



FREEDOM OF INFORMATION REQUEST



Request Number: F-2015-00784

Keyword: Operational Policing

Subject: Persons Arrested/Charged Under Vagrancy Act For Begging

Request and Answer:

Question 1

How many people have been arrested and or charged in Belfast and Northern Ireland in the past 5 years (from 2010-2015) in Belfast and Northern Ireland for begging under the Vagrancy Act?

Question 2

What nationality were they?

Answer 1-2

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.

Please see the table below on page numbered 1.

N.B. The information includes those persons arrested and processed through police custody. Therefore, those arrested and street bailed or dealt with by other means e.g. discretionary disposal, etc. will not be included in the figures and those whose detention is not authorised by the custody officer have also been excluded. The information extracted is based on the individual arrested for the offence of begging under the Vagrancy Act and covers the time period of 1 January 2010-24 February 2015. The number of arrests that resulted in a charge has also been provided and the charges are based on those arrested in the time period specified.

Question 3

What were the consequences for those who charged? (Did they face imprisonment, fine, verbal warnings or any other action?)

Please see the table below on page numbered 2.

N.B. This information is taken from a live recording system and may be subject to change.

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.

**Number of arrests¹ for Begging under the Vagrancy Act
(1 Jan 2010 -24 Feb 2015)**

Nationality	Total
United Kingdom; Northern Ireland; Scotland; Ireland	27
Poland	10
Romania	74
Slovakia	1
Totals	112

**Number of charges resulting from an arrest for Begging under the
Vagrancy Act (1 Jan 2010 -24 Feb 2015)**

Nationality	Total
United Kingdom; Northern Ireland; Ireland	22
Poland	9
Romania	46
Slovakia	1
Totals	78

1 Arrested and detained in police custody, note this will not include persons arrested and not detained in police custody.

Please Note: 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 in such a way as to identify those records that are relevant.

**Details of charges following arrest for the offence of Begging under the
Vagrancy Act (1 Jan 2010 - 24 Feb 2015)**

Result	No
Adult caution	4
Bound Over Charge Withdrawn	3
Conditional discharge	1
Convicted pending sentence	1
Convicted probation order	4
Conviction absolute discharge	1
Conviction Conditional Discharge	25
Conviction fine	11
Conviction Imprisonment	9
Conviction imprisonment suspend	1
Dismissed	1
Informed Warning	2
No prosecution	4
No result	2
No result - arrest warrant	3
Not guilty	1
Withdrawn	5
Total	78