

CRIME AND JUSTICE

Recorded Crime in Scotland: December 2021

This Official Statistics bulletin presents information on the number of crimes and offences recorded by the police in Scotland during December 2021. It also includes a comparison with the equivalent month of the previous two years.

These Official Statistics were introduced from April 2020 to inform users about the volume and type of crimes and offences recorded in Scotland during the Coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic. Whilst the restrictions put in place to limit the spread of the virus will have had an impact on the number of crimes and offences recorded by the police, some caution is advised before necessarily attributing all of the changes to this situation. For example, longer term trends in some types of offending, which existed prior to the pandemic, may remain a factor.

The annual [Recorded Crime in Scotland bulletin](#) remains the primary source of information on crimes and offences recorded by the police, and has been designated as National Statistics by the Office for Statistics Regulation. The most recent edition, covering the 2020-21 reporting year, was published on 28th September 2021.

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

Summary

The police in Scotland recorded 16,823 crimes in December 2021. This was 8% lower than the 18,229 crimes recorded in the same month of 2020 (when pandemic restrictions were in place) and 12% lower than the 19,209 crimes recorded in the same month of 2019 (for which there was no pandemic or restrictions on movement).

In December 2021:

- Non-sexual crimes of violence were 5% higher compared to December 2020 (increasing from 698 to 734 crimes), and 2% higher compared to December 2019 (increasing from 723 to 734 crimes).
- Sexual crimes were 22% higher compared to December 2020 (increasing from 885 to 1,084 crimes), and 12% higher compared to December 2019 (increasing from 968 to 1,084 crimes).
- Crimes of dishonesty were 1% lower compared to December 2020 (decreasing from 7,767 to 7,686 crimes), and 10% lower than in December 2019 (decreasing from 8,502 to 7,686 crimes).
- Fire-raising, vandalism etc. was 11% lower compared to December 2020 (decreasing from 3,605 to 3,202 crimes), and 19% lower than in December 2019 (decreasing from 3,930 to 3,202 crimes).
- Other crimes were 22% lower compared to December 2020 (decreasing from 5,274 to 4,117 crimes), and 19% lower than in December 2019 (decreasing from 5,086 to 4,117 crimes).
- Fewer crimes were recorded by police in 23 (72%) out of 32 local authorities, compared to December 2020.

The number of offences recorded by the police in Scotland in December 2021 was 16,756. This is 9% lower than the 18,374 offences recorded in the same month of 2020 (when pandemic restrictions were in place) and 19% lower than the 20,597 offences recorded in the same month of 2019 (for which there was no pandemic or restrictions on movement).

In December 2021:

- Miscellaneous offences decreased by 3% compared to December 2020 (decreasing from 9,382 to 9,090), and were 17% lower compared to December 2019 (decreasing from 10,938 to 9,090).

- Motor vehicle offences were 15% lower compared to December 2020 (decreasing from 8,992 to 7,666), and 21% lower compared to December 2019 (decreasing from 9,659 to 7,666).

As outlined above, the annual [Recorded Crime in Scotland bulletin](#) remains the primary source of information on crimes and offences recorded by the police in Scotland, including longer-term analysis of changes to each of the crime and offence groups detailed above.

Main findings

Crimes recorded by the police

In December 2021, the police recorded 16,823 crimes. This was 8% (or 1,406 crimes) lower than the 18,229 crimes recorded in the same month of 2020 (when pandemic restrictions were in place) and 12% lower than the 19,209 crimes recorded in the same month of 2019 (for which there was no pandemic or restrictions on movement). There were variations in the year-on-year trends between different crime types. However, with the exception of Non-sexual crimes of violence and Sexual crimes, all groups were lower than pre-pandemic levels (December 2019) ([Table 1](#), [Chart 1](#)).

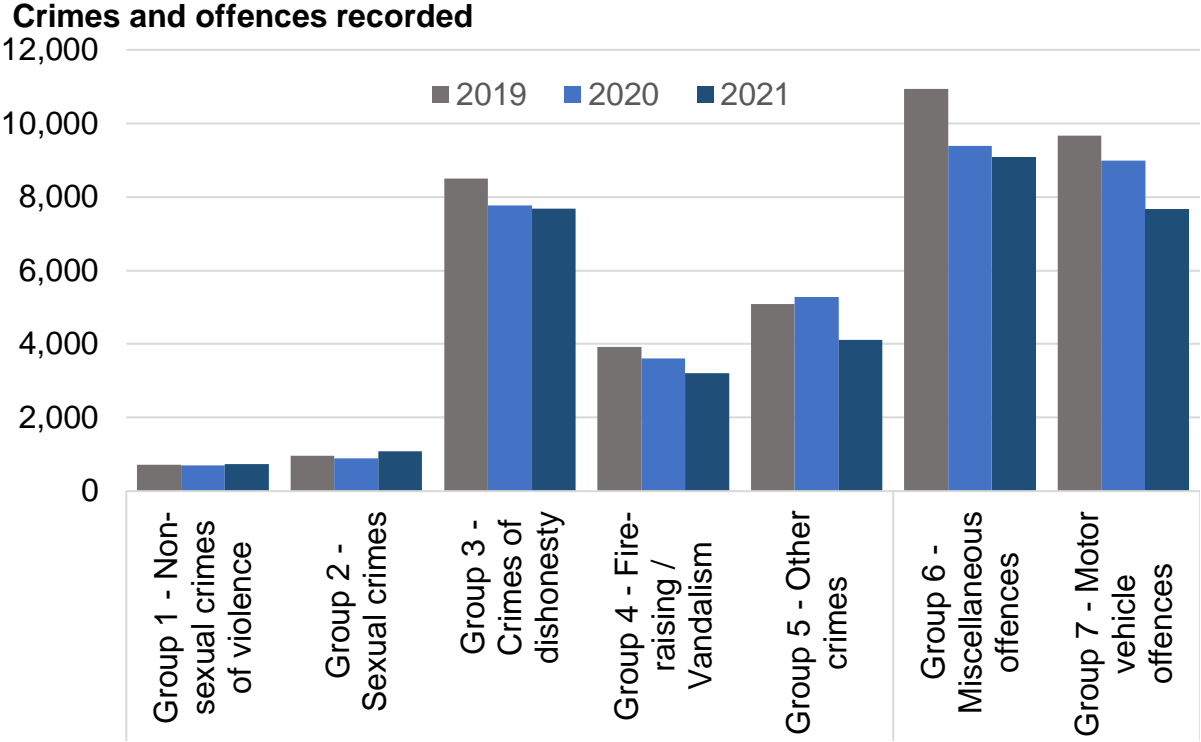
In December 2021:

- Non-sexual crimes of violence were 5% (or 36 crimes) higher compared to December 2020 (increasing from 698 to 734 crimes), and 2% higher compared to December 2019 (increasing from 723 to 734 crimes). Within this, Attempted murder and serious assault increased by 10% compared to December 2020 (from 260 to 286 crimes), but decreased by 15% from December 2019 (from 335 to 286 crimes). Other violence increased by 27% compared to December 2020 (from 176 to 223 crimes) and increased by 78% from December 2019 (from 125 to 223 crimes). The increase in Other violence between December 2020 and December 2021 was due to a rise in Drugging (from 1 to 72 crimes). The rise in Drugging is likely due to cases of “spiking”. A rise in Threats and extortion was also a factor in the increase in Other violence since December 2019, with the recently published National Statistics bulletin estimating that more than three-quarters (77%) of Threats and extortion recorded in 2020-21 were cyber-crimes. Crimes under the Domestic Abuse (Scotland) Act 2018 decreased by 17% compared to December 2020 (from 128 to 106 crimes), and were 21% lower than in December 2019 (decreasing from 134 to 106 crimes).
- Sexual crimes were 22% (or 199 crimes) higher compared to December 2020, increasing from 885 to 1,084 crimes, and were 12% (or 116 crimes) higher than in December 2019 (increasing from 968 to 1,084 crimes). Sexual assault increased by 56% compared to December 2020 (from 278 to 433 crimes), and increased by 27% compared to December 2019 (increasing from 341 to 433 crimes). The rise in Sexual assault since 2019 and 2020 was primarily due to an increase in Sexual assault of females, including classifications for adults (aged 16 or older), older children (aged 13-15) and young children (under 13). Rape and attempted rape increased by 20% compared to December 2020 (from 142 to 171 crimes), but decreased by 2% compared to December 2019 (from 175 to 171 crimes).

- Crimes of dishonesty were 1% (or 81 crimes) lower compared to December 2020, decreasing from 7,767 to 7,686 crimes. This was 10% lower than in December 2019 (decreasing from 8,502 to 7,686 crimes). Crimes of Fraud have been at increased levels throughout the pandemic. Despite there being three fewer crimes compared to December 2020 (down from 1,497 to 1,494 crimes), there was a 65% increase since December 2019 (from 905 to 1,494 crimes). The [Changes in levels of recorded fraud](#) section below provides users with further background on what may be contributing to this change. Other dishonesty has been the biggest contributor (by volume) to the decrease since 2020, having fallen by 29% compared to December 2020 (from 354 to 251 crimes), and was 33% lower when compared to December 2019.
- Fire-raising, vandalism etc. was 11% (or 403 crimes) lower compared to December 2020, decreasing from 3,605 to 3,202 crimes, and was 19% lower than December 2019. Vandalism etc. has fallen 12% since December 2020 (decreasing from 3,424 to 3,027 crimes). This is 18% lower than December 2019 levels.
- Other crimes were 22% (or 1,157 crimes) lower than in December 2020, decreasing from 5,274 to 4,117 crimes. This is also 19% lower than December 2019 (decreasing from 5,086 to 4,117 crimes). The main contributors to these decreases were Drugs (which fell by 33% compared to December 2020 and 32% compared to December 2019) and Crimes against public justice (which fell by 10% compared to December 2020 but were unchanged compared to December 2019).

Chart 1. Crimes and offences recorded by the police, by crime group, December 2019, 2020 and 2021

Chart: each category shows columns from left to right for December 2019, 2020 and 2021



Offences recorded by the police

In December 2021, the police recorded 16,756 offences. This was 9% (or 1,618 offences) lower than the 18,374 offences recorded in the same month in 2020, and 19% lower than in December 2019 (decreasing from 20,597 to 16,756 offences). Miscellaneous offences decreased by 3% compared to December 2020, and by 17% compared to December 2019. Motor vehicle offences decreased by 15% compared to December 2020, and by 21% compared to December 2019, as detailed below ([Table 2](#)).

In December 2021:

- Miscellaneous offences decreased by 3% (or 292 offences) compared to December 2020 (decreasing from 9,382 to 9,090 offences), and by 17% compared to December 2019 (decreasing from 10,938 to 9,090 offences). The largest decrease by volume since December 2020 was Breach of the peace etc., which fell by 10% from 3,703 to 3,322 offences, and were 21% lower than December 2019. Common assault increased by 4% from 4,185 to 4,361 offences, but was 16% lower than December 2019.
- Motor vehicle offences were 15% (or 1,326 offences) lower compared to December 2020, decreasing from 8,992 to 7,666 offences, and were 21% lower than December 2019 levels. The main contributors to the decrease since December 2020 by volume were Unlawful use of vehicle (which decreased by 27%, from 3,602 to 2,620 offences) and Speeding (which decreased by 24%, from 1,561 to 1,194 offences), and this is 21% and 31% below December 2019 levels, respectively. Other motor vehicle offences increased by 4% compared to December 2020 (from 1,753 to 1,827 offences). All categories within Motor vehicle offences decreased when compared to December 2019.

Local Authorities

Compared to December 2020, a decrease in recorded crime was seen in 23 (72%) out of 32 local authorities, with 9 showing an increase ([Table 3](#)). The largest decrease was seen in the Shetland Islands (down 51%) and the largest increase was in the Orkney Islands, which had 28% more recorded crimes. It should be noted that the relatively small number of crimes recorded in some of Scotland's local authorities can fluctuate over time - leading to large percentage changes. This is particularly relevant in this release, where monthly data is being presented rather than the annual information provided in the National Statistics.

The biggest contributors by volume to the overall decrease in crimes recorded by the police were North Lanarkshire (down 24%, or 332 crimes), North Ayrshire (down 30%, or 165 crimes) and Fife (down 14%, or 162 crimes).

April to December 2019 and April to December 2020, compared with April to December 2021

Overall, in April to December 2021 the police recorded 169,705 crimes, a reduction of 4% (or 6,857 crimes) compared to the equivalent period of the previous year (176,562 crimes) ([Table 4](#)). This was 9% (or 17,808 crimes) lower than the same period in 2019 (187,513 crimes). The biggest drivers of the decrease by volume since 2020 were Drugs (down 23%, or 6,231 crimes), Crimes against public justice (down 10%, or 1,854 crimes) and Housebreaking (down 17%, or 1,365 crimes). When compared with 2019, the biggest drivers of the reduction by volume were Shoplifting (down 30%, or 7,027 crimes), Drugs (down 23%, or 6,253 crimes) and Other theft (down 17%, or 5,412 crimes). The largest increase since 2020 by volume was Sexual assault (up 30%, or 911 crimes). Compared with 2019, the largest increase by volume was Fraud (up 68%, or 5,396 crimes).

The number of offences recorded by the police in April to December 2021 was 2% (or 3,628 offences) lower than the equivalent period in 2020, with Miscellaneous offences decreasing by 1% (or 1,131 offences) and Motor vehicle offences decreasing by 3% (or 2,497 offences) ([Table 5](#)). Compared to 2019, offences decreased by 8% (or 15,700 offences), with Miscellaneous offences decreasing by 4% (or 4,237 offences) and Motor vehicle offences decreasing by 12% (or 11,463 offences).

Changes in levels of recorded fraud

Fraud was almost unchanged in December 2021 compared to December 2020 with only three fewer crimes, but 65% (or 589 crimes) higher than in December 2019. The [Recorded Crime National Statistics](#) have highlighted an increasing trend in recorded fraud over a number of years (up 117% between 2014-15 and 2020-21). Fraud increased by 26% between 2019-20 and 2020-21 with the circumstances of the pandemic very likely to be playing a significant role, including behavioural changes such as increased online shopping. Research published within the recent Recorded Crime in Scotland bulletin estimated that 57% of fraud crimes recorded in 2020-21 were cyber-crimes, compared to 29% in 2019-20.

Some care is advised before attributing all of the recent changes to the specific circumstances of the COVID-related lockdown. This is because a procedural change was made in April 2020 to how some crimes of fraud (and other types of crime which could involve a victim and a perpetrator in different physical locations) are recorded. This has had an impact when comparing figures for fraud which fall before and after the April 2020 change.

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

The research published in the Recorded Crime in Scotland bulletin estimated the procedural change led to 900 additional crimes of fraud being recorded in 2020-21.

¹ [HMICS Crime Audit 2016](#)

Crimes recorded under coronavirus legislation

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

Given the rapid pace of these changes, Police Scotland have used an interim and bespoke data collection to capture information on the number of new crimes recorded under the coronavirus legislation. This is why figures for this legislation are currently presented separately to the overall totals provided for recorded crime in this bulletin. The bespoke data collection suggests that there were 11 such crimes recorded during December 2021, up from two in the previous month (see [Table A](#) below). Users should treat these figures as broadly indicative, and may be subject to further revision in future releases. The 2020-21 annual National Statistics included this activity within the overall crime total for Scotland (up to March 2021). The equivalent activity from April 2021 onwards will be reflected in the 2021-22 publication.

Table A: Number of crimes recorded under coronavirus legislation, April 2020 to December 2021

Month	Number of crimes recorded
2020	
April	2,741
May	1,654
June	219
July	17
August	21
September	189
October	588
November	1,811
December	1,540
2021	
January	3,473
February	4,199
March	3,573
April	2,221
May	1,434
June	163
July	45
August	10
September	6
October	8
November	2
December	11

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Notes for these tables

- The symbol 'n/r' is used to denote where a percentage change figure is not reported. This is done if the denominator is less than ten as any resulting figure may be misleading.
- Please note that tables 1, 2, 4 and 5 can be accessed at local authority level online via the following link: [Recorded Crime in Scotland: December 2021](#)

Table 1: Crimes recorded by the police, Scotland, December 2019, 2020 and 2021

Crime group	December			% Change since	% Change since
	2019	2020	2021	December 2020	December 2019
Total crimes¹	19,209	18,229	16,823	-8%	-12%
Non-sexual crimes of violence	723	698	734	5%	2%
Homicide etc.	6	9	4	n/r	n/r
Attempted murder & serious assault	335	260	286	10%	-15%
Robbery	123	125	115	-8%	-7%
Domestic Abuse (Scotland) Act 2018	134	128	106	-17%	-21%
Other violence	125	176	223	27%	78%
Sexual crimes	968	885	1,084	22%	12%
Rape & attempted rape	175	142	171	20%	-2%
Sexual assault	341	278	433	56%	27%
Crimes associated with prostitution	6	7	10	n/r	n/r
Other sexual crimes	446	458	470	3%	5%
Crimes of dishonesty	8,502	7,767	7,686	-1%	-10%
Housebreaking	1,019	862	767	-11%	-25%
Theft by opening a lockfast place (OLP)	154	115	112	-3%	-27%
Theft from a motor vehicle by OLP	200	173	126	-27%	-37%
Theft of a motor vehicle	381	346	344	-1%	-10%
Shoplifting	2,377	1,829	1,750	-4%	-26%
Other theft	3,090	2,591	2,842	10%	-8%
Fraud	905	1,497	1,494	0%	65%
Other dishonesty	376	354	251	-29%	-33%
Fire-raising, vandalism etc.	3,930	3,605	3,202	-11%	-19%
Fire-raising	217	181	175	-3%	-19%
Vandalism etc.	3,713	3,424	3,027	-12%	-18%
Other crimes	5,086	5,274	4,117	-22%	-19%
Crimes against public justice	1,728	1,928	1,728	-10%	0%
Handling offensive weapons	716	656	572	-13%	-20%
<i>Not used in other criminal activity</i>	313	326	236	-28%	-25%
<i>Used in other criminal activity</i>	403	330	336	2%	-17%
Drugs	2,627	2,677	1,796	-33%	-32%
Other	15	13	21	62%	40%

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

Table 2: Offences recorded by the police, Scotland, December 2019, 2020 and 2021

Crime group	December			% Change since	% Change since
	2019	2020	2021	December 2020	December 2019
Total offences	20,597	18,374	16,756	-9%	-19%
Miscellaneous offences	10,938	9,382	9,090	-3%	-17%
Common assault	5,175	4,185	4,361	4%	-16%
Breach of the peace etc.	4,197	3,703	3,322	-10%	-21%
Drunkenness and other disorderly conduct	280	254	195	-23%	-30%
Urinating etc.	222	37	128	246%	-42%
Other miscellaneous offences	1,064	1,203	1,084	-10%	2%
Motor vehicle offences	9,659	8,992	7,666	-15%	-21%
Dangerous and careless driving	1,009	893	846	-5%	-16%
Driving under the influence	693	578	585	1%	-16%
Speeding	1,733	1,561	1,194	-24%	-31%
Unlawful use of vehicle	3,306	3,602	2,620	-27%	-21%
Vehicle defect offences	568	436	440	1%	-23%
Seat belt offences	125	83	82	-1%	-34%
Mobile phone offences	131	86	72	-16%	-45%
Other motor vehicle offences	2,094	1,753	1,827	4%	-13%

Table 3: Crimes recorded by the police by local authority, Scotland, December 2019, 2020 and 2021

	December			% Change since	% Change since
	2019	2020	2021	December 2020	December 2019
Aberdeen City	934	929	1,022	10%	9%
Aberdeenshire	521	491	509	4%	-2%
Angus	202	279	240	-14%	19%
Argyll & Bute	149	190	154	-19%	3%
Clackmannanshire	178	142	145	2%	-19%
Dumfries & Galloway	462	504	480	-5%	4%
Dundee City	805	804	680	-15%	-16%
East Ayrshire	489	452	340	-25%	-30%
East Dunbartonshire	215	230	145	-37%	-33%
East Lothian	292	352	228	-35%	-22%
East Renfrewshire	177	139	137	-1%	-23%
Edinburgh City	2,259	1,964	1,944	-1%	-14%
Falkirk	563	534	510	-4%	-9%
Fife	1,052	1,175	1,013	-14%	-4%
Glasgow City	3,300	2,732	2,868	5%	-13%
Highland	655	590	548	-7%	-16%
Inverclyde	322	268	241	-10%	-25%
Midlothian	320	344	277	-19%	-13%
Moray	227	240	253	5%	11%
Na h-Eileanan Siar	65	42	26	-38%	-60%
North Ayrshire	475	543	378	-30%	-20%
North Lanarkshire	1,480	1,394	1,062	-24%	-28%
Orkney Islands	25	18	23	28%	-8%
Perth & Kinross	382	396	398	1%	4%
Renfrewshire	619	586	609	4%	-2%
Scottish Borders	311	322	251	-22%	-19%
Shetland Islands	24	39	19	-51%	-21%
South Ayrshire	390	296	331	12%	-15%
South Lanarkshire	1,121	1,041	907	-13%	-19%
Stirling	315	243	242	0%	-23%
West Dunbartonshire	325	335	310	-7%	-5%
West Lothian	555	615	533	-13%	-4%
Scotland¹	19,209	18,229	16,823	-8%	-12%

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

Table 4: Crimes recorded by the police, Scotland, April to December 2019, 2020 and 2021

Crime group	April to December 2019	April to December 2020	April to December 2021	% Change since 2020	% Change since 2019
Total crimes¹	187,513	176,562	169,705	-4%	-9%
Non-sexual crimes of violence	7,191	6,677	7,429	11%	3%
Homicide etc.	94	75	65	-13%	-31%
Attempted murder & serious assault	3,260	2,681	2,763	3%	-15%
Robbery	1,279	1,300	1,249	-4%	-2%
Domestic Abuse (Scotland) Act 2018	1,300	1,167	1,223	5%	-6%
Other violence	1,258	1,454	2,129	46%	69%
Sexual crimes	10,159	9,469	10,945	16%	8%
Rape & attempted rape	1,849	1,676	1,857	11%	0%
Sexual assault	3,803	2,989	3,900	30%	3%
Crimes associated with prostitution	71	36	63	75%	-11%
Other sexual crimes	4,436	4,768	5,125	7%	16%
Crimes of dishonesty	83,717	72,804	71,720	-1%	-14%
Housebreaking	9,524	7,906	6,541	-17%	-31%
Theft by opening a lockfast place (OLP)	1,328	941	927	-1%	-30%
Theft from a motor vehicle by OLP	2,065	1,681	1,476	-12%	-29%
Theft of a motor vehicle	3,694	3,372	3,339	-1%	-10%
Shoplifting	23,715	16,125	16,688	3%	-30%
Other theft	31,933	26,180	26,521	1%	-17%
Fraud	7,879	12,907	13,275	3%	68%
Other dishonesty	3,579	3,692	2,953	-20%	-17%
Fire-raising, vandalism etc.	36,649	32,760	33,216	1%	-9%
Fire-raising	2,092	2,033	2,036	0%	-3%
Vandalism etc.	34,557	30,727	31,180	1%	-10%
Other crimes	49,797	54,852	46,395	-15%	-7%
Crimes against public justice	14,720	19,368	17,514	-10%	19%
Handling offensive weapons	7,413	7,875	7,498	-5%	1%
<i>Not used in other criminal activity</i>	<i>3,408</i>	<i>3,639</i>	<i>3,217</i>	<i>-12%</i>	<i>-6%</i>
<i>Used in other criminal activity</i>	<i>4,005</i>	<i>4,236</i>	<i>4,281</i>	<i>1%</i>	<i>7%</i>
Drugs	27,503	27,481	21,250	-23%	-23%
Other	161	128	133	4%	-17%

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

Table 5: Offences recorded by the police, Scotland, April to December 2019, 2020 and 2021

Crime group	April to December 2019	April to December 2020	April to December 2021	% Change since 2020	% Change since 2019
Total offences¹	192,039	179,967	176,339	-2%	-8%
Miscellaneous offences	99,848	96,742	95,611	-1%	-4%
Common assault	44,474	40,112	42,993	7%	-3%
Breach of the peace etc.	39,162	39,023	36,632	-6%	-6%
Drunkenness and other disorderly conduct	4,440	4,730	3,811	-19%	-14%
Urinating etc.	1,822	717	1,035	44%	-43%
Other miscellaneous offences	9,950	12,160	11,140	-8%	12%
Motor vehicle offences	92,191	83,225	80,728	-3%	-12%
Dangerous and careless driving	8,773	8,670	9,452	9%	8%
Driving under the influence	4,926	6,361	5,849	-8%	19%
Speeding	22,301	16,150	16,203	0%	-27%
Unlawful use of vehicle	28,974	29,664	26,032	-12%	-10%
Vehicle defect offences	5,278	4,813	4,307	-11%	-18%
Seat belt offences	2,262	1,382	1,283	-7%	-43%
Mobile phone offences	1,887	1,304	1,054	-19%	-44%
Other motor vehicle offences	17,790	14,881	16,548	11%	-7%

Annexes

Annex 1: Background

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

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

The annual [Recorded Crime in Scotland](#) bulletin remains the primary source of information on crimes and offences recorded by the police, and has been designated as National Statistics by the Office for Statistics Regulation. The most recent update, covering the 2020-21 reporting year, was published on 28th September 2021. Users should refer to the National Statistics for more detailed information on the production of the recorded crime statistics - including governance arrangements, a description of their quality, background methodologies and changes to recording practice.

Annex 2: Data Sources

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

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

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

Before the Scottish Crime Recording Board (SCRB) approved this transition, a final confirmatory check of the full 2019-20 reporting year was carried out. This involved a comparison of trends in recorded crimes, offences and clear up rates for all local authorities and Scotland as a whole between 2018-19 and 2019-20. A final technical review of the impact that the switch in sources had on the 2020-21 crime data was carried out with a summary of the results published in Annex 3 of the [Recorded Crime in Scotland, 2020-21 bulletin](#).

In order to produce the new monthly Official Statistics included in this bulletin in the necessary shorter time frames, the information supplied by Police Scotland has been extracted from SEBP on a monthly basis. While the figures provided in this publication use the same source as the most recent National Statistics on Recorded Crime in Scotland, they are not directly comparable as the data was extracted at different times.

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

The December 2021 data for this bulletin was extracted in January 2022. In order to compare on a like-for-like basis, data used for comparison was taken from the December 2020 bulletin published last year, which was extracted in January 2021. Since there was a relatively short time frame for amendments to have been made to the information for both bulletins, this information is likely to be subject to change as time passes. In contrast, information for December 2019 was extracted in January 2021. As more than a year had passed since the crimes were originally recorded and the vast majority of amendments were likely to have taken place, this data is unlikely to change. Some caution should therefore be taken in interpreting the changes between years, as outlined in these monthly bulletins, which should be seen as providing a broad indication of changes over the period in volumes and types of specific crimes and offences.

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

For further background information (e.g. classification of Crimes and Offences and comparisons with England & Wales and Northern Ireland) please see the [Recorded Crime in Scotland User Guide](#).

Annex 3: Feedback

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

Justice_Analysts@gov.scot.

An Official Statistics publication for Scotland

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How to access background or source data

The data collected for this statistical bulletin:

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

Complaints and suggestions

If you are not satisfied with our service or have any comments or suggestions, please write to the Chief Statistician, GR, St Andrews House, Edinburgh, EH1 3DG, Telephone: (0131) 244 0302, e-mail statistics.enquiries@gov.scot.

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