



Scottish Government  
Riaghaltas na h-Alba

# **Justice Analytical Services (JAS) Safer Communities and Justice Statistics Monthly Data Report**

**October 2022 edition**

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# Introduction

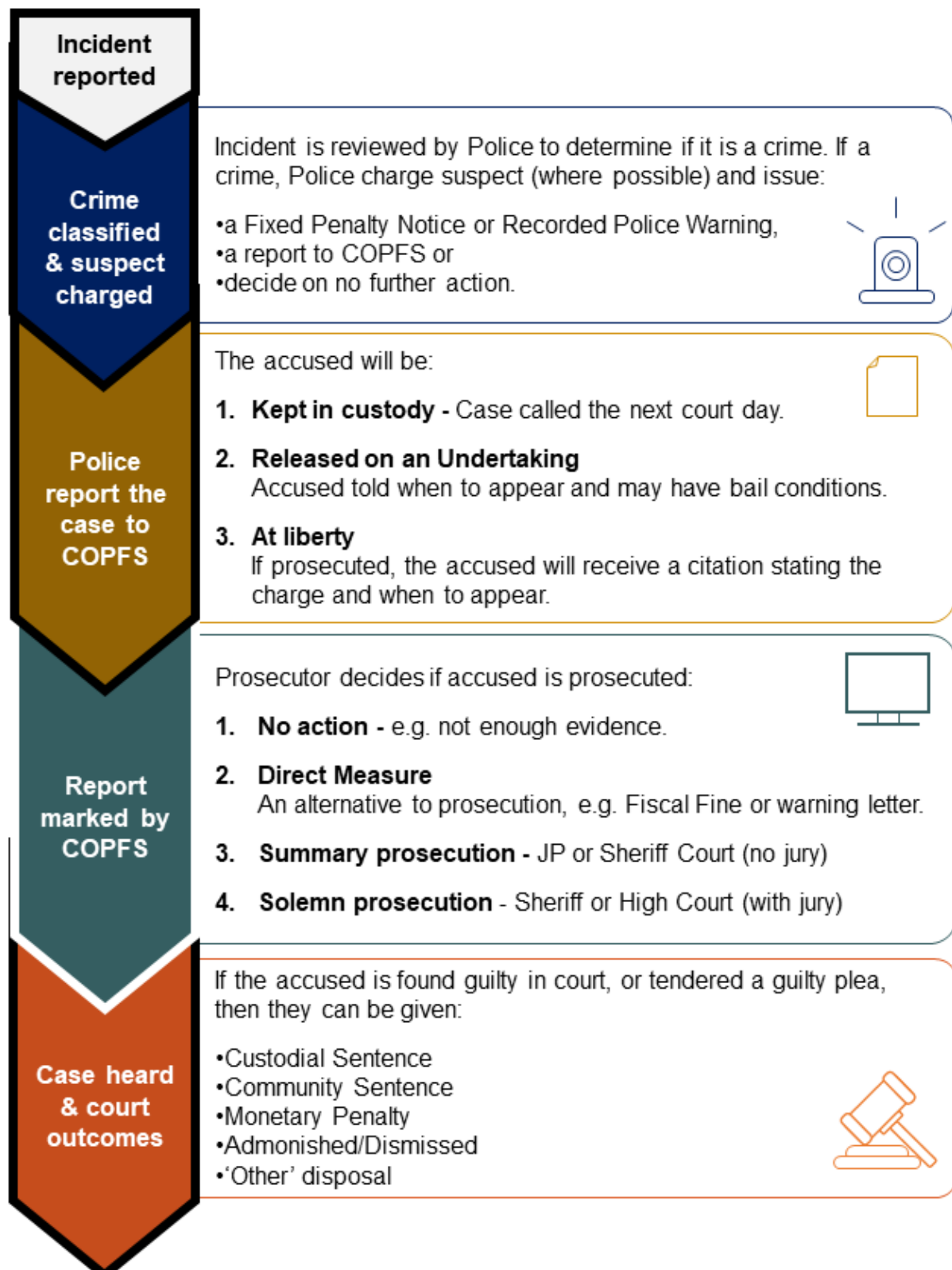
This report provides an overview of a number of important justice and safer communities statistics. Data has been gathered from a number of different sources and may be subject to future revision as more recent data becomes available.

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

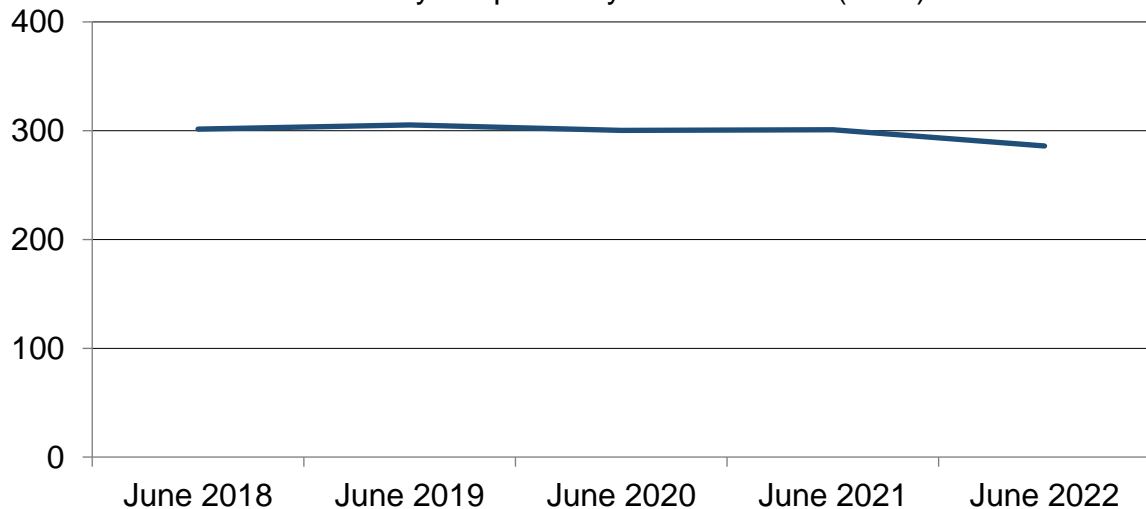


# Crime in General

## Summary statistics on crime in general

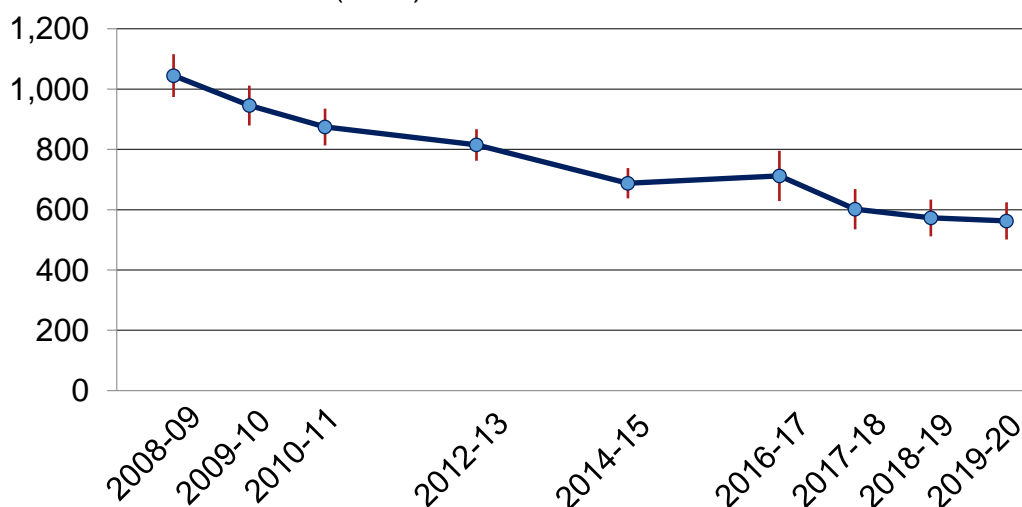
► **Police recorded crime is at the lowest level seen since 1974 and is down 5% since the year ending June 2018.** Between the year ending June 2021 and 2022, the number of crimes recorded decreased by 5%, to 285,974. This fall was driven by a reduction in crimes recorded under Covid-19 related legislation (from 20,146 to 96). All other crimes collectively increased by 2%.

Number of crimes recorded by the police - year to 30 June (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 increased in the most recent year.** Non-sexual crimes of violence recorded by the police increased by 9%, to 70,156 in the year ending June 2022. This was driven by a rise in common assault (also up 10%), which makes up the clear majority (84%) of all non-sexual crimes of violence recorded in the year ending June 2022. 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.

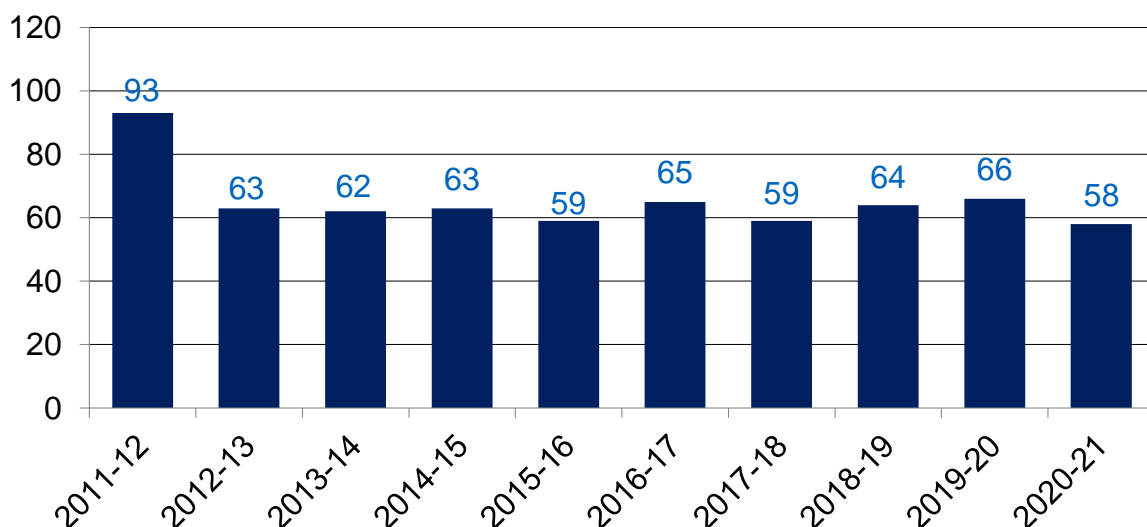
▶ **Recorded sexual crimes increased in the most recent year.** Sexual crimes recorded by the police increased by 7%, to 14,880 in the year ending June 2022. Which has led to the highest number of Sexual crimes in the last five years. Multiple factors lie behind the long term increase in recorded sexual 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.

▶ **Decrease in crime clear up rate.** The clear up rate for all recorded crimes was 54.0% in 2021-22, down from 59.3% in 2020-21 and similar to 54.9% in 2019-20. The decrease in 2021-22 reflects a partial return to the volume of different crime types recorded in the year prior to the pandemic (2019-20), albeit clear up rates have still fallen for each of the individual crime groups.

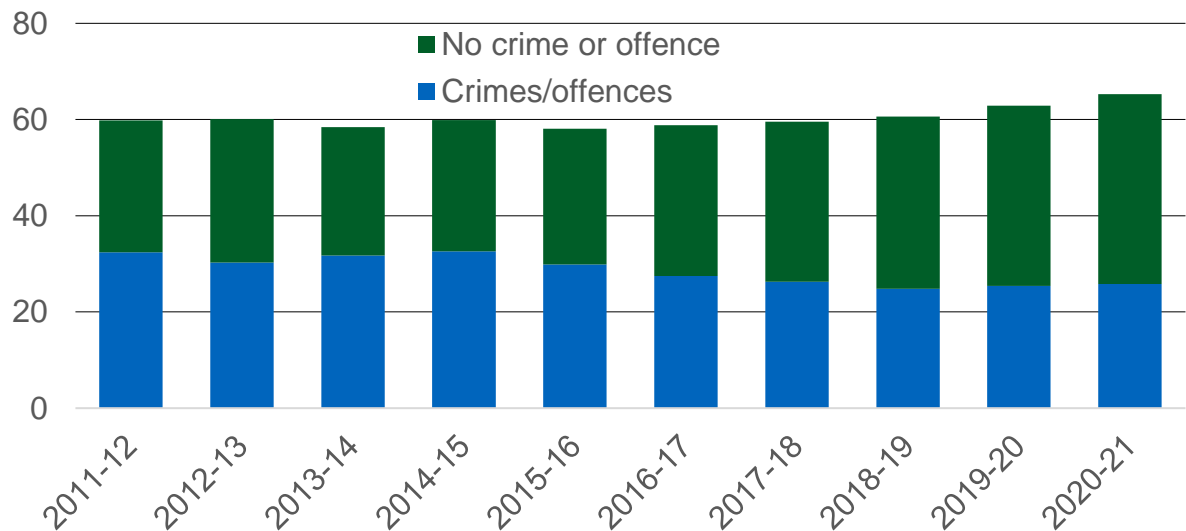
▶ **No. of victims of homicide at record low.** There were 58 homicide victims recorded by the police in Scotland in 2020-21, a 38% decrease from 2011-12 and the lowest value since comparable records began in 1976. Since 2012-13, the number of victims of homicide each year ranged between 58 and 66.

Number of victims of homicide



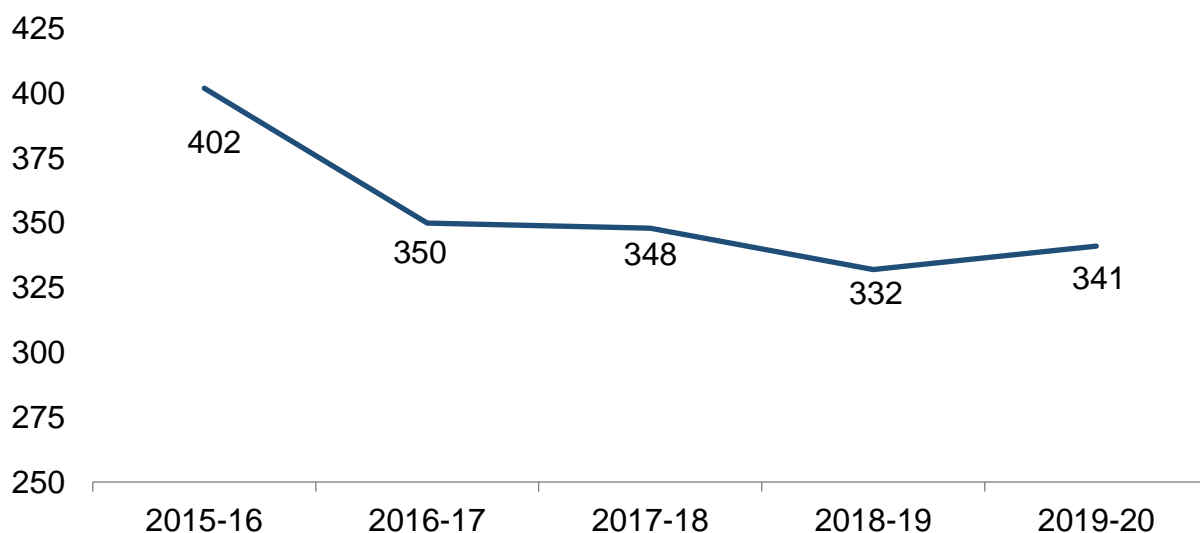
► **Increase in recorded domestic abuse incidents.** There were 65,251 incidents of domestic abuse recorded by the police in 2020-21, an increase of 4% on 2019-20. In 2020-21, 40% of all incidents recorded by the police included the recording of at least one crime or offence.

No. of domestic abuse incidents (000s)



► **Small increase in firearm offences.** Between 2018-19 and 2019-20 the number of crimes and offences in which a firearm was alleged to have been involved increased by 3% (from 332 to 341 offences). The 2018-19 and 2019-20 totals are the lowest and second lowest, respectively, since comparable records began in 1980.

Number of recorded crimes and offences where a firearm was alleged to be involved

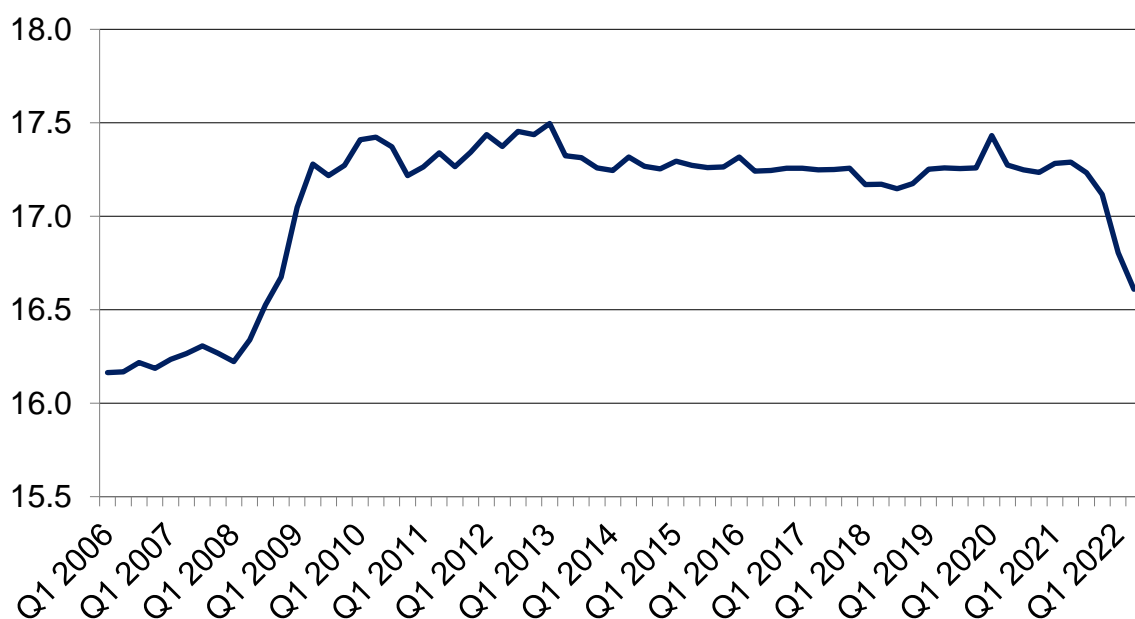


# Policing

## Summary statistics on policing

► There were **16,610 full-time equivalent (FTE) police officers in Scotland on 30 June 2022**. This was 376 (+2.3%) more officers compared to the position on 31 March 2007, but 679 (-3.9%) less than on 30 June 2021.

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



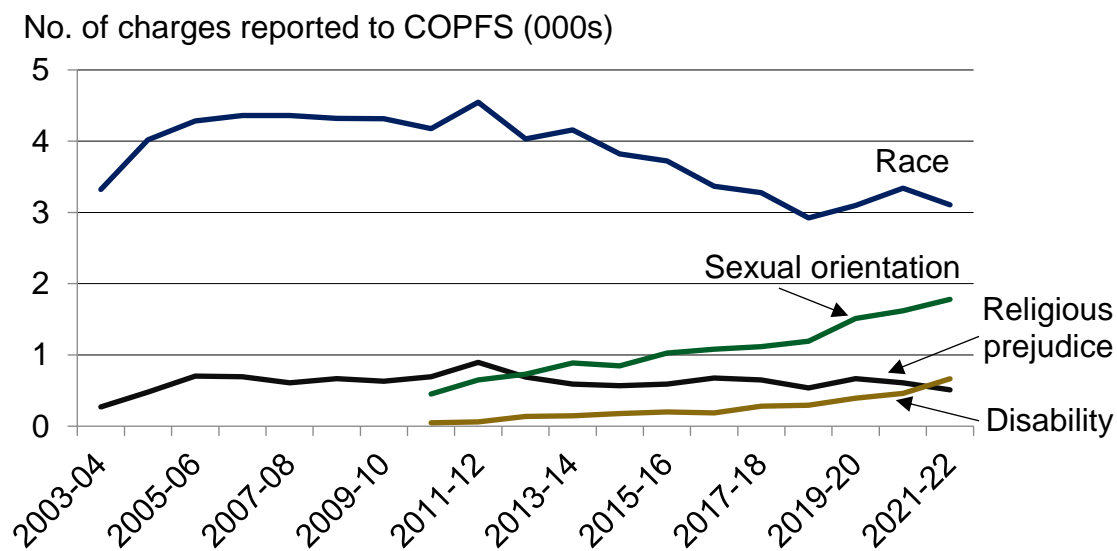


# Hate Crime

## 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.

► **Marginal decrease in overall hate crime charges.** There was a decrease in the number of charges reported to the Crown Office and Procurator Fiscal Service in 2021-22 compared to 2020-21 for race and religion. Sexual orientation, disability and transgender identity aggravated hate crime charges saw an increase. Racial crime remains the most commonly reported hate crime, followed by crimes with a sexual orientation aggravator.



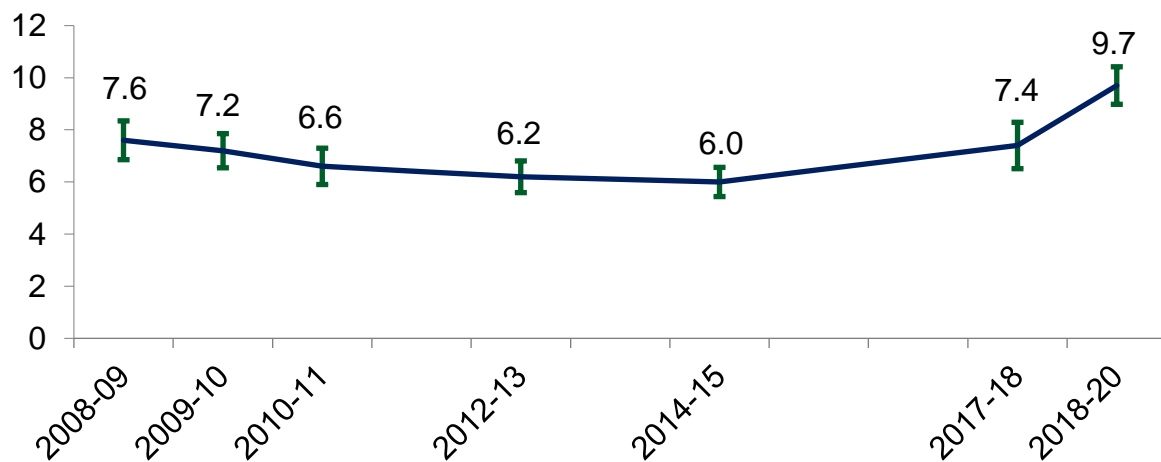
# Drugs

## 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

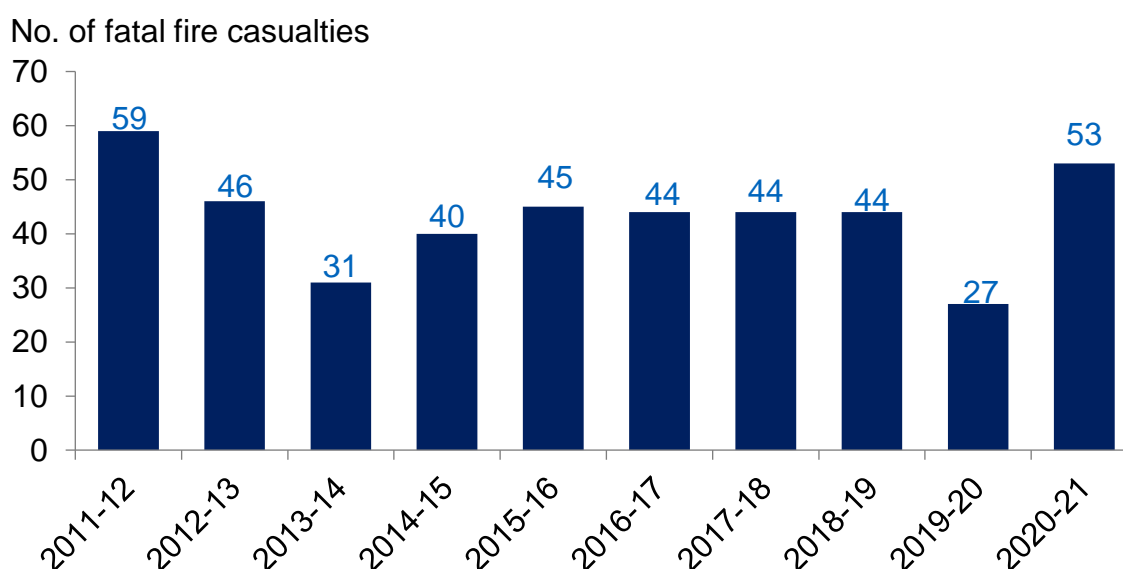
## Summary statistics on community safety

► **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.

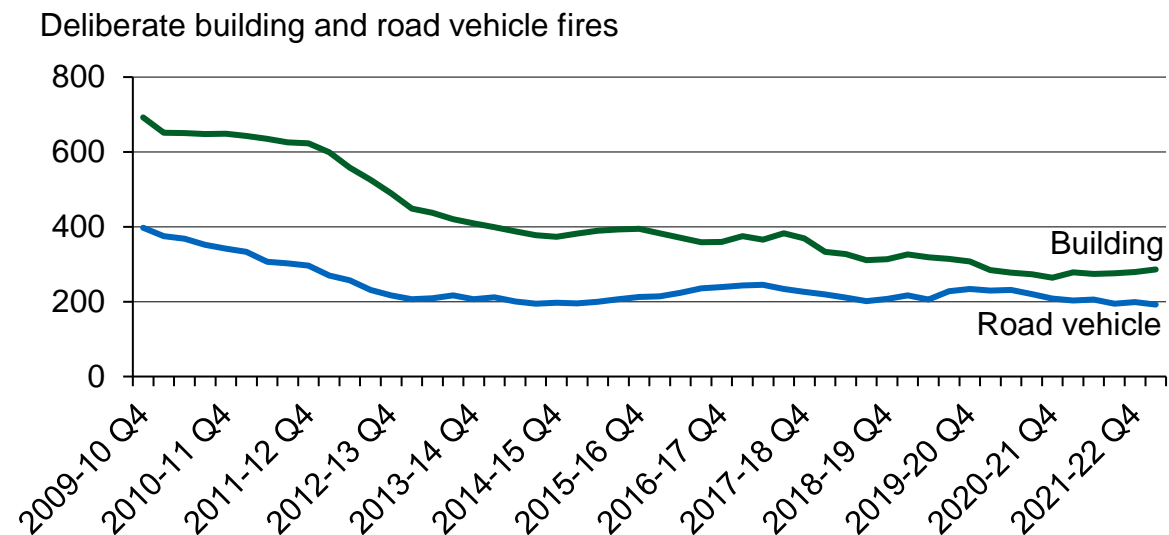
► **Number of fires fallen 22% in the last decade.** In 2020-21, there were 25,147 fires in Scotland, up 3% on 2019-20 but 22% lower than in 2011-12. There were 53 fire fatalities in 2020-21, nearly double the historic low of 27 in 2019-20 and the second highest in the last decade.



► **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

**\* New \*** There were 370 deliberate building fires in quarter 1 of 2022-23, up from 343 in the same quarter of 2021-22. Over the same period, the number of deliberate road vehicle fires fell from 213 to 185. 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 avoidable false alarm signals from a workplace, either from an automatic fire alarm or from a person. There were 6,815 UFAS incidents in quarter 1 of 2022-23, which made up 27% of all incidents attended in that quarter. This was up from 22% of all incidents attended in the equivalent quarter of 2021-22. 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.

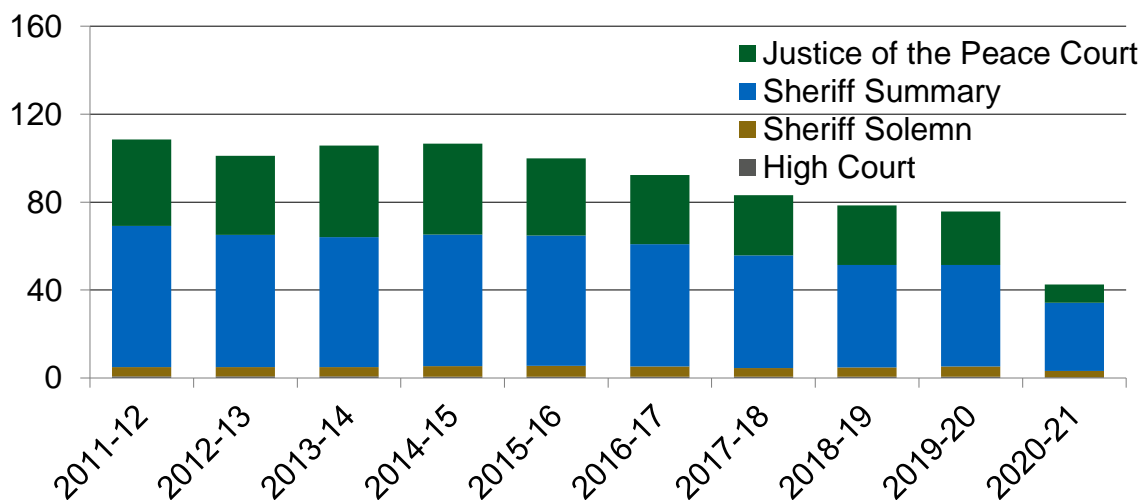
# Criminal & Civil Proceedings

## Summary statistics on criminal and civil proceedings

### ► COVID-19 impacted the number of proceedings and convictions in 2020-21.

The number of people convicted in Scottish courts fell by 44% from 2019-20 to 42,532.

Number of people convicted in Scottish courts (000s)



The 2020-21 data mainly reflects the impact of Covid-19 across the justice system, and should not be interpreted as indicative of longer term trends.

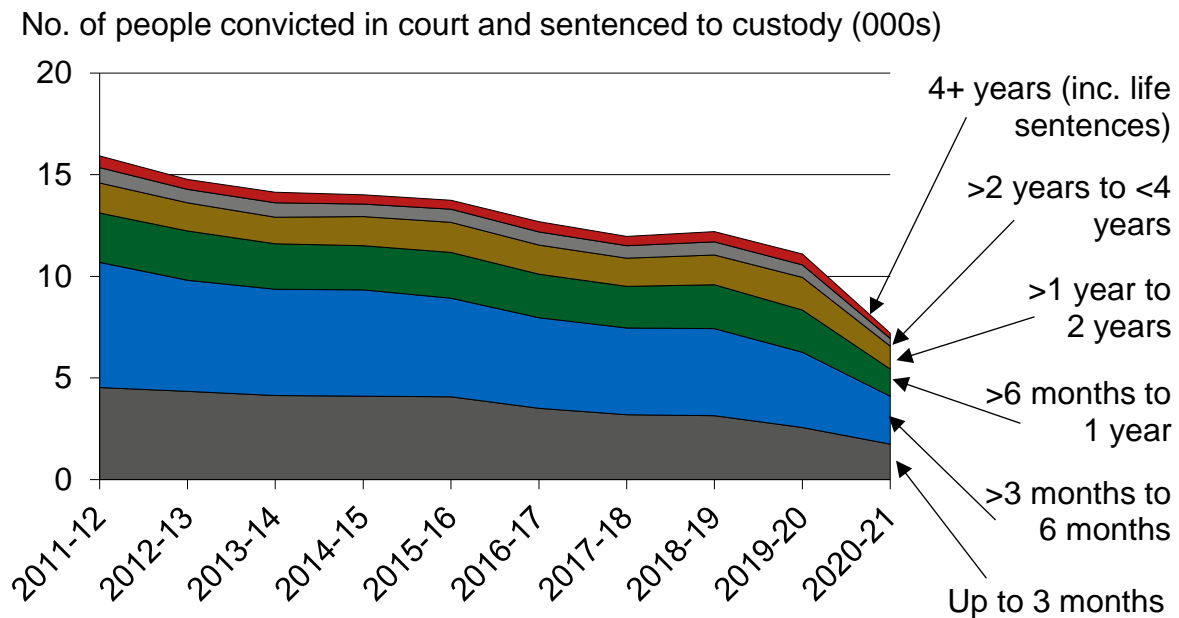
### ► Fall in convictions in almost all categories between 2019-20 & 2020-21.

Convictions fell the most for motor vehicle offences (down 58%) and crimes of dishonesty (down 44%). However, convictions for crimes under the Domestic Abuse (Scotland) Act increased by 81% (383 convictions) in 2020-21 compared to 2019-20 (212 convictions). The course of conduct offence was only introduced in April 2019 and so to some extent an increase would be expected after the first year as it takes time for evidence to build up and cases to progress through court.

### ► Fall in numbers of community sentences issued, but rise in proportion in 2020-21.

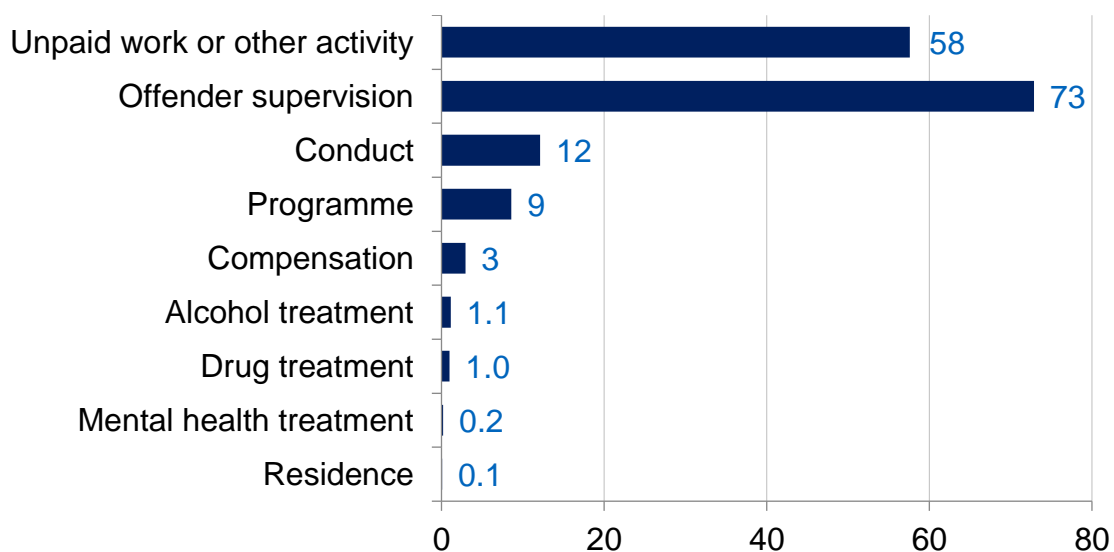
The number of community sentences in court fell by 42% between 2019-20 and 2020-21, from 16,661 to 9,741, in line with the fall seen in convictions overall due to the impact of COVID-19 on court business. The proportion of all convictions resulting in a community sentence rose to 23%, the highest in the past decade. The proportion split of sentence types this year is likely a function of the differing levels of capacity of the different court types operating during the year rather than indicative of any trend.

► **Average custodial sentence is under a year.** For those who are convicted in court and sentenced to custody, the average sentence in 2020-21 was almost eleven months (329 days) in length. This was 8% shorter than in 2019-20, but 14% longer than in 2011-12 (9.5 months). The proportion of people receiving a sentence of up to one year or less remained unchanged at 75% in 2020-21, the lowest proportion of the last decade.



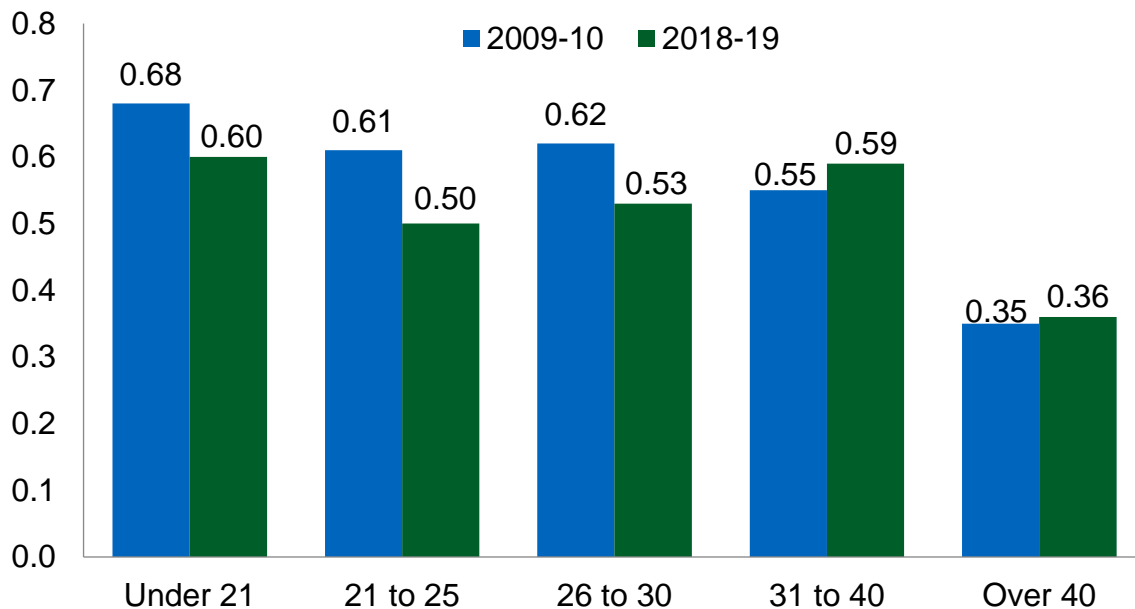
The 2020-21 data mainly reflects the impact of Covid-19 across the justice system, and should not be interpreted as indicative of longer term trends.

► **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 increases of 7% for 31-40 year olds and 3% for those aged over 40.

Average reconvictions per offender

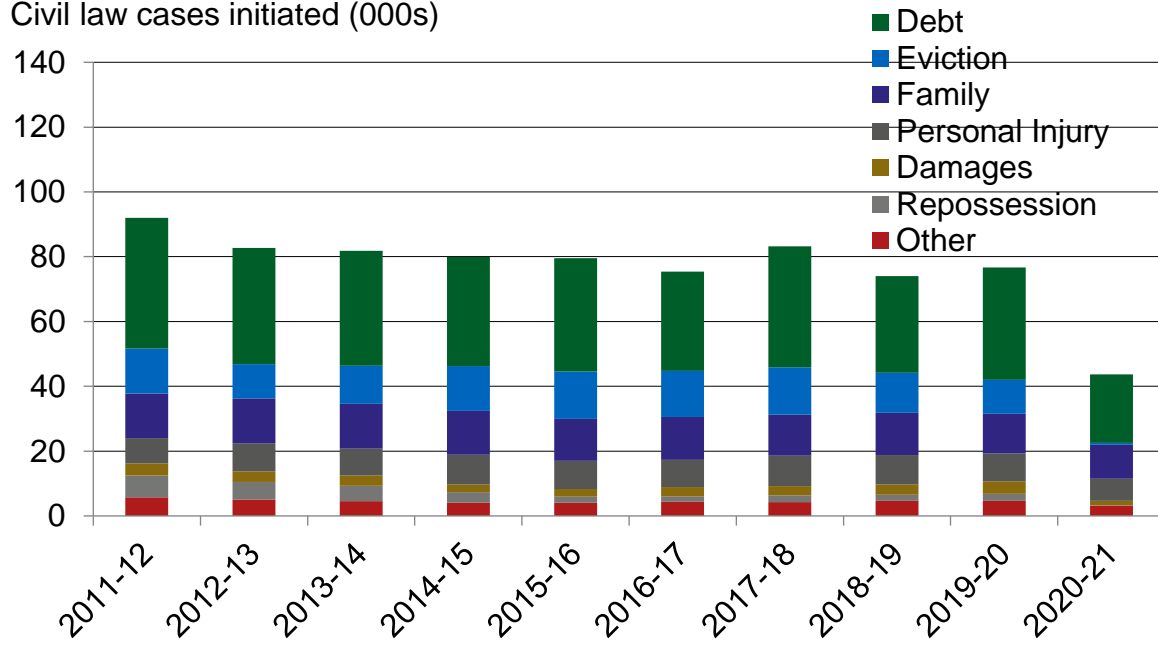


► **No. of children referred to SCRA on offence grounds down by over 30 per cent in last 10 years.** [Statistics published by the Scottish Children's Reporter Administration \(SCRA\)](#) show that, in 2021-22, 2,398 children were referred to the Reporter on offence grounds. This constitutes a decrease of 31% since 2012-13.

► **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 cases. Family and personal injury actions were second and third most common, at 24% and 16% respectively.

Civil law cases initiated (000s)





# Prisons

## Summary statistics on prisons

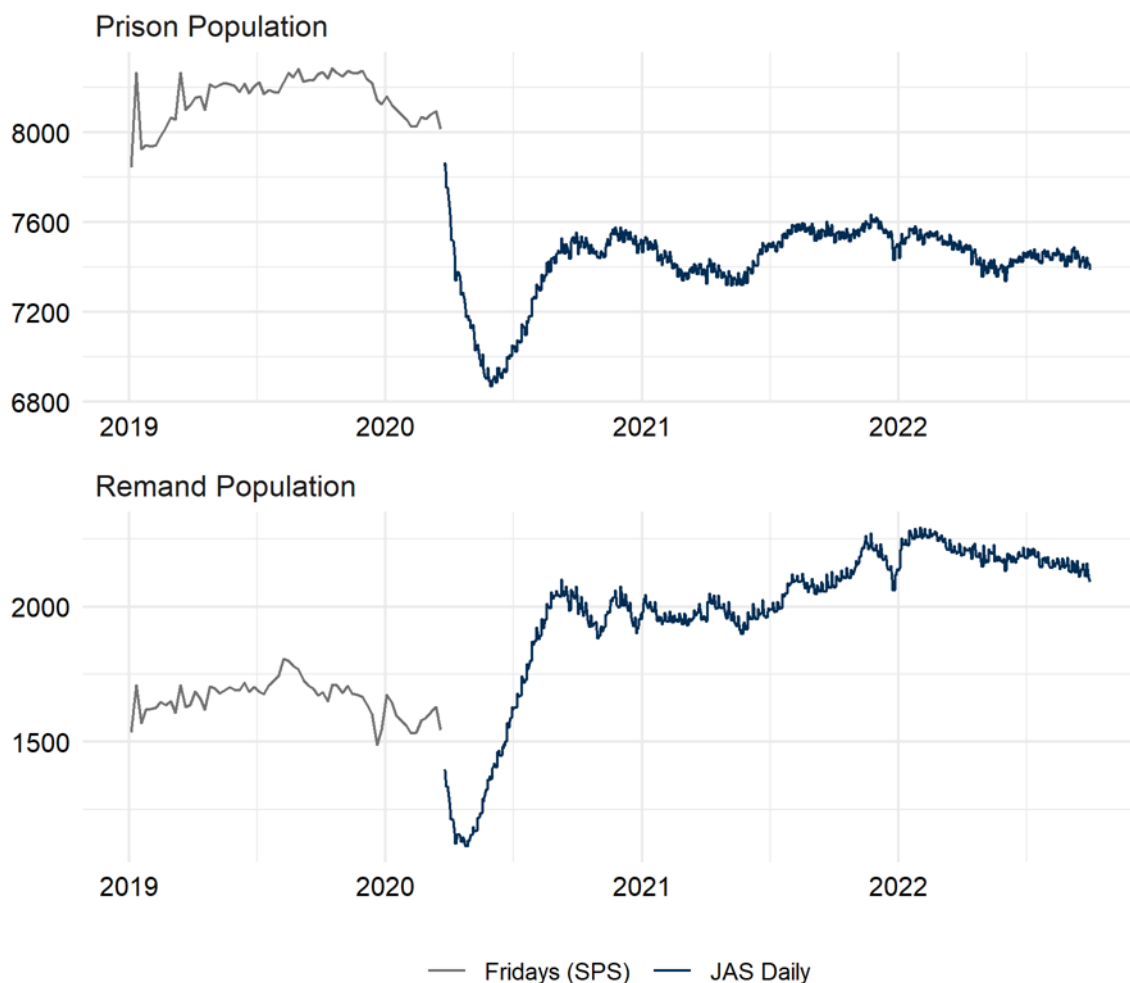
**\* New \***

▶ **The prison population has risen from its lowest point at the end of May 2020.** [Friday population figures 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 7,300 and 7,600 and was 7,386 on 1<sup>st</sup> October 2022.

▶ The remand population was at its lowest point of 1,114 on 24<sup>th</sup> April 2020, but grew to over 2,000 by September 2020. The remand population has grown significantly since, and exceeded previous records on 1<sup>st</sup> February 2022 to a new peak of 2,292. It has since fallen slightly to 2,091 (28% of the total prison population) on 1<sup>st</sup> October 2022.

Chart: Prison populations (total and remand), January 2019 through September 2022



## Further detail on prison population

### \* New \*

In September 2022 (up until the morning of Saturday 1<sup>st</sup> October 2022):

- the population decreased by 51 to 7,386
- 2,091 were on remand: 1,806 (24%) untried & 285 (4%) awaiting sentence
- 66% of arrivals were untried (549 of 829), and 19% awaiting sentence (154)

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 growing difficulties in the management of the prison population.

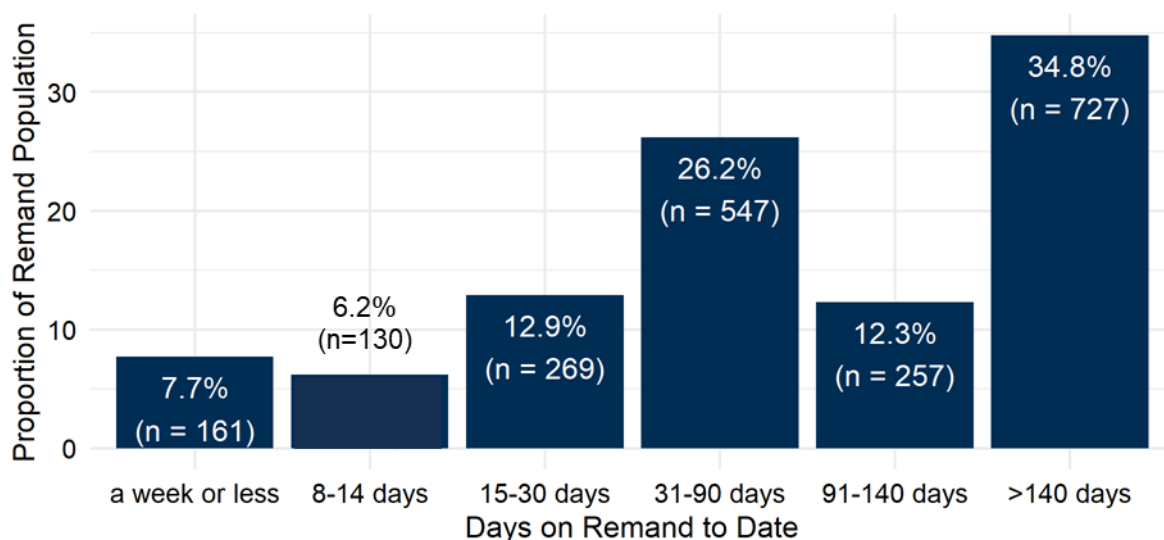
The remand population grew during March through November 2021, exceeding its previous recorded peak. In line with previous years, overall numbers and remand populations fell during December 2021, hitting a low of 7,433 (2,061 remand) over Christmas before rebounding. Since February, the prison population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

## Time on Remand to Date

### \* New \*

Among the 2,091 people on remand as of the morning of Saturday 1<sup>st</sup> October 2022, the median continuous time spent with this status to date was 81 days.

Chart: Banded continuous time on remand



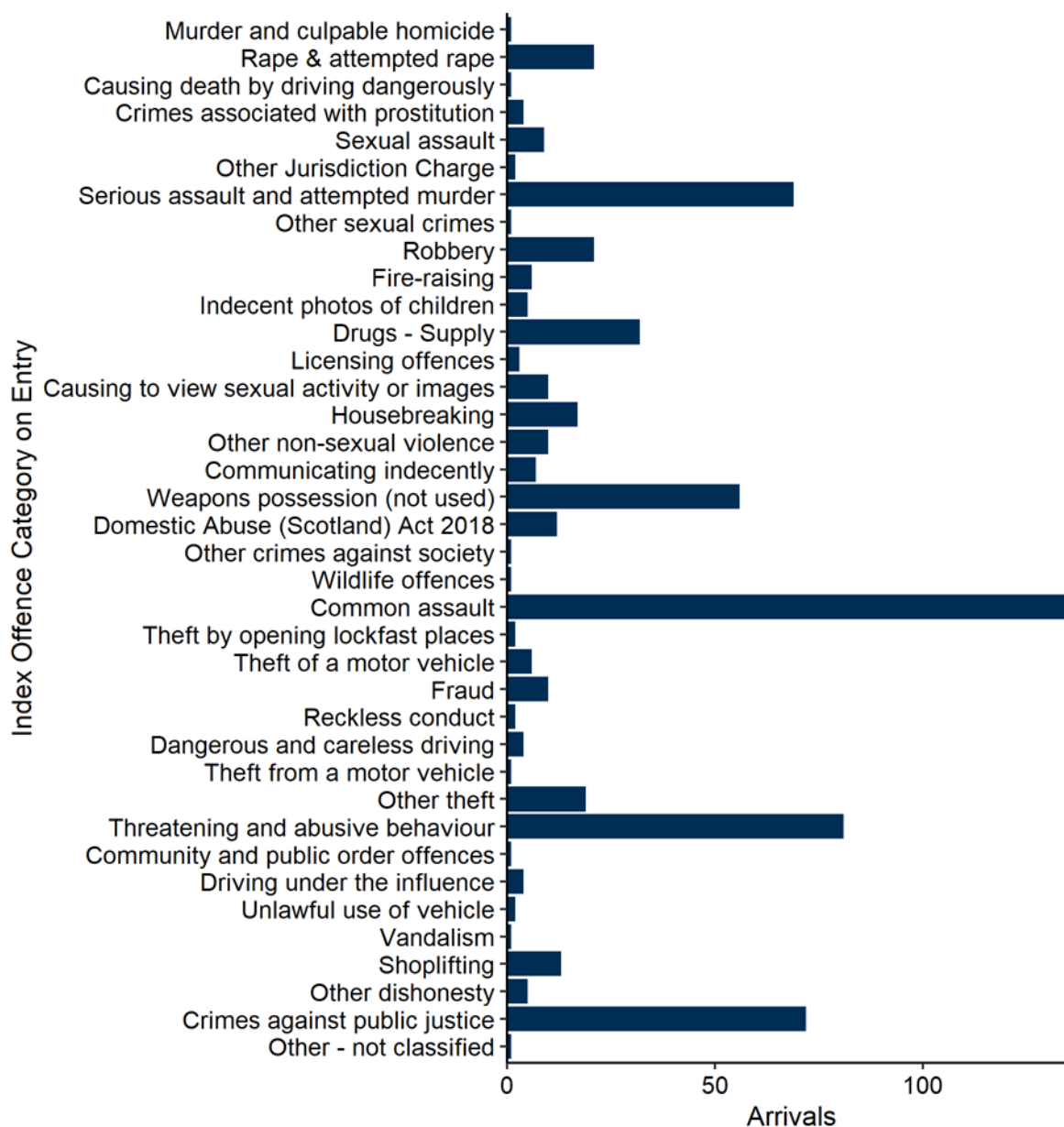
**Note:** The remand population includes individuals whose trial has commenced but not concluded, as well as those awaiting commencement of a trial. As a result, the figures referenced above reflect only that an individual has held the same status for an extended period, but do not reflect the relationship between these times on remand and the ongoing court procedure(s) to which they relate.

## Remand Arrival Offences

**\* New \***

There were 650 remand arrivals to prison with known offence types in September, awaiting trial or sentence for the following alleged offences.

Chart: Index offence category on entry of arrivals to remand



**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.

The crime categories presented here have been revised in line with those presented in [Recorded Crime in Scotland, 2021-22](#).

# Topic Page

## Recorded Crime in Scotland: year ending June 2022

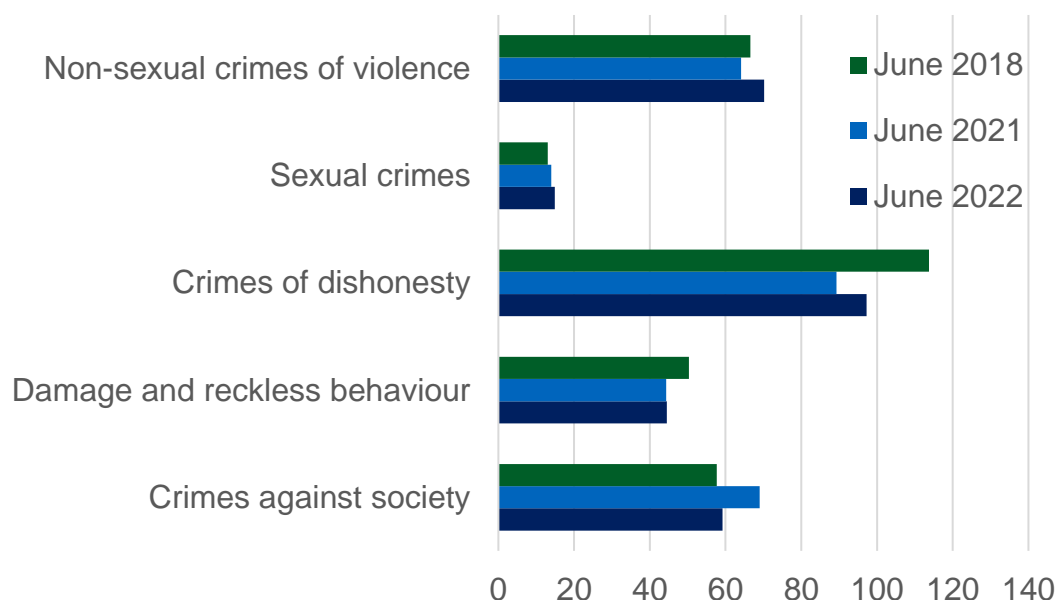
The police in Scotland recorded 285,974 crimes in the year ending June 2022. This was 5% lower than the 300,747 crimes recorded in the year ending June 2021, and 5% lower than the 301,376 crimes recorded in the year ending June 2018.

This was driven by a nearly 100% reduction in crimes recorded under Coronavirus related legislation (from 20,146 in the year ending June 2021 to 96 in the year ending June 2022), while all other crimes collectively increased by 2%.

However, recorded crime is at the lowest level seen over the latest five years and at the lowest level seen for a 12-month period since 1974.

The Scottish Crime and Justice Survey (SCJS) is a complementary measure that includes crimes that are not reported to the police. It found there was no change between 2018-19 and 2019-20.

Chart: Crimes and offences recorded by the police, by crime group, years ending June 2018, June 2021 and June 2022



# 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 2020-21](#). Official 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.

### **Correspondence and enquiries**

For enquiries about this publication please contact:

Justice Analytical Services,

e-mail: [Justice\\_Analysts@gov.scot](mailto:Justice_Analysts@gov.scot)

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