



State of Security

Quarter 1 Report

March 2022





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COMPILED BY THE

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Executive Summary

According to the 2021 Global Peace Index, South Africa ranks 123rd out of 163 countries in the world in terms of societal safety and security. Several theories have been highlighted in the current study to explain the prevalence of crime and victimisation in South Africa. These theories cover a range of possible explanations including lifestyle, demographic factors, and the economic state of the country.

An online survey was conducted to gauge the level of safety and security experienced by South Africans before and during the nationwide lockdown which began on 26 March 2020. Respondents were asked how they expect their level of safety and security to change once lockdown is over. The results showed that South African's expected their overall sense of safety to decrease further once the lockdown levels are eased. Overall results from this study will be used as a baseline upon which comparisons will be made for the following AASA State of Security studies to be conducted in 2022.

Significantly, of the 1473 respondents surveyed, 78% reported to adding additional safety features to their homes since the lockdown began. Furthermore, respondents indicated that since the lockdown began, they take more security measures in public spaces which include keeping all bags secure and closed, as well as avoiding being in public spaces alone. In addition, respondents indicated that they felt safer in indoor public spaces as opposed to outdoor public spaces despite the threat of the COVID-19. This could be due to the fact that crimes against the person are increasing at a rapid rate, as reported in the most recently published crime statistics.

Of the surveyed sample, 68% of respondents indicated that they had been a victim of a crime, with the most

common types of crime being housebreaking and robbery. Furthermore, respondents who indicated that they had fallen victim to crime in the past indicated a range of psychological and behavioural changes, which include avoiding certain locations, anxiety, and feelings of helplessness, amongst others.

Due to the current state of security in South Africa, the need for private security continues to increase. South Africans have indicated the need for their loved ones to be safer and more secure on a daily basis regardless of where they were. The AASA recognised that timely assistance is vital during an emergency, and as such, partnered with more than 180 security companies across South Africa in creating a security solution to members regardless if they were at home, at work or on the road.

AA Armed Response, utilises an app-based service that dispatches private security officers closest to a person's location at the push of a button. An example of this is the Rem-i-Amica panic button, that has a wide range of security features. These include real-time tracking, fall detection and a full integration with over 180-Armed Response Partners. Rem-i-Amica has a GPS tracking system and during an emergency, it automatically sends coordinates to the listed emergency contacts in the form on an SMS. The device also signals when the battery is running low, and it is water resistant. This service is available to both members and non-members of the AASA.

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Introduction

In South Africa, government officials are placed in a position of power, where they define what is considered to be a criminal act and/or an act that is seen as punishable. Therefore, crime, may be seen as a social construct (Akih & Dreyer, 2017). According to the South African Constitution (Act 108 of 1996), Chapter 2 7(2), “The state must respect, protect, promote and fulfil the rights in the Bill of Rights”. Section 12(1) states that “Everyone has the right to freedom and security of the person, which includes the right— (c) to be free from all forms of violence from either public or private sources”. Therefore, there is a positive duty on the South African government to promote these rights to security. Observing the global comparison of South Africa, the current state of security, as well as the perceived sense of security, it is clear that this right is not being fulfilled by the South African state.

South Africa has the third highest crime rate in the world at 76.86 crimes per 100 000 in the population (World Population Review, 2022). This crime rate has been associated with South Africa’s political transitions over the last decade (such as state capture) (Schönteich & Louw, 2001). South Africa has undergone a recent transition regarding the COVID-19 pandemic. On 26 March 2020, South Africa entered level-5 lockdown which lasted until 30 April 2020. The country has subsequently moved between lockdown and adjusted lockdown levels four to one. At the time of publication of this report, South Africa was in lockdown level one. During level-5 lockdown, there was a significant decrease to the crime rate, which was attributed to the stay-at home order and alcohol ban during COVID-19 (Kriegler, 2021). However, when the hard lockdowns were lifted, there was a 15% increase in crime in May 2021, in comparison to 2019 (Gatticchi, 2021). During these transitional periods, there are attempts to consolidate new institutions and regulations (such as COVID-19 lockdown rules). With this change, society and the instruments of control are reshaped. Through this development, there is space for crime to increase, causing criminal justice functions to be weakened (Schönteich & Louw, 2001).

Violence may be seen as a social phenomenon in South Africa. Being exposed to violent incidents typically

shapes expectations of behaviours, in which norms, within a cultural and/or social group are defined, creating an internalization of ‘pro-violent’ values (World Health Organization, 2009). Violence in South Africa has become a subculture, through which individuals tend to embrace values and norms which are more permissive of violence (Curling, 2008). Owing to this, violence has become one of South Africa’s most accepted ways in responding to conflict.

The relationship between violence and crime emerges through learnt and taught social processes which are often derived from social inequalities (Curling, 2008). This view is problematic, given that it normalizes the belief that “violence is to be met with violence”, which contributes towards an increase in violence-related crimes (Ludbrook, 2020). An example of this relates to the civil unrest experienced in 2021 that started in KwaZulu-Natal, where there were scenes of rioting, violent looting and burning of buildings (Du Plessis, 2021). In addition, during the COVID-19 hard lockdown period, evidence reveals that in 2019-2020, there was an average increase of 146 sexual offences per day, in comparison to the same period between 2018-2019 (Minisini, 2021). Both these examples illustrate the violent nature South African’s are adopting, when dealing with conflict. This violence, as well as the normalization of violence, may exacerbate South Africans concerns for their safety and security.

Furthermore, according to the Human Development Index, South Africa has been ranked 114 out of 189 countries, as a result of declining living standards and worsening income inequality (Mlaba, 2020). South Africa has dropped by two ranks on the index, as during the COVID-19 pandemic, more than two-million people lost their jobs (Mlaba, 2020). Of the South African population, 55.5% (30.3 million people) are living under poverty-stricken conditions (Sulla, 2020). South Africa has been deemed one of the most unequal countries in the world (Mlaba, 2020).

As a result of these unequal opportunities, violent acts tend to increase. For example, people may begin to enter illegal labour markets, such as the selling of drugs,

in order to make an income (Curling, 2008). In addition, poverty is closely associated with social status. In turn, in order to maintain a hierarchical position within a community, an individual may become violent as a means of demonstrating their ability to exercise dominance and power as a result of being in a financially insecure position. These examples demonstrate how poverty-stricken conditions tend to create social disorganization (Curling, 2008). This social disorganization has the potential to foster an environment where violence is more likely to occur. This is likely to contribute towards an increase in the rate of criminal behaviour, given that there is a lack of behavioural control, as well as the internalization and transmission of values that would typically go against societal norms (Curling, 2008).

These factors reveal that South Africa is suffering from crippling political, social and economic climates. A culture of violence, as well as high levels of poverty, unemployment and inequality, will continue to be a threat to the internal security of South Africa. It is apparent that the South African Police Service (SAPS), South Africa's Intelligence Service and the South African National Defence Force (SANDF) are failing to mobilize an appropriate approach to ensure South Africa's national security (Cilliers, 2021). Therefore, there is a need for private security to protect the citizens of South Africa.

In this report, possible theoretical explanations for the high crime and victimisation rates in the country are explored. Furthermore, insights relating to the perceived safety levels before and during the lockdown, the impact of victimisation, and safety measures taken by South Africans to mitigate crime is highlighted. The insights in this report will serve as a baseline for the 2022 State of Security Report. In this report, there will be insights into opinions/feelings of safety among South Africans due to the continuous increase in crime rates. Finally, the AASA proposes an easy, affordable, and reliable solution for citizens to increase their safety and security.

Theoretical Approaches to Victimology in South Africa

Several theories have been proposed as an explanation to the observed victimisation within South Africa.

- Lifestyle/exposure model of personal victimisation

(Hindelang, Gottfredson & Garofalo, 1978): This model suggests that victimisation rates are closely linked to lifestyle and individual demographics, such as gender and age. The model is based on the assumption that younger, unattached males, who spend more time away from home, are exposed to more opportunities for victimisation by strangers. This means victimisation rates become predictable when lifestyle variations are taken into consideration. The risk of becoming the victim of a crime is then directly related to the amount of time an individual spends in public spaces. There are, however, prerequisites for victimisation such as the presence of the victim and offender at a specific time and place, the offender's willingness to victimise, and the offender's ability and willingness to use violence or some form of a threat (Saponaro, 2013).

- Routine activities approach (Cohen & Felson, 1979): This theory is based on the assumption that crime occurs as a product of the spatial and temporal organisation of society, creating an opportunity for criminal tendencies to become actions. This means crime takes place as a result of opportunities created within society during the daily activities of individuals. In order for a crime to take place, a motivated offender, a suitable target, and an absence of any form of protection of the target, is required (Saponaro, 2013).
- The opportunity model (Cohen, Kleugel & Land, 1981): This model identifies five elements that play a role in the likelihood of a crime occurring, namely: exposure, proximity, guardianship, target attractiveness, and properties of specific offences. Exposure refers to the availability of a target at any given time or place. Proximity refers to the physical distance between potential targets and potential offenders. Guardianship refers to individuals or objects that prevent crime directly or indirectly. Target attractiveness refers to the desirability of a target person or object, as well as the perceived likelihood that the target will offer resistance during the commission of the crime. The properties of the specific offence refer to the effort or ease with which an offence can be committed, for example, less effort is required to steal an unattended phone than what would be required to steal a vehicle from a supervised parking garage. A crime is more likely to be committed when the target is accessible to the offender, the offender is in close proximity to the target,

- the target is unattended, the target is highly desirable and unlikely to offer resistance, and the crime can be committed with little effort (Saponaro, 2013).
- The differential risk model of criminal victimisation (Fattah, 1991): In an attempt to address the shortcomings of the lifestyle/exposure model, the routine activities theory, and the opportunities model, the differential risk model of criminal victimisation combined the previous theories into a single approach consisting of ten categories. According to Fattah (1991), crimes take place when an opportunity is presented to an offender, as well as when the target is attractive, suitable, and vulnerable. The likelihood of becoming the victim of a crime is also predicated by the number of motivated offenders and exposure to high-risk environments, such as dangerous places and times. Those individuals that are in close association or have relationships with potential offenders run an increased risk of becoming victimised. Situational variables such as behavioural patterns that include incitement, carelessness, or obliviousness, increase the chances of being victimised. High-risk activities associated with high-risk lifestyles, such as illegal activities, will increase the probability of becoming a victim. In contrast, more cautious avoidant behaviour will reduce the possibility of becoming a victim. Structural and cultural factors need to be taken into consideration, as those from minority groups are more likely to become the targets of crimes committed by the dominant or conventional groups (Saponaro, 2013).
 - Extended low self-control theory (Schreck, 1999): This theory is based on the assumption that individuals with low self-control commit crimes. Potential offenders with low self-control are more prone to succumb to temptation without considering the consequences of the specific criminal behaviour. In the same way, a lack of self-control can increase the vulnerability of a potential victim. For instance, an individual under the influence of alcohol or drugs may be unable to defend themselves against victimisation. Certain aspects of self-control could help reduce the chances of being victimised, for instance the ability to postpone gratification, empathy, tolerance for frustration, diligence, preferences for mental rather than physical activity, and risk avoidance (Saponaro, 2013).
 - Extended control balance theory (Piquero & Hickman, 2003): This theory is based on the assumption that every individual is controlled, as well as able to control others, and the relationship between these two elements influences the probability and type of deviant behaviour of an individual. An absence of control over one's own actions may lead to criminal behaviour in an attempt to regain control. Similarly, an excess of control of others may lead to criminal behaviour through the exploitation of others. Correspondingly, an individual with a lack of control may become more vulnerable to victimisation, as they become more passive and submissive. Individuals with an excess of control may become vulnerable to victimisation, through their perceived belief of their own impunity and invulnerability (Saponaro, 2013).
 - Other theoretical developments:
 - The socio-structural perspective: Victimisation occurs as a result of the economic and power structures within a society. Pressures are placed on subjugated individuals, through for example, relative deprivation, which results in the social disorder and the deterioration of communities. This then results in the tendency of individuals to become offenders, as well as increasing the risk for victimisation (Saponaro, 2013).
 - The sociocultural perspective: Victimisation is the result of the historic treatment of women and the patriarchal composition of society. This theory is based on the traditional roles of men and women within society, with crime as a way to display and maintain male dominance. Women are thus more vulnerable to victimisation due to their restricted role in society, male dominance, the division of labour, the class system within society, and/or racial discrimination (Saponaro, 2013).
 - The physical-milieu perspective: Victimisation is based on the physical area in which an individual resides, for example individuals residing in inner cities, high crime rate areas, areas with high mobility rates, low income, poor living conditions, etc., are more likely to experience victimisation. The behaviour of an individual has no bearing on the chance of becoming a victim of crime.
 - The socio-interactionist perspective: Victimisation often occurs as a result of misguided or misinterpreted

interaction between the victim and the offender. Consequently, a crime occurs when an offender and a victim have engaged in some sort of interaction that has gone amiss (Saponaro, 2013).

- The social exchange perspective: Victimisation occurs when a power imbalance transpires between the victim and the offender. As long as both parties feel that they are benefiting from the interaction, as well as perceived that they are being treated fairly, criminal encounters may be avoided (Saponaro, 2013).
- The learned helplessness theory: Victims become passive due to their perceived lack of control in a situation. A victim who believes that their actions have no impact on their experiences of victimisation,

becomes passive to such an extent that they suffer psychological paralysis. This psychological paralysis halts their ability to offer any sort of resistance against victimisation, creating ideal targets (Saponaro, 2013).

Although each of these theories explain an aspect of victimisation, none of them adequately explain the range of victimisation experienced in South Africa. This includes stranger crimes, property crimes, domestic crimes and white-collar crimes. A combined approach to criminal behaviour and victimisation may be the most appropriate within the South African context, taking into consideration historical, structural, political, and individual characteristics.

Current State of Security in South Africa

Below is a breakdown of the latest national crime statistics in South Africa according to the quarterly reports released

by the SAPS (2021, 2022). The statistics for 2021/2022 Quarter 4 have not been released at the time of reporting:

TABLE 1: QUARTERLY NATIONAL CRIME STATISTICS

Crime Category	2021 Quarter 1 April – June 2021	2021 Quarter 2 July – September 2021	2021 Quarter 3 October – December 2021
Murder	5 760	6 163	6 859
Sexual offences	12 702	11 964	14 188
Attempted murder	5 145	5 157	5 645
Assault with intent to inflict grievous bodily harm	37 530	35 625	46 513
Common assault	39 406	37 137	47 081
Common robbery	10 701	9 619	10 524
Robbery with aggravating circumstances	33 876	31 480	34 143
Total Contact Crimes (Crimes Against the Person)	145 120	137 145	164 953
Rape	10 006	9 556	11 315
Sexual assault	1 900	1 753	2 069
Attempted sexual offences	514	400	524
Contact sexual offences	282	255	280
Total Sexual Offences	12 702	11 964	14 188

Crime Category	2021 Quarter 1 April – June 2021	2021 Quarter 2 July – September 2021	2021 Quarter 3 October – December 2021
Carjacking	5 146	4 973	5 455
Robbery at residential premises	5 346	5 372	5 760
Robbery at non-residential premises	5 255	4 867	5 138
Robbery of cash in transit	46	52	60
Bank robbery	1	1	6
Truck hijacking	411	410	448
Arson	978	1 284	963
Malicious damage to property	26 326	27 704	30 658
Total Contact-Related Crimes	27 304	28 988	31 621
Burglary at non-residential premises	14 627	18 776	14 408
Burglary at residential premises	39 477	35 949	39 692
Theft of motor vehicle and motorcycle	9 433	8 721	9 776
Theft out of or from motor vehicle	21 310	19 467	20 170
Stock-theft	6 757	6 663	7 404
Total Property-Related Crimes	91 604	89 576	91 450
All theft not mentioned elsewhere	60 056	59 671	64 214
Commercial crime	24 030	24 613	27 155
Shoplifting	11 281	10 526	10 451
Total Other Serious Crimes	95 367	94 810	101 820
Total Community Reported Serious Crimes	359 395	350 519	389 844
Illegal possession of firearms and ammunition	3 147	3 355	3 387
Drug-related crime	31 648	30 224	36 053
Driving under the influence of alcohol or drugs	10 964	7 649	13 181
Sexual offences detected as a result of police action	1 428	1 522	1 987
Total Crime Detected As A Result Of Police Action	47 187	42 750	54 608

As can be seen from the statistics above, crime rates in 2021 decreased from quarter 1 to quarter 2. However, rates began to increase from quarter 2 to quarter 3. The trend of these crime rates may be understood when considering the COVID-19 lockdown levels. During quarter 2, South Africa was on adjusted alert level 3 from 26 July to 12 September 2021. During this level, South Africans were encouraged to stay at home and there were limits on alcohol sales and consumption. This may offer an explanation for why crime rates dropped in the second quarter of 2021. Quarter 3 saw the highest crime rates overall, however, it was during this period that South Africans were allowed to purchase alcohol again and the country moved to adjusted level 1 lockdown. Furthermore, the December holidays are noted for increased crime activity.

When analysing the 2021 crime rates across the three quarters, there is a considerable increase in all the different types of criminal acts. Contact crimes decreased by 7975 cases from quarter 1 to quarter 2. However, the cases increased by 27 808 cases from quarter 2 to quarter 3. The reported murder cases have steadily increased from quarter 1 to quarter 3, during 2021. It is interesting to note that the sexual offences cases decreased in quarter 2 of 2021, as during previous levels of hard lockdown, these cases were significantly higher. Although there was a decrease of 738 cases between quarter 1 and quarter 2, there was an increase of 2 224 cases from quarter 2 to quarter 3. Unlike the decrease that was seen in the previous AASA State of Security Reports, robbery and burglary at

residential properties increased. These findings further highlight the need for South African citizens to adopt additional safety measures, such as private security.

Bearing the above in mind, official crime statistics are not always accurate due to a range of factors including the underreporting of crimes, crime categories changing, and the perception of the officer recording the crime (Buil-Gil et al., 2021). Additionally, when data is recorded it cannot be traced back to any individual incident (Harrendorf et al., 2010). How the data is then presented will impact the impression it creates (Buil-Gil et al., 2021). The redefining of a crime, excluding less serious offences, and failing to record cases with little or no evidence, may all create the impression that crime reduction strategies are successful (Steyn, 2013).

As such, the use of victim surveys is likely to depict a clearer picture of crime in South Africa, as victims are more likely to report crimes on these surveys than to the South African Police Service (SAPS). Severe crimes including kidnapping or murder are more likely to be reported to the police, whereas personal crimes, especially less severe crimes, are less likely to be reported. Some victims may not feel comfortable sharing information regarding sensitive crimes, such as rape or sexual assault, resulting in the underestimation of these crimes. In contrast, some crimes may be over-reported and may not fit the legal definition, as the discretion remains with the victim, based on their own legal understanding (Steyn, 2013).

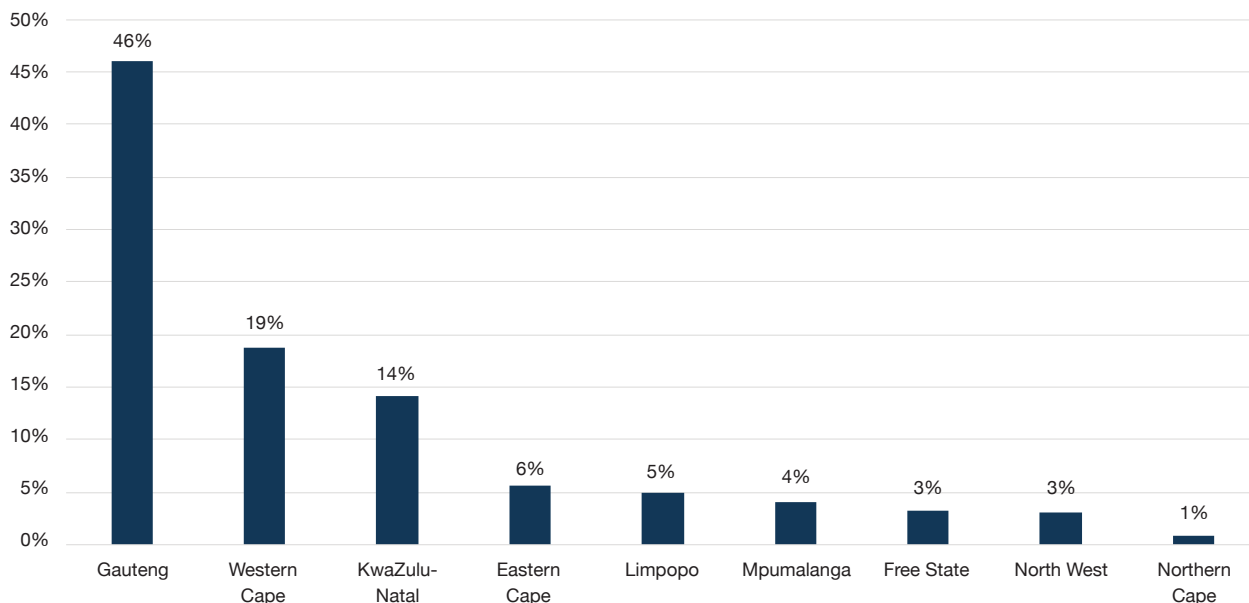


State of Security Results

The sections to follow present an analysis of the results obtained from the survey. These sections illustrate South African’s perceptions and experiences of crime in South Africa.

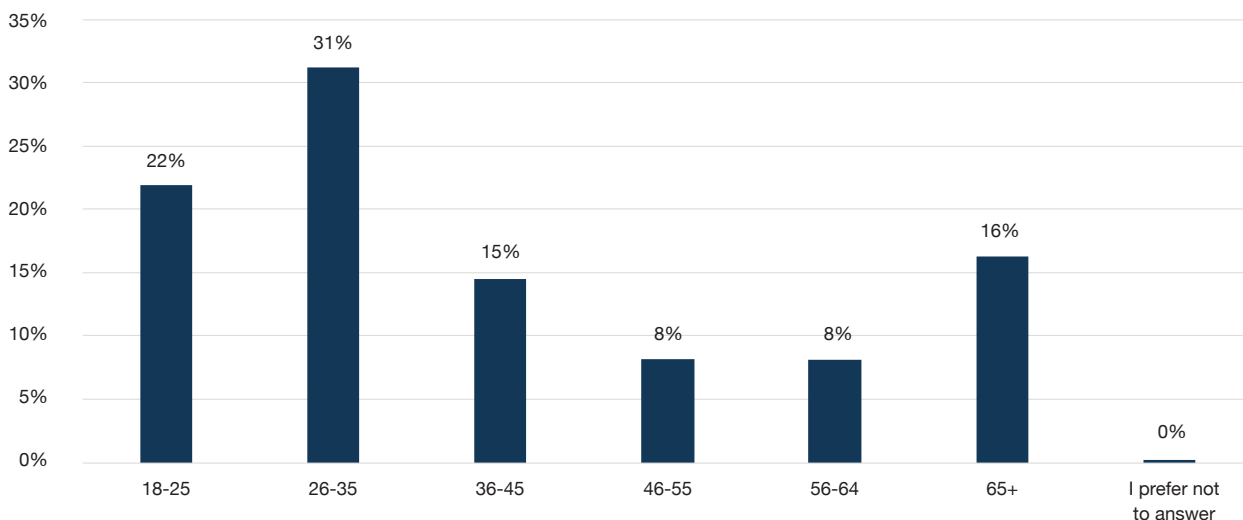
Demographics

In which province do you currently reside?



Sample: 1473

What is your current age?



Sample: 1473

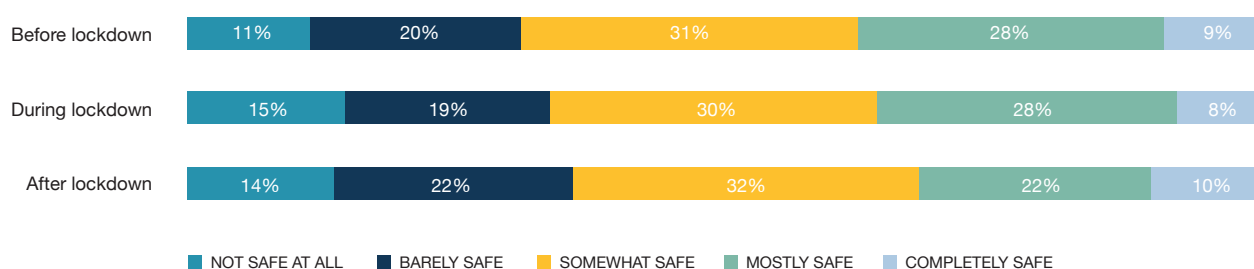
Respondents are representative of the South African population.

Perception of Security in South Africa

In order to gain insight into the ways South Africans perceive their security levels, respondents' perception of security will be looked at in various settings, across various times. The data collected for this report will be used as a baseline for the State of Security studies to follow this year.

GRAPH 1: OVERALL PERCEPTION OF SAFETY

Overall perception of safety

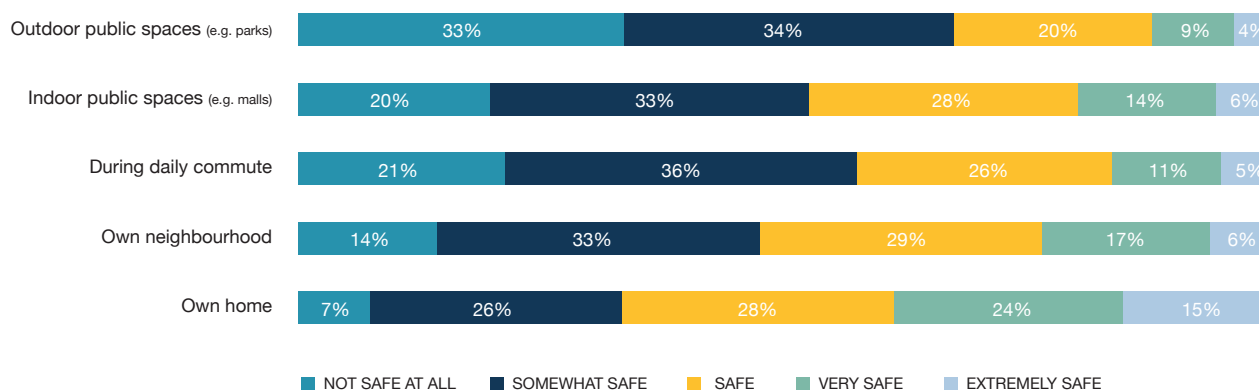


Sample: 1473

In the first quarter of 2022, respondents were asked to rate their overall perception of safety before the lockdown, during the lockdown, and how safe they expect to feel after the lockdown. At first glance, it may appear that respondents expect to feel safer post-lockdown, where 10% reported feelings of complete safety. However, when considering respondents' feelings of not being safe at all (14%) and feeling barely safe (22%), post-lockdown appears to be the time where individuals expect to feel the least safe. It can therefore be said that the perceived level of safety of individuals in South Africa is decreasing steadily as the lockdown levels are eased.

GRAPH 2: PERCEPTION OF SAFETY IN VARIOUS SETTINGS BEFORE THE LOCKDOWN

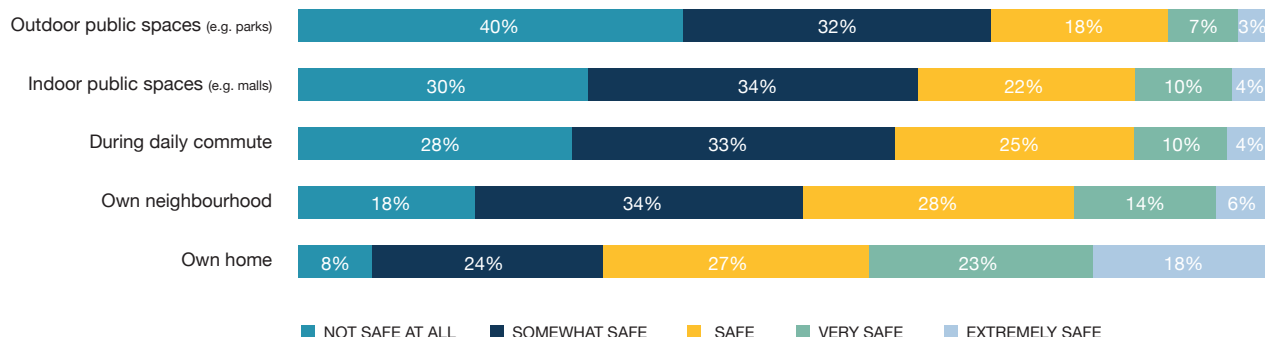
How safe did you feel in the following environments BEFORE the 2020 COVID-19 lockdowns were initiated?



Sample: 1473

GRAPH 3: PERCEPTION OF SAFETY IN VARIOUS SETTINGS DURING THE LOCKDOWN

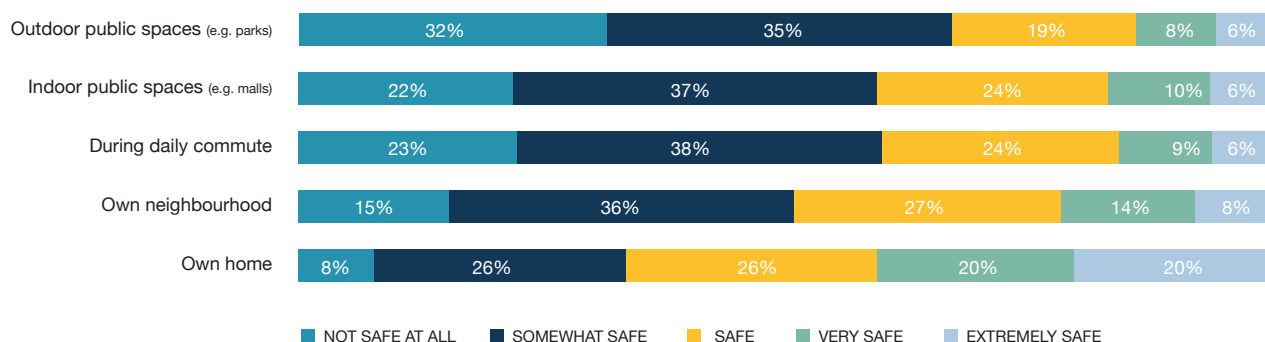
How safe do you feel in the following environments DURING the COVID-19 lockdown?



Sample: 1473

GRAPH 4: PERCEPTION OF SAFETY IN VARIOUS SETTINGS AFTER THE LOCKDOWN

How safe do you think you will feel in the following environments once the COVID-19 lockdowns are removed?



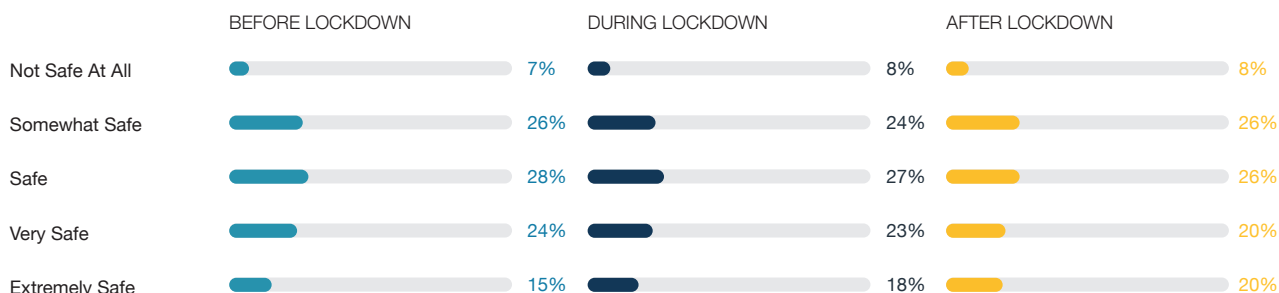
Sample: 1473

Outdoor public spaces are the spaces where the respondents feel most unsafe, while their own homes are where they feel most safe. This sense of safety within South Africans’ own homes is worthy of a more in-depth analysis. The AA’s personalised armed response services are well placed to service South Africans.

Sense of Security in Private Spaces

GRAPH 5: PERCEPTION OF SAFETY IN OWN HOME BEFORE, DURING, AND AFTER THE LOCKDOWN

How safe do you feel in your own home?

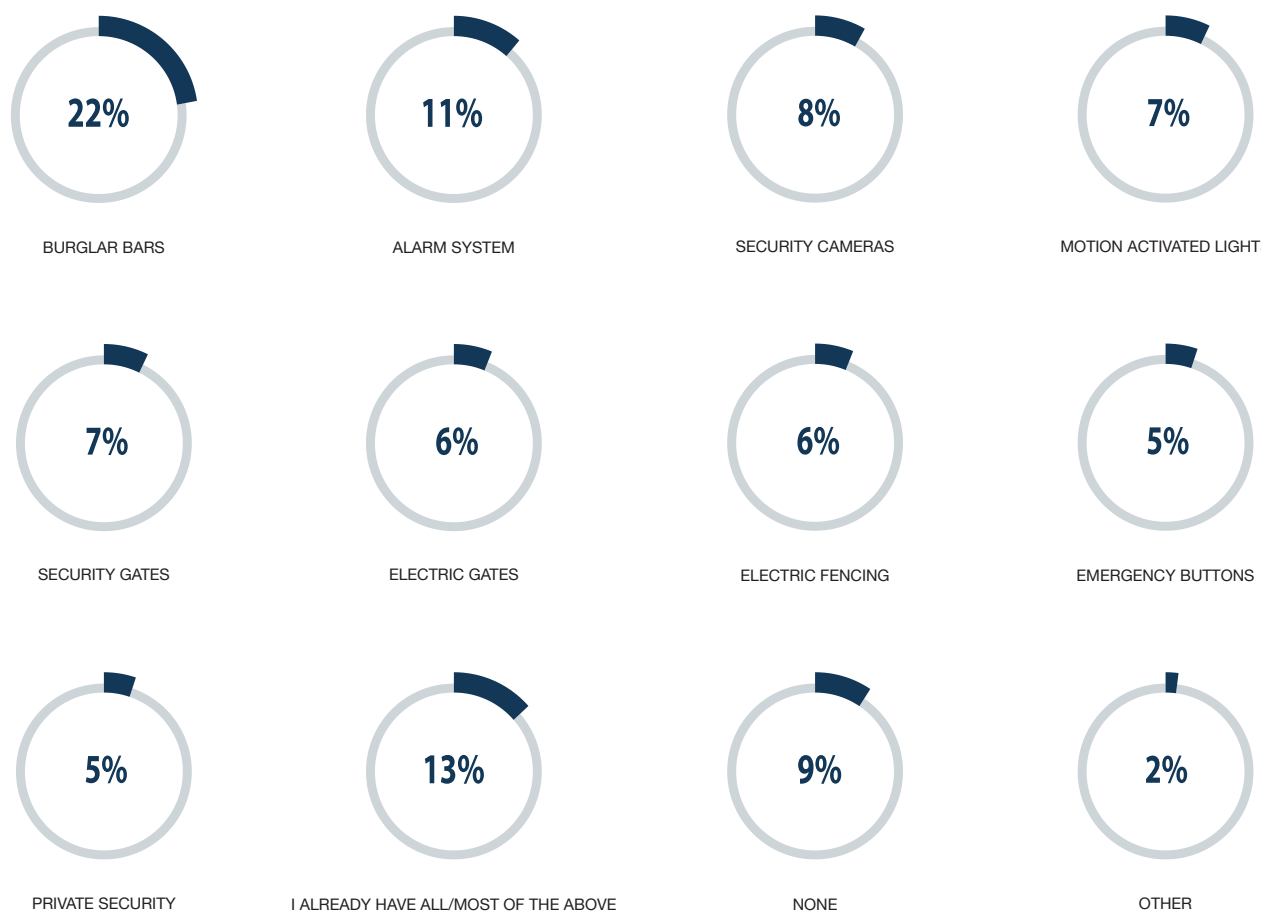


Sample: 1473

In their own homes, respondents’ sense of insecurity remains relatively stable before, during, and after lockdown. Interestingly, the 2022 respondents indicated that they will feel somewhat safer in their homes after the lockdown ends. One possible explanation for this could be that the respondents have added more security features to their homes since the lockdown began.

GRAPH 6: SAFETY FEATURES ADDED TO HOMES IN THE LAST SIX MONTHS

Which of the following safety features have you added to your home in the last 6 months?

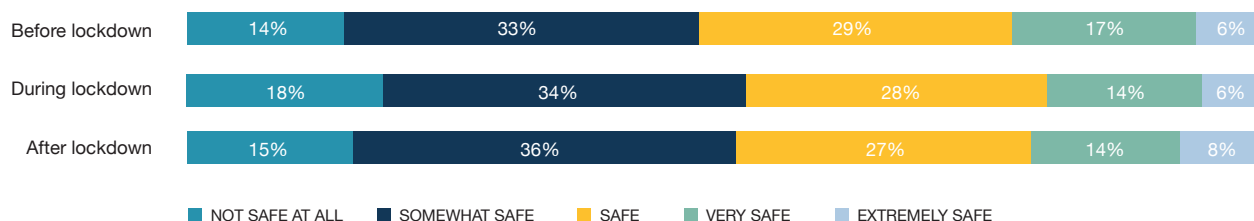


Sample: 1473

As with the previous iterations of the AASA State of Security report, the need for security features remains a priority for respondents. Burglar bars continue to be seen as the first line of defence against criminal elements, as they are seen as cheap and effective. Interestingly, a significant portion of respondents have indicated that they have added all or most of the security features available to them within their homes. This reiterates the sense of safety experienced within their homes.

GRAPH 7: PERCEPTION OF SAFETY IN OWN NEIGHBOURHOOD BEFORE, DURING, AND AFTER THE LOCKDOWN

How safe do you feel in your own neighbourhood?



Sample: 1473

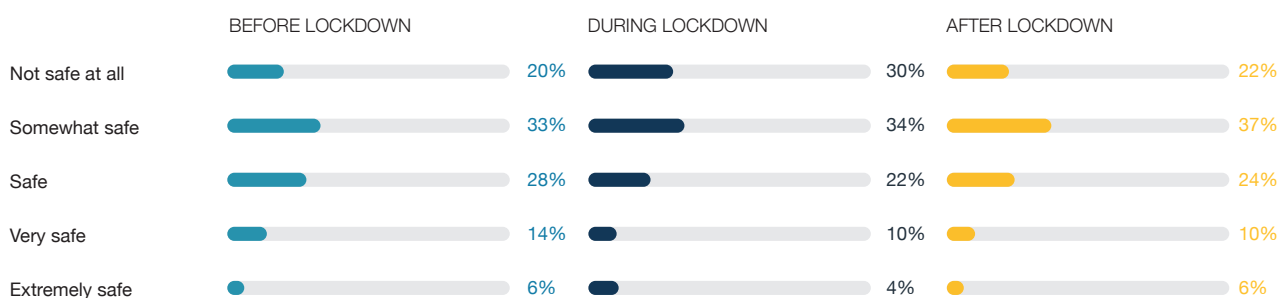
Despite there being a sense of hope towards increased feelings of safety post-lockdown, significant concerns still remain regarding safety and security for the majority of respondents in their own neighbourhood, which is in line with previous findings. To gain more insight into perceptions of neighbourhood safety, further investigation would be required to determine the type of neighbourhoods that respondents live in, for instance whether security estates and gate communities increase a sense of security in residents.

Generally, respondents feel safer in their own private spaces, including their own homes and neighbourhoods. This sense of security is most likely attributable to the safety features added to individual homes and neighbourhoods. Perceptions of their sense of security is reduced when respondents enter public spaces, where they have less control, as well as where additional safety features are lacking.

Sense of Security in Public Spaces

GRAPH 8: SENSE OF SECURITY – INDOOR PUBLIC SPACES BEFORE, DURING, AND AFTER THE LOCKDOWN

How safe do you feel in indoor public spaces?



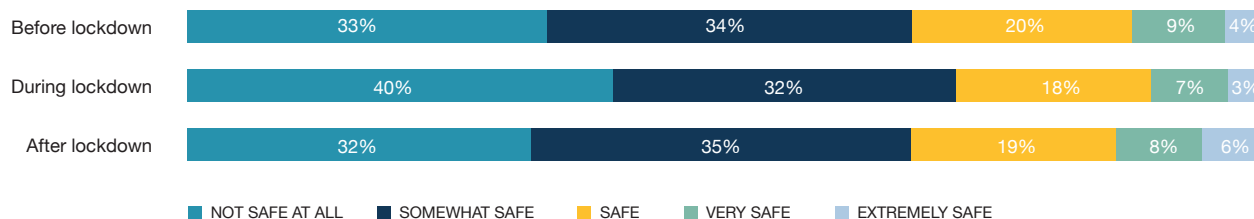
Sample: 1473

According to the data collected in 2021 and 2022, South Africans feel significantly less safe in indoor public spaces during lockdown than they felt before the lockdown. Potential explanations of these results could be attributed to the dire economic conditions, including rising unemployment and increased desperation, brought about by the lockdown.

In 2021, it seemed that respondents had a different sense of safety due to the harsher lockdown levels. This may be attributed to the increase worry about COVID-19, safety and security. For example, during this hard lockdown, South Africans experienced civil unrest which likely contributed towards the respondent’s lower sense of security during this period. Whereas, in 2022, it may be that some of the respondents have become less concerned about COVID-19, but there is an increase surrounding concerns for safety and security.

GRAPH 9: SENSE OF SECURITY – OUTDOOR PUBLIC SPACES BEFORE, DURING, AND AFTER THE LOCKDOWN

How safe do you feel in outdoor public spaces?

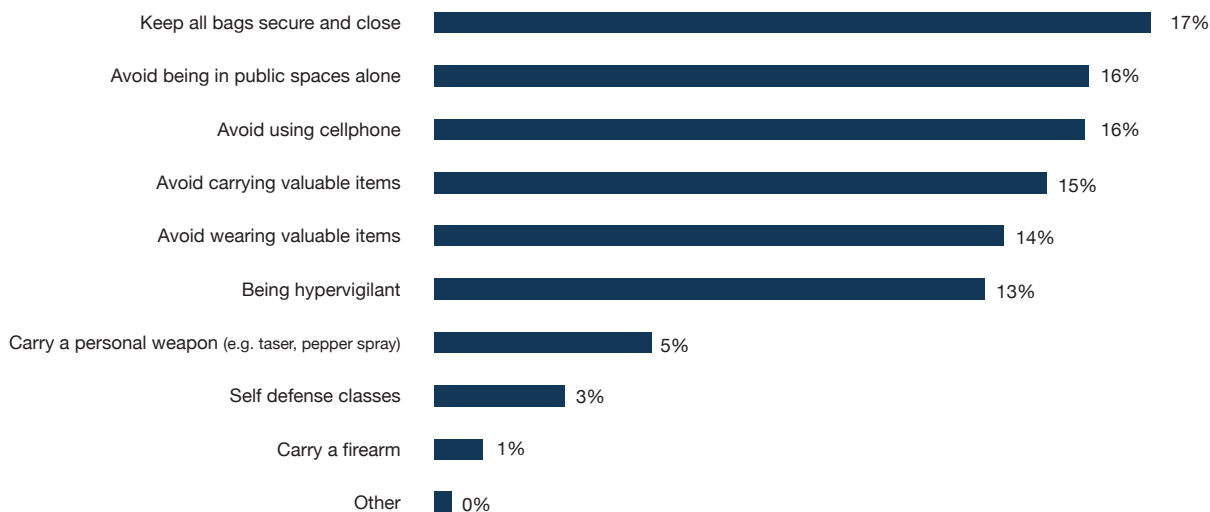


Sample: 1473

In the 2022 AASA State of Security report, the respondents’ sense of security is reported to be the lowest in outdoor public spaces, such as parks. This may be because these spaces make South Africans vulnerable to contact crimes and various sexual offences, which are the two broad crime categories with the most alarming crime rates. Furthermore, the effects of COVID-19 have seemingly contributed to public spaces being where individuals feel the most unsafe. The lack of efficient policing has placed the task of public safety in the hands of potential victims to take measures to protect themselves and/or their property.

GRAPH 10: SAFETY MEASURES TAKEN IN PUBLIC SPACES

Which of the following precautions do/have you take/n to ensure safety in public spaces?



Sample: 5987

Note – Respondents were able to choose more than one option

While the predominant safety precaution used in 2021 was to avoid being in public spaces alone, 2022 saw a different safety precaution being taken. 17% of respondents reported that they keep all bags secure and closed when in a public space. A possible reason for this may be due to the increased cases of robbery, as presented in the published SAPS crime statistics.

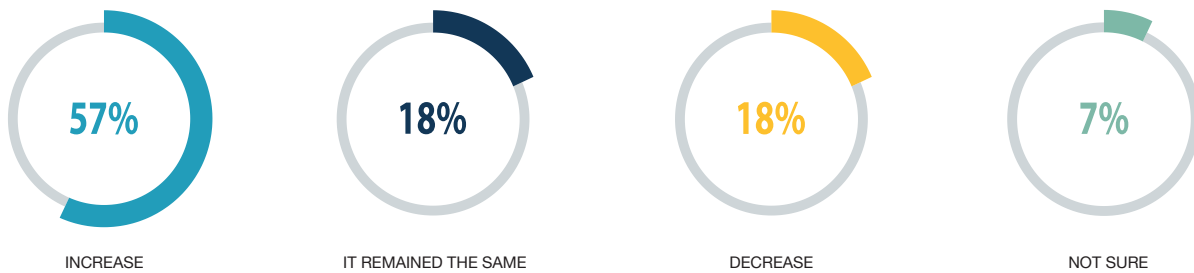
This further emphasises the need for South Africans to take additional safety measures when in public spaces. Further insight on perceived safety in public spaces could be gained by looking at the different precautionary measures taken by men and women, as each is susceptible to different crimes.

Perception of Crime Rate in Community

Respondents were asked how they perceive the current crime rate in their community since the nationwide lockdown began. They were also asked about how they expect the crime rate to change throughout the different levels of lockdown.

GRAPH 11: CRIME NOTICED WITHIN COMMUNITY DURING THE LOCKDOWN

Did you notice an increase or decrease in crime in your area during the COVID-19 lockdowns based on your community group activity (e.g. WhatsApp group)?

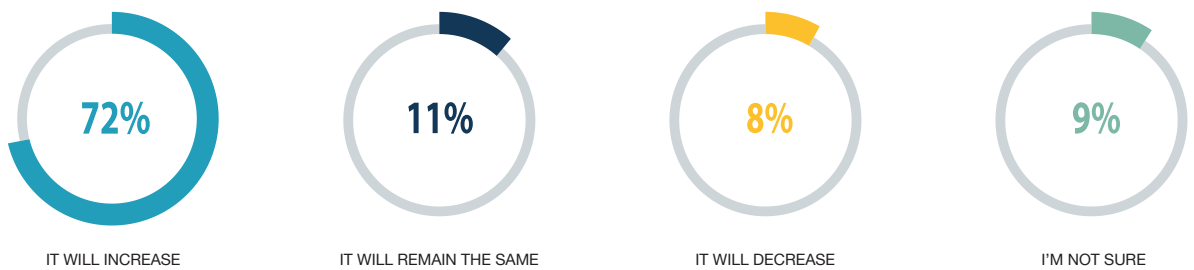


Sample: 1473

More respondents have noticed crime in their community during the lockdown in 2022 (57%) than in 2021 (56%).

GRAPH 12: EXPECTATION OF CRIME RATES IN THE FORESEEABLE FUTURE

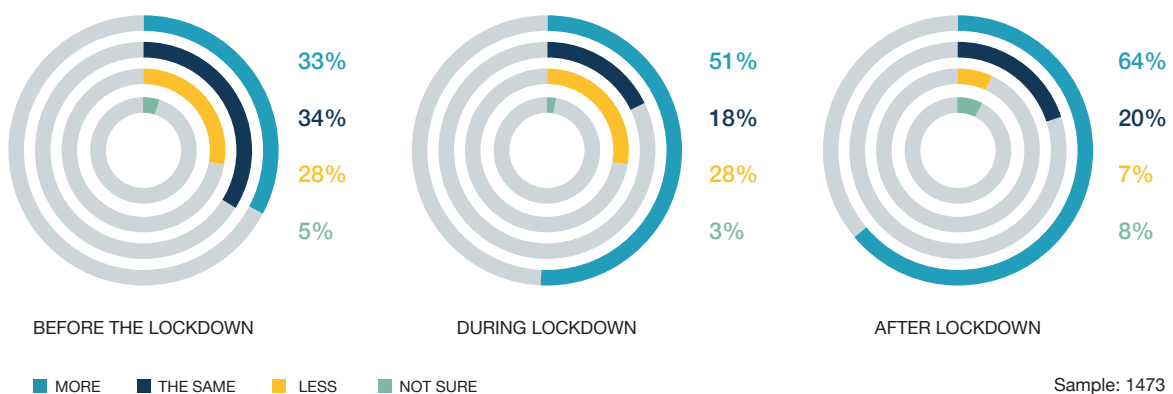
What do you think the crime rate will look like in the foreseeable future?



Sample: 1473

GRAPH 13: CRIME RATES IN DIFFERENT CIRCUMSTANCES

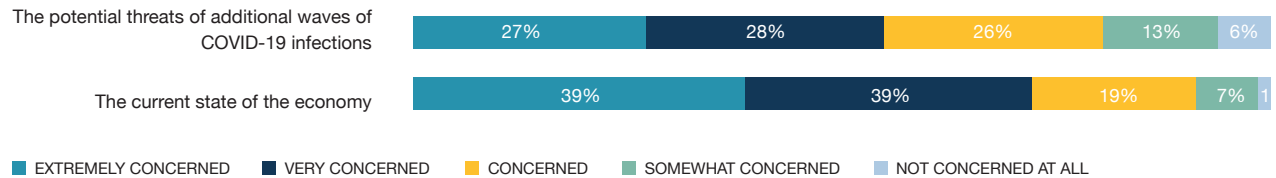
In your opinion, what was/is/will be the crime rate in the following circumstances:



Sample: 1473

GRAPH 14: CONCERNS ABOUT CRIME RATE

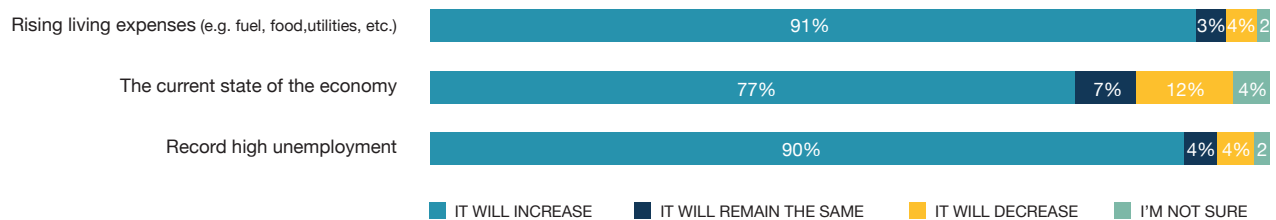
How concerned are you about the crime rate bearing the following in mind



Sample: 1473

GRAPH 15: FACTORS INFLUENCING CRIME RATE

How do you think the following factors will influence the crime rate in South Africa?



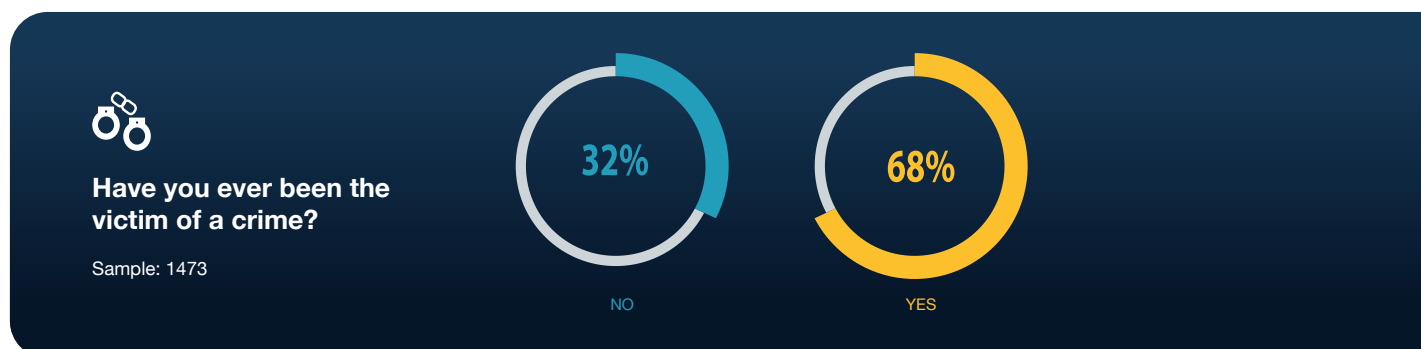
Sample: 1473

Respondents appear to be in agreement regarding the increase in crime levels in the foreseeable future. Post-lockdown remains the time where respondents expect the crime rate to increase the most. Rising living expenses and record high unemployment are the factors respondents believe are most likely to lead to an increase in crime.

Self-Reported Victimization

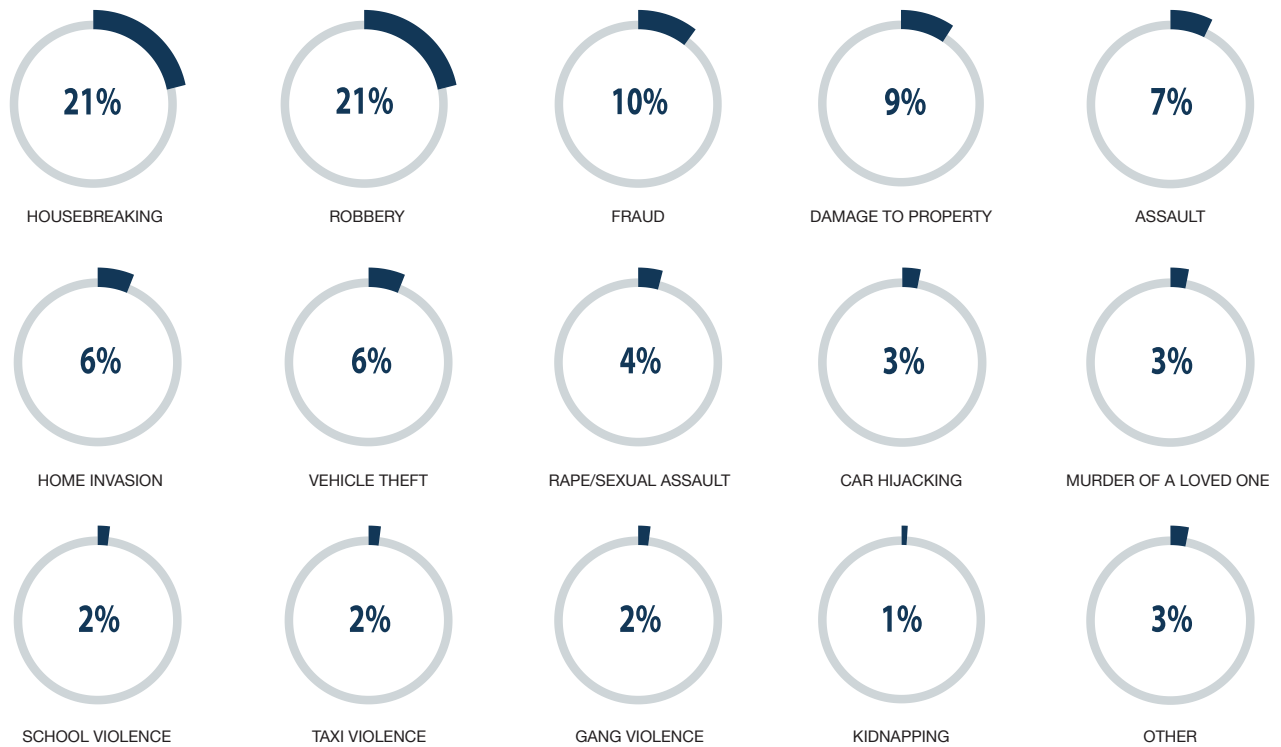
Respondents were asked whether they had ever been a victim of a crime, and if so what the nature of the crime was. Victim surveys are likely to generate greater crime rates than police statistics, as not all crimes are reported to the police (Steyn, 2013). In addition, the crimes that are self-reported are based on the individual's understanding of the law and what constitutes a crime, what category the crime belongs to, and how they remember the circumstances of the crime.

GRAPH 16: PREVIOUS VICTIMISATION



GRAPH 17: NATURE OF CRIME

What type of crime have you been a victim of?



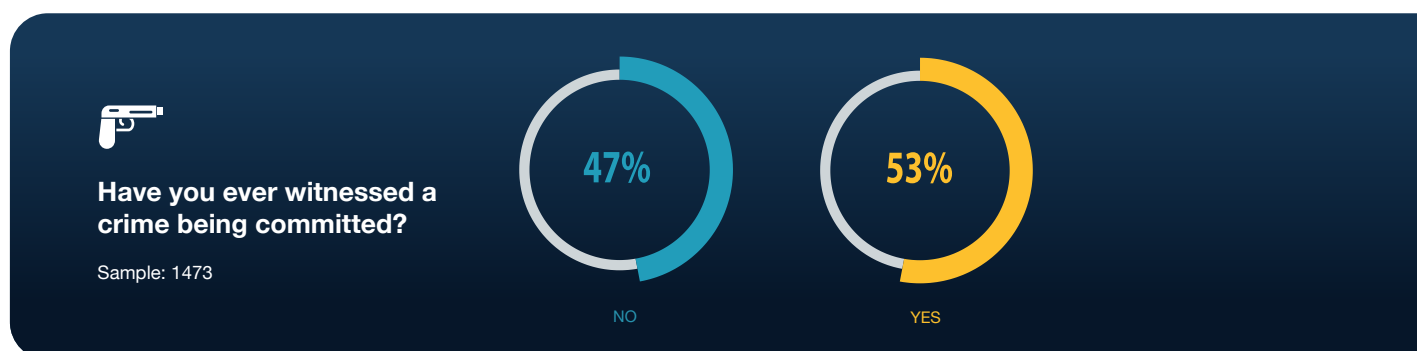
Sample: 2581

Note – Respondents were able to choose more than one option

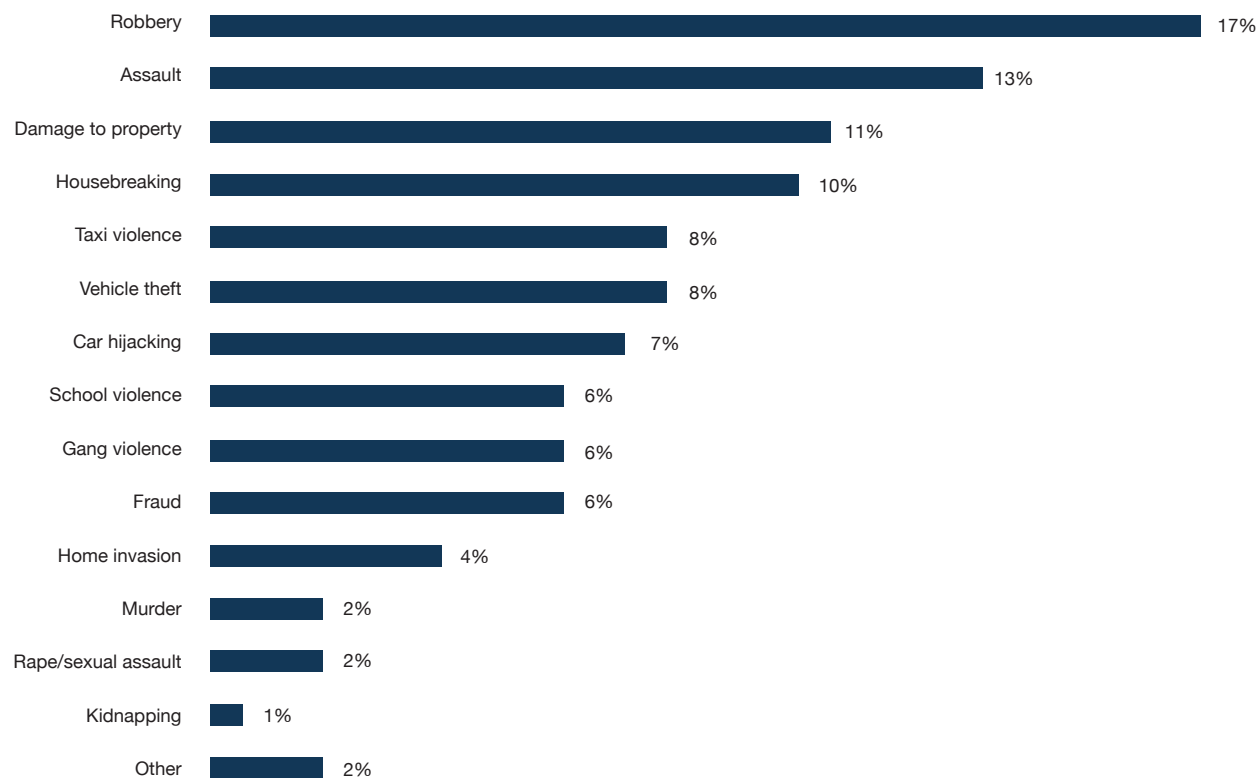
As in the previous iterations of the State of Security reports, housebreaking and robbery remained the most predominant crimes experienced by the respondents. Interestingly, respondents still perceived their level of safety and security to be greatest within their own homes, even though housebreakings are the most prevalent crimes experienced.

Additionally, the crime rates reported in the previous State of Security reports stand in contrast to the official SAPS crime statistics, where crimes against the person are the most common. In the current survey, crimes against the person outnumbered property crimes, which is in line with the latest published crime statistics.

GRAPH 18: PREVIOUS EXPOSURE TO CRIME



GRAPH 19: CRIMES WITNESSED

What type of crime have you witnessed?

Sample: 2261

Note – Respondents were able to choose more than one option

In line with the published crime statistics, as well as reported victimisation, robbery and assault, were also the crimes most witnessed by respondents.

Impact of Victimisation

Becoming a victim of crime may have immediate consequences, such as physical harm, psychological distress and damage to property. In addition to these, long-term consequences may be prevalent. Victimisation may lead to increased levels of fear, changes in behavioural patterns and reduced life satisfaction (Hanslmeier, Kemme & Baier, 2016).

The impact of crime may influence various aspects of an individual's life and functioning, such as their role in society, occupational functioning, social functioning, and life-satisfaction and well-being. Victimisation may result in Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD), influencing the

role an individual plays within society, their home, or their relationships. For example, a parent may become over-protective of their child after becoming a victim, influencing the development of the child. Similarly, victimisation may change the behaviour of a partner, leading to problems within intimate relationships. Occupational functioning is influenced when there is a decline in productivity as a result of physical or psychological harm. An individual may also become less social as a result of victimisation, leading to isolation. Life satisfaction and well-being is thus influenced by changes in one or multiple aspects of an individual's life (Hanson et. al., 2010).

The exact cost of crime is difficult to calculate, as it encompasses more than medical costs and replacement of property. The monetary impact of a crime can be determined by calculating the cost of medical bills, damage to property, and lost wages. The intangible cost of crime is much more elusive and has a considerably wider impact. An individual may choose to change residence, or change jobs, in addition to paying medical bills, counselling bills, and replacing damaged or lost property. The medical cost of victimisation may include long-term health issues as a result of injury, while the psychological harm can never be completely quantified

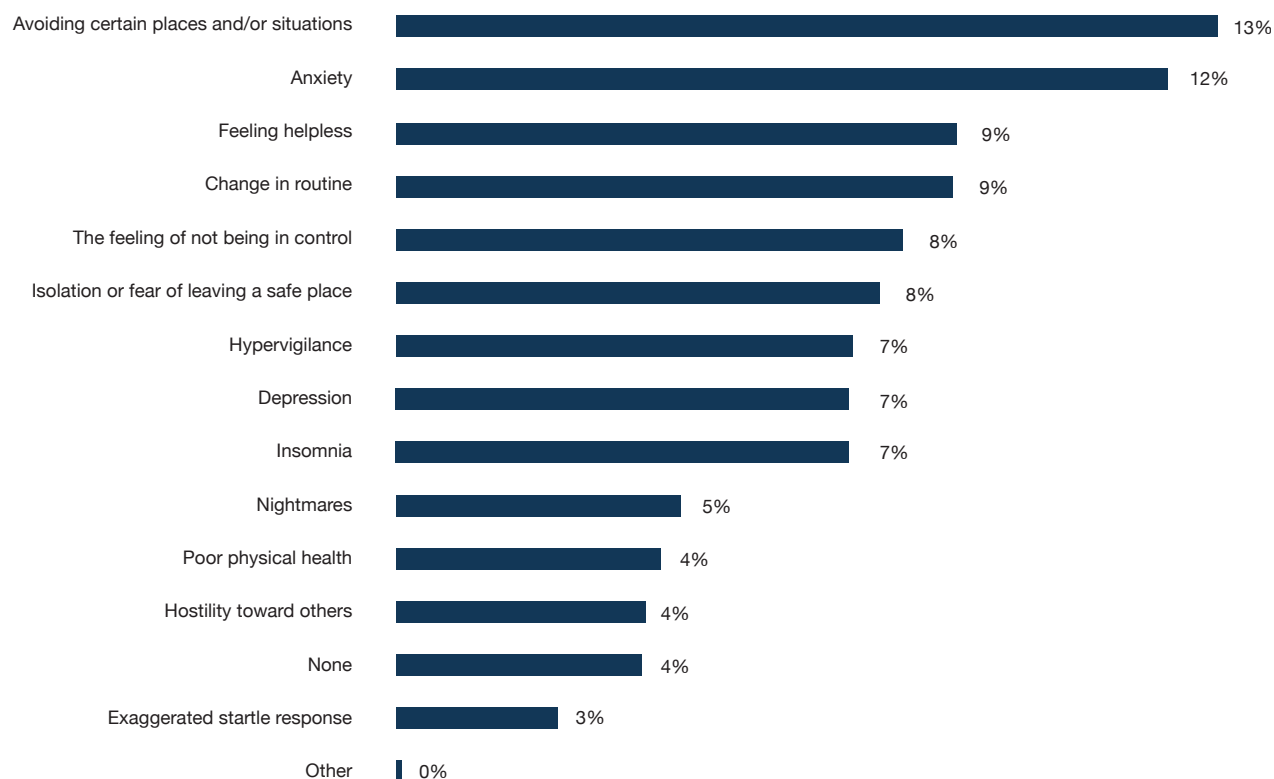
beyond the cost of counselling. There is however no way to quantify the cost of behavioural changes or the reduction in life satisfaction. Victimisation does not only affect a single individual, but often those around them as well. For instance, the loss of a life impacts the lives of many other individuals. Furthermore, victimisation may send a message to entire communities or societies, telling them that they are not safe in their own homes or neighbourhoods etc. The cost of crime to society also includes declines in international investments and reduced levels of tourism, affecting the overall economy of a country.

Self-Reported Impact of Victimisation

Respondents were asked to indicate whether they had suffered any psychological impact as a result of fear of victimisation during the lockdown.

GRAPH 20: IMPACT OF VICTIMISATION

Have you experienced any of the following as a direct result of fear for your own, or the safety of others during the lockdown?



Sample: 5372

Note – Respondents were able to choose more than one option

The fear associated with victimisation, whether directly or through the victimisation of a loved one or community member, has an impact on the behaviour, as well as mental and physical wellbeing of individuals. The most prominent behavioural change reported by respondents across all iterations of the AASA State of Security report is the avoidance of certain places or situations. Furthermore, a range of psychological symptoms were reported, including anxiety, hypervigilance, helplessness, hostility, isolation, depression, etc.

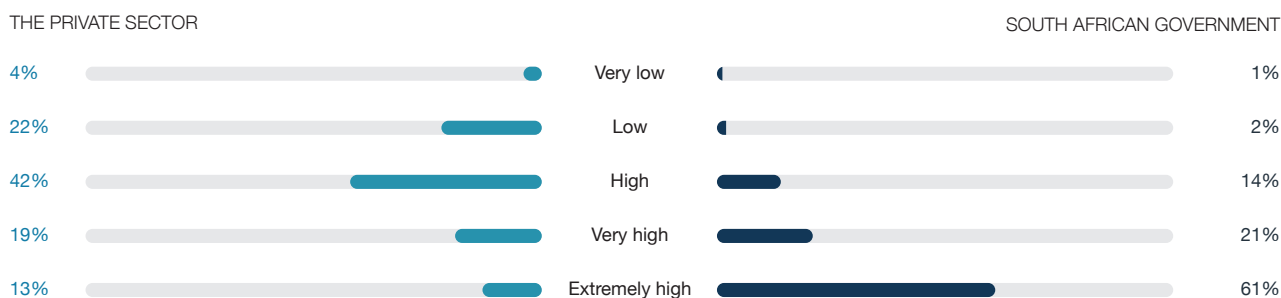
Reporting Crimes in South Africa

To understand the varying reasons for reporting, or not reporting, crime to the South African Police Service (SAPS), respondents were asked about their general attitudes towards the SAPS and the South African Government as well as their reasons for always, sometimes, or never reporting crimes.

Attitudes Towards the South African Government and Police Service

GRAPH 21: PERCEIVED LEVEL OF CORRUPTION IN THE SOUTH AFRICAN GOVERNMENT VERSUS THE PRIVATE SECTOR

How do you perceive the level of corruption in the following sectors?



Sample: 1473

GRAPH 22: TRUST IN THE SOUTH AFRICAN POLICE SERVICE VERSUS PRIVATE SECURITY

Which do you trust more?



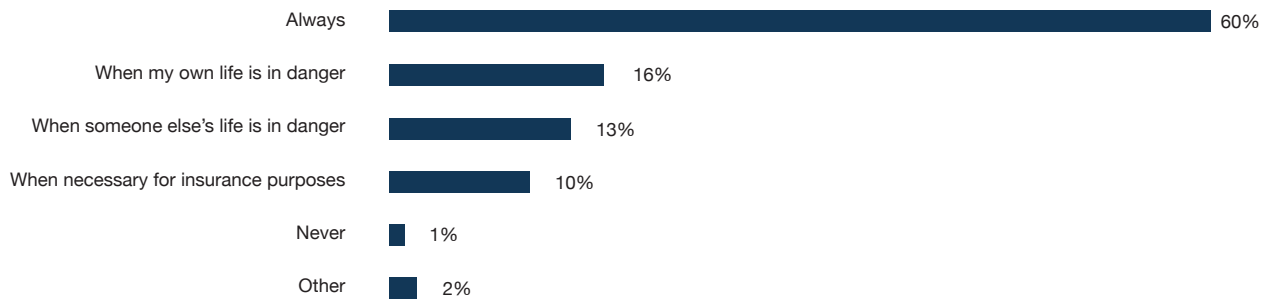
Sample: 1473

The majority of the respondents (76%) report having more trust in private security than in the South African Police Service. There is a 3% decrease in trust in the SAPS from the 2021 study. This coincides with the perceived level of corruption reported by the respondents, where it can be seen that 61% perceive extremely high levels of corruption in the South African government.

Reporting Crime

GRAPH 23: WHEN WILL YOU REPORT A CRIME

At what point will you report a crime to the South African Police Service (SAPS)?



Sample: 1757

Note – Respondents were able to choose more than one option

GRAPH 24: WHEN WILL YOU REPORT A CRIME – OTHER

Other

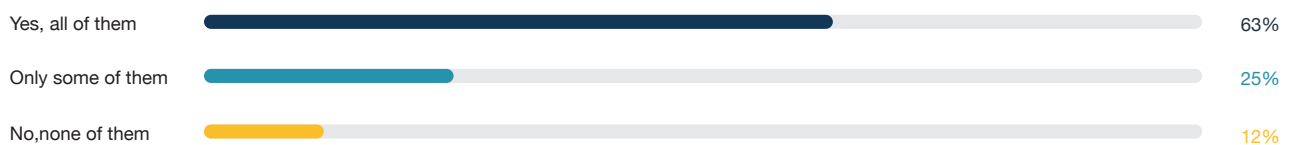


Sample: 33

Respondents who indicated that they had been a victim of a crime were asked if they reported the crimes to the SAPS or not, and then the reasons why they reported all, none, or some of the crimes.

GRAPH 25: WERE CRIMES REPORTED TO THE SAPS

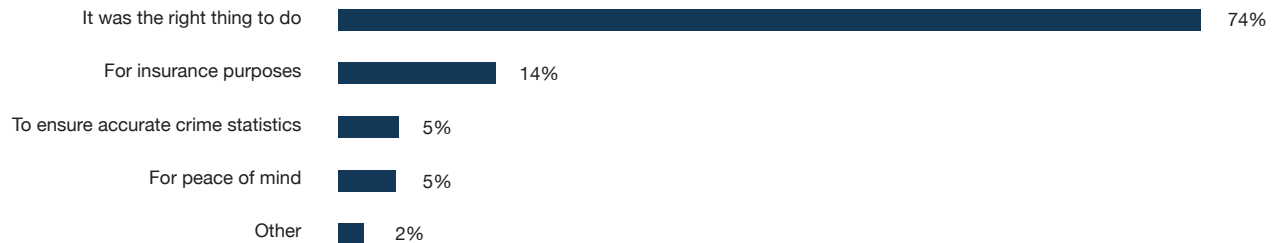
Did you report any/all of these crimes to the South African Police Service (SAPS)?



Sample: 1002

GRAPH 26: REASONS FOR REPORTING THESE CRIMES

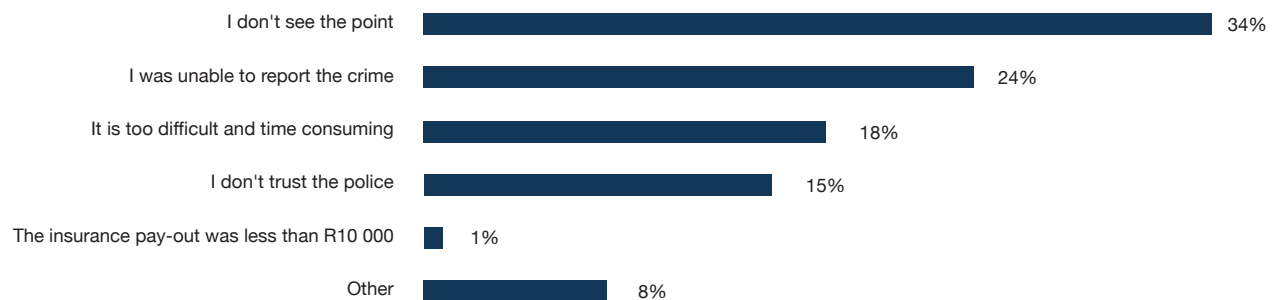
Why did you report this/these crime/s to the South African Police Service (SAPS)?



Sample: 629

GRAPH 27: REASONS FOR NOT REPORTING THESE CRIMES

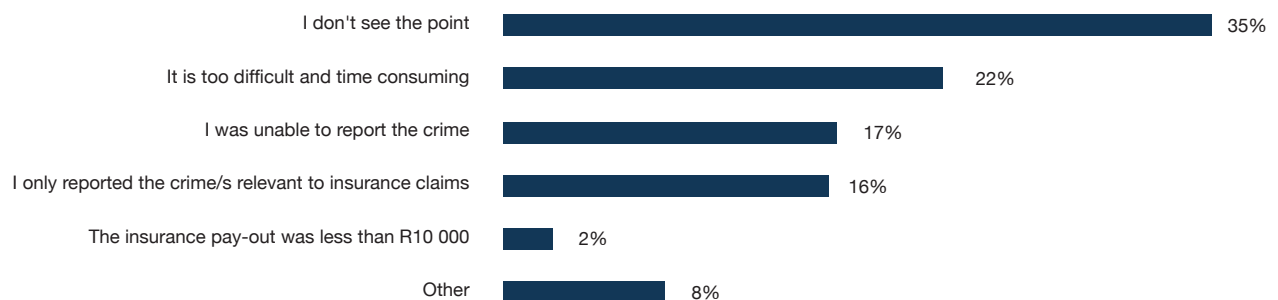
Why did you not report any of these crimes to the South African Police Service (SAPS)?



Sample: 125

GRAPH 28: REASONS FOR ONLY REPORTING SOME CRIMES

Why did you only report some of these crimes to the South African Police Service (SAPS)?



Sample: 248

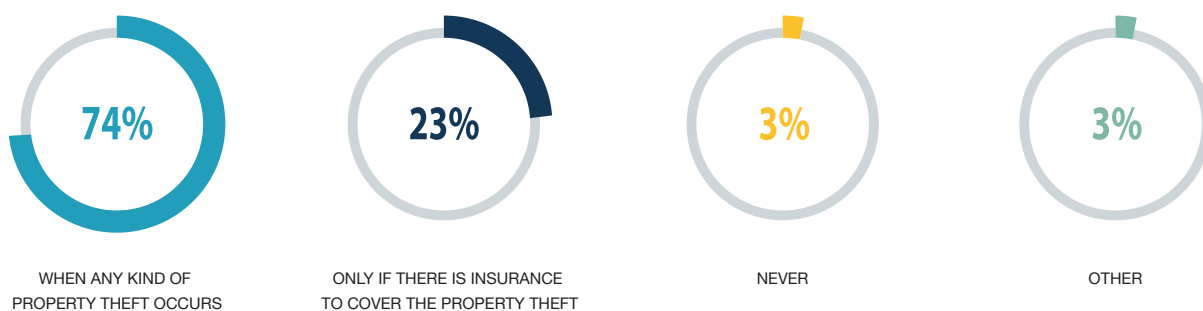
Of the respondents who had been a victim of a crime, 63% reported all of the crimes to the SAPS. 25% only reported some of the crimes and 12% reported none of them. The respondents who did report the crimes did so because it was the right thing to do (74%). Reporting the crimes for insurance purposes was indicated by 14% of the respondents. Not seeing the point in reporting the crime was the most frequently indicated reason for respondents either not reporting any of the crimes (34%), or only reporting some of the crimes (35%).

Reporting Property Theft and Damage

Respondents were asked at what point, and at which amount of loss incurred, they would report property theft and damage to the SAPS.

GRAPH 29: WHEN WILL YOU REPORT PROPERTY THEFT

At what point will you report property theft to the South African Police Service (SAPS)?

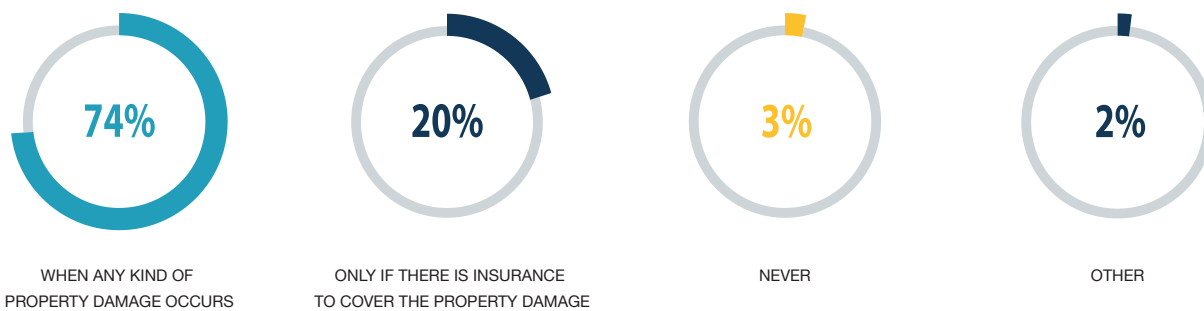


Sample: 1559

Note – Respondents were able to choose more than one option

GRAPH 30: WHEN WILL YOU REPORT PROPERTY DAMAGE

At what point will you report property damage to the South African Police Service (SAPS)?

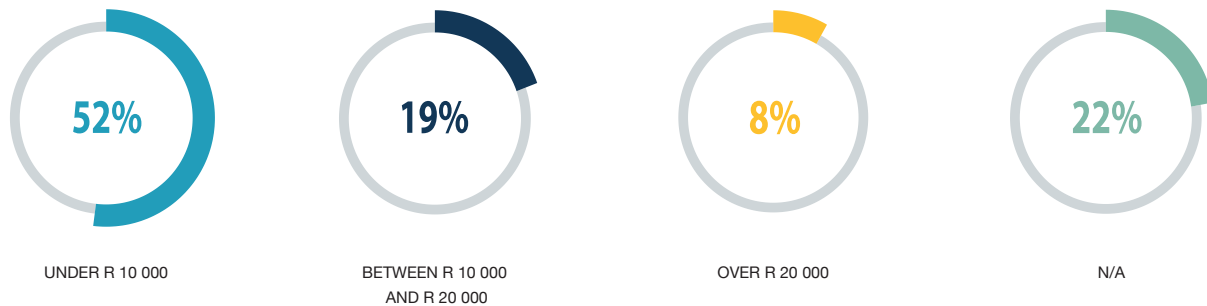


Sample: 1503

Note – Respondents were able to choose more than one option

GRAPH 31: AMOUNT OF LOSS INCURRED BEFORE REPORTING PROPERTY THEFT

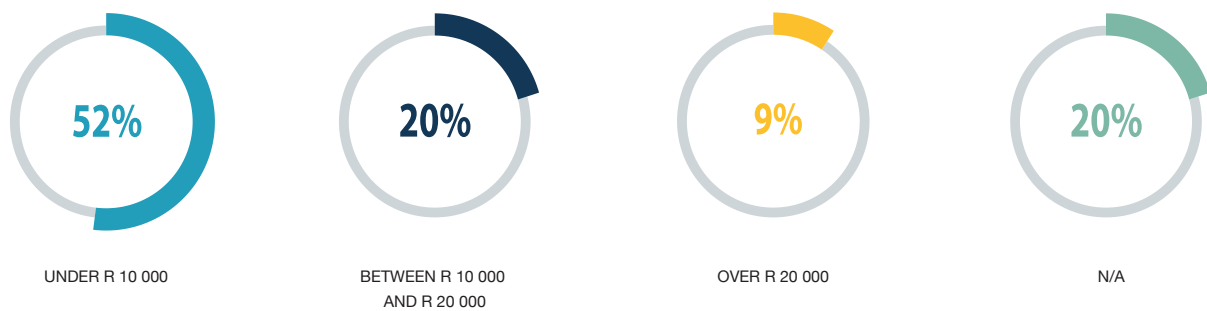
At which amount of loss incurred would you report the property theft to the SAPS?



Sample: 1473

GRAPH 32: AMOUNT OF LOSS INCURRED BEFORE REPORTING PROPERTY DAMAGE

At which amount of loss incurred would you report the property damage to the SAPS?



Sample: 1473

The majority of respondents (74%) indicated that they would report property theft to the SAPS when any kind of property theft occurs. 23% indicated that they would only report property theft if they had insurance to cover it. Similarly, 74% of the respondents indicated that they would report property damage to the SAPS when any kind of property damage occurred. 20% would only report property damage if insurance would cover it. For both property theft and damage, the majority of the respondents indicated that loss incurred under R10 000 warranted the damage or theft being reported to the SAPS.

The AA's Solution to Greater Sense of Security

In response to the past and current state of security in South Africa, a booming private security market has developed in South Africa. As of 31 March 2021, the Private Security Industry Regulatory Authority (PSiRA) has registered 2.6 million individual security officers and over 11 000 security companies. Of the 2.6 million

registered security officers, roughly 560 000 are active and deployed by just under 11 000 registered and active security companies (PSiRA, 2021). The majority of active private security companies are based in Gauteng (4 243), followed by KwaZulu-Natal (2 042).

Registered Private Security Businesses and Officers 2020/2021

Registered active security businesses	10 830
Registered active guarding businesses	7 315
Registered active cash-in-transit businesses	4 306
Registered active armed response businesses	5 307
Registered active (employed) security officers	557 277

(PSiRA Annual Report 2020/2021)

AA Armed Response

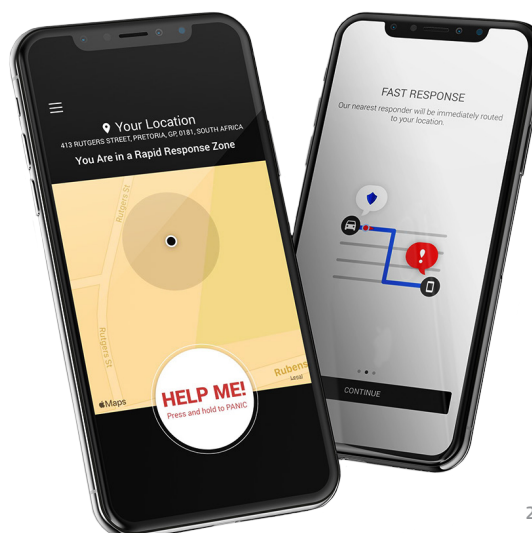
AA Armed Response is an app-based, personal armed security service from the Automobile Association of South Africa (AASA). The app is available as part of the AASA's RescueMe suite of apps within the AA app, or as a standalone app and provides users with personal armed security at the push of a button.

AA Armed Response is a location-based security solution which provides immediate co-ordinates of the user's location to a call centre when activated. More than 180 private professional security companies throughout South Africa are contracted on the service and the closest security provider to the user's position is then dispatched to provide armed assistance.

AA Armed Response is available at an affordable cost to anyone, whether they are currently an AA Member or not. Non-AA Members do not receive a discounted rate when using the AA Armed Response service.

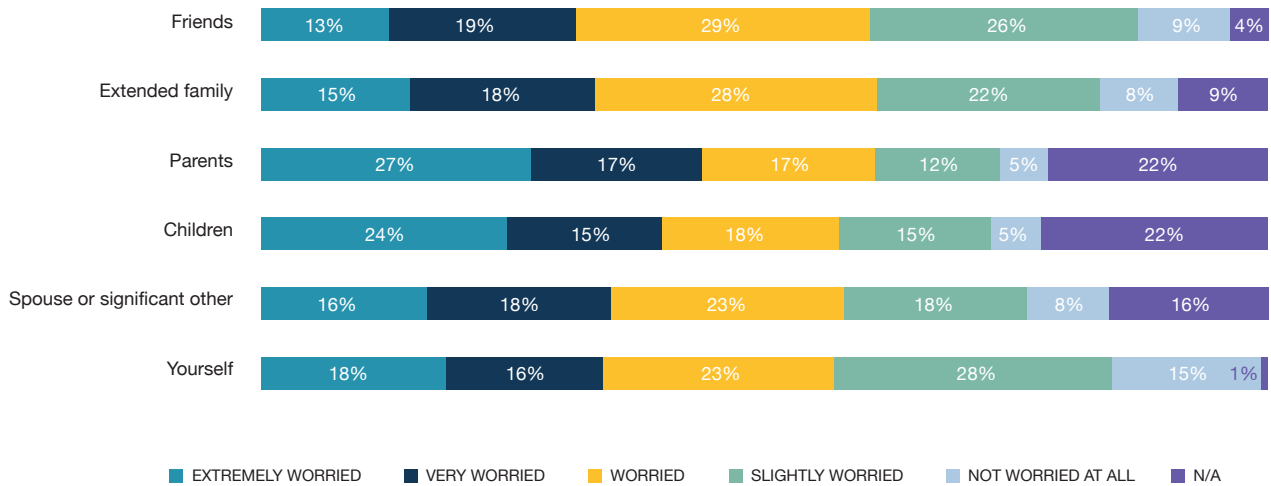
Interest in AA Armed Response

Respondents were asked to indicate whether the presence of a panic button linked to their smartphone would make them feel safer. Respondents were also asked about whether they were concerned for their loved ones' safety during the lockdown and the civil unrest, and whether a panic button linked to the smartphone of their loved ones would make them feel more at ease.



GRAPH 33: CONCERN FOR THE SAFETY OF LOVED ONES AND ONESELF

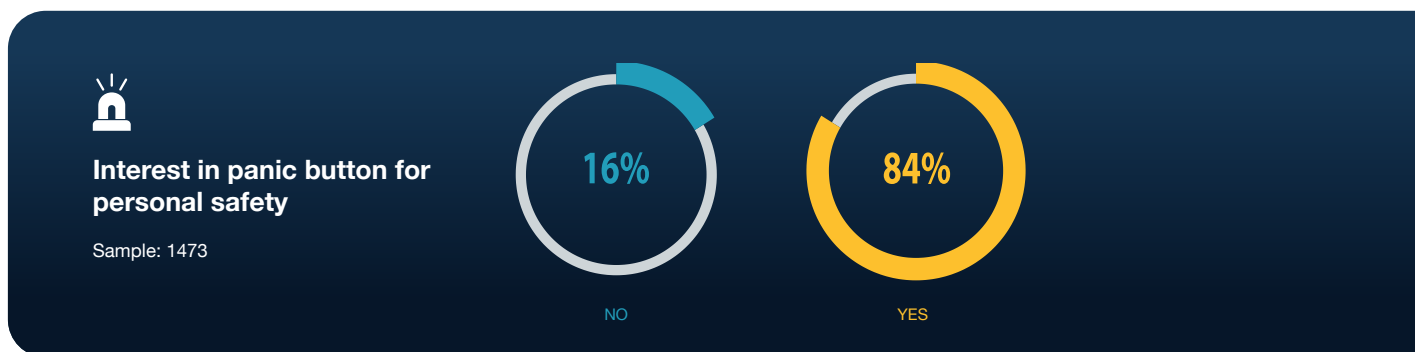
How worried are/were you about the physical safety of the following people DURING any level of the COVID-19 lockdowns?



Sample: 1473

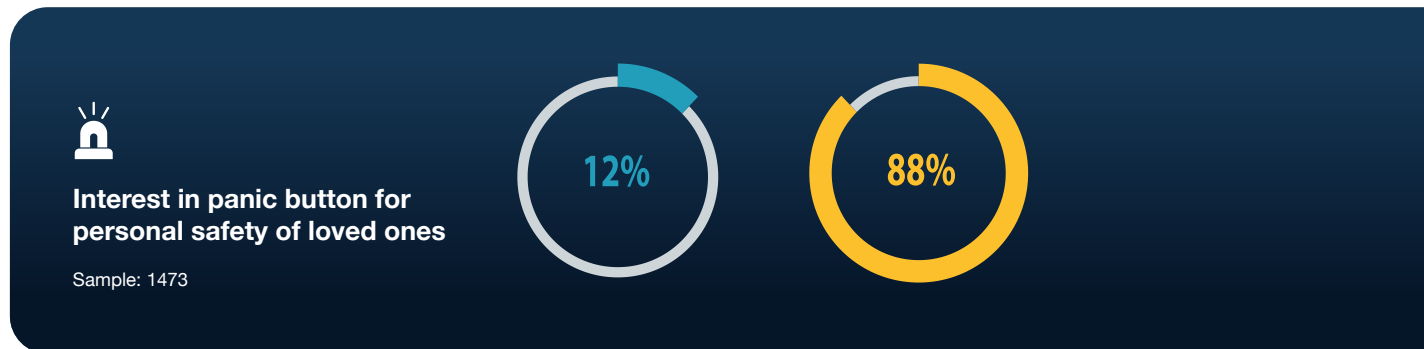
The majority of the respondents are concerned for the safety of their loved ones, especially their parents and/or children. Concerns for oneself remained the lowest amongst participants. The AA Armed Response app can be added to the smartphones of loved ones, reducing the concern for the safety of these individuals.

GRAPH 34: INTEREST IN PANIC BUTTON FOR PERSONAL SAFETY



According to the first State of Security study, the majority of respondents (66%) claimed to have an interest in a panic button for their personal safety. This result increased by 5% in the August 2020 report (71%), and then increased again by a considerable 13% in the 2021 report, indicating an increase in the need for personal security. This interest remained stable from 2021 to 2022.

GRAPH 35: INTEREST IN PANIC BUTTON FOR PERSONAL SAFETY OF LOVED ONES



The 2022 respondents indicated that they would be more interested in the AA Armed Response services for their loved ones (88%), rather than for themselves (84%). Results show a growing increase in interest in a panic button for loved ones from the initial report.

Discussion and Key Findings

This study was conducted to gauge the level of safety and security experienced by South Africans both before, during and after the nation-wide lockdown. The insights gathered within this report will be used as a baseline for the State of Security studies to follow.

In 2022, the respondents claimed to have felt safest within their own homes compared to public spaces. The 2022 respondents indicated that their sense of safety in their own homes will increase after lockdown, which was also seen among the 2021 respondents. Similarly, respondents reported avoiding public spaces as a direct result of fear for their own safety. As respondents venture away from their homes, there was an understandable decrease in their reported sense of safety.

While South Africans expressed feeling safe in their homes, they claimed to have added a variety of safety features including burglar bars, alarm systems, and security cameras to their homes since the lockdown began. The increase in added safety features may be a direct result of spending more time at home due to the lockdown restrictions and many South Africans working from home. Although respondents reported feeling most safe at home, the most prevalent crimes experienced by South Africans in 2022 included housebreaking and robbery. This is in line with the national crime statistics for the previous financial year, where residential burglaries and robberies reportedly increased.

South Africans indicated their increasing need to take safety precautions when in both outdoor and indoor public spaces. A possible reason for this could be that crime is

continuing to increase in South Africa, which tends to exacerbate South Africans fears around being victimized or being re-victimized. This creates a significant amount of uncertainty regarding the future.

Overall, respondents reported more concern for the physical safety of parents and children, than other loved ones and themselves. In line with this, they were more interested in a panic button for their loved ones, than for themselves. Due to self-serving biases, South Africans are less likely to acknowledge the possibility of their physical safety being infringed upon. Therefore, individuals will generally report more concern for their loved ones, than for themselves.

These results have indicated that the low level of safety felt by South Africans is prevalent and the impact thereof continues to affect the country regardless. The COVID-19 pandemic caused citizens to doubt the South African government and the efficacy of the South African Police Services. The majority of the respondents indicated that they have more trust in private security than in the South African Police Service. This is of concern due to the fact that the majority of respondents have been victims of crime, have witnessed crime and want to report these crimes, however, lack trust in the SAPS.

Through South Africans indicating their need for private security, the AA Mobile Armed Response service serves as a possible solution to improving the state of security within South Africa by giving South Africans the sense of safety they require.

Conclusion

The current state of security in South Africa demonstrates a high rate of interpersonal violence. It appears that South Africans do not feel a sense of security in their everyday lives, changing their behaviour to avoid victimisation and adding security features to their homes. The current state of security experienced by South Africans has continued to decrease as lockdown restrictions are eased.

The crime statistics presented from the previous financial year demonstrate a drastic increase of interpersonal violence including murder, sexual assault, and contact

crimes. This problem has been countered by South Africans through taking high security measures, having concern for their loved ones, and their eagerness for reliable security companies.

The prevention of crime, as well as the immediate response to victimisation, has become an increasing need for South Africans. This is a need that the AA has potentially alleviated through the AA Mobile Armed Response service to better the state of security within South Africa.

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