



Home Office

Understanding Criminal Careers in Organised Crime

Research Report 74

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Table of contents

TABLE OF CONTENTS	2
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY.....	4
1. INTRODUCTION AND CONTEXT	10
<i>Approach</i>	10
<i>The data source</i>	11
<i>Generating a sample of organised crime offenders</i>	12
<i>Comparison groups</i>	16
2. THE CHARACTERISTICS OF ORGANISED CRIME OFFENDERS	18
<i>Age</i>	18
<i>Gender and nationality</i>	20
<i>Ethnicity</i>	22
<i>Types of inclusion offence</i>	23
<i>The geographic distribution of inclusion offences</i>	26
3. THE CRIMINAL HISTORIES OF ORGANISED CRIME OFFENDERS: AGE OF ONSET AND VOLUME OF OFFENDING.....	29
<i>Age of offending onset</i>	29
<i>Time from onset to inclusion offence</i>	31
<i>Volume of offending</i>	33
4. CRIMINAL CAREER TRAJECTORIES	36
<i>The frequency of individual offending, by age</i>	36
5. OFFENCE SPECIALISATION.....	42
6. OFFENDING IN THE FIVE YEARS BEFORE THE INCLUSION OFFENCE.....	48
7. ESCALATION IN OFFENDING	55
8. OFFENCE-BASED RISK FACTORS FOR INVOLVEMENT IN ORGANISED CRIME	62
9. DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS	70
REFERENCES	80
APPENDIX A: LIKELY AND POSSIBLE ORGANISED CRIME OFFENCES	83

APPENDIX C: CONVERTING THE POLICE NATIONAL COMPUTER 15-LEVEL OFFENCE CATEGORISATION INTO A 10-LEVEL CATEGORISATION	105
APPENDIX D: METHODOLOGY	107
<i>D1. Definition of inclusion offences</i>	107
<i>D2. Pathways analysis</i>	108
<i>D3. Specialisation analysis</i>	109
<i>D4. Trajectory analysis</i>	112
<i>D5. Risk analysis</i>	114
APPENDIX E: THE NETHERLANDS RESEARCH	117

Keywords

Organised crime; offenders; criminal histories; trajectories; specialisation; escalation; risk analysis

Disclaimer

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Executive summary

- This study examines the criminal histories of offenders who become involved in organised crime. It is based on analysis of administrative data on criminal sanctions (court conviction, or caution / warning / reprimand) held on the Police National Computer (PNC) database. PNC data represents *proven* offending, which is unlikely to be a true reflection of *actual* offending behaviour.
- There is no system in place to flag offenders involved in organised crime on the PNC. The analysis is therefore based on individuals convicted of offences associated with an involvement in organised crime, in terms of the crime type, sentence length and sentencing of co-offenders.
- There were 4,112 offenders who met the criteria on the PNC between 2007 and 2010. These individuals formed the basis of the study. Separate samples of general and serious crime offenders were drawn from the PNC to compare against organised crime offenders.
- Although a wide range of offences were identified indicating a link to organised crime (the 'inclusion' offences), the majority (73%) of offenders were selected on the basis of a conviction for a drugs-related offence (principally supply or importation). Around one in ten offenders

were selected for having a conviction for a violence offence (principally kidnapping and false imprisonment).

- At the point offenders were convicted of their inclusion offence, the average age of organised crime offenders was 32 years. This was older than the general offenders but similar to the serious crime offenders. Only one per cent of organised and serious crime offenders were under the age of 18 at the time of their inclusion offence, much lower than in the general offender group (19%).
- Almost all of the organised crime offenders were men (95%), and 13 per cent were identified as being non-UK nationals (a marginally higher proportion than for both the general and serious crime offenders). They had more diverse ethnic backgrounds than the two comparison groups. Just over one-half (56%) were assessed by the police as being White European, compared with 81 per cent of general offenders and 73 per cent of serious crime offenders.
- The average age that organised crime offenders received their first criminal sanction was 19 years. This was broadly similar to that for general and serious offenders (22 and 19 years respectively). Over one-half (57%) of organised crime offenders received their first sanction under the age of 18. For those who received their first sanction as an adult, the highest proportion received this offence between 18 and 25 years (31% of all organised crime offenders).

- Organised crime offenders had more prior sanctions than general offenders. On average they had been sanctioned on nine occasions before their inclusion offence, compared with only three occasions for general offenders. Serious crime offenders had been sanctioned on a similar number of occasions to organised crime offenders prior to the inclusion offence (on 11 occasions). Just under one in ten organised crime offenders had received no sanctions prior to their inclusion offence. This was similar to serious offenders (10%) but considerably lower than general offenders (45%).
- An analysis of offending frequency by age indicated several routes into organised crime. Two-thirds of organised crime offenders had offended at a relatively low rate throughout their criminal careers. These included a proportion who had offended very little before adulthood: for example, 1 in 10 did not reach their offending peak until into their 30s and showed no fall in the rate of offending as they got older. Organised crime offenders who followed the more conventional pattern of offending, peaking in late teenage years before rapidly declining, made up less than one in five (18%) of the sample.
- Organised crime offenders showed little evidence of 'specialising' in particular types of offence (i.e. having a criminal career dominated by sanctions for a particular crime type). In this respect they were similar to the two comparison groups, with offenders' criminal histories

covering a range of offence types. Only 12 per cent of organised crime offenders were identified as specialising in a crime type before their inclusion offence. Most of those who did show signs of specialisation had received multiple sanctions for drug-related offending.

- The criminal histories in the five years before the inclusion offence were analysed in detail. Six groups with distinct offence and offender profiles were identified:
 - **no sanctions** – the largest group (29% of all organised crime offenders) had received **no** sanctions in the 5 years before the inclusion offence. This group was made up of older offenders, with an average age of 37 years at the inclusion offence;
 - **versatile and very prolific** – in contrast, the second largest group (23%) was made up of prolific offenders who had received on average 15 sanctions in the five year period and who offended across a range of offence types. This group was made up of younger offenders, with an average age of 27 years;
 - **mixed prolific** – this group had a mix of offences (principally driving offences, but with some sanctions for drugs and breaches). Although they were sanctioned quite frequently,

they had one-half the average number of sanctions of the versatile / prolific group (seven) and had a higher average age (30 years). Neither violence nor acquisitive offences featured heavily, and less than one-half had been sanctioned for a drugs offence;

- **mainly violence** – this group was dominated by sanctions for violence offences; four in five had received sanctions for violence offences. Nearly one-third had received a sanction for a drugs offence (31%), while 39 per cent had sanctions for 'other' offences;

- two smaller groups were identified, each with quite distinctive profiles in terms of their prior offending in the five years before the inclusion offence. Each was dominated by sanctions for specific crime-types, namely **acquisitive** and **drugs** offences. Neither group was especially prolific and the average age of both groups was similar, at around 30 years of age.

- Looking at the seriousness of offending throughout their criminal careers, a quarter of organised crime offenders showed a considerable rise in seriousness from the point of their first offence to the inclusion offence.

- Finally, the analysis sought to identify those offences that indicated a heightened risk of an offender receiving a subsequent conviction for an offence linked to organised crime. When compared with matched control groups of both general *and* non-organised serious offenders, 10 offences (out of 131 considered) were identified as revealing a heightened risk of a future conviction for an offence linked specifically to organised crime. These offences mainly related to lower level drug possession and supply; forgery of motor vehicle documents / fraud; trading in firearms; and lower level offences relating to the concealment of the proceeds of crime.

1. Introduction and context

Organised crime is a dangerous and constantly evolving global phenomenon (Europol, 2011). In recent years the Home Office has made considerable efforts to combat this threat under the auspices of its national strategy *Local to Global: Reducing the Risk from Organised Crime* (HM Government, 2011).

A significant gap in the UK evidence base on organised crime is around the offending careers of serious and organised criminals.¹ The aim of this study is to increase understanding of the criminal careers of organised offenders and, in doing so, inform the development of policy and law enforcement responses.

The research aims to:

- provide a profile of the characteristics of offenders involved in organised crime in England and Wales;
- chart the criminal careers of organised crime offenders; and
- establish whether offence-based risk factors can be identified that may support early identification of organised crime offenders.

Approach

The general approach used in this study is to apply existing statistical techniques for analysing the criminal careers of offenders to those individuals involved in organised crime (see Appendix D for details). It is based on an analysis of administrative data collected by the police that records details of all sanctions received by individuals. Data on a subset of offenders who were

¹ Research has been completed in the Netherlands to look at the criminal careers of organised criminals and a summary of findings can be found in Appendix E.

identified as likely to have been involved in organised crime were analysed to build a picture of:

- the demographic characteristics of offenders involved in organised crime;
- the nature of proven offending by offenders in the sample;
- the offending histories of those involved in organised crime, including:
 - *age* at first sanction;
 - *frequency* of offending at the different stages of a criminal career;
 - *escalation* in terms of seriousness of offending; and
 - *specialisation* in terms of diversity in offence-types committed by individuals through their criminal careers; and
- the offence-based risk factors that exist for subsequent convictions related to organised crime.

The data source

An extract of data was taken from the Police National Computer (PNC), which includes information on all offenders sanctioned² for any offence in England and Wales. Cases were selected for inclusion from a four-year target period (2007 to 2010). Drawing cases from the recent past meant that the study could focus on current patterns in organised crime offending. It also meant that offenders' prior convictions could be mapped over the longest possible

² A sanction is a conviction at court or a police caution, warning or reprimand for a specific offence.

period (the research extract of the PNC goes back to 1933 for some offenders). The full dataset contained 20,752,827 individual offences committed in England and Wales that related to 2,170,206 offenders.

Generating a sample of organised crime offenders

Various definitions exist to describe what constitutes 'organised crime' (see Finckenauer, 2005). The starting point for defining organised crime in this study was the Government's preferred definition of organised crime:

"... individuals, normally working with others, with the capacity and capability to commit serious crime on a continuing basis, which includes elements of planning, control and coordination, and benefits those involved. The motivation is often, but not always, financial gain. Some types of organised crime, such as organised child exploitation, have other motivations." (HM Government, 2011, p 3).

This study takes an offence-led approach to organised crime; i.e. the sample was identified using offences and convictions related to organised crime in administrative conviction data available through the PNC. This is in contrast to previous research in this area, which has taken a person-led approach that drew on police intelligence to identify the organised crime offenders. It is likely that the sample in this study includes smaller networks and individuals who are less likely to be captured by a person-led approach.

Offenders involved in organised crime are not flagged on the PNC database and there are currently (as at July 2013) no offences designated specifically as organised crime offences. Three criteria were used to identify offenders who, based on the details held on the PNC, could be judged as having been convicted for an offence linked to organised crime. The criteria were designed to capture offences associated with organised crime, more serious offences, and the involvement of at least two offenders in the commission of the offence. The specific criteria were:

- the conviction related to an offence considered to be associated with organised crime, and was recorded on the PNC between 2007 and 2010;
- the offender received a minimum custodial sentence of three years;³ and
- the offender was sentenced along with a co-offender.

Offenders with convictions for an offence that met all three criteria formed the basis of the study. These offences are referred to as 'inclusion' offences. Note that the size of the network in which an offender was involved forms no part of the definition. To address the first criterion, all offence codes⁴ were assessed as to whether they might be related to organised crime.⁵ The review of

³ Serious crime was defined by section 93(4) of the Police Act 1997.

⁴ Using the Home Office offence code index.

⁵ Initially, offences were categorised as 'likely to be', 'possibly' or 'not' related to organised crime (see Appendix A for more information). All offences that were coded to the first two categories, and fulfilled the criteria for sentence length and being sentenced with a co-offender, ultimately made up the sample.

offence codes drew on the judgement of an experienced law enforcement officer within the research team. The initial list of selected offences was then reviewed by other researchers in the team, and practitioners and policy makers with a background of working in organised crime. In total 185 individual offence codes were identified as indicating a potential link to organised crime and involved some degree of planning and control (see Appendix A). Offenders who had been convicted of these offences between 2007 and 2010, and who had also received a minimum three-year sentence and been sentenced with a co-offender were selected. In total 4,112 offenders met all three criteria (0.2% of all offenders on the PNC for the 4 years 2007–2010).

These offenders represent a proxy population of individuals convicted for an organised crime offence. It is likely that other offenders will have convictions linked to organised crime in the PNC between 2007 and 2010. However, the selection process has been designed to reduce the risk that offenders *not* linked to organised crime are included in the analysis. The criteria for sentencing a co-offender⁶ and sentence length were particularly important in reducing the risk of including offenders *not* related to organised crime (so called ‘false positives’).⁷ The strengths and weaknesses of this approach are summarised in the text box below.

⁶ The sentencing of co-offenders is thought not to be reliably recorded by police on the PNC. The use of the co-offender variable therefore will mean that some organised crime offenders will have been excluded purely due to poor data recording.

⁷ It is possible that some of these co-offenders may also be in the organised crime sample. It is not possible to investigate this further as the researchers have no information on their PNC identifiers.

What can proxy organised crime offenders indicate?

The organised crime offender population is hidden in the sense that offenders are often skilled at evading law enforcement and, when sanctioned, an offence will not be recorded as being linked to organised crime. A criminal careers analysis of organised crime offenders has not been done before in the UK. The approach used in this study represents a starting point to examine the criminal pathways taken by organised offenders. The sample does not provide a complete picture of organised criminals in the UK and all references to 'organised crime offenders' in this study should be interpreted as relating to a proxy group of offenders. There are a number of caveats to this approach, identified below.

- PNC data provide a measure of proven offending (i.e. those offences resulting in a sanction) not actual offending behaviour. It is likely that the actual level of organised crime is greater than the level detected. It is not possible to know how the hidden (undetected) contingent of organised crime offenders are distinct from or similar to the sample. The pattern of sanctions will also, to some extent, reflect law enforcement priorities and actions.
- PNC data cannot identify when a crime has been perpetrated with a co-offender. It can only indicate where someone is *caught* with a co-offender, and both were convicted. Therefore, the sample only includes those offenders who were convicted with co-defendants. This increases the likelihood of false negatives (i.e. rejecting offenders who met the crime type and sentencing criteria, but who were convicted alone, though their offence had involved a co-offender).
- Organised crime offenders are diverse in terms of the role played and type of criminality that they are involved in. Using sentence length as a selection criteria increases the likelihood of excluding offenders operating at the lower end of the organised crime spectrum. In addition, repeat offenders are often given longer sentences by the criminal justice system, so recidivists are more likely to be included in the sample.
- The criterion offences linked to organised criminality and planning have to some degree predetermined the picture of organised crime provided in this study.

In spite of these caveats, this proxy sample of organised crime offenders provides a valuable insight into the characteristics and offending behaviour of a sizeable number of offenders whose inclusion conviction is likely to be linked to organised crime. Though it is not possible to estimate the number of organised crime offenders who were wrongly excluded from the analysis by not meeting all three selection criteria, the study design allows greater confidence that those in the sample were genuinely convicted for an offence related to organised crime.

The conviction that identified the individual as an organised crime offender will throughout this report be referred to as their '*inclusion*' offence.

Comparison groups

Two comparison groups of a similar size to the organised crime group were generated from the same PNC dataset. The comparison groups enable the characteristics of organised crime offenders to be compared with those of other offenders. The groups consisted of the following.

- A random sample of '*general crime*' offenders (4,090)⁸ with any kind of criminal sanction in 2007 to 2010.
- A random sample of '*serious crime*' offenders (4,109) who had received a custodial sentence of 3 years or more between 2007 and 2010.

In both the general and serious crime groups the offenders were *not* sanctioned with a co-offender, and their proven offence was *not* among the 185 offence codes identified as linked to organised crime.⁹ Nor did they have a sanction for a prior organised crime offence in their criminal histories.

Since offence seriousness (measured in terms of sentence length) was one criterion for selecting organised crime offenders, the separate sample of '*serious crime*' offenders was generated to ensure that the offenders in the

⁸ Each sample had originally contained 4,112 offenders. The reduction in numbers was due to missing data for gender and date of birth in some cases. These were removed from the samples.

⁹ Offences identified for the selection criteria as '*likely*' or '*possibly*' related to organised crime.

sample could be compared with offenders receiving sentences that were similar in terms of seriousness.

A variety of approaches were taken to analyse the PNC data. Each sought to reveal a different insight into the criminal pathways of organised crime offenders. The sections that follow focus on the following factors:

- the demographic characteristics of organised crime offenders and the nature of the inclusion offences – a snapshot of convicted organised crime dealt with by the police over 2007–2010;
- the onset of their criminal career and the volume of offences before being convicted of organised crime;
- specialisation within their criminal career – whether they have been involved in a wide range of offences;
- their offending profile in the five years before the inclusion offence – the frequency of offending before being convicted for an organised crime offence;
- escalation of offence seriousness; and
- offence-based risk factors for involvement in organised crime – whether prior sanctions that could act as warning signals for subsequent organised crime can be identified.

2. The characteristics of organised crime offenders

This section describes the characteristics of the organised crime offenders and compares them with those of the offenders in the comparison groups. It summarises the offenders' age at inclusion offence, gender, nationality and ethnicity. It also provides an overview of the inclusion offences and the geographic spread of offenders. Few studies have previously examined the demographic characteristics of organised crime offenders, and none of these has been undertaken in the UK.

Age

Figure 1 shows the age at which the organised crime offenders and the offenders in the two comparison groups were convicted for their inclusion offence (that is, the conviction between 2007 and 2010 that led to their inclusion in the study). The main difference in the age profiles of the three groups was in terms of the most common (or modal) age at the time of the inclusion offence. For both serious crime and general offenders, the most common age at the time of the inclusion offence was 21 and 20 years respectively. This was substantially lower than that of organised crime offenders, whose modal age was 27 years.

The average (mean) age of organised crime offenders was 32 years when they committed their inclusion offence. This was similar to the average age of serious crime offenders (31 years), but approximately 3 years older than the general crime offenders (28 years). There was no difference in the mean ages

of UK and non-UK offenders of organised crime offenders (31.6 and 31.2 years respectively).¹⁰

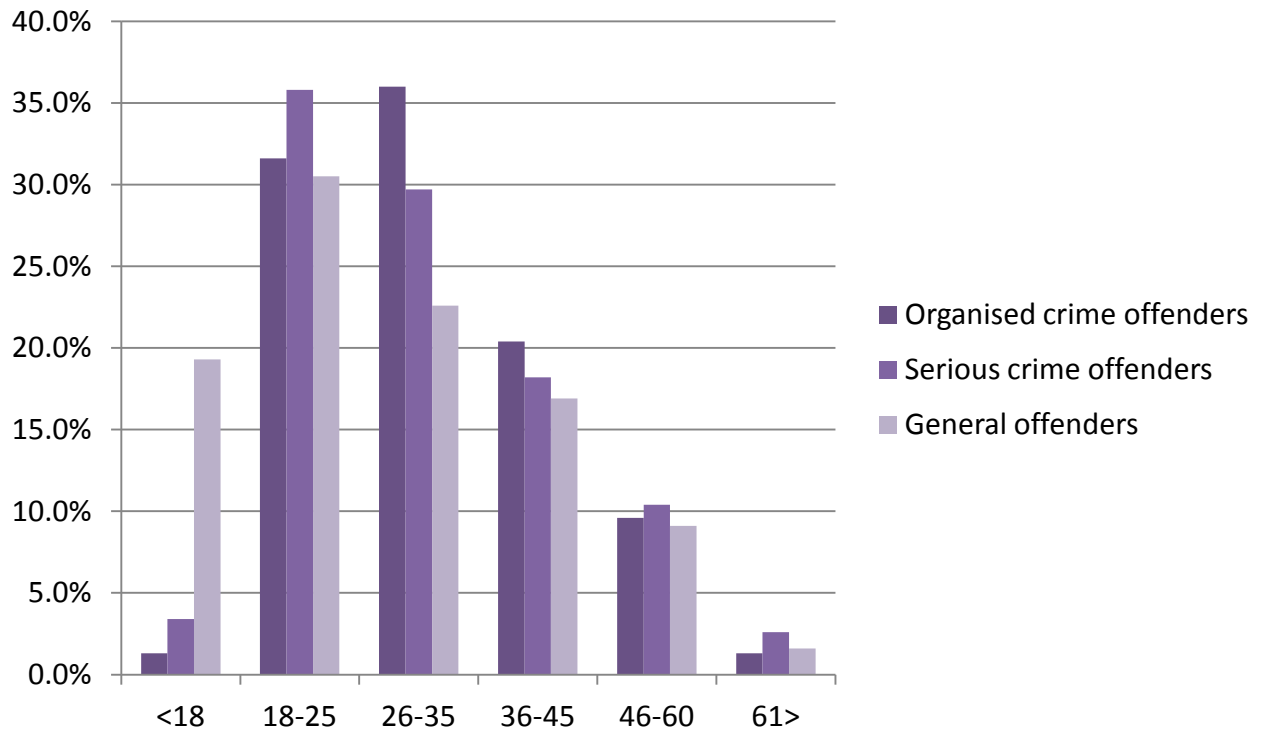
Figure 1 illustrates the age band in which different groups of offenders received their inclusion offence.¹¹ Only one per cent of organised crime offenders and three per cent of serious crime offenders were under the age of 18 at the time of the inclusion offence, a much smaller proportion than for general crime offenders (19%).¹² However, for those over the age of 18 the age profiles were more similar across the three groups. For instance, approximately one-third of organised offenders (32%), serious offenders (36%) and general crime offenders (31%) were between ages 18 and 25 at the time of the inclusion offence.

¹⁰ See Appendix Table B1 for full comparison of ages at inclusion offence.

¹¹ See Appendix Table B2 for breakdown by age.

¹² This may in part relate to the selection criteria for organised crime and serious crime offenders, stipulating a minimum three-year sentence for inclusion.

Figure 1. Inclusion offence, by age band and offender group



Gender and nationality

The overwhelming majority of individuals in the organised crime sample were men (95%; see Table 1). The proportion of men in the organised crime sample and the serious crime sample was markedly higher than for the general crime offenders, where men accounted for 78 per cent of the total.

Table 1. Offender group, by gender

	Organised crime offenders		Serious crime offenders		General offenders	
	%	N	%	N	%	N
Men	95.0	3,905	95.7	3,934	78.1	3,194
Women	5.0	204	4.3	175	21.9	896
Total	100.0	4,109	100.0	4,109	100.0	4,090

Chi-squared test of independence $X^2=880.8$ on 2df; $p<0.001$).

Nationality was categorised as UK, non-UK and unknown. The majority of offenders in all three samples were UK nationals, accounting for around four out of five individuals in each group (Table 2); 13 per cent of organised crime offenders were non-UK nationals, higher than both the serious (9%) and general (10%) offenders. Nationality had not been recorded for around five per cent of organised crime offenders.

Table 2. Offender group, by offender nationality

	Organised crime offenders		Serious crime offenders		General offenders	
	%	N	%	N	%	N
UK	81.8	3,360	86.0	3,533	80.8	3,305
Non-UK	13.1	537	9.1	374	10.0	410
Unknown	5.2	212	4.9	202	9.2	375
Total	100.0 [^]	4,109	100.0	4,109	100.0	4,090

Chi-squared test of independence $X^2=113.4$ on 4 df; $p<0.001$). * Percentages may not add to

100 because of rounding.

There was no difference in the gender of organised crime offenders when analysed by nationality (5% of both UK and non-UK national organised crime offenders were women).¹³

Ethnicity

The ethnic breakdown for each offender group is shown in Table 3. The Police National Computer (PNC) classifies an offender's ethnicity to one of six categories used by the police.¹⁴ White Europeans were the majority in each group although they accounted for considerably fewer of the organised crime offenders (56%) than the serious crime (73%) and general crime (81%) offenders. Offenders whose ethnicity was recorded as 'Black' (23%) or 'Asian' (15%) together accounted for more than one-third of organised crime offenders in the analysis.

¹³ See Appendix Table B3.

¹⁴ An offender's recorded ethnicity is based on an assessment made by the police. PNC data are not based on self-identified ethnicity. This may impact on the accuracy of the analysis.

Table 3. Ethnicity, by offender group

	Organised crime offenders		Serious crime offenders		General offenders	
	%	N	%	N	%	N
Asian	15.0	616	7.5	208	5.4	221
Black	23.3	958	17.1	704	8.0	329
Chinese / Japanese / South East Asian	2.3	93	0.9	36	0.8	31
Middle Eastern	1.1	44	0.5	20	0.8	31
White – North European	53.9	2,216	70.7	2,905	79.6	3,256
White – South European	2.2	91	1.8	73	1.8	74
Unknown	2.2	91	1.5	63	3.6	148
Total	100.0	4,109	100.0	4,009	100.0	4,090

Chi-squared test of independence $X^2=898.0$ on 12 df; $p<0.001$).

Types of inclusion offence

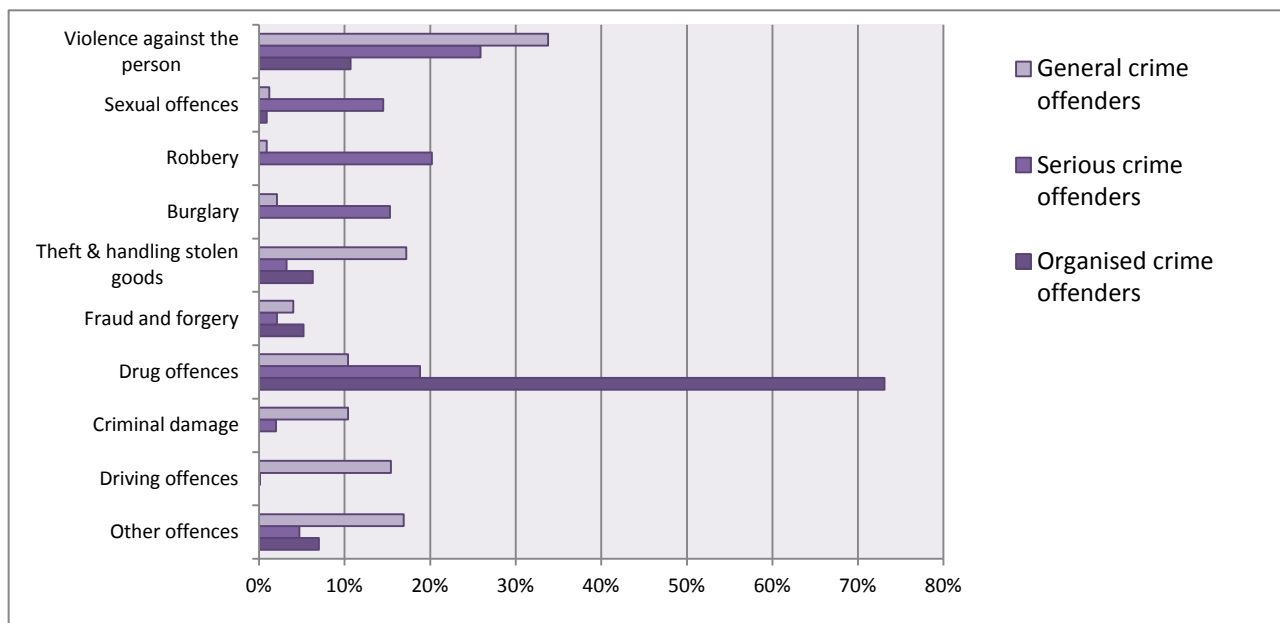
To get an overview of the type of offences that led to individuals being identified as ‘proxy’ organised crime offenders, the inclusion offences were allocated to one of ten offence categories. Figure 2¹⁵ presents the inclusion offences for the organised crime offenders alongside those for the serious crime and general offenders.¹⁶ The inclusion offences for organised crime offenders were dominated by convictions for drugs offences. Just under three-quarters (73%) of organised crime offenders’ inclusion offences were drugs-

¹⁵ See Appendix Table B4 for inclusion offence breakdown.

¹⁶ See Appendix C for more detail on the methodology.

related (principally supply or importation). By contrast, drug-related offences accounted for only 19 per cent of inclusion offences for the serious crime offenders, and only ten per cent of general crime offenders. Fraud and forgery offences made up a minority of offences in each group but were more common as inclusion offences in the organised crime group (5%).

Figure 2. Inclusion offences: Proportion of offenders sanctioned for each type of offence, by group type



Just over one in ten organised crime offenders (11%) had an inclusion offence for violence (for example, offences relating to firearms or kidnapping).

Violence offences were more common as inclusion offences amongst both the serious (26%) and general crime (34%) samples. Acquisitive crimes (robbery, burglary and theft) featured rarely as inclusion offences for organised crime.¹⁷

¹⁷ This may in part be an artefact of the selection criteria used to sample organised crime offenders, which included a three-year sentence minimum. Acquisitive crimes are less likely to receive sentences of this length.

Overall, inclusion offences for the two comparison groups were more evenly distributed across the ten offence categories compared with the organised crime offenders.

The pattern of organised crime convictions displayed in Figure 2 in part reflects the methodology used to build the proxy sample of organised criminals.¹⁸ It will also partly reflect law enforcement priorities, sentencing policy and variations in detection rates by offence type (the detection rate is considerably higher for drug-related offences than other offence types such as fraud).¹⁹ However, it will also reflect actual offending behaviours. While it is not possible to make adjustments for the effect of these other factors on the make-up of organised criminals in the UK, the analysis points to a conviction profile dominated by the supply and importation of drugs, with smaller 'niche' groups of offenders convicted for violence, fraud, forgery and organised acquisitive crime.

Examining the inclusion offence by offender nationality showed that the inclusion offences of non-UK nationals show a little more diversity in crime types than their UK national organised crime counterparts. Table 4 shows three-quarters (75%) of UK nationals and 64 per cent of non-UK-nationals had a drugs-related inclusion offence. Fraud and forgery offences were relatively prominent (10%) for non-UK organised crime offenders. Violence against the

¹⁸ As part of the criteria for inclusion into the proxy sample, specific offence types were selected by the researchers as 'likely' or 'possibly' related to organised crime.

¹⁹ Home Office (2013), this report showed that the proportion of drug-related recorded crime that goes on to be sanctioned (i.e. is detected) is much higher than for other types of recorded crime.

person (13%) and theft and handling stolen goods (6%) were also similarly prominent to UK offenders.²⁰

Table 4. Inclusion offence, by nationality (organised crime offenders only)

	Total N=4,109		UK nationals N=3,360		Non-UK nationals N=537 ²¹	
	%	N	%	N	%	N
Violence against the person	10.7	439	10.4	351	12.8	69
Sexual offences	0.9	37	0.4	13	3.9	21
Theft and handling stolen goods	6.3	259	5.7	193	7.6	41
Fraud and forgery	5.2	214	4.3	143	10.4	56
Drug offences	73.1	3,005	74.9	2,516	63.9	343
Criminal damage	0.0	2	0.1	2	0.0	0
Other offences	7.0	286	7.2	241	6.3	34
Total no. of sanctions ²²		4,242		3,459		564

Percentages will sum to more than 100 as some offenders receive convictions for more than one type of inclusion offence at the inclusion date. Robbery, burglary and driving offences were excluded from the analysis as there were no offenders in the organised crime group with inclusion convictions for these offences.

The geographic distribution of inclusion offences

The final part of this section explores the geographic distribution of the inclusion offences for organised crime offenders. These were analysed by the police force area in England and Wales in which the inclusion offences were committed. Table 5 shows the top 16 (of 43) police force areas in England and Wales by the number of organised crime inclusion offences committed in each

²⁰ Proportions for the serious crime and general offending samples can be found in Appendix Table B5.

²¹ Nationality was unknown for 212 of the 537 offenders.

²² There are 4,109 offenders, a number of whom will have received sanctions for more than one organised crime inclusion offence on this sanction occasion.

area. The geographic patterns in Table 5 will not necessarily represent the residential location of organised crime groups or offenders, but are the areas of impact in terms of where crimes related to organised offending are being committed, and critically, detected. Organised crime groups can, of course, target their operations outside the areas where they actually live.

The organised crime offenders were concentrated in the metropolitan areas of London, the North West, West Yorkshire and West Midlands. One in five (19.9%) organised crime *proxy offenders* in this study were convicted for offences taking place in the London Metropolitan police force area, while between them, the top three areas – London, West Yorkshire and Greater Manchester – accounted for over one-third of all organised crime offenders between 2007 and 2010.

Generally the proportion of organised crime offenders in an area mirrored the relative ranking of recorded crime in that area. However, several areas did not correspond to their expected ranking. South Wales was ranked 6th by organised crime, but 13th by all police recorded crime. Surrey and Cleveland also appeared to have high rankings relative to their rank on police recorded crime. In contrast, Avon and Somerset, South Yorkshire, Essex and Nottinghamshire, ranked 7th, 8th, 12th and 14th in terms of all recorded crime, did not appear in the top 16 organised crime areas.²³

²³ The importance of importation for organised crime might in part explain the prominence some of areas that are close to entry points to the UK (for example, Sussex, ranked 9th in Table 5).

Table 5. Police force area, by organised crime offenders and rank of all recorded crime

	No. of <i>organised crime offenders</i>	Percentage of all <i>organised crime offenders</i>	Rank of police force areas in terms of recorded crime 2007–10
1. Metropolitan	816	19.9	1
2. West Yorkshire	303	7.4	4
3. Greater Manchester	293	7.1	2
4. West Midlands	191	4.6	3
5. Thames Valley	183	4.5	5
6. South Wales	183	4.5	13
7. Merseyside	181	4.4	10
8. Hampshire	174	4.2	6
9. Sussex	123	3.0	15
10. Kent	114	2.8	9
11. West Mercia	102	2.5	21
12. Surrey	96	2.3	25
13. Northumbria	93	2.3	17
14. Cleveland	88	2.1	29
15. Devon and Cornwall	86	2.1	16
16. Lancashire	83	2.0	11
All other forces (N=27)	1,000	24.3	
Total	4,109	100.0	

3. The criminal histories of organised crime offenders: Age of onset and volume of offending

Having explored the characteristics of organised crime offenders, this section explores the basic features of their criminal careers. These include the age at which the individuals started offending and the volume of convictions or other sanctions received. International studies have suggested that, due to the more complex and collaborative nature of organised crime, the pathways that lead an offender to become involved in organised crime differ from those that general offenders take into crime (Kleemans and de Poot, 2008).

Unless stated otherwise, all non-UK offenders and those of unknown nationality have been excluded from all subsequent analyses. This is because it is unlikely that the full criminal histories of these groups are recorded on the Police National Computer (PNC). After removing non-UK nationals, 3,360 offenders remained (82% of the original organised crime sample).

Age of offending onset

The average age at which offenders received their *first* sanction (i.e. conviction, caution, warning or reprimand) for any type of offence is shown in Table 6.²⁴ For both the organised and serious crime offenders, the mean age of first sanction was in the late teenage years (19.0 and 18.8 years respectively). These were both younger than the mean age of general offenders (21.7 years).

²⁴ This includes offenders for whom their inclusion offence was their first offence.

Table 6. Age of UK offenders at their first sanctioned offence

Age at first offence	Organised crime offenders		Serious crime offenders		General offenders	
	%	N	%	N	%	N
15 and under	35.2	1,183	48.1	1,698	29.9	989
16–17	21.6	726	18.2	643	16.4	541
18–25	30.8	1,035	20.4	719	31.1	1,028
26–35	7.2	241	6.3	224	11.0	364
36–45	3.0	100	3.1	110	6.6	220
46–60	1.9	64	2.9	101	4.1	136
61 and over	0.3	11	1.1	38	0.8	27
Total	100.0	3,360	100.0	3,533	100.0	3,305
Mean age	19.0		18.8		21.7	

Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) shows a statistically significant difference between the age of onset of the three groups ($F=100.5$ on 2, 10195 df; $p<0.001$). There was no statistically significant difference in ages between the serious crime offenders and organised crime offenders (Bonferroni post-hoc test, $p=0.98$)

Almost six in ten (57%) organised crime offenders had received their first sanction under the age of 18. Serious crime offenders were the most likely to have been sanctioned in childhood (66%) and general crime offenders the least likely (46%). In all 3 groups the most frequent age group for receiving a first sanction was between 18 and 25, but this proportion was higher for organised crime (31%) and general offenders (31%) than for serious crime offenders (20%). Though 43 per cent of organised crime offenders started

their criminal career in adulthood, only five per cent were over the age of 35, compared with seven per cent of serious offenders and 12 per cent of general offenders.

Time from onset to inclusion offence

Taking the analysis of age at first offence and age at inclusion offence together, suggests that a considerable number of years separate an offender's first sanction and their conviction for an *inclusion* offence related to organised crime. Table 7 gives the distribution of time from onset to inclusion offence. For over 4 in 10 (44%) of organised crime offenders there was a period of between 5 and 15 years from offending onset to the inclusion offence.

Table 7. Time in years from onset to inclusion offence, by type of sample

Time in years from onset to inclusion	Organised crime offenders		Serious crime offenders		General offenders	
	%	N	%	N	%	N
0	9.9	331	10.1	358	44.8	1,481
Under 3 years	6.9	232	7.2	255	8.8	292
3 and under 5 years	7.7	259	7.6	268	7.7	253
5 and under 10 years	23.9	804	25.0	883	13.8	457
10 and under 15 years	20.2	680	18.6	657	8.9	294
15 and under 25 years	17.6	591	17.5	617	9.1	302
25 years and over	13.8	463	14.0	495	6.8	226
Total	100.0	3,360	100.0	3,533	100.0	3,305
Mean time from onset to inclusion	12.61		12.54		6.51	

ANOVA shows a statistically significant difference between the time from onset to inclusion of the three groups ($F=408.1$ on 2, 10195 df; $p<0.001$). There was no statistically significant difference in times between the serious crime offenders and organised crime offenders (Bonferroni post-hoc test, $p=0.99$)

The average elapsed time from onset to the inclusion offence is over 12 years for both the organised crime sample and the serious crime sample. This is around double the time from onset to inclusion for general offenders.

Though many organised crime offenders have criminal careers that appear to span a considerable number of years, a minority of organised crime offenders had no sanctions prior to their inclusion offence. Table 7 shows that for around ten per cent of the organised crime sample, the inclusion offence was their first known offence.

Organised crime offenders with no sanctions prior to their *inclusion* offence

Around ten per cent of the UK organised crime sample had received no sanctions prior to their inclusion offence. This was the same as the corresponding proportion in the serious crime sample (10%) and substantially lower than the proportion in the general sample (45%). Given the nature of the organised crime inclusion offences, i.e. they involve planning and collaboration and receive three-year-plus sentences, the proportion found to have no prior sanction event is quite striking.

The mean age of UK offenders in the organised crime sample who had no prior offences was 33 and the most common (modal) age 26. This was a similar age profile to that found for all organised crime offenders (see Table 1).

The inclusion offences for this sub-group relates largely to 'drug offences' (66%) but 8 per cent were involved in fraud and forgery, 9.2 per cent were involved in theft and handling stolen goods and 7 per cent in violence against the person.

Volume of offending

An alternative way of examining criminal careers of offenders is to consider the total volume of sanctions acquired between the onset of offending and the inclusion offence. Table 8 shows the average number of sanctions and convictions received by offenders in each group sample prior to their inclusion offence. The organised crime offenders had an average of 9 sanction occasions and 21 offences before their *inclusion* offence for organised

crime.²⁵ This is considerably more than for the general crime group, though a higher proportion of this group (45%) had no contact with the criminal justice system prior to their inclusion offence.

For the majority of organised crime offenders there is a substantial history of prior contact with the criminal justice system before their inclusion offence. Serious crime offenders were somewhat more prolific in terms of prior offending than the organised crime offenders. On average, they had slightly more contact with the criminal justice system than the organised crime offenders before the inclusion offence, recording marginally higher average numbers of sanction/conviction occasions. The difference was more marked in terms of the average number of sanctions / convictions received (27 sanctions for serious crime offenders compared with 21 for the organised crime offenders). However, on balance, the organised crime sample bears close resemblance to the serious crime sample in terms of the volume of prior sanctions. Repeating the analysis on *non-UK* organised crime offenders showed that the majority (58%) had also been convicted of at least one offence in England and Wales prior to their inclusion offence. So while it is not possible to be sure of the full extent of the criminal histories of this group before they came to the UK, almost six in ten were known to the police in the UK before their inclusion offence.

²⁵ Offenders can often be charged with multiple offences at each contact (i.e. sanction occasion) with the criminal justice system.

Table 8. Prior sanctions and convictions, by offender group (UK offenders only)

a) Including those with no prior sanctions

Mean no. of previous:	Organised crime offenders	Serious crime offenders	General crime offenders
Sanction occasions	9.2	11.1	3.3
Sanctions	21.3	27.2	6.8
Conviction occasions	8.4	10.2	2.8
Previous convictions	20.4	26.1	5.3

b) Excluding those with no prior sanctions

Mean no. of previous:	Organised crime offenders	Serious crime offenders	General crime offenders
Sanction occasions	10.2	12.4	5.9
Sanctions	23.7	30.3	12.5
Conviction occasions	9.8	11.9	6.6
Previous convictions	23.8	30.5	15.1

Excluding offenders with no prior sanctions from the analysis revealed a marginal increase in the levels of previous contact with the criminal justice system, both for organised crime and serious crime offenders. The number of sanctions and convictions increased more notably for general offenders when looking only at offenders with previous contact.

4. Criminal career trajectories

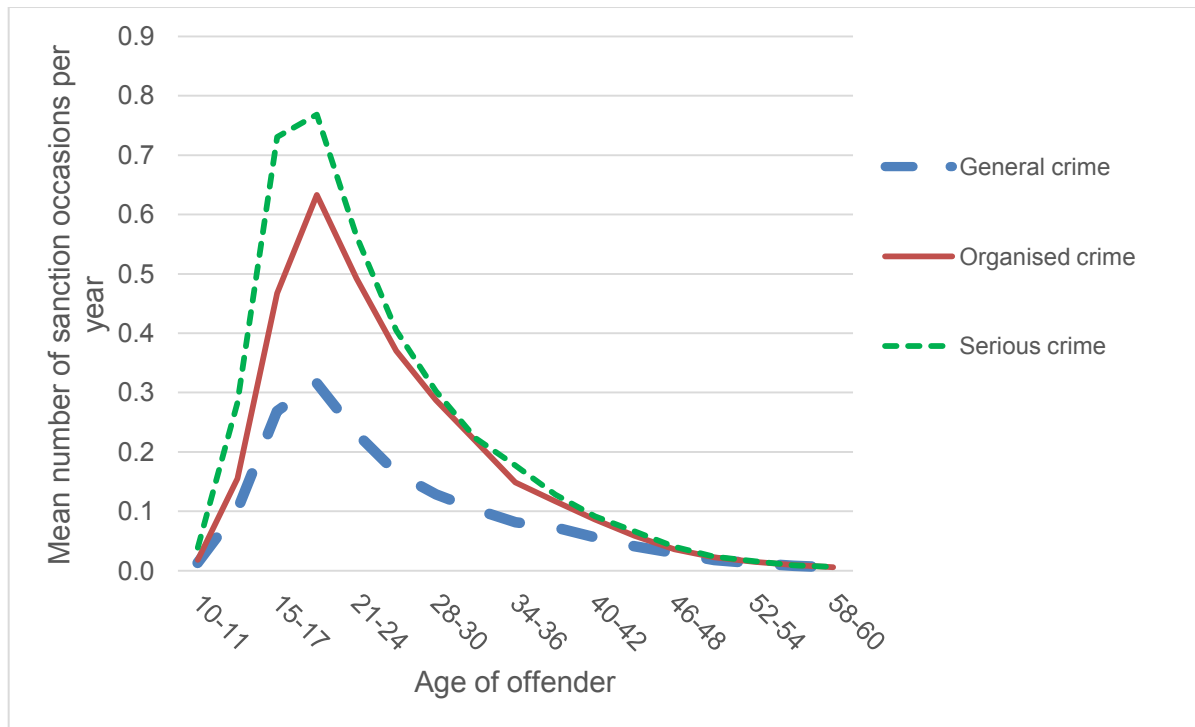
The frequency of individual offending, by age

Previous studies of the criminal histories of generalist offenders have revealed the existence of a clear 'age-crime curve'. They showed a tendency for the frequency of sanctions to rise steeply up until the late teenage years, before declining into adulthood.²⁶ In other words, a large proportion of offending was confined to adolescence and once they entered adulthood, individuals began to offend less frequently and often desisted altogether. Section 3 showed that the organised crime offenders in this study had a different aggregate offending profile to generalist offenders prior to the inclusion offence. International studies have shown that this traditional pattern of offending does not appear to apply to offenders who go on to be involved in organised crime.²⁷ Figure 3 shows the age-crime curves for the three groups of offenders, in terms of the yearly number of sanction occasions calculated in selected three-year age bands. Although the organised crime sample appears to have a slightly later peak of offending than the other two offender groups, the age-crime curve follows the same patterns. The age-crime curve for the organised crime group lies between the higher conviction rates of the serious crime sample and the lower conviction rate of the general crime group.

²⁶ See Farrington (1986).

²⁷ See van Koppen *et al.* (2010a).

Figure 3. Age-crime curves for the three offender groups (UK nationality only) in selected three-year age bands



The age conviction profiles of organised crime offenders were examined in more detail using an amended version of a methodology used by van Koppen *et al.* (2010a) in their study of Dutch organised crime offenders. Using a technique known as group-based trajectory modelling, they allocate offenders to one of the trajectory groups on the basis of the likelihood of their belonging to a particular group.²⁸ This is determined by the criminal histories and based on the frequency of sanctions received at each age; each offender's profile is compared with these trajectories and the offender is assigned membership of the trajectory that is the closest match. The approach is described in more detail in Appendix D4. Care must be taken in interpreting such trajectories;

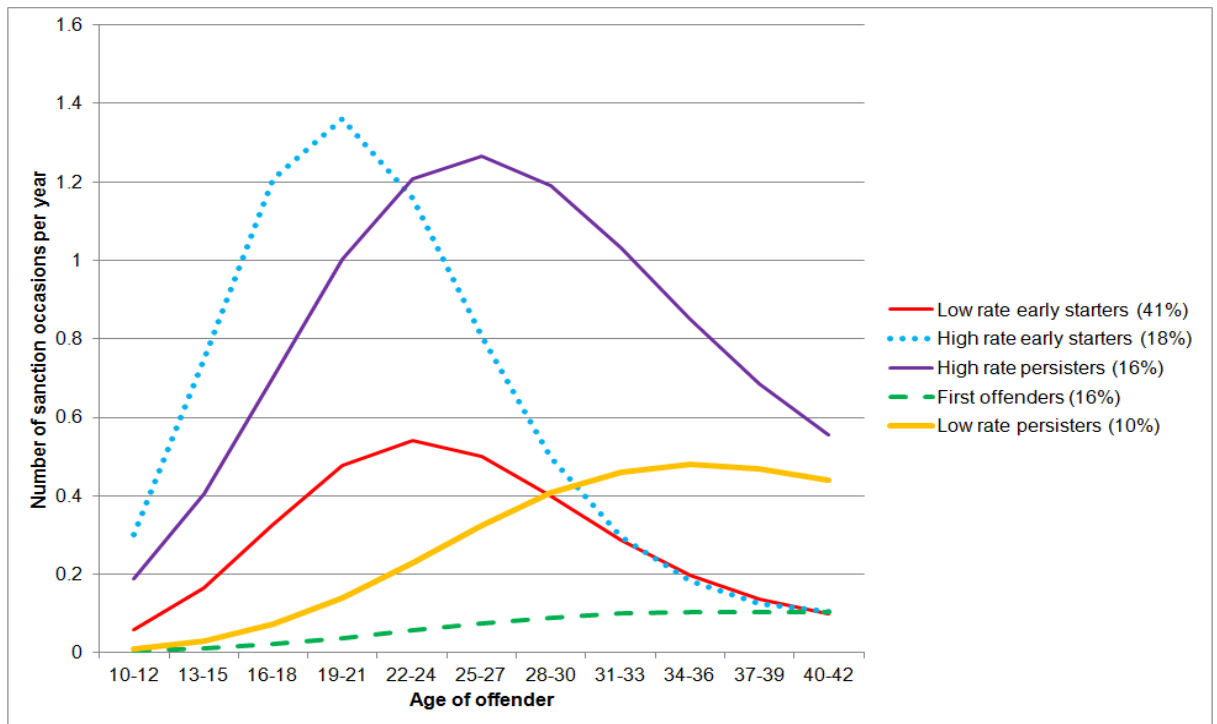
²⁸ This means that each individual is not assigned absolutely to a trajectory group, but instead has a probability of belonging to each group.

these are group averages and will not reflect the considerable year to year variability that exists in each individual offender.

The trajectory analysis on the organised crime sample resulted in the creation of five trajectory groups shown in Figure 4. Offender trajectories were grouped as follows:

- low rate early starters – began offending in childhood and peaked in early 20s, however the rate of offending was no more than 0.5 sanctions per year;
- high rate early starters – began offending in childhood and went on to offend at a relatively high rate until late teenage / early 20s (nearly 1.4 sanctions per year) before declining quickly;
- high rate persisters – began offending relatively early at a high rate that peaked in their mid-20s (reaching 1.3 sanctions per year). There was a gradual reduction in offending into their 30s;
- first offenders – for many in this group the ‘inclusion’ offence would have been their first sanction, while others will have offended at a very low rate before their inclusion offence;
- low rate persisters – began offending in early adulthood at a low rate that peaked in their 30s (nearly 0.5 sanctions per year). There was no subsequent reduction in the rate of offending for this group.

Figure 4. Frequency of sanction occasions²⁹, by trajectory group – organised crime sample only



The largest group was the low rate early starter group, which accounted for 41 per cent of organised crime offenders. High rate early starters, who displayed a more conventional pattern of offending (that is they offended at a high rate before a swift decline from late teenage years), accounted for only 18 per cent of organised crime offenders. High rate persisters made up 16 per cent of the sample and offended at a similar rate but did not peak until a little older (mid-20s). First offenders (16%) and low-rate persisters (10%) together made up over one-quarter of the sample. Low-rate persisters' offending did not peak until into their early 30s and the rate of offending remained at this level as offenders aged.

²⁹ Offenders will often receive more than one sanction on each sanction occasion.

Overall, two-thirds of organised crime offenders displayed a relatively low rate of offending throughout their criminal career, with between 0.1 sanctions per year ('first offenders') to approximately 0.5 sanctions per year ('low rate early starters' and 'low rate persisters'). These offenders displayed less of the prolific, impulsive and chaotic offending behaviour of other types of persistent offender. Often, these offenders displayed a modest and more stable rate of offending, continuing in some cases as they matured into middle age.

Researchers in the Netherlands produced group trajectories that were not dissimilar to those displayed in Figure 3.³⁰ The most interesting group identified in their research was the large group of offenders (40%) for whom their criminal history did not begin until adulthood and whose rate of offending rose from their early 20s onwards. In addition, 19 per cent were classified as first offenders. This pattern is not typical of general offending behaviour.

The trajectories analysis was repeated using data from the comparison groups.³¹ Organised crime offenders were mainly characterised by the large proportion of low rate offenders in the group (61%). Similarly, general offenders incorporated many who were low rate (60%) or first time offenders (26%). High rate offenders were much more prominent in the serious crime group (47%). Offenders who were early starters featured less in the general

³⁰ See Appendix E for a summary of this research.

³¹ See Appendix Table B6. The analysis of trajectories is based on all three groups and so generated slightly different results to those presented in Figure 4 (where the analysis was based solely on organised crime offenders).

offender group (25%) than in the organised (48%) and serious crime (51%) offender groups.

In summary, an age-crime analysis of criminal careers showed that no single pathway exists into organised criminality. Some offenders had an age-crime profile that mimicked that found in previous research for generalist offenders, with a pronounced peak in offending around the late teenage years. However, other offenders had either few (or no) precursor offences, or a less pronounced initial peak of offending (starting from a low base and growing gradually as they matured). As this research measured proven offending it is not possible to know the degree to which reductions in offence rate represented desistance or an improved ability to evade detection.

5. Offence specialisation

This next section addresses the question of whether organised crime offenders show signs of crime type 'specialisation'. Do offenders involved in organised crime tend to commit the same or similar types of offences throughout their criminal careers? Or are they more diverse, receiving sanctions across the breadth of criminal offence types in the years before their inclusion offence? Previous studies of specialisation within general offenders have shown that, overall, most offenders were not specialists. They had criminal careers with sanctions from a wide range of offence types. However, these studies have also shown that, within the general pattern, a small group of specialist offenders exists (Soothill *et al.*, 2008; Sullivan *et al.*, 2009).

The extent to which individuals receive sanctions for the same or related offences during their criminal careers was assessed using an established mechanism for calculating diversity in offending careers, namely, the 'diversity score' (Simpson, 1949; Agresti and Agresti, 1978). This uses a simple scoring mechanism to examine the degree of consistency in an offender's prior sanctions. A score of zero represents complete specialisation in one of the ten offence categories. A score approaching one shows extremely diverse behaviour across all crime types. For this analysis the specialisation threshold was set at 0.4. Offenders with scores of 0.4 and below were considered to be specialist offenders.³²

³² See Appendix D3 for more explanation of the methodology and why 0.4 was chosen as the threshold.

Organised crime offenders as a whole were found to have an average diversity score of 0.62.³³ This was similar to the serious crime sample (0.63) and a little higher than the general sample (0.52). This suggests that, taken as a whole, none of the three groups displayed specialisation in their offending behaviour. However, these overall scores concealed variety within each group. While most offenders in all three groups had extremely diverse criminal histories, some offenders showed signs of being more specialised.³⁴ Using the same threshold, 11.8 per cent of organised crime offenders were defined as specialists, compared with 12.5 per cent of the serious crime offenders and 19.4 per cent of general offenders.

There are several limitations to this analysis. First, it is not sensitive enough to account for the length of time between sanctions. A surge in individual offending in a particular year was treated in the same way as a similar number of sanctions over a much longer criminal career. In addition, comparing diversity scores across samples can be problematic as the measure of diversity will depend on the number of sanctions in an offender's criminal history.³⁵ The more offences that an individual has in his / her criminal career, the greater the chance that he / she will exhibit a wider range of offending. While the difference between the proportion of specialists in the organised crime and serious crime groups was negligible, the higher proportion of specialists in the general offenders was likely to be a consequence of offenders' diversity score being based on considerably fewer sanctions over

³³ See appendix B, Table B7 for analysis output.

³⁴ A wide standard deviation (0.20) across the offender groups indicated this.

³⁵ Sullivan *et al.* (2009, p 423.)

their criminal careers (see Appendix Table B8). To address this, the diversity scores were re-analysed³⁶ by the number of sanctions in an individual's criminal career.³⁷ Using this approach, the diversity scores were found to increase with the number of sanctions. Additionally, the organised crime offenders were found to be similar to those in the two comparison groups, with similar numbers of sanctions. For example, for those offenders with between seven and ten sanctions, the diversity score for the organised crime sample was 0.58 compared with 0.54 for the serious crime sample and 0.62 for the general offending sample.

Offenders identified as 'specialists' in the organised crime sample were also examined by the types of crime they were involved in, while controlling for the number of sanctions received.³⁸ The results are shown in Table 9.

³⁶ See Appendix B, Table B7 for the full analysis.

³⁷ For the purposes of this part of the analysis a five-level categorisation was used for numbers of sanctions: 2–3 sanctions, 4–6 sanctions, 7–10 sanctions, 11–20 sanctions and 21 or more sanctions.

³⁸ See Appendix Table B8 for full figures, including those for the control samples.

Table 9. Proportion of specialists in each crime type, by number of sanctions in criminal career (organised crime offenders)

Violence against the person	Sexual offences	Robbery	Burglary	Theft and handling stolen goods	Fraud and forgery	Drugs offences	Criminal damage	Driving offences	Other	N
Row percentages										
2–3 sanctions										
10.3	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.9	5.6	77.6	0.0	0.0	5.6	107
4–6 sanctions										
9.4	0.8	0.0	0.0	3.1	7.1	74.0	0.0	0.8	4.7	127
7–10 sanctions										
4.8	3.2	0.0	0.0	3.2	3.2	82.5	0.0	1.6	1.6	63
11–20 sanctions										
3.2	3.2	0.0	0.0	4.8	9.5	65.1	0.0	4.8	9.5	63
21 or more sanctions										
0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	17.4	4.3	52.2	0.0	4.3	17.4	23

Where crime type 'specialisation' was evident amongst organised crime offenders, it was dominated by drugs offences. Of all 'specialists' identified with between two and six prior sanctions in their history, around three-quarters specialised in drug offending. This proportion rose to 83 per cent amongst those with between seven and ten sanctions. Specialised drugs offenders dominated, regardless of the number of prior sanctions, although they were less common amongst offenders who had received 11 or more sanctions. Offenders who specialised in theft and handling stolen goods displayed the opposite pattern. Theft and handling stolen goods specialists accounted for around three per cent of those offenders with between four and six sanctions but around one-fifth (17%) of specialist offenders with 21 or more sanctions. By way of contrast, specialist offenders in the comparison groups were much more likely to 'specialise' in sex, violence, or theft offences than drug offences (see Appendix B Table B8). For example, for organised crime offenders who specialised and had between seven and ten sanctions, only three per cent 'specialised' in sexual offences. The corresponding figure for serious crime offenders was around one-half of all specialists. Likewise, approximately ten per cent of 'specialist' organised offenders with between two and six sanctions did so in violence against the person. For serious and general offenders the corresponding proportions were around one-third.

It is worth making one cautionary observation about 'specialisation' in drugs offences. This analysis did not differentiate between drug offences for possession, supply and importation, so it is possible that repeated sanctions

for drugs offences might simply demonstrate a series of sanctions for drugs possession (rather than, for example, specialist involvement in low level drug supply).

In summary neither the organised crime offenders nor the two comparison groups were dominated by offenders whose sanctions showed a pattern of specialisation in a particular crime type. A minority of organised crime offenders (12%) were classified as 'specialist' offenders, even when controlling for the number of sanctions they had received. When these specialist offenders were examined in detail, the majority were found to 'specialise' in drug offending (regardless of how many sanctions they had received), although this finding may need to be interpreted carefully given the range of possible drugs offences that might be included under this heading.

6. Offending in the five years before the inclusion offence

This section looks in more detail at the pattern of offending in the five years before the inclusion offence for organised crime offenders alone.³⁹ In policy terms the period immediately prior to the inclusion offence is of particular interest since it is more likely that offending in this period will link more closely to offending behaviour that led to the inclusion offence (i.e. the organised crime offence). This section looks at all sanctions recorded in the *five years prior* to the inclusion offence. For offenders who had criminal careers spanning less than five years, all of the prior offending was analysed.

Sanctions that occurred in this five-year period were classified using the same headings as those used to classify inclusion offences.⁴⁰ A statistical procedure known as latent class analysis, which identifies patterns of prior behaviour, was used to identify common features in offending behaviour across the five years prior to the inclusion offence. Using this approach, each offender was allocated to one of six groups (or 'classes'). Each class had a distinct 'profile' based on the nature of the sanctions received by offenders in the five years before the inclusion offence.⁴¹

The proportion of offenders allocated to each 'class' is given in Table 10. This also shows the probability of at least one sanction within a specific crime type

³⁹ The analysis was limited to offenders of UK nationality due to difficulties determining for non-UK nationals whether aspects of their criminal career were not captured by the Police National Computer (PNC) due to being perpetrated overseas.

⁴⁰ See Table 5 on page 28

⁴¹ More details of the method can be found in Appendix D2.

occurring during the five years before the inclusion offence. Each class has been named to describe the main offending characteristics of each group across this period.

Table 10. Probability of at least one offence of a given type over the five years before inclusion offence, by class (UK offenders only)

	Offending pattern in previous five years					
Percentage of all organised crime offenders (%)	23.4	15.0	13.5	11.6	8.1	28.5
Offences in past five years	Versatile and very prolific	Mainly violence	Mixed prolific	Mainly acquisitive	Mainly drugs	No sanctions in previous five years
Violence against the person	0.71	0.80	0.25	0.05	0.05	0
Sexual offences	0.02	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0
Robbery	0.09	0.07	0.00	0.05	0.01	0
Burglary	0.27	0.04	0.00	0.20	0.01	0
Theft and handling stolen goods	0.70	0.13	0.10	0.63	0.01	0
Fraud and forgery	0.16	0.01	0.07	0.20	0.01	0
Drugs offences	0.64	0.31	0.47	0.35	1.00	0
Criminal damage	0.33	0.22	0.03	0.08	0.01	0
Driving offences	0.55	0.07	0.95	0.25	0.00	0
Other*	0.95	0.39	0.58	0.47	0.22	0
Mean no. of sanctions in past five years	14.5	4.0	7.1	6.1	2.9	0.0
Percentage of female offenders	4.4	3.9	1.7	8.4	7.5	5.0
Mean age (at inclusion offence)	27	28	30	30	32	37

Note: Probabilities greater than 0.6 are highlighted in yellow and those between 0.4 and 0.6 are highlighted in grey.

*Includes breach offences.

Over one-quarter (29%) of offenders were found to have had no sanctions in the previous five years. This group also had the highest average age of all six groups (37 years) at the inclusion offence. This was the largest of the six groups and includes those offenders with no prior sanctions at any time before their inclusion offence. An additional piece of analysis on this group also showed only around one-third (35%) of this group had received a custodial sentence at any point prior to the inclusion offence.

Nearly one-quarter (23%) were classified as 'versatile and very prolific' offenders. They committed a wide range of offences and appeared as the most diverse of the offender groups generated from this analysis. Over 70 per cent of this group had received at least one sanction for violence and a similar proportion had sanctions for theft offences in the five years before the inclusion offence. A slightly smaller proportion had a sanction for a drug offence. Furthermore, most (95%) had sanctions for 'other' offences (these generally related to some sort of breach, such as failing to adhere to the conditions of a court order or bail). These were the most criminally active of all six groups, with an average of 14.5 sanctions over the five-year period, and had the lowest average age (27 years) at inclusion offence.

The group labelled 'mainly violence' had considerably fewer sanctions than the 'versatile and very prolific' group (an average of four sanctions over the five years). Four in five of this group had received sanctions for violence offences in the five years before the inclusion offence. Nearly one-third (31%)

of this group had received a sanction for a drugs offence, while 39 per cent had sanctions for 'other' offences.

The 'mainly acquisitive' group (12%) was the only group showing a specific propensity to commit acquisitive crimes. Their sanction profile in the five years before the inclusion offence was dominated by theft (63%), burglary (20%) and fraud and forgery (20%). This group had, along with the 'mainly violence' group, a less pronounced involvement in drug offences over the five years before the inclusion offence. Just over one-third had received a sanction for a drug offence and a small number had been sanctioned for a violence offence.

The smallest group, 'mainly drugs', accounted for only 8 per cent of organised crime offenders and displayed the highest degree of offence 'specialisation'. Every offender in this group had received at least one drugs sanction in the five years before inclusion, and few had been involved in offending of any other kind. They were one of the least prolific offender groups with an average of only 2.9 offences in the five-year period.

Finally, the 'mixed prolific' group was the least distinctive of the groups identified. These offenders accounted for 13.5 per cent of organised crime offenders. Their offending was spread across a number of areas with violence, drugs and driving offences the most prominent. Most (95%) in this group had committed a driving offence and nearly one-half a drug-related offence (47%).

The 'no sanctions' and 'mainly drugs' groups were not only the least prolific offenders during the five-year period, they also had the highest average ages (37 and 32 years respectively). By contrast, the group with the highest mean number of offences in the five years before inclusion, the 'versatile and very prolific' group, had the lowest average age (27 years).

Female organised crime offenders were spread quite evenly across the six groups. They were most prominent in the 'mainly acquisitive' and 'mainly drugs' offender classes, comprising 8.4 per cent and 7.5 per cent of each group respectively.

Table B9 in Appendix B contains information on the relationship between the groups and the different inclusion offences. Those in the 'mainly drugs' class are most likely to have been convicted for a drug-related inclusion offence. Those in the 'versatile and very prolific' and the 'mainly violence' groups are more likely to be convicted of an organised crime violence offence than the other groups. In the group with no sanctions in the five-year period fraud and forgery and theft and handling stolen goods were reasonably prominent among the organised crime inclusion offences.

In summary, this analysis highlights the diversity of offending behaviours in organised crime offenders in the five years before their inclusion offence. The study has previously shown that the vast majority of inclusion offences were drugs offences (mainly supply and importation). It is tempting to make judgements about the link between the sanctions received in the five years

before the inclusion offence and the inclusion offence, but there needs to be caution in making these links. The five-year precursor offences *may* be directly linked in some way to the inclusion offence (for example, linked to the specific offences that resulted in the offender being selected for this study) but some will be unrelated (in other words, not part of a clear continuum of offending). What can be said with confidence is that there is clearly no single offence 'route' into organised crime as defined in this study. Rather, there appear to be some distinct patterns in their prior offending histories. Some displayed offending behaviour focused on one or two specific types of offending (for example, the 'mainly drugs' group). The versatile and prolific group received a high number of sanctions for a wide range of offence types, in comparison with the oldest group of offenders who had received no sanctions in the five years prior to the inclusion offence. To be included in this study required an offence of a certain severity, and one that would commonly require established contacts, planning and organisation. In this context, the existence of a sizeable group of relatively mature offenders with no sanctions in this period (at least as measured by formal contact with the criminal justice system) is interesting and potentially poses a considerable challenge for law enforcement.

7. Escalation in offending

'Escalation' is a term that describes how an offender's pattern of offending increases in seriousness with age. Previous sections have focused on the nature of the inclusion offence, onset, volume and crime type. This section examines the nature of offence escalation for organised crime offenders.⁴²

To measure escalation requires applying seriousness scores for each sanction offence in an offender's criminal history. Previous research⁴³ has used Police National Computer (PNC) data to generate a seriousness scale for all recorded offences. It used the sentencing experience (custodial and non-custodial) of all offences recorded in courts to produce a seriousness score ranging between 9.9 (for example, for murder) to 0 (for example, for riding a pedal cycle while drunk). This scale gives an average seriousness score of around 3.8 for general offending across a typical criminal history. Table 11 gives a selection of seriousness scores for various offences.

Since most organised crime proxy offences identified here have scores above 3.8, then most (if not all) organised crime offenders in this study are likely to show escalation in offence seriousness over time. The question is not whether they will escalate, but the nature of their journey to committing a serious organised crime offence, and whether there are any distinct paths within escalation.

⁴² The analysis was limited to offenders of UK nationality due to difficulties determining for non-UK nationals whether aspects of their criminal career are not captured by the Police National Computer (PNC) due to being perpetrated overseas.

⁴³ See Francis *et al.* (2005).

Table 11. Examples of seriousness scores for various offences

Offence name	Seriousness score
Murder	9.90
Rape of a female	8.06
Importation of class A drugs	6.77
Wounding with intent GBH	6.13
Supply of heroin	5.79
Conspiracy to defraud	5.06
Theft of motor vehicle	4.11
Stealing by an employee	4.04
Shoplifting	3.57
Absconding from bail	3.10
Uninsured motor vehicle	2.06
Riding a cycle while drunk	0.00

For the organised crime sample, the average seriousness score for sanctions received at the time of the the inclusion offence is 5.22⁴⁴ (standard deviation 1.02); if only the organised crime sanctions are considered, the mean seriousness score increases to 5.59 (standard. deviation 0.69).

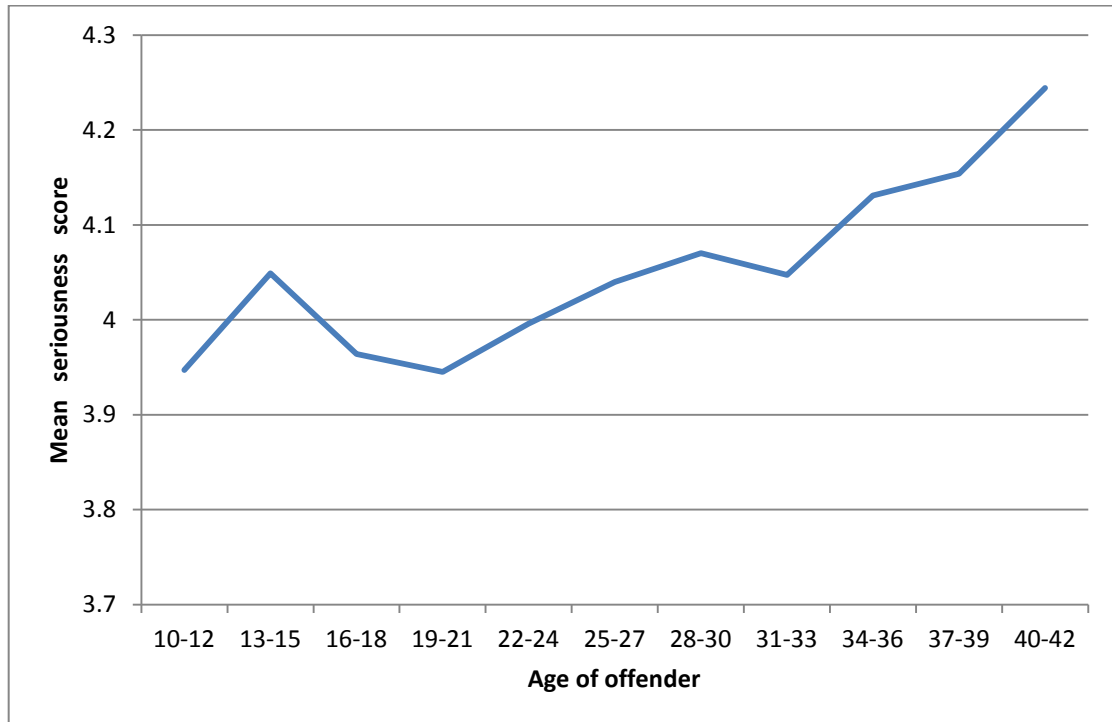
The analysis that follows covers all offenders with at least two sanctions at different ages. In cases where a court appearance had resulted in sanctions for two or more offences, 'seriousness' was measured on the basis of the most serious offence. This avoids very serious offences being 'averaged away' by sanctions for more minor offences dealt with on the same sentencing occasion (for example, a rape and a theft offence).

⁴⁴ At the time they were sanctioned for the inclusion offence, many offenders will have received concurrent sanctions for other offences.

The average offence seriousness was first examined by age group. Figure 5 shows the average offence seriousness score for organised crime offenders by age of the offenders at the time of sanction.⁴⁵ Only offenders who were sanctioned in a particular age group contribute to the average for that age group, so the trend line is based on the results for different numbers of offenders. The average offence seriousness increases over time, from around 3.95 in the early teenage years up to around 4.25 by age 40.

⁴⁵ This analysis includes all sanctions up to and including the inclusion offence, and includes only those offenders who had received two or more sanctions.

Figure 5. Organised crime offenders' average offence seriousness score, by age group



However, average trend lines can conceal more varied patterns of escalation.

It is possible that the observed increase is simply an artefact of the least serious offenders stopping offending, leaving the more serious offenders still offending at age 40. In addition, there may be different patterns of offence seriousness over time.

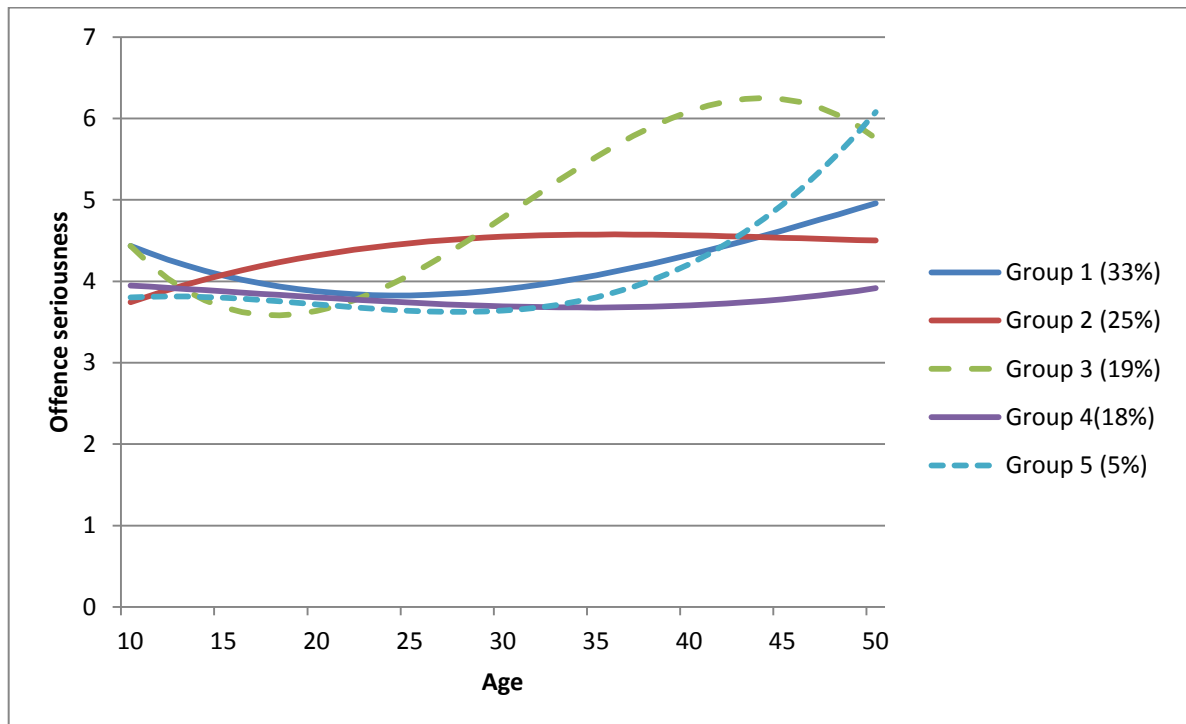
To investigate this, group-based trajectory modelling⁴⁶ (the method used to examine the frequency of offending) was again used to investigate changes in offence seriousness by offender age. There are some caveats to this approach. First, the analysis produces 'average' escalation trajectories over the 3,000 or so offenders in the sample. Secondly, the number of cases over the lengths of the various trajectories will change. There were fewer offenders

⁴⁶ See Nagin (2005).

at both the lower and higher ages than at the middle reflecting the offending profile of the sample. So, for example, only 291 offenders contributed to the first age group (10–12 years) whereas 2,262 offenders contributed to the group aged 19–21 years. However, five sizeable groups were clearly identified. Figure 6 shows the findings graphically.

None of the five groups began committing offences at a level below the average offence seriousness score (3.8). In each group, offending in childhood and early adulthood remained at around this level. Two groups, Group 3 (19%) and Group 5 (5%) showed a steady rise in offence seriousness up to the point of their inclusion offence. They committed the most serious offences and the level of escalation was considerable. Group 3 displayed a rise in seriousness from their early 20s, whereas the small proportion of offenders in Group 5 did not display escalation until much later (their mid-30s). Neither of these groups reached their peak level of offence seriousness until into their 40s.

Figure 6. Escalation in seriousness for organised crime offenders (UK offenders only)



The remaining three groups made up over three-quarters of the sample and all three demonstrated a high degree of consistency in levels of offending seriousness across the age groups. From their teenage years until middle-age, offenders in Group 2 (25%) were involved in offending at a high but stable level of seriousness (approximately 4.5). Group 4 (18%) offended throughout close to the average level of seriousness (3.8). Finally, Group 1, the largest group (33%), displayed a gradual escalation from around age 30 years into middle age.

The analysis indicates that a proportion of organised crime offenders escalate over their criminal history. Just under 20 per cent showed a rapid escalation pattern and an additional 5 per cent of offenders showed an escalation later in life. The increase in escalation shown in the overall trend in Figure 5 was not

an artefact of less serious offenders stopping, but instead suggests that some offenders become more serious in their offending. Those groups that did not escalate remained stable in the level of seriousness of their offending.

8. Offence-based risk factors for involvement in organised crime

This section examines the offence-based risk factors that may be associated with future convictions for an organised crime proxy offence. Because of the nature of the Police National Computer (PNC) data (which contain offences only resulting in a sanction) the results are to some extent limited, but the analysis is still useful. Indeed, previous studies of the criminal careers of serious offenders have successfully identified offences that heighten the risk of a conviction for a more serious offence in later life.⁴⁷

A retrospective matched design was adopted to compare the presence (or absence) of convictions for different offences in the criminal histories of organised crime offenders with a matched group of, say, general offenders. The odds-ratio of the association between the offence and receiving a conviction for an organised crime inclusion offence were calculated. These odds were then interpreted as a prospective risk factor, making the claim that the presence of an offence in an offender's early history will heighten the likelihood of being an organised criminal in later life. However, it needs to be pointed out that this is not a true prospective study and does not attempt to calculate *absolute* risks of becoming an organised criminal. See Appendix D5 for further discussion.

⁴⁷ See Soothill *et al.* (2002).

It was necessary to match cases and make the serious and general crime offender samples as similar as possible to the organised crime offenders in terms of their age, gender, location (defined by the police force area in which the offence took place), and year of sanction, to ensure that individuals in each group had an equal opportunity to develop a criminal history before their inclusion offence.⁴⁸

As this analysis requires matched comparison groups, two new comparison groups were generated from PNC data to represent general and serious crime offenders.⁴⁹ In other words, the organised crime sample and the two comparison samples had similar characteristics *except* in terms of their inclusion offence.

The analysis that follows calculates the *relative risk*⁵⁰ of receiving a subsequent conviction for an organised crime proxy offence given the presence of a sanction for a specific offence earlier in the history of an offender. It does not measure the absolute likelihood of an individual going on to receive a conviction for an offence linked to organised crime. For example, the analysis may reveal that a sanction for careless driving increases the relative risk of a subsequent conviction for an offence linked to organised crime (when compared with the offending population as a whole). The *absolute* risk of an offender convicted of careless driving getting an organised

⁴⁸ More details of the method can be found in Appendix D5.

⁴⁹ A matched case-control analysis approach.

⁵⁰ Odds-ratios can be interpreted as relative risks as the likelihood of becoming an organised criminal is low.

crime conviction is likely to be very low, since only a very small proportion of careless driving offenders actually go on to receive an organised crime conviction. This can be the case even if the relative risk appears high.

In order to assess risk for the relevant offences, relative risks were estimated for every offence type by conditional logistic regression. The relative risk is a ratio of probabilities associated with a sanction for a particular offence. A relative risk of 'one' would mean that the offence neither increased nor reduced the likelihood of a subsequent conviction linked to organised crime. A relative risk of 'five' for a specific offence would mean that the probability of the offender becoming an organised criminal is five times greater with that offence in their history than not having that offence. Approximately one-third of the 131 offences⁵¹ examined were associated with an increased likelihood of conviction linked to organised crime when compared with the general offending comparison group. The full list is given in Appendix B Table B10. These offences can be divided into the following four groups.

- Sanctions for **lower end offences related to drugs possession and supply** generated relative risks ranging from 2.4 (possession class B offence) to 7.5 (possession and supply of class A drugs). In other words, the presence of these convictions raised the risk of being convicted for a subsequent organised crime offence by a factor of

⁵¹ The 131 offences encompass all offence types for which the organised crime offenders had been sanctioned prior to the inclusion offence.

between 2.4 to 7.5 times, when compared with the general offending population.

- Offences related to **deception, fraud and forgery**, raised the relative risk of a future organised crime conviction by between 1.5 (deception) and 32.0 (fraud / conspiracy to defraud) times.
- A third group was typified by **driving-related offences**, such as reckless driving. In general most of the driving offences doubled the chances of a future conviction linked to organised crime compared with the general offending population. For example, receiving a sanction for 'driving while disqualified' has a relative risk of 2.1.
- The fourth main group relates to **robbery and theft convictions**. These generated relative risks of between 1.5 and 2.0. Many of these sanctions related to motor vehicle thefts.

In addition to the four larger groups, there are other smaller groupings of offences (listed below) that were associated with an increased relative risk of a subsequent conviction linked to organised crime.

- Compliance with the criminal justice process (absconding, bail and breach offences). These had relative risks of between 1.6 and 1.7.
- Two specific offences relating to the *Proceeds of Crime Act 2002*, which, although rare, generated high relative risks.

While the comparison between organised crime offenders and general offenders identified risk factors for gaining an organised crime conviction, it is possible that they simply reflect an increasing risk for a conviction for serious offending. To explore whether this was the case, the organised crime cases were compared with those in the serious crime offender sample. All offences that were identified as risk factors in the initial analysis were selected and tested as risk factors in a new analysis, but this time compared with the serious crime offender sample.

Table 12 shows all offences with relative risks that showed statistically significant differences to the serious crime sample and that were also statistically significant for the general comparison group. This means that the presence of an offence in Table 12 in an individual's criminal history was more likely to lead to a future conviction linked to organised crime than to either a general or a serious (non-organised) offence.

Over one-half of the offences identified in Table 12 relate to drugs offences.⁵² Among those offenders who had received a sanction for possession and supply of class A drugs, the relative risk for a subsequent conviction for an organised crime offence compared with general offenders was 7.6, and with serious offenders, 2.4. In other words, the presence of a sanction for possession and supply of class A drugs increased the likelihood of a future conviction linked to organised crime by over seven times compared with

⁵² See Appendix Table B10 for the full list of offences analysed.

general offenders. When compared with serious crime offenders, offenders with a sanction for possession and supply of a class A drug were more than twice as likely to go on to be convicted of an offence linked to organised crime. This offence type was a specific risk factor distinguishing organised crime offenders from both general *and* other serious offenders.

Table 12. Matched case-control analysis organised crime offenders against **serious offender** controls

Offence-based risk factor (presence of sanction in criminal history)	No. of cases	No. of serious controls	Relative risk	P-value
Driving –motorway speeding pulled over	19	10	1.90	0.10
Drugs importation – other	46	16	3.00	<0.001
Drugs – possession class A	949	854	1.16	0.008
Drugs – possession and supply class A	442	196	2.44	<0.001
Drugs – possession and supply class B	161	104	1.58	<0.001
Drugs – supply class A	309	176	1.88	<0.001
Drugs – supply class B	61	38	1.62	0.02
Drugs – supply class C	15	3	5.00	0.01
Forgery	39	14	2.79	0.001
Fraud – motor insurance	20	8	2.50	0.03
Proceeds of crime – concealment	11	1	3.67	0.05
Weapon – trading in firearms	110	72	1.58	0.004

Significant risk factors ($p \leq 0.10$), which are also significant risk factors against general controls, identified offence-based risk factors for subsequent organised crime conviction.

Other drugs offences showed a similar pattern involving supply and / or possession and also importation. Table 12 also identifies forgery, motor insurance fraud, concealment of the proceeds of crime, and trading in firearms as offences that considerably increase the relative risk of a future conviction for organised crime compared with a control group of serious offenders. However, the number of offenders with these offence types in their criminal history was quite low.

A number of crimes were identified as risk factors for serious crime more generally, rather than for organised crime alone.⁵³ For example, for individuals with a sanction for driving whilst disqualified in their criminal history, the risk of being convicted of a subsequent serious offence was higher than the risk for receiving a subsequent conviction for an organised crime offence. In other words, driving whilst disqualified was still a risk factor for becoming an organised crime offender, but it was even more of a risk factor for becoming a serious crime offender. This was also true of other offence types: robbery, theft, burglary, and criminal justice system 'compliance' offences all had relative risks of less than one. This means that these offences should be considered as risk factors for serious offending, and not just for organised crime offending.

In summary, the analysis identified a range of offences that highlight the future risk of being convicted for an offence linked to organised crime. Some of the offences with a heightened risk were linked to the prior experience and opportunities required for the commission of organised crime. Indeed, the majority of offence categories highlighted were previously identified as inclusion offences. In this analysis it appears that prior to the *inclusion* offence, the offender was already operating at a lower level of organised criminality with lower level drug possession and supply, forgery, fraud, trading in firearms and offences related to the Proceeds of Crime Act.

⁵³ See Appendix B, Table B8 for the full list of offences analysed.

The high prevalence of drug-related risk factors might be an indication that this particular criminal sphere is an important entry-point for all those who come to be involved in organised crime, and also reinforces the dominance of drug supply within organised crime. It might also reflect the data, which are in part a reflection of law enforcement priorities, and also the methodology used for this research.⁵⁴

⁵⁴ Drug offences featured heavily in the offence criteria-set used for generating the proxy organised crime sample.

9. Discussion and conclusions

This study set out to address an important evidence gap within UK research into organised crime. It examines the criminal histories of offenders who become involved in organised crime by analysing administrative data on criminal sanctions (court conviction, or caution / warning / reprimand) of offenders held on the Police National Computer (PNC). Individuals were included in the study if they:

- were convicted of offences associated with an involvement in organised crime;
- had received a sentence of three years or more; and
- were sentenced with co-offenders.

The offenders that make up the sample do not represent the totality of organised criminals in the UK. Rather the analysis is undertaken on a proxy group of offenders who, through the application of a consistent set of criteria, have been deemed to be linked to organised crime. While there are limitations to this approach, the study represents a starting point to examine the criminal pathways taken by organised crime offenders. The main findings can be summarised as follows.

Nearly three-quarters of organised crime offenders' inclusion offences were for drugs supply or importation.

The average age that offenders were sanctioned for an organised crime inclusion offence was 32 years, and the majority of offences related to drug

supply, production and importation (73%). Only a small proportion of offenders had inclusion offences for violence (11%), theft and handling stolen goods (6%) and fraud and forgery (5%). By contrast, drugs offences featured much less frequently among the inclusion offences of serious crime offenders (19%) and general offenders (10%). The dominance of drugs offences in part reflects the nature of organised crime in the UK and the importance of drug supply within organised crime. However, the prevalence of this offence type will also be influenced by factors such as the legislative process, the focus of police operations and the effectiveness of the criminal justice system in prosecuting different types of offences. It is well known, for instance, that the detection and conviction rates for drugs offences are high compared with many other offence types (Home Office, 2013).

It is possible that the application of both the 'co-offending' and the 'sentence length' criteria to select organised criminals in the first instance may have increased the likelihood of drugs offenders being included in the sample and other offence types being excluded. Nonetheless, this proxy sample of organised crime offenders provides valuable insights into the characteristics and offending behaviour of a sizeable number of offenders whose inclusion conviction is likely to be linked to organised crime.

Fewer organised crime offenders were assessed by the police as being non-White North European than the general or serious crime offenders.

In terms of ethnicity, organised crime offenders were more diverse than either of the comparison groups. Just over one-half (56%) were assessed by the police as being White European, compared with 81 per cent of general offenders and 73 per cent of serious crime offenders. And while organised crime is commonly reliant on transnational networks of offenders, the vast majority of organised crime offenders identified were UK nationals. In terms of their age and gender, organised crime offenders were broadly similar to serious crime offenders.

Just under six in ten (57%) organised crime offenders received their first sanction under the age of 18, while ten per cent had received no sanctions prior to their 'inclusion' offence. One-quarter of organised crime offenders showed a considerable increase in the seriousness of their offending as their criminal career progressed.

Some 57 per cent of organised crime offenders had received their first sanction by the age of 18. This compared with 46 per cent of general offenders and 66 per cent serious offenders. The average age that organised crime offenders received their first criminal sanction was 19 years. This was broadly similar to general and serious offenders (22 and 19 years respectively).

Prior to their inclusion offence ten per cent of offenders had not received any sanctions. There are two possible explanations for this. First, their inclusion offence may have genuinely been their very first offence; or they may have been active criminals before their inclusion offence but successful at avoiding detection and conviction. The proportion of organised crime offenders for whom the inclusion offence was also their first offence was lower than for both the general and serious crime offenders (45% and 13% respectively).

The level of offence seriousness rose considerably for around one-quarter (24%) of organised crime offenders as they aged, not peaking until they were in their 40s. In some respects a peak in seriousness might have been expected given that seriousness (a minimum three-year sentence) formed part of the initial selection criteria for selecting organised crime offences. However, a large proportion (43%) displayed little escalation, and one-third (33%) showed a more gradual increase in offence seriousness.

One in five organised crime offenders received a high number of sanctions as teenagers but their offending rapidly declined as they moved into early adulthood (a pattern commonly seen in general offenders). However, two-thirds of organised crime offenders offended at a low rate throughout their criminal careers, and a proportion had offended little or not at all before becoming an adult.

Many of the findings from this study support the general observation that organised crime offenders were not a homogeneous group; they took a variety

of routes into organised crime. The proxy group of organised crime offenders differed widely in terms of offending onset and trajectories, type and diversity of prior offending, and where in the UK the offending took place. Just over four in ten (43%) of organised crime offenders had not received any sanctions before the age of 18. Looking at patterns in offending over time one-quarter (26%) of organised crime offenders offended very little or not at all during their teenage years and showed a very gradual increase in offending from early adulthood. By contrast one-third of organised crime offenders demonstrated offending patterns more akin to those commonly seen in general crime offenders and displayed a high frequency of offending through their teenage years, before a sharp decline in their late teenage years or early to mid-20s. The contrast between these two groups might demonstrate different routes taken to get to the same end point, or it may point to groups of offenders with intrinsically different 'roles' in organised crime. And the implication is that neither early criminal experiences, nor the developmental factors used to explain general offending behaviour, were essential precursors for involvement in organised crime.

Over the entire course of their criminal careers, only 12 per cent of organised crime offenders specialised in a certain type of offending, mostly drug-related offences.

Specialising in one particular offence type for the duration of their criminal careers was rare. Only 12 per cent of organised crime offenders specialised in one type of offence throughout their criminal careers. Of those who were identified as 'specialist' offenders, a large proportion had specialised in drug

offences. For the serious crime offender group violence and sexual offences were prominent among those identified as specialist offenders, but less so among organised crime specialist offenders.

Focusing on the criminal histories of offenders in the five years before the inclusion offence revealed six discrete groups of offender, with distinct profiles in terms of type and volume of offending, and age of the offender. The two largest groups contrasted starkly with each other. One comprised the youngest organised crime offenders, who offended prolifically and committed a wide range of offences. The other was the oldest of all six groups, whose members had received no sanctions at all during this five-year period.

An analysis of offenders' criminal histories in the five years prior to the inclusion offence revealed groups of offenders with highly distinctive offence profiles. Two groups, which between them comprised over one-half of all organised crime offenders, were almost opposites in terms of offence composition, age and frequency of offending. The largest group (29%) was also the oldest, with an average age of 37, with members who had received no sanctions in the five years before the inclusion offence. By contrast, the second largest group (23%) was the youngest, with an average age of 27, and were prolific offenders who had committed a wide range of offence types during the five years before the inclusion offence.

What the research cannot address is whether these two groups represent offenders who play very different roles in organised crime, or had followed very different pathways into similar organised crime 'roles'. It is also possible that these two groups may simply be made up of offenders at different stages of their criminal career (although the complete switch from a prolific, younger offender to a mature person desisting from offending does not seem an especially plausible transition). The question of whether the group with no sanctions had in fact not offended in the five-year period, or if they had simply been better at evading law enforcement, is not possible to answer in this study.

Most of the other groups of organised crime offenders showed some consistency in the types of offences they had been sanctioned for over the five-year period before the inclusion offence. For example, in one of the smaller groups, offenders had all received sanctions for drug offences and little else, while another group's offenders specialised in violence and theft offences. This suggests that, within a more condensed timescale, offending by *some* organised crime offenders did appear to concentrate around certain crime types.

One group stood out as having patterns of offending with little discernible focus, and for committing offences that, superficially at least, appeared less obviously linked to organised crime. The majority had been sanctioned for a driving offence. It is difficult to speculate how offending behaviour such as this

could be followed shortly afterwards with a conviction for a serious organised crime offence.

A small number of offences were identified as offence-based risk factors for a subsequent conviction for an organised crime offence, most of which were offences that had been classified in the sampling as offences related to organised crime.

An analysis of offence-based risk factors found a number of offence types to be risk factors for a future conviction for an offence related to organised crime. When compared with matched control groups of both general *and* non-organised serious offenders, 10 offences (out of 131 considered) were identified as revealing a heightened risk of a future conviction for an offence linked specifically to organised crime. These offences mainly related to lower level drug possession and supply; forgery and motor vehicle documents / fraud; trading in firearms; and lower level offences relating to the concealment of the proceeds of crime. All had formed part of the original criterion used for selecting organised crime offenders, which suggests that a number had been involved in some aspect of organised crime prior to the inclusion offence.

Implications for policy and further research

This is one of the first studies that aims to identify and analyse the criminal careers of organised crime offenders using police administrative data. As such, as well as answering some questions about the characteristics of organised crime offenders, it raises new ones to address. It has established that organised crime offenders are far from being a homogeneous group, either in terms of their characteristics or their offending histories.

But many questions remain unanswered. The existence of a large group of offenders whose involvement in organised crime begins in adulthood, and often without a clear pattern of prior offending, is intriguing and one worth further investigation. Establishing to what extent these offenders were simply more adept at avoiding detection, or whether their involvement in organised criminality in later life was more opportunistic would be a central question to address.

Likewise, the versatile and prolific offender group, with an average age of 27 also represents a group worthy of more detailed study. And while there are undoubted strengths to using an approach that applies the consistency of a clear set of offence-based criteria, this introduces some biases to the organised crime 'sample'. It would therefore also be valuable to repeat the analysis using a methodology that selected offenders using an intelligence-led assessment of their involvement in organised crime.

This report deliberately does not include a long list of recommendations for policy and practice. This is an initial, largely descriptive study, which, while throwing up information of practical relevance, provides more a platform for future investigation rather than a finished product in terms of new policy or practice. However, one general point is worth making. In terms of demographic factors, history of offending and offence-based risk factors, organised crime offenders looked quite distinct from general offenders. But they share more similarities with serious offenders. Practical efforts to identify broad indicators of the risk of involvement in organised crime might well consider looking at them under the umbrella of serious crime offences more generally, rather than specifically focusing on organised crime.

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Appendix A: Likely and possible organised crime offences

HO code	Offence description	Likely / possible	Organised crime family
61.27	Forgery and Counterfeiting Act 1981 S.17 Possess materials or dies to make counterfeit coin or note.	Likely	Commodity importation, counterfeiting or illegal supply
81.07	Firearms Act 1968 S.3 (1)(Group 1) Trading in firearms without being registered.	Likely	Commodity importation, counterfeiting or illegal supply
81.08	Firearms Act 1968 S.3 (1) (Group 2) Trading in firearms without being registered.	Likely	Commodity importation, counterfeiting or illegal supply
77.53	Criminal Justice [International Co-operation] Act 1990 S.19[a] – [class A] Person has controlled drug in his possession on a ship.	Likely	Drug activity
77.54	Criminal Justice [International Co-operation] Act 1990 S.19[a] – [class B] Person has controlled class B drug in his possession on a ship.	Likely	Drug activity
77.59	Criminal Justice [International Co-operation] Act 1990 S.19[a] – [class unspecified] Possession of controlled drug on a ship.	Likely	Drug activity
92.01	Customs & Excise Management Act 1979 S.50[2;3;5] 170[1;2;4] – [class unspecified] Unlawful importation of controlled drug under Misuse of Misuse Of Drugs Act 1971.	Likely	Drug activity
92.02	Customs & Excise Management Act 1979 S.68[2;4] 170[1;2;4] – [class unspecified] Exportation of drugs controlled under the Misuse of Drugs Act 1971.	Likely	Drug activity
92.03	Customs & Excise Management Act 1979 S.50[2;3;5] 170[1;2;3] Unlawful importation of a class A drug.	Likely	Drug activity
92.04	Customs & Excise Management Act 1979 S.50[2;3;5] 170[1;2;3] – [Class B] Unlawful importation of controlled class B drug under Misuse of Drugs Act 1971.	Likely	Drug activity
92.05	Customs & Excise Management Act 1979 S.50[2;3;5] 170[1;2;3] – [Class C] Unlawful importation of controlled class C drug under Misuse of Drugs Act 1971	Likely	Drug activity
92.06	Customs & Excise Management Act 1979 S.68[2;4] 170[1;2;4] – Class A Unlawful exportation of controlled class A drug under Misuse of Drugs Act 1971.	Likely	Drug activity
92.07	Customs & Excise Management Act 1979 S.68[2;4] 170[1;2;4] – Class B Unlawful exportation of controlled class B drug under Misuse of Drugs Act 1971.	Likely	Drug activity
92.08	Customs & Excise Management Act 1979 S.68[2;4] 170[1;2;4] – Class C Unlawful exportation of controlled class C drug under Misuse of Drugs Act 1971.	Likely	Drug activity
92.1	Production or being concerned in the production of controlled class A drug – cocaine. Misuse of Drugs Act 1971 S.4(2).	Likely	Drug activity
92.11	Production or being concerned in the production of controlled class A drug – heroin. Misuse of Drugs Act 1971 S.4(2).	Likely	Drug activity
92.12	Production or being concerned in the production of a controlled class A drug – LSD. Misuse of Drugs Act 1971 S.4(2).	Likely	Drug activity
92.13	Production or being concerned in the production of a controlled class A drug – MDMA. Misuse of Drugs Act 1971 S.4(2).	Likely	Drug activity
92.14	Production or being concerned in the production of a controlled class A drug – ‘crack’.	Likely	Drug activity
92.15	Misuse of Drugs Act 1971 S.4(2) Production of or being concerned with the production of a controlled class A drug – methadone.	Likely	Drug activity
92.19	Production or being concerned in the production of other controlled class A drug. Misuse of Drugs Act 1971 S.4(2).	Likely	Drug activity
92.2	Production or being concerned in the production of controlled class B drug – amphetamine. Misuse of Drugs Act 1971 S.4(2).	Likely	Drug activity
92.25	Production or being concerned in the production of a controlled class B drug. Misuse of Drugs Act 1971 S.4(2).	Likely	Drug activity
92.27	Misuse of Drugs Act 1971 S.4(2) Production of or being concerned in the production of a controlled class C drug – anabolic steroids.	Likely	Drug activity
92.28	Production or being concerned in the production of	Likely	Drug activity

	controlled class C drug. Misuse of Drugs Act 1971 S.4(2).		
92.29	Production or being concerned in the production of an unspecified controlled drug. Misuse of Drugs Act 1971 S.4(2).	Likely	Drug activity
92.41	Supplying, offering to supply or being concerned in controlled class B drug – cannabis. Misuse of Drugs Act 1971 S.4(3).	Likely	Drug activity
93.49	Concealing or transferring the proceeds of drug trafficking.	Likely	Drug activity
93.5	Assisting another person to retain the benefit of drug trafficking.	Likely	Drug activity
93.51	Acquisition, possession or use of proceeds of drug trafficking.	Likely	Drug activity
93.55	Methylamphetamine (Crystal meth) production. Misuse of Drugs Act 1971 S.4(2) & Sch.2.	Likely	Drug activity
93.59	Production of or being concerned in the production of a controlled drug – GHB (Hydroxy-n-butric acid). Misuse of Drugs Act 1971 S.4(2) & Sch.2.	Likely	Drug activity
93.6	Production of or being concerned in the production of a controlled drug – ketamine. Misuse of Drugs Act 1971.	Likely	Drug activity
53.37	Cartel offences. Enterprise Act 2002 Ss.188; 189 &190.	Likely	Fraud and financial crime
78.19	Trafficking people into the UK for the purpose of exploitation. Asylum & Immigration (Treatment of Claimants) Act 2004 S.4(1)(5).	Likely	Organised immigration crime
78.2	Trafficking people within the UK for the purpose of exploitation. Asylum & Immigration (Treatment of Claimants) Act 2004 S.4(2)(5).	Likely	Organised immigration crime
66.42	Serious Organised Crime & Police Act 2005 Ss.145 & 147 Interference with contractual relationships so as to harm animal research organisations.	Likely	Other
24.19	Keeping a brothel used for prostitution – Sexual Offences Act 1956 S.33A as added by Sexual Offences Act 2003 S.55.	Likely	Sexual offences
71.09	Controlling a child prostitute or a child involved in pornography – child aged 13–17. Sexual Offences Act 2003 S.49(1)(a) & (b)(i) & (2).	Likely	Sexual offences
72.01	Arranging or facilitating arrival of a person into the UK for sexual exploitation (trafficking). Sexual Offences Act 2003 S.57.	Likely	Sexual offences
72.02	Arranging or facilitating travel of a person within the UK for sexual exploitation (trafficking). Sexual Offences Act 2003 S.58.	Likely	Sexual offences
38.06	Failure to disclose another person involved in money laundering – other nominated officers in the regulated sector. Proceeds of Crime Act 2002 Ss.332 & 334(1).	Likely	Specialist money laundering
35	Theft Act 1968 S.21. Blackmail.	Likely	Violent criminal activity
36.01	Common law. Kidnapping.	Likely	Violent criminal activity
36.02	Hijacking. Aviation Security Act 1982 Ss.1–6(2). Channel Tunnel Security Order 1994 Articles 457 & 458. Channel Tunnel Act 1987 S.1(7). Aviation and Maritime Security Act 1990 Ss.9 & 10.	Likely	Violent criminal activity
66.43	Serious Organised Crime & Police Act 2005 S.146 & 147 Intimidation of persons connected with animal research organisations.	Likely	Violent criminal activity
53.11	Stamp Duties Management Act 1891 S.13 Fraudulently printing, mutilating or re-issuing stamps.	Possible	Commodity importation, counterfeiting or illegal supply
53.35	Computer Misuse Act 1990 S.3 Unauthorised modification of computer material.	Possible	Commodity importation, counterfeiting or illegal supply
53.44	Make, adapt, supply or offer to supply any article knowing that it is designed or adapted for use in the course of or in connection with fraud.	Possible	Commodity importation, counterfeiting or illegal supply
60.21	Forgery and Counterfeiting Act 1981 Ss.1 & 2 Forgery, etc. of prescription in respect of scheduled drug.	Possible	Commodity importation, counterfeiting or illegal supply
61.21	Forgery and Counterfeiting Act 1981 Other forgery or copying false instrument.	Possible	Commodity importation, counterfeiting or illegal supply
61.23	Forgery and Counterfeiting Act 1981 S.5 Possessing false instrument or materials to make false instrument.	Possible	Commodity importation, counterfeiting or illegal supply
61.24	Forgery and Counterfeiting Act 1981 S.14 Making counterfeit coin or note.	Possible	Commodity importation, counterfeiting or illegal

			supply
61.25	Forgery and Counterfeiting Act 1981 S.15 Passing, etc. counterfeit coin or note as genuine.	Possible	Commodity importation, counterfeiting or illegal supply
61.26	Forgery and Counterfeiting Act 1981 S.16 Possessing counterfeit coin or note.	Possible	Commodity importation, counterfeiting or illegal supply
61.3	Hallmarking Act 1973 S.1(1)(a) Unhallmarked article description that it is wholly or partly gold, silver, etc. S.1(1)(b). To supply or offer unhallmarked article as above. S.3(8) Person of no authority strikes an article with a mark.	Possible	Commodity importation, counterfeiting or illegal supply
61.31	Hallmarking Act 1973 S.6(1)(a) Makes counterfeit of any die or mark. S.6(1)(b) Removes any mark from an article of precious metal, etc. S.6(1)(c) Utters any counterfeit or a die or any article bearing a counterfeit of a mark.	Possible	Commodity importation, counterfeiting or illegal supply
69.02	Bring or cause another to bring or leave or knowingly give / throw / otherwise convey a List A article into / out of a prison.	Possible	Commodity importation, counterfeiting or illegal supply
81.09	Firearms Act 1968 S.3(2)(Group 1) Selling firearm(s) to a person without certificate.	Possible	Commodity importation, counterfeiting or illegal supply
81.1	Firearms Act 1968 S.3(2)(Group 2) Selling firearm(s) to a person without certificate.	Possible	Commodity importation, counterfeiting or illegal supply
81.14	Firearms Act 1968 S.3(5)(Group 2) Falsifying certificate, etc. with a view to acquiring firearm.	Possible	Commodity importation, counterfeiting or illegal supply
81.15	Firearms Act 1968 S.4(1)(Group 2) Shortening shot gun or other smooth bore gun.	Possible	Commodity importation, counterfeiting or illegal supply
81.16	Firearms Act 1968 S.4(3)(Group 1) Conversion of firearms.	Possible	Commodity importation, counterfeiting or illegal supply
81.17	Firearms Act 1968 S.5(1)(Group 1) Possessing or distributing prohibited weapons or ammunition.	Possible	Commodity importation, counterfeiting or illegal supply
81.38	Firearms Act 1968 S.21(5)(Group 1) Supplying firearms to person denied them under S.21.	Possible	Commodity importation, counterfeiting or illegal supply
81.39	Firearms Act 1968 S.21(5)(Group 2). Supplying firearms to a person denied them under S.21.	Possible	Commodity importation, counterfeiting or illegal supply
81.4	Firearms Act 1968 S.21(5)(Group 3) Supplying firearms to person denied them under S.21.	Possible	Commodity importation, counterfeiting or illegal supply
81.71	Possessing or distributing firearm disguised as other object (Group 1). Firearms Act 1968 S.5(1A)(a) as amended by Criminal Justice Act 2003 S.288.	Possible	Commodity importation, counterfeiting or illegal supply
81.72	Possessing or distributing other prohibited weapons. Firearms Act 1968 S.5(1A)(b) (c) (d) (e) (f) or (g) as amended by Criminal Justice Act 2003.	Possible	Commodity importation, counterfeiting or illegal supply
81.73	Offence in relation to the unlawful importation of any weapon or ammunition of a kind mentioned in S.5(1)(a) (ab) (aba) (ac) (ad) (ae) (af) or (c) of the Firearms Act 1968. Customs & Excise Management Act 1979 S.50(1) (2) (3) (4) & (5A).	Possible	Commodity importation, counterfeiting or illegal supply
81.74	Offence in relation to the unlawful exportation of any weapon or ammunition of a kind mentioned in S.5(1)(a) (ab) (aba) (ac) (ad) (ae) (af) or (c) of the Firearms Act 1968. Customs & Excise Management Act 1979 S.68(2)(3) & (4A).	Possible	Commodity importation, counterfeiting or illegal supply
82.02	VAT Act 1994 S.72[13] Car Tax Act 1983 Sch.1 Para.8(1) & Para.8(12) Hydrocarbon Oil Duties Act 1979 Ss.10[56];13[34];14[67]. Offences ag.	Possible	Commodity importation, counterfeiting or illegal supply
82.03	Fraudulent evasion of duty – an offence in connection with a prohibition or restriction on the importation or exportation of any weapon or ammunition of a kind mentioned in S.5(1) of the Firearms Act 1968. Customs & Excise Management Act 1979 S.170.	Possible	Commodity importation, counterfeiting or illegal supply
84.09	Falsification of Register, etc. Copyright Designs and Patents Act 1988.	Possible	Commodity importation, counterfeiting or illegal supply
84.1	Offences triable either way except those included in 84/09 – Copyright Designs and Patents Act 1988.	Possible	Commodity importation, counterfeiting or illegal supply

92.21	Production or being concerned in the production of a controlled class B drug – cannabis. Misuse of Drugs Act 1971 S.4(2).	Possible	Drug activity
92.3	Supplying, offering to supply or being concerned in controlled class A drug – cocaine. Misuse of Drugs Act 1971 S.4(3).	Possible	Drug activity
92.31	Supplying, offering to supply or being concerned in controlled class A drug – heroin. Misuse of Drugs Act 1971 S.4(3).	Possible	Drug activity
92.32	Supplying, offering to supply or being concerned in controlled class A drug – LSD. Misuse of Drugs Act 1971 S.4(3).	Possible	Drug activity
92.33	Supplying, offering to supply or being concerned in controlled class A drug – MDMA. Misuse of Drugs Act 1971 S.4(3).	Possible	Drug activity
92.34	Supplying or offering to supply a controlled class A drug – 'crack'.	Possible	Drug activity
92.35	Misuse of Drugs Act 1971 Supplying or offering to supply a controlled class A Drug – methadone.	Possible	Drug activity
92.39	Supplying, offering to supply or being concerned in other controlled class A drug. Misuse of Drugs Act 1971 S.4(3).	Possible	Drug activity
92.4	Supplying, offering to supply or being concerned in controlled class B drug – amphetamine. Misuse of Drugs Act 1971 S.4(3).	Possible	Drug activity
92.45	Supplying, offering to supply or being concerned in controlled class B drug. Misuse of Drugs Act 1971 S.4(3).	Possible	Drug activity
92.47	Misuse of Drugs Act 1971 Supplying or offering to supply a controlled class C drug – anabolic steroids.	Possible	Drug activity
92.48	Supplying, offering to supply or being concerned in controlled class C drug. Misuse of Drugs Act 1971 S.4(3).	Possible	Drug activity
92.49	Supplying, offering to supply or being concerned in unspecified controlled drug Misuse of Drugs Act 1971 S.4(3).	Possible	Drug activity
92.63	Possession of controlled class B drug cathinone derivatives – mephedrone.	Possible	Drug activity
92.7	Possession with intent to supply controlled class A drug – cocaine. Misuse of Drugs Act 1971 S.5 (3)	Possible	Drug activity
92.71	Possession with intent to supply controlled class A drug – heroin. Misuse of Drugs Act 1971 S.5(3).	Possible	Drug activity
92.72	Possession with intent to supply controlled class A drug – LSD. Misuse of Drugs Act 1971 S.5(3).	Possible	Drug activity
92.73	Possession with intent to supply controlled class A drug – MDMA Misuse of Drugs Act 1971 Sec 5(3).	Possible	Drug activity
92.74	Having possession of a controlled drug with intent to supply class A drug – 'crack'.	Possible	Drug activity
92.75	Misuse of Drugs Act 1971 S.5(2) Having possession of a controlled drug with intention to supply class A drug – methadone.	Possible	Drug activity
92.79	Possession with intent to supply other controlled class A drug. Misuse of Drugs Act 1971 S.5(3).	Possible	Drug activity
92.8	Possession with intent to supply controlled class B drug – amphetamine. Misuse of Drugs Act 1971 S.5(3).	Possible	Drug activity
92.81	Possession with intent to supply controlled class B drug – cannabis. Misuse of Drugs Act 1971 S.5(3).	Possible	Drug activity
92.83	Possession with intent to supply controlled class B drug cathinone derivatives – mephedrone	Possible	Drug activity
92.85	Possession with intent to supply other controlled class B drug. Misuse of Drugs Act 1971 S.5(3).	Possible	Drug activity
92.87	Misuse of Drugs Act 1971 S.5(3) Having possession of a controlled drug with intent to supply class C drug – anabolic steroids.	Possible	Drug activity
92.88	Possession with intent to supply controlled class C drug. Misuse of Drugs Act 1971 S.5(3).	Possible	Drug activity
92.89	Possession with intent to supply unspecified controlled drug. Misuse of Drugs Act 1971 S.5(3).	Possible	Drug activity
92.9	Incite another to supply a controlled class A drug.	Possible	Drug activity
92.91	Incite another to supply a controlled class B drug.	Possible	Drug activity
92.92	Incite another to supply a controlled class C drug.	Possible	Drug activity
93.4	Other indictable / triable either way offences relating to drugs (for example, Misuse of Drugs Act; Drug Trafficking Offences Act; Misuse of Drugs Regs 1985).	Possible	Drug activity
93.61	Methylamphetamine (crystal meth) supply. Misuse of Drugs Act 1971 S.4(3) & Sch.2.	Possible	Drug activity

93.65	Supplying or offering to supply (or being concerned in supplying or offering to supply) a controlled drug – GHB (Hydroxy-n-butric acid). Misuse of Drugs Act 1971 S.4(3) & Sch.2.	Possible	Drug activity
93.66	Supplying or offering to supply a controlled drug –ketamine. Misuse of Drugs Act 1971.	Possible	Drug activity
93.73	Methylamphetamine (crystal meth) possession with intent to supply. Misuse of Drugs Act 1971 S.5(3) & Sch.2.	Possible	Drug activity
93.77	Having possession of a controlled drug with intent to supply GHB (Hydroxy-n-butric acid). Misuse of Drugs Act 1971 S.5(3) & Sch.2.	Possible	Drug activity
93.78	Having possession of a controlled drug – ketamine – with intent to supply. Misuse of Drugs Act 1971.	Possible	Drug activity
51.01	Theft Act 1968 S.19 False statements by company directors.	Possible	Fraud and financial crime
51.03	Frauds by company directors other than 51/01. Theft Act 1968 S.19.	Possible	Fraud and financial crime
52.01	False accounting. Theft Act 1968 S.17; Protection of Depositors Act 1963 S.1.	Possible	Fraud and financial crime
52.02	Failing to keep proper accounting records. Companies Act 1985 S.221(5).	Possible	Fraud and financial crime
52.03	Authorising failure to keep proper accounting records. Companies Act 1985 S.221(5) & (6).	Possible	Fraud and financial crime
52.04	Permitting failure to keep proper accounts. Companies Act 1985 S.221(5) & (6).	Possible	Fraud and financial crime
52.05	Failing to secure preservation of accounting records. Companies Act 1985 S.222(6).	Possible	Fraud and financial crime
53.04	Conspiracy to defraud. Common Law and Criminal Justice Act 1987 S.12.	Possible	Fraud and financial crime
53.15	Theft Act 1968 S.20(1) Dishonestly destroying defacing or concealing a document.	Possible	Fraud and financial crime
53.22	Land Charges Act 1972 S10(5) Frauds in connection with sale of land, etc.	Possible	Fraud and financial crime
53.3	Insider dealing.	Possible	Fraud and financial crime
53.32	Theft Act 1968 S.24A as added by Theft [Amendment] Act 1996 S.2 Dishonestly retaining a wrongful credit.	Possible	Fraud and financial crime
53.38	Corrupt transactions with agents. Prevention of Corruption Act 1906 S.1.	Possible	Fraud and financial crime
53.4	Dishonestly makes a false representation to make a gain for oneself or another or to cause loss to another or to expose another to a risk. Fr	Possible	Fraud and financial crime
53.41	Dishonestly fail to disclose information to make a gain for oneself or another or to cause loss to another or to expose another to a risk.	Possible	Fraud and financial crime
53.42	Commit fraud by dishonestly abusing one's position. Fraud Act 2006 S1(2c)4.	Possible	Fraud and financial crime
53.43	Possession, etc. of articles for use in frauds. Fraud Act 2006 S.6.	Possible	Fraud and financial crime
53.52	Land Registration Act 2002 S.123 In the course of registration proceedings suppressed information regarding concealing a right / claim or substantiating a false claim.	Possible	Fraud and financial crime
55.01	Offences in relation to bankruptcy and insolvency. Deeds of Arrangement Act 1914 S.17; Insolvency Act 1986 (triable either way offences).	Possible	Fraud and financial crime
55.02	Contravening company director's disqualification order. Company Directors Disqualification Act 1986 Ss.1 & 13.	Possible	Fraud and financial crime
55.03	Disqualified person managing company. Company Directors Disqualification Act 1986 Ss.8 & 13.	Possible	Fraud and financial crime
55.04	Undischarged bankrupt acting as a director. Company Directors Disqualification Act 1986 S.11(1).	Possible	Fraud and financial crime
55.05	Undischarged bankrupt taking part in or being concerned in the promotion, formation or management of a company. Company Directors Disqualification Act 1986 S.11(1).	Possible	Fraud and financial crime
75.39	Cheating at gambling or enabling or assisting person to cheat. Gambling Act 2005 S.42.	Possible	Fraud and financial crime
84.11	Licences and certificates relating to medicinal products, etc. Medicines Act 1968 (triable either way offences).	Possible	Fraud and financial crime
95.08	Disclosure, obstruction, false or misleading statements, etc. Financial Services & Markets Act 2000 Ss.346, 351, 352,397 & 398; Sch.4 Para.6; Sch.13 Para.11.	Possible	Fraud and financial crime
99.23	Customs & Excise Management Act 1979 Ss.50(2) & (3), 68(2), 170(1) & (2) Fraudulent evasion of duty, etc. other than drugs.	Possible	Fraud and financial crime
61.38	Possess / control identity documents with intent.	Possible	Organised immigration crime

61.4	Possess another person's / control a false or improperly obtained identity document.	Possible	Organised immigration crime
78.05	Immigration & Asylum Act 1999 S.86(1) Person who provides immigration advice or services in contravention of S.79 (provision of immigration).	Possible	Organised immigration crime
78.1	Assisting unlawful immigration to EU Member State. Immigration Act 1971 S.25 as added by Nationality Immigration & Asylum Act 2002 S.143.	Possible	Organised immigration crime
78.11	Helping asylum-seeker to enter the UK. Immigration Act 1971 S.25A as added by Nationality Immigration & Asylum Act 2002 S.143.	Possible	Organised immigration crime
78.12	Assisting entry to UK in breach of deportation order or exclusion order. Immigration Act 1971 S.25B as added by Nationality Immigration & Asylum Act 2002 S.143.	Possible	Organised immigration crime
78.14	Registration card (making or using or attempting to use a false registration card; altering, using or attempting to use a registration card. Na	Possible	Organised immigration crime
78.15	Registration card (having false registration card in possession, having article within Para.(f) or (g) in possession without reasonable excuse). Immigration Act 1971 S.26A(3)(c) & (h) and (6) as added by Nationality Immigration & Asylum Act 2002 S.148.	Possible	Organised immigration crime
78.16	Immigration stamp. Immigration Act 1971 S.26B as added by Nationality Immigration & Asylum Act 2002 S.149.	Possible	Organised immigration crime
98.01	Possessing or having control of false documents, etc. with intention of causing a third party to believe that the person in possession of the documentation or another person is a licensed gangmaster. Gangmaster (Licensing) Act 2004 Ss.6 & 12(2) (3) & (4).	Possible	Organised immigration crime
99.98	Acting as a gangmaster in contravention of S.6 (prohibition of unlicensed activities). Gangmaster (Licensing) Act 2004 Ss.6 & 12(1).	Possible	Organised immigration crime
38.01	Concealing, etc. – criminal property. Proceeds of Crime Act 2002 Ss.327 & 334(1).	Possible	Organised theft
38.02	Arrangements – being concerned in arrangement knowing or suspecting facilitating acquisition, retention, use or control of criminal property by	Possible	Organised theft
38.03	Acquisition, use & possession – criminal property. Proceeds of Crime Act 2002 Ss.329 & 334(1).	Possible	Organised theft
48.01	Theft Act 1968 S.1 Theft of motor vehicle.	Possible	Organised theft
54.01	Theft Act 1968 S.22 Receiving stolen goods.	Possible	Organised theft
54.02	Theft Act 1968 S.22 Undertaking or assisting in the retention, removal, disposal or realisation of stolen goods or arranging to do so.	Possible	Organised theft
53.34	Computer Misuse Act 1990 S.2 Unauthorised access with intent to commit or facilitate commission of further offences.	Possible	Other
21.02	Causing or inciting a female child under age 13 to engage in sexual activity – penetration. Sexual Offences Act 2003 S.8(1) & (2).	Possible	Sexual offences
21.03	Causing or inciting a female child under age 13 to engage in sexual activity – no penetration. Sexual Offences Act 2003 S.8(1) & (3).	Possible	Sexual offences
21.04	Causing or inciting a male child under age 13 to engage in sexual activity – penetration. Sexual Offences Act 2003 S.8(1) & (2).	Possible	Sexual offences
21.05	Causing or inciting a male child under age 13 to engage in sexual activity – no penetration. Sexual Offences Act 2003 S.8(1) & (3).	Possible	Sexual offences
24.17	Causing or inciting prostitution for gain. Sexual Offences Act 2003 S.52.	Possible	Sexual offences
24.18	Controlling a prostitute for gain. Sexual Offences Act 2003 S.53.	Possible	Sexual offences
71.01	Arranging or facilitating the commission of a child sex offence. Sexual Offences Act 2003 S.14.	Possible	Sexual offences
71.08	Causing or inciting child prostitution or pornography – child aged 13–17. Sexual Offences Act 2003 S.48(1)(a) & (b)(i) & (2).	Possible	Sexual offences
71.1	Arranging or facilitating child prostitution or pornography – child aged 13–17. Sexual Offences Act 2003 S.50(1)(a) & (b)(i) & (2).	Possible	Sexual offences
71.11	Causing or inciting child prostitution or pornography – child aged under 13. Sexual Offences Act 2003 S.48(1)(a) & (b)(ii) & (2).	Possible	Sexual offences
71.13	Arranging or facilitating child prostitution or pornography –	Possible	Sexual offences

	child aged under 13. Sexual Offences Act 2003 S.50(1)(a) & (b)(i) & (2).		
86.01	Obscene Publications Act 1959 S.2(1) as amended by Obscene Publications Act 1964 S.1(1) Prohibition of publication of obscene matter.	Possible	Sexual offences
86.02	Protection of Children Act 1978 S.1 Take, distribute or publish indecent photographs of children.	Possible	Sexual offences
38.04	Failure to disclose another person involved in money laundering – regulated sector. Proceeds of Crime Act 2002 Ss.330 & 334(1).	Possible	Specialist money laundering
38.05	Failure to disclose another person involved in money laundering – nominated officers in the regulated sector. Proceeds of Crime Act 2002 Ss.331 & 334(1).	Possible	Specialist money laundering
95.06	Offences of prejudicing an investigation: Disclosure likely to prejudice investigation; falsifying, concealing, destroying or otherwise disposing of, etc. documents relevant to investigation. Proceeds of Crime Act 2002 S.337.	Possible	Specialist money laundering
3.02	Offences against the Person Act 1861. S.4.	Possible	Violent criminal activity
5.06	Offences against the Person Act 1861 S.28 Burning, maiming, etc. by explosion.	Possible	Violent criminal activity
5.07	Offences against the Person Act 1861 S.29 Causing explosion or casting corrosive fluids with intent to do grievous bodily harm.	Possible	Violent criminal activity
5.13	Explosive Substances Act 1883 S.3 (in part) Possession, etc. of explosives with intent to endanger life.	Possible	Violent criminal activity
5.14	Firearms Act 1968 S.16 (Group 1). Possession of firearms with intent to endanger life or injure property.	Possible	Violent criminal activity
5.15	Firearms Act 1968 S.16 (Group 2). Possession of firearm with intent to endanger life or injure property.	Possible	Violent criminal activity
5.16	Firearms Act 1968 S.16 (Group 3). Possession of firearm with intent to endanger life or injure property.	Possible	Violent criminal activity
5.2	Wounding or other act endangering life. Chemical Weapons Act 1996 S.2.	Possible	Violent criminal activity
5.24	Use of noxious substances or things to cause harm or intimidate. Anti-Terrorism Crime & Security Act 2001 S.113.	Possible	Violent criminal activity
36.03	Common law false imprisonment.	Possible	Violent criminal activity
36.04	Detaining and threatening to kill or injure a hostage. Taking of Hostages Act S.1.	Possible	Violent criminal activity
59.12	Explosive Substances Act 1883 S.3 (in part) Threat and possession of explosive substances.	Possible	Violent criminal activity

Appendix B: Additional tables and graphs.

Table B1. Comparison of age at inclusion sanction

	Total	UK	Non-UK
Organised crime sample			
Mean	31.7	31.6	31.2
Median	29.0	29.0	29.0
Mode	27.0	27.0	25.0
Serious crime sample			
Mean	31.4	31.3	30.2
Median	29.0	28.0	28.0
Modal	21.0	21.0	19.0
General offenders sample			
Mean	28.7	28.3	30.7
Median	26.0	25.0	29.0
Mode	20.0	20.0	27.0

Table B2. Age of offenders at inclusion offence

Age at inclusion offence	Organised crime sample		Serious crime sample		General offenders sample	
	%	N	%	N	%	N
15 and under	0.2	8	0.4	18	10.1	414
16–17	1.1	44	3.0	122	9.2	375
18–25	31.6	1,297	35.8	1,469	30.5	1,246
26–35	36.0	1,478	29.7	1,220	22.6	924
36–45	20.4	837	18.2	746	16.9	691
46–60	9.6	393	10.4	428	9.1	374
61 and over	1.3	52	2.6	106	1.6	66
Total	100.0	4,109	100.0	4,109	100.0	4,090
Mean age	31.7		31.5		28.7	

ANOVA shows significant difference between the mean inclusion ages of the three groups ($F=88.6$ on 2, 12305 df; $p<0.001$). There was no statistically significant difference in the mean age of the serious crime offenders and organised crime offenders (Bonferroni post-hoc test, $p=0.99$)

Table B3. Proportion of males in each sample, by nationality

	Whole sample		UK		Non-UK	
	%	N	%	N	%	N
Organised crime sample	95.0	3,905	95.1	3,197	95.3	512
Serious crime sample	95.7	3,934	95.6	3,378	97.3	364
General offenders sample	78.1	3,194	78.8	2,605	82.2	337

Table B4. Inclusion offences: proportion of offenders sanctioned for each type of offence, by group type

	Organised crime offenders		Serious crime offenders		General offenders	
	%	N	%	N	%	N
Violence against the person	10.7	439	25.9	1,063	33.8	1,381
Sexual offences	0.9	37	14.5	597	1.2	48
Robbery	0.0	0	20.2	831	0.9	38
Burglary	0.0	0	15.3	629	2.1	84
Theft and handling stolen goods	6.3	259	3.2	113	17.2	702
Fraud and forgery	5.2	214	2.1	85	4.0	163
Drug offences	73.1	3,005	18.8	771	10.4	427
Criminal damage	0.0	2	2.0	83	10.4	427
Driving offences	0.0	0	0.1	5	15.4	629
Other offences	7.0	286	4.7	195	16.9	692
Total no. of sanctions ⁵⁵		4,242		4,372		4,591

Percentages will sum to more than 100 as some offenders receive convictions for more than one type of inclusion offence at the inclusion date. 'Other' offences are predominantly breach, bail, and public order offences.

⁵⁵ A number of offenders will have received sanctions for more than one inclusion offence on this sanction occasion.

Table B5. Type of offence for serious crime sample and general crime sample, by nationality (inclusion offences)

a) General crime sample

General sample	Total		UK		Non-UK	
	%	N	%	N	%	N
Violence against the person	33.8	1,381	36.0	1,190	23.9	98
Sexual offences	1.2	48	1.3	43	1.0	4
Robbery	0.9	38	1.0	33	0.5	2
Burglary	2.1	84	2.3	76	1.0	4
Theft and handling stolen goods	17.2	702	16.2	537	24.1	99
Fraud and forgery	4.0	163	2.7	89	10.2	42
Drug offences	10.4	427	11.2	370	7.3	30
Criminal damage	10.4	427	11.2	369	5.6	23
Driving offences	15.4	629	14.4	476	20.7	85
Other offences	16.9	692	16.9	558	16.1	66

Percentages will not sum to 100 as some offenders receive convictions for more than one type of offence at the target sanction date.

b) Serious crime sample

Serious crime sample	Total		UK		Non-UK	
	%	N	%	N	%	N
Violence against the person	25.9	1,063	26.0	919	25.9	97
Sexual offences	14.5	597	13.6	479	15.0	56
Robbery	20.2	831	20.9	740	19.3	72
Burglary	15.3	629	16.6	585	9.4	35
Theft and handling stolen goods	3.2	113	3.0	106	5.1	19
Fraud and forgery	2.1	85	1.6	55	4.5	17
Drug offences	18.8	771	18.4	651	22.2	83
Criminal damage	2.0	83	2.1	73	1.3	5
Driving offences	0.1	5	0.1	4	0.3	1
Other offences	4.7	195	4.4	157	6.4	24

Percentages will not sum to 100 as some offenders receive convictions for more than one type of offence at the target sanction date.

Figure B1. Frequency of sanctions, by trajectory group – all three samples combined

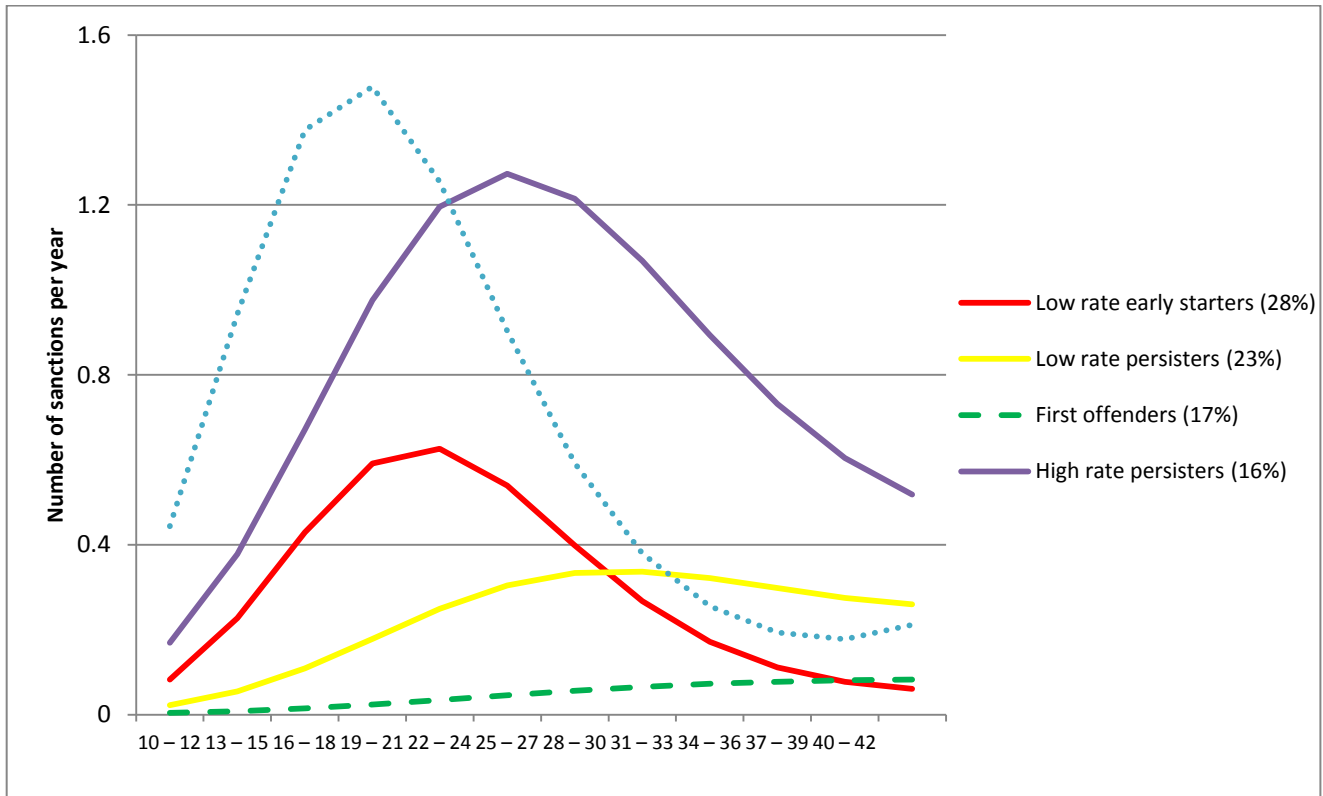


Table B6. Proportion of offenders in each trajectory class within each sample

	Class 1 low rate persisters	Class 2 low rate early starters	Class 3 first offenders	Class 4 high rate persisters	Class 5 high rate early starters	Total
Organised crime	25.8	35.5	11.1	15.3	12.4	100.0%
Serious crime	15.1	24.2	13.8	20.4	26.5	100.0%
General crime	39.6	19.9	25.8	9.1	5.5	100.0%

Chi-squared test of differences in proportions = 894.8 on 2df. $p < 0.001$.

Table B7. Comparison of diversity scores across the samples, by numbers of sanctions

Mean diversity score	Organised crime sample	Serious crime sample	General offenders sample
Overall	.62	.63	.52
2–3 sanctions	.31	.33	.33
4–6 sanctions	.49	.47	.51
7–10 sanctions	.58	.54	.62
11–20 sanctions	.64	.63	.66
21+ sanctions	.72	.72	.69
Percentage of specialists (N)	11.8% (383)	12.5% (430)	19.4% (473)

Table B8. Proportion of specialists in each crime type, by number of sanctions in criminal career

	Violence against the person	Sexual offences	Robbery	Burglary	Theft and handling stolen goods	Fraud and forgery	Drugs offences	Criminal Damage	Driving offences	Other	N
2–3 sanctions											
Organised crime	10.3	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.9	5.6	77.6	0.0	0.0	5.6	107
Serious crime	44.2	20.9	4.7	2.3	2.3	3.5	20.9	0.0	0.0	1.2	86
General offenders	40.7	0.4	0.4	0.8	13.0	2.8	13.4	5.1	15.8	7.5	253
4–6 sanctions											
Organised	9.4	0.8	0.0	0.0	3.1	7.1	74.0	0.0	0.8	4.7	127

crime											
Serious crime	31.7	41.6	2.0	0.0	5.0	1.0	15.8	0.0	3.0	0.0	101
General offenders	34.0	0.7	0.0	0.7	11.6	5.4	8.8	4.1	25.2	9.5	147

Table B8. (continued) Proportion of specialists in each crime type, by number of sanctions in criminal career

	Violence against the person	Sexual offences	Robbery	Burglary	Theft and handling stolen goods	Fraud and forgery	Drugs offences	Criminal Damage	Driving offences	Other	N
7–10 sanctions											
Organised crime	4.8	3.2	0.0	0.0	3.2	3.2	82.5	0.0	1.6	1.6	63
Serious crime	10.3	59.8	1.1	0.0	1.1	1.1	19.5	0.0	2.3	4.6	87
General offenders	11.1	0.0	0.0	0.0	29.6	3.7	22.2	0.0	18.5	14.8	27
11–20 sanctions											
Organised crime	3.2	3.2	0.0	0.0	4.8	9.5	65.1	0.0	4.8	9.5	63
Serious crime	4.6	72.4	0.0	1.1	2.3	8.0	9.2	0.0	1.1	1.1	87
General offenders	9.7	25.8	0.0	0.0	22.6	12.9	9.7	3.2	3.2	12.9	31

21+ sanctions											
Organised crime	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	17.4	4.3	52.2	0.0	4.3	17.4	23
Serious crime	0.0	50.7	0.0	4.3	4.3	7.2	13.0	1.4	2.9	15.9	69
General offenders	0.0	13.3	0.0	0.0	26.7	13.3	5.3	0.0	0.0	46.7	15

Table B9. Organised crime UK offenders: Offending pattern in previous five years, by organised crime offence type

Type of organised crime	Offending pattern in previous five years						p-value for equality of percentages
	Class 1	Class 2	Class 3	Class 4	Class 5	Class 6	
	Versatile and very prolific	Mainly violence	Mixed prolific	Mainly acquisitive	Mainly drugs	No sanctions in previous five years	
	Column percentages						
Violence against the person	13.1%	15.0%	8.2%	11.1%	5.3%	8.7%	<0.001
Sexual offences		0.2%		0.8%		0.9%	
Robbery							
Burglary							
Theft and handling stolen goods	1.7%	1.3%	3.5%	6.4%	5.3%	8.7%	<0.001
Fraud and forgery	2.4%	2.4%	4.3%	8.2%	1.0%	9.7%	<0.001
Drugs offences	76.3%	70.5%	78.9%	72.2%	85.4%	71.5%	<0.001
Criminal damage						0.2% ⁺	
Driving offences							
Other	4.6%	13.2%	7.6%	7.5%	6.6%	6.2%	<0.001

Column percentages sum to greater than 100 as offenders may have more than one type of organised crime offence at the inclusion sanction. The offence of 'making or possessing of explosives, etc. with intent' is classified by the Home Office under 'criminal damage'.

Table B10. Matched case-control analysis – organised crime offenders against general offender controls: Offence-based risk factors for subsequent organised crime conviction

Offence-based risk factor (presence of offence in criminal history)	No. of cases	No. of controls	Relative risks	P-value
Abscond from custody	73	46	1.58	0.01
Breach	1,346	946	1.74	<0.001
Failure to surrender to bail	1,303	925	1.73	<0.001
Burglary in a dwelling	685	563	1.28	<0.001
Commercial burglary	724	633	1.21	0.003
Careless driving	125	65	1.93	<0.001
Dangerous driving	331	155	2.27	<0.001
Driving while disqualified	971	564	2.11	<0.001
Driving failing to provide information	46	27	1.70	0.03
Driving – no seatbelt	15	5	3.00	0.03
Driving – no insurance	1,407	957	1.88	<0.001
Driving – no licence	774	539	1.58	<0.001
Driving – Motorway speeding pulled over	19	6	3.17	0.01
Failing to stop at accident	129	86	1.54	0.003
Failure to stop on signal of traffic officer	101	39	2.67	<0.001
Road traffic miscellaneous	341	270	1.34	0.001
Vehicle test offences	231	124	2.00	<0.001
Drugs importation – other	46	9	5.62	<0.001
Drugs – obstructing powers of search	46	15	3.21	<0.001
Drugs – possession class A	949	407	3.01	<0.001
Drugs – possession class B	944	474	2.39	<0.001
Drugs – possession class C	123	28	4.65	<0.001
Drugs – possession + supply class A	442	68	7.56	<0.001
Drugs – possession + supply class B	161	50	3.41	<0.001
Drugs – supply class A	309	58	5.83	<0.001
Drugs – supply class B	61	20	3.15	<0.001
Drugs – supply class C	15	3	5.00	0.01
False imprisonment	22	10	2.20	0.04
Harassment – public order	50	25	2.09	0.004

Table B10. (continued) Matched case-control analysis –organised crime offenders against general offender controls: Offence-based risk factors for subsequent organised crime conviction

Offence-based risk factor (continued)	No. of cases	No. of controls	Relative risks	P-value
Deception	477	339	1.53	<0.001
Forgery	39	13	3.00	0.001
Forgery of notes or coins	46	22	2.09	0.004
Fraud	30	8	3.75	0.001
Fraud – conspire to defraud	32	1	32.00	0.001
Fraud – motor insurance	20	6	3.33	0.01
Obstructing a constable	622	417	1.64	<0.001
Attempt to pervert the course of justice	95	50	1.97	<0.001
Proceeds of crime – acquire	17	1	17.00	0.006
Proceeds of crime – conceal	11	0	>100	0.05
Robbery	448	265	1.65	<0.001
Theft	1,244	1,136	1.18	0.003
Theft – going equipped	317	190	1.78	<0.001
Theft – handling	115	55	2.20	<0.001
Theft of vehicle	223	160	1.42	0.001
Theft – receiving stolen goods	877	566	1.93	<0.001
Theft – aggravated vehicle no death	198	138	1.45	0.001
Theft – vehicle taking and driving away	703	586	1.27	<0.001
Weapon – possession of a firearm	105	40	2.81	<0.001
Weapon – trading in firearms	110	25	4.54	<0.001
Weapon – offensive in public	288	155	1.92	<0.001
Weapon – possession of offensive	419	289	1.53	<0.001

Offence-based risk factors Relative risk less than 1	No. of cases	No. of controls	Relative risks	P-value
Driving under influence of drink/drugs	526	619	0.81	0.002
Drunk and disorderly	189	306	0.58	<0.001
Sexual indecent exposure	3	12	0.25	0.03
Assaults on persons telecommunications	1	9	0.11	<0.001

All other risk factors were not statistically significant.

Table B10. Matched case-control analysis –organised crime offenders against serious offender controls: Offence-based risk factors for subsequent organised crime conviction.

Offence-based risk factor (presence of offence in criminal history)	No. of cases	No. of serious controls	Relative risks	P-value
Abscond from custody	73	151	0.46	<0.001
Breach	1,346	1,892	0.49	<0.001
Failure to surrender to bail	1,303	1,738	0.55	<0.001
Burglary in a dwelling	685	1,292	0.38	<0.001
Commercial burglary	724	1,225	0.45	<0.001
Careless driving	125	122	1.02	0.85.
Dangerous driving	331	420	0.76	<0.001
Driving while disqualified	971	1114	0.81	<0.001
Driving failing to provide information	46	59	0.78	0.21
Driving – no seatbelt	15	14	1.07	0.85
Driving – no insurance	1,407	1,643	0.74	<0.001
Driving – no licence	774	1,039	0.65	<0.001
Driving – Motorway speeding pulled over	19	10	1.90	0.10
Failing to stop at accident	129	127	1.02	0.90
Failure to stop on signal of traffic officer	101	114	0.87	0.36
Road traffic miscellaneous	341	437	0.72	<0.001
Vehicle test offences	231	259	0.87	0.18
Drugs importation – other	46	16	3.00	<0.001
Drugs – obstructing powers of search	46	50	0.92	0.68
Drugs – possession class A	949	854	1.16	0.008
Drugs – possession class B	944	992	0.93	0.18
Drugs – possession class C	123	101	1.23	0.13
Drugs – possession + supply class A	442	196	2.44	<0.001
Drugs – possession + supply class B	161	104	1.58	<0.001
Drugs – supply class A	309	176	1.88	<0.001
Drugs – supply class B	61	38	1.62	0.02
Drugs – supply class C	15	3	5.00	0.01
False imprisonment	22	26	0.85	0.56
Harassment – public order	50	78	0.64	0.01

Statistically significant risk factors greater than 1 are highlighted.

Table B10. (continued) Matched case-control analysis – organised crime offenders against serious offender controls: Offence-based risk factors for subsequent organised crime conviction.

Offence-based risk factor (continued)	No. of cases	No. of controls	Relative risks	P-value
Deception	477	567	0.79	0.001
Forgery	39	14	2.79	0.001
Forgery of notes or coins	46	44	1.04	0.83
Fraud	30	24	1.25	0.41
Fraud – conspire to defraud	32	27	1.19	0.51
Fraud – motor insurance	20	8	2.50	0.03
Obstructing a constable	622	791	0.73	<0.001
Attempt to pervert the course of justice	95	125	0.76	0.04
Proceeds of crime – acquire	17	23	0.74	0.35
Proceeds of crime – conceal	11	1	3.67	0.05
Robbery	448	753	0.52	<0.001
Theft	1,244	1,834	0.44	<0.001
Theft – going equipped	317	479	0.61	<0.001
Theft – handling	115	149	0.76	0.03
Theft of vehicle	223	347	0.60	<0.001
Theft – receiving stolen goods	877	1,127	0.67	<0.001
Theft – aggravated vehicle no death	198	450	0.39	<0.001
Theft – vehicle taking and driving away	703	1,153	0.48	<0.001
Weapon – possession of a firearm	105	101	1.04	0.77
Weapon – trading in firearms	110	72	1.58	0.004
Weapon – offensive in public	288	413	0.66	<0.001
Weapon – possession of offensive	419	525	0.76	<0.001

Statistically significant risk factors greater than 1 are highlighted.

Appendix C: Converting the Police National Computer 15-level offence categorisation into a 10-level categorisation

The Home Office uses a 15-level categorisation for all offences. These categories are:

- Breach offences
- Burglary
- Criminal damage
- Drug offences
- Fraud and forgery
- Indictable motoring offences
- Offences outside England & Wales
- Other indictable offences
- Robbery
- Sexual offences
- Summary motoring offences
- Summary offences excluding motoring
- Theft and handling stolen goods
- Unknown
- Violence against the person

Using this as a starting point, the study developed a 10-level categorisation. In just over one per cent of sanction occasions in which a conviction for a breach was received at the inclusion sanctioning occasion, the breach offence was the only conviction. The fact that convictions for breach offences are almost always received alongside other convictions suggests that these offences are usually received as a consequence of other proven criminal activity.

Convictions for breach offences in themselves do not necessarily indicate the types of criminal behaviour that offenders engage in. Therefore breach offences were merged into an 'other offences' category for this study, as were 'offences outside England & Wales', some 'other indictable offences' (for example, attempting to pervert the course of justice), and most of the 'summary offences excluding motoring'. Also, included in the 'summary

offences excluding motoring' were a number of violent offences such as common assault. These were placed in the 'violence against the person' category. Finally, included in the Home Office category of 'summary motoring offences' are offences of fraud relating to motoring. These were moved to the 'fraud and forgery' category.

Appendix D: Methodology

D1. Definition of inclusion offences

For offenders in the organised crime sample, if an offender had more than one sanctioning occasion (court conviction, or caution / warning / reprimand) during 2007–2010 and on at least one of these occasions received a conviction for an organised crime, then the inclusion offences will be those offences received at the first court occasion in which an organised crime conviction was received.

Similarly, for offenders in the serious crime sample, if an offender had more than one sanctioning occasion during 2007–2010, and did not receive a conviction for an organised crime offence during this period, but on at least one of these occasions received a conviction for a serious offence, then the inclusion offences will be those offences received at the first court occasion in which a conviction for a serious crime was received.

Finally, for offenders selected for the general crime sample, the inclusion offences are those relating to the first sanctioning occasion in 2007–2010.

An offender in the organised crime sample will have co-offenders. If they also received a sentence of three years or more for an organised crime offence, then they will also be included in the sample as part of the design. As the data

were anonymised before being made available for analysis, the co-offenders could not be identified via their Police National Computer (PNC) number to include them if they received a sentence of less than three years. In addition, it was not possible to calculate the proportion within the sample who had been co-offenders involved in the same organised crime inclusion offence.

D2. Pathways analysis

The pathways analysis was carried out on the 3,360 UK organised crime offenders, looking at the offences in the five years prior to and not including the organised crime inclusion offence. Ten indicator variables were defined for each of the offence types (Appendix C) and for each offender. The indicator variables O_{ij} were set to 1 if offender i had an offence of type j in the five-year period, and 0 otherwise. Latent class analysis, which can be used to cluster categorical data and is described in Francis *et al.* (2004), was carried out on the indicator variables using Latent Gold, and was used to determine specific classes of offending behaviour in the five years prior to the organised crime offence. As latent class analysis depends on start values, 100 different start values were used and the best chosen to ensure as far as possible that the likelihood was fully maximised. The Bayesian Information Criterion (BIC) was used to determine the number of classes – the minimum BIC was achieved with five classes. Class profiles were determined by assigning each offender to their most likely class, and carrying out additional analyses.

D3. Specialisation analysis

The diversity index (Simpson, 1949; Agresti and Agresti, 1978) was used to assess specialisation in common with recent work (for example, Sullivan *et al.*, 2006). If there are K types of offending, the diversity score for each offender i is calculated by taking one minus the sum of the squared proportions for offender i in each of the K categories:

$$d_i = 1 - \sum_{k=1}^K p_{ik}^2$$

In other words, the score uses the proportion of the total number of convictions in each offender's history for each type of offence. A score of zero represents complete specialisation (all p_{ik} are zero apart from one category) and scores approaching one represent complete diversity. For 10 offence categories, the maximum diversity is 0.90. The analysis of the data was carried out on members of the sample with two or more offences.

To illustrate the score, two examples are presented. Example 1 illustrates the case of a specialised offender who operates mainly in the domain of drug offending but who does occasionally get convicted for other types of offence. In fact, 92 per cent of the offender's offences are for drug offences, so this can be considered the specialist category. The diversity score for this offender is 0.15.

Example 2 illustrates a fairly diverse offender. With the same number of offences this offender is involved in nearly all types of offending and does not specialise in any one particular type. Indeed, the offence category that

contains the highest proportion of offences is theft offences, at 28 per cent.

The diversity score for this offender is 0.83.

Example 1:

Total	25	1
Other offences	0	0
Driving offences	0	0
Criminal damage	0	0
Drug offences	23	0.92
Fraud offences	0	0
Theft and handling stolen goods	1	0.04
Burglary	0	0
Robbery	0	0
Sexual offences	0	0
Violence against the person	1	0.04
No.		
Percentage		

Example 2:

Total	25	1
Other offences	0	0
Driving offences	2	0.08
Criminal damage	2	0.08
Drug offences	4	0.16
Fraud offences	1	0.04
Theft and handling stolen goods	7	0.28
Burglary	5	0.20
Robbery	0	0
Sexual offences	2	0.08
Violence against the person	2	0.08
No.		
Percentage		

D4. Trajectory analysis

The group-based trajectory analysis was carried out on all three UK-only samples and, separately, for only the UK organised crime offenders. Using the criminal history of each offender, the number of sanction occasions in specific three-year age groups (10–12, 13–15, etc., up to 40–42) was calculated (a sanction occasion would be a court appearance or other event such as a caution where one or more offences were convicted on the same day).

Additionally, an exposure variable consisting of the number of years for which the offender was exposed to the risk of a sanction was also calculated.

Offenders are of different ages at the inclusion offence and so their criminal history finishes at different ages. The total number of cases ranges from 10,080 at age 10–12 through to 2,685 at age 40–42 for the combined analysis. The methodology used both partial and full histories in trajectory groups. It is possible that a cross-sectional analysis (say by considering only those offenders aged between 30 and 40) would give different results.

The methodology follows Nagin (2005). A negative binomial model for counts was fitted, and allowed for K different trajectory patterns over age, assuming a cubic trend. The natural log of exposure was included as an offset term. The negative binomial scale parameter was allowed to vary across trajectory groups. A range of trajectory models for $K=1$ to $K=7$ was fitted using latent class regression in Latent Gold, and using 100 different start values for each value of K . The minimum value of K was selected by examination of the BIC of each model – the minimum BIC was found with five trajectory groups. As

with the pathways analysis above, offenders were assigned to their most likely trajectory according to the posterior probabilities given by the analysis.

Osgood (2005) was among many to raise a note of caution, saying:

“The primary issue for interpretation is to realize that growth curves do not fully capture individual change, but instead they are more abstract summaries of general trends, smoothed according to the constraints of the statistical model. Appreciating that growth curves do not reflect the full reality will save us from unjustified inferences, such as interpreting level growth curves as indicating that individuals are highly consistent in their offending from year to year.”

D5. Risk analysis

This analysis took a matched case control retrospective design approach, matching first organised crime offenders in 2007–2010 with serious crime offenders and then with general offenders in the same period. The controls were chosen to have a sanction for an offence in the same year and police authority, and to be of the same age and gender. The reason for the detailed matching in this part of the study was to ensure that the matched controls had the same opportunity to commit crime and had the same length of exposure in terms of age to commit such crime.

Of the 3,360 UK organised crime offenders, 113 had a prior organised crime offence and these were removed, leaving 3,247 organised crime offenders for which matches were required. Two sets of control groups of offenders who had never received a conviction for an organised crime offence were created:

- serious crime offenders; and
- general offenders (including serious crime offenders)

The two control groups were selected by matching with the 3,247 organised crime offenders by:

- age (complete years);
- gender;
- location (police force in which inclusion offences were detected); and
- calendar year of conviction (2007, 2008, 2009 or 2010).

In total there were 33,744 UK offenders with a serious offence in the sampling period and with no organised crime offences either at the inclusion offence or

in their history. Amongst these offenders exact matches were found for 2,878 (88.6%) of the organised crime offenders. Matches were found for a further 6.7 per cent after the matching criteria was relaxed to allow the ages of potential matches to be plus or minus one year. Matches were found for a further 1.4 per cent after the matching criteria was relaxed further to allow the ages of potential matches to be plus or minus 2 years. The rest of the offenders were matched using ten-year age categories.

For the general sample matching, there were in total 1,723,286 UK offenders with no organised crime offences during the target period, and no organised crime offences prior to their inclusion offence. Amongst this general sample of offenders exact matches were found for 3,236 (96%) of the organised crime offenders. Matches were found for the remaining four per cent by relaxing the matching criteria to allow the ages of potential matches to be plus or minus one year.

For the case sample and two control samples, a set of 131 potential risk factors was chosen, defined by the presence or absence of a particular offence in the prior criminal history of the individual.

For each risk factor, the organised crime sample was then compared with each of the two control groups in turn, and an odds-ratio of the presence or absence of a particular criminal conviction in the past related to the probability of either having an organised crime conviction or a non-organised crime conviction. The odds-ratio can be thought of as the prospective odds of

gaining an organised crime or non-organised crime conviction in the future, given the presence of a particular conviction. The odds-ratio is reported as a relative risk.⁵⁶ Conditional logistic regression (which allowed for the matched-pairs nature of the comparison) was carried out to assess the significance of the relative risk (Agresti, 2002, Ch. 10). Table B7 reports only the risk factors where relative risks (compared with a general control group) are statistically significantly different from 1.0; Table B8 reports the same risk factors but compared with serious crime controls. It should be emphasised that retrospective risks need to be validated in a prospective design.

⁵⁶ For matched pairs data, the odds-ratio is calculated from the ratio of the number of case offenders with a particular offence present and control offenders with the offence absent, to the number of case offenders with a particular offence absent and control offenders with the offence present. As organised crime is rare, the odds-ratio is a good approximation to the relative risk (Szklo and Nieto, 2006) and in this analysis odds-ratios are reported as relative risks.

Appendix E: The Netherlands research

The most important body of work in the area of criminal careers relating to organised crime careers has emerged from a group of Dutch criminologists. Four publications (Kleemans and van de Bunt, 2008; Kleemans and de Poot, 2008; van Koppen *et al.*, 2010a; and van Koppen *et al.*, 2010b) summarise their recent research. The sources and the type of samples underpinning their work are similar.

For information on their organised crime offenders they used the Dutch Organized Crime Monitor, which makes available the files of Dutch police investigations of criminal groups. Table E1 summarises the samples used and the main focus of each of their papers.

This analysis focuses on the three papers that carried out quantitative work.

The **Kleemans and de Poot (2008)** paper stressed how *“social ties play an important role in organized crime”*, claiming that *“the social opportunity structure, defined as social ties providing access to profitable criminal opportunities, is extremely important for explaining involvement in organized crime”* (p.69). It analysed how and when offenders become known to the criminal justice authorities, studying in depth the criminal careers of ‘starters’. The paper claimed that the social opportunity structure explains why certain offenders ‘progress’ to certain types of organised crime whereas others become involved only later in life. It also claimed that social opportunity

structure may explain 'late starters' – people without any appreciable criminal history – and people in conventional jobs who turn to criminality.

Table E1. Samples used in the four Dutch papers

Publication	Sample used	Dates of series	Main focus of paper	Methodology
Kleemans and de Bunt, 2008	1,623 offenders (120 cases) [but mainly focused on four case studies]	1996–2006	Elaborates on occupations, work relations, work settings, and their connection with organised crime activities	Mainly qualitative
Kleemans and de Poot, 2008	979 suspects (involved in 79 cases)	1995–1999	Focuses on the importance of social ties, emphasising the social opportunity structure	Quantitative and qualitative
van Koppen, de Poot, Kleemans and Nieuwbeerta, 2010a	1,623 offenders (120 cases) – restricted analysis to 854 offenders who grew up in the Netherlands	1994–2006	Investigates criminal trajectories of individuals involved in organised crime.	Quantitative and qualitative
van Koppen, de Poot and Blokland, 2010b	1,623 offenders (120 cases) – restricted analysis to 746 offenders, thus eliminating foreign offenders	1994–2006	Considers comparisons between offenders who engage in organised crime and general offenders	Quantitative

In this paper the authors compared their series with the total offender population (this population comprises offenders with at least one criminal offence that was dealt with in the Netherlands in 1997) and showed considerable differences in terms of age profiles. There was also a useful table in terms of considering the length of the offenders' activity in crime before what they term as the 'index case'. Further, they have an interesting

focus on the involvement mechanisms of 'late starters' and the careers of what they term as '(ring) leaders and nodal offenders'.

The **van Koppen, de Poot, Kleemans and Nieuwbeerta (2010a)** used a semi-parametric group-model to cluster 854 individuals into groups with similar developmental trajectories. They identified four groups:

- adult-onset (40%), a large group with no history of offending prior to adulthood, but from thereon often showing little sign of desistance;
- no previous convictions (19%);
- early starters (11%); and
- a group of persistent offenders 'persisters' (30%).

They applied the trajectory analyses to three kinds of criminal activities (i.e. drug trafficking, organised fraud, and other criminal activities) and four types of roles (i.e. leaders, coordinators, lower-level suspects and others).

The **van Koppen, de Poot and Blokland (2010b)** paper showed how many organised crime offenders do not have judicial contacts before adulthood, but they also noted that *"surprisingly, this turns out to be the case for the comparison group as well"* (p 356). Again their comparison group of general offenders was derived by selecting from all offenders with a conviction in the Netherlands in 1997. Their important claim is that *"organized crime offenders seem to differ from general offenders from the start, not so much in the onset age or the frequency of their judicial contacts, but in the seriousness of their criminal behaviour."* (p 371).

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