



# Incidents and Crimes with a Hate Motivation Recorded by the Police in Northern Ireland

## Update to 30<sup>th</sup> September 2021

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In the 12 months from 1<sup>st</sup> October 2020 to 30<sup>th</sup> September 2021:

- There were more hate incidents recorded across each hate motivation strand when compared with the previous twelve months, with the exception of transphobic incidents.
- There were more hate crimes recorded across each hate motivation stand when compared with the previous twelve months.
- There were 353 more racist incidents and 276 more racist crimes recorded.
- There was an increase of 233 sectarian, while the number of crimes rose by 174. The level of sectarian incidents is the highest 12 month period recorded since the period January 2016 to December 2016.
- Homophobic incidents increased from 344 to 401 and crimes increased from 246 to 265.
- Disability incidents increased from 83 to 119 and crimes rose from 55 to 78.
- Faith/religion incidents rose from 34 to 66 and crimes increased from 12 to 53.
- Transphobic incidents decreased from 68 to 63, while the number of transphobic crimes rose from 34 to 37.

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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 on the cover page.

# 1. Things you need to know about this release

## Coverage

This release is produced in accordance with the pillars and principles set out in the Code of Practice for Statistics.

The Police Service of Northern Ireland (PSNI) publishes figures on the levels and trends in police recorded incidents and crimes with a hate motivation. As these figures only relate to those hate motivated incidents reported to the police, they only provide an indication of the true extent of hate motivations. The statistics are collated and produced by statisticians seconded to the Police Service of Northern Ireland (PSNI) from the Northern Ireland Statistics and Research Agency (NISRA). Collation of this data started in 2004/05.

This release presents statistics relating to hate motivated incidents and crimes recorded by the police to 30 September 2021. Figures were compiled on 19 November 2021. Changes can be expected to in-year figures each time they are published, as all records from 1st April 2021 are subject to ongoing validation and quality assurance processes until publication in May 2022.

All tables and charts in the bulletin, along with supplementary data, are available from the PSNI website in the [accompanying spreadsheet, 335KB \(opens in a new window\)](#).

The next update covering the 12 months to 31 December 2021 will be published on 24 February 2022. A full [publication schedule, 32KB \(opens in a new window\)](#) is available on the PSNI website.

## What is a hate motivated incident or hate motivated crime as recorded by the police?

**Hate crime** is defined as any criminal offence which is perceived, by the victim or any other person, to be motivated by hostility or prejudice towards someone based on a personal characteristic. PSNI also use the principles of this definition to record non-crime hate incidents (see 'Hate Incident or Hate Crime' below).

### Hate Incident or Hate Crime?

Police recorded crime data is a victim oriented approach to crime recording. A crime will be recorded as having a hate motivation where it meets the relevant 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 crime being recorded. Where crimes with a hate abuse motivation are recorded, they are classified according to the Home Office Counting Rules and form a subset of the overall police recorded crime statistics.

Further details of the background and recording practice in relation to police recorded crime statistics are available in the [User Guide to Police Recorded Crime Statistics, 1MB \(opens in a new window\)](#). An explanation of what constitutes an incident and a crime is provided in Section 2.1 of this guide, while reference to hate motivated incidents and crimes is available in Section 6. These recording practices, methods of counting outcomes and allocation of crime types apply equally to crimes with a hate motivation.

**The victim of the hate crime** will be recorded as the person to whom the hostility or prejudice is displayed, even if they do not have the personal characteristic targeted but are connected to someone who has, for example a parent who is harassed because they have a child with a disability. In some cases the personal characteristic may be incorrectly perceived by the person displaying the hostility or prejudice.

Within PSNI there are six strands of hate motivation that are monitored; Race, Homophobia (sexual orientation), Sectarianism, Faith/religion (non-sectarian), Disability and Transphobia. The definition for each of these motivations is provided on the next page, while an explanation of the perception test is provided below

### The Perception Test

Evidence is not the test when reporting a hate incident; when an incident or crime has been reported to police by the victim or by any other person and they perceive it as being motivated by prejudice or hate, it will be recorded and investigated as a hate incident or crime. The perception of the victim, or any other person is the defining factor in determining whether an incident is a hate incident, or in recognising the hostility element of a hate crime. Perception-based recording refers to the perception of the victim, or any other person. It would not be appropriate to record a crime or incident as a hate crime or hate incident if it was based on the perception of a person or group who had no knowledge of the victim, crime or the area, and who may be responding to media or internet stories or who are reporting for a political or similar motive. The other person could, however, be one of a number of people, including: police officers or staff; witnesses; family members; civil society organisations who know details of the victim, the crime or hate crimes in the locality, such as a third-party reporting charity; a carer or other professional who supports the victim; someone who has knowledge of hate crime in the area – this could include many professionals and experts such as the manager of an education centre used by people with learning disabilities who regularly receives reports of abuse from students; a person from within the group targeted with the hostility, e.g. a Traveller who witnessed racist damage in a local park.

## Definitions

### Race

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 he/she falls. Racial group includes the Irish Traveller community.

### Homophobia (sexual orientation)

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.

### Sectarianism

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. However sectarianism can also relate to other religious denominations, for example, Sunni and Shi'ite in Islam.

### Faith/Religion (non-sectarian)

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)

Any disability including physical or sensory disability, learning disability, long-term illness and mental health.

### Transphobia

Includes people who are trans and those who hold the gender recognition certificate under the Gender Recognition Act 2004. Police recorded crime data is a victim oriented approach to crime recording. A crime will be recorded as having a hate motivation where it meets the relevant 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 crime being recorded. Where crimes with a hate abuse motivation are recorded, they are classified according to the Home Office Counting Rules and form a subset of the overall police recorded crime statistics.

## Points to note in this bulletin

**In-year figures are provisional:** changes can be expected to in-year figures each time they are published, as records from 1st April 2021 are subject to ongoing validation and quality assurance processes until publication in May 2022. Revisions to figures for previous financial years are applied on an annual basis in May.

**Incidents and multiple motivations:** A small number of incidents will have more than one type of hate motivation attributed to the incident. Due to this potential for double counting, the six hate motivation strands should not be added together and presented as overall hate incidents and crimes.

**Crimes:** As there may be more than one crime recorded within an individual incident, it is possible for the number of crimes with a particular hate motivation to be higher than the number of incidents with that motivation.

**Incidents and Crimes:** Hate-motivated crimes and hate-motivated incidents should not be added together as crimes for each motivation strand are included in the incident count for each hate motivation strand.

**Malicious communications:** Recording of this crime, which is classified to harassment (within violence against the person), started on 1st April 2017. This should be considered in relation to any changes in the overall violence against the person classification.

**Disclosure control** has been applied to some tables in line with the requirements of the Code of Practice for Official Statistics. Where this applies cells have been merged or suppressed in order to ensure the identity of individuals/organisations or any private information relating to them is not revealed. '\*' indicates a cell has been suppressed.

## 2. Levels of hate motivated incidents and crimes – overall summary

In 12 months from 1<sup>st</sup> October 2020 to 30<sup>th</sup> September 2021:

- The number of incidents recorded rose across five of the six hate motivations (racist, homophobic, sectarian, disability, and faith/religion) when compared with the previous 12 months.
- The number of crimes recorded increased across all of the six motivations (racist, homophobic, sectarian, disability, faith/religion and transphobic) when compared with the previous 12 months
- Incidents with a transphobic motivation showed the only decrease (5), and crimes with a transphobic motivation showed the smallest increase (3).
- Incidents and crimes with a racist motivation showed the largest overall increase (353 incidents and 276 crimes).

**Table 1 Overall summary of hate motivated incidents and crimes**

|                | Incidents<br>Oct'19-Sep'20 | Incidents<br>Oct'20-Sep'21 | Incidents<br>Change | Crimes Oct'19-<br>Sep'20 | Crimes<br>Oct'20-Sep'21 | Crimes<br>Change |
|----------------|----------------------------|----------------------------|---------------------|--------------------------|-------------------------|------------------|
| Racist         | 878                        | 1,231                      | 353                 | 588                      | 864                     | 276              |
| Homophobic     | 344                        | 401                        | 57                  | 246                      | 265                     | 19               |
| Sectarian      | 869                        | 1,102                      | 233                 | 628                      | 802                     | 174              |
| Disability     | 83                         | 119                        | 36                  | 55                       | 78                      | 23               |
| Faith/Religion | 34                         | 66                         | 32                  | 12                       | 53                      | 41               |
| Transphobic    | 68                         | 63                         | -5                  | 34                       | 37                      | 3                |

The rest of this bulletin looks in more detail at racist, homophobic and sectarian motivations, with further tables on these strands of hate motivation available in the [accompanying spreadsheet, 335KB \(opens in a new window\)](#).

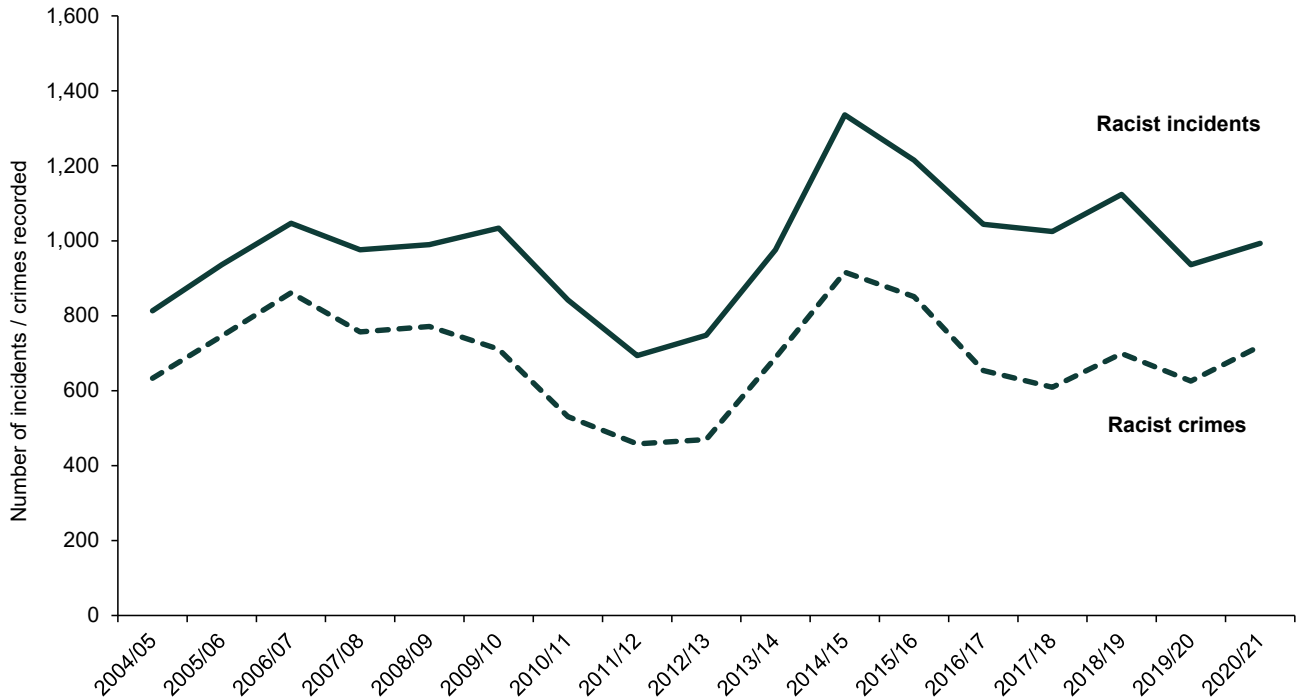
Additional figures on disability, faith/religion and transphobic motivations are available in the accompanying spreadsheet Table 1 and Table 15.

A more detailed analysis of all hate motivation strands is available through the publication [Trends in Hate Motivated Incidents and Crimes Recorded by the Police in Northern Ireland 2004/05 to 2020/21, 1.6MB \(opens in a new window\)](#).

### 3. What is happening to levels of racist incidents and crimes over the longer term?

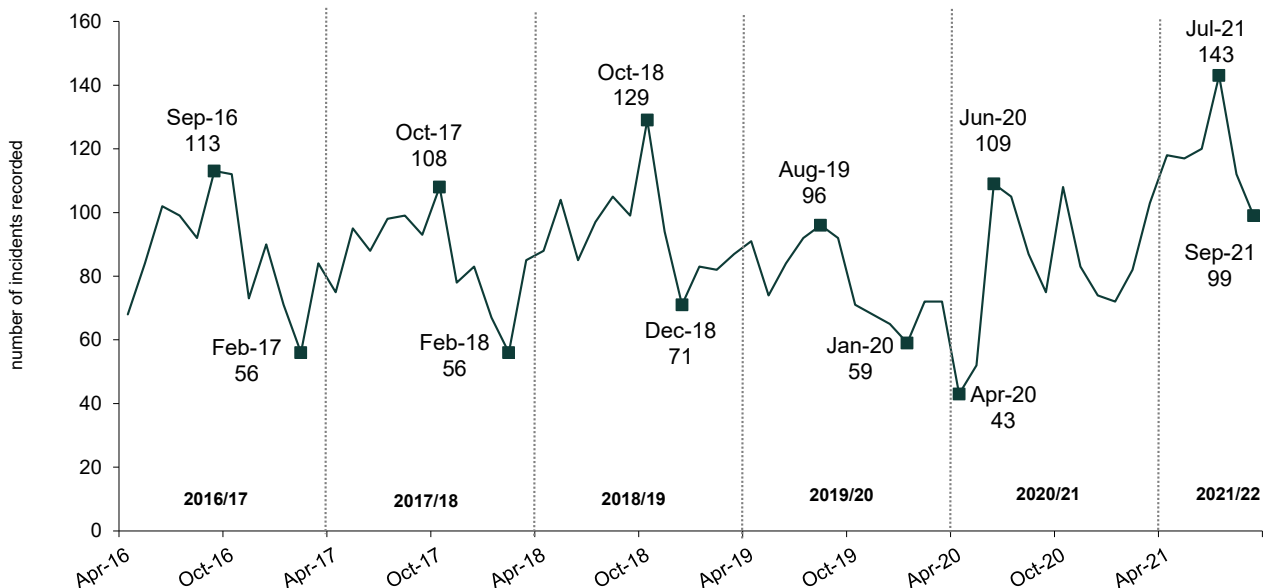
Following a decline in levels of racist incidents and crimes between 2009/10 and 2011/12 increases were seen each year between 2011/12 and 2014/15 (the highest recorded in the series). Levels have trended downwards since 2014/15 with the exception of increases seen in 2018/19 and 2020/21. The number of incidents recorded in 2020/21 is the eighth highest in the data series, with the number of crimes being the seventh highest.

**Figure 1 Trends in racist incidents and crimes recorded by the police since 2004/05**



Since 2016/17 racist incidents have tended to reach their highest levels around September or October each year, with the lowest levels recorded between December and March; August 2019, April 2020 and June 2020 are an exception to this pattern. Figure 2 shows the pattern of racist incidents over the last five financial years and the emerging pattern in the current financial year 2021/22.

**Figure 2 Police recorded racist incidents each month April 2016 to September 2021, showing highest and lowest levels in each financial year**

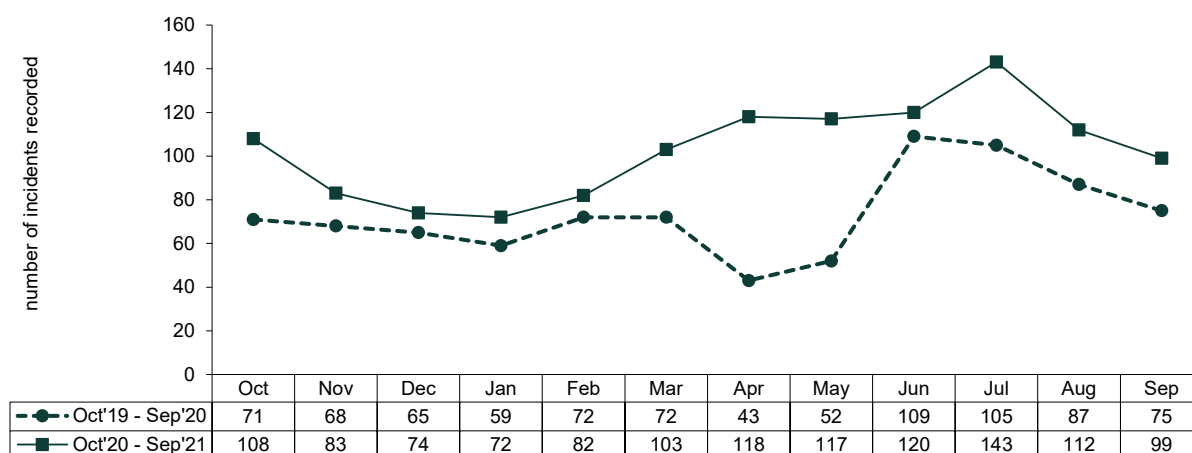


## 4. What has been happening to levels of racist incidents and crimes more recently?

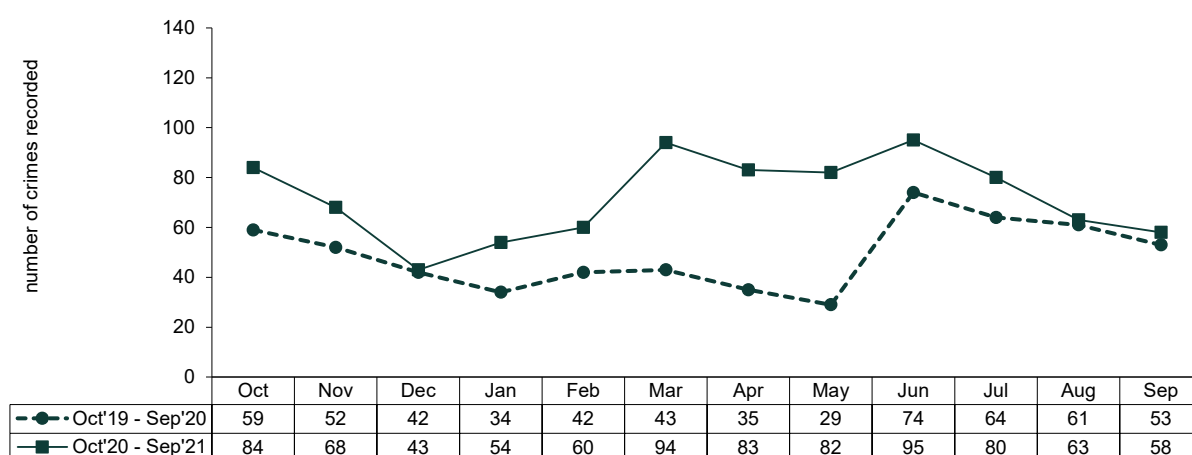
In the 12 months from 1<sup>st</sup> October 2020 and 30<sup>th</sup> September 2021:

- There were higher levels of both racist incidents and crimes recorded when compared with the previous 12 months. [Table 2]
- There were 1,231 racist incidents recorded by the police in Northern Ireland, 353 more than for the previous 12 months. [Table 2]
- The number of racist crimes recorded by the police was 864, an increase of 276 on the previous 12 months. [Table 2]
- There were 6 racist incidents and 5 racist crimes per 10,000 population<sup>1</sup>, compared with 5 racist incidents and 3 racist crimes per 10,000 population in the previous 12 months.
- Racist crimes represented 0.9% of all police recorded crime.
- There was an increase of 164 in violence against the person offences, while offences of theft, burglary and criminal damage rose by 107. All other offences increased from 9 to 14. [Table 2]

**Figure 3 Racist incidents recorded by the police, October 2019 to September 2021**



**Figure 4 Racist crimes recorded by the police, October 2019 to September 2021**



<sup>1</sup> Crime per 10,000 population based on mid-year population estimate of 1,895,510 for 2020, the latest mid-year estimate available at time of compilation. Mid-year population estimates are available from the [NISRA website \(opens in a new window\)](#).

**Table 2 Racist incidents and crimes recorded by the police**

|                                              | Oct'19 to Sep'20 | Oct'20 to Sep'21 |
|----------------------------------------------|------------------|------------------|
| <b>Incidents</b>                             | <b>878</b>       | <b>1,231</b>     |
| Violence Against the Person Offences         | 350              | 514              |
| Theft (including burglary) & criminal damage | 229              | 336              |
| All other offences                           | 9                | 14               |
| <b>Total crimes (racist motivation)</b>      | <b>588</b>       | <b>864</b>       |

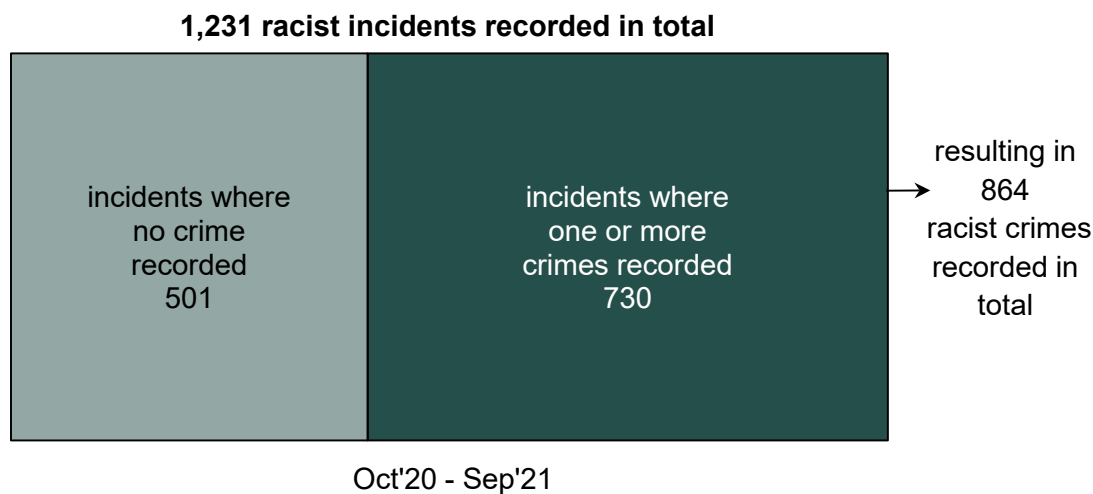
**What is the difference between a racist incident and racist crime recorded by the police?**

Not all racist 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 racist crime being recorded. Some racist incidents will result in multiple crimes being recorded. **Racist crimes are included in the incident count and the two should not be added together.**

Figure 5 shows how racist incidents are broken down into those with and without crimes.

In the twelve months to 30 September 2021 there were 1,231 incidents recorded by the police where there was a racist motivation. Of these, there were 501 incidents which did not involve a crime (i.e. incidents where the circumstances did not amount to an offence being committed). The remaining 730 incidents involved one or more crimes (amounting to 864 racist crimes in total). Around two in five incidents recorded in this time period did not result in a crime being recorded.

**Figure 5 Racist incidents and crimes**





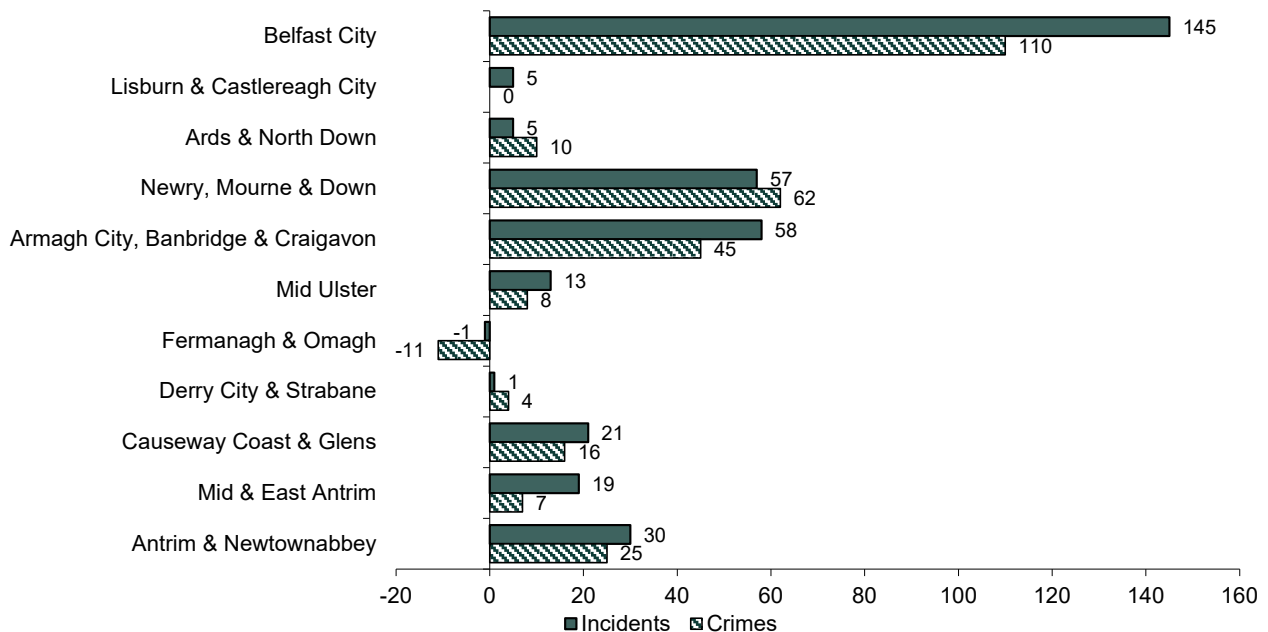
## 5. Racist incidents and crimes - what has been happening in policing districts?

When comparing the current and previous 12 months, ten policing districts showed an increase in the number of racist incidents, with nine showing an increase in the number of racist crimes. Belfast City policing district, which accounts for around two out of five racist incidents and crimes recorded in Northern Ireland, showed an increase in both incidents (145) and crimes (110). [Table 3]

**Table 3 Racist incidents and crimes recorded by the police, by policing district**

| Policing district                  | Incidents Oct'19 to Sep'20 | Incidents Oct'20 to Sep'21 | Incidents change | Crimes Oct'19 to Sep'20 | Crimes Oct'20 to Sep'21 | Crimes change |
|------------------------------------|----------------------------|----------------------------|------------------|-------------------------|-------------------------|---------------|
| Belfast City                       | 379                        | 524                        | 145              | 251                     | 361                     | 110           |
| Lisburn & Castlereagh City         | 50                         | 55                         | 5                | 34                      | 34                      | 0             |
| Ards & North Down                  | 50                         | 55                         | 5                | 19                      | 29                      | 10            |
| Newry, Mourne & Down               | 39                         | 96                         | 57               | 28                      | 90                      | 62            |
| Armagh City, Banbridge & Craigavon | 82                         | 140                        | 58               | 57                      | 102                     | 45            |
| Mid Ulster                         | 48                         | 61                         | 13               | 31                      | 39                      | 8             |
| Fermanagh & Omagh                  | 26                         | 25                         | -1               | 25                      | 14                      | -11           |
| Derry City & Strabane              | 70                         | 71                         | 1                | 49                      | 53                      | 4             |
| Causeway Coast & Glens             | 31                         | 52                         | 21               | 20                      | 36                      | 16            |
| Mid & East Antrim                  | 46                         | 65                         | 19               | 35                      | 42                      | 7             |
| Antrim & Newtownabbey              | 57                         | 87                         | 30               | 39                      | 64                      | 25            |
| No district assigned               | 0                          | 0                          | 0                | 0                       | 0                       | 0             |
| <b>Northern Ireland</b>            | <b>878</b>                 | <b>1,231</b>               | <b>353</b>       | <b>588</b>              | <b>864</b>              | <b>276</b>    |

**Figure 6 Change in police recorded racist incidents and crimes by policing district, 12 months to September 2021 compared with the previous 12 months**



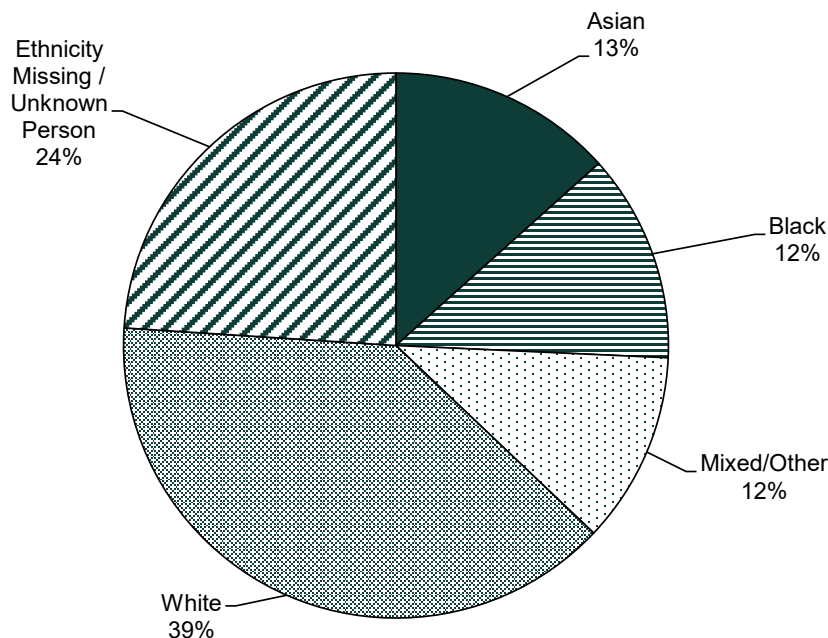
## 6. What are the ethnicities and nationalities of racist crime victims?

**Ethnicity:** Different ethnicity classifications have been used within the PSNI crime recording systems since 2007/08. Table 12 in the [accompanying spreadsheet, 335KB \(opens in a new window\)](#) reflects racist crimes by the ethnicity of the victim grouped by Asian, Black, Mixed/Other and White ethnicities. The historic classifications that are no longer available for selection on the NICHE system are separately identified. These may still be identified in the data where the victim details were recorded while the historic classifications were in use.

**Nationality:** Table 13 in the [accompanying spreadsheet, 335KB \(opens in a new window\)](#) shows the nationalities of victims of racist crime. These figures are based on nationality only and do not take into account the victim's ethnicity.

**Ethnicity and Nationality combined:** Not all victims of the same nationality have the same ethnicity. This is particularly evident for those victims of racist crimes who identify their nationality as UK and Ireland. Table 14 in the [accompanying spreadsheet, 335KB \(opens in a new window\)](#) shows the most frequently recorded victim nationalities for each ethnicity. This makes it possible to see, for example, the number of victims with UK and Ireland nationality who have Asian, Black or White ethnicity. This can also be seen in relation to a number of other nationalities.

**Figure 7 Ethnicity of victims of racist crimes, October 2020 to September 2021**

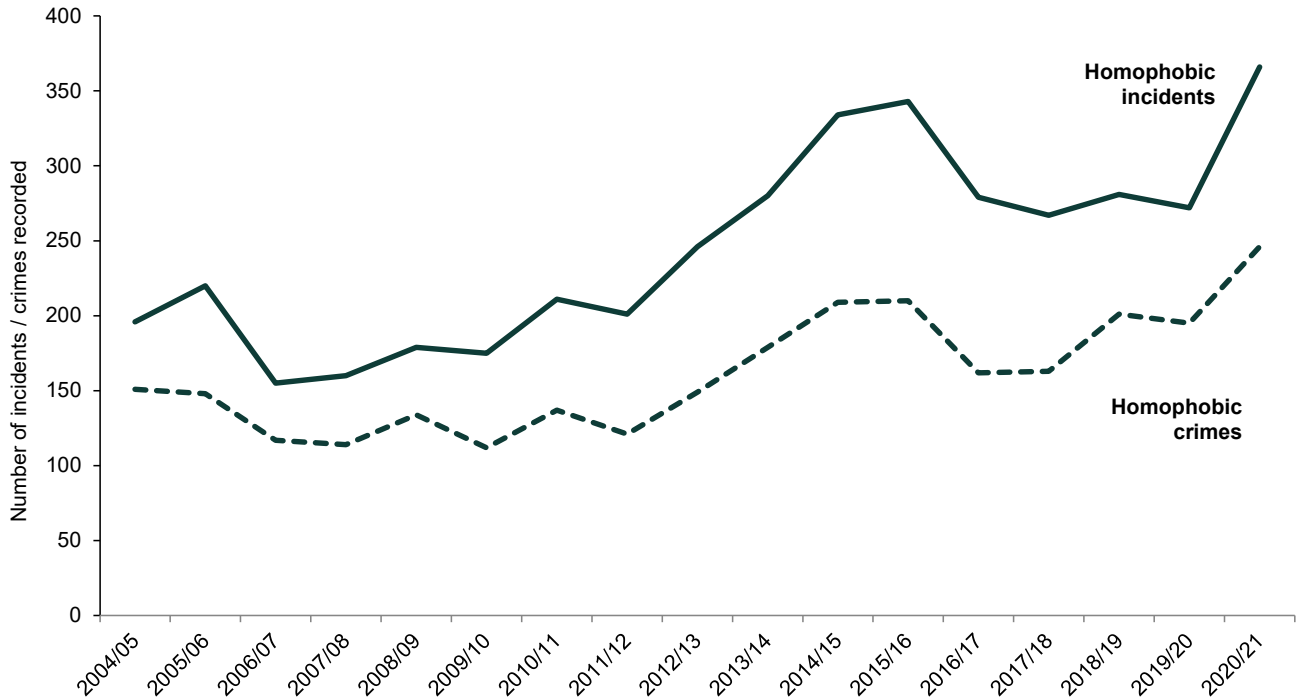


The ethnicity of victims of racist crimes is available in at least 76 per cent of records, while the nationality is available in at least 72 per cent.

## 7. What is happening to levels of homophobic incidents and crimes over the longer term?

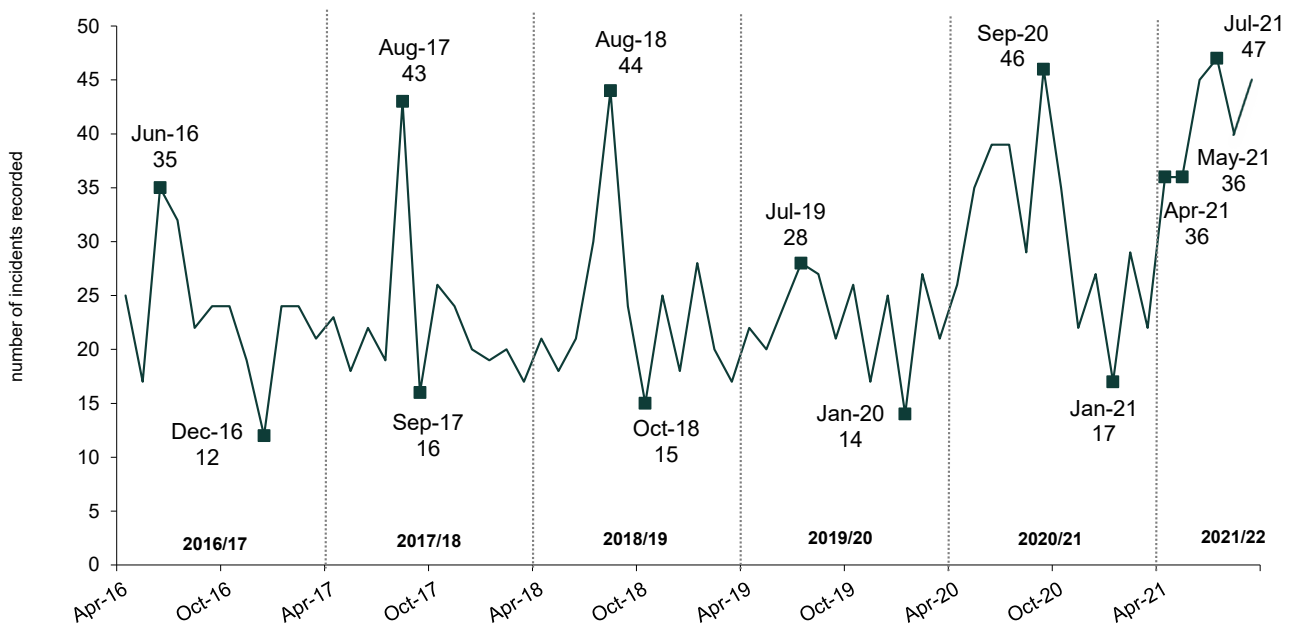
Homophobic motivated incidents and crimes generally increased between 2006/07 and 2015/16. Incidents and crimes fell below the 2015/16 level for the period between 2016/17 and 2019/20. There was a sharp increase in the number of homophobic motivated incidents and crimes in 2020/21, with both rising to the highest level recorded since the data series began in 2004/05.

**Figure 8 Trends in homophobic incidents and crimes recorded by the police since 2004/05**



Homophobic incidents tend to reach a peak between June and September while the lowest levels tend to be seen between September and December, and in more recent years, January. Figure 9 shows the pattern of homophobic incidents over the last five financial years and the emerging pattern in the current financial year 2021/22.

**Figure 9 Police recorded homophobic incidents each month April 2016 to September 2021, showing highest and lowest levels in each financial year**

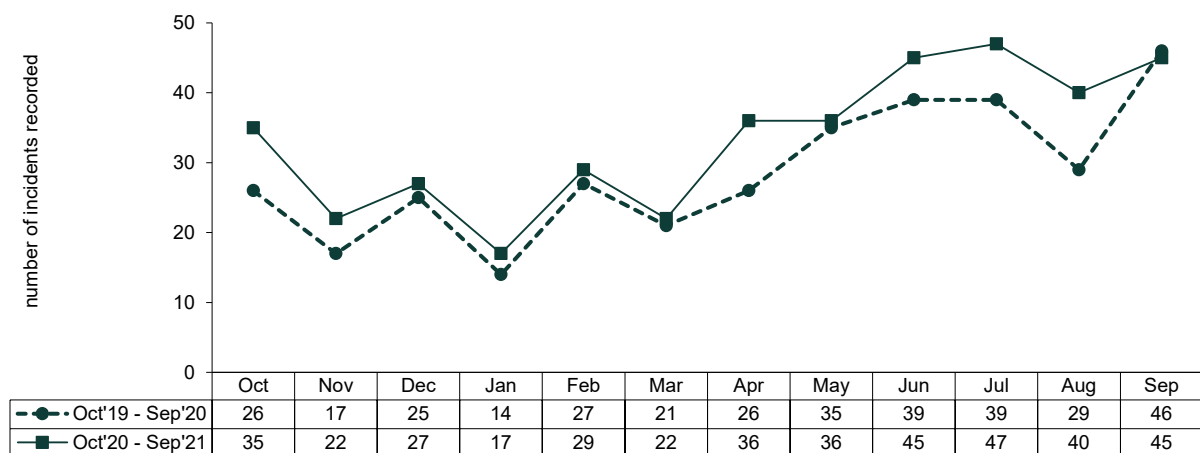


## 8. What has been happening to levels of homophobic incidents and crimes more recently?

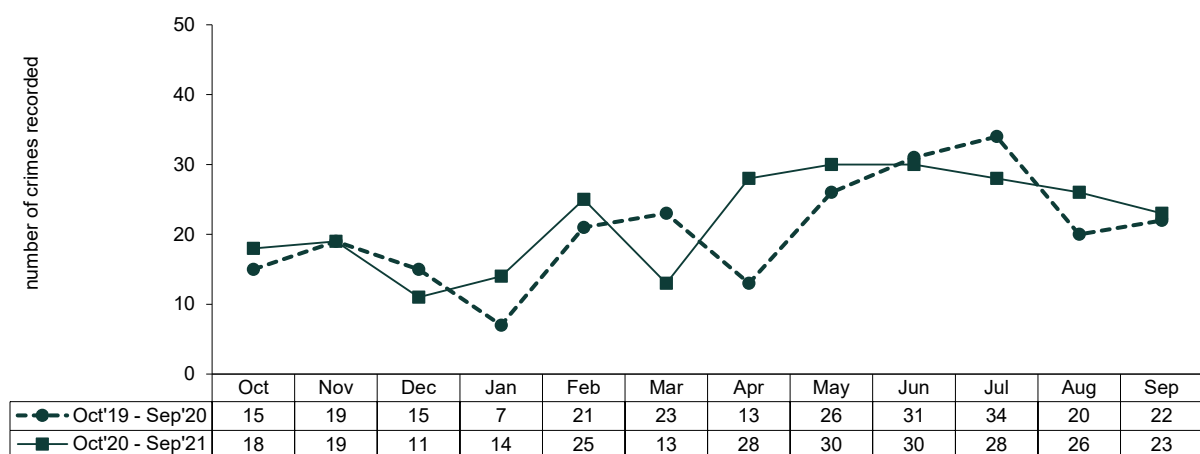
In the 12 months from 1<sup>st</sup> October 2020 and 30<sup>th</sup> September 2021:

- There were 401 homophobic incidents recorded by the police in Northern Ireland, 57 more than the previous 12 months. [Table 4]
- The number of homophobic crimes recorded by the police was 265, an increase of 19 on the previous 12 months. [Table 4]
- There were 2 homophobic incidents and 1 homophobic crime per 10,000 population<sup>2</sup>, matching levels recorded in the previous 12 months.
- Homophobic crimes represented 0.3% of all police recorded crime.
- The number of violence against the person offences rose by 11, and both theft, burglary & criminal damage offences and all other offences increased by 4. [Table 4]

**Figure 10 Homophobic incidents recorded by the police, October 2019 to September 2021**



**Figure 11 Homophobic crimes recorded by the police, October 2019 to September 2021**



<sup>2</sup> Crime per 10,000 population based on mid-year population estimate of 1,895,510 for 2020, the latest mid-year estimate available at time of compilation. Mid-year population estimates are available from the [NISRA website \(opens in a new window\)](#).

**Table 4 Homophobic incidents and crimes recorded by the police**

|                                              | Oct'19 to Sep'20 | Oct'20 to Sep'21 |
|----------------------------------------------|------------------|------------------|
| <b>Incidents</b>                             | <b>344</b>       | <b>401</b>       |
| Violence Against the Person Offences         | 200              | 211              |
| Theft (including burglary) & criminal damage | 43               | 47               |
| All other offences                           | 3                | 7                |
| <b>Total crimes (homophobic motivation)</b>  | <b>246</b>       | <b>265</b>       |

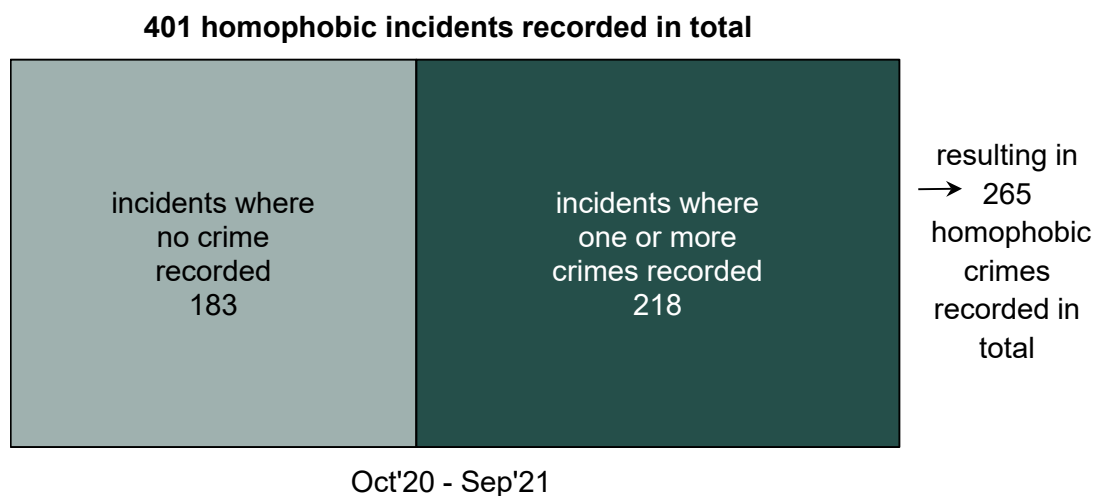
**What is the difference between a homophobic incident and homophobic crime recorded by the police?**

Not all homophobic 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 homophobic crime being recorded. Some homophobic incidents will result in multiple crimes being recorded. **Homophobic crimes are included in the incident count and the two should not be added together.**

Figure 12 shows how homophobic incidents are broken down into those with and without crimes.

In the twelve months to 30<sup>th</sup> September 2021 there were 401 incidents recorded by the police where there was a homophobic motivation. Of these, there were 183 incidents which did not involve a crime (i.e. incidents where the circumstances did not amount to an offence being committed). The remaining 218 incidents involved one or more crimes (amounting to 265 homophobic crimes in total). Approaching half of all incidents recorded in this time period did not result in a crime being recorded.

**Figure 12 Homophobic incidents and crimes**



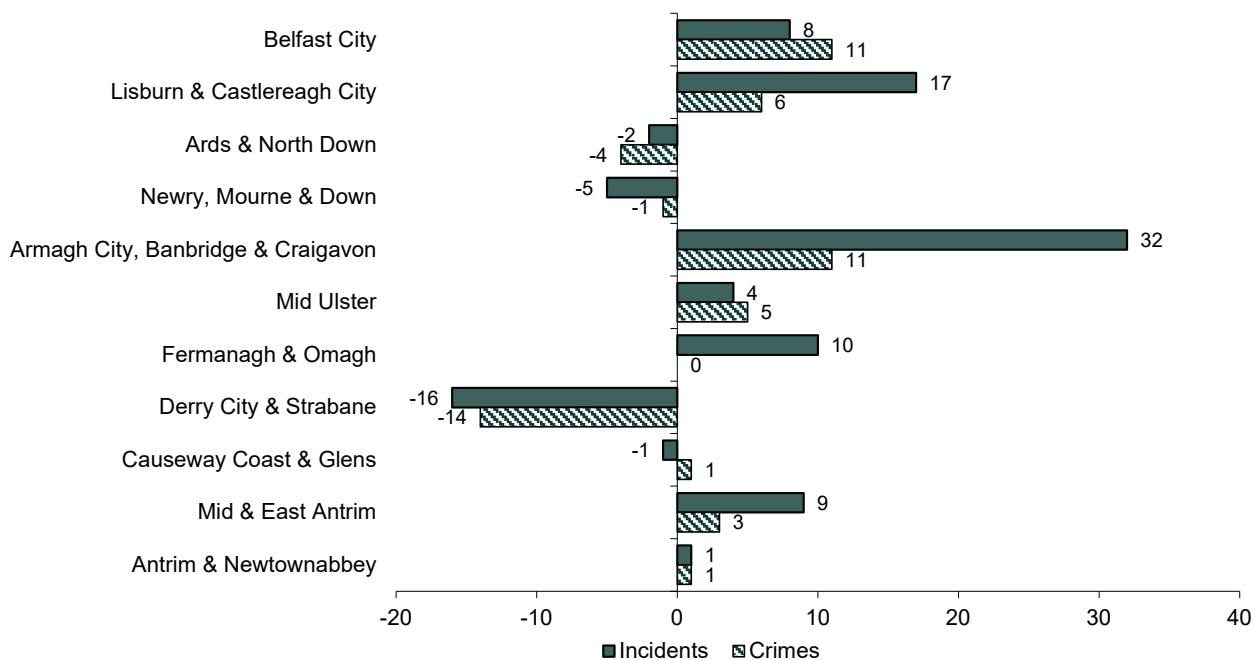
## 9. Homophobic Incidents and crimes - what has been happening in policing districts?

When comparing the current and previous 12 months, four policing districts showed a decrease in the number of homophobic incidents and seven showed an increase. Seven policing districts also showed an increase in homophobic crimes. Belfast City policing district, which accounts for nearly two in five homophobic incidents and crimes recorded in Northern Ireland in the current 12 months, showed an increase of 8 incidents and 11 crimes. [Table 5]

**Table 5 Homophobic incidents recorded by police by policing district**

| Policing district                  | Incidents Oct'19 to Sep'20 | Incidents Oct'20 to Sep'21 | Incidents change | Crimes Oct'19 to Sep'20 | Crimes Oct'20 to Sep'21 | Crimes change |
|------------------------------------|----------------------------|----------------------------|------------------|-------------------------|-------------------------|---------------|
| Belfast City                       | 142                        | 150                        | 8                | 85                      | 96                      | 11            |
| Lisburn & Castlereagh City         | 17                         | 34                         | 17               | 11                      | 17                      | 6             |
| Ards & North Down                  | 15                         | 13                         | -2               | 8                       | 4                       | -4            |
| Newry, Mourne & Down               | 30                         | 25                         | -5               | 29                      | 28                      | -1            |
| Armagh City, Banbridge & Craigavon | 30                         | 62                         | 32               | 28                      | 39                      | 11            |
| Mid Ulster                         | 18                         | 22                         | 4                | 16                      | 21                      | 5             |
| Fermanagh & Omagh                  | 14                         | 24                         | 10               | 10                      | 10                      | 0             |
| Derry City & Strabane              | 42                         | 26                         | -16              | 34                      | 20                      | -14           |
| Causeway Coast & Glens             | 13                         | 12                         | -1               | 12                      | 13                      | 1             |
| Mid & East Antrim                  | 8                          | 17                         | 9                | 4                       | 7                       | 3             |
| Antrim & Newtownabbey              | 15                         | 16                         | 1                | 9                       | 10                      | 1             |
| No district assigned               | 0                          | 0                          | 0                | 0                       | 0                       | 0             |
| <b>Northern Ireland</b>            | <b>344</b>                 | <b>401</b>                 | <b>57</b>        | <b>246</b>              | <b>265</b>              | <b>19</b>     |

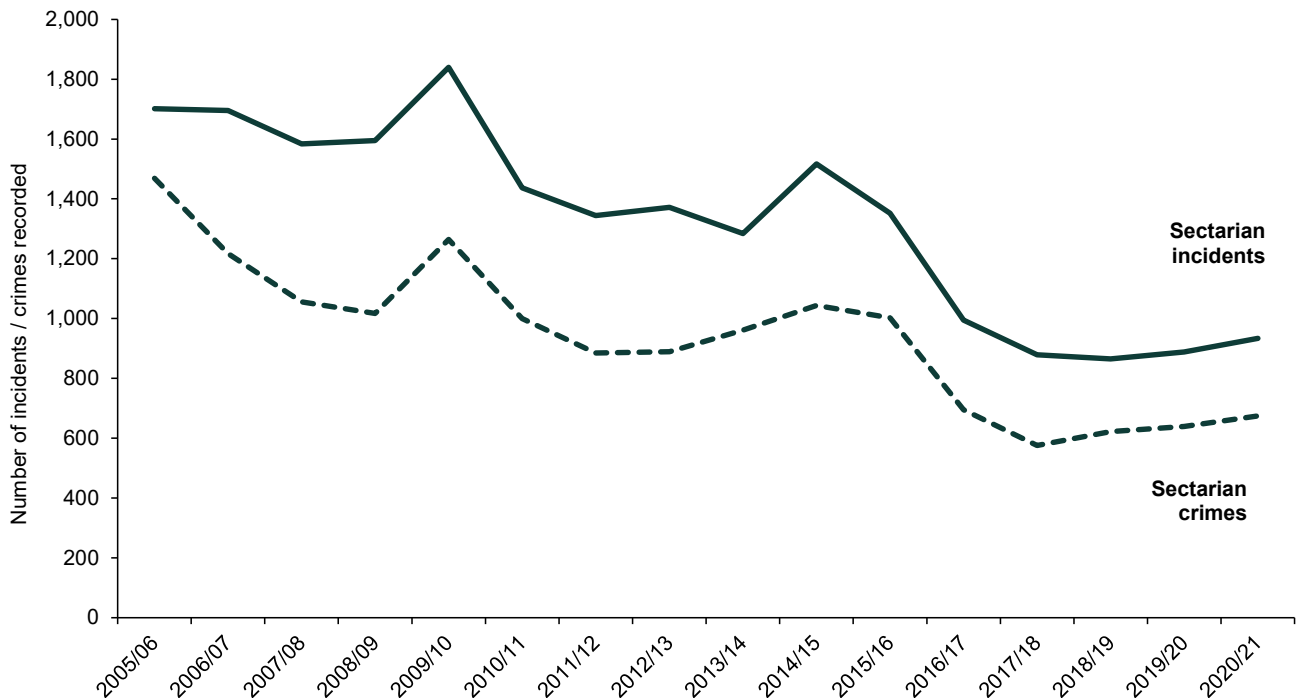
**Figure 13 Change in police recorded homophobic incidents and crimes by policing district, 12 months to September 2021 compared with the previous 12 months**



## 10. What is happening to levels of sectarian incidents and crimes over the longer term?

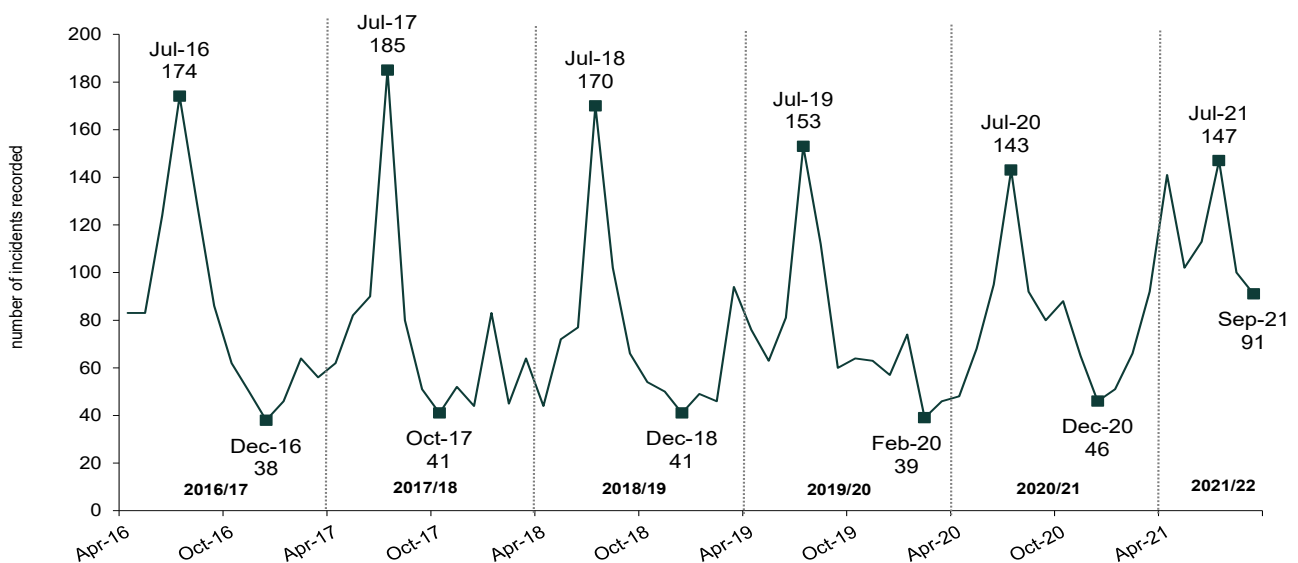
The number of sectarian incidents was at its highest level in 2009/10 with 1,840 incidents recorded. Levels have generally fallen since then, with 2018/19 the lowest in the data series and less than half of the peak level recorded in 2009/10; the number of incidents has increased in each year since 2018/19. The number of sectarian crimes was at its lowest in 2017/18 and has since increased each year to 2020/21, with 2020/21 being the fourth lowest level in the data series showing a fall of 54 per cent when compared with the highest level which was recorded in 2005/06.

**Figure 14 Trends in sectarian incidents and crimes recorded by the police since 2004/05**



Sectarian incidents tend to peak in July of each year and such levels may be closely linked to unrest during this period. The above average level of incidents recorded in April 2021 may also have been related to sustained unrest during that month. The lowest levels tend to be recorded between October and February. Figure 15 shows the pattern of sectarian incidents over the last five financial years and the emerging pattern in the current financial year 2021/22.

**Figure 15 Police recorded sectarian incidents each month April 2016 to September 2021, showing highest and lowest levels in each financial year**

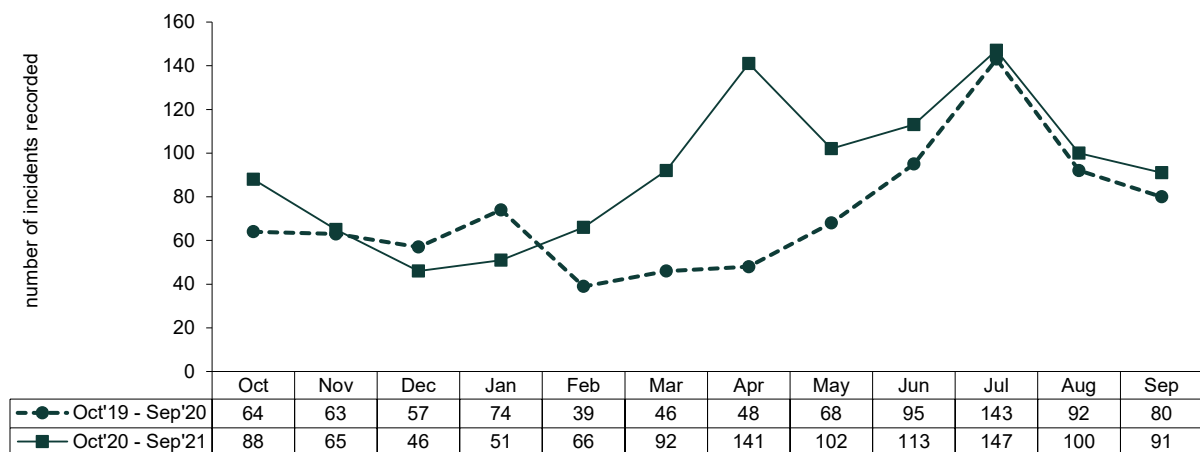


## 11. What has been happening to levels of sectarian incidents and crimes more recently?

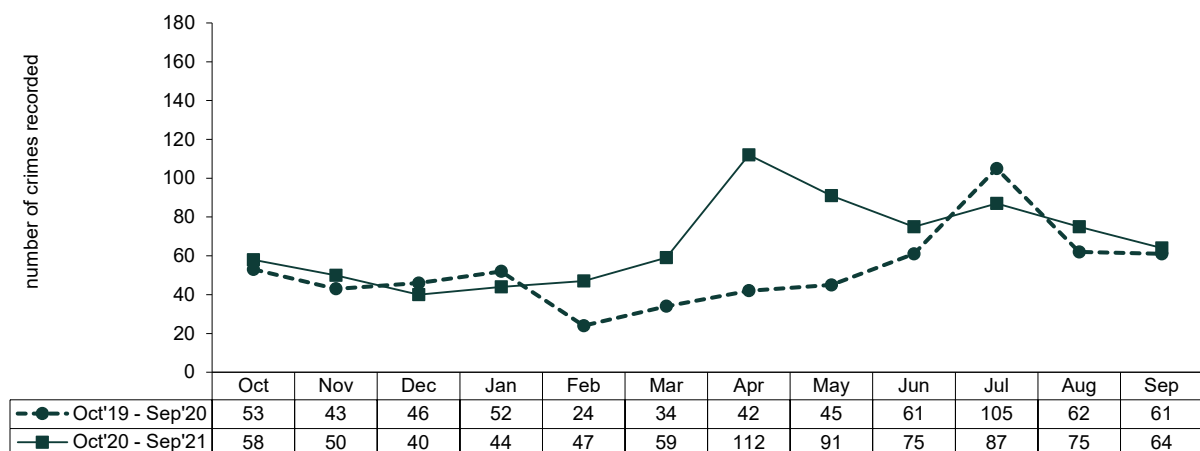
In the 12 months from 1<sup>st</sup> October 2020 and 30<sup>th</sup> September 2021:

- There were 1,102 sectarian incidents recorded by the police in Northern Ireland, an increase of 233 on the previous 12 months. [Table 6]
- The number of sectarian crimes recorded by the police rose to 802, an increase of 174 on the previous 12 months. [Table 6]
- The level of sectarian incidents during the latest 12 months are the highest 12 month period recorded since the 12 months ending December 2016.
- There were 6 sectarian incidents and 4 sectarian crimes per 10,000 population<sup>3</sup>, compared with 5 sectarian incidents and 3 sectarian crimes per 10,000 population recorded in the previous 12 months.
- Sectarian crimes represented 0.8% of all police recorded crime.
- An increase was seen in violence against the person offences (81 offences higher), theft, burglary and criminal damage offences (85), and all other offences (8). [Table 6]

**Figure 16 Sectarian incidents recorded by the police, October 2019 to September 2021**



**Figure 17 Sectarian crimes recorded by the police, October 2019 to September 2021**



<sup>3</sup> Crime per 10,000 population based on mid-year population estimate of 1,895,510 for 2020, the latest mid-year estimate available at time of compilation. Mid-year population estimates are available from the [NISRA website \(opens in a new window\)](#).



**Table 6 Sectarian incidents and crimes recorded by the police**

|                                              | Oct'19 to Sep'20 | Oct'20 to Sep'21 |
|----------------------------------------------|------------------|------------------|
| <b>Incidents</b>                             | <b>869</b>       | <b>1,102</b>     |
| Violence Against the Person Offences         | 352              | 433              |
| Theft (including burglary) & criminal damage | 258              | 343              |
| All other offences                           | 18               | 26               |
| <b>Total crimes (racist motivation)</b>      | <b>628</b>       | <b>802</b>       |

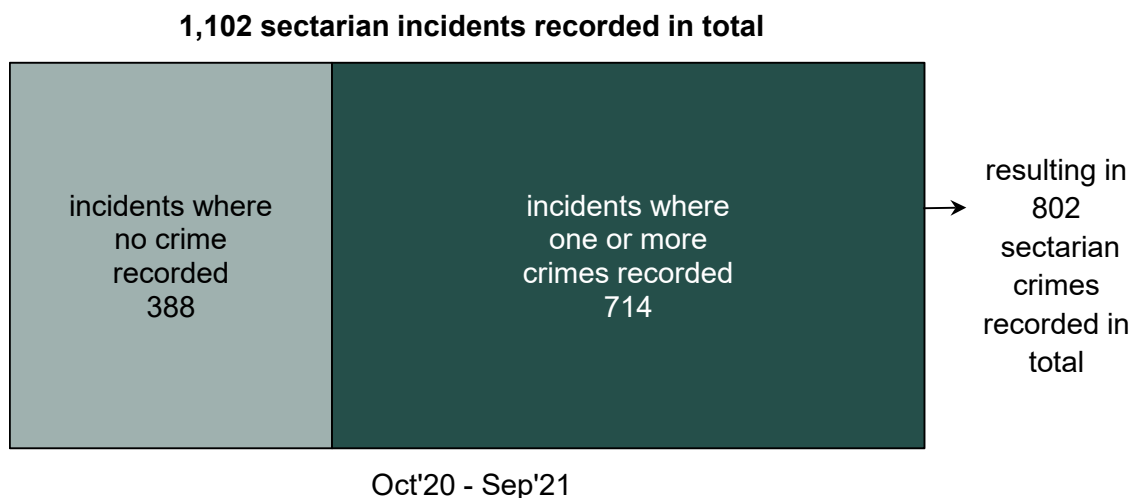
**What is the difference between a sectarian incident and sectarian crime recorded by the police?**

Not all sectarian 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 sectarian crime being recorded. Some sectarian incidents will result in multiple crimes being recorded. Sectarian crimes are included in the incident count and the two should not be added together.

Figure 18 shows how sectarian incidents are broken down into those with and without crimes.

In the twelve months to 30<sup>th</sup> September 2021 there were 1,102 incidents recorded by the police where there was a sectarian motivation. Of these, there were 388 incidents which did not involve a crime (i.e. incidents where the circumstances did not amount to an offence being committed). The remaining 714 incidents involved one or more crimes (amounting to 802 sectarian crimes in total). Just over one third of incidents recorded in this time period did not result in a crime being recorded.

**Figure 18 Sectarian incidents and crimes**



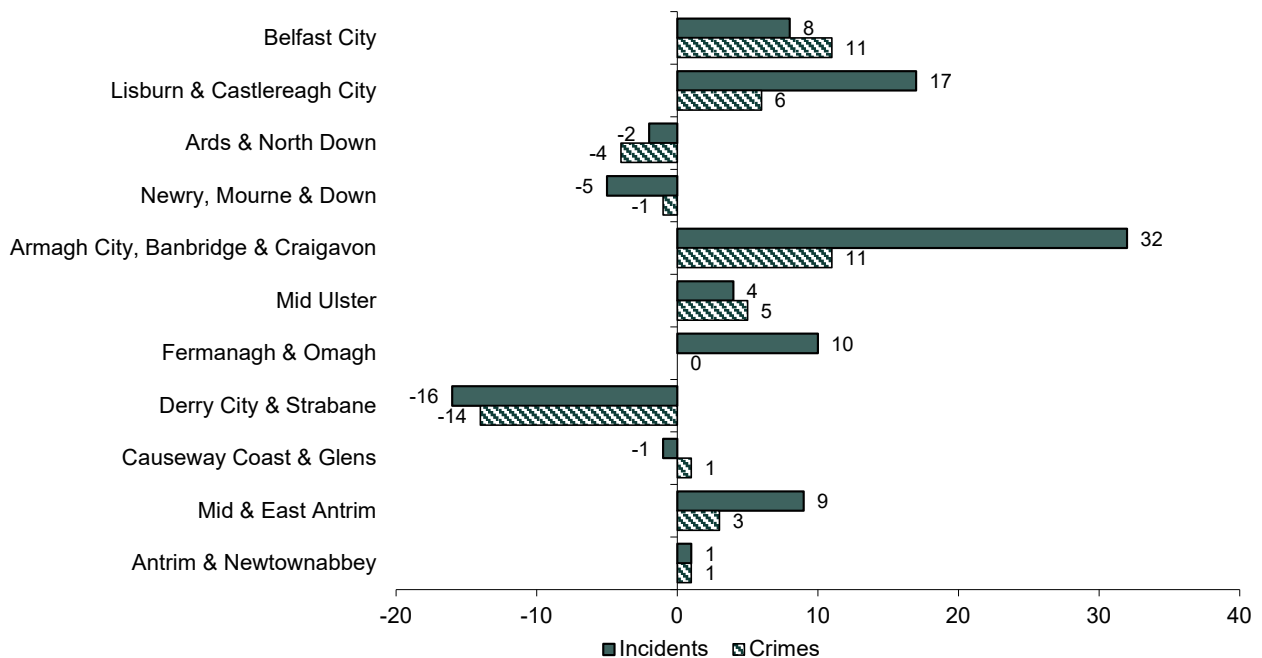
## 12. Sectarian Incidents and crimes - what has been happening in policing districts?

When comparing the current and previous 12 months, nine policing districts showed an increase in the number of sectarian incidents and eight showed an increase in sectarian crimes. Belfast City policing district, which accounts for just under one third of all sectarian incidents and crimes recorded in Northern Ireland in the current period, recorded 8 more incidents and 19 more crimes. [Table 7]

**Table 7 Sectarian incidents recorded by police by policing district**

| Policing district                  | Incidents Oct'19 to Sep'20 | Incidents Oct'20 to Sep'21 | Incidents change | Crimes Oct'19 to Sep'20 | Crimes Oct'20 to Sep'21 | Crimes change |
|------------------------------------|----------------------------|----------------------------|------------------|-------------------------|-------------------------|---------------|
| Belfast City                       | 340                        | 348                        | 8                | 243                     | 262                     | 19            |
| Lisburn & Castlereagh City         | 49                         | 80                         | 31               | 29                      | 53                      | 24            |
| Ards & North Down                  | 32                         | 31                         | -1               | 22                      | 21                      | -1            |
| Newry, Mourne & Down               | 35                         | 52                         | 17               | 26                      | 35                      | 9             |
| Armagh City, Banbridge & Craigavon | 85                         | 101                        | 16               | 63                      | 60                      | -3            |
| Mid Ulster                         | 44                         | 104                        | 60               | 36                      | 88                      | 52            |
| Fermanagh & Omagh                  | 33                         | 36                         | 3                | 22                      | 26                      | 4             |
| Derry City & Strabane              | 98                         | 112                        | 14               | 68                      | 89                      | 21            |
| Causeway Coast & Glens             | 45                         | 81                         | 36               | 31                      | 62                      | 31            |
| Mid & East Antrim                  | 70                         | 65                         | -5               | 54                      | 42                      | -12           |
| Antrim & Newtownabbey              | 38                         | 92                         | 54               | 34                      | 64                      | 30            |
| No district assigned               | 0                          | 0                          | 0                | 0                       | 0                       | 0             |
| <b>Northern Ireland</b>            | <b>869</b>                 | <b>1,102</b>               | <b>233</b>       | <b>628</b>              | <b>802</b>              | <b>174</b>    |

**Figure 19 Change in police recorded sectarian incidents and crimes by policing district, 12 months to September 2021 compared with the previous 12 months**



## 13. Attacks on symbolic premises

Attacks on symbolic premises are recorded where a crime has a sectarian motivation, where the premises is the intended target of the attack, and where the premises are one of the following; a church or chapel, a GAA or Ancient Order of Hibernians Hall, an Orange Hall or Apprentice Boys Hall, or a school. These figures are a subset of sectarian motivated crimes.

**Table 8 Attacks on Symbolic Premises**

| Type of Symbolic Premises               | Oct'19 to Sep'20 | Oct'20 to Sep'21 |
|-----------------------------------------|------------------|------------------|
| Church or Chapel                        | 10               | 5                |
| GAA or Ancient Order of Hibernians Hall | *                | *                |
| Orange or Apprentice Boys Hall          | 14               | 14               |
| School                                  | *                | *                |

\* Cell suppression has been applied to ensure that the identity of individuals/organisations or any private information relating to them is not revealed.

## 14. Background and Data Quality

### Data collection and data accuracy

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 audits and data quality checks are routinely conducted in an attempt to ensure that any under or over-recording is corrected. Crimes with a hate motivation are included within the police recorded crime statistics for Northern Ireland and these crimes are recorded in compliance with the Home Office Counting Rules. A comprehensive validation and quality assurance process has been set in place to ensure that the numbers and types of crimes being recorded meet the standards set down in these rules. Details of the data quality checks and processes that PSNI has in place are available in section 4 of the [User Guide to Police Recorded Crime Statistics in Northern Ireland, 1MB \(opens in a new window\)](#).

Annual Revisions: Revisions to previously published annual data in respect of hate motivated crimes were applied for the first time to financial year figures released in May 2018. The revisions take account of crime cancellations and sanction outcomes identified since the previous annual publication. Revisions of this nature will next be applied in May 2022. Further guidance on crime cancellation can be found in the [Home Office Counting Rules for Recorded Crime \(opens in a new window\)](#).

### How the data is used

Hate motivation statistics have been collated by PSNI in their current format since 2004/05. They are used widely within PSNI as management information and to inform policy and performance. The figures are also used by government departments and other voluntary and statutory agencies to inform debate and policy development regarding hate crime in Northern Ireland.

### Additional data available to accompany this release

This release provides an overview of hate motivated incidents and crimes recorded by the police in the 12 months to June 2021. Additional Tables are available on the PSNI website to supplement the information contained in this bulletin. The data is available in both [excel spreadsheet, 335KB \(opens in a new window\)](#) and [open document spreadsheet, 222KB \(opens in a new window\)](#) formats.

### Web links to other information you may be interested in

Further details on Police Recorded Crime statistics, including those with a hate motivation, are available in the [User Guide to Police Recorded Crime Statistics in Northern Ireland, 1MB \(opens in a new window\)](#). This is a reference guide with explanatory notes regarding the issues and classifications which are key to the production and presentation of police recorded crime statistics.

**Hate Motivation Annual Trends in Northern Ireland:** Annual figures on incidents and crimes with a hate motivation recorded by the police from 2004/05 to 2020/21 are available in the publication [Trends in Hate Motivated Incidents and Crimes Recorded by the Police in Northern Ireland 2004/05 to 2020/21, 1.6MB \(opens in a new window\)](#).

**Police Recorded Crime Statistics (opens in a new window):** These statistics are updated on a monthly basis; an annual trends bulletin is also published.

**Crime Outcomes (opens in a new window):** The latest publication presenting the wider outcomes framework within PSNI and summarising the outcomes that have been assigned to crimes recorded by the police between 2015/16 and 2020/21 was published on 19 November 2021. The publication includes a section on outcomes relating to hate motivated crimes.

**NINIS (opens in a new window):** Access to a range of geographic areas for hate motivated incidents and crimes recorded by the police (annual totals only) is available through the Northern Ireland Neighbourhood Information System (NINIS)

**Hate Crime in England & Wales:** [Hate Crime in England & Wales 2020-21 \(opens in a new window\)](#) is published by the Home Office. There are some key differences in presentation of hate crime within England & Wales compared with Northern Ireland that should be considered. Further details are provided in Section 9 of the Annual Trends bulletin (see link above).

Copies of other PSNI publications are available from the [PSNI website \(opens in a new window\)](#).