

# Motoring Offence Statistics for Northern Ireland

1<sup>st</sup> December 2019 – 30<sup>th</sup> November 2020

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- From 1<sup>st</sup> December 2019 to 30<sup>th</sup> November 2020, there were 46,116 detections for motoring offences in Northern Ireland, a decrease of 8% on the 50,024 detections recorded in the previous 12 months.
- The largest offence group recorded was speeding offences with a total of 8,527 detections. This was an increase of 11% on the number recorded in the previous 12 months.
- Insurance offences accounted for 18% of all detections, a decrease of 41 on the number detected from December 2018 – November 2019.
- The highest speed detected by PSNI officers in the latest 12 months was 130mph, on the Ballyquin Road, Limavady and M1 Motorway, Portadown.
- Almost one in five motoring offences was detected in Belfast City District from 1<sup>st</sup> December 2019 – 30<sup>th</sup> November 2020.
- There has been a 68% decrease in the number of vehicle test certificate offences when compared with the previous 12 months. Automatic MOT renewals coupled with reduced traffic volumes in earlier months of 2020 due to COVID-19 will likely have impacted on this decrease.



Northern Ireland  
Statistics and Research Agency



Keeping People Safe

## Contents

1. Things you need to know about this release
2. Summary
3. Trends
4. Age and Gender
5. Offence Group
6. Policing District
7. Further Information

We welcome user feedback on these statistics. This can be sent to the email address on the cover page or by contacting us at the telephone number provided.

## 1. Things you need to know about this release

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).

[PSNI Official Statistics documentation](#) is available on the Official Statistics section of the PSNI website.

### Coverage

This report provides statistics on the number of motoring offences detected by police in Northern Ireland from 1<sup>st</sup> December 2019 – 30<sup>th</sup> November 2020. It does not include any detections by the NI Road Safety Partnership (NI RSP). Figures relating to such detections through the Partnership can be accessed via the following link – [NI RSP](#).

The range of disposals covered includes those offences dealt with by means of a fixed penalty notice (FPN), speed awareness course and referral for prosecution. Statistics Branch developed the functionality to report on prosecution referrals in 2017, at which point the figures were validated and reported back to 2011. Quality concerns due to the introduction of different information systems prevented any further back dating of the figures.

This report presents the most recent motoring offence statistics based on figures that were extracted on 25<sup>th</sup> January 2021. Referred for prosecution figures from 1<sup>st</sup> January 2019 onwards remain provisional and therefore subject to amendment. Referred for prosecution figures for 2011 – 2018 have been amended following the completion of a review into motoring offence codes. The information is also available in tabular format in the [accompanying spreadsheets](#) on the PSNI website.

Background information and details of the offences included in each offence grouping (Section 6) can be found in the [Motoring Offence User Guide](#) on the PSNI website. 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.

### National Statistics Status

National Statistics status means that our statistics meet the highest standards of trustworthiness, quality and public value, and as producers, it is our responsibility to maintain compliance with these standards.

These statistics were designated as National Statistics in March 2020 following a full [assessment](#) against the [Code of Practice](#).

### 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.

More detail can be found in the Motoring Offence User Guide which can be accessed via the [motoring offences](#) statistics web page on the PSNI website.

### Related statistics

Sources of motoring offences data for other domains include [An Garda Síochána - Republic of Ireland](#) and [England and Wales](#). Related statistics include [Injury road traffic collision statistics](#) and [NI Road Safety Partnership](#) statistics.

## 2. Summary

Table 1 shows that, over the last 12 months:

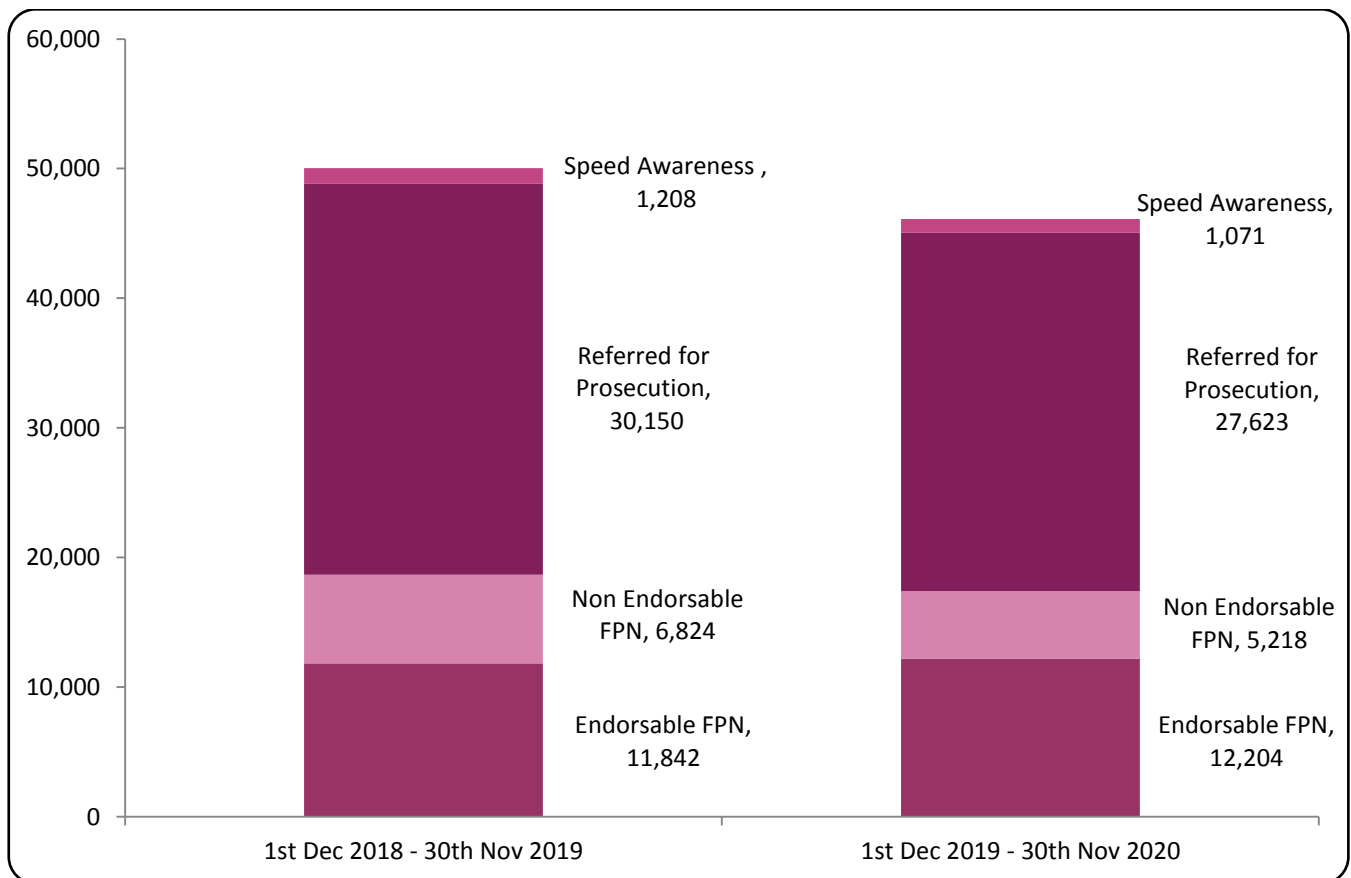
- The number of motoring offences detected fell by 8% to 46,116
- Non endorsable fixed penalties decreased by 24%
- Speed awareness courses decreased by 11%
- Offences referred for prosecution fell by 8%

**Table 1 Number of motoring offences by disposal type, 1<sup>st</sup> December 2018 – 30<sup>th</sup> November 2020\***

|                              | 1 <sup>st</sup> Dec 2018 – 30 <sup>th</sup> Nov 2019 | 1 <sup>st</sup> Dec 2019 – 30 <sup>th</sup> Nov 2020 | Change over last 12 months | Percentage change over last 12 months |
|------------------------------|--|--|----------------------------|---------------------------------------|
| Endorsable Fixed Penalty     | 11,842   | 12,204   | 362                        | 3                                     |
| Non Endorsable Fixed Penalty | 6,824  | 5,218  | -1,606                     | -24                                   |
| Referred for Prosecution     | 30,150   | 27,623   | -2,527                     | -8                                    |
| Speed Awareness Course       | 1,208  | 1,071  | -137                       | -11                                   |
| <b>Total</b>                 | <b>50,024</b>  | <b>46,116</b>  | <b>-3,908</b>              | <b>-8</b>                             |

\*Figures are provisional and subject to change.

**Figure 1 Comparisons of disposal types for motoring offences between 1<sup>st</sup> December 2018 – 30<sup>th</sup> November 2019 and 1<sup>st</sup> December 2019 – 30<sup>th</sup> November 2020**



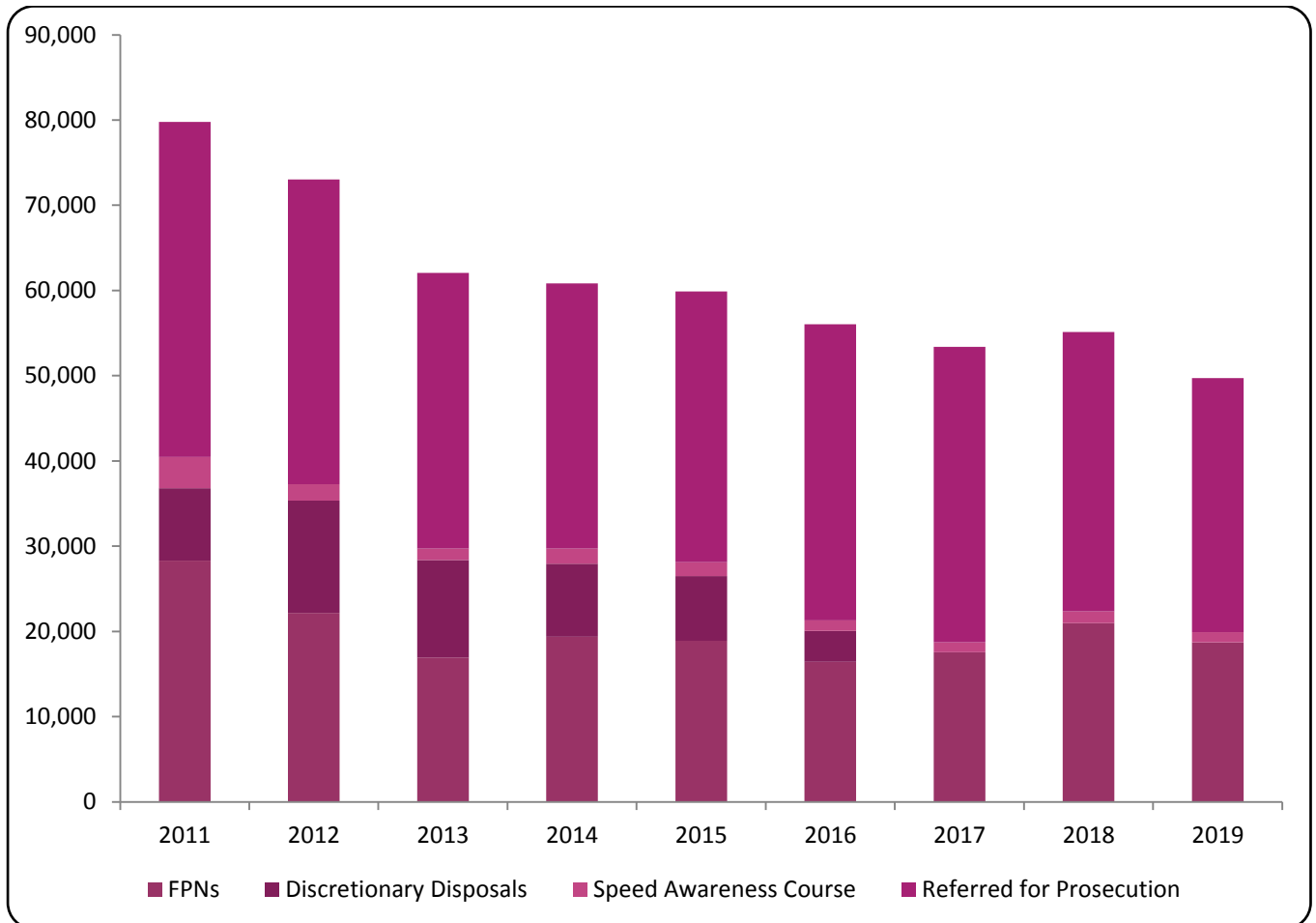
Note that not all detections in the most recent months will have been processed at this time, particularly those referred for prosecution.

### 3. Trends

The number of motoring offences had been steadily decreasing over a 8 year period from a total of 79,796 recorded in 2011 to 49,818 recorded in 2019 (see figure 2).

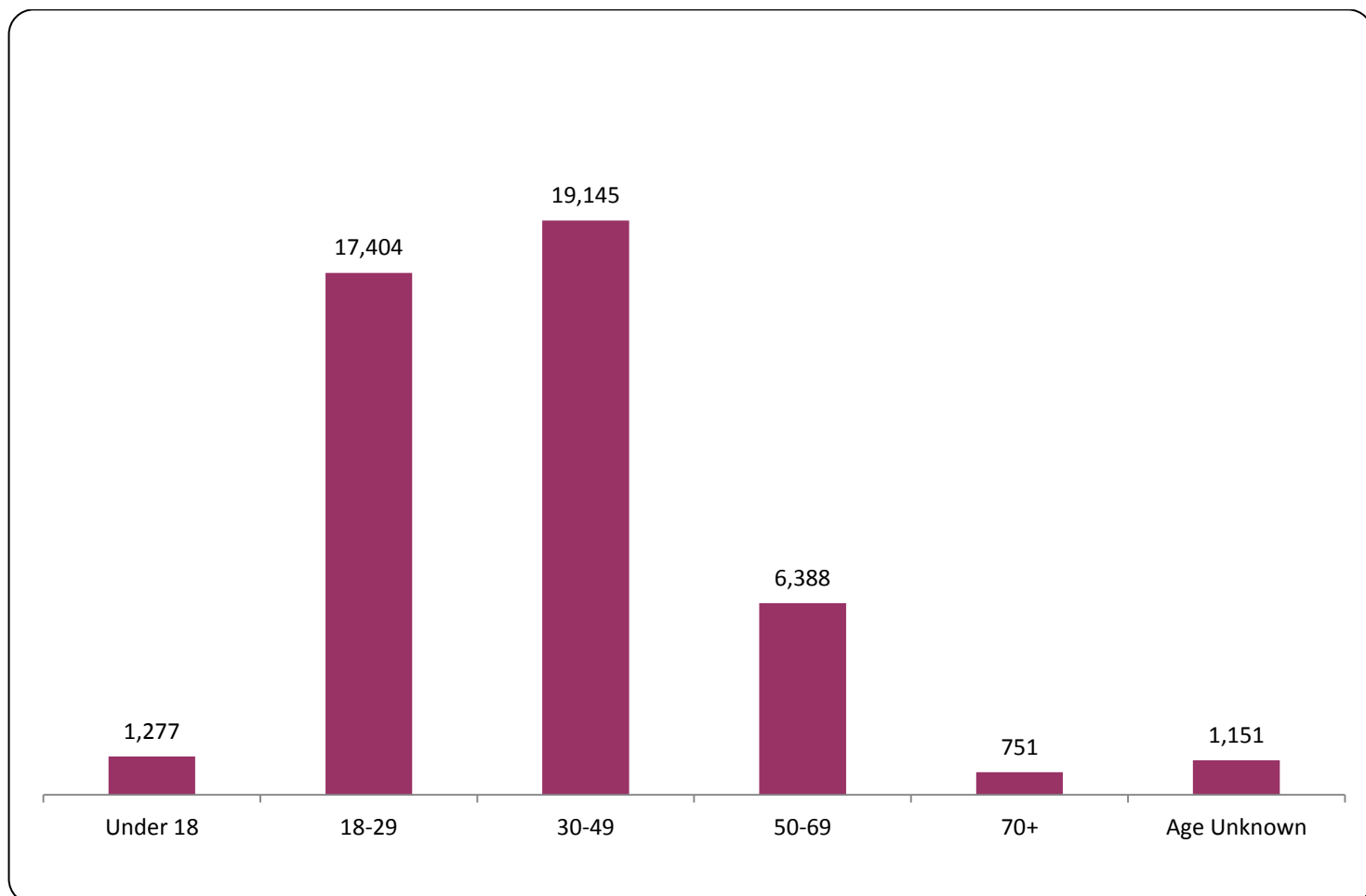
Discretionary disposals were introduced during 2011 as an alternative method of disposal for dealing with motoring offences but was then removed on 31<sup>st</sup> July 2016.

**Figure 2 Number of motoring offences by disposal type: 1<sup>st</sup> January 2011 – 31<sup>st</sup> December 2019**



## 4. Age and Gender

Figure 3 Number of motoring offences by age: 1<sup>st</sup> December 2019 – 30<sup>th</sup> November 2020



- Figure 3 shows that those aged 30-49 years old accounted for over two fifths of motoring offences detected between 1<sup>st</sup> December 2019 and 30<sup>th</sup> November 2020, followed by those aged 18-29 (38%). Almost all (99.4%) of the unknown ages refer to non endorsable offences, which can be issued in the absence of the offender and do not require licence details to process, for example parking offences.
- Males accounted for 8 in 10 of all motoring offences detected between 1<sup>st</sup> December 2019 and 30<sup>th</sup> November 2020.

## 5. Offence Ggroup

**Table 2 Number of motoring offences by gender, age band and offence group<sup>1</sup>  
1<sup>st</sup> December 2019 – 30<sup>th</sup> November 2020\***

|   | Female       | Male          | Other /<br>Unknown | Under 18     | 18-29         | 30-49         | 50-69        | 70+        | Age<br>Unknown | Total         |
|---|--------------|---------------|--------------------|--------------|---------------|---------------|--------------|------------|----------------|---------------|
| Breach of signs & signals                   | 82           | 202           | 7                  | 3            | 76            | 78            | 54           | 11         | 69             | <b>291</b>    |
| Careless driving                            | 787          | 2,762         | 0                  | 86           | 1,301         | 1,332         | 669          | 157        | 4              | <b>3,549</b>  |
| Construction & use <sup>2</sup>             | 292          | 2,423         | 1                  | 77           | 1,628         | 705           | 248          | 25         | 33             | <b>2,716</b>  |
| Dangerous driving                           | 142          | 1,380         | 0                  | 67           | 771           | 523           | 146          | 15         | 0              | <b>1,522</b>  |
| Drink or drug driving                       | 591          | 2,381         | 2                  | 34           | 913           | 1,496         | 495          | 36         | 0              | <b>2,974</b>  |
| Driving licence                             | 630          | 3,480         | 0                  | 117          | 1,597         | 1,923         | 435          | 38         | 0              | <b>4,110</b>  |
| Driving whilst disqualified                 | 60           | 867           | 0                  | 85           | 293           | 456           | 88           | 5          | 0              | <b>927</b>    |
| Failing to stop / remain / report collision | 433          | 1,988         | 0                  | 92           | 976           | 973           | 311          | 66         | 3              | <b>2,421</b>  |
| Fraudulent use / declaration                | 20           | 252           | 1                  | 3            | 106           | 124           | 23           | 6          | 11             | <b>273</b>    |
| Insurance                                   | 1,495        | 6,752         | 2                  | 231          | 3,362         | 3,752         | 820          | 83         | 1              | <b>8,249</b>  |
| L & R driver <sup>3</sup>                   | 228          | 1,350         | 0                  | 120          | 768           | 549           | 127          | 14         | 0              | <b>1,578</b>  |
| Miscellaneous                               | 77           | 844           | 0                  | 55           | 384           | 395           | 70           | 16         | 1              | <b>921</b>    |
| Mobile phone                                | 565          | 2,868         | 0                  | 22           | 777           | 1,796         | 776          | 62         | 0              | <b>3,433</b>  |
| Non motor vehicle                           | 0            | 43            | 1                  | 3            | 15            | 17            | 9            | 0          | 0              | <b>44</b>     |
| Parking                                     | 506          | 703           | 55                 | 0            | 107           | 108           | 57           | 0          | 992            | <b>1,264</b>  |
| Pedestrian                                  | 3            | 53            | 0                  | 3            | 26            | 18            | 7            | 2          | 0              | <b>56</b>     |
| Seatbelt                                    | 165          | 723           | 0                  | 17           | 262           | 408           | 172          | 28         | 1              | <b>888</b>    |
| Speeding <sup>4</sup>                       | 2,301        | 6,225         | 1                  | 96           | 3,121         | 3,534         | 1,619        | 155        | 2              | <b>8,527</b>  |
| Vehicle TADA <sup>5</sup> / tampering       | 112          | 1,037         | 0                  | 150          | 551           | 406           | 39           | 3          | 0              | <b>1,149</b>  |
| Vehicle test certificate                    | 228          | 995           | 1                  | 16           | 370           | 552           | 223          | 29         | 34             | <b>1,224</b>  |
| <b>Total</b>                                | <b>8,717</b> | <b>37,328</b> | <b>71</b>          | <b>1,277</b> | <b>17,404</b> | <b>19,145</b> | <b>6,388</b> | <b>751</b> | <b>1,151</b>   | <b>46,116</b> |

\* Figures are provisional and subject to change.

<sup>1</sup> Please note an offence group is made up of many individual offences. For the full list of offences and groups see the [motoring offences section](#) of the PSNI website.

<sup>2</sup> Construction & use offences include defective tyre, defective exhaust, excess noise, incorrect form of registration mark and no number plate.

<sup>3</sup> The offence 'L or R driver exceeding 45mph limit' is included in the speeding offence group. L and R driver = Learner driver and Restricted driver

<sup>4</sup> This does not include drivers detected for speeding through the Northern Ireland Road Safety Partnership.

<sup>5</sup> Vehicle TADA = Vehicle taking and driving away

- Table 2 shows that the largest offence group recorded was speeding offences with a total of 8,527 detections, accounting for 18% of all detections for motoring offences. This was an increase of 11% on the number recorded in the previous 12 months.
- The highest speed recorded by PSNI officers in the latest 12 months was 130mph on the Ballyquin Road, Limavady and M1 Motorway, Portadown.
- In the latest 12 months, the NI Road Safety Partnership detected over 5 times more speeding offences than the PSNI (45,227).
- There has been a 39% increase in the number of construction and use offences when compared with December 2018 – November 2019. The increase is mainly attributed to an increase in the number of FPNs issued for number plate type offences e.g. 'Incorrect form of registration mark'.
- Over half of those detected for mobile phone offences were age 30-49.
- One quarter of all female detections was for speeding offences.
- There has been a 68% decrease in the number of vehicle test certificate offences when compared with the previous 12 months. Automatic MOT renewals coupled with reduced traffic volumes<sup>1</sup> in earlier months of 2020 due to COVID-19 will likely have impacted on this decrease.
- Almost one in five detections where offender was aged under 30 was for insurance offences.
- Over three fifths of those detected for construction and use offences were aged under 30.

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<sup>1</sup> [DfI traffic volumes](#)



**Table 3 Number of motoring offences by month and offence group<sup>1</sup>, 1<sup>st</sup> December 2018 – 30<sup>th</sup> November 2020\***

|                                       | Dec 2019     | Jan 2020     | Feb 2020     | Mar 2020     | Apr 2020     | May 2020     | Jun 2020     | Jul 2020     | Aug 2020     | Sep 2020     | Oct 2020     | Nov 2020     | Dec 2019 - Nov 2020 | Dec 2018 - Nov 2019 | Change over last 12 months | Percentage change over last 12 months |
|---------------------------------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|---------------------|---------------------|----------------------------|---------------------------------------|
| Breach of signs & signals             | 34           | 26           | 26           | 4            | 3            | 50           | 28           | 25           | 26           | 16           | 32           | 21           | <b>291</b>          | <b>329</b>          | -38                        | -12                                   |
| Careless driving                      | 356          | 369          | 357          | 263          | 179          | 303          | 344          | 323          | 310          | 293          | 253          | 199          | <b>3,549</b>        | <b>4,467</b>        | -918                       | -21                                   |
| Construction & use <sup>2</sup>       | 144          | 155          | 188          | 136          | 125          | 298          | 334          | 283          | 266          | 249          | 299          | 239          | <b>2,716</b>        | <b>1,959</b>        | 757                        | 39                                    |
| Dangerous driving                     | 119          | 131          | 110          | 85           | 155          | 148          | 158          | 167          | 112          | 135          | 112          | 90           | <b>1,522</b>        | <b>1,540</b>        | -18                        | -1                                    |
| Drink or drug driving                 | 346          | 248          | 250          | 211          | 243          | 289          | 246          | 292          | 260          | 242          | 190          | 157          | <b>2,974</b>        | <b>3,141</b>        | -167                       | -5                                    |
| Driving licence                       | 290          | 312          | 313          | 296          | 341          | 544          | 480          | 465          | 280          | 314          | 234          | 241          | <b>4,110</b>        | <b>3,988</b>        | 122                        | 3                                     |
| Driving whilst disqualified           | 65           | 100          | 75           | 68           | 71           | 105          | 79           | 86           | 78           | 66           | 66           | 68           | <b>927</b>          | <b>1,117</b>        | -190                       | -17                                   |
| Failing to stop / remain / report     | 294          | 235          | 229          | 234          | 165          | 229          | 180          | 226          | 220          | 164          | 118          | 127          | <b>2,421</b>        | <b>3,023</b>        | -602                       | -20                                   |
| Fraudulent use / declaration          | 16           | 21           | 24           | 17           | 26           | 43           | 27           | 25           | 31           | 19           | 19           | 5            | <b>273</b>          | <b>297</b>          | -24                        | -8                                    |
| Insurance                             | 609          | 677          | 621          | 597          | 695          | 958          | 851          | 806          | 644          | 615          | 604          | 572          | <b>8,249</b>        | <b>8,290</b>        | -41                        | 0                                     |
| L & R driver <sup>3</sup>             | 90           | 112          | 107          | 116          | 149          | 165          | 175          | 160          | 131          | 145          | 137          | 91           | <b>1,578</b>        | <b>1,586</b>        | -8                         | -1                                    |
| Miscellaneous                         | 64           | 57           | 76           | 62           | 86           | 114          | 93           | 90           | 68           | 83           | 69           | 59           | <b>921</b>          | <b>930</b>          | -9                         | -1                                    |
| Mobile phone                          | 224          | 269          | 318          | 290          | 194          | 331          | 370          | 381          | 323          | 306          | 258          | 169          | <b>3,433</b>        | <b>3,759</b>        | -326                       | -9                                    |
| Non motor vehicle                     | 5            | 1            | 0            | 3            | 4            | 5            | 2            | 7            | 3            | 6            | 6            | 2            | <b>44</b>           | <b>27</b>           | 17                         | 63                                    |
| Parking                               | 124          | 153          | 130          | 79           | 61           | 244          | 223          | 38           | 49           | 80           | 56           | 27           | <b>1,264</b>        | <b>1,708</b>        | -444                       | -26                                   |
| Pedestrian                            | 7            | 11           | 2            | 3            | 4            | 2            | 4            | 5            | 3            | 4            | 8            | 3            | <b>56</b>           | <b>75</b>           | -19                        | -25                                   |
| Seatbelt                              | 54           | 63           | 77           | 58           | 59           | 97           | 78           | 128          | 74           | 64           | 74           | 62           | <b>888</b>          | <b>928</b>          | -40                        | -4                                    |
| Speeding <sup>4</sup>                 | 335          | 682          | 660          | 468          | 530          | 1,252        | 1,118        | 1,017        | 722          | 672          | 604          | 467          | <b>8,527</b>        | <b>7,694</b>        | 833                        | 11                                    |
| Vehicle TADA <sup>5</sup> / tampering | 123          | 150          | 103          | 92           | 116          | 109          | 96           | 90           | 67           | 87           | 57           | 59           | <b>1,149</b>        | <b>1,331</b>        | -182                       | -14                                   |
| Vehicle test certificate              | 249          | 299          | 162          | 133          | 71           | 82           | 68           | 39           | 31           | 39           | 23           | 28           | <b>1,224</b>        | <b>3,835</b>        | -2,611                     | -68                                   |
| <b>Total</b>                          | <b>3,548</b> | <b>4,071</b> | <b>3,828</b> | <b>3,215</b> | <b>3,277</b> | <b>5,368</b> | <b>4,954</b> | <b>4,653</b> | <b>3,698</b> | <b>3,599</b> | <b>3,219</b> | <b>2,686</b> | <b>46,116</b>       | <b>50,024</b>       | -3,908                     | -8                                    |

\* Figures are provisional and subject to change.

<sup>1</sup> Please note an offence group is made up of many individual offences. For the full list of offences and groups see the [motoring offences section](#) of the PSNI website.

<sup>2</sup> Construction & use offences include defective tyre, defective exhaust, excess noise, incorrect form of registration mark and no number plate.

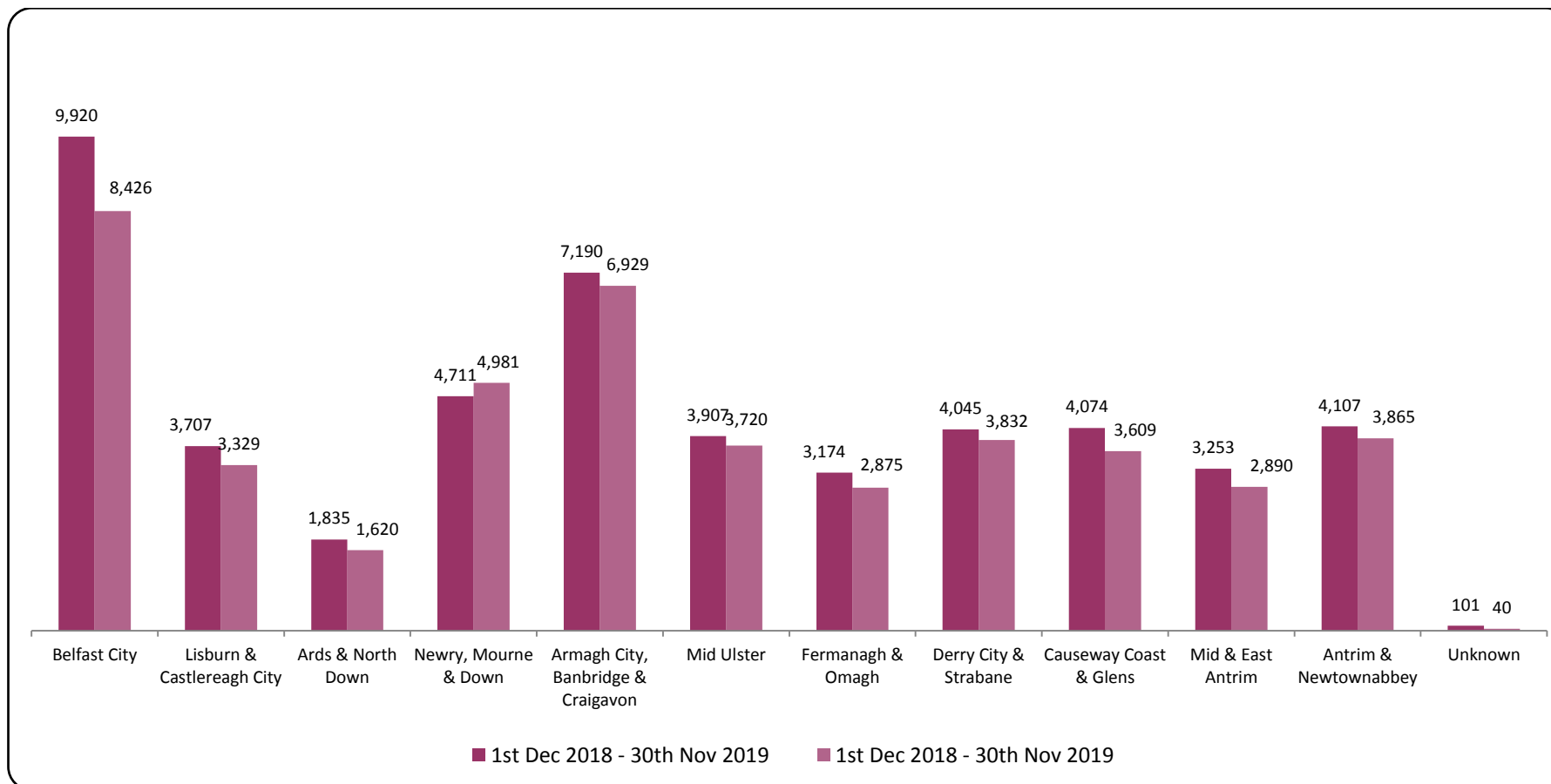
<sup>3</sup> The offence 'L or R driver exceeding 45mph limit' is included in the speeding offence group. L and R driver = Learner driver and Restricted driver

<sup>4</sup> This does not include drivers detected for speeding through the Northern Ireland Road Safety Partnership.

<sup>5</sup> Vehicle TADA = Vehicle taking and driving away

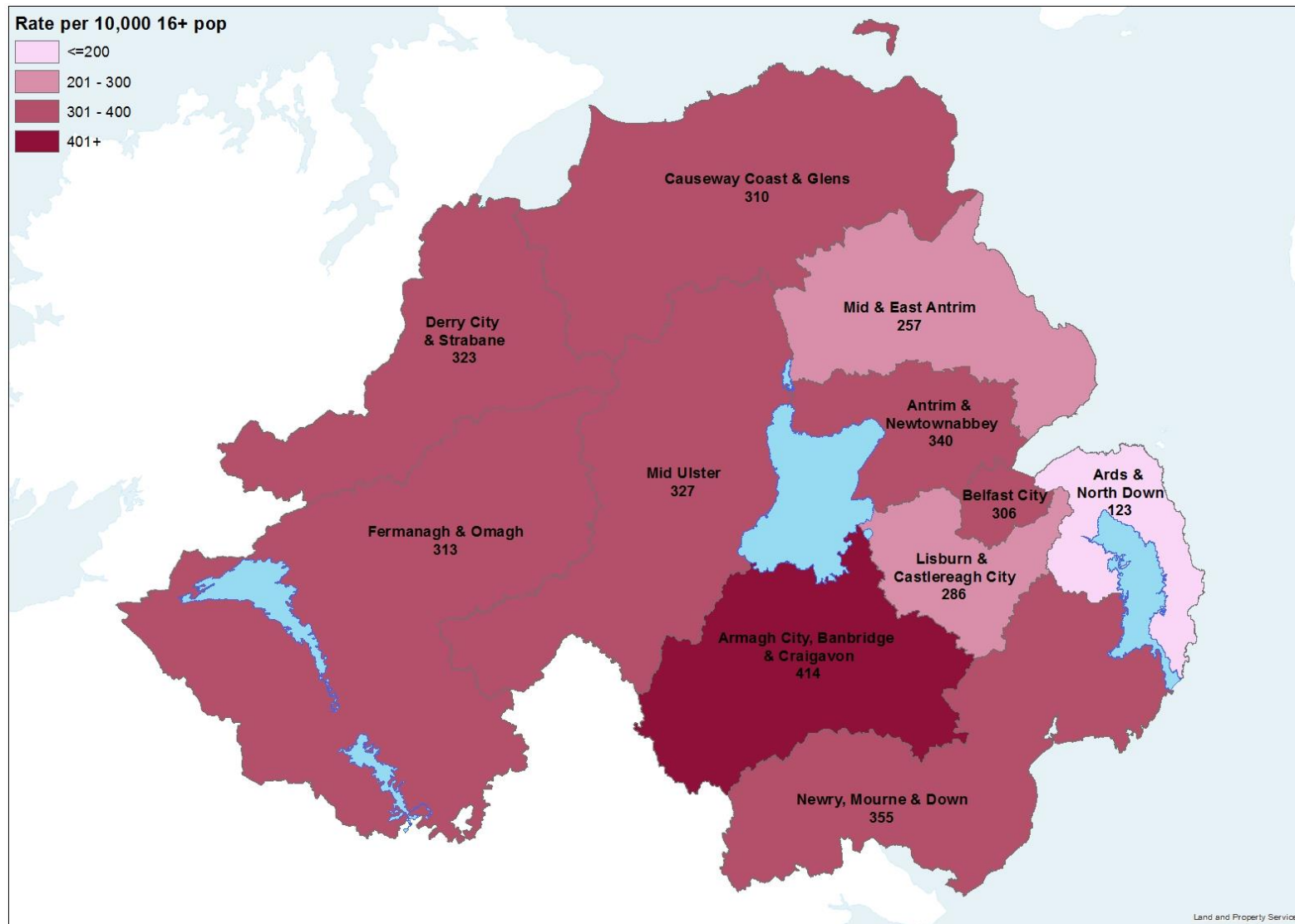
## 6. Policing District

Figure 4: Number of motoring offences by Policing District: 1<sup>st</sup> December 2018 – 30<sup>th</sup> November 2020



- Figure 4 shows that 18% of motoring offences was detected in Belfast City District followed by a further 15% in Armagh City, Banbridge and Craigavon district.
- Newry, Mourne and Down was the only district to see an increase in detections when compared with the previous 12 months.

Figure 5: Rate of motoring offences per 10,000 population<sup>2</sup> aged 16+ by Policing District: 1<sup>st</sup> December 2019 – 30<sup>th</sup> November 2020



<sup>2</sup> Population figures sourced from [Northern Ireland Neighbourhood Service \(NINIS\)](#), based on mid-year population estimates for 2019.

## 7. Further Information

A [User Guide](#) providing detailed information on the motoring offences statistics is available on the PSNI website.

[PSNI Official Statistics documentation](#) is available on the Official Statistics section of the PSNI website.

### 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.

### Fixed penalty notices

Fixed penalties originated as an administrative way to deal with simple parking offences without referring such matters to the courts. Such was its success that it was identified as an efficient way to deal with minor road traffic offences and was expanded to encompass these matters in the mid-1980s. With the introduction of penalty points for traffic offences, the scheme was expanded to incorporate endorsable and non-endorsable offences.

Non-endorsable offences - meaning those which don't result in points on your licence incur a fine of £30. Fines for endorsable offences are £60 and three points. More serious offences such as driving without insurance can incur fines of up to £200 and six points. Other fixed penalty offences include No MOT (£60) or Vehicle Excise License (£60). Fine collection and revenue reporting are managed by the NI Courts Service.

The full list of offences and groups are published on the [motoring offences section](#) of the PSNI website.

### 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 (currently online due to COVID-19) 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.

### Revisions

Figures for 2019 were finalised in March 2020. Figures from January 2020 onwards are currently provisional and subject to ongoing quality assurance and minor amendment, primarily due to the time taken to process all offences, particularly those referred for prosecution or completing a speed awareness course.

To demonstrate the scale of revisions, updated figures for January – October are provided in the table below:

|                              | Last Month Publication | This month publication | Change       | Percentage change |
|------------------------------|------------------------|------------------------|--------------|-------------------|
| Endorsable Fixed Penalty     | 10,072                 | 10,835                 | 763          | 7.6               |
| Non Endorsable Fixed Penalty | 4,388                  | 4,400                  | 12           | 0.3               |
| Referred for Prosecution     | 22,584                 | 23,627                 | 1,043        | 4.6               |
| Speed Awareness Course       | 910                    | 1,020                  | 110          | 12.1              |
| <b>Total</b>                 | <b>37,954</b>          | <b>39,882</b>          | <b>1,928</b> | <b>5.1</b>        |