

**Subject:** Number of and reasons for suicides in Scotland from 2007-2017.

**FOI reference:** FOI/18/02944

**Date received:** 15 October 2018

**Date responded:** 16 October 2018

**Information requested:**

Information on the number of suicides in Scotland recorded by NRS. Specifically:

1. The numbers of adult suicides annually from 2007 to 2017 in Scotland, plus the number in total for that 10 year period sorted according to region.
2. Whether NRS compiles data on reasons for individual suicides notified to coroners from the information contained in suicide notes? If not, then may such information be held by coroner offices?

**NRS Response:**

NRS compiles statistics of probable suicides (which are defined, for this purpose, as the numbers of deaths for which the underlying cause was either intentional self-harm or an event of undetermined intent).

On point number 1, almost all the information requested is available from the "Probable Suicides" section of our website, which can be found at this address

<https://www.nrscotland.gov.uk/statistics-and-data/statistics/statistics-by-theme/vital-events/deaths/suicides>

Table 3 shows that adults account for almost all the probable suicides. Tables 4 and 5 show the numbers of probable suicides (of all ages) for each Health Board and Local Authority area, for each year from 1974 (Health Boards) and 1991 (Local Authorities) to 2017, from which, the totals for the regions can be calculated.

Under section 25(1) of FOISA, we do not have to provide information if it is already reasonably accessible. If, however, you do not have internet access to obtain this information from the website(s) listed, then please contact us again and we will send you a paper copy.

On point number 2, we do not compile any data on the reasons for individual suicides. Our data on probable suicides are based on what is recorded by the death registration process (which does not obtain the reasons for a death from either the doctor who certifies the death or from the person who registers the death) plus advice from procurators fiscal (Scotland does not have coroners) on whether deaths were believed to be due to (e.g.) intentional self-harm (but not on the reasons for deaths). However, such information may be held by the Crown Office and Procurator Fiscal Service ( <http://www.copfs.gov.uk/about-us/about-us> ), who may be able to help.

This is a formal notice under section 17(1) of FOISA that National Records of Scotland does not have the information requested.