

SPS Quarterly Public Information Page

**Prison by Numbers Quarter 4
(January - March 2025)**

Unlocking Potential - Transforming Lives.

Contents

1.0 Key Messages3

2.0 Prison Population4

3.0 Complexities of Population6

4.0 Legal Status (Sentenced & Remand)7

5.0 Young People in our Care8

6.0 Women in our Care9

7.0 Equality and Diversity.....10

8.0 Protection Populations.....14

9.0 Geography of Imprisonment in Scotland16

10.0 International Comparisons20

11.0 Prison Estate & Configuration.....21

12.0 Staffing Levels23

13.0 Open Estate25

14.0 Home Detention Curfew (HDC).....26

15.0 Face to Face & Virtual Visits28

16.0 Additional Information and Useful Links28

1.0 Key Messages

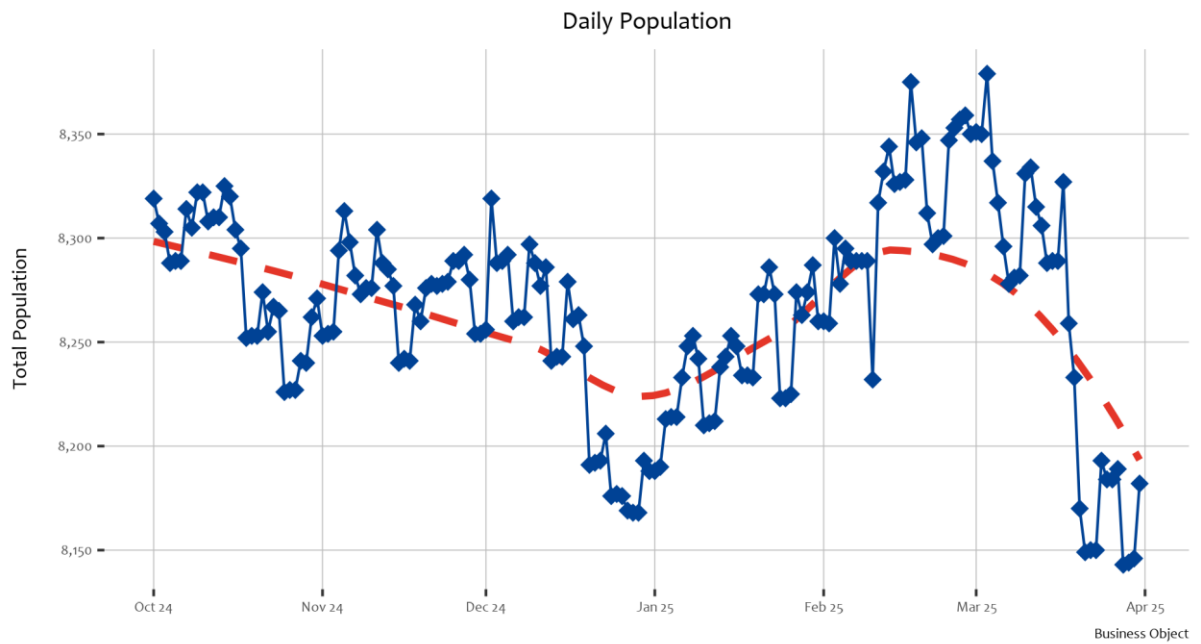
Key messages drawn from this quarterly report are as follows:

- The weekly average prison population decreased by 0.2% in Quarter 4 24/25 compared to the end of the previous quarter. Compared to the same period last year, the prison population increased by 4.1%.
- The remand population increased by 4% in Quarter 4 24/25.
- The long-term population increased by 1.7% in Q4 24/25 while the short-term population reduced by 4.3%.
- The women's prison population rose by 3.1% between the last week of December-24 and last week of March-25.
- The population of those with a history of sexual offending remained stable in Q4 24/25 compared to Quarter 3.
- Single cell occupancy reduced throughout Q4 24/25.
- In reviewing the characteristics of those in our care in Q4 24/25, the majority of the prison population were male (96%), heterosexual (88%), had a marital status of single (77%) and were white (92%).
- The national rate of imprisonment in Scotland increased to 0.2% at the end of September. Rates of imprisonment equal to or above the national rate were observed in 11 of 32 Local Authorities.
- 41% of those in our care come from the 20% most deprived areas of Scotland.

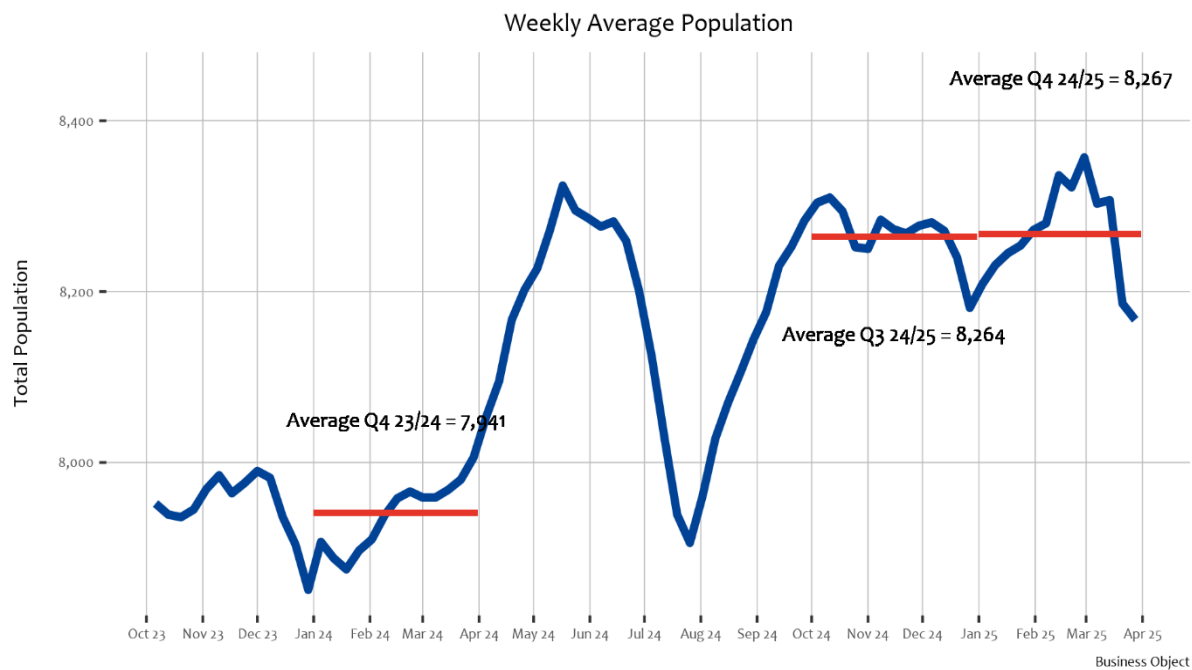
General Enquiries Email: SPSDataAnalysis@prisons.gov.scot

2.0 Prison Population

The daily prison population increased throughout January and February, peaking at 8,379 on the 3rd of March. From mid-March, the daily prison population decreased quickly as a result of the STP40 early release programme, reaching a low of 8,143 on the 28th of March. Overall, the prison population in Q4 24/25, despite fluctuation, remained at the same level observed at the end of the previous quarter.



The weekly average prison population decreased by 0.2% in the last week of Q4 24/25 compared to the last week of Q3 24/25, although the quarterly average remained broadly the same in Q4 24/25 compared to the previous quarter. The graph below illustrates that the quarterly average population in Q4 24/25 increased compared to the same period last year. The average prison population in Q4 23/24 was 7,941 and in Q4 24/25 was 8,267. This represents an increase of 4.1% in Q4 24/25 compared to Q4 23/24.



The Scottish Prison Service (SPS) publishes Prison Population Reports illustrating the population in custody broken down by custody type, gender, and age, as well as the population on Home Detention Curfew by gender. The Prison Population Reports can be found on the links below:

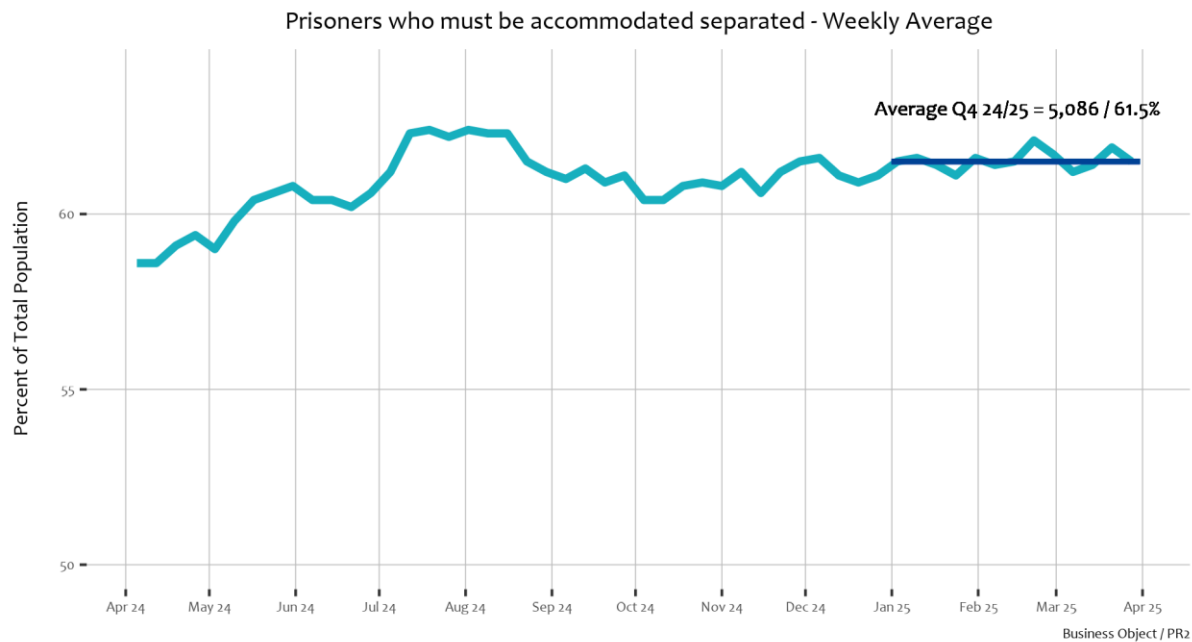
[Prison Population Report – Weekly time series](#)

[Prison Population Report – Annual Prison Population](#)

3.0 Complexities of Population

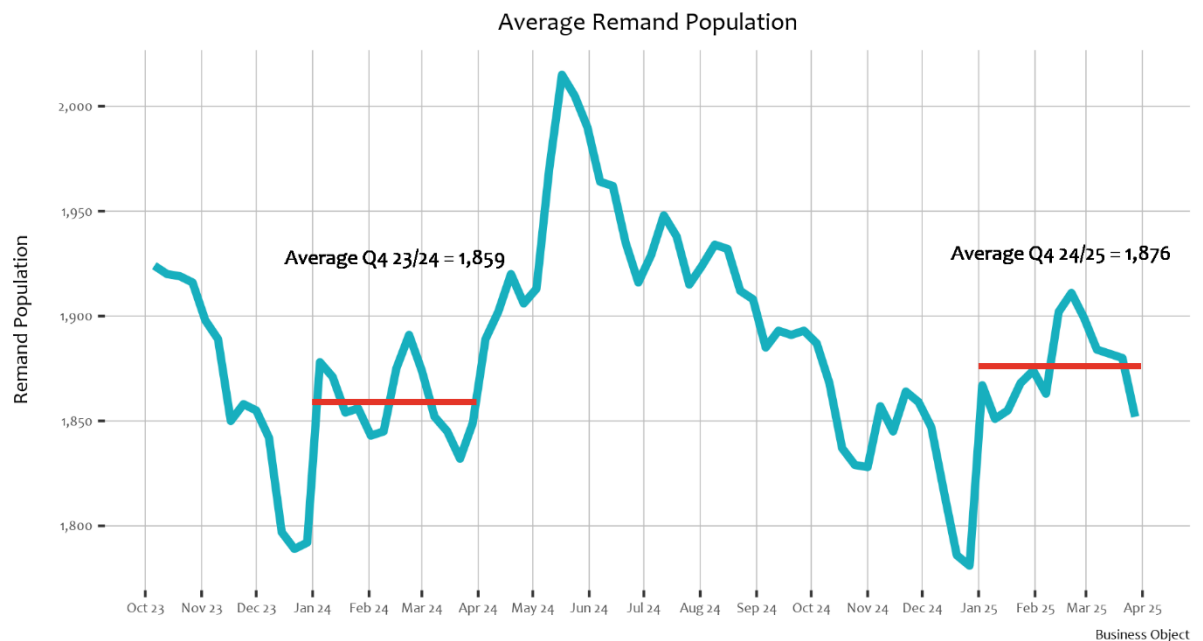
The rising overall population numbers are of concern in terms of ongoing management when we move close to population and design capacity; however also of note is the rising complexity of Scotland’s prison population. Many individuals need to be accommodated separately for a variety of reasons i.e., due to people’s legal status, gender, offence type, protection status, and/or health care needs, as well as residents with individual management needs.

The number of those in our care who must be accommodated separately remained broadly stable throughout Q4 24/25. An average of around 61.5% of the prison population, or 5,086 individuals, needed to be accommodated separately in Q4 24/25, compared to 61% of the prison population, or 5,042 individuals in the previous quarter.



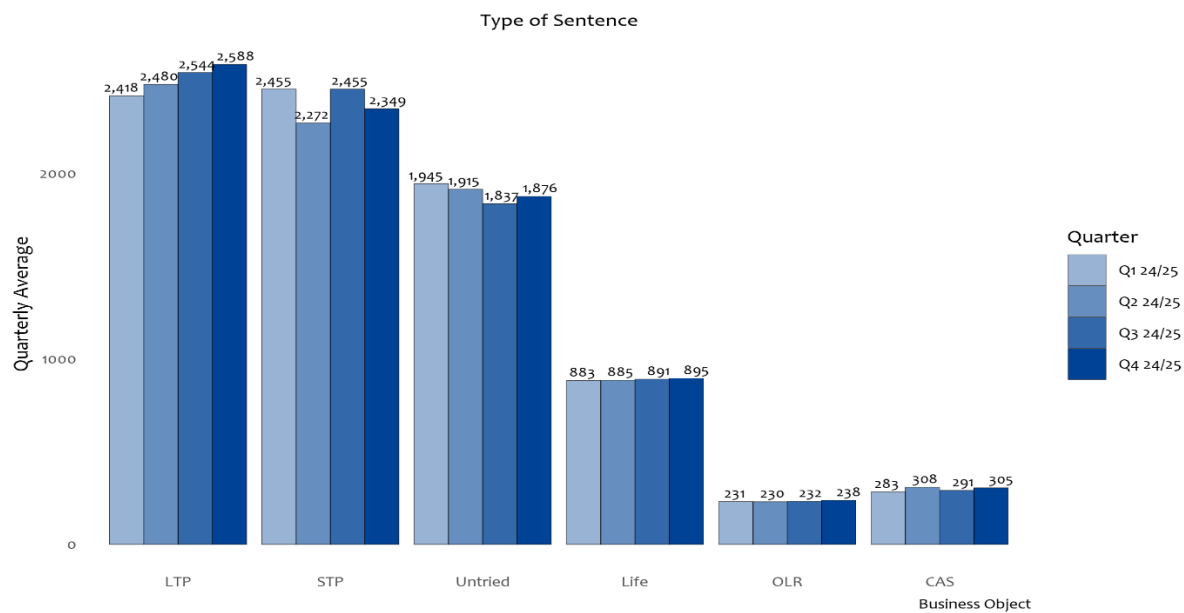
4.0 Legal Status (Sentenced & Remand)

The remand population increased by 4% in the last week of Q4 24/25 compared to the last week of the previous quarter. Compared to the same period last year, the remand population rose by 0.9%, from an average of 1,859 in Q4 23/24 to an average of 1,876 in Q4 24/25.



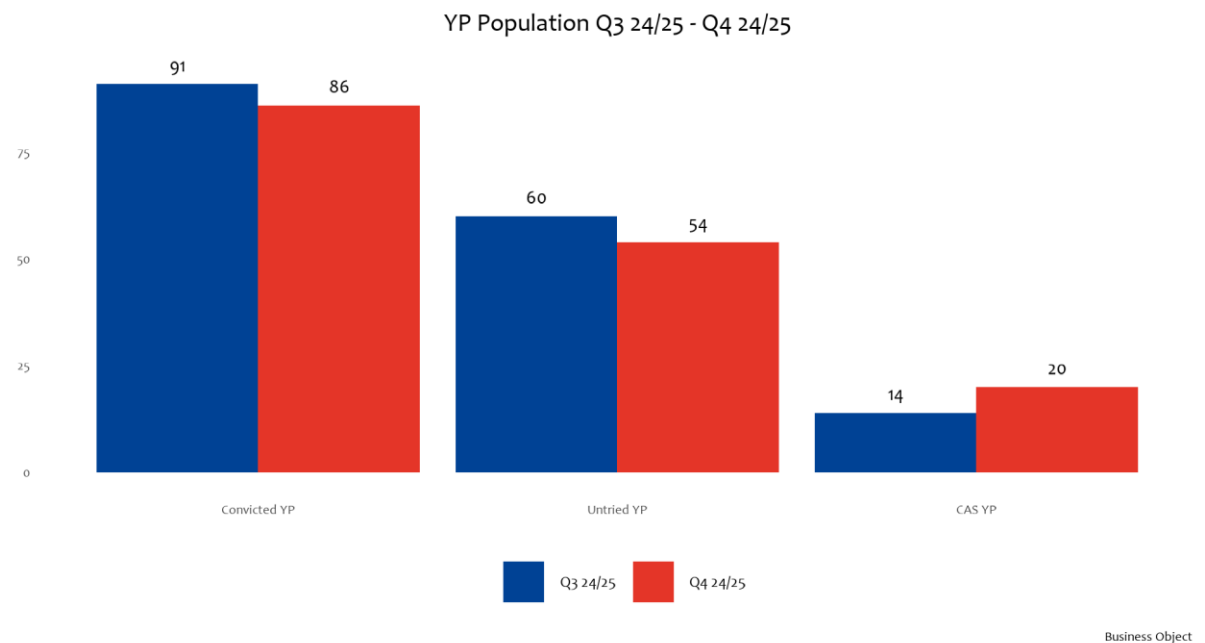
The number of those on remand remains high compared to the pre-pandemic period. In Quarter 4 24/25, the remand population accounted for 22.7% of the total prison population. High numbers of individuals on remand can create management issues for establishments, such as people having to move to convicted halls early; and long periods on remand mean that individuals spend longer without access to the full regime.

The long-term population increased by 1.7% in Q4 24/25 compared to the previous quarter, accumulating a total increase of 7% between Q1 and Q4 24/25. The STP40 programme in February and March helped in reducing the short-term population from 2,455 in Q3 to 2,349 in Q4 24/25 (a decrease of 4.3%). Life sentences (including OLRs) remained broadly stable in the last two quarter of the year and accumulated an overall increase of 1.4% between Q1 and Q4 4/25.



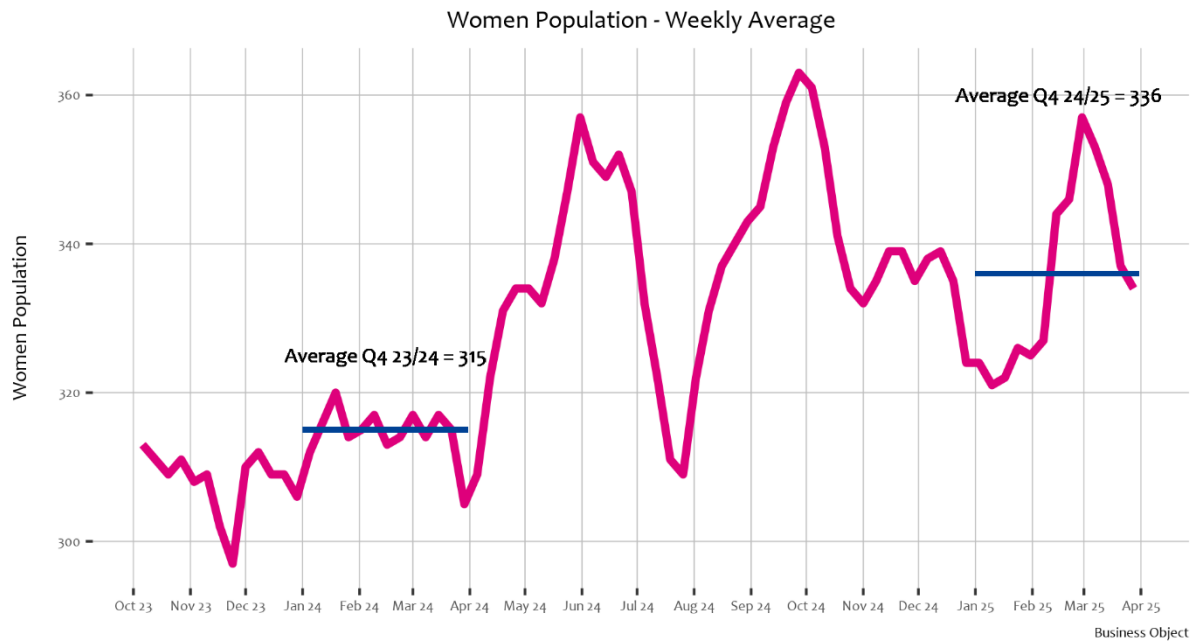
5.0 Young People in our Care

The quarterly Young People (YP) average reduced from 165 in Q3 24/25 to 161 in Q4 24/25, this is a decrease of 2.4%. As observed below, Convicted and Untried YP decreased by 5.5% and 10% in the period, respectively.



6.0 Women in our Care

The weekly average women’s population rose from 324 in the last week of December-24 to 334 in the last week of March-25; this is an increase of 3.1%. Compared to the same period last year, the quarterly average population of women increased from 315 in Q4 23/24 to 336 in Q4 24/25, an increase of 6.7%. In the same period, the male population increased by 3.8%.



7.0 Equality and Diversity

The Scottish Prison Service aims to provide accessible services to meet the needs of those in our care. This means an ongoing commitment to promote equal opportunities through policies and strategies to promote equality throughout all our establishments. The following data presents an overview of the diversity of the 8,105 people in our care on 31st March 2025. ¹

Information regarding religious affiliation is not robust enough to publish at this stage. Further Equality and Diversity reports are available [here](#).

Affirmed Gender

SPS defines affirmed gender as the gender in which a person lives their day-to-day life. It may differ from the gender assigned at birth, which is the gender a person was originally registered as on their birth certificate. Non-binary individuals identify themselves as having no gender or as being on a gender spectrum² between man and woman. Gender-fluid is defined³ by “not having only one gender or moving freely between genders.”

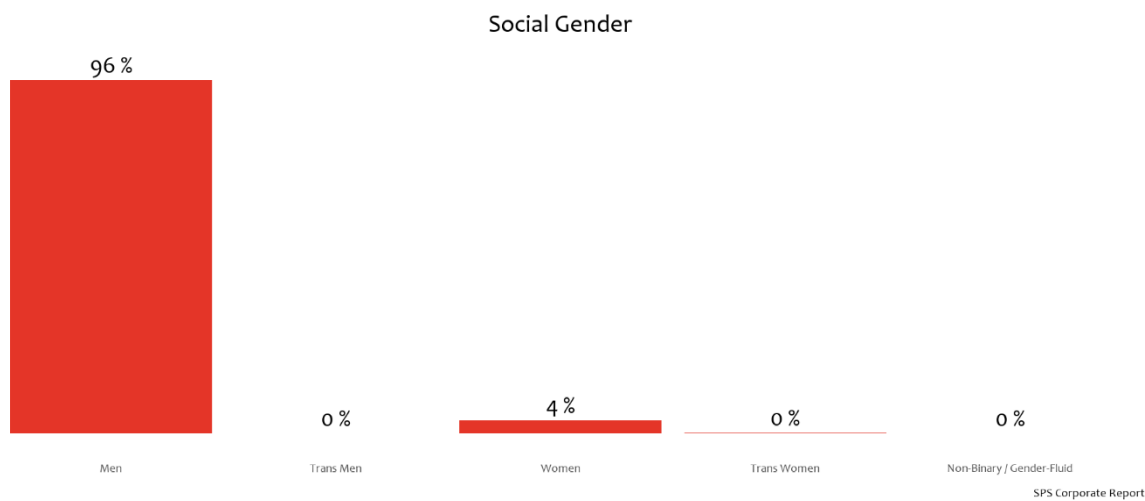
In Q4 24/25, 96% of the people in our care were recorded as men and another 4% as women. Trans men, trans women and non-binary/gender-fluid combined accounted for less than 1% of the total population. In total, there were 18 trans people in custody at the end of Q4 24/25.

¹ The Public Information Page is a working document. The inclusion of data on protected characteristics is being kept under review to ensure the public scrutiny requirements are met whilst protecting the privacy of those in our care.

² Available on

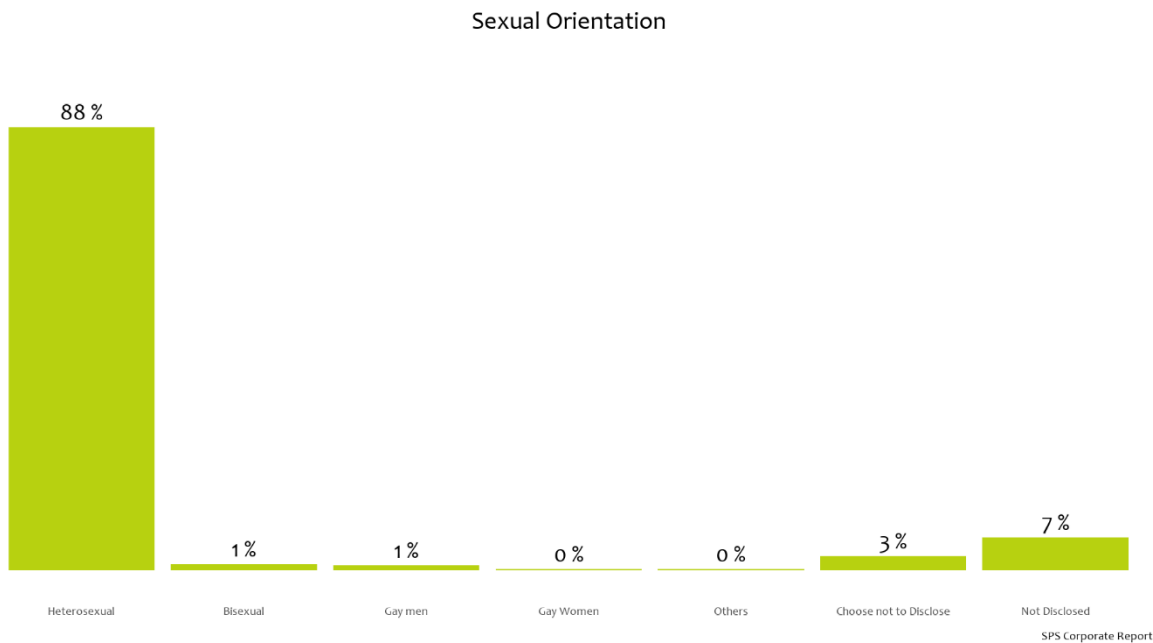
<https://www.ons.gov.uk/economy/environmentalaccounts/articles/whatisthedifferencebetweensexandgender/2019-02-21#:~:text=The%20UK%20government%20defines%20gender,they%20were%20assigned%20at%20birth>

³ Cambridge Dictionary definition available on <https://dictionary.cambridge.org/dictionary/english/gender-fluid>



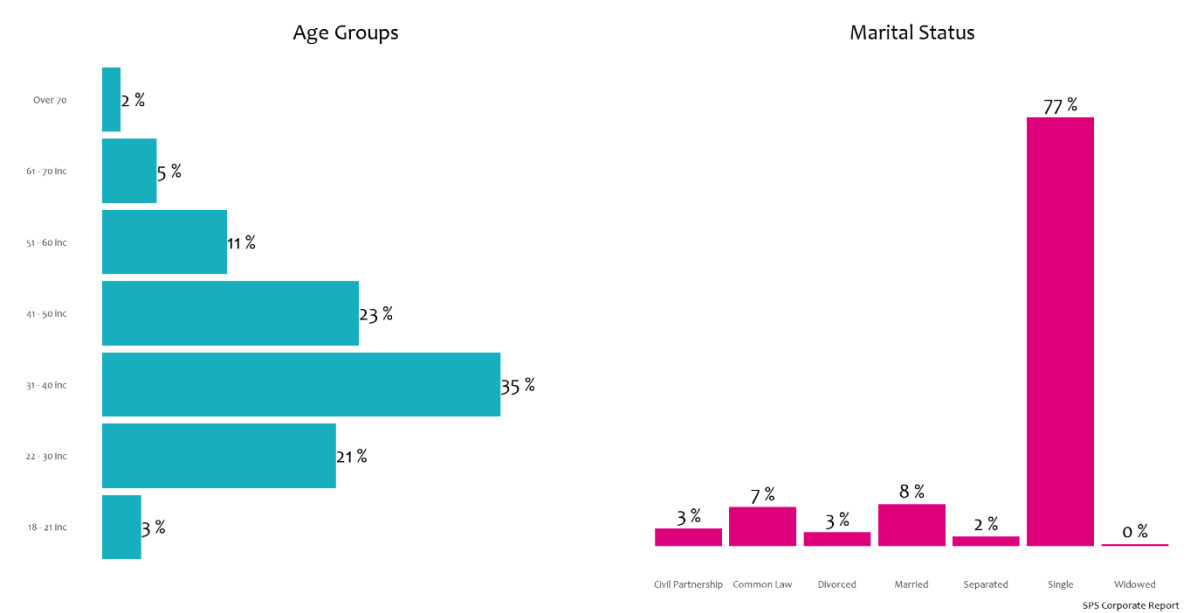
Sexual Orientation

Most of the people in our care declared themselves as heterosexual, 88%. Bisexuals, gay men and gay women comprised 2%. Another 3% preferred not to disclose while a further 7% were not obtained. More details are illustrated in the chart below.



Age Group and Marital Status

The chart below illustrates the prison population in Q4 24/25 by age group and marital status. The highest age group continues to be those aged between 31 and 40 years old (35%), while the lowest proportion is individuals over 70 years old, at 2%.



77% of the people in our care reported themselves as single in Q4 24/25. Another 7% reported as “Common Law (or cohabitation with a partner)”. Married people also accounted for 8% of the custodial population.

Ethnic Group

In Q4 24/25, 92% of the prison population declared themselves as white. African people comprised 1% while Asian, Asian Scottish or Asian British people comprised 3%. Those who declared themselves Caribbean or Black were 1%. Those who declared themselves as Other Ethnic Group and Mixed or Multiple represented 2% and 1%, respectively. More details can be observed in the chart below.



Disability

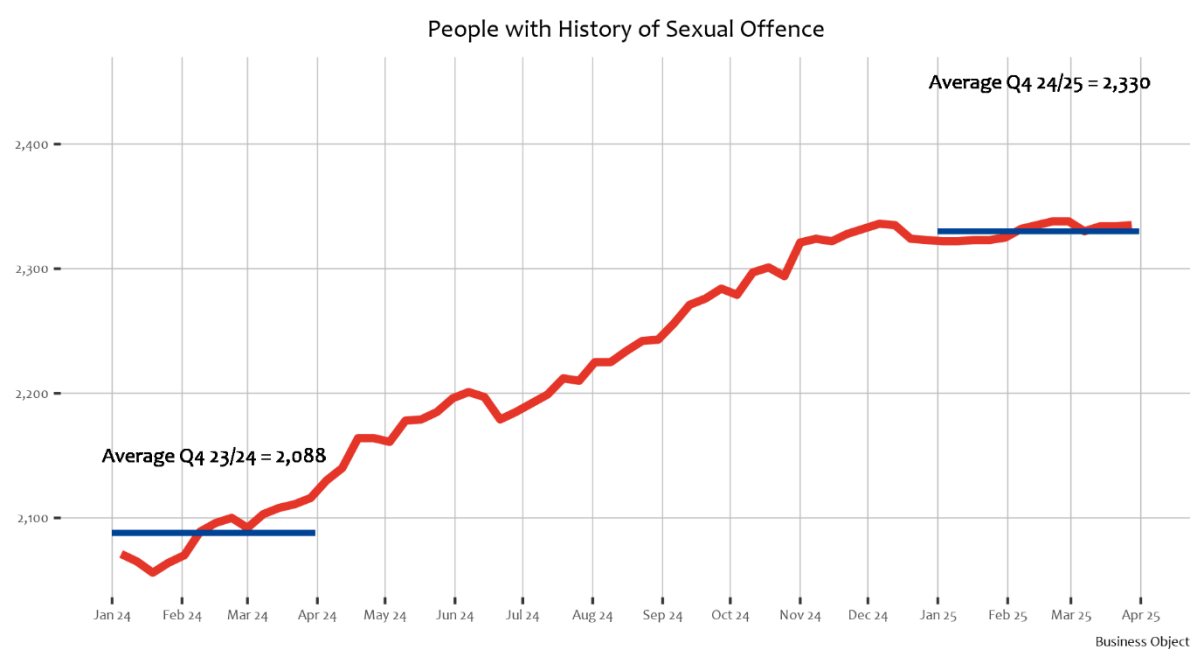
Eleven percent of the people in our prisons have told us that they have a disability. Another 87% did not report any disability and 2% opted not to disclose.

Disability	
Yes	11%
No	87%
Choose not to Disclose	2%

8.0 Protection Populations

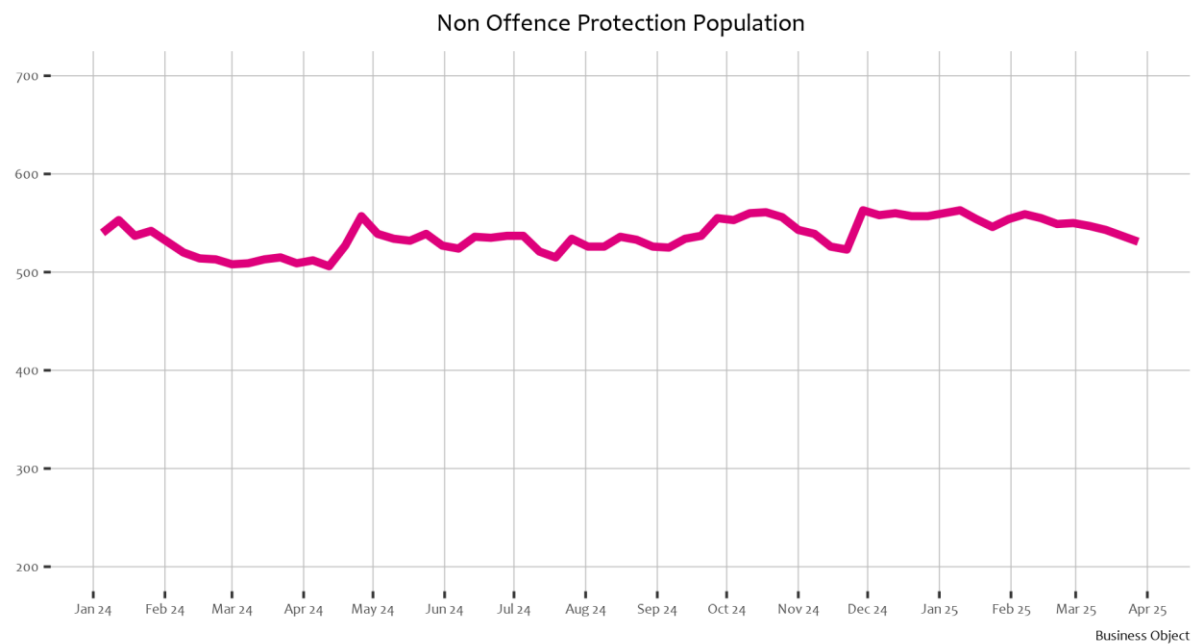
There are people with a history of sexual offending in each of Scotland’s prisons. This graph illustrates the extent of the accommodation issues in terms of this prisoner group, which impacts on the operational running of each prison, as this category of prisoner must be separate from the mainstream population.

The population of those with a history of sexual offending in custody remained stable in Q4 24/25, compared to the previous quarter. In average, the population of those with history of sexual offending in Q4 24/25 increased by 11.6% compared to the same period last year.



Non-Offence Protections (NOPs) also need to be located and managed separately from mainstream prisoners due to being identified as those who are considered at risk should they associate together. There are a number of factors which contribute to this such as previous or current charges which have received negative media attention and could endanger the individuals, those previously employed in the Police or Prison services or those who have generated enemies and/or debts to an extent that there may be a risk to the individual should they be allocated into a mainstream residential area. This negatively impacts the operational running of the prison because NOP prisoners sometimes need to be accommodated and managed separately, depending on the severity of need for protection status.

The number of individuals within the NOP population remained broadly stable at a quarterly average of 550 for the last two quarters.



9.0 Geography of Imprisonment in Scotland

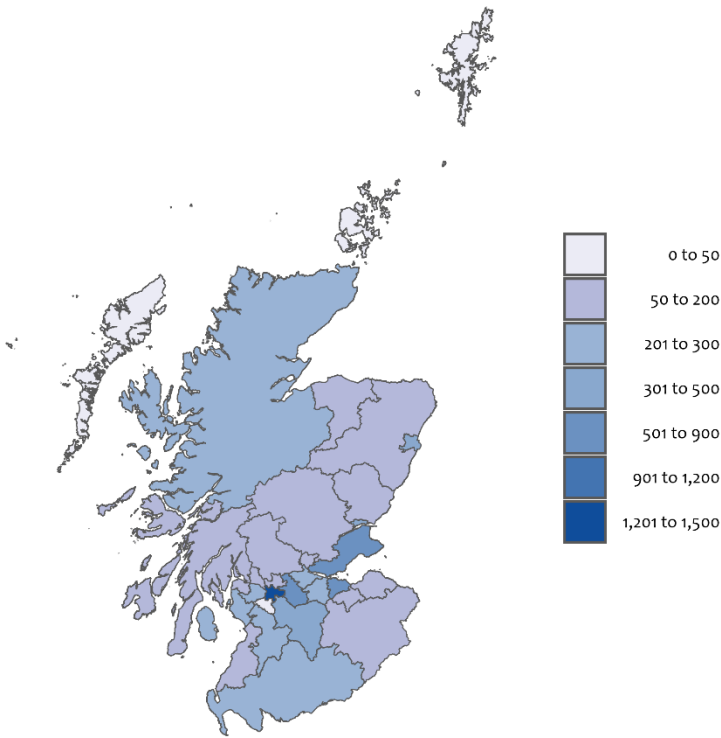
When considering the prison population by Local Authority (LA), people whose last known postcode was in Glasgow City continued to comprise the largest number; 1,468 individuals in custody, comprising 17.8% of the total prison population at the end of Q4 24/25. The City of Edinburgh has the second largest prison population, with 638 individuals, followed by North Lanarkshire and Fife with 562 and 537 individuals, respectively.

Na H-Eileanan Siar, Shetland Islands and Orkney Island have the smallest number of individuals in custody. The three Local Authorities together comprise 0.5% of the total of residents in prison.

According to the Prison Records, 4.9% of the people in our care recorded an address outwith Scotland, therefore they are not associated with any LA. Another 0.1% do not have an identifiable address or do not have any address recorded in our system.

The map below illustrates the number of people in custody by LA on 31st March 2025.

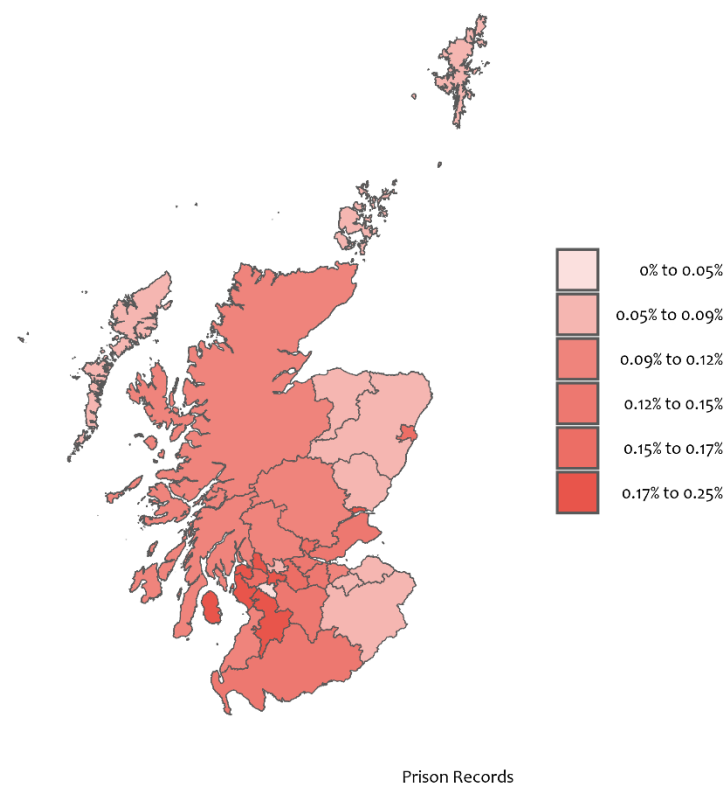
Number of People in Custody by Local Authority



The national rate of imprisonment in Scotland⁴ was 0.2% at the end of March. Rates of imprisonment equal or above the national rate were observed in 11 of the 32 LAs.

The map below illustrates the rate of imprisonment by LA on 31st March 2024.

Rate of Imprisonment by Local Authority



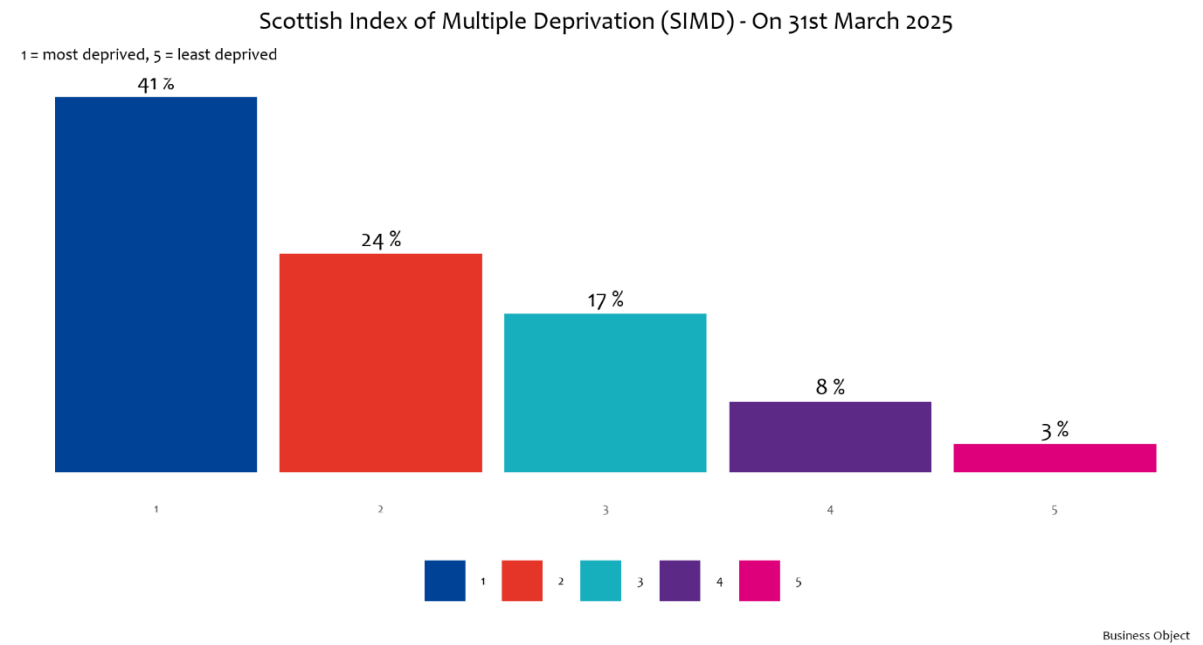
⁴ The Scottish population figures used to calculate the rate of imprisonment was obtained from [Scotland's Census 2022](#)

The table below illustrates the total number of individuals in custody on 31st March 2025, broken down by length of sentence per LA.

	Remand + Undetermined Sentence	Short Term Prisoners - Less than 4 years	Long Term Prisoners - Over 4 Years (including Life)
Aberdeen City	126	108	155
Aberdeenshire	48	48	81
Angus	31	23	48
Argyll And Bute	19	22	43
City Of Edinburgh	183	162	293
Clackmannanshire	28	33	28
Dumfries And Galloway	78	71	69
Dundee City	125	103	141
East Ayrshire	78	66	83
East Dunbartonshire	24	13	24
East Lothian	39	21	40
East Renfrewshire	12	15	13
Falkirk	70	76	91
Fife	132	142	263
Glasgow City	402	361	705
Highland	71	53	114
Inverclyde	45	47	74
Midlothian	19	15	38
Moray	29	17	41
Na H-Eileanan Siar	5	5	5
North Ayrshire	86	80	82
North Lanarkshire	172	141	249
Orkney Islands	<5	<5	8
Outwith Scotland	105	88	208
Perth And Kinross	49	35	73
Renfrewshire	67	84	143
Scottish Borders	20	33	47
Shetland Islands	<5	5	<5
South Ayrshire	40	42	57
South Lanarkshire	143	116	208
Stirling	21	43	30
Unidentifiable Address	<5	<5	<5
West Dunbartonshire	49	52	79
West Lothian	61	60	107
Not on Prison Records	<5	<5	<5

Deprivation

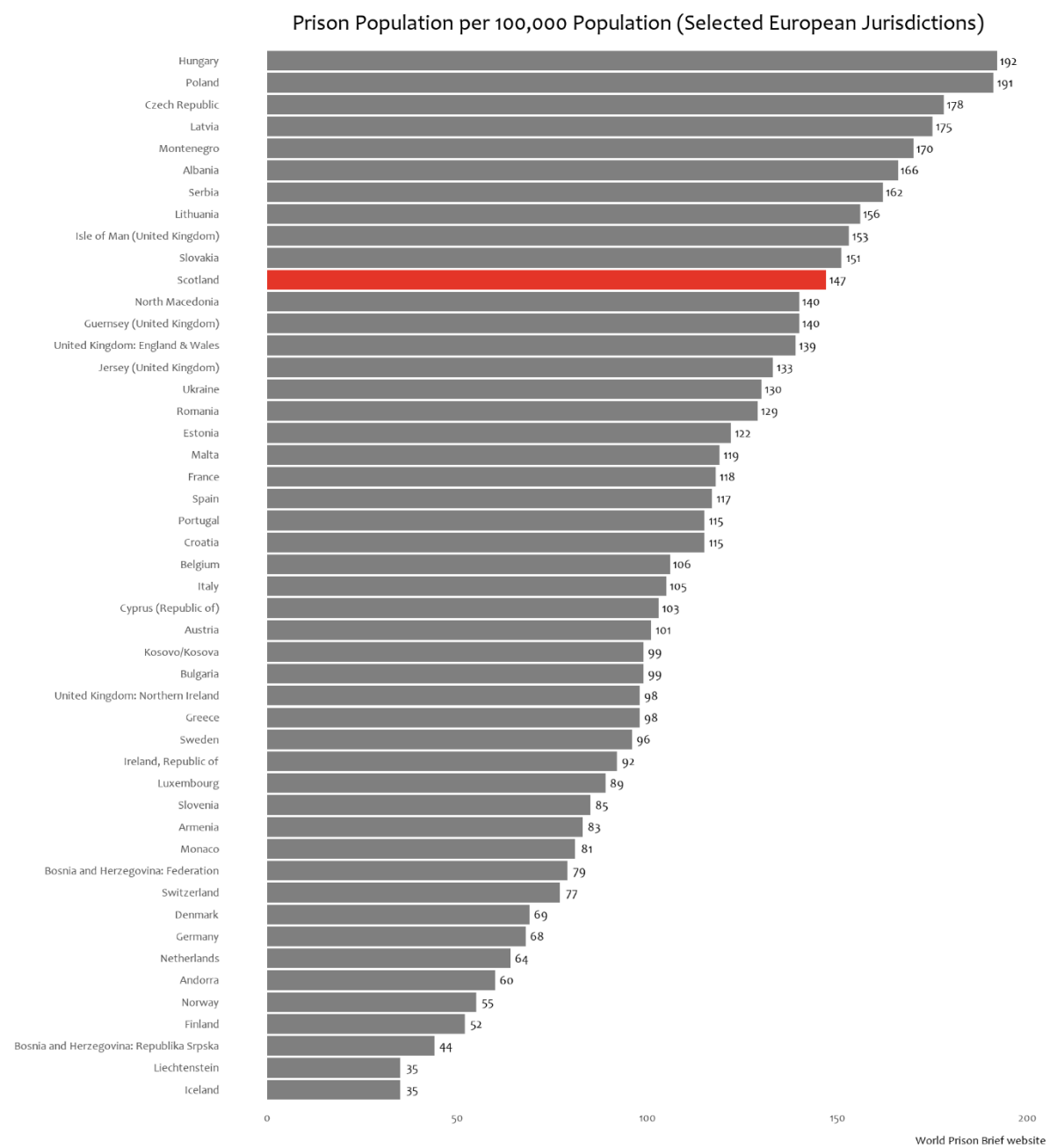
The data extracted from the Prison Records on 31st March 2025 indicates that 41% of the prison population come from the 20% most deprived areas of Scotland while 3% come from the least deprived areas⁵.



⁵ The Scottish Index Multiple Deprivation (SIMD) is a relative measure of deprivation across 6,976 small areas. SIMD ranks from most deprived (ranked 1) to least deprived (ranked 6,976). This Public Information Page linked SIMD Geographical Data to the postcode of those in our care and focused on the areas below 20% most deprived data zones in Scotland.

10.0 International Comparisons

The figure below shows the prison population per 100,000 people for a selection of European countries⁶. Scotland has a rate of 147 prisoners for every 100,000 people.

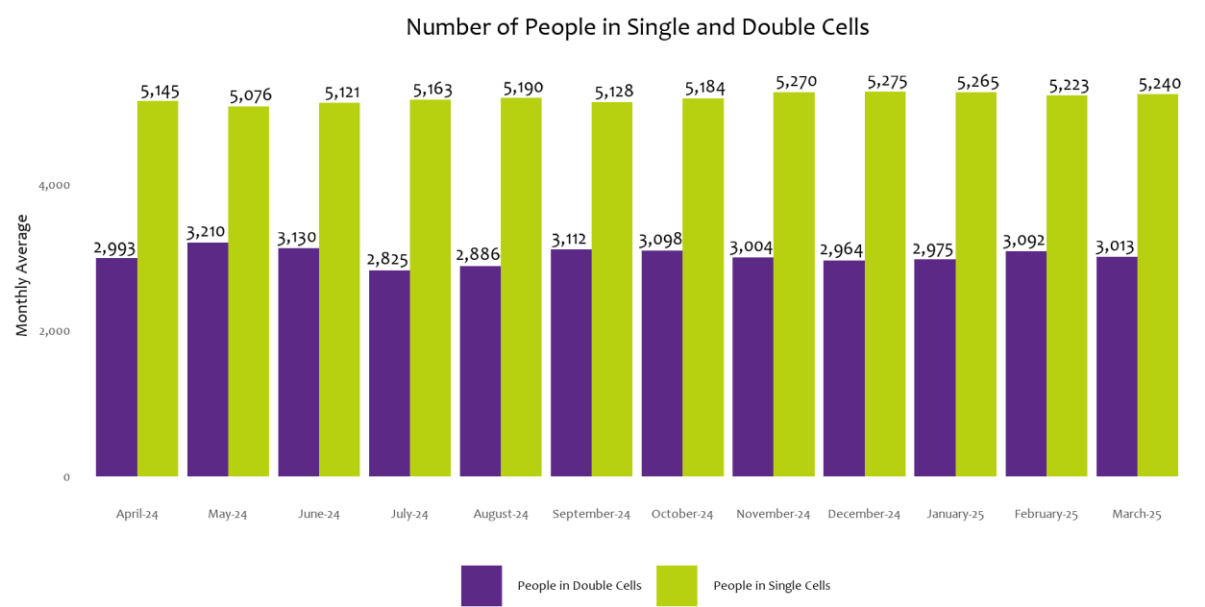


⁶ [World Prison Brief](#), accessed in February 2025.

11.0 Prison Estate & Configuration

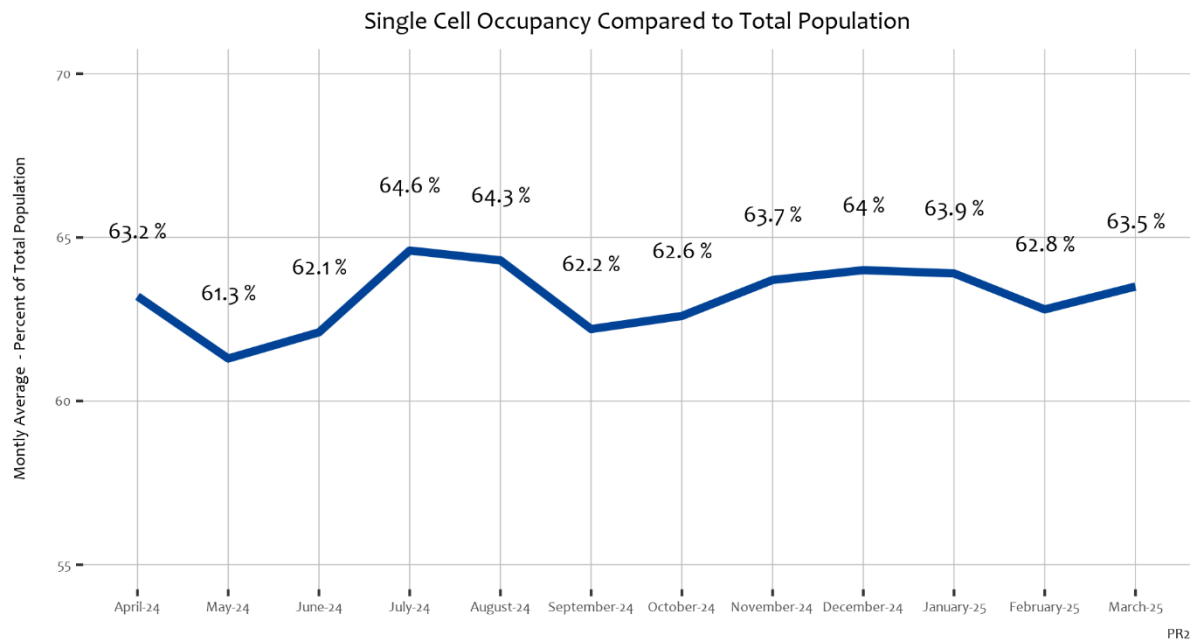
At the end of March 2025, two establishments were operating at or over the agreed Assessed Capacity Tolerance (ACT). Another six establishments were operating very close to ACT.

In Q4 24/25, the monthly average number of people accommodated in single cells reduced from 5,265 individuals in January to 5,240 in March, while the number of people accommodated in Double Cells increased by 1.3%. Between April-24 and March-25, the average number of people accommodated in single cells increased by 1.8%. In the same period, the average number of people accommodated in double cells increased by less than 1%.



PR2

Current Single Cell Occupancy (SCO) figures illustrate the impact that the rising and increasingly complex population is having on the ability to provide individuals with single cells. In the short term, SPS is unable to increase the capacity to offer individuals single cells, as this would require building new establishments or re-designing existing ones. In Q4 24/25, SCO reduced from an average of 63.9% in January to 63.5% in March.

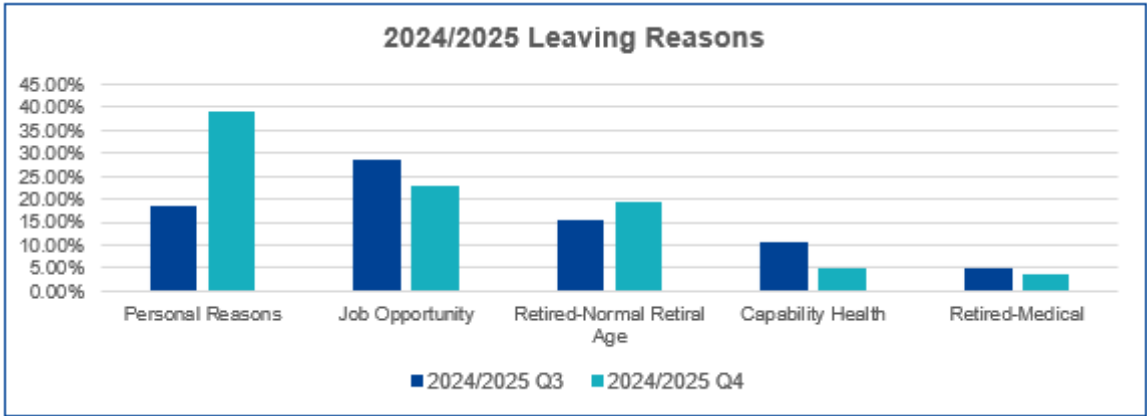


12.0 Staffing Levels

SPS currently has 5,106 employees (4,808.5 full-time equivalent (FTE)), as of the 31st March 2025. This is an increase from 31st December 2024 (5,055 employees, 4,760 FTE).

Turnover

Turnover is a focus for SPS, with the priority being having a better understanding as to why employees leave. In Q4 24/25, there were 62 employees who left SPS which is a decrease compared to Q3 24/25. The top four leaving reasons in Q4 were Job Opportunity, Personal Reasons, Job Opportunity, Retired-Normal Retiral Age, and Capability Health. These reasons equate to 85.5% of Q 4 leavers.

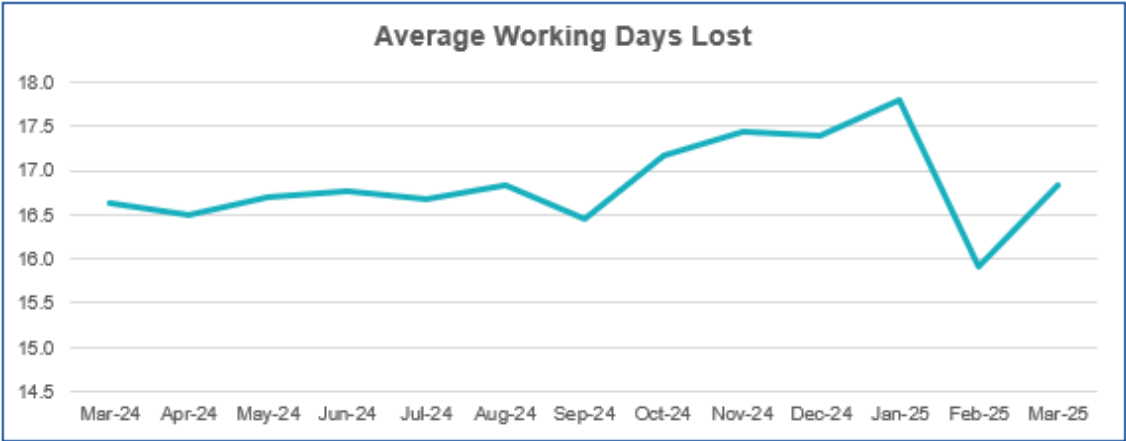


Absence

Staff absence is one of the main priorities for SPS. The sickness absence levels have slightly increased from 16.6 Average Working Days Lost (AWDL) in March 2024 to 16.8 Average Working Days Lost (AWDL) in March 2025. The average working days lost are the number of FTE days lost to sickness absence by SPS employees within a 12-month rolling period.

The calculation for this is:

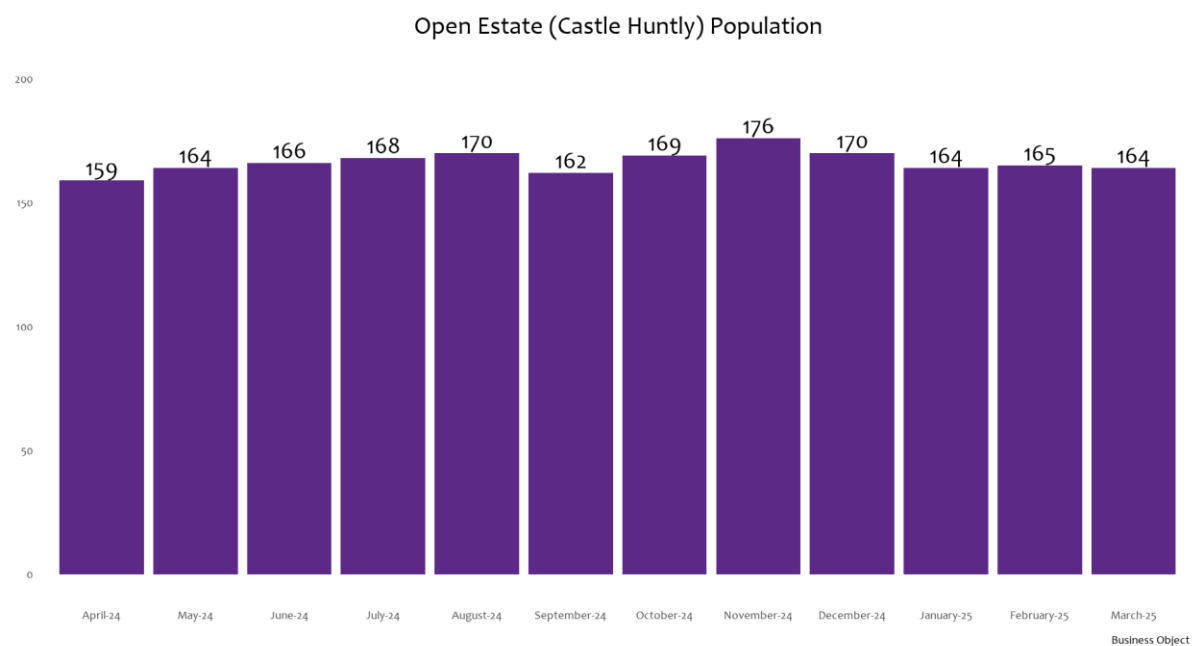
$$\text{AWDL} = \frac{\text{Total number of working days lost to absence}}{\text{Total FTE for all SPS employees}}$$



13.0 Open Estate

To progress to less secure conditions, an individual must undergo case management and the level of risk for moving them must be agreed by the SPS and key partners. All convicted population can be eligible once the criteria are met. This process is managed for adult males via Castle Huntly, HMP&YOI Polmont for Young People and HMP Stirling for the female estate.

The population of Castle Huntly (also known as the Open Estate) reduced from an average of 170 in December-24 to 164 in January-25 and remained stable throughout the end of Q4 24/25.

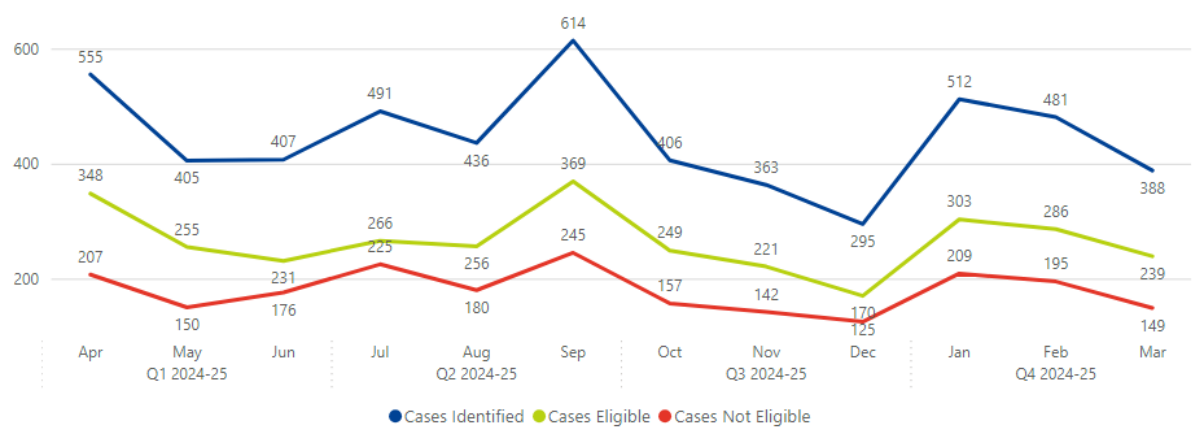


Identifying people held in less secure conditions within HMP&YOI Polmont and HMP Stirling is complicated by the structure of management information held by SPS; work is underway to report upon these populations.

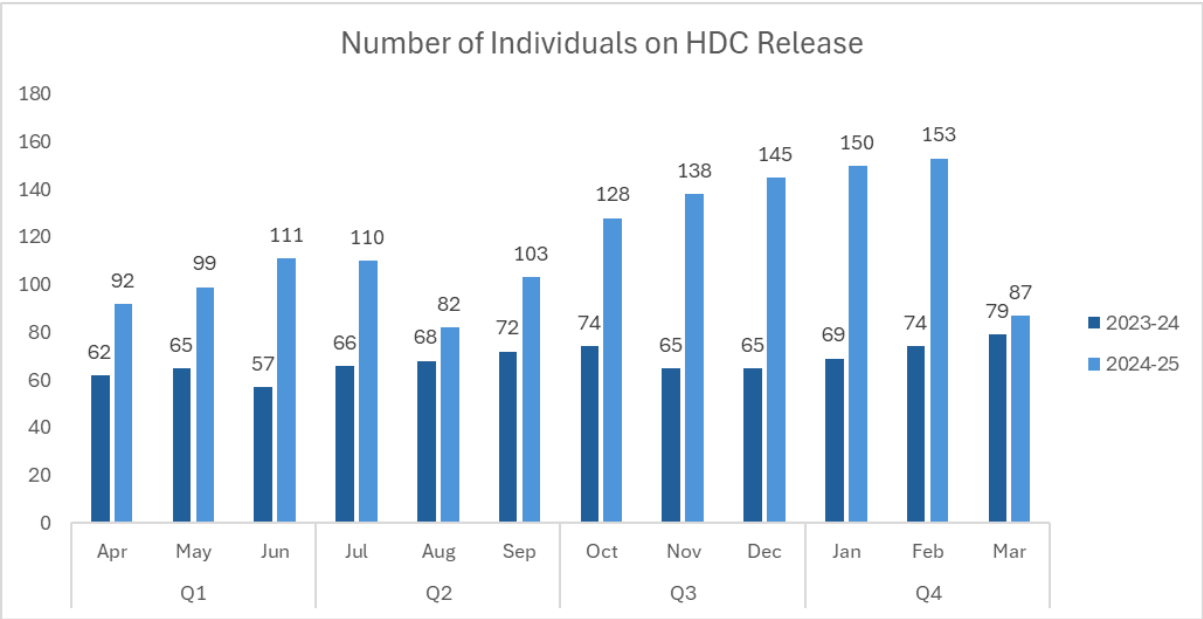
14.0 Home Detention Curfew (HDC)

The Prisoners (Early Release) (Scotland) Act 2025 (STP40) impacted the HDC process, as the cohort that were eligible for STP40 were the same cohort that would be eligible for HDC.

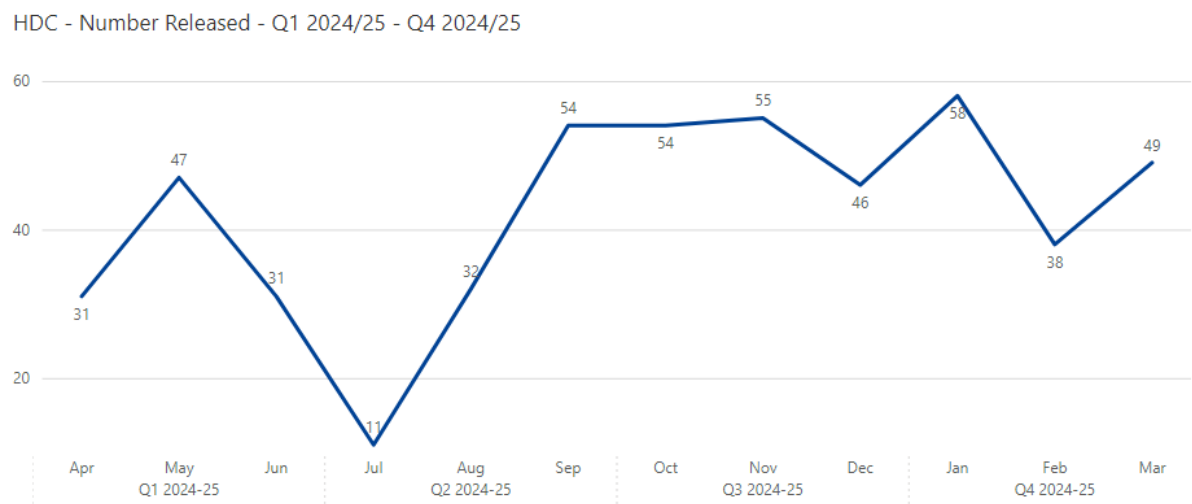
HDC - Cases Identified - Q1 2024/25 - Q4 2024/25



During 2024, a significant rise in the numbers of individuals on HDC was evident. At the end of December 2023, there were 65 people on HDC release; at the end of December 2024, there were 145. However, Q4 24/25 shows a significant reduction in the numbers due to the STP40 implementation.



In Q4 2024/25 there were a total number of 145 individuals released on HDC. There was a dip in the numbers released in July due to emergency release and in February due to STP40 as the pool of people being released on STP40 were also those individuals eligible for HDC.



15.0 Face to Face & Virtual Visits

Due to an issue with data access, it is not possible to provide analysis of visits in this quarter. We will endeavour to fix this at the earliest possible opportunity.

16.0 Additional Information and Useful Links

About this report

The Public Information Page (PIP) is a quarterly report published by the Scottish Prison Service (SPS) to provide transparency about various metrics related to the running of prisons in Scotland. Data is extracted from SPS management information systems and compiled into the PIP report each quarter. Because this data comes from live systems and is extracted at various points throughout the year, it can differ from other similar data in the public domain, such as the Scottish Prison Population Statistics. The data compiled in this report is not subject to the same level of quality assurance as the official statistics, although every effort is made to ensure its accuracy before publication.

We seek to be as open and transparent as possible, while also upholding our statutory obligation to ensure those in our care have their personal information protected. We have improved the way in which we collate and present data on our transgender population and, following advice from information governance experts, will only provide information on the total number of transgender people in our care. We have also applied disclosure control throughout the report where small numbers might mean that individuals could be identified.

Other data sources

- **Parliamentary Questions**

A full list of Parliamentary Questions answered in the Scottish Parliament on the subject of prisons is available from the Scottish Parliament website [here](#).

- **Corporate Plan**

The Corporate Plan identifies a set of strategic themes and outcomes, which defines and shapes SPS priorities over the duration of that Plan. This is currently on the SPS website [here](#).

- **Prisons Plan**

COVID19 has necessitated a change in planning arrangements. The SPS Delivery Plan can be found [here](#).

- **SPS Annual Report and Accounts**

The purpose of the Annual Report and Accounts is to provide an overview of the Scottish Prison Service, its purpose and activities. It also includes information on key risk and issues for the organisation as well as a high-level summary of performance. The most recent Report is available [here](#).

- **Drivers of the prison population: crime and convictions statistics.**

The drivers of the prison population are the number of people committing crimes, the numbers convicted, and the number given custodial sentences each year. The latest statistics from Scottish Government and the Scottish Courts and Tribunal Service are provided below:

[Criminal Proceedings in Scotland, 2019-20](#)

[Criminal Proceedings in Scotland, 2020-21](#)

[Criminal Proceedings in Scotland, 2021-22](#)

[Criminal Proceedings in Scotland, 2022-23](#)

[Recorded Crime in Scotland, 2021-22](#)

[Recorded Crime in Scotland, 2022-23](#)

[Recorded Crime in Scotland, 2023-24](#)

[Recorded Crime in Scotland, 2024-25](#)

- **Prisons research and surveys**

SPS undertakes a range of research and evaluations of prison and related services. These reports will be uploaded at the time the reports are ready for publication. More information can be found [here](#).

- **Scottish Prison Population Statistics**

Data on Scottish prison population levels and characteristics, receptions to/liberations from prison. The last publication is available [here](#).

- **[Scottish Prison Interactive Analysis Tool](#)**

The Scottish Prison Population Statistics app contains a large amount of information on people in prison and their movements over the period 2009-10 through 2023-24. The app is designed to allow users to freely explore this information, giving users control over a wide range of options.

- **Coronavirus (COVID-19): Justice Analytical Services data report**

Monthly data report on how the COVID-19 pandemic has affected the Justice System in Scotland, including information from Police Scotland, Crown Office and Procurator Fiscal Service, courts and prisons. All publications are available [here](#).

- [Freedom of Information Responses](#)

- **Scottish Government Justice Analytical Services Criminal Disposals Dashboard**

The interactive dashboard contains information on charge level disposals from Scottish criminal courts. The data included in the dashboard is provided by the Scottish Courts and Tribunals Services (SCTS). For more information, please click [here](#).

- **Sex, gender identity, trans status – data collection and publication: guidance**

Guidance for public bodies on the data collection of data on sex and gender, available [here](#).

- **Tableau – Scotland’s Justice Statistics and Trends**

The Tableau is a data visualization tool that highlights publicly available data in a way that supports understanding of the community justice landscape at a local authority area level. More information can be obtained [here](#).

- **Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation (SIMD)**

The purpose of the SIMD is that it “identifies small area concentrations of multiple deprivation across all of Scotland in a consistent way. It allows effective targeting of policies and funding where the aim is to wholly or partly tackle or take account of area concentrations of multiple deprivation. More information is available [here](#).

- **The World Prison Brief**

The World Prison Brief is an online database providing free access to information on prison systems around the world. It supports evidence-based development of prison policy and practice globally. For more information click [here](#).

- [Scotland’s Census 2022 – Rounded population estimates](#)

- [Mid-2020 Population Estimates Scotland | National Records of Scotland \(nrscotland.gov.uk\)](#)