

**Justice Analytical Services
Safer Communities and Justice Statistics Monthly Data
Report**

May 2022 edition

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Introduction

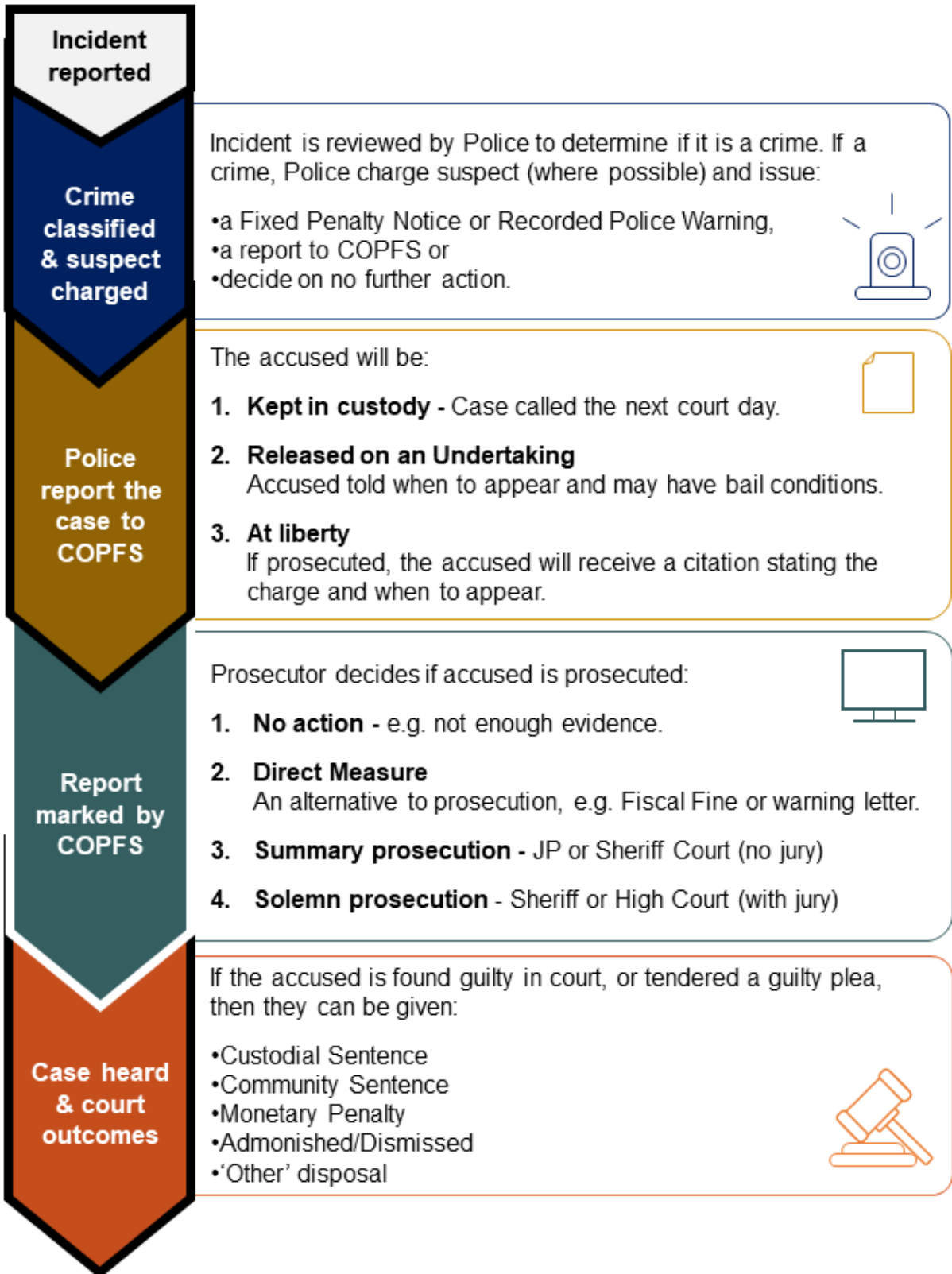
This report provides an overview of a number of important justice and safer communities statistics. Data has been gathered from a number of different sources and may be subject to future revision as more recent data becomes available.

Any newly updated summary statistics are preceded by * New * and are also marked in **yellow** background.

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How crime flows through the Justice System

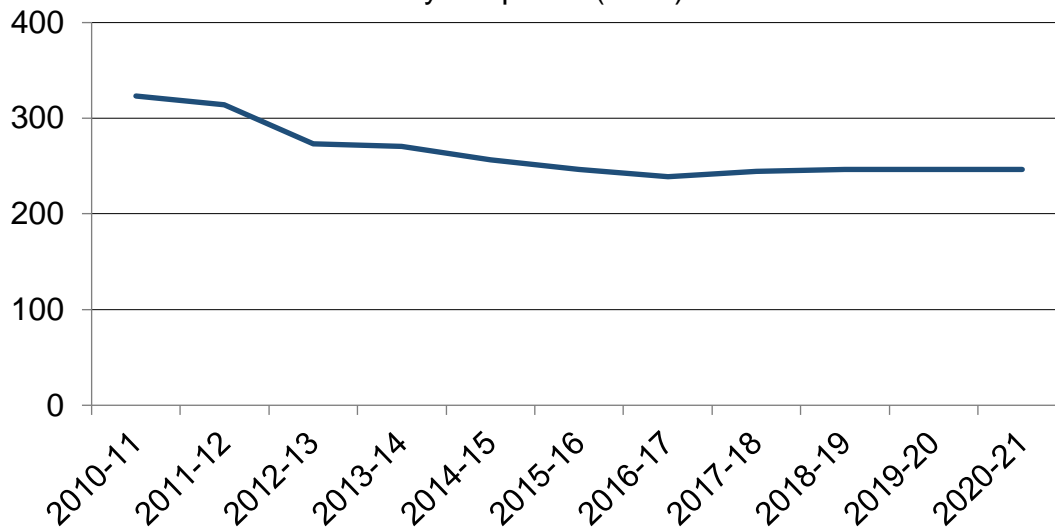


Crime in General

Summary statistics on crime in general

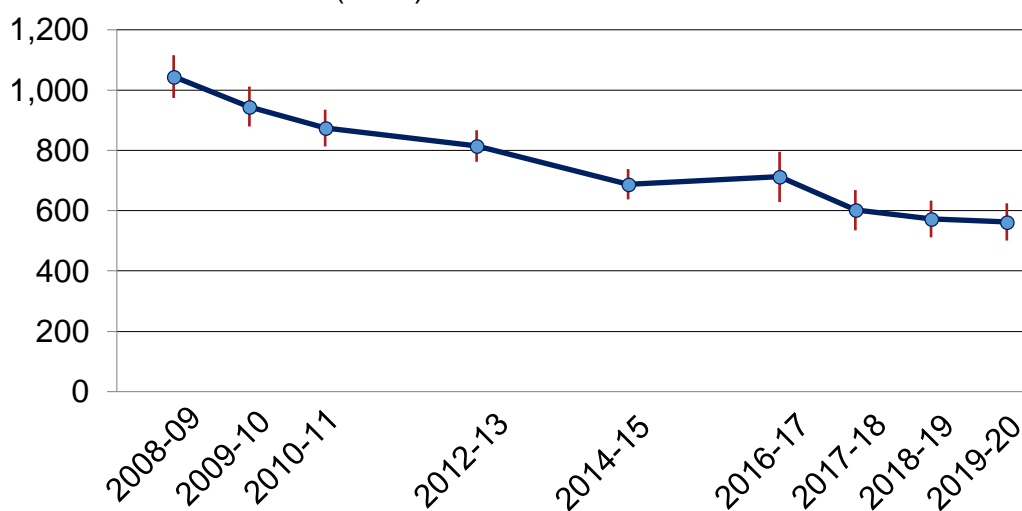
► **Police recorded crime at one of the lowest levels since 1974 and is down 22% since 2011-12.** Between 2019-20 and 2020-21, the number of crimes recorded remained almost unchanged. The 2020-21 figure includes 20,976 crimes under Coronavirus legislation (compared to 107 in 2019-20). All other crimes collectively decreased by 8%.

Number of crimes recorded by the police (000s)



► **Crime has fallen by 46% since 2008-09.** Results from the Scottish Crime and Justice Survey (SCJS) show that around 1 in 8 adults were victims of crime in 2019-20 (11.9%) compared to 1 in 5 in 2008-09 (20.4%). The estimated number of crimes fell by 46% over the same period, and by 21% since 2016-17. The SCJS detected no change in the overall victimisation rate between 2018-19 and 2019-20.

Estimated total crimes (000s)



▶ **Violent crime has fallen over the long term.** Non-sexual crimes of violence recorded by the police fell by 4%, to 8,972 in 2020-21. This decrease is due to the recording of fewer crimes across every category except “other” violence, which rose by 22%. This is due to an increase in online crimes of threats and extortion. Overall, non-sexual crimes of violence remained at a lower level than all years between 1980 and 2011-12. The SCJS showed a 39% fall in violent crime between 2008-09 and 2019-20 and that an estimated 48% of violent crime in 2019-20 was reported to the police.

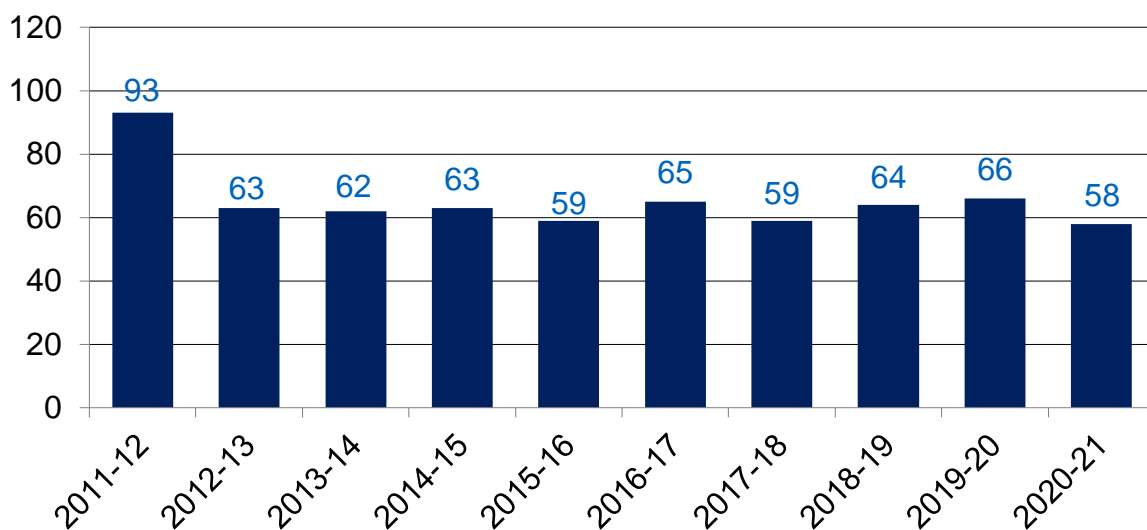
▶ **Sexual crimes fell for a second consecutive year.** Sexual assault, and rape & attempted rape, both fell between 2019-20 and 2020-21, while other sexual crimes continued to rise. Overall, sexual crimes remain at one of their highest levels. Multiple factors lie behind the long term increase in recorded sexual crime including a greater willingness of victims to come forward, more historical reporting, more online offending and the impact of new legislation. The SCJS for 2018-20 (2018-19 & 2019-20 combined) estimated that 3.6% of adults experienced at least one serious sexual assault since the age of 16, unchanged from 2008-09.

▶ **Women more likely to experience partner abuse.** The SCJS, for 2018-20, estimated that 3.2% of respondents had experienced partner abuse in the year prior to interview. A higher proportion of women than men experienced this, at 3.7% and 2.6% respectively.

▶ **Increase in crime clear up rate.** The clear up rate for all recorded crimes was 56.3% in 2020-21, up from 51.5% in 2019-20. This is the largest increase on record and likely reflects the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic on the volume and types of crime recorded.

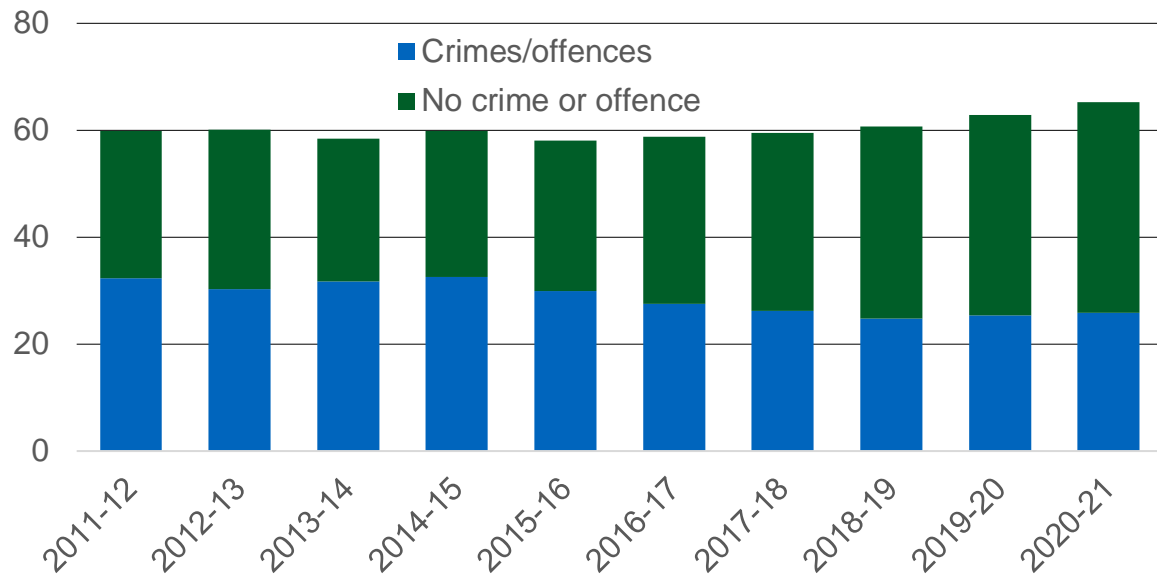
▶ **No. of victims of homicide at record low.** There were 58 homicide victims recorded by the police in Scotland in 2020-21, a 38% decrease from 2011-12 and the lowest value since comparable records began in 1976. Since 2012-13, the number of victims of homicide each year ranged between 58 and 66.

Number of victims of homicide



► **Increase in recorded domestic abuse incidents.** There were 65,251 incidents of domestic abuse recorded by the police in 2020-21, an increase of 4% on 2019-20. In 2020-21, 40% of all incidents recorded by the police included the recording of at least one crime or offence.

No. of domestic abuse incidents (000s)

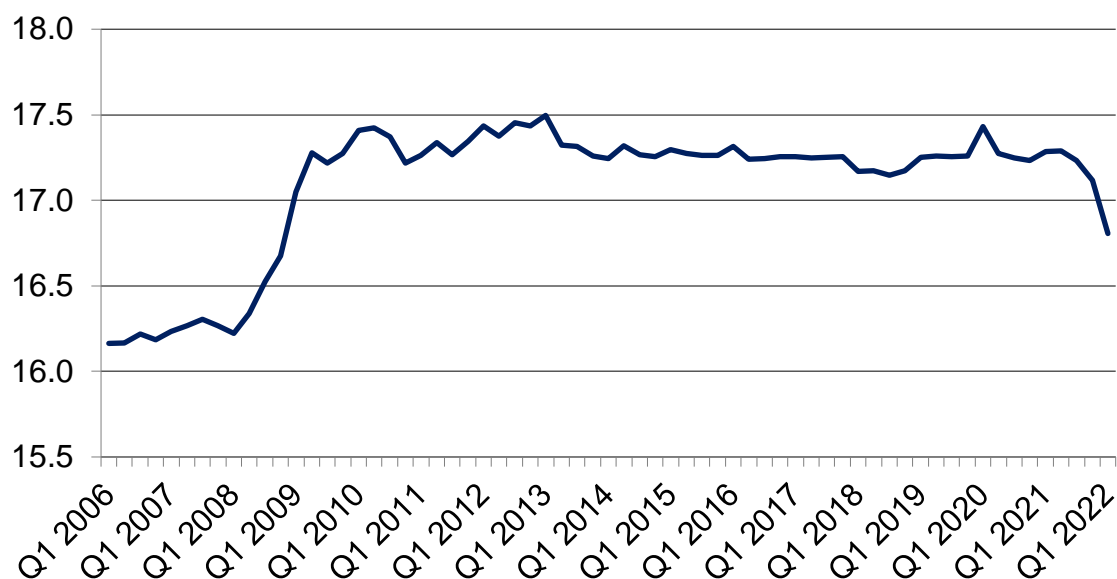


Policing

Summary statistics on policing

▶ * New * There were 16,805 full-time equivalent (FTE) police officers in Scotland on 31 March 2022. This was 571 (+3.5%) more officers compared to the position at 31 March 2007, but 479 (-2.8%) less than 31 March 2021.

No. of police officers (FTE) (000s)

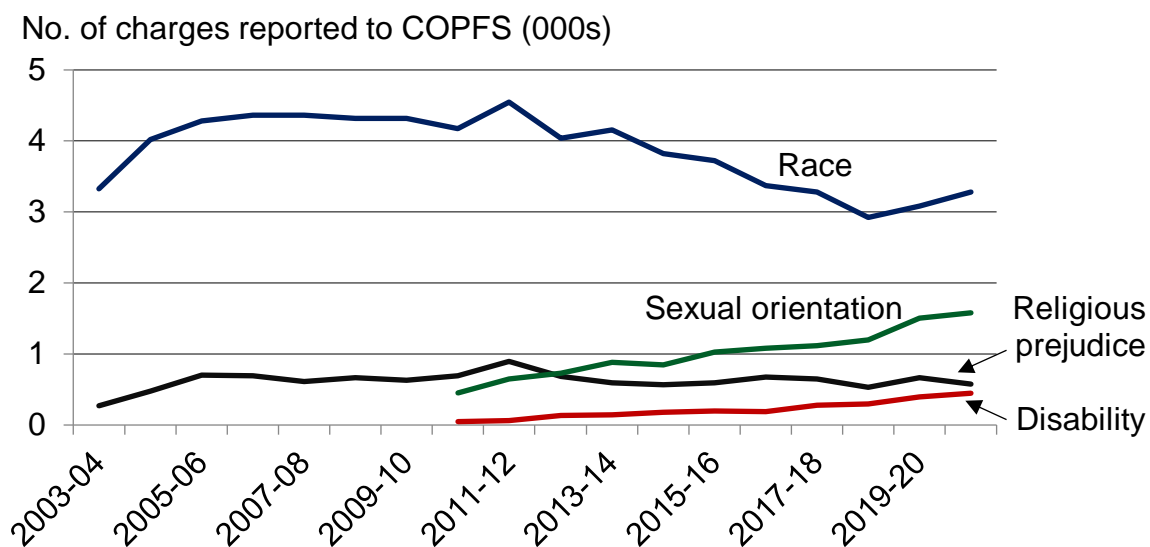


Hate Crime

Summary statistics on hate crime

▣ **Numbers stable for police recorded hate crime.** Between 2014-15 & 2019-20, the number of hate crimes recorded by the police was relatively stable, at around 6,300 to 7,000. In 2019-20, 62% of hate crimes included an aggravator for race, 20% sexual orientation, 8% religion, 4% disability and 1% transgender identity. The remaining 5% included multiple hate aggravators.

▣ **Increase in hate crime charges.** There was an increase in the number of charges reported to the Crown Office and Procurator Fiscal Service in 2020-21 compared to 2019-20 for race, sexual orientation and disability aggravated hate crime charges, with a decrease in religious aggravated charges and a slight decrease in transgender identity aggravated charges. Racial crime remains the most commonly reported hate crime, followed by crimes with a sexual orientation aggravator.



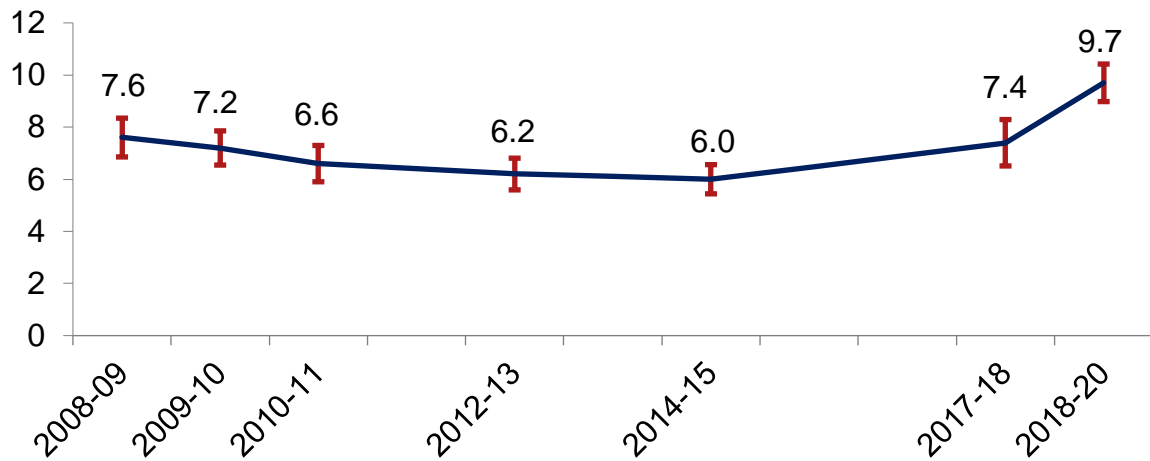
Drugs

Summary statistics on drugs

► **The proportion of adults reporting use of comparable illicit drugs has risen.**

Results from the Scottish Crime and Justice Survey (SCJS) show that in 2018-20, 9.7% of respondents reported taking one or more of these drugs in the 12 months prior to interview. This has increased from 7.6% in 2008-09 and 7.4% in 2017-18. The drugs listed in the survey questionnaire are the same for both 2017-18 and 2018-20, enabling a direct comparison. There was an increase from 9.5% in 2017-18 to 13.5% in 2018-20 for overall self-reported drug use in the 12 months prior to interview.

Percentage of adults reporting use of comparable illicit drugs



To have a more comparable measure since 2008-09, the figures in this chart exclude poppers, glues, solvents, gas or aerosol and prescription only painkillers not prescribed to the respondent.

Community Safety

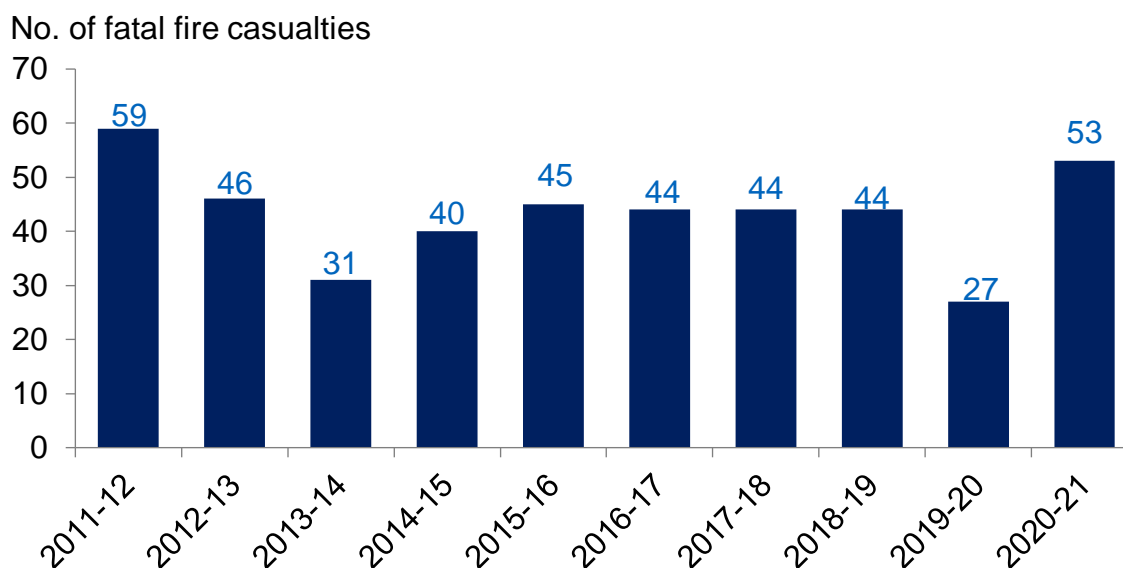
Summary statistics on community safety

▶ **Improved public perception of local crime rate since 2008-09.** The public feel safer in their local communities. The SCJS found that, in 2019-20, 73% of adults thought that the local crime rate had stayed the same or reduced in the past two years. This shows an improvement from 69% in 2008-09 and no change since 2018-19 (73%).

▶ **Most adults feel safe walking alone after dark.** The SCJS found that over three-quarters (77%) of adults said that they felt very or fairly safe walking alone in their neighbourhood after dark in 2019-20, unchanged from 2018-19 (78%) but an increase from 66% in 2008-09.

▶ **Most adults say police are doing a good or excellent job.** The SCJS reported that, in 2019-20, 55% of adults said that the police in their local area were doing a good or excellent job, unchanged from 2018-19 (56%) but down from 61% in 2012-13.

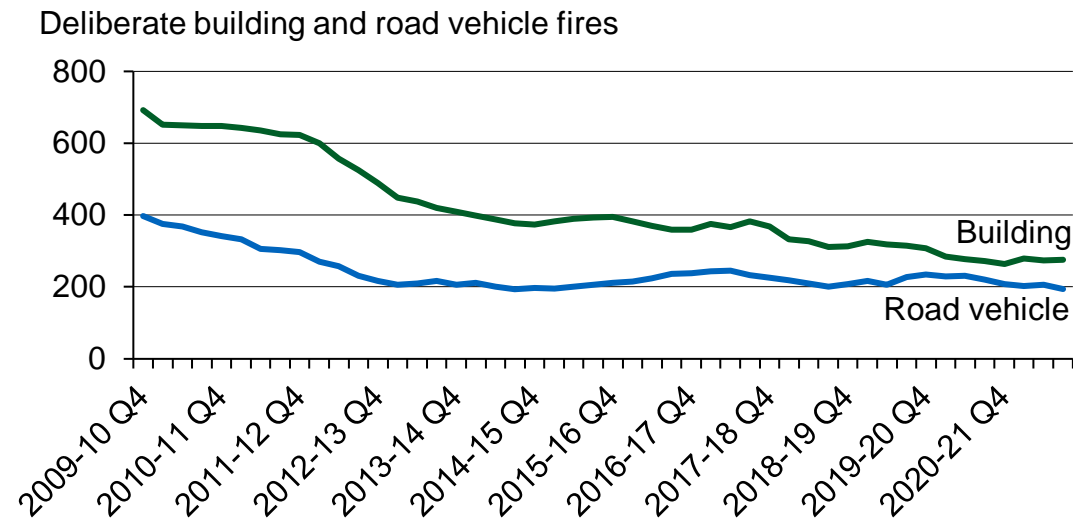
▶ **Number of fires fallen 22% in the last decade.** In 2020-21, there were 25,147 fires in Scotland, up 3% on 2019-20 but 22% lower than in 2011-12. There were 53 fire fatalities in 2020-21, nearly double the historic low of 27 in 2019-20 and the second highest in the last decade.



▶ **Sharp fall in emergency hospital admissions due to assault since 2011-12.** In 2020-21, there were 1,891 emergency hospital admissions due to assault, including 496 due to assault with a sharp object. These were, respectively, 57% and 47% lower than in 2011-12.

Further detail on fire statistics

There were 279 deliberate building fires in quarter 3 of 2021-22, up from 274 in the same quarter of 2020-21. Over the same period, the number of deliberate road vehicle fires fell from 221 to 176. There has been a long-term downward trend in deliberate building and deliberate road vehicle fires since this series began,



The figures used in this chart are the average of the quarter in question and the three quarters prior, in order to allow for seasonal variation.

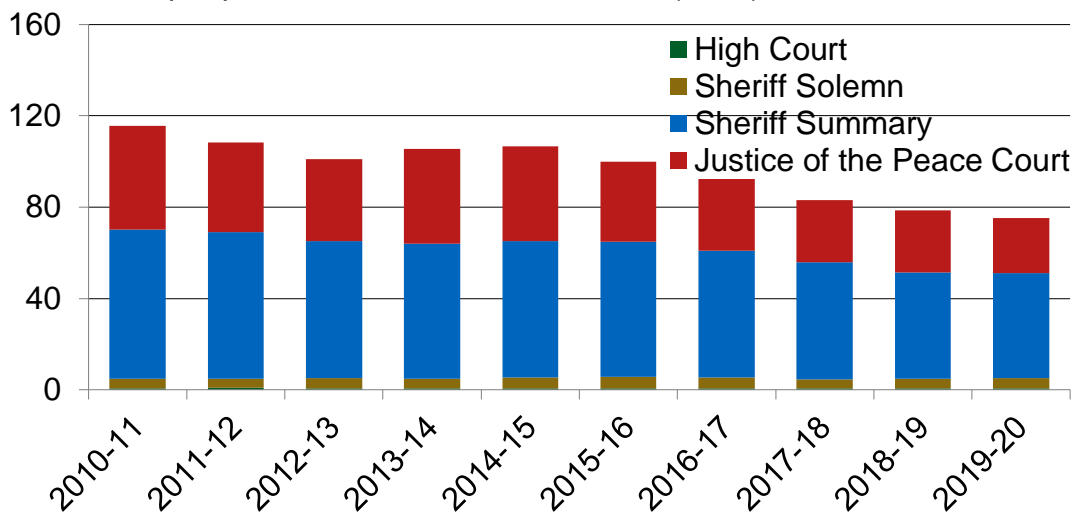
Unwanted fire alarm signals (UFAS) describe potentially avoidable false alarm signals from a workplace, either from an automatic fire alarm or from a person. There were 8,004 UFAS incidents in quarter 3 of 2021-22, which made up 34% of all incidents attended in that quarter. This was up from 31% of all incidents attended in the equivalent quarter of 2020-21. The Covid-19 pandemic could have influenced the previous year's figures as most offices were closed and homeworking was encouraged. This meant that less people were in workplace buildings and so there was less opportunity for an unwanted signal to be triggered.

Criminal & Civil Proceedings

Summary statistics on criminal and civil proceedings

▶ **Lowest number of convictions in last 10 years.** In 2019-20, the number of people convicted in Scottish courts fell by 4% from 2018-19 to 75,251. This is in line with the general downward trend of the last ten years.

Number of people convicted in Scottish courts (000s)

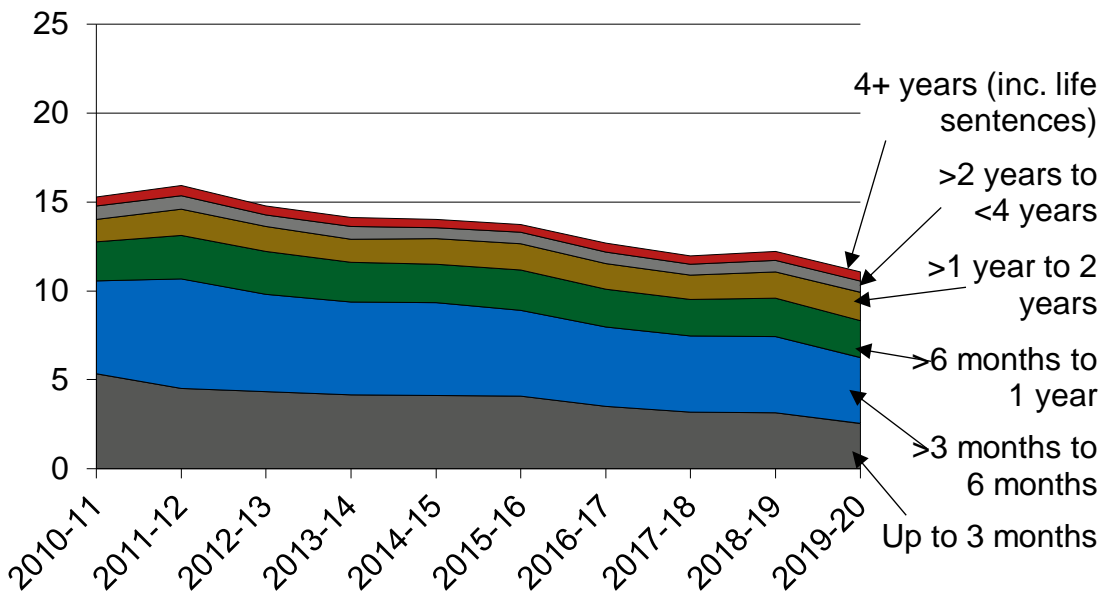


▶ **Fall in convictions in most categories between 2018-19 & 2019-20.** There were notable falls in the number of convictions for unlawful use of a motor vehicle (down 18% or 1,358 fewer convictions), drug crimes (down 11% or 575), and shoplifting (down 9% or 533). However, convictions for violent crimes increased by 11% in 2019-20, with more than half of this increase accounted for by new offences under the Domestic Abuse (Scotland) Act 2018 (206 convictions).

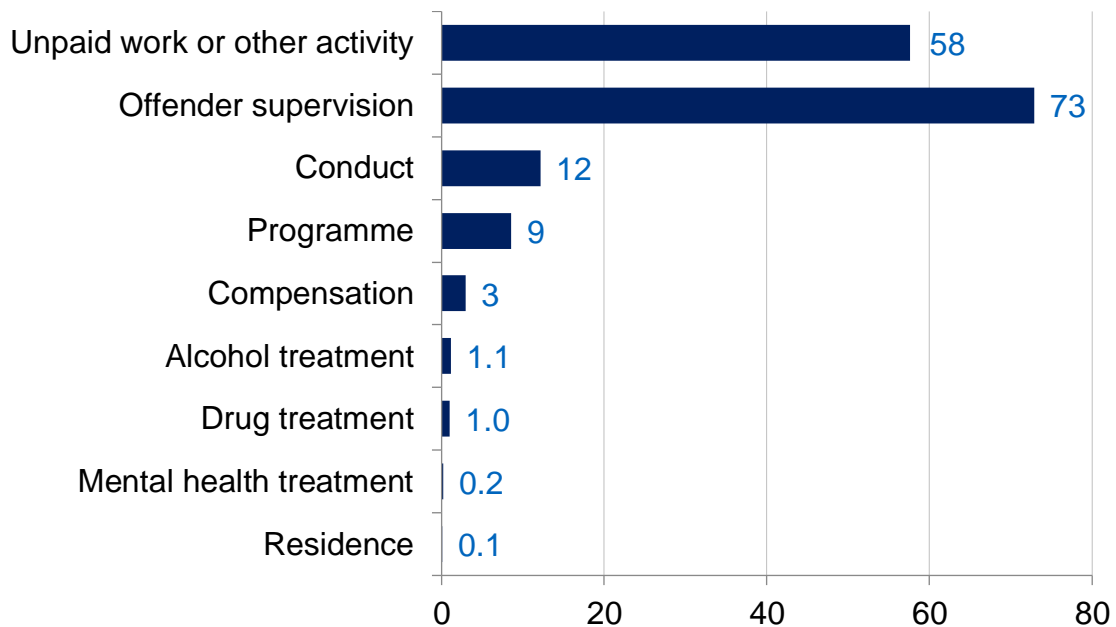
▶ **Rise in community sentences in 2019-20.** The number of community sentences in court rose by 7% between 2018-19 and 2019-20, from 15,211 to 16,296. The proportion of all convictions resulting in a community sentence rose to 22%, the highest in the past decade.

▶ **Average custodial sentence is almost a year.** For those who are convicted in court and sentenced to custody, the average sentence in 2019-20 was almost a year (356 days) in length. This was 9% longer than in 2018-19 and 29% longer than in 2010-11 (9¼ months). The proportion of people receiving a sentence of up to one year or less fell to 75% in 2019-20, the lowest proportion of the last decade.

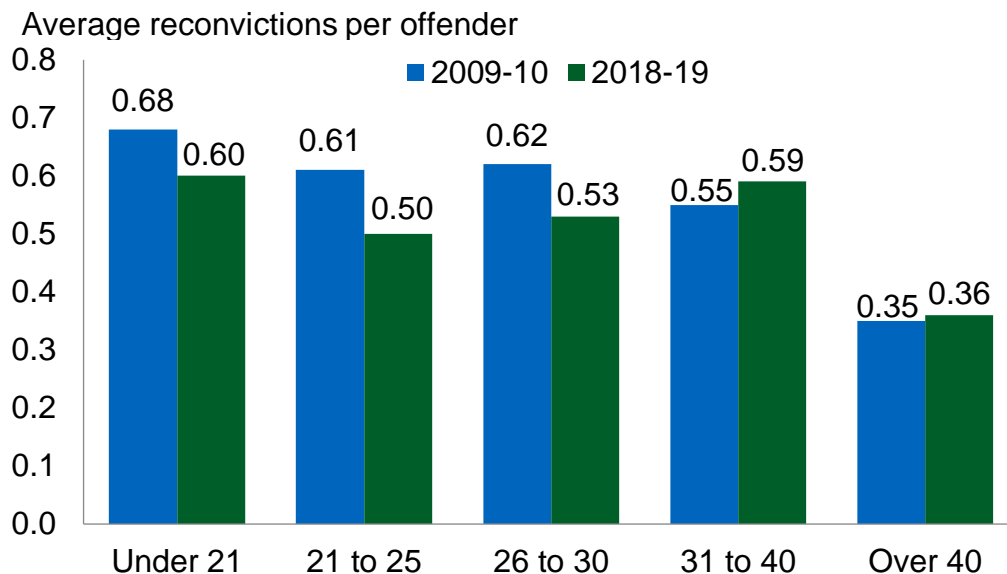
No. of people convicted in court and sentenced to custody (000s)



► **Community payback orders more likely to have supervision than unpaid work.** There were 8,169 community payback orders imposed in 2020-21, 51% lower than in 2019-20. The suspension of delivery of unpaid work due to Covid-19 during part of the year was a major factor in more orders being issued with offender supervision requirements (73%) than unpaid work or other activity requirements (58%).



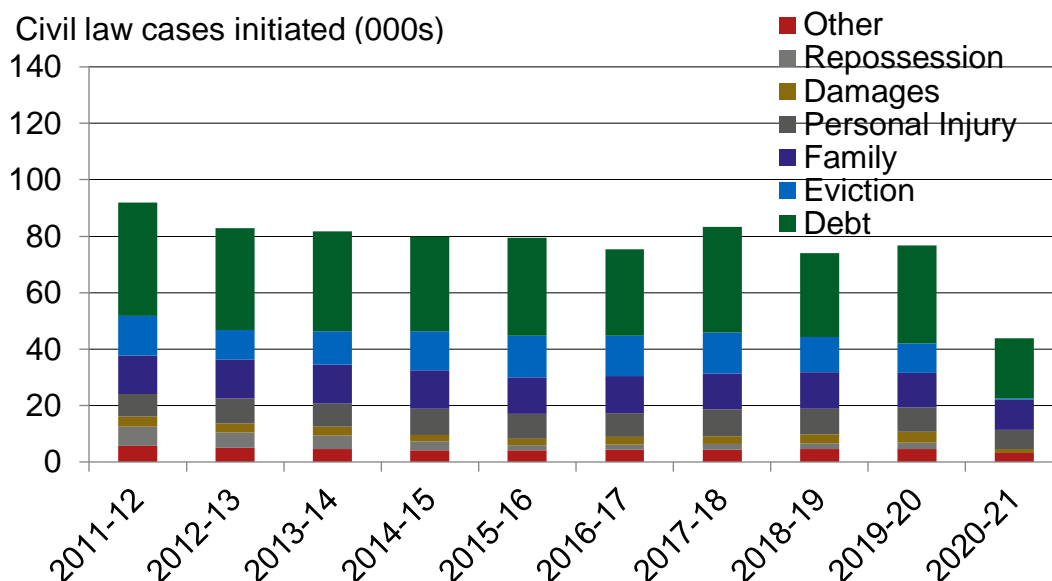
► **Reconviction rates are at one of their lowest levels in 22 years.** The average number of reconvictions per offender was 11% lower than it was a decade ago. The fall in the last decade was driven by younger age groups, with average reconvictions decreasing by 12% for under 21s, 18% for 21-25 year olds, and 15% for 26-30 year olds. In contrast, average reconvictions increased for the older age groups over the decade, with a 7% increase for 31-40 year olds and 3% for those aged over 40.



▶ **No. of children referred to SCRA on offence grounds down by almost 60 per cent in last 10 years.** [Statistics published by the Scottish Children's Reporter Administration \(SCRA\)](#) show that, in 2020-21, 2,207 children were referred to the Reporter on offence grounds. This constitutes a decrease of 59% since 2011-12.

▶ **Long-term downward trend in initiated civil law cases, latest figures lower due to restrictions during the pandemic.** There were 43,632 civil law cases initiated across the Court of Session and sheriff courts in 2020-21 (excluding summary applications). This represents a decrease of 41% from 2019-20.

▶ **All case types decreased since 2019-20.** The largest decreases were in repossessions (down 96%), evictions (down 95%) and damages (down 65%). Debts were down 39%, while the lowest decreases were seen in personal injury (down 21%) and family (down 14%). Debt actions remain the most common, constituting 49% of principal craves. Family and personal injury actions were second and third most common, at 24% and 16% respectively.



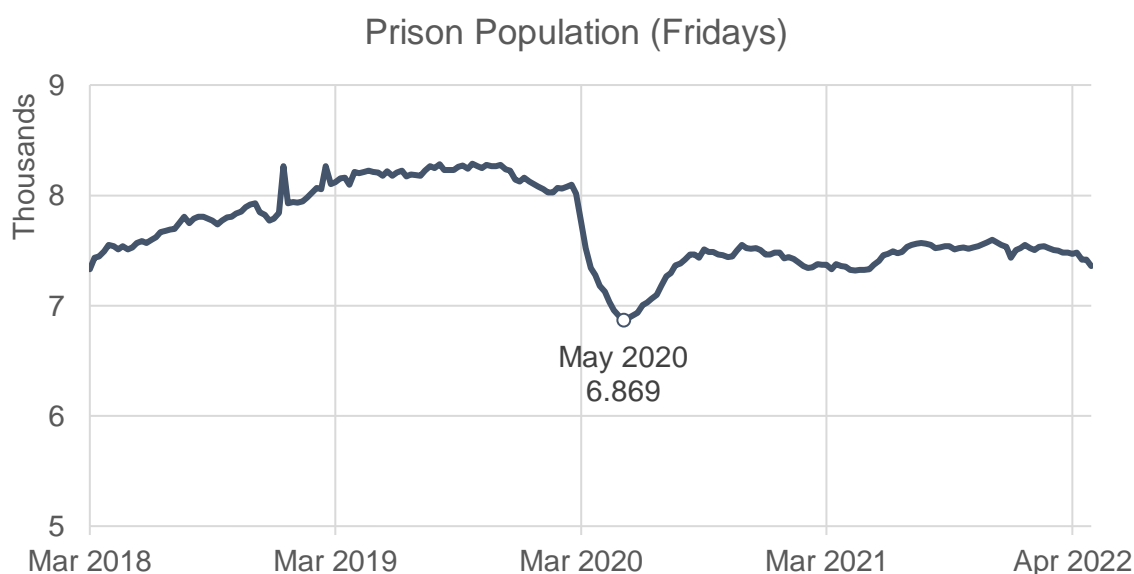
Prisons

Summary statistics on prisons

▶ **The prison population has risen from its lowest point at the end of May 2020.** [Daily population figures for Friday published by the Scottish Prison Service](#), show that the prison population rose from around 7,500 in April 2018 to around 8,300 in November 2019, but fell sharply in the early days of the lockdown in 2020. This was due to a drop in the number of sentenced admissions following the Covid-19 outbreak and the early release of prisoners.

▶ The population has since stabilised between 7,400 and 7,600 and was 7,412 on 25th April 2022. The remand population was at its lowest point of 1,114 on 27th April 2020, but grew to over 2,000 by September 2020.

▶ The remand population has grown significantly since the pre-pandemic period, exceeding previous records in February 2022 to a new peak of 2,289 on the 8th. It has since fallen slightly to 2,183 on 25th April 2022 (29% of the overall prison population).



Further detail on prison population

In April 2022 (up until the morning of Sunday 1st May 2022):

- the population decreased by 131 to 7,357
- 2,149 were on remand: 1,851 (25%) untried & 298 (4%) awaiting sentence
- 68% of arrivals were untried (523 of 773), and 17% awaiting sentence (130)

While the overall prison population is lower than pre-pandemic levels, the number of people held on remand remains at a historic high. The changing levels across groups that are required by law to be housed separately – like those on remand – pose increasing difficulties in the management of the prison population.

The remand population grew during March through November 2021, exceeding its previous recorded peak. On 23 November the remand population was 2,272 – 30%.

In line with previous years, overall numbers and remand populations fell during December 2021, hitting a low of 7,433 (2,061 remand) over Christmas before rebounding. Since February the prison population overall has fallen somewhat, but the remand population peaked again on the 1st February 2022 at 2,292 (30%) – the highest daily number on record.

Chart: Total daily prison population

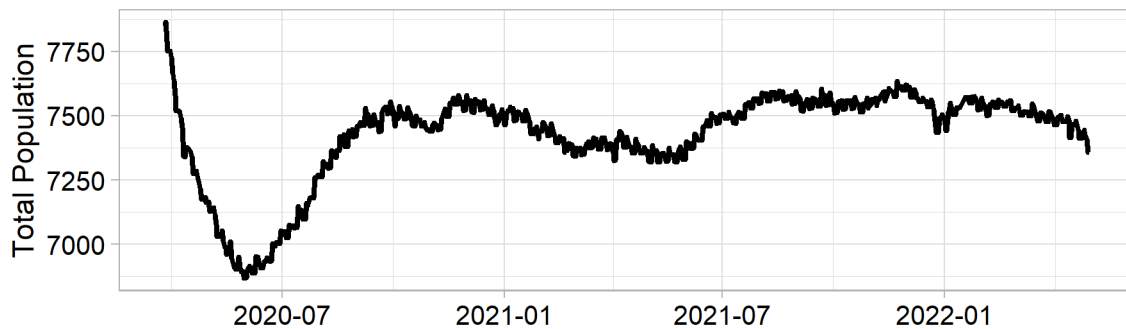
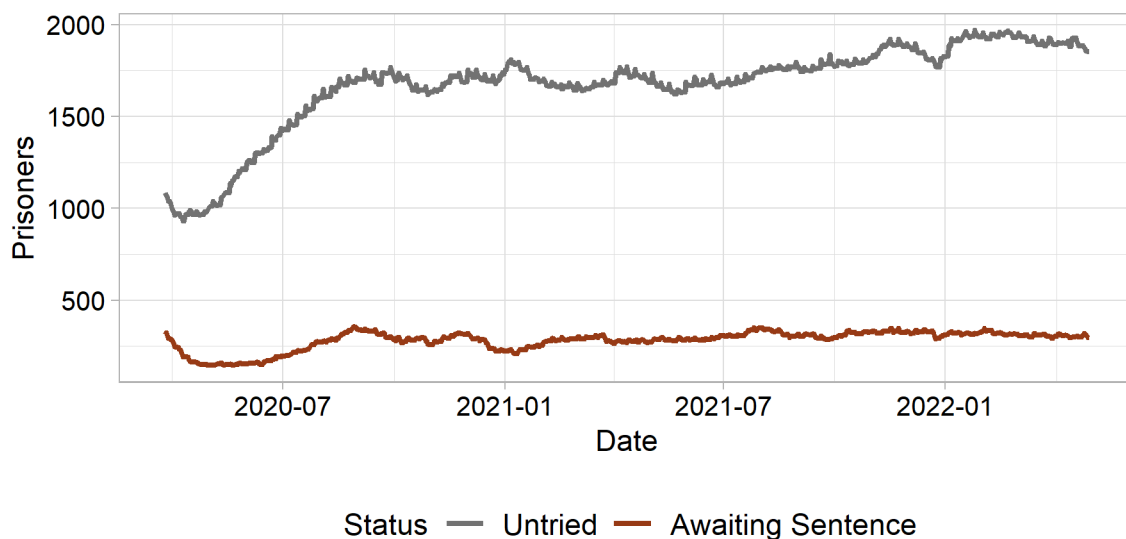


Chart: Daily remand populations

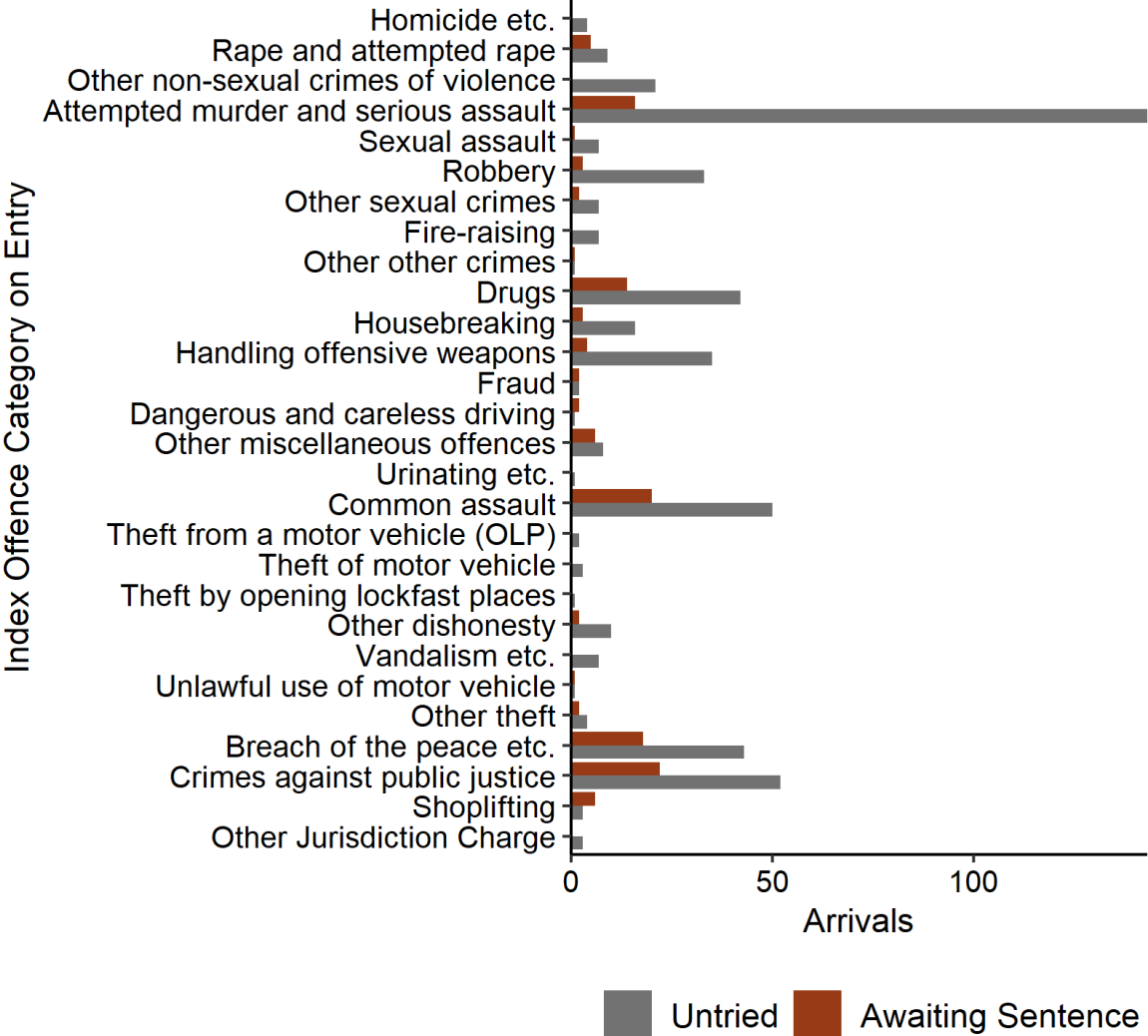


Status — Untried — Awaiting Sentence

Remand Arrival Offences

There were 646 un-sentenced arrivals to prison with known offence types in April, awaiting trial or sentence for the following alleged offences.

Chart: Index offence category on entry of un-sentenced arrivals



Note: Double-counting may occur where an individual arrives, is absent from prison for one or more nights in the month, and then returns before the end of the period. Where an individual has multiple alleged offence types in a single stint, the offence towards the top of the list in the chart is used as the index offence.

Further Information:

Latest published [Annual Prison Population Statistics](#)

Topic pages

1) The impact on the justice system of the 26th United Nations Climate Change Conference of the Parties (COP26)

On 28th April 2022, Justice Analytical Services (JAS) published a [summary report on the impact of COP26 on the justice system: summary](#). The data collected for this report resulted from a collaborative effort between Police Scotland, Crown Office & Procurator Fiscal Service (COPFS), Scottish Courts & Tribunals Service & JAS colleagues. A summary of the findings as of 22nd March 2022 is presented below:



97 arrests were made by the police



46 accused were reported to COPFS for prosecution to be considered



28 of those reported to COPFS had no further action taken



2 of those reported to COPFS were issued with a fiscal fine



14 were marked for court proceedings



1 was given a custodial sentence



1 was fined by the court



1 was not convicted



11 cases are ongoing

2) Remand and bail outcomes paper

[The remand and bail outcomes paper](#) uses a new dataset prepared by Scottish Courts and Tribunals Services covering hearings in Sheriff courts from April 2016 to March 2021, to help illustrate some of the key trends in bail and remand decisions, as well as factors that are associated with the decision.

The paper presents data on the numbers and likelihoods of accused individuals being remanded, bailed, ordained or subject to some other outcome at the first point in time when such a decision is made for each individual. The analysis shows for example that overall there were fewer remand decisions made from sheriff courts in the first pandemic year (2020/21) than in previous years.

The fall in remand decisions was due to the decrease in volume of summary case decisions (decisions to remand increased slightly for solemn cases in 2020/21). Although the total number of remands at first bail decision points fell in the first pandemic year, the overall number of remands for new solemn petition (more serious) cases rose.

Other key findings from the analysis include the following:

- Sheriff Solemn (more serious) proceedings are more likely to result in an individual being remanded and are less likely to involve an individual being ordained than Sheriff Summary proceedings.
- The manner in which an individual appears in court (e.g., from police custody) is strongly correlated with likelihood of bail and remand outcomes.
- Individuals that have previously breached the terms of their bail are far more likely to be remanded than those who have not.
- There was an increase in the number of decisions to remand in Solemn – which was driven by an increase in the total number of solemn petitions rather than the likelihood of being remanded.
- Both the rise in solemn petitions and the rise in remand decisions for those on solemn petitions is strongly associated with breach of bail conditions.

Sources and Further Information

Sources and further information

The information presented in this report is primarily drawn from a range of Official Statistics sources. In the case of fire and prisons statistics, more recent analysis of administrative data has been used, whilst recorded hate crime information comes from a Social Research publication.

Police activity:

- Quarterly [Recorded Crime in Scotland](#) bulletin. This contains National Statistics on crimes and offences recorded by the police in Scotland.
- [Homicide in Scotland Statistics](#). Annual National Statistics on crimes of homicide recorded by the police in Scotland.
- [Domestic Abuse Recorded by the Police in Scotland Statistics](#). Annual Official Statistics on police recorded domestic abuse in Scotland.
- [Police Officer Quarterly Strength Statistics Scotland](#). Quarterly Official Statistics on the number of full-time equivalent police officers in Scotland.
- [Characteristics of police recorded hate crime in Scotland: study](#). Social Research study into the nature of police recorded hate aggravated crimes in Scotland.

Courts and prisons data:

- [Criminal Proceedings Statistics in Scotland](#). Annual National Statistics on criminal proceedings concluded in Scottish courts and on a range of measures available as alternatives to prosecution.
- Annual [Civil Justice Statistics](#) bulletin. This contains Official Statistics on civil justice and court reform as recorded by the Scottish Courts and Tribunals Service (SCTS).
- [Scottish Prison Population Statistics 2019-20](#). Experimental statistics on Scottish prison populations, exploring population levels and composition and change over time.
- [SCTS Official Statistics](#). Includes quarterly data on fines, financial penalty collection rates, and criminal court activity in Scotland.

Other:

- The [Scottish Crime and Justice Survey](#) (SCJS) is a large-scale social survey which asks people about their experiences and perceptions of crime and the justice system in Scotland. The most recent release was for 2019/20.
- [Criminal Justice Social Work Statistics in Scotland](#). Annual National Statistics on criminal justice social work activity in Scotland.

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