

# Overview of crime and justice statistics

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## Table of contents

1. [Flowchart](#)
2. [Source information and flowchart details](#)

# 1 . Flowchart

## 2 . Source information and flowchart details

### Criminal conduct

While generally statistics referenced relate to crime in England and Wales, some fraud offences may occur outside of England and Wales, but affect victims within. It is not possible to measure all crime. The Crime Survey for England and Wales (CSEW) measures victim-based crimes only and samples from just the resident household population (excluding various groups). The Commercial Victimization Survey only measures crimes against select business sectors. The police and National Fraud Intelligence Bureau record only those offences that come to their attention.

[Back to flowchart](#)

### [Crime Survey for England and Wales](#)

The CSEW asks both children aged 10 to 15 and adults aged 16 and over about their experiences of crime. For the crime types and population it covers, the CSEW provides the best estimates of the extent of crime in England and Wales and how this has changed over time, including crimes not reported to, or recorded by, the police. More information can be found in the [Crime Statistics Quarterly Publication](#) and [User Guide to Crime Statistics](#).

[Back to flowchart](#)

### [Commercial Victimization Survey](#)

The Commercial Victimization Survey (CVS) is a survey in which businesses from select sectors in England and Wales are asked about the extent and nature of crimes they experienced. The CVS measures crimes experienced by individual businesses' premises in selected sectors. The selection of sectors covered varies each year. For more information, see [Crime Against Businesses Statistics](#).

[Back to flowchart](#)

### Crimes dealt with by other agencies

Not all records of crime are captured within this framework. Some crimes are dealt with by other agencies, beside the police or National Fraud Intelligence Bureau (NFIB). These agencies will collate separate records of offences that are not fed into police recorded crime. Whilst not an exhaustive list, some examples are: [Border Force](#) and [Department for Work and Pensions](#).

[Back to flowchart](#)

## Police recorded crime

Police recorded crimes are defined by the [Notifiable Offence List](#) and provide a measure of demand on the police. These are the primary source for subnational crime statistics and low volume crimes (for example, homicide) and “victimless” crimes such as possession offences. They cover a wider population and broader set of offences than the CSEW but omit crimes undetected by the police. (See the [Crime Statistics Quarterly Publication](#) and [User Guide to Crime Statistics](#), raw data is available from the [Home Office](#).)

[Back to flowchart](#)

## National Fraud Intelligence Bureau

The NFIB is a government-funded initiative run by the City of London Police, who lead national policing on fraud. The NFIB receives reports of fraud via Action Fraud, a national fraud reporting centre that records incidents of fraud directly from the public and organisations, and via two industry bodies; Cifas and Financial Fraud Action UK (FFA UK). For more information, see the [User Guide to Crime Statistics](#).

[Back to flowchart](#)

## Crime outcomes

These are crime outcomes as assigned by the police and are designed to strengthen police discretion, promote a more victim-orientated approach and increase transparency in policing. Every recorded crime is allocated one of a number of outcomes (these can be grouped into three categories; court action, out of court action, and no criminal justice outcomes). For more information, see [Crime Outcomes in England and Wales](#).

[Back to flowchart](#)

## Criminal Justice Statistics Quarterly

The criminal justice statistics quarterly, published by the Ministry of Justice, provides information on offenders as they are processed by the justice system. Statistics on out-of-court disposals, court proceedings, conviction and sentencing statistics are available, as well as statistics on offending histories. For more information, see the [Criminal Justice Statistics Quarterly](#) and [A Guide to Criminal Court Statistics](#).

[Back to flowchart](#)

## Offender Management Statistics Quarterly

The Ministry of Justice also publishes the offender management statistics quarterly, which includes main statistics relating to offenders who are in prison or under Probation Service supervision. Included are flows into these services (receptions into prison or probation starts) and flows out (releases from prison or probation terminations). For more information, see the latest version of the [Offender Management Statistics Quarterly](#) and [Proven Reoffending Statistics](#).

[Back to flowchart](#)

## Flowchart details

## All other crimes

Other crimes, which are not covered by either the CSEW or CVS, include crimes without a victim, such as drugs or weapons possession, or crimes suffered by people not living in households (for example, those living in communal establishments such as nursing homes or student halls of residence).

[Back to flowchart](#)

## Crime is not reported to the police

Crimes may not be reported to the police for a number of reasons. The most common reasons identified by the CSEW include; the victim thinking the police would not have been bothered or interested, the victim believing the police could have done nothing about it and the victim believing the crime was too trivial to report. This is the main reason why CSEW estimates of crime are generally higher and are thought to better reflect the true extent of crime.

[Back to flowchart](#)

## Records transferred or cancelled by the police

A transferred or cancelled record occurs when the police have originally recorded an offence, but have subsequently determined that the crime did not take place, or was recorded in error (in which case the record exits the process) or needs to be transferred to another force (transferred records start at the beginning of this process, in another force area). The Home Office publish "Transferred or cancelled records" data, [annually](#) and [quarterly](#).

[Back to flowchart](#)

## Court actions

Court actions are where the accused has to attend a court process. These include cases that have an outcome of charge or summons, or where an offence was taken into consideration (TICs). These proceedings generally involve the Crown Prosecution Service (CPS). Statistics on the number of CPS convictions and unsuccessful outcomes are available, see [CPS Case Outcomes by Principal Offence](#). The Home Office also publish this data; [Crime Outcomes in England and Wales publication](#).

[Back to flowchart](#)

## Out of court actions

Where offenders do not enter the court process, other outcomes include; cautions (for adults or young people), Penalty Notices for Disorder (PNDs), cannabis warnings and community resolutions. Statistics are published within [Crime Outcomes in England and Wales publication](#) (Home Office) and Criminal Justice Statistics Quarterly (Ministry of Justice). These data sources are not comparable since the latter refers to offenders and the former to offences.

[Back to flowchart](#)

## No criminal justice action

Where the police have taken their investigation as far as they can, but have not progressed to “court” or “out of court” action, reasons vary greatly. As a result there is also a wide range of “no criminal justice action” outcomes including; instances where no suspect has been identified, where the victim does not support action and cases where there are evidential difficulties; Crime Outcomes in England and Wales publication.

[Back to flowchart](#)

## Non-notifiable crimes

Non-notifiable offences are offences dealt with exclusively by magistrates’ courts or by the police issuing a Penalty Notice for Disorder or a Fixed Penalty Notice (these include offences such as prosecutions by TV Licensing). Non-notifiable crimes are not included in police recorded crime and crime outcomes statistics. However, they make up a great number of criminal proceedings in the [Criminal Justice Statistics Quarterly](#).

[Back to flowchart](#)

## Magistrates’ court

Virtually all criminal court cases begin in magistrates’ courts and 95% finish there. In some instances a case can start in a magistrates’ court and finish in a higher court, normally the Crown Court. The magistrates’ courts hear the less serious summary cases such as common assault or motoring offences as well as some “triable-either-way” cases such as theft.

[Back to flowchart](#)

## Crown Court

The Crown Court is a single court, which sits in 77 court centres across England and Wales. It carries out three principal types of activity: jury trials for the more serious criminal cases, the sentencing of those who are convicted in either the Crown Court or magistrates’ courts and appeals from decisions of magistrates.

[Back to flowchart](#)

## Custody

If sentenced to custody, adults aged over 21 are imprisoned, while adults aged 18 to 20 will be sentenced to detention in a young offenders’ institution. Penalties range from a short sentence (less than 12 months) to mandatory life sentences depending on the seriousness of the offence. For more detailed information, see [A Guide to Criminal Justice Statistics](#).

[Back to flowchart](#)

## Community sentence

A community sentence (or order) can comprise up to 12 requirements on the offender, which are dependent on the offender and the offence they committed. Requirements could include unpaid work (formally known as community service), an electronically-monitored curfew, mental health training, or meetings with a probation officer.

[Back to flowchart](#)

## Suspended sentence

A suspended sentence enables a court that passes a custodial sentence of 12 months or less to suspend that sentence for a given time (between six months and two years). During that time, the offender must undertake certain requirements in the community (for example, a community sentence). If the offender breaches the requirements the custodial sentence will then take effect.

[Back to flowchart](#)

## Fines

Fines are available to punish all offenders (except in cases where a mandatory minimum sentence applies, such as for murder). Fines make up the vast majority of sentences for non-notifiable offences. With regards to notifiable crimes, they make up around a fifth of all sentences handed out.

[Back to flowchart](#)

## Other disposals

There are a range of other disposals available to the courts. In some cases they are used in conjunction with other sentences handed down. In others, they are the only punishment. Examples of other disposals include discharges, compensation to the victim and further sentences like confiscation orders and disqualification from driving.

[Back to flowchart](#)

## Prison receptions and releases, probation starts and probation terminations

[Offender Management Statistics Quarterly](#) includes main statistics relating to offenders who are in prison or under Probation Service supervision. It covers flows into these services (receptions into prison or probation starts) and flows out (discharges from prison or probation terminations) as well as the caseload of both services at specific points in time.

[Back to flowchart](#)

## Reoffending

Statistics on [reoffending](#) are available from the Ministry of Justice.

[Back to flowchart](#)