

Asked by **Lord Bassam of Brighton** Asked by **Lord Bassam of Brighton** Asked on: 06 February 2015 Ministry of Justice Television: Licensing Lords HL4745 To ask Her Majesty's Government how many people received custodial sentences in the last 10 years, broken down by gender, for the non-payment of fines relating to television licences; for how many of those people this was their sole offence; and how long the average sentence was.

Lord Faulks Answered on: 18 February 2015

Offenders found guilty of TV licence evasion may be sentenced to a fine and there is an expectation that fines are paid immediately where possible. HM Courts and Tribunals Service takes the issue of fine enforcement very seriously and is working to ensure that the recovery of fines is a continued priority nationwide. Failure to pay a fine imposed for TV licence evasion can lead to committal to prison for fine default, but only as a last resort once all other methods of recovering the money have been considered or tried and have failed.

Information about the length of time for which men and women were committed to prison for failing to pay a fine imposed for non-payment of a TV licence, since 2005, is provided in the table. The data relates to the fine defaulter's principal offence: information about whether it was their sole offence is not collected.

Fine defaulter receptions for non-payment of a TV licence, by sex and average sentence length, England and Wales, January 2005- September 2014

	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010 ⁽¹⁾	2011	2012	2013	Jan-Sep 2014
Fine defaulter receptions for non-payment of a TV licence										
Males	21	21	17	19	11	..	10	25	15	10
Females	8	3	10	16	19	..	38	26	17	24
Average sentence length in days										
Males	14	14	11	20	17	..	20	19	25	19
Females	17	6	17	16	17	..	24	25	23	18

Data Sources and Quality

These figures have been drawn from administrative IT systems which, as with any large scale recording system, are subject to possible errors with data entry and processing.

(1) During 2010 there was a disruption to the supply of the prison receptions data which is used for the purpose of statistical reporting.