

**Accredited Official Statistics**



# **Criminal Proceedings in Scotland: 2022-23**

**17 December 2024**

This bulletin forms part of the Scottish Government series of statistical bulletins on the criminal justice system. Statistics are presented on criminal proceedings concluded in Scottish courts and on a range of measures available as alternatives to prosecution, which are issued by the police and by the Crown Office and Procurator Fiscal Service. Detailed figures for 2022-23 are presented, along with selected trends for the most recent ten years.

The 2022-23 bulletin contains the same tables as previous bulletins, however the chapters have been reworked to provide a high-level summary of the data and charts.

These figures demonstrate the continued recovery of the justice system following the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic. 2022-23 marked a return to normal court capacities following the court closures and reduced capacities during 2020-21 and 2021-22. However, it does reflect the challenges of dealing with the resulting backlog of cases and despite an increase in overall volume of proceedings in 2022-23 these remained below 2019-20 levels. Although the impact of the pandemic is evident in these latest figures, caution should be taken in attributing any changes entirely to this. As the data continues to be affected by the pandemic and the justice system's recovery, figures for 2022-23, alongside those from 2020-21 onwards, should not be considered indicative of longer-term trends.

## Contents

|  |           |
|--|-----------|
| <b>Key Points</b> .....  | <b>8</b>  |
| Court proceedings and convictions.....                           | 8         |
| Court sentences.....   | 9         |
| Characteristics of offenders .....                               | 9         |
| Aggravations .....   | 10        |
| Bail.....  | 10        |
| Police disposals .....   | 11        |
| Crown Office and Procurator Fiscal Service disposals .....       | 11        |
| <b>Introduction</b> .....  | <b>12</b> |
| Changes made to this year's report.....                          | 12        |
| Routes through the criminal justice system .....                 | 12        |
| Recorded crime .....   | 13        |
| Police disposals and referrals.....                              | 16        |
| COPFS disposals and referrals .....                              | 16        |
| Court disposals .....  | 17        |
| Disposals interactive dashboard.....                             | 17        |
| Comparability with other statistics .....                        | 17        |
| What is covered by these statistics?.....                        | 18        |
| What is not covered by these statistics?.....                    | 18        |
| An Accredited Official Statistics Publication for Scotland ..... | 19        |
| <b>1. Trends in people proceeded against and convicted</b> ..... | <b>20</b> |
| High-level summary .....   | 20        |
| <b>2. Trends in conviction rates</b> .....                       | <b>23</b> |
| High-level summary .....   | 23        |
| <b>3. Acquittals by crime type</b> .....                         | <b>24</b> |
| High-level summary .....   | 24        |
| <b>4. People convicted in court</b> .....                        | <b>26</b> |
| High-level summary .....   | 26        |
| <b>5. People convicted by crime or offence</b> .....             | <b>29</b> |
| High-level summary .....   | 29        |
| <b>6. Court sentencing</b> .....                                 | <b>33</b> |
| High-level summary .....   | 33        |
| <b>7. Custodial sentences</b> .....                              | <b>36</b> |
| High-level summary .....   | 36        |

|   |           |
|---|-----------|
| Categories of custodial sentence length .....   | 39        |
| Custodial sentences for Sexual crimes.....  | 40        |
| <b>8. Community sentences .....</b>   | <b>42</b> |
| High-level summary .....  | 42        |
| <b>9. Financial penalties and other sentences.....</b>                                | <b>44</b> |
| High-level summary .....  | 44        |
| <b>10. Aggravations .....</b>   | <b>46</b> |
| High-level summary .....  | 46        |
| <b>11. Police disposals.....</b>  | <b>49</b> |
| High-level summary .....  | 49        |
| Recorded Police Warnings .....  | 50        |
| Anti-Social Behaviour Fixed Penalty Notices.....                                      | 51        |
| <b>12. Crown Office and Procurator Fiscal Service disposals .....</b>                 | <b>53</b> |
| High-level summary .....  | 53        |
| <b>13. Bail and undertakings .....</b>  | <b>56</b> |
| High-level summary .....  | 56        |
| Bail orders made, and by main crime type .....  | 57        |
| <b>Data and methodology .....</b>   | <b>58</b> |
| <b>Annex A - Data sources and data standards .....</b>                                | <b>58</b> |
| Court proceedings, police disposals, COPFS disposals, bail and undertakings ..        | 58        |
| Other data sources .....  | 58        |
| Data standards for justice partners .....   | 59        |
| <b>Annex B - Data quality, data processing and data confidentiality .....</b>         | <b>60</b> |
| Data quality: data processing system .....  | 60        |
| Data quality: data processing system update .....                                     | 60        |
| Data quality: validation of CHS data .....  | 60        |
| Data quality: data validation during production of the statistical bulletin.....      | 61        |
| Data confidentiality .....  | 62        |
| Revisions .....   | 62        |
| <b>Annex C – Understanding the statistics in this bulletin and counting rules ...</b> | <b>64</b> |
| (a) the person or company proceeded against or convicted.....                         | 64        |
| (b) individual person.....  | 64        |
| (c) individual offences .....   | 65        |
| Comparisons with other sources .....  | 67        |
| Comparisons with statistics from other countries .....                                | 68        |
| <b>Annex D - Definitions, classifications and notation .....</b>                      | <b>69</b> |

|   |           |
|---|-----------|
| Person's sex .....  | 69        |
| Custodial sentences .....   | 70        |
| Community sentences .....   | 70        |
| Financial penalties .....   | 71        |
| Other sentences .....   | 72        |
| Classification of crimes and offences .....                                   | 73        |
| New grouping structure for the presentation of crime statistics .....         | 73        |
| Crimes .....  | 74        |
| Group 1 – Non-sexual crimes of violence .....                                 | 74        |
| Group 2 – Sexual crimes .....   | 75        |
| Group 3 – Crimes of dishonesty .....  | 76        |
| Group 4 – Damage and reckless behaviour .....                                 | 78        |
| Group 5 – Crimes against society .....  | 78        |
| Coronavirus restrictions .....  | 80        |
| Offences .....  | 80        |
| Group 6 – Antisocial offences .....   | 80        |
| Group 7 – Miscellaneous offences .....  | 81        |
| Group 8 – Road traffic offences .....   | 81        |
| Changes to crime groups .....   | 83        |
| Changes to offence groups .....   | 85        |
| <b>Annex E – Legislative and policy changes .....</b>                         | <b>86</b> |
| Coronavirus legislation .....   | 86        |
| Other changes to legislation during the period covered by this bulletin ..... | 87        |
| <b>Annex F: User engagement .....</b>   | <b>88</b> |
| <b>Tell us what you think .....</b>   | <b>88</b> |
| Enquiries .....   | 88        |
| Join our mailing list .....   | 89        |
| Future publications .....   | 89        |

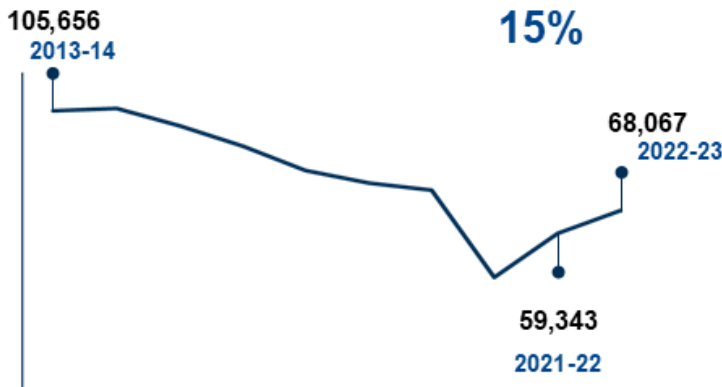
# Criminal Proceedings in Scotland, 2022-23

Justice Analytical Services



## ► Court activity

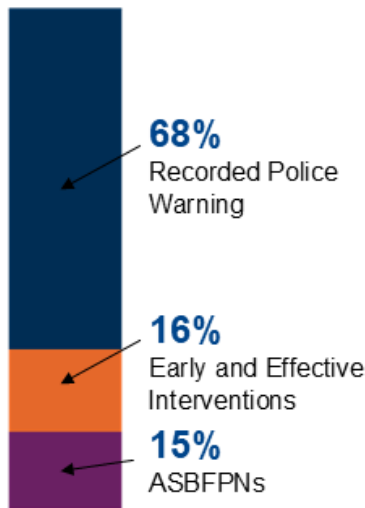
The number of convictions in Scotland increased by 8,724 between 2021-22 and 2022-23, a rise of:



Data for 2020-21, 2021-22 and 2022-23 reflect the continuing impact of the coronavirus pandemic across the justice system and should not be interpreted as indicative of longer-term trends.

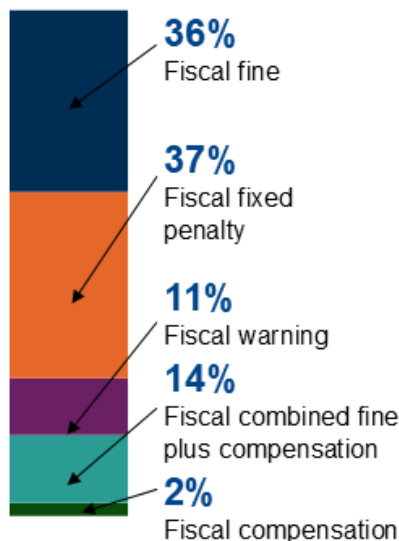
## ► Non-court disposals in 2022-23

Nearly two-thirds of police disposals in 2022-23 were Recorded Police Warnings



Restorative Justice Warnings and Formal Adult Warnings comprised the remaining 1% of police disposals in 2022-23

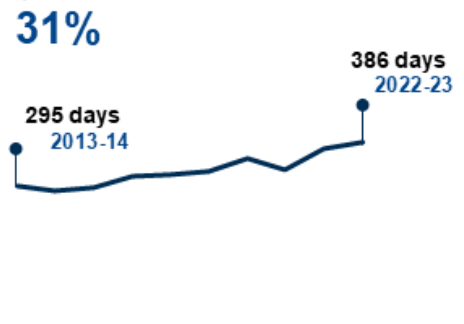
Three-quarters of COPFS disposals in 2022-23 were Fiscal fines and fixed penalties



Fiscal fixed penalties made up less than 1% of COPFS disposals in 2022-23

## ► Custodial sentences

Since 2013-14 the average length of custodial sentences has increased by:



## ► Corresponds with

A smaller proportion of shorter sentences

Proportion 12 months or less

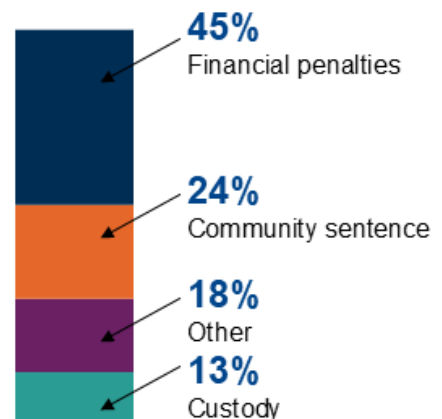
82% → 73%

Proportion longer 12 months

18% → 27%

## ► Main penalty

Over two-fifths of all sentences in 2022-23 were financial penalties



Description: This is an infographic composed of five individual charts showing the headline trends in Criminal Proceedings in Scotland for the period 2013-14 to 2022-

23. The first chart is a line chart showing the total number of convictions over this 10 year span. It shows a 20% increase from 59,343 in 2021-22 to 68,067 in 2022-23 and a decreasing long term trend, with 105,656 in 2013-14. The second chart is a line chart showing that average length of custodial sentences has increased by 31% in 10 years, from 295 days in 2013-14 to 386 days in 2022-23. Additional data shows this is driven by a smaller proportion of shorter sentences compared to longer sentences over the same span. A third chart shows that in 2022-23 sentences given were 45% financial penalties, 24% community sentences, 18% other sentences and 13% custodial sentences. The remaining two charts refer to non-court disposals given by the police and Crown Office and Procurator Fiscal (COPFS), respectively. The first of these shows that more than two-thirds of police disposals are Recorded Police Warnings, with the rest made up of 16% Early and Effective Interventions and 15% Anti-social Behaviour Fixed Penalty Notices. The second of these shows that three-quarters of COPFS disposals are Fiscal fines and fixed penalties, with the two contributing equally. The remaining COPFS disposals were 11% fiscal warnings, 14% fiscal combined fine plus compensation and 2% fiscal compensation.

# Key Points

## Court proceedings and convictions

(Tables 1, 2 and 4a-c)

- In 2022-23 a total of 79,173 people were proceeded against in court, an increase of 17% from 2021-22 (67,698 people) but a decrease of 35% from 2013-14 (121,780 people).
- Of the 79,173 people proceeded against in court in 2022-23, 68,067 people were convicted of at least one of the charges against them. This is an increase of 15% from 2021-22 (59,343 people) but a decrease of 36% from 2013-14 (105,656 people).
- In 2022-23 the overall conviction rate was 86%, down two percentage points from 2021-22 (88%). This is within the range seen in the most recent ten years of data and typical of the pre-pandemic range of 86% to 88%.
- The number of people convicted of a main charge of non-sexual violence in 2022-23 was 11,143. This is an increase of 23% from 2021-22 (9,075 people) but a decrease of 16% from 2013-14 (13,226 people).
- Within non-sexual violence the largest proportional increase in the number of people convicted between 2021-22 and 2022-23 was for a main charge of robbery (up 28% from 300 to 385 people). One of the largest proportional decreases in the last ten years was for a main charge of common assault (down 28% from 11,213 to 8,052 people).
- In 2022-23, 763 people were convicted with a main charge under the Domestic Abuse (Scotland) Act 2018 (DASA). This is an increase of 11% from 2021-22 (690 people). Despite this being the third successive year convictions rose since the introduction of this act, 2022-23 marks the first time that DASA convictions have not outpaced the change in convictions as a whole (up 15% between 2021-22 and 2022-23).
- The number of people convicted of a main charge of a sexual crime in 2022-23 was 1,415. This is an increase of 10% from 2021-22 (1,283 people) and an increase of 25% from 2013-14 (1,129 people).
- Within sexual crime, the number of people convicted of a main charge of rape and attempted rape was 187 in 2022-23. This is an increase of 17% from 2021-22 (160 people) and an increase of 108% from 2013-14 (90 people). The conviction rate for rape and attempted rape fluctuates year to year and was 54% in 2022-23. This is the second highest rate in the 10-year span.
- The number of people convicted of a main charge of a crime of dishonesty in 2022-23 was 5,929. This is an increase of 8% from 2021-22 (5,478 people) and a decrease of 53% from 2013-14 (12,579 people).



## **Court sentences**

(Tables 7-10)

- Of the 68,067 people convicted of a crime in Scottish courts in 2022-23, 8,923 were given a main penalty of a custodial sentence. This is an increase of 9% from 2021-22 (8,186 people) and a decrease of 37% from 2013-14 (14,170 people).
- A custodial sentence was the main penalty imposed on a convicted person in 13% of cases in 2022-23, This represents a decrease of one percentage point from 2021-22 (14%) and is identical to 2013-14 (13%).
- The average length of a custodial sentence, excluding life and indeterminate sentences, was 386 days in 2022-23. This is 3% longer than the 375 days seen in 2021-22 and 31% longer than the 295 days seen in 2013-14. The long-term trend of rising average custody length is likely driven by a complex range of interacting factors. These include a shift in the mix of the seriousness of court cases and a reduction in the use of shorter custodial sentences.
- In 2022-23, the crime types with the longest average custodial sentences (excluding life and indeterminate sentences) were murder and culpable homicide (2,903 days) and rape and attempted rape (2,533 days). These were also the crime types with the longest sentence lengths in the 10-year span beginning in 2013-14.
- Custodial sentence lengths of 3 to 6 months were the most common in the 10-year span from 2013-14 to 2022-23. They accounted for 29% of all custodial sentences in 2022-23.
- In 2022-23, 24% (16,246) of all convictions resulted in a main penalty of a community sentence. This is a 15% increase from the 14,139 seen in 2021-22 and an 11% decrease from the 18,272 seen in 2013-14. Along with 2021-22 (also 24%), this is the joint highest proportion seen in the 10-year span.
- The 15% increase in people given a main penalty of a community sentence between 2021-22 and 2022-23 was driven by a 21% rise in Community Payback Orders (from 10,475 to 12,632). Over the last year, other types of community sentence either held steady or declined.

## **Characteristics of offenders**

(Tables 5, 6, 8c, 10b and 11)

- In 2022-23, the number of people convicted of at least one charge per 1,000 population was 14. This is an increase from 2021-22 (12) and a decrease from 2013-14 (22). The increase since 2021-22 likely reflects the rise in court activity, whereas the decline since 2013-14 may reflect a general trend before the pandemic.
- The number of convicted people per 1,000 population was higher for males in 2022-23 (23) than for females (four). The absolute decline since 2013-14 was larger for males (down from 38) than for females (down from seven).

- With convictions declining over the last ten years, this has led to a decrease in every age group. The largest absolute declines were for those aged 21-30 (down from 52 to 28) and 18-20 (down 43 to 21).

## **Aggravations**

(Tables 12 and 13)

- The statutory domestic abuse aggravation was introduced in 2017-18, and was proven in 7,805 convictions in 2022-23. This has increased by four since 2021-22 (7,801).
- In 2022-23, there were 160 convictions with a statutory aggravation for domestic abuse in relation to a child. This was an increase of 14% from the 140 seen in 2021-22. This aggravation was created under the Domestic Abuse (Scotland) Act 2018 and applies where a child was involved or otherwise adversely affected by the offending. The aggravation came into effect for crimes committed on or after 1 April 2019.
- In respect of hate crime legislation, crimes may be aggravated if the crime is motivated against a particular characteristic. Over the last ten years, the number of convictions with aggravations for disability has the largest percentage increase 613%, rising from 30 to 214 aggravations. Similarly sexual orientation increased by 159% rising from 227 to 588.
- Racial aggravations increase by 1% from 2013-14 to 2022-23. There were 708 aggravations in 2022-23. Transgender is at its highest in a decade with 24 aggravations in 2022-23.
- Religious aggravations have decreased from 256 in 2013-14 to 208 in 2022-23, a decline of 19%.

## **Bail**

(Tables 14-16)

- In 2022-23, 26,562 bail orders were made. This is an increase of 11% from 2021-22 (23,901) but a decrease of 42% from 2013-14 (46,123). These changes largely track those of court activity overall, with prosecutions increasing 17% between 2021-22 and 2022-23 and decreasing 35% between 2013-14 and 2022-23. However, it should be noted that when a case concludes in court may be in a different year to any corresponding bail order being made.
- There were 7,988 bail-related offences in 2022-23 (e.g. breach of bail conditions, such as failure to appear in court after being granted bail). This is an 11% increase from 2021-22 (7,224) but less than 0.5% decrease from 2013-14 (8,003).
- The proportion of bail-related offences as a percentage of all bail orders granted in 2022-23 was 30%. This is the joint highest in the 10-year span with 2021-22 (also 30%). This may in part reflect people subject to bail being on bail for longer periods due to court backlogs.

- In 2022-23, there were 23,747 undertakings to appear in court. This is a 4% decrease from 2021-22 (24,613) and an 7% increase from 2013-14 (22,101).

## **Police disposals**

(Tables 17-18)

- The total number of police disposals remained steady from 31,271 in 2021-22 to 31,278 in 2022-23.
- There were 21,127 Recorded Police Warnings (RPWs) issued during 2022-23, which is an increase of 5% from the 20,139 issued in 2021-22.
- In 2022-23, 4,722 people received an Anti-Social Behaviour Fixed Penalty Notice as a main penalty, a decrease of 11% from the 5,300 issued in 2021-22.
- Early and Effective Interventions decreased by 7% between 2021-22 and 2022-23, from 5,496 to 5,093.

## **Crown Office and Procurator Fiscal Service disposals**

(Tables 20-22)

- In 2022-23 11,004 people were issued with a fiscal fine, which are available for any offence that could be tried without a jury, as a main penalty, a decrease of 7% from the 11,846 issued in 2021-22.
- In 2022-23, 11,364 Fiscal Fixed Penalties, which relate only to certain road traffic offences, were issued to people as a main penalty, a decrease of 6% from 12,068 in 2021-22.

# Introduction

This bulletin presents statistics on the number of people dealt with by the Scottish Criminal Justice System. The statistics are derived from data held on the Criminal History System (CHS), a central hub used for the electronic recording of information on people accused or convicted of perpetrating a criminal act. The CHS is used and maintained by Police Scotland.

All tables referred to below are available in the “[Supporting Documents](#)” Excel workbook for this bulletin. The workbook includes an “Introduction” sheet, with information on how to navigate the tables, alongside a “Notes” sheet, with relevant details to assist users when reading and interpreting results.

## Changes made to this year’s report

Changes have been made to this year’s report as follows:

- A small number of records, where main charge was murder or rape, were identified to be duplicated. These duplicate records were removed and the correction has been back dated for the 10-years covered in this publication.
- From 1 April 2021, Adult Protection Act Offences was no longer counted as a crime. The reason for this is that the charge does not relate to a criminal offence and was created to allow the circumstances to be reported to the Procurator Fiscal. This change has now also been made to the bail and undertakings data for consistency and has been backdated for the 10-years covered in this publication.
- Population figures have been updated in this publication using the latest available NRS mid-year population estimates. This update has been back dated for the ten years included in this publication, in previous publications only the latest year was updated.

Further information on the new crime grouping structure can be found in [Annex D](#), or in the [User Guide to Recorded Crime Statistics in Scotland](#).

## Routes through the criminal justice system

[Chart 1](#) depicts the various possible routes through the criminal justice system. People accused of a crime can be dealt with in a variety of ways: they can be dealt with directly by the police, by measures such as a warning or fixed penalty notice (More information on these measures can be found in the [Police Disposals section](#)); or the police can send a report to the Crown Office and Procurator Fiscal Service (COPFS) for review. COPFS can decide to:

- take no action
- issue a direct measure (see [COPFS Disposals section](#))
- proceed against the individual in Court

The number of people passing through the Justice System at a particular point in time depends in part on levels of crime made known to the police, as well as the

measures that are available for use by criminal justice organisations at that time, as these can influence the point at which action is taken.

At each of the stages presented in [Chart 1](#) information is logged on the CHS regarding the status of the accused. COPFS and the Scottish Courts and Tribunals Service (SCTS) provide updates on their own systems which are fed back electronically to Police Scotland's CHS. When an accused's case is given a final conclusion it is considered completed and the case is "disposed" of from the criminal justice system. The option used to complete the case is referred to as the method of "disposal", whether it is a court disposal used by SCTS or non-court disposal employed by COPFS or the Police.

## **Recorded crime**

The statistical publication, [Recorded Crime in Scotland, 2022-23](#), was published on 20 June 2023. The Recorded Crime publication and this Criminal Proceedings publication divide violations of criminal law into (a) crimes and (b) offences (see [Annex D](#) for further detail). This distinction is made only for statistical reporting purposes.

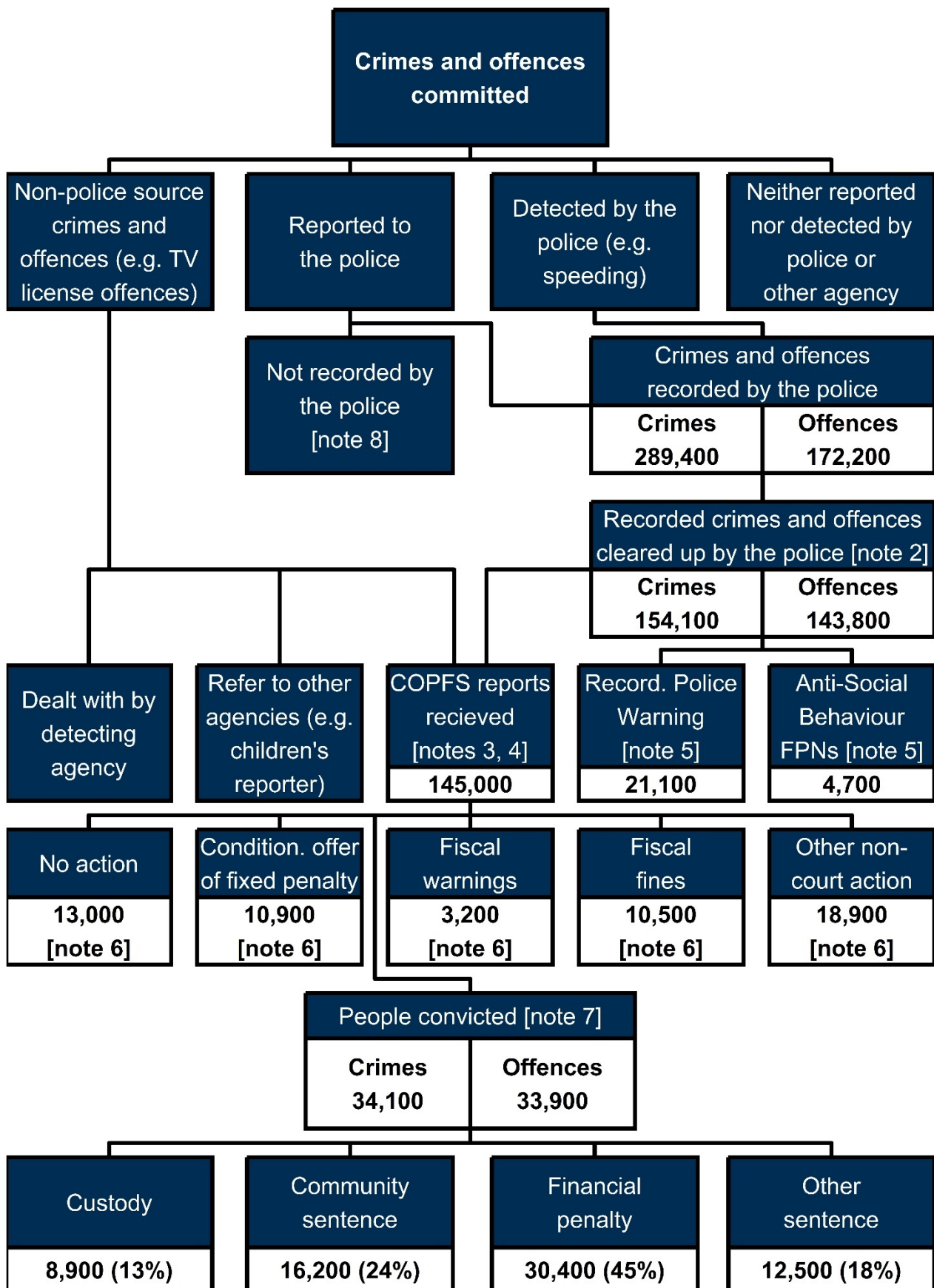
As shown in [Chart 1](#), the total number of crimes recorded by the police in Scotland in 2022-23 was 289,362, an increase of 1% from the 286,464 crimes recorded in 2021-22. The proportion of recorded crimes 'cleared up' by the Police decreased by 0.7 percentage points from 54% in 2021-22 to 53.3% in 2022-23. A crime is regarded as 'cleared-up' where there is sufficient evidence under Scots criminal law to justify consideration of criminal proceedings.

The total number of offences recorded by the police decreased by 5% from 180,913 in 2021-22 to 172,207 in 2022-23. It should be noted that the number of offences recorded by the police generally tends to be affected more by Police activity and operational decisions than the number of crimes.

Whilst differences in counting methods (see [Annex C](#)) mean the figures in the Recorded Crime publication and those in this bulletin are not directly comparable, a crime or offence only comes to the attention of COPFS for consideration for prosecution once it has been recorded as such by the police, so recorded crime figures will have some influence on the number of prosecutions and convictions in Court.

### **Chart 1: Overview of action within the criminal justice system in 2022-23 [note 1].**

Data from police recorded crime, the Crown Office and Procurator Fiscal Service and Scottish criminal court proceedings showing the differing volumes of crimes, offences and both court disposals and direct measures across the Scottish criminal justice system in 2022-23.



Source: Criminal Proceedings in Scotland 2022-23

Notes and description for [Chart 1](#)

Description: This is a detailed flow chart providing an overview of actions taken within the criminal justice system from the point a crime or offence is committed, with notes underneath. Level 1 is one box: all crimes and offences committed. Level 2 shows how it is reported and is split into 4 boxes: Non-police source crimes and offences, reported to the police, detected by the police, and neither reported or detected by police or other agency. Level 3 shows how it is recorded and is split into 2 boxes: crimes (289,400) and offences (172,200) recorded by the police come from a crime or offence being reported or detected by the police. The other box is where it is not recorded by the police (see note 8). Level 4 shows if the crime (154,100) or offence (143,800) has been cleared up by the police (see note 2). Level 5 shows next steps from it being cleared up, with 4,700 Anti-social behaviour fixed penalties (note 5), 21,100 Recorded police warnings (note 5) and 145,000 Reports received by Procurator Fiscal (notes 3, 4). Non-police source crimes and offences from level 2 can also lead to a report received by Procurator Fiscal, or is Dealt with by detecting agency, or is referred to other agencies. Level 6: of the 145,000 reports, there were 13,000 “no action”, 10,900 PF conditional offence of fixed penalties, 3,200 fiscal warnings, 10,500 fiscal fines and 18,900 other non-court action (note 6). Level 7: there were also people convicted for crimes (34,100) and offences (33,900). Level 8: of those convicted, there were 8,900 custodial sentences (13%), 16,200 community sentences (24%), 30,400 financial penalties (45%) and 12,500 other sentences (18%).

Note 1. Figures rounded to the nearest 100, and based on activity during 2022-23.

Note 2. Crimes recorded in 2022-23 may not be cleared up or dealt with until 2023-24 or later.

Note 3. A report to the procurator fiscal may involve more than one crime or offence and more than one alleged offender.

Note 4. Reports to the fiscal on non-criminal matters such as sudden deaths, are not included in this total.

Note 5. Number of people from CHS, Recorded Police Warnings also include six Formal Adult Warnings.

Note 6. Number of cases; Data taken from Crown Office [Case processing statistics 2019 to 2024](#)

Note 7. Figures for people with a charge proved count the number of different proceedings in which a person is convicted. People may be convicted of multiple charges in one proceeding, but this is counted as one person convicted per proceeding.

Note 8. It may be deemed that an incident does not warrant recording e.g. if there is a lack of evidence that a crime was committed.

A number of outcomes may result in subsequent prosecutions or referrals to other agencies, for example if a condition such as payment of a fixed penalty is not complied with. For simplicity, these pathways are not shown [Chart 1](#).

## Police disposals and referrals

[Chart 1](#) also shows that following a crime being cleared up, Police Scotland will either send a report to COPFS to decide what action should be taken or will deal with the case directly. [Section 11](#) of this report contains statistics on the following non-court disposals available to the police when dealing with a case directly:

- Recorded Police Warnings (RPWs) were introduced on 11 January 2016 to deal with a wider range of low-level offences. A warning can be issued on the spot, or a notice issued retrospectively. This scheme replaced and extended Formal Adult Warnings.
- Anti-Social Behaviour Fixed Penalty Notices (ASBFPNs) as provided for in the [Antisocial Behaviour etc \(Scotland\) Act 2004](#) for a range of offences including drunken-related behaviours and playing loud music; and
- actions which are used specifically for juveniles (aged 8 to 17) such as Restorative Justice Warnings and Early and Effective Interventions (EEI).

There are further options available to the police that we are not able to provide data on such as conditional offers of a fixed penalty notice for coronavirus restrictions or moving motor vehicle offences. A full listing of the range of disposals available can be seen in [Annex D](#).

## COPFS disposals and referrals

In 2022-23, COPFS received 144,957 criminal reports (from the police and other specialist reporting agencies), a decrease of 3% compared to 2021-22 (148,925) – more information is available in the [Case processing statistics 2019 to 2024](#).

Where there is sufficient evidence and it is in the public interest to take action, prosecution in court is only one of a range of possible options the Procurator Fiscal has for dealing with people they have received a report for and, where appropriate, they may issue a direct measure. Statistics for the following non-court disposals are included in this publication:

- Fiscal fines of between £50 and £500
- Compensation orders of up to £5,000
- Fiscal warnings, and
- Fixed penalties of between £50 and £300, generally issued for motor vehicle offences.

There are further actions that the Procurator Fiscal can take that are not included in this report such as diverting cases to social work and other agencies and referrals to the Scottish Children's Reporter Administration (SCRA).

A full listing of the range of disposals available can be seen in [Annex D](#).



## Court disposals

The majority of statistics in this publication provide information on criminal cases brought to court and are contained in Sections 1 to 10. The outcomes possible for the person proceeded against are:

- the person is convicted, either after pleading guilty or being found guilty after evidence has been heard in Court
- the person is acquitted following a not guilty verdict
- the person is acquitted following a not proven verdict
- the person has their plea of not guilty accepted by the prosecutor or the case against them is deserted i.e. the Crown decides no longer to proceed with a prosecution at that time (though they may in some cases decide to prosecute at a future date)

## Disposals interactive dashboard

The disposals interactive dashboard is available here:

<https://scotland.shinyapps.io/sg-criminal-disposals-dashboard/>. This dashboard provides management information on disposals at charge level in Scottish criminal courts. The dashboard presents all disposals for each charge that is proved in court. The dashboard allows users to investigate trends from April 2017 by financial year or financial year quarter and is updated quarterly.

This data in the dashboard is not directly comparable to the data in this Criminal Proceedings bulletin as in this bulletin the data usually relates to the crime or offence group for which a person is proceeded against or convicted relate to the main charge involved. If there are multiple charges libelled on a Complaint or Indictment, and thereafter proven against an accused in a single proceeding, the main charge is the crime or offence receiving the most severe penalty.

Although the trends shown in the dashboard and the ones published in the Criminal Proceedings bulletin are similar, the numbers presented in the dashboard are larger than those presented in the bulletin. Data presented in the dashboard include all disposals issued for a charge including those disposals sometimes referred to as secondary disposals (often for a specific order or warning given alongside a primary disposal). These secondary disposals appear in dashboard in the Other disposals category meaning that the numbers in this category appear larger than might be expected. The dashboard provides detailed information about custodial and community disposals.

## Comparability with other statistics

Please note that the statistics presented in [Chart 1](#) are taken from multiple data sources which are not strictly comparable, and there is no direct relationship between the number of crimes and offences recorded by the police and the number of follow-up actions taken by other agencies within the criminal justice system. For example, in the recorded crime statistics a single crime or offence recorded by the

Police may have more than one perpetrator, each of whom would be counted separately in the criminal proceedings statistics. There are also some offences included in this bulletin, such as failure to pay a television licence, which are reported directly to the procurator fiscal by specialist reporting agencies such as TV Licensing and therefore are not included in the police recorded crime statistics.

There are other comparability issues in that crimes or offences recorded and cleared up by the Police may not be processed by the Procurator Fiscal or the Courts in the same year as they were recorded. There is also the possibility that the crime or offence recorded by the police is altered by the Procurator Fiscal during the marking process.

For full details of comparability issues please see the relevant sections in [Annex C](#).

### **What is covered by these statistics?**

These statistics cover people who are dealt with at different stages of the Scottish Criminal Justice System, specifically:

1. Police disposals, including:
  - Anti Social Behaviour Fixed Penalty Notices
  - Recorded Police Warnings
  - Early and Effective Interventions
2. Crown Office and Procurator Fiscal Service disposals, including:
  - Fiscal fines
  - Fixed penalties
  - Fiscal warnings
  - Compensation orders
3. Scottish courts, including:
  - Proceedings
  - Convictions
  - Sentencing outcomes
  - Bail

### **What is not covered by these statistics?**

- Police Fixed Penalty Notices for road traffic and coronavirus restriction offences
- Fiscal work orders
- Appeals
- Children's hearing activity and most diversions for young people
- Diversions from prosecution

## **An Accredited Official Statistics Publication for Scotland**

These statistics are [accredited official statistics](#). The Office for Statistics Regulation has independently reviewed and accredited these statistics as complying with the standards of trustworthiness, quality and value in the [Code of Practice for Statistics](#).

These statistics were accredited in June 2012, in assessment report 125 on the [UK Statistics Authority](#) website.

Accredited official statistics are called National Statistics in the [Statistics and Registration Service Act 2007](#).

Scottish Government statistics are regulated by the Office for Statistics Regulation (OSR). OSR sets the standards of trustworthiness, quality and value in the [Code of Practice for Statistics](#) that all producers of official statistics should adhere to.

More information about Scottish Government statistics is available on the [Scottish Government website](#).

# 1. Trends in people proceeded against and convicted

(Tables 1, 2, 4a-c, 5a-c and 6a-c)

Unless otherwise stated, references in this bulletin to the crime or offence group for which a person is proceeded against or convicted relate to the main charge involved. If there are multiple charges libelled on a Complaint or Indictment, and thereafter proven against an accused in a single proceeding, the main charge is the crime or offence receiving the most severe penalty (as defined in Annex C). The final column of Table 4b provides counts of individual crimes or offences with a charge proven regardless of whether or not it was the main crime or offence involved. Please note that where an accused is subject to multiple separate proceedings, that accused is counted multiple times in the figures presented in this bulletin

## High-level summary

### Court proceedings and convictions

(Tables 1, 2, 4a-c, 5a-c and 6a-c)

#### Year on year change (2021-22 to 2022-23)

- 79,173 people were proceeded against in court in 2022-23, a rise of 17% on 2021-22 (67,698 proceedings)
- There were 68,067 convictions in 2022-23, an increase of 15% from 2021-22 (59,343 convictions)

#### Change over the latest 10 years (2013-14 to 2022-23)

- The number of people proceeded against decreased by 35% over the latest ten years, from 121,780 proceedings in 2013-14 to 79,173 proceedings in 2022-23.
- Over the same period, the number of convictions decreased by 36%, from 105,656 convictions in 2013-14 to 68,067 convictions in 2022-23.

#### Breakdown by gender and age

- In 2022-23 males accounted for 83% (56,375 convictions) of all convictions, a similar proportion as each year in the past ten years (range 82% to 83%). More males than females were convicted in all crime and offence categories.
- In 2022-23, the highest number of convictions per 1,000 population was for the 31 to 40 age group overall (31 per 1,000), the 21 to 30 age group also showing a similar 28 convictions per 1,000 population. In comparison in 2013-14, the age group with the highest numbers of convictions per 1,000 population was those aged 21 to 30, with 52 convictions per 1,000 population.

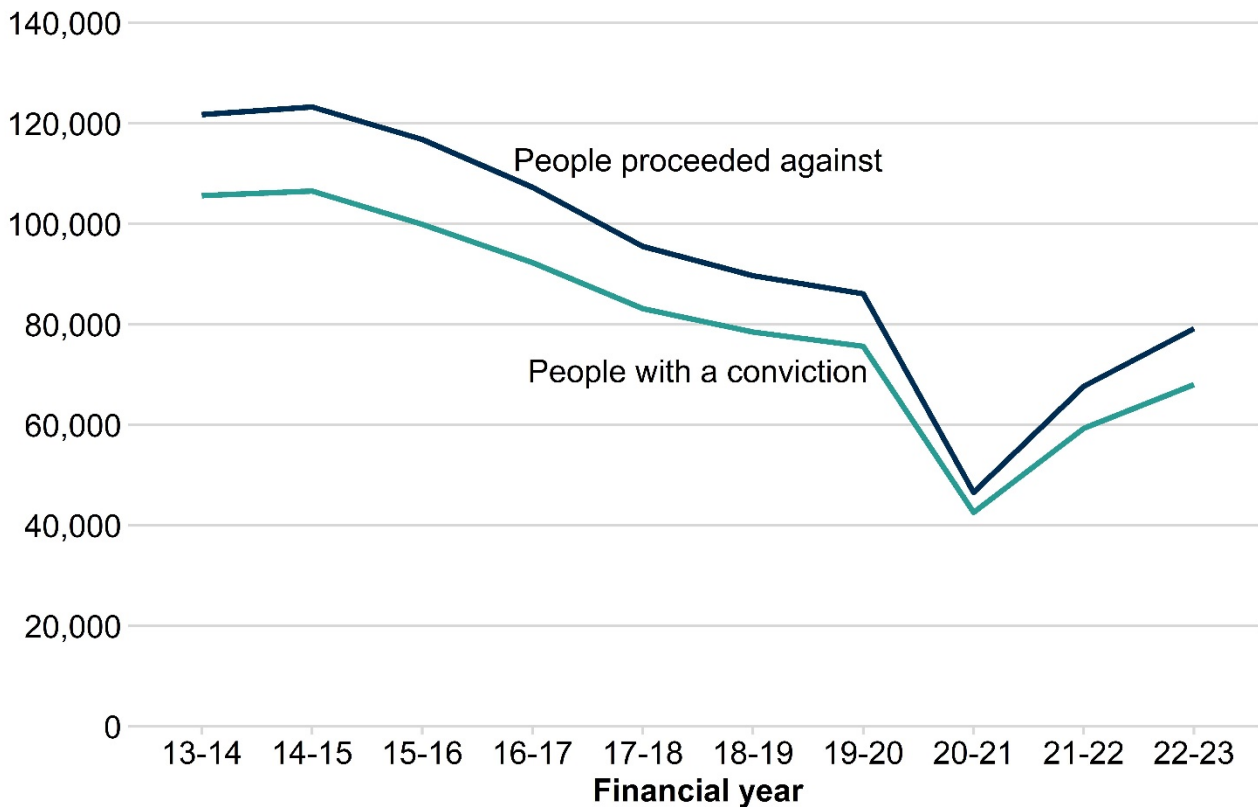
### Key points to note

- The number of people convicted of a main charge of non-sexual violence in 2022-23 was 11,143. This is an increase of 23% on 2021-22 (9,075 people) but a decrease of 16% on 2013-14 (13,226 people).
- Convictions under the Domestic Abuse (Scotland) Act 2018, which was the only non-sexual crime of violence to increase between 2019-20 and 2020-21, continued to increase in 2022-23 by 11% (up from 690 in 2021-22 to 763).

### Chart 2. Over the longer term proceedings and convictions have declined.

People proceeded against and convicted in Scottish courts, 2013-14 to 2022-23.

#### Number of people



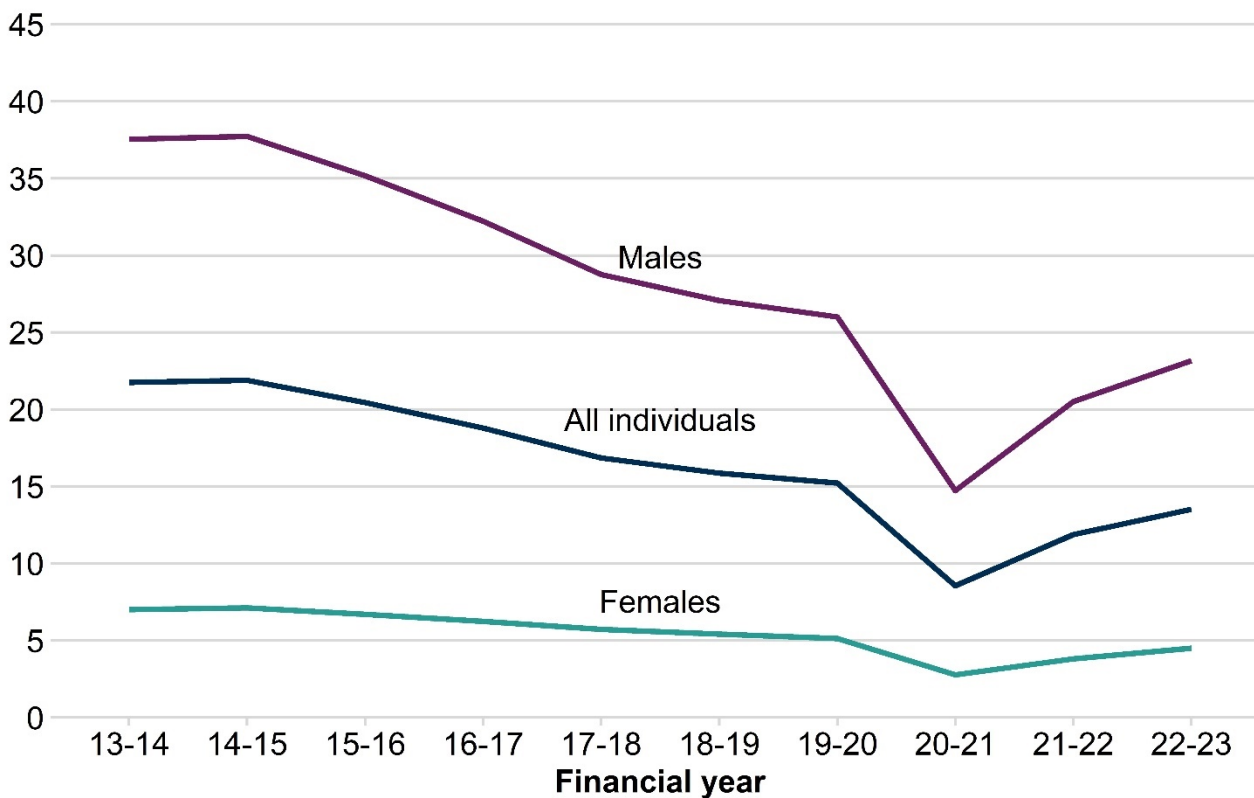
Source: Criminal Proceedings in Scotland 2022-23

The rise in the number of convictions between 2021-22 and 2022-23 has been led by an increase in absolute numbers for: Common assault (up 24% to 8,052), Threatening and abusive behaviour (up 16% to 10,573) and Crimes against public justice (up 14% to 9,053). Together these three offence categories represented 40% of convictions in 2021-22 and 41% in 2022-23.

**Chart 3. The longer term decline in per capita convictions is driven by a fall in males.**

Convictions per 1,000 population in Scottish criminal courts, by sex, 2013-14 to 2022-23.

**Convictions per 1,000 population**



Source: Criminal Proceedings in Scotland 2022-23

## 2. Trends in conviction rates

(Tables 4a-c)

Conviction rates are calculated by dividing the number of people convicted by the number of people proceeded against. Care should be taken when interpreting data on conviction rates. Conviction rates include guilty pleas and those who have been found guilty after evidence has been heard in court. Conviction rates are dependent on a number of factors, including the strength of evidence available; and the complexity of the case and the number of guilty pleas. However, all convictions are wholly dependent upon the decision of the court. A high conviction rate could indicate that cases brought to court are evidentially strong or straightforward (for example road traffic offences), but it could also indicate that cases which are evidentially weak, for instance, lacking sufficient admissible evidence are not reaching court. Conversely, a low conviction rate could indicate that the highly complex or evidentially difficult cases are brought to Court, but, the judge or jury is unwilling to accept the evidence provided by the prosecutor and thereafter unable to convict the accused. Further detail of acquittals with respect to rape and attempted rape can be seen in [Section 3](#).

### High-level summary

#### Trends in conviction rates, 2013-14 to 2022-23

(Tables 4a-4c)

#### Year on year change (2021-22 to 2022-23)

The rise in the number of convictions between 2021-22 and 2022-23 has been led by an increase in absolute numbers for:

- Common assault (up 23% to 10,276)
- Threatening and abusive behaviour (up 18% to 12,090)
- Crimes against public justice (up 16% to 10,161)
- Driving under the influence (up 32% to 4,846)

#### Change over the latest 10 years (2013-14 to 2022-23)

Over the last ten years, the number of convictions fell for most crimes and offences with the largest falls in:

- Speeding (down 69%)
- Shoplifting (down 54%)
- Common assault (down 28%)

There were however increases in convictions for most sexual crimes, (up by 25% since 2013-14).

#### Key points to note

- The overall conviction rate decreased to 86% in 2022-23, down from 88% in 2021-22. This marks a return to the levels seen pre-pandemic where, between 2013-14 and 2019-20, conviction rates ranged from 86% to 88%.

### 3. Acquittals by crime type

(Table 2)

When an accused person is found not guilty of a charge, or the charge is not proven, this is called an 'acquittal'.

#### High-level summary

#### Acquittals by crime type

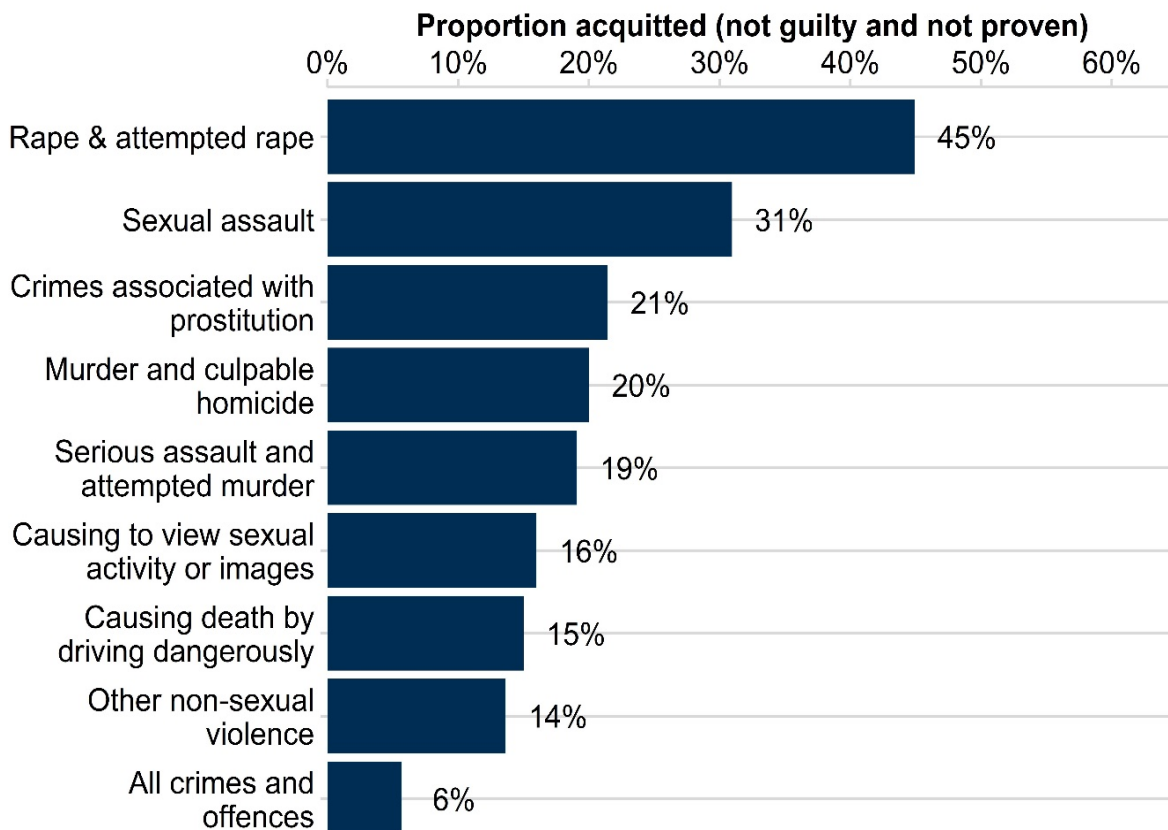
(Table 2)

- In 2022-23, 4% of people were acquitted on a 'not guilty' verdict, and 1% were acquitted on a 'not proven' verdict.
- 8% either had a plea of 'not guilty' accepted or their case was deserted by the prosecution or the Court.
- These proportions are broadly unchanged over the last five years.
- The highest rate of acquittal was seen for rape and attempted rape, where 45% or 155 of the 345 people proceeded against were acquitted
- 31% of the people proceeded against for sexual assault were acquitted (181 out of 585)
- The highest rate of acquittal for non-sexual crimes of violence was for murder and culpable homicide (20% or 11 out of 55 people proceeded against)



**Chart 4. Rape & attempted rape and Sexual assault have the highest acquittal rates.**

Crime types with the highest acquittal rates (not guilty and not proven) in Scottish courts in 2022-23.



Source: Criminal Proceedings in Scotland 2022-23

[Chart 4](#) shows the crime types with the highest acquittal rates in comparison with the overall rate of 6% in 2022-23.

## 4. People convicted in court

(Table 3)

There are four main court types that deal with criminal cases in Scotland.

- The High Court, which deals with the most serious crimes such as murder, rape and armed robbery. Murder convictions carry a mandatory life sentence and the maximum penalty that may be imposed in the other cases is up to life imprisonment and/or an unlimited fine. The exact maximum in a given case will be determined by any limit provided for in law for the offences being prosecuted. A single judge hears cases with a jury of 15 people. The jury reach a verdict, and if a conviction arises, the judge determines sentence.
- Sheriff Courts, which deal with the majority of cases in Scotland. These can either be solemn, where the Sheriff sits with a jury of 15 people or summary, where the Sheriff sits alone [note 1]. For solemn cases, the jury reaches a verdict and, if a conviction arises, the Sheriff determines sentence. The maximum penalty for solemn cases is five years' imprisonment and/or an unlimited fine. For summary cases, the Sheriff reaches a verdict and, if a conviction arises, determines the sentence. The maximum penalty that may be imposed (in most circumstances [note 2]) is one year's imprisonment and/or a £10,000 fine.
- The Justice of the Peace courts. These deal with the less serious crimes, such as speeding, shoplifting and certain types of breach of the peace. They are chaired by a Justice of the Peace or "lay magistrate" who has been appointed from the local community and trained in criminal law and procedure. They can impose custodial sentences of up to 60 days and fines up to £2,500.

### High-level summary

#### People Convicted in court

(Tables 3)

- 68,067 people were convicted in a Scottish court in 2022-23
- 68% of these were convicted in a sheriff summary court

#### Year on year change (2021-22 to 2022-23)

There was an increase between 2021-22 and 2022-23 in the number of people convicted in each court type:

- High court convictions up 30% to 733
- Sheriff solemn court convictions up 17% to 5,563
- Sheriff summary court convictions up 16% to 46,340
- Justice of the peace court convictions up 9% to 15,431

#### Change over the latest 10 years (2013-14 to 2022-23)

- There was an overall decrease of 36% in the number of convictions from 2013-14 to 2022-23. Over the same time period:

- High court convictions have risen by 4%
- Sheriff solemn court convictions have risen by 17%
- Sheriff summary court convictions have fallen by 21%
- Justice of the peace court convictions have fallen by 63%

**Key points to note**

- The majority of convictions have taken place in a sheriff summary court every year since 2013-14. The proportion of sheriff summary court convictions has risen from 55% in 2013-14 to 68% in 2022-23

[Chart 5](#) shows the changes in the proportion of convictions seen in each court type since 2013-14.

Please note that recording delays are typical for High Court activity due to the complex nature of cases held there. As a result, the total number of High Court convictions for 2022-23 may be slightly underestimated, and will likely be revised upwards in the 2023-24 bulletin. More information is available in the [Annex revisions section](#).

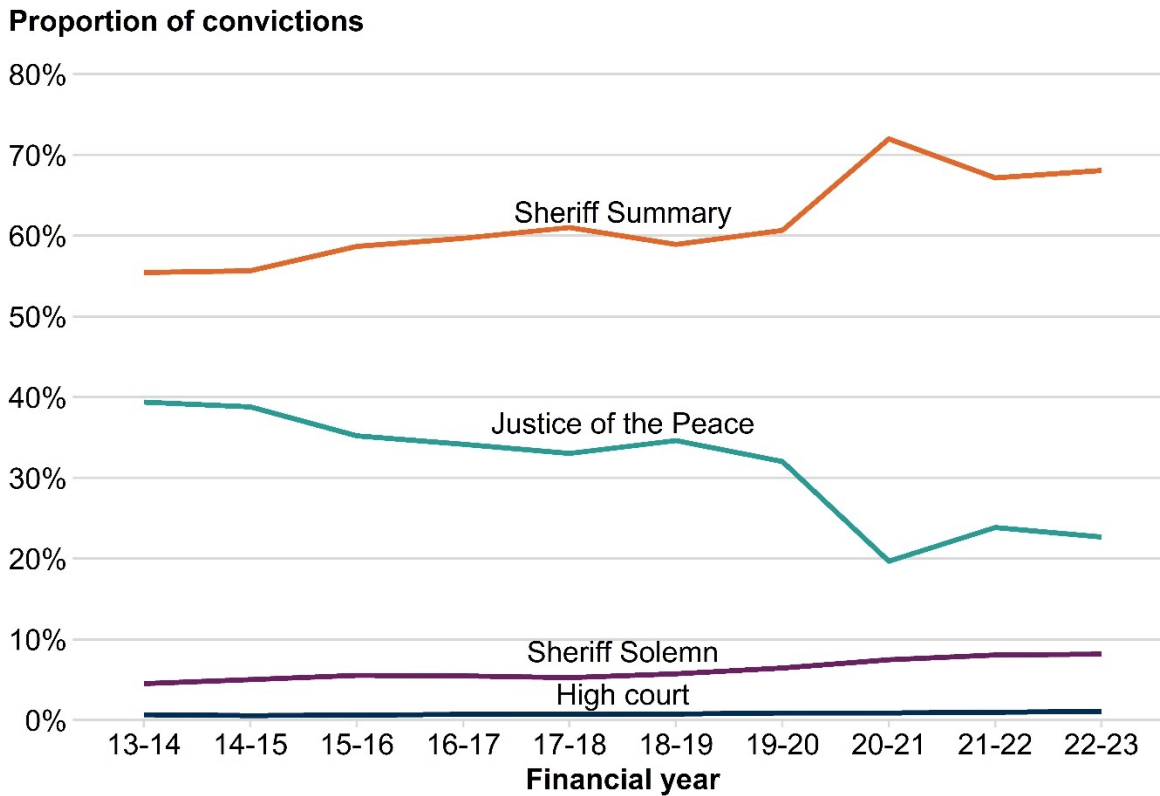
Notes for Section 4. People convicted in court

Note 1. In a Sheriff Solemn court, the jury determines whether an accused is guilty or not and the Sheriff determines sentence. In a Sheriff Summary court, the Sheriff determines both whether an accused is guilty or not and, if guilty, the sentence.

Note 2. The court can sentence up to an additional six months where there is a bail aggravation on the charge, and Sheriff Court fines can be higher than £10,000 where there is legislative provision for this in relation to a specific offence.

**Chart 5. Over the long term the proportion of convictions made in Justice of the Peace courts has declined, with all other court types proportionally increasing.**

Proportion of convictions by court type, 2013-14 to 2022-23.



Source: Criminal Proceedings in Scotland 2022-23

## 5. People convicted by crime or offence

(Tables 4a and 4b)

Breaches of criminal law can be divided into ‘crimes’ and ‘offences’. This distinction is made only for statistical reporting purposes. Although the breaches allocated under “crimes” can generally be considered to be more serious, there are some “offences” that have more severe punishments associated with them than “crimes”.

The Scottish Government has recently introduced a new classification of crimes and offences following a consultation in response to user needs. The full paper [Presenting official statistics on recorded crime and related topics: consultation](#) provides users with more information on background to the consultation and the [new grouping structure](#) for the presentation of crime statistics section provides a full breakdown of the new classification structure. The biggest change is the transfer of Common assault and Stalking from the Miscellaneous offences group to the Non-sexual crimes of violence group.

### High-level summary

#### People convicted by crime or offence group

(Tables 4a-b and 6a-b)

- In 2022-23, 53% of all breaches were crimes and 47% were offences

#### Year on year change (2021-22 to 2022-23)

Crimes:

- Between 2021-22 and 2022-23, convictions for crimes increased by 15%
- Non-sexual violence convictions increased by 2,068 (23%)
- Crimes against society convictions increased by 1,627 (13%)
- Crimes of dishonesty convictions increased by 451 (8%)
- Damage and reckless behaviour convictions increased by 246 (17%)
- Sexual crimes convictions increased by 132 (10%)

Offences:

- Between 2021-22 and 2022-23, convictions for offences increased by 14%
- Road traffic offences increased by 2,509 (13%)
- Antisocial offences increased by 1,448 (15%)
- Miscellaneous offences increased by 261 (22%)

#### Change over the latest 10 years (2013-14 to 2022-23)

Crimes:

- Between 2013-14 and 2022-23, convictions for crimes decreased by 36%
- Non-sexual violence convictions decreased by 2,083 (16%)
- Crimes against society convictions decreased by 4,387 (24%)
- Crimes of dishonesty convictions decreased by 6,650 (53%)
- Damage and reckless behaviour convictions decreased by 775 (31%)
- Sexual crimes convictions increased by 286 (25%)

## Offences:

- Between 2013-14 and 2022-23, convictions for offences decreased by 41%
- Road traffic offences decreased by 18,766 (47%)
- Antisocial offences decreased by 3,810 (26%)
- Miscellaneous offences decreased by 1,452 (50%)

## Breakdown by age and sex

- In 2022-23, males accounted for 81% (8,976) of convictions for Non-sexual crimes of violence and 95% of convictions for sexual crimes (1,346).
- In 2022-23, those age over 40 were the largest age group convicted for sexual crimes, (44% or 629 convictions) and road traffic offences (36% or 7,786 convictions). Those aged 31-40 were the largest age group of those convicted for crimes of dishonesty (40% or 2,360 convictions)

## Key points to note

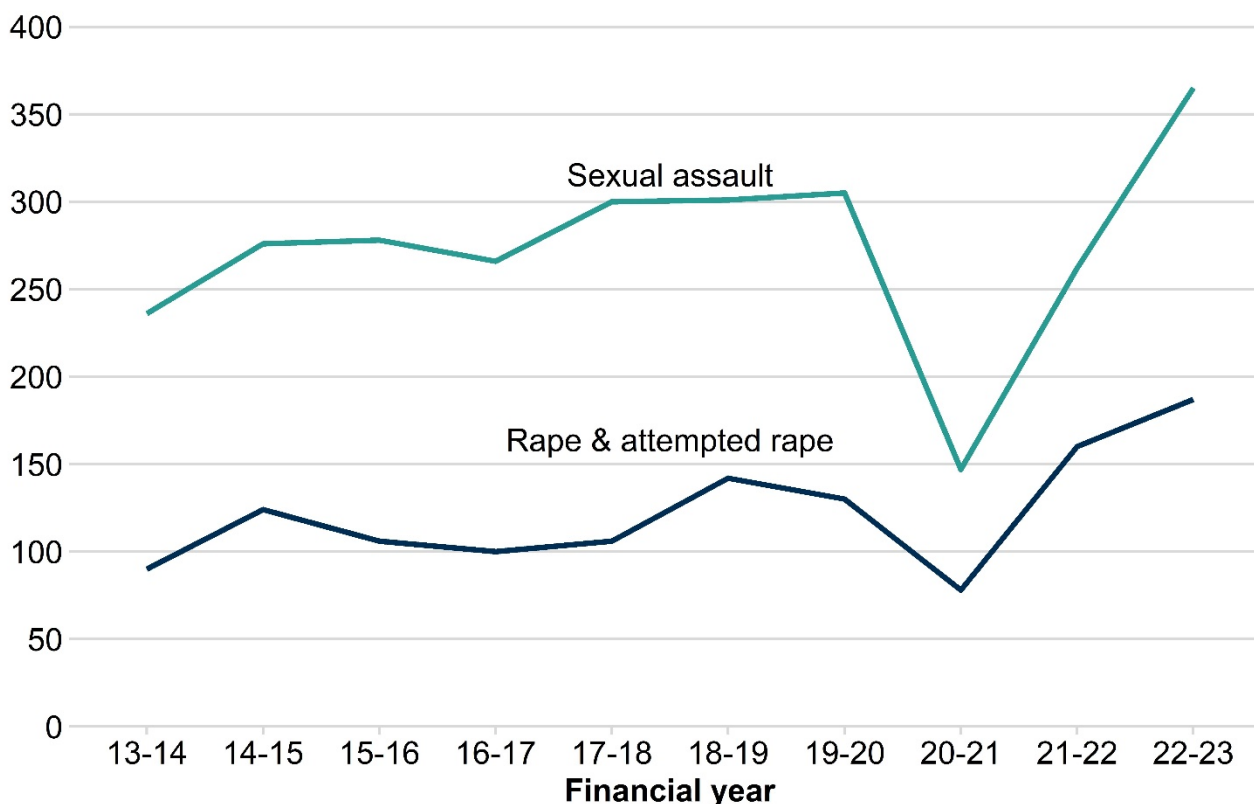
- Within sexual crime, the number of people convicted of a main charge of Rape and attempted rape was 187 in 2022-23. This is the highest total since comparable records began in 1989 and is an increase of 17% on 2021-22 (160 people) and an increase of 108% on 2013-14 (90 people). The conviction rate for Rape and attempted rape fluctuates year to year and was 54% in 2022-23. This is the second highest rate in the 10-year span.
- The number of people convicted of a main charge of a crime of dishonesty in 2022-23 was 5,929. This is an increase of 8% on 2021-22 (5,478 people) and a decrease of 53% on 2013-14 (12,579 people).

Please note that recording delays are typical for high court activity due to the complex nature of cases held there. As a result the number of proceedings and convictions for Rape and attempted rape for 2021-22 may be slightly underestimated. More information is available in the [Annex B revisions](#) section.

**Chart 6. Longer term trends in Rape and attempted rape and Sexual assault convictions [Note 1] show general increases.**

Rape and attempted rape and Sexual assault convictions in Scottish courts, 2013-14 to 2022-23.

**Number of Rape and attempted rape and Sexual assault convictions**



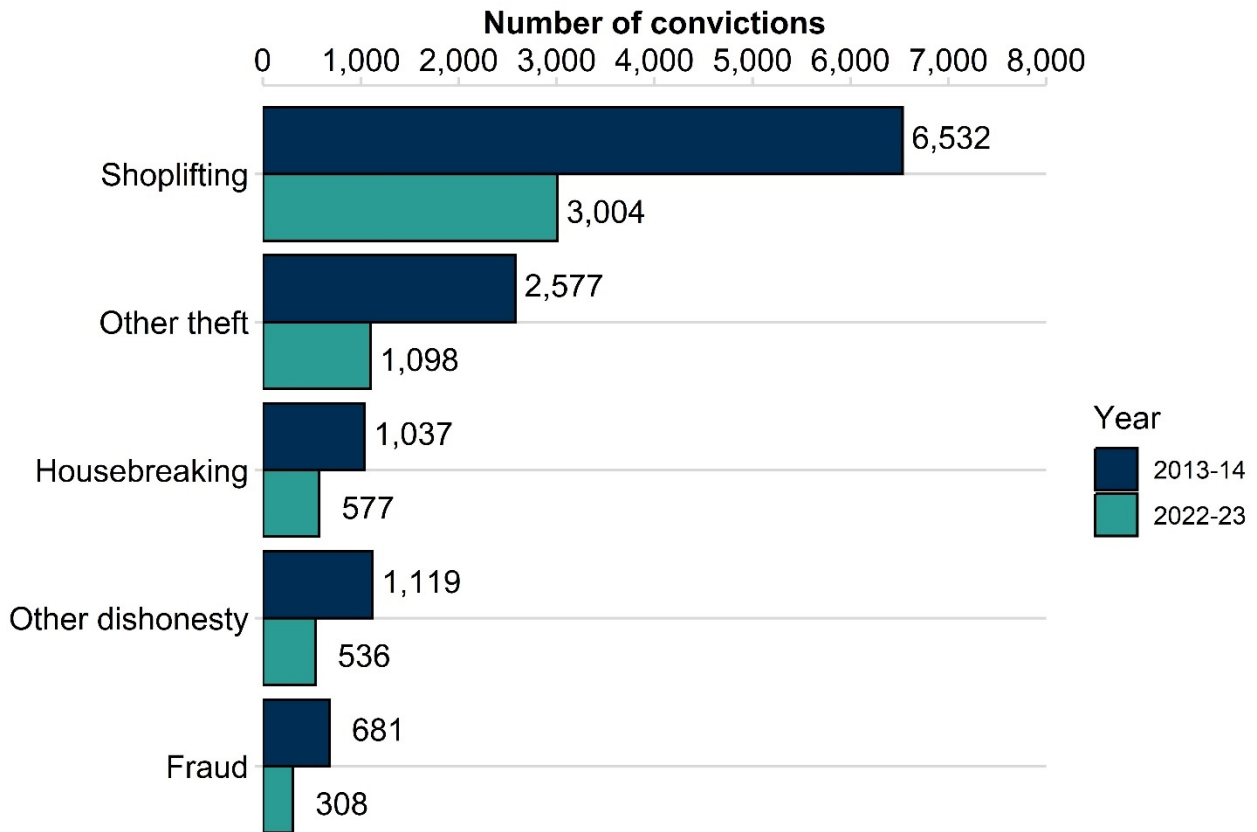
Source: Criminal Proceedings in Scotland 2022-23

**Notes for Sexual crimes**

Note 1. Although Sexual crimes includes more categories, for clarity [Chart 6](#) is limited to just Rape and attempted rape and Sexual assault. These two categories both attract the highest proportion of custodial sentences and have the longest average custodial sentence length.

**Chart 7. Convictions for Crimes of dishonesty have declined over the long term.**

Comparison of convictions in Scottish courts for the most common types of Crimes of dishonesty, 2013-14 and 2022-23.



Source: Criminal Proceedings in Scotland 2022-23



## 6. Court sentencing

(Tables 7-8 and 11)

The main types of penalty or sentence given to those found guilty in Scottish Courts are custodial sentences, community sentences and financial penalties.

For less serious cases or where it is felt the main punishment types are not suitable, the individual found guilty can be “admonished” (given a verbal warning from the Sheriff). A full listing of the range of court disposals is outlined in [Annex D](#).

### High-level summary

#### Headline in Court sentencing

(Tables 7a, 7b, 11)

Of all people convicted during 2022-23:

- 13% were issued custodial sentences (8,923)
- 24% were issued community sentences (16,246), and
- 45% were issued financial penalties (30,351)

A further 18% of people were issued other sentences (12,547), which are mostly admonishments (Chart 7).

#### Year on year change (2021-22 to 2022-23)

There was an overall increase of 15% between 2021-22 and 2022-23 in the number of people convicted and in each main penalty as follows:

- Custodial sentences up 9% to 8,923
- Community sentences up 15% to 16,246
- Financial penalties up 13% to 30,351
- All other sentences up 22% to 12,547

#### Change over the latest 10 years (2013-14 to 2022-23)

There was an overall decrease of 36% in the number of convictions from 2013-14 to 2022-23. Over the same time period:

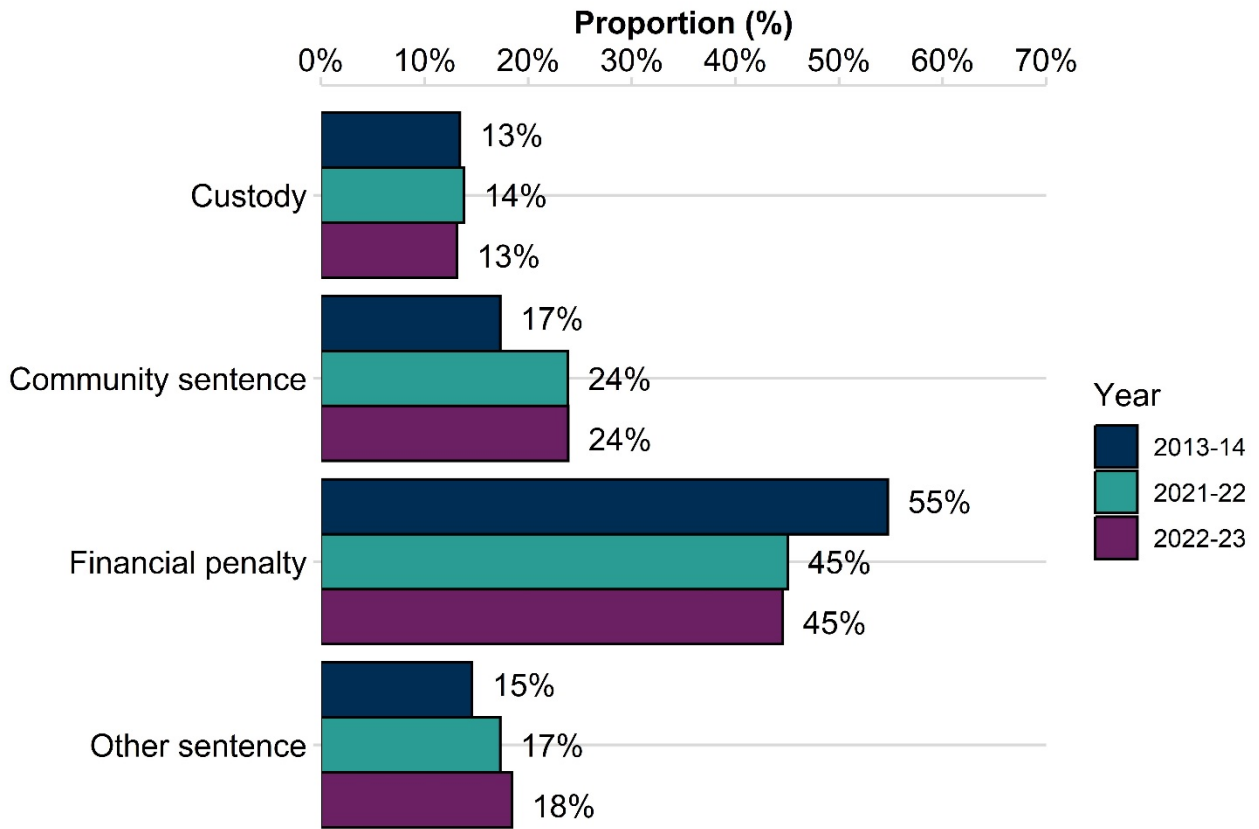
- Custodial sentences have fallen by 37%
- Community sentences have fallen by 11%
- Financial Penalties have fallen by 47%
- All other sentences have fallen by 19%

#### Key points to note

- The 15% increase in people given a main penalty of a community sentence between 2021-22 and 2022-23 was driven by a 21% rise in Community Payback Orders (from 10,475 to 12,632). Over the same span, other types of community sentence either held steady or declined.

**Chart 8. Longer term trends in sentencing show shifts away from financial penalties and towards community sentences.**

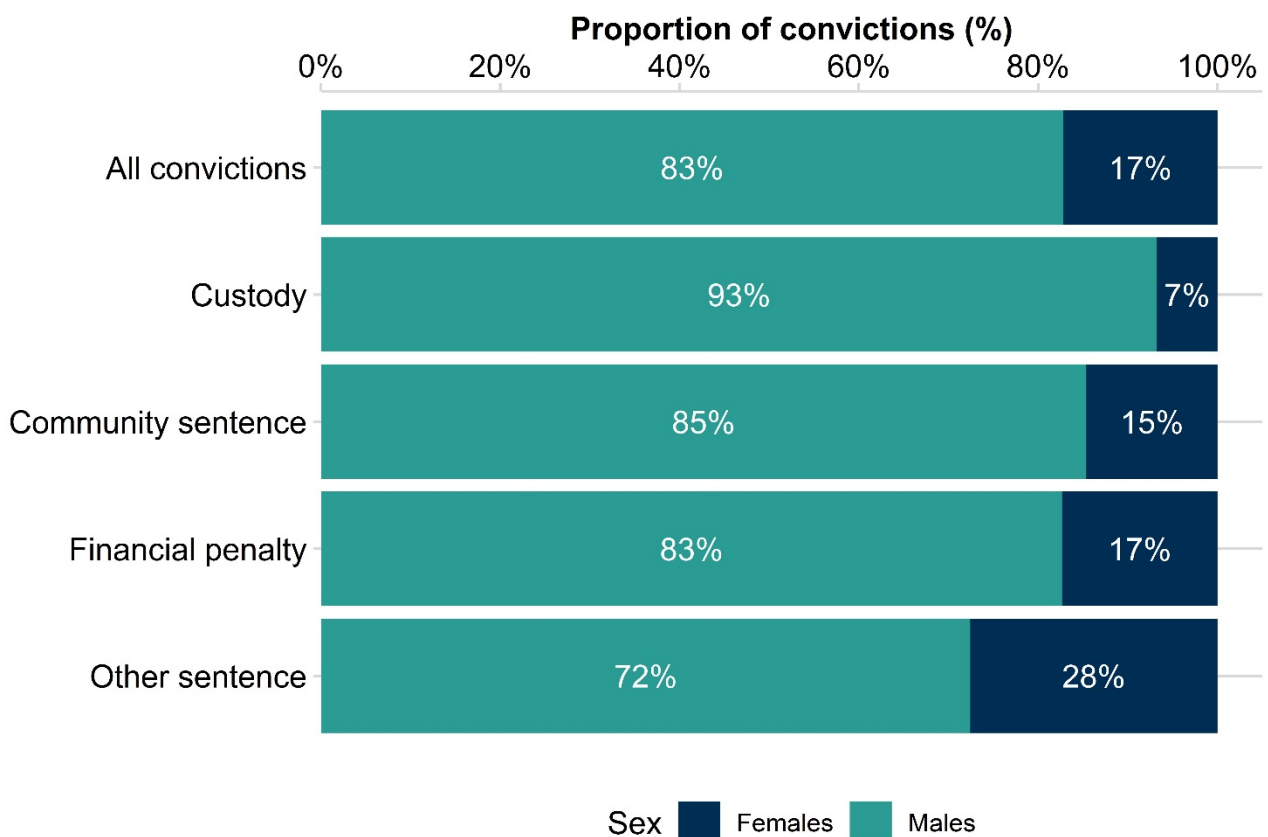
Proportion of sentence types imposed in Scottish criminal courts, 2013-14, 2021-22 and 2022-23.



Source: Criminal Proceedings in Scotland 2022-23

### Chart 9. Males make up a larger proportion of custodial and community sentences than convictions as a whole.

Total convictions and disposal type in Scottish criminal courts, by gender, 2022-23.



Source: Criminal Proceedings in Scotland 2022-23

## 7. Custodial sentences

(Tables 7a-b, 8a-c, 9 and 10a-d)

Custodial sentences comprise convicted people who are sent to prison or a young offenders' institution. The number of custodial sentences given is affected by a range of factors, including the number of convictions in any given year, the types of crimes for which people are being convicted and sentencing guidelines.

Courts will consider the full facts and circumstances of a case before deciding an appropriate sentence in a given case. This includes whether or not the offender has been convicted before and whether there are any mitigating circumstances. These statistics do not take into account the factors influencing the sentencing decisions.

### High-level summary

#### Custodial sentences

**(Tables 7a-b, 8a-c, 9 and 10a-d)**

Custodial sentences comprise convicted people who are sent to prison or a young offenders' institution.

In 2022-23, there were 8,923 custodial sentences issued. Of these:

- 8,093 were prison sentences (91%)
- 288 were young offenders institution sentences (3%)
- 320 were supervised release order sentences (4%)
- 200 were extended sentences (2%)
- 20 were Orders for life long restriction (<1%)

Custodial sentences are more likely to be issued for more serious crimes, for example:

- 98% of convictions for murder and culpable homicide and 96% of rape and attempted rape convictions resulted in a custodial sentence.
- Only 1% of road traffic offences convictions resulted in a custodial sentence

#### Year on year change (2021-22 to 2022-23)

- Between 2021-22 and 2022-23 all custodial sentences increased by 9% to 8,923
- Prison sentences increased by 7%
- Young offender institution sentences increased by 23%
- Supervised order sentences increased by 34%
- The number of custodial sentences issued for convictions of non-sexual violence rose by 15%
- The number of custodial sentences issued for convictions of sexual crimes rose by 5%

#### Change over the latest 10 years (2013-14 to 2022-23)

- Between 2013-14 and 2022-23 all custodial sentences decreased by 37%
- Prison sentences decreased by 35%
- Young offender institution sentences decreased by 77%

- Supervised order sentences increased by 12%
- The number of custodial sentences for non-sexual violence decreased by 18%
- The number of custodial sentences for sexual crimes increased by 24%
- Within that, custodial sentences for rape and attempted rape increased by 117%

### **Breakdown by gender**

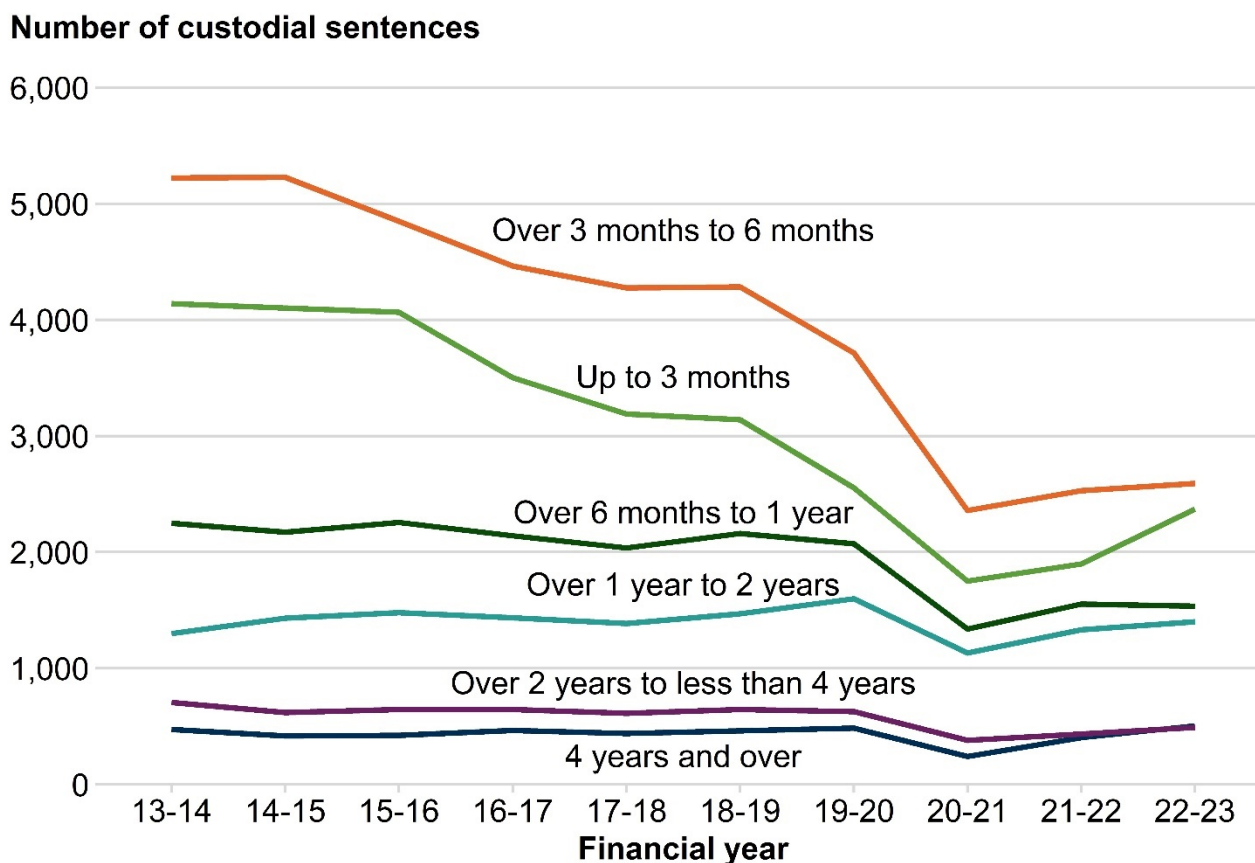
- In 2022-23 males accounted for 93% (8,323) of all custodial sentences. 72% of males received a custodial sentence of under 1 year, this compares to 88% of females who received a custodial sentence of under 1 year.

### **Key points to note**

- The proportion of convictions resulting in a custodial sentence has remained fairly constant throughout the last ten years.
- A custodial sentence was the main penalty imposed on a convicted person in 13% of cases in 2022-23, This represents a decrease of one percentage point on 2021-22 (14%) and is identical to 2013-14 (13%).
- The average length of a custodial sentence, excluding life and indeterminate sentences, was 386 days in 2022-23. This is 3% longer than the 375 days seen in 2021-22 and 31% longer than the 295 days seen in 2013-14. The long-term trend of rising average custody length is likely driven by a complex range of interacting factors. These include a shift in the mix of the seriousness of court cases and a reduction in the use of shorter custodial sentences.

**Chart 10. Long term declines in custodial sentences given are more pronounced for shorter sentences than longer sentences.**

Custodial sentences given in Scottish criminal courts, by sentence length, 2013-14 to 2022-23.



Source: Criminal Proceedings in Scotland 2022-23

**Notes for Length of custodial sentences**

Note 1. Murder carries a mandatory life sentence upon conviction. Although an Order for Lifelong Restriction is a sentence that lasts for the rest of a person’s life, it is not treated as a life sentence for the purpose of these statistics.

Note 2: life sentences and Orders for Lifelong Restriction (OLRs) are not included in calculations for average sentence length as they are of indeterminate duration. Although a minimum term in custody is specified, the actual time in custody will depend on decisions by the Parole Board and they may spend longer in custody than the minimum specified by the court. This reflects the expected operation of life sentences. Data on the average length of the punishment part of life sentences and OLRs are published in an experimental statistics paper alongside this bulletin, which can be found under the [“Supporting documents”](#) menu on the [website for this publication](#).

## Categories of custodial sentence length

Relevant provisions in the [Criminal Justice and Licensing \(Scotland\) Act 2010](#) were commenced in February 2011 to introduce a presumption against short sentences (PASS) (three months or less).

In June 2019, the extension of the presumption to 12 months or less was approved by the Scottish Parliament in the [Presumption Against Short Periods of Imprisonment \(Scotland\) Order 2019](#). This presumption stated that a court must not pass a sentence of imprisonment for a term of three months or less unless it considers that no other method of dealing with the person is appropriate. The extended presumption came into force on 4 July 2019 in relation to offences committed on that date and after. However, the policy was introduced part way through the financial year, and it took time for the first eligible offences to go to court, so the data included in the 2019-20 bulletin did not fully cover the extension. It was anticipated that some conclusions of the effects of this policy would be seen in the 2020-21 bulletin, however the impact of COVID-19 makes it difficult to separate the effects of the pandemic from the effects of the extended presumption against short custodial sentences. The [Extended Presumption Against Short Sentences – Monitoring Information](#) Official Statistics provided data on sentencing to monitor the progress of the extension policy which followed a bulletin covering the period 1 July 2019 to 31 December 2019.

Although initial effects of this policy may be seen to some extent in these statistics in the 2019-20 financial year, and the specific monitoring bulletins, subsequent versions of this bulletin will be able to come to more definitive conclusions. The Extended Presumption Against Short Sentences – Monitoring Information Official Statistics also provide data on sentencing to monitor the progress of the extension policy.

[Chart 10](#) illustrates patterns of custodial sentence length by specific categories.

## **Custodial sentences for Sexual crimes**

As shown in [Chart 11](#), custody was the most frequently used disposal for Rape and attempted rape in 2022-23, being imposed on 96% of people with a charge proven. Custodial sentences for Rape and attempted rape attracted the second longest average custodial sentence of all crime types (after Murder and culpable homicide).

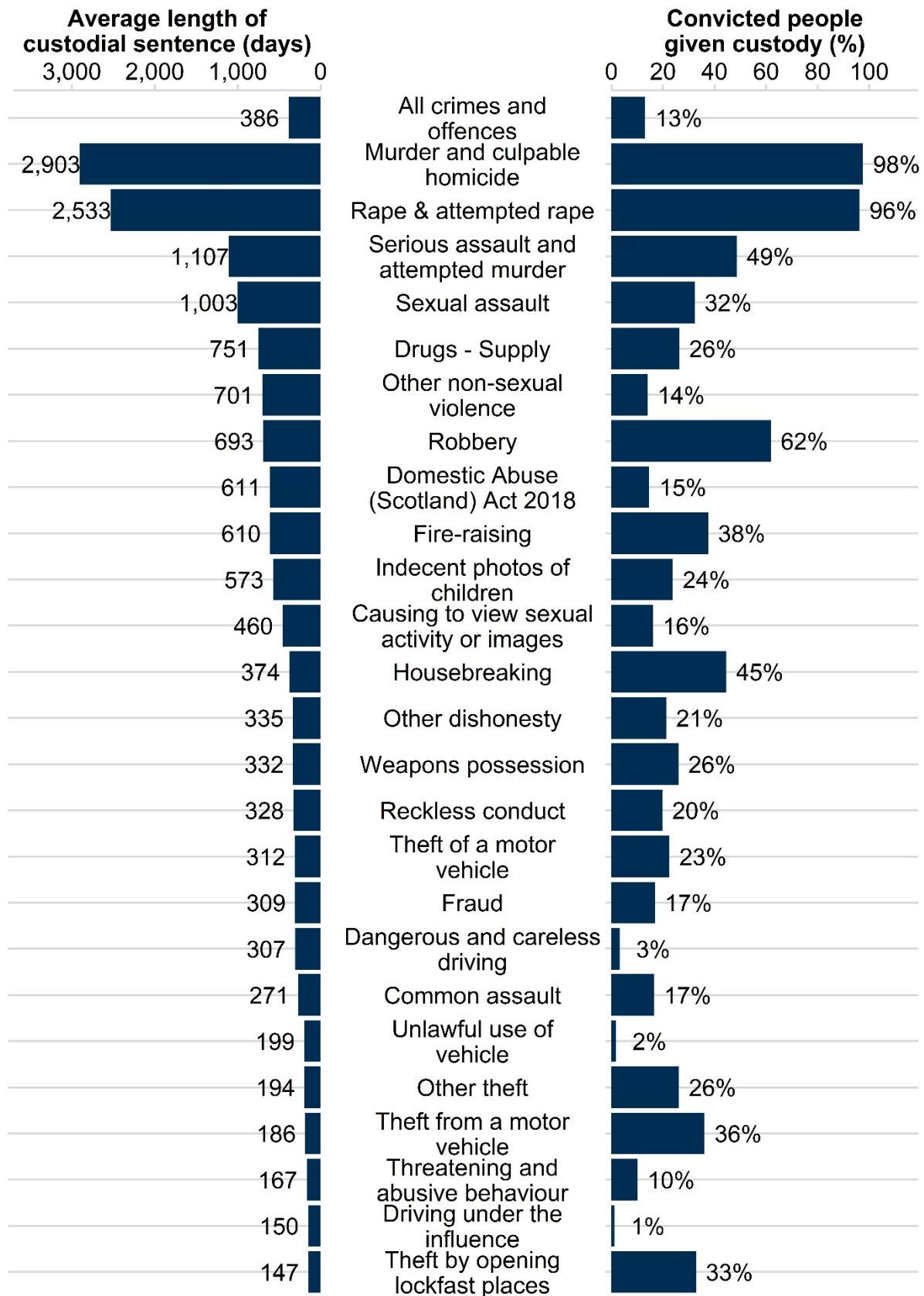
**Chart 11. Murder and culpable homicide and Rape & attempted rape receive both the largest proportion of custodial sentences and the longest custodial sentences.**

Notes for Chart 11

Note 1. Excludes crime types where the number of people sentenced to prison is fewer than 30.



**Average sentence length (excluding life sentences) given and proportion receiving custody, in Scottish criminal courts, by crime and offence group [note 1], 2022-23.**



Source: Criminal Proceedings in Scotland 2022-23

## 8. Community sentences

(Tables 7a-b, 8a-c and 11)

Community sentence is a collective term for the different sentences given by courts that are served in the community, often as an alternative to a custodial sentence. Community Payback Orders are the most widely used community sentence and can include requirements such as unpaid work or other activity requirements, being supervised by a social worker, or programme requirements. Other community sentences are Drug Treatment and Testing Orders and Restriction of Liberty Orders. There is a wide range of options available in the Scottish courts, which are listed at [Annex D](#).

### High-level summary

#### Community sentences

##### (Tables 7a-b, 8a-c and 11)

In 2022-23, there were 16,246 community sentences issued. Of these:

- 12,632 were Community payback orders (78%)
- 3,331 were restriction of liberty orders (21%)
- 277 were drug treatment and testing orders (2%)

And

- 40% of sentences for non-sexual crimes of violence were community sentences
- 56% of sentences for sexual crimes were community sentences

#### Year on year change (2021-22 to 2022-23)

Between 2021-22 and 2022-23

- All community sentences increased by 15% to 16,246
- Community payback orders increased by 21%
- Restriction of liberty orders remained broadly unchanged
- Drug treatment and testing orders decreased by 12%

#### Change over the latest 10 years (2013-14 to 2022-23)

- Between 2013-14 and 2022-23 all community sentences decreased by 11%
- A community sentence was the main penalty imposed on a convicted person in 24% of cases in 2022-23. This is the same as in 2021-22 (24%) and an increase from 2013-14 (17%)
- The only type of community sentence to increase over ten years were restriction of liberty orders (up 209%)

#### Breakdown by gender

- In 2022-23 males accounted for 85% (13,870) of all community sentences
- Between 2013-14 and 2022-23 the number of community sentences issued to males decreased by 9% compared to 22% for females

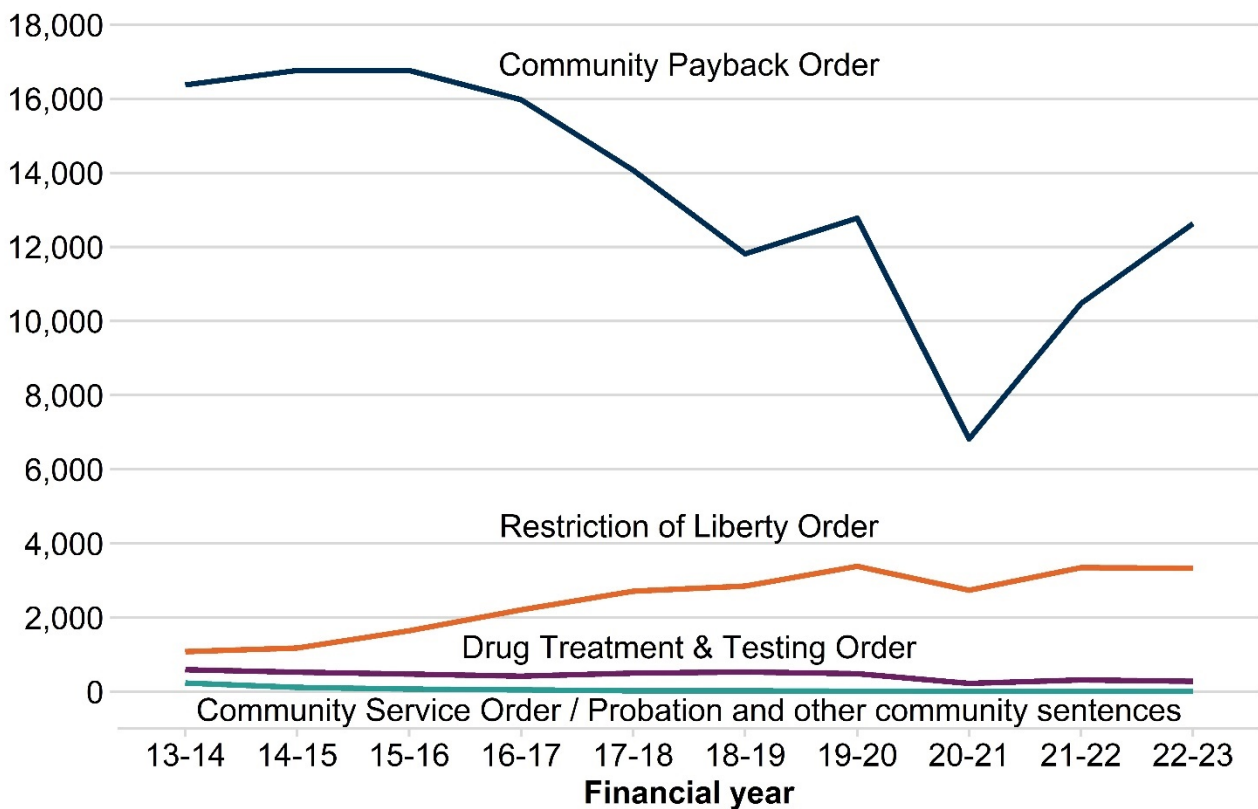
### Key points to note

- The 15% increase in people given a main penalty of a community sentence between 2021-22 and 2022-23 was driven by a 21% rise in Community Payback Orders (from 10,475 to 12,632). Over the last year, other types of community sentence either held steady or declined.

### Chart 12. Community sentences have declined in the long term but increased in recent years, whereas Restriction of Liberty Orders have steadily increased.

People issued community sentences in Scottish criminal courts, by community sentence type, 2013-14 to 2022-23.

#### People issued a community sentence



Source: Criminal Proceedings in Scotland 2022-23

## 9. Financial penalties and other sentences

(Tables 7a-b, 8a-c and 11)

The Courts can impose financial penalties such as fines, which are enforced by the Scottish Courts and Tribunals Service (SCTS), or compensation orders, which are collected by the SCTS with the monies then paid to the victim. “Other sentences” are mostly admonishments which are a verbal warning from the sheriff.

### High-level summary

#### Financial penalties and other sentences

##### (Tables 7a-b, 8a-c and 11)

In 2022-23, there were 30,351 financial penalties issued (45% of all sentences). Of these:

- 29,622 were fines (98%)
- 729 were compensation orders (2%)
- 22% sentences for non-sexual crimes of violence were financial penalties
- 5% of sentences for sexual crimes were financial penalties
- 87% of sentences for road traffic offences were financial penalties
- There were 11,771 admonishments in 2022-23, 17% of all sentences

#### Year on year change (2021-22 to 2022-23)

Between 2021-22 and 2022-23 all financial penalties increased by 13% to 30,351

- Fines also increased by 13%
- Compensation orders increased by 20%

#### Change over the latest 10 years (2013-14 to 2022-23)

Between 2013-14 and 2022-23 all financial penalties decreased by 47%

- Fines decreased by 48%
- Compensation orders decreased by 17%
- As a proportion of all sentences, financial penalties decreased from 55% to 45%
- The average fine (calculated as the median) has increased from £180 in 2013-14 to £300 in 2022-23

#### Breakdown by gender and age

- In 2022-23 males accounted for 83% (25,094) of all financial penalties.

#### Key points to note

- Longer term trends in sentencing show a shift away from financial penalties towards community sentences.

Notes for financial penalties and other sentences;

Note 1. The median value is the midpoint of a ranked series of data. It is used so that very high or very low values do not impact excessively on the calculated average.

Note 2. Year-on-year comparisons for fines and compensation orders are in cash terms, and have therefore not been adjusted for inflation.

# 10. Aggravations

(Tables 12-13)

Please see [Annex B](#) for a note on data quality relating to the aggravations data.

Aggravations are a code that can be recorded to provide additional information about a criminal charge. Some aggravations are created by legislation, these are known as statutory aggravations. These must be proved in court but can be proven by a single source of evidence rather than by corroborated evidence. For example, if someone who commits a common assault motivated by malice towards the victim's religion, this offence would be recorded as assault with an aggravation of religious prejudice. Statutory aggravations can result in a higher penalty. Other aggravations are not created by legislation but are identifiers added for additional information. They do not need to be proved in court.

## High-level summary

### Aggravations

(Tables 12-13)

In 2022-23 there were 11,525 aggravations recorded against the main charge. Of these:

- the most common were domestic statutory abuse aggravations (7,805)
- 708 were racial aggravations and 588 were related to sexual orientation
- The convictions with the highest number of convictions with domestic statutory abuse aggravations were threatening and abusive behaviours (2,774), Crimes against public justice (2,026) and common assault (1,908).

### Year on year change (2021-22 to 2022-23)

- Between 2021-22 and 2022-23 all aggravations recorded increased by 7%
- Aggravations relating to sexual orientation increased by 204 (53%)
- Aggravations relating to race increased by 157 (28%)

### Change over the latest 10 years (2013-14 to 2022-23)

- Between 2013-14 and 2022-23, all aggravations recorded decreased by 6%
- Aggravations relating to sexual orientation increased by 361 (159%)
- Aggravations relating to disability increased by 184 (613%)
- Aggravations relation to religion decreased by 48 (19%)

### Breakdown by gender

- In 2022-23, the vast majority of people convicted of an offence with an aggravation were male (87%)

### Key points to note

- The statutory domestic abuse aggravation was used for the first time in 2017-18. In 2022-23 it was applied to 80% of all domestic aggravations.

- There were also 160 domestic aggravations involving a child, this is the 4<sup>th</sup> year that data is available for this category.

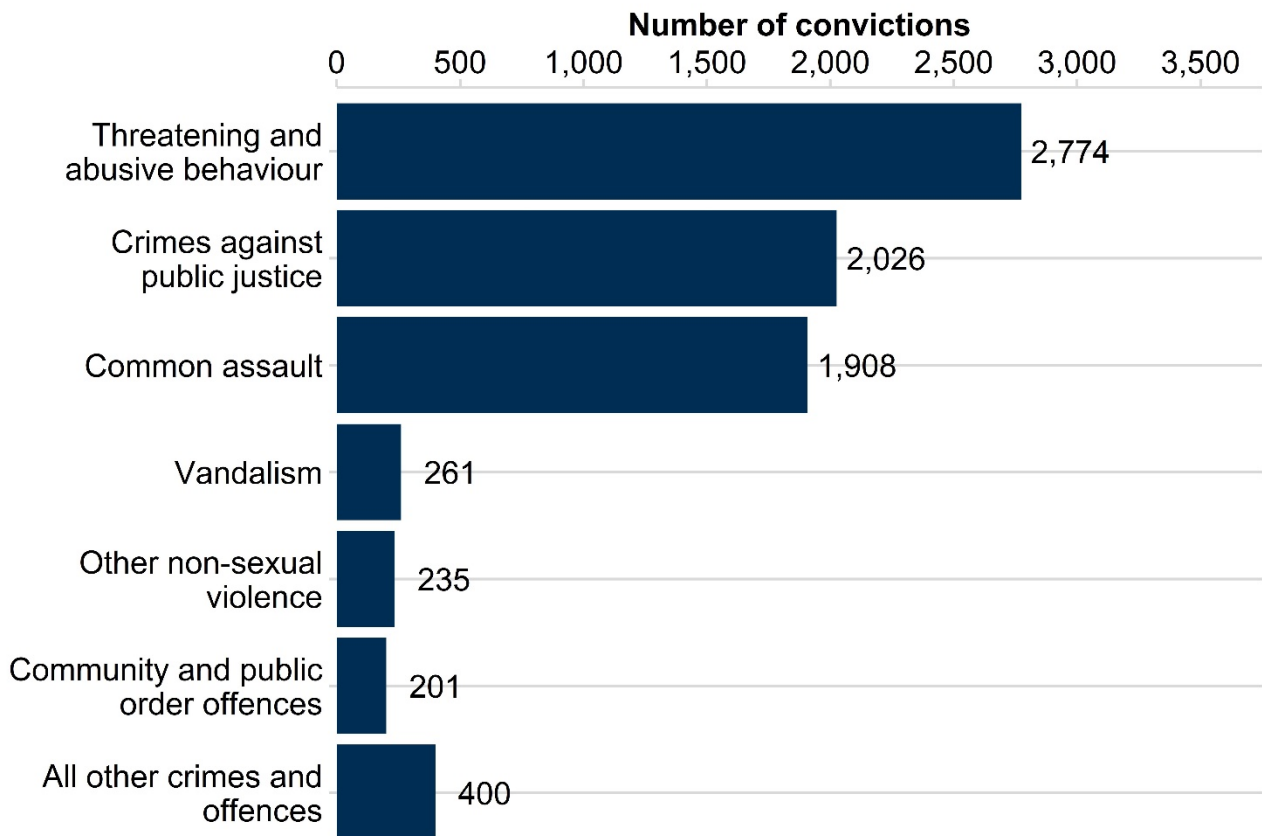
This publication includes statistics on a subset of the full set of aggravation/identifier codes on the CHS. The set of aggravations this publication covers are: domestic abuse, disability, racial, religious, sexual orientation and transgender. The legislation creating these aggravations is outlined in [Annex C](#). The [Abusive Behaviour and Sexual Harm \(Scotland\) Act 2016](#) created a statutory aggravation of domestic abuse, which came into force on 24 April 2017, making this the sixth year data has been presented on this aggravation. The aggravation for domestic abuse in relation to a child under the [Domestic Abuse \(Scotland\) Act 2018](#) came into effect on 1 April 2019, making this the fourth year data has been presented on this aggravation.

Please note that statistics on statutory bail aggravations, which identify offences that were committed while the offender was on bail, are not included in this publication but are published alongside this bulletin, under the "[Supporting documents](#)" menu on the [website for this publication](#).

Please be aware that a single proceeding can have more than one aggravation recorded against it e.g. "domestic" and "disability". In these cases, the same proceeding would be counted twice in the aggravation tables but once in the other court tables.

**Chart 13. The most common crime types with a statutory domestic abuse aggravation are threatening and abusive behaviour, crimes against public justice and common assault.**

Convictions in Scottish criminal courts with a domestic abuse statutory aggravation, by crime type, 2022-23



Source: Criminal Proceedings in Scotland 2022-23



# 11. Police disposals

(Tables 17-20)

When dealing with minor offences, the police may choose not to refer an individual to the Crown Office and Procurator Fiscal Service (COPFS) which may lead to court. Instead they may issue a recorded police warning (RPW), an Anti-Social Behaviour Fixed Penalty Notice (ASBFPNs) or another action specifically for juveniles (aged 8 to 17).

## High-level summary

### Police disposals

(Tables 17-19)

In 2022-23 there were 31,278 police disposals issued in Scotland. Of these:

- 21,127 (68%) were recorded police warnings
- 5,093 (16%) were Early and Effective interventions
- 4,722 (15%) were ASBFPNs
- Recorded police warnings were most commonly given for possession of drugs (6,610, or 31%) and for threatening and abusive behaviour (5,373 or 25%)

### Year on year change (2021-22 to 2022-23)

- There was almost no change in the number of police disposals issued between 2021-22 and 2022-23
- The number of RPWs has increased by 5% to 21,127
- The number of ASBFPNs decreased by 11% to 4,722

### Change over the latest 10 years (2013-14 to 2022-23)

- Between 2013-14 and 2022-23 there was a decrease of 37,011 police disposals (down 54%)
- The largest change was in ASBFPNs which decreased by 50,900 (92%)

### Breakdown by gender

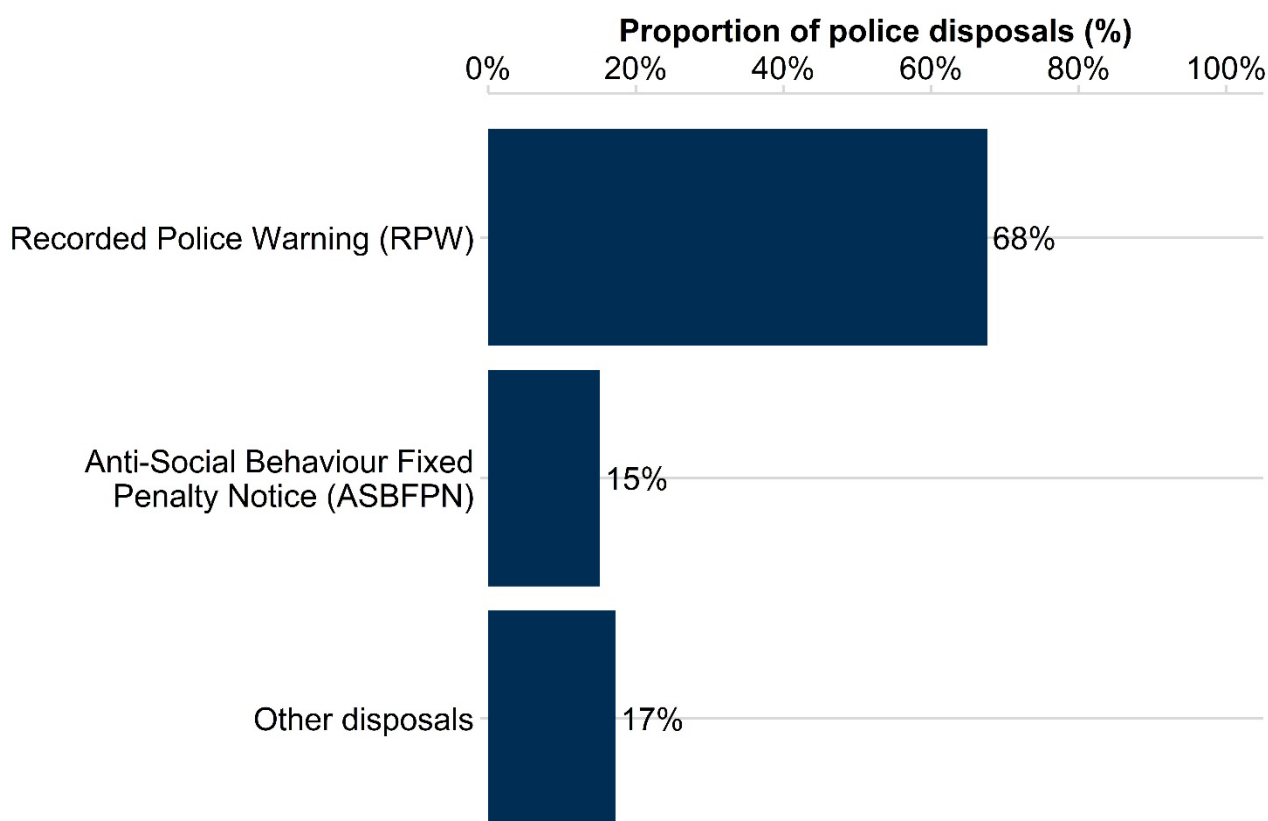
- 73% of all recorded police warnings were given to males
- 31% of males given RPWs were aged over 40.

### Key points to note

- There were 21,127 Recorded Police Warnings (RPWs) issued during 2022-23, which is an increase of 5% from the 20,139 issued in 2021-22.
- Early and Effective Interventions decreased by 7% between 2021-22 and 2022-23, from 5,496 to 5,093.

## Chart 14. Recorded Police Warnings make up just over two-thirds of police disposals.

Police Scotland disposals, by type, 2022-23.



Source: Criminal Proceedings in Scotland 2022-23

ASBFPNs accounted for more than 80% of the police disposals presented in this publication in 2013-14, but the number has been declining since then. In 2022-23 they made up 15% of police disposals. The most used police disposal in 2022-23 (68%) was the Recorded Police Warning which was introduced in 2015-16 ([Chart 14](#)). It is important to note, however, that there are other types of police measures not included in these statistics such as Fixed Penalty Notices for coronavirus restrictions, moving road traffic offences and other youth justice measures. A more detailed listing of the disposals available in this publication can be seen in [Annex D](#).

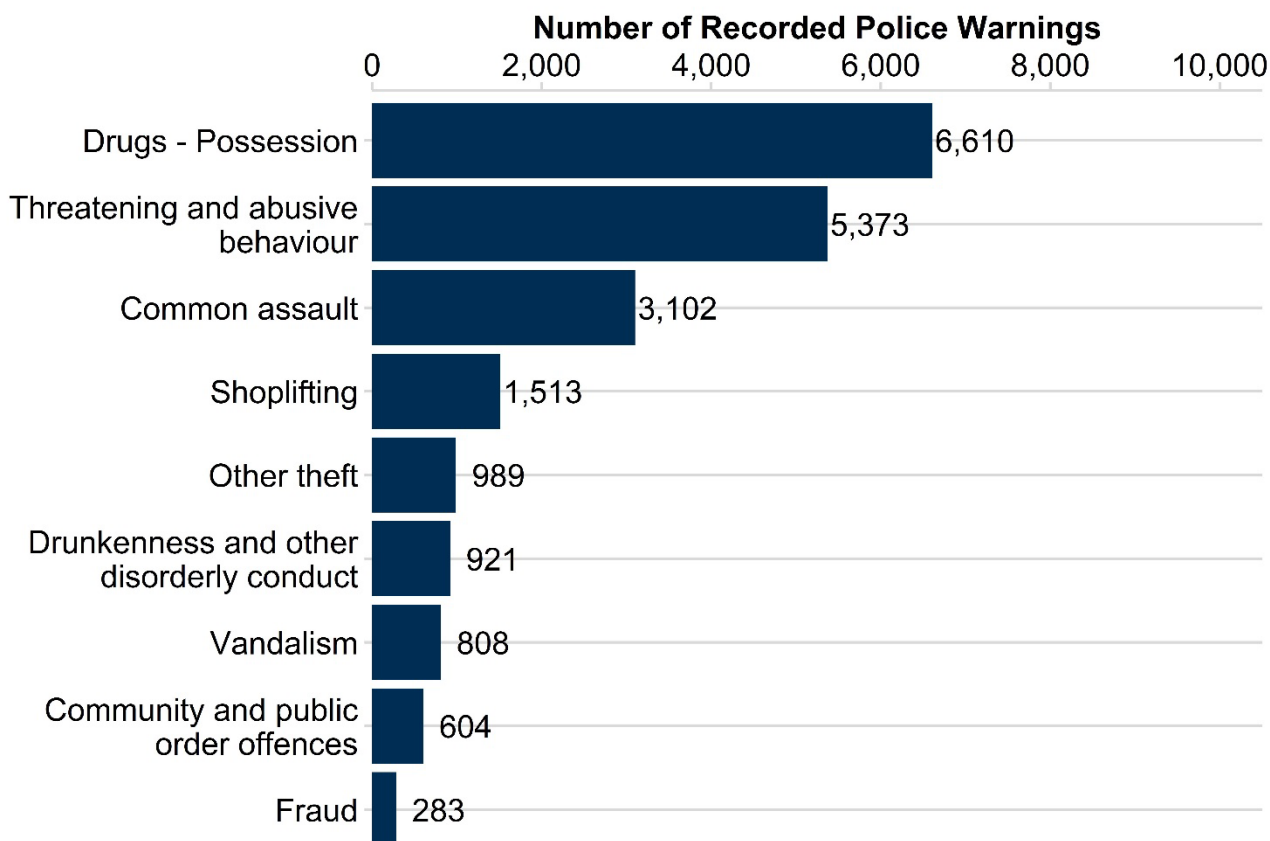
### Recorded Police Warnings

The use of Recorded Police Warnings (RPWs) grew quickly after their introduction in January 2016, becoming the most used police disposal in 2016-17 (19,678 issued). In 2022-23 there were 21,127 RPWs issued, which is an increase of 5% from 21,039 in 2021-22.

RPWs were issued in 2022-23 for a wide range of offences, such as Drugs possession (31% of all RPWs) and Threatening and abusive behaviour (25% of all RPWs) ([Chart 15](#)).

**Chart 15. The most common crime types Recorded Police Warnings were issued for were Threatening and abusive behaviour, Drugs possession and Common assault.**

Recorded Police Warnings issued by Police Scotland, by crime type, 2022-23.



Source: Criminal Proceedings in Scotland 2022-23

The introduction of RPWs coincided with the phasing out of Formal Adult Warnings (FAWs), although FAWs are not a direct replacement for RPWs.

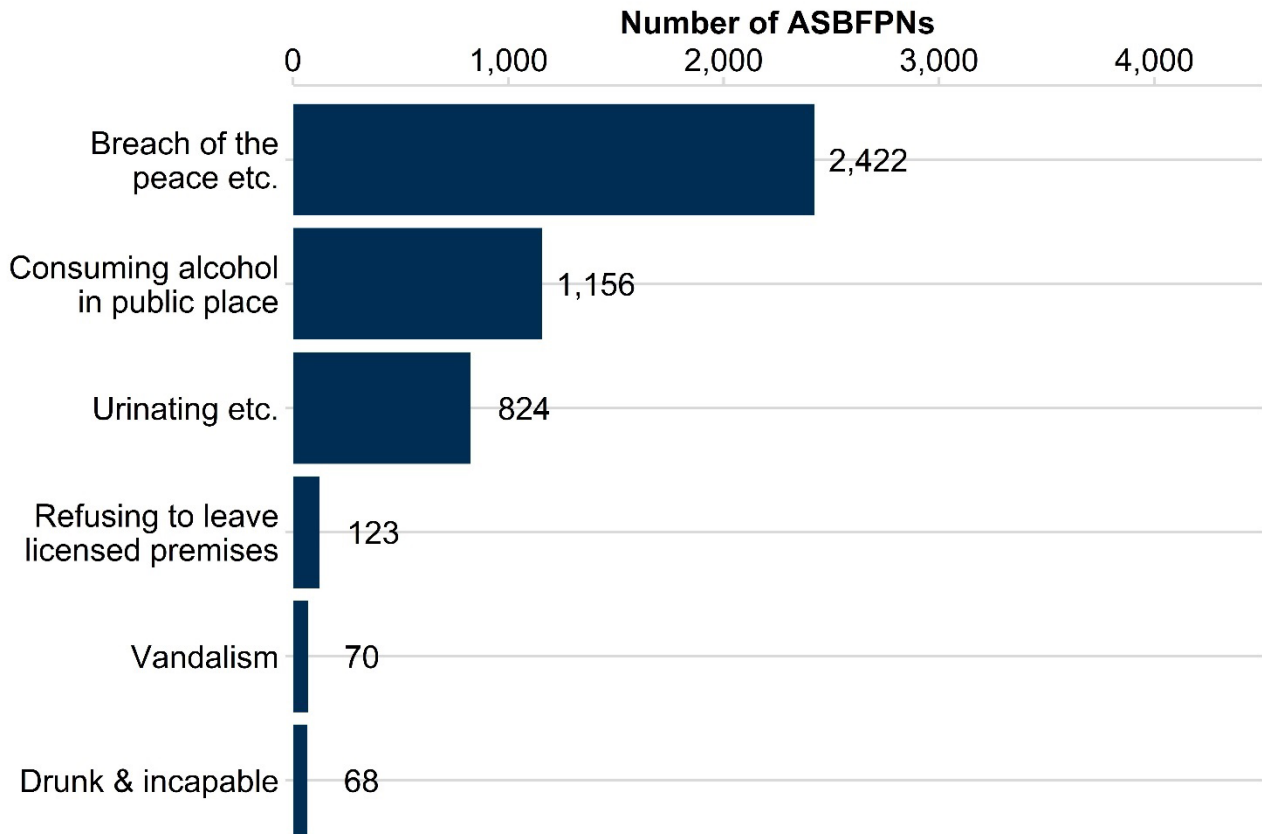
From 16 July 2018, it became possible to issue RPWs for less serious, non-sexual Common assault, and this use made up 15% of the total number of RPWs in 2022-23.

**Anti-Social Behaviour Fixed Penalty Notices**

Anti-Social Behaviour Fixed Penalty Notices (ASBFPNs) allow the police to issue offenders a £50 fine for a range of offences including drunken-related behaviours and playing loud music.

**Chart 16. The most common offence Anti-Social Behaviour Fixed Penalty Notices were issued for was Breach of the peace etc.**

Anti-Social Behaviour Fixed Penalty Notices (ASBFPNs) issued by Police Scotland, by offence type, 2022-23.



Source: Criminal Proceedings in Scotland 2022-23

# 12. Crown Office and Procurator Fiscal Service disposals

(Tables 20-22)

When a report is submitted by the Police (or other specialist reporting agency) to the Procurator Fiscal, prosecution in court is only one of a range of possible options for dealing with people who have been charged. The Procurator Fiscal can decide to take no action e.g. if there is insufficient evidence, or if it is not in the public interest to proceed. Alternatively, the Procurator Fiscal can decide to use a non-court direct measure such as a fiscal fine or a diversion from prosecution. Where the Procurator Fiscal decides to offer a diversion from prosecution, this is not shown in the data in this publication.

## High-level summary

### Crown Office and Procurator Fiscal Services (COPFS) disposals

(Tables 20-22)

In 2022-23 there were 30,770 COPFS disposals issued in Scotland. Of these:

- 11,004 (36%) were fiscal fines
- 11,364 (37%) were a Fiscal fixed penalty
- 4,170 (14%) were Fiscal combined fine plus compensation
- Fiscal fines were most commonly given for possession of drugs (3,410 or 32%) and for unlawful use of vehicle (2,234 or 21%)

### Year on year change (2021-22 to 2022-23)

- Between 2021-22 and 2022-23 all COPFS disposals decreased by 5%
- The largest change was in Fiscal combined fines plus compensation which increased by 47%

### Change over the latest 10 years (2013-14 to 2022-23)

- Between 2013-14 and 2022-23 there was a decrease of 51,587 COPFS disposals (down 63%)
- The largest change was in Fiscal combined fines plus compensation which increased by 116%

### Breakdown by gender

- 76% of all COPFS Fiscal fine were given to males
- 34% of males given Fiscal fines were aged over 40.

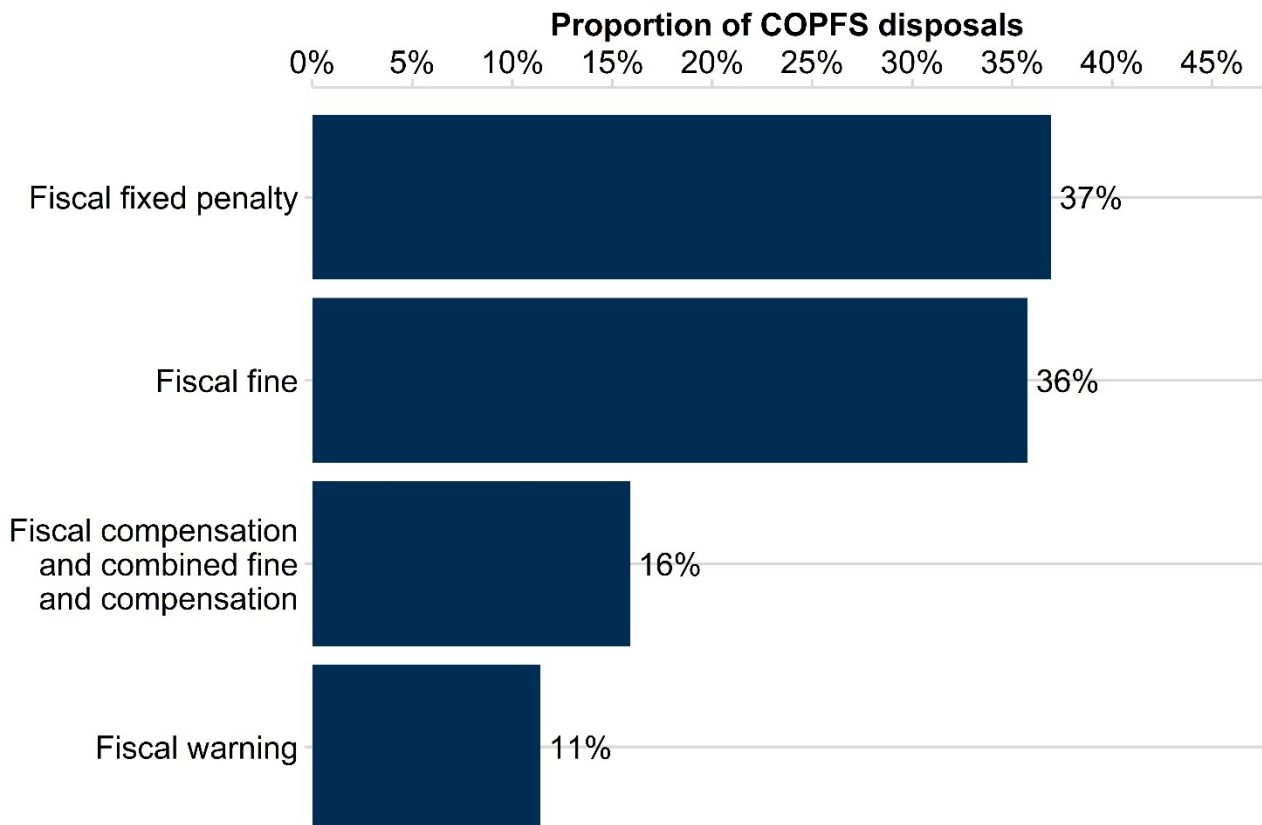
### Key points to note

- In 2022-23 11,004 people were issued with a fiscal fine, which are available to any offence which be tried summarily, as a main penalty, a decrease of 7% from the 11,846 issued in 2021-22.

- In 2022-23, 11,364 Fiscal Fixed Penalties, which relate only to certain road traffic offences, were issued to people as a main penalty, a decrease of 6% from 12,068 in 2021-22.

**Chart 17. Fiscal fines and Fiscal fixed penalties were the two most common disposals issued by the Crown Office and Procurator Fiscal Service.**

Crown Office and Procurator Fiscal Service disposals by type, 2022-23.

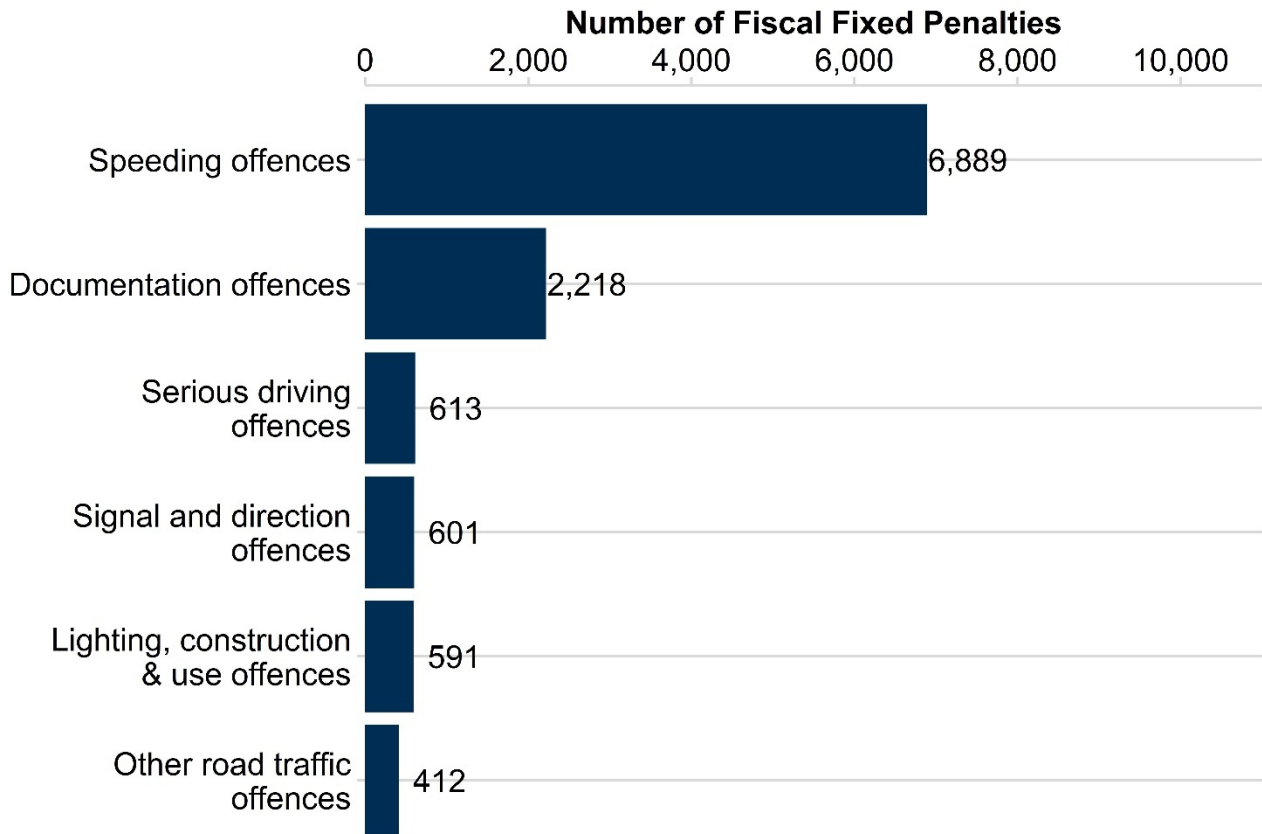


Source: Criminal Proceedings in Scotland 2022-23

The most common crime that COPFS were issued for in 2022-23 was Speeding offences (6,889 penalties), which made up more than two thirds (61%) of all COPFS. After this COPFS were most commonly issued for the following crimes ([Chart 18](#)): 20% were for Documentation offences (such as using a vehicle without a test certificate, without a licence or failure to insure), totalling 2,218; 5% were for Serious driving offences (such as mobile phone and seatbelt offences), totalling 613 penalties.

**Chart 18. The most common offence the Crown Office and Procurator Fiscal Service issued a Fiscal Fixed Penalty for was Speeding offences.**

Fiscal Fixed Penalties issued by the Crown Office and Procurator Fiscal Service, by offence type, 2022-23.



Source: Criminal Proceedings in Scotland 2022-23

# 13. Bail and undertakings

(Tables 14-16)

When a person is arrested or charged by the Police, the Police may decide to keep that person in custody. The police will submit a report to the Procurator Fiscal in respect of the person in custody and where the Procurator Fiscal decides that the accused is to be prosecuted, they will appear at court on the first lawful day after they were taken into police custody. At this point, the Court will decide whether the accused should be released on bail until they next need to appear in court for later stages of the proceedings. In some circumstances, the individual is not merely cited to appear at Court at a later date, but the Police decide to release the individual on an Undertaking to appear at Court on a specified date and time.

On 25 January 2018, the law applicable to undertakings was changed, and is set out under [Sections 25-30 of the Criminal Justice \(Scotland\) Act 2016](#). An Undertaking generally has conditions attached including that the person should not commit an offence; interfere with witnesses or evidence or otherwise obstruct the course of justice; or behave in a manner which causes, or is likely to cause, alarm or distress to witnesses. Any further condition that a constable considers necessary and proportionate to ensure that the undertaking conditions are observed may also be imposed. These undertaking conditions are similar to those for bail.

Please note that four additional tables on bail are published alongside this bulletin, and can be found under the "[Supporting documents](#)" menu on the [website for this publication](#). These include bail statistics by court type as well as age and sex. One of the tables presents bail aggravations i.e. offences that were committed while the offender was on bail.

## High-level summary

### Bail and undertakings

#### (Tables 14-16)

In 2022-23, 26,562 bail orders were made in Scotland. Of these:

- 3,587 (14%) were for crimes of dishonesty
- 3,339 (13%) were for common assault
- 2,587 (10%) were for Non-sexual crimes of violence (excluding common assault)

#### Year on year change (2021-22 to 2022-23)

- Between 2021-22 and 2022-23 all bail orders made increased by 11%
- The number of bail related offences with a conviction increased by 11% to 7,988.
- The number of undertakings to appear in court decreased by 4% to 23,747.

#### Change over the latest 10 years (2013-14 to 2022-23)

- Between 2013-14 and 2022-23 there was almost no change in the number of bail related offence with a conviction.



- The number of undertakings to appear in court increased by 7% (to 23,747) between 2013-14 and 2022-23

### **Breakdown by gender**

- The number of bail related offences with a conviction for those aged 31-40 has increased by 29% (to 2,649) between 2013-14 and 2022-23
- The number of males with a bail related offences with a conviction was almost unchanged between 2013-14 and 2022-23 at 6,965. The number of females decreased by 4% over the same period to 1,023.

### **Key points to note**

- In 2022-23, 26,562 bail orders were made. This is an increase of 11% on 2021-22 (23,901) and a decrease of 42% on 2013-14 (46,123). These changes largely track those of court activity overall, with prosecutions increasing 17% between 2021-22 and 2022-23 and decreasing 35% between 2013-14 and 2022-23. However, it should be noted that when a case concludes in court may be in a different year to any corresponding bail order being made.
- The proportion of bail-related offences as a percentage of all bail orders granted in 2022-23 was 30%. This is the joint highest on the 10-year span with 2021-22 (also 30%). This may in part reflect people subject to bail being on bail for longer periods due to court backlogs.

### **Bail orders made, and by main crime type**

The number of bail orders relates to individual bail orders. Unlike the number of proceedings, where we count only one 'main' charge per person in each proceeding, multiple bail orders can be issued to a person during one case. Bail orders can also be issued in circumstances which may not lead to proceedings. However, there is a direct correlation between numbers of bail orders and numbers of proceedings, and any overall trend is likely to be similar in both.

# Data and methodology

## Annex A - Data sources and data standards

### Court proceedings, police disposals, COPFS disposals, bail and undertakings

A.1 Statistical information on the Scottish Government Criminal Proceedings database is derived from data held on the Criminal History System (CHS), a central database used for the electronic recording of information on persons accused and/or convicted of committing a criminal act. The CHS is maintained by Police Scotland and they are responsible for managing its operation and own the majority of the data.

A.2 [Chart 1](#) in the main body of the bulletin depicts how people accused of committing a crime move through the criminal justice system. People can be disposed from the system in a variety of ways, including being dealt with directly by the police by fines or warnings, being fined or warned by the Crown Office and Procurator Fiscal Service (COPFS), or being proceeded against in court. At each of these stages information is logged on the CHS regarding the status of the accused. COPFS and the Scottish Courts and Tribunal Service (SCTS) make updates on their own systems which are fed back electronically to Police Scotland's CHS. When an offender's case reaches its final conclusion or "disposal" and a sentence is given for guilty offenders, the case is considered completed on the CHS, and after this point, the data is sent to us in the next monthly return.

A.3 The Scottish Government receives individual-level returns from the CHS on a monthly basis. These are electronically submitted by Police Scotland for cases that are completed, or if case has been further modified. Information on criminal trials that are on-going or have not been dealt with through the police or COPFS disposals are not included in this report, and not held by the Scottish Government.

A.4 The source of the statistical data on bail orders and undertakings is also the CHS. The Scottish Government receives monthly files for this data.

### Other data sources

A.5 [Chart 1](#) presents a range of summary data other than that derived from the CHS, such as information collected directly from COPFS, Scottish Government Recorded Crime outputs, [referrals to the Children's Reporter](#) and information on police conditional offers made for motor vehicle offences, based on figures provided from another Police Scotland database. Please see [Annex C](#) for a description on how the counting bases for these data sources differ.

A.6 The population figures used to produce the rates shown in Table 5 are the relevant mid-year estimates prepared by the [National Records of Scotland](#) (NRS).

## Data standards for justice partners

A.7 Data standards are adhered to by organisations inputting data to the CHS in terms of the definitions of data items and their corresponding values. These standards are agreed under the Justice Digital Strategy and ensure there is consistency across the justice organisations in the information they collect. Further information on the data standards can be found on the Scottish Government's [Access to justice pages](#) and in the [Integration of Scottish Criminal Justice Information Systems \(ISCJIS\): data sharing manual](#).

A.8 The following protocols also ensure consistency in the data collected:

- The Scottish Courts and Tribunal Service protocol for the handling of errors that may occur in the transmission of data between justice partners' databases;
- The protocol for the investigation/resolution of disputed data between Police Scotland and the Crown Office and Procurator Fiscal Service;
- The protocol for sharing electronic information between justice partners.

A.9 The Scottish Government also has representation on a data quality group and is kept informed of any data quality issues relating to the CHS. This group meets around three times a year and includes representatives from Police Scotland, COPFS, Scottish Children's Reporter Administrator, and Scottish Courts and Tribunals Service.

A.10 The Scottish Government has implemented a crime code classification framework to ensure consistent and comparable reporting between criminal justice statistical outputs. Please see [Annex B3-B4](#) and [Annex D](#) for full details.

# Annex B - Data quality, data processing and data confidentiality

## Data quality: data processing system

B.1 The Criminal History System (CHS) is an administrative system used to track individuals through the criminal justice system and, as such, was not designed purely for statistical purposes. However, actions and processes have been put in place to ensure that Scottish Government statisticians understand the data. The data requirements for these extracts are contained in a joint specification document that has been agreed between Police Scotland and the Scottish Government.

B.2 Monthly extracts are uploaded onto a Scottish Government database at which point validation checks are undertaken to ensure a realistic number of records are added to the database. Checks are also made to ensure values for charges, court locations and disposal type are recognised. If any unexplained patterns or unrecognised codes are identified at the data upload stage, further investigations are undertaken. It may be necessary, at times, to go back to Police Scotland to verify the data.

B.3 Charge codes are the operational codes used to identify the crime or offence and are linked to legislation. New charge codes for crimes and offences under emerging legislation are created by the Crown Office and Procurator Fiscal Service (COPFS) on a monthly basis, and shared with the Scottish Government. When new codes are identified at the data upload stage they are verified and then added to a look-up table of recognised codes.

B.4 The Scottish Government is responsible for mapping each charge code to a crime code, which forms the basis of the crime code classification (see [Annex D](#)). There are around 8,300 [charge codes](#) which are mapped to around 600 crime codes, which in turn are (as of the 2021-22 publication onwards) grouped into 50 broader categories, and further into eight crime and offence groups. This mapping is agreed with individuals from Police Scotland and COPFS and enables consistent and comparable reporting between justice organisations.

## Data quality: data processing system update

B.5 When we receive data from the CHS as described above, the monthly extracts mentioned in B.3 are processed into our local database. In preparation for the annual Criminal Proceedings publication, a process is run which collates the year's data into a format that allows us to validate and analyse the information.

## Data quality: validation of CHS data

B.6 Numerous data cleaning checks are performed and where issues have occurred these have been reported in the relevant bulletin. The last being in relation to 2018-19 data. These are then incorporated into future validation rules.

## **Data quality: data validation during production of the statistical bulletin**

B.7 As a court proceeding or police/ COPFS non-court disposal can be made up of more than one offence, production of the statistics at 'persons' level requires an intermediary processing stage to be carried out on the CHS data. Where a person is proceeded against for more than one crime or offence in a single proceeding, only the main charge is counted. The main charge is the one receiving the most severe penalty (or disposal) if one or more charges are proved, and is identified using a look-up table which ranks the disposal types in order of severity.

B.8 For example, custody is ranked higher than a monetary fine, so for a proceeding where there was a mixture of these two types of disposal, the main charge counted for this record would be the charge associated with the custody disposal rather than the charge related to the monetary disposal.

B.9 If two charges have the same disposal, then the charge mapped to the lowest numbered crime code is taken as the main crime. Generally the lower the crime code, the more serious the crime would be considered to be. The lowest crime code is for murder and the highest for motor vehicle offences.

B.10 Once this dataset is created the following types of validation are carried out:

- Automated validation procedures and manual checks to identify any unrealistic data values e.g. long custodial sentences for petty crimes or short sentences for the most serious of crimes. Effort is also made to clean up records for which key information is missing e.g. missing court locations or age/sex of the offender. These are referred back to Police Scotland, Scottish Court and Tribunal Service (SCTS) or COPFS for correction or for explanation of any unusual circumstances.
- Other checks are carried out as necessary changes to the justice system. For example when new legislation is implemented, checks are undertaken to ensure cases are coming through the system at a realistic rate.
- Trends in the statistics are compared against case processing information published by COPFS and management information provided by SCTS to ensure that the volume of court proceedings are consistent. Information is compared by court type (e.g. high court, sheriff court etc.) to identify any differences.
- Further checks are undertaken by crime type, sentence type and other characteristics to identify any errors and unusual values. As an extra level of assurance, policy experts within the Scottish Government are consulted to identify why any significant changes may have occurred. Any relevant contextual information is then added to the bulletin.
- Similar consultation is undertaken with COPFS, SCTS and Police Scotland wherein results are shared purely for quality assurance purposes. Insight at an operational level provides invaluable feedback and informs whether further investigation of statistical quality is required.

- Further quality assurance and checking is undertaken on the statistics by members of Scottish Government Justice Analytical Services team.
- In recent years, we have carried out much more extensive quality assurance with external agencies. The purpose of this is to ensure the accuracy and quality of the statistics published. COPFS have identified that there may be a small number of court proceedings (often involving multiple charges and of a complex nature) which are being recorded as separate court cases which, in fact, should only be reported as one. The effect of this would be to over-estimate the true number of court proceedings. Investigations suggest that this affects all crime types, though to varying degrees.

## Data confidentiality

B.11 Court proceedings are held in public and may be reported on by the media unless the court orders otherwise, for example where children are involved.

While our aim is for the statistics in this bulletin to be sufficiently detailed to allow a high level of practical utility, care has been taken to ensure that it is not possible to identify an individual or organisation and obtain any private information relating to them.

B.12 We have carried out a [data protection impact assessment on our handling and use of personal data](#) which is available along with a [privacy notice](#).

B.13 We have assessed the risk of individuals being identified in the tables in this bulletin and have established that no private information can be identified. Where demographic information is provided, this is done either in wider categories of ages (for example tables 6, 21 and 22) or in numbers per 1,000 population (Table 5). This ensures that where there are small numbers, personal information about individuals cannot be identified.

B.14 Some of the additional data tables we provide alongside this publication have local authority information related to the offender. In the local authority tables, either demographic information is provided or offence-level information is provided, but not a combination of both. Similar to the main publication tables, demographic information is divided into wider age categories to further restrict the ability to identify individuals.

## Revisions

B.15 The CHS is not designed for statistical purposes and is dependent on receiving timely information from Justice organisations. A pending case on the CHS should be updated in a timely manner but there are occasions when slight delays happen. Recording delays of this sort generally affect High Court disposals more than those of other types of court, as they are the most complex and lengthy trials. Also, the court may await reports before passing a sentence, so there may be a gap between when the defendant is found guilty and when a sentence is given. We only receive the data when the sentence details are given.

B.16 The figures given in this bulletin reflect the details of court proceedings as recorded on the CHS, that were concluded on or by 31 March 2023, and as provided to the Scottish Government up to the end of December 2023. Any subsequent updates on court disposals made will be incorporated into future bulletins and therefore some figures for 2022-23 (in particular those relating to the High Court) are likely to be subject to minor revisions.

B.17 These recording delays mean that figures for 2022-23 should be considered provisional as future bulletins may provide updates.

B.18 Records may be changed on the CHS, and these updates are included in the monthly data extracts that are sent to us. In some cases the sentence date may be changed due to changes in the sentence. This may move some of the sentences into the following financial year.

B.19 When revisions are required, they comply with the [Scottish Government's policy on revisions and corrections](#).

# Annex C – Understanding the statistics in this bulletin and counting rules

C.1 Individual offenders may be proceeded against on more than one occasion, and within a proceeding, they may be proceeded against for more than one charge. The units of measurement used in this bulletin, which may be different to those in other criminal justice statistics publications, are:

## **(a) the person or company proceeded against or convicted**

A person proceeded against can be defined as someone with a charge proved, those acquitted not guilty, those acquitted not proven, those where a not guilty plea was accepted and those deserted simpliciter. Where a case was deserted 'pro loco et tempore', or 'not called', they are not included here.

Also excluded are people against whom proceedings are raised but which are dropped before they reach court. This will therefore exclude those who appear on petition but are not subsequently indicted.

People are counted once for each occasion they are proceeded against. If a person is proceeded against more than once on the same day, each proceeding will be counted separately. References to 'people' include companies.

Where a person is proceeded against for more than one crime or offence in a single proceeding, only the main charge is counted. The main charge is the one receiving the most severe penalty (or disposal) if one or more charges are proved, and is identified using a look-up table which ranks the disposal types in order of severity. For example, custody is ranked higher than a monetary fine, so for a proceeding where there was a mixture of these two types of disposal, the main charge counted for this record would be the charge associated with the custody disposal rather than the charge related to the monetary disposal.

If two charges have the same disposal, then the charge with the lowest numbered crime code is taken as the main crime. Generally the lower the crime code, the more serious the crime would be considered to be. The lowest crime code is for murder and the highest for motor vehicle offences.

A person convicted is defined to be one who had a plea of 'guilty' accepted, or who was proved guilty of at least one charge within a proceeding as a result of a trial. Throughout this bulletin, the terms 'people convicted' and 'convictions' are used interchangeably. If the case does not reach the courts then the main charge within the case that reaches the furthest stage in the criminal justice system is counted e.g. if the case is disposed of via a non-court disposal by the police or COPFS.

## **(b) individual person**

In the period covered by this bulletin, each person convicted of a crime or offence will have been assigned a unique reference number by Police Scotland. This



enables all convictions relating to an individual person to be linked together, so that analysis of the number of convictions per person in any given year, and the number of their previous convictions and reconvictions can be derived. The Scottish Government publishes information on the number of previous convictions and reconvictions in the Accredited Official Statistics publication [Reconviction rates in Scotland](#).

### **(c) individual offences**

In addition to analysing people convicted by the main charge involved, data in relation to individual charges (offences) which are proved are also available. These can be seen in Tables 4a and 4b, which show aggregate figures for charges (offences) by crime type alongside those based on the main charge.

C.2 Generally, only the initial outcome is included in the court proceedings statistics so that, for example, a person fined is regarded as fined even if he or she subsequently goes to prison in default of payment. Similarly, no account is taken of the outcome of appeals; the exception to this is for those crimes where an appeal is determined prior to publication and the conviction is quashed or the sentence is substituted.

C.3 The number of prosecutions and sentences given could be influenced by operational practices within the justice system. For example there may be times when the police report a particular offence to the procurator fiscal but, when the facts and circumstances are examined, the procurator fiscal decides to proceed with an alternative charge. There are rare occasions when such decisions are made but unfortunately, the charge is not then updated on the computerised records. There is nothing to suggest that the scale of this issue is large enough to alter the overall trends reported.

C.4 A court can impose more than one penalty in appropriate cases. For example, a fine can be imposed in addition to a more severe penalty, such as custody, although the statistics are only based on whichever penalty is deemed to be the main charge. The main additional punishments are generally disqualification from holding or obtaining a driving licence and the endorsement of a driving licence. Please note that although statistics on driving licence disqualifications are not published in this output they are available on request.

C.5 In the court proceedings statistics, the reference year used is the year in which the person is sentenced. For example if a person pleads to, or is convicted for, a charge in 2018-19, but is not sentenced until 2019-20, all events are recorded as occurring in 2019-20. The age of each person is calculated as at the date of sentence or acquittal.

C.6 The custodial sentence length for the person is the total sentence given for all charges in a proceeding.

C.7 In some cases, although the publication focuses on the main charge, one sentence can be given for all charges, or multiple charges can be served consecutively or concurrently. For example, a single 'In Cumulo' prison sentence

can be given for multiple offences that arose from the same incident; an eighteen month sentence could consist of twelve months given for the main charge, and six months for a separate charge.

C.8 Figures for sentence lengths imposed include any element imposed for bail aggravation under section 27(1)(b) of the Criminal Procedure (Scotland) Act 1995, and under section 16 of the Prisoners and Criminal Proceedings (Scotland) Act 1993 (where the offender committed an offence following release from custody on licence prior to the end of a previous sentence period imposed).

C.9 Aggravations can be recorded by Police Scotland or COPFS to provide additional information relating to the nature of a charge. For example, someone who commits an assault which is motivated by malice towards the victim as a result of their religion might have their offence recorded under “common assault” with an aggravation code of “religious” hatred.

C.10 The set of aggravation codes that are used on the CHS include statutory aggravations which are those introduced through legislation. Examples of statutory aggravations are:

- Sexual orientation, transgender identity and disability as introduced through the [Offences \(Aggravation by Prejudice\) \(Scotland\) Act 2009](#);
- Racially motivated crime as legislated for under [Section 96 of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998](#);
- Religiously motivated crime as legislation for under [Section 74 of the Criminal Justice \(Scotland\) Act 2003](#);
- Bail and undertaking aggravations as introduced in [Criminal Procedure \(Scotland\) Act 1995](#), sections 22 and 27.
- Domestic abuse aggravations, as introduced via the [Abusive Behaviour and Sexual Harm \(Scotland\) Act 2016](#).
- Domestic abuse aggravation in relation to a child under the [Domestic Abuse \(Scotland\) Act 2018](#).

The CHS also includes some codes that are not statutory, but are used as identifiers to highlight particular cases to the police, COPFS, or SCTS. This includes an identifier for domestic abuse, which identifies domestic abuse related charges for operational purposes, whether or not the statutory domestic abuse aggravation applies to them.

C.11 Statistics on offences with a bail aggravation recorded, which identify offences that were committed while the offender was on bail, are published under the “[supporting documents](#)” menu on the [website for this publication](#).

C.12 Bail orders are issued at various times during the legal process. They are generally granted at an early point, often before there is a petition/complaint. Furthermore, it’s possible that an individual can receive multiple bail orders in the same case – this may be because conditions have been breached/appealed/reviewed, and a new order is subsequently issued. The

combination of these events mean that there is no expectation of a direct correlation between the numbers of bail orders issued and the numbers of proceedings, although at a basic level, an increase in activity in the justice system will generally correlate with an increase in the numbers of both bail orders and proceedings.

C.13 Bail undertakings are used when a person has been charged with a crime, but where the accused is trusted to maintain good behaviour until their court appearance, and therefore is not required to be held in custody. The accused agrees that they will attend court at a specific time, and may also be held to certain conditions. An undertaking will not be granted if a person was arrested on a warrant.

### **Comparisons with other sources**

C.14 Care should be taken when comparing different data sources relating to the criminal justice system. For example [Recorded Crime in Scotland](#) statistics count crimes and offences at the time that they came to the attention of Police Scotland while criminal proceedings statistics report on cases which have concluded in court. This means that a crime may be recorded by the police in one year and court proceedings concluded in a subsequent year. In addition, a person may be proceeded against for more than one crime, or a set of crimes with more than one victim, in a proceeding, but only the main charge is counted in these court proceedings statistics. There is also the possibility that the crime recorded by the police may be altered in the course of judicial proceedings. There are also some offences included in this bulletin, such as failure to pay a television licence, which are reported directly to the procurator fiscal by specialist reporting agencies such as TV Licensing and therefore are not included in the police recorded crime statistics.

C.15 COPFS publish a number of outputs, including annual figures relating to the number of cases reported to procurators fiscal each year, and the number of cases disposed of each year, by type of disposal. More information is available in the COPFS [Case processing statistics 2019 to 2024](#) . Some of these figures are presented in Table 1 clearly marked as cases. Each COPFS case includes at least one charge, similar to criminal proceedings, but may involve more than one offender. The criminal proceedings statistics count individual people disposed of. It is not currently possible to extract information on some of the other COPFS non-court disposals from the CHS e.g. fiscal work orders and no actions.

C.16 COPFS also publish charge-level statistics in publications such as Hate Crime in Scotland and Domestic Abuse Charges reported to COPFS, both found on the [COPFS publications page](#). The counting base for these statistics are at individual charge level rather than case level. As Criminal Proceedings statistics only measure the main charge in a case it would be expected that COPFS figures would be higher. There will also be timing differences since COPFS figures are based on the year of the report to COPFS, while the Criminal Proceedings figures are based on the year a person is sentenced.

C.17 Custodial disposals are counted differently from the direct sentenced prison receptions (excluding fine default receptions) published in the [Scottish Prison Population Statistics](#) publications. Most of this difference is because a person given custodial sentences for separate sets of proceedings on the same day is counted as two custodial sentences in the criminal proceedings statistics, but only one direct sentence reception in the prison statistics.

C.18 Community sentence disposals are also counted on a slightly different basis from the statistics in [Justice Social Work](#) (JSW) publications. The differences between the two sources include:

- Where two or more identical orders have been issued to run concurrently, the JSW information only counts one order, whereas the criminal proceedings statistics will count more than one, although only one may be shown for a person where the table only counts the main disposal.
- Criminal proceedings data counts the penalty of first disposal whereas JSW data includes orders given subsequent to the initial disposal (e.g. as a result of fine default, following an appeal etc.). Similarly, orders such as Community Payback Orders show a variation relative to these statistics in the JSW and other sources; this may be because they will sometimes be withdrawn and reissued in particular circumstances – we do not count these additional impositions here.
- The date on which the order is deemed to be given can vary between the two collections, particularly where the penalty is given on a different date from the plea/verdict.

C.19 Please note that statistics on Restriction of Liberty Orders (RLOs) will not match statistics published by G4S, the Scottish Government's contractor for electronic monitoring. This is because statistics in this publication are representative of the main charge in a set of proceedings and will mask RLOs issued for secondary charges. By contrast, the G4S figures count all RLOs issued by the courts relating to all charges.

## **Comparisons with statistics from other countries**

C.20 Direct comparisons with statistics from other countries should be taken with care as legal frameworks and legislation for criminal offences differ. In addition, data collection techniques and recording definitions will vary considerably. For example, the Ministry of Justice's [Criminal court statistics quarterly](#) are based on information directly captured from the court's operational databases and are typically over a year to the latest quarter. By contrast these statistics for Scotland are from the CHS, a police database that collates information from COPFS and the SCTS, and are published on a financial year basis.

C.21 Despite international differences, Criminal Proceedings statistics are included in international reports collated by the United Nations and Eurostat such as:

- [European Sourcebook of crime and criminal justice statistics](#)
- Various analysis and reports on the [Eurostat website](#).

# Annex D - Definitions, classifications and notation

D.1 The measures available to a court in sentencing a convicted person depend on a number of matters including what Parliament has legislated for in terms of appropriate penalties and the age of the person.

D.2 In some cases, if the court obtains evidence that the accused is suffering from a mental disorder, they can be assessed as unfit for trial, or acquitted because they were not criminally responsible at the time of the offence with a mental health disposal being issued by the court.

## Person's sex

D.3 'Sex' can be considered to refer to whether someone is male or female based on their physiology, with 'gender' representing a social construct or sense of self that takes a wider range of forms. Throughout this report we refer to 'sex' rather than 'gender' because this better reflects recording practices in relation to this information. In reality it is likely that recording includes a mixture of physiological and personal identity.

D.4 Sex in this bulletin is generally based on how a person presents and is recorded when a person's details are entered into the CHS. It is recorded for operational purposes, such as requirements for searching. A person's sex may only be changed on the CHS if they produced a Gender Recognition Certificate, or there has been a data entry error. A small number of records are recorded as 'unknown' where for some reason a clear understanding of the sex of the individual is not known.

D.5 During production of this bulletin we query any unusual sex values with Police Scotland, SCTS, and COPFS. Unusual values may be where sex for the same person has been recorded differently against two different proceedings, or where a female has been proceeded against for rape and attempted rape. We fix any values that were erroneous with the correct values. During a review of these figures since the last bulletin was published, an error was found that recorded a female as having been convicted of attempted rape in 2018-19. This was found to be incorrect and has now been corrected in the dataset. A revision of the published bulletin tables where this figure appears will be issued.

D.6 The Scottish Government created a [working group on the recording of sex and gender in data](#) to give guidance to public bodies on the collection, disaggregation, and use of data on sex and gender. The group met between 2019 and 2021 and published [guidance for public bodies and supporting documentation](#) on 22 September 2021.

## **Custodial sentences**

D.7 In 2022-23 the custodial sentence measures available to courts, that we have statistics for, included the options to:

- a. Imprison the convicted person (if aged 21 or over); sentence to a Young Offenders' Institution (YOI) (if aged 16 to 21 and not a child subject to compulsory supervision).
- b. Issue an Order for Lifelong Restriction (OLR). The OLR provides for the lifelong supervision of high-risk violent and sexual offenders and allows for a greater degree of intensive supervision than is the current norm. The OLR is designed to ensure that offenders, after having served an adequate period in prison to meet the requirements of punishment, do not present an unacceptable risk to public safety once they are released into the community. The period spent in the community will be an integral part of the sentence, which lasts for the remaining period of the offender's life.
- c. Impose an Extended Sentence. These sentences give additional post-release supervision on licence where it is considered that any existing supervision after the offender's release from custody would be a risk to the public. Extended sentences are imposed on sex offenders or on violent offenders who receive a custodial sentence of four years or more.
- d. Impose a Supervised Release Order. These can be used for people sentenced to less than 4 years in custody for offences other than sexual crimes. They mean that the person is compulsorily supervised by a criminal justice social worker for up to one year following release. These orders should only be imposed where the Court believes it would help prevent serious harm. The offender must comply with the reasonable instructions of the supervising officer.
- e. Sentence a person under the age of 18 convicted of murder to be detained without limit of time in such place, and under such conditions, as Scottish Ministers may direct (the effect of this is normally detention in a young offenders institution or secure unit). Where the person is aged 18 or over but under 21 he or she should be detained initially in a young offenders institution.
- f. Where a child (as defined in [Section 199 of the Children's Hearings \(Scotland\) Act 2011](#)) is convicted on indictment and the court is of the view that no other method of dealing with the child is appropriate, the court may sentence the child to be detained for a period specified in the sentence and shall during that period be liable to be detained in such place, and on such conditions, as Scottish Ministers may direct.

## **Community sentences**

D.8 Community sentence is a collective term for the ways that courts can punish someone convicted of committing an offence other than by serving a custodial sentence. The following list includes the community sentence options which can be imposed.

a. Community payback order (CPO). These were introduced by the Criminal Justice and Licensing (Scotland) Act 2010 and can only be imposed in respect of offence(s) committed on or after 1 February 2011. The CPO replaced provisions for community service orders, probation orders, supervised attendance orders, and the community reparation order.

A CPO can consist of one or more of 10 requirements including offender supervision, compensation, unpaid work or other activity, mental health treatment, drug treatment and alcohol treatment, restricted movement requirement. Every order must contain either an unpaid work or other activity requirement, or an offender supervision requirement (or both). If an offender fails to comply with a requirement in the order, the court can impose a number of sanctions, including a restricted movement requirement. The restricted movement requirement at first disposal came into force in May 2022 so after the time period covered by this bulletin. Restricted movement requirement could previously be imposed following breach only.

b. Restriction of liberty order: a community sentence introduced by section 5 of the Crime and Punishment (Scotland) Act 1997 and available to courts nationally from 1 May 2002. This requires a person to remain within a location, usually their home, at times specified by the court. A person's compliance with the order is monitored electronically.

c. Drug treatment and testing order (DTTO): a measure introduced by the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 and rolled out in phases from 1999 onwards. These are designed to reduce or stop offending by addressing problem drug use through the provision or access to a closely monitored treatment programme.

And, for offences committed prior to 1 February 2011:

d. Probation order, of which some had conditions such as unpaid work or alcohol treatment attached.

e. Community service order requiring the offender to undertake unpaid work.

f. Supervised attendance order which the court can impose as an alternative to custody for people who have defaulted on fines imposed for minor criminal offences.

## **Financial penalties**

D.9 The list below includes the financial penalty sentence options that allow the courts to:

a. fine the offender

b. impose a compensation order requiring the offender to compensate the victim for any resulting injury, loss, damage, alarm or distress.

## Other sentences

D.10 The list below includes the “other” sentence options that allow the courts to:

- a. admonish the offender or make an order to find caution (the overwhelming majority of these are admonishments).
- b. order an absolute discharge (with no conviction recorded in summary procedure) or, following a deferral of sentence, make no order.
- c. remit a child offender to a children's hearing (if the accused is a child, under 16 years of age or aged 16 or 17 and subject to a supervision requirement).
- d. make a guardianship order if the accused is suffering from a mental disorder (with no conviction recorded in summary procedure).
- e. make a compulsion order if the accused is suffering from a mental disorder (with a conviction recorded), for a period of six months with regular reviews.

D.11 The range of options available to the police for minor offences (Police non-court disposals) includes:

- a. Recorded Police Warnings, which were introduced on 11 January 2016 to deal with low-level offences and replaced Formal Adult Warnings. They can be issued to any person over the age of 16. It is not a finding of guilt but is an alternative to prosecution and can be taken into account within a period of two years should the offender come to the further notice of the police.
- b. Anti-social behaviour fixed penalty notices (ASBFPNs) of £50, which can be issued for eleven crime/offence types, including drunken-related behaviours and playing loud music, to people aged 16 or over. Payment of the penalty involves no admission of guilt.
- c. Disposals for young people who offend such as Early and Effective Interventions (EEI) and Restorative Justice Warnings.

D.12 When a report is submitted by the police to COPFS, prosecution in court is only one of a range of possible options for dealing with people who have been charged. COPFS can decide to use one of these non-court direct measures (COPFS non-court disposal):

- a. Fiscal fines of between £50 to £500 for summary offences during the period covered by this bulletin.
- b. Fiscal fixed penalties, generally issued for motor vehicle offences.
- c. Fiscal warnings provide a method of dealing with a case without recourse to prosecution – they mean that the person receiving that warning cannot be prosecuted for that offence.



- d. Fiscal compensation orders of up to £5,000 payable to the victim for personal injury, loss, damage, alarm or distress.
- e. Combined fiscal fine and fiscal compensation order.
- f. Fiscal Work Orders (FWOs) were introduced across Scotland in April 2015 and provide COPFS with the option of offering an alleged offender a period of unpaid work of between 10 and 50 hours, as an alternative to prosecution. Successful completion of the order discharges the right to prosecute. Work is ongoing with COPFS and Police Scotland to ensure that these disposals are recorded correctly, and we intend to publish FWO statistics when we are satisfied that they are accurate.

## **Classification of crimes and offences**

D.13 Violations of criminal law are divided, for statistical purposes only, into crimes and offences. There are around 8,300 [charge codes](#), which are the operational codes used within the Justice System to identify crimes and offences. These charge codes are mapped to around 600 crime codes, which in turn are (as of the 2021-22 publication onwards) grouped into 50 broader categories, and further into eight crime and offence groups. Coronavirus restrictions crimes are recorded under a separate unnumbered group. This classification enables consistent and comparable reporting between criminal justice organisations and is presented in the table below.

## **New grouping structure for the presentation of crime statistics**

The Scottish Government produces a number of statistical products which previously used a seven group structure to present statistics on the justice system in Scotland. For example, in addition to these statistics, this structure was also used in the National Statistics on Recorded Crime in Scotland.

It is within the context of the evolving nature of crime, and the legislation that underpins how it is categorised, that the Scottish Crime Recording Board consulted users on how these statistics are presented. An initial consultation was run between July and November 2019 and a [recorded crime and related topics: consultation responses - summary](#) was published in June 2021.

Following this initial consultation, the Crime Board considered all responses and requested user views of two options for how these statistics could be presented in a second consultation which ran between October and December 2021. A [Recorded crime and police activity statistics consultation: summary of responses](#) from this consultation was published in March 2022.

Taking all responses into account, the Crime Board decided that the previous set of crime and offence groups were to be replaced by a new set. These are presented side-by-side in the [changes to crime groups section](#). The biggest change is the transfer of Common assault and Stalking from the Miscellaneous offences group to the Non-sexual crimes of violence group. Overall, the new structure retains a similar number of groups to the previous structure (with some changes in the

naming of certain groups) but provides a more detailed breakdown within these groups.

It is important to note that these changes represent a purely statistical exercise and have no bearing on the severity of the sentence an individual receives as a result of a court proceeding.

The statistics presented in this publication use the new structure for the first time and it is intended that the National Statistics on Criminal Proceedings in Scotland will continue to use the new groups shown in the tables below for the foreseeable future.

## Crimes

### Group 1 – Non-sexual crimes of violence

| Category                             | Includes  |
|--------------------------------------|---|
| Murder and culpable homicide         | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Murder</li> <li>• Culpable homicide</li> <li>• Corporate homicide</li> </ul>   |
| Causing death by driving dangerously | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Causing death by dangerous driving</li> <li>• Death by careless driving when under influence drink or drug</li> <li>• Causing death by careless driving</li> <li>• Illegal driver involved in fatal accident</li> </ul>  |
| Serious assault and attempted murder | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Attempted murder</li> <li>• Serious assault</li> </ul> <p>An assault is classified as serious if the victim sustained an injury resulting in detention in hospital as an in-patient or any of the following injuries whether or not he/she was detained in hospital: fractures, internal injuries, severe concussion, lacerations requiring sutures which may lead to impairment or disfigurement or any other injury which may lead to impairment or disfigurement.</p> |
| Common assault                       | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Common assault</li> <li>• Common assault of an emergency worker</li> <li>• Common assault of a retail worker</li> </ul>  |

| Category                           | Includes   |
|------------------------------------|--|
| Robbery                            | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Robbery and assault with intent to rob</li> </ul>   |
| Domestic Abuse (Scotland) Act 2018 | Crimes of domestic abuse under the <a href="#">Domestic Abuse (Scotland) Act 2018</a> , which covers a course of conduct.  |
| Other non-sexual violence          | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Threats and extortion</li> <li>• Cruel and unnatural treatment of children or adults</li> <li>• Abortion</li> <li>• Concealment of pregnancy</li> <li>• Possession of a firearm with intent to endanger life, commit crime etc.</li> <li>• Abduction</li> <li>• Ill-treatment and neglect of patients and vulnerable adults</li> <li>• Drugging (assault)</li> <li>• Offence of stalking</li> </ul> |

## Group 2 – Sexual crimes

| Category                                  | Includes   |
|---|--|
| Rape and attempted rape                   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Rape</li> <li>• Attempted rape</li> </ul>   |
| Sexual assault                            | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sexual assault (13-15 year old or adult 16+)</li> <li>• Sexually coercion (13-15 year old or adult 16+)</li> <li>• Sexual assault of young child (under 13 years)</li> <li>• Lewd and libidinous practices</li> </ul> |
| Causing to view sexual activity or images | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Public indecency</li> <li>• Sexual exposure</li> </ul>  |

| Category                                     | Includes  |
|--|---|
| Communicating indecently                     | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Communicating indecently</li> </ul>  |
| Threatening to or disclosing intimate images | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Threatening to disclose an intimate image</li> <li>• Disclosure of an intimate image</li> </ul>  |
| Indecent photos of children                  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Taking, distribution, possession etc. of indecent photos of children</li> </ul>  |
| Crimes associated with prostitution          | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Crimes relating to prostitution</li> <li>• Soliciting services of person engaged in prostitution</li> <li>• Brothel keeping</li> <li>• Immoral traffic</li> <li>• Procuration</li> </ul> |
| Other sexual crimes                          | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Incest</li> <li>• Voyeurism</li> <li>• Administering a substance for sexual purposes</li> </ul>  |

### **Group 3 – Crimes of dishonesty**

| Category      | Includes   |
|---------------|--|
| Housebreaking | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Theft by housebreaking domestic property (dwelling and non-dwelling)</li> <li>• Theft by housebreaking other property</li> <li>• Housebreaking with intent to steal domestic property (dwelling and non-dwelling)</li> <li>• Housebreaking with intent to steal other property</li> <li>• Attempted housebreaking with intent to enter and steal domestic property (dwelling and non-dwelling)</li> </ul> |

| Category                         | Includes   |
|----------------------------------|--|
|                                  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Attempted housebreaking with intent to enter and steal other property</li> </ul>  |
| Theft by opening lockfast places | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Theft by opening lockfast places (OLP) (excluding motor vehicle)</li> <li>• OLP (excluding motor vehicle) with intent to steal</li> <li>• Attempted OLP excluding motor vehicle with intent to steal</li> </ul> |
| Theft from a motor vehicle       | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Theft by OLP from a motor vehicle</li> <li>• OLP with intent to steal from a motor vehicle</li> <li>• Attempted OLP with intent to steal from a motor vehicle</li> </ul>  |
| Theft of a motor vehicle         | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Theft of a motor vehicle and contents</li> <li>• Attempted theft of a motor vehicle</li> </ul>  |
| Shoplifting                      | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Shoplifting</li> </ul>  |
| Other theft                      | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Theft of pedal cycles</li> <li>• Theft from a motor vehicle not elsewhere classified</li> </ul>   |
| Fraud                            | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Common law fraud</li> <li>• Statutory fraud</li> <li>• Forgery and uttering (excluding currency crimes)</li> </ul>  |
| Other dishonesty                 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Forgery (other)</li> <li>• Reset</li> <li>• Embezzlement</li> <li>• Corruption</li> </ul>   |

#### **Group 4 – Damage and reckless behaviour**

| Category         | Includes   |
|------------------|--|
| Fire-raising     | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Fire-raising</li><li>• Muirburn</li></ul>  |
| Vandalism        | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Malicious mischief</li><li>• Vandalism</li></ul>   |
| Reckless conduct | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Culpable and reckless conduct (not with firearms)</li><li>• Reckless conduct with firearms</li></ul> |

#### **Group 5 – Crimes against society**

| Category                      | Includes  |
|-------------------------------|---|
| Crimes against public justice | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Perjury</li><li>• Resisting arrest</li><li>• Bail offences (other than absconding or re-offending)</li><li>• Wasting police time</li></ul>  |
| Weapons possession            | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Possession of an offensive weapon (including used in other criminal activity)</li><li>• Restriction of offensive weapons</li><li>• Having in a public place an article with a blade or point (including used in other criminal activity)</li><li>• Having in prison an article with a blade or point (including used in other criminal activity)</li><li>• Possession of an offensive weapon (not blade or point) in a prison (including used in other criminal activity)</li></ul> |

| Category                     | Includes   |
|------------------------------|--|
|                              | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Possession of an offensive weapon (not blade or point) in a school (including used in other criminal activity)</li> <li>• Having in school an article with a blade or point (including used in other criminal activity)</li> <li>• Possession of a corrosive substance (including used in other criminal activity)</li> <li>• Possession of certain dangerous knives in a private place (including used in other criminal activity)</li> <li>• Possession of prohibited offensive weapons in a private place (including used in other criminal activity)</li> </ul> |
| Drugs - Supply               | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Illegal importation of drugs</li> <li>• Production, manufacture or cultivation of drugs</li> <li>• Supply, possession with intent to supply etc. of drugs</li> <li>• Related money laundering offences</li> <li>• Bringing drugs into prison</li> </ul>   |
| Drugs - Possession           | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Possession of drugs</li> </ul>  |
| Other crimes against society | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Offences Relating to Serious Organised Crime</li> <li>• Treason</li> <li>• Conspiracy</li> <li>• Explosives offences</li> <li>• Wrecking, piracy and hijacking</li> <li>• Crimes against public order</li> </ul>  |

## Coronavirus restrictions

| Category                 | Includes   |
|--------------------------|--|
| Coronavirus restrictions | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Coronavirus restrictions</li></ul> |

## Offences

### Group 6 – Antisocial offences

| Category                                 | Includes  |
|--|---|
| Threatening and abusive behaviour        | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Breach of the peace</li><li>• Threatening or abusive behaviour</li></ul>  |
| Racially aggravated conduct              | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Racially aggravated harassment</li><li>• Racially aggravated conduct</li></ul>  |
| Drunkenness and other disorderly conduct | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Drunk and disorderly</li><li>• Drunk and incapable</li><li>• Drunk in charge of a child</li><li>• Drunk and attempting to enter licensed premises</li><li>• Drunk or drinking in unlicensed premises</li><li>• Disorderly on licensed premises</li><li>• Drunk and attempting to enter a sports ground</li><li>• Refusing to quit licensed premises</li><li>• Consumption of alcohol in designated places, byelaws prohibited</li></ul> |
| Urinating etc.                           | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Urinating etc.</li></ul>  |



## Group 7 – Miscellaneous offences

| Category                            | Includes   |
|-------------------------------------|--|
| Community and public order offences | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• False/Hoax calls</li><li>• Offences involving children</li></ul>                             |
| Environmental offences              | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Labour laws</li><li>• Offences against environmental legislation</li></ul>                   |
| Licensing offences                  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Offences against liquor licensing laws</li><li>• Naval military and air force laws</li></ul> |
| Wildlife offences                   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Offences involving animals/plants</li></ul>  |
| Other miscellaneous offences        | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Offences against local legislation</li><li>• Consumer protection acts</li></ul>              |

## Group 8 – Road traffic offences

| Category                       | Includes   |
|--------------------------------|--|
| Dangerous and careless driving | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Dangerous driving offences</li><li>• Driving carelessly</li></ul>  |
| Driving under the influence    | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Driving or in charge of motor vehicle while unfit through drink or drugs</li><li>• Blood alcohol content above limit</li><li>• Failing to provide breath, blood or urine specimens</li></ul> |
| Speeding                       | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Speeding in restricted areas</li><li>• Other speeding offences</li></ul>   |

| Category                    | Includes  |
|-----------------------------|---|
| Unlawful use of vehicle     | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Driving whilst disqualified</li> <li>• Driving without a licence</li> <li>• Offences relating to driving without insurance</li> <li>• Vehicle excise license offences</li> </ul> |
| Vehicle defect offences     | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Offences relating to faulty lights on vehicles</li> <li>• Other vehicle defects relating to tyres, brakes etc.</li> <li>• Weight contraventions for goods vehicles</li> </ul>    |
| Seat belt offences          | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Drivers and passengers failing to wear seatbelts</li> <li>• Failure to restrain children in appropriate seatbelts</li> </ul>   |
| Mobile phone offences       | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Driving whilst using a mobile phone</li> </ul>   |
| Other road traffic offences | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Accident offences including failing to stop/provide details</li> <li>• Parking offences</li> <li>• Motor Vehicle Records of Work (eg Tachograph) Offences</li> </ul>             |

## Changes to crime groups

| Old crime groups  | New crime groups  |
|---|---|
| <p><b>Non-sexual crimes of violence</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Homicide etc. (incl. causing death by driving)</li> <li>• Attempted murder and serious assault</li> <li>• Robbery</li> <li>• Domestic Abuse (Scotland) Act 2018</li> <li>• Other violence</li> </ul> | <p><b>Non-sexual crimes of violence</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Murder and culpable homicide</li> <li>• Death by dangerous driving</li> <li>• Serious assault and attempted murder</li> <li>• Common assault</li> <li>• Robbery</li> <li>• Domestic Abuse (Scotland) Act 2018</li> <li>• Other non-sexual violence</li> </ul>  |
| <p><b>Sexual crimes</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Rape and attempted rape</li> <li>• Sexual assault</li> <li>• Crimes associated with prostitution</li> <li>• Other sexual crimes</li> </ul>   | <p><b>Sexual crimes</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Rape and attempted rape</li> <li>• Sexual assault</li> <li>• Causing to view sexual activity or images</li> <li>• Communicating indecently</li> <li>• Threatening to or disclosing intimate images</li> <li>• Indecent photos of children</li> <li>• Crimes associated with prostitution</li> <li>• Other sexual crimes</li> </ul> |

| <b>Old crime groups</b>   | <b>New crime groups</b>   |
|---|---|
| <p><b>Crimes of dishonesty</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Housebreaking</li> <li>• Theft by opening a lockfast place (OLP)</li> <li>• Theft from a motor vehicle by OLP</li> <li>• Theft of a motor vehicle</li> <li>• Shoplifting</li> <li>• Other theft</li> <li>• Fraud</li> <li>• Other dishonesty</li> </ul> | <p><b>Crimes of dishonesty</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Housebreaking</li> <li>• Theft by opening a lockfast place (OLP)</li> <li>• Theft from a motor vehicle by OLP</li> <li>• Theft of a motor vehicle</li> <li>• Shoplifting</li> <li>• Other theft</li> <li>• Fraud</li> <li>• Other dishonesty</li> </ul> |
| <p><b>Fire-raising, vandalism etc.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Fire-raising</li> <li>• Vandalism etc.</li> </ul>   | <p><b>Damage and reckless behaviour</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Vandalism</li> <li>• Reckless conduct</li> <li>• Fire-raising</li> </ul>   |
| <p><b>Other crimes</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Crimes against public justice</li> <li>• Handling offensive weapons</li> <li>• Drugs</li> <li>• Other</li> </ul>  | <p><b>Crimes against society</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Crimes against public justice</li> <li>• Handling offensive weapons [note 1]</li> <li>• Drugs – Supply</li> <li>• Drugs – Possession</li> <li>• Other crimes against society</li> </ul>   |
| <p><b>Coronavirus restrictions</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Coronavirus restrictions</li> </ul>   | <p><b>Coronavirus restrictions</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Coronavirus restrictions</li> </ul>   |

## Changes to offence groups

| Old offence groups   | New offence groups   |
|--|--|
| <p><b>Miscellaneous offences</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Common assault</li> <li>• Breach of the peace etc.</li> <li>• Drunkenness and other disorderly conduct</li> <li>• Urinating etc.</li> <li>• Other</li> </ul>   | <p><b>Antisocial offences</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Threatening and abusive behaviour</li> <li>• Racially aggravated conduct</li> <li>• Drunkenness and other disorderly conduct</li> <li>• Urinating etc.</li> </ul> <p><b>Miscellaneous offences</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Community and public order offences</li> <li>• Environmental offences</li> <li>• Licensing offences</li> <li>• Wildlife offences</li> <li>• Other miscellaneous offences</li> </ul> |
| <p><b>Motor vehicle offences</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Dangerous and careless driving</li> <li>• Driving under the influence</li> <li>• Speeding</li> <li>• Unlawful use of a motor vehicle</li> <li>• Vehicle defect offences</li> <li>• Seat belt offences</li> <li>• Mobile phone offences</li> <li>• Other</li> </ul> | <p><b>Road traffic offences</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Dangerous and careless driving</li> <li>• Driving under the influence</li> <li>• Speeding</li> <li>• Unlawful use of a motor vehicle</li> <li>• Vehicle defect offences</li> <li>• Seat belt offences</li> <li>• Mobile phone offences</li> <li>• Other road traffic offences</li> </ul>  |

### Notes for new grouping structure

Note 1. In the National Statistics on Recorded Crime in Scotland, the category of Handling Offensive Weapons is further split into two further categories: 'Used in other criminal activity' and 'Not used in other criminal activity'. Due to the nature of the data used to produce these statistics, this breakdown is not possible and Criminal Proceedings in Scotland includes only a single value for these two categories.

# Annex E – Legislative and policy changes

## Coronavirus legislation

E.1 The [Coronavirus \(Scotland\) Act 2020](#) was introduced in April 2020. National lockdowns due to the Covid-19 pandemic were in place from 24 March to 19 June 2020 and 5 January to 22 February 2021. This resulted in significant reduced activity in both the number of reports being referred to COPFS and the number of proceedings going through Scottish courts. Local tiered restrictions also affected court activity in various regions across Scotland throughout 2020-21 when national lockdowns were not in place. The 2022-23 figures demonstrate the continued recovery of the justice system following the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic. The 2022-23 financial year marked a return to normal court capacities following the court closures and reduced capacities of 2020-21 and 2021-22. However, it does reflect the challenges of dealing with the resulting backlog of cases and despite an increase in overall volume of proceedings from 2021-22, 2022-23 remained below 2019-20 levels. Although the impact of the pandemic is evident in these latest figures, caution should be taken in attributing any changes entirely to this ongoing situation. As the data continues to be affected by the pandemic and the justice system's recovery, figures for 2022-23, alongside those from 2020-21 onwards, should not be considered indicative of longer-term trends.

## Domestic Abuse Scotland Act

E.2 The [Domestic Abuse \(Scotland\) Act 2018](#) introduced a crime relating to a person engaging in a course of behaviour relating to domestic abuse. There is also a provision for a new statutory aggravation relating to children, which is aggravated if the offence directs behaviour at a child, or uses a child to direct behaviour at the partner/ex-partner. It came into force on 1 April 2019.

E.3 In the past, these crimes will often have been convicted under individual charges in other crimes or offences categories, including Breach of the peace etc. (which covers stalking, and threatening and abusive behaviour) and Common assault in the Miscellaneous offences category. Therefore it may affect the numbers of proceedings and convictions for these crimes, and the numbers of proceedings and convictions with a statutory domestic abuse aggravation or domestic abuse identifier. COPFS' [Domestic-abuse-publication-2022-23](#) statistics on the number of charges reported to them showed that the percentage of charges for stalking with a domestic abuse identifier was 53% in 2022-23 a decrease from 57% in 2021-22.

E.4 The introduction of this act is also likely to have an effect on the numbers of proceedings and convictions in the violent crime category, as the new crime under this act was added to this category. It was put in this category after consultation with users.

## **Other changes to legislation during the period covered by this bulletin**

E.5 The [Abusive Behaviour and Sexual Harm \(Scotland\) Act 2016](#) introduced a new statutory aggravation for domestic abuse which came into force in April 2017. This act also covers ‘intimate images’ offences (often known as ‘revenge porn’).

E.6 [Sections 79-81 of the Criminal Justice \(Scotland\) Act 2016](#) (“the 2016 Act”) made significant changes to the sheriff and jury procedures contained in the [Criminal Procedure \(Scotland\) Act 1995](#) (“the 1995 Act”), and were introduced over three dates during the period May to August 2017. This may feed through to average sentence lengths because it allows sentence discounts for early guilty pleas.

E.7 The [2016 Act - Part I \(Police powers\)](#) came into force on 25 January 2018. The provisions, amongst other matters, transferred written undertaking provisions from the 1995 Act to Part I of the 2016 Act.

E.8 On 5 December 2014 the alcohol limit for drivers in Scotland was reduced from 80 mg to 50 mg per 100 ml blood.

E.9 The [Offensive Behaviour at Football and Threatening Communications \(Scotland\) Act 2012](#), which came into effect on 1 March 2012, was repealed on 20 April 2018. See [Annex E7 in the 2018-19 bulletin](#) for a table of all the proceedings and convictions under this act by year.

E.10 From 1 April 2021, Adult Protection Act Offences (also called Breach of adult at risk banning order) was no longer counted as a crime. This charge does not relate to a criminal offence and was created to allow the circumstances to be reported to the Procurator Fiscal. This exclusion from the Criminal Proceedings total has also been backdated.

E.11 The [Protection of Workers \(Retail and Age-restricted Goods and Services\) \(Scotland\) Act 2021](#) came into effect on 24 August 2021. This introduced a new crime of Common Assault of a Retail Worker and the first proceedings for this crime are included in the 2021-22 bulletin. Common Assault of a Retail Worker forms part of the Common assault crime category (see [Annex D.13](#)).

E.12 [The Dogs \(Protection of Livestock\) \(Amendment\) \(Scotland\) Act 2021](#) came into effect on 5 November 2021. Under this new law, owners of dogs that attack or worry livestock can be fined up to £40,000 or sent to prison for up to 12 months.

E.13 [The Animals and Wildlife \(Penalties, Protection and Powers\) \(Scotland\) Act 2020](#) came into force on 30 November 2020. This increases penalties for animal welfare and health offences as well as wildlife crimes.

E.14 [The Age of Criminal Responsibility \(Scotland\) Act 2019](#) came into full effect on 17 December 2021 and means children under 12 can no longer be charged or arrested.

E.15 On 28<sup>th</sup> June 2022, Section 6 of the [Offensive Weapons Act 2019](#) was implemented. This includes the introduction of an offence of having a corrosive substance in a public place. Section 44 and 46 of the legislation came into effect on 27 March 2023, meaning the possession of certain offensive weapons is now illegal in both a public and private. This includes Section 46 prohibiting the possession of listed offensive weapons in private places and Section 44 prohibiting the possession of certain dangerous knives in private places.

## Annex F: User engagement

F.1 These statistics are used by a large number of stakeholders within central government and other public bodies for a variety of purposes.

F.2 We will continue to consult with the users of the Accredited Official Statistics in order to get a better understanding of who the users are and what their requirements are for both the data and the presentation of these statistics.

F.3 One area in particular we are aiming to improve is the inclusion of ethnicity data in the bulletin. This is the case with a number of key datasets across the justice system and a [Cross Justice Working Group on Data and Evidence on Race](#) has been set up to address this. As part of this group we are working with stakeholders to address the gaps in data and analysis on ethnicity within the justice system.

F.4 We always welcome feedback on the content and the uses made of our statistical bulletins and users are invited to submit their comments and any suggestions for improvement to: [justice\\_analysts@gov.scot](mailto:justice_analysts@gov.scot).

## Tell us what you think

We are always interested to hear from our users about how our statistics are used, and how they can be improved.

### Enquiries

For enquiries about this publication please contact:

Graeme Lloyd  
Justice Analytical Services  
E-mail: [justice\\_analysts@gov.scot](mailto:justice_analysts@gov.scot)  
Telephone: 0300 244 4931

For general enquiries about Scottish Government statistics please contact:

Office of the Chief Statistician  
e-mail: [statistics.enquiries@gov.scot](mailto:statistics.enquiries@gov.scot)



## **Join our mailing list**

If you would like to receive notification about statistical publications, or find out about consultations on our statistics please join the [ScotStat mailing list](#).

## **Future publications**

Details of future publications can be found on the [Scottish Government's forthcoming publications web page](#).



© Crown copyright 2024



This publication is licensed under the terms of the Open Government Licence v3.0 except where otherwise stated. To view this licence, visit [nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence/version/3](https://nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence/version/3) or write to the Information Policy Team, The National Archives, Kew, London TW9 4DU, or email: [psi@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:psi@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk).

Where we have identified any third party copyright information you will need to obtain permission from the copyright holders concerned.

This publication is available at [www.gov.scot](http://www.gov.scot)

Any enquiries regarding this publication should be sent to us at

The Scottish Government  
St Andrew's House  
Edinburgh  
EH1 3DG

ISBN: 978-1-83691-128-9 (web only)

Published by The Scottish Government, December 2024

Produced for The Scottish Government by APS Group Scotland, 21 Tennant Street, Edinburgh EH6 5NA  
PPDAS1537494 (12/24)

W W W . g o v . s c o t