



Irish Times / Behaviour & Attitudes Social Poll: Technical Appendix

- This poll was conducted amongst a representative sample of 1,002 Irish male adults aged 18 yrs plus, over the period 1st to 12th August 2008.
- All respondents were surveyed in-home, in strict accordance with AIMRO (Association of Irish Market Research Organisations) and ESOMAR (European Society for Opinion and Market Research) guidelines.
- Fieldwork was conducted at 100 different locations across the country, with the sample controlled by Region, Age, Working Status and Socio-Economic Status.
- The survey findings can be said to be accurate to within approximately plus or minus three percentage points.
- In order to generate as accurate and honest a measure of the views, opinions and behaviour of men in Ireland today, the interview was split into two parts; an introductory face-to-face section covering general behaviour and attitudes, and a self-completion section covering the more sensitive social and moral issues.
- Behaviour & Attitudes is a member of AIMRO, ESOMAR and the Market Research Society Company Partner Service.

IRISH TIMES MENS POLL - Thursday 18th September

Last year's Irish Times/Behaviour & Attitudes Social Poll took a detailed look at the world of the Irish female from a behavioural, attitudinal and psycho social perspective. The results of the survey were received enthusiastically by the general public, as well as by social commentators and academics specialising in gender-related issues.

Indeed, dozens of individuals suggested to Behaviour & Attitudes that a corresponding social poll exploring the world of the Irish male should be conducted, given the perceived dearth of research conducted amongst this segment of the population.

Over the next three days the results of this poll, based upon a representative sample of 1,000 Irish males aged 18 years plus, are analysed from a range of perspectives. Today, we will explore the role of career and finance in the Irish male's life, within the broader sociological context.

Tomorrow, coverage of the poll extends to a treatment of relationships and sex.

Finally, Saturday's edition of the Irish Times will focus on the Irish male from the point of view of his social attitudes, while next week some comparisons will be drawn between this year's Men's Poll and last year's equivalent survey amongst Irish Women.

One of the first questions posed in the poll related to the degree to which Irish men are concerned about a whole range of social issues. Table I sets down the issues measured, ranked in order of concern. Perhaps not surprisingly, given the rate of economic decline at home and abroad over the past few months, day to day living expenses emerges as the single issue of greatest concern to Irish men.

Closer analysis of the data reveals that concern in relation to day to day subsistence peaks amongst males aged 25-44 years, that segment of the population which tends in general to be under greatest financial pressure whether it be due to the cost of making it on to the property ladder, higher interest rates, childcare and education costs, etc.

By way of background, the Behaviour & Attitudes Consumer Confidence Monitor, produced on a quarterly basis since 2002, indicates that Confidence in the economy reached an all-time low in July of this year (when the last wave of interviewing was conducted). On a Confidence rating scale ranging from plus 100 (complete confidence in the economy for the year ahead) to minus 100 (complete lack of confidence in the economy) July's confidence rating amongst men dropped from minus 48 in April to minus 71 in July. The corresponding July figure for women was minus 62, the first time men have been more pessimistic than women about the future economic outlook.

Table I: ISSUES OF CONCERN

	Extremely concerned/ worried	Very concerned / worried	Somewhat concerned / worried	Not particularly concerned/ worried	Not at all concerned / worried
Day-to-day living expenses	25	38	24	11	3
Crime	24	38	25	9	3
The health service in general	25	31	26	12	4
Rising interest rates	21	33	22	15	9
The amount of money I will have to live on when I am older/retired	18	28	28	19	7
World climate change	12	32	34	16	6
Tax individualisation	14	28	27	18	12
My personal security	12	24	31	25	6
The cost of childcare	12	19	16	23	28
The threat of international terrorism	10	20	29	27	13
The education system	10	19	28	29	13
My personal health	7	16	27	32	16

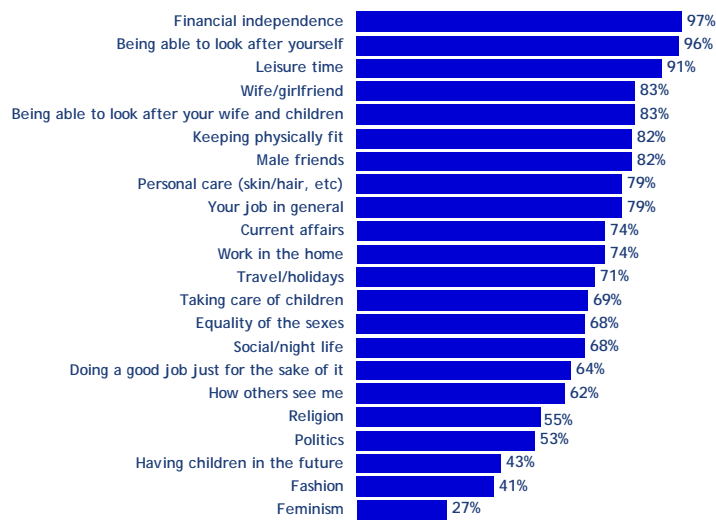
Q. I would now like you to tell me the degree to which you are concerned with or worried about each of the following areas at a personal level, using one of the words on this card

While peoples' concern with their capacity to make ends meet on a day to day basis may have been predictable given the current economic climate, it is, to my mind, remarkable that almost as many Irish men are concerned about levels of crime in Ireland today, with 62% of them claiming to be extremely or very concerned/worried in this regard. The fact that just under a third are wary of their own personal security would suggest that worries about crime for today's Irish male are more to do with a fear of their loved ones being victims of crime, than they themselves.

Over the last ten years or so the great majority of opinion polls conducted in Ireland will have identified dissatisfaction with the health service as the number one concern. The fact that men are now more preoccupied with levels of crime than they are with the health service in overall terms speaks volumes of the extent to which an Garda Síochána and/or the judicial system are seen to be struggling to deal with the situation.

Further insight into the psyche of the Irish male can be gleaned from Figure 1, which ranks a range of aspects in terms of how important the Irish male perceives them to be in his life today. In line with the key concerns already identified, it can be seen that financial independence and the capacity to look after himself are by far the issues of greatest importance to Irish men.

FIGURE I: ASPECTS OF IMPORTANCE IN MEN'S LIVES: VERY/QUITE IMPORTANT



Q. Looking at the words in the left hand side of the grid below, how important is each item in your life?

As we head towards more straitened economic times, personal relationships, whether that be with wife/girlfriend or indeed male friends, are also identified as a top priority. Curiously, a full 93% of Irish men aged 18-24 years tell us that their male friends are important to them in their lives today. An interesting statistic given the prevailing wisdom that young men find it difficult to share their feelings with each other at times of personal crisis.

Notwithstanding these fears and concerns, however, we should not lose sight of the fact that the great majority of Irish males (i.e. 85% plus) are satisfied with their life as a whole, their home life, and indeed the state of their general health.

Figure II again reveals lower levels of satisfaction, as indicated throughout the survey, in relation to respondents' general financial security, including considerable worries with regard to job security.

FIGURE II: OVERALL LEVELS OF SATISFACTION WITH ASPECTS OF LIFE: VERY/SOMEWHAT SATISFIED



Q. And overall, how satisfied or dissatisfied are you with each of the following?

Indeed, all of the survey questions relating to the respondents' confidence in the economy consistently reveals a core grouping, equating to approximately one third of all adult Irish males, whose financial outlook is fundamentally bleak.

With a view to better understanding this segment of the male population, we can identify that by far the lowest levels of job security, ease of making ends meet, and even pension ownership emerge amongst those who are employed in the building/construction, manufacturing and non-professional services (including retail) sectors.

For example, with an average monthly disposable income of just under €400, a majority (51%) of men working in the building/construction sector admit they are finding it difficult to make ends meet, with over a third insecure in their jobs. While the average monthly disposable income of male civil servants is only marginally higher (€485), 94% of them at least feel secure in their jobs.

While a third of all men may have registered a pessimistic view of the current financial climate in Ireland, it also emerges that a similar proportion (34%) claim that they may decide not to work in Ireland all of their lives anyhow. Indeed, the proportion of young Irish males aged 18-34 years who indicate that they do intend to work in Ireland throughout their working career stands at just 55% - a bare majority.

Undoubtedly the worsening economic situation has had a significant impact on the mindset of these individuals, as they begin to consider opportunities abroad as we head inexorably towards all-out recession.

Incidentally, approximately one in eight of all Irish male adults indicated that, if they had a free choice, they would rather live in Australia than Ireland (rising to 21% of those employed in manufacturing!) A further 11% stated they would prefer to live in Continental Europe, while another one in ten of all Irish males tell us they would ideally like to live in the USA or Canada.

While some of these are non-nationals considering a return to their country of birth, the great majority are in fact Irish-born.

Undoubtedly, the last twelve months of economic doom and gloom has had an effect on the Irish male's perspective on life. If the results of this poll are borne out we can expect to see significant numbers of Irish men emigrate throughout 2009 and 2010, as workers refuse to cede the financial advances they have made over the course of the last ten years, seeking a brighter future elsewhere.

Tomorrow, we explore the Irish male's attitudes towards relationships and sex, and the extent to which he is coping with the changing role of the male in this regard.

IRISH TIMES MENS POLL - Friday 19th September

Today's analysis of the Irish Times/ Behaviour & Attitudes Men's Poll looks at the whole area of relationships and sex, and the extent to which men are coping with the sociological changes of the last ten to twenty years.

As a scene-setter, seven in ten of all males claim to be either married or in a long-term relationship. Of these, just over one in ten claim to have had another sexual relationship while they were still with their current partner, although it should be pointed out that this figure is significantly higher amongst those aged between 18-34 years, many of whom are presumably unmarried, and perhaps not as committed as their wedded counterparts.

In other words, our poll has revealed that, of the 1.7 million males in Ireland today, just under 1.2 million are quite well settled in a long-standing relationship, for better or for worse.

Incidentally, the average male feels that 29 is the ideal age for a man to become married, with 32 the best age to have a first child.

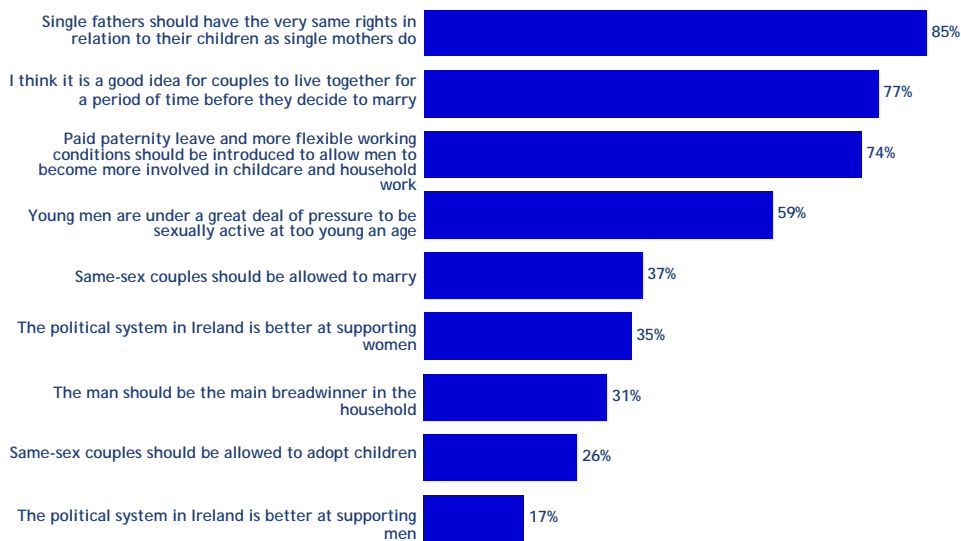
By all accounts, men's wives/girlfriends/partners rank as being extremely important to them in their lives in general. In fact, of twenty two life aspects rated, wife/girlfriend emerged as the fourth most important, with only financial independence, being able to look after yourself and leisure time being rated higher.

Which is not to say that the average male has an over-romanticised view of his relationship. Indeed, over three quarters of all men, rising to almost 90% of all those aged 18-44 years, feel it is a good idea for couples to live together for a period of time before they decide to marry.

The pragmatism of today's male regarding relationships is even more starkly revealed by way of the fact that 45% of all men believe that everyone getting married nowadays should consider entering into a prenuptial agreement. Only 34% actually disagree with this sentiment, with the balance (21%) unsure.

Once in an established relationship, the poll reveals some interesting findings concerning the type of relationship favoured by men. Figure I illustrates...

FIGURE I: LEVELS OF AGREEMENT WITH ATTITUDINAL STATEMENTS



Q. Do you agree or disagree with each of the following statements

As can be seen, men do feel that more flexible working conditions should be introduced whereby they can become more involved in childcare and household work. This desire by males for greater involvement in the running of the family extends to their views of the role of single fathers today.

Thus, the vast majority of men feel that single fathers should have the very same rights in relation to their children as single mothers do. In demanding such rights, presumably men are indicating that single fathers should also share responsibility with the children's mother in raising them.

Underpinning these views regarding the desired role of the man within the family unit, is a fundamental desire by men that children should be brought up in a household with both a mother and a father. This more 'traditional' stance is consistent across all age groups from 25 years up. Table I illustrates.

In addition to the questions relating to their own personal relationships, the survey respondents were also asked their views of sexual norms in general, within the context of society today.

TABLE I: PREFERRED FAMILY COMPOSITION

	TOTAL	AGE					
		18-24 YRS	25-34 YRS	35-44 YRS	45-54 YRS	55-64 YRS	65 YRS +
Better for children if both mother and father in home	77	66	71	80	82	81	86
Better for children if a mother only in home	5	4	4	5	4	6	5
Better for children if a father only in home	0	0	0	0	1	0	0
Makes no difference	11	15	18	11	9	6	5
Don't know/no opinion	7	15	6	4	5	7	5

Q. In your view, do children fare better if they are brought up in a household with both a mother and a father, a household with a mother only, a household with a father only, or does it make no difference?

Perhaps not surprisingly men feel that, compared to twenty years ago, attitudes towards sex in Ireland are more liberal (92% of all men).

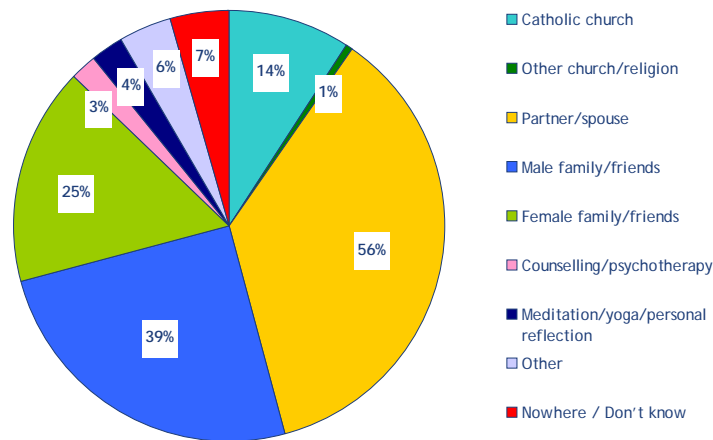
Interestingly though, not all males believe this is necessarily a good thing. In fact, just half of all men feel sexual liberation has been a positive force in Irish society, with the great majority of these of the opinion that both men and women have benefited in equal measure in this regard. By definition, however, the other half are either unsure as to the benefits of freer sex, or believe it is a negative societal force.

A clue to what may be driving this somewhat muted response to sexual liberation can be gleaned from the finding that six in ten of all Irish males, across all age groups, feel that young men are under a great deal of pressure to be sexually active at too young an age. Perhaps linked to this latter finding, we find that men appear to be under considerable pressure to project a certain external image to those around them.

Thus, grooming and body image emerge as being of considerable importance to men in general, with over 60% of them acknowledging that how others see them does matter, almost 8 in 10 identifying personal care (skin/hair) as a feature of importance to them, with 41% of them going to far as to say that fashion is very much important to them in their everyday lives.

All in all, therefore, the Irish male reveals quite an orthodox view of the worth and power of personal relationships in their lives today. When the chips are down, the majority of men will turn to their partners/spouse when in need of emotional comfort and reassurance (see Figure II). Compare this with the insignificant proportions (14%) seeking solace from the Catholic Church.

FIGURE II: SOURCES TURN TO FOR COMFORT/REASSURANCE



Q. Which of the following do you tend to turn to when in need of emotional comfort and reassurance?

The fact that the great majority of men, regardless of age, have had just three sexual partners in total over the course of their lives, and that only 7% reject the notion of long-term monogamy within a relationship, is further evidence of the sanctity of relationships for them.

If anything, today's Irish male wishes to be more, rather than less, involved in the raising of his family, to the extent that he would like to see more flexible working legislation introduced to allow him do so.

This may be somewhat at odds with the prevailing view of men today and their willingness to live up to their responsibilities - signs perhaps that we, as a species, have finally grown up!

IRISH TIMES MENS POLL - Saturday 20th September 2008

Over the last two days analysis of the Irish Times/Behaviour & Attitudes Men's Poll has focused in the main on the role of relationships in their day to day lives, within an environment of growing economic and financial uncertainty.

Indeed, the conclusion thus far has been that despite the current economic turmoil, men have maintained an optimistic view of life in general, seeming to take a more pragmatic view of the negatives within the grand scheme of things.

Today we delve more deeply into the overall wellbeing of men from a physiological, emotional and moral viewpoint.

To begin with the physiological component of men's DNA, it is perhaps surprising to note that a full 98% of men describe their general health as either 'good' or 'middling', a figure which drops just three percentage points amongst those aged 55 years plus. When questioned at a separate question about the state of their health, less than one in thirteen of all men express any dissatisfaction at all with their physical wellbeing.

It has been our experience as researchers that people do tend to hold an overly-optimistic view of their health. Given what we know of increasing rates of adult obesity, a veritable Type 2 diabetes epidemic etc it would appear that some men at least are burying their heads in the sand on this score.

A series of questions relating to sports participation levels and frequency of medical check-ups would appear to support this theory. Thus, once men reach the relatively young age of 34, the vast majority cease to participate in any type of team sports at all, with barely a quarter playing any individual sports (golf, tennis, etc) monthly or more often.

While half do claim to take less strenuous forms of exercise each week (primarily walking), even this type of activity drops off significantly once men hit just 55 years of age. With the majority checking their basic weight less than twice a year or never at all, there would appear to be something of a need for a health awareness campaign aimed at reminding men of the importance of monitoring their health levels on an ongoing basis.

Remaining with the theme of physical health, our poll reveals that just under one third of all men smoke cigarettes nowadays, a figure which peaks at four in ten of those aged 25-34 years. Perhaps encouragingly however, cigarette consumption is significantly lower amongst young men in their teens and early twenties, a finding which does auger well for the future health of men.

We already know that, as a society, we have issues to do with alcohol consumption. One of the established academic measures of problem drinking is the extent to which those who consume alcohol indicate that they feel they should cut down. The theory is that if an individual feels they should cut down, it may well be indicative of a pending problem with alcohol dependency.

Today's poll indicates that of the 85% plus of all 18-34 year old men who drink any type of alcohol nowadays, three in ten have felt at some stage that they should cut down on their drinking. This is a worryingly high figure, compared for example with those aged 55 and older, less than a quarter of whom respond in a similar fashion.

Allied with extremely high levels of illicit drug consumption amongst young men, more effective drug awareness initiatives are clearly required if current consumption levels are to be reversed. See Figure I

FIG I: DRUGS CONSUMPTION LEVELS

	TOTAL	AGE					
		18-24 yrs	25-34 yrs	35-44 yrs	45-54 yrs	55-64 yrs	65 yrs+
Smoke cigarettes nowadays	32	27	39	34	30	31	25
Drink alcohol nowadays	81	84	87	83	80	77	68
Ever taken soft drugs like marijuana	30	47	45	34	29	9	6
Ever taken harder drugs like heroin, cocaine, etc	10	18	17	9	7	3	2

Lest we take too pessimistic a view of men's overall wellbeing, an overview of their emotional state of mind is worthwhile. Figure II sets down the responses elicited when the survey participants were asked whether they agreed or disagreed with a series of psychographic statements.

**FIG II: PSYCHOGRAPHIC STATEMENTS:
LEVELS OF AGREEMENT**

	Agree Strongly	Agree Slightly	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Disagree Slightly	Disagree Strongly
	%	%	%	%	%
I'm quite content with my way of life	39	40	9	5	2
It's more important to have friends than to be successful	24	33	25	12	2
I like myself pretty much the way I am	28	48	12	6	1
My greatest achievements are ahead of me	24	33	25	12	12
I'd say I'm rebelling against the way I was brought up	7	11	22	27	29

Q. Here are some statements other people have made to describe themselves and life in Ireland. Please indicate how strongly you agree or disagree with each statement?

As can be seen, the overwhelming majority of men are quite content with their way of life, are comfortable in their own skins, and are inclined to agree that it is more important to have friends than to be materially successful.

The majority of men up to their mid forties still feel that their greatest achievements are ahead of them, suggesting yet again that despite their day to day travails, men have chosen to adopt a fundamentally optimistic view of the world and their role in it.

With less than one in five of them claiming to be rebelling against the way they were brought up, perhaps this is no wonder.

As to their capacity to express their emotions, today's man again seems to be in a comfortable place. Thus, almost six in ten of all men feel it is acceptable for a man to cry in public, and women will be pleased to note that a majority (51%) agree with the statement 'I am very sentimental'.

On a more serious note, we should not lose sight of the fact that, while optimistic and upbeat in overall terms, there will always be a segment of the male population which is struggling psychologically and emotionally.

For example, 20% of men tell us that they have had somebody close to them commit suicide. Just under 1 in 10 (8%) claim to have seriously considered suicide themselves, a figure which rather disturbingly rises to 12% of males aged 18 to 34 years.

Finally, having dissected the health of the typical male from a physical and emotional perspective, a few parting words on his moral wellbeing is in order. In overall terms, it might be said that men's health in this respect is "middling to good". Thus, while significant moral opprobrium attaches to the notion of drink driving, receiving stolen goods, or claiming state benefits illegally, quite a few feel

that they are on safe moral ground when it comes to keeping money they have found, or even not paying for the TV licence.

FIG III: STANCE ON MORAL ISSUES

	Always be Justified	Sometimes be justified	Never be justified	No opinion
	%	%	%	%
Keeping money that you have found	4	33	54	7
Avoiding a fare on public transport	2	27	65	5
Not paying for the TV licence	4	23	64	9
Taking the drug marijuana or hashish	3	19	69	8
Claiming state benefits when you are not entitled to them	1	21	74	4
Buying something you know was stolen	0	12	82	5
Driving under the influence of alcohol	0	8	87	3

Q. For each of the following statements, please tell me whether you think that it can always be justified, sometimes be justified or never be justified?

All in all therefore, our poll paints a picture of a typical male who is reasonably balanced and generally at ease with himself. In fact, quite a likeable chap overall - despite his flaws.