



**An
Phríomh-Oifig
Staidrimh**

Central
Statistics
Office

Standard SIMS Report: Recorded Crime



Single Integrated Metadata Structure (SIMS) Report

For

Recorded Crime

This documentation applies to the reporting period:
2023

Last edited:

1 December 2023



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2. Introduction

In July 2004 the Expert Group on Crime Statistics reported to the Minister for Justice, Equality and Law Reform and recommended that the compilation of reported crime statistics should be transferred from the Garda Síochána to a dedicated and independent external statistical unit.

Following discussions with the Director General of the Central Statistics Office (CSO) it was agreed that such a unit should be established within the CSO.

The Central Statistics Office (CSO) compiles and publishes Recorded Crime statistics in Ireland on a quarterly basis. Headline Crime Statistics were first published by CSO in Quarter 3 2006 and this was based on data from the period 2003 to 2006. The Headline Crime Statistics release was replaced by the Recorded Crime release in Quarter 1 2008.

Please note that a categorization of ‘Statistics Under Reservation’ had been applied to Recorded Crime Statistics in 2018 to reflect the fact that there were data quality issues in the underlying sources used to compile these statistics.

This categorisation has been lifted with the publication of the fifth Review of Recorded Crime Statistics in October 2023. This is possible because An Garda Síochána have introduced a range of quality measures over the last number of years which have resulted in sustained improvement in the quality of the underlying crime data. These changes give a level of assurance to users that they can rely on Recorded Crime Statistics. The CSO will continue to inform users of the quality of the data they are using, and of any particular issues which may need to be noted around time series comparability as they arise.

For further information see our Lifting of Under Reservation categorisation for Recorded Crime Statistics FAQ page at <https://www.cso.ie/en/methods/crime/liftingofunderreservationcategorisationforrecordedcrimestatisticsfaq/>

3. Contact

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4. Metadata Update

4.1. Metadata last certified

1 December 2023.

4.2. Metadata last posted

18 April 2023

4.3. Metadata last update

1 December 2023.



5. Statistical Presentation

5.1. Data Description

Recorded Crime statistics provide information relating to the frequency, type and distribution of crimes as recorded by An Garda Síochána (AGS) on its PULSE (Police Using Leading Systems Effectively) crime incident database system.

Recorded Crime statistics refer only to crime incidents reported to or which become known to An Garda Síochána and recorded as such. This is only one part of a picture of criminal behaviour in Ireland. Other aspects (and other sources of information) are presented in separate CSO releases and publications.

Recorded Crimes are counted using the '**Primary Offence**' rule. This means that when two or more crimes are committed in a single episode, it is the primary recorded crime incident which is counted. The primary incident is the incident for which suspected offender would receive the greatest penalty on conviction. For example, if a suspected offender involved in an incident of dangerous driving causing death and an incident of drug possession, the incident of dangerous driving causing death should be classified as the primary incident. The drug possession incident would not be included in the Recorded Crime statistics as only primary incidents are counted for statistical purposes. For further information, please see the attached to the Crime Counting Rules guide published by An Garda Síochána.

<https://www.garda.ie/en/about-us/publications/policy-documents/guide-to-how-crime-is-counted-and-recorded.pdf>.

The Recorded Crime statistics exclude elements of Group 4 (Dangerous or Negligent Acts), and all of Groups 14 (Road and Traffic Offences (Not Elsewhere Classified or n.e.c.) and 16 (Offences Not Elsewhere Classified) of the Irish Crime Classification System (ICCS).

5.2. Classification System

Recorded Crime statistics are disaggregated by crime incident type, the time period of the date the incident became known (i.e., reported) to AGS, and by Garda administrative areas.

The Recorded Crime standard release uses a condensed version of the Irish Crime Classification System (ICCS) with elements of Group 4 (Dangerous or Negligent Acts), and all of Groups 14 (Road and Traffic Offences (Not Elsewhere Classified)) and 16 (Offences Not Elsewhere Classified) removed. Please see the following link for further details:

https://www.cso.ie/en/media/csoie/methods/recordedcrime/ICCSq_V2.0.pdf

Crime incidents are classified geographically using the relevant Garda subdistrict (station) and statistics are then aggregated up to Division and Region.

Data in the standard publication includes a breakdown by Garda Region. Divisional and other breakdowns are available on PxStat.

5.3. Sector Coverage

Not applicable.

5.4. Statistical Concepts and definitions

Incidents reported to, or which become known to, An Garda Síochána are recorded as **crime incidents** if a member of An Garda Síochána determines that, on the balance of probability, a criminal offence defined by law has taken place, and there is no credible evidence to the contrary.



Recorded Crime incidents are differentiated by type, reporting period and location for statistical purposes:

Crime type

The 'incident type' variable, as recorded on PULSE, is used to differentiate between crimes of different type.

The set of PULSE incident types is mapped to the Irish Crime Classification System (ICCS) for statistical reporting.

The Recorded Crime publication does not include Groups 14 and 16 of the ICCS and includes only some subcategories of Group 4. This is because some offences (i.e., specified road traffic offences) are initially recorded as Fixed Charge Notice offences on a separate database and are only recorded on PULSE if the offender fails to pay the fine within the specified time period.

Date

The 'date reported' variable, as recorded on PULSE, is used to differentiate between different reporting time periods i.e., by quarter and by year.

It is the date the crime is reported, rather the date the crime occurred, that is used for statistical reporting which is in line with international best practice.

Location

The Station (or Garda sub-district) variable, as recorded on PULSE, is used to aggregate crime incidents up to administrative areas such as Garda Divisions and Garda Regions.

For stations which have been closed, crime incidents are reassigned to the Garda sub-district which assumed responsibility for the area of the closed station.

The Garda regional structure changed in Q4 2019. This reduced the number of Garda regions from six to four. The four regions are:

- Dublin Metropolitan Region
- North Western Region
- Eastern Region
- Southern Region

An Garda Síochána are currently in the process of the rolling out of a new Operation Model. This will involve a fundamental change to the organisational structure from the existing District Based Model to a new Divisional Functional Area Model. Further updates will follow in due course.

5.5. Statistical Unit

The principal counting unit for crimes used in Recorded Crime statistics is the crime incident. See <https://www.garda.ie/en/about-us/publications/policy-documents/guide-to-how-crime-is-counted-and-recorded.pdf> for definition.

5.6. Statistical Population

CSO counts valid primary crime incidents recorded within the Republic of Ireland.

5.7. Reference Area

State



5.8. Time Coverage

2003-2023

5.9. Base Period

Not applicable.

6. Unit of Measure

Number of recorded incidents is expressed as an integer number. Change is expressed in percentages.

7. Reference Period

Quarter and year to latest quarter.

8. Institutional Mandate

8.1. Legal Acts and other agreements

Recorded Crime statistics are not currently governed by any EU Regulation.

Section 47 of the Garda Síochána Act 2005 however makes provision for information concerning offences, criminal proceedings etc. to be made available to the CSO.

<https://www.irishstatutebook.ie/eli/2005/act/20/section/47/enacted/en/html#sec47>

Activities of the CSO are governed by the Statistics Act 1993.

8.2. Data Sharing

The Central Statistics Office is in receipt of a single regular data extract from the PULSE database, updated each quarter. This data is transferred electronically between An Garda Síochána and CSO through a secure VPN (virtual private network)..

The data extract comprises a subset of the data held on the PULSE database, configured for the specific purpose of compiling Recorded Crime statistics. This data sharing is currently being governed via a Memorandum of Understanding between An Garda Síochána and the Central Statistics Office. Please see the following link for details:

<https://www.cso.ie/en/aboutus/lgdp/legislation/memorandumsofunderstanding/mougarda/>

The CSO does not share this data with any other organisation or individual.

9. Confidentiality

9.1. Confidentiality – policy

All information supplied to the CSO is treated as strictly confidential. The Statistics Act, 1993 sets stringent confidentiality standards: Information collected may be used only for statistical purposes, and no details that might be related to an identifiable person or business undertaking may be divulged to any other government department or body.



These national statistical confidentiality provisions are reinforced by the following EU legislation:

Council Regulation (EC) No 223/2009 on European statistics for data collected for EU statistical purposes. Please see the following link:

<http://data.europa.eu/eli/reg/2009/223>

Further details are outlined in the CSO's Code of Practice on Statistical Confidentiality.

For more information on the CSO Statistical Data Confidentiality Policy please visit:

<https://www.cso.ie/en/aboutus/lgdp/csodatapolicies/statisticalconfidentiality/>

9.2. Confidentiality – data treatment

All data are treated as strictly confidential in accordance with the Statistics Act, 1993.

10. Release Policy

10.1. Release Calendar

The date of dissemination of all statistics released by CSO can be found in the Release Calendar published on www.cso.ie. This calendar is regularly updated.

10.2. Release calendar access

The release calendar can be accessed via the CSO website, www.cso.ie, or directly from this link:

<https://www.cso.ie/en/csolatestnews/releasecalendar/>

10.3. User access

In accordance with Principle 6 of the European Statistics Code of Practice all users of CSO statistics have equal access to CSO publications and releases via the CSO website at the same time of 11 am. Any privileged pre-release access to any outside user is limited, controlled and publicised. In the event that leaks occur, pre-release arrangements are revised so as to ensure impartiality.

The CSO recognises that in very limited circumstances a business need for pre-release access may be substantiated. Any form of pre-release access is a privilege and a strict CSO pre-release access policy is adhered to for these special requests. The full pre-release access policy can be accessed at <https://www.cso.ie/en/aboutus/lgdp/csodatapolicies/csopolicyonpre-releaseaccess/>

The various results are published nationally in statistical release format as well as on the CSO website (www.cso.ie). Selected extracts from the results are posted on the CSO's data dissemination database, PxStat at the following link:

<https://data.cso.ie/product/RC>

11. Frequency of Dissemination

Quarterly.



12. Accessibility and clarity

12.1. News release

There is no News release connected to this survey

12.2. Publications

A copy of the Recorded Crime publication can be found on the CSO website using the following link:
<https://www.cso.ie/en/statistics/crimeandjustice/>

12.3. On-line database

Statistics in tabular format are available from the CSO's dissemination database PxStat and can be accessed from the following link <https://data.cso.ie/product/rc>

12.3.1. AC 1. Data tables - consultations

The Recorded Crime PxStat page on the CSO website was accessed 23,221 times during the period 1/11/2022 and 1/11/2023. Out of those hits, 7,139 were unique.

12.4. Micro-data Access

Not applicable.

12.5. Other

Aggregate level data is supplied to the United Nations, Eurostat and OECD on an annual basis by questionnaire. Please see attached:

United Nations:

<https://dataunodc.un.org/>

Eurostat

<http://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/web/crime/database>

OECD

<https://stats.oecd.org/index.aspx?queryid=67085#>

12.5.1. AC2. Metadata consultations

Not calculated.

12.6. Documentation on Methodology

Further information on the Methodology used in compiling Recorded Crime Statistics can be found in the CSO's methods page for the release, directly from this link:
<https://www.cso.ie/en/methods/crime/recordedcrime/>

12.6.1. AC3 – Metadata completeness – rate

Not calculated



12.7. Quality Documentation

Further information on the quality documentation for Recorded Crime Statistics can be found in the CSO's methods page for the release, directly from this link

<https://www.cso.ie/en/methods/crime/recordedcrime/>

13. Quality Management

13.1. Quality Assurance

Quality Management Framework

The Crime & Criminal Justice section avails of an office wide Quality Management Framework (QMF). This framework allows all CSO processes and outputs to meet the required standard as set out in the European Statistics Code of Practice (ESCoP). The QMF foundations are based on establishing the UNECE's Generic Statistical Business Process Model (GSBPM) as the operating statistical production model to achieve a standardised approach to Quality Management. All and any changes implemented to CSO processes and outputs require adherence to the QMF.

The CSO has carried out five reviews of the quality of An Garda Síochána PULSE data ending with the most recent review published in October 2023 which was based on data from Quarter 1, 2023. The reports of these reviews are published at the following link on the CSO website.

<https://www.cso.ie/en/statistics/crimeandjustice/reviewofthequalityofrecordedcrimestatistics/>

The latest review saw the lifting of the 'Under Reservation' designation on Recorded Crime Statistics. This was possible because An Garda Síochána have introduced a range of quality measures over the last number of years which have resulted in sustained improvement in the quality of the underlying crime data. These changes give a level of assurance to users that they can rely on Recorded Crime Statistics.

For further information, please go to the Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ) page at

<https://www.cso.ie/en/methods/crime/liftingofunderreservationcategorisationforrecordedcrimestatisticsfaq/>

13.2. Quality Assessment

The CSO requires that all statistical production areas carry out an annual self-assessment exercise to evaluate the quality of the processes used and the disseminated products. During the last iteration of this exercise, it was determined that the platform currently used is adequate for producing these crime statistics. The data sources are of sufficient quality to deliver the core set of required statistics and processing is adequate to allow for the timely analysis and dissemination of the statistics.

Section 13.1 above references the most recent CSO review of quality of PULSE data which was published in October 2023 and based on data for Quarter 1 2023. The CSO lifted the 'Under Reservation' designation on Recorded Crime Statistics because it concluded that Garda PULSE data is fit for official statistics purposes, while also noting the improved data for operational policing purposes. This conclusion was reached because the terms of various key CSO recommendations from the *Quality Improvement Proposal* from 2018 and Quality Reviews have been met, principally:

- The development and implementation of a formal data quality management system for PULSE that ensures fit-for-purpose crime data (developments throughout 2022 & 2023 culminating in quality checking and publishing of those results, with a focus on risk management).
- An independent review conducted on behalf of An Garda Síochána (AGS) which found evidence of good controls for the acknowledged risks to data collection and quality.
- There is now a senior manager within AGS who has overall responsibility for data quality.



- The provision of a comprehensive and publicly available document explaining how crime is recorded (2020).

In addition, a new Memorandum of Understanding between CSO and AGS which explicitly outlines expectations concerning AGS quality checking and reporting of same. The standard quality checks of PULSE data conducted as part of the fifth CSO Quality Review show evidence of consistent high data quality levels.

Relevance

13.3. User Needs

Recorded Crime statistics provide information relating to the frequency, type and distribution of crimes as recorded by An Garda Síochána (AGS) on its PULSE (Police Using Leading Systems Effectively) crime incident database system.

The CSO maintains an ongoing dialogue with several of our principal users in order to ensure that we are able to act upon any emerging user needs as quickly as possible.

13.3.1. Main National Users

- An Garda Síochána
- Department of Justice & Equality
- Policing Authority
- Policymakers
- Agencies and NGOs
- Members of the public
- Media
- Researchers

13.3.2. Principal External Users

- United Nations
- Eurostat
- OECD

13.4. User Satisfaction

Not measured.

13.5. Data Completeness

As part of the Quality Reviews of Recorded Crime Statistics, the CSO also assesses the extent to which user needs are being met. Following is a link to Appendix 1 of the most recent Quality Review which outlines the extent to which user needs are currently being met:

<https://www.cso.ie/en/releasesandpublications/ep/p-rqcs/reviewofthequalityofrecordedcrimestatistics2023/appendices/>

13.5.1. Data Completeness rate

Not calculated.

14. Accuracy and reliability



14.1. Overall accuracy

Between 2018 and October 2023, the categorisation of “Statistics Under Reservation” had been applied to Recorded Crime statistics to reflect the fact that there were data quality issues in the underlying sources used to compile these statistics. This categorisation has now been lifted (see Section 13.2 above).

14.2. Sampling Error

Not applicable.

14.2.1. A1. Sampling error indicator

Not applicable.

14.3. Non-sampling Error

The main sources of non-sampling error refer to coverage errors and errors introduced at the time of measuring incidents.

14.3.1. Coverage error

Coverage errors can be introduced in the data for several motives, including crimes that are reported to Gardai but not recorded on the PULSE system, crimes that are recorded under a ‘non-crime’ category on the PULSE system and crimes that have been marked ‘invalid’ in the PULSE System. However, the most recent Quality review outlines the controls that AGS have in place to mitigate against these errors and these are outlined in the following chapter ‘Risks to Data Quality and Controls’:

<https://www.cso.ie/en/releasesandpublications/ep/p-rqcs/reviewofthequalityofrecordedcrimestatistics2023/riskstodataqualityandcontrols/>

In the same review, the CSO assessed the quality of Recorded Crime Statistics in the following chapter

<https://www.cso.ie/en/releasesandpublications/ep/p-rqcs/reviewofthequalityofrecordedcrimestatistics2023/csoassessmentofdataquality/>

Based on the examination of samples of crime incidents, it found that

- The crime type was correctly assigned to 98% of reported crime incidents.
- All non-crime incident types were correctly classified.
- The reason for invalidation was clear for 94% of invalidated crime incidents (Crime incidents can be marked invalid on PULSE if it is determined that a crime did not occur, or if the record is a duplicate or created in error).
- Very high degree of compliance with crime counting rules (upwards on 98%).

Table 3.1 in the following chapter outlines a summary of the metrics from the CSO data quality checks:

<https://www.cso.ie/en/releasesandpublications/ep/p-rqcs/reviewofthequalityofrecordedcrimestatistics2020/dataquality/>

14.3.1.1 A2. Over coverage error

Not applicable

14.3.1.1 A3. Common units - proportion



Not applicable.

14.3.2 Measurement error

Measurement errors are closely linked to coverage errors, please refer to Section 14.1 above.

14.3.3 Non-Response Error

Not applicable.

14.3.3.1 Unit non-response rate

Not applicable.

14.3.3.2 Item non-response rate

14.3.3.2 Item non-response rate

Not applicable.

14.3.4 Processing error

Not calculated.

14.3.4.2 Model assumption error

15 Timeliness and punctuality

15.3 Timeliness

Statistics are published by the end of the third month succeeding the quarter, for example, Recorded Crime for Q4 of any year would be published in March of the following year. Statistics for previous periods are revised on each publication, due to the potential for reclassification/invalidation etc. of incidents.

15.3.3.2 TP1. Time lag – First results

Not applicable.

15.3.3.3 TP2. Time lag – Final results

3 months.

14.4. Punctuality

Crime statistics are published on the CSO website on time according to the date specified in the advanced release calendar

15.3.3.4 TP3. Punctuality – Punctuality - delivery and publication

0 days.



16 Comparability

16.3 Comparability – Geographical

Not applicable.

16.3.3.2 CC1. Asymmetry for mirror flow statistics

Not applicable.

16.4 Comparability over time

Several factors have the potential to influence the comparability of Recorded Crime statistics over time and across Garda geographical areas. These include but are not limited to:

- Changes in Garda operational activity
- Changes to legislation
- Changes in reporting levels by victims
- Changes to Garda station boundaries

Differences in legislation, definitions and recording procedures in different countries will greatly affect international comparisons.

16.4.3.2 Length of Comparable Time series

20 Years

16.5 Coherence – cross domain

Recorded Crime statistics refer only to crime incidents reported to or which become known to An Garda Síochána and recorded as such. Some offence types are processed by organisations other than the Gardai (e.g., revenue, local authorities etc).

16.5.3.2 Coherence – Sub annual and annual statistics

Not applicable.

16.5.3.3 Coherence with National Accounts

Not applicable.

16.6 Coherence – internal

Not applicable.

17 Cost and Burden

The CSO publishes annual estimates of Cost and Response Burden and is available from the Response Burden Barometer

<https://www.cso.ie/en/statistics/enterprisestatistics/responseburdenbarometer/>

18 Data Revision



18.3 Data Revision Policy

Published statistics are subject to correction and revision for a variety of reasons. The most common reasons include the receipt of additional information (for example, late survey responses) and updated seasonal factors. Occasional revisions also occur as a result of changes to definitions, methodology, classifications and general updating of statistical series.

It is recognised internationally that the existence of a sound revisions policy maintains credibility in official statistics. The CSO General Revisions Policy, which details how revisions should be managed and communicated to users, outlines the three main types of revisions:

- Planned Routine Revisions
- Planned Major Revisions
- Unplanned Revisions.

One reason for unplanned revisions occurring can be when errors are detected after publication. The 'CSO Error Correction Policy – How to deal with Publication Errors' outlines the steps taken when these errors are detected. As required under Principle 6.3 of the European Statistics Code of Practice, errors detected in published statistics are corrected at the earliest possible date and users are informed. An important step in the process is the documentation and analysis of errors that have occurred and their causes. This allows the CSO to take measures preventing similar errors from occurring in the future and uniformity in dealing with them when they do.

The data revision policy that CSO statistics adheres to can be found via the following link:

<https://www.cso.ie/en/methods/quality/treatmentofrevisions/>

18.4 Data Revision Practice

Statistics for previous periods are revised on each publication, due to the potential for reclassification/invalidation etc. of incidents. Revisions due to processing errors are notified in line with policy.

18.4.3.2 Data Revision – Average size

Not calculated

19 Statistical processing

14.4.1. Source Data

The source of data for the compilation of Recorded Crime Statistics is Crime incident data from PULSE (Police Using Leading Systems Effectively, the crime incident database of An Garda Síochána, Ireland's national policing service).

19.3.3.2 Population and sampling frame

Not applicable.

19.3.3.3 Sampling design

19.3.4 Survey size

Not applicable.

19.3.4.2 Survey technique



19.4 Frequency of data collection

The CSO receives an extract of PULSE from An Garda Síochána on a quarterly basis.

19.5 Data Collection

19.5.3.2 Type of Survey/Process

Administrative data (source: An Garda Síochána PULSE dataset).

19.5.3.3 Questionnaire (including explanations)

Not applicable.

19.5.3.4 Survey Participation

Not applicable.

19.5.3.5 Data Capture

Crime incident records are created and maintained by AGS on PULSE. See <https://www.garda.ie/en/about-us/publications/policy-documents/guide-to-how-crime-is-counted-and-recorded.pdf>

The CSO receives via secure VPN (Virtual Private Network) a copy of PULSE incident record microdata, with a subset of data fields, electronically once each quarter and updates all statistical records with information as contained in the most recent dataset.

19.6 Data Validation

Up to Q4 2017, CSO carried out two edits on the source data for statistical purposes. One related to the counting of sex and fraud offences in a series where there is the same victim and same offender. The second related to age-specific offences e.g., abduction vs kidnapping.

Since Q4 2017, CSO implements an automatic check on sex and fraud offences (Groups 2 and 9) reported between 1 January 2003 and 30 June 2017 to reconcile scenarios where a continuous series involving the same victim and same offender would be counted multiple times due to how they are recorded in the source data. The edit is for statistical purposes only and is in accordance with the Crime Counting Rules. An Garda Síochána introduced additional quality control procedures for incidents reported after 1 July 2017. These quality control procedures negate the need for CSO to continue to implement the automatic correction.

Since Q4 2017, CSO no longer edits age-specific offences reported after 1 July 2017. This was due to the absence of any corrections for several years due to better data collection. A correction is still applied to errors found in incidents reported prior to 1 July 2017.

Once compiled, outputs are compared to previous quarters and years and any unusual changes are queried with An Garda Síochána. It should be noted however that changes over time may be due to a number of an Garda Síochána operational factors which the CSO would not be aware of.

19.7 Data Compilation

Crime incidents recorded on PULSE are classified according to the type of incident that is determined to have taken place by the recording member.

19.7.3.2 Imputation (for Non-Response or Incomplete Data Sets)



Not applicable.

19.7.3.3 A7. Imputation rate

Not applicable.

19.7.3.4 Grossing and Weighting

Not applicable.

19.8 Adjustment

Not applicable.

19.8.3.2 Seasonal Adjustment

Not applicable.

20 Comment

Additional information relating to An Garda Síochána can be obtained from their website www.garda.ie