



Ministry  
of Justice



# **Offender Management Statistics Bulletin, England and Wales**

Quarterly April to June 2015

**Ministry of Justice**  
Statistical Bulletin

29 October 2015

## Introduction

This bulletin provides the latest statistics relating to offenders who are in prison or supervised in the community in England and Wales. The statistics are presented in detail, with commentary, and reference to longer term trends, in the following sections of the bulletin.

This bulletin covers the prison population as at 30 September 2015 and the probation caseload as at 30 June 2015, and compares them to the same time in the previous year.

This bulletin also covers prison receptions and probation starts, as the flows into these services, and releases from prison and probation terminations, as the flows out of these services. For each of these topics this bulletin reports on the quarter April to June 2015, compared to the same period in the previous year.

Further information about background, data definitions, data quality issues, and users of the statistics are available in the accompanying document.

The next edition of this bulletin, covering the period July to September 2015, with prison population figures as at 31 December 2015, will be published on 28 January 2016 at 9.30am.

In the publication of Offender Management Quarterly Statistics January to March 2015, the number of prisoners reported as serving determinate sentences of ten years or more was misreported as 4,420 prisoners, representing 5% of the total prison population as at 30 June 2015. This was reported both in the key findings and the prison population section of the bulletin. While the underlying statistics were correct. Only prisoners serving 10 to less than 14 years were included in the total and those serving determinate sentences of 14 years or more were not. This value therefore should have been reported as 7,466 prisoners, representing 9% of the total prison population.

## Key Findings

- The total number of prisoners has remained relatively stable over the last twelve months to 30 September 2015 with an increase of fewer than 200 prisoners. The composition of those on remand, sentenced and non-criminal population, however, has changed.
- The sentenced prison population continues to shift towards a population serving longer determinate sentences. The number of prisoners serving determinate sentences of four years or more continued to increase. It can now be reported that 9% of the prison population, is serving a determinate sentence of ten years or more.
- Prison receptions and releases for determinate sentences decreased across all sentence lengths over the last year, apart from receptions for long determinate sentences of four years or more, which continued to increase, by 19% compared to the same period in 2014.
- The Offender Rehabilitation Act 2014 (ORA) expanded licence supervision so that anyone sentenced to more than a day in prison will receive at least 12 months supervision on release. This has affected both the probation caseload and the number of offenders recalled to custody to the end of June 2015.
- The total annual probation caseload (court orders and pre and post release supervision) stood at 228,844 at the end of June 2015, up 5% on the end of June 2014. This rise is mainly due to the impact of ORA. The court order caseload (offenders on community orders (COs) and suspended sentence orders (SSOs)) rose slightly by 1%, with the CO caseload falling 1% but the SSO caseload rising by 7% between the quarters ending June 2014 and 2015. The increase in SSOs is likely to be related to legislative changes as described below.
- There were 1,140 recalls of offenders serving a sentence of less than 12 months between April and June 2015. The fact that these sentences only became eligible for recall as a result of ORA, since 1 February 2015 explains the majority of the 28% increase in licence recalls compared with the same period in 2014.
- The proportion of offenders not returned to custody by the end of September 2015, following a licence recall over the whole period 1999 to the end of March 2015, remained stable with only 6 in every 1,000 prisoners not being returned to custody.

## Prison population

The prison population grew rapidly between 1993 and 2008, at an average of 4% a year. This rapid rise was driven by:

- Increases in the number of people sentenced to immediate custody from 1993 to 2002;
- Increases in the average custodial sentence length and increased use of indeterminate sentences; and
- Increases in the number of offenders recalled to prison following breaches of their licence conditions, along with increases in the average length of time these offenders spent in prison once recalled.

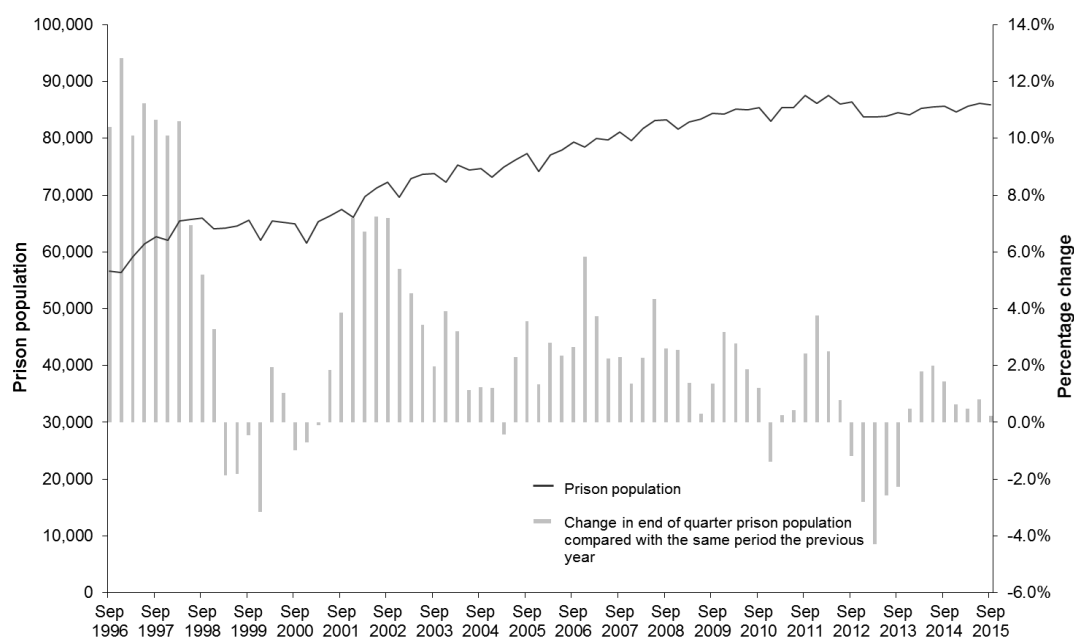
The rise in the prison population slowed considerably from the summer of 2008, in part due to the introduction of the [Criminal Justice and Immigration Act 2008](#), which changed sentencing and offender management in ways which helped to reduce growth in the prison population.

This flatter trend continued until the public disorder seen in UK cities from 6 to 9 August 2011 which had an immediate but temporary impact on the prison population. During 2012 and into 2013, the prison population began to fall due to a falling remand population and a continued decline in the number of under 18s in custody. The falling remand population during 2012 reflected falling volumes going through the courts plus the introduction of the [Legal Aid, Sentencing and Punishment of Offenders \(LASPO\) Act](#) in December 2012. This Act restricted the use of remand for offenders who would be unlikely to receive a custodial sentence.

The [‘Story of the Prison Population 1993 to 2012’](#) is an in-depth look at what happened to the prison population between 1993 and 2012 and the major factors contributing to the changes.

Following the LASPO Act in December 2012, and up until the end of June 2013, the prison population stabilised. In particular, by March 2013 the remand population stopped falling as it had done since August 2011. After settling at a lower level the remand population then began to rise again from August 2013, and contributed to the sharp rise in the prison population seen between the end of August and October 2013. Overall, since June 2013 the prison population has increased, albeit at a slower rate than in previous years, typically growing at around 1% a year.

**Figure 1: Quarterly prison population and annual percentage change, England and Wales, September 1996 to September 2015**



The total number of prisoners has remained relatively stable over the last twelve months to 30 September 2015 with an increase of fewer than 200 prisoners. The composition of those on remand, sentenced and non-criminal population, however, has changed. This was driven by a 1% increase in the sentenced population and a 5% increase in the non-criminal population. Since the beginning of 2015, the remand population has gradually decreased, which is represented by an 8% drop since 30 September 2014. The demographics of the overall prison population are also changing.

## Remand

Since late 2014, the remand population has steadily decreased to just under 11,500 prisoners as at 30 September 2015. This is consistent with [Criminal Court Statistics Quarterly](#), which shows there to be a decreased number of outstanding cases in the Crown Court.

The number of prisoners on remand for possession of weapons has nearly doubled over the last twelve months to 30 September 2015. This may be due to changes in the volume and nature of prosecutions for knife crime or linked to the provisions in the [Criminal Justice and Courts Act 2015](#). Under the 2015 Act, offenders aged 18 or over convicted of a second offence of possession of a blade or offensive weapon sentenced on or after 17 July 2015 now face a minimum custodial sentence of six months or four months if the offender is aged between 16 or 17. It is possible increases in this offence group seen in earlier quarters may have been due to the impact of the Bill on the Justice system before its implementation.

## Sentenced

In line with the long term trend, the sentenced population only increased slightly, however its composition continued to change. The number of prisoners serving sentences less than four years decreased whereas those serving determinate sentences of four years or more continued to increase. Over the twelve months to 30 September 2015, the number of prisoners serving these long determinate sentences increased by 6%. Much of this increase is attributable to the population serving an extended determinate sentence (EDS); there were 2,204 prisoners serving an EDS on 30 September 2015, which is now 3% of the sentenced prison population.

Over a third of the prison population was serving a determinate sentence of four years or more, excluding indeterminate sentences, on 30 September 2015. As part of the more detailed breakdown on sentence lengths introduced, it can now be reported that 7,636 prisoners, representing 9% of the total prison population, were serving determinate sentences of ten years or more, excluding EDSs. This statistic was misreported in the July release.

The rise in the long determinate sentenced population is in line with the increasing number of sentenced sex offenders. At the end of September 2015, there were 11,738 sentenced sex offenders in the prison population, which is 9% higher than twelve months before. This is consistent with the recent ['Crime in England and Wales'](#) bulletin from the Office for National Statistics that reported the highest number of sexual offences recorded by the police since 2002/03, for the year ending June 2015. In contrast, the sentenced population for violence against the person offences remains the largest sentenced population by offence group and has increased by 3% over the last year to September 2015.

The number of prisoners serving indeterminate sentences (IPP (Indeterminate Sentence for Public Protection) or life) was down 5% on the previous year, to 11,835. As a result of the abolition of the IPP sentence, offenders are no longer receiving these sentences and prisoners are only being released. Therefore over the last year, the decrease in the indeterminate sentence population is explained almost entirely by the IPP population. In the longer term, the IPP population has fallen by over a quarter from 6,020 as at the end of September 2012 to 4,431 as at the end of September 2015. The number of IPP prisoners who are post-tariff has remained broadly flat over the last year, meaning that the proportion of the population post-tariff has been increasing. More than three quarters of IPP prisoners are now post-tariff.

The number of life sentenced prisoners remained stable at around 7,400. There were 52 whole-life prisoners at the end of June 2015, with four additional life prisoners being treated in secure hospitals. One life prisoner has moved from a secure hospital to prison since the last quarter.

## **Recalls**

There is no clear evidence to explain the growth in the recall population, which has increased by 14% to 6,356 prisoners over the year. Whilst the Offender Rehabilitation Act 2014 (ORA) expanded licence supervision, so that anyone sentenced to more than a day in prison will receive at least 12 months supervision on release, this only came into effect for those who committed an offence and were sentenced after 1 February 2015. As at 30 September 2015 there were 315 prisoners recorded as being recalled under ORA, representing 5% of the recall population.

## **Foreign National Offenders**

There was a slight increase in the foreign national population in custody, which was up 1% on the previous year to 10,442 on 30 September 2015. Looking at the longer trend, the foreign national population increased from the year 2002 to its highest value of 11,498 as at the end of June 2008 when they accounted for 14% of the population. There was then a small decrease in the population until March 2011 when it fell to 10,745. Since then the foreign national population has remained stable, representing around 12-13% of the population.

The five most common nationalities, after British Nationals, in prisons in England and Wales are Polish, Irish, Romanian, Jamaican and Albanian, accounting for approximately one third of the foreign national population and one in twenty of the prison population overall.

## Prison receptions

First receptions count prisoners the first time they appear in prison from court. A prisoner's reception type is counted each time they are first received into custody as untried, convicted unsentenced, and sentenced prisoners from court. This means that prisoners can be counted in more than one of these categories if their custody status changes as they progress through the Criminal Justice System in the reporting period.

A total of 24,790 offenders were received into custody as first receptions in the quarter ending June 2015. The total number of first receptions for this quarter is slightly lower than the number of first receptions seen in the preceding three quarters. There was a 7% decrease in the number of untried receptions when compared to the same quarter last year whilst the number of sentenced receptions increased marginally compared to April to June 2014. Large percentage decreases were observed relative to the same quarter in the previous year in the number of fine defaulters (44%) and indeterminate sentences (29%). There continues to be a trend for increased numbers of longer determinate sentences of four years or more.

Young adult (18 to 20 years) and juvenile (15 to 17 years) untried remand receptions have decreased by more than a tenth compared to the same quarter last year. The number of young adult sentenced receptions has also decreased (13%) although this was less pronounced for 15 to 17 year olds (5%). For young adults, decreases in the number of receptions were observed in all categories of sentence lengths of less than 4 years. In contrast, the total number of young adult sentenced receptions for 4 years or more increased by 20%.

### Former Members of the Armed Forces

In December 2014, the Government published [a response to the review of ex-armed forces in the criminal justice system](#). In line with recommendation 2, National Offender Management Service have been recording whether remand and newly sentenced prisoners have been a member of the armed services on first reception into prison. The intention is to publish this data in 2016 once sufficient validation and quality assurance checks have been completed.



## Prison releases

A total of 17,671 offenders were released from custody in the quarter ending June 2015, a decrease of 3% compared with the same quarter last year. This has been driven by decreases in the number of releases across all determinate sentence length bands. In contrast, there were 110 prisoners released from an IPP and a further 76 from a life sentence which when taken together have increased by 38% on the same quarter last year.

In addition, 13 indeterminate sentenced prisoners were removed under the Tariff Expired Removal Scheme (TERS) in the latest quarter. This scheme allows indeterminate sentenced foreign national prisoners, who are liable to removal from the UK, to be deported from the country on or after the date of their tariff expiry without referral to the Parole Board. The scheme began in May 2012, and by the end of June 2015 there had been 326 removals in total.

The number of releases on Home Detention Curfew (HDC) fell by 1% to 2,059 between the quarters ending June 2014 and June 2015. To be considered for release under HDC an offender must be serving a sentence of less than 4 years, and the number of offenders serving such sentences has been falling (see Prison population). The decrease of 4% in the eligible population will have a direct impact on the number that can be considered for HDC release and the number that are therefore subsequently released.

Between April and June 2015, there were 83,091 incidences of release on temporary licence (ROTL) from prisons in England and Wales. This is a 31% reduction since the same period in 2014. All types of licence showed decreases. The number of release incidences for females decreased by 26%, compared to a 31% decrease for males over the same period. The number of individuals given at least one instance of ROTL between April and June 2015 was 3,668, which represents a 28% decrease compared to the same quarter last year. Of the individuals given at least one instance of ROTL, 21% were on an indeterminate sentence.

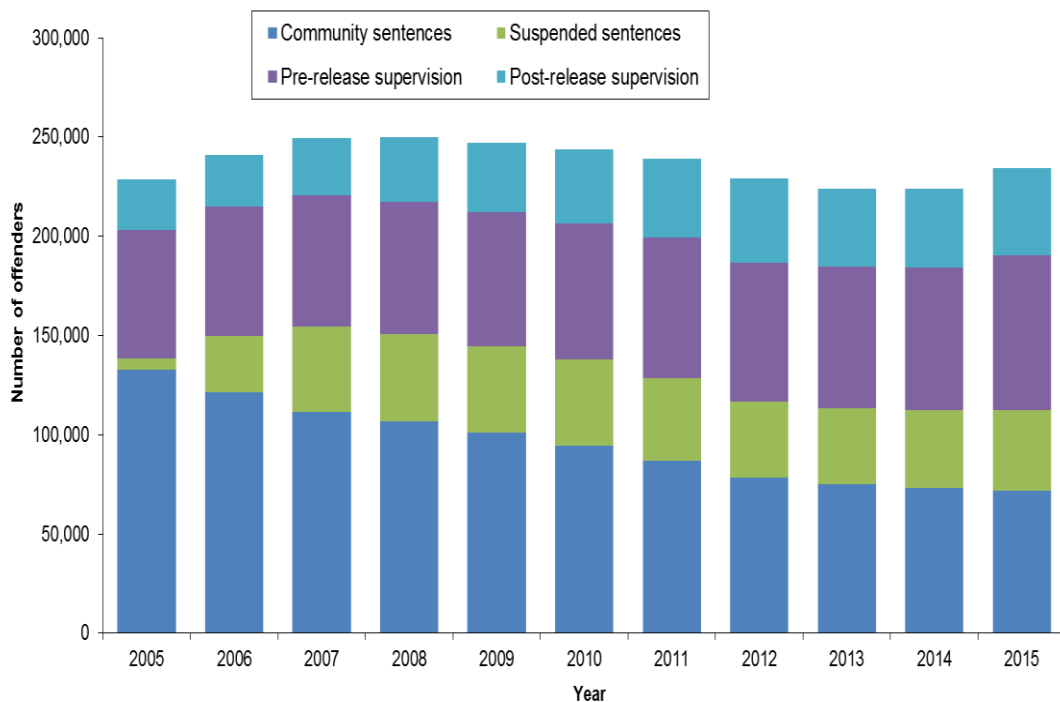
There were 37 recorded temporary release failures (TRFs) between April and June 2015, which is around half of the number of failures seen in same quarter of the previous year.

## Probation

Transforming Rehabilitation is a reform programme that is changing the way offenders are managed in the community. Since the 1<sup>st</sup> June 2014, Probation Trusts have been replaced by the National Probation Service (NPS), which manages the most high-risk offenders across seven divisions; and 21 new Community Rehabilitation Companies (CRCs), who manage medium and low-risk offenders.

The total annual probation caseload (court orders and pre and post release supervision) increased by 39% between 2000 and 2008 to 243,434. Since then the probation caseload fell year on year, reaching 217,359 at the end of 2014. However, at the end of June 2015, the total caseload stood at 228,844, up 5% on the number one year earlier. This recent rise is mainly due to statutory supervision on release from prison for all offenders given custodial sentences.

**Figure 2: Number of offenders under Probation Service supervision at end of December, 2005-2014 and end of June 2015**



The court order caseload (offenders on community orders (COs) and suspended sentence orders (SSOs)) rose slightly by 1%, with the CO caseload falling by 1% but the SSO caseload rising by 7% between the quarters ending June 2014 and 2015. The increase in SSOs is likely to be related to changes under the LASPO Act 2012, which provided for custodial sentences of two years or less to be suspended where previously only

custodial sentences of 12 months or less could be suspended. The number of offenders starting COs and SSOs with requirements shows increases over this period, but this may be explained, at least partly, by the fact that starts were under-counted slightly in the previous quarter due to a change in the data collection methodology and the transition from probation trusts to NPS Divisions/CRCs from June 2014.

In addition, in the quarter ending June 2015 there were 2,586 starts of SSOs without requirements attached. This brings the total number of stand-alone SSOs starts to more than 17,500 since they were introduced under the LASPO Act 2012 (see **Accompanying Information Appendix A – Data sources and quality**).

The caseload of offenders supervised before or after release from prison increased by 10% between the quarters ending June 2014 and 2015, whilst the number of pre-release supervision starts has more than doubled. This is due to the introduction of the Offender Rehabilitation Act 2014 (ORA) on 1<sup>st</sup> February 2015, where all offenders given custodial sentences are now subject 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.

With regards to the number of requirements started under court orders, there has again been a notable rise in curfews and standalone curfews in particular. This, as well as a rise in unpaid work requirements, may reflect the continuing impact of a mandatory punitive requirement in every community order, introduced from December 2013 under the Crime and Courts Act 2013. There have generally been falls across the other requirements, with the supervision requirement in particular being replaced by the rehabilitation requirement introduced under ORA.

Of the court orders terminated in the quarter ending June 2015, 67% of community orders were terminated successfully; they either ran their full course or were terminated early for good progress. For the supervision periods of suspended sentence orders, some 70% were terminated successfully over this period.

The number of court reports prepared by the Probation Service continued to fall over the last couple of years – 39,864 court reports were prepared in the quarter ending June 2015, reflecting the continuing downward trend in the number of cases being dealt with by the courts.

In general, courts follow the sentences proposed in pre-sentence reports (PSRs), particularly where an immediate custodial sentence has been recommended. Around 88% of such proposed sentences in PSRs resulted in immediate custody.

## Licence recalls

A key element of public protection is that offenders released on licence should be effectively supervised in the community and swiftly recalled to custody if they breach their licence or if their behaviour gives cause for concern. It is explained to offenders at the outset that they are liable to be recalled to custody if they breach any of the conditions of their licence. There are various reasons why offenders are recalled to custody for breaching their licence conditions besides committing a further offence. For example, an offender may be recalled if there is any deterioration in behaviour which leads the National Offender Management Service (NOMS) to conclude that there is an increased risk of the offender committing further offences.

There has been a 28% increase in licence recalls compared with April to June 2014; however this is almost entirely due to the implementation of the Offender Rehabilitation Act 2014 (ORA). Expanded licence supervision as a result of ORA came into effect for those sentenced from 1 February 2015 and means that anyone sentenced to more than a day in prison will receive at least 12 months supervision on release. April to June 2015 is therefore the first quarter in which offenders were eligible for this type of recall throughout the whole period. There were 1,140 recalls of offenders serving a sentence of less than 12 months between April and June 2015. The number of recalls of prisoners sentenced to 12 months or more (including indeterminate sentences), who would not be affected by ORA, increased by only 1% compared to the same quarter in 2014.

Between April 1999 and June 2015, 196,121 of those released on licence were recalled to custody for breaching the conditions of their licence, e.g. failing to report to their probation officer. Of all those recalled over the period, 99.4% were returned by the end of September 2015.

Of all those released on licence and recalled to custody between April 1999 and June 2015, there were 1,197 who had not been returned to custody by the end of September 2015. This means the proportion of prisoners not returned to custody over this period is 0.6%, which is constant compared to previous years. A further 18 offenders had not been returned to custody as of 30 September 2015 after recall between 1984 and April 1999, meaning the total number of offenders not returned to custody at the end of September 2015 was 1,215. These figures include some offenders believed to be dead or living abroad but who have not been confirmed as dead or deported.

The last edition of OMSQ included a response to the consultation on how licence recalls tables could be presented after the changes made as part of the transforming rehabilitation reforms. It was intended that this edition would include a breakdown showing whether recalls occurred in the licence period

or supervision period. Data quality work on this breakdown is ongoing and will be published in due course once it has been suitably quality assured.

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General information about the official statistics system of the UK is available from: [statisticsauthority.gov.uk/about-the-authority/uk-statistical-system](http://statisticsauthority.gov.uk/about-the-authority/uk-statistical-system)

Ministry of Justice publishes data relating to offender management in England and Wales. Equivalent statistics for Scotland and Northern Ireland can be found at:

[www.scotland.gov.uk/Topics/Statistics/Browse/Crime-Justice](http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Topics/Statistics/Browse/Crime-Justice)  
[www.dojni.gov.uk/index/statistics-research/stats-research-publications.htm](http://www.dojni.gov.uk/index/statistics-research/stats-research-publications.htm)

This publication and associated spreadsheet files of the tables contained in this document and detailed information of definitions, sources and key legislative changes are available for download at:

[www.gov.uk/government/collections/offender-management-statistics-quarterly](http://www.gov.uk/government/collections/offender-management-statistics-quarterly)



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