



Home Office

Police workforce, England and Wales, as at 31 March 2020 second edition

Introduction

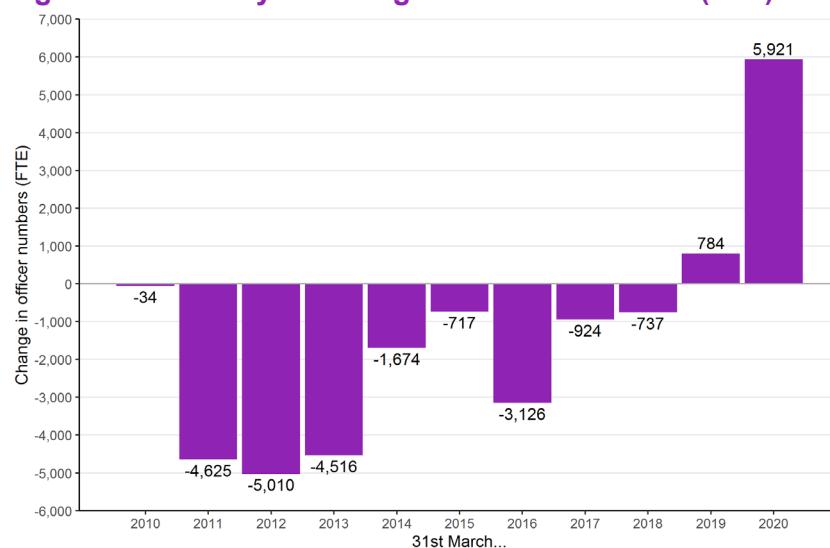
This release is an end-year update of the [Police workforce, England and Wales](#) publication series, containing information on police workers in post on 31 March 2020. This release also provides more detailed information on police workers, such as sex, ethnicity and age breakdowns, as well as roles that officers perform.

While this bulletin contains information on workers as at 31 March 2020, a second statistical bulletin on [‘police officer uplift’](#) has also been published alongside this release. This second release provides information on progress with the recruitment of an additional 20,000 officers in England and Wales as at June 2020.

Police workforce as at 31 March 2020

- 129,110 full-time equivalent (FTE) officers were in post as at 31 March 2020 in the 43 territorial police forces in England and Wales.
- This was an increase of 4.8% on March 2019 (up 5,921 FTEs from 123,189 officers) and the largest year on year change since 2003/04.
- Excluding transfers, 12,883 police officers (FTE) joined the 43 territorial police forces in England and Wales in 2019/20, the highest number since comparable data collection began in 2002/03.

Figure 1: Year on year change in officer numbers (FTE)



- The total workforce (officers, staff, Police Community Support Officers and designated officers) were at 210,620 FTE on the same date, an increase of 4.2% on the previous year.

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2 Introduction

2.1 General introduction

This release contains statistics on the numbers of police officers, police staff, Police Community Support Officers (PCSOs), designated officers¹, special constables and Police Support Volunteers (PSVs) in post on 31 March 2020. The statistics cover all the 43 territorial police forces in England and Wales. Though data for the British Transport Police are largely excluded from analysis within this report, their data can be found in the accompanying [data tables](#). Also, for the first time in this series, data from the National Crime Agency (NCA) have been published, though their figures do not count towards the England and Wales total (which relates to the 43 territorial forces only).

Unless otherwise stated, total workforce figures quoted in the bulletin include those on career breaks or other forms of long term absence, as well as those seconded in to police forces from other forces or central services (e.g. the Home Office, the National Crime Agency). It excludes those seconded out from forces to central services. The workforce figures in this release are all presented on a full-time equivalent (FTE) basis unless indicated otherwise. The accompanying [data tables](#) provide the same information on a headcount basis.

The [user guide](#) to Police Workforce Statistics contains further information, including a glossary, conventions used, and other background information. It contains further information on the quality and limitations of the various datasets, and the ways in which the Home Office engages with users of the statistics.

The data in this release, as well as headcount figures, can be found in the '[Police Workforce, England and Wales, 31 March 2020](#)' tables.

2.2 New content in this release

For the first time in this series information on the number of officers working in the National Crime Agency (NCA) have been published. Though these figures are not included in the totals throughout the report (which relate to the 43 territorial forces in England and Wales only), they are included in the [data tables](#) where appropriate. Officers in the NCA can be either warranted (with powers of constable) or non-warranted.

2.3 National Statistics Status

The Office for Statistics Regulation (the regulatory arm of the UK Statistics Authority) has confirmed the continued designation of these statistics as National Statistics. This means that these statistics meet the highest standards of trustworthiness, impartiality, quality and public value, and are fully compliant with the [Code of Practice for Statistics](#).

¹ Designated officers are police staff (who are not police officers) employed to exercise specific powers that would otherwise only be available to police officers.

Given the known issues around the quality of the data, statistics in this release on 'Length of service' are designated as Official Statistics, and not National Statistics. Further information can be found in the relevant section ([4.7](#)).

Revisions to this bulletin

Following a revision from Norfolk and Suffolk police, the number of officers on recuperative and restrictive/adjusted duties have been updated for these forces in Chapter 7. Table A summarises these revisions.

Table A: Revisions made since first publication

Force	Metric	First publication (headcount)	Revised (headcount)	Difference (headcount)
Norfolk	Officers on recuperative duties	463	141	-322
Norfolk	Officers on restricted/adjusted duties	36	33	-3
Suffolk	Officers on recuperative duties	328	120	- 208
Suffolk	Officers on restricted/adjusted duties	26	29	+3

At a national level, the number of officers on recuperative duties has been revised from 5,345 to 4,815 (a change of -10%), and the number of officers on restricted/adjusted duties remains unchanged. Table W3 of the [accompanying data tables](#) has also been updated to reflect these revisions.

Furthermore, a typo (which made a sentence unclear) was spotted on page 27. This has now also been updated.

3 Headline workforce figures

Key results

- As at 31 March 2020 there were 210,620 FTE police workers (including staff) employed by the territorial forces in England and Wales, an increase of 4.2% on the previous year. In addition, there were 4,837 FTE National Crime Agency (NCA) officers in England and Wales. NCA officers include both those warranted with the powers of a police constable or other powers, as well as civilians involved in the investigation of serious and organised crime (non-warranted officers).
- Following the Government's pledge to recruit an additional 20,000 officers by March 2023. There has been an increase in the number of officers in the 43 police forces in England and Wales, from 123,189 full-time equivalent (FTE) officers in March 2019, to 129,110 FTE in March 2020 (4.8% increase).
- This is the largest number of officers as at 31 March since 2013, and the highest year on year increase in officer numbers since 2003/04.

3.1 Total police workforce

As at 31 March 2020, there were 210,620 workers employed by the 43 territorial police forces in England and Wales (Table 3.1), an increase of 8,582, or 4%, compared with a year earlier (when there were 202,039 workers).

Table 3.1: Police workforce, as at 31 March 2020, England and Wales

Rank	2019	2020	Percentage change (%)
Chief Officer ¹	211	231	9.5
Chief Superintendents	313	315	0.6
Superintendents	895	937	4.6
Chief Inspectors	1,666	1,732	4.0
Inspectors	5,550	5,654	1.9
Sergeants	18,470	18,826	1.9
Constables	96,084	101,415	5.5
Total police officer ranks	123,189	129,110	4.8
Police staff, designated officers and traffic wardens	69,303	72,330	4.4
Police Community Support Officers	9,547	9,180	-3.8
Total police workforce	202,039	210,620	4.2
Special Constabulary²	10,642	9,571	-10.1
Police support volunteers²	7,670	8,370	9.1

Source: Home Office, [Workforce Open Data Table](#)

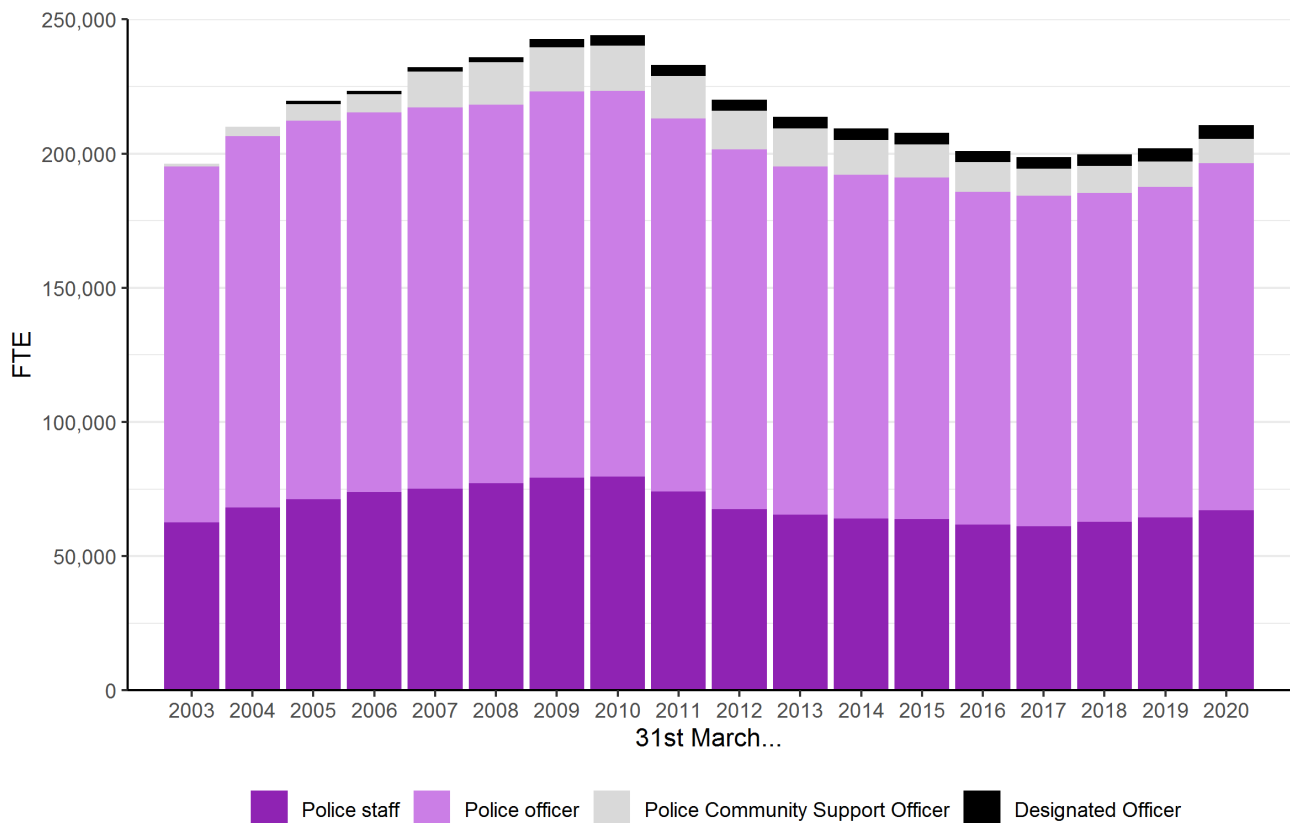
Notes:

1. Includes Assistant Chief Constables, Deputy Chief Constables and Chief Constables, and their equivalents in the Metropolitan Police and City of London Police. These police officers were previously referred to as Association of Chief Police Officer (ACPO) ranks; however on 1 April 2015 ACPO was replaced by the National Police Chiefs' Council (NPCC).
2. Special constables and police support volunteers do not have contracted working hours so their numbers are provided on a headcount rather than a FTE basis.

There were small increases in all worker types, except Special Constables, which fell by 10%, and PCSOs (by 4%) compared with the previous year. The largest volume increase was in police officers (which increased by 5,921 FTE) and reflects the drive to recruit an additional 20,000 police officers by March 2023. Some of these new recruits may have joined following experience as a Special Constable or PCSO, which may explain the fall in the latter categories.

Figure 3.1 shows the long-term trend in the police workforce numbers, broken down by worker type. Workforce numbers had been increasing to 2010, then decreased in each year before reaching a low-point in 2017. In the last three years the previous downward trend has reversed, and the latest figures show a total workforce increase of 4% compared with the previous year.

Figure 3.1: Police workforce, by worker type, as at 31 March 2003 to 31 March 2020, England and Wales^{1,2}



Source: Home Office, [table H3](#)

Notes:

1. Excludes traffic wardens due to their very small numbers, which reflect the dominant role of local authorities in parking control.
2. Some forces are unable to provide data on some types of designated officers separately. In these cases, designated officers have been counted under police staff.

In addition to the 210,620 police workers, there were 9,571 special constables (headcount) in the 43 police forces in England and Wales on 31 March 2020, and 8,370 Police Support Volunteers (PSVs). Special constables and PSVs do not have contracted working hours so their numbers are provided on a headcount rather than an FTE basis.

3.2 Police officers

There were 129,110 full-time equivalent (FTE) police officers in the 43 police forces as at 31 March 2020 (131,576 in headcount terms). This is the highest number of officers as at 31 March since 2013. However the latest figures are still 10% lower than the peak in 2009, when there were 143,769 police officers, representing a total decrease of 14,659 FTEs.

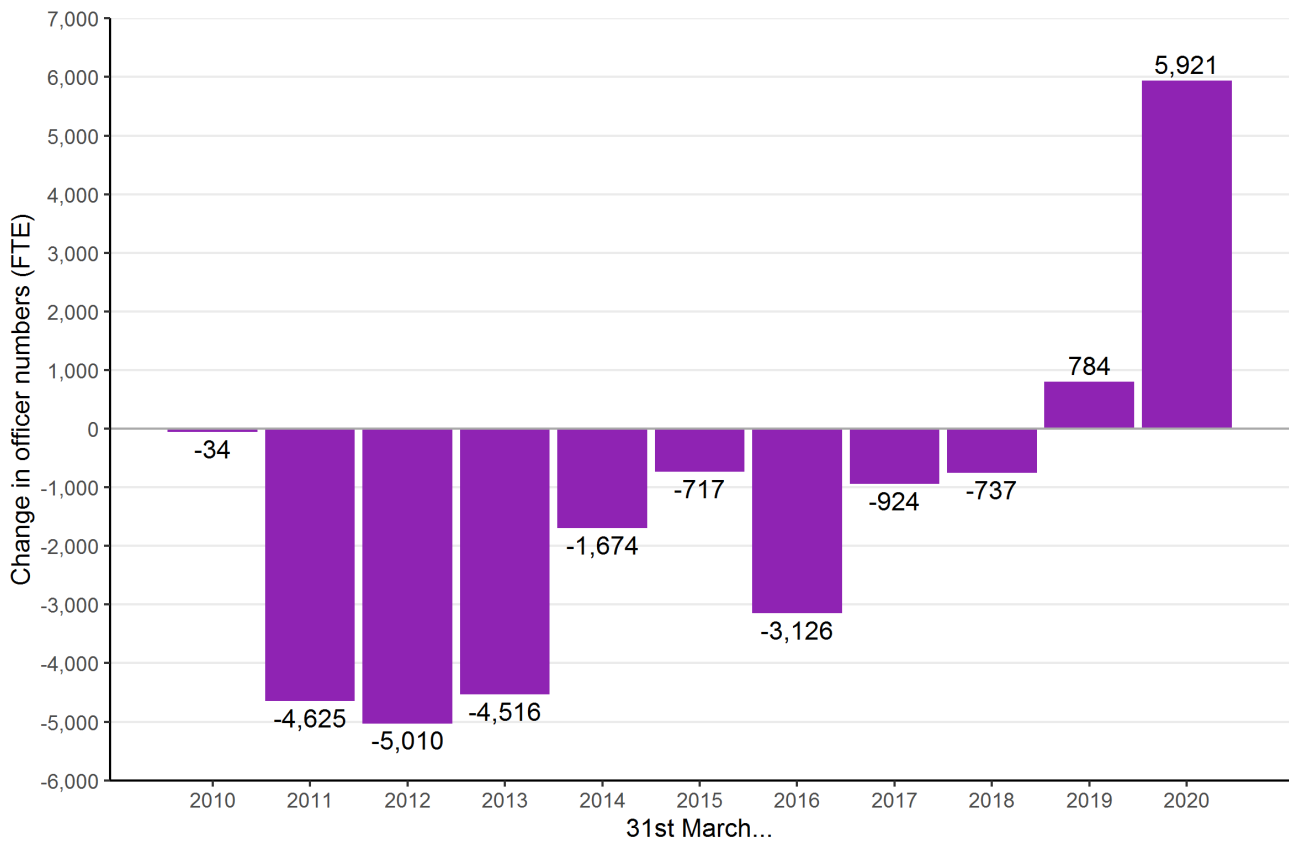
While not included in the headline figures, the British Transport Police employed 2,964 FTE police officers in England and Wales.

On 5 September 2019 the Prime Minister [announced](#) the Government commitment to recruit an additional 20,000 police officers in England and Wales by 31 March 2023. The first phase of this pledge was to recruit up to 6,000 additional officers by the end of March 2021. Following this announcement, the increase in officer numbers between March 2019 and March 2020 is the largest year on year growth in officer numbers (FTE) since 2003/04. Statistics on the progress towards this recruitment target, as well as the methodology for counting additional officers, is published separately in the quarterly '[Police officer uplift](#)' statistics.

Figure 3.2 shows the number of police officers in the 43 territorial forces increased by 5,921 full-time equivalents (5%) compared with a year earlier - the second consecutive annual increase after the downward trend seen since 2010. This equates to an increase of 5,765 in headcount terms, which is also a 5% increase on the headcount as at 31 March 2019 (from 125,811 to 131,576).

Data published in the '[Police officer uplift](#)' statistics show that (as at March 2020) 3,104 of the 5,765 headcount increase (54%) is a result of the drive to recruit an additional 20,000 officers by March 2023. The rest of the increase (2,661 officers) was recruited by forces under increased precept funding.

Figure 3.2: Change in the number of police officers (FTE), as at 31 March 2010 to 31 March 2020, compared with the previous 12 months, England and Wales

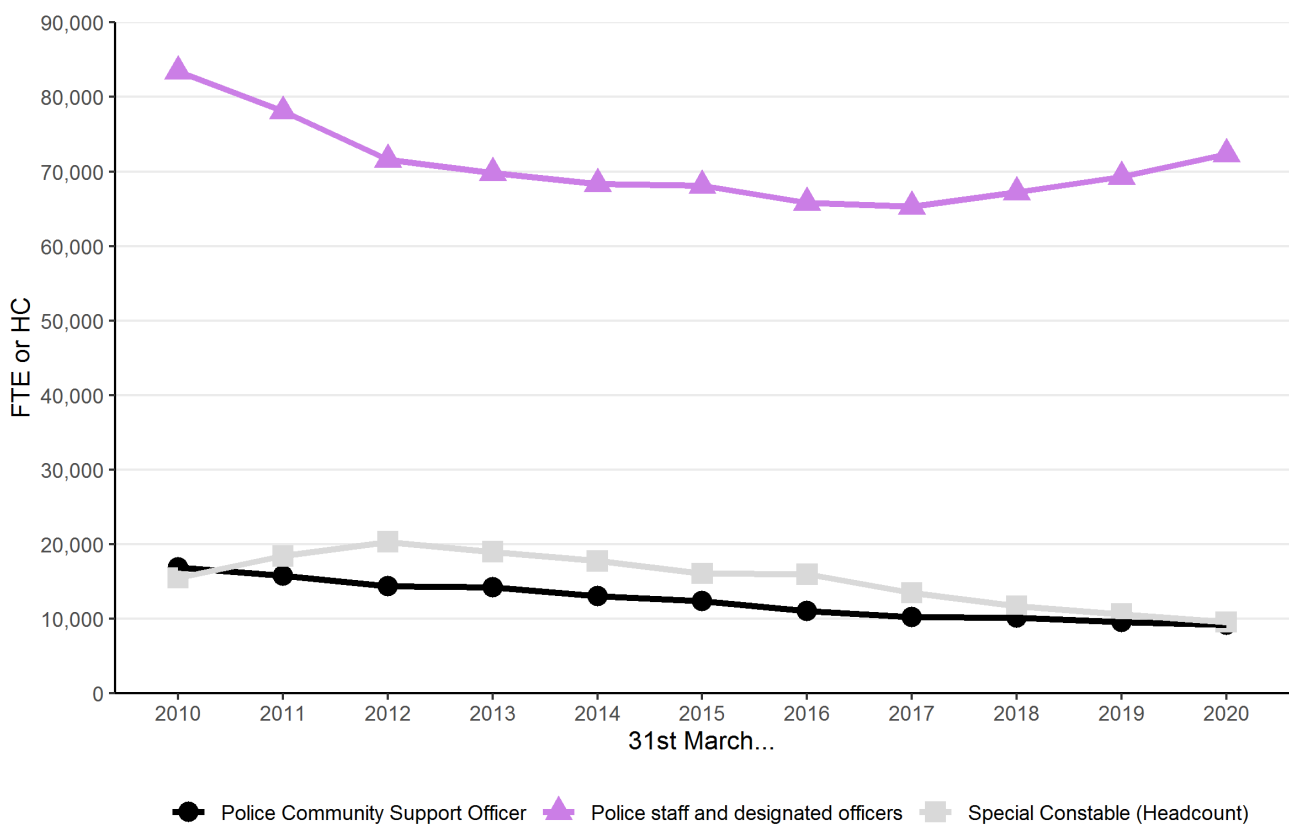


Source: Home Office, [table H3](#)

3.3 Other police worker and volunteers

Figure 3.3 shows the trend in the number of other police workers and volunteers over the last 10 years. Between 2010 and 2017, police staff numbers and designated officer numbers² had been falling. However, there have been increases in recent years with a latest combined increase of 4% on March 2019. Police Community Support Officer (PCSO) numbers have fallen each year since 2010. There were 9,180 PCSOs in the latest year (down 4% on 2019). In addition, the number of special constables has also continued to fall, to 9,571 (down 10%) from 10,642 the previous year.

Figure 3.3 Police staff and designated officers, Police Community Support Officers, and special constables, 31 March 2010 to 31 March 2020, England and Wales



Source: Home Office, [table H3](#)

² Some forces are unable to distinguish designated officers from police staff, therefore, they have been combined to better reflect the situation across all forces. These workers can be separately identified in the [Open Data Tables](#).

4 Promotions, joiners and leavers

Key results

- In 2019/20, 12,883 full-time equivalent (FTE) police officers joined the 43 police forces in England and Wales (excluding transfers). This volume of joiners is a 61% increase on the previous year (up from 7,978) and the highest number since data collection began.
- In 2019/20, 7,141 police officers (FTE) left the 43 territorial police forces (excluding transfers), accounting for 5.8% of officers employed by the forces at the start of the year.
- In 2019/20, 2,756 police officers received a promotion in 42 police forces in England and Wales accounting for 3.0% of all officers (excluding Metropolitan Police, who were unable to provide such data).

This chapter presents statistics on the number of promotions, joiners and leavers in the police, as well as information on the length of service of current police officers.

Data on promotions are based on the number of officers promoted during the financial year and are on a headcount basis. Data are collected by the rank to which an officer is promoted. Officers on temporary promotion and those promoted on transfer from another police force are not included in these statistics.

Data on joiners and leavers are based on the number of workers who joined and left the force during the financial year and are based on full-time equivalents. Joiner rates are calculated by dividing the number of joiners during the financial year by the total number of workers as at the end of the year (i.e. 31st March). This indicates how many of those employed by the force at the end of the year joined during the year.

Wastage rates are calculated by dividing the number of leavers during the financial year by the total number of workers at the end of the previous year (i.e. as at 31 March). This indicates how many of those employed at the start of the current year left during the year.

These wastage rates are a good indication of turnover within the police but not a precise one as individual workers cannot be tracked. Some workers may join and leave the force during the same year and will only be captured in the denominator (i.e. those employed at the end of the previous year). This is particularly for those worker types with higher turnover, such as special constables.

There are several routes via which officers can join or leave the police:

Joiners

- **Standard direct recruit** – individuals joining the police for the first time, including via Direct Entry, Fast Track and Police Now schemes. This also includes Police Community Support Officers and other police staff who are joining as a police officer.
- **Re-joining** – individuals who have previously left the forces, but have since re-joined.
- **Previously special constable** – individuals who are joining as a police officer having previously been a special constable
- **Transfer** – individuals joining from one of the other 43 territorial police forces in England and Wales, or another non-Home Office force (e.g. the British Transport Police).

Leavers

- **Death** – those who have died, either on active duty or otherwise.
- **Dismissal/Contract termination** – individuals who have been required to resign, made compulsorily redundant, or have had their contract terminated. While these figures will include dismissals for misconduct, they are not exclusively misconduct cases, as they also include redundancies and contract terminations.
- **Medical retirement** – individuals who have retired on ill health grounds.
- **Normal retirement** – individuals who have retired, not on ill health grounds.
- **Transfer** – individuals leaving to join one of the other 43 territorial police forces in England and Wales, or a non-Home Office force (e.g. the British Transport Police).
- **Voluntary resignation** – individuals who resign or leave under voluntary exit schemes. Special constables, who leave to join the regular constabulary, or have been inactive for more than 12 months, are included here.

Further information on the types of police officer joiner and leaver can be found in the [‘User guide to Police Workforce statistics’](#).

4.1 Promotions

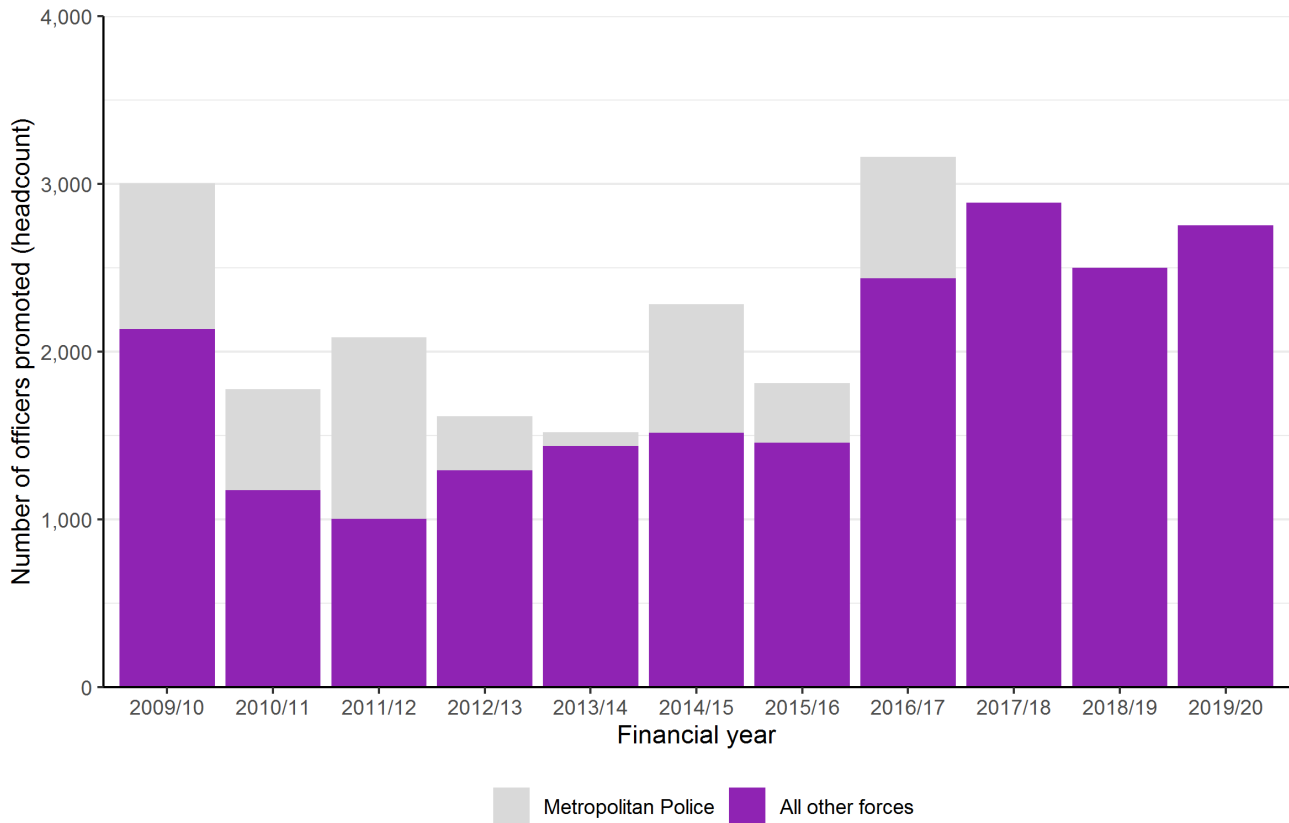
Since the implementation of a new HR system in 2018, the Metropolitan Police Service (MPS) have been unable to provide data on promotions for the past three years. To make a comparable time series, data in this section therefore exclude the MPS, however, data for promotions within the MPS for years prior to 2017/18 are provided in the [data tables](#).

In 2019/20, 2,756 police officers received a promotion in 42 police forces in England and Wales accounting for 3% of all officers. Excluding the MPS for both years, this was an increase of 10% compared with the number of officers promoted in the previous year.

As in previous years, most promotions were seen at lower ranks, such as constables promoted to sergeants (accounting for 63% of all promotions). As expected, fewer promotions were seen in higher ranks, such as chief superintendents promoted to chief

officers (0.9%). This reflects the hierarchical structure of the police workforce with fewer opportunities for promotion at the top of the pyramid.

Figure 4.1: Police officer promotions (headcount), 2009/10 to 2019/20, England and Wales^{1,2}



Source: Home Office, [table P1](#)

Notes:

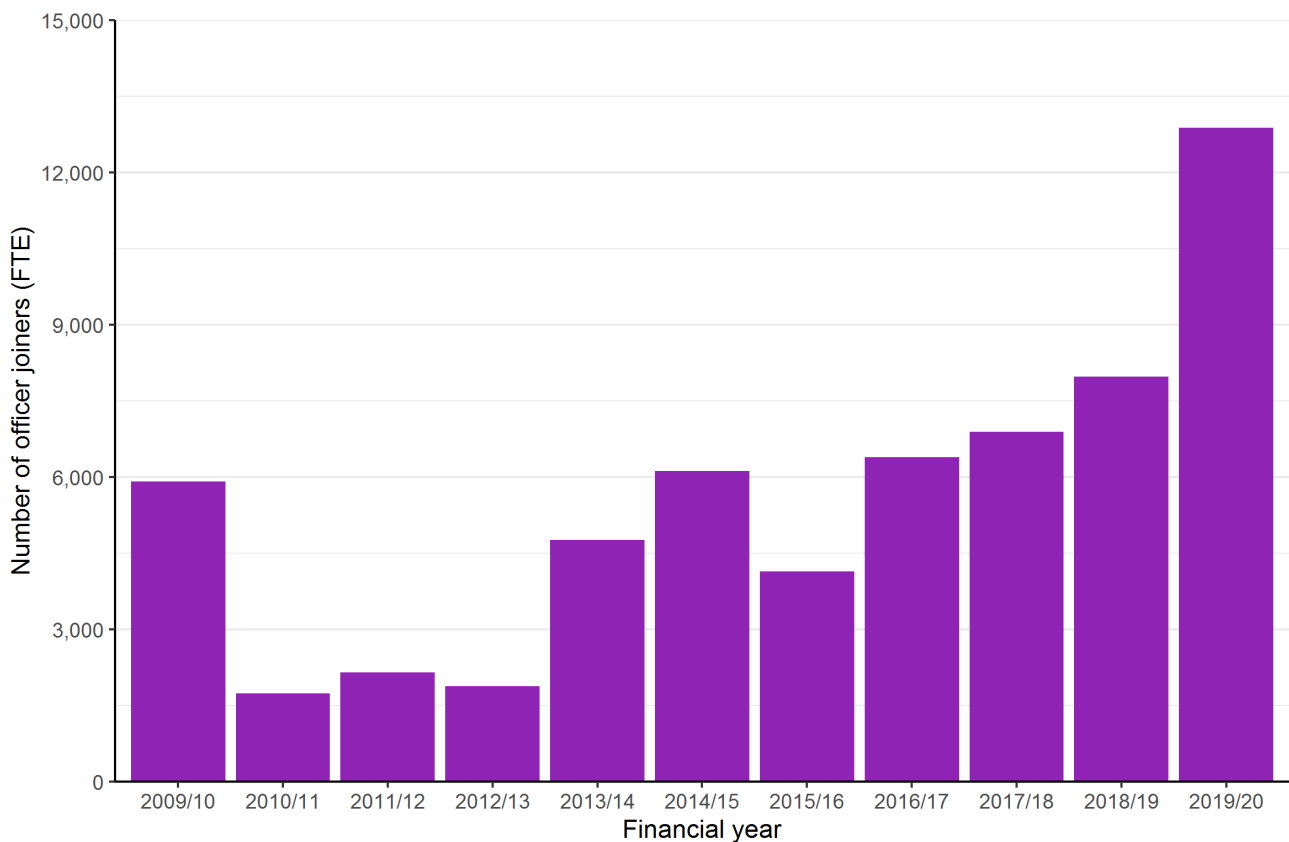
1. Officers on temporary promotion and those promoted on transfer from another police force are not included in these statistics.
2. 2017/18, 2018/19 and 2019/20 exclude the Metropolitan Police Service, who were unable to provide data. However, MPS promotions data for previous years are shown in grey.

Further information on the ethnicity and sex of police officer promotions can be found in [chapter 6](#).

4.2 Joiners

In 2019/20, 12,883 full-time equivalent (FTE) police officers joined the 43 police forces in England and Wales, accounting for 10% of officers (excluding transfers). This volume of joiners is a 61% increase on the previous year (up by 4,905 from 7,978 joiners in 2018/19) and the highest number since comparable data collection began in 2002/03. Most of this increase in joining officers can be attributed to the [Government pledge](#) to recruit an additional 20,000 police officers in England and Wales by 31 March 2023. Further details on new recruits since the announcement of the recruitment drive can be found in the quarterly [‘Police officer uplift’](#) statistics.

Figure 4.2: Police officer joiners, 2009/10 to 2019/20, England and Wales¹



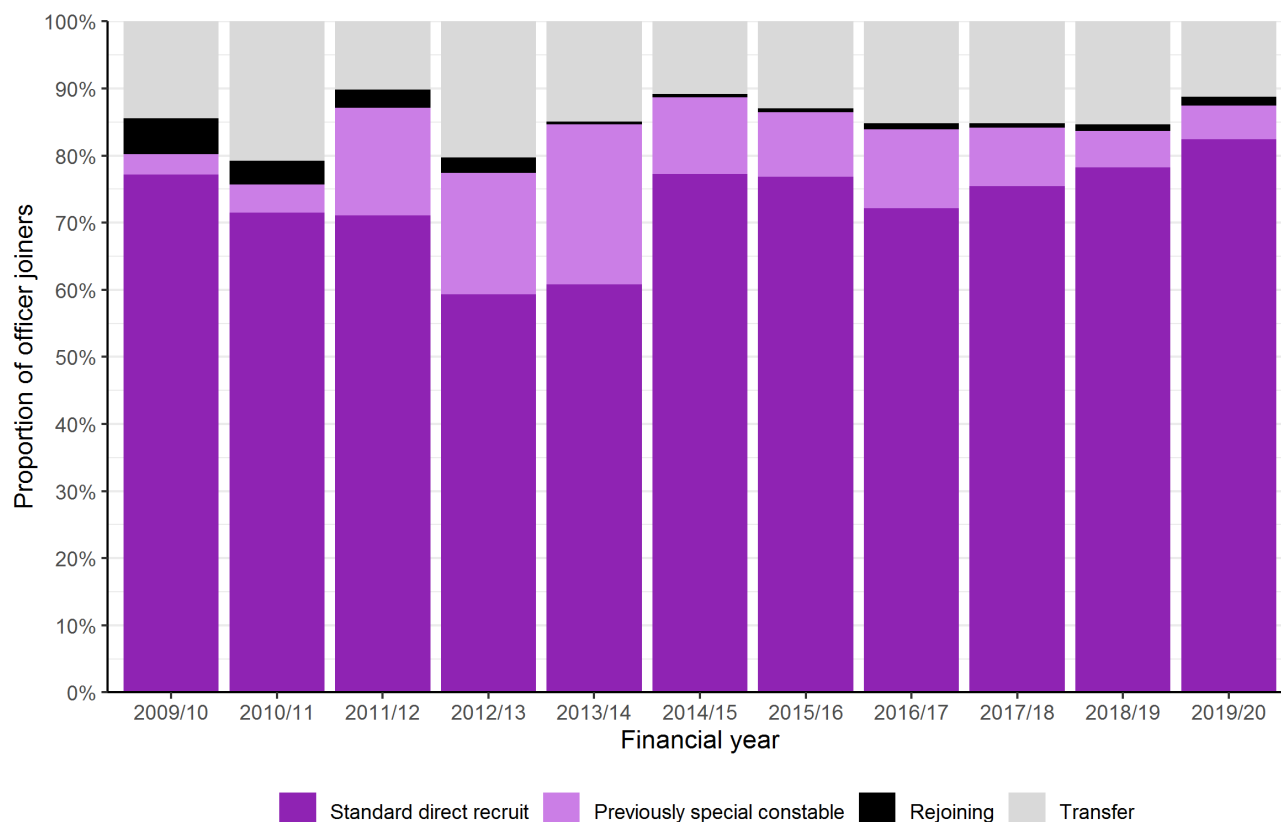
Source: Home Office, [Joiners Open Data Table](#)

Notes:

1. Excludes those transferring in from other police forces.

Between 2009/10 and 2018/19, the majority (fluctuating between 60-80% each year) of officer joiners (including transfers) have been new recruits joining for the first time (Figure 4.3). In 2019/20, 82% of officer joiners (including transfers) were standard direct recruits, the highest percentage since data collection began, and reflecting the campaign to recruit 20,000 additional officers by March 2023.

Figure 4.3: Police officer joiners (FTE), by route of entry, 2009/10 to 2019/20, England and Wales

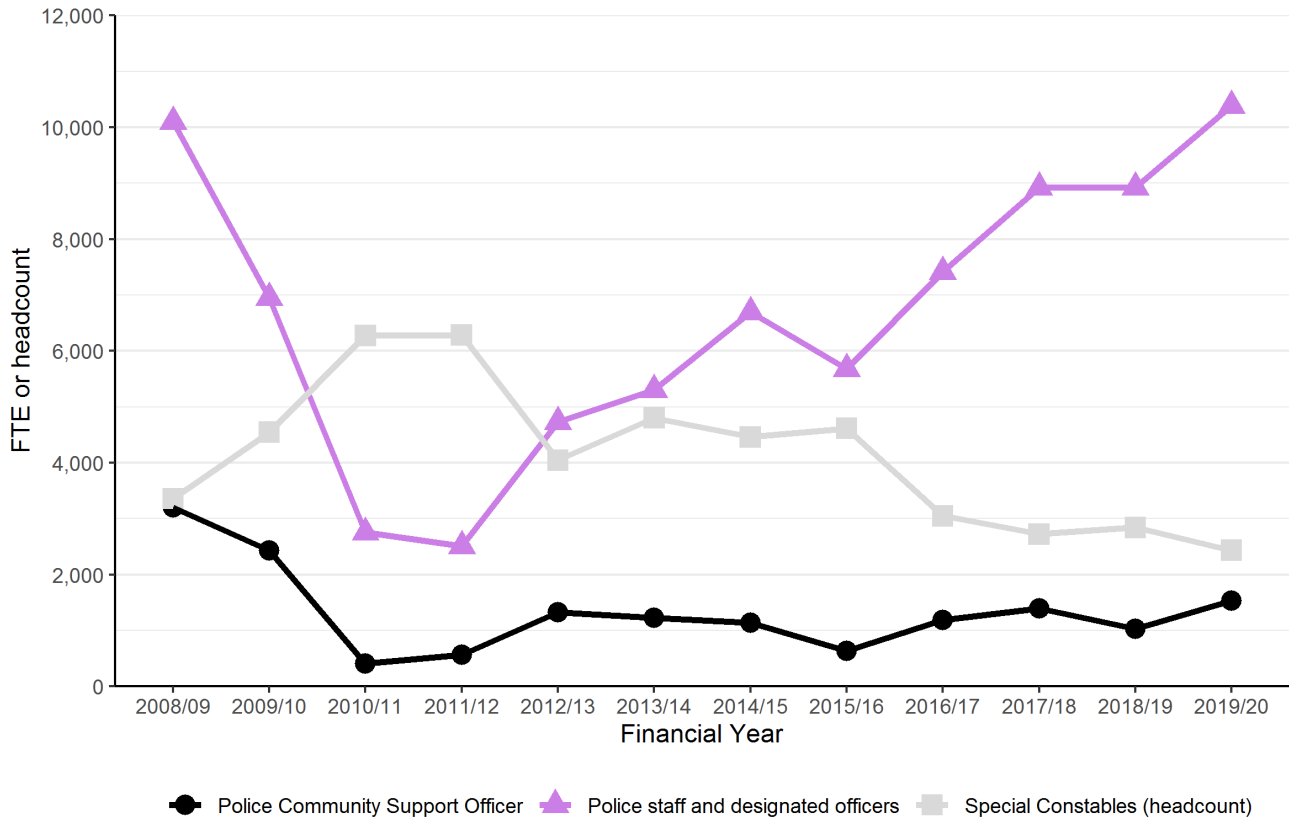


Source: Home Office, [Joiners Open Data Table](#)

4.3 Other worker types

The number of PCSO joiners fell sharply between 2008/09 and 2010/11 and has remained at relatively low levels since (Figure 4.4). Following a stagnant year in 2018/19, the number of police staff and designated officers joining rose again in 2019/20. This continues the upward trend seen following two particularly low years of recruitment in 2010/11 and 2011/12. These years also saw low numbers of police officers and PCSO joiners and reflect generally low recruitment levels at that time. However, the number of new special constable joiners was relatively high during the same period. The number of new special constable joiners has declined since 2015/16.

Figure 4.4: Other police worker joiners, 2008/09 to 2019/20, England and Wales¹



Source: Home Office, [Joiners Open Data Table](#)

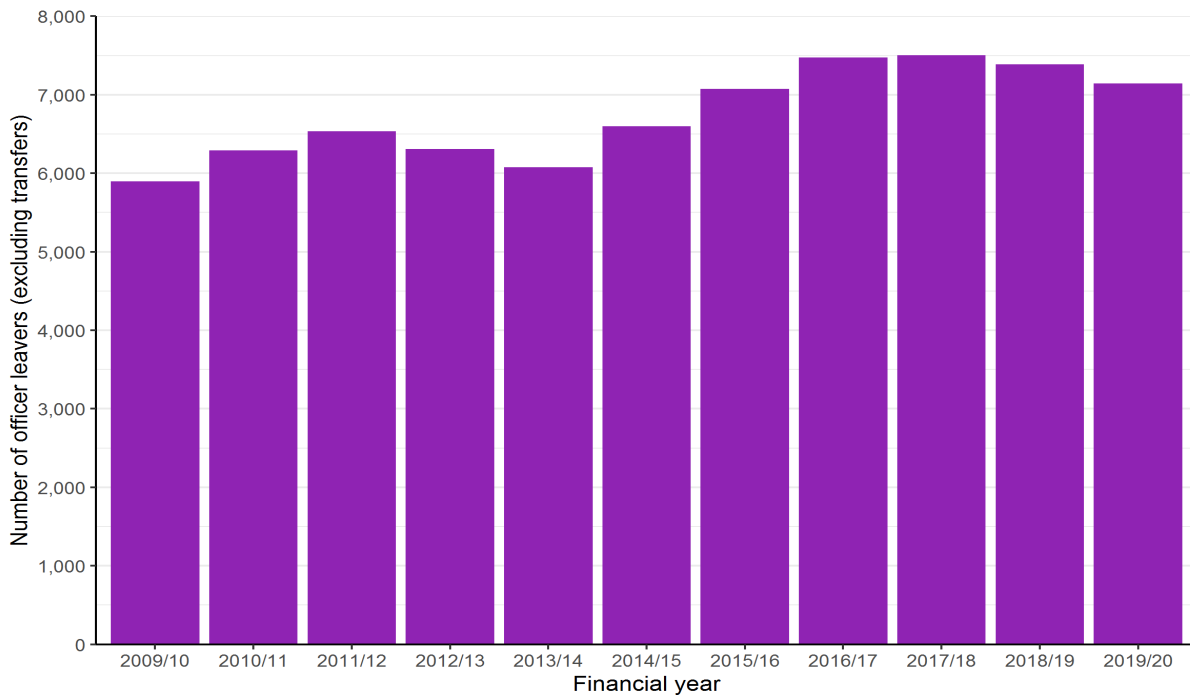
Notes:

- 1. Excludes those transferring in from other police forces.

4.4 Leavers

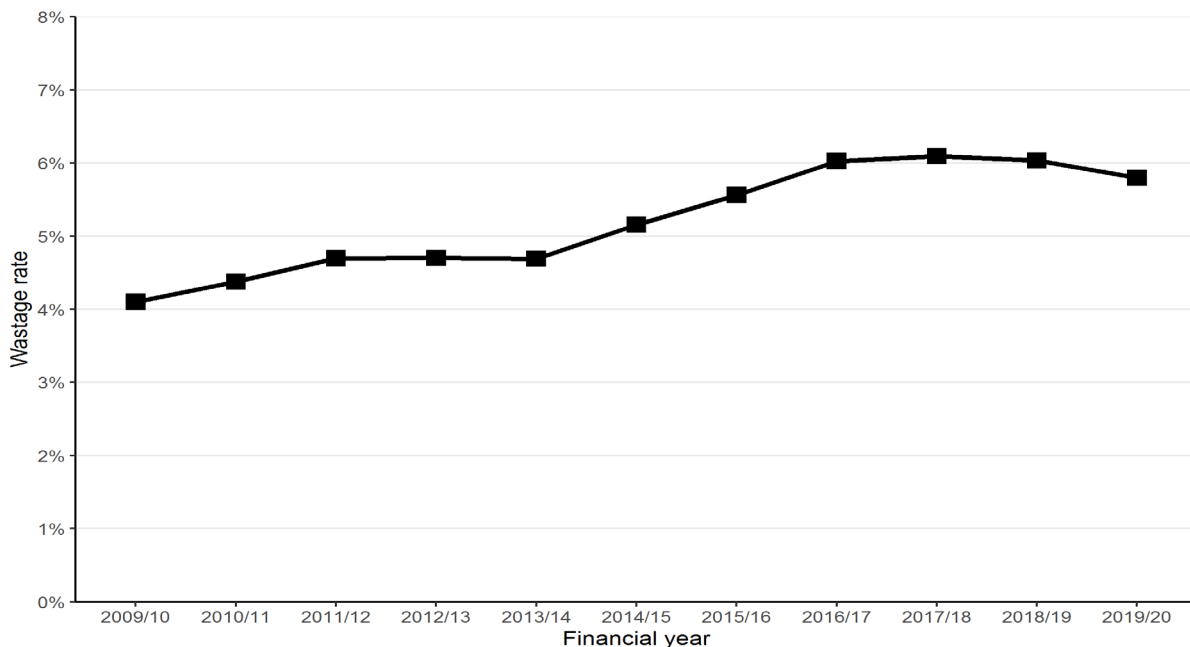
In 2019/20, 7,141 full-time equivalent (FTE) police officers left the 43 territorial police forces (excluding transfers) (Figure 4.5), accounting for 6% of officers employed by the forces at the start of the year (Figure 4.6). Compared with the previous year there was a small fall of 3% in the number of officers leaving the service (down 246 FTE officers from 7,387). This is the second year running that the numbers of officers joining the service exceeds the number of officers leaving.

Figure 4.5: Police officer leavers (excluding transfers), 2009/10 to 2019/20, England and Wales



Source: Home Office, [Leavers Open Data Table](#)

Figure 4.6: Police officer wastage rate (excluding transfers), 2009/10 to 2019/20, England and Wales¹



Source: Home Office, [Leavers Open Data Table](#)

Notes:

1. Wastage rates are calculated by dividing the total number of leavers (excluding transfers) during the financial year by the total number of workers as at 31 March of the previous year.

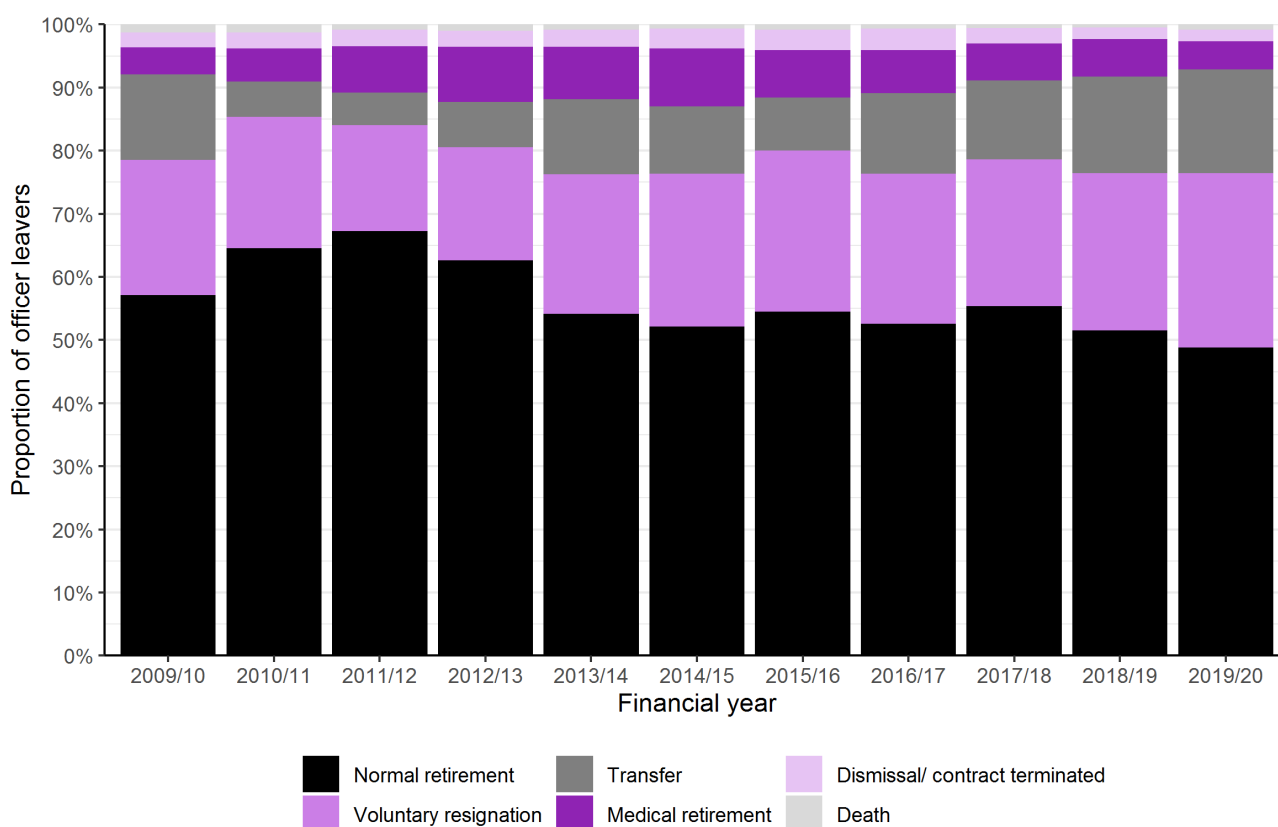
The number of officers leaving the police, in each of the last five years, is shown in Table 4.1 by reason for departure.

Table 4.1: Police officer leavers, by route of exit, 2015/16 to 2019/20, England and Wales

Route of exit	2015/16	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20
Normal retirement	4,211	4,507	4,747	4,492	4,169
Voluntary resignation	1,968	2,035	1,995	2,175	2,363
Transfer	648	1,093	1,068	1,339	1,405
Medical retirement	582	587	500	514	377
Dismissal	247	289	211	161	163
Death	69	57	51	46	69

The majority of those leaving the service do so via normal retirement, which accounts for around 50% to 60% of leavers annually (Figure 4.7). The proportion of voluntary resignations increased in the latest year from 29% up to 33% of leavers (excluding transfers).

Figure 4.7: Police officer leavers, by route of exit, 2009/10 to 2019/20, England and Wales



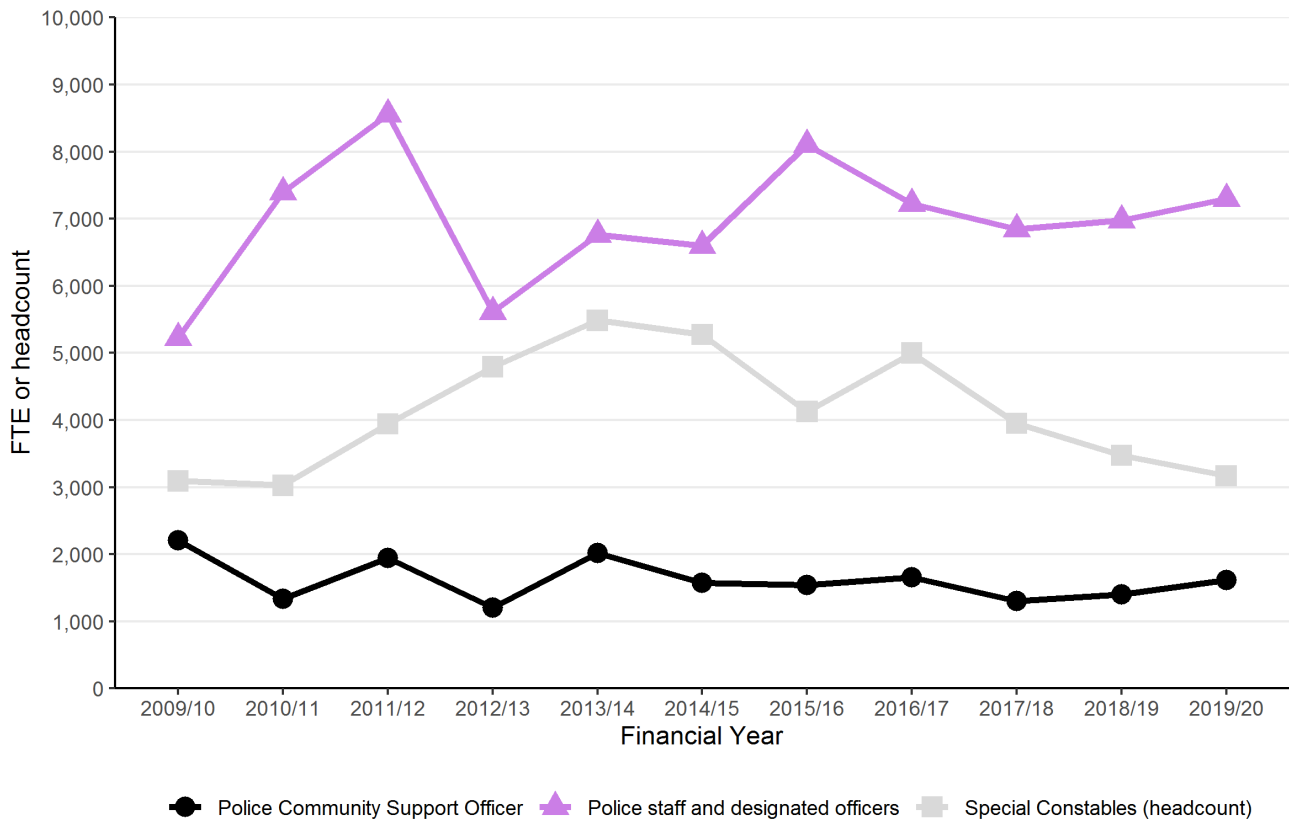
Source: Home Office, [Leavers Open Data Table](#)

Further Information on the ethnicity and sex of police joiners and leavers can be found in [chapter 6](#).

4.5 Other worker types

The number of full-time equivalent police staff and designated officers (combined), and PCSOs leaving the service across the 43 police forces in England and Wales has increased in the latest year (Figure 4.8). Conversely, the number of Special Constables leaving the service has decreased in the latest year.

Figure 4.8: Other police worker leavers, 2009/10 to 2019/20, England and Wales¹



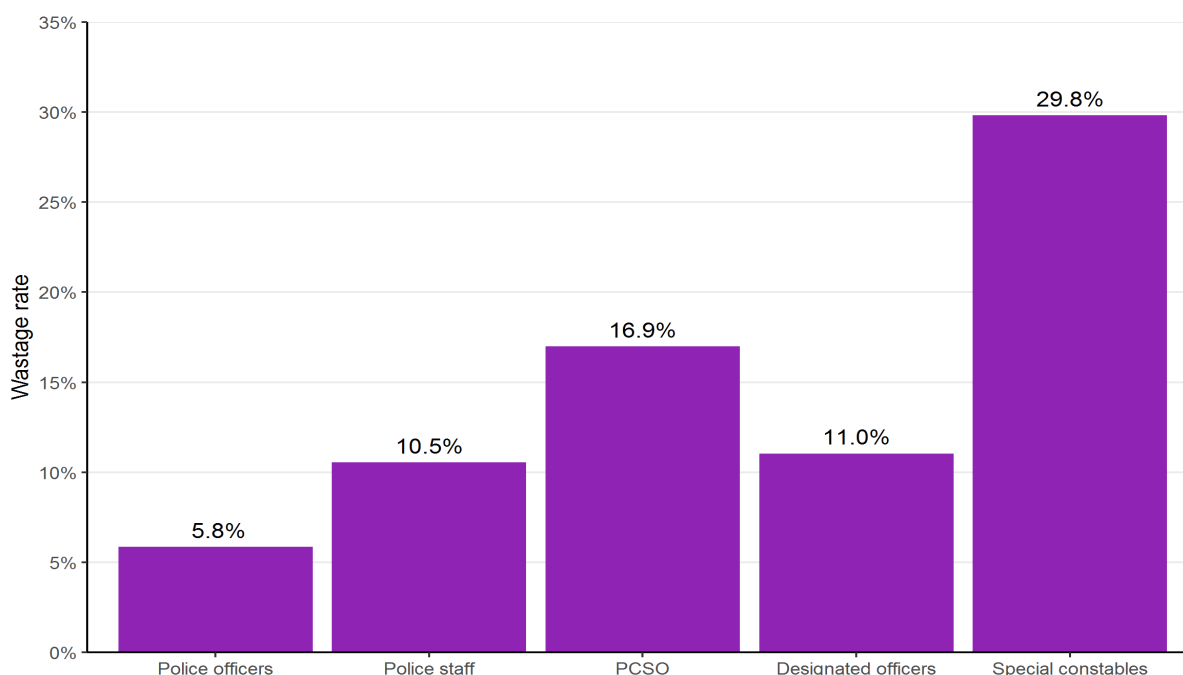
Source: Home Office, [Leavers Open Data Table](#)

Notes:

1. Excludes those transferring out to other police forces

In 2019/20, of the paid police worker types (i.e. excluding special constables), PCSOs had the highest wastage rate (excluding transfers), at 17% (Figure 4.9). Police staff and designated officers combined had a wastage rate of 10%, and police officers had the lowest wastage rate, at 6%. The wastage rate for special constables was particularly high, at 30%. However, this will partly reflect the fact that some leave the special constabulary to take paid roles within the force (excluding transfers 6% of joining police officers were previously special constables).

Figure 4.9: Wastage rates by police worker type (excluding transfers), 2019/20, England and Wales¹



Source: Home Office, [Leavers Open Data Table](#)

Notes:

1. Wastage rates are calculated by dividing the total number of leavers during the financial year by the total number of workers as at 31 March of the previous year.

4.6 Length of service

Statistics on length of service are designated as ‘Official Statistics’ rather than ‘National Statistics’. This is due to a number of data quality issues. Some forces have reported problems extracting length of service data from their HR systems. Where officers have transferred from another force, or changed roles within a force, some constabularies record the length of service based on the date the officer started their current role (rather than the date the officer joined the police service). This is likely to skew the data towards shorter service periods and under-record longer periods of service where individuals may have moved posts or forces.

While these issues will have less impact on the national picture, they are likely to have more of an effect on further breakdowns of the data, such as by force or rank of officer. While the findings in this section should be considered with caution, they give a reasonable indication of the picture at the national level, but users should be wary of making force comparisons.

This section includes information on the length of service of police officers in England and Wales. The data cover the length of time in the police service as a whole, excluding time spent on unpaid long-term absence and career breaks. Data in the section refer to the situation as at 31 March 2020 and are on a headcount basis.

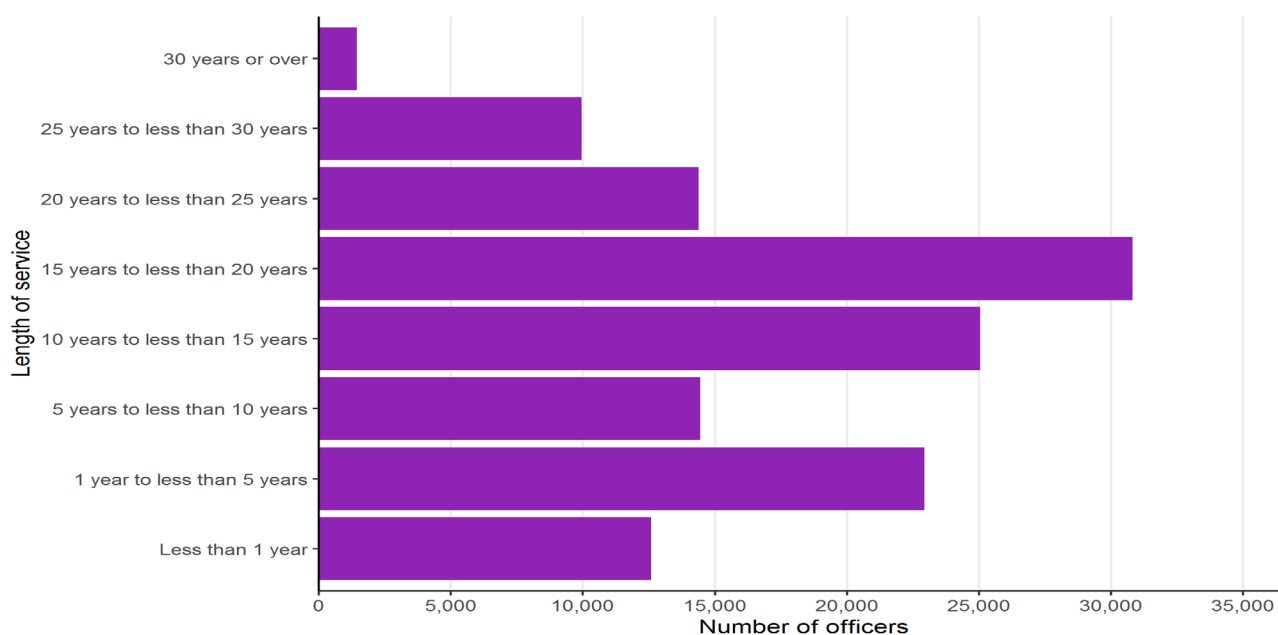
In the 43 forces in England and Wales, the number of officers with fewer than 5 years of service was 35,515 (headcount), which accounted for 27% of all police officers (where the length of service is known). Of these, 35% (12,584 officers) had less than 1 year of service.

Patterns in the length of service data tend to reflect recruitment trends over time. Relatively low levels of recruitment between 2010/11 and 2012/13 meant that the number of officers with between 5 years and less than 10 years of service, as at 31 March 2020, were relatively low (11%). Over the last few years as recruitment levels have increased, so too has the number and proportion of officers with fewer than 5 years of service.

Around a fifth (19%) of police officers have been in the service between 10 years and less than 15 years, and around a quarter (23%) of police officers have been in the police service between 15 and less than 20 years. This spike is likely to be partly a result of a recruitment drive in the early/mid 2000s.

Just 1,429 (or 1.1%) officers had served for more than 30 years. This reflects the fact that many current police officers are entitled to receive a full pension after 30 years of service, leading to many officers retiring at that point.

Figure 4.10: Length of service of police officers, as at 31 March 2020, England and Wales¹



Source: Home Office, [table JL5](#)

Notes:

1. Where length of service information is not known, length of service in current police force has been used instead.

5 Frontline and local policing

Key results

- The number of frontline police officers in England and Wales increased by 5.3% in the 12 months to 31 March 2020 to reach 108,856. The proportion of officers employed in frontline roles remained stable (92%).
- Local police officers increased by 9.3% in number to 59,176 in the last 12 months. This contributed to a rise in the proportion of officers employed in local policing roles to 50.2% from 48.3%.

5.1 Introduction

This chapter provides statistics on the number of police officers employed in frontline policing roles, according to the model set out by Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire & Rescue Services (HMICFRS). Further details on the model can be found in Annex 4 of HMICFRS's [Value for Money Profiles](#) and the [user guide](#) which accompanies this release. This chapter also presents statistics on police officers employed in local policing functions. Statistics presented here are based on which function a police officer spent the majority of their time doing.

5.2 Changes to the police functions framework

Since 2012, the Home Office has published statistics on police officer, police staff and Police and Community Service Officers (PCSO) functions, based upon a set of 60 function categories that had remained unchanged for several years. Following an extensive consultation with police forces, HMICFRS and other key stakeholders, the Home Office replaced this old functions-framework with a framework based on the Police Objective Analysis (POA) categories. These are reviewed annually by the Home Office, HMICFRS and police forces, to ensure that they remain relevant and reflect current policing structures. The change was agreed in order to modernise the data collection, and to align it with the framework used by HMICFRS to collect data on police income, expenditure and funded posts. This change came into effect from 31 March 2015 onwards.

5.3 Comparisons over time

The change of framework means that the police functions data based on the POA framework for 2015 onwards are not directly comparable with data collected under the old framework. Although some functions may appear to be similar between the two, there are often differences in definitions, and so any attempts to compare across the two frameworks should be done with caution. Very few functions are comparable across both frameworks.

In addition to this, the POA categories are reviewed annually, therefore some categories may be added, removed, or amended from one year to the next.

Further details on the police functions framework, along with a full list of the functions included in the old and new frameworks, can be found in the [user guide](#).

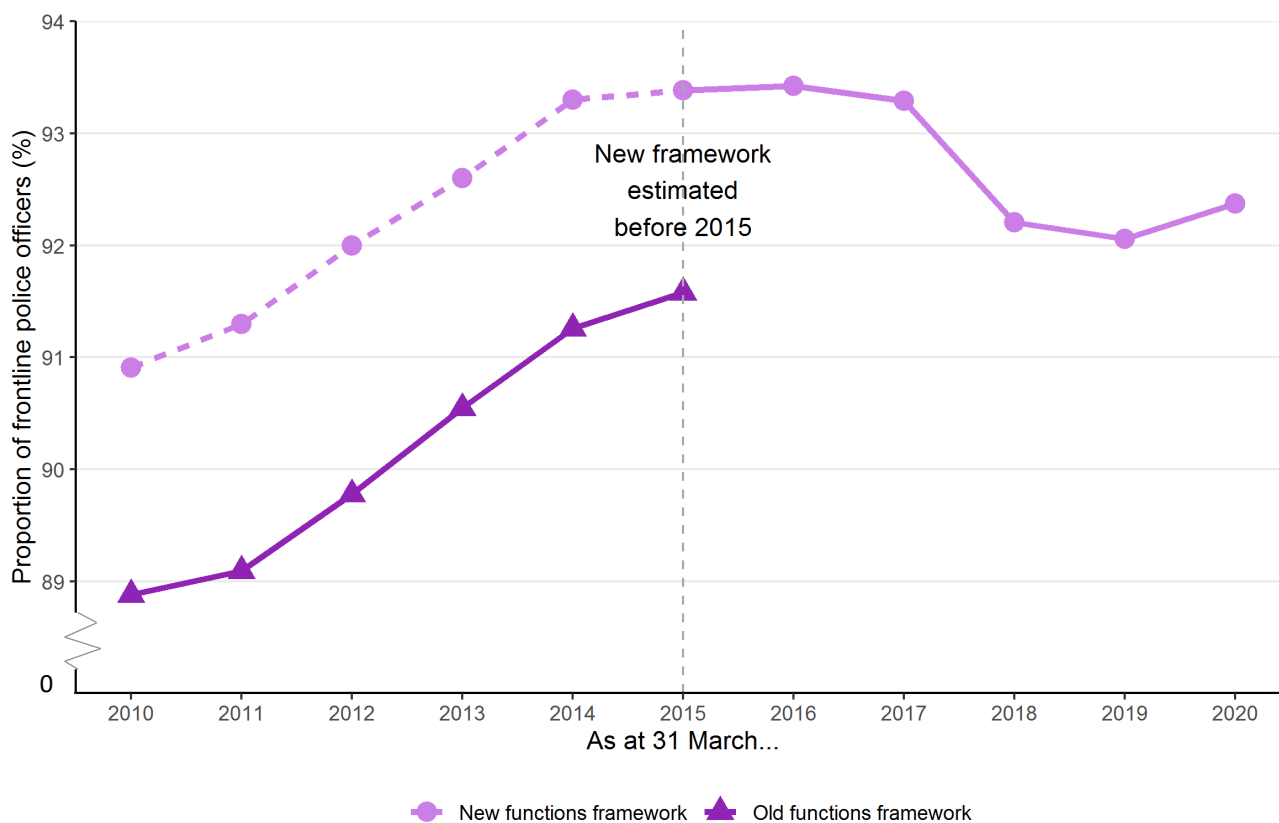
5.4 Frontline policing

As stated in section 5.2, the change in police functions framework has resulted in a loss of comparability over time. This is particularly true for the measure of frontline policing, as both the framework and the frontline model that is based on this have changed. This causes difficulties when attempting to make comparisons of frontline policing with previous years. Further details on the model based on the new POA functions framework can be found in Annex 4 of HMICFRS's [Value for Money Profiles](#). One of the most significant changes was that National Policing functions, including Counter Terrorism/Special Branch roles, were excluded from the model entirely. Many of these were previously classed as frontline roles.

To provide a back series on frontline policing, the Home Office collected data from the police under both the old and the new frameworks in March 2015. This means data can be adjusted for previous years to create a longer time series. Estimates have been made at a Police Force Area level, which in turn has allowed the national England and Wales figure to be estimated. Further information on the method used to estimate the back series can be found in the [user guide](#).

Figure 5.1 shows the difference between the old frontline measure and the estimated back series of the new measure for the proportion of frontline police officers. At the national level, the proportion of police officers in frontline policing roles was 1.8 percentage points higher as at 31 March 2015 under the new POA framework compared with the old framework.

Figure 5.1: Proportion of frontline police officers, England and Wales, as at 31 March 2010 to 31 March 2020¹



Source: Home Office, [table F5](#)

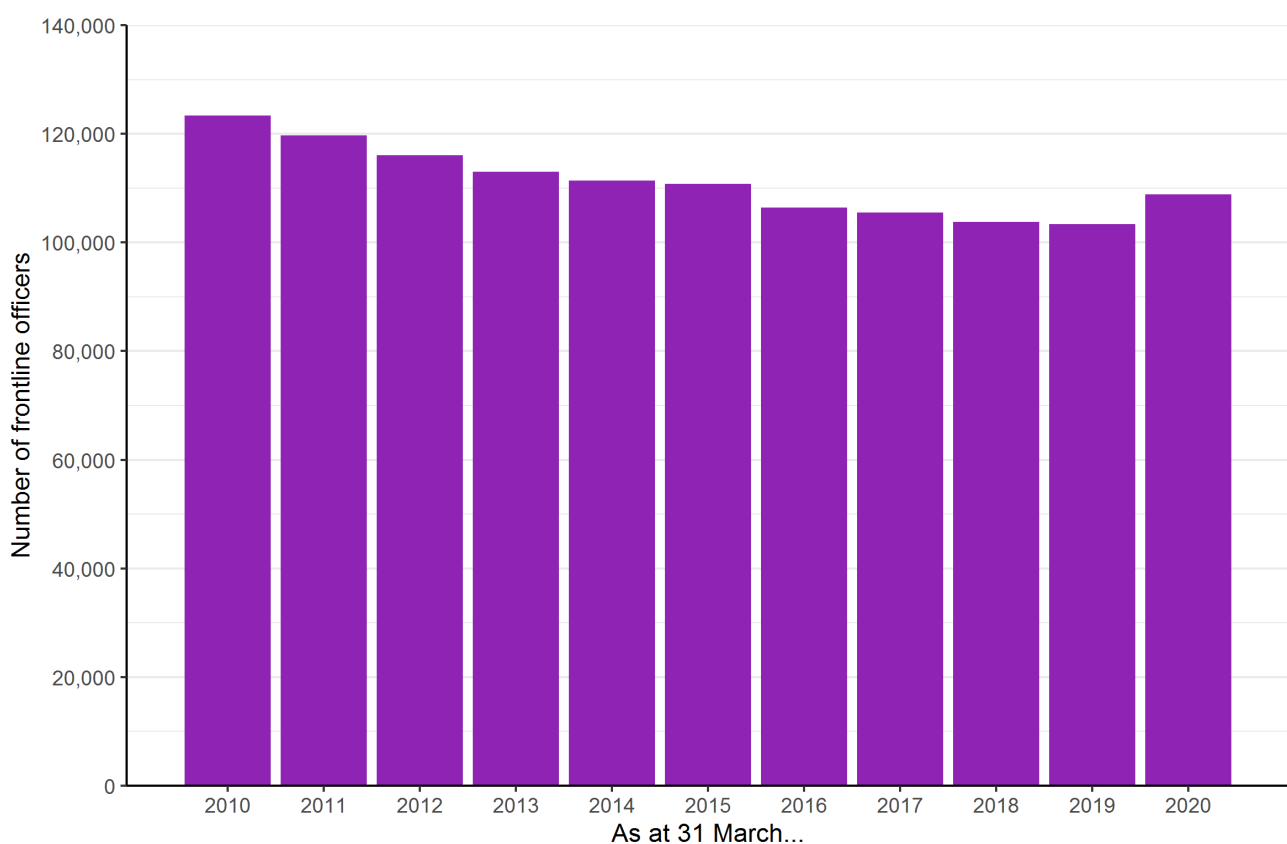
Notes:

- Figures for March 2015 onwards have been calculated using Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire & Rescue Services' (HMICFRS's) frontline policing model. Further details on the frontline policing model based on the old functions framework can be found in HMICFRS's [Policing in Austerity: Meeting the Challenge](#) report. Further details on the model based on the new POA functions framework can be found in Annex 4 of HMICFRS's [Value for Money Profiles](#). Both models exclude police officers recorded under the 'other' function category. The 'other' function category includes police officers on maternity/paternity leave, career break, full-time education or on suspension; and those on long-term leave (sickness, compassionate special or unpaid).

Figure 5.2 shows the trend in the number and proportion of police officers employed in frontline policing roles as at 31 March, in each year from 2010 to 2020. Figures from 31 March 2010 to 31 March 2014 have been estimated as described above. The underlying figures are presented in the main data tables, along with the number and proportion of police officers employed in frontline support and business support roles as at 31 March in each year from 2010 to 2020.

As at 31 March 2020 there were 108,856 police officers employed in frontline policing roles, an increase of 5,509 officers (or 5.3%) compared with the previous year. The proportion of officers employed in frontline roles remained stable (92%).

Figure 5.2: Number and proportion of full-time equivalent frontline¹ police officers, England and Wales, as at 31 March 2010 to 31 March 2020²



Source: Home Office, [table F5](#)

Notes:

1. Visible operational frontline and non-visible frontline have been added together to give an overall frontline total.
2. Figures for March 2015 onwards have been calculated using Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire & Rescue Services' (HMICFRS's) frontline policing model. Figures for March 2010 to March 2014 have been estimated based on data for a parallel running year (March 2015) where data was collected using both functions frameworks. Further details on these estimates can be found in the [user guide](#).

Table 5.1: Number of full-time equivalent police officers employed in frontline¹, frontline support² and business support roles, England and Wales, as at 31 March 2011 to 31 March 2020³

	Frontline	Frontline support	Business support
31-Mar-11	119,729	6,469	4,912
31-Mar-12	116,122	5,971	4,161
31-Mar-13	113,009	5,215	3,762
31-Mar-14	111,383	4,706	3,309
31-Mar-15	110,853	4,324	3,528
31-Mar-16	106,411	4,087	3,401
31-Mar-17	105,502	4,114	3,471
31-Mar-18	103,837	4,348	4,428
31-Mar-19	103,347	4,176	4,645
31-Mar-20	108,856	4,140	4,846

Source: Home Office, [table F6](#)

Notes:

1. Visible operational frontline and non-visible frontline have been added together to give an overall frontline total.
2. Frontline support was previously named operational support under the old framework.
3. Figures for March 2015 onwards have been calculated using Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire & Rescue Services' (HMICFRS's) frontline policing model and police officer functions data in the [main data tables](#). Figures for March 2010 and March 2014 have been estimated based on data for a parallel running year (March 2015) where data was collected using both functions frameworks. Further details on these estimates can be found in the [user guide](#).

Table 5.2: Proportion of full-time equivalent police officers employed in frontline¹, frontline support² and business support roles, England and Wales, as at 31 March 2010 to 31 March 2020³

	Frontline	Frontline support	Business support
31-Mar-11	91.3	4.9	3.7
31-Mar-12	92.0	4.7	3.3
31-Mar-13	92.6	4.3	3.1
31-Mar-14	93.3	3.9	2.8
31-Mar-15	93.4	3.6	3.0
31-Mar-16	93.4	3.6	3.0
31-Mar-17	93.3	3.6	3.1
31-Mar-18	92.2	3.9	3.9
31-Mar-19	92.1	3.7	4.1
31-Mar-20	92.4	3.5	4.1

Source: Home Office, [table F6](#)

Notes:

1. Visible operational frontline and non-visible frontline have been added together to give an overall frontline total.
2. Frontline support was previously named operational support under the old framework.
3. Figures for March 2015 onwards have been calculated using Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire & Rescue Services' (HMICFRS's) frontline policing model. Figures for March 2010 and March 2014 have been estimated based on data for a parallel running year (March 2015) where data was collected using both functions frameworks. Further details on these estimates can be found in the [user guide](#).

5.5 Local policing

Under the POA functions framework outlined in section 5.2, each individual police function is categorised into a broader group, one of which is 'local policing'. This is defined as police officers/staff whose primary role involves at least one of the following:

- neighbourhood policing;
- incident (response) management;
- specialist community liaison; and,
- working within the local policing command team.

Full details on the definitions of each function can be found in Table_F4 of the accompanying [data tables](#).

There were 59,176 police officers employed within local policing functions as at 31 March 2020, an increase of 5,018 officers (9.3%) compared with a year earlier. This continues a reversal in the declines over the previous three years. Those working within local policing roles accounted for 50.2% of all officers as at 31 March 2020, a slightly larger proportion than the previous year figure of 48.3% (proportion excludes 'Other' and 'National Policing' functions).

Table 5.3: Number and proportion of full-time equivalent police officers in local policing roles, England and Wales, as at 31 March 2016 to 31 March 2020¹

	31-Mar-15	31-Mar-16	31-Mar-17	31-Mar-18	31-Mar-19	31-Mar-20
Number	61,083	57,415	56,430	53,822	54,158	59,176
Proportion (%)	51.5	50.4	49.9	47.8	48.3	50.2

Source: Home Office, [table F1](#)

Notes:

1. The proportions have been calculated excluding police officers recorded under the 'Other' function category and 'National Policing' functions. The 'Other' category includes police officers on maternity/paternity leave, career break, full-time education or on suspension; and those on long-term leave (sickness, compassionate special or unpaid)

There were 100 local police officers for every 100,000 people in England and Wales³, - 99 for every 100,000 people in England and 105 for every 100,000 people in Wales. London had the most at 147 for every 100,000 people, while the South East had the least at 77 for every 100,000 people.

³ Population estimates taken from "[Estimates of the population for the UK, England and Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland](#)", Office of National Statistics:

5.6 Police functions by ethnicity

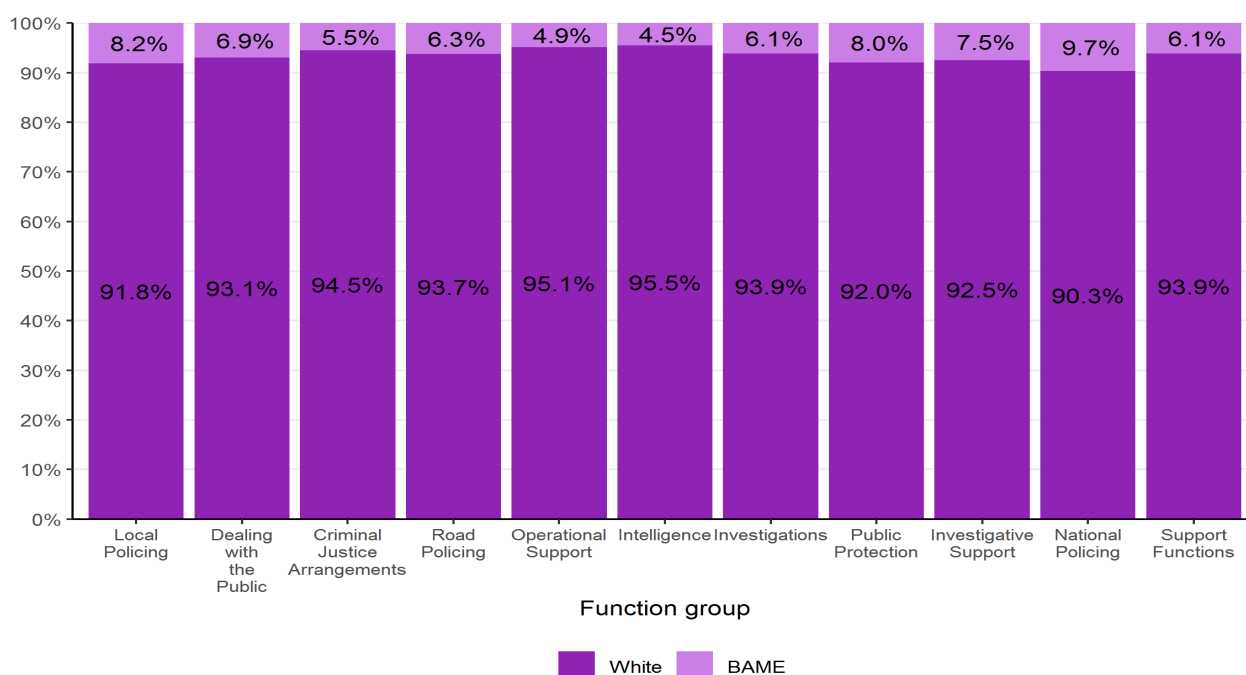
Each individual police function is categorised into a broader group, such as local policing, road policing and national policing (for example) according to the POA framework outlined in section 5.2.

Within these groups, data is collected on the ethnicity of the officer, as represented by one of three groups: 'White', 'Black and minority ethnic', and 'Not stated'. Proportions in this section are calculated by excluding the third group representing cases where the ethnicity of the officer was not known. More detailed ethnicity is available according to other segmentation such as police force and rank in [chapter 6](#).

As at 31 March 2020, those identifying as White accounted for 92.7% of all officers and those identifying as Black, Mixed, Asian, Chinese or Other accounted for 7.3%. Twelve months earlier these figures were 93.1% and 6.9% respectively.

Figure 5.3 shows the ethnic split across each policing function. Local Policing, the single largest officer function in full-time equivalent (FTE) terms, was 91.8% White and 8.2% Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic (BAME) as at 31 March 2020. Twelve months earlier these figures were 92.2% and 7.8%.

Figure 5.3: Proportion of police officers, by ethnic group and function, as at 31 March 2020, England and Wales¹



Source: Home Office, [Table F7](#)

Notes:

1. Proportions exclude cases where the ethnicity of the officer is 'not stated'.

National Policing recorded the highest proportion of BAME officers at 9.7% with those identifying as White accounting for 90.3%.

6 Diversity

Key results

- As at 31 March 2020, BAME officers represented 7.3% of all officers who stated their ethnicity, a small increase from 6.9% reported in the previous year.
- Under-representation was highest among Senior ranks (i.e. chief inspector or above) compared with constables and other ranks. For example, 4% of officers of rank chief inspector or above were BAME, compared with 8% of constables.
- There were 40,319 female police officers in the 43 police forces on 31 March 2020, making up 31% of police officers in England and Wales (up 1 percentage point from 30% last year).

6.1 Introduction

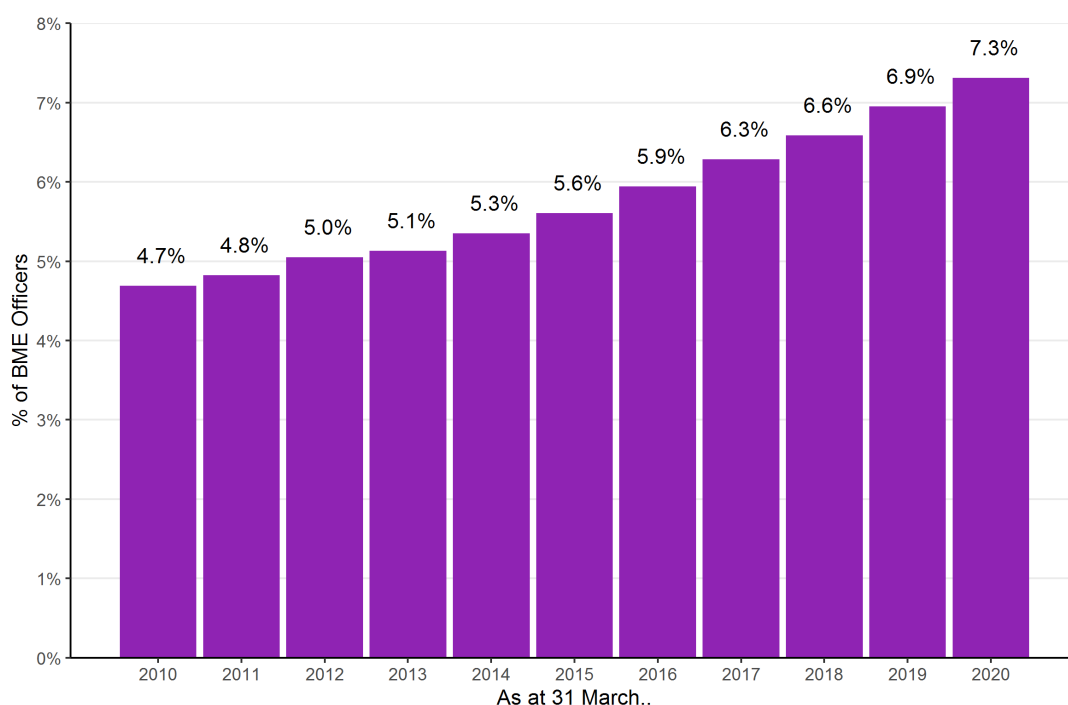
This chapter presents statistics on the diversity of the police workforce, focusing specifically on the ethnicity, sex and age. It also presents information on the ethnicity and sex of promoted officers, joiners and leavers.

6.2 Police officers: Ethnicity

As at 31 March 2020, there were 9,174 full-time equivalent (FTE) Black, Asian, and Minority Ethnic (BAME) police officers in the 43 forces in England and Wales, an increase of 842 (10%) compared with a year earlier. BAME officers represented 7.3% of all officers who stated their ethnicity, an increase from 6.9% in the previous year. There has been a gradual upward trend in the proportion of BAME officers since 2010 (Figure 6.1) and reflects a churn of the workforce with new recruits drawn from a more diverse background than their predecessors. However, the proportion of BAME officers remains considerably lower than the 14% of the population in England and Wales who identify as BAME⁴.

⁴ Population data from the 2011 Census, based on whole population. Data available at: <https://www.ons.gov.uk/census/2011census/2011censusdata>

Figure 6.1: Proportion of police officers who are BAME, as at 31 March 2010 to 31 March 2020, England and Wales¹



Source: Home Office, [Ethnicity Open Data Table](#)

Notes:

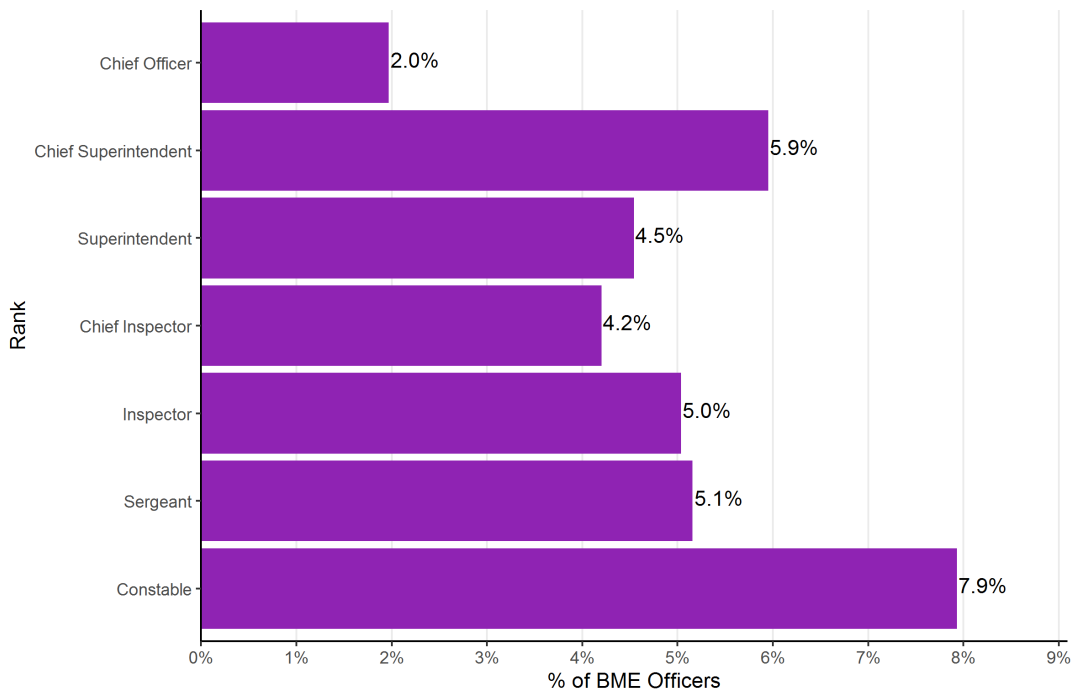
1. Excludes those who did not state their ethnicity.

Of the 43 forces, the Metropolitan Police Service (MPS) had the highest proportion of BAME police officers, with 15% of officers identifying themselves as such but still well below the proportion of BAME people resident in the Capital (40%) according to the 2011 Census.

The second highest proportion of BAME officers was in West Midlands Police, where 12% of officers who stated their ethnicity identified themselves as BAME (compared with 30% of the local population). This force was closely followed by Bedfordshire Police (where 10% of police officers identified as BAME compared with 23% of the local population). Police forces covering more rural areas (such as North Wales Police and Cumbria Police) had the smallest proportion of BAME officers (1%), reflecting a relatively small BAME population within those areas.

As in previous years, levels of BAME under-representation were highest among Senior ranks (i.e. chief inspector or above) compared with constables and other ranks. For example, 4% of officers of rank chief inspector or above were BAME, compared with 8% of constables (Figure 6.2). This is likely to partly reflect the increasing number of BAME joiners in recent years, many of whom will have joined at constable level but also the historical under-representation of the BAME community in the service.

Figure 6.2: Proportion of police officers who are BAME, by rank, as at 31 March 2020, England and Wales¹



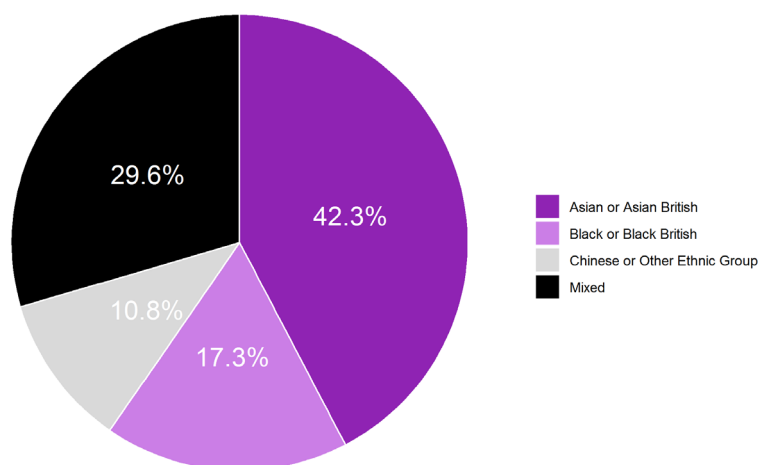
Source: Home Office, [table D1](#)

Notes:

1. Excludes those who did not state their ethnicity.

Of the 9,174 BAME officers employed in the 43 police forces in England and Wales, 42% classified themselves as Asian or Asian British, 30% as Mixed, 17% as Black or Black British, and 11% as Chinese or Other ethnic group. These proportions have remained relatively stable over recent years.

Figure 6.3: Composition of BAME officers, by ethnic group, as at 31 March 2020, England and Wales



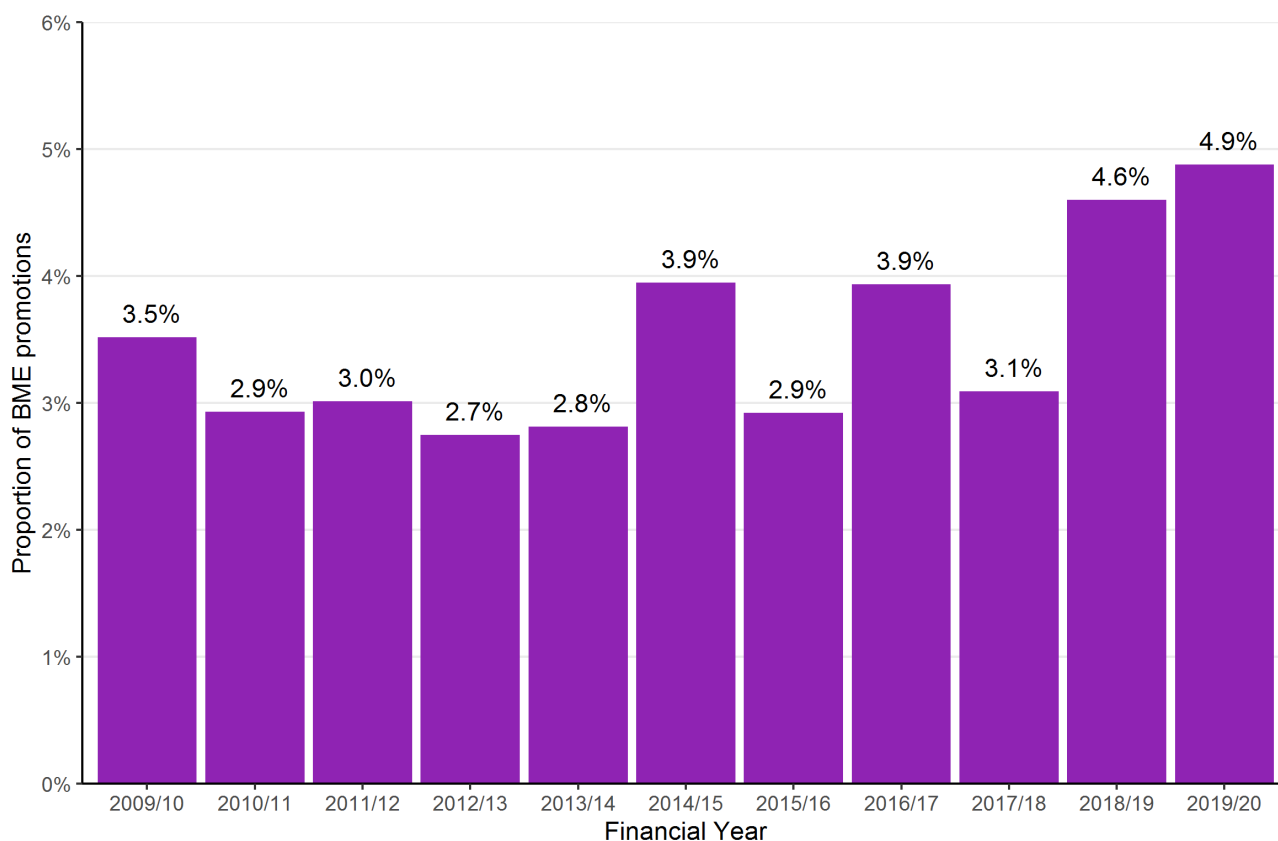
Source: Home Office, [table D2](#)

6.3 Police officer promotions

Since the implementation of a new HR system in 2018, the Metropolitan Police Service (MPS) have been unable to provide data on promotions for the past three years. To make a comparable time series, data in this section therefore exclude the MPS. However, data for promotions within the MPS for years prior to 2017 are provided in the [data tables](#). Since the MPS have a large proportion of officers who are Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic (15%) figures in this section will be affected by the absence of data for the force.

Of the 2,756 police officers promoted in 42 of the 43 police forces in 2019/20, 2,689 indicated their ethnicity. Of these, 131, or 5%, identified themselves as BAME, a similar proportion to the previous year. (Figure 6.4)

Figure 6.4: Proportion of promotions where the officer promoted is BAME, 2009/10 to 2019/20, England and Wales^{1,2}



Source: Home Office, [Promotions Open Data Table](#)

Notes:

1. Data are on a headcount basis and exclude cases where the ethnicity of the officer promoted is unknown.
2. Excludes the Metropolitan Police Service who were unable to provide data for 2017/18, 2018/19 or 2019/20.

6.4 Police officer joiners: Ethnicity

Excluding transfers, 12,883 police officers joined the 43 police forces in England and Wales in 2019/20, and 12,426 (96%) stated their ethnicity. Of these, 1,270, or 10% identified themselves as BAME, down 1 percentage point on last year.

The Metropolitan Police Service (18%), and Greater Manchester Police (19%), had the most BAME joiners (excluding transfers) in both volume and percentage terms and, though the volume of new recruits was low (49 new recruits in total), the City of London Police had the most BAME joiners (excluding transfers) in percentage terms alone, at 22%.

In 2019/20, the majority of BAME joiners (excluding transfers) were standard direct recruits (97% of all BAME joiners). Table 6.1 shows how this compares with those officer joiners who identified themselves as White.

Table 6.1: Officer joiner types, by ethnicity, 2019/20, England and Wales^{1,2}

Type of joiner	BAME joiners	White joiners
Standard Direct Recruit	96.6%	92.4%
Previously Special Constable	2.3%	6.2%
Re-joining	1.1%	1.5%
	100.0%	100.0%

Source: Home Office, [Joiners Open Data Table](#)

Notes:

1. Excludes cases where the ethnicity of the joining officer is unknown.
2. Excludes transfers between forces.

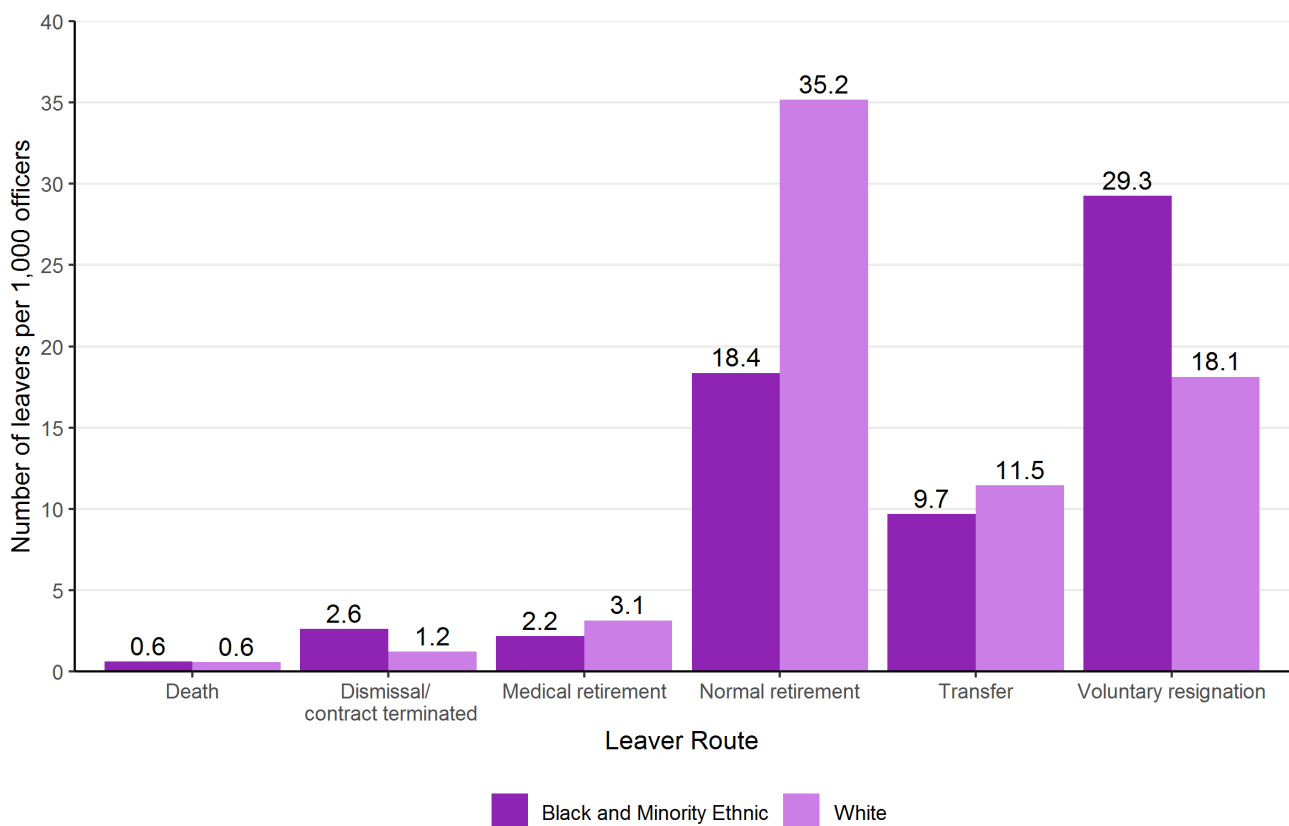
For further information about the different joiner types, please see [chapter 4](#).

6.5 Police officer leavers: Ethnicity

In 2019/20, and excluding transfers, 6,944 of the 7,141 (97%) officers who left the 43 police forces in England and Wales stated their ethnicity. Of these, 442, or 6%, were BAME officers.

There was a higher rate of normal retirements amongst White officers. This is likely to reflect the differing age profile of different ethnic groups within the police. For example, due to historically low levels of recruitment of BAME officers they are likely to be generally younger than White officers, meaning fewer BAME officers are likely to have yet reached retirement. Rates of voluntary resignations and dismissals (which also includes cases where a contract was terminated for reasons other than misconduct) were higher amongst BAME officers (Figure 6.5).

Figure 6.5: Number of officers leaving by each exit route per thousand officers, by ethnicity, 2019/20, England and Wales^{1,2,3}



Source: Home Office, [Leavers Open Data Table](#)

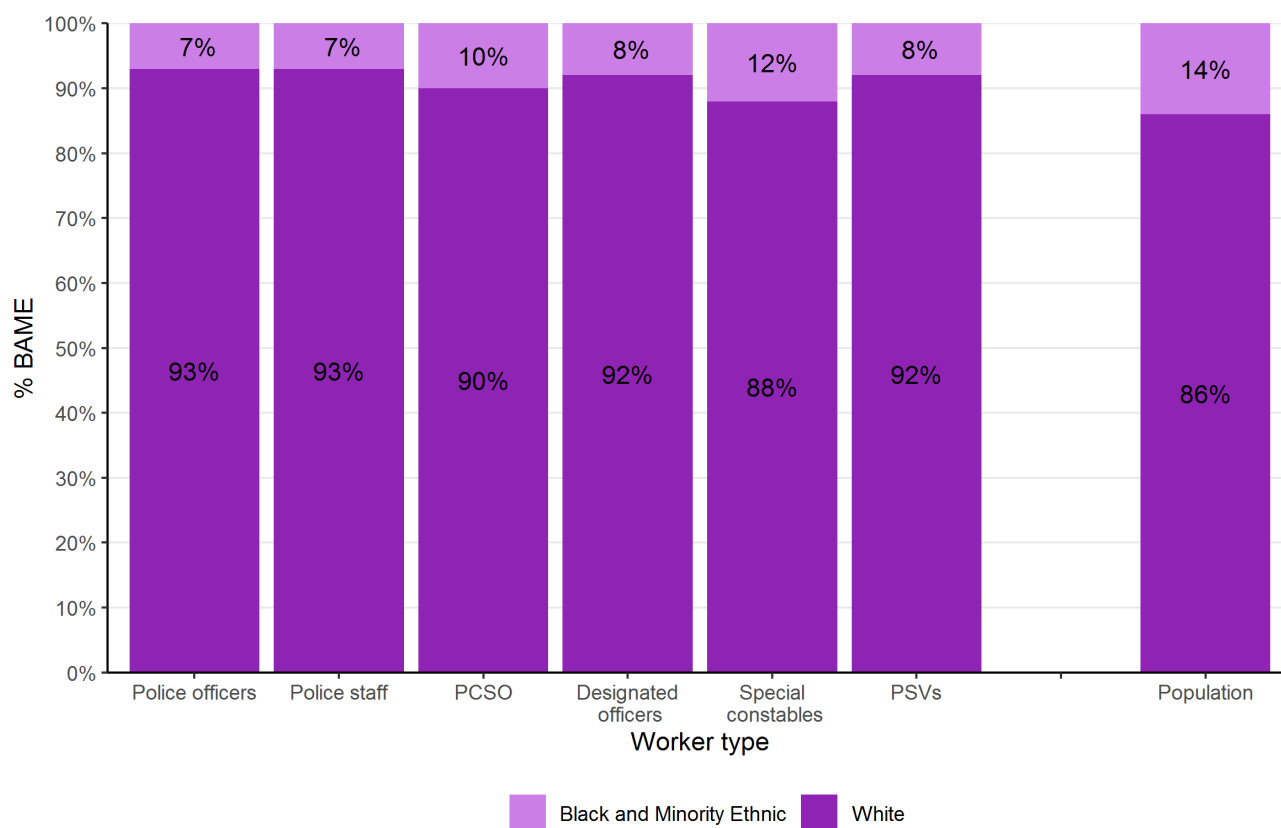
Notes:

1. Excludes cases where the ethnicity of the leaving officer is unknown.
2. Excludes transfers to other forces.
3. Leaving rates are calculated as number of officers leaving via that route in 2019/20, as a proportion of officers employed by the forces as at 31 March 2019 per thousand officers.

6.6 Police staff, PCSOs, designated officers, special constables, and police support volunteers: Ethnicity

The proportion of BAME workers in other areas of the workforce is higher than for police officers (Figure 6.6). The most ethnically diverse part of the police workforce is the Special Constabulary, where, as at 31 March 2020, 1,034 of the 8,782 special constables who stated their ethnicity identified as BAME (12% compared with 7% of officers, and 14% of the population), closely followed by police community support officers (10%).

Figure 6.6: Ethnic breakdown of the police workforce, as at 31 March 2020, England and Wales¹



Source: Home Office, [Ethnicity Open Data Table](#)

Notes:

1. Excludes those who did not state their ethnicity.

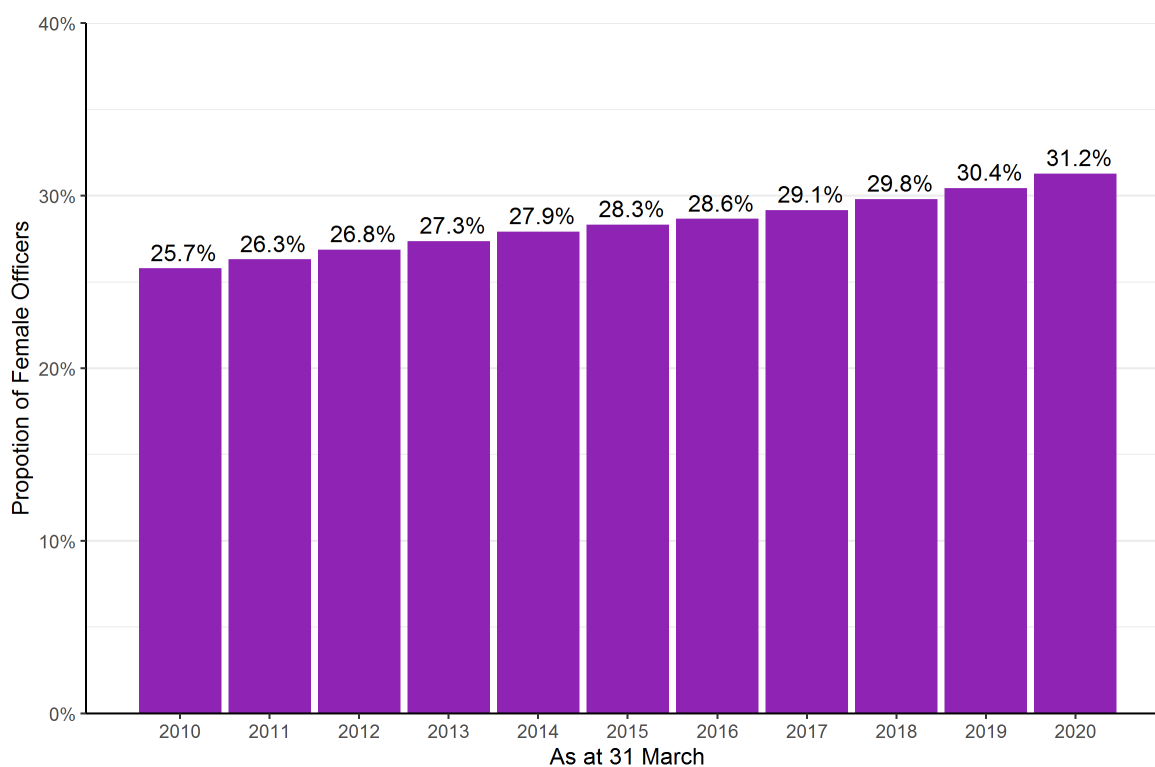
6.7 Police officers: Sex

There were 40,319 female police officers in the 43 police forces on 31 March 2020, making up 31% of police officers in England and Wales. The number of female officers increased by 2,886 (8%) compared with a year earlier, and the proportion of female police officers also increased slightly (up 1 percentage point from 30%).

The proportion of female police officers in the 43 forces has increased in every year over the past decade (Figure 6.7) from 36,988 to 40,319 between March 2010 and March 2020.

As in previous years, of the 43 forces, Cumbria had the highest proportion of female police officers (40%), followed by North Wales (37%). The City of London Police, Cleveland, and the MPS had the smallest proportions at 23%, 27%, and 28% respectively.

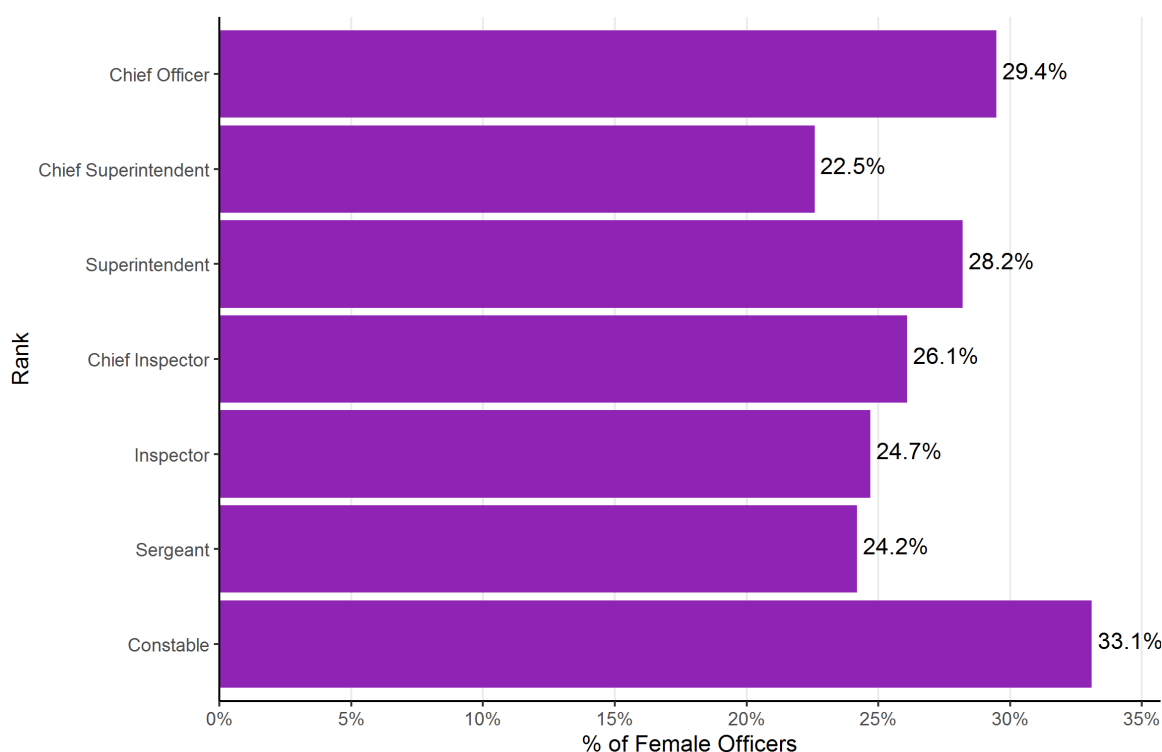
Figure 6.7: Proportion of female police officers, as at 31 March 2010 to 31 March 2020, England and Wales



Source: Home Office, [Workforce Open Data Table](#)

Female officers were more commonly found in constable ranks, which reflects the increasing diversity of the workforce in recent years, with most new joiners coming in at constable level (Figure 6.8).

Figure 6.8: Proportion of female police officers, by rank, as at 31 March 2020, England and Wales



Source: Home Office, [table D2](#)

6.8 Police officer promotions: Sex

Of the 2,756 police officers promoted in 42 of the 43 police forces in 2019/20 (the MPS are currently unable to provide data on promotions), 847 were female, which accounted for 31% of all officer promotions (the same proportion as female officers). This was an increase of 126 on the 721 female officers promoted in 2018/19 (excluding the MPS).

6.9 Police officer joiners and leavers: Sex

Excluding transfers, of the 12,883 police officers that joined the 43 police forces in 2019/20, 4,722 (37%) were female. This was similar to the year before, and broadly in line with rest of the last ten years, when the proportion of female joiners has varied between 30% and 38%. The proportion of female joiners was therefore higher than the proportion of current officers that are female (31%). This shows a trend towards an increasing proportion of female officers. Of new female joiners (excluding transfers) in 2019/20, 94% were standard direct recruits, with most of the rest joining from the Special Constabulary (6%).

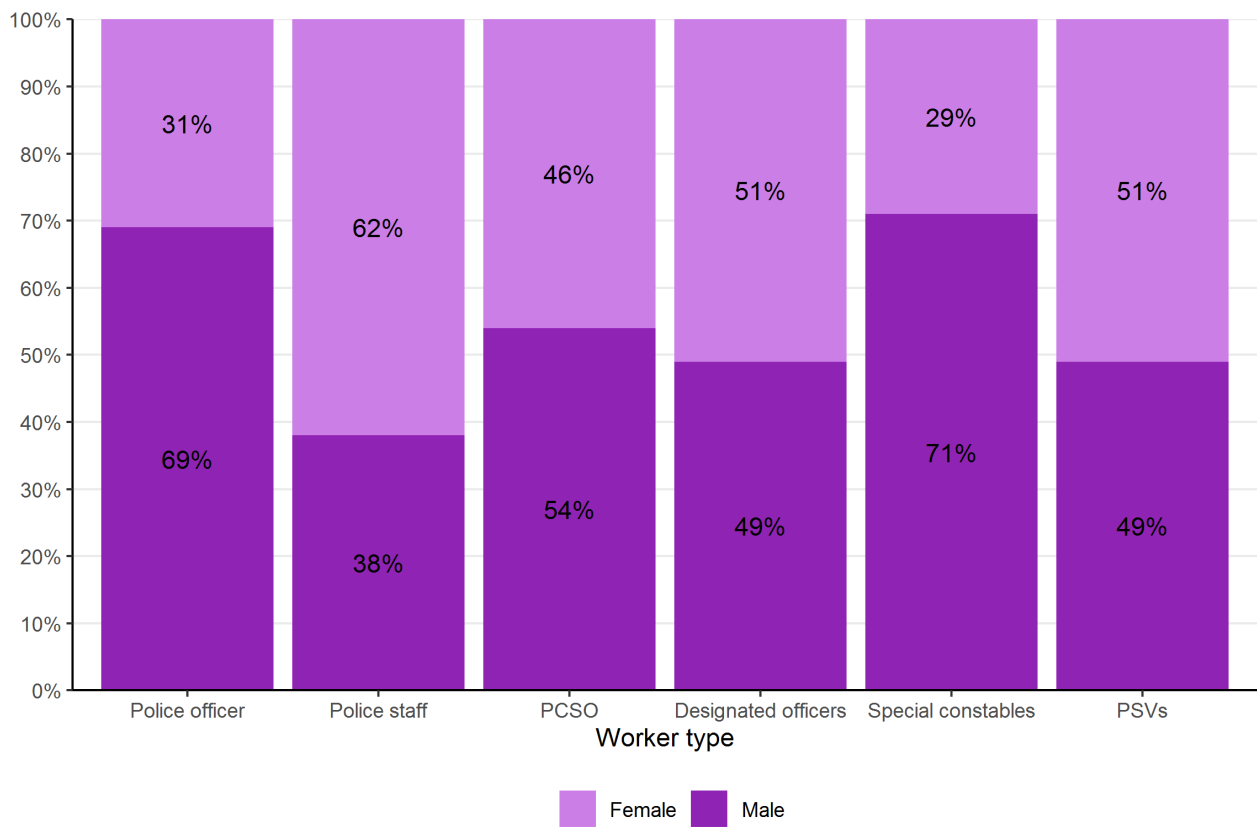
Of the 7,141 officer leavers during the year to March 2020, 1,910 (27%) were female. Most female officers left either via normal retirements (47% of all female leavers, compared with 63% of all male leavers) or voluntary resignations (44% of all female leavers, compared with 29% of all male leavers) in 2019/20. As a proportion of officers, fewer females retired (not on medical grounds) than their male counterparts (47% of female leavers and 63% of male

leavers left via this route), but more left through voluntary resignations (44% of female leavers left via this route compared with 29% of males).

6.10 Police staff, PCSOs, designated officers, special constables, and police support volunteers: Sex

As at 31 March 2020, females made up 62% of police staff in the 43 forces in England and Wales. The split was most even for Police Support Volunteers and designated officers, both 51% female. The proportion of females in the Special Constabulary was similar to that for police officers, with around 3 in 10 special constables being female (29%).

Figure 6.9: Proportion of the police workforce who are female, as at 31 March 2020, England and Wales

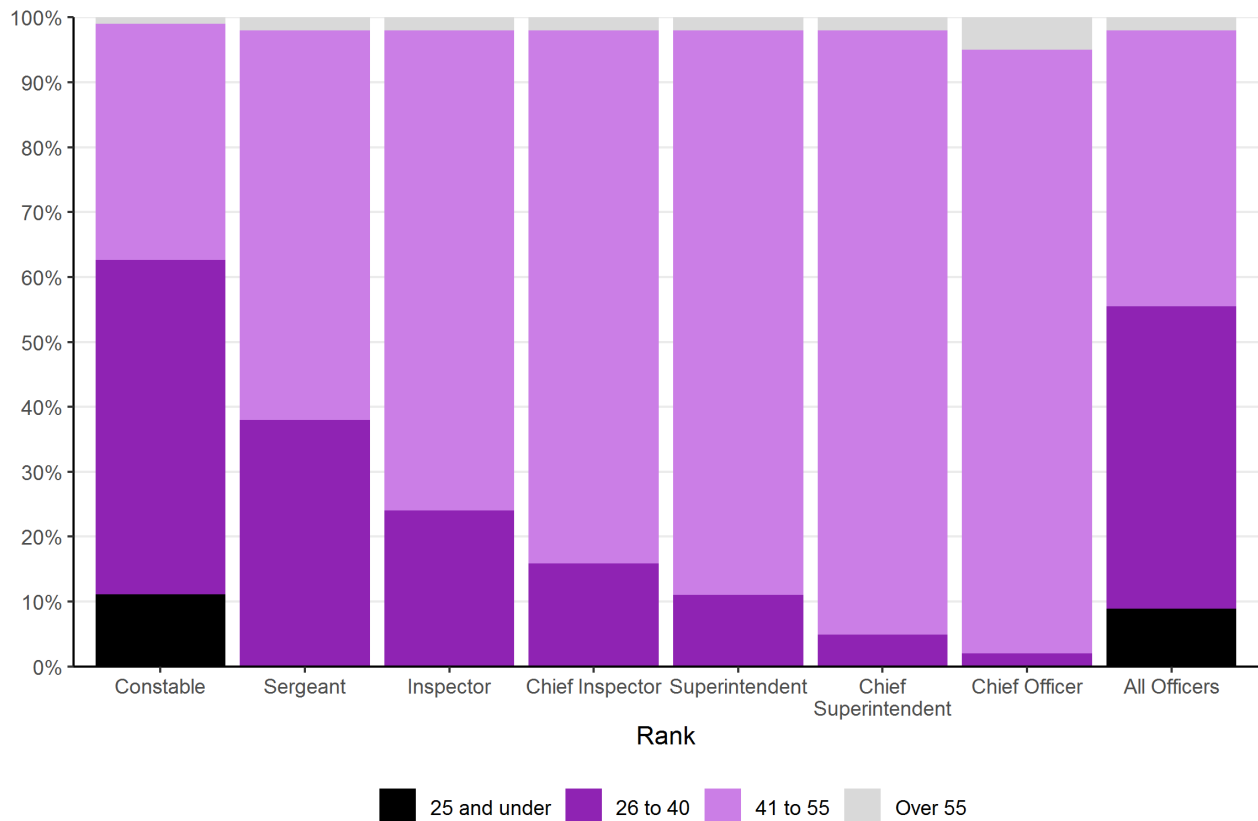


Source: Home Office, [Workforce Open Data Table](#)

6.11 Police officers: Age

As at 31 March 2020, over half (56%) of all police officers were aged 40 or under, with 9% of all officers aged 25 and under. As expected, the age profile varied by rank, with a large proportion of older officers in more senior ranks; for example, while just 4 chief officers (2%) were aged under 40, 62% of constables were.

Figure 6.10: Age breakdown of police officers, by rank, as at 31 March 2020¹



Source: Home Office, [table D5](#)

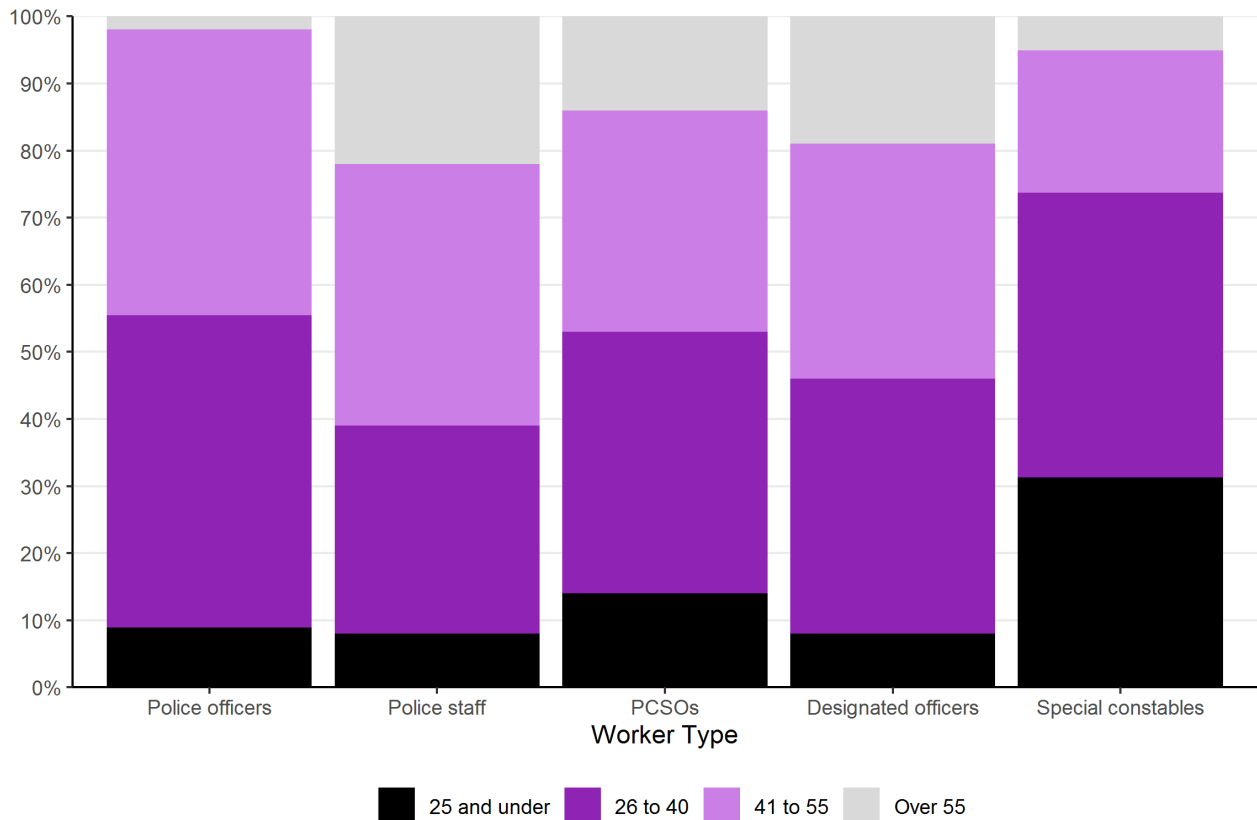
Notes:

1. Excludes cases where the age of the officer is unknown.

6.12 Police staff, PCSOs, designated officers and special constables: Age

Figure 6.11 shows the variation in the age profile of the police workforce. As expected, civilian staff tended to be older than other worker types, with 22% of staff over the age of 55, compared with just 2% of officers. In contrast, the Special Constabulary had a younger profile than the paid ranks, with 31% of special constables aged 25 and under. This is much higher than the next nearest worker type (PCSOs at 14%).

Figure 6.11: Age breakdown of police workers, by worker type, as at 31 March 2020¹



Source: Home Office, [Age Open Data Table](#)

Notes:

1. Excludes cases where the age of the worker is unknown.

7 Officer wellbeing

Key results

- As at 31 March 2020, there were 2,578 full-time equivalent (FTE) police officers on long-term sick leave in the 43 forces in England and Wales accounting for 2% of police officers in England and Wales (a similar proportion to previous years).
- As at 31 March 2020, there were 4,857 FTE officers on long-term absence in the 43 forces in England and Wales. This accounted for 4% of all officers.
- Excluding Cheshire (who could not provide data), as at 31 March 2020, there were 4,815 police officers (headcount) on recuperative duties, accounting for 4% of officers. There were also a further 5,121 officers on adjusted/restricted duties, accounting for a further 4% of officers in these forces.

7.1 Introduction

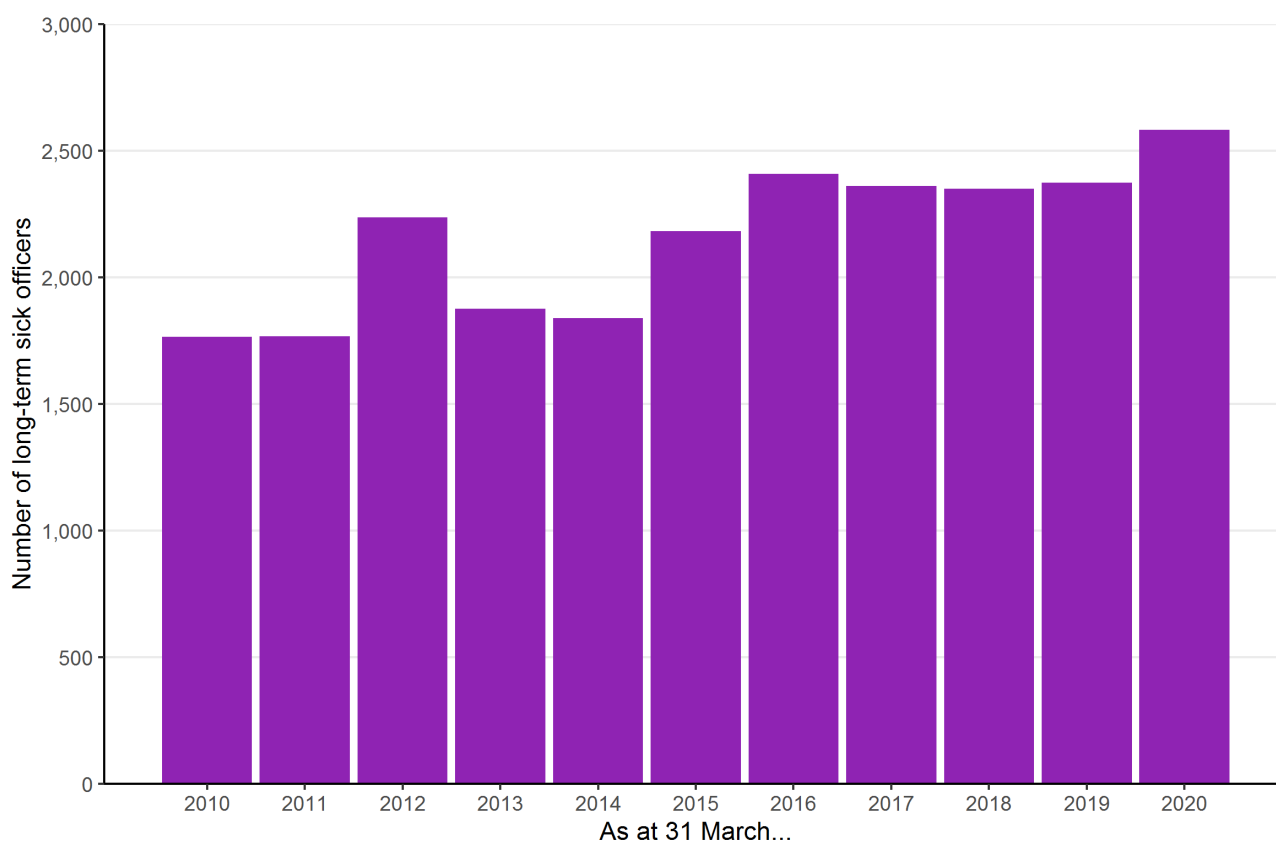
This chapter provides information on the number of officers on long-term sick leave, and the number on recuperative and adjusted/restricted duties as at 31 March of each year. Definitions of recuperative, restricted and adjusted duties, as well as information on long-term sickness, are provided in the relevant sections below.

7.2 Sickness

This section contains information on the number of police officers (FTE) on long-term sick leave, as at 31 March each year. Long-term sickness includes any recognised medical condition, physical or psychological, as reported by the officer or a medical practitioner, which has lasted for more than 28 calendar days.

As at 31 March 2020, there were 2,578 full-time equivalent police officers on long-term sick leave in the 43 forces in England and Wales, an increase of 208 officers (FTE) when compared with the previous year, and accounting for 2% of police officers in England and Wales (a similar proportion to previous years).

Figure 7.1: Number of officers (FTE) on long-term sick leave, as at 31 March 2010 to 31 March 2020, England and Wales¹



Source: Home Office, [table W1](#)

Notes:

1. In order for sickness to be classed as long-term, an officer must be absent for more than 28 calendar days.

7.3 Sickness by rank and sex

There was some variation in sickness levels across ranks, with officers at higher ranks generally having lower levels of sickness; 2.1% of constables were on long-term sick leave, compared with 1.1% of officers of Chief Inspector rank or above.

Table 7.1: Proportion of officers (FTE) on long-term sick leave, by rank, as at 31 March 2020, England and Wales

Rank	Proportion on long-term sick leave
Constable	2.1%
Sergeant	1.6%
Inspector	1.4%
Chief Inspector or above	1.1%

Source: Home Office, [Absence Open Data Table](#)

Sickness rates have been consistently higher among females than males with 2.6% of female officers on long-term sick leave, compared with 1.7% of male officers as at 31 March 2020.

7.4 Recuperative and adjusted/restricted duties

This section contains information on the number of officers on recuperative and adjusted/restricted duties as at the 31 March 2020, broken down by sex. Data in the section are based on officer headcount (rather than full time equivalents).

On 1 May 2015, reforms came into effect that meant forces were required to re-categorise officers who were not fully deployable. This saw the replacement of the previous categories (which were used in different ways by different forces) with the more precise category of 'limited duties'. This includes three sub-categories of 'adjusted', 'recuperative' and 'management restricted' duties' (data on management restricted duties are not collected by the Home Office). The transition to this new framework has taken place on different timescales across forces, and as a result, 2018 data will include officers categorised under a mixture of the old and new definitions (i.e. those officers previously categorised as 'restricted' on medical grounds and those newly categorised as being on 'adjusted' duties). In future years, it is likely that the data will more closely reflect the new categories, as forces complete their transition to these.

Definitions of recuperative, adjusted, and management restricted duties are provided below.

Adjusted duty – duties falling short of full deployment, in respect of which workplace adjustments (including reasonable adjustments under the Equality Act 2010) have been made to overcome barriers to working. For an officer to be placed on adjusted duties, he/she must be attending work on a regular basis and be working for the full number of hours for which he/she is paid (in either a full time or part time substantive role).

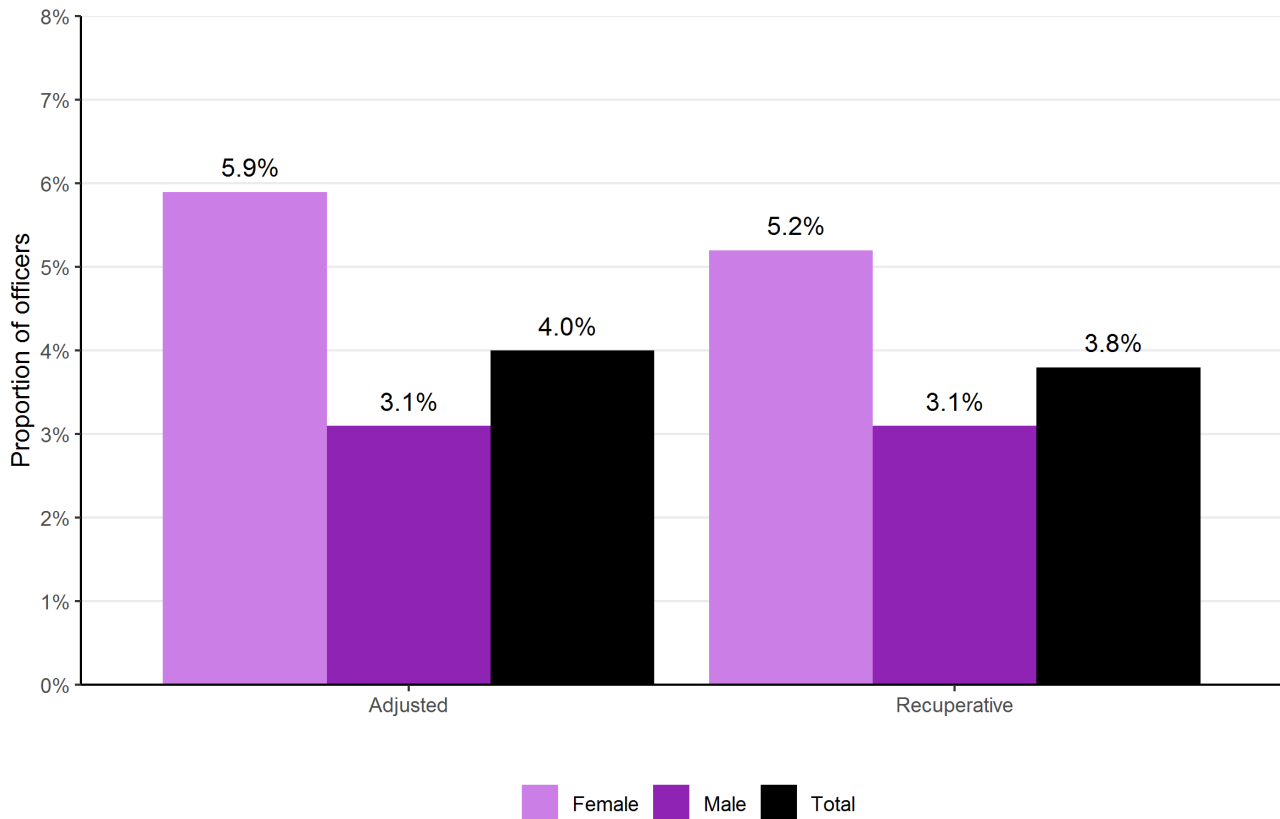
Recuperative duty – duties falling short of full deployment, undertaken by a police officer following an injury, accident, illness or medical incident, during which the officer adapts to and prepares for a return to full duties and the full hours for which they are paid, and is assessed to determine whether he or she is capable of making such a return.

Management restricted duty – duties falling short of full deployment to which an officer is allocated in circumstances in which: verifiable confidential or source sensitive information or intelligence has come to the notice of the force that questions the suitability of an officer to continue in his or her current post; and/or serious concerns are raised which require management actions, both for the protection of individuals and the organisation. In either case also that: criminal or misconduct proceedings are not warranted; and the Chief Constable has lost confidence in the officer continuing in their current role.

Excluding Cheshire (who could not provide data), as at 31 March 2020, there were 4,815 police officers (headcount) on recuperative duties, accounting for 4% of officers. There were also a further 5,121 officers on adjusted/restricted duties, accounting for a further 4% of officers in these forces.

Of female officers in England and Wales (excluding those forces who could not provide data), 5% were on recuperative duties and 6% were on adjusted/restricted duties as at 31 March 2020. This was higher than the proportion of males on recuperative and adjusted/restricted duties, which were each 3%.

Figure 7.2: Proportion of officers (headcount) on recuperative and adjusted/restricted duties, by sex, as at 31 March 2020, England and Wales^{1,2}



Source: Home Office, [table W3](#)

Notes:

1. On 1 May 2015, reforms came into effect that meant forces were required to re-categorise officers who are not fully deployable. The transition to this new framework has taken place on different timescales across forces, and as a result, data on "adjusted/restricted duties" are likely to contain a mix of officers on 'adjusted' and 'restricted' duties.
2. Excludes Avon & Somerset and Cheshire for adjusted duties and Cheshire and Sussex for recuperative duties

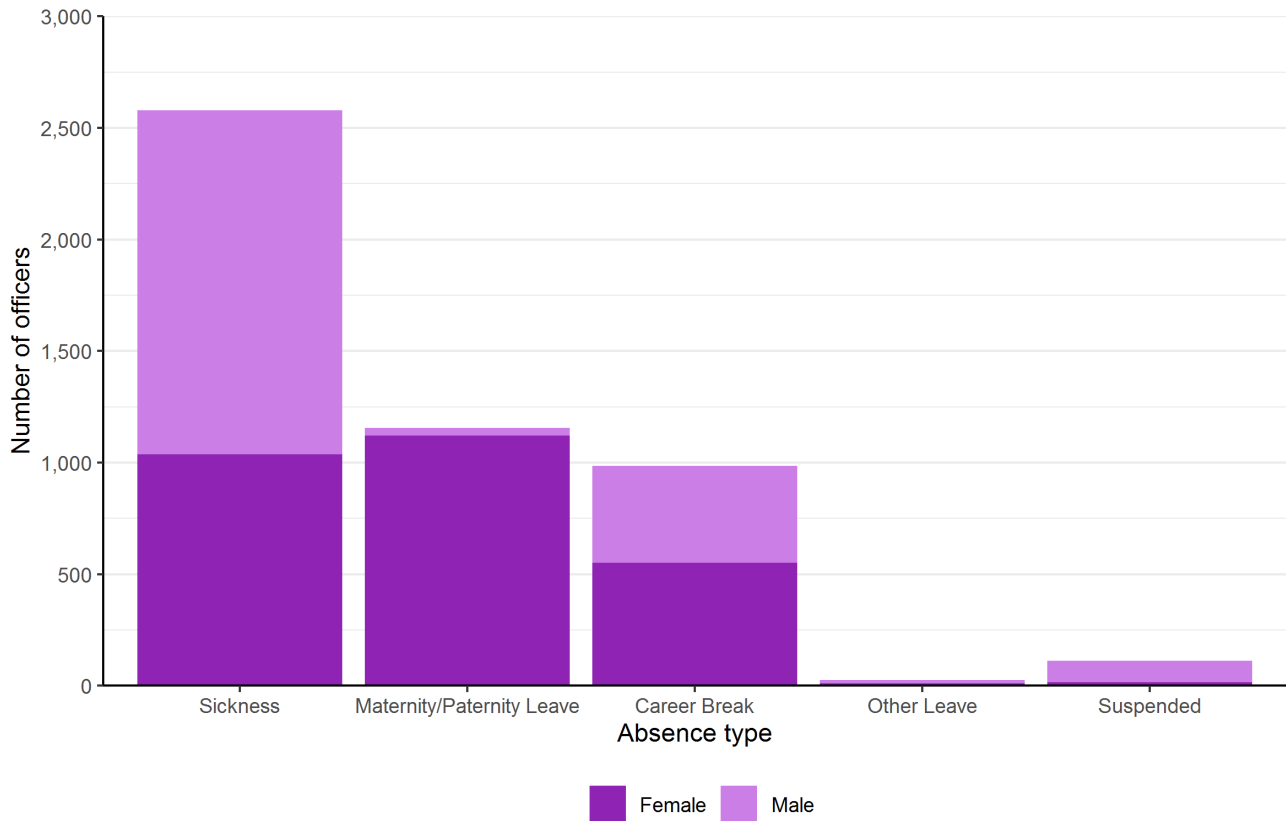
7.5 Long-term absence

This section presents data on long-term absence due to career breaks, maternity/paternity leave, sick leave and suspension. More detailed information on absences due to long-term sickness is covered in section 7.2. Long-term absence is any absence that has lasted for more than 28 calendar days, as at the end of the reporting period (31 March 2020).

As at 31 March 2020, there were 4,857 full-time equivalent (FTE) officers on long-term absence in the 43 forces in England and Wales. This accounted for 4% of all officers.

Of officers on long-term absence, 2,578 (53%) were on sick leave, 1,156 (24%) were on maternity/paternity leave, and 986 (20%) were on career breaks. The remaining 3% were either suspended, or on 'other leave' (which includes compassionate leave and special leave).

Figure 7.3: Number of officers on long-term absence broken down by absence type and sex, England and Wales, as at 31 March 2020¹



Source: Home Office, [Absence Open Data Table](#)

Notes:

1. In order for sickness to be classed as long-term, an officer must be absent for more than 28 calendar days.

Although females accounted for 31% of police officers in England and Wales, they accounted for 56% of all long-term absentees as at 31 March 2020. However, excluding maternity/paternity leave, females accounted for 44% of all absences. Although females accounted for a disproportionate amount of many of the absence types (relative to the breakdown by sex of police officers), maternity/paternity leave, and career breaks were the two categories in which females accounted for the majority of absences.

Table 7.2: Proportion of long-term absence accounted for, by sex, as at 31 March 2020, England and Wales

Absence type	Proportion (%)	
	Male	Female
Career break	44.0	56.0
Sick leave	59.7	40.3
Maternity / Paternity leave	2.9	97.1
Other leave	56.3	43.7
Suspended	86.9	13.1
All long-term absence (excluding Maternity / paternity leave)	56.4	43.6
All long-term absence	43.6	56.4
All police officers	68.8	31.2

Source: Home Office, [Absence Open Data Table](#)

7.6 Additional data

Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire & Rescue Services (HMICFRS) publishes a range of data in their annual [Value for Money Profiles](#). This includes data on short and medium-term sickness, as well as recuperative and adjusted/restricted duties.

Data on short and medium-term sickness are considered to be less robust than long-term sickness and should be interpreted with caution. Short and medium-term sickness is more likely to fluctuate from one year to the next and can be more prone to variation in the accuracy of recording between forces.

Statistical Bulletins are prepared by staff in Home Office Statistics under the National Statistics Code of Practice and can be downloaded from GOV.UK:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/home-office/about/statistics>

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