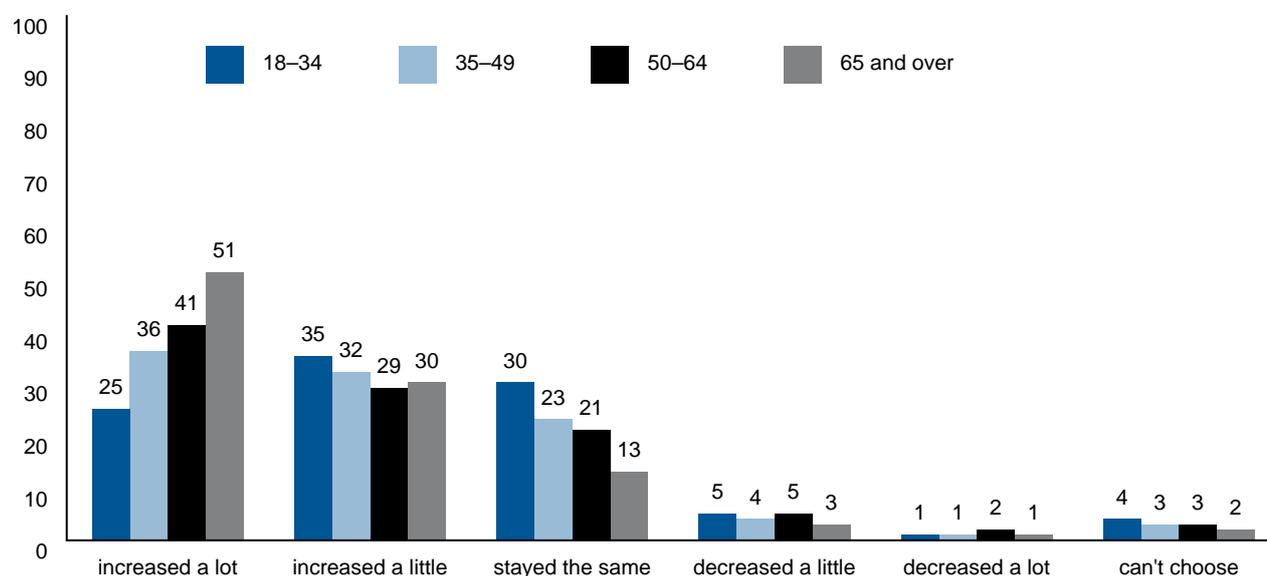


## Perception of crime trends

The Australian Survey of Social Attitudes (AuSSA) is a survey of 4270 Australians, first carried out by the Australian National University's Centre for Social Research in 2003. One of the questions asked by AuSSA in 2003 was whether respondents believed crime had increased, decreased or stayed the same over the past two years. As can be seen in the chart below, belief that crime had increased either a little or a lot was most common. Comparatively few people perceived crime as having decreased in the two years leading up to the survey. Perception of crime varied across age groups. Fifty-one percent of those aged 65 and over thought that crime had increased a lot between 2001 and 2003, compared with 25 percent of those aged 18 to 34. Younger people were more likely to believe that crime had stayed the same (30% of 18–34 year olds, compared with 13% of those aged 65 and over). The proportion of people who thought crime had decreased a little or a lot was low across all age groups, showing little variation. These findings are at odds with actual crime trends as the overall pattern in recent years is one of decreasing crime. According to the International Crime Victimization Survey, crime victimisation rates in Australia declined between 2000 and 2004, from 24 percent to 17 percent. In addition, recorded property crime rates declined from 2001 to 2004 for most major categories of offence (AIC 2006).

Perception of crime trends between 2000 and 2003 by age, percentage



SOURCE: Indermaur D & Roberts L 2005. 'Perceptions of crime and justice', in Wilson S et al. *Australian Social Attitudes: The First Report*. Sydney: UNSW Press: 141–160

### References

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<http://www.aic.gov.au/publications/facts/2005/index.html>