

Keeping People Safe



FREEDOM OF INFORMATION REQUEST



Request Number: F-2021-00254

Keyword: Crime

Subject: Young Offenders

Request and Answer:

Your request for information has now been considered. In respect of Section 1(1)(a) of the Act we can confirm that the Police Service of Northern Ireland does hold information to which your request relates. The decision has been taken to disclose the following.

Request 1

I would like to receive information regarding the number of children under the age of 18 who have been convicted of one or more crime in Northern Ireland from 2015-2020.

Request 2

If possible, I would ask that this information is broken down into ages i.e., the number of children aged 12, aged 15, etc to correlate with each year from 2015-2020.

Answer

In response to Request 1 & 2, please see the table below.

Please note: Information relating to convictions and prosecutions is provided by NI Courts Service and the Public Prosecution Service to PSNI for information purposes only and may not be wholly accurate. For accurate figures the relevant information should be sought from either NI Courts or PPS directly.

The Niche Technical team is not involved in checking reliability and validity of any data input into Niche and cannot rule out the possibility of input errors which may have influenced the figures provided in this response.

Conviction Year	Age when convicted	Total People
2015	13	2
	14	7
	15	26
	16	50
	17	109
2016	13	2
	14	2
	15	19
	16	33
	17	72
2017	13	1
	14	8
	15	17
	16	31
	17	71
2018	12	1
	13	1
	14	4
	15	11
	16	29
	17	65
2019	12	1
	13	2
	14	5
	15	10
	16	27
	17	66
2020	12	1
	13	1
	14	3
	15	7
	16	16
	17	28

Request 3

I would also like to know the most common crimes under 18s have been convicted of in Northern Ireland in this time range, the average length of time young people are in custody for and the cost per year of keeping a young offender in custody.

Answer

In response to Request 3, please see the tables below.

Please note: As a definition of 'most common crimes' has not been specified, this has been interpreted to mean the top 10 crimes for which under 18s have been convicted for.

Offence	Number of Under 18s Convicted of the Offence
SB5008019 - USING A MOTOR VEHICLE WITHOUT INSURANCE	176
SB4302001 - CRIMINAL DAMAGE	175
SB4108004 - COMMON ASSAULT	157
SB4706006 - DISORDERLY BEHAVIOUR	124
SB4510001 - THEFT	91
SB4722003 - ASSAULT ON POLICE	90
SB4725009 - RESISTING POLICE	70
SB5008329 - DRIVING WHILE DISQUALIFIED BY REASON OF AGE (OFFENCES ON OR AFTER 16 JULY 2008)	68
SB4801016 - POSSESSION OF A CLASS B CONTROLLED DRUG	64
SB4510008 - THEFT	51

Average Time in Custody (hours)	Average Time in Custody (minutes)
8	487

Enquiries made in relation to the cost per year of keeping a young offender in custody, failed to locate any records or documents held by PSNI relevant to your request based on the information you have provided. This is post-conviction and therefore, not a matter for policing. Accordingly, I have determined that the Police Service of Northern Ireland does not hold the information to which you seek access.

Request 4

I would like to receive information regarding the number of crimes committed by under children under 10 years old in Northern Ireland from 2015-2020.

Request 5

If possible, I would also like to know which crimes were most commonly committed by under 10s in this time period.

Answer

In response to Request 4 & 5, please see the table below detailing recorded crimes¹ that have since been assigned an outcome of Prosecution prevented - suspect under age.

Please note: Provided are the figures for recorded crimes based on the outcome code for 'Prosecution prevented – named suspect identified but is below the age of criminal responsibility' which indicates the person involved in the offence was under ten years at the time of offence.

However, it should be noted that if an alternative outcome code is applied to the crime, records involving a person under ten will not be identified within this search.

Data is provided from 1 April 2015 – 28 February 2021 by the main crime types. Data extracted 16th March 2021. ¹ Crimes recorded to 28th February 2021

Offences	2015/16	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20	1 April 2020-28 February 2021
Violence against the person	80	103	66	75	56	53
Sexual offences	35	39	25	12	19	8
Robbery, Burglary and Theft	30	31	30	27	16	3
Criminal damage	56	62	43	41	30	27
Other crimes against society	2	11	6	8	7	5

If you have any queries regarding your request or the decision please do not hesitate to contact me on 028 9070 0164. When contacting the Corporate Information Branch, please quote the reference number listed at the beginning of this letter.

If you are dissatisfied in any way with the handling of your request, you have the right to request a review. You should do this as soon as possible or in any case within two months of the date of issue of this letter. In the event that you require a review to be undertaken, you can do so by writing to the Head of Corporate Information Branch, PSNI Headquarters, 65 Knock Road, Belfast, BT5 6LE or by emailing foi@psni.pnn.police.uk.

If following an internal review, carried out by an independent decision maker, you were to remain dissatisfied in any way with the handling of the request you may make a complaint, under Section 50 of the Freedom of Information Act, to the Information Commissioner's Office and ask that they investigate whether the PSNI has complied with the terms of the Freedom of Information Act. You can write to the Information Commissioner at Information Commissioner's Office, Wycliffe House, Water Lane, Wilmslow, Cheshire, SK9 5AF. In most circumstances the Information Commissioner will not investigate a complaint unless an internal review procedure has been carried out, however the Commissioner has the option to investigate the matter at his discretion.

Please be advised that PSNI replies under Freedom of Information may be released into the public domain via our website @ www.psni.police.uk

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