



Public  
Prosecution  
Service

Policy and Information Unit  
Public Prosecution Service  
Belfast Chambers  
93 Chichester Street  
Belfast BT1 3JR

[REDACTED]

FOI 1904/21-22

14 March 2022

[REDACTED]

I refer to your email dated 23 February 2022 in which you asked for information regarding the gender and age of persons prosecuted for crimes in Northern Ireland. 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:

*“Under the terms of the Freedom of Information Act please providing a response to the following for each of the last 5 years for which figures are available:*

*The gender and ages of people being prosecuted for crimes in Northern Ireland”.*

In response, please see Tables 1-5 below at **Annex A** which detail the gender and age of persons prosecuted by the PPS between 1 April 2016 and 31 March 2021. These tables should be read in conjunction with the accompanying notes.

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](mailto:info@ppsni.gov.uk). You should state clearly 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**

## Annex A

**Table 1:**

**Number of prosecutorial decisions issued by suspect gender and age group 1 April 2016 - 31 March 2017**

### By Gender

	Indictable Prosecution	Summary Prosecution	Diversion	No Prosecution
Female	201	5,430	1,164	3,999
Male	1,473	23,726	3,193	11,599
Transgender	-	9	4	7
Unknown/Not recorded	#	130	2	32

### By Age Group

	Indictable Prosecution	Summary Prosecution	Diversion	No Prosecution
17 and under	26	1,419	1,178	1,207
18-25	429	8,332	1,305	3,632
26-35	569	9,197	709	4,127
36-45	284	5,032	449	2,898
46-55	204	3,126	365	2,145
56-65	100	1,295	187	863
66-75	40	391	96	302
76 and over	11	88	46	90
Unknown	20	415	28	373

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**Table 2:****Number of prosecutorial decisions issued by suspect gender and age group 1 April 2017 - 31 March 2018****By Gender**

	Indictable Prosecution	Summary Prosecution	Diversion	No Prosecution
Female	179	5,484	1,031	3,881
Male	1,210	23,642	2,915	11,560
Transgender	0	28	4	7
Unknown/Not recorded	17	141	1	18

**By Age Group**

	Indictable Prosecution	Summary Prosecution	Diversion	No Prosecution
17 and under	13	1,359	1,082	1,116
18-25	335	7,949	1,088	3,474
26-35	489	9,333	687	4,305
36-45	256	5,213	399	2,819
46-55	160	3,296	312	2,054
56-65	85	1,373	186	935
66-75	28	404	106	322
76 and over	15	80	58	104
Unknown	25	288	33	337

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**Table 3:**

**Number of prosecutorial decisions issued by suspect gender and age group 1<sup>st</sup> April 2018 - 31 March 2019**

**By Gender**

	Indictable Prosecution	Summary Prosecution	Diversion	No Prosecution
Female	206	5,464	917	3,983
Male	1,477	23,497	2,579	11,837
Transgender	0	15	3	17
Unknown/Not recorded	11	165	2	23

**By Age Group**

	Indictable Prosecution	Summary Prosecution	Diversion	No Prosecution
17 and under	18	1,290	926	1,083
18-25	391	7,710	1,009	3,349
26-35	592	9,356	600	4,450
36-45	299	5,418	371	3,013
46-55	209	3,221	273	2,190
56-65	99	1,366	154	996
66-75	48	389	84	313
76 and over	20	98	62	126
Unknown	18	293	22	340

**Table 4:**

**Number of prosecutorial decisions issued by suspect gender and age group 1 April 2019 – 31 March 2020**

**By Gender**

	Indictable Prosecution	Summary Prosecution	Diversion	No Prosecution
Female	213	5,629	826	3,879
Male	1,563	23,816	2,547	11,349
Transgender	0	12	6	6
Unknown/Not recorded	10	195	2	17

**By Age Group**

	Indictable Prosecution	Summary Prosecution	Diversion	No Prosecution
17 and under	8	1,202	1,035	1,090
18-25	426	7,200	923	3,130
26-35	635	9,949	545	4,287
36-45	336	5,621	370	2,983
46-55	203	3,353	244	2,083
56-65	94	1,452	115	949
66-75	41	437	78	296
76 and over	20	120	58	141
Unknown	23	318	13	292

**Table 5:**

**Number of prosecutorial decisions issued by suspect gender and age group 1 April 2020 – 31 March 2021**

**By Gender**

	Indictable Prosecution	Summary Prosecution	Diversion	No Prosecution
Female	187	4,979	708	3,476
Male	1,344	22,458	2,118	10,075
Transgender	#	9	-	10
Unknown/Not recorded	13	148	6	4

**By Age Group**

	Indictable Prosecution	Summary Prosecution	Diversion	No Prosecution
17 and under	9	959	820	914
18-25	301	6,737	814	2,760
26-35	575	9,321	468	3,920
36-45	319	5,521	305	2,671
46-55	161	2,975	213	1,850
56-65	97	1,353	113	837
66-75	42	352	55	314
76 and over	19	95	26	121
Unknown	21	281	19	178

## Notes on the Analysis

1. Figures are provided for each financial year based on date most serious prosecutorial decision issued between 1 April and 31 March.
2. Please note that suspect age is based on date of birth information provided to the PPS by the PSNI or other file source. Suspect gender is as provided to the PPS by the PSNI or other file source. No data validation checks have been undertaken by PPS. In a small proportion of cases age or gender may not be recorded.
3. Suspect age is at time most serious decision issued.
4. A number of types of prosecutorial decision are available to the prosecutor, as follows:
  - Indictable prosecution applies in the more serious offences which may be heard in the Crown Court.
  - Summary prosecution applies to cases which may be heard in the Magistrates' Courts.
  - 'Diversion' includes a number of different disposal types:
    - A caution is a formal reprimand administered by the police. Whilst it is not a conviction it is recorded on a person's criminal record.
    - An informed warning is also a formal reprimand administered by police and is recorded on a person's criminal record.
    - A diversionary youth conference is an alternative to prosecution in court and may be used in cases where the defendant is a youth. This type of restorative conference may involve a number of parties, including the defendant, the victim and police. A youth conference is a formal process, and although not a conviction, is recorded on a person's criminal record.
    - Other diversionary options include referrals to the National Driver Alertness Course (NDAC).
- With the exception of the NDAC, it should be noted that diversionary options are only available to prosecutors if the defendant admits that he/she has committed the offence and agrees to accept and participate in the diversionary option.

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- A decision for no prosecution will be taken if the prosecutor decides that in any case being considered there is insufficient evidence or that it is not in the public interest to prosecute

5. '-' = Numbers suppressed to avoid disclosure of categories containing fewer than three persons / decisions.

6. '#' = Numbers 3 or greater suppressed in order to prevent disclosure of smaller numbers elsewhere.