

25 November 2024

FOI Ref 17475

Request - You asked us the following:

Please can I request the following information:

- 1.)
 - a) How many unaccompanied migrant children have been registered as 'missing' since January 2020?
 - b) How many of these people (some of whom may now be adults) are still registered as missing?
 - c) How many of these have been missing for more than one month? How many have been missing for more than six months? How many have been missing for more than a year?
- 2)
 - a) Of the people in 1.) b) How many of these are still under the age of 18?
 - b) Of the people in 1.) b) How many of these are now over 18?
 - c) Of the people in 1.) b) please break down the ages at which they went missing (ie - how many went missing at age 14, how many at age 15, etc)
 - d) Please break down the figures in 1.) b) by sex
 - g) Please break down the figures in 1.) b) by nationality
 - h) Please break down the figures in 1.) b) by the local authority (or or other authority) from whose care they went missing.
- 3)
 - a) Of the people in 1.) b) Please provide me with the age and nationality of the girl who was the youngest on the date she went missing. Has she been missing for more than six months? More than a year? (If data protection rules allow please also tell me in which month did she go missing?) From which local authority/other authority?
 - b) Of the people in 1.) b) please provide me with the age and nationality of the boy who was the youngest on the date he went missing. Has he been missing for more than six months, more than a year? (If data protection rules allow please also tell me in which month did she go missing?) From which local authority/other authority?

If you are planning on invoking the time/cost exemption please instead answer as many questions as possible within the time/cost limit, starting from question 1 and working your way down.

CLARIFICATION RECEIVED FROM APPLICANT 25/11/2024

Please can I make an amendment to the request I sent on the 15th November (Ref:17475)

I've updated question 1) a) to clarify that I would like as much data as possible in the case that data isn't available for certain years - and 1) b) to say that I'd like the data as at 22 November 2024 or the nearest possible date.

I've also corrected some sloppy numbering in question 2.

The full and amended request is below. Many thanks!

Please can I request the following information:

1.)

a) How many unaccompanied migrant children have been registered as 'missing' since January 2020? If this data is only available via FOI for more recent months or years because of improved recording - please provide me with data reaching as far back as possible AND the date from which the data stretches back.

b) As at 22 November or nearest possible date: How many of these people (some of whom may now be adults) are still registered as missing?

c) How many of these in 1.) b) have been missing for more than one month? How many have been missing for more than six months? How many have been missing for more than a year?

2)

a) Of the people in 1.) b) How many of these are still under the age of 18?

b) Of the people in 1.) b) How many of these are now over 18?

c) Of the people in 1.) b) please break down the ages at which they went missing (ie - how many went missing at age 14, how many at age 15, etc)

d) Please break down the figures in 1.) b) by sex

e) Please break down the figures in 1.) b) by nationality

f) Please break down the figures in 1.) b) by the local authority (or other authority) from whose care they went missing.

3)

a) Of the people in 1.) b) Please provide me with the age and nationality of the girl who was the youngest on the date she went missing. Has she been missing for more than six months? More than a year? (If data

protection rules allow please also tell me in which month did she go missing?) From which local authority/other authority?

b) Of the people in 1.) b) please provide me with the age and nationality of the boy who was the youngest on the date he went missing. Has he been missing for more than six months, more than a year? (If data protection rules allow please also tell me in which month did she go missing?) From which local authority/other authority?

If you are planning on invoking the time/cost exemption please instead answer as many questions as possible within the time/cost limit, starting from question 1 and working your way down

We received your request on 15/11/2024 and have processed this under the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA).

Staffordshire Police's response to your enquiry is as follows:

In accordance with Section 17(1) of the Freedom of Information Act, this letter represents a refusal notice for this particular request.

The following exemption has been applied:

- Section 12(1) where the cost of compliance exceeds the appropriate limit. Section 12(1) does not oblige a public authority to comply with a request for information if the authority estimates that the cost of complying with the request would exceed the prescribed limit'.

The above information has been withheld for the following reasons:

There is no method by which we can easily retrieve information from our systems to answer this request. For the time period requested, there have been in excess of 15,000 occurrences in order to ascertain 'how unaccompanied migrant children have been registered as missing'. Would mean going through every missing child since 2020. To extract this data would therefore require a very labour-intensive manual trawl through each record. From dip sampling, it has been estimated that it would take approximately 30 minutes to review each record to answer this request, this would equate to over 7,500 hours. To achieve this task would therefore exceed the 18-hour time and cost threshold of the FOI Act by some considerable margin.

Advice and assistance

Section 16 of the Act places an obligation upon the Authority to provide advice and assistance, in order to comply with this obligation please see below.

In order to assist in refining your request data could be provided for question 1b. However, please note further exemptions may apply.

Freedom of Information Request Appeals Procedure

1. Who Can Ask for a Review

Any person who has requested information from Staffordshire Police, which has been dealt with under the Freedom of Information Act, is entitled to complain and request an internal review, if they are dissatisfied with the response they received.

2. How to Request a Review

Requests for review of a Freedom of Information request must be made in writing within two months of the date of receipt of this email, and should be addressed to:

foi@staffordshire.police.uk

Or by Post to:

Central Disclosure Unit
Staffordshire Police HQ
PO Box 3167
Stafford
ST16 9JZ

The reference number, date of the request and details of why the review is being requested must be included. Requests for review should be brought to the attention of the Central Disclosure Unit within two months of the Force's response to the original FOI request.

3. Review Procedure

Receipt of a request for review will be acknowledged in writing. The review will be conducted by another Decision Maker who is independent from the original Decision Maker. The Central Disclosure Unit will set a target date for a response. The response will be made as soon as is practicable with the intention to complete the review within 20 working days. In more complex cases the review may take up to 40 working days.

The independent Decision Maker will conduct a review of the handling of the request for information and of decisions taken, including decisions taken about where the public interest lies in respect of exempt information where applicable. The review enables a re-evaluation of the case, taking into account the matters raised by the complaint.

4. Conclusion of the Appeal

On completion of the review the Independent Decision maker will reply to the complainant with the result of the review. If the complainant is still dissatisfied following the review they should contact the Information Commissioner to make an appeal. The Information Commissioner can be contacted via the following details:

Information Commissioner's Office
Wycliffe House
Water Lane
Wilmslow
Cheshire
SK9 5AF



STAFFORDSHIRE
POLICE

ICO Website for complaints link: <https://ico.org.uk/make-a-complaint/foi-and-eir-complaints/foi-and-eir-complaints/>

Freedom of Information
Central Disclosure Unit