

Reference: 02286997

Information Requests
information.requests@ofcom.org.uk

29 September 2026

Freedom of Information request: Right to know request

Thank you for your request for information about racism complaints in broadcasting.

We received this request on 22 September 2026 and we have considered your request under the Freedom of Information Act 2000.

Your request

Under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 I request the following information:

The number of complaints of racism in broadcasting for the following periods:

2016/17

2017/18

2018/19

2019/20

2020/21

2021/22

2022/23

2023/24

2024/25

2025/26

This information should be made available to me in electric form if possible.

Our response

By way of background, complaints about broadcast standards are carefully assessed under Ofcom's [Broadcasting Code](#) ("the Code") which sets standards for programme content that all Ofcom licensees must follow. Individual complaints received by Ofcom are assigned to cases, and a case is opened when Ofcom is assessing a specific programme or issue and each case may consist of one or more complaints. In line with our published complaints [procedures](#), we review every complaint we receive to consider whether it raises potentially substantive issues under the Code which warrant investigation by Ofcom. If we consider that these standards may have been breached, we will investigate. You can find decisions about complaints we have considered in [Ofcom's Broadcast and On Demand Bulletin](#), published every fortnight on our website.

Please note, in line with our retention period, we only hold searchable records on our complaints database for the past 5 years. We have provided that data below.

We have searched our complaints database under the category “Race discrimination / offence”.

Complaints closed under the category “Race discrimination / offence”

Financial year	Complaints
2020/21	5,869 (966 cases)
2021/22	5,481 (813 cases)
2022/23	1,367 (584 cases)
2023/24	11,817 (523 cases)
2024/25	1,482 (337 cases)
2025/26	1046 (327 cases)

Yours sincerely,

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Request an internal review

If you are unhappy with the response you have received to your request for information, or think that your request was refused without a reason valid under the law, you may ask for an internal review. If you do, it will be subject to an independent review within Ofcom. We will either uphold the original decision, or reverse or modify it.

If you would like to ask us to carry out an internal review, you should get in touch within two months of the date of this letter. There is no statutory deadline for us to complete our internal review, and the time it takes will depend on the complexity of the request. But we will try to complete the review within 20 working days (or no more than 40 working days in exceptional cases) and keep you informed of our progress. Please email the Information Requests team (information.requests@ofcom.org.uk) to request an internal review.

Taking it further

If you are unhappy with the outcome of our internal review, then you have the right to [complain to the Information Commissioner’s Office](#).