An example: what OASys tells us

- Anonymised OASys extract for start of sentence assessments in England & Wales during 2008/09 (*N*=99,734).

- Test feasibility of using OASys data to identify risk factors for involvement in organised crime (OC).

- Considered factors relating to demographics, criminal history, offending related needs and social circumstances.

- Defined as one of 185 offences potentially linked to OC, involving planning & control, and co-offenders.

- Using these criteria we identified 2,721 (2.7%) known offenders involved in OC.

Demographics & criminal history

- Those involved in OC were younger and of a 'non-white' ethnic origin.

- Significantly fewer males in the OC group, relative to the wider assessed national correctional services' caseload during 2008/09.

- Those convicted for drugs and fraud and forgery offences were more likely to be involved in OC.

- Those convicted for violence, burglary, robbery, criminal damage and other offences were significantly less likely to have been.

More on criminal history

Those involved in OC :

- were less likely to have had a prior court appearance as a juvenile or adult;

- had acquired prior convictions across a smaller range of offence categories or types;

- had a shorter known offending career;

- had served fewer previous custodial sentences; and

- were assessed as having a lower likelihood of reconviction (as measured by the overall OASys scores).

Offending related needs (1)

OC offenders were significantly more likely to have been identified with a need relating to:

- **lifestyle and associates** (e.g. easily influenced by criminal associates, manipulative and/or predatory lifestyle, recklessness and risk-taking behaviour) (55.3% vs. 43.6%);

- **drug misuse** (contributing to risks of offending and harm) (36.9% vs. 22.9%); and

- **finances** (debt problems, insufficient finances to cover essentials/maintain lifestyle) (33.6% vs. 27.3%).

Offending related needs (2)

But were less likely to have an offending related need linked to:

- **thinking and behaviour** (poor interpersonal skills, impulsivity, lacks awareness of consequences) (44.9% vs. 60.8%);

- **relationships** (quality of familial relationships, current partner has a criminal record) (36.3% vs. 42.1%);

- **emotional well-being** (difficulties coping, psychological problems) (33.6% vs. 43.5%);

- **attitudes** (pro-criminal attitudes, views of community/society) (30.9% vs. 35.3%); and

- **alcohol misuse** (binge or excessive use) (20.9% vs. 46.9%)(all at p<0.001).

Social circumstances (1)

- OC offenders were no more or less likely to be living in permanent, independent housing (77.7% vs. 77.1%).

- But significantly less likely to be living in transient or short-term accommodation (8.3% vs. 13.1%) or supported housing (2.1% vs. 3.0%).

- In contrast to others on the national correctional services' caseload, these organised offenders were found in 2008/09 to have higher rates of no fixed abode upon commencement of sentence (6.6% vs. 5.0%).

Social circumstances (2)

- OC offenders were more likely to be unemployed (76.5% vs. 70.6%), but less likely to report state benefits as main source of income (52.9% vs. 56.4%).

- Less prone to be identified as having problems in relationships with close family members (43.0% vs. 50.2%).

- Less likely to experience social isolation e.g. arising from a lack of close friends or associates (27.6% vs. 32.9%).

- But more of this group were assessed as having problems in the degree of community integration e.g. the extent of their attachment to individual(s), community or faith groups (61.8% vs. 58.6%).

So what predicted OC offending? (1)

- Ethnicity, degree of community integration and having no prior contact with the courts were the three most predictive factors for involvement in OC identified from 11 considered in multivariate analysis.

- Employment and increasing age were found to reduce the likelihood of involvement in OC, as did having a larger number of offending related needs and experiencing social isolation.

- By contrast, being female, having relational problems with close family members and the (increasing) length of one's offending career all appeared to elevate the likelihood of involvement in OC.

So what predicted OC offending? (2)

- The number of previous custodial sentences served and the number of different categories of prior conviction did not predict involvement in OC once other factors were controlled for.

- Most of the variability explaining involvement in OC was unaccounted for within the multivariate model we were able to develop using these OASys data.

How useful might OASys be?

- Good, but utility of OASys as a tool for identifying predictors of involvement in OC is limited by a lack of data on sentence length and the nationality of assessed offenders.

- The scope to repeat this exercise with a larger sample assembled over a longer period of time may be further limited by changes made to full and standard OASys assessments completed from September 2009.

- Resulted in the loss of questions on a number of relevant static and dynamic issues (e.g. categories of prior conviction, accommodation and employment status).