



News Release
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PPS PUBLISHES STATISTICAL BULLETIN ON HATE CRIME

Almost 95% of the most serious hate crime prosecutions during 2014/15 resulted in a conviction in the Crown Court, according to a new statistical bulletin on hate crime, published by the Public Prosecution Service (PPS) today. This compared with a conviction rate of 86.4% last year.

Overall the PPS received 570 files from police involving hate crime, a figure similar to that in 2013/14 (572).

The bulletin reveals a drop in the number of cases motivated by sectarianism, which fell to 213 cases from 253 in 2013-14. Sectarian hate crimes still represent almost two-fifths of all cases relating to hate crimes received from the PSNI.

The Director of Public Prosecutions, Barra McGrory QC, said: "We are listening to the victims of hate crime, and those who work with them, about the impact that such offences have on the lives of individuals.

"These statistics show that the work being carried out by the PPS and our partners across the Criminal Justice system in tackling hate crime is producing results.

"The conviction rates being recorded are very reassuring. They show that the information we receive from the police, and the files we prepare, build a strong case for prosecution and that helps send out a message that hate crime will be dealt with in the strongest possible terms.

"Of course, there is still work to be done and we will continue to work closely with a range of agencies to ensure the robust and effective prosecution of all such cases."

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 bulletin also includes, for the first time, enhanced sentencing statistics using data recorded by the Northern Ireland Courts and Tribunals service. These refer to cases where a person convicted of an offence has their sentence increased if the judge is satisfied beyond reasonable doubt that it was aggravated by hostility.

Part One: Cases Involving Hate Crime Submitted by the PSNI – Key Findings

During the financial year:

- The PPS received a total of 570 files from the PSNI involving hate crime. This was similar to 2013/14 (572).
- Almost two-fifths (37%) of files received related to sectarian crimes. This compared with 44% during 2013/14.
- Prosecutorial decisions were issued by the PPS in respect of 807 persons in cases involving hate crime. Almost three-fifths (59%) of the decisions issued were for prosecution (403) or for diversion from the courts (71).
- A total of 36 defendants were dealt with in the Crown Court. The conviction rate in the Crown Court was 94.4%, an increase on 2013/14 (86.4%).
- Of the 383 defendants dealt with in the Magistrates' and Youth Courts, 67.4% were convicted. This was a similar outcome to 2013/14 (67.8%).

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

During the financial year:

- Prosecutorial decisions were issued by the PPS in respect of 549 persons in cases considered by a prosecutor to have involved hate crime which was 'aggravated by hostility'. Over three-fifths (62%) of the decisions issued were for prosecution (298) or for diversion from the courts (41).
- A total of 53 defendants were dealt with in the Crown Court. The majority of these defendants (43; 81%) were prosecuted in court on the basis that the alleged offences were aggravated by hostility.
- The conviction rate in the Crown Court was 86.8%, a decrease on 2013/14 (94.1%). Of the 46 defendants convicted, 13 were recorded as having received an enhanced sentence (that is, where the Judge accepted that the aggravating feature of the offence(s) had been proven beyond reasonable doubt).
- A total of 284 defendants were dealt with in the Magistrates' and Youth Courts. Of these, 204 (72%) were prosecuted in court on the basis that the alleged offences were aggravated by hostility.
- The conviction rate in the Magistrates' and Youth Courts was 68.7%, an increase on 2013/14 (63.7%). Of the 195 defendants convicted, 40 were recorded as having received an enhanced sentence.

Notes to Editors

The full Statistical Bulletin can be found [here](#)

This summary should be read in conjunction with the explanatory notes and definitions provided (see pages 3 - 4 and 21 - 24 of the Bulletin).

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.

The bulletin may be viewed or downloaded at www.ppsni.gov.uk. Any member of the public may comment on the report by contacting PPS as follows:

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