| Police Scotland logo | Freedom of Information Response Our reference: FOI 25-0988  Responded to: 15 April 2025 |
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Your recent request for information is replicated below, together with our response.

## This is a request for information under the Freedom of Information Act. Under the act, I wish to be provided with the following information regarding the total number of arrests of under 18s for supplying drugs and intent to supply drugs over the last three years (2024, 2023, 2022). I wish the ages to be broken down by age (eg, 17, 16, 15) and the type of drug being confiscated.

The Criminal Justice (Scotland) Act 2016 removed the separate concepts of arrest and detention and replaced them with a power of arrest without warrant - where there are reasonable grounds for suspecting a person has committed, or is committing, an offence.

When a person is arrested, a statement of arrest should be read over as soon as reasonably practicable, and details recorded in the arresting officer’s notebook.

A person is ‘Not Officially Accused’ (a suspect) when arrested and not cautioned and charged. They are ‘Officially Accused’ once arrested and cautioned and charged.

If conveyed to a police station, the arrested person will have their details recorded in our National Custody System.

There are situations however whereby a person must be released from police custody prior to their arrival at a police station - effectively they are ‘de-arrested’ - where the reasonable grounds for suspicion no longer exist. In those circumstances, the details of an arrested person are not held electronically.

As a result, we are unfortunately unable to collate comprehensive arrest data, as case by case assessment of all officer notebooks would be required - in addition to the partial arrest data held in the National Custody System.

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

For the reasons outlined above, Police Scotland do not collate data on arrests.

We have gone on to consider whether we could, instead, provide detected crime data but I am afraid that is also not possible within the cost exemption as every drug related crime report would have to be reviewed to extract and note the age of the accused individual.

You may be interested in Stop and Search data - which is available by age - [Data Publication - Police Scotland](https://www.scotland.police.uk/about-us/how-we-do-it/stop-and-search/data-publication/)

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.