



BAR COUNCIL NEWS UPDATE – MONDAY 24 FEBRUARY 2020

Criminal justice

Daily Mail, p2 & [online](#), [Daily Telegraph](#), [Metro](#), [Daily Star](#), [Politics Home](#), [Press Association](#) – Chair of the Bar, Amanda Pinto QC, is quoted across the national media in response to the latest criminal justice quarterly statistics from the Ministry of Justice.

The latest figures prompted the media to report that “109,000 criminals dodged punishment just by saying sorry to their victims.”

Amanda Pinto QC said: “This latest snapshot of our weary criminal justice system is bleak, but sadly, unsurprising. What might appear to be faceless statistics tell a human story of injustices which are being repeated over and over in every part of the country. The evidence shows a decrease in the number of people being charged despite violent crime growing. This translates to fewer criminals being dealt with by our underfunded and under-resourced system. Significant investment across the entire justice system is urgently needed – more police and prison places are not a panacea. This investment will only be worthwhile if the courts as a whole are given the resources to cope with the pressure of investigating and prosecuting the crime we know is there.

“We hope that the Treasury will pay close attention to the recommendations in our submission ahead of the upcoming Budget. Repeatedly said to be an important national asset, it is time our justice system was acknowledged and treated as just that.

Justice Week

[Legal Futures](#), [Education Today](#) - The public shares a widespread concern that their rights are being eroded and that they need to know more about the law, according to research by the main three lawyer groups published today to mark Justice Week.

People were particularly concerned about attacks of freedom of speech and expression.

The Bar Council, Law Society and Chartered Institute of Legal Executives (CILEx) commissioned Populus to poll 4,182 people and alongside it have launched a campaign featuring a team of 'superheroes' to highlight to younger people in particular the vital role of justice and the rule of law in supporting democracy.

The survey found that fewer than one in five people aged 18-24 felt democracy was strengthening at the moment, while a third worried about having less freedom. Among over 55s, this concern rose to 40%.

Many people of all ages feared the environment was inadequately protected, while more than eight out of ten cited a need for environmental protection laws.

Chair of the Bar, Amanda Pinto QC, said: "As this survey shows, young people clearly have an appetite for greater knowledge about how the law can help everyone play their part in society. Justice Week 2020 is about encouraging that awareness."

Education Today reports that, as part of Justice Week 2020 (24-28 February), Young Citizens is calling all schools in England and Wales to delivery of 'The Big Legal Lesson'. More than 40,000 young people in over 440 schools are already expected to participate in the biggest public legal education event of its kind on the fundamentals of the justice system in England and Wales.

Television cameras in court

Sheerness Times Guardian – Kent's media continues to report on **Chair of the Bar, Amanda Pinto QC's** cautious response to plans to televise sentencing in the Crown Courts. Former Canterbury Crown Court judge, Andrew Prentice, also urged caution.

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