



FREEDOM OF INFORMATION REQUEST



Request Number: F-2022-02572

Keyword: Crime/Incident Statistics Other and Multiple Crime/Incident types

Subject: Non-crime Incidents

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.

Clarification sought:

Would you please advise if you are referring to non-crime hate incidents?

Clarification received:

Yes - I am referring to non-crime hate incidents.

Request 1

Could you please provide the number of non-crime incidents recorded from January 1 2017?

Request 2

Could the data be broken down by year and what specifically the non-crime incident was, with as much specific detail as possible.

Answer to Requests 1 – 2

The table below is based on all incidents with a hate motivation which did not result in a recorded offence with a hate motivation (a Non-Crime Hate Incident), during the period January 2017 - June 2022. This has been broken down by the hate strand (racist, homophobic, sectarian, faith/religion, disability and transphobic). The only break down of incidents that is available is by hate strand.

| Hate Strand | Non-Crime Hate Incidents |
|----------------|--------------------------|
| Racist | 2,521 |
| Homophobic | 773 |
| Sectarian | 1,881 |
| Disability | 264 |
| Faith/Religion | 165 |
| Transphobic | 163 |

Please note that a single incident may involve more than one hate strand. Therefore the figures above can't be added together to provide a total number of non-crime hate incidents.

Request 3

Could it also include whether the individual's name was recorded? I understand the guidance around what information is recorded has changed since July.

Please add details of the police interactions (this is terminology used by College of Policing) and the results of those actions.

Answer

PSNI currently records the names of all parties for non-crime hate incidents. However, we are in the process of adopting the College of Policing guidance issued in July 2022 to take account of the *Miller v College of Policing* and this will be reflected in our updated Hate Crime Service Instruction.

Notes in conjunction with 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.

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 Corporate Information Manager, Corporate Information Branch, PSNI Headquarters, 65 Knock Road, Belfast, BT5 6LE or by emailing foi@psni.police.uk.

If, following an Internal Review carried out by an independent decision maker, you remain unhappy about how your request has been handled you have the right to apply in writing to the Information Commissioner, under Section 50 of the Freedom of Information Act, at 'Information Commissioner's Office, Wycliffe House, Water Lane, Wilmslow, Cheshire, SK9 5AF. There are a number of other platforms you can use to contact the ICO and these can be found on the ICO's website at the following link: [Make a complaint | ICO \(https://ico.org.uk/make-a-complaint/\)](https://ico.org.uk/make-a-complaint/).

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 their discretion.

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

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