



FREEDOM OF INFORMATION REQUEST



Request Number: F-2021-01095

Keyword: Crime

Subject: Non-Crime Hate Incidents (2018-2021)

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

The number of non-crime hate incidents recorded in your constabulary in each calendar month from 1st January 2018 to 5th May 2021 inclusive, broken down by calendar month (i.e. a single number for January 2018, a single number for February 2018 etc.)

Answer

The following table is based on all recorded hate incidents with a hate motivation marker, where no crime was recorded, broken down by month and year, for the period 1st January 2018 to 5th May 2021.

The first column includes all hate incidents with a racist, homophobic, disability, faith/religion or transphobic marker. The second column includes the sectarian hate motivation, in addition to the previously listed hate motivations.

Each incident may have more than one recorded hate motivation.

	Non-Crime Hate Incidents	Non-Crime Hate Incidents (Including Sectarian)
January 2018	53	104
February 2018	41	58
March 2018	54	77
April 2018	70	88
May 2018	49	69
June 2018	56	92
July 2018	61	123
August 2018	84	115

September 2018	67	84
October 2018	66	85
November 2018	59	74
December 2018	47	57
January 2019	56	70
February 2019	48	66
March 2019	50	79
April 2019	58	75
May 2019	48	75
June 2019	48	82
July 2019	55	100
August 2019	57	99
September 2019	59	84
October 2019	43	62
November 2019	31	55
December 2019	44	60
January 2020	51	80
February 2020	48	63
March 2020	42	54
April 2020	31	44
May 2020	46	73
June 2020	67	112
July 2020	73	122
August 2020	53	87
September 2020	66	92
October 2020	57	88
November 2020	40	56
December 2020	51	65
January 2021	38	49
February 2021	47	71
March 2021	46	82
April 2021	70	106
1st - 5th May 2021	26	35

Please note: Changes can be expected to figures from 1st April 2021 as records are subject to ongoing validation and quality assurance processes until publication in May 2022; annual revisions to previously published financial year figures may also be applied at this time.

The following notes are applicable to the data provided

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

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

Hate Incident or Hate Crime?

Police recorded crime data is a victim oriented approach to crime recording. A crime will be recorded as having a hate motivation where it meets the relevant definition provided above. Not all hate motivated incidents will result in the recording of a crime, as what has occurred in the incident may

not be of the level of severity that would result in a crime being recorded. Where crimes with a hate abuse motivation are recorded, they are classified according to the Home Office Counting Rules and form a subset of the overall police recorded crime statistics.

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

Definitions

Race

A racial group can be defined as a group of persons defined by reference to race, colour, nationality or ethnic or national origins (this includes UK National origins i.e. Scottish, English, Welsh and Irish) and references to a person's racial group refer to any racial group into which he/she falls. Racial group includes the Irish Traveller community.

Homophobia (sexual orientation)

Homophobia can be defined as a fear or dislike directed towards lesbian, gay or bisexual people, or a fear or dislike directed towards their perceived lifestyle, culture or characteristics. Sexual orientation can be defined as an individual's preference for a particular sex (be it the opposite or the same), or an individual's view of their own sexuality.

Sectarian

The term 'sectarian', whilst not clearly defined, is a term almost exclusively used in Northern Ireland to describe incidents of bigoted dislike or hatred of members of a different religious or political group. It is broadly accepted that within the Northern Ireland context an individual or group must be perceived to be Catholic or Protestant, Nationalist or Unionist, or Loyalist or Republican. However sectarianism can also relate to other religious denominations, for example, Sunni and Shi'ite in Islam.

Faith/Religion

A faith or religious group can be defined as a group of persons defined by reference to religious belief or lack of religious belief. This would include Christians, Muslims, Hindus, Sikhs and different sects within a religion. It also includes people who hold no religious belief at all.

Disability

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

Transphobia

Includes people who are trans and those who hold the gender recognition certificate under the Gender Recognition Act 2004.

The Perception Test

Evidence is not the test when reporting a hate incident; when an incident or crime has been reported to police by the victim or by any other person and they perceive it as being motivated by prejudice or hate, it will be recorded and investigated as a hate incident or crime. The perception of the victim or any other person is the defining factor in determining whether an incident is a hate incident, or in recognising the hostility element of a hate crime. Perception-based recording refers to the perception of the victim, or any other person. It would not be appropriate to record a crime or incident as a hate crime or hate incident if it was based on the perception of a person or group who had no knowledge of the victim, crime or the area, and who may be responding to media or internet stories or who are reporting for a political or similar motive. The other person could, however, be one of a number of people, including: police officers or staff; witnesses; family members; civil society organisations who

know details of the victim, the crime or hate crimes in the locality, such as a third-party reporting charity; a carer or other professional who supports the victim; someone who has knowledge of hate crime in the area – this could include many professionals and experts such as the manager of an education centre used by people with learning disabilities who regularly receives reports of abuse from students; a person from within the group targeted with the hostility, e.g., a Traveller who witnessed racist damage in a local park.

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.