| Police Scotland logo | Freedom of Information Response Our reference: FOI 25-1229  Responded to: 11 June 2025 |
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Your recent request for information is replicated below, together with our response.

**I wish to make a freedom of information request and would be grateful if you could supply the following information within twenty working days:**

1. **The number of cases with a 'CSE flag' applied for the calendar years 2020 - 2024.**

Firstly, I must advise 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 CSE flag. Therefore, figures for 2020-2022 are not held by Police Scotland and section 17 of the Act therefore applies.

The CSE flag was added during 2023, therefore the figures do not represent the full year. The figures for 2023 for cases with a CSE flag show there were 895 cases, and for 2024, 1,243 cases. This is for all divisions within Police Scotland.

1. **A breakdown by ethnicity of perpetrators for those cases applied a CSE flag.**

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, CSE markers cannot be broken down by ethnicity. To provide the information requested would require a manual review of each of the above-mentioned cases. As such, this is an exercise which would exceed the cost limit set out in the Fees Regulations.

1. **The number of “live” group-based CSE investigations led by your force for the years 2020 - 2024, including those progressing through the criminal justice system. “Group based”, in this context, means those crimes involving two or more offenders. If possible, broken down by the number of individuals in each “group”/gang.**

Again, I have considered your request and unfortunately, I am unable to provide the requested information as it would prove too costly to do so within the context of the fee regulation and of section 12(1) of the Act - Excessive Cost of Compliance therefore applies.

By way of explanation, it is not possible to identify group-based figures. The crime recording systems used by Police Scotland and our legacy forces prior to the formation of Police Scotland have no facility which allows us to carry out a search of group based CSE offences.

To extract the data involves resource intensive manual searching of police systems to identify cases. There is not one specific crime for CSE therefore the true picture of offending may not be shown. Further research would take us over the 40 hours and cost limit.

**d) The number of safeguarding referrals received 2020 - 2024 for children because of sexual exploitation concerns.**

Concern reports are submitted for all child concern incidents in Police Scotland onto the Interim Vulnerable Persons Database (iVPD). The data below was extracted using the ‘incident’s raised’ date and extracted from iVPD by selecting the specified ‘At risk Markers’ – Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE). Please note more than one incident nominal can be attributed to an incident.

Data prior to 29th March 2022 is not held by Police Scotland and section 17 of the Act therefore applies. The figures from 29th March 2022 are provided below:

2022 - 786

2023 – 1,023

2024 – 867

**e) The number of Child Abduction Warning Notices (CAWN) issued to adults 2014 - 2025, and a breakdown by ethnicity of those presented with one.**

The information sought is not held by Police Scotland and section 17 of the Act therefore applies.

By way of explanation, Police Scotland do not issue CAWNs.

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.