

Police Service of Northern Ireland

Police Recorded Crime in Northern Ireland: Monthly Update to 31 August 2017

Published 28 September 2017

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This monthly bulletin presents the most recent police recorded crime statistics, relating to crimes recorded by the police to 31 August 2017. Figures were compiled on 26 September 2017, using data extracted from the police administrative system on that date. Figures dating back to 1 April 2017 are provisional and will be subject to change until the finalised 2017/18 data are published in May 2018.

A range of more detailed tables are available in the [summary tables](#) and [pivot table data](#) which accompany this bulletin. Further information on the contents of these tables can be found in the NOTES section of this bulletin. In addition a [User Guide](#) provides further information about the collation of these statistics.

A more comprehensive publication covering trends from 1998/99 to 2016/17 will be pre-announced in due course. The next monthly update covering the 12 months to 30 September 2017 will be published on 26 October 2017.

Assessment of police recorded crime in Northern Ireland

In 2014 the UK Statistics Authority cancelled the designation of police recorded crime statistics in England & Wales because of concerns regarding the quality and integrity of their statistics. The lack of assurance of the data integrity in Scotland resulted in the designation of these statistics being cancelled; designation was subsequently confirmed in September 2016.

As a result of these concerns, the Authority commenced an assessment of police recorded crime in Northern Ireland in June 2014. In addition to this assessment, Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary (HMIC) were invited to conduct a crime data integrity audit within PSNI during September 2014 similar to those they conducted in England & Wales during 2014. The outcome of the audit was published in March 2015 in the report [Crime data integrity – inspection of the Police Service of Northern Ireland](#). The main findings in relation to data quality were:

- a crime recording accuracy rate of 97 per cent with a confidence interval of +/-2 per cent;
- 98 per cent of crimes correctly classified; and
- 84 per cent recorded within the 72-hour limit allowed under the Home Office Counting Rules.

The UK Statistics Authority assessment was concluded after the publication of the HMIC report; the Authority's [assessment report Number 301 Statistics on Police Recorded Crime in Northern Ireland \(Police Service of Northern Ireland\)](#) was published on 28 May 2015. This report judged that the police recorded crime statistics in Northern Ireland can be designated as National Statistics. A letter of confirmation as National Statistics was published in February 2016.

National Statistics Designation

National Statistics status means that official statistics meet the highest standards of trustworthiness, quality and public value.

All official statistics should comply with all aspects of the Code of Practice for Official Statistics. They are awarded National Statistics status following an assessment by the Authority's regulatory arm. The Authority considers whether the statistics meet the highest standards of Code compliance, including the value they add to public decisions and debate.

It is a producer's responsibility to maintain compliance with the standards expected of National Statistics, and to improve its statistics on a continuous basis. If a producer becomes concerned about whether its statistics are still meeting the appropriate standards, it should discuss its concerns with the Authority promptly. National Statistics status can be removed at any point when the highest standards are not maintained, and reinstated when standards are restored.

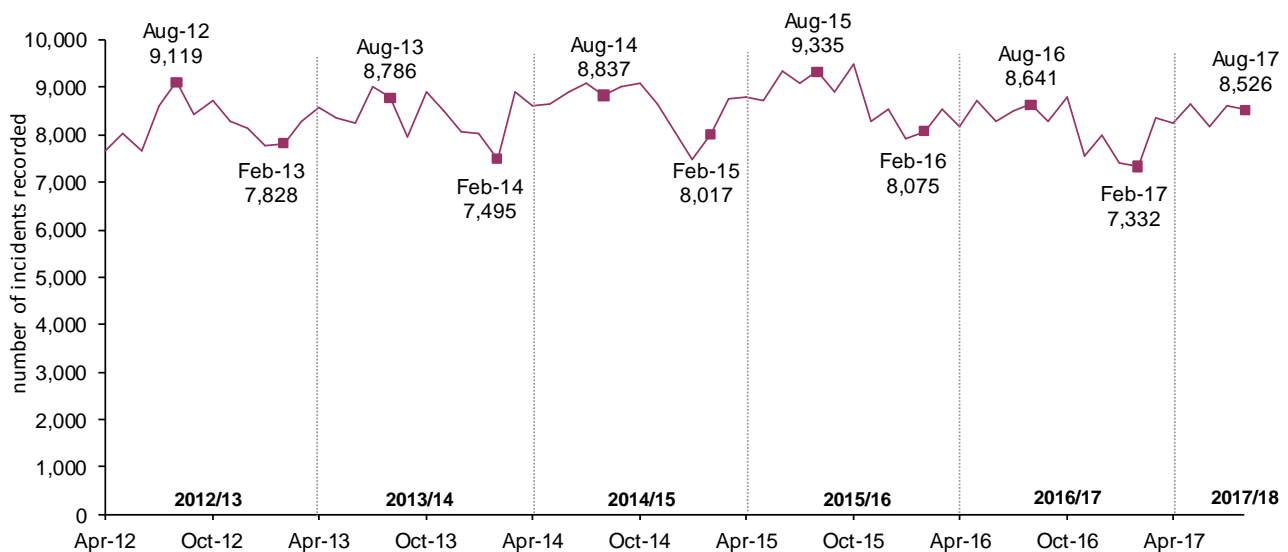
Recent Changes to Home Office Counting Rules

Burglary: From 1 April 2017 the classifications within burglary have been changed from *domestic burglary* and *non-domestic burglary* to *burglary-residential* and *burglary-business & community*. This reflects a revised approach within the Home Office Counting Rules. What constitutes a burglary does not change; however burglary-residential and burglary-business & community represent a new data series. For example sheds, garages, outhouses etc within the boundary of a dwelling are recorded under burglary-residential, while previously they may have been recorded as non-domestic burglary. Where such a building is used solely for business purposes, it will be recorded as burglary-business & community. The individual series for domestic burglary and burglary-residential cannot be added together to create an overall figure. The same applies to non-domestic burglary and burglary-business & community. The full definition for these classifications can be found in the NOTES section at the end of this bulletin. A detailed breakdown of the burglary classifications is available in the [pivot table data](#) which accompany this bulletin.

OVERALL CRIME TRENDS (excluding crimes recorded by Action Fraud)

- Crime has shown a downwards trend over the last fourteen years, from a peak of 138,132 in 2002/03 to 98,076 recorded in 2016/17, the lowest full financial year recorded since 1998/99 (the first year for which comparable crime data is available). The level of 97,958 recorded during the twelve months to 31 August 2017 shows a decrease of 118 on the 2016/17 figure of 98,076.
- Crime decreased by 4.0 per cent (4,067 offences) in the twelve months to 31 August 2017 when compared with the previous twelve months.
- The majority of this decrease occurred in the categories of violence against the person, burglary, theft and criminal damage offences whilst drug offences showed an increase; the increase in sexual offences (rape and other sexual offences combined) was slight. A full breakdown by crime category is available in Table 2.
- At 8,526 the level of crime recorded in August 2017 was 1.3 per cent (115 offences) lower than that in August 2016.

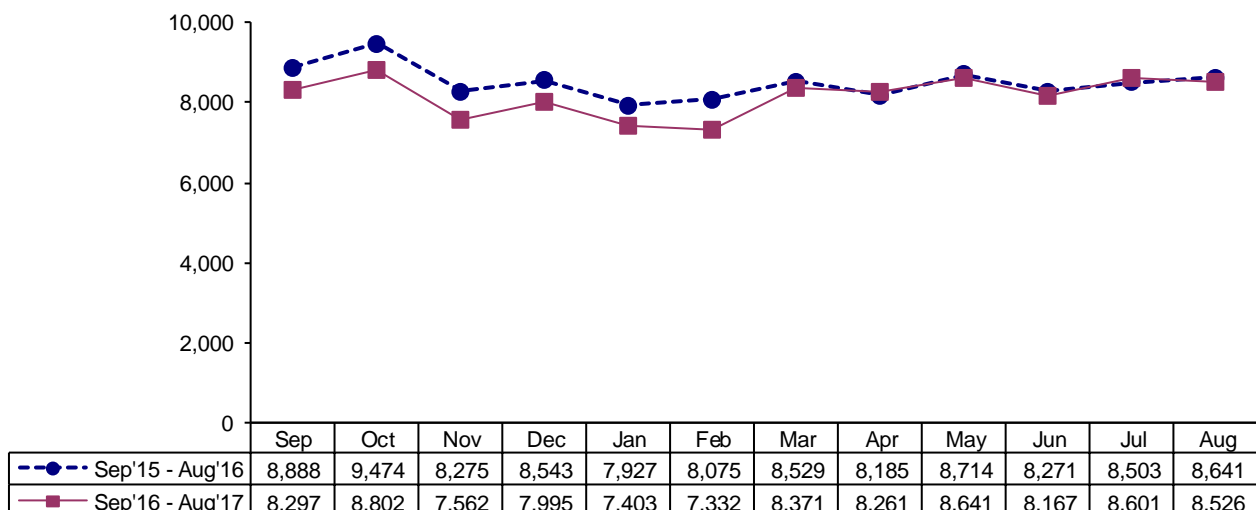
Figure 1 Total number of crimes each month from April 2012 to August 2017 (excluding Action Fraud)



COMPARISON OF CURRENT AND PREVIOUS 12 MONTHS, excluding Action Fraud (September 2016 to August 2017 with September 2015 to August 2016)

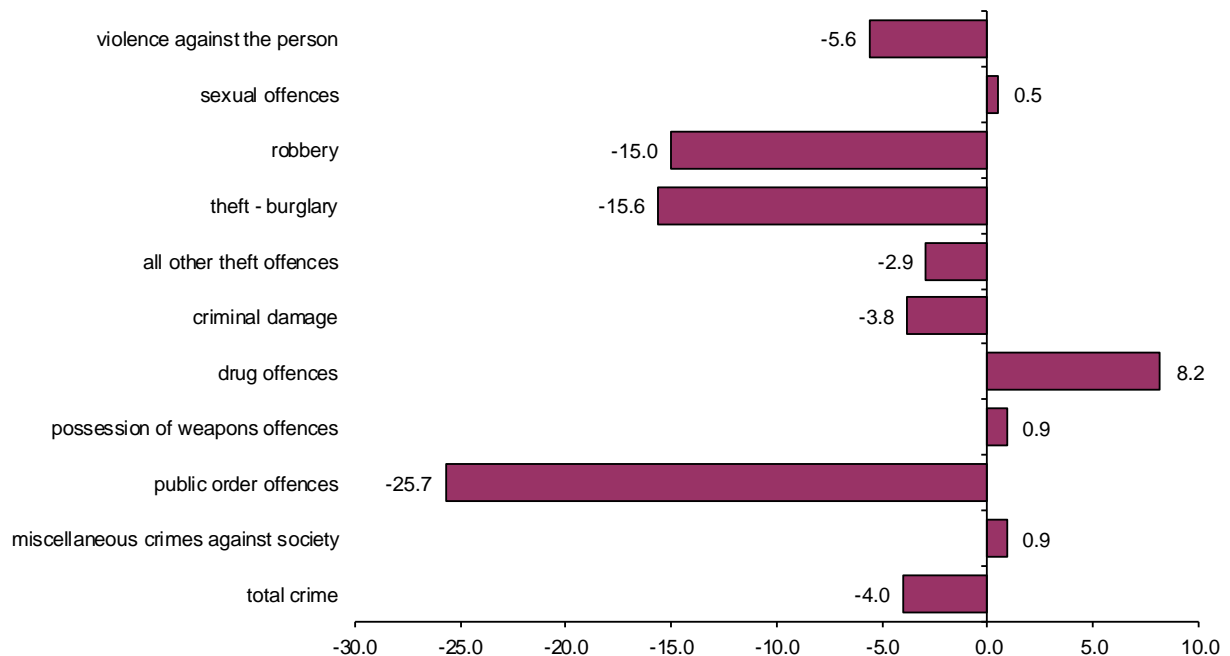
- Overall crime decreased by 4.0 per cent in the twelve months to 31 August 2017 when compared with the twelve months to 31 August 2016. The highest level seen was in October 2015 (9,474 offences). Levels have fluctuated in a generally downwards direction since then, with November 2016, January 2017 and February 2017 showing the three lowest levels recorded during the last two years. The 7,332 offences recorded in February 2017 is the second lowest monthly figure recorded since the data series began in April 1998. Each month from September 2016 to February 2017 was lower than the same month the previous year by relatively similar amounts. Since March 2017 levels have been closer to those recorded the previous year, with both April 2017 and July 2017 being slightly higher than April 2016 and July 2016 respectively.

Figure 2 Total number of crimes each month from September 2015 to August 2017 (excluding Action Fraud)



- Recorded crime figures by type of crime for September 2016 to August 2017 compared with September 2015 to August 2016 are shown in Table 2. Overall crime outcomes and outcomes by type of disposal covering the same time periods are available in Tables 3 and 4. Between September 2016 and August 2017 there were 13 outcomes recorded where no action was taken against the offender (indictable only offences where the offender died before proceedings or PPS did not prosecute), with two recorded between September 2015 and August 2016; these outcomes are included in the rates presented in Table 3 but are not presented as separate disposal types in Table 4.

Figure 3 Percentage change in the main recorded crime types, September 2016 to August 2017 compared with September 2015 to August 2016



- Trends over the last two years:** The main crime categories of violence against the person, robbery, burglary, theft offences (excluding burglary), criminal damage and public order offences are showing a downwards trend over the last two years with sexual offences, possession of weapons offences and miscellaneous crimes against society each showing a fairly flat trend. Drug offences are showing a slight upwards trend.
- Violence with injury (including homicide)** has shown a downwards trend over the last two years. Levels have fluctuated in a generally downwards direction from September 2015. Levels fell from 1,332 offences in December 2015, the highest in the last two years, to 970 offences recorded in November 2016, the lowest level recorded in the last two years. There were 1,141 offences recorded in August 2017. **Violence without injury** has shown a similar pattern to violence with injury, generally downwards direction from September 2015 to 1,551 in February 2016 before increasing to 1,860 in May 2016, the highest figure in the last two years. This was followed by an overall decrease to a two-year low of 1,369 offences in November 2016. The level has since moved in an upwards direction from 1,378 offences in February 2017 to 1,801 offences in June 2017 before falling to the current level of 1,673 offences in August 2017.
- Sexual offences** have shown a fairly flat trend over the last two years. While there have been month on month increases throughout much of the last two years, some sharp falls have contributed to flattening out the trend, such as decreases from October to December 2015, June to July 2016, October 2016 to December 2016, March 2017 to April 2017 and May 2017 to August 2017, with the August 2017 level of 233 offences the second lowest over the past 24 months. The lowest figure recorded in the last two years was in December 2015 (210 offences), while May 2017 is currently the highest (336 offences).
- Robbery** has shown a slight downwards trend over the last two years. Levels have tended to fluctuate, ranging from 70 offences recorded in October 2015 and July 2016 to the lower levels of 46 offences in May 2016 and March 2017, 44 in May 2017 and 43 in both December 2016 and January 2017, the joint lowest level recorded in the last two years.
- Burglary:** (see notes to change in burglary classifications, page 1 and NOTES section) Over the last two years burglary offences have shown a downwards trend. The highest level recorded was in October 2015 with 827 offences and the lowest level recorded was in April 2017 with 505 offences. There were 507 offences recorded in August 2017, the second lowest level in the past 24 months. Monthly figures have been lower in every month in the last 12 months compared to the corresponding month in the previous year with the exception of June 2017 and July 2017 (566 in June 2017 compared with 548 offences in June 2016 and 604 in July 2017 compared with 601 offences in July 2016).

- The classification of theft offences (excluding burglary) has shown a downwards trend over the last two years. Within this classification the following trends can be seen:

Theft from the person has shown an overall flat trend. There were peaks seen in February 2016 (52 offences) and December 2016 (60 offences), while the lowest levels were 21 offences in June 2016 and 26 offences in January 2017, March 2017 and August 2017. Levels generally fell between September 2015 and June 2016, followed by increases in most months to December 2016 when 60 offences were recorded. There was a sharp fall to 26 offences in January 2017, the second lowest level in the past two years and levels have since fluctuated to the current level of 26 offences in August 2017.

Vehicle offences have shown a downwards trend over the past two years. There were 469 offences recorded in September 2015, the highest level in the past two years. The levels then saw a general fall to the second lowest figure, 299 offences in May 2016. Increases in most months since May 2016 saw levels reach 434 offences in December 2016. There were 269 offences recorded in August 2017, the lowest level in the past two years.

Shoplifting offences have shown a downwards trend. The level peaked at 617 offences in October 2015; the trend has been in a general downwards direction since then, with levels falling each month from October 2016 to a two-year low of 381 offences recorded in January 2017. The level for July 2017 was 449 offences, the second lowest recorded in the last two years, before rising to the current level of 514 offences in August 2017.

Bicycle theft fell in most months from 86 offences in September 2015 to 35 offences in March 2016. This was followed by general increases to reach 96 offences in October 2016. After a fall in levels to 40 offences recorded in December 2016 there have been increases seen in most months since then reaching 105 offences in May 2017, the highest level in the past two years. The level has declined sharply with 68 offences recorded in June 2017 and 66 offences recorded in July 2017 before increasing to 98 offences recorded in August 2017, the second highest level in the past 24 months.

All other theft offences have shown a flat trend over the last two years. The level has generally fluctuated, with the highest figure in the past two years recorded in March 2017 (1,082 offences) while the lowest level recorded in the last two years was in November 2016 (924 offences). The level in August 2017 was the second highest recorded over the past 24 months, with 1,080 offences.

- **Criminal damage** offences have seen a downwards trend over the last two years. The level peaked in October 2015 with 1,961 offences recorded, the highest level recorded in the last two years. In both time periods levels have fallen between October and February, to 1,400 offences in February 2016 and 1,378 offences in February 2017. These February levels are the lowest figures in the past 24 months. The current level for August 2017 is 1,742 offences.
- **Outcomes where disposal administered:** The overall rate has shown a fairly flat trend, which has been reflected across most of the main crime types.

POLICING DISTRICT COMPARISON OF CURRENT AND PREVIOUS 12 MONTHS, excluding Action Fraud (September 2015 to August 2016 compared with September 2016 to August 2017)

- Belfast City has shown a downwards trend over the past two years. The level decreased from September 2015 (3,196 offences) to January 2016 (2,642 offences) before generally increasing to a level of 2,994 offences recorded in October 2016. This was followed by decreasing levels to a two-year low of 2,462 in January 2017 before fluctuating upwards to reach a current level of 2,819 offences recorded in August 2017. The number of offences recorded in each month between August 2016 and July 2017 has been lower than the corresponding months in 2015 and 2016 (with the exception of March and May 2017), contributing to the overall downwards trend.
- Trends over the last two years in Lisburn & Castlereagh City and Mid & East Antrim policing districts are showing a slight increase whereas they are fairly flat in Newry, Mourne & Down and Causeway Coast & Glens policing districts. In the remaining policing districts, trends have been in a downwards direction.
- Seven policing districts have seen a lower level of crime recorded in August 2017 when compared with August 2016, with decreases ranging from 75 in Newry, Mourne & Down to five in Belfast City. Of the four districts experiencing a higher level of crime, this ranged from increases of one in Causeway Coast & Glens to 93 in Antrim & Newtownabbey policing district.

Figure 4 Percentage change in recorded crime by policing district, September 2016 to August 2017 compared with September 2015 to August 2016 (excluding Action Fraud)



RECORDING OF FRAUD

From 1 April 2015 Action Fraud has taken responsibility for the central recording of fraud and cyber crime previously recorded by PSNI; Action Fraud became responsible for all such reports in England & Wales by 1 April 2014. Action Fraud is the UK's National Reporting Centre for fraud and cyber crime reported directly to them from the public and other organisations. While this means that these fraud and cyber offences are no longer recorded by PSNI, Action Fraud figures relating to fraud and cyber crime occurring in Northern Ireland are provided to PSNI on a monthly basis. As a result, the figures within this bulletin are presented on a comparable basis that excludes crimes recorded by Action Fraud, unless otherwise specified.

Table 1 Number of fraud offences recorded in the 12 months to 31 August 2017 compared with the previous 12 months

	12 months to Aug'16	12 months to Aug'17
Recorded by Action Fraud	2,462	3,565

Table 2 Number of recorded crimes in the 12 months to 31 August 2017 compared with the previous 12 months

Offence group	Number and percentage changes			
	12 months to August 2016	12 months to August 2017 ^{1,2}	change between years	% change between years ³
VICTIM-BASED CRIME				
VIOLENCE AGAINST THE PERSON	35,068	33,120	-1,948	-5.6
<i>Homicide</i>	19	17	-2	-
<i>Violence with injury</i>	14,764	13,784	-980	-6.6
<i>Violence without injury</i>	20,285	19,319	-966	-4.8
SEXUAL OFFENCES	3,166	3,182	16	0.5
<i>Rape</i>	826	884	58	7.0
<i>Other sexual offences</i>	2,340	2,298	-42	-1.8
ROBBERY	711	604	-107	-15.0
<i>Robbery of personal property</i>	548	483	-65	-11.9
<i>Robbery of business property</i>	163	121	-42	-25.8
THEFT OFFENCES	32,447	30,478	-1,969	-6.1
<i>Burglary⁴</i>	8,046	6,789	-1,257	-15.6
<i>Theft from the person</i>	482	428	-54	-11.2
<i>Vehicle offences</i>	4,421	4,413	-8	-0.2
<i>Bicycle theft</i>	714	889	175	24.5
<i>Shoplifting</i>	6,543	5,855	-688	-10.5
<i>All other theft offences</i>	12,241	12,104	-137	-1.1
CRIMINAL DAMAGE	19,887	19,133	-754	-3.8
OTHER CRIMES AGAINST SOCIETY				
DRUG OFFENCES	5,496	5,944	448	8.2
<i>Trafficking of drugs</i>	864	857	-7	-0.8
<i>Possession of drugs</i>	4,632	5,087	455	9.8
POSSESSION OF WEAPONS OFFENCES	911	919	8	0.9
PUBLIC ORDER OFFENCES	1,471	1,093	-378	-25.7
MISCELLANEOUS CRIMES AGAINST SOCIETY	2,868	2,894	26	0.9
TOTAL RECORDED CRIME – ALL OFFENCES (excluding Action Fraud)	102,025	97,958	-4,067	-4.0

¹ Figures for the 12 months to 31 August 2017 are provisional and will be subject to change.

² Individual crime types may not add to Total Recorded Crime – All Offences as there will be some crimes yet to complete the validation process and be allocated to a crime classification.

³ '-' indicates that for offences recorded a percentage change is not reported because the base number of offences is less than 50. '.' indicates that data are not available.

⁴ From 1 April 2017 the classifications within burglary have been changed from *domestic burglary* and *non-domestic burglary* to *burglary-residential* and *burglary-business & community*. This reflects a revised approach within the Home Office Counting Rules. What constitutes a burglary does not change; however burglary-residential and burglary-business & community represent a new data series. A detailed breakdown of the burglary classifications is available in the [pivot table data](#) which accompany this bulletin.

Table 3 Crime outcomes^{1,2} in the 12 months to 31 August 2017 compared with the previous 12 months, rates (%)

Offence group	Percentages		
	Crime Outcomes ^{1,2} (rate %)		% point change ⁵
	12 months to August 2016	12 months to August 2017 ³	
VICTIM-BASED CRIME			
VIOLENCE AGAINST THE PERSON	30.6	29.5	-1.1
<i>Homicide</i>	94.7	94.1	-0.6
<i>Violence with injury</i>	32.8	31.4	-1.4
<i>Violence without injury</i>	29.0	28.2	-0.8
SEXUAL OFFENCES	13.6	12.3	-1.3
<i>Rape</i>	9.7	7.9	-1.8
<i>Other sexual offences</i>	15.0	14.0	-0.9
ROBBERY	21.5	24.7	3.1
<i>Robbery of personal property</i>	15.7	15.5	-0.2
<i>Robbery of business property</i>	41.1	61.2	20.1
THEFT OFFENCES	21.1	20.9	-0.2
<i>Burglary⁴</i>	10.5	11.4	0.9
<i>Theft from the person</i>	6.0	7.5	1.5
<i>Vehicle offences</i>	19.0	19.7	0.7
<i>Bicycle theft</i>	4.1	4.2	0.1
<i>Shoplifting</i>	59.6	61.9	2.3
<i>All other theft offences</i>	9.9	8.5	-1.4
CRIMINAL DAMAGE	16.4	16.1	-0.3
OTHER CRIMES AGAINST SOCIETY			
DRUG OFFENCES	89.1	84.4	-4.7
<i>Trafficking of drugs</i>	81.3	73.7	-7.5
<i>Possession of drugs</i>	90.6	86.2	-4.3
POSSESSION OF WEAPONS OFFENCES	64.3	66.1	1.7
PUBLIC ORDER OFFENCES	53.8	58.6	4.9
MISCELLANEOUS CRIMES AGAINST SOCIETY	53.4	45.9	-7.5
TOTAL RECORDED CRIME – ALL OFFENCES (excluding Action Fraud)	28.7	28.1	-0.6

¹ Outcomes presented here include charge/summons, cautions (adult and juvenile), community resolutions (formerly known as discretionary disposals), penalty notices for disorder, offences taken into consideration and indictable only offences where no action was taken against the offender (died before proceedings or PPS did not prosecute).

² Discretionary Disposals were revised and rebranded as Community Resolutions on 30 June 2016.

³ Figures for the 12 months to 31 August 2017 are provisional and will be subject to change.

⁴ From 1 April 2017 the classifications within burglary have been changed from *domestic burglary* and *non-domestic burglary* to *burglary-residential* and *burglary-business & community*. This reflects a revised approach within the Home Office Counting Rules. What constitutes a burglary does not change; however burglary-residential and burglary-business & community represent a new data series. A detailed breakdown of the burglary classifications is available in the [pivot table data](#) which accompany this bulletin.

⁵ '-' indicates that for offences recorded a percentage change is not reported because the base number of offences is less than 50, and that for offences detected an outcome rate cannot be calculated as there were no offences recorded.

Table 4 Crime outcomes by type of disposal¹ in the 12 months to 31 August 2017 compared with the previous 12 months, rates (%)

Offence group	Percentages									
	Charge/summons		Caution		Community resolution ²		Penalty notice for disorder ³		Taken into consideration	
	12 months to August 16	12 months to August 17 ⁴	12 months to August 16	12 months to August 17 ⁴	12 months to August 16	12 months to August 17 ⁴	12 months to August 16	12 months to August 17 ⁴	12 months to August 16	12 months to August 17 ⁴
VICTIM-BASED CRIME										
VIOLENCE AGAINST THE PERSON	25.0	24.5	2.3	1.9	3.4	3.2	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
<i>Homicide</i>	94.7	88.2	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
<i>Violence with injury</i>	27.5	26.3	2.5	2.1	2.9	2.9	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
<i>Violence without injury</i>	23.1	23.1	2.1	1.7	3.8	3.3	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
SEXUAL OFFENCES	12.7	11.0	0.5	0.7	0.3	0.3	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
<i>Rape</i>	9.4	7.5	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
<i>Other sexual offences</i>	13.8	12.4	0.7	0.9	0.4	0.4	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
ROBBERY	21.4	24.3	0.1	0.3	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
<i>Robbery of personal property</i>	15.7	15.3	0.0	0.2	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
<i>Robbery of business property</i>	40.5	60.3	0.6	0.8	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
THEFT OFFENCES	13.5	13.6	1.5	1.2	3.3	4.1	2.7	2.0	0.0	0.0
<i>Burglary⁵</i>	9.9	10.7	0.3	0.3	0.2	0.4	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
<i>Theft from the person</i>	5.4	5.8	0.2	0.0	0.4	1.6	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
<i>Vehicle offences</i>	17.7	18.3	0.7	0.9	0.5	0.4	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
<i>Bicycle theft</i>	2.1	2.9	0.4	0.0	1.5	1.2	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
<i>Shoplifting</i>	30.6	33.0	4.9	4.2	10.7	14.7	13.4	10.1	0.0	0.0
<i>All other theft offences</i>	6.2	5.3	1.0	0.5	2.7	2.6	0.1	0.1	0.0	0.0
CRIMINAL DAMAGE	11.2	11.6	1.4	1.3	3.5	3.0	0.3	0.2	0.0	0.0
OTHER CRIMES AGAINST SOCIETY										
DRUG OFFENCES	48.2	45.9	19.7	13.8	21.2	24.7	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
<i>Trafficking of drugs</i>	74.3	66.3	6.0	6.3	0.9	1.2	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
<i>Possession of drugs</i>	43.4	42.5	22.3	15.0	25.0	28.7	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
POSSESSION OF WEAPONS OFFENCES	51.2	56.3	8.0	8.7	5.2	1.1	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
PUBLIC ORDER OFFENCES	50.8	54.7	1.8	2.3	0.3	0.1	0.0	0.1	0.8	1.5
MISCELLANEOUS CRIMES AGAINST SOCIETY	49.9	43.8	1.8	1.6	1.7	0.6	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
TOTAL RECORDED CRIME – ALL OFFENCES (excluding Action Fraud)	20.8	20.6	2.8	2.3	4.2	4.5	0.9	0.7	0.0	0.0

¹ It is possible to detect a crime with an offence which attracts a lesser penalty than the crime recorded. For example where an assault occasioning actual bodily harm has been recorded (violence with injury), the offender may be dealt with for the offence of common assault (violence without injury). Outcomes where no action was taken against the offender are not presented.

² Discretionary Disposals were revised and rebranded as Community Resolutions on 30 June 2016.

³ Penalty notices for disorder were introduced in June 2012.

⁴ Figures for the 12 months to 31 August 2017 are provisional and will be subject to change.

⁵ From 1 April 2017 the classifications within burglary have been changed from domestic burglary and non-domestic burglary to burglary–residential and burglary–business & community. This reflects a revised approach within the Home Office Counting Rules. What constitutes a burglary does not change; however burglary–residential and burglary–business & community represent a new data series. A detailed breakdown of the burglary classifications is available in the [pivot table data](#) which accompany this bulletin.

NOTES

Strengths and Limitations of Police Recorded Crime Statistics and Alternative Measures of Crime

While this monthly update presents the level of crime recorded by the police, there is an alternative but complementary measure of crime, the Northern Ireland Crime Survey (NICS) which is published by the Department of Justice for Northern Ireland. Each source of crime information has different strengths and limitations but can be looked at together to provide a more comprehensive picture of crime than could be obtained from either series alone. Details around the need for both recorded crime figures and the NICS can be found in paragraphs 1.2 and 1.3 of the bulletin [Experience of Crime: Findings from the 2015/16 Northern Ireland Crime Survey](#). Both of these measures of crime inform public debate about crime and support the development and monitoring of policy.

Unlike the Northern Ireland Crime Survey, police recorded crime figures do not include crimes that have not been reported to the police; they also exclude those crimes that are not recorded in order to comply with the Home Office Counting Rules (HOCR). They do cover crimes against those aged under 16, organisations such as businesses, and crimes 'against the state' i.e. with no immediate victim (e.g. possession of drugs). It was estimated in 2015/16 that around 52 per cent of NICS comparable crime was reported to the police in Northern Ireland although this varied for individual offence types.

Like any administrative data, police recorded crime statistics are affected by the rules governing the recording of data, systems in place and operational decisions in respect of the allocation of resources. More proactive policing in a given area could lead to an increase in crimes recorded without any real change in underlying crime trends. These issues need to be taken into account when using these data.

Variations in crime trends: crime survey data and police recorded crime figures in England & Wales and Northern Ireland

An analysis of variation in crime trends looking at comparable crime categories between the Crime Survey for England and Wales (CSEW) and the police recorded crime series for England and Wales was conducted by the Office for National Statistics. This was initially published in January 2013, with updated analysis available in the User Guide to Crime Statistics for England and Wales Chapter which can be accessed through the ONS website in [Crime and justice methodology - User guides](#). This work identified a divergence in the trends between the two sets of figures, with the police recorded crime figures showing larger falls in crime. This raised questions about the quality of the police recorded crime figures and was one of the issues that led to the UK Statistics Authority removing the National Statistics designation from the police recorded crime figures in England and Wales.

The trends identified by ONS were not reflected in Northern Ireland; the Northern Ireland Crime Survey (NICS) showed crime falling at a greater rate than the police recorded crime statistics. Further details of the Northern Ireland analysis can be found on page 6 of the [User Guide to Police Recorded Crime Statistics in Northern Ireland](#).

Data Accuracy

Figures within the current financial year to date are provisional and will be subject to slight revision until finalised figures for the full financial year are published in May 2018. Within year, crime figures are subject to a validation and quality assurance process. The overall crime figures at Northern Ireland and District level cover all records identified as crimes, including those that have not yet completed the validation process. However figures for each crime type do not include records which are under process and so these figures will not add to the overall total. The percentage of crimes complete and under process is shown in Table 5 below.

Table 5 Percentage of crime records that have completed the validation process, August 2017

	Percentages	
	% crime records complete	% crime records under process
Year to date: April-August 2017	98.6%	1.4%
Latest complete month: August 2017	97.1%	2.9%

Data Quality and Auditing

The quality assurance processes mentioned above have been set in place to ensure that the numbers and types of crimes being recorded are, as far as is possible, recorded in compliance with the Home Office Counting Rules. Further 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](#).

As mentioned previously in this bulletin, in light of the crime recording issues in England & Wales and Scotland, Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary (HMIC) were invited to conduct a crime data integrity audit within PSNI during September 2014, similar to those they conducted in England & Wales during 2014. The outcome of the audit was published on 19 March 2015 in the report [Crime data integrity – inspection of the Police Service of Northern Ireland](#). The main findings in relation to data quality were:

- a crime-recording accuracy rate of 97 percent with a confidence interval of +/-2 percent;
- 98 percent of crimes correctly classified; and
- 84 percent recorded within the 72-hour limit allowed under HOCR.

Revisions

As mentioned above in relation to Data Accuracy, figures within the current financial year to date are provisional and will be subject to slight revision until finalised figures for the full financial year are published. This means that the totals for each month, crime type and policing district for each month from April 2017 can change each time the figures are published during the financial year.

These revisions will happen for one of a number of reasons:

- Incidents identified as crimes but not processed on the crime recording system by the time the figures are extracted for publication will appear in subsequent updates. For example, a crime is reported to the police on 1 November 2016 and it is fully processed on the crime recording system by 15 November 2016. As figures for the bulletin covering the latest 12 months to 30 November 2016 were extracted and published in December 2016, this crime will be included in the November figures in this publication. However if the same crime is not processed on the crime recording system until 15 January 2017, it will not be available for inclusion in the figures until the data extracted and published towards the end of January 2017.
- Figures may change from month to month due to crimes being reclassified from one crime type to another during the financial year. This may be because quality checks have identified the crime as incorrectly classified, or further information may indicate that the circumstances surrounding the crime were not as initially recorded.
- These revisions are not always in an upwards direction. The Home Office Counting Rules allow crimes initially recorded to be cancelled (previously referred to as 'no crime'd') or removed from the crime figures. This can happen for a number of reasons:
 - Transferred: the crime was committed outside the jurisdiction of the police force in which it was recorded;
 - Cancelled: additional verifiable information becomes available which determines that no notifiable crime has been committed;
 - Cancelled: the crime, as alleged, constitutes part of a crime already recorded;
 - Cancelled: the reported incident was recorded as a crime in error;
 - Cancelled: self defence claimed (for specific recorded assaults).

Full guidance on 'crime cancellation' is available in the [Home Office Counting Rules](#).

Table 6 Extent of revisions for crime figures contained in the monthly update to 31 July 2017, which was first published 31 August 2017

	As published 31 Aug 2017	As published 28 Sep 2017	Scale of revision		Numbers & Percentages	
			Number	%	% change between years	
					As published 31 Aug 2017	As published 28 Sep 2017
Financial Year to date: Apr -Jul 2017	33,691	33,670	-21	-0.1%	0.1%	0.0%
12 Months Aug 2016 to Jul 2017	98,094	98,073	-21	-0.02%	-4.5%	-4.5%

Additional data

This bulletin shows a Northern Ireland level summary of police recorded crime for the 12 months to August 2017. Accompanying this bulletin are additional data in the form of [summary tables](#) and [pivot table data](#), both of which are available in excel spreadsheets. The data is also available in open document format.

- summary tables for Northern Ireland, each policing district comparing recorded crimes and outcome rates for latest 12 months with the previous 12 months by a range of crime types;
- a pivot table providing statistics on recorded crime, outcomes (numbers) and outcome rates (%) with each data measure available:
 - at Northern Ireland level as well as for each policing district;
 - for a range of crime types;
 - for a range of time periods (current rolling 12 months, previous rolling 12 months, financial year to date, previous financial year to date and each of the last 24 months);
- two pivot tables, one by age and one by gender providing statistics on recorded crime, outcomes (numbers), outcome rates (%) and population rate (per 1,000 population) with each data measure available:
 - at Northern Ireland level;
 - for a range of crime types;
 - by age range or gender;
 - for the current rolling 12 months and previous rolling 12 months.

Each pivot table allows the user to manipulate the data, select the data they are most interested in and carry out calculations on the data. The data records displayed in the pivot table are also available in this spreadsheet.

Introduction of Action Fraud within Northern Ireland

From 1 April 2015 Action Fraud became responsible for the central recording of fraud and cyber crime previously recorded by PSNI; Action Fraud became responsible for all such reports in England & Wales by 1 April 2014. Action Fraud is the UK's National Reporting Centre for fraud and cyber crime reported directly to them from the public and other organisations. While this means that these fraud and cyber offences are no longer recorded by PSNI, Action Fraud figures relating to fraud and cyber crime occurring in Northern Ireland are provided to PSNI on a monthly basis. As a result, this bulletin contains a short section on the recording of fraud which presents Action Fraud figures covering the last two years. All other sections within the bulletin present figures on a comparable basis that exclude crimes recorded by Action Fraud, unless otherwise specified.

Community Resolutions

Discretionary Disposals were revised and rebranded as Community Resolutions on 30 June 2016.

Burglary Classification Residential: The classification of residential burglary includes all buildings or parts of buildings that are within the boundary of, or form a part of, a dwelling and includes the dwelling itself, vacant dwellings, sheds, garages, outhouses, summer houses and any other structure that meets the definition of a building. It also includes other premises used for residential purposes such as houseboats, residential care homes and hostels. Where an outbuilding **within such a boundary but not forming part of the dwelling building**, such as a garage or workshop is used solely for business purposes this should be recorded as burglary – business and community. Where both a dwelling house and an outbuilding used for business purposes (**belonging to the same victim**) are subject of a burglary at the same time, then only the residential burglary is to be recorded.

Burglary Classification Business & Community: The classification of business and community burglary includes all buildings or parts of buildings that are used **solely and exclusively for business purposes** or are otherwise entirely outside the classification of residential burglary such as a place of worship. Where an outbuilding is **within the boundary of a dwelling, but not forming part of the dwelling building**, such as a garage or workshop and is used solely for business purposes this should be recorded as burglary – business and community. Where both a dwelling house and an outbuilding used for business purposes (**belonging to the same victim**) are subject of a burglary at the same time then only the residential burglary is to be recorded.

Change to policing boundaries as a result of implementing the Review of Public Administration

As part of the Review of Public Administration which came into effect on 1 April 2015, PSNI moved from eight to eleven policing districts, with the new policing model becoming fully operational at the end of September 2015.

Geographic availability of police recorded crime statistics

Figures are available for a range of additional geographic areas through the [Northern Ireland Neighbourhood Information System \(NINIS\)](#). These figures are updated on an annual basis.

Provisional management information drawn from police recorded crime figures, published at street level each month, is available through the [police crime mapping website](#). The figures on the crime mapping website will differ from those provided in this bulletin as they have been extracted from the police administrative system on different dates, and also require a grid reference in order to be mapped.

Further information

[Trends in Police Recorded Crime in Northern Ireland 1998/99 to 2015/16](#) was published on 1 December 2016 and provides detailed trend information covering this time period. An updated publication covering trends from 1998/99 to 2016/17 will be pre-announced in due course.

Further details on Police Recorded Crime statistics are available in the [User Guide to Police Recorded Crime Statistics in Northern Ireland](#), and in the [Police Recorded Crime Statistics Quality Report](#). These are reference guides with explanatory notes regarding the issues and classifications which are key to the production and presentation of police recorded crime statistics.

Copies of other PSNI publications are available from the [PSNI website](#).

Contact details

For further information about the police recorded crime statistics for Northern Ireland, or to contact the PSNI Crime Statistician please:

Email: statistics@psni.police.uk;

Write to: Statistics Branch, Lisnasharragh, 42 Montgomery Road, Belfast, BT6 9LD; or

Telephone: 028 9065 0222 ext 24135