

## Article

# Perception and experience of police and criminal justice system, England and Wales: year ending March 2025

Perceptions of the police and criminal justice system in England and Wales, using accredited official statistics from Crime Survey for England and Wales (CSEW).

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# 1 . Main points

The Crime Survey for England and Wales (CSEW) for the year ending (YE) March 2025 showed:

- around half of all respondents reported that their local police were doing a good or excellent job (49%); this has decreased compared with a decade ago (62% in the YE March 2015 survey)
- around two-thirds of respondents reported that they had confidence in the local police (67%); this was a slight increase compared with the previous year (65%), but lower compared with ten years ago (76% in the YE March 2015 survey)
- around 1 in 9 respondents reported seeing police officers or police community support officers on foot patrol in their local area once a week or more (11%); this has decreased from around 3 in 10 in the YE March 2015 survey (29%), and from around 4 in 10 at its peak in the YE March 2011 survey (39%)
- respondents who had been a victim of crime in the last 12 months and reported it to the police were satisfied with the police response in around half of crime incidents (51%); this was a decrease compared with the YE March 2015 survey (70%)
- around half of all respondents reported that they were confident that the criminal justice system as a whole is effective (48%); a decrease compared with its peak in the YE March 2016 survey (54%)
- around 3 in 5 respondents reported that they agreed that the criminal justice system as a whole is fair (63%); this represents a decrease compared with its peak in the YE March 2018 survey (69%)

## 2 . Public perceptions of local policing

The Crime Survey for England and Wales (CSEW) asks people aged 16 years and over:

"Taking everything into account, how good a job do you think the police in this area are doing?"

Of the respondents, 49% gave their local police a positive rating (that they did a good or excellent job) in the year ending (YE) March 2025 survey. This was a decrease compared with the YE March 2015 survey (62%) and there has been a general downward trend in the rating over the last nine years (Figure 1).

**Figure 1: There has been a downward trend in the rating of the local police over the last nine years**

Good or excellent rating

Figure 1: There has been a downward trend in the rating of the local police over the last nine years



Source: Crime Survey for England and Wales (CSEW) from the Office for National Statistics

Notes:

1. Owing to the suspension of the CSEW during the Coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic, data are not available for YE March 2021 and YE March 2022.

Data from YE March 2012 CSEW onwards are not directly comparable with those from previous years because of changes to the CSEW questionnaire. However, there was a general upward trend during this preceding period (YE March 2006 to YE March 2011 surveys).

There were differences in the rating of local police by a range of respondent characteristics:

- people aged 55 to 64 years (44%) and 65 to 74 years (43%) were less likely to provide a positive rating of the local police compared with other age groups
- those identifying within the "Asian/Asian British" ethnic group (55%), "Black/African/Caribbean/Black British" ethnic group (55%) and "Other" ethnic group (57%) were more likely to rate their local police positively than those identifying within the "White" ethnic group (48%)
- there was variation within these broad ethnic groupings; for example, within the "Black/African/Caribbean/Black British" ethnic group, those identifying as Black African (59%) were more likely to rate the police positively than those identifying as Black Caribbean (42%)
- people born in the UK (46%) were less likely to rate their local police positively, compared with people not born in the UK (59%)
- disabled people were less likely to rate their local police positively (43%), compared with non-disabled people (50%)
- those who had experienced a crime in the previous 12 months were less likely to rate their local police positively (40%), compared with those who had not experienced a crime (51%)
- those respondents who perceived that crime had gone up in the last few years at a local level were less likely to give the police a positive rating (37%), compared with those respondents who did not think that crime had gone up in the past few years (57%)
- those who reported that there was a high level of anti-social behaviour in their local area were less likely to give local police a positive rating (30%), compared with those who reported lower levels of anti-social behaviour (52%)

It is important to note that these respondent characteristics are not necessarily independently related to police ratings. For example, the relationship between disability and police rating may be related to age.

As well as this general question on rating, the CSEW also asks people aged 16 years and over whether they agree or disagree with several specific statements relating to their perceptions of the local police:

- police can be relied upon when needed
- police would treat you with respect
- police would treat you fairly
- police understand local concerns
- police deal with local concerns
- police in this area can be trusted
- overall confidence in local police

The data show a general downward trend across all categories in recent years (Figure 2). Although, there were slight increases across most categories compared with the YE March 2024. For example, the proportion of respondents agreeing that they have "Overall confidence in local police" increased in the YE March 2025 survey (67%), compared with the previous year (65%), but was lower compared with 10 years ago (76% in the YE March 2015 survey).

## **Figure 2: There has been a downward trend across different categories related to confidence in the local police in recent years**

Percentage saying that they "tend to agree" or "strongly agree"

### **Notes**

1. The variable "Police in this area can be trusted" was included from the year ending (YE) March 2016.
2. Owing to the suspension of the CSEW during the Coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic, data are not available for YE March 2021 and YE March 2022.

Data from YE March 2012 CSEW onwards are not directly comparable with those from previous years because of changes to the CSEW questionnaire. However, there was a general upward trend across these indicators during this preceding period (YE March 2006 to YE March 2011 surveys).

### 3 . Visibility of the local police

The Crime Survey for England and Wales (CSEW) asks people aged 16 years and over how often they see police officers or police community support officers (PCSOs) on foot patrol in their local area (within about a 15-minute walk).

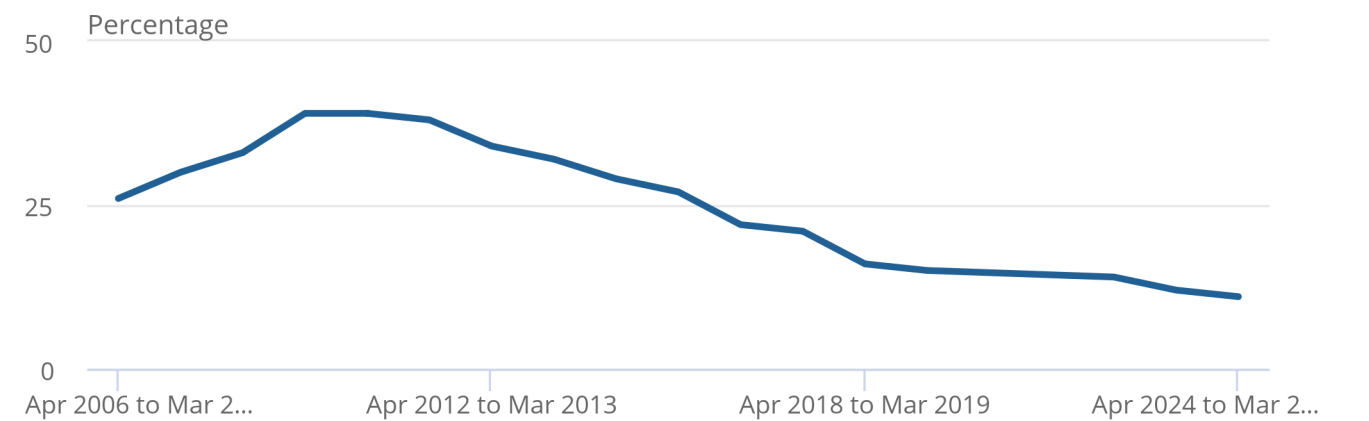
Around 1 in 9 respondents reported high police visibility (seeing officers or PCSOs on foot patrol in their local area once a week or more) in the year ending (YE) March 2025 survey (11%). There has been a continued downward trend in the reporting of high police visibility since its peak in the YE March 2011 survey (39%), following increases between the YE March 2007 survey (26%), when the question was first asked, and the YE March 2011 survey.

**Figure 3: There has been a steady downward trend in the prevalence of high police visibility since YE March 2011**

Percentage reporting high police visibility

Figure 3: There has been a steady downward trend in the prevalence of high police visibility since YE March 2011

Percentage reporting high police visibility



Source: Crime Survey for England and Wales (CSEW) from the Office for National Statistics

Notes:

1. Owing to the suspension of the CSEW during the Coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic, data are not available for the YE March 2021 and the YE March 2022.

The proportion of people reporting high police visibility in YE March 2025 varied across different groups within the population:

- people aged 65 to 74 years (5%) and 75 and over (7%) were less likely to report high police visibility compared with other age groups
- people born outside the UK (19%) were more likely to report high police visibility than people born in the UK (9%)
- disabled people (9%) were less likely to report high police visibility than non-disabled people (12%)
- the proportion of people reporting high police visibility was higher among those who identified as gay or lesbian (24%) and bisexual (22%), compared with those who identified as heterosexual (10%)
- people living in single-person households with children (17%) and people living in households with multiple adults and children (13%) were more likely to report high police visibility, compared with people living in households without children (10%)
- people living in urban areas were more likely to report high police visibility (13%), compared with rural areas (4%)
- the proportion of people reporting high police visibility was higher among those who perceived high levels of anti-social behaviour in their local area (18%), compared with those who perceived lower levels of anti-social behaviour (11%)

It is important to note that respondent characteristics are not necessarily independently related to high police visibility. For example, the relationship between household structure and high police visibility may be related to age.

## 4 . Victim satisfaction with the police response

The Crime Survey for England and Wales (CSEW) asks those respondents that have been a victim of crime in the last 12 months and reported the incident to the police:

"Overall, were you (the victim) satisfied or dissatisfied with the way the police handled the matter?"

Responses to this question can vary according to the crime type, the victim's background characteristics and the victim's experiences of the criminal justice system. As the victim satisfaction question in the CSEW asks about each individual incident, victims of multiple incidents will be counted more than once. Therefore, analysis is based on the numbers of incidents, rather than on individuals.

Victims were ("very" or "fairly") satisfied with how the police handled the matter in approximately half of crime incidents (51%) in the year ending (YE) March 2025 survey. There has been a general downward trend in victim satisfaction with how the police handled the matter since the YE March 2014 survey (75%), following increases between the YE March 2007 (58%) and YE March 2014 survey.

**Figure 4: There has been a decline in victim satisfaction with how the police handled crime incidents since the year ending March 2014**

Percentage of victims who were very or fairly satisfied with police

Figure 4: There has been a decline in victim satisfaction with how the police handled crime incidents since the year ending March 2014



Source: Crime Survey for England and Wales (CSEW) from the Office for National Statistics

Notes:

1. Data not available for the year ending (YE) March 2002.
2. Owing to the suspension of the CSEW during the Coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic, data are not available for YE March 2021 and YE March 2022.



The proportion of incidents in which victims were satisfied with the police response varied by the following characteristics:

- victims aged 16 to 24 years were less likely to be satisfied with the police response (32%), compared with those aged 45 to 54 years (61%), those aged 65 to 74 years (59%), and those aged 75 and over (61%)
- victims who were single were less likely to be satisfied with the police response (39%), compared with victims who were married or in civil partnerships (58%), or divorced (59%)

There were also differences in victim satisfaction by crime type. Victim satisfaction was lower in incidents of theft from the person (26%), compared with most other crime types:

- violence (58%)
- domestic burglary incidents (62%)
- other household theft (54%)
- vehicle-related theft (48%)

In addition, levels of victim satisfaction with how the police dealt with an incident were also affected by wider criminal justice system factors. The proportion of incidents where the victim was satisfied with how the police dealt with the matter was higher:

- where the victim felt they were treated fairly by the police (74%) compared with those who felt they were not (5%)
- where the police found out who did it (62%), compared with where the police did not find out who did it (42%)
- when the offender was charged by the police (95%), compared with when no action was taken against the offender (36%)
- where the victim was kept informed by the police (77%), compared with where the victim was not kept informed well (19%)

## 5 . Confidence in the criminal justice system

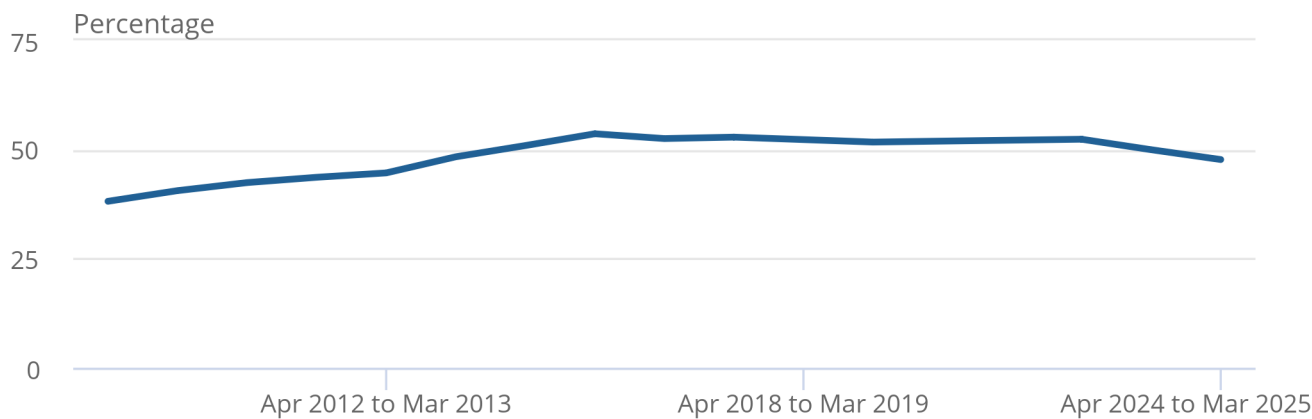
The Crime Survey for England and Wales (CSEW) asks people aged 16 years and over whether they are confident that the criminal justice system (CJS) as a whole is effective. Just under half of all respondents were confident that the CJS is effective in the year ending (YE) March 2025 survey (48%). There was a steady increase in confidence in the effectiveness of the CJS as a whole between the YE March 2009 (38%) and YE March 2016 survey (54%), followed by a gradual decline to 48% in the YE March 2025 survey.

**Figure 5: Confidence in the effectiveness of the criminal justice system (CJS) has decreased in recent years, following steady increases**

Percentage saying that they are confident that the CJS as a whole is effective

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Percentage saying that they are confident that the CJS as a whole is effective



Source: Crime Survey for England and Wales (CSEW) from the Office for National Statistics

Notes:

1. Question was not asked in the year ending (YE) March 2019.
2. Owing to the suspension of the CSEW during the Coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic, data are not available for YE March 2021 and YE March 2022.

Confidence in the effectiveness of the CJS differed across certain respondent characteristics:



- people aged 16 to 24 years were more likely to report being confident in the effectiveness of the CJS (61%) than people in all other age groups
- people born in the UK were less likely to be confident in the effectiveness of the CJS (43%) than people born outside the UK (65%)
- disabled people were less likely to be confident in the effectiveness of the CJS (37%), compared with non-disabled people (50%)
- people who had experienced a crime in the last 12 months were less likely to report being confident in the effectiveness of the CJS (39%), compared with people who had not been a victim of crime in the last 12 months (49%)
- people who perceived that there was a high level of anti-social behaviour in their local area were less likely to report being confident that the CJS is effective (37%), compared with people who perceived lower levels of anti-social behaviour in their local area (50%)

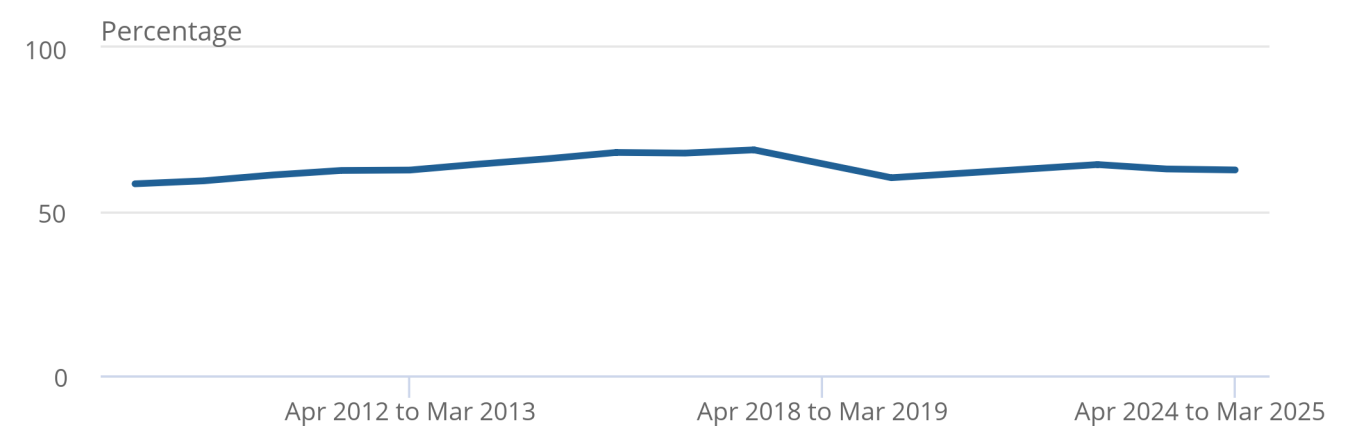
The CSEW also asks respondents whether they agree that the CJS as a whole is fair. Around 3 in 5 respondents agreed that the CJS as a whole is fair in the YE March 2025 survey. Over the long term, there were increases in the proportion of respondents agreeing that the CJS as a whole is fair from the YE March 2009 survey (58%) to a peak in the YE March 2018 survey (69%). This has been followed by decreases in recent years to 63% in the YE March 2025 survey.

**Figure 6: There have been decreases in confidence that the criminal justice system (CJS) as a whole is fair in recent years, following steady increases up to YE March 2018**

Percentage agreeing that the CJS as a whole is fair

Figure 6: There have been decreases in confidence that the criminal justice system (CJS) as a whole is fair in recent years, following steady increases up to YE March 2018

Percentage agreeing that the CJS as a whole is fair



Source: Crime Survey for England and Wales (CSEW) from the Office for National Statistics

Notes:

1. Question was not asked in year ending (YE) March 2019.
2. Owing to the suspension of the CSEW during the Coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic, data are not available for YE March 2021 and YE March 2022.

Confidence among respondents that the CJS as a whole is fair, differed across certain respondent characteristics:

- people aged 16 to 24 years were more likely to agree that the CJS is fair (68%), compared with other age groups
- men were more likely to agree that the CJS is fair (65%), compared with women (61%)
- people born in the UK were less likely to agree that the CJS is fair (60%), compared with people born outside the UK (72%)
- disabled people were less likely to agree that the CJS is fair (52%), than non-disabled people (65%)
- people living in single-person households with children (56%) were less likely to agree that the CJS is fair, compared with people living in households with multiple adults and children (66%), and people living in households without children (62%)
- people who had experienced a crime in the last 12 months were less likely to agree that the CJS is fair (54%), compared with people who had not experienced a crime in the last 12 months (64%)
- people who perceived a high level of anti-social behaviour in their local area were less likely to agree that the CJS is fair (46%), compared with people who perceived lower levels of anti-social behaviour in their local area (66%)

It is important to note that respondent characteristics are not necessarily independently related to perceptions of the CJS. For example, the relationship between disability and confidence that the CJS as a whole is fair, may be related to age.

CSEW data also showed that 19% of people aged 16 and over were aware of the Code of Practice for Victims of Crime in the YE March 2025. This has remained relatively stable across the years.

## 6 . Data on perception and experience of police and criminal justice system

[Perception and experience of police and criminal justice system, England and Wales: year ending March 2025](#)

Dataset | Released 19 August 2025

Perceptions and experience of the police and criminal justice system in England and Wales, using accredited official statistics from the Crime Survey for England and Wales (CSEW).

## 7 . Data sources and quality

Data presented in this article are based on the Crime Survey for England and Wales (CSEW). CSEW estimates are [accredited official statistics](#) and were [independently reviewed by the Office for Statistics Regulation](#) in October 2024. They comply with the standards of trustworthiness, quality and value in the [Code of Practice for Statistics](#) and should be labelled "accredited official statistics".

The CSEW is primarily an interviewer-administered face-to-face victimisation survey in which people (aged 16 years and over) resident in households in England and Wales are asked about their experiences of selected crimes in the 12 months before the interview. They are also asked about other crime-related issues, such as attitudes and perceptions of the police or the Criminal Justice System. It tracks long-term trends from year ending (YE) December 1981 to YE March 2025.

The CSEW uses a sample, not the whole population. The sample aims to be accurate within practical limits, such as time and cost. Therefore, the estimates have some uncertainty and are not precise figures. This affects how changes in estimates should be interpreted. View more information on [how we measure and communicate uncertainty for our surveys](#).

Changes were made to CSEW questions in April 2011 that is related to data presented in [Section 2: Public perceptions of local policing](#). Therefore, data from YE March 2012 CSEW onwards are not directly comparable with those from previous years. These questionnaire changes may have led to an increase in positive responses. For further information, see our [Focus on public perceptions of policing 2011/12 release](#).

More information about the CSEW can be found in our [User guide to crime statistics for England and Wales](#).

## 8 . Related links

[Crime in England and Wales: year ending March 2025](#)

Bulletin | Released 24 July 2025

Crime against households and adults using data from police recorded crime and the Crime Survey for England and Wales (CSEW).

## 9 . Cite this article

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