The Scottish Crime and Justice Survey: Consistency and Change

Neil Grant, Scottish Government
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What I’ll cover today…

• Background to SCJS
• 2014/15 survey
• 2016/17 onwards
  – Change and consistency
  – Procurement
  – Set up
What is the SCJS?

The SCJS is a large-scale social survey, run by the Scottish Government, which asks people about their experiences and perceptions of crime. The survey is important because it provides a picture of crime in Scotland, including crimes that haven’t been reported to, or recorded by the police.

Who takes part?

6,000 adults (over 16) in private households across Scotland

Who isn’t included?

Children
Those living in group residences, institutions or those without a fixed address.
Commercial or public sector bodies
How are the data collected?

1. A sample of households are randomly selected.
2. An interviewer visits the respondents’ home.
3. Participation is voluntary, but is important in helping us make representative estimates for Scotland.
4. Interviews last approximately 40 minutes.
5. The main survey questions are answered verbally.
6. An additional section on sensitive issues (such as drug use) is completed privately on a tablet computer.

What does the survey cover?

- Vandalism
- All motor vehicle theft
- Personal theft (excl robbery)
- Serious Assault
- Minor Assault with injury
- Robbery
- Property Crime
- Other h’hold theft (inc cycles)
- Housebreaking
- Assault
- Attempted assault
- Minor Assault with no/ negligible injury
- Violent Crime
- All SCJS crime
A brief history of Scottish Crime Surveys...

- Crime & victimisation surveys in Scotland have a wee bit of history...

- Pre-2008 survey intermittent with sample size c.5000. Surveys were administered using paper questionnaires by interviewers on smaller samples (c. 5,000 interviews), and early surveys did not cover the Highlands and Islands of Scotland.

- **McCaig review (2003)** of the design, content and management of the survey found the survey unable to produce trends, high margin of error (esp. around lower incidence crimes), unable to report findings below the national level.

- The SCJS represents a major departure in survey design, methodology and sample size
  - 2008/09 (c. 16,000 interviews)
  - 2009/10 (c. 16,000 interviews)
  - 2010/11 (c. 13,000 interviews)
  - 2012/13 & 2014/15 (c. 12,000 interviews)
The latest SCJS results…

The SCJS measured **814,639** crimes in 2012/13

The SCJS estimates that **crime in Scotland has fallen by 22% since 2008/09.**

39% of crime was reported to the police

Victims didn’t report crime because they felt that the police couldn’t have done anything, it was too trivial or the police wouldn’t be interested.

When crime was reported, two thirds of victims were satisfied with how the police handled the matter.

The risk of property crime was higher than violent crime

The risk of crime was higher for those living in the 15% most deprived areas.

The risk of crime decreased with age

The risk of crime was slightly higher for men

One in six adults was a victim of crime however…
3.1% of adults were the victim of violent crime

89% of violent crimes were minor assaults, 2% were serious assaults & 1% was robbery

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Percentage</th>
<th>Description</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>4%</td>
<td>Men were twice as likely to be the victim of violent crime</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2%</td>
<td>Young men (aged 16-24) had the highest risk of violent crime</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11%</td>
<td>The offender was under the influence of alcohol in 59% of violent crimes</td>
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Almost one in three violent crimes happened between 9pm and 3am on a weekend.

59% of these, three-fifths sustained minor bruising or a black eye.

48% of violent crime was reported to the police.

(*23% were not reported because the victim dealt with the matter themselves)
**14.8% of adults were the victim of property crime**

27% of property crime was vandalism, 21% was other household theft, 13% was personal theft, 6% was motor vehicle-related theft & 4% was housebreaking

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<tr>
<th>Risk of Property Crime</th>
<th>25-44 year olds had the highest risk of property crime</th>
<th>19%</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Men 15%</td>
<td>Women 14%</td>
<td></td>
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<th>Over 60’s had the lowest risk of property crime</th>
<th>8%</th>
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<tr>
<td>51% of victims estimated the value of damaged property to be less than £1300</td>
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<tr>
<td>78% of victims estimated the value of stolen property to be less than £1300</td>
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<th>Damaged or stolen items were covered by insurance in 41% of cases.</th>
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<td>35% of property crime was reported to the police*</td>
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<tr>
<td>(*43% was not reported because the incident was considered to be trivial)</td>
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<td>Housebreaking was the most reported crime</td>
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The 2014/15 Survey

• 2014/15 fieldwork finished in May 2015, following a two-month extension.
• Publication set for **March 2016** for the Main Findings report.
• Engagement with users on how we report has led to a range of planned improvements, including:
  – More streamlined reporting
  – Graphic summaries
  – More information on equalities groups, comparisons with police recorded crime
  – Improved dissemination of results (including on social media)
The contract has been awarded to a consortium of **Ipsos MORI** and **NatCen Social Research**

- Contract will run from 2016/17 until 2019/20, with a possible 2 year extension.
- From 2016/17, the SCJS will become a continuous survey with a sample size of around 6,000 adults each year
What’s the difference?

The new survey will, at its core, remain consistent with previous iterations of the Scottish Crime and Justice Survey.

**SCJS 2014/15**

- 12,000 adults take part every two years
- Results available every two years

**SCJS 2016/17**

- 6,000 adults take part every year
- Some results available annually (e.g. perceptions data)
Where are we now?

• Working with our new contractors to set up the 2016/17 survey.
• We have carried out a **Questionnaire Review** to consider what to include in the 2016/17 survey. (Find out more here- [http://ow.ly/VjueZ](http://ow.ly/VjueZ))
• Making some improvements in how we carry out our fieldwork (e.g. improved advance materials).
• Planning for a pilot (Jan 2016) and looking at consistency throughout, e.g. scripting, coding etc
• Working with our users to understand how to best meet their needs as the survey changes.
Plans for the 2016/17 Questionnaire

• Maintaining consistency is very important, however, it is important to make some changes to ensure that the survey best meets users needs.
• A range of minor changes to ensure that the survey continues to collect the most relevant and up-to-date information (e.g. police contact question to include ‘call 101’, list of substances in drug use).
• Updating how we collect information on harassment to better capture online forms of harassment.
• Some more substantive changes, including considering questions on:
  • Serious and Organised Crime
  • Workplace Abuse
  • Public expectations of police
• Continuing to develop options on capturing information on cyber crime through the survey (considering planned changes to CSEW).
• Annual survey allows us to begin making plans for future surveys.
Self-completion form

- Currently asked to whole sample (no-age restriction)
- High-proportion of interviewer administered ‘self-completion’ forms
- Respondents ‘don’t like computers’

- Ethical considerations
- Sensitive questions
- Data quality - results different to ‘true self-completion’

- Solution – introduce 3rd stage: paper questionnaire
SCJS access and contacts

Access data and results


**Data tables** - breakdowns by demographics

**Reports** - Main, Technical, Sexual Victimisation, Domestic Abuse, Drug Use

**Datasets** - available from the UKDS - [http://ukdataservice.ac.uk/](http://ukdataservice.ac.uk/)

**StatsTV** - ow.ly/RnNns

Get in touch

**SCJS Mailbox**: SCJS@gov.scot

Neil Grant, SCJS Director - neil.grant@gov.scot


Follow us on Twitter: @SGJusticeAnalys
Questions?