



CRIME AND JUSTICE

Recorded Crime in Scotland:

June 2020

This bulletin is the third edition of a new monthly release of Official Statistics on crimes and offences recorded by the police in Scotland. It provides information on the number of crimes and offences recorded during June 2020, and includes a comparison with the equivalent month of the previous year.

These Official Statistics have been introduced to inform users about the volume and type of crimes and offences recorded in Scotland during the Coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic. Whilst the conditions of lockdown have had an impact on the number of crimes and offences recorded by the police, some caution is advised before necessarily attributing all of the changes to this situation. For example, longer term trends in some types of offending recorded by the police, which existed prior to the pandemic, may remain a factor.

Scottish Government statisticians will continue to publish these bulletins each month, covering the period of April to September 2020. After that point, the Scottish Crime Recording Board (which oversees the production of Official Statistics on recorded crime in Scotland) will review whether this process should continue, including user feedback on the value of these statistics.

The annual [Recorded Crime in Scotland bulletin](#) remains the primary source of information on crimes and offences recorded by the police, and has been designated as National Statistics by the Office for Statistics Regulation. The next update, covering the 2019-20 reporting year, will be published in September.

Statistics on crimes and offences recorded by the police provide a measure of the volume of criminal activity with which the police are faced. Crimes recorded by the police do not reveal the incidence of all crimes committed as not all crimes are reported to the police.

Summary

The number of crimes recorded by the police in Scotland was 3% lower in June 2020 than in June 2019, reducing from 21,084 to 20,440. Over the same time period:

- Non-sexual crimes of violence were 15% lower (reducing from 851 to 722).
- Sexual crimes were 5% higher, increasing from 1,123 to 1,184 crimes.
- Crimes of dishonesty were 15% lower (reducing from 9,655 to 8,184 crimes).
- Fire-raising, vandalism etc. were 9% lower (reducing from 3,867 to 3,524 crimes).
- Other crimes were 22% higher (increasing from 5,588 to 6,826 crimes).
- Fewer crimes were recorded by the police in 17 (53%) out of 32 local authorities.

The number of offences recorded by the police in Scotland was 1% higher in June 2020 than in June 2019, increasing from 21,645 to 21,892. Over the same time period:

- Miscellaneous offences were 4% higher (increasing from 11,454 to 11,881).
- Motor vehicle offences were 2% lower (reducing from 10,191 to 10,011).

Overall, the number of crimes recorded by the police during April to June 2020 was 9% lower than the same period in 2019. This included April 2020 being 18% lower than April 2019, May 2020 being 5% lower than May 2019, and June 2020 being 3% lower than June 2019. As outlined above, the annual [Recorded Crime in Scotland bulletin](#) remains the primary source of information on crimes and offences recorded by the police in Scotland, including longer-term analysis of changes to each of the crime and offence groups detailed above.

It should be noted that the total figure for recorded crime (presented in this summary and throughout the bulletin) excludes the new crimes being recorded under the recently enacted coronavirus legislation. Please see the [Crimes recorded under coronavirus legislation](#) section below for more information.

Main findings

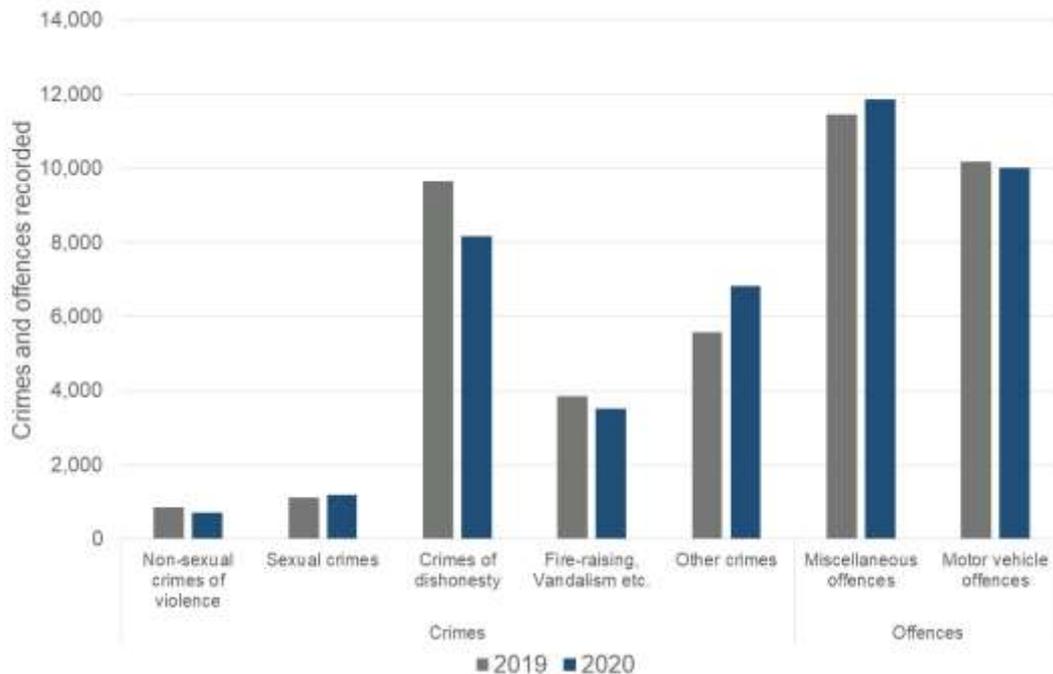
Crimes recorded by the police

In June 2020, the police recorded 20,440 crimes. This is 3% lower (or 644 crimes) than the 21,084 crimes recorded in the same month of 2019. There were variations in the year-on-year trends between different crime types. ([Table 1](#), [Chart 1](#)).

Between June 2019 and June 2020:

- Non-sexual crimes of violence were 15% lower (or 129 crimes), reducing from 851 to 722. The main contributor to this reduction was Attempted murder & serious assault, which fell by 33% (or 145 crimes). Over the same period, crimes recorded under the Domestic Abuse (Scotland) Act 2018 reduced by 13% (or 19 crimes) from 142 to 123 crimes. There were increases in both Robbery and Other violence, up by 19% and 15% respectively.
- Sexual crimes were 5% higher (or 61 crimes), increasing from 1,123 to 1,184 crimes. The main contributor to this increase was Other sexual crimes, which increased by 33% or 161 crimes (the biggest drivers being sexual communications type offences). There were decreases in all other categories of Sexual crime (including 5% for Rape & attempted rape, and 20% for Sexual assault).
- Crimes of dishonesty were 15% lower (or 1,471 crimes), reducing from 9,655 to 8,184 crimes. The main contributors to this reduction were a 41% fall in levels of Shoplifting (or 1,160 crimes) and a 16% reduction in Other theft (down 588 crimes). Over the same period, the number of frauds recorded was 75% higher, increasing by 662 to 1,542 crimes. The [Changes in levels of recorded fraud](#) section below provides users with further background on what may be contributing to this change.
- Fire-raising, vandalism etc. was 9% lower (or 343 crimes), reducing from 3,867 to 3,524 crimes. The main contributor to this reduction was Vandalism etc., which fell by 9%, or 346 crimes.
- Other crimes were 22% higher (or 1,238 crimes), increasing from 5,588 to 6,826 crimes. The main contributors to this increase were Crimes against public justice, which rose by 41% (or 670 crimes) and Drugs crime, which increased by 16% (or 493 crimes).

Chart 1. Crimes and offences recorded by the police, by crime group, June 2020 compared with June 2019



Offences recorded by the police

In June 2020, the police recorded 21,892 offences. This is 1% higher (or 247 offences) than the 21,645 offences recorded in the same month in 2019. There was a 4% increase in Miscellaneous offences, and a 2% decrease in Motor vehicle offences, as detailed below ([Table 2](#)).

Between June 2019 and June 2020:

- Miscellaneous offences increased by 4% (or 427 offences), from 11,454 to 11,881. This was driven by increases in several categories, including Other miscellaneous offences (up 57% or 594 offences), Breach of the peace etc. (up 6% or 282 offences) and Drunkenness and other disorderly conduct (up 46% or 280 offences). These increases were partially offset by a reduction in Common assault, which was 13% or 646 offences lower.
- Motor vehicle offences were 2% lower (or 180 offences), reducing from 10,191 to 10,011. The main contributors to this reduction were Other motor vehicle offences (which fell by 22% or 420 offences) and Speeding, which fell by 11% (or 299 offences). There were increases in Driving under the influence (54% or 276 offences), (Unlawful use of a vehicle up 8% or 234 offences) and Dangerous and careless driving (up 15% or 135 offences).

Local Authorities

Compared to June 2019, a reduction in recorded crime was seen in 17 (53%) out of 32 local authorities, with the remaining 15 showing an increase ([Table 3](#)). The largest decrease was seen in the Shetland Islands (down 37%) and largest increase was in Na h-Eileanan Siar (up 139%). It should be noted that the relatively small number of crimes recorded in some of Scotland's local authorities can fluctuate over time - leading to large percentage changes. This is particularly relevant in this release, where monthly data is being presented rather than the annual information provided in the National Statistics.

The biggest contributors by volume to the overall reduction in crimes recorded by the police were Glasgow City (down 9% or 329 crimes), followed by Edinburgh City (down 11% or 269 crimes) and Fife (down 14% or 173 crimes).

April to June 2020 compared with April to June 2019

Overall, in April to June 2020 the police recorded 58,198 crimes, a reduction of 9% (or 5,602 crimes) compared to the same period in 2019 (63,800 crimes) ([Table 4](#)). The biggest drivers of this reduction by volume were Shoplifting (down 42% or 3,526 crimes), Vandalism etc. (down 20% or 2,299 crimes) and Other theft (down 21% or 2,297 crimes). Crimes against public justice saw the biggest increase over this period, growing by 37% (or 1,782 crimes) from 4,811 to 6,593 crimes. Fraud was also higher, increasing by 62% (or 1,564 crimes) from 2,508 to 4,072.

Over the same period, the number of offences recorded by the police was 11% lower (or 7,000 offences), with Miscellaneous offences falling by 4% (or 1,363 offences) and Motor vehicle offences falling by 18% (or 5,637 offences) ([Table 5](#)).

Changes in levels of recorded fraud

Fraud was 75% higher (or 662 crimes) in June 2020 than in June 2019. Further to the note of caution provided in the introduction to these statistics, there are two reasons why some care is advised before attributing all of this change to the specific circumstances of the COVID-related lockdown.

The first is that the [Recorded Crime National Statistics](#) have highlighted an increasing trend in recorded fraud over a number of years (up 40% between 2014-15 and 2018-19), which may be continuing. The second is that a procedural change was made in April 2020 to how some crimes of fraud (and other types of crime which could involve a victim and a perpetrator in different physical locations) are recorded.

Prior to the 1st April 2020, these statistics excluded any crime with a victim in Scotland and a perpetrator who was confirmed by the police to be outside the United Kingdom when the crime took place. Following a recommendation by Her Majesty's Chief Inspectorate for Constabulary in Scotland (HMICS) to review recording practice in this area¹, the Scottish Crime Recording Board approved a change so that from the 1st April these crimes are now included in the statistics. It should be noted that those cases with only a suspicion or insufficient evidence to confirm that the perpetrator was outside the UK were always included.

This change is likely to have led to additional crimes of fraud being recorded, with a similar impact possible for other types of crime which could be committed using digital technologies. At this early stage we are unable to say to what extent this procedural change has increased levels of recorded fraud, though the 2020-21 National Statistics (to be published in September 2021) will provide users with an estimate of the number of additional crimes that were recorded as a result of this change.

¹ <https://www.hmics.scot/publications/crime-audit-2016>

Crimes recorded under coronavirus legislation

It is important to note that these Official Statistics currently exclude crimes recorded under the [Coronavirus Act 2020](#) and [Health Protection \(Coronavirus\) \(Restrictions\) \(Scotland\) Regulations 2020](#). These were implemented on 25th March and 27th March respectively and resulted in new crimes being recorded - for example where someone, who had left the place they were living, did not have a reasonable excuse for this when asked by a police officer, and failed to comply with police advice or instruction to return there.

Given the rapid pace of these changes, Police Scotland have used an interim and bespoke data collection to capture information on the number of new crimes recorded under the coronavirus legislation. This is why figures for this legislation are currently presented separately to the overall totals provided for recorded crime in this bulletin. The bespoke data collection suggests that approximately 2,700 such crimes were recorded during April 2020, reducing to 1,700 in May 2020 and then 220 in June 2020. Users should treat these figures as broadly indicative, and may be subject to further revision in future releases. In due course the annual National Statistics will include this activity within the overall crime total for Scotland.

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Notes for these tables

- The symbol 'n/r' is used to denote where a percentage change figure is not reported. This is done if the denominator is less than ten as any resulting figure may be misleading.
- Please note that tables 1, 2, 4 and 5 can be accessed at local authority level online via the following link: <http://www.gov.scot/ISBN/978-1-83960-922-0>

Table 1: Crimes recorded by the police, Scotland, June 2019 and June 2020

Crime group	June		% Change since June 2019
	2019	2020	
Total crimes¹	21,084	20,440	-3%
Non-sexual crimes of violence	851	722	-15%
Homicide etc.	17	9	-47%
Attempted murder & serious assault	439	294	-33%
Robbery	132	157	19%
Domestic Abuse (Scotland) Act 2018	142	123	-13%
Other violence	121	139	15%
Sexual crimes	1,123	1,184	5%
Rape & attempted rape	205	194	-5%
Sexual assault	425	338	-20%
Crimes associated with prostitution	8	6	n/r
Other sexual crimes	485	646	33%
Crimes of dishonesty	9,655	8,184	-15%
Housebreaking	1,113	871	-22%
Theft by opening a lockfast place (OLP)	178	101	-43%
Theft from a motor vehicle by OLP	253	166	-34%
Theft of a motor vehicle	400	367	-8%
Shoplifting	2,840	1,680	-41%
Other theft	3,576	2,988	-16%
Fraud	880	1,542	75%
Other dishonesty	415	469	13%
Fire-raising, vandalism etc.	3,867	3,524	-9%
Fire-raising	215	218	1%
Vandalism etc.	3,652	3,306	-9%
Other crimes	5,588	6,826	22%
Crimes against public justice	1,620	2,290	41%
Handling offensive weapons	882	958	9%
<i>Not used in other criminal activity</i>	400	459	15%
<i>Used in other criminal activity</i>	482	499	4%
Drugs	3,070	3,563	16%
Other	16	15	-6%

1. The total figure for recorded crime excludes the new crimes being recorded under the recently enacted coronavirus legislation. Please see the [Crimes recorded under coronavirus legislation](#) section for more information.

Table 2: Offences recorded by the police, Scotland, June 2019 and June 2020

Offence group	June		% Change since June 2019
	2019	2020	
Total offences	21,645	21,892	1%
Miscellaneous offences	11,454	11,881	4%
Common assault	5,046	4,400	-13%
Breach of the peace etc.	4,545	4,827	6%
Drunkenness and other disorderly conduct	609	889	46%
Urinating etc.	214	131	-39%
Other miscellaneous offences	1,040	1,634	57%
Motor vehicle offences	10,191	10,011	-2%
Dangerous and careless driving	914	1,049	15%
Driving under the influence	512	788	54%
Speeding	2,649	2,350	-11%
Unlawful use of vehicle	3,067	3,301	8%
Vehicle defect offences	597	630	6%
Seat belt offences	307	222	-28%
Mobile phone offences	231	177	-23%
Other motor vehicle offences	1,914	1,494	-22%

Table 3: Crimes recorded by the police by local authority, Scotland, June 2019 and June 2020

Local Authority	June		% Change since June 2019
	2019	2020	
Aberdeen City	944	965	2%
Aberdeenshire	548	669	22%
Angus	337	239	-29%
Argyll & Bute	232	203	-13%
Clackmannanshire	202	178	-12%
Dumfries & Galloway	636	506	-20%
Dundee City	847	920	9%
East Ayrshire	494	495	0%
East Dunbartonshire	217	236	9%
East Lothian	350	293	-16%
East Renfrewshire	222	207	-7%
Edinburgh City	2,467	2,198	-11%
Falkirk	637	581	-9%
Fife	1,235	1,062	-14%
Glasgow City	3,592	3,263	-9%
Highland	631	612	-3%
Inverclyde	308	366	19%
Midlothian	363	259	-29%
Moray	236	210	-11%
Na h-Eileanan Siar	23	55	139%
North Ayrshire	550	532	-3%
North Lanarkshire	1,660	1,721	4%
Orkney Islands	36	74	106%
Perth & Kinross	346	435	26%
Renfrewshire	605	713	18%
Scottish Borders	322	304	-6%
Shetland Islands	49	31	-37%
South Ayrshire	431	360	-16%
South Lanarkshire	1,202	1,236	3%
Stirling	334	364	9%
West Dunbartonshire	404	433	7%
West Lothian	624	720	15%
Scotland¹	21,084	20,440	-3%

1. The total figure for recorded crime excludes the new crimes being recorded under the recently enacted coronavirus legislation. Please see the [Crimes recorded under coronavirus legislation](#) section for more information.

Table 4: Crimes recorded by the police, Scotland, April to June 2019 and April to June 2020

Crime group	April to June 2019	April to June 2020	% Change since 2019
Total crimes¹	63,800	58,198	-9%
Non-sexual crimes of violence	2,378	2,102	-12%
Homicide etc.	34	26	-24%
Attempted murder & serious assault	1,163	830	-29%
Robbery	388	435	12%
Domestic Abuse (Scotland) Act 2018	425	370	-13%
Other violence	368	441	20%
Sexual crimes	3,458	2,907	-16%
Rape & attempted rape	618	481	-22%
Sexual assault	1,309	823	-37%
Crimes associated with prostitution	16	10	-38%
Other sexual crimes	1,515	1,593	5%
Crimes of dishonesty	28,622	23,797	-17%
Housebreaking	3,199	2,783	-13%
Theft by opening a lockfast place (OLP)	441	279	-37%
Theft from a motor vehicle by OLP	748	662	-11%
Theft of a motor vehicle	1,243	1,161	-7%
Shoplifting	8,411	4,885	-42%
Other theft	10,798	8,501	-21%
Fraud	2,508	4,072	62%
Other dishonesty	1,274	1,454	14%
Fire-raising, vandalism etc.	12,386	9,996	-19%
Fire-raising	757	666	-12%
Vandalism etc.	11,629	9,330	-20%
Other crimes	16,956	19,396	14%
Crimes against public justice	4,811	6,593	37%
Handling offensive weapons	2,600	2,693	4%
<i>Not used in other criminal activity</i>	1,201	1,321	10%
<i>Used in other criminal activity</i>	1,399	1,372	-2%
Drugs	9,484	10,069	6%
Other	61	41	-33%

1. The total figure for recorded crime excludes the new crimes being recorded under the recently enacted coronavirus legislation. Please see the [Crimes recorded under coronavirus legislation](#) section for more information.

Table 5: Offences recorded by the police, Scotland, April to June 2019 and April to June 2020

Crime group	April to June 2019	April to June 2020	% Change since 2019
Total offences	65,410	58,410	-11%
Miscellaneous offences	34,008	32,645	-4%
Common assault	14,963	12,513	-16%
Breach of the peace etc.	13,386	13,528	1%
Drunkenness and other disorderly conduct	1,700	2,112	24%
Urinating etc.	618	246	-60%
Other miscellaneous offences	3,341	4,246	27%
Motor vehicle offences	31,402	25,765	-18%
Dangerous and careless driving	2,834	2,682	-5%
Driving under the influence	1,528	2,166	42%
Speeding	8,262	4,741	-43%
Unlawful use of vehicle	9,451	9,807	4%
Vehicle defect offences	1,893	1,397	-26%
Seat belt offences	903	436	-52%
Mobile phone offences	741	433	-42%
Other motor vehicle offences	5,790	4,103	-29%

Annexes

Annex 1: Background

As outlined on page one, these new monthly Official Statistics have been introduced to inform users about the volume and type of crimes and offences recorded in Scotland during the Coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic.

Their role is to provide more recent information on this topic - in a product that has been produced by Scottish Government statisticians, in line with the [Code of Practice for Official Statistics](#).

Scottish Government statisticians will continue to publish these bulletins each month, covering the period from April to September 2020. After that point, the Scottish Crime Recording Board (which oversees the production of Official Statistics on recorded crime in Scotland) will review whether this process should continue, including user feedback on the value of these statistics.

The annual [Recorded Crime in Scotland](#) bulletin remains the primary source of information on crimes and offences recorded by the police, and has been designated as National Statistics by the Office for Statistics Regulation. The next update, covering the 2019-20 reporting year, will be published in September. Users should refer to the National Statistics for more detailed information on the production of the recorded crime statistics - including governance arrangements, a description of their quality, background methodologies and changes to recording practice.

The next bulletin, covering the month of July 2020, will be published on 20th August. Publication dates for further bulletins will be announced in due course.

Annex 2: Data Sources

Since 2013-14, the National Statistics on Recorded Crime in Scotland have been produced using data extracted from a single Police Scotland IT system called the Scottish Operational and Management Information System (ScOMIS). This data is then provided to the Scottish Government for the production of the National Statistics.

In 2019, Police Scotland developed a new data repository called the Source for Evidence Based Policing (SEBP). The intention is that this will, in due course, become the official source of information for the recorded crime National Statistics, replacing ScOMIS.

A preliminary review, looking at how changing from ScOMIS to SEBP impacts on the production of the Recorded Crime National Statistics, suggests that there is good alignment between both of these administrative systems.

Before the Scottish Crime Recording Board (SCRB) approves this transition, a final confirmatory check of the full 2019-20 reporting year will take place prior to publication of the Recorded Crime in Scotland, 2019-20 National Statistics.

This will involve a comparison of trends in recorded crimes, offences and clear up rates for all local authorities and Scotland as a whole between 2018-19 and 2019-20. A technical report detailing the results of this analysis and highlighting any implications for data interpretation will be published in September 2020.

In order to produce the new monthly Official Statistics included in this bulletin in the necessary shorter time frames, the information supplied by Police Scotland has been extracted from SEBP. As such, the figures provided in this publication use a different source from the most recent National Statistics on Recorded Crime in Scotland – and are therefore not directly comparable (notwithstanding the preliminary finding noted above that there is good alignment between the two systems).

In addition, amendments to crime and offence records will always arise after data has been submitted by Police Scotland to the Scottish Government. Some crime or offence records may, on further investigation by the police, be redesignated to not constitute a crime or offence (a process known as ‘no-criming’). In other cases the original crime or offence may be re-classified, which could shift the record between different crime or offence groups (for example if a common assault was found on further investigation to be a serious assault it would switch from Group 6 Miscellaneous Offences to Group 1 Non-sexual Crimes of Violence).

The data for this bulletin was extracted in July 2020. The information for June 2019 is unlikely to change as more than a year has passed since the crimes were originally recorded and the vast majority of amendments are likely to have taken place. In contrast, there has been a much shorter time for amendments to have been made to the information for June 2020 and so this information is likely to change to a greater extent as more time passes. Some caution should therefore be taken in interpreting the changes between 2019 and 2020, as outlined in these monthly bulletins, which should be seen as providing a broad indication of changes over the period in volumes and types of specific crimes and offences. We will assess the impact of revisions to the data and provide further information in future publications.

When published, the annual National Statistics for 2019-20 and 2020-21 will provide the most robust source of information on crimes recorded by the police, and how these have changed over time.

For further background information (e.g. classification of Crimes and Offences and comparisons with England & Wales and Northern Ireland) please see Annex 1 in the latest National Statistics on Recorded Crime in Scotland: <https://www.gov.scot/publications/recorded-crime-scotland-2018-19/pages/23/>

Annex 3: Feedback

We are always keen to hear users' views on our products and as this is the first in a new series of monthly recorded crime publications we would welcome feedback. If you have any comments or suggestions please contact us at: Justice_Analysts@gov.scot.

An Official Statistics publication for Scotland

Official and National Statistics are produced to high professional standards set out in the Code of Practice for Official Statistics. Both undergo regular quality assurance reviews to ensure that they meet customer needs and are produced free from any political interference.

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How to access background or source data

The data collected for this statistical bulletin:

- are available in more detail through statistics.gov.scot.
- some limited additional information may be made available on request, subject to consideration of legal and ethical factors. Please contact statistics.enquiries@gov.scot for further information.
- detailed information cannot be made available by Scottish Government for further analysis as Scottish Government is not the data controller.

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