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### Number of convictions in 2020 at an all-time low

**Vienna**, 2021-06-09 – In 2020, 25 586 convictions by Austrian courts were registered, as Statistics Austria reports. This represents a decline of 13.7% compared to the previous year. The convictions were based on a total of 42 502 offences (see Table 1), with an average of 1.66 offences per conviction. A total of 23 716 people were legally convicted, with an average of 1.08 convictions per convict.

"In 2020, there was the biggest relative drop in the number of convictions since the introduction of diversion in adult criminal law in 2000. After a near steady decline since 2005, convictions in the 2020 Corona year plummeted abruptly to an all-time low of 25 586", said Tobias Thomas, Director General of Statistics Austria.

### Significant decrease in convictions for property and drug offences

In 2020, as in the previous year, offences against property represented the largest group (12 926 or 30.4%), followed by offences against life and limb (7 727 or 18.2%) and offences under the Narcotic Substances Act (7 039 or 16.6%). These three groups together accounted for around two thirds of all offences.

Compared to the previous year, the total number of offences decreased by 11.4% in 2020. Some offences declined at an above-average rate (see Table 2), among others theft (-20.3%), (grossly) negligent manslaughter (-17.3%), negligent bodily harm (-15.7%), but also offences under the Narcotic Substances Act (-16.4%) and the Financial Offences Act (-27.4%). Almost no changes were observed with regard to murder (+/-0.0%), dangerous threat (+1.0%), (aggravated) property damage (-3.5%) and rape (+2.0%). Contrary to the general trend, a few types of offences also increased, including child pornography (+18.0%) and continued use of violence (+15.8%). However, some of the final judgements rendered in 2020 may relate to offences committed in previous years, and the duration of the court proceedings is typically related to the type of offence. In 2020, the police crime statistics recorded a drop of 11.3% in reported offences.

### No relevant changes in the sex and age of the convicts

In 2020, the proportion of men (84.7%) and adults (83.6%) amongst all convicts was almost the same as in the previous year (see Table 3). At the time of the crime, 6.3% of those convicted were juveniles (14- to 17-year-olds) and 10.1% were young adults (18- to 20-year-olds).

Similar to the previous year, just over half (55.4%) of all convicts had one or more previous convictions (2019: 56.6%).

### Reconviction rate decreased slightly

The reconviction rate has decreased slightly from 32.7% in 2019 to 32.0% in 2020. The reconviction statistics monitor all those released (from an unconditional prison sentence or institutional placement) or legally convicted (except for unconditional prison sentences or institutional placement) in a certain base year over a period of four years with regard to new convictions by Austrian courts. Of the total of 26 318 people in the 2016 cohort – that is, the conviction or release took place in 2016 – around two thirds (68.0%) did not get another conviction, while every third person was convicted again within four years. If there was a reconviction, it occurred within a short period of time: two thirds of all reconvictions were recorded within the first two years of the observation period.

For more detailed results and further information regarding crime statistics please refer to our [website](#).

**Information on methods, definitions:** **Judicial criminal statistics** are based on the criminal records file maintained by the Federal Ministry of the Interior. It classifies final convictions which are handed down by the Austrian courts in accordance with the Austrian Criminal Code or supplementary criminal laws. In the case of proceedings instituted on account of multiple punishable acts, the conviction is classified according to the offence that is decisive in terms of the punishment imposed ("principal offence"). Since 2012 Statistics Austria has been obtaining information on the "principal offence" from the courts. In addition, all convicted offences have been made available for statistical purposes since reporting year 2012.

**Statistics on reconvictions** are based on persons being legally convicted (except for unconditional prison sentences) or released from prison during the base year. The statistics show how many of the persons concerned were convicted again during a given risk period. Until base year 2009 the observation period covered five calendar years. Since base year 2010 every person has been individually observed over a period of four years.

**Table 1: Convicted persons, convictions and offences 2012–2020**

Data level	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
<b>Absolute number</b>									
Convicted persons	32 285	31 541	30 227	29 511	27 916	28 286	27 655	27 284	23 716
Convictions	35 541	34 424	32 980	32 118	30 450	30 746	30 157	29 632	25 586
Offences	53 624	51 696	49 940	49 210	47 645	49 049	48 830	47 980	42 502
<b>Change to previous year in %</b>									
Convicted persons	.	-2.3	-4.2	-2.4	-5.4	1.3	-2.2	-1.3	-13.1
Convictions	.	-3.1	-4.2	-2.6	-5.2	1.0	-1.9	-1.7	-13.7
Offences	.	-3.6	-3.4	-1.5	-3.2	2.9	-0.4	-1.7	-11.4
S: STATISTICS AUSTRIA, Judicial Criminal Statistics.									

**Table 2: Changes in selected offences or groups of offences 2019–2020**

Offence or group of offences <sup>1)</sup>	2019 <sup>2)</sup>	2020 <sup>2)</sup>	Change	Change in %
<b>All offences total</b>	<b>47 980</b>	<b>42 502</b>	<b>-5 478</b>	<b>-11.4</b>
<b>Crimes against life and limb</b>	<b>8 474</b>	<b>7 727</b>	<b>-747</b>	<b>-8.8</b>
thereof bodily harm	4 363	3 968	-395	-9.1
thereof negligent bodily harm	1 238	1 044	-194	-15.7
thereof grievous bodily harm	1 779	1 801	-22	-1.2
thereof (grossly) negligent manslaughter	150	124	-26	-17.3
thereof murder <sup>2)</sup>	86	86	0	0.0
<b>Crimes against liberty</b>	<b>4 407</b>	<b>4 269</b>	<b>-138</b>	<b>-3.1</b>
thereof dangerous threat	1 982	2 002	20	1.0
thereof continued use of violence	146	169	23	15.8
<b>Crimes against property</b>	<b>14 824</b>	<b>12 926</b>	<b>-1 898</b>	<b>-12.8</b>
thereof theft	6 664	5 309	-1 355	-20.3
thereof fraud	2 548	2 388	-160	-6.3
thereof (aggravated) property damage	2 174	2 098	-76	-3.5
<b>Crimes against sexual integrity</b>	<b>1 322</b>	<b>1 432</b>	<b>110</b>	<b>8.3</b>
thereof rape	98	100	2	2.0
thereof child pornography	573	676	103	18.0
thereof (aggravated) sexual abuse of a minor	225	228	3	1.3
<b>Offences under the Narcotic Substances Act</b>	<b>8 415</b>	<b>7 039</b>	<b>-1 376</b>	<b>-16.4</b>
<b>Offences under the Financial Offences Act</b>	<b>274</b>	<b>199</b>	<b>-75</b>	<b>-27.4</b>
S: STATISTICS AUSTRIA, Judicial Criminal Statistics 2019 and 2020. – 1) Including attempts. – 2) Year of conviction, crime might have been committed in a previous year.				

**Table 3: Convicts 2019–2020**

Characteristics of the person at the time of the first conviction in the reporting year	Convicts			
	2019		2020	
	absolute	in %	absolute	in %
<b>Convicts total</b>	<b>27 284</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>23 716</b>	<b>100.0</b>
<b>Sex</b>				
Men	23 181	85.0	20 096	84.7
Women	4 103	15.0	3 620	15.3
<b>Age at the time of the crime</b>				
Juveniles (14 to 17 years)	1 634	6.0	1 494	6.3
Young adults (18 to 20 years)	2 764	10.1	2 388	10.1
Adults (21 years and above)	22 886	83.9	19 834	83.6
<b>Nationality</b>				
Austria	15 619	57.2	14 051	59.2
Other	11 665	42.8	9 665	40.8
<b>Previous convictions</b>				
Without previous conviction	15 445	56.6	13 133	55.4
With previous conviction(s)	11 839	43.4	10 583	44.6
S: STATISTICS AUSTRIA, Judicial Criminal Statistics 2019 and 2020.				

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