



Crime and criminal justice

Our work in the area of crime and the criminal justice system reflects the emphasis on evidence-based policy making. Many of our studies have provided policy makers with the information they need to develop improvements to the criminal justice system. Other studies have been used by local authorities and their partners to measure perceptions of crime in their local area.

Recent examples of projects include:

Scottish Crime and Criminal Justice Survey

In 2007 we were awarded a contract to carry out this survey for the Scottish Government. This is the first time this survey, which has run in some form since 1993, has been run on a continuous basis. It involves interviews with a random sample of around 16,000 adults per year, starting from the 1st April 2008. Initially, the contract provides for 2 years of interviewing. The survey provides information that is used to develop policy in the areas of crime and civil justice. The questionnaire is modular in design, with some questions being only asked of a quarter of the sample, and uses CASI (computer-assisted self interviewing) for sensitive question areas. Questions are designed to provide estimates of the prevalence of victimisation and incidence of crimes comparable to those recorded by the police; information on areas of concern such as card fraud, id theft and workplace violence; opinions on issues related to justice such as community sentencing, performance of part of the criminal justice system; recent experience of civil justice; drug use; domestic abuse and sexual victimisation.

Scottish Crime Survey

The 2003 sweep of the Scottish Crime Survey was commissioned by the Scottish Executive and was undertaken by TNS as part of a consortium. The survey involved face-to-face interviews with a random, pre-selected sample of 5,000 adults across Scotland. It was designed to provide robust data on victimisation rates, and views on crime and the criminal justice system.

An additional self-completion element provided data on illicit drug use and experiences of domestic abuse. There was a further self-completion survey of 400 young people aged 12-15 years, which covered experiences of crime and bullying outside the home, and knowledge of drugs.



North Liverpool Community Justice Centre

Commissioned by the Department for Constitutional Affairs, this involved an RDD telephone and face-to-face tracking survey over several waves. The survey monitored residents' perceptions of crime and antisocial behaviour in a particular area of North Liverpool, their attitudes towards the Criminal Justice System and an evaluation of the introduction of a new type of community justice led initiative in the area, the North Liverpool Community Justice Centre, which is the first of its type to in the country. The first wave of research was conducted with 1,400 respondents in June and July 2005, with follow up waves (which included a face-to-face element) following over the next two years. This project required multiple contact attempts to get a good response rate among residents in a small local area. The report was published by the Ministry of Justice in 2007.

Understanding Community Cohesion: A case study approach

The Home Office commissioned TNS Social to conduct a qualitative study with residents in nine Local Areas across England. A large-scale qualitative project, 50 focus groups were conducted in a 6-week period. The groups discussed issues surrounding community cohesion, that is, they explored and sought to understand what it is like to live in the residents' community and crucially, if residents from different backgrounds get on together. The groups were conducted in February-March 2005 and the nine locations were selected to reflect different types of neighbourhood in terms of levels of deprivation and proportion of BME residents. Each focus group was conducted with a single ethnic group. We identified a number of factors that residents consider important in building community cohesion and identified factors that would promote and restrict community cohesion.

Barriers to Citizen Governance, Home Office.

To support the Home Office's 'Together We Can Plan', the Civil Renewal Unit commissioned TNS to explore the motivations and barriers to activities that might be termed 'citizen governance' through qualitative research. The key objective of the research was to provide information to inform policies aimed at supporting and sustaining more effective citizen governance. The research comprised 13 focus group discussions. Participants were recruited from the 2005 Local Area Boost to the Home Office Citizenship Survey. Participants were selected on the basis of whether or not they had engaged in citizen governance participation.

Crown Prosecution Service

We have conducted a number of consultations for the Equality and Diversity Unit of the **CPS**. These exercises have been conducted among community organisations, academics, NGOs and other stakeholders depending on the subject matter. The issues we have covered include domestic violence, police area reform, treasury counsel, transmission of sexually transmitted infections, deaths in custody, charging decisions and the CPS's Race Equality Scheme. For example:

Consultation on public policy document on domestic violence

This was conducted for the CPS before they launched this high profile public policy. We consulted with relevant community and voluntary groups as well as CPS's partners within the criminal justice system to understand their views of the draft policy. This was then amended to take into account the views of these various stakeholders before publication and implementation.

Race Equality Scheme

We carried out a consultation exercise among minority community groups as part of the development of the CPS' Race Equality Scheme. Workshops were conducted to consult with community groups and CPS staff to establish which CPS policies and procedures were of most relevance to minority ethnic communities and how the impact of these policies and procedures could be monitored. We followed this up with consultation on the development of a public policy statement on dealing with the prosecution of racially and religiously aggravated crime (a key area identified in the Race Equality Consultation). As part of this study we consulted representatives of minority communities as well as other agencies within the criminal justice system. The final policy statement was presented by the Attorney General at the press conference.

Criminal Injuries Compensation Authority

We conducted a large scale review of clients' satisfaction with the service they had received from CICA. The study looked at clients' understanding of the application and review process as well as their views about the compensation received. Over 2000 postal questionnaires were analysed. The study findings were fed into a large-scale review of processes.

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