

# Scottish Prison Population Statistics 2022-23

A National Statistics Publication for Scotland

CRIME AND JUSTICE



# Key Findings

## Prison Population

The overall prison population remained lower than its pre-pandemic peak throughout 2022-23, and fell slightly from the previous financial year. The **average daily prison population** in 2022-23 was 7,426. This was a 1% decrease from the average daily prison population in 2021-22 (7,506), indicating broad stability in average daily population levels across the two reporting years.

This overall stability masks in-year changes in prison population levels. In 2022-23, the remand population fell slowly but broadly consistently month-on-month. On the other hand, the sentenced population rose slowly between the second and fourth quarters of 2022 before increasing rapidly in the first quarter of 2023 (from an average of 5,562 in January to 5,738 in March).

While the **(average daily) remand** population fell by 3% in 2022-23, it remained high at 1,804. The proportion of the average daily prison population held on remand in 2022-23 was 24% (-1% from 2021-22 and the second highest annual rate to date).

The decrease in the **(average daily) remand** population is not observed equally across all the index (alleged) offence groups. Those accused of index Group 1 (Non-Sexual Crimes of Violence) offences remained the largest group in the (average daily) remand population in 2022-23, comprising 49% overall at 879 (-13 prisoners on the average day from 2021-22). Those accused of index Group 5 (Crimes Against Society) offences remained the second largest group in the (average daily) remand population, overall comprising 21% at 386 (-38 prisoners on the average day from 2021-22).

On the other hand, the **(average daily) remand** population accused of index Group 2 (Sexual) offences continued its long-term increase, rising by 5% in 2022-23, (+11 prisoners on the average day to 228) and comprising 13% of the overall (average daily) remand population.

The **overall (average daily) sentenced population** remained at very similar levels in 2021-22 and 2022-23, falling by just 15 prisoners on the average day to 5,583. However, there were changes across the different index offence groups, and these varied in direction and extent.

Those with index offences in Group 1 (Non-sexual Crimes of Violence) remained the largest group in the average daily **sentenced** population, comprising 45% of the total at 2,530 (-1% from 2021-22). Those with Group 2 (Sexual) index offences continued to grow, comprising 22% of the (average daily) sentenced population in 2022-23 at 1,225 (+10% from 2021-22).

The (average daily) **sentenced** populations with index offences in Group 3 (Dishonesty) and Group 5 (Crimes against society) continued to fall in 2022-23 – down 12% to 304 and down 8% to 743 from 2021-22, respectively.

The continuation of these trends has led to an (average daily) **sentenced** population increasingly comprised of those convicted of index violent and sexual offences. Those with index offences in Groups 1 (Violence) and 2 (Sexual) comprised 67% of the sentenced population in 2022-23 (+2 percentage points from 2021-22).

Change also occurred across index sentence groups in 2022-23. While the (average daily) **sentenced** population serving index sentences of '>1 and ≤2 years' and of '>2 and ≤4 years' decreased from 2021-22 (-10% to 736 and -5% to 690, respectively), those serving index sentences of one year or less increased (+6% to 972). Those serving longer index sentences ('>4 and <10 years' and '10+ years') also increased in 2022-23 (+6% to 1,464 and +5% to 285, respectively). The populations serving life and other indeterminate sentences fell by 3% each in 2022-23 (from 953 to 928 and 192 to 187, respectively).

The share of the (average daily) **sentenced** population serving shorter index sentences remained below pre-pandemic levels in 2022-23. In 2019-20, 53% of the sentenced population had index sentences of 4 years or less. In 2022-23 this proportion had fallen to 43%.

The (average daily) population of **women** remained stable in 2022-23 at 282 (-1 prisoner on the average day from 2021-22). Women comprised just 4% of the average daily prison population in 2022-23.

While the population overall remained stable, this pattern varies by legal status category. The sentenced population of **women** decreased 5% to 188 between 2021-22 and 2022-23, whereas there were small increases in the untried (+9 prisoners on the average day to 72) and convicted awaiting sentence (+1 prisoners on the average day to 21) populations over the same period. The continuation of this trend has led to further growth in the proportion of women held on remand in 2022-23 (from 29% in 2021-22 to 33%).

The long-term reduction in the (average daily) population of **young people** (under 21) in custody continued through 2022-23 (-15% from 2021-22 to 159). Young people comprised just 2% of the average daily prison population in 2022-23. Reductions occurred in both the (average daily) sentenced and untried populations of young people between 2021-22 and 2022-23. The reduction was greater in the sentenced population (-20% to 76) than in the untried (-12% to 64), leading to an increase in the proportion of young people in custody held on remand at 50% (+2 percentage points from 2021-22).

The smallest (average daily) population of **under 18s** in custody to date was recorded in 2022-23, at just 9 on the average day (-5 prisoners on the average day from 2021-22).

The number of **individuals** who spent any period of time in prison in 2022-23 remained at a very similar level compared to 2021-22, increasing just 1% from 14,411 to 14,528. While there has been small growth in the numbers of individuals experiencing imprisonment in recent reporting years, the number of individuals recorded in each year since 2020-21 remains considerably below pre-pandemic levels.

## Prison Population Flows

There were 10,509 **arrivals** to custody in 2022-23, a decrease of around 2% from 2021-22. The decrease is driven by a fall in arrivals with 'untried' status (-2% from from 6,859 in

2021-22 to 6,728 in 2022-23). Convicted awaiting sentence and sentenced arrivals remained broadly stable between 2021-22 and 2022-23. The volume of **departures** from custody remained at similar levels to 2021-22 at 10,437, a decrease of less than 0.4% from 2021-22. Both arrivals and departures remained considerably below pre-pandemic levels in 2022-23.

Median **time on remand** before departure remained at 21 days in 2022-23. However, the longest periods spent on remand have been increasing over time. In 2017-18, 90% of remand departures had occurred within 63 days, with the longest 10% of stays before departure taking 64 days or more. By 2022-23, the longest 10% of stays before departure from remand took 146 days or more.

For those **transitioning from remand to the sentenced population**, the median time on remand fell slightly (from 55 to 54 days). However, for the 10% staying longest before transitioning, time on remand continued to increase. In 2019-20, 90% of transitions occurred within 145 days, with the longest 10% of stays before transition taking 146 days or more. By 2022-23 the longest 10% of stays before transitioning from remand took 289 days or more.

The number of **liberations from remand** to the court or procurator fiscal continued to increase in 2022-23, up 14% to 3,683 from 3,241 in 2021-22. In 2022-23, the volume of transitions from remand continued to exceed liberations to court or procurator fiscal (3,883 and 3,683 respectively). Liberations from remand to bail continued to decrease in 2022-23 (-28% to 999) but the volume of liberations to bail remains higher than in pre-pandemic years (e.g. 528 in 2019-20).

**Sentenced liberations** to conditional release (on licence, parole or home detention curfew) increased by 14% in 2022-23, from 886 in 2021-22 to 1,006. Liberations recorded as 'sentence served' fell by 8% in 2022-23, from 4,175 in 2021-22 to 3,826.

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# Introduction

A National Statistics Publication  
by  
Scottish Government Justice Analytical Services  
on behalf of the  
Scottish Prison Service

## About Scottish Prison Population Statistics

This publication was produced by Scottish Government statisticians using administrative data from the Scottish Prison Service (SPS) management information system PR2. These data are collected by prison officers and staff for operational intelligence and logistical support.

It is important to note that the prison population is not static; individuals move in and out of the population every day. PR2 is a live system, updating constantly to capture changes to the state of the prison population. An extract of data from this system reports on the population at the moment in time the extract is drawn. Like many other operational databases, it was not designed to retain detailed historical data, or to provide retrospective information to assess how the prison population has changed over time.

Up until 2014, the Scottish Government held and reported on data compiled by combining and linking daily extracts from PR2. In addition, a number of the tables and figures in those previous reports were based on single-day ‘snapshots’ rather than the data compiled throughout the year.

Due to technological changes in 2014, it is no longer possible to produce these data. The dataset used in this publication (and all other publications produced from 2019-20 onwards) has been created using the information that is retained about the periods when prisoners occupied specific cells. Hence the population spine underlying this publication is termed “cellWise”, or the cellWise data. More detail on how these data are constructed is provided in the accompanying Technical Manual<sup>1</sup>.

The construction of the cellWise data is fundamentally different, both to the previous data design and to the aggregation produced by SPS in the interim. It has therefore not been possible to align these results exactly with publications pre 2019-20. Chapter 9 shows that trends and approximate levels are sufficiently aligned for meaningful interpretation of high level prison population trends. Where uncertainties do arise, these will be highlighted throughout this report, and are also listed in chapter 9. The measurements throughout this publication therefore represent estimates based on the data as constructed.

The Scottish Government is seeking views on its statistical products. To take part in this consultation, please complete the [Scottish Government official statistics feedback survey](#).

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<sup>1</sup> Technical Manual: CellWise Data Construction, <https://www.gov.scot/publications/scottish-prison-population-statistics/pages/cellwise-data-construction/>

## Technical Manual

Information about the derivation of the cellWise analytical dataset and the various measurements and factors used in this report is provided in a stand-alone technical manual, available from the Scottish Government website<sup>2</sup>.

## Supplementary Tables

The following supplementary tables are available alongside this publication in Excel format<sup>3</sup>

**Table 1: Supplementary Tables**

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A2	Women and Young People in Custody by Source
B1	Establishment Demographics
B2	Populations by Age and Gender
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M1	Population Legal Statuses
M2	Population Index Offences
M3	Population Index Sentences
O1	Arrivals
O2	Remand Time Statistics
O3	Remand Departure / Transition Offences
O4	Departures and Liberation Types
O5	Arrivals and Transitions to the Sentenced Population
O6	Arrivals by Offence Group
X1	Monthly and Quarterly Prison Populations

<sup>2</sup> Scottish Prison Population Statistics Technical Manual, <https://www.gov.scot/publications/scottish-prison-population-statistics/>

<sup>3</sup> Supplementary Tables, <https://www.gov.scot/publications/scottish-prison-population-statistics-2022-23/documents/>

## Interactive Analytical Tool

An interactive tool has been produced alongside this report to allow users access to a bespoke analysis.

<https://scotland.shinyapps.io/sg-prison-population-statistics/>

A worked example using this tool to explore statistics on time on remand was published in the September 2022 edition of the JAS Monthly Data Report<sup>4</sup>.

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<sup>4</sup> JAS Monthly Data Report, <https://www.gov.scot/publications/justice-analytical-services-jas-safer-communities-justice-statistics-monthly-data-report-september-2022-edition/pages/11/>

# 1 Average Daily Populations

[Supplementary tables A1]

The average daily prison population<sup>5</sup> in 2022-23 was 7,426. This is a small decrease of 1% from the previous year (7,506), indicating broad stability in average daily population levels across the most recent reporting years.

**Figure 1: Long-term trends in the average daily prison population, 2002-03 to 2022-23**

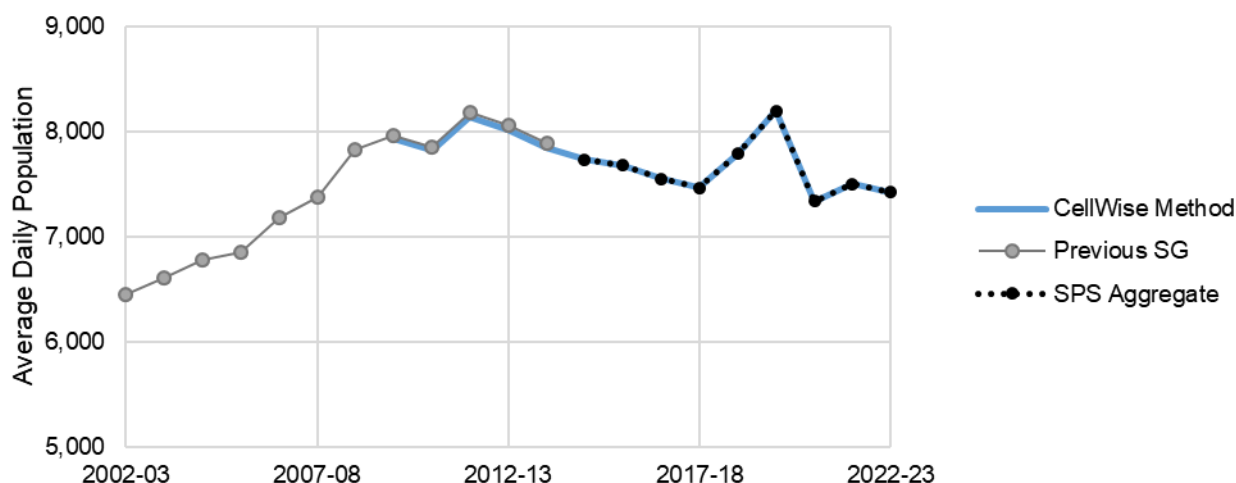


Figure 1 shows the fluctuations in the average daily prison population over the last two decades, as well as the close correlation between different sources of information on the overall average daily prison population. Further comparisons between these different sources are provided in section 9.

## 1.1 COVID impacts on the prison population

[Supplementary tables X1]

Using only annual average daily population figures masks in-year changes in population levels. Under normal conditions, the changes occurring in the prison population on a day-to-day or week-to-week basis are small relative to the size of that population overall. However, as reported in previous recent editions<sup>6</sup>, coronavirus public health measures and the adaptations to these across the justice system, led to rapid and significant changes in the prison population from Spring 2020. Compliance with public health measures during the pandemic influenced operations across the criminal justice system. The Lord Advocate issued revised guidelines on the use of police custody, and the courts had to close for extended periods or operate at reduced capacity. Prison establishments had to ensure sufficient space to allow prisoners to observe public health measures.

<sup>5</sup> Technical Manual: Average daily population, <https://www.gov.scot/publications/scottish-prison-population-statistics/pages/analytical-factors-and-measurements/#Average%20daily%20population>

<sup>6</sup> Scottish Prison Population statistics, 2021-22 <https://www.gov.scot/publications/scottish-prison-population-statistics-2021-22/pages/4/>

The impact of justice system responses to public health measures in 2020-21 included: a decreased volume of custody cases reported to the Crown Office and Procurator Fiscal Service, and an increased volume of undertakings reports<sup>7</sup>; a reduced likelihood of an accused being remanded<sup>8</sup>; a reduced volume of concluded cases in courts, with subsequent reduction in custodial sentences issued *and* growth in the trial backlog<sup>9</sup>; and an agreement in the initial stages of the pandemic response to early release of eligible short-term sentenced prisoners<sup>10</sup>.

Combined, these changes across the justice system impacted both the in-flows to custody and the out-flows from custody throughout 2020-21. While there was no further early release of prisoners, the changes observed in the first pandemic year continued across subsequent reporting years. The impacts of the changes occurring in response to the pandemic have not yet been fully isolated in the data held by the Scottish Government. However, it is reasonable to conclude that the changes described above have resulted in the lower prison population levels reported since 2020-21. This should not be interpreted as indicative of longer-term prison population trends. Chapter 10 outlines other important factors determining the level and composition of the prison population, all of which may contribute to further changes in the coming years.

Figure 2 shows the month-to-month changes in the prison population from January 2020 to March 2023. The average prison population fell rapidly in the first three months of the pandemic, from around 8,000 in March 2020 to just under 7,000 by June 2020. The population rose thereafter, and broadly stabilised from September 2020 at around 7,500. The chart shows that the average prison population fell and rose across 2021 and 2022. From December 2022, the average population began to increase, returning to the higher levels observed in 2021 by March 2023.

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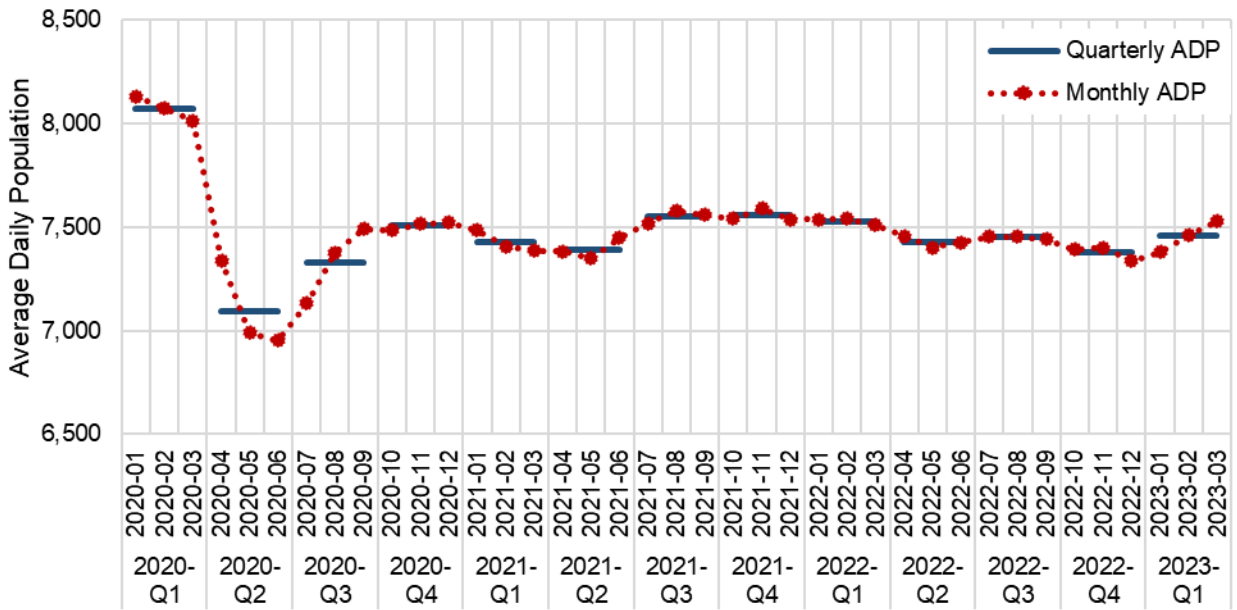
<sup>7</sup> Coronavirus (COVID-19): Justice Analytical Services data report, <https://www.gov.scot/collections/coronavirus-covid-19-justice-analytical-services-data-report/>

<sup>8</sup> Sheriff Courts - remand and bail outcomes: occasional paper, <https://www.gov.scot/publications/occasional-paper-remand-bail-outcomes-first-bail-decision-points-sheriff-courts/>

<sup>9</sup> Coronavirus (COVID-19): Justice Analytical Services data report, <https://www.gov.scot/collections/coronavirus-covid-19-justice-analytical-services-data-report/>, and Sheriff Courts - remand and bail outcomes: occasional paper, <https://www.gov.scot/publications/occasional-paper-remand-bail-outcomes-first-bail-decision-points-sheriff-courts/>

<sup>10</sup> SPS COVID-19 Information Hub, <https://www.sps.gov.uk/Corporate/Information/covid19/covid-19-information-hub.aspx>

**Figure 2: Monthly and quarterly average prison populations, showing a rapid reduction between March and June 2020 and stability from September 2020 to December 2022, after which the population increased**

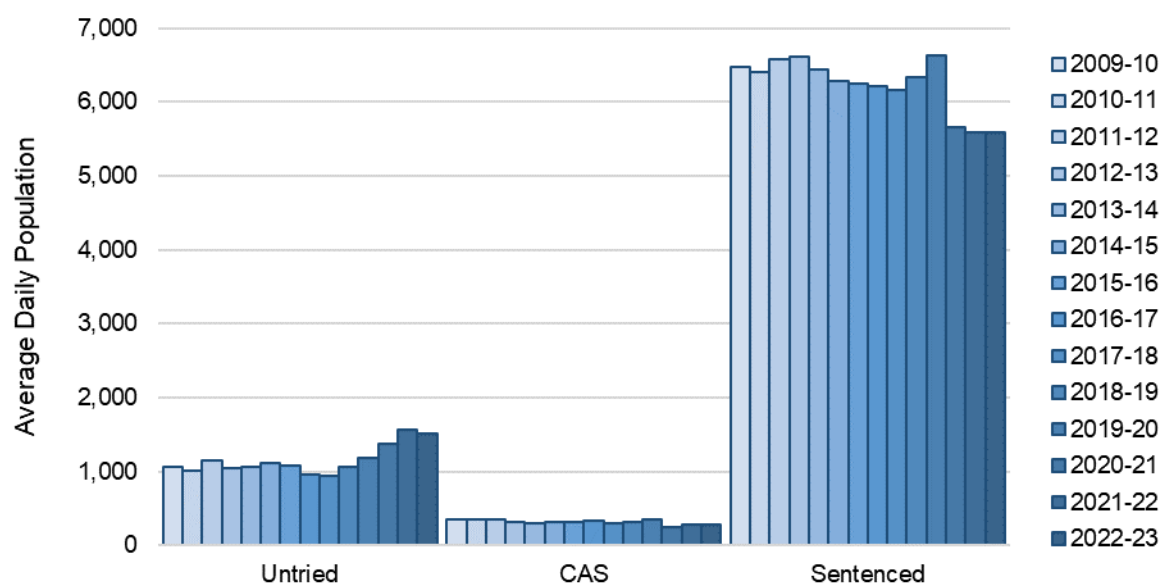


## 1.2 Legal status

[Supplementary tables M1 and X1]

There are known discrepancies between legal status populations determined using cellWise data and the live system data in other published sources. See section 9.1 for details.

**Figure 3: Legal Status – average daily populations, 2009-10 to 2022-23**



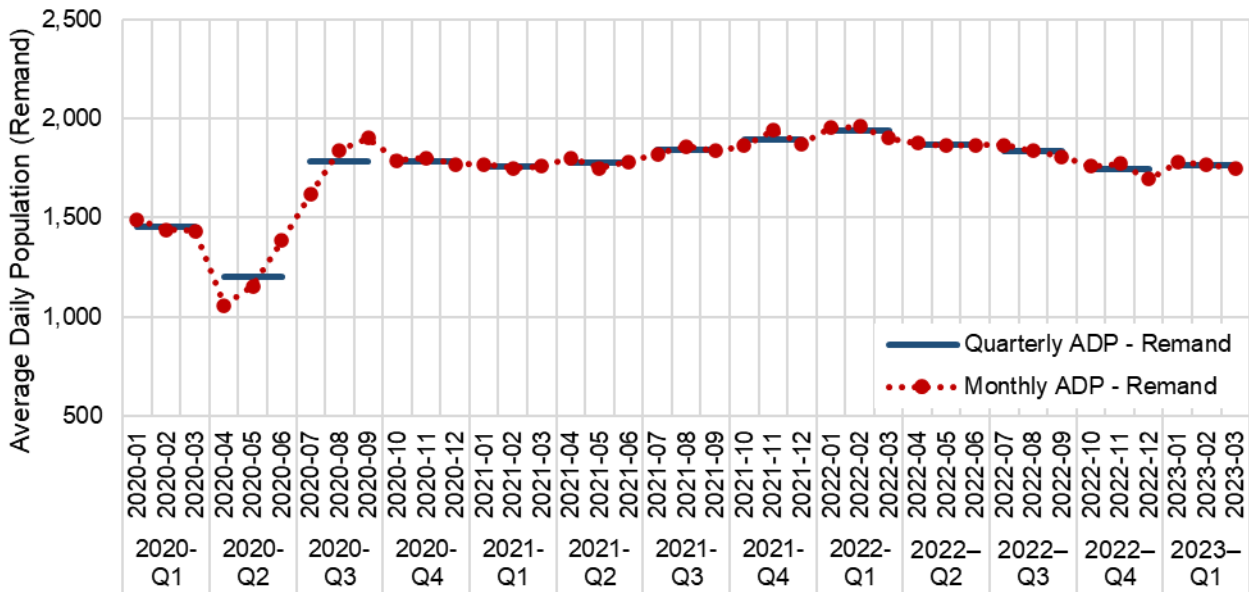
The overall (average daily) prison population remained broadly stable between 2021-22 and 2022-23, decreasing by just 1%. Figure 3 breaks the average daily population down by legal status<sup>11</sup> category, showing that the sentenced population remained at very similar levels in 2021-22 and 2022-23, falling by just 15 to 5,583. Over the same period, the untried population decreased by 54 to 1,517, while the convicted awaiting sentence (CAS) population decreased by 4 to 287.

The overall (average daily) remand population (untried + CAS) decreased by 3% between 2021-22 and 2022-23. On the average day in 2022-23, 1,804 prisoners were on remand. This is the second highest annual rate to date at 24% of the population, down from 25% in 2021-22.

Figure 4 and Figure 5 provide the monthly and quarterly remand and sentenced populations since January 2020. After an initial sharp decrease, the remand population grew rapidly to September 2020 and thereafter levelling off for the remainder of 2020-21 at a higher level than pre-pandemic. After falling during 2022, remand numbers increased in early 2023 before continuing to fall slowly over the remainder of the first quarter.

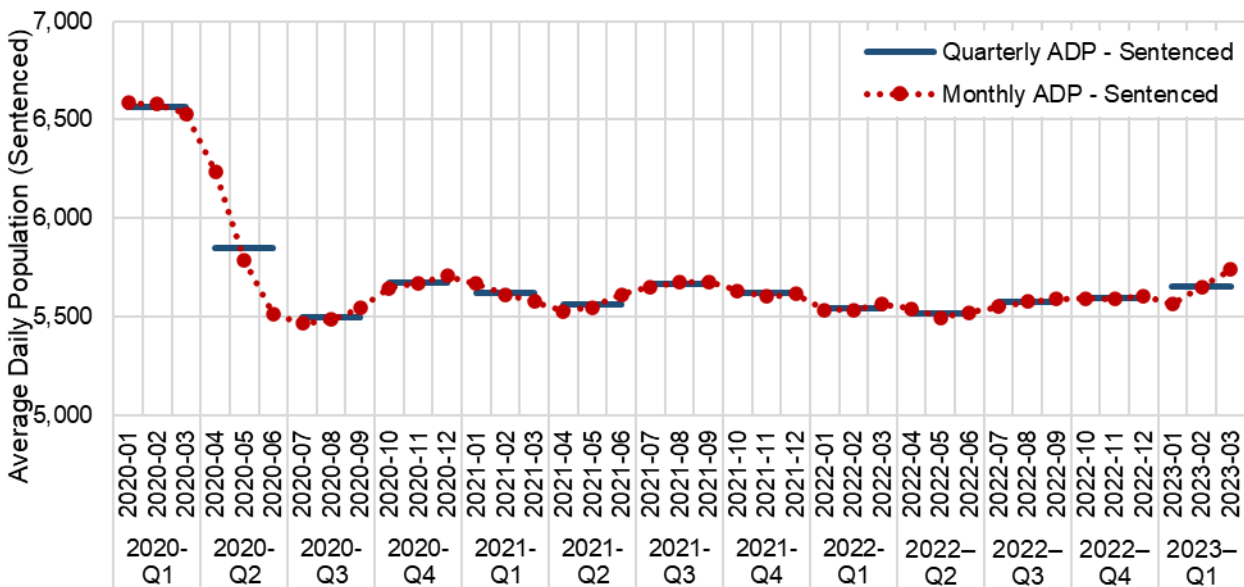
<sup>11</sup> Technical Manual: Legal status, <https://www.gov.scot/publications/scottish-prison-population-statistics/pages/analytical-factors-and-measurements/#Legal%20status>

**Figure 4: Monthly and quarterly average prison populations on remand, with a rapid reduction to April 2020, a steep increase to September 2020 followed by a period with broadly stable high levels**



The sentenced population fell substantially and rapidly between April and July 2020. Since then it has remained broadly stable (between 5,500 and 5,700 until early 2023) and considerably below pre-pandemic levels. However, in the first three months of 2023 there was a consistent increase in the sentenced population and on the average day in March 2023 it stood at 5,738 – the highest monthly level since May 2020.

**Figure 5: Monthly and quarterly average sentenced prison population, showing a rapid reduction to July 2020 followed by a period of broad stabilisation from September 2020 then an uptick in Q1 of 2023**



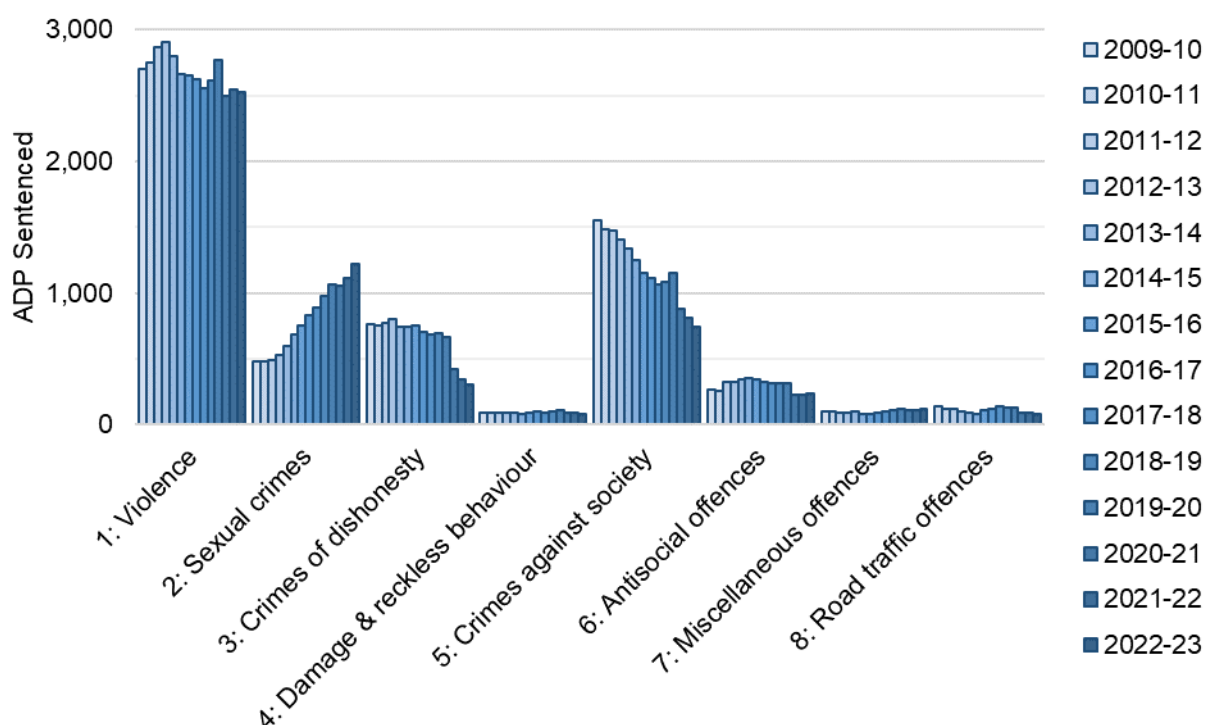


### 1.3 Index Offence Groups

[Supplementary tables M2]

This section examines the index offence groups of the (average daily) sentenced population. A more detailed discussion of the offence categories within these groups is provided in section 4. The alleged offences of those held on remand are discussed in section 5.

**Figure 6: Sentenced index offence groups – average daily populations, 2009-10 to 2022-23**



Overall there was stability in the size of the (average daily) sentenced population between 2021-22 and 2022-23. However, there were changes across the different index offence groups<sup>12</sup>, and these varied in direction and extent as Figure 6 shows. The patterns observed reflect both the impacts of the pandemic and a continuation of pre-existing trends.

There were increases in the populations with index offences in Group 2 (Sexual crimes, +10% to 1,225) and Group 7 (Miscellaneous offences, +6% to 118). Group 6 (Anti-social offences) and Group 1 (Non-sexual crimes of violence) remained broadly stable across the reporting years at 238 (+2%) and 2,530 (-1%), respectively. At 45% of the sentenced population (-1% from 2021-22), Group 1 remained the largest sentenced index offence group in the average daily population. Those with Group 2 (Sexual) index offences increased to 22% (+2 percentage points) of the (average daily) sentenced population between 2021-22 and 2022-23.

<sup>12</sup> Technical Manual: Index offence, <https://www.gov.scot/publications/scottish-prison-population-statistics/pages/analytical-factors-and-measurements/#Index%20offence>

The populations with index offences in Group 3 (Dishonesty) and Group 5 (Crimes against society) continued to fall in 2022-23 – down 12% to 304 and down 8% to 743, respectively.

The changes occurring within the index offence groups continues to change the overall offence profile of the prison population. The consistently large (average daily) population with index offences in Group 1, the growing population with index offences in Group 2 and the falling populations with index offences in Group 3 (Dishonesty) and Group 5 (Crimes against society) has led to a sentenced population increasingly comprised of those with index violent and sexual offences. Other groups' shares shifted by less than 1 percentage point. Together, those with index offences in Groups 1 and 2 comprised 67% of the sentenced population in 2022-23.

## 1.4 Index sentences

[Supplementary tables M3]

The index sentence is the longest single sentence being served in each occupancy period<sup>13</sup>. Where a person in prison has multiple custodial sentences, the *overall* sentence length cannot be calculated from the available data. This is due to a lack of information as to whether multiple custodial sentences are to be served consecutively or concurrently. Where an individual is given multiple sentences to be served consecutively (a common occurrence with multiple short sentences), their overall sentence length will be longer than the longest individual sentence.

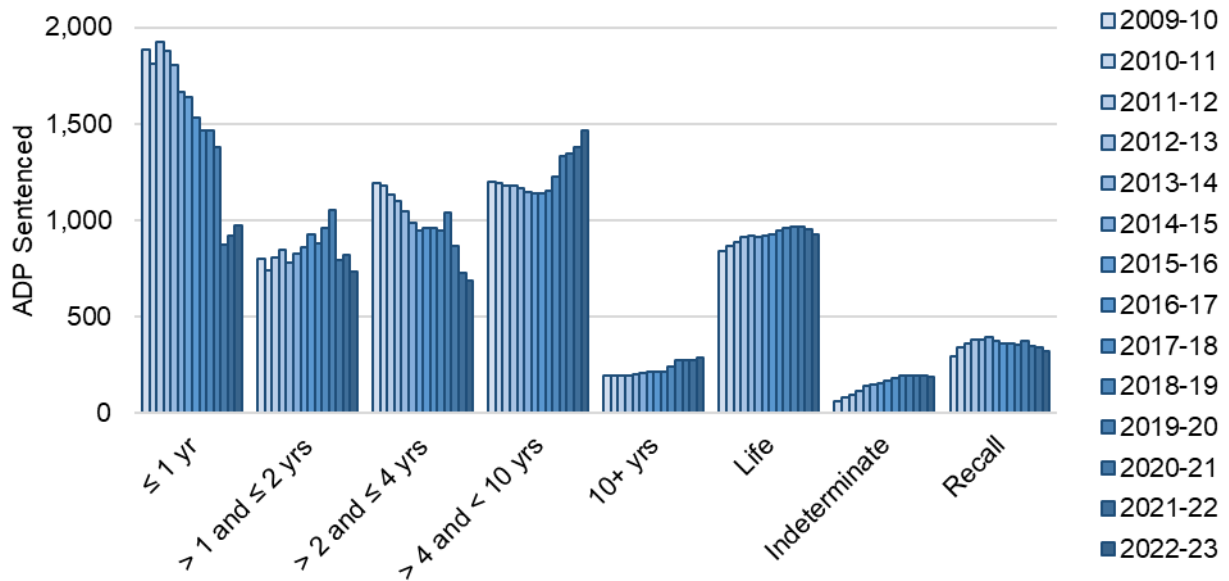
For clarity, the shorter sentence bands presented in the supplementary tables and in the interactive analysis tool<sup>14</sup> have been compressed in the following charts in this section.

While the overall size of the (average daily) sentenced population remained broadly stable between 2021-22 and 2022-23, Figure 7 shows this pattern was not observed across index sentence bands.

The (average daily) population serving index sentences of one year or less increased by around 6% from 921 in 2021-22 to 972 in 2022-23. The population with index sentences of '> 1 and ≤ 2 years' and of '> 2 and ≤ 4 years' decreased (-10% to 736 and -5% to 690, respectively). Over the same period there was a 6% increase in the '> 4 and < 10 years' category, from 1,376 to 1,464, and a 5% increase in those serving index sentences of '10+ years', from 271 to 285. The populations serving life and other indeterminate sentences fell by 3% each (from 953 to 928 and 192 to 187, respectively).

<sup>13</sup> Technical Manual: Index sentence, <https://www.gov.scot/publications/scottish-prison-population-statistics/pages/analytical-factors-and-measurements/#Index%20sentence>

<sup>14</sup> <https://scotland.shinyapps.io/sq-prison-population-statistics/>

**Figure 7: Index sentences – average daily populations, 2009-10 to 2022-23**

The share of the sentenced population serving shorter index sentences remains below pre-pandemic levels. In 2019-20, 53% of the sentenced population had index sentences of 4 years or less (the lowest three bands in Figure 7). In 2022-23 this proportion had fallen to 43%.

## 1.5 Further population characteristics

The following two chapters of this report discuss the average daily populations of women (section 2) and young people (section 3) in custody. Further information on other age groups, as well as information on other available protected characteristics (ethnicity, disability, sexual orientation), and breakdowns by prison establishment and armed forces history are available in the Supplementary Tables B1-7 and M1 accompanying this release.

Further exploration of these data can be conducted through the interactive analytical tool at <https://scotland.shinyapps.io/sq-prison-population-statistics/>.

## 2 Women in Custody

[Supplementary tables A2, B2 and M1]

In line with the overall (average daily) prison population, the (average daily) population of women remained stable in 2022-23 (282 compared to 283 in 2021-22). The population of men fell by around 1% between 2021-22 and 2022-23, from 7,221 to 7,143, and therefore is also broadly stable. Women comprised just 4% of the average daily prison population in 2022-23.

While the population overall remained stable, this pattern varies by legal status category. Figure 8 shows that the sentenced population of women fell by 10 (-5%) from 198 in 2021-22 to 188 in 2022-23, while there were small increases in the untried (+9 to 72) and CAS (+1 to 21) populations over the same period.

**Figure 8: Women in prison by legal status – average daily populations, 2009-10 to 2022-23**

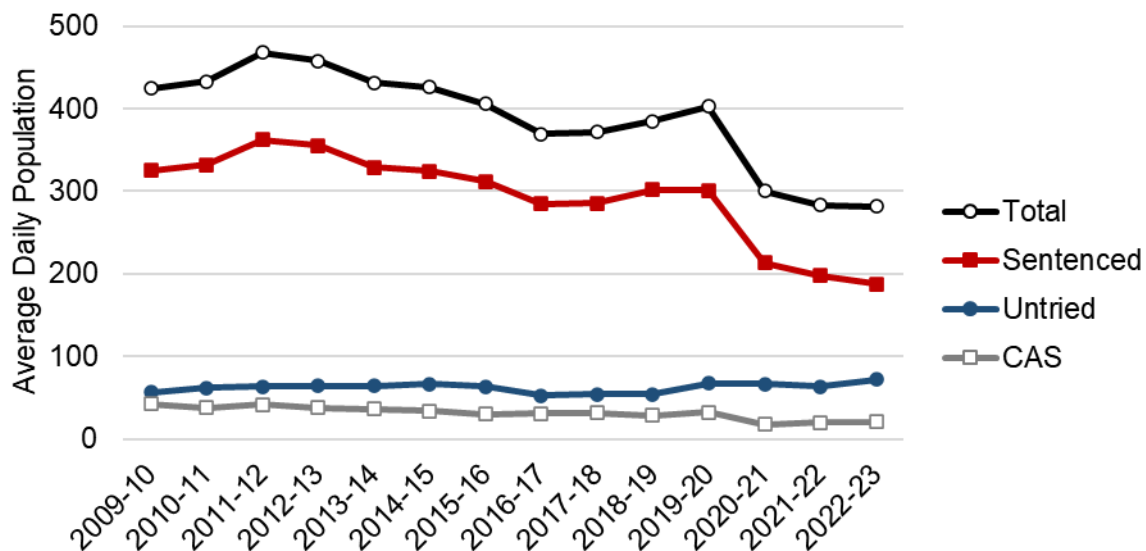
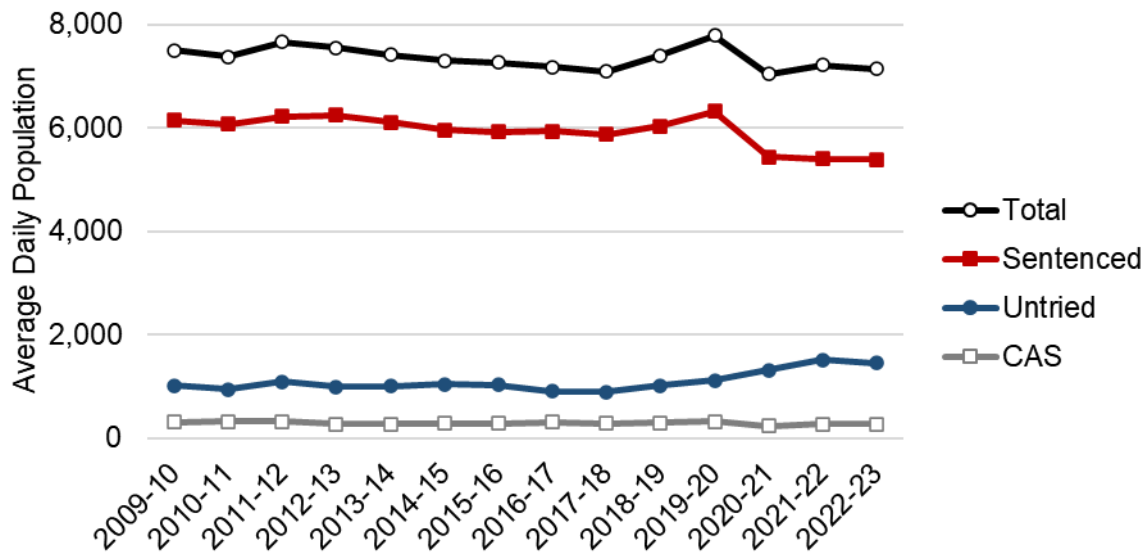


Figure 9 (below) shows that between 2021-22 and 2022-23 the men's CAS and sentenced populations similarly remained broadly stable (-5 each to 266 and 5,394, respectively), while the men's untried population fell by 62 (-4%) from 1,507 to 1,445.

**Figure 9: Men in prison by legal status – average daily populations, 2009-10 to 2022-23**



As a share of their respective populations, the proportion of women on remand has consistently exceeded that of men. From 2021-22 to 2022-23 that gap widened. Where previously 29% of women and 25% of men were on remand on an average day, in 2022-23 the proportion of women on remand increased to 33%, while for men it fell slightly to 24%.

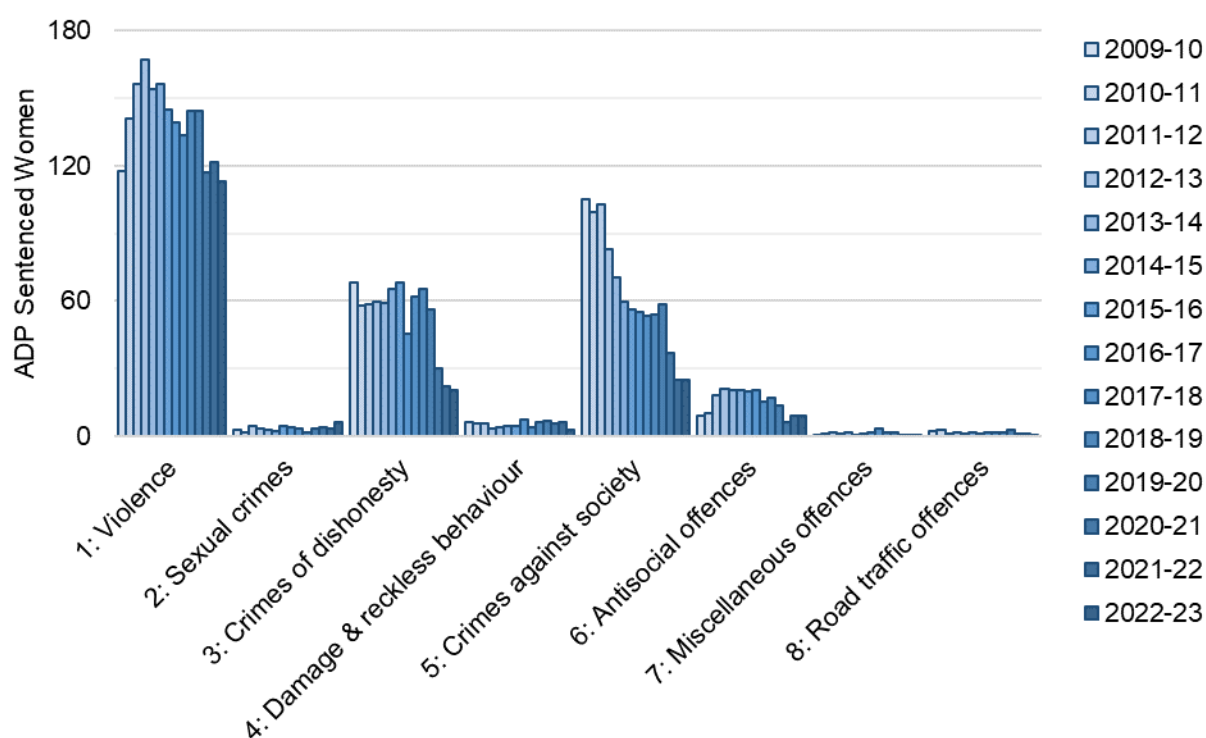
## 2.1 Index offence groups

[Supplementary table M2]

On the average day in 2022-23, 113 women had index offences<sup>15</sup> in Group 1 (Violence), a fall of 8% from 122 in 2021-22. Nevertheless, this remains the largest offence group in the average daily sentenced population of women. The population with index offences in Group 3 (Crimes of dishonesty) also fell by 8% (-1 individual) to 21, while the population with index offences in Group 5 (Crimes against society) remained stable over the same period. The population of women serving sentences for index Group 3 (Dishonesty) and 5 (Crimes against society) index offences remains less than half of pre-pandemic levels.

The population with index offences in the other offence groups remained at very low levels in 2022-23 (less than 10 individuals on the average day) (Figure 10).

**Figure 10: Sentenced index offence groups of women – average daily populations, 2009-10 to 2022-23**



<sup>15</sup> Technical Manual: Index offence, <https://www.gov.scot/publications/scottish-prison-population-statistics/pages/analytical-factors-and-measurements/#Index%20offence>

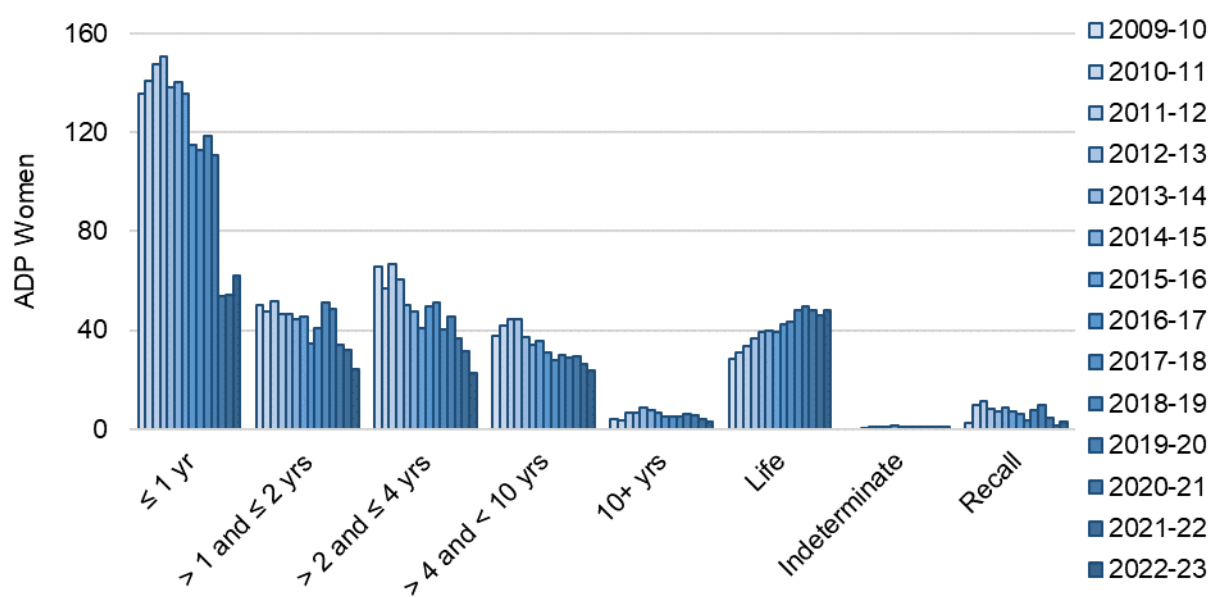
## 2.2 Index sentences

[Supplementary table M3]

Figure 11 shows the index sentence<sup>16</sup> profile of the (average daily) population of women to 2022-23. While the overall sentenced population of women fell in 2022-23, this pattern varies by index sentence group. Of those serving index sentences of up to 1 year, the population rose from 54 in 2021-22 to 62 in 2022-23, and the number serving life sentences also rose slightly from 46 to 48. Meanwhile there were relatively large decreases in the '> 1 and ≤ 2 years' (-8 to 24) and '> 2 and ≤ 4 years' (-9 to 23) index sentence groups and small decreases in '> 4 and < 10 years' (-2 to 24) and '10+ years' (-1 to 3) index sentences.

As in the overall population, the share of the women's sentenced population with shorter index sentences remains below pre-pandemic levels. In 2019-20, 68% of the (average daily) women's sentenced population had index sentences of 4 years or less. In 2022-23 this had fallen to 58%.

**Figure 11: Index sentence length populations of women in custody – average daily populations, 2009-10 to 2022-23**



<sup>16</sup> Technical Manual: Index sentence, <https://www.gov.scot/publications/scottish-prison-population-statistics/pages/analytical-factors-and-measurements/#Index%20sentence>

### 3 Young People in Custody

[Supplementary tables A2, B2, and M1]

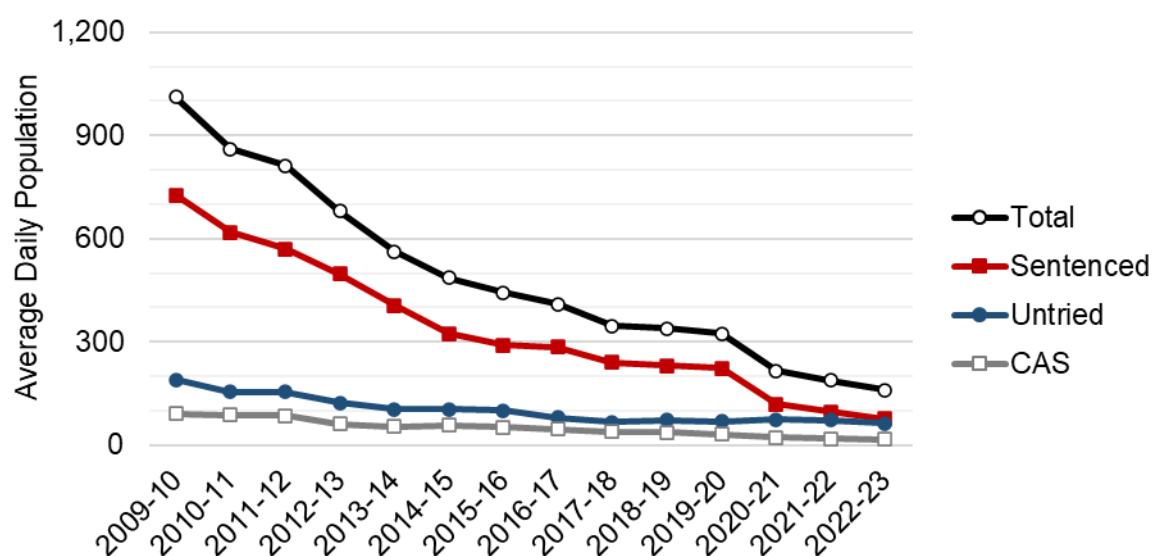
The number of young people in prison in Scotland continues to fall. On an average day in 2009-10 there were 1,012 people under 21 in Scottish prisons, and young people made up 13% of the prison population. In 2022-23 there were 159 young people in custody on an average day, comprising just 2% of the prison population overall.

In the context of a broadly stable (average daily) prison population overall, the number of young people in custody fell between 2021-22 and 2022-23. The population of 16 and 17 year olds fell from 14 in 2021-22 to 9 in 2022-23. The population of 18 to 20 year olds fell by around 13% from 173 to 150 over the same period.

The overall population of young people in custody broken down by legal status is provided in Figure 12. This shows that the sentenced population of young people continued to fall in 2022-23, with 76 sentenced under-21 year olds on the average day; a 20% reduction from 96 in 2021-22. The untried population also fell in 2022-23 (around 12% from 72 in 2021-22 to 64 in 2022-23), while the CAS population remained the same over the reporting period (17 in both 2021-22 and 2022-23).

The proportion of young people in custody on remand (untried and CAS) has been consistently higher than that of the prison population as a whole, and pre-pandemic was around 30%. Ongoing reductions in the sentenced population since 2019-20 have resulted in an increase in this proportion to around 50% of young people (80) in custody being held on remand on the average day in 2022-23.

**Figure 12: Young people (under 21) in prison by legal status – average daily populations, 2009-10 to 2022-23**



Looking at further age breakdowns, the reduction in 16 and 17 year olds is observed in the remand population only. Between 2021-22 and 2022-23, the (average daily) sentenced population was stable at 3, but the untried population halved, falling from 10 to 5.



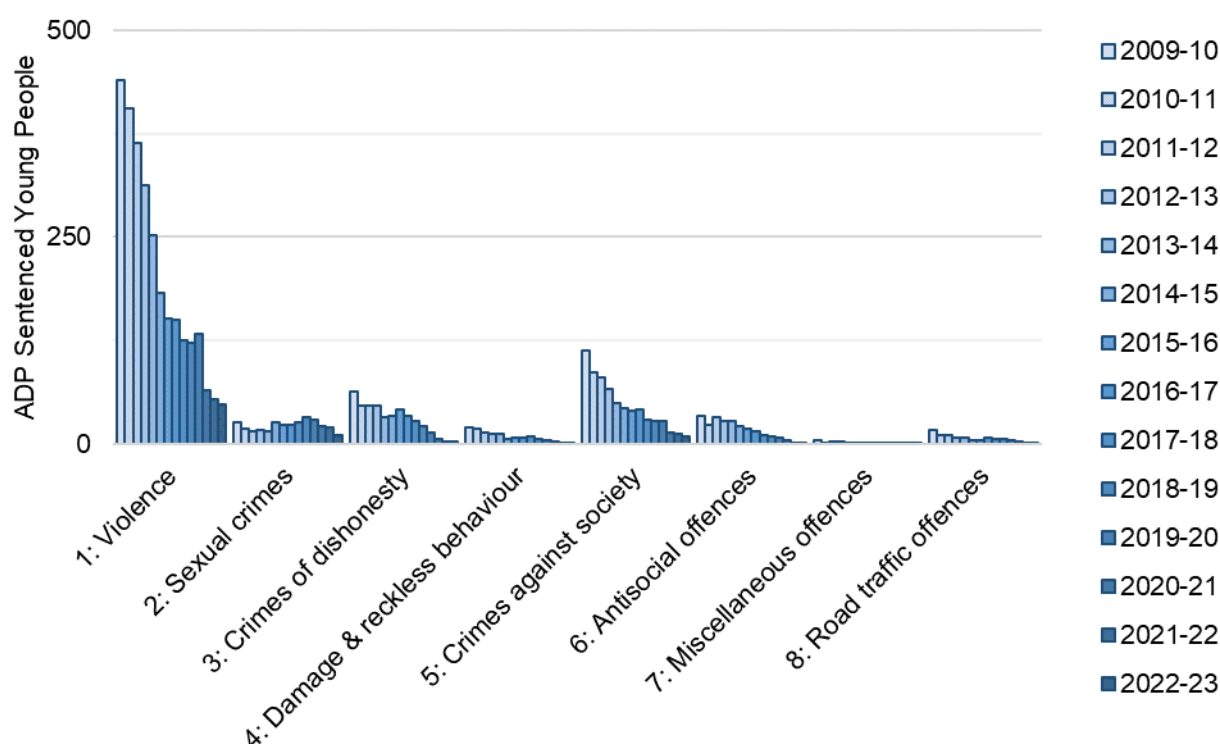
For 18 to 20 year olds, both remand and sentenced populations reduced between 2021-22 and 2022-23 (-3 and -19 respectively).

### 3.1 Index offence groups

[Supplementary tables M2]

As shown in Figure 13, the (average daily) sentenced population of young people continued a previously observed downward trend<sup>17</sup> in index offence Groups 1, 2 and 5 between 2021-22 and 2022-23. Other groups remained stable at a very low level over the same period<sup>18</sup>.

**Figure 13: Index offence groups of sentenced young people (under 21 years) – average daily populations, 2009-10 to 2022-23**



Those with index offences in Group 1 (Violence) continued to account for the largest group in the sentenced population of young people in 2022-23 at 63% (48 sentenced young people on the average day).

<sup>17</sup> Scottish Prison Population Statistics: Legal Status, 2019-20, <https://www.gov.scot/publications/scottish-prison-population-statistics-legal-status-2019-20/pages/6/>

<sup>18</sup> Technical Manual: Index offence, <https://www.gov.scot/publications/scottish-prison-population-statistics/pages/analytical-factors-and-measurements/#Index%20offence>

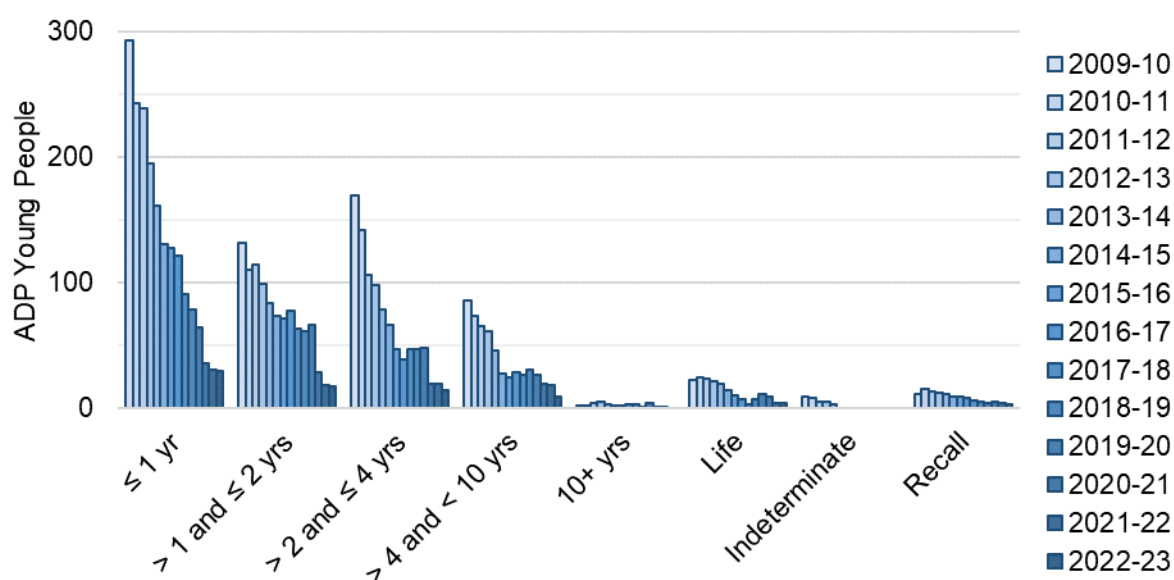
## 3.2 Index sentences

[Supplementary table M3]

Figure 14 shows the index sentence<sup>19</sup> profile of the (average daily) population of young people under 21.

In line with the overall trend, there has been a reduction in the population of young people in each of the index sentence bands between 2021-22 and 2022-23. The population in the two lowest index sentence bands fell very slightly (-1 in both '≤ 1 year' and '> 1 and ≤ 2 years', to 30 and 17 respectively), while there was a greater fall in the population of young people with an index sentence of '> 2 and ≤ 4 years' and '> 4 and < 10 years' (-6 to 14 and -10 to 9). There were no young people with determinate index sentences of '10+ years' identified on the average day in 2022-23, and just 4 with Life sentences.

**Figure 14: Index sentences of young people (under 21) – average daily populations, 2009-10 to 2022-23**



<sup>19</sup> Technical Manual: Index sentence, <https://www.gov.scot/publications/scottish-prison-population-statistics/pages/analytical-factors-and-measurements/#Index%20sentence>

## 4 Sentenced Index Offences

[Supplementary tables M2]

This section provides detailed breakdowns of index offence groups in the sentenced average daily population discussed in section 1.3 into index offence categories<sup>20</sup>. The 50 offence categories (and eight over-arching offence groups) provide high-level summaries of the offence profile of the prison population, but necessarily mask the full complexity of the offence profiles of individuals in the prison population.

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

The largest category of offence in Group 1 remains ‘Serious assault and attempted murder’. The sentenced (average daily) population with this index offence was 1,012 in 2022-23, broadly in line with the previous year (+1% from 1,005).

The second largest category in Group 1 was ‘Murder and culpable homicide’, which remained largely stable from the previous year at 569 on the average day in 2022-23 (compared to 571 in 2021-22).

The population with an index offence of common assault fell substantially during 2020-21 but has continued to rise since. On the average day in 2022-23 this was 494, compared to 489 and 442 in 2021-22 and 2020-21 respectively. This remains lower than pre-pandemic levels (568 in 2019-20).

There was a 10% reduction in the sentenced population with the index offence of ‘Robbery’ in 2022-23, from 348 in 2021-22 to 312.

There was a 15% increase in the sentenced population with an index ‘Domestic Abuse Act’ offence (from 44 in 2021-22 to 51 in 2022-23). Offences in this category are those covered by the 2018 Act<sup>21</sup> and therefore do not cover the totality of domestic abuse related offences in the prison population.

### 4.2 Group 2 – Sexual offences

In line with the previously observed rising trend<sup>22</sup>, the (average daily) sentenced population with an index offence of ‘Rape and attempted rape’ increased between 2021-22 and 2022-23. This population rose by 13% from around 736 in 2021-22 to 831 on an average day in 2022-23, and remains the largest population category in Group 2.

<sup>20</sup> Technical Manual: Index offence, <https://www.gov.scot/publications/scottish-prison-population-statistics/pages/analytical-factors-and-measurements/#Index%20offence>

<sup>21</sup> Domestic Abuse (Scotland) Act 2018, <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/asp/2018/5/contents/enacted>

<sup>22</sup> Scottish Prison Population Statistics: Legal Status, 2019-20. Section 3.1.2 <https://www.gov.scot/publications/scottish-prison-population-statistics-legal-status-2019-20/pages/6/>

The second largest category was the sentenced population with the index offence of 'Sexual assault', which increased 6% over the same period from 228 to 241.

Increases were observed in the categories 'Indecent photos of children', 'Crimes associated with prostitution' and 'Threatening to or disclosing intimate images'. The largest of these, and the third largest index offence category in group 2, was 'Indecent photos of children', which increased from 63 in 2021-22 to 71 in 2022-23.

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

While the (average daily) sentenced population with offences in Group 3 continued to fall overall (-12%), this pattern was not consistent across all index offence categories in the group.

The largest category 'Housebreaking' saw a 25% decrease from 175 in 2021-22 to around 132 in 2022-23. Across the other categories there was broad stability in 2022-23. The population with an index offence of 'Shoplifting' – the second largest category in this group – increased slightly from 44 to 46. The population of those with the index offence 'Theft of a motor vehicle' rose 35%, but the absolute numbers remained small (17 in 2021-22 and 23 in 2022-23).

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

The overall number of those with a Group 4 index offence continued to fall in the (average daily) sentenced population with an 11% reduction between 2021-22 and 2022-23 from 90 to 80. There were reductions in the population with an index offence of 'Reckless conduct' (-10 to 33) and 'Vandalism' (-1 to 12), while the population with an index offence of 'Fire-raising' increased (+2 to 36).

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

The (average daily) sentenced populations across the group 5 offence categories fell by 8% overall in 2022-23 from 807 to 743. The largest index offence category in this group is 'Drugs – Supply', whose population fell by 6% from 381 in 2021-22 to 357 in 2022-23. The largest proportionate reduction was in the 'Weapons possession' category, which fell 16% from 238 to 199 on the average day in 2022-23. It remains the second largest category in this group, ahead of 'Crimes against public justice' where the population fell from 139 to 134 on the average day in 2022-23.

### **4.6 Group 6 – Antisocial offences**

The (average daily) sentenced population with Group 6 index offences increased 3% from 232 in 2021-22 to 238 in 2022-23.

Around 95% of this population group had an index offence of 'Threatening and abusive behaviour' (226, +5 in 2022-23). The remainder of this population group had index offences of 'Community and public order offences' (7, +2 in 2022-23) and 'Racially aggravated conduct' (5, -1 in 2022-23).

## **4.7 Group 7 – Miscellaneous offences**

The (average daily) sentenced population with Group 7 index offences rose slightly overall between 2021-22 and 2022-23 (+6 to 118). In 2022-23, around 58% of the population with Group 7 index offences had index 'Licensing offences' (68), while a further 46 had index 'Other miscellaneous offences'. On the average day in 2022-23 there were 4 with index 'Wildlife offences'.

## **4.8 Group 8 – Road traffic offences**

As in previous reporting years, those with an index offence of 'Dangerous and careless driving' made up on average around 57% (48, -5 in 2022-23) of this population group . Those with an index offence of 'Unlawful use of vehicle' decreased marginally from 26 in 2021-22 to 25 in 2022-23, and those with an index offence of 'Driving under the influence' rose +4 to 12 in 2022-23.

## 5 Remand Index (alleged) Offences

The remand population comprises individuals who are untried and those who are CAS.<sup>23</sup> As discussed in section 1.2 of this report, the remand population grew to historically high levels in 2020. While the (average daily) remand population fell in 2022-23, it remained at a high level (1,804).

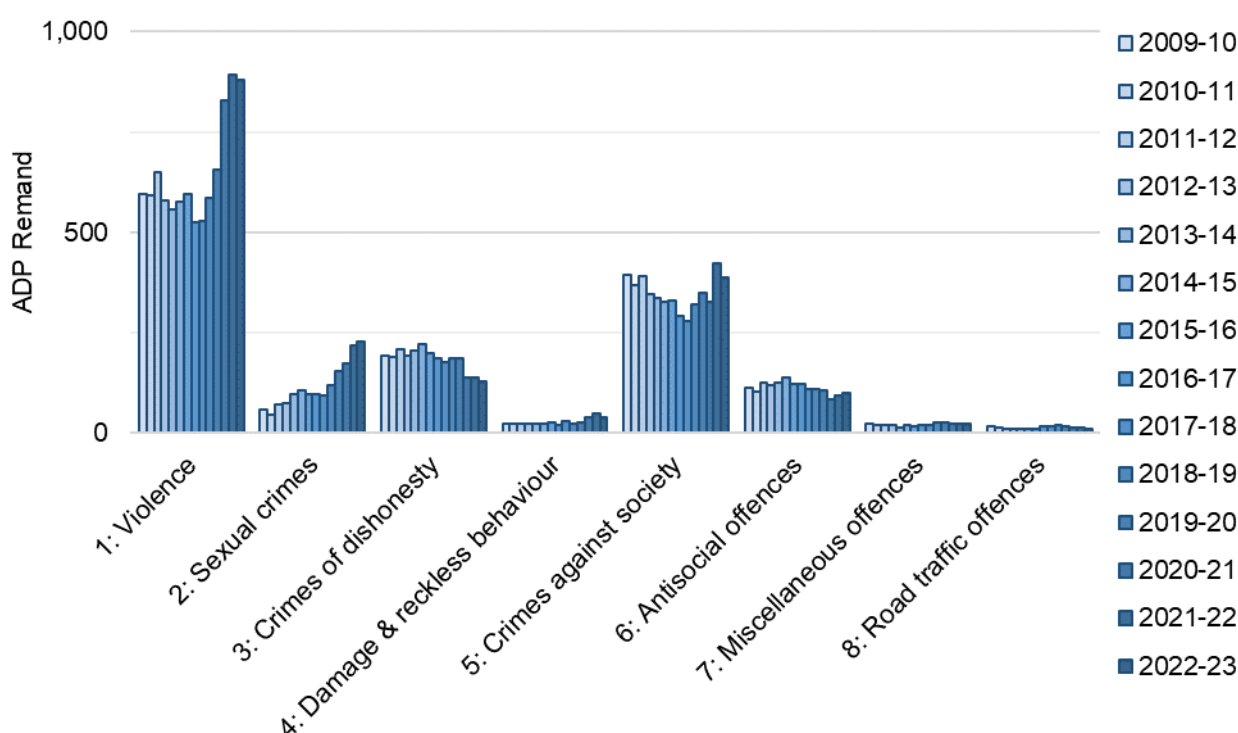
This section provides the breakdown of the (average daily) remand population by index (alleged) offence group, followed by a further breakdown by index (alleged) offence categories. Detail of the method for deriving index (alleged) offence is provided in the technical manual.<sup>24</sup>

### 5.1 Remand index (alleged) offence groups

[Supplementary tables M2]

While the overall (average daily) remand population fell by 3% between 2021-22 to 2022-23, this decrease is not observed equally across all of the index (alleged) offence<sup>25</sup> groups within the remand population (see Figure 15).

**Figure 15: Remand offence groups – average daily populations, 2009-10 to 2022-23**



<sup>23</sup> Technical Manual: Legal Status, <https://www.gov.scot/publications/scottish-prison-population-statistics/pages/analytical-factors-and-measurements/#Legal%20status>

<sup>24</sup> Technical Manual: Index Offence Derivation: <https://www.gov.scot/publications/scottish-prison-population-statistics/pages/cellwise-data-construction/#index-offence-derivation>

<sup>25</sup> Technical Manual: Index Offence group, <https://www.gov.scot/publications/scottish-prison-population-statistics/pages/analytical-factors-and-measurements/#Index%20offence%20group>

Those accused of index Group 1 (Non-Sexual Crime of Violence) offences have consistently been the largest group in the (average daily) remand population. In 2022-23 the population of this group was 879 on an average day, a small absolute reduction (-13) from 2021-22. This reduction is small relative to the overall reduction in the average daily population, so the proportion of the remand population with alleged offences in this group increased slightly in 2022-23 from 48% in 2021-22 to 49%.

The (average daily) remand population accused of index Group 2 (Sexual) offences continued its long-term increase, albeit at a lower rate in 2022-23 than previous reporting years. This group rose by 5% in 2022-23, from 217 in 2021-22 to 228 and comprised 13% of the overall (average daily) remand population. The (average daily) populations of those accused of index offences in Groups 6 (Anti-social) and 7 (Miscellaneous offences) rose by similar proportions over the same period: +5% for Group 6 from 95 to 100 and +3% for Group 7 from 23 to 24.

The (average daily) remand populations accused of index offences in Group 3 (Dishonesty), and Group 4 (Damage and reckless behaviour) fell slightly between 2021-22 and 2022-23 (-7% from 138 to 128 and -9 from 48 to 39 respectively).

Those accused of index Group 5 (Crimes against society) offences, also fell by 9%, from 424 in 2021-22 to 386 in 2022-23. Group 5 remains the second largest category at 21% of the overall (average daily) remand population.

## 5.2 Index (alleged) offence categories

[Supplementary tables M2]

This section provides a breakdown of the (average daily) remand population into categories of index (alleged) offence<sup>26</sup>.

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

Among the (average daily) population held on remand for alleged Group 1 (Violent) offences in 2022-23, the largest index offence category was 'Serious assault and attempted murder'. This index offence category made up 21% of the (average daily) population on remand overall, and 42% of those accused of index offences in Group 1. The (average daily) remand population accused of this index offence was 371 in 2022-23 (-2 from 373 in 2021-22).

Those accused of 'Common assault' (256) comprised 14% of the (average daily) remand population in 2022-23. This is the same absolute figure as reported in 2021-22.

The (average daily) remand population accused of an index offence of 'Robbery' fell 10% between 2021-22 and 2022-23, from 115 to 104. The (average daily) remand population accused of 'Murder and culpable homicide' fell by 1 over the same period to 57.

<sup>26</sup> Technical Manual: Index offence, <https://www.gov.scot/publications/scottish-prison-population-statistics/pages/analytical-factors-and-measurements/#Index%20offence>

The (average daily) remand population accused of index 'Domestic Abuse offences', increased from 55 to 58 between 2021-22 and 2022-23.

### **5.2.2 Group 2 – Sexual offences**

Among the (average daily) remand population accused of index Group 2 (Sexual) offences, the largest group are those accused of 'Rape & attempted rape'. This group increased from 135 in 2021-22 to 139 in 2022-23, comprising 61% of the (average daily) remand population accused of Group 2 index offences and 8% of the (average daily) remand population overall.

Those accused of 'Sexual assault' were the second largest population group amongst those accused of Group 2 index offences in 2022-23, remaining at a similar level to the previous reporting year (+1 from 35 in 2021-22 to 36 in 2022-23).

Small increases were observed between 2021-22 and 2022-23 in the (average daily) remand populations accused of 'Communicating indecently' (+3 to 14), 'Indecent photos of children' (+3 to 12), 'Crimes associated with prostitution' (+3 to 3) and 'Other sexual crimes' (+2 to 13).

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

The overall 9% decrease in the (average daily) remand population accused of Group 5 offences in 2022-23 was driven by a 16% fall in the number accused of index 'Weapons possession' offences (from 187 to 158) and a 10% fall in the number of those accused of index 'Drugs (supply)' offences (137 to 124). The number of those accused of an index 'Crimes against public justice' offence remained stable (+1) at 98 on an average day in 2022-23.

### **5.2.4 Other offence categories**

Further information on the offence categories in Groups 3,4,6,7, and 8 is contained in the supplementary table (M2) and the Interactive Analysis Tool<sup>27</sup>.

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<sup>27</sup> <https://scotland.shinyapps.io/sq-prison-population-statistics/>



## 6 Individuals Experiencing Imprisonment

[Supplementary tables B2 and M1]

The number of individuals<sup>28</sup> who spent any time in prison remained at a very similar level in 2022-23 compared to 2021-22, increasing by only 1% from 14,413 to 14,528 (see Figure 16). Prior to the pandemic there was a long term downward trend in the numbers of individuals experiencing imprisonment year-on-year. During 2020-21 there was a sharper decrease in the number of individuals. The last two reporting years have seen a small rise, but the number of individuals recorded in 2022-23 remains considerably below pre-pandemic levels. These patterns likely reflect the impacts of the pandemic on justice system operations, as discussed in section 1.1.

Note that the measure of individuals differs from the average daily population measures discussed in previous chapters. Here, each individual is given equal weight regardless of how long they spent in prison.

**Figure 16: Unique individuals spending any time in prison, 2009-10 to 2022-23**

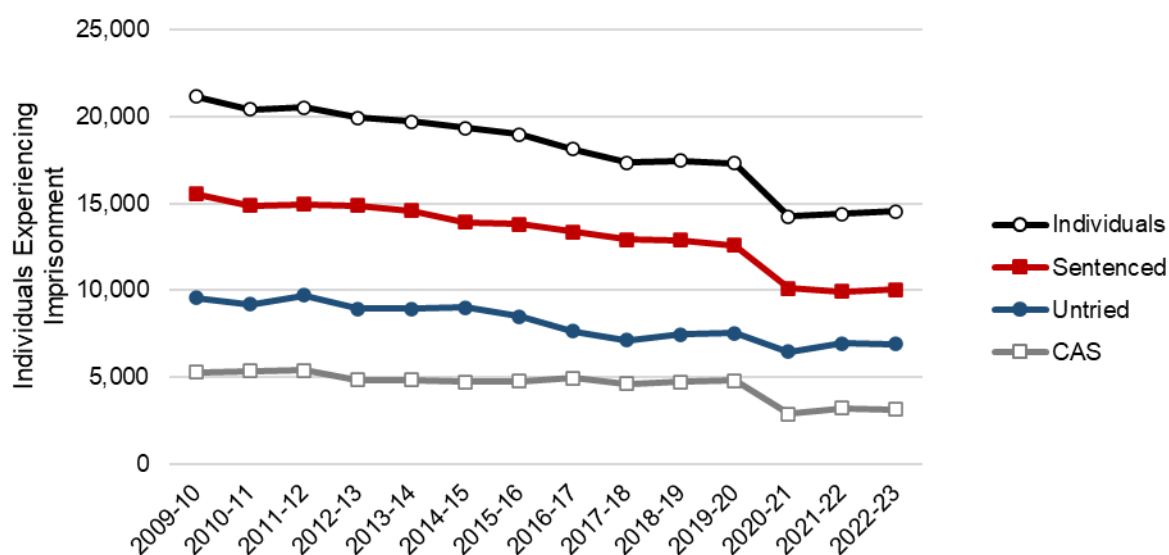


Figure 16 shows that there was overall stability in the number of individuals experiencing imprisonment between 2021-22 and 2022-23, a pattern that holds when looking at the legal status breakdown of individuals experiencing custody<sup>29</sup>.

Note that an individual can have more than one legal status type each year and is counted for each status held. This means that the total number of individuals across the legal status types will be more than the total number of individuals held in custody in each year.

<sup>28</sup> Technical Manual: Individuals, <https://www.gov.scot/publications/scottish-prison-population-statistics/pages/analytical-factors-and-measurements/#Individuals>

<sup>29</sup> Technical Manual: Legal Status, <https://www.gov.scot/publications/scottish-prison-population-statistics/pages/analytical-factors-and-measurements/#Legal%20status>

The rest of this section examines the characteristics of individuals experiencing imprisonment.

## 6.1 Gender

[Supplementary tables B2 and M1]

While there were small increases in 2022-23, the numbers of men and women spending any time in prison were similar to those recorded in 2021-22. In 2022-23, 13,666 men (+113) experienced imprisonment, as did 860 women (+4).

The number of women who spent any time in prison over the course of the year has halved over the past decade, from 1,622 in 2012-13 to 860 in 2022-23. Over the same period the number of men spending any time in prison fell by 25%, from 18,299 to 13,666.

As in 2021-22, women made up just 6% of individuals experiencing imprisonment in 2022-23.

Breaking down the number of individuals by legal status reveals different patterns for men and women. The breakdown by legal status for men broadly follows the overall pattern displayed in figure 16.

For women, the numbers experiencing imprisonment as convicted awaiting sentence and sentenced fell between 2021-22 and 2022-23 (by -5% to 252 and -4% to 442, respectively), and the number of women experiencing imprisonment as untried increased by 9% (from 432 in 2021-22 to 470 in 2022-23).

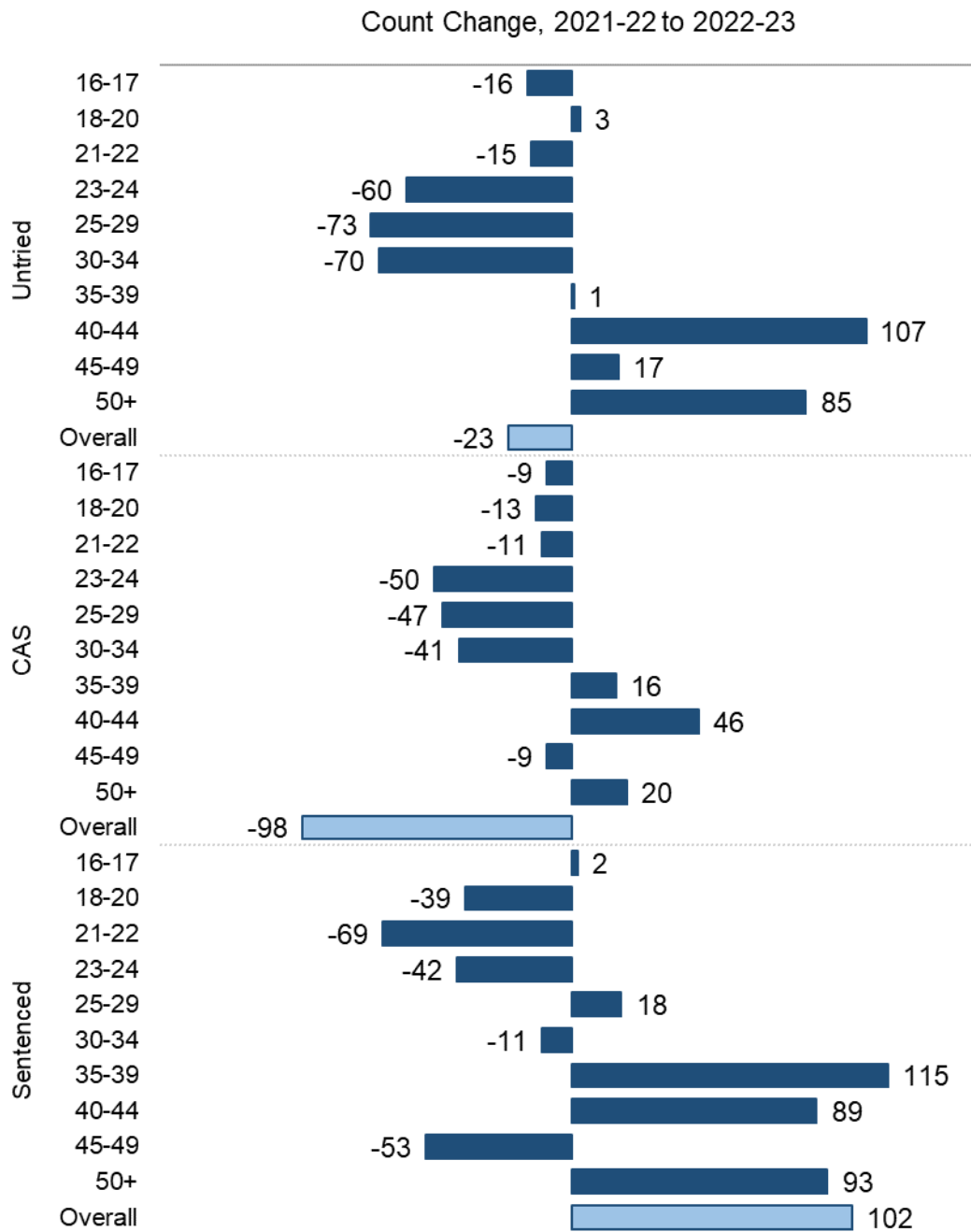
## 6.2 Age

[Supplementary tables B2 and M1]

Over the longer term (from 2009-10), there has been a reduction in the number of young people and younger adults (those under 30 years) experiencing imprisonment, but broad stability or increases in the number of those in the older adult age bands (30 years+). The highest proportionate increases have occurred amongst adults aged 50 years or over.

In line with this longer term trend, the increase in the number of individuals experiencing imprisonment in 2022-23 is driven almost entirely by increases in the number of older adults (those aged 35+). Figure 17 shows that this pattern holds across the legal statuses, and is most pronounced in the larger categories of 'untried' and 'sentenced'.

**Figure 17: Change in number of individuals experiencing imprisonment by legal status and age, 2021-22 to 2022-23**



The previously reported trend<sup>30</sup> of an aging group of people experiencing imprisonment continued in 2022-23. The average age of individuals spending any time in prison in 2012-13 was 32.7 years; by 2022-23 this had risen to 37.4. The proportion of individuals experiencing imprisonment that were aged 50 years or older has almost doubled in ten years, rising from 7.7% in 2012-13 to 14.8% in 2022-23.

<sup>30</sup> Scottish prison population: statistics 2019 to 2020, Section 2.1  
<https://www.gov.scot/publications/scottish-prison-population-statistics-2019-20/pages/4/>

## 6.3 Ethnicity

[Supplementary tables B3]

The majority of individuals experiencing imprisonment in 2022-23 identified as White (94%)<sup>31</sup>.

Reflecting the overall pattern of individuals experiencing imprisonment, there were small increases in the number of individuals experiencing imprisonment across ethnic groups between 2021-22 and 2022-23: White (+41 to 13,617); Asian(+26 to 325); Other ethnic group (+35 to 231); African, Caribbean or Black (+15 to 274); Mixed or Multiple (+1 to 79). Overall there was little change to the proportion of individuals each ethnic group represented between 2021-22 and 2022-23.

In 2022-23, the rate of imprisonment for the White, Asian, and Mixed or Multiple ethnic groups remained similar to the previous reporting year (3.2, 2.6 and 4.5 per 1,000 respectively). The imprisonment rates remained higher for the African, Caribbean and Black and Other Ethnic groups, and showed an increase from the rates seen in 2021-22 (from 8.3 to 8.7 and from 7.3 to 8.5 per 1,000 respectively)<sup>32</sup>.

Ethnic groupings have been aggregated in this report, which is likely to mask variations within each group. Disaggregation of prisoner ethnicity data is currently being pursued for future analyses.

## 6.4 Other individual level characteristics

Statistics on other available protected characteristics (disability, sexual orientation, and marital status) and armed forces history are provided in the Supplementary Tables B4-7 accompanying this publication.

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<sup>31</sup> Technical Manual: Ethnicity, <https://www.gov.scot/publications/scottish-prison-population-statistics/pages/analytical-factors-and-measurements/#Ethnicity>

<sup>32</sup> More information about the derivation of these rates is provided in the Technical Manual: Comparator population rates, <https://www.gov.scot/publications/scottish-prison-population-statistics/pages/analytical-factors-and-measurements/#Comparator%20population%20rates>

# 7 Population In-Flows

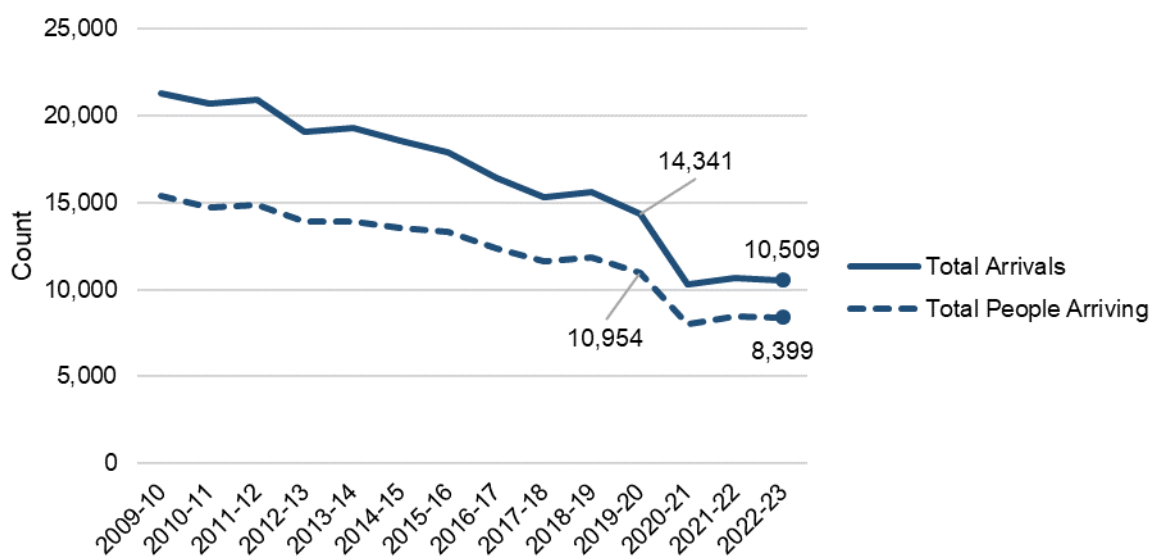
## 7.1 Arrivals to prison

[Supplementary Table C1]

An arrival<sup>33</sup> is where a continuous period of imprisonment begins for an individual, and is only counted as such if the arrival occurred on a separate day from any previous departure for that individual. Individuals can arrive to custody more than once each year and so a single individual may be counted more than once when analysing arrivals.

In line with the patterns reported for the average daily population and the number of individuals spending time in custody, there is a pattern of broad stability in the number of arrivals to custody between 2021-22 and 2022-23. There were 10,509 arrivals to custody in 2022-23, a decrease of around 2% from 2021-22. While there has been a longer term downward trend in the number of arrivals to custody, the number of arrivals has been considerably lower than pre-pandemic levels for the last three reporting years (see Figure 18).

**Figure 18: Number of arrivals, and unique individuals arriving, 2009-10 to 2022-23**

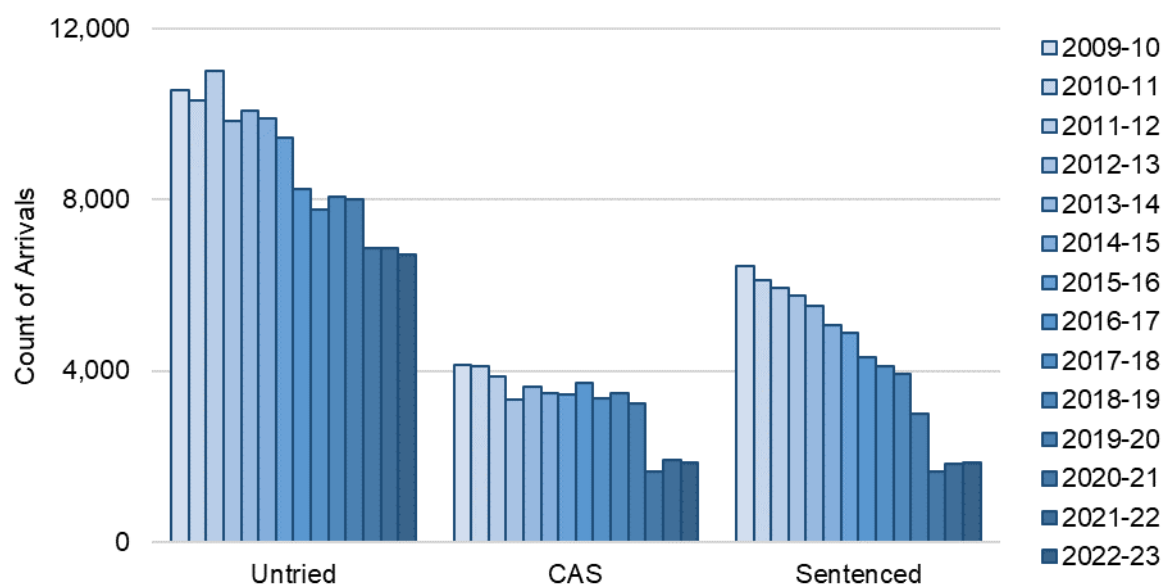


## 7.2 Arrivals by legal status

[Supplementary Table O1]

Figure 19 shows the number of arrivals varies by legal status category. Arrivals across all legal status categories remain below pre-pandemic levels and the distribution of arrivals across the categories has been broadly similar for the past two reporting years. As in 2021-22, untried arrivals accounted for 64% of all arrivals to prison in 2022-23 (compared to 67% in 2020-21, and between 50 and 56% in the years before the pandemic).

<sup>33</sup> Technical Manual: Arrival, <https://www.gov.scot/publications/scottish-prison-population-statistics/pages/analytical-factors-and-measurements/#Arrival>

**Figure 19: Arrivals by legal status**

Likely reflecting the Covid impacts on the operation of the justice system (see Section 1.1) and other longer term trends, arrivals across all legal status categories remained considerably below pre-pandemic levels in 2022-23. Convicted awaiting sentence and sentenced arrivals remained broadly stable between 2021-22 and 2022-23 and untried arrivals decreased by 2%, from 6,859 in 2021-22 to 6,728 in 2022-23.

### 7.3 Arrivals by local authority

[Supplementary tables C2]

The overall national rate of arrival to prison decreased by a small amount from 1.9 per 1,000 head of population in 2021-22 to 1.8 in 2022-23<sup>34</sup>.

Arrivals to prison remained broadly similar across all local authority areas between 2021-22 and 2022-23.

Dundee City retained the highest rate of arrival at 3.4 per 1,000 population in 2022-23. Local authorities with similarly high rates include Clackmannshire at 3.2 per 1,000 and East Ayrshire, Glasgow City, Inverclyde and North Ayrshire at 2.8 per 1,000.

<sup>34</sup> More information about the derivation of these rates is provided in the Technical Manual: Comparator population rates, <https://www.gov.scot/publications/scottish-prison-population-statistics/pages/analytical-factors-and-measurements/#Comparator%20population%20rates>

## 7.4 Arrivals by deprivation

[Supplementary tables C3]

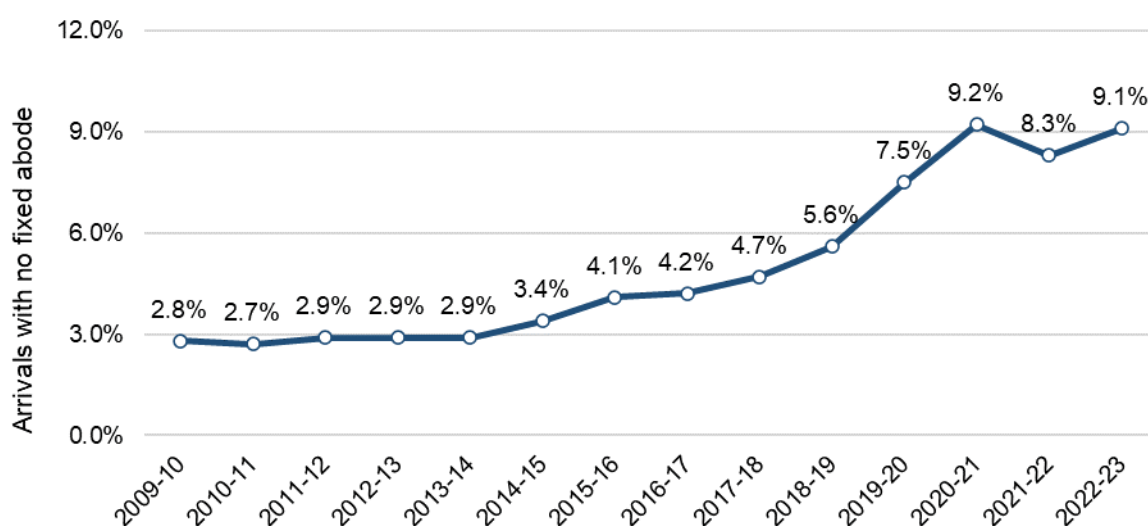
There was little change to the previously reported pattern of arrivals to prison being most likely from the 10% most deprived areas of Scotland<sup>35</sup>. As in 2021-22, the 10% most deprived areas of Scotland accounted for 31% of all arrivals to prison in 2022-23. This is a slightly lower rate than the 33-36% level over the preceding decade.

## 7.5 Arrivals by no fixed abode

[Supplementary tables C4]

In 2022-23, 9.1% of arrivals to prison were individuals registered as of no fixed abode (Figure 20), returning to the approximate rate of 2020-21<sup>36</sup> (9.2%).

**Figure 20: Proportion of arrivals of individuals with no fixed abode continues to increase**



## 7.6 Arrivals by offence group

[Supplementary tables O6]

While the overall number of arrivals remained very similar between 2021-22 and 2022-23, this pattern varied by index offence group<sup>37</sup>. Arrivals with a Group 1 violence index offence remained at very similar levels, and comprised the highest volume of arrivals in both reporting years (4,433 in 2021-22 and 4,414 in 2022-23). Arrivals with a Group 5 'crimes against society' index offence also remained at very similar levels, increasing by just 1% from 2,684 in 2021-22 to 2,700 in 2022-23, as did arrivals with a Group 2 sexual

<sup>35</sup> Scottish prison population statistics 2019-20, Section 3.3, <https://www.gov.scot/publications/scottish-prison-population-statistics-2019-20/pages/5/>

<sup>36</sup> Technical Manual: No fixed abode, <https://www.gov.scot/publications/scottish-prison-population-statistics/pages/analytical-factors-and-measurements/#Of%20no%20fixed%20abode>

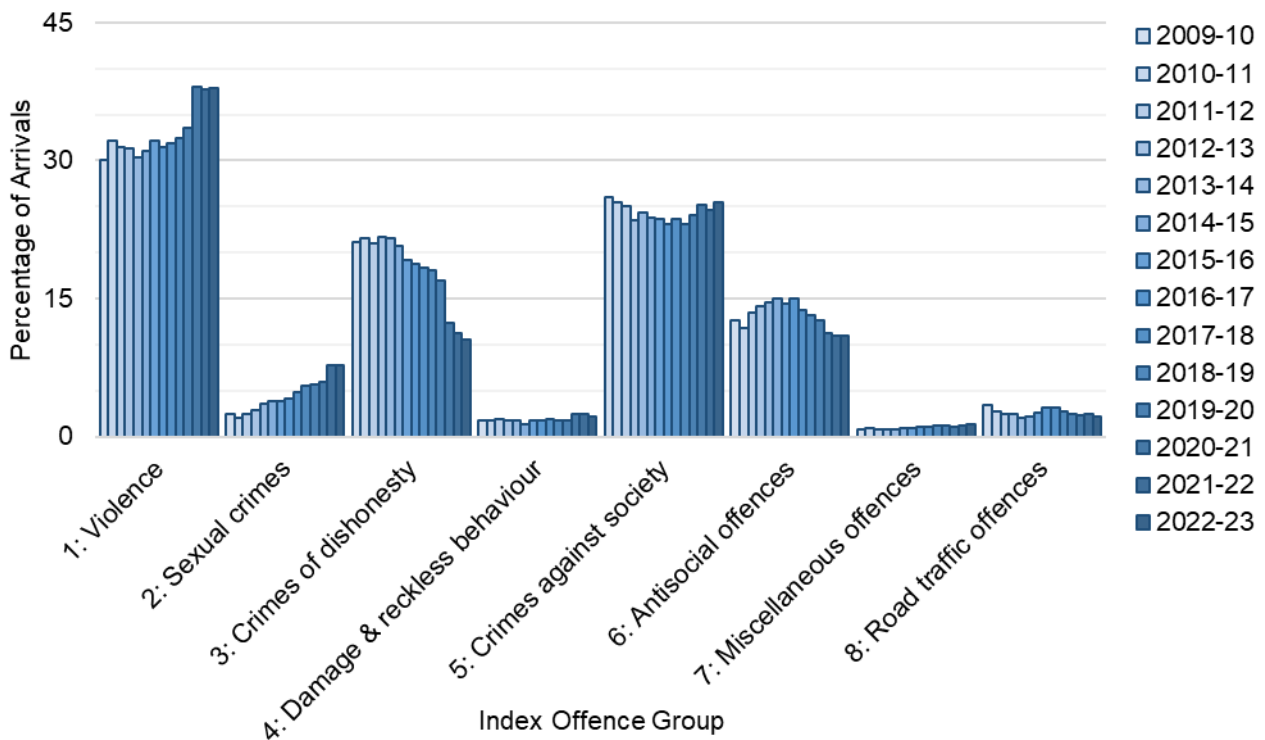
<sup>37</sup> Technical Manual: Index offence, <https://www.gov.scot/publications/scottish-prison-population-statistics/pages/analytical-factors-and-measurements/#Index%20offence%20group>

index offence (-3% to 812 in 2022-23). Arrivals with a Group 7 miscellaneous index offence increased by 9% between 2021-22 and 2022-23 but the overall volume is considerably lower at 115 and 125 respectively.

There were decreases across other index offence groups in 2022-23. The largest volume reductions were in groups 3 and 6. Arrivals with a Group 3 dishonesty index offence fell by 9% from 1,212 in 2021-22 to 1,100 in 2022-23, and those with a group 6 antisocial index offence fell 7% from 695 to 647. Arrivals for both of these index offence groups remain considerably below pre-pandemic levels – the number of arrivals with a Group 3 dishonesty offence in 2022-23 are less than half the number recorded in 2019-20 (2,434), and the number with a Group 6 index offence are just over half in 2022-23 (1,234 in 2019-20).

The share of arrivals across the index offence groups changed slightly between 2021-22 and 2022-23 (Figure 21). There were slight increases in the proportion arriving with index crimes against society (25.9%, +0.6%pts) and violence (42.3%, +0.5%pts) and a reduction in the proportion arriving with index crimes of dishonesty (10.5%, -0.9%pts) between 2021-22 and 2022-23.

**Figure 21: Proportion of arrivals by Index Offence Groups, 2009-10 to 2022-23**





## 8 Population Transitions and Out-Flows

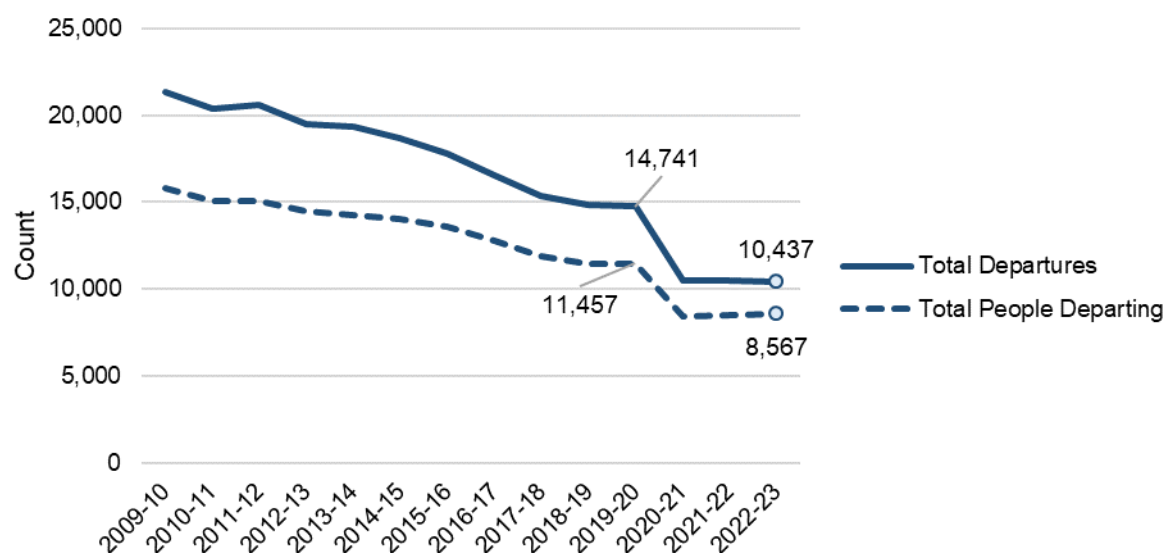
This section of the report examines transitions within, and departures from, custody in the reporting year. Quantification of population flows are provided, as well as an examination of custodial ‘journeys’ by legal status. Individuals can enter custody with any one of the legal statuses (untried, convicted awaiting sentence, or sentenced), and may transition through other statuses before departing<sup>38</sup>. For the custodial ‘journeys’ captured in the cellWise data, it is possible to measure and report overall time in custody, as well as time spent with a remand status. Where available, the reasons for an individuals’ liberation is provided in section 8.4.

### 8.1 Departures and transitions

[Supplementary Tables C1, O2, O3 & O4]

There was broad stability between reporting years, with 10,437 departures<sup>39</sup> from prison in 2022-23 - a decrease of less than 0.4% from 2021-22. Volume of departures remained considerably below pre-pandemic levels for 2022-23. Accounting for multiple departures per person, 8,567 individuals departed prison one or more times in 2022-23 – an increase of less than 1% from the previous year (see Figure 22), and still far below the 2019-20 level of 11,457.

**Figure 22: Number of departures, and unique individuals departing, fell over 2009-10 to 2022-23**



<sup>38</sup> For more information see the Technical Manual: Legal Status Hierarchy, <https://www.gov.scot/publications/scottish-prison-population-statistics/pages/cellwise-data-construction/#Legal%20status%20heirarchy>

Section 9.1 provides details of the reverse transitions in 2022-23.

<sup>39</sup> Technical Manual: Departure, <https://www.gov.scot/publications/scottish-prison-population-statistics/pages/analytical-factors-and-measurements/#Departure>

Of all departures<sup>40</sup> in 2022-23, 47% were from remand and 53% were sentenced. This is broadly the same proportion departing from a remand status as in 2021-22 (46%), and reflects a longer term pattern (43% in 2020-21 and 44% in 2019-20, 40-43% in preceding years). The number of remand departures increased by around 1% in 2022-23, from 4,773 in 2021-22 to 4,836. On the other hand, departures from sentenced status decreased from the previous year (-2% from 5,613 to 5,520 in 2022-23).

There were 3,883 transitions<sup>41</sup> from remand to sentenced status in 2022-23 - around 1% more than in 2021-22 (3,847) but still 22% less than pre-pandemic (4,966 in 2019-20).

## 8.2 Custodial journeys

[Supplementary Tables C1 & O2]

**Figure 23: Departures by Journey Type**

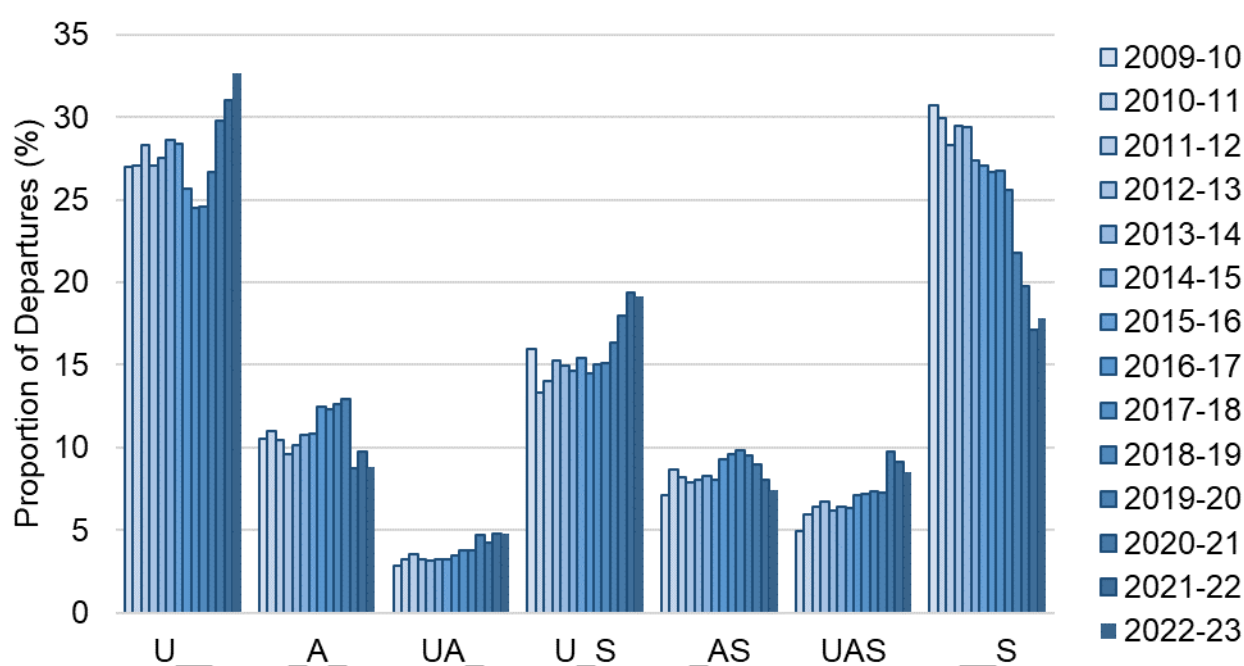


Figure 23 shows the proportion of departures by custodial journey type<sup>42</sup>. Journey types represent the progress through the legal status hierarchy<sup>43</sup> in the course of an occupancy period, from untried (U), convicted awaiting sentence (A) to sentenced (S). Custodial journeys vary depending on legal status on arrival and whether or not the individual transitions between legal statuses before departing. Some individuals enter and leave

<sup>40</sup> A small number of departures have missing values for legal status at time of departure. The sum of labelled departures (e.g. remand plus sentenced) will therefore be different to the sum of all departures above (10,401 rather than 10,474)

<sup>41</sup> Technical Manual: Status transitions, <https://www.gov.scot/publications/scottish-prison-population-statistics/pages/analytical-factors-and-measurements/#Status%20transition>

<sup>42</sup> Technical Manual: Journey type, <https://www.gov.scot/publications/scottish-prison-population-statistics/pages/analytical-factors-and-measurements/#Journey%20type>

<sup>43</sup> Technical Manual: Legal status hierarchy, <https://www.gov.scot/publications/scottish-prison-population-statistics/pages/cellwise-data-construction/#Legal%20status%20heirarchy>

custody having had the same legal status for the duration of their time served/ held. These would be represented as U, A or S in the chart above. Others enter custody with one legal status and transition to another before leaving. For example, an individual may enter as untried, progress to convicted awaiting sentence and then subsequently sentenced. This particular journey type would be UAS in the chart above.

The proportion of departures from an untried only journey has increased consistently over the past four years, from around a quarter in 2018-19 to one third in 2022-23. Over that period the number of such departures has risen (to 3,935 in 2019-20) then fallen (3,128 in 2020-21) before rising again to reach 3,413 in 2022-23. Over the same period there has been a substantial fall in the proportion of sentenced only journeys. Fluctuations in the number and prevalence of the different journey types likely reflect changes in the volume and nature of court business, and the disruption to court activity during the pandemic. Information about court business is published monthly by the Scottish Courts and Tribunals Service<sup>44</sup>.

### 8.3 Time in custody

[Supplementary tables D2]

The mean total duration of an occupancy period in custody was 235 days in 2022-23.

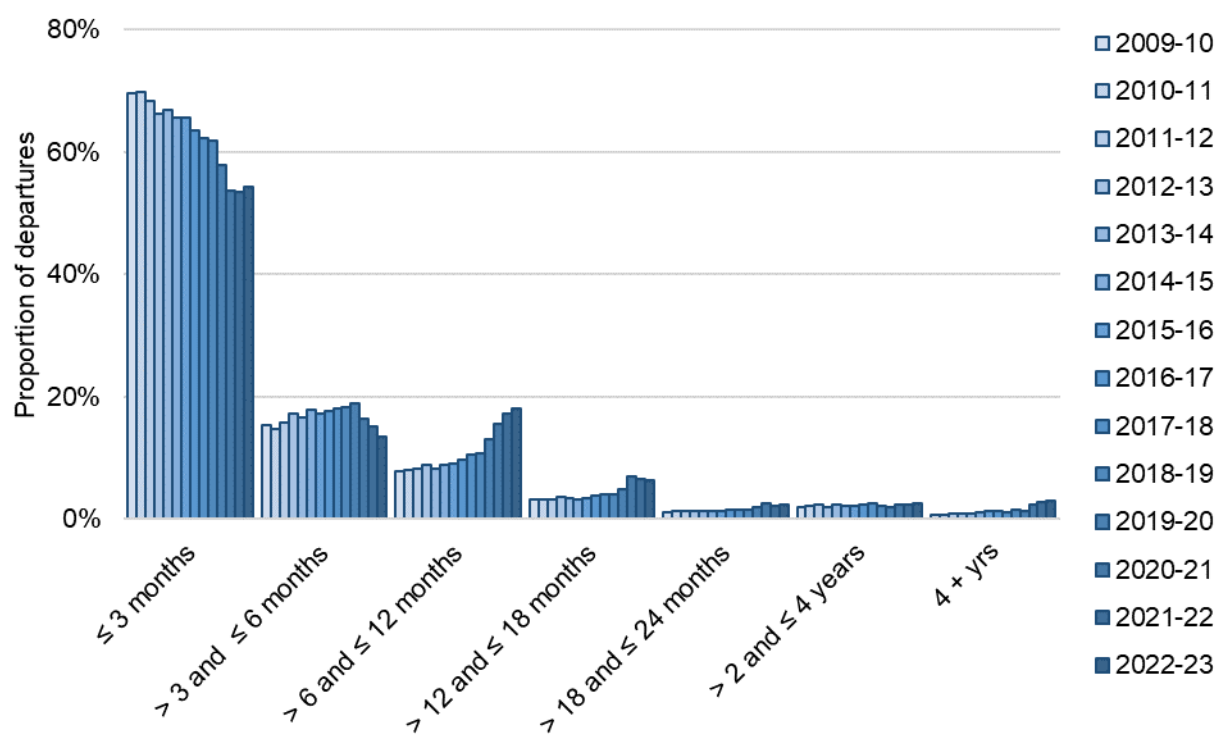
The average time spent in custody has increased over the longer term, a pattern that became more pronounced during the pandemic. In 2009-10, the mean total duration was 122 days. This had increased to 169 in 2019-20<sup>45</sup> before a sharp increase to 216 days in 2020-21 (+47 days). The latest increase (+9 days from 2021-22 to 235) appears to have been driven by a continued reduction in the share of departing occupancy periods of '> 3 and 6 months' and increase in those of '> 6 and ≤ 12 months' and of '4+ years', as shown in Figure 24.

There has been a long term decline in the proportion of short stays in custody. Continuous periods in custody of 6 months or less made up 85% of all occupancy periods ending in 2009-10 and 77% in 2019-20, but just 68% in 2022-23.

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<sup>44</sup> Scottish Courts and Tribunals Service Official Statistics, <https://www.scotcourts.gov.uk/official-statistics>

<sup>45</sup> Technical Manual: Time to departure, <https://www.gov.scot/publications/scottish-prison-population-statistics/pages/analytical-factors-and-measurements/#Time%20to%20Departure>

**Figure 24: Banded time in custody at departure**

### 8.3.1 Time on remand

[Supplementary tables O2]

Time on remand can be measured when an individual departs custody without a sentencing warrant in that occupancy period, or when they transition from a remand status to the sentenced population<sup>46</sup>.

As shown in Figure 25, the median time taken for an individual to depart custody from remand has remained at a similar level since 2009-10. In 2022-23 the median number of days to departure from remand was 21 days. However, the longest periods spent on remand have been increasing over time. In 2017-18, 90% of remand departures had occurred within 63 days, with the longest 10% of stays before departure taking 64 days or more. By 2022-23, the longest 10% of stays before departure from remand took 146 days or more.

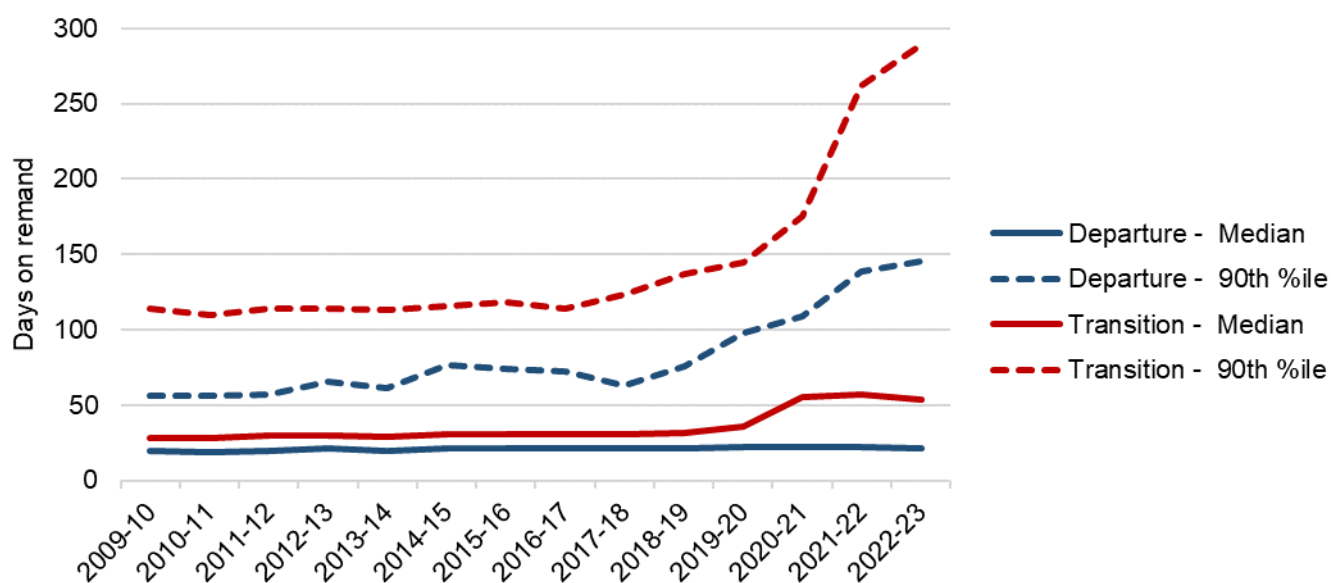
The time taken to transition from a remand status to the sentenced population is longer on average than it is to depart from remand. The median number of days to transition was broadly stable from 2009-10 to 2017-18. In 2017-18 the median number of days to transition was 31, but this rose steeply in 2020-21 to 55. In 2022-23 it remained at a similar level at 54 days.

As with departures, the longest periods to transition from remand to sentenced have been increasing over time. In 2019-20, 90% of transitions occurred within 145 days, with the

<sup>46</sup> Technical Manual: Time on remand, <https://www.gov.scot/publications/scottish-prison-population-statistics/pages/analytical-factors-and-measurements/#Time%20on%20remand>

longest 10% of stays before transition taking 146 days or more. By 2022-23 the longest 10% of stays before transition from remand took 289 days or more.

**Figure 25: Days on remand by destination – transition to the sentenced population or departure to the community – median and 90<sup>th</sup> percentile days**



In 2022-23, although remand-only journey types<sup>47</sup> of all lengths increased in number only slightly, the proportion share across duration bands shifted somewhat from 2021-22. The proportion of remand journeys lasting up to 7 days had remained around 22% over the previous three reporting years but increased to 25% in 2022-23. The proportion of remand journeys lasting more than 140 days also increased remained slightly elevated from 7% in 2020-21 to 10% in 2021-22 and 2022-23.

<sup>47</sup> Technical Manual: Journey type, <https://www.gov.scot/publications/scottish-prison-population-statistics/pages/analytical-factors-and-measurements/#Journey%20type>

## 8.4 Liberations

### 8.4.1 Liberations from remand

[Supplementary tables O4]

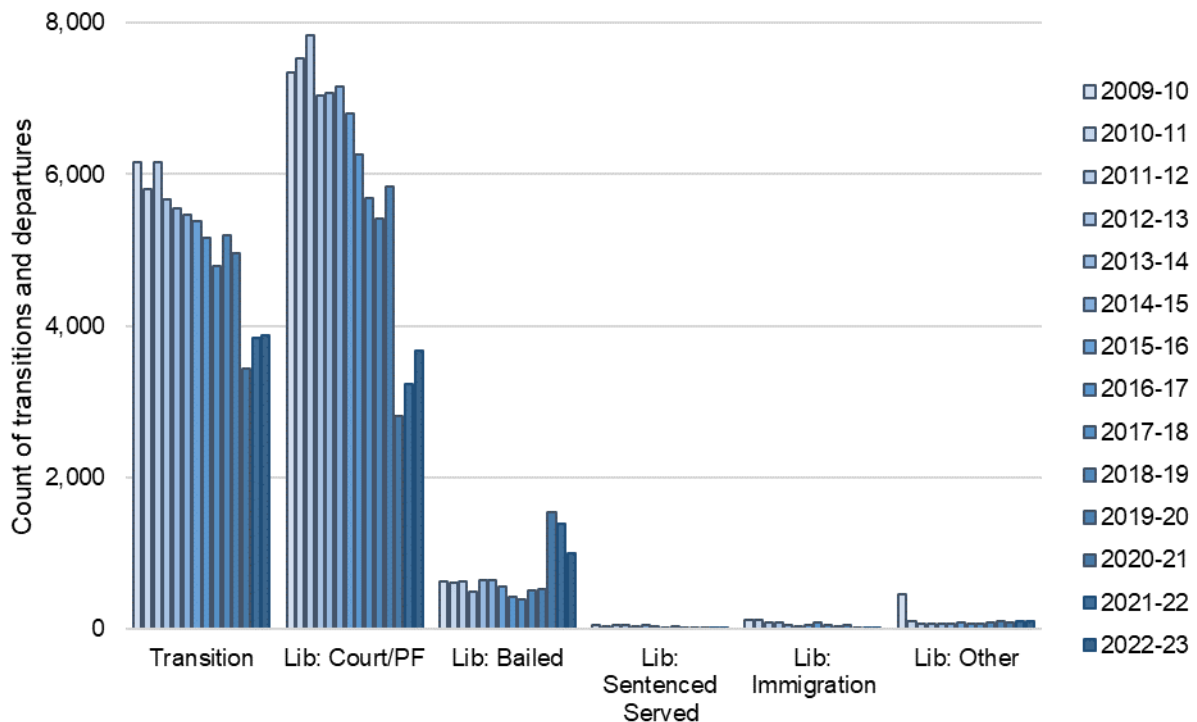
The overall volume of recorded liberation types for departures from remand increased slightly between 2021-22 and 2022-23, from 4,773 to 4,836.

The number of court or procurator fiscal liberations increased 14%, from 3,241 in 2021-22 to 3,683 in 2022-23. This continues the trend from 2021-22, following a large decrease in this liberation type (-52%) in the first pandemic year.

Prior to the pandemic, liberations to court or procurator fiscal accounted for the largest volume of recorded liberation types. This pattern shifted in 2020-21, when it fell below the volume of transitions to sentenced. In 2022-23, volume of transitions continued to exceed liberations to court or procurator fiscal (3,883 and 3,683 respectively).

In 2019-20, 528 remand departures were liberated to bail, but in 2020-21 this increased almost threefold to 1,544 (Figure 26) before decreasing by 10% in 2021-22 to 1,393. In 2022-23 this decreased by a further 28% to 999 but the volume remains higher than in pre-pandemic years.

**Figure 26: Number of transitions and departures from remand by liberation type**



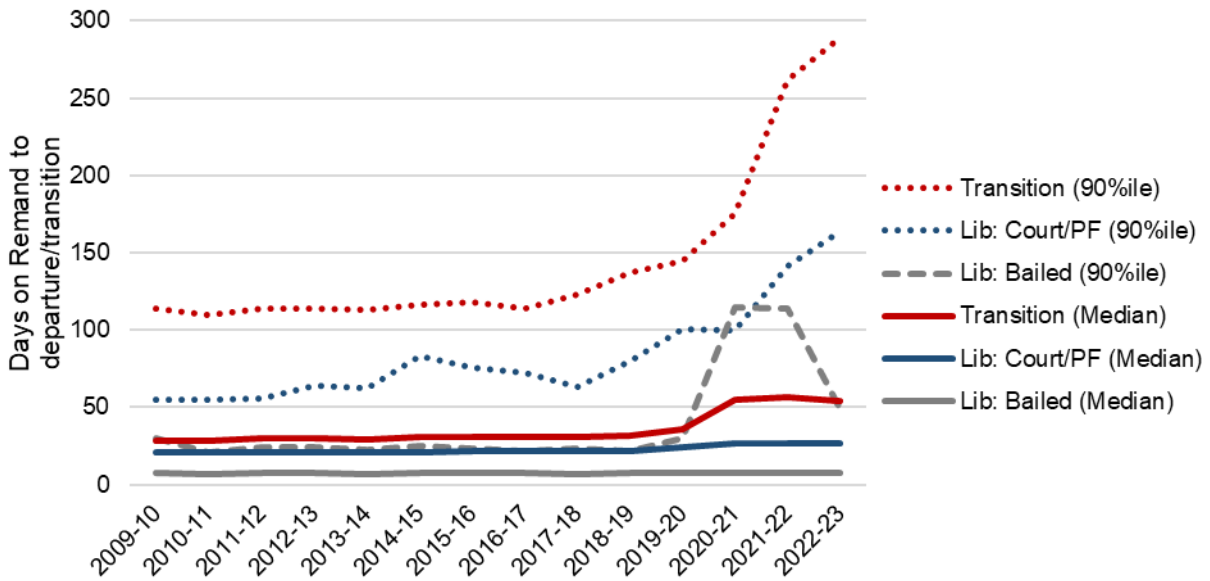
The time to departure varies depending on the type of liberation. Figure 27 shows the median and 90<sup>th</sup> percentile days on remand by liberation type.

Median time to liberation from remand by the courts or procurator fiscal remained constant from 2020-21 at 27 days, while the 90<sup>th</sup> percentile increased from 100 days in 2020-21 to 141 days in 2021-22 and then to 164 days in 2022-23.

Days on remand until transition is described in section 8.3.1.

Liberations to bail have fluctuated in recent years, with the median time to liberation staying constant between 2019-20 and 2022-23 at 8 days. However, 10% of those liberated to bail remained in custody for 114 days or more in 2021-22 and 115 days or more in 2020-21, compared with just 30 days or more in 2019-20. In 2022-23 this 90<sup>th</sup> percentile level fell back down to 49 days.

**Figure 27: Days on remand for transitions to the sentenced population and departures by liberation type, median and 90<sup>th</sup> percentile**

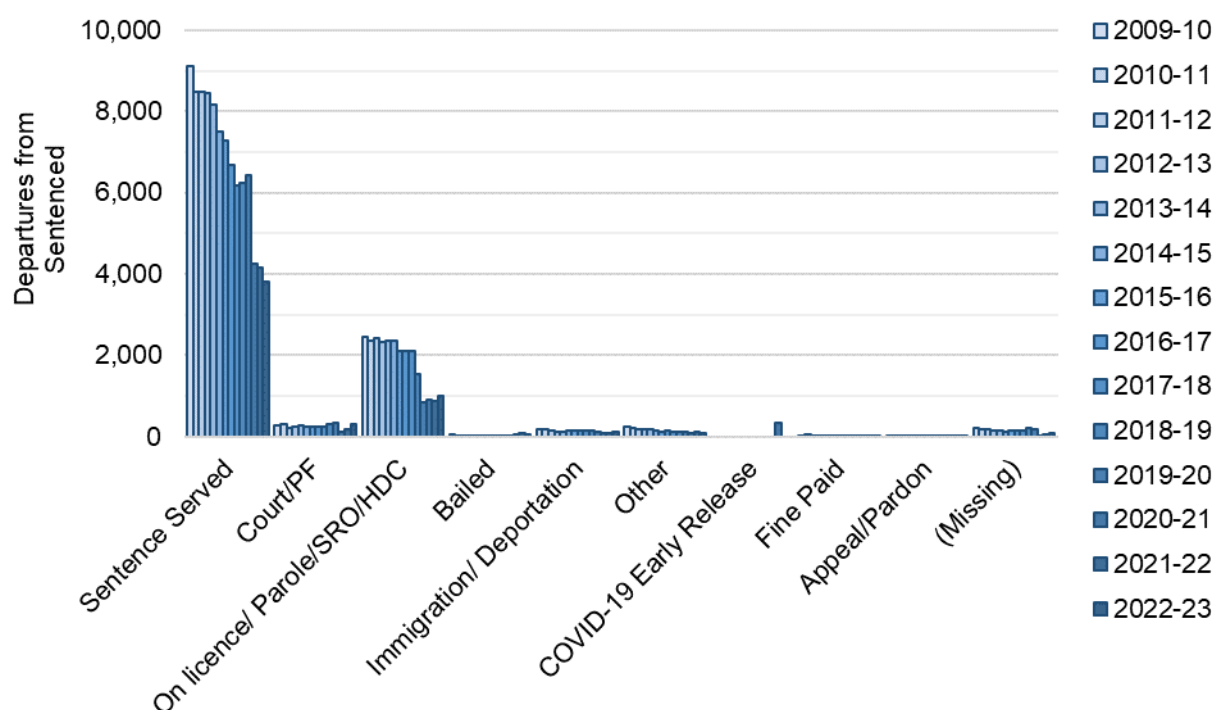


## 8.4.2 Sentenced liberations

[Supplementary tables O4]

As discussed in section 8.1, the overall volume of sentenced departures fell slightly in 2022-23. This was reflected in a 2% decrease in recorded liberations<sup>48</sup> from the sentenced population (from 5,613 in 2021-22 to 5,520 in 2022-23). Figure 28 below shows the breakdown by liberation type.

**Figure 28: Number of departures from sentenced status by liberation type**



Liberations recorded as 'sentence served' fell by 8% in 2022-23, from 4,175 in 2021-22 to 3,826. On the other hand, liberations to conditional release (on licence, parole or home detention curfew) increased by 14% from 886 in 2021-22 to 1,006 in 2022-23.

Liberations by the court or procurator fiscal increased from 189 to 300 over the same time period. There was a decrease in liberations to bail, from 80 in 2021-22 to 57 in 2022-23. These liberation types, generally associated with remand prisoners, may indicate individuals moving from sentenced to remand prior to departure, as discussed in section 9.1.

Under emergency legislation introduced at the beginning of the Covid pandemic<sup>49</sup>, 348 prisoners were released in 2020-21. There have been no further such releases.

<sup>48</sup> Technical Manual: Liberation type, <https://www.gov.scot/publications/scottish-prison-population-statistics/pages/analytical-factors-and-measurements/#Liberation%C2%A0type>

<sup>49</sup> The Release of Prisoners (Coronavirus) (Scotland) Regulations 2020, <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ssi/2020/138/contents/made>



## 9 Source Comparison

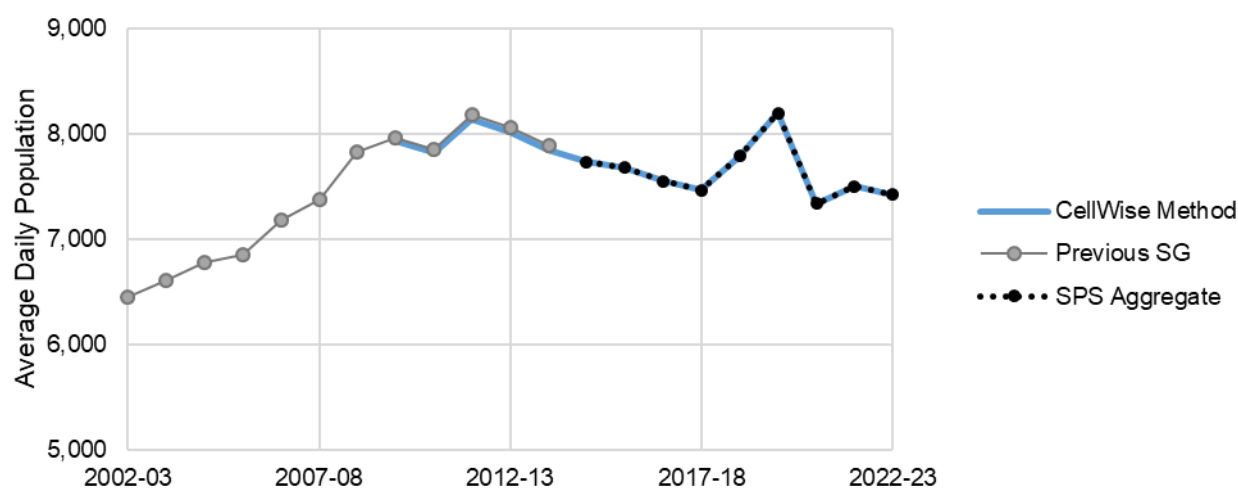
The cellWise data on which this publication is based is substantially different from other sources of information about the prison population – the preceding statistical publications from Scottish Government (up to 2013-14)<sup>50</sup>, the management information snapshots taken throughout the pandemic period published as monthly reports by Scottish Government<sup>51</sup>, and the aggregate information produced by the Scottish Prison Service<sup>52</sup>.

The major points of difference lie in the average distribution between legal statuses, and the inability in the cellWise data to determine overall sentence lengths. In spite of this, as shown in Figure 29, the estimate of the overall prison population are closely aligned across the three annual sources:

- across the 5 years where the previous Official Statistics overlap (2010-11 through 2015-16), the cellWise estimate of average daily population is slightly lower by between 0.4% and 0.6%
- across the 9 years where the SPS aggregation overlaps (2014-15 to 2022-23), the cellWise estimate of average daily population is within  $\pm 0.05\%$

This provides us with a very high level of confidence in using the cellWise data to describe the occupancy and characteristics of people in Scottish prisons.

**Figure 29: Comparison of sources for the overall prison population estimation show close alignment**



Further disaggregated population group changes are provided in Supplementary Table A2.

<sup>50</sup> Historic publications are still available on the Scottish Government website:

<https://www.gov.scot/collections/scottish-prison-population-statistics/>

<sup>51</sup> Monthly reports from June 2020 to March 2022:

<https://www.gov.scot/collections/coronavirus-covid-19-justice-analytical-services-data-report/>

From April 2022 onwards: <https://www.gov.scot/collections/justice-analytical-services-safer-communities-and-justice-statistics-monthly-reports/>

<sup>52</sup> Annual aggregates and weekly snapshot information:

<https://www.sps.gov.uk/Corporate/Information/SPSPopulation.aspx>

## 9.1 Legal status discrepancies

Due to the lack of consistent information retained on PR2 about the end point of periods spent in prison serving a sentence, prisoners who return to the remand population immediately after a sentence is served continue to be counted as sentenced for the purpose of their on-going Occupancy Period<sup>53</sup>. This aspect of the data construction is explained in further detail in the accompanying technical manual<sup>54</sup>.

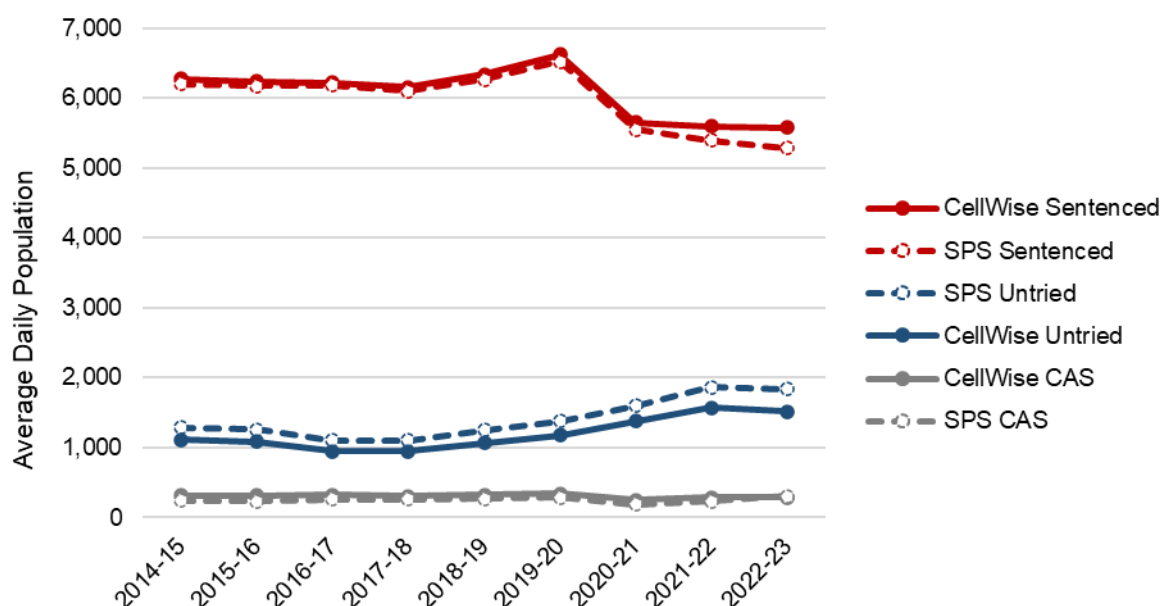
Based on the snapshots collected to monitor the prison population from the beginning of the pandemic, there were 656 such retrograde transitions (from sentenced to remand) in the course of 2020-21, growing to 936 in 2021-22 and 1,274 in 2022-23. In addition there were 125 transitions from CAS to Untried in 2020-21, growing to 168 in 2021-22 and 224 in 2022-23. No such transitions can be detected in the cellWise data construction.

This leads to the following effects when comparing the cellWise and SPS aggregate estimates of legal status populations over the 6 intersecting years:

- A growing underestimate of the average daily Untried population from 13% (214) in 2020-21, 16% (299) in 2021-22 and 17% (319) in 2022-23
- A shifting variation in the average daily Convicted Awaiting Sentence population, which goes from over-estimating by 61 (32%) in 2020-21 and 58 (25%) in 2021-22 to a slight underestimate of 17 (5%) in 2022-23
- Over-estimate of the average daily Sentenced population by 50-200, or around 4%

These differences over time are illustrated in Figure 30:

**Figure 30: Comparison of sources of population estimates by legal status**



<sup>53</sup> Technical Manual: Occupancy Period, <https://www.gov.scot/publications/scottish-prison-population-statistics/pages/cellwise-data-construction/#Occupancy%20period>

<sup>54</sup> Technical Manual: Legal Status Hierarchy, <https://www.gov.scot/publications/scottish-prison-population-statistics/pages/cellwise-data-construction/#Legal%20status%20heirarchy>

## 9.2 Index offences

The offences for which people are imprisoned listed throughout this report are index offences<sup>55</sup>. People may be imprisoned for multiple offences in a single occupancy period. In such cases we identify the most “serious” offence by the only available metric – the length of associated sentence. Where no sentences have been passed, the index offence is the offence category with the longest associated sentence on average based on all sentencing warrants over the past three years of SPS warrant data.

## 9.3 Sentence length ambiguity

Throughout this report the sentence length of prisoners is their “index” sentence length<sup>56</sup>. There is currently no conflicting published source on the sentence distribution of prisoners. However, live information drawn from the PR2 system can provide the *overall sentence length* for each individual person in prison when the snapshot is taken. CellWise cannot use this information, which is over-written on PR2 when it is amended or updated.

Information about sentence length drawn from the cellWise data will therefore always explicitly reference *Index Sentence length* – the length of the longest determinate sentence applied in the course of an Occupancy Period.

This information cannot be used to divide the population into “long-term” and “short-term prisoners” (those serving an *overall* sentence of less than 4 years). Live (or daily aggregated) information is needed for that population segmentation.

A comparison of index sentence length and overall sentence length is provided in the Technical Manual for 2013-14, the latest year when the previous Official Statistics publication and cellWise data were both available<sup>57</sup>.

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<sup>55</sup> Technical Manual: Index Offence Derivation, <https://www.gov.scot/publications/scottish-prison-population-statistics/pages/cellwise-data-construction/#index-offence-derivation>

<sup>56</sup> Technical Manual: Index Sentence derivation, <https://www.gov.scot/publications/scottish-prison-population-statistics/pages/cellwise-data-construction/#index-sentence-derivation>

<sup>57</sup> *Ibid.*

## 10 Context and supplementary information

Previous publications have provided a high level summary of the changes occurring in characteristics of the prison population. These included a reduction in the numbers of individuals spending time in custody year on year, but a growth in the daily prison population from 2017-18 that appeared to be driven by increases in the time served in custody.

This publication builds on the information provided in previous publication<sup>58</sup>. With that in mind, we re-iterate the explanation for the trends documented in previous releases as the key context in which the findings from this publication should be viewed<sup>59</sup>:

“The changes described [in this publication] may reflect the multitude of legislative and policy changes implemented across the wider criminal justice system in recent years. The data presented here cannot attest to the impact of these on their own, but the context is important to consider in interpreting the patterns above.

“For example, in terms of sentencing, the presumption against short-term prison sentences was introduced in 2011, and extended to include custodial sentences of 12 months or less in 2019, with the aim of reducing ineffective use of custody and encouraging community based sentences addressing offending and rehabilitation. Changes in sentencing practices over time are observed in the Criminal Proceedings in Scotland 2018-19 report<sup>60</sup>, with a steady increase in custodial sentences of more than one year.

“Changes to release arrangements can impact the prison population. Automatic early release for longer term prisoners ended in 2015 and use of home detention curfew for short-term prisoners<sup>61</sup> was substantially reduced in 2018. Audit Scotland have also highlighted the stretching of financial resources and staff due to rising prisoner numbers as adversely affecting re-offending/rehabilitation programme completion and preventing prisoners from qualifying for release on parole.<sup>62</sup>

“Scottish Government Justice Analytical Services provide ongoing monitoring and modelling of change within the justice system. Recent analysis<sup>63</sup> suggests that the above factors, in combination with historical improvements in clear-up and conviction rates, have impacted on the size and nature of the prison population.

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<sup>58</sup> Scottish Prison Population statistics collection, <https://www.gov.scot/collections/scottish-prison-population-statistics/>

<sup>59</sup> Scottish prison population: statistics 2019 to 2020, Section 5.1  
<https://www.gov.scot/publications/scottish-prison-population-statistics-2019-20/>

<sup>60</sup> Criminal proceedings in Scotland: 2018-2019, <https://www.gov.scot/publications/criminal-proceedings-scotland-2018-19/>

<sup>61</sup> Defined as those serving a sentence of less than 4 years. More information on HDC is available on the SPS website: <https://www.sps.gov.uk/Corporate/Information/HomeDetentionCurfew.aspx>

<sup>62</sup> Audit Scotland (2019) [https://www.audit-scotland.gov.uk/uploads/docs/report/2019/s22\\_190912\\_sps.pdf](https://www.audit-scotland.gov.uk/uploads/docs/report/2019/s22_190912_sps.pdf)

<sup>63</sup> See Conlong (2019), available in addendum here: [https://www.parliament.scot/S5\\_Public\\_Audit/General%20Documents/SG\\_SPS\\_20191216.pdf](https://www.parliament.scot/S5_Public_Audit/General%20Documents/SG_SPS_20191216.pdf)

“However, modelling change also suggests that shifts in [the prison] populations may reflect changes in the nature of offending coming to the attention of justice agencies, whether through shifting social norms and values and/or direct changes to legislation on criminal offences. The [previous] Criminal Proceedings in Scotland 2018-19 release points to substantial rises in convictions for sexual offences (including rape and attempted rape) where the imposition of custodial sentences is highly likely<sup>64</sup>.

“Compliance with public health measures during the pandemic influenced operations across the criminal justice system. The Lord Advocate issued revised guidelines on the use of police custody, and the courts had to close for extended periods or operate at reduced capacity. Prison establishments had to ensure sufficient space to allow prisoners to observe public health measures.

“The impact of justice system responses to public health measures in 2020-21 included: a decreased volume of custody cases reported to the Crown Office and Procurator Fiscal Service, and an increased volume of undertakings reports<sup>65</sup>; a reduced likelihood of an accused being remanded<sup>66</sup>; a reduced volume of concluded cases in courts, with subsequent reduction in custodial sentences issued *and* growth in the trial backlog<sup>67</sup>; and an agreement in the initial stages of the pandemic response to early release of eligible short-term sentenced prisoners<sup>68</sup>. Combined, these shifts impacted both the in-flows *to* custody and the out-flows *from* custody.

“Whilst it is not yet possible to isolate the impact of the pandemic on the data, it is reasonable to conclude that the latest data is predominantly a reflection of the impact of the pandemic across the justice system, and should not be interpreted as indicative of longer-term trends.”

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<sup>64</sup> See also Recorded Crime in Scotland 2020-21 for further context: <https://www.gov.scot/publications/criminal-proceedings-scotland-2020-21/>

<sup>65</sup> Coronavirus (COVID-19): Justice Analytical Services data report, <https://www.gov.scot/collections/coronavirus-covid-19-justice-analytical-services-data-report/>

<sup>66</sup> Sheriff Courts - remand and bail outcomes: occasional paper, <https://www.gov.scot/publications/occasional-paper-remand-bail-outcomes-first-bail-decision-points-sheriff-courts/>

<sup>67</sup> Coronavirus (COVID-19): Justice Analytical Services data report, <https://www.gov.scot/collections/coronavirus-covid-19-justice-analytical-services-data-report/>, and Sheriff Courts - remand and bail outcomes: occasional paper, <https://www.gov.scot/publications/occasional-paper-remand-bail-outcomes-first-bail-decision-points-sheriff-courts/>

<sup>68</sup> SPS COVID-19 Information Hub, <https://www.sps.gov.uk/Corporate/Information/covid19/covid-19-information-hub.aspx>

## 10.1 Other sources of information on the Scottish prison population

The Scottish Government produces a range of statistics on the criminal justice system. Those referenced in this publication include information about recorded crime rates (<https://www.gov.scot/collections/recorded-crime-in-scotland/>) and criminal proceedings statistics (<https://www.gov.scot/collections/criminal-proceedings-in-scotland/>)

On the 30<sup>th</sup> August 2023 the Scottish Government published a review of deaths in custody over the ten year period to 2021-22. This report uses the previous edition of these Scottish Prison Population Statistics as a basis for population rate calculations. While some values have changed marginally from the previous edition, the results and their associated conclusion remain valid. Deaths in Prison Custody, 2012-2022 can be found on the Scottish Government website at <https://www.gov.scot/publications/deaths-prison-custody-scotland-2012-2022/>

From June 2020 until April 2022, Scottish Government Justice Analytical Services published a monthly data report with the latest available information from across the justice system<sup>69</sup>. This includes information about monthly populations and about the alleged offences of people arriving on remand. These data are not directly comparable with the statistics presented in this report, as they are derived from collected daily snapshots rather than by the cellWise data construction. Furthermore, they are based on live information and have not been passed through the quality assurance applied to cellWise statistics.

From May 2022 this monthly information on prison populations was integrated into the Justice Analytical Services Monthly data report<sup>70</sup> and expanded to include statistics on time on remand to date for the remand population on the first of each month.

Justice Analytical Services has produced short-term projections of the prison population using 'microsimulation' scenario modelling which simulates prison arrivals and departures and estimates the number of individuals in prison on a particular date in the future. These projections may be found at <https://www.gov.scot/collections/scottish-prison-population-statistics/>.

Information comparing prison populations across Europe is compiled by the Council of Europe each year in the SPACE-I collection<sup>71</sup>. The collated figures are drawn from single day snapshots (typically January 31<sup>st</sup> each year), or totals over the course of a calendar year. They are therefore related to, but not directly comparable with, cellWise data.

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<sup>69</sup> Coronavirus (COVID-19): Justice Analytical Services data report collection, <https://www.gov.scot/collections/coronavirus-covid-19-justice-analytical-services-data-report/>

<sup>70</sup> Justice Analytical Services Safer Communities and Justice Statistics Monthly Report, <https://www.gov.scot/collections/justice-analytical-services-safer-communities-and-justice-statistics-monthly-reports/>

<sup>71</sup> Council of Europe & University of Lausanne: Annual Penal Statistics, <https://wp.unil.ch/space/space-i/annual-reports/>

The Scottish Prison Service (SPS) publish a range of statistical information and research reports about the prison population on their website. Justice Analytical Services is not responsible for the content of these reports.

The latest SPS Prisoner Survey was conducted in 2019 and is available at [https://www.sps.gov.uk/sites/default/files/2024-02/17thPrisonSurvey\\_2019\\_Research.pdf](https://www.sps.gov.uk/sites/default/files/2024-02/17thPrisonSurvey_2019_Research.pdf)

Weekly population snapshots and annual averages of the prison population broken down by custody type, gender and age, as well as the population on home detention curfew by gender can be found on the SPS website: [www.sps.gov.uk/about-us/transparency/data-research-and-evidence](http://www.sps.gov.uk/about-us/transparency/data-research-and-evidence).

The Scottish Prison Service publishes quarterly public information reports providing information across a number of prisoner and staff metrics. The quarterly reports covering the period of this annual report are listed below:

- Public Information Page (PIP) Quarter 1 2022-23:  
[https://www.sps.gov.uk/sites/default/files/2024-02/Public%20Information%20Page%20%28PIP%29%20Quarter1%2020228710\\_3860.pdf](https://www.sps.gov.uk/sites/default/files/2024-02/Public%20Information%20Page%20%28PIP%29%20Quarter1%2020228710_3860.pdf)
- Public Information Page (PIP) Quarter 2 2022-23:  
[https://www.sps.gov.uk/sites/default/files/2024-02/Public%20Information%20Page%20%28PIP%29%20Quarter%202%202022-20238786\\_3886.pdf](https://www.sps.gov.uk/sites/default/files/2024-02/Public%20Information%20Page%20%28PIP%29%20Quarter%202%202022-20238786_3886.pdf)
- Public Information Page (PIP) Quarter 3 2022-23:  
[https://www.sps.gov.uk/sites/default/files/2024-02/Public%20Information%20Page%20%28PIP%29%20Quarter%203%2020228975\\_3912.pdf](https://www.sps.gov.uk/sites/default/files/2024-02/Public%20Information%20Page%20%28PIP%29%20Quarter%203%2020228975_3912.pdf)
- Public Information Page (PIP) Quarter 4 2022-23:  
[https://www.sps.gov.uk/sites/default/files/2024-02/Public%20Information%20Page%20%28PIP%29%20Quarter%204%2020229133\\_3962.pdf](https://www.sps.gov.uk/sites/default/files/2024-02/Public%20Information%20Page%20%28PIP%29%20Quarter%204%2020229133_3962.pdf)

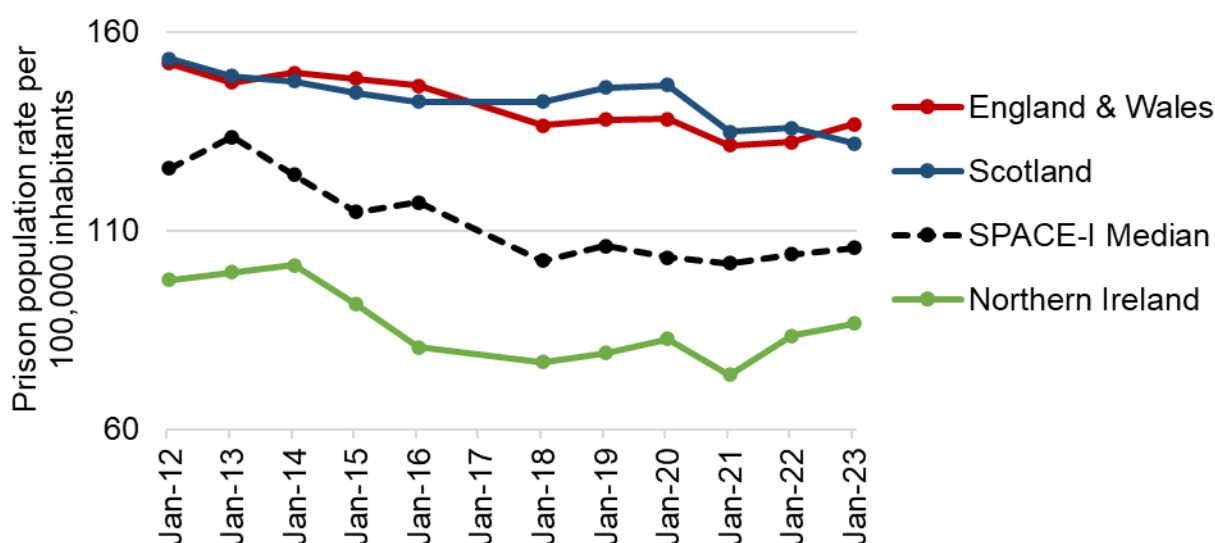
## 10.2 International Comparisons

In 2023, a Council of Europe SPACE-I collection occurred on the 1<sup>st</sup> January and shows that Scotland continued to have one of the highest prison population rates in western Europe<sup>72</sup>. On that date there were 131.9 prisoners per 100,000 inhabitants in Scotland.

On this occasion, while in Northern Ireland it remained far lower at 86.6 per 100,000 inhabitants, the prison population rate in England & Wales was slightly higher than that in Scotland at 136.8 per 100,000. Figure 31 shows that this had not been the case since 2016, and that Scotland and England & Wales have levels consistently higher than the median rate among Council of Europe contributors. Across all 48 countries in the SPACE-I collection, England & Wales and Scotland had the 16<sup>th</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup> highest prison population rates respectively.

As shown in Figure 2, the prison population in Scotland rose from January 2023 through March 2023. According to management information collections<sup>73</sup>, between 31 December and 31<sup>st</sup> March 2023 the Scottish prison population increased by around 3.0%. Over the same period the prison population in England and Wales<sup>74</sup> also increased by around 3.1%, indicating that the lower prison population rate in Scotland as compared to England & Wales held at least to the end of the financial year 2022-23.

**Figure 31: Prison population rates per 100,000 inhabitants in UK nations from 2012 through 2023, SPACE-I<sup>75</sup>**



<sup>72</sup> Council of Europe, “Prison stock on 1<sup>st</sup> January 2023”: <https://wp.unil.ch/space/space-i/prison-stock-on-1-january/prison-stock-on-1st-january-2023> retrieved 14/9/2023

<sup>73</sup> Scottish Government “Justice Analytical Services: safer communities and justice statistics monthly reports” <https://www.gov.scot/collections/justice-analytical-services-safer-communities-and-justice-statistics-monthly-reports/>, retrieved 14/9/2023

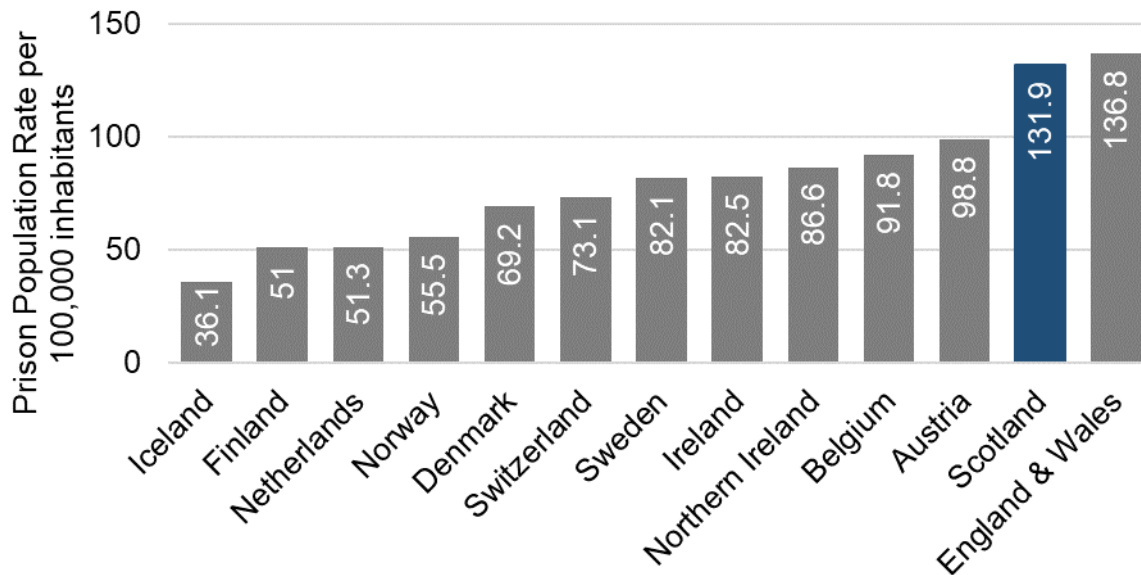
<sup>74</sup> MoJ, “Offender management statistics quarterly”: <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/offender-management-statistics-quarterly> retrieved 14/9/2023

<sup>75</sup> SPACE-I Annual Reports: <https://wp.unil.ch/space/space-i/annual-reports/> retrieved 14/9/2023



The Scottish Government research papers “Building a New Scotland” use a set of 10 comparator countries<sup>76</sup>. The prison population rates for those countries, Scotland, England & Wales and Northern Ireland are provided in Figure 32.

**Figure 32: Prison population rates per 100,000 inhabitants in comparable European countries on 1<sup>st</sup> January 2023, SPACE-I<sup>77</sup>**



<sup>76</sup> Scottish Government, “Independence in the modern world. Wealthier, happier, fairer: why not Scotland?”: <https://www.gov.scot/publications/independence-modern-world-wealthier-happier-fairer-not-scotland/pages/3/> retrieved 5/10/2023

<sup>77</sup> Council of Europe, “Prison stock on 1<sup>st</sup> January 2023”: <https://wp.unil.ch/space/space-i/prison-stock-on-1-january/prison-stock-on-1st-january-2023> retrieved 14/9/2023

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<https://scotland.shinyapps.io/sq-prison-population-statistics/>

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Version	Date	Changes
First Publication 1.0	5/12/2023	
1.1	5/03/2024	Section 10.1: update to external document links