



Offender Management Statistics Bulletin, England and Wales

Quarterly: October to December 2019, and Annual (calendar year) 2019
Prison population: 31 March 2020

Main points

82,990 prisoners in England and Wales as at 31 March 2020



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

72,172 first receptions into prison in 2019



The number of first receptions represents a fall of 6% compared to 2018.

62,771 releases from sentences in 2019



This is 10% lower than in 2018. As the prison population shifts towards those serving longer sentences, we would expect fewer releases in a given period.

210,326 adjudication outcomes in 2019



This is a rise of 3% compared to 2018, driven by increases in the number of offences for 'violence'. This was offset by a fall in the number of offences for 'unauthorised transactions'. Additional days were awarded as punishment on 19,685 occasions – this is 12% lower than in 2018.

6,789 licence recalls between October and December 2019



This is a 6% increase on the same quarter in 2018, driven by increases in recalls from determinate sentences of more than 12 months.

247,759 offenders on probation at the end of 2019



This number has decreased by 3% compared to the number supervised as at 31 December 2018.

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

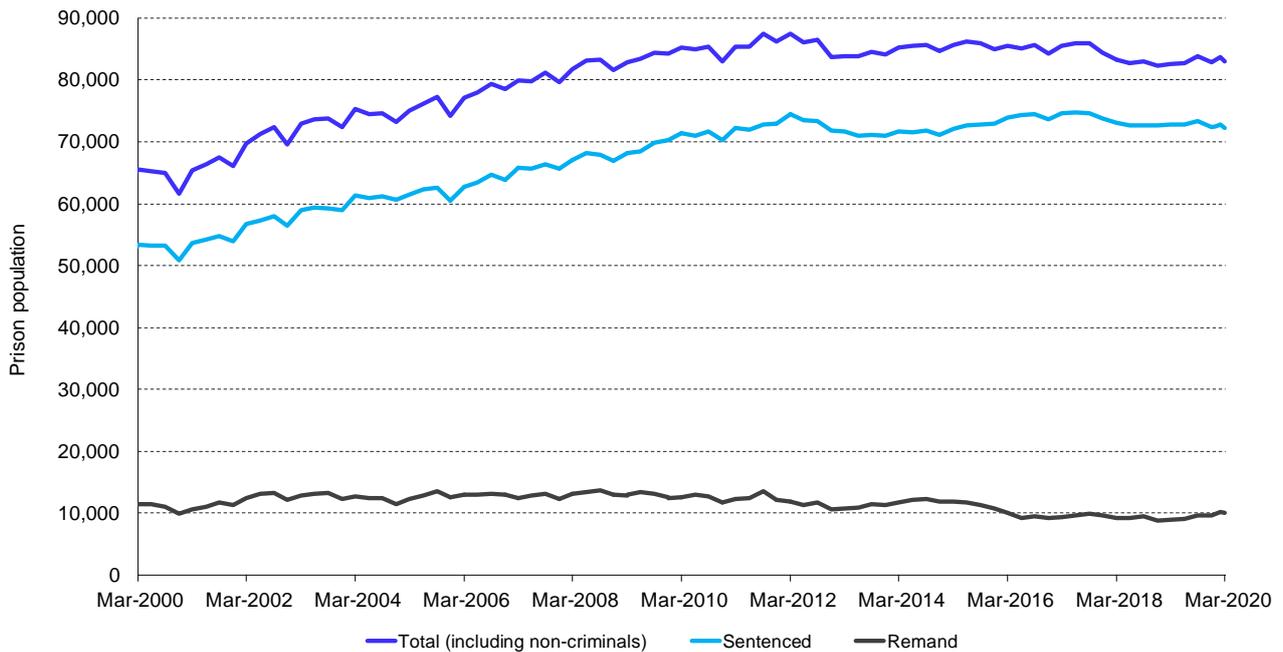
For technical detail please refer to the accompanying guide, '[Guide to offender management statistics](#)'.

1. Population

The prison population stood at 82,990 on 31 March 2020.

The sentenced prison population stood at 72,187 (87% of the prison population); the remand prison population stood at 10,043 (12%) and the non-criminal prison population stood at 760 (1%).

Figure 1: Prison population, March 2000 to 2020 (Source: Table 1.1)



Remand prison population

The remand population was 12% higher than the same point 12 months earlier. The number of males and females in custody on remand increased by 12% (to 9,484) and 8% (to 559) respectively.

More than half (59%) of those in custody on remand were being held for either:

Violence against the person (24% of the remand population), Drug offences (21%) or Theft Offences (14%).

Sentenced prison population

The sentenced population has decreased by 1% in the year leading up to 31 March 2020.

Broadly speaking, the longer term trend shows decreases in the number of prisoners serving determinate sentences of less than 4 years and increases in those serving determinate sentences of 4 years plus.

Sexual 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, as there was a 4% decrease in the sentenced sexual offender population in the 12 months to 31 March 2020.

As at 31 March 2020 there were 12,774 prisoners serving sentences for sexual offences, which represented 18% of the sentenced prison population.

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. On a quarterly prison population basis, the number of prisoners serving immediate custodial sentences for sexual offences is at the lowest level since September 2016 (12,771).

'Violence Against the Person (VATP)' 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. The number of those serving sentences for a 'Violence against the person' offence increased by 4% (to 20,055) compared to the same time last year.

Extended Determinate Sentences (EDS)

EDSs were made available for courts to impose from 13 April 2015 for individuals convicted of specified serious violent, sexual or terrorist offences. On 31 March 2020, 5,793 prisoners were serving such sentences; a 10% increase compared to the same time last year.

Indeterminate sentences

As at 31 March 2020, there were 9,110 (8,769 male; 341 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 2,039 IPP prisoners as at 31 March 2020 which represents a decrease of 15% 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 25% (to 1,328).

The proportion of the IPP population who are post-tariff continues to increase; 94% of IPP prisoners were post-tariff as of 31 March 2020 compared to 91% at the same time the previous year.

The number of life sentenced prisoners (7,071) has remained broadly unchanged compared to 31 March 2019. There were 64 whole-life prisoners at the end of March 2020, with 2 additional life prisoners being treated in secure hospitals.

Recall to custody

The prison population who have been recalled to custody (8,933 prisoners) increased by 24% over the year leading up to 31 March 2020. 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 and long determinate sentences.

Foreign National Offenders (FNOs)

There were 9,283 (1,952 remand, 6,639 sentenced and 692 non-criminal) foreign nationals held in custody and the HMPPS-operated Immigration Removal Centre (IRC, at Morton Hall) as at 31 March 2020; representing 11% of the total prison population.

The number of FNOs in the prison (and HMPPS IRC) population has increased by 2% compared to 31 March 2019. 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

Summary of annual statistics

72,172 individuals were received into custody as first receptions in 2019.

This is 6% fewer than in 2018, and 43% fewer than in 2009.

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 2009) the number of annual first prison receptions has fallen by 43%, to around 72,000 in 2019.

First prison receptions of Foreign Nationals

Around 1 in 7 (15%) of the total first prison receptions in 2019 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 half (50%) of the total Foreign National first prison receptions in 2019: Romanians (1,782), Polish (1,446), Albanians (1,087), Irish (619) and Lithuanians (588).

Prison admissions

In 2019, there were 29,570 ‘untried’ prison admissions (i.e. for those on pre-trial remand); this is 5% lower than in 2018 and represents the lowest number since the start of the time series in 1990. One in every three untried prison admissions during 2019 was for an alleged Violence Against The Person (VATP) or Drug Offence.

There were around 20,000 (20,027) ‘convicted unsentenced’ entries to custody during 2019 (i.e. after having been found guilty at court but awaiting their sentencing hearing). Though this represents a 1% rise compared to 2018, it is still around the lowest level since 1990.

There were 54,501 sentenced admissions to prison in 2019 (8% lower than in 2018). This also represents the lowest level since 1990. Around half (46%) of the sentenced admissions during 2019 were for short sentences of ‘less than or equal to 6 months’.

The offence-mix for those entering prison following sentence is changing. Compared to 2018, there were large decreases in the numbers of immediate custodial (‘non-fine defaulter’) sentenced admissions for ‘Sexual offences’ (24% decrease) and ‘Fraud offences’ (20% decrease), however there were notable year-on-year increases for the offence groups of ‘Criminal damage and arson’ (11% increase), and ‘Possession of weapons’ (9% 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 2019, there were 25,040 recall admissions to custody, this is an increase of 10% compared to 2018. ‘3 in 5’ (62%) recall admissions in 2019 were for those recalled from determinate sentences of ‘12 months or more’, whereas fewer than 1,000 (4%) recall admissions were those recalled from an indeterminate sentence.

Summary of quarterly statistics

The number of first receptions between October and December 2019 was 5% lower than the same period in 2018. This is in line with the longer falling trend over the past 10 years.

After large decreases in remand admissions from 2015 to the end of 2018, the figures are beginning to increase. Compared to Oct-Dec 2018, there were increases in remand admissions in the latest quarter ('untried' admissions increased by 2%, and 'convicted unsentenced' admissions increased by 3%). However, there was a 10% fall in the number of sentenced admissions (to 12,870) compared with the same quarter in 2018.

Recall admissions continued to increase in the latest quarter (a 7% increase; to 6,365) compared to Oct-Dec 2018. Of which, the number of recall admissions from determinate sentences increased by 7% and those from indeterminate sentences increased by 14%.

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 2019, 255 matched individuals first received into custody answered that they had served in the armed services - this represented 2% of those who provided a response to the question at the point of their first reception during the latest quarter. This figure has been steadily falling over the past couple of years.

In October 2019, the MoJ published the second release of 'Ex-Service Personnel in the Prison Population' – which included an estimate of the numbers and characteristics of ex-service personnel in the prison population. This was published as part of the Offender Management Statistics; April to June 2019 here: <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/offender-management-statistics-quarterly-april-to-june-2019>

3. Releases

Summary of annual statistics

62,771 offenders were released from custody during 2019.

62,019 releases from determinate sentences and 752 from indeterminate sentences.

In 2019, a total of 62,019 offenders were released from determinate sentences, a fall of 10% from 2018. The number of males released from determinate sentences fell by 9% between 2018 and 2019, whereas the number of females released decreased by 12%. 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 2019) are not directly comparable with pre-2015 data, the trend of falling numbers of releases from determinate sentences looks to be continuing.

752 offenders were released from indeterminate sentences in 2019; a 20% decrease compared to 2018. Of the indeterminate releases during 2019, 377 were from IPP sentences (down 25% compared to 2018) and 375 from life sentences (a decrease of 13% from 2018).

The average time served in prison (including time spent on remand) for those released from determinate sentences continued to increase, to 13.7 months (mean) and 4.8 months (median) for those released in 2019. Both the mean and median figures have been increasing each year since 2015.

Summary of quarterly statistics

15,931 offenders were released from custody in the latest quarter.

15,756 releases from determinate sentences and 175 from indeterminate sentences.

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

There were 7% fewer releases during the quarter ending December 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 (7%) 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 175 releases from indeterminate sentences (92 IPP, 83 Life) between October and December 2019, a 19% decrease from the same period in 2018. The number of IPP and life releases fell by 16% and 23% 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)

3,156 offenders were released on HDC during the latest quarter – this represents a fall of 12% 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 (3% lower than the same period in 2018).

Releases on Temporary Licence (ROTL)

There were 119,069 incidences of ROTL during the quarter ending December 2019, which is a 21% increase on the same quarter last year.

5,280 individuals were given at least one incidence of ROTL between October and December 2019 - an increase of 23% compared to the same quarter in 2018.

There were 176 recorded Temporary Release Failures (TRFs) between October and December 2019. This is an increase of 26 compared with the previous quarter and an increase of 34 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 680 incidences of temporary release resulting in a failure between October and December 2019.

Prisoner transfers

There was a total of 21,666 recorded incidences of prisoner transfer during the latest quarter (1% decrease from last year). The majority of these (71%) were routine inter-prison transfers. 17,894 prisoners had at least one incidence of a transfer in quarter ending December 2019.

4. Adjudications

Summary of annual statistics

There were 210,326 adjudication outcomes in 2019.

64% of these adjudications were proven.

During 2019 there were 210,326 adjudications – this is a rise of 3% compared to 2018. Of these, proven adjudications increased from 132,538 to 133,838 (1% increase) over the same period and this has been driven by a large increase in violence. Since 2013, the upward trend observed in the volume of all adjudications is slowing down.

The total number of proven adjudications for ‘violence’ offences increased from 18,810 (2018) to 20,965 (2019), a rise of 11% and a continuing increasing trend. This has reached the highest level since 2011 and is consistent with the recent [‘Safety in Custody’](#) bulletin that confirmed assaults and serious assaults have reached a record high. This was counterbalanced by a fall in the number of proven adjudications for ‘unauthorised transactions’ and ‘disobedience/disrespect’; down 2% and 1% respectively. This fall has in turn impacted on the proportion of proven adjudications for ‘unauthorised transactions’ (those include possession of alcohol, drugs and other prohibited items), which has decreased slightly over the past 12 months to account for 30% in 2019, but remains still high in comparison with figures reported between 2011 and 2016. The fall in the proportion of proven adjudications for ‘disobedience/disrespect’ has however been continuous since 2011. This situation has led to a slowdown in the growth of the volume of all proven adjudications.

More serious alleged breaches of prison rules are adjudicated upon by Independent Adjudicators (instead of Prison Governors). During 2019 there were 28,817 adjudications heard by an Independent Adjudicator, which represents an 8% fall compared to 2018. Despite this, the proportion of adjudications for ‘violence’ has remained fairly stable over recent years, fluctuating between 14% and 17% of all adjudication cases in each year since 2013.

Use of ‘Additional Days’ as punishment

The upward trend in the number of occasions where additional days were awarded reached a peak in 2018. Since then there has been a sharp decline from 22,365 occasions (2018) to 19,685 (2019), which has resulted in a fall of the number of additional days added to prisoners’ sentences, from 380,169 (2018) to 337,395 (2019).

Taking these two sets of figures together, every time additional days were awarded as punishment in 2019, an average of 17 additional days were added (this average is unchanged compared with 2018).

Summary of quarterly statistics

There were 50,353 adjudication outcomes between October and December 2019.

This is a decrease of 7% on the same quarter in the previous year. Additional days were awarded as punishment on 4,591 occasions in this quarter.

63% of all adjudications were proven.

Around a third (31%) of proven adjudications were for offences of unauthorised transactions, closely followed by disobedience and disrespect (30%). The number of proven adjudications for 'unauthorised transactions' and 'disobedience/disrespect' fell by 12% (to 9,783) and 11% (to 9,638) respectively on the same quarter of the previous year. The number of proven offences for violence has decreased slightly by 1%.

There was an 8% decrease in the number of proven adjudications (to 31,889) from the same quarter in 2018. This resulted in a 9% fall in the number of punishments (to 52,677).

Additional days were awarded as punishment on 4,591 occasions between October and December 2019; this is 21% lower than the same period in 2018. A total of 78,908 days was awarded in the latest quarter – this represents a decrease of 20% from the same quarter in 2018 (98,525 days between October to December 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

The number of licence recalls between October and December 2019 was 6,789, of which 692 were recalls from Home Detention Curfew (HDC).

The total number of recalls increased by 6% compared to the same quarter in 2018.

The total number of quarterly recalls has generally been increasing since October-December 2016. Although the number of recalls increased by 6% from the same quarter a year ago, it represents a decrease of 3% from the previous quarter. 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 2,256 each quarter since October-December 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 trend upwards. Between October and December 2019, there were 4,455 offenders recalled from a sentence over 12 months, an increase of 9% 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 October-December 2019, consistent with recent quarters.

Between October and December 2019, 107 IPP prisoners and 51 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 December 2019, there were 1,946 who had not been returned to custody by the end of March 2020.

A further 17 offenders had not been returned to custody as of March 2020 after recall between 1984 and April 1999, meaning the total number of offenders not returned to custody at the end of March 2020 was 1,963. These figures include some offenders believed to be dead or living abroad but who have not been confirmed as dead or deported.

Of the 1,963 not returned to custody by 31 March 2020, 342 had originally been serving a prison sentence for violence against the person offences and a further 63 for sexual offences.

6. Probation

Summary of annual statistics

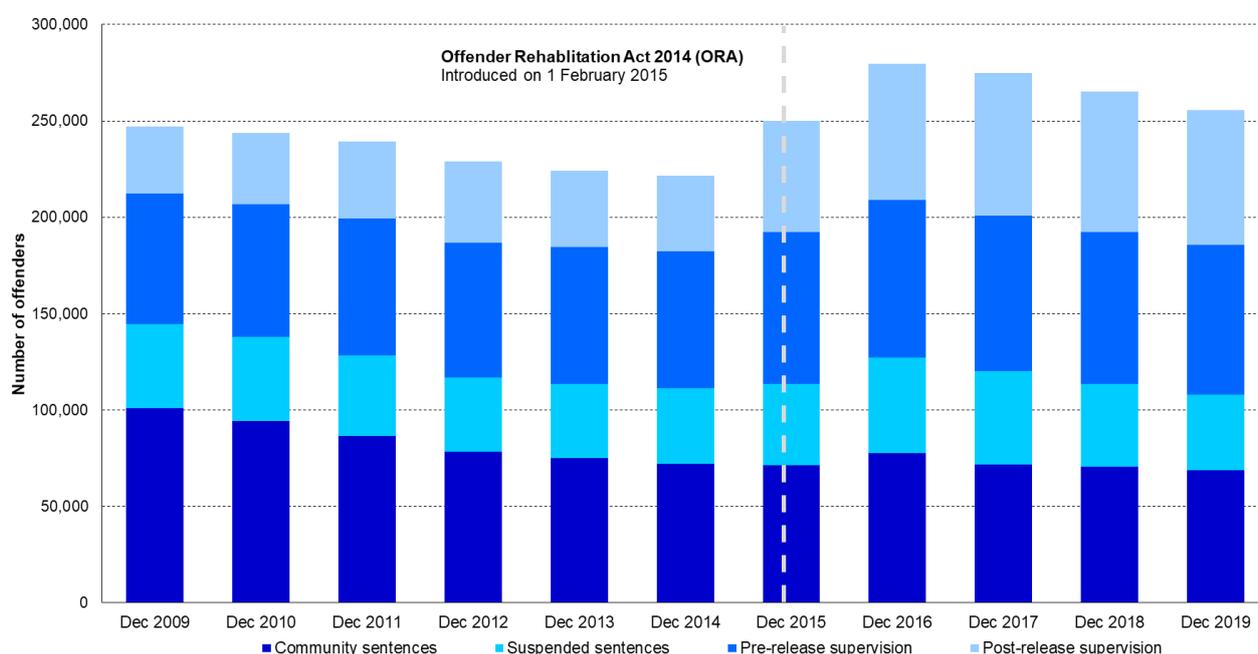
The total number of offenders on probation (i.e. court orders and pre/post supervision) at the end of December 2019 was 247,759.

This represents a 3% decrease compared to the end of December 2018 and an increase of 3% compared to December 2009.

Since 2009, the number of offenders supervised by the Probation Service has decreased year on year to 217,359 at the end of December 2014. However, at the end of December 2019, the total probation caseload stood at 247,759 which represents 3% decrease compared to 31 December 2018 and a 14% increase since 2014.

This increase can be explained by the implementation of the Offender Rehabilitation Act (ORA) in February 2015 where all offenders on a custodial sentence are subjected to statutory supervision on release from prison. Previously, only adults sentenced to over 12 months in custody and all young offenders were subject to statutory supervision. The number of offenders supervised before or after release from prison has increased by 34% since 2014 to 146,786 at the end of December 2019. In comparison to the previous year, that number decreased by 2%; 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 2019 (source: Table A4.13 of the annual probation tables)



The total court order caseload decreased by 22% between 2009 and 2014 to 109,353 and then increased in 2016 by 14% to 124,643. However, it has decreased in recent years to 106,234 at the end of December 2019; this represents a 5% decline compared to the previous year.

Following a 27% decrease in the number of offenders on a Community Order (CO) from 2009 to 2014, the number increased in 2016 before decreasing to 67,809 at the end of December 2019; this represents a 2% decline in comparison to the previous year. Similarly, those on a Suspended Sentence Order (SSO) with requirements decreased from 2009 to 2013 by 12% to 38,227 before increasing in 2016 to 49,541.

The number subsequently decreased again to stand at 39,083 at the end of December 2019, which represents a 9% decrease in comparison to the previous year.

For offenders starting supervision by the Probation Service, the number of court order starts decreased by 38% between 2009 and 2019 to 104,038; over the same period, COs decreased by 40% from 122,796 to 73,871 and SSOs with requirements decreased by 33% from 46,897 to 31,613. The average length of COs starts increased from 12.1 months in 2018 to 12.4 months in 2019 and the average length of SSOs starts remained at 17.2 months over the same period. As a result of ORA being implemented in February 2015, as explained previously, the number of offenders starting pre-release supervision in custody increased by 81% from 45,063 in 2014 to 81,523 in 2019.

The total number of pre-sentence reports (PSRs) prepared by the Probation Service decreased by 53% between 2009 and 2019 to 103,004. However, this can be partly explained by the downward trend in the number of offenders sentenced in all courts over the same period. In the year ending September 2009, the number of offenders given sentences for community sentences, SSOs and custodial sentences decreased by 55%, 10% and 24% respectively compared to the year ending September 2019.¹

Summary of quarterly statistics

During the quarter October to December 2019, 17,976 offenders started COs, representing a decrease of 11% compared to the same quarter in the previous year. The number of offenders who started SSOs with requirements remained at a similar level of 7,631 between October and December 2019, whilst those starting pre-release supervision decreased by 11% over the same period.

Overall, 27,839 requirements were started under COs between October to December 2019, with unpaid work, drug treatments and accredited programmes decreasing by 11% to 8,771, 16% to 1,121 and 7% to 2,023 respectively since the same quarter in 2018. Between October to December 2019, 13,218 requirements were started under SSOs, with unpaid work and accredited programmes increasing by 5% to 3,791 and 4% to 1,289 respectively since the same period in the previous year.

In terms of the most frequently used combinations of requirements under COs, rehabilitation combined with unpaid work, accredited programmes combined with rehabilitation and rehabilitation combined with drug treatment decreased by 7% to 2,963, 18% to 597 and 19% to 668 respectively in October to December 2019 compared to the same quarter last year. Under SSOs, accredited programmes combined with rehabilitation and unpaid work saw the largest increase at 28% to 367, whilst rehabilitation and unpaid work and rehabilitation combined with curfew increased by 7% to 1,457 and 14% to 370 respectively.

Of court orders terminated from October to December 2019, 70% of 18,576 COs and 75% of 7,526 SSOs (for the supervision period) were terminated successfully, i.e. ran their full course or were terminated early for good progress.

In the quarter October to December 2019, there was a 13% decrease in the number of PSRs prepared by the Probation Service compared to the same quarter in 2018. Eighty-nine per cent of immediate custodial sentences proposed in PSRs resulted in that sentence being given in the year ending December 2019.

¹ Table Q5.1a in the Criminal Justice System Quarterly Statistics publication states the number of offenders sentenced at all courts 12 months ending September 2009 to 12 months ending September 2019. <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/criminal-justice-system-statistics-quarterly-september-2019>

Further information

This publication presents quarterly and annual data trends.

Our statisticians regularly review the content of publications. Development of new and improved statistical outputs is usually dependent on reallocating existing resources. As part of our continual review and prioritisation, we welcome user feedback on existing outputs including content, breadth, frequency and methodology. Please send any comments you have on this publication including suggestions for further developments or reductions in content.

Accompanying files

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

- A '[Guide to Offender Management Statistics](#)', which provides comprehensive information about data sources and quality, as well as key legislative changes.
- A document outlining the '[Users of Offender Management Statistics](#)'
- A set of data tables, covering each section of this bulletin, including a prison population data tool.

National Statistics status

National Statistics status means that official statistics meet the highest standards of trustworthiness, quality and public value. All official statistics should comply with all aspects of the Code of Practice for Official Statistics. They are awarded National Statistics status following an assessment by the Authority's regulatory arm. The Authority considers whether the statistics meet the highest standards of Code compliance, including the value they add to public decisions and debate.



It is the Ministry of Justice's responsibility to maintain compliance with the standards expected for National Statistics. If we become concerned about whether these statistics are still meeting the appropriate standards, we will discuss any concerns with the Authority promptly. National Statistics status can be removed at any point when the highest standards are not maintained, and reinstated when standards are restored.

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Next update: 30 July 2020

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

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