



## Press release

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### 19 Crime and criminal justice

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Conviction statistics 2015

### **For juveniles mostly community service, for adults mainly financial penalty**

Neuchâtel, 06.06.2016 (FSO) – **In 2015 a total of 12,100 juvenile convictions were passed. This corresponds to a decline of 2% compared with the previous year. The decline in juvenile convictions that began in 2011 has thus continued and now totals -21%. Unconditional community service continues to be the most common sentence for juveniles (36%). In the same year, 108,500 adult convictions were recorded in the register of convictions. This corresponds to a decline of 3% compared with the previous year. An unconditional financial penalty remains the most common sentence (71%). These are some of the findings from the Federal Statistical Office (FSO).**

In almost half of all convictions (44%), juveniles were sentenced to a "personal performance" (community service: cleaning, for example, or attending courses). In 26% of convictions, a caution (warning) was given, in 20% a fine and in 7% detention. While juveniles on probation were rarely sentenced to "personal performance" (9%), this was much more common for juveniles in detention (62%).

In comparison with the previous year, an obvious decline can be seen in the number of unconditional detentions pronounced in the last year (-17%), whereas the number of conditional detentions remained stable.

#### **Fewer juvenile offenders under the Swiss Criminal Code**

The majority of juvenile convictions are due to consumption of narcotic substances (42%) or property offences (31%).

The general decline of 2% in juvenile convictions for 2015 is due solely to falling numbers in offences under the Swiss Criminal Code (-12%), which includes property offences. An increase has been seen for all other laws taken into account in the juvenile conviction statistics: Road Traffic Act +5%; Foreign

Nationals Act +39; Trafficking in narcotic substances +15% and Consumption of narcotic substances +4%.

### **Mainly conditional financial penalties for adults**

The most common sentence for adults in 2015 was once again conditional financial penalty (71%), followed by unconditional financial penalty at 14%. In third place were unconditional custodial sentences (8%). In 2015 only 2% of main sanctions were conditional custodial sentences, which are becoming less and less frequent. In 71% of convictions, in addition to this main sanction a fine was imposed; these cannot be conditional and must be paid without exception.

The professed aim of the criminal law revision of 2007 was to replace short custodial sentences of less than six months by financial penalties or community service. In the case of custodial sentences of less than one month, this has largely been achieved (decline of almost 100% for conditional and 77% for unconditional custodial sentences).

For custodial sentences lasting between one and six months, however, a relatively small decline can be observed (-32% for conditional and -19% for unconditional custodial sentences). One of the main reasons for this scant decline is the fact that 80% of all convictions with an unconditional custodial sentence of between one and six months concern people who are not part of the resident population, making it difficult to enforce a financial penalty or community service instead.

### **Rise only for trafficking in narcotic substances**

The decline in adult convictions is due to falling conviction numbers for offences under the Swiss Criminal Code (-8%), the Road Traffic Act (-2%) and the Foreign Nationals Act (-1%).

In 2015, almost half (57,600) of all convictions recorded in the register of convictions were for a felony or misdemeanour under the Road Traffic Act. Serious violations of traffic regulations, such as speeding and driving while unfit through alcohol, medication or narcotic substances fell by 5% and theft or unlawful taking of a motor vehicle with intent to drive dropped by 7%.

Almost 35,000 of the adult convictions recorded were for offences under the Criminal Code. Convictions for property offences - almost half of convictions under the Criminal Code - fell by -11%, violent crime by -9% and sex offences by -12%.

The 18,000 convictions of adults for offences under the Foreign Nationals Act were mostly due to illegal entry into or illegal residence in Switzerland (80%). Here too, a small decline of 1% was seen.

An increase in comparison with the previous year was seen only for trafficking in narcotic substances (+4%). The 7000 adult convictions in 2015 for trafficking in narcotic substances was the highest number ever since the start of the conviction statistics in 1984.

SWISS FEDERAL STATISTICAL OFFICE  
Media Office

## Surveys

Since 1999 the juvenile conviction statistics has recorded all juvenile convictions for offences under the Criminal Code, the Foreign Nationals Act, the Narcotics Act or for a felony or misdemeanour under the Road Traffic Act. Since 1984 the conviction statistics has recorded all adult convictions entered in the conviction register due to a misdemeanour or felony.

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