

FOI DoF/2023-0413**Request**

Can you provide by year covering the 1 April 2018 to 30 September 2023, a table or data of suicides registered in Northern Ireland, with the table or data disaggregated by (a) the country of birth of the deceased, (b) their age and (c) if possible, the local authority area of the suicide.

Response

I can confirm that the Department holds some of the information requested.

The Northern Ireland Statistics and Research Agency (NISRA) produces statistics based on the cause of death information recorded on death certificates and collected by the General Register Office (GRO) during the death registration process.

Please note that in the United Kingdom the National Statistics definition, in considering suicide events, includes cases where the [International Classification of Diseases 10th Revision \(ICD-10\)](#) are either X60-X84 and Y87.0 (Suicide and self-inflicted injury) or Y10-Y34 and Y87.2 (Event of Undetermined intent). Any data provided are based on the **year of registration** rather than the year of occurrence. Events such as suicide are referred to the coroner, and this process can take some time; therefore, deaths recorded each year may have occurred prior to the registration year.

Prior to the publication of the annual suicide statistics, NISRA carries out standard internal quality assurance data checks. Therefore, besides the total number of suicides by age grouping registered in 2022, already published in the [Registrar general annual report](#), and the provisional (P) number of suicides by age grouping registered between January to June 2023, published in the [registrar general quarterly report](#), any further disaggregation of the suicide statistics will not be available (n/a) until the suicide statistics 2022 and 2023 are published.

- a) The table below shows the number of suicides registered in Northern Ireland by country of birth from April 2018 to June 2023.

Country of birth	Apr-Dec 2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	Jan-Jun 2023P
Northern Ireland	154	181	180	201	n/a	n/a
Great Britain	15	12	20	17	n/a	n/a
Republic of Ireland	10	4	8	6	n/a	n/a
Other	10	8	11	13	n/a	n/a
Total	189	205	219	237	203	109

The disaggregation of the data by country of birth, for 2022 and 2023 are subject to Exemption Section 22(1) (information intended for future publication). The suicide statistics 2022 annual data are planned for release in December 2023, as per the Vital Statistics Unit publication schedule. (<https://www.nisra.gov.uk/publications/vital-statistics-documentation>). The suicide statistics 2023 annual data will be released in winter 2024. By applying Section 22(1) Exemption of the FOI Act, we are required to carry out a Public Interest Test, which can be found attached at Annex B.

- b) The table below shows the number of suicides registered in Northern Ireland by age grouping, April 2018 to June 2023.

Age groupings (Years)	Apr-Dec 2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	Jan-Jun 2023P
under 15	0	2	2	5	2	0
15-34	69	67	78	91	54	37
35-44	42	44	54	46	43	24
45-54	33	50	35	51	44	25
55-64	25	21	33	23	34	13
65-74	16	18	11	16	18	5
75 years or older	4	3	6	5	8	5
Total	189	205	219	237	203	109

Data for July to September 2023 are subject to Exemption Section 22(1) (information intended for future publication) as the Registrar General Quarterly report, quarter 3 2023 data that includes provisional numbers of deaths from suicide by age grouping, are planned for release during December 2023 as per the Vital Statistics Unit publication schedule. (<https://www.nisra.gov.uk/publications/vital-statistics-documentation>). By applying Section 22(1) Exemption of the FOI Act, we are required to carry out a Public Interest Test, which can be found attached at Annex B.

- c) The table below shows the number of registered suicides by the 11 Local Government Districts (LGD) of Northern Ireland, April 2018 to June 2023. Please note that the deaths of those whose usual residence is outside Northern Ireland are included in national and sub-national figures for Northern Ireland, based on where the death occurred.

LGD	Apr-Dec 2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	Jan-Jun 2023P
Antrim & Newtownabbey	14	11	12	11	n/a	n/a
Armagh City, Banbridge & Craigavon	13	20	29	27	n/a	n/a
Belfast	56	54	62	63	n/a	n/a
Causeway Coast & Glens	15	9	12	14	n/a	n/a
Derry City & Strabane	14	21	12	23	n/a	n/a
Fermanagh & Omagh	14	11	18	14	n/a	n/a
Lisburn & Castlereagh	16	21	15	10	n/a	n/a
Mid & East Antrim	10	17	12	13	n/a	n/a
Mid Ulster	9	18	10	13	n/a	n/a
Newry, Mourne & Down	17	13	24	27	n/a	n/a
Ards & North Down	11	10	13	22	n/a	n/a
Total	189	205	219	237	203	109

Data for 2022 and 2023 are subject to Exemption Section 22(1) (information intended for future publication). The suicide statistics 2022 annual data are planned for release in December 2023, as per the Vital Statistics Unit publication schedule.
<https://www.nisra.gov.uk/publications/vital-statistics-documentation>).

The suicide statistics 2023 annual data will be released in winter 2024. By applying Section 22(1) Exemption of the FOI Act, we are required to carry out a Public Interest Test, which can be found attached at Annex B.

PUBLIC INTEREST TEST

Annex B

Request Ref: DoF/2023-0413

Request Summary: Suicide death data in NI for the period 1 April 2018 to 30 September 2023

Information Details:	Exemption/ Exception Applied	Disclosure	Non Disclosure
		(Please complete both columns to show all factors have been considered)	
Can you provide by year covering the 1 April 2018 to 30 September 2023, a table or data of suicides registered in Northern Ireland, with the table or data disaggregated by (a) the country of birth of the deceased, (b) their age and (c) if possible, the local authority area of the suicide.	S22	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To show compliance with the FOI Act by disclosing information held by the Department as a Public Authority; There is a general public interest in the accountability, openness and transparency of government, and to promote public understanding. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> For requested parts a) and c) the data for 2022 and 2023 are subject to Exemption Section 22(1) (information intended for future publication). The suicide statistics 2022 annual data are planned for release in December 2023, as per the Vital Statistics Unit publication schedule. (https://www.nisra.gov.uk/publications/vital-statistics-documentation). The suicide statistics 2023 annual data will be released in winter 2024. For requested part b) the data for July to September 2023 are subject to Exemption Section 22(1) (information intended for future publication) as the Registrar General Quarterly report, quarterly 3 2023 data, that includes provisional details of deaths from suicide by age grouping, are planned for release during December 2023 as per the Vital Statistics Unit publication schedule. (https://www.nisra.gov.uk/publications/vital-statistics-documentation.) NISRA carries out standard internal quality assurance checks on this data which may result in the information requested being subject to ongoing change in the run-up to publication. It is in the public interest that the quality assurance process is concluded before making this information available to the public to ensure accuracy and consistency of messaging and thereby confidence in what we report. As the information requested is of notable interest to the wider public, it is important that it can be accessed by all interested parties at the same time in an accurate form. This is in line with the Official Statistics Code of Practice which states: 'Statistics and data should be equally available to all, not given to some people before others. They should be published at a sufficient level of detail and remain publicly available.'

PUBLIC INTEREST DECISION: After weighing up the competing public interest considerations, we consider it is reasonable in all the circumstances that the information held should be withheld from disclosure until the future date of publication (section 22[1]) and that the public interest in maintaining the exemption outweighs the public interest in disclosure.

Signed: Deborah Lyness

Date: 07 November 2023