

PPS publishes annual statistical bulletin on hate crime

The Public Prosecution Service (PPS) has published its annual statistical bulletin, 'Cases Involving Hate Crime 2016/17'.

The bulletin is set out in two parts, reflecting the two distinct definitions applied in cases involving hate crime, as recorded by the Police Service of Northern Ireland (PSNI) and the PPS. In Part One key statistics are presented in relation to cases involving hate crime submitted to the PPS by the PSNI, while in Part Two key statistics are presented in relation to cases considered by a Prosecutor to have involved hate crime which was 'aggravated by hostility'.

The key findings include:

Part One: Cases Involving Hate Crime Submitted by the PSNI

- A sharp decline in the number of cases submitted by police. In 2016/17 386 files were received compared to 573 in the previous year.
- The majority of files received fell into two categories, 'violence against the person' (61%) or 'public order' (12%).
- The number of cases involving violent offences fell by just over three-tenths (31%), from 343 in 2015/16 to 236 in 2016/17.
- Prosecutorial decisions were issued in respect of 514 persons, a decrease of 33% on 2015/16 (764).
- 81.8% of defendants dealt with in the Crown Court were convicted while the conviction rate in the Magistrates' and Youth Courts was 59.8%

Part Two: Cases Considered by a PPS Prosecutor to have Involved Hate Crime which was 'Aggravated by Hostility'

- The PPS took 347 prosecutorial decisions in 2016/17, over two-thirds (67%) of which were for prosecution (208) or a diversion from the courts (26). This compares to 516 prosecutorial decisions taken in 2015/16 of which 70% were for prosecution (314) or a diversion from the courts (46).

- The majority of the 347 prosecutorial decisions related to offence types which were either aggravated on the basis of race (153) or religion (119). Fifty four decisions related to offence types aggravated on the basis of sexual orientation, a further seven in respect of disability while 14 were recorded as multiple motivations.
- 161 defendants were convicted during 2016/17 and of those, 44 were recorded as having received an increased sentence where the judge accepted that the aggravating feature of their offence(s) had been proven beyond reasonable doubt.

The Bulletin can be found [here](#) on the PPS website, www.ppsni.gov.uk.

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Notes to Editors

1. The statistical information provided in this bulletin includes caseloads, prosecutorial decisions and outcomes of prosecutions at court. Figures are provided for the full 2016/17 financial year (i.e. 1 April 2016 to 31 March 2017), and includes comparisons for the equivalent period in 2015/16.
2. This summary should be read in conjunction with the explanatory notes and definitions provided (see pages 3 - 4 and 22 - 25 of the Bulletin).
3. These are 'Official Statistics' as defined in Section 6 of the Statistics and Registration Services Act 2007. Statisticians from the Northern Ireland Statistics and Research Agency are seconded to the PPS and are responsible for ensuring that the statistics produced comply with the Code of Practice for Official Statistics. All statistics for the current financial year have been finalised.
4. The PPS Hate Crime Policy can be found [here](#).

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