



## FREEDOM OF INFORMATION REQUEST



**Request Number:** F-2018-02570

**Keyword:** Crime

**Subject:** Arrests For Begging For 5 Years

### Request and Answer:

Your request for information has now been considered. In respect of Section 1(1)(a) of the Act I can confirm that the Police Service of Northern Ireland does hold information to which your request relates. The decision has been taken to disclose the following.

#### Request 1

I would like to know how many arrests have been made in relation to begging in the last five years, broken down into each year from 2013.

#### Request 2

I would like a breakdown of the area in which these arrests took place.

#### Answers 1 and 2

Please find the information requested in the separate spreadsheet.

In conjunction with the data provided please note the following:

The information has been extracted from the custody arrests data from NICHE, please note this includes those persons arrested and processed through police custody. Therefore, those arrested and street bailed or dealt with by other means e.g. community resolution, pnd etc. will not be included in the figures.

The information extracted is based on the individual arrested for the offence of begging (5006001) and covers the time period of 1 January 2013-17 December 2018. The count of custody numbers per year is provided, along with the arrest district to provide a breakdown of the areas in which the arrests took place. An overall count of persons arrested is provided as background information. There were no arrests/charges for the offence of causing/procuring child to beg – offence codes 4202004, 4202005, 4202006 and 4202007.

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 into the system in such a way as to identify those records that are relevant.

#### Request 3

Where possible, I would like to know how many of these arrests led to prosecutions.

**Answer**

A total of 163 of these arrests have had a decision made by PPS to Prosecute for the offence of Begging.

This request was interpreted as requesting a collective figure and therefore has been done so accordingly and in addition to provide the information in the same format as requests 1 and 2 would be considered as low level data and has the potential to identify a person.

This is correct as of date 20<sup>th</sup> December 2018, as some of the associated case files could still be awaiting a Public Prosecution Service (PPS) decision.

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](mailto: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](http://www.psni.police.uk)

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