



# Motoring Offence Statistics for Northern Ireland

## 1<sup>st</sup> March 2021 to 28<sup>th</sup> February 2022

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PSNI Statistics Branch  
Lisnasharragh  
42 Montgomery Road  
Belfast  
BT6 9LD

Web: [PSNI Statistics](#)

 [statistics@psni.police.uk](mailto:statistics@psni.police.uk)

 02890 650222 Ext. 24135

In the 12 months from 1st March 2021 to 28th February 2022:

- There were 41,259 detections for motoring offences in Northern Ireland, which were dealt with by means of a fixed penalty notice, speed awareness course or referral for prosecution.
- This represented a decrease of 14% on the 47,707 detections recorded in the previous 12 months, with reductions reported among the speeding, insurance and mobile phone offence groups.
- Nonetheless, speeding offences were the largest offence group recorded (6,673) and along with insurance (6,635) accounted for almost one-third of the total detections.
- The highest speed detected by PSNI officers in the latest 12 months was 128mph, on the M1, Lurgan.
- The number of vehicle test certificate offences remain low compared with pre-covid levels which resulted in a significant decrease due to reduced traffic and automatic MOT renewals. However, such offences have increased by 45% during March 2021 – February 2022, compared to March 2020 – February 2021.

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We welcome user feedback on these statistics. This can be sent to the email address on the cover page or by contacting us at the telephone number provided.

## 1. Things you need to know about this release

Motoring offence statistics for Northern Ireland are collated and produced by statisticians seconded to the Police Service of Northern Ireland (PSNI) from the Northern Ireland Statistics and Research Agency (NISRA).

[PSNI Official Statistics documentation](#) is available on the Official Statistics section of the PSNI website.

### Coverage

This report provides statistics on the number of motoring offences detected by police in Northern Ireland from 1<sup>st</sup> March 2021 – 28<sup>th</sup> February 2022. It does not include any detections by the NI Road Safety Partnership (NI RSP). Figures relating to such detections through the Partnership can be accessed via the following link – [NI RSP](#).

The range of disposals covered includes those offences dealt with by means of a fixed penalty notice (FPN), speed awareness course and referral for prosecution.

This report presents the most recent motoring offence statistics based on figures that were extracted on 25<sup>th</sup> April 2022. Referred for prosecution figures from 1<sup>st</sup> January 2020 onwards remain provisional and therefore subject to amendment. The information is also available in tabular format in the [accompanying spreadsheets](#) on the PSNI website.

Background information and details of the offences included in each offence grouping can be found in the [Motoring Offence User Guide](#) on the PSNI website. Please note the figures refer to the number of offences and not the number of persons detected as a person can be detected for more than one offence.

### National Statistics Status

National Statistics status means that our statistics meet the highest standards of trustworthiness, quality and public value, and as producers, it is our responsibility to maintain compliance with these standards.

These statistics were designated as National Statistics in March 2020 following a full [assessment](#) against the [Code of Practice](#).

Since the assessment by the UK Statistics Authority, we have continued to comply with the Code of Practice for Statistics, and have made the following improvements:

- In November 2020, a review of the motoring offence codes was conducted to ensure all appropriate offences continue to be included in the statistics, with the referred for prosecution figures amended accordingly.
- In October 2021, a further review of the motoring offence codes was completed and as a result the offence groups were amended to better reflect the offences recorded within them.

### Uses of the statistics

Uses of the statistics, based on user engagement, information requests and satisfaction survey feedback include policy making and policy monitoring, performance monitoring, and public interest, by a range of users including PSNI, Policing and Community Safety Partnerships (PCSPs), media and academics.

More detail can be found in the Motoring Offence User Guide which can be accessed via the [motoring offences](#) statistics web page on the PSNI website.

### Related statistics

Sources of motoring offences data for other domains include [An Garda Síochána - Republic of Ireland](#) and [England and Wales](#). Related statistics include [Injury road traffic collision statistics](#) and [NI Road Safety Partnership](#) statistics.

## 2. Summary

Table 1 shows that, over the last 12 months:

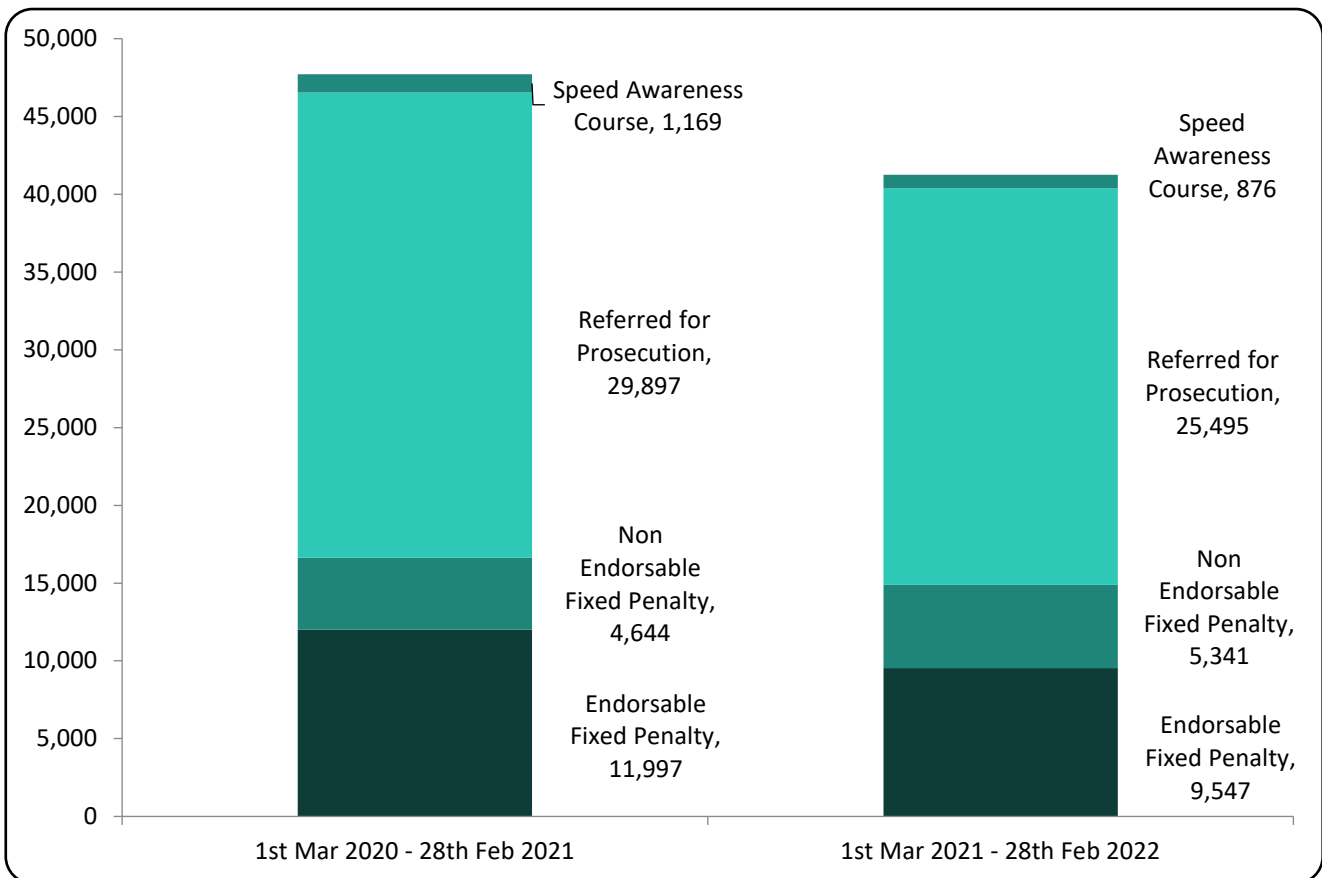
- The number of motoring offences detected fell by 14% to 41,259
- Offences referred for prosecution fell by 15%
- Endorsable fixed penalties decreased by 20%
- Number of speed awareness courses decreased by 25%

**Table 1 Number of motoring offences by disposal type, 1<sup>st</sup> March 2020 – 28<sup>th</sup> February 2022\***

	1st Mar 2020 - 28th Feb 2021	1st Mar 2021 - 28th Feb 2022	Change over last 12 months	Percentage change over last 12 months
Endorsable Fixed Penalty	11,997	9,547	-2,450	-20
Non Endorsable Fixed Penalty	4,644	5,341	697	15
Referred for Prosecution	29,897	25,495	-4,402	-15
Speed Awareness Course	1,169	876	-293	-25
<b>Total</b>	<b>47,707</b>	<b>41,259</b>	<b>-6,448</b>	<b>-14</b>

\*Figures are provisional and subject to change.

**Figure 1 Comparisons of disposal types for motoring offences between 1<sup>st</sup> March 2020 – 28<sup>th</sup> February 2021 and 1<sup>st</sup> March 2021 – 28<sup>th</sup> February 2022**



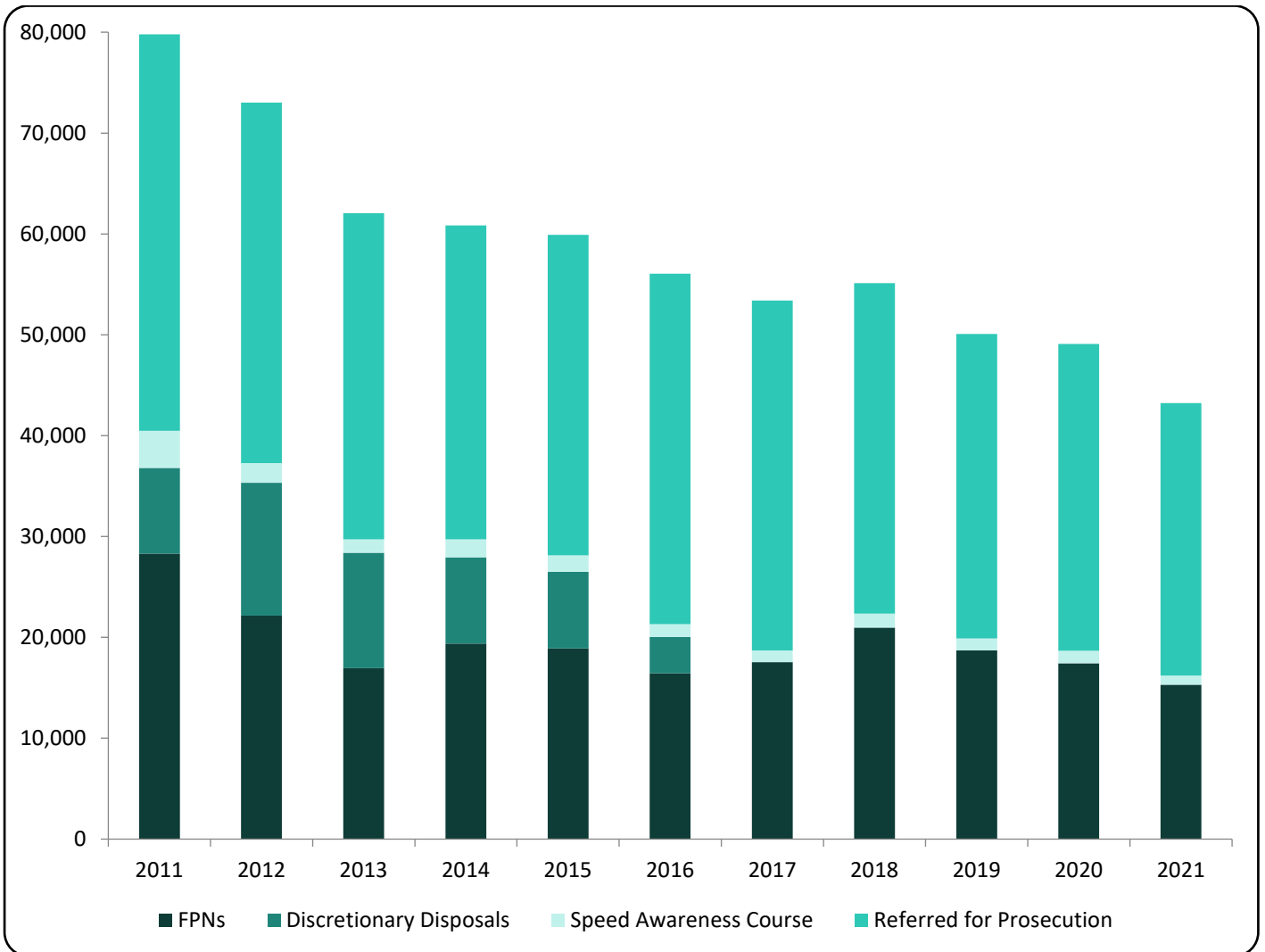
Note that not all detections in the most recent months will have been processed at this time, particularly those referred for prosecution.

### 3. Trends

The number of motoring offences have been generally decreasing over a 10 year period from a total of 79,796 recorded in 2011 to 43,237 recorded in 2021 (see figure 2).

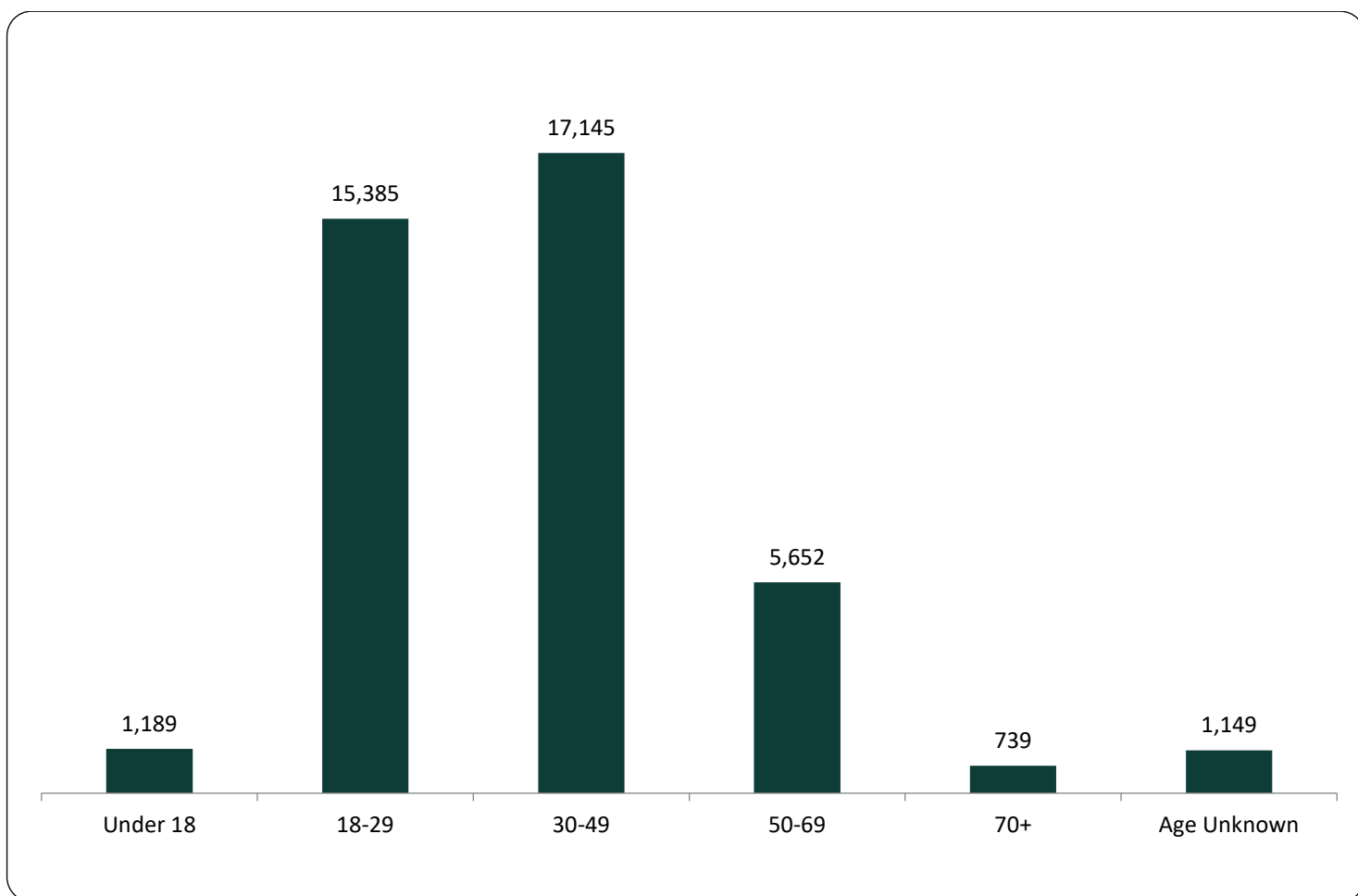
Discretionary disposals were introduced during 2011 as an alternative method of disposal for dealing with motoring offences but was then removed on 31<sup>st</sup> July 2016.

**Figure 2 Number of motoring offences by disposal type: 1<sup>st</sup> January 2011 – 31<sup>st</sup> December 2021**



## 4. Age and Gender

Figure 3 Number of motoring offences by age: 1<sup>st</sup> March 2021 – 28<sup>th</sup> February 2022



- Figure 3 shows that those aged 30-49 years old accounted for over two fifths of motoring offences detected between 1<sup>st</sup> March 2021 and 28<sup>th</sup> February 2022, followed by those aged 18-29 (37%). Almost all (99%) of the unknown ages refer to non endorsable offences, which can be issued in the absence of the offender and do not require licence details to process, for example parking offences.
- Males accounted for 8 in 10 of all motoring offences detected between 1<sup>st</sup> March 2021 and 28<sup>th</sup> February 2022.

## 5. Offence Group

**Table 2 Number of motoring offences by gender, age band and offence group<sup>1</sup>**  
**1<sup>st</sup> March 2021 – 28<sup>th</sup> February 2022\***

	Female	Male	Other / Unknown	Under 18	18-29	30-49	50-69	70+	Age Unknown	Total
Breach of signs & signals	89	232	7	1	75	103	73	9	67	<b>328</b>
Careless driving	920	3,131	6	85	1,426	1,583	784	171	8	<b>4,057</b>
Construction & use	389	2,368	6	77	1,653	725	238	22	48	<b>2,763</b>
Dangerous driving	163	1,441	0	48	792	571	165	28	0	<b>1,604</b>
Drink or drug driving	541	2,234	4	19	859	1,400	451	49	1	<b>2,779</b>
Driving licence	493	2,946	5	119	1,250	1,675	344	55	1	<b>3,444</b>
Driving whilst disqualified	90	934	1	89	300	539	88	9	0	<b>1,025</b>
Failing to stop / remain / report collision	384	1,740	3	76	759	905	320	64	3	<b>2,127</b>
Fraudulent use / declaration	38	203	0	1	66	133	34	6	1	<b>241</b>
Insurance	1,090	5,536	9	229	2,615	3,103	616	71	1	<b>6,635</b>
L & R driver	311	1,483	5	136	853	648	148	14	0	<b>1,799</b>
Miscellaneous	94	804	3	66	377	340	108	8	2	<b>901</b>
Mobile phone	400	1,832	2	12	523	1,153	504	42	0	<b>2,234</b>
Non-driver	205	320	5	11	219	211	79	9	1	<b>530</b>
Parking	527	823	76	2	173	171	76	8	996	<b>1,426</b>
Seatbelt	157	663	0	10	251	343	179	37	0	<b>820</b>
Speeding	1,907	4,764	2	67	2,515	2,726	1,251	114	0	<b>6,673</b>
Vehicle TADA / tampering	96	920	1	126	427	422	38	3	1	<b>1,017</b>
Vehicle test certificate	180	676	0	15	252	394	156	20	19	<b>856</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>8,074</b>	<b>33,050</b>	<b>135</b>	<b>1,189</b>	<b>15,385</b>	<b>17,145</b>	<b>5,652</b>	<b>739</b>	<b>1,149</b>	<b>41,259</b>

\* Figures are provisional and subject to change.

<sup>1</sup> Please refer to section 7 further information for more detail regarding the offence groups.

- Table 1 shows a drop of one fifth in the number of endorsable tickets issued in past 12 months when compared with previous 12 months, this is mainly attributed to large fall in tickets issued for speeding, no insurance and using a mobile phone.
- Table 2 shows that the largest offence group recorded was speeding offences with a total of 6,673 detections, accounting for 16% of all detections for motoring offences. This was a decrease of 23% on the number recorded in the previous 12 months.
- Insurance offences also accounted for 16% of all offences, a reduction of 19% on the number recorded between March 2020 and February 2021.
- The highest speed recorded by PSNI officers in the latest 12 months was 128mph, on the M1, Lurgan.
- In the latest 12 months, the NI Road Safety Partnership detected over 8 times more speeding offences than the PSNI (53,864).
- Only six out of the nineteen offence groups reported an increase in detections over the year, one of which was vehicle test certificates, which was up by 45% or 264 detections.
- Mobile phone offences showed the largest percentage decrease over the 12 month period, reducing by 33% (1,103 detections).
- Over half of those detected for mobile phone offences were age 30-49.
- Almost one quarter of all female detections was for speeding offences.
- The number of vehicle test certificate offences remain low compared with pre-covid levels which resulted in a significant decrease due to reduced traffic and automatic MOT renewals. However, such offences have increased by 45% during March 2021 – February 2022, compared to March 2020 – February 2021.
- More than two fifths of those detected for insurance offences were aged under 30.



**Table 3 Number of motoring offences by month and offence group<sup>1</sup>, 1<sup>st</sup> March 2020 – 28<sup>th</sup> February 2022\***

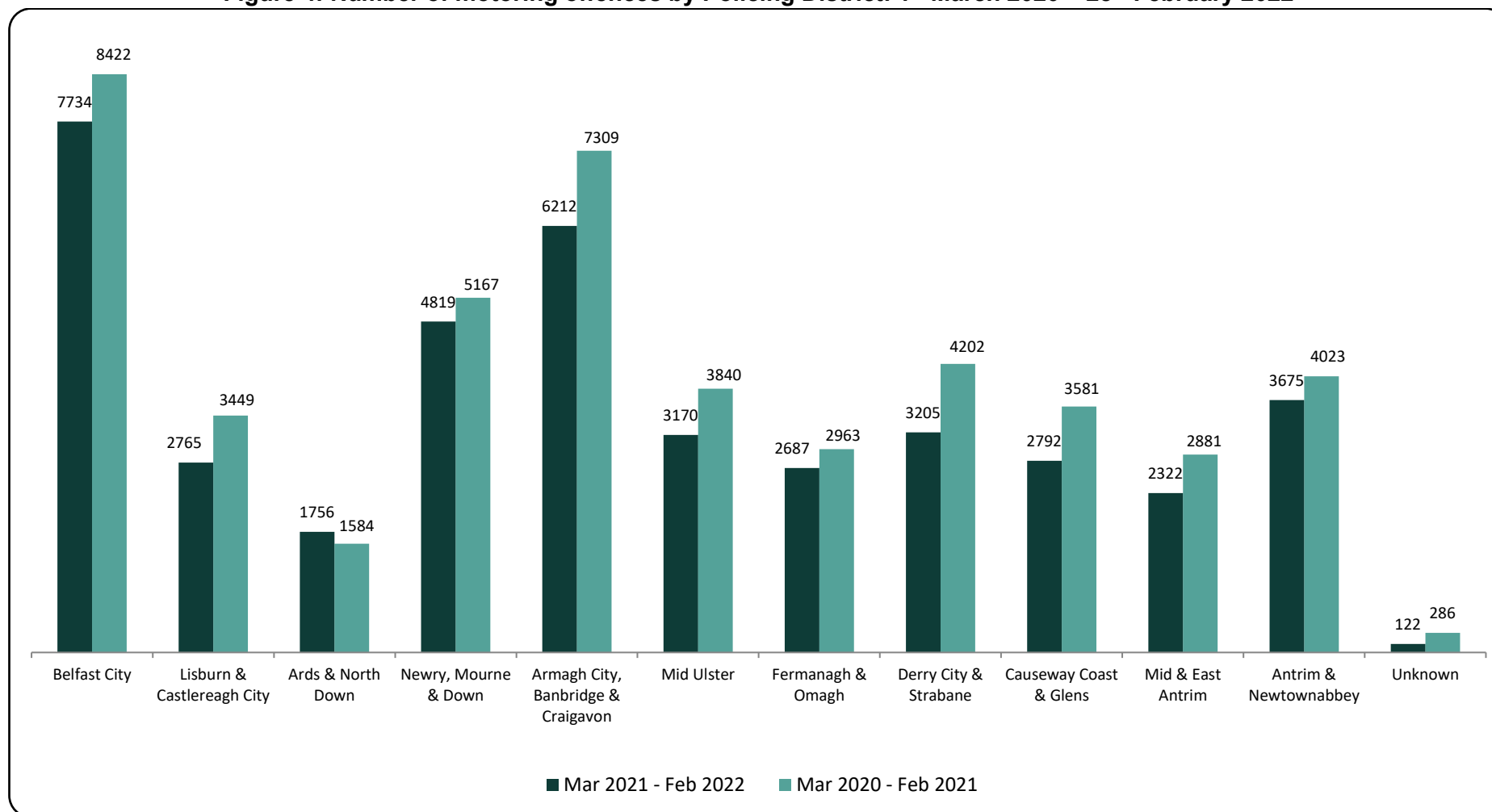
Offence group	Mar 2021	Apr 2021	May 2021	Jun 2021	Jul 2021	Aug 2021	Sep 2021	Oct 2021	Nov 2021	Dec 2021	Jan 2022	Feb 2022	Mar 2021 - Feb 2022	Mar 2020 - Feb 2021	Change over last 12 months Number	Change over last 12 months %
Breach of signs & signals	58	43	20	33	30	23	15	41	13	18	21	13	328	271	57	21
Careless driving	301	392	418	410	365	340	389	395	331	271	265	180	4,057	3,770	287	8
Construction & use	215	291	341	265	214	227	216	239	278	152	180	145	2,763	2,975	-212	-7
Dangerous driving	168	179	202	151	128	143	131	128	136	91	86	61	1,604	1,811	-207	-11
Drink or drug driving	191	201	271	251	263	270	247	286	236	247	165	151	2,779	2,975	-196	-7
Driving licence	352	358	340	346	316	313	275	307	240	246	196	155	3,444	4,354	-910	-21
Driving whilst disqualified	111	102	95	101	82	82	91	93	67	71	79	51	1,025	1,023	2	0
Failing to stop / remain / report collision	164	193	262	218	188	241	213	208	163	129	90	58	2,127	2,706	-579	-21
Fraudulent use / declaration	36	26	20	25	13	23	19	27	19	13	9	11	241	323	-82	-25
Insurance	685	670	597	630	597	543	534	623	463	486	442	365	6,635	8,218	-1,583	-19
L & R driver	148	158	157	169	150	152	181	196	140	145	107	96	1,799	1,792	7	0
Miscellaneous	83	82	75	86	77	90	84	79	62	69	69	45	901	1,075	-174	-16
Mobile phone	199	234	246	238	186	219	193	208	175	90	141	105	2,234	3,337	-1,103	-33
Non-driver	57	52	53	55	45	42	44	46	36	41	38	21	530	711	-181	-25
Parking	313	176	168	69	249	65	65	94	76	32	83	36	1,426	999	427	43
Seatbelt	62	95	83	113	69	86	78	60	50	45	50	29	820	864	-44	-5
Speeding	638	698	716	653	581	486	515	584	558	353	553	338	6,673	8,649	-1,976	-23
Vehicle TADA / tampering	107	101	88	86	90	101	114	86	66	76	62	40	1,017	1,262	-245	-19
Vehicle test certificate	34	48	61	76	90	100	64	86	83	62	90	62	856	592	264	45
<b>Total</b>	<b>3,922</b>	<b>4,099</b>	<b>4,213</b>	<b>3,975</b>	<b>3,733</b>	<b>3,546</b>	<b>3,468</b>	<b>3,786</b>	<b>3,192</b>	<b>2,637</b>	<b>2,726</b>	<b>1,962</b>	<b>41,259</b>	<b>47,707</b>	<b>-6,448</b>	<b>-14</b>

\* Figures are provisional and subject to change.

<sup>1</sup> Please refer to section 7 further information for more detail regarding the offence groups.

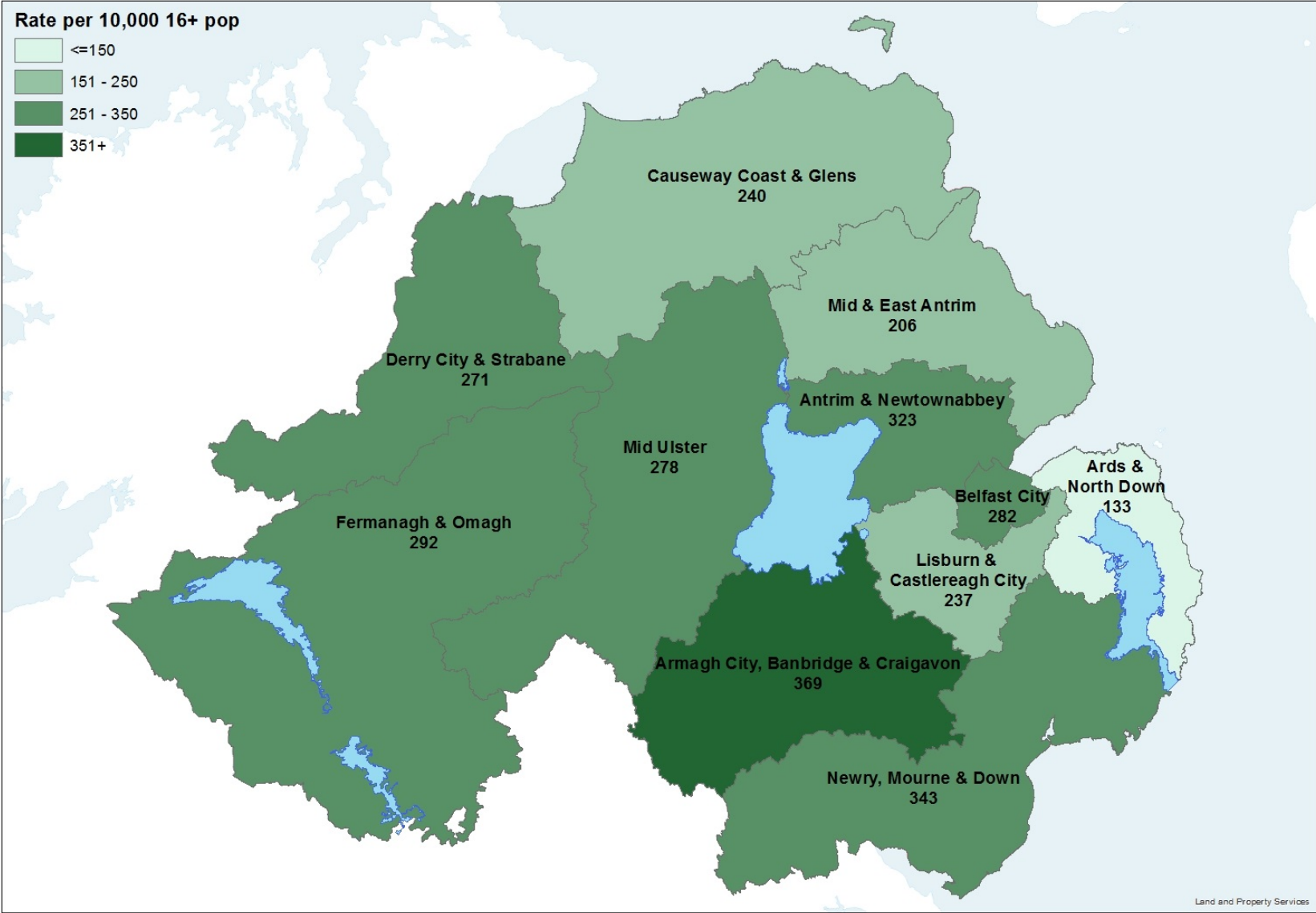
## 6. Policing District

Figure 4: Number of motoring offences by Policing District: 1<sup>st</sup> March 2020 – 28<sup>th</sup> February 2022



- Figure 4 shows that 19% of motoring offences was detected in Belfast City District followed by a further 15% in Armagh City, Banbridge and Craigavon district.

Figure 5: Rate of motoring offences per 10,000 population<sup>1</sup> aged 16+ by Policing District: 1<sup>st</sup> March 2021 – 28<sup>th</sup> February 2022



<sup>1</sup> Population figures sourced from [Northern Ireland Neighbourhood Service \(NINIS\)](#), based on mid-year population estimates for 2020.

## 7. Further Information

A [User Guide](#) providing detailed information on the motoring offences statistics is available on the PSNI website.

[PSNI Official Statistics documentation](#) is available on the Official Statistics section of the PSNI website.

### Referred for prosecution

Police led prosecutions for motoring offences occur when the offence is of a serious nature and has no corresponding fixed penalty or where multiple offences have occurred or where the alleged offender wishes to have the matter(s) heard at court. Where an offending driver has already accumulated a number of penalty points, to the extent that a driving disqualification is now in scope, such cases must be heard at court and will consequently also be subject of a prosecution.

### Fixed penalty notices

Fixed penalties originated as an administrative way to deal with simple parking offences without referring such matters to the courts. Such was its success that it was identified as an efficient way to deal with minor road traffic offences and was expanded to encompass these matters in the mid-1980s. With the introduction of penalty points for traffic offences, the scheme was expanded to incorporate endorsable and non-endorsable offences.

Non-endorsable offences - meaning those which don't result in points on your licence incur a fine of £30. Fines for endorsable offences are £60 and three points. More serious offences such as driving without insurance can incur fines of up to £200 and six points. Other fixed penalty offences include No MOT (£60) or Vehicle Excise License (£60). Fine collection and revenue reporting are managed by the NI Courts Service.

The full list of offences and groups are published on the [motoring offences section](#) of the PSNI website.

### Speed awareness courses

Speed awareness courses were introduced in Northern Ireland in 2010. Drivers, depending on the speed at which they were detected, October be offered an opportunity to attend a speed awareness course as an alternative to penalty points. The course which is available at eight locations throughout Northern Ireland and delivered and managed (currently online due to COVID-19) by an appointed contractor must be attended within a period of 120 days from the date of detection. Certain restrictions apply to who can qualify for the speed awareness course option.

### Offence groups

An offence group is made up of many individual offences. For the full list of offences and groups see the [motoring offences section](#) of the PSNI website.

### Careless driving

Unlike England and Wales there is not one single offence for careless driving in Northern Ireland. The careless driving offence group includes driver does not have proper control of vehicle, driving without due care and attention, overtaking on inside lane, driving on hard shoulder of motorway and reversing on motorway.

### Construction and use

Construction and use offence group includes defective tyre, defective exhaust, excess noise, incorrect form of registration and no number plate offences.

### L & R driver

L & R driver means learner and restricted driver offence group. Note the offence of L or R driver exceeding 45mph is included in the speeding group.

### Miscellaneous

Miscellaneous offence group includes taxi related offences, tachograph and driver hours offences.

## Non-driver

The non-driver offence group includes all aiding and abetting, permitting and causing offences. It also includes non-motor vehicle and pedestrian offences.

## Speeding

This does not include driver's detected speeding through the NI Road Safety Partnership.

## Vehicle TADA / tampering

Vehicle TADA means Vehicle taking and driving away.

## Revisions

Figures for 2021 were finalised in March 2022. Figures from January 2022 onwards are currently provisional and subject to ongoing quality assurance and minor amendment, primarily due to the time taken to process all offences, particularly those referred for prosecution or completing a speed awareness course.