

The Independent Office for Police Conduct: Public Perceptions Tracker

SUMMARY OF RESEARCH FOR THE 2017/18 FINANCIAL YEAR

Waves: 1-6

Fieldwork: June 2017 – March 2018

Methodology

Tracking the public's perceptions towards the IOPC

- Populus conducted six online surveys at regular intervals among adults in England and Wales. These were nationally representative with sample sizes of approximately n=1850 (with a larger sample in Wave 4 which boosted 18-24s and BAMEs).
- The first survey was conducted in June 2017 and the most recent, Wave 6, was conducted between 16-18 March 2018.
- The results are also available to view in the IOPC/Populus dashboard.
- The first four of these surveys were conducted before the organisation become the IOPC. Where relevant, notes on question wording are included in this report.
- This report focusses on the following demographics alongside the overall England and Wales population: younger people (18-24), BAMEs, the upper social grades (ABC1s), the lower social grades (C2DEs), and those with a condition or disability.
- Please note that the base size for BAMEs and 18-24s are smaller than for the other subgroups (with an average of around 70 BAME respondents in each wave and 200 18-24s). The fluctuations for this sample wave on wave therefore tend to be greater.
- Some slides display aggregated data across waves. Please note that unique respondents can only be ensured for a maximum of up to four waves. There may therefore be some overlap in respondents in aggregated data.

Executive summary

Executive summary

- The English and Welsh public were fairly evenly divided in the 2017/18 financial year on whether the police could be trusted to deal fairly with complaints made against it.
- The biggest demographic differentiator on this issue was ethnicity. BAME respondents were more likely than other respondents to lack confidence in the police's ability to fairly deal with complaints.
- Most of the public (fluctuating between two thirds and three quarters) said they would be likely to complain if they were unhappy about how a police officer behaved towards them, with few major demographic differences.
- The IOPC has been less well known than the IPCC in the two waves in which this was tested. Around a third of the public claimed to be aware of the new organisation, compared with around three quarters for the older organisation.
- The IOPC (as with the IPCC) was associated by some with being 'independent', 'professional' and 'impartial', but by others as being 'bureaucratic', 'biased' and 'slow'. Most of the public were confident that it did its work in an impartial way, but few were 'very confident'.
- The top priorities for the public with regard to identifying learnings for the police were child sexual abuse, corruption or abuse of powers, domestic abuse, modern slavery or trafficking, and mental health.
- BAMEs were more likely than others to prioritise learnings relating to discrimination, hate crime, race, religion, and belief, and stop and search, while those with a condition or disability were more likely to call for mental health to be prioritised than the population as a whole.

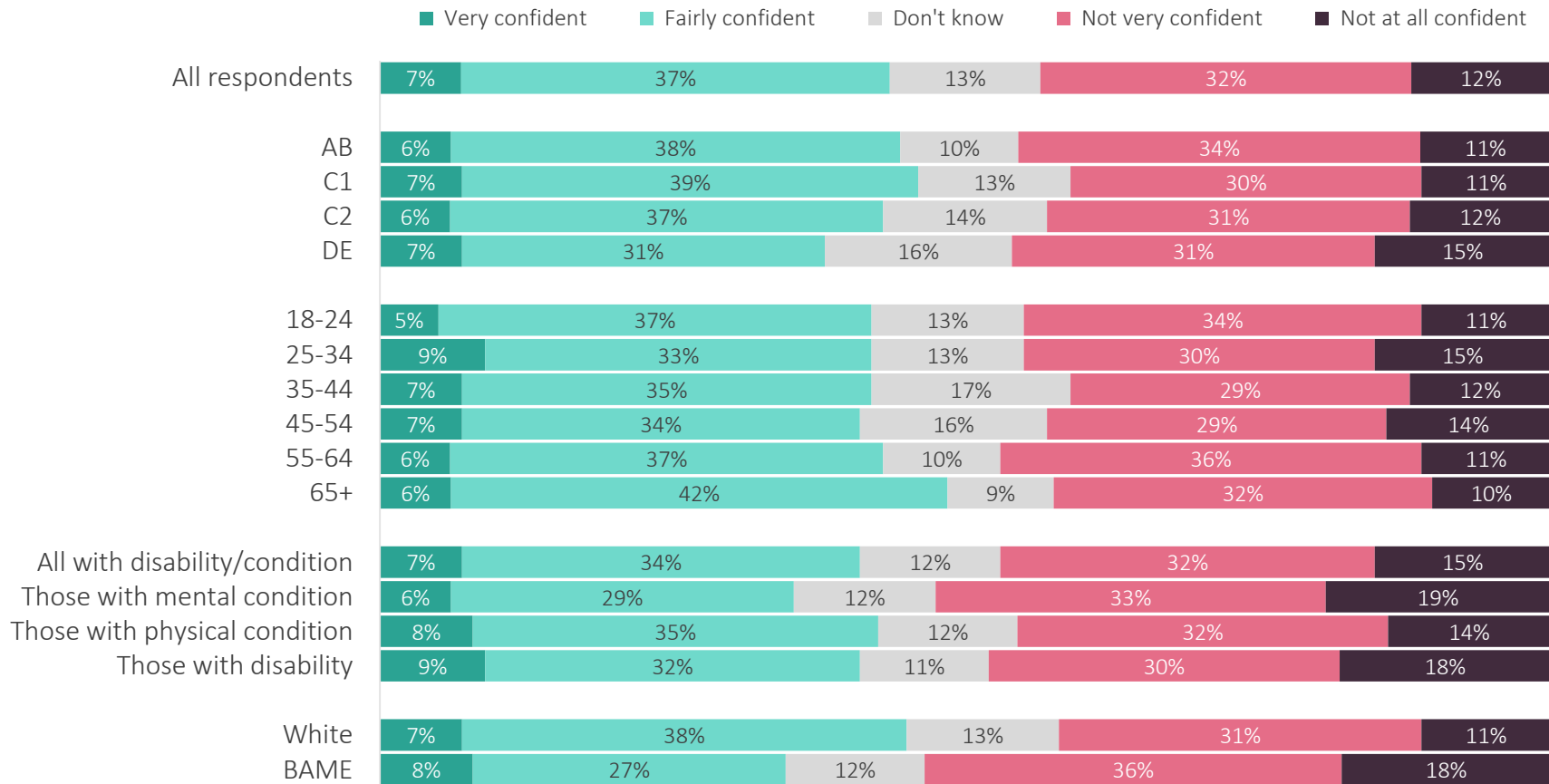
Complaining about the police

The population is divided on the police's ability to fairly deal with complaints, and most say they would complain if treated unfairly

- Throughout the reporting period the England and Wales population has been fairly evenly divided on whether the police can be trusted to deal fairly with complaints made against it.
- The biggest demographic differentiator on this issue is ethnicity. BAME respondents are more likely than other respondents to lack confidence in the police's ability to fairly deal with complaints.
- Those in the upper social grade categories (ABC1) have also consistently been more confident in the police's ability to deal fairly with complaints than those in the lower categories (C2DE).
- Between two thirds and three quarters of the public say they would be likely to complain if they were unhappy about how a police officer behaved towards them, though this has fluctuated throughout the 2017/18 financial year.
- In most waves, younger people (18-24) have been slightly less likely to say they would complain than older people. C2DEs are also less likely to say they would complain than ABC1s.

Confidence in the police's handling of complaints, by demographic

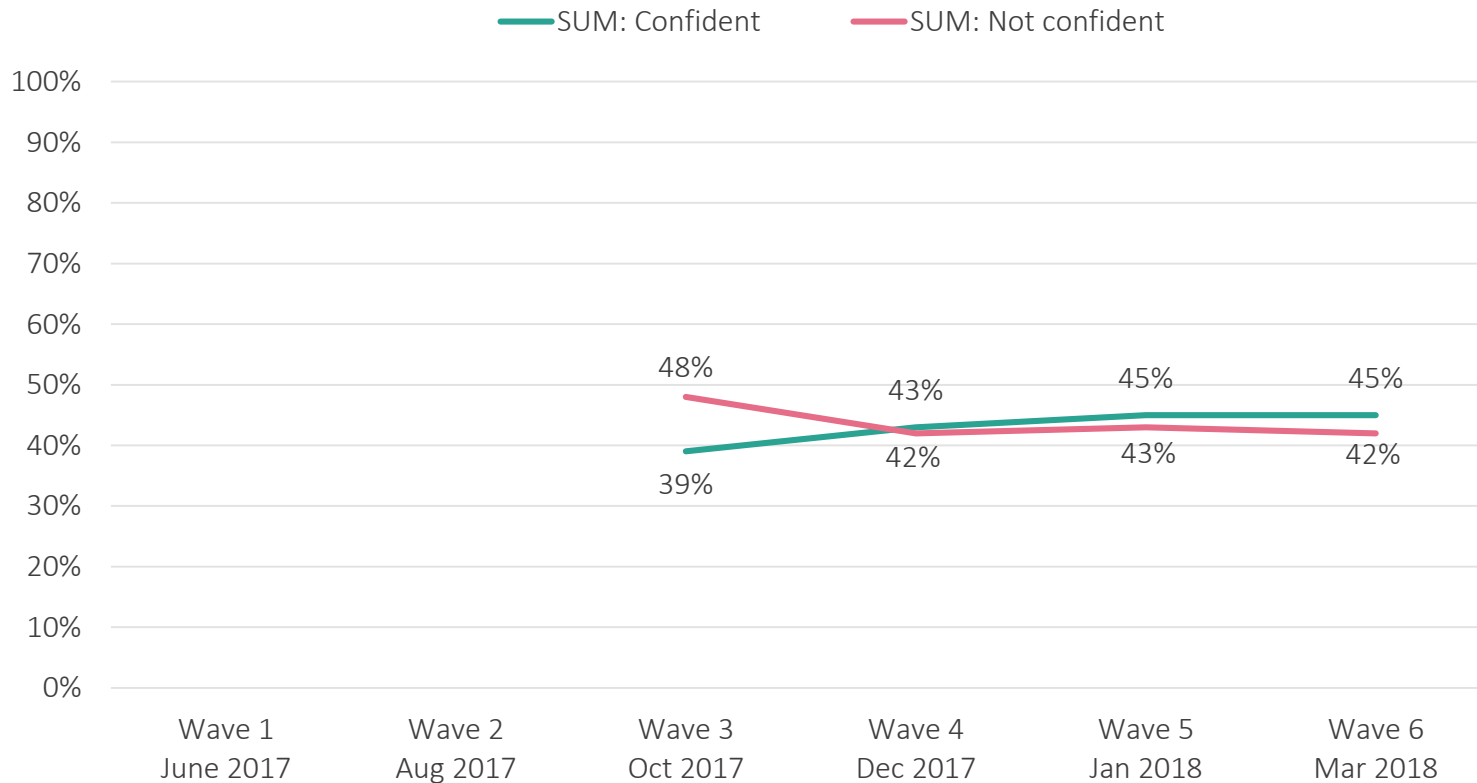
Q. How confident, if at all, are you that the police deal fairly with complaints made against the police?
 Showing aggregated results from waves 3-6



1. Base sizes: All, Waves 3-6 (n=7,944); AB (n=2,399), C1 (n=2,282), C2 (n=1,273), DE (n=1,990); 18-24 (n=1,090), 25-34 (n=1,256), 35-44 (n=1,305), 45-54 (n=1,363); 55-64 (n=1,118); 65+ (n=1,812); all with disability/condition (n=1,747), those with mental condition (n=666), those with physical condition (n=1,055), those with disability (n=583); white (n=6,980); BAME (n=906)

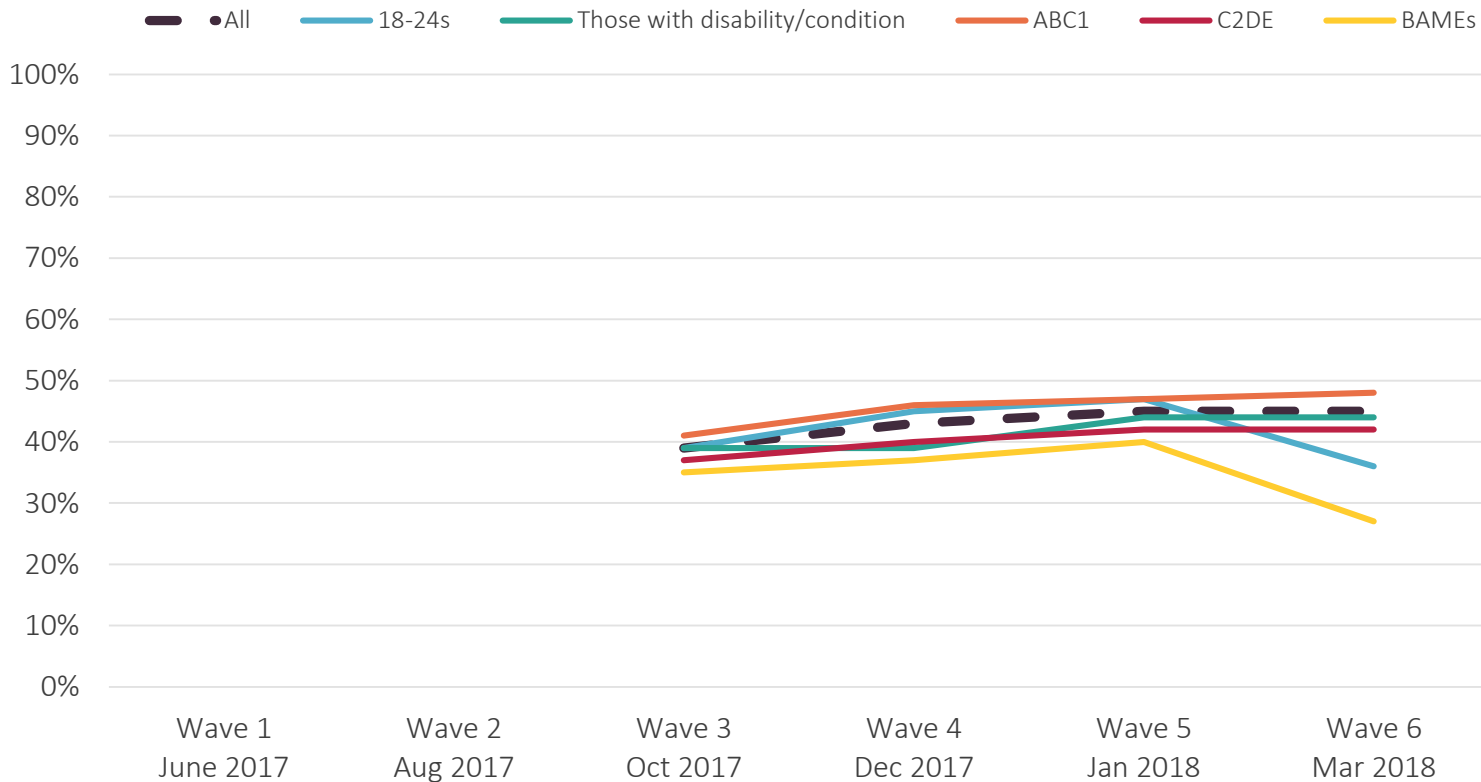
Confidence in the police's handling of complaints, over time

Q. How confident, if at all, are you that the police deal fairly with complaints made against the police?



Confidence in the police's handling of complaints, over time

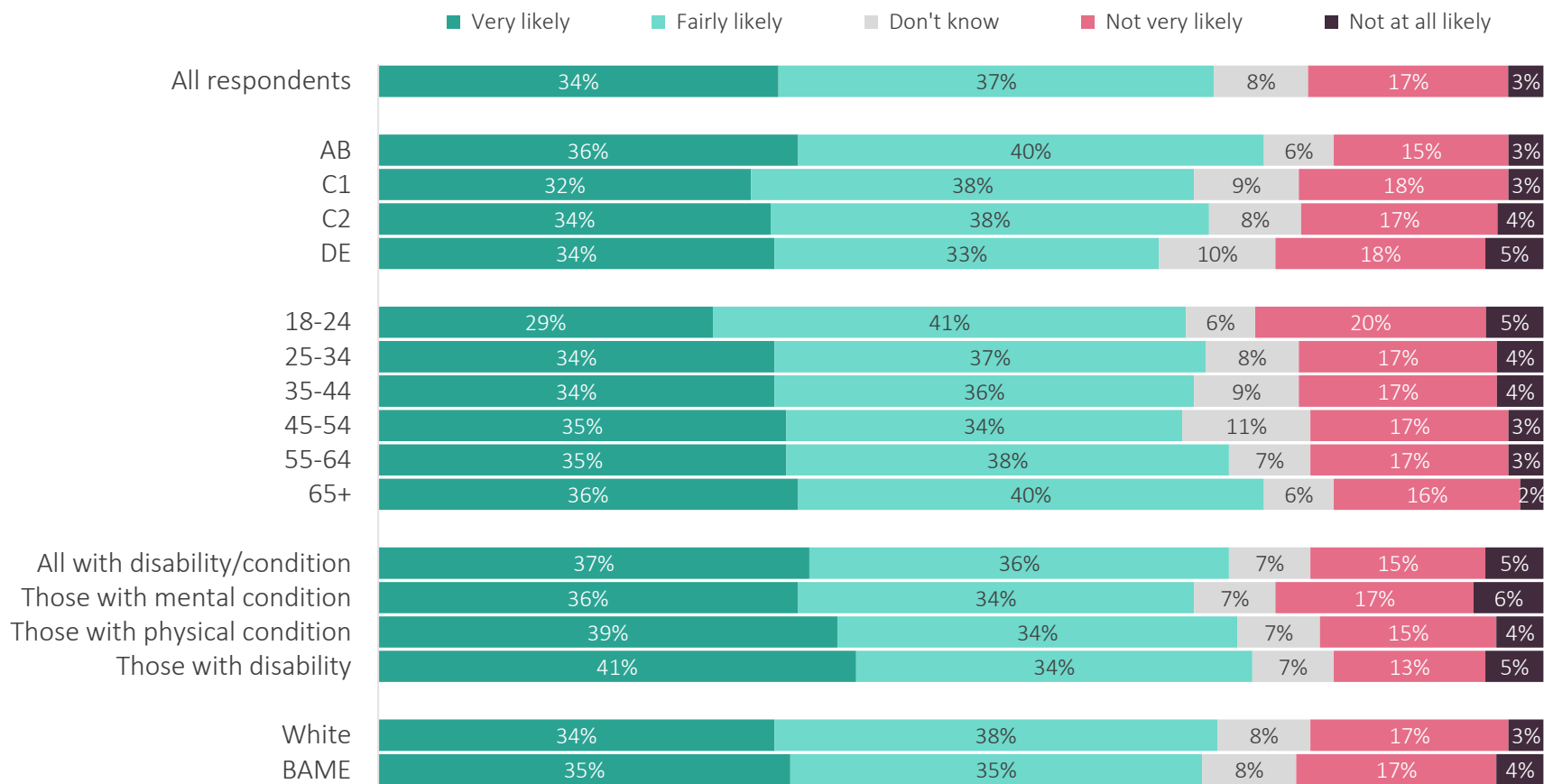
Q. How confident, if at all, are you that the police deal fairly with complaints made against the police?
 Showing only 'Sum: Confident'



Likelihood to complain, by demographic

Q. If you were really unhappy about how a police officer behaved towards you, OR handled a matter in which you were involved, how likely would you be to complain?

Showing aggregated results from waves 1-6*

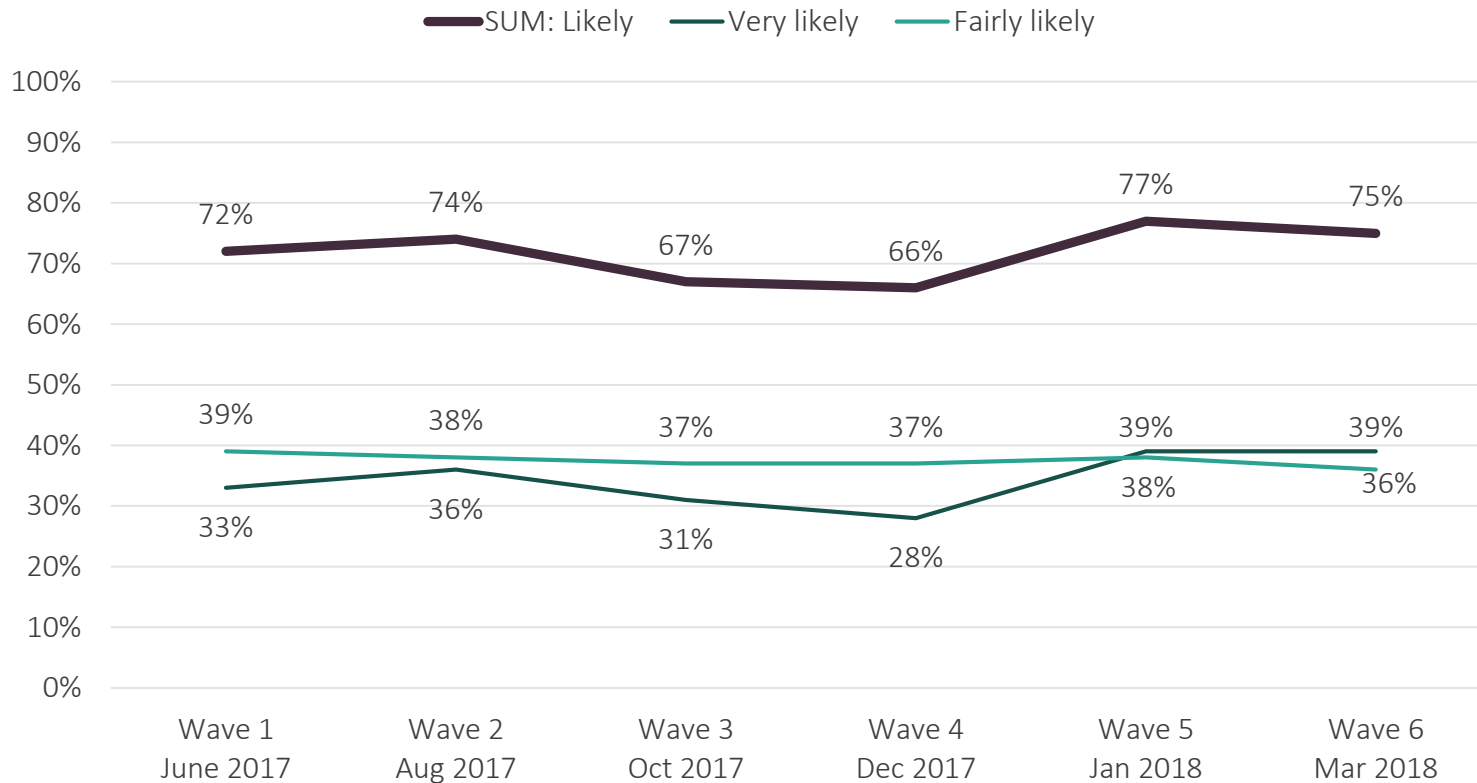


1. Base sizes: All, Wave 6 (n=11,661); AB (n=3,450), C1 (n=3,323), C2 (n=1,961), DE (n=2,927); 18-24 (n=1,527), 25-34 (n=1,811), 35-44 (n=1,947), 45-54 (n=2,046), 55-64 (n=1,663), 65+ (n=2,667); all with disability/condition (n=2,662), those with mental condition (n=1,041), those with physical condition (n=1,580), those with disability (n=876); white (n=10,371); BAME (n=1,200)

*NB. Unique respondents can only be ensured for a max of 4 waves. There may therefore be some overlap in respondents in this data.

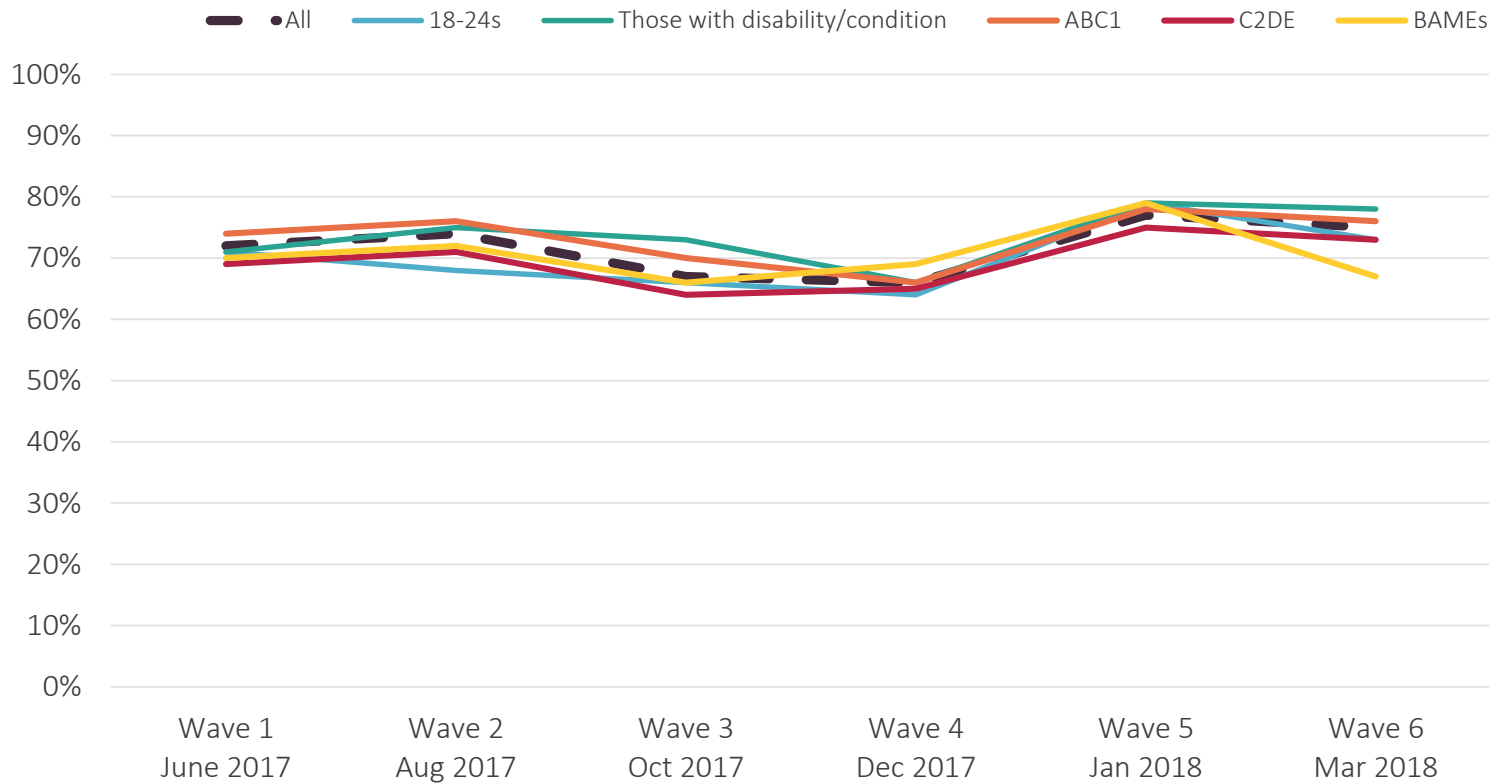
Likelihood to complain, over time

Q. If you were really unhappy about how a police officer behaved towards you, OR handled a matter in which you were involved, how likely would you be to complain?



Likelihood to complain, over time

Q. If you were really unhappy about how a police officer behaved towards you, OR handled a matter in which you were involved, how likely would you be to complain? **Showing Sum: Likely [very likely + fairly likely]**



Awareness of the IOPC

The IOPC remains far less known than the IPCC

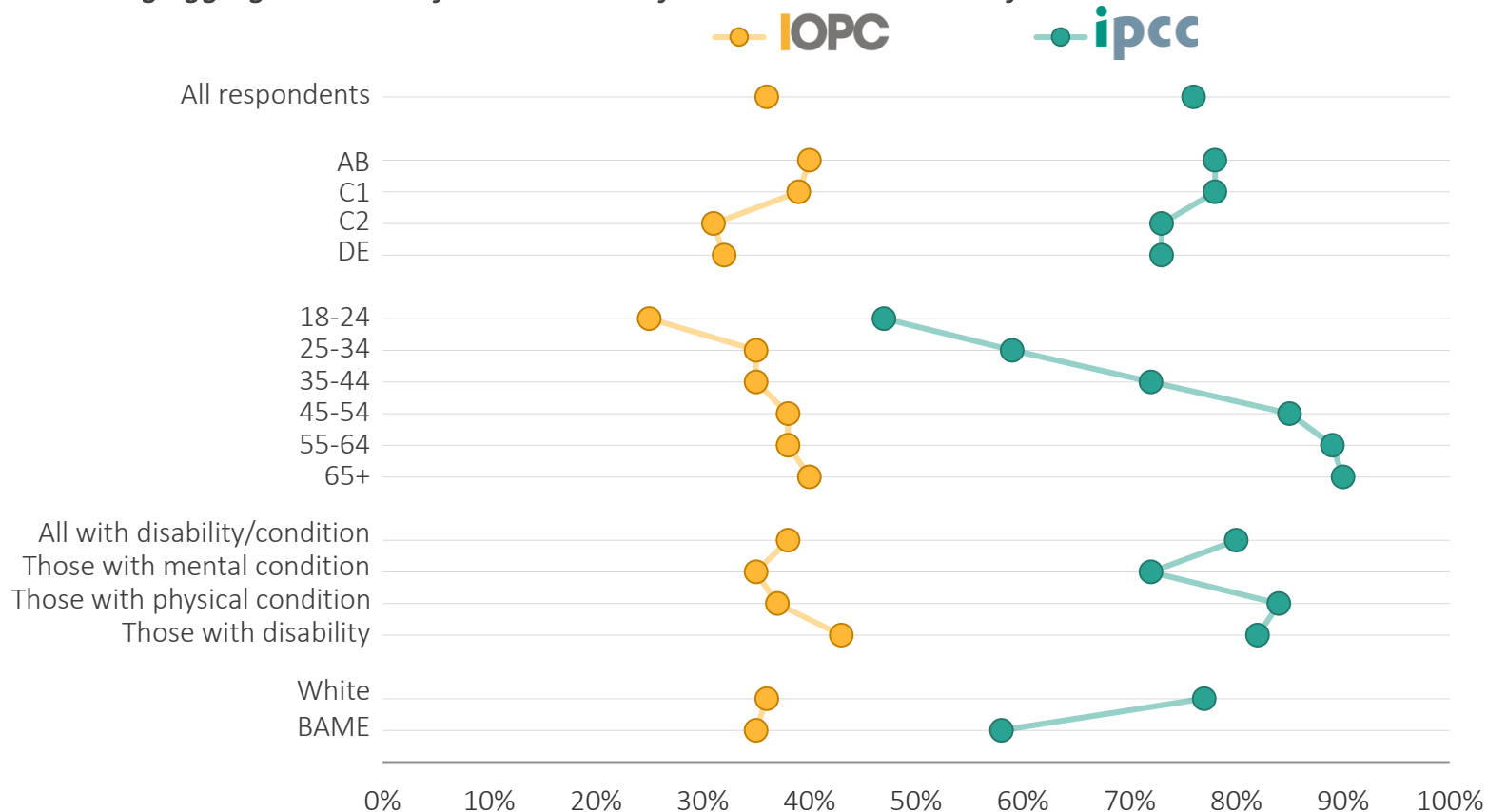
- Awareness levels of the IPCC (around three quarters of the public) are much higher than awareness of the new IOPC (between a third and four in ten).
- Perhaps as a result of increased exposure over time, older people were much more likely to be aware of the IPCC than younger people throughout the 2017/18 financial year. BAMEs also tended to be less aware of the IPCC than the population as a whole.
- These patterns are not clearly replicated for awareness of the new IOPC, though 18-24s are less aware of it than the rest of the population.
- Awareness of the IOPC and the IPCC appears to be higher among ABC1s compared with C2DEs. In the case of the new IOPC, the difference is around ten percentage points.
- By far the most common way of becoming aware of the IOPC is via television news, while some come across it in newspapers, on the radio, or on online news websites.
- This pattern is broadly consistent across demographics, with some differences. Younger people (18-24s) and BAMEs are more likely than the overall population to have come across the IOPC/IPCC via social media and less likely to have come across it via television news, though the latter is still by far the most common of exposure to the organisation for all demographics.

Awareness of the IOPC/IPCC, by demographic

Q.A1.1 Have you heard of the Independent Office for Police Conduct (IOPC) before today? [% saying 'yes']

Q.A1.2 Have you heard of the Independent Police Complaints Commission (IPCC) before today? [% saying 'yes']

Showing aggregated results from waves 1-6 for 'IPCC' and waves 5-6 for 'IOPC'*



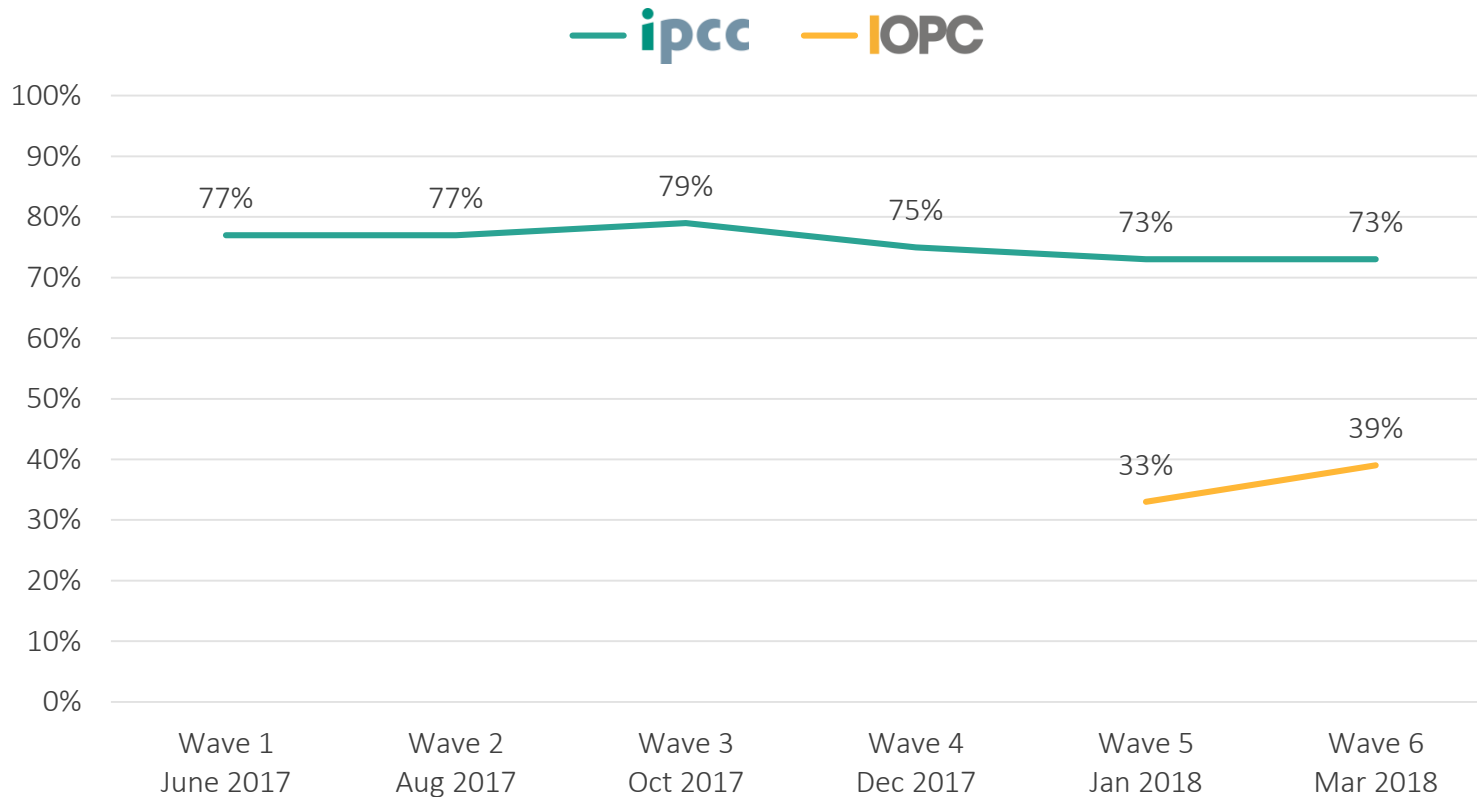
1. Base sizes: All, Wave 5-6 (n=3,696); AB (n=1,066), C1 (n=1,067), C2 (n=591), DE (n=972); 18-24 (n=402), 25-34 (n=574), 35-44 (n=610), 45-54 (n=659), 55-64 (n=564), 65+ (n=887); all with disability/condition (n=845), those with mental condition (n=309), those with physical condition (n=523), those with disability (297); white (n=3,421); BAME (n=249). For base sizes for waves 1-6, please see previous slides.

*NB. Unique respondents can only be ensured for a max of 4 waves. There may therefore be some overlap in respondents in this data.

Awareness of the IOPC/IPCC, over time

Q. Have you heard of the Independent Office for Police Conduct (IOPC) before today? [% saying 'yes']

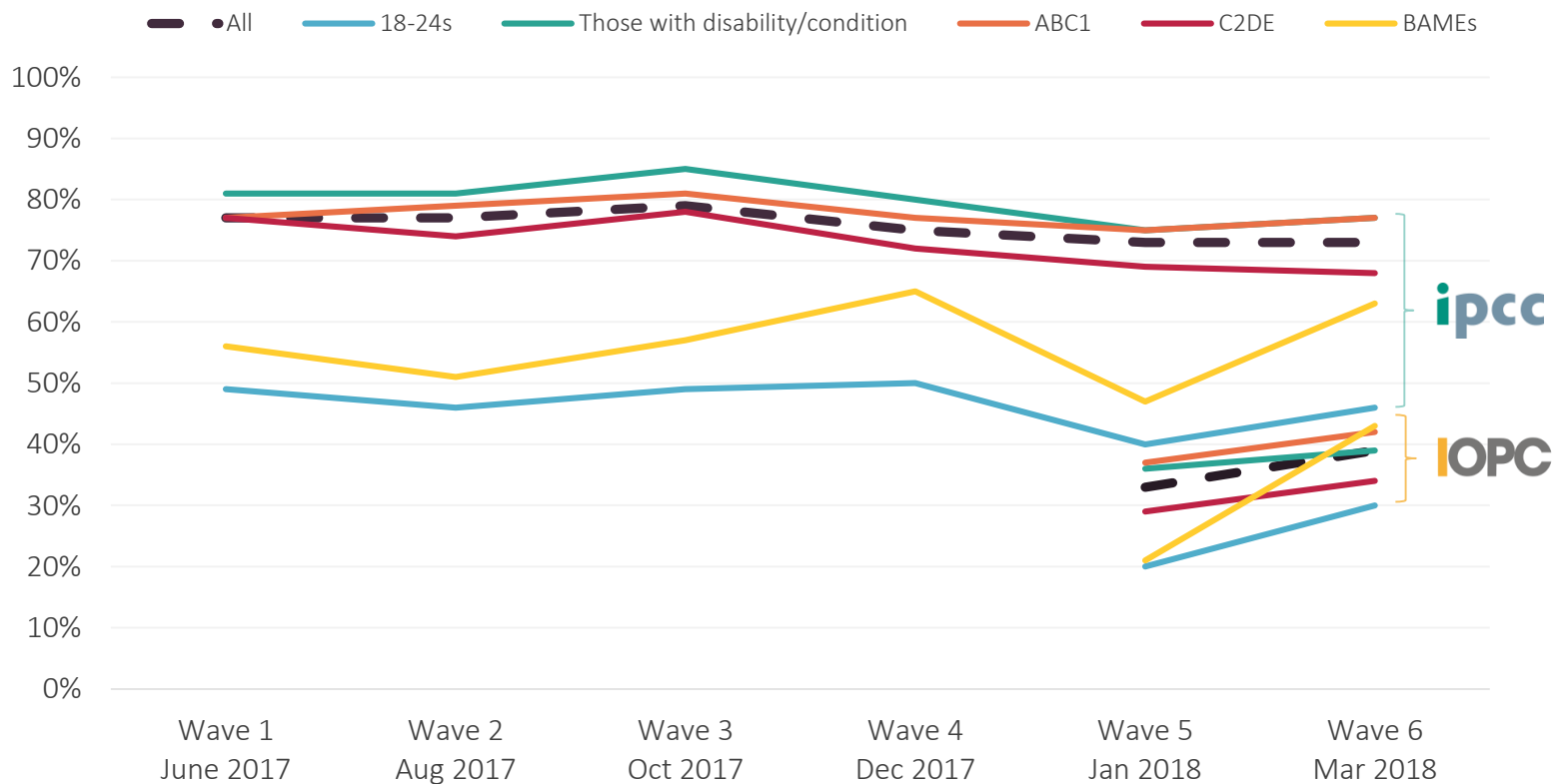
Q. Have you heard of the Independent Police Complaints Commission (IPCC) before today? [% saying 'yes']



Awareness of the IOPC/IPCC, over time

Q. Have you heard of the Independent Office for Police Conduct (IOPC) before today? [% saying 'yes']

Q. Have you heard of the Independent Police Complaints Commission (IPCC) before today? [% saying 'yes']



Claimed origin of awareness, by demographic

Q.A2 In which of the following ways, if any, have you heard about the Independent Police Complaints Commission (IPCC)? [Asked to all respondents who have heard of the IPCC/IOPC]

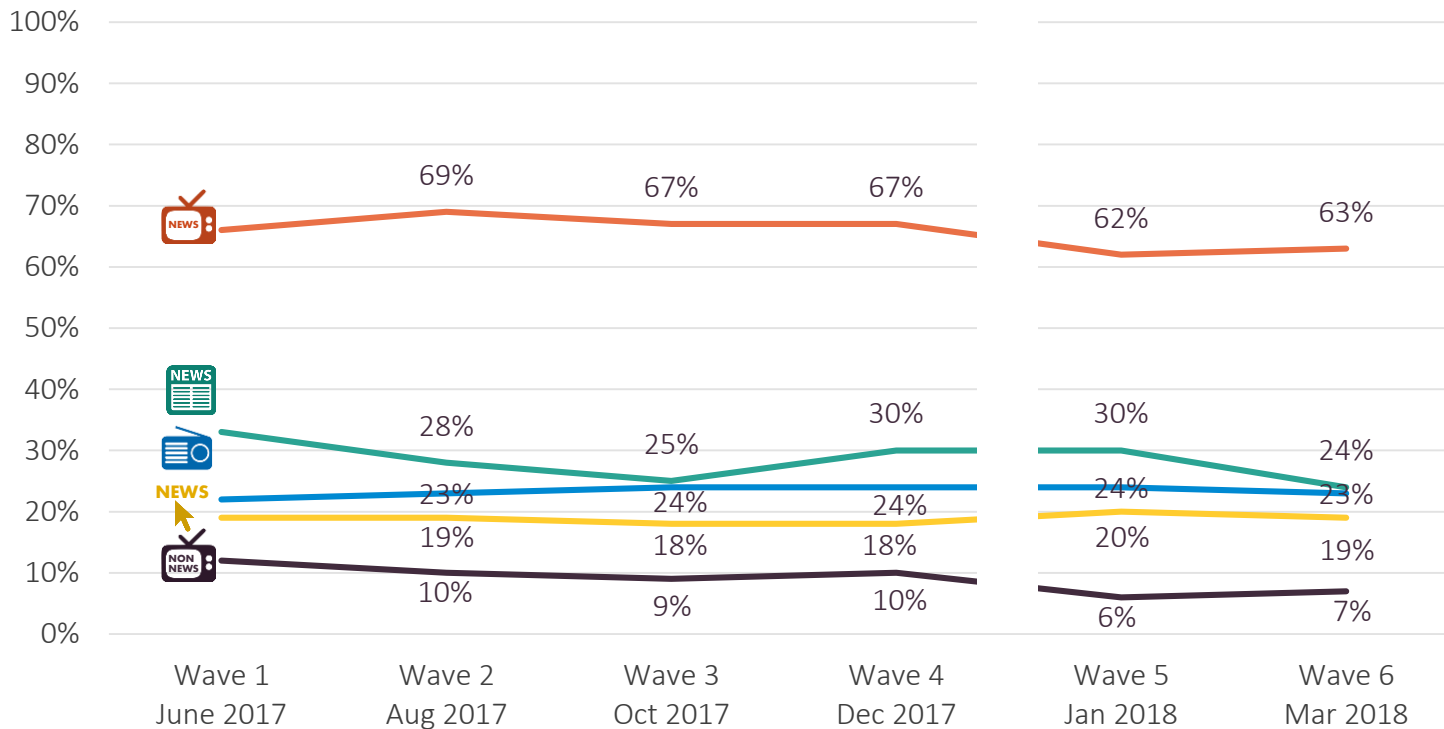
Showing aggregated results from waves 1-6*

	All	18-24	Those with condition/disability	ABC1	C2DE	BAMEs
Television news	66%	47%	67%	67%	65%	58%
Print newspaper	28%	15%	26%	32%	24%	27%
Radio news	23%	18%	19%	26%	20%	20%
Online news website	19%	25%	17%	22%	14%	28%
A non-news television programme	9%	11%	12%	9%	9%	9%
Social media	9%	19%	10%	9%	8%	18%
Through a family member or friend	7%	13%	7%	7%	7%	14%
Online non-news website	4%	6%	5%	5%	4%	9%
Through my job	4%	4%	4%	6%	2%	6%
A non-news radio programme	3%	3%	3%	3%	3%	6%
Because I made a complaint to the IPCC	2%	1%	2%	1%	2%	4%

Claimed origin of awareness, over time

Q.A2 In which of the following ways, if any, have you heard about the Independent Police Complaints Commission (IPCC)?
 [Asked to all respondents who have heard of the IPCC/IOPC]

From Wave 5 onwards, respondents were asked about 'the Independent Office for Police Conduct (IOPC) (previously known as the Independent Police Complaints Commission (IPCC))'.



Claimed origin of awareness – TV news only

Q.A2 In which of the following ways, if any, have you heard about the Independent Police Complaints Commission (IPCC)?
 [Asked to all respondents who have heard of the IPCC/IOPC]

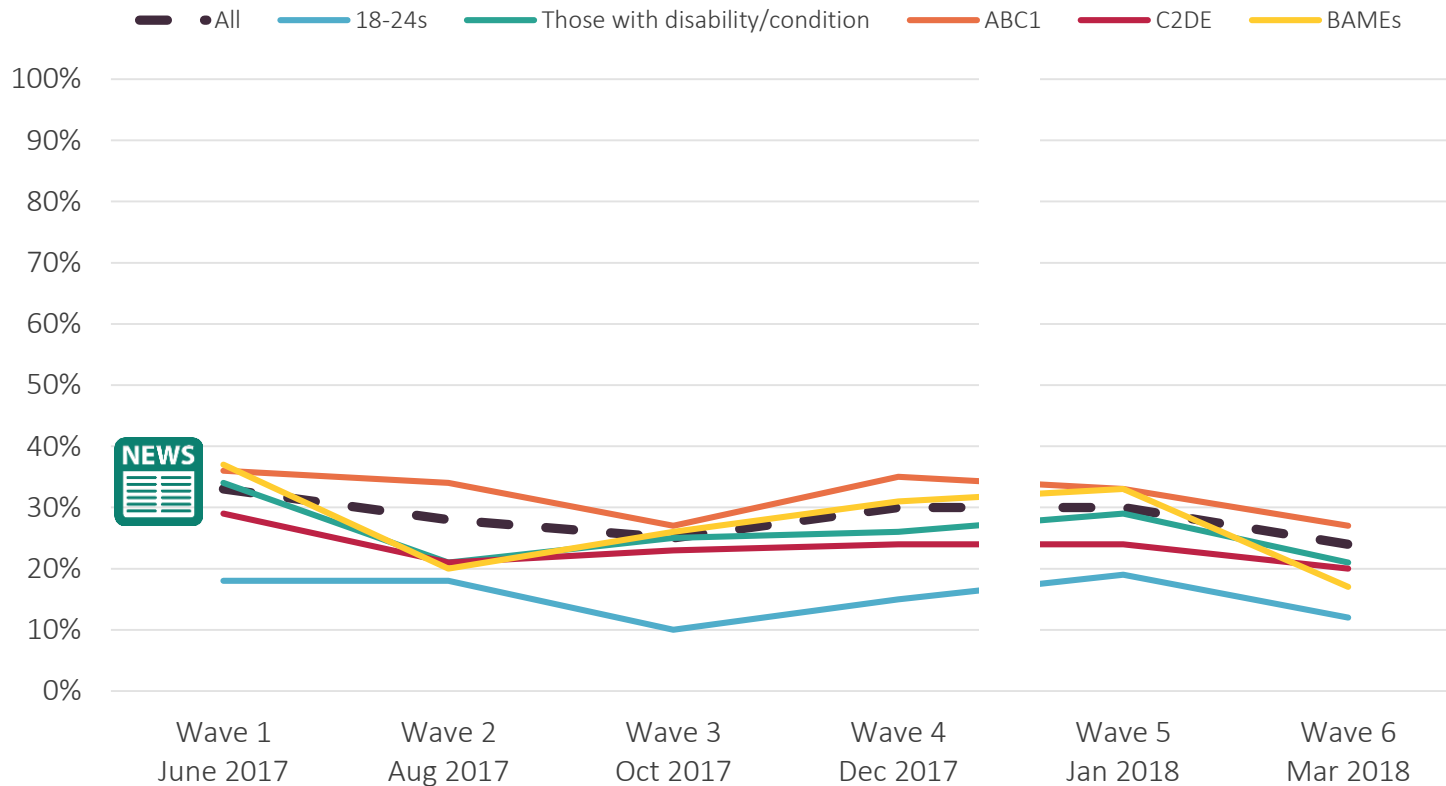
From Wave 5 onwards, respondents were asked about 'the Independent Office for Police Conduct (IOPC) (previously known as the Independent Police Complaints Commission (IPCC))'.



Claimed origin of awareness – print newspapers news only

Q.A2 In which of the following ways, if any, have you heard about the Independent Police Complaints Commission (IPCC)?
 [Asked to all respondents who have heard of the IPCC/IOPC]

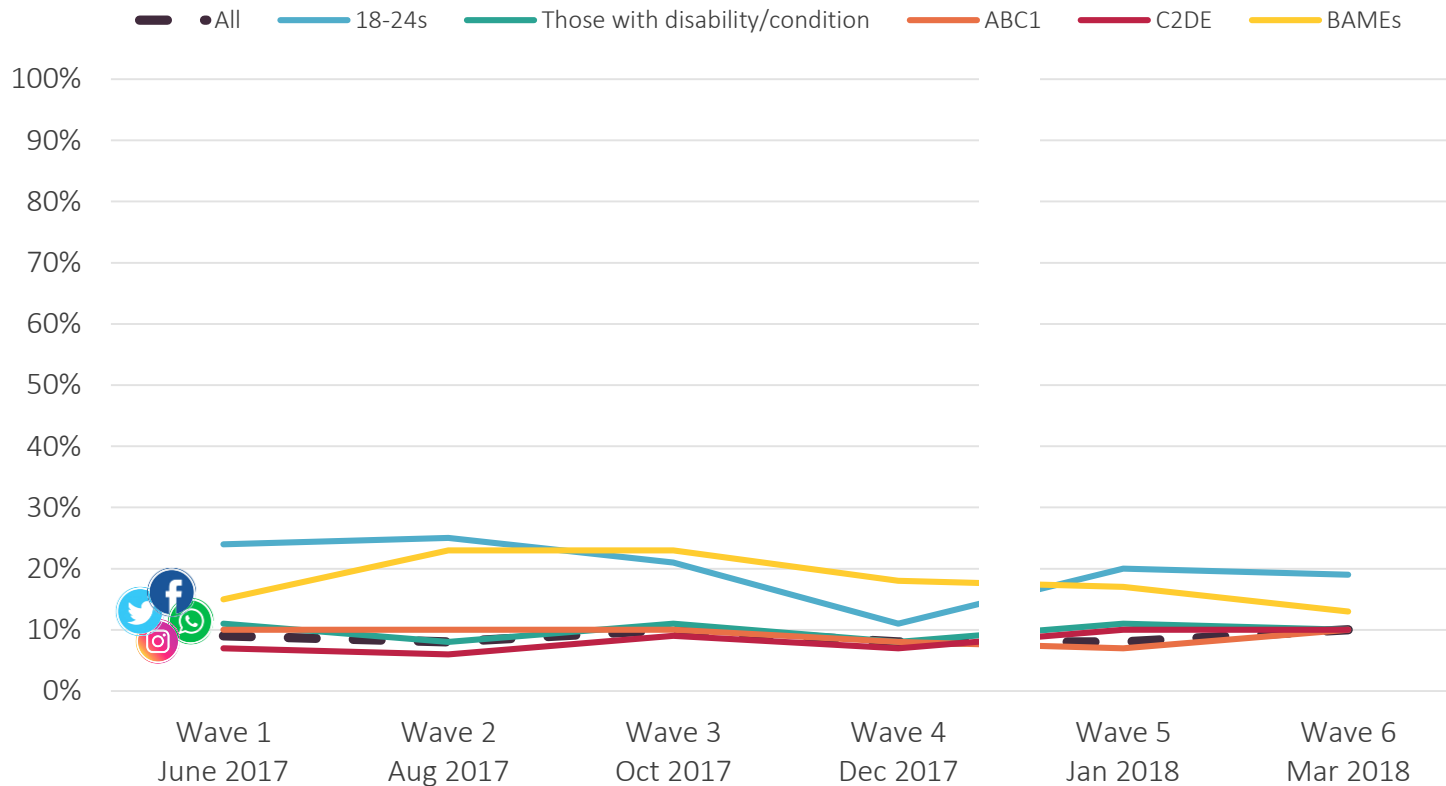
From Wave 5 onwards, respondents were asked about 'the Independent Office for Police Conduct (IOPC) (previously known as the Independent Police Complaints Commission (IPCC))'.



Claimed origin of awareness – social media only

Q.A2 In which of the following ways, if any, have you heard about the Independent Police Complaints Commission (IPCC)?
 [Asked to all respondents who have heard of the IPCC/IOPC]

From Wave 5 onwards, respondents were asked about 'the Independent Office for Police Conduct (IOPC) (previously known as the Independent Police Complaints Commission (IPCC))'.



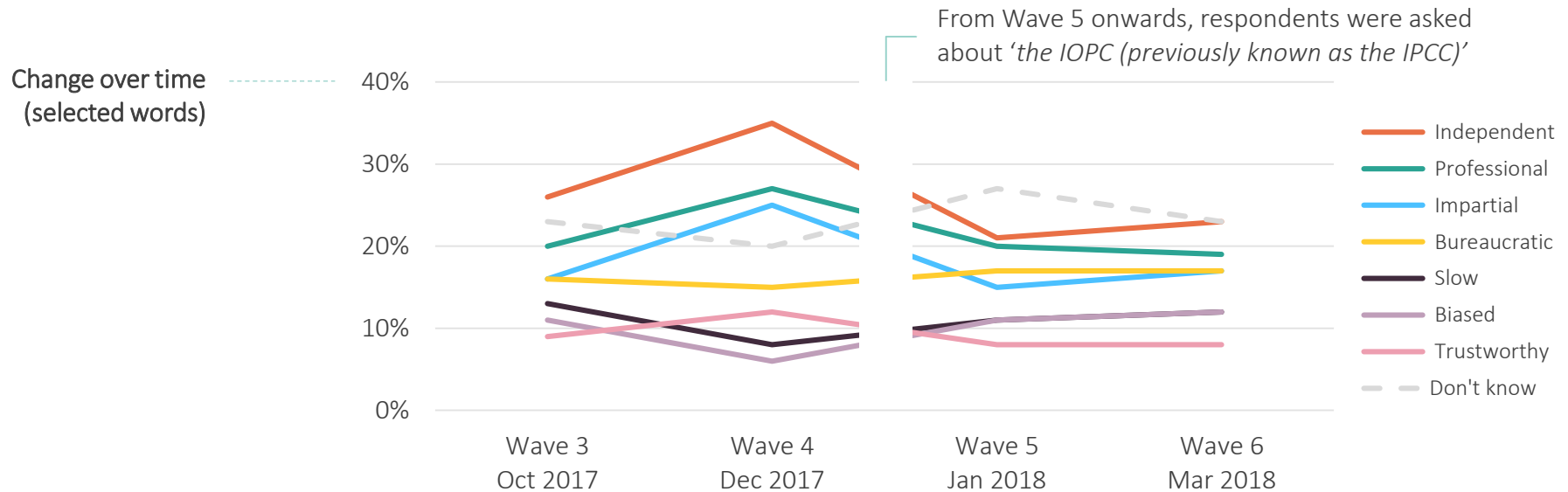
Perceptions of the IOPC

The IOPC has mixed brand associations among those who know about it

- The IOPC is commonly viewed as independent, and professional, but also bureaucratic and slow.
- It is very rarely associated with being 'successful', 'diverse' and 'timely'.
- More people associate the IOPC with impartiality (17%) than bias (12%).
- These top perceptions have changed little since the IPCC became the IOPC.
- BAMEs are slightly less likely to call the organisation 'impartial' or 'professional' than the population overall.
- Those in the upper social grades (ABC1) are slightly more likely to think of the IOPC as impartial and independent compared with those in the lower social grades (C2DE).

Associations with the IOPC

Q. Which, if any, of the following words or phrases do you think best describe the IOPC (previously known as the IPCC)? Please choose up to three words. [Asked only to those who have heard of the IOPC/IPCC]



Associations with the IOPC, by demographic

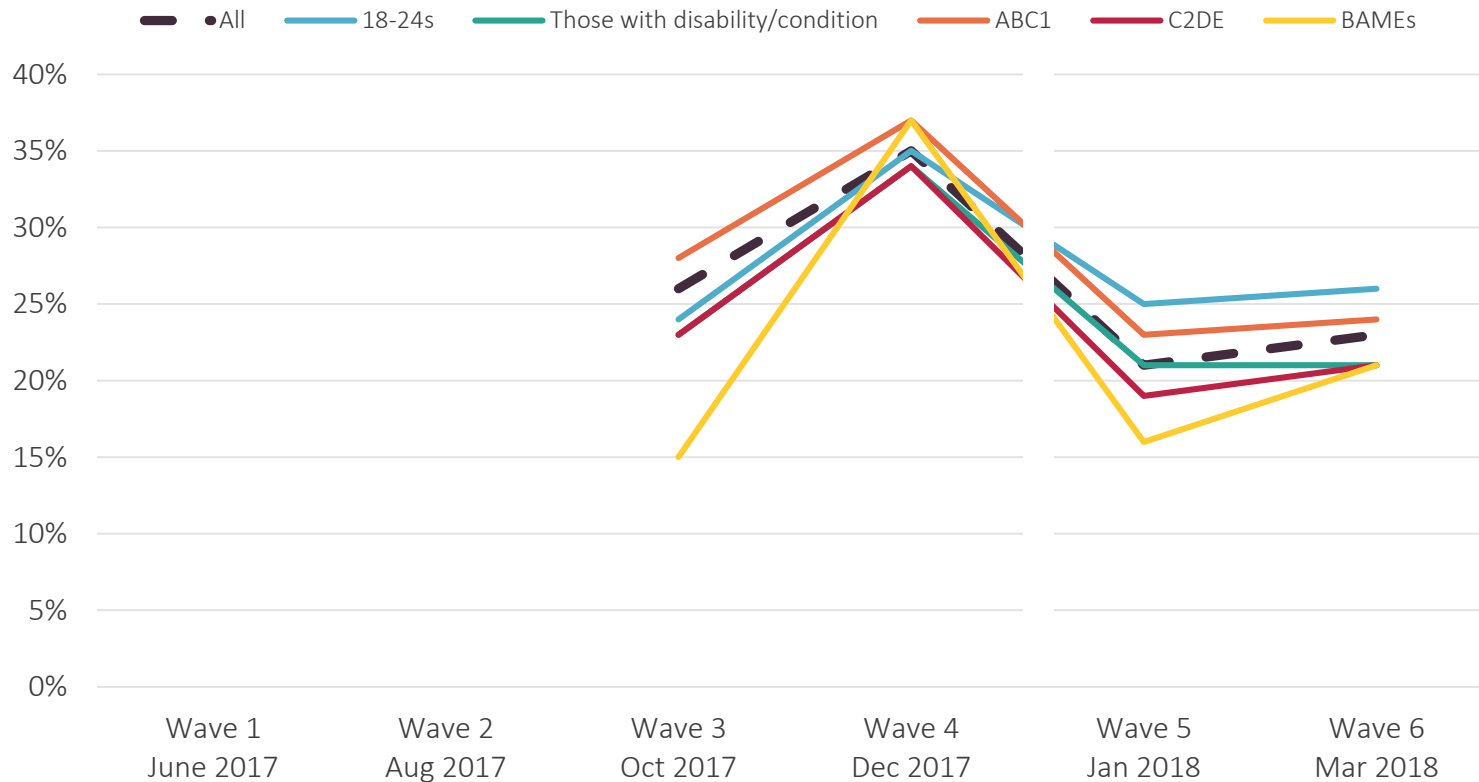
Q. Which, if any, of the following words or phrases do you think best describe the IOPC (previously known as the IPCC)? Please choose up to three words. [Asked only to those who have heard of the IOPC/IPCC] **Showing aggregated results from waves 3-6**

	All	18-24	Those with condition/disability	ABC1	C2DE	BAMEs
Independent	27%	28%	26%	28%	25%	24%
Professional	22%	19%	25%	22%	22%	18%
Impartial	19%	17%	17%	20%	17%	15%
Bureaucratic	16%	14%	17%	17%	15%	15%
Slow	11%	7%	12%	11%	10%	8%
Trustworthy	10%	11%	11%	9%	10%	8%
Biased	9%	7%	11%	9%	10%	11%
Ineffective	9%	7%	10%	10%	9%	11%
Responsive	9%	9%	8%	9%	9%	10%
Powerful	8%	10%	9%	8%	8%	8%
Effective	8%	6%	8%	8%	8%	9%
Defensive	7%	2%	7%	8%	6%	4%
Inefficient	6%	6%	6%	6%	5%	9%
Efficient	6%	5%	7%	5%	6%	7%
Remote	5%	2%	5%	5%	4%	2%
Transparent	4%	5%	4%	5%	4%	7%
Listens well	4%	6%	4%	3%	4%	6%
Connected	3%	4%	3%	3%	3%	3%
Powerless	3%	4%	3%	3%	3%	6%
Assertive	3%	5%	4%	3%	3%	4%
Passive	3%	3%	3%	3%	2%	4%
Well-run	2%	2%	2%	2%	2%	2%
Successful	2%	4%	1%	1%	2%	4%
Timely	2%	3%	1%	1%	2%	6%
Diverse	1%	2%	1%	1%	1%	2%

'Independent'

Q. Which, if any, of the following words or phrases do you think best describe the IOPC (previously known as the IPCC)?
Please choose up to three words. [Asked only to those who have heard of the IOPC/IPCC]

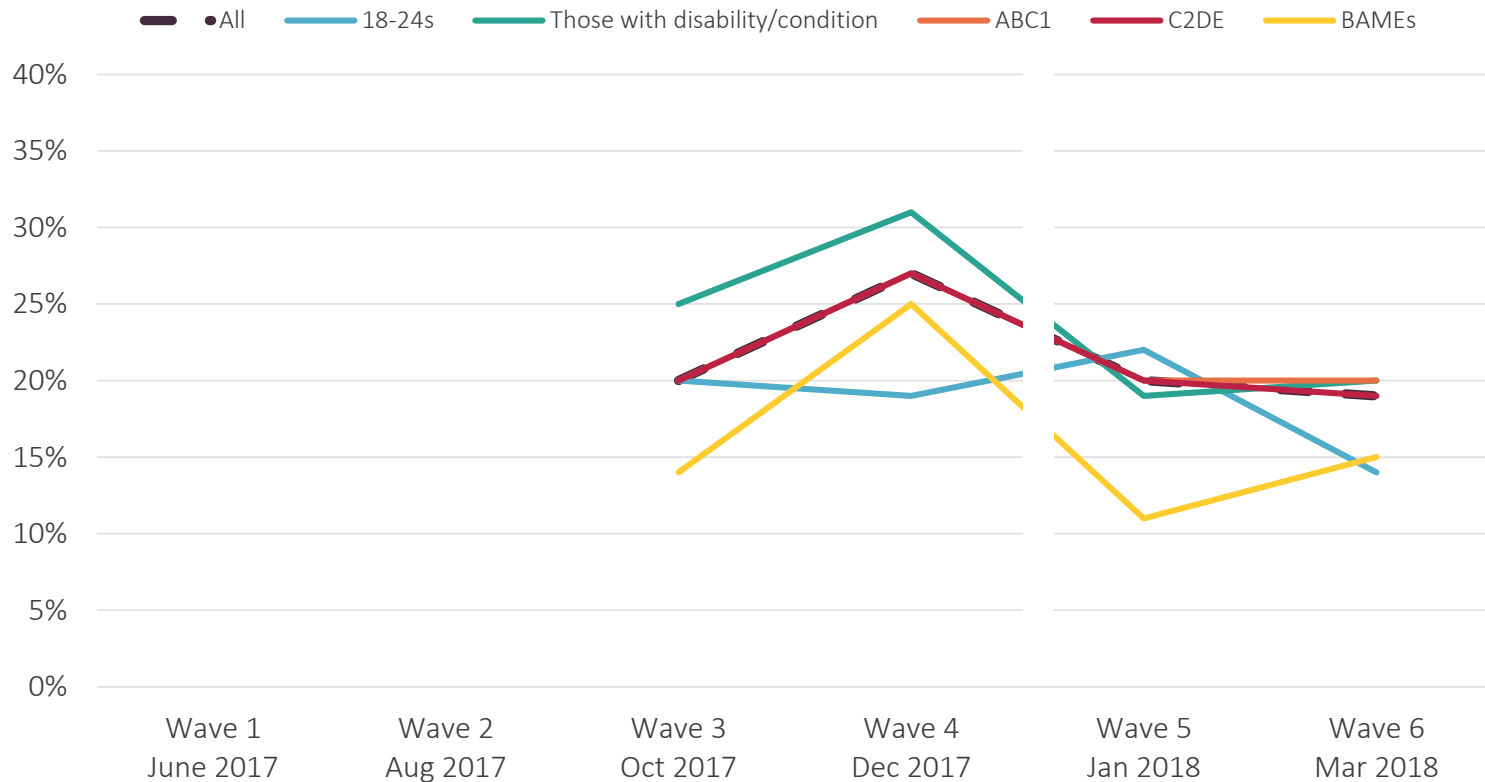
From Wave 5 onwards, respondents were asked about 'the IOPC (previously known as the IPCC)'



'Professional'

Q. Which, if any, of the following words or phrases do you think best describe the IOPC (previously known as the IPCC)?
Please choose up to three words. [Asked only to those who have heard of the IOPC/IPCC]

From Wave 5 onwards, respondents were asked about 'the IOPC (previously known as the IPCC)'



'Impartial'

Q. Which, if any, of the following words or phrases do you think best describe the IOPC (previously known as the IPCC)?
Please choose up to three words. [Asked only to those who have heard of the IOPC/IPCC]

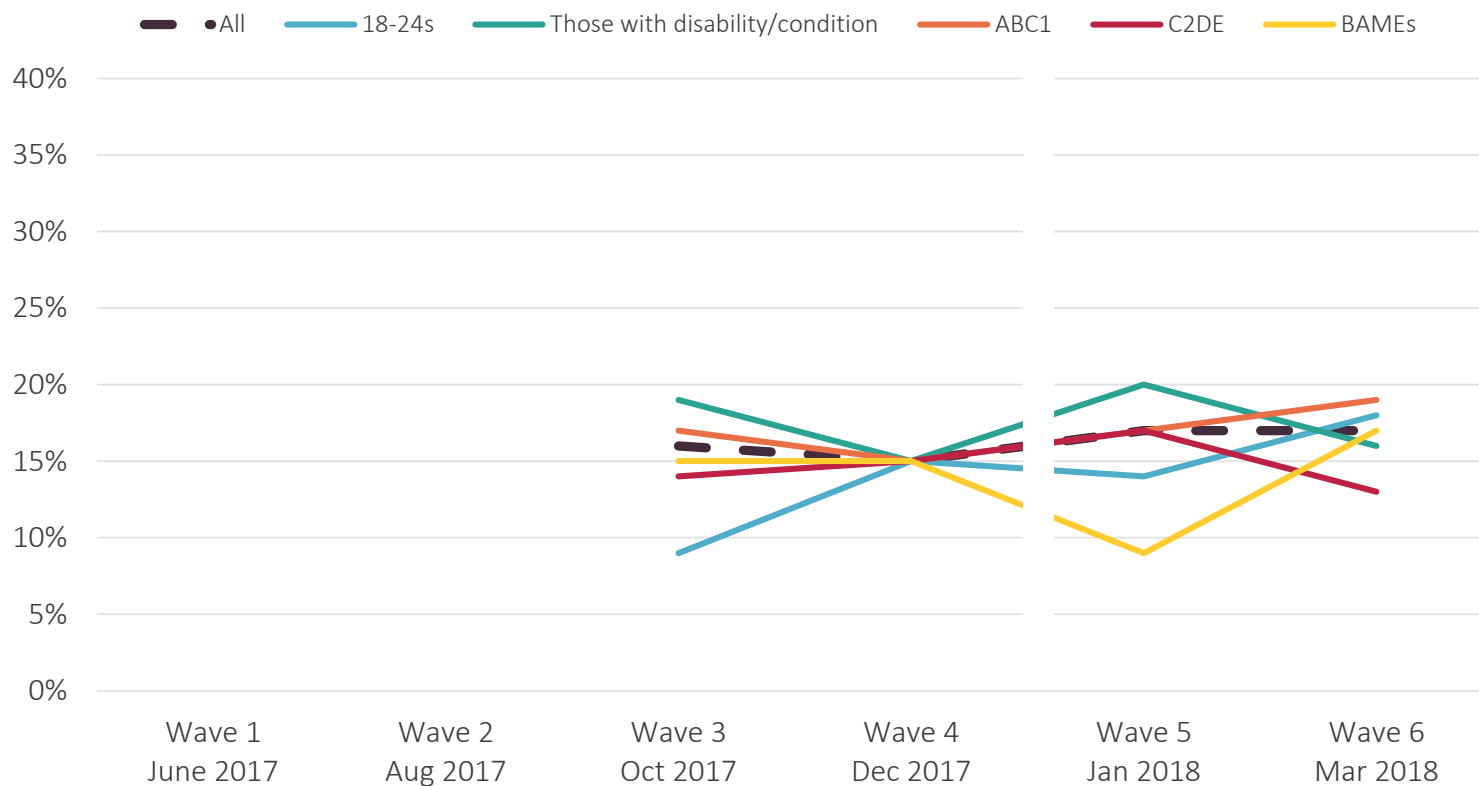
From Wave 5 onwards, respondents were asked about 'the IOPC (previously known as the IPCC)'



'Bureaucratic'

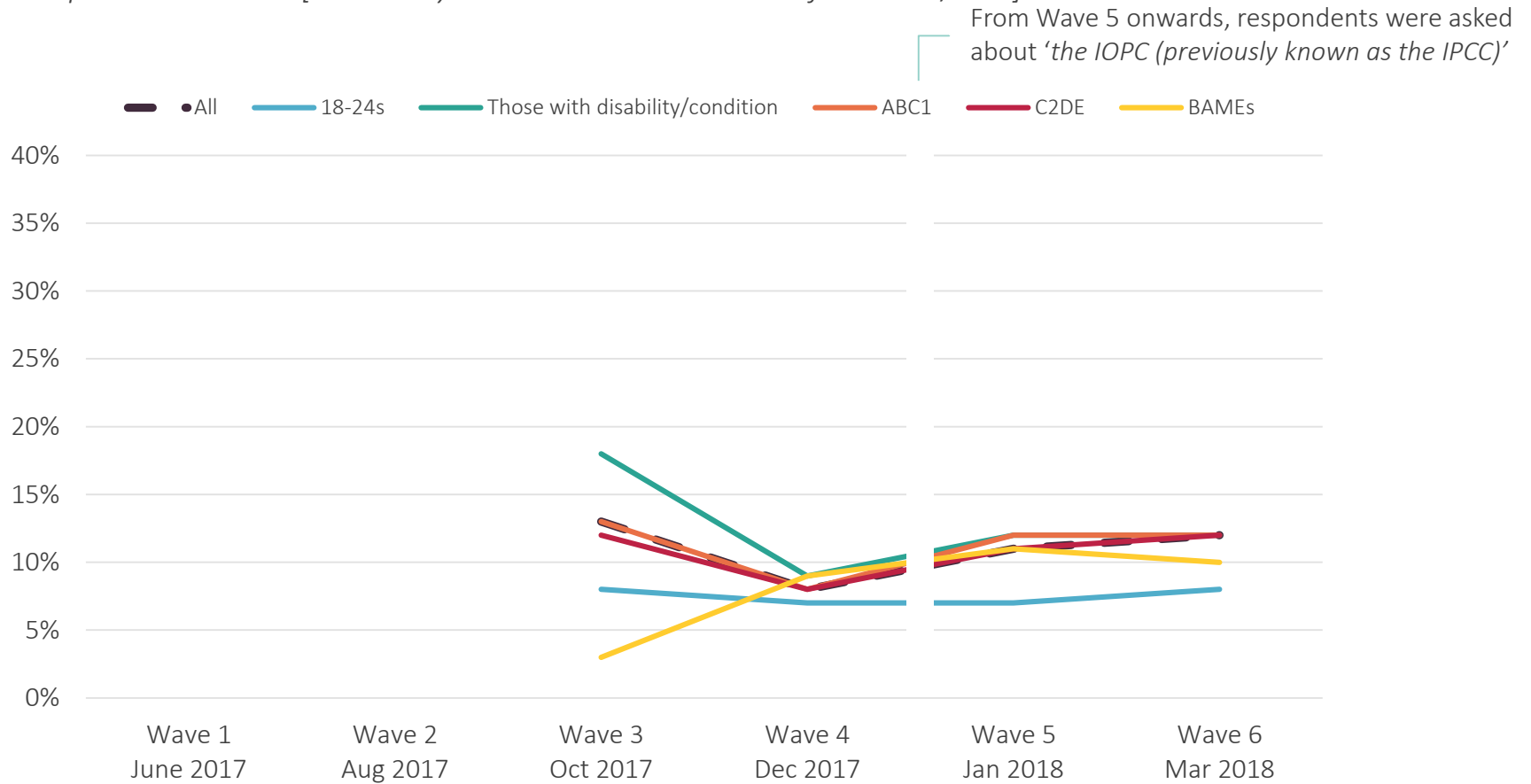
Q. Which, if any, of the following words or phrases do you think best describe the IOPC (previously known as the IPCC)?
Please choose up to three words. [Asked only to those who have heard of the IOPC/IPCC]

From Wave 5 onwards, respondents were asked about 'the IOPC (previously known as the IPCC)'



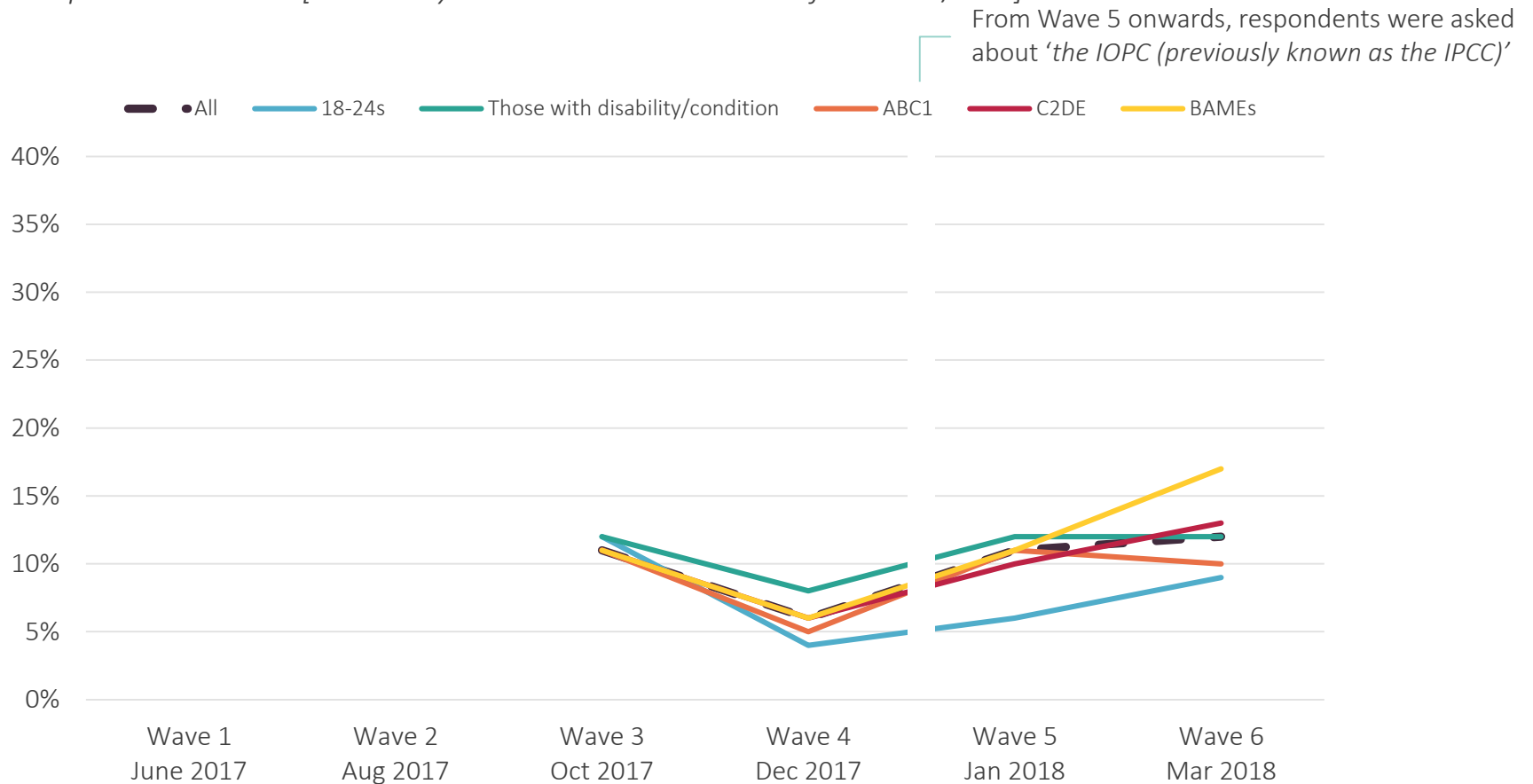
'Slow'

Q. Which, if any, of the following words or phrases do you think best describe the IOPC (previously known as the IPCC)?
Please choose up to three words. [Asked only to those who have heard of the IOPC/IPCC]



'Biased'

Q. Which, if any, of the following words or phrases do you think best describe the IOPC (previously known as the IPCC)?
Please choose up to three words. [Asked only to those who have heard of the IOPC/IPCC]



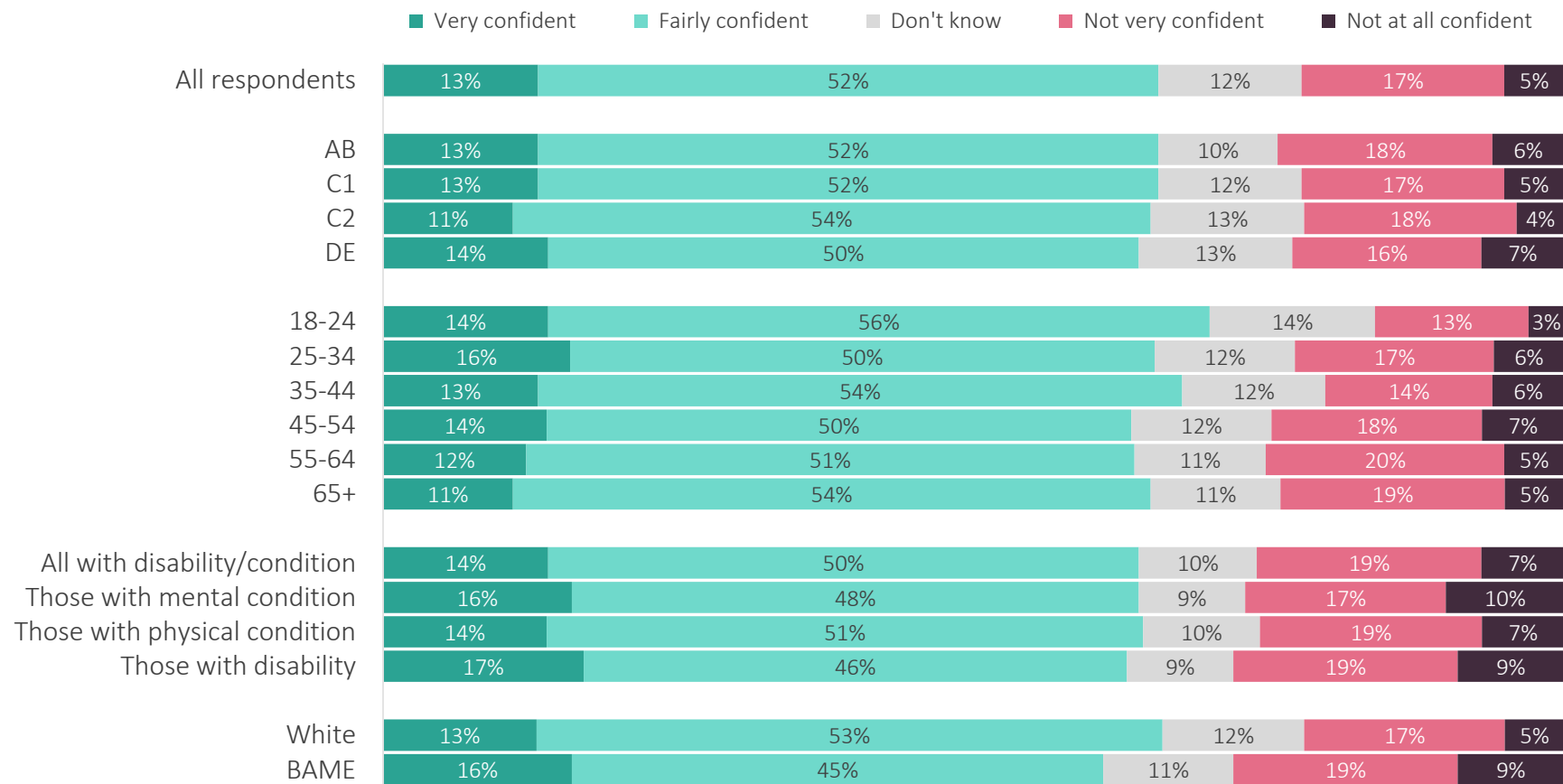
Confidence in the IOPC's impartiality

The IOPC has mixed brand associations among those who know about it

- Most people who have heard of the organisation are confident that it deals with its work in an impartial way, though few are 'very confident'. The proportion who are confident has fluctuated throughout the reporting period.
- In the final wave of the 2017/18 financial year BAMEs were significantly less confident than the overall population that the IOPC dealt with its work impartially, but this was not true of the waves. In the final wave of the financial year, around four in ten BAMEs who had heard of the organisation say they are not confident of its impartiality, compared with only a quarter of white people.
- The views of those with a condition or disability towards the IOPC's impartiality match closely with the population as a whole, and there is also no clear differentiation between different social grades.
- In the final wave of the financial year, respondents who lacked confidence in the IOPC's impartiality were asked to name the reason for this. The most common open text-box reasons given by low-confidence respondents were a) that the IOPC is biased towards the police when making decisions on cases, b) that it is also too closely linked to the police force as an organisation, and c) a more generalised lack of trust in establishment institutions.

Confidence in the IOPC's impartiality, by demographic

Q. How confident, if at all, are you that the Independent Office for Police Conduct, previously known as the Independent Police Complaints Commission deals with its work in an impartial way? [Showing only those who had heard of the IPCC/IOPC]
 Showing aggregated results from waves 2-6*

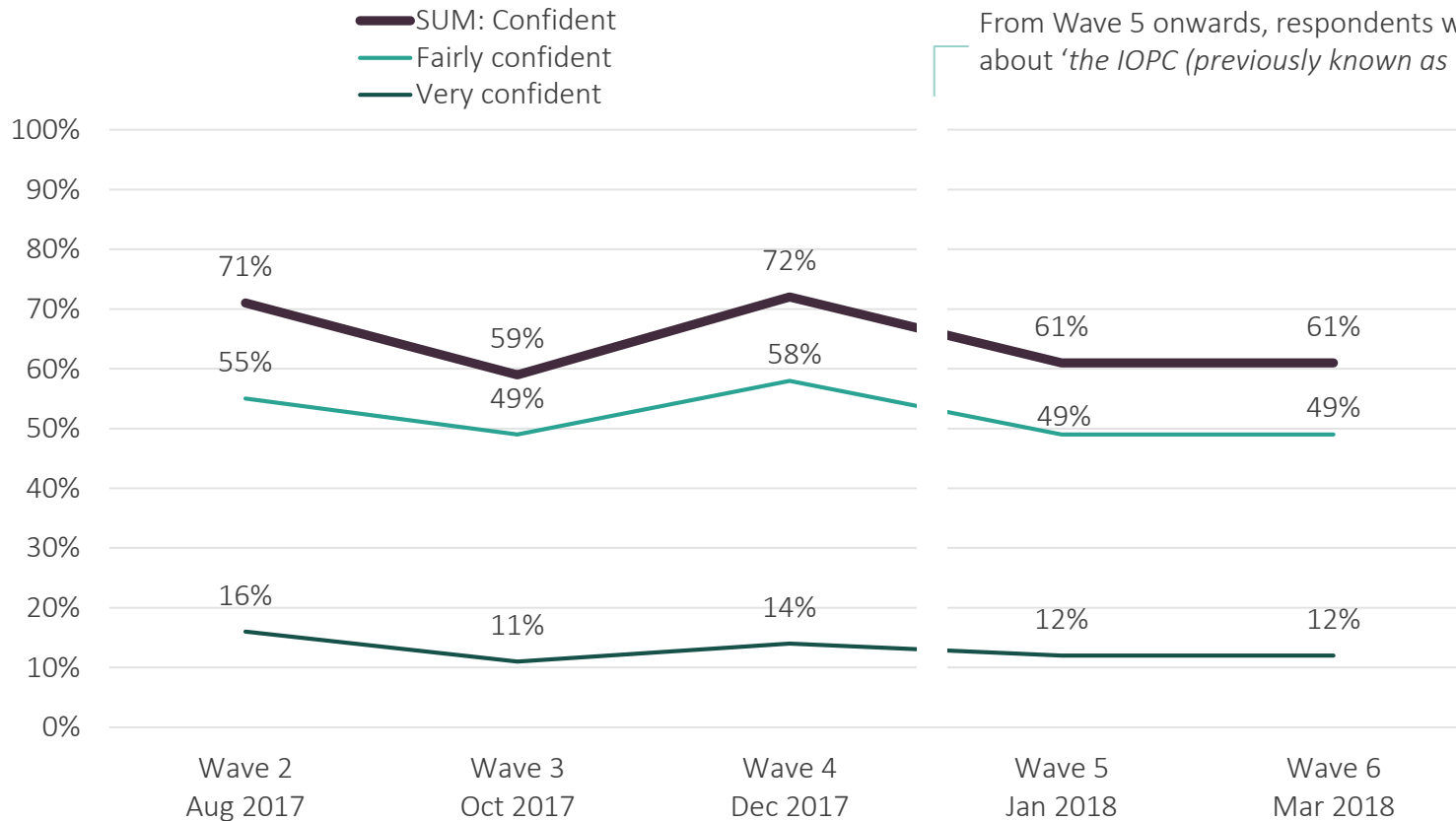


1. Base sizes: All, Waves 2-6 (n=7,342); AB (n=2,289), C1 (n=2,136), C2 (n=1,142), DE (n=1,775); 18-24 (n=613), 25-34 (n=923), 35-44 (n=1,155), 45-54 (n=1,433), 55-64 (n=1,219), 65+ (n=1,999); all with disability/condition (n=1,775), those with mental condition (n=630), those with physical condition (n=1,107), those with disability (n=601); white (n=6,676); BAME (n=616)

*NB. Unique respondents can only be ensured for a max of 4 waves. There may therefore be some overlap in respondents in this data.

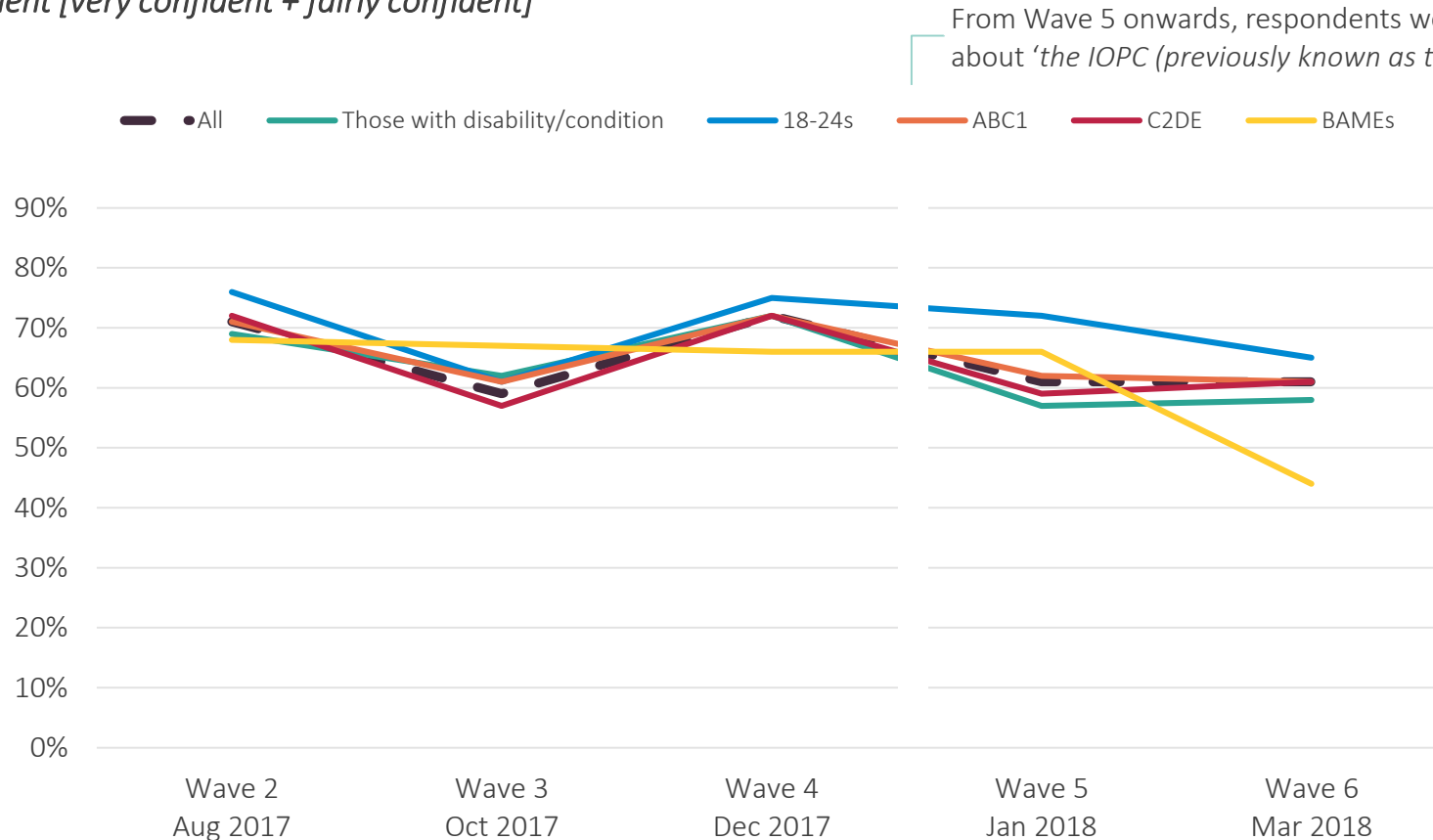
Confidence in the IOPC's impartiality, over time

Q. How confident, if at all, are you that the Independent Office for Police Conduct, previously known as the Independent Police Complaints Commission deals with its work in an impartial way? [Showing only those who had heard of the IPCC/IOPC]



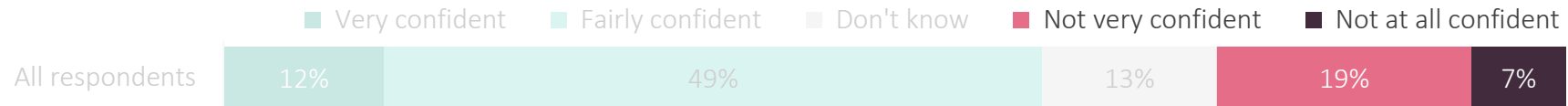
Confidence in the IOPC's impartiality, over time

Q. How confident, if at all, are you that the Independent Office for Police Conduct, previously known as the Independent Police Complaints Commission deals with its work in an impartial way? Showing only those who had heard of the IPCC/IOPC
 Sum: Confident [very confident + fairly confident]



Top reasons for lack of confidence in the IOPC's impartiality

Q. You said you were not confident that the IOPC, previously known as the IPCC, deals with its work in an impartial way. Why do you say that? [Open text box]



1

Biased towards the police

Perceived IOPC bias towards the police is the most common reason for distrusting its impartiality. Respondents suggest that when police officers are investigated, the IOPC tends to find in favour of the police.

"They say they are independent, but they nearly always find in favour of the police, which makes me wonder."

2

Too close to the police

In connection to this, the second most common reason given is that the IOPC is institutionally connected to the police, and thus is motivated to be biased towards it. Many point to the number of ex-police officers in the IOPC as evidence of this.

"Many of its staff are ex-police officers and it is too closely linked bureaucratically with police services."

3

Lack of trust in the establishment

Thirdly, some respondents have a general and deep distrust of the establishment, and view the IOPC through this lens. They distrust institutions generally, rather than the IOPC specifically.

"I have very little faith in most commissions. Corruption is rife throughout every organisation."

4

Media reports / specific cases

A smaller number say their lack of confidence arises from media stories or reports. Few, however, name individual cases.

"Too many high profiles cases in the media suggest they're not impartial."

5

Lack of trust in the police

Other respondents cite their deep lack of trust in the police itself. By association, they say they cannot trust the IOPC.

"I don't trust the police or anything remotely connected to them."

Priorities for learnings

Child sexual abuse and corruption are top priorities for all, but BAMEs are also concerned about discrimination and hate crime

- The top priorities for the public with regard to identifying learnings for the police are child sexual abuse, corruption or abuse of powers, domestic abuse, modern slavery or trafficking, and mental health.
- In the three waves in which this question was asked during the reporting period, these priorities have been broadly similar among ABC1s and C2DEs, though ABC1s have been slightly more likely to highlight corruption and abuse of powers, while C2DEs have been slightly more likely to highlight child sexual abuse.
- For BAMEs, there are clearer differences compared with the rest of the population. They are more likely than white people to cite discrimination, hate crime, race, religion, and belief, and stop and search as higher priorities.
- Younger people (18-24s) appear slightly more likely to prioritise mental health than the rest of the population.
- Those with a condition or disability have been more likely to call for mental health to be prioritised than the population as a whole in the three waves in which this question was asked.

Top priorities to identify learnings, by demographic

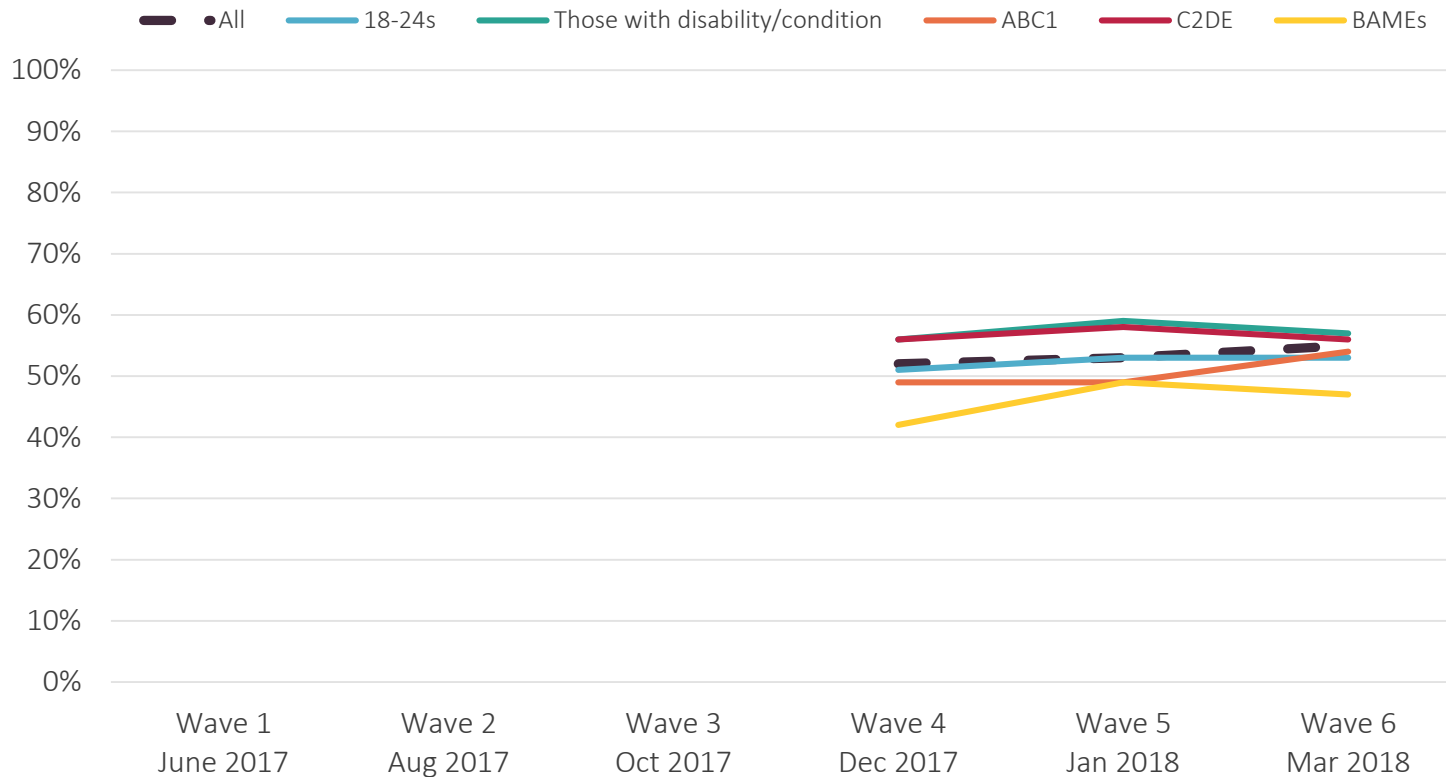
Q. The IOPC has a responsibility to increase public confidence in the police complaints system. One way to do this is by examining cases that it has investigated to identify learning to improve policing practice. From the following areas related to policing, which do you think should be a priority for the IOPC to identify learnings? Please select up to 5.

Showing aggregated results from waves 4-6

	All	18-24	Those with condition/disability	ABC1	C2DE	BAMEs
Child sexual abuse	53%	52%	57%	51%	57%	45%
Corruption / abuse of powers	49%	38%	52%	51%	47%	44%
Domestic abuse	29%	38%	28%	27%	31%	28%
Modern slavery / trafficking	26%	26%	30%	26%	26%	23%
Mental health	25%	31%	32%	23%	26%	17%
Near miss deaths in police custody	25%	25%	27%	26%	23%	23%
Police firearms / shootings	24%	22%	24%	25%	23%	23%
Hate crime	24%	29%	23%	24%	23%	35%
Children and young people	21%	18%	20%	20%	23%	19%
Discrimination	21%	27%	21%	23%	19%	34%
Use of restraint	18%	17%	20%	19%	16%	17%
Race religion and belief	16%	23%	16%	18%	14%	28%
Call handling of emergency calls	14%	9%	15%	15%	14%	13%
Alcohol and drugs	14%	15%	13%	13%	16%	14%
Stop and search	13%	13%	12%	14%	12%	18%
Missing persons	13%	17%	11%	11%	15%	11%
Body worn video	12%	13%	13%	12%	12%	9%
Public order	12%	7%	10%	12%	11%	9%
Police pursuits	9%	6%	8%	9%	9%	10%
Undercover policing	9%	7%	8%	9%	8%	9%
Taser	8%	7%	8%	8%	8%	8%

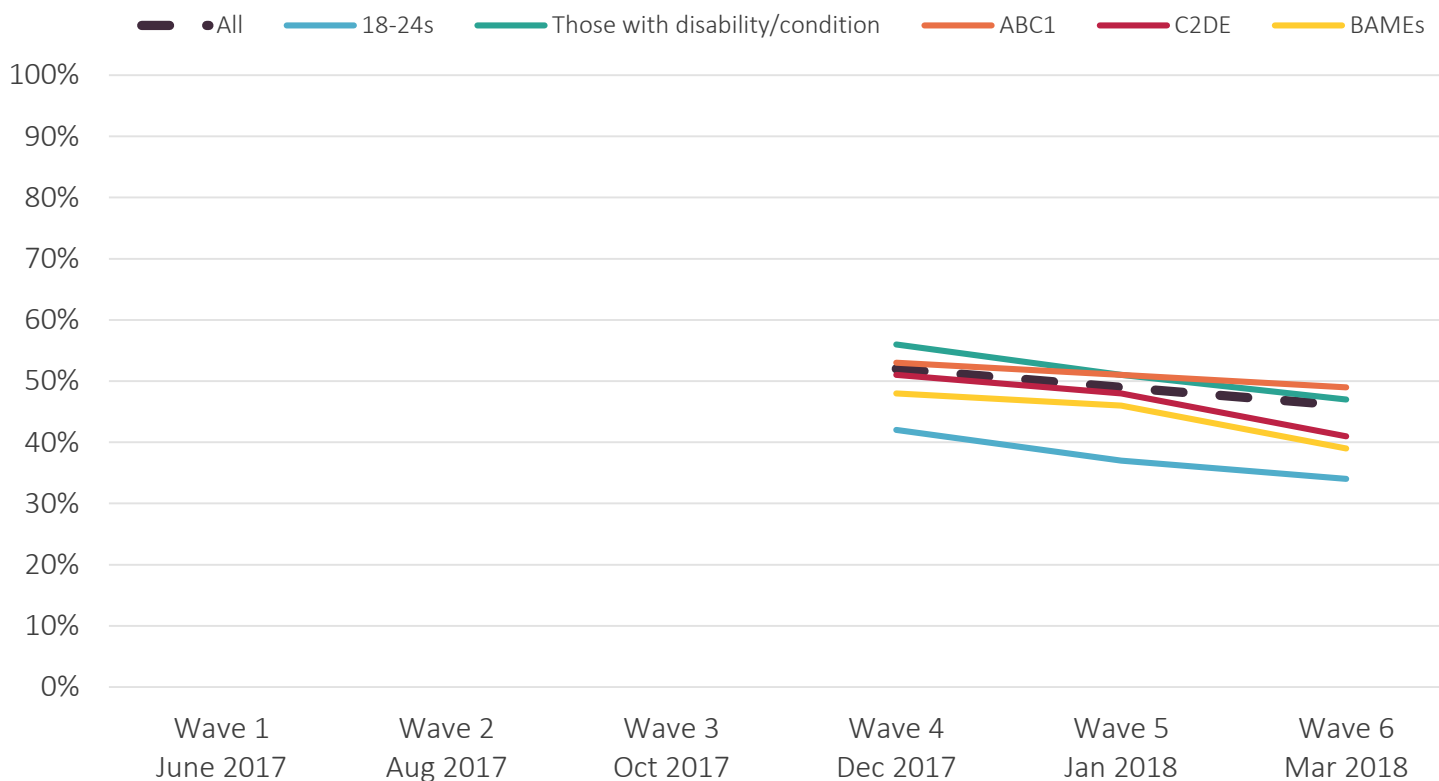
Child sexual abuse

Q. The IOPC has a responsibility to increase public confidence in the police complaints system. One way to do this is by examining cases that it has investigated to identify learning to improve policing practice. From the following areas related to policing, which do you think should be a priority for the IOPC to identify learnings? Please select up to 5.



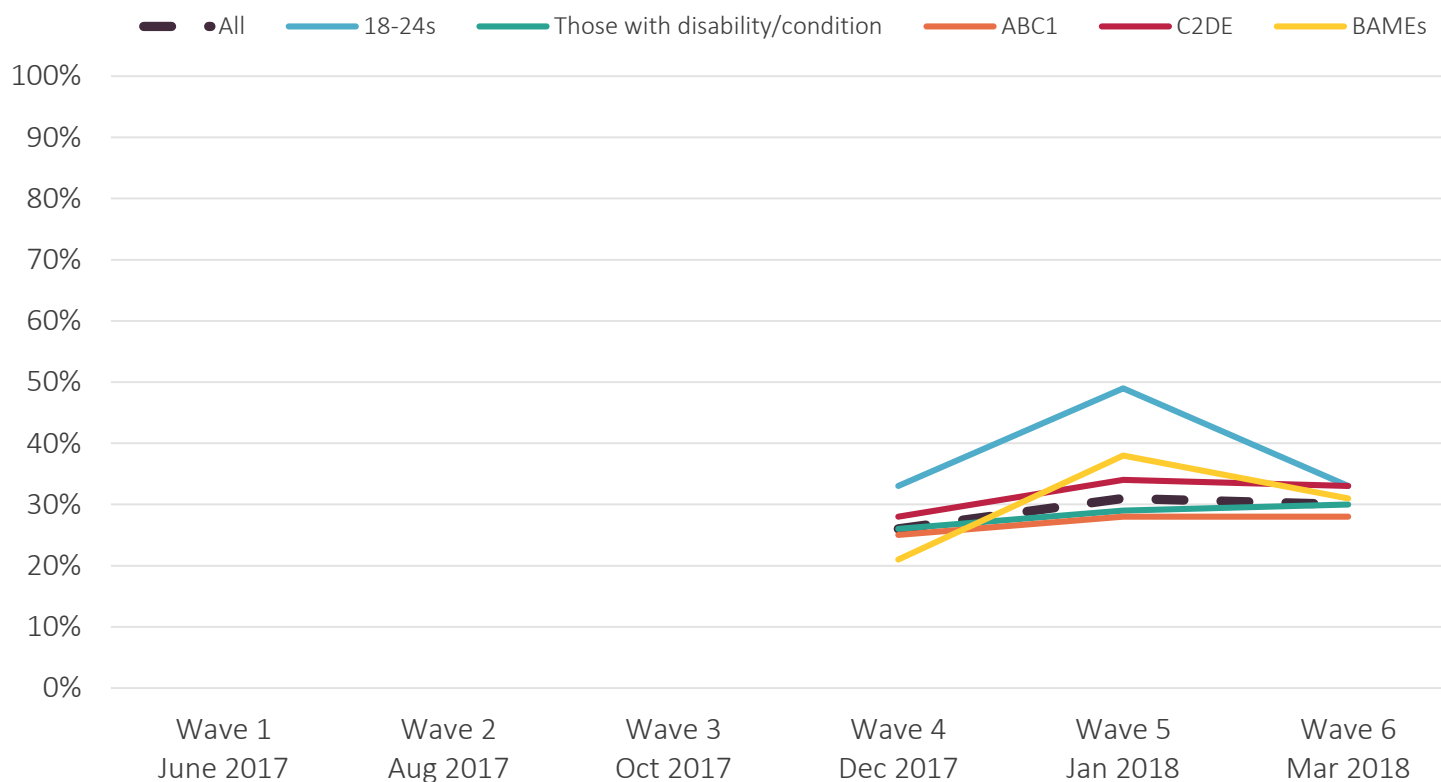
Corruption / abuse of powers

Q. The IOPC has a responsibility to increase public confidence in the police complaints system. One way to do this is by examining cases that it has investigated to identify learning to improve policing practice. From the following areas related to policing, which do you think should be a priority for the IOPC to identify learnings? Please select up to 5.



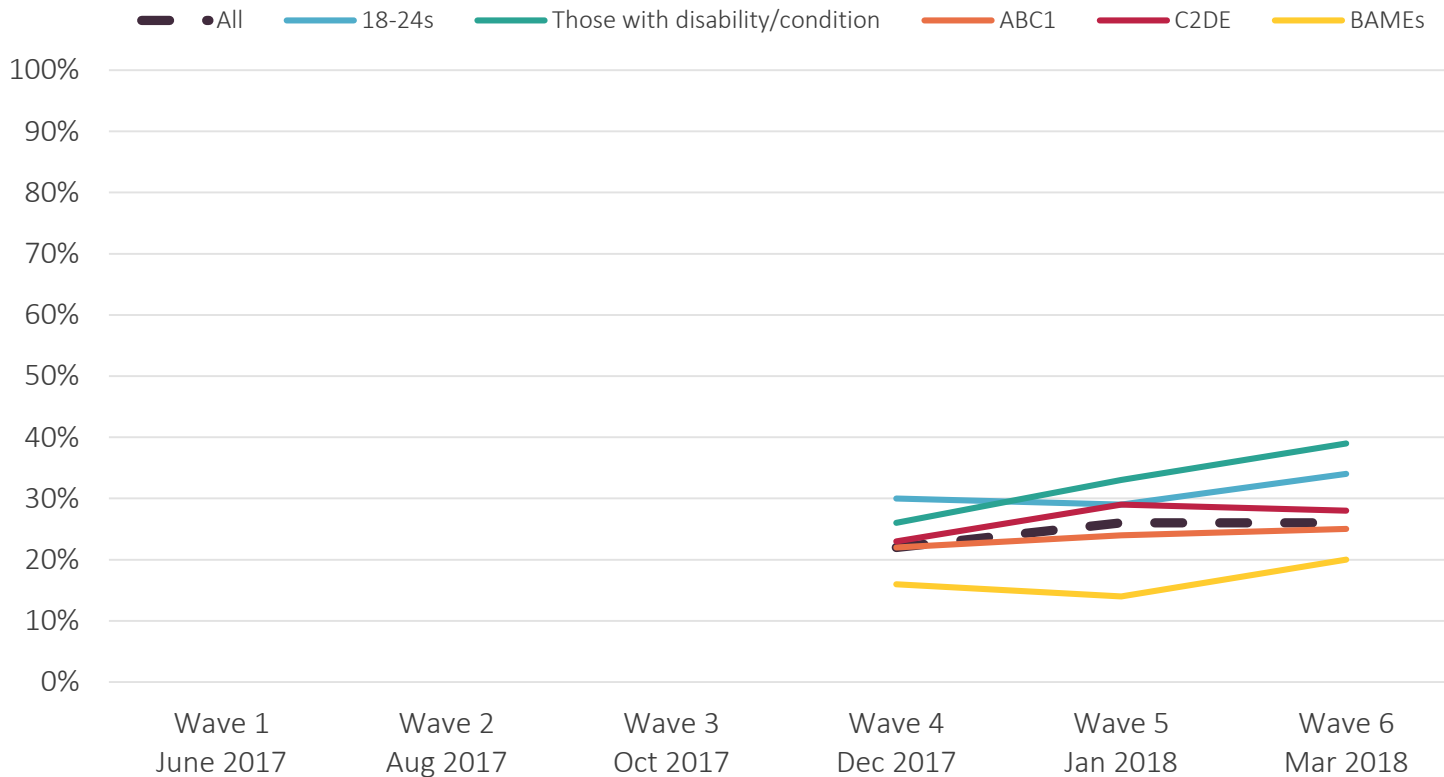
Domestic abuse

Q. The IOPC has a responsibility to increase public confidence in the police complaints system. One way to do this is by examining cases that it has investigated to identify learning to improve policing practice. From the following areas related to policing, which do you think should be a priority for the IOPC to identify learnings? Please select up to 5.



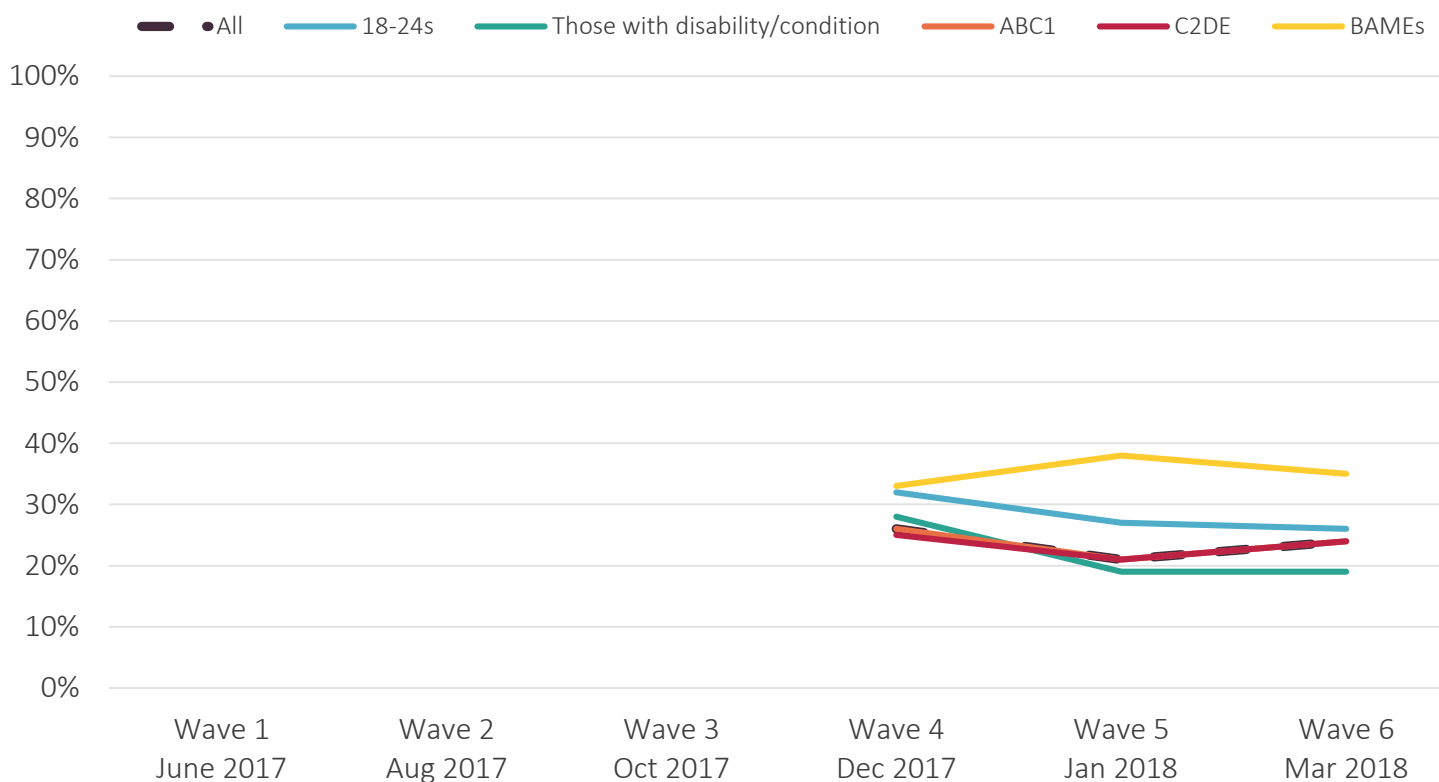
Mental health

Q. The IOPC has a responsibility to increase public confidence in the police complaints system. One way to do this is by examining cases that it has investigated to identify learning to improve policing practice. From the following areas related to policing, which do you think should be a priority for the IOPC to identify learnings? Please select up to 5.



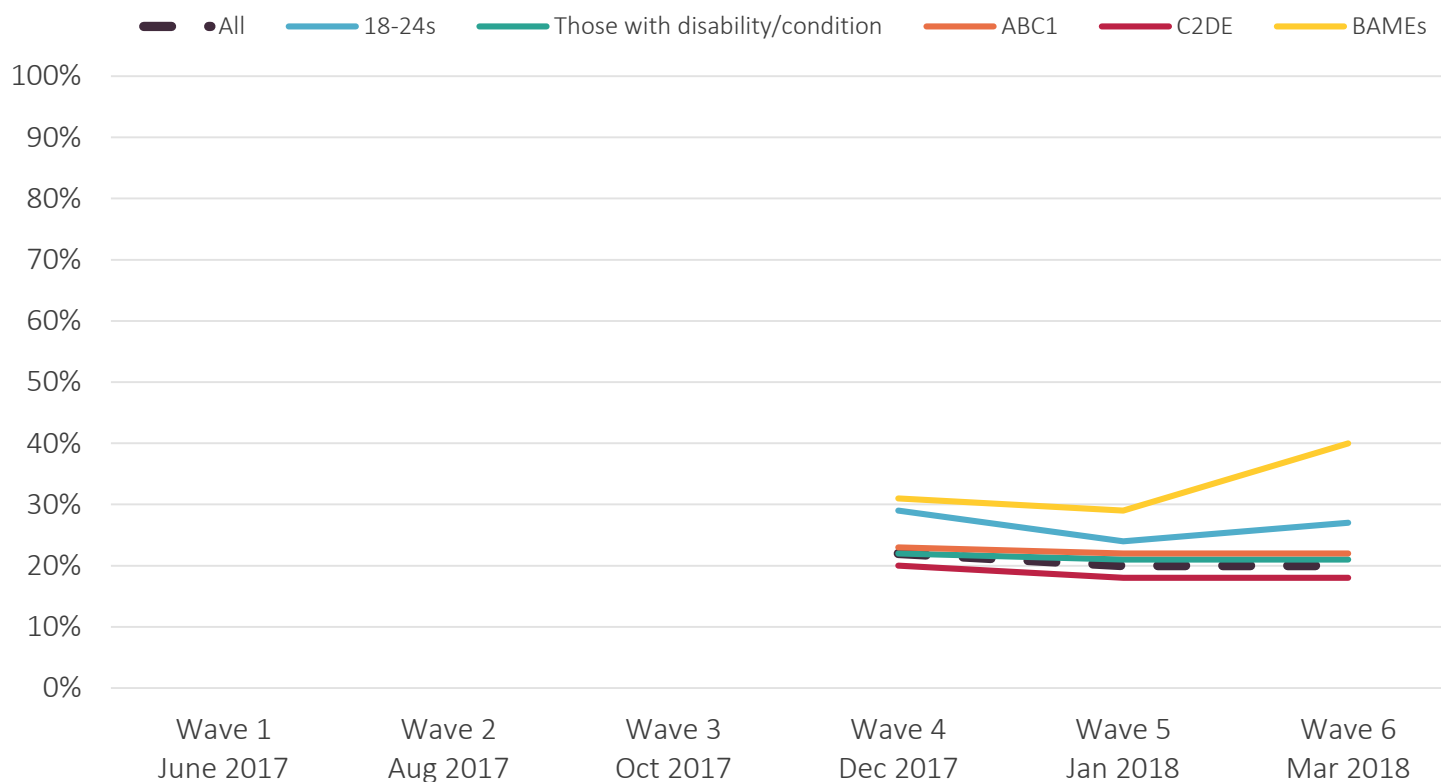
Hate crime

Q. The IOPC has a responsibility to increase public confidence in the police complaints system. One way to do this is by examining cases that it has investigated to identify learning to improve policing practice. From the following areas related to policing, which do you think should be a priority for the IOPC to identify learnings? Please select up to 5.



Discrimination

Q. The IOPC has a responsibility to increase public confidence in the police complaints system. One way to do this is by examining cases that it has investigated to identify learning to improve policing practice. From the following areas related to policing, which do you think should be a priority for the IOPC to identify learnings? Please select up to 5.



Northburgh House
10 Northburgh Street
London EC1V 0AT

T +44 [0]20 7253 9900
F +44 [0]20 7253 9911

info@populus.co.uk
www.populus.co.uk

Populus