

Presentation title:

## An exploratory analysis of returning defendants and the potential of data first linked criminal courts data in England and Wales

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This paper presents the findings of a Ministry of Justice (MoJ) – led research study on returning defendants to the criminal courts in England and Wales from 2011 to 2019. The study analyses the first linked datasets between the magistrates' courts and the Crown Court administrative data in the two nations. The linking methodology and respective research-ready datasets have been produced as part of a pioneering data-linking programme, Data First, funded by ADR UK (Administrative Data Research UK). The programme links administrative datasets from across the justice system and with other government departments to provide powerful new insights on justice system users, their pathways, and outcomes across a range of public services. After a short introduction to and overview of the achievements of the Data First programme to date and its academic research potential, the presentation summarises the findings of descriptive analyses of individuals in the criminal courts across offence types, the extent and nature of repeat users, including the type of offences repeat users are most likely to enter the criminal courts for. The presentation demonstrates how linked administrative data available through the ground-breaking Data First programme can be effectively used for research. The presentation ends with suggestions for further analyses and the findings' policy implications.