

# An Garda Síochána

## Public Attitudes Survey Bulletin



Q1 2017

Research conducted by



**This bulletin presents key findings from the first quarter of the Public Attitudes Survey conducted between January and March 2017.**

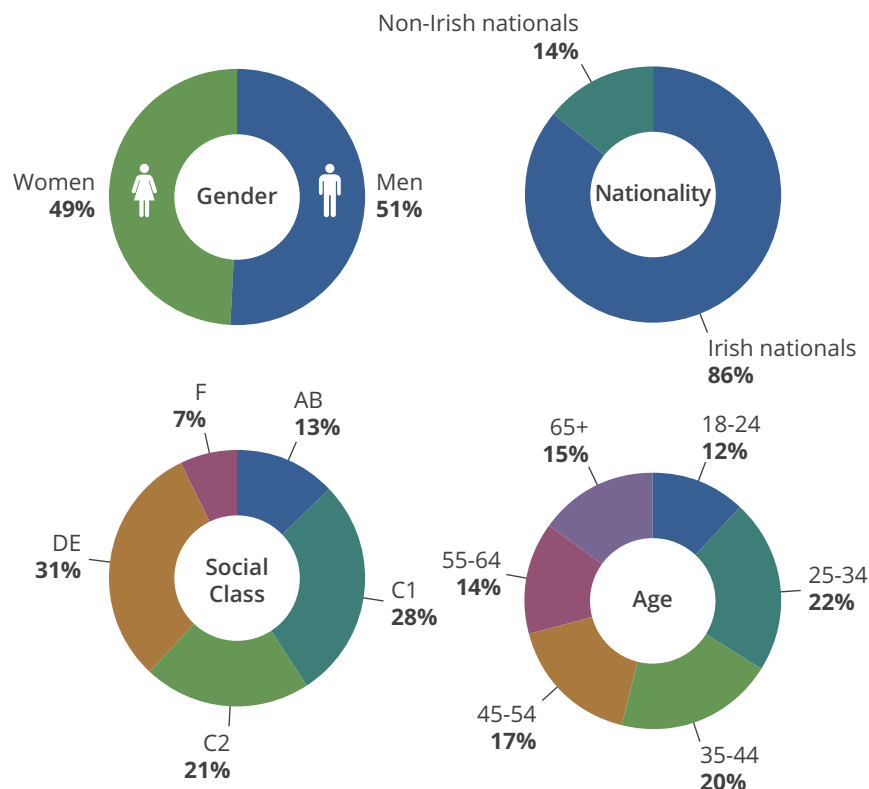
People were asked about their perceptions of crime; if they experienced victimisation in the last year, whether they reported this crime, and their satisfaction with an Garda Síochána's handling of their incident. Respondents were also asked about their level of worry about becoming a victim of crime, their fear about crime, as well as its impact on their quality of life. They were asked if Gardaí patrolled 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 with 1,500 being surveyed each quarter. Data were collected by means of in-home, face-to-face interviews. The high level results presented in this bulletin are based on data 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.

### Demographics

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



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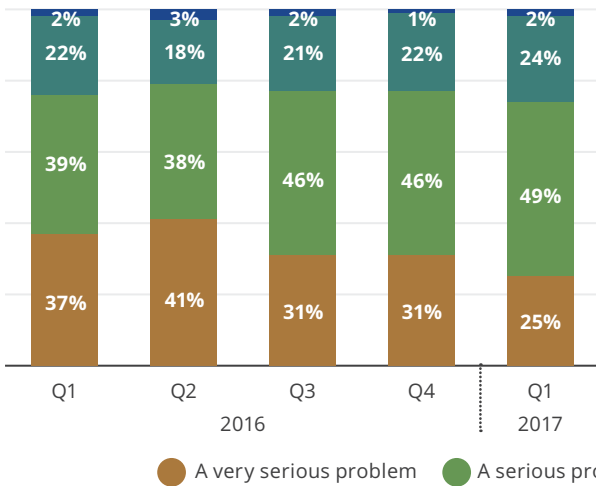
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# Perceptions of Crime

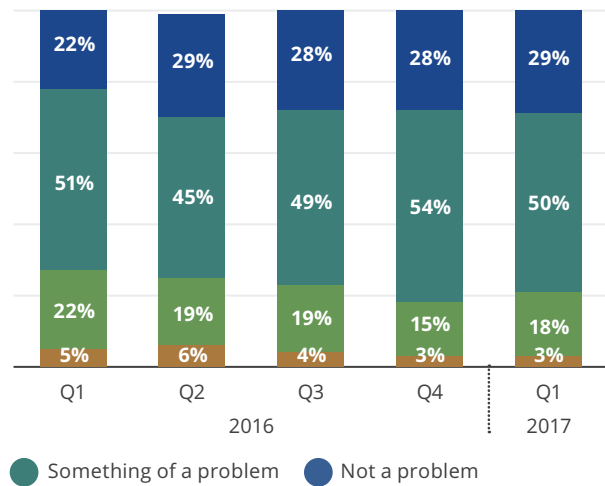
In Q1 2017, 74% of respondents perceived national crime to be either a very serious or serious problem, down 2% from the same period in 2016. The proportion of respondents who consider national crime to be a very serious problem has been trending downwards since Q2 2016, however the proportion that perceived national crime to be a serious problem increased over the same period.

In comparison, during the first quarter of 2017 only 21% of respondents considered local crime to be a very serious or serious problem, down 6% compared to Q1 2016. Between Q4 2016 and Q1 2017 there was a slight increase (3%) in the proportion of respondents who considered local crime to be either a very serious or serious problem.

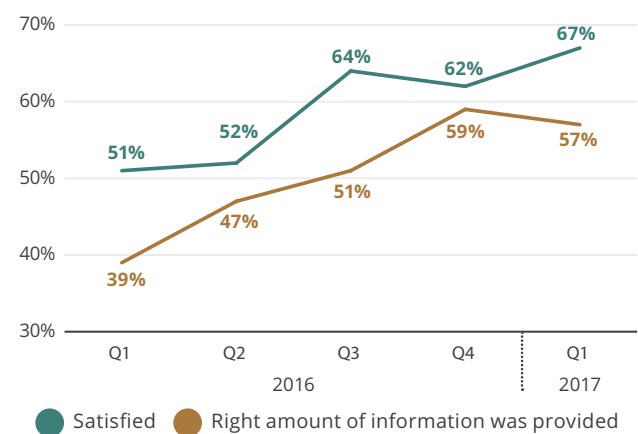
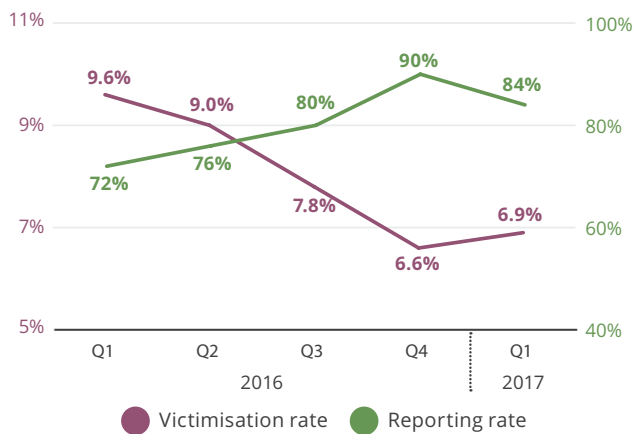
Perceptions of National Crime



Perceptions of Local Crime



# Victimisation



In Q1 2017 the victimisation rate<sup>1</sup> stood at 6.9%<sup>2</sup>, compared to 9.6% during the same quarter last year. During Q1 2017 84%<sup>3</sup> of victims interviewed stated they had reported their most recent crime incident to Gardaí, compared to 72% in Q1 2016. In general, over that period, the proportion of victims reporting their crime incidents has been trending upwards, however between the last two quarters there was a decrease in the proportion of victims reporting their crime incident to An Garda Síochána (-6%).

During Q1 2017 satisfaction among victims of crime (who reported their crime to Gardaí) stood at 67%, an increase of 16% since Q1 2016. The majority of victims felt that the right amount of information had been provided to them (57%); this had been trending upwards during 2016 before seeing a drop of 2% between the latest two quarters.

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

<sup>2</sup> 104 respondents experienced victimisation in the previous 12 months. Caution should be taken when examining analysis done on small population proportions, especially victim samples.

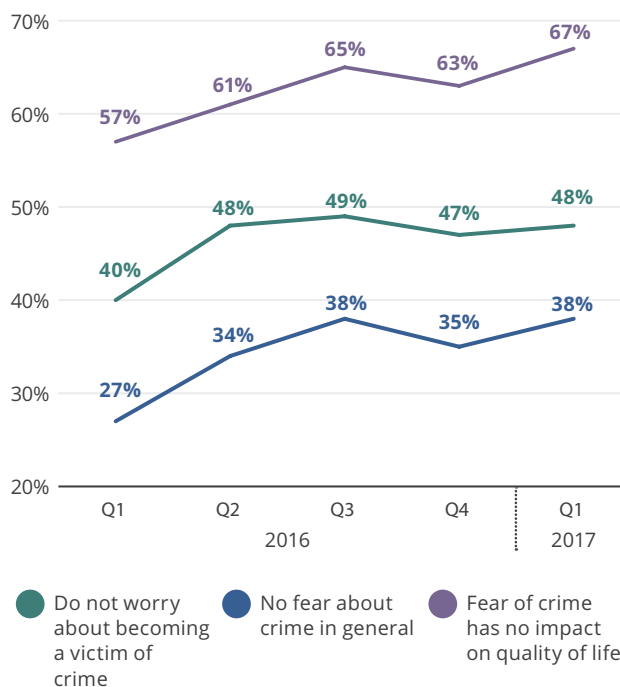
<sup>3</sup> 87 victims reported their crime to Gardaí.

# Fear and Worry about Crime

During Q1 2017 nearly half (48%) of respondents reported that they did not worry about becoming a victim of crime; this has increased eight percentage points compared to the same period last year. Of those who were worried about victimisation; 4% worried about becoming a victim of personal injury, 10% worried about property theft or damage, and 39% worried about becoming a victim of both.

In Q1 2017 38% of respondents reported having no fears about the level of crime in general; likewise this has also been trending upwards over the past five measurement points. Of those who reported being fearful of the level of crime in general, 4% had a lot of fears, 26% had some fears, while 33% reported they had very few fears.

Over two thirds of respondents (67%) reported that their fear of crime had no impact on their quality of life, an increase of 10% since Q1 2016. Among those who believed that fear of crime had impacted their quality of life, the majority (22%) stated that it had reduced quality a little, 9% reported it had moderately reduced quality, and 1% stated it had significantly reduced their quality of life.

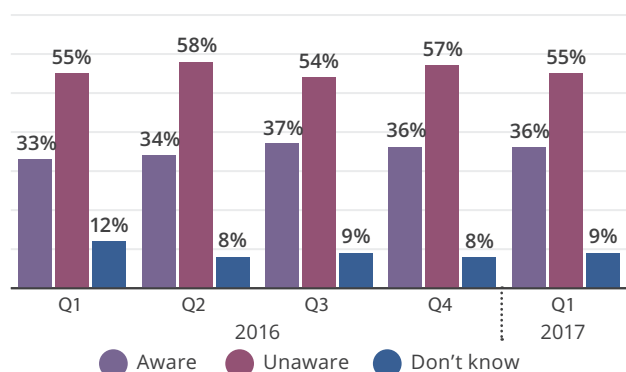


# Garda Visibility

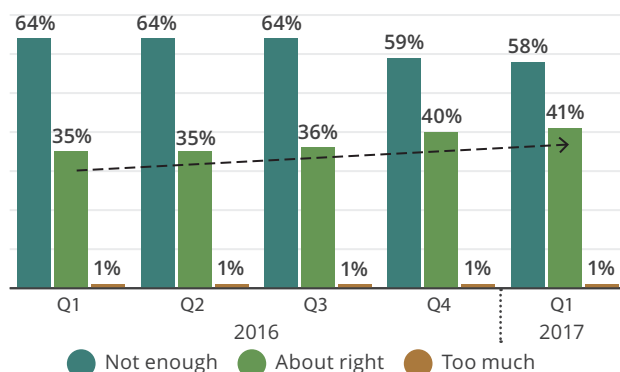
In Q1 2017, 36% of respondents were aware of Garda patrols in their local area. This has increased by three percentage points since Q1 2016 and remained stable since Q4 2016. The proportion of respondents reporting that they did not know about Garda patrols has also decreased.

In Q1 2017 41% of respondents considered Garda presence in their local area to be at about the right level, this has been consistently trending upwards since Q1 2016.

Garda Patrols Locally



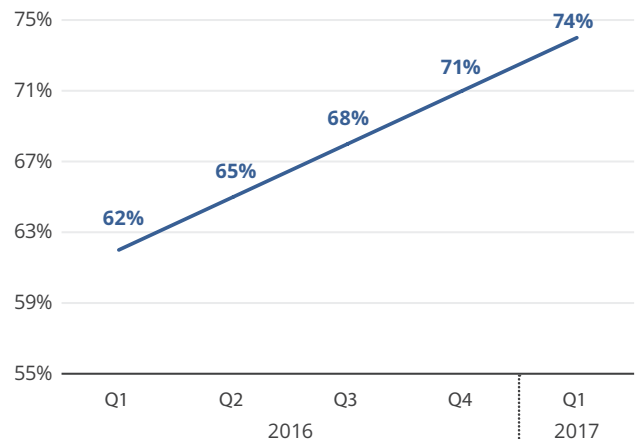
Garda Presence Locally



# Satisfaction with An Garda Síochána

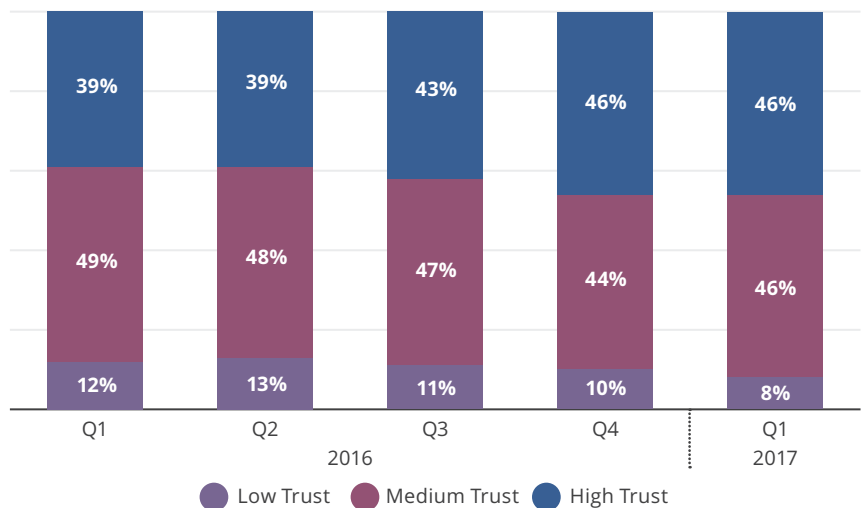
In Q1 2017 74% (10% were very satisfied while 64% reported they were satisfied) of respondents reported they were satisfied with the service provided by An Garda Síochána to local communities, 18% stated they were quite dissatisfied, 3% reported being very dissatisfied, while 5% replied that they did not know. Since Q1 2016 there has been a steady increase in the proportion of respondents who reported they were satisfied with An Garda Síochána.

Satisfied with the service provided by An Garda Síochána



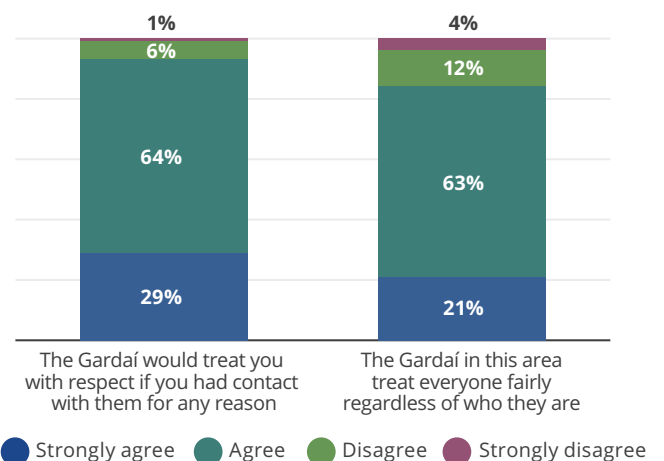
# Trust in An Garda Síochána

In Q1 2017 92% of respondents stated they had a mid to high level of trust in An Garda Síochána. Since Q1 2016 the proportion of respondents reporting low levels of trust in An Garda Síochána has decreased quarter on quarter, while those expressing a high level of trust in the organisation have been steadily increasing each quarter.



# Equality of treatment by An Garda Síochána

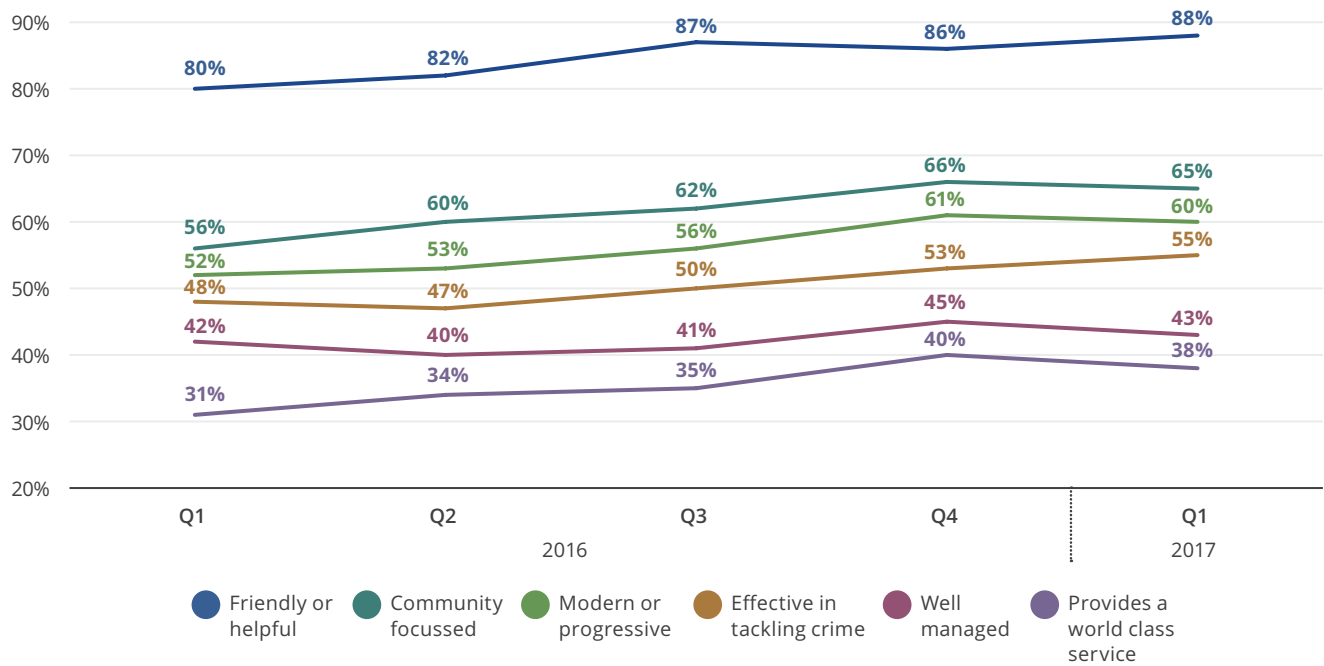
Two new questions relating to equality of treatment by An Garda Síochána were added to the Public Attitudes Survey in 2017. When asked if the Gardaí would treat you with respect if you had contact with them for any reason 93% agreed, while 7% disagreed; when asked if the Gardaí in the area treat everyone fairly regardless of who they are 84% agreed, while 16% disagreed



# Perceptions of the Garda Organisation

In Q1 2017 88% of respondents agreed that members of An Garda Síochána were friendly or helpful; 65% agreed that the organisation was community focused; 60% thought the organisation was modern or progressive; 55% reported that An Garda Síochána was effective in tackling crime; while 43% agreed that the organisation was well managed, 38% thought that An Garda Síochána provides a world class police service.

Between Q1 2016 and Q1 2017 there was an improvement in perceptions of the Garda organisation across all six measures of effectiveness and capability. There was, however, a decline between Q4 2016 and Q1 2017 in terms of the organisation being community focused, modern or progressive, well managed, as well as in the proportion of respondents who agreed that An Garda Síochána provides a world class police service.



# Conclusion

This Q1 Public Attitudes Survey summary report is the first in a series of bulletins that will be published on a quarterly basis by An Garda Síochána.

When respondents were asked about their perceptions of crime, the majority considered the national crime problem to be more serious than the crime problem in their local area.

The victimisation rate has declined considerably since the first quarter of 2016, while the proportion of victims reporting their crime to Gardaí has increased; although a slight decrease was evident between the last two quarters. Similarly, the proportion of respondents reporting that they received the right amount of information from Gardaí also decreased between Q4 2016 and Q1 2017. Victim satisfaction remains above 2016 levels. As noted already, caution should be taken when interpreting results of analysis from small victim proportions.

Among respondents 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 had on

their quality of life have all decreased since these questions were added to the survey in Q1 2016.

Awareness of Garda patrols in local areas stands at 36%, while perceptions of Garda presence being at the right level has consistently increased since Q1 2016.

Nearly three quarters of respondents reported they were satisfied with the service provided by An Garda Síochána to local communities, this has been consistently trending upwards since 2016.

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

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.

In general, perceptions of the Garda organisation declined between Q4 2016 and Q1 2017.