



**News Release  
11 April 2013**

## **PPS PUBLISHES LATEST PUBLIC ATTITUDES RESEARCH FINDINGS**

The Public Prosecution Service (PPS) today published "Perceptions of the Public Prosecution Service", a bulletin presenting the findings of the Northern Ireland Omnibus Survey.

The bulletin provides information in respect of the latest survey, conducted in January 2013, and includes comparisons with the previous survey in January 2012. Where appropriate, information from earlier years has also been provided.

### **Key findings**

Results from the 2013 survey were as follows:

- Three-quarters (75%) of respondents stated that they had heard of the PPS. This was similar to the finding of 76% in 2012. **(Question 1)**
- Nearly two out of three respondents (65%) were very or fairly confident that the PPS was effective at prosecuting people accused of committing a crime. While this was a decrease from 67% in 2012, it compared with 57% in 2011, when this particular issue was raised in the survey for the first time. **(Question 2)**
- Nearly seven-tenths (68%) of respondents in the survey were very or fairly confident in the fairness and impartiality of the PPS, representing a slight decline on 2012 (70%). **(Question 3)**
- Respondents were asked if they thought that the PPS was an independent organisation or part of the police. Just under three-quarters (74%) thought that the PPS was an independent organisation, distinct from police. This was an increase from 71% in 2012. **(Question 4)**
- Forty four per cent of respondents were aware that the PPS made use of 'diversionary options', such as restorative cautions and informed warnings. This compared with 41% in 2012. **(Question 5a)**

- The majority of respondents (60%) agreed with the PPS use of diversionary options. This represented a small increase on 2012 (58%). **(Question 5b)**
- Respondents were asked to identify (from a list of fourteen offences) the five categories of crime of greatest public concern in Northern Ireland today. Taking all five mentions by each respondent into account, the issues of most concern were: drug offences (62%); offences against the elderly (56%); offences involving violence (48%); offences against children (47%), hate crime (45%) and burglary (44%). The category 'drug offences' also received the greatest number of mentions in 2012. **(Question 6)**

### ***Notes to Editors***

The Northern Ireland Omnibus Survey is a regular sample survey carried out by the Central Survey Unit of the Northern Ireland Statistics and Research Agency (NISRA). It is designed to provide a snapshot of the behaviour, lifestyle and views of a representative sample of people in Northern Ireland, and is used to inform Government policy in a range of areas, including criminal justice.

The PPS has commissioned questions for inclusion in the Omnibus Survey on an annual basis since 2006. A total of seven questions were included in the January 2013 survey in order to gauge the following: public awareness of the PPS and its role; public perceptions of the Service's independence, fairness and impartiality; views as to PPS effectiveness; views on the use of 'diversionary' options by PPS; and the categories of crime of greatest concern to the public in Northern Ireland.

The information gathered via the survey is used by the PPS for a variety of purposes, such as informing the development of policy and assessing the effectiveness of the Service's Communication and Outreach Strategies. Data in respect of the PPS's effectiveness and its fairness and impartiality are also used as key performance indicators for the Service.

Detailed notes have been supplied, which provide an account of the technical aspects of the survey, including the origin of the sample, response rates and its 'representativeness' (see 'User Information' on page 15 of the bulletin).

These are 'Official Statistics' as defined in Section 6 of the Statistics and Registration Services Act 2007. Statisticians from the Northern Ireland Statistics and Research Agency are seconded to the PPS and are responsible for ensuring that the statistics produced comply with the Code of Practice for Official Statistics.

The bulletin may be viewed or downloaded at [www.ppsni.gov.uk](http://www.ppsni.gov.uk). Any member of the public may comment on the report by contacting PPS as follows:

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