Scottish Crime and Justice Survey (SCJS) update

Crime Surveys User Conference 2020

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SCJS - overview
SCJS - who takes part?

- **Who takes part in the survey?**
  - Around 5,500 adults (aged 16 & over)
  - In private households (incl. rented accommodation)
  - Across Scotland

- **Who does not take part in the survey**
  - Children
  - Those living in group, residences, institutions or those without a fixed address
  - Commercial or public sector bodies
SCJS - how is the information collected?

1. An interviewer visits the respondent’s home.

2. Participation is voluntary, but is important in helping us make representative estimates for Scotland.

3. A sample of households are randomly selected.

4. Interviews last approximately 40 minutes.

5. The main survey questions are answered verbally and the interviewer inputs information into a computer.

6. An additional section on sensitive issues (such as drug use) is completed privately on a tablet computer.
SCJS - what topics are covered?

- Experiences of being a victim of:
  - Violent Crime
    - Including:
      - Assault
      - Robbery
  - Property Crime
    - Including:
      - Vandalism
      - Personal theft
      - Other household theft

- Public perceptions of:
  - Crime
  - The Police
  - The Justice system

What is not covered by the survey:
- Crime without a specific victim (e.g., drug possession, speeding)
- Crimes against business (e.g., shoplifting)
- Crime without a victim to interview (e.g., homicide)

Respondents also self-complete a questionnaire that covers drug use, partner abuse, sexual victimisation & stalking
Key findings from the 2018/19 SCJS
SCJS - how much crime was there?

- As in previous years, most crime was property related:
  - 71% PROPERTY CRIME
  - 29% VIOLENT CRIME

- Comparing to police recorded crime, both key sources found large decreases in the level of crime in Scotland since 2008/09.
SCJS - perceptions of the police & the justice system

• The majority of adults in Scotland (56%) believed the police in their local area were doing an excellent or good job in 2018/19.

• Consistent with previous years, the majority of adults knew little about the criminal justice system but were fairly confident about its operation. For example, three-quarters (76%) of adults were confident that it allows those accused of crimes to get a fair trial regardless of who they are
SCJS - fear of crime

- People feel safer than a decade ago:

78% of adults felt safe walking alone after dark.

- 12 percentage points since 2008/09.
- No change since 2017/18.

Graph showing:
- 93% alone in home at night in 2008/09 rising to 96%.
- 66% walking alone in local area after dark in 2008/09 rising to 78%.
How COVID-19 has affected the SCJS
• March 17\textsuperscript{th} all Scottish Government face-to-face surveying, including the SCJS, was suspended

• Results for 2019/20 can be produced to a comparable quality to earlier years, though no SCJS for 2020/21 (and potentially 2021/22)

• Developed a new survey on the population’s experience of crime during the COVID-19 pandemic: the Scottish Victimisation Telephone Survey (SVTS)
The Scottish Victimisation Telephone Survey (SVTS)

- Main aim to capture victimisation
- Telephone survey of re-contact SCJS sample
- 20 minute interview (compared to 40 minute SCJS)
- Interviews ran in September through to October, with 2,654 interviews completed
- Response rate of 42%
The questionnaire

- Victim form
- Perceptions of crime
- Feelings of safety
- Worry about crime
- Security consciousness
- Perceptions of the police
What’s next for the SVTS and SCJS?

- We anticipate that findings from the SVTS will be available in early 2021
- Findings from the 2019/20 SCJS will be available in March 2021
- Opportunities for further analysis
- 2021/22 survey year
Stay in touch

• If you have any feedback or further questions about the surveys, please get in touch with the SCJS team at SCJS@gov.scot

• Users will be kept updated through ScotStat communications, including on any plans for a second follow-up survey. You can sign up to receive ScotStat updates via the ScotStat website