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Analytical Services Group

The Northern Ireland Prison Population 2018/19

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Statistics and Research Agency

NATIONAL STATISTICS

Key Findings

Average Daily Prison Population

♦ The overall average daily prison population increased by 0.6% during 2018/19 to 1,448. Males increased slightly from 1,382 to 1,384 while the female population increased from 57 to 65 (Table 1).

♦ The remand population increased by 18.5% from 368 in 2017/18 to 436 this year and is at its highest level since reporting by financial year began in 2014/15 (Figure 2 and Table 1).

♦ During 2018/19 the average daily immediate custody prison population fell by 5.1% to 1,006, its lowest level since reporting by financial year began in 2014/15 (Figure 2 and Table 1).

♦ Prisoners aged between 30 to 39 years of age made up the largest proportion of the average daily immediate custody prison population (32.9%). In each of the previous four financial years, the age group 21 to 29 years had accounted for the largest number of prisoners (Table 2).

♦ The proportion of those aged between 18 and 20 years of age has decreased each year since 2014/15, accounting for 2.9% of the total population during 2018/19 (Table 2).

♦ In terms of custodial sentence length, the average daily population decreased in all sentence categories, compared to last year, except for those serving a life sentence and those serving a sentence of three months or less, both of which reported slight increases, up from 156 to 158 and 26 to 28 respectively (Table 4).

♦ Violence Against the Person offences continued to account for the largest proportion of all principal offence categories (33.6%; Figure 6 and Table 6).

Receptions

♦ The number of receptions during 2018/19 was higher than the previous year, 5,252 compared to 5,092 during 2016/17, an increase of 3.1% (Figure 7 and Table 7).

♦ Remand receptions increased by 15.1% over the last year, up from 2,786 during 2017/18 to 3,206 during 2018/19 This resulted in an increase in the proportion of receptions recorded as remand from 54.7% during 2017/18 to 61.0% during 2018/19 (Figure 8 and Table 7).

♦ The number of receptions for fine default (where the individual was received into custody solely for fine default offences) decreased by 39.3%, from 611 in 2017/18 to 371 in 2018/19 (Figure 8 and Table 7).

♦ The largest number of immediate custody receptions were recorded within the 21 to 29 years age group, accounting for 634 (39.2%) of receptions. While this age group had accounted for the largest number of immediate custody receptions since financial year reporting began in 2014/15, the proportion of receptions in this group had been decreasing which has coincided with a gradual increase in the proportion of receptions into immediate custody reported in the 30 to 39 years age group, from 24.8% in 2014/15 to 30.8% this year (Table 8).

♦ A larger proportion of female receptions were sentenced to a custody sentence length of one year or less (90.3%) compared to males (77.2%; Table 10).

♦ Both Public Order offences and Violence Against the Person offences accounted for 17.9% of immediate custody receptions (290 and 289 receptions respectively; Table 12).

♦ 27.2% (28) of female immediate custody receptions in 2018/19 were for Violence Against the Person, compared to 17.3% (261) of male receptions (Table 12).

Contents

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Introduction

This bulletin reports on key statistics relating to the average daily prison population levels and receptions for Northern Ireland during the 2018/19 financial year. It includes information by establishment, custody type, gender, age and sentence length and principal offence categories. The report also includes some international data for comparison purposes, as well as analysing trend data for the key statistics.

The data used in this bulletin are taken from the Northern Ireland Prison Service Management Information System (PRISM). Details on the methodology used, data validation and definition of terms can be found in the Methodology and Counting Rules section at the back of this bulletin.

This is an annual National Statistics publication and the contents of this report will be of interest to the public, government policy makers, academics and others who want to understand more about the prison population in Northern Ireland. Further information on National Statistics and Users can be found at the back of this report.

1. Average Daily Prison Population

The average daily prison population for 2018/19 was 1,448, an increase of 0.6% compared to the 1,439 reported during 2017/18. This has been the first year on year increase in the daily prison population since reporting on a financial year basis began during 2014/15.

Figure 1: Average Daily Prison Population 2003-2018/19
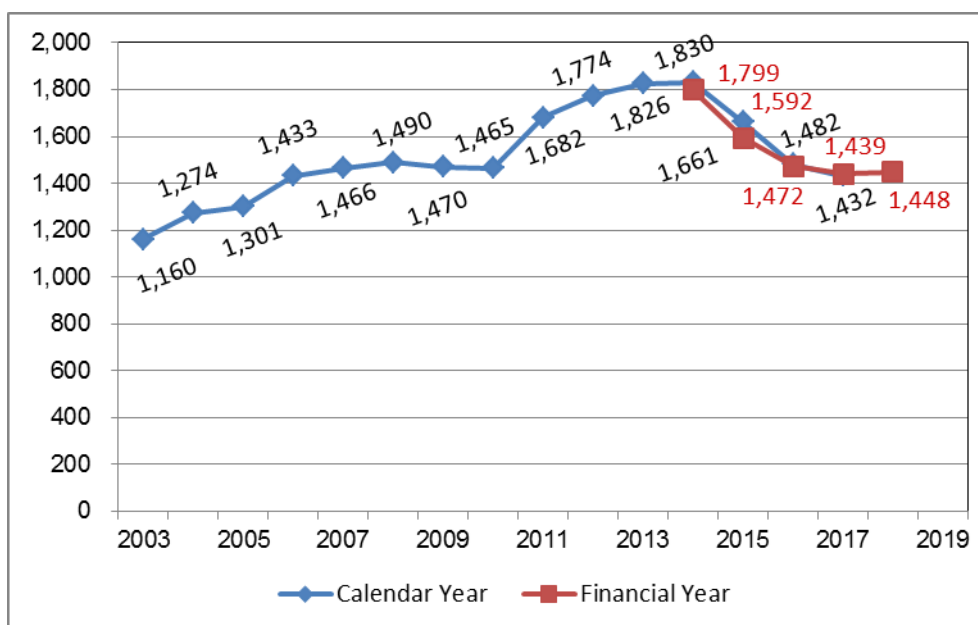
The increase in the average daily prison population during 2018/19 was not apparent across all prison establishments, as the average daily population for Maghaberry fell from 857 during 2017/18 to 839 this year. The other three prison establishments all reported an increase in the average daily population with Magilligan up from 430 to 447, males in Hydebank Wood College up from 95 to 98 and females in Hydebank Wood College up from 57 to 65 (Table 1).

The following sections look at average daily prison population by custody type and gender, as well as some of the characteristics of sentenced prisoners, namely age, sentence length and principal offence.

Average Daily Prison Population by Prisoner Type

Remand Prisoners

The average daily remand prison population significantly increased by 18.5% compared to the previous year, from 368 to 436. This is the highest average daily remand prison population since reporting by financial year started in 2014/15.

The proportion of prisoners on remand has increased each year, rising from 23.3% during 2014/15 to 24.7% during 2015/16, 25.4% during 2016/17, 25.6% during 2017/18 and 30.1% during 2018/19 (Figure 2 and Table 1).

In certain circumstances remands can be held in Magilligan. During 2018/19 there was an average remand population of five at Magilligan.

Figure 2: Average Daily Prison Population by Prisoner Type, 2014/15-2018/19
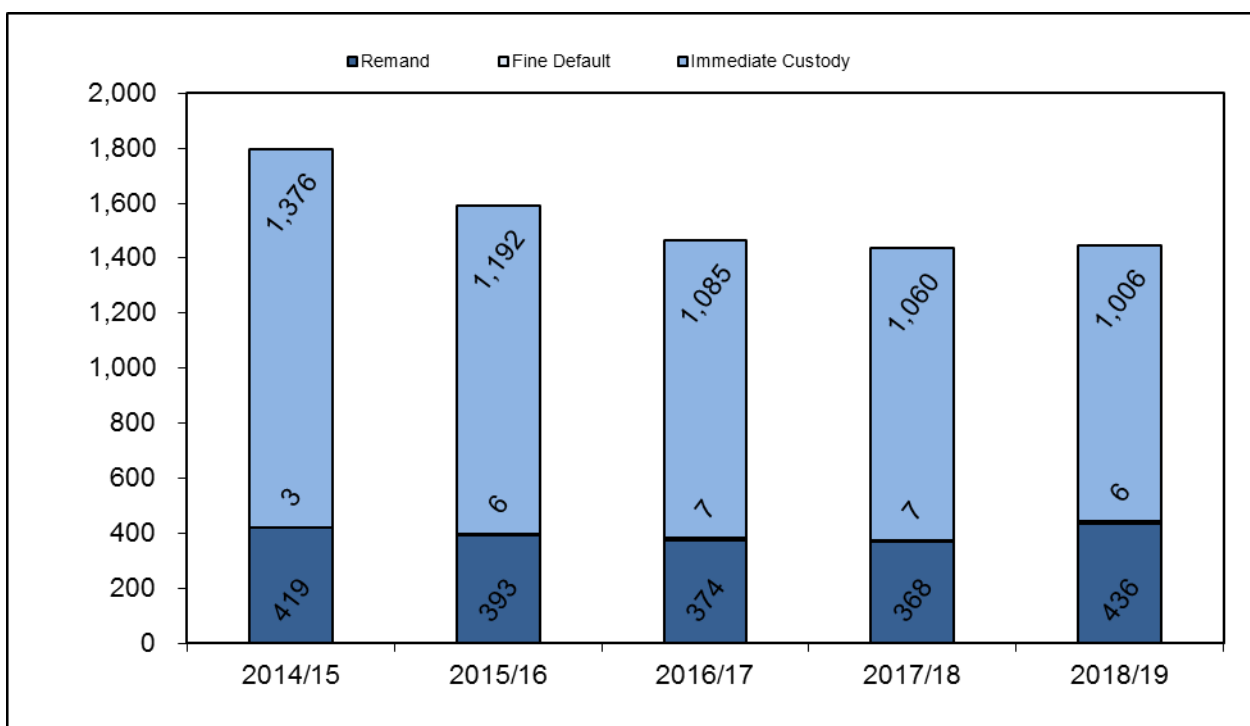
Immediate Custody Prisoners

During 2018/19 the average daily immediate custody prisoner population was 1,006, a significant decrease of 5.1% from the previous year's level of 1,060. The immediate custody prisoner population has fallen each year since 2014/15, when it was 1,376, to the 1,006 reported this year (Figure 2).

The Department of Justice recently published statistics on prosecutions and convictions for 2018. This showed that overall custodial convictions during the 2018 calendar year increased, from 2,910 during 2017 to 3,001 during 2018 (+3.1%). This information is published [here](.)[1].

The overall increase in custodial convictions was driven by the increase in custodial convictions in the Magistrates' Court which was up from 2,259 during 2017 to 2,423 during 2018 (+7.3%) whereas custodial convictions in the Crown Court decreased from 651 during 2017 to 578 during 2018 (-11.2%).

[1]Source: (https://www.justice-ni.gov.uk/publications/court-prosecutions-convictions-and-out-court-disposals-ni-2018)

Fine Default and Non-Criminal Prisoners

The average daily fine default and non-criminal prisoner (immigrant detainee) population accounted for a small proportion of the overall average daily prison population (0.4% for fine default and 0.1% for non-criminal). Figures for both have remained fairly similar over each of the last five financial years with fine defaults never exceeding a daily average of seven and non-criminal never accounting for more than a daily average of five since 2014/15 (Table 1).

Average Daily Prison Population by Gender

Figure 3: Average Daily Prison Population by Gender, 2014/15-2018/19
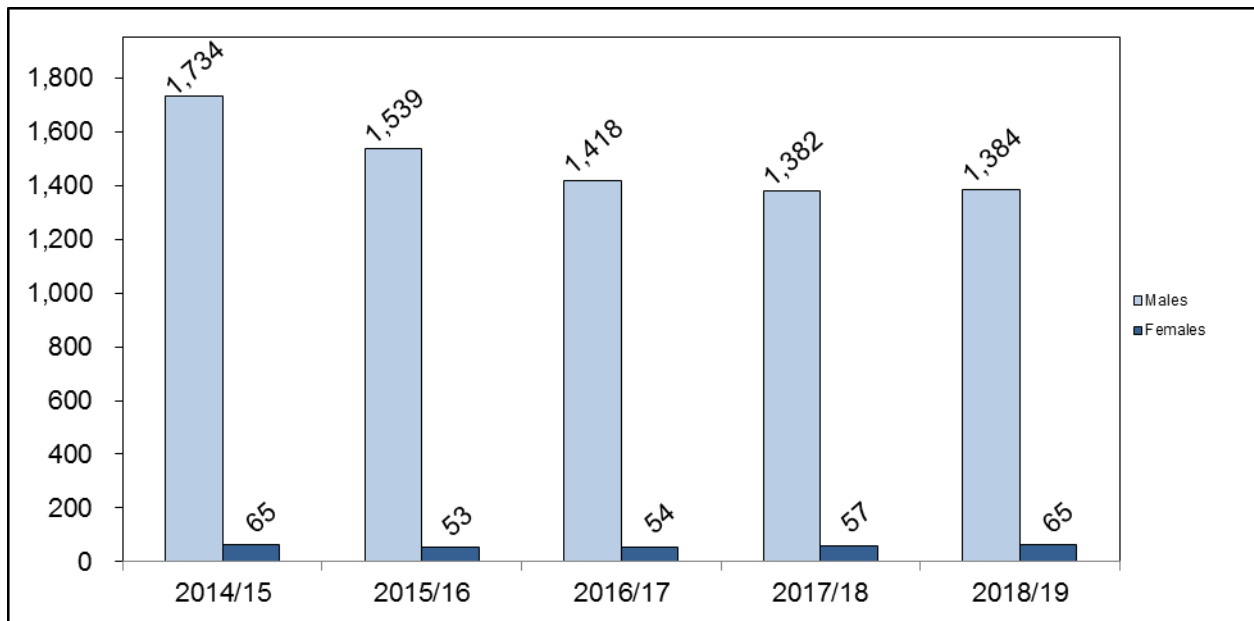
While males account for the vast majority of the average daily prison population (95.6%), the average daily male prison population rose very slightly, up 0.1% from 1,382 during 2017/18 to 1,384 this year.

The average daily female prison population increased by a greater rate from 57 during 2017/18 to 65 during 2018/19, an increase of 14% (Table 1).

Average Daily Immediate Custody Prison Population by Current Age

For the first time since reporting on a financial year basis began in 2014/15, prisoners aged between 30 and 39 years of age made up the largest proportion of the immediate custody prisoner population during 2018/19 (32.9%). This was followed by those aged 21 to 29 years (31.0%), 40 to 49 years (17.3%), 50 to 59 years (9.5%), 60+ years (6.5%) and 18 to 20 years (2.9%). During the previous four financial years, prisoners aged 21 to 29 years had accounted for the largest proportion of the immediate custody prison population.

The number and proportion of the average daily immediate custody prison population aged 18 to 20 years has fallen on an annual basis since 2014/15 when it accounted for 4.9% (68) of the overall total to the 2.9% (29) reported this year (Table 2).

Figure 4: Average Daily Prison Population under Sentence of Immediate Custody by Current Age, 2018/19
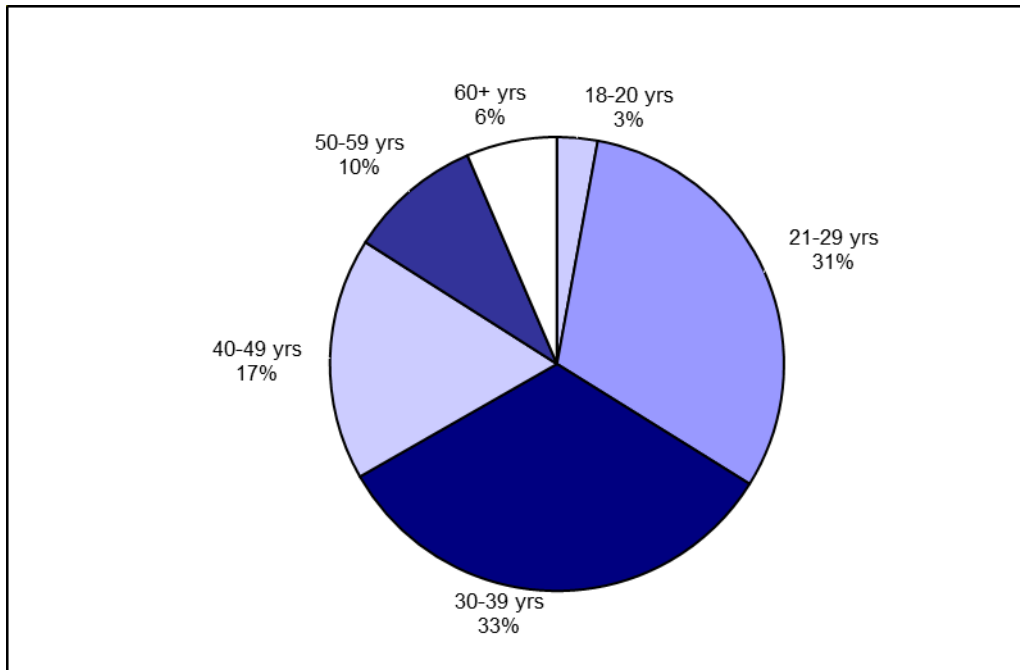
Average Daily Immediate Custody Prison Population by Sentence Length

Figure 5: Average Daily Prison Population under Sentence of Immediate Custody by Sentence Length, 2018/19
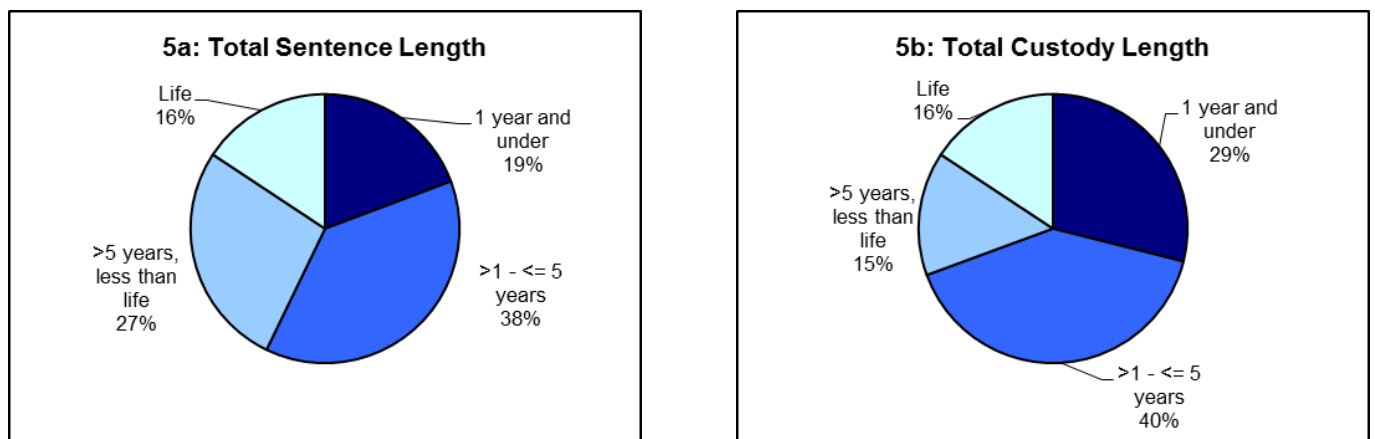
Figures 5a and 5b show the breakdown of total sentence length and total custody length for prisoners under sentence of immediate custody during 2018/19. In terms of custodial sentence length, the average daily population decreased in all sentence categories, compared to last year, except for those serving a life sentence and those serving a sentence of three months or less, both of which reported a slight increase (up from 156 to 158 and 26 to 28 respectively; Table 4).

More detailed sentence length information can be found in Table 3 and Table 4 in the tabular appendix at the back of this report.

Average Daily Immediate Custody Prison Population by Principal Offence

Some 33.6% (338) of principal offences during 2018/19 were categorised as Violence Against the Person, with 17.5% (176) categorised as Public Order Offences and 10.3% (104) categorised as Sexual Offences (Figure 6). These categories were also the three largest in terms of principal offence last year when Violence Against the Person accounted for 34.7% (368) of principal offences, Public Order Offences accounted for 16.3% (173) and Sexual Offences accounted for 10.0% (106).

Overall, the breakdown of offences by principal offence categories has remained largely the same over the last three years (Table 6).

Figure 6: Average Daily Prison Population under Sentence of Immediate Custody by Principal Offence, 2018/19
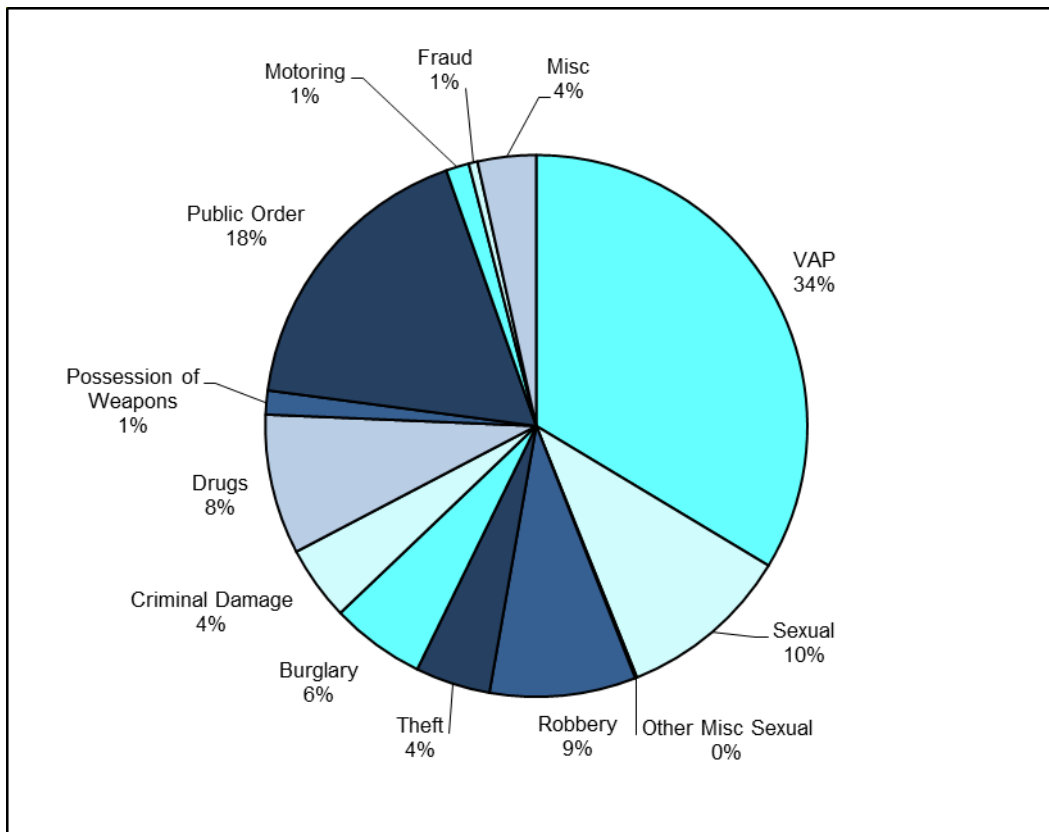
2. Receptions into Prison

The number of receptions into prison increased by 3.1%, from 5,092 during 2017/18 to 5,252 during 2018/19 (Figure 7). The 5,252 receptions were made by 2,977 prisoners, giving a reception rate of 1.8, compared to a reception rate of 1.9 during 2017/18 (5,092 receptions for 2,686 prisoners).

Female receptions into Hydebank Wood College decreased from 423 during 2017/18 to 411 during 2018/19. While female remand receptions increased from 246 during 2017/18 to 269 during 2018/19, female receptions into immediate custody fell from 117 last year to 103 this year and female receptions for fine default decreased from 58 during 2017/18 to 37 during 2018/19 (Table 7).

Male receptions into Maghaberry and Magilligan increased by 3.0% from 4,203 during 2017/18 to 4,331 this year (Table 7).

Figure 7: Prison Receptions, 2004-2018/19
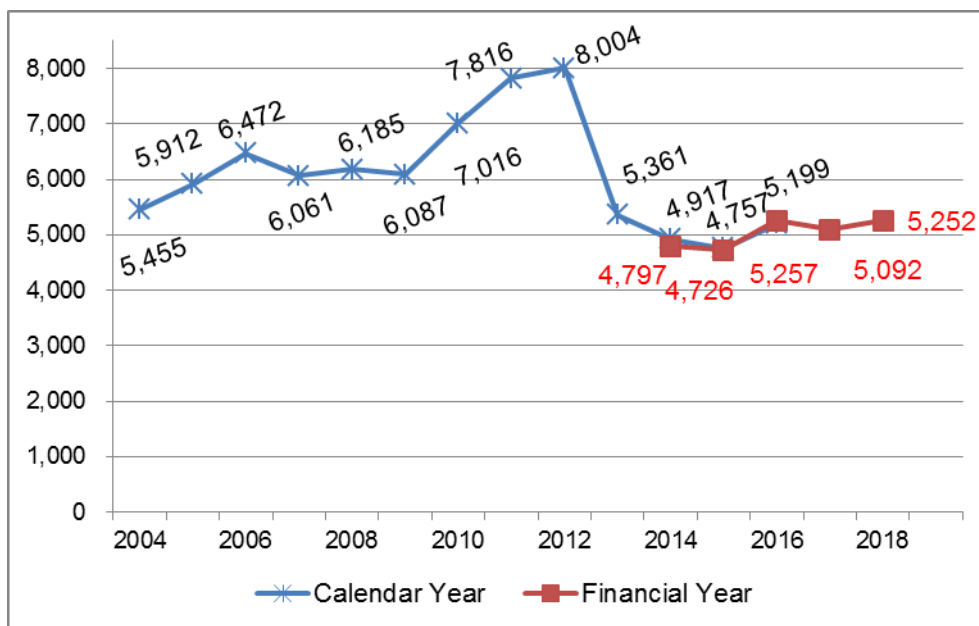
Young male receptions into Hydebank Wood College increased by 9.4% over the last year (from 466 to 510). This was largely a consequence of the 15% increase in remand receptions for this group (up from 305 during 2017/18 to 351 during 2018/19), as receptions into immediate custody fell from 134 last year to 129 this year (Table 7).

In certain circumstances, Magilligan can house remand prisoners, resulting in 26 remand receptions this year compared to 19 last year.

The subsequent sections of this report examine receptions by custody type and gender, as well as some of the characteristics of immediate custody prisoner receptions, namely age, sentence length and principal offence.

Prison Receptions by Prisoner Type

Remand Prisoners

Remand receptions significantly increased by 15.1% over the last year, up from 2,786 during 2017/18 to 3,206 during 2018/19. This resulted in an increase in the proportion of receptions recorded as remand from 54.7% during 2017/18 to 61.0% during 2018/19. The 61% reported this year was the highest level recorded since the current time series moved to a financial year basis in 2014/15 (Figure 8 and Table 7).

Immediate Custody Prisoners

Receptions into immediate custody remained similar this year (1,616) compared to last (1,619). Male receptions into immediate custody in Maghaberry and Magilligan increased by 1.2% over the last year (from 1,368 to 1,384) with receptions into immediate custody at Hydebank Wood College for both young males and females both decreasing compared to 2017/18 (Young males were down from 134 to 129 and females decreased from 117 to 103; Table 7).

Figure 8: Prison Receptions by Prisoner Type, 2014/15-2018/19
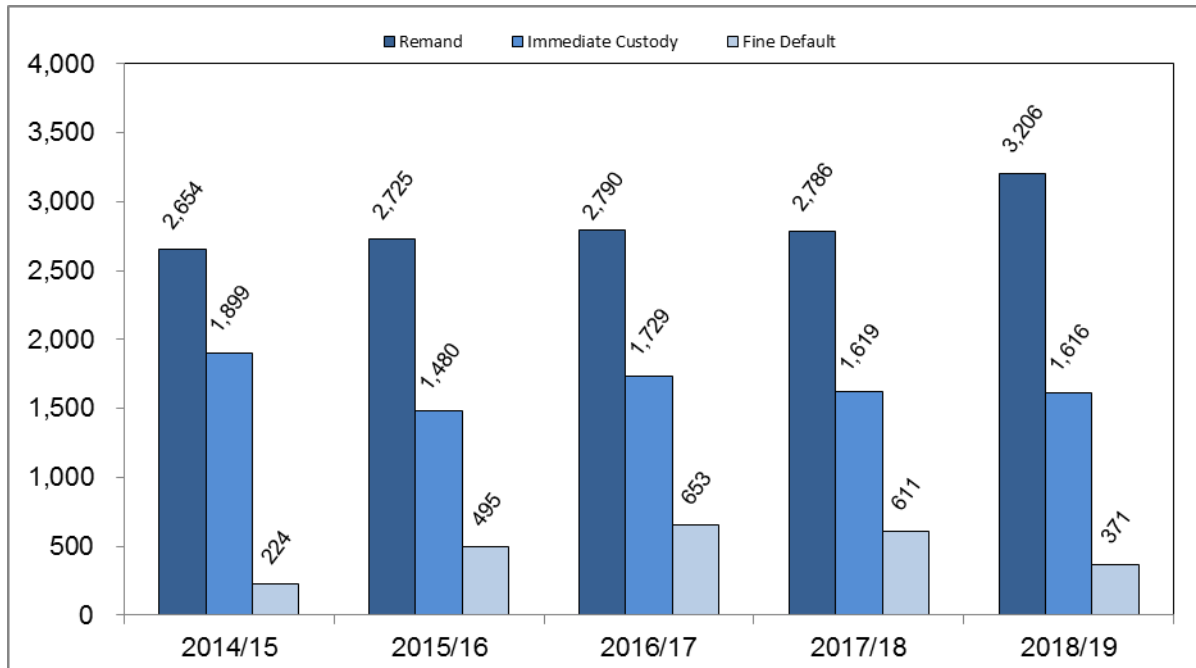
Fine Default and Non-Criminal Prisoners

The number of receptions for fine default (where the individual was received into custody solely for fine default offences) significantly decreased by 39.3%, from 611 during 2017/18 to 371 during 2018/19 (Figure 8 and Table 7).

Due to the way in which the Northern Ireland Prison Service (NIPS) case management system (PRISM) inputs individual information, the methodology used in this report to compute receptions may under count the total number of fine default receptions, with further detail on this contained in the Definitions section of this report. Nevertheless, this methodology is consistent in its approach across years with the level of decrease reported over the last year most likely a consequence of the establishment of the new Fine Collection Service within the Northern Ireland Courts and Tribunals Service. The FCS, which has been operational since 01 June 2018, has a range of powers to collect and enforce outstanding financial penalties. Through the establishment of regular payment plans, low but regular payments to FCS have been increasing since June 2018, contributing to the reduction in prison committals for fine default.

The number of non-criminal (immigrant detainee) receptions decreased from 76 during 2017/18 to 59 during 2018/19, accounting for 1.1% of all receptions (Table 7).

Prison Receptions by Gender

The total number of male receptions increased by 3.7%, from 4,669 during 2017/18 to 4,841 during 2018/19. This was largely a consequence of the 15.6% increase in male remand receptions across all establishments (from 2,540 to 2,937), with total male receptions into immediate custody remaining similar

(1,513 during 2018/19 compared to 1,502 during 2017/18). Total male receptions for fine default did decrease though, by 39.6% (from 553 to 334).

Immediate Custody Receptions by Age at Reception

The largest number of immediate custody receptions were recorded within the 21 – 29 years age group, accounting for 634 (39.2%) of receptions. While this age group has accounted for the largest number of immediate custody receptions since financial year reporting began in 2014/15, the proportion of receptions in this group has been decreasing from a high of 43.5% during 2015/16. This has coincided with a gradual increase in the proportion of receptions into immediate custody reported in the 30- 39 years age group, from 24.8% during 2014/15 to 30.8% this year (Figure 9 and Table 8).

Figure 9: Immediate Custody Receptions by Age at Reception, 2018/19
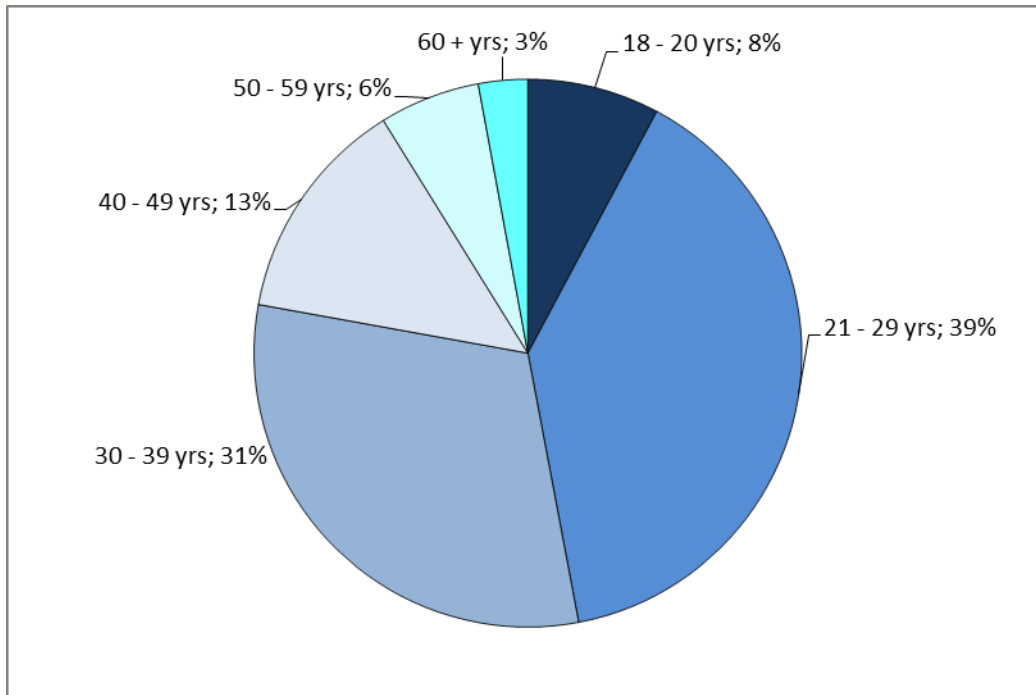
Immediate Custody Receptions by Sentence Length

Figure 10a and Figure 10b show the breakdown of sentences for immediate custody receptions for both the total sentence length and the custody sentence length.

Figure 10: Immediate Custody Receptions by Sentence Length, 2018/19
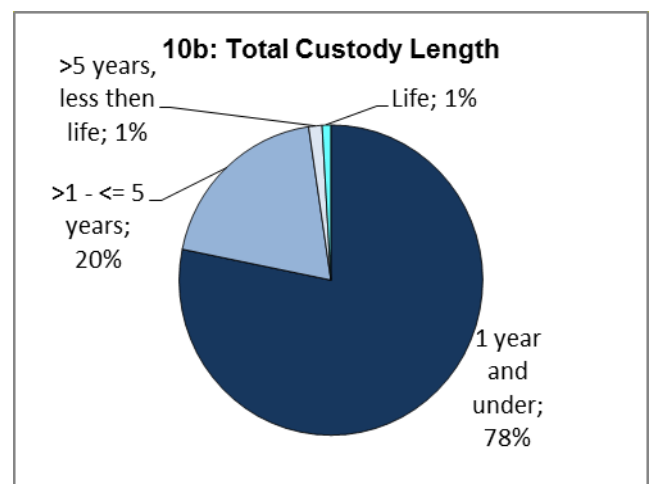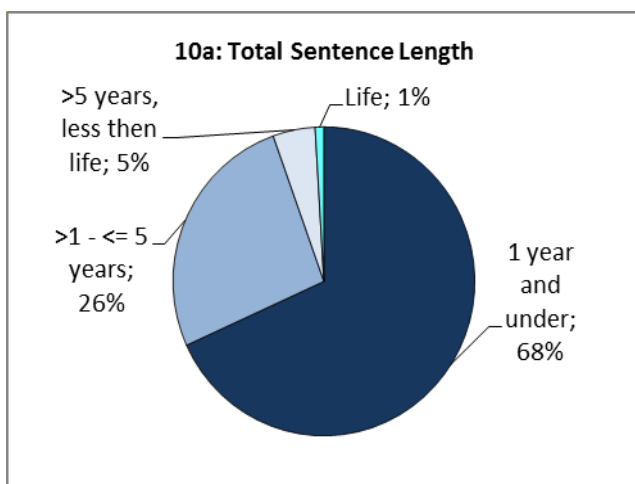
Primarily, in terms of the prison population, the custody length imposed is of greater significance than the total sentence length (which includes the licence element); as it is the custody length which determines how long a person must initially spend in custody. Figure 10b shows that custody sentences of 1 year and under accounted for the largest proportion of sentenced receptions (78.2%) which is similar to the 79.1% reported for this category last year.

There was a slight increase in the proportion of custody sentences greater than one year and less than or equal to five years, which increased from 18.3% to 19.5% (up from 296 to 314 receptions).

Looking at gender and sentence length, Table 10 shows that 90.3% (93) of females receptions were sentenced to one year or less in custody, compared to 77.2% (1,169) of males. Looking at sentences of six months or less, 64% (66) of female receptions received sentences of this length compared to 51.4% (777) of male receptions (Table 10).

Immediate Custody Receptions by Principal Offence

Both Public Order offences and Violence Against the Person offences accounted for 17.9% of immediate custody receptions (290 and 289 receptions respectively). While the proportion of receptions for Violence Against the Person remained the same as that reported during 2017/18, the proportion of Public Order offences fell significantly from 21.4% last year. The category of principal offence reporting the largest increase compared to last year was drug offences significantly up from 8.8% (143 immediate custody receptions) in 2017/18 to 11.8% (190) in 2018/19. Immediate custody receptions for Theft also increased from 11.7% (190) to 13.7% (222) over the last year, while Burglary offences increased significantly from 6.7% (107) to 8.7% (139) between 2017/18 and 2018/19. There was a significant decrease in Motoring Offences from 6.2% (100) in 2017/18 to 4.1% (66) in 2018/19 (Figure 11 and Table 12).

Figure 11: Immediate Custody Receptions by Principal Offence, 2018/19
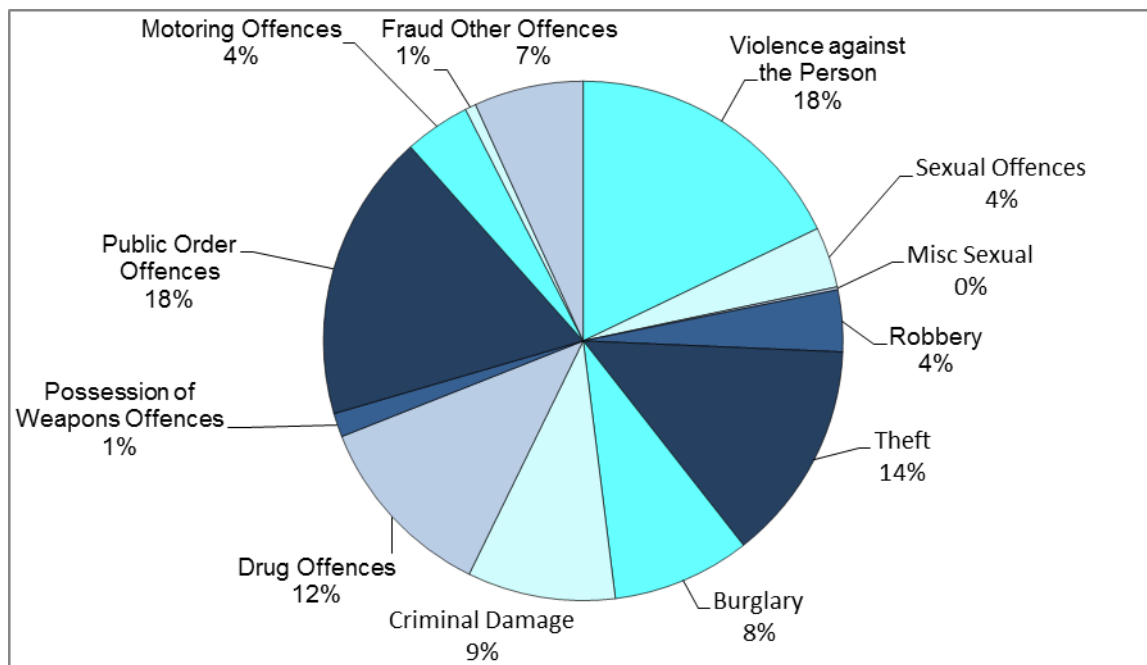
In terms of gender, 77.6% (80) of female immediate custody receptions during 2018/19 were for either Violence Against the Person (27.2%), Theft (25.2%) or Public Order Offences (25.2%). These three categories accounted for a total of 47.7% (721) of male immediate custody receptions; 17.3%, 13.0% and 17.4% respectively (Table 12).

3. International Comparisons

A range of international prison comparisons are published in the *World Prison Brief* which can be found here[2]. One such comparison relates to the prison population as a rate of every 100,000 of the overall population within each jurisdiction. Figure 12 shows the prison population per 100,000 people in the population for a selection of European countries, with the information based on the latest available at the end of August 2019. As illustrated in this figure, Northern Ireland has a rate of 81 prisoners for every 100,000 people in the population. The equivalent figure for Scotland was 150 and England and Wales was 140. With a rate of 82, the Republic of Ireland's rate was more in line with that of Northern Ireland.

Figure 12: Prison Population per 100,000 Population, Selected European Jurisdictions
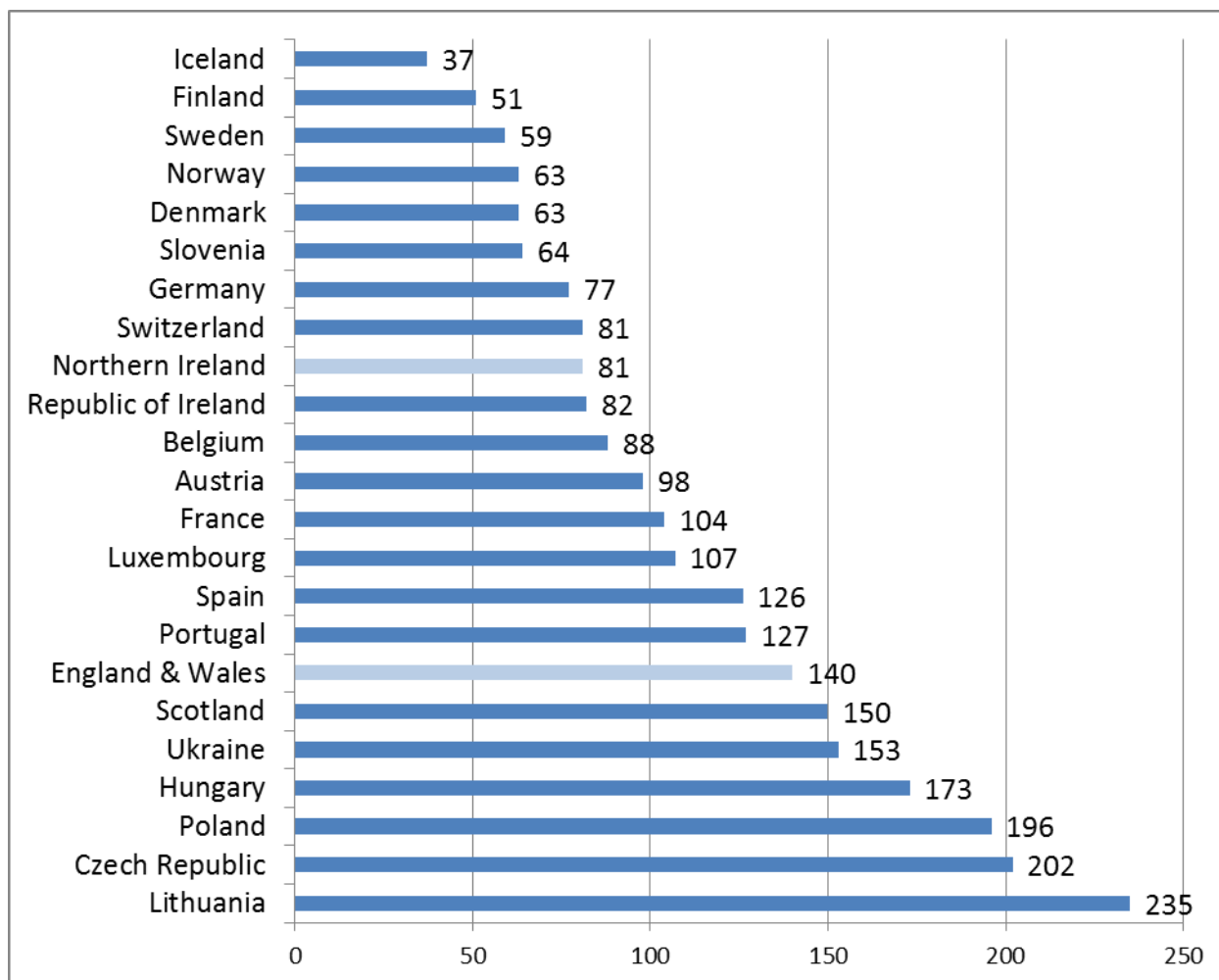
Tabular Annex[3]

Table 1: Average Daily Northern Ireland Prison Population by Prisoner Type, Gender and Establishment

		2015/16	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19
Remand	Maghaberry	339	319	310	353
	Magilligan	0	0	2	5
	Hydebank Wood College Males	36	36	37	51
	Hydebank Wood College Females	18	18	19	26
	Total	393	374	368	436
Immediate Custody	Maghaberry	584	541	538	480
	Magilligan	506	452	427	442
	Hydebank Wood College Males	66	57	56	46
	Hydebank Wood College Females	35	35	38	38
	Total	1,192	1,085	1,060	1,006
Fine Default	Maghaberry	5	6	6	5
	Magilligan	0	0	0	0
	Hydebank Wood College Males	0	0	0	0
	Hydebank Wood College Females	1	0	1	0
	Total	6	7	7	6
Non-Criminal	Maghaberry	2	2	2	1
	Magilligan	0	0	0	0
	Hydebank Wood College Males	0	2	2	0
	Hydebank Wood College Females	0	0	0	0
	Total	2	5	4	1
Males		1,539	1,418	1,382	1,384
Females		53	54	57	65
Establishment	Maghaberry	931	869	857	839
	Magilligan	506	453	430	447
	Hydebank Wood College Males	102	96	95	98
	Hydebank Wood College Females	53	54	57	65
	Total	**1,592**	**1,472**	**1,439**	**1,448**

Components may not sum to totals due to rounding
Females may include Transgender persons

[3]For presentational purposes, the tables in this report commence in 2015/16. Tables back to 2014/15 can be found in excel format here (https://www.justice-ni.gov.uk/articles/prison-population).

Table 2: Average Daily Northern Ireland Prison Population under Sentence of Immediate Custody by Gender and Current Age

		2015/16	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19
Males	18 - 20 Years	42	37	34	27
	21 - 29 Years	400	360	340	304
	30 - 39 Years	333	299	326	320
	40 - 49 Years	199	184	158	163
	50 - 59 Years	120	110	98	90
	60 + Years	62	60	66	63
	Total	1,157	1,051	1,022	968
Females	18 - 20 Years	0	1	2	2
	21 - 29 Years	10	10	9	7
	30 - 39 Years	7	8	8	11
	40 - 49 Years	9	7	11	10
	50 - 59 Years	6	5	6	6
	60 + Years	2	2	1	2
	Total	35	35	38	38
All	18 - 20 Years	43	38	36	29
	21 - 29 Years	410	370	349	312
	30 - 39 Years	340	308	334	331
	40 - 49 Years	208	192	169	174
	50 - 59 Years	126	115	104	96
	60 + Years	65	63	67	65
	Total	1,192	1,085	1,060	1,006

Components may not sum to totals due to rounding
Females may include Transgender persons

Table 3: Average Daily Northern Ireland Prison Population under Sentence of Immediate Custody by Current Age, Gender and Sentence Length

	2015/16			2016/17			2017/18			2018/19		
	Total Length	Custody Length	Licence Length	Total Length	Custody Length	Licence Length	Total Length	Custody Length	Licence Length	Total Length	Custody Length	Licence Length
Adult Males (Aged 21 and Over)												
Life	156	156	156	154	154	154	148	148	148	150	150	150
>10 Years, less than life	116	68	0	108	60	0	104	58	0	101	54	0
>5 Years & ≤10 Years	235	117	21	189	109	21	156	102	22	164	96	27
>4 Years & ≤5 Years	74	51	41	57	51	39	63	45	37	62	39	35
>3 Years & ≤4 Years	98	93	74	84	75	59	85	60	43	74	67	52
>2 Years & ≤3 Years	130	133	154	111	104	115	127	98	115	92	102	123
>1 Year & ≤2 Years	134	247	200	138	209	172	128	202	192	130	176	152
>6 Months & ≤12 Months	90	152	57	94	150	67	92	173	75	81	155	79
>3 Months & ≤6 Months	60	75	8	57	78	17	61	78	15	64	79	11
≤3 Months	21	21	0	22	23	0	22	22	0	23	24	0
No Licence	0	0	403	0	0	370	0	0	339	0	0	313
Missing	1	1	1	0	0	0	1	1	1	1	0	0
Total	1,115	1,115	1,115	1,014	1,014	1,014	988	988	988	941	941	941
Young Males (Aged Less than 21)												
Life	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	1
>10 Years, less than life	1	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
>5 Years & ≤10 Years	5	3	0	3	1	0	4	0	0	3	0	0
>4 Years & ≤5 Years	2	1	0	2	1	0	2	1	0	1	1	1
>3 Years & ≤4 Years	3	1	1	2	0	0	2	0	0	0	1	1
>2 Years & ≤3 Years	7	3	5	6	4	4	6	4	5	4	2	2
>1 Year & ≤2 Years	5	11	11	8	11	8	8	10	7	5	8	5
>6 Months & ≤12 Months	10	14	4	8	12	5	7	12	6	6	7	1
>3 Months & ≤6 Months	6	7	1	5	6	0	5	7	1	5	6	0
≤3 Months	2	2	0	2	2	0	2	2	0	2	2	0
No Licence	0	0	20	0	0	20	0	0	15	0	0	17
Missing	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Total	42	42	42	37	37	37	34	34	34	27	27	27
All Males	1,157	1,157	1,157	1,051	1,051	1,051	1,022	1,022	1,022	968	968	968
Adult Females (Aged 21 & Over)												
Life	6	6	6	6	6	6	7	7	7	7	7	7
>5 Years, less than life	6	3	0	2	1	0	3	1	0	5	1	0
>1 Year & ≤5 Years	12	11	11	11	9	8	13	12	10	13	12	9
>6 Months & ≤12 Months	5	7	2	10	10	3	5	8	4	6	9	5
>3 Months & ≤6 Months	5	6	0	4	6	2	6	7	0	4	6	0
≤3 Months	1	1	0	1	1	0	2	2	0	2	2	0
No Licence	0	0	15	0	0	14	0	0	15	0	0	15
Missing	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Total	34	34	34	33	33	33	36	36	36	36	36	36
Young Females (Aged Less than 21)												
Life	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
>5 Years, less than life	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0
>1 Year & ≤5 Years	0	0	0	1	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	0
>6 Months & ≤12 Months	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	1	0	0
>3 Months & ≤6 Months	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
≤3 months	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
No Licence	0	0	1	0	0	1	0	0	2	0	0	2
Total	1	1	1	1	1	1	2	2	2	2	2	2
All Females	34	34	34	35	35	35	38	38	38	38	38	38

Life includes those detained at the Secretary of State's Pleasure

Components may not sum to totals due to rounding

Females may include Transgender persons

Table 4: Average Daily Northern Ireland Prison Population under Sentence of Immediate Custody by Gender and Sentence Length

	2015/16			2016/17			2017/18			2018/19		
	Total Length	Custody Length	Licence Length	Total Length	Custody Length	Licence Length	Total Length	Custody Length	Licence Length	Total Length	Custody Length	Licence Length
Males												
Life	156	156	156	154	154	154	149	149	149	151	151	151
>10 Years, less than life	117	68	0	109	60	0	104	58	0	101	54	0
>5 Years & ≤10 Years	240	119	21	192	110	21	160	102	22	167	96	27
>4 Years & ≤5 Years	76	52	42	60	52	39	65	45	37	62	40	35
>3 Years & ≤4 Years	101	94	75	86	75	59	86	60	43	74	67	52
>2 Years & ≤3 Years	137	136	159	117	108	120	133	102	121	96	104	125
>1 Year & ≤2 Years	140	258	211	145	220	179	136	212	199	135	184	156
>6 Months & ≤12 Months	100	167	62	102	162	72	99	185	80	87	162	80
>3 Months & ≤6 Months	66	82	8	62	84	17	66	85	15	69	85	11
≤3 months	23	24	0	24	25	0	23	23	0	25	26	0
No Licence	0	0	423	0	0	390	0	0	354	0	0	330
Missing	1	1	1	0	0	0	1	1	1	0	0	0
Total Males	1,157	1,157	1,157	1,051	1,051	1,051	1,022	1,022	1,022	968	968	968
Females												
Life	6	6	6	6	6	6	7	7	7	7	7	7
>5 Years, less than life	6	3	0	2	1	0	3	1	0	5	1	0
>1 Year & ≤5 Years	12	11	11	11	9	8	13	12	10	13	12	9
>6 Months & ≤12 Months	5	7	2	10	11	3	6	9	4	7	10	5
>3 Months & ≤6 Months	5	6	0	4	6	2	6	7	0	4	6	0
≤3 months	1	1	0	1	1	0	2	3	0	2	2	0
No Licence	0	0	15	0	0	15	0	0	17	0	0	17
Missing	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Total Females	35	35	35	35	35	35	38	38	38	38	38	38
All												
Life	162	162	162	160	160	160	156	156	156	158	158	158
>5 Years, less than life	362	190	21	302	170	21	267	161	22	273	150	27
>1 Year & ≤5 Years	465	551	497	419	465	405	433	431	410	381	407	378
>6 Months & ≤12 Months	105	174	64	112	173	75	105	194	84	94	172	85
>3 Months & ≤6 Months	71	88	9	67	91	19	72	92	16	73	91	12
≤3 months	25	25	0	25	26	0	25	26	0	27	28	0
No Licence	0	0	438	0	0	405	0	0	371	0	0	347
Missing	1	1	1	0	0	0	1	1	1	0	0	0
Total	1,192	1,192	1,192	1,085	1,085	1,085	1,060	1,060	1,060	1,006	1,006	1,006

Life includes those detained at the Secretary of State's Pleasure
Components may not sum to totals due to rounding
Females my include Transgender persons

Table 5: Average Daily Northern Ireland Prison Population under Sentence of Immediate Custody by Current Age, Gender and Principal Offence

	2015/16		2016/17		2017/18		2018/19	
	Males	**Females**	**Males**	**Females**	**Males**	**Females**	**Males**	**Females**
Aged 21 & Over								
Violence Against the Person	386	18	362	15	344	14	316	16
Sexual Offences	128	0	111	0	104	2	102	2
Misc. Sexual	6	0	4	0	5	0	1	0
Robbery	112	2	86	1	90	3	82	1
Theft	49	2	31	5	34	5	36	5
Burglary	61	0	60	0	59	0	53	0
Criminal Damage	38	4	37	2	34	1	41	1
Drug Offences	84	3	92	2	90	3	81	2
Possession of Weapons Offences	14	0	15	0	13	0	14	0
Public Order Offences	177	4	166	3	159	5	164	7
Motoring Offences	20	0	18	0	25	0	13	0
Fraud	7	0	4	1	6	1	5	0
Other Offences	31	1	27	2	25	2	33	2
Missing	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Total Aged 21 and Over	**1,115**	**34**	**1,014**	**33**	**988**	**36**	**941**	**36**
Aged Less than 21								
Violence Against the Person	12	0	8	0	11	0	6	0
Sexual Offences	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Misc. Sexual	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Robbery	5	0	4	0	4	0	5	0
Theft	4	0	4	0	2	0	3	0
Burglary	7	0	4	1	4	0	3	0
Criminal Damage	5	1	2	0	3	0	3	0
Drug Offences	0	0	0	0	1	0	1	0
Possession of Weapons Offences	1	0	0	0	0	0	1	0
Public Order Offences	5	0	11	0	8	1	5	1
Motoring Offences	1	0	2	0	0	0	1	0
Fraud	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Other Offences	1	0	1	0	1	0	0	0
Missing	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Total Aged Less than 21	**42**	**1**	**37**	**1**	**34**	**2**	**27**	**2**
All	**1,157**	**35**	**1,051**	**35**	**1,022**	**38**	**968**	**38**

Components may not sum to totals due to rounding

Females may include Transgender persons

Due to revisions in classification for Public Order and Other Offences, data prior to 2015/16 will not be consistent across these categories. The revision involved reclassifying Recall Offences from Other to Public Order Offences

Table 6: Average Daily Northern Ireland Prison Population under Sentence of Immediate Custody by Gender and Principal Offence

		2015/16	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19
Males	Violence Against the Person	397	370	354	322
	Sexual Offences	130	112	104	102
	Misc. Sexual	6	4	5	1
	Robbery	117	90	94	86
	Theft	53	35	36	39
	Burglary	67	64	63	56
	Criminal Damage	43	39	37	43
	Drug Offences	84	92	91	82
	Possession of Weapons Offences	15	15	13	14
	Public Order Offences	182	177	167	168
	Motoring Offences	21	20	25	14
	Fraud	7	4	6	5
	Other Offences	33	28	26	33
	Missing	1	0	0	0
	Total	**1,157**	**1,051**	**1,022**	**968**
Females	Violence Against the Person	18	16	14	16
	Sexual Offences	0	0	2	2
	Misc. Sexual	0	0	0	0
	Robbery	2	1	3	1
	Theft	2	5	6	6
	Burglary	0	1	1	0
	Criminal Damage	4	3	2	1
	Drug Offences	3	2	3	2
	Possession of Weapons Offences	0	0	0	0
	Public Order Offences	4	3	6	8
	Motoring Offences	0	0	0	0
	Fraud	0	1	1	0
	Other Offences	1	2	2	2
	Missing	0	0	0	0
	Total	**35**	**35**	**38**	**38**
All	Violence Against the Person	416	386	368	338
	Sexual Offences	130	112	106	104
	Misc. Sexual	6	4	5	1
	Robbery	119	91	97	88
	Theft	55	40	42	45
	Burglary	68	64	64	57
	Criminal Damage	47	42	38	45
	Drug Offences	87	95	94	84
	Possession of Weapons Offences	15	15	13	14
	Public Order Offences	187	180	173	176
	Motoring Offences	21	20	25	14
	Fraud	7	6	7	5
	Other Offences	32	30	27	35
	Missing	1	0	0	0
	Total	**1,192**	**1,085**	**1,060**	**1,006**

Components may not sum to totals due to rounding
Females may include Transgender persons
Due to revisions in classification for Public Order and Other Offences, data prior to 2015/16 will not be consistent across these categories. The revision involved reclassifying Recall Offences from Other to Public Order Offences

Table 7: Northern Ireland Prison Receptions by Prisoner Type, Gender and Establishment

		2015/16	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19
Remand	Maghaberry	2,170	2,239	2,216	2,560
	Magilligan	0	0	19	26
	Hydebank Wood College Males	340	316	305	351
	Hydebank Wood College Females	215	235	246	269
	Total	2,725	2,790	2,786	3,206
Immediate Custody	Maghaberry	1,253	1,473	1,361	1,373
	Magilligan	0	0	7	11
	Hydebank Wood College Males	143	151	134	129
	Hydebank Wood College Females	84	105	117	103
	Total	1,480	1,729	1,619	1,616
Fine Default	Maghaberry	405	547	532	308
	Magilligan	0	0	1	1
	Hydebank Wood College Males	35	38	20	25
	Hydebank Wood College Females	55	68	58	37
	Total	495	653	611	371
Non-Criminal	Maghaberry	24	77	61	47
	Magilligan	0	0	6	5
	Hydebank Wood College Males	1	6	7	5
	Hydebank Wood College Females	1	2	2	2
	Total	26	85	76	59
Males		4,371	4,847	4,669	4,841
Females		355	410	423	411
Establishment	Maghaberry	3,852	4,336	4,170	4,288
	Magilligan	0	0	33	43
	Hydebank Wood College Males	519	511	466	510
	Hydebank Wood College Females	355	410	423	411
	Total	**4,726**	**5,257**	**5,092**	**5,252**

Females may include Transgender persons

Table 8: Northern Ireland Prison Receptions under Sentence of Immediate Custody by Gender and Age at Reception

		2015/16	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19
Males	18 - 20 Years	141	145	121	116
	21 - 29 Years	606	713	626	604
	30 - 39 Years	354	449	457	465
	40 - 49 Years	192	170	164	199
	50 - 59 Years	69	105	90	86
	60 + Years	34	42	44	43
	Total	1,396	1,624	1,502	1,513
Females	18 - 20 Years	7	9	13	10
	21 - 29 Years	37	37	37	30
	30 - 39 Years	27	20	27	33
	40 - 49 Years	5	19	20	16
	50 - 59 Years	8	18	15	10
	60 + Years	0	2	5	4
	Total	84	105	117	103
All	18 - 20 Years	148	154	134	126
	21 - 29 Years	643	750	663	634
	30 - 39 Years	381	469	484	498
	40 - 49 Years	197	189	184	215
	50 - 59 Years	77	123	105	96
	60 + Years	34	44	49	47
	Total	1,480	1,729	1,619	1,616

Females may include Transgender persons

Table 9: Northern Ireland Prison Receptions under Sentence of Immediate Custody by Age at Reception, Gender and Sentence Length

	2015/16			2016/17			2017/18			2018/19		
	Total Length	Custody Length	Licence Length	Total Length	Custody Length	Licence Length	Total Length	Custody Length	Licence Length	Total Length	Custody Length	Licence Length
Adult Males (Aged 21 & Over)												
Life	10	10	10	16	16	16	13	13	13	13	13	13
>10 Years, less than life	18	8	0	12	5	0	12	7	0	12	6	0
>5 Years & ≤10 Years	42	29	7	45	17	5	59	19	4	58	17	4
>4 Years & ≤5 Years	18	6	5	45	16	3	27	11	8	29	16	12
>3 Years & ≤4 Years	46	29	10	77	29	10	49	31	18	57	30	23
>2 Years & ≤3 Years	96	54	34	139	69	60	112	59	50	104	58	47
>1 Year & ≤2 Years	148	159	104	230	234	190	194	168	136	195	183	131
>6 Months & ≤12 Months	252	303	56	289	411	153	264	382	121	252	361	131
>3 Months & ≤6 Months	362	392	16	363	417	38	379	419	35	393	426	20
≤3 months	253	255	0	263	265	0	271	271	0	282	285	0
No Licence	0	0	1,003	0	0	1,004	0	0	995	0	0	1,014
Missing	10	10	10	0	0	0	1	1	1	2	2	2
Total	1,255	1,255	1,255	1,479	1,479	1,479	1,381	1,381	1,381	1,397	1,397	1,397
Young Males (Aged Less than 21)												
Life	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	1	2	2	2
>10 Years, less than life	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
>5 Years & ≤10 Years	3	1	1	4	0	0	3	0	0	2	0	0
>4 Years & ≤5 Years	0	1	1	2	1	0	1	1	0	2	1	1
>3 Years & ≤4 Years	0	0	0	3	0	0	2	1	1	3	1	1
>2 Years & ≤3 Years	7	2	2	11	5	6	10	2	2	5	2	2
>1 Year & ≤2 Years	8	9	7	25	21	14	15	15	15	13	13	8
>6 Months & ≤12 Months	43	46	6	32	48	18	25	32	6	27	31	8
>3 Months & ≤6 Months	48	51	1	36	38	1	37	42	1	37	41	3
≤3 months	31	31	0	32	32	0	27	27	0	25	25	0
No Licence	0	0	123	0	0	106	0	0	95	0	0	91
Missing	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Total	141	141	141	145	145	145	121	121	121	116	116	116
All Males	1,396	1,396	1,396	1,624	1,624	1,624	1,502	1,502	1,502	1,513	1,513	1,513
Adult Females (Aged 21 & Over)												
Life	0	0	0	1	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0
>5 Years, less than life	1	0	0	1	0	0	3	1	0	1	0	0
>1 Year & ≤5 Years	7	3	4	17	11	10	15	7	9	17	10	4
>6 Months & ≤12 Months	16	18	3	30	32	5	19	25	7	17	22	7
>3 Months & ≤6 Months	34	37	2	31	36	5	41	44	1	33	36	1
≤3 months	19	19	0	16	16	0	26	27	0	25	25	0
No Licence	0	0	68	0	0	75	0	0	87	0	0	81
Missing	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Total	77	77	77	96	96	96	104	104	104	93	93	93
Young Females (Aged Less than 21)												
Life	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
>5 Years, less than life	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
>1 Year & ≤5 Years	1	0	0	2	2	1	2	1	1	0	0	0
>6 Months & ≤12 Months	0	1	1	3	3	0	2	2	0	5	5	0
>3 Months & ≤6 Months	3	3	0	3	3	0	2	3	0	1	1	0
≤3 months	3	3	0	1	1	0	7	7	0	4	4	0
No Licence	0	0	6	0	0	8	0	0	12	0	0	10
Total	7	7	7	9	9	9	13	13	13	10	10	10
All Females	84	84	84	105	105	105	117	117	117	103	103	103

Life includes those detained at the Secretary of State's Pleasure

Females may include Transgender persons

Table 10: Northern Ireland Prison Receptions under Sentence of Immediate Custody by Gender and Sentence Length

	2015/16			2016/17			2017/18			2018/19		
	Total Length	Custody Length	Licence Length	Total Length	Custody Length	Licence Length	Total Length	Custody Length	Licence Length	Total Length	Custody Length	Licence Length
Males												
Life	10	10	10	16	16	16	14	14	14	15	15	15
>10 Years, less than life	19	8	0	12	5	0	12	7	0	12	6	0
>5 Years & ≤10 Years	45	30	8	49	17	5	62	19	4	60	17	4
>4 Years & ≤5 Years	18	7	6	47	17	3	28	12	8	31	17	13
>3 Years & ≤4 Years	46	29	10	80	29	10	51	32	19	60	31	24
>2 Years & ≤3 Years	103	56	36	150	74	66	122	61	52	109	60	49
>1 Year & ≤2 Years	156	168	111	255	255	204	209	183	151	208	196	139
>6 Months & ≤12 Months	295	349	62	321	459	171	289	414	127	279	392	139
>3 Months & ≤6 Months	410	443	17	399	455	39	416	461	36	430	467	23
≤3 months	284	286	0	295	297	0	298	298	0	307	310	0
No Licence	0	0	1,126	0	0	1,110	0	0	1,090	0	0	1,105
Missing	10	10	10	0	0	0	1	1	1	2	2	2
Total Males	1,396	1,396	1,396	1,624	1,624	1,624	1,502	1,502	1,502	1,513	1,513	1,513
Females												
Life	0	0	0	1	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0
>5 Years, less than life	1	0	0	1	0	0	3	1	0	1	0	0
>1 Year & ≤5 Years	8	3	4	19	13	11	17	8	10	17	10	4
>6 Months & ≤12 Months	16	19	4	33	35	5	21	27	7	22	27	7
>3 Months & ≤6 Months	37	40	2	34	39	5	43	47	1	34	37	1
≤3 months	22	22	0	17	17	0	33	34	0	29	29	0
No Licence	0	0	74	0	0	83	0	0	99	0	0	91
Missing	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Total Females	84	84	84	105	105	105	117	117	117	103	103	103
All												
Life	10	10	10	17	17	17	14	14	14	15	15	15
>5 Years, less than life	65	38	8	62	22	5	77	27	4	73	23	4
>1 Year & ≤5 Years	331	263	167	551	388	294	427	296	240	425	314	229
>6 Months & ≤12 Months	311	368	66	354	494	176	310	441	134	301	419	146
>3 Months & ≤6 Months	447	483	19	433	494	44	459	508	37	464	504	24
≤3 Months	306	308	0	312	314	0	331	332	0	336	339	0
No Licence	0	0	1,200	0	0	1,193	0	0	1,189	0	0	1,196
Missing	10	10	10	0	0	0	1	1	1	2	2	2
Total	1,480	1,480	1,480	1,729	1,729	1,729	1,619	1,619	1,619	1,616	1,616	1,616

Life includes those detained at the Secretary of State's Pleasure
Females may include Transgender persons

Table 11: Northern Ireland Prison Receptions under Sentence of Immediate Custody by Age at Reception, Gender and Principal Offence

	2015/16		2016/17		2017/18		2018/19	
	Males	Females	Males	Females	Males	Females	Males	Females
Aged 21 & Over								
Violence Against the Person	229	17	301	24	253	19	234	25
Sexual Offences	50	0	54	2	54	1	60	1
Misc. Sexual	9	0	13	0	8	0	3	0
Robbery	23	1	37	0	49	3	54	0
Theft	139	16	138	25	133	33	177	24
Burglary	72	4	109	0	91	1	119	5
Criminal Damage	114	19	138	13	148	7	127	7
Drug Offences	120	3	189	8	134	7	174	5
Possession of Weapons Offences	21	0	22	1	16	0	19	0
Public Order Offences	295	12	283	10	300	18	253	21
Motoring Offences	74	2	81	2	94	3	64	0
Fraud	17	0	11	4	19	3	10	1
Other Offences	88	3	103	7	82	8	103	4
Missing	4	0	0	0	0	1	0	0
Total Aged 21 & Over	1,255	77	1,479	96	1,381	104	1,397	93
Aged Less than 21								
Violence Against the Person	34	1	31	4	23	3	27	3
Sexual Offences	0	0	1	0	1	0	0	0
Misc. Sexual	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Robbery	2	0	7	0	8	0	8	0
Theft	25	1	18	1	22	2	19	2
Burglary	21	2	14	1	14	1	15	0
Criminal Damage	23	2	17	2	14	4	15	0
Drug Offences	2	1	4	0	2	0	11	0
Possession of Weapons Offences	3	0	1	0	4	0	5	0
Public Order Offences	18	0	34	1	25	3	11	5
Motoring Offences	4	0	8	0	3	0	2	0
Fraud	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Other Offences	9	0	10	0	5	0	3	0
Missing	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Total Aged Less than 21	141	7	145	9	121	13	116	10
All	1,396	84	1,624	105	1,502	117	1,513	103

Females may include Transgender persons
Due to revisions in classification for Public Order and Other Offences, data prior to 2015/16 will not be consistent across these categories. The revision involved reclassifying Recall Offences from Other to Public Order Offences

Table 12: Northern Ireland Prison Receptions under Sentence of Immediate Custody by Gender and Principal Offence

		2015/16	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19
Males	Violence Against the Person	263	332	276	261
	Sexual Offences	50	55	55	60
	Misc. Sexual	9	13	8	3
	Robbery	25	44	57	62
	Theft	164	156	155	196
	Burglary	93	123	105	134
	Criminal Damage	137	155	162	142
	Drug Offences	122	193	136	185
	Possession of Weapons Offences	24	23	20	24
	Public Order Offences	313	317	325	264
	Motoring Offences	78	89	97	66
	Fraud	17	11	19	10
	Other Offences	97	113	87	106
	Missing	4	0	0	0
	Total	**1,396**	**1,624**	**1,502**	**1,513**
Females	Violence Against the Person	18	28	22	28
	Sexual Offences	0	2	1	1
	Misc. Sexual	0	0	0	0
	Robbery	1	0	3	0
	Theft	17	26	35	26
	Burglary	6	1	2	5
	Criminal Damage	21	15	11	7
	Drug Offences	4	8	7	5
	Possession of Weapons Offences	0	1	0	0
	Public Order Offences	12	11	21	26
	Motoring Offences	2	2	3	0
	Fraud	0	4	3	1
	Other Offences	3	7	8	4
	Missing	0	0	1	0
	Total	**84**	**105**	**117**	**103**
All	Violence Against the Person	281	360	298	289
	Sexual Offences	50	57	56	61
	Misc. Sexual	9	13	8	3
	Robbery	26	44	60	62
	Theft	181	182	190	222
	Burglary	99	124	107	139
	Criminal Damage	158	170	173	149
	Drug Offences	126	201	143	190
	Possession of Weapons Offences	24	24	20	24
	Public Order Offences	325	328	346	290
	Motoring Offences	80	91	100	66
	Fraud	17	15	22	11
	Other Offences	100	120	95	110
	Missing	4	0	1	0
	Total	**1,480**	**1,729**	**1,619**	**1,616**

Females may include Transgender persons
Due to revisions in classification for Public Order and Other Offences, data prior to
2015/16 will not be consistent across these categories. The revision involved
reclassifying Recall Offences from Other to Public Order Offences

Methodology and Counting Rules

National Statistics

National Statistics status means that official statistics meet the highest standards of trustworthiness, quality and public value.

All official statistics should comply with all aspects of the Code of Practice for Official Statistics. They are awarded National Statistics status following an assessment by the Authority's regulatory arm. The Authority considers whether the statistics meet the highest standards of Code compliance, including the value they add to public decisions and debate.

It is the Department of Justice's responsibility to maintain compliance with the standards expected of National Statistics. If we become concerned about whether these statistics are still meeting the appropriate standards, we will discuss any concerns with the Authority promptly. National Statistics status can be removed at any point when the highest standards are not maintained, and reinstated when standards are restored.

Users

The statistics included in this publication are used extensively and meet a broad spectrum of user needs as shown below:

User	Summary of main statistical needs
DoJ Minister/Director General of the Northern Ireland Prison Service	Use the statistics to monitor the prison population and capacity of the prison estate
NI Assembly	Statistics are used to answer assembly questions
Policy teams in DoJ	Statistics are used to inform policy development and to monitor impact of changes over time and the impact they have on the system
Agencies responsible for offender management	Current and historical robust administrative data are used to support performance management information at national and local levels within each agency to complement their understanding of the current picture and trends over time
Academia, students and businesses	Used as a source of statistics for research purposes and to support lectures, presentations and conferences
Journalists	Used as a compendium of robust data on prison population
General public	Data are used to respond to ad-hoc requests and requests made under the Freedom of Information (FOI) Act

Data Source

The data used in this bulletin are derived from analysing the daily prison population for a given year, taken from the Northern Ireland Prison Service Management Information System (PRISM). As this is mainly an administrative database, rigorous validation procedures are followed to ensure the data presented is as accurate as possible. More details on the validation procedures followed are included in the Data Quality and Validation Section of this report. Whilst these procedures were carried out by the

Analytical Services Group of the Department of Justice, the data is subject to the limitations inherent in any large scale recording system and to variation in recording practice over time.

Unlawfully at large prisoners are excluded from these numbers.

Discontinuities

This bulletin was subject to a consultation exercise, during April/May 2018, regarding proposed changes to the reporting period. Details of this consultation can be found at:
https://www.justice-ni.gov.uk/publications/results-2018-consultation-review-reporting-period-published-annual-national-statistical-publication

The consultation invited responses to the proposal of using financial year data as the main reporting period for future publications. The responses were favourable, with no objections to the proposed changes. As a result, this publication focuses mainly on data by financial year.

Definitions

Average Prisoner Population

Daily prison population snapshots are downloaded from the PRISM system as at midnight; the average daily prisoner population for a given year is derived from the average of these.

Receptions Data

Receptions are counted whenever there is an entry into prison (committal) and/or a change in a prisoner's custody type from one day to the next. For example, if during the time period in question a prisoner is committed into prison as a remand prisoner, then without being released is sentenced, this would count as one remand reception and one sentenced reception.

However, if a sentenced prisoner receives another sentence whilst currently serving a sentence, this will not be counted as a new sentenced reception, as the custody type has not changed.

If a prisoner is released and is subsequently committed on the same or different custody status this is counted as a new reception.

The receptions data are based on the premise that when a person is received more than once during a year he/she will be counted separately on each occasion, including each occasion of change of status between remand and sentenced/Fine Default during the same period of custody.

Caution needs to be exercised when looking at fine default receptions. Fine default prisoners are counted on the prison system as sentenced prisoners, so if a prisoner is sentenced and subsequently (without being released) serves some time as a fine default prisoner their status does not change. In essence this means that a fine default reception is only picked up if there is a change from remand to fine default, or if they are committed to prison as a fine default prisoner. Therefore fine default receptions shown in this report may well undercount the actual number of fine default receptions. This is not an issue when calculating the fine default average prison population figures as they can be identified as fine defaults.

If a prisoner is committed and released on the same day then they will not be included in this analysis as the daily population snapshot is taken at midnight.

From 2009 onwards the methodology for producing receptions data changed, so too has the source from whence the data originates. Therefore caution should be exercised when making comparisons with data before 2009.

Age

For the daily averages the age of a prisoner is calculated at the time of the snapshot.

For receptions data, the age of a prisoner is calculated at age of the reception.

Some of the tables in this bulletin refer to 'adult' and 'young' prisoners. An 'adult' is aged 21 years and over and a 'young' prisoner is aged under 21 years.

Offence Grouping

An extensive exercise was carried out in late 2013 by statisticians across Criminal Justice in Northern Ireland, to reclassify all offences into main offence groupings, as far as possible, that are more in line with England and Wales. Due to this exercise receptions data published prior to 2009 on offence groupings will not be directly comparable with those from 2009 onwards. Data relating to averages pre 2013 on offence groupings will also not be directly comparable, as data published on averages pre 2013 used the old classification system.

A further review was carried out in 2017 which resulted in two offence categories being re-classified. The two groupings which are affected are Public Order and Other Offences. Recalls and revocation of licence offences are no longer classified as Other Offences; they are now classified as Public Order Offences. As a result of these changes, it is not possible to compare any data relating to these two categories contained in this report with any data relating to these two categories from previous reports. However, all data contained in this report for previous years have been revised to take this new methodology into account.

Principal Offence

Where a person is received under sentence for two or more offences, only the principal offence is used. Following a review during 2013 by statisticians in the Department of Justice, Northern Ireland, an updated algorithm for calculating principal offence was adopted. Details on this can be found in a special paper using the link https://www.justice-ni.gov.uk/publications/methodology-paper-adoption-and-implementation-principal-offence-northern-ireland.

Due to the way data is stored and extracted in PRISM, sentence lengths for each individual offence cannot be extracted; as such calculating principal offence using actual sentence length is not possible. Instead principal offence using the principal at trial algorithm is used as the basis for calculating principal offence for prison statistics. This calculates principal offence based on the offence that has the statutory highest maximum sentence. For offences with the same highest maximum sentence then further flags are used to calculate the principal offence. More detail on this can be found in the above report. Due to slight differences in data, the methodology is adapted for Prison purposes. PRISM holds a flag which determines if the offence is a main offence or not; this flag is used in the Prison methodology. The actual offence date is held in PRISM but due to difficulties extracting this, it cannot be used as a method for calculating principal offence. As such this step in the process is replaced by ordering based on the numerical offence code for each offence.

Sentence Length

If a person is received under sentence for two or more offences at the same time, sentence length is taken as the longest of any concurrent sentences, with consecutive sentences being treated as one sentence equal in length to the sentences added together.

However, if a sentenced prisoner receives another sentence whilst currently serving a sentence, the sentence details of the first sentence are used to work out sentence lengths.

Type of Prisoner

Currently there are three prison establishments in Northern Ireland - HMP Magilligan, HMP Maghaberry and Hydebank Wood College. Female prisoners are held in a separate unit within Hydebank Wood College.

Whilst the prison population consists mainly of offenders sentenced by the courts to immediate custody for criminal offences, it also includes fine defaults, remand prisoners and a small number of non-criminal prisoners.

Fine defaulters are those who have been given a fine by the courts and have not paid the fine within a stipulated time, and have then been the subject of a warrant issued by the court. The duration of sentence is dependent upon the amount of the unpaid fine and ranges from one week where the default is £200 or less, to ten years where the default exceeds £1 million.

Remand prisoners include those charged with an offence and whom the courts have ruled should be detained in custody pending trial; those whom the courts have permitted to be released on bail pending trial but have not as yet met the conditions (usually financial) of the bail; those who had been released on bail but have subsequently been re-admitted to prison because they breached a condition of bail; and those who have been found guilty by the court but have been ordered to be detained in custody pending sentence.

Non-criminal prisoners are mainly made up of those being held under the terms of the Immigration Act.

Data Quality and Validation

The steps taken to quality assure this information for statistical purposes are described below.

The data used to derive the information originates from the Northern Ireland Prison Service (NIPS) case management system (PRISM). This is a live recording system which is used extensively by NIPS for day to day case management purposes. As such the information extracted, while subject to human data entry error, needs to be highly accurate as it is the main information tool used to manage prisoners on a day-to-day basis, to list their status/privileges and, for that matter to regulate discharge dates/record sentence lengths.   It is used not only by Prison Service Staff but also Probation Staff. The data from which the average population and receptions information are derived are therefore core fields, the accuracy of which is a requirement for the effective handling of day-to-day prison operations.

It is perhaps important to emphasise that Prison Service Staff themselves have a vested interest in the complete reliability of the data populated into the fields used for this analysis. Information is not derived from subsidiary screens which do not contribute to the officer's own capacity to discharge his/her duties or which can be bypassed without impacting immediately on the officer's own work.

The procedure undertaken to derive the statistics now has the following stages. A data download is extracted from PRISM which includes details on individual prisoners. This is imported into the statistical package SPSS and this data is used as the primary source of information to calculate the prison population. Rigorous validation exercises are then conducted to ensure that the information produced is as accurate as possible.

These Data Quality and Validation procedures can be split into two parts, firstly ensuring the data from PRISM is accurate and up to date. For this purpose, manual checks are carried out and data corrected to ensure:

- that all sentenced prisoners have a sentence length;
- that there are no sentence lengths that are discrepant (e.g. murder offences attracting a sentence of 7 days);
- that the total effective sentence adds up to the custody sentence plus the licence sentence;
- that the stated age of prisoners is appropriate and realistic (e.g. no-one aged 8,108, etc.);

- that the gender of prisoners is appropriate for the prison establishment (e.g. no male prisoners in a female prison); and
- that a general check of the data as a whole suggests no other anomalies.

Any such discrepancies identified at this stage (for which there may on, albeit rare, occasion be a valid reason) are checked out against the Integrated Court Operations System (ICOS), the Criminal Records Viewer and additional screens on PRISM itself. Any issues are resolved on an individual basis.

Secondly, an extensive manual cross checking exercise is conducted using PRISM to ensure that after manipulating the data, the information produced is correct. A list of all receptions for each prisoner is listed and details are then cross checked manually against the records held on PRISM.

After validating and updating the database using the above method, 18.8% of sentence lengths were changed and 14.6% of offence groupings were changed. Whilst these checking procedures are extensive and robust, it is not possible to validate every case so it is worth noting that the statistics contained in the publication are inevitably subject to the limitations inherent in any large-scale recording system and to variations in recording practice over time. However, as PRISM is used extensively for the operation of the core business and the fields used are fields in the accuracy of which officers themselves have a strong vested interest, one can now be confident in the accuracy and robustness of the source administrative data to a degree much greater than would normally be the case with administrative systems requiring lower degrees of operational precision.

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.

Analysis

Significant Testing

Findings in this report were compared using statistical testing. This was done to provide a level of confidence as to whether there was a real difference in findings between years or categories, or whether apparent differences were simply within the range expected with chance variation. The test employed was a Chi Square, which tests for association between two categorical variables - for example, gender (males and females) and offence category (Theft and non-Theft). Where a statistically significant result was found (i.e. a result with a probability of less than 5.0% under chance conditions) this has been reported in the text.

Presentation

For ease of use figures in pie charts are given as whole numbers whereas percentages throughout the text are to one decimal point.

Whilst tables of information have been included in the tabular appendix containing data for the last four financial years, similar tables are also published alongside this bulletin in Microsoft Excel format containing date for the last five financial years.