

Documentation of statistics for Convictions 2023

1 Introduction

The purpose of the statistics is to analyse the number of convictions for criminal offences in connection with offences against the penal code, the road traffic act and other special laws. The statistics on convictions for criminal offences date back to 1832, but are in its present form comparable from 1980 and onwards.

2 Statistical presentation

The statistics shed light on the number of convictions for violation of the penal code, the road traffic act and other special legislation as well as the length of imprisonments. Convictions consist of imprisonments, fines, withdrawals and also acquittals. The statistics are divided after type of offence, type of conviction, sex, age, municipalities and regions.

2.1 Data description

The statistics on convictions for criminal offences form part of the criminal statistics. The criminal statistics include statistics on criminal cases from reported crimes and victims to convictions and also arrests and imprisonments.

The statistics on convictions for criminal offences are person-based case statistics, which shed light on the number of convictions for violation of the penal code, the road traffic act and other special legislation. Convictions consist of imprisonments, fines, withdrawals and also acquittals. A main distinction is made between guilty decisions (the person has been found guilty) and not-guilty decisions (the person has not been found guilty). The statistics do not contain information on all fines as fines for violation of the road traffic act less than DKK 2,500 and fines of less than DKK 1,000 for the violation of most of the other special laws are not registered in the Central Criminal Register, which is the data source of the statistics.

The conviction concerns the main case as more than one case can be decided in the same conviction. The police chooses one of the cases (typically the most serious) as the main case in a complex of cases. In general, the statistics is distributed by the type of offence etc. of the main cases and the total number of cases are only shown in some few tables. However, the majority of decisions only concerns one case. One person can have one or several convictions during a year.

The published statistics distributes the convictions by type of offence, type of conviction and in case of an imprisonment, the length of sentence, sex, age and municipality of the convicted person.

2.2 Classification system

Municipalities and regions plus grouping of the types of decisions and of codes of the criminal offences. The criminal offences are divided into the penal code, the road traffic act and special law/legislation. The penal code is furthermore divided into four subgroups: Sexual offences, Crimes of violence, Offences against property and Other offences. The most special laws/legislation are referred to as single acts, while the rest are categorized as 'Other special laws/legislations'.

The provisions of the Danish Criminal Code regarding sexual offences went through essential amendments taking effect from 1 July 2013. The amendments resulted in e.g. more categories of sexual offences than previously being placed under the provisions about rape (section 216). See more: [Rape - Convictions](#) og [Rape - Secondary cases](#)

A new concept of consent regarding rape is taking effect from 1st of January 2021 which has resulted in new ways for the police to register offences regarding rape. This has to be taken into account when comparing data over time.

A new concept regarding stalking is taking effect from 14th of December 2022. Stalking figures in 'Coercive control etc'.

2.3 Sector coverage

Not relevant for these statistics.

2.4 Statistical concepts and definitions

Type of decision: Nature of the sentence passed. This can be an unconditional or a suspended prison sentence, a fine, discharge or dismissal of charge, withdrawal of a charge, sentence to treatment, acquittal etc. Overall, a distinction is made between two types of decisions: verdicts of guilty and verdicts of not guilty. Acquittal and withdrawal of a charge are verdicts of not guilty, whereas all other types of decisions are verdicts of guilty.

Type of offence: Type of offence describes the kind of law violation which the conviction concerns. The criminal offences are divided into the penal code, the road traffic act and special law/legislation. Violations of the penal code are grouped in sexual offences, crimes of violence, offences against property and other offences. The most special laws/legislation are referred to as single acts, while the rest are categorized as 'Other special laws/legislations'. The grouping of offense codes used is available here: [Violations of the penalcode](#).

2.5 Statistical unit

The unit in the statistics on convictions is a decision concerning violations of the penal code, the road traffic act or the special legislation. The decision can be conferred by the court, the prosecution and the commissioner of police. The decision could be a statement by the prosecution about either giving up the charge, different forms of withdrawal of charges or the issue of fines and warnings. Decisions made by the court could concern imprisonment, fines and warnings, and also the conditional withdrawal of charges or acquittal.

2.6 Statistical population

The population covered by the statistics is convictions made during a calendar year and registered in the Central Criminal Register. If the extract from the register to Statistics Denmark is made before the conviction is registered it will not be included in the statistics.

2.7 Reference area

Denmark, except the Faroe Islands and Greenland

2.8 Time coverage

The statistics covers the period from 1980 and onwards

2.9 Base period

Not relevant to this statistics.

2.10 Unit of measure

Number of convictions. Average length of imprisonment is measured in number of months.

2.11 Reference period

01-01-2023 - 31-12-2023

2.12 Frequency of dissemination

Annual

2.13 Legal acts and other agreements

The Act on Statistics Denmark §6.

There is no EU Regulation related to the statistics on convictions.

2.14 Cost and burden

There is no response burden as the statistics are based on registers. Data are compiled by the National Commissioner of the Danish Police.

2.15 Comment

Convictions have a [Subject page](#)

3 Statistical processing

The source of the statistics is The Central Criminal Register - administered by the National Commissioner of the Danish Police. Data are delivered yearly via System-to-system transmission. The data go through a probability check in form of a comparison with data from the previous year, key variables are checked for valid values and irrelevant decisions are deleted. Based on the reported data the length of unsuspended and suspended sentences are calculated.

3.1 Source data

Since 1979, the Central Criminal Register - administered by the National Commissioner of the Danish Police.

3.2 Frequency of data collection

Annual

3.3 Data collection

System-to-system transmission

3.4 Data validation

The data go through a probability check in form of a comparison with data from the previous year. Explanations of possible big deflections in the the distribution of key variables are looked for, possible by contacting the National Police, the central criminal register or other relevant bodies.

3.5 Data compilation

Key variables are checked for valid values. Irrelevant decisions are deleted, e.g. decision with irrelevant type of offence or decisions made by courts in Greenland or the Faroe Islands. The code numbers of the type of decision and the type of offence are converted to Statistics Denmark-codes, which are hierarchically constructed. Based on the reported data the length of unsuspended and suspended sentences are calculated. In case of partly suspended sentences the length of the sentence is divided into an unsuspended part and a suspended part.

3.6 Adjustment

No further corrections of data than mentioned in Data validation and Data compilation are done.

4 Relevance

The statistics are used broadly by the authorities, organizations, researchers, the press etc. The tables in the <http://www.statbank.dk> are used frequently. Views and suggestions from key users are taken into consideration in the preparation of the statistics.

4.1 User Needs

Users are ministries (especially the Ministry of Justice), the local police authorities, courts, municipalities and counties, different organisations, educational institutions, research or scientific institutions, the media, private firms and private individuals.

Applications are public and private planning, education, research/scientific and public debate.

4.2 User Satisfaction

The statistics on convictions are often used by the press and the tables on <http://www.statbank.dk> are used frequently. In connection with the preparation of the annual publication *Kriminalitet* (Criminality) a consulting meeting with key users of the statistics is held. Forwarded views and suggestions are taken into consideration in the planning of the statistics.

4.3 Data completeness rate

Not relevant to this statistics.

5 Accuracy and reliability

The reliability of the statistics on convicted criminal offences is considered to be good. The data come from a single administrative register and Statistics Denmark receives a single total extract annually.

The statistics include all convictions registered in the central criminal register at the time the extract is done, typically about February 1st following the relevant year. A number of convictions made during the year will happen not to be registered at that time. That implies that the total number of convictions presumably is under-estimated.

The statistics is only published as final figures.

5.1 Overall accuracy

The reliability of the statistics on convicted criminal offences is considered to be good. The data come from a single administrative register and Statistics Denmark receives a single total extract including all the convicted criminal offences in Denmark. The statistics include all convictions registered in the central criminal register at the time the extract to Statistics Denmark is done, typically about February 1st following the relevant calendar year. A number of convictions made during the calendar year will happen not to be registered before the time of extraction. That implies that the total number of convictions presumably is under-estimated. The exact size is not known but is regarded as limited and of the same extent each year.

5.2 Sampling error

There is no sampling errors as the statistics are compiled on the basis of registers.

5.3 Non-sampling error

The statistics include all convictions registered in the central criminal register at the time the extract to Statistics Denmark is done, typically about February 1st following the relevant calendar year. A number of convictions made during the calendar year will happen not to be registered before the time of extraction. That implies that the total number of convictions presumably is under-estimated. The exact size is not known but is regarded as limited and of the same extent each year.

The statistics does not include all fines as fines below DKK 2,500 for violation of the road traffic act and fines below DKK 1,000 for violation of the main part of the other special laws are not registered in the central criminal register.

There is no unit non-response or item non-response

5.4 Quality management

Statistics Denmark follows the recommendations on organisation and management of quality given in the Code of Practice for European Statistics (CoP) and the implementation guidelines given in the Quality Assurance Framework of the European Statistical System (QAF). A Working Group on Quality and a central quality assurance function have been established to continuously carry through control of products and processes.

5.5 Quality assurance

Statistics Denmark follows the principles in the Code of Practice for European Statistics (CoP) and uses the Quality Assurance Framework of the European Statistical System (QAF) for the implementation of the principles. This involves continuous decentralized and central control of products and processes based on documentation following international standards. The central quality assurance function reports to the Working Group on Quality. Reports include suggestions for improvement that are assessed, decided and subsequently implemented.

5.6 Quality assessment

The reliability of the statistics on convicted criminal offences is considered to be good. The data come from a single administrative register and Statistics Denmark receives a single total extract including all the convicted criminal offences in Denmark. The statistics include all convictions registered in the central criminal register at the time the extract to Statistics Denmark is done, typically about February 1st following the relevant calendar year. A number of convictions made during the calendar year will happen not to be registered before the time of extraction. That implies that the total number of convictions presumably is under-estimated. The exact size is not known but is regarded as limited and of the same extent each year.

The statistics does not include all fines as fines below DKK 2,500 for violation of the road traffic act and fines below DKK 1,000 for violation of the main part of the other special laws are not registered in the central criminal register.

By studying the development in the number of convictions (typical fines) for violation of the road traffic act and other special laws as police regulation and euphoriant act it has to be considered that the activity of the police in the form of e.g. speed controls or special efforts in the night life by itself can affect the number of convictions. An increase in the number of convictions in these areas does not necessarily reflect an increase in the number of violations but can also reflect that a greater proportion are discovered and registered.

There is no sampling errors as the statistics are compiled on the basis of registers.

5.7 Data revision - policy

Statistics Denmark revises published figures in accordance with the [Revision Policy for Statistics Denmark](#). The common procedures and principles of the Revision Policy are for some statistics supplemented by a specific revision practice.

5.8 Data revision practice

Only final figures are published.

6 Timeliness and punctuality

The statistics are published approximately 3 months after the end of the year. The punctuality is very high as the statistics usually are published without delay in relation to the scheduled time.

6.1 Timeliness and time lag - final results

Only final figures are published. The statistics are published within 4 months after the end of the reference period. Time of publication the last 5 years has been between 2 months and 24 days and 3 months and 25 days.

2023: 3 months 25 days 2022: 3 months, 3 days 2021: 2 months 24 days 2020: 2 months 25 days 2019: 2 months 25 days

6.2 Punctuality

The punctuality is very high as the statistics usually are published without delay in relation to the scheduled time.

7 Comparability

Since 1979, the statistics has been prepared on the same date source. In general the statistics is therefore comparable during time. As a consequence of law amendments or wishes for more information on specific kind of offences the division of type of offences has been altered during the years. An overview of new and ceases type of offences can be found in this annex (in Danish): [Development type of offences](#).

7.1 Comparability - geographical

EUROSTAT and UN collect annual data from the member states on convictions for specific type of offences and publish statistics based on this. However, the range of items included in the different groups of crime can differ between countries and comparisons based upon absolute figures should be made with caution.

7.2 Comparability over time

Since 1979, the statistics has been prepared on the same date source. In general the statistics is therefore comparable during time. As a consequence of law amendments or wishes for more information on specific kind of offences the division of type of offences has been altered during the years.

Among major changes are:

In 1986, offences against public decency was divided into a number of more specific types of offences.

In 1989, amendments to the penal code took effect which concerned the crimes of violence especially in respect of sections 244-246. This caused a break in the statistics which it is difficult to assess the extent of.

Lack of registration of vehicle and offences against departmental order regarding registration of vehicles were until 2012 classed with the Road Traffic Act. Hereafter with the Tax Act.

Section 265 regarding restraining order in the Penal Code is replaced by the law on expulsion, restraining order and ban on stay in 2012.

The provisions of the Danish Criminal Code regarding sexual offences went through essential amendments taking effect from 1 July 2013. The amendments resulted in e.g. more categories of sexual offences than previously being placed under the provisions about rape (section 216). See more: [Rape - Convictions](#) and [Rape - Secondary cases](#)

A new concept of consent regarding rape is taking effect from 1st of January 2021 which has resulted in new ways for the police to register offences regarding rape. This has to be taken into account when comparing data over time.

As from July 1st 2001 lenient imprisonment was abolishes. This implies that the statistics on number and length of the sentences on and after 2001 not are comparable with the previous years as short and long sentences now are grouped together.

Fines for violation of the road traffic act below DKK 2,500 are not included in the statistics as from 2012. In the period 2001-2011 the limit was DKK 1,500 and before 2001 DKK 1,000. These changes together with changes (increases) in the size of the fines for violations of the road traffic act affect the number of fines included in the statistics.

From 2006 to 2007 there was a decrease in the number of convictions. Probably this has to be seen in relation to the reform of the organization of the police and the courts which took place in 2007 and which can have caused delay in the work of the police and the courts.

On January 1, 2018, the special burglary-section 276a was introduced into the Criminal Code. The new section meant that the removal of things from a foreign house was now also termed burglary, only the presence in the house had been unjustified. It was therefore no longer a condition for the presence to be obtained by force for example by breaking up windows or doors. In practice, it meant that a large number of reported crimes that were previously theft were now categorized as burglaries.

Law amendments and changes in the administrative praxis may have affected the development in the number of different kind of convictions and new type of convictions can have occurred as well. For a description of this, please consult the high quality documentation (in danish) in TIMES of the variable [AFG_AFGTYP3](#).

7.3 Coherence - cross domain

The National Commissioner of the Danish Police publishes statistics about reported offences with guilty convictions for violation of the penal code. This statistics is based on the Administrative System of the National Police. Both the statistics published by Statistics Denmark and by the National Commissioner consists of decisions made in the period concerned. However, the statistics published by the National Commissioner comprised all cases in which a guilty decision has been made while the unit in the statistics published by Statistics Denmark is the main case as more than one case can be decided in the same conviction. Besides this, the grouping of types of offence in the statistics published by the National Commissioner differs from that in the statistics published by Statistics Denmark. The statistics published by the National Commissioner are not divided by type of decision or by sex and age of the convicted persons as the statistics of Statistics Denmark. On the other hand, it is possible to divide the statistics from the National Commissioner by police district and by quarter, half-year and the whole year.

7.4 Coherence - internal

Data are internally consistent.

8 Accessibility and clarity

The statistics are published in: [News from Statistics Denmark]<https://www.dst.dk/da/Statistik/nyt>). In StatBank the statistics are published under the subject [Convictions](#). Besides this the statistics form part of Statistical Ten-Year Review and the publication [Kriminalitet \(Criminality\)](#) (danish only). At Statistics Denmark's webpage the statistics furthermore are presented on its [Subject page](#).

8.1 Release calendar

The publication date appears in the release calendar. The date is confirmed in the weeks before.

8.3 User access

Statistics are always published at 8:00 a.m. at the day announced in the release calendar. No one outside of Statistics Denmark can access the statistics before they are published.

8.2 Release calendar access

The Release Calendar can be accessed on our English website: [Release Calendar](#).

8.4 News release

The statistics on convictions are published annually in: [News from Statistics Denmark](#) in *Domme for kriminalitet*.

8.5 Publications

The statistics are annually published in [Statistisk Tiårsoversigt \(Statistical Ten-Year Review\)](#) (danish only) and in the publication [Kriminalitet \(Criminality\)](#) (danish only).

8.6 On-line database

The statistics are published in the StatBank under the subject in the following tables:

- [STRAF43](#): Decisions total pr. 100.000 inhabitants by type of decision, age and sex
- [STRAF44](#): Decisions, total by region, type of offence, type of decision, age, sex and time
- [STRAF46](#): Suspended sentence by region, sex, age, type of offence, type of decision, length of sentence and time
- [STRAF47](#): Unsuspended sentence by region, sex, age, type of offence, type of decision, length of sentence and time
- [STRAF40](#): Decisions by type of offence, type of decision, age, sex and time
- [STRAF48](#): Average length (months) of suspended sentences by sex, age, type of offence, type of decision and time
- [STRAF49](#): Average length of unsuspended sentences (month) by sex, age, type of offence, type of decision and time
- [STRAF61](#): Decided secondary cases by type of offence, type of decision, age, sex and time
- [LIGEPB4](#): Convictions for offences against the person by type of offence, age, sex and time
- [LIGEPI4](#): Gender equality indicator of convictions for offences against the person by type of offence, age, indicator and time

8.7 Micro-data access

Data on convictions are kept as ready-made files containing basic information at individual level. Taylor made statistics can be prepared on bases of the ready-made files. Through Statistics Denmark's Division of Research Service it is possible for researchers to be granted access to anonymized data, i.e., data for which all identification details such as ID numbers have been removed.

8.8 Other

Tables with information on convictions for selected types of offences are annually delivered to EUROSTAT. Final data are available to DST Consulting, The Division of Research Services and other users in Statistics Denmark in the form of module data.

8.9 Confidentiality - policy

In the preparing of Convictions the guidelines in Statistics Denmark's [Data Confidentiality Policy](#) are followed.

8.10 Confidentiality - data treatment

The published statistics on convictions is distributed by no other characteristics than municipality, sex and age. This ensures that convictions not can be related to individuals.

8.11 Documentation on methodology

Documentation of the variables in the statistics is available in TIMES. For selected variables High Quality Documentation is available.

A description of the statistical method may be found in the annual publication Kriminalitet (Criminality): [Concepts and sources of the statistisc \(danish only\)](#).

8.12 Quality documentation

Results from the quality evaluation of products and selected processes are available in detail for each statistics and in summary reports for the Working Group on Quality.

9 Contact

The administrative placement of these statistics is in the division of Population and Education. The contact person is Iben Birgitte Pedersen, tel.: + 45 2360 3711, and e-mail: IPE@dst.dk.