

[REDACTED]

FOI 181/25-26

23 September 2025

[REDACTED]

We refer to your email dated 26 August 2025 in which you requested information. Your request has been dealt with under the terms of the Freedom of Information Act 2000.

Freedom of Information Act 2000

The Freedom of Information Act creates rights of access for any person making a request for information to a public authority. The rights of access are twofold. First, to be informed by the public authority if it holds information of the description specified in the request, and if that is the case, secondly, to be provided with that information. These rights are subject to important limitations, which are designed to achieve a proper balance between the right to know and considerations of law and policy in the broader public interest.

You had asked the following:

“I would like to receive statistics from the year 2000 up to the present date on the following:

- 1. The total number of convictions for sexual offences.*
- 2. The number of these convictions that resulted from guilty pleas.*
- 3. The number of these convictions that resulted from a trial where the defendant was found guilty.*
- 4. The overall conviction rate for sexual offences during this period.*

I understand that some of this information may be sensitive, but I would appreciate any data you can provide in a summarized format. If you need any further clarification regarding this request, please do not hesitate to contact me”.

In respect of information relating to the period between 2000-2014, in terms of the Freedom of Information Act I can confirm that the PPS does not hold the requested data, as defined under Section 1(1)(a) of the Act.

In response to questions 1 and 4, please be advised that this information is published for the period from 2015/16 to 2023/24 in our [annual statistical bulletins on cases involving sexual offences](#). The data includes caseloads, prosecutorial decisions and the outcomes of prosecutions at court (Magistrates' and Crown Courts) in relation to 'Rape', 'Other Sexual Offences' and 'All Sexual Offences'.

In respect of questions 2 and 3, please be advised that the data includes a considerable number of mixed outcomes at court; i.e. where a defendant pleads not guilty to at least one sexual offence and the final results include a mix of guilty and not guilty findings. In addition, there may have been a guilty plea to other charges (i.e. other than a sexual offence) which resulted in a conviction. Therefore it is not possible to extract the level of detail required, and answer your question accurately, without carrying out a manual exercise covering all cases on the PPS Case Management System (CMS) involving a sexual offence. This would easily exceed the cost limit as defined in Section 12 of the Act which makes provision for public authorities to refuse requests for information where the cost of dealing with them would exceed the appropriate limit; for the PPS as a Government Department the limit is set at £600. This represents the estimated cost of one person spending 3.5 working days in determining whether the department holds the information, locating, retrieving and extracting the information.

Please note that the data for 2024/25 cannot be provided as it will form part of the upcoming statistical bulletin on sexual offences which is due for publication in November 2025. Therefore, in terms of the Freedom of Information Act, the exemption in Section 22 (Information intended for future publication) applies to the data you have requested.

Section 22 is a qualified exemption and requires a public interest test. Details of the exemption are outlined at **Annex A**.

If you are dissatisfied in any way with the handling of your request, you have the right to request a review in accordance with our review procedure. You should do this as soon as possible or in any case within two months of the date of this response and you can do so by writing to the Head of Policy and Information, Public Prosecution Service, Belfast Chambers, 93 Chichester Street, BELFAST, BT1 3JR or alternatively by sending an e-mail to info@ppsni.gov.uk. You should state the grounds on which you are requesting the review.

Alternatively, you may wish to apply directly to the Information Commissioner for a decision. The Information Commissioner can be contacted at:

Information Commissioner's Office
Wycliffe House
Water Lane
Wilmslow
Cheshire
SK9 5AF

Yours sincerely,

Information Management Team
Public Prosecution Service

