



**14 June 2019**

## **HIGH LEVELS OF PUBLIC CONFIDENCE IN THE PPS**

More than two-thirds (68.7%)<sup>1</sup> of the public have confidence that the Public Prosecution Service provides a fair and impartial prosecution service to the people of Northern Ireland, an independent survey has revealed.

According to the findings of the Northern Ireland Life and Times Survey published today (Friday 14 June 2019), 68.7% of those questioned said they were either very or fairly confident in the fairness and impartiality of the PPS.

This is the first year that the Northern Ireland Life and Times Survey respondents were asked for their views on the Public Prosecution Service.<sup>2</sup>

The bulletin - entitled "[Perceptions of the Public Prosecution Service](#)" - provides information on levels of public awareness of the PPS, as well as public confidence in the fairness, effectiveness and independence of the organisation.

The survey was conducted over the period from September 2018 to February 2019.

### **Key findings**

Results from the four questions asked in the 2018 survey were as follows:

- Four fifths of respondents (80.8%) stated that they had heard of the PPS;
- Almost two-thirds of respondents (64.2%) were confident that the PPS is effective at prosecuting people accused of committing a crime;
- More than two-thirds of respondents (68.7%) were confident that the PPS provides a fair and impartial prosecution service;
- Almost two-thirds of respondents (64.8%) were confident that the PPS takes prosecution decisions independently.

ENDS

### **Notes to Editors**

The Northern Ireland Life and Times (NILT) Survey was launched by the University of Ulster and Queen's University of Belfast in the autumn of 1998. Its mission is to monitor the attitudes and behaviour of people in Northern Ireland annually to provide a time-series and a

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<sup>1</sup> All findings exclude 'Don't Know' responses – i.e. refers only to those who offered an opinion on the PPS.

<sup>2</sup> These questions were previously asked via the Northern Ireland Omnibus Survey; -findings can be found on the PPS website at <https://www.ppsni.gov.uk/Surveys-and-Research-7881.html>

public record of how attitudes and behaviour develop on a wide range of social policy issues. The survey is run on a modular format and aims to provide a local resource for use by the general public and a data source for public and academic debate.

This is the first year that Northern Ireland Life and Times Survey respondents were asked for their views on the Public Prosecution Service. A total of four questions specific to the PPS were included to gauge the following:

- Public awareness of the PPS (Question 1);
- Views as to the PPS's effectiveness in prosecuting people accused of committing a crime (Question 2);
- Public perceptions of the PPS's independence (Question 3); and
- Public perceptions of the PPS's fairness and impartiality (Question 4).

Question 1 was asked of all respondents. Questions 2, 3 and 4 relate only to those respondents who had heard of the PPS (i.e. respondents who had answered 'yes' at (Question 1).

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 Annex 2: Technical Notes, page 15 of the bulletin). It should be noted that the 2018 NILT Survey has produced a relatively high proportion of people who answered 'don't know' in response to the questions. These 'don't knows' have been excluded from the main body of the report. As such, the focus of the bulletin is on those people who have offered an opinion regarding the PPS.

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.

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 <https://www.ppsni.gov.uk/Surveys-and-Research-7881.html>. Any member of the public may comment on the report by contacting PPS as follows:

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