

***ISME* NATIONAL CRIME SURVEY 2014**

August 2014

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INTRODUCTION

Crime and its prevention are enduring public issues. **ISME, the Irish Small and Medium Enterprises Association**, conducts a National Crime Survey annually to ascertain the current impact of crime against businesses. This report details the results of the 2014 survey which was sent by email on the 18th of July to 7,000 member companies. A total of 819 companies responded by the deadline of the 16th of July, a response rate of 12%.

The Association has been annually monitoring the rate of crime against business since 2003 and the 2014 figures are now presented. **This survey aims to fill the gap in our knowledge regarding the character, magnitude and impact of offences perpetrated within and against the business community.**

We also highlight the significant (and largely unquantifiable) economic and emotional weight borne by the business community as a result of crime. Smaller enterprises are particularly vulnerable, since they lack scale and therefore experience greater difficulty in absorbing the direct and indirect costs of victimisation.

There has been a one point increase in the incidence of business crime in the past 12 months. However, the cost of crime for businesses has increased dramatically since the beginning of the recession and is still not being measured separately and therefore not prioritised. It is quite clear that government intervention is required to assist businesses in tackling this issue.

Most businesses that have survived the recession are now struggling to grow in these difficult economic times. Increases in crimes against businesses are a further threat to their profitability and, by extension, to the employment and tax revenue that they create. Crime deprives local communities of much needed enterprises and amenities and is often a traumatic and demoralizing event for owner-managers and their staff.

This report highlights the increasing instances and costs of business crime being borne by the SME business community. This creates an extremely difficult business environment for SMEs in which to trade and the administration must take steps to ensure that it improves as quickly as possible.

The Government needs to commit the necessary support and resources to law enforcement agencies and the Gardai in order to improve their performance in this area. The survey results clearly show a need for an **increased Garda presence, stronger judicial penalties and a greater awareness of the Crime Prevention Officer Service**. A comprehensive business crime prevention strategy must be put in place and pro-actively implemented so that this scourge on businesses can be eradicated.

Until the issue is taken more seriously at official level, business owners will not put in the time and money in reporting a crime unless they are confident of adequate action being taken against the perpetrators of crime against their businesses.

ISME, with its strong independent national network, is willing to work with the Government and law enforcement agencies to develop a plan to combat this issue.

We trust that this year's survey results will drive the issue of business crime to the top of the Government's agenda.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- **39% of companies have been the target of criminal activity in the last 12 months, this is a one point increase on the 2013 figures.**
- **The direct cost of crime per enterprise is €9,760 per annum and the annual cost of prevention is €4,372 per company. This gives a total average cost of €14,242 per company annually.**
- **The direct cost of crime per enterprise has risen by 136% in 8 years since 2007 and the total cost of crime per enterprise is up 64% in that period. Average security costs have seen a 3% reduction since 2007.**
- **The total cost of crime against businesses nationally is €1.5 billion.**
- **On a regional basis the highest incidence of crime was reported in both Dublin City 53% and Leinster 39%, followed by Dublin County 37% and Munster 33%.**
- **The Retail sector was the area of the business community most affected with a significant 64%. It was followed by Manufacturing and Construction at 44% and 42% respectively.**
- **The most common crime reported was 'Burglary' by 33% of respondents, closely followed by 'Robbery' 26%, and 'Vandalism' 23%.**
- **9% of respondents confirmed being victims of theft by members of staff, a decrease on the 17% reported in 2013. This illustrates the importance of vigilance amongst SME owner-managers on internal criminal activity.**
- **55% reported that they felt that the general level of crime has increased in the last 12 months, with 66% identifying the recession as a major contributor to the increased incidence of crime.**
- **43% of respondents said they believe that crime in their locality is 'getting worse', up from 41% in 2013.**
- **The number of businesses experiencing more than one instance of crime increased from 67% to 75%.**
- **The survey results confirm that only 5% of SME owner/managers are confident that if they were the victim of a crime that the criminal would be apprehended.**
- **After the direct cost of crime, increased security costs at 48% (down from 54% in 2013) are the biggest impact of crime on business. This is followed by 'alterations to building layout to enhance security' as reported by 37% of respondents.**
- **The indirect costs of crime cannot be underestimated, as 23% of SMEs who suffered from criminal activity identified 'disruption to trading' as being a particular problem with 12% indicating 'poor staff morale'.**

- **Alarms and monitored alarm response rates are the primary crime prevention methods at 62% and 58% respectively. This is followed by the use of CCTV at 52%.**
- **There has been a decrease in the reporting of crime to the Gardai. This has gone from a 15% non-reporting rate in 2013 to an 18% rate in 2014.**
- **35% of those who reported a criminal incident to the Gardai were dissatisfied with the response it received. This is an increase on the 30% dissatisfaction rate in 2013.**
- **Of those who did not report the criminal incidents, 63% stated that it was because they believed it was 'too trivial' and an alarming 38% said it was because they had 'no faith that the criminal would be charged'.**
- **55% were not covered by insurance for their loss due to crime, an improvement on the 59% who suffered this fate last year.**
- **41% of companies have never requested crime reduction advice. Of those who did, 22% received their advice from a security company and 20% received it from the Gardai.**
- **32% of companies have liaised with the Gardai on crime prevention strategies, a decrease on the 37% who had done so in 2013.**
- **Of the 61% of respondents who were aware of the Crime Prevention Office, only 21% had used the service. 75% of these found it to be either 'very helpful' or 'helpful', an increase from 66% in 2013.**
- **SME owner-managers rate a more visible police presence as the most effective deterrent against crime at 77%. CCTV surveillance follows closely behind on 76% and 73% would like to see tougher sentencing in our courts. 71% believe that a fast Garda response is effective.**
- **The judicial system was rated as effective by only 3% of respondents. 80% called for tougher sentences to be handed down by the courts.**
- **83% called for a 'significant increase in Garda numbers' and 68% would like more CCTV cameras to be installed in town centres.**

RECOMMENDATIONS

ISME has ten recommendations for reducing the level of crimes perpetrated against businesses:

- 1. Introduction of a single, national definition for business crime in Ireland to enable these offences to be properly ‘tagged’, measured, analysed and ultimately solved by the Garda. Business crime must be measured and recorded so that the extent, nature and scope of the issue can be properly assessed.**
- 2. The Annual Report of the Garda Commissioner should contain a specific section concerning business crime, backed by figures on the number of business crimes reported and detected, in the same way as other crime statistics and specific recommendations.**
- 3. Set ambitious targets for Key Performance Indicators in this area to gauge the effectiveness of the efforts being made to reduce business crime.**
- 4. A National Forum on Crime should be created to analyse this problem and propose solutions. The Forum should include representatives from law enforcement agencies and the business community, to build closer partnership work between business, government, law enforcement and others to fully utilise the sector’s data, knowledge and expertise.**
- 5. Provide training to Community Police Officers to improve their understanding of how local businesses operate and the impact and extent of business crime.**
- 6. Reassess the sentences handed out by the judiciary when dealing with business crime to ensure that they are an adequate deterrent.**
- 7. Increase levels of CCTV surveillance, particularly in town centres, and increase the number of Gardai on patrol by outsourcing administrative duties to the private sector.**
- 8. Conduct an awareness campaign to educate businesses about the existence of the Crime Prevention Office and its benefits.**
- 9. Develop and implement business watch initiatives and ensure that they are advertised effectively to businesses.**
- 10. Launch and promote a ‘Mind your Business’ website which outlines best practice methods and tools for business crime prevention.**

COMMENTARY

The results of the survey confirm that crime against business has increased by 1 point on 2013 figures. The direct cost of these crimes has decreased from €11,976 in 2013 to €9,870 in 2014. The total cost of crime to business is now €1.502bn (down from €1.622bn in 2013). The decrease in the total cost is due to the smaller number of companies sharing the burden.

It is difficult to understand why reducing crimes against business isn't a high priority issue on the national agenda. The results of this survey make it clear that business crime is a major issue for SMEs. Criminal activity against businesses also has a devastating impact on the wider community and in particular on local economies, which rely on businesses for opportunities and employment. In extreme circumstances, the incidence and cost of crime may drive a firm out of business or at least oblige it to relocate to a more secure area. In situations of this kind, local people suffer from lost employment opportunities and a reduction in business services.

Our current coalition government is primarily focused on generating jobs, it must also focus on decreasing the scourge of business crime which jeopardises existing jobs and acts as a barrier to the creation of new employment.

There is a lack of confidence amongst owner managers in the justice system which must be addressed. Only 5% of small business owners surveyed had confidence that if they were a victim of crime, the criminal would be apprehended. An even smaller 3% had faith that the judiciary would then act as a deterrent to the criminal against repeat offences. As a consequence a significant number of companies (18%) do not report crime to the authorities. They believe it will be seen as 'too trivial' or likely to go unpunished. Business crime must be taken more seriously by the relevant authorities and must be investigated and penalised accordingly to restore confidence in the justice system.

The recommendations made in this report would, if implemented, greatly assist owner-managers in tackling this problem. It is particularly important that the government starts recording and measuring business crime so that the full scale of the problem can be ascertained. Only then can we properly understand and address this issue. A greater understanding of the nature and scale of the problem will assist the authorities in devising a crime prevention strategy. ISME is prepared to work with the government and law enforcement agencies in preparing this strategy.

The incidence of crime merits considerable attention from the law enforcement agencies, which need to devote increased resources into ensuring that crime perpetrated against business is eradicated, not only for the benefit of the business but those associated with the business, including businesses, staff and the local community. 75% of SMEs affected by crime faced more than one instance of crime over the last year. **This is an untenable situation for owner-managers and is adversely affecting their ability to trade profitably.**

The survey respondents were unambiguous in their calls for more visible policing, increased CCTV surveillance and tougher court sentences. The Association understands that each of these measures would incur costs at a time of national austerity and cutbacks. The Government will argue that we simply do not have the financial resources to invest in these actions. However, it is imperative that funds are allocated to tackle this growing epidemic.

The economy is reliant on SMEs, often referred to as its 'engine', to stimulate growth. A business environment where this growth is a given must be created. Businesses cannot prosper and

increase their employment numbers when they are forced to endure rising costs of criminality and significant crime prevention costs.

Increasing awareness of crime prevention techniques must be a priority area. 41% of businesses have never sought crime prevention advice. The government must implement an awareness campaign nationally via the usual channels of tv, newspapers and the internet to ensure that business owners are armed with the best information possible in developing their own crime prevention methods. A '*Mind your Business*' website outlining best practice in this area should be launched.

Key Performance indicators must be set to determine the effectiveness of any steps taken to decrease business crime. This is important to ensure that actual gains are made in the area and to avoid the risk of a strategy being set that simply pays lip service to the problem but does not effectively address it.

Any attack on small and medium (SME) business is an attack on business viability, economic stability and, by extension, social prosperity. This ISME National Crime Survey Report gives cause for concern. Not only does the small business sector appear to be under attack from crime but the probability of repeat victimisation is high.

Equally, however, this report provides pointers for the development of considered crime prevention policies and programs. In particular, it confirms the findings of previous ISME research regarding the vulnerability of SME business to crime.

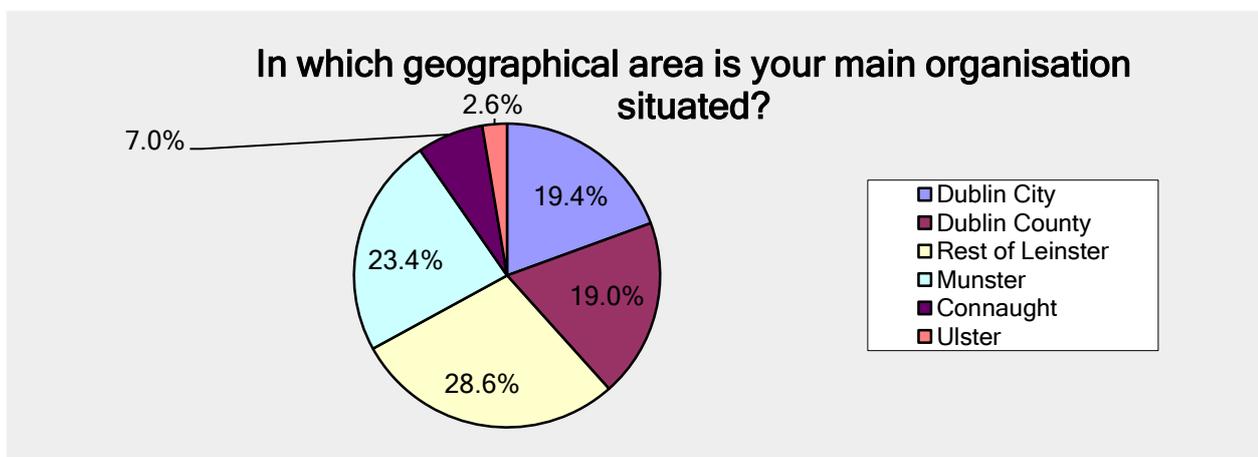
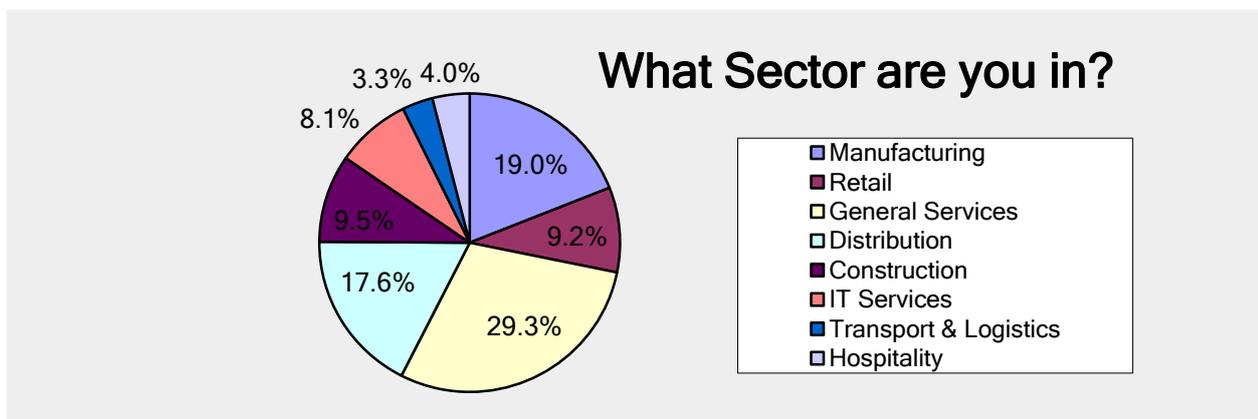
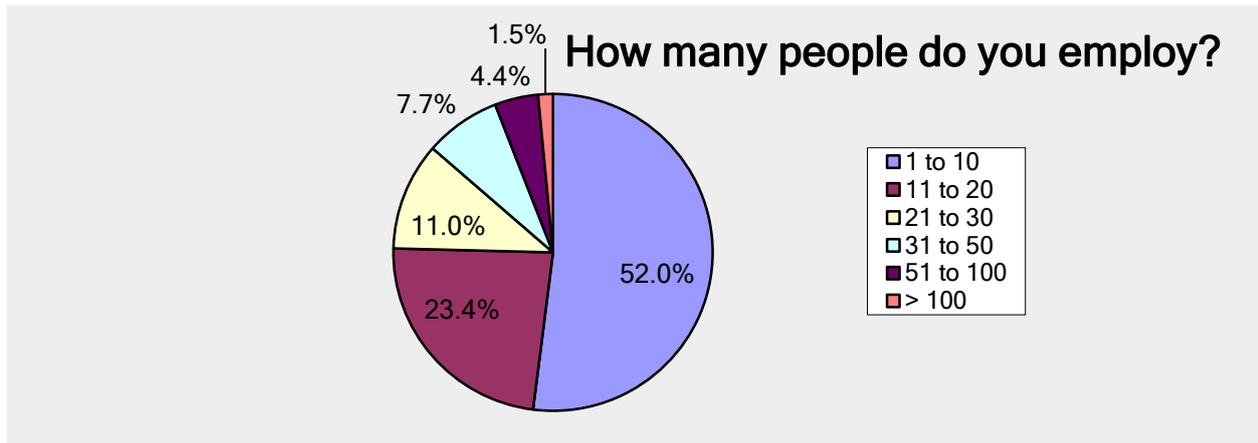
The Government has a responsibility to act now to ensure that the detrimental impact of crimes against business on the economy, local communities and employment rates is reduced considerably and swiftly.

PROFILE OF SURVEY RESPONDENTS

To establish the level, extent and impact of crime on SMEs, a questionnaire was sent by email on the 16th of July, 2014 to 3000 sample companies. Some 819 companies responded by the deadline of Friday 25th July, 2014, a response rate of 27%.

Company size by numbers employed

The sectors represented in the survey are shown in the following tables:



EXTENT OF CRIME AGAINST SMEs

Q 7 In the last 12 months has your business been affected by crime?

	Dublin City	Dublin County	Leinster	Munster	Connacht	Ulster	TOTAL 2014	TOTAL 2013
YES	53%	37%	39%	33%	21%	43%	39%	38%
NO	47%	63%	61%	67%	79%	57%	61%	62%

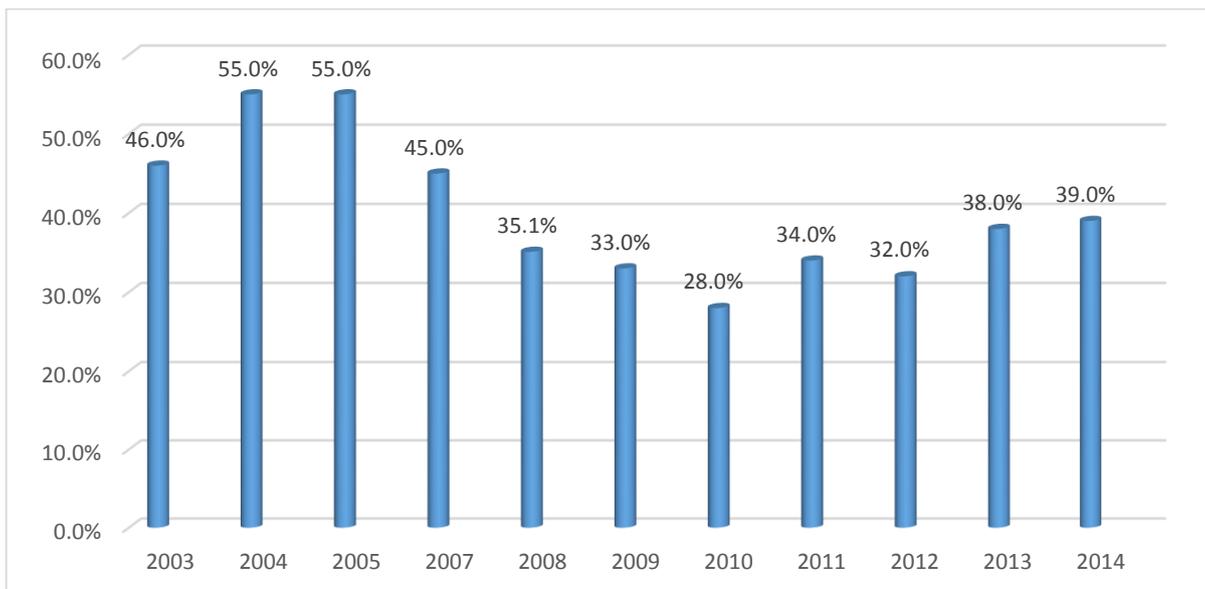
	Manufacturing	Retail	General Services	Distribution	Construction	IT Services	TOTAL 2014	TOTAL 2013
YES	44%	64%	29%	35%	42%	23%	38%	38%
NO	56%	36%	71%	65%	58%	77%	62%	62%

The above table shows that 39% of SMEs have been affected by crime against their businesses in the last 12 months. This is an increase on 2013 when 38% of respondents at that time confirmed their businesses had experienced crime.

Companies based in Dublin City (53%) and Ulster (43%) reported the highest instances of crime against business, closely followed by Dublin County (37%). Businesses in Connacht reported the lowest incidence of crime (21%).

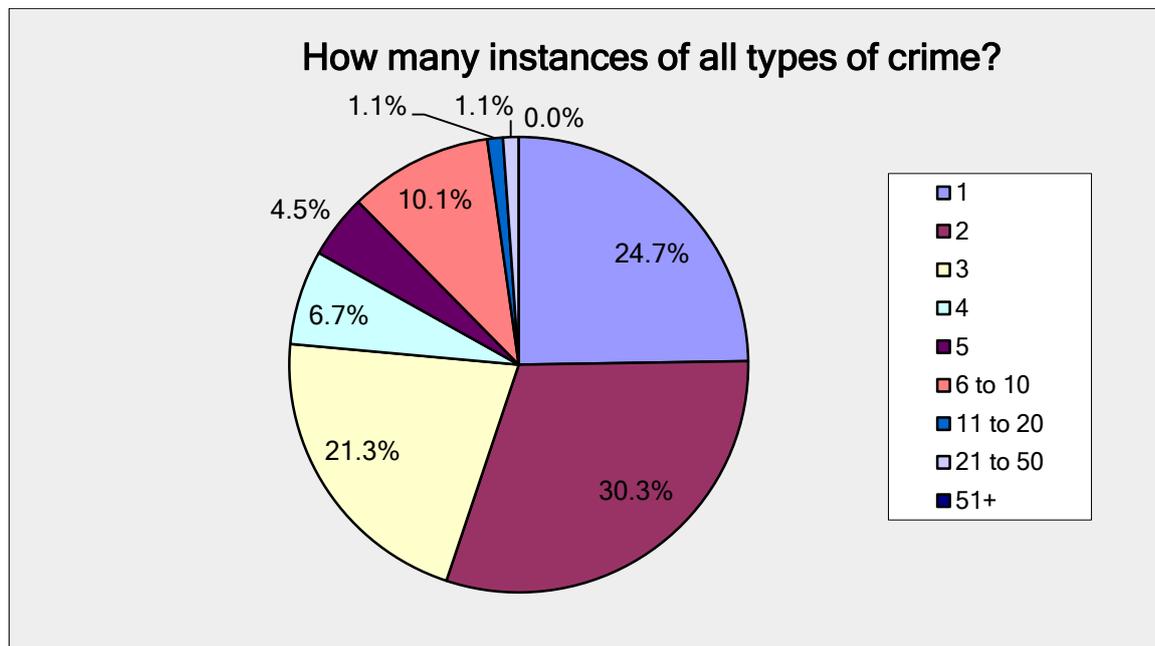
The Retail sector reported the highest incidence of crime with 64% confirming that their businesses had experienced crime in the last 12 months. IT Services reported the lowest incidences at 23%.

There has been a decline in the overall incidence of crime since 2005 from 55% down to 39%. However, 39% is the highest total recorded since 2007 when it was 45%.



Instances of Crime in last 12 months

Of those businesses that experienced crime, 25% experienced just one instance in the last 12 months, with 75% experiencing two or more instances. However, it must be noted that 18% of incidents went unreported so the situation is even bleaker than that shown in the chart below.



1	2	3	4	5	6-10	11-20	21-50	51+
25%	30%	21%	7%	5%	10%	1%	1%	0%

General Crime Situation

The perception of the general crime situation has improved. 55% of respondents outlined that in their view the general level of crime in their area has increased in the last 12 months. In 2013, 63% of respondents believed that crime levels in their area had worsened.

66% of companies outlined that they felt that the recession had a major impact on the incidence of crime, an increase from the 65% reported in 2013. 17% of respondents stated that the impact is minimal.

Local Crime Situation

43% of businesses responded that, in their opinion, the problem of crime in their own locality was getting worse, a 2 point increase on 2013. However, only 2% stated that they felt that the situation was improving.

TYPE OF CRIMINAL ACTIVITY INFLICTED ON BUSINESSES

Q11. Which of the following crimes has affected your business in the last 12 months? (Respondents may give more than one answer)

Answer Options	Dublin City	Dublin County	Leinster	Munster	Connacht	Total 2014	Total 2013
Damage to vehicle	20%	31%	15%	11%	0%	18%	22%
Burglary	36%	23%	30%	37%	50%	33%	31%
Theft by outsiders (e.g. shoplifting)	24%	8%	19%	11%	50%	18%	26%
Vandalism	24%	23%	11%	37%	50%	23%	28%
Theft of vehicle	8%	8%	4%	5%	0%	6%	10%
Theft by member of staff	8%	15%	0%	21%	0%	9%	17%
Drunk and disorderly behaviour	12%	0%	4%	11%	0%	7%	13%
Internet Crime	4%	0%	15%	11%	0%	8%	6%
Arson	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	3%
Graffiti	24%	0%	0%	5%	0%	8%	10%
Fraud	8%	8%	22%	5%	0%	11%	15%
Personal Injury/Violence	4%	0%	0%	0%	0%	1%	8%
Extortion	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	1%
Robbery	12%	54%	30%	21%	50%	26%	32%
Attempted Burglary	12%	31%	26%	11%	0%	18%	26%
Anti Social Behaviour	16%	0%	15%	21%	50%	15%	19%
Other (please specify)	8%	0%	7%	0%	0%	7%	5%

'Burglary' at 33%, up from 31% in 2013, was reported as the most common form of crime suffered by businesses, followed by Robbery (26%), vandalism (23%), 'theft by outsiders' (18%) and 'attempted burglary' (18%).

There has been a welcome improvement in personal injury and violent crimes which occurred in only 1% of businesses in 2014, compared with 8% in 2013. Anti-social behaviour has also improved slightly from 19% to 15%, although the negative impact this behavior has on a business cannot be underestimated.

Dublin City and Munster are both affected badly by burglary while robbery and vandalism are a huge concern for Dublin County. Leinster is largely affected by robbery, burglary and fraud. Connacht respondents expressed concerns surrounding theft, vandalism and anti-social behavior.

Answer Options	Manufacturing	Retail	General Services	Distribution	Construction	Total 2014	Total 2013
Damage to vehicle	5%	14%	10%	21%	60%	18%	22%
Burglary	40%	36%	25%	29%	30%	33%	31%
Theft by outsiders (e.g. shoplifting)	0%	50%	15%	14%	20%	18%	26%
Vandalism	20%	36%	10%	21%	10%	23%	28%
Theft of vehicle	0%	0%	5%	7%	0%	6%	10%
Theft by member of staff	0%	21%	10%	14%	0%	9%	17%
Drunk and disorderly behaviour	5%	29%	0%	0%	0%	7%	13%
Internet Crime	10%	7%	10%	14%	0%	8%	6%
Arson	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	3%
Graffiti	0%	7%	5%	21%	10%	8%	10%
Fraud	0%	21%	10%	21%	10%	11%	15%
Personal Injury/Violence	5%	0%	0%	0%	0%	1%	8%
Extortion	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	1%
Robbery	35%	14%	30%	29%	0%	26%	32%
Attempted Burglary	30%	7%	25%	21%	0%	18%	26%
Anti Social Behaviour	10%	36%	15%	14%	0%	15%	19%
Other (please specify)	10%	0%	10%	14%	0%	7%	5%

There are significant variations in the extent and nature of crimes endured by the different sectors. The Retail sector, understandably, is most impacted by 'Theft by Outsiders' at 50%. The Distribution sector is badly affected by vehicle theft (7%) while Manufacturers are most concerned with burglary and robbery. The General Services Sector is also largely affected by burglary but also experiences significant 'theft from outsiders' at 15%.

EFFECT & COST OF CRIME ON SMES

Q12. In the last 12 months, as a consequence of the criminal activity, what has been the effect on your business? (Respondents may give more than one answer)

Answer Options	Dublin City	Dublin County	Leinster	Munster	Connacht	Total 2014	Total 2013
Higher insurance costs	20%	23%	19%	11%	0%	17%	26%
Alteration to buildings layout to	44%	62%	30%	26%	50%	37%	35%
No effect on business	16%	31%	11%	16%	50%	17%	18%
Disruption to trading	28%	0%	33%	21%	0%	23%	26%
Poor Staff morale	20%	15%	7%	11%	0%	12%	15%
Damage to organisation reputation	16%	0%	7%	0%	0%	7%	6%
Problems in obtaining insurance	8%	0%	0%	0%	0%	2%	4%
Increased Security Costs	44%	23%	59%	53%	100%	48%	54%
Loss of customers	8%	0%	4%	0%	0%	5%	9%
Postponement/Cancellation of investment	8%	0%	7%	0%	0%	5%	6%
Problems in recruiting	0%	8%	4%	0%	0%	2%	1%
Moved business's location	4%	0%	0%	0%	0%	1%	3%
Other (please specify)	0%	0%	4%	5%	0%	3%	7%

Being the victim of a crime can lead to businesses facing substantial costs. This is particularly the case for higher 'security costs', which affects 48% of companies. 'Alterations to building layout' (37%) and 'disruption to trading' (23%) also have a significant impact on the profitability margins of companies.

Security costs are a major concern for all businesses. 48% of businesses saw their security costs increase in 2014. Higher insurance costs due to crime are also affecting 17% of companies.

5% of businesses have lost customers due to crime (a slight decrease on 6% last year) and 1% have had to make the drastic, and costly, decision to move location.

When analysed sectorally it is clear that the Manufacturing (70%) and Distribution (57%) sectors are most affected by increasing security costs. The Retail (21%) and Construction (10%) sectors are affected by a loss of customers due to crime. 37% of businesses have had to alter their building layout to enhance security in 2014, an increase on 34% in 2013.

In the last 12 months, as a consequence of the criminal activity, what has been the effect on your business?

Answer Options	Manufacturing	Retail	General Services	Distribution	Construction	IT Services	Total 2014	Total 2013
Higher insurance costs	5%	29%	15%	14%	10%	0%	17%	26%
Alteration to buildings layout to enhance security	55%	50%	30%	29%	30%	0%	37%	34%
No effect on business	10%	29%	0%	21%	40%	33%	17%	18%
Disruption to trading	20%	29%	25%	29%	20%	0%	23%	26%
Poor Staff morale	0%	21%	25%	14%	0%	0%	12%	15%
Damage to organisation's reputation	5%	0%	20%	7%	0%	0%	7%	6%
Problems in obtaining insurance	0%	14%	0%	0%	0%	0%	2%	4%
Increased Security Costs	70%	43%	40%	57%	10%	33%	48%	54%
Loss of customers	0%	21%	0%	0%	10%	0%	5%	10%
Postponement/ Cancellation of investment	5%	7%	5%	7%	0%	0%	5%	6%
Problems in recruiting	0%	7%	5%	0%	0%	0%	2%	1%
Moved business's location	0%	0%	5%	0%	0%	0%	1%	3%
Other (please specify)	5%	0%	0%	7%	0%	33%	3%	7%

Hidden costs such as poor staff morale and damages to the company's reputation are affecting 12% and 7% of businesses respectively. The effect of these issues on the businesses bottom line is difficult to quantify but it certain to be having a detrimental impact.

COST OF CRIME

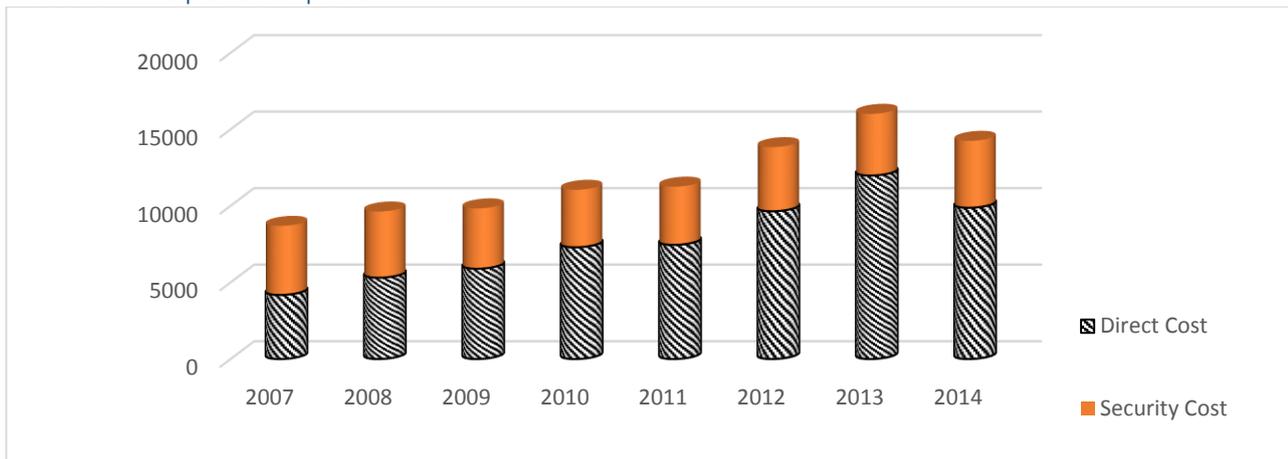
There is no official scientific method of collating and registering the cost of crime on SMEs, mainly because crimes against business are not recorded separately in statistics compiled by the Gardai and not all incidents of crime against business are even reported to the Gardai, as evidenced from the 18% non-reporting, in this survey.

When asked in this survey approximately how much direct criminal activity cost their business financially over the last 12 months, the average figure reported was €9,870, down from €11,976 in 2013.

Annual security costs have risen to €4,372 per enterprise. However, in line with the improvements in technology, the cost of security has dropped by 3% since 2007.

The direct cost of crime per enterprise has risen by 136% in 8 years since 2007 while the average security cost has reduced by 3%. The total cost of crime per enterprise has risen 64% since 2007, this figure is a composite of the actual loss suffered, repairs required and the annual cost of prevention.

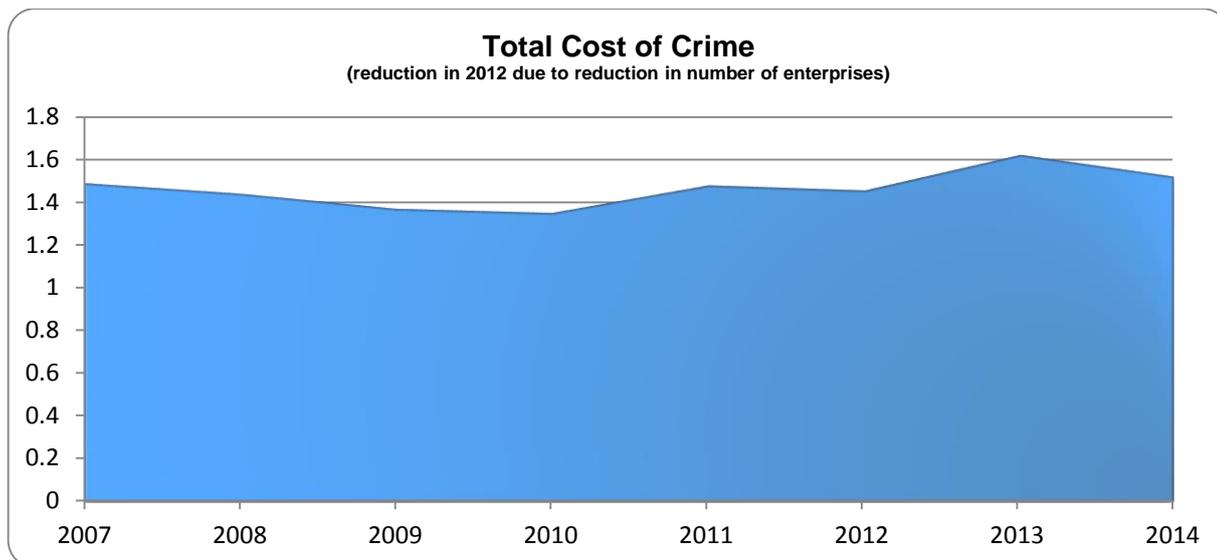
Cost of crime per enterprise



Direct Cost:	4,181	5,305	5,891	7,291	7,449	9,640	11,976	9,870
Security Cost:	4,506	4,318	3,937	3,751	3,798	4,193	4,032	4,372
TOTAL	8,687	9,423	9,828	11,042	11,247	13,833	16,008	14,242

As outlined previously it is difficult to put an estimate on the overall direct cost of crime on business, but when it is considered that 39% of companies have been affected in the last 12 months and there are approximately 185,000 SMEs active in Ireland (down from 189,000 reported in 2011), the total costs are €712m, down from the €860m recorded in 2013.

This figure increases significantly when the cost of crime prevention methods is factored in. For example companies spent on average €4,372 (a slight increase on 2013) on security, security devices and prevention including alarms and CCTV, equating to a further cost of €808m.



2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014
1.49bn	1.44bn	1.37bn	1.35bn	1.475bn	1.455	1.622	1.5bn

The total direct cost of crime against business in the last 12 months is estimated at €1.5bn (calculated on 185,000 businesses in Ireland).

The fact that the cost of crime has been rising consistently since 2010, and has now only dropped slightly, is mainly due to a drop in business entities. Government must take action to reduce this issue as increased business costs threaten the viability of businesses and must be lessened as quickly as possible.

From a purely economic perspective, the impetus to prevent crimes against business generally, and SMEs in particular, is therefore great.

Note

The national cost of crime is based on the average cost multiplied by the incident rate multiplied by the number of business entities in Ireland (decreased from 189,000 in 2013 to 185,000 in 2014).

Direct cost of crime €9870 per company 185,000 SMEs of which 39% are affected by crime.

⇒ $185,000 \times 0.39 \times €9870 = €712m.$

The cost of security is based on the average cost of security multiplied by the number of business entities in Ireland.

Crime prevention cost €4,372 per company.

⇒ $185,000 \times 4,372 = €808m.$

Total Cost of Crime

⇒ $€712m + €808m = €1.52bn$

INSURANCE

Q10. If the criminal activity did not cost you anything, was it because you were insured?

Answer Options	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014
YES	23%	31%	38%	38%	35%	41%	45%
NO	77%	69%	62%	63%	65%	59%	55%

As illustrated above, 55% of firms were not covered by insurance for their loss due to crime. Although business crime is often seen as a 'victimless crime', the reality is actually very different, as a significant amount of crime against business is not insured and the costs are borne by the company or passed on to consumers through increased costs of goods and services.

Business crime also leads to increased insurance costs which is a further burden on companies. 17% of respondents have had to pay higher insurance costs in the past 12 months as a direct consequence of the criminal activity they had suffered.

CRIME PREVENTION METHODS USED

Q 26. What crime prevention methods do you use? (Respondents may give more than one answer)

The use of alarms continues to be the primary weapon of choice for crime prevention, with 62% of companies having an alarm on their premises. This was followed by 58% who use Alarm Response, with 52% using CCTV.

	Dublin City	Dublin County	Leinster	Munster	Connacht	Ulster	Total 2014	Total 2013
CCTV	67%	47%	44%	54%	59%	43%	52%	53%
Time Lock Safe	2%	5%	7%	10%	6%	0%	6%	9%
Alarm	73%	65%	59%	54%	65%	43%	62%	67%
Security Guard	23%	12%	3%	14%	0%	0%	11%	14%
Alarm Response	75%	72%	54%	51%	29%	29%	58%	60%
Access Control	42%	51%	35%	44%	35%	29%	41%	40%
Other (please specify)	10%	12%	20%	9%	12%	14%	13%	7%
	Manufacturing	Retail	General Services	Distribution	Construction	IT Services	Total 2014	Total 2013
CCTV	57%	78%	38%	63%	26%	53%	52%	53%
Time Lock Safe	2%	22%	1%	12%	0%	12%	6%	9%
Alarm	72%	70%	50%	70%	70%	47%	62%	67%
Security Guard	7%	4%	17%	9%	9%	6%	11%	14%
Alarm Response	63%	70%	43%	77%	39%	65%	58%	60%
Access Control	48%	30%	43%	42%	13%	41%	41%	40%
Other	17%	9%	9%	12%	17%	24%	13%	7%

23% of businesses in Dublin City and 14% in Munster use security guards. This is above the national average of 11% for the use of security guards. The use of access control in all businesses has increased from 40% to 41%.

The use of CCTV cameras is popular with retailers and distributors with 78% and 63% respectively using them.

BUSINESS REPORTING OF CRIME

Q 13. If your business has been affected by crime in the last 12 months, was it reported to the Gardai?

	Dublin City	Dublin County	Leinster	Munster	Connacht	Ulster	Total 2014	Total 2013
YES	76%	92%	89%	74%	100%	67%	82%	85%
	Manufacturing	Retail	General Services	Distribution	Construction	IT Services	Total 2014	Total 2013
YES	95%	79%	75%	86%	90%	0%	82%	85%

82% of businesses affected by crime confirmed that they had reported criminal activity against their business in the last 12 months to the Gardai, a 3% decrease on last year.

Q 14. How do you feel the Gardai dealt with the reported incident?

Answer Options	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014
Effectively	14%	23%	20%	22%	17%	34%	19%	12%
Adequately	49%	53%	51%	48%	62%	40%	52%	53%
Unsatisfactorily	37%	23%	28%	29%	21%	26%	29%	35%

65% of respondents were satisfied with how the Gardai dealt with the reported incident. 35% were dissatisfied, a 6 point increase on the previous year.

Q 15. If the crime was not reported to the Gardai, was that because of: (respondents may give more than one answer)

Answer Options	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014
Perception that the crime was too trivial	48%	38%	71%	61%	59%	63%
Lack of time	5%	0%	5%	11%	0%	6%
Insurance Costs	0%	0%	10%	17%	0%	0%
Fear of Reprisal	0%	6%	0%	0%	6%	6%
Only an attempt	10%	19%	14%	0%	0%	0%
Unable to contact Gardai	5%	0%	0%	0%	6%	0%
Lack of faith that the criminal would be charged	38%	38%	28%	17%	35%	38%
No confidence in Garda response	33%	13%	24%	22%	29%	38%
Fearful of negative publicity	5%	6%	5%	6%	6%	0%
Other (please specify)	24%	19%	4%	17%	12%	13%

Of those who did not report the criminal incidents that they experienced, 63% stated that it was because they believed it was 'too trivial' and an alarming 38% said it was because they had 'no faith that the criminal would be charged'. A significant 38% have 'no confidence in Garda response', up from 29% in 2013.

Q.18 Do you have confidence that if you were a victim of crime, the criminal would be apprehended?

	Dublin City	Dublin County	Leinster	Munster	Connacht	Ulster	2014	2013
YES	2%	9%	3%	10%	0%	0%	5%	8%
	Manufacturing	Retail	General Services	Distribution	Construction	IT Services	2014	2013
YES	6%	9%	5%	2%	8%	10%	5%	8%

The survey results confirm that only 5% of SME owner/managers have confidence that if they were the victim of a crime that the criminal would be apprehended. As a consequence a significant number of companies (18%) do not report crime to the authorities. They believe it will be seen as 'too trivial' or likely to go unpunished. A system that has confidence rates at levels this low is one which clearly needs an overhaul.

Garda Crime Prevention Office

Q23. Are you aware of the existence of Crime Prevention Officers?

	Dublin City	Dublin County	Leinster	Munster	Connacht	Ulster	2014	2013
YES	56%	43%	60%	72%	82%	57%	61%	63%
NO	44%	57%	40%	28%	18%	43%	39%	37%
	Manufacturing	Retail	General Services	Distribution	Construction	IT Services	2014	2013
YES	53%	78%	61%	65%	48%	56%	61%	63%
NO	47%	22%	39%	35%	52%	44%	39%	37%

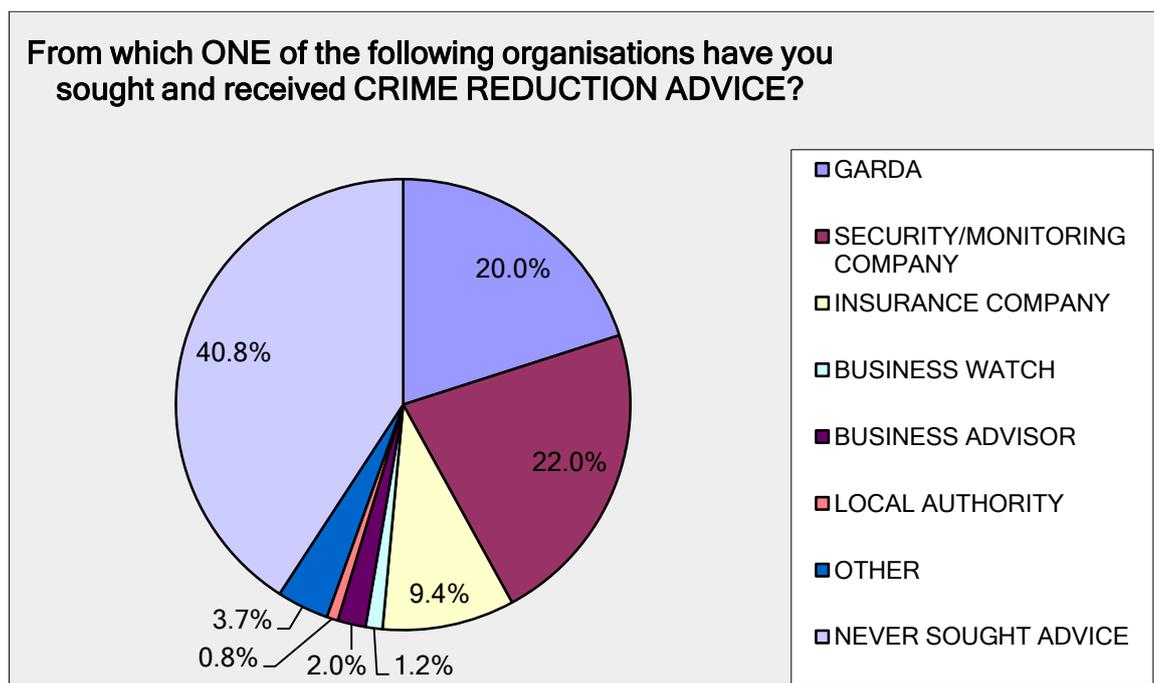
61% of owner/managers are aware of the existence of Crime Prevention Officers (CPO), who are there specifically to deal with crime against business, down from 63% last year. An awareness campaign, as suggested earlier, would rectify the knowledge shortfalls here and serve to increase the numbers of those engaging with the CPO.

Q 24. If yes, have you used this service?

	Dublin City	Dublin County	Leinster	Munster	Connacht	Ulster	2014	2013
YES	36%	11%	16%	23%	14%	25%	21%	20%
	Manufacturing	Retail	General Services	Distribution	Construction	IT Services	2014	2013
YES	16%	22%	21%	14%	33%	10%	21%	20%

Of those who are aware of the existence of Crime Prevention Officers only 21% have availed of their services, a 1% increase from last year.

SOURCES OF ADVICE



41% of companies have never requested crime reduction advice. This figure has remained static since 2013 and requires improvement.

Of those who did, 22% received their advice from a security company and 20% received it from the Gardai.

Business advisors and business watch services were only chosen for advice by approximately 3% of companies combined. Insurance companies were also relatively infrequently solicited for advice with less than 9% of companies using them for this purpose.

MEASURES TO REDUCE CRIME

It is evident that from the report thus far that the issue of crime is having a substantial negative impact on businesses. It is essential that this problem is combated to ensure that businesses have the opportunity to grow and develop. The SME sector plays a pivotal role in the Irish economy and so the problems it faces must be taken seriously by Government. The following answers outline the measures owner-managers would like to see taken to reduce crime.

Q 23. Do you support any of the following measures as part of a campaign to reduce crime? (Respondents may give more than one answer)

Answer Options	Dublin City	Dublin County	Leinster	Munster	Connacht	Ulster	2014	2013
Significant increase in Gardai numbers and presence	84%	83%	78%	85%	94%	86%	83%	75%
Tougher sentencing by the courts	80%	74%	82%	85%	82%	57%	80%	78%
More emphasis on rehabilitation of criminals	31%	33%	25%	34%	41%	29%	31%	32%
Legalisation of so-called soft drugs (e.g. cannabis)	22%	21%	24%	20%	12%	0%	21%	18%
Legalisation of so-called hard drugs (e.g. heroin)	8%	10%	15%	7%	12%	14%	11%	14%
Increase in CCTV in town centre	71%	60%	67%	70%	88%	43%	68%	71%
Answer Options	Manufacturing	Retail	General Services	Distribution	Construction	IT Services	2014	2013
Significant increase in Gardai numbers and Gardai	80%	91%	87%	84%	79%	67%	83%	75%
Tougher sentencing by the courts	84%	86%	75%	86%	83%	78%	80%	78%
More emphasis on rehabilitation of criminals	22%	23%	38%	30%	28%	22%	31%	32%
Legalisation of so-called soft drugs (e.g. cannabis)	4%	36%	26%	21%	4%	22%	21%	18%
Legalisation of so-called hard drugs (e.g. heroin)	11%	23%	8%	12%	8%	11%	11%	14%
Increase in CCTV in town centre	73%	81%	68%	65%	63%	56%	68%	71%

83% of SMEs are in favour of increasing Gardai numbers and Gardai presence on the streets, an increase on 75% in 2013. Tougher sentencing by the Courts is seen by 80% as a necessary measure to tackle crime and 68% support the introduction of more CCTV cameras to town centres.

The legalisation of hard and soft drugs is not a proposal that has garnered much support within the SME business community. Only 21% would support legalising soft drugs and an even smaller 11% feel the same way about hard drugs.

Q 22. How effective do you consider each of the following to be in reducing crime against your business?

Answer Options	Very Effective	Effective	Fair	Not very Effective	Not Effective at all
Fast Garda Response	43%	28%	16%	7%	6%
More Visible Policing	53%	24%	12%	6%	5%
CCTV Surveillance	39%	37%	18%	4%	2%
Tougher sentencing	50%	23%	12%	9%	6%

SME owner-managers rate a more visible police presence as the most effective deterrent against crime at 77%. CCTV surveillance follows closely behind on 76% and 73% would like to see tougher sentencing in our courts. 71% believe that a fast Garda response is effective.

THE JUDICIAL SYSTEM

When asked about the judicial system an appallingly low 3% of respondents felt it was effective in dealing with business crime. This is not surprising as 80% of companies would encourage tougher sentencing by the Courts.

It is clear that the current judicial and sentencing system does not adequately deter criminals. Punishments must fit crimes and repeat offenders must be dealt with severely. It is distressing and frustrating for Owner-managers to see criminals escape with light or suspended sentences while they struggle to recover the losses they have incurred as a result of the crime in question.

Until the issue is taken more seriously at official level, business owners will not put in the time and money in reporting a crime unless they are confident of adequate action being taken against the perpetrators of crime against their businesses.

Government must increase the spend on prisons and community service programmes in order to ensure that there is adequate capacity in the system for offenders to be punished.

Ends.