# Who is seeing your intimate pictures? Surge in reports of sharing



Concerns surrounding the issue of non-consensual sharing of intimate images have surged following new findings released by the Police Service of Northern Ireland (PSNI). Over the past five years, a total of 420 offences relating to the disclosure of private sexual photographs and films were reported to the police. This alarming statistic includes incidents that predominantly affected women, with 325 female victims and 93 male victims recorded.

The data, illustrating the prevalence of what is commonly referred to as 'revenge porn', indicates that the intent behind such actions is not always revenge, as experts caution against the term's misleading implications. The impact on victims is profound, affecting both their mental health and personal reputation. Statistics imply a significant social awareness of the issue; a survey conducted earlier this year found that one-third of adults either know someone who has been a victim or have experienced the crime themselves.

In reviewing the annual figures, 2020 saw 79 reported incidents, involving 71 females and eight males. The following year, 2021, recorded a rise to 100 incidents, including 79 female victims and 21 male victims. Notably, in 2022, the numbers dipped slightly to 86 incidents involving 66 females and 20 males, and this figure remained unchanged in 2023, with 59 females and 25 males affected. The 2024 figures indicate an increase, with 69 occurrences reported, involving 50 female victims and 19 male victims. Two victims in 2023 were categorised with “unknown” gender, highlighting the need for inclusivity in reporting and data collection.

DUP MLA Cheryl Brownlee, who is a member of the Policing Board, obtained the figures from the PSNI and expressed her concern regarding the implications of such a crime. “These figures highlight the devastating impact of this form of abuse, particularly on women, and underline the urgent need for continued action to address it,” Brownlee stated. She emphasized the severe emotional and psychological distress faced by victims and stressed the importance of enhanced preventative measures and support systems.

In her commitment to addressing the issue, Ms Brownlee has vowed to collaborate with relevant authorities to ensure that those responsible for these offences are held accountable. “I am committed to continuing work with the relevant authorities to ensure that perpetrators are held accountable and that victims are given the protection and justice they deserve,” she said.

As the PSNI continues to gather evidence on these incidents, the numbers underscore a challenging landscape where personal privacy is increasingly at risk, prompting calls for robust mechanisms to protect potential victims and support those already affected by such grave violations of trust.

Source: [Noah Wire Services](https://www.noahwire.com)

## Bibliography

* <https://revengepornhelpline.org.uk/news/reports-to-the-revenge-porn-helpline-increased-by-106-in-2023/> - This URL supports the concern over non-consensual sharing of intimate images, highlighting a significant rise in reports to the Revenge Porn Helpline and the profound impact on victims' mental health and personal reputation.
* <https://www.scotland.police.uk/access-to-information/freedom-of-information/disclosure-log/disclosure-log-2024/july/24-1676-crime-stats-non-consensual-sharing-of-intimate-images-revenge-porn-victim-18s-2023-td/> - This URL provides crime statistics related to non-consensual sharing of intimate images, which aligns with the issue of 'revenge porn' and its prevalence across different regions.
* <https://www.bbc.com/news/uk-northern-ireland-64845171> - This URL could potentially provide news coverage of the PSNI's findings on non-consensual sharing of intimate images, although specific details are not available in the search results.
* <https://www.police-service-of-northern-ireland.co.uk/> - This URL is the official website of the Police Service of Northern Ireland, which could provide general information on their efforts to address non-consensual sharing of intimate images.
* <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/new-laws-to-protect-people-from-revenge-porn> - This URL discusses legal measures to protect individuals from 'revenge porn', aligning with the need for enhanced preventative measures and support systems mentioned in the article.
* <https://www.nspcc.org.uk/keeping-children-safe/online-safety/non-consensual-sharing-of-intimate-images/> - This URL provides information on the impact of non-consensual sharing of intimate images, emphasizing the need for robust mechanisms to protect potential victims and support those affected.