

# An Garda Síochána

## Public Attitudes Survey Bulletin



Q4 2017

Research conducted by



**This bulletin presents key findings from the fourth quarter of the Public Attitudes Survey conducted between October and December 2017.**

People were asked about their perceptions of national and local crime; if they experienced victimisation in the last year, whether they reported this crime, and their satisfaction with An Garda Síochána's handling of their incident. Respondents were also asked about their level of worry about becoming a victim of crime, their fear about crime, as well as its impact on their quality of life. They were asked what crimes they think should be prioritised by Gardaí; how visible Garda patrols are in their local area; as well as their level of trust, satisfaction, and overall perceptions of the Garda organisation.

The survey is designed to run on a continuous basis (it is continuously surveying the population) with 1,500 being surveyed each quarter. Data was collected by means of in-home, face-to-face interviews. The high level results presented in this bulletin are based on data which has been weighted by age, gender, social class and nationality.

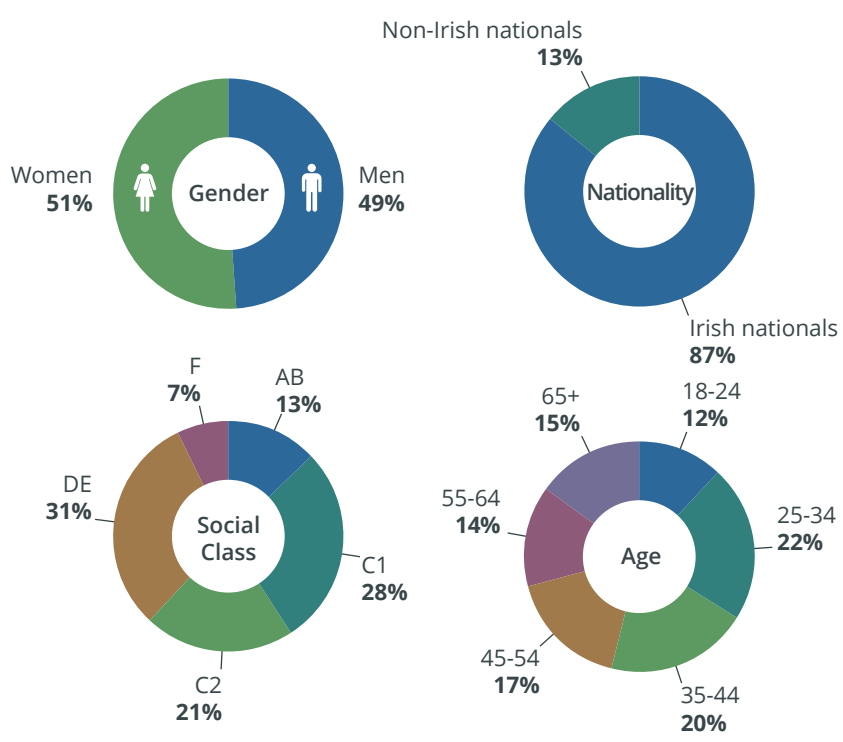
This is a survey of a random sample of the population; therefore, we have to accept that there will be some margin of error. This has been calculated at +/- 2.53 per cent for the quarterly sample. It is important to note that as analysis is done on smaller proportions, the margin of error increases. This should be taken into account when examining analysis of victims of crime. Not all charts where percentages are used will add up to 100 percent because of the rounding of figures.

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### Demographics

The sample is of 1,500 adults aged 18 years and over.



# Perceptions of Crime

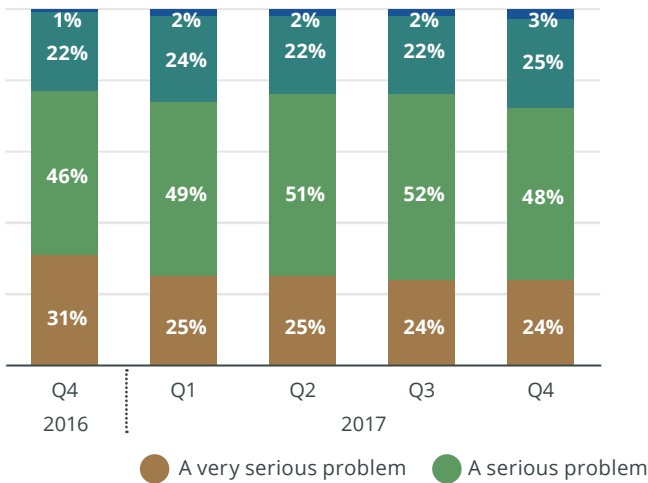
In Q4 2017, 72% of respondents perceived national crime to be either a very serious or serious problem, down 5% from the same period in 2016.

Between the latest two survey sweeps, there was a further decrease (-4%) in the number of respondents reporting national crime to be either a very serious or serious problem.

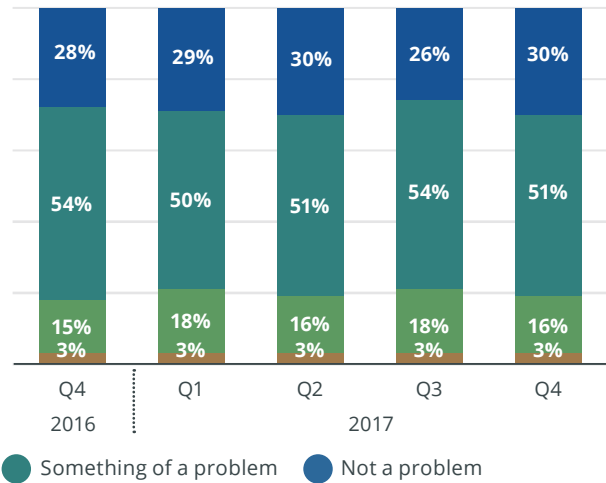
In comparison, during the fourth quarter of 2017 only 19% of respondents considered local crime to be a very serious or serious problem.

Since Q4 2016, the number of respondents reporting local crime to be either a very serious or serious problem has varied between 18 and 20%.

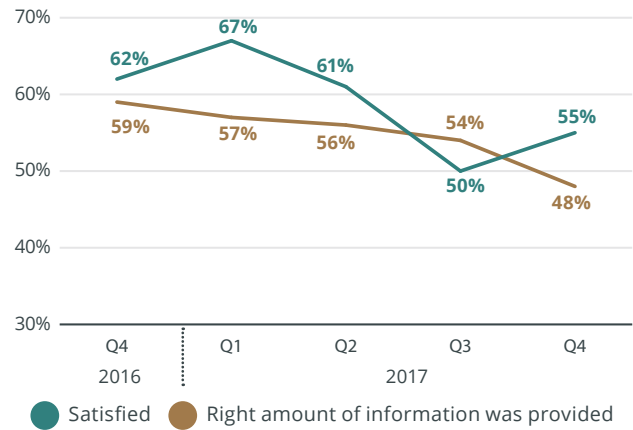
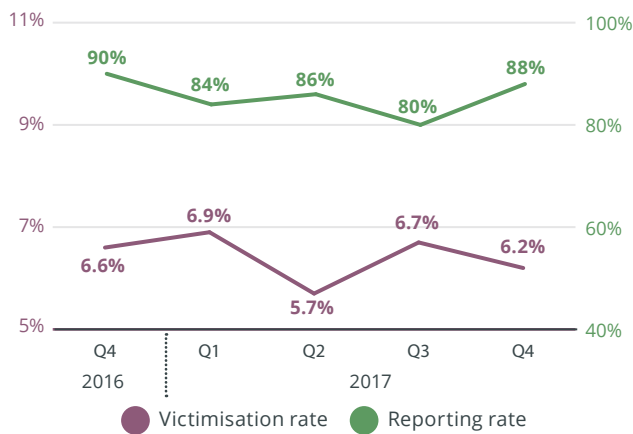
Perceptions of National Crime



Perceptions of Local Crime



# Victimisation



During Q4 2017, the victimisation rate<sup>1</sup> stood at just over 6%<sup>2</sup> and 88%<sup>3</sup> of victims interviewed stated they had reported their most recent crime incident to Gardaí.

Over recent survey sweeps the victimisation rate has fluctuated around 6%, while during the course of 2017 the proportion of victims reporting their crime incident to An Garda Síochána has trended upwards.

During Q4 2017, satisfaction among victims of crime (who reported their crime to Gardaí) stood at 55%, a decrease of 7% since Q4 2016. There was, however, a slight increase between the last two survey sweeps.

The proportion of victims that felt the right amount of information had been provided to them has continued to decrease over recent survey sweeps.

<sup>1</sup> This includes being a victim of burglary, theft, robbery, criminal damage, assault, or fraud.

<sup>2</sup> 93 respondents experienced victimisation in the previous 12 months.

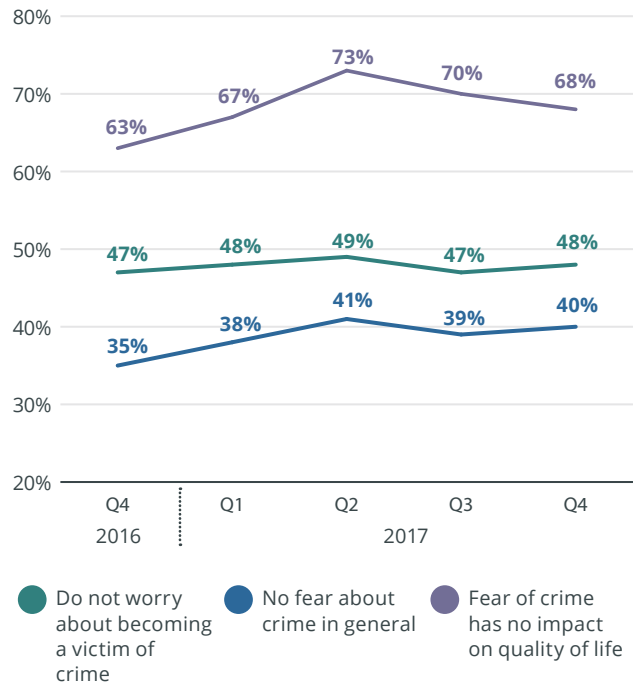
<sup>3</sup> 82 victims reported their crime to Gardaí.

# Fear and Worry about Crime

During Q4 2017, 48% of respondents reported that they did not worry about becoming a victim of crime; this has remained comparatively stable since Q4 2016. Of those who were worried about becoming a victim of crime; 3% worried about becoming a victim of personal injury, 9% worried about property theft or damage, and 40% worried about becoming a victim of both.

In Q4 2017, 40% of respondents reported having no fears about the level of crime in general; this has continued to trend upwards over recent measurement points. Among those who reported being fearful of the level of crime in general, 4% had a lot of fears, 27% had some fears, while 29% reported they had very few fears.

Sixty-eight percent of respondents reported that their fear of crime had no impact on their quality of life. This has increased compared to Q4 2016 levels, however those reporting that fear of crime had no impact on their quality of life has trended downwards over recent survey quarters. Among those who believed that fear of crime had impacted their quality of life, 21% stated that it had reduced quality a little, 8% reported it had moderately reduced quality, while 1% stated it had significantly or greatly reduced their quality of life.

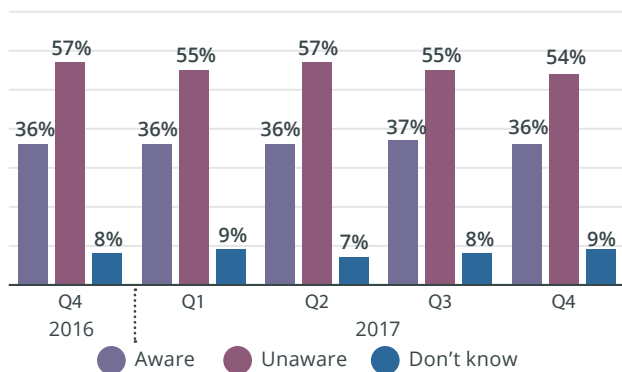


# Garda Visibility

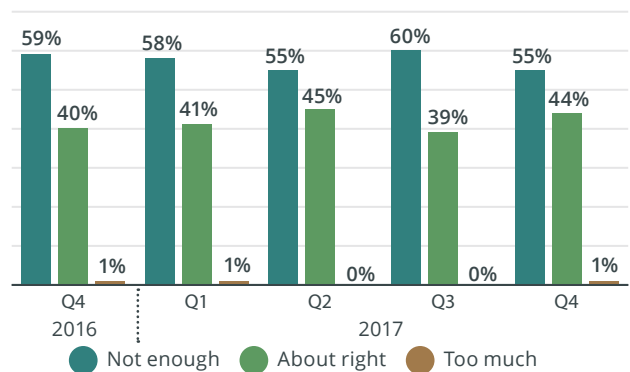
In Q4 2017, 36% of respondents were aware of Garda patrols in their local area. This has remained relatively stable since Q4 2016.

In Q4 2017, 44% of respondents considered Garda presence in their local area to be at about the right level. This has been fluctuating between 40 and 45% over recent survey quarters.

Garda Patrols Locally



Garda Presence Locally

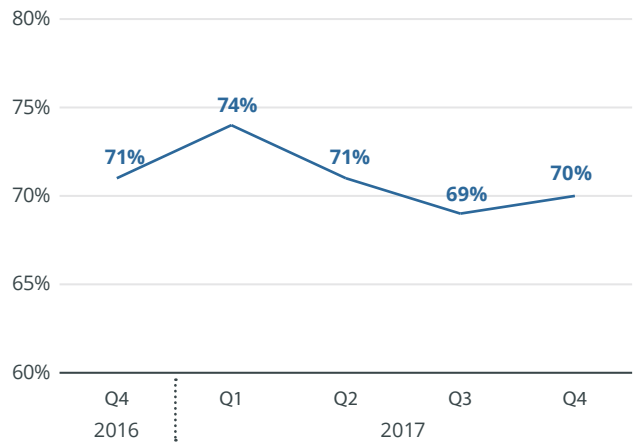


# Satisfaction with An Garda Síochána

In Q4 2017, 70% (10% were very satisfied while 60% reported they were satisfied) of respondents reported they were satisfied with the service provided by An Garda Síochána to local communities, 17% stated they were quite dissatisfied, 4% reported being very dissatisfied, while 9% replied that they did not know.

Over recent survey sweeps, satisfaction with the service provided by An Garda Síochána has varied between 69 and 74%.

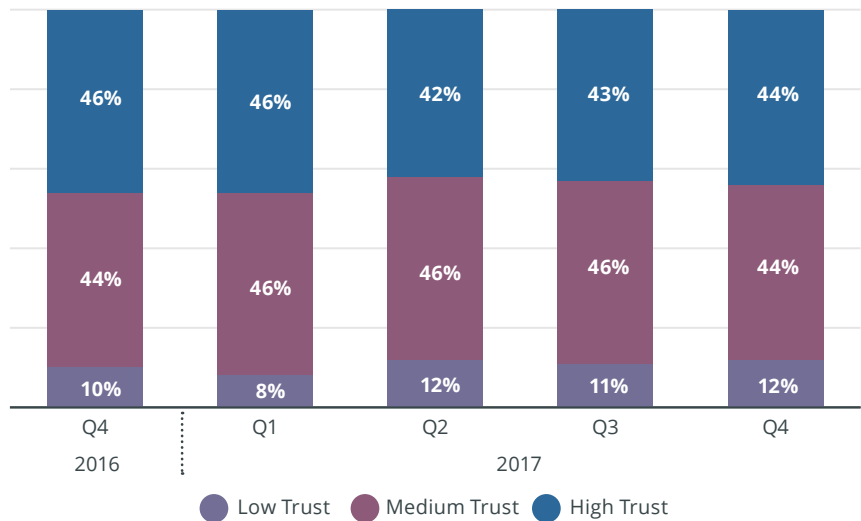
Satisfied with the service provided by An Garda Síochána



# Trust in An Garda Síochána

In Q4 2017, 88% of respondents stated they had a mid to high level of trust in An Garda Síochána.

Comparing Q4 2017 to the same period last year, trust in An Garda Síochána decreased by two percentage points.

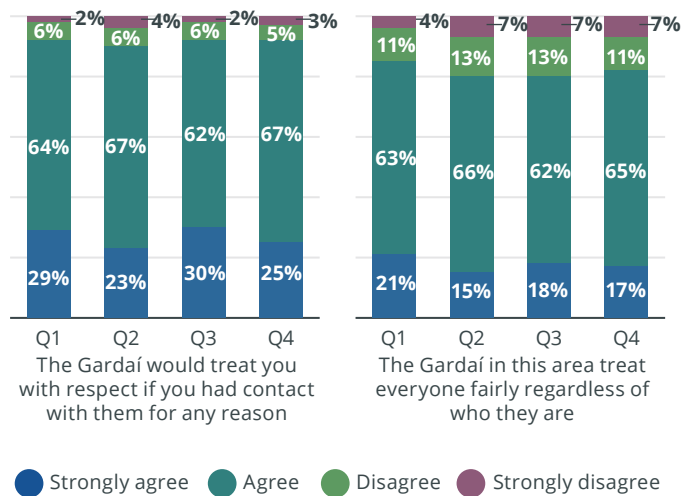


# Equality of Treatment by An Garda Síochána

Two new questions relating to equality of treatment by An Garda Síochána were added to the Public Attitudes Survey in 2017.

In Q4 2017, 92% of respondents agreed that the Gardaí would treat you with respect if you had contact with them for any reason. Since Q1 2017, the proportion of respondents agreeing with this statement has remained at 90% or above.

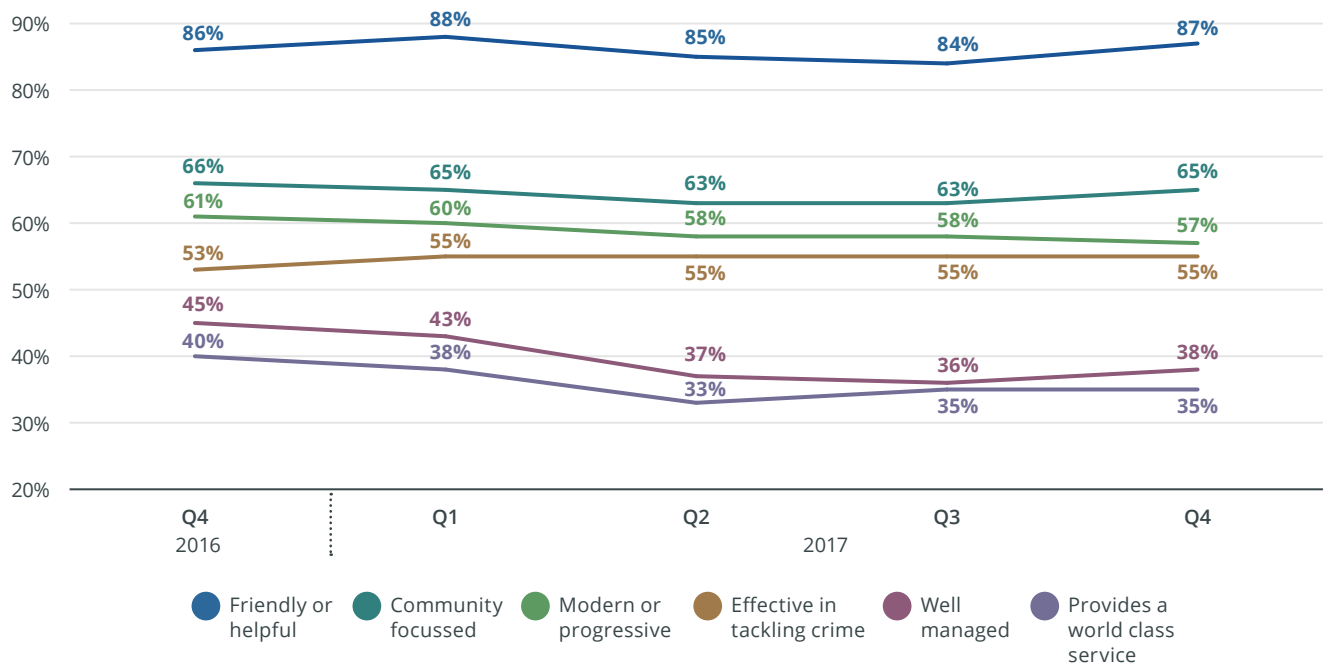
When respondents were asked if the Gardaí in the area treat everyone fairly regardless of who they are, 82% agreed. Similarly, this has remained above 80% since the question was added to the survey.



# Perceptions of the Garda Organisation

In Q4 2017, 87% of respondents agreed that An Garda Síochána was friendly or helpful; 65% agreed that the organisation was community focused; 57% thought the organisation was modern or progressive; 55% reported that An Garda Síochána was effective in tackling crime; while 38% agreed that the organisation was well managed, 35% thought that An Garda Síochána provides a world class police service.

Perceptions of the Garda organisation across measures of effectiveness and capability have remained largely stable over recent survey sweeps. The greatest variability is seen in respondents agreeing that An Garda Síochána is well managed; 45% agreed in Q4 2016, however this fell to 38% during the latest measurement point. Respondents continue to have positive views about the capability of An Garda Síochána to be friendly and helpful, community focused, as well as modern or progressive.



# Conclusion

This Public Attitudes Survey summary report is the fourth in a series of bulletins published on a quarterly basis by An Garda Síochána. Previous bulletins and annual reports are available at [www.garda.ie](http://www.garda.ie).

Respondents continue to consider crime a much more serious problem nationally compared to in their local area, although there has been a slight decrease in the number of respondents reporting national crime to be either a very serious or serious problem over recent survey sweeps.

During 2017, the victimisation rate fluctuated around 6%. The proportion of victims reporting their crime to Gardaí stood at 88% during Q4 2017. Between the last two survey sweeps, satisfaction among victims increased, however it is 7% lower than the same period in 2016. Victims reporting that they received the right amount of information from Gardaí has continued to decline since Q4 2016.

Reported fear about the level of crime in general, perceived likelihood of becoming a victim of crime, and the level of impact respondents' fear of crime has on their quality of life have remained stable over recent sweeps of the survey.

Awareness of Garda patrols in local areas stands at 36% for Q4 2017. Perceptions of Garda presence being at the right level increased between the latest two survey sweeps, it is 4% above Q4 2016 levels.

70% of respondents reported they were satisfied with the service provided by An Garda Síochána to local communities. This has fluctuated between 69 and 74% during the past five measurement points.

The public's trust in the Garda organisation remains high at 88%.

The vast majority of respondents believed that the Gardaí would treat them, or others, with respect, regardless of who they are, if they had contact with them for any reason.

While slight increases in agreement across measures of the effectiveness and capability of the Garda organisation over recent survey sweeps have been achieved, the majority have not been sustained or improved upon.