

6th February 2025

REFERENCE: FOI25\12

Dear Madam,

Thank you for your request for information dated 31st January 2025 as detailed below.

- 1) In the years 2020 to 2024, how many people were convicted of domestic violence in Northern Ireland? Can you provide an annual and gender breakdown please (i.e. how many of those were men?)?
- 2) In the years 2020 to 2024, how many those convicted were given sentences of a) less than six months b) less than a year c) more than five years d) more than ten years? Please can you provide an annual breakdown.
- 3) In the years 2020 to 2024, how many those convicted were given non-custodial sentences. Please can you provide an annual breakdown.
- 4) Out of those convicted during the years 2020 to 2024, how many were given early release from prison while serving their sentences?

Information in relation parts 1 to 3 of your request, in relation to the numbers of convictions at courts where there was a domestic violence motivation attributed to an offence, as well as for the gender of those convicted in those cases, has been provided in relation to the years 2019 to 2023, the most recent five years for which statistics are available. Statistics in relation to cases dealt with at courts in 2024 have not yet been prepared and may be available by late June 2025.

Information in relation to length of custodial disposals imposed has been interpreted slightly differently than that posed in the original query, so that a continuous series of disposals can be provided.

Convictions for cases where there was a domestic violence motivation for an offence by gender of defendant, 2019 to 2023

Year	Male	Female	Total
2019	1,060	113	1,173
2020	794	76	870
2021	1,267	154	1,421
2022	1,420	144	1,564
2023	1,792	178	1,970

Source: DoJ

Note:

1. Figures relate to initial disposals at courts.
2. Figures relate to cases where there was a conviction for at least one offence where there was a domestic abuse motivation, as assessed by Public Prosecution Service, or where there was at least one instance of the new domestic abuse offence, as introduced under the Domestic Abuse and Civil Proceedings Act (Northern Ireland) 2021.
3. Figures for males include a small number of persons who had no gender recorded or who were recorded as other than male or female

Length of imprisonment disposals in cases where there was a conviction for a domestic violence motivated offence, 2019 to 2023

Year	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
6 months or less	215	202	258	361	447
over 6 months to 1 year	29	27	28	44	71
over 1 year to 5 years	43	23	42	40	76
over 5 years to 10 years	8	#	*	6	13
more than 10 years	5	*	#	7	10
Total custodial disposals	300	260	337	458	617

Source: DoJ

Note:

1. Figures relate to initial disposals at courts.
2. Figures relate to cases where there was a conviction for at least one offence where there was a domestic abuse motivation, as assessed by Public Prosecution Service, or

where there was at least one instance of the new domestic abuse offence, as introduced under the Domestic Abuse and Civil Proceedings Act (Northern Ireland) 2021.

3. Figures for length of custodial disposal imposed relate to the main offence in the case.

4. Figures for length of disposal relate to periods to be spent in custody and periods to be spent on licence.

* means a figure of less than 3 has been treated under rules of disclosure.

means a figure of 3 or more has treated to prevent disclosure of a small number elsewhere.

Number of defendants receiving a non-custodial sentence following conviction for a domestic violence motivation offence, 2019 to 2023

Year	No. of defendants
2019	873
2020	610
2021	1,084
2022	1,106
2023	1,353

Source: DoJ

Note:

1. Figures relate to initial disposals at courts.

2. Figures relate to cases where there was a conviction for at least one offence where there was a domestic abuse motivation, as assessed by Public Prosecution Service, or where there was at least one instance of the new domestic abuse offence, as introduced under the Domestic Abuse and Civil Proceedings Act (Northern Ireland) 2021.

3. Figures relate to the main offence in the case.

In relation to part 4 of your query, none were given early release. The only type of early release from NIPS custody is through the Conditional Early Release (CER) Scheme. The CER policy is published at: <https://www.justice-ni.gov.uk/publications/revised-cer-policy-september-2022>

The policy states (Section 24 parts G and H) that prisoners are deemed presumed unsuitable for early release if they are subject to a current Prevention Order or are serving a sentence for an offence involving or associated with threatening behaviour or domestic

violence in an intimate or close family relationship; or an offence under the Domestic Abuse and Civil Proceedings Act (Northern Ireland) 2021 that is a domestic abuse offence, a child aggravated domestic abuse offence or any other offence aggravated by domestic abuse.

If you are unhappy with the result of your request for information you may request an internal review within two calendar months of the date of this letter. If you request an internal review please do so in writing stating the reasons to the address above.

If following an internal review you were to remain dissatisfied you may make a complaint to the Information Commissioner and ask him to investigate whether the DoJ has complied with the terms of the FOIA. You can write to the Information Commissioner at:

Information Commissioner
Wycliffe House
Water Lane
Wilmslow
Cheshire
SK9 5AF

The Commissioner will not investigate a complaint unless an internal review procedure has been carried out.

Further details on the role of the Information Commissioner and the handling of appeals can be found at: www.informationcommissioner.gov.uk

Yours sincerely

Freedom of Information Manager