



Christmas drink/drug driving campaign 2025/26

Northern Ireland

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This bulletin summarises available information in relation to the PSNI Christmas drink/drug driving campaign 2025/26, which ran from 1st December 2025 to 1st January 2026 inclusive, specifically the outcomes in terms of Preliminary Breath Tests (PBTs) and drink/drug driving arrests.

These figures are provisional and subject to change, particularly for PBTs which are likely to increase as more information is uploaded to the system.

Key points:

- Initial figures show that PSNI officers conducted 5,198 preliminary breath tests (PBTs) during the Christmas drink/drug drive campaign between 1st December 2025 and 1st January 2026. While this is a decrease of 19.0% on the same period last year, it is likely that the 2025/26 total will increase as more information is uploaded to the system from the PBT devices. (See Note to Table 1)
- Of the 5,198 PBTs conducted, 7.2% (375) resulted in a fail or failed to provide, which is proportionately slightly lower than for the 2024/25 campaign (7.9%).
- A total of 288 arrests were made for drink/drug driving related offences during this year's campaign, representing a decrease of 4.0% compared with the same period last year (300).
- The highest number of arrests were made in Belfast (56), while Derry City and Strabane experienced the largest decrease in arrests when compared with the same period last year (from 40 to 23).
- While males accounted for the majority (78.8%) of those arrested for drink/drug driving offences throughout the 2025/26 campaign, there were 24 more females arrested than in 2024/25 (61 compared to 37).
- Just over half of those arrested (51.0%) were between 30 and 49 years old. The youngest person arrested for drink/drug driving offences during the 2025/26 campaign was 14 years old while the oldest was 82 years old.
- The highest evidential breath test reading recorded over the campaign was 172µg/100ml.

Background

There is no one measure of counting alcohol or drug driving offences as this is a complex process and there is no unique source of data. This bulletin has presented the information on the basis that those who have a Preliminary Breath Test with a result of 'Fail' or 'Failure to Provide' are a proxy measure for driving when under the influence of alcohol or drugs. Police will arrest people, collect further evidence via breath, blood or urine and present this to the Public Prosecution Service (PPS) who will ultimately decide on the prospect of a successful case.

In terms of the 2025/26 statistics, the PBT figures are based on an extract of the data on 22nd January 2026 and are likely to increase as more information is uploaded to the system. The arrest figures were extracted on 22nd January 2026 and will be subject to minor amendment. These figures are therefore provisional and subject to change.

Official Statistics

This bulletin is an Official Statistics publication meaning it complies with the [Code of Practice for Official Statistics](#) as follows:

- Trustworthiness: the statistics are impartial, independent and released in an open and transparent manner in accordance with a pre-announced publication schedule
- Quality: the statistics are produced using robust and relevant data sources which undergo continuous quality improvement and assurance checks
- Value: the statistics strive to meet user needs informed by ongoing feedback, providing sufficient detail which is widely accessible.

Preliminary Breath Tests

Table 1 Number of Preliminary Breath Tests carried out by PSNI by result

Result	1 st Dec 2024 – 1 st Jan 2025		1 st Dec 2025 – 1 st Jan 2026		% change between 2024/25 and 2025/26*
	Number	%	Number	%	
Zero	5,639	87.9	4,627	89.0	-17.9
Pass	237	3.7	178	3.4	-24.9
Warning	34	0.5	18	0.3	-47.1
Fail	334	5.2	244	4.7	-26.9
Failed to Provide	170	2.7	131	2.5	-22.9
Total	6,414	100.0	5,198	100.0	-19.0

Note:

*The % change compares preliminary figures for the current year to the finalised figures for the previous year, therefore the decrease is likely to reduce as systems continue to update for 2025/26. The % change based on the 2024/25 preliminary total (5,556) as published on 23rd January 2025 is -6%.

Arrests

Table 2 Number of arrests for drink/drug driving offences by District

District	1 st Dec 2024 – 1 st Jan 2025	1 st Dec 2025 – 1 st Jan 2026
Antrim and Newtownabbey	22	29
Ards and North Down	22	15
Armagh, Banbridge and Craigavon	35	23
Belfast City	57	56
Causeway Coast and Glens	22	23
Derry City and Strabane	40	23
Fermanagh and Omagh	13	29
Lisburn and Castlereagh	23	14
Mid and East Antrim	16	12
Mid Ulster	23	27
Newry, Mourne and Down	27	37
Total	300	288

Table 3 Number of arrests for drink/drug driving offences by sex

Sex	1 st Dec 2024 – 1 st Jan 2025	1 st Dec 2025 – 1 st Jan 2026
Male	263	227
Female	37	61
Other/Unknown	0	0
Total	300	288

Table 4 Number of arrests for drink/drug driving offences by age group

Age group	1 st Dec 2024 – 1 st Jan 2025	1 st Dec 2025 – 1 st Jan 2026
Under 18	0	3
18 – 29	81	86
30 – 49	171	147
50 – 69	46	46
70+	2	6
Total	300	288

Provisional evidential breath test results

Table 5 Results of evidential breath procedures completed for those arrested for drink/drug driving offences, 1st December 2025 – 1st January 2026

Result	1 st Dec 2025 – 1 st Jan 2026
Zero	11
1 - 34µg/100ml	28
35 - 49µg/100ml	19
50+µg/100ml	136
Failed to provide	41
No breath result	53
Total	288

¹ 'No breath result' includes those which resulted in a blood/urine sample as opposed to a breath sample, including those being tested for impairment through drugs, the results of which require time to process.

² The legal limit for breath tests is 35µg/100ml.

³ Figures are provisional and subject to change.

Source: PSNI Statistics Branch, Lisnasharragh