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Safety in Custody Statistics, England and Wales: Deaths in Prison Custody to September 2026 Self-harm and Assaults to June 2026

Main Points

Number of deaths decreased from the previous 12-month period	↓	In the 12 months to September 2026, there were 360 deaths in prison custody, a decrease of 12% from 411 deaths in the previous 12 months. Of these, 66 deaths were self-inflicted, a decrease of 32% from the 97 self-inflicted deaths in the previous 12 months.
The rate of self-harm decreased in both male and female establishments from the previous 12-month period	↓	In the 12 months to June 2026, the rate of self-harm was 789 incidents per 1,000 prisoners (68,231 incidents), a 10% decrease from the 12 months to June 2025, with a 12% decrease in male establishments and a 3.8% decrease in female establishments. In the most recent quarter, the rate of self-harm increased by 1.6%, with a 2.9% increase in the rate in male establishments while remaining steady (a 0.2% increase) in female establishments. The number of incidents increased by 1.3% to 16,234.
The rate of individuals who self-harmed decreased from the previous 12-month period	↓	In the 12 months to June 2026, the rate of individuals who self-harmed was 150 individuals per 1,000 prisoners (12,973 individuals), a decrease of 5% from a rate of 158 in the previous 12 months. The number of self-harm incidents per individual decreased from 5.6 to 5.3 in the 12 months to June 2026.
The rate of assaults decreased from the previous 12-month period	↓	In the 12 months to June 2026, the rate of assaults was 346 assaults per 1,000 prisoners (29,944 assaults), down 4.1% from the 12 months to June 2025. In the most recent quarter, assaults were down 1.0% to 7,076 incidents and the assault rate was down 0.7% to 83 assaults per 1,000 prisoners.
The rate of prisoner-on-prisoner assaults decreased from the previous 12-month period	↓	In the 12 months to June 2026, the rate of prisoner-on-prisoner assaults was 239 assaults per 1,000 prisoners (20,705 prisoner-on-prisoner assaults), down 1.6% from the 12 months to June 2025 (with a 2.1% decrease in the rate in male establishments and a 9% increase in female establishments). In the latest quarter, the number of prisoner-on-prisoner assaults was down 1.3% to 4,899 incidents.
The rate of assaults on staff decreased		In the 12 months to June 2026, the rate of assaults on staff was 110 assaults per 1,000 prisoners (9,481 assaults on staff), down 9% from

from the previous 12-month period		the 12 months to June 2025 (with an 11% decrease in the rate in male establishments, but an 8% increase in female establishments). In the latest quarter the number of assaults on staff decreased by 1.0% to 2,220 incidents.
The rate of serious assaults increased from the previous 12-month period		In the 12 months to June 2026, the rate of serious assaults was 40 serious assaults per 1,000 prisoners (3,422 incidents), up 0.8% from the previous 12 months. The rate of serious prisoner-on-prisoner assaults was up 2.4% to 30 per 1,000 prisoners (2,581 incidents), while the rate of serious assaults on staff was down by 6% to 10 per 1,000 prisoners (859 incidents) in the 12 months to June 2026.
11% of all assaults were serious		

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If you are struggling to cope, please call Samaritans for free on 116 123 (UK and the Republic of Ireland) or contact other sources of support, such as those listed on the NHS help for suicidal thoughts webpage. Support is available around the clock, every day of the year, providing a safe place for you, whoever you are and however you are feeling.

Statistician's comment

In the 12 months to September 2026, we have seen a decrease in the number of deaths (12% decrease). In the 12 months to June 2026, we have seen a 10% decrease in the number of self-harm incidents and a 4.3% decrease in the number of assault incidents compared with the previous year. The number of incidents of assaults has decreased in male establishments but increased in female establishments over the past 12 months while the number of incidents of self-harm have decreased in both male and female establishments in the past 12 months. The number of assaults in female establishments has reached the highest level in the time series¹.

The number of deaths has decreased from 411 to 360 in the 12 months to September 2026, with the rate of deaths decreasing from 4.7 deaths per 1,000 prisoners to 4.2 deaths per 1,000 prisoners over the same time period. There were 66 self-inflicted deaths^{2,3} in the latest year, a decrease from 97 in the previous year. The rate of self-inflicted deaths has remained broadly stable at around 1.0 per 1,000 prisoners since the 12 months to September 2017. There were 5 homicides in the 12 months to September 2026, a decrease from 6 homicides in the previous 12 months. In the five years prior to the 12 months to September 2024, there were between 1 and 3 total homicides per year, and in the following years there have been 5-6 total homicides per year.

The rate^{4,5} of self-harm incidents per 1,000 prisoners in the 12 months to June 2026 decreased by 10%. There was a decrease in the rate of self-harm incidents in both the male estate (down 12% to 593 incidents per 1,000 prisoners) and in the female estate (down 3.8% to 5,504 per 1,000 prisoners)⁶. The rate is over nine times higher in female establishments than male establishments. The decrease in the rate in the female estate was driven by a decrease in the average number of incidents among those who self-harmed in female establishments, from 17.2 to 15.8, while the rate of individuals self-harming increased from 333 to 349 self-harming individuals per 1,000 prisoners. For male establishments, the average number of incidents among those who self-harmed decreased from 4.5 to 4.2 and the rate of individuals self-harming also decreased from 151 to 142 self-harming individuals per 1,000 prisoners.

The rate of assault incidents per 1,000 prisoners decreased by 4.1% to 346 incidents per 1,000 prisoners in the 12 months to June 2026, while the rate of serious assaults increased by 0.8% to 40 incidents per 1,000 prisoners over the same period. In female establishments the rate of assault incidents increased by 8% to a peak of 656 per 1,000 prisoners, compared to a decrease of 4.9% in male establishments (to 333 per 1,000 prisoners). The rate of assaults was nearly twice as high in female establishments than in male establishments. The proportion of assaults in female establishments that were serious remains lower, at 7% compared with 12% in male establishments, despite the rate of serious assaults being higher in female establishments (up 11% to a new peak

¹ The time series for assault incidents starts in 2000, and self-harm incidents starts in 2004.

² Apparent cause is based on the HMPPS classification of deaths in prison custody. Self-inflicted deaths are any death of a person who has apparently taken his or her own life irrespective of intent. This not only includes suicides but also accidental deaths as a result of the person's own actions. This classification is used because it is not always known whether a person intended to die by suicide.

³ Any death of a person who has voluntarily taken their own life - a verdict determined at inquest. As inquests will not have occurred at the time HMPPS publishes deaths statistics, HMPPS makes no attempt to attribute intent (which is the responsibility of the coroner/inquest). HMPPS does not produce official statistics on suicides but does monitor inquest verdicts to ensure that classifications of deaths are consistent.

⁴ Rates reflect the changes in the number of incidents, as well as the changes in prison population over time. More information can be found in the accompanying guide. Data on population statistics are published in the Offender Management Statistics Quarterly publication <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/offender-management-statistics-quarterly>.

⁵ See Guide to Safety in Custody Statistics for a summary of how rates are calculated.

⁶ A greater percentage decrease in the female population than the male population means that female prisoners now make up a slightly smaller proportion of the overall estate in the latest period. Because the rate of female self-harm is much higher than that of male self-harm, this shift in the population composition has contributed to the decrease in the overall rate, causing it to decrease more than the male and female estates individually.

rate of 49 per 1,000 prisoners) than in male establishments (which remained steady [up 0.3%] at a rate of 39 per 1,000 prisoners).

In the 12 months to June 2026, the rate of assaults on staff decreased 9% to 110 incidents per 1,000 prisoners, with an 11% decrease in male establishments (to 101 per 1,000 prisoners) but an 8% increase in female establishments (to a new peak of 309 per 1,000 prisoners). During the same period, the rate of prisoner-on-prisoner assaults decreased 1.6% to 239 incidents per 1,000 prisoners, with a 2.1% decrease in male establishments (to 235 per 1,000 prisoners) and a 9% increase in female establishments (to a new peak of 351 per 1,000 prisoners).

Background

Safety in custody statistics cover deaths, self-harm and assaults in prison custody in England and Wales, with figures in the summary tables in the quarterly publications presented on a 12-month rolling basis over an 11-year time series⁷. This release provides statistics on deaths of prisoners to the end of September 2026, and statistics on assaults and self-harm up to the end of June 2026.

The total prison population has fallen slightly in the latest year⁸ following a large increase in the prison population since 2021, particularly for certain population groups such as remand⁹. As at 30th June 2026 the prison population was around 1,500 (1.7%) lower than at the end of June 2025. The prison population as of 30th June 2026 remains around 8,000 or 10% higher than at the end of April 2021, with the male prison population increasing by 10% and the female prison population increasing by 6% from the end of April 2021.

These changes in population should be borne in mind when interpreting changes in the numbers of incidents over time. In the context of substantial population change, rates per 1,000 prisoners more accurately describe changes in the likelihood of incidents occurring¹⁰. Data on deaths, self-harm and assaults are routinely presented as rates of incidents per 1,000 prisoners (as well as numbers) for all prisoners and for the male and female estates.

The comparability of statistics between 2020 and 2022 with other time periods is affected by the differing levels of restrictions implemented within prisons to limit and control the spread of the COVID-19 virus through the National Framework. These restrictions included the implementation of effective isolation of prisoners to reduce the spread of COVID-19, reverse cohorting of new prisoners into custody, and shielding of vulnerable prisoners.

Between November 2022 and November 2024, in order to make the best use of capacity across the estate in the light of recent increases in the prison population, young people were routinely retained in the Youth Custody Service (YCS) estate until their 19th birthday (rather than transferring to an adult prison on or soon after their 18th birthday, as previously occurred in most cases).

This means the age demographic in the young people's estate, but also in adult prisons, is slightly different compared to previous years.

Supplementary annual tables, providing more in-depth statistics on a calendar year basis, underlying data files with pivot tables providing lower-level granularity, and a technical guidance document are also available alongside this bulletin, at

www.gov.uk/government/collections/safety-in-custody-statistics.

⁷ Data on deaths is published three months ahead of self-harm and assaults. Therefore, the deaths annual publication and tables are published alongside the Safety in Custody quarterly update to September publication.

⁸ The monthly prison population has fluctuated due to various policy changes, and the latest monthly population decreased to the end of June 2026, although the annual average prison population in the 12 months to June 2026 was just 0.3% lower than the previous 12 months. See the Offender Management Statistics Quarterly Bulletin for more information.

⁹ Quarterly population data to March 2026 is published in the [Offender Management Statistics Quarterly Bulletin](https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/offender-management-statistics-quarterly) <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/offender-management-statistics-quarterly>.

¹⁰ The comparability over the year of other measures that are based on self-harming individuals (such as the number of incidents per self-harming individual, or the proportion of incidents requiring hospital attendance) are not affected by changes in population size.

Changes to the next publication:

Deaths

From the next publication released on 28th January 2027 – Safety in Custody: quarterly update to September 2026 (which will include deaths data to December 2026 and our additional annual deaths tables), deaths in the Children and Young People Secure Estate will be excluded from the tables from January 2019 onwards, and the youth population will be excluded from the overall death rates. The Children and Young People Secure Estate is already excluded from the assaults and self-harm tables and rates, so this allows the deaths data to be consistent with the rest of the publication.

Information on all deaths within the Children and Young People Secure Estate are already included and can be found in the [Safety in the Children and Young People Secure Estate publication](#).

1 Deaths: 12 months ending September 2026

Number of deaths decreased from the previous 12-month period

In the 12 months to September 2026, there were 360 deaths in prison custody, a **decrease** of 12% from 411 deaths in the previous 12 months.

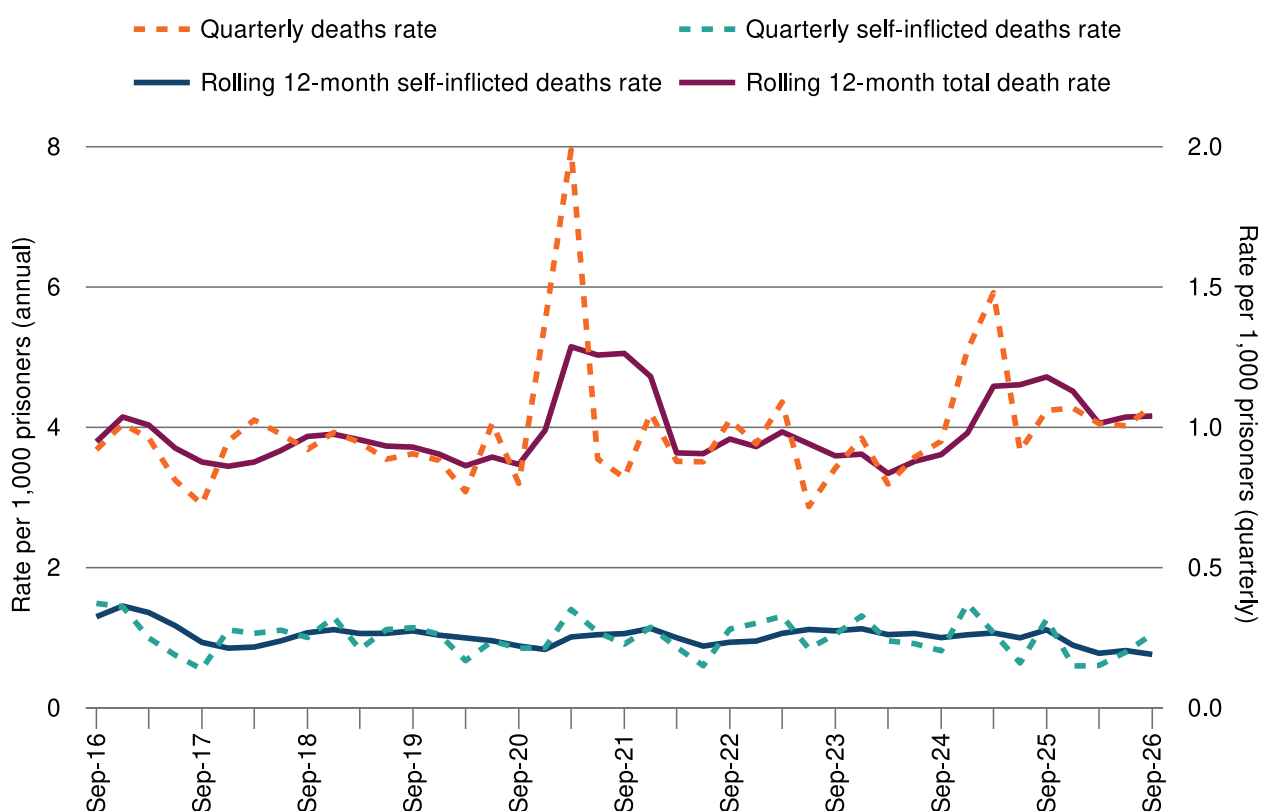
In the most recent quarter, there were 94 deaths, an **increase** of 9% from the previous quarter.

Number of self-inflicted deaths decreased from the previous 12-month period

In the 12 months to September 2026, there were 66 self-inflicted deaths, a 32% **decrease** from 97 in the previous 12 months.

There were 23 self-inflicted deaths in the most recent quarter, an **increase** of 35% from 17 in the previous quarter. Quarterly deaths figures should be considered with caution due to greater volatility.

Figure 1: Quarterly 12-month rolling rate of deaths per 1,000 prisoners, 12 months ending September 2016 to 12 months ending September 2026, with quarterly rates



In the 12 months to September 2026, there were 360 deaths in prison custody (a rate of 4.2 per 1,000 prisoners), a 12% decrease from 411 deaths in the previous 12 months (a rate of 4.7 per 1,000 prisoners). Long-term trends and more detail are presented in the annual tables¹¹.

¹¹ Data on deaths are published three months ahead of assaults and self-harm, therefore, the annual publication Deaths in prison custody for 1978 to 2025 is published in the Safety in Custody quarterly update to September 2025.

Over the same period, there were 214 deaths due to natural causes (a rate of 2.5 per 1,000 prisoners), a 9% decrease from 234 deaths by natural causes in the previous 12 months (a rate of 2.7 per 1,000 prisoners).

There were 66 self-inflicted deaths in the 12 months to September 2026 (a rate of 0.8 per 1,000 prisoners), a decrease of 32% from 97 self-inflicted deaths in the previous 12 months (a rate of 1.1 per 1,000 prisoners). The rate of self-inflicted deaths has remained broadly stable at around 1.0 per 1,000 prisoners since the 12 months to September 2017.

There were 5 homicides in the 12 months to September 2026, a decrease from 6 homicides in the previous 12 months. In the five years prior to the 12 months to September 2024, there were between 1 and 3 total homicides per year, and in the following years there have been 5-6 total homicides per year.

There were 75 deaths recorded as 'Other' in the 12 months to September 2026, an increase of 1 from 74 in the previous 12 months. Of those 75 deaths, 30 were 'Other/Non-natural', a decrease of 52% over the same period. The other 45 deaths are 'awaiting further information' prior to being classified. In some cases, the results of the toxicology and post-mortem tests are inconclusive, meaning classification cannot be arrived at until a coroner's inquest takes place (which can be a considerable time after the death). As a result, the number and rate of deaths in the individual categories are not directly comparable with earlier years: it is likely that numbers in some categories will be revised upwards once classifications have been finalised.

In the most recent quarter, there were 94 deaths, an increase of 9% from 86 deaths in the previous quarter.

There were 23 self-inflicted deaths in the latest quarter, an increase of 35% from 17 in the previous quarter. However, quarterly death figures should be considered with caution due to greater volatility and the potential for seasonal effects¹².

¹² Seasonal effects refer to variation in time series data that occur at regular intervals (typically intervals shorter than a year e.g. monthly or quarterly).

2 Self-harm: 12 months to June 2026

The rate of self-harm incidents decreased in both the male and female estate from the previous 12-month period

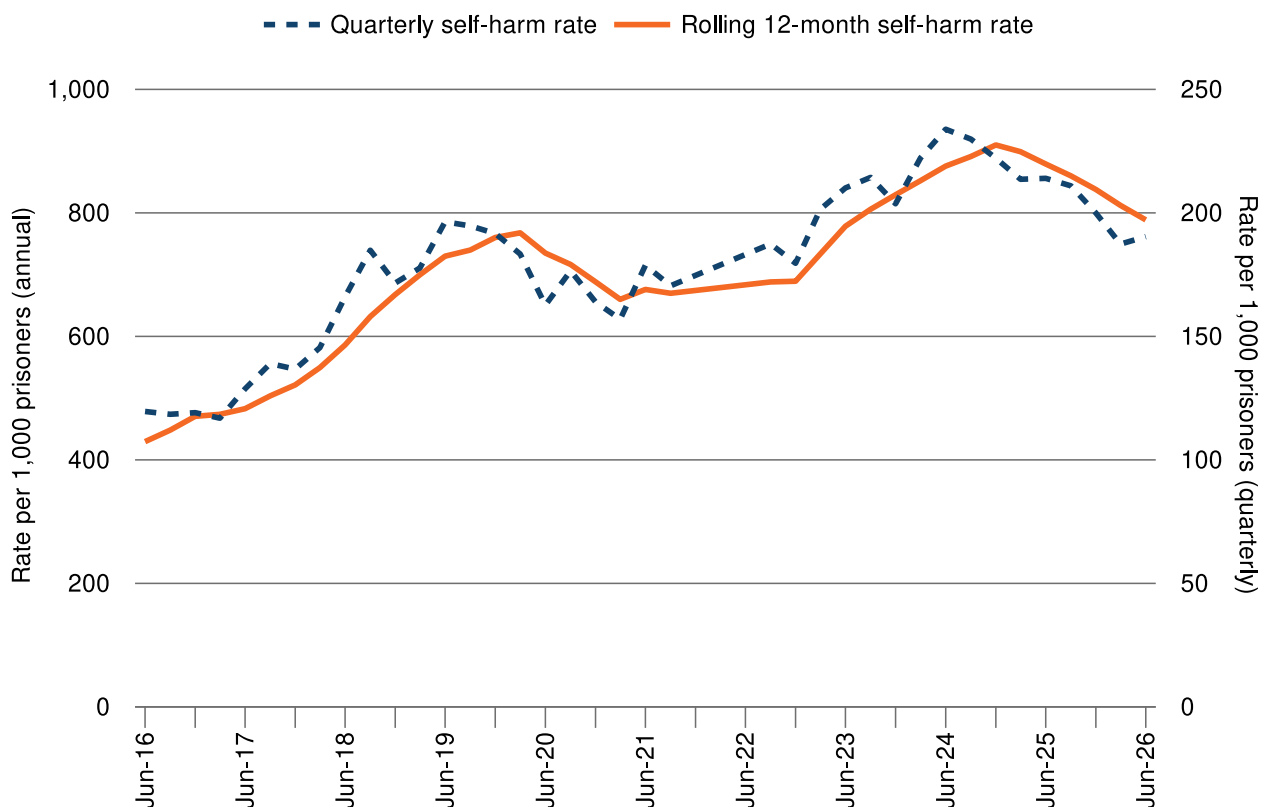
There were 68,231 self-harm incidents in the 12 months to June 2026, a 10% **decrease** from the previous 12 months, with a 12% **decrease** in male establishments and a 6% **decrease** in female establishments. Over the same period the rate of self-harm incidents per 1,000 prisoners **decreased** by 12% in male establishments and **decreased** by 3.8% in female establishments.

In the most recent quarter, there were 16,234 self-harm incidents, a 1.3% **increase** compared to the previous quarter (increasing 2.6% in male establishments and decreasing 2.1% in female establishments). Over the same period the rate of self-harm incidents per 1,000 prisoners **increased** 2.9% in male establishments and **remained steady** (a 0.2% increase) in female establishments.

The rate of individuals who self-harmed decreased, and the number of incidents per self-harming individual decreased in the latest year

There were 12,973 individuals who self-harmed in the 12 months to June 2026, a 5% **decrease** compared to 13,727 in the previous 12 months. Over the same period the rate of self-harming individuals per 1,000 prisoners decreased by 5% from 158 to 150. The number of self-harm incidents per self-harming individual **decreased** 5% from 5.6 to 5.3 in the 12 months to June 2026.

Figure 2: Quarterly 12-month rolling rate of self-harm incidents per 1,000 prisoners, 12 months ending June 2016 to 12 months ending June 2026, with quarterly rates



In the 12 months to June 2026, there were 68,231 reported incidents of self-harm (a rate of 789 per 1,000 prisoners). The number of incidents of self-harm decreased 10% from 76,211 in the previous 12 months. The rate of incidents in the latest 12 months also decreased 10% from the previous 12 months.

On a quarterly basis, the number of incidents in the 3 months to June 2026 increased by 1.3% from the previous quarter, from 16,030 to 16,234 incidents. The rate of incidents of self-harm in the three months to June 2026 increased by 1.6% from the previous quarter to 190 incidents per 1,000 prisoners.

The number of individuals who self-harmed decreased by 5% to 12,973 in the latest 12 months, from 13,727 in the previous 12 months. The rate, or proportion, of prisoners self-harming also decreased (by 5%) to 150 self-harming individuals per 1,000 prisoners in the latest 12 months. The number of incidents per self-harming individual in the latest 12 months was 5.3, a decrease of 5% from 5.6 in the previous year. A small number of individuals who repeatedly self-harm have a disproportionate impact on this figure: just under half (47%) of prisoners who self-harmed in 2025 did so only once.

The number of self-harm incidents requiring hospital attendance¹³ decreased by 11% (to 2,926 incidents) in the 12 months to June 2026 but increased by 2.0% in the latest quarter (to 717 incidents). The proportion of incidents that required hospital attendance in the 12 months to June 2026 remained unchanged at 4.3%.

Self-harm levels differ considerably by sex. Although the number of incidents in the female estate is smaller than in the male estate, the rate of self-harm per 1,000 prisoners is much higher. In the 12 months to June 2026, there were 49,283 incidents in the male estate compared with 18,948 in the female estate, representing a 12% decrease in male establishments and a 6% decrease in female establishments compared to the previous year. The rate of self-harm in the female estate (5,504 incidents per 1,000 prisoners) is over nine times higher than in the male estate (593 incidents per 1,000 prisoners).

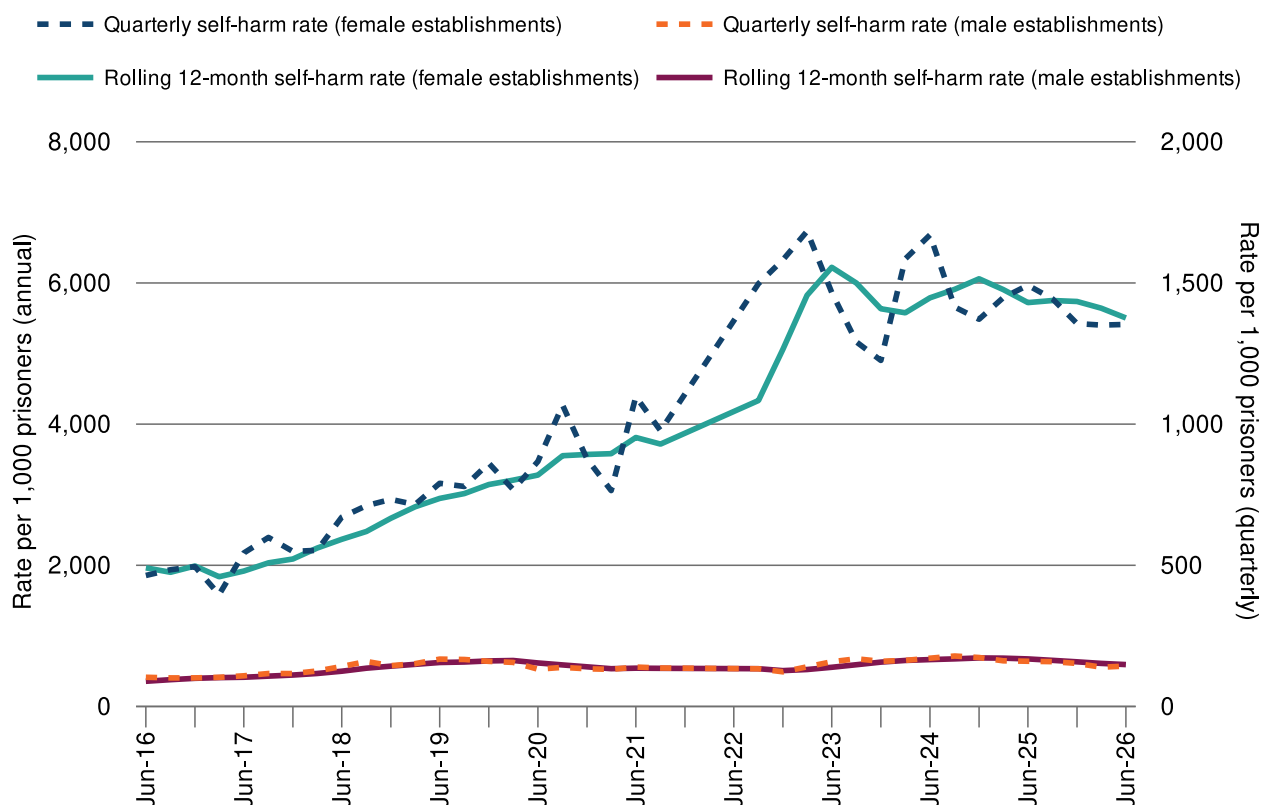
On a quarterly basis, the number of incidents in the three months to June 2026 increased by 2.6% in male establishments and decreased by 2.1% in female establishments compared with the previous three months. The rate of self-harm incidents increased by 2.9% in male establishments and remained steady (increased by 0.2%) in female establishments in the latest quarter.

The number of incidents per individual who self-harmed in female establishments was 3.8 times that in male establishments. In the 12 months to June 2026 there were 15.8 incidents of self-harm per self-harming female, a decrease from 17.2 in the previous 12 months, compared with 4.2 incidents per self-harming male, a decrease from 4.5 in the previous 12 months.

The proportion of females self-harming in the latest 12 months was 349 individuals per 1,000 prisoners, an increase of 4.8% from 333 individuals per 1,000 prisoners in the previous 12 months. The decrease in the rate of self-harm in the female estate occurred despite this increase in the proportion of females self-harming, as a result of the larger proportionate decrease in incidents per individual. The decrease in the rate of self-harm in the male estate was driven by both a smaller proportion of individuals self-harming and a decrease in the number of self-harm incidents per individual (with the proportion of males self-harming having decreased from 151 to 142 individuals per 1,000 prisoners).

¹³ An incident of self-harm requiring hospitalisation does not only reflect the seriousness of the incident. This also depends on the healthcare facilities at the establishment, which vary across the estate.

Figure 3: Quarterly 12-month rolling rate of self-harm incidents per 1,000 prisoners by sex of establishment, 12 months ending June 2016 to 12 months ending June 2026



Self-harm incidents requiring hospital attendance decreased in male establishments by 11%, to 2,639 in the 12 months to June 2026, and the proportion of incidents requiring hospital attendance increased slightly to 5.4%. In the female estate 287 self-harm incidents required hospital attendance, a 7% decrease from the previous year, and the proportion of incidents in the female estate requiring hospital attendance remained the same at 1.5%.

As Figure 3 shows, over the last decade there has been more variation in the quarterly rate of self-harm in the female estate than in the male estate. This may in part reflect the impact of the small number of individuals who repeatedly self-harm being greater in the female estate.

3 Assaults: 12 months to June 2026

Assaults decreased while serious assaults increased from the previous 12-month period

In the 12 months to June 2026, there were 29,944 assault incidents, a 4.3% **decrease** from the previous 12 months. Of these, 3,422 were serious assaults, a 0.6% **increase**. The rate of assaults **decreased** by 4.1% to 346 incidents per 1,000 prisoners, and the rate of serious assaults **increased** by 0.8% to 40 per 1,000 prisoners in the latest 12 months.

Assaults **decreased** by 1.0% in the latest quarter to 7,076 incidents and the number of serious assaults **increased** by 11% to 852 incidents.

The rate of assaults per 1,000 prisoners remained higher in female than male establishments

The rate of assaults in male establishments **decreased** by 4.9% from the previous 12 months, while the rate in female establishments **increased** by 8%. Assault rates for the 12 months to June 2026 were nearly twice as high in female establishments (656 incidents per 1,000 prisoners) than in male establishments (333 incidents per 1,000 prisoners). Both the number of incidents and the rate reached a new peak in female establishments in the latest 12 months.

Prisoner-on-prisoner assaults decreased from the previous 12-month period

There were 20,705 prisoner-on-prisoner assaults in the 12 months to June 2026, a 1.8% **decrease** from the previous 12 months. The rate of prisoner-on-prisoner assaults **decreased** 1.6% to 239 incidents per 1,000 prisoners. During this period, the rate **decreased** 2.1% to 235 assaults per 1,000 prisoners in male establishments and **increased** 9% to 351 assaults per 1,000 prisoners in female establishments, reaching a new peak.

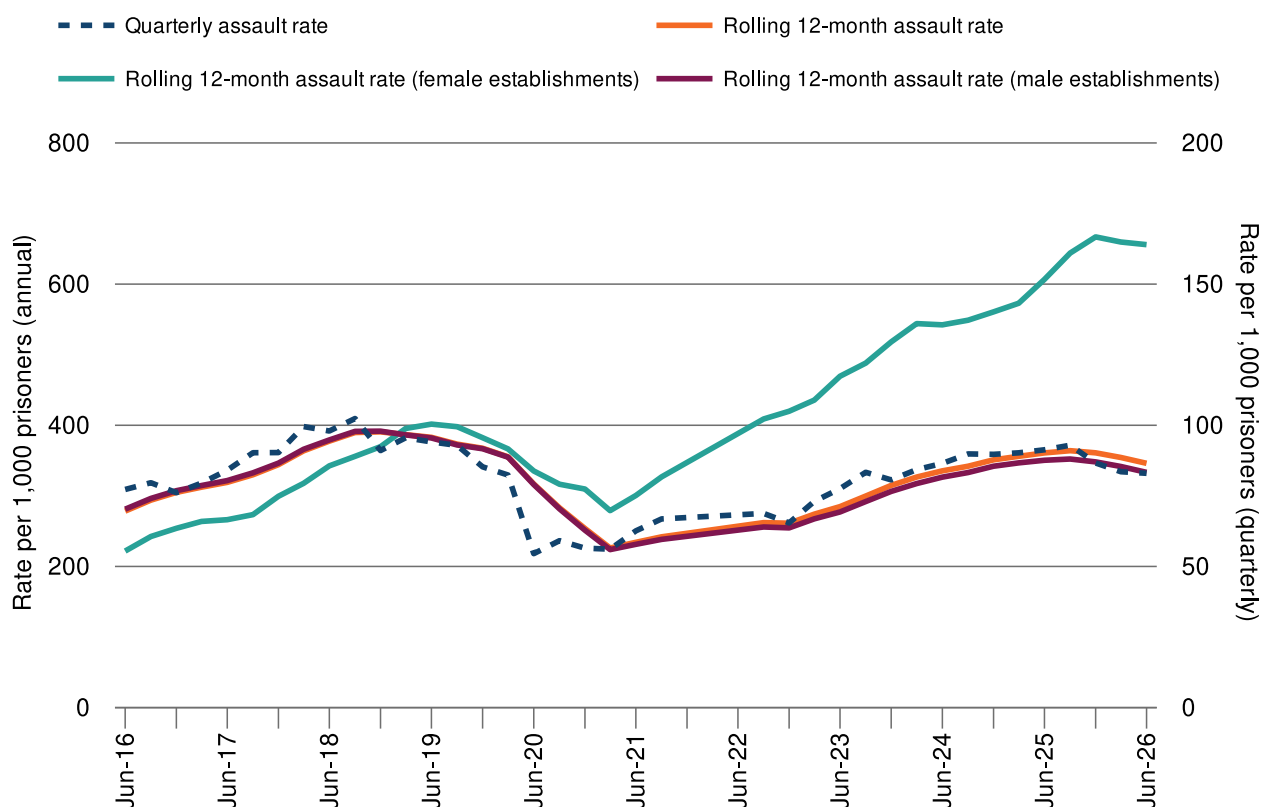
In the latest quarter, the number of prisoner-on-prisoner assaults **decreased** 1.3% to 4,899 incidents.

Assaults on staff decreased from the previous 12-month period

There were 9,481 assaults on staff in the 12 months to June 2026, a 10% **decrease** from the previous 12 months. The rate of assaults on staff also **decreased** by 9% to 110 incidents per 1,000 prisoners. During this period, the rate in male establishments **decreased** by 11% to 101 assaults per 1,000 prisoners but **increased** by 8% to a new peak of 309 assaults per 1,000 prisoners in female establishments.

In the latest quarter the number of assaults on staff **decreased** 1.0% to 2,220 compared to the previous quarter.

Figure 4: Quarterly 12-month rolling rate of total assaults by sex of establishment, 12 months ending June 2016 to 12 months ending June 2026, with quarterly rates



In the 12 months to June 2026, assault incidents decreased by 4.3% to 29,944 (a rate of 346 incidents per 1,000 prisoners), from 31,282 in the previous 12 months. The rate of assaults in the latest 12 months was lower, by 4.1%, than in the previous 12 months.

The number of assault incidents is 5% lower than in the year to June 2019, pre-pandemic¹⁴. The rate of assaults per 1,000 prisoners is 10% lower than the pre-pandemic peak of the 12 months to June 2019.

In the latest quarter there were 7,076 assaults, down 1.0% from the previous quarter. The number of assaults and the quarterly rate remain lower than their peak in the July to September 2018 quarter.

The number of incidents in male establishments decreased by 5% to 27,686 in the 12 months to June 2026 (a rate of 333 per 1,000 prisoners), from 29,140 in the previous 12 months. The rate of assaults in male establishments in the latest 12 months was 4.9% lower than in the previous 12 months.

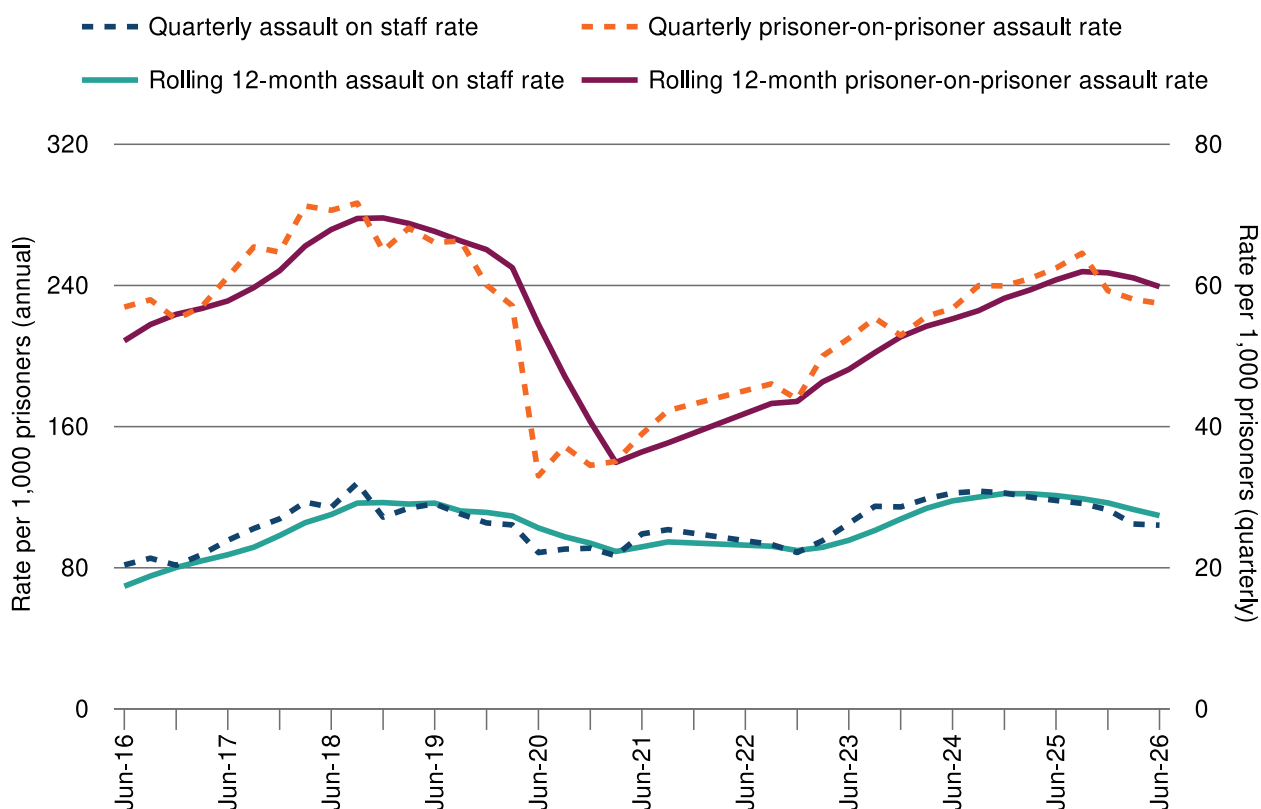
The number of incidents in female establishments increased by 5% to 2,258 incidents in the 12 months to March 2026 (a rate of 656 per 1,000 prisoners), from 2,142 in the previous 12 months. The rate of assaults in female establishments in the latest 12 months was 8% higher than in the previous 12 months. The rate and number of incidents in the female estate are now at their highest levels in the time series¹⁵.

¹⁴ From April 2018, assault figures exclude incidents occurring within the youth estate so figures from before this time are not fully comparable to those after the exclusion.

¹⁵ The time series for assault incidents starts in 2000, and self-harm incidents starts in 2004.

In the latest quarter, the number of assaults in male establishments decreased by 1.6% to 6,552 incidents, compared to an increase of 7% in female establishments to 524 assaults. During this period the rate of assaults decreased 0.7% to 83 assaults per 1,000 prisoners, which comprises a 1.3% decrease in male establishments (to 80 assaults per 1,000 prisoners) and a 10% increase in female establishments (to 157 assaults per 1,000 prisoners).

Figure 5: Quarterly 12-month rolling rate of prisoner-on-prisoner assaults and assaults on staff, 12 months ending June 2016 to 12 months ending June 2026, with quarterly rates



There were 20,705 prisoner-on-prisoner assaults¹⁶ in the 12 months to June 2026 (a rate of 239 per 1,000 prisoners), a decrease of 1.8% from the 21,081 assaults in the previous 12 months. The rate of prisoner-on-prisoner assaults in the latest 12 months was 1.6% lower than in the previous 12 months. In the latest quarter, there were 4,899 prisoner-on-prisoner assaults, a 1.3% decrease from 4,966 in the previous quarter.

There were 9,481 assaults on staff¹⁷ in the 12 months to June 2026 (a rate of 110 per 1,000 prisoners), a decrease of 10% from the 10,482 assaults in the previous 12 months. The rate of assaults on staff in the latest 12 months was 9% lower than in the previous 12 months. In the latest quarter, there were 2,220 assault on staff incidents, a 1.0% decrease from 2,242 in the previous quarter.

¹⁶ This figure includes any prisoner-on-prisoner assaults where there may also have been an assault on staff.

¹⁷ There was a change in how staff assaults have been recorded from April 2017, this has simplified how incidents involving staff are identified, however it is possible this has increased the recording of incidents. Please see the Guide to Safety in Custody statistics for further information.

The proportion of total assaults that were assaults on staff¹⁸ decreased to 32% in the 12 months to June 2026, from 34% in the previous 12 months. In the 12 months to June 2026, the proportion of assaults that were on staff remained higher in female establishments (47%) than in male establishments (30%).

In male establishments, prisoner-on-prisoner assaults decreased by 2.2% to 19,498 incidents (235 incidents per 1,000 male prisoners) in the 12 months to June 2026, and the rate decreased by 2.1%. Assaults on staff decreased by 11% to 8,416 incidents (101 incidents per 1,000 male prisoners), and the rate also decreased by 11%.

In female establishments, prisoner-on-prisoner assaults increased by 6% to 1,207 incidents (351 incidents per 1,000 female prisoners) in the 12 months to June 2026, and the rate increased by 9%. Assaults on staff increased by 5% to 1,065 incidents (309 incidents per 1,000 female prisoners) in the 12 months to June 2026, and the rate increased by 8%. For both prisoner-on-prisoner assaults and assaults on staff, both the number of incidents and the rate reached a new peak within female establishments in the latest 12 months.

¹⁸ Some assault incidents may be recorded as both a prisoner-on-prisoner assault and an assault on staff, so the sum of the two categories may exceed the total number of assaults.

Serious assaults

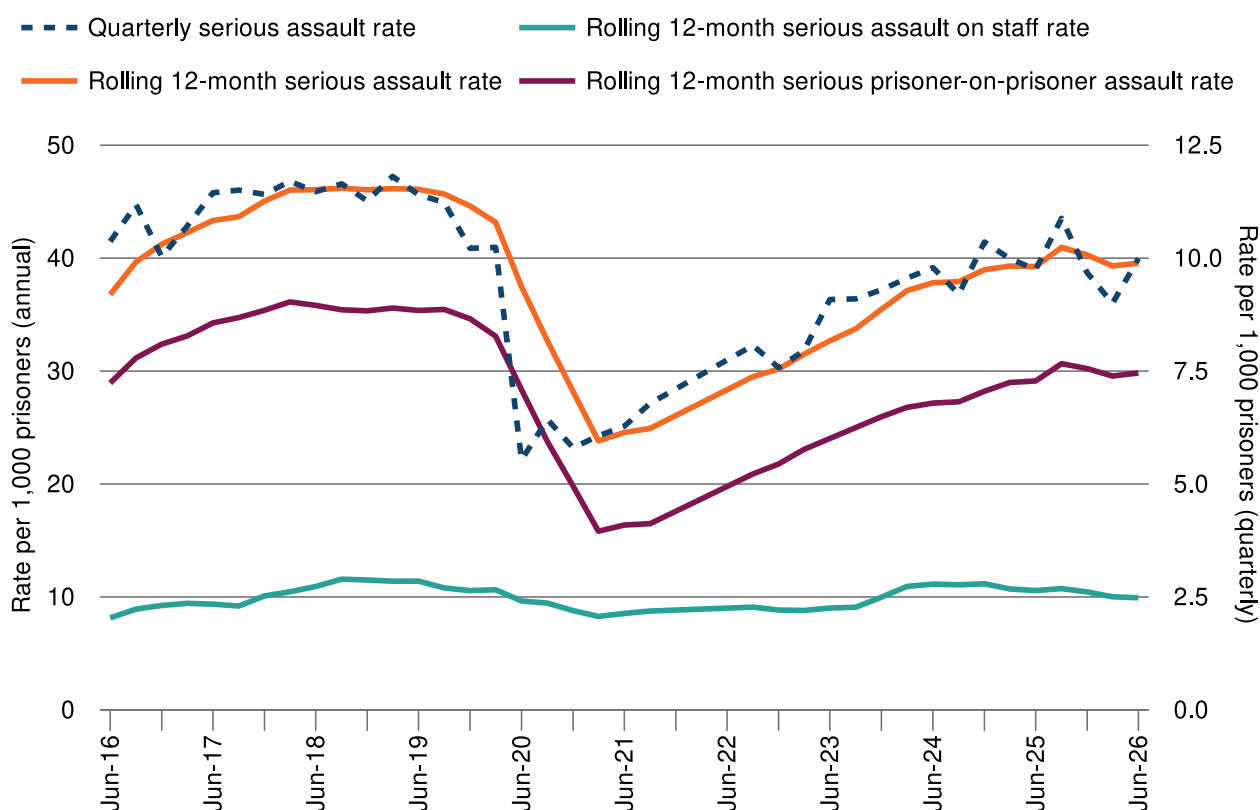
Of the 29,944 assault incidents, 3,422 (11%) were serious

In the 12 months to June 2026, there were 3,422 serious assault incidents, an **increase** of 0.6% from the previous 12 months. The rate of serious assaults **increased** by 0.8% to 40 per 1,000 prisoners over the period.

Serious prisoner-on-prisoner assaults **increased** by 2.2% to 2,581, while serious assaults on staff **decreased** by 6% to 859 in the 12 months to June 2026.

Serious assaults are those which fall into one or more of the following categories: a sexual assault; requires detention in outside hospital as an in-patient; requires medical treatment for concussion or internal injuries; or incurs any of the following injuries: a fracture, scald or burn, stabbing, crushing, extensive or multiple bruising, black eye, broken nose, lost or broken tooth, cuts requiring suturing, bites, temporary or permanent blindness.

Figure 6: Quarterly 12-month rolling rate of total serious assaults, serious prisoner-on-prisoner assaults, and serious assaults on staff, 12 months ending June 2016 to 12 months ending June 2026



In the latest 12 months, 11% of assaults were serious assaults. This is unchanged from 11% in the previous 12 months to June 2025 and has remained broadly consistent since 2018. The proportion of all assaults that were serious remained higher in male establishments (12%) than in female establishments (7%).

In the 12 months to June 2026, there were 3,422 serious assaults (a rate of 40 per 1,000 prisoners), an increase of 0.6% from the previous 12 months. The rate of serious assaults in the latest 12

months increased by 0.8% from in the previous 12 months. The rate was higher in female establishments (49 serious assaults per 1,000 prisoners) than male establishments (39 per 1,000 prisoners). In the latest quarter there were 852 serious assault incidents, an 11% increase from 770 incidents in the previous quarter.

There were 2,581 serious prisoner-on-prisoner assaults (a rate of 30 per 1,000 prisoners) in the 12 months to June 2026, a 2.2% increase from 2,525 in the previous 12 months. The rate of serious prisoner-on-prisoner assaults in the latest 12 months was 2.4% higher than in the previous 12 months. In the 12 months to June 2026, the rate of serious prisoner-on-prisoner assaults increased by 18% in female establishments (to a new peak of 32 per 1,000 prisoners), while there was a 1.8% increase in male establishments (to 30 per 1,000 prisoners)¹⁹. In the latest quarter, there were 642 serious prisoner-on-prisoner assaults, a 9% increase from 588 in the previous quarter²⁰.

There were 859 serious assaults on staff (a rate of 10 per 1,000 prisoners) in the 12 months to June 2026, a 6% decrease from 916 in the previous 12 months. The rate of serious assaults on staff was also 6% lower than in the previous 12 months, with the rate decreasing 6% in both female establishments (to 16 incidents per 1,000 prisoners) and male establishments (remaining at 10 incidents per 1,000 prisoners). In the latest quarter, there were 215 serious assaults on staff, a 14% increase from 188 in the previous quarter.

¹⁹ The time series for assault incidents starts in 2000, and self-harm incidents starts in 2004.

²⁰ Due to a low number of incidents for serious assaults, a small increase or decrease in incidents can lead to a large percentage change.

Further Information



Accredited official statistics status

<https://osr.statisticsauthority.gov.uk/accredited-official-statistics/> Accredited Official

Statistics are called National Statistics in the Statistics and Registration Service Act 2007. These Accredited Official Statistics were independently reviewed by the Office for Statistics Regulation (OSR) in March 2013. They comply with the standards of trustworthiness, quality and value in the Code of Practice for Statistics and should be labelled as accredited official statistics.

Our statistical practice is regulated by the OSR, which sets the standards of trustworthiness, quality and value in the [Code of Practice for Statistics](#) that all producers of official statistics should adhere to. You are welcome to contact us directly with any comments about how we meet these standards. Alternatively, you can contact OSR by emailing regulation@statistics.gov.uk or via the [OSR website](#).

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

Future publications

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

Accompanying files

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

- A technical guide providing further information on how the data are collected and processed, as well as information on the revisions policy and legislation relevant to sentencing trends and background on the functioning of the criminal justice system.
- A set of summary tables for the latest quarter, and annual tables up to the latest calendar year.
- Underlying data files with pivot tables, giving lower-level granularity.

Contact

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

Tel: 020 3334 3536

Email: <https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/ministry-of-justice/about/media-enquiries>

Other enquiries about these statistics should be directed to:

Prison Safety Statistics and Analysis Team

Analysis Directorate

Ministry of Justice

102 Petty France

London

SW1H 9AJ

Email: OMSQ-SiC-publications@justice.gov.uk

<https://code.statisticsauthority.gov.uk/the-code/mailto:regulation@statistics.gov.uk> **Next update:**

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URL: www.gov.uk/government/collections/safety-in-custody-statistics

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