

Motoring Offence Statistics for Northern Ireland

2017 Annual Report

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- In 2017, there were 50,178 detections for motoring offences in Northern Ireland, a decrease of 8.3% on the 54,715 detections recorded in 2016.
- Of the 50,178 detections in 2017, almost two thirds (62.7%) resulted in a referral for prosecution and a further 23.4% in endorsable fixed penalty notices.
- The largest offence group recorded was insurance offences with a total of 8,702 detections in 2017 accounting for 17.3% of all detections for motoring offences. This was an increase of 1.7% (142) on the number recorded in 2016.
- Speeding offences accounted for 6,934 (13.8%) of all these detections in 2017, a decrease of 0.7% (51) on the number recorded in 2016. There were a further 4,802 detections related to mobile phone offences down by 19.0% on the number in 2016.
- Vehicle test certificate offences have seen an increase of 145.1% to 3,912 in 2017 when compared with 2016. This is likely to be attributable to increased usage and accuracy of Automatic Number Plate Recognition (ANPR) equipment.



Northern Ireland
Statistics and Research Agency

Keeping People Safe



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This bulletin is an Official Statistics Publication meaning it complies with all aspects of the Code of Practice for Official Statistics. More information on [Official Statistics](#) is available on the PSNI Statistics website.

1. Context

Motoring offence statistics for Northern Ireland are collated and produced by statisticians seconded to the Police Service of Northern Ireland (PSNI) from the Northern Ireland Statistics and Research Agency (NISRA).

This report provides statistics on the number of motoring offences detected by police. It does not include any detections from the NI Road Safety Partnership. Figures relating to such detections through the Partnership can be accessed via following link – [NI RSP](#).

The range of disposals covered includes those offences dealt with by means of a fixed penalty notice (FPN), discretionary disposal (offences prior to 2017), speed awareness course and referral for prosecution.

This report presents the most recent motoring offence statistics for the calendar year 2017 based on figures that were extracted on 21st March 2018. Referred for prosecution figures will remain provisional and will be subject to amendment.

Please note the figures refer to the number of offences and not the number of persons detected as a person can be detected for more than one offence.

Change to current publication

In September 2017 this report was enhanced to include the number of people detected for motoring offences by the Police Service of Northern Ireland (PSNI) and referred for prosecution as a result. This differs from previous publications which included only those motoring offences dealt with by means of a fixed penalty notice (FPN), discretionary disposal or speed awareness course. The addition of those referred for prosecution greatly improves the scope of the data source by providing information on all potential outcomes, thus creating a more complete picture of police enforcement in this area. Key stakeholders including the PSNI and the Department for Infrastructure (DfI) were consulted during the development of this additional information.

Discretionary disposals have been renamed as Community Resolution Notices (CRN) as of 30th June 2016. They follow the same basic principles as discretionary disposals but differ insofar as they should not be routinely issued for motoring offences. The most common motoring offences are capable of being dealt with through the Fixed Penalty Scheme which provides the means to avoid a criminal conviction in the majority of cases. Any CRNs that may have been issued for motoring offences in 2017 are not included in this publication.

Implications for the data series

There have been no changes to the methodology applied to produce the overall outcomes for example FPNs and speed awareness courses therefore these statistics remain comparable over time. The statistics are broken down by offence groups for example, speeding, careless driving and these have been reviewed alongside the publication of the referred for prosecution data. An offence group is made up of many individual offences. Some offences have been re-categorised into different groups and new groups have been created for example, failing to stop / remain / report collision therefore the offence groups may not be directly comparable with those previously published. A list of the individual offences that make up each offence group is available in the appendix of the [Motoring Offence User Guide](#) which can be accessed via the PSNI website.

Uses of the statistics

Uses of the statistics, based on user engagement, information requests and satisfaction survey feedback include policy making and policy monitoring, performance monitoring, and public interest, by a range of users including PSNI, Policing and Community Safety Partnerships (PCSPs), media and academics.

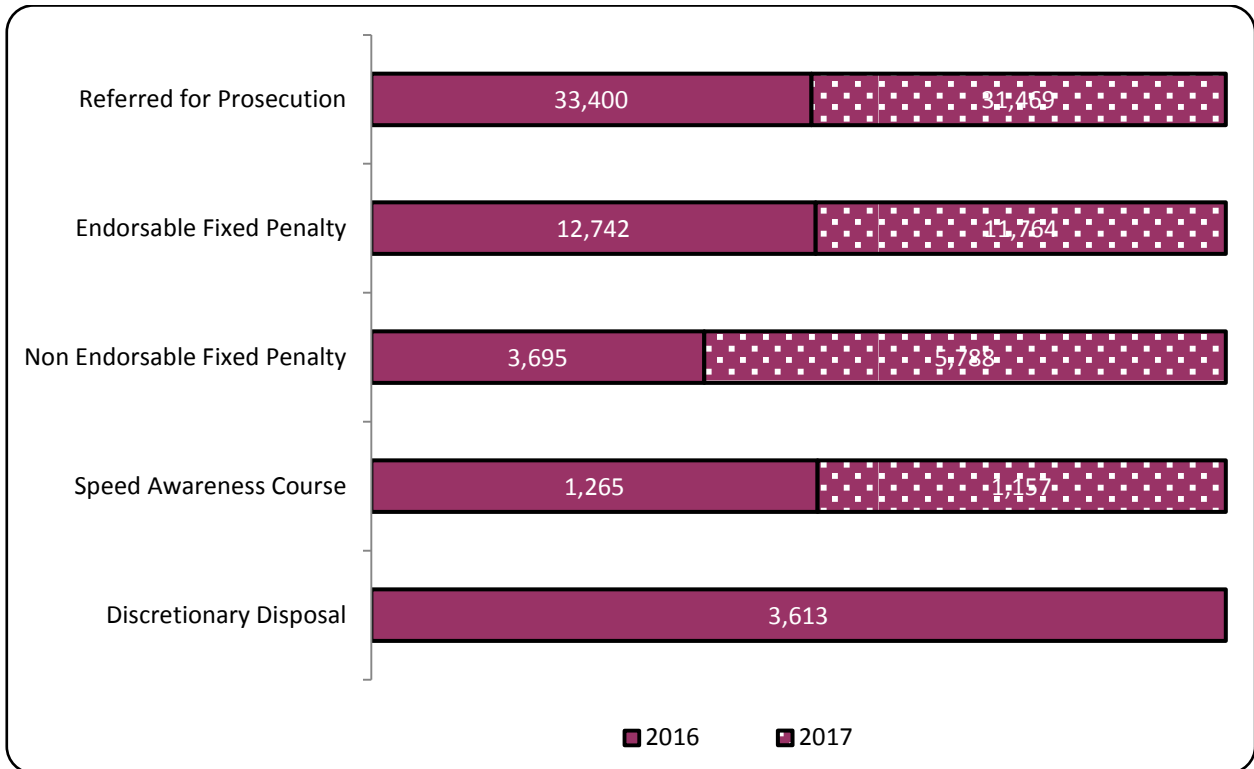
PSNI Statistics Branch welcomes any user feedback on the changes, which can be provided via the email address on the cover page.

2. Summary

Over the last 12 months:

- The number of motoring offences fell by 8.3% or 4,537;
- Non endorsable fixed penalties increased by 56.6% or 2,093 due to the increase in number of vehicle test certificate offences;
- Endorsable fixed penalties decreased by 7.7% or 978;
- And offences referred for prosecution fell by 5.8% or 1,931

Figure 1: Comparisons of disposal types¹ for motoring offences between 2016 and 2017



¹ Discretionary disposals have been renamed as Community Resolution Notices (CRN) as of 30th June 2016 and are no longer routinely issued for motoring offences. For this reason, any CRNs that may have been issued for motoring offences in 2017 are not included in these figures.

3. Trends

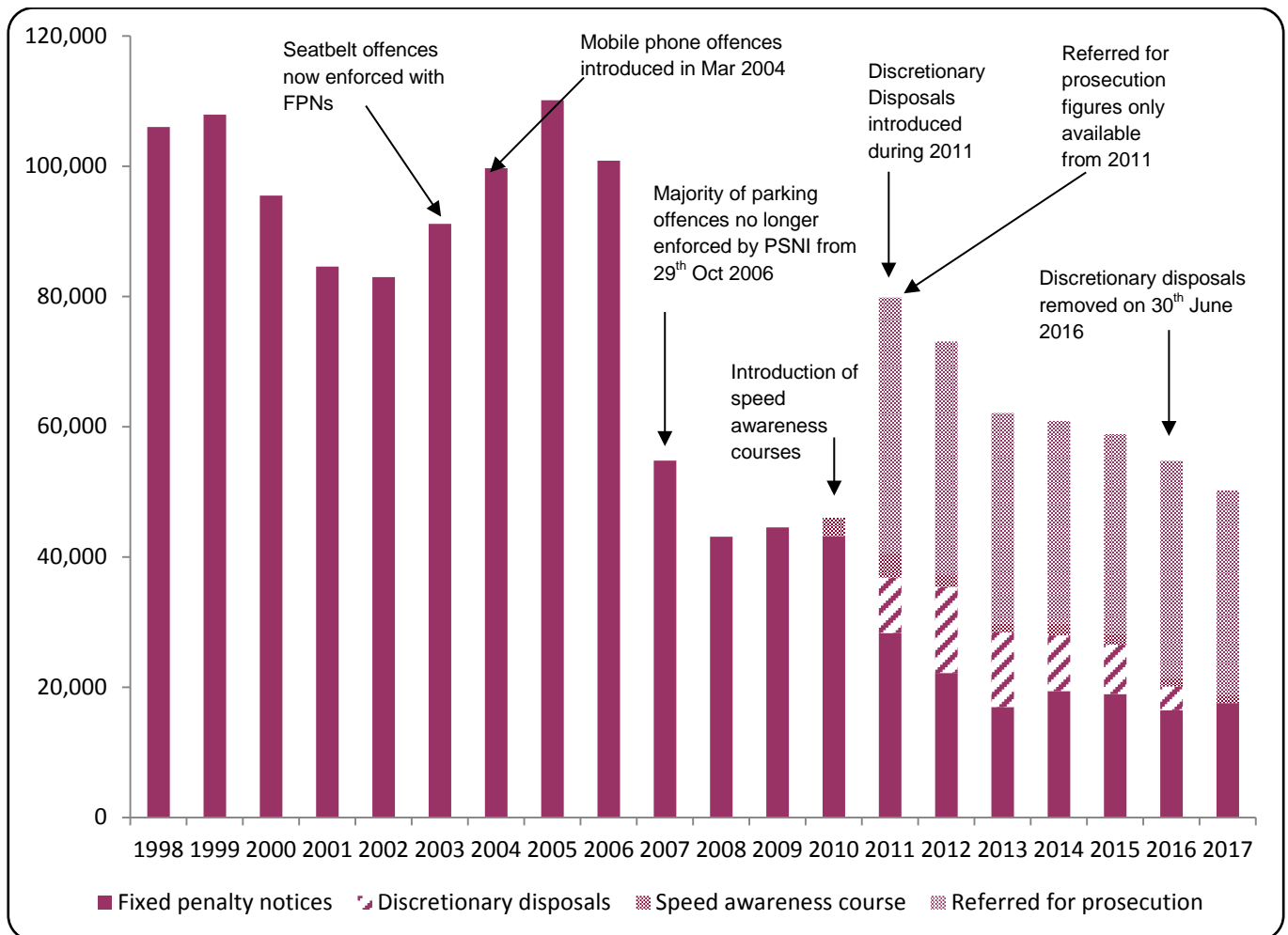
The number of FPNs has significantly decreased over the past number of years from a total 105,966 recorded in 1998 to 17,552 recorded in 2017.

A large proportion of the decrease is due to the introduction of the Traffic Management (NI) Order 2005 which came into effect on 30th October 2006. This legislation decriminalised the vast majority of parking and waiting offences in Northern Ireland. Enforcement of parking/waiting restrictions is now the responsibility of Traffic Attendants employed by National Car Parks Limited on behalf of Transport NI.

The total number of motoring offences has been steadily decreasing over the past number of years from 79,795 recorded in 2011 to 50,178 in 2017.

The removal of discretionary disposals as an option for motoring offences has had a notable impact on the number of motoring offences, albeit other disposals have also seen a decline over the years.

Figure 2: Number of motoring offences by disposal type: 1998 –2017

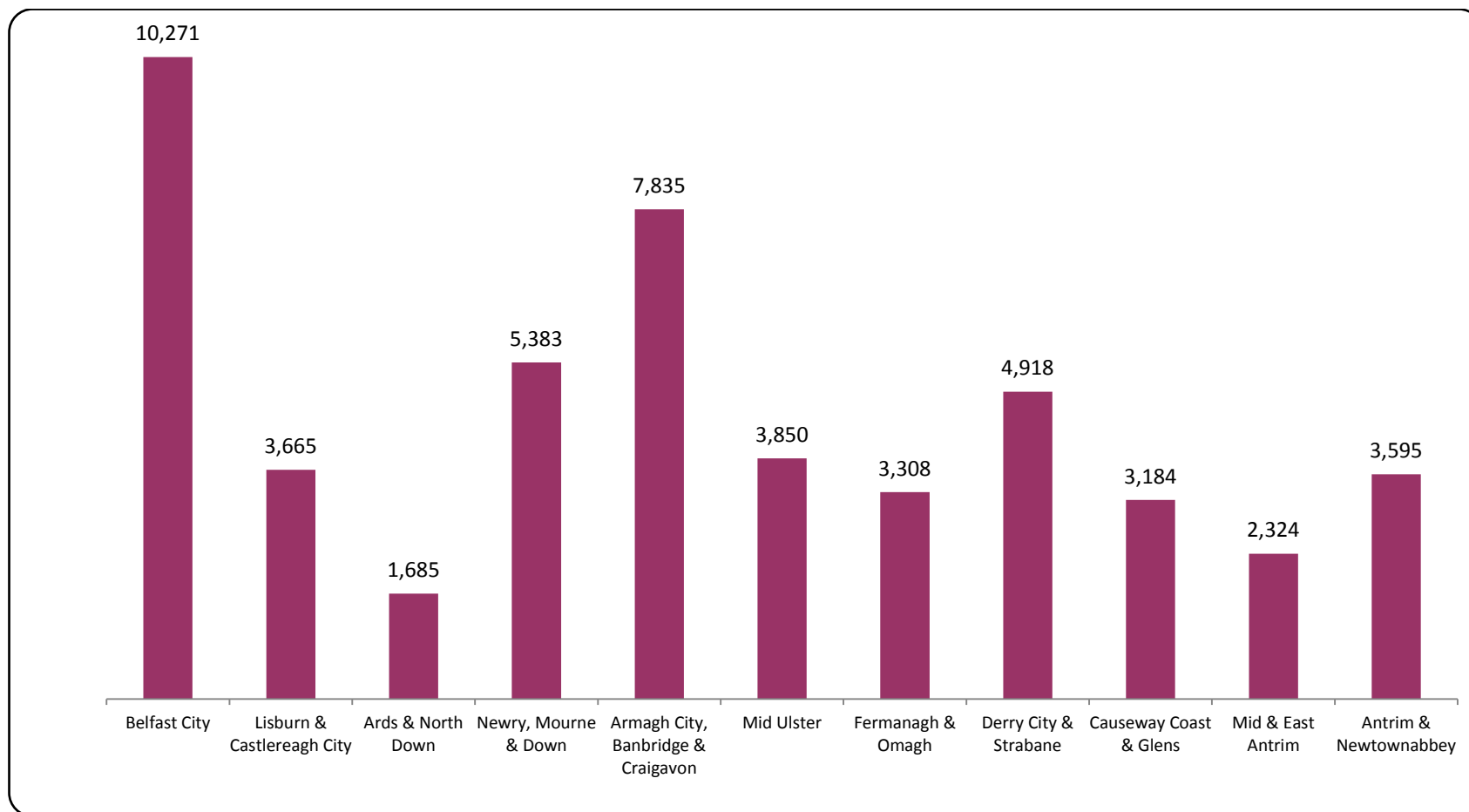


4. Offence group

Table 1: Number of motoring offences by month and offence group

2017	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Total	Total	Change over last	
	2017	2017	2017	2017	2017	2017	2017	2017	2017	2017	2017	2017	2017	2016	12 months	%
															Number	
Breach of signs & signals	23	32	26	24	20	18	51	44	19	18	20	26	321	395	-74	-18.7
Careless driving	448	443	408	385	393	394	363	381	414	407	362	294	4,692	7,179	-2,487	-34.6
Construction & use	166	137	108	118	118	114	128	103	105	149	152	124	1,522	2,650	-1,128	-42.6
Dangerous driving	156	133	144	141	152	146	183	146	121	135	123	120	1,700	2,041	-341	-16.7
Drink or drug driving	198	226	242	250	234	256	281	243	234	263	198	238	2,863	3,121	-258	-8.3
Driving licence	433	410	450	440	424	403	431	355	318	376	337	312	4,689	4,710	-21	-0.4
Driving whilst disqualified	88	90	105	113	104	94	102	98	69	83	89	77	1,112	1,138	-26	-2.3
Failing to stop / remain / report collision	204	297	247	235	225	235	231	244	285	214	196	144	2,757	3,424	-667	-19.5
Fraudulent use / declaration	24	18	20	32	30	15	28	10	16	22	23	17	255	220	35	15.9
Insurance	760	785	797	742	739	697	750	707	633	731	665	696	8,702	8,560	142	1.7
L & R driver	149	142	130	122	145	135	126	119	124	134	103	133	1,562	1,790	-228	-12.7
Miscellaneous	71	72	60	62	67	53	70	57	63	55	57	46	733	920	-187	-20.3
Mobile phone	364	435	457	411	469	432	406	391	338	378	415	306	4,802	5,927	-1,125	-19.0
Non motor vehicle	2	1	4	2	2	4	4	3	6	3	3	3	37	54	-17	-31.5
Parking	98	94	69	67	45	31	54	78	66	239	143	128	1,112	1,068	44	4.1
Pedestrian	2	7	7	6	9	10	4	4	10	4	5	5	73	107	-34	-31.8
Seatbelt	82	87	116	123	140	118	105	83	86	107	87	83	1,217	1,365	-148	-10.8
Speeding	638	565	636	595	728	592	572	447	452	552	709	448	6,934	6,883	51	0.7
Vehicle TADA / tampering	100	123	119	107	113	92	114	97	93	75	83	67	1,183	1,567	-384	-24.5
Vehicle test certificate	284	358	372	337	341	303	299	300	232	329	385	372	3,912	1,596	2,316	145.1
Total	4,290	4,455	4,517	4,312	4,498	4,142	4,302	3,910	3,684	4,274	4,155	3,639	50,178	54,715	-4,537	-8.3

Figure 3: Number of motoring offences by Policing District: 2017



The number of motoring offences detected in Belfast City represented one-fifth (20.5%) of all motoring offences detected in 2017 while Ards and North Down detected the least, accounting for 3.4% of the total in 2017. Armagh City, Banbridge and Craigavon accounted for 37 offences per 1,000 population, followed by Derry City and Strabane (33 offences per 1,000 population) while Ards and North Down accounted for the least with 11 per 1,000 population.

6. Age and Gender

Table 2: Number of motoring offences by gender, age band and offence group: 2017

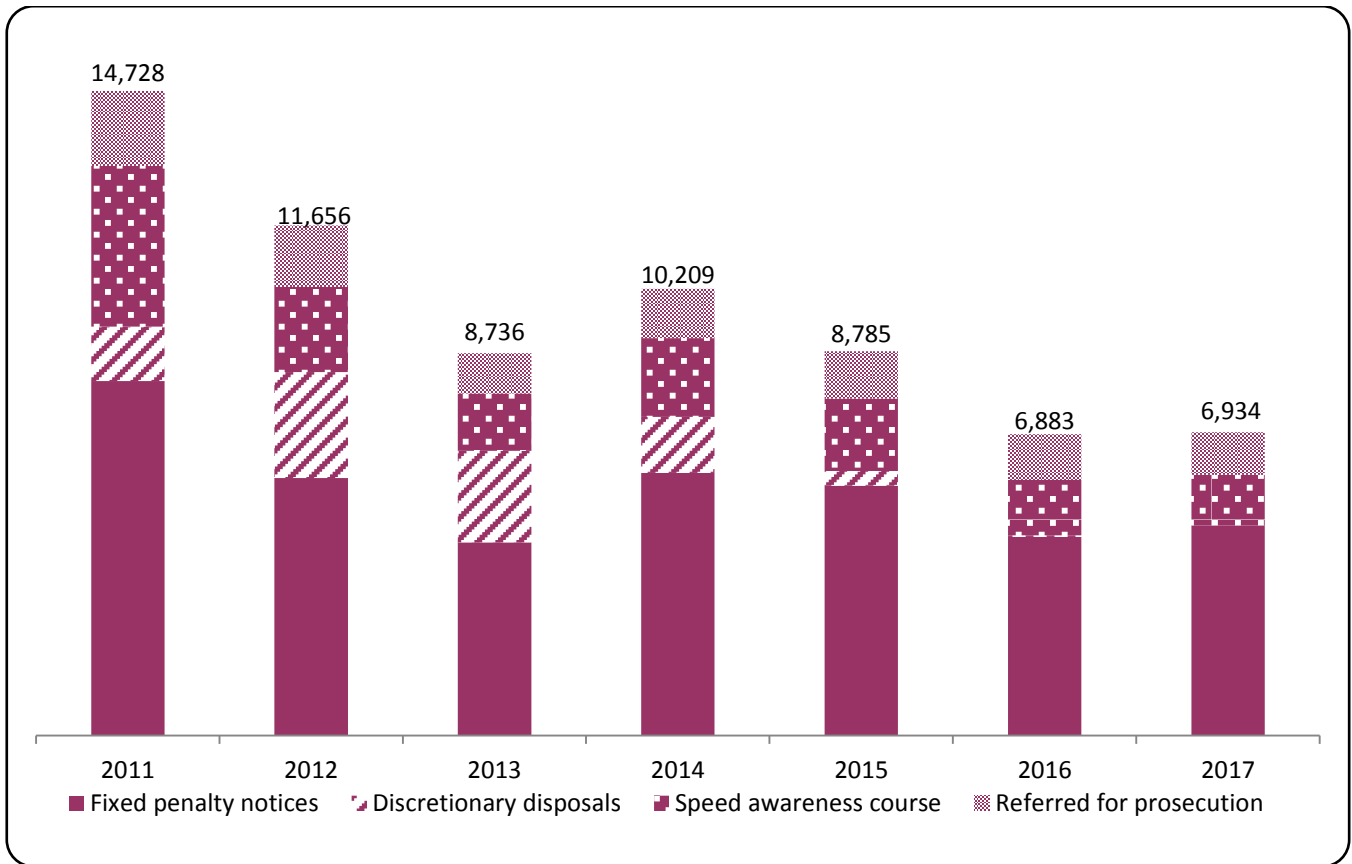
2017	Gender			Age						Total
	Male	Female	Unknown	Under 18	18 - 29	30 - 49	50 - 69	70+	Unknown	
Breach of signs & signals	221	86	14	2	77	131	45	6	60	321
Careless driving	3,532	1,150	10	108	1,728	1,700	908	237	11	4,692
Construction & use	1,307	182	33	73	870	397	150	11	21	1,522
Dangerous driving	1,506	193	1	74	927	512	165	22	0	1,700
Drink or drug driving	2,371	492	0	26	1,023	1,254	519	41	0	2,863
Driving licence	3,933	756	0	119	1,991	2,089	452	36	2	4,689
Driving whilst disqualified	990	122	0	96	443	490	78	5	0	1,112
Failing to stop / remain / report collision	2,229	528	0	107	1,184	942	421	103	0	2,757
Fraudulent use / declaration	223	32	0	3	109	100	36	5	2	255
Insurance	7,118	1,584	0	237	3,979	3,621	784	78	3	8,702
L & R driver	1,292	270	0	102	818	500	129	13	0	1,562
Miscellaneous	665	66	2	42	406	235	48	2	0	733
Mobile phone	3,749	1,053	0	22	1,240	2,481	990	69	0	4,802
Non motor vehicle	37	0	0	5	13	17	2	0	0	37
Parking	600	462	50	7	112	127	53	7	806	1,112
Pedestrian	56	16	1	4	45	13	8	3	0	73
Seatbelt	988	220	9	11	381	541	241	42	1	1,217
Speeding	5,015	1,914	5	89	2,592	2,928	1,210	114	1	6,934
Vehicle TADA / tampering	1,067	116	0	182	594	342	63	2	0	1,183
Vehicle test certificate	2,914	966	32	31	1,142	1,905	705	60	69	3,912
Total	39,813	10,208	157	1,340	19,674	20,325	7,007	856	976	50,178

7. Speeding

In Northern Ireland speeding offences can be detected by PSNI officers or by the fixed cameras and mobile cameras operated by the Northern Ireland Road Safety Partnership (NIRSP). More detailed information regarding the NIRSP can be obtained from the [NI RSP website](#). In 2016¹ (the most recent year available) the NIRSP detected 43,344 persons speeding which equated to approximately 86.3% of the combined PSNI and NIRSP total for that year.

Prior to the formal change in policy on 30th June 2016 and in response to the increase in number of road traffic collision fatalities, advice was given to police officers to cease using discretionary disposals for speeding, mobile phone and seatbelt offences. This is reflected by the reduction in the number of discretionary disposals issued in recent years for speeding offences.

Figure 4: Number of speeding offences detected by PSNI 2011 – 2017



In 2017, there were 6,934 detections for speeding offences, accounting for more than one in seven (13.8%) of all motoring offences detected by PSNI. Almost one-third (30.2%) of these were detected at the weekend (Saturday or Sunday) – see Table 3.

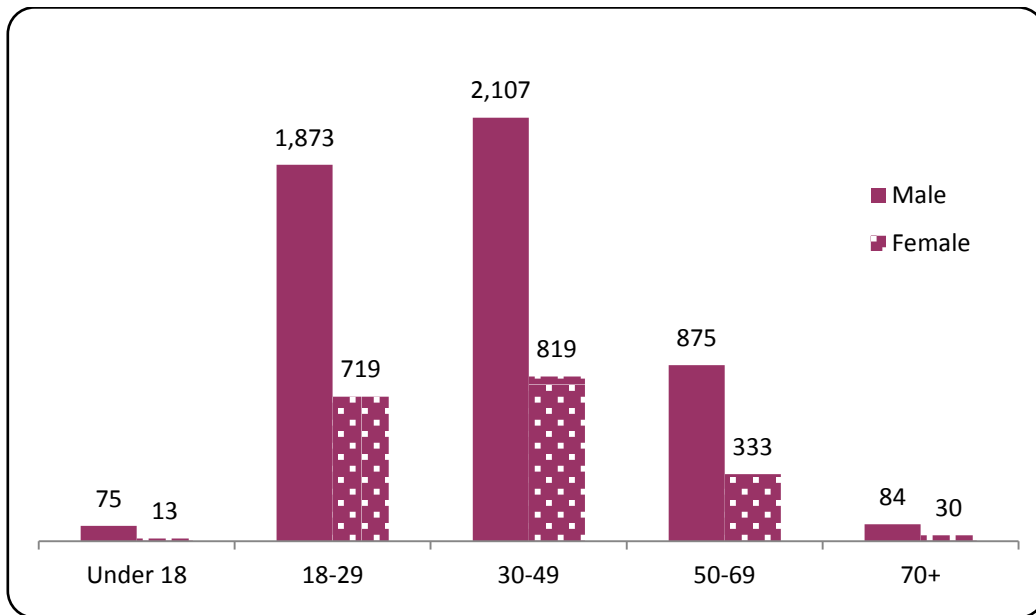
¹ 2017 figures will be published on 3rd August 2018.

Table 3: Number of speeding offences by day of week and month of year 2017

2017	Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Total
January	103	124	106	73	73	70	89	638
February	69	87	69	99	106	57	78	565
March	109	80	75	86	125	90	71	636
April	114	61	85	87	100	61	87	595
May	131	78	106	58	127	107	121	728
June	65	73	75	109	88	96	86	592
July	102	116	74	52	79	63	86	572
August	56	41	87	79	92	48	44	447
September	69	71	43	22	85	75	87	452
October	95	68	99	58	71	80	81	552
November	98	95	116	87	122	95	96	709
December	94	47	38	62	64	80	63	448
Total	1,105	941	973	872	1,132	922	989	6,934

Where the gender is known males accounted for 72.4% of all persons detected for speeding offences. Persons aged 30 – 49 represented over two-fifths (42.2%) of all persons detected for speeding offences followed by 18 - 29 year olds accounting for a further 37.4%.

Figure 5: Number of speeding offences by age and gender 2017

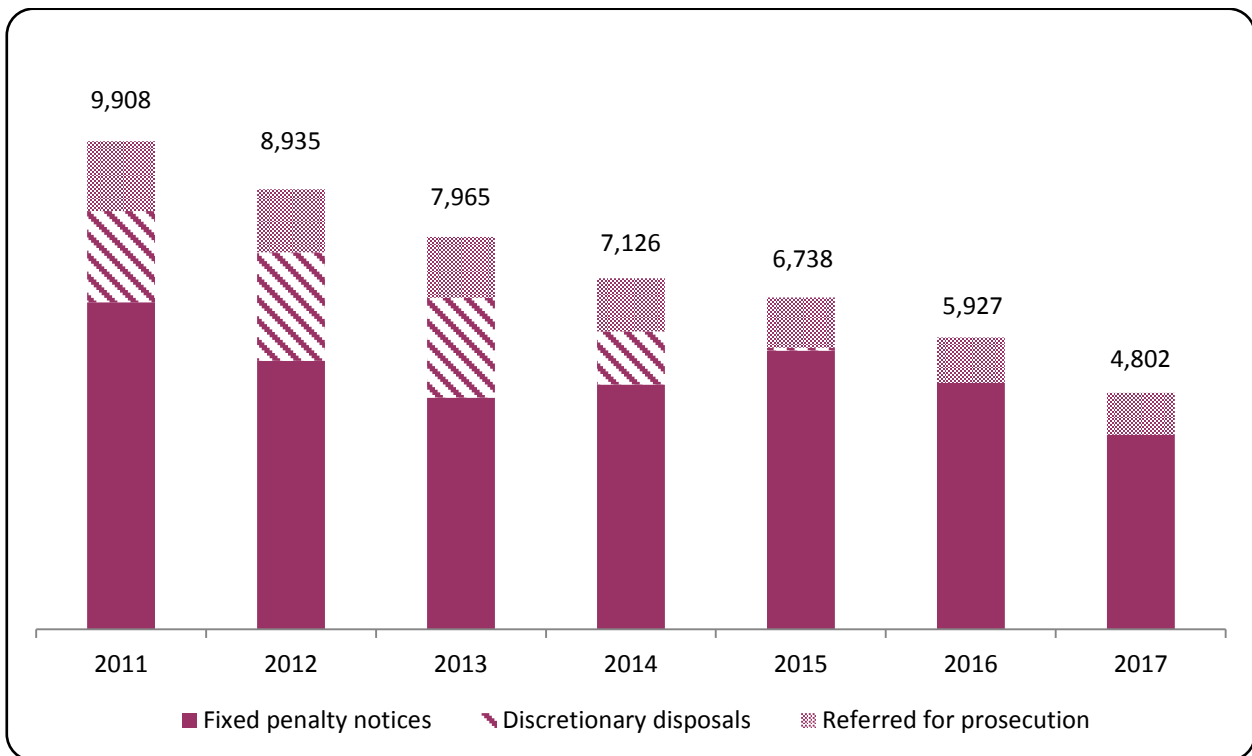


Unknown age and gender is excluded from the chart above

8. Mobile phone

The number of detections for mobile phone offences has steadily decreased from 9,908 in 2011 to 4,802 in 2017 (a decrease of 51.5%). As with speeding, the changes to discretionary disposals resulted in decreased use of this disposal in recent years for mobile phone offences.

Figure 6: Number of mobile phone offences 2011 – 2017



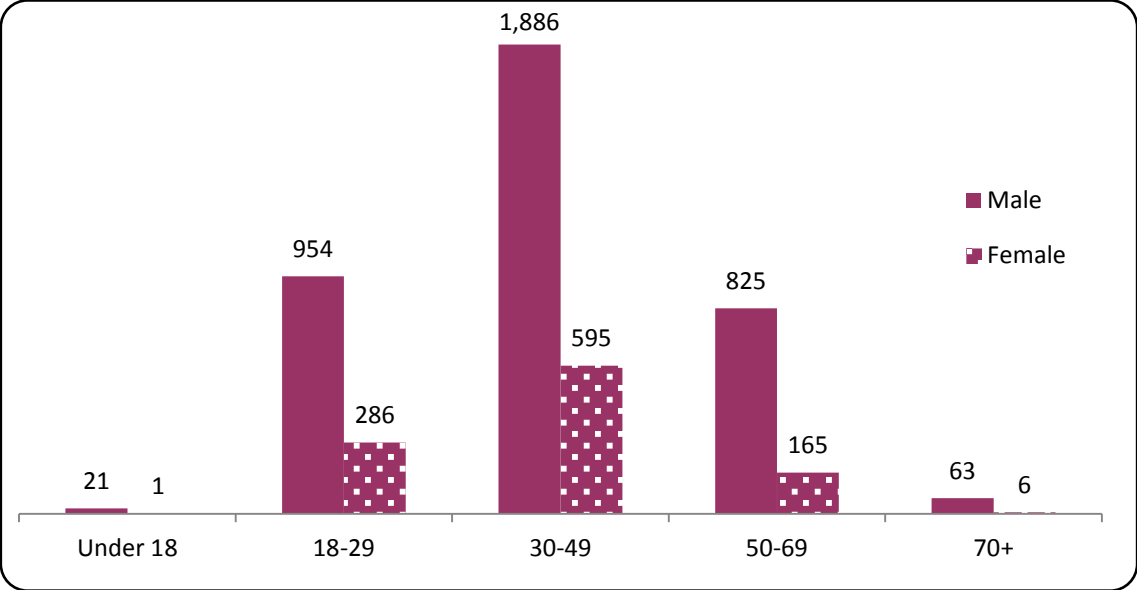
Mobile phone offences accounted for approximately one tenth (9.6%) of all motoring offences in 2017. There were fewer detections for this offence group on a Saturday and Sunday with majority detected on a Thursday (17.7%).

Table 4: Number of mobile phone offences by day of week and month of year 2017

2017	Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Total
January	26	52	70	53	53	60	50	364
February	23	68	75	60	78	92	39	435
March	29	77	57	96	99	60	39	457
April	20	74	57	65	79	58	58	411
May	20	68	99	89	68	89	36	469
June	23	57	68	79	88	87	30	432
July	31	92	65	45	58	48	67	406
August	33	36	83	76	62	48	53	391
September	17	58	49	38	55	73	48	338
October	34	56	56	62	61	77	32	378
November	16	48	67	73	95	75	41	415
December	24	41	39	40	56	65	41	306
Total	296	727	785	776	852	832	534	4,802

Males accounted for over three quarters (78.1%) of all persons detected for mobile phone offences while persons aged 30 – 49 accounted for over half (51.7%).

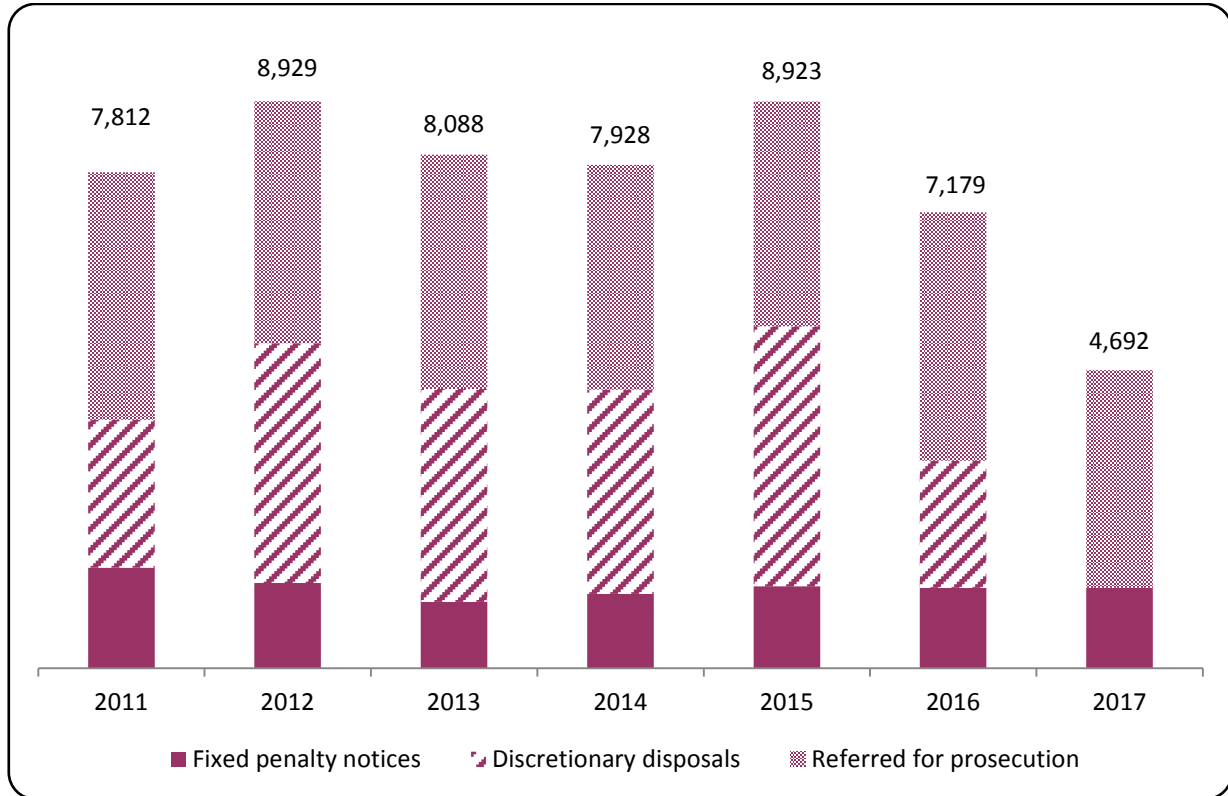
Figure 7: Number of mobile phones offences by age and gender 2017



8. Careless driving

The number of careless driving offences has decreased from 7,812 in 2011 to 4,692 in 2017 (a decrease of 39.9%). Careless driving offences accounted for 9.4% of all motoring offences in 2017.

Figure 8: Number of careless driving offences 2011 – 2017



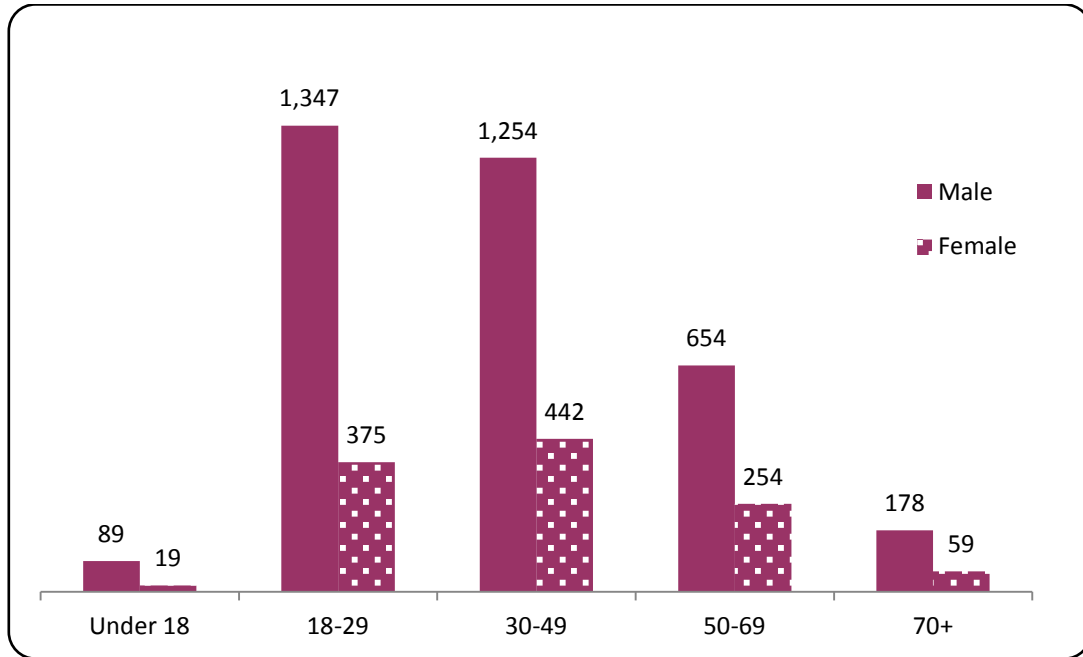
One in six (16.2%) were issued on a Wednesday while January was the month of year where most detections for careless driving offences occurred, accounting for 9.5% of the total.

Table 5: Number of careless driving offences by day of week and month of year 2017

2017	Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Total
January	69	77	61	74	52	62	53	448
February	49	66	47	68	75	70	68	443
March	46	28	39	88	68	81	58	408
April	69	57	44	38	65	50	62	385
May	45	50	51	61	72	58	56	393
June	51	54	44	69	71	63	42	394
July	61	55	44	56	47	37	63	363
August	32	43	63	65	61	62	55	381
September	61	47	45	55	64	80	62	414
October	58	56	58	68	55	59	53	407
November	51	42	48	70	53	55	43	362
December	45	24	28	48	36	48	65	294
Total	637	599	572	760	719	725	680	4,692

Where gender is known males accounted for 75.4% of careless driving offences and 18 - 29 year olds accounted for almost two fifths (36.9%).

Figure 9: Number of careless driving offences by age and gender 2017



Unknown age and gender is excluded from the chart above

9. Disposal types

Offences referred for prosecution accounted for 62.7% (31,469) of all motoring offences detected in 2017, followed by endorsable fixed penalty notices (23.4%, 11,764). A further 11.5% were dealt with by means of a non endorsable FPN (5,788), while the remaining 2.3% completed a speed awareness course (1,157).

Figure 10: Breakdown of disposal types used for motoring offences 2017

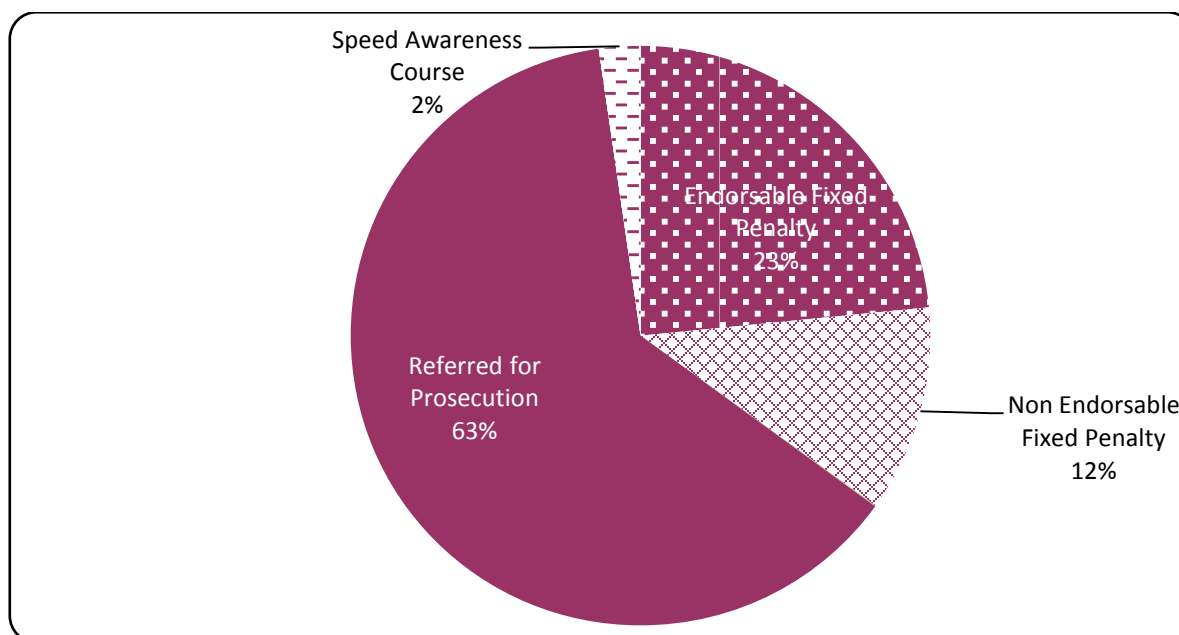


Table 6: Offence group by disposal type 2017

2017	Endorsable FPN	Non Endorsable FPN	Referred for prosecution	Speed Awareness	Total
Breach of signs & signals	0	321	0	0	321
Careless driving	1,050	212	3,430	0	4,692
Construction & use	0	1,235	287	0	1,522
Dangerous driving	282	0	1,418	0	1,700
Drink or drug driving	0	0	2,863	0	2,863
Driving licence	0	0	4,689	0	4,689
Driving whilst disqualified	0	0	1,112	0	1,112
Failing to stop/ remain/ report collision	0	0	2,757	0	2,757
Fraudulent use / declaration	0	3	252	0	255
Insurance	819	0	7,883	0	8,702
L & R driver	85	0	1,477	0	1,562
Miscellaneous	2	33	698	0	733
Mobile phone	3,949	0	853	0	4,802
Non motor vehicle	0	12	25	0	37
Parking	28	1,080	4	0	1,112
Pedestrian	0	30	43	0	73
Seatbelt	757	109	351	0	1,217
Speeding	4,792	9	976	1,157	6,934
Vehicle TADA / tampering	0	0	1,183	0	1,183
Vehicle test certificate	0	2,744	1,168	0	3,912
Total	11,764	5,788	31,469	1,157	50,178

9.1 Fixed penalty notices

FPNs originated as an administrative way to deal with simple parking offences without referring such matters to the courts. The scheme was then expanded to cover minor road traffic offences in the mid-1980s and was again further expanded to incorporate endorsable and non endorsable offences with the introduction of penalty points in October 1997.

Non endorsable offences are those which do not result in penalty points on your licence and which incur a fine of £30. The standard fine for endorsable offences is £60 along with three penalty points. More serious offences such as driving causing or permitting no insurance can incur fines of up to £200 and six points. Fine collection and revenue reporting are managed by NI Court Service.

A list of fixed penalty offences can be found at – [FPN List](#)

Endorsable fixed penalty notices

Endorsable FPNs accounted for almost one quarter (11,764, 23.4%) of all disposal types used in 2017. Persons aged 30-49 represented 45.4% of those issued with an endorsable FPN, followed by persons aged 18-29 (32.0%). Females accounted for one quarter (25.1%) of all issued endorsable FPNs, while males accounted for 74.9%. Close to half (45.3%) of all endorsable FPNs issued to females were for speeding offences.

Table 7: Number of endorsable FPNs issued by offence group, gender and age 2017

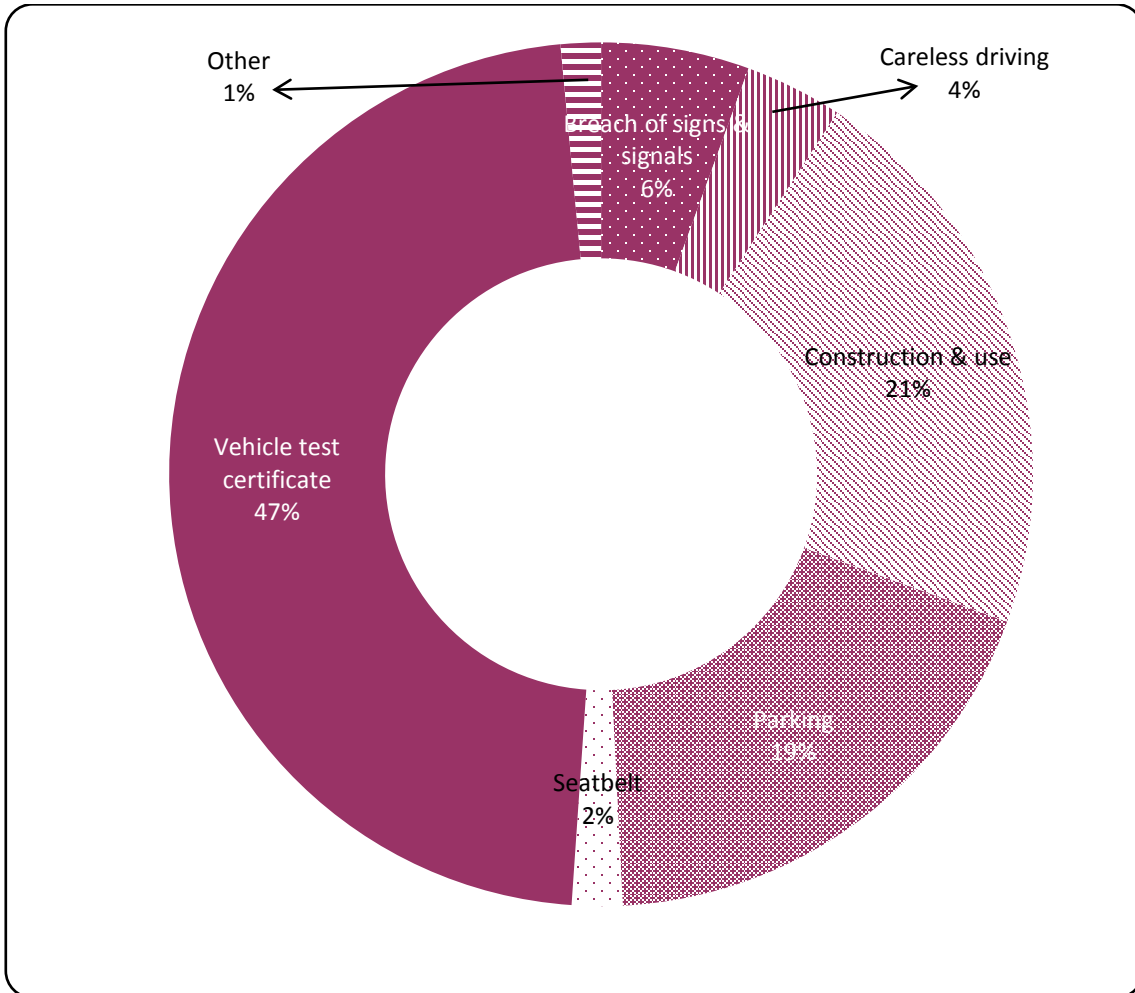
2017	Gender			Age					Total
	Male	Female	Total	Under 18	18 - 29	30 - 49	50 - 69	70+	
Careless driving	794	256	1,050	12	322	389	279	48	1,050
Dangerous driving	249	33	282	7	172	72	29	2	282
Insurance	562	257	819	0	297	386	121	15	819
L & R driver	79	6	85	19	48	13	5	0	85
Miscellaneous	2	0	2	1	1	0	0	0	2
Mobile phone	3,036	913	3,949	18	973	2,052	845	61	3,949
Parking	21	7	28	0	3	17	7	1	28
Seatbelt	613	144	757	4	191	345	182	35	757
Speeding	3,456	1,336	4,792	38	1,763	2,065	845	81	4,792
Total	8,812	2,952	11,764	99	3,770	5,339	2,313	243	11,764

Non Endorsable fixed penalty notices

There were 5,788 non endorsable FPNs issued in 2017, an increase of 56.6% on the number issued in 2016. The increase can largely be attributed to the increase in the number of vehicle test certificate offences over the same period, due to the increased use of ANPR.

Non endorsable FPNs accounted for one in eight (11.5%) of all motoring offences. Vehicle test certificate offences accounted for almost half (47.4%) of all non endorsable issued FPNs, followed by construction and use offences (21.3%).

Figure 11: Number of non endorsable FPNs issued by offence group 2017



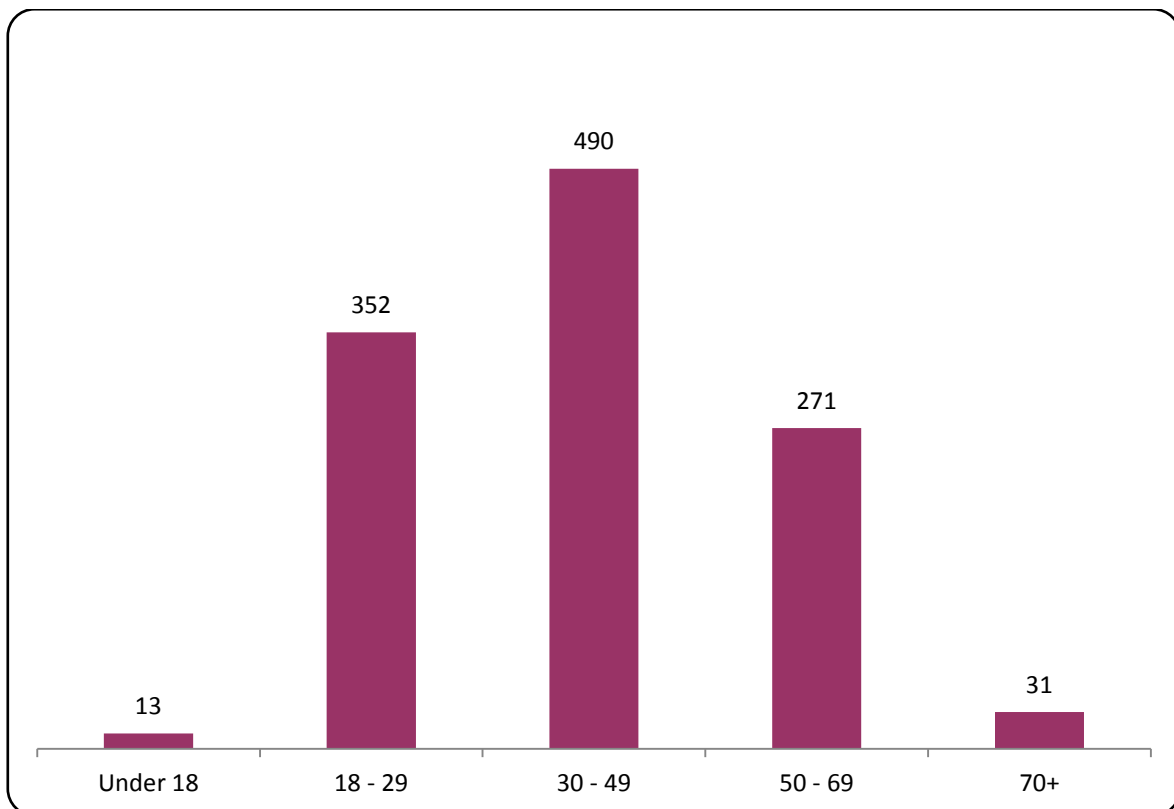
Other includes offence groups 'Fraudulent use / declaration', 'Miscellaneous', 'Non motor vehicle', 'Pedestrians' and 'Speeding'.

9.2 Speed awareness courses

Speed awareness courses were introduced in Northern Ireland in 2010. Drivers, depending on the speed at which they were detected, may be offered an opportunity to attend a speed awareness course as an alternative to penalty points. The course, which is available at eight locations throughout Northern Ireland and delivered and managed by an appointed contractor, must be attended within a period of 120 days from the date of detection. Certain restrictions apply to who can qualify for the speed awareness course option, for those not eligible they will be dealt with by means of an alternative disposal option.

Almost one in six (16.7%) of drivers caught speeding by police officers in 2017 completed a speed awareness course. Drivers aged 30-49 represented over two-fifths (42.4%) of those who completed a course, followed by drivers aged 18-29 (30.4%).

Figure 12: Age of drivers who completed a speed awareness course 2017



Based on date of detection and not date course was completed

9.3 Referred for prosecution

Police led prosecutions for motoring offences occur when the offence is of a serious nature and has no corresponding fixed penalty or where multiple offences have occurred or where the alleged offender wishes to have the matter(s) heard at court. Where an offending driver has already accumulated a number of penalty points, to the extent that a driving disqualification is now in scope, such cases must be heard at court and will consequently also be subject of a prosecution.

Motoring offences that have been referred for prosecution accounted for 62.7% of all motoring offences in 2017 with insurance offences making up one quarter (25.1%) of all offences referred for prosecution.

Males accounted for over four fifths (83.1%) of all persons referred for prosecution for motoring offences while persons aged 18 – 29 accounted for 43.8%

Table 8: Number of offences referred for prosecution by offence group, gender and age 2017

2017	Gender			Age						Total	
	Male	Female	Unknown	Under 18	18 - 29	30 - 49	50 - 69	70+	Unknown		
Breach of signs & signals	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Careless driving	2,570	859	1	92	1,320	1,218	604	187	9		3,430
Construction & use	249	38	0	12	167	75	32	1	0		287
Dangerous driving	1,257	160	1	67	755	440	136	20	0		1,418
Drink or drug driving	2,371	492	0	26	1,023	1,254	519	41	0		2,863
Driving licence	3,933	756	0	119	1,991	2,089	452	36	2		4,689
Driving whilst disqualified	990	122	0	96	443	490	78	5	0		1,112
Failing to stop / remain / report collision	2,229	528	0	107	1,184	942	421	103	0		2,757
Fraudulent use / declaration	222	30	0	3	108	99	36	5	1		252
Insurance	6,556	1,327	0	237	3,682	3,235	663	63	3		7,883
L & R driver	1,213	264	0	83	770	487	124	13	0		1,477
Miscellaneous	633	65	0	39	395	221	42	1	0		698
Mobile phone	713	140	0	4	267	429	145	8	0		853
Non motor vehicle	25	0	0	4	7	12	2	0	0		25
Parking	3	1	0	0	1	1	2	0	0		4
Pedestrian	32	11	0	3	23	6	8	3	0		43
Seatbelt	286	65	0	3	133	154	56	5	0		351
Speeding	840	136	0	35	474	372	92	2	1		976
Vehicle TADA / tampering	1,067	116	0	182	594	342	63	2	0		1,183
Vehicle test certificate	974	194	0	26	455	544	133	9	1		1,168
Total	26,163	5,304	2	1,138	13,792	12,410	3,608	504	17		31,469