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Phríomh-Oifig  
Staidrimh

Central  
Statistics  
Office

# Standard Report on Methods and Quality for Probation re-offending statistics

**Standard Report**  
**on**  
**Methods and Quality**  
**for**  
**Probation re-offending statistics**

This documentation applies to the reporting period:

**2016**

Last edited: (04/11/2020)

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**The explanatory information can be deleted when the data is input into each section**

## **1 Overview**

The Probation Re-offending Statistics publication provides information on the level of recorded re-offending by individuals placed under the management of the Probation Service. The information in this publication relates to individuals who entered the Probation Service in 2016.

The probation re-offending rate is the percentage of individuals issued with a probation order during a reference year who were convicted of any crime incident that was recorded within three years of the date of their probation sentence. The resulting conviction relating to the incident must then be obtained within two years of the date when the incident was recorded.

For example, if an offender was sentenced to probation on December 31st, 2014 and they committed an offence on December 31st, 2017 for which a conviction was obtained on or before December 31st, 2019 they would be included as a re-offender.

To allow for more timely measures of re-offending, one- and two-year measures of re-offending are also presented in this publication, allowing the analysis to come forward to reference year 2016 (one year for re-offence from end 2016 and a further two years allowed for court conviction brings us to end 2019).

## **2 General Information**

### **2.1 Statistical Category**

Administrative data statistical publication

### **2.2 Area of Activity**

Crime & Criminal Justice Statistics

### **2.3 Organisational Unit Responsible, Persons to Contact**

Directorate:	Social and Demographic Statistics
Division:	Social Analysis
Contact names:	Felix Coleman – felix.coleman@csso.ie

### **2.4 Objectives and Purpose; History**

The objective of creating probation re-offending statistics is to inform stakeholders of the levels of re-offending that take place by individuals put under the supervision of the probation service. Statistics relating to re-offending inform policy makers of the effectiveness of interventions to reduce levels of re-offend in the probation population.

### **2.5 Periodicity**

Statistics on probation re-offending are defined by annual cohorts with the most recent available data relating to individuals placed on probation in 2016. Existing publications covering 2011-2015 are available on the CSO website that show the level of 1,2- and 3-year probation re-offending rates.

### **2.6 Client**

The survey is conducted to meet National requirements. There is currently no Eurostat regulation on probation re-offending.

### **2.7 Users**

- Department of Justice and Equality
- An Garda Síochána
- Semi-state agencies in justice
- Economists
- Research institutions
- Individual researchers
- The public

### **2.8 Legal basis**

The Statistics Act (1993) makes provision for the legal transfer of data from government agencies to the Central Statistics Office (CSO) for the creation of statistics.

### **3 Statistical Concepts, Methods**

#### **3.1 Subject of the Statistics**

The primary statistical indicator created is a re-offending indicator for individuals who receive a probation order during the reference year. Re-offending estimates measuring one, two- and three-year re-offending rates are derived from data provided by the probation service and the Garda PULSE data.

#### **3.2 Units of Observation/Collection Units/Units of Presentation**

The population of interest is all persons who receive a probation order each reference year. The percentage of re-offending is defined as the proportion of individuals who re-offend as a percentage of the total number of persons who receive probation orders.

The main units of presentation are

- Demographic variables such as sex, age, and geographic location
- Re-offending indicators

#### **3.3 Data Sources**

Data is provided by Garda's PULSE information system for offences and the Irish Probation Service (IPS) provide the information on probationers.

#### **3.4 Reporting Unit/Respondents**

Individuals in court and on probation are the primary source of data that is used to generate re-offending statistics.

#### **3.5 Type of Survey/Process**

Administrative data collection by the courts / Garda and probation service

#### **3.6 Characteristics of the Sample/Process**

##### **3.6.1 Population and Sampling Frame**

No sampling procedures are used in the creation of probation re-offending statistics. Data is provided for the whole population of probation re-offenders and re-offending indicators.

##### **3.6.2 Sampling Design**

No sampling procedures are used to derive probation re-offending statistics

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##### **3.7 Survey Technique/Data Transfer**

Data from the government agencies (probation and PULSE) is transferred securely to the CSO for the statistical purpose of developing probation re-offending statistics

#### **3.8 Questionnaire (including explanations)**

Data is provided by individuals who are part of Garda / Probation and court activities in relation to offences relating to probation and re-offending indicators. The data is captured during these processes and transferred to the CSO. The CSO do not utilise any direct questionnaires during the development of its re-offending estimates.

#### **3.9 Participation in the Survey**

Data collected as part of the Garda and Courts activities is mandatory

#### **3.10 Characteristics of the Survey/Process and its Results**

Individuals identified as having received probation orders by the IPS are matched to data containing information about court proceedings for the relevant years to identify if any carried out a re-offending offence within 3 years of entering probation.

Results and statistical tables are available via the statistical publication at

[https://www.cso.ie/en/statistics/crimeandjustice/probation\\_recidivism/](https://www.cso.ie/en/statistics/crimeandjustice/probation_recidivism/)

#### **3.11 Classifications used**

**Age:** Age groups were classified as follows:

- <18 years old
- 18-24 years old
- 25-44
- 45-64 years old

- 65 years old or above
- Sex:** Sex (physiological sex) was classified as follows
- Male
  - Female

**Probation type**

- Community Service
- Post Release Supervision Order
- Probation Order

**Probation referral offence**

- 01 Homicide and related offences
- 02 Sexual offences
- 03 Attempts/Threats to Murder, assaults, harassments and related off.
- 04 Dangerous or negligent acts
- 05 Kidnapping and related offences
- 06 Robbery, extortion and hijacking offences
- 07 Burglary and related offences
- 08 Theft and related offences
- 09 Fraud, deception and related offences
- 10 Controlled drug offences
- 11 Weapons and explosives offences
- 12 Damage to property and to the environment
- 13 Public order and other social code offences
- 14 Road and traffic offences
- 15 Offences against Government, justice procedures and organisation of crime
- 16 Offences not elsewhere classified or not stated<sup>2</sup>

**Custodial re-offending sanction indicator**

- Custodial
- Non-custodial

### **3.12 Regional Breakdown of Results**

**County:**

- Cavan, Donegal, Leitrim, Monaghan, Sligo, Laois, Longford, Offaly, Westmeath, Galway, Mayo, Roscommon, Dublin, Kildare, Meath, Wicklow, Louth, Clare, Limerick, Tipperary, Carlow, Kilkenny, Wexford, Waterford, Cork, Kerry

## **4 Production of the Statistics, Data Processing, Quality Assurance**

### **4.1 Data Capture**

Data is captured by the courts service and the Probation service

### **4.2 Coding**

Most of the coding is undertaken during data collection. Supplementary coding is done by the Statisticians in CSO using SAS.

### **4.3 Data Editing**

Data is edited to provide variables that can be used to create tables relating to re-offending indicators. For example, the age of an individual at the time in which they receive a probation order is derived from the individuals date of birth and the actual date the probation order was decided upon by the courts service.

### **4.4 Imputation (for Non-Response or Incomplete Data Sets)**

No imputation is carried out

### **4.5 Grossing and Weighting**

No grossing or weighting takes place

### **4.6 Computation of Outputs, Estimation Methods Used**

Outputs are compiled by aggregation of grossed data to produce the totals appearing in the release. The aggregations are calculated using SAS statistical software and Microsoft excel.

#### **4.7 Other Quality Assurance Techniques Used**

The data provided by the courts and PULSE is cross validated for consistency.

### **5 Quality**

#### **5.1 Relevance**

Probation re-offending estimates are provided for the most recent reference year possible under the methodology. In order that most re-offending activity is captured by court process', the principle of 3 years to re-offend and a further 2 years to check for a relevant court outcome is used. So, probationers in 2016 are checked for 3 years for indicators of re-offending.

#### **5.2 Accuracy and Reliability**

##### **5.2.1. Sampling Effect & representivity**

There is no sampling in relation to probation re-offending statistics

##### **5.2.2. Non-Sampling Effects**

###### **5.2.2.1 Quality of the Data Sources used (other than survey register)**

CSO regularly communicates with data providers in relation to quality and quality improvement. Statistics using PULSE data is published under reservation and is part of an ongoing quality improvement process in conjunction with the AGS

###### **5.2.2.2 Register Coverage**

CSO receive all available data in relation to court outcomes and re-offending indicators.

###### **5.2.2.3 Non-response (Unit and Item)**

Indicators of non-response are not available from the data providers for probation re-offending statistics. For creating re-offending indicators CSO achieve a 98% match rate between data from PULSE and the IPS data.

###### **5.2.2.4 Measurement Errors**

Data provided for probation re-offending is validated as part of the data use within PULSE and the courts service. Indicators of measurement error are not directly captured or provided during the data transfer, however validation checks carried out provide indicators of incorrect data created due to various measurement errors.

###### **5.2.2.5 Processing Errors**

Consistency and validation checking are carried out on data relating to probation and courts services to reduce process error in the statistical process.

###### **5.2.2.6 Model-related Effects**

Not Applicable

#### **5.3 Timeliness and Punctuality**

##### **5.3.1 Provisional Results**

Provisional results are not compiled

##### **5.3.2 Final Results**

Results were published in November, t+3months after receiving data related to the end of the reference period

#### **5.4 Coherence**

Comparisons are made with existing publications relating to probation on the IPS website

#### **5.5 Comparability**

Comparability between Ireland's probation estimates and international data is limited. Probation has a different legal definition internationally and a such limits its comparability. The UK provide data on proven re-offending that groups all offences (custodial and non-custodial) together.

## **5.6 Accessibility and Clarity**

### **5.6.1 Assistance to Users, Special Analyses**

The probation re-offending release is available on the CSO website. The background notes on the publication provide some detail on the survey. Special analyses are accommodated where possible, on request.

### **5.6.2 Revisions**

The data is not currently revised. Any revisions that take place will be carried out in accordance with CSO's guidelines with respect to revision.

### **5.6.3 Publications**

#### **5.6.3.1 Releases, Regular Publications**

#### **5.6.3.2 Statistical Reports**

Not applicable

#### **5.6.3.3 Internet**

<https://www.cso.ie/en/statistics/crimeandjustice/>

### **5.6.4 Confidentiality**

The confidentiality of the data provided to the CSO by respondents is guaranteed by law in accordance with the 1993 Statistics Act. The data cannot be accessed under the Freedom of Information Act and is not disclosed to any other Government Department or Agency. All CSO staff including field personnel are designated as "Officers of Statistics" on appointment, thereby making them liable to penalties under the Statistics Act if they divulge confidential information to individuals or bodies. The laptops on which the data were collected are encrypted and password protected. Results are published in a format that is sufficiently aggregated to prevent the identification of individuals. A standard mechanism for applying for access to anonymised microdata by researchers is provided.

## **6 Additional documentation and publications**

none