



Detainee survey methodology,
results and analyses

Dungavel IRC

August 2025

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Detainee survey methodology

A representative survey of detainees is carried out at the start of every inspection, the results of which contribute to the evidence base for the inspection.

HMI Prisons researchers developed a self-completion questionnaire in May 2019 to support HMI Prisons' *Expectations*. The questionnaire consists of structured questions covering the detainee 'journey' from reception to removal/release together with demographic and background questions which enables comparison of responses from different sub-groups of the detainee population. There are also three open questions at the end of the questionnaire which allow detainees to express in their own words what they find most positive and negative about the IRC. Qualitative analysis of these written comments is undertaken by HMI Prisons researchers and used by inspectors.

Sampling

For smaller IRCs or where the current detainee population is small, questionnaires are offered to every detainee. If the detainee population is large at the time of the survey, questionnaires are offered to a sample of detainees, using the following procedure. On the day of the survey a random sample is drawn by HMI Prisons researchers from a detainee population printout ordered by room location. Using a power calculation, HMI Prisons researchers calculate the minimum sample size required to ensure that the survey findings are representative of the entire population of the centre. The formula used in the calculation assumes a 65% response rate and a 95% confidence interval with a 7% margin of error.

Distributing and collecting questionnaires

HMI Prisons researchers distributed and collected the questionnaires in person. A cover sheet was included with the questionnaire which explained the purpose of the survey and that participation was voluntary. Assurances were given about confidentiality, anonymity and the storage and retention of the data. Detainees were provided with a sealable envelope for their completed questionnaire and told when researchers would return to collect it. Due to social distancing measures researchers were not able to obtain verbal consent from detainees and therefore returned and completed questionnaires were deemed as providing consent. The questionnaire was available in 23 languages.

Survey responses

At the time of the survey on 18 August 2025 the detainee population at Dungavel IRC was 140. Questionnaires were distributed to 139 detainees. It was not possible to offer a questionnaire to one detainee. We received a total of 92 completed questionnaires, a response rate of 66%.

Returned language	Number of completed survey returns
English	43 (47%)
Albanian	15 (16%)
Vietnamese	12 (13%)
Romanian	7 (8%)
Chinese	5 (5%)
Polish	5 (5%)
Arabic	2 (2%)
Lithuanian	1 (1%)
Spanish	1 (1%)
Urdu	1 (1%)
Total	92 (100%)

The full inspection report is available on our website at:
<https://www.justiceinspectorates.gov.uk/hmiprisons/inspections/>

Detainee survey results and analyses

Over the following pages we present the full survey results followed by numerous comparative analyses for Dungavel IRC. For the comparator analyses, where relevant, each question was reformulated using the Chi-square test (or Fisher's exact test if there are fewer than five expected counts in a cell) into a binary 'yes/no' format and affirmative responses compared. Missing responses have been excluded from all analyses and for some questions, responses from a sub-group of the sample are reported (as indicated in the data).

Responses from Dungavel IRC 2025 compared with those from other HMI Prisons surveys

These analyses are carried out on summary data from all survey questions. As we have been using a revised version of the questionnaire since May 2019, we do not yet have full comparator data for all questions.

- Survey responses from Dungavel IRC in 2025 compared with survey responses from other IRCs inspected since August 2022.
- Survey responses from Dungavel IRC in 2025 compared with survey responses from Dungavel IRC in 2021.

Comparisons between self-reported sub-populations of detainees within Dungavel IRC 2025

These analyses are carried out on summary data from selected survey questions only.

- Responses of detainees aged 25 and under compared with those aged over 25.
- Responses of detainees from all other ethnic groups combined are compared with those of white detainees.
- Responses of Muslim detainees compared with those of non-Muslim detainees.
- Responses of detainees who reported that they had a disability compared to those who did not.
- Responses of detainees who reported that they had mental health problems compared with those who did not.
- Responses of detainees with female, non-binary or other gender identities compared with those of male detainees.
- Responses of non-heterosexual detainees compared with heterosexual detainees.
- Responses of detainees who reported not being able to understand written or spoken English very / quite well compared with those who can.
- Responses of detainees who reported that they had been held in prison in the UK compared with those of detainees who reported that they had not been held in prison in the UK.

Please note that we only carry out within-IRC comparator analysis where there is a minimum of 10 responses in each comparison group.

In the comparator analyses, statistically significant differences are indicated by shading. The probability threshold (i.e. p-value) is set at 0.01 which means that there is a 1% likelihood the statistically significant difference between the two groups is due to chance. Results that are significantly more positive are indicated by green shading and results that are significantly more negative are indicated by blue shading. Orange shading has been used to show a statistically significant difference in demographic or other background details. If there is no shading, any difference between the two results is not statistically significant and may have occurred by chance. Grey shading indicates that there are no valid comparative data for that question.

Filtered questions are indented and preceded by an explanation in italics of how the filter has been applied. In the comparator analyses, percentages for filtered questions refer to the number of respondents filtered to that question. For all other questions, percentages refer to the total number of valid responses to the question.

Section 1: About you

1.1	What wing or unit are you currently living on?	
	Loudoun House	28 (30%)
	Duke House.....	17 (18%)
	Main House Top	21 (23%)
	Main House Middle.....	6 (7%)
	Hamilton House (Men's unit)	12 (13%)
	Hamilton House (Women's unit)	8 (9%)
1.2	How old are you?	
	Under 18.....	0 (0%)
	18-20	7 (8%)
	21-25	17(18%)
	26-29	19(21%)
	30-39	28 (30%)
	40-49	14 (15%)
	50-59	7 (8%)
	60-69	0 (0%)
	70 or over	0 (0%)
1.3	How would you describe your ethnicity?	
	Asian	37 (41%)
	Black	7 (8%)
	Mixed.....	5 (5%)
	White	35 (38%)
	Other	7 (8%)
1.4	Do you understand spoken English?	
	Very well.....	26 (29%)
	Quite well.....	24 (26%)
	A little.....	27 (30%)
	No.....	14 (15%)
1.5	Do you understand written English?	
	Very well.....	27 (30%)
	Quite well.....	21 (23%)
	A little.....	25 (27%)
	No.....	18 (20%)

Section 2: Immigration detention

2.1	How long have you been detained in this centre?	
	Less than 1 week	16 (18%)
	1 week or more but less than 1 month	39 (43%)
	1 month or more but less than 3 months	19 (21%)
	3 months or more but less than 6 months	14 (15%)
	6 months or more	3 (3%)

2.2	How much time have you spent in immigration detention in the UK in total?	
	Less than 1 month.....	38 (42%)
	1 month or more but less than 3 months	29 (32%)
	3 months or more but less than 6 months	15 (17%)
	6 months or more	6 (7%)
	Don't remember.....	2 (2%)
2.3	Have you ever been held in prison in the UK?	
	Yes	46 (53%)
	No.....	41 (47%)

Section 3: Your journey to this centre

3.1	Before being brought to this centre, were you told where you were going?	
	Yes	60 (67%)
	No.....	30 (33%)
3.2	How were you treated by escort staff during your journey to this centre?	
	Very well.....	44 (48%)
	Quite well.....	34 (37%)
	Quite badly	6 (7%)
	Very badly	3 (3%)
	Don't remember.....	4 (4%)

Section 4: Reception and first nights

4.1	When you were searched in reception, was this done in a respectful way?	
	Yes	79 (87%)
	No.....	7 (8%)
	Don't remember.....	4 (4%)
	Was not searched	1 (1%)
4.2	While in reception, were you able to speak to someone from the health care team?	
	Yes	79 (87%)
	No.....	9 (10%)
	Don't remember.....	3 (3%)
4.3	Overall, how were you treated in reception?	
	Very well.....	48 (53%)
	Quite well.....	35 (39%)
	Quite badly	1 (1%)
	Very badly	3 (3%)
	Don't remember.....	3 (3%)

4.4 When you first arrived, did you have any problems with the following? (Please tick all that apply.)

Getting phone numbers	18 (21%)
Contacting family	16 (19%)
Arranging care for children or other dependants	4 (5%)
Contacting employers.....	5 (6%)
Money.....	18 (21%)
Housing	6 (7%)
Feeling depressed.....	30 (36%)
Feeling suicidal.....	11 (13%)
Your mental health	22 (26%)
Your physical health	15 (18%)
Drugs or alcohol (e.g. withdrawal)	3 (4%)
Getting medication	4 (5%)
Lost or delayed property.....	11 (13%)
Other problems.....	9 (11%)
Did not have any problems.....	32 (38%)

4.5 Did staff help you to deal with any of these problems?

Yes	33 (40%)
No.....	17 (21%)
Did not have any problems.....	32 (39%)

4.6 Did you feel safe on your first night in this centre?

Yes	63 (71%)
No.....	18 (20%)
Don't remember.....	8 (9%)

4.7 In your first two days here, did you receive information in a language you could understand about:

	Yes	No	Don't remember
Daily life at this centre	60 (75%)	11 (14%)	9 (11%)
Visits	51 (75%)	12 (18%)	5 (7%)
How to see immigration staff	53 (77%)	11 (16%)	5 (7%)
How to get legal advice	54 (78%)	11 (16%)	4 (6%)
How to see health care staff	54 (78%)	10 (14%)	5 (7%)
Other support available	47 (73%)	9 (14%)	8 (13%)

Section 5: Legal rights and immigration

5.1 Have you received free legal advice in this centre?

Yes	61 (70%)
No.....	26 (30%)

5.2 Do you have an immigration lawyer?

Yes	59 (70%)
No.....	25 (30%)

- 5.3 If you have an immigration lawyer, how easy or difficult is it to:**
- | | Easy | Difficult | Don't know |
|-------------------------------|----------|-----------|------------|
| Contact your lawyer | 35 (65%) | 12 (22%) | 7 (13%) |
| Have a visit from your lawyer | 10 (24%) | 10 (24%) | 21 (51%) |
- 5.4 How easy or difficult is it to:**
- | | Easy | Difficult | Don't know |
|--|----------|-----------|------------|
| Obtain bail information | 32 (41%) | 26 (33%) | 20 (26%) |
| Access up-to-date information about your country | 24 (34%) | 21 (30%) | 25 (36%) |
| See Home Office immigration staff | 33 (45%) | 24 (32%) | 17 (23%) |
- 5.5 Are Home Office immigration staff keeping you informed about the progress of your case?**
- | | |
|-----------------|----------|
| Yes | 42 (50%) |
| No..... | 29 (35%) |
| Don't know..... | 13 (15%) |

Section 6: Respectful detention

- 6.1 Please answer the following questions about the wing or residential unit you are currently living on:**
- | | Yes | No | Don't know |
|--|----------|----------|------------|
| Do you normally have enough clean, suitable clothes for the week? | 69 (82%) | 13 (15%) | 2 (2%) |
| Can you shower every day? | 77 (94%) | 3 (4%) | 2 (2%) |
| Do you have clean sheets every week? | 58 (70%) | 15 (18%) | 10 (12%) |
| Do you get cleaning materials for your room every week? | 62 (77%) | 11 (14%) | 8 (10%) |
| Is it normally quiet enough for you to sleep or relax at night? | 53 (66%) | 23 (29%) | 4 (5%) |
| Can you get your property from the centre's property store when you need it? | 54 (68%) | 12 (15%) | 14 (18%) |
- 6.2 Normally, how clean or dirty are the communal/shared areas of your wing or unit (landings, stairs, showers etc.)?**
- | | |
|-------------------|----------|
| Very clean | 35 (42%) |
| Quite clean | 37 (45%) |
| Quite dirty | 6 (7%) |
| Very dirty | 5 (6%) |
- 6.3 What is the quality of food here?**
- | | |
|-----------------|----------|
| Very good | 23 (26%) |
| Quite good..... | 45 (51%) |
| Quite bad..... | 10 (11%) |
| Very bad | 10 (11%) |
- 6.4 Do you get enough to eat at meal times?**
- | | |
|------------------------|----------|
| Always | 43 (49%) |
| Most of the time | 23 (26%) |
| Some of the time | 12 (14%) |
| Never..... | 9 (10%) |

6.5	Does the centre's shop sell the things that you need?	
	Yes	46 (54%)
	No.....	31 (36%)
	Don't know.....	8 (9%)
6.6	Do you know how to make a complaint about your treatment in this centre?	
	Yes	55 (64%)
	No.....	31 (36%)
6.7	In your experience, are complaints dealt with fairly?	
	Yes	22 (26%)
	No	8 (9%)
	Not made a complaint	55 (65%)
6.8	Have you ever been too afraid to make a complaint about your treatment in this centre?	
	Yes	20 (24%)
	No.....	65 (76%)

Section 7: Staff

7.1	Do staff here treat you with respect?	
	Always	53 (61%)
	Most of the time	22 (25%)
	Some of the time	8 (9%)
	Never.....	4 (5%)
7.2	Do staff here knock and wait for an answer before entering your room?	
	Always	44 (51%)
	Most of the time	22 (25%)
	Some of the time	9 (10%)
	Never.....	12 (14%)
7.3	Are there any members of staff here you can turn to for help if you have a problem?	
	Yes	72 (85%)
	No.....	13 (15%)
7.4	Have staff physically restrained you since you've been in this centre?	
	Yes	8 (10%)
	No.....	72 (90%)
7.5	Have you spent any time in the separation/isolation unit, in this centre?	
	Yes	12 (14%)
	No.....	72 (86%)

Section 8: Faith

8.1 What is your religion?

No religion	9 (10%)
Buddhist	8 (9%)
Christian	31 (36%)
Hindu	4 (5%)
Jewish	0 (0%)
Muslim	29 (33%)
Sikh	0 (0%)
Other	6 (7%)

8.2 Are your religious beliefs respected here?

Yes	64 (77%)
No.....	4 (5%)
Don't know.....	6 (7%)
Not applicable (no religion).....	9 (11%)

8.3 Can you speak to a Chaplain of your faith in private, if you want to?

Yes	33 (40%)
No.....	8 (10%)
Don't know.....	32 (39%)
Not applicable (no religion).....	9 (11%)

Section 9: Safety

9.1 Have you ever felt unsafe here?

Yes	36 (41%)
No.....	51 (59%)

9.2 Where have you felt unsafe? (Please tick all that apply.)

In your room	5 (7%)
On corridors.....	6 (9%)
In the dining hall	7 (10%)
At health care	3 (4%)
In association or shared areas (e.g. TV room)	4 (6%)
In activity areas (e.g. library, IT room, education, gym).....	5 (7%)
In outside areas.....	8 (12%)
Anywhere else in this centre.....	7 (10%)
Never felt unsafe here	51 (74%)

9.3 Do you feel unsafe now?

Yes	23 (29%)
No.....	57 (71%)

9.4 Have you experienced any of the following forms of victimisation or bullying from other detainees here? (Please tick all that apply.)

Verbal abuse	7 (10%)
Threats or intimidation.....	6 (8%)
Sexual comments.....	4 (6%)
Sexual assault.....	1 (1%)
Physical assault.....	1 (1%)
Theft	7 (10%)
Other	3 (4%)
Not experienced any of these from detainees here	59 (82%)

9.5 If you were being bullied or victimised by other detainees here, would you report it?

Yes	43 (57%)
No.....	33 (43%)

9.6 Have you experienced any of the following forms of victimisation or bullying from staff here? (Please tick all that apply.)

Verbal abuse	4 (5%)
Threats or intimidation	4 (5%)
Sexual comments	0 (0%)
Sexual assault	0 (0%)
Physical assault.....	0 (0%)
Theft	4 (5%)
Other	5 (7%)
Not experienced any of these from staff here.....	61 (81%)

9.7 If you were being bullied or victimised by staff here, would you report it?

Yes	50 (65%)
No.....	27 (35%)

Section 10: Alcohol and drugs

10.1 While in this centre, have you developed any problems with:

	Yes	No
Illicit drugs	0 (0%)	76 (100%)
Medication not prescribed to you	2 (3%)	74 (97%)
Alcohol	0 (0%)	75 (100%)

10.2 Do you currently have a problem with:

	Yes	No
Illicit drugs	1 (1%)	73 (99%)
Medication not prescribed to you	2 (3%)	71 (97%)
Alcohol	0 (0%)	72 (100%)

10.3 While in this centre, have you been helped with your problems with:

	Yes	No	Not applicable
Illicit drugs	0 (0%)	1 (1%)	72 (96%)
Medication not prescribed to you	2 (3%)	0 (0%)	70 (96%)
Alcohol	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	72 (100%)

10.4 Is it easy or difficult to get illicit drugs in this centre?

Very easy	4 (5%)
Quite easy	2 (3%)
Quite difficult.....	0 (0%)
Very difficult.....	5 (7%)
Don't know.....	65 (86%)

10.5 Is it easy or difficult to get alcohol in this centre?

Very easy	3 (4%)
Quite easy	2 (3%)
Quite difficult.....	0 (0%)
Very difficult.....	7 (9%)
Don't know.....	66 (85%)

Section 11: Health and support

- 11.1 Is a professional interpreter available if you need one during health care assessments?**
- | | |
|--------------------------------|----------|
| Yes | 38 (46%) |
| No..... | 6 (7%) |
| Don't know..... | 15 (18%) |
| Don't need an interpreter..... | 23 (28%) |
- 11.2 What is the quality of health care services here?**
- | | |
|------------------------------------|----------|
| Very good | 32 (39%) |
| Quite good..... | 24 (29%) |
| Quite bad..... | 7 (9%) |
| Very bad | 9 (11%) |
| Have not been to health care | 10 (12%) |
- 11.3 Do you have any mental health problems?**
- | | |
|-----------|----------|
| Yes | 31 (38%) |
| No..... | 51 (62%) |
- 11.4 Have you been helped with your mental health problems while in this centre?**
- | | |
|---|----------|
| Yes | 12 (16%) |
| No..... | 14 (18%) |
| Don't have mental health problems | 51 (66%) |
- 11.5 Have you ever felt depressed while in this centre?**
- | | |
|-----------|----------|
| Yes | 54 (68%) |
| No..... | 26 (33%) |
- 11.6 Have you ever felt suicidal while in this centre?**
- | | |
|-----------|----------|
| Yes | 17 (21%) |
| No..... | 63 (79%) |
- 11.7 If you have felt depressed or suicidal here, did you receive any help from staff?**
- | | |
|---|----------|
| Yes | 19 (29%) |
| No..... | 22 (33%) |
| Have not felt depressed or suicidal | 25 (38%) |

Section 12: Other needs and support

- 12.1 Do you consider yourself to have a disability (long-term physical, mental or learning needs that affect your day-to-day life)?**
- | | |
|-----------|----------|
| Yes | 19 (24%) |
| No..... | 59 (76%) |
- 12.2 If you have a disability, are you getting the support you need?**
- | | |
|--|----------|
| Yes | 7 (9%) |
| No..... | 6 (8%) |
| Don't have a disability/don't need support | 63 (83%) |

Section 13: Activities

13.1	Are you taking part in any education here?	
	Yes	31 (39%)
	No, but I want to	17 (21%)
	No and I don't want to.....	32 (40%)
13.2	If you are taking part in education, is it helpful?	
	Yes	30 (37%)
	No.....	1 (1%)
	Not taking part in education.....	50 (62%)
13.3	Do you have a job here?	
	Yes	25 (30%)
	No, but I want one	27 (33%)
	No and I don't want one.....	30 (37%)
13.4	Does the library have appropriate materials to meet your needs?	
	Yes	50 (62%)
	No.....	16 (20%)
	Don't know.....	15 (19%)
13.5	How easy or difficult is it to access what you need on the internet?	
	Very easy	24 (29%)
	Quite easy	22 (27%)
	Quite difficult.....	11 (13%)
	Very difficult.....	11 (13%)
	Don't know.....	14 (17%)
13.6	Can you go to the gym as often as you want to?	
	Yes	59 (70%)
	No.....	10 (12%)
	Don't know.....	7 (8%)
	Don't want to go.....	8 (10%)
13.7	Is there enough to do in this centre to fill your time?	
	Yes	44 (53%)
	No.....	21 (25%)
	Don't know.....	18 (22%)

Section 14: Keeping in touch with family and friends

14.1	Have you had any problems with sending or receiving mail (letters or parcels)?	
	Yes	12 (14%)
	No.....	71 (86%)
14.2	Have you had a visit from family or friends since you've been in this centre?	
	Yes	20 (24%)
	No.....	65 (76%)
14.3	Are your visitors usually treated with respect by staff?	
	Yes	13 (16%)
	No.....	4 (5%)
	Don't know.....	1 (1%)
	Have not had a visit.....	65 (78%)

Section 15: Leaving this centre

15.1	Has anyone here helped you prepare for leaving this centre?	
	Yes	22 (28%)
	No.....	56 (72%)

Section 16: More about you

16.1	Are you responsible for any child under the age of 18 in the UK?	
	Yes	17 (22%)
	No.....	59 (78%)
16.2	What is your gender?	
	Female	10 (12%)
	Male	70 (84%)
	Non-binary	0 (0%)
	Other	3 (4%)
16.3	How would you describe your sexual orientation?	
	Straight/heterosexual	55 (83%)
	Gay/lesbian/homosexual	3 (5%)
	Bisexual.....	1 (2%)
	Other	7 (11%)
16.4	Do you identify as transgender or transsexual?	
	Yes	5 (7%)
	No.....	67 (93%)