

# Q methods study of vulnerability

Understanding how the police, health services, education providers, social care and other agencies providing core public services in Bradford respond to and deal with people's vulnerabilities.

## Key details

<b>Lead institution</b>	<a href="#">Vulnerability &amp; Policing Futures Research Centre</a>
<b>Principal researcher(s)</b>	Professor Adam Crawford <a href="mailto:n.capstick@leeds.ac.uk">n.capstick@leeds.ac.uk</a>
<b>Police region</b>	Yorkshire
<b>Collaboration and partnership</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• University of Leeds</li> <li>• Bradford Metropolitan Borough Council</li> </ul>
<b>Level of research</b>	Professional/work based
<b>Project start date</b>	May 2022

## Research context

Vulnerability is a well-used concept among public services in the UK. However, what this means in practice for public services, the police and non-governmental organisations is underexplored.

The meaning of vulnerability is subjective and the concept is used in various ways across different settings, with different outcomes.

## Aim

The project aims to shed light on how vulnerability is interpreted and how it is used to frame public service delivery.

It will look at the effect of vulnerability-based interventions in cities such as Bradford and Leeds.

The project will provide a better understanding of the diverse perceptions of the role of the police in safeguarding vulnerable populations.

## Research methodology

The project uses Q methodology to explore divergent and convergent opinions about vulnerability and structure them in a way that can be studied.

Q methodology combines qualitative approaches and statistical analysis to examine patterns in human subjectivity. It does so by:

- presenting participants with a structured set of opinion statements about a topic
- asking them to rank responses
- clustering these into shared views for statistical analysis

In addition to the data collected via statement rankings, rich qualitative data will be collected from in-depth interviews. During these interviews, respondents will explain why they agreed or disagreed with certain statements and values.

## Summary of findings

This project was completed in May 2024.

Öznur Yardimci and others. 2026. 'Vulnerability and policing: The views of service providers and users.' The British Journal of Criminology, azag028, <https://doi.org/10.1093/bjc/azag028>.

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