

# Q-Step Internship: Data Journalism The Times & The Sunday Times

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I spent my Q-Step internship with the Data Team. The Data Team are an editorial team, working with both The Times and The Sunday Times newspapers. They utilise computational statistical techniques to interrogate data.

## The Task

The Data Team were tasked to interrogate and collate data retrieved via Freedom of Information requests from 43 police forces in England and Wales in order to find interesting and newsworthy statistics.

## Method

All police FOI responses had to be manually sorted through. Charges were grouped using information from the CPS. Arrests and Convictions were totalled for each year and a decision had to be made to find the most appropriate date range to use as the responses did not all span the same date range. Working with another journalist, some police forces were contacted to supply more complete data. Information from the Home Office on Officer Strength was then collected and compared our numbers. Summary statistics were calculated on a spreadsheet.

## Key Findings

Approximately one police officer arrested every 27 Hours between 2010 and 2014, or a total of 1,629

One third of officers arrested were arrested on suspicion of Crimes Against the Person, this charge category includes offences such as GBH, and Battery.

The officer conviction rate in Lancashire, when compared to the most recent Home Office officer strength size, worked out as 1.44% of their total. This was the highest arrest rate of any force included in the sample.

One in every 40 officers arrested in the Met Police, since 2010

## Other Stories

- Mapping regional impact of "Pay to Stay" measures announced in the August budget
- Investigation of FCA register to uncover hidden gender imbalance in the biggest banks active in the UK

**Police arrest one of their own every day**

Tom Harper, Christian Eriksson and The Sunday Times Data Team

A POLICE officer is arrested on suspicion of criminal offences almost every day, according to figures released under freedom of information laws.

A total of 1,629 officers were arrested over the past five years – one almost every 27 hours.

Almost a third were detained on suspicion of committing violent offences including assault, grievous bodily harm and manslaughter, according to data released by most of the 43 forces in England and Wales.

More than 500 officers went on to be convicted, cautioned or punished for crimes ranging from rape, drug trafficking and sexual offences to fraud and traffic offences. Some received jail sentences.

The statistics reveal there were 174 arrests for sexual offences, with 39 officers convicted or cautioned; 33 arrests for fraud and 41 for perverting the course of justice. Six officers were convicted of sexual offences involving children.

Lancashire police had the worst record with 1.44% of its 3,000 officers convicted or cautioned for criminal offences, according to an analysis of the latest Home Office figures on police force size.

The Metropolitan police, which has been rocked by a series of corruption scandals in recent years, dominated the statistics due to its size, with 781 officers arrested and 146 convicted or cautioned. Almost 2.5% of the Met force – one in every 40 officers – was arrested over the past five years, with almost one in every 200 convicted of a crime.

Perhaps the best-known recent case was the "Plebgate" affair involving PC Keith Wallis, who was jailed for 12 months after lying about witnessing an altercation at the gates at the end of Downing Street that involved the former Tory chief whip, Andrew Mitchell.

Keith Vaz, the chairman of the home affairs select committee, said he would be raising the findings with Sir Bernard Hogan-Howe, the Met commissioner. "These figures are surprising and the committee will want to put them to the commissioner," he said.

Vaz also expressed surprise the statistics had not already been disclosed by the College of Policing, the national body that is supposed to publish figures on police misconduct.

In other examples of officers who have been convicted of offences, in March Chris Higgs, a former officer with Devon and Cornwall police, admitted 16 crimes, including blackmail, perverting the course of justice, witness interference and fraud.

Osman Iqbal, a West Midlands police officer, was given a seven-year prison term in 2014 after his colleagues found he was a gangster involved in money-laundering, prostitution rackets and the supply of class A drugs.

While the figures are dominated by large, urban forces such as the Met and West Midlands, rural forces also feature. Devon and Cornwall police recorded the highest number of officers arrested on suspicion of fraud while Kent had 19 officers arrested for violent offences and nine for perverting the course of justice – the highest in England and Wales.

All the forces contacted by The Sunday Times said allegations of criminality against its officers were taken seriously and rigorously investigated. Some also stressed that an arrest did not always mean an officer was later found guilty.

Jacqui Cher, the National Police Chiefs' Council spokeswoman on professional standards and ethics, said: "The code of ethics is now well embedded across the service... When members of the service fall short of these standards, well established and rigorous processes are in place to ensure appropriate action is taken.

"If an officer is suspected of criminal activity, we act quickly to investigate as we want to ensure the service maintains the highest standards of integrity and conduct."

Sunday Times Data Team: Karrie Kehoe, Asher Berkowitz-Werner and Chloe Coleman

**ST DIGITAL**

Interactive: Find out your local police force fare!

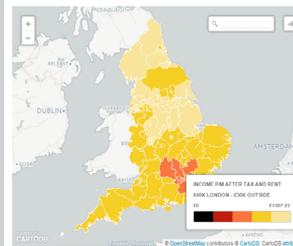
Go to our tablet edition or [thesundaytimes.co.uk/news](http://thesundaytimes.co.uk/news)

| Force              | Convicted or cautioned | Arrested |
|--------------------|------------------------|----------|
| Lancashire         | 1.44                   | 2.4%     |
| Gloucestershire    | 1.12                   |          |
| Suffolk            | 0.78                   | 0.78     |
| Humber-side        | 0.19                   | 0.74     |
| Sussex             | 0.57                   | 0.71     |
| West Midlands      | 0.64                   | 1.82     |
| Greater Manchester | 0.12                   | 0.61     |
| Merseyside         | 0.58                   | 0.98     |
| Kent               | 0.58                   | 1.69     |
| South Wales        | 0.95                   | 0.58     |

## Osborne's Pay to Stay measures squeeze southeast families

Social housing tenants with household incomes of £40,000 or more in London, or £30,000 and over in the rest of England, will have to pay market rents under the new "Pay to Stay" measures. The extra allowance for London is not always reflected in rents, with several areas of higher prices outside London and the southeast.

The dataset compares after-tax income at the £40,000 and £30,000 levels with the median rent for a three-bedroom property. Areas in which family budgets will feel the pinch without the London allowance are highlighted. The proportion of after-tax income spent on rent, and net income remaining, is compared to an outer London average.



## NEWS

### Big banks give less than 10% of top jobs to women

Nicholas Helen and The Sunday Times Data Team Published: 16 August 2015

EIGHT big banks and financial institutions, including Scottish Widows, Rothschild and Barclays, each have less than 10% of their top posts filled by women.

Two of them, Macquarie and Mizhuo, have no women at board level or the equivalent, according to analysis by The Sunday Times of 35,700 senior jobs at 33 financial institutions.

The findings reveal the "laggards" holding back the rise of a new generation of female business leaders, according to Denise Wilson, chief executive of the Davies review, which has helped women to occupy more than a quarter of non-executive roles at FTSE 100 companies.

"We cannot afford to ignore half the talent pipeline in our core sector of financial services, which is one of our great British exports," she said. "We do have some outstanding performers... but they are propping up those who have not woken up to the subject."

Image 1. Top: Source Sunday Times 13/09/2015

Image 2. Left: Source: The Times RedBox

Image 3. Above: Source Sunday Times Online