



FREEDOM OF INFORMATION REQUEST



Request Number: F-2015-02995

Keyword: Crime

Subject: Arrests Under the Vagrancy Act 1824

Request and Answer:

Question

Under the Freedom of Information Act 2000, I am seeking the following information in relation to the use of the Vagrancy Act 1824 in your constabulary.

Between January 2012 and September 2015, I would like to know how many arrests have been made in your constabulary in relation to the Vagrancy Act 1824.

I would like this information on a year-by-year basis up until the time my FOI request is answered. If accessing such information does not exceed the statutory time limit for an FOI request, I would also request the ages and nationalities of those arrested. (If providing such information does exceed the time limit, I would request that you provide, please, only the number of arrests made between the specified dates.)

Some parts of this request may be easier to answer than others, and should this prove to be the case I would ask that you release available data as soon as possible rather than hold up the entire request.

Answer

This is to inform you that the Police Service of Northern Ireland has now completed its search for the information you requested. The decision has been taken to disclose the located information to you in full.

Between the 1st January 2012 and 23rd September 2015 there have been a total of 30 arrests made for offences relating to the Vagrancy Act 1824. The number of arrests broken down by year, nationality and age is attached below as requested.

Please note that the offences which are covered by the Vagrancy Act 1824 include 'Found on Premises for Unlawful Purpose', 'Possessing Instrument with Intent to Commit an Offence' and 'Unlawful Charitable Collection'. This information relates to those people arrested by the PSNI and processed through custody. Where an individual has been dealt with by other means e.g. street bailed, discretionary disposal etc. their information will not be included in these figures.

This information is based on data extracted from a live system and may be subject to change. It is dependent on the information having been input into the system in such a way as to identify those records that are relevant.

If you have any queries regarding your request or the decision please do not hesitate to contact me on 028 9070 0164. When contacting the Freedom of Information Team, please quote the reference number listed at the beginning of this letter.

If you are dissatisfied in any way with the handling of your request, you have the right to request a review. You should do this as soon as possible or in any case within two months of the date of issue of this letter. In the event that you require a review to be undertaken, you can do so by writing to the Head of Freedom of Information, PSNI Headquarters, 65 Knock Road, Belfast, BT5 6LE or by emailing foi@psni.pnn.police.uk.

If following an internal review, carried out by an independent decision maker, you were to remain dissatisfied in any way with the handling of the request you may make a complaint, under Section 50 of the Freedom of Information Act, to the Information Commissioner's Office and ask that they investigate whether the PSNI has complied with the terms of the Freedom of Information Act. You can write to the Information Commissioner at Information Commissioner's Office, Wycliffe House, Water Lane, Wilmslow, Cheshire, SK9 5AF. In most circumstances the Information Commissioner will not investigate a complaint unless an internal review procedure has been carried out, however the Commissioner has the option to investigate the matter at his discretion.

Please be advised that PSNI replies under Freedom of Information may be released into the public domain via our website @ www.psni.police.uk

Personal details in respect of your request have, where applicable, been removed to protect confidentiality.

Arrests Under the Vagrancy Act 1824 by Nationality¹ (1 Jan 2012 - 23 Sep 2015)				
Nationality¹	2012	2013	2014	2015
Ireland	0	0	2	1
Lithuania	0	1	0	0
Northern Ireland	6	7	6	0
Romania	0	0	0	2
Scotland	0	0	1	0
United Kingdom	3	0	1	0
Total	9	8	10	3

¹Nationality - Where more than one nationality is recorded the first nationality recorded has been extracted

Arrests Under the Vagrancy Act 1824 by Age at time of Arrest (1 Jan 2012 – 23 Sep 2015)				
Age	2012	2013	2014	2015
14	0	0	1	0
15	0	2	0	1
18	0	1	0	0
19	0	1	1	0
21	0	1	2	1
23	1	0	1	0
24	2	0	0	0
25	2	0	0	0
26	0	0	1	0
28	0	0	1	0
30	1	0	0	0
39	1	1	0	0
41	1	0	0	0
42	0	0	1	0
43	0	0	1	0
44	0	0	0	1
45	0	1	0	0
50	1	0	0	0
52	0	0	1	0
54	0	1	0	0
Total	9	8	10	3

Source: PSNI Statistics Branch