



VIEWS ON ORGANISED CRIME IN NORTHERN IRELAND: FINDINGS FROM THE FEBRUARY 2003 NORTHERN IRELAND OMNIBUS SURVEY

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This bulletin describes public awareness and knowledge of organised crime in Northern Ireland. The findings are based on an analysis of eight questions that were included in the February 2003 Northern Ireland Omnibus Survey, and makes comparisons, where appropriate, with survey findings from January 2002.

KEY FINDINGS

- ◆ Of those surveyed, the majority (95%) thought that there was a problem with organised crime in Northern Ireland (Figure 1).
- ◆ Almost four fifths (79%) of those surveyed thought that paramilitary organisations were mainly responsible for committing offences related to organised crime in Northern Ireland (Figure 4).
- ◆ More than four fifths (84%) of those surveyed said that they associated drug dealing with organised crime in Northern Ireland, 49% said protection/extortion racketeering, 38% said armed robbery and 37% said fuel smuggling (Figure 9). This compares to the January 2002 Omnibus Survey where 74% said that they associated drug dealing with organised crime in Northern Ireland, 40% said protection racketeering and 19% said fuel smuggling.
- ◆ Over half (52%) of those surveyed said that they would report someone if they knew they were associated with organised crime (Figure 11). This compares to 48% of respondents in the January 2002 Omnibus Survey.
- ◆ Almost four fifths (79%) of those surveyed said if they were to report someone that they knew was associated with organised crime, they would report them to the police (Table 6).
- ◆ Almost half (47%) of those surveyed had heard of the Organised Crime Task Force (Figure 16). This proportion increased from 21% in the January 2002 Omnibus Survey.
- ◆ The majority (92%) of those surveyed thought that the existence of an Organised Crime Task Force was a good idea (Figure 19). A similar proportion of respondents in the January 2002 Omnibus Survey (93%) also thought that it was a good idea.
- ◆ Two thirds (66%) of those surveyed said that the existence of an Organised Crime Task Force was a good idea because it would clamp down on crime, 37% said that it would make Northern Ireland a safer place and 30% said that it would reduce drug dealing (Figure 21).

INTRODUCTION

1. The Northern Ireland Organised Crime Task Force was established in September 2000 to provide strategic direction for a multi agency approach to tackling organised crime. Chaired by the Minister of State, Jane Kennedy, the Task Force brings together representatives from Government, law enforcement and a wide range of other agencies. It is a forum where partner agencies can discuss problems, share information and agree priorities.

2. The Task Force published its third annual Threat Assessment of the scale and nature of the problem of organised crime in Northern Ireland together with its strategy to tackle it in June 2003. The Threat Assessment identifies that the level of organised criminality remains high with around two thirds of the groups identified having associations or links to paramilitaries.

3. In order to gain an understanding of the level of public awareness and knowledge of organised crime, the Northern Ireland Office Statistics and Research Branch, on behalf of the Organised Crime Task Force, commissioned a number of questions in both the January 2002 and February 2003 Northern Ireland Omnibus Surveys.

4. The Northern Ireland Omnibus Survey is conducted several times each year by the Central Survey Unit of the Northern Ireland Statistics and Research Agency and is designed to provide a snapshot of the behaviour, lifestyle and views of a representative sample of people in Northern Ireland.

5. The survey comprises two distinct parts: core questions about the respondents and their individual circumstances, and a variety of mainly attitudinal questions commissioned by clients. Originally, four questions were commissioned by the Northern Ireland Office Statistics and Research Branch in the January 2002 Northern Ireland Omnibus Survey. The questions asked were:

- ◆ 'What types of crime would you associate with organised crime in Northern Ireland?'
- ◆ 'How likely is it that you would report someone if you knew that they were associated with organised crime?'
- ◆ 'Have you heard of the Organised Crime Task Force?'
- ◆ 'In your opinion, is the existence of an Organised Crime Task Force to deal with organised crime a good idea?'

In order to build and improve on an understanding of public awareness and knowledge of organised crime in Northern Ireland, a further four questions were included in the February 2003 Northern Ireland Omnibus Survey. These were:

- ◆ 'Do you think that there is a problem with organised crime in Northern Ireland?'
- ◆ 'Who do you think is mainly responsible for committing offences related to organised crime in Northern Ireland?'
- ◆ 'If you were to report someone, who would you report them to?'
- ◆ 'Why do you think the existence of an Organised Crime Task Force is a good idea?'

This bulletin is based on the findings from the February 2003 Omnibus Survey and focuses on analysis by:

- ◆ gender
- ◆ age
- ◆ area of residence
- ◆ religion

The bulletin also examines changes in respondents' views between the January 2002 Survey and February 2003 Survey.

6. The sample to be surveyed was drawn from the Valuation and Lands Agency list, the most up-to-date listing of private households in Northern Ireland. At each address one person aged 16 or over was selected to participate. From an eligible sample of 1,941 individuals, 1,214 interviews were achieved, giving a response rate of 63%. The sample is designed to be representative of the population of Northern Ireland. Further information relating to the sample can be found in the Technical Notes section.

7. Analysis by religion is based only on those respondents who said that they were either Catholic or Protestant. Respondents who refused to answer the religion question or those who said they were a religion other than Catholic or Protestant were excluded from this analysis.

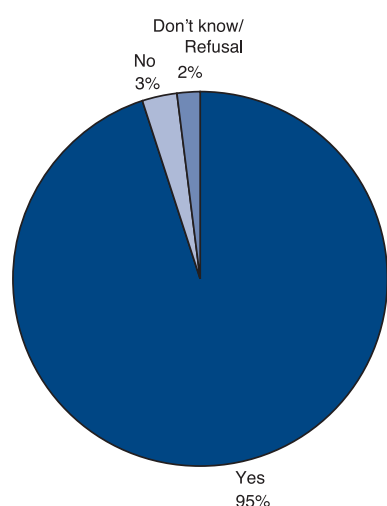
8. Analysis by area is based on three areas in Northern Ireland: Belfast; East of Northern Ireland and West of Northern Ireland. These areas are formed using the 26 District Councils in Northern Ireland. Further information relating to area breakdown can be found in the Technical Notes section.

SURVEY FINDINGS

Question 1: Do you think that there is a problem with organised crime in Northern Ireland?¹

9. Overall, the majority (95%) of respondents thought that there was a problem with organised crime in Northern Ireland (Figure 1). Only 3% of respondents thought that there was not a problem with organised crime and 2% of respondents said they didn't know.

Figure 1: Respondents' views on whether there is a problem with organised crime in Northern Ireland



Gender

10. Identical proportions of males and females thought that there was a problem with organised crime in Northern Ireland (95%) (Table 1). Proportionately more males (4%) than females (2%) thought that there was not a problem with organised crime in Northern Ireland.

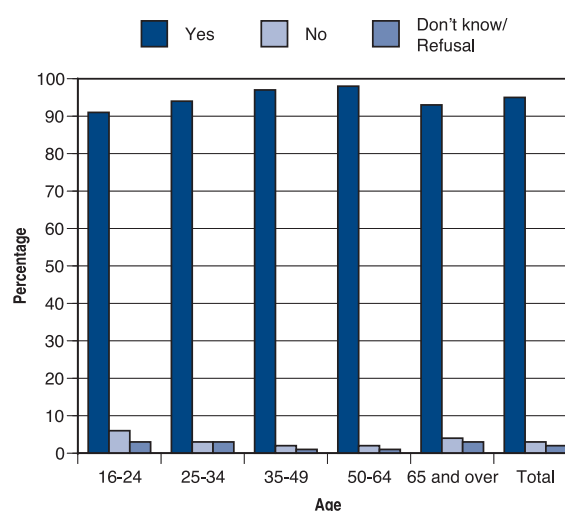
Table 1: Respondents' views on whether there is a problem with organised crime in Northern Ireland: by gender

	Male %	Female %	Total %
Base	526	688	1214
Yes	95	95	95
No	4	2	3
Don't know/Refusal	1	3	2

Age

11. The majority of respondents within each age group thought that there was a problem with organised crime in Northern Ireland (Figure 2). Respondents within the 35-49 (97%) and 50-64 (98%) age groups were the most likely to think that there was a problem with organised crime whilst those respondents in the 16-24 age group (91%) were the least likely to think this was the case.

Figure 2: Respondents' views on whether there is a problem with organised crime in Northern Ireland: by age group



Area

12. Although the majority of respondents thought that there was a problem with organised crime in Northern Ireland, this was more likely to be the case for respondents from the East of Northern Ireland (97%) whilst respondents from the West of Northern Ireland (92%) were least likely to think this was the case (Table 2).

Table 2: Respondents' views on whether there is a problem with organised crime in Northern Ireland: by area

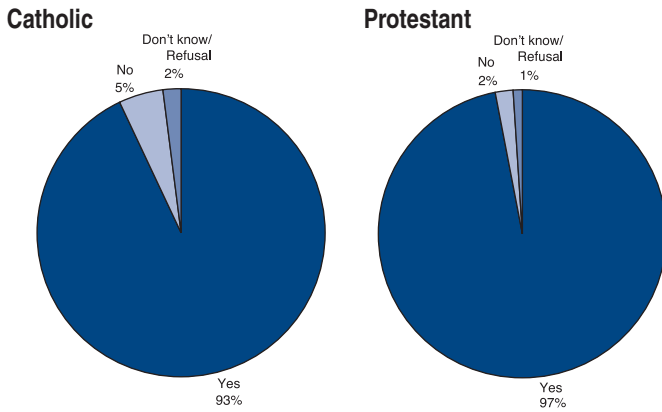
	Belfast %	East %	West %	Total %
Base	209	575	430	1214
Yes	95	97	92	95
No	3	2	5	3
Don't know/Refusal	2	1	3	2

¹ This question was not asked in the January 2002 Survey

Religion

13. A smaller proportion of Catholics (93%) than Protestants (97%) thought that there was a problem with organised crime in Northern Ireland (Figure 3).

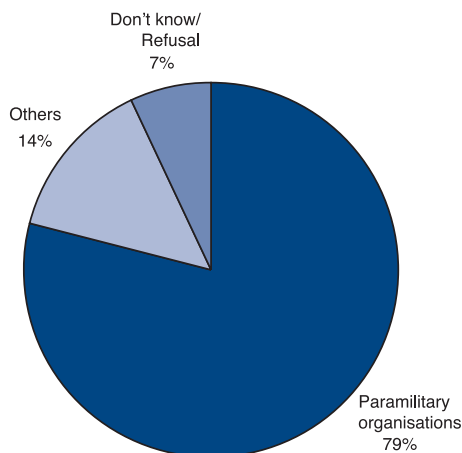
Figure 3: Respondents' views on whether there is a problem with organised crime in Northern Ireland: by religion



Question 2: Who do you think is mainly responsible for committing offences related to organised crime in Northern Ireland?¹

14. Almost four fifths (79%) of those surveyed thought that paramilitary organisations were mainly responsible for committing offences related to organised crime in Northern Ireland; 14% thought that a variety of 'others' were mainly responsible for committing offences related to organised crime and 7% said they did not know (Figure 4). The category 'others' consisted mainly of 'young people', 'criminal gangs' and 'people involved in drug dealing'.

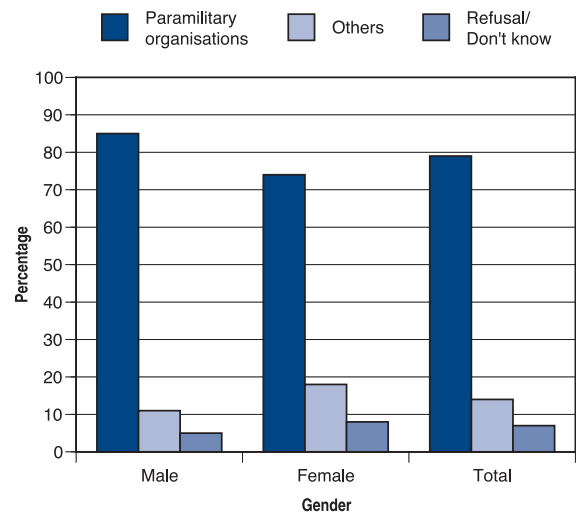
Figure 4: Respondents' views on who is mainly responsible for committing offences related to organised crime in Northern Ireland



Gender

15. Proportionately more males (85%) than females (74%) thought that paramilitary organisations were mainly responsible for committing offences related to organised crime in Northern Ireland. Females (18%) were more likely than males (11%) to think that 'others' were mainly responsible while similar proportions said that they didn't know (Figure 5).

Figure 5: Respondents' views on who is mainly responsible for committing offences related to organised crime in Northern Ireland: by gender

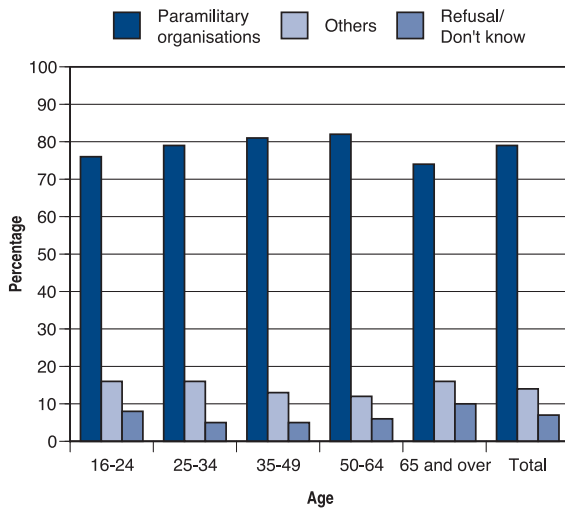


Age

16. Although the proportion of respondents who thought that paramilitary organisations were mainly responsible for committing offences related to organised crime was high for all age categories, this was more likely to be the case for those aged 35-49 (81%) and 50-64 years (82%) (Figure 6). Respondents aged 65 and over (74%) were least likely to say this was the case.

¹ This question was not asked in the January 2002 Survey

Figure 6: Respondents' views on who is mainly responsible for committing offences related to organised crime in Northern Ireland: by age group

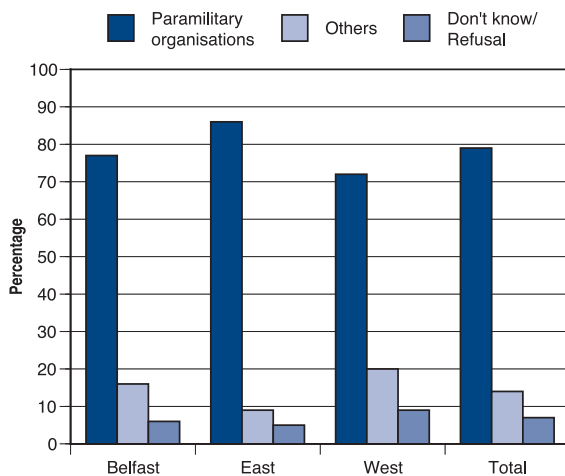


Area

17. Respondents from the East of Northern Ireland (86%) were the most likely to think that paramilitary organisations were mainly responsible for committing offences related to organised crime in Northern Ireland. Respondents from the West of Northern Ireland (72%) were the least likely to say this was the case (Figure 7).

18. Respondents from the West of Northern Ireland (20%) were the most likely to think that 'others' were mainly responsible for committing offences related to organised crime in Northern Ireland whilst those from the East of Northern Ireland (9%) were the least likely to say this was the case.

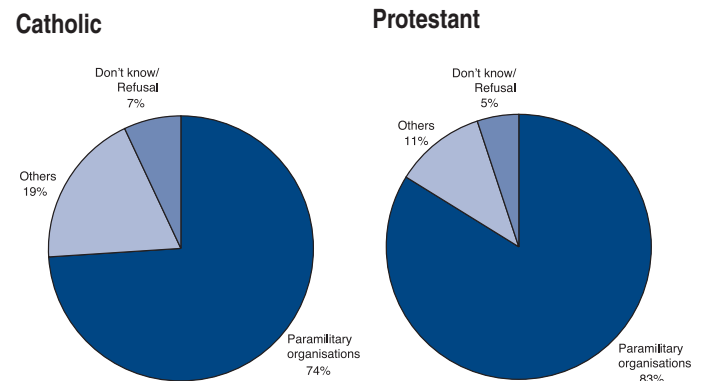
Figure 7: Respondents' views on who is mainly responsible for committing offences related to organised crime in Northern Ireland: by area



Religion

19. Proportionately more Protestants (83%) than Catholics (74%) thought that paramilitary organisations were mainly responsible for committing offences related to organised crime in Northern Ireland (Figure 8). Catholics (19%) were more likely than Protestants (11%) to think that 'others' were mainly responsible.

Figure 8: Respondents' views on who is mainly responsible for committing offences related to organised crime in Northern Ireland: by religion



Question 3: What types of crime would you associate with organised crime in Northern Ireland?²

20. Overall, more than four fifths (84%) of those surveyed said that they associated drug dealing with organised crime in Northern Ireland, nearly half (49%) said protection/extortion racketeering and almost two fifths said armed robbery (38%) and fuel smuggling (37%). By contrast, only 12% said that they associated counterfeit money production and prostitution with organised crime in Northern Ireland (Figure 9).

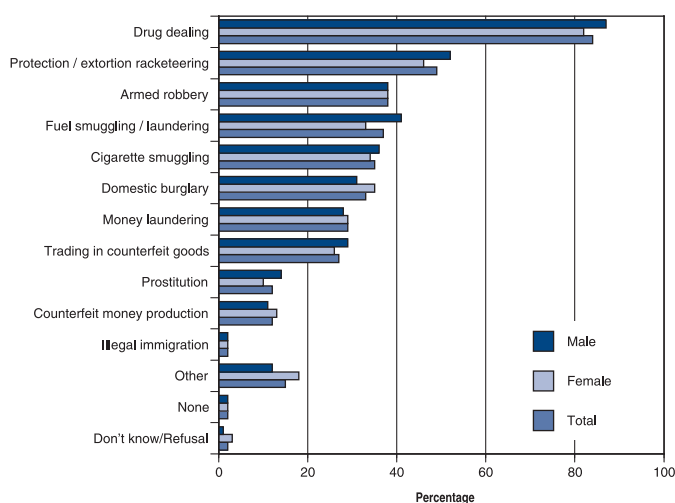
21. This can be compared to the results of the January 2002 Omnibus Survey where 74% said that they associated drug dealing with organised crime in Northern Ireland, 40% said protection racketeering and 19% said fuel smuggling.

² Respondents were probed by the interviewer to think of crimes they would associate with organised crime. Respondents could offer up to 6 types of crime when answering this question.

Gender

22. Proportionately more males than females said that they associated drug dealing (87% compared to 82%), protection/extortion racketeering (52% compared to 46%) and fuel smuggling/laundering (41% compared to 33%) with organised crime in Northern Ireland. By contrast, more females than males said that they associated domestic burglary (35% compared to 31%) with organised crime in Northern Ireland (Figure 9). Identical proportions of males and females said that they associated armed robbery (38%) with organised crime in Northern Ireland.

Figure 9: Respondents' views on the types of crime they associate with organised crime: by gender



Age

23. Respondents aged 35-49 and those aged 50-64 years were the most likely to say that they associated drug dealing, protection/extortion racketeering and fuel smuggling/laundering with organised crime in Northern Ireland, whilst those aged 16-24 years were the least likely to say this (Table 3). Respondents aged 65 and over (46%) were the most likely age group to say that they associated armed robbery with organised crime in Northern Ireland.

Table 3: Respondents' views on the types of crime they associate with organised crime: by age group

	16-24 %	25-34 %	35-49 %	50-64 %	65 and over %	Total %
Base	116	215	362	262	259	1214
Drug dealing	78	84	89	87	79	84
Protection/ extortion racketeering	30	51	58	54	42	49
Armed robbery	38	40	39	29	46	38
Fuel smuggling /laundering	25	33	42	40	37	37
Cigarette smuggling	30	36	37	37	33	35
Domestic burglary	38	27	34	33	35	33
Money laundering	16	32	33	29	27	29
Trading in counterfeit goods	27	29	31	29	18	27
Prostitution	11	11	17	8	11	12
Counterfeit money production	10	14	14	9	11	12
Illegal immigration	2	1	3	2	1	2
Other	16	14	16	16	11	15
None	2	3	1	2	1	2
Don't know/ Refusal	3	2	1	2	5	2

Area

24. Respondents from Belfast and the East of Northern Ireland were the most likely to say that they associated drug dealing, protection/extortion racketeering and armed robbery with organised crime in Northern Ireland, whilst respondents from the West of Northern Ireland were the least likely to say this. In contrast, respondents from the West of Northern Ireland (40%) were the most likely to say that they associated fuel smuggling/laundering with organised crime in Northern Ireland whilst respondents from Belfast (27%) were the least likely to say this (Table 4).

25. Respondents from the West of Northern Ireland (40%) were the most likely to say that they associated domestic burglary with organised crime in Northern Ireland. This compares to 32% of respondents from the East of Northern Ireland and 20% of respondents from Belfast who said that this was the case.

26. Comparisons between the January 2002 and February 2003 Omnibus Surveys showed that similar proportions of respondents from Belfast said that they associated domestic burglary with organised crime (21% and 20%). In contrast, the proportion of respondents from the East of Northern Ireland who said that they associated domestic burglary with organised crime increased from 20% in January 2002 to 32% in February 2003. Similarly, the proportion of respondents from the West of Northern Ireland who said that they associated domestic burglary with organised crime increased from 25% in January 2002 to 40% in February 2003.

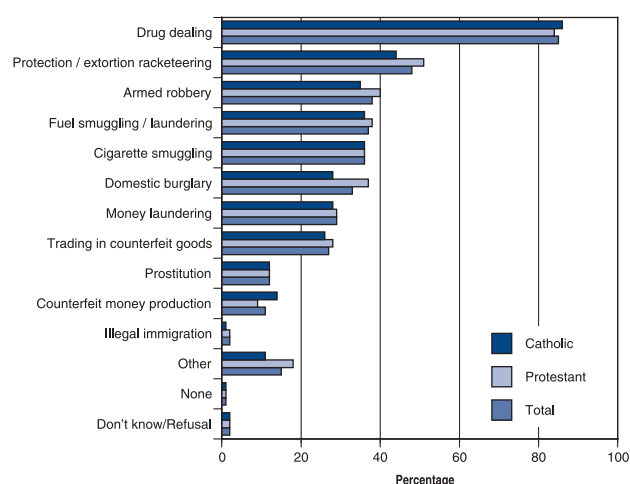
Table 4: Respondents' views on the types of crime they associate with organised crime: by area

	Belfast %	East %	West %	Total %
Base	209	575	430	1214
Drug dealing	85	87	81	84
Protection/ extortion racketeering	59	56	36	49
Armed robbery	41	40	33	38
Fuel smuggling/ laundering	27	38	40	37
Cigarette smuggling	32	37	35	35
Domestic burglary	20	32	40	33
Money laundering	21	30	30	29
Trading in counterfeit goods	30	27	27	27
Prostitution	16	14	8	12
Counterfeit money production	11	12	12	12
Illegal immigration	1	2	3	2
Other	17	15	15	15
None	3	1	1	2
Don't know/ Refusal	2	2	3	2

Religion

27. Similar proportions of Catholics (86%) and Protestants (84%) said that they associated drug dealing with organised crime in Northern Ireland (Figure 10). Proportionately more Protestants than Catholics said that they associated protection/extortion racketeering (51% compared to 44%), armed robbery (40% compared to 35%) and domestic burglary (37% compared to 28%) with organised crime. By contrast, 14% of Catholic respondents said that they thought counterfeit money production was associated with organised crime compared to 9% of Protestant respondents.

Figure 10: Respondents' views on the types of crime they associate with organised crime: by religion



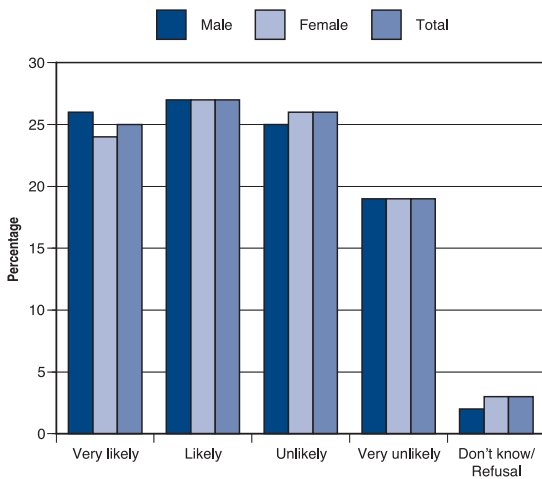
Question 4: How likely is it that you would report someone if you knew that they were associated with organised crime?

28. Over half (52%) of those surveyed said that they would report someone (responded either 'likely' or 'very likely') if they knew they were associated with organised crime (Figure 11). Almost one fifth (19%) of respondents rated it very unlikely they would report someone if they knew they were associated with organised crime. This compares to 48% of respondents in the January 2002 Omnibus Survey who said that they would report someone if they knew they were associated with organised crime and 22% who rated it very unlikely they would report someone.

Gender

29. The proportion of respondents who said they would report someone if they knew they were associated with organised crime was similar for both males (53%) and females (51%). Identical proportions of males and females said that it was very unlikely they would report someone if they knew they were associated with organised crime (19%) (Figure 11).

Figure 11: Respondents' views on whether they would report someone if they knew they were associated with organised crime: by gender



Age

30. Respondents aged 50-64 years (62%) were the most likely age group to say that they would report someone if they knew they were associated with organised crime. This compares to 42% of respondents in the 16-24 age group and 45% of respondents in the 25-34 age group who said that this was the case (Table 5).

31. One quarter of respondents aged 25-34 said it was very unlikely they would report someone if they knew they were associated with organised crime. This compares to 15% of respondents in the 50-64 age group who said that this was the case.

Table 5: Respondents' views on whether they would report someone if they knew they were associated with organised crime: by age group

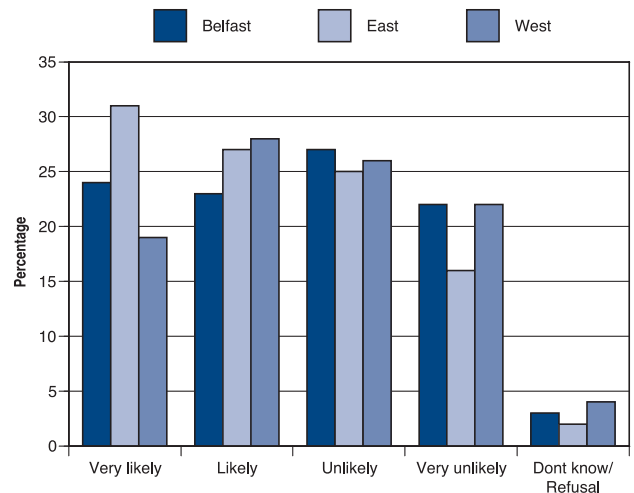
	16-24 %	25-34 %	35-49 %	50-64 %	65 and over %	Total %
Base	116	215	362	262	259	1214
Very likely	14	19	28	39	19	25
Likely	28	26	25	23	35	27
Unlikely	37	26	26	22	21	26
Very unlikely	21	25	18	15	20	19
Don't know/Refusal	1	4	2	1	6	3

Area

32. Respondents from the East of Northern Ireland were the most likely to say that they would report someone if they knew they were associated with organised crime (Figure 12). Almost three fifths (58%) of those from the East of Northern Ireland compared to 47% from both the West of Northern Ireland and Belfast said that this was the case.

33. More than one fifth (22%) of respondents from Belfast and the West of Northern Ireland said that it was very unlikely they would report someone if they knew they were associated with organised crime. In contrast, 16% of those from the East of Northern Ireland said that this was the case.

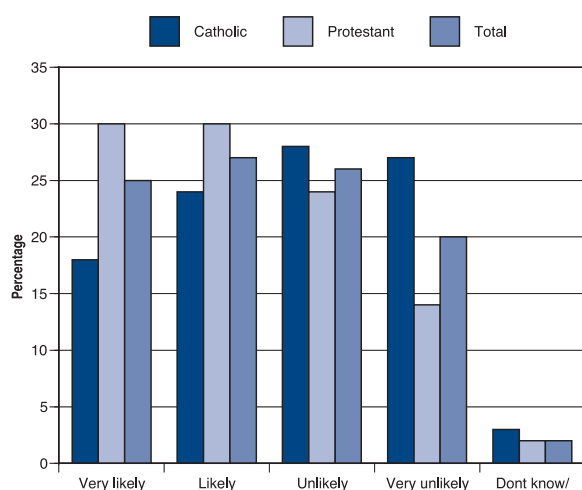
Figure 12: Respondents' views on whether they would report someone if they knew they were associated with organised crime: by area



Religion

34. Proportionately more Protestants (60%) than Catholics (42%) said that they would report someone if they knew they were associated with organised crime (Figure 13). Over one quarter (27%) of Catholics compared to 14% of Protestants said it was very unlikely they would report someone if they knew they were associated with organised crime.

Figure 13: Respondents' views on whether they would report someone if they knew they were associated with organised crime: by religion



Question 5: If you were to report someone, who would you report them to?¹

35. Overall, almost four fifths (79%) of those surveyed said if they were to report someone, they would report them to the police. Only 5% of respondents said they would report someone to a family member or friend; 4% to a community group; 3% to a religious authority figure and 2% to a lawyer (Table 6). Less than one tenth (7%) said that they would report someone to something 'other' than that described above, for example 'a confidential telephone number' and 'a local councillor'.

¹ This question was not asked in the January 2002 Survey. This question was asked of everyone in the February 2003 Survey. Respondents' could offer up to 6 answers to this question.

Gender

36. A similar proportion of males (80%) and females (79%) said that they would report someone to the police (Table 6).

Table 6: Respondents' views on who they would report someone to: by gender

	Male %	Female %	Total %
Base	526	688	1214
Police	80	79	79
Lawyer	1	3	2
Religious Authority figure	2	3	3
Community Group	4	5	4
Family / Friend	4	6	5
Other	8	6	7
Don't know / Refusal	5	4	5

Age

37. Respondents aged 50-64 years (86%) were the most likely age group to say that they would report someone to the police whilst respondents in the 25-34 age group (76%) were the least likely to say this (Table 7). More than one tenth (12%) of respondents aged 16-24 years said that they would report someone to family or friend. This compares to 3% of respondents aged 35-49 years and 2% of respondents aged 50-64 years.

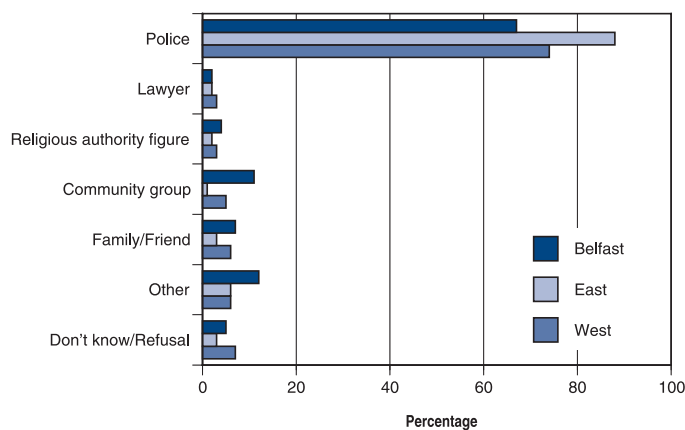
Table 7: Respondents' views on who they would report someone to: by age group

	16-24 %	25-34 %	35-49 %	50-64 %	65 and over %	Total %
Base	116	215	362	262	259	1214
Police	78	76	77	86	80	79
Lawyer	2	2	3	2	3	2
Religious Authority figure	1	4	3	2	2	3
Community group	5	4	4	5	4	4
Family / Friend	12	5	3	2	4	5
Other	5	10	9	5	5	7
Don't know / Refusal	3	5	6	3	7	5

Area

38. Respondents from the East of Northern Ireland (88%) were the most likely to say that they would report someone to the police whilst respondents from Belfast (67%) were the least likely to say this (Figure 14). More than one tenth (11%) of respondents from Belfast said that they would report someone to a community group whilst only 1% of respondents from the East of Northern Ireland said that this was the case.

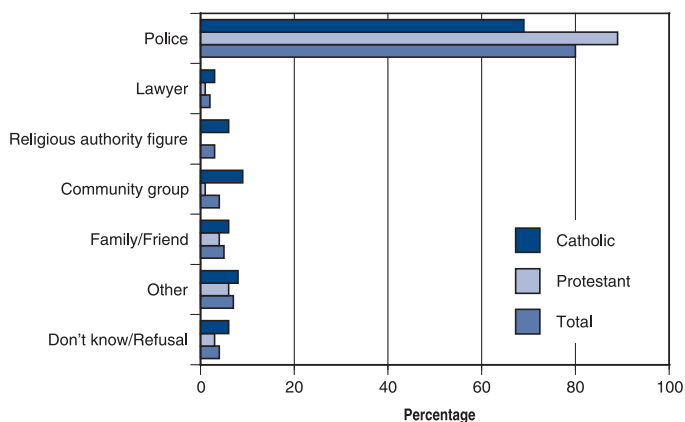
Figure 14: Respondents' views on who they would report someone to: by area



Religion

39. Proportionately more Protestants (89%) than Catholics (69%) said that they would report someone to the police (Figure 15). In contrast, more Catholics than Protestants said that they would report someone to a religious authority figure (6% compared to 0%) or a community group (9% compared to 1%).

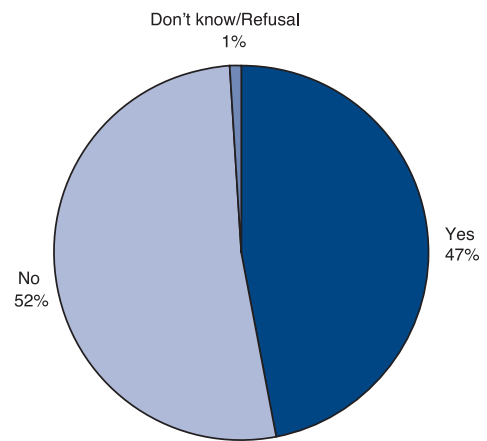
Figure 15: Respondents' views on who they would report someone to: by religion



Question 6: Have you heard of the Organised Crime Task Force?

40. Almost half (47%) of those surveyed had heard of the Organised Crime Task Force (Figure 16). This proportion increased from 21% in the January 2002 Omnibus Survey.

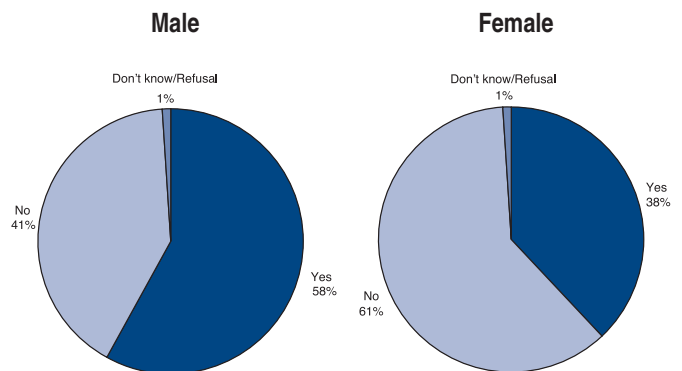
Figure 16: Respondents' knowledge of the Organised Crime Task Force



Gender

41. Proportionately more males (58%) than females (38%) had heard of the Organised Crime Task Force (Figure 17).

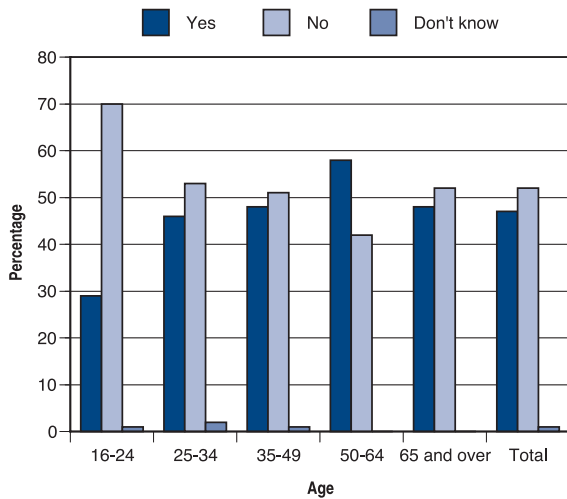
Figure 17: Respondents' knowledge of the Organised Crime Task Force: by gender



Age

42. Respondents aged 50-64 years (58%) were the most likely to have heard of the Organised Crime Task Force (Figure 18). This compares to 29% of respondents aged 16-24 years who said that this was the case.

Figure 18: Respondents' knowledge of the Organised Crime Task Force: by age group



Area

43. Respondents from the East of Northern Ireland (50%) were the most likely to have heard of the Organised Crime Task Force whilst respondents from Belfast (40%) were the least likely to say that this was the case (Table 8).

Table 8: Respondents' knowledge of the Organised Crime Task Force: by area

	Belfast %	East %	West %	Total %
Base	209	575	430	1214
Yes	40	50	46	47
No	59	50	52	52
Don't know/Refusal	2	-	1	1

Religion

44. Identical proportions of Catholics and Protestants had heard of the Organised Crime Task Force (47%) (Table 9).

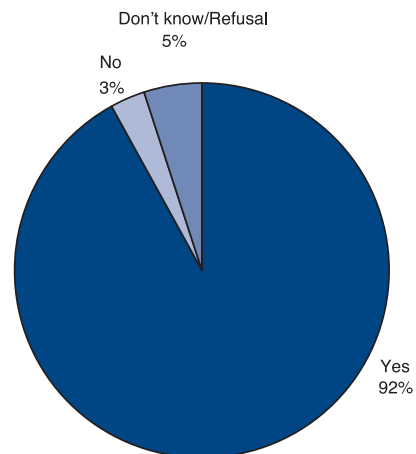
Table 9: Respondents' knowledge of the Organised Crime Task Force: by religion

	Catholic %	Protestant %	Total %
Base	443	682	1125
Yes	47	47	47
No	53	53	53
Don't know/Refusal	0	-	0

Question 7: In your opinion, is the existence of an Organised Crime Task Force to deal with organised crime a good idea?

45. Overall, the majority (92%) of respondents thought that the existence of an Organised Crime Task Force was a good idea (Figure 19). A similar proportion of respondents in the January 2002 Omnibus Survey (93%) also thought that it was a good idea.

Figure 19: Respondents' views about whether the existence of an Organised Crime Task Force is a good idea



Gender

46. A similar proportion of males (93%) and females (92%) thought that the existence of an Organised Crime Task Force was a good idea (Table 10).

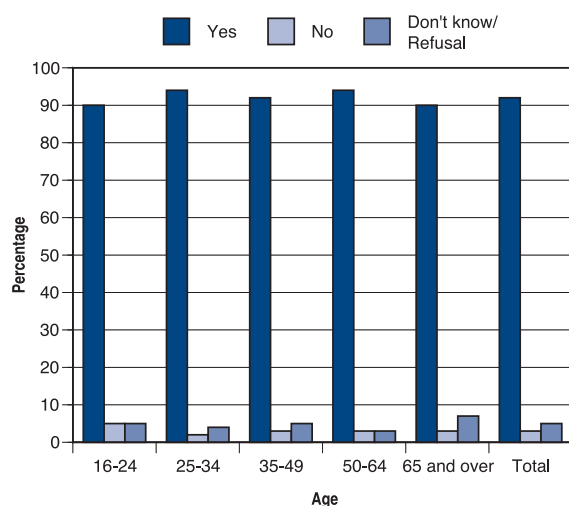
Table 10: Respondents' views on whether the existence of an Organised Crime Task Force to deal with organised crime is a good idea: by gender

	Male %	Female %	Total %
Base	526	688	1214
Yes	93	92	92
No	3	3	3
Don't know/ Refusal	4	5	5

Age

47. A similar proportion of respondents within each age group thought that the setting up of an Organised Crime Task Force was a good idea (Figure 20).

Figure 20: Respondents' views on whether the existence of an Organised Crime Task Force to deal with organised crime is a good idea: by age group



Area

48. Although the majority of respondents thought that the existence of an Organised Crime Task Force was a good idea, this was more likely to be the case for respondents from the East of Northern Ireland (95%). Respondents from Belfast (89%) were the least likely to think that the existence of an Organised Crime Task Force was a good idea (Table 11).

Table 11: Respondents views on whether the existence of an Organised Crime Task Force to deal with organised crime is a good idea: by area

	Belfast %	East %	West %	Total %
Base	209	575	430	1214
Yes	89	95	90	92
No	3	3	4	3
Don't know/ Refusal	8	2	6	5

Religion

49. A similar proportion of Catholics (92%) and Protestants (94%) thought that the existence of an Organised Crime Task Force was a good idea (Table 12).

Table 12: Respondents' views on whether the existence of an Organised Crime Task Force to deal with organised crime is a good idea: by religion

	Catholic %	Protestant %	Total %
Base	443	682	1125
Yes	92	94	93
No	3	3	3
Don't know/ Refusal	5	3	4

Question 8: Why do you think the existence of an organised Crime Task Force is a good idea/not a good idea?¹

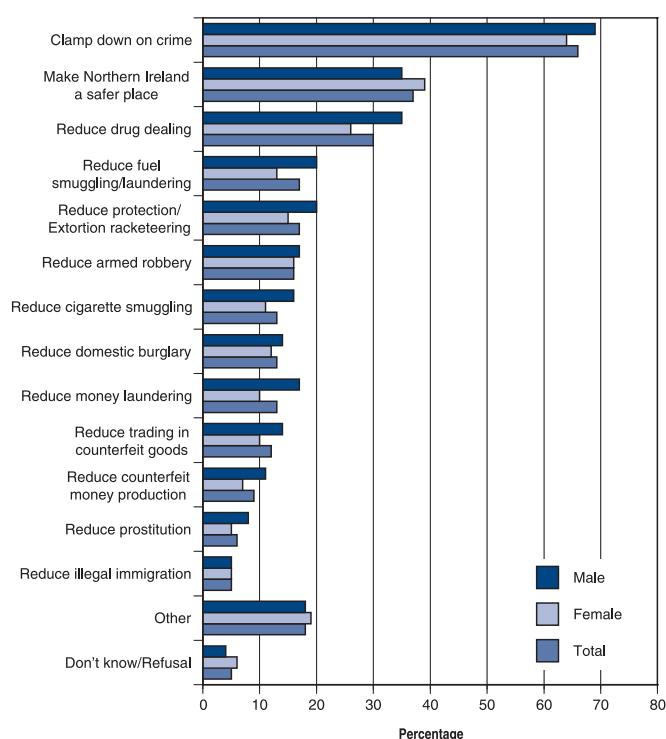
50. When asked why they thought the existence of an Organised Crime Task Force was a good idea/not a good idea, two thirds (66%) of those surveyed said it would clamp down on crime. More than one third (37%) said it would make Northern Ireland a safer place, 30% said it would reduce drug dealing and 18% mentioned a range of other reasons (Figure 21). The category 'other' included responses such as 'Organised Crime Task Force can deal directly with organised crime' and 'releases police to deal with ordinary crime'. A negligible number of respondents gave reasons why they thought the existence of an Organised Crime Task Force was not a good idea, these were mainly that it would not make any difference.

¹ This question was not asked in the January 2002 Survey. Respondents' were probed by the interviewer to think of reasons why the existence of an Organised Crime Task Force is a good idea / not a good idea. Respondents' could offer up to 14 reasons in reply to this question.

Gender

51. Proportionately more males than females said that the existence of an Organised Crime Task Force was a good idea because it would clamp down on crime (69% compared to 64%) and reduce drug dealing (35% compared to 26%). By contrast, more females than males said that it was a good idea because it would make Northern Ireland a safer place (39% compared to 35%) (Figure 21).

Figure 21: Respondents' views on why they think the existence of an Organised Crime Task Force is a good idea: by gender



Age

52. A similar proportion of respondents in each of the age groups said that the existence of an Organised Crime Task Force was a good idea because it would make Northern Ireland a safer place and reduce drug dealing. Respondents in the older age groups (those aged 50 and over) were the most likely to say it was a good idea because it would clamp down on crime (Table 13).

Table 13: Respondents' views on why they think the existence of an Organised Crime Task Force is a good idea: by age group

	16-24 %	25-34 %	35-49 %	50-64 %	65 and over %	Total %
Base	116	215	362	262	259	1214
Clamp down on crime	62	62	63	70	75	66
Make Northern Ireland a safer place	40	38	35	37	37	37
Reduce drug dealing	33	26	31	32	29	30
Reduce fuel smuggling /laundrying	9	15	18	19	19	17
Reduce protection / extortion racketeering	11	19	18	20	16	17
Reduce armed robbery	13	13	17	18	18	16
Reduce cigarette smuggling	11	14	13	17	11	13
Reduce domestic burglary	13	8	14	16	12	13
Reduce money laundrying	10	12	13	16	13	13
Reduce trading in counterfeit goods	8	11	12	16	11	12
Reduce counterfeit money production	7	7	10	10	8	9
Reduce prostitution	4	6	8	7	4	6
Reduce illegal immigration	4	4	6	5	4	5
Other	18	21	24	17	7	18
Don't know Refusal	4	5	5	4	8	5

Area

53. Respondents from the East of Northern Ireland were the most likely to say that they thought the existence of an Organised Crime Task Force was a good idea because it would clamp down on crime (68%), make Northern Ireland a safer place (38%) and reduce drug dealing (31%), whilst respondents from Belfast were the least likely to give these reasons. Respondents

from the West of Northern Ireland were the most likely to say it was a good idea because it would reduce domestic burglary (17%) whilst respondents from Belfast (7%) were the least likely to say this (Table 14).

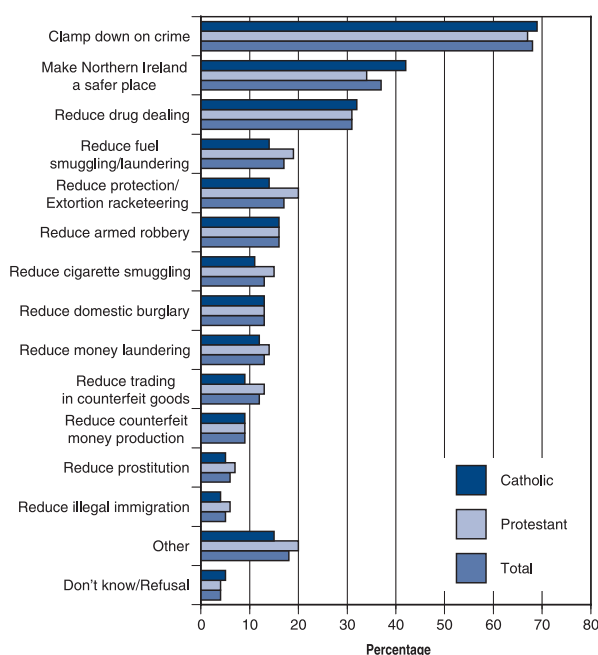
Table 14: Respondents' views on why they think the existence of an Organised Crime Task Force is a good idea: by area

	Belfast %	East %	West %	Total %
Base	209	575	430	1214
Clamp down on crime	62	68	66	66
Make Northern Ireland a safer place	34	38	37	37
Reduce drug dealing	28	31	30	30
Reduce fuel smuggling / laundering	11	20	15	17
Reduce protection / extortion racketeering	21	20	12	17
Reduce armed robbery	13	17	17	16
Reduce cigarette smuggling	8	15	14	13
Reduce domestic burglary	7	11	17	13
Reduce money laundering	10	14	14	13
Reduce trading in counterfeit goods	9	13	12	12
Reduce counterfeit money production	9	9	9	9
Reduce Prostitution	5	6	7	6
Reduce illegal immigration	2	4	7	5
Other	20	19	17	18
Don't know/Refusal	8	3	7	5

Religion

54. Similar proportions of Catholics and Protestants said that they thought the existence of an Organised Crime Task Force was a good idea because it would clamp down on crime or reduce drug dealing (Figure 22). Proportionately more Catholics than Protestants said that it was a good idea because it would make Northern Ireland a safer place (42% compared to 34%) whilst more Protestants than Catholics said that it was a good idea because it would reduce protection / extortion racketeering (20% compared to 14%).

Figure 22: Respondents' views on why they think the existence of an Organised Crime Task Force is a good idea: by religion



TECHNICAL NOTES

55. The sample of those surveyed in the February 2003 Northern Ireland Omnibus Survey was drawn from the Valuation and Lands Agency list, the most up-to-date listing of private households in Northern Ireland. The complete list of private addresses was stratified into three regions – Belfast, East of Northern Ireland and West of Northern Ireland, and a random sample drawn from each stratum.

56. At each address the interviewer lists all members of the household eligible for inclusion in the sample, that is, all persons aged 16 or over. The interviewer's computer then randomly selects one person from each household to complete the interview. From an eligible sample of 1,941 individuals, 1,214 interviews were achieved giving a response rate of 63%.

57. Selecting only one individual for interview at each address means individuals living in large households have a lower chance of being included in the sample than individuals living in smaller households. The data presented in this bulletin has been weighted to prevent a bias towards smaller households.

58. To assess how accurately a survey sample reflects the population of Northern Ireland, the characteristics of the sample are compared with the characteristics of the current Census of Population. Table 15 shows a comparison between the February 2003 Omnibus Survey sample and the Northern Ireland population aged 16 and over from the 2001 Census of Population.

Table 15: Sample profile 2001 Census of Population % February 2003 Omnibus Survey

	2001 Census of Population %	February 2003 Omnibus Survey %
Base	1,292,169	1,214
Sex		
Male	48	44
Female	52	56
Age Group		
16-24	16	10
25-34	19	38
35-49	27	22
50-64	20	18
65 and over	17	12

59. The area analysis was based on District Council boundaries and is detailed in Table 16. The 26 District Councils listed in this table were used to form each of the three areas (Belfast, East of Northern Ireland, West of Northern Ireland) described in the bulletin.

Table 16: Areas of Northern Ireland by District Council Area

Area	District Councils
Belfast	Belfast
East of Northern Ireland	Antrim, Ards, Ballymena, Banbridge, Carrickfergus, Castlereagh, Craigavon, Down, Larne, Lisburn, Newtownabbey, North Down
West of Northern Ireland	Armagh, Ballymoney, Coleraine, Cookstown, Dungannon, Fermanagh, Limavady, Derry, Magherafelt, Moyle, Newry & Mourne, Omagh, Strabane.

60. Percentages denoted in both tables and figures do not always sum to 100%. In some instances this is because respondents' had the opportunity to offer more than one answer to the question. In other cases it is a consequence of rounding.

61. In the tables, if the figure is less than 0.5% the cell is denoted with a '0%'. If a category is not applicable, the cell is left empty.

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Produced by the Statistics and Research Branch of the Northern Ireland Office.

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