

Police Service of Northern Ireland

Agricultural and Rural Crime in Northern Ireland: Quarterly Update to 31 March 2018

Prepared 14 May 2018



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This bulletin presents (i) agricultural and (ii) rural crime for the latest financial year 2017/18 and the previous financial year 2016/17.

Figures for financial years dating back to 2010/11 and for calendar years dating back to 2011 are available in a separate spreadsheet.

The bulletin is split into two main sections, Agriculture Crime and Urban/Rural Crime, the definitions of which are provided below.

Agriculture Crime: the agricultural crime figures in this bulletin represent offences of burglary, robbery and theft where the victim is involved in an agricultural-based activity. Agricultural crime covers burglary, robbery and theft offences where the property or vehicles stolen have an agricultural link (e.g. farm equipment, agricultural vehicles, livestock) or where the location was agricultural (e.g. farm, farmhouse). This information is identified from both drop down pick lists and free text searches using key agricultural-related words.

Urban/Rural crime: this covers all burglary, robbery and theft offences, split into these two geographical areas based on an aggregation of settlement bands. Please note that not all agricultural crime will occur in a rural settlement.

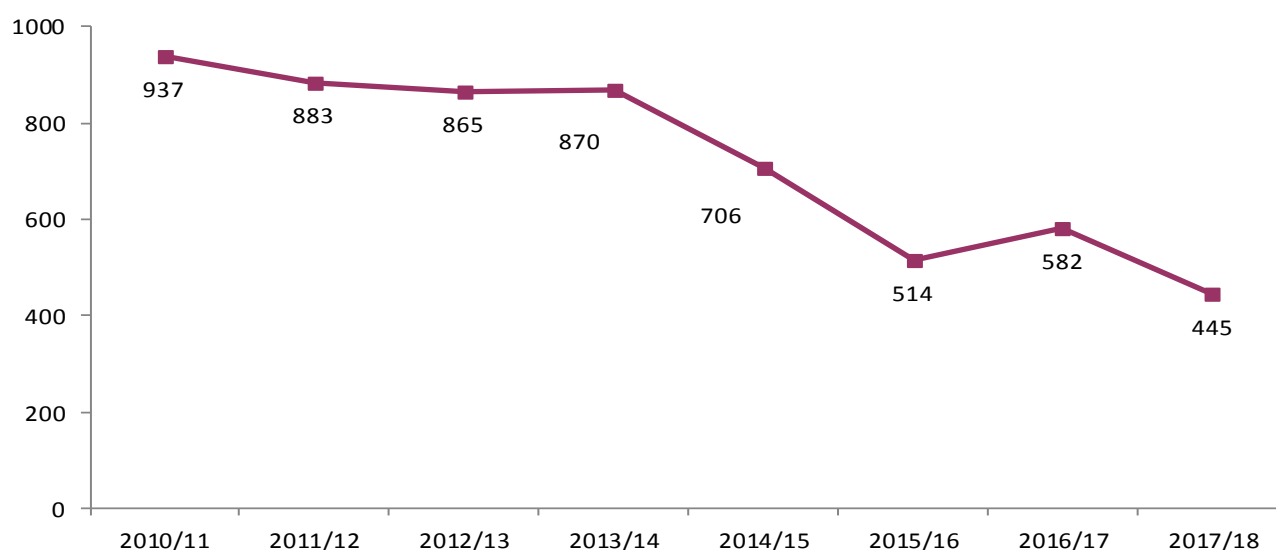
The urban/rural crime split is based on classification boundaries that are available for Northern Ireland as defined by the Planning Service, these areas being defined from Settlement Development Limits. Further details are available from the NISRA website (<http://www.nisra.gov.uk/support/geography/urban-rural-classification>). Crimes are allocated to urban or rural by linking the available postcode information for the crime location to the Central Postcode Directory.

Please note: all figures contained in these tables are subject to revision. Further information is provided in the NOTES section on the last page of this bulletin.

Trends in Agricultural Crime 2010/11 to 2017/18

The number of burglary, robbery and theft offences relating to agricultural-based activity has shown an overall downwards trend from 937 offences recorded in 2010/11 to 445 recorded in 2017/18. The figures for 2017/18 show a decrease of 137 when compared with 2016/17 and are less than half of the level recorded in 2010/11. [Figure 1 and Table 1 in accompanying spreadsheet].

Figure 1 Agriculture Crime, 2010/11 to 2017/18



- During 2017/18:
 - 97 per cent of agriculture crime was identified as occurring in rural settlement areas. Since 2010/11 this proportion has ranged between 95 and 98 per cent¹ [Table 2 in accompanying spreadsheet].

¹ Urban/rural settlement figures are identified through matching the postcode of the occurrence with the Central Postcode Directory.

- Burglary and robbery represented 33 per cent of agricultural crime, while theft represented 67 per cent. Since 2010/11 burglary and robbery have represented between 27 and 34 per cent of agricultural crime while theft has represented between 66 and 73 per cent [Table 3 in accompanying spreadsheet].
- Agriculture crime represented 1.4 per cent of all burglary, robbery and theft offences. This compares with 1.8 per cent during 2016/17 and 2.4 per cent in each of 2010/11, 2012/13 and 2013/14 [Tables 1 and 5 in accompanying spreadsheet].
- The highest level of agriculture crime was seen in Newry, Mourne & Down (79 offences), followed by Mid & East Antrim (59), Armagh City, Banbridge & Craigavon (58), Mid Ulster (55), Causeway Coast & Glens (49) and Fermanagh & Omagh (42) [Table 1 in bulletin and accompanying spreadsheet].
- One of the policing districts showed an increase, eight showed decreases and two showed no change. The increase was seen in Mid & East Antrim (6) while the largest decrease was seen in Armagh City, Banbridge & Craigavon (46) [Table 1 in bulletin and accompanying spreadsheet].

Table 1 Agriculture Crime by Policing District

	Numbers		
	2016/17	2017/18	change
Belfast City	2	2	0
Lisburn & Castlereagh City	21	21	0
Ards & North Down	21	20	-1
Newry, Mourne & Down	90	79	-11
Armagh City, Banbridge & Craigavon	104	58	-46
Mid Ulster	66	55	-11
Fermanagh & Omagh	67	42	-25
Derry City & Strabane	45	27	-18
Causeway Coast & Glens	63	49	-14
Mid & East Antrim	53	59	6
Antrim & Newtownabbey	50	33	-17
Northern Ireland	582	445	-137

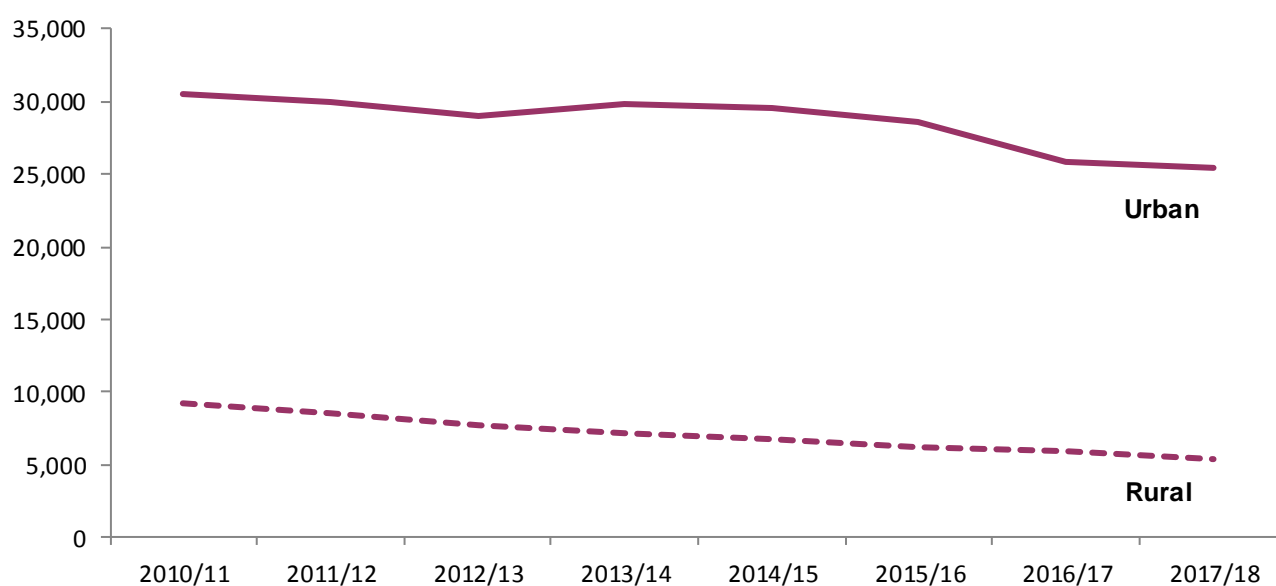
Table 2 Agriculture Crime split by Urban/Rural settlements

	Numbers		
	2016/17	2017/18	change
Urban	13	13	0
Rural	569	432	-137
Not known	0	0	0
Total	582	445	-137

Trends in Urban/Rural Crime 2010/11 to 2017/18²

- In Northern Ireland as a whole, burglary, robbery and theft offences have shown an overall downwards trend since 2010/11 when 39,778 offences were recorded to 2017/18 (30,839 offences). The level recorded in 2017/18 represents a fall of 2.6 per cent when compared with 2016/17 and a fall of 22.5 per cent when compared with 2010/11 [Table 5 in accompanying spreadsheet].
- The number of burglary, robbery and theft offences in **rural settlements** has fallen each year since 2010/11. There were 437 fewer offences when comparing 2017/18 with 2016/17; the level of 5,432 recorded in 2017/18 is more than a third lower than the 9,211 offences recorded in 2010/11 [Table 5 in accompanying spreadsheet].
- Levels of burglary, robbery and theft offences in **urban settlements** have shown an overall downwards trend since 2010/11 when 30,567 such offences were recorded. The level of 25,407 recorded in 2017/18 shows a fall of 1.5 per cent when compared with 2016/17 and a fall of 16.9 per cent when compared with 2010/11 [Table 5 in accompanying spreadsheet].

Figure 3 Burglary, robbery and theft offences, Urban and Rural, 2010/11 to 2017/18



- Between 2010/11 and 2017/18 the *proportion* of burglary, robbery and theft offences occurring in urban settlement areas has increased from 77 per cent to 82 per cent. Correspondingly the *proportion* of these offences occurring in rural settlements has fallen from 23 per cent to 18 per cent [Table 5 in accompanying spreadsheet].
- During 2017/18 the percentage of burglary, robbery and theft offences occurring in rural settlement areas was 52 per cent in Mid Ulster, 45 per cent in Fermanagh & Omagh, 41 per cent in Newry, Mourne & Down, 33 per cent in Causeway Coast & Glens, 29 per cent in Armagh City, Banbridge & Craigavon, 24 per cent in Antrim & Newtownabbey, 22 per cent in Mid & East Antrim, 21 per cent in Lisburn & Castlereagh City, 17 per cent in Ards & North Down and 17 per cent in Derry City & Strabane. This figure was less than 1 per cent in Belfast City [Table 5 in accompanying spreadsheet].

² Urban/rural settlement figures are identified through matching the postcode of the occurrence with the Central Postcode Directory.

Table 5 Urban/Rural² Crime by Policing District

	Numbers					
	Urban		Rural		Total	
	2016/17	2017/18	2016/17	2017/18	2016/17	2017/18
Belfast City	12,520	11,908	37	49	12,557	11,957
Lisburn & Castlereagh City	1,457	1,670	455	454	1,912	2,124
Ards & North Down	1,451	1,538	331	320	1,782	1,858
Newry, Mourne & Down	1,505	1,357	998	930	2,503	2,287
Armagh City, Banbridge & Craigavon	2,004	1,893	825	770	2,829	2,663
Mid Ulster	534	585	735	639	1,269	1,224
Fermanagh & Omagh	761	686	637	556	1,398	1,242
Derry City & Strabane	1,747	1,799	411	363	2,158	2,162
Causeway Coast & Glens	927	976	520	476	1,447	1,452
Mid & East Antrim	1,283	1,438	479	395	1,762	1,833
Antrim & Newtownabbey	1,596	1,557	441	480	2,037	2,037
Northern Ireland	25,785	25,407	5,869	5,432	31,654	30,839

Changes to previously published figures for 2015/16 and 2016/17: Revisions have been made to previously published police recorded crime and outcome figures for 2015/16 and 2016/17. The Home Office introduced a wider outcomes framework for police recorded crime which was adopted within PSNI in April 2015; this approach means that every crime record should eventually be assigned an outcome. In a small number of cases changes to crimes, such as crime cancellation or identification of an outcome, occur after the figures have been published. To take account of such changes, revisions have been made for the first time to crimes recorded since 2015/16 which have since been cancelled or which have since had a sanction outcome identified. This has resulted in slight changes to the police recorded crime, outcome and outcome rate figures for 2015/16 and 2016/17, when compared with previous publications. Revisions of this nature will be routinely applied to future annual publications. Burglary, robbery and theft figures in Table 5 in the bulletin and Tables 5 and 6 in the accompanying spreadsheet have been revised accordingly.

NOTES

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.

Definitions

Agricultural crime covers burglary, robbery and theft offences where the property or vehicles stolen have an agricultural link (e.g. farm equipment, agricultural vehicles, livestock) or where the location was agricultural (e.g. farm, farmhouse). This information is identified from both drop down pick lists and free text searches using key agricultural-related words.

Urban/Rural crime covers all burglary, robbery and theft offences, split into these two geographical areas based on an aggregation of settlement bands.

Please note that not all agricultural crime will occur in a rural settlement.

Data Accuracy and Revisions

Agricultural crime figures are based on a range of information extracted from a live crime recording system and, as such, will always be subject to revision.

Within the current financial year revisions may occur because:

- There will be incidents identified as crimes but not processed on the crime recording system by the time the figures are extracted for presentation in these tables.
- Figures may change from month to month due to crimes being reclassified from one crime type to another during the financial year. This may be because quality checks have identified the crime as incorrectly classified, or further information may indicate that the circumstances surrounding the crime were not as initially recorded.
- The Home Office Counting Rules allow crimes initially recorded to be 'no crime'd' or removed from the crime figures.

Revisions to any records within the dataset may also occur as information in relation to property stolen, vehicles stolen and location may be updated on the live system. This may be through adding additional information or updating existing information based on more up-to-date details.

The urban/rural figures are identified through matching the available postcode to the Central Postcode Directory. Postcode accuracy and availability within the current financial year will not be of the same quality or completeness as a full financial year. This is because additional quality checks are completed at the end of each financial year to improve postcode quality and completeness. Further details are available in the [User Guide to Police Recorded Crime Statistics in Northern Ireland](#).

Further information

[Trends in Police Recorded Crime in Northern Ireland 1998/99 to 2016/17](#) was published on 12 January 2018 and provides detailed trend information covering this time period.

Further details on Police Recorded Crime statistics are available in the [User Guide to Police Recorded Crime Statistics in Northern Ireland](#), and in the [Police Recorded Crime Statistics Quality Report](#). These are reference guides with explanatory notes regarding the issues and classifications which are key to the production and presentation of police recorded crime statistics.

Copies of other PSNI publications are available from the PSNI website:

<https://www.psni.police.uk/inside-psni/Statistics/>

For further information about the police recorded crime statistics for Northern Ireland, or to contact the PSNI Crime Statistician please:

Email: statistics@psni.police.uk;

Write to: Statistics Branch, Lisnasharragh, 42 Montgomery Road, Belfast, BT6 9LD; or

Telephone: 028 9065 0222 ext 24135