

By Grahame Allen,
Matthew Burton,
Alison Pratt

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Terrorism in Great Britain: the statistics



Background

- 1 Deaths due to terrorism
- 2 Stop and Search
- 3 Port and border controls
- 4 Arrests
- 5 Prosecutions and convictions
- 6 Prison population
- 7 Ethnicity
- 8 Control orders and TPIMS
- 9 Extremists abroad
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Background

The beginning of the millennium saw an increased political focus on the threat from international terrorism, heightened by the attack on the Twin Towers on 11 September 2001. Only one year before 9/11, new counter-terrorism legislation had been passed in the UK. Designed to reform and extend state powers found in previous counter-terrorism legislation, the [Terrorism Act 2000](#) gave increased powers to the Home Secretary and the police. It moved the focus of counter-terrorism to all forms of domestic and international terrorism, rather than just Northern Ireland-related terrorism.

In 2003, the Government introduced its counter-terrorism strategy, CONTEST. Now in its fourth iteration, CONTEST aims to reduce the risk to the UK from terrorism with four objectives:

- **Pursue:** to stop terrorist attacks
- **Prevent:** to stop people becoming terrorists or supporting terrorism
- **Protect:** to strengthen protection against a terrorist attack
- **Prepare:** to mitigate the impact of a terrorist attack

Although statistics relating to terrorism and the use of counter-terrorism legislation have been collected by the Home Office since the 1970s, the publication (and consistent collection) of data was halted in 2001.

Home Office statistical bulletins on terrorism resumed in 2008, with most data series backdated to 11 September 2001.

This briefing examines the available statistics on terrorism in Great Britain including:

- Deaths due to terrorism
- The use of stop and search legislation
- Terrorism arrests
- Pre-charge detention periods
- Prosecutions and convictions for terrorism
- Terrorist prisoners
- The use of TPIMS
- The number of foreign fighters fighting in Syria

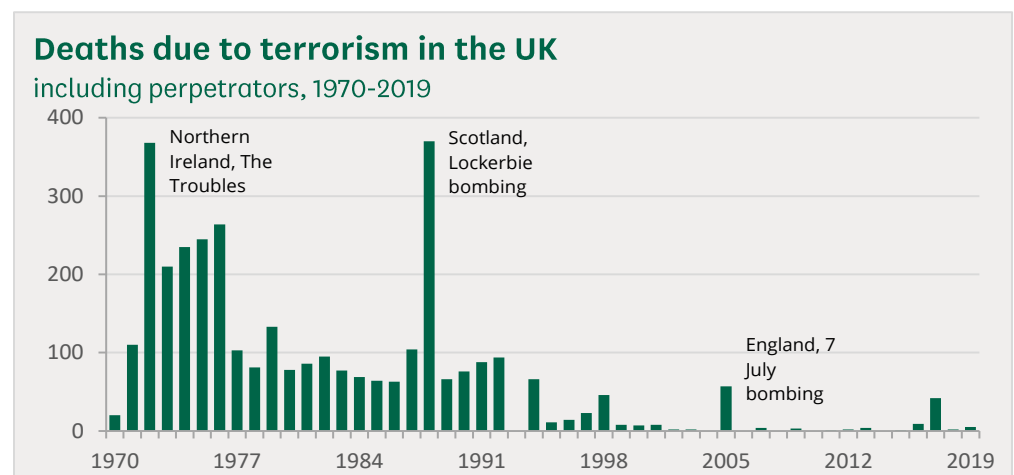
With the exception of the number of deaths due to terrorism, data in this paper relates solely to Great Britain, i.e. England, Wales and Scotland. This is largely due to the application of different and more varied counter-terrorism legislation in Northern Ireland, and the different counting rules used in Northern Ireland's terrorism statistics, making it difficult to compare with the rest of the UK.

The main source of data on terrorism in Great Britain is the Home Office's quarterly statistical release, [Operation of police powers under the Terrorism Act 2000](#). This is the source of data used in this briefing, except where specified. **The data in this paper generally covers the financial year up to 2021/22 (unless otherwise specified).**

1

Deaths due to terrorism

The [Global Terrorism Database](#) (GTD) is contracted by the US Department of State to collate statistics on terrorist events around the world. The chart below uses data from the GTD to show the annual number of deaths due to terrorism in the UK from 1970 to 2019 (including perpetrators).



Notes: no data available for 1993

Source: START, [Global Terrorism Database](#), accessed 5 July 2022

According to the GTD, there were 3,416 terrorism-related deaths in the UK between 1970 and 2019, with the majority of these occurring between 1970 and the early 1990s. Most of the deaths between 1970 and 1990 were in Northern Ireland (84%). There are two clear peaks in the annual number of people killed: 1972, when 344 people were killed in Northern Ireland, and 1988, when 271 people were killed in Scotland in the Lockerbie bombing.

The general trend from the 1990s shows a decrease in the number of people killed due to terrorism; notable exceptions being 2005 and 2017. In 2005 there were 57 deaths related to terrorism (including perpetrators), of which 56 occurred in London in the 7 July bombings. In 2017, three separate attacks resulted in multiple deaths: Westminster Bridge and Palace (6 deaths), Manchester Arena (23 deaths) and London Bridge (11 deaths).

The Office for National Statistics also publish data on deaths due to terrorism. The available figures show that there were 93 deaths in England and Wales from April 2003 to 31 March 2021 due to terrorism (excluding perpetrators).¹

¹ ONS, [Focus on Violent Crime and Sexual Offences 2013/14](#), appendix table 2.09, 12 February 2015; ONS, [Appendix Tables: Homicide in England and Wales year ending March 2021](#), table 15a, 10 February 2022.

2 Stop and Search

The [Terrorism Act 2000](#) introduced three new stop and search powers to assist police in the prevention, disruption and detection of terrorism.

2.1 Section 44 and 47

Section 44 of the [Terrorism Act 2000](#) provided the power for a constable in uniform to stop and search any vehicle and its occupants, or any pedestrian, within an authorised area. Authorisation was to be given by an officer of at least the rank of Assistant Constable (or equivalent), and could cover any geographical area for up to 28 days, after which the authorisation must be renewed.² Whilst the search was only to be ‘for the purpose of searching for articles of a kind which could be used in connection with terrorism’, there was no requirement under Section 44 for the police officer conducting the search to have grounds for reasonable suspicion that the person being searched may be involved in terrorism.³

The Act was amended to extend Section 44 powers to the British Transport Police (BTP) and non-Home Office forces such as the Civil Nuclear Constabulary, thereby covering most of Great Britain. However, the use of this power remained overwhelmingly concentrated in London where a continuous rolling authorisation under Section 44 remained in place from 2001 to 2009.⁴

The use of these powers was highly controversial. In 2007 a challenge was brought before the European Court of Human Rights (ECHR) on the basis that they violated Articles 5, 8, 10 and 11 of the Convention for the Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms. Delivering a final verdict in January 2010, the court ruled that the powers under Section 44 were contrary to Article 8 – the right to a private and family life – but did not rule on whether the powers violated Articles 5, 10 and 11.⁵

² An ACPO rank is a rank of at least Assistant Chief Constable, or that of Commander in the City of London or Metropolitan Police. ACPO, the Association of Chief Police Officers, was replaced by the [National Police Chiefs' Council](#) on 1 April 2015.

³ [Terrorism Act 2000](#), Section 45(1)(a) & (b) as enacted.

⁴ Lord Carlisle of Berriew Q.C., [Report on the Operation in 2008 of the Terrorism Act 2000 and Part 1 of the Terrorism Act 2006](#), June 2009, paras 145-151; C. Walker, *Blackstone's Guide to the Anti-Terrorism Legislation*, 3ed., 2014.

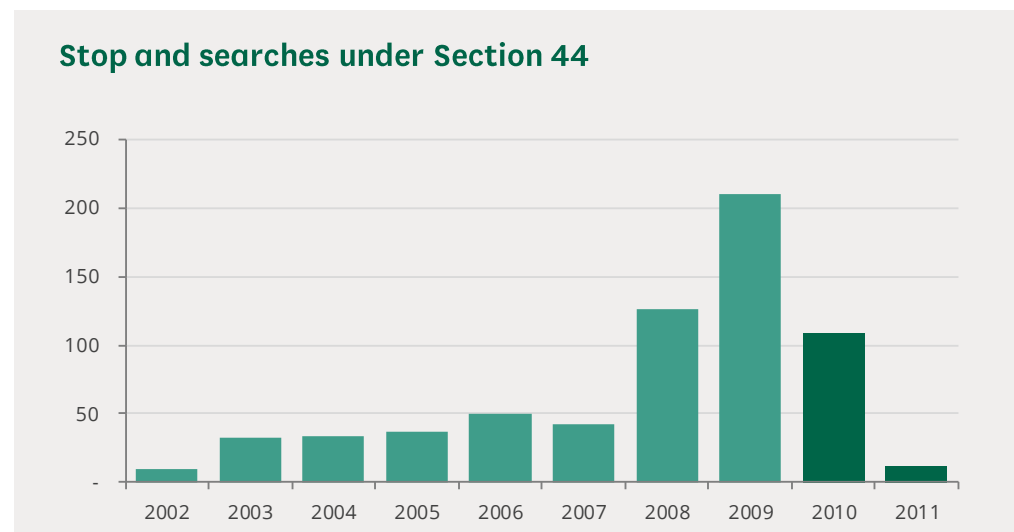
⁵ [Gillian v United Kingdom \(4158/05\)](#), 2010 ECHR 28.

Following the Court's ruling, the powers under Sections 44-47 were suspended by the Home Secretary on 8 July 2010, and after a Home Office review, repealed by the [Protection of Freedoms Act 2012](#), s.59.

The [Terrorism Act 2000](#) was subsequently amended to include a new power under Section 47A which again allowed a constable in uniform to stop and search any vehicle, its occupants or any pedestrian in an authorised area. However, the authorisation required from a senior police officer under Section 47A now has a significantly higher threshold than under Section 44: an authorising officer must now reasonably suspect that an act of terrorism will take place and consider that the authorisation is necessary to prevent any such act from occurring.⁶

Stop and search under S44 and S47A

The chart below shows the number of searches carried out under Section 44 of the [Terrorism Act 2000](#) in Great Britain between 2001/02 and 2010/11. Note that stop and search data prior to 2009/10 (coloured light green) are less reliable and include only forces in England and Wales (excluding the British Transport Police). Data for 2009/10 onwards (dark green) is for England and Wales and includes the BTP but excludes Greater Manchester Police (GMP).⁷



Notes: BTP did not provide data to the Home Office prior to 2009/10, therefore data from before this period are not directly comparable with more recent years.

Source: Home Office, [Source: Home Office, Police powers and procedures, year ending 31 March 2021, second edition](#), table ss.15, 18 November 2021

⁶ [Terrorism Act 2000, Section 47A\(1\)](#)

⁷ Home Office, [Source: Home Office, Police powers and procedures, year ending 31 March 2021, second edition](#), table ss.15, 18 November 2021

There were just under 460,000 stop and searches carried out under S44 powers from 2007-08 to its repeal on 18 March 2011⁸. Just over 3,000 searches (0.7%) led to an arrest being made. Of the 108,534 people stopped and searched in 2009-10, only 511 were arrested (0.5%), and only one arrest was terrorism related. In 2010-11, there was a total of 11,761 searches and 79 arrests (0.7%), none of which were for a terrorism-related offence.

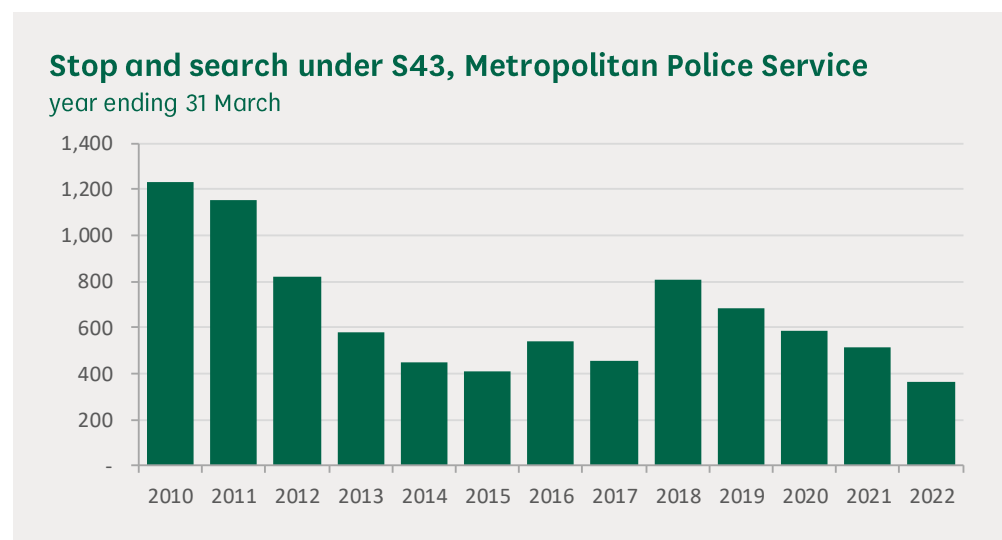
Following the Parsons Green attack on 15 September 2017 the police used the power to stop and search under S47A for the first time – 149 stop and searches were carried in total in 2017/18 (145 by the British Transport Police), of which 5 resulted in an arrest, with 3 of these terrorism-related⁹. No further stop and searches have been carried out under S47A.

2.2

Section 43

Section 43 and 43A of the [Terrorism Act 2000](#) authorise a constable to stop and search any person whom they reasonably suspect to be a terrorist, or any vehicle (and its occupants) they believe is being used for terrorist purposes.

Data on the use of these powers is only available for the Metropolitan Police Force and only from year ending 31 March 2010 onwards.¹⁰



Note: does not include 'vehicle only' searches.

Source: Home Office, [Operation of police powers under the Terrorism Act 2000 and subsequent legislation: Arrests, outcomes, and stop and search, Great Britain, quarterly update to March 2022](#)

⁸ On 26 January 2011 the Home Secretary announced that the [review of counter-terrorism and security powers](#) recommended stop and search powers under sections 44-47 be repealed and replaced with a more targeted and proportionate power. Sections 44 to 47 of the Terrorism Act 2000 were subsequently replaced by a more limited [remedial order](#) which came into force on 18 March 2011.

⁹ Home Office, [Source: Home Office, Police powers and procedures, year ending 31 March 2021, second edition](#), table ss.15, 18 November 2021

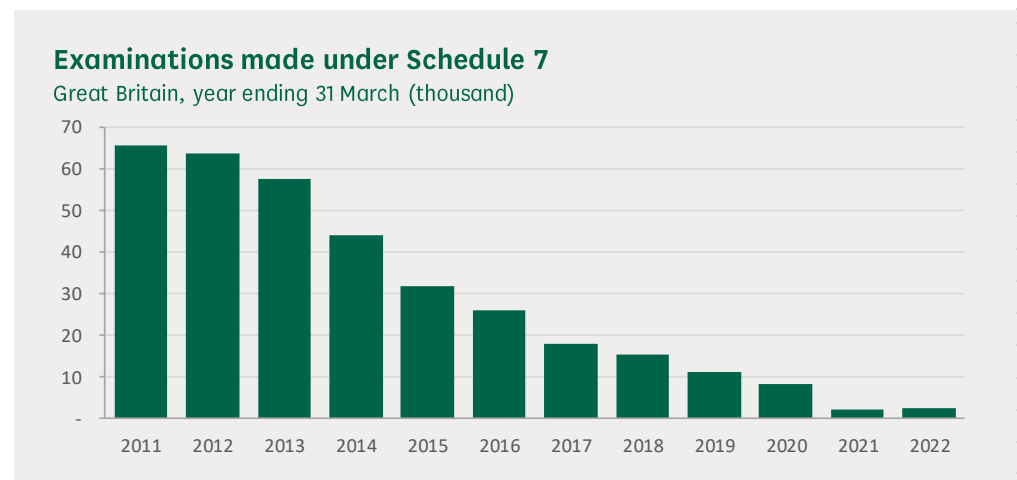
¹⁰ Data for all other police forces is collected centrally in the 'other' category under Section 1 of the [Police and Criminal Evidence Act 1984](#) and can't be separately identified. Some data for individual police forces is available on their websites.

Between 2009/10 and 2021/22 there have been 8,597 stop and searches in London under Section 43 powers. Approximately 6% of these (557) have resulted in a subsequent arrest. **In 2021/22 there were 366 stop and searches with 8% (31) of those stopped arrested.**

3

Port and border controls

Under Schedule 7 of the [Terrorism Act 2000](#), an examining officer may stop any person at a port who is entering or leaving the UK (or any person travelling by aircraft within the UK) for the purpose of finding out if they are involved in acts of terrorism. Officers can question an individual and inspect their documents, search them or any vehicle (including ships or aircraft) and detain a person for up to six hours if necessary.¹¹



Note: data does not include examinations on unaccompanied freight

Source: Home Office, [Operation of police powers under the Terrorism Act 2000 and subsequent legislation: financial year ending March 2022](#), table S.03a, 9 June 2022

Data on Schedule 7 examinations is available from 1 April 2009. Between 2009/10 and 2021/22, there were 432,643 examinations conducted, of which 6% lasted for over an hour.

The number of examinations conducted under Schedule 7 reduced year on year from the year ending 31 March 2010. **In the year ending 31 March 2022 there were 2,604 examinations conducted, of which 46% lasted over an hour.** There were 15% more examinations conducted in 2021/22 than in 2020/21.¹²

¹¹ [Terrorism Act 2000, Schedule 7](#).

¹² Home Office, [Operation of Police powers under the Terrorism Act 2000 and subsequent legislation: financial year ending March 2022](#), table S.03a

4

Arrests

An arrest is terrorism-related if either at the time of arrest, or during any subsequent investigation, a constable suspects the arrested person to be involved in terrorism.¹³

Section 41 of the [Terrorism Act 2000](#) gives a police constable the power to arrest a person whom they reasonably suspect to be a terrorist. Any person arrested under Section 41 is then subject to the provisions within Schedule 8 which allow for the extension of that person's detention, prior to release or charge, beyond the normal limits (see section 4.5 of this paper).

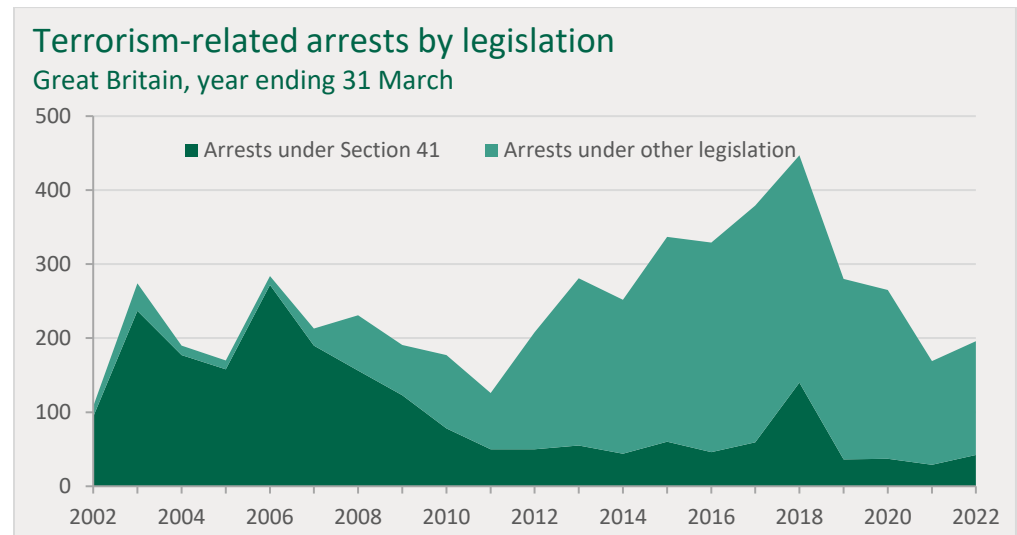
However, as a suspect's involvement in terrorism may only come to light following investigation, a person suspected of terrorism may initially be arrested under other powers: either the general powers of a constable (Section 24 of the [Police and Criminal Evidence Act 1984](#), or Common Law in Scotland), or powers of arrest contained within other legislation.

Section 41 of the [Terrorism Act 2000](#) came into force on 19 February 2001. Between then and 11 September of that year, there were 38 arrests made under the Act.

Between 11 September 2001 and 31 March 2021, there have been 4,907 terrorism-related arrests, 2,091 (43%) of which were made under Section 41 of the [Terrorism Act 2000](#).

The following chart shows that in the six years after the introduction of the [Terrorism Act 2000](#), there were a large number of arrests made under Section 41, with an approximate average of 200 arrests made under this legislation each year. This compares with an average of 20 terrorism-related arrests made under other legislation over the same period.

¹³ Home Office, [User guide to operation of police powers under the Terrorism Act 2000 and subsequent legislation](#), p.14, June 2017.



Note: Figures for the year ending March 2002 include data from 11 September onwards. Data includes arrests for offences that are considered by the National Counter-Terrorism Police Operations Centre (NCTOPC) to be terrorism-related, either at the time of arrest, or at a subsequent point in the investigation.

Source: Home Office, [Operation of police powers under the Terrorism Act 2000 and subsequent legislation: financial year ending March 2022](#), table A.01, 9 June 2022

In contrast, over the six most recent years, the number of arrests made under Section 41 has dropped to an average of about 60 per year, whilst the average number of terrorism-related arrests made under other legislation has increased to 230 per year.

The number of terrorism-related arrests made in Great Britain since 2001 reached a peak in 2017/18 with 447 arrests.

In 2021/22 there were 196 terrorism-related arrests: 42 (21%) were S41 arrests and 154 (79%) were made under other legislation. There were 10% more terrorism-related arrests than the 169 made in 2020/21.

Notably, there is an increasingly large proportion of terrorism-related arrests that are being made under non-terrorism legislation. There is no clear reason for this apparent change in preference of the police for arrests under PACE or common law powers over the specific power of arrest contained in the Terrorism Act 2000.¹⁴

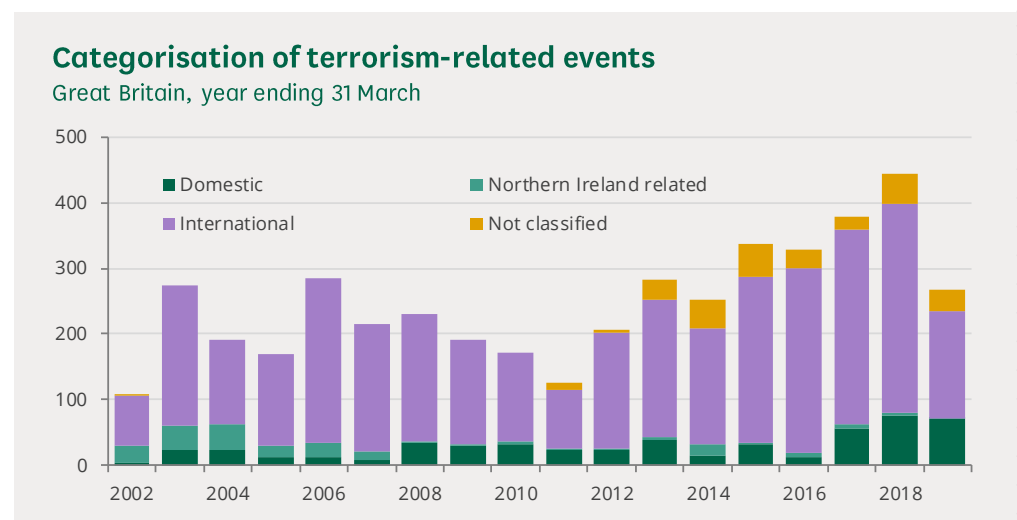
¹⁴ This is noted in D. Anderson Q.C. [The Terrorism Acts in 2014](#), para 7.6, September 2015, who recommends a detailed study of this change.

4.1

Categorisation of the terrorist link

When an arrested person is suspected of a terrorism-related offence, the terrorist threat they are suspected to pose is categorised by the National Counter Terrorism Police Operations Centre (NCTPOC). The categories are not mutually exclusive and may be amended during the course of an investigation. The possible categories are:

- **International** – activity linked to or motivated by a terrorist organisation based outside the UK (this does not relate to the nationality of the suspect).
- **Northern Ireland** – activity supporting the actions or ideology of any Northern Ireland terrorist organisation.
- **Domestic** – terrorism other than International or Northern Ireland related.
- **Not classified** – other suspected offences under terrorism legislation by individuals who are not thought to have any links to a terrorist group, e.g. failing to comply with border controls¹⁵



Note: Figures for the year ending March 2002 include data from 11 September onwards. Includes all charged under terrorism legislation and all charges under non-terrorism legislation where the offence was considered by the NCTPOC to be terrorism-related.

Source: Home Office, [Operation of police powers under the Terrorism Act 2000 and subsequent legislation: financial year ending March 2019](#), table A.13, 13 June 2019

The majority of terrorism-related arrests made since 11 September 2001 have been classified as being related to international terrorism (79%). **In 2018/19 (the latest year for which data has been published), 60% (162) of arrests were classified by ACTCC (Association of Chief Police Officers' Counter**

¹⁵ Home Office, [User guide to operation of police powers under the Terrorism Act 2000 and subsequent legislation](#), p. 19, December 2019.

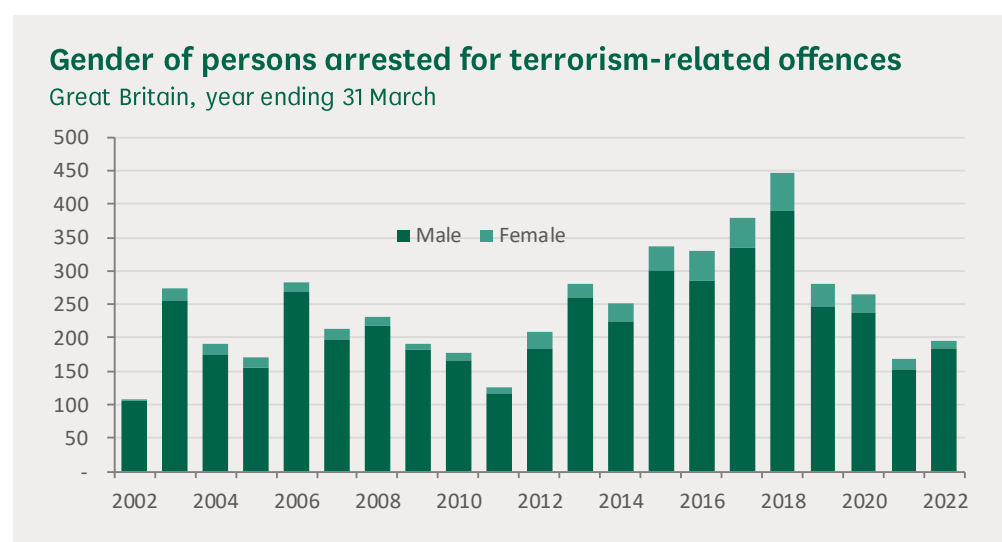
Terrorism Coordination Centre) as being related to international terrorism.

4.2

Gender and age

The majority of people arrested for terrorism-related offences are male. Between 2001/02 and 2021/22 a total of 6,637 men have been arrested – representing around 91% of all terrorism-related arrests. This proportion is maintained for the numbers of people charged, and again among those subsequently convicted of terrorism offences.

In 2021/22, 94% of those arrested were male (184) and 6% (12) female. These broad proportions are maintained for the number of people charged, and again among those subsequently convicted of terrorism offences.



Note: Figures for the year ending March 2002 include data from 11 September onwards. Includes all charged under terrorism legislation and all charges under non-terrorism legislation where the offence was considered by the NCTPOC to be terrorism-related.

Source: Home Office, [Operation of police powers under the Terrorism Act 2000 and subsequent legislation: financial year ending March 2022](#), table A.09, 9 June 2022

Between 2001/02 and 2021/22, 51% of all terrorism-related arrests have been of people under the age of 30. There were 236 people (5%) under the age of 18 at the time of their arrest. This proportion was broadly maintained when looking at those who have been charged and those charged with a subsequent conviction.¹⁶

¹⁶ Home Office, [Operation of police powers under the Terrorism Act 2000 and subsequent legislation: financial year ending March 2022](#), table A.10, 9 June 2022

In 2021/22, 46% of all terrorism-related arrests have been of people aged 30 and over. There were 29 people (5%) under the age of 18 at the time of their arrest.

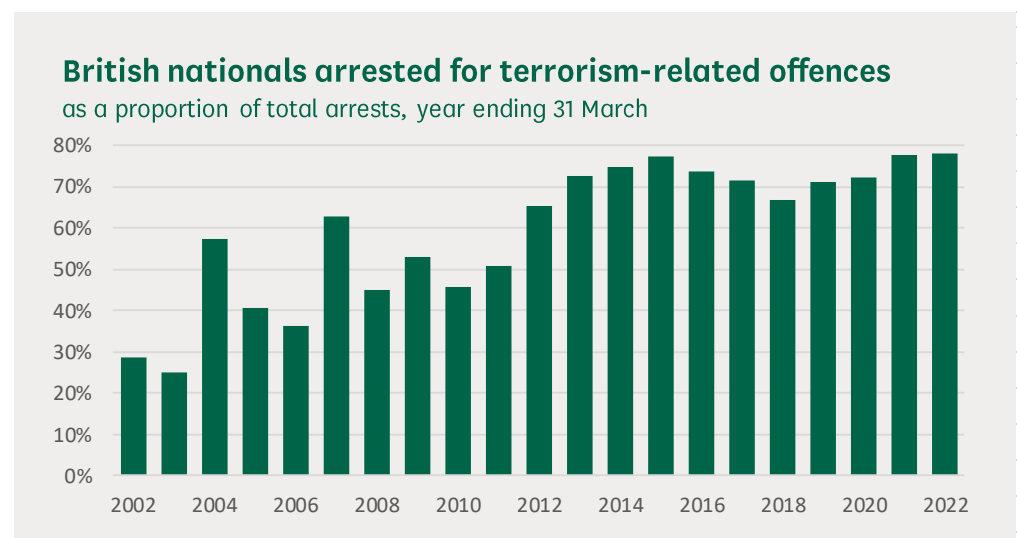
There has been an increase in the number of young people arrested for terrorism-related offences in recent years. Of the 236 under 18s arrested since 11 September 2001, over half (58%) have been arrested since 1 April 2015.

Data for the gender and age of those persons arrested for terrorism-related offences between 2001/02 and 2021/22 is given in Appendix table A1.

4.3 Nationality

The majority of people (61%) arrested for terrorism-related offences in Great Britain since 11 September 2001 declared they were a British national at the time of arrest.¹⁷

The proportion of those arrested who are British nationals has generally increased each year, as shown in the chart below. In 2001/02 29% were British nationals. **In 2021/22, 78% of those arrested for terrorism-related offences were British nationals.**¹⁸



Notes: Figures for the year ending March 2002 include data from 11 September onwards. Nationality is self-declared by persons at time of arrest and may differ from their country of origin. Excludes British dual nationality.

Source: Home Office, [Operation of police powers under the Terrorism Act 2000 and subsequent legislation: financial year ending March 2022](#), table A.12a, 9 June 2022

¹⁷ Home Office, [Operation of police powers under the Terrorism Act 2000 and subsequent legislation: financial year ending March 2022](#), table A.12a, 9 June 2022

¹⁸ Ibid.

Since 11 September 2001 there have been 103 different nationalities arrested for terrorism-related offences. The table below shows the top 30 nationalities of people arrested.

Top 30 nationalities of terrorism-related arrests					
by number of arrests in Great Britain between year ending 31 March 2002 and year ending 31 March 2021					
	Great Britain	3,139		Albania	26
	Algeria	194		Morocco	26
	Iraq	180		Portugal	25
	Pakistan	171		Netherlands	24
	Iran	99		Poland	24
	Afghanistan	94		Palestine	24
	Turkey	86		Germany	22
	Somalia	84		Lebanon	21
	India	63		Sudan	20
	Sri Lanka	59		Italy	19
	Ireland	52		Saudi Arabia	19
	Bangladesh	48		Romania	17
	Libya	47		Ethiopia	17
	France	44		Tunisia	17
	Syria	31		Spain	16

Notes: Figures for the year ending March 2002 include data from 11 September onwards. Nationality is self-declared by persons at time of arrest and may differ from their country of origin.

Source: Home Office, [Operation of police powers under the Terrorism Act 2000 and subsequent legislation: financial year ending March 2022](#), table A.12a, 9 June 2022

After Great Britain, the next 10 most common nationalities (Algeria through to Ireland) account for 21% of all terrorism-related arrests (1,082) - this is greater than the remaining 93 nationalities combined (16%).

4.4

Religion

In September 2013, the Home Office published an additional briefing alongside the regular counter terrorism statistics release to show an analysis by religion.¹⁹ This was, in part, the government's response to David Anderson's 2011 review of the terrorism legislation, in which he noted that some Muslims perceived an automatic bias in the characterisation of attacks by Muslims as 'terrorism' by law enforcement, politicians and the press in contrast to other extremist groups:

¹⁹ Home Office, [Terrorism arrests: analysis of charging and sentencing outcomes by religion](#), 12 September 2013.

This, they say, results in discriminatory sentencing and cements popular perceptions of terrorism, at least in Great Britain, as crime perpetuated overwhelmingly by Muslims.²⁰

David Anderson said he had found no evidence indicating discrimination along these lines.²¹ Likewise the Home Office analysis found no statistically significant differences between Muslim and non-Muslim offenders in the proportions charged, sentence length or seriousness of offence.²²

When a person is arrested, charged or convicted, there is the option for them to self-report their religious beliefs, however there is no legal requirement for a person's religion to be recorded. In the Home Office statistical release, which considers people arrested for a terrorism-related offence between 1 September 2001 and 31 August 2012, the religion was marked as unknown in 47% of cases.

Given the lack of a legal requirement for an individual's religion to be recorded when they are in custody, it is likely that some religions were over-recorded simply due to practical reasons (considerations such as dietary requirements for example). This means that it is potentially more likely that Muslim religion will be recorded as opposed to somebody of Christian faith, for example, which may go unrecorded.

Terrorism-related arrests by religion

Great Britain, September 2001 - August 2012

	Muslim	Other or no religion	Unknown	Total
Arrested				
Count	1,066	149	1,082	2,297
% of total arrests	46%	6%	47%	100%
of which:				
Total charged				
Count	436	55	347	838
% of total arrested	41%	37%	32%	36%
of which:				
Charged with terrorism offence				
Count	290	41	181	512
% of total charged	67%	75%	52%	61%

Notes: Religion is self-declared by persons at time of arrest and data is only available for those who choose to declare their religion as there is no legal requirement to do so.

Source: Home Office, [Terrorism arrests: analysis of charging and sentencing outcomes by religion](#), 12 September 2013

²⁰ D. Anderson Q.C., [The Terrorism Acts in 2011](#), June 2012, p. 26.

²¹ D. Anderson Q.C., [The Terrorism Acts in 2012](#), July 2013, p. 129.

²² D. Anderson Q.C., [The Terrorism Acts in 2013](#), July 2014, p. 68-9; Home Office, [Terrorism arrests: analysis of charging and sentencing outcomes by religion](#), 12 September 2013.

Between 1 September 2001 and 31 August 2012, there were 2,297 people arrested for terrorism-related offences, of which 1,066 (46%) declared themselves to be Muslim. The remaining 54% were reported as being of a different religion, of no religion, or were recorded as unknown.

Following arrest, 41% of Muslims were subsequently charged compared with 37% of those of another or no religion: these differences are not statistically significant and may be down to chance. However, a statistically significant difference was found between Muslims charged and those of an unknown religion.²³

Currently, more recent data relating to the religion of those arrested for terrorism-related offences is not available. Information on the religion of those in custody can be found in section 6.

4.5 Pre-charge detention

Section 41 of the [Terrorism Act 2000](#) gives a police constable the power to arrest a person, without warrant, if they reasonably suspect them to be a terrorist. Arrest under Section 41 also provides the police with wider powers of investigation by extending the time limit for which a person may be detained without charge beyond the normal limits allowed under the [Police and Criminal Evidence Act 1984](#) in England and Wales, and the more restrictive [Criminal Procedure \(Scotland\) Act 1995](#). These provisions extending the limit on pre-charge detention are contained within Schedule 8 of the [Terrorism Act 2000](#).

The maximum period of detention allowed under Section 41, currently 14 days, was subject to considerable variation between 2001 and 2011:

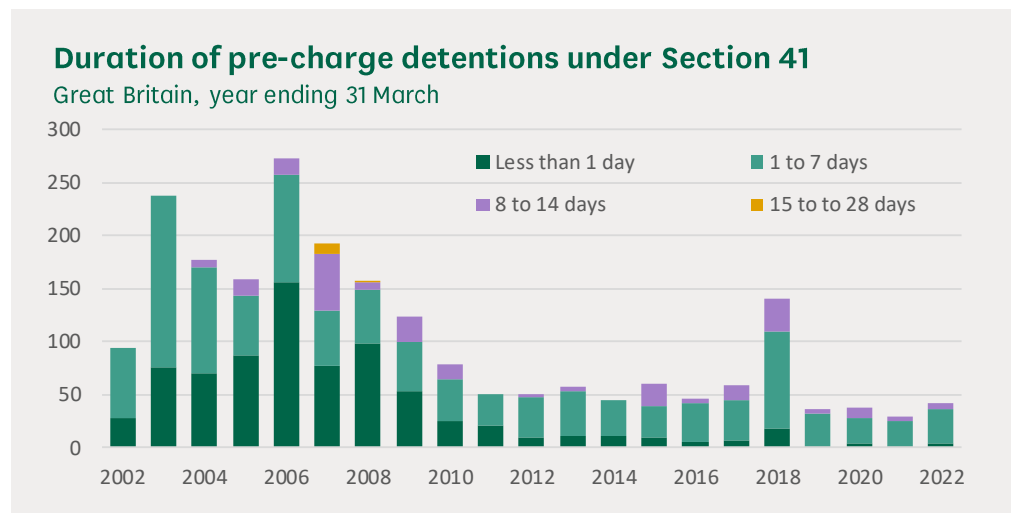
- 2001-2003: 7 days
- 2003-2006: 14 days
- 2006-2011: 28 days

Following a Home Office review in 2011 it was concluded that there should be no routine requirement for 28 days detention and that a maximum of 14 days should suffice.²⁴ An emergency power allowing for temporary extension to 28 days was provided for from 25 January 2011 and this remains the current maximum.²⁵

²³ Home Office, [Terrorism arrests: analysis of charging and sentencing outcomes by religion](#), 12 September 2013, section 3.

²⁴ Home Office, [Review of counter-terrorism and security powers](#), January 2011.

²⁵ [Protection of Freedoms Act 2012](#), sections 37 and 38.



Note: Figures for the year ending March 2002 include data from 11 September onwards.

Source: Home Office, [Operation of police powers under the Terrorism Act 2000 and subsequent legislation: financial year ending March 2022](#), table A.02, 9 June 2022

Of the 2,133 people arrested under Section 41 of the [Terrorism Act 2000](#) since 11 September 2001, the majority (87%) have been detained for fewer than 7 days; 763 people (36%) have been held for less than one day; and 1,126 (52%) for between one and seven days. Only 11 people have been detained for longer than 14 days, 10 in 2006/07 and one in 2007/08. Six people were detained for the 28 day maximum period in 2006/07.²⁶

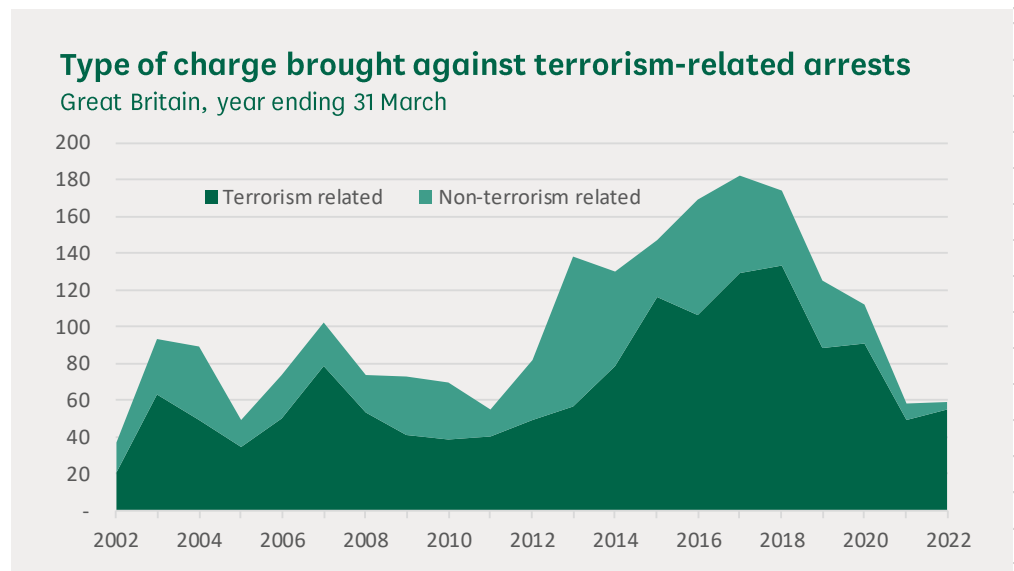
4.6

Types of charges

Charges following terrorism-related offences are not limited to offences under terrorism legislation, nor does an initial arrest categorised as ‘terrorism-related’ mean that the resulting outcome of any investigation is recorded as such.

The chart below shows the total number of charges against people arrested for a terrorism-related offence by type of charge.

²⁶ Home Office, [Operation of Police powers under the Terrorism Act 2000 and subsequent legislation: quarterly update to December 2017](#), table QA.02



Note: Figures for the year ending March 2002 include data from 11 September onwards.

Source: Home Office, [Operation of police powers under the Terrorism Act 2000 and subsequent legislation: financial year ending March 2022](#), table A.03, 9 June 2022

In total, 41% of those arrested for terrorism-related offences since 11 September 2001 have been charged, and of these, 68% were terrorism-related charges.²⁷

In 2021/22, of 196 terrorism-related arrests, 30% resulted in charges, and of these, 93% were terrorism-related charges.²⁸

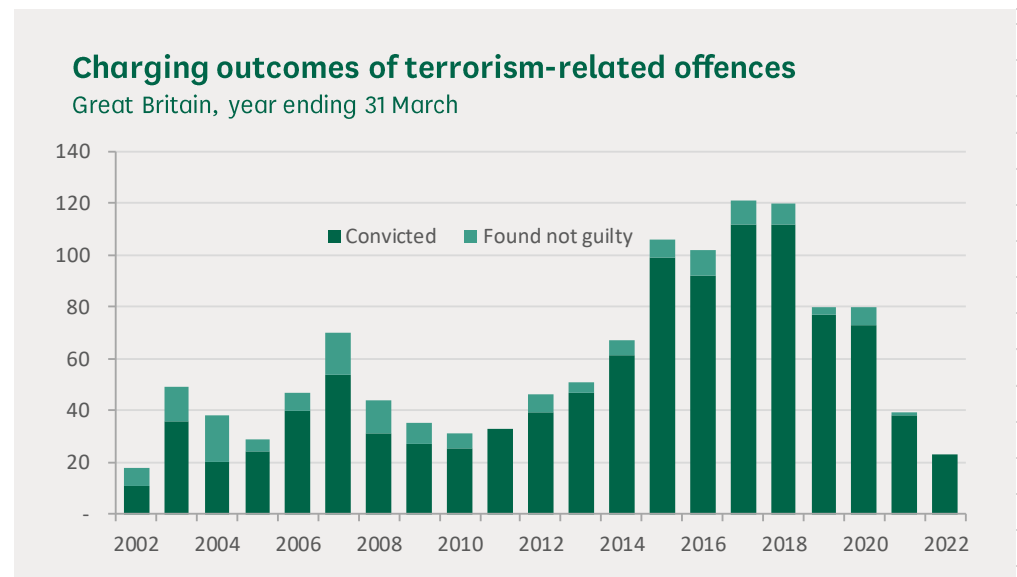
²⁷ Home Office, [Operation of police powers under the Terrorism Act 2000 and subsequent legislation: financial year ending March 2021](#), table A.03, 10 June 2021

²⁸ *ibid.*

5

Prosecutions and convictions

Not all individuals charged are subsequently prosecuted. For a prosecution to go ahead, the CPS must be satisfied that there is a realistic prospect of a conviction and that it is within the public interest to pursue a case.



Note: Figures for the year ending March 2002 include data from 11 September onwards. Data includes all charges under non-terrorism legislation and under other legislation where considered by NCTPOC to be terrorism related. Excludes cases where conviction was later quashed on appeal.

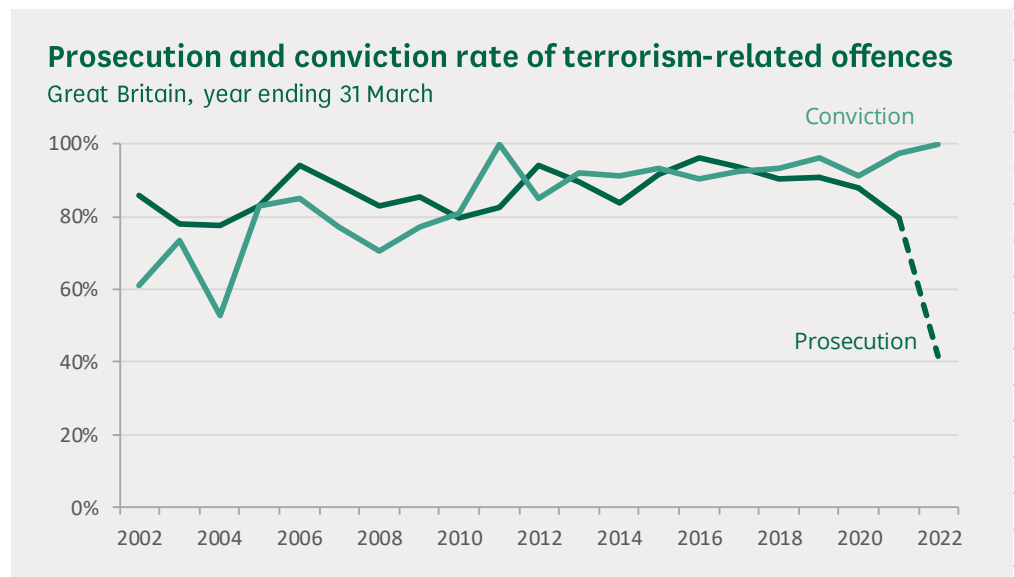
Source: Home Office, [Operation of police powers under the Terrorism Act 2000 and subsequent legislation: financial year ending March 2022](#), table A.06c, 9 June 2022

Of the 1,423 individuals charged with a terrorism-related offence since 11 September 2001, 86% (1,229) were proceeded against, and of those, 87% (1,074) were convicted.²⁹

Of the 55 persons charged with a terrorism-related offence in the year ending 31 March 2022, 23 were prosecuted, all of whom were found guilty. As at 31 March 2022, 30 were awaiting prosecution.³⁰

²⁹ Home Office, [Operation of police powers under the Terrorism Act 2000 and subsequent legislation: financial year ending March 2021](#), table A.06c, 10 June 2021

³⁰ *ibid.*



Note: Figures for the year ending March 2002 include data from 11 September onwards. Data includes all charges under non-terrorism legislation and under other legislation where considered by NCTPOC to be terrorism related. Excludes cases where conviction was later quashed on appeal.

Source: Home Office, [Operation of police powers under the Terrorism Act 2000 and subsequent legislation: financial year ending March 2022](#), table A.06c, 9 June 2022

It may take some time, following a suspect's arrest, for an individual to be charged and for any trial to begin. For this reason, the prosecution rate for the most recent years (**shown by a broken line in the chart above**) will be lower but is more than likely to be revised upwards as on-going investigations are completed.

The conviction rate of terrorism-related offences has increased since the year ending 31 March 2002, after an initial drop to a low of 53% in 2004 when 18 defendants were found not guilty. The conviction rate reached 100% in 2011 and has remained above 90% since the year ending March 2013. It reached 100% once more for the year ending March 2022.

Full data on the charging outcomes of terrorism-related offences since September 2001 is given in Appendix table A2.

6

Prison population

The number of people in custody either convicted and sentenced for a terrorism-connected offence, or on remand pending trial, is provided by the National Offender Management Service (for England and Wales) and the Scottish Prison Service. Data on terrorist and extremist prisoners is published on a quarterly basis and provides a point in time indication of the number of individuals in custody; it does not necessarily indicate a flow.

From September 2020 onwards, the Ministry of Justice and Home Office have formally adopted the definition ‘**Terrorism-Connected Offender**’. This definition replaces the previously used term ‘**Terrorism-Related Offender**’ which will no longer be used for the purposes of publishing official statistics for terrorist prisoners. For this reason, figures for September 2020 onwards are not directly comparable with previous years or quarters.³¹

‘Terrorism-Connected Offender’ refers to individuals who have committed specified offences which the sentencing court has determined have a ‘terrorist connection’ in accordance with [Part 3 of the Counter-Terrorism Act 2008](#). Whereas ‘Terrorism-Related Offender’ refers to individuals who have been convicted of a terrorism-related offence under both terrorism (Section 41 of the section 41 of the Terrorism Act 2000 and subsequent legislation) and non-terrorism legislation. The latter includes prisoners who may be linked to prisoners who are charged with a terrorist offence but they themselves are charged with a criminal offence such as providing false documentation.

The Home Office classifies terrorist prisoners by ‘ideology’ in relation to their membership to [proscribed groups](#) believed to be involved in terrorism, according to the following definitions:³²

- **Islamist extremist** – This refers to individuals from Islamic proscribed groups who advocate, justify or glorify acts of violence (especially against civilians) or other illegal conduct to achieve fundamental changes to society.
- **Extreme right-wing** - This refers to individuals from politically extreme right-wing proscribed groups such as National Action which became the first extreme right-wing group to be proscribed as a terrorist organisation in December 2016.
- **Other** – This refers to individuals from proscribed groups not categorised as ‘Islamist extremist’ or ‘far right-wing’. For example, this includes

³¹ Home Office, [User guide to operation of police powers under the Terrorism Act 2000 and subsequent legislation](#), Chapter 9, 10 June 2021.

³² *ibid*

Northern-Ireland related groups such as the Ulster Volunteer Force (UVF). This category also includes cases whereby the individual's proscribed terrorist group is unclear, meaning their ideological link is not known.

On 31 March 2022, there were 159 individuals in prison classed as 'Islamist extremists', with a further 57 categorised as 'extreme right-wing'.



Notes: includes persons on remand as well as those sentenced to prison. Figures for 31 March 2021 are not directly comparable with previous years.

Source: Home Office, [Operation of police powers under the Terrorism Act 2000 and subsequent legislation: financial year ending March 2022](#), table P.01, 9 June 2022

On 31 March 2022, 96 (41%) of the 233 prisoners in custody for terrorism-connected offences defined themselves as Asian or Asian British, 84 (36%) as White and 18 (8%) as Black or Black British.

The majority (68%) of prisoners in custody for terrorism-related offences on 31 March 2022 declared themselves as Muslim. 36 prisoners (15%) were Christian.

Ethnicity and religion of terrorist and extremist prisoners

Great Britain, as at 31 March

	Total	Percentage
Ethnicity		
White	84	36%
Mixed	11	5%
Asian or Asian British	96	41%
Black or Black British	18	8%
Other ethnic group	22	9%
Unrecorded	2	1%
Religion		
Christian	36	15%
Muslim	158	68%
Buddhist	3	1%
Hindu	-	-
Sikh	-	-
Jewish	1	0%
No religion	27	12%
Other religious groups	8	3%

Note: Both ethnicity and religion are self-identified. Prisoners may change religion while in prison. These changes will not be accounted for in the figures.

Source: Home Office, [Operation of police powers under the Terrorism Act 2000 and subsequent legislation: financial year ending March 2022](#), table P.02 and P.04, 9 June 2022

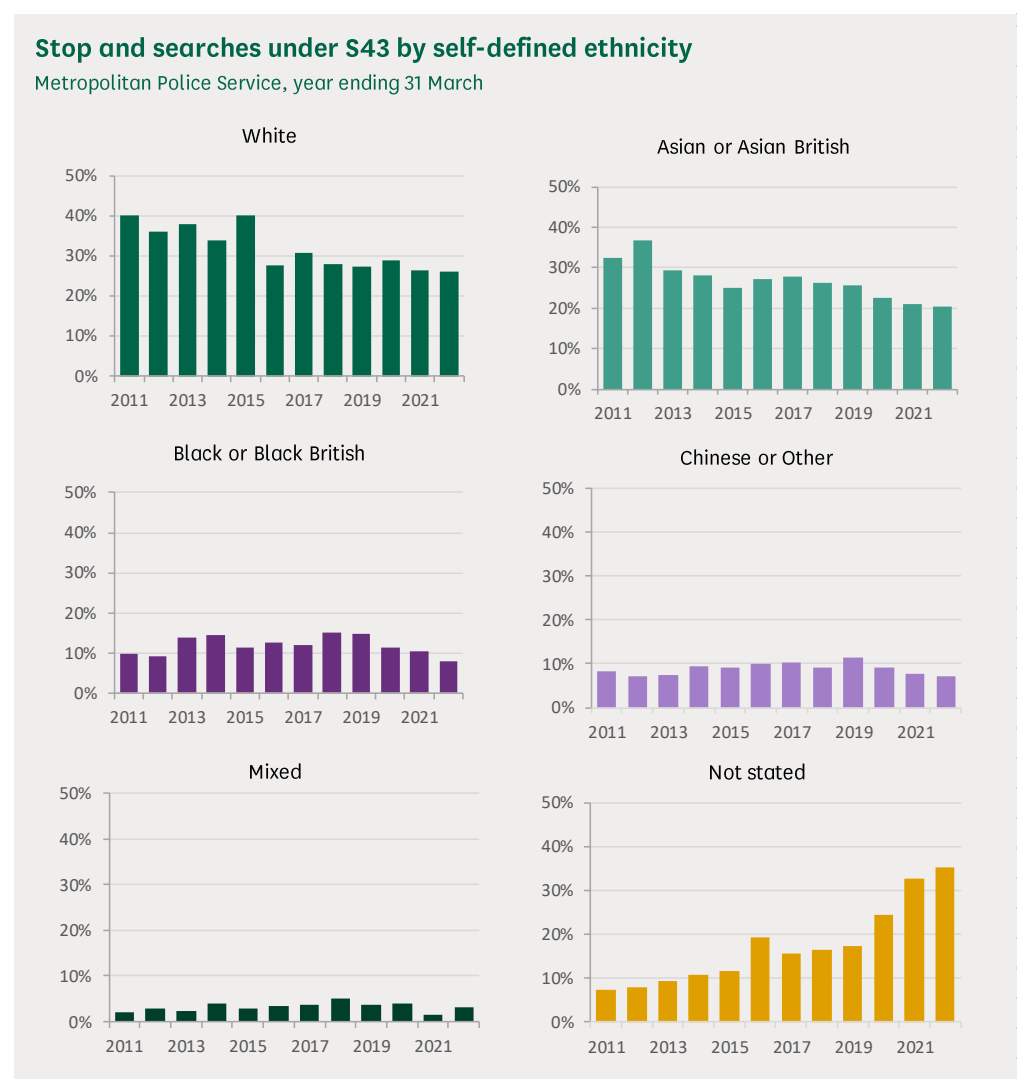
7

Ethnicity

7.1

Stop and Searches

When a person is stopped and searched under Section 43, the searching officer asks the person their ethnicity. Data for the self-defined ethnicity of those stopped and searched is only available for the Metropolitan Police Service. The chart below shows this data annually from 2010/11.



Note: does not include 'vehicle only' searches.

Source: Home Office, [Operation of police powers under the Terrorism Act 2000 and subsequent legislation: financial year ending March 2022](#), table S.02, 9 June 2022

Of those stopped and searched in London under powers conferred by Section 43 of the Terrorism Act (2000) between 2010/11 and 2021/22: 33% self-defined as White; 28% as Asian or Asian British; and 12% Black or Black British.

Data from the 2011 Census shows that the percentage of Asian people stopped and searched in the period was proportionally higher than the share of the London population that was Asian (17%). White people accounted for almost two thirds of the London population (60%) but represented around one third of those stopped and searched.³³

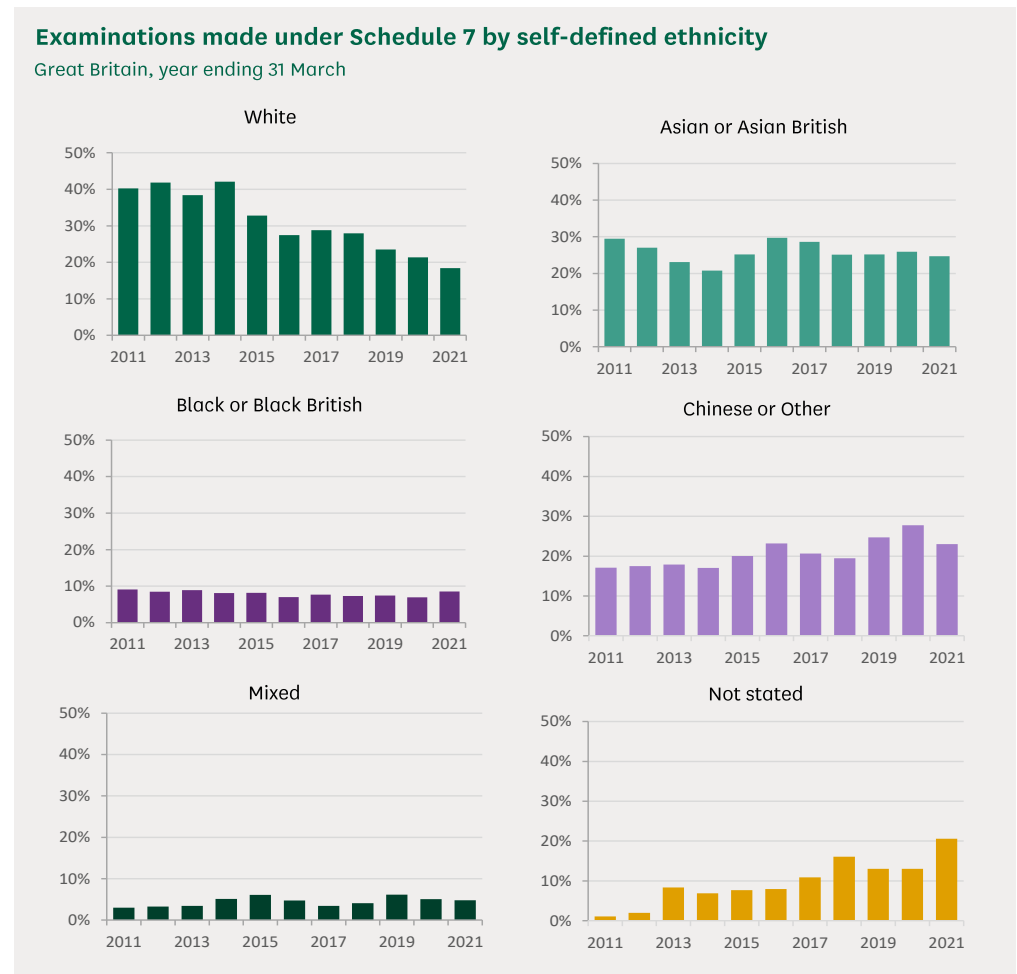
Of all the people stopped and searched under S43 in 2021/22: 26% self-defined as White; 20% Asian or Asian British; and 8% Black or Black British. Note that 35% did not state their ethnicity.

7.2

Schedule 7 examinations

The self-defined ethnicity of those stopped for Schedule 7 examinations has been recorded from 2010/11 and is shown in the chart below. Data for 2021/22 has not yet been released. Of those stopped between 2010/11 and 2020/21: 37% were White, 26% Asian or Asian British, 19% were Chinese or another ethnicity, and 8% were Black or Black British.

³³ ONS, [Regional ethnic diversity](#) (2011 Census data), 1 August 2018.



Note: does not include examinations of unaccompanied freight.

Source: Home Office, [Operation of police powers under the Terrorism Act 2000 and subsequent legislation: financial year ending March 2021](#), table S.03, 10 June 2021

Data for 2021/22 has not yet been released. In 2020/21, of those stopped: 24% were White, 25% Asian or Asian British, 25% were Chinese or another ethnicity, and 7% Black or Black British.

7.3

Arrests

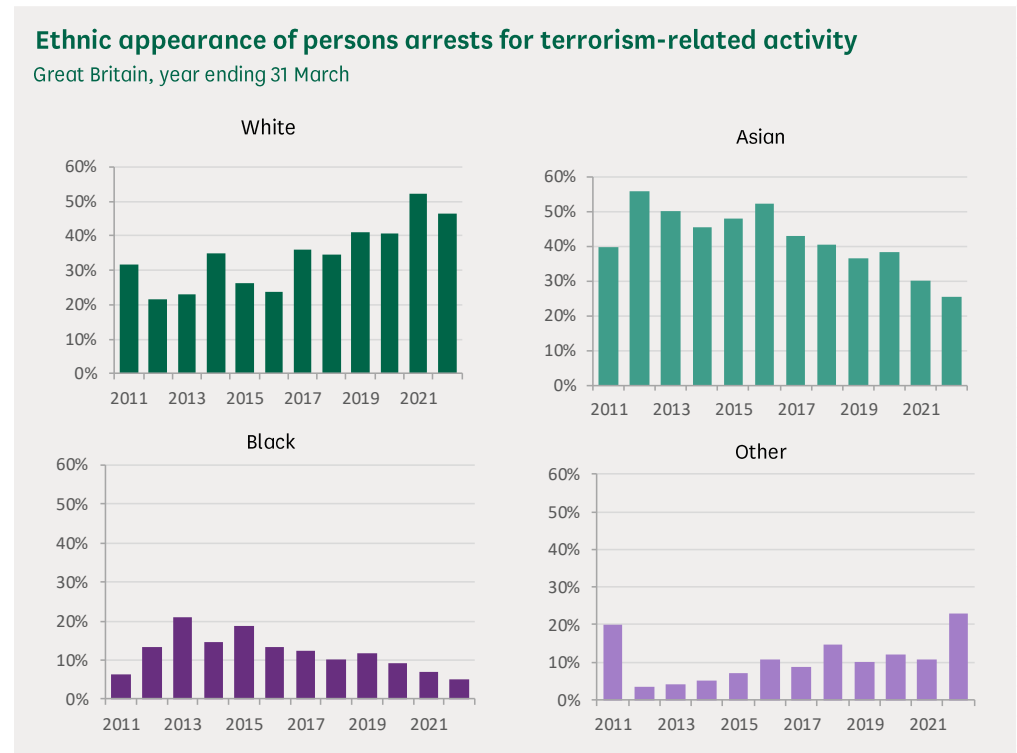
The ethnicity of a suspect is based upon the observation of a police officer at the time of arrest or charge. Those arrested may consider themselves to be of a different ethnic origin than what was *observed* by the police officer.

Of those arrested for terrorism-related offences between 2011/12 and 2021/22, 43% were reported as being of Asian appearance, 34% White, 13% Black, and 10% Other or Not Known.

Data from the 2011 Census for England and Wales and the 2011 Scotland Census shows that in Great Britain: 87% of the population identified as White,

2% identified as being of Mixed ethnicity, 7% as Asian, 3% as Black, African or Caribbean and 1% identified as 'Other'.³⁴

In 2021/22, of those arrested for terrorism-related offences: 46% were reported as White, 26% of Asian appearance, 5% Black, and 23% Other.³⁵



Note: Ethnic appearance as recorded by the police at time of arrest.

Source: Home Office, [Operation of police powers under the Terrorism Act 2000 and subsequent legislation: financial year ending March 2022](#), table A.11, 9 June 2022

In recent years, the percentage of those arrested for terrorism-related offences described as of White or other ethnic appearance has increased. In 2021/22 around 46 % of those arrested were described as White compared to 30% in 2009/10. Over the same period the proportion of those arrested described as of Asian or Black ethnic appearance has fallen. The most pronounced change was for arrests involving people described as Asian, falling from a peak of 59% in 2011/12 to 26% in 2021/22.

³⁴ National Records of Scotland, [Scotland's Census 2011 Table KS201SC – Ethnic Group](#), ONS, [2011 Census for England and Wales Table KS201EW via nomis](#), both accessed 12 October 2021

³⁵ Home Office, [Operation of police powers under the Terrorism Act 2000 and subsequent legislation: financial year ending March 2021](#), table A.11, 10 June 2021

8

Control orders and TPIMS

The basis for executive measures against individuals suspected of terrorism is rooted in legislation passed at the time of the Troubles in Northern Ireland. Legislation such as the [Prevention of Terrorism Acts 1974, 1976 and 1989](#) brought in wide ranging emergency and special powers, including 'internment' (i.e. detention without trial), exclusion orders and detention orders.³⁶

8.1

Anti-Terrorism, Crime and Security Act 2001

Following the attacks on the Twin Towers on 11 September 2001 the Government at the time reacted quickly with the passage of the [Anti-terrorism, Crime and Security Act 2001](#).³⁷ The incompatibility of this legislation with Article 5 of the European Convention on Human Rights (the right to liberty) led to the Government making a controversial derogation order, just two years after the Convention had been incorporated into UK law.³⁸

As explained by the then Home Secretary, a total of 17 people had been certified under the Act, 16 of them detained:

Eight were detained in December 2001, one in February 2002, two in April 2002, one in October 2002, one in November 2002, two in January 2002 and one in October 2003. One further individual has been certified under Part IV of the ATCS Act in August 2003 but is detained under other powers.

Of the total detained, two have voluntarily left the United Kingdom. The other fourteen remain in detention.³⁹

³⁶ B. Brandon, 'Terrorism, human rights and the rule of law: 120 years of the UK's legal response to terrorism', [2004] Crim. L.R. 981.

³⁷ Measures provided for by this Act include the extension of police powers in carrying out searches and obtaining fingerprints of terrorist suspects for identification purposes, retention of communications data and freezing and seizure of terrorist assets. Part IV of the Act extended powers to indefinitely detain foreign nationals who are suspected international terrorists.

³⁸ A. Tomkins, 'Legislating against terror: the Anti-terrorism, Crime and Security Act 2001', [2002] P.L. 205. See also Privy Counsellor Review Committee, [Anti-terrorism, Crime and Security Act 2001 Review: Report](#), 18 December 2003, Foreword.

³⁹ [HC Deb 18 November 2003 vol 413 c27WS](#)

Eventually six of the individuals detained under this legislation left the UK. The other 11 individuals remained in detention and certified under the Act until Part IV was replaced by Control Orders in 2005.

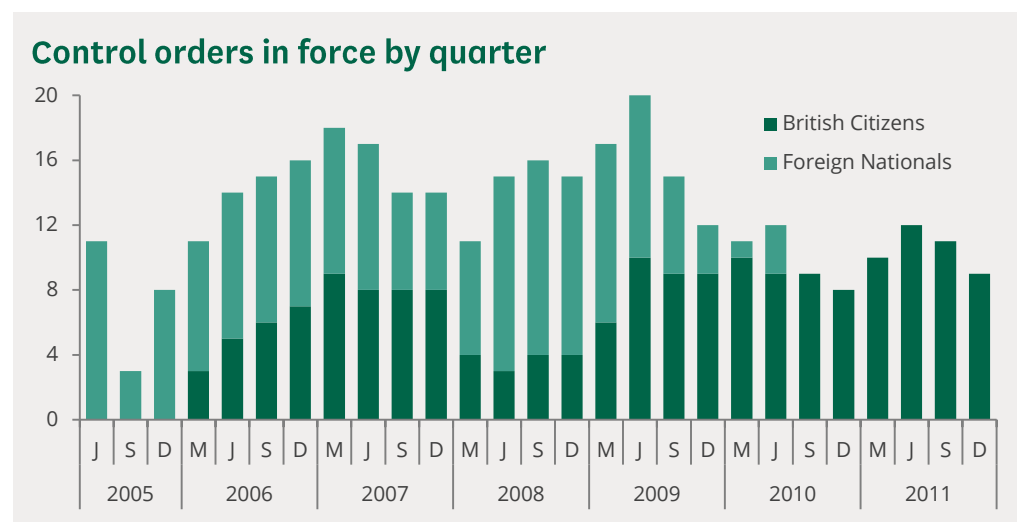
8.2

Control Orders

In 2004, the House of Lord ruled to quash a derogation order in relation to Part IV of the Act.⁴⁰ The Government did not seek to renew the Part IV powers and instead the introduced a system of Control Orders under the [Prevention of Terrorism Act 2005](#).

Control Orders were executive measures which imposed certain obligations upon an individual considered ‘necessary for purposes connected with preventing or restricting involvement by that individual in terrorism-related activity.’⁴¹ Non-derogating Control Orders (i.e. those which were deemed not to impact on an individual’s rights under ECHR) were issued by the Home Secretary. Derogating Control Orders could only be issued on application to a court, but no such Orders were ever made.⁴²

Under the Control Orders regime (and subsequent Terrorism Prevention and Investigation Measures) the Home Secretary was required to make a statement to Parliament every three months listing the number of measures in force. Data has been collated from these statements, as recorded in Hansard, and used to create the charts below which show the number of measures in force.



Notes: Control Orders were provided for under the Prevention of Terrorism Act 2005. This was replaced by Terrorism Prevention and Investigation Measures on 15 December 2011 and therefore there is a discontinuity in the 3 month period in the dataset.

Source: Figures collected from Hansard by House of Commons Library

⁴⁰ [A and others v Secretary of State for the Home Department \[2004\] UKHL 56](#)

⁴¹ Section 1(3) Prevention of Terrorism Act 2005.

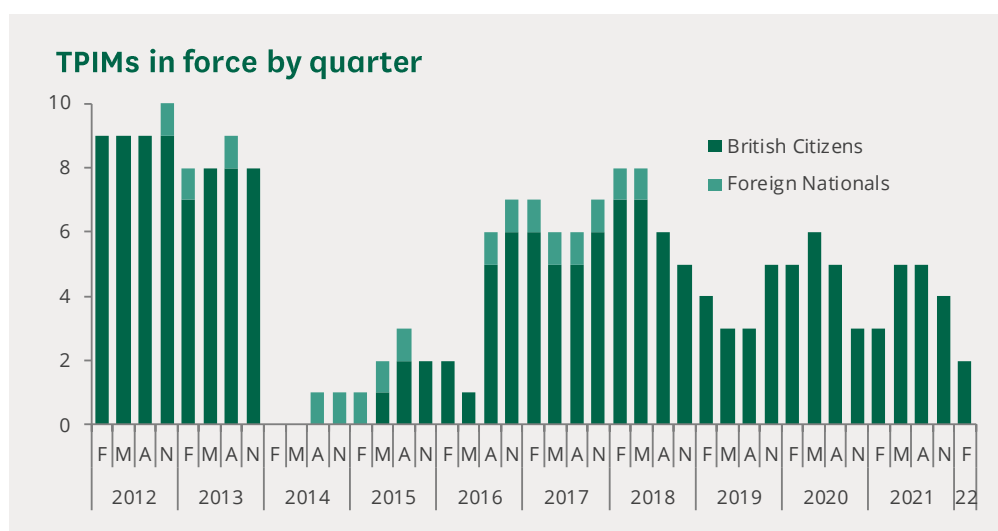
⁴² C. Walker, Blackstone’s Guide to the Anti-Terrorism Legislation, 3ed., 2014, 7.06.

In total, 52 individuals were subject to Control Orders; all were men who were suspected of involvement in Islamist terrorism.⁴³ When Control Orders were introduced in 2005, all the individuals subject to an Order were foreign nationals. By the time they were replaced by Terrorism Prevention and Investigation Measures in 2011, all were British Citizens.

8.3

TPIMS

Terrorism Prevention and Investigation Measures (TPIMs) were introduced by the Coalition Government in 2011 as a replacement for Control Orders.⁴⁴ Like Control Orders, TPIMs are issued by the Home Secretary. They may also place certain obligations on an individual but are restricted to the 12 measures listed in [Schedule 1 of the 2011 Act](#).



Notes: Terrorism Prevention and Investigation Measures came into force on 15 December 2011 and therefore there is a discontinuity in the 3 month period in the dataset. The usual period runs from 1 of each 3 months ending 28 February / 31 May / 31 August / 30 November.

Source: Figures collected from Hansard by House of Commons Library

There are currently two TPIMs in force as at 28 February 2022, considerably fewer than at the peak of 20 Control Orders in June 2009.⁴⁵ One notable trend is the reduction in the number of measures issued against foreign nationals over the years with a contrasting increase in those issued against British Citizens.

⁴³ D. Anderson Q.C., [Control Orders in 2011](#), March 2012, p 4.

⁴⁴ The Prevention of Terrorism Act 2005 was repealed by the Terrorism Prevention and Investigation Measures Act 2011.

⁴⁵ Home Office, Terrorism Prevention, and Investigation Measures: 1 December to 28 February 2022 [\[Written Statement HCWS105\]](#), 16 June 2022

9

Extremists abroad

In a statement to the House on 1 September 2014 the then Prime Minister David Cameron highlighted the concern of the European Council over the “creation of an Islamic Caliphate in Iraq and Syria, and the Islamist-extremist export of terrorism on which it is based”.⁴⁶ The Prime Minister went on to emphasise the potential threat posed by Britons travelling abroad to take part in extremist activity, subsequently returning to the UK and posing a threat to national security.

It is difficult to accurately estimate the number of foreign fighters who have travelled abroad to join Sunni militant organisations such as Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (ISIL). In September 2014, the security services estimated that 500 Britons were fighting in Syria, many of whom were affiliated with ISIL. This was in addition to 700 from France, 400 from Germany and “hundreds more from other countries including America, Canada, Austria, Denmark, Spain, Sweden, Belgium, the Netherlands and Australia”.⁴⁷

The latest (4 February 2019) Government estimate of the number of British nationals who have travelled to Syria and Iraq to take part in the conflict is 900, with around 20% of these being killed overseas and 40% being known to have returned. Only “a very small number of travellers have returned in the last 12 months”.⁴⁸ More recent data is unlikely to be published “for reasons of national security”.⁴⁹

Further background information on extremists abroad can be found in the HC Library Briefing Paper: [Returning terrorist fighters](#).

⁴⁶ [HC Deb 1 September 2014 c23](#).

⁴⁷ *ibid.*, c24.

⁴⁸ [PQ 216313](#) [Islamic State: British Nationals Abroad] 4 February 2019

⁴⁹ Home Office, [PQ 175698](#) [on Proscribed Organisations: British nationals abroad]

10

Appendix

A1. Persons arrested for terrorism-related offences, by sex and age

Great Britain, year ending 31 March

	Total arrests	Age					Gender	
		Under 18	18-20	21-24	25-29	30 and over	Male	Female
2002	108	-	5	13	23	67	105	3
2003	274	8	24	34	73	135	255	19
2004	190	8	13	36	35	98	175	15
2005	170	5	11	25	41	88	156	14
2006	284	11	39	56	65	113	269	15
2007	213	10	19	39	59	86	197	16
2008	231	5	13	42	64	107	217	14
2009	191	6	18	33	48	86	181	10
2010	177	5	8	20	54	90	166	11
2011	126	3	5	23	31	64	116	10
2012	208	8	16	41	57	86	184	24
2013	281	17	19	44	69	132	260	21
2014	252	6	20	33	69	124	224	28
2015	337	8	48	60	62	159	300	37
2016	329	14	27	62	59	167	285	44
2017	379	18	34	56	66	205	335	44
2018	447	27	50	77	86	207	391	56
2019	280	15	35	40	50	140	246	34
2020	265	12	21	33	48	151	239	25
2021	169	21	17	18	30	83	152	16
2022	196	29	24	19	34	90	184	12
2002-2022	5,107	236	466	804	1,123	2,478	4,637	468
% share		5%	9%	16%	22%	49%	91%	9%

Source: Home Office, [Operation of police powers under the Terrorism Act 2000 and subsequent legislation: financial year ending March 2022](#), table A.09 and A.10, 9 June 2022

A2 Charging outcomes of terrorism-related offences under terrorism and non-terrorism legislation^{1,2}

Great Britain, year ending 31 March

	Charged ⁴				Prosecutions		Convictions ⁶		
	Total	Not proceeded against	Awaiting prosecution	Other outcome ⁵	Total	Prosecution rate	Total	Found not guilty	Conviction rate
2002 ³	21	3	-	-	18	86%	11	7	61%
2003	63	14	-	-	49	78%	36	13	73%
2004	49	11	-	-	38	78%	20	18	53%
2005	35	6	-	-	29	83%	24	5	83%
2006	50	3	-	-	47	94%	40	7	85%
2007	79	9	-	-	70	89%	54	16	77%
2008	53	9	-	-	44	83%	31	13	70%
2009	41	6	-	-	35	85%	27	8	77%
2010	39	8	-	-	31	79%	25	6	81%
2011	40	7	-	-	33	83%	33	-	100%
2012	49	3	-	-	46	94%	39	7	85%
2013	57	6	-	-	51	89%	47	4	92%
2014	79	13	-	-	66	84%	60	6	91%
2015	116	10	-	-	106	91%	99	7	93%
2016	106	4	-	-	102	96%	92	10	90%
2017	129	8	-	-	121	94%	112	9	93%
2018	133	11	2	-	120	90%	112	8	93%
2019	88	5	3	-	80	91%	77	3	96%
2020	91	5	4	2	80	88%	73	7	91%
2021	49	4	6	-	39	80%	38	1	97%
2022	55	1	30	1	23	42%	23	-	100%
Total since Sept 2001	1,422	146	45	1,422	1,228	86%	1,073	155	87%

Notes:

1. Data presented here are based on the latest position with each case as at the date of data provision from NCTPOC (22 April 2022).
2. Includes all charges under non-terrorism legislation and under other legislation where considered by NCTPOC to be terrorism related.
3. Figures for the year ending December 2002 include data from 11 September 2001 onwards..
4. Refers to the substantive charge at indictment recorded by the Crown Prosecution Service.
5. Includes other cases/outcomes such as cautions, transfers to UK Border Agencies, the offender being circulated as wanted and extraditions.
6. Excludes cases when a conviction was later quashed on appeal.

Source:

[Home Office, Operation of police powers under the Terrorism Act 2000 and subsequent legislation: financial year ending March 2021, table A.06c, 10 June 2021](#)

Source: Home Office, [Operation of police powers under the Terrorism Act 2000 and subsequent legislation: financial year ending March 2022](#), table A.06c, 9 June 2022

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