

UNGRIPP Statistical Briefing: The Ongoing Human Toll of the Abolished IPP Sentence

Abolished in 2012, yet the Imprisonment for Public Protection (IPP) sentence continues to hold thousands in a cycle of indefinite detention. Despite minor fluctuations, the latest data reveals a system at a standstill, deepening a severe mental health and humanitarian crisis. While emergency early-release schemes have seen tens of thousands of people serving a determinate sentence released to solve the prison overcrowding crisis, individuals on the abolished IPP sentence are left behind—creating a stark and growing systemic injustice.

SYSTEMATIC STANDSTILL: The 11-Year Prison Project

A total of **2,271 individuals** remain trapped in custody (a minor drop from 2,329 last quarter), this combines those who have never been released and those back on recall.

- **A Glacial Decline:** The average drop in the IPP prison population across the last 8 quarters is a miserable **-2% per quarter**.
- **A Decade of Delay:** At the current rate of bureaucratic inertia, UNGRIPP estimates it will take a **minimum of 11 years** just to clear the remaining IPP prison population.
- **The Legacy:** This timeline means the IPP will persist for **31 years** since its introduction and **24 years** after its official abolition.

Quarterly Population Decline (Past 8 Quarters)

Quarter Ending	30-Sep-24	31-Dec-24	31-Mar-25	30-Jun-25	30-Sep-25	31-Dec-25	31-Mar-26	30-June-26
Population Drop	-1%	-3%	-3%	-2%	-3%	-1%	-2%	-2%

THE UNRELEASED

There are **856 people** in prison who have never been released. For this group, the original "punishment" phase of their sentence ended years—sometimes decades—ago.

- **99.4% Are Over-Tariff:** **851 out of 856** unreleased individuals have passed their expiry date. They are being held purely on the directive of the state.
- **80%** of the unreleased population have now spent **10 to 20+ years extra in prison** beyond their tariff (up from 75% last quarter).
- **679 people have served 10–20 years past their tariff**, the original tariff the judges deemed as proportionate:
 - **77% (522 people)** of these people had an original tariff of under 4 years.
 - **156 of these people** had an original tariff of under 2 years.

The Reality: Hundreds of human beings have now served triple, quadruple, or quintuple their original court-mandated sentences for minor, non-violent, or low-level offenses.

THE RECALLED

There are currently **1,415 people** serving an IPP sentence in prison on recall.

- **Policy versus IPP action plan:** Quarterly recalls dropped by 3% (86 people) this quarter. However, compared to last quarter's 18% drop, the progress is stalling. The short-lived drop was a one-off result of the *licence termination policy* changing the law.
- **Technicalities, Not Offending:** National data indicates that the vast majority of these individuals are not recalled for committing new crimes, but for administrative and technical slip-ups on licence.
- **Two Years Wasted Per Recall:** Once recalled, an individual spends an average of **26 months** back behind bars.

THE HUMAN COST: Self-Harm and Suicide

The psychological torture of indefinite detention—not knowing if or when you will ever go home—has created a severe safety crisis.

- **Self-Harm in the Male Estate.** In 2025 alone, there were **3,188** recorded incidents of self-harm among people serving an IPP sentence. While overall figures saw a minor 2% dip driven by the female estate, self-harm incidents actually **increased across male prisons**.
- **Suicides in Prison: 2 more individuals** serving an IPP sentence took their own lives in 2025. This brings the total number of self-inflicted deaths in custody since the sentence's inception to **96 people**. (The historical peak of 9 suicides in 2023 stands as a stark warning of what happens when hope is completely extinguished).
- **Suicides in the Community:** The trauma does not end at the prison gates. Government data reveals a hidden epidemic of despair, with **44 people** who have been released on an IPP licence dying by suicide, unable to cope with the crushing psychological weight of the IPP supervision and fear of indefinite recall.

How You Can Help

The current statistical trends demonstrate that the IPP crisis will not resolve itself through slow change. The government must introduce immediate, effective measures to end this tragedy.

Please speak to Alex Norris (Secretary of State for Justice) and request the following actions:

1. **IPP Reform:** The IPP sentence should be reformed, and every person serving an IPP should be resentenced or have their sentence reviewed/reconsidered and set according to the principle of proportionality.
2. **Set Release Date:** Those serving the sentence who are still in prison should be given a set release date by the Parole Board.

1. Quarterly figures from March to June 2026 quarter. Population as of 30th June 2026. Data taken from [Offender Management Statistics Quarterly](#) and [Safety in Custody](#) statistics.

2. Self-Harm statistics include both recalled and unreleased, previously they only included unreleased.