

An Garda Síochána Public Attitudes Survey Bulletin



Q2 2019

Research conducted by



This bulletin presents the key findings from the second quarter of the Garda Public Attitudes Survey conducted between April and June 2019. While 16 and 17 year olds are surveyed and reported on in the Public Attitude Survey annual report, the sample size is too small to report on a quarterly basis.

Survey respondents were asked about their perceptions of national and local crime; whether they had been victims of crime in the last year and, if so, whether they reported the crime to Gardaí. Satisfaction levels with how their case was handled were also queried. Respondents were asked about their level of fear and worry about crime and victimisation, and whether this impacts their quality of life. Their views on the crime types that should be prioritised by Gardaí were gathered as well as perceptions of Garda visibility and Garda presence in their local areas. Satisfaction levels with An Garda Síochána and the degree of trust felt in the Gardaí was also examined as were views on equality of treatment by Gardaí, Garda-community relations and perceptions of the Garda organisation's effectiveness and capability.

The survey is designed to run on a continuous basis (it is continuously surveying the population), with 1,500 people being surveyed each quarter. Data was collected by means of in-home, face-to-face interviews with participants. 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, it must be accepted that there will be some margin of error. This has been calculated at +/- 2.53 percent 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 remembered when examining analysis of victims of crime. A further point to note is that not all charts where percentages are used will add up to 100 percent due to the rounding of figures. In line with the methodology used in the 2018 Annual Report, preliminary analysis of all variables was completed to assess the proportion of 'don't know' responses. A decision was then taken on

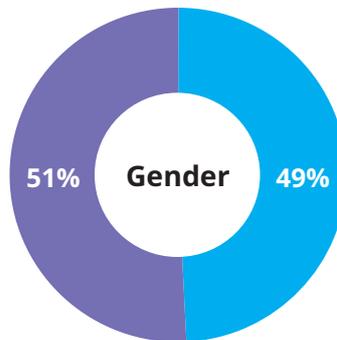
whether they were to be excluded from subsequent analyses. 'Don't know' and refused responses have been removed from analysis if they account for less than 10 percent of responses at all measurement points. In cases where 'don't know' responses totalled 10 percent or more of respondents' replies, analysis including and excluding such responses are presented for completeness. Monitoring of 'don't know'/refused responses is ongoing to ensure data quality is maintained.

Demographics

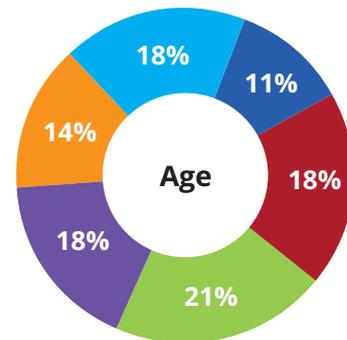
The sample is of 1,500 adults aged 18 years and over.

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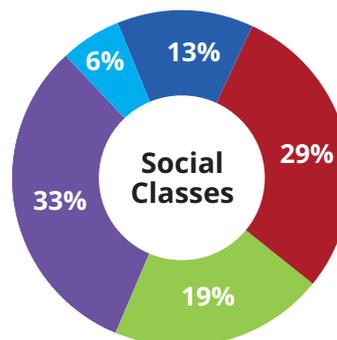
- 2 Perceptions of Crime
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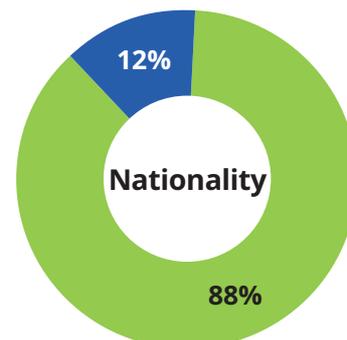
● Female ● Male



● 18-24 ● 25-34 ● 35-44
● 45-54 ● 55-64 ● 65+



● F ● AB ● C1 ● C2 ● DE



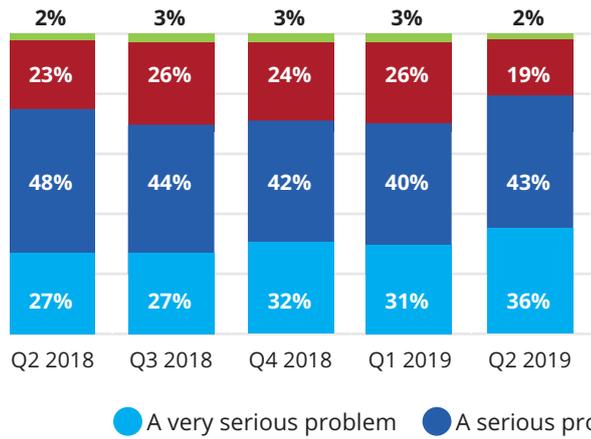
● Non-Irish Nationals ● Irish Nationals

Perceptions of Crime

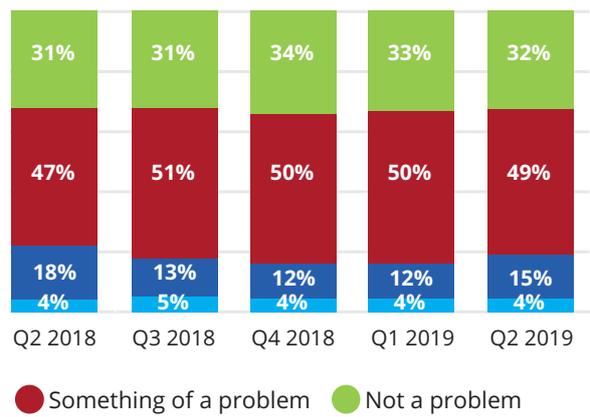
In Q2 2019, 79 percent of survey respondents considered national crime to be either 'very serious' or 'serious' – an increase of 8 percentage points from quarter one of this year, and the highest level this has been recorded at since Q2 2018. However, in general, the proportion of respondents who perceive national crime to be 'very serious' or 'serious' has remained relatively stable over the last number of survey

sweeps, with figures fluctuating between 71 and 79 percent since Q2 2018. Respondents continue to view local crime as less serious than national crime. In Q2 2019, 19 percent of respondents perceived crime in their local areas as 'very serious' or 'serious' – an increase of 3 percentage points from Q1 2019 but down 3 percentage points from the same quarter of last year.

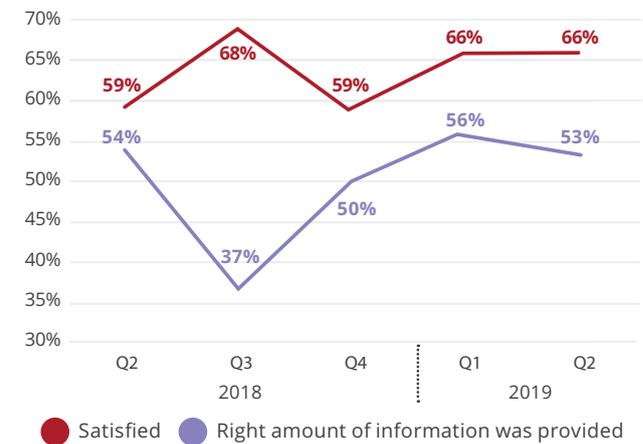
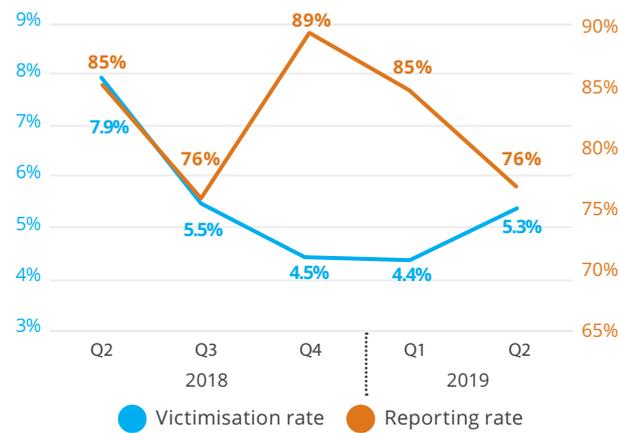
Perceptions of National Crime



Perceptions of Local Crime



Victimisation



In Q2 2019, the victimisation rate¹ was 5.3 percent², with 76 percent³ of victims interviewed stating they had reported their most recent crime incident to An Garda Síochána. This reporting rate represents a decrease of 9 percentage points from Q1 of 2019. During Q2 2019, satisfaction among victims of crime (who reported their crime to Gardaí) stood at 66

percent, no change from Q1 2019. The proportion of victims that felt the right amount of information had been provided to them stood at 53 percent – a slight decrease from Q1 of this year. **Quarterly figures relating to victims of crime should be treated with caution due to the low sample size.**

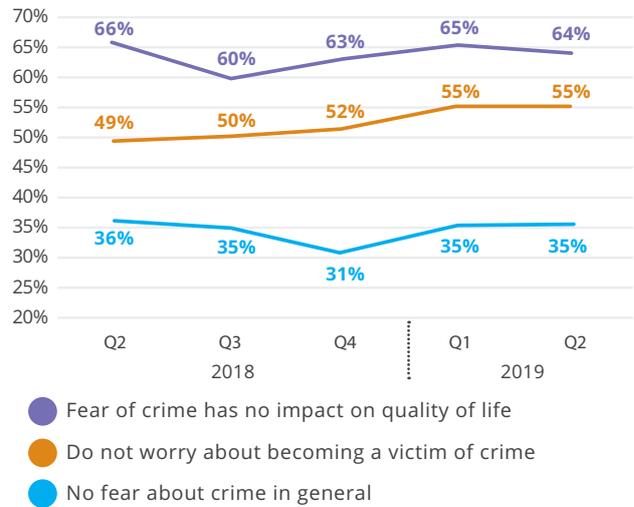
1 This includes being a victim of burglary, theft, robbery, criminal damage, assault, or fraud.

2 79 respondents experienced victimisation in the previous 12 months.

3 62 victims reported their crime to An Garda Síochána.

Worry about Victimization and Fear of Crime

In Q2 2019, the proportion of respondents who do not worry about becoming a victim of crime stood at 55 percent – no change from Q1 of this year, and an increase of 6 percentage points from the same quarter in 2018. Among those who did worry about victimisation, 5 percent worried about becoming a victim of personal injury, 12 percent worried about property theft or damage and 27 percent worried about becoming a victim of both. In Q2 2019, 35 percent of respondents reported having no fear about crime in general. For those respondents who reported being fearful, 3 percent had ‘a lot of fears’, while 61 percent reported having ‘some’ fears or ‘very few’ fears. Sixty-four percent of respondents reported that their fear of crime had no impact on their quality of life (this figure has fluctuated between 60% and 66% since Q2 2018). Among those who reported that fear of crime had impacted their quality of life, 23 percent stated that it had reduced quality a little, 10 percent reported it had moderately reduced their quality of life, while 3 percent stated it had significantly or greatly reduced their quality of life.

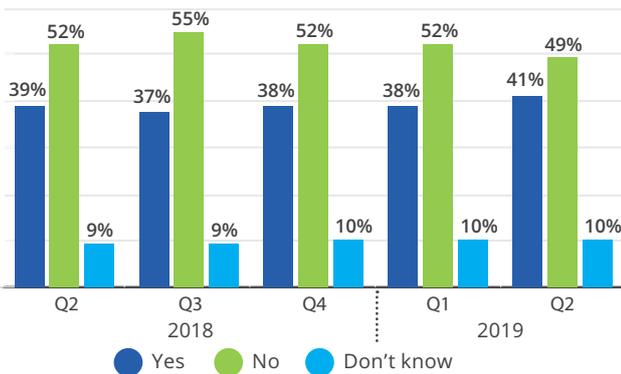


Garda Visibility

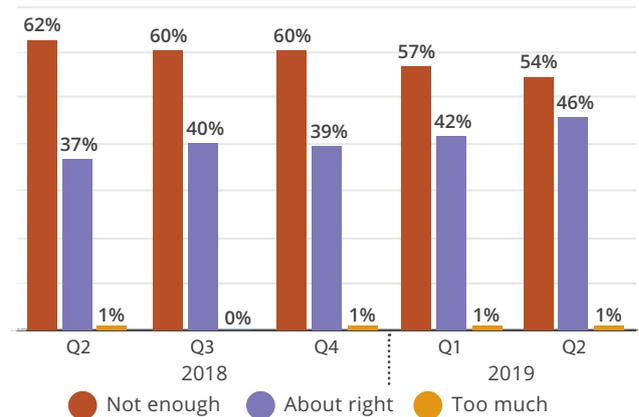
Perceptions of Garda patrols in local areas and Garda presence locally have increased in Q2 2019 to their highest levels in the last five quarters of the Public Attitudes Survey. Forty-one percent of respondents reported being aware of Garda patrols in their local area during Q2 2019 – an increase

of 3 percentage points from the first quarter of this year. During Q2 2019, 46 percent of respondents considered Garda presence in their local areas as ‘about right’ – an increase of 9 percentage points compared to the same quarter in 2018.

Garda Patrols Locally



Garda Presence Locally

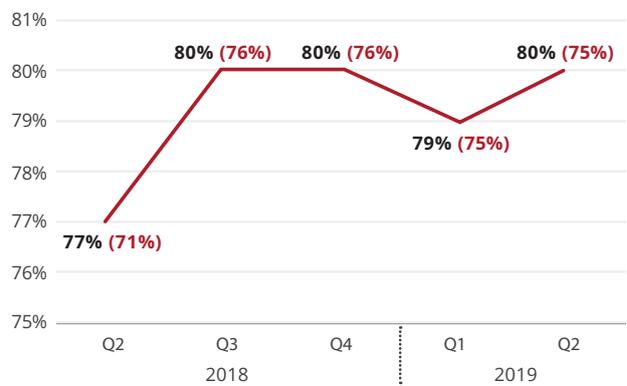


Satisfaction with An Garda Síochána

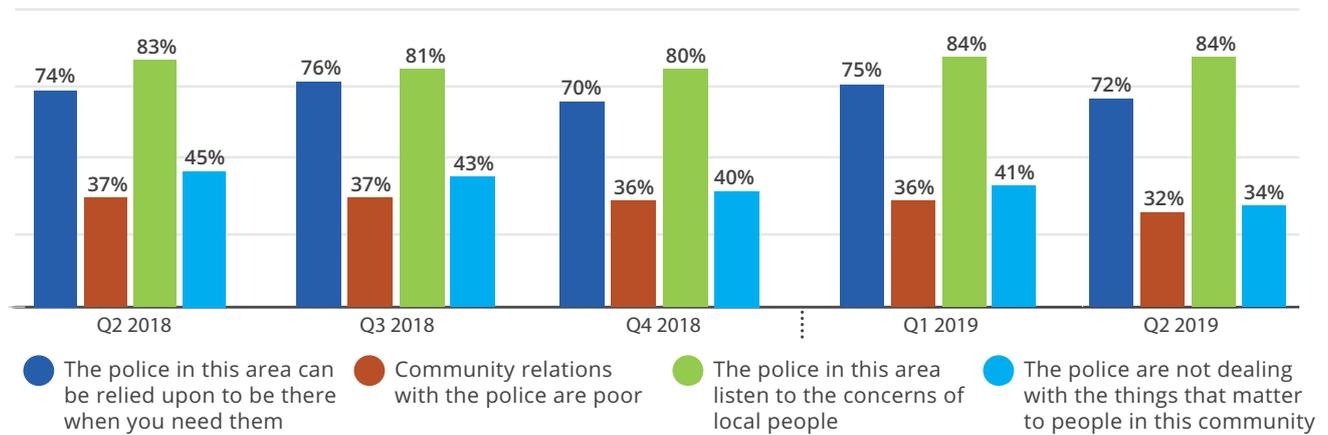
In Q2 2019, 80 percent of survey respondents reported being either 'very satisfied' or 'satisfied' with the service provided to their local communities by An Garda Síochána (this figure was 75% when 'don't know' responses were included). Satisfaction levels have remained relatively stable over the last four quarters (80% in Q3 and Q4 of 2018 respectively, and 79% in Q1 2019). Q2 of 2019 continues the upward trend in satisfaction with Garda service to local communities among survey respondents which has been recorded since Q1 2016 (when it stood at 62%). The last four quarters showing the highest satisfaction levels. In January 2018, four new questions were added to the Public Attitudes Survey. These relate to reliability of Gardaí in local areas and Garda-community relations. In the 2018 Annual Report, analysis of these questions is contained within the 'Equality of Treatment by An Garda Síochána' chapter. However, to ensure consistency across quarterly bulletins, analysis of these questions is presented in this section on 'Satisfaction with An Garda Síochána'. In Q2 2019, 72 percent of respondents agreed that the Gardaí can be relied upon to be there when needed. This figure has fluctuated since Q2 2018 between 70 and 76 percent. Thirty-two percent of respondents agreed that Garda-community relations are poor, down 4 percentage points from Q1 2019; the majority, at 84 percent, felt that Gardaí listen to the concerns of local people – no change

from Q1 2019. Finally, 34 percent agreed that Gardaí are not dealing with things that matter to the local community. This figure has seen a decrease from 41 percent in Q1 2019 – 7 percentage points. As with previous sections, 'don't know' and refused responses are removed from analysis if they account for less than 10 percent of responses. However, to accurately present the data, proportions excluding and including 'don't know' responses are presented in the Satisfaction with An Garda Síochána chart (in red) and Level of Agreement charts below.

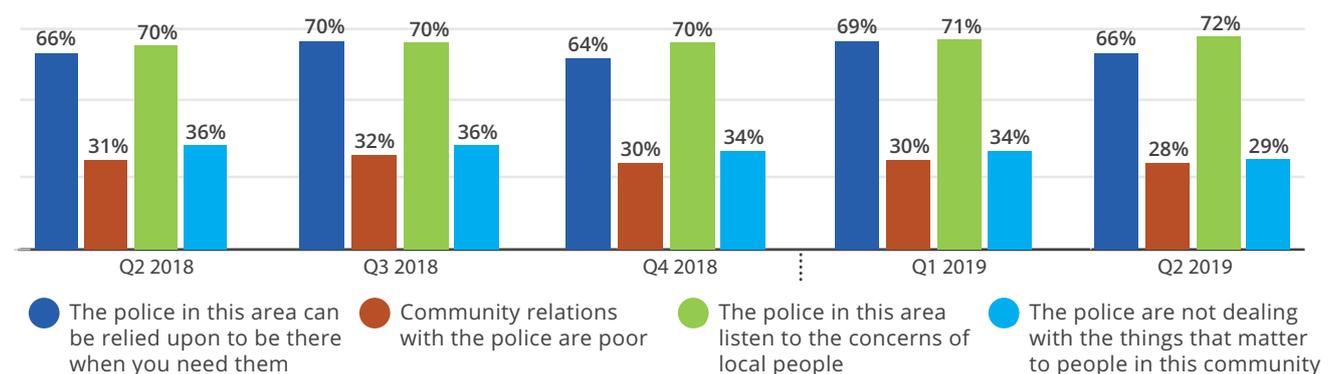
Satisfaction with An Garda Síochána ('very satisfied' and 'satisfied')



Level of Agreement Excluding 'Don't Know' Responses

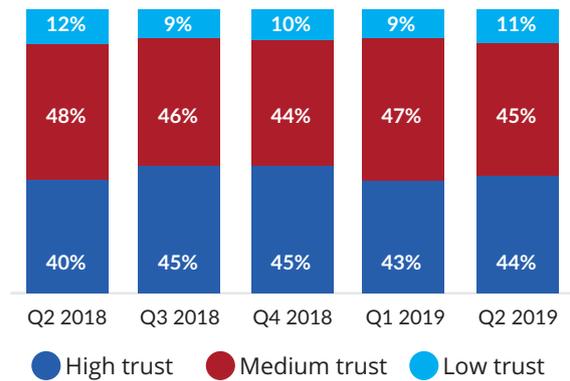


Level of Agreement Including 'Don't Know' Responses



Trust in An Garda Síochána

During Q2 2019, 89 percent of respondents reported having a mid to high level of trust in An Garda Síochána. Trust in the Gardaí is a measure that has remained very stable over survey sweeps.

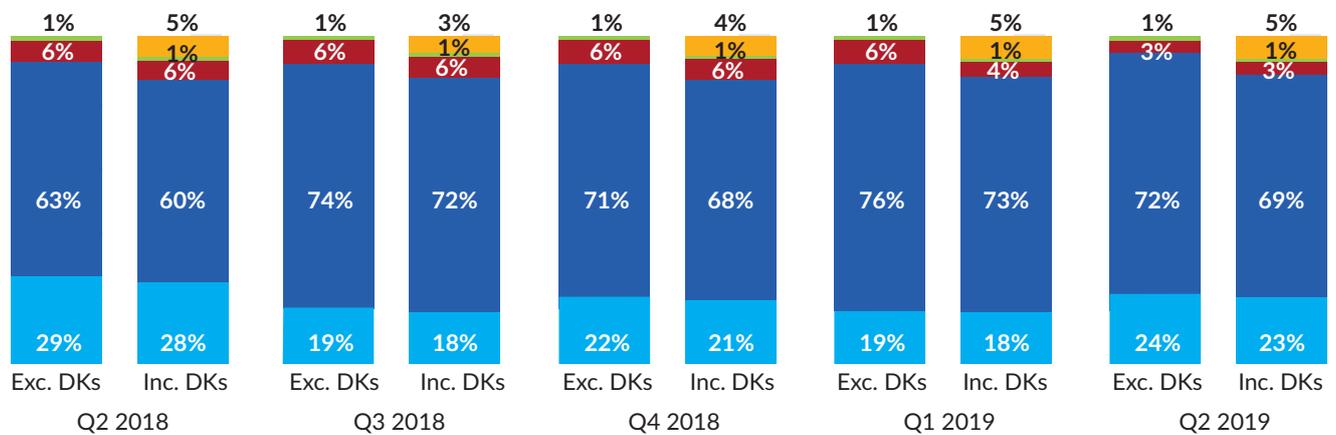


Equality of Treatment by An Garda Síochána

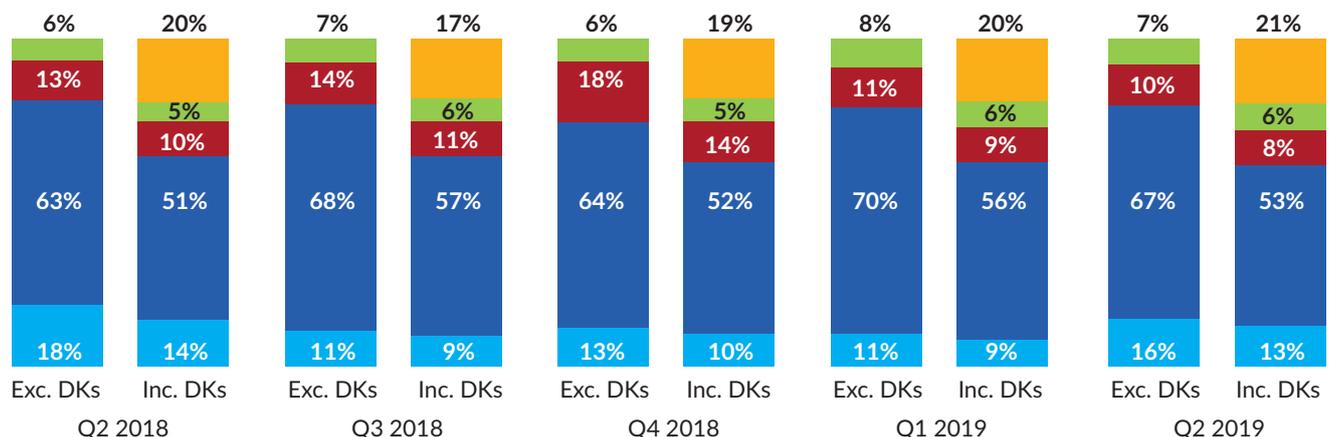
With little change from Q1 2019, in Q2, 96 percent of survey respondents agreed that Gardaí would treat them with respect if they had contact with them for any reason (when 'don't know' responses were included in the analysis, this figure was 92%). Q1 and Q2 of 2019 saw the highest agreement level with this statement over the last five quarters. When respondents were asked if the Gardaí in their local area

treat everyone fairly regardless of who they are, 83 percent agreed (66% when 'don't know' responses were included). This figure is up two percentage points from Q1 2019. Due to the large number of 'don't know' responses to this question (21%), figures including and excluding 'don't know' responses are presented in the charts below.

The Gardaí treat people with respect

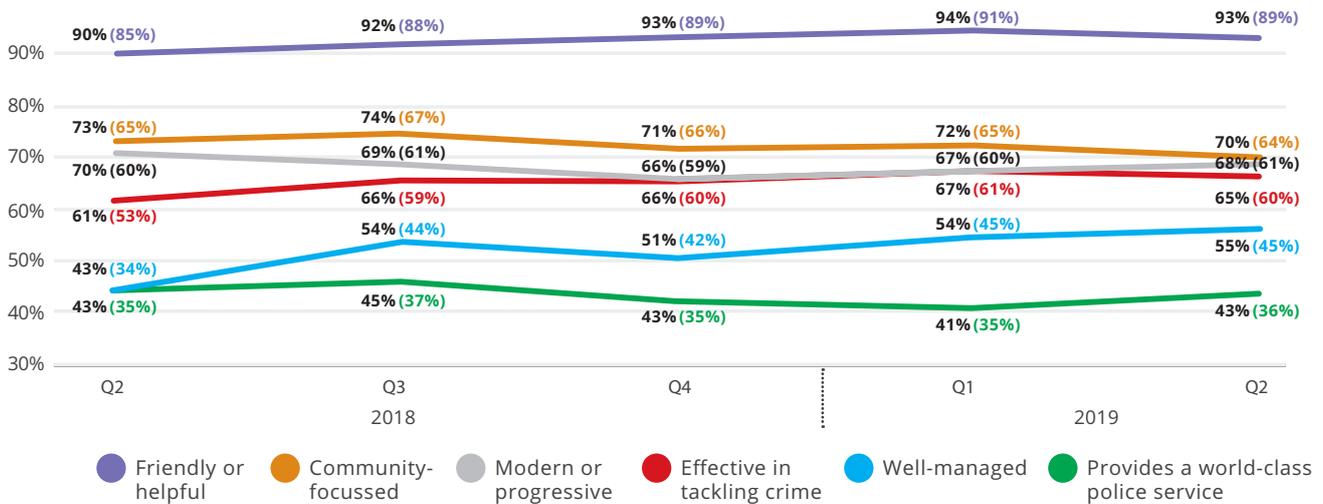


The Gardaí treat everyone fairly



● Strongly agree ● Agree ● Disagree ● Strongly disagree ● Don't know

Perceptions of the Garda Organisation



As stated previously, if 'don't know' and refused responses amount to less than 10 percent, they are not included in the analysis. However, to provide complete and accurate presentation of the data, proportions including and excluding 'don't know' responses are presented in the chart above. In Q2 2019, the majority of survey respondents (93%) agreed that members of An Garda Síochána are friendly and helpful. As in Q1 2019, and over the last number of survey sweeps, this figure has remained consistently high. Seventy percent of respondents felt that An Garda Síochána is community-

focussed – a decrease of 2 percentage points from Q1; the proportion who considered it modern and progressive stood at 68 percent and effective in tackling crime, 65 percent; 43 percent considered An Garda Síochána provides a world-class service (up 2 percentage points from Q1 data) and finally, 55 percent agreed that the organisation is well-managed. Perceptions of An Garda Síochána's effectiveness and capability have been steadily improving since 2016 and Q2 2019 has seen improvements in a number of areas, although some measurements show slight decreases.

Conclusion

Commissioned by An Garda Síochána, with fieldwork completed by Amárach Research, An Garda Síochána's Public Attitudes Survey results are now published on a quarterly basis. Previous bulletins and annual reports are available at www.garda.ie.

Local crime continues to be viewed as less serious than national crime. Q2 2019 data shows there has been a slight increase in those who view national crime as a 'serious' or 'very serious' problem.

In Q2 2019, the victimisation rate stood at 5.3 percent, while the proportion of victims reporting their crime to Gardaí stood at 76 percent. Satisfaction among victims of crime (who reported the crime to Gardaí) was recorded as 66 percent. As stated previously, it is important to note that as analysis is done on smaller proportions of the sample the margin of error increases. This should be taken into account when examining quarterly victims of crime samples.

In Q2 2019, the proportion of respondents who do not worry about becoming a victim of crime (a figure that has been steadily increasing over the last number of survey sweeps) remained the same as in Q1 2019 – 55 percent. Equally, there was no change in the proportion of those who have no fear

about crime in general from the first quarter of this year and only a 1 percentage decrease in those who report that fear of crime has no impact on their quality of life.

Awareness of Garda patrols in local areas stood at 41 percent in Q2 2019. Perceptions of Garda presence being at the right level have fluctuated since Q2 2018 between 37 percent and 46 percent in Q2 2019 (their highest level). Eighty percent of respondents reported they were satisfied with the service provided by An Garda Síochána to local communities. This has remained relatively stable over the last four measurement points.

Trust in An Garda Síochána continues to remain high at 89 percent. As in Q1 2019, the majority of respondents (96%) believe that Gardaí would treat you with respect if you had contact with them for any reason and that Gardaí in their local area treat everyone fairly regardless of who they are (83%). Agreement levels with statements about An Garda Síochána's effectiveness and capability have remained relatively stable over the last number of quarterly sweeps. There have been slight decreases in views on An Garda Síochána being friendly and helpful, community-focused and effective in tackling crime.