| Police Scotland logo | Freedom of Information Response Our reference: FOI 25-1871  Responded to: 20 June 2025 |
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Your recent request for information is replicated below, together with our response.

1. **Ethnicity of suspects charged in cases of multi-offender child sexual offences**

**What I’m requesting: Ethnicity data on suspects charged with a sexual offence or offences against a victim or victim aged under 18 at the time of the offence, where the case involved two or more offenders or suspected offenders, broken down as follows:**

* **Number of Asian suspects charged**
* **Number of Black suspects charged**
* **Number of White suspects charged**
* **Number of Other Ethnicity suspects charged**
* **Number of suspects charged where ethnicity is Unknown**

**Please indicate whether suspects’ ethnicity is recorded based on self-defined ethnicity, ethnic appearance data or other criteria.**

**Timeframe: Suspects charged in the last three calendar years (January 2022 to January 2025). If that is not possible, please provide information on suspects charged in the last three financial years (March 2022 to March 2025). If that is not possible, please provide the most recent 12 months’ of data that you can retrieve.**

Unfortunately, I estimate that it would cost well in excess of the current FOI cost threshold of £600 to process your request. I am therefore refusing to provide the information sought in terms of section 12(1) of the Act - Excessive Cost of Compliance.

By way of explanation, although some sexual offence classifications include the victim age, others would need to review all Sexual crime reports to establish age of victim, whether there were more than one suspect and also their ethnicity - an exercise which I estimate would far exceed the cost limit set out in the Fees Regulations.

1. **Ethnicity of suspects in ongoing cases of multi-offender child sexual offences**

**What I’m requesting: Ethnicity data on suspects in all cases involving two or more offenders or suspected offenders of sexual offences against a victim or victims aged under 18 at the time of the offence that were ongoing as of 17 June 2025, broken down as follows:**

* **Number of Asian suspects**
* **Number of Black suspects**
* **Number of White suspects**
* **Number of Other Ethnicity suspects**
* **Number of suspects where ethnicity is Unknown**

**Please indicate whether suspects’ ethnicity is recorded based on self-defined ethnicity, ethnic appearance data or other criteria.**

Unfortunately, I estimate that it would cost well in excess of the current FOI cost threshold of £600 to process your request. I am therefore refusing to provide the information sought in terms of section 12(1) of the Act - Excessive Cost of Compliance.

By way of explanation, although some sexual offence classifications include the victim age, others would need to review all Sexual crime reports to establish age of victim, whether there were more than one suspect and also their ethnicity - an exercise which I estimate would far exceed the cost limit set out in the Fees Regulations.

1. **Ethnicity of charged suspects in cases flagged as group based child sexual exploitation**

**What I’m requesting: Ethnicity data on suspects charged in cases flagged as “group based** **child sexual exploitation”, or the closest equivalent term used by your police force, broken down as follows:**

* **Number of Asian suspects charged**
* **Number of Black suspects charged**
* **Number of White suspects charged**
* **Number of Other Ethnicity suspects charged**
* **Number of suspects charged where ethnicity is Unknown**

**Please indicate whether suspects’ ethnicity is recorded based on self-defined ethnicity, ethnic appearance data or other criteria.**

**Timeframe: Suspects charged in the last three calendar years (January 2022 to January 2025). If that is not possible, please provide information on suspects charged in the last three financial years (March 2022 to March 2025). If that is not possible, please provide the most recent 12 months’ of data that you can retrieve.**

Unfortunately, I estimate that it would cost well in excess of the current FOI cost threshold of £600 to process your request. I am therefore refusing to provide the information sought in terms of section 12(1) of the Act - Excessive Cost of Compliance.

By way of explanation, Police Scotland has a new national case system that has been fully rolled out across all divisions within Police Scotland since January 2023. Prior to this, each division had individual case systems and there was not a child sexual exploitation flag. The child sexual exploitation flag was added during 2023, however it is not possible to identify group-based figures nor the ethnicity of the accused without case by case assessment. In 2024 alone there were 1,243 cases, each of which would require to be individually reviewed.

If you require any further assistance, please contact us quoting the reference above.

You can request a review of this response within the next 40 working days by [email](mailto:foi@scotland.police.uk) or by letter (Information Management - FOI, Police Scotland, Clyde Gateway, 2 French Street, Dalmarnock, G40 4EH). Requests must include the reason for your dissatisfaction.

If you remain dissatisfied following our review response, you can appeal to the Office of the Scottish Information Commissioner (OSIC) within 6 months - [online](https://www.foi.scot/appeal), by [email](mailto:enquiries@foi.scot) or by letter (OSIC, Kinburn Castle, Doubledykes Road, St Andrews, KY16 9DS).

Following an OSIC appeal, you can appeal to the Court of Session on a point of law only.

This response will be added to our [Disclosure Log](http://www.scotland.police.uk/access-to-information/freedom-of-information/disclosure-log) in seven days' time.

Every effort has been taken to ensure our response is as accessible as possible. If you require this response to be provided in an alternative format, please let us know.