

Prison: the facts

Bromley Briefings Summer 2015

Facts and figures provide a better basis than opinion for policy and practice change. Drawn largely from government sources, these facts chart the extraordinary rise in prison numbers over the last twenty years, inflation in sentencing and the social and economic consequences of overuse of custody. They reveal the state of our overcrowded prisons and the state of people in them, the impact of deep budget cuts, the pace and scale of change in the justice system and the scope for community solutions to crime.

On 15 May 2015, the prison population in England and Wales was 84,372.¹ Between 1993 and 2014 the prison population in England and Wales increased by more than 40,000 people, a 91% rise.²

At an average annual cost per prison place of £36,237,³ the rise in the prison population represents an estimated additional cost of £1.22bn annually—over £40 per year for every UK taxpayer.

Prison has a poor record for reducing reoffending—45% of adults are reconvicted within one year of release. For those serving sentences of less than 12 months this increases to 58%. Over two-thirds (68%) of under 18 year olds are reconvicted within a year of release.⁴

Reoffending by all recent ex-prisoners costs the economy between £9.5 and £13 billion a year.⁵

The prison system as a whole has been overcrowded in every year since 1994.⁶ Overcrowding affects whether activities, staff and other resources are available to reduce risk of reoffending. At the end of March 2015, 70 of the 117 prisons in England and Wales were overcrowded.⁷

Short prison sentences are less effective than community sentences at reducing reoffending. People serving prison sentences of less than 12 months had a reoffending rate seven percentage points higher than similar offenders serving a community sentence—they also committed more crimes.⁸

Prisons are getting bigger. 43% of prisoners are now held in prisons of 1,000 places or more.⁹

There are now fewer staff looking after more prisoners. The number of staff employed in the public prison estate has fallen by 29% in the last four years—12,980 fewer staff.¹⁰

In 2014 there were 243 deaths in custody, the highest number on record. Over a third were self-inflicted.¹¹

In the last year serious assaults in prison have risen by over a third.¹²

According to the National Audit Office, there is no consistent correlation between prison numbers and levels of crime.¹³ International comparisons also show there is no consistent link between the two.¹⁴

More than double the number of children are affected by parental imprisonment than divorce in the family.¹⁵ Around 200,000 children in England and Wales had a parent in prison at some point in 2009.¹⁶

Looked after children make up 33% of boys and 61% of girls in custody,¹⁷ despite fewer than 1% of all children in England being in care.¹⁸

1 Ministry of Justice (2015) Population and capacity briefing for Friday 15 May 2015, London: Ministry of Justice

2 Table A1.2, Ministry of Justice (2014) Offender management statistics prison population 2014, London: Ministry of Justice and Table 1.1, Ministry of Justice (2015) Offender management statistics quarterly: July to September 2014, London: Ministry of Justice

3 Table 1, Ministry of Justice (2014) Costs per place and costs per prisoner by individual prison, NOMS annual report and accounts 2013-14: Management information addendum, London: Ministry of Justice and HM Prison Service (1993) Prison Service annual report and accounts April 1992–March 1993, London: HMSO

4 Tables 16a, 17a and 16b, Ministry of Justice (2015) Proven reoffending statistics: July 2012 to June 2013, London: Ministry of Justice

5 National Audit Office (2010) Managing offenders on short custodial sentences, London: The Stationery Office

6 Home Office (1999) Digest 4: Information on the criminal justice system in England and Wales, London: Home Office

7 Ministry of Justice (2015) Monthly population bulletin March 2015, London: Ministry of Justice

8 Ministry of Justice (2013) 2013 Compendium of re-offending statistics and analysis, London: Ministry of Justice

9 Ministry of Justice (2015) Monthly population bulletin March 2015, London: Ministry of Justice

10 Table 2, Ministry of Justice (2014) National Offender Management Service workforce statistics bulletin: December 2014, London: Ministry of Justice

11 Table 1.1, Ministry of Justice (2015) Safety in custody statistics quarterly update to December 2014, London: Ministry of Justice

12 Table 3.1, Ministry of Justice (2015) Safety in custody statistics quarterly update to December 2014, London: Ministry of Justice

13 National Audit Office (2012) Comparing International Criminal Justice Systems, London: National Audit Office

14 Lappi-Seppälä, T (2015) Why some countries cope with lesser use of imprisonment, available at <http://www.prisonreformtrust.org.uk/Portals/0/Documents/Tapio%20Lappi-Sepp%C3%A4l%C3%A4%20London%202015.pdf>

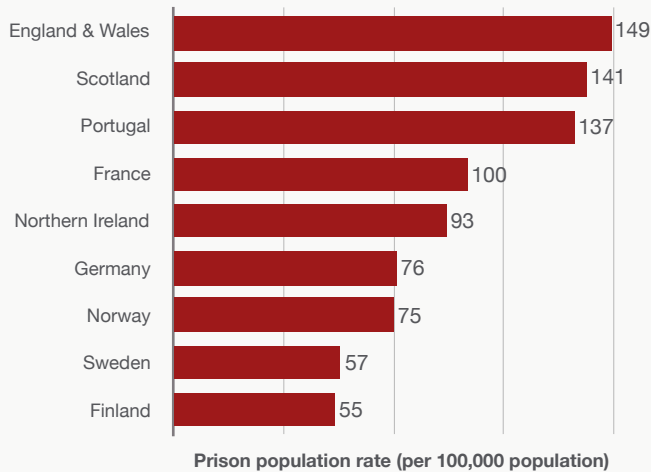
15 Office for National Statistics (2011) Divorces in England and Wales 2009, Fareham: Office for National Statistics

16 Ministry of Justice (2012) Prisoners' childhood and family backgrounds, London: Ministry of Justice

17 Kennedy, E. (2013) Children and Young People in Custody 2012–13, London: HM Inspectorate of Prisons and Youth Justice Board

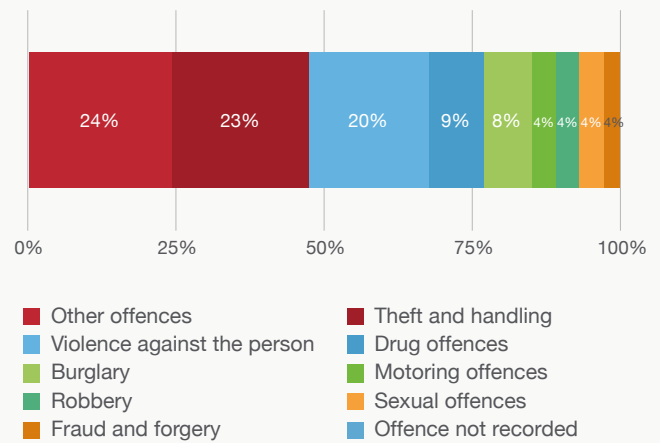
18 Department for Education (2013) Children looked after in England year ending 31 March 2013, London: DfE, StatsWales website, and Office for National Statistics (2013) Population estimates total persons for England and Wales and regions Mid-1971 to Mid-2012, London: ONS

Imprisonment rates across Western Europe



Source: International Centre for Prison Studies

Prison receptions by offence type, 2014



Source: Ministry of Justice (2015) Offender management statistics annual tables 2014

Prison population and sentencing trends

Use of custody

Between 1993 and 2014 the prison population in England and Wales increased by more than 40,000 people, a 91% rise.¹⁹

England and Wales have the highest imprisonment rate in Western Europe, locking up 149 people per 100,000 of the population. Scotland has a rate of 141 per 100,000 and Northern Ireland 93 per 100,000.²⁰

On 15 May 2015, the prison population in England and Wales was 84,372. Scotland's prison population was 7,620 and Northern Ireland's prison population was 1,713.²¹

Prison sentences are getting longer. The average prison sentence is now more than three months longer than in 2002 – 15.8 months.²²

Greater use of long custodial sentences accounted for 66% of the rise in the prison population between 1993 and 2012. The number of people serving sentences of four years or more, including indeterminate sentences, increased by 26,600.²³ They now make up almost one in four sentenced prisoners.²⁴

¹⁹ Table A1.2, Ministry of Justice (2014) Offender management statistics prison population 2014, London: Ministry of Justice and Table 1.1, Ministry of Justice (2015) Offender management statistics quarterly: July to September 2014, London: Ministry of Justice

²⁰ International Centre for Prison Studies website, http://www.prisonstudies.org/highest-to-lowest/prison_population_rate?field_region_taxonomy_tid=14

²¹ Ministry of Justice (2015) Population and capacity briefing for Friday 15 May 2015, London: Ministry of Justice, Scottish Prison Service website and Northern Ireland Prison Service website

²² Table Q5.4, Ministry of Justice (2015) Criminal justice statistics quarterly update to September 2013 and Table Q5.6, Ministry of Justice (2013) Criminal justice statistics quarterly update to September 2012, London: Ministry of Justice

²³ Ministry of Justice (2013) Story of the prison population: 1993 - 2012 England and Wales, London: Ministry of Justice

²⁴ Table A1.1, Ministry of Justice (2014) Offender management statistics prison population 2014, London: Ministry of Justice

Short prison sentences are less effective than community sentences at reducing reoffending.²⁵

Despite this, nearly half (45%) of all people entering prison under sentence are serving a sentence of six months or less.²⁶

Life and indeterminate sentences

Increasing numbers of people in prison don't know if, or when, they might be released.

Indeterminate sentences account for 18% of the sentenced prison population, up from 9% in 1993.²⁷

12,203 people are currently serving indeterminate sentences. 61% are serving a life sentence (7,447) while the remaining 39% are serving an Indeterminate sentence for Public Protection (4,756).²⁸

Three-quarters of people serving an IPP sentence are still in prison despite having passed their tariff expiry date – the minimum period they must spend in custody.²⁹ Many have been held years beyond their tariff.

Rates of release for IPP prisoners have slowed in the past year. In 2014 for every 1,000 people serving an IPP sentence only 73 were released, down from 77 in 2013.³⁰

²⁵ Ministry of Justice (2013) 2013 Compendium of re-offending statistics and analysis, London: Ministry of Justice

²⁶ Table A2.1, Ministry of Justice (2015) Offender management statistics annual tables 2014, London: Ministry of Justice

²⁷ Table A1.1, Ministry of Justice (2014) Offender management statistics prison population 2014, London: Ministry of Justice and Ministry of Justice (2013) Story of the prison population: 1993 - 2012 England and Wales, London: Ministry of Justice

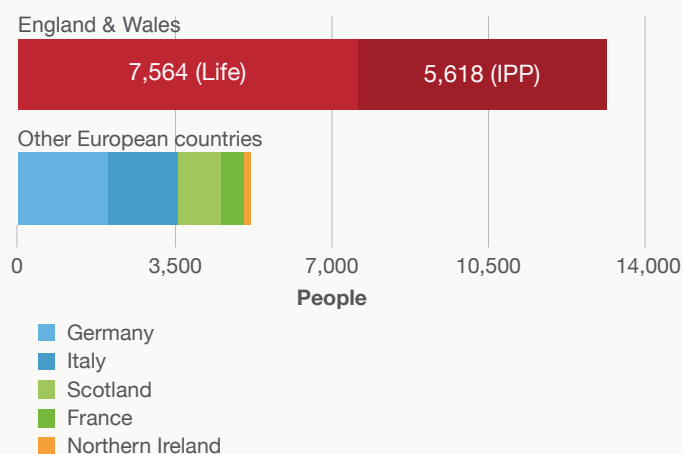
²⁸ Table 1.9, Ministry of Justice (2015) Offender management statistics quarterly: October to December 2014, London: Ministry of Justice

²⁹ Ibid.

³⁰ Table A3.3, Ministry of Justice (2015) Offender management statistics annual tables 2014, London: Ministry of Justice and Table A1.12, Ministry of Justice (2014) Offender management statistics prison population 2014, London: Ministry of Justice

Indefinitely maybe?

Use of indeterminate prison sentences in Europe, 2013



Source: Council of Europe Annual Penal Statistics, Survey 2013

Only 14% of people who have served an IPP sentence reoffend within a year of release.³¹

England and Wales have more than three times as many people serving indeterminate sentences than France, Germany and Italy combined—the highest in Europe by a high margin.³²

People serving mandatory life sentences are spending more of their sentence in prison. On average they spend 17 years in custody, up from 13 years in 2001.³³

Lifers continue to serve their sentence on release from prison for the rest of their lives. They are subject to monitoring and restrictions and can be returned to custody at any point if they break the terms of their licence.

There are currently 52 people serving a whole life sentence—they will never be released.³⁴

There is currently no reliable official information on the number of people convicted under joint enterprise. Estimates range from over 400 to 1,853 people.³⁵

People on remand

People remanded to custody are innocent until proven guilty. In the last year 48,330 people were remanded into custody to await trial.³⁶

31 Table 17a, Ministry of Justice (2015) Proven reoffending statistics: July 2012 to June 2013, London: Ministry of Justice

32 Table 7, Aebi, M. and Delgrande, N. (2015) Council of Europe Annual Penal Statistics, Survey 2013, Strasbourg: Council of Europe

33 Table A3.4, Ministry of Justice (2015) Offender management statistics annual tables 2014, London: Ministry of Justice and Table A3.4, Ministry of Justice (2014) Offender management statistics annual tables 2013, London: Ministry of Justice

34 Table 1.9, Ministry of Justice (2015) Offender management statistics quarterly: October to December 2014, London: Ministry of Justice

35 Justice Committee (2014) Joint enterprise: follow-up, London: The Stationery Office

36 Table A2.1, Ministry of Justice (2015) Offender management statistics annual tables 2014, London: Ministry of Justice

Three-fifths of people entering prison on remand awaiting trial are accused of non-violent offences. 13% were for theft and handling offences, and 9% for drug offences.³⁷

People on remand currently make up 14% of the total prison population—11,800 people. The majority are awaiting trial (70%), whilst the rest await sentencing.³⁸

One in ten people (10,688) remanded in custody were subsequently acquitted. A further 15% of people (15,481) received a non-custodial sentence.³⁹

Remand prisoners spend an average of nine weeks held in custody.⁴⁰

Remand prisoners receive no financial help from the Prison Service at the point of release.⁴¹ Those acquitted receive no compensation.

People in prison - a snapshot

Men represent 95% of the prison population in England and Wales. Unless otherwise stated, references to people in prison largely concern men in prison.

Children and young adults

The number of children (under-18s) in custody has fallen by two-thirds in the last seven years.⁴² They are also committing fewer crimes—with proven offences down by 72% from their peak in 2005–06.⁴³

At the end of March 2015 there were 1,004 children in custody in England and Wales. 44 children were aged 14 or younger.⁴⁴

Over a third of children in custody in 2013–14 were there for non-violent crimes.⁴⁵

Children spend an average seven months in custody, including time on remand.⁴⁶

One in five children in custody surveyed reported that they had learning difficulties.⁴⁷

37 Table A2.2, Ibid.

38 Table 1.1, Ministry of Justice (2015) Offender management statistics quarterly: October to December 2014, London: Ministry of Justice

39 Table Q3a, Ministry of Justice (2014) Criminal Justice Statistics Quarterly Update to March 2014, London: Ministry of Justice

40 Hansard HC, 21 January 2013, c51W

41 Citizens Advice (2007) Locked Out: CAB evidence on prisoners and ex-offenders, London: Citizens Advice

42 Table 2.1, Youth Justice Board (2015) Monthly youth custody report - March 2015, London: Ministry of Justice

43 Table 4.2, Ministry of Justice (2015) Youth Justice Statistics 2013–14 England and Wales, London: Ministry of Justice

44 Table 2.1 and 2.8, Youth Justice Board (2015) Monthly youth custody report - March 2015, London: Ministry of Justice

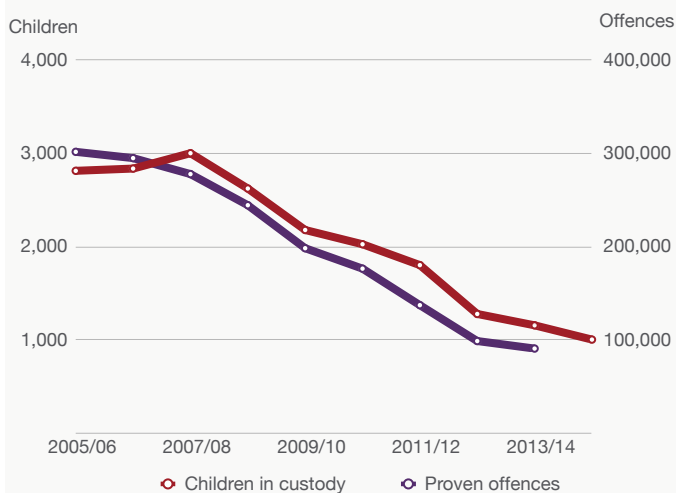
45 Table 7.5a, Ministry of Justice (2015) Youth Justice Statistics 2013–14 England and Wales, London: Ministry of Justice

46 Table A3.1c, Ministry of Justice (2014) Offender management statistics annual tables 2013, London: Ministry of Justice

47 Gyateng, T., et al. (2013) Young People and the Secure Estate: Needs and Interventions, London: Youth Justice Board

Prison works?

Child custody has dropped significantly—and so has offending



Sources: Youth Justice Board Monthly youth custody report March 2015 and Youth Justice Statistics 2013–14

Three-quarters of children in prison had an absent father, one-third had an absent mother. Two-fifths had been on the child protection register or had experienced neglect or abuse.⁴⁸

Use of restraint on children is increasing. In 2013–14 there were 28 incidents of restraint per 100 children in custody, up from 18 in 2009–10.⁴⁹

Assault rates amongst children in custody are rising. In 2013–14 there were 15 assaults per 100 children in custody, up from 9 in 2009–10.⁵⁰

The number of young adults (aged 18–20) in prison in England and Wales continues to fall—with 13% fewer in custody in March 2015 than the previous year.⁵¹

Fewer than 1% of all children in England are in care,⁵² but looked after children make up 33% of boys and 61% of girls in custody.⁵³

The minimum age that a person can be prosecuted in a criminal trial in England, Wales and Northern Ireland is 10 years. This compares to 12 years in Canada, 13 years in France, 14 years in Germany and China, and 15 years in Sweden. In Scotland the age of criminal responsibility is eight years, but the minimum age for prosecution is 12.⁵⁴

48 Jacobson J. et al (2010) Punishing Disadvantage: a profile of children in custody, London: Prison Reform Trust

49 Table 8.3, Youth Justice Board (2015) Youth Justice Statistics 2013–14 England and Wales, London: Ministry of Justice

50 Ibid.

51 Table 1.1, Ministry of Justice (2015) Offender management statistics quarterly bulletin October to December 2014, London: Ministry of Justice

52 Department for Education (2013) Children looked after in England year ending 31 March 2013, London: DfE, StatsWales website, and Office for National Statistics (2013) Population estimates total persons for England and Wales and regions Mid-1971 to Mid-2012, London: ONS

53 Kennedy, E. (2013) Children and Young People in Custody 2012–13, London: HM Inspectorate of Prisons and Youth Justice Board

54 Jacobson, J. and Talbot, J. (2009) Vulnerable Defendants in the Criminal Courts: a review of provision for adults and children, London: Prison Reform Trust; and <http://www.scotland.gov.uk/News/Releases/2009/03/27140804>

Women

The number of women in prison nearly trebled between 1993 and 2005. This has started to slowly reverse, but there are still over 2,000 more women in prison today than there were twenty years ago.⁵⁵

On 15 May 2015 there were 3,889 women in prison in England and Wales.⁵⁶

Most women entering prison under sentence (82%) have committed a non-violent offence. In 2014, 41% of women entering custody under sentence for theft and handling stolen goods.⁵⁷

Most women entering prison serve very short sentences. In 2014, 58% of sentenced women entering prison were serving six months or less.⁵⁸ In 1993 only a third of women entering custody were sentenced to six months or less.⁵⁹

53% of women in prison report having experienced emotional, physical or sexual abuse as a child, compared to 27% of men.⁶⁰

46% of women in prison report having suffered a history of domestic abuse.⁶¹

49% of women prisoners in a Ministry of Justice study were assessed as suffering from anxiety and depression, compared to 19% of the female population in the UK.⁶²

If alternatives to prison were to achieve an additional reduction of just 6% in reoffending by women, the state would recoup the investment required to achieve this in just one year.⁶³

Mothers and fathers, prisoners' children

More than double the number of children are affected by parental imprisonment than divorce in the family.⁶⁴ Approximately 200,000 children in England and Wales had a parent in prison at some point in 2009.⁶⁵

55 Table A1.2, Ministry of Justice (2015) Offender management statistics annual tables 2014, London: Ministry of Justice and Table 1.1, Ministry of Justice (2015) Offender management statistics quarterly bulletin December 2013 to December 2014, London: Ministry of Justice

56 Ministry of Justice (2015) Population and capacity briefing for Friday 15 May 2015, London: Ministry of Justice

57 Table A2.2b, Ministry of Justice (2015) Offender management statistics annual tables 2014, London: Ministry of Justice

58 Table A2.1, Ministry of Justice (2015) Offender management statistics annual tables 2014, London: Ministry of Justice

59 Hedderman, C. (2012) Empty cells or empty words, government policy on reducing the number of women going to prison, London: Criminal Justice Alliance

60 Ministry of Justice (2012) Prisoners' childhood and family backgrounds, London: Ministry of Justice

61 Baroness Corston (2007) A Review of Women with Particular Vulnerabilities in the Criminal Justice System, London: Home Office

62 Ministry of Justice (2013) Gender differences in substance misuse and mental health amongst prisoners, London: Ministry of Justice

63 new economics foundation (2008) Unlocking value: How we all benefit from investing in alternatives to prison for women offenders, London: new economics foundation

64 Office for National Statistics (2011) Divorces in England and Wales 2009, Fareham: Office for National Statistics

65 Ministry of Justice (2012) Prisoners' childhood and family backgrounds, London: Ministry of Justice

During their time at school an estimated 7% of children experience their father's imprisonment.⁶⁶

It is estimated that more than 17,240 children were separated from their mother in 2010 by imprisonment.⁶⁷

Only 9% of children whose mothers are in prison are cared for by their fathers in their mothers' absence.⁶⁸

Parental imprisonment approximately trebles the risk for antisocial or delinquent behaviour by their children.⁶⁹

Over half (54%) of prisoners interviewed had children under the age of 18 when they entered prison. The vast majority felt they had let their family down (82%).⁷⁰

40% of prisoners said that support from their family, and 36% said that seeing their children, would help them stop reoffending in the future.⁷¹

Women are often held further away from their families, making visiting difficult and expensive. The average distance is 60 miles, but many are held considerably further away.⁷²

Foreign national prisoners

The term 'foreign national prisoner' encompasses many different people. They may have come to the UK as children with parents, or be second generation immigrants; they may be asylum seekers or been given indefinite leave to remain as a refugee; they could be European nationals; those who have entered the UK illegally or were in the UK as students, visitors or workers who have got involved in the criminal justice system.

Foreign nationals (non-UK passport holders) currently make up 12% of the prison population in England and Wales. On 31 March 2015 there were 10,481 held in prison.⁷³

1,254 people are not serving criminal sentences but are held administratively under Immigration Act powers in Immigration Removal Centres.⁷⁴

66 Department for Education and Skills (2003) Every Child Matters, London: The Stationery Office

67 Wilks-Wiffen, S. (2011) Voice of a Child, London: Howard League for Penal Reform

68 Baroness Corston (2007) A Review of Women with Particular Vulnerabilities in the Criminal Justice System, London: Home Office

69 Murray, J., & Farrington, D. P. (2008) 'The effects of parental imprisonment on children'. In M. Tonry (Ed.), Crime and justice: A review of research (Vol. 37, pp. 133-206). Chicago: University of Chicago Press

70 Ministry of Justice (2012) Prisoners' childhood and family backgrounds, London: Ministry of Justice

71 Ibid.

72 Women in Prison (2013) State of the estate - Women in Prison's report on the women's custodial estate 2011-12, London: Women in Prison

73 Table 1.8, Ministry of Justice (2015) Offender management statistics quarterly bulletin October to December 2014, London: Ministry of Justice

74 Table 1.7, Ibid.

Foreign national prisoners come from 154 countries, but over half are from 10 countries (Poland, Ireland, Romania, Jamaica, Lithuania, India, Pakistan, Nigeria, Albania and Somalia).⁷⁵

Currently 13% of women in prison are foreign nationals⁷⁶—some of whom are known to have been coerced or trafficked into offending.

One in ten foreign national women serving a sentence in prison is there for fraud and forgery offences (usually possession of false documents), and nearly one in three (31%) is there as a result of drugs offences.⁷⁷

More than 23,000 foreign national offenders have been removed from the UK since 2010.⁷⁸

As of 15 December 2014, there were 394 immigration detainees held in prison.⁷⁹

Black, Asian and minority ethnic people

26% of the prison population, 21,880 people, are from a minority ethnic group.⁸⁰ This compares to around one in 10 of the general population.⁸¹

10% of the British national prison population are black and 6% are Asian.⁸² For black Britons this is significantly higher than the 2.8% of the general population they represent.⁸³

According to the Equality and Human Rights Commission, there is now greater disproportionality in the number of black people in prisons in the UK than in the United States.⁸⁴

The number of Muslim prisoners has more than doubled over the past 12 years. In 2002 there were 5,502 Muslims in prison, but by 2015 this had risen to 12,328.⁸⁵

Muslims in prison are far from being a homogeneous group. Some were born into Muslim families, and others have converted. 41% are Asian, 31% are black, 14% are white and 8% are mixed.⁸⁶

75 Table 1.8, Ibid.

76 Ibid.

77 Table A1.9, Ministry of Justice (2014) Offender management statistics annual tables 2013, London: Ministry of Justice

78 House of Commons written question 227471

79 House of Commons written question 225536

80 Table 1.4, Ministry of Justice (2015) Offender management statistics quarterly bulletin October to December 2014, London: Ministry of Justice

81 Table A3.5.2, Equality and Human Rights Commission (2010) How fair is Britain? Equality, Human Rights and Good Relations in 2010, London: Equality and Human Rights Commission

82 Table A1.7, Ministry of Justice (2014) Offender management statistics Prison Population 2014, London: Ministry of Justice

83 Table 4, Office for National Statistics (2011) Population Estimates by Ethnic Group 2002 – 2009, London: Office for National Statistics

84 Equality and Human Rights Commission (2010) How fair is Britain? London: Equality and Human Rights Commission

85 Table A1.8, Ministry of Justice (2014) Offender management statistics prison population 2014, London: Ministry of Justice and Table 1.5, Ministry of Justice (2015) Offender management statistics quarterly October to December 2014, London: Ministry of Justice

86 Table A1.12, Ministry of Justice (2014) Offender management statistics annual tables 2013, London: Ministry of Justice

Black and minority ethnic and Muslim prisoners often report more negatively about their experience in prison and relationships with staff. Both responded more negatively in over two-thirds (67%) of the Inspectorate's survey questions than white and non-Muslim prisoners.⁸⁷

5% of prisoners say they are Gypsy, Romany or Traveller.⁸⁸ However, "there is evidence of a possible reluctance by many prisoners to identify themselves as such."⁸⁹

Older people

People aged 60 and over are the fastest growing age group in the prison estate. The number of sentenced prisoners aged 60 and over rose by 164% between 2002 and 2015.⁹⁰

People aged 50 and over currently make up 14% of the prison population. There are 11,720 people aged 50 and over in prison in England and Wales—3,984 are aged 60 and over.⁹¹

On 31 March 2014 there were 102 people in prison aged 80 and over. Five people in prison were 90 or older.⁹²

42% of men in prison aged over 50 have been convicted of sex offences. The next highest offence category is violence against the person (25%) followed by drug offences (11%).⁹³

54% of older prisoners are estimated to have a disability. Of these, 28% have physical disabilities.⁹⁴

Social care for prisoners is expected to cost £9.4 million per year—with £7.4 million of this for people over 50.⁹⁵

As the prison population ages, more prisoners will die of natural causes while in prison. In 2014, 107 people aged 50 or over died of natural causes whilst in prison, a nearly 50% increase in the last decade.⁹⁶

87 HM Chief Inspector of Prisons (2013) Annual Report 2012-13, London: The Stationery Office

88 HM Inspectorate of Prisons (2014) People in prison: Gypsies, Romany and Travellers, London: HMIP

89 Department for Communities and Local Government (2012), Progress report by the ministerial working group on tackling inequalities experienced by Gypsies and Travellers, London: CLG

90 Table A1.5, Ministry of Justice (2014) Offender management statistics annual tables 2013, London: Ministry of Justice

91 Table 1.3, Ministry of Justice (2015) Offender management statistics quarterly bulletin October to December 2014, London: Ministry of Justice

92 Hansard HC, 21 July 2014, c850W

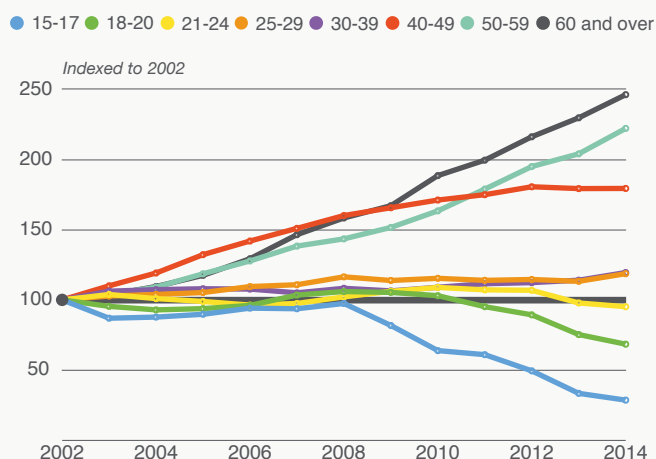
93 Table A1.4, Ministry of Justice (2014) Offender management statistics annual tables 2013, London: Ministry of Justice

94 Omolade, S (2014) The needs and characteristics of older prisoners: Results from the Surveying Prisoner Crime Reduction (SPCR) survey, London: Ministry of Justice

95 Department of Health (2014) The Care Act 2014: Draft regulations and guidance for implementation of Part 1 of the Act in 2015/16 - Impact Assessment, London: Department of Health

96 Table 1.3, Ministry of Justice (2015) Safety in custody statistics quarterly update to March 2015, London: Ministry of Justice

Growing old in prison



Source: Table A1.5, Ministry of Justice (2014) Offender Management Statistics Prison Population 2014

Health and wellbeing

Disability

36% of prisoners are estimated to have a physical or mental disability. This compares with 19% of the general population.⁹⁷

18% of prisoners are estimated to have a physical disability.⁹⁸

People with learning disabilities and difficulties

20–30% of people in prison are estimated to have learning disabilities or difficulties that interfere with their ability to cope with the criminal justice system.⁹⁹ However, a recent joint inspectorate report found that the criminal justice system is currently failing to identify people with learning disabilities and difficulties adequately.¹⁰⁰

23% of children in custody have very low IQs of below 70, and a further 36% have an IQ between 70–80).¹⁰¹

Four-fifths of prisoners with learning disabilities or difficulties report having problems reading prison information.¹⁰²

97 Ministry of Justice (2012) Estimating the prevalence of disability amongst prisoners: results from the Surveying Prisoner Crime Reduction (SPCR) survey, London: Ministry of Justice

98 Ibid.

99 Loucks, N. (2007) No One Knows: Offenders with Learning Difficulties and Learning Disabilities. Review of prevalence and associated needs, London: Prison Reform Trust

100 Criminal Justice Joint Inspection (2015) A joint inspection of the treatment of offenders with learning disabilities within the criminal justice system - phase two in custody and the community, London: HM Inspectorate of Prisons

101 Harrington, R., and Bailey, S. (2005) Mental health needs and effectiveness of provision for young offenders in custody and in the community, London: Youth Justice Board

102 Talbot, J. (2008) Prisoners' Voices: Experiences of the criminal justice system by prisoners with learning disabilities and difficulties, London: Prison Reform Trust

Independent inspectors found that “little thought was given to the need to adapt regimes to meet the needs of prisoners with learning disabilities who may find understanding and following prison routines very difficult.”¹⁰³

Prisoners with learning disabilities or difficulties are more likely than other prisoners to have broken a prison rule, five times as likely to have been subject to control and restraint, and over three times as likely to report having spent time in segregation.¹⁰⁴

Over half of prison staff believe that they are more likely to be victimised and bullied than other prisoners.¹⁰⁵

By April 2015 the government had invested £74m in liaison and diversion services at police stations and courts, leading to 53% coverage across England. Full roll out of services will be completed in 2017.¹⁰⁶

Mental health

26% of women and 16% of men said they had received treatment for a mental health problem in the year before custody.¹⁰⁷

25% of women and 15% of men in prison reported symptoms indicative of psychosis.¹⁰⁸
The rate among the general public is about 4%.¹⁰⁹

Rates of self-harm have increased by 13% in the last two years. There were 25,775 self-harm incidents in 2014 with 1,749 requiring a hospital attendance.¹¹⁰

Women accounted for 26% of all incidents of self-harm in 2014 despite representing just 5% of the total prison population. This has fallen sharply since 2011 when women accounted for nearly half of all incidents, and reflects rising incidents amongst men.¹¹¹

46% of women prisoners report having attempted suicide at some point in their lives. This is more than twice the rate of male prisoners (21%) and higher than in the general UK population (6%).¹¹²

¹⁰³ Criminal Justice Joint Inspection (2015) A joint inspection of the treatment of offenders with learning disabilities within the criminal justice system - phase two in custody and the community, London: HM Inspectorate of Prisons

¹⁰⁴ Talbot, J. (2008) Prisoners' Voices: Experiences of the criminal justice system by prisoners with learning disabilities and difficulties, London: Prison Reform Trust

¹⁰⁵ Talbot, J. (2007) No One Knows: Identifying and supporting prisoners with learning difficulties and learning disabilities: the views of prison staff, London: Prison Reform Trust

¹⁰⁶ Department of Health website, accessed on 21 April 2015, <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/extra-funding-for-mental-health-nurses-to-be-based-at-police-stations-and-courts-across-the-country>

¹⁰⁷ Ministry of Justice (2013) Gender differences in substance misuse and mental health amongst prisoners, London: Ministry of Justice

¹⁰⁸ Ministry of Justice (2013) Gender differences in substance misuse and mental health amongst prisoners, London: Ministry of Justice

¹⁰⁹ Wiles, N., et al. (2006) Self-reported psychotic symptoms in the general population, *The British Journal of Psychiatry*, 188: 519-526

¹¹⁰ Table 2.1, Ministry of Justice (2015) Safety in custody statistics quarterly update to December 2014, London: Ministry of Justice

¹¹¹ Table 2.1, Ibid.

¹¹² Ministry of Justice (2013) Gender differences in substance misuse and mental health amongst prisoners, London: Ministry of Justice

Deaths in custody

There were 243 deaths in custody in 2014, the highest number on record. Of these 141 were due to natural causes, and 84 were self-inflicted (35%).¹¹³

Suicide rates are significantly higher in custody than amongst the general population. In 2014 the rate of self-inflicted deaths amongst the prison population was 100 per 100,000 people, amongst the general population it is 11.9 per 100,000 people.¹¹⁴

456 young people aged 15–25 have died in prison in the last 20 years. 86% of these deaths were classified as self-inflicted.¹¹⁵

One in five self-inflicted deaths in 2014 were by prisoners held on remand. This has fallen from a spike in 2010, however remand prisoners only account for 14% of the prison population.¹¹⁶

The number of deaths from natural causes has more than doubled since 2000. In 2014 there were 141 deaths from natural causes, an 8% increase on the previous year.¹¹⁷

The average age of people dying from natural causes in prison between 2007 and 2010 was 56 years old.¹¹⁸

Drugs

Levels of drug use are high amongst offenders, with highest levels of use found amongst most prolific offenders. 64% of prisoners reported having used drugs in the four weeks before custody.¹¹⁹

14% of men and women in prison are serving sentences for drug offences.¹²⁰

66% of women and 38% of men in prison report committing offences to get money to buy drugs.¹²¹

Nearly half of women in prison report having committed offences to support someone else's drug use.¹²²

¹¹³ Table 1.1, Ministry of Justice (2015) Safety in custody statistics quarterly update to December 2014, London: Ministry of Justice

¹¹⁴ Table 1.1, Ibid. and Office for National Statistics (2015) Suicides in the United Kingdom, 2013 Registrations, Newport: Office for National Statistics

¹¹⁵ Table 1.3, Ministry of Justice (2015) Safety in custody statistics quarterly update to December 2014, London: Ministry of Justice

¹¹⁶ Table 1.8, Ibid. and Table 1.1, Ministry of Justice (2015) Offender management statistics quarterly bulletin October to December 2014, London: Ministry of Justice

¹¹⁷ Table 1.1, Ibid.

¹¹⁸ Prisons and Probation Ombudsman (2012) Learning from PPO investigations: Natural cause deaths in prison custody 2007-2010, London: Prisons and Probation Ombudsman

¹¹⁹ Ministry of Justice (2013) Gender differences in substance misuse and mental health amongst prisoners, Results from the Surveying Prisoner Crime Reduction (SPCR) longitudinal cohort study of prisoners, London: Ministry of Justice

¹²⁰ Table 1.2b, Ministry of Justice (2015) Offender management statistics quarterly, October to December 2014, London: Ministry of Justice

¹²¹ Ministry of Justice (2013) Gender differences in substance misuse and mental health amongst prisoners, London: Ministry of Justice

¹²² Light, M. et al. (2013) Gender differences in substance misuse and mental health amongst prisoners, London: Ministry of Justice

Diverted prescription medication is reported in the majority of prisons. This can result in problems such as drug debts, bullying, unknown interactions with other prescribed drugs and the risk of overdose.¹²³

HM Inspectorate of Prisons has cautioned that “the increased availability in prisons of new psychoactive substances, often known as legal highs, was a source of debt and associated bullying and a threat to health.”¹²⁴

Reconviction rates more than double for prisoners who reported using drugs in the four weeks before custody compared with prisoners who had never used drugs (62% vs. 30%).¹²⁵

Alcohol

In over half of all violent crimes the victim believed the offender or offenders to be under the influence of alcohol.¹²⁶

38% of people surveyed in prison believed that their drinking was a big problem. 70% said that they had been drinking when they committed their offence.¹²⁷

Men and women in prison who reported drinking daily had an average of 20 units per day. This was equivalent to drinking four bottles of wine or ten pints of beer in a single day.¹²⁸

Social and economic disadvantage

Education and skills

47% of prisoners report having no qualifications. This compares to 15% of the working age general population.¹²⁹

One in five prisoners report needing help with reading and writing or numeracy. Around two in five need help with education and improving work-related skills.¹³⁰

Purposeful activity in adult male prisons has plummeted in the last few years. In nearly half of prisons results were judged to be not sufficiently good or poor by inspectors.¹³¹

123 HM Chief Inspector of Prisons (2012) Annual Report 2011-12, London: The Stationery Office

124 HM Chief Inspector of Prisons (2014) Annual Report 2013-14, London: The Stationery Office

125 Ministry of Justice (2013) Gender differences in substance misuse and mental health amongst prisoners, London: Ministry of Justice

126 Table 3.11, Office for National Statistics (2015) Crime Statistics, Focus on Violent Crime and Sexual Offences, Nature of Crime Tables 2013/14 - Violence, London: Office for National Statistics

127 Alcohol and Crime Commission (2014) The Alcohol and Crime Commission Report, London: Addaction

128 Ministry of Justice (2013) Gender differences in substance misuse and mental health amongst prisoners, London: Ministry of Justice.

129 Ministry of Justice (2012) The pre-custody employment, training and education status of newly sentenced prisoners, London: Ministry of Justice

130 Ibid.

131 HM Chief Inspector of Prisons (2013) Annual Report 2012-13, London: The Stationery Office and HM Chief Inspector of Prisons (2014) Annual Report 2013-14, London: The Stationery Office

42% of prisoners had been expelled or permanently excluded from school.¹³²

Over half of prisons inspected by Ofsted were judged as requiring improvement or inadequate for learning and skills.¹³³

In these prisons “education and training had little impact on supporting prisoners’ progression to sustained employment or training on release.”¹³⁴

Prisoners who had attend vocational training in prison are more likely to secure employment shortly after release¹³⁵—a view endorsed by Ofsted.¹³⁶

Housing and employment

15% of newly sentenced prisoners reported being homeless before custody—9% were sleeping rough.¹³⁷

11% of prisoners released from custody in 2013–14 had no settled accommodation.¹³⁸ A recent report by inspectors found that the figures are “misleading” as “they do not take into account the suitability or sustainability of the accommodation.”¹³⁹

A third of prisoners reported being in paid employment in the four weeks before custody. 13% reported never having had a job.¹⁴⁰

In 2013–14 only a quarter of prisoners entered employment on release from prison.¹⁴¹ Outcomes for women are significantly worse than for men.¹⁴²

Just 12% of people leaving prison and referred to the Work Programme have found a job which they have held for six months or more.¹⁴³ Of these, nearly one in five has subsequently gone back to Jobcentre Plus.¹⁴⁴

132 Ministry of Justice (2010) Compendium of reoffending statistics, London: Ministry of Justice

133 Ofsted (2014) The report of Her Majesty’s Chief Inspector of Education, Children’s Services and Skills 2013/14: Further education and skills, Manchester: Ofsted

134 Ibid.

135 Brunton-Smith, I. and Hopkins, K (2014) The impact of experience in prison on the employment status of longer-sentenced prisoners after release, London: Ministry of Justice

136 Ofsted (2014) The report of Her Majesty’s Chief Inspector of Education, Children’s Services and Skills 2013/14: Further education and skills, Manchester: Ofsted

137 Ministry of Justice (2012) Research Summary 3/12, Accommodation, homelessness and reoffending of prisoners, London: Ministry of Justice

138 Table 15, Ministry of Justice (2014) NOMS Annual Report 2013/14: Management Information Addendum, London: Ministry of Justice

139 Criminal Justice Joint Inspection (2014) Resettlement provision for adult offenders: Accommodation and education, training and employment, London: HMIP

140 Ministry of Justice (2012) The pre-custody employment, training and education status of newly sentenced prisoners, London: Ministry of Justice

141 Table 12, Ministry of Justice (2014) National Offender Management Service Annual Report 2013/14: Management Information Addendum, London: Ministry of Justice

142 Prison Reform Trust (2015) Working it out, London: Prison Reform Trust

143 Table 2.8, Department for Work and Pensions (2015) Work Programme Official Statistics to December 2014, London: DWP

144 Department for Work and Pensions Tabulation Tool, accessed on 29 April 2015, available at http://tabulation-tool.dwp.gov.uk/WorkProg/wp_cuml_jo/payment_group/completed/a_cnjo_r_payment_group_c_completed_dec14.html

Only 12% of employers surveyed said that they had employed somebody with a criminal record in the past three years. One in five employers said they either did or were likely to exclude them from the recruitment process.¹⁴⁵

Financial exclusion and debt

Almost three-quarters of prisoners surveyed said finance, benefits and debt were a very significant need on release—second only to accommodation.¹⁴⁶

The discharge grant has remained fixed at £46 since 1997. Thousands of prisoners are ineligible, including those released from remand, fine defaulters and people serving less than 15 days.¹⁴⁷

People released from prison are more likely to be claiming benefits than other ex-offenders. More than half of people released from prison were claiming out-of-work benefits one month afterwards, with two-fifths still claiming benefits two years after release.¹⁴⁸

A third of prisoners reported that they did not have a bank account; of whom 31% had never had one.¹⁴⁹

Two-thirds of families said their debts had increased since the imprisonment of their relative. The same proportion of former prisoners felt that their debts had worsened during their sentence.¹⁵⁰

Over four in five former prisoners surveyed said their conviction made it harder to get insurance and four-fifths said that when they did get insurance, they were charged more. The inability to obtain insurance can prevent access to mortgages and many forms of employment or self-employment.¹⁵¹

Performance and outcomes

Reoffending

Prison has a poor record for reducing reoffending—45% of adults are reconvicted within one year of release. For those serving sentences of less than 12 months this increases to 58%.¹⁵²

45% of women leaving prison are reconvicted within one year.¹⁵³ For women who have served more than 11 previous custodial sentences, the reoffending rate rises to 77%.¹⁵⁴

Nearly three-fifths of young people (18–20) released from custody in the first quarter of 2008 reoffended within a year.¹⁵⁵

Over two-thirds of children (10–17) released from custody reoffended within a year.¹⁵⁶

Short prison sentences are less effective than community sentences at reducing reoffending. People serving prison sentences of less than 12 months had a reoffending rate seven percentage points higher than similar offenders serving a community sentence—they also committed more crimes.¹⁵⁷

People who reported being homeless before entering prison are more likely to be reconvicted on release than those who didn't.¹⁵⁸

Reoffending rates are lower for people who reported being in employment the year before custody. 40% of people who had previously had a job reoffended within a year of release, compared with 65% of those who hadn't.¹⁵⁹

Poly-drug users have the highest reoffending rates of all people released from prison. Seven in ten people were reconvicted compared with just under half of those who used class B and/or C drugs in the four weeks before custody.¹⁶⁰

Prison visits help to reduce the risk of reoffending. Reoffending is 39% higher for people who did not receive visits whilst in prison compared to those who did.¹⁶¹

Less than one percent of releases on temporary licence (ROTL) result in a failure. In 2012, of the 485,000 releases there were 428 failures—most for failure to return, late return, or other breach of licence. Just 26 involved the prisoner being arrested on suspicion of committing an offence.¹⁶²

¹⁵³ Table 8.10, Ministry of Justice (2014) Women and the Criminal Justice System, London: Ministry of Justice

¹⁵⁴ Tables S5.26 and S5.28, Ministry of Justice (2012) Statistics on Women and the Criminal Justice System 2011, London: Ministry of Justice

¹⁵⁵ Hansard HC, 17 January 2011, c653W

¹⁵⁶ Table 18b, Ministry of Justice (2014) Proven re-offending statistics quarterly July 2011 to June 2012, London: Ministry of Justice

¹⁵⁷ Ministry of Justice (2013) 2013 Compendium of re-offending statistics and analysis, London: Ministry of Justice

¹⁵⁸ Ministry of Justice (2012) Accommodation, homelessness and reoffending of prisoners, London: Ministry of Justice

¹⁵⁹ Ministry of Justice (2012) The pre-custody employment, training and education status of newly sentenced prisoners, London: Ministry of Justice

¹⁶⁰ Ministry of Justice (2010) Compendium of reoffending statistics, London: Ministry of Justice

¹⁶¹ May, C. et al. (2008) Factors linked to reoffending: a one-year follow-up of prisoners who took part in the Resettlement Surveys 2001, 2003 and 2004, London: Ministry of Justice

¹⁶² Ministry of Justice (2014) Statistical Notice: Releases on temporary licence, 2012, London: Ministry of Justice

¹⁴⁵ Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development (2010) Disadvantaged Groups in the Labour Market, London: CIPD

¹⁴⁶ Figure C.5, Meadows, L. et al (2010) Investigating the Prisoner Finance Gap across four prisons in the North East, London: DWP

¹⁴⁷ Prison Service Instruction 72/2011 Discharge, Annex B

¹⁴⁸ Ministry of Justice (2014) Experimental statistics from the 2013 MoJ /DWP /HMRC data share: Linking data on offenders with benefit, employment and income data, London: Ministry of Justice

¹⁴⁹ Bath, C., and Edgar, K. (2010) Time is Money: Financial responsibility after prison, London: Prison Reform Trust

¹⁵⁰ Bath, C., and Edgar, K. (2010) Time is Money: Financial responsibility after prison, London: Prison Reform Trust

¹⁵¹ Ibid.

¹⁵² Tables 16a and 17a, Ministry of Justice (2015) Proven reoffending statistics: July 2012 to June 2013, London: Ministry of Justice

The failure rate of ROTL has more than halved since 2002. Despite this, new restrictions on ROTL have seen a 14% drop in its use in the last year.¹⁶³

Costs

Over the last three years public sector prisons have delivered £263m savings—£84m through benchmarking and efficiency in 2013–14.¹⁶⁴

The cost of a prison place reduced by 10% between 2009–10 and 2012–13. The average annual overall cost of a prison place in England and Wales is now £36,237.¹⁶⁵

The daily prison food budget for 2013–14 was £1.96 per person.¹⁶⁶

Contracted services now make up 40% of NOMS' budget, around £1.4bn.¹⁶⁷

The UK has the most privatised prison system in Europe. In England and Wales 15,112 people (18% of the prison population) are held in private prisons. The United States holds 8% of its prisoners in private prison facilities.¹⁶⁸

Imprisoning mothers for non-violent offences carries a cost to children and the state of more than £17m over a 10 year period.¹⁶⁹

Reoffending by all recent ex-prisoners costs the economy between £9.5 and £13 billion annually. As much as three quarters of this cost can be attributed to former short-sentenced prisoners: some £7–10bn a year.¹⁷⁰

Prison overcrowding and pressure on resources

At the end of March 2015, 70 of the 117 prisons in England and Wales were overcrowded.¹⁷¹

In 2013–14 an average of 19,383 people were held in overcrowded accommodation—23% of the prison population.¹⁷² The average number of people doubling up in cells designed for one occupant was 18,515.¹⁷³

163 Table A3.6, Ministry of Justice (2015) Offender management statistics annual tables 2014, London: Ministry of Justice

164 National Offender Management Service (2014) Business Plan 2014–2015, London: NOMS

165 Table 1, Ministry of Justice (2014) Costs per place and costs per prisoner, National Offender Management Service Annual Report and Accounts 2012–13: Management Information Addendum, London: Ministry of Justice

166 Hansard HC, 29 January 2014, c604W

167 National Offender Management Service (2014) Business Plan 2014–2015, London: Ministry of Justice

168 Ministry of Justice (2014) Prison population monthly bulletin March 2015, London: Ministry of Justice and US Department of Justice (2014) Prisoners in 2013, Washington: Bureau of Justice Statistics

169 new economics foundation (2008) Unlocking value: How we all benefit from investing in alternatives to prison for women offenders, London: new economics foundation

170 National Audit Office (2010) Managing offenders on short custodial sentences, London: The Stationery Office

171 Ministry of Justice (2015) Monthly population bulletin March 2015, London: Ministry of Justice

172 Hansard HC, 25 June 2014, c215W

173 Ministry of Justice (2014) Prison and probation trusts performance statistics 2013/14: Prison performance digest 2013–14, London: Ministry of Justice

Private prisons have held a higher percentage of their prisoners in overcrowded accommodation than public sector prisons every year for the past 16 years.¹⁷⁴

HM Chief Inspector of Prisons found that overcrowding remains a significant barrier to ensuring that people have access to the necessary activities, staff and that other resources are available to keep them purposefully occupied and reduce the likelihood they will reoffend.¹⁷⁵ “Resources are now stretched very thinly...there is a pretty clear choice for politicians and policy makers—reduce prison populations or increase prison budgets.”¹⁷⁶

By June 2020 the prison population is projected to reach 90,200. These figures do not yet take account of the projected impact of the new measures in the Criminal Justice & Courts Act.¹⁷⁷

Prison performance and staffing

The proportion of prisons whose performance, as rated by the National Offender Management Service, is “of concern” or “of serious concern” has risen from 13% in 2012–13, to 23% in 2013–14.¹⁷⁸

In the last year serious assaults in prison have risen by over a third.¹⁷⁹

The National Tactical Response Group, a specialist unit assisting in safely managing and resolving serious incidents in prisons, was called out 223 times in 2014, compared with 129 times in 2012.¹⁸⁰

43% of prisoners are now held in prisons of 1,000 places or more.¹⁸¹ This is despite smaller prisons tending to be safer and more effective than larger establishments.¹⁸²

The number of staff employed in the public prison estate has fallen by 29% in the last four years—12,980 fewer staff.¹⁸³

174 Ibid.

175 HM Chief Inspector of Prisons (2013) Annual Report 2012–13, London: The Stationery Office

176 HM Chief Inspector of Prisons (2012) Annual Report 2011–12, London: The Stationery Office

177 Ministry of Justice (2014) Prison population projections 2014–2020, London: Ministry of Justice

178 Ministry of Justice (2014) Prison and Probation Trusts performance statistics 2013–14: Prison performance digest 2013–14, London: Ministry of Justice and Prison performance digest 2012–13

179 Table 3.1, Ministry of Justice (2015) Safety in custody statistics quarterly update to December 2014, London: Ministry of Justice

180 House of Commons written question 226949 and Hansard HC, 25 November 2013, c88W

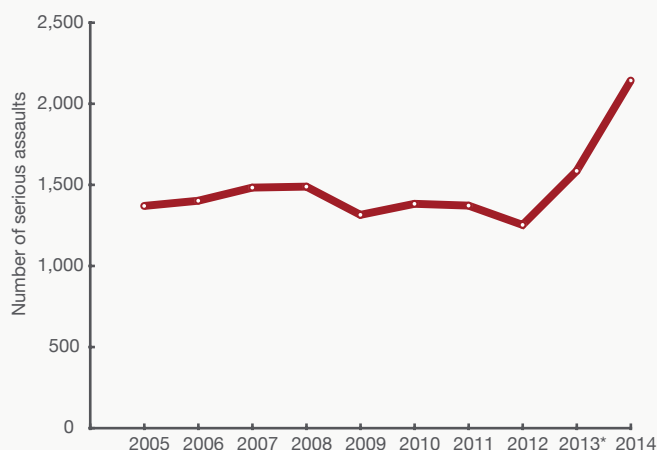
181 Ministry of Justice (2015) Monthly population bulletin March 2015, London: Ministry of Justice

182 Prison Reform Trust (2008) Titan prisons: a gigantic mistake, London: Prison Reform Trust

183 Table 2, Ministry of Justice (2015) National Offender Management Service workforce statistics bulletin: December 2014, London: Ministry of Justice

Rising prison violence

Serious assaults in prisons up by 35% in last year



Source: Table 4, Ministry of Justice (2015) Safety in Custody summary tables
*2013 saw changes to quality assurance processes with improved reporting of assaults.

Prisons are faced with high sickness levels amongst staff. In 2013–14 the average number of working days lost to sickness absence was 11 days, a rise from 9.8 days in 2011–12.¹⁸⁴ This compares to an average of 4.4 days per worker in the labour market as a whole.¹⁸⁵

The average tenure of a Governing Governor in a public sector prison is around three years and four months.¹⁸⁶

Joint working in prisons

St Giles Trust offers training and a recognised qualification to prisoners who deliver housing advice in a number of prisons. 246 people started to train as peer advisors, and 1,302 people were supported on release from prisons in 2014.¹⁸⁷

The Toe by Toe reading plan run by the Shannon Trust enable prisoners to act as peer mentors to support other prisoners who are learning to read. 85% of learners surveyed felt their reading skills were improving.¹⁸⁸

The National Grid offender training and employment programme works with people coming to the end of their sentences and provides training and a job on release for those selected. Over 2,000 prisoners have completed the scheme which has a reoffending rate of just 6%.¹⁸⁹

Timpson actively recruit ex-offenders to work for them. It has set up a full time training facility at HMP Liverpool and HMP Wandsworth in London, and the women's prison HMP New Hall. A Prison Excellence Centre also runs at HMP Forest Bank in Salford. Timpson colleagues train people in a prison workshop environment.¹⁹⁰

The Samaritans' Listener Scheme is active in almost every prison across the UK. In 2013 there were around 1,600 Listeners in place. Listeners play an invaluable role in making prisons safer by being there for other prisoners who might be struggling to cope, helping them to talk about their worries and try to find a positive way forward. Listeners were contacted 75,000 times during 2013.¹⁹¹

Solutions to crime

Short prison sentences are less effective than community sentences at reducing reoffending. People serving prison sentences of less than 12 months had a reoffending rate seven percentage points higher than similar offenders serving a community sentence—they also committed more crimes.¹⁹²

In 2013–14, over three-quarters of community payback sentences were successfully completed.¹⁹³

The number of people starting community orders has fallen by 8% in the last year.¹⁹⁴

An evaluation of three Transition to Adulthood pilot projects working with young adult offenders in the community and prior to release from prison found that, over six months, only 9% were reconvicted of a new offence (all non-violent); 9% breached the terms of their community order or licence; numbers in employment trebled; and numbers classified as not in education, employment and training halved.¹⁹⁵

85% of victims surveyed as part of a government funded £7m seven year research programme were either 'very' or 'quite' satisfied with their restorative conference. 80% of offenders in the Justice Research Consortium's (JRC) conferences were 'very' or 'quite' satisfied.¹⁹⁶

190 Timpson website, <http://www.timpson.co.uk/timpson-academy.php>, accessed on 1 May 2014

191 Samaritans (2014) Annual Report 2013/14, Surrey: Samaritans

192 Ministry of Justice (2013) 2013 Compendium of re-offending statistics and analysis, London: Ministry of Justice

193 Ministry of Justice (2014) National Offender Management Service annual report 2013/14: Management information addendum

194 Ministry of Justice (2015) Offender management statistics quarterly: October to December 2014, London: Ministry of Justice

195 Catch 22 (2012) Supporting Transitions, A summative evaluation of the Transition to Adulthood pilots, London: Catch 22

196 Shapland, J et al (2007) Restorative Justice: the views of victims. The third report from the evaluation of three schemes. Ministry of Justice Research Series 3/07. London: Ministry of Justice

184 Ministry of Justice (2014) National Offender Management Service annual report 2013/14: Management information addendum, London: Ministry of Justice and Management information addendum 2011/12

185 Office for National Statistics (2014) Sickness absence in the labour market, February 2014, London: ONS

186 Hansard HC, 18 July 2013, c854W

187 St Giles Trust (2015) Impact report 2014, London: St Giles Trust

188 Shannon Trust website, accessed on 13 May 2015, <http://www.shannontrust.org.uk/our-work/our-achievements/>

189 www.nationalgrid.com/corporate/Media+Centre/Press+Releases/Global+Press+Releases/2000th+YO.htm

27% fewer crimes were committed by offenders who had experienced restorative conferencing, compared with those offenders who did not.¹⁹⁷

Restorative justice approaches are cost-effective. As a result of reductions in the frequency of offending Restorative Justice Council projects saved nine times what they cost to deliver.¹⁹⁸

Public opinion

In an ICM survey commissioned by the Prison Reform Trust conducted one month after the riots in August 2011 the overwhelming majority of those surveyed (94%) supported opportunities for offenders who have committed offences such as theft or vandalism to do unpaid work in the community, as part of their sentence, to pay back for what they have done.¹⁹⁹

Almost three quarters (71%) believe victims should have a say in how the offender can best make amends for the harm they have caused.²⁰⁰

From a range of measures to prevent crime and disorder, most people (84%) consider that better supervision of young people by parents would be effective.²⁰¹

There is widespread support for ‘better mental health care’ (80%); ‘making amends to victims’ (79%); ‘unpaid community work’ (76%); and ‘treatment to tackle drug addiction’ (74%).

Around two-thirds (65%) consider that a prison sentence would be effective in preventing crime and disorder.²⁰²

In August 2012 a Populus poll of victims of lower level crime showed that 63% support community sentences as an alternative to prison for lower level offenders.²⁰³

Just 12% of the population think that crime is one of the most important issues facing Britain today.²⁰⁴ This compares with 47% in 2008.

Only 16% of people taking part in the Ministry of Justice’s You be the Judge scheme awarded a more severe sentence than was given by the original sentencing judge.²⁰⁵

197 Restorative Justice Council (2011) What does the Ministry of Justice RJ research tell us? London: RJC, available at http://www.restorativejustice.org.uk/resource/ministry_of_justice_evaluation_of_restorative_justice/

198 Ibid.

199 Prison Reform Trust (2011) Public want offenders to make amends briefing paper, London: Prison Reform Trust

200 Ibid.

201 Ibid.

202 Ibid.

203 Victim Support and Make Justice Work (2012) Out in the open: What victims really think about community sentencing, London: Victim Support

204 Economist/Ipsos MORI March 2015 Issues Index, accessed on 13 May 2015, available at <https://www.ipsos-mori.com/researchpublications/researcharchive/3542/EconomistIpsos-MORI-March-2015-Issues-Index.aspx>

205 Cuthbertson, S. (2013) Analysis of complete ‘You be the Judge’ website experiences, London: Ministry of Justice

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Prison Reform Trust, London EC1V 0JR 020 7251 5070 prt@prisonreformtrust.org.uk
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