



# An Garda Síochána Public Attitudes Survey Bulletin

Q1 2019

Research conducted by



This bulletin presents the key findings from the first quarter of the Public Attitudes Survey conducted between January and March 2019.

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 and their satisfaction levels with how Gardaí handled their case. Respondents were also 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  $\pm 2.53$  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

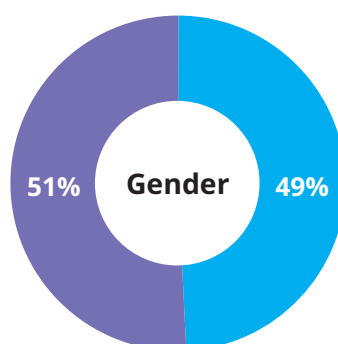
whether they were to be excluded from subsequent analyses. 'Don't know' and refused responses have been removed from analysis if they account for less than 10 percent of responses at all measurement points. In cases where 'don't know' responses totalled 10 percent or more of respondents' replies, analysis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

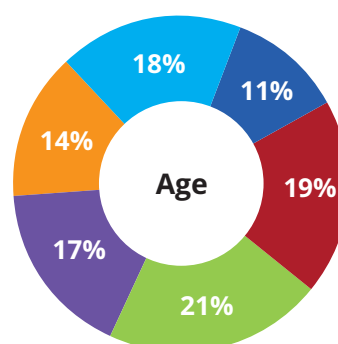
The sample is of 1,500 adults aged 18 years and over.

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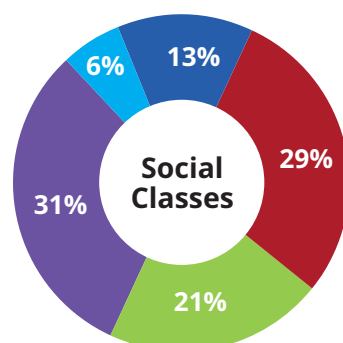
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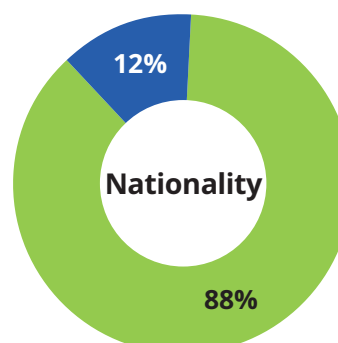
Female Male



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



F AB C1 C2 DE



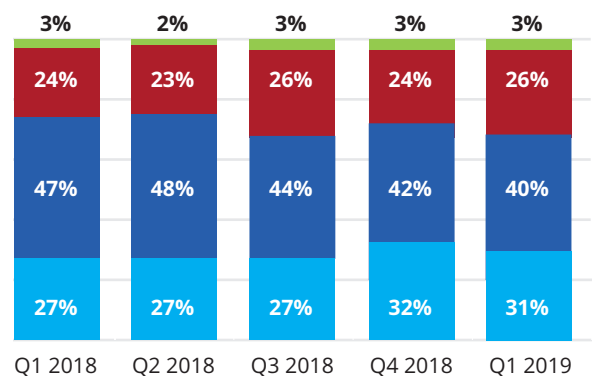
Non-Irish Nationals Irish Nationals

# Perceptions of Crime

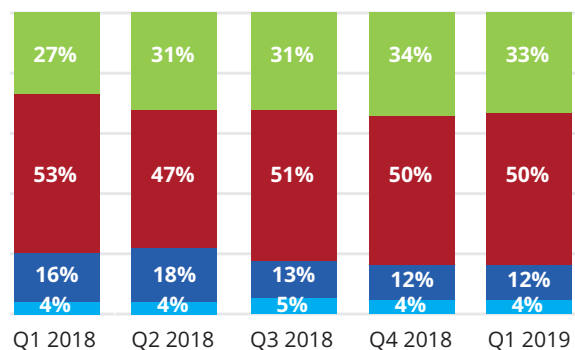
In Q1 2019, 71 percent of survey respondents considered national crime to be either 'very serious' or 'serious' – a decrease of three percentage points from Q4 2018. In general, the proportion of respondents who perceive national crime to be 'very serious' or 'serious' has remained relatively

stable over the last number of quarter sweeps. Respondents continue to view local crime as less serious than national crime. In Q1 2019, 16 percent of respondents perceived crime in their local areas as 'very serious' or 'serious' – no change from Q4 of 2018.

## Perceptions of National Crime

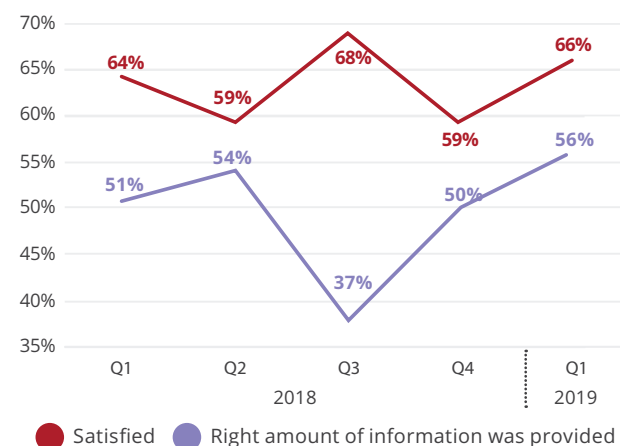
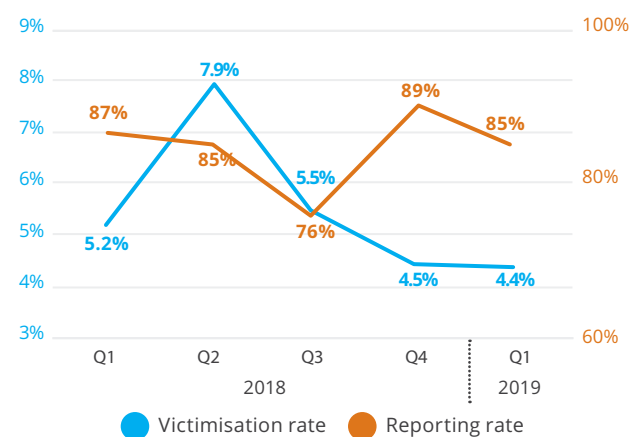


## Perceptions of Local Crime



● A very serious problem ● A serious problem ● Something of a problem ● Not a problem

# Victimisation



The victimisation rate<sup>1</sup> stood at 4.4 percent<sup>2</sup> during Q1 2019 with 85 percent<sup>3</sup> 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 relaunched and continues the trend set in Q4 2018 when it was at 4.5 percent. During Q1 2019,

satisfaction among victims of crime (who reported their crime to Gardaí) stood at 66 percent, an increase of 7 percent since Q4 2018. During Q1 2019, the proportion of victims that felt the right amount of information had been provided to them stood at 56 percent - this has been trending upwards since Q3 2018.

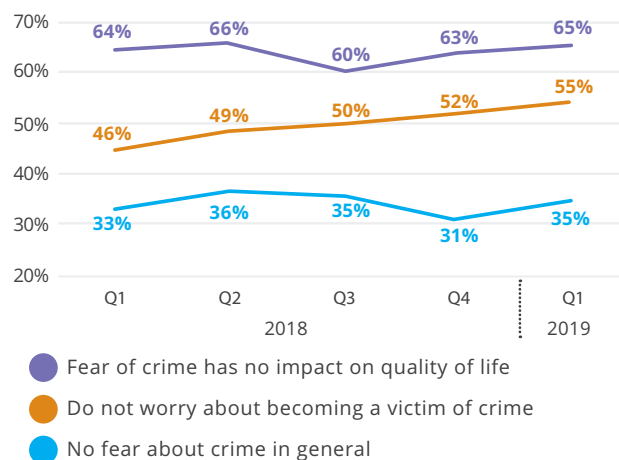
<sup>1</sup> This includes being a victim of burglary, theft, robbery, criminal damage, assault,

or fraud.  
<sup>2</sup> 66 respondents interviewed during Q1 2019 experienced victimisation in the

previous 12 months.  
<sup>3</sup> 57 victims reported their crime to An Garda Síochána in Q1 2019.

## Fear and Worry about Crime

The proportion of respondents who do not worry about becoming a victim of crime has been steadily increasing since Q1 2018 (46%). In Q1 2019, the figure stood at 55 percent, an increase of 9 percentage points. Among those who did worry about victimisation, 4 percent worried about becoming a victim of personal injury; 13 percent worried about property theft or damage and 28 percent worried about becoming a victim of both. In Q1 2019, 35 percent of respondents reported having no fear about crime in general. For those respondents who reported being fearful, 2 percent had 'a lot of fears', while 62 percent reported having 'some' fears or 'very few' fears. Sixty-five percent of respondents reported that their fear of crime had no impact on their quality of life (an increase of 5 percentage points from Q3 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 5 percent stated it had significantly or greatly reduced their quality of life.

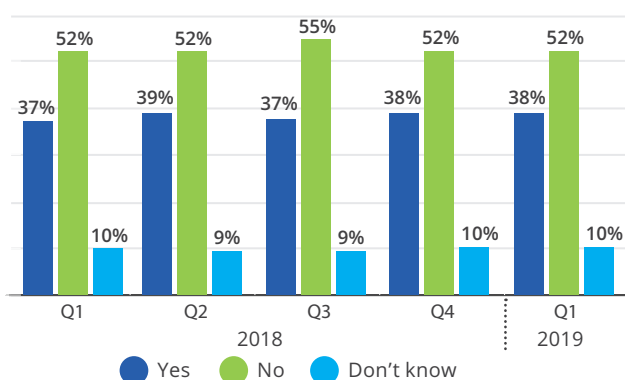


## Garda Visibility

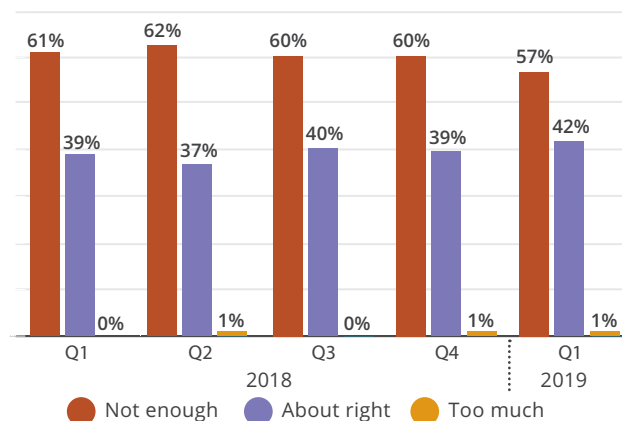
Thirty-eight percent of respondents reported being aware of Garda patrols in their local area during Q1 2019 – no change from Q4 2018 and a relatively stable measurement over the

last four quarters. During Q1 2019, 42 percent of respondents considered Garda presence in their local areas as 'about right' – an increase of 3 percentage points compared to Q1 2018.

### Garda Patrols Locally



### Garda Presence Locally

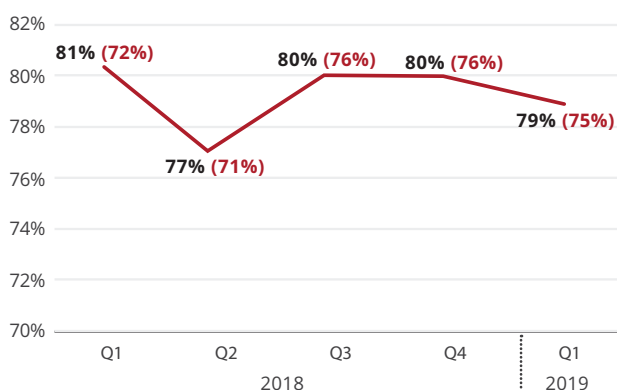


# Satisfaction with An Garda Síochána

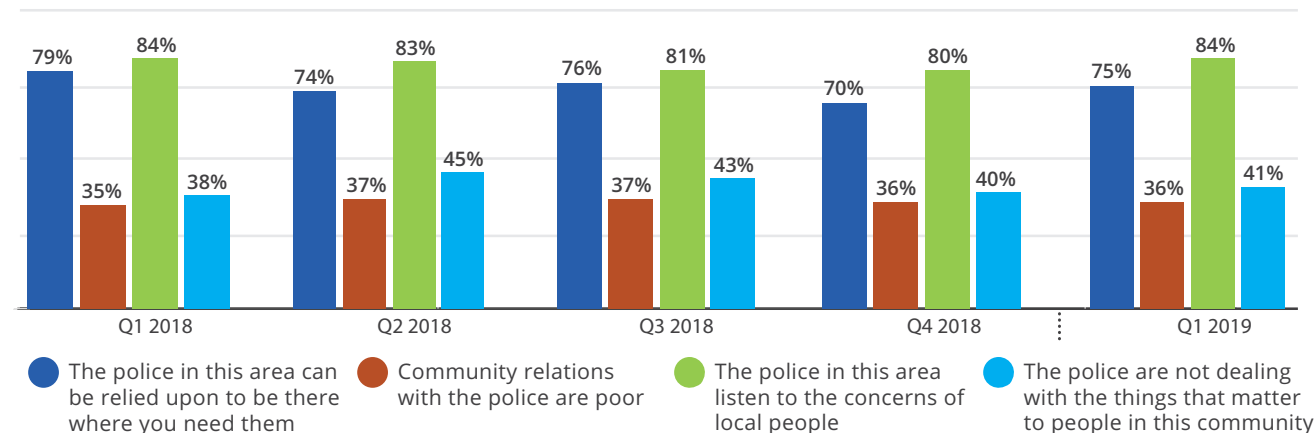
In Q1 2019, 79 percent of survey respondents reported being either 'very satisfied' or 'satisfied' with the service provided to their local communities by An Garda Síochána. This figure has remained relatively stable over the last three quarters (it was 80% in Q3 and Q4 of 2018 respectively). In general, satisfaction with Garda service to local communities among survey respondents has been increasing steadily since Q1 2016, with Q1, Q3 and Q4 2018, and Q1 2019 showing the highest satisfaction levels in the last two years. In January 2018, four new questions were added to the Public Attitudes Survey. These relate to the reliability of the 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 Q1 2019, 75 percent of respondents agreed that the Gardaí can be relied upon to be there when needed. This figure has fluctuated between Q1 2018 and Q1 2019 between 70 and 79 percent. Thirty-six percent of respondents agreed that Garda-community relations are poor; the majority at 84 percent felt that Gardaí listen to the concerns of local people. Finally, 41 percent

agreed that Gardaí are not dealing with things that matter to the local community. 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 chart below.

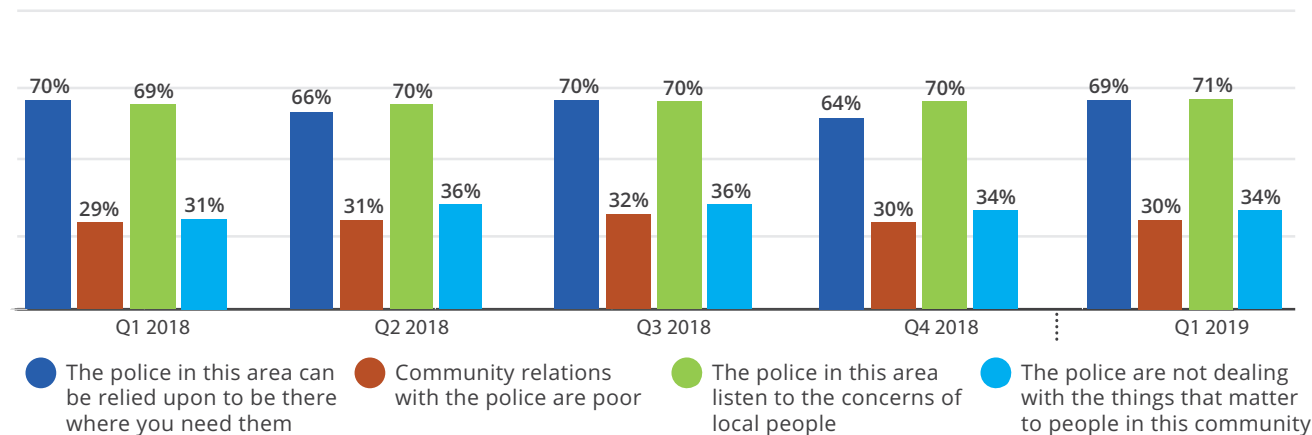
## Satisfaction with An Garda Síochána



## Level of Agreement exc. Don't Know Responses

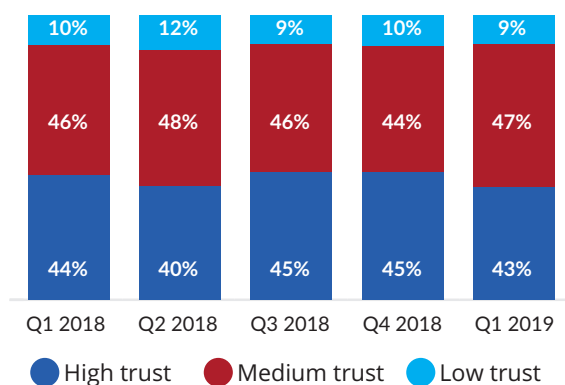


## Level of Agreement inc. Don't Know Responses



## Trust in An Garda Síochána

During Q1 2019, 90 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.

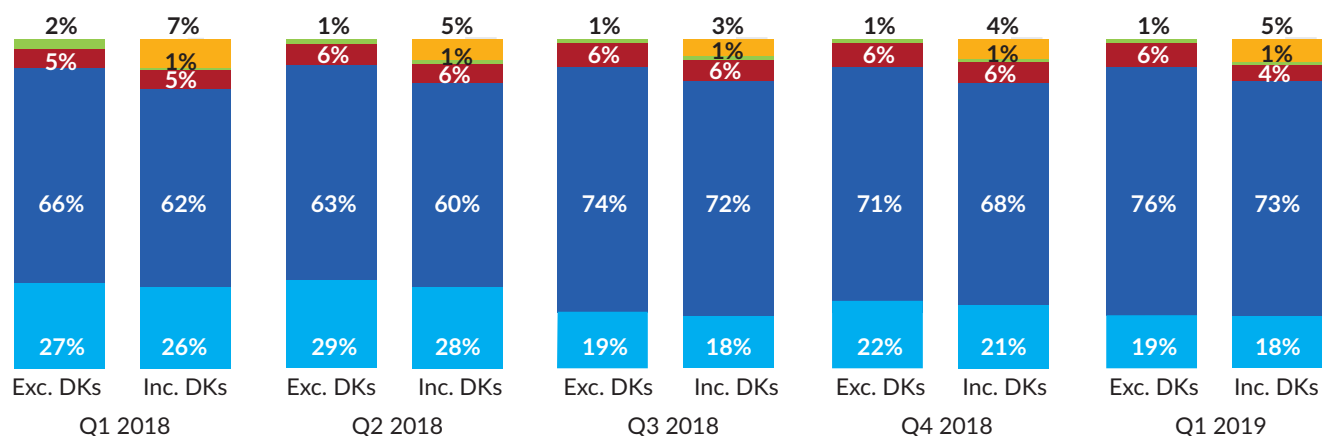


## Equality of Treatment by An Garda Síochána

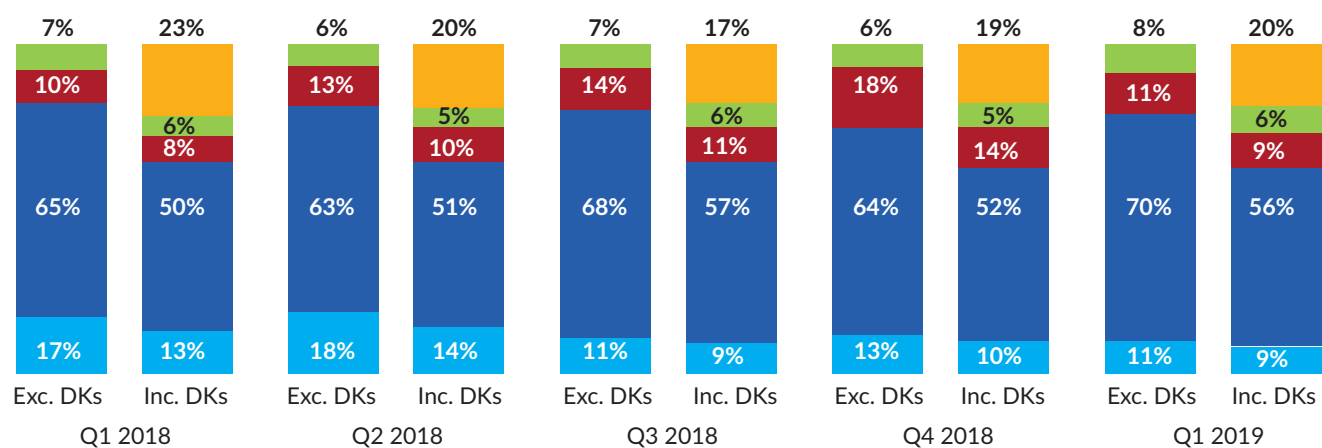
In Q1 2019, 95 percent of survey respondents agreed that Gardaí would treat them with respect if they had contact with them for any reason (when 'don't know' responses were included in the analysis this figure was 91%). This has been the highest agreement level with this statement over the last four quarters. When respondents were asked if the Gardaí in

their local area treat everyone fairly regardless of who they are, 81 percent agreed (65% when 'don't know' responses were included). Twenty percent of respondents replied 'don't know' to this question. As such, responses including and excluding 'don't know' responses are presented in the charts below.

### The Gardaí treat people with respect

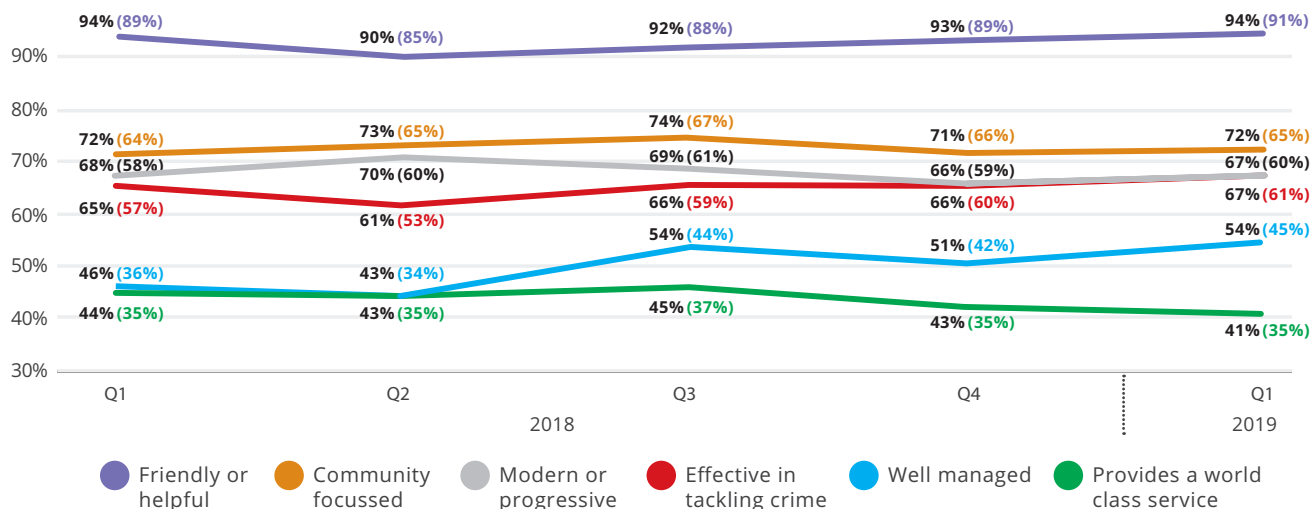


### The Gardaí treat everyone fairly



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 charts below. During Q1 2019, the majority of survey respondents (94%) agreed that members of An Garda Síochána are friendly and helpful. This figure has remained consistently high over the last number of survey sweeps. Seventy-one percent

of respondents felt that An Garda Síochána is community-focused; the proportion who considered it modern and progressive and effective in tackling crime stood at 67 percent respectively; 41 percent considered An Garda Síochána provides a world-class service and finally, 54 percent agreed that the organisation is well-managed. Perceptions of An Garda Síochána's effectiveness and capability have been steadily improving since 2016 and Q1 2019 shows further improvements across most measurements.

## Conclusion

Commissioned by An Garda Síochána, with fieldwork completed by Amarách 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](http://www.garda.ie).

National crime continues to be viewed as a 'serious' or 'very serious' problem by respondents, compared to local crime which is not viewed as a significant problem.

During Q1 2019, the victimisation rate stood at 4.4 percent, while the proportion of victims reporting their crime to Gardaí stood at 85 percent. Between the last two measurement points the victimisation rate has been at its lowest since the survey relaunched in Q1 2015. Except for Q3 2018 (76%), victims' reporting of their crime incident has been over 85 percent since Q4 2017. 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.

The proportion of respondents who do not worry about becoming a victim of crime has been steadily increasing over the last number of survey sweeps. Between Q4 2018 and

Q1 2019, there has been an increase in those who have no fear about crime in general. Equally, those respondents who report that fear of crime has no impact on their quality of life has been increasing since Q3 2018.

Awareness of Garda patrols in local areas stood at 38 percent in Q1 2019. Perceptions of Garda presence being at the right level have fluctuated since Q1 2018 and were at their highest level in Q1 2019. Seventy-nine 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 three measurement points.

Trust in An Garda Síochána continues to remain high at 90 percent. The majority of respondents (95%) 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 (81%). Agreement levels with statements about An Garda Síochána's effectiveness and capability have remained relatively stable over the last number of quarter sweeps. There have been slight decreases in views on it being friendly and helpful, effective in tackling crime and being well-managed.