

Police numbers in England & Wales

- There were 124,066 full-time equivalent police officers in the 43 police forces of England and Wales on 31 March 2016, a 2,752 decrease (2.2%) compared with a year earlier. In addition there were 296 central service secondees (bringing the total to 124,362). There were 2,968 British Transport Police officers.
- Since March 2003 this headline measure of police strength has included staff on career break or maternity/paternity leave. Excluding staff on career break or maternity/paternity leave, to enable longer term comparisons, the strength of the 43 police forces was 118,779 at March 2016, the lowest level since March 1985.
- Since 2010 there are nearly 20,000 fewer FTE police officers, a reduction of nearly 14%.
- Police forces recruited 4,735 officers in the 12 months to March 2016, with 7,701 officers leaving over that period.
- The proportion of female police officers in England and Wales has increased from 7% in 1977 to 29% by 2016.
- Ethnic minority strength as a proportion of total police service strength increased from 1.0% in 1989 to 6% in March 2016. In London, the proportion of ethnic minority officers in the Metropolitan Police force is 12%.
- The Library's [Police Service Strength](#) briefing paper contains updated UK-wide statistics.

Total police officer strength¹, England and Wales 2004-2016

Full Time Equivalent at 31 March

	Total excluding secondments	Of which:				Total strength ²
		Female Number	%	Minority ethnic Number	%	
2004	138,468	27,925	20%	4,594	3%	140,563
2005	141,059	29,940	21%	4,971	4%	142,794
2006	141,523	31,520	22%	5,236	4%	143,271
2007	141,892	33,117	23%	5,519	4%	142,374
2008	141,861	34,332	24%	5,793	4%	142,363
2009	143,770	36,121	25%	6,290	4%	144,274
2010	143,734	36,988	26%	6,642	5%	144,235
2011	139,109	36,532	26%	6,615	5%	139,585
2012	134,099	35,401	26%	6,664	5%	134,580
2013	129,584	35,401	27%	6,537	5%	129,956
2014	127,909	35,653	28%	6,715	5%	128,346
2015	126,818	35,738	28%	6,979	6%	127,110
2016	124,066	35,498	29%	7,218	6%	124,362

Notes:

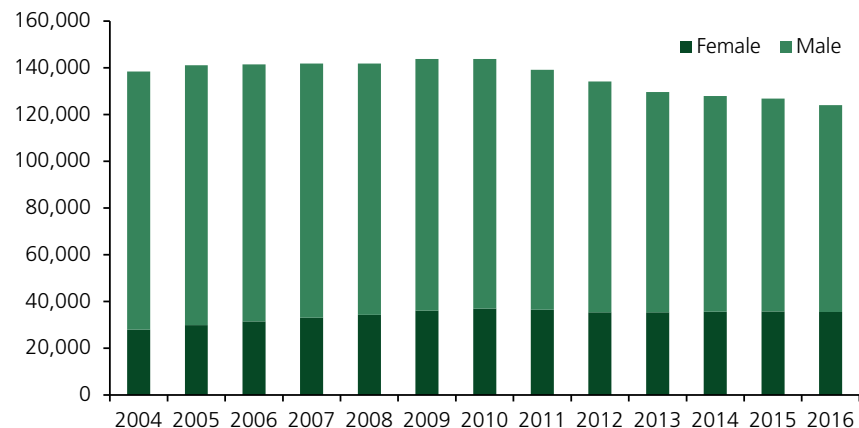
1 - Includes staff on career breaks or maternity/paternity leave.

2 - FTE + secondments. Excludes British Transport Police. From March 2007 no longer includes staff employed by NCS and NCIS following the launch of SOCA.

Source: Home Office Statistical Bulletin, Police Service Strength, England & Wales

Police officer strength, England and Wales 2004-2016

FTE excluding secondments at 31 March



Annual changes in police officer strength (excluding secondments)

Consistent like for like basis - FTE, England and Wales
March 1980- March 2016

