



**Police Service**  
of Northern Ireland



# Outcomes of Crimes Recorded by the Police in Northern Ireland

## 2015/16 to 2023/24

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# Contents

Contents.....	1
Things you need to know about this release .....	2
Key Points.....	4
1. Distribution of crime outcomes .....	5
2. Distribution of outcomes by type of crime.....	7
3. Length of time between report to police and outcome being assigned .....	9
4. Distribution of outcomes for crimes with a domestic abuse motivation .....	10
5. Distribution of outcomes for crimes with a hate motivation .....	11
Appendix 1. Presentation of Crime Outcomes .....	14
Appendix 2. Description and Categorisation of Crime Outcomes .....	16
Appendix 3. Further Information .....	17

We welcome comment and feedback on these statistics. If you would like to forward your views, receive notification of new publications or be kept informed of developments relating to PSNI statistics, please email your contact details using the email address provided on the cover page.

# Things you need to know about this release

## Coverage

This bulletin is an Official Statistics publication meaning it complies with the [Code of Practice for Statistics](#) as follows:

- Trustworthiness: the statistics are impartial, independent and released in an open and transparent manner in accordance with a pre-announced publication schedule
- Quality: the statistics are produced using robust and relevant data sources which undergo continuous quality improvement and assurance checks
- Value: the statistics strive to meet user needs informed by ongoing feedback, providing sufficient detail which is widely accessible.

Our statistical practice is regulated by the Office for Statistics Regulation (OSR). OSR sets the standards of trustworthiness, quality and value in the Code of Practice for Statistics that all producers of official statistics should adhere to. You are welcome to contact us directly with any comments about how we meet these standards by emailing [statistics@psni.police.uk](mailto:statistics@psni.police.uk). Alternatively, you can contact OSR by emailing [regulation@statistics.gov.uk](mailto:regulation@statistics.gov.uk) or via the [OSR website \(opens in a new window\)](#).

The Home Office introduced a new outcomes framework in England & Wales in April 2014, allowing every crime recorded by the police to be given an outcome and therefore showing how the police deal with all crimes. This framework was implemented within the Police Service of Northern Ireland (PSNI) in April 2015. Prior to this, outcomes focused solely on those crimes resulting in a 'sanction', such as charge, summons, caution, community resolution or penalty notice for disorder and published as outcome rates. These outcome rates continue to be published in the Police Recorded Crime Monthly and Annual Trends bulletins (see below and [Appendix 1](#)).

This is the eighth annual bulletin presenting the wider outcomes framework within PSNI, summarising the outcomes that have been assigned to crimes recorded by the police between 2015/16 and 2023/24. This bulletin can be read alongside the Police Recorded Crime publications in order to see the wider context of recorded crime and crime outcomes.

Figures were compiled on 12<sup>th</sup> November 2024, using data extracted from the police administrative system on that date. All tables and charts in the bulletin, along with supplementary data, are available in the accompanying spreadsheet on the [PSNI website \(opens in a new window\)](#).

Future publication of these figures will be pre-announced in due course.

**Data Quality:** 'Sanction' outcomes are applied on the basis of charge sheets, PPS directions (summonses issued), signed caution forms, PND notices and community resolution forms. They are checked for compliance by the PSNI's Statistics Branch and validated in accordance with the Home Office Counting Rules.

Crimes resulting in no formal action being taken by police against a suspect will also have the outcome assigned according to the Home Office Counting Rules. The correct application of these outcomes is not quality assured by the PSNI's Statistics Branch. However basic quality checks are conducted to ensure records have the essential elements completed, allowing inclusion in the data.

## Points to note

**Crime outcomes** show the action taken in relation to each crime recorded. This is regardless of the number of suspects identified in relation to each crime. Therefore the figures in this bulletin cannot be used to comment on suspects or offenders.

The commentary within this bulletin refers to observations and patterns of crime across each financial year 2015/16 to 2023/24.

## Basis for the presentation of figures in each section of this bulletin

The figures in Sections 1, 2, 4 and 5 are based on the date the crime was reported to police; they relate to crimes recorded between 2015/16 and 2023/24 and show the outcome methods that have since been assigned to those crimes.

The figures in Section 3 (length of time between report to police and outcome being assigned) are based on outcomes assigned during each financial year, regardless of the crime report date. This allows the analysis to fairly represent all crime types, including those crimes that tend to have longer investigations.

## Presentation of crime outcomes

[Appendix 1](#) presents a comparison of 'outcome rates' (an integral part of the Police Recorded Crime statistics) and 'outcomes since assigned' (as published in this bulletin). Appendix 1 highlights the differences between the two sets of statistics in terms of the time series available, coverage and data quality. It provides strengths and limitations of each approach, caution to be exercised in interpreting the figures and how both sets of figures are calculated.

## Description and Categorisation of Crime Outcomes

[Appendix 2](#) presents the full range of outcomes available by the outcome group and the more detailed outcome type. While the full range of Home Office outcomes is presented, some of these are not available for use within Northern Ireland, or are administered differently. Appendix 2 highlights those 'sanction' outcome methods in use within Northern Ireland prior to the implementation of the new outcomes framework in April 2015. The outcome groups are further aggregated for presentation purposes.

## Revisions

While every crime should eventually be assigned an outcome, this may take some time due to ongoing investigations. Therefore the figures published within this bulletin will be subject to revision in future publications, as investigations are completed and as outcomes continue to be assigned. This is particularly applicable to the more recent periods, as can be seen in the table below.

### Crimes recorded 2015/16 to 2023/24 that have since been assigned an outcome, comparison of current figures with previously published figures

Date of publication	2015/16	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24
January 2018	98.0	94.7	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
November 2018	98.5	97.8	92.4	-	-	-	-	-	-
November 2019	98.7	98.3	95.1	90.4	-	-	-	-	-
November 2020	98.7	98.4	95.5	92.5	91.2	-	-	-	-
November 2021	98.7	98.5	95.7	92.9	93.1	90.5	-	-	-
November 2022	98.7	98.5	95.7	93.1	93.5	92.6	89.3	-	-
November 2023	98.8	98.5	95.8	93.1	93.7	93.2	92.0	88.8	-
November 2024	98.8	98.5	95.8	93.2	93.8	93.5	92.6	91.2	88.5

## Comparisons with England and Wales

The links below are to publications relating to the crime outcome framework in England and Wales.

[Crime Outcomes in England and Wales Statistics \(opens in a new window\)](#)

[Domestic abuse in England and Wales overview: November 2024 \(opens in a new window\)](#)

[Hate Crime, England and Wales \(opens in a new window\)](#)

These publications should be viewed alongside their Northern Ireland equivalents ([Appendix 3](#)), which provide further information on methodologies that may affect comparisons.

The outcome methods available in both England & Wales and Northern Ireland are described in [Appendix 2](#). While the same outcome methods apply across both jurisdictions (apart from those indicated), the criminal justice processes behind the application of these methods may differ, affecting both volumes and the length of time between the report being made to police and the outcome being assigned.

## Key Points

At time of analysis, outcomes have been assigned to at least 96 per cent of crimes recorded between 2015/16 and 2017/18 and between 91 and 94 per cent of crimes recorded between 2018/19 and 2022/23. Outcomes have been assigned to 89 per cent of crimes recorded in the most recent financial year 2023/24.

**Charge / summons** – the following proportion of crimes are resolved by means of charge / summons:

- Around one in five of all crimes.
- Up to one in four violence against the person and sexual offences.
- Between 13 per cent and 16 per cent of robbery, theft and criminal damage offences.
- Between two in five and half of other crimes against society.
- Around one in four crimes with a domestic abuse motivation.
- Between one in ten and one in five sexual orientation crimes and around one in ten crimes with a racist or sectarian motivation. Proportions tend to be smaller and show a greater degree of variability for crimes with a faith/religion, disability or transgender identity motivation.

**Out-of-court disposals** – the following proportion of crimes are resolved by means of out-of-court disposals:

- Between seven and nine per cent of all crimes.
- Between four and six per cent for violence against the person and sexual offences.
- Between five and seven per cent for robbery, theft and criminal damage offences.
- Around one in four other crimes against society.
- Generally less than five per cent for crimes with a domestic abuse or hate motivation.

**Evidential difficulties** – the following proportion of crimes do not progress due to evidential difficulties:

- Up to thirty eight per cent of all crimes; for up to 26 percent of crimes the evidential difficulties are where the victim does not support action, while for up to 14 per cent of crimes the victim does support action.
- Around half of violence against the person and sexual offences.
- Between 15 and 23 per cent for robbery, theft and criminal damage offences.
- Between 13 and 18 per cent for other crimes against society.
- Around three in five crimes with a domestic abuse motivation (60%); around two in five are where the victim does not support action.
- For crimes with a sexual orientation, disability or transgender identity motivation evidential difficulties tends to be the most frequently assigned outcome method. For crimes with a racist, sectarian or faith/religion motivation evidential difficulties tends to be the second most frequently assigned outcome method.

**Investigation complete, no suspect** – in the following proportion of crimes a suspect was not identified and the investigation closed:

- 40 per cent of all crimes recorded in 2015/16 falling in each subsequent year to 22 per cent in 2022/23, rising again to 24 per cent in 2023/24; the lower proportion in more recent years may partly reflect the larger proportion of crimes, particularly since 2018/19, that have yet to have an outcome applied.
- Up to 14 per cent for violence against the person and sexual offences.
- 65 per cent of robbery, theft and criminal damage offences in 2015/16 falling each year to 47 per cent in 2022/23 and 2023/24.
- Between four and six per cent for other crimes against society.
- This outcome method shows generally higher proportions than for evidential difficulties for crimes with a racist, sectarian or faith/religion motivation, and generally lower proportions for crimes with a sexual orientation, disability or transgender identify motivation.

**Offences not yet assigned an outcome**

- The proportion of crimes yet to be assigned an outcome ranges from 1 per cent in 2015/16 to 11 per cent in 2023/24.
- Sexual offences, rape offences in particular, are the main crimes where outcomes have not yet been assigned. Around one in five sexual offences and one in five rape offences recorded during 2023/24 have not yet had an outcome assigned.

# 1. Distribution of crime outcomes

**Caution to be taken when comparing financial years:** It should be borne in mind that the larger proportion of crimes not yet allocated an outcome for more recent years (11.5% in 2023/24) may have a greater impact on the final distribution of outcomes for these years than would be the case for previous years (1.2% in 2015/16, the first year of the data series). The level of completeness for each financial year is shown in Table 1.1 – ‘Total offences that have since been assigned an outcome’ and ‘Offences not yet assigned an outcome’.

The figures in this section are based on the date the crime was reported to police; they relate to crimes recorded between 2015/16 and 2023/24 and show the outcome methods that have since been assigned to those crimes.

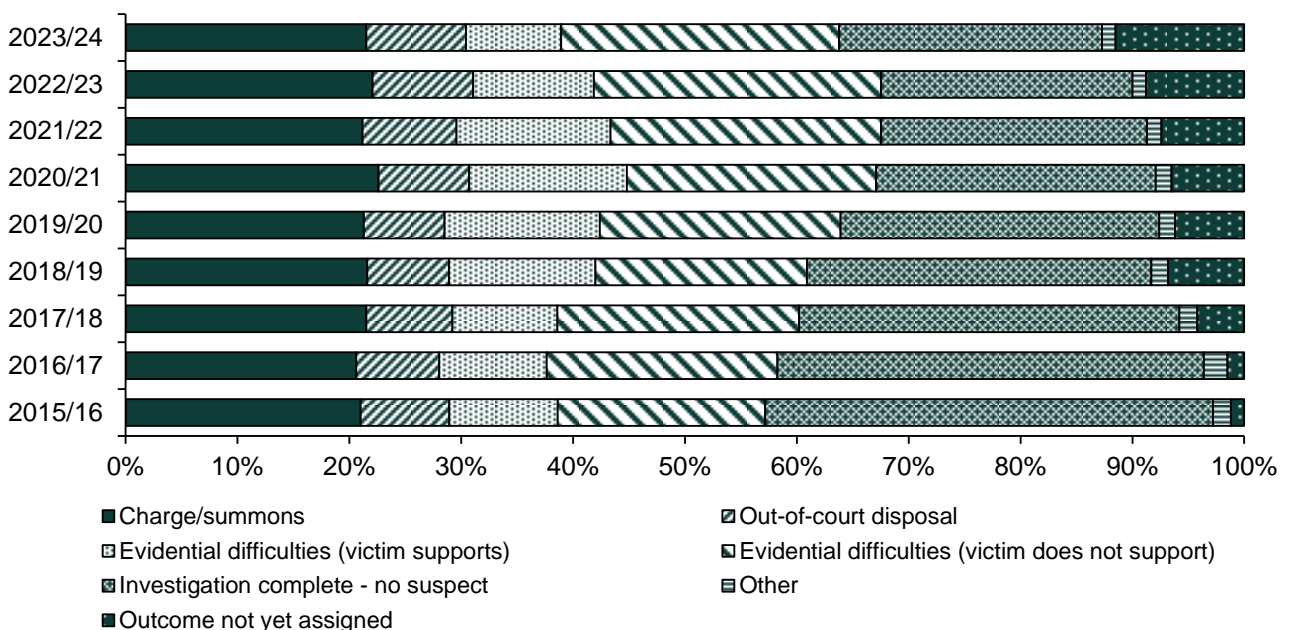
Taking into account those crimes yet to be assigned an outcome, the overall distribution of outcome methods is broadly similar for each year, as shown in Figure 1.1. The information in Figure 1.1 suggests that the ‘investigation complete – no suspect’ is the outcome method most impacted by crimes where an outcome is not yet assigned.

A more detailed breakdown of outcome types for all crime is shown in Table 1.1.

At time of analysis:

- At 88.5 per cent the proportion of crimes in 2023/24 that have since been assigned an outcome is the lowest at time of first publication since the start of the data series in 2015/16.
- Around one in five crimes are resolved by means of charge or summons (21.5 per cent in 2023/24).
- Between 7 and 9 per cent of crimes are resolved using out-of-court disposal methods (9 per cent in 2023/24).
- The proportion of crimes that do not progress to prosecution due to evidential difficulties where the victim supports action has fallen from 14 per cent in 2020/21 to 8 per cent in 2023/24, the lowest proportion seen since the start of the series in 2015/16. Evidential difficulties where the victim does not support action increased each year from 19 per cent in 2018/19 to 26 per cent in 2022/23, with 2023/24 slightly lower at 25 per cent.
- In 2015/16, 40 per cent of offences recorded had no suspect identified and the investigation was closed (an investigation can be re-opened at any time should further information come to light). This figure fell in each subsequent year to 22 per cent in 2022/23 before rising again to 24 per cent in 2023/24. This may partly reflect the larger proportion of crimes, particularly since 2018/19, yet to have an outcome applied (1 per cent in 2015/16 increasing to more than 7 per cent in 2021/22, 9 per cent in 2022/23 and 11 per cent in 2023/24).
- Prosecution is prevented or is not in the public interest in up to one per cent of crimes; this proportion is similar for crimes where the action is undertaken by another body/agency.

**Figure 1.1 Outcomes<sup>1</sup> that have since been assigned to all crimes recorded, 2015/16 to 2023/24**



<sup>1</sup> Other includes the outcome groups Taken into consideration, Prosecution prevented or not in the public interest, Action undertaken by another body/agency and Diversionary, educational or intervention activity.

**Table 1.1 Outcomes that have since been assigned to crimes recorded during 2015/16 and 2023/24**  
(shown as a percentage of total offences)

<b>Outcome group &amp; type<sup>1</sup></b>	<b>2015/16</b>	<b>2016/17</b>	<b>2017/18</b>	<b>2018/19</b>	<b>2019/20</b>	<b>2020/21</b>	<b>2021/22</b>	<b>2022/23</b>	<b>2023/24</b>
Charge/summons	21.0	20.6	21.5	21.6	21.3	22.6	21.2	22.1	21.5
Taken into consideration	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Out-of-court (formal)	3.9	3.3	2.8	2.4	2.2	2.2	2.0	1.9	1.7
<i>Juvenile caution</i>	1.0	0.9	0.8	0.8	0.8	0.7	0.7	0.7	0.5
<i>Adult caution</i>	1.9	1.6	1.5	1.3	1.2	1.3	1.2	1.0	1.1
<i>Penalty Notice for Disorder</i>	1.0	0.8	0.5	0.3	0.2	0.2	0.1	0.1	0.1
Out-of-court (informal)	4.0	4.1	4.9	4.9	5.0	5.9	6.4	7.1	7.2
<i>Community resolution</i>	4.0	4.1	4.9	4.9	5.0	5.9	6.4	7.1	7.2
Prosecution prevented or not in the public interest	0.9	1.1	0.7	0.5	0.4	0.4	0.4	0.3	0.4
<i>Offender died before proceedings</i>	0.2	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.0	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.1
<i>No prosecution directed (not in the public interest, PPS)</i>	0.3	0.4	0.3	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.0	0.0
<i>Prosecution prevented - suspect under age</i>	0.2	0.3	0.2	0.2	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.1
<i>Prosecution prevented - suspect too ill</i>	0.1	0.2	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.1
<i>Prosecution prevented - victim/key witness dead/too ill</i>	0.1	0.1	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
<i>Prosecution time limit expired</i>	0.0	0.0	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Evidential difficulties (suspect identified; victim supports action)	9.7	9.6	9.4	13.1	13.9	14.1	13.8	10.8	8.5
Evidential difficulties (victim does not support action)	18.5	20.6	21.6	18.9	21.5	22.3	24.2	25.7	24.8
<i>Evidential difficulties: suspect not identified; victim does not support further action</i>	1.0	1.5	1.4	1.2	1.8	1.5	2.1	3.2	2.9
<i>Evidential difficulties: suspect identified; victim does not support further action</i>	17.5	19.2	20.1	17.7	19.8	20.8	22.1	22.5	22.0
Investigation complete - no suspect identified	40.0	38.1	34.0	30.8	28.5	25.0	23.8	22.5	23.5
Action undertaken by another body/agency	0.7	1.0	0.9	1.0	1.0	0.9	0.8	0.9	0.8
Diversions, educational or intervention activity	-	-	-	-	-	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.1
Total offences that have since been assigned an outcome	98.8	98.5	95.8	93.2	93.8	93.5	92.6	91.2	88.5
Offences not yet assigned an outcome	1.2	1.5	4.2	6.8	6.2	6.5	7.4	8.8	11.5
Total offences % (excluding Action Fraud)	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

<sup>1</sup> A description of each outcome method is available in [Appendix 2](#).



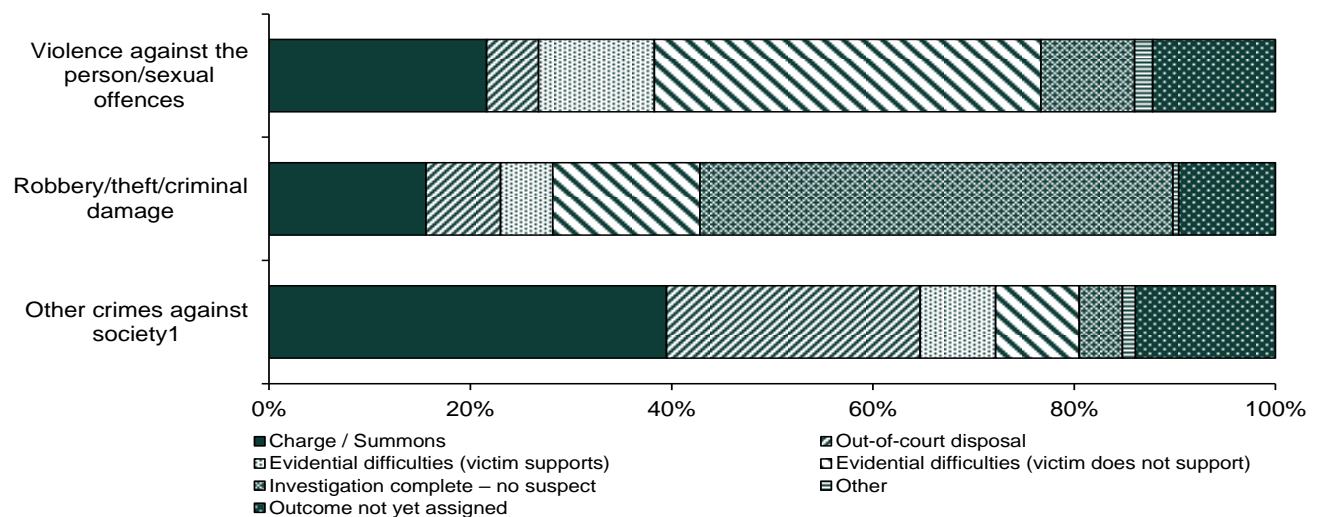
## 2. Distribution of outcomes by type of crime

The distribution of outcome methods varies depending on the type of crime recorded. This often reflects the nature of the offence such as, for example, its seriousness or how difficult it may be to identify a suspect.

- Around half of violence against the person and sexual offences are assigned outcomes relating to evidential difficulties, between 21 per cent and 25 per cent are dealt with by means of charge/summons and between four and six per cent by out-of-court disposals; 50, 21 and 5 per cent respectively in 2023/24.
- Between half and two thirds of robbery, theft and criminal damage offences result in an investigation being completed with no suspect identified, more than one in ten are dealt with by means of charge/summons and between five and seven per cent by out-of-court disposals; 47, 16 and 7 per cent respectively in 2023/24.
- Up to half of other crimes against society result in a charge/summons being applied, with around one in four being dealt with by out-of-court disposals. In around five per cent of crimes the investigation is completed with no suspect identified; 39, 25 and 4 per cent respectively in 2023/24.

Figures 2.1 and 2.2 show the distribution of outcomes assigned to crimes recorded during 2023/24. The figures for each year are available in Tables 2.1 and 2.2 of the [accompanying spreadsheet \(opens in a new window\)](#).

**Figure 2.1 Outcomes that have since been assigned to crimes recorded during 2023/24, by broad crime classification**



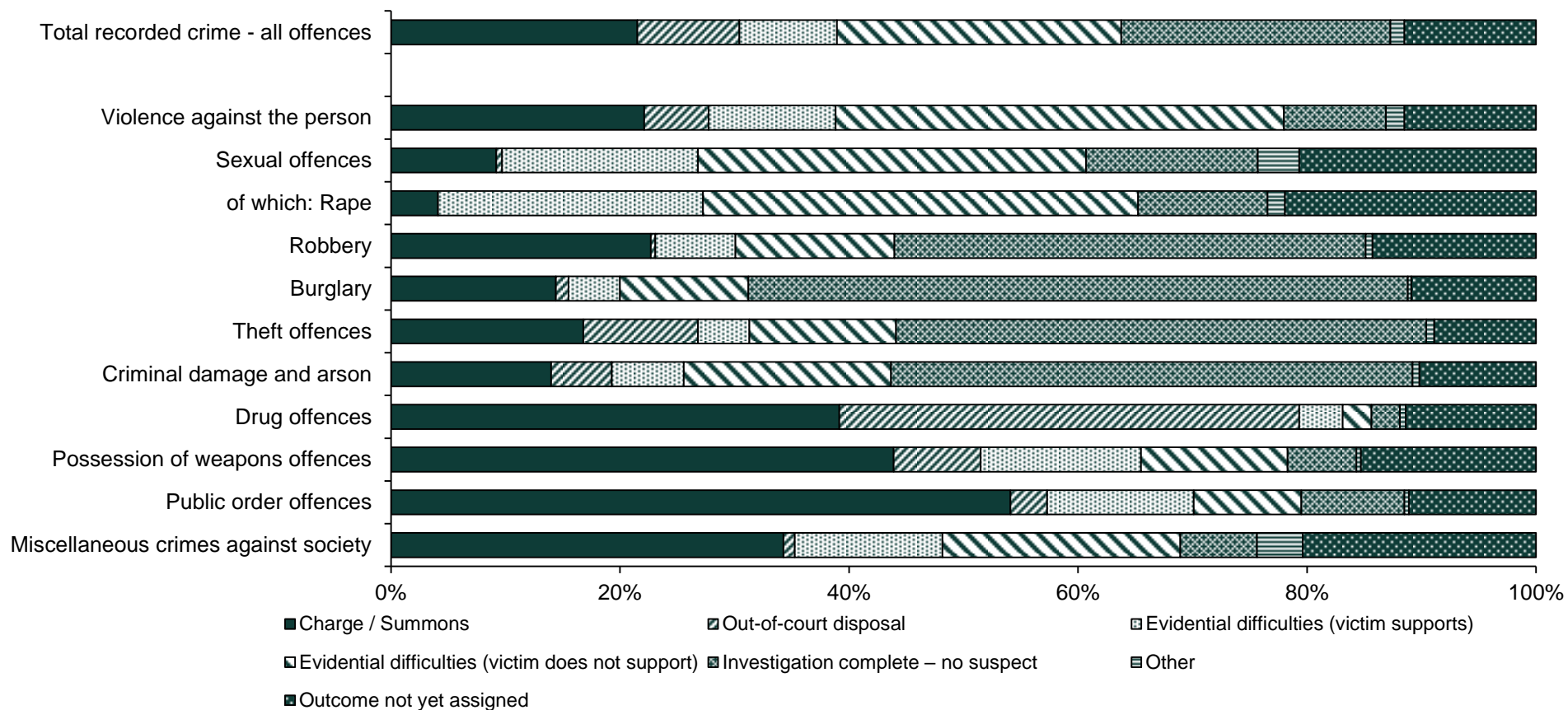
<sup>1</sup> includes drug offences, possession of weapons offences, public order offences and miscellaneous crimes against society.

Some of the main observations across all financial years for the more detailed crime classifications are:

- The proportion of violence against the person offences resulting in charge/summons was 26 per cent in 2015/16; since 2018/19 the proportion has ranged between 21 and 23 per cent (22 per cent in 2023/24). Those resulting in an out-of-court disposal has varied between 4 per cent in 2019/20 and 6 per cent in 2015/16 and in each year 2021/22 to 2023/24.
- Sexual offences, especially rape offences, show the highest proportion of crimes for which an outcome has yet to be assigned (i.e. still under investigation). Figures for 2015/16 show that 6 per cent of rape offences have yet to be assigned an outcome, while 73 per cent have been assigned an outcome code relating to evidential difficulties. For the most recent time period (2023/24), 22 per cent of rape offences have not yet been assigned an outcome and 61 per cent show an outcome relating to evidential difficulties.
- In 2015/16, 18 per cent of robberies, 11 per cent of burglaries, 25 per cent of thefts and 16 per cent of criminal damage offences were assigned a sanction outcome. In 2023/24 the proportions have increased to 23 per cent for robbery, 16 per cent for burglary, 27 per cent for theft and 19 per cent for criminal damage. The proportion of these offences assigned an evidential difficulties outcome was lowest in 2015/16; robbery increased from 18 per cent to 32 per cent in 2022/23 (21 per cent in 2023/24), burglary increased from 11 per cent to 18 per cent in 2022/23 (16 per cent in 2023/24), theft increased from 14 per cent to 25 per cent in 2019/20 (17 per cent in 2023/24) and criminal damage increased from 17 per cent to 25 per cent in 2021/22 and 2022/23 (24 per cent in 2023/24).
- Between 2015/16 and 2019/20 around half of all drug offences resulted in a charge or summons, falling to 39 per cent in 2023/24. Since 2015/16 the proportion of drug offences resulting in a formal out-of-court disposal has fallen in most years (from 21 per cent in 2015/16 to 7 per cent in 2023/24), while the proportion resulting in an informal out-of-court disposal has increased from 19 per cent in 2015/16 to 37 per cent in 2022/23 (34 per cent in 2023/24). Around half of all public order offences result in a charge or summons, while the proportion of weapon possession offences resulting in a charge or summons has fallen from around half to around two in five.



**Figure 2.2 Outcomes that have since been assigned to crimes recorded during 2023/24 by outcome group and offence group**

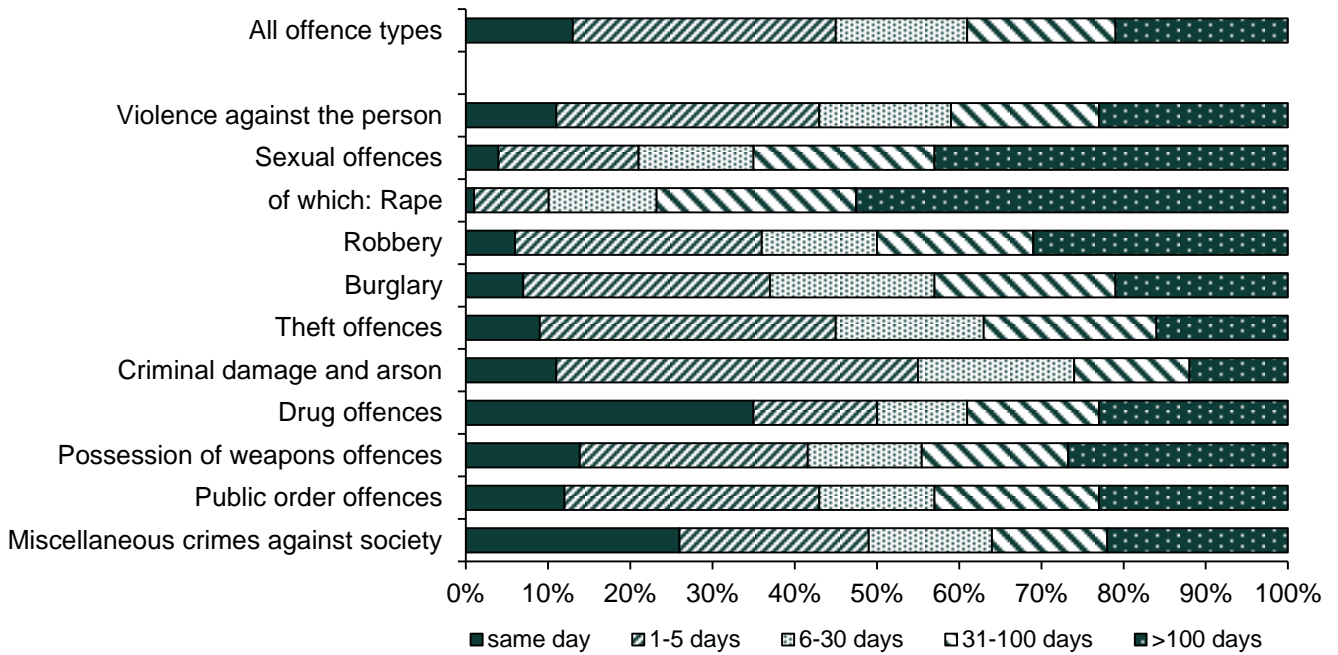


### 3. Length of time between report to police and outcome being assigned

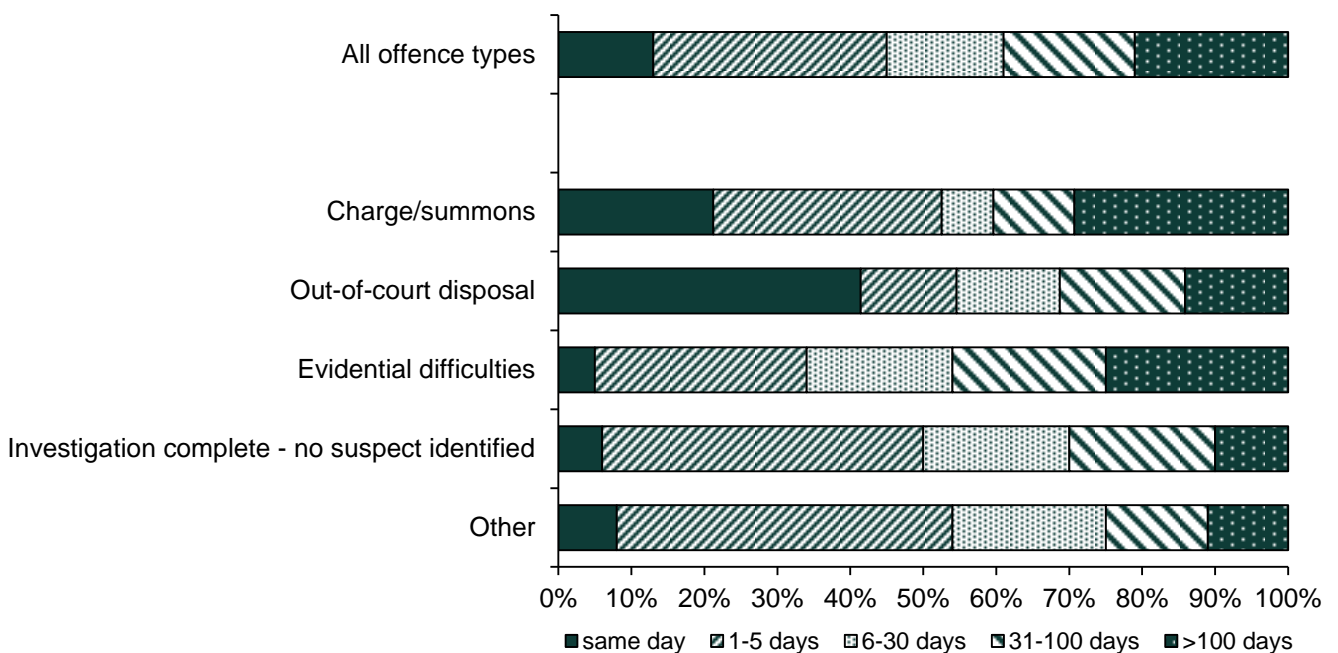
This section looks at the length of time between the initial report being made to police and an outcome being assigned. Figures 3.1 and 3.2 are based on outcomes assigned during 2023/24, regardless of the crime report date. This allows the analysis to fairly represent all crime types, including those crimes that tend to have longer investigations.

The numbers behind these charts, along with all figures for 2015/16 to 2023/24, are available in Tables 3.1 and 3.2 in the [accompanying spreadsheet \(opens in a new window\)](#).

**Figure 3.1 Length of time between offence being reported to police and outcome being assigned by type of offence, 2023/24**



**Figure 3.2 Length of time between offence being reported to police and outcome being assigned by type of outcome, 2023/24**



## 4. Distribution of outcomes for crimes with a domestic abuse motivation

This section examines the distribution of outcomes in relation to crimes with a domestic abuse motivation. The numbers behind Figure 4.1 are available in Table 4.1 in the [accompanying spreadsheet \(opens in a new window\)](#)

**Charge / summons:** Around one in four crimes with a domestic abuse motivation result in a charge or summons; this proportion fell from 27 per cent in 2015/16 to 23 per cent in 2019/20. The proportion in 2023/24 is 24 per cent.

**Out-of-court disposals:** The proportion of out-of-court disposals (both formal and informal) has varied between 3 and 4 per cent.

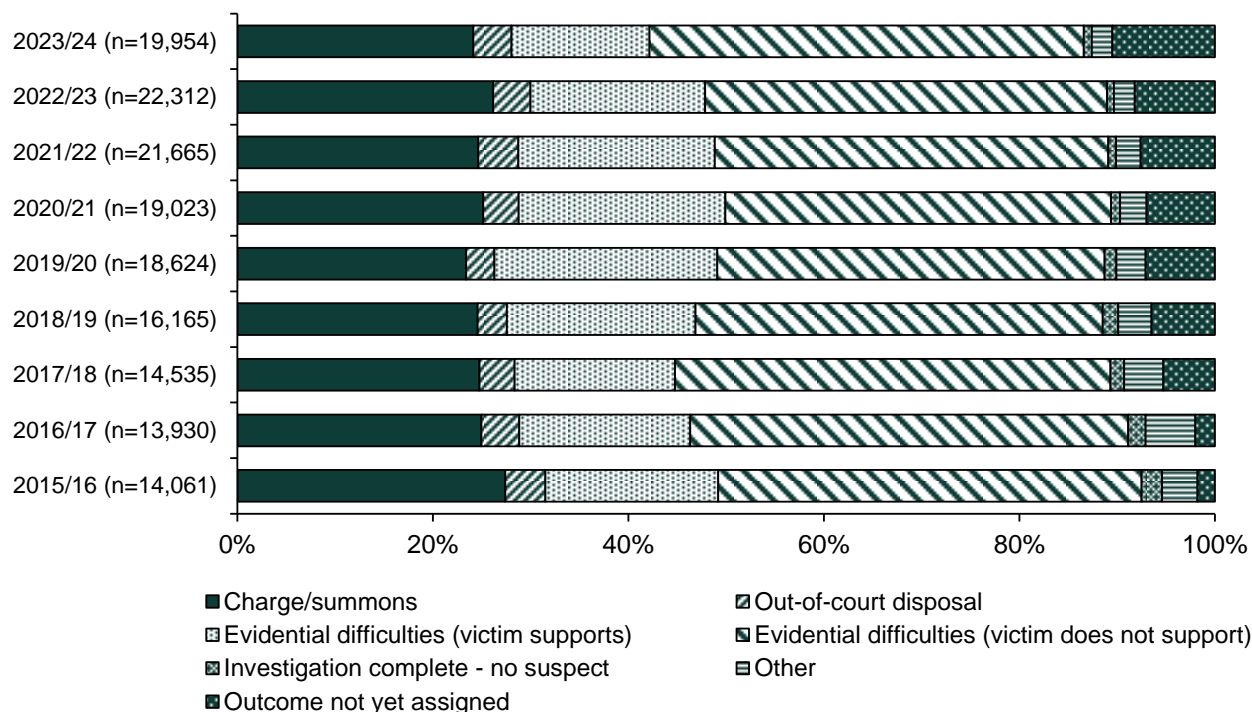
**Evidential difficulties:** Around three in five crimes do not proceed further due to evidential difficulties. Around two in five outcomes with evidential difficulties are where the victim does not support action, with around one in five being those where the victim supports action.

The proportion of domestic abuse crimes where the victim does not support action was highest in 2016/17 and 2017/18 (45 per cent). The proportion in 2023/24 (44 per cent) is the third highest since 2015/16. The lowest proportion was seen in 2020/21 (39 per cent).

The proportion of domestic abuse crimes where the victim supports action rose from the lowest proportion recorded of 16 per cent in 2017/18 to 23 per cent in 2019/20. The proportion has fallen in each year since 2019/20 to 14 per cent in 2023/24.

**Offences not yet assigned an outcome:** The changes described above should be considered in light of the proportion of domestic abuse crimes where an outcome has yet to be assigned, increasing from 2 per cent in 2015/16 to 10 per cent in 2023/24.

**Figure 4.1 Outcomes that have been assigned to domestic abuse crimes recorded between 2015/16 and 2023/24 (n = number of crimes recorded)**



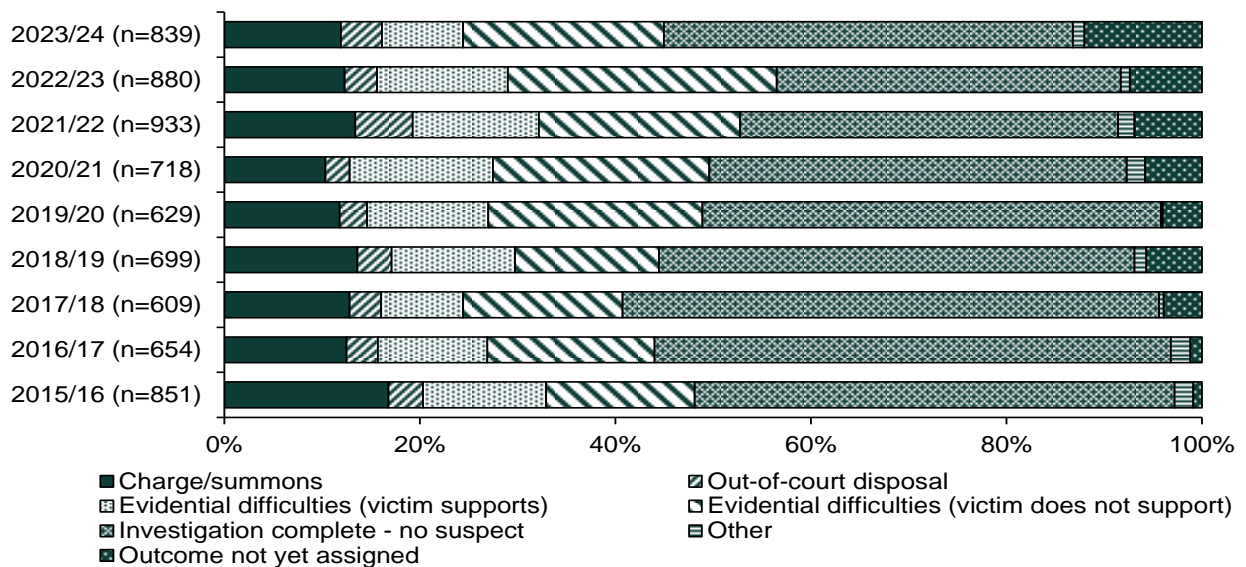
## 5. Distribution of outcomes for crimes with a hate motivation

This section presents the distribution of outcomes in relation to crimes with a hate motivation. The associated data is available in Table 5.1 in the [accompanying spreadsheet \(opens in a new window\)](#). Some of the hate motivations have low levels of crimes recorded which can have an impact on the degree of variability in outcome distribution; the crime figures are provided to help put this variability in context.

For crimes with a hate motivation, the majority of outcomes assigned relate to either evidential difficulties or to the investigation being completed with no suspect identified.

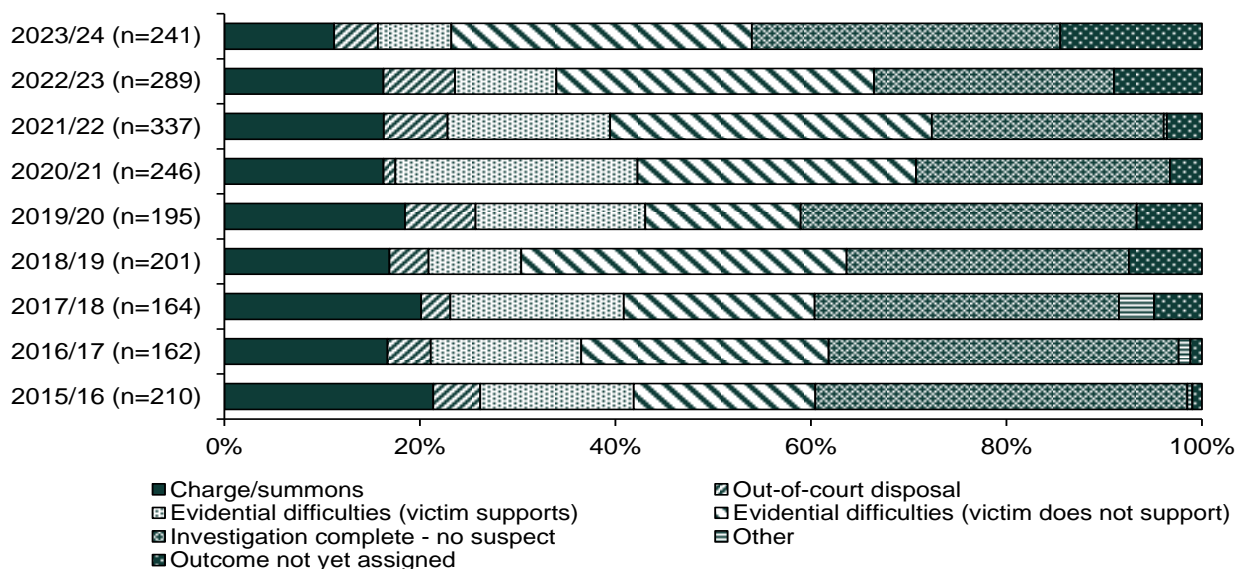
**Racist motivation:** Between 2015/16 and 2019/20 no suspect was identified in around half of crimes, falling to around two in five crimes since 2020/21. Between 2015/16 and 2018/19 around a quarter were given an outcome relating to evidential difficulties, increasing to 41 per cent in 2022/23 before falling to 29 per cent in 2023/24. Since 2015/16 between 10 per cent and 17 per cent of racist crimes have been dealt with by charge/summons (12 per cent in 2023/24).

**Figure 5.1 Outcomes that have since been assigned to crimes with a racist motivation recorded between 2015/16 and 2023/24 (n = number of crimes recorded)**



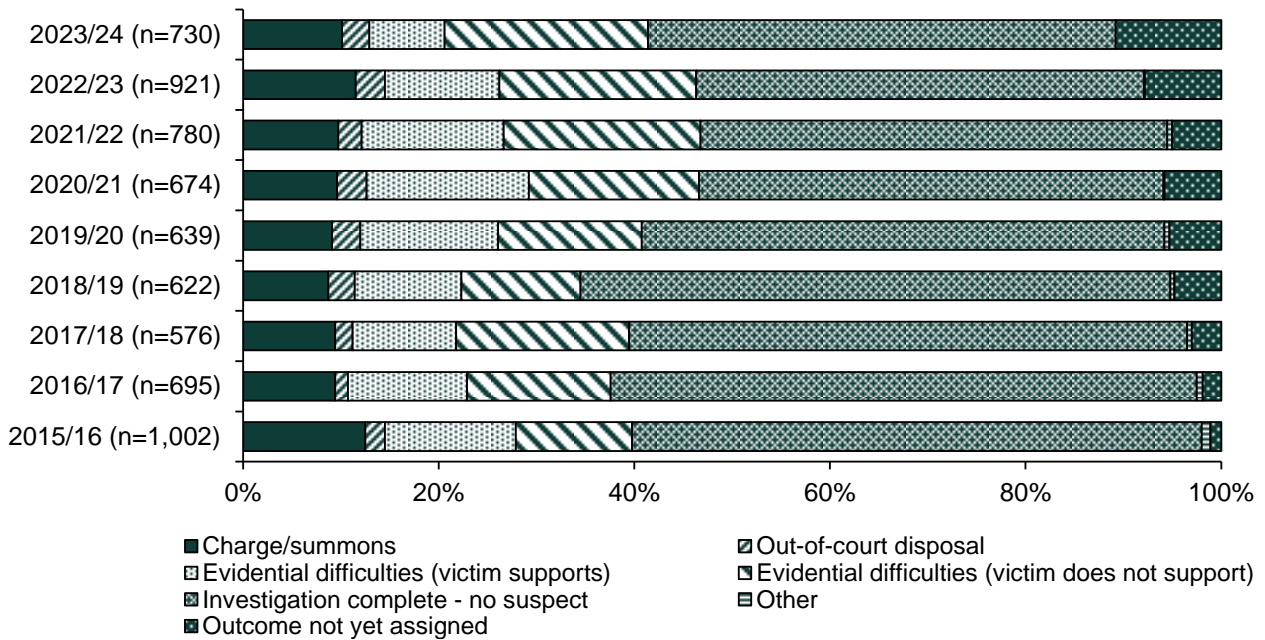
**Sexual Orientation motivation:** Nearly two in five crimes were closed with no suspect identified in 2015/16 before showing a general fall to around a quarter in 2022/23 (32 per cent in 2023/24). The proportion closed with evidential difficulties varies between a third (2015/16 and 2019/20) and around 50 per cent (2020/21 and 2021/22); the proportion in 2023/24 is 38 per cent. Up to one in five crimes are dealt with by charge/summons (11 per cent in 2023/24).

**Figure 5.2 Outcomes that have since been assigned to crimes with a sexual orientation motivation recorded between 2015/16 and 2023/24 (n = number of crimes recorded)**



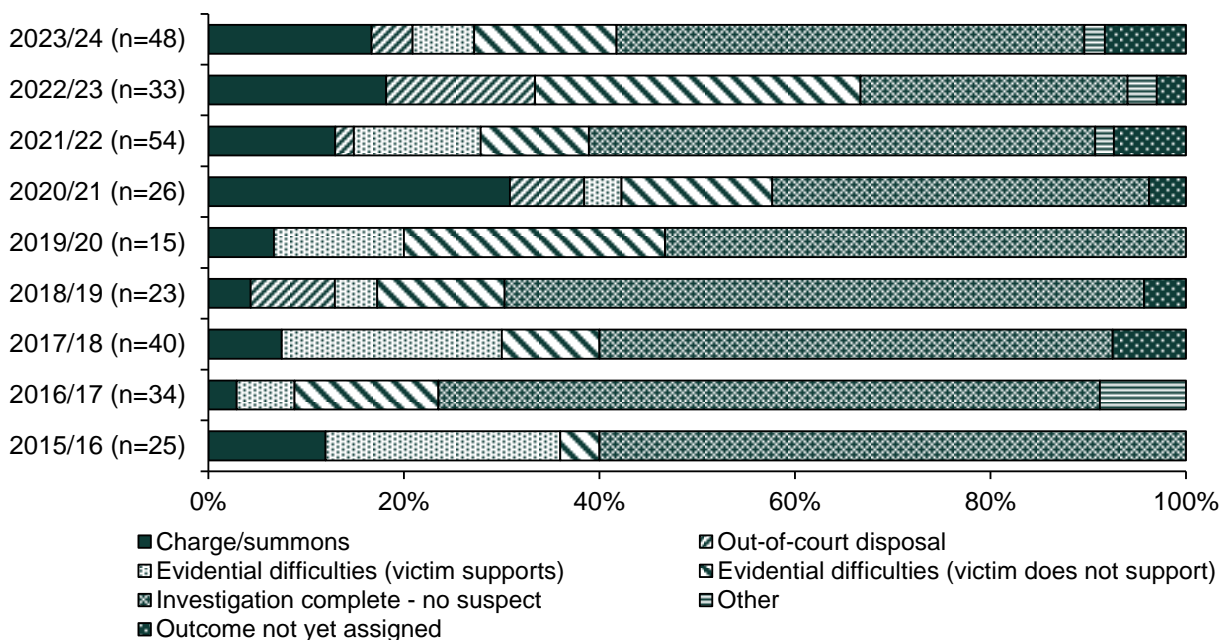
**Sectarian motivation:** Between 2015/16 and 2018/19 up to three in five crimes were closed with no suspect identified; since 2019/20 this proportion has been closer to 50 per cent (48 per cent in 2023/24). Between 2015/16 and 2019/20 and also in 2023/24 around a quarter were given an outcome relating to evidential difficulties; between 2020/21 and 2022/23 this figure was closer to one third. Around one in ten sectarian crimes are dealt with by means of charge/summons or an out-of-court disposal (10 per cent in 2023/24).

**Figure 5.3 Outcomes that have since been assigned to crimes with a sectarian motivation recorded between 2015/16 and 2023/24 (n = number of crimes recorded)**



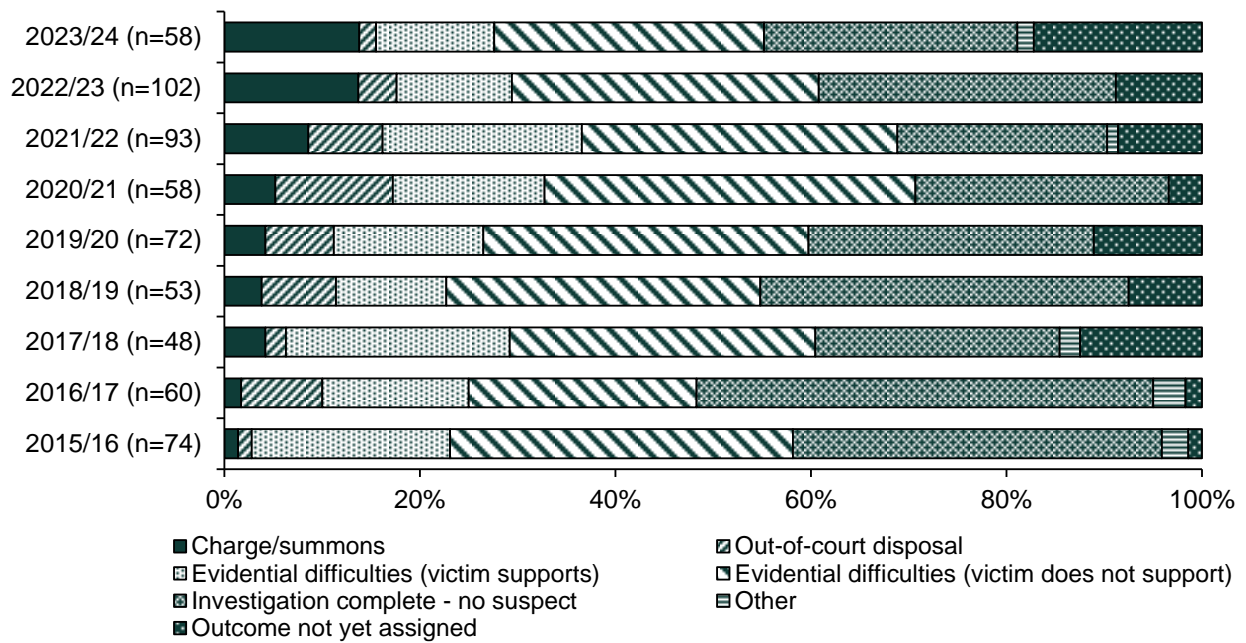
**Faith/religion motivation:** Bearing in mind the degree of variability in the outcome distribution for crimes with a faith/religion motivation, the most frequently assigned outcome is that of no suspect identified ranging from more than two thirds of crimes in 2016/17 to around a quarter of crimes in 2022/23 (48 per cent in 2023/24). More than one in five crimes do not proceed due to evidential difficulties (21 per cent in 2023/24), with the exception of 2018/19 when the figure was 17 per cent and 2020/21 when it was 19 per cent. The proportion of faith/religion crimes dealt with by means of charge/summons shows a high degree of variability, ranging from 3 per cent in 2016/17 to 31 per cent in 2020/21; the proportion for 2023/24 is 17 per cent.

**Figure 5.4 Outcomes that have since been assigned to crimes with a faith/religion motivation recorded between 2015/16 and 2023/24 (n = number of crimes recorded)**



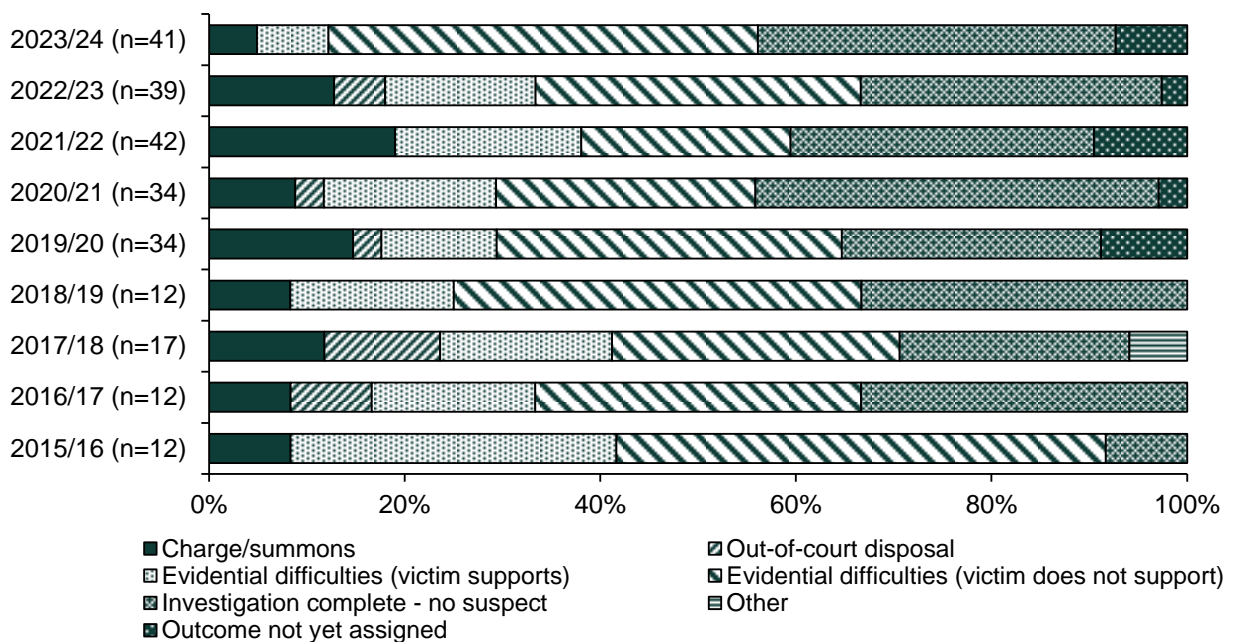
**Disability motivation:** Between two in five and half of crimes are assigned outcomes relating to evidential difficulties (40 per cent in 2023/24). No suspect identified outcomes range from close to half of crimes in 2016/17 to one in five crimes in 2021/22 (26 per cent in 2023/24). Up to 14 per cent are dealt with by means of charge/summons, while up to 12 per cent are dealt with by means of out-of-court disposals.

**Figure 5.5 Outcomes that have since been assigned to crimes with a disability motivation recorded between 2015/16 and 2023/24 (n = number of crimes recorded)**



**Transgender Identity motivation:** As with faith/religion and disability crimes, those with a transgender identity motivation show a greater degree of variability with between 71 per cent and 92 per cent attributed to evidential difficulties and no suspect identified (51 per cent evidential difficulties and 37 per cent no suspect identified in 2023/24). Between 5 per cent and 19 per cent of transgender identity crimes are dealt with by means of charge/summons (5 per cent in 2023/24) and up to 12 per cent by means of out-of-court disposal (there were no out-of-court disposals in 2023/24).

**Figure 5.6 Outcomes that have since been assigned to crimes with a transgender identity motivation recorded between 2015/16 and 2023/24 (n = number of crimes recorded)**





## Appendix 1. Presentation of Crime Outcomes

There are two ways of presenting crime outcomes, as a crime outcome rate and as outcomes which have since been assigned to recorded crimes. These two ways of presentation are described below.

**Coverage:** Sanction outcomes are where formal action is taken by police; charge/summons, adult or juvenile caution, offence taken into consideration at court, penalty notice for disorder (PND) and community resolution. They also include no prosecution directed, where prosecution not in public interest / offender died before proceedings and the offence is indictable-only and there is sufficient evidence to prosecute).

Additional outcomes were introduced by the Home Office in April 2014 and used within PSNI from April 2015 to identify how police deal with crimes where no formal action can be taken due to evidential difficulties, no suspect being identified, action undertaken by another agency and, from 2020/21, diversionary, educational or intervention activity.

**Time series:** Sanction outcomes (those resulting in formal action being taken) are available for crimes detected since 1998/99.

Crimes detected using those outcomes where no formal action could be taken are available from 2015/16.

**Data Quality:** 'Sanction' outcomes are applied on the basis of charge sheets, PPS directions (summons issued), signed caution forms, PND notices and community resolution forms. They are checked for compliance by the PSNI's Statistics Branch and validated in accordance with the Home Office Counting Rules.

Crimes where no formal action is taken by police against a suspect are assigned outcome codes based on the guidance provided in the Home Office Counting Rules. The correct application of these outcomes is not quality assured by the PSNI's Statistics Branch. However basic quality checks are conducted to ensure records have the essential elements completed, allowing inclusion in the data. These figures are published as Official Statistics.

Outcome Rates	Outcomes since assigned
<p><b>Basis for presentation:</b> Number of crimes detected in a defined period as a percentage of the number of crimes recorded in that same period. In other words these are two separate data sets with no direct link between crime and outcome, although there will be a great degree of overlap between them.</p>	<p><b>Basis for presentation:</b> Number of crimes recorded in a defined period and how they have since been resolved, ie the crime is directly linked to its associated outcome.</p>
<p><b>Calculation example:</b> 104,344 crimes recorded during 2023/24 with 33,213 crimes detected by means of a sanction outcome and 64,114 crimes resulting in no formal action during 2023/24. This gives a sanction 'outcome rate' of 31.8% and an 'outcome rate' of 61.4% for crimes resulting in no formal action.</p> <p>It is possible to show an outcome rate of over 100 per cent. Adding together outcome rates for all outcome methods will not provide a meaningful total.</p>	<p><b>Calculation example:</b> This calculation is based on all crimes having the potential to be allocated an outcome. 104,344 crimes recorded during 2023/24 of which 31,745 have since been assigned a sanction outcome and 60,630 have since been given an outcome relating to no formal action. The percentage of crimes with a sanction outcome since assigned is 30.4% and 58.1% for crimes that have since resulted in no formal action; 11.5% have no outcome.</p> <p>The percentage of crimes assigned an outcome can increase over time until it reaches 100%, although this level of completeness is unlikely.</p>
<p><b>Strengths:</b> Volumes of outcomes recorded in a particular time period provide a useful indication of police activity in understanding how crimes are resolved. As the outcome rate is based on what has been detected during the time period it is not impacted by the lag time for a crime to result in an outcome [Figures 3.1 and 3.2].</p>	<p><b>Strengths:</b> This presentation is the best way of understanding how crimes recorded in a specified time period have been resolved, with such analysis repeated over time as investigations are completed and outcomes are assigned. It gives a more complete picture of the work the police do to investigate and resolve crime.</p>
<p><b>Limitations:</b> These outcome rates are described by the Home Office as illustrative rather than true rates that can be influenced by changes in crime volumes. Where crime volumes increase or decrease markedly from one year to the next, it is likely that any outcome rate will react more slowly.</p>	<p><b>Limitations:</b> The proportion of crimes not yet assigned an outcome is a main consideration when looking at outcomes covering a more recent time period with those for an earlier time period, for example 11.5% in 2023/24 compared with 1.2% in 2015/16.</p>

### Publication

**Outcome rates** are published in the Police Recorded Crime Monthly Updates and Annual Trends Bulletin, where they are presented as sanction outcome rates only. They are also published in this bulletin (Police Crime Outcomes Annual Update), where they cover both sanction outcomes and those outcomes which do not result in formal action being taken by police.

**Outcomes which have since been assigned to recorded crimes** are published in this bulletin, Police Crime Outcomes Annual Update.



**Table A1 Outcome Rates 2015/16 to 2023/24, by outcome type and group**

Figures in this table are presented as outcome rates; the number of crimes detected by each outcome method in each financial year expressed as a percentage of the number of crimes recorded in each financial year.

<b>Outcome group &amp; type</b>	<b>2015/16</b>	<b>2016/17</b>	<b>2017/18</b>	<b>2018/19</b>	<b>2019/20</b>	<b>2020/21</b>	<b>2021/22</b>	<b>2022/23</b>	<b>2023/24</b>
Charge/summons <sup>1</sup>	21.0	20.8	21.0	21.4	21.5	22.8	20.7	22.3	22.7
Taken into consideration <sup>1</sup>	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Out-of-court (formal) <sup>1</sup>	3.8	3.4	2.8	2.5	2.2	2.2	1.9	1.9	1.9
<i>Juvenile caution<sup>1</sup></i>	<i>0.9</i>	<i>0.9</i>	<i>0.8</i>	<i>0.8</i>	<i>0.8</i>	<i>0.7</i>	<i>0.7</i>	<i>0.7</i>	<i>0.6</i>
<i>Adult caution<sup>1</sup></i>	<i>1.9</i>	<i>1.7</i>	<i>1.5</i>	<i>1.3</i>	<i>1.2</i>	<i>1.3</i>	<i>1.1</i>	<i>1.0</i>	<i>1.2</i>
<i>Penalty Notice for Disorder<sup>1</sup></i>	<i>1.0</i>	<i>0.8</i>	<i>0.5</i>	<i>0.3</i>	<i>0.2</i>	<i>0.2</i>	<i>0.1</i>	<i>0.1</i>	<i>0.1</i>
Out-of-court (informal) <sup>1</sup>	3.9	4.1	4.9	4.8	5.0	6.0	6.2	7.1	7.2
<i>Community resolution<sup>1</sup></i>	<i>3.9</i>	<i>4.1</i>	<i>4.9</i>	<i>4.8</i>	<i>5.0</i>	<i>6.0</i>	<i>6.2</i>	<i>7.1</i>	<i>7.2</i>
Prosecution prevented or not in the public interest <sup>2</sup>	0.9	1.0	1.0	0.5	0.4	0.5	0.4	0.4	0.4
<i>Offender died before proceedings<sup>2</sup></i>	<i>0.1</i>	<i>0.2</i>	<i>0.1</i>	<i>0.1</i>	<i>0.1</i>	<i>0.0</i>	<i>0.1</i>	<i>0.1</i>	<i>0.1</i>
<i>No prosecution directed (not in the public interest, PPS)<sup>2</sup></i>	<i>0.4</i>	<i>0.3</i>	<i>0.5</i>	<i>0.1</i>	<i>0.1</i>	<i>0.2</i>	<i>0.1</i>	<i>0.0</i>	<i>0.0</i>
<i>Prosecution prevented - suspect under age<sup>2</sup></i>	<i>0.2</i>	<i>0.2</i>	<i>0.2</i>	<i>0.2</i>	<i>0.1</i>	<i>0.1</i>	<i>0.1</i>	<i>0.1</i>	<i>0.1</i>
<i>Prosecution prevented - suspect too ill<sup>2</sup></i>	<i>0.1</i>	<i>0.2</i>	<i>0.1</i>	<i>0.1</i>	<i>0.1</i>	<i>0.1</i>	<i>0.1</i>	<i>0.1</i>	<i>0.0</i>
<i>Prosecution prevented - victim/key witness dead/too ill<sup>2</sup></i>	<i>0.1</i>	<i>0.1</i>	<i>0.0</i>	<i>0.0</i>	<i>0.0</i>	<i>0.0</i>	<i>0.0</i>	<i>0.0</i>	<i>0.0</i>
<i>Prosecution time limit expired<sup>2</sup></i>	<i>0.1</i>	<i>0.1</i>	<i>0.1</i>	<i>0.1</i>	<i>0.1</i>	<i>0.0</i>	<i>0.0</i>	<i>0.0</i>	<i>0.1</i>
Evidential difficulties (suspect identified; victim supports action) <sup>2</sup>	9.0	9.4	9.8	12.6	14.7	14.2	12.9	11.5	9.6
Evidential difficulties (victim does not support action) <sup>2</sup>	16.9	20.7	22.3	18.9	21.7	22.0	22.9	25.6	26.2
<i>Evidential difficulties: suspect not identified; victim does not support further action<sup>2</sup></i>	<i>0.9</i>	<i>1.3</i>	<i>1.6</i>	<i>1.1</i>	<i>1.8</i>	<i>1.6</i>	<i>2.0</i>	<i>3.1</i>	<i>3.0</i>
<i>Evidential difficulties: suspect identified; victim does not support further action<sup>2</sup></i>	<i>16.0</i>	<i>19.4</i>	<i>20.7</i>	<i>17.8</i>	<i>19.9</i>	<i>20.5</i>	<i>20.9</i>	<i>22.5</i>	<i>23.1</i>
Investigation complete - no suspect identified <sup>2</sup>	39.9	37.7	34.5	30.4	29.1	25.3	23.2	22.2	24.4
Action undertaken by another body/agency <sup>2</sup>	0.6	1.0	0.9	1.0	1.0	0.9	0.8	0.9	0.8
Diversions, educational or intervention activity <sup>2</sup>	-	-	-	-	-	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.1
Total police recorded crime (excluding Action Fraud)	104,930	98,036	98,132	100,842	106,473	94,199	106,353	111,411	104,344

<sup>1</sup> These outcomes are termed 'sanction outcomes' and refer to those crimes where formal action is taken by police.

<sup>2</sup> Outcomes where no formal action is taken by police.

## Appendix 2. Description and Categorisation of Crime Outcomes

**Please note:** Some outcome methods used within England and Wales are not available for use within Northern Ireland, or are administered differently. These are identified below. Further details are in the crime user guide. Additional considerations when comparing Northern Ireland with England and Wales are provided on page 3.

### Charge/summons<sup>1</sup>

### Taken into consideration<sup>1</sup>

### Out-of-court (formal)<sup>1</sup>

- Juvenile caution
- Adult caution
- Penalty Notice for Disorder

### Out-of-court (informal)<sup>1</sup>

- Cannabis/Khat warning (this option is not available within Northern Ireland; the outcomes most likely to be used in these circumstances fall within out-of-court (formal) and Community Resolution)
- Community Resolution

### Prosecution prevented or not in the public interest<sup>2,3</sup>

- Offender died before proceedings<sup>2,3</sup>
- Not in the public interest, PPS (in England & Wales this would be the CPS)<sup>2,3</sup>
- Not in the public interest, police (this outcome method is not available within Northern Ireland, public interest decisions can only be made by PPS)<sup>3</sup>
- Prosecution prevented – suspect under age (named suspect identified but is below the age of criminal responsibility)<sup>3</sup>
- Prosecution prevented – suspect too ill (named suspect identified but is too ill (physical or mental health) to prosecute)<sup>3</sup>
- Prosecution prevented – victim/key witness dead/too ill (named suspect identified but victim or key witness is dead or too ill to give evidence)<sup>3</sup>
- Prosecution time limit expired<sup>3</sup>

### Evidential difficulties (suspect identified; victim supports action)<sup>3</sup>

- Evidential difficulties named suspect identified – the crime is confirmed and the victim supports police action but evidential difficulties prevents further action

### Evidential difficulties (victim does not support action)<sup>3</sup>

- Evidential difficulties victim based – named suspect not identified – the crime is confirmed but the victim declines or is unable to support further police action to identify the offender
- Evidential difficulties victim based – named suspect identified – the victim does not support (or withdraws support from) police action

### Investigation complete – no suspect identified<sup>3</sup>

- Crime investigated as far as reasonably possible – case closed pending further investigative opportunities becoming available

### Action undertaken by another body/agency<sup>3</sup>

- Further action resulting from the crime report will be undertaken by another body or agency subject to the victim (or person acting on their behalf) being made aware of the action to be taken

### Diversionsary, educational or intervention activity<sup>3</sup>

- Diversionsary, educational or intervention activity, resulting from the crime report, has been undertaken and it is not in the public interest to take any further action. This outcome method was established by the National Police Chief's Council for collection on a voluntary basis in April 2019. It was first used in PSNI in 2020/21.

### Further investigation to support formal action not in the public interest<sup>3</sup>

- Further investigation, resulting from the crime report, which could provide evidence sufficient to support formal action being taken against the suspect is not in the public interest – police decision (from January 2016). This outcome method is not available within Northern Ireland, public interest decisions can only be made by PPS.

### National Fraud Intelligence Bureau filed<sup>3</sup>

- A crime of fraud has been recorded but has not been allocated for investigation because the assessment process at the NFIB has determined there are insufficient lines of enquiry to warrant such dissemination. This outcome method is not included in any tables as it applies to fraud offences recorded by NFIB only. From 1 April 2015 Action Fraud became responsible for the central recording of fraud and cyber crime previously recorded by PSNI.

<sup>1</sup> These outcomes are termed 'sanction outcomes' and refer to those crimes where formal action is taken by police.

<sup>2</sup> Indictable only offences in relation to 'Offender died before proceedings' and 'Not in the public interest, PPS' are considered 'sanction outcomes'; Hybrid and summary offences dealt with in this way are not 'sanction outcomes' and are not included in the outcome framework prior to April 2015.

<sup>3</sup> Outcomes where no formal action is taken by police.

## Appendix 3. Further Information

### Crime Statistics User Guide

Further details on Police Recorded Crime statistics are available in the User Guide to Police Recorded Crime Statistics on the [PSNI website \(opens in a new window\)](#). 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. The guide provides background information on:

- definitions relating to crimes, incidents and outcomes, including a description of the crime types included within the crime bulletins;
- recording practices, including PSNI data collection, quality and audit processes;
- data timeliness and availability; and
- the geographic areas for which crimes are available; statistics for geographies other than policing area and policing district can be accessed through the [NISRA Data Portal \(opens in a new window\)](#).

### Web links to other information you may be interested in

[Police Recorded Crime Statistics \(opens in a new window\)](#) are updated on a monthly basis; an Annual Trends bulletin is also published

[Domestic Abuse Statistics \(opens in a new window\)](#) are updated on a quarterly basis (in August, November, February and May), with a more comprehensive trends publication made available annually.

[Hate Motivation Statistics \(opens in a new window\)](#) are updated on a quarterly basis (in August, November, February and May), with a more comprehensive trends publication made available annually.

The PSNI website has a full [publication schedule \(opens in a new window\)](#).