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Analytical Services Group

**Perceptions of Crime:
Findings from the
2016/17
Northern Ireland
Crime Survey**

Research and Statistical Bulletin 01/2018

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January 2018



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SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

- ◆ Drugs (76%), alcohol (58%) and a lack of discipline from parents (49%) were the three factors most commonly identified by NICS 2016/17 respondents as major causes of crime in Northern Ireland today. When asked which single factor they considered to be the main cause of crime, the most common responses, cited by 35% and 19% of respondents respectively, were drugs and a lack of discipline from parents.
- ◆ Almost three-fifths (57%) of NICS 2016/17 respondents thought crime levels in Northern Ireland had increased in the preceding two years. Although this proportion remained unchanged ($p < 0.05$) compared with NICS 2015/16 (60%), the NICS 2016/17 figure is 22 percentage points below that observed in 2003/04 (79%). The proportion of respondents who felt there was less crime in Northern Ireland rose ($p < 0.05$) between NICS 2015/16 and 2016/17, from 10% to 14%.
- ◆ As in previous sweeps of the survey, NICS 2016/17 respondents continued to be more positive in their perceptions of crime trends in their local area than at the regional level with 29% believing local crime levels had increased in the preceding two years.
- ◆ Based on a seven-strand composite measure, findings from NICS 2016/17 show that 9% of respondents perceived the level of anti-social behaviour (ASB) in their local area to be high, on a par with NICS 2015/16 (8%). The equivalent figure for England and Wales was also 9% (Crime Survey for England and Wales (CSEW) 2016/17). Across the individual categories, 'rubbish or litter lying around' (25%, NICS 2016/17; 30%, CSEW 2016/17) and 'people using or dealing drugs' (25% and 23% respectively) were most commonly identified as problems in both jurisdictions.
- ◆ Despite a lower prevalence of crime in Northern Ireland, respondents to NICS 2016/17 displayed higher levels of worry about car crime (10%, NICS 2016/17 v 7%, CSEW 2016/17) and violent crime (14% v 10%) than their counterparts in England and Wales.
- ◆ For the crime types examined, the vast majority of NICS 2016/17 respondents believed it unlikely that they would fall victim during the coming year. Overall, 9% of respondents thought it was likely that they would be the victim of burglary, 9% believed they would experience some form of vehicle-related theft, while 6% perceived themselves to be at risk of violent crime.
- ◆ At 72%, the majority of NICS 2016/17 respondents felt that 'fear of crime' has a minimal impact on their quality of life, remaining on a par with that observed the previous year (73%, NICS 2015/16). A further 23% claimed it has a moderate effect, while the remaining four per cent stated their quality of life is greatly affected by their 'fear of crime'.

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1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 The focus of this publication

This bulletin draws on findings from the 2016/17 Northern Ireland Crime Survey (NICS), a representative, continuous, personal interview survey of the experiences and perceptions of crime of 1,877 adults living in private households throughout Northern Ireland. Previously conducted on an ad hoc basis in 1994/95, 1998, 2001 and 2003/04, the NICS began operating on a continuous basis in January 2005.

In addition to describing respondents' perceptions of causes of crime, recent changes in crime levels and the extent of anti-social behaviour in the local area, the bulletin illustrates three commonly used measures of concern about crime:

1. worry about crime and personal safety;
2. perceptions of the risk of victimisation; and
3. perceptions of the effect of 'fear of crime' on quality of life.

Comparisons are made (where appropriate and available) between the results of the 2016/17 NICS and those of the 2016/17 [Crime Survey for England and Wales](#) (CSEW, formerly known as the British Crime Survey (BCS); ONS, 2017), as well as with earlier sweeps of the NICS. While previously reported on in this bulletin, the following socio-demographic (personal, household and area) groups (listed below) are now presented in the accompanying Microsoft Excel workbook only due to the impact on robustness of sub-sample analyses following the reduced sample size. Associated confidence intervals are also presented. The first six relate to equality categories specified in Section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998:

1. religious belief;
2. age;
3. living arrangements (marital status);
4. sex (gender);
5. disability (or illness);
6. household type (child dependants);
7. self-perceived nationality;
8. household income;
9. housing tenure;
10. type of area (urban / rural);
11. policing district (see Technical Annex for details);
12. multiple deprivation measure rank (MDM 2010);
13. perceived level of anti-social behaviour in area;
14. experience of crime reported to the police; and
15. daily newspaper readership.

Throughout this report key findings are commented on in the text, with full numerical details on each section available in the relevant tables comprising the Tabular Annex.

An additional NICS 2016/17 report on experience of crime (Campbell and Rice, forthcoming), will publish separately.

1.2 About the Northern Ireland Crime Survey

Closely mirroring the format and core questions of the CSEW, the NICS is an important source of information about community safety issues such as levels of, and public attitudes to, crime and anti-social behaviour. Its results play an important role in informing and monitoring government policies and targets. Within the [2016-21 Draft Programme for Government](#) (PfG), the Department of Justice will lead on Indicator 1 related to reducing crime. Findings contained within this bulletin will be used by the department to inform the Delivery Plan for this Indicator. NICS findings will also inform the assessment of the impact of the [Community Safety Strategy](#) (DoJ, 2012) and the [Northern Ireland Policing Board's Strategic Outcomes for Policing in Northern Ireland 2016-2020](#) (2016).

An alternative, but complementary, measure of crime to offences recorded by the police, the main aims of the NICS are to:

- ◆ measure crime victimisation rates experienced by people living in private households, whether or not these crimes were reported to or recorded by the police;
- ◆ monitor trends in the level of crime, independent of changes in reporting levels or police recording practices;
- ◆ measure people's perceptions of and reactions to crime (for example, the level and causes of crime, the extent to which they are concerned about crime and the effect of crime on their quality of life);
- ◆ identify the characteristics and circumstances of people most at risk from and affected by different types of crime;
- ◆ measure public confidence in policing and the wider criminal justice system; and
- ◆ collect sensitive information, using self-completion modules, on people's experiences regarding crime-related issues such as domestic violence.

Recorded crime figures cannot, by their nature, provide an impression of the extent of concern about crime (often described as 'fear of crime') among different sections of the community. Hence, it is necessary to complement the police figures with information drawn from the NICS, which, for the crime types it covers, provides a more complete measure of the extent and impact of crime against private households and their adult occupants. Further information on recorded crime statistics can be found in the [Police Service of Northern Ireland \(PSNI\) User Guide to Police Recorded Crime Statistics](#) (PSNI, 2018a).

While some of the core interviewer-administered modules for NICS 2016/17 were (generally) based on CSEW 2016/17, some modification has been necessary to reflect local issues and the fact that the smaller NICS sample size would not have generated robust results for follow-up questions asked of small sub-sections of the sample.

Additional information, covering issues such as sampling design and methodology is available within the [NICS User Guide](#) (DoJ, 2016a) and associated [Quality Report](#) (DoJ, 2016b).

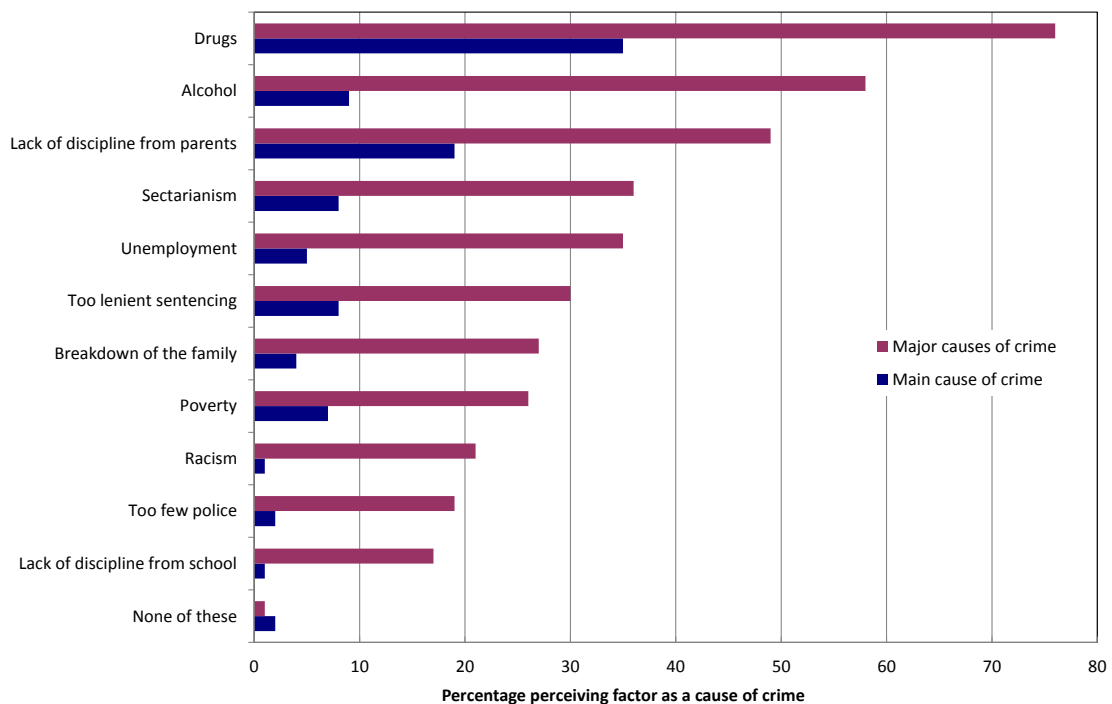
2. PERCEPTIONS OF CAUSES OF CRIME, CRIME LEVELS AND ANTI-SOCIAL BEHAVIOUR

2.1 Causes of crime

Northern Ireland Crime Survey (NICS) respondents were asked to select from a list the factors they considered to be *major* causes of crime in Northern Ireland today. If a respondent selected more than one factor, they were then asked which of these factors they believed to be the *main* cause of crime.

- ◆ Findings from NICS 2016/17 show that, as in previous years, drugs, alcohol and a lack of discipline from parents (76%, 58% and 49% respectively) remain the three factors most commonly identified as major causes of crime in Northern Ireland today. At 17% and 19% (respectively), a ‘lack of discipline from school’ and ‘too few police’ were among those least likely to be identified by NICS 2016/17 respondents as major causes (Table A1; Figure 2.1).
- ◆ When asked which single factor they considered to be the main cause of crime, the most common response was drugs, cited by 35% of respondents, followed by a lack of discipline from parents (19%) (Table A1; Figure 2.1).

Figure 2.1: Perceptions of causes of crime (%) in Northern Ireland



Source: NICS 2016/17

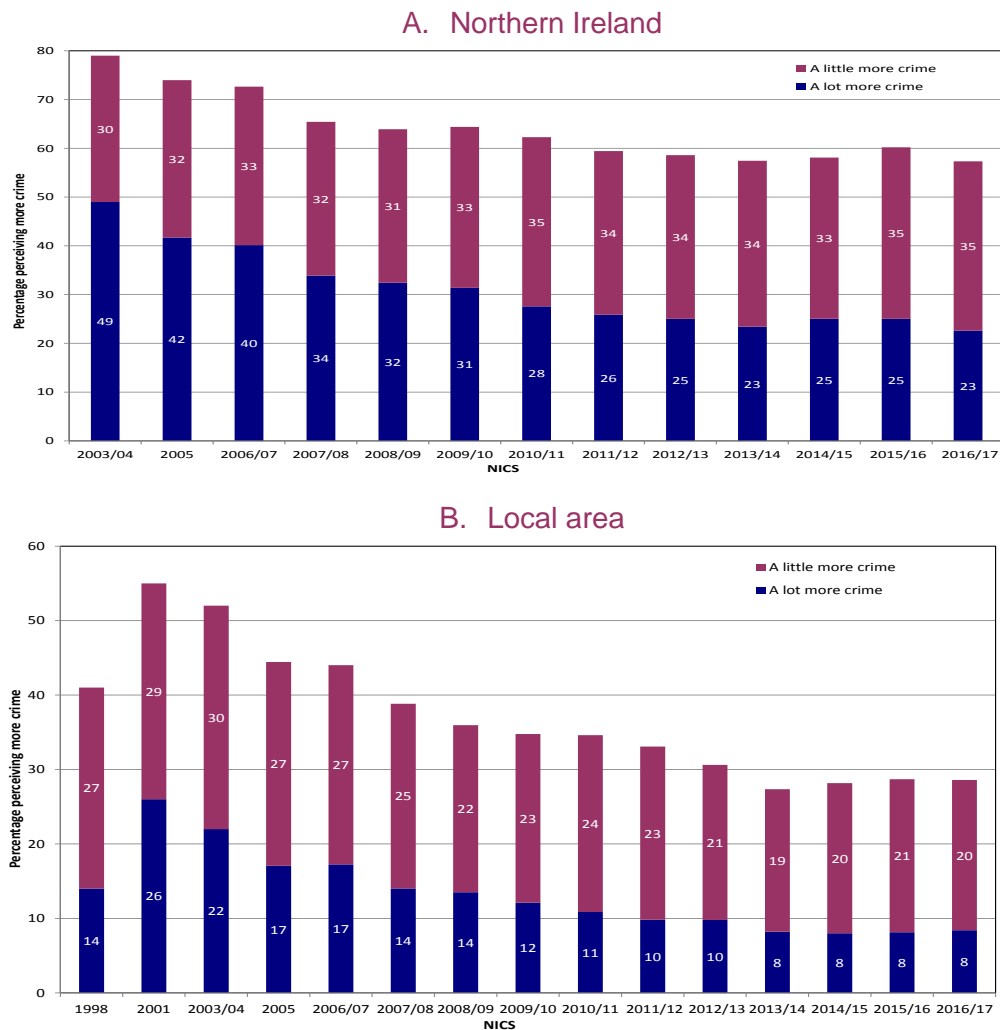
2.2 Perceptions of change in crime levels

NICS participants were also asked how they perceived the level of crime to have changed, if at all, in both Northern Ireland and their local area during the two years prior to interview, based on a five-point scale ranging from ‘a lot more crime’ to ‘a lot less crime’. Typically, people are inclined to believe crime is on the increase, even if it is not, and that the situation is worse at the regional level than in their own local area. Thus, it is the trend in this proportion, rather than the actual value, that is of primary interest.

NICS 2016/17: Perceptions of Crime

- ◆ Tables A2, A3 and Figure 2.2 illustrate that the proportions of NICS 2016/17 respondents believing that crime is on the increase, either locally (29%) or in Northern Ireland as a whole (57%), are among the lowest levels ever recorded by the survey.
- ◆ Almost three-fifths (57%) of NICS 2016/17 respondents believed that crime levels across Northern Ireland have increased in the preceding two years. While this did not represent a statistically significant change ($p < 0.05$) from the previous year (60% in 2015/16), it is one of the lowest rates observed by the survey and compares with 79% in 2003/04 (Table A2; Figure 2.2A).
- ◆ In contrast, there was a statistically significant increase ($p < 0.05$) in the proportion of respondents who felt there was less crime across Northern Ireland, from 10% in NICS 2015/16 to 14% in 2016/17. This may to some extent reflect the decrease of 6.6% in police recorded crime over the same period ([Trends in Police Recorded Crime in Northern Ireland 1998/99 to 2016/17](#) (PSNI, 2018b)) (Table A2).
- ◆ As in previous sweeps of the survey, NICS 2016/17 respondents were more positive in their perceptions of crime levels within their local area than at the regional level with 29% believing crime in their local area had increased in the preceding two years. While this was unchanged ($p < 0.05$) from 2015/16 (29%), it does compare favourably with that observed in NICS 2001 when the proportion who felt crime had increased was almost twice that recorded in 2016/17 (55% v 29% respectively). This reduction was primarily due to a drop in the proportion who felt there was ‘a lot more crime’, from 26% to 8%, over the same period (Table A3; Figure 2.2B).

Figure 2.2: Perceptions of changing crime levels (%) in Northern Ireland and the local area



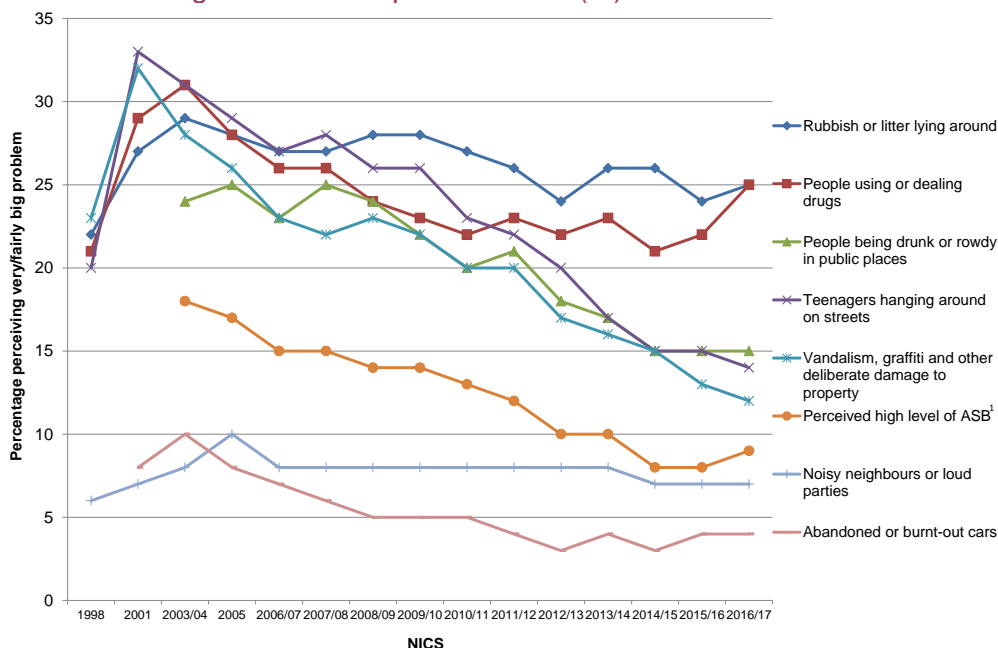
2.3 Perceptions of anti-social behaviour in Northern Ireland and England and Wales

Respondents to the NICS and CSEW were asked to rate how much of a problem different types of anti-social behaviour (ASB) are in their area using a four-point scale ranging from 'very big problem' to 'not a problem at all'. Since 2003/04, responses to the following seven strands have been used to form a composite measure (see Section 4.3 of the [NICS User Guide](#) (DoJ, 2016a, for more information) to gauge the overall perceived level of ASB in the local area:

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

- ◆ Based on this composite measure, findings from NICS 2016/17 show that the proportion of respondents who perceived the level of ASB in their local area to be high was 9%, unchanged ($p < 0.05$) from that observed in 2015/16 (8%). The proportion perceiving a high level of ASB has fallen gradually over the last decade from the 2003/04 figure of 18%. The equivalent figure for England and Wales (CSEW 2016/17) was 9% (Table A4).
- ◆ While there were no statistically significant changes ($p < 0.05$) between 2015/16 and 2016/17 for any of the seven individual ASB strands, when 2016/17 findings are compared with those from 2003/04, overall decreases ($p < 0.05$) were observed for most strands. The largest decreases, in percentage point terms, were observed for 'teenagers hanging around on streets' (from 31% to 14%) and 'vandalism, graffiti and other deliberate damage to property' (28% to 12%) (Table A4; Figure 2.3).
- ◆ The ASB types most likely to be perceived by NICS 2016/17 respondents as problems in the local area were 'rubbish or litter lying around' and 'people using or dealing drugs' (both 25%) whereas 'abandoned or burnt-out cars' (4%) and 'noisy neighbours or loud parties' (7%) were considered the least problematic forms of ASB (Table A4; Figure 2.3).

Figure 2.3: Perceptions of ASB (%) in the local area



1. Derived from responses to the seven individual ASB strands.

- ◆ A similar trend is reflected in England and Wales with CSEW 2016/17 respondents also most likely to perceive ‘rubbish or litter lying around’ (30%) and ‘people using or dealing drugs’ (23%), and least likely to consider ‘abandoned or burnt-out cars’ (3%), as problems (Table A4).
- ◆ NICS respondents were then asked to select the type of ASB that, in their view, causes the single biggest problem in their local area. Two-fifths (40%) responded that none of the seven ASB strands represented the single biggest problem in their local area, a proportion which has shown an overall increase from 31% in NICS 2008/09. Of the specific ASB strands considered, the most common response, cited by 21% of NICS 2016/17 participants, was ‘rubbish or litter lying around’. While rubbish and litter has been reported as the single biggest problem in recent years, results from earlier sweeps, for example 2008/09 (when the question was first introduced), suggest ‘teenagers hanging around on streets’ was considered the single biggest local problem (23%). The equivalent rate for rubbish or litter lying around in NICS 2008/09 was 16% (Table A5).
- ◆ As in previous years, ‘abandoned or burnt-out cars’ (1%; NICS 2016/17) was least likely to be considered as the single biggest local problem (Table A5).

3. WORRY ABOUT CRIME AND PERSONAL SAFETY

3.1 Worry about crime and personal safety in Northern Ireland and England and Wales

Worry about becoming a victim of crime is measured by the NICS in two ways: firstly, about specific crimes; and secondly, with regard to personal safety when alone after dark, either at home or walking in the local area (Table A6).

Respondents to NICS 2016/17 were asked how worried they are about becoming a victim of the following crimes using a four-point scale, ranging from ‘very worried’ to ‘not at all worried’:

1. home being burgled;
2. being mugged and robbed;
3. physical attack by a stranger;
4. physical attack because of their race, religion, sexuality or disability;
5. rape;
6. theft of a car; and
7. theft from a car.

Two composite indicators for worry about car crime and violent crime are constructed from the responses to the individual car crime and violent crime questions. These additional indicators, together with the proportion of respondents who claimed to be ‘very worried’ about burglary, are compared with CSEW analyses.

For the worry about car crime indicator, responses to each car crime question of ‘very worried’ are awarded 2 points and ‘fairly worried’ 1 point. Those respondents scoring a combined 3 or 4 points are considered to have a high level of worry about car crime. This measure refers only to respondents residing in households owning, or with regular use of, a vehicle.

A similar approach is used to determine the worry about violent crime indicator, with responses to each violent crime question of ‘very worried’ being awarded 2 points and ‘fairly

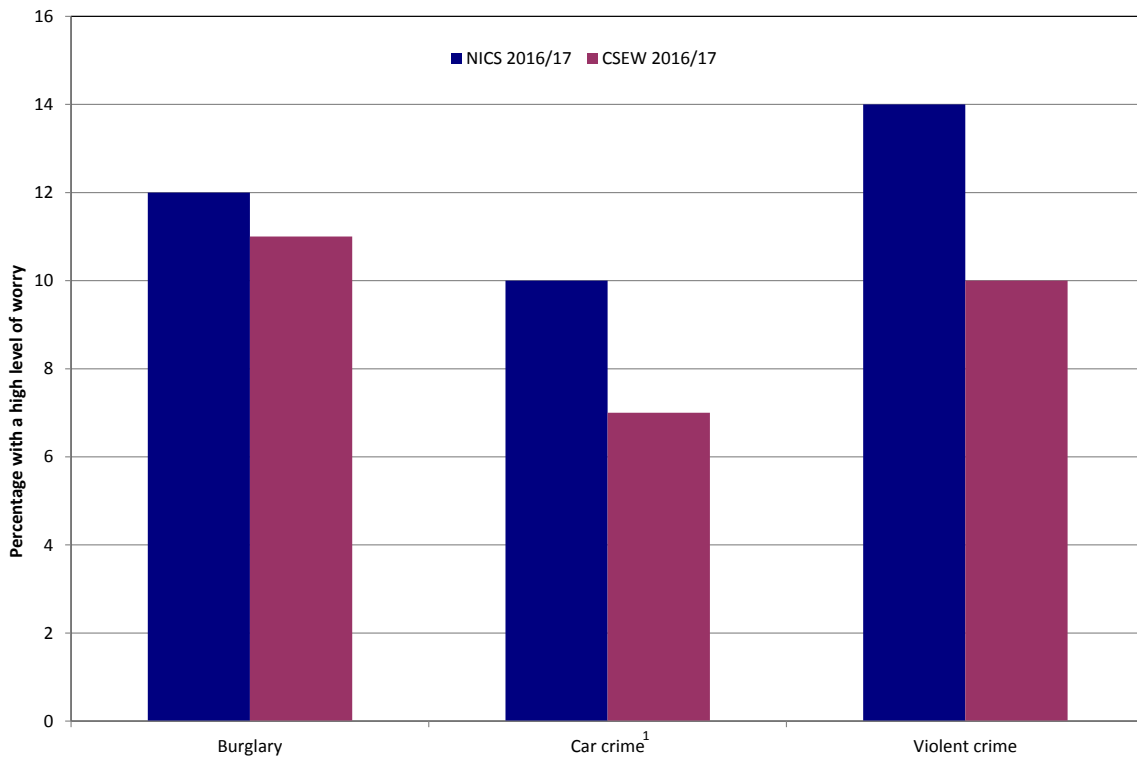
worried' 1 point. In this instance, the scale ranges from 0 to 8 points and those scoring 4 or more points are deemed to have a high level of worry about violent crime.

Since 2007/08, NICS respondents have also been asked how worried they are about becoming a victim of (all types of) crime in general, using the same four-point scale ('very worried' to 'not at all worried'). Responses to this question are included within Table A6.

Table A6 shows the proportions of respondents in Northern Ireland and England and Wales who expressed high levels of worry about burglary, car crime and violent crime.

- ◆ Despite a lower prevalence of crime in Northern Ireland than in England and Wales, results show that NICS 2016/17 respondents were more likely than their CSEW 2016/17 counterparts to express high levels of worry about violent crime (14% v 10% respectively) and car crime (10% v 7%); results for burglary were more closely aligned (12% v 11%) (Table A6; Figure 3.1).

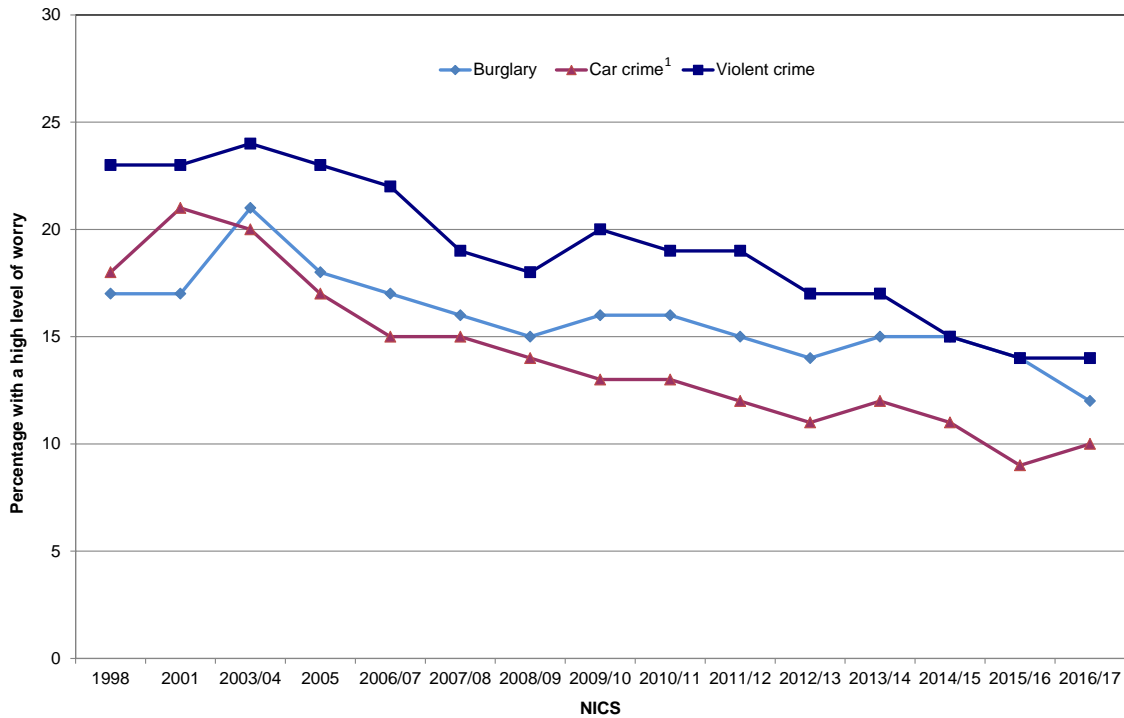
Figure 3.1: Worry about crime (%) in Northern Ireland and England and Wales



1. Based on respondents residing in households owning, or with regular use of, a vehicle.

- ◆ While NICS 2016/17 findings show the proportions expressing high levels of worry about burglary and violent crime (12% and 14% respectively) were unchanged ($p < 0.05$) from those observed in 2015/16 (both 14%), they compare favourably with NICS 2003/04 rates of 21% and 24% (respectively) (Table A6; Figure 3.2).
- ◆ Similarly, while the proportion of NICS 2016/17 respondents reporting a high level of worry about car crime (10%) remained on a par ($p < 0.05$) with that recorded the previous year (9%, NICS 2015/16), the 2016/17 rate is around half that observed in 2001 (21%) (Table A6; Figure 3.2).

Figure 3.2: Worry about crime (%) in Northern Ireland



1. Based on respondents residing in households owning, or with regular use of, a vehicle.

- ◆ As in previous sweeps, 2016/17 respondents in Northern Ireland were much more likely to feel 'very unsafe' when walking alone in their area after dark (6%) than when alone in their home at night (2%) (Table A6).
- ◆ Consistent with levels of worry about crime, both measures of personal safety were unchanged ($p < 0.05$) between NICS 2015/16 and 2016/17: walking alone in area after dark (7% and 6% respectively); and being alone in home at night (2% in both years). While the proportion feeling very unsafe when alone in home at night has remained at 2% each year since 2003/04, the proportion who feel very unsafe walking alone in their area after dark has shown a decrease over the same period with the 2016/17 rate of 6% around half of that observed in 2003/04 (13%) (Table A6).

4. PERCEPTIONS OF THE LIKELIHOOD OF VICTIMISATION

4.1 Perceptions of the likelihood of victimisation in Northern Ireland

A person's perception of the likelihood that they will be a victim of crime may be influenced by their level of worry about crime. In addition to questions on worry about crime (Section 3), the NICS asked respondents how likely they think it is that they will be a victim of the following offences in the next 12 months, using a four-point scale ranging from 'very likely' to 'very unlikely':

1. home being burgled;
2. theft of a car;
3. theft from a car;
4. being mugged and robbed; and
5. physical attack by a stranger.

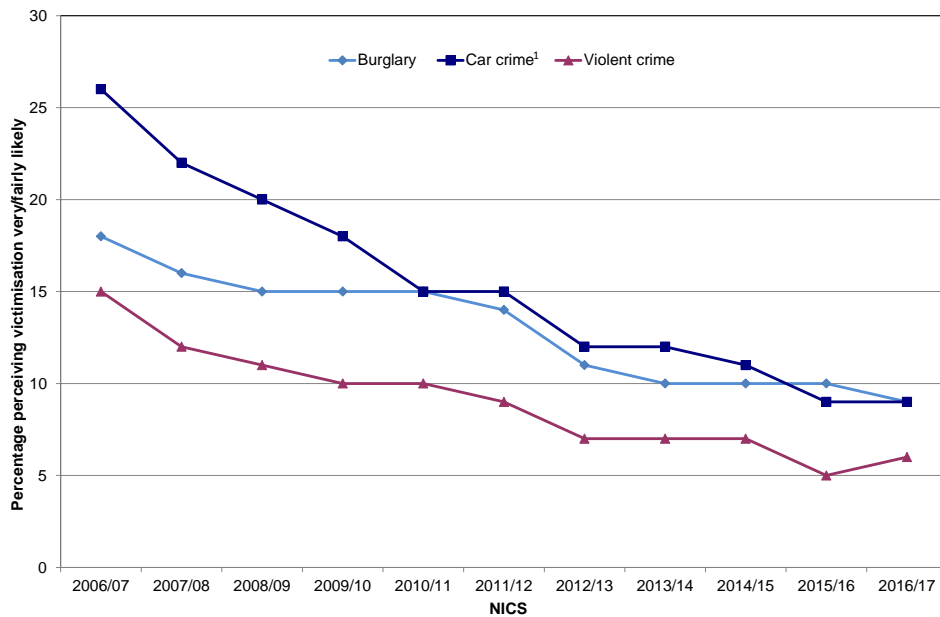
Two composite indicators to measure the perceived likelihood of being a victim of car crime and violent crime are constructed from the responses to the individual car crime and violent crime questions. These additional indicators, together with the proportion of respondents who say they are very or fairly likely to have their home burgled in the next year, comprise the three crime groups presented in this section (Table A7).

The perceived likelihood of being a victim of car crime is a composite measure of respondents who think they are very or fairly likely to either have a car/van stolen or have something stolen from a car/van in the next year, or both. This measure refers only to respondents residing in households owning, or with regular use of, a vehicle.

Similarly, the perceived likelihood of being a victim of violent crime is a composite measure of anyone who thinks they are very or fairly likely to be either mugged/robbed or physically attacked by a stranger in the next year, or both.

- ◆ In line with results from previous sweeps, the vast majority of NICS 2016/17 respondents believed it unlikely that they would fall victim to any of these crimes during the coming year. For example, it is apparent from Table A7 that nine out of ten people surveyed (91%) did not think they would experience burglary.
- ◆ Overall, equal proportions of NICS 2016/17 respondents believed they would experience some form of vehicle-related theft or burglary (both 9%), while 6% perceived themselves to be at risk of violent crime. While no statistically significant changes ($p < 0.05$) were observed compared with 2015/16 for any of the three measures, the proportions of respondents believing it likely that they would fall victim to each of these crime types have been falling gradually and compare with highs observed in 2006/07: car crime (26%, NICS 2006/07 v 9%, NICS 2016/17); violent crime (15% v 6%); and burglary (18% v 9%) (Table A7; Figure 4.1).

Figure 4.1: Perceptions of the risk of victimisation (%) in Northern Ireland



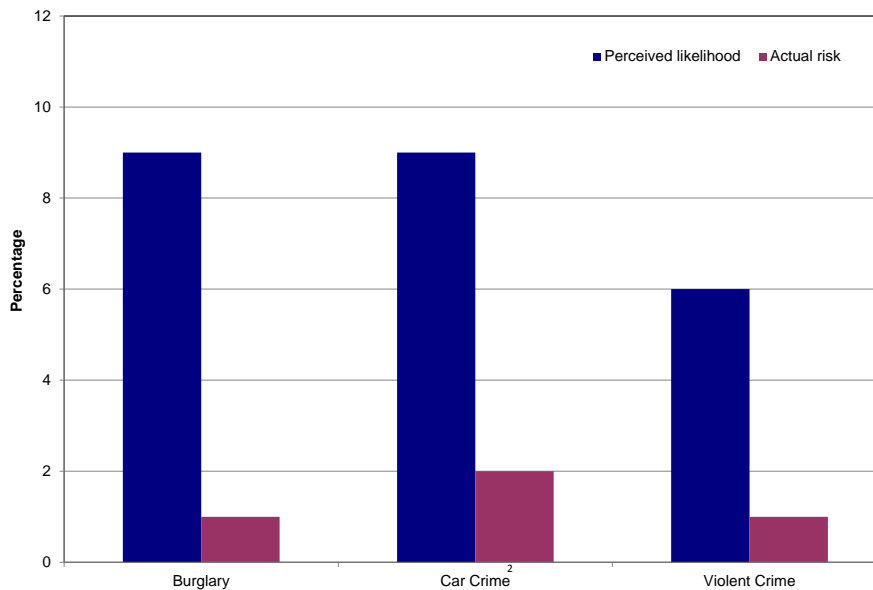
1. Based on respondents residing in households owning, or with regular use of, a vehicle.

4.2 Perceptions of the likelihood of victimisation, and actual risk, in Northern Ireland

NICS findings reveal a disparity between a person’s perceived likelihood of being a victim of crime and their actual risk, whereby the perceived risk exceeds the actual risk across each of the crime types considered.

- ◆ NICS 2016/17 results show that 9% of people thought they were very or fairly likely to be a victim of burglary, compared with an actual risk of one per cent. A similar pattern emerged in terms of car crime (9% v 2%) and violent crime (6% v 1%) (Figure 4.4).

Figure 4.4: Perceived likelihood of victimisation and actual risk (%)¹ by individual crime type



Sources: NICS 2015/16 and 2016/17

1. Rates for the perceived risk are based on NICS 2016/17 findings while those for actual risk are based on [NICS 2015/16](#) (Campbell, 2017). NICS 2016/17 victimisation rates will be available in the 'Experience of Crime: Findings from the 2016/17 Northern Ireland Crime Survey' report (forthcoming).

2. Based on respondents residing in households owning, or with regular use of, a vehicle.

5. PERCEPTIONS OF THE EFFECT OF ‘FEAR OF CRIME’ ON QUALITY OF LIFE

5.1 Perceptions of the effect of ‘fear of crime’ on quality of life in Northern Ireland

While a basic level of concern about crime may be beneficial in that it encourages people to take measures to reduce their likelihood of victimisation, ‘fear (about being a victim) of crime’ can become problematic if it has a detrimental impact on a person’s quality of life.

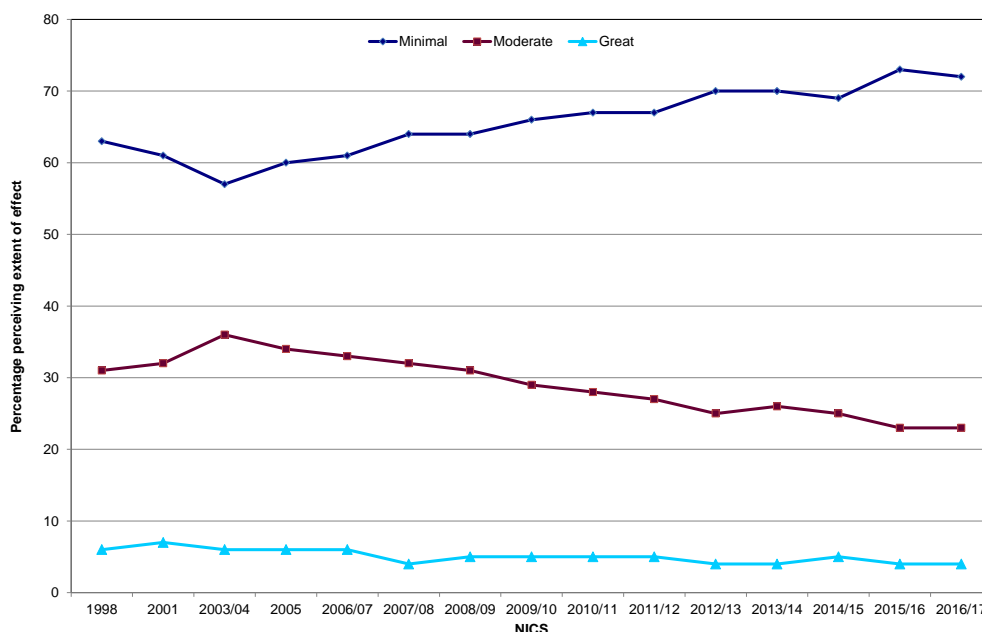
Respondents to NICS were asked how much their own quality of life is affected by their ‘fear of crime’ on a scale of 1 to 10, where 1 is no effect and 10 is a total effect. In order to standardise the results, the following conventions have been used to gauge the effect of ‘fear of crime’ on quality 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 for England and Wales were included in previous years’ bulletins, however, this question was not included in the CSEW 2016/17 survey.

- ◆ Almost three-quarters (72%) of NICS 2016/17 respondents felt ‘fear of crime’ has a minimal impact on their quality of life, showing no statistically significant change ($p < 0.05$) to the rate of 73% observed the previous year (NICS 2015/16). Similarly, the proportions claiming fear of crime has a moderate (23% in both years) or minimal effect (4% in both years) also remained unchanged ($p < 0.05$) over this period.
- ◆ The proportion of respondents who felt a minimal impact on their quality of life has shown an improvement over the last decade or so with the 2016/17 rate of 72% comparing with a low of 57% observed in 2003/04. In turn, a reduction has occurred in the proportion reporting a moderate effect from 36% to 23% over the same period, while the rate observed for a great effect on quality of life has remained relatively stable (Table A8; Figure 5.1).

Figure 5.1: Perceptions of the effect of ‘fear of crime’ on quality of life (%) in Northern Ireland



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<https://www.psni.police.uk/globalassets/inside-the-psni/our-statistics/police-recorded-crime-statistics/documents/police-recorded-crime-in-northern-ireland-1998-99-to-2016-17.pdf>

TABULAR ANNEX

Table A1: Perceptions of the causes of crime (%) in Northern Ireland^{1,2}

	Major causes of crime ³	Main cause of crime
Drugs	76	35
Alcohol	58	9
Lack of discipline from parents	49	19
Sectarianism	36	8
Unemployment	35	5
Too lenient sentencing	30	8
Breakdown of the family	27	4
Poverty	26	7
Racism	21	1
Too few police	19	2
Lack of discipline from school	17	1
None of these	1	2
<i>Unweighted base</i>	1,873	1,873

Source: NICS 2016/17

1. Results exclude don't knows and refusals.
2. Respondents were asked to select from a list the factors they considered to be the major causes of crime in Northern Ireland today. If respondents selected more than one factor they were asked which of the factors they believed to be the main cause of crime. If respondents gave only one factor, this was taken as the main cause.
3. Percentages may add to more than 100 as respondents could select more than one cause.

Table A2: Perceptions of change in overall crime levels (%) in Northern Ireland¹

	NICS 2003/04	NICS 2005	NICS 2006/07	NICS 2007/08	NICS 2008/09	NICS 2009/10	NICS 2010/11	NICS 2011/12	NICS 2012/13	NICS 2013/14	NICS 2014/15	NICS 2015/16	NICS 2016/17	Statistically significant change, 2015/16 to 2016/17? ²
More crime³	79	74	73	65	64	64	62	59	59	57	58	60	57	
A lot more crime	49	42	40	34	32	31	28	26	25	23	25	25	23	
A little more crime	30	32	33	32	31	33	35	34	34	34	33	35	35	
Same	14	17	18	20	23	24	25	28	29	31	31	30	29	
Less crime	7	9	10	14	13	11	13	12	12	12	10	10	14	** ↑
<i>Unweighted base</i>	2,704	3,578	3,678	3,790	3,737	3,977	3,916	3,925	3,898	3,458	2,003	1,914	1,820	

1. Results exclude don't knows and refusals.
2. Statistical significance of change at the 5% level (two-tailed test) is indicated by a double asterisk (**).
3. The proportion of respondents believing there has been 'a little more crime' or 'a lot more crime'; these figures may not sum to the 'more crime' composite figure due to rounding.

Table A3: Perceptions of change in local crime levels (%) in Northern Ireland^{1,2}

	NICS 1998	NICS 2001	NICS 2003/04	NICS 2005	NICS 2006/07	NICS 2007/08	NICS 2008/09	NICS 2009/10	NICS 2010/11	NICS 2011/12	NICS 2012/13	NICS 2013/14	NICS 2014/15	NICS 2015/16	NICS 2016/17	Statistically significant change, 2015/16 to 2016/17? ³
More crime⁴	41	55	52	44	44	39	36	35	35	33	31	27	28	29	29	
A lot more crime	14	26	22	17	17	14	14	12	11	10	10	8	8	8	8	
A little more crime	27	29	30	27	27	25	22	23	24	23	21	19	20	21	20	
Same	47	36	36	42	42	45	48	49	49	51	53	55	56	57	56	
Less crime	12	8	12	13	14	16	16	16	16	16	17	17	16	15	15	
<i>Unweighted base</i>	2,648	2,597	2,644	3,076	3,171	3,295	3,291	3,495	3,494	3,497	3,524	3,109	1,816	1,707	1,605	

1. Results exclude don't knows and refusals.
2. Based on respondents who had been living in their area for more than three years.
3. Statistical significance of change at the 5% level (two-tailed test) is indicated by a double asterisk (**).
4. The proportion of respondents believing there has been 'a little more crime' or 'a lot more crime'; these figures may not sum to the 'more crime' composite figure due to rounding.

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Table A4: Perceptions of different types of anti-social behaviour as very / fairly big problems (%) in Northern Ireland and England and Wales¹

	NICS 1998	NICS 2001	NICS 2003/04	NICS 2005	NICS 2006/07	NICS 2007/08	NICS 2008/09	NICS 2009/10	NICS 2010/11	NICS 2011/12	NICS 2012/13	NICS 2013/14	NICS 2014/15	NICS 2015/16	NICS 2016/17	Statistically significant change, 2015/16 to 2016/17 ²	CSEW 2016/17
Perceived high level of ASB³	-	-	18	17	15	15	14	14	13	12	10	10	8	8	9		9
Abandoned or burnt-out cars	-	8	10	8	7	6	5	5	5	4	3	4	3	4	4		3
Noisy neighbours or loud parties	6	7	8	10	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	7	7	7		10
People being drunk or rowdy in public places	-	-	24	25	23	25	24	22	20	21	18	17	15	15	15		16
People using or dealing drugs	21	29	31	28	26	26	24	23	22	23	22	23	21	22	25		23
Teenagers hanging around on streets	20	33	31	29	27	28	26	26	23	22	20	17	15	15	14		15
Rubbish or litter lying around	22	27	29	28	27	27	28	28	27	26	24	26	26	24	25		30
Vandalism, graffiti and other deliberate damage to property	23	32	28	26	23	22	23	22	20	20	17	16	15	13	12		14
Unweighted base⁴	3,058	3,007	3,104	3,691	3,788	3,932	3,855	4,098	4,077	4,063	4,055	3,596	2,071	1,974	1,877		8,722⁵

¹ - Denotes indicator was not included in survey.

- Results exclude don't knows and refusals.
- Statistical significance of change at the 5% level (two-tailed test) is indicated by a double asterisk (**).
- ASB: Anti-social behaviour (measure derived from responses to the seven individual strands in the table).
- Unweighted base refers to rubbish or litter lying around. Other bases will be similar.
- CSEW unweighted base refers to people using or dealing drugs. Other CSEW bases will be similar.

Table A5: Perceptions of different types of anti-social behaviour as the single biggest problem (%) in the local area¹

	NICS 2008/09	NICS 2009/10	NICS 2010/11	NICS 2011/12	NICS 2012/13	NICS 2013/14	NICS 2014/15	NICS 2015/16	NICS 2016/17
Abandoned or burnt-out cars	1	1	1	1	0	0	0	0	1
Noisy neighbours or loud parties	4	4	4	4	4	5	4	4	4
People being drunk or rowdy in public places	11	11	10	10	8	8	9	7	7
People using or dealing drugs	8	7	9	9	10	11	12	12	13
Teenagers hanging around on streets	23	21	19	18	16	13	10	11	11
Rubbish or litter lying around	16	16	18	18	18	19	22	20	21
Vandalism, graffiti and other deliberate damage to property	7	7	7	7	6	5	5	4	4
None of these	31	32	33	33	37	38	37	41	40
Unweighted base	3,852	4,090	4,066	4,055	4,049	3,594	2,072	1,972	1,874

- Results exclude don't knows and refusals.

Table A6: Worry about crime and personal safety (%) in Northern Ireland and England and Wales¹

	NICS 1998	NICS 2001	NICS 2003/04	NICS 2005	NICS 2006/07	NICS 2007/08	NICS 2008/09	NICS 2009/10	NICS 2010/11	NICS 2011/12	NICS 2012/13	NICS 2013/14	NICS 2014/15	NICS 2015/16	NICS 2016/17	Statistically significant change, 2015/16 to 2016/17 ²	CSEW 2016/17
% with high levels of worry																	
Burglary	17	17	21	18	17	16	15	16	16	15	14	15	15	14	12		11
Car crime ³	18	21	20	17	15	15	14	13	13	12	11	12	11	9	10		7
Violent crime ⁴	23	23	24	23	22	19	18	20	19	19	17	17	15	14	14		10
% very worried																	
Crime overall	-	-	-	-	-	9	8	8	9	8	7	7	7	6	7		-
% feeling very unsafe																	
Walking alone in area after dark	8	11	13	11	11	12	10	10	9	8	7	7	7	7	6		-
Alone in home at night	1	1	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2		-
Unweighted base⁵	3,057	3,010	3,104	3,691	3,790	3,933	3,856	4,102	4,080	4,061	4,054	3,594	2,073	1,975	1,876		8,363

¹ - Denotes indicator was not included in survey.

- Results exclude don't knows and refusals.
- Statistical significance of change at the 5% level (two-tailed test) is indicated by a double asterisk (**).
- Based on respondents residing in households owning, or with regular use of, a vehicle.
- As described in Section 3.1, the violent crime indicator is constructed from four questions. For the question on 'worry about physical attack because of their race, religion, sexuality or disability', the CSEW does not refer to 'sexuality or disability'.
- Unweighted base refers to worry about burglary. Other bases will be similar with the exception of car crime which is based on vehicle-owners only.

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Table A7: Perceptions of the risk of victimisation (%) in Northern Ireland¹

% perceiving it likely that they will be a victim within the next year	NICS 2006/07	NICS 2007/08	NICS 2008/09	NICS 2009/10	NICS 2010/11	NICS 2011/12	NICS 2012/13	NICS 2013/14	NICS 2014/15	NICS 2015/16	NICS 2016/17	Statistically significant change, 2015/16 to 2016/17 ²
Burglary	18	16	15	15	15	14	11	10	10	10	9	
Car crime ³	26	22	20	18	15	15	12	12	11	9	9	
Violent crime	15	12	11	10	10	9	7	7	7	5	6	
<i>Unweighted base⁴</i>	3,708	3,855	3,774	4,006	3,987	3,992	3,980	3,527	2,051	1,938	1,843	

1. Results exclude don't knows and refusals.

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

3. Based on respondents residing in households owning, or with regular use of, a vehicle.

4. Unweighted base refers to perceived likelihood of being a victim of burglary. Bases for violent crime will be similar but will be lower for car crime which is based on vehicle-owners only.

Table A8: Perceptions of the effect of 'fear of crime' on quality of life (%) in Northern Ireland¹

	NICS 1998	NICS 2001	NICS 2003/04	NICS 2005	NICS 2006/07	NICS 2007/08	NICS 2008/09	NICS 2009/10	NICS 2010/11	NICS 2011/12	NICS 2012/13	NICS 2013/14	NICS 2014/15	NICS 2015/16	NICS 2016/17	Statistically significant change, 2015/16 to 2016/17 ²
Minimal	63	61	57	60	61	64	64	66	67	67	70	70	69	73	72	
Moderate	31	32	36	34	33	32	31	29	28	27	25	26	25	23	23	
Great	6	7	6	6	6	4	5	5	5	5	4	4	5	4	4	
<i>Unweighted base</i>	3,049	3,008	3,099	3,691	3,789	3,929	3,854	4,099	4,079	4,062	4,054	3,596	2,074	1,975	1,877	

1. Results exclude don't knows and refusals.

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

TECHNICAL ANNEX

Sampling and fieldwork

With effect from April 2014 the target achieved sample size of the NICS was reduced from 3,500 interviews to 2,000 interviews. This reduction was occasioned by the need to make savings generally in the levels of Departmental spending. The initial NICS 2016/17 sample consisted of 3,375 addresses, randomly selected from the Land and Property Services domestic property database. Visits to each address by an interviewer from the NISRA Central Survey Unit resulted in an eligible sample of 3,030 occupied addresses, from which attempts were made to interview one randomly selected adult respondent at each address.

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 smaller households.

In January 2005, the NICS began operating on a continuous basis. This bulletin refers primarily to fieldwork undertaken during the financial year 1 April 2016 to 31 March 2017, which involved complete interviews with 1,877 people aged 16 years and over. This represents an eligible response rate of 62%.

Respondents were assured in advance of the interviews that any information they provided would be treated as entirely confidential and that the level of detail produced in publications or in any subsequent analyses would not allow for identification of individuals. The interviews typically lasted just under an hour for non-victims, although those involving respondents who disclosed several crimes could last much longer.

Rounding, error and statistical significance

Don't knows, refusals and non-valid responses have been excluded from the analyses. Percentages may not always sum to 100 due to the effect of rounding to the nearest whole number, or because respondents could give more than one response. Figures presented in the tables and graphs within this bulletin have been rounded. Unrounded figures are available in the accompanying Microsoft Excel version of the Tabular Annex.

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

Because NICS estimates are subject to sampling error, differences between estimates from successive years of the survey or between population subgroups (presented in the accompanying Microsoft Excel workbook) may occur by chance.

For the purposes of this bulletin, 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.

As a result of the sample reduction, the confidence limits of any percentages from the survey are now wider than was the case previously and the margin of difference between findings now required to achieve 'statistical significance' has widened accordingly. This means that absolute differences in percentages which would previously have been 'statistically significant' with the larger numbers then sampled (and the much narrower range of error for any findings) may not necessarily now be found to be statistically significant with the reduced

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sample size. As the Department of Justice does not routinely publish NICS estimates where the unweighted base is less than 100 cases, the sample reduction also means findings for some socio-demographic sub-groups, which would previously have been included, are no longer published. Some findings for the socio-demographic sub-groups examined may present as zero. These findings are based on the selected sample. They do not necessarily suggest that people in that area or among that group do not, for example, worry about crime or personal safety.

Further information on the 2016/17 sweep of the NICS is contained within the NICS 2016/17 Technical Report (forthcoming, via the [Northern Ireland Department of Justice](#) website).

Table B1: Sample profile for NICS 2016/17

Group	Sub-group	Unweighted Number	Unweighted %	Weighted %
Sex	Men	804	43	44
	Women	1,071	57	56
Age group	16-24	140	7	11
	25-34	280	15	14
	35-44	301	16	16
	45-54	344	18	20
	55-64	301	16	16
	65-74	300	16	14
	75+	209	11	9
Religion	Catholic	754	40	40
	Protestant	909	48	49
Area type	Urban	1,227	65	62
	Urban, excluding Belfast	602	32	31
	Rural	650	35	38
Policing district	Antrim and Newtownabbey	140	7	7
	Ards and North Down	176	9	9
	Armagh City, Banbridge and Craigavon	210	11	11
	Belfast	370	20	18
	Causeway Coast and Glens	153	8	8
	Derry City and Strabane	166	9	9
	Fermanagh and Omagh	119	6	7
	Lisburn and Castlereagh	129	7	7
	Mid and East Antrim	150	8	8
	Mid Ulster	92	5	6
	Newry, Mourne and Down	172	9	9
Multiple Deprivation Measure Rank¹	1st quintile (most deprived)	381	20	17
	2nd quintile	398	21	21
	3rd quintile	378	20	21
	4th quintile	376	20	22
	5th quintile (least deprived)	344	18	19
Vehicle-owning households		1,480	79	85

1. Rank order of super output areas (derived from 2010 Multiple Deprivation Measure).

NOTES

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