

An Garda Síochána Public Attitudes Survey Bulletin



Q4 2018

Research conducted by



This bulletin presents high level findings from the fourth quarter of the Public Attitudes Survey conducted between October and December 2018.

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 how visible Garda patrols are in their local area; as well as their level of trust, satisfaction, perceptions of fair treatment and overall perceptions of An Garda Síochána.

excluding such responses are presented for completeness or where relevant comparisons are deemed necessary. Monitoring of don't know/refused responses is ongoing to ensure data quality is maintained. It is not possible to present analysis of the 16 and 17 year old cohort on a quarterly basis due to sample size restrictions.

Demographics

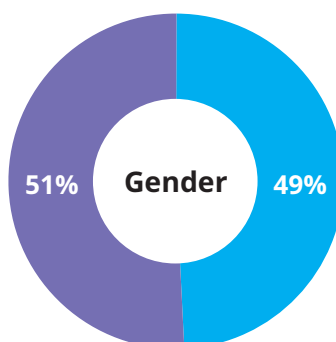
In Q4 2018 the sample is of 1,500 adults aged 18 years and over.

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. The high level results presented in this bulletin are based on data which has been weighted by age, gender, social class and nationality.

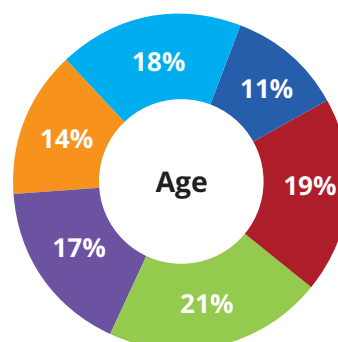
This is a survey of a random sample of the population; therefore, we have to accept that there will be some margin of error. This has been calculated at +/- 2.53 per cent for the quarterly sample. It is important to note that as analysis is done on smaller proportions, the margin of error increases. 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. In line with the methodology used in the 2017 Annual Report, preliminary analysis of all variables was completed to assess the proportion of don't know responses. A decision was then taken about 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% of responses at all measurement points. In cases where don't know responses totalled 10% or more of respondents' replies, analysis including and

CONTENTS

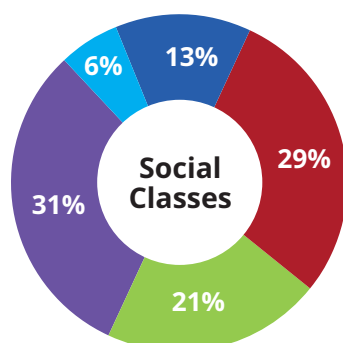
- 2 Perceptions of crime
- 2 Victimisation
- 3 Fear and worry about crime
- 3 Garda visibility
- 4 Satisfaction with An Garda Síochána
- 4 Trust in An Garda Síochána
- 5 Equality of treatment by An Garda Síochána
- 6 Perceptions of the Garda organisation
- 7 Conclusion



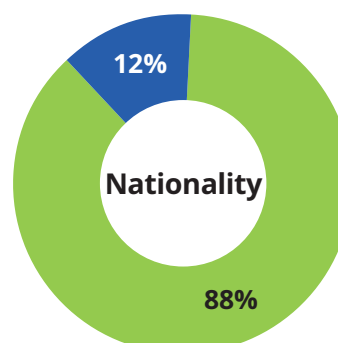
● Female ● Male



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



● F ● AB ● C1 ● C2 ● DE



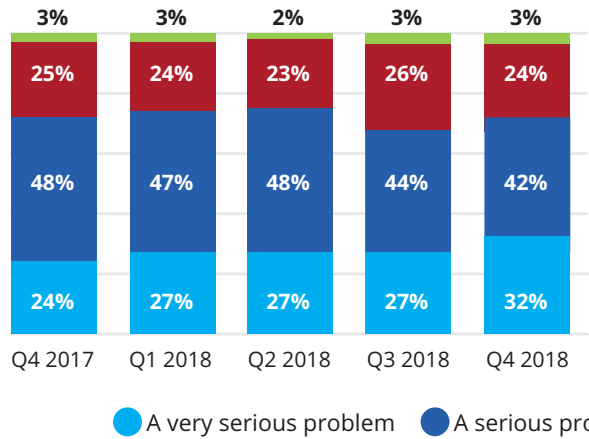
● Non-Irish Nationals ● Irish Nationals

Perceptions of Crime

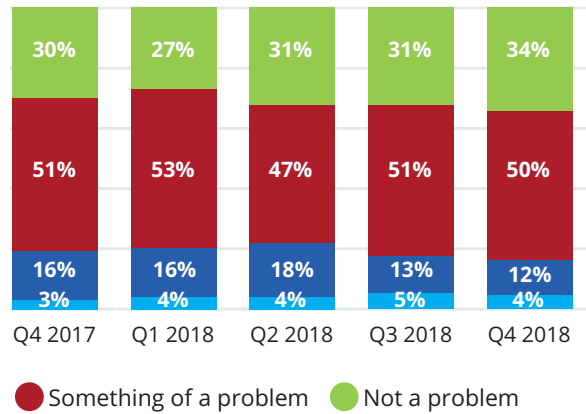
In Q4 2018, 74% of respondents perceived national crime to be either a very serious or serious problem. This perception increased between the last two quarters and levels have fluctuated between 71% and 75% over recent survey sweeps. In comparison, over the same period, only 16%

of respondents considered local crime to be a very serious or serious problem, the lowest quarterly result since the survey was re-launched. This divergent perception of the seriousness of local and national crime continues to feature strongly across Public Attitude Survey publications.

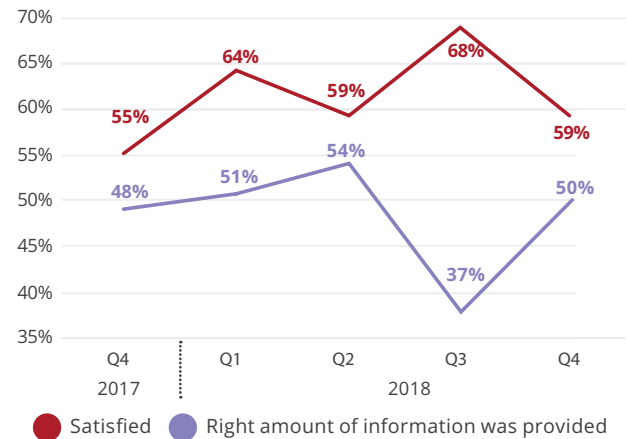
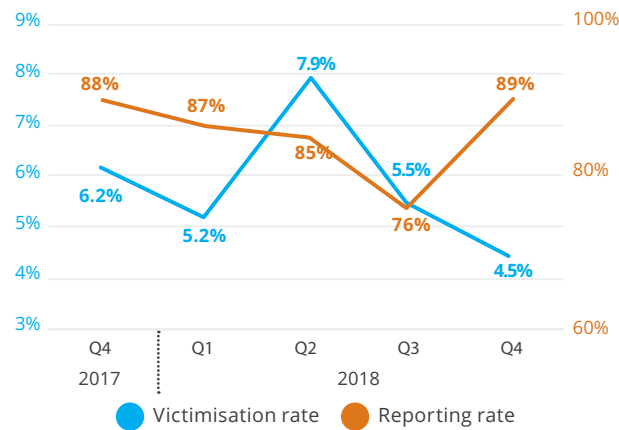
Perceptions of National Crime



Perceptions of Local Crime



Victimisation



The victimisation rate¹ stood at 4.5%² during Q4 2018, with 89%³ of victims interviewed stating they had reported their most recent crime incident to An Garda Síochána. This represents the lowest quarterly victimisation rate since the survey was re-launched. During Q4 2018, satisfaction among victims of crime (*who reported their crime to Gardaí*) stood at 59%, an increase of 4 percentage points when compared

to the same quarter last year. Half of victims who reported their most recent crime to gardaí felt that the right amount of information had been provided to them, this is a notable increase (+13%) since the last survey sweep. During 2018 there has been some fluctuation in levels of satisfaction amongst victims of crime. However changes must be interpreted with caution due to the low samples involved.

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

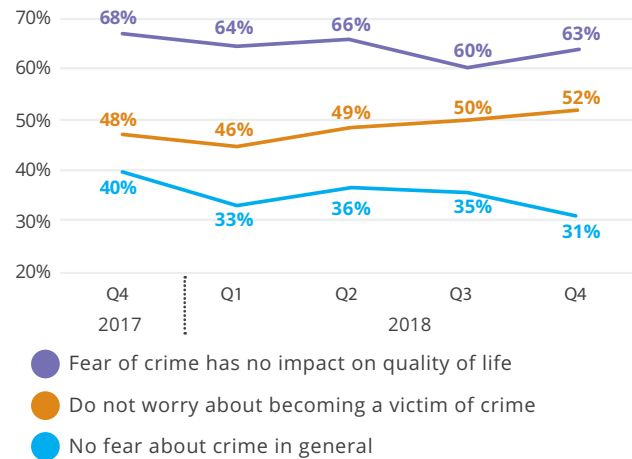
2 68 respondents interviewed during Q4 2018 experienced victimisation in the previous 12 months

3 59 victims reported their crime to An Garda Síochána in Q4 2018

Fear and Worry about Crime

As can be seen in the chart, during Q4 2018 over half (52%) of respondents reported that they did not worry about becoming a victim of crime. This proportion has gradually increased over the last number of survey sweeps. Among those who did worry about becoming a victim of crime; 3% worried about becoming a victim of personal injury, 14% worried about property theft or damage, and 31% worried about becoming a victim of both. Over the same period, 31% of respondents reported having no fears about the level of crime in general; this has continued to decrease over recent survey sweeps. Among those who reported being fearful, 3% had a lot of fears, while 31% reported having some fears and 34% stated they had very few fears. Sixty three percent of respondents reported that their fear of crime had no impact on their quality of life. Among those who reported that fear of crime had any impact their quality of life, 23% stated that it had reduced quality a little, 11% reported it had moderately reduced quality, while 2% stated it had significantly and 1% stated that it had greatly reduced their quality of life. Although the proportion of respondents who stated that they had no

fear about the level of crime in general decreased between Q3 and Q4, a greater proportion of respondents reported that fear of crime had no impact on their quality of life and that they did not worry about becoming a victim of crime in the future.

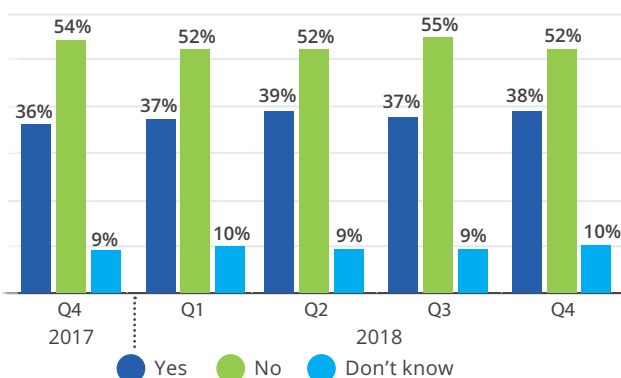


Garda Visibility

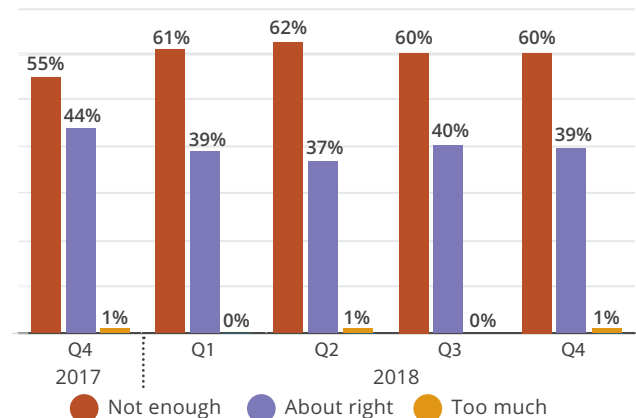
In Q4 2018, 38% of respondents were aware of Garda patrols in their local area. Garda visibility has remained very stable fluctuating between 36% and 39% since Q4 2017. During Q4

2018, 39% of respondents considered Garda presence in their local area to be at about the right level, down five percentage points compared to Q4 2017.

Garda Patrols Locally



Garda Presence Locally

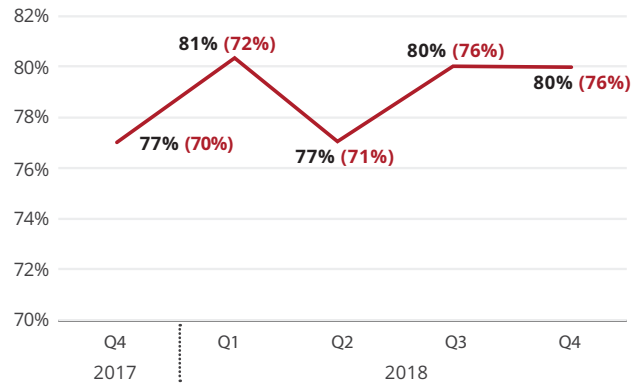


Satisfaction with An Garda Síochána

During Q4 2018, 80% of respondents reported they were satisfied with the service provided by An Garda Síochána to local communities (76% when don't know responses are included). This represents an increase of +3% from the same period in 2017 and has remained the same compared to the last measurement point. In general, satisfaction with the service provided by An Garda Síochána to local communities has been maintained during 2018. Four new questions investigating specific aspects of service provided to local communities were added at the beginning of 2018. During Q4 2018, 70% of respondents agreed that Gardaí could be relied upon to be there when you need them. This has decreased by 9 percentage points compared to Q1 2018. Over one third of respondents (36%) agreed that community relations with the police were poor, this has remained relatively stable over the past four measurement points. Eighty percent believed that Gardaí listen to the concerns of local people, this has decreased each quarter since the question was added. Finally, four in every ten (40%) respondents agreed that the Gardaí are not dealing with the things that matter to people in the local community. This has fluctuated between 45%

and 38% during 2018. As outlined in the introduction, don't know and refused responses are removed from analysis if they account for less than 10% of responses. In the interest of completeness, proportions excluding and including don't know responses are presented in the chart and table.

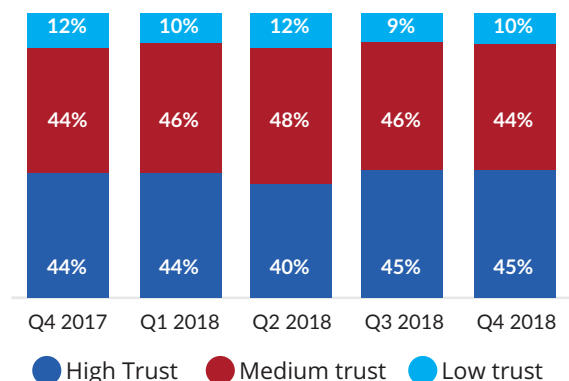
Satisfaction with An Garda Síochána



	Q1 2018 % Agreement excluding don't know responses	Q1 2018 % Agreement including don't know responses	Q2 2018 % Agreement excluding don't know responses	Q2 2018 % Agreement including don't know responses	Q3 2018 % Agreement excluding don't know responses	Q3 2018 % Agreement including don't know responses	Q4 2018 % Agreement excluding don't know responses	Q4 2018 % Agreement including don't know responses
The police in this area can be relied upon to be there when you need them	79%	70%	74%	66%	76%	70%	70%	64%
Community relations with the police are poor	35%	29%	37%	31%	37%	32%	36%	30%
The police in this area listen to the concerns of local people	84%	69%	83%	70%	81%	70%	80%	70%
The police are not dealing with the things that matter to people in this community	38%	31%	45%	36%	43%	36%	40%	34%

Trust in An Garda Síochána

Nearly 9 in every 10 (89%) respondents stated they had a mid to high level of trust in An Garda Síochána during Q4 2018. Trust in the Garda organisation has remained stable since the survey was re-launched.

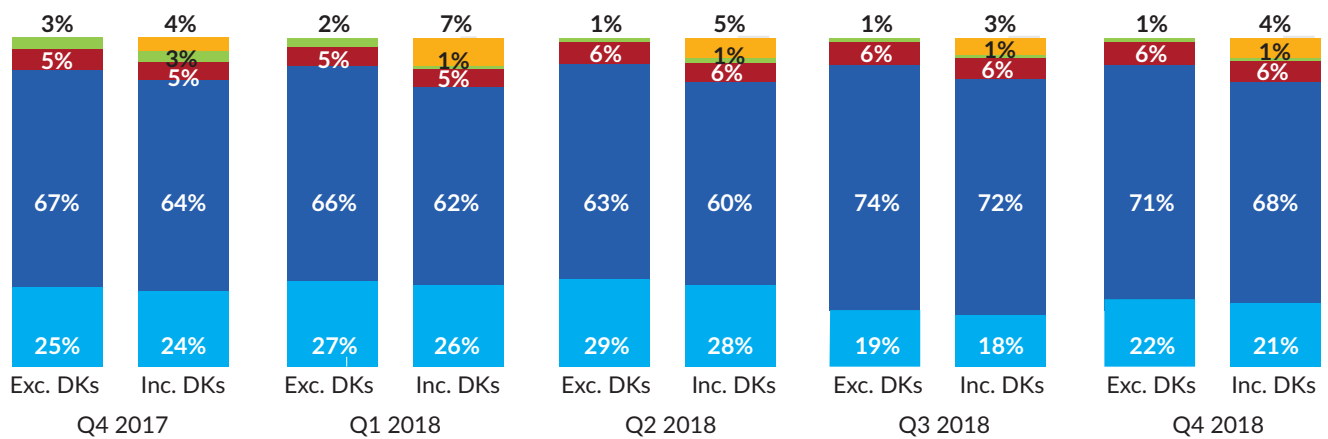


Equality of Treatment by An Garda Síochána

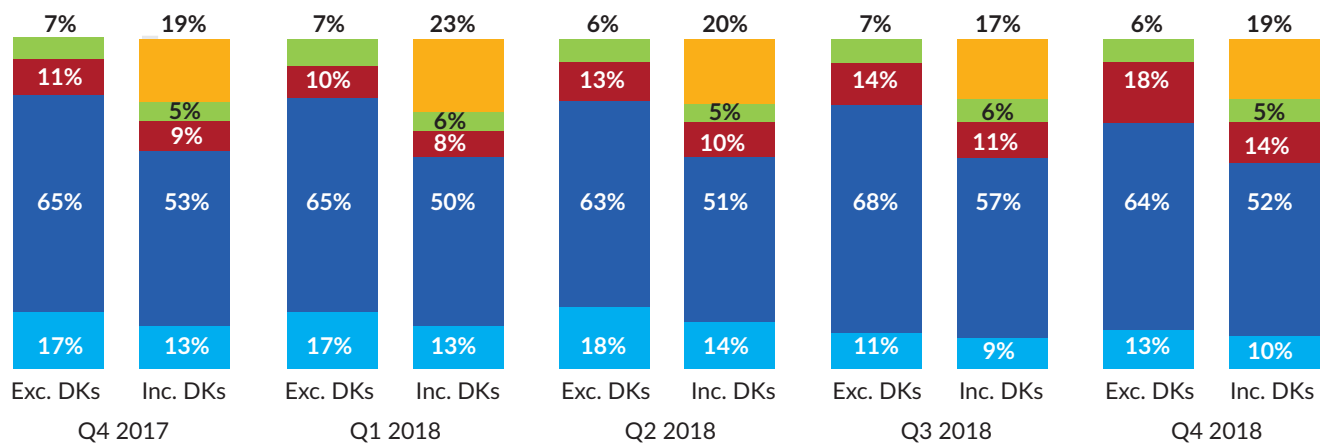
In Q4 2018, 93% of respondents agreed (89% when don't know responses are included) that members of An Garda Síochána would treat you with respect if you had contact with them for any reason. This has remained very stable over the last five measurement points. When respondents were asked if the

Gardaí in the area treat everyone fairly regardless of who they are, 77% agreed (62% when don't know responses are included). This has decreased each quarter since Q4 2017. Proportions including and excluding don't know responses are presented for both questions in the charts below.

The Gardaí treat people with respect

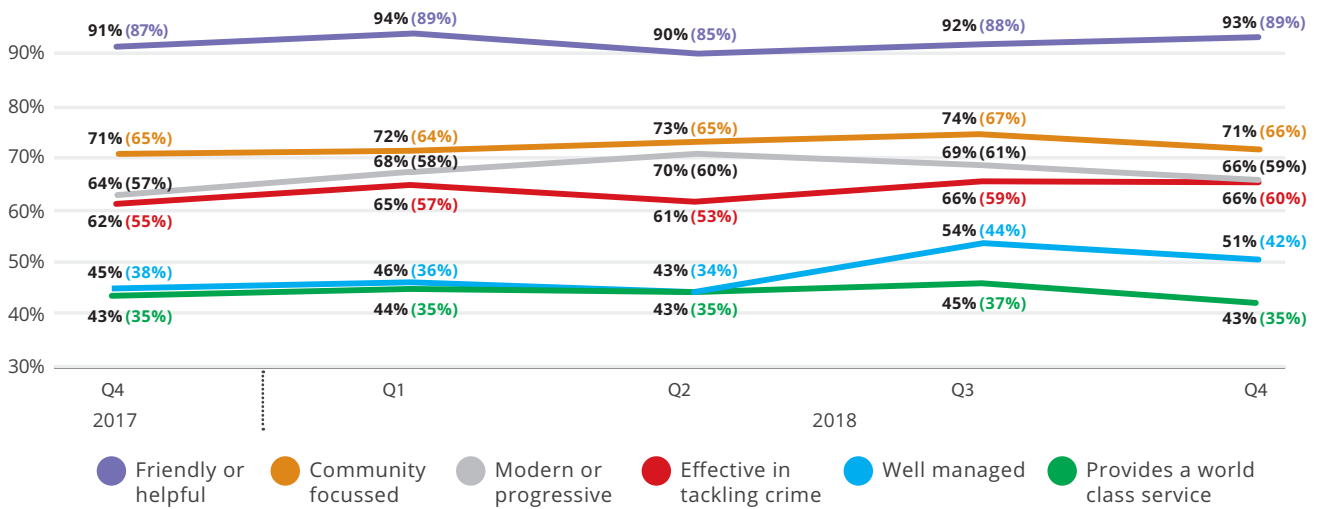


The Gardaí treat everyone fairly



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

Perceptions of the Garda Organisation



When asked about perceptions of the Garda organisation, 93% of respondents agreed that An Garda Síochána was friendly or helpful; 71% agreed that the organisation was community focused; 66% thought the organisation was modern or progressive, while the same proportion agreed they were effective in tackling crime. Over half of respondents (51%) agreed that the Garda organisation was well managed and 43% agreed that An Garda Síochána provides a world class police service. Between the last two survey sweeps, perceptions of the Garda organisation across four of the six measures of effectiveness and capability have decreased.

Perceptions that the organisation is friendly or helpful increased, while agreement that AGS was effective in tackling crime remained constant. After a notable increase in the perception that An Garda Síochána is well managed between Q2 and Q3 2018, it decreased by three percentage points between the last two survey sweeps. As outlined already, don't know and refused responses are removed from analysis if they account for less than 10% of responses. In the interest of completeness, proportions excluding and including don't know responses (*in brackets*) are presented in the chart above.

Conclusion

An Garda Síochána now publishes results from its Public Attitudes Survey on a quarterly basis. The work is commissioned by An Garda Síochána and the fieldwork completed by Amarách Research. Previous bulletins and annual reports are available at www.garda.ie.

When respondents were asked about their perceptions of crime, the vast majority continue to perceive the national crime problem to be much more serious than crime in their local area. The perception that national crime is a serious problem increased between the last two sweeps of the Public Attitudes Survey, while perceptions of local crime as a serious problem decreased.

During Q4 2018, the victimisation rate stood at 4.5%, while the proportion of victims reporting their crime to Gardaí was 89%. The quarterly victimisation rate is at its lowest level since the Public Attitudes Survey was re-launched. Victim reporting rates continue to fluctuate. It is important to note that as analysis is done on smaller proportions of the sample, the margin of error increases. As noted already, caution should be taken when interpreting results of analysis completed using victim samples.

Between Q4 2017 and Q4 2018 the proportion of respondents reporting they did not worry about the likelihood of becoming a victim of crime has trended upwards. Over the same period, there has been a decrease in the proportion of respondents reporting that they have no fear about the level of crime in general. The proportion of respondents reporting that their fear of crime had no impact on their quality of life continues to waver between 60% and 68%. Monitoring will continue as quarterly results are published.

Awareness of Garda patrols locally stood at 38% for Q4 2018, while perceptions of Garda presence being at the right level

was 39%. These perceptions have remained very stable over recent survey sweeps with little fluctuation in the proportion of respondents aware of garda patrols or in the proportion reporting that they are content with the level of garda presence in their area.

During Q4 2018, eighty percent of respondents reported they were satisfied with the service provided by An Garda Síochána to local communities. This has increased by three percentage points since Q4 2017 and remains unchanged compared to Q3 2018. New questions relating to satisfaction with gardaí locally show that the majority of survey respondents believe that the gardaí can be relied upon when you need them and that they listen to the concerns of local people. During 2018, approximately one in three respondents believed community relations with the gardaí were poor and a slightly higher proportion believed that the gardaí were not dealing with the things that mattered to people in their local community.

The publics' trust in the Garda organisation remains high at 89%. The vast majority of respondents agreed that the Gardaí would treat them with respect if they had contact with them for any reason. There has been a decrease in the perception that the organisation treats everyone fairly, regardless of who they are, over recent survey sweeps. Perceptions of the effectiveness and capability of the Garda organisation decreased between Q3 2018 and Q4 2018 across the majority of measures. At quarterly intervals during 2018, agreement that AGS is friendly or helpful, community focussed and provides a world class police service has remained broadly consistent. Some greater variations can be seen across perceptions that the organisation is modern or progressive, well-managed and that it is effective in tackling crime. Quarterly monitoring will continue into 2019.