

Measuring Reoffending

Criminal Justice

Why two recidivism rates are usually not comparable at all.

Every measure counts something different and misses something else.

Measure	Captures	Limitation
Rearrest	Police contact	Highest count, weakest proof
Reconviction	Court outcome	Misses undetected offending
Reimprisonment	Return to custody	Reflects sentencing policy
Self-report	Behaviour reported	Depends on candour and recall
Breach or recall	Rule violation	Not new offending at all

Educational reference. Two reoffending rates are comparable only if measure, follow-up window and cohort definition all match.