Domestic Abuse Incidents and Crimes Recorded by the Police in Northern Ireland: Quarterly Update to 31 March 2017
(Providing final figures for 1st April 2016 to 31st March 2017)

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This quarterly bulletin presents the most recent statistics relating to domestic abuse incidents and crimes recorded by the police for the financial year 2016/17, which runs from 1 April 2016 to 31 March 2017.

A range of more detailed tables are available in the excel summary table and excel pivot table data which accompany this bulletin. Further information on the contents of these tables can be found in the NOTES section at the end of the bulletin.

The next quarterly update covering the latest 12 months to 30 June 2017 will be published on 31 August 2017. A more comprehensive publication covering trends from 2004/05 to 2016/17 will be pre-announced in due course.

Domestic Abuse Motivation Definition

The PSNI has adopted the definition of domestic abuse as outlined in the Northern Ireland Government Strategy ‘Stopping Domestic and Sexual Violence and Abuse in Northern Ireland’ as:

‘threatening, controlling, coercive behaviour, violence or abuse (psychological, virtual, physical, verbal, sexual, financial or emotional) inflicted on anyone (irrespective of age, ethnicity, religion, gender, gender identity, sexual orientation or any form of disability) by a current or former partner or family member’.

The following will assist in the application of this definition:

(a) ‘Incident’ means an incident anywhere and not confined to the home of one of the partners/family members;

(b) ‘Family members’ include mother, father, son, daughter, brother, sister, grandparents, whether directly or indirectly related, in-laws or stepfamily;

(c) ‘Intimate partners’ means there must have been a relationship with a degree of continuity and stability. The relationship must also have had (or reasonably supposed to have had) a sexual aspect, such as in the relationship between husband and wife or between others generally recognised as a couple including same sex couples.

A crime will be recorded as domestic abuse where it meets the definition provided above. Not all domestic abuse incidents will result in the recording of a crime. Domestic abuse crimes are classified according to the Home Office Counting Rules and form a subset of the overall police recorded crime statistics.

An explanation of what constitutes an incident and a crime is provided in Section 2.1 of the User Guide to Police Recorded Crime Statistics.
OVERALL TRENDS IN DOMESTIC ABUSE INCIDENTS AND CRIMES (excluding fraud)

- There were 29,166 domestic abuse incidents recorded in 2016/17, 2.7 per cent (774 incidents) higher than the 2015/16 figure of 28,392, and the highest level recorded since the data series began in 2004/05. The 2016/17 figure is 39.2 per cent higher than the level of 20,959 recorded in 2004/05. Domestic abuse incidents have tended to increase year on year since 2004/05, with the exception of a 1.6 per cent decrease between 2006/07 and 2007/08 and a 7.3 per cent decrease between 2009/10 and 2010/11.

- There were 13,933 domestic abuse crimes recorded in 2016/17, the second highest level recorded since 2004/05. This represents a 1.0 per cent decrease on the 14,073 crimes recorded in 2015/16 and is the first fall in levels seen in six years; the last decrease occurred between 2009/10 and 2010/11.

- There were three murders with a domestic abuse motivation in 2016/17, compared with one in 2015/16.

Figure 1  Trends in domestic abuse incidents and crimes 2004/05 to 2016/17

COMPARISON OF 2016/17 WITH 2015/16 (excluding fraud)

- In 2016/17 there were 29,166 incidents recorded where there was a domestic abuse motivation. Of these 29,166 incidents there were 15,787 which did not contain a crime (i.e. non-notifiable offences or incidents where the circumstances did not amount to an offence being committed). The remaining 13,379 incidents contained one or more crimes (amounting to 13,933 recorded crimes in total).

Figure 2  Domestic abuse incidents and crimes

- 29,166 domestic abuse incidents recorded in total
- 28,392 domestic abuse incidents recorded in total
- Incidents where no crime recorded
- Incidents where one or more crimes recorded
- Resulting in
- 14,073 domestic abuse crimes recorded in total
- 15,923 domestic abuse crimes recorded in total
- Resulting in
- 13,933 domestic abuse crimes recorded in total
### Table 1
**Total number of domestic abuse incidents with and without crimes, 2015/16 and 2016/17**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Domestic abuse Incidents</th>
<th>2015/16</th>
<th>2016/17</th>
<th>change</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Incidents not containing any crime</td>
<td>15,923</td>
<td>15,787</td>
<td>-136</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Incidents with one or more crimes recorded</td>
<td>12,469</td>
<td>13,379</td>
<td>910</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total number of incidents</strong></td>
<td>28,392</td>
<td>29,166</td>
<td>774</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Table 2
**Domestic abuse crimes, 2015/16 and 2016/17**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Domestic abuse Crimes</th>
<th>2015/16</th>
<th>2016/17</th>
<th>change</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Domestic abuse crimes recorded</td>
<td>14,073</td>
<td>13,933</td>
<td>-140</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- Domestic abuse incidents recorded in 2016/17 have largely mirrored the levels recorded in 2015/16 but at a higher level for ten of the twelve months. At 29,166, the figure for 2016/17 is 774 incidents higher than the 2015/16 figure of 28,392. The largest monthly increases were seen when comparing the months of June, December and September; 187, 166 and 144 incidents higher than the same months in 2015 respectively. The two months showing decreases in domestic incidents recorded were April (191 incidents lower than 2015) and February (30 incidents lower than 2016).

- There were 13,933 domestic abuse crimes recorded in 2016/17, a decrease of 140 crimes on 2015/16. The number of domestic abuse crimes recorded each month in 2016/17 was very similar compared with 2015/16, with crimes higher in six out of the twelve months and lower for the remaining six. The largest monthly increase occurred in October (88 crimes higher) and the largest decrease occurred in January (97 crimes lower).

- The domestic abuse crime outcome rate for 2016/17 is 29.0%, 2.4 percentage points lower than the 2015/16 rate of 31.4%.

**Figure 3** Domestic abuse incidents each month
April 2015 to March 2017

**Figure 4** Domestic abuse crimes each month
April 2015 to March 2017
Table 3  Domestic abuse crimes and crime outcomes rates, 2015/16 and 2016/17

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Crime Type</th>
<th>Crimes Recorded</th>
<th>% change between years</th>
<th>Crime Outcomes Rate (%)&lt;sup&gt;1&lt;/sup&gt;</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2015/16</td>
<td>2016/17</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Violence against the person offences</td>
<td>10,083</td>
<td>9,993</td>
<td>-0.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Violence with injury (including homicide)</td>
<td>3,949</td>
<td>3,968</td>
<td>0.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Violence without injury</td>
<td>6,134</td>
<td>6,025</td>
<td>-1.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Theft (including burglary) and criminal damage</td>
<td>2,299</td>
<td>2,386</td>
<td>3.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Breach of non-molestation order</td>
<td>916</td>
<td>734</td>
<td>-19.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>All other offences</td>
<td>775</td>
<td>820</td>
<td>5.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total crimes (domestic abuse motivation)</strong></td>
<td><strong>14,073</strong></td>
<td><strong>13,933</strong></td>
<td><strong>-1.0</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<sup>1</sup> Outcomes presented here include charge/summons, cautions (adult and juvenile), community resolutions, penalty notices for disorder, offences taken into consideration and indictable only offences where no action was taken against the offender (died before proceedings or PPS did not prosecute).

<sup>2</sup> The % point change is calculated on unrounded outcome rate figures.
COMPARISON OF POLICING DISTRICTS: 2015/16 AND 2016/17 (excluding fraud)

- Between 2015/16 and 2016/17 domestic abuse incidents increased in nine of the eleven policing districts with the remaining two policing districts showing a decrease. The largest increase was in Ards & North Down (281 incidents) followed by Fermanagh & Omagh (198 incidents) and Belfast City (190 incidents). The policing districts where decreases occurred were Derry City & Strabane (229 incidents) and Armagh City, Banbridge & Craigavon (86 incidents).

- Domestic abuse crimes increased in six of the eleven policing districts, with decreases experienced in the remaining five districts when comparing 2016/17 with 2015/16. Fermanagh & Omagh experienced the largest increase (81 crimes) followed by Lisburn & Castlereagh City (72 crimes). Derry City & Strabane experienced the largest decrease (137 crimes) followed by Belfast City with a decrease of 99 crimes.

- Within Belfast City district increases in domestic abuse incidents and crimes were seen in North (328 incidents and 21 crimes) and West (131 incidents and 36 crimes); these represent the local policing teams based in Tennent Street and Woodbourne respectively. A fall of 209 incidents and 158 crimes was recorded in East (local policing team Strandtown) whilst South (local policing team Lisburn Road) recorded a fall of 60 incidents and a rise of 2 crimes.

Table 4  Domestic abuse incidents, crimes and crime outcomes rates, by policing district, 2015/16 and 2016/17

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Policing district</th>
<th>Domestic Abuse Incidents</th>
<th>Domestic Abuse Crimes</th>
<th>Domestic Abuse Crime Outcomes Rate (%)&lt;sup&gt;1&lt;/sup&gt;</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2015/16</td>
<td>2016/17</td>
<td>change</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Belfast City: of which</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>East&lt;sup&gt;3&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>1,801</td>
<td>1,592</td>
<td>-209</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>North&lt;sup&gt;3&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>2,660</td>
<td>2,988</td>
<td>328</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>South&lt;sup&gt;3&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>1,237</td>
<td>1,177</td>
<td>-60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>West&lt;sup&gt;3&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>1,915</td>
<td>2,046</td>
<td>131</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lisburn &amp; Castlereagh City</td>
<td>1,497</td>
<td>1,627</td>
<td>130</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ards &amp; North Down</td>
<td>2,068</td>
<td>2,349</td>
<td>281</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Newry, Mourne &amp; Down</td>
<td>2,020</td>
<td>2,142</td>
<td>122</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Armagh City, Banbridge &amp; Craigavon</td>
<td>3,001</td>
<td>2,915</td>
<td>-86</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mid Ulster</td>
<td>1,476</td>
<td>1,500</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fermanagh &amp; Omagh</td>
<td>1,493</td>
<td>1,691</td>
<td>198</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Derry City &amp; Strabane</td>
<td>3,012</td>
<td>2,783</td>
<td>-229</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Causeway Coast &amp; Glens</td>
<td>2,158</td>
<td>2,187</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mid &amp; East Antrim</td>
<td>2,161</td>
<td>2,267</td>
<td>106</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Antrim &amp; Newtownabbey</td>
<td>1,893</td>
<td>1,902</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<sup>1</sup> Outcomes presented here include charge/summons, cautions (adult and juvenile), community resolutions, penalty notices for disorder, offences taken into consideration and indictable only offences where no action was taken against the offender (died before proceedings or PPS did not prosecute).

<sup>2</sup> The % point change is calculated on unrounded outcome rate figures.

<sup>3</sup> Belfast City district has four local policing teams based in Lisburn Road (South), Tennent Street (North), Strandtown (East) and Woodbourne (West).
Figure 5  Percentage change in the number of domestic abuse incidents by policing district, 2015/16 and 2016/17

Figure 6  Percentage change in the number of domestic abuse crimes by policing district, 2015/16 and 2016/17
Unlike the Northern Ireland Crime Survey (NICS), police recorded crime figures do not include crimes that have not been reported to the police; they also exclude those crimes that are not recorded in order to comply with the Home Office Counting Rules (HOCR). They do cover crimes against those aged under 16, organisations such as businesses, and crimes ‘against the state’ i.e. with no immediate victim (e.g. possession of drugs).

Like any administrative data, police recorded crime statistics are affected by the rules governing the recording of data, systems in place and operational decisions in respect of the allocation of resources. More proactive policing in a given area could lead to an increase in crimes recorded without any real change in underlying crime trends. These issues need to be taken into account when using these data.

As part of the Review of Public Administration which came into effect on 1st April 2015, PSNI moved from eight to eleven policing districts, with the new policing model becoming fully operational at the end of September 2015.

From 1st April 2015 Action Fraud became responsible for the central recording of fraud offences previously recorded by PSNI, with the result that fraud offences are no longer recorded by PSNI. As such, any reference to police recorded crime figures in this bulletin excludes fraud offences. Further details are available in the latest police recorded crime monthly update, available on the PSNI website.

**Time periods covered**
The figures in this bulletin are presented on a financial year basis and, in this context:

- Quarter 1 refers to the months April, May and June
- Quarter 2 refers to the months July, August and September
- Quarter 3 refers to the months October, November and December
- Quarter 4 refers to the months January, February and March

**Data accuracy**
Figures covering the full financial year from 1st April to 31st March are presented in their finalised format and are not subject to revision. While crimes included within the police recorded crime statistics for Northern Ireland are individually checked for compliance with the Home Office Counting Rules, the identification of a domestic abuse motivation is derived from a motivation ‘tick box’ on the system used by PSNI to record crime. The motivation is identified and completed by a police officer or member of police staff for each such reported incident or crime. The correct application of a domestic abuse motivation for all such incidents/crimes is not quality assured by the PSNI’s Statistics Branch, but audits and data quality checks are routinely conducted in an attempt to ensure that any under or over-recording is corrected.

**Additional data**
This bulletin shows a Northern Ireland level summary of domestic abuse incidents and crimes recorded by the police for the financial year 2016/17. Accompanying this bulletin are additional data in the form of excel summary table and excel pivot table data. The data is also available in open document format.

The pivot tables allow the user to manipulate the data, select the data they are most interested in and carry out calculations on the data. The data records displayed in the pivot tables are also available in the same spreadsheet files. The pivot tables provide a range of data including domestic abuse incidents, domestic abuse crimes and crime outcomes where there is a domestic abuse motivation (both numbers and rates). Each of these data measures is available:

- at Northern Ireland level as well as for each policing district;
- for a range of crime types; and
- for a range of time periods (previous and current financial years and each of the last 8 quarters).

**Further information**
*Trends in Domestic Abuse Incidents and Crimes Recorded by the Police in Northern Ireland 2004/05 to 2015/16* provides detailed trend information covering this time period. An updated publication covering trends from 2004/05 to 2016/17 will be pre-announced in due course.

Further details on Police Recorded Crime statistics, including those with a domestic abuse motivation, are available in the *User Guide to Police Recorded Crime Statistics in Northern Ireland*. This is a reference guide with explanatory notes regarding the issues and classifications which are key to the production and presentation of police recorded crime statistics.

Figures are available for a range of additional geographic areas through the **Northern Ireland Neighbourhood Information System (NINIS)**. These figures are updated on an annual basis.

Copies of other PSNI publications are available from the PSNI website: [https://www.psnipe.uk/inside-psni/Statistics/](https://www.psnipe.uk/inside-psni/Statistics/)

For further information about the police recorded crime statistics for Northern Ireland, or to contact the PSNI Crime and Incident Statistician please:
Email: [statistics@psni.police.uk](mailto:statistics@psni.police.uk);
Write to: Statistics Branch, Lisnasheeragh, 42 Montgomery Road, Belfast, BT6 9LD; or
Telephone: 028 9065 0222 ext 24135