



Ministry
of Justice



Proven Re-offending Statistics Quarterly Bulletin

January to December 2013,
England and Wales

Ministry of Justice
Statistics Bulletin

29 October 2015

Contents

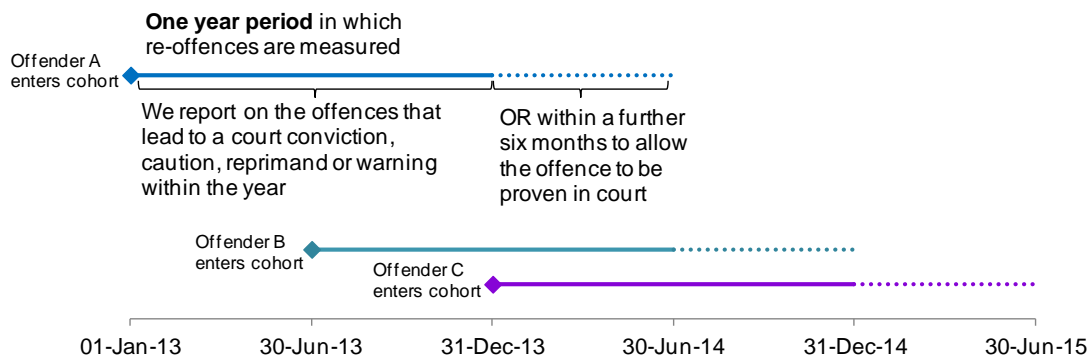
Introduction	3
Key findings	4
Main report	6
Overall - adult and juvenile offenders	6
Males and Females	7
Age	8
Index offence	9
Previous offences	10
Index disposal (sentence) type	11
Comparing the effectiveness of sentences	14
Adult offenders by individual prison	15
Adult offenders by probation trust.....	15
Measuring proven re-offending	16
Contact points	18

Introduction

This quarterly bulletin provides key statistics on Proven Re-offending for adult and juvenile offenders who were released from custody, received a non-custodial conviction at court, received a caution, or received a reprimand or warning in the period January to December 2013. It presents the proportion of offenders who re-offend (proven re-offending rate) and the number of proven re-offences by offender history, demographics, individual prisons, probation trusts, local authorities and youth offending teams.

How is proven re-offending measured?

A proven re-offence 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.



An offender enters cohort if they are released from custody, received a non-custodial conviction at court, received a caution, or received a reprimand or warning in the period January to December 2013.

Latest figures are provided with comparisons to 2012 and 2003 in order to highlight long-term trends. The [full set of results](#) is published separately in a set of Excel tables which provide headline Proven Re-offending statistics, and new data tools which provide more detailed breakdowns. These are:

- Proven re-offending overview data tool
- Proven re-offending by index disposal data tool
- Proven re-offending - prison/youth secure accommodation/probation trust data tool

These data tools provide the information in a more flexible pivot table format, making it easier to locate and extract specific information. These data tools have replaced the previous annual individual level proven re-offending CSVs.

Annex A the latest interim re-conviction estimates from the **Peterborough Payment by Results pilots** and Annex B a note on the total **number of Serious Further Offences** are published separately alongside this bulletin.

If you have any feedback, questions or requests for further information about this bulletin, please direct them to statistics.enquiries@justice.gsi.gov.uk.

Key findings

Overall - adult and juvenile offenders

In 2013 around 514,000 adult and juvenile offenders¹ were cautioned², received a non-custodial conviction at court or released from custody. Around 136,000 of these offenders committed a proven re-offence within a year.

This gives an overall proven re-offending rate of 26.5%; this rate has remained fairly stable, fluctuating between around 26% and 29% since 2003.

The 2013 re-offending rate represents a small increase of 0.5 percentage points compared to the previous 12 months and a fall of 2.0 percentage points since 2003.

Around 421,000 proven re-offences were committed over the one year follow-up period, with those that re-offended committing, on average, 3.10 re-offences each.

The highest re-offending rate by age group is 38.4%, for offenders aged 10 to 14, the number of offenders in this cohort has fallen by around 79% since 2003. The re-offending rate for this age group has overtaken offenders aged 15 to 17, who previously had a consistently higher re-offending rate over all editions of this publication and now are second highest.

Less than 1% of all proven re-offences committed over the one year follow-up period were serious violent or sexual offences with very little change since 2003.

Adult offenders

Adult offenders had a proven re-offending rate of 25.4%, representing a small increase of 0.5 percentage points compared to the previous 12 months and a fall of 1.5 percentage points since 2003, this rate has been fairly flat since 2003 fluctuating between around 24% and 27%.

Unsurprisingly, adult offenders with 11 or more previous offences have a higher re-offending rate than those with no previous offences – 47.0% compared to 8.1%.

In the 2013 cohort, adult offenders with an index offence of 'Theft' had the highest proven re-offending rate of 42.9%. Those with the lowest rate had an index offence of 'Fraud' and re-offended at a rate of 11.3%.

¹ 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 ['Definitions and Measurement' document](#) for further information.

² Includes reprimands and warnings for juveniles.

Adult offenders starting a court order

The proven re-offending rate for adult offenders starting a court order (Community sentence or Suspended Sentence Order) was 34.3%, a fall of 5.6 percentage points since 2003, and an increase of 0.8 percentage points compared to the previous 12 months.

Adult offenders released from custody

The proven re-offending rate for adult offenders released from custody in 2013 was 45.8%. This represents a small increase of 0.6 percentage points compared to the previous 12 months and a fall of 5.8 percentage points since 2003.

Since 2004, the overall rate for those released from custody has remained relatively stable at around 45% to 49%;

The rate for those released from short sentences has been consistently higher compared to those released from longer sentences. Adults who served sentences of less than 12 months re-offended at a rate of 59.3%, compared to 34.7% for those who served determinate sentences of 12 months or more.

The trends for those released from short and long sentences have both remained broadly flat since 2005 and are consistent with the overall trend.

Juvenile offenders

Around 44,000 juvenile offenders were cautioned, convicted or released from custody in 2013 and around 17,000 of them committed a re-offence. This gives a proven re-offending rate of 37.9%, up 2.2 percentage points from the previous 12 months and an increase of 3.7 percentage points since 2003, the cohort has fallen by around 68% since 2003.

Juvenile offenders with 11 or more previous offences have a higher re-offending rate than those with no previous offences –24.1% compared to 74.2%.

Juvenile offenders released from custody

The proven re-offending rate for juvenile offenders released from custody in 2013 was 66.5%.

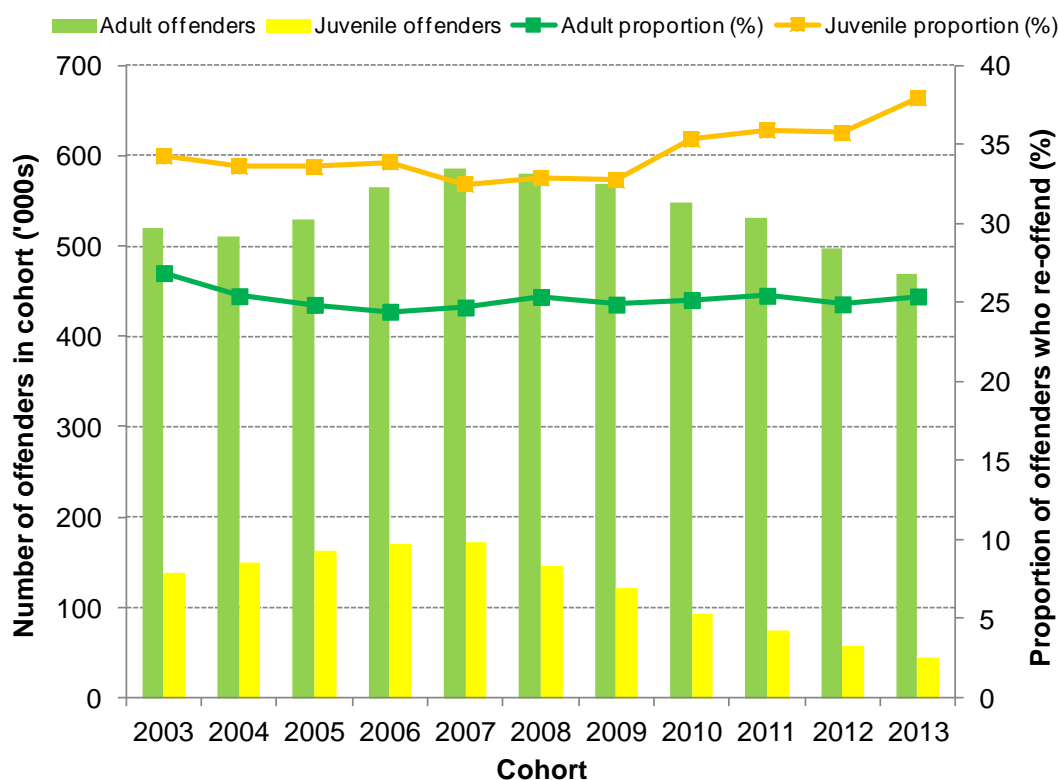
In spite of the increase in the overall juvenile re-offending rate, the re-offending rate for juveniles released from custody continues to fall with a decrease of 1.7 percentage points compared to the previous 12 months and a fall of 8.4 percentage points since 2003.

Main report

Overall - adult and juvenile offenders (Table A1)

Adult offenders accounted for 91% (around 470,000) of the January to December 2013 offender cohort, and juvenile offenders accounted for 9% (around 44,000). 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.

Figure 1: Proportion of adult and juvenile offenders in England and Wales who commit a proven re-offence, 2003 to 2013



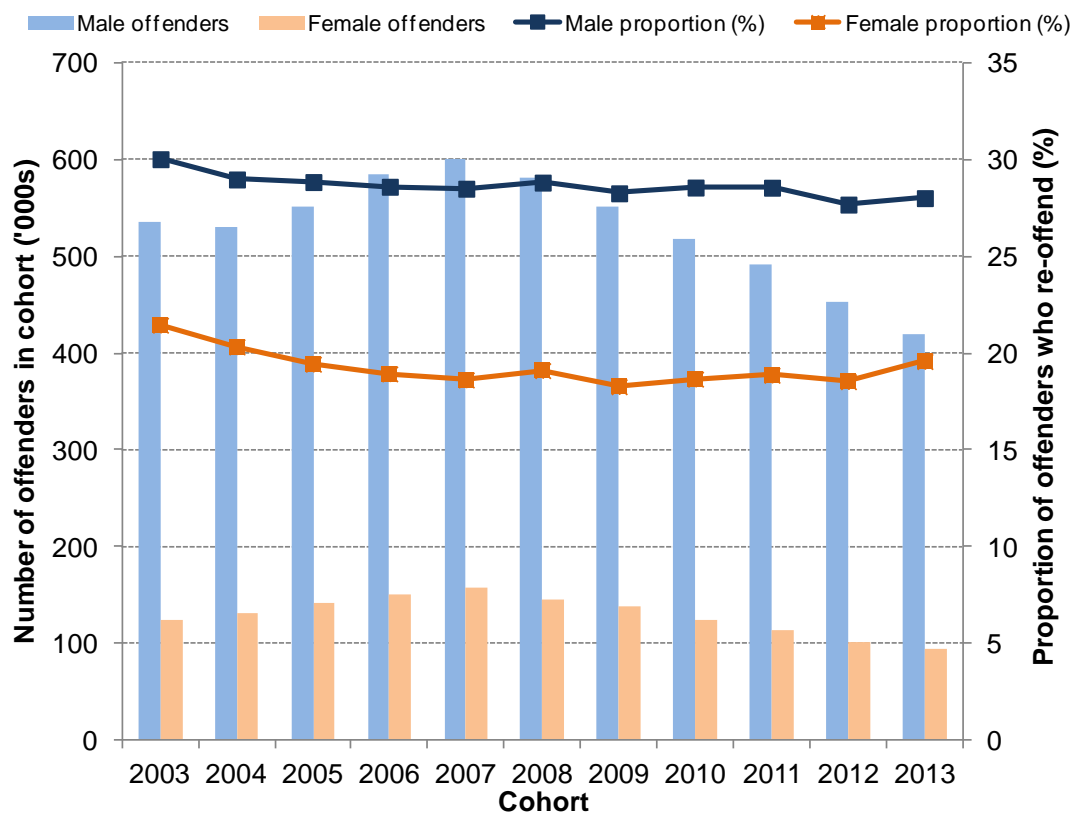
Around 119,000 of all **adult offenders** were proven to have committed a re-offence within a year. This gives a proven re-offending rate of 25.4% which represents a small increase of 0.5 percentage points compared to 2012. Since 2003, there has been little change in this rate, as illustrated in Figure 1. Over this time it has ranged from around 24% to 27% and since 2004 it has remained steady at around 25%.

The proven re-offending rate for **juvenile offenders** is higher, and in the last 12 months it has increased from 35.7% in 2012 to 37.9% in 2013. While the juvenile re-offending rate has seen an increase of 3.7 percentage points since 2003, the cohort has fallen by around 68%. The average number of previous offences per juvenile offender was 2.58 in 2013 and 1.83 in 2003. In spite of the increase in the overall juvenile re-offending rate, the re-offending rate for juveniles released from custody continues to fall.

Males and Females (Table A2)

In the 2013 cohort, 82% were male and 18% were female – a split that has changed little since 2003. Male offenders from the 2013 cohort re-offended at a higher rate of 28.0% compared to female offenders who re-offended at a rate of 19.6%. Both rates have remained broadly stable since 2003 (Figure 2). Between 2003 and 2013, the proven re-offending rate for male and female offenders decreased by 2.0 and 1.9 percentage points respectively.

Figure 2: Proportion of adult and juvenile offenders in England and Wales who commit a proven re-offence, by sex, 2003 to 2013



A summary report was published in November 2014 by a range of agencies relating to [the experience of women in the criminal justice system](#).

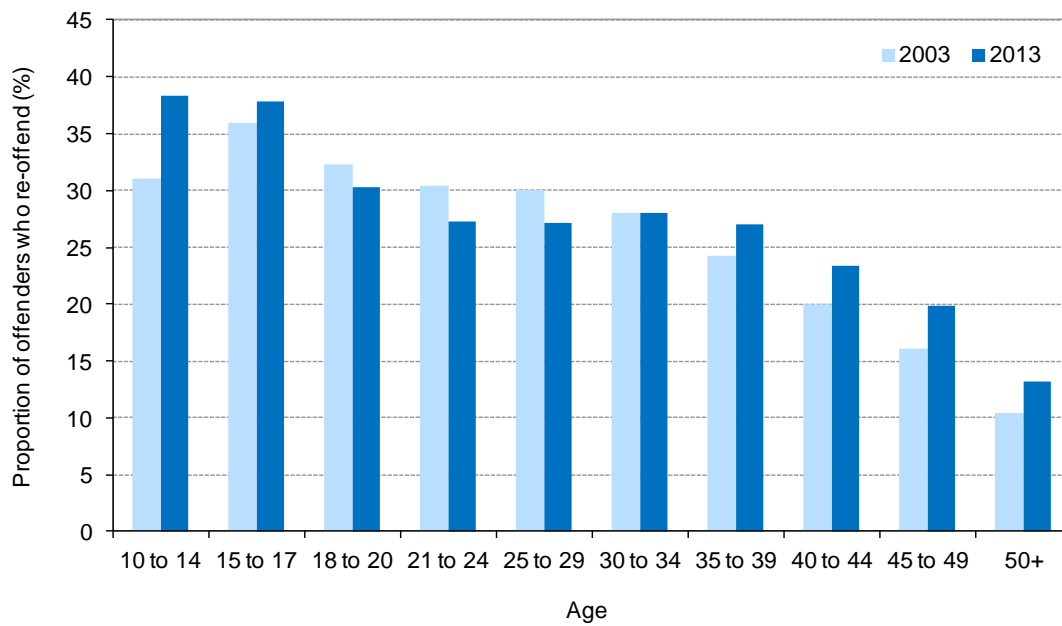
Age (Table A3)

The highest re-offending rate by age group is 38.4%, for offenders aged 10 to 14, this cohort has fallen by around 79% since 2003. The re-offending rate for this age group has overtaken offenders aged 15 to 17, who previously had a consistently higher re-offending rate over all editions of this publication. At 37.8%, rates for this group are the second highest.

Since 2003 the age distribution of re-offending has changed. Compared to 2003, the proven re-offending rate for offenders in the cohort for 2013 increased for 10 to 17 year olds and for those aged 35 and over, but fell for offenders aged 18 to 29. There was no change for offenders aged 30 to 34.

Figure 3 shows that the proven re-offending rate generally falls with increasing age.

Figure 3: Proportion of adult and juvenile offenders in England and Wales who commit a proven re-offence, by age, 2003 and 2013

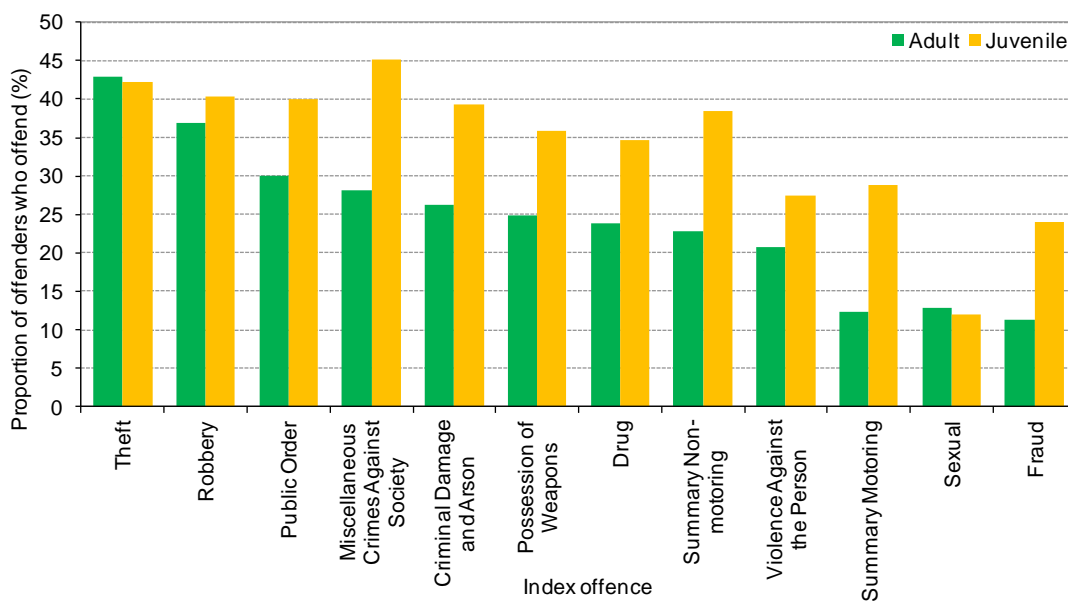


Index offence (Table A4)

The offence that leads to an offender being included in the offender cohort is called the index offence. In the 2013 cohort, adult offenders with an index offence of ‘Theft’ had the highest proven re-offending rate of 42.9%. This was followed by those with an index offence of ‘Robbery’ with a rate of 36.9%. Those with the lowest rate had an index offence of ‘Fraud’ and re-offended at a rate of 11.3%. Additionally, with a fall of 9.9 percentage points, the ‘Fraud’ index offence category saw the largest decrease between 2003 and 2013. In contrast, the largest increase of 6.6 percentage points over the same period occurred for those with an index offence of ‘Public Order’ with a re-offending rate of 30.0%.

In the 2013 cohort, juvenile offenders with an index offence of ‘Miscellaneous crimes against society’³ had the highest proven re-offending rate of 45.2%. Those with the lowest rate had a ‘sexual’ index offence and re-offended at a rate of 12.0%. This ‘Sexual’ index offence category, with a fall of 9.1 percentage points, had the largest decrease between 2003 and 2013. The largest increase of 9.5 percentage points over the same period occurred for those with an index offence of ‘Theft’ with a re-offending rate of 42.2%.

Figure 4: Proportion of adult and juvenile offenders in England and Wales who commit a proven re-offence, by index offence, 2013



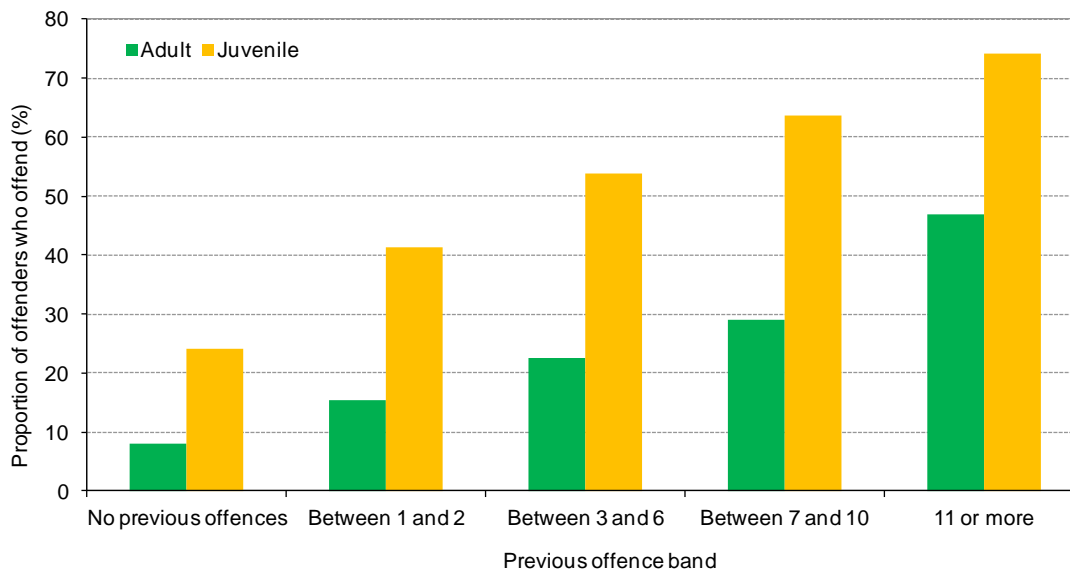
³ Miscellaneous crimes against society comprises a variety of offences. The largest volume offences include: handling stolen goods, threat to commit criminal damage and perverting the course of justice.

Previous offences (Table A5)

Generally, offenders with a large number of previous offences have a higher rate of proven re-offending than those with fewer previous offences and this is true for both adults and juveniles. In the 2013 cohort, for adults, the proven re-offending rates ranged from 8.1% for offenders with no previous offences to 47.0% for offenders with 11 or more previous offences. For juveniles these figures were 24.1 and 74.2 respectively. Between 2003 and 2013, the largest decrease in the proven re-offending rate for adults was among offenders with seven to ten previous offences and 11 or more previous offences, at 4.6 percentage points. For juveniles the largest decrease was for the 11 or more previous offences group (8.1 percentage points).

Adult offenders with 11 or more previous offences represented just under a third of all adult offenders in the 2013 cohort, but committed over two thirds of all adult proven re-offences. For juvenile offenders this group made up only 6% of all juvenile offenders, but committed nearly a fifth (18%) of all juvenile proven re-offences.

Figure 5: Proportion of adult and juvenile offenders in England and Wales who commit a proven re-offence, by number of previous offences, 2013



Index disposal (sentence) type (*Table C1*)

The index disposal of the offender is the type of sentence the offender received for their index offence. For the Proven Re-offending Statistics Quarterly Bulletin, this is defined as custody, court order, or other disposal resulting from a conviction at court, such as a fine or discharge, caution, reprimand or final warning (young offenders).

Adult offenders released from custody or commencing a court order

Between January and December 2013, around 172,000 adult offenders were released from custody or commenced a court order. Around 62,000 of these offenders were proven to have committed a re-offence within a year. This gives a proven re-offending rate of 35.9%. Since 2005, this rate has fallen slightly by 2.5 percentage points.

Adult offenders commencing a court order

Between January and December 2013, around 122,000 adult offenders started a court order and around 42,000 of these (34.3%) committed a proven re-offence within a year. This represents an increase of 0.8 percentage points compared to the previous 12 months, and a fall of 5.6 percentage points since 2003.

The Legal Aid, Sentencing and Punishment of Offenders Act 2012 introduced Suspended Sentence Orders (SSOs) without requirements attached. Offenders sentenced to such SSOs are not supervised by the Probation Service. There have been increasing numbers of such orders given since they were introduced in December 2012. The re-offending rate for these SSOs without requirements is 36.7%. The re-offending rate for SSOs with requirements is 30.3%.

These figures should not be compared to assess the effectiveness of different types of SSOs, as there is no control for known differences in offender characteristics and the type of sentence given.

Adult offenders released from custody

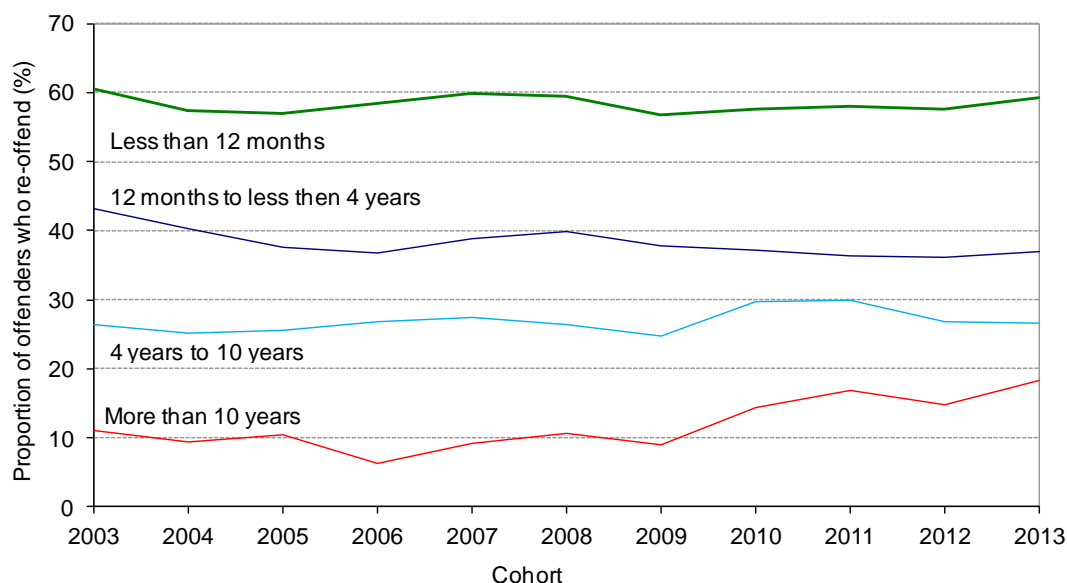
Between January and December 2013, around 59,000 adult offenders were released from custody and around 27,000 of these (45.8%) were proven to have committed a re-offence within a year. The rate has decreased by 5.8 percentage points since 2003, and has increased slightly from 45.2% for the same period 12 months ago.

Just under half of the adult offenders released from custody in 2013 were released from a custodial sentence of less than 12 months. These offenders had a proven re-

offending rate of 59.3% compared to 34.7% for those who served sentences of 12 months or more.

The rate for those released from short sentences has been consistently higher compared to those released from long sentences, as shown in Figure 6. However, the re-offending rate for those released from sentences of more than 10 years has seen an increase over recent years, and now stands at 18.3%.

Figure 6: Proportion of adult offenders released from custody who commit a proven re-offence, by custodial sentence length, 2003 to 2013



Juvenile offenders given a reprimand, warning or youth caution

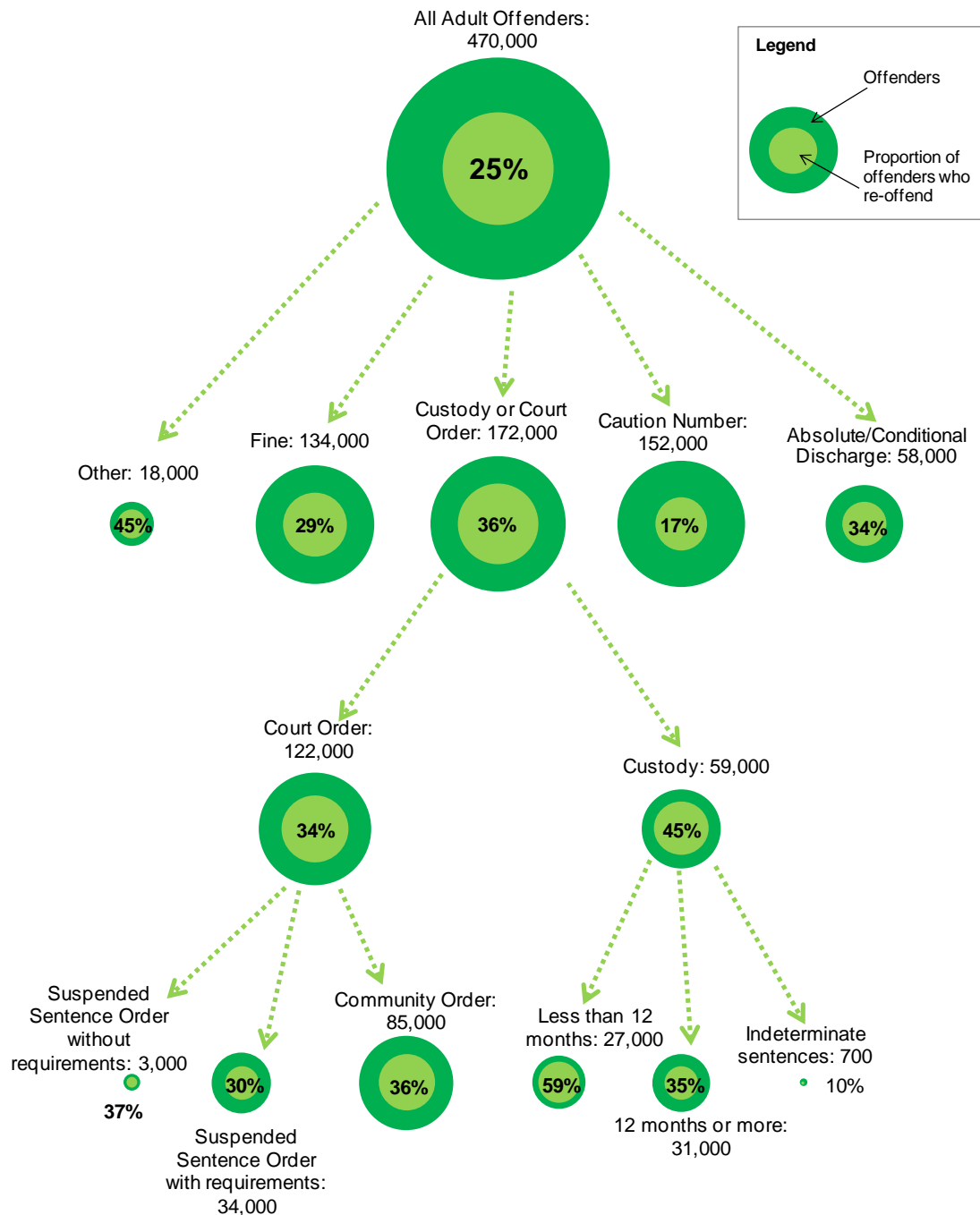
The re-offending rate for juvenile offenders given a reprimand, warning or youth caution was 29.7% an increase of 3.9 percentage points from the previous year and 4.2 percentage points from 2003. Reprimands and warnings for youths were abolished under Legal Aid Sentencing and Punishment of Offenders Act 2012 with effect from 8 April 2013 and 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, there is sufficient evidence for a realistic prospect of conviction but it is not in the public interest to prosecute.

Juvenile offenders released from custody

The re-offending rate for juveniles released from custody continues to fall. In 2013 around 1,300 juvenile offenders were released from custody and around 800 of these (66.5%) were proven to have committed a re-offence within a year. This represents a decrease of 1.7 percentage points compared to the previous 12 months and fall of 8.4 percentage points since 2003.

Proven adult re-offending: Offenders, re-offenders and proportion of offenders who re-offend by index disposal and custodial sentence length, 2013



Number of offenders in each disposal category do not sum to the total number of offenders. This is due to a difference in methodology to provide a realistic and relevant view of proven re-offending by disposal type.

The first event within each disposal is taken as the start point. Therefore, some offenders will appear in more than one disposal category. Please see the definitions and measurement paper for more information.

Data are rounded to the nearest 1,000; except for indeterminate sentences which are rounded to the nearest 100.

Comparing the effectiveness of sentences

Proven re-offending rates by index disposal (sentence type) 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.

The [‘The impact of short custodial sentences, Community Orders and Suspended Sentence Orders on reoffending’](#) compares like for like offenders which enables a more reliable comparison of proven re-offending rates between offenders receiving different sentences.

Short-term custody (less than 12 months in prison, without supervision on release) for the 2008 to 2011 cohorts was consistently associated with higher rates of proven re-offending than community orders and suspended sentence orders (‘court orders’).

Over a one year follow-up period, a higher proportion of people re-offended having been sentenced to short term custody than other, similar people given:

- a community order, of 3 percentage points higher;
- a suspended sentence order, of 7 percentage points higher.

Short term custody was associated with up to one more re-offence per person on average than both community and suspended sentence orders.

In the [‘2013 Compendium of Re-offending Statistics and Analysis’](#), non-custodial sentences were also compared:

- Suspended sentence orders had a lower re-offending rate than community orders (3.2 percentage points for 2010);
- Community orders had a higher re-offending rate than fines, though the difference was small (0.9 percentage points in 2010);
- Conditional discharges had a lower re-offending rate than: Community orders (5.1 percentage points for 2010); and Fines (5.5 percentage points for 2010).

Adult offenders by individual prison (*Prison/youth secure accommodation/probation trust data tool*)

Among prisons that released 30 or more offenders in 2013, proven re-offending rates varied considerably from 6.7% to 75.2% for offenders with a sentence of less than 12 months and from 3.7% to 59.0% for offenders with a sentence of 12 months or more. A large part of this variability reflects the mix of offenders who are held in different prisons and, therefore, comparisons between prisons should not be made using these raw re-offending rates.

Adult offenders by probation trust (*Prison/youth secure accommodation/probation trust data tool*)

For the period this report covers, offenders given a court order were managed by the Probation Service which comprised of 35 probation trusts. Proven re-offending rates for these offenders are presented by probation trust in the Prison/youth secure accommodation/probation trust data tool. This takes the first court order or licence commencement from within each probation trust as the start point for measuring re-offending and subsequent events as proven re-offences.

Proven re-offending rates varied considerably between probation trusts from 28.9% to 43.0%. A large part of this variability reflects the mix of offenders who are given a court order and, therefore, comparisons between probation trusts should not be made using these raw re-offending rates.

Measuring proven re-offending

There is no agreed international standard for measuring and reporting re-offending. An offender's journey through the criminal justice system can be a complex one; offenders can appear on numerous occasions.

Measuring true re-offending is complex. Official records are taken from either the police or courts, but they will underestimate the true level of re-offending because only a proportion of crime is reported and/or detected and not all crimes are recorded on one central system. Furthermore, other methods for measuring re-offending, such as self-report studies, which do not identify the offender, are likely to be unreliable. Therefore, this report aims to estimate proven re-offending for a specified group of offenders using data mainly from the Police National Computer.

Since this report measures re-offending on a consistent basis across all groups, it is possible to tailor analysis of re-offending to meet specific requirements.

The headline measure

This is the overall measure of re-offending and is presented for different demographic groups and by offence. To provide this **overview of proven re-offending**, offenders are tracked and their proven re-offending behaviour is recorded, taking the **first event**⁴ in the **relevant period** as the start point and subsequent events as proven re-offences. Users should refer to tables A1 to A6, B1 to B4 and the proven re-offending overview data tool for these statistics.

Index disposal

In this measure offenders are tracked and their proven re-offending behaviour is recorded **within** each disposal (caution, court order, release from custody, etc.) Users should refer to tables C1 to C2b for these statistics and the proven re-offending by index disposal data tool for these statistics.

Prison/Probation Trust

In this measure offenders are tracked and their proven re-offending behaviour is recorded **within** each operational unit (prison or probation trust) taking the first event **within** each as the start point and subsequent events as re-offences.

Probation Trusts ceased to exist on 1 June 2014, and were replaced with the National Probation Service and 21 Community Rehabilitation Companies. However, since the reporting period for this bulletin covers 2013, we have continued to publish statistics at Probation Trust level in the accompanying tables. Changes to relevant data tools will be consulted on in due course.

Early estimates

An early estimate of proven re-offending for young offenders— this uses a shorter follow-up and waiting period, but otherwise measures re-offending in exactly the

⁴ An event is one of the following: a release from custody, convicted at court with a non-custodial sentence, received a caution, reprimand or warning.

same way as the headline measure. This provides an earlier indication of proven re-offending trends for young offenders and is published as management information alongside the accompanying proven re-offending tables.

Re-conviction measure – Payment by results

A re-conviction measure for use by payment by results pilots – this is the measure used in the prison pilots at HMP Peterborough and HMP Doncaster which measures court convictions. For more details, please refer to Annex A.

For a more detailed explanation, please see the accompanying [‘Definitions and Measurement’ document](#).

Consultation

This quarterly bulletin was developed in response to a consultation in late 2010 and early 2011 by the Ministry of Justice (MoJ) on “Improvements to Ministry of Justice Statistics”.

Users

The contents of this bulletin will be of interest to Government policy makers, the agencies responsible for offender management at both national and local levels, providers, practitioners and others who want to understand more about proven re-offending.

In particular there are two MoJ impact indicators which will be monitored using results from this bulletin:

- Adult and juvenile re-offending – the percentage of adult and juvenile offenders who re-offend.
- The percentage of adults released from custody who re-offend.

Government policy makers also use these statistics to develop, monitor and evaluate key elements of its policies including those on payments by results, legal aid and sentencing guidelines. Offender management agencies use these statistics to gain a local understanding of the criminal justice system, understand performance and to highlight best practice. Key agencies include: the National Offender Management Service, the Youth Justice Board, private and voluntary sector providers of prison and probation services and local authorities.

Contact points

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General information about the official statistics system of the United Kingdom is available from <http://statisticsauthority.gov.uk/about-the-authority/uk-statistical-system>

Alternative formats are available on request from statistics.enquiries@justice.gsi.gov.uk.



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