

First time entrants (FTE) into the Criminal Justice System and Offender Histories: Year ending December 2022

This publication covers the period from year ending December 2012 to year ending December 2022. In the last three years of this period the work of the courts has been impacted by the restrictions imposed in response to the COVID pandemic, such as court closures and subsequent backlogs, and also industrial action by criminal barristers taking place between April 2022 and October 2022. This should be borne in mind when making comparisons.

This publication provides an overview of trends in first time entrants into the Criminal Justice System and Offender Histories in England and Wales.

Main points

The proportion of adult offenders convicted for an indictable offence with long criminal careers was 33% in 2022, broadly in-line with 2021.		In year ending December 2022, the proportion of adult offenders convicted for an indictable offence with long criminal careers (15 or more previous cautions or convictions) was 33%. This is broadly in-line with 2021 but down compared to the years 2012 to 2020, where between 36% and 39% of adult offenders convicted for an indictable offence had long criminal careers.
The proportion of the offenders convicted for an indictable offence who are first time offenders¹ has increased year on year since 2013.		In 2022, 17% of the offenders convicted for an indictable offence were first-time offenders, up 7 percentage points since 2012. Of all offenders convicted in 2022, 22% were first time offenders, an increase of 8 percentage points since 2012.
The proportion of juvenile offenders convicted for an indictable offence who were first time offenders has steadily increased since 2012.		43% of juvenile offenders convicted for an indictable offence were first time offenders in 2022, up 28 percentage points since 2012.
The proportion of offenders cautioned or convicted for an indictable offence in 2022 with at least one prior caution or conviction was 78%, down slightly from 2021.		182,414 offenders were cautioned or convicted for an indictable offence in 2022; 78% of them had at least one prior caution or conviction. This is down slightly from 2021, when 79% of offenders cautioned or convicted for an indictable offence had at least one prior caution or conviction.

For any feedback related to the content of this publication, please let us know at statistics.enquiries@justice.gov.uk

¹ Offenders with no previous cautions or convictions. This count differs from First Time Entrants (FTEs) because all offenders prosecuted by an English or Welsh police force, irrespective of country of residence, are included.

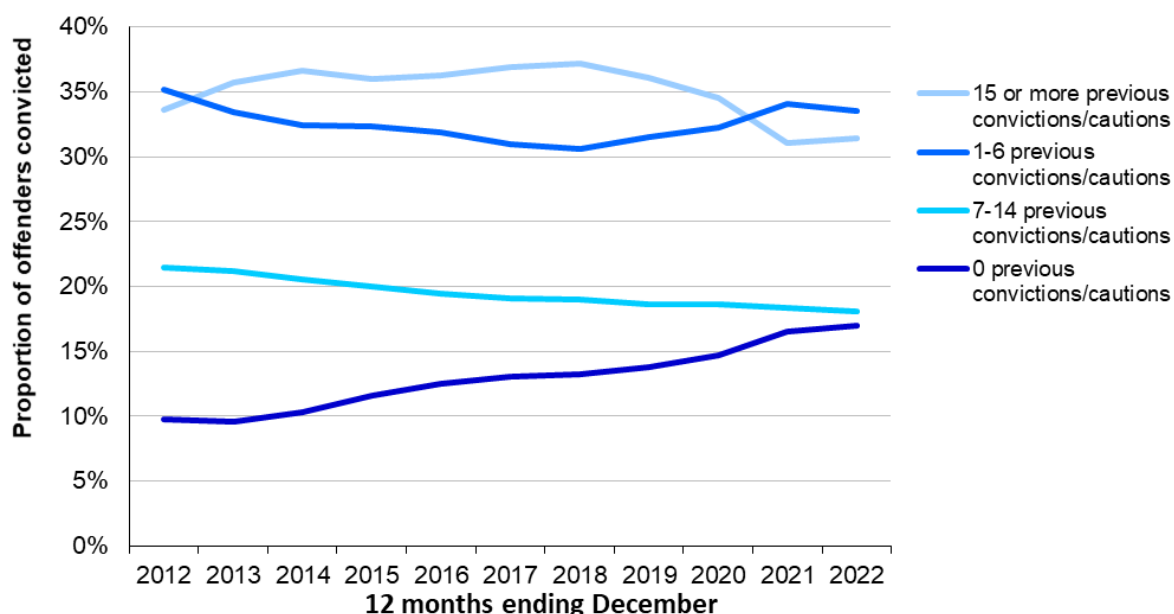
1. Statistician's comment

The proportion of adult offenders convicted for an indictable offence with long criminal careers (15 or more previous cautions or convictions) was 33% in 2022. This was broadly in line with the previous year, but down compared to the period between 2012 and 2020 where between 36% and 39% of adult offenders convicted for an indictable offence had long criminal careers. In contrast, the proportion of the offenders convicted for an indictable offence who are first time offenders has increased year on year since 2013, up to 17% in 2023. In addition, the proportion of juvenile offenders convicted for an indictable offence who were first time offenders has steadily increased since 2012, up to 43% in 2022.

2. Long criminal careers

In year ending December 2022, there were around 49,000 adult offenders convicted for an indictable offence with a long criminal career (15 or more previous cautions or convictions). This represents 33% of all adult offenders convicted for an indictable offence. The proportion of all offenders (juveniles and adults) convicted for an indictable offence with a long criminal career (15 or more previous cautions or convictions) was 31% in 2022, in-line with 2021. 43% of those convicted of an indictable offence with a long criminal career received an immediate custodial sentence.

Figure 1: Proportion of offenders convicted for indictable offences by previous criminal history, December 2012 to December 2022 (Source: Criminal History Pivot tool - Q4 2022)

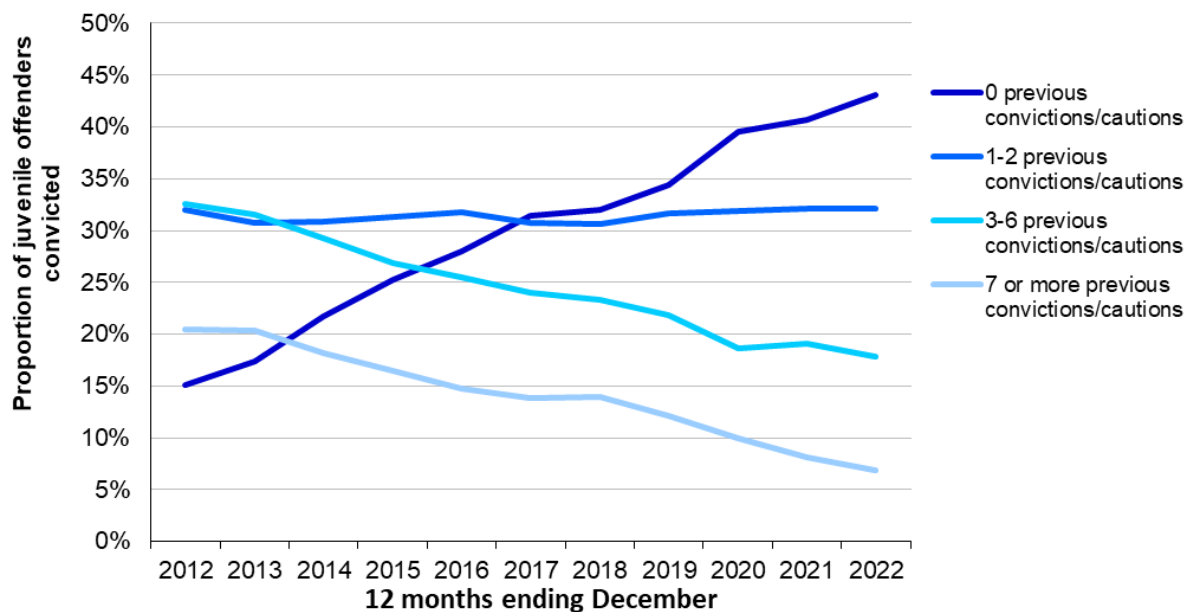


3. First time offenders¹

The proportion of the offenders convicted for an indictable offence who are first time offenders has increased year on year since 2013. In 2022, 17% of the offenders convicted for an indictable offence were first-time offenders, up 7 percentage points since 2012. Of all offenders convicted in 2022, 22% were first time offenders, an increase of 8 percentage points since 2012. The number of first time offenders convicted of an indictable offence has been broadly stable since 2018 at around 26,500, with the exception of 2020 when the number decreased to around 22,200 (figures during this period may have been affected by the COVID-19 pandemic).

The proportion of juvenile offenders convicted for an indictable offence who were first time offenders has steadily increased since 2012, up to 43% in 2022. This is an increase of 28 percentage points since 2012.

Figure 2: Proportion of juvenile offenders convicted for an indictable offence by previous criminal history, December 2012 to December 2022 (Source: Criminal History Pivot tool - Q4 2022)



4. Offence type by criminal history

In 2022, first time offenders convicted of an indictable offence were most often convicted for violence against the person offences and drug offences (22% for both offence classes). In contrast, offenders convicted of an indictable offence in 2022 with a long criminal career were most often convicted of theft offences, with 41% being convicted for this type of offence.

Further information

The data presented in this publication are provisional and updated in each publication. Figures provided for more recent years are subject to change in future publications as ongoing cases pass through the Criminal Justice System.

A technical guide providing further information on how the data is collected and processed can be found at:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/first-time-entrants-fte-into-the-criminal-justice-system-and-offender-histories-year-ending-december-2022>

Accompanying files

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

- ODS format tables containing data on first time entrants into the Criminal Justice System and Offender Histories in England and Wales up to December 2022
- An interactive pivot tool containing data on the number of all offenders cautioned or sentenced for indictable and summary offences, by previous criminal history, offence type, age group, ethnicity, gender, disposal category and disposal type, from December 2012 to December 2022
- An interactive pivot tool containing data on the latest offence for offenders cautioned or sentenced by first and all previous offences, offence type, disposal category and disposal type, from December 2012 to December 2022
- An interactive pivot tool containing data on the number of First Time Entrants by offence type, age group, ethnicity, gender, disposal category and disposal type, from December 2012 to December 2022
- An interactive Sankey diagram looking at outcomes for offenders cautioned or convicted by previous offending history, age group, gender and offence group, from December 2012 to December 2022
- A technical guide providing further information on how the data is collected and processed
- The pre-release access list for this publication
- Statistical notice and consultation response: First time entrants into the Criminal Justice System data

National Statistics status

National Statistics status means that official statistics meet the highest standards of trustworthiness, quality, and public value. This bulletin recently underwent a compliance check with the Office for Statistics Regulation and retained its National Statistics status in May 2020². All official statistics should comply with all aspects of the Code of Practice for 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.

² [Office for Statistics Regulation: Proven re-offending and criminal justice system statistics](#)

Future publications

Next update: May 2024

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 changes in content.

Contact

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

Tel: 020 3334 3536

Email: newsdesk@justice.gov.uk

Other enquiries about, or feedback on, these statistics should be directed to the Data and Analysis division of the Ministry of Justice:

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

Email: statistics.enquiries@justice.gov.uk

© Crown copyright

Produced by the Ministry of Justice

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