



UNIVERSITY OF LEEDS

Women and Electronic Monitoring



Ella Holdsworth (law1erm@leeds.ac.uk)

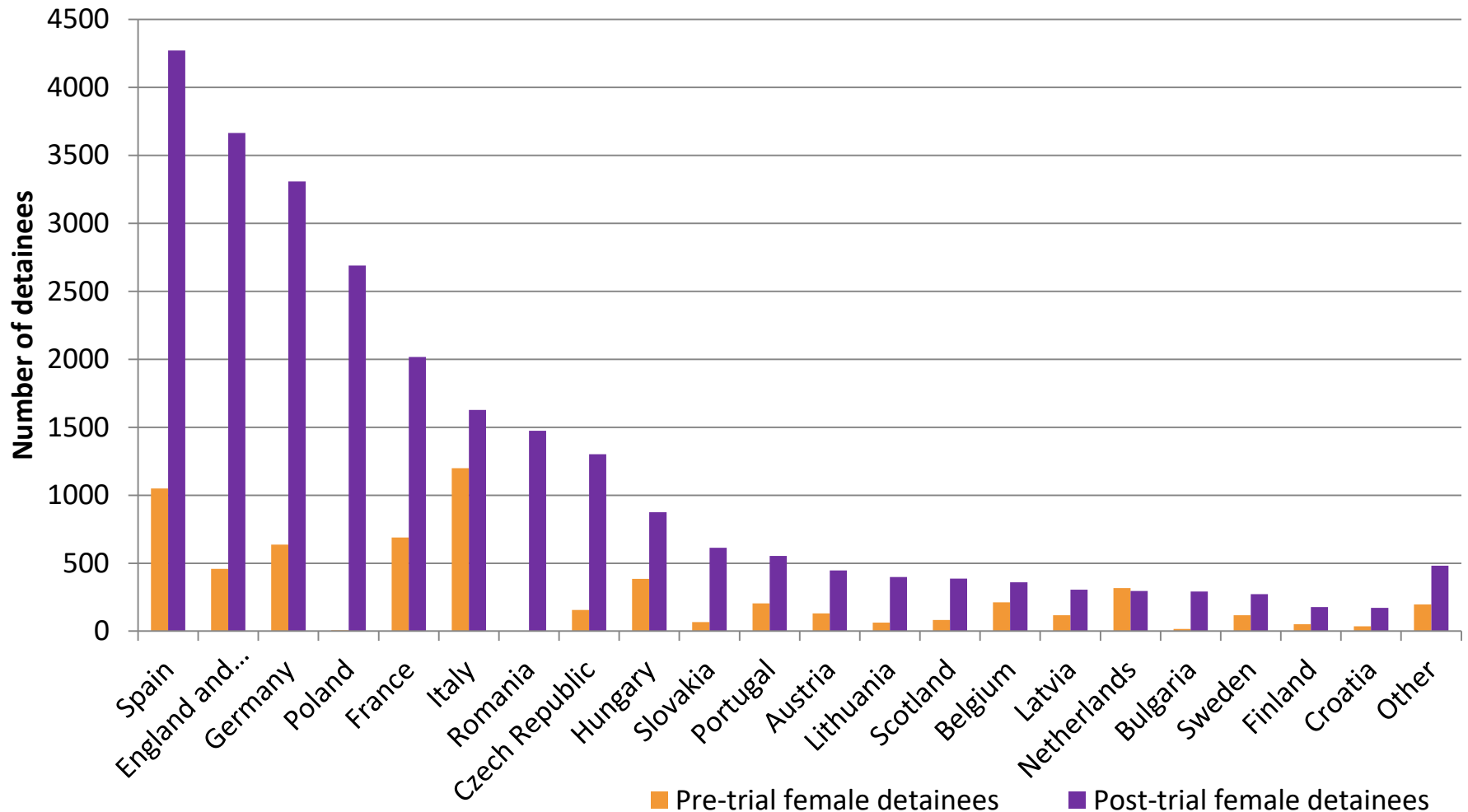
Professor Anthea Hucklesby (A.L.Hucklesby@leeds.ac.uk)

Centre for Criminal Justice Studies, University of Leeds, UK

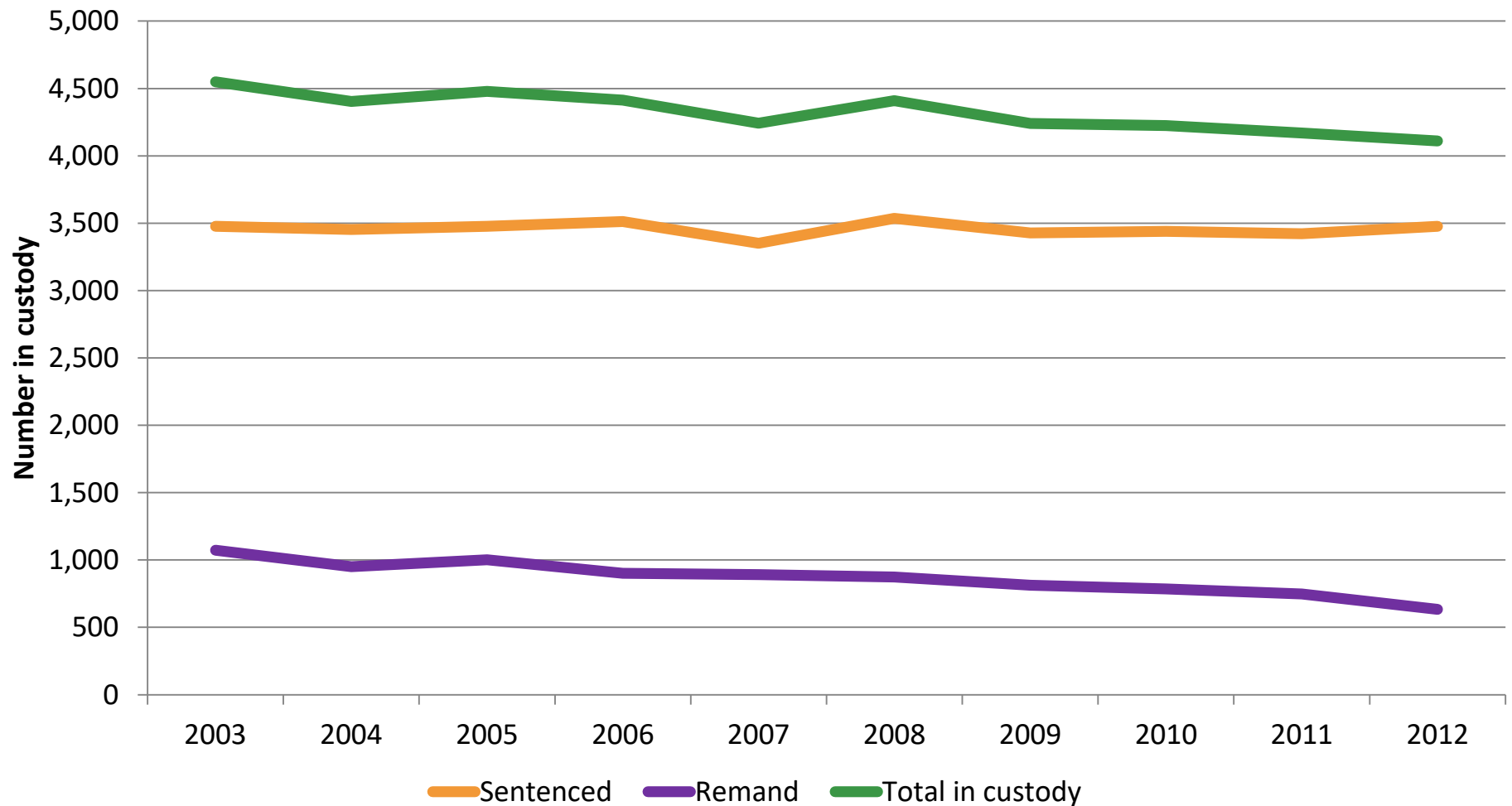
Women-wise EM Policy

- Criminal justice systems are designed for men
- A 'women-wise' EM policy makes sense because:
 - Female prison populations would be reduced
 - Compliance rates could be increased
 - Involvement in criminal justice system would be minimised
 - Levels of fine default would be reduced

Number of pre- and post-trial detainees in EU member states 2012 (SPACE 1, Table 3)

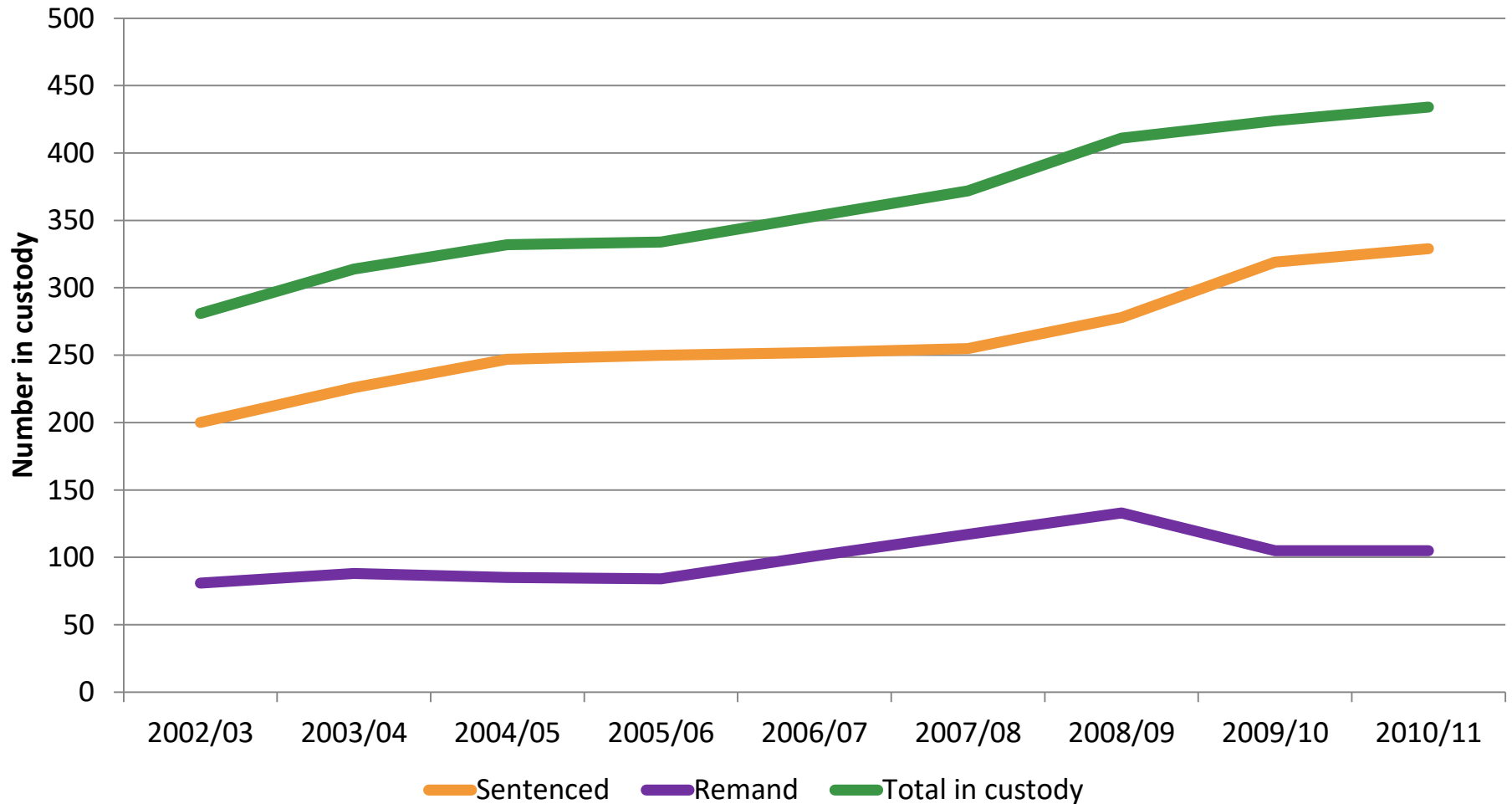


Female prisoners in England and Wales 2003-2012 (MoJ, 2014)



Female prisoners in Scotland 2002/3 - 2010/11

(Scottish Government, 2011)



The use of EM in England and Wales March 2014 (source: MoJ, 2014)

	Bail		Court order		Post-release		Total	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Female	363	8	1148	17	247	10	1651	12
Male	4004	92	5737	83	2241	90	10665	88
Total	4367	100	6885	100	2488	100	13740	100

Female offenders are not men

- Women commit fewer, less serious offences
- Women are less 'risky' than men
- Women are more 'at risk' than men
- Differences in living arrangements and caring responsibilities
- Differences in experiences of punishments
- BUT EM regimes and equipment are the same for women and men

Equipment

- Equipment is a universal design
- Tags are not designed for use with women
- Strap sizes are designed to fit men

How do I look?



© Valerie Hastie

Wearing the tag

- Both men and women have raised issues about wearing the tag (Hucklesby 2008)
- Uncomfortable, bulky and made of hard material.
- Tags are visible making them a status symbol for some and embarrassing for others
- Activities and clothes are avoided e.g Swimming
- Tags provide reminders and visibility might be important to sentencers etc.

What women think of wearing the tag

"It's like a big lump of plastic stuck to your leg. Like, every time you move your leg to walk, it hits against your ankle bone."

- Tags were too tight or too loose
- Caused problems when sleeping and walking
- Tags caused bruising on women's legs
- The size of women's ankles and lower legs fluctuates
- The tag is embarrassing to wear
- Women change their clothes to hide it

"I do find my tag embarrassing, [with] me being a girl... and sometimes I go out and I can see people look[ing] at it and I'll be like 'god!'"

Women's deviance?

Women have been convicted of criminal damage

"I wanted to make it look pretty!"

British offender, 22, fined after using dozens of fake diamonds to 'bling' her electronic curfew tag.



Women and compliance with EM (Hucklesby, 2009)

- Compliance rates are lower
- Higher breach rates
- Higher proportion of females breached for accumulated time violations
- Levels of compliance linked to:
 - Children
 - Household tension

Regimes

- Standardised hours
- Breach policies

The potential of EM for women

- Alternative to prison
 - Remand
 - Sentenced
- Early release
- Encourage compliance with other requirements of community sentences
- Alternatives to other community sentences
- Alternative to fines

Making EM women-wise

- Equipment: designing a tag for women
- Regime
 - Hours: flexibility
- Compliance policies and practice

Designing an EM programme for women

How would you design an EM programme for women, which addresses the issues that have been raised?