| Police Scotland logo | Freedom of Information Response Our reference: FOI 23-0123  Responded to: 3rd February 2023 |
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Your recent request for information is replicated below, together with our response.

## The total number of online grooming cases (Sexual Communication with a Child offences) recorded in 2022, 2021, 2020, 2019, 2018, 2017.

## The age of the victims in these cases each year and the proportion of the victims that identified themselves as each gender category, where these details were recorded.

## The methods, social media platforms and websites used in these offences each year where the means of communication was known/recorded. Ideally broken down as percentages, such as Snapchat was used in 30% of offences, Facebook was used in 17%.

## How many people were arrested in relation to these crimes in each year, how many were found guilty and sentenced and how many are still ongoing

## How many websites or other means of communication were taken down in each year in relation to these offences.

In response to these questions, I must advise you that crimes in Scotland are recorded in accordance with the Scottish Government Justice Department offence classification codes and we do not have the specific offence referred to, in Scotland.

As such, in terms of Section 17 of the Freedom of Information (Scotland) Act 2002, this represents a notice that the information you seek is not held by Police Scotland.

To be of some assistance, I would refer you to a previous FOI response which provides recorded and detected sexual crime statistics:-

[22-1095 – Crime Stats – Sexual – Victim, female – 4yrs - Police Scotland](https://www.scotland.police.uk/access-to-information/freedom-of-information/disclosure-log/disclosure-log-2022/june/22-1095-crime-stats-sexual-victim-female-4yrs/)

There are three crime classifications which may be of interest to you: *Grooming of children for the purposes of sexual offences*; *Communicating indecently with young child (under 13)*; and *Communicating indecently with older child (13-15)*.

Data for these offences in terms of recorded and detected crimes are available and can be provided however, as you will see from the above response, there were more than 700 recorded offences in 2021/22 alone and so research as to the gender would be exempt from disclosure in accordance with Section 12(1) of the Act (Excessive Cost of Compliance).

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](http://www.itspublicknowledge.info/Appeal), by [email](mailto:enquiries@itspublicknowledge.info) 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.