



**An
Phríomh-Oifig
Staidrimh**

Central
Statistics
Office

Standard SIMS Report: Prison Re-Offending Estimates



Single Integrated Metadata Structure (SIMS) Report

For

Prison Re-offending Estimates

This documentation applies to the reporting period:

2021

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2. Introduction

Measuring prison re-offending is designed to show the extent to which a released prisoner re-offends following their custodial sanction from the Irish justice system. The published statistics are used by many different parts of the justice system in policy formulation related to crime and crime prevention. More recently important methodological updates have refined the estimates to measure custodial reoffending and fine sentence re-offending separately (from 2011 onwards).

3. Contact

Contact Organisation:	Central Statistics Office
Contact Organisation Unit:	Social Analysis
Contact Name:	Felix Coleman
Contact person function:	Statistician
Contact Mail address:	Felix Coleman, Central Statistics Office, Cork, Republic of Ireland
Contact email address:	Felix.coleman@cso.ie
Contact Phone Number:	(+353) 21 4535129
Contact Fax Number:	

4. Metadata Update

4.1. Metadata last certified

04/04/2023

4.2. Metadata last posted

11/07/2023

4.3. Metadata last update

01/07/2023



5. Statistical Presentation

5.1. Data Description

The principal statistics published is the rate of re-offending for the released prisoners each year.

5.2. Classification System

- Age
- Sex
- Offence type
- Re-offence type
- County of address
- Custodial period prior to release
- Irish Crime Classification System (ICCS)
- Custodial/Non-custodial court outcomes

For the purposes of showing re-offending sanctions in this publication, court outcomes have been classified to provide aggregate estimates of either a custodial or non-custodial reprimand. The following outcomes have been classified for this purpose under either custodial or non-custodial sanction.

Custodial:

- Detention
- Detention – Consecutive Detention
- Part Suspended Juvenile Detention between the ages of 12 – 17 yrs.
- Juvenile Detention Consecutive Sentence 12 -17 yrs.
- Imprisonment
- consecutive Imprisonment
- Consecutive & Part Suspended Imprisonment
- Part Suspended Imprisonment in Absence
- Imprisonment in Absence
- Consecutive
- Remand on Continuing Bail

Non-Custodial

- Disqualification FOR LIFE
- Detention
- Suspended Conviction / Probation Act Orders
- Dismiss Probation Act 1(2)
- Disqualification Conviction / Probation Act Orders
- Forthwith Fine
- Fine
- Imprisonment – Suspended
- Juvenile Fine Order
- Community Service Order
- Strike Out
- Community Service Order – Consecutive
- Unusual Result
- Withdrawn
- Imprisonment – Consecutive & Suspended
- Detention – Consecutive & Consecutive & Suspended

Regional Breakdown of Results

- County
- NUTS 2

5.3. Sector Coverage

All persons released from custodial sentences during the reference year (2018, 2021)



5.4. Statistical Concepts and definitions

Re-offending

For this report there are two conditions which must be met in order for an individual to be classified as a re-offender:

1. The individual must commit a recorded incident within a defined period of the date of their Probation Order. The length of the period considered varies for different cohorts. The period is *1 year for the 2017 cohort*.
2. There must be a conviction for this incident within *two* years of the date on which the incident was recorded.

For example, if a person was placed on a probation or Community Service Order on December 31st, 2017 and committed an offence on the December 31st, 2018, they would be considered as having reoffended if court proceedings leading to a conviction were concluded on or before December 31st, 2019.

Exclusions

When considering re-offending, certain offence types are excluded. These offences include mainly traffic offences and some animal welfare offences. A complete list is available on request.

Probation type

This report considers three types of probation: Probation Orders, Community Service Orders and Post Release Supervision Orders.

Crime recording

Incidents reported, or which become known to members of An Garda Síochána, are recorded when, on the balance of probability, a Garda determines that a criminal offence defined by law has taken place, and there is no credible evidence to the contrary. If it is subsequently determined that a criminal incident did not take place, the record is invalidated and is not counted in the statistics. If a person makes a report and subsequently withdraws it, then this too is invalidated unless there is evidence to suggest that, by reasonable probability, the offence has taken place.

For criminal incidents where victim confirmation is required (e.g. assault, fraud), a criminal incident is recorded only where the victim confirms the incident or where there is evidence to suggest that by reasonable probability it occurred.

Crime Classification

A criminal incident is classified as a particular offence type at the initial recording of that incident. However, upon investigation, it may later become apparent that an alternative offence type should be used. In this event, the record is amended to reflect this. Re-classification based on court proceedings only occurs in relation to homicide offences. The classification is used in this publication is the ICCSq.

Custodial/Non-custodial court outcomes

For the purposes of showing re-offending sanctions in this publication, court outcomes have been classified to provide aggregate estimates of either a custodial or non-custodial reprimand. The following outcomes have been classified for this purpose under either custodial or no-custodial sanction.

Methodological updates

CSO's publication of prison related re-offending from 2020 onwards has been adjusted to include some methodological updates.

Further details of these are available at: [Prison Re-offending Estimates 2011-2017 Technical Note](#) and [Prison Re-offending Estimates 2011 - 2018 Methodological Updates](#).

There are four key changes that have taken place:

1. The release date of individuals now incorporates early release dates to measure the time periods to re-offending incidents. Early release takes place when an individual receives a reduction in their custodial period and is released earlier than the court sentence they received. Historically, only the courts



custodial release date was used to calculate periods to re-offending incidents. Incorporating the early release data has resulted in:

- A more accurate calculation of the period between physical release and re-offence.
 - A more accurate determination of the individual's year of release in cases where early release takes place in a different reference year to the court allocated release date. Table 8.1 below shows the changes between using the court reference date and the adjusted release date that uses the updated information from the prison service.
2. A re-committal to prison by a released individual during the re-offending periods (three and one year) has now been included as a re-offending indicator in addition to the existing Garda PULSE identifiers of incidents and convictions. It has resulted in:
 - A more consistent re-offending indicator to measure re-offending.
 - More accurate measure of the time to the 1st re-offending incident (For example in 2017 an additional 214 custodial re-offenders (8%) were identified as re-offenders by being re-committed to custody in the reference period).
 3. Prison related re-offending is now separated into custodial and fine sentence re-offending indicators. The update aims to provide a clearer indicator of re-offending related to two different forms of sanction. "Custodial / Prison re-offending" indicators are focused on individuals who have served custodial sentences while fine sentence related re-offending is mainly related to non-custodial reprimands.
 4. Offences linked to Road and Traffic related incidents that are dealt with through the courts (and outside of the penalty points system) that were traditionally excluded from the measurement of re-offending have now been included as a qualifying re-offending offence.

CSO's publication of prison related re-offending from 2021 onwards has been adjusted to include some further methodological updates. More details are available at : [Prison Re-offending Statistics 2011-2018 Methodological Updates](#)

5.5. Statistical Unit

- Persons released each year.
- Number of releases each year.

The units differ when a person can receive more than one release in a year. If there is more than one type of unit, define each type.

5.6. Statistical Population

The population of interest is all prisoners / fined individuals who are released by the IPS each year.

5.7. Reference Area

Ireland

5.8. Time Coverage

2008-2021

5.9. Base period

Not applicable

6. Unit of Measure

- Number of Persons released each year
- Number of releases each year



7. Reference Period

2021

8. Institutional Mandate

8.1. Legal Acts and other agreements

Not applicable.

8.2. Data Sharing

Prison release data is provided to the CSO for each reference year. This data is used with PULSE data from the Garda to establish re-offences.

9. Confidentiality

9.1. Confidentiality – policy

All information supplied to the CSO is treated as strictly confidential. The Statistics Act, 1993 sets stringent confidentiality standards: Information collected may be used only for statistical purposes, and no details that might be related to an identifiable person or business undertaking may be divulged to any other government department or body.

These national statistical confidentiality provisions are reinforced by the following EU legislation: Council Regulation (EC) No 223/2009 on European statistics for data collected for EU statistical purposes. Further details are outlined in the CSO's Code of Practice on Statistical Confidentiality.

For more information on the CSO confidentiality policy please visit:

<https://www.cso.ie/en/aboutus/lgdp/csodatapolicies/statisticalconfidentiality/>

9.2. Confidentiality – data treatment

Data provided for prison re-offending is stored in line with CSO procedures on data protection

10. Release Policy

10.1. Release Calendar

The date of dissemination of all statistics released by CSO can be found in the Release Calendar published in CSO.ie. This calendar is regularly updated.

10.2. Release calendar access

The release calendar can be accessed via the CSO website, www.cso.ie, or directly from this link: <https://www.cso.ie/en/csolatestnews/releasecalendar>

10.3. User access

In accordance with Principle 6 of the European Statistics Code of Practice all users of CSO statistics have equal access via the CSO website at the same time of 11 am. Any privileged pre-release access to any outside user is limited, controlled, and publicised. In the event that leaks occur, pre-release arrangements are revised so as to ensure impartiality.



The CSO recognises that in very limited circumstances a business need for pre-release access may be substantiated. Any form of pre-release access is a privilege and a strict CSO pre-release access policy is adhered to for these special requests. The full pre-release access policy can be accessed at <https://www.cso.ie/en/aboutus/lgdp/csodatapolicies/csopolicyonpre-releaseaccess/>

The various results are published nationally in statistical release format as well as on the CSO website (www.cso.ie). Selected extracts from the results are posted on the CSO's data dissemination database, PxStat.

11. Frequency of Dissemination

Annual

12. Accessibility and clarity

12.1. News release

The most recent press release relating to Prison Re-Offending can be found at: <https://www.cso.ie/en/csolatestnews/pressreleases/2022pressreleases/pressstatementprisonreoffending2020/>

12.2. Publications

The most recent Prison Re-Offending release is available from the CSO website at https://www.cso.ie/en/statistics/crimeandjustice/prison_recidivism/

12.3. On-line database

Prison Re-Offending tables are available on the CSO dissemination database PxStat. They can be accessed directly from the following link: <https://data.cso.ie/product/pros>

12.3.1. AC1. Data tables -consultations

The total number of consultations to the release for the period 01/01/2021 to 02/11/2021 was 8,054 hits, out of which 2,161 were unique hits.

12.4. Micro-data Access

Not calculated.

12.5. Other

Ad-hoc reports provided when requested to IPS and Department of Justice.

12.5.1. AC2. Metadata consultations

Not Calculated.

12.6. Documentation on Methodology

Further information on the Methodology used to compile the Prison Re-Offending release can be found in the CSO's methods page for the release, directly from these links: <https://www.cso.ie/en/methods/crime/prisonre-offendingstatistics/>
<https://www.cso.ie/en/methods/crime/methodologydocuments/>



12.6.1. AC3 – Metadata completeness – rate

Not calculated.

12.7. Quality Documentation

For more information and documentation on the quality associated with this release please refer to the CSO's methods page: <https://www.cso.ie/en/methods/crime/prisonre-offendingstatistics/>

13. Quality Management

13.1. Quality Assurance

Quality Management Framework

The CSO avails of an office wide Quality Management Framework (QMF). This framework allows all CSO processes and outputs to meet the required standard as set out in the European Statistics Code of Practice (ESCP). The QMF foundations are based on establishing the UNECE's Generic Statistical Business Process Model (GSBPM) as the operating statistical production model to achieve a standardised approach to Quality Management. All and any changes implemented to CSO processes and outputs require adherence to the QMF.

13.2. Quality Assessment

The CSO conducts self-assessment reviews on all their published processes on an annual basis. The last iteration of this review carried out in 2022 identified the need for a more contemporary indicator of reoffending which would be able to complement the existing publications on re-offending that are being published. The development of these indicators has started in 2023.

14. Relevance

14.1. User Needs

Measuring prison re-offending helps policy makers measure and understand how to reduce crime. The CSO carries out regular consultations with the following groups:

- Interdepartmental group on a fairer and safer Ireland
- Crime and Migration Statistics User Information Group (CMUIG).

14.1.1. Main National Users

Department of Justice, Irish Prison Service (IPS). The Irish probation service, Public

14.1.2. Principal External Users

Not applicable

14.2. User Satisfaction

No user satisfaction survey has been conducted.

14.3. Data Completeness

Not applicable

14.3.1. Data Completeness rate

Not applicable



15. Accuracy and reliability

15.1. Overall accuracy

Recorded crime statistics are considered statistics under reservation. Please refer to <https://www.cso.ie/en/methods/crime/statisticsunderreservationfaq/> for more information.

15.1.1. Non-Response Error

Not applicable

15.1.1.1. Unit non response rate

Not applicable.

15.1.1.2. Item non response rate

Not applicable.

15.1.2. Processing error

Cross validation of variables used for reducing and identifying coding errors.

15.1.3. Model assumption error

Not applicable.

16. Timeliness and punctuality

16.1. Timeliness

The current timeliness for publication is 2 years after the end of the reference period due to the late availability of data for analysis. Improved communications with data providers will enable more recent years to be published shortly.

16.1.1. TP1. Time lag – First results

Not applicable.

16.1.2. TP2. Time lag – Final results

Currently +2 years

3- year prison re-offending published for reference year 2018

1-year prison re-offending published for reference year 2021

16.2. Punctuality

The Prison Re-Offending release is published in accordance with the date specified in the CSO's advance release calendar.

16.2.1. TP3. Punctuality – Punctuality - delivery and publication

+60 days



17. Comparability

17.1. Comparability – Geographical

Re-offending estimates are broadly in line with international comparison Non- standard methodology internationally limits comparability. These are:

- Different reference periods for time to re-offend.
- Different custodial and sanction concepts

17.1.1. CCI. Asymmetry for mirror flow statistics

Not applicable.

17.2. Comparability over time

There are no known breaks in time series.

17.2.1. Length of Comparable Time series

11 years

17.3. Coherence – cross domain

Not applicable

.

17.3.1. Coherence – Sub annual and annual statistics

Not applicable.

17.3.2. Coherence with National Accounts

Not applicable

.

17.4. Coherence – internal

Not applicable.

18. Cost and Burden

Estimates of Cost and Burden can be obtained from the Response Burden Barometer
<https://www.cso.ie/en/statistics/multisectoral/responseburdenbarometer/>

Survey specific information is available via CSO's dissemination database PxStat.
<https://data.cso.ie/product/RBB>

19. Data Revision

19.1. Data Revision Policy

Published statistics are subject to correction and revision for a variety of reasons. The most common reasons include the receipt of additional information (for example, late survey responses) and updated



seasonal factors. Occasional revisions also occur as a result of changes to definitions, methodology, classifications and general updating of statistical series.

It is recognised internationally that the existence of a sound revisions policy maintains credibility in official statistics. The CSO General Revisions Policy, which details how revisions should be managed and communicated to users, outlines the three main types of revisions:

- Planned Routine Revisions
- Planned Major Revisions
- Unplanned Revisions.

One reason for unplanned revisions occurring can be when errors are detected after publication. The 'CSO Error Correction Policy – How to deal with Publication Errors' outlines the steps taken when these errors are detected. As required under Principle 6.3 of the European Statistics Code of Practice, errors detected in published statistics are corrected at the earliest possible date and users are informed. An important step in the process is the documentation and analysis of errors that have occurred and their causes. This allows the CSO to take measures preventing similar errors from occurring in the future and uniformity in dealing with them when they do.

The data revision policy that CSO statistics adheres to can be found via the following link:

<https://www.cso.ie/en/methods/quality/treatmentofrevisions/>

19.2. Data Revision Practice

Overlaps of years are included when significant revisions take place. A separate technical note is also published to explain the changes.

There were no revisions for 2016 / 2021 reference periods.

19.2.1. Data Revision – Average size

Not applicable

20. Statistical processing

20.1. Source Data

There are three main administrative data sources used for the creation of the Prison Re-Offending release:

- Irish prison service (IPS) release data
- Garda PULSE data
- Courts Service data.

20.1.1. Population and sampling frame

The number of released prisoners each year.

20.1.2. Sampling design

Not applicable.

20.1.3. Survey size

Not applicable

20.1.4. Survey technique

Secure datasets containing information on prison releases and offences is transferred to the CSO each year using secure data transfer.



20.2. Frequency of data collection

Annual

20.3. Data Collection

Considerable challenges arise in documenting the quality of prison release data and PULSE data. At present it is not possible to systematically store quality measurement of variables provided regularly by the IPS and PULSE.

20.3.1. Type of Survey/Process

Administrative data process.

20.3.2. Questionnaire (including explanations)

No questionnaire is currently used to compile prison re-offending statistics by the CSO.

20.3.3. Survey Participation

No participation is currently required to compile the statistics on reoffending.

20.3.4. Data Capture

Data is collected in Excel and manipulated using the SAS statistical software. Metadata is then identified and managed through the Colectica suite of products.

- Excel
- Colectica Designer / Repository
- SAS

20.4. Data Validation

Extensive consistency checks between variables provided by the IPS and PULSE were used to validate the consistency of variables provided. In addition, the variables of fundamental value were validated with the IPS for quality.

20.5. Data Compilation

Statistical outputs were compiled from the population of prison releases using SAS. Extensive data mining techniques are used to establish a valid dataset of prison re-offending. This includes:

- Deriving variables related to release date / prison term / 3 year and 1 year re-offending indicators.
- SAS / Exorbyte / Excel

Prison release data is matched to Garda PULSE data for each released prisoner. The prisoner is then identified as a re-offender if a valid incident from Garda data is present. The characteristics of the prisoner (Age / gender / offence type) are then used to describe the reoffending population. Data matching software is used to merge the two data sources and identify links to enable re-offending indicators.

20.5.1. Imputation (for Non-Response or Incomplete Data Sets)

Missing data is included in published outputs as missing when significant.

20.5.1.1. A7. Imputation rate

Not calculated.

20.5.2. Grossing and Weighting

Grossing is not currently used in prison re-offending statistics.



20.6. Adjustment

Not applicable.

20.6.1. Seasonal Adjustment

Not applicable.

21. Comment