



## FREEDOM OF INFORMATION REQUEST



**Request Number:** F-2018-02292

**Keyword:** Crime

**Subject:** Arrests For Begging From 2013 - To Date

### 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 am writing in regards to begging in Northern Ireland, and those who may actually not be truly homeless. Please state the number of people arrested for begging in each of the last five years, including 2018 to date.

#### Answer

Please note that there were a total of 167 individuals arrested.

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

The information extracted is based on the individual arrested for the offence of begging and covers the time period of 1 January 2013-30 September 2018.

Your request asks for '**number of people arrested per year**', and the information provided in the table directly below is a count of individuals arrested per annum, therefore a person may have been arrested more than once in a particular year and will be counted once in the annual figure, however they may have been arrested in each of the years requested and will be counted in each year.

<b>Year</b>	<b>Number of arrests</b>
2013	3
2014	46
2015	35
2016	63
2017	41
2018	32
<b>Total</b>	<b>220</b>

In the table directly below are the counts of custody numbers per year as the second part of your request refers to the detained person (dp) address in each custody occurrence, and please note a dp may have a different home address in each occurrence.

<b>Year</b>	<b>Number of people arrested</b>
2013	3
2014	38
2015	28
2016	56
2017	35
2018	25
<b>Total</b>	<b>185</b>

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.

In addition please note there were **no** arrests/charges for the offence of causing/procuring child to beg – offence codes 4202004, 4202005, 4202006 and 4202007.

## **Request 2**

Of the custody occurrences, state how many had residential addresses, non-residential addresses and the type (e.g, hostel, no fixed abode, street corners)

## **Answer**

Please find in the table below data for the 'number of arrests for begging offence with residence type\*'

<b>Year</b>	<b>Hostel</b>	<b>No Fixed Abode</b>	<b>Nursing Home</b>	<b>Residential *</b>
2013	-	1	-	2
2014	2	22	-	22
2015	1	15	-	19
2016	-	34	-	29
2017	3	22	2	14
2018	1	26	1	4
<b>Total</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>120</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>90</b>

Please find in the table below data for the 'number of individuals arrested per year for begging offence'

<b>Year</b>	<b>Hostel</b>	<b>No Fixed Abode</b>	<b>Nursing Home</b>	<b>Residential *</b>
2013		1		2
2014	2	17		19
2015	1	13		14
2016		29		27
2017	3	17	1	14
2018	1	26	1	4
<b>Total</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>103</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>80</b>

Please note that \* 'Residential' represents incidents for which the arrested person had a 'home' address on Niche which has no categorisation or marker (e.g. common name, business name or address remarks) to indicate that it is a non-residential property. There is thus a possibility that some of these properties, categorised above as residential, may in fact be shelters and/or managed by charitable organisation services but this information would not necessarily be recorded against the address on Niche.

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.psnipolice.uk](http://www.psnipolice.uk)

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