

An Garda Síochána Public Attitudes Survey Bulletin



Q3 2019

Research conducted by



This bulletin presents the key findings from the third quarter of the Garda Public Attitudes Survey conducted between July and September 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 were also examined, as were views on 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

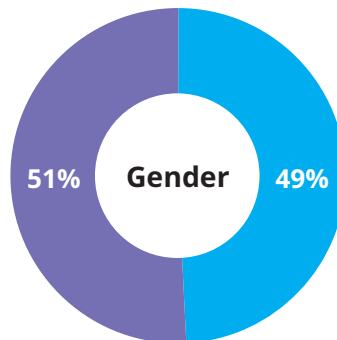
whether they were to be excluded from subsequent analyses. 'Don't know' and refused responses have been removed from analysis if they account for less than 10 percent of responses at all measurement points. In cases where 'don't know' responses totalled 10 percent or more of respondents' replies, analysis 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

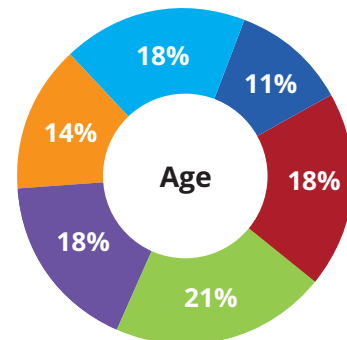
The sample is of 1,500 adults aged 18 years and over.

CONTENTS

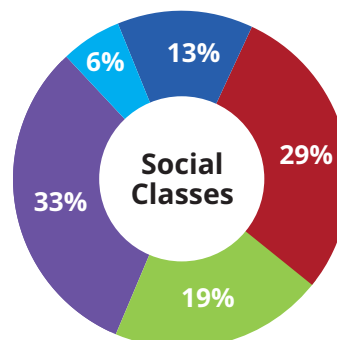
- 2 Perceptions of Crime
- 2 Victimisation
- 3 Fear and Worry about Crime
- 3 Garda Visibility
- 4 Satisfaction with An Garda Síochána
- 5 Trust in An Garda Síochána
- 5 Treatment by An Garda Síochána
- 6 Perceptions of the Garda Organisation
- 6 Conclusion



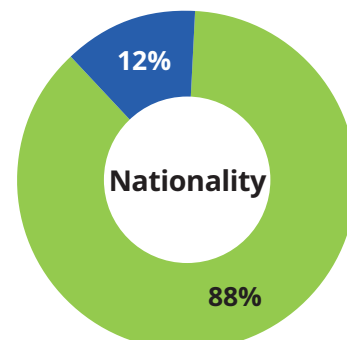
● Female ● Male



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



● F ● AB ● C1 ● C2 ● DE



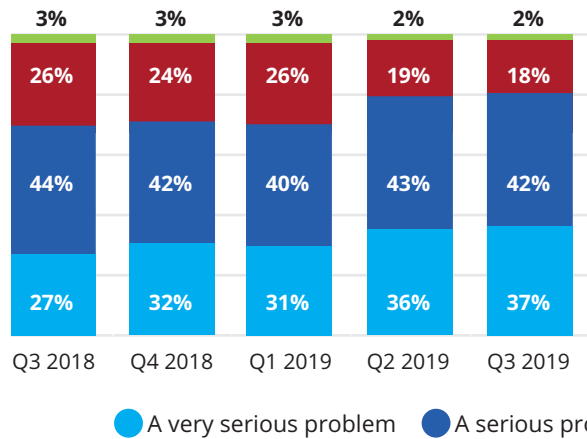
● Non-Irish Nationals ● Irish Nationals

Perceptions of Crime

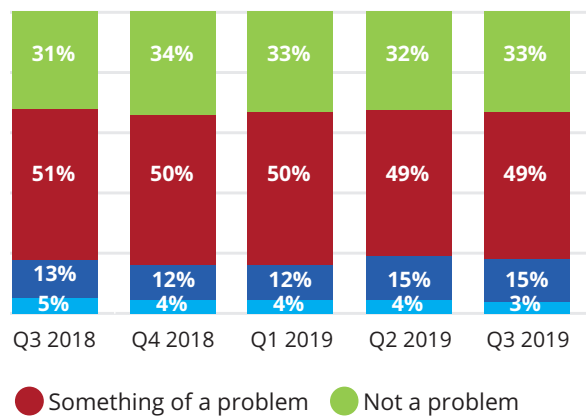
In Q3 2019, 79 percent of survey respondents considered national crime to be either 'very serious' or 'serious' – no change from Q2 2019, although an increase of 8 percentage points from the same quarter of last year. In general, the proportion of respondents who perceive national crime to be 'very serious' or 'serious' remained relatively stable over the last five survey sweeps, although respondents who consider

national crime to be a 'very serious problem' has been trending upwards since Q3 2018. In contrast, respondents continue to view local crime as less serious than national crime. In Q3 2019, 18 percent of respondents perceived crime in their local areas as 'very serious' or 'serious' – a decrease of one percentage point from Q2 2019.

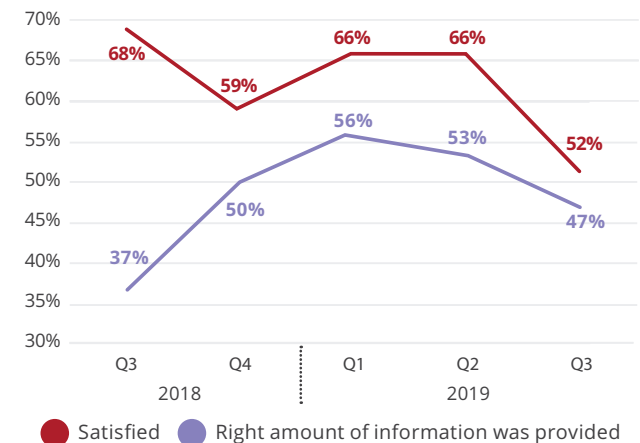
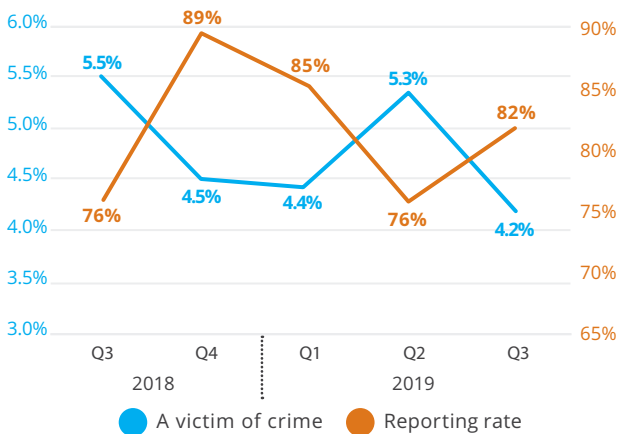
Perceptions of National Crime



Perceptions of Local Crime



Victimisation



In Q3 2019, the victimisation rate¹ stood at 4.2 percent², compared to a rate of 5.5 percent in the same quarter of 2018. During Q3 2019, 82 percent³ of victims stated they had reported their most recent crime incident to An Garda Síochána. This represents an increase of 6 percentage points from the reporting rate in Q2 2019, although it is still below the Q1 figure. Satisfaction among victims of crime during Q3 2019 (victims who reported their crime to Gardaí) stood at 52

percent, a decrease of 14 percentage points from Q2 2019, and down 16 percentage points from the same quarter of 2018. Forty-seven percent of victims in Q3 2019 felt the right amount of information had been provided to them – an increase of 10 percentage points from the same quarter last year, although this figure has been trending downwards since Q1 2019. **Quarterly figures relating to victims of crime should be treated with caution due to the low sample.**

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

2 63 respondents experienced victimisation in the previous 12 months.

3 49 victims reported their crime to An Garda Síochána.

Worry about Victimization and Fear of Crime

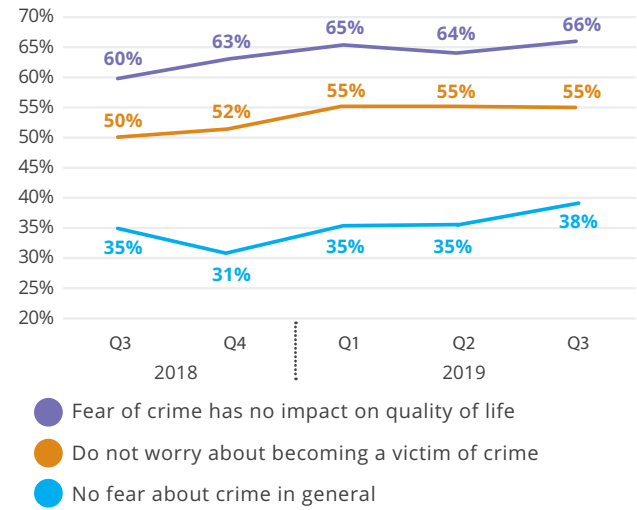
The proportion of respondents who do not worry about becoming a victim of crime has remained stable at 55 percent for the last three quarters. This has increased from 50 percent in Q3 of 2018. Among those who did worry about victimisation, 4 percent worried about becoming a victim of personal injury, 15 percent worried about property theft or damage and 26 percent worried about becoming a victim of both.

In Q3 2019, 38 percent of respondents reported having no fear about crime in general, an increase of 3 percentage points from Q2 2019. For those respondents who reported being fearful, 3 percent had 'a lot of fears' while 59 percent reported having 'some' fears or 'very few' fears.

Sixty-six percent of respondents reported that their fear of crime had no impact on their quality of life – an increase of 6 percentage points from the same quarter of 2018. This figure has, for the most part, been trending upwards since Q3 2018. Among those who reported that fear of crime had impacted their quality of life, 22 percent stated it had reduced their quality a little, 22 percent reported it had moderately reduced

their quality of life and 3 percent significantly or greatly.

Worry about Victimization and Fear of Crime

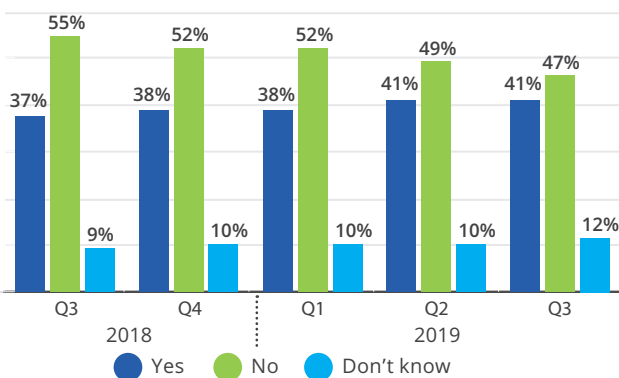


Garda Visibility

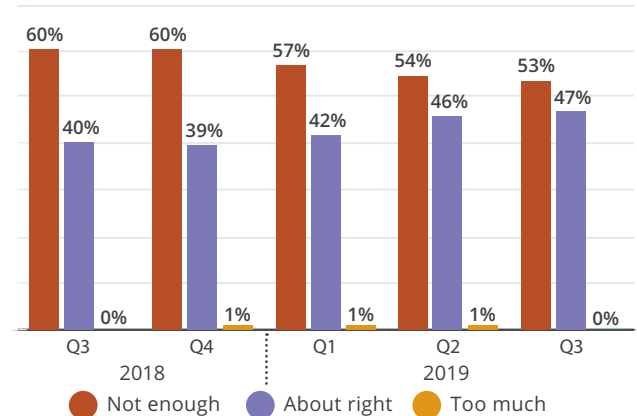
During Q3 2019, 41 percent of respondents reported being aware of Garda patrols locally - no change from Q2 2019, with these two periods showing the highest levels in the last number of quarters of the Public Attitude Survey. In terms of

perceptions of Garda presence locally, during Q3 2019, 47 percent felt it was 'about right'. This figure has been trending upwards since Q4 2018.

Garda Patrols Locally



Garda Presence Locally



Satisfaction with An Garda Síochána

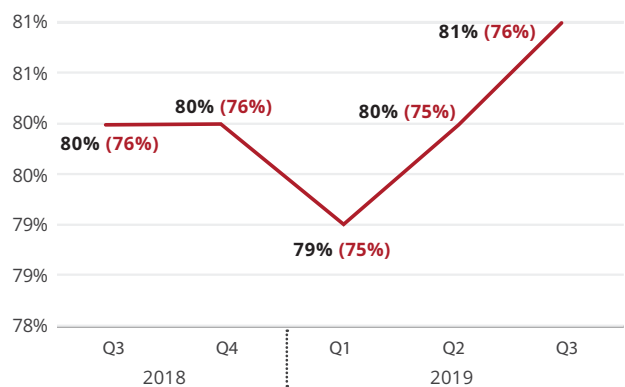
During Q3 2019, 81 percent of survey respondents reported being either 'very satisfied' or 'satisfied' with the service provided to their local communities by An Garda Síochána (this figure was 76% when 'don't know' responses were included). Satisfaction levels have been trending upwards since Q1 2019, but in general have remained within the 79 – 81 percent range since Q3 of 2018. Satisfaction levels continue in an upward trend since Q1 2016 (when it stood at 62%), with Q3 2019 showing the highest satisfaction level.

In January 2018, four new questions were added to the Public Attitudes Survey related to reliability of Gardaí in local areas and Garda-community relations. 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.

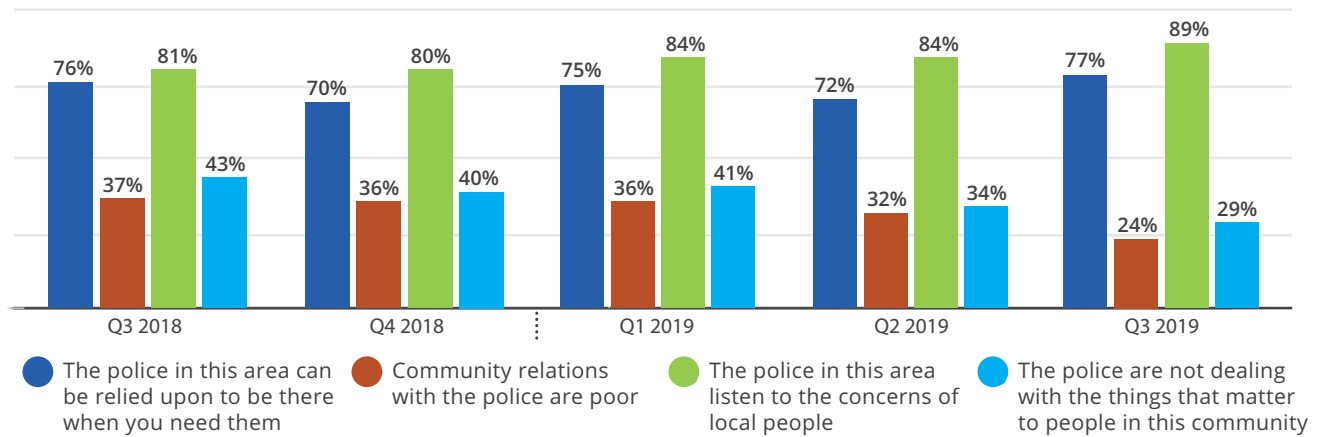
- During Q3 2019, 77 percent of respondents agreed that the Gardaí can be relied upon to be there when needed. This is an increase of 5 percentage points from Q2 2019, and the highest figure in the last five quarters.

- Twenty-four percent of respondents agreed that Garda-community relations are poor, a decrease of 8 percentage points from Q2 2019. This figure has been trending downwards steadily since Q3 2018.
- The majority at 89 percent felt that Gardaí listen to the concerns of local people – an increase of 8 percentage points from the same quarter in 2018.
- Finally, 29 percent agreed that Gardaí are not dealing with things that matter to the local community. This figure has seen a decrease from 43 percent in Q3 2018 – 14 percentage points.

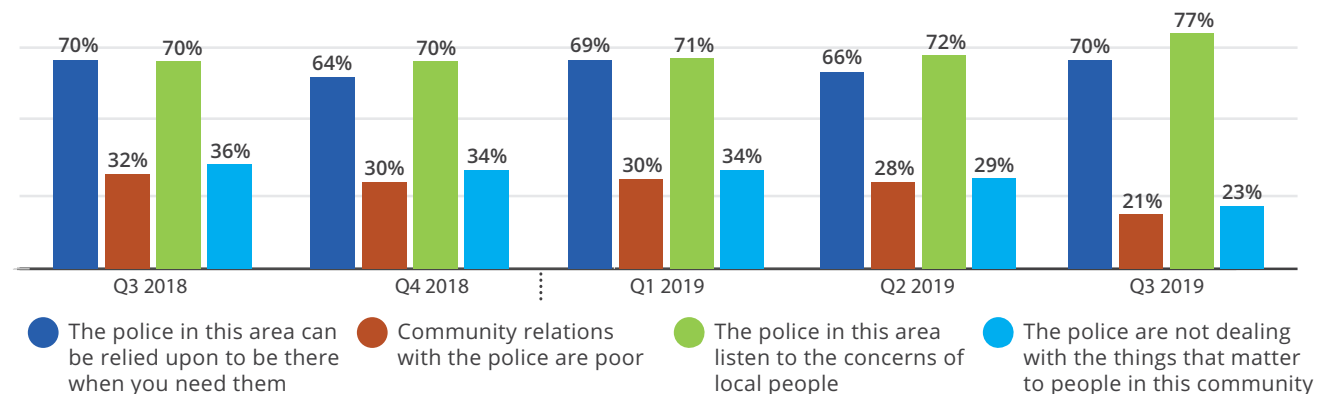
Satisfaction with An Garda Síochána



Level of Agreement Excluding 'Don't Know' Responses

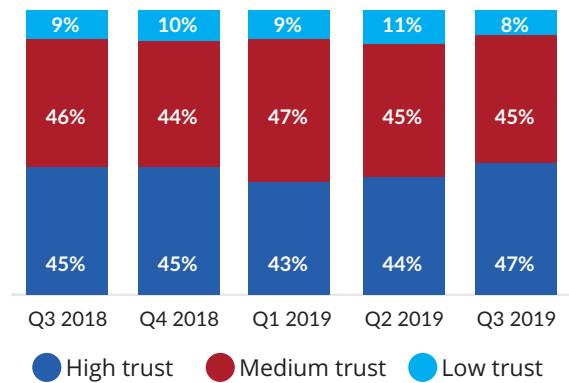


Level of Agreement Including 'Don't Know' Responses



Trust in An Garda Síochána

Trust in An Garda Síochána during Q3 2019 continues to remain high, with 92 percent of respondents reporting having a mid to high level of trust. While trust in the Gardaí is a measure that has remained very stable over survey sweeps, Q3 2019 is the highest recorded trust level in the last five quarters.

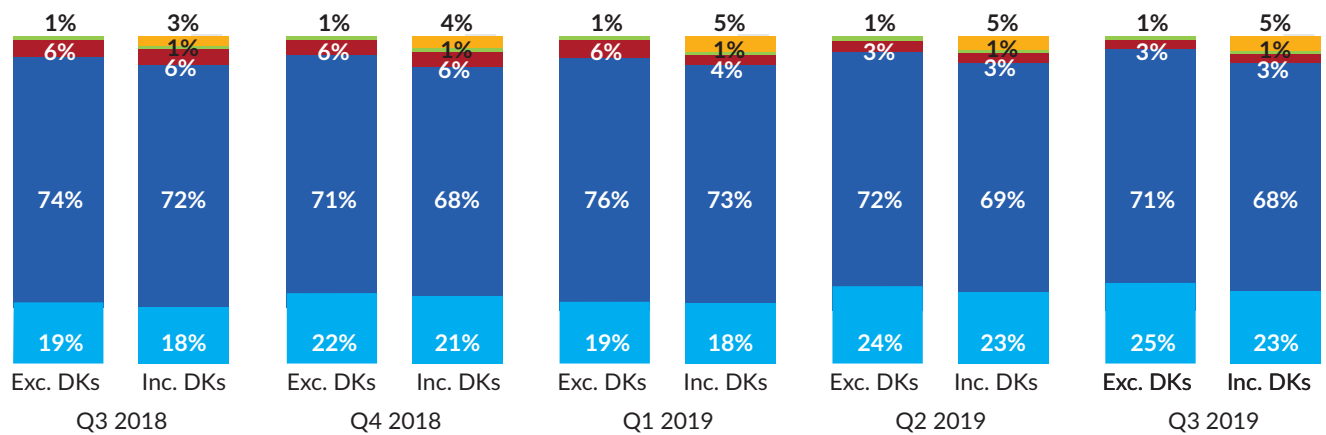


Treatment by An Garda Síochána

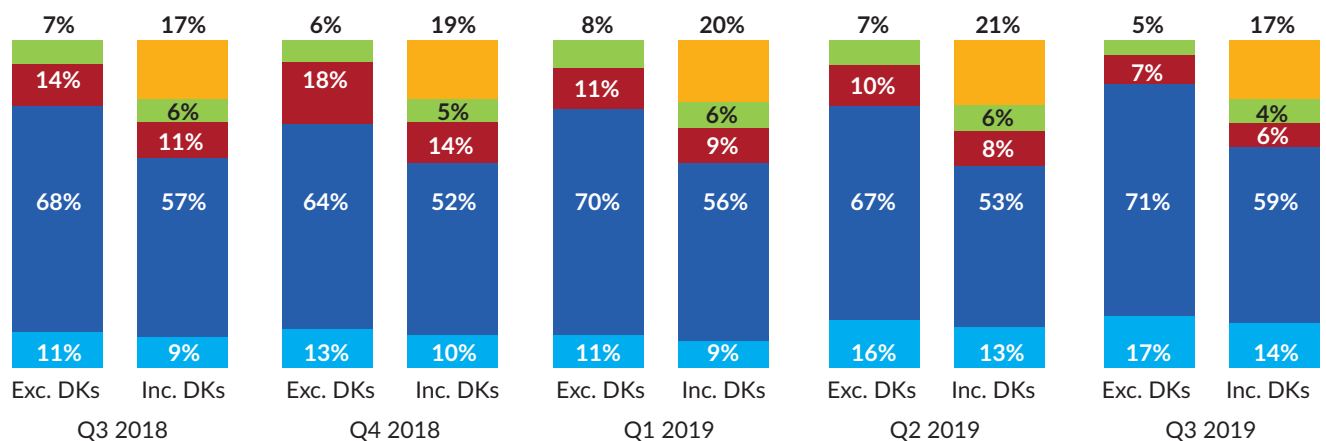
Due to the large number of 'don't know' responses to this question, figures including and excluding 'don't know' responses are presented in the charts below. During Q3 2019, 96 percent of survey respondents agreed that Gardaí would treat them with respect if they had contact with them for any reason (when 'don't know' responses were included in the analysis, this figure was 91%). Q2 and Q3 of 2019 saw

the highest agreement level with this statement over the last five quarters. When asked if the Gardaí in their local area treat everyone fairly regardless of who they are, 88 percent of respondents agreed (73% when 'don't know' responses were included). This figure has increased by 9 percentage points from the same quarter in 2018.

The Gardaí treat people with respect

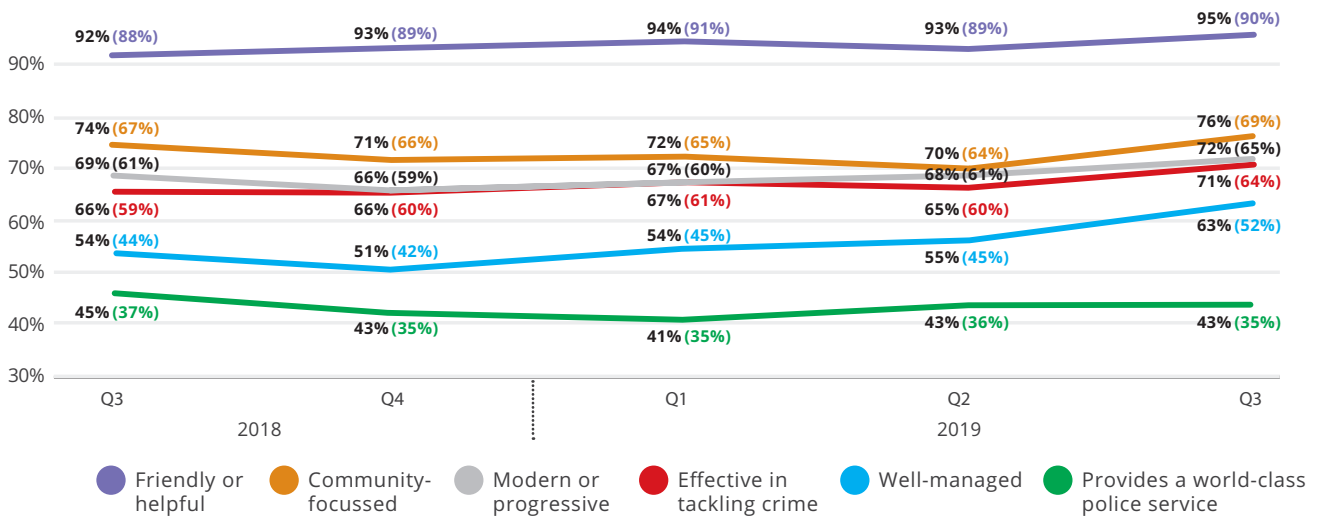


The Gardaí treat everyone fairly



● 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 ('don't know' figures in brackets). Quarter 3 of 2019, saw the highest agreement level among respondents in the last five quarters (95%) with the statement that 'An Garda Síochána are friendly and helpful'. This figure remains consistently high. Similarly, 76 percent of respondents felt that An Garda Síochána is community-focused – an increase of 6 percentage

points from Q2 of 2019; the proportion who considered An Garda Síochána modern and progressive stood at 72 percent (this has been trending upwards since Q4 2018) and effective in tackling crime, 71 percent; 63 percent considered An Garda Síochána to be well-managed (up 8 percentage points from Q2 data). Finally, 43 percent agreed that the organisation provides a world-class service (no change from Q2). Perceptions of An Garda Síochána's effectiveness and capability have been steadily improving since 2016 and Q3 2019 continues this trend in most areas.

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.

As with previous quarters, respondents continue to view local crime as less serious than national crime. The proportion of respondents who view national crime as 'very serious' has been trending upwards since Q3 2018, although the combined figure for those who view it as 'serious' or 'very serious' has remained relatively stable.

In Q3 2019, the victimisation rate stood at 4.2 percent, while the proportion of victims reporting their most recent crime to Gardaí stood at 82 percent. Satisfaction among victims of crime (who reported the crime to Gardaí) has decreased in Q3 2019 to 52 percent from 66 percent in Q2. **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 Q3 2019, the proportion of respondents who do not worry about becoming a victim of crime remained the same as in

Q1 and Q2 2019. The proportion of respondents who have no fear about crime in general increased 3 percentage points from Q2 2019 to 38 percent and those who felt fear of crime had no impact on their quality of life also showed a slight increase from the same quarter of 2018.

Awareness of Garda patrols in local areas remained at 41 percent in Q3 2019, while perceptions of Garda presence locally being at the right level have been trending upwards since Q4 2018 and stood at 47 percent in Q3 2019. Satisfaction with service to local communities has also been trending upwards since the first quarter of 2019. Eighty-one percent were either 'satisfied' or 'very satisfied' with this service.

Trust in An Garda Síochána continues to remain very high at 92 percent. Similarly, in Q3 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 (88%). Finally, agreement levels with statements about An Garda Síochána's effectiveness and capability have shown improvements across all areas since Q2 2019 (opinions about An Garda Síochána providing a world-class service have remained the same).