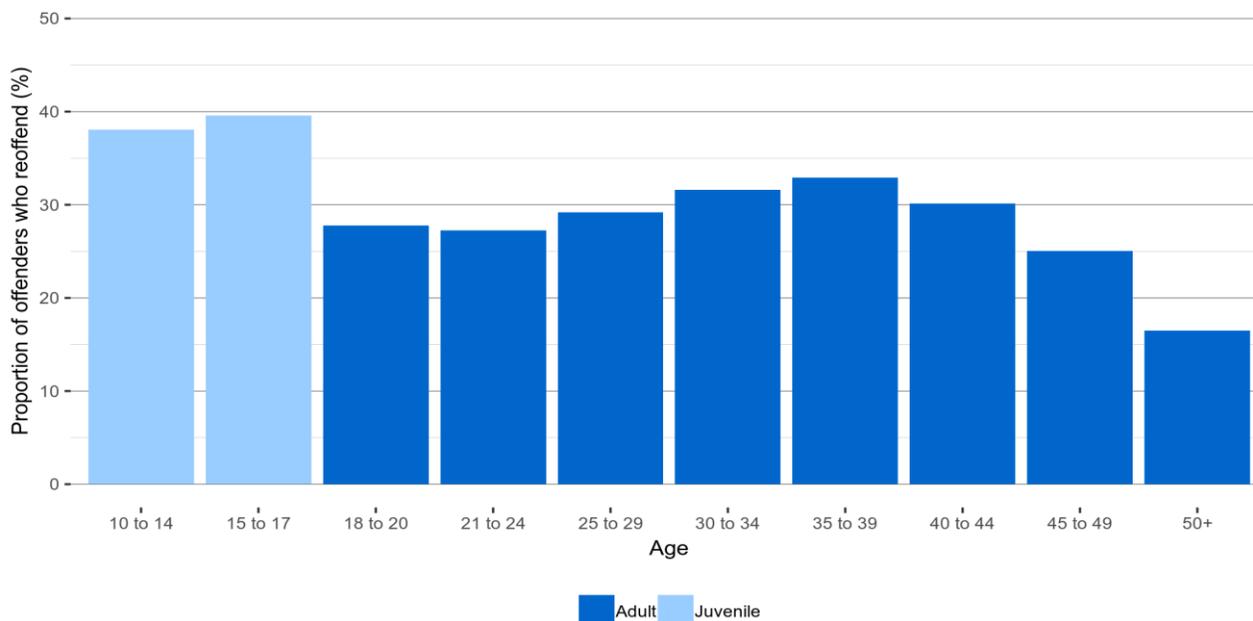
The juvenile reoffending rate decreased by 0.7 percentage points since the same quarter in the previous year. Over the years, the rate has fluctuated between 36.3% and 43.6%.⁶ However, for context, the number of offenders in the cohort has fallen by 87% since April to June 2006.

The juvenile reoffending rate for the January to March 2018 offender cohort was 39.2%, a 0.7 percentage point decrease from the same quarter in the previous year. Of the approximately 7,000 juvenile offenders, just under 3,000 of them committed a reoffence within a one-year follow-up period (equivalent to around 11,000 proven reoffences). Those that reoffended committed on average 4.02 reoffences each, an increase of 2.7% since the same quarter in 2017.

Since the start of the timeseries, the juvenile reoffending rate has been more variable compared to the overall and adult rates, fluctuating between 36.3% and 43.6%⁷ whilst the frequency of reoffences has increased over the last decade. However, for context, the number of offenders in the cohort has fallen by 87% since 2006.

As with the adult cohort, juvenile offenders with 11 or more previous offences had a higher reoffending rate than those with no previous offences, 72.0% and 21.0% respectively. Juvenile offenders with 11 or more previous offences made up 12% of the offender cohort whilst those with no previous offences accounted for 44% of the cohort.

Figure 4: Proportion of adult and juvenile offenders who commit a proven reoffence, by age, England and Wales, January to March 2018 (Source: Table A3)



⁵ Juveniles are defined as those aged 10 to 17 years old.

⁶ The new reoffending measure, however, is likely to be more variable from quarter to quarter due to the smaller size of the cohorts.

⁷ Ibid.

This quarter, 15 to 17-year-old offenders have the highest reoffending rate, closely followed by the 10 to 14-year-old offenders, with reoffending rates of 39.6% and 38.0% respectively (figure 4). Following a general increase from 2006 to 2015, the reoffending rates for both these age groups have decreased as the offender cohorts and number of reoffenders have continued to decline, although there was a small increase in the 15 to 17-year-old group over the last quarter. The proven reoffending rate for juveniles is higher than adults and the rate starts to fall with increasing age after the 35 to 39-year-old group.

5. Adult reoffending by disposal⁸

Adults released from custody or starting court orders had a proven reoffending rate of 36.7%

This represents a 1.0 percentage point decrease since the same quarter in the previous year and a decrease of 3.2 percentage points since the same quarter in 2011. The rates have fluctuated between 36.3% and 42.9% since 2006, with a more gradual decrease seen in recent years.

Adults released from custodial sentences of less than 12 months had a proven reoffending rate of 62.7%

This is a decrease of 1.4 percentage points from the same quarter in the previous year. Those released from sentences of less than or equal to 6 months had a proven reoffending rate of 64.8%, which is also a decrease, of 2.0 percentage points, since the same quarter in the previous year.

Adults released from custody or starting court orders had a proven reoffending rate of 36.7%, a decrease of 1.0 percentage points compared to the same quarter in 2017. This also represents a decrease of 3.2 percentage points since the same quarter in 2011, i.e. the year for which the PbR baseline was originally constructed. The rates have fluctuated between 36.3% and 42.9% since 2006, with a more gradual decrease seen in more recent years.

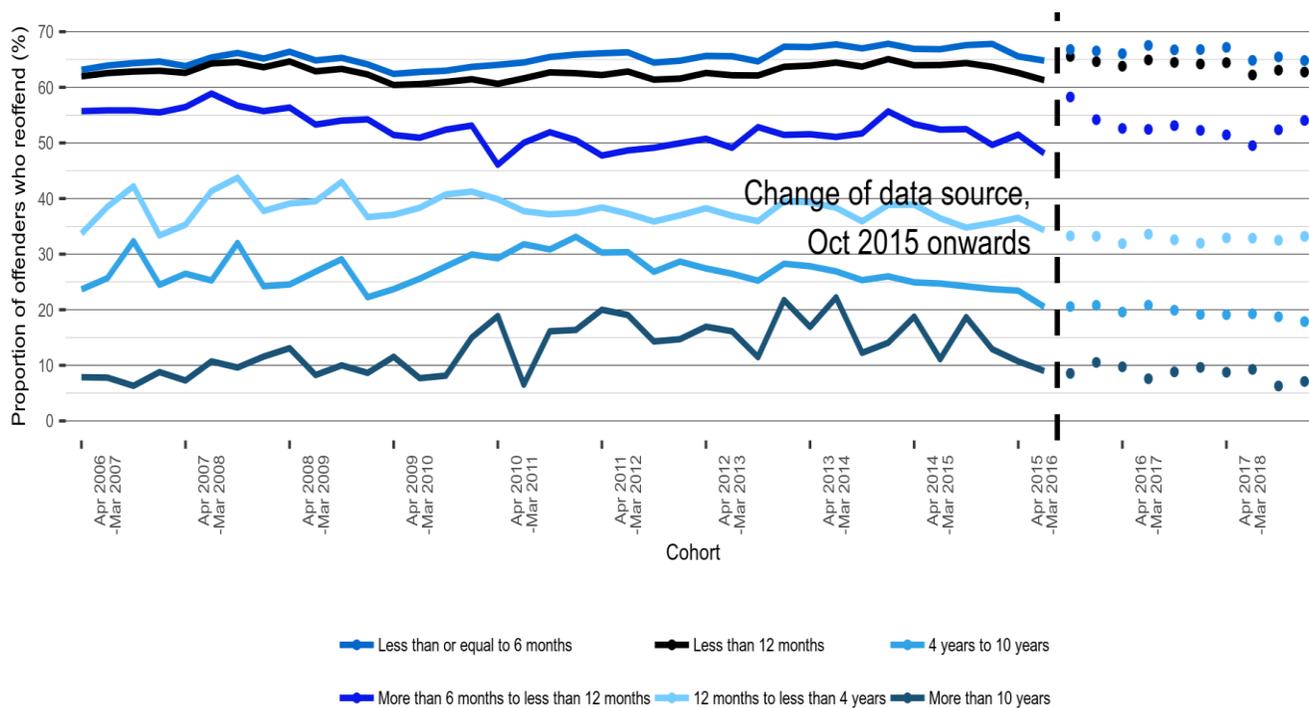
The proven reoffending rate for adult offenders starting a court order⁹ specifically was 32.5%, a 1.4% percentage point decrease since the same quarter in the previous year and a 4.0 percentage point decrease when compared to the same quarter in 2011. However, when adjusted for offender mix (i.e. when controlling for offender characteristics), the decrease observed since 2011 is smaller, at 1.0 percentage points.

Adult offenders who had received a caution or fine had lower reoffending rates compared to those who had received any other main disposal type and this has remained the case throughout the timeseries. For the January to March offender cohort, the rate was 14.5% for those who had been, whilst 24.0% of offenders who received a fine went on to reoffend; these represent decreases of 0.3 percentage points and 0.9 percentage points respectively compared to the same quarter in 2017.

⁸ For proven reoffending statistics, a disposal is defined as a caution, court order, custody, or other disposal resulting from a conviction at court, such as a fine or discharge. A different methodology is used for proven reoffending statistics by disposal type. The first proven offence within each disposal is treated as the start point for measuring proven reoffending. Therefore, some offenders will appear in more than one disposal category.

⁹ Community order or suspended sentence order.

Figure 5: Proportion of adult offenders released from custody who commit a proven reoffence, by custodial sentence length, England and Wales, April 2006 to March 2018 (Source: Table C2a)



The proven reoffending rate for adult offenders released from custody was 46.8%, a 1.4 percentage point decrease compared to the same quarter the previous year. Mirroring the trend over the years, adults in the January to March 2018 cohort who served sentences of 12 months or more reoffended at a substantially lower rate at 29.2% compared to those who served a sentence of less than 12 months at a rate of 62.7% (figure 5). The latter is largely driven by adult offenders released from sentences of less than or equal to 6 months (representing 81% of offenders released from custody after less than 12 months) who had a proven reoffending rate of 64.8%, a decrease of 2.0 percentage points since the same quarter in the previous year. However, users should exercise caution when comparing the effectiveness of different sentences because the presented rates do not control for known differences in offender characteristics receiving those sentences - for further information please consult recent research on the [impact of short custodial sentences, community orders and suspended sentence orders on reoffending](#) as well as the [guide to proven reoffending statistics](#).¹⁰

¹⁰ Proven reoffending rates by disposal should not be compared to assess the effectiveness of sentences, as there is no control for known differences in offender characteristics and the type of sentence given. For further information see [Annex D of the October 2016 publication](#) (page 41) and the [guide to proven reoffending statistics](#).

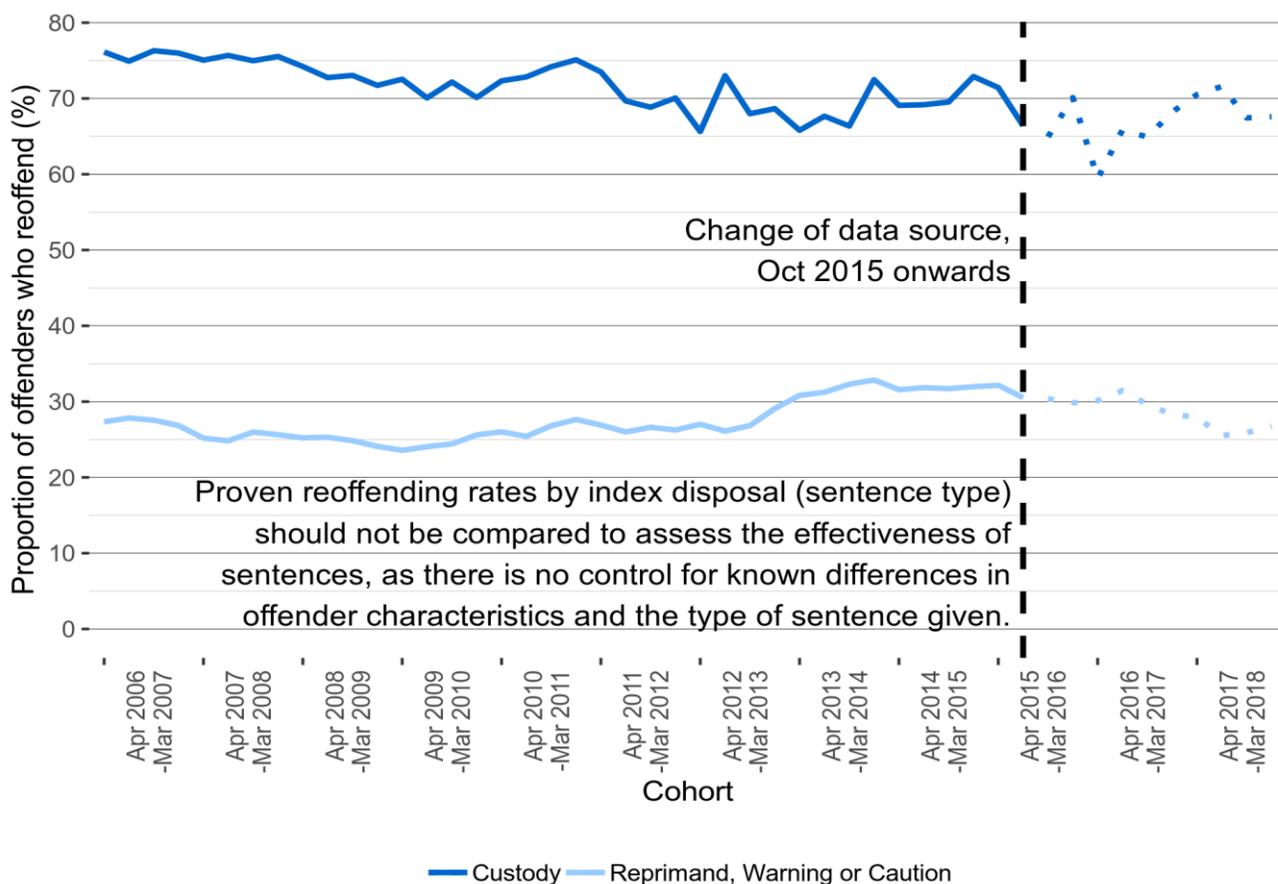
6. Juvenile reoffending by disposal¹¹

Juvenile offenders given youth cautions had a proven reoffending rate of 26.8%

The reoffending rate for juvenile offenders given youth cautions has decreased by 1.6 percentage points since the same quarter last year.

Reprimands and warnings for youths were abolished under the Legal Aid Sentencing and Punishment of Offenders Act 2012 with effect from 8 April 2013 and were replaced with youth cautions. Youth cautions are a formal out-of-court disposal that can be used as an alternative to prosecution for juvenile offenders in certain circumstances. A youth caution may be given for any offence where the young offender admits an offence and there is sufficient evidence for a realistic prospect of conviction, but it is not in the public interest to prosecute.

Figure 6: Proportion of juvenile offenders released from custody or given a reprimand, warning or caution who commit a proven reoffence, England and Wales, April 2006 to March 2018 (Source: Table C1b)



¹¹ The juvenile proven reoffending data by disposal uses the same methodology as that adopted for adult reoffending by disposal (see section 5 for more details).

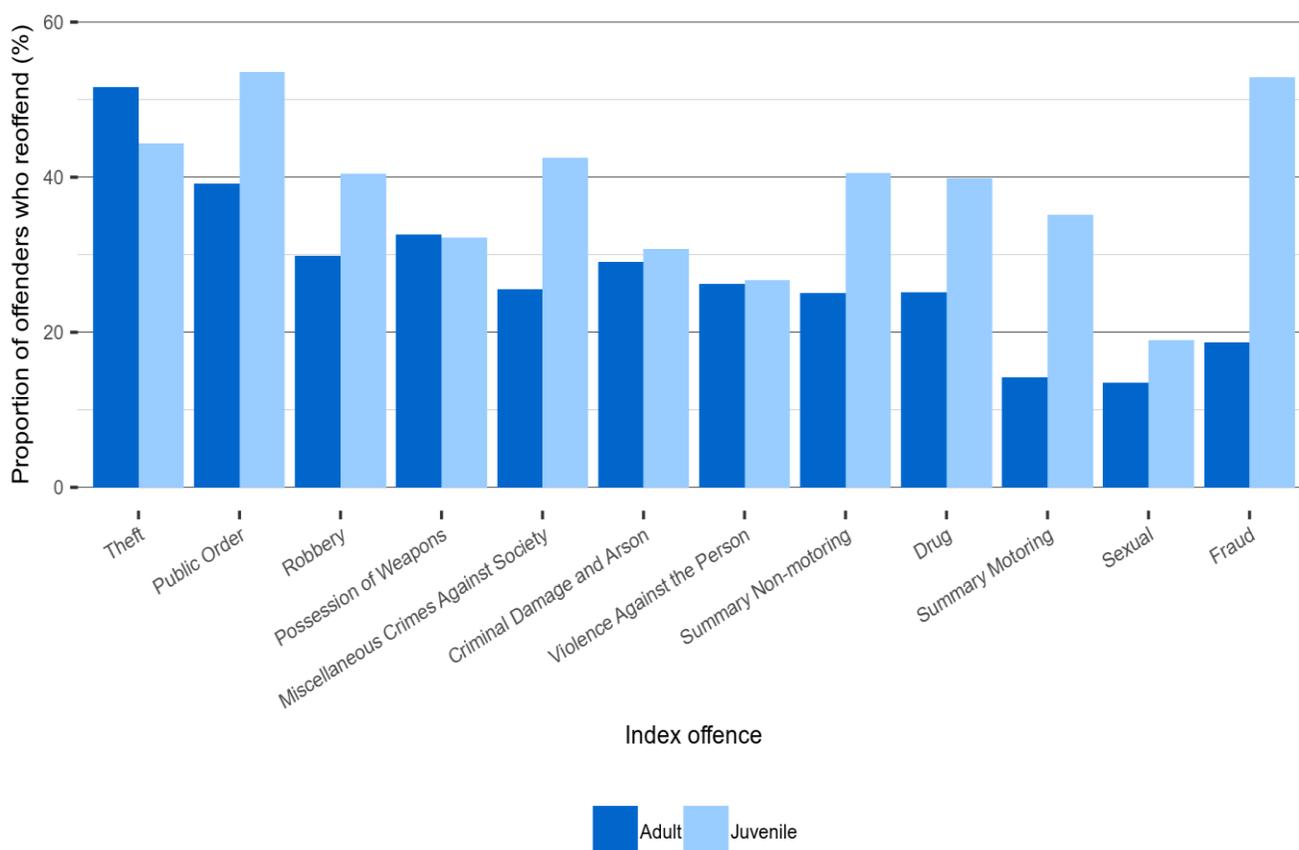
Between January and March 2018, 179 juvenile offenders were released from custody and 121 (67.6%) were proven to have committed a reoffence within a year (figure 6). The rate has decreased by 0.6 percentage points compared to the same quarter in 2017. There is, however, likely to be more variation with the new reoffending measure from one quarter to another due to the relatively small size of the cohort.

7. Index offences¹²

For the January to March 2018 adult cohort, the index offence category associated with the highest reoffending rate was theft at 51.6%

This represents a 0.1 percentage point decrease compared to the same quarter in 2017. The second highest reoffending rate of 39.2% amongst adult offenders was those with an index offence of public order (figure 7).

Figure 7: Proportion of adult and juvenile offenders in England and Wales who commit a proven reoffence, by index offence (except the 'other' offence category), January to March 2018 (Source: Table A4a/b)



For the adult cohort, the proportion of reoffences committed depending on index offence has remained broadly stable over time. Whilst theft has consistently been the index offence category associated with the highest reoffending rate compared to other offences, the second highest had previously been robbery from 2006 to 2012 before public order offences overtook from 2013 onwards.

¹² An index offence refers to the offence that leads to an offender being included in the offender cohort.

Across the timeseries, the lowest rate of reoffending in the adult cohort was observed amongst those with a sexual offence as their index offence, with a rate of 13.5% for the January to March 2018 cohort. Excluding the 'other' offence category, the miscellaneous crimes against society index offence category saw the largest percentage point decrease in reoffending rate since 2006, a 11.4 percentage point difference. Those with an index offence of public order saw the biggest increase in this period, a 7.4 percentage point difference.

In the juvenile cohort, those with an index offence of public order had the highest proven reoffending rate at 53.6%, closely followed by those with an index offence of fraud at 52.9%. Over the years, the index offence associated with the highest rates has swung between public order and miscellaneous crimes. Those with the lowest rate across the timeseries, excluding the 'other' offence category, were offenders who had committed a sexual index offence. Their reoffending rate for the January to March 2018 cohort was 19.0%. Those who committed criminal damage and arson index offences saw the largest percentage point decrease in reoffending rate since 2006 (a 9.3 percentage point difference) whilst fraud index offences represented the biggest percentage point increase over the same period (a 20.9 percentage point difference). However, the latter is largely driven by the move of certain offence types from the miscellaneous crimes to the fraud offence category.

Further information

Accompanying files

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

- A [technical guide](#) to proven reoffending statistics providing information on how proven reoffending is measured and the data sources used.
- A set of [overview tables](#), covering each section of this bulletin and including statistics which would have been presented in the 'Proven reoffending statistics: October to December 2017' cancelled release.
- A set of data tools provide proven reoffending data by demographics, offender history, individual prisons (available from April 2005 - September 2015) and probation area and geography.

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.

Future publications

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.

Contact

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