

17 AUG 2016

Jeni Cartwright
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Dear Ms Cartwright

Official Information Act 1982 request

I am replying to your Official Information Act 1982 (the Act) request of 22 June 2016, requesting information on relationship fraud and benefit fraud.

I am unable to provide statistics on relationship fraud as offence codes do not identify the type of benefit fraud that a person is being charged with. This information is only available in the individual case files which are not subject to the Act. Furthermore, the Ministry of Justice (the Ministry) does not record whether an individual sentenced to prison has children. Accordingly, your request for this information is declined under section 18(g)(i) of the Act as it is information that is not held by the Ministry.

In response to your request for statistics on benefit fraud please see the attached two tables.

Benefit fraud numbers have been obtained by identifying individuals prosecuted by the Ministry of Social Development (MSD) for offences included in the Australian and New Zealand Standard Offence Classification sub division: 0911 Obtain Benefit by deception. The most common offences are:

- Take/Obtain/Use Doc For Pecuniary Advantage
- Misleading A Social Welfare Officer
- Obtain By Deception (Over \$1,000)
- Mislead Info To Obtain Benefit/Finance
- Breaches Social Security Act By Fraud
- Knowing Document Altered/Reproduced Intent To Defraud
- Other Offence Social Security Act.

The Ministry relies on ethnicity information provided by the prosecuting agency, in this case the MSD. As this information is not provided by the MSD on charging documents, the majority of ethnicities are unknown to the Ministry. In some instances the Ministry has been able to provide ethnicity where individuals have been linked to other cases where this information is recorded.

If you require any clarification of the information contained in this response please contact Antony Paltridge, Team Leader, Media and External Relations, at media@justice.govt.nz or call (04) 918 8980 or 027 689 0667.

If you are not satisfied with my response to your request, you have the right to make a complaint to the Ombudsman under section 28(3) of the Act. The Ombudsman may be contacted by writing to PO Box 10-152, Wellington.

Yours sincerely



pp- Heather Baggott
General Manager, District Courts

Ref: 57606

Table 1: Number of people convicted of benefit fraud, broken down by gender and ethnicity, by calendar year of outcome, 2005 to 2015

Gender	Ethnicity	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015
Female	European	12	9	2	8	5	10	5	10	4	4	
	Maori	12	18	12	10	14	11	10	26	19		5
	Other	1			5	3	7	2	4	3	3	1
	Pacific Island	3	2	2	1	2		2		7	1	
	Unknown	486	467	491	493	420	437	423	555	445	637	371
Male	European	15	6	4	5	5	3	3	8	2	1	1
	Maori	8	17	11	8	3	8	5	13	7		6
	Other	1	2		1	2	4	1	5	2	3	
	Pacific Island	3	1	1				2	3	6	1	
	Unknown	426	319	317	286	232	200	218	305	244	437	216
Unknown	1	5	5	2		2	3	7		4	1	
Total		968	846	843	819	686	682	674	936	741	1091	601

Table 2: Number of people convicted of benefit fraud that resulted in imprisonment, broken down by gender and ethnicity, by calendar year of outcome, 2005 to 2015

Gender	Ethnicity	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015
Female	European	1	0	0	0	0	1	1	0	0	1	0
	Maori	3	2	0	0	1	0	2	1	3	0	1
	Other	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	1	1	0	0
	Unknown	99	76	74	20	23	24	25	21	27	22	16
	European	3	1	0	1	1	1	0	0	1	0	0
Male	Maori	1	1	2	5	0	2	0	1	0	0	1
	Other	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0
	Pacific Island	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0
	Unknown	46	40	43	17	25	18	20	14	11	18	7
	Unknown	1	1	2	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0
Total		154	121	121	43	50	48	48	40	43	41	25

Note: Imprisonment includes people sentenced in a District or High Court to a corrections facility only.