

Police Service of Northern Ireland

User Guide to Police Recorded Crime Statistics in Northern Ireland

Revised December 2011

Acknowledgements

Staff in the Home Office Statistics Unit of the Science and Research Group have prepared a User Guide to Home Office Crime Statistics which provides background information on both Police Recorded Crime Figures and the British Crime Survey. PSNI's Statistics Branch has based some sections of its user guide on the Home Office model but has added numerous amendments to allow for differences in the legislation and legal process in place within Northern Ireland when compared with England and Wales.

PSNI's Statistics Branch would like to thank the Home Office for allowing this guide to be adapted.

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1 Introduction

The Police Service of Northern Ireland publishes figures on the levels and trends of crime in Northern Ireland, based on police recorded crime data. An alternative but complementary measure of crime, the Northern Ireland Crime Survey (NICS), is published by the Department of Justice for Northern Ireland. Each source of crime information has different strengths and limitations but can be looked at together to provide a more comprehensive picture of crime than could be obtained from either series alone.

Detail around the need for both recorded crime figures and the NICS can be found in paragraphs 1.2 and 1.3 of the bulletin [Experience of Crime: Findings from the 2010/11 Northern Ireland Crime Survey](#). Both of these measures of crime inform public debate about crime and support the development and monitoring of policy.

The Home Office produce a [User Guide to Home Office Crime Statistics](#) (Police recorded crime data in England and Wales and the British Crime Survey). A range of Home Office publications are available on the [Home Office Internet site](#).

Police recorded crime statistics in Northern Ireland are published as an annual bulletin providing finalised figures for the latest financial year, along with trends and commentary. Monthly updates providing a summary of the latest police recorded crime statistics are published throughout the year, these statistics being provisional and subject to change.

This User Guide to Police Recorded Crime Statistics in Northern Ireland is designed to be a useful reference guide with explanatory notes regarding the issues and classifications which are key to the production and presentation of these crime statistics.

The publication date for the annual bulletin is pre-announced and can be found via the [UK National Statistics Publication Hub](#). It is also made available via the Police Service of Northern Ireland Internet site, along with the date of each monthly update: [Crime publication schedule](#).

Copies of PSNI statistical bulletins on recorded crime are available from the PSNI Internet site [crime statistics page](#), which also provides access to the latest monthly update.

Previously published annual reports for the financial years dating back to 2002/03 are available in the [Crime Statistics Archive](#) on the PSNI Internet site. In addition, this archive also contains scanned images of relevant crime tables from each annual Report of the Chief Constable, in calendar year format from 1968 until 1997 and in financial year format (April to March) from 1997/98 to 2001/02.

We welcome comment and feedback on these statistics. If you would like to forward your views, receive notification of new publications or be kept informed of developments relating to PSNI statistics, please email your contact details using the email address provided below.

For further information about the police recorded crime statistics for Northern Ireland, or to contact the PSNI Crime Statistician please:

Email: statistics@psni.police.uk;

Write to: Statistics Branch, Lisnasharragh, 42 Montgomery Road, Belfast, BT6 9LD; or

Telephone: 0845 600 8000 ext 24135, Fax 028 9092 2998

Information on the Northern Ireland Crime Survey, including past publications and future publication schedules, can be found via:

The [UK National Statistics Publication Hub](#);

The [Department of Justice for Northern Ireland Internet site](#); and

The Northern Ireland Statistics and Research Agency's [Central Survey Unit Internet site](#);

By emailing: statistics.research@dojni.x.gsi.gov.uk; or

By writing to: Department of Justice Statistics and Research Branch, Massey House, Stormont Estate, BELFAST, BT4 3SX

2 Police recorded crime

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2.1 Introduction to police recorded crime

The Home Office collates and publishes recorded crime data supplied by the 43 police forces of England and Wales, plus the British Transport Police. In Northern Ireland these data are collated and produced by statisticians seconded to the Police Service of Northern Ireland from the Northern Ireland Statistics and Research Agency, working to the [Official Statistics Code of Practice](#).

What is a recorded crime: Recorded crime data are based on an aggregated count of each crime within the notifiable offence list (see [Appendix 1](#)). Notifiable offences include all offences that could possibly be tried by jury (these include some less serious offences, such as minor theft that would not usually be dealt with this way) plus a few additional closely related offences, such as assault without injury. Information on recorded crimes that are detected is collected in the same way. Further details on what constitutes a detection are provided in [Section 2.4 Detections](#).

What is an incident: All incidents reported to the police are recorded in accordance with the [National Standard for Incident Recording \(NSIR\)](#), which sets out a common approach to be followed in classifying the broad range of calls for service the police receive from the general public. In many cases these incidents may be crimes in law, such as disorderly behaviour or many road traffic offences, but they are not of a level of severity that would result in the recording of a notifiable crime (as described above). Thus, they are not included in the main police recorded crime dataset.

Annual crime data are published on a financial year basis and provisional recorded crime data are published each month on a rolling 12 month basis and financial year to date basis.

Recorded crime figures are an important indicator of police workload, and can be used for local crime pattern analysis and provide a good measure of trends in well-reported crimes (in particular, homicide, which is not covered by the NICS). There are also some categories of crime (such as drug possession offences) where the volume of offences recorded are heavily influenced by police activities and priorities; in such cases recorded crime figures may not provide an accurate picture of the true extent of criminality.

Recorded crime figures are used widely within PSNI as management information, to monitor performance on crime and detection rate targets against the Policing Plan, to inform PSNI policy and to provide information in support of operational research identifying appropriate allocation of police resource. The figures are also used by the Northern Ireland Policing Board and at local level by District Policing Partnerships to monitor the performance of the police. The Department of Justice for Northern Ireland is a key user of crime figures in relation to policy development.

Recorded crime figures are also used in response to both Assembly and Parliamentary questions, informing public debate and concerns around criminal activity. Information is used by academic researchers and the media, examining local and national public interest in current affairs relating to crime levels. There is a demand for crime figures from businesses, either keen to identify crimes that may affect their business or to identify demand for any related business service they may provide. Members of the public would also forward requests for crime information specific to their area of interest or specific to the area in which they live or work.

Unlike the NICS, police recorded crime figures do not include crimes that have not been reported to the police or incidents that the police have reason not to record. It was estimated in 2010/11 that around 44 per cent of NICS comparable crime was reported to the police in Northern Ireland although this varied for individual offence types. Further information on crime reporting rates in Northern Ireland and England and Wales is provided in Section 4 of the bulletin [Experience of Crime: Findings from the 2010/11 Northern Ireland Crime Survey](#). Findings from previous surveys estimate the proportion of NICS comparable crime reported to the police was 50% in 2009/10, 46% in 2008/09, 48% in 2007/08, 51% in 2006/07, 39% in 2005, 45% in 2003/04 and 54% in 2001.

2.2 Home Office Recording practices

Recorded crime statistics are affected by changes in reporting and recording practices. To ensure consistency, police recording practice is governed by Home Office Counting Rules and the National Crime Recording Standard (NCRS). These rules provide a national standard for the recording and classifying of notifiable offences by police forces in England and Wales. Although the Police Service of Northern Ireland does not fall under the jurisdiction of the Home Office, the same recording practices are followed and applied within Northern Ireland. However differences in legislation between the two jurisdictions must be taken into account when making comparisons between police recorded crime statistics for England & Wales and those for Northern Ireland. The Home Office Internet site has a two-page [NCRS fact sheet](#).

During 2010/11 an exercise was conducted to more closely align the crime recording classifications used in PSNI publications with those used by the Home Office in their publications on police recorded crime figures for England and Wales. The aim of this exercise was to improve comparability of police recorded crime figures in Northern Ireland with those for England and Wales, while taking into account legislative differences between the two jurisdictions. The realigned crime classification has been in use within PSNI since 1st April 2011. A comprehensive data series dating back to 1998/99, based on the realigned classifications, is available on the PSNI Internet site: [Police Recorded Crime in Northern Ireland](#).

The latest version of the Counting Rules and other key documents is available on the Home Office Internet site: [Counting Rules for Recorded Crime](#).

There have been two major changes to the recording of crimes in recent years: in April 1998 the Home Office Counting Rules for Recorded Crime were expanded to include certain additional summary offences and counts became more victim-based (the number of victims was counted rather than the number of offences); in April 2002, the NCRS was introduced across England & Wales and Northern Ireland, although some forces adopted key elements of the standard earlier and compliance with the standard continued to improve in the years following its formal introduction. In April 2001, a year prior to the introduction of the NCRS, the Police Service of Northern Ireland introduced a new crime recording system (Integrated Crime Information System or 'ICIS') which improved data collection and coverage. As a result more low level crime was identified and included within the recorded crime statistics and the subsequent introduction of NCRS in April 2002 did not have a large impact.

The NCRS was devised by the Association of Chief Police Officers (ACPO) in collaboration with Home Office statisticians. It was designed to ensure greater consistency between forces in recording crime and to take a more victim-oriented approach to crime recording with the police being required to record any allegation of crime unless there was credible evidence to the contrary (Simmons *et al.*, 2003).

Both of these changes resulted in an increase in the number of crimes recorded. Certain offences, such as the more minor violent crimes, were more affected by these changes than others. All of these factors need to be considered when looking at the trends in recorded crime.

Ongoing consultation on the formulation and development of the policy on crime recording is provided through working groups of the National Crime Recording Steering Group (NCRSG), comprising members of the Home Office, police force regional representatives and representatives of ACPO, Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary (HMIC) and the Crown Prosecution Service (CPS).

Police recorded crime statistics, like any administrative data, will be affected by the rules governing the recording of data, systems in place and operational decisions in respect of the allocation of resources. More proactive policing in a given area could lead to an increase in crimes recorded without any real change in underlying crime trends. Therefore, when examining trends in police recorded crime data presented in statistical bulletins it is important to read the commentary which will explain any caveats associated with the data.

Police forces in England & Wales were subject to assessments of crime data quality conducted by the Audit Commission, the latest of which was carried out in 2007. The full national audit programme ceased in 2007/08, although a local crime audit manual was developed for use by Force Crime Registrars within each police force.

2.3 Recording of most serious violence offences

A recent example of where crime recording has raised an issue is in relation to offences of grievous bodily harm (GBH). In April 2008 the Home Office issued clarification on the recording of offences of

grievous bodily harm with intent. As a result, levels of these offences increased across most police forces.

The Home Office then commissioned HMIC to conduct an independent inspection focusing on the recording of most serious violence in all forces in England and Wales which confirmed that there had been a level of misrecording of these types of offences. The findings of this inspection were published in October 2009 'Crime Counts: A Review of Data Quality for Offences of the Most Serious Violence (HMIC, 2009)'.¹

A great deal of work was undertaken in forces, including within the Police Service of Northern Ireland, to implement the clarification and in response to the HMIC report. These issues affected how individual offences were classified under specific offence codes. The overall counts for police recorded violence against the person and the subcategories of violence with and without injury, were unaffected.

Refer to section 3 in volume 2 of the 2008/09 Crime in England and Wales annual bulletin for a fuller discussion of issues around the recording of GBH offences (Smith and Hoare, 2009, <http://homeoffice.gov.uk/science-research/research-statistics/>).

2.4 Detections

Detected crimes are those that have been 'cleared up' by the police. Not every case where the police know, or think they know, who committed a crime can be counted as a detection and some crimes are counted as detected when the victim might view the case as far from solved. For any crime to be counted as detected, sufficient evidence must be available to claim a detection and all of the conditions below must be met:

- a notifiable offence has been committed and recorded;
- a suspect has been identified and has been made aware that they will be recorded as being responsible for committing that crime and what the full implications of this are; and
- one of the methods of sanction or non-sanction detection described in this section applies.

The police may use one of several methods to count a crime as detected. They fall into two broad categories; sanction and non-sanction detections.

Once a detection has been claimed, any identifiable victim must be informed that the crime has been detected, or in the case of a child, their parent or guardian.

The detection (or clear-up) rate is the number of detections recorded in a given year expressed as a percentage of the total number of crimes recorded in the same period.

Detections are counted on the basis of crimes rather than offenders. For example, if six offenders are involved in a robbery and all are arrested and charged, then this counts as one detection (ie the robbery is deemed to be 'detected'). Alternatively if only one of the six is identified and charged while the other five remain unidentified and at large, this also means that the robbery can still be deemed as 'detected'.

Further information on detections can be found in [Section H](#) of the general counting rules.

Please note that the terminology and processes in these rules refer to what is in place in England and Wales (e.g. for Crown Prosecution Service in England and Wales, replace with Public Prosecution Service in Northern Ireland). There will be differences between the criminal justice processes outlined in the detections section of Counting Rules and those that are in place within Northern Ireland.

Sanction detections

Sanction detections include offences which are cleared up through a formal sanction to the offender. Not all sanction detections will necessarily result in a subsequent conviction. In cases detected by 'charge/summons', the Public Prosecution Service for Northern Ireland (PPS) may decide not to take forward proceedings or the offender might be found not guilty.

¹ http://www.hmic.gov.uk/SiteCollectionDocuments/Thematics/THM_20091020.pdf

A sanction detection can be claimed when an offender has been dealt with in one of the ways listed below.

- **Charged or summonsed:** An offence is deemed to be detected if a person has been charged or summonsed for the crime (irrespective of any subsequent acquittal at Court).
- **Cautioned:** An offence is deemed to be detected if an offender has been cautioned by the police. A caution may be administered after PPS direction or consultation with PPS when an offender admits guilt, where there is sufficient evidence for a realistic prospect of conviction and where the offender consents to the caution being issued.
- **Had an offence taken into consideration:** An offence is deemed to be detected if the offender admits the crime and asks for it to be taken into consideration by the court and where there is additional verifiable information linking that offender to the crime.
- **Youth conference:** Where the defendant is a youth, PPS may consider a diversionary youth conference as an alternative to prosecution in court, when an offender admits guilt and agrees to accept and participate in this diversionary option. This type of restorative conference may involve a number of parties including the defendant, the victim and police. A plan will be produced by this conference which must be approved by the PPS. A Youth Conference is a formal process and, although not a conviction, is recorded on a person's criminal record for a period of 30 months².

Penalty Notices for Disorder (PNDs) and Warnings for Cannabis Possession are counted as sanction detections within England & Wales. While PNDs were introduced in England & Wales in 2005, they have not yet been introduced within Northern Ireland. Detections in relation to Cannabis Possession in Northern Ireland will be included within the sanction detection methods listed above.

Non-sanction detections

'Non-sanction detections' comprise those where the offence is counted as cleared up but no further action was taken against the offender. Prior to April 2007 various reasons were allowed for claiming non-sanction detections including where the:

- offender, victim or essential witness is dead or too ill;
- victim refuses or is unable to give evidence;
- offender is under the age of criminal responsibility;
- police or the PPS decide that it would not be in the public interest to proceed; and
- time limit of six months for commencing prosecution has been exceeded.

From April 2007, there are now only two ways in which a non-sanction detection may be claimed. Firstly, where the offender dies before proceedings could be initiated or completed and, secondly, where the PPS decides not to prosecute (through application of the public interest test)³. Their use is now restricted to 'indictable only' offences (those offences which must be tried in a Crown Court).

2.5 Changes to detection rates

There have been a number of changes to recording practices and the sanctions available that have affected the recorded crime detection rates.

The Home Office Counting Rules for recorded crime changed from April 1998. These brought new offences into the series with varying detection rates.

The implementation of the NCRS in April 2002 is thought to have had an inflationary effect on recorded crime and the assumption is that it has depressed detection rates since those offences added to the data series are generally less serious and possibly harder to detect. Northern Ireland experienced a drop in the overall detection rate of 7 percentage points between 2000/01 and 2001/02, most likely due to the introduction of the ICIS system within PSNI (as described in 2.2 Recording Practices). The introduction of NCRS in April 2002 did not then have any additional impact on the overall detection rate.

Prior to 1st April 2003 it was permissible to claim a detection where "inflammatory consequences" prevented interviewing the suspect or informing them of the detection. This option was removed by the

² Taken from para 4.6.1 of the [PPSNI Code for Prosecutors](#)

³ Details can be found in section 4.3 of the [PPSNI Code for Prosecutors](#)

Home Office from 1st April 2003, stating that in such cases the crime should remain undetected. Within Northern Ireland there was a greater reliance on detecting crimes in circumstances where speaking to the suspect could 'inflammate' the situation resulting in the complainant being threatened or harmed or of further offences being committed against them. For these reasons Northern Ireland was allowed to continue claiming detections in these circumstances while the Home Office considered PSNI's position. While the Home Office indicated that exceptions to this ruling could be considered in relation to paramilitary offences, PSNI agreed to stop the use of 'inflammatory consequences' as a permitted detection method from 1st April 2004. There was a drop of 4.2 percentage points in detection rate for the Complainant declined to prosecute detection method between 2003/04 and 2004/05.

In April 2006, a higher evidential standard was adopted within the PSNI following the establishment of the Public Prosecution Service in Northern Ireland. This resulted in a fall in the overall detection rate, from 30.6% in 2005/06 to 23.6% in 2006/07.

From April 2007 some of the methods allowed for claiming non-sanction detections were discontinued altogether, and the overall detection rate within Northern Ireland fell further, from 23.6% in 2006/07 to 20.5% in 2007/08. Since this date the overall and sanction detection rates have essentially been the same.

3 Crime types

[3.1 Violence against the person, sexual offences and robbery](#)

[3.2 Property crime](#)

[3.3 Drug offences](#)

3.1 Violence against the person, sexual offences and robbery

Violent crimes are those where the victim is intentionally stabbed, punched, kicked, pushed, jostled, etc., or threatened with violence whether or not there is any injury.

As police recorded crime statistics for violence, especially less serious violence, are particularly affected by changes in recording practice over time, the Northern Ireland Crime Survey is the best measure for long-term trends in violence at a Northern Ireland level. Police statistics are important for showing the mix of violent crimes dealt with and recorded by the police. They are an important measure of activity locally and a source of operational information to help identify and address local crime problems, at a lower geographical level than is possible using the NICS. Police statistics also provide more reliable information on less common crimes, such as robbery, and are currently the only source of data on homicides and offences against those not resident in households.

3.1.1 Violence against the person

Violence against the person offences contain the full spectrum of assaults, from pushing and shoving that result in no physical harm, to murder. Even within the same offence classification, the degree of violence varies considerably between incidents.

Trends in police recorded violent crime can be very difficult to interpret, as they are influenced by a number of factors. It is important to consider the following issues when interpreting trends.

Local policing activity and priorities affect the levels of reported and recorded violent crime. Where the police are proactive in addressing low-level violence and anti-social behaviour, this can lead to more of these crimes being brought to their attention and being recorded. For example, research by the Cardiff Violence Research Group showed an association between the introduction of CCTV surveillance and increased police detection of violence (Sivarajasingam *et al.*, 2003).

Police recorded crime data are subject to changes in police recording practices. The 1998 changes to the Home Office Counting Rules had a very significant impact on the recording of violent and sexual crime; In England & Wales the number of violence against the person offences recorded by the police increased by 118 per cent as a result of the 1998 changes (Povey and Prime, 1999). In Northern Ireland there was an increase of 182 per cent as a result of these changes. Much of this increase resulted from a widening of the offence coverage to include assaults with little or no physical injury and offences of harassment (again with no injury).

The National Crime Recording Standard (NCRS), introduced in April 2002, again resulted in increased recording of violent and sexual crimes particularly for less serious offences, as well as for some other offences. In England & Wales there was an estimated NCRS effect of 23 per cent on violence against the person offences in the first 12 months of implementation, although it was recognised that this effect was unlikely to be complete within the first 12 months (Simmons *et al.*, 2003).

Audits undertaken by the Audit Commission on behalf of the Home Office indicate substantial improvements in crime recording across forces in the two to three years following NCRS introduction, which would particularly impact on violence against the person and result in increases in recorded crimes for this category.

In police recorded crime statistics, violent crime is grouped into two broad, high-level categories of violence against the person with injury and violence against the person without injury.

- **Violence against the person without injury** includes all incidents of assault without injury, possession of weapons offences and a number of public order offences, such as harassment.

Violence against the person with injury

The categories described below are included within violence against the person with injury. Attempts at inflicting injury are also included.

Homicide: Includes murder, manslaughter and infanticide.

Death by driving offences: Includes by dangerous driving, careless or inconsiderate driving, driving under the influence of drink or drugs and while being an unlicensed or uninsured driver.

Corporate manslaughter: This is where an organisation is deemed responsible for a person's death.

Grievous bodily harm (GBH): This includes injury resulting in permanent disability, more than minor permanent disfigurement, broken bones, fractured skull, compound fractures, substantial loss of blood, lengthy treatment or serious psychiatric injury (based on expert evidence).

- **GBH with intent** occurs when there is clear evidence of a deliberate attempt to inflict serious bodily harm regardless of level of injury sustained.
- **GBH without intent** occurs when serious bodily harm results but there is no evidence of a deliberate intent to inflict such an injury. Prior to April 2008, GBH without intent was not separated out from a much broader category of less serious wounding that mostly consisted of Actual Bodily Harm (AOABH).
- The definition of **GBH with intent** rests upon whether "the actions of the offender clearly show a deliberate attempt to inflict serious bodily harm". The clarification to the rules from April 2008 makes this clear and that "the gravity of the injury resulting is not necessarily the determining factor". The rules were clarified as there had previously been some confusion as to whether the degree of injury sustained, rather than intent, should be the sole determining factor in the recording of these offences (see Section 2 for a fuller explanation).

Actual Bodily Harm (AOABH): This relates to any assault with injury which is not GBH (with or without intent) and includes internal injury and shock (when accompanied by expert psychological evidence).

Other offences within this classification include attempted murder and poisoning or female genital mutilation.

Violence against the person without injury

The categories described below are included within violence against the person without injury.

Threats to kill: This is where an individual fears that the offender's threat is real and may be carried out.

Possession of weapons offences: These include possession of firearms with intent, possession of article with blade or point and possession of other weapons. If a weapon is used in the commission of an offence, then the police will normally record a more serious notifiable offence. Offences of possessing firearms with no intent are recorded under other miscellaneous offences.

Harassment offences: These are incidents where no other substantive notifiable offence exists, but when looked at as a course of conduct are likely to cause fear, alarm or distress. In Northern Ireland these will incorporate offences of intimidation such as intimidation to leave residence/occupation, intimidation to leave employment or to do/refrain from doing any act.

Assault without injury offences: Those offences where, at the most, a feeling of touch or passing moment of pain is experienced by the victim.

Other offences within this classification conspiracy to murder, cruelty or neglect to children, abandoning a child under two years, child abduction and assault on police without injury.

Domestic Abuse: Recorded crime statistics do not specifically identify offences of domestic abuse. However, where there is a domestic abuse motivation associated with any incident or recorded crime, PSNI will record this motivating factor on the individual incident or crime record. These figures are available in separate bulletins dedicated to statistics on incidents and crimes with a domestic abuse motivation.

Hate Motivations: While in England & Wales there are specific offences in law of racially or religiously aggravated assault, these offences do not exist in Northern Ireland. However as with domestic abuse, PSNI will record a motivating factor relating to hate (racist, homophobic, sectarian, faith/religion, disability and transphobic) on the individual crime record where it is appropriate to do so. These figures are available in separate bulletins dedicated to statistics on incidents and crimes with a hate motivation.

3.1.2 Sexual offences

Most serious sexual crime

The police recorded crime category of most serious sexual crime encompasses rape, sexual assault, and sexual activity with children. The Sexual Offences (Northern Ireland) Order 2008, introduced in February 2009, altered the definitions of all three categories so comparisons around this time should

be made with caution (similar legislation, The Sexual Offences Act 2003, was introduced in England and Wales in May 2004). Certain offences such as trafficking for sexual exploitation, which is included in this group, were originally introduced in Northern Ireland through the Sexual Offences Act 2003.

Other sexual offences

The group of **other sexual offences** recorded by the police covers unlawful sexual activity, mostly involving consenting adults and is therefore particularly influenced by police activity in investigating such crime. It includes among other offences, exploitation of prostitution and soliciting, but not prostitution itself (which is not a notifiable offence). Certain offences such as sexual grooming, voyeurism and trafficking for sexual exploitation which are included in this group, were originally introduced in Northern Ireland through the Sexual Offences Act 2003. The reclassification exercise conducted during 2010/11 identified that, within Northern Ireland, offences of soliciting for the purposes of prostitution had not been identified as notifiable offences. This omission has been rectified and these offences are included in the recorded crime figures from April 2011.

3.1.3 Robbery

A robbery is an incident or offence in which force or the threat of force is used either during or immediately prior to a theft or attempted theft. As with violence against the person, police recorded robberies cover a wide range of seriousness from armed bank robberies to muggings for mobile phones or small amounts of money. Recorded crime offences also distinguish between robbery of personal property (personal robbery) and business property (business robbery). Robbery of business property is a recorded crime classification where goods stolen belong to a business or other corporate body (such as a bank or a shop), regardless of the location of the robbery. The taking of vehicles during robberies (often termed hijacking) are also included as robbery.

3.2 Property crime

Property crime includes offences of burglary, offences against vehicles, other theft, fraud and forgery and criminal damage.

3.2.1 Burglary

Burglary: The police record an offence of burglary if a person enters any building as a trespasser and with intent to commit an offence of theft, GBH or unlawful damage.

Aggravated burglary: This occurs when the burglar is carrying a firearm, imitation firearm, offensive weapon or explosive.

Recorded crime figures are provided separately for burglaries that occur in domestic properties and those which occur in commercial or other properties.

Domestic burglaries: These include burglaries in all inhabited dwellings, including inhabited caravans, houseboats and holiday homes, as well as sheds and garages connected to the main dwelling (for example, by a connecting door).

Non-domestic burglaries: These include burglaries to businesses (including hotels and similar accommodation) and also some burglaries of sheds and outhouses where these are not clearly connected to the inhabited property.

Attempted burglary: This is recorded by the police if there is clear evidence that the offender made an actual, physical attempt to gain entry to a building (e.g. damage to locks, or broken doors) but was unsuccessful.

3.2.2 Offences against vehicles

The police recorded crime category of offences against vehicles covers private and commercial vehicles (although does not distinguish between the two).

Thefts and attempted thefts of vehicles: These are where the intent is to permanently deprive the owner.

Unauthorised taking of a vehicle: This is where intent to permanently deprive the owner is not evident and would typically include 'joyriding' where the car is later recovered.

Aggravated vehicle taking: This is where a vehicle once taken is known to have been driven dangerously, damaged or caused an accident.

Thefts and attempted thefts from a vehicle: These are where property in or on the vehicle is targeted.

Interfering with a motor vehicle: This includes attempts to drive away without apparent intent to permanently deprive the owner, mostly recorded crime offences where there is evidence of intent to commit either theft of or from a vehicle or taking and driving away (also termed taking without consent (TWOC)), but there is either:

- (i) No evidence of intent to commit one of these three offences specifically, or
- (ii) There is evidence of intent to commit TWOC

The taking of vehicles during robberies (often termed hijacking) are included within the robbery offence group.

3.2.3 Other theft offences

The recorded crime offence group of other theft offences includes thefts that are not covered by other property crime offence groups (i.e. thefts from vehicles are included in offences against vehicles). Offences included are theft from a person (theft, including attempts, of a handbag, wallet, cash etc. directly from the victim, but without the use of physical force against the victim, or the threat of it), thefts of bicycles, shoplifting and other theft or unauthorised taking.

3.2.4 Fraud and forgery

The measurement of fraud is challenging as fraud is known to be very substantially underreported to the police. Better information can be derived from other sources. For example, figures for plastic (credit, debit or bank) card fraud are obtained from The UK Cards Association, which is the leading trade association for the cards industry in the UK. For more information on the various sources of fraud including administrative data and on the nature, extent and economic impact of fraud in the UK, see Hoare (2007), Levi *et al.* (2007) and Wilson *et al.* (2006).

Offences of fraud and forgery are recorded by the police, but figures from 2007/08 onwards are not comparable with previous years due to the introduction of the Fraud Act 2006, which commenced in January 2007 and saw significant changes to offences in the fraud and forgery offence group.

For offences prior to January 2007, fraud is defined as dishonestly deceiving to obtain either property or a pecuniary advantage. Recorded crime statistics were collected for: fraud by company director; false accounting; cheque and credit card fraud; other frauds; bankruptcy and insolvency offences; forgery or use of false drug prescription; other forgery and vehicle/driver document fraud.

Under the Fraud Act 2006, fraud is defined as dishonestly making a false representation to obtain property or money for themselves or another. Recorded crime statistics are collected for: fraud by company director; false accounting; other frauds (including deception); failing to disclose information; abuse of position; making or supplying articles for use in fraud; possession of articles for use in fraud; bankruptcy and insolvency offences; forgery or use of false drug prescription / other forgery and vehicle/driver document fraud. Figures are also provided for offences of making off without payment.

The Counting Rules changes in January 2007 also changed recording of fraud so that in most cases cheque and plastic card fraud is counted on a 'per account' rather than 'per transaction' basis. If an account is defrauded only one offence is recorded rather than one offence per fraudulent transaction on each account (as was the practice prior to January 2007). For example, previously if a person had their credit card stolen and it was subsequently used on ten separate occasions to buy goods fraudulently from ten different shops there would be a requirement for one crime record for theft and ten for deception. Now there is a requirement to record one theft and one fraud by false representation. The result of this change means that fewer crimes of plastic card and cheque fraud were recorded by the police during 2007/08, 2008/09 and 2009/10 compared with previous years and recorded fraud and forgery figures prior to 2007/08 are not comparable with more recent figures.

This change was made to reduce significant bureaucracy in recording crime (possibly involving several police forces) and to reflect the fact that in the cases when this counting basis is used, the financial loss is generally borne by the financial institution at which the account is held rather than by the merchants who process a transaction or by the account holder.

From April 2007, where a financial institution makes full financial recompense to an account holder, the financial institution (rather than the account holder) can report the crime directly to a single point of contact within the police.

These changes have been supported by The UK Cards Association and ACPO as they have resulted in significant reductions in bureaucracy in relation to the reporting of cheque and plastic card fraud. This has focused police effort on reports of fraud most likely to lead to a suspect being brought to justice and also introduced single points of contact within police forces for the financial institutions to report cases directly to. As victims of fraud are mainly commercial organisations, it is not covered in the same way as other crimes. The government's Fraud Review (2006) also specifically welcomed the changes that were being put in place.

The 2006 Fraud Act also resulted in the creation of a National Fraud Authority (NFA). One of the key objectives of this new body is to support better reporting of fraud crimes and their subsequent investigation. During 2009/10 the NFA opened a single national point of reporting for a wide range of frauds, in particular those arising from the growing use of the internet and email. This new means of reporting sits outside the police service as a call centre (Action Fraud) with an associated online reporting tool. At the same time the police have established a National Fraud Intelligence Bureau (NFIB) to receive reports from Action Fraud as well as those from the banks and other financial institutions and to analyse them to identify positive investigatory opportunities which will then be referred to individual forces to follow up. The creation of these new bodies has had little or no impact on police recorded crime data for 2009/10 as they only commenced operation in early 2010.

3.2.5 Criminal damage

Police recorded criminal damage results from any person who without lawful excuse destroys or damages any property belonging to another, intending to destroy or damage any such property or being reckless as to whether any such property would be destroyed or damaged. Damage which is repairable without cost, or which is accidental, is not included in police recorded crime statistics. Separate recorded crime figures exist for criminal damage to a dwelling, to a building other than a dwelling, to a vehicle and other criminal damage.

While in England & Wales there are specific offences in law of racially or religiously aggravated criminal damage, these offences do not exist in Northern Ireland. However as with the recording of similar offences within the violence against the person group, PSNI will record a motivating factor relating to hate (racist, homophobic, sectarian, faith/religion, disability and transphobic) on the individual crime record where it is appropriate to do so. These figures are available in separate bulletins dedicated to statistics on incidents and crimes with a hate motivation.

Arson: This is the act of deliberately setting fire to property including buildings and vehicles.

For vehicle crime, if a vehicle is stolen and later found deliberately burnt out by the same offender, one crime of theft of a vehicle is recorded by the police. If there is evidence that someone unconnected with the theft committed the arson, then an offence of arson is recorded by the police in addition to the theft.

3.3 Drug offences

In addition to the figures for offences of drug trafficking and non-trafficking that are provided in the recorded crime series, the Police Service of Northern Ireland produces a separate annual bulletin on Drug Seizures and Arrests.

4 PSNI recording processes, data quality and data availability

[4.1 Recording processes within PSNI](#)

[4.2 Data Audits](#)

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4.1 Recording processes within PSNI

The PSNI processes for recording crimes generally start off with a call for service from a member of the public. However the recording of a crime may also result from police generated action. Further details are provided below, including an outline of how crime details are obtained and the quality assurance processes that are applied to the information gathered.

4.1.1 Calls for Service

The PSNI's command and control system is used to respond to calls for service from members of the public by prioritising the call and tasking the appropriate police response. Each incident is closed off using codes and definitions set out in the [National Standard for Incident Recording \(NSIR\)](#), designed to provide a common approach to be followed by police forces in England, Wales and Northern Ireland in classifying the broad range of calls for service received.

4.1.2 Obtaining and recording crime details

Each incident automatically transfers from the command and control system to the NICHE system on which crimes are recorded. Those incidents containing a code which indicates the incident may be crime-related are automatically forwarded for the attention of staff within each policing District who have been trained in the application of the [Home Office Counting Rules](#).

These staff examine each of these incident reports and identify those incidents that contain one or more crimes. They then ensure that sufficient details are input onto the NICHE system to meet the requirements for inclusion in the recorded crime figures. Once they are satisfied that the relevant details have been input, the record is then given a code which automatically passes it to Statistics Branch.

4.1.3 Quality assurance processes

Each crime and detection included within the police recorded crime statistics for Northern Ireland is individually checked for compliance with the [Home Office Counting Rules](#) by highly trained staff within the PSNI's Statistics Branch.

Data quality checks are also conducted regularly throughout the year to identify and correct inconsistencies within the data and to minimise any over-recording of crime. A risk based approach has been applied to the running of these quality checks, with priority given to those that have a direct impact on the quality of published recorded crime figures:

Priority 1: Daily checks – those that maximise the accuracy of figures which are updated daily for internal performance monitoring;

Priority 2: Monthly checks which identify potential missed crimes and detections;

Priority 3: Monthly checks which improve data quality, for example:

- essential checks to ensure that victim age, victim gender or injury level matches the offence that has been recorded;
- desirable checks which identify records where the location, property or weapon details may be inconsistent with the recorded offence;
- non essential checks which may identify missing or potentially incorrect information but which would not have a direct impact on the quality of the published recorded crime figures.

Work is also completed once a year to improve the level of completion and quality of postcodes attached to each crime record. Further details on this process are available in [Section 7 Geographic Recording of Crime](#).

[Section 5 \(domestic abuse incidents and crimes\)](#) and [section 6 \(hate motivated incidents and crimes\)](#) provide additional information on recording processes and data quality as applied to these data outputs.

4.2 Data Audits

The quality assurance processes outlined above have been set in place to ensure the numbers and types of crimes being recorded are in compliance with the Home Office Counting Rules. In addition to this, Statistics Branch has developed a risk-based audit process examining incident reports that do not result in a crime being recorded. Incidents of this nature are assessed against the National Crime Recording Standard to see whether or not a crime should have been recorded. The resulting compliance rates give an indication of how much crime might be missed from the crime figures. Common mistakes and problems are fed back to Districts and guidance is provided as necessary, with the aim of reducing non-compliance and minimising the under-recording of crime. There are two main types of non-compliance which are outlined below.

1) **Missed crime non-compliance:** i.e. information contained in the incident report strongly suggests that a crime should have been recorded. In most of these cases a crime is recorded as a result of the incident being returned to the District for checking. These 'missed' crimes tend to be minor assaults and harassment offences, minor criminal damage and minor theft. For audits conducted between 2004 and 2008 compliance rates in relation to missed crimes ranged from 94% to 96%. In 2009/10 the average compliance rate was 96.5%, while in 2010/11 the average compliance rate was 97.6%. Although audits for 2011/12 are still ongoing, the current average compliance rate is 91%.

2) **Insufficient information non-compliance:** i.e. there is insufficient information available in the incident report for the person conducting the audit to establish whether or not a crime should be recorded. When fed back to Districts as a result of audit non-compliance, the outcome of most of these cases is that additional information is subsequently provided by the District which establishes why a crime was not recorded.

Ongoing work on crime recording continues to consider data quality issues and the NCRSG acts to promote consistent recording practice between forces (see, for example, section 2.3).

4.3 Data Management

Statistics Branch has access to data which is extracted from the NICHE recording system on a daily basis. Automated processes ensure that the internal management information system and reports are updated each day. Access to these data extracts enables Statistics Branch to produce bulletins for publication and to respond to ad hoc requests for information.

4.4 Timeliness

A balance needs to be obtained between the requirement for figures to be as up-to-date as possible and the requirement to publish figures which are of appropriate quality and completeness for use. There is a lag of around four weeks between the end of the month and publication of the monthly bulletin. Each monthly crime bulletin highlights the percentage of crime records that have completed the validation process for the period of time covered within the bulletin, to give an indication of how complete the in-year data is. Ideally the percentage of crime records still under process for the latest month covered would be less than 5%.

Figures within the current financial year to date are provisional and remain subject to change until finalised figures for the full financial year are published. Final figures for the full financial year (presented as per the monthly updates) are published around six weeks after the end of the financial year. This is to allow for additional quality checks to be completed on the data. The more detailed annual commentary and spreadsheet will be published in late June/early July.

4.5 Data Availability

Information that is published in the monthly and annual crime bulletins has been examined to make sure it meets levels of quality and completeness appropriate for publication. The proportion of records for which information is unavailable is identified in the bulletins and accompanying spreadsheets. There will be some variables held on the operational system for which the level of missing or incomplete information is too high to allow for inclusion in the bulletins, or where the data quality is not sufficient for publication.

Crime classifications are published at levels for which disclosure issues have been considered, including the geographic level at which the information is produced and also the length of time period covered. The [confidentiality protection arrangements](#) document on the PSNI internet site provides additional information on PSNI's arrangements for maintaining the confidentiality of statistical data and statistical disclosure control.

Therefore any requests for crime classifications or types of data not included in the bulletins are assessed and responded to on a case by case basis. Where there is potential for placing additional data on the website, this will be taken forward.

Where there are requests for types of information that would require additional processes to be put in place for gathering this information (eg business crime, retail crime), these will be forwarded within PSNI for a decision on whether there is a business requirement to collect information in this format.

4.5.1 Availability of Information Relating to Victim Characteristics

In the Home Office Counting Rules individual offences are identified as being victim-based, state-based or victim and state-based. State-based offences are those for which no member of the public or business/organisation is a victim. For victim-based offences, the victim can be a member of the public (referred to here as person victim), a police officer who was the victim of a crime in the course of carrying out their duty, or a business or organisation. The introduction of the NICHE system in 2007/08 has enabled a breakdown of crime by the type of victim to be provided from this date.

Figures relating to victim characteristics are available for those victim-based offences where the victim is a person victim (as described above). Victim characteristic figures are provided at a Northern Ireland level for 12 month periods (either full financial years or the latest rolling 12 months), for a range of crime classifications and are made available through monthly and annual updates

Victim characteristics are not available for incidents that have not resulted in a crime being recorded, for example anti social behaviour incidents ([see 2.1 for an explanation of what constitutes an incident and what constitutes a crime](#)). This is mainly due to the proportion of such records for which victim characteristics are unavailable.

4.5.1.1 Victim Age

The age bands available for recorded crime are: under 18, 18-19, 20-24, 25-29, 30-34, 35-39, 40-44, 45-49, 50-54, 55-59, 60-65 and 65+.

Figures are available for number of crimes recorded, number of sanction detections (currently for monthly updates only but will be available for 2011/12 when the detailed annual bulletin is published), sanction detection rates and population rates (per 1,000 population).

The following crime types are available for each age band:

- Violence against the person – with injury
- Violence against the person – without injury
- Sexual offences
- Robbery
- Burglary
- Offences against vehicles
- Other theft offences
- Fraud and forgery
- Criminal damage
- Other miscellaneous offences
- All offences

4.5.1.2 Victim Gender

Figures are available (male, female, gender unknown) for the number of crimes recorded, number of sanction detections, sanction detection rates and population rates per 1,000 population.

A gender breakdown is currently available for monthly updates only but will be available dating back to 2007/08 when the detailed annual bulletin for 2011/12 is published.

The following crime types are available for each gender:

- Violence against the person – with injury
- Violence against the person – without injury
- Sexual offences
- Robbery
- Burglary
- Offences against vehicles
- Other theft offences
- Fraud and forgery
- Criminal damage
- Other miscellaneous offences
- All offences

4.6 Publication

Annual data are published on a financial year basis. Provisional recorded crime data are published each month on a rolling 12 month basis and financial year to date basis. Provisional figures remain subject to change until the annual data are published. Provisional figures in each monthly bulletin supersede those published in previous monthly updates.

A [publication schedule](#) is available on the PSNI Internet site.

Further information on crime publications is available in the [introduction](#) to this user guide.

5 Domestic Abuse Incidents and Crimes

[5.1 Definition of domestic abuse](#)

[5.2 Data use](#)

[5.3 Data collection](#)

[5.4 Data quality](#)

[5.5 Data Management](#)

[5.6 Timeliness](#)

[5.7 Data Availability](#)

[5.8 Publication](#)

As well as publishing figures on the levels and trends of crime in Northern Ireland, based on police recorded crime data, PSNI also publishes data on those incidents and crimes which have a domestic abuse motivation. Figures relating to domestic abuse incidents and crimes are not a National Statistics product.

5.1 Definition of domestic abuse

The Northern Ireland Regional Steering Group on Domestic Violence has defined domestic abuse as 'any incident of threatening behaviour, violence or abuse (psychological, physical, verbal, sexual, financial or emotional) inflicted on one person by another where they are or have been intimate partners or family members, irrespective of gender or sexual orientation', where:

- **Incident** means an incident anywhere and not confined to the home of one of the partners/family members;
- **Intimate partners** means there must have been a relationship with a degree of continuity and stability. The relationship must also have had (or reasonably supposed to have had) a sexual aspect, such as in the relationship between husband and wife or between others generally recognised as a couple including same sex couples; and
- **Family members** include mother, father, son, daughter, brother, sister, grandparents, whether directly or indirectly related, in-laws or stepfamily.

An explanation of what constitutes an incident and a crime is provided in [Section 2.1 Introduction to Police Recorded Crime](#). A crime will be recorded as domestic abuse where it meets the definition provided above. Not all domestic abuse incidents will result in the recording of a crime as what has occurred in the incident may not be of the level of severity that would result in a notifiable offence being recorded. Where domestic abuse crimes are recorded they are classified according to the Home Office Counting Rules and form a subset of the overall police recorded crime statistics. The recording practices, methods of counting detections and crime types as described in Sections 2 and 3 apply equally to crimes with a domestic abuse motivation.

5.2 Data use

These statistics are used widely within PSNI as management information and to monitor performance on domestic abuse related targets against the Policing Plan. The figures are also used by government departments and other voluntary and statutory agencies to inform debate and policy development regarding domestic abuse in Northern Ireland. Furthermore it is widely accepted that there is under-reporting of domestic abuse incidents to the police.

5.3 Data collection

Domestic abuse statistics have been collated by PSNI in their current format since 2004/05. While PSNI compiled statistics on domestic abuse prior to 2004/05, the method of data collection and definitions of crimes and crime types was not comparable and so these figures are not made available by PSNI's Statistics Branch.

The system which was used by PSNI in 2004/05 for crime recording (the integrated crime information system or 'ICIS') was modified to enable incidents to be identified as having a domestic abuse motivation. Where an incident was given this marker, each crime recorded within that incident was also identified as having a domestic abuse motivation, although offences of assault of police were excluded from the domestic abuse crime figures.

The current system on which crime is recorded, NICHE, was introduced from 1st April 2007. This system refined the process for recording crimes with a domestic abuse motivation in that the marker identifying an incident or crime as domestic could be applied to each incident or crime separately. In

other words a crime which may have been recorded within an incident identified as domestic, but which did not itself have a domestic motivation, would not have the domestic marker applied.

5.4 Data quality

While crimes included within the police recorded crime statistics for Northern Ireland are individually checked for compliance with the Home Office Counting Rules by the PSNI's Statistics Branch, the identification of a domestic abuse motivation is derived from a motivation 'tick box' on the system used by PSNI to record crime. The motivation is identified and completed by a police officer or member of police staff for each such reported incident or crime. The correct application of a domestic abuse motivation for all such incidents/crimes is not quality assured by the PSNI's Statistics Branch, but audits and data quality checks are routinely conducted in an attempt to ensure that any under or over-recording is corrected.

5.5 Data Management

Statistics Branch has access to data which is extracted from the NICHE recording system on a daily basis. Automated processes ensure that the internal management information system and reports are updated each day. Access to these data extracts enables Statistics Branch to produce bulletins for publication and to respond to ad hoc requests for information.

5.6 Timeliness

A balance needs to be obtained between the requirement for figures to be as up-to-date as possible and the requirement to publish figures which are of appropriate quality and completeness for use. Data quality checks are currently issued on a quarterly basis and Districts are given a month to complete these checks. Figures are then published towards the end of the month in which these checks have been completed, resulting in a lag of around eight weeks between the end of the quarter and publication of the quarterly bulletin.

Figures within the current financial year to date are provisional and remain subject to change until finalised figures for the full financial year are published. Final figures for the full financial year (presented as per the quarterly updates) are published around six weeks after the end of the financial year. This is to allow for additional quality checks to be completed on the data. The more detailed annual commentary and spreadsheet will be published in late June/early July.

5.7 Data Availability

Information that is published in the quarterly and annual bulletins has been examined to make sure it meets levels of quality and completeness appropriate for publication. The proportion of records for which information is unavailable is identified in the bulletins and accompanying spreadsheets. There will be some variables held on the operational system for which the level of missing or incomplete information is too high to allow for inclusion in the bulletins, or where the data quality is not sufficient for publication.

Crime classifications are published at levels for which disclosure issues have been considered, including the geographic level at which the information is produced and also the length of time period covered. The [confidentiality protection arrangements](#) document on the PSNI internet site provides additional information on PSNI's arrangements for maintaining the confidentiality of statistical data and statistical disclosure control.

Therefore any requests for crime classifications or types of data not included in the bulletins are assessed and responded to on a case by case basis. Where there is potential for placing additional data on the website, this will be taken forward.

Where there are requests for types of information that would require additional processes to be put in place for gathering this information, these will be forwarded within PSNI for a decision on whether there is a business requirement to collect information in this format.

5.7.1 Availability of Information Relating to Victim Characteristics

The Home Office has identified offences as being victim-based, state-based or victim and state-based. State-based offences are those for which no member of the public or business/organisation is a victim. For victim-based crimes with a domestic abuse motivation the victim will be a member of the public, referred to as a person victim. Victim characteristic figures are available through the annual bulletins.

Victim characteristics are not available for domestic abuse incidents that have not resulted in a crime being recorded ([see 2.1 for an explanation of what constitutes an incident and what constitutes a crime](#)). This is mainly due to the proportion of such records for which victim characteristics are unavailable.

5.7.1.1 Victim Age

In relation to **domestic abuse crimes**, the age bands available are under 18 and 18+, with figures dating back to 2004/05. At a Northern Ireland level the crime classifications provided for each age band are violence against the person – with injury, violence against the person – without injury, property crime, all other offences and total offences. Figures for each age band are also available for total offences recorded by policing district and policing area.

5.7.1.2 Victim Gender

In relation to **domestic abuse crimes**, those victims aged 18+ are further split into female aged 18+ and male aged 18+, with figures dating back to 2004/05. At a Northern Ireland level the crime classifications provided for these gender splits are violence against the person – with injury, violence against the person – without injury, property crime, all other offences and total offences. Figures for these gender splits are also available for total offences recorded by policing district and policing area.

5.8 Publication

Annual data are published on a financial year basis, with the annual bulletin providing finalised figures for the latest financial year along with trends and commentary. Provisional incident and recorded crime data are published each quarter on a rolling 12 month basis and financial year to date basis. Provisional figures remain subject to change until the annual data are published. Provisional figures in each quarterly bulletin supersede those published in previous quarterly updates.

A [publication schedule](#) is available on the PSNI Internet site.

[PSNI publications on domestic abuse incidents and crimes](#) are available from the PSNI Internet site. This link also provides access to the latest quarterly updates and to annual reports dating back to 2004/05.

Bulletins on [Experience of Domestic Violence: Findings from the Northern Ireland Crime Survey](#) can be found in the archive section of the Department of Justice Internet site:

6 Hate Motivated Incidents and Crimes

[6.1 Hate motivation definitions](#)

[6.2 Data use](#)

[6.3 Data collection](#)

[6.4 Data quality](#)

[6.5 Data Management](#)

[6.6 Timeliness](#)

[6.7 Data Availability](#)

[6.8 Publication](#)

As well as publishing figures on the levels and trends of crime in Northern Ireland, based on police recorded crime data, PSNI also publishes data on those incidents and crimes which have a hate motivation. Figures relating to hate motivated incidents and crimes are not a National Statistics product.

6.1 Hate motivation definitions

The PSNI have adopted the definition for racially motivated incidents recommended by the Stephen Lawrence enquiry, namely 'Any incident, which is perceived to be racist by the victim or any other person.' Additionally the PSNI also use the principles of this definition to record all types of hate incidents as listed below, along with their definitions:

Racist Incidents

A racist incident is defined as any incident which is perceived to be racist by the victim or any other person. A racial group can be defined as a group of persons defined by reference to race, colour, nationality or ethnic or national origins (this includes UK National origins i.e. Scottish, English, Welsh and Irish) and references to a person's racial group refer to any racial group into which they fall. Racial group includes the Irish Traveller community.

Homophobic Incidents (sexual orientation)

A homophobic incident is defined as any incident which is perceived to be homophobic by the victim or any other person. Homophobia can be defined as a fear or dislike directed towards lesbian, gay or bisexual people, or a fear or dislike directed towards their perceived lifestyle, culture or characteristics. Sexual orientation can be defined as an individual's preference for a particular sex (be it the opposite or the same), or an individual's view of their own sexuality.

Sectarian Incidents

A sectarian incident is defined as any incident which is perceived to be sectarian by the victim or any other person. The term 'sectarian', whilst not clearly defined, is a term almost exclusively used in Northern Ireland to describe incidents of bigoted dislike or hatred of members of a different religious or political group. It is broadly accepted that within the Northern Ireland context an individual or group must be perceived to be Catholic or Protestant, Nationalist or Unionist, or Loyalist or Republican.

Faith/Religious Incidents (non-sectarian)

A faith/religious incident is defined as any incident which is perceived to be based upon prejudice towards or hatred of the faith of the victim or so perceived by the victim or any other person. A faith or religious group can be defined as a group of persons defined by reference to religious belief or lack of religious belief. This would include Christians, Muslims, Hindus, Sikhs and different sects within a religion. It also includes people who hold no religious belief at all.

Disability (or Disablist) Incidents

A disability related incident is defined as any incident which is perceived to be based upon prejudice towards or hatred of the victim because of their disability or so perceived by the victim or any other person. Disability can be defined as any physical or mental impairment which has substantial and long-term adverse effect on a person's ability to carry out normal day to day activities.

Transphobic Incidents

A transphobic incident is defined as any incident which is perceived to be transphobic by the victim or any other person. Gender should not be confused with sexual orientation. A transsexual is a person who has 'gender dysphoria' or dissatisfaction with his or her own birth gender. Transsexuals may be lesbian, gay, bisexual or heterosexual and may or may not consider an incident perpetrated against them to be homophobic.

An explanation of what constitutes an incident and a crime is provided in [Section 2.1 Introduction to Police Recorded Crime](#). A crime will be recorded as having a hate motivation where it meets the

definition provided above. Not all hate motivated incidents will result in the recording of a crime as what has occurred in the incident may not be of the level of severity that would result in a notifiable offence being recorded. Where crimes with a hate motivation are recorded they are classified according to the Home Office Counting Rules and form a subset of the overall police recorded crime statistics. The recording practices, methods of counting detections and crime types as described in Sections 2 and 3 apply equally to crimes with a hate motivation.

6.2 Data use

These statistics are used widely within PSNI as management information and to monitor performance on hate motivation related targets against the Policing Plan. The figures are also used by government departments and other voluntary and statutory agencies to inform debate and policy development regarding incidents and crimes with a hate motivation in Northern Ireland.

6.3 Data collection

Incidents and crimes with a racist or homophobic motivation have been collated by PSNI in their current format since 2004/05. Sectarian, faith/religion and disability motivated incidents and crimes have been collated since 2005/06. Incidents and crimes with a transphobic motivation have been collated since 2006/07. While PSNI compiled statistics on racist and homophobic motivations prior to 2004/05, the method of data collection and definitions of crimes and crime types was not comparable and so these figures are not made available by PSNI's Statistics Branch.

The system which was used by PSNI in 2004/05 for crime recording (the integrated crime information system or 'ICIS') was modified to enable incidents to be identified as having a racist or homophobic motivation. Where an incident was given this marker, each crime recorded within that incident was also identified as having a racist or homophobic motivation.

The current system on which crime is recorded, NICHE, was introduced from 1st April 2007. This system refined the process for recording crimes with a hate motivation in that the marker identifying an incident or crime as hate motivated could be applied to each incident or crime separately. In other words a crime which may have been recorded within an incident identified as hate motivated, but which did not itself have a hate motivation, would not have the hate motivation marker applied.

This information is used widely within PSNI as management information and to monitor performance on hate motivation related targets against the Policing Plan. The figures are also used by government departments and other voluntary and statutory agencies to inform debate and policy development regarding the impact of incidents of this nature on Northern Ireland.

6.4 Data quality

While crimes included within the police recorded crime statistics for Northern Ireland are individually checked for compliance with the Home Office Counting Rules by the PSNI's Statistics Branch, the identification of a hate motivation is derived from a motivation 'tick box' on the system used by PSNI to record crime. The motivation is identified and completed by a police officer or member of police staff for each such reported incident or crime. The correct application of a hate motivation for all such incidents/crimes is not quality assured by the PSNI's Statistics Branch, but quarterly audits and data quality checks are conducted in an attempt to ensure that any under or over-recording is corrected.

6.5 Data Management

Statistics Branch has access to data which is extracted from the NICHE recording system on a daily basis. Automated processes ensure that the internal management information system and reports are updated each day. Access to these data extracts enables Statistics Branch to produce bulletins for publication and to respond to ad hoc requests for information.

6.6 Timeliness

A balance needs to be obtained between the requirement for figures to be as up-to-date as possible and the requirement to publish figures which are of appropriate quality and completeness for use. Data quality checks are currently issued on a quarterly basis and Districts are given a month to complete these checks. Figures are then published towards the end of the month in which these checks have been completed, resulting in a lag of around eight weeks between the end of the quarter and publication of the quarterly bulletin.

Figures within the current financial year to date are provisional and remain subject to change until finalised figures for the full financial year are published. Final figures for the full financial year (presented as per the quarterly updates) are published around six weeks after the end of the financial year. This is to allow for additional quality checks to be completed on the data. The more detailed annual commentary and spreadsheet will be published in late June/early July.

6.7 Data Availability

Information that is published in the quarterly and annual bulletins has been examined to make sure it meets levels of quality and completeness appropriate for publication. The proportion of records for which information is unavailable is identified in the bulletins and accompanying spreadsheets. There will be some variables held on the operational system for which the level of missing or incomplete information is too high to allow for inclusion in the bulletins, or where the data quality is not sufficient for publication.

Crime classifications are published at levels for which disclosure issues have been considered, including the geographic level at which the information is produced and also the length of time period covered. The [confidentiality protection arrangements](#) document on the PSNI internet site provides additional information on PSNI's arrangements for maintaining the confidentiality of statistical data and statistical disclosure control.

Therefore any requests for crime classifications or types of data not included in the bulletins are assessed and responded to on a case by case basis. Where there is potential for placing additional data on the website, this will be taken forward.

Where there are requests for types of information that would require additional processes to be put in place for gathering this information, these will be forwarded within PSNI for a decision on whether there is a business requirement to collect information in this format.

6.7.1 Availability of Information Relating to Victim Characteristics

The Home Office has identified offences as being victim-based, state-based or victim and state-based. State-based offences are those for which no member of the public or business/organisation is a victim. For victim-based offences, the victim can be a member of the public (referred to here as person victim), a police officer who was the victim of a crime in the course of carrying out their duty, or a business or organisation. The introduction of the NICHE system in 2007/08 has enabled a breakdown of crime by the type of victim to be provided from this date. Victim characteristic figures are available through the annual bulletins.

Victim characteristics are not available for incidents with a hate motivation that have not resulted in a crime being recorded ([see 2.1 for an explanation of what constitutes an incident and what constitutes a crime](#)). This is mainly due to the proportion of such records for which victim characteristics are unavailable.

Victim characteristics are also not available in relation to victims of faith/religion, disability or transphobic motivation as the number of person victims is too small to enable these details to be provided.

6.7.1.1 Victim Age

In relation to **racist, homophobic and sectarian crimes**, the age bands available are under 18, 18-64 and 65+. Figures date back to 2007/08 and are available at a Northern Ireland level and for total offences recorded.

6.7.1.2 Victim Gender

In relation to **racist, homophobic and sectarian crimes**, figures are available split by female victims and male victims, with the number of crimes where the gender is unknown also provided. Figures date back to 2007/08 and are available at a Northern Ireland level and for total offences recorded.

6.7.1.3 Ethnicity/Nationality

Figures relating to the ethnicity and nationality of victims are provided for crimes with a racist motivation and are available in the detailed annual bulletin (Table 2.5).

6.7.1.4 Religious Background / Sexual Orientation

The provision of these victim characteristics in relation to crimes with a homophobic, sectarian or faith/religion motivation is not possible due to the proportion of such crimes for which this information is either unknown or for which the victim refused to provide these details. Further information is

available in the sections of the Hate Motivated Incidents and Crimes in Northern Ireland annual bulletin which deal with information relating to victims.

6.8 Publication

Annual data are published on a financial year basis, with the annual bulletin providing finalised figures for the latest financial year along with trends and commentary. Provisional incident and recorded crime data are published each quarter on a rolling 12 month basis and financial year to date basis. Provisional figures remain subject to change until the annual data are published. Provisional figures in each quarterly bulletin supersede those published in previous monthly updates.

A [publication schedule](#) is available on the PSNI Internet site.

[PSNI publications on hate motivated incidents and crimes](#) are available from the PSNI Internet site. This link also provides access to the latest quarterly updates and to annual reports dating back to the year the recording of each type of hate motivation started.

7 Geographic recording of crime

7.1 Policing areas

7.2 Neighbourhood Policing Teams (NPTs)

7.3 Standard Geographic Areas

7.4 Data Availability

As a general rule crimes are geographically recorded by the police based on the location in which the incident occurred. Crime by location is currently presented in two main ways:

- by policing area and policing district (available through the PSNI Internet Site);
- by standard geographic area (available through the [Northern Ireland Neighbourhood Information System](#) Internet Site: - Local Government District (LGD), Ward, Assembly Area, Westminster Parliamentary Constituency, Education & Library Board, Health & Social Services Board, Health & Social Care Trust and Neighbourhood Renewal Area (NRA).

7.1 Policing areas

Policing areas are based on the local government district (LGD) boundaries for Northern Ireland, with Belfast being split into East, North, South and West. Policing areas have then been grouped together to form the eight policing districts as shown in Figure 7.1 below

While the policing boundaries described in this section have changed since those in place in 1998/99, postcode information has been used to create a comprehensive data series based on the current boundaries.

Each crime record is allocated to a policing area at the time of recording. Crime figures within the current financial year are provisional and, at any one point in time, there may be a small number of crimes which have not yet been allocated to a policing area. However by the time the financial year figures are finalised, all crimes will have been allocated to a policing area.

Figure 7.1 Map of policing districts and policing areas in Northern Ireland



7.2 Neighbourhood Policing Teams (NPTs)

Policing areas are split into smaller localities which are covered by Neighbourhood Policing Teams. Due to technical reasons it is currently not possible to provide figures on crime, anti social behaviour, domestic abuse motivations or hate motivations for each NPT. However work to enable such information to be provided is being progressed.

7.3 Standard Geographic Areas

While all crimes are allocated to a policing area, there is no automatic allocation to other standard geographic areas. These allocations are done using the postcode attached to the address at which the crime occurred. However not all of these addresses contain a valid postcode and some addresses do not have a postcode at all.

Once crime figures have been finalised after the end of each financial year, work is undertaken by staff in Statistics Branch to improve the quality and completeness of postcode details. After this work is finished, more than 99% of records in the dataset have a postcode:

- postcodes which are obviously incorrect are removed from the dataset (eg where the policing area is identified as Belfast but the postcode places the crime in Newry and no alternative postcode can be identified);
- records where the postcode and the policing area fall close to the same geographic boundary but on different sides of that boundary are kept in the dataset.

The postcode is then used to allocate the standard geographic areas to each record in the dataset by a process of matching to the latest Central Postcode Directory (CPD). Summary crime figures for each geographic area are then compiled and disclosure control is applied whereby any cell with a value of three or less is replaced with a *. On occasion it is also necessary to replace cells with values above three with a * where not to do so would enable a value of three or less to be identified. The application of disclosure control is to avoid the disclosure of any personal information about an individual or organisation. Further details on disclosure control are available in the statement on [confidentiality protection arrangements](#).

The completed files are then forwarded for updating on the [Northern Ireland Neighbourhood Information System \(NINIS\)](#).

Due to the amount of work involved in compiling figures for these standard geographic areas, it is only possible to provide such updates once a year.

Please note: while there may be an expectation that crime figures by policing area and by LGD would be the same, differences may be found for the following reasons:

- policing area is allocated at time of recording and is 100% complete, while LGD is allocated on the basis of postcode information which is 99% complete;
- the inclusion of records where the postcode places the record in a LGD neighbouring the allocated policing area.

7.4 Data Availability

The levels of geographic availability differ between recorded crime, incidents and crimes with a domestic motivation and hate motivated incidents and crimes. The geographic areas and crime classifications available are outlined in the sections below.

7.4.1 Data Availability for Recorded Crime

The spreadsheet which accompanies the annual crime bulletin contains a pivot table which provides the number of crimes recorded, number of sanction detections, sanction detection rates and population rates per 1,000 population for each financial year dating back to 1998/99 and for each policing district and policing area, in addition to the Northern Ireland level. These figures are also available for the following crime classifications:

Violence against the person – with injury	Theft from a vehicle	Criminal damage
Violence against the person – without injury	Theft or unauthorised taking of a motor vehicle	Drug trafficking
Sexual offences	Interfering with a motor vehicle	Drug non-trafficking
Robbery	Shoplifting	Other miscellaneous offences
Burglary in a dwelling	All other theft offences	All Offences
Burglary in a building other than a dwelling	Fraud and forgery	

All the above information is also available in the monthly bulletins for the following time periods: the current and previous 12 months, current and previous financial years to date and for each month over the last two years.

7.4.2 Data Availability for Domestic Abuse Incidents and Crimes

The spreadsheet which accompanies the annual bulletin Incidents and Crimes with a Domestic Abuse Motivation contains a pivot table which provides the number of domestic abuse crimes recorded, number of domestic abuse sanction detections, domestic abuse sanction detection rates and domestic abuse population rates per 1,000 population for each financial year dating back to 2004/05 and for each policing district and policing area, in addition to the Northern Ireland level. These figures are also available for the following crime classifications:

- Violence against the person – with injury
- Violence against the person – without injury
- Property crime
- Breach of non-molestation order
- All other offences
- All Offences

The number of incidents with a domestic abuse motivation, along with rates per 1,000 population by policing district and policing area for each financial year dating back to 2004/05 are also available in this spreadsheet.

The above information is also available in the quarterly bulletins for the following time periods: the current and previous 12 months, current and previous financial years to date and for each quarter over the last two years. The only exceptions are that violence against the person – with injury and violence against the person – without injury are combined to provide an overall category of violence against the person, and that breach of non molestation order is not provided separately but is combined with all other offences.

7.4.3 Data Availability for Incidents and Crimes with a Hate Motivation

The spreadsheets for racist, homophobic and sectarian motivations which accompany the annual bulletin Hate Motivated Incidents and Crimes each contain a pivot table providing the number of hate motivated crimes recorded, number of hate motivated sanction detections, hate motivated sanction detection rates and hate motivated population rates per 1,000 population for each financial year dating back to the start of each data series and for each policing district and policing area, in addition to the Northern Ireland level. These figures are also available for the following crime classifications:

- Violence against the person – with injury
- Violence against the person – without injury
- Property crime
- All other offences
- All Offences

The number of incidents with a hate motivation, along with rates per 1,000 population by policing district and policing area for each financial year dating back to the start of each data series are also available in these spreadsheets.

The number of incidents, recorded crimes and sanction detection rates for faith/religion motivations and disability motivations are available at policing district and policing area for each financial year dating back to 2005/06. These figures are not provided for crime classifications below the level of total crime.

Due to the low number of incidents and crimes with a transphobic motivation recorded each year, descriptive information is provided in the annual bulletin.

The above information is also available in the quarterly bulletins for the following time periods: the current and previous 12 months, current and previous financial years to date and for each quarter over the last two years. The one exception is that violence against the person – with injury and violence against the person – without injury are combined to provide an overall category of violence against the person.

7.4.4 Data Availability on NINIS

NINIS holds a range of crime and crime-related information in its [Crime and Justice Data Catalogue](#) and also in the [Neighbourhood Renewal Data Catalogue \(Community Well-being dataset\)](#).

7.4.4.1 Crime and Justice Data Catalogue

Notifiable Offences Recorded	
Time Period Covered	Each financial year dating back to 1998/99
Geographic Areas Covered	Local Government District (LGD), Ward, Assembly Area, Westminster Parliamentary Constituency, Education & Library Board, Health & Social Services Board, Health & Social Care Trust and Policing Area
Crime Classifications Available	Total recorded crime – all offences Violence against the person Violence against the person with injury Violence against the person without injury Sexual offences Robbery Burglary Burglary in a dwelling Burglary in a building other than a dwelling Offences against vehicles Other theft offences Fraud and forgery Criminal damage Drug offences Other miscellaneous offences

Domestic Incidents and Crimes	
Time Period Covered	Each financial year dating back to 2004/05
Geographic Areas Covered	Domestic Abuse Incidents – Policing Area only
	Domestic Abuse Crimes - Local Government District (LGD), Ward, Assembly Area, Westminster Parliamentary Constituency, Education & Library Board, Health & Social Services Board, Health & Social Care Trust and Policing Area
Crime Classifications Available	Total number of offences recorded with a domestic abuse motivation only

Hate Incidents and Crimes (those with a racist, homophobic or sectarian motivation only)	
Time Period Covered	Racist and homophobic - each financial year dating back to 2004/05 Sectarian – each financial year dating back to 2005/06
Geographic Areas Covered	Incidents with racist, homophobic or sectarian motivation – Policing Area only
	Crimes with racist, homophobic or sectarian motivation - Local Government District (LGD), Ward, Assembly Area, Westminster Parliamentary Constituency, Education & Library Board, Health & Social Services Board, Health & Social Care Trust and Policing Area
Crime Classifications Available	Total number of offences recorded with a racist, homophobic or sectarian motivation only

Anti-social behaviour incidents	
Time Period Covered	each financial year dating back to 2006/07
Geographic Areas Covered	Local Government District (LGD), Ward, Assembly Area, Westminster Parliamentary Constituency, Education & Library Board, Health & Social Services Board, Health & Social Care Trust and Policing Area
ASB Classifications Available	Total number of anti-social behaviour incidents only

7.4.4.2 Neighbourhood Renewal Data Catalogue – Community Well-being

Notifiable Offences	
Time Period Covered	Each financial year dating back to 1998/99
Geographic Areas Covered	Neighbourhood Renewal Area
Crime Classifications Available	Total recorded crime – all offences Violence against the person Violence against the person with injury Violence against the person without injury Sexual offences Robbery Burglary Burglary in a dwelling Burglary in a building other than a dwelling Offences against vehicles Other theft offences Fraud and forgery Criminal damage Drug offences Other miscellaneous offences

Domestic Abuse Crimes	
Time Period Covered	Each financial year dating back to 2004/05
Geographic Areas Covered	Neighbourhood Renewal Area
Crime Classifications Available	Total number of offences recorded with a domestic abuse motivation only

Hate Crimes (those with a racist, homophobic or sectarian motivation only)	
Time Period Covered	Racist and homophobic - each financial year dating back to 2004/05 Sectarian – each financial year dating back to 2005/06
Geographic Areas Covered	Neighbourhood Renewal Area
Crime Classifications Available	Total number of offences recorded with a racist, homophobic or sectarian motivation only

Anti-social behaviour incidents	
Time Period Covered	Each financial year dating back to 2006/07
Geographic Areas Covered	Neighbourhood Renewal Area
ASB Classifications Available	Total number of anti-social behaviour incidents only

8 UK and International crime statistics

The police recorded crime data used in this publication cover crimes in Northern Ireland only.

Crime statistics for England & Wales, Scotland and Ireland are collected and published separately.

The latest bulletins for **England & Wales** are available from the [Home Office](#) Internet Site.

The latest bulletins for **Scotland** are available from [The Scottish Government](#) Internet Site.

The latest bulletins for Ireland are available from [Central Statistics Office Ireland](#) Internet Site.

Links to additional publications which contain recorded crime figures are provided below. Where national or international comparisons are made, differences in data collection methods and legislation between countries should be taken into consideration.

[Northern Ireland Abstract of Statistics Online](#)

[Regional Trends \(Office for National Statistics\)](#)

[Social Trends \(Office for National Statistics\)](#)

[Eurostat](#)

[European Sourcebook](#)

[United Nations Surveys on Crime Trends](#)

Appendix 1 Recorded crime list

The classifications defined in this Appendix are those used for crimes recorded by the police and notifiable to the Home Office. In general, attempting, conspiring, aiding, abetting, causing or permitting a crime is classified under the heading of the crime itself, though in certain cases it is shown separately.

Recorded crime covers all indictable and triable-either-way offences. Additionally, a few closely associated summary offences are included. These offences are identified in the listing, together with the reasons for their inclusion. The crimes on this list are termed notifiable offences and their listing is referred to as the notifiable offences list (NOL).

Most of the offences listed are defined in terms of legal offences (i.e. sections of Acts). A comprehensive list of these offences, together with key legal definitions and explanatory notes, appears in the [Counting Rules for Recorded Crime](#) pages on the Home Office Internet Site.

The numbering of each classification provided below follows the numbering of the crime classifications as displayed within the Counting Rules for Recorded Crime.

Note: The offences and legislation in the Home Office Counting Rules for Recorded Crime are based on those used in England & Wales. There will be differences in offences and legislation within Northern Ireland.

Violence against the person

Violence against the person – with injury

1. Murder
 - 4.1 Manslaughter
 - 4.2 Infanticide
Applies to infants aged under 12 months killed by the mother while of disturbed mind.
- Homicide
Comprises murder, manslaughter and infanticide.
2. Attempted murder
- 4.3 Intentional destruction of a viable unborn child
Applies to the unborn child 'capable of being born alive'.
- 4.4 Causing death by dangerous driving
- 4.6 Causing death by careless driving when under the influence of drink or drugs
- 4.8 Causing death by careless or inconsiderate driving
- 5A. Inflicting grievous bodily harm (GBH) with intent
- 5B. Use of substance or object to endanger life
- 5C. Possession of items to endanger life
Further split into Explosives and Firearms / Ammunition
- 8F. Inflicting grievous bodily harm (GBH) without intent
- 8H. Racially or religiously aggravated inflicting grievous bodily harm (GBH) without intent
Classification does not apply within Northern Ireland.
- 37.1 Causing death by aggravated vehicle taking
- 4.7 Causing or allowing death of a child or vulnerable person
- 4.9 Causing death by driving: unlicensed drivers etc.
- 4.10 Corporate manslaughter

- 8G. Actual bodily harm (AOABH) and other injury
Further split into AOABH (assault occasioning actual bodily harm) and Assault on police with injury (Covers those assaults with an AOABH injury level but where the victim was a police officer. Where a police officer receives an injury more serious than AOABH, this will be recorded using the appropriate offence)
- 8J. Racially or religiously aggravated actual bodily harm (ABH) or other injury
Classification does not apply within Northern Ireland.
- 8K. Poisoning or female genital mutilation

Violence against the person – without injury

- 3A. Conspiracy to murder
- 3B. Threats to kill
- 6. Endangering railway passengers
- 7. Endangering life at sea
- 10A. Possession of firearms with intent
- 10C. Possession of other weapons
- 10D. Possession of article with blade or point
- 8L. Harassment
Further split into Harassment and Intimidation (no exact match for intimidation offences in England & Wales)
- 9A. Public fear, alarm or distress
Classification does not apply within Northern Ireland.
- 8M. Racially or religiously aggravated harassment
Classification does not apply within Northern Ireland.
- 9B. Racially or religiously aggravated public fear, alarm or distress
Classification does not apply within Northern Ireland.
- 11. Cruelty to and neglect of children
- 12. Abandoning a child under the age of two years
- 13. Child abduction
- 14. Procuring illegal abortion
- 104. Assault without injury on a constable
Summary offences, closely associated with actual bodily harm (see classification 8G).
- 105A. Assault without injury
Summary offences, closely associated with actual bodily harm (see classification 8G). Includes, amongst other offences, common assault and aggravated assault. From 1 April 2003 only includes assaults involving no injury, please note that this change was introduced a year earlier in England and Wales on 1 April 2002.
- 105B. Racially or religiously aggravated assault without injury (see classification 105A)
Classification does not apply within Northern Ireland.

Sexual offences

Most serious sexual crime

- 17. Indecent assault on a male
Covers offences recorded under legislation in place prior to introduction of Sexual Offences (Northern Ireland) Order 2008. Is further split into age 17+ and age <17.
- 17A. Sexual assault on a male aged 13 and over
- 17B. Sexual assault on a male child under 13

- 19A-H. Rape
Is further split into rape and attempted rape.
- 20. Indecent assault on a female
Covers offences recorded under legislation in place prior to introduction of Sexual Offences (Northern Ireland) Order 2008. Is further split into age 17+ and age <17.
- 20A. Sexual assault on a female aged 13 and over
- 20B. Sexual assault on a female child under 13
- 21. Unlawful sexual intercourse with a girl under 14
Covers offences recorded under legislation in place prior to introduction of Sexual Offences (Northern Ireland) Order 2008.
- 21. Sexual activity involving a child under 13
- 22A. Causing sexual activity without consent
- 22. Unlawful sexual intercourse with a girl under 17
Covers offences recorded under legislation in place prior to introduction of Sexual Offences (Northern Ireland) Order 2008.
- 22B. Sexual activity involving a child under 16
- 70. Sexual activity etc. with a person with a mental disorder
- 71. Abuse of children through prostitution and pornography
- 72. Trafficking for sexual exploitation
- 74. Gross indecency with a child
Covers offences recorded under legislation in place prior to introduction of Sexual Offences (Northern Ireland) Order 2008.

Other sexual offences

- 16. Buggery
Covers offences recorded under legislation in place prior to introduction of Sexual Offences (Northern Ireland) Order 2008.
- 18. Gross indecency between males
Covers offences recorded under legislation in place prior to introduction of Sexual Offences (Northern Ireland) Order 2008.
- 23. Incest or familial sexual offences
- 24. Exploitation of prostitution
- 25. Abduction of a female
- 27. Soliciting for the purpose of prostitution
These offences will be included in the Northern Ireland recorded crime figures from 1st April 2011. Please see 3.1.2 Other sexual offences for further explanation.
- 73. Abuse of position of trust of a sexual nature
- 88A. Sexual grooming
- 88C. Other miscellaneous sexual offences
- 88D. Unnatural sexual offences
- 88E. Exposure and voyeurism

Robbery

Key elements of the offence of robbery (Section 8 of the Theft Act (Northern Ireland) 1969) are stealing and the use or threat of force immediately before doing so, and in order to do so. Any injuries resulting from this force are not recorded as additional offences of violence.

- 34A. Robbery of business property
Further split into armed robbery, ordinary robbery and hijacking.
- 34B. Robbery of personal property
Further split into armed robbery, ordinary robbery and hijacking.

Burglary

Key elements of police recorded burglaries (as defined by the Theft Act (Northern Ireland) 1969) are entry (or attempted entry) to a building as a trespasser with intent to either (a) steal property from it (including stealing or attempting to steal), (b) inflict grievous bodily harm or (c) commit unlawful damage to property whilst inside. The offence group also includes aggravated burglary (Section 10 of the same Act), which is defined as a burglary where the burglar is in possession of a weapon at the time. The Home Office Counting Rules contain details of the types of premises that constitute a dwelling.

- 28A. Burglary in a dwelling
- 28B. Attempted burglary in a dwelling
- 28C. Distraction burglary in a dwelling
Not available in Northern Ireland, distraction burglary figures are included in 28A.
- 28D. Attempted distraction burglary in a dwelling
Not available in Northern Ireland, attempted distraction burglary figures are included in 28B.
- 29. Aggravated burglary in a dwelling
- 30A. Burglary in a building other than a dwelling
- 30B. Attempted burglary in a building other than a dwelling
- 31. Aggravated burglary in a building other than a dwelling

Offences against vehicles

- 37.2 Aggravated vehicle taking
Part of Article 172 of the Road Traffic Northern Ireland Order 1981. Applies to offences of unauthorised vehicle taking (see classification 48 below) with additional aggravating factors of dangerous driving, or causing an accident involving injury or damage.
- 45. Theft from a vehicle
- 48. Theft or unauthorised taking of motor vehicle
Unauthorised taking of motor vehicle (part of Article 172 of the Road Traffic Northern Ireland Order 1981; also known as taking without consent or TWOC) is a summary offence. It is closely associated with theft of a motor vehicle because at the time of recording it may not be known whether the intention is to permanently deprive the owner.
- 126. Interfering with a motor vehicle
Summary offences, closely associated with theft of or from vehicles. The Home Office Counting Rules contain detailed guidance for forces on distinguishing between these offences and criminal damage, where a vehicle is reported damaged.

Thefts of and from vehicles

Where this terminology is used it refers to aggravated vehicle taking, theft from a vehicle and theft or unauthorised taking of a motor vehicle.

Other theft offences

All the offences listed here, unless shown otherwise, form the legal offence of theft (Section 1 of the Theft Act (Northern Ireland) 1969), which is defined as a person dishonestly appropriating property belonging to another with the intention of permanently depriving the other of it.

- 38. Profiting from or concealing knowledge of the proceeds of crime
- 39. Theft from the person
Includes snatch theft, but if this involves the use or threat of force (e.g. if the victim resists), then it is recorded as robbery.
- 40. Theft in a dwelling other than from automatic machine or meter
- 41. Theft by an employee
- 42. Theft of mail
- 43. Dishonest use of electricity

- 44. Theft or unauthorised taking of a pedal cycle
Includes taking a pedal cycle without consent (Article 172 of the Road Traffic Northern Ireland Order 1981).
- 46. Shoplifting
- 47. Theft from automatic machine or meter
- 49. Other theft or unauthorised taking
Includes, amongst other offences, unauthorised taking of conveyance other than a motor vehicle or pedal cycle.
- 54. Handling stolen goods
Section 21 of the Theft Act (Northern Ireland) 1969. Dishonestly receiving etc. goods, knowing them to have been stolen.

Fraud and forgery

- 51. Fraud by company director
- 52. False accounting
- 53A-J. Fraud by false representation etc
Further split into
 - 53D. *Other fraud (not covered elsewhere including deception)*
 - 53E. *Fraud by failing to disclose information*
 - 53F. *Fraud by abuse of position*
 - 53H. *Making or supplying articles for use in fraud*
 - 53J. *Possession of articles for use in fraud*
- 55. Bankruptcy and insolvency offences
- 60/61. Forgery or use of false drug prescription / Other forgery
- 61A. Possession of false documents
- 814. Vehicle/driver document fraud
These records comprise driving licences, insurance certificates, registration and licensing documents, work records, operators' licences and test certificates.

Criminal damage

- 56A. Arson endangering life
- 56B. Arson not endangering life
Not all malicious fires that the police record are included here. If the owner of the property set alight is wounded, then a crime of violence is recorded. If a stolen vehicle is subsequently burnt out, it is recorded as a vehicle theft. An additional arson offence is recorded only if there is evidence that the arsonist is unconnected with the vehicle thief.
- 58A. Criminal damage to a dwelling
- 58B. Criminal damage to a building other than a dwelling
- 58C. Criminal damage to a vehicle
- 58D. Other criminal damage
- 58E. Racially or religiously aggravated criminal damage to a dwelling (see classification 58A).
Classification does not apply within Northern Ireland.
- 58F. Racially or religiously aggravated criminal damage to a building other than a dwelling (see classification 58B).
Classification does not apply within Northern Ireland.
- 58G. Racially or religiously aggravated criminal damage to a vehicle (see classification 58C).
Classification does not apply within Northern Ireland.
- 58H. Racially or religiously aggravated other criminal damage (see classification 58D).
Classification does not apply within Northern Ireland.
- 59. Threat or possession with intent to commit criminal damage

Figures for explosives offences and petrol bombing offences, which form a subset of the criminal damage offence group, are also available separately.

Drug offences

- 92A. Trafficking in controlled drugs
- 92C. Other drug offences
Various offences, mostly under the Misuse of Drugs Act 1971, including permitting premises to be used for unlawful purposes; failure to comply with notice requiring information relating to prescribing, supply etc. of drugs; supply of intoxicating substance; and supply etc. of articles for administering or preparing controlled drugs.
- 92D. Possession of controlled drugs (excluding cannabis)
- 92E. Possession of controlled drugs (cannabis)

Other miscellaneous offences

- 10B. Possession of firearm
- 81. Other firearms offences
- 15. Concealing an infant death close to birth,
- 26. Bigamy
- 33. Going equipped for stealing, etc.
- 35. Blackmail
- 36. Kidnapping
- 62. Treason
- 64. Riot
- 65. Violent disorder (*within Northern Ireland riotous behaviour is the most comparable offence*)
- 66. Other offences against the State and public order
Further split into:
 - Bomb hoax related offences*
 - Breach of anti-social behaviour order*
 - Breach of non-molestation order*
 - Breach of sex offender orders etc*
 - Offences under anti-terrorist legislation*
 - Other*
- 67. Perjury
- 68. Libel
- 75. Betting, gaming and lotteries
- 76. Aiding suicide
- 78. Immigration offences
- 79. Perverting the course of justice
- 80. Absconding from lawful custody
- 82. Customs and Revenue offences
- 83. Bail offences
- 84. Trade description offences
- 85. Health and Safety offences
- 86. Obscene publications, etc. and protected sexual material
- 87. Protection from eviction
- 89. Adulteration of food
- 90. Other knives offences
- 91. Public health offences
- 94. Planning laws
- 95. Disclosure, obstruction, false or misleading statements etc.

- 99. Other indictable or triable-either-way offences
- 802. Dangerous driving
Further split into dangerous driving and dangerous driving causing GBI etc