



Ministry of
JUSTICE

**Public confidence in the Criminal
Justice System:
findings from the British Crime
Survey 2002/03 to 2007/08**

Dominic Smith

Ministry of Justice Research Series 16/10
July 2010

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First Published 2010

ISBN: 978-1-84099-404-9

Acknowledgements

I would like to thank Jane Becker, Catherine Cousins, Oliver Dean, Liz Eaton, Nicholas Poyntz, Jacqui Fincham, Laura Freeman and the British Crime Survey team for their contributions to this project. I would also like to thank colleagues for their valuable comments on the draft report.

Dominic Smith

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Summary

This report provides an overview of public confidence in the Criminal Justice System (CJS) during the period 2002/03 to 2007/08. It draws together findings from the British Crime Survey (BCS) and considers both the national (England and Wales) and local level picture.

The report supplements previous publications on BCS headline data on confidence in the CJS by presenting more detail to help identify and understand the different factors that influence confidence, and how it varies for different population subgroups.

The report covers:

- Overall levels of confidence in the CJS.
- Further breakdown of the public confidence in the CJS measures.
- Public perceptions of the wider CJS.

Main findings

- The 2007/08 BCS showed that 44% of adults in England and Wales were confident that the 'CJS was effective in bringing people who commit crimes to justice' compared with 39% in 2002/03.
- There was a statistically significant increase in levels of confidence across 9 of the 42 Local Criminal Justice Boards (LCJB) between 2002/03 and 2007/08. There was a fall in one LCJB.
- At the national level in England and Wales, victim and witness satisfaction with the police and other CJS agencies remained stable from 2002/03 to 2007/08.
- Each of the other six confidence in the CJS measures (see page 4 for more details) showed an increase in 2007/08 compared with 2002/03.
- Levels of confidence in the CJS varied by demographic and socio-economic characteristics. The 2007/08 findings indicate that women were more likely to be confident in the CJS than men. Levels of confidence in the CJS were more likely to be higher among younger people, Black and Minority Ethnic groups, those living in private rented accommodation and those who had not experienced crime in the past 12 months. Confidence in the majority of measures and ratings of parts of the CJS was highest among the youngest age group surveyed (16–24).
- In 2007/08, the highest rated part of the CJS by the public was the police. This is in line with results from previous years of the survey.
- In 2007/08, more than three-quarters of respondents (77%) felt that sentences given out by the courts were too lenient. However, many respondents underestimated sentencing practice.

About the British Crime Survey

The BCS is a face-to-face continuous survey of approximately 47,000 adults in private households in England and Wales. The first results from the 2007/08 survey were published in *Crime in England and Wales 2007/2008* (Kershaw *et al.*, eds., 2008). For further information on the 2007/08 BCS, including terminology, please refer to this volume: <http://www.homeoffice.gov.uk/rds/pdfs08/hosb0708.pdf>

The British Crime Survey (BCS) is a nationally representative, household victimisation survey that has been conducted since 1982. The main purpose of the survey is to measure the extent and nature of criminal victimisation against adults, aged 16 or over, living in private households in England and Wales.

The 2007/08 BCS reported on 46,983 interviews conducted between April 2007 and March 2008 and referred to incidents experienced by respondents in the 12 months prior to their interview. BMRB Social Research carried out the fieldwork for the 2007/08 BCS. Interviews were conducted face to face by trained interviewers. The response rate was 76%.

Further information on the British Crime Survey and access to recent publications can be found at <http://www.homeoffice.gov.uk/rds/bcs1.html>

Statistical significance

Since the BCS estimates are subject to sampling error, differences between estimates from successive years of the survey or between population subgroups may occur by chance. Tests of statistical significance are used to identify which differences are unlikely to have occurred by chance. In this publication, tests at the 5% significance level have been applied (the level at which there is a 1 in 20 chance of an observed difference being solely due to chance). Any differences reported in the text are significant at this level.

Questions on confidence in the CJS

The questions reported here cover the period 2002/03 to 2007/08. The questions were used to measure performance against Public Service Agreement (PSA) 2, agreed in the 2004 Spending Review, which covered the period 2002/03 to 2007/08. Under the 2007 Spending Review, PSA 2 was replaced with PSA 24 and a new set of questions were developed for inclusion in the BCS. Further details are given in Appendix D.

1. Public confidence in the Criminal Justice System

The Criminal Justice System (CJS) is one of the major public services in England and Wales. It is responsible for:

- detecting crime and bringing offenders to justice;
- carrying out the orders of court, such as collecting fines; and
- supervising community and custodial punishment.

Criminal justice agencies include the police, the Crown Prosecution Service (CPS), the courts, the prison service, the probation service, and the youth justice service. The work of these agencies is overseen by three government departments: the Ministry of Justice, the Home Office and the Attorney General's Office.

Results for England and Wales

The level of public confidence in the CJS between 2002/03 and 2007/08 was measured by responses given to questions in the British Crime Survey (BCS). The main measure was based on the question: 'How confident are you that the CJS is effective in bringing people who commit crimes to justice?' Responses were measured on a four-point scale:

- Very confident;
- Fairly confident;
- Not very confident;
- Not at all confident.

Public confidence was defined as the proportion who said that they were 'very' or 'fairly' confident.

Table 1.1 shows the response to the confidence measure during the period, 2002/03 to 2007/08.

Table 1.1 Public confidence in the Criminal Justice System, 2002/03 to 2007/08, England and Wales

BCS 2002/03 to 2007/08 Question	2002/ 03	2003/ 04	2004/ 05	2005/ 06	2006/ 07	2007/ 08	Statistically significant change, 2002/03 to 2007/08
	Percentage very/fairly confident						
Effective in bringing people who commit crimes to justice	39	41	43	44	41	44	*
<i>Unweighted base</i>	<i>36,007</i>	<i>37,393</i>	<i>44,460</i>	<i>47,175</i>	<i>46,618</i>	<i>36,425</i>	

* Indicates that the latest data are statistically significantly higher than the baseline at the 5% level.

Local Criminal Justice Boards results

The BCS was used to examine confidence in the CJS at Local Criminal Justice Board (LCJB) level (see Glossary for description) from 2004/05 to 2007/08 with a target of statistically significant improvement from the 2004/05 baseline by the year ending March 2008. **Figure 1.1** on the next page highlights the LCJBs that achieved a statistically significant increase in confidence in the CJS between 2004/05 and 2007/08.

Victim and witness satisfaction with the Criminal Justice System

The BCS also measures victim and witness satisfaction with the police and other CJS agencies.¹ The BCS asked victims and witnesses 'how satisfied they were with how the police and other CJS agencies handled the matter'². Responses were measured on a four-point scale:

- Very satisfied;
- Fairly satisfied;
- A bit dissatisfied;
- Very dissatisfied.

Victim and witness satisfaction was defined as the proportion who said that they were 'very' or 'fairly' satisfied.

Between the six months to March 2004 baseline and the year ending March 2008, the level of satisfaction was stable (the proportion of 60% for the 12 months ending March 2008 not being statistically significantly different to that of 58% in the 6 months to March 2004 baseline).

Overall, in 2007/08 victims were more likely to be satisfied with their 'dealings with the other parts of the CJS' than their 'dealings with the police', 72% satisfaction compared with 59% satisfaction.

1 Other CJS Agencies include Crown Prosecution Service, Magistrates'/Crown/Juvenile Courts, Victim Support, prison service, probation service, witness service, and youth offending teams.

2 The measure of victim and witness satisfaction with the police and other CJS agencies was a weighted average of three measures. The first measure was asked of respondents who reported being a witness of crime in the 12 months before interview and who had contact with the police on this matter. The second and third measures were asked of respondents who reported being a victim of crime in the last 12 months prior to interview; one question was asked of victims who had contact with the police and the second was asked of victims who had contact with other CJS agencies (see Appendix B).

Figure 1.1 Local Criminal Justice Board general confidence data 2007/08 compared with 2004/05, England and Wales



Source: BCS 2004/05 and 2007/08.

2. Further analysis of confidence in Criminal Justice System measures

Additional confidence in Criminal Justice System measures

As well as the overall public confidence in the Criminal Justice System (CJS) measure 'CJS was effective in bringing people who commit crimes to justice', there were six other 'confidence in the CJS' measures included in the British Crime Survey (BCS). These were:

- 'How confident are you that the CJS respects the rights of those accused of committing a crime and treats them fairly?'
- 'How effective do you think the CJS as a whole is in reducing crime?'³
- 'How confident are you that the CJS deals with cases promptly and efficiently?'
- 'How confident are you that the CJS meets the needs of victims of crime?'
- 'How confident are you that the CJS is effective at dealing with young people accused of crime?'
- 'How confident are you that people who come forward as witnesses are treated well by the CJS?'

Table 2.1 shows the response to each of the additional six confidence questions during the period 2002/03 to 2007/08. Each of these confidence measures was higher in 2007/08 compared with 2002/03.

The highest level of confidence was found for the proportion of people who were very or fairly confident that the 'CJS respects the rights of those accused of committing a crime' (80%). The lowest level of confidence was found for whether the 'CJS was effective in dealing with young people accused of crime', at one in four people (25%).

3 Based on the proportion responding 'very' or 'fairly' effective.

Table 2.1 Additional public confidence in the Criminal Justice System measures, 2002/03 to 2007/08, England and Wales

Question	2002/03	2003/04	2004/05	2005/06	2006/07	2007/08	Statistically significant change, 2002/03 to 2007/08
	Percentage very/fairly confident						
Respects the rights of people accused of committing a crime and treats them fairly	77	77	78	80	79	80	*
<i>Unweighted base</i>	34,767	36,233	43,139	45,873	45,323	35,339	
Effective at reducing crime ^a	31	35	39	38	36	38	*
<i>Unweighted base</i>	35,770	37,128	44,010	46,813	46,300	36,133	
Deals with cases promptly and efficiently	36	38	39	41	40	42	*
<i>Unweighted base</i>	34,524	35,897	42,628	45,344	44,786	34,872	
Meets the needs of victims of crime	30	32	34	36	33	36	*
<i>Unweighted base</i>	35,237	36,615	43,474	46,220	45,676	35,614	
Dealing with young people accused of crime ^a	21	24	27	26	25	25	*
<i>Unweighted base</i>	35,362	36,580	43,403	46,317	45,805	35,719	
Treats people who come forward as witnesses well ^b	n/a	64	65	68	67	69	*
<i>Unweighted base</i>	n/a	15,030	39,776	42,425	41,602	32,577	

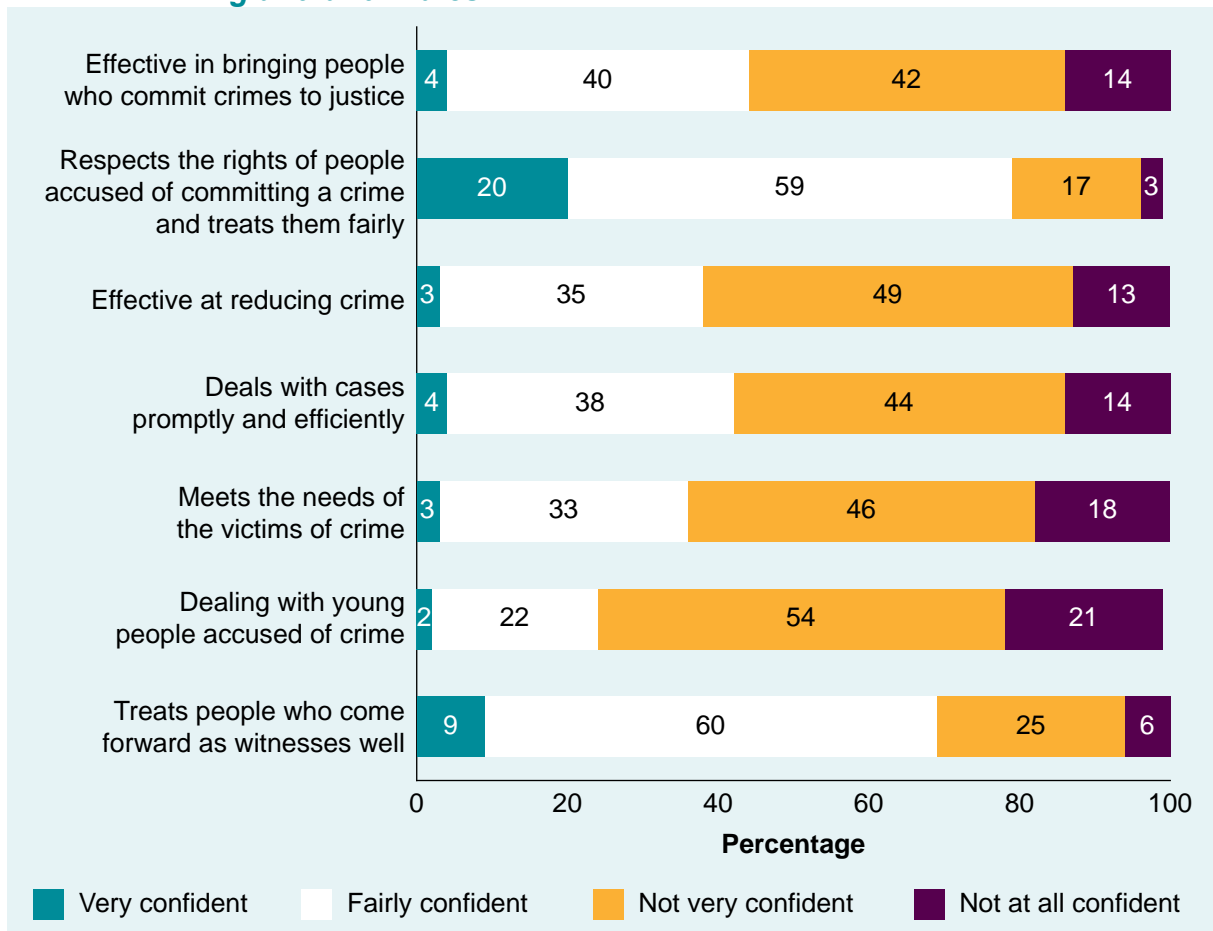
* Indicates that the latest data are statistically significantly higher than the baseline at the 5% level.

a Based on the percentage very/fairly effective.

b Question was introduced in October 2003; therefore 03/04 is based on six months of data. Statistically significant change is calculated from 2003/04 (October 2003 - March 2004) to 2007/08.

Figure 2.1 shows the breakdown of responses given for each of the confidence measures in 2007/08. Of those who were confident, including both 'very' or 'fairly' confident, the larger proportion was 'fairly' confident. The 'very' confident responses generally accounted for the smallest proportion of responses, ranging between 2% ('effective in dealing with young people accused of crime') and 20% ('respects the rights of people accused of committing a crime and treats them fairly'). The 'not very confident' responses generally accounted for the highest proportion of responses, ranging between 17% ('respects the rights of people accused of committing a crime and treats them fairly') and 54% ('effective in dealing with young people accused of crime').

Figure 2.1 Confidence in the Criminal Justice System responses,^a 2007/08, England and Wales



^a Percentages may not add up to 100% due to rounding each component to the nearest whole percentage.
Source: BCS 2007/08

Table 2.2 gives the breakdown of the four available responses to the ‘general’ confidence question (confidence in the CJS’s ‘effectiveness in bringing people who commit crimes to justice’) from 2002/03 to 2007/08. There was an increase in both the ‘very confident’ and ‘fairly confident’ responses from 2002/03 to 2007/08, while ‘not very confident’ and ‘not at all confident’ responses both showed a fall during the same period.

Table 2.2 Trends in the general confidence measure, 2002/03 to 2007/08, England and Wales

BCS 2002/03 to 2007/08 Response	2002/03	2003/04	2004/05	2005/06	2006/07	2007/08	Statistically significant change, 2002/03 to 2007/08
	Percentage						
Very confident	3	3	3	4	4	4	**
Fairly confident	36	38	40	41	38	40	**
Not very confident	44	43	42	41	43	42	*
Not at all confident	17	16	15	14	16	14	*
<i>Unweighted base</i>	<i>36,007</i>	<i>37,393</i>	<i>44,460</i>	<i>47,175</i>	<i>46,618</i>	<i>36,425</i>	

* Indicates that the latest data are statistically significantly lower than the baseline at the 5% level.

** Indicates that the latest data are statistically significantly higher than the baseline at the 5% level.

Confidence levels by Local Criminal Justice Board

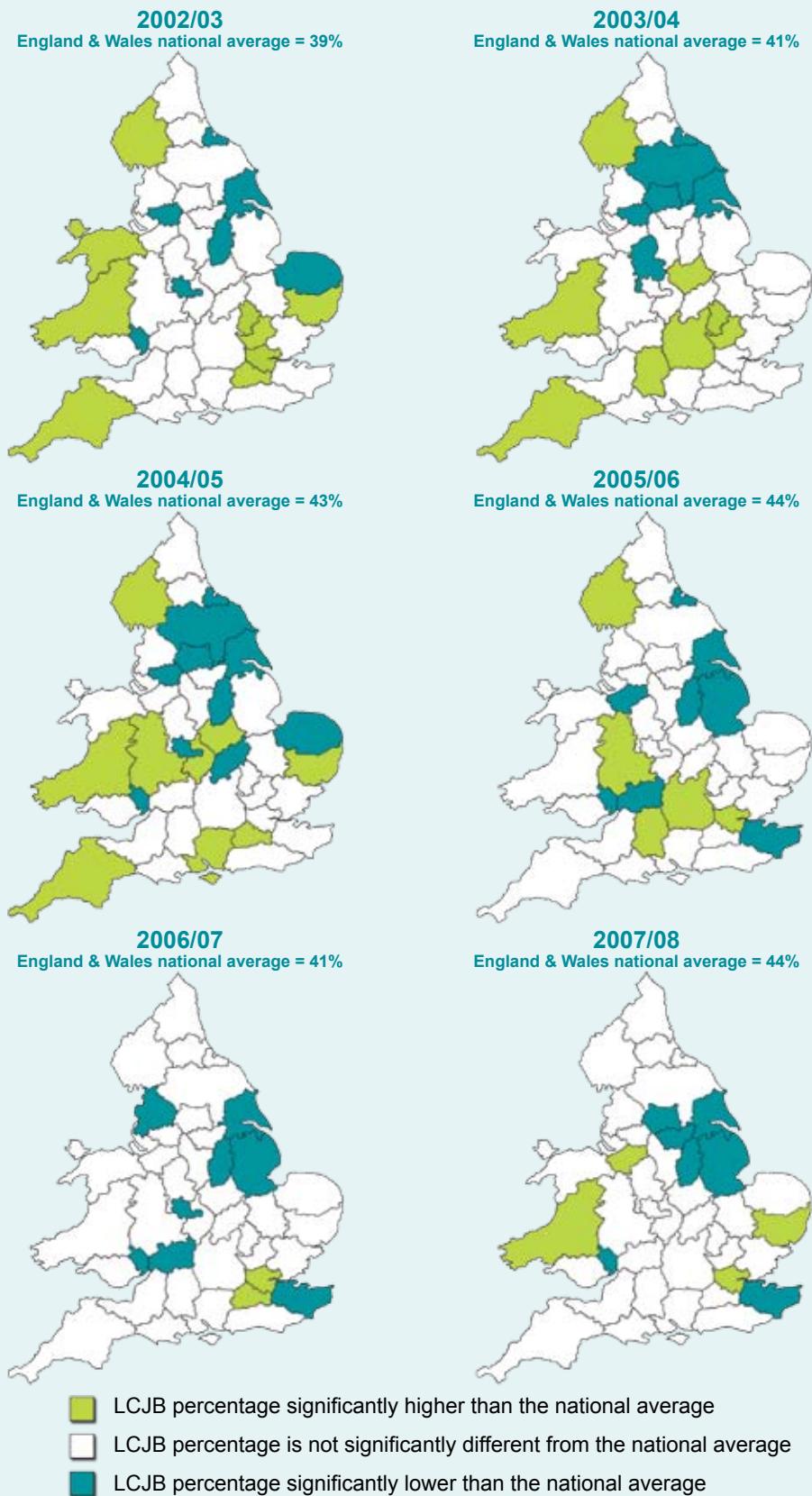
Figure 2.2 shows the variation in levels of confidence at the Local Criminal Justice Board (LCJB) level with the national average, based on the measure 'CJS is effective in bringing people who commit crimes to justice', from 2002/03 to 2007/08. The range in 2007/08 was between 35% (Gwent) and 51% (Cheshire).

In 2002/03, 8 of the 42 LCJBs had a general confidence level that was higher than the national average, while 7 had levels of confidence lower than the national average. The number of LCJBs differing from the national average peaked in 2004/05, with nine above the national average and ten below. Since that time, the number of LCJBs differing from the national average decreased each year and reached a low in 2007/08, when there were four LCJBs above the national average, and five below.

Tables A.1 to A.7 in Appendix A provide LCJB trend data on each of the seven confidence in the CJS questions from 2002/03 to 2007/08.

Looking at other area measures there was some variation between the ten Government Office Regions (GORs) in terms of confidence in the CJS (see Table 2.3) in 2007/08. Confidence in 'effectiveness in bringing people who commit crimes to justice' and 'meeting the needs of victims' was higher among people from London than those in the other GORs.

Figure 2.2 Local Criminal Justice Board general confidence data, 2002/03 to 2007/08, England and Wales



Source: BCS 2002/03 to 2007/08

Table 2.3 Confidence in the Criminal Justice System by Government Office Region, 2007/08, England and Wales

BCS 2007/08	Effective in bringing people who commit crimes to justice	Respects the rights of and treats fairly people accused of committing a crime	Effective in reducing crime	Deals with cases promptly and efficiently	Meets the needs of victims	Effective in dealing with young people accused of crime	Witnesses are treated well	
								Percentage very/fairly confident/effective
Government Office Region								
North East	45	78	41	44	36	26	68	
<i>Unweighted base</i>	2,401	2,327	2,372	2,300	2,345	2,346	2,173	
North West	45	81	39	44	36	26	67	
<i>Unweighted base</i>	4,237	4,070	4,200	3,988	4,121	4,141	3,714	
Yorkshire and the Humber	40	82	36	42	33	24	68	
<i>Unweighted base</i>	3,287	3,159	3,254	3,137	3,189	3,221	2,930	
East Midlands	43	83	36	41	35	23	70	
<i>Unweighted base</i>	4,068	3,955	4,033	3,910	3,977	3,994	3,654	
West Midlands	43	78	37	40	34	24	66	
<i>Unweighted base</i>	3,577	3,462	3,540	3,428	3,514	3,507	3,168	
East of England	47	81	39	44	37	25	71	
<i>Unweighted base</i>	4,765	4,665	4,733	4,591	4,681	4,702	4,353	
London	48	74	42	44	41	26	64	
<i>Unweighted base</i>	2,880	2,766	2,856	2,759	2,807	2,816	2,546	
South East	45	81	38	41	36	24	73	
<i>Unweighted base</i>	4,016	3,921	3,997	3,860	3,941	3,947	3,641	
South West	43	81	38	42	35	25	72	
<i>Unweighted base</i>	3,879	3,791	3,856	3,733	3,804	3,800	3,499	
Wales	43	78	39	42	37	28	66	
<i>Unweighted base</i>	3,315	3,223	3,292	3,166	3,235	3,245	2,899	
England and Wales	44	80	38	42	36	25	69	
<i>Unweighted base</i>	36,245	35,339	36,133	34,872	35,614	35,719	32,577	

Who is likely to be confident in the Criminal Justice System?

The characteristics of BCS respondents who had the highest levels of confidence in the CJS in 2007/08 are listed below.

- Women were more confident than men in five out of the seven aspects of confidence ('bringing people who commit crimes to justice', 'reducing crime', 'dealing with cases promptly and efficiently', 'meeting the needs of victims', and 'dealing with young people accused of crime'). Men were more likely than women to be confident that the 'CJS respects the rights of those accused of crime'.
- Confidence in the CJS was higher among young people (aged 16 to 24) than any other age groups for all measures except for the 'CJS respects the rights of those accused of crime'.
- People from Black and Minority Ethnic backgrounds had higher levels of confidence than those from White backgrounds in five out of the seven aspects of the CJS. The exceptions were 'respecting the rights of people accused of committing a crime' where White groups had higher levels of confidence, and confidence in the 'CJS treating witnesses well', where there was no difference between Whites and non-Whites.
- Confidence in the CJS was higher among private renters compared with both owner-occupiers and social renters in six of the seven aspects of the CJS, with the exception of 'respecting the rights of those accused of committing a crime'.
- People who had experienced crime as a victim or witness in the last 12 months were less likely to be confident compared with people who had not been a victim or witness for all seven aspects of confidence in the CJS.
- People who perceived a high level of anti-social behaviour (ASB) in their local area were less likely to be confident compared with people who did not perceive a high level of ASB in all seven aspects of confidence in the CJS. The Glossary provides information about the ASB measure.

Table 2.4 Confidence in the Criminal Justice System by demographic and socio-economic characteristics, 2007/08, England and Wales

BCS 2007/08	Respects the rights of & treats fairly people accused of committing a crime	Effective in bringing people who commit crimes to justice	Effective in reducing crime	Deals with cases promptly and efficiently	Meets the needs of victims	Effective in dealing with young people accused of crime	Witnesses are treated well	Unweighted base ^a
Men	80	44	37	42	34	23	68	16,684
16-24	77	58	55	53	58	39	81	1,454
25-34	80	50	43	48	44	25	76	2,337
35-44	82	43	36	43	35	21	68	3,226
45-54	82	40	35	39	28	21	63	2,811
55-64	81	35	27	33	21	17	61	2,907
65-74	80	34	28	33	21	17	62	2,222
75+	80	38	33	36	27	20	64	1,727
Women	79	45	39	43	37	26	69	19,741
16-24	75	53	50	47	51	38	78	1,670
25-34	80	50	44	49	47	30	72	2,947
35-44	80	50	39	45	41	27	69	3,702
45-54	80	42	33	42	33	23	65	3,000
55-64	78	38	31	37	27	20	63	3,209
65-74	80	37	35	37	27	20	65	2,673
75+	81	41	37	40	31	22	64	2,540
Ethnic group								
White	80	43	37	41	34	24	68	34,009
Non-White	76	56	52	54	51	34	69	2,410

Table 2.4 Confidence in the Criminal Justice System by demographic and socio-economic characteristics, 2007/08, England and Wales (continued)

BCS 2007/08	Respects the rights of & treats fairly people accused of committing a crime	Effective in bringing people who commit crimes to justice	Effective in reducing crime	Deals with cases promptly and efficiently	Meets the needs of victims	Effective in dealing with young people accused of crime	Witnesses are treated well	Unweighted base ^a
Percentage very or fairly confident								
Marital status								
Married	82	42	35	40	31	22	66	17,269
Cohabiting	79	43	37	43	37	23	70	3,236
Single	77	53	47	47	48	33	75	7,530
Separated	79	47	41	48	42	27	66	1,088
Divorced	76	38	33	38	29	19	62	3,184
Widowed	80	42	38	42	32	23	66	4,105
Respondent's employment status								
In employment	80	45	38	43	37	24	70	20,678
Unemployed	73	53	44	47	47	29	70	610
Economically inactive	79	42	38	41	34	25	66	15,052
Student	79	63	57	54	60	40	80	826
Looking after family/home	78	50	44	49	44	33	70	2,109
Long-term/temporarily sick/ill	72	37	35	39	30	22	59	1,660
Retired	81	37	33	36	26	19	63	10,025
Other inactive	75	49	46	47	43	35	65	432

Table 2.4 Confidence in the Criminal Justice System by demographic and socio-economic characteristics, 2007/08, England and Wales (continued)

BCS 2007/08	Respects the rights of & treats fairly people accused of committing a crime	Effective in bringing people who commit crimes to justice	Effective in reducing crime	Deals with cases promptly and efficiently	Meets the needs of victims	Effective in dealing with young people accused of crime	Witnesses are treated well	Unweighted base ^a
Percentage very or fairly confident								
Respondent's occupation								
Managerial and professional occupations	82	44	34	38	32	21	69	12,163
Intermediate occupations	80	41	36	40	33	22	67	7,227
Routine and manual occupations	78	42	39	44	36	26	67	14,410
Never worked and long-term unemployed	77	54	45	52	48	35	70	1,057
Full-time students	78	60	55	52	56	39	80	1,420
Not classified	78	41	45	44	35	30	62	148
Highest qualification								
Degree or diploma	82	48	38	40	36	23	70	11,040
Apprenticeship or A/AS level	81	43	36	41	36	23	69	6,243
O level/GCSE	79	45	40	45	39	28	70	7,224
Other	80	43	38	44	36	25	67	1,585
None	77	41	39	43	34	26	64	10,231
Long-standing illness or disability								
Long-standing illness or disability	78	37	33	37	28	21	63	10,336
Limits activities	78	36	32	36	27	20	61	7,190
Does not limit activities	80	40	34	37	30	21	66	3,139
No long-standing illness or disability	80	47	40	44	39	26	70	26,031

Table 2.4 Confidence in the Criminal Justice System by demographic and socio-economic characteristics, 2007/08, England and Wales (continued)

BCS 2007/08	Respects the rights of & treats fairly people accused of committing a crime	Effective in bringing people who commit crimes to justice	Effective in reducing crime	Deals with cases promptly and efficiently	Meets the needs of victims	Effective in dealing with young people accused of crime	Witnesses are treated well	Unweighted base ^a
Percentage very or fairly confident								
Daily newspaper readership								
National broadsheets	83	49	38	38	35	23	71	4,636
National tabloids	79	38	34	41	31	22	66	12,385
Other daily newspaper	79	46	42	45	39	26	68	4,249
Read more than one	75	39	32	40	31	23	74	193
Tenure								
Owners	81	42	35	40	32	22	68	25,709
Social rented sector	74	43	40	45	38	27	65	6,023
Private rented sector	79	56	49	49	49	33	75	4,556
Accommodation type								
Houses	80	44	37	42	35	24	69	30,311
Detached	83	44	36	41	33	23	70	9,132
Semi-detached	80	42	37	41	34	23	67	11,469
Terraced	78	45	39	44	38	26	69	9,710
Flats/maisonettes	77	49	43	45	41	28	69	4,059
Other accommodation	82	46	47	43	39	27	74	174

Table 2.4 Confidence in the Criminal Justice System by demographic and socio-economic characteristics, 2007/08, England and Wales (continued)

BCS 2007/08	Respects the rights of & treats fairly people accused of committing a crime	Effective in bringing people who commit crimes to justice	Effective in reducing crime	Deals with cases promptly and efficiently	Meets the needs of victims	Effective in dealing with young people accused of crime	Witnesses are treated well	Unweighted base ^a
ACORN category								
Percentage very or fairly confident								
Wealthy Achievers	83	45	36	41	34	23	70	9,900
Urban Prosperity	79	52	44	44	44	28	71	2,760
Comfortably Off	80	43	36	41	34	23	69	11,429
Moderate Means	78	43	39	44	38	27	67	4,997
Hard Pressed	76	43	41	45	37	26	65	7,254
Area type								
Urban	79	44	38	42	36	25	68	27,147
Rural	81	45	38	42	35	25	71	9,278
Level of physical disorder ^b								
High	74	42	39	43	37	25	61	1,897
Not high	80	44	38	42	36	25	69	32,472
Perceived level of anti-social behaviour ^c								
High	73	34	31	36	30	20	60	5,244
Not high	81	46	40	44	37	26	70	29,570

Table 2.4 Confidence in the Criminal Justice System by demographic and socio-economic characteristics, 2007/08, England and Wales (continued)

BCS 2007/08	Respects the rights of & treats fairly people accused of committing a crime	Effective in bringing people who commit crimes to justice	Effective in reducing crime	Deals with cases promptly and efficiently	Meets the needs of victims	Effective in dealing with young people accused of crime	Witnesses are treated well	Unweighted base ^a
Percentage very or fairly confident								
Experience of crime in past 12 months								
Not victim or witness	81	47	41	45	38	27	70	21,141
As witness only	79	42	36	40	35	23	68	7,817
As victim only	80	43	36	41	35	22	67	3,690
As both victim and witness	76	36	31	35	31	19	65	3,747
ALL ADULTS	80	44	38	42	36	25	69	36,425

a Unweighted bases refer to confidence that the criminal justice system is effective in bringing people who commit crimes to justice. Bases for the other measures will be similar.

b Based upon the interviewer's assessment of the local area (see the Glossary for definition of physical disorder).

c This is the overall measure of anti-social behaviour as described in the Glossary.

Source: Crime in England and Wales 2007/08.

3. Public perceptions of the Criminal Justice System

Ratings of different parts of the Criminal Justice System

As well as asking about general confidence in the Criminal Justice System (CJS), the British Crime Survey (BCS) asked ‘How good a job do you think each criminal justice group is doing?’ **Table 3.1** illustrates trends in the ratings of the individual groups (good or excellent).

Table 3.1 *Proportion of the public who think different parts of the Criminal Justice Service are doing a good or excellent job, 2002/03 to 2007/08, England and Wales*

BCS 2002/03 to 2007/08	2002/03	2003/04	2004/05	2005/06	2006/07	2007/08	Statistically significant change, 2002/03 to 2007/08
	Percentage good or excellent job						
Police	48	48	48	51	51	53	**
<i>Unweighted base</i>	36,450	37,891	45,069	47,410	46,850	36,579	
Prisons	25	26	26	27	23	25	
<i>Unweighted base</i>	32,893	34,218	26,764	10,711	10,761	10,921	
Magistrates	26	28	28	31	29	31	**
<i>Unweighted base</i>	34,066	35,468	27,918	11,151	10,987	11,050	
Probation	24	26	28	26	20	23	*
<i>Unweighted base</i>	29,762	30,936	24,498	9,896	10,018	10,002	
CPS	23	26	27	29	28	30	**
<i>Unweighted base</i>	33,500	34,793	27,238	10,917	10,848	10,925	
Judges	25	26	26	30	27	30	**
<i>Unweighted base</i>	34,564	35,992	28,249	11,267	11,193	11,203	
Youth Court	14	16	17	18	15	16	**
<i>Unweighted base</i>	32,317	32,956	25,946	10,519	10,264	10,373	

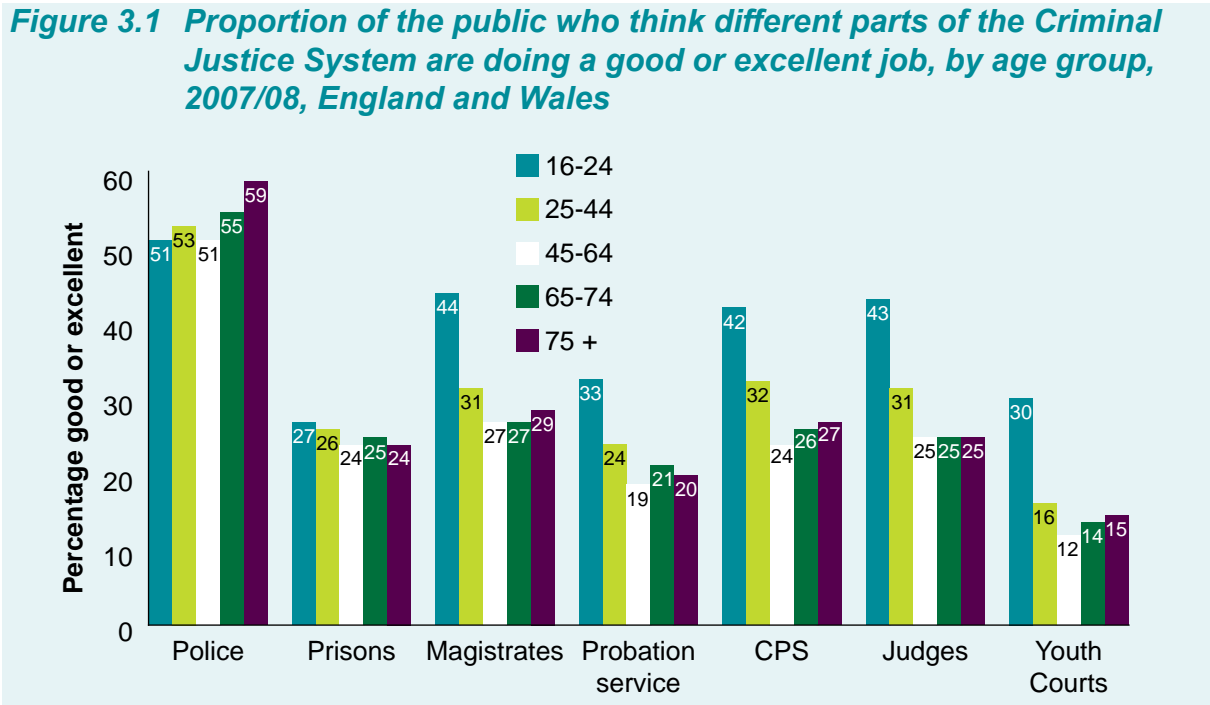
* Indicates that the latest data are statistically significantly lower than the baseline at the 5% level.

** Indicates that the latest data are statistically significantly higher than the baseline at the 5% level.

In 2007/08, the most highly rated group remained the police, with 53% saying that the police were doing an excellent or good job nationally. The lowest rated group was the youth courts, with 16% saying that the youth courts were doing an excellent or good job nationally. All of the groups apart from prisons and probation showed an increase in 2007/08 compared with 2002/03.

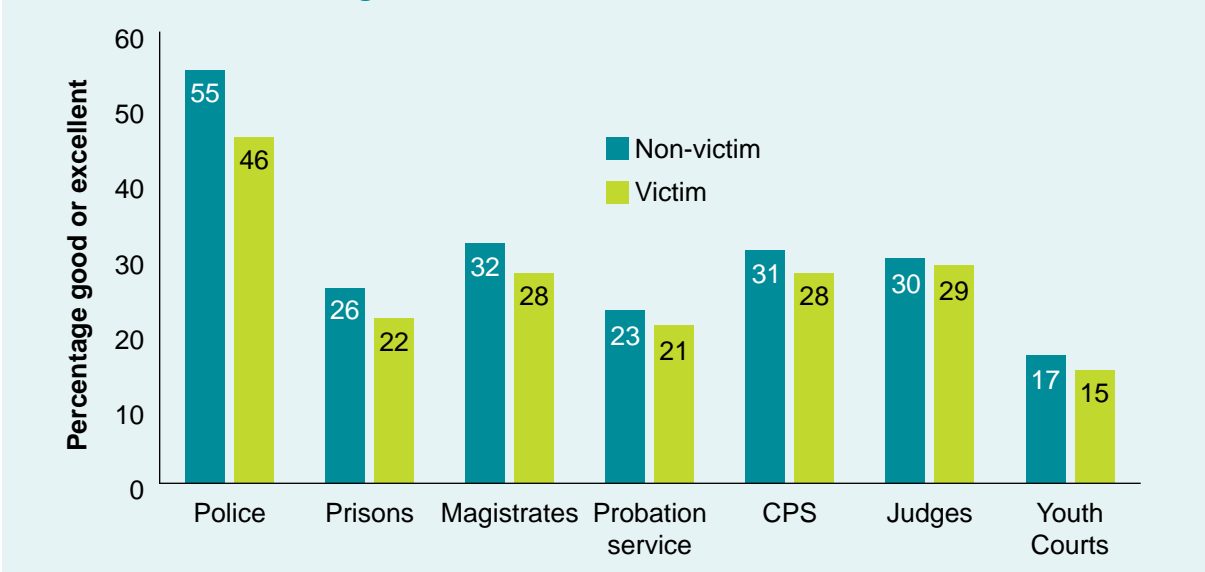
Figures 3.1 and 3.2 show the ratings of the criminal justice groups by age and whether or not the respondent had been a victim of crime in the last 12 months. With the exception of the police, ratings of all the other CJS groups were highest among the 16 to 24 age group. The police were most likely to be rated highly by those aged 75 and over. With the exception of judges, the difference between victims and non-victims was not statistically significant. Non-victims rated all the CJS groups more highly than victims. Both victims and non-victims were more likely to think the police were doing a good or excellent job compared with other criminal justice groups. This is in contrast to victims' satisfaction with their personal dealings with different parts of the CJS, in which they were less satisfied with the police compared with other parts of the CJS.

Figure 3.1 Proportion of the public who think different parts of the Criminal Justice System are doing a good or excellent job, by age group, 2007/08, England and Wales



Source: BCS 2007/08

Figure 3.2 *Proportion of the public who think different parts of the Criminal Justice System are doing a good or excellent job, by victim status, 2007/08, England and Wales*



Source: BCS 2007/08

Priorities for the Criminal Justice System

BCS respondents were asked to select from a list the function that they believed should be the highest priority for the CJS.

Overall the findings of the 2007/08 BCS were similar to the findings of the previous three years in that ‘bringing people who commit crime to justice’ was seen as the highest priority for the CJS by 51% of respondents. The second most frequently selected priority was ‘reducing crime’ (24%), followed by ‘dealing with cases promptly and efficiently’ (12%).

The top three priorities were consistent for both men and women; victims and non-victims; and across age groups. The priorities were also consistent across minority ethnic groups, other than for Mixed minority ethnic groups, whose second highest priority was ‘dealing with cases promptly and efficiently’ and third most frequently selected priority was ‘reducing crime’.

Table 3.2 Respondents' highest priority for the Criminal Justice System, by personal characteristics, 2007/08, England and Wales

BCS 2007/08 ^a	Bringing people who commit crimes to justice	Respects rights of people accused of committing crime	Reducing crime	Dealing with cases promptly and efficiently	Meeting the needs of victims of crime	Dealing with young people accused of crime	Reducing worry about crime	Unweighted base
Gender								
Men	51	2	25	11	5	4	2	5,234
Women	51	2	22	13	5	4	2	6,269
Age								
16-24	44	4	30	10	6	5	2	966
25-44	53	2	26	10	4	5	1	3,794
45-64	54	2	22	14	4	3	2	3,842
65-74	50	2	18	16	7	5	1	1,543
75 or older	48	3	16	16	9	6	3	1,358
Ethnic group								
White	52	2	23	12	5	4	1	10,749
Mixed	54	6	12	16	7	0	6	54
Asian	43	4	26	12	4	7	3	367
Black	38	4	26	11	8	9	4	202
Other	32	4	28	20	4	9	4	129
Experience of crime in the past 12 months								
Non-victim	50	2	23	13	5	5	2	9,182
Victim	56	1	26	9	4	3	1	2,321
ALL ADULTS ^b	51	2	24	12	5	4	2	11,503

^a Excludes don't knows and 'other' non-defined categories from analyses.

^b General BCS dataset.

Views on sentencing

The BCS measured public perceptions of sentencing through the following question: 'In general, would you say that sentences handed down by the courts are too tough, about right, or too lenient?' Respondents are asked to select their answer from the following response list:

- Much too tough;
- Too tough;
- About right;
- Too lenient;
- Much too lenient.

Table 3.3 shows the responses given to this question for 2007/08. Just over three-quarters (77%) thought that sentences were either much too lenient or too lenient.

Table 3.3 *Perceptions of the way the Criminal Justice System deals with offenders, 2007/08, England and Wales*

BCS 2007/08		Are sentences passed by the courts too tough or too lenient?	
	Response		Percentage
	Much too tough		0
	Too tough		2
	About right		21
	Too lenient		39
	Much too lenient		38
	<i>Unweighted base</i>		5,624

Figure 3.3 shows that from 2002/03 until 2006/07 there was an increase in the proportion of people who thought that sentences handed down by the courts were much too lenient, from 33% to 40%. The proportion from 2006/07 to 2007/08 decreased from 40% to 38%. A comparison between the 2002/03 figure and the 2007/08 figure suggests that people believe that sentencing is becoming more lenient. However, *Sentencing Statistics 2007* (Ministry of Justice, 2008b) shows that the proportion of people sentenced to immediate custody for indictable offences⁴ increased from 23% in 1997 to 24% in 2007. The number of persons sentenced to immediate custody for all indictable offences rose from 71,900 in 1997 to 74,000 in 2007, a 3% increase.

4 Includes indictable only and triable-either-way offences. 'Indictable only' are the most serious breaches of the criminal law and must be dealt with at the Crown Court. 'Triable-either-way offences' may be tried either at the Crown Court or at magistrates' courts.

Figure 3.3 Perceptions of sentences handed down by the courts as much too lenient, 2002/03 to 2007/08, England and Wales



Source: BCS 2002/03 to 2007/08

BCS respondents were asked a set of questions to find out about their knowledge of, and attitudes to, sentencing practices:

- When asked “out of every 100 men aged 21 and over who are convicted of house burglary, how many do you think are sent to prison?”, the average estimate was 36.
- When asked “out of every 100 men aged 21 and over who are convicted of rape, how many do you think are sent to prison?”, the average estimate was 66.

Sentencing statistics from 2007 (calendar year) showed that 59% of men aged 21 and over who were sentenced received immediate custody for burglary in a dwelling⁵ (compared with a perception of 36%). The corresponding figure for men aged 21 and over sentenced for rape⁶ during 2007 who received immediate custody was 97% (compared with a perception of 66%) (Ministry of Justice, 2008b). The BCS responses therefore showed a disparity between public perceptions of sentencing and actual sentencing practice, in that sentencing practice was underestimated with regard to these offences. This suggests that respondents’ knowledge about sentencing practices was poor.

5 Includes ‘burglary in a dwelling’ and ‘aggravated burglary in a dwelling’.

6 Includes rape of a female/male over 16, under 16, under 13, and attempted rape.

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**Appendix A: Local Criminal Justice Board trend data
on each of the seven confidence in the
Criminal Justice System questions, 2002/03
to 2007/08**

Table A.1 Public confidence that the 'Criminal Justice System is effective in bringing people who commit crimes to justice', 2002/03 to 2007/08, England and Wales

BCS 2002/03 to 2007/08	2002/03	2003/04	2004/05	2005/06	2006/07	2007/08
Local Criminal Justice Board	Percentage very/fairly confident					
Avon and Somerset	36	43	40	47	41	41
Bedfordshire	36	46	42	46	44	48
Cambridgeshire	39	44	46	45	42	46
Cheshire	40	41	45	41	43	51
Cleveland	33	37	37	40	38	44
Cumbria	48	49	52	51	42	44
Derbyshire	41	43	44	44	41	41
Devon and Cornwall	45	46	48	44	44	43
Dorset	37	40	47	44	43	46
Durham	41	38	45	42	40	41
Essex	37	41	41	44	38	45
Gloucestershire	42	39	41	38	38	41
Greater Manchester	35	36	39	41	39	42
Hampshire	42	44	49	46	42	46
Hertfordshire	46	49	45	46	45	47
Humberside	30	33	31	35	33	35
Kent	39	40	44	40	36	41
Lancashire	35	39	45	46	38	46
Leicestershire	43	46	48	48	40	48
Lincolnshire	37	39	41	40	35	39
Merseyside	37	40	45	42	39	45
Metropolitan/City of London	41	43	45	48	47	48
Norfolk	33	40	39	43	42	47
North Yorkshire	38	37	37	44	42	45
Northamptonshire	37	39	35	42	35	43
Northumbria	41	41	39	41	40	47
Nottinghamshire	28	37	36	37	38	43
South Yorkshire	36	39	42	41	40	39
Staffordshire	35	35	44	42	40	42
Suffolk	43	44	50	47	44	49
Surrey	44	43	48	45	46	47
Sussex	38	41	42	46	42	44
Thames Valley	41	46	45	50	45	46
Warwickshire	38	39	48	46	39	45
West Mercia	42	43	49	49	41	46
West Midlands	32	40	40	43	38	41
West Yorkshire	35	37	39	46	43	40
Wiltshire	42	47	46	50	43	46
Dyfed Powys	46	49	51	46	44	50
Gwent	32	39	34	33	36	35
North Wales	47	40	44	44	43	43
South Wales	35	38	41	44	41	43
England and Wales	39	41	43	44	41	44
Unweighted base	36,007	37,393	44,460	47,175	46,618	36,425

Table A.2 Public confidence that the 'Criminal Justice System respects the rights of those accused of committing a crime and treats them well', 2002/03 to 2007/08, England and Wales

BCS 2002/03 to 2007/08	2002/03	2003/04	2004/05	2005/06	2006/07	2007/08
Local Criminal Justice Board	Percentage very/fairly confident					
Avon and Somerset	76	80	78	80	77	83
Bedfordshire	76	76	79	80	80	81
Cambridgeshire	80	78	78	80	82	83
Cheshire	78	76	80	84	80	82
Cleveland	80	84	85	86	82	84
Cumbria	75	79	77	80	77	76
Derbyshire	80	80	76	82	82	82
Devon and Cornwall	76	80	81	80	78	81
Dorset	84	79	82	81	80	79
Durham	78	80	83	83	82	82
Essex	78	78	81	82	81	81
Gloucestershire	75	67	70	74	78	81
Greater Manchester	75	76	75	79	79	81
Hampshire	75	78	79	79	79	82
Hertfordshire	77	77	82	84	82	79
Humberside	80	77	78	84	80	85
Kent	79	79	78	79	81	81
Lancashire	75	75	79	79	77	80
Leicestershire	77	76	76	83	80	85
Lincolnshire	79	76	78	81	78	83
Merseyside	81	74	79	81	79	80
Metropolitan/City of London	73	74	75	77	76	74
Norfolk	76	79	78	81	79	84
North Yorkshire	78	74	79	80	82	77
Northamptonshire	74	74	74	78	80	84
Northumbria	78	74	74	75	74	73
Nottinghamshire	83	74	78	80	78	81
South Yorkshire	76	75	76	79	77	79
Staffordshire	78	77	83	79	82	78
Suffolk	79	81	80	81	82	82
Surrey	79	76	80	83	80	83
Sussex	75	75	76	82	80	78
Thames Valley	78	79	78	81	81	81
Warwickshire	80	78	84	85	83	84
West Mercia	81	79	81	82	84	79
West Midlands	73	76	73	76	76	77
West Yorkshire	82	80	83	81	83	84
Wiltshire	76	78	79	81	81	81
Dyfed Powys	78	81	80	83	76	81
Gwent	79	80	78	83	82	82
North Wales	77	79	78	83	79	80
South Wales	80	77	77	78	79	74
England and Wales	77	77	78	80	79	80
Unweighted base	34,767	36,233	43,139	45,873	45,323	35,339

Table A.3 Public confidence that the 'Criminal Justice System is effective in reducing crime', 2002/03 to 2007/08, England and Wales

BCS 2002/03 to 2007/08	2002/03	2003/04	2004/05	2005/06	2006/07	2007/08
Local Criminal Justice Board	Percentage very/fairly effective					
Avon and Somerset	31	34	40	41	35	36
Bedfordshire	29	33	38	40	37	41
Cambridgeshire	32	32	40	38	39	41
Cheshire	34	29	38	37	37	44
Cleveland	26	37	39	41	36	40
Cumbria	35	41	46	45	38	39
Derbyshire	35	37	41	39	36	33
Devon and Cornwall	35	38	43	37	36	40
Dorset	24	32	40	36	36	36
Durham	36	33	41	40	40	39
Essex	30	37	34	37	30	35
Gloucestershire	32	33	37	33	33	33
Greater Manchester	27	31	36	36	35	37
Hampshire	34	36	39	39	35	39
Hertfordshire	35	35	40	40	37	38
Humberside	25	27	26	30	29	31
Kent	31	37	37	34	31	34
Lancashire	27	34	42	35	32	36
Leicestershire	32	36	40	42	41	42
Lincolnshire	28	30	31	35	32	34
Merseyside	33	37	42	38	37	40
Metropolitan/City of London	34	39	44	42	41	41
Norfolk	26	32	38	37	34	41
North Yorkshire	31	30	33	35	38	38
Northamptonshire	30	31	32	36	29	35
Northumbria	37	40	42	39	41	42
Nottinghamshire	18	31	32	33	31	34
South Yorkshire	29	32	40	37	36	35
Staffordshire	32	32	36	34	33	39
Suffolk	35	38	44	43	38	41
Surrey	35	37	41	37	36	39
Sussex	33	33	39	39	36	38
Thames Valley	34	35	38	41	35	39
Warwickshire	29	35	40	38	36	40
West Mercia	34	36	40	41	35	36
West Midlands	26	35	37	37	37	35
West Yorkshire	30	34	31	42	42	37
Wiltshire	35	38	41	40	38	41
Dyfed Powys	36	40	40	37	37	41
Gwent	29	36	32	29	29	30
North Wales	37	32	41	38	39	40
South Wales	30	33	39	38	36	42
England and Wales	31	35	39	38	36	38
Unweighted base	35,770	37,128	44,010	46,813	46,300	36,133

Table A.4 Public confidence that the 'Criminal Justice System deals with cases promptly and efficiently', 2002/03 to 2007/08, England and Wales

BCS 2002/03 to 2007/08	2002/03	2003/04	2004/05	2005/06	2006/07	2007/08
Local Criminal Justice Board	Percentage very/fairly confident					
Avon and Somerset	32	37	36	41	37	42
Bedfordshire	35	36	37	42	41	45
Cambridgeshire	33	38	41	45	42	46
Cheshire	38	35	41	39	40	44
Cleveland	34	40	39	41	36	42
Cumbria	39	47	47	51	43	44
Derbyshire	39	40	40	39	42	41
Devon and Cornwall	38	44	45	45	43	43
Dorset	29	33	42	41	42	41
Durham	39	38	48	45	42	40
Essex	36	37	33	39	39	42
Gloucestershire	34	35	33	35	37	38
Greater Manchester	32	34	37	39	41	43
Hampshire	35	39	41	42	40	45
Hertfordshire	39	39	39	41	41	42
Humberside	30	28	30	34	28	37
Kent	35	41	38	39	35	37
Lancashire	34	36	42	38	39	45
Leicestershire	37	40	40	42	41	46
Lincolnshire	34	38	37	38	36	40
Merseyside	37	35	40	40	42	43
Metropolitan/City of London	38	40	42	45	41	44
Norfolk	37	41	40	42	44	48
North Yorkshire	33	32	33	36	37	45
Northamptonshire	34	36	35	40	36	39
Northumbria	38	40	38	42	40	46
Nottinghamshire	27	33	33	38	33	39
South Yorkshire	38	37	40	41	39	41
Staffordshire	35	34	35	38	39	42
Suffolk	40	39	41	47	43	45
Surrey	42	39	40	41	39	42
Sussex	33	33	35	37	37	37
Thames Valley	37	37	39	40	37	44
Warwickshire	35	35	40	43	42	43
West Mercia	36	39	40	39	36	39
West Midlands	30	39	40	43	40	38
West Yorkshire	36	39	37	42	42	43
Wiltshire	38	39	40	42	40	43
Dyfed Powys	38	42	47	40	40	49
Gwent	31	35	35	30	32	38
North Wales	42	38	44	43	44	45
South Wales	30	36	39	39	40	41
England and Wales	36	38	39	41	40	42
Unweighted base	34,524	35,897	42,628	45,344	44,786	34,872

Table A.5 Public confidence that the 'Criminal Justice System meets the needs of the victims of crime', 2002/03 to 2007/08, England and Wales

BCS 2002/03 to 2007/08	2002/03	2003/04	2004/05	2005/06	2006/07	2007/08
Local Criminal Justice Board	Percentage very/fairly confident					
Avon and Somerset	29	31	33	37	31	34
Bedfordshire	25	33	32	37	35	40
Cambridgeshire	32	32	36	37	34	36
Cheshire	32	28	35	32	36	41
Cleveland	28	31	34	34	33	36
Cumbria	33	37	38	37	33	36
Derbyshire	32	31	36	34	33	34
Devon and Cornwall	31	37	38	34	35	37
Dorset	31	30	32	31	33	36
Durham	31	32	33	37	35	32
Essex	28	29	30	35	34	34
Gloucestershire	32	32	31	31	28	30
Greater Manchester	27	29	32	38	32	34
Hampshire	31	36	38	35	32	37
Hertfordshire	32	37	32	37	37	38
Humberside	25	26	25	30	27	29
Kent	27	31	34	32	28	32
Lancashire	26	30	33	34	33	36
Leicestershire	33	36	38	37	33	41
Lincolnshire	28	31	32	31	26	33
Merseyside	27	29	35	33	30	33
Metropolitan/City of London	34	38	40	43	39	41
Norfolk	28	33	32	35	34	39
North Yorkshire	27	25	30	32	34	34
Northamptonshire	25	28	27	30	28	34
Northumbria	33	30	30	35	33	37
Nottinghamshire	26	33	31	30	29	32
South Yorkshire	30	34	37	33	31	31
Staffordshire	25	26	29	32	32	31
Suffolk	32	29	38	38	36	40
Surrey	33	34	36	35	34	38
Sussex	30	30	32	34	31	34
Thames Valley	32	35	37	37	34	38
Warwickshire	26	30	37	35	32	37
West Mercia	33	32	38	39	31	36
West Midlands	25	33	31	33	31	34
West Yorkshire	29	30	32	38	34	35
Wiltshire	31	36	37	37	35	34
Dyfed Powys	36	37	36	34	34	41
Gwent	28	32	28	27	27	34
North Wales	34	34	32	34	37	37
South Wales	26	28	33	34	32	36
England and Wales	30	32	34	36	33	36
Unweighted base	35,237	36,615	43,474	46,220	45,676	35,614

Table A.6 Public confidence that the 'Criminal Justice System is effective in dealing with young people accused of crime', 2002/03 to 2007/08, England and Wales

BCS 2002/03 to 2007/08	2002/03	2003/04	2004/05	2005/06	2006/07	2007/08
Local Criminal Justice Board	Percentage very/fairly effective					
Avon and Somerset	20	22	23	27	26	22
Bedfordshire	17	23	25	28	27	27
Cambridgeshire	21	24	29	25	27	22
Cheshire	22	20	26	25	24	29
Cleveland	22	28	30	27	25	27
Cumbria	23	31	29	32	27	28
Derbyshire	23	22	28	26	25	22
Devon and Cornwall	23	30	33	25	22	27
Dorset	20	26	24	24	25	23
Durham	24	22	26	23	25	24
Essex	22	27	26	26	26	23
Gloucestershire	22	23	24	24	22	21
Greater Manchester	17	20	27	25	25	22
Hampshire	21	25	29	24	23	25
Hertfordshire	23	23	26	28	26	25
Humberside	15	17	18	20	19	19
Kent	20	25	27	21	19	19
Lancashire	16	25	29	28	21	27
Leicestershire	19	27	25	25	28	28
Lincolnshire	16	22	25	25	24	23
Merseyside	21	25	30	26	22	26
Metropolitan/City of London	26	26	33	30	28	26
Norfolk	17	25	28	25	27	27
North Yorkshire	15	19	21	21	26	25
Northamptonshire	19	23	22	21	18	20
Northumbria	23	22	24	23	25	27
Nottinghamshire	12	19	18	22	19	20
South Yorkshire	20	23	28	26	26	24
Staffordshire	20	21	25	20	25	24
Suffolk	24	30	32	30	27	25
Surrey	24	27	28	25	25	25
Sussex	18	22	23	27	22	24
Thames Valley	20	24	28	28	26	26
Warwickshire	20	22	26	25	22	25
West Mercia	20	24	27	25	24	24
West Midlands	18	24	28	25	25	24
West Yorkshire	19	21	23	30	27	25
Wiltshire	22	24	30	28	23	29
Dyfed Powys	28	28	28	28	30	31
Gwent	20	23	20	16	17	19
North Wales	26	24	26	29	31	27
South Wales	17	19	26	28	28	31
England and Wales	21	24	27	26	25	25
Unweighted base	35,362	36,580	43,403	46,317	45,805	35,719

Table A.7 Public confidence that the 'Criminal Justice System treats people who come forward as witnesses well', 2002/03 to 2007/08, England and Wales

BCS 2002/03 to 2007/08	2002/03	2003/04	2004/05	2005/06	2006/07	2007/08
Local Criminal Justice Board	Percentage very/fairly effective					
Avon and Somerset	n/a	69	70	72	70	70
Bedfordshire	n/a	68	66	69	69	73
Cambridgeshire	n/a	72	69	74	73	73
Cheshire	n/a	57	63	65	66	70
Cleveland	n/a	70	69	72	69	68
Cumbria	n/a	68	68	69	63	67
Derbyshire	n/a	69	69	65	68	67
Devon and Cornwall	n/a	74	73	71	70	74
Dorset	n/a	66	67	69	72	73
Durham	n/a	63	66	71	67	70
Essex	n/a	63	59	68	67	66
Gloucestershire	n/a	53	57	66	68	68
Greater Manchester	n/a	54	62	66	65	67
Hampshire	n/a	66	69	68	70	73
Hertfordshire	n/a	64	64	70	73	72
Humberside	n/a	60	55	65	63	68
Kent	n/a	66	71	69	67	70
Lancashire	n/a	61	66	68	67	72
Leicestershire	n/a	67	68	71	73	74
Lincolnshire	n/a	70	61	70	66	70
Merseyside	n/a	47	54	54	52	58
Metropolitan/City of London	n/a	63	64	69	65	64
Norfolk	n/a	66	61	69	71	72
North Yorkshire	n/a	67	63	60	63	69
Northamptonshire	n/a	66	63	69	69	71
Northumbria	n/a	62	60	62	67	67
Nottinghamshire	n/a	66	59	64	61	69
South Yorkshire	n/a	68	65	70	67	64
Staffordshire	n/a	63	71	73	72	65
Suffolk	n/a	66	69	73	73	76
Surrey	n/a	73	72	76	72	74
Sussex	n/a	61	70	71	73	71
Thames Valley	n/a	72	65	72	71	75
Warwickshire	n/a	63	68	70	70	72
West Mercia	n/a	66	68	71	73	70
West Midlands	n/a	60	61	62	64	64
West Yorkshire	n/a	67	69	69	72	70
Wiltshire	n/a	74	67	67	64	69
Dyfed Powys	n/a	71	65	67	69	69
Gwent	n/a	65	58	56	58	59
North Wales	n/a	54	59	67	68	64
South Wales	n/a	58	63	68	65	69
England and Wales	n/a	64	65	68	67	69
Unweighted base	n/a	15,030	39,776	42,425	41,602	32,577

Appendix B: Victim and Witness satisfaction with the police and other Criminal Justice System agencies

The measure of victim and witness satisfaction was a weighted average of three measures. The first measure was asked of respondents who reported being a witness of crime in the 12 months before interview and who had contact with the police on this matter ('How satisfied or dissatisfied were you with your most recent contact with the police?'). The second and third measures were asked of respondents who reported being a victim of crime in the last 12 months prior to interview; one question was asked of victims who had contact with the police ('Overall, were you satisfied or dissatisfied with the way the police handled this matter?') and the second was asked of victims who had contact with other CJS agencies ('Thinking only about the agencies you have just mentioned, that is excluding the police, overall were you satisfied or dissatisfied with the way they handled the matter?').

For each of these three questions the responses were:

1. Very satisfied;
2. Fairly satisfied;
3. A bit dissatisfied;
4. Very dissatisfied.

Satisfaction was based on the proportion of respondents who were either 'very' or 'fairly' satisfied.

Appendix C: Calibration weighting

From 2001 onward the Home Office has calculated and applied additional calibration weights to counter the effect of differential response rates between age, sex and regional subgroups. Results for British Crime Surveys (BCS) from 1996 onwards have all been re-weighted using this technique.

Calibration weighting is used to adjust for differential non-response. The weighting is designed to make adjustments for known differentials in response rates between different ages by sex subgroups. For example, a household containing a 24-year-old male living alone may be less likely to respond to the survey than a household containing a 24-year-old male with a partner and a child. The procedure therefore gives different weights in such a way that the weighted distribution of individuals in the responding households matches the known distribution in the population as a whole.

For more information on weighting see the 2007–08 British Crime Survey (England and Wales) Technical Report Volume I. <http://www.homeoffice.gov.uk/rds/pdfs08/bcs0708tech1.pdf>

Appendix D: Development of British Crime Survey questions on confidence in the Criminal Justice System from 2008-09 to 2010-11

The questions reported in this document relate to a set of questions included in the British Crime Survey (BCS) until 2007/08. These questions were used as a measure for Public Service Agreement 2 (PSA 2), raising public confidence in the Criminal Justice System (CJS), which was set as part of the 2004 Spending Review and covered the period 2002/03 to 2007/08. The PSA 2 target was to achieve a statistically significant increase from the baseline year ending March 2003 (39%) by the year ending March 2008. This was achieved.

Following the 2007 Spending Review a new Public Service Agreement (PSA 24) was agreed. The new public confidence in the CJS target focused on perceptions of fairness and effectiveness. A new set of questions was therefore developed to measure public perceptions of the fairness and effectiveness of the CJS. These were introduced to the BCS in October 2007.

The evidence from Smith (2007) in *Confidence in the Criminal Justice System: What lies beneath?* suggested a more considered measure of confidence was achieved once people had a chance to think about what factors contributed to their feelings of confidence in the CJS. The confidence question contained in the BCS was asked at the start of the section on confidence in the CJS. The findings from the research provided an argument for using the 'inverted funnelling sequence'. Placing the general confidence measure at the end of the section, thereby moving from specific questions about the CJS to the general one, may allow people to give a more considered response.

A multi-stage approach was used to develop and test the questions. This included:

- qualitative research involving group discussions to explore public understanding and perceptions of fairness and effectiveness within the CJS; and
- development, cognitive testing and piloting of a question set, followed at each stage by further revisions.

The development work identified two different approaches to measuring confidence:

- perceptions of effectiveness and
- perceptions of fairness.

For **effectiveness**, respondents are asked seven questions about their confidence in the effectiveness of each of the individual agencies that comprise the CJS. This prompts the respondent's awareness and knowledge of the agencies within the CJS before asking about confidence in the effectiveness of the CJS as a whole.

- 'How confident are you that the police are effective in catching criminals?'
- 'How confident are you that the Crown Prosecution Service is effective at prosecuting people accused of committing a crime?'
- 'How confident are you that the courts are effective at dealing with cases promptly?'
- 'How confident are you that the courts are effective at giving punishments which fit the crime?'
- 'How confident are you that prisons are effective at punishing offenders who have been convicted of a crime?'
- 'How confident are you that prisons are effective at rehabilitating offenders who have been convicted of a crime?'
- 'How confident are you that the probation service is effective at preventing criminals from re-offending?'
- **'How confident are you that the CJS as a whole is effective?'**

Responses were measured on a four-point scale:

- Very confident;
- Fairly confident;
- Not very confident;
- Not at all confident.

Public confidence is defined as the proportion of respondents who say that they are 'very' or 'fairly' confident.

For fairness, the approach is based on a set of seven statements covering common attitudes towards issues around 'fairness' in order to provoke consideration of these different aspects before asking the general question on perceptions of fairness in the CJS as a whole.

- 'The CJS gives witnesses and victims the support they need.'
- 'The CJS treats those who have been accused of a crime as innocent until proven guilty.'
- 'The CJS takes into account the views of victims and witnesses.'
- 'When handing out sentences the CJS takes into account the circumstances surrounding a crime.'
- 'The CJS is too soft on those accused of committing a crime.'
- 'The CJS achieves the correct balance between the rights of the offender and the rights of the victim.'
- 'The CJS discriminates against particular groups or individuals.'
- 'How confident are you that the CJS as a whole is fair?'

Responses for the first seven statements were measured on a four-point Likert scale:

- Strongly agree;
- Tend to agree;
- Tend to disagree;
- Strongly disagree.

Public confidence is defined as the proportion who say that they 'strongly' and 'tend to' agree. The exception to this is the general question 'How confident are you that the CJS as a whole is fair?' for which public confidence is defined as the proportion who say that they are 'very' or 'fairly' confident.

Based on interviews in the year to December 2009, 41% of people were confident that the CJS as a whole is effective, an increase from 37% in the year to December 2008. The BCS also showed that in the year to December 2009, 59% of people thought the CJS as a whole is fair, an increase from 58% in the year to December 2008.

Glossary

Anti-social Behaviour Measure

The BCS measures levels of perceived anti-social behaviour from responses to seven individual anti-social behaviour questions:

- noisy neighbours or loud parties;
- teenagers hanging around on the streets;
- rubbish or litter lying around;
- vandalism, graffiti and other deliberate damage to property;
- people using or dealing drugs;
- people being drunk or rowdy in public places;
- abandoned or burnt-out cars.

Perceptions of anti-social behaviour are measured using a scale based on answers to the seven questions as follows:

- 'very big problem' = 3;
- 'fairly big problem' = 2;
- 'not a very big problem' = 1;
- 'not a problem at all' = 0.

The maximum score for the seven questions is 21. Respondents with a score of 11 or more on this scale are classified as having high levels of perceived anti-social behaviour. This disorder scale can only be calculated for the 2001 BCS onwards as the question on people being drunk or rowdy was only introduced in 2001.

Local Criminal Justice Boards (LCJBs)

LCJBs lead on key priorities for reducing crime and administering justice on a local basis. They bring together the chief officers of the CJS agencies in each of the 42 criminal justice areas in England and Wales as well as a number of other partners and key agencies across the CJS.

Physical disorder

This term is used to describe a measure based on the interviewer's assessment of the level of:

- vandalism, graffiti and deliberate damage to property;
- rubbish and litter;
- homes in poor condition in the area.

Using guidance, the interviewer has to make an assessment as to whether each of these problems is:

- very common;
- fairly common;
- not very common;
- not at all common.

For each, very and fairly common is scored as 1 and not very and not at all as 0. A scale is then constructed by summing the scores for each case. The scale ranges from 0 to 3, with high disorder areas being those with a score of 2 or 3. The measurement of respondents' own perceptions is described under anti-social behaviour.

Ministry of Justice Research Series 16/10

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2002/03 to 2007/08**

This report presents analysis relating to public confidence in the Criminal Justice System (CJS) as reported during the period 2002/03 to 2007/08, covering overall levels of confidence in the CJS and public perceptions of the wider CJS. It draws together findings from the British Crime Survey (BCS), considering both the national (England and Wales) and local level picture. The report follows on from earlier publications on BCS headline data on confidence in the CJS by presenting more detail to help identify and understand the different factors that influence confidence in the CJS.

ISBN 978 1 84099 404 9

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