



Department of  
**Justice**

[www.dojni.gov.uk](http://www.dojni.gov.uk)

---

**Analytical Services Group**

**Perceptions of Policing,  
Justice and  
Anti-Social Behaviour:  
Quarterly Update to  
December 2013**

**March 2014**

## INTRODUCTION

This update presents the most recent statistics on the level of public confidence in policing and the criminal justice system in Northern Ireland as well as public perceptions of anti-social behaviour. The data are drawn from the Northern Ireland Crime Survey (NICS) with the most recent findings being based on interviews conducted during the period 1 January 2013 to 31 December 2013. Findings for the same period the previous year, and any statistically significant changes between the two, are also included in the main report. Trend data with comparable figures for the last five years (where available) are included in the Annex.

NICS in-year results (i.e. quarterly updates based on the 12-months to June, September and December) are provisional and are subject to revision during end-of-year validation procedures.

End-of-year NICS 2010/11 results on perceptions of policing and justice (Campbell and Freel, 2012) and NICS 2012/13 results on anti-social behaviour (Cadogan and Campbell, 2014), both including socio-demographic analyses, have been published in separate statistical bulletins.

## CONFIDENCE IN THE POLICE AND POLICE ACCOUNTABILITY ARRANGEMENTS

Public confidence in the police and police accountability arrangements across Northern Ireland as a whole (referred to collectively as 'policing') is measured through a series of questions contained within the NICS. An overall (composite) confidence in policing measure is derived from responses to seven individual strands as outlined in Table 1.

- ◆ The proportion of people who expressed overall confidence in policing in the 12-months to December 2013 (79.6%) remained on a par<sup>2</sup> with that observed in the same period the previous year (80.4%) (Table 1).
- ◆ In the year ending December 2013, two of the seven strands relating to confidence in the police and police accountability arrangements showed a statistically significant decrease ( $p < 0.05$ ) when compared with the previous year: 'police treat Catholics and Protestants equally in Northern Ireland as a whole' (from 82.7% to 78.4%); and the 'Policing Board (NIPB) helps ensure the police do a good job' (82.1% to 79.4%). The five remaining indicators were unchanged over the same period (Table 1).

**Table 1: Confidence in the police and police accountability arrangements<sup>1</sup>**

| % confident that the...  | Jan 12<br>to<br>Dec 12 | Jan 13<br>to<br>Dec 13 | Statistically significant<br>change since previous<br>year? <sup>2</sup> |
|--|------------------------|------------------------|--|
| <b>Overall confidence rating<sup>3</sup></b>                           | <b>80.4</b>            | <b>79.6</b>            |  |
| Police provide an ordinary day-to-day service for all the people of NI | 85.0                   | 85.6                   |  |
| Police do a very or fairly good job in NI as a whole                   | 72.0                   | 73.6                   |  |
| Police treat Catholics and Protestants equally in NI as a whole        | 82.7                   | 78.4                   | ** ↓   |
| Policing Board (NIPB) is independent of police                         | 74.2                   | 72.9                   |  |
| Policing Board (NIPB) helps ensure police do a good job                | 82.1                   | 79.4                   | ** ↓   |
| Police Ombudsman (OPONI) is independent of police                      | 84.5                   | 84.9                   |  |
| Police Ombudsman (OPONI) helps ensure police do a good job             | 84.6                   | 84.5                   |  |

1. All figures exclude don't knows and refusals.

2. See Technical Notes. Statistical significance of change at the 5% level (two-tailed test) is indicated by a double asterisk (\*\*).

3. This measure is the weighted mean of the responses to the seven individual confidence strands listed in the table. Greater weighting is given to the three questions on the police.

## CONFIDENCE IN THE LOCAL POLICE

In addition to policing within Northern Ireland as a whole, the NICS also measures the level of public confidence in the local police, both overall and in specific aspects of their work. As part of a series of questions, respondents were asked to what extent they agree / disagree with seven statements concerning the local police; the first six are ‘funnel-type’ questions designed to help generate a more considered response to a seventh overall confidence measure.

- ◆ At 67.3% in the 12-months to December 2013, the proportion of adults who expressed overall confidence in their local police showed a statistically significant increase ( $p < 0.05$ ) when compared with that observed during the same period the previous year (64.8%) (Table 2).
- ◆ Findings show that, in the year ending December 2013, a statistically significant increase ( $p < 0.05$ ) was observed, compared with the same period the previous year, in the proportion of respondents who agreed that the local police ‘can be relied on to be there when you need them’ (from 51.4% to 54.6%). The five remaining measures remained on a par<sup>2</sup> with those observed the previous year (Table 2).

**Table 2: Confidence in the local police<sup>1</sup>**

| % agreeing that the local police...                       | Jan 12<br>to<br>Dec 12 | Jan 13<br>to<br>Dec 13 | Statistically significant<br>change since previous<br>year? <sup>2</sup> |
|---|------------------------|------------------------|--|
| <b>Overall confidence in the local police<sup>3</sup></b> | <b>64.8</b>            | <b>67.3</b>            | ** ↑   |
| Can be relied on to be there when you need them           | 51.4                   | 54.6                   | ** ↑   |
| Would treat you with respect if you had contact with them | 84.6                   | 84.3                   |  |
| Treat everyone fairly regardless of who they are          | 66.0                   | 66.1                   |  |
| Can be relied on to deal with minor crimes                | 51.2                   | 51.7                   |  |
| Understand the issues that affect this community          | 62.8                   | 62.0                   |  |
| Are dealing with the things that matter to this community | 51.2                   | 51.2                   |  |

1. All figures exclude don't knows and refusals.

2. See Technical Notes. Statistical significance of change at the 5% level (two-tailed test) is indicated by a double asterisk (\*\*).

3. Based on respondents agreeing with the statement, ‘Taking everything into account, I have confidence in the police in this area’.

## CONFIDENCE IN ENGAGEMENT

A set of questions relating to levels of public confidence in the local police working in partnership with other agencies, including district councils, to address local anti-social behaviour (ASB) and crime issues is also included within the NICS. Results from two separate questions on 'seeking people's views about' and 'dealing with' local issues have been used to form a composite rating to measure overall confidence in engagement with local communities.

- ◆ At 41.1% in the 12-months to December 2013, overall confidence in engagement was unchanged when compared with the same period the previous year (40.6%) (Table 3).
- ◆ Based on interviews for the year ending December 2013, the proportions of respondents agreeing that the police and other agencies both 'seek people's views about' (40.2%) and 'are dealing with' (41.9%) ASB and crime issues that matter in the local area remained on a par<sup>2</sup> with those reported during the previous year (39.1% and 42.1% respectively) (Table 3).

**Table 3: Confidence in the level of engagement by the local police and other agencies<sup>1</sup>**

| % agreeing that the police and other agencies, including district councils...    | Jan 12<br>to<br>Dec 12 | Jan 13<br>to<br>Dec 13 | Statistically significant<br>change since previous<br>year? <sup>2</sup> |
|--|------------------------|------------------------|--|
| <b>Overall engagement rating<sup>3</sup></b>                                     | <b>40.6</b>            | <b>41.1</b>            |  |
| Seek people's views about the ASB and crime issues that matter in the local area | 39.1                   | 40.2                   |  |
| Are dealing with the ASB and crime issues that matter in the local area          | 42.1                   | 41.9                   |  |

1. All figures exclude don't knows and refusals.

2. See Technical Notes. Statistical significance of change at the 5% level (two-tailed test) is indicated by a double asterisk (\*\*).

3. This measure is the arithmetic mean of the responses to the two individual engagement strands in the table.

## CONFIDENCE IN THE CRIMINAL JUSTICE SYSTEM

Public confidence in both the fairness and effectiveness of the criminal justice system (CJS) is measured through two separate, single questions contained within the NICS. Both questions are preceded by a series of 'lead-in' questions on the fairness and effectiveness of various aspects of the CJS, designed to encourage a considered response.

- ◆ Based on interviews conducted in the 12-months ending December 2013, findings indicate that the proportion of respondents who were confident that the CJS as a whole is both effective (41.4%) and fair (59.5%) show no statistically significant change to those observed the previous year (40.4% and 58.6% respectively) (Table 4).

**Table 4: Confidence in the criminal justice system<sup>1</sup>**

| % confident that the...     | Jan 12<br>to<br>Dec 12 | Jan 13<br>to<br>Dec 13 | Statistically significant<br>change since previous<br>year? <sup>2</sup> |
|-----------------------------|------------------------|------------------------|--|
| CJS as a whole is effective | 40.4                   | 41.4                   |  |
| CJS as a whole is fair      | 58.6                   | 59.5                   |  |

1. All figures exclude don't knows and refusals.

2. See Technical Notes. Statistical significance of change at the 5% level (two-tailed test) is indicated by a double asterisk (\*\*).

## PERCEPTIONS OF ANTI-SOCIAL BEHAVIOUR

Respondents to the NICS are asked to rate how much of a problem different types of anti-social behaviour (ASB) are in their area. Since NICS 2003/04, responses to seven individual ASB strands, as outlined in Table 5, have been used to form a composite measure to gauge the overall perceived level of ASB in the local area.

- ◆ Findings from NICS interviews carried out in the 12-months to December 2013 estimate that almost one in ten adults (9.8%) perceived there to be a high level of anti-social behaviour in their local area, showing no statistically significant change from that observed the previous year (11.1%) (Table 5).
- ◆ Based on the 12-months ending December 2013, two of the seven indicators that comprise the composite measure showed statistically significant decreases ( $p < 0.05$ ) when compared with the previous year: 'people being drunk or rowdy in public places' (from 19.3% to 16.6%); and 'teenagers hanging around on streets' (21.2% to 17.4%). The five remaining indicators were unchanged over the same period (Table 5).

**Table 5: Perceived level of anti-social behaviour in the local area<sup>1</sup>**

| % saying very / fairly big problem                          | Jan 12<br>to<br>Dec 12 | Jan 13<br>to<br>Dec 13 | Statistically significant<br>change since previous<br>year? <sup>2</sup> |
|---|------------------------|------------------------|--|
| <b>Perceived high level of ASB<sup>3</sup></b>              | <b>11.1</b>            | <b>9.8</b>             |  |
| Abandoned or burnt-out cars                                 | 3.4                    | 4.1                    |  |
| Noisy neighbours or loud parties                            | 8.4                    | 7.4                    |  |
| People being drunk or rowdy in public places                | 19.3                   | 16.6                   | ** ↓   |
| People using or dealing drugs                               | 21.8                   | 22.2                   |  |
| Teenagers hanging around on streets                         | 21.2                   | 17.4                   | ** ↓   |
| Rubbish or litter lying around                              | 25.9                   | 26.1                   |  |
| Vandalism, graffiti and other deliberate damage to property | 18.2                   | 16.4                   |  |

1. All figures exclude don't knows and refusals.

2. See Technical Notes. Statistical significance of change at the 5% level (two-tailed test) is indicated by a double asterisk (\*\*).

3. ASB: Anti-social behaviour (measure derived from responses to the seven individual strands in the table).

NICS respondents are asked how much their quality of life is affected by anti-social behaviour on a scale of 1 to 10, where 1 is no effect and 10 is a total effect. In order to standardise the results, the following conventions have been used to gauge the effect of anti-social behaviour on quality of life:

1. minimally affected (responded in the range 1 to 3);
  2. moderately affected (responded in the range 4 to 7); and
  3. greatly affected (responded in the range 8 to 10).
- ◆ Findings from NICS interviews carried out in the 12-months to December 2013 indicate that the proportions of respondents who felt that anti-social behaviour has a minimal (85.3%), moderate (12.9%) or great (1.8%) impact on their quality of life show no statistically significant change when compared with the previous year (83.6%, 14.3% and 2.1% respectively) (Table 6).

**Table 6: Perceptions of the effect of anti-social behaviour on quality of life<sup>1,2</sup>**

| % saying anti-social behaviour has a... | Jan 12<br>to<br>Dec 12 | Jan 13<br>to<br>Dec 13 | Statistically significant<br>change since previous<br>year? <sup>3</sup> |
|---|------------------------|------------------------|--|
| Minimal effect                          | 83.6                   | 85.3                   |  |
| Moderate effect                         | 14.3                   | 12.9                   |  |
| Great effect                            | 2.1                    | 1.8                    |  |

1. All figures exclude don't knows and refusals.

2. This question has been included within the survey since January 2012.

3. See Technical Notes. Statistical significance of change at the 5% level (two-tailed test) is indicated by a double asterisk (\*\*).

## REFERENCES

**Cadogan, G. and Campbell, P.** (2014). *Perceptions of Crime: Findings from the 2012/13 Northern Ireland Crime Survey*. DOJ Research and Statistical Bulletin 1/2014. Belfast: DOJ.

<http://www.dojni.gov.uk/index/statistics-research/stats-research-publications/northern-ireland-crime-survey-s-r/r-and-s-bulletin-1-2014-perceptions-of-crime-findings-from-the-2012-13-northern-ireland-crime-survey.htm>

**Campbell, P. and Freel, R.** (2012). *Perceptions of Policing, Justice and Organised Crime: Findings from the 2010/11 Northern Ireland Crime Survey*. DOJ Research and Statistical Bulletin 2/2012. Belfast: DOJ.

<http://www.dojni.gov.uk/index/statistics-research/stats-research-publications/northern-ireland-crime-survey-s-r/policing-justice-and-organised-crime-bulletin-2-2012.htm>

## FURTHER INFORMATION

For further information on the Northern Ireland Crime Survey please contact: Analytical Services Group, Department of Justice, Knockview Buildings, Stormont Estate, Belfast BT4 3SL; Telephone: 028 9052 3368; Email: [statistics.research@dojni.x.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:statistics.research@dojni.x.gsi.gov.uk)

This update and other Department of Justice research and statistical publications are available at: [www.dojni.gov.uk](http://www.dojni.gov.uk)

## TECHNICAL NOTES

Selecting only one person at each address means that individuals living in large households have a lower chance of being included in the sample than those living in small households. Accordingly, the data presented in this publication have been weighted by household size to prevent a bias towards small households. Don't knows, refusals and non-valid responses have been excluded from the analyses.

Because of a combination of both sampling and non-sampling error, any sample is unlikely to reflect precisely the characteristics of the population.

Statistical significance tests have been carried out on a range of differences observed between various sweeps of the NICS. These tests are used to establish the degree of confidence with which we can infer the observed findings as an accurate reflection of the perceptions of the population.

For the purposes of this update, where differences have emerged as being statistically significant, these have been reported at the 5% ( $p < 0.05$ ) level of probability (two-tailed tests). This means that, for any observed result that is found to be statistically significant, one can be 95% confident that this has not happened by chance.

Where differences are described as not statistically different, this means that the results do not differ beyond the levels expected by chance fluctuation (as judged at the 5% level).

## ANNEX

**Table A1: Confidence in the police and police accountability arrangements<sup>1</sup>**

| % confident that the...  | Jan 09<br>to<br>Dec 09 | Jan 10<br>to<br>Dec 10 | Jan 11<br>to<br>Dec 11 | Jan 12<br>to<br>Dec 12 | Jan 13<br>to<br>Dec 13 |
|--|------------------------|------------------------|------------------------|------------------------|------------------------|
| <b>Overall confidence rating<sup>2</sup></b>                           | <b>79.6</b>            | <b>77.8</b>            | <b>80.5</b>            | <b>80.4</b>            | <b>79.6</b>            |
| Police provide an ordinary day-to-day service for all the people of NI | 82.4                   | 80.7                   | 84.9                   | 85.0                   | 85.6                   |
| Police do a very or fairly good job in NI as a whole                   | 68.1                   | 67.1                   | 72.0                   | 72.0                   | 73.6                   |
| Police treat Catholics and Protestants equally in NI as a whole        | 82.5                   | 79.1                   | 83.6                   | 82.7                   | 78.4                   |
| Policing Board (NIPB) is independent of police                         | 76.2                   | 73.6                   | 73.7                   | 74.2                   | 72.9                   |
| Policing Board (NIPB) helps ensure police do a good job                | 81.7                   | 81.9                   | 81.5                   | 82.1                   | 79.4                   |
| Police Ombudsman (OPONI) is independent of police                      | 88.1                   | 86.1                   | 85.6                   | 84.5                   | 84.9                   |
| Police Ombudsman (OPONI) helps ensure police do a good job             | 87.4                   | 87.6                   | 84.2                   | 84.6                   | 84.5                   |

1. All figures exclude don't knows and refusals.

2. This measure is the weighted mean of the responses to the seven individual confidence strands listed in the table. Greater weighting is given to the three questions on the police.

**Table A2: Confidence in the local police<sup>1</sup>**

| % agreeing that the local police...                       | Jan 09<br>to<br>Dec 09 | Jan 10<br>to<br>Dec 10 | Jan 11<br>to<br>Dec 11 | Jan 12<br>to<br>Dec 12 | Jan 13<br>to<br>Dec 13 |
|---|------------------------|------------------------|------------------------|------------------------|------------------------|
| <b>Overall confidence in the local police<sup>2</sup></b> | <b>60.0</b>            | <b>59.7</b>            | <b>64.5</b>            | <b>64.8</b>            | <b>67.3</b>            |
| Can be relied on to be there when you need them           | 45.4                   | 45.3                   | 50.6                   | 51.4                   | 54.6                   |
| Would treat you with respect if you had contact with them | 82.2                   | 81.7                   | 83.5                   | 84.6                   | 84.3                   |
| Treat everyone fairly regardless of who they are          | 64.8                   | 63.8                   | 65.8                   | 66.0                   | 66.1                   |
| Can be relied on to deal with minor crimes                | 44.8                   | 46.4                   | 49.9                   | 51.2                   | 51.7                   |
| Understand the issues that affect this community          | 59.2                   | 59.9                   | 62.2                   | 62.8                   | 62.0                   |
| Are dealing with the things that matter to this community | 46.5                   | 46.2                   | 49.1                   | 51.2                   | 51.2                   |

1. All figures exclude don't knows and refusals.

2. Based on respondents agreeing with the statement, 'Taking everything into account, I have confidence in the police in this area'.

**Table A3: Confidence in the level of engagement by the local police and other agencies<sup>1</sup>**

| % agreeing that the police and other agencies, including district councils ...   | Jan 09<br>to<br>Dec 09 | Jan 10<br>to<br>Dec 10 | Jan 11<br>to<br>Dec 11 | Jan 12<br>to<br>Dec 12 | Jan 13<br>to<br>Dec 13 |
|--|------------------------|------------------------|------------------------|------------------------|------------------------|
| <b>Overall engagement rating<sup>2</sup></b>                                     | <b>40.4</b>            | <b>38.8</b>            | <b>39.1</b>            | <b>40.6</b>            | <b>41.1</b>            |
| Seek people's views about the ASB and crime issues that matter in the local area | 42.8                   | 39.4                   | 37.8                   | 39.1                   | 40.2                   |
| Are dealing with the ASB and crime issues that matter in the local area          | 38.1                   | 38.1                   | 40.5                   | 42.1                   | 41.9                   |

1. All figures exclude don't knows and refusals.

2. This measure is the arithmetic mean of the responses to the two individual engagement strands in the table.

**Table A4: Confidence in the criminal justice system<sup>1</sup>**

| % confident that the...     | Jan 09<br>to<br>Dec 09 | Jan 10<br>to<br>Dec 10 | Jan 11<br>to<br>Dec 11 | Jan 12<br>to<br>Dec 12 | Jan 13<br>to<br>Dec 13 |
|-----------------------------|------------------------|------------------------|------------------------|------------------------|------------------------|
| CJS as a whole is effective | 37.3                   | 38.8                   | 40.4                   | 40.4                   | 41.4                   |
| CJS as a whole is fair      | 58.3                   | 57.5                   | 60.3                   | 58.6                   | 59.5                   |

1. All figures exclude don't knows and refusals.

**Table A5: Perceived level of anti-social behaviour in the local area<sup>1</sup>**

| % saying very / fairly big problem                          | Jan 09<br>to<br>Dec 09 | Jan 10<br>to<br>Dec 10 | Jan 11<br>to<br>Dec 11 | Jan 12<br>to<br>Dec 12 | Jan 13<br>to<br>Dec 13 |
|---|------------------------|------------------------|------------------------|------------------------|------------------------|
| <b>Perceived high level of ASB<sup>2</sup></b>              | <b>14.6</b>            | <b>13.7</b>            | <b>11.7</b>            | <b>11.1</b>            | <b>9.8</b>             |
| Abandoned or burnt-out cars                                 | 5.6                    | 5.0                    | 4.4                    | 3.4                    | 4.1                    |
| Noisy neighbours or loud parties                            | 8.4                    | 8.3                    | 8.3                    | 8.4                    | 7.4                    |
| People being drunk or rowdy in public places                | 22.7                   | 21.2                   | 20.0                   | 19.3                   | 16.6                   |
| People using or dealing drugs                               | 23.3                   | 23.0                   | 22.4                   | 21.8                   | 22.2                   |
| Teenagers hanging around on streets                         | 26.0                   | 23.8                   | 21.3                   | 21.2                   | 17.4                   |
| Rubbish or litter lying around                              | 27.3                   | 27.7                   | 24.8                   | 25.9                   | 26.1                   |
| Vandalism, graffiti and other deliberate damage to property | 22.5                   | 20.2                   | 19.8                   | 18.2                   | 16.4                   |

1. All figures exclude don't knows and refusals.

2. ASB: Anti-social behaviour (measure derived from responses to the seven individual strands in the table).

**Table A6: Perceptions of the effect of anti-social behaviour on quality of life<sup>1,2</sup>**

| % saying anti-social behaviour has a... | Jan 12<br>to<br>Dec 12 | Jan 13<br>to<br>Dec 13 |
|---|------------------------|------------------------|
| Minimal effect                          | 83.6                   | 85.3                   |
| Moderate effect                         | 14.3                   | 12.9                   |
| Great effect                            | 2.1                    | 1.8                    |

1. All figures exclude don't knows and refusals.

2. This question has been included within the survey since January 2012.



## NOTES

**Analytical Services Group**

Department of Justice

Knockview Buildings

Stormont Estate

Belfast

BT4 3SL

Email: [statistics.research@dojni.x.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:statistics.research@dojni.x.gsi.gov.uk)

Telephone: 028 9052 3368

[www.dojni.gov.uk](http://www.dojni.gov.uk)