

Analytical Services Group

Adult and Youth Reoffending in Northern Ireland (2015/16 Cohort)

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- This annual bulletin provides information on the one year proven reoffending rate for offenders who received a non-custodial disposal at court, a diversionary disposal or who were released from custody during 2015/16 within Northern Ireland. Information is presented in relation to the full cohort and also disaggregated in relation to adults (those aged 18 and over) and youths (those aged 17 and under).
- **Of the 21,982 people included in the 2015/16 cohort, 4,059 (18.5%) reoffended during the one year observational period** (adults 17.6%, youths 29.7%). The overall reoffending rate is being used as an indicator for the Draft Programme for Government and the NICS Outcomes Delivery Plan.
- Of the 4,059 who reoffended, over two-fifths (44.2%) committed their first reoffence within the first three months (adults 43.5%, youths 49.8%).
- In terms of offending history, 60.1% of the 21,982 had committed previous offences, ranging from one to 583 distinct offences, (adults 61.9%, youths 36.9%).
- Overall, 12.2% of females and 20.0% of males had reoffended (adult females 11.5% and adult males 19.1%, youth females 19.6% and youth males 32.4%).
- The one year proven reoffending rate for¹;
 - custody releases was 40.8% (adults 39.1% and 40 of 41 youths).
 - court community disposal (supervision) was 34.7% (adults 31.5%, youths 60.1%).
 - court community disposal (no supervision) was 18.1% (adults 17.6%, youths 50.7%).
 - diversionary disposal was 16.4% (adults 14.0%, youths 24.8%).
- The highest reoffending rates were found amongst those who had committed a baseline offence in the 'Burglary' category (38.5%), followed by 'Robbery' (32.4%). This was the same for adults only, ('Burglary' 38.8% and 'Robbery' 28.8%). For youths, the highest reoffending rates were found amongst those who had committed a baseline offence in the 'Criminal Damage' category (39.3%), followed by 'Public Order' (31.9%).

¹ Base reoffending rates should not be used to measure the comparative success of different disposal types in their own right. The reason for this is that different offender characteristics and histories, coupled with different offence types, will themselves be related to the type of disposal given. Therefore, offender profiles may differ substantially between the different disposal types.

Contents		Page
1. Introduction		1
2. Findings		1
2.1 Overall Reoffending Rate		1
2.2 Reoffending Interval		2
2.3 Number of Proven Reoffences		3
2.4 Offending History		4
2.5 Gender and Age at Baseline		6
2.6 Disposal		7
2.7 Baseline Offence		8
2.8 Specified and Serious Offences		9
Appendix 1 – Tables		11
Appendix 2 – References		23
Appendix 3 – Methodology and Counting Rules		24

Figures		Page
Figure 1: Reoffending Interval by Disposal Group (All)		3
Figure 2: Number of Proven Reoffences		4
Figure 3: Reoffending Rate by Number of Previous Offences (All)		5
Figure 4: Reoffending Rate by Age at First Recorded Offence (All)		6
Figure 5: Reoffending Rate by Time between First Offence and Baseline Date (All)		6
Figure 6: Reoffending Rate by Age at Baseline and Gender		7
Figure 7: Reoffending Rate by Baseline Offence (All)		9

Tables		Page
Table 1a: Reoffending Rate (All)		11
Table 1b: Reoffending Rate (Adult)		11
Table 1c: Reoffending Rate (Youth)		11
Table 2a: Reoffending Interval by Disposal Group (All)		12
Table 2b: Reoffending Interval by Disposal Group (Adult)		12
Table 2c: Reoffending Interval by Disposal Group (Youth)		13
Table 3: Number of Proven Reoffences		13
Table 4: Reoffending Rate by Number of Previous Offences		14
Table 5: Reoffending Rate by Age at First Recorded Offence		14
Table 6: Reoffending Rate by Time between First Recorded Offence and Baseline Date		15
Table 7: Reoffending Rate by Age and Gender		16
Table 8: Reoffending Rate by Disposal		17
Table 9: Reoffending Rate by Baseline Offence Category		18
Table 10a: Baseline Offence Category by First Reoffence Category (All)		19
Table 10b: Baseline Offence Category by First Reoffence Category (Adult)		20
Table 10c: Baseline Offence Category by First Reoffence Category (Youth)		21
Table 11a: Reoffending Rate by Specified and Serious Offences		22
Table 11b: Proportion of Offenders with a Baseline Specified and Serious Offences whose First Reoffence was also Specified and Serious		22

1. INTRODUCTION

In 2013, the Department of Justice's Analytical Services Group embarked on a project to revise the methodology used to calculate recidivism rates within Northern Ireland, bringing it more in line with established methodology in England and Wales. A brief summary of the approach used is given in Appendix 3 – Methodology and Counting Rules. For a more detailed methodology refer to ['Northern Ireland Reoffending Methodology: Methodology and Glossary Part 1' \(Duncan, 2014\)](#).

This paper will provide information on the reoffending rates for the 2015/16 adult and youth cohorts. It should be noted that these figures have not been adjusted to make allowances for factors known to influence reoffending, such as gender, age and criminal history. Therefore, it is inappropriate to compare these findings straightforwardly with other similar results from within Northern Ireland or other jurisdictions. In order to aid comparison, however, section 2.1 provides adjusted overall reoffending rates for the 2015/16 cohort.

2. FINDINGS

The following section provides information on the reoffending rates of the total cohort and for those of adults and youths separately. Information will be presented in relation to the overall reoffending rate, reoffending interval, number of proven reoffences, offending history, gender, age, disposal, baseline offence and specified and serious offences.

2.1 Overall Reoffending Rate

In order to aid comparison, a model was initially produced based on the 2010/11 data, the findings of which were published in December 2014 and revised in August 2015.² The purpose of the model is to enable comparison by adjusting reoffending rates to take into consideration any differences in the underlying reoffending-related characteristics of those included in each cohort. The predicted scores presented in this publication have been calculated based on this new model.

A total of 21,982 offenders were included in the 2015/16 cohort. Overall, 4,059 (18.47%) committed a proven reoffence within the year following being released from custody, receiving a non-custodial court disposal or a diversionary disposal. This value is being

² Northern Ireland Reoffending Methodology: Methodology and Glossary Part 2 (New Edition: August 2015)

used as an indicator for the Draft Programme for Government and the NICS Outcomes Delivery Plan, with comparisons being drawn against the overall reoffending rate for the 2013/14 Cohort. The 18.47% reoffending rate found in the 2015/16 Cohort marks a 0.41 percentage point increase in the actual rate of reoffending compared to the baseline of 18.06%. After controlling for offender related characteristics, this increase reduces to 0.32 percentage point. (Appendix 1, Table 1a).

When comparing to the previous year, the 2015/16 reoffending rate of 18.47% represents a 0.60 percentage point increase in the actual rate of reoffending for the 2014/15 Cohort. After controlling for offender-related characteristics, this increase falls to 0.49 percentage points. Between 2010/11 and 2015/16 there was a 1.77 percentage point increase in actual rates of reoffending; however, after controlling for offender-related characteristics, there appears to be a decrease in reoffending of 4.08 percentage points (Appendix 1, Table 1a).

When examined separately, 3,601 (17.62%) of the 20,439 adults included in the 2015/16 cohort reoffended. This represents a 0.77 percentage point increase in the actual rate of reoffending between 2014/15 and 2015/16. After controlling for offender-related characteristics this increase falls to 0.53 percentage points. Between 2010/11 and 2015/16 there was a 1.68 percentage point increase in actual rates of reoffending; however, after controlling for offender-related characteristics, there appears to be a decrease in reoffending of 4.21 percentage points (Appendix 1, Table 1b).

Youths make up seven percent of the entire 2015/16 cohort. In total 458 (29.68%) of the 1,543 youths committed a reoffence within one year of being released from custody, being given a non-custodial disposal at court or a diversionary disposal. No appropriate model could be found based on the 2010/11 cohort, most likely the result of the small size of this group of offenders. Using the additional information now available, a potential model is being explored that may assist in the comparison of reoffending rates for young people going forward. As more information becomes available and progress will be reported in future publications (Appendix 1, Table 1c).

2.2 Reoffending Interval

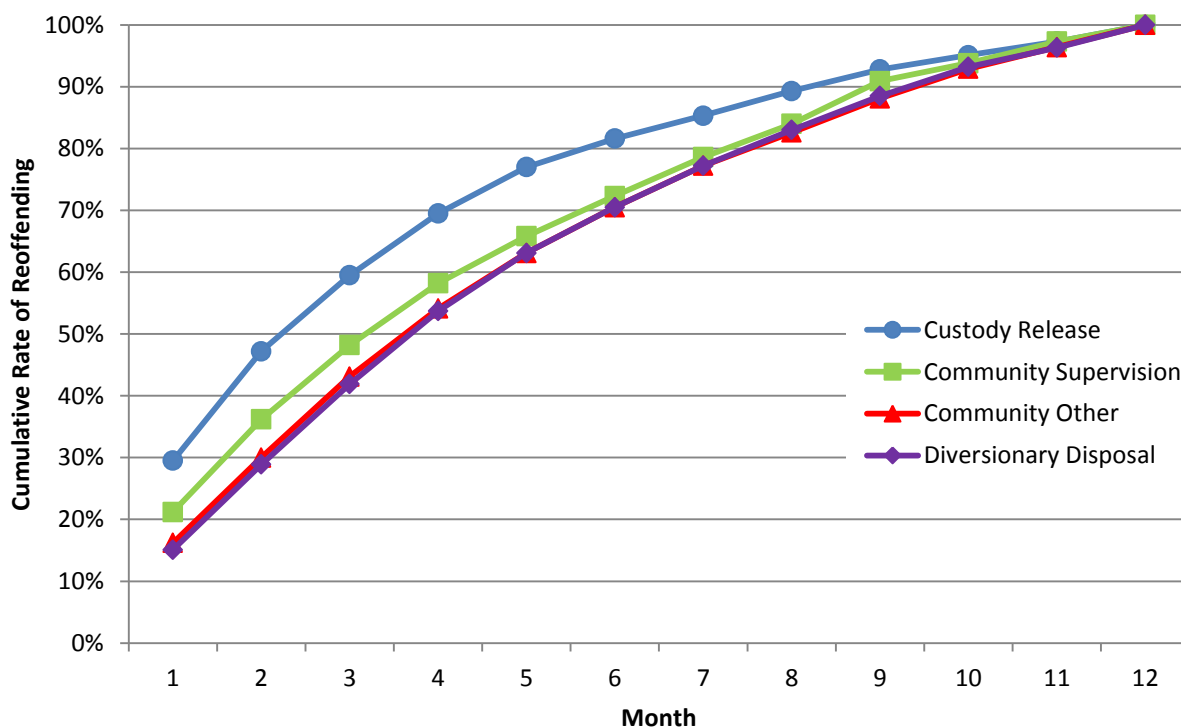
Of the total 4,059 adults and youths who reoffended, 697 (17.2%) reoffended within the first month of being released from custody, receiving a non-custodial court disposal or a

diversionary disposal. For adults, 600 (16.7%) of the 3,601 who reoffended did so within the first month. For youths this proportion was higher, with 97 (21.2%) of the 458 reoffenders committing a reoffence within the first month.

By three months, overall 1,795 (44.2%) of the adult and youth reoffenders had committed a further offence. For adults separately, this proportion was 43.5%, compared to 49.8% for youths.

Overall, for those released from custody who reoffended, 59.5% had done so within the first three months of release, rising to 81.6% by the end of the first six months. Although all disposal groups followed this general trend, those released from custody were more likely to reoffend within the first month of release from custody, a trend noted for adults (Figure 1 and Appendix 1, Table 2a, 2b and 2c).

Figure 1: Reoffending Interval by Disposal Group (All)*



*Offenders are counted once per disposal group, however they may appear in more than one group

2.3 Number of Proven Reoffences

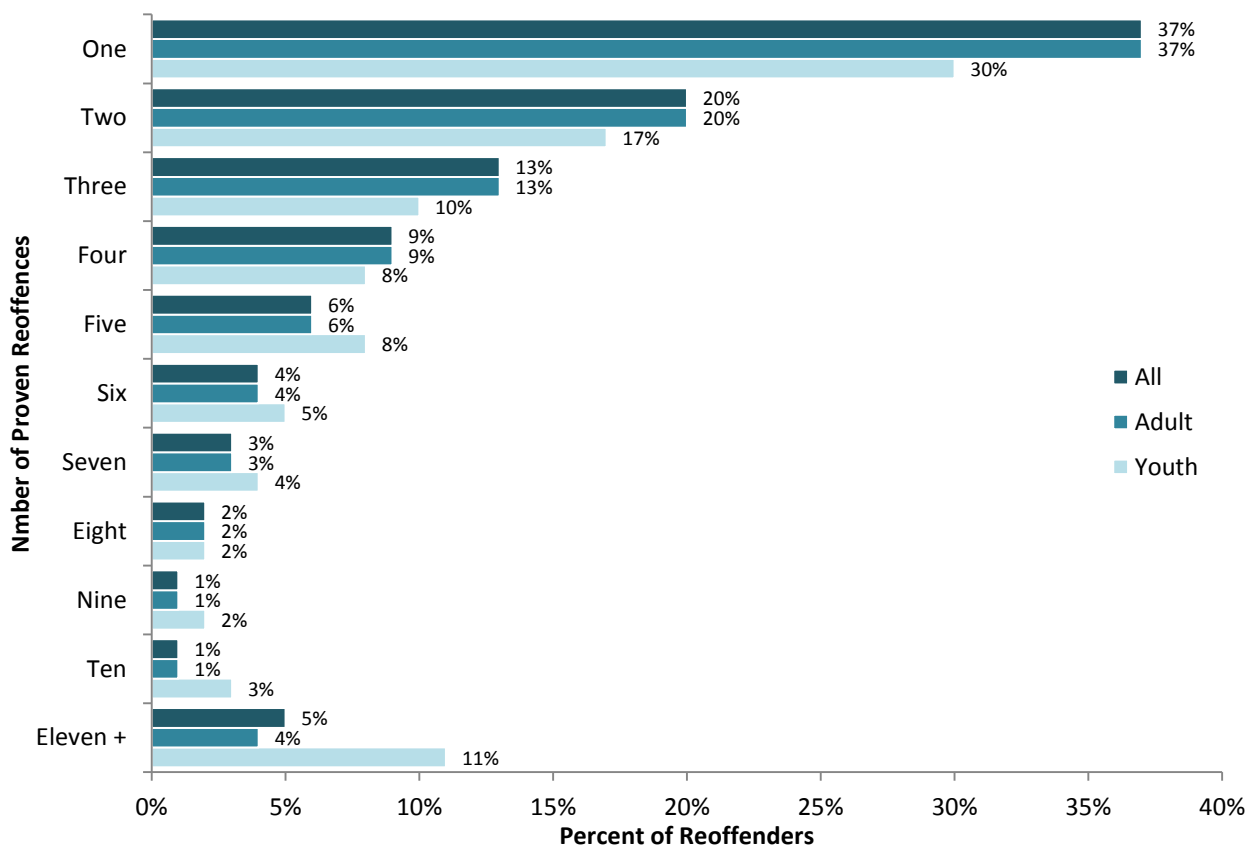
During the observation year, the 4,059 people who reoffended committed a further 13,622 proven offences, with adults committing 11,486 and youths committing 2,136 offences.

Overall this averages to just over three offences per reoffender and less than one offence per offender across the entire 2015/16 cohort. This was also true for adults, whereas youth reoffences equated to an average of five offences per youth who reoffended and just over one offence per offender across the youth cohort.

Less than two-fifths (37.4%) of adults committed only one further offence within the observation year and 3.8% committed 11 or more reoffences. In contrast, 30.3% of youths committed only one further offence, with 10.7% committing 11 or more.

Overall, the number of reoffences ranged from one to 56 for adults and one to 36 for youths (Figure 2 and Appendix 1, Table 3).

Figure 2: Number of Proven Reoffences



2.4 Offending History

Of the 21,982 offenders included in the 2015/16 cohort, 8,765 had no previous offences. The remaining 13,217 (60.1%) had committed a total of 203,428 previous offences³ within their lifetime, ranging from one to 583 offences (Appendix 1, Table 4).

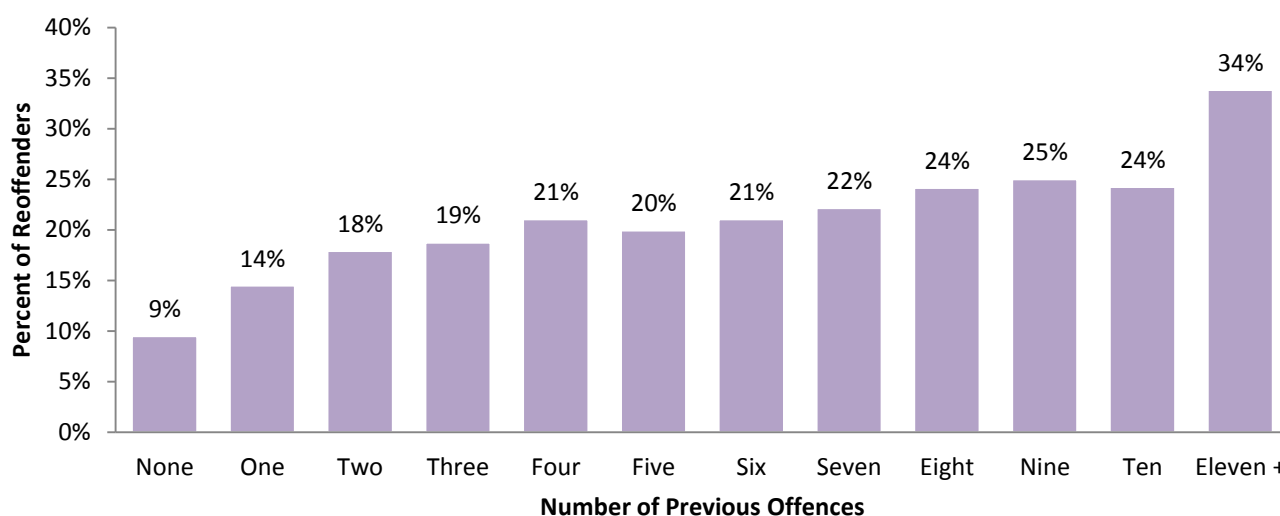
³ Offences included are those recorded on an offender's criminal record only.

Of the 20,439 adults, 7,791 had no previous offences. The remaining 12,648 (61.9%) had committed 199,488 previous offences, ranging from one to 583.

Of the 1,543 youths, 974 had no previous offences. The remaining 569 (36.9%) had committed 3,940 previous offences, ranging from one to 84.

As shown in Figure 3, the reoffending rate overall tends to increase with the rate of previous convictions.

Figure 3: Reoffending Rate by Number of Previous Offences (All)



For each person in the 2015/16 cohort, their age at first recorded offence was calculated. As Figure 4 shows, the rate of reoffending appears to be generally higher for those who committed their first recorded offence in their early teenage years (Appendix 1, Table 5).

As well as age at first offence, the time between committing this first offence and entering the 2015/16 cohort (i.e. the baseline date) was calculated as an estimate of the length of time each person has been engaging in criminal behaviours (Appendix 1, Table 6). This represents a very simplistic measure and does not take into consideration the frequency or severity of offending during this period. However, as can be seen in Figure 5, it is interesting to note that although the rates of reoffending initially appear to increase as the length of time between first offence and the date they enter the 2015/16 cohort increases, after approximately 10 years the reoffending rate appears to consistently decline. This is likely an interaction between ageing and reoffending behaviours. As highlighted in section 2.5, reoffending rates appear to decline as age increases.

Figure 4: Reoffending Rate by Age at First Recorded Offence (All)

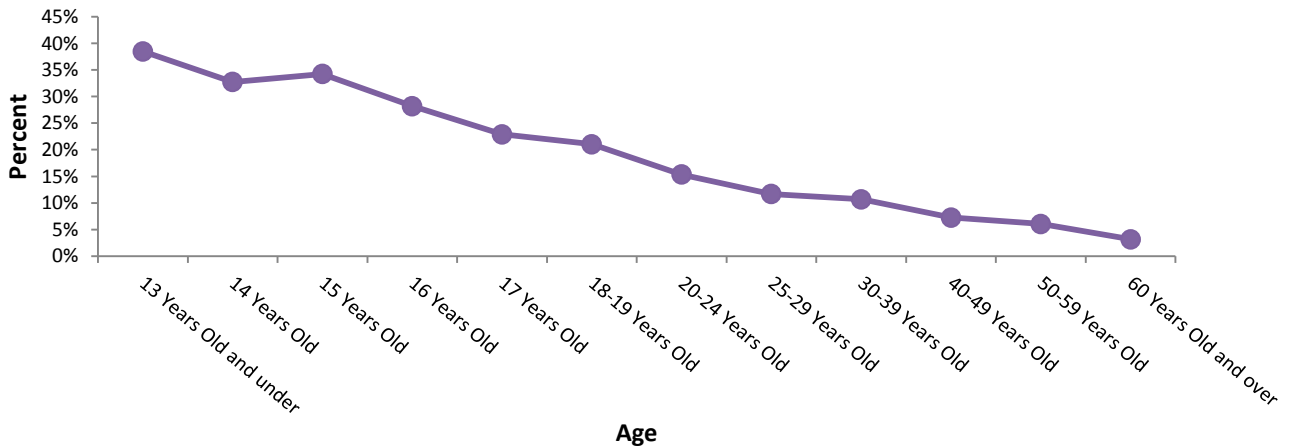
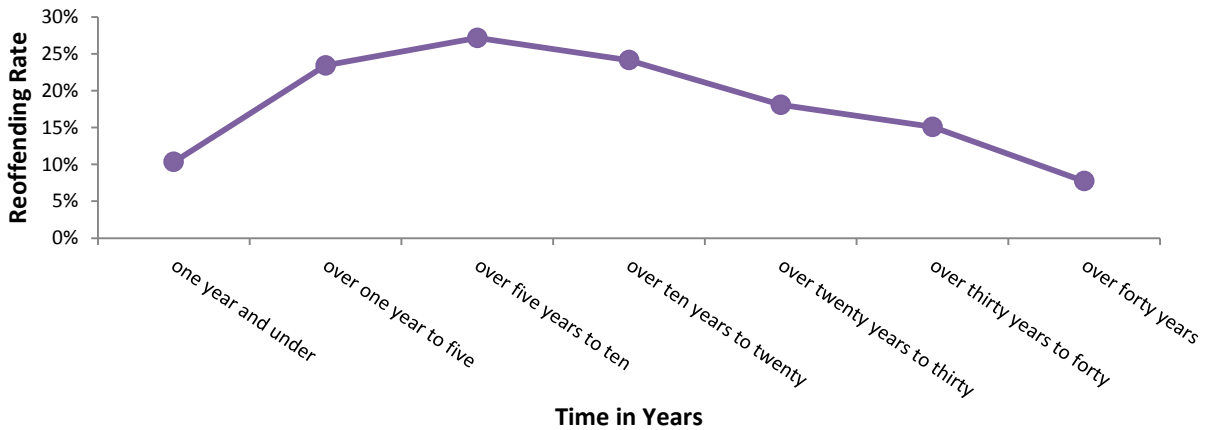


Figure 5: Reoffending Rate by Time between First Offence and Baseline Date (All)



2.5 Gender and Age at Baseline

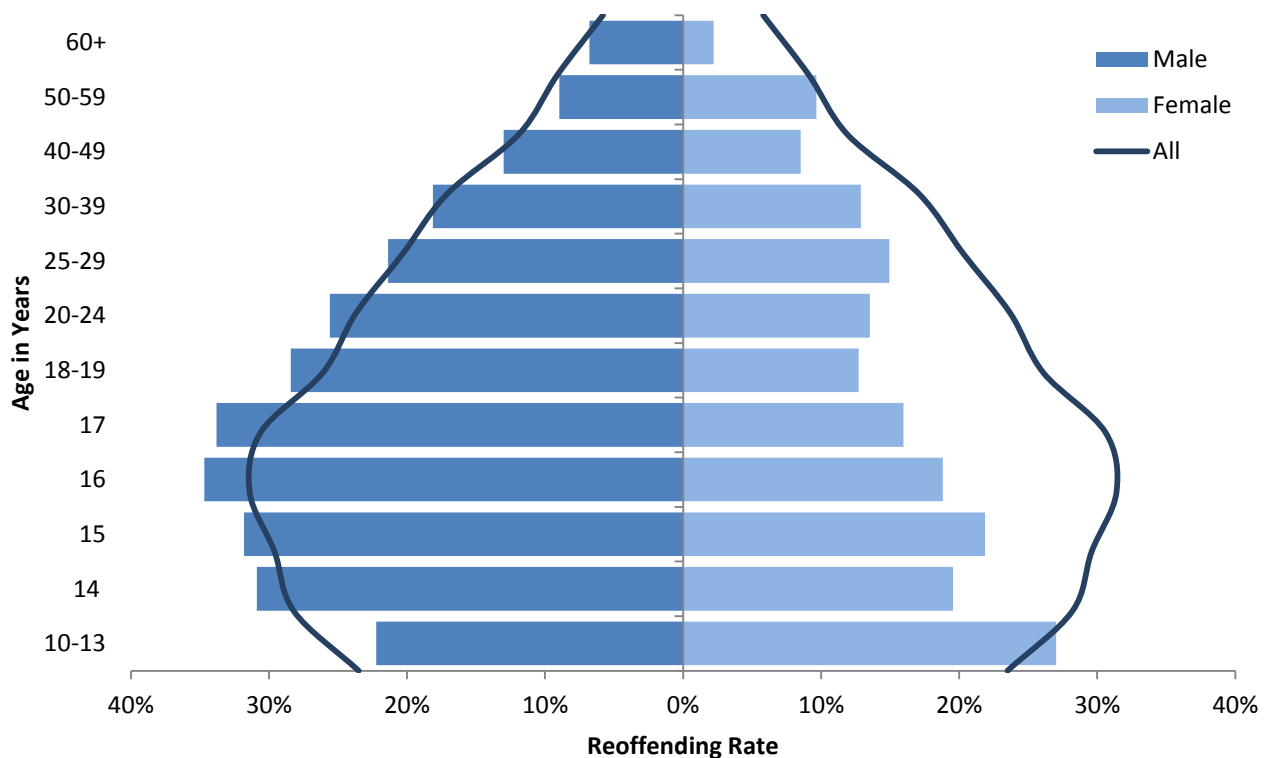
Of the 21,982 offenders in the cohort, 4,287 (19.5%) were female and the remaining 17,695 were male (80.5%). Overall, 521 females (12.2%) and 3,538 males (20.0%) had a proven reoffence within one year (Appendix 1, Table 7).

Of the 20,439 adults in the cohort, 3,961 (19.4%) were female and the remaining 16,478 were male (80.6%). Overall, 457 females (11.5%) and 3,144 males (19.1%) had a proven reoffence within one year.

Of the 1,543 youths in the cohort, 326 (21.1%) were female and the remaining 1,217 were male (78.9%). Overall, 64 females (19.6%) and 394 males (32.4%) had a proven reoffence within one year.

In terms of age, when looking at the entire cohort, the rate of reoffending appears to increase throughout the teen years, reaching a plateau between 16 and 17 and then consistently declines thereafter. When looking at males and females separately however, the pattern appears to be different, with males following this overall pattern and females presenting no consistent trend. This may be a result of the small number of female offenders (Figure 6 and Appendix 1, Table 7).

Figure 6: Reoffending Rate by Age at Baseline and Gender



2.6 Disposal

Appendix 1, Table 8 provides a breakdown of reoffending by baseline disposal. Although separate disposals are listed, disposals are grouped into four main categories:

1. People released from custody or young offender centre during 2015/16. This group includes those released from serving a prison term only and those released under community supervision (such disposals include Determinate Custodial Sentences);
2. People given a non-custodial disposal at court that requires supervision in the community (such as a probation order);
3. People given a non-custodial disposal at court that does not require supervision in the community (such as a fine or a suspended sentence); and
4. People given a diversionary disposal (such as a caution or an informed warning).

At 40.8%, those with a custodial disposal have the highest reoffending rate, followed by non-custodial disposal with community supervision (34.7%), non-custodial disposal without supervision (18.1%) and, finally, diversionary disposals (16.4%).

Adults released from custody had a one year reoffending rate of 39.1%, followed by non-custodial disposal with community supervision (31.5%), non-custodial disposal without supervision (17.6%) and, finally, diversionary disposals (14.0%).

Forty of the 41 youths released from custody reoffended within one year, as did 60.1% of those who received a non-custodial disposal with community supervision, 50.7% of those who received a non-custodial disposal without supervision and 24.8% of those who received a diversionary disposal.

Please note that base reoffending rates should not be used to measure the comparative success of different disposal types in their own right. The reason for this is that different offender characteristics and histories and different offence types will themselves be related to the type of disposal given. Therefore, offender profiles may differ substantially between the different disposal types.

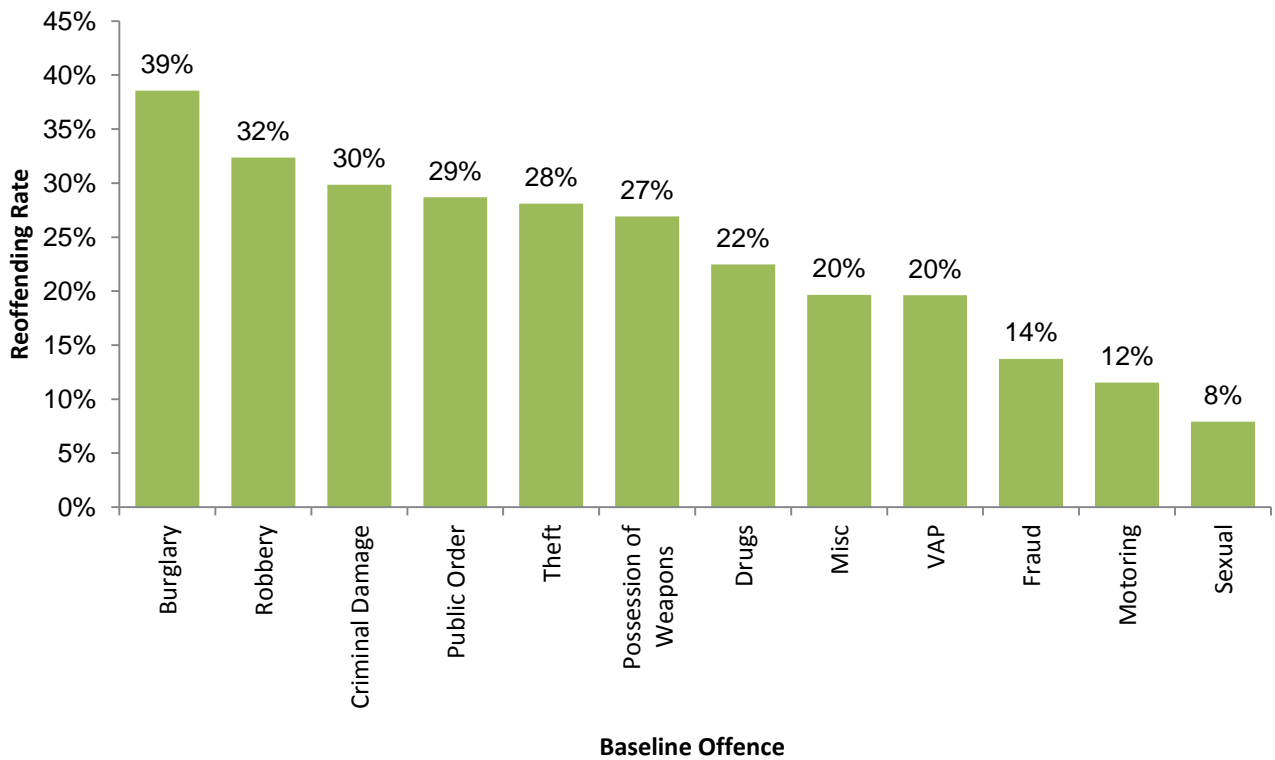
2.7 Baseline Offence

Figure 7 presents the reoffending rate by baseline offence category. Overall, reoffending rates were highest amongst those who committed a baseline offence in the 'Burglary' category followed by 'Robbery' (38.5% and 32.4% respectively).

For adults, the highest reoffending rates were for baseline offence categories of 'Burglary' and 'Robbery' (38.8% and 28.8%). For youths, the highest reoffending rates were found amongst those who had committed a baseline offence in the 'Criminal Damage' category (39.3%), followed by 'Public Order' (31.9%)

As was found in the 2014/15 Cohort, the lowest overall rates of reoffending for the 2015/16 cohort were committed by those with a baseline 'Sexual' offence. This also held true for adults when viewed separately from youths (Appendix 1, Table 9).

Figure 7: Reoffending Rate by Baseline Offence (All)



Appendix 1, Tables 10 a, b and c provide a breakdown of baseline offence category by first reoffence category. Although no definitive pattern emerged, it is interesting to note that, overall and for adults alone, for those who committed a baseline offence of 'Violence Against the Person', 'Theft', 'Drugs', 'Public Order' and 'Motoring', the largest proportion of first reoffences were for offences in the same category. For youths, this was true for 'Violence Against the Person' and 'Theft'.

2.8 Specified and Serious Offences

During September 2016 there was an internal Department of Justice exercise which made a small number of changes to offence classifications designated as specified or serious, as per the Criminal Justice (NI) Order 2008.⁴ This had a limited impact on the number of offences designated as 'serious'. However, those offences designated as 'specified' have increased substantially. This should not be interpreted as an increase in such offences, but has resulted from the inclusion of additional offence types in this classification. As such, no comparison with years prior to the 2013/14 Cohort can be made.

⁴ <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/nisi/2008/1216>

Overall, 2,355 (10.7%) of the 21,982 people in the 2015/16 cohort had committed a baseline 'specified' offence. Of these, 517 (22.0%) went on to reoffend, 101 committing a further 'specified' offence. When examined separately, 10.1% of the adult cohort (2,072 of the 20,439 adults), had committed a baseline 'specified' offence. Of these, 427 (20.6%) went on to reoffend, 87 committing a further 'specified' offence. For youths, 283 (18.3%) had committed a baseline 'specified' offence. Of these, 90 (31.8%) went on to reoffend, 14 committing a further 'specified' offence (Appendix 1, Tables 11a and 11b).

Overall, 636 (2.9%) of the 21,982 people in the 2015/16 cohort had committed a 'serious' offence, of whom 111 (17.5%) reoffended, 4 committing a further serious offence. In total, 572 (2.8%) of the 20,439 adults had committed such offences, of whom 88 (15.4%) reoffended, 4 committing a further serious offence. Of youths, 64 (4.1% of the 1,543 youths) had committed such offences. Of these 64, 23 (35.9%) reoffended, none committing a further serious offence (Appendix 1, Tables 11a and 11b).

APPENDIX 1- Tables

Table 1a: Reoffending Rate (Total Cohort)⁵ *

	Number of people in Cohort	Number who Reoffended within one Year	Actual Reoffending %	Predicted Reoffending %
2010/11	33,815	5,646	16.70%	15.70%
2011/12	31,343	5,869	18.73%	18.96%
2012/13	29,427	5,452	18.53%	19.41%
2013/14	27,069	4,890	18.06%	20.82%
2014/15	23,627	4,221	17.87%	21.44%
2015/16	21,982	4,059	18.47%	21.55%
Difference over and above predicted compared to 2010/11				-4.08
Difference over and above predicted compared to 2014/15				0.49
Difference over and above predicted compared to 2013/14**				0.32

**The Overall Reoffending Rate has been identified as an indicator for the Draft Programme for Government and the NICS Outcomes Delivery Plan. The baseline comparison for this indicator is the 2013/14 Cohort.

Table 1b: Reoffending Rate (Adult Cohort)*

	Number of people in Cohort	Number who Reoffended within one Year	Actual Reoffending %	Predicted Reoffending %
2010/11	30,576	4,875	15.94%	15.63%
2011/12	28,751	5,116	17.79%	17.90%
2012/13	27,130	4,760	17.55%	18.49%
2013/14	25,164	4,353	17.30%	20.69%
2014/15	22,064	3,718	16.85%	21.28%
2015/16	20,439	3,601	17.62%	21.52%
Difference over and above predicted compared to 2010/11				-4.21
Difference over and above predicted compared to 2014/15				0.53

Table 1c: Reoffending Rate (Youth Cohort)*

	Number of people in Cohort	Number who Reoffended within one Year	Actual Reoffending %	Predicted Reoffending %
2010/11	3,248	772	23.77%	-
2011/12	2,592	753	29.05%	-
2012/13	2,297	692	30.13%	-
2013/14	1,905	537	28.19%	-
2014/15	1,563	503	32.18%	-
2015/16	1,543	458	29.68%	-

*At present no model has been produced to calculate the predictive reoffending rate of the youth cohort.

⁵ Illustrative example of the method used to calculate change in reoffending between cohorts, taking into consideration predicted reoffending rates.

- The 2015/16 Actual Reoffending Rate equals 18.47% and the 2010/11 equals 16.70%. When subtracted (18.47 – 16.70) there appears to be a 1.77 percentage point increase in actual reoffending.
- Now we need look at how we would have expected or predicted these cohorts to behave. The 2015/16 Predicted Reoffending Rate equals 21.55% and the 2010/11 equals 15.70%. When subtracted (21.55 – 15.70) there appears to be a 5.85 percentage point increase in predicted reoffending.
- Now we need to combine the actual increase and the predicted increase to show reoffending behaviour over and above what we would have -expected. Change in reoffending equals 1.77. From this we subtract the change in predicted 5.85 (1.77 – 5.85). This equals -4.08, suggesting that there has actually been a decrease in the rate of reoffending when characteristics related to reoffending are taken into consideration.

Equation:

Change in Reoffending Rate	=	(Difference in Actual Reoffending Rates)	-	(Difference in Predicted Reoffending Rates)
	=	(18.47 – 16.70)	-	(21.55 - 15.70)
	=	(1.77)	-	(5.85)
	=	-4.08		

Table 2a: Reoffending Interval by Disposal Group (All)*

Disposal Group*	Time to Reoffense in Months												Total
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	
Custody Release	173	104	72	59	44	27	22	23	21	13	13	16	587
Community Supervision	178	125	101	84	63	55	53	45	58	24	29	23	838
Community Other	425	361	342	288	236	193	175	142	144	125	92	93	2,616
Diversionary Disposal	138	126	119	108	86	67	62	53	50	43	28	34	914
Total	697	581	517	441	358	280	264	222	231	180	141	147	4,059
Percent													
Custody Release	29.5%	17.7%	2.3%	10.1%	7.5%	4.6%	3.7%	3.9%	3.6%	2.2%	2.2%	2.7%	100%
Community Supervision	21.2%	14.9%	12.1%	10.0%	7.5%	6.6%	6.3%	5.4%	6.9%	2.9%	3.5%	2.7%	100%
Community Other	16.2%	13.8%	13.1%	11.0%	9.0%	7.4%	6.7%	5.4%	5.5%	4.8%	3.5%	3.6%	100%
Diversionary Disposal	15.1%	13.8%	13.0%	11.8%	9.4%	7.3%	6.8%	5.8%	5.5%	4.7%	3.1%	3.7%	100%
Total	17.2%	14.3%	12.7%	10.9%	8.8%	6.9%	6.5%	5.5%	5.7%	4.4%	3.5%	3.6%	100%
Cumulative Percent													
Custody Release	29.5%	47.2%	59.5%	69.5%	77.0%	81.6%	85.3%	89.3%	92.8%	95.1%	97.3%	100%	
Community Supervision	21.2%	36.2%	48.2%	58.2%	65.8%	72.3%	78.6%	84.0%	90.9%	93.8%	97.3%	100%	
Community Other	16.2%	30.0%	43.1%	54.1%	63.1%	70.5%	77.2%	82.6%	88.1%	92.9%	96.4%	100%	
Diversionary Disposal	15.1%	28.9%	41.9%	53.7%	63.1%	70.5%	77.2%	83.0%	88.5%	93.2%	96.3%	100%	
Total	17.2%	31.5%	44.2%	55.1%	63.9%	70.8%	77.3%	82.8%	88.5%	92.9%	96.4%	100%	

****Individual disposals will not sum to the overall total as an individual may experience multiple disposals. For each of these groupings only, the first instance a person is included in this category is counted.**

Table 2b: Reoffending Interval by Disposal Group (Adult)*

Disposal Group*	Time to Reoffense in Months												Total
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	
Custody Release	163	93	64	57	40	26	21	22	20	13	12	16	547
Community Supervision	136	94	77	71	50	45	45	38	51	23	27	20	677
Community Other	400	343	326	274	231	183	169	135	140	125	88	92	2,506
Diversionary Disposal	86	84	77	65	59	54	43	38	30	28	16	21	601
Total	600	519	448	389	322	259	238	199	207	164	124	132	3,601
Percent													
Custody Release	29.8%	17.0%	11.7%	10.4%	7.3%	4.8%	3.8%	4.0%	3.7%	2.4%	2.2%	2.9%	100%
Community Supervision	20.1%	13.9%	11.4%	10.5%	7.4%	6.6%	6.6%	5.6%	7.5%	3.4%	4.0%	3.0%	100%
Community Other	16.0%	13.7%	13.0%	10.9%	9.2%	7.3%	6.7%	5.4%	5.6%	5.0%	3.5%	3.7%	100%
Diversionary Disposal	14.3%	14.0%	12.8%	10.8%	9.8%	9.0%	7.2%	6.3%	5.0%	4.7%	2.7%	3.5%	100%
Total	16.7%	14.4%	12.4%	10.8%	8.9%	7.2%	6.6%	5.5%	5.7%	4.6%	3.4%	3.7%	100%
Cumulative Percent													
Custody Release	29.8%	46.8%	58.5%	68.9%	76.2%	81.0%	84.8%	88.8%	92.5%	94.9%	97.1%	100%	
Community Supervision	20.1%	34.0%	45.3%	55.8%	63.2%	69.9%	76.5%	82.1%	89.7%	93.1%	97.0%	100%	
Community Other	16.0%	29.6%	42.7%	53.6%	62.8%	70.1%	76.9%	82.2%	87.8%	92.8%	96.3%	100%	
Diversionary Disposal	14.3%	28.3%	41.1%	51.9%	61.7%	70.7%	77.9%	84.2%	89.2%	93.8%	96.5%	100%	
Total	16.7%	31.1%	43.5%	54.3%	63.3%	70.5%	77.1%	82.6%	88.3%	92.9%	96.3%	100%	

****Individual disposals will not sum to the overall total as an individual may experience multiple disposals. For each of these groupings only, the first instance a person is included in this category is counted.**

Table 2c: Reoffending Interval by Disposal Group (Youth)*

Disposal Group*	Time to Reoffense in Months												Total
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	
Custody Release	10	11	8	2	4	1	1	1	1	0	1	0	40
Community Supervision	42	31	24	13	13	10	8	7	7	1	2	3	161
Community Other	25	18	16	14	5	10	6	7	4	0	4	1	110
Diversionary Disposal	52	42	42	43	27	13	19	15	20	15	12	13	313
Total	97	62	69	52	36	21	26	23	24	16	17	15	458
Percent**													
Custody Release	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Community Supervision	26.1%	19.3%	14.9%	8.1%	8.1%	6.2%	5.0%	4.3%	4.3%	0.6%	1.2%	1.9%	100%
Community Other	22.7%	16.4%	14.5%	12.7%	4.5%	9.1%	5.5%	6.4%	3.6%	0.0%	3.6%	0.9%	100%
Diversionary Disposal	16.6%	13.4%	13.4%	13.7%	8.6%	4.2%	6.1%	4.8%	6.4%	4.8%	3.8%	4.2%	100%
Total	21.2%	13.5%	15.1%	11.4%	7.9%	4.6%	5.7%	5.0%	5.2%	3.5%	3.7%	3.3%	100%
Cumulative Percent**													
Custody Release	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Community Supervision	26.1%	45.3%	60.2%	68.3%	76.4%	82.6%	87.6%	91.9%	96.3%	96.9%	98.1%	100%	
Community Other	22.7%	39.1%	53.6%	66.4%	70.9%	80.0%	85.5%	91.8%	95.5%	95.5%	99.1%	100%	
Diversionary Disposal	16.6%	30.0%	43.5%	57.2%	65.8%	70.0%	76.0%	80.8%	87.2%	92.0%	95.8%	100%	
Total	21.2%	34.7%	49.8%	61.1%	69.0%	73.6%	79.3%	84.3%	89.5%	93.0%	96.7%	100%	

*Individual disposals will not sum to the overall total as an individual may experience multiple disposals. For each of these groupings only, the first instance a person is included in this category is counted.

**Percentage cannot be shown as denominator is less than 50.

Table 3: Number of Proven Reoffences

Number of Proven Reoffences	All		Adult		Youth	
	Number of Offenders	Percent of Reoffenders	Number of Offenders	Percent of Reoffenders	Number of Offenders	Percent of Reoffenders
One	1,486	36.6%	1,347	37.4%	139	30.3%
Two	802	19.8%	722	20.0%	80	17.5%
Three	512	12.6%	467	13.0%	45	9.8%
Four	355	8.7%	320	8.9%	35	7.6%
Five	240	5.9%	205	5.7%	35	7.6%
Six	169	4.2%	144	4.0%	25	5.5%
Seven	113	2.8%	93	2.6%	20	4.4%
Eight	92	2.3%	83	2.3%	9	2.0%
Nine	51	1.3%	44	1.2%	7	1.5%
Ten	54	1.3%	40	1.1%	14	3.1%
Eleven +	185	4.6%	136	3.8%	49	10.7%
Total	4,059	100.0%	3,601	100.0%	458	100.0%

Table 4: Reoffending Rate by Number of Previous Offences

Number of Previous Offences	All			Adult			Youth		
	Reoffended	Total Number of Offenders	One year Proven Reoffending Rate	Reoffended	Number of Offenders	One year Proven Reoffending Rate	Reoffended	Number of Offenders	One year Proven Reoffending Rate*
None	832	8,765	9.5%	633	7,791	8.1%	199	974	20.4%
One	303	2,093	14.5%	250	1,927	13.0%	53	166	31.9%
Two	257	1,435	17.9%	221	1,334	16.6%	36	101	35.6%
Three	202	1,078	18.7%	171	1,007	17.0%	31	71	43.7%
Four	176	836	21.1%	163	803	20.3%	13	33	-
Five	143	717	19.9%	128	688	18.6%	15	29	-
Six	126	599	21.0%	119	586	20.3%	7	13	-
Seven	107	483	22.2%	100	464	21.6%	7	19	-
Eight	107	443	24.2%	100	431	23.2%	7	12	-
Nine	97	388	25.0%	92	375	24.5%	5	13	-
Ten	80	330	24.2%	77	324	23.8%	3	6	-
Eleven +	1,629	4,815	33.8%	1,547	4,709	32.9%	82	106	77.4%
Total	4,059	21,982	18.5%	3,601	20,439	17.6%	458	1,543	29.7%

*Percentage cannot be shown as denominator is less than 50.

Table 5: Reoffending Rate by Age at First Recorded Offence

Age*	All			Adult			Youth		
	Reoffended	Total Number of Offenders	One year Proven Reoffending Rate	Reoffended	Number of Offenders	One year Proven Reoffending Rate	Reoffended	Number of Offenders	One year Proven Reoffending Rate
13 Years Old and under	466	1,211	38.5%	281	727	38.7%	185	484	38.2%
14 Years Old	303	925	32.8%	218	639	34.1%	85	286	29.7%
15 Years Old	405	1,182	34.3%	319	865	36.9%	86	317	27.1%
16 Years Old	393	1,394	28.2%	323	1,116	28.9%	70	278	25.2%
17 Years Old	432	1,885	22.9%	400	1,707	23.4%	32	178	18.0%
18-19 Years Old	689	3,274	21.0%	689	3,274	21.0%	0	0	-
20-24 Years Old	624	4,067	15.3%	624	4,067	15.3%	0	0	-
25-29 Years Old	265	2,268	11.7%	265	2,268	11.7%	0	0	-
30-39 Years Old	290	2,715	10.7%	290	2,715	10.7%	0	0	-
40-49 Years Old	124	1,713	7.2%	124	1,713	7.2%	0	0	-
50-59 Years Old	53	875	6.1%	53	875	6.1%	0	0	-
60 Years Old Plus	15	473	3.2%	15	473	3.2%	0	0	-
Total	4,059	21,982	18.5%	3,601	20,439	17.6%	458	1,543	29.7%

*This is the offender's age at the time they committed their first offence as recorded on the Criminal Record Viewer.

Table 6: Reoffending Rate by Time between First Recorded Offence and Baseline Date

Time in Years*	All			Adult			Youth		
	Reoffended	Total Number of Offenders	One year Proven Reoffending Rate	Reoffended	Number of Adult Offenders	One year Proven Reoffending Rate	Reoffended	Number of Youth Offenders	One year Proven Reoffending Rate**
One year and under	839	8,128	10.3%	643	7,224	8.9%	196	904	21.7%
Over one year to five	1,028	4,390	23.4%	796	3,808	20.9%	232	582	39.9%
Over five years to ten	1,005	3,701	27.2%	975	3,644	26.8%	30	57	52.6%
Over ten years to twenty	777	3,219	24.1%	777	3,219	24.1%	0	0	-
Over twenty years to thirty	268	1,482	18.1%	268	1,482	18.1%	0	0	-
Over thirty years to forty	123	816	15.1%	123	816	15.1%	0	0	-
Over forty years	19	246	7.7%	19	246	7.7%	0	0	-
Total	4,059	21,982	18.5%	3,601	20,439	17.6%	458	1,543	29.7%

*This is the time in years between the offender's first offence as recorded on the Criminal Record Viewer and the baseline date.

**Percentage cannot be shown as denominator is less than 50.

Table 7: Reoffending Rate by Age and Gender

Gender	Age*	Reoffended	Total Number of Offenders	One year Proven Reoffending Rate**
Female	10-13 Years Old	10	37	-
	14 Years Old	9	46	-
	15 Years Old	14	64	21.9%
	16 Years Old	16	85	18.8%
	17 Years Old	15	94	16.0%
	18-19 Years Old	30	236	12.7%
	20-24 Years Old	88	651	13.5%
	25-29 Years Old	92	616	14.9%
	30-39 Years Old	130	1,009	12.9%
	40-49 Years Old	71	834	8.5%
	50-59 Years Old	42	435	9.7%
	60 Years Old and Over	4	180	2.2%
	Total Female		521	4,287
Male	10-13 Years Old	22	99	22.2%
	14 Years Old	46	149	30.9%
	15 Years Old	70	220	31.8%
	16 Years Old	111	320	34.7%
	17 Years Old	145	429	33.8%
	18-19 Years Old	385	1,355	28.4%
	20-24 Years Old	892	3,484	25.6%
	25-29 Years Old	644	3,013	21.4%
	30-39 Years Old	722	3,984	18.1%
	40-49 Years Old	322	2,479	13.0%
	50-59 Years Old	132	1,471	9.0%
	60 Years Old and Over	47	692	6.8%
	Total Male		3,538	17,695
Total	10-13 Years Old	32	136	23.5%
	14 Years Old	55	195	28.2%
	15 Years Old	84	284	29.6%
	16 Years Old	127	405	31.4%
	17 Years Old	160	523	30.6%
	18-19 Years Old	415	1,591	26.1%
	20-24 Years Old	980	4,135	23.7%
	25-29 Years Old	736	3,629	20.3%
	30-39 Years Old	852	4,993	17.1%
	40-49 Years Old	393	3,313	11.9%
	50-59 Years Old	174	1,906	9.1%
	60 Years Old and Over	51	872	5.8%
	Overall Total		4,059	21,982

*Age at Baseline Date

**Percentage cannot be shown as denominator is less than 50.

Table 8: Reoffending Rate by Disposal*

Disposal Group	Disposal*	All			Adult			Youth		
		Reoffended	Number of Offenders	One year Proven Reoffending Rate**	Reoffended	Number of Offenders	One year Proven Reoffending Rate**	Reoffended	Number of Offenders	One year Proven Reoffending Rate**
Custody Release	Life Licences	0	2	-	0	2	-	0	0	-
	Indeterminate Custodial Sentences	0	3	-	0	3	-	0	0	-
	Extended Custodial Sentences	8	26	-	8	26	-	0	0	-
	Determinate Custodial Sentences	99	480	20.6%	98	479	20.5%	1	1	-
	Custody Probation Order	0	19	-	0	19	-	0	0	-
	Imprisonment	391	794	49.2%	391	794	49.2%	0	0	-
	Young Offender Centre	76	106	71.7%	61	91	67.0%	15	15	-
	Juvenile Justice Centre Orders	25	26	-	0	0	-	25	26	-
	Total	587	1,439	40.8%	547	1,398	39.1%	40	41	-
Community Supervision	Attendance Centre	12	22	-	0	0	-	12	22	-
	Enhanced Combination Order	19	41	-	18	40	-	1	1	-
	Combination Order	113	319	35.4%	106	310	34.2%	7	9	-
	Probation Order	352	964	36.5%	324	925	35.0%	28	39	-
	Community Service Order	268	934	28.7%	257	916	28.1%	11	18	-
	Youth Conference Order	124	220	56.4%	13	33	-	111	187	59.4%
	Community Responsibility Order	17	26	-	1	3	-	16	23	-
	Total	838	2,416	34.7%	677	2,148	31.5%	161	268	60.1%
Community Other	Suspended Imprisonment	840	2,796	30.0%	826	2,768	29.8%	14	28	-
	Monetary Penalty	1,780	11,218	15.9%	1,759	11,150	15.8%	21	68	30.9%
	Bound Over	18	118	15.3%	18	118	15.3%	0	0	-
	Conditional Discharge	250	772	32.4%	180	669	26.9%	70	103	68.0%
	Absolute Discharge	13	37	-	13	36	-	0	1	-
	Other Disposal	30	168	17.9%	14	139	10.1%	16	29	-
	Total	2,616	14,427	18.1%	2,506	14,210	17.6%	110	217	50.7%
Diversionary Disposal	Caution	699	4,555	15.3%	565	4,099	13.8%	134	456	29.4%
	Youth Conference Plan (PPS)	178	661	26.9%	33	129	25.6%	145	532	27.3%
	Informed Warning	93	468	19.9%	10	91	11.0%	83	377	22.0%
	Total	914	5,566	16.4%	601	4,303	14.0%	313	1,263	24.8%
Overall Total		4,059	21,982	18.5%	3,601	20,439	17.6%	458	1,543	29.7%

*Individual disposals will not sum to disposal groups or the overall total as an individual may experience multiple disposals. For each of these groupings only, the first instance a person is included in this category is counted.

**Percentage cannot be shown as denominator is less than 50.

Table 9: Reoffending Rate by Baseline Offence Category

Baseline Offence Group	All			Adult			Youth		
	Reoffended	Total Number of Offenders	One year Proven Reoffending Rate	Reoffended	Number of Offenders	One year Proven Reoffending Rate	Reoffended	Number of Offenders	One year Proven Reoffending Rate*
Violence Against the Person	680	3,466	19.6%	556	3,062	18.2%	124	404	30.7%
Sexual	14	177	7.9%	11	154	7.1%	3	23	-
Robbery	22	68	32.4%	17	59	28.8%	5	9	-
Theft	482	1,716	28.1%	423	1,521	27.8%	59	195	30.3%
Burglary	101	262	38.5%	87	224	38.8%	14	38	-
Criminal Damage	315	1,055	29.9%	231	841	27.5%	84	214	39.3%
Drugs	545	2,426	22.5%	513	2,299	22.3%	32	127	25.2%
Possession of Weapons	70	260	26.9%	50	216	23.1%	20	44	-
Public Order	442	1,541	28.7%	389	1,375	28.3%	53	166	31.9%
Motoring	1,082	9,393	11.5%	1,046	9,215	11.4%	36	178	20.2%
Fraud	28	204	13.7%	27	199	13.6%	1	5	-
Miscellaneous	278	1,414	19.7%	251	1,274	19.7%	27	140	19.3%
Total	4,059	21,982	18.5%	3,601	20,439	17.6%	458	1,543	29.7%

*Percentage cannot be shown as denominator is less than 50.

Table 10a: Baseline Offence Category by First Reoffence Category (All)

Baseline Offence Category	First Reoffence Category***											
	VAP	Sexual	Robbery	Theft	Burglary	Criminal Damage	Drugs	Possession of Weapons	Public Order	Motoring	Fraud	Miscellaneous
VAP*	215	2	1	65	5	52	65	10	120	106	1	38
Sexual**	7	1	0	1	0	0	2	0	1	1	0	1
Robbery**	7	0	0	5	1	1	3	0	3	1	0	1
Theft	76	0	4	185	15	22	51	7	31	67	8	16
Burglary	20	0	0	24	13	9	8	0	11	10	1	5
Criminal Damage	90	1	1	32	5	48	29	5	52	38	0	14
Drugs	74	1	1	55	4	28	201	13	30	123	0	15
Possession of Weapons	18	0	0	10	0	8	13	3	6	9	0	3
Public Order	108	0	0	30	6	30	45	3	127	67	1	25
Motoring	114	0	0	105	8	27	96	13	74	620	3	22
Fraud**	5	0	0	6	0	1	3	0	0	9	4	0
Miscellaneous	48	0	0	30	3	12	36	4	38	61	0	46
Total	782	5	7	548	60	238	552	58	493	1,112	18	186
Percent												
VAP*	31.6%	0.3%	0.1%	9.6%	0.7%	7.6%	9.6%	1.5%	17.6%	15.6%	0.1%	5.6%
Sexual**	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Robbery**	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Theft	15.8%	0.0%	0.8%	38.4%	3.1%	4.6%	10.6%	1.5%	6.4%	13.9%	1.7%	3.3%
Burglary	19.8%	0.0%	0.0%	23.8%	12.9%	8.9%	7.9%	0.0%	10.9%	9.9%	1.0%	5.0%
Criminal Damage	28.6%	0.3%	0.3%	10.2%	1.6%	15.2%	9.2%	1.6%	16.5%	12.1%	0.0%	4.4%
Drugs	13.6%	0.2%	0.2%	10.1%	0.7%	5.1%	36.9%	2.4%	5.5%	22.6%	0.0%	2.8%
Possession of Weapons	25.7%	0.0%	0.0%	14.3%	0.0%	11.4%	18.6%	4.3%	8.6%	12.9%	0.0%	4.3%
Public Order	24.4%	0.0%	0.0%	6.8%	1.4%	6.8%	10.2%	0.7%	28.7%	15.2%	0.2%	5.7%
Motoring	10.5%	0.0%	0.0%	9.7%	0.7%	2.5%	8.9%	1.2%	6.8%	57.3%	0.3%	2.0%
Fraud**	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Miscellaneous	17.3%	0.0%	0.0%	10.8%	1.1%	4.3%	12.9%	1.4%	13.7%	21.9%	0.0%	16.5%

*Violence against the Person

**Percentage cannot be shown as denominator is less than 50.

***Highlighted figures indicate those baseline offences for which the largest proportion of first reoffences were for offences in the same category.

Table 10b: Baseline Offence Category by First Reoffence Category (Adult)

Baseline Offence Category	First Reoffence Category***											
	VAP	Sexual	Robbery	Theft	Burglary	Criminal Damage	Drugs	Possession of Weapons	Public Order	Motoring	Fraud	Miscellaneous
VAP*	171	2	1	48	4	36	58	8	98	101	1	28
Sexual**	6	1	0	1	0	0	1	0	1	0	0	1
Robbery**	5	0	0	3	1	1	3	0	3	1	0	0
Theft	63	0	4	165	13	17	47	6	27	61	6	14
Burglary	18	0	0	19	12	7	8	0	7	10	1	5
Criminal Damage	66	0	1	21	4	28	25	3	37	35	0	11
Drugs	71	1	1	52	3	21	192	12	27	119	0	14
Possession of Weapons	15	0	0	8	0	1	10	2	4	8	0	2
Public Order	93	0	0	27	4	25	40	2	115	63	1	19
Motoring	108	0	0	103	6	24	90	12	71	608	3	21
Fraud**	5	0	0	5	0	1	3	0	0	9	4	0
Miscellaneous	44	0	0	24	3	7	35	4	34	57	0	43
Total	665	4	7	476	50	168	512	49	424	1,072	16	158
Percent												
VAP*	30.8%	0.4%	0.2%	8.6%	0.7%	6.5%	10.4%	1.4%	17.6%	18.2%	0.2%	5.0%
Sexual**	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Robbery**	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Theft	14.9%	0.0%	0.9%	39.0%	3.1%	4.0%	11.1%	1.4%	6.4%	14.4%	1.4%	3.3%
Burglary	20.7%	0.0%	0.0%	21.8%	13.8%	8.0%	9.2%	0.0%	8.0%	11.5%	1.1%	5.7%
Criminal Damage	28.6%	0.0%	0.4%	9.1%	1.7%	12.1%	10.8%	1.3%	16.0%	15.2%	0.0%	4.8%
Drugs	13.8%	0.2%	0.2%	10.1%	0.6%	4.1%	37.4%	2.3%	5.3%	23.2%	0.0%	2.7%
Possession of Weapons	30.0%	0.0%	0.0%	16.0%	0.0%	2.0%	20.0%	4.0%	8.0%	16.0%	0.0%	4.0%
Public Order	23.9%	0.0%	0.0%	6.9%	1.0%	6.4%	10.3%	0.5%	29.6%	16.2%	0.3%	4.9%
Motoring	10.3%	0.0%	0.0%	9.8%	0.6%	2.3%	8.6%	1.1%	6.8%	58.1%	0.3%	2.0%
Fraud**	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Miscellaneous	17.5%	0.0%	0.0%	9.6%	1.2%	2.8%	13.9%	1.6%	13.5%	22.7%	0.0%	17.1%

*Violence against the Person

**Percentage cannot be shown as denominator is less than 50.

***Highlighted figures indicate those baseline offences for which the largest proportion of first reoffences were for offences in the same category.

Table 10c: Baseline Offence Category by First Reoffence Category (Youth)

Baseline Offence Category	First Reoffence Category***											
	VAP	Sexual	Robbery	Theft	Burglary	Criminal Damage	Drugs	Possession of Weapons	Public Order	Motoring	Fraud	Miscellaneous
VAP*	44	0	0	17	1	16	7	2	22	5	0	10
Sexual**	1	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	1	0	0
Robbery**	2	0	0	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
Theft	13	0	0	20	2	5	4	1	4	6	2	2
Burglary**	2	0	0	5	1	2	0	0	4	0	0	0
Criminal Damage	24	1	0	11	1	20	4	2	15	3	0	3
Drugs**	3	0	0	3	1	7	9	1	3	4	0	1
Possession of Weapons**	3	0	0	2	0	7	3	1	2	1	0	1
Public Order	15	0	0	3	2	5	5	1	12	4	0	6
Motoring**	6	0	0	2	2	3	6	1	3	12	0	1
Fraud**	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Miscellaneous**	4	0	0	6	0	5	1	0	4	4	0	3
Total	117	1	0	72	10	70	40	9	69	40	2	28
Percent												
VAP*	35.5%	0.0%	0.0%	13.7%	0.8%	12.9%	5.6%	1.6%	17.7%	4.0%	0.0%	8.1%
Sexual**	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Robbery**	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Theft	22.0%	0.0%	0.0%	33.9%	3.4%	8.5%	6.8%	1.7%	6.8%	10.2%	3.4%	3.4%
Burglary**	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Criminal Damage	28.6%	1.2%	0.0%	13.1%	1.2%	23.8%	4.8%	2.4%	17.9%	3.6%	0.0%	3.6%
Drugs	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Possession of Weapons**	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Public Order	28.3%	0.0%	0.0%	5.7%	3.8%	9.4%	9.4%	1.9%	22.6%	7.5%	0.0%	11.3%
Motoring**	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Fraud**	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Miscellaneous**	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-

*Violence against the Person

**Percentage cannot be shown as denominator is less than 50.

***Highlighted figures indicate those baseline offences for which the largest proportion of first reoffences were for offences in the same category.

Table 11a: Reoffending Rate by Specified and Serious Offences

Criminal Justice (NI) Order 2008 List	All			Adult			Youth		
	Reoffended	Total Number of Offenders	One year Proven Reoffending Rate	Reoffended	Number of Offenders	One year Proven Reoffending Rate	Reoffended	Number of Offenders	One year Proven Reoffending Rate
Specified Offences	517	2,355	22.0%	427	2,072	20.6%	90	283	31.8%
Serious Offences	111	636	17.5%	88	572	15.4%	23	64	35.9%

Table 11b: Proportion of Offenders with a Baseline Specified and Serious Offences whose First Reoffence was also Specified and Serious

Criminal Justice (NI) Order 2008 List	All			Adult			Youth		
	Reoffended	Total Number of Offenders	One year Proven Reoffending Rate	Reoffended	Number of Offenders	One year Proven Reoffending Rate	Reoffended	Number of Offenders	One year Proven Reoffending Rate*
Specified Offences	101	517	19.5%	87	427	20.4%	14	90	15.6%
Serious Offences	4	111	3.6%	4	88	4.5%	0	23	-

APPENDIX 2 - References

Duncan. L. (2014) '*R & S Bulletin 4/2014 Northern Ireland Reoffending Methodology: Methodology and Glossary Part 1*'. Department of Justice <https://www.justice-ni.gov.uk/publications/r-s-bulletin-42014-northern-ireland-reoffending-methodology>

Duncan. L. (2015) '*R & S Bulletin 16/2015 Northern Ireland Reoffending Methodology: Methodology and Glossary Part 2 (New Edition August 2015)*'. Department of Justice <https://www.justice-ni.gov.uk/publications/rs-bulletin-162015-northern-ireland-reoffending-methodology>

APPENDIX 3 – Methodology and Counting Rules

The following section provides a brief summary of the methodology and counting rules used in the production of the Northern Ireland reoffending rates. For more detailed methodologies and glossaries providing definitions of key terms please refer to the two published methodology papers⁶.

3.1 Who is included in the cohort?

The cohort is made up of all adults and youths who have been given a non-custodial disposal at court, a diversionary disposal or who have been released from custody⁷ during the financial year 2015/16. An adult is defined as someone aged 18 or over at the time of community disposal or release from custody and a youth is defined as anyone aged 17 or under at this point. Information in the following bulletin is presented for the full cohort (adults and youths combined) and separately for adults and youths.

3.2 What are the baseline date, offence and disposal?

The baseline date is the date of entry into the cohort. This is the date that a non-custodial sentence is given at court, a diversionary disposal imposed or an individual is released from custody. This date forms the starting point for the observation period. The baseline offence is the principal offence associated with this baseline date. Following consultation, it has been agreed that an offender will be counted once within each relevant disposal category, including the initial baseline disposal associated with their entry into the cohort and also disposal categories associated within any subsequent proven reoffences.

3.3 What are the observation and follow up periods?

The observation period is the window of time over which a person is observed following receipt of a diversionary disposal or non-custodial disposal at court or release from custody. A balance needs to be struck between the need for timely information and the need to make the reoffending rate as informative and meaningful as possible. For one year reoffending, the observation period is one year and the follow up period is six months.

⁶ <https://www.justice-ni.gov.uk/publications/r-s-bulletin-42014-northern-ireland-reoffending-methodology>
<https://www.justice-ni.gov.uk/publications/rs-bulletin-162015-northern-ireland-reoffending-methodology>

⁷ Includes only those released from custody following the completion of a sentence and excludes fine defaulters, those bailed or released following a period on remand, subject to extradition or transfer to another secure hospital facility.

3.4 What counts as a reoffence?

Under one year proven reoffending methodology an offence is counted as a reoffence if it:

- occurs within the one year observation period.
- has been committed within Northern Ireland.
- is prosecuted via the Police Service of Northern Ireland (PSNI) and not a third party (e.g. the Department of Communities can bring some cases of benefit fraud).
- is not a breach offence (e.g. breach of a probation order).
- has been 'proven', meaning that a court conviction or diversionary disposal has been imposed within the observation year or by the end of the 6 month follow up period.

3.5 Data Source

In Northern Ireland the main data source used to measure reoffending rates is supplied to the Department of Justice's Analytical Services Group from the Causeway Data Sharing Mechanism (DSM1). The information used is primarily created from an extract of records held on the Criminal Records Viewer (CRV). The CRV is held on Causeway and utilises data which originated from PSNI, along with data from Northern Ireland Courts and Tribunals Service. Causeway is an interconnected information system, launched as a joint undertaking by the Criminal Justice Organisations (CJOs) in Northern Ireland.

Information is also provided from the Northern Ireland Prison Service (NIPS) case management system (PRISM) and the Youth Justice Agency regarding releases from custody. Information on these offenders is matched to information taken from CRV.

3.6 Data Quality and Validation

While every care has been taken in collating the data, they are subject to the limitations inherent in any large-scale recording system and to variation in recording practice over time. While the relevant CJOs have a vested interest in maintaining the accuracy of the data within their management information systems, a number of accuracy, quality assurance/validation procedures have been conducted upon the dataset used to compile this data series, to ensure the data extracted are accurate, complete and fit for the statistical purposes for which they are to be used. Both automated and manual checks are carried out, at individual case level and, data corrected, where possible. Much of this validation is completed for the production of datasets in relation to the annual Prosecutions,

Convictions and out of Court Disposals Publications⁸. Please refer to these publications for information on the validation process.

Specific to this publication is the validation process completed on prison release data, to ensure that key fields are complete and logical and that all those who have been sentenced and released from custody can be identified. Validation exercises conducted have included comparing convictions data from Causeway with records from other agencies, including the Northern Ireland Prison Service, the Probation Board for Northern Ireland and the Youth Justice Agency, with amendments made where appropriate. For example, for the 2015/16 dataset, 1,515 cases were checked to ensure all sentenced prisoners were identified, with amendments made in 233 cases, relating to updates to the sentence release status of the offenders and updates to essential date fields. These changes are required due to the point in time in which the data has been extracted from the NIPS case management system (PRISM) and recording practices within NIPS that are not consistent with information required to produce the reoffending analysis.

Following guidance provided by the Office for National Statistics on the Quality Assessment of Administrative Data, information pertaining to data quality and validation is continually being assessed.

3.7 Interpreting Trends

The ability to compare and discuss trends in reoffending is important to its usefulness as a performance target within government. However, differences in the offending related characteristics of those included in each cohort make comparing reoffending rates problematic, across both time and jurisdictions. Although statistical techniques can be employed to control for differences within the cohorts, care should also be taken to understand the wider context within which the offending and reoffending has occurred. In this bulletin the overall and adult reoffending rates have been adjusted and compared to the 2010/11 and 2014/15 findings, in order to provide an estimate of change in reoffending. For more information on the methodological approach used to adjust these figures, please refer to ['Northern Ireland Reoffending Methodology: Methodology and Glossary Part 2 \(New Edition: August 2015\)' \(Duncan, 2015\)](#).

⁸ <https://www.justice-ni.gov.uk/articles/prosecutions-and-convictions>

In addition, reoffending rates should not be used routinely to measure the comparative success of the different disposal types. As no adjustments have been made to control for offender characteristics or factors relating to variations in sentencing, such comparisons would be misleading.

During 2015 and 2016 there was a consistent decline in the number of cases prosecuted and also in corresponding guilty findings. This has resulted in a further reduction in the size of the reoffending cohort.

A further distorting factor for 2015/16 may be the significant reduction in disposals at the Crown Court. The introduction of new rules in May 2015 in relation to legal aid remuneration resulted in a number of solicitors and counsel withdrawing their representation from a range of court cases. This affected defendants' access to legal aid representation and had an impact on disposals and delay within the Crown Court process during the period.

3.8 Analysis and Presentation of Statistics

The data used in this report are validated, maintained and analysed using IBM SPSS, which is a statistical package commonly used within social science.

For ease of use, figures in charts are given as whole numbers, whereas percentages throughout the text and tables are reported to one decimal place. When reporting on the change in reoffending rates, figures are presented to two decimal places due to the small numbers involved.

Whilst tables of information have been included in Appendix 1, the tables are also published alongside this bulletin in Microsoft Excel and open data format for ease of use.

The data upon which the publication is based are used to inform policy decisions within the Department of Justice (DoJ), as well as to inform requests from other Government organisations, answers to NI Assembly questions and queries from the general public.

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