



Northern Ireland Peace Monitoring Report

Number One

Paul Nolan

February 2012

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Data sources and acknowledgements

This report draws mainly on statistics that are in the public domain. Data sets from various government departments and public bodies in Northern Ireland have been used and, in order to provide a wider context, comparisons are made which draw upon figures produced by government departments and public bodies in England, Scotland, Wales and the Republic of Ireland. Using this variety of sources means there is no standard model that applies across the different departments and jurisdictions. Many organisations have also changed the way in which they collect their data over the years, which means that in some cases it has not been possible to provide historical perspective on a consistent basis. For some indicators, only survey-based data is available. When interpreting statistics from survey data, such as the Labour Force Survey, it is worth bearing in mind that they are estimates associated with confidence intervals (ranges in which the true value is likely to lie). In other cases where official figures may not present the full picture, survey data is included because it may provide a more accurate estimate – thus, for example, findings from the Northern Ireland Crime Survey are included along with the official crime statistics from the PSNI.

The production of the report has been greatly assisted by the willing cooperation of many statisticians and public servants, particularly those from the Northern Ireland Statistics and Research Agency, the PSNI, and the various government departments. On occasion data tables have been drawn up in response to particular requests and such assistance has been invaluable. Thanks are also due to Dr Danielle Blaylock, Dr Orna Young and Dr Robin Wilson for their assistance in the production of the report.

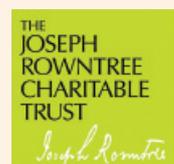
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Foreword

This publication marks the beginning of one process and the end of another. The process that has now come to an end was one where discussions were held about whether or not it would be possible to devise a way to monitor the peace process in Northern Ireland on a year-on-year basis. This report shows that it is possible to approach such a complex undertaking, and to do it in such a way that the findings are based on a very solid bed of evidence. For the compilation and ordering of the research I would like to thank the report's author, Paul Nolan, who brought energy and skill to the task. I would also like to acknowledge the contribution of all those who served on the Advisory Board and read through many drafts, contributing insights, criticisms and, most of all, encouragement. Professor Adrian Guelke, Professor Jennifer Todd, Professor Paddy Hillyard, and Professor Gillian Robinson all contributed valuable perspectives, drawing upon a range of academic disciplines, while Neil Gibson from Oxford Economics brought specialist knowledge of how the recession is impacting upon the different communities within Northern Ireland. Duncan Morrow and Jacqueline Irwin from the Community Relations Council are both long-term observers of grassroots change and their detailed knowledge of the local situation kept us focused on how the dynamics of the situation play out in people's lives. In considering how the report could be structured we were fortunate in having Ms Nancy Kelley from the Joseph Rowntree Foundation on the Advisory Board. She has had long involvement in evidence-based policy analysis and brought a keen pragmatic focus to our discussions. We are also extremely grateful to Ms Celia McKeon and Mr Michael Pitchford from the Joseph Rowntree Charitable Trust who had, from the outset, conviction about the purpose of the project.

Having mentioned both the Joseph Rowntree Foundation and the Joseph Rowntree Charitable Trust, it is wholly appropriate to pay tribute to the long-term commitment both organisations have shown to Northern Ireland, most importantly in the dark days of the Troubles. The Charitable Trust has been a major funder of the third sector and the Foundation has done much to increase our knowledge of poverty and social inclusion. It was natural that we should turn to them when the idea of this project was first floated. Credit for the original idea belongs with the former CEO of the Community Relations Council, Duncan Morrow, who first argued that some objective monitoring of the peace process was necessary. It was those first discussions with our colleagues in the Joseph Rowntree organisations back in 2009 that led to this report today.

This is the start of the process of annual monitoring. This report will be followed by others and each year we will be able to measure the distance travelled – either closer to, or further away from, the shared goal of a peaceful and inclusive society. It is our hope that by providing this dispassionate analysis on an annual basis we will help guide those making the journey.

Tony McCusker
Chairperson

Community Relations Council

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Ten Key Points

1. *The political institutions are secure*

All five main political parties are now prepared to work within an agreed political framework. The main features are: an Assembly where power is shared through an all-party coalition, an Irish dimension with functioning institutions, acceptance of the consent principle, adherence to equality and human rights, and an underwriting of the whole package by the British and Irish governments. Each party emphasises different aspects of the package but none seeks to dismantle the accord. This is by contrast with the lack of consensus at the time of the 1998 referendum, often presented as the high point of the peace process. At that time 29% of the population voted against the Agreement. Protestant opinion was only marginally in favour, with 57% voting Yes. Attitudinal evidence from the Northern Ireland Life and Times Survey shows that the existing arrangement is the preference of the majority of respondents, not just as a temporary solution but as a long-term policy.

2. *The level of violence is down*

The number of shootings and bombings fell by over a quarter in 2011, from 171 to 124, a drop of 27%. During 2011 there was one security-related death, one fewer than in 2010. Together with 2008 this marked the lowest number of security-related deaths since the police began keeping records in 1969. The number of people injured dropped from 116 to 80, and the number of victims of paramilitary assault from 94 to 73. All forms of paramilitary violence were down on 2010, and significantly down on the figures a decade ago. The dissidents' campaign was at its peak in 2001, and in that year the combined efforts of republican and loyalist paramilitaries resulted in 17 deaths, 355 shootings and 349 explosions and attempted bombings.

Other forms of crime also showed a decrease in 2011. The Northern Ireland Crime Survey showed a 14% decrease in victimisation from 2009-10, a pattern borne out in the police recorded-crime tally, which was the lowest since the NICS began in 1998-99 and 45% down from the peak in 2003-04. Overall, Northern Ireland is a relatively peaceful society. Based on the 2011 figures, the risk of becoming a victim is 14.3%, compared with 21.5% in England and Wales. While post-conflict societies like Kosovo, Guatemala or (especially) South Africa have often recorded increases in crime following a peace settlement, this has not been the case in Northern Ireland. And while conflict societies often record high rates of domestic violence, again this has not been true of Northern Ireland, where the incidence of abuse has consistently run below other parts of the UK.

3. Paramilitarism remains a threat

Paramilitary campaigns are not likely to fade away in the foreseeable future; on the contrary they seem set to continue. The operational capacity of the dissident republicans is lower than that of the Provisional IRA at any stage of its campaign, but they have not allowed themselves any possibility of a political exit and will therefore maintain their efforts to destabilise the political arrangements. But these have to date resulted in an outcome opposite to that intended: instead of disrupting the political accord, the violence has served to consolidate the consensus. The funeral of the PSNI officer Ronan Kerr, killed by dissidents in April 2011, marked a rallying point, bringing the political, security, religious and sporting elites together in a symbolic show of unity. Loyalist paramilitaries have sought a post-conflict role but failed to find one that can accommodate all their members. The funding for ex-prisoner organisations is running out and the May 2011 elections put paid to the hope of loyalist political direction. While the two main organisations have stuck to the terms of their decommissioning pledge, they have not abandoned violence: in 2011 there were 27 assaults (mainly 'punishment' beatings) but there have also been racist attacks and, in June 2011, a large-scale invasion of a Catholic enclave in east Belfast. The loose command structures within loyalist paramilitaries leave scope for rogue adventurism of this kind, and a younger generation of recruits may wish to see more violent assertions of the loyalist presence.

4. The policing deal is not secure

The main focus for dissident violence is likely to remain on Catholic members of the PSNI. This is making it harder for PSNI officers resident in Catholic areas to join or remain within the force. While the Patten target of 30% has been reached for police officers, only 27.3% of all PSNI personnel are Catholic, as against estimates of 46% for the adult population. By contrast, the proportion of Catholics among prisoners, at 55%, is exactly double the proportion in the police service. The first independent study of Catholics in the PSNI showed them not to be representative of the Catholic population as a whole, and the figures for dropout show more Catholics than Protestants leaving. Any further erosion will put in doubt the representative nature of the service – an essential pillar of the peace settlement. And, while support for the PSNI amongst Catholics has been on the increase, it still lags behind the support indicated by Protestants; furthermore, both are significantly lower than that enjoyed by police elsewhere in the UK. In the case of Catholics, there is greater support for the other parts of the criminal justice system. Polls taken before June 2011 showed particular trust in the Office of Police Ombudsman, but three critical reports since then have led nationalist politicians to express deep concern about the independence of the office. The controversy that surrounds this issue affects not only the role of the Ombudsman but has the potential to weaken nationalist confidence in policing as a whole.

5. The recession is affecting the equality agenda

Catholics still lag behind Protestants on a range of indicators to do with unemployment and social deprivation. To date, the two main drivers for equalisation have been demography and educational attainment. Between 1990 and 2010 the number of Catholics of working age increased by 114,000, or 30%, while the Protestant increase was only 4%. Within an equal opportunities framework this had led to an increased Catholic share of the job market, and the trend had been pointing to a shift from a 60/40 split in favour of Protestants a decade ago to one where a 50/50 split appeared likely. Allied to that numerical increase, the higher educational attainment by Catholics at every level in the schooling system, and the 60/40 split in favour of Catholics in higher education enrolments, has meant the Catholic share of the labour market is no longer so 'bottom heavy'. In major employment sectors like the civil service not only are there more Catholics in post but they have increasingly moved up the managerial ranks. In the latest figures, the Catholic median wage overtook that of Protestants for the first time (£9.44 as against £9.11 per hour). But the escalator that was carrying the Catholic population upwards has been halted by the recession. This has meant a suspension of relativities at the level that obtained in 2008, rather than a reversal. To date, the public service, where Catholics account for approximately half the workforce, has not shed jobs on the same scale as have local authorities in England. Instead, the cuts have often fallen on capital budgets and the impact therefore absorbed by the private sector, mainly construction. The next period of austerity will however see cuts in public employment, and with that a further rebalancing of the relativities of Catholics and Protestants – within and outside the labour market.

6. Youth unemployment is potentially destabilising

A World Bank report (2011) into urban violence across the globe observes that one constant in all conflict situations is youth unemployment. The fact that youth unemployment in Northern Ireland rose to 19.1% in 2011 is cause for concern, particularly since there is no expectation of an uplift that might resolve the situation. There is no communal difference that leaves the young people from one religion more disadvantaged than the other and the Northern Ireland figure is still marginally below the UK average. The August riots in England however served as a bellwether for the fact that a youth unemployment rate of 20% can take a society into a danger zone. The Institute of Fiscal Studies has warned of a 'lost generation' and Northern Ireland is no longer insulated by public-spending largesse from the economic forces that created this crisis. While police sources in England warn that there is every danger of further eruptions of youth violence, the underpinning frustrations will probably take a different, and more sectarian, form if expressed in Northern Ireland. There is evidence of paramilitaries mobilising unemployed young people during the 'marching season', but the dynamic is more complex than that of youth acting as a reserve army for paramilitarism. Alienation from the police is at its highest in areas of high social disadvantage and the prevalence of anti-social behaviour is creating a market opportunity for those paramilitaries who wish to present themselves as 'community police'.

7. A new, confident, and neutral urban culture has emerged

One of the unpredicted features of the peace process has been the emergence of Belfast and Derry-Londonderry as centres of urban sophistication, with the staging of events like the MTV awards in Belfast and the securing of the City of Culture contract for Derry-Londonderry. These are flagship events rather than everyday occurrences, but the glowing presentation of Northern Ireland in a wide range of tourist magazines has not been based solely on such glamorous occasions. Attention has focused more on the relaxed environment of the city centres, which now boast a new 'cappuccino culture', busy restaurants, shopping malls and night clubs. Economically, the expansion of the public space in this way depends much more on domestic support than the tourist trade, and it is clear that for an affluent layer within Northern Ireland there is a post-'Troubles' society to be enjoyed where consumption identities matter more than tribal loyalties. The most recent NILT survey showed a significant increase in those who view town centres as safe and welcoming spaces, and research by the Institute of Conflict Research shows respondents acknowledging there has been a growth in mixed or neutral social spaces. The expansion of new shared spaces bumps up against geographical and class boundaries, however. Within a half-mile of Belfast city centre lie areas that rank high in the tables for multiple deprivation, and the consumption boom cannot be seen to be evenly distributed. For those with the means to participate, though, the new consumer culture is nonetheless real and marks a stage in the journey away from street violence, and towards a new sense of identity for Northern Ireland.

8. Northern Ireland remains a very divided society

Fourteen years after the Good Friday Agreement Northern Ireland remains a very divided society. The indicators show that in some areas the divisions have increased: most obviously, the number of interface walls has increased from 22 at the time the Agreement was signed to 48 today, if one uses the definition used by the Department of Justice, or 88 according to the last count taken by the Institute of Conflict Research. There has been no decrease in the flags and emblems on display during the marching season, and a dispute over the flying of the union flag in Ballyclare in 2011 revealed the inadequacy of the Flags Protocol for the regulation of contested symbols. There is evidence of continuing deep division in housing and education. According to the NIHE, 90% of social housing in Northern Ireland is still segregated. And while 6.5% of children now attend integrated schools, this means the other 93.5% are separated into Catholic and Protestant schools. Sectarian division persists too in electoral politics. No new political party has emerged since the 1998 Agreement, and the stability of Northern Ireland politics, as described above, is to do with the equilibrium achieved between the two blocs rather than any reconciliation between the two political cultures. The voting transfers in the May 2011 elections showed very clearly the silo cultures of nationalism and unionism. While the partnership between Sinn Fein and the DUP is at the heart of the power-sharing arrangement, the DUP only managed to attract 2% of its transfers from Catholic voters, and Sinn Fein only got 2.2% of its transfers

from Protestants. Both partners have emerged from the fray having outdistanced the internal rivals in their own camps – in the case of the DUP, the Ulster Unionist Party and in the case of Sinn Fein, the SDLP. Their parallel trajectories have left them defined less by their constitutional preferences and more by their ethnic bases. The gravitational pull towards the strong voice in each community suggests that Northern Ireland politics will in future be defined by the equilibrium between one large Catholic party and one large Protestant party.

9. *There has been no strategy for reconciliation*

Reconciliation was a word frequently invoked in the 1998 Agreement but it is an extraordinary fact that, since it was signed, the Northern Ireland parties have not agreed any strategy to allow the core division between Protestants and Catholics to be addressed. A policy framework, *A Shared Future*, was put in place by the New Labour direct-rule administration in 2005. Neither Sinn Fein nor the DUP accepted the policy, and each attempted to draft an alternative. In a demonstration of the problem they were supposed to be addressing, they could not find agreement. The impetus for a new document came from the Alliance party during the negotiations leading to the Hillsborough Agreement but the draft that was produced, *Cohesion Sharing and Integration*, was comprehensively rejected when it went out to consultation. As a result Northern Ireland has completed another year without a framework to address sectarianism. This does not mean that reconciliation and anti-sectarian activities have not taken place. On the contrary, there are countless organisations, groups and projects working on peace-building. The policy direction is not an agreed or strategic one; rather it is driven by the priorities of the different funders and approximately 80% of peace and reconciliation work in Northern Ireland is sustained by external funding – most notably, the EU Peace programme. That money is soon to run out, and while the Northern Ireland Executive has pledged in its draft Programme for Government 2011-15 to bring forward a new draft of *Cohesion, Sharing and Integration*, it is not expected that there will be a resource commitment that will match that which Northern Ireland has enjoyed from European and American funders.

10. *No solution has been found for dealing with the past.*

The headlines over the past year have been full of bombings, shootings, murders and atrocities. These are not events that have occurred in the past twelve months, but controversies that have erupted because of inquiries into events from one, two, three, and even four decades ago – and, on occasion, there have been controversies because no inquiry has been commissioned. The Saville Report of 2010 produced a very definite conclusion in its report into the Bloody Sunday shootings, but the satisfaction which the Catholic community drew from that – and from David Cameron's unequivocal acceptance of the findings – was followed by a series of quarrels about the reports into historic crimes from the Office of the Police Ombudsman. It was felt that the police had been given soft treatment, a suspicion reinforced by a report from the Criminal Justice Inspectorate in 2011 which concluded that the Ombudsman

had allowed the independence bar to be lowered. There was also anger at Cameron's decision not to commission an independent inquiry into the murder of the solicitor Pat Finucane – a decision seen to be a breach of trust, and protested as such by the Irish government. On the loyalist side there was anger that the Historical Enquiries Team had reopened the files on UVF activity in Belfast, and the anger spilled over into street disorder. The opportunity for reasoned discussion about how the past should be handled was lost in the furore surrounding the 2009 report of the Consultative Group on the Past – largely because of a clause which suggested a one-off payment to all families who had lost someone in 'the Troubles', regardless of whether that person was seen as a victim or a perpetrator. This issue, more than any other, continues to confound the sense that Northern Ireland has left the Troubles behind.

A. Introduction

1. Why a Peace Monitoring Report?

The NI Peace Monitoring Report will provide independent monitoring of Northern Ireland's journey out of violence, and of the efforts to create a society in which all can live free from fear, and in relationships of trust and safety with their fellow citizens. An indicator framework will be created to allow the measurement of change towards the goals of equality, social cohesion, sharing, and the ability to deal with political difference through open dialogue and accommodation. The findings will be made available to all through the publication of an annual report.

The long-term verdict of history on the Northern Ireland peace process can only be guessed at: as Zhou Enlai is rumoured to have said about the 1789 French Revolution, it is still too early to tell. But two main opposing opinions are emerging: one, which holds that the Northern Ireland peace process is a uniquely successful resolution to a centuries-old conflict; the other which says that the political architecture of the settlement is fatally weakened by having laid its foundations in communal identities. Between these two poles there is a range of opinion which fluctuates with changing circumstances. In May 2011, for example, the Queen's visit to Dublin was described as the crowning event in a long-term process of reconciliation between British and Irish identities; in June unionists and nationalists were once more fighting street battles in East Belfast, and in July the disorder accompanying the street disorders cost over £6 million in policing costs alone. Political optimists and pessimists could equally find justification for their underlying assumptions in the events of the year. The state of the debate is summed up by one academic as follows:

There are radically opposing views among experts on whether, ten years on, the settlement has reduced or increased sectarianism, as to whether it has crystallised or softened opposing views, and as to whether it has solidified or moderated opposing blocs, or perhaps even begun to transform them. (Todd, 2010:88)

The purpose of the Peace Monitoring Report therefore is to assemble and to examine the evidence. This will be done dispassionately, drawing upon as wide a range of sources as possible and subjecting the findings to a rigorous scrutiny. The findings will be made public each year through an annual report – this being the first in the series.

Is Northern Ireland moving towards a shared future, or is it falling back into older patterns of separation and antagonism? Evidence can seem to point in both directions.

“Contrary to common expectations, combatants do not have the greatest difficulty resolving underlying conflicts of interest and reaching bargains. They have the greatest difficulty implementing the resulting terms.” (Walter, 2002:5)

2. What is being measured?

There has been an exponential growth in the study of peace and conflict – not just between states but, because of the rise in ethnic conflict, within states. Recent developments in peace monitoring reflect the diversity of their origins. Academic peace institutes, like the Scandinavian International Peace Research Institute, the Uppsala Conflict Data Program, or the Heidelberg Institute for International Conflict Research, tend to act as observatories producing ‘conflict barometers’ to calibrate the danger of war in different theatres across the globe. The Global Peace Index, which is produced annually, provides an annual ranking of the countries of the world in terms of their proximity to peace, and stresses its relevance to global capital. The American military, following its interventions in Iraq and Afghanistan, has concerned itself very much with indicator frameworks that will allow for predictions about the ‘inflection points’ that signal changes in the political temperature. Post-conflict studies have been slower to emerge. A significant addition in recent years is the Yearbook of Peace Processes, issued by the Escola de Cultura de Pau, University of Barcelona. This provides a short account of the status of each continuing conflict (usually about 70 each year) and any peace agreements that have been signed.

All of these varied initiatives are of relevance but none provides a ready-made guide to how the Northern Ireland peace process might be measured.

Is there still a peace process?

The peace process is still a governmental and intergovernmental category – the EU, for example, is still pledged to its Peace 3 Programme (and may commit to a fourth tranche using the same term). All the research evidence shows that ethnic conflicts are notoriously hard to cap, and that the ‘conflict cycle’ (Misra, 2008: 135-148) does not end with the signing of an agreement. To use a distinction from Boutros-Ghali, the peace-building that begins after the accord is signed is every bit as important as the peace-making that led up to it (Boutros-Ghali, 1995).

In her detailed study of peace processes the American political scientist Barbara Walter makes the following observation:

Contrary to common expectations, combatants do not have the greatest difficulty resolving underlying conflicts of interest and reaching bargains. They have the greatest difficulty implementing the resulting terms. In short, the conditions that encourage groups to initiate negotiations and sign settlements do not appear sufficient to bring peace (Walter, 2002:5).

Walter’s conclusion is that where the peace accord is based on mutual vetoes, as it is in the Northern Ireland Assembly, the very structures that initially offer security may in time create sufficient frustrations to threaten the resurgence of violence, unless the inflexible blocking mechanisms are allowed to evolve into more open and accommodating political structures. In these terms, the Belfast / Good Friday Agreement, the St Andrews Agreement and the Hillsborough accord are all just staging posts on a much longer journey, the trajectory of which is by no means certain but which can still at each stage be accurately described as the Northern Ireland peace process.

3. How has it been measured?

If peace were simply the absence of violence, then the trajectory of the Northern Ireland peace process would be easy to trace: using the statistics for deaths and injuries, bombings and shootings, riots, arrests and convictions, we would be able to plot with almost mathematical certainty our journey out of violent conflict. We might even be able to arrive at a forecast for the time when the figures for violence in Northern Ireland come into line with those for other parts of these islands, and we could be seen to function within the norms generally accepted for Western European polities. The decrease in violence since the 1998 Agreement is not sufficient, however, to guarantee such a future. Northern Ireland was in fact an exceptionally peaceful society in the 1960s, if measured only by the statistics for violence. It was a classic example of what the Norwegian peace studies expert Johann Galtung calls 'negative peace' – that is, peace defined simply by the absence of violence. In such situations structural injustices may be waiting to erupt into conflict – as indeed was the case before the civil rights movement took to the streets at the end of the 1960s. The measuring instruments must therefore not only examine overt cases of violence but also what Galtung calls the 'structural violence' below, the inequalities or imbalances that might precipitate a return to violent conflict.

The destination of the Northern Ireland peace process has always been a matter of 'creative ambiguity', and this creates an obvious difficulty in measuring progress towards that point. For unionists, the compromises over territorial sovereignty are justified by the belief that this marks a final settlement of the constitutional issue; for republicans, the acceptance of the consent principle is justified by the belief that the UK framework is only a temporary construct and will give way in time to a united Ireland. Nationalists are still on a journey. Unionists think they have arrived at the terminus. Does the Agreement therefore simply mark a generational truce, or does it represent a more fundamental compromise between the competing national identities? At present all parties unite in trying to make the political arrangements 'work'. What shared meaning attaches to this term can be elucidated by reference to the Programme for Government, which in its successive iterations places an emphasis on economic prosperity, stability of institutions and a political culture that respects human rights and accepts diversity. Can there be progress towards these goals while the underlying constitutional *desiderata* diverge? And is it possible that the process of working together towards these goals will lead to a reconciliation of constitutional preferences and, indeed, to a reconciliation of people?

Such a scenario is the one that earns the terms 'positive peace', that is a dispensation characterised by justice, fairness, reconciliation and social justice. No one could have hoped that Northern Ireland would have reached such an ideal state in such a short time. What has been disappointing, however, is the degree to which the basic conflict, that between the two main ethnonationalist communities, has remained active in what we choose to call the post-conflict period. This is a process that has been neatly summarised as 'Clausewitz in reverse' (Ramsbotham et al, 2005:200) – in other words, the continuation of the war into politics, with politics broadly defined to include cultural contestations over languages, symbols, and celebrations and continuing disturbances at community level. For some, this deepening of sectarianism does not represent a betrayal of

the Agreement but rather the inevitable outworking of constitutional engineering built upon communal identities, which serves only to reinforce the historical divisions. In short, as far as the critics of the Agreement are concerned, Northern Ireland can only remain stuck in a model that reinforces the traditional divide. Is Northern Ireland evolving as a co-existence model, sometimes referred to as peace-without-reconciliation, or a 'cold peace' (Ignatieff, 2003) or is there a more durable peace emerging which bridges the fundamental gap that has historically divided the Protestant and Catholic populations? How can indicators be used to allow conclusions to be drawn?

4. Creating an indicator framework

According to Babbie (2010: 131), 'An indicator is a sign of the presence or absence of the concept we are studying.' Peace is a concept too loose and baggy to be measured without further definition; we must break it down into more meaningful dimensions and then construct indicator sets that will allow these categories to be appraised in real-life situations. The crucial first step is being clear about the concept under investigation. For example, the Bertelsmann Foundation has explored how social justice can be monitored in developed societies, working from OECD data. It divides the concept into five dimensions: poverty avoidance, education access, labour market inclusion, social cohesion, and equality and generational equality. These are further divided into indicator sets, pooling 18 qualitative and quantitative indices into a linear scale.

When we looked at the dimensions of the peace process in Northern Ireland to be monitored, we had to focus on those areas crucial to the journey towards peace. As the mission statement puts it,

An indicator framework will be created to allow the measurement of change towards the goals of equality, social cohesion, sharing, and the ability to deal with political difference through open dialogue and accommodation.

This has been translated into four distinct but interlocking dimensions, each with own indicator set made up of both quantitative and qualitative data. The four dimensions are:--

1. Security

The simplest measure of how peaceful any society is comes from the sense of security experienced by the individual citizen. This has to be assessed in different contexts: the home, the neighbourhood, the workplace, and public space. To build evidence we have looked not just at crime statistics but at attitudinal surveys and academic articles which explore the subjective sense of security. Attention has also been paid to differentials between geographical areas and between groups. Levels of violence are key indicators of the absence of security, and during the Troubles they were the statistics most frequently used to measure the intensity of the conflict. The decline in violence following the ceasefires provides useful evidence of the journey out of conflict, and we have therefore collated data on bombings, shootings, beatings, hijacking, arson attacks, and other forms of injury to person or property. Trends which show decline in the security-related category of the PSNI crime statistics

cannot, however, of themselves be taken as evidence that the threat of sectarian violence has been left behind. While the figures for 2011 provided encouragement in that the murder rate has fallen to pre-1969 levels, the Chief Constable warned that the dissident threat was at its highest since the Omagh bomb in 1998. The sense of latent violence therefore has to be part of the equation, as any account based simply on crime statistics would fail to capture life under its shadow.

2. Equality

The Troubles erupted against a backdrop of structural inequality in housing, employment, and life chances between Catholics and Protestants. This fault-line, therefore, has to be constantly monitored to see if the inequality gap is opening up or closing over. In the 1998 Agreement great emphasis is laid upon equality as the essential ingredient of any peace settlement: the wording of the Agreement commits the participants to 'partnership, equality and mutual respect', and one of the first initiatives following its signing was the creation of an Equality Commission. In the past, inequality was closely associated with discrimination, but external factors now have a hugely important influence. Northern Ireland has had to absorb the shocks of a global recession that has radically restructured the labour market, creating new differentials. The de-industrialisation of an earlier period has had its effect on heavy industries like shipbuilding and engineering, while the recession is making its impact felt on 21st century employment sectors. These blind forces rebalance the life chances for Catholics and Protestants in unintended ways. So too do educational policy and the quality of educational provision which prepare – or fail to prepare – a younger generation for the labour market. Consideration of education and equality also brings gender necessarily into focus: social disadvantage, religious background, and gender can combine to create compound effects, so differentials need to be understood in interaction with each other. The same applies to health, housing, and labour market data.

3. Political progress

The mission statement commits the Peace Monitoring Report to measuring 'the ability to deal with political difference through open dialogue and accommodation'. Progress in this sense does not have to be measured against particular constitutional destinations, such as a united Ireland or further integration with Britain. Instead it can be seen in terms of the ability of political opponents to use dialogue to arrive at mutually satisfactory outcomes – or, to use the wording from the *A Shared Future* document, the situation 'where differences are resolved through dialogue in the public sphere'. Since 1998 it has been clear from all the attitudinal surveys that the society as a whole feels most coherent and most purposeful when the political elites show the capacity to trade and to pursue shared agendas. We have therefore taken the three-strand approach of the Belfast Agreement to measure how successfully the political representatives have been in reaching accommodation in these arenas: in the power-sharing Assembly in Northern Ireland, in the north-south bodies and in development of an east-west agenda. One other crucial area concerns the ability of Northern Ireland to deal with the legacy of its past. Regardless of the preferred means to realise this purpose, the measure is how well the governments, the regional politicians and society generally have managed to satisfy the demand to do so.

4. Cohesion and sharing

An equal division of resources may be based on a one-for-you, one-for-me model – or, as it is sometimes put, a shared-out future rather than a shared future. This form of equality leads to an increased sense of tribal identity, rather than its diminution. Critics of the 1998 Agreement accuse it of having ushered in a form of well-intentioned apartheid through the system of weights and counter-weights to balance the competing claims of unionists and nationalists– a 'separate but equal' approach to conflict management. For the Agreement to succeed in going beyond this model it must show itself capable of creating 'bridging' social capital between communities, and not just reinforcing the 'bonding' capital that keeps the blocs internally intact and distinct. Social cohesion and sharing are therefore very important goals of the peace process, as indeed for any democratic society. The Club de Madrid has recently launched its Shared Societies Project to advise governments on how to create united polities while respecting cultural diversity. In their model this does not mean elevating sharing to an absolute. In a pluralist society respect for difference means accepting some forms of distinctiveness. Northern Ireland must strike the balance between respecting claims as to distinctive cultures and maintaining the sense of a single shared society. The indicator framework therefore has to provide a dispassionate analysis of the evidence base, including the policy context, the empirical detail of public provision, the costs of division, and the various attempts made in the private, public and voluntary sectors to promote good relations. Given that Northern Ireland is now very definitely a multi-ethnic society, it has been necessary also look at how well it has managed the shift from 'two communities' to a society where people from different backgrounds respect each other as fellow citizens, living, working and relaxing together.

SECTION B

Background: Northern Ireland: A Society In Transition

1. The Nature of the Peace Settlement

The Good Friday Agreement or, as it is also known, the Belfast Agreement, was signed on 10th April 1998. In some accounts it ended the period of political violence known by the euphemism of 'the Troubles', a conflict which began at the end of the 1960s and cost the lives of more than 3,500 people. If one dates the outset as the first civil rights march in 1968, then its span is three times longer than the duration of WW1 and WW2 put together. It is of course possible to stretch that span back much further: the Plantation of Ulster in the 17th century gave rise to patterns still discernible today – an ethnic differentiation between English and lowland Scots colonists and resentful Irish dispossessed. The ethnic markers first became visible at this time: the Irish language and the English, the Catholicism of the native Irish and the Protestantism of the new planters. That identity conflict has remained at the core ever since, and the Good Friday Agreement bases itself on a recognition of there being 'two communities'. The religious markers do not by themselves explain the content of the conflict: this is not a conflict primarily *about* religion, but rather one where religion acts principally as the marker for two distinct ethnonational identities. The roots of the quarrel in the clash between Planter and Gael have meant at different times and to different degrees that members of each community have sought succour through identification with the larger national identities of Britain and Ireland. As McEvoy puts it, the conflict 'is about two groups with allegiances to two different national communities, Britain and Ireland, which themselves have a long history of conflict' (McEvoy, 2008:8).

The mutually exclusive nature of the British and Irish identity claims gave rise to the widespread belief that Northern Ireland was a problem without a solution, a conflict that had to be managed rather than resolved. The innovative thinking that led to the Good Friday Agreement did not accept such a zero-sum equation. Instead of an either/or approach where one identity necessarily negated the other, the Agreement substituted a both/and approach to the problem of identity and belonging. A 'parity of esteem' principle was applied to the 'two traditions', nationhood was disentangled from statehood, and the citizens were encouraged to see Britishness and Irishness as complementary, rather than competing, identities – the Agreement makes provision, for example, for Northern Ireland residents to hold both British and Irish passports. And, while Northern Ireland remains within the constitutional framework of the UK, there is also a constitutional innovation which allows for an 'Irish dimension.' This was not an idea that originated in the 1998 negotiations: as the timeline below shows, the peace settlement that emerged in 1998 evolved through many previous iterations, with increasing flexibility in the concept of national identity from the mid-1980s onwards. And, just as the 1998 Agreement was a re-formulation of earlier ideas, so its provisions in turn became extended by subsequent accords, principally the St Andrews Agreement and the Hillsborough Agreement of 2010.

Nationhood was disentangled from statehood, and the citizens were encouraged to see Britishness and Irishness as complementary, rather than competing, identities.

The main staging posts to the present dispensation have been:

The power-sharing Executive (1974) Some core features of the 1998 accord can be seen in the framework established by the British government through a process of deliberation following the introduction of direct rule in 1972, involving a green paper, a white paper and legislation. There was, first, a commitment to power-sharing government rather than the winner-takes-all form of majoritarianism that had characterised unionist rule from the foundation of the state. Secondly, there was the acceptance of an 'Irish dimension' through a Council of Ireland— the details negotiated at a conference at Sunningdale in late 1973. This proved, however, insufficient to bridge the gap between nationalists and unionists: for nationalists, angry about the injustices of internment and Bloody Sunday, the Council of Ireland seemed not to take them far enough towards a united Ireland; for unionists, shocked by the ferocity of the IRA campaign, the Council of Ireland appeared a fatal dilution of the security offered by their British identity. The deal collapsed in May 1974 following a strike called by the loyalist Ulster Workers' Council.

The Anglo-Irish Agreement (1985) A shared concern over the perceived growing strength of militant republicanism led the British and Irish governments to sign an agreement of shared understanding. Two principles were laid down which have been retained in all subsequent arrangements: first, that the Irish government should have a say in the affairs of Northern Ireland; secondly, there could be no change in the constitutional status of Northern Ireland without the consent of the majority (the 'consent principle'). Although the governments hoped the balancing out of unionist and nationalist concerns would commend the AIA equally, unionists felt bitterly betrayed by Margaret Thatcher for conceding powers to what they described as a 'foreign country'.

The Brooke-Mayhew Talks (1991-92) The Secretary of State Peter Brooke invited the four main parties at that time, the UUP, the DUP, the SDLP and the Alliance Party, into a set of talks about Northern Ireland's future. Sinn Fein was not invited but Brooke appeared to address the republican movement directly by stating that Britain had 'no selfish strategic or economic interest in Northern Ireland'. The talks, continued under Brooke's successor Mayhew, ultimately failed but did manage to resurrect the possibility of dialogue toward a solution.

The Hume-Adams Talks (1992-93) John Hume first engaged the Sinn Fein leadership in talks in 1988 but they were unable to bridge the gap in their respective positions. Hume however resumed his private dialogue with Gerry Adams in 1992, using Brooke's statement about the British having no selfish or strategic interest in Ireland to challenge the republican orthodoxy about Britain as an imperialist presence. The dialogue sparked fierce antagonism (some from within Hume's own party) as it was thought to confer respectability on the leadership of the IRA, which at that time was still pursuing its campaign of violence. What emerged was a more nuanced understanding from the republican movement about how its core principle of 'self-determination' could be understood in a situation where the 'self' was itself contested.

The Downing Street Declaration (1993) Although it took its name from the residence of the British Prime Minister, the document was a display of the unity of approach between John Major and his Irish counterpart, Albert Reynolds. The stress was on the facilitative role the two governments wished to play in NI affairs – neither one pursuing an aggressive historic claim, but working together to accommodate any arrangements agreed between regional political forces.

The Framework Documents (1995) The IRA had announced its ceasefire in August 1994 on the understanding that multi-party ‘peace talks’ would follow. The Framework Documents issued in February 1995 laid down the parameters for a lasting settlement. This was in essence the three-strand approach: a set of ideas about a power-sharing Assembly was contained in Framework Document One; Document Two proposed there should be a north-south body, and, to balance it, an east-west Intergovernmental Conference. The issue of self-determination was dealt with by a commitment to uphold the wishes of the majority in Northern Ireland.

The Good Friday / Belfast Agreement (1998) These multi-party talks were designed on an ‘inclusive’ basis, open to 14 parties including electorally tiny groupings like the Women’s Coalition, the Labour Party, and the UVF-linked Progressive Unionist Party. The inclusiveness was stressed to allow for the participation of Sinn Fein; it was known however that if Sinn Fein were included the DUP would exclude itself. The political span was therefore not complete, but it did include not just the usual centre parties but representation from the extreme ends of the republican and loyalist spectrum. When agreement was reached then its significance was that ideas which had previously been aired only in governmental circles had been embraced by representatives of both communities, and, following the referendum, by the people themselves. The euphoria at the time tended to obscure the significance of the DUP staying outside the consensus, and 29% of the electorate voting against the Agreement. The Agreement itself worked within the parameters laid down in the Framework Documents (including an acceptance of the consent principle) but elaborated the arrangements within each of the three strands. Once signed by both governments it enjoyed the status of an international treaty and was hailed internationally as a model of conflict resolution. Its core tenets remain in place as the architecture of the present dispensation (see below) but, for all its successes, further negotiations and additional accords were needed to allow the cornerstone of the settlement, the devolved government in Northern Ireland, to bed down.

The St Andrews Agreement (2006) The years following the signing of the Agreement were dogged by mutual suspicion and increasing hostility between the nationalist and unionist parties. The first devolved Assembly only functioned intermittently, and was suspended four times between February 2000 and October 2002, when it was put in cold storage until May 2007. The decommissioning of IRA weapons proved the main stumbling block, and the strength of Protestant feeling on the issue saw unionist leadership pass from David Trimble and the UUP to Ian Paisley and the DUP. Even after the IRA had decommissioned in 2005, suspicion remained about Sinn Fein’s bona fides, particularly following the Northern Bank robbery in December 2004 and the murder of Robert McCartney in a Belfast bar in January 2005. Sinn Fein, for its part, was sceptical about the DUP’s willingness to share power with Catholics in any circumstance, and

the conference at St Andrews was seen by both governments as a last-ditch attempt to rescue the peace process. There were many bargaining chips on the table, including issues as diverse as academic selection, the remit of the North-South Ministerial Council and equality and human rights. The two core issues however were, first, that Sinn Fein should accept the PSNI as the legitimate police force and, secondly, that the DUP should commit to making the new political institutions work. In the end, the agreement that emerged was signed only by the two governments and not the parties, but there was sufficient support (however grudging) to allow a 'transitional Assembly' to resume in preparation for the elections in 2007 which saw devolved government restored.

The Hillsborough Agreement (2010) The St Andrews Agreement allowed for the devolution of policing and justice powers to Stormont, but the DUP continued to block the transition right up to the end of 2009, saying there was insufficient 'community confidence'. The talks at Hillsborough were convened to break this stalemate. Once again, other issues were brought into play, including parading and a new financial package for Northern Ireland. On 5 February 2010 the two governments announced agreement had been reached on all the main items (including a financial package of £1 billion) but the most significant by far was the agreement to devolve policing and justice – described as 'the last piece of the jigsaw' in the NI peace process. To help ease the deal it was agreed that the first Justice Minister would not come from the DUP or Sinn Fein but from the Alliance Party. With this package in place a more confident form of devolution began.

2. The Political Architecture of the Peace Process

2.1 *The Northern Ireland Assembly*

As the devolved legislature of Northern Ireland, the NI Assembly has the power to legislate in areas not explicitly retained by the Parliament of the United Kingdom. Powers kept by Westminster are divided into 'excepted matters', which it retains indefinitely, and 'reserved matters', which may be transferred at a later date. The composition and powers of the Assembly are laid down in the Northern Ireland Act 1998. This allows for six Members of the Assembly (or MLAs) for each of the 18 Westminster constituencies, 108 in total. This affords Northern Ireland more representation than any other part of the United Kingdom. If the representation ratios of the NI Assembly were replicated throughout the UK there would be 3,730 MPs in the House of Commons.

Other features of devolved government in Northern Ireland make it exceptional. The system of governance is 'consociational': instead of the conventional government-and-opposition arrangement, all political parties sit in government in a grand coalition, with seats awarded according to electoral strength. More specifically:

- The allocation of Executive seats is by the D'Hondt proportionality rule. Ministerial portfolios are assigned one at a time, beginning with the party with the highest total. As the largest party, the DUP has first choice of departments, followed by Sinn Fein, and so on.
- Every MLA is designated as 'nationalist', 'unionist' or 'other'. For controversial legislation to be enacted it must receive 'cross-community support', which has been taken to mean a concurrent majority of nationalist and unionist MLAs.

The careful weighting given to votes in the Assembly has proved not to be as central to the functioning of the power-sharing Assembly as had originally been assumed. This is largely because the most important decisions are made by the Executive, and not on the floor of the Assembly, and it is here that the mutual veto is exercised through close negotiations by the two dominant parties, Sinn Fein and the DUP. The centralisation of power in this duopoly is such that the smaller parties allege the most important decisions are agreed between them, crowding out alternative views.

2.2 *North-South and East-West*

Two bodies were set up, one designed as the counter-weight to the other. The North-South Ministerial Council is the governmental expression of the desire for an 'Irish dimension'; the British-Irish Council is in place to satisfy unionist desire for stronger ties with other parts of the UK. In practice, one has found useful business to pursue while the other struggles to establish its role.

The North-South Ministerial Council sits at the apex of six cross-border bodies, the remit of which is to 'develop consultation, co-operation and action within the island of Ireland' on matters of mutual interest. In

practical terms this means the management of overlapping concerns on areas such as trade, tourism, waterways, fisheries and transport. Very little political controversy attends the operations of these bodies, and for the most part their activities are conducted in a brisk and business-like way.

The British-Irish Council has found it more difficult to assert its purpose. The East-West remit is extended to include not just the British, Irish and NI Assembly members, but representatives from Wales, Scotland, Jersey, Guernsey and the Isle of Man. Only 16 summit meetings took place between 1999 and 2011, and the body appears becalmed. A decision made in 2010 to secure an administrative base in Edinburgh may help restore its energy but, although it was seen as an essential part of the settlement, its workings rarely trouble the political agenda.

2.3 Equality and Human Rights

Equality

The Agreement affirms the centrality of human rights and equality to a peaceful settlement. Under the Northern Ireland Act 1998 this commitment was given organisational form through an Equality Commission (sponsored by the Office of the First and Deputy First Minister) and a Human Rights Commission. The Equality Commission took over the functions of a number of bodies which had preceded it: the Commission for Racial Equality for Northern Ireland, the Equal Opportunities Commission for Northern Ireland, the Fair Employment Commission and the Northern Ireland Disability Council. Prior to the Human Rights Commission there had been a Standing Advisory Committee on Human Rights. The creation of the two bodies in 1999 however signalled the change in political culture brought about by the Good Friday Agreement.

The liberal intentions of the Agreement were given legislative power under Section 75 and Schedule 9 to the Northern Ireland Act 1998, which came into force on 1st January 2000. Section 75(1) placed a statutory obligation on public authorities, in carrying out their functions relating to Northern Ireland, to have 'due regard to the need to promote equality of opportunity' along nine axes:

- between persons of different religious belief, political opinion, racial group, age, marital status or sexual orientation;
- between men and women generally;
- between persons with a disability and persons without; and
- between persons with dependents and persons without.

Designated public authorities were mandated to undertake a systematic review of every policy, including where necessary an Equality Impact Assessment (EQIA). Section 75(2) places an obligation on such bodies also to promote 'good relations'. The duty is weaker, however, than 75(1) stipulating only 'regard to the desirability of promoting good relations'. Goldie (2008) suggests that the less rigorous requirement on good relations has allowed it to be separated out from the equality duty, and for equality to be given a superior status.

One difficulty that has attended the implementation of the equality principle has been the bureaucracy that surrounds it. A review by the Equality Commission in 2007 found that public bodies had concerned themselves more with the reporting processes than with achieving outcomes, and so a revised schedule was introduced in April 2010, charging public bodies with the responsibility of conducting an 'audit of inequalities' and linking it to concrete outcomes in action plans.

Human Rights

The NI Human Rights Commission (NIHRC) was created in 1999, amid a consensus about the centrality of human rights which has since evaporated. The New Labour government elected in 1997 was committed to the underlying principles of international human rights, as evidenced by the Human Rights Act 1998, which incorporated the European Convention on Human Rights (ECHR) into domestic law. The act, which took effect from October 2002, enables individuals to enforce their Convention rights before domestic courts. This would have had effect in Northern Ireland in any case, but the 1998 Agreement's strong endorsement of human rights took this a stage further by tasking the NIHRC with bringing forward proposals on a Bill of Rights for Northern Ireland. Such a bill could not dilute ECHR standards, but was to offer supplementary rights reflecting the particular circumstances of a society emerging from conflict. While the discourse of human rights focuses on the individual, the putative supplementary rights in Northern Ireland include purported group rights to 'reflect the principles of mutual respect for the identity and ethos of both communities and parity of esteem'. No such bill has yet been enacted, and the debates around the NIHRC proposals have fallen into familiar political wrangles, with no discernible end in sight. The NIHRC produced its latest report on the subject in December 2008 and presented it to the Secretary of State. From December 2009 to March 2010 the Northern Ireland Office consulted on its proposals to enact a Bill containing some elements of the Commission's recommendations, having firmly rejected most of them.

3. Demography and identity

3.1 Population Statistics

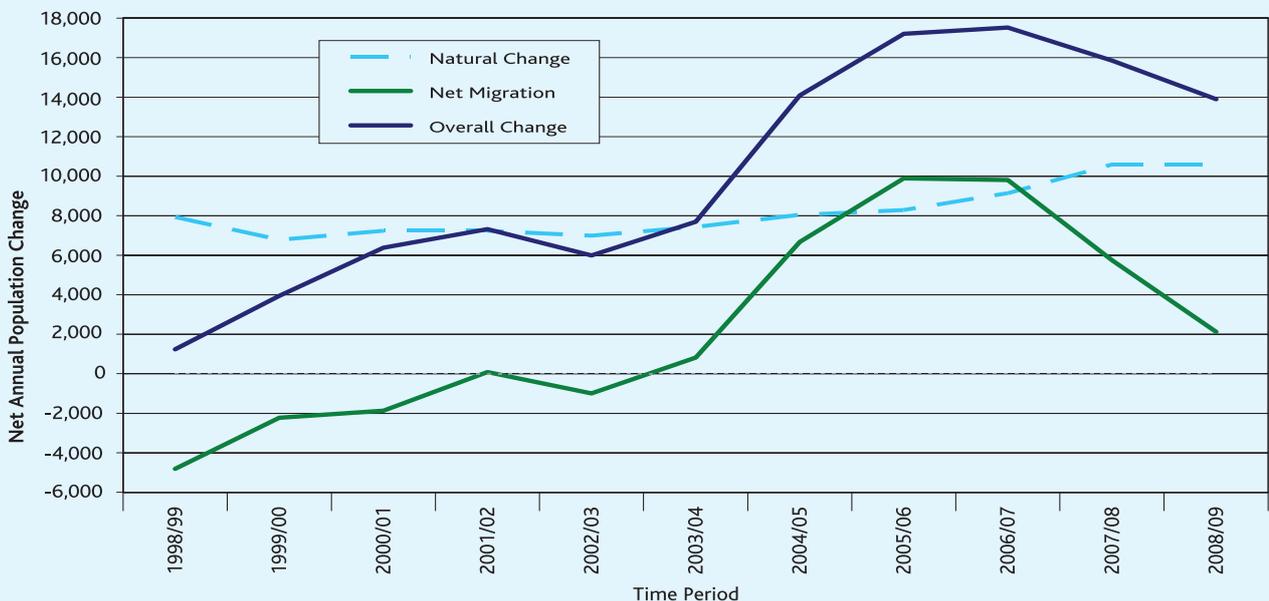
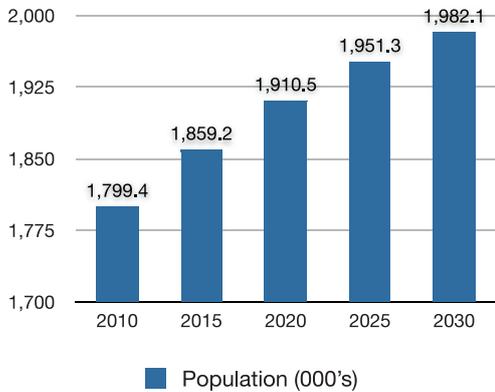
Overall figures

Until the results of the 2011 census are processed the only certain figures are those for the 2001 census which put the population of Northern Ireland at 1,689,319. The Northern Ireland Statistics and Research Agency (NISRA) however has produced ongoing estimates of population change, and in June 2009 produced an estimate of total population as being 1,788,896, an overall increase of 16%. NISRA projects that this steady growth will continue, with the total of 2 million being reached sometime just after the year 2030. Northern Ireland is the only UK region which has had fertility levels above replacement since 1978. The current fertility rate (2.03 births per woman in 2011) is attributed in part to the growth in immigrant communities (Research and Information Services, NI Assembly, 2011).

Over the last decade natural change – the difference between births and deaths – has been the main driver of population. It was not consistently so: as Chart 2 shows, there was an acceleration in net migration from 2003, when for the first time it was positive, until 2005-2007, when a plateau was reached. With the recession net migration fell sharply from its annual peak of nearly 10,000 to just 2,120 in the mid-year update for 2008-09.

Chart 2: Components of Population Change (1989/99 – 2008/09) Source: Office of National Statistics, 2010

Chart 1: Population changes
Source: NISRA Population Projections, 2011



New migrant communities have added an important factor to the social dynamic; so too has the high proportion of young people. As Chart 3 shows, in addition to having the fastest growing population in the UK, Northern Ireland also has the youngest. In 2007, 22 per cent were children and 16 per cent were of pensionable age - a very different age structure from the other parts of the UK.

Chart 3: Demographic comparisons between Northern Ireland and other UK countries 2001-2021 Sources: ONS (2010) UK population estimates, NISRA Demographic Report of NI, Spring 2009

	England	Wales	Scotland	Northern Ireland
2001 census population figures	49.4m	2.9m	5.1m	1.7m
<i>Projections</i>				
2011	52.6m	3.0m	5.2m	1.8m
2021	56.4m	3.2m	5.4m	1.9
% change 2011-2021	7.3	5.4	3.4	6.2
<i>Components of change (percentage contribution, 2011-2021)</i>				
Natural increase	58.2	34.9	29.6	93.6
Net migration	42.9	65.1	70.4	6.4
<i>Age structure</i>				
% of children (under 16)	19	19	18	22
% of pensionable age	19	21	19	16
Median age	39.6	41.4	41.7	37.0

In relation to the UK

Northern Ireland occupies 5.7% of the land space of the UK, but on current estimates accounts for only 2.9% of the UK population, estimated by the Office of National Statistics in June 2009 to be 61,792,000.

In relation to the Republic of Ireland

The majority of the population of the island of Ireland, 4,470,700 (71.4%), live in the Republic, with 1,788,800 (28.6%) living in Northern Ireland. If the population figures for each jurisdiction are combined the total population figure for the island is 6,259,000.

3.2 Immigration and the new communities

Historically, Northern Ireland has been a homogenously white society. The 2001 census recorded 99.15% of the population as white. During the 1970s and 1980s there was constant out-migration. Some years as many as 10,000 people left, for reasons at least in part due to the conflict.

Chart 4: Population of NI in relation to countries of the UK (000's)

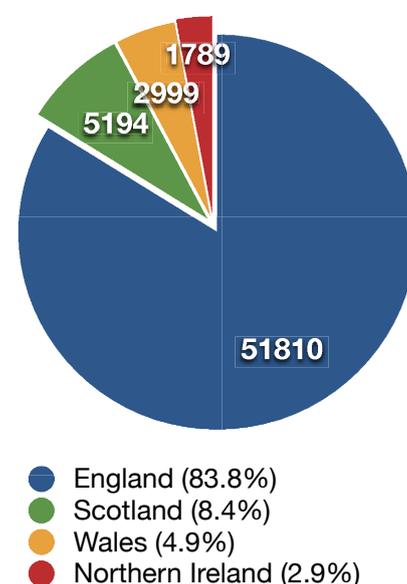


Chart 5: Population of NI in relation to population of the Republic of Ireland
Source: NISRA Population Estimates, 2011/ Central Statistics Office, Dublin.

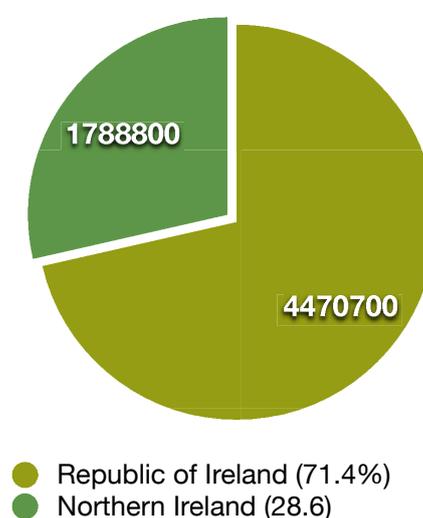
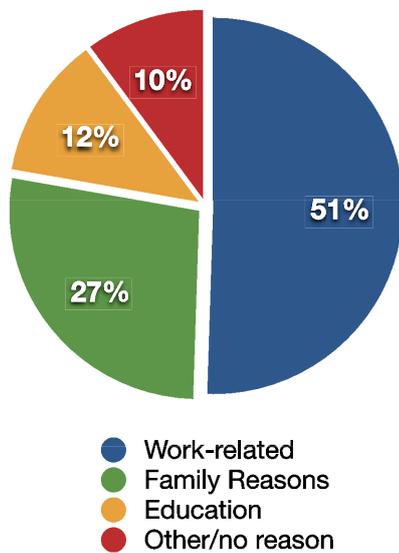


Chart 6: Comparisons with other countries in the UK: Worker Registration Scheme registrations per 1,000 population (May 2004 to June 2010)

Country	WRS registrations (May 2004- June 2010)	WRS registrations per 1,000 population
England	922,000	18.0
Scotland	90,000	17.5
Wales	28,500	9.6
Northern Ireland	40,000	22.7
United Kingdom	1,080,000	17.7

Chart 7: Reasons given by migrants for coming to Northern Ireland:



How multi-ethnic is Northern Ireland?

The standard definition of a migrant used by public bodies derives from the UN and excludes many of those who come to work for limited periods. A migrant is defined as:

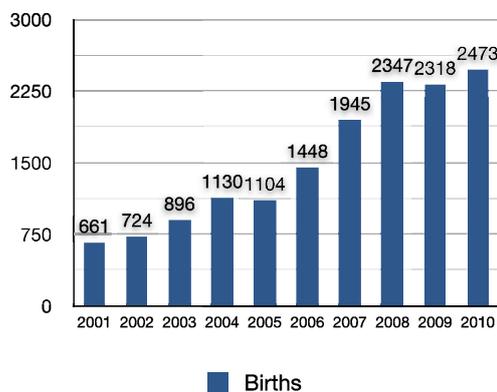
A person who moves to a country other than that of his or her usual residence for a period of at least a year (12 months), so that the country of destination effectively becomes his or her new country of long-term residence.

Applying this definition, a composite picture for Northern Ireland can be built up using the following sources:

- The Worker Registration Scheme (WRS)
- The Labour Force Survey
- National Insurance Number (NINo)
- Health registrations
- Higher Education enrolments
- Births to mothers born outside Northern Ireland
- School census figures.

Chart 8: Births registered to mothers born outside the UK or Ireland

Source: NISRA Register of Births



Methodological difficulties attend each measure, mainly because so many migrants do not feature in governmental recording systems. Additional confusion is created when the numbers of in-migrants, a flow, is used as a measure of the number of people from minority ethnic communities, a stock. But it is clear that, since the 2001 census, a significant increase has taken place in the number of people born outside the UK and Ireland living in Northern Ireland. The following estimates have been made:

- The 2009 NISRA Demographic Report of Northern Ireland puts the size of the A8 immigrant population at 30,000 or just under 1.7% of the population. This does not include non-A8 immigrants or the pre-existing ethnic-minority population.
- A study by Oxford Economics in December 2009, *Labour Market and Skills Impact of Migrant Workers in Northern Ireland*, uses different data sources to estimate the number of migrant workers at between 33,000 and 41,000, approximately 2% of the workforce.
- The latest 2010 figure from the Labour Force Survey puts the total at 80,000 people, or approximately 4.4% of the population as a whole.

- The two most reliable counts are the school census and the Registrar General's recoding of births to mothers from outside Northern Ireland. They show a clear picture of increasing numbers with each age cohort:
- The School Census collated by the Department shows that in the year 2009 there were 2,400 children, 1.6% of the official register, in secondary education for whom English was a second language. At primary level the number was almost double that, at 3%.
- The Register of Births has shown a steady increase in births to mothers from outside NI, the UK, or the RoI. In 2010 the figures was 2,473 or 9.8% of all births in Northern Ireland (see Chart 9).

Chart 9: Births registered in Northern Ireland classified by mother's country of birth, 2010
Source: NISRA

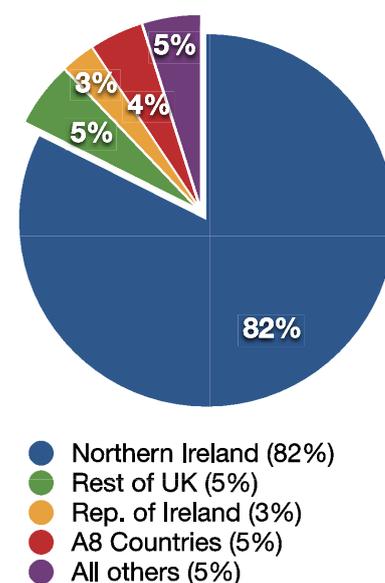


Chart 10: Births registered in Northern Ireland classified by mother's country of birth Source: NISRA Population statistics: Births in Northern Ireland

Registration Year	Mother's Country of Birth						All Births
	Northern Ireland	Rest of UK	Rep. of Ireland	A8 Countries	All other Countries	Unknown	
2001	18,993	1,557	722	12	649	29	21,962
2002	18,507	1,480	653	16	708	21	21,385
2003	18,610	1,459	654	21	875	29	21,648
2004	19,056	1,408	689	34	1,096	35	22,318
2005	19,040	1,463	705	118	986	16	22,328
2006	19,611	1,477	736	390	1,058	-	23,272
2007	20,325	1,456	723	775	1,170	2	24,451
2008	21,095	1,410	779	1,080	1,267	-	25,631
2009	20,539	1,364	689	1,113	1,205	-	24,910
2010	20,805	1,323	714	1,235	1,238	-	25,315

3.2 Demography and communal identities

Northern Ireland has in the past been defined as a majority/minority conflict, but the figures no longer support such an analysis. The 2001 census recorded the population as 43.76% Catholic and 53.13% Protestant. This was a less dramatic re-balancing than had been projected. Analysing the media coverage of the 2001 census, and the anticipation leading up to the results, McEldowney *et al* concluded that a 'master narrative' in which the Catholic population was outbreeding the Protestants had already been embedded so deeply in most commentators that the data were simply shoehorned into providing evidence for this claim.

There is no simple geographical dividing line that separates Catholic and Protestant communities cleanly into distinct blocs; rather there are constant reversals of majority and minority status in the way in which the populations are conjoined. That said, the 2001 census did confirm an

Below the age of 35 the majority of the population is Catholic; above that age the majority population is Protestant.

Chart 11: Demographic breakdown of the Protestant and Catholic population of Northern Ireland by age Source: Derived from Labour Force Survey, Religion Report, 2009



underlying pattern in which main population centres could be said to have either Catholic or Protestant majorities, with the north and the west mainly Catholic, and the south and east mainly Protestant.

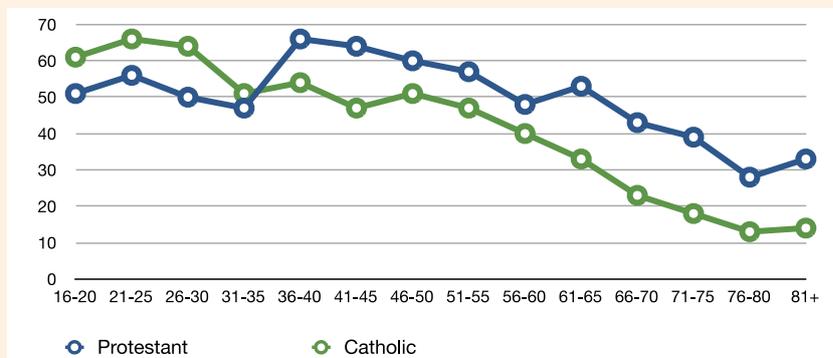
Belfast emerged in the 2001 census as very finely balanced: 49% Protestant, 47% Catholic and 3% as other religions or none. Its population has been in long-term decline – from 318,548 in 1981 to the most recent (2009) total of 268,398. This has been mainly due to factors at work in other de-industrialised cities, such as the move of professionals to the suburbs and the growth of a commuter belt. It has however mainly been Protestants moving out to the dormitories that ring the city. Lisburn, for example, seven miles outside Belfast, saw its population grow in the same period from 85,118 to 116,471 and in 2002 was granted city status as part of the events to mark the Queen’s Golden Jubilee. In the same year, in a telling illustration of how the population shift affected the balance of communal identities, Belfast elected its first Sinn Fein mayor.

What changes can be expected in the 2011 census? The datasets produced by NISRA show a fairly clear picture: below 35 the majority of the population is Catholic; above that age the majority is Protestant. Section 2.2 in this report on the economy shows the implications for the labour market as the workforce moves towards a communal equalisation. In the school census, the demographic shift is already producing a Catholic majority: the 2010 figures show Catholic pupils making up just over half the total, with the remainder dividing between Protestants (37.7%) and Other (11.5%) (see Chart 14).

Chart 12: Protestant and Catholic ratios by school types when Others are excluded Source: DENI School census 2010/11

School type	Protestant	% of total	Catholic	% of total	Total
Primary	56,501	(42%)	78,018	(58%)	134,519
Secondary (non-grammar)	32,072	(39.1%)	49,981	(60.1%)	82,053
Grammar	24,773	(45.1%)	30,158	(54.1%)	54,931

Chart 13: Age and religion by age band Source: NISRA Demographic Profile 2009



3.4 Beyond orange and green?

How large is the population which exists outside the two main blocs? Usually, the census figures are the most reliable source of information on how people self-categorise in relation to belief systems but the data collected in the 2001 census was subjected to further processing by NISRA in order to reassign those who had identified themselves as neither Protestant or Catholic into one or other of the two religious blocs. The reason was to give a more detailed picture of community background for the benefit of public bodies administering anti-discrimination procedures. The first analysis had shown that almost 14% of those completing the census form failed to state a religion, but following a process of reassignment this total was reduced down to 3%.

Chart 16: Reallocation of 'non-religious' into Protestant and Catholic blocs

	Pre-allocation Census Distribution	Reallocated Census Distribution
Catholics	678,500 (40.3%)	737,450 (43.8%)
Protestants	767,900 (45.6%)	895,400 (53.1%)
Other religions	5,500 (0.3%)	7,100 (0.4%)
None/not stated	233,900 (13.9%)	45,850 (2.7%)
Total	1,685,800	1,685,800

Such a process is not consistent with the Council of Europe Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities, which includes provisions for the right to self-identification and the 'right of exit'. Article 3.1 of the Convention states: 'Every person belonging to a national minority shall have the right freely to choose to be treated or not treated as such and no disadvantage shall result from this choice or from the exercise of the rights which are connected to that choice.' The Equality Commission judged that adherence to this provision would disproportionately affect monitoring systems designed to promote equality.

Chart 14: Religion in the School Census, 2011

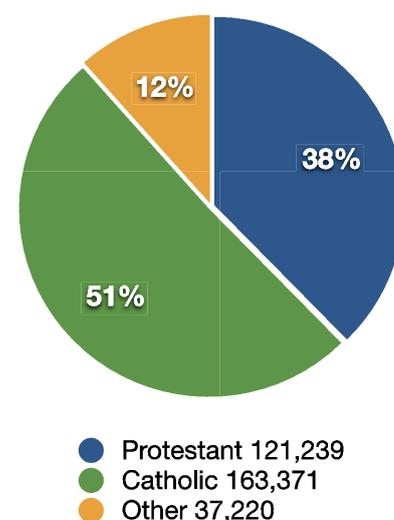
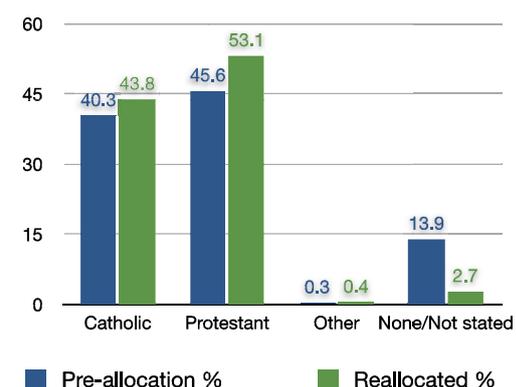


Chart 15: Reallocation of 'non-religious' into Protestant and Catholic blocs

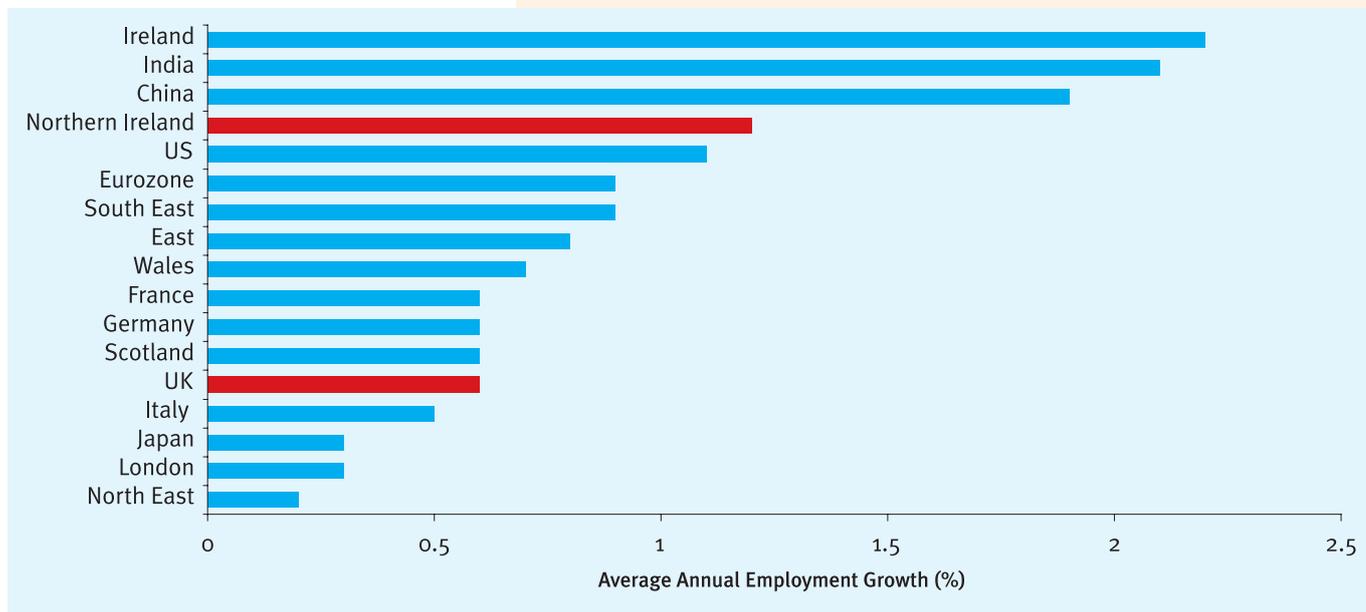


4. The Changing Economy

4.1 The vulnerability of the Northern Ireland economy

The 'normalisation' of the Northern Ireland economy following the 1994 ceasefires and the 1998 Agreement coincided with strong growth in the UK and unprecedented growth in the Republic. These factors created a sense of optimism and the NI economy enjoyed a boom. That boom can now be seen to have begun in the mid-80s however, and, as Chart 17 shows, in terms of employment growth Northern Ireland, having for years been seen as a basket-case, unexpectedly became not only the most successful of the UK regions but the most one of the most successful economies in the world.

Chart 17: Selected UK Regional and International Employment Growth, 1984-2009
(Source: Independent Review of Economic Policy, DETI and Invest NI, p.29, Figure 2.5)



During the extraordinary period of the Celtic Tiger, Northern Ireland reaped some of the benefits as southern investors took their property boom into the north. A post-'Troubles' catch-up saw major British retailers locate flagship developments in Northern Ireland, significant 'peace' monies from the EU and the USA, new service industries, and, for the first time ever, soaring immigration as mobile labour poured in to an economy which, in 2007, had only 3.8% unemployment, with employment shortfalls in some areas.

Five years on the picture looks very different. The worldwide recession has affected Northern Ireland as all other parts of the UK, and the link to the Republic's property-led boom has brought crisis in the wake of the spectacular collapse of the Irish economy. It was the construction industry which dominated the economies north and south during the boom years. According to Oxford Economics (2011), it created 170,000 net jobs between 1997 and 2007; subsequently more than 160,000 jobs have been lost.

All of this leaves the NI economy in a very vulnerable state. Growth rates have consistently trailed behind the UK average and in its forecasts for 2012 PricewaterhouseCoopers projects growth of 1.0% for the UK economy and just 0.6% for Northern Ireland. The new normal is not a

return to the troughs of the 1970s, as the economy is now within the pack of UK regions, albeit at the lower end, but the recovery will be long and slow. The peace dividend has run out and the structural weaknesses of the economy are now very much on display. HM Treasury provided this assessment in a paper published in March 2011: 'Peace has not in itself been sufficient to raise Northern Ireland prosperity to the UK average or even to the UK average excluding South East England. Northern Ireland still has one of the weakest economies in the UK' (HMT, 2011: 3). Chart 18 uses a range of key indicators to rank the Northern Ireland economy in relation to the other UK regions. With the exception of demography it is in the lower half of the scale on all of the indicators.

CHART 19: The collapse of the Housing Market Source: NIHE Research Bulletin, Autumn, 2011

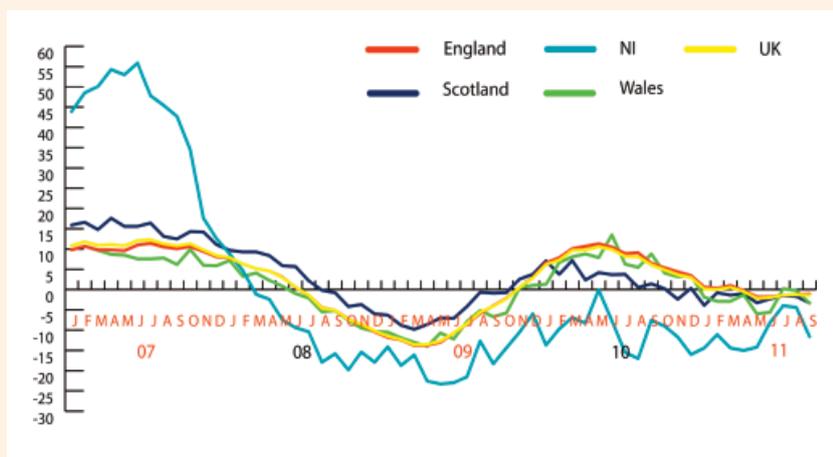
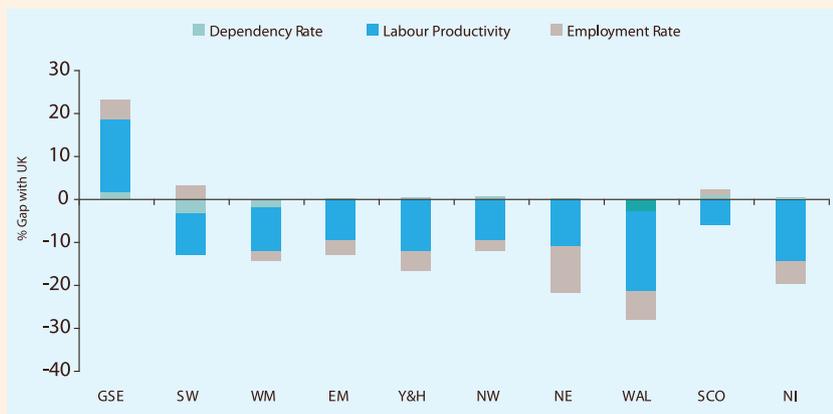


Chart 20: Disaggregating NI's Output Gap (Source: Oxford Economics, 2010)



The reasons for the structural weaknesses of the NI economy were analysed in the Independent Review of Economic Policy (2009), commissioned by the Enterprise Minister, Arlene Foster. The report disaggregates the gaps with the rest of the UK (Chart 20) and highlights the problem of relatively poor labour productivity. Since wages tend to follow productivity, it is by no means surprising that average wages are also well below the rest of the UK (see Chart 21).

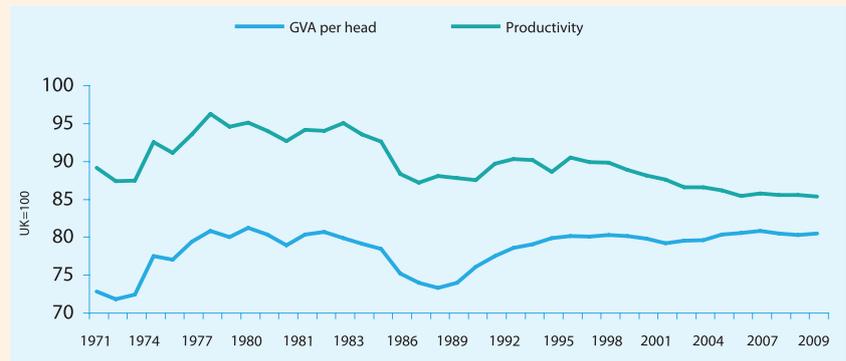
Chart 18: Regional Rank Indicators
(Rank out of 12) Source: Oxford Economics

Indicator	Rank in 2010
Working age population % of total pop	5
Participation rate	10
Unemployment rate	11
% employment in manufacturing	7
% employment in private services	12
Self employment % of total employment	2
GVA per person	10
GVA per manufacturing employee	7
GVA per private services employee	9
Average earnings	12
Disposable income per head	9
Consumers expenditure per head	10
House prices	8

“Peace has not in itself been sufficient to raise Northern Ireland prosperity to the UK average... Northern Ireland still has one of the weakest economies in the UK.”

Her Majesty's Treasury, March 2011

Chart 21: NI's Productivity and Living Standards, Relative to UK Average (Source: Independent Review of Economic Policy, DETI, 2009, p.25 Figure 2.2)



In trying to address how growth might improve living standards, the Independent Review drew attention to a conundrum: the main differentiating factor between NI and other regions, from the standpoint of foreign investors, is the low wage regime, and firms which are attracted by that prospect are also likely to move again should wages increase.

4.2 Profiling the workforce

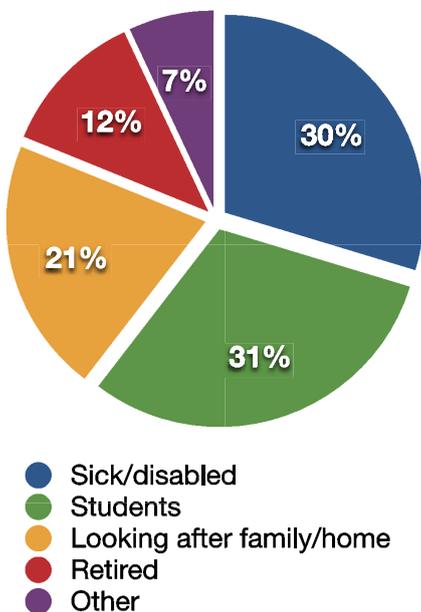
The Northern Ireland workforce trails the UK average on a number of key indicators when labour force statistics and demographic data are compared:

Chart 22: Northern Ireland workforce comparisons with UK (Source: NISRA Demographic Report/ DFP Monthly Labour Market Report, April 2011)

	Northern Ireland	United Kingdom
Employment Rate	67.8%	70.3%
Unemployment Rate	6.8%	8.4%
Employment inactivity rate for 16-24 age group	27.1%	23.1%
Unemployed 18-24 rate	18.2%	20.5%
Long-term unemployed as % of total	37.0%	
Claimant count	6.9%	5.0%
Average weekly hours worked	32.7	31.7
Average full-time weekly wage (gross)	£450.60	£500.70
Gender pay gap (female as % of male)	91.9%	80.5%
Those with no educational qualifications	20%	10%

Note: These figures are for Sept-Nov 2011 Source: Monthly Labour Market Report, January 2012

Chart 23: Economically Inactive, Sept-Nov 2011 (16-64 age group) Source: Monthly Labour Market Report, January 2012



Note: While 90% of the inactive do not want work, the other 10% included in this chart do not satisfy the full International Labour Organisation job search criteria (by actively seeking work and being able to start a job).

While the employment rate is the second lowest among the 12 UK regions, unemployment is not proportionately as high as might be expected – it is slightly below the UK average. The reason is the very large percentage of the working-age population classified as economically inactive: the Northern Ireland rate of 28.3% is significantly higher than the UK average (23.2%). A breakdown of the economically inactive is provided in Chart 23. The largest group comprises sick/disabled persons. The number claiming Disability Living Allowance is more than double that for England (see Chart 24).

Over one third (36.2%) of the economically inactive have no educational qualifications, compared with 12.1% of those in employment. Chart 25 demonstrates the correlation between educational attainment and economic activity. Northern Ireland has the highest percentage of adults of working age in the UK with no educational qualifications: 20%, compared with 10% of the UK as a whole. A further skills gap exists at all other levels (see Chart 25).

Only 4% of the NI workforce is employed in the knowledge economy, one of the lowest rates in the UK. The reality is that, despite the claims made about the excellence of Northern Ireland's education system, the workforce is under-qualified. Given its other disadvantages, Northern Ireland needs not just to equal but to outdistance UK averages to secure inward investment.

Chart 25: Qualifications by economic activity Oct – Dec 2010 (Source: LFS Quarterly Supplement, 28/02/11)

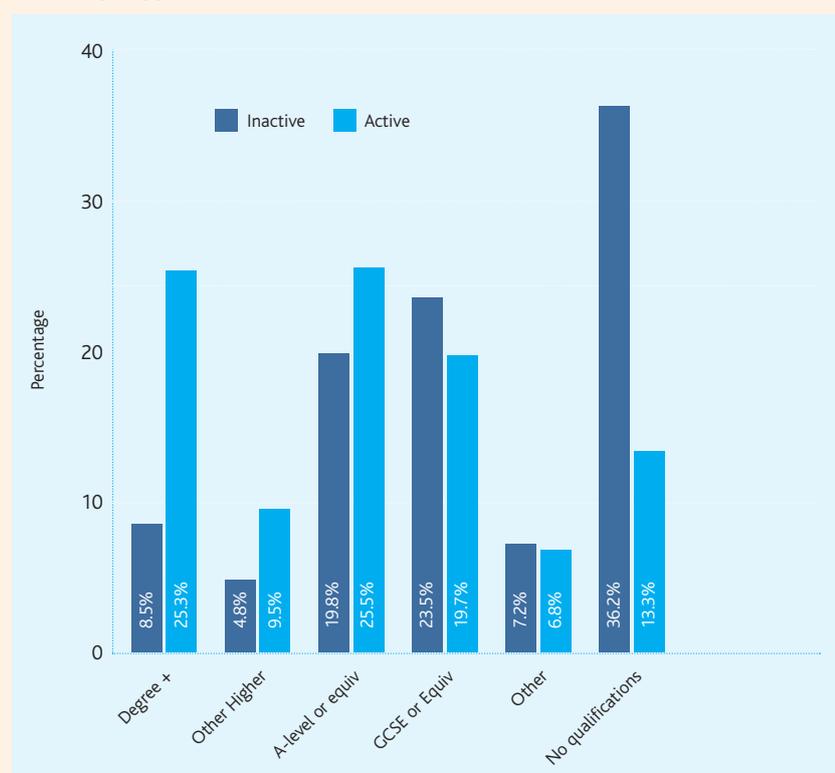


Chart 24: Percentage claiming Disability Living Allowance 2011 Source: Department of Social Development

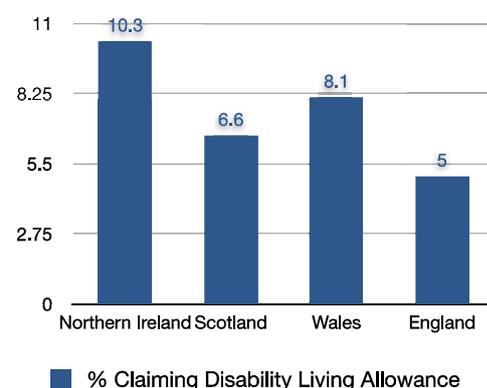
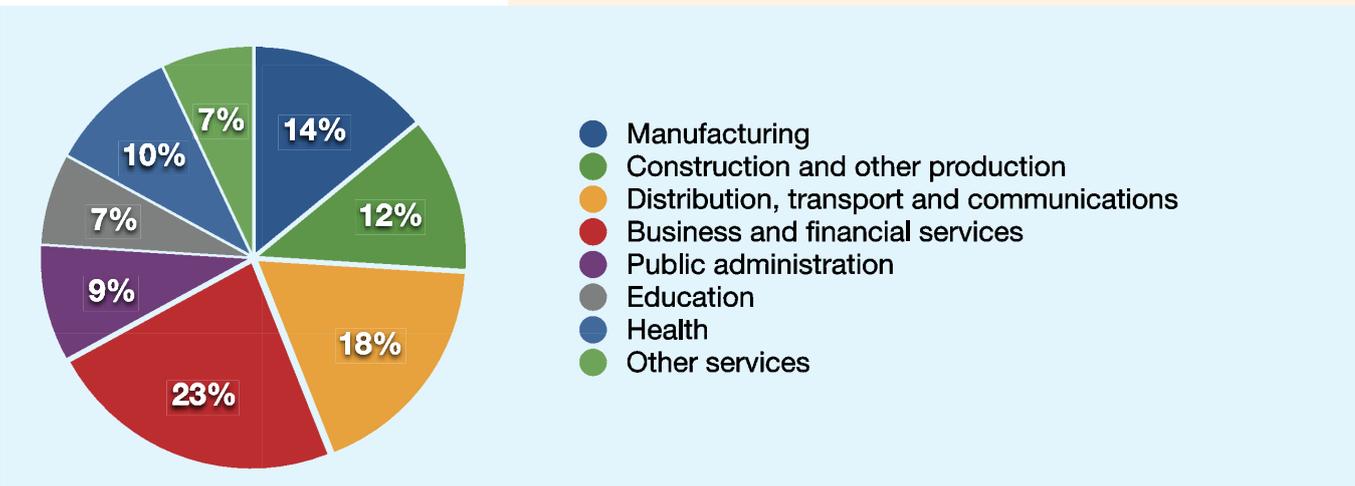


Chart 26: Highest Qualifications Northern Ireland and the UK (Source: Independent Review of Economic Policy, 2009, p.37, Table 2.6)

	Working Age		In Employment	
	NI	UK	NI	UK
Degree or Equivalent	19%	21%	24%	24%
Higher Education	8%	8%	9%	10%
A-level or equivalent	25%	23%	25%	24%
GCSE Grades A-C or equivalent	21%	23%	20%	22%
Other Qualifications	6%	13%	6%	13%
No qualifications	22%	12%	16%	8%
Total	100%	100%	100%	100%

Chart 27: Pie chart of GVA by sector:



In the international press the problems of the Northern Ireland economy have been overshadowed by the spectacular collapse of the Irish economy, and the IMF/EU bailout package agreed at the beginning of 2011. It has been observed however that in the longer term the chances of recovery in the Republic's economy are higher than those of Northern Ireland. PricewaterhouseCoopers in its *NI Economic Outlook Bulletin* in March 2011 comments that the Republic is better positioned to stage a recovery because of its private sector base, the skills set, the export tradition and the confidence needed to drive an economy. By contrast, the PwC indicators for Northern Ireland present a more pessimistic picture:

Chart 28: PricewaterhouseCoopers Forecasts and Economic Indicators Source: PwC Economic Outlook Bulletin, November 2011

GDP Growth (%)	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012
Northern Ireland	0.4	-4.5	0.8	1.0	0.6
United Kingdom	-0.1	-5.0	1.3	1.4	1.0
Republic of Ireland	-3.0	-7.5	-0.3	1.5	1.1

All projections by economists are qualified by uncertainties about the eurozone and global markets. In even the best-case scenarios, however, economic recovery may not lead to significant job growth. The Ernst & Young *Economic Eye* (Winter 2011) analysis of the economies of NI and the Republic projects that the two may regain their peak outputs by 2013 and 2015 respectively. Even if that is so, the projection for the labour market is much less optimistic. Peak employment levels, in this analysis, will not be regained until 2020 and 2030 respectively. For Northern Ireland, then, on a best case scenario the recession will have lasted 13 years. In terms of the peace process, the neuralgic point lies in the figures for youth unemployment, and the disappointed hopes of those who fall into the long-term unemployment trap. In the claimant count for November 2011 a worrying 30.1% of all claimants were under 25.

DIMENSION 1

The Sense of Security

An opinion poll conducted in March 1999, in the wake of the Good Friday Agreement, found security was the clear priority for most respondents (Irwin,2002). But while for the majority of Protestants the decommissioning of IRA weapons was most important, for most Catholics number one was reform of the police. A peaceful society is one that provides reassurance and a sense of safety to all in equal measure, including members of ethnic-minority communities. Can it be said that Northern Ireland has gone on to achieve that?

Racist attacks in Belfast in 2009 led to headlines in which the city was described as 'fast becoming the race hate capital of Europe'.

- Is Northern Ireland an inherently violent society? It has been observed in other conflict societies, like Kosovo, Guatemala and South Africa, that once peace agreements are signed other forms of violent crimes then increase.
- Domestic violence and sexual crime has been shown to correlate with violent ethnic conflict, suggesting a culture of male violence underlying political antagonisms. Is this true for Northern Ireland?
- How much security do the citizens of Northern Ireland experience in their homes, workplaces and communities?
- What steps are being taken to demilitarise the physical environment and provide a sense of security to all?

1. Overall Crime rates

1.1 How violent a society is Northern Ireland?

The European Institute for Crime Prevention and Control, a UN-linked body, produces annual statistics that allow for comparisons based on six of the most serious crimes: intentional homicide, rape, robbery, major assault, burglary and car theft. In the statistical tables Northern Ireland is positioned as follows (where 1 indicates the most serious level of crime):

- 19th out of 34 for homicide
- 13th out of 34 for robbery
- 11th out of 28 for major assault
- 13th out of 34 for burglary
- 18th out of 33 for car theft

(Source: Harrendorf, S., Heiskanen, M., and Malby, S., *International Statistics on Crime and Justice*, European Institute for Crime Prevention and Control, Helsinki 2010.)

Chart 29: Cases of intentional homicide, Source: Harrendorf et al, 2010

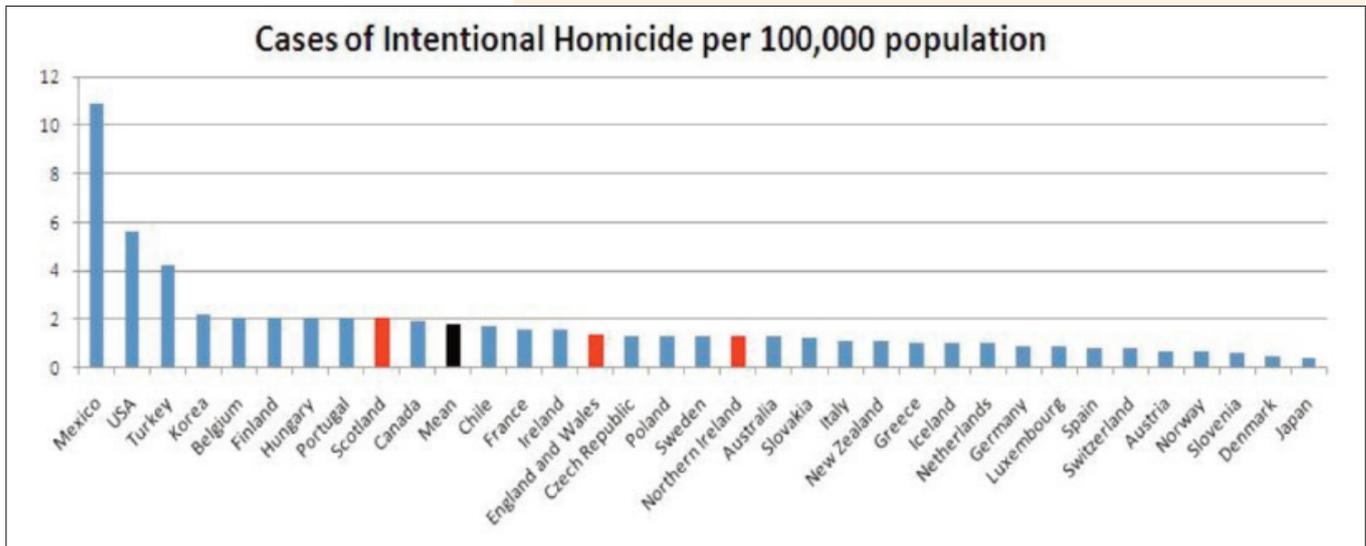
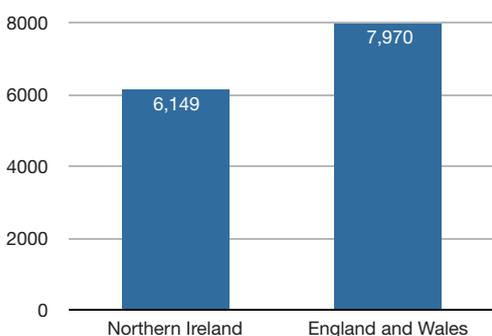


Chart 30a: Recorded crime per 100,000 of the population, Northern Ireland and England and Wales Source, Department of Justice, 2010



1.2 Comparisons with England and Wales

The most direct comparisons can be made with England and Wales as since 2001-02 PSNI has been following the counting rules of the National Crime Recording Standard (NCRS). Northern Ireland’s crime rate is proportionately lower: as Chart 30a shows, in 2009-10 there were 6,149 recorded crimes per 100,000 of the population, as opposed to 7,970 in England and Wales. In 2010-11 there were 105,400 recorded crimes in Northern Ireland, a further fall of 3.8% (Chart 30c).

The issue of undercounting

Not all crimes are reported and the process of recording is, in the eyes of many criminologists, a top-down exercise which excludes as much it includes. In response, new measures have been developed, chief among them the British Crime Survey and its regional equivalent, the Northern Ireland Crime Survey (NICS), which conduct a rolling series of interviews with a representative sample. It turns out that there is more reporting of crime in Northern Ireland: some 46% of the crimes measured in the 2008-09 NICS are comparable with

recorded crime categories, as against 41% in England and Wales. As to experience of crime, in Northern Ireland 14.3% of all households and their adult occupants were victim of at least one crime during the 12 months prior to interview, compared with 21.5% in England and Wales (see Chart 30b). To assess under-reporting the Policing Board commissioned a survey from Ipsos Mori in 2007. The stimulus for the project had been the unusually high levels of crime reported in predominantly Catholic areas in 2005-06 an increase of 11.7% in that period (compared with a drop of 0.2% in predominantly Protestant areas). Against the backdrop of antipathy of sections of the Catholic community towards the police, the survey found that Catholics were 42% more likely to report crime than a year previously, a finding consistent with another detecting a 25% increase of confidence in the PSNI (though there were geographical exceptions, such as Foyle).

A more recent survey conducted by NICS in Sept 2011 showed that the overall confidence rating in the police had risen from 78.1% in 2010 to 80.2% - the highest percentage yet recorded.

2. The paramilitary threat to security

On 2nd April 2011 PSNI Officer Ronan Kerr was killed by a booby-trap bomb placed underneath his car at his home in Omagh. The killing seemed all the more shocking because it was the only security-related death during the year. With that single exception, there was no other murder by a paramilitary organisation in this period. No member of the British Army was killed, no Catholic civilian was killed by a Protestant in any security-related circumstance, and no Protestant civilian by a Catholic.

Chart 30b: Experience of crime, Northern Ireland, England and Wales 2010/11
Source: NICS, 2011

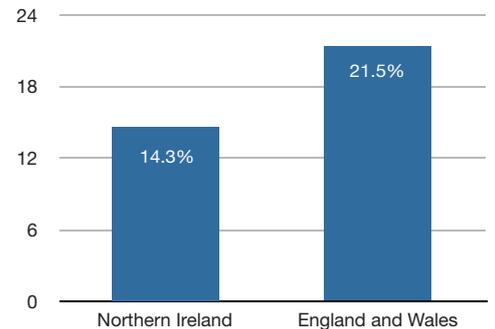


Chart 30c: Overall Recorded Crime in Northern Ireland 2000-2011 Source: PSNI Statistics

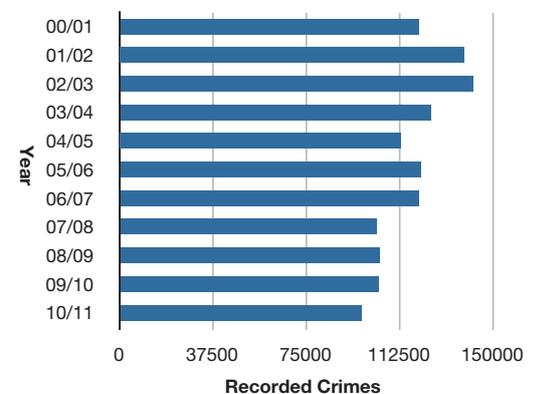


Chart 31a Long-Term trends in security-related deaths
Charts 31b: Long-term trends in shootings and bombings

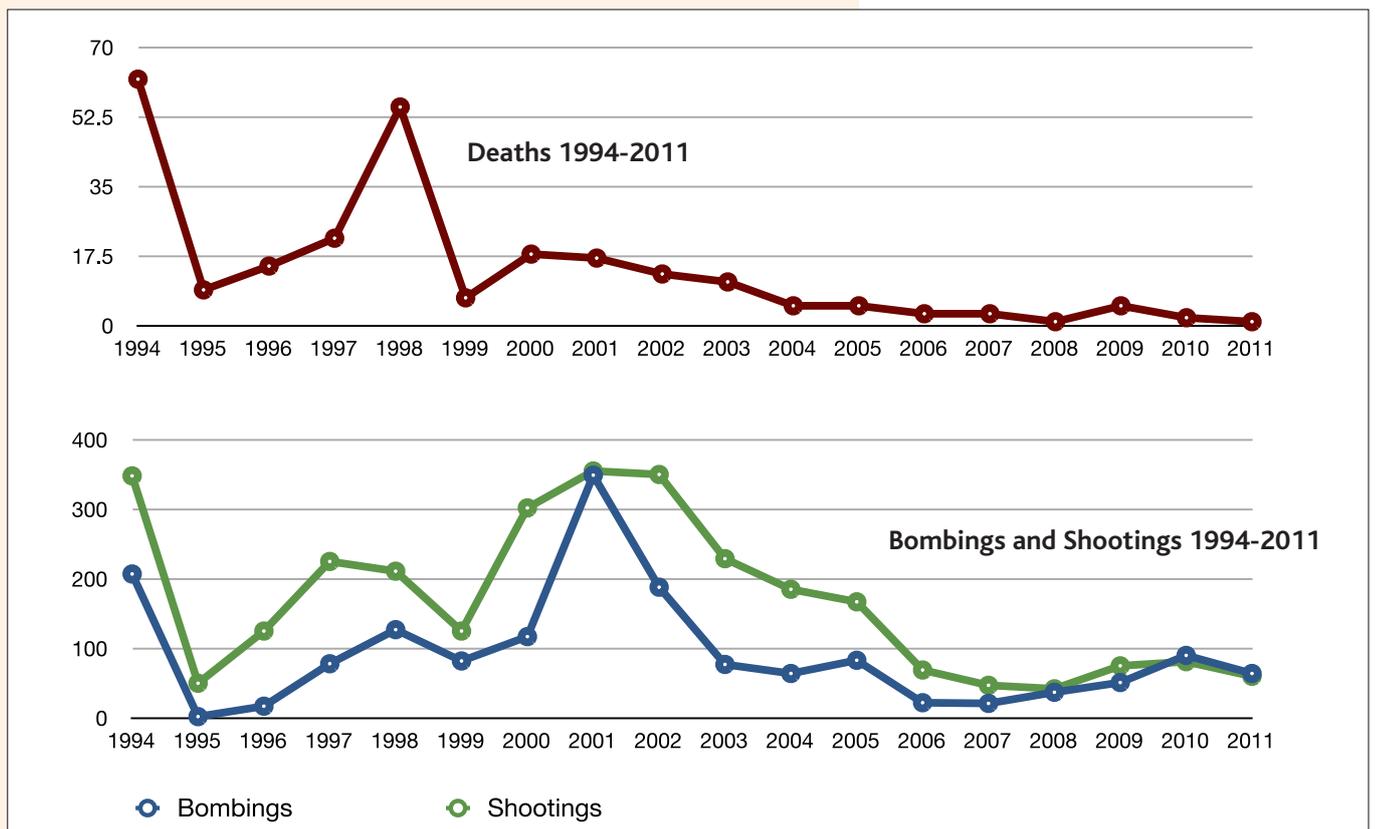


Chart 32: Paramilitary murders from the restoration of devolution in May 2007 – December 2011: perpetrators and victim

VICTIMS						
Perpetrators	British army	PSNI	Uninvolved civilians	Republican paramilitary	Loyalist paramilitary	Total
Republican paramilitaries						
PIRA	0	0	0	0	0	0
CIRA	0	1	0	2	0	3
ONH	0	0	0	1	0	1
RIRA	2	0	0	1	0	3
INLA	0	0	2	0	0	2
Unspecified dissident	0	1	0	0	0	1
Loyalist paramilitaries						
UVF	0	0	0	0	1	1
LVF	0	0	0	0	0	0
UDA	0	0	0	0	0	0
Unspecified loyalist	0	0	1	0	0	1
Total	2	2	3	4	1	12

- CIRA *Continuity Irish Republican Army*
- INLA *Irish National Liberation Army*
- LVF *Loyalist Volunteer Force*
- ONH *Óglaigh na hÉireann*
- PIRA *Provisional Irish Republican Army*
- RIRA *Real Irish Republican Army*
- UDA *Ulster Defence Association*
- UVF *Ulster Volunteer Force*

The security figures for the year show a decline in all forms of paramilitary activity. There was an overall drop of a quarter (27%) in bombings and shootings compared with the previous year, and a sharp decline also in the number of casualties from paramilitary attacks: down from 94 to 73, a drop of 22%. Taking all these statistics together the year 2011 emerges as the least violent since the police first began compiling statistics in 1969.

The figures ought to have been a cause of celebration, and yet there was little celebrating anywhere in Northern Ireland. There is a keen awareness that latent violence can suddenly become manifest, as it did in 2001 when the dissidents renewed their campaign. In recent years the government's Independent Reviewer on Justice and Security, Robert Whalley, has used his annual report to provide details on what are termed 'residual terrorists' (Whalley, 2008, 2009, 2010). The phrase suggests that the violence is a carry-over from another period, but the persistence of the dissident organisations in the period since the 1998 Agreement, coupled with the resurgence of loyalist organisations, suggests that paramilitarism is a phenomenon still very much of this period. In fact the Chief Constable Matt Baggott warned in September 2010 that the dissident threat was at its highest level since the 1998 Real IRA bomb in Omagh which killed 29 people. On 29 September 2010, the British Home Secretary, on the advice of the UK's Joint Terrorism Analysis Centre, announced that the dissident threat had been raised from moderate to substantial in its calibration of security warnings, an estimation immediately endorsed by the Garda Commissioner, Fachtma Murphy. An

indication of the increased concern had come at the beginning of 2010 when the head of MI5, Sir Jonathan Edwards reported to the cross-bench Parliamentary Intelligence and Security Committee that 'what was not anticipated when we went into this spending period was the way in which the situation in Northern Ireland has degenerated. In January 2010 the service had considerably more what we would call Primary 1, i.e. life-threatening, investigations in NI than we do in the rest of GB'. (Intelligence and Security Committee Annual Report, 2010-11: 11). As a result, Evans explained, MI5 planned to increase its spend on NI from the 15% given over in 2009/10 to 18% in 2010/11.

The extent to which the paramilitary threat in Northern Ireland has been impacting on overall perceptions of UK security can be seen in the position it occupies in the Terrorism Risk Index (TRI), published annually by Maplecroft, the respected global risk intelligence company. The 2011 TRI report places Britain as at greater risk than any other Western nation. The index, which looks at both the likelihood and the severity of attack, places Britain at number 38 in the world; this is in the 'medium risk' band, ahead of 'low risk' countries including the US (61st), Spain (53d) and Germany (62nd) (Maplecroft, 2011). The analysts made recognition of the fact that the UK faced threats from Islamic militants but, while these were seen as a real danger, 'the majority of perpetrated attacks continue to be committed by dissident Irish Republican terrorists'. In fact the TRI data records that of the 26 terrorist attacks in the UK between April 2010 and March 2011, all but one of them occurred within Northern Ireland. Figures such as these made Whitehall sympathetic to the appeals coming forward from the PSNI Chief Constable, and on 18 February 2011 an additional £245 million was provided to help cope with the dissident threat: £199.5 million from the Treasury and £45 million from the NI Executive.

Several independent sources backed the police estimate of the threat. The International Centre for the Study of Radicalisation at King's College London released a report entitled *Return of the Militants – Violent Dissident Republicanism* which stated that the 'danger posed by groups such as the Real IRA and Continuity IRA is at its greatest level in over a decade, and is likely to increase' (Frampton, 2010). But the seasoned journalist Ed Moloney provided this perspective: 'The violence committed by dissidents in the last two years could easily be fit into a two or three week period when the Provisionals were active' (Moloney, Belfast Telegraph, 30/11/10).

The International Monitoring Commission (IMC) was also quite circumspect. While warning that the dissident threat was more serious than it had been for several years it did so in carefully measured language, saying that 'in terms of weapons, money, personnel and support the present dissident campaign in no way matches the range and tempo of the PIRA campaign of the Troubles' (IMC, November 2010). The IMC also warned at that time that the loyalist paramilitary threat was not to be discounted, a warning made prescient by the events of 2011. The dynamics driving the two forms of paramilitarism are quite different.

2.1 The republican dissidents

The Continuity IRA (CIRA), the Real IRA (RIRA) and Óglaigh na hÉireann (ONH) are the main paramilitary organisations, but each of these has subdivided into factions. In March 2010, for example, the Andersonstown News reported that the Continuity IRA had split into three groups: one loyal

SECURITY STATISTICS (Calendar Year)

	2010	2011
Civilian deaths	2	0
Police deaths	0	1
Persons injured	116	80
Bombings	90	64
Shootings	81	60
Casualties of paramilitary attacks (total)	94	73
Casualties of republican paramilitary attacks	48	46
Casualties of loyalist paramilitary attacks	46	27
Firearms finds	105	160
Explosives finds (kgs)	3	32
Persons arrested under Terrorism Act (Section 41)	205	151
Persons subsequently charged	48	32

The security figures for 2011 show a decrease in all forms of paramilitary violence. There was an overall drop of over a quarter (27%) in bombings and shootings compared with the previous year, and one death (PSNI Officer Ronan Kerr) where in 2010 there had been two. There were no civilian deaths. All the paramilitary assaults using guns (33) were carried out by dissident republicans. Following the decommissioning of weapons loyalists use baseball bats or clubs for their punishment beatings. It should be noted that while the number of punishment attacks by dissidents is slightly down (from 48 to 46) the severity of the attacks has increased. Shotguns are now used by Óglaigh na hÉireann, and 12 of the 33 persons injured in dissident attacks suffered shotgun wounds. These cause more widespread nerve damage and the injuries can lead to amputations. Just over half the attacks were on those in the 16-24 age group. The clearance rate for these crimes was only 4%.

to the old leadership in Limerick, one loyal to a well-known criminal/republican from Ballymurphy in West Belfast, and a third under the control of a different Belfast dissident. Each faction has retained the title of the CIRA, and each has its own self-styled 'army council'. The other organisations are equally fissiparous, which means that the titles describe unsteady entities, and the distinction of being the 'main' dissident group is subject to rapid fluctuation. There are no clear ideological distinctions to be made, and the blurred lines that distinguish one group from another often have to be re-drawn as new groups emerge and allegiances shift. The killing of PSNI officer Ronan Kerr, for example, was first attributed simply to 'dissident republicans', but Belfast Telegraph journalist Suzanne Breen presented a credible claim from former Provisional IRA men, including some who had been involved in the Canary Wharf bombing of 1996, that they had been responsible for placing the device under Kerr's car (Belfast Telegraph 22/4/11). The same individuals, who wished to be known simply as 'the IRA', also claimed responsibility for the killing of two soldiers at Massereene Barracks in March 2009, and the attempted killing of PSNI officer Peadar Heffron in January 2010 – even though the former was claimed by the Real IRA and the latter by Oglai na Eireann. It is possible that some operatives freelance for different organisations, and possible also that co-operation between factions takes place as circumstances demand or as opportunities present themselves. It is also possible however that some claims are designed to mislead, and any analysis of the dissident groups must allow for a degree of dissembling. A security briefing to the Irish Times in April 2011 suggested that the PSNI, Garda and MI5 intelligence-gathering is no longer so concerned with the brand name used for press releases, and more concerned with which individuals are involved. The security source is quoted as saying: 'What's important is who did it, rather than what group did it'.

There are nonetheless some distinguishing features that identify particular factions, and the genealogical table which traces their histories also serves to explain the origin of the violence emanating from these groups. The main factions are:

The Continuity IRA This group originated in a split in the republican movement in 1986 when traditionalists led a walk out of the Sinn Féin Ard Fheis in opposition to the modernising wing led by Gerry Adams and Martin McGuinness. Those who left immediately declared the existence of a new party, Republican Sinn Féin (RSF). Following the IRA ceasefire in August 1994 a new armed group announced its existence in December that year with a 'business as usual' semtex explosion in Enniskillen, giving meaning to the term 'continuity' in the name it chose for itself. Having originated in a split, the organisation found itself weakened through a series of further splits and in 2011 the *nom de guerre* was used by a number of splinter groups.

The Real IRA In 1997, as the shape of the political settlement became clear, a second split took place in the republican movement. At an IRA convention in Falcarragh, Co. Donegal in 1997 three hardliners were expelled, and they went on to form the Real IRA. Their campaign got off to a disastrous start with the bombing of Omagh in 1999. A 500lb bomb was left in the centre of the town on 28 August, and the subsequent explosion killed 29 and injured 220, making it the worst single atrocity in the history of the Troubles. Forced into a tactical ceasefire, the organisation eventually revived its activities, announcing the start of a 'new campaign' in 2008. Its most deadly operation was the killing of two soldiers at Massereene Barracks near Antrim in March 2009. In May 2011 it placed a bomb in the Santander bank in Derry and also

attempted to bomb a Santander branch in Newry – in a subsequent statement these attacks were said to be in response to bankers' 'greed'. (Belfast Telegraph 26/10/11) The same statement accepted responsibility for a bomb placed at the office of the City of Culture in Derry. Political propaganda on behalf of CIRA is carried out by the 32 County Sovereignty Movement which has as one of its leading figures Marian Price, who served 20 years for her part in the bombing of the Old Bailey while she had been a member of the IRA. In May 2011 Price was charged with urging support for an illegal organisation after she addressed an Easter 1916 commemoration in Derry.

Óglaigh na hÉireann The title can be translated either as 'soldiers' or 'volunteers' of Ireland. It carries particular resonance as it was the term used by the old IRA which fought under that name during the War of Independence (1919-22) and then became the official title of the Irish Defence Forces, a title still in official use today. To choose it as name gives notice that the group does not recognise the institutions of the Republic any more than it does the institutions of Northern Ireland. It was in 2010 that the ONH established itself as a particular threat. On the 8th January a bomb exploded under the car of PSNI officer Peadar Heffron in Randalstown, Co. Antrim. Heffron, who lost his right leg in the explosion, is a Catholic, had been the captain of PSNI GAA team and an Irish language specialist within the police force. The ONH's capacity to strike was further displayed on 12 April 2011, the day when policing and justice powers were devolved. A car bomb was exploded at the MI5 base at Palace Barracks Hollywood. The car had in fact been driven to the base by a taxi driver whose family had been held hostage in Ligoniel while he had transported it. This tactic of 'proxy bombs' had caused alienation from the IRA even in its own heartlands when it used in the last stages of its campaign, but it was used once again in August 2011 by ONH to transport a 200lb bomb to the PSNI station at Strand Road, Derry. While eschewing electoral politics, the ONH were also active in the street disturbances during the 2010 and 2011 marching seasons.

Will the dissidents continue their campaign?

On present trends the dissidents seem certain to continue their campaign. As 'keepers of the flame' the dissidents' long-term purpose is to keep the republican ideal alive; in order to do that in the current climate they have evolved a number of short term objectives. These are:

- 1) To disrupt the liberal consensus and show by regular acts of violence that the Good Friday settlement has not produced the peace that was promised.
- 2) To drive Catholics out of the PSNI and convert it back to a Protestant dominated force.
- 3) To gain legitimacy as a community police force in nationalist areas by acting against drug-dealers, thieves and those involved in anti-social behaviour.
- 4) To agitate in contended situations, particularly during the marching season, in order to maximise adversity between nationalists and state forces, and to provide leadership for militant youth.
- 5) To prompt over-reaction by the government – ideally to force a return of the British Army onto the streets.
- 6) To build capacity to the point where a bombing campaign can be launched in England.

The objectives do not include any involvement in democratic or electoral politics. To the contrary, politics is foresworn. The dissident blogosphere is full

of slogans but is otherwise devoid of theory or debate. Without ideological distinctions to divide them, and with a limited set of objectives, it is likely that the dissidents will be able to sustain their campaign into the next period. But the visit of Queen Elizabeth to Ireland in 2011 was a virility test for armed republicans which the dissidents were unable to meet - no serious attack was mounted - and the tempo of the killings has dropped.

To provide some perspective, the tempo of the dissident campaign does not yet match that of their activities in the 1997-2001 period (see Charts 31a and 31b), let alone that of the Provisionals at the height of their campaign. In statistical terms, the number of security-related casualties for the whole of 2011 period (1 death, 80 injuries) equates to less than two days of the violence in the peak year of 1972. It is possible that the unity of all Irish institutions, north and south, in the face of the Ronan Kerr killing has had its effect. And the dissident groups been heavily penetrated by informers. Such undercover activity forced the IRA campaign to a virtual standstill in its final stages: by one account 8 out of 10 operations attempted by the Belfast Brigade in the early 1990s were thwarted (Phoenix, 1997). In January-April 2010 security forces reported about 50 dissident operations, including targeting and planning, had been disrupted. In the early 1990s however the Provisionals had an alternative political strategy that offered a way out. The dissidents have not allowed themselves any such exit.

2.2 Loyalist paramilitaries

The attention given to dissident republicans tends to obscure the persistence of loyalist paramilitary violence. The IMC monitored all forms of paramilitary violence in the period 2002-2010 and in its final report, issued in July 2011, it made the observation that: 'taking assaults and shootings together, until 2010 loyalists have caused more casualties than republicans'. In the view of the IMC the problem is compounded by the lack of direction shown by its leaders in the post-conflict situation:

In contrast to PIRA, loyalist groups are finding it very difficult to contemplate going out of business. Indeed, one striking feature of the changes we have described has been how PIRA, however slowly, transformed itself under firm leadership and has gone out of business as a paramilitary group while loyalist groups, lacking comparable direction, have struggled to adapt.

The UVF

In May 2007 the UVF announced it was to 'pursue a civilian, non-militarised role' but it did not at that time commit to decommission its weapons. That finally happened in June 2009, as was verified by the De Chastelain Commission, and the IMC's 23d report, issued in May 2010, gave the organisation a favourable report. Then in May 2010 the former member Bobby Moffatt was shot down in broad daylight on the Shankill Road. A specially commissioned report by the IMC, issued in September 2010, not only confirmed that the UVF had committed the murder, but also said that the organisation had been guilty of targeting immigrant communities in South Belfast with hoax devices, and of involvement in riots in West Belfast in early July 2010.

Further concerns arose in October 2010 when riots broke out in Rathcoole following police raids. The police activity related to an investigation by the

Historical Enquiries Team into the Mount Vernon UVF, an investigation very much resented by the organisation. Translink reported it put the costs of burnt buses at £400,000 (BBC News, 24/10/10) and the PSNI put the policing costs for the two nights of rioting at £78,910 (BBC News, 8/12/10).

As a result of the increased violence cracks opened up in the Progressive Unionist Party (PUP). Leader Dawn Purvis resigned in June 2010, saying that democratic politics could not be reconciled with murder, and in August Deputy Leader, David Rose, followed suit. At a meeting on 29 September 2010 the party decided that, despite the tensions created, it would not break its links with the UVF. David Irvine's brother Brian was elected as the new leader, and the party re-affirmed its commitment to developing working-class politics. The hope of political advance was quashed in the May 2011 elections. The PUP received less than 2,000 votes in its East Belfast heartland in the Assembly election, and only 0.2% of the total vote in NI. In recognition of the scale of the defeat Brian Irvine resigned as leader, and in October 2011 long-serving member Billy Hutchinson stepped into the role.

In the wake of the PUP's electoral defeat there was a resurgence of street activity by the UVF. On the evening of 22 June, at the beginning of the marching season, an organised mob came from the Protestant Castlereagh Street area to invade the neighbouring Catholic enclave, Short Strand. Estimates put the numbers at between 60 and 100 men. They were dressed in black and wore face masks and latex gloves to prevent any finger-printing. PSNI Assistant Chief Constable Alastair Finlay put the blame squarely on the UVF. The attack was the culmination of a build-up which had seen the UVF increasingly flexing its muscles. Paramilitary murals showing armed UVF men had once again begun to adorn gable walls, and statements from the PUP leadership expressed deep unhappiness with the ongoing HET inquiry. There were further problems in store in the autumn of 2011 when the first 'supergrass' trial for many years began in Belfast. Fourteen UVF men were on trial for the murder of a UDA man and the main evidence was provided by two brothers who gave evidence against their former comrades in exchange for lighter sentences. The picture they painted was one of an organisation that inhabited a culture of drink, drugs and serious violence – mostly directed against their co-religionists. As the trial proceeded more murals of armed men went up in East Belfast. The UVF leadership on the Shankill Road continues to espouse the 2007 strategy, but it now seems to carry little meaning on the streets of North and East Belfast.

The UDA

The UDA decommissioned its weapons on 6th January 2010. In May 2011 six of its leaders were treated as honoured guests of the Irish President when the Queen made her visit to the Garden of Remembrance in Dublin. In October 2011 a UDA delegation visited Washington where they made calls on the Irish Embassy, the Northern Ireland Bureau and the offices of various Congressmen. The fact the UDA remains an illegal body was quietly set aside to allow these peacebuilding efforts to take place. As an unarmed, but still proscribed, organisation the UDA has found itself existing in something of a legal limbo with no real sense of direction.

Having satisfied the De Chastelain Commission on weaponry in 2010, it still had to persuade the IMC that it was following a peaceful path. In its 22nd Report, issued in February 2010, the IMC recognised that the organisation was no longer involved in shootings or bombings, and in its 23d Report, issued in

Chart 33: Map 1 Number of casualties as a result of paramilitary style shootings in Northern Ireland 2010

Area Overall Shootings

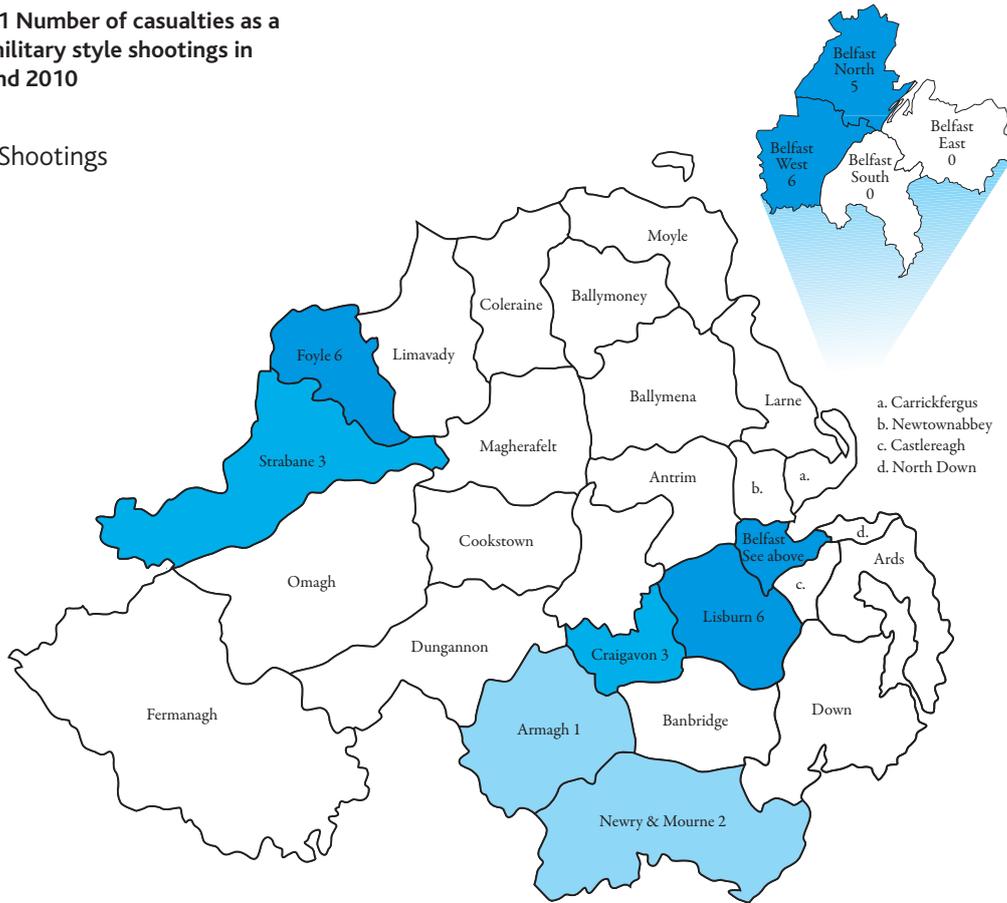
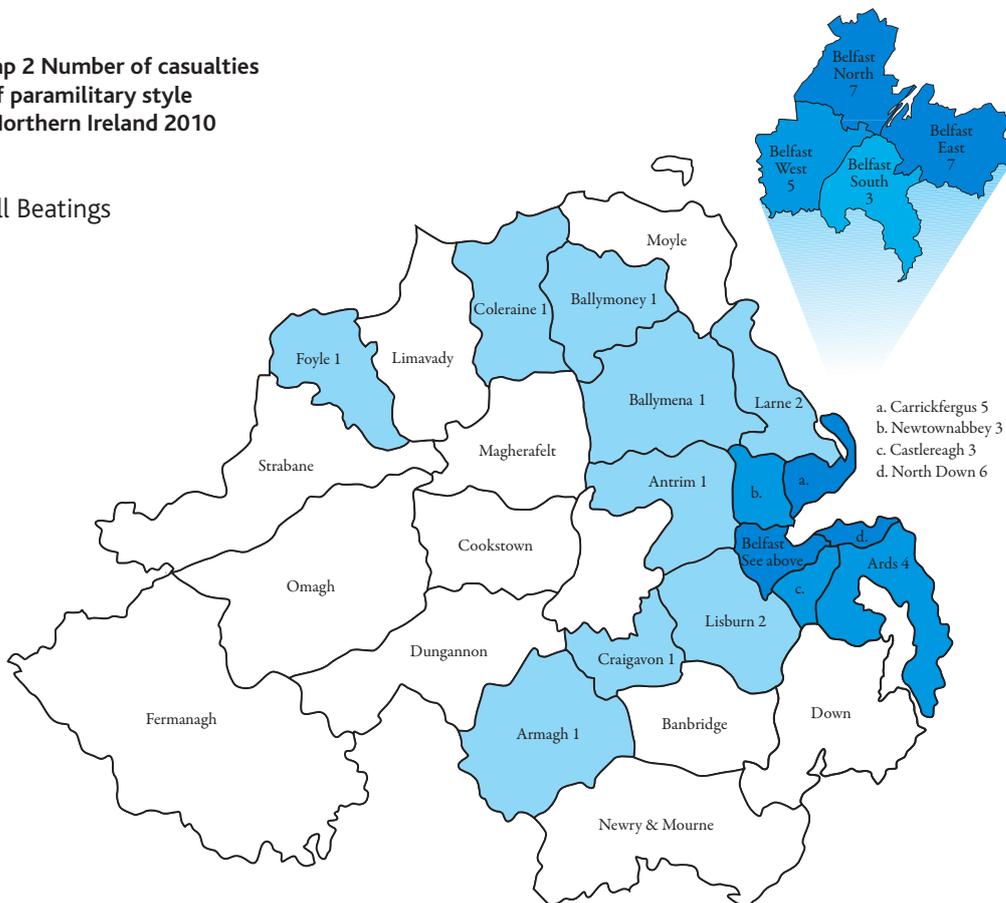
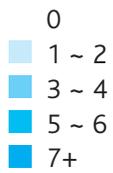


Chart 34: Map 2 Number of casualties as a result of paramilitary style assaults in Northern Ireland 2010

Area Overall Beatings



November 2010, further attested that the organisation had not involved itself in any sectarian attacks or inter-communal disorders since the January announcement - indeed, it reported evidence of the organisation working across the peace line to prevent trouble. In an effort to project its new face the UDA in North Belfast invited members of the IMC sit in on a meeting in a community centre in Tiger's Bay in September. The meeting, attended also by the PSNI District Commander for North Belfast and by a former IRA man from the neighbouring New Lodge Road, provided a practical demonstration of how the former antagonists were working cooperatively with each other and with the police to calm sectarian tensions. However the picture is by no means a simple one. The loose brigade structure referred to above means that different parts of the organisation have moved in different directions, and while ex-prisoner organisations have provided a role and a purpose for some, others have continued with criminal activity - 'some of it serious', in the words of the IMC. Significantly, as can be seen in the tables for beatings and shootings (see Chart 34), while the number of shootings has gone down, the number of beatings has gone up. In asserting its authority in loyalist areas, the UDA is still keen not to be seen in breach of its decommissioning commitment, which means that 'punishment' beatings have replaced 'punishment' shootings.

Another difficulty mentioned by the IMC is that recruitment has continued, a fact that the monitoring body found troubling. The fact of recruitment draws attention to the uncertain status of the organisation. It has not gone out of business, but it is not clear what its business is. Although its members may be made welcome in Aras an Uachtarain and win plaudits in Washington, it has not been able to turn that political capital into something more substantial for its members. Paid positions as ex-combatants in peacebuilding organisations have provided jobs for some, but even then the European peace funding that sustains such employment is of a temporary nature. The younger generation coming out of schools with few or no qualifications, and faced with workless futures, might choose to use the structures of the UDA to return it to an older tradition.

South East Antrim UDA

The South East Antrim Brigade was one of the six 'brigade units' of the UDA, but in 2007 split off from the main body and since that time has functioned as an autonomous unit. Its territory takes in such loyalist stronghold areas as Carrickfergus, Rathcoole, Larne and Ballymena. In February 2010 Gordon Brown announced to the House of Commons that it had decommissioned its weapons, but this did not mark the end of the organisation's activities. In October 2010 the BBC and other media outlets speculated about its involvement in riots in Ballyclare following police drug raids. The Real Ulster Freedom Fighters (RUFF) – a name thought to be a cover for the SE Antrim UDA – claimed responsibility for a pipe bomb found in a children's playground in September 2010, and for pipe bombs found outside Catholic homes in the same period. In total, 28 RUFF attacks were lodged by the PSNI in East Antrim in the 2008-11 period (BBC News, 27 /10/11) including a pipe bomb left on the window of a Polish family's home in Antrim.

The document *Beyond Conflict* issued in 2007 showed the SE Antrim UDA attempt to secure a new future for its members through peace funding. The proposal that it should receive £8.5 million in exchange for an offer to end criminality in the area met with public derision, and the eventual abandonment of that plan seems to have marked the end of the organisation's move into community development activities.

3. Hate Crimes

3.1 Definitional issues

Following the lead of the Macpherson Inquiry into the Stephen Lawrence killing, the PSNI allows the victim to determine whether a crime is a hate crime. In the PSNI diversity training programmes, however, officers are instructed that while the categorisation is perception-driven, any prosecution has to be evidence-based. Six types of hate crime are recognised: racist, homophobic, transphobic, disability-related, religious, and sectarian. The correct application of a hate motivation is not quality-assured by the PSNI’s Central Statistics Branch, but quarterly audits are conducted to ensure any under- or over-recording is corrected. The category of sectarian crime is distinguished from religion-based crimes thus (PSNI Report on Hate Crimes, 2009-10):

The term sectarian is understood to describe incidents based on a person’s perceived religion or political opinion. It is broadly accepted that within the Northern Ireland context an individual or group is perceived to be Catholic or Protestant, Nationalist or Unionist, Loyalist or Republican.

In August 2011 a disagreement broke out between the Northern Ireland Human Rights Commission (NIHRC) and the Northern Ireland Council for Ethnic Minorities (NICEM) over definitions of sectarianism and racism. The UN Committee for the Elimination of all forms of Racial Discrimination was taking evidence from lobby groups, and in its submission the NIHRC argued that sectarianism should be treated as a sub-set of racism, on a par with anti-Semitism or Islamophobia. This would extend the protection of anti-racism legislation to victims of sectarianism. The NICEM said that any conflation of the two would result in the concerns of ethnic minorities being crowded out by legal disputes on issues such as parades relating primarily to Protestants and Catholics. The committee has still to rule on the issue.

Chart 35: Overall trends in hate crime 2004 -2011

Motivation	Incidents 2008/09	Incidents 2009/10	Percentage change	Crimes 2008/09	Crimes 2009/10	Percentage change
Racist	1,038	842	-18.9%	712	531	-25.4%
Homophobic	175	211	20.6%	112	137	22.3%
Faith/Religion	23	21	-50%	15	17	13.3%
Sectarian	1,840	1,437	-21.9%	1,264	995	-21.3%
Disability	58	38	-34.5%	41	31	-24.4 4%
Transphobic	14	22	57.2%	4	8	100.0%

In September 2011 the Association of Chief Police Officers (ACPO) published a breakdown of figures for hate crime in 2010 across all 44 police services in England, Wales and Northern Ireland. These do not bear out the image of Northern Ireland as particularly marked by such offences. By population ratio, the region could expect to account for 2.9% of the 2010 total. In fact it was responsible for 1.9% (898) of the 48,127 hate

crimes and 1.6% (641) of the 39,311 specifically race-hate crimes. The figures do not make for wholly valid comparisons, since they do not allow for the lower minority-ethnic presence in Northern Ireland.

Figures released by the PSNI for April 2010 to March 2011 show that the increase in sectarian and hate crime has been reversed. Racist incidents fell by 18.9% (196) and racist crimes by 25.4% – the total of 531 was the lowest recorded since the data series began in 2004-05 – and sectarian crimes dropped by 21.3%. This downward trend can also be seen in England and Wales but the fall-off in Northern Ireland was steeper in 2010-11.

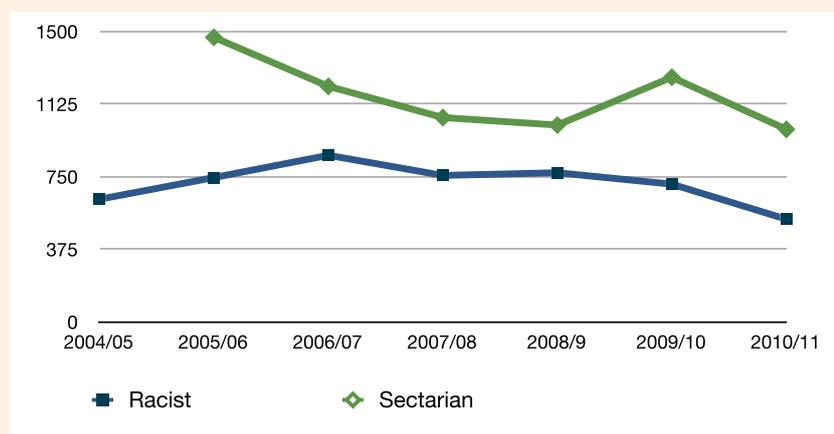
3.2 Racist hate crime

Racist crime has not only been falling but that pattern has been changing. The PSNI has been able to classify the victims of 86% of such crimes, categorised as black, white, Asian, and mixed/other. In 2007-08 the largest single group, white, made up 66% of the victims. In 2007/08 white was still the largest single group but the share has dropped to 54%. Of the 273 whites who suffered racist attack during the year, Polish immigrants were the most common victims, accounting for 88 or 32%, marginally fewer than the 91 Asians attacked. The second largest nationality in the white category was UK/Ireland, which includes Irish travellers.

Chart 36: Trends in racist and sectarian crime Source: Compiled from PSNI 'Trends in Hate Motivated Incidents and Crimes 2004/05 to 2010/11' (Note: the recording of sectarian hate crime did not begin until 2005/06)

Type of crime	2004/05	2005/06	2006/07	2007/08	2008/09	2009/10	2010/11
Racist	634	746	861	757	771	712	531
Sectarian		1,470	1,217	1,056	1,017	1,264	995

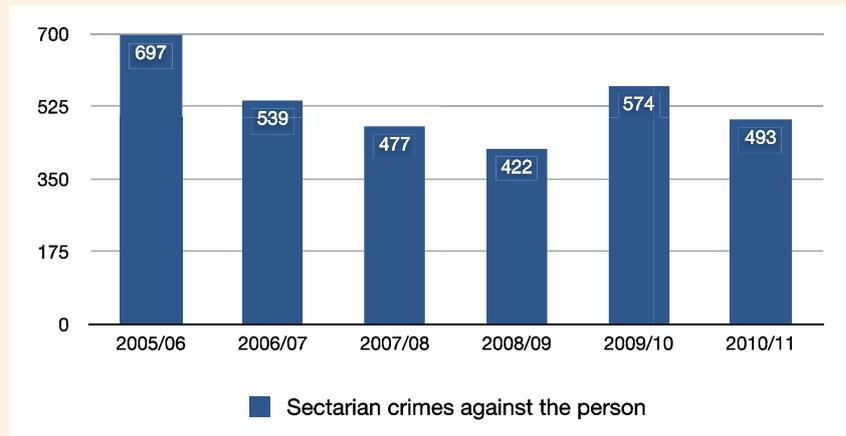
Chart 37: Trends in racist and sectarian hate crime 2004/05 to 2010/11. Source: Derived from PSNI hate crime statistics



3.3 Sectarian hate crime

Violence against the person accounts for half (49%) of all sectarian crime. In the PSNI classification this can account for minor offences such as pushing and shoving and, at the other end of the spectrum, homicide. In the PSNI statistics, therefore, violence against the person is broken down into two sub-categories: with and without injury. Taken together the total for 2010-11 is 493 offences, a decrease of 14.1% on the previous year (see Chart 38).

Chart 38: Sectarian crimes against the person Source: PSNI 'Trends in Hate Motivated Crime, 2004/05 to 2010/11'



The victims of hate crime are:

- mainly male – while 203 women were identified as victims in 2010-11 the number of men was 478.
- mainly in the 18-64 age group – there were 478 in this bracket, as against 110 under 18 and 25 aged 65 or over.

Attacks on symbolic premises usually make up approximately 90% of crimes against property where the motivation is sectarian. In 2010-11 the figure was 91%. There was, however, a decrease in each category of attacks on symbolic premises in the past year.

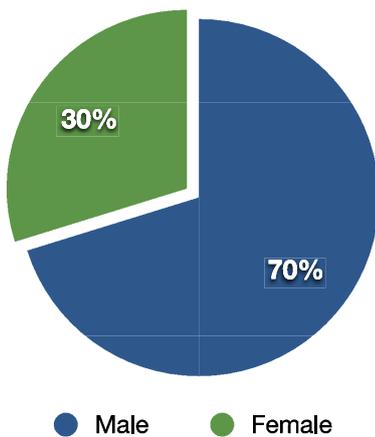
Chart 40: Attacks on symbolic premises (Source: PSNI Trends in Hate Motivated Crime 2004-05 to 2010-11)

Type of symbolic premises	2007/08	2008/09	2009/10	2010/11
Church or chapel	19	37	24	23
GAA or Hibernian hall	6	10	15	8
Orange or Apprentice Boys Hall	63	61	72	58
School	6	13	15	*
Total	94	121	126	89

3.4 Intimidation

The peak year for attacks on symbolic premises, 2009-10, was also a peak year for those driven out of their homes by intimidation. The mass evacuation of 96 Roma from south Belfast in June 2009 partly explains the increase in this period, as does a series of coordinated attacks on Polish homes in the Village area of Belfast following a World Cup qualifier in April 2009, when 46 people were forced to flee. These acts of mass intimidation took place within half a mile of each other and both were attributed to

Chart 39: Victims of hate crime by gender Source: PSNI hate crime statistics



loyalist paramilitaries. The incidents helped to increase the total by 194, a rise of one third on the previous year (580).

Analysis of the figures for those intimidated out of their homes (see Chart 41) throws up these patterns:

- For the third year in a row no victim said they did not know why they were intimidated: they are aware of who is behind their expulsion.
- In three quarters of the cases the intimidation is done by paramilitaries enforcing their authority in their own neighbourhoods.
- Sectarianism is also a factor, but a minor one (consistently around or below 10%) when the primary reason given is the threat posed by paramilitaries.
- Racist motivation has more than doubled in the last four years, from 41 cases in 2006-07 (5.3% of the total) to 96 (12.4% of the total). This can be accounted for by the intimidation of Polish and Roma residents in April and June 2009.

Chart 41: Numbers given homelessness status by the Northern Ireland Housing Executive Source: NIHE

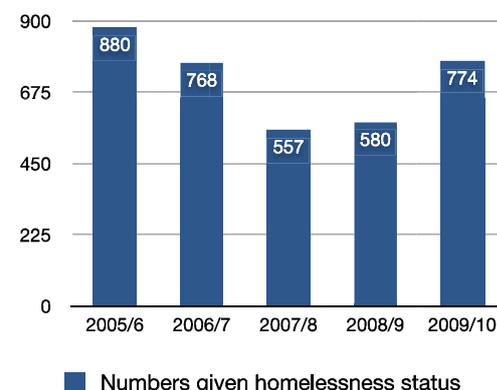


Chart 42: Motivation behind intimidation 2006-10 Source: OFMDFM Good Relations Indicators, 2010.

Motivation behind intimidation	2006/07	As % of total	2007/08	As % of total	2008/09	As % of total	2009/10	As % of total
Disability	-	-	28	5.0%	10	1.7%	13	1.7%
Paramilitary	448	58.3%	433	77.7%	453	78.1%	577	75.0%
Racial	41	5.3%	32	5.7%	45	7.8%	96	12.4%
Sectarian	67	8.7%	53	9.5%	61	10.5%	75	9.7%
No motivation stated	197	25.7%	0	0	0	0	0	0

3.5 Other forms of hate crime

While there have been decreases in sectarian and racist crime, and a decrease also in disability-related hate crime, there have been increases in three other categories. The three that have increased are: homophobic, transphobic, and faith/religion crimes.

Homophobic crime

Chart 43a: Trends in homophobic motivated incidents and crimes 2004-05 to 2010/11

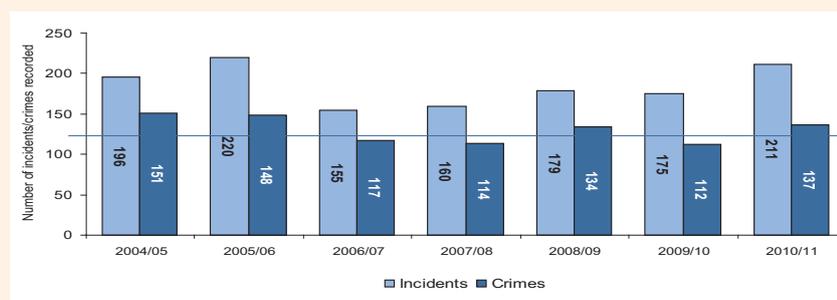
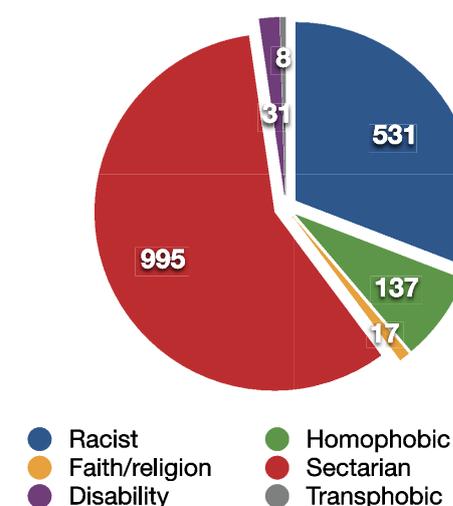


Chart 43: Hate crimes by category Source: PSNI hate crime statistics, 2010/11

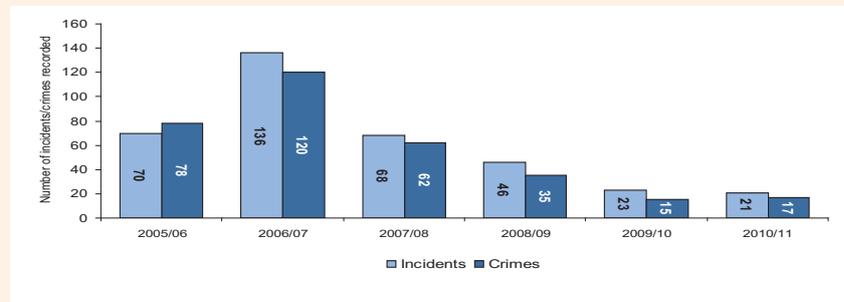


In 2010-11 homophobic incidents rose by 36 (20.6%) and homophobic crimes increased from 112 to 137 (22.3%). These figures must be considered a considerable under-estimate. According to the research report *Through Our Eyes* (2011), sponsored by the Rainbow Coalition and the PSNI, 64% of homophobic incidents in the previous three years were never reported. The increased co-operation between the PSNI and the LGBT community in initiatives like Unite Against Hate and the PSNI LGBT Independent Advisory Board may mean that the increased figures are the result of increased reporting.

Faith/religion crimes

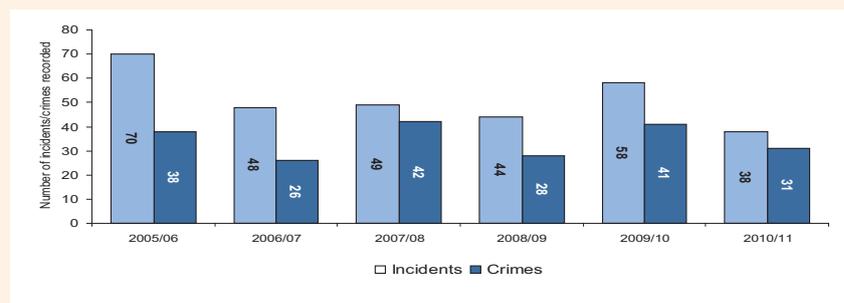
The long-term decline presented in this chart may not represent a change in the patterns of behaviour so much as an increased rigour in the attribution of motive in the cases of crimes involving places of worship or persons of religious belief. Using the present criteria incidents (21) and crimes (17) are both at the lowest level since data sets began.

Chart 43b: Trends in faith/religion motivated incidents and crimes, 2005/06 to 2010/11



Disability crime

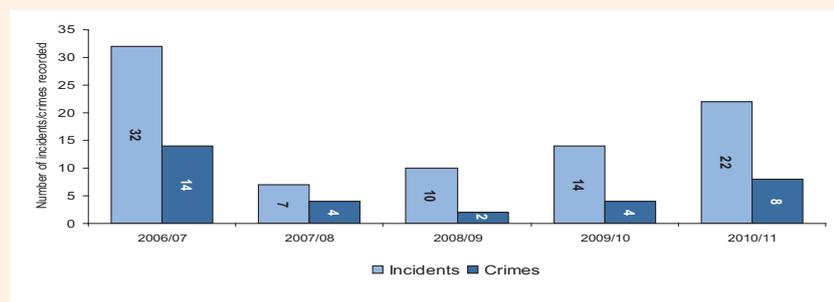
Chart 44c: Trends in disability-related crime 2005/06 to 2010/11



Disability incidents fell by 20 (34.5%), the lowest since disability crime was first recorded in 2005-06. Disability crimes fell by 10, bringing the total to 31 – not as low as the 2006-07 figure of 26.

Transphobic crimes

Chart 43d: Trends in transphobic crimes 2006/07 to 2010/11



The number of transphobic crime is relatively small and this means an increase of four represents a 50% rise. Over a longer time frame however, from 2007-08 to 2010-11, the trend is a consistent increase in incidents and crimes.

Source for 43a, b, c, d: PSNI Trends in Hate Crime Statistics, 2011

3.6 Domestic violence

Where there are high levels of political violence it is taken that a correlation with sexual violence and domestic violence is likely. The truth is hard to establish in Northern Ireland, since these crimes are under-reported. This is not simply to do with attitudes to the police: it is also to do with attitudes to the crime. A NISRA analysis of Northern Ireland Crime Survey statistics on domestic violence showed that only 52% of victims considered their 'worst' incident to constitute a crime; a further 26% considered that it was 'wrong, but not a crime' and a further 18% considered that it was 'just something that happened'. These attitudes have not been confined to the victims. A 2010 report by the Criminal Justice Inspectorate said:

Historically, a culture of referring to such incidents as 'just another domestic' existed in justice organisations and such offences were not always taken seriously.

There is evidence that reporting of domestic violence has considerably increased. The NICS shows that in 2001-02 only 14% of victims reported their 'worst' incident but by 2007-08 that had risen to 25%. Efforts to shift the culture surrounding domestic violence within the criminal justice system include the following:

- a Domestic Abuse Thematic Review by the Human Rights Committee of the Northern Ireland Policing Board in 2009, updated in May 2011;
- a review published in December 2010 by the Criminal Justice Inspectorate of how the criminal justice system responds to domestic abuse, including recommendations for improvements;
- a rewriting of the PSNI policy directive Police Response to Domestic Incidents to contain guidance relevant to minority-ethnic victims;

- creation of Multi-Agency Risk Assessment Conferences across Northern Ireland, to bring together multi-sectoral expertise, and
- the appointment of a Domestic Abuse Champion within the PSNI.

These reforms have not as yet had any significant impact on the crime statistics issued by the PSNI. The number of domestic abuse crimes has hovered around 10,000 per year for the past decade, and the last three years show it still close to that figure:

Chart 44: Domestic abuse crimes 2008/09 to 2010/11 Source: Derived from PSNI crime statistics

	2008/09	2009/10	2010/11	Percentage change
Total no. of incidents	23,591	24,482	22,865	-6.6%
Total no. of crimes	9,211	9,903	9,456	-4.5%
Detection Rates	37.8%	43.3%	46.3%	+3.0%

These figures do not confirm any higher levels of domestic abuse in Northern Ireland than in the UK generally. On the contrary, the NICS repeatedly shows prevalence below England and Wales: in 2008 11% of the population identified as having been a victim of domestic violence in their lifetime; the comparable figure from the British Crime Survey was 23%.

Rape

Under-reporting also attends the issue of rape. Analysis of the 2009-10 BCS self-completion module showed that only 11 per cent of victims of serious sexual assault told the police. The official statistics however show a sharp increase in rape over the past ten years: from 2000-01 to 2010-11 the number virtually doubled, from 232 to 550. The trend in indecent assaults has not followed the same pattern.

Chart 45: Rape and indecent assault statistics Source: Derived from PSNI crime statistics

Crime	98/99	00/01	02/03	04/05	06/07	08/09	10/11
Rape	318	232	357	379	457	404	550
Indecent assault on female	693	508	515	615	636	573	-
Indecent assault on male	185	155	118	132	159	128	

4. Policing and Criminal Justice

The agreement reached at Hillsborough Castle in February 2010 allowed for the devolution of policing and justice to the NI Assembly. It marked a key stage in the peace process – the phrase most commonly invoked was that ‘the last piece of the jigsaw has fallen into place’. A new Department of Justice came into being on 12 April 2012, with functions set out in the Northern Ireland Act 1998 (Devolution of Policing and Justice) Order 2010. The Alliance Party leader David Ford was appointed to the position as Minister of Justice as a temporary compromise. The most sensitive parts of his portfolio are policing, prisons and the role of the Police Ombudsman.

4.1 Policing

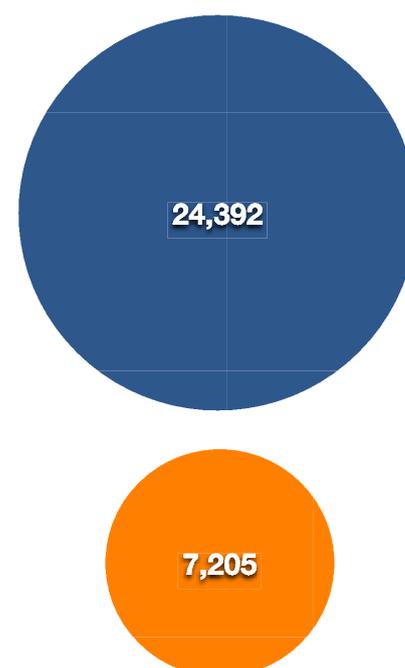
Strength and composition

The security forces have undergone a considerable downsizing since the Belfast Agreement. The total security presence in 1998, combining RUC and British Army personnel, was 24,392. In 2011 the PSNI provides a policing service with 7,216 full-time officers. That still leaves Northern Ireland with more police per head of population than any other service in the UK or Ireland (Chart 47). Crime is considerably lower in the region (see section) but the Chief Constable, Matt Baggott, has argued successfully that more resources are required to cope with the threat posed by dissident republicans. In 2011 it was agreed that an additional £199.5 million should be granted by the Treasury over four years, with a further £45 million from the Northern Ireland Executive’s budget. This represents an increase of about 23% in the budget of the PSNI, which was £1.172 billion in 2010-11.

Chart 47: Comparative strengths of police forces in UK and ROI. Sources: Home Office and Dail Parliamentary questions

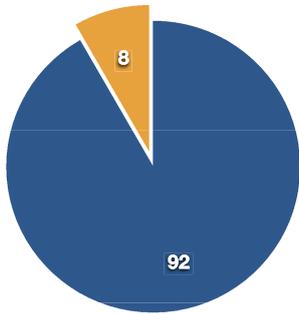
Country	Population	Police officers	Head of population per police officer
England	51,810,000	136,261	380
Scotland	5,194,000	17,339	300
Wales	3,000,255	7,245	414
Republic of Ireland	4,481,249	14,571	314
N Ireland	1,788,800	7,216	250

Chart 46: Size of security forces in 1998 and 2011

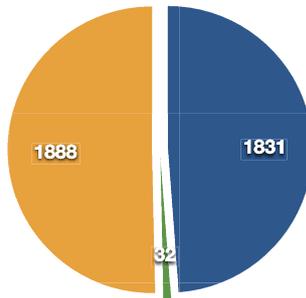


Catholics in the PSNI

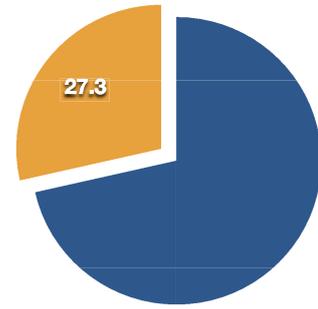
48a: Catholic Police Officers in 1999



48b: Recruitment during the quota period, 2001-2011



48c: Religious breakdown of all staff, 2011



● Protestant ● Non Determined ● Catholic

Chart 49: Percentage of Catholics in PSNI 2011

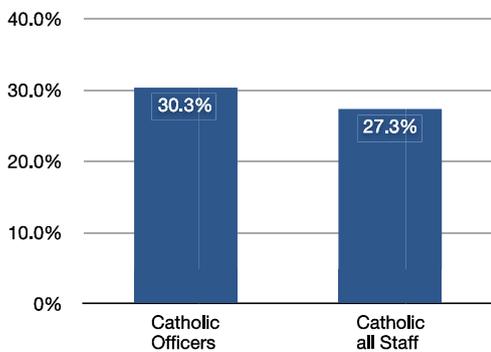
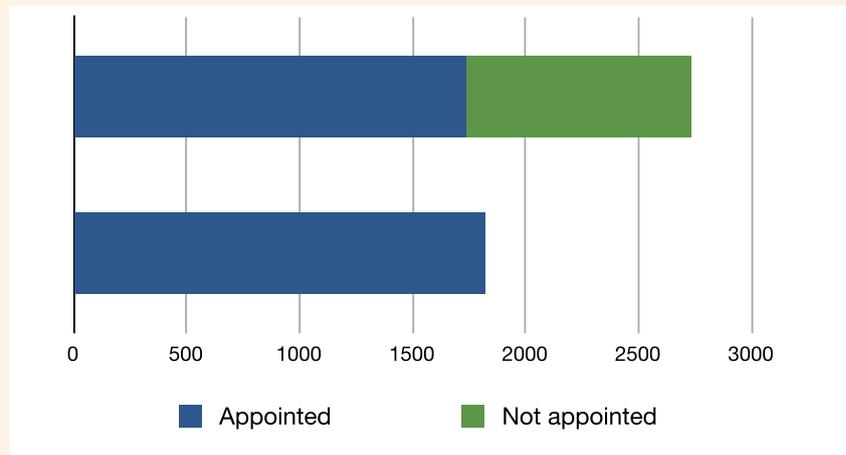


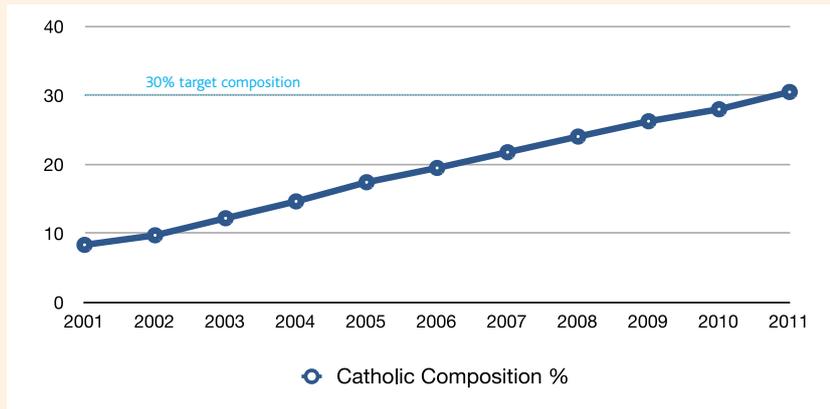
Chart 50: Protestant and Catholic appointments to the PSNI and the number of eligible Protestants not appointed



Religious composition

The PSNI still has a majority of its officers drawn from the Protestant community (see Chart 48a) but the number of Catholics has increased broadly in line with the recommendations of the Patten Report. A 50/50 quota was introduced into the recruitment process as a temporary measure, and was renewed annually by direct-rule ministers. In 1999, when Patten produced his report, Catholics made up 8.3% of the police force. In March 2011 the Secretary of State, Owen Patterson, said he would let 50/50 lapse as the Patten target of 30% had been reached – at that point Catholics made up 30.3% of the service. The tempo of Catholic applications had slowed, however: the proportion declined steadily from its peak of 44.3% in June 2007 to 37.4% in January 2010.

Chart 51: Catholic composition within PSNI as at 1 April each year



The decision to end the quota was supported by the Minister for Justice and Alliance Party leader, David Ford. The SDLP contended that the system should have been maintained, to help achieve the 44% Catholic proportion which would match the adult population. The DUP argued that the bias in favour of Catholics was deeply illiberal and anti-meritocratic, and had disadvantaged many well-qualified Protestant applicants. A parliamentary question tabled by the News Letter revealed that in 2001-10 the preferential treatment for Catholics had meant that none who had met the merit criteria had been excluded, while 945 Protestants who had met the same merit criteria (some of these may have been repeat applicants) had not been appointed.

Chart 52: Religious composition of the PSNI
Source: PSNI Central Statistics (accurate as at 1/5/11)

	Percentage Perceived Protestant	Percentage Perceived Catholic	Percentage Not determined	Percentage Female	Percentage Male	Percentage Ethnic Minority	Total
Police Officers	67.5	30.3	2.2	26.7	73.3	0.5	7156
Other Staff	78.1	18.7	3.3	63.9	36.1	0.4	2512

*Accurate as at 1/11/2011

For the Patten recommendations to succeed Catholics not only have to join the PSNI; they have to progress so that the organisation does not remain top-heavy with Protestants. But a disproportionate number of Catholics have left the PSNI after less than five years service. The religious breakdown is as follows:

Chart 53: Religious breakdown of officers who leave the PSNI early 2001-2011
Source: Response to Parliamentary question, published in the Belfast News Letter 19/2/2011

	Catholics	Protestants	Undetermined
Number who left with less than 5 years	154 (56.2%)	108 (39.4%)	12 (4.4%)
Number who left with less than 1 year	38 (57.8%)	24 (36.4%)	4 (6.0%)

The characteristics of the new Catholic intake to the PSNI have been analysed in the first full-length study, *Catholics Police Officers in Northern Ireland* (Gethins, 2011). This suggests that the Catholics who have joined are not representative of the nationalist population as a whole, being more centrist in their politics and more accommodationist in their attitudes to, for example, integrated education. In addition, sectarianism is presented as 'a significant part of canteen culture' (Gethins, 2011:186)

Monitoring the police: perceptions and complaints

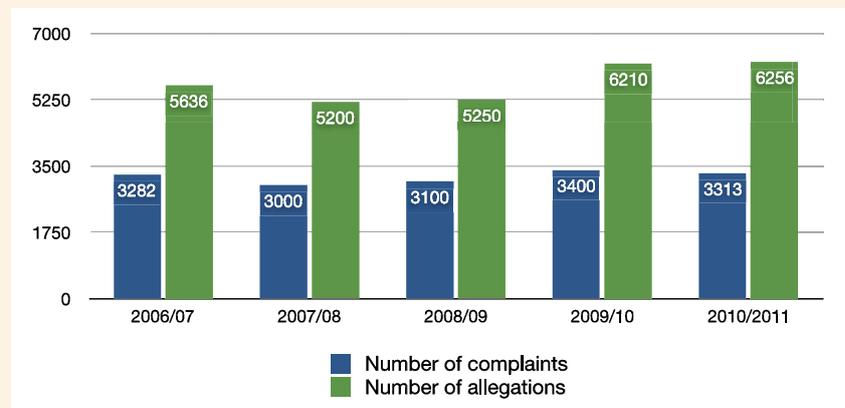
Confidence in the police has been rising. Statistics issued by the Department of Justice (Freel and Toner, Dec.2011) show an overall confidence has increased from 78.1% in the twelve months leading to September 2010 to 80.2% in the twelve months leading to September 2012. This is the most positive rating ever for the PSNI. In 2003 the figure stood at 73%. The increase of seven percentage points is equivalent to a percentage point increase every year. There has also been a significantly significant increase in the number who believe the PSNI treat Protestants and Catholics equally - up from 79.7% in 2010 to 82.7% in 2011. In their report the previous year Freel and Toner (2010) drilled deeper and found that the greatest difference in confidence concerned equality of treatment by the police – Protestants 89% as against Catholics 71%. As the authors point out, however, Catholics tend to have higher confidence in other aspects of criminal justice: 84% of Catholics, for example, have confidence in the Policing Board, compared with 81% of Protestants.

Those who describe themselves as nationalist are less likely to display overall confidence in the police (72%) than those with a British (81%) or a Northern Irish (82%) identity. The gaps in confidence do not always follow the religio-political divide, however. The NICS report shows a strong negative correlation between poverty indicators, such as high incidence of ASBOs or single-parent households, and confidence in the police.

Complaints

The Office of the Police Ombudsman for Northern Ireland (OPONI) received 3,313 complaints and 6,256 allegations in 2010-11, respectively 6% and 4% fewer than in 2009-10.

Chart 54: Complaints to the Police Ombudsman about the PSNI, 2006/07 to 2010/11 Source NI Police Ombudsman's Report 2010/11.



The number of complaints received by the OPONI rose steadily from 2004-05 to 2009-10, before dipping slightly in 2010-11. The increase over the previous five year period may simply be because there were more

grounds for complaint, but the 2010 report of the Human Rights Committee of the Policing Board suggested that the increase could be attributable to the 'normalisation' of policing and the processes of criminal justice. In 2001/02 almost half of all complaints were about oppressive police behaviour; by 2010/11 this had dropped to 30.4%. Complaints about failure of duty meanwhile moved in the opposite direction, up from 23% in 2001-02 to 39.4% in 2010/11.

Chart 55: Long-term changes in the nature of complaints about the police:
Source: OPONI Long-term Trends Report, 2010 / Annual Report 2010-11

Nature of complaint	2001/02	2010/11
Failure of duty	23%	39.4%
Oppressive behaviour	49%	30.4%
Incivility	13%	10.9%
Other	14%	19.3%

One explanation offered by the PSNI for the increase in 'failure of duty' complaints is that the police often have to be chary in their response to minor incidents, such as a break-in or a broken window, in case they are traps set by dissidents. But in many cases this caution is seen as failure to respond. An alternative explanation is that the PSNI has still not made the transition to community policing, and such lack of responsiveness may provide opportunities for paramilitaries to assume the mantle of 'community police'. This argument is supported by survey evidence in a report by the University of Ulster criminologist John Topping. In *Paramilitary Entrepreneurs? The Competing Imperatives of Policing Provision in Northern Ireland* (Topping 2011), he says that 'police inertia' is leading to widespread dissatisfaction in working-class areas. The proportion of complaints stemming from socially disadvantaged communities would support this.

The use of stop-and-search powers

The PSNI have additional powers to 'stop, search and arrest persons, to enter premises and to seize items'. The Justice and Security (Northern Ireland) Act provides for their scrutiny by an Independent Reviewer – a role undertaken since May 2008 by Robert Whalley. In his third report, issued in November 2010, he drew attention to a sharp increase in stop and search under section 21 of the act. Comparing August-July in successive years, the figures were as follows:

Chart 56: Increase in the use of JSA Section 21 Stop and Search powers, 2008-09 to 2009-10. Source: Third Report of the Independent Reviewer, Robert Whalley, November 2010.

	Average per month	Total for the year
2008/09	69	829
2009/10	560	6,728

Use of the controversial power under Section 44 TACT, which allowed a police officer to stop and search a person even without the 'reasonable suspicion' that the person was a terrorist or had committed a terrorist-related offence

Of the 45,394 persons stopped, searched and/or questioned under the PACT, TACT and JSA during 2010/11 there were only 1,705 arrests made - no more than 4%.

was suspended by the Home Office in July 2010 after the European Court of Human Rights ruled it to be an unlawful interference in the rights of the individual. Following its suspension, there was an increase in the use of Section 24 of the Justice and Security Act, which allows for a similar power, in that again police can use stop and search without any requirement for reasonable suspicion of terrorist activity. Whalley's report shows an increase in the use of Section 24 JSA from 1,163 to 16,023 in 2009-10 – **an increase of 1,277%.**

While Whalley is prepared to accept that the use of these powers may have been necessary given the terrorist threat, the 2010/11 Human Rights Report of the Northern Ireland Policing Board shows the use of the powers have been singularly ineffective in the arrest of terrorists. Of the 45,394 persons stopped, searched and/or questioned under the PACT, TACT and JSA during 2010/11 there were only 1,705 arrests made - no more than 4%. The degree of alienation amongst young people must be considerable. An analysis by age of all the stop statistics for July-September 2011 showed that nearly 40% of them were of the 18-25 age group (Human Rights Report, NIPB, 2010/11:34). The Office of the Police Ombudsman in its Equality Monitoring Report (2006-2011) noted that there was a 14% increase in complaints about the police, and also that men younger than 24 are the group most likely to complain about the police.

These figures took on extra significance in light of the August 2011 riots in England. Research by the Guardian in conjunction with LSE showed that of those charged with attacking the police 73% had been subject to stop and search in the previous 12 months. Whalley returned to the theme of alienation in his 2011 report. He recorded that for some, the use of these powers was now, more than ever, 'holding back the progress towards a normal society'. He concluded once more, however, that the use of stop-and-search powers was justified. He said the Protection of Freedoms Bill would provide a 'higher bar', with the powers only to be exercised in 'tightly circumscribed circumstances'. And he pointed to a fall-back in stop and search in August 2010 - July 2011. The figures show a decrease of 36% in overall 'stop' activity, although, as Chart 57 (below) shows, the pattern is made complex by the displacement from the Terrorism Act into other legislative instruments.

Chart 57: Changes in the use of 'stop' powers 2009-10 – 2010-11 Source: Fourth Report of the Independent Reviewer, Robert Whalley, November 2011.

	2009/10	% of stops	2010/2011	% of stops
Police and Criminal Evidence Order (PACE)	24,557	38	21,129	50
Terrorism Act (TACT)	33,073	58	435	1
Justice and Security Act (JSA)	7,891	12	20,372	49

The largest increase, as can be seen, was again in the use of the JSA, and there were extraordinary increases in the number of people stopped and searched under its section 24, which allows for stops in relation to the seizure of munitions and armaments. These can be conducted in public or in private and in 2010-11 there were 15,628 searches in public places and 395 on private property – a total of 16,023. Compared with a total of 1,163 in 2009-10, this represented **an increase of 1,277%.**

Two developments in 2011 are likely to erode the high levels of confidence in the PSNI expressed in the NICS survey. They are:

1. The controversy over the re-hiring of former RUC officers. The Audit Office revealed that the PSNI had re-employed 304 RUC officers as temporary staff, but by sourcing them through an employment agency, its recruitment process was not subject to the normal equality procedures. While described as temporary many are in the most sensitive areas of policing: 63 in Intelligence, 59 in Serious Crime and 19 in Specialist Operations. Nationalist politicians were quick to point out the danger of the PSNI coming to resemble too closely the old RUC.
2. The activities of MI5. Secret operations conducted by MI5, operating from its base in Holywood's Palce Barracks, have alarmed Sinn Fein. A series of newspaper stories about agent provocateurs and attempts to recruit informers have brought back memories of the 'dirty war' to republican communities. The party remains committed to its support for the police but leading figures have used media outlets to express the view that this support is hard to maintain in the face of criticisms from within their own community. As the Belfast Telegraph's Brian Rowan puts it: 'This is not a row for the sake of being awkward. It is a serious attempt to engage Matt Baggott sooner rather than later' (Belfast Telegraph, 31/1/12).

4.2 Prisons

The Northern Ireland Prison Service (NIPS) did not undergo the same radical reform as the police following the Good Friday Agreement. Instead, a series of damning inspections and reports led the Justice Minister, David Ford, in 2010 to set up a review body chaired by Dame Anne Owers. Her interim report, published in February 2011, said that root-and-branch reform of the prison service was necessary (Belfast Telegraph, 1/3/11): 'We found it had become demoralised and dysfunctional, resigned to bad press and routine criticism.' In June 2011 the Department of Justice launched the Strategic Efficiency and Effectiveness Programme, a four-year reform package described as similar to Patten in its ambition. In October Dame Owers published her final report, which set out 40 recommendations on how the prison service should be reorganised. These included a reduction in staff and greater emphasis on rehabilitation.

Chart 58: Annual Prison population in UK, RoI. Source: Molloy, R. and Moore, T. (2010)

	Total Prison Population	Per 100,000 of Population
England/Wales	83,392	153
Scotland	7,893	152
Northern Ireland	1,562	88
Republic of Ireland	3,325	76

Northern Ireland does not have a large prison population, compared with other UK jurisdictions (see Chart 58), but it does have many problems within its prison service. Chief are the following:

Overstaffing The Owers report revealed that the NIPS employs 1,800 prison officers, and 400 support staff, to supervise 1,600 prisoners. Even the high-security unit in Belmarsh in England employs only three prisoner officers (with back-up reserves) for every 12 prisoners, yet Northern Ireland’s largest unit, Maghaberry, employs five officers for every three prisoners.

Costs In October 2011, Justice Minister David Ford announced the cost of housing a prisoner had been reduced to £75,200, a reduction of the £78,580 figure for 2010 given by Molloy and Moore (below). The comparative figures for other parts of the UK and the Republic of Ireland are given in Chart 59.

Chart 59: Cost per prisoner, UK and Rol Source: Molloy,R. and Moore, T. (2010)

	Northern Ireland (£)	England/Wales (£)	Scotland (£)	Republic of Ireland (Euro)
2009-10	78,580	N/A	N/A	N/A
2008-09	81,340	30,370	31,106	92,717

Inefficiency The Owers report found the system inefficient at every level, with ‘managers unable to manage’. Between September and December 2010 three prisoners were released by mistake.

Oppressive regime The Owers report spoke of a ‘security-led regime’ and in October 2011 the Criminal Justice Inspectorate said the NIPS was maintaining a high-security regime for all prisoners when it was only necessary for a few. The suicides of three prisoners in May 2011 highlighted unacceptable deficits in care for those with mental health problems. Professor Phil Scraton of the prison reform group Action Prison said that the prison system had ‘gone beyond the point of crisis’ (Belfast Telegraph, 30/5/11).

Failure to rehabilitate The Criminal Justice Inspectorate report *An Inspection of Prisoner Resettlement* (October 2011) said that, despite previous warnings, the NIPS was not doing enough to rehabilitate prisoners. It estimated the annual cost of reoffending at £80 million.

Paramilitary prisoners Since 2003 the NIPS has operated a regime whereby high-security loyalist and republican prisoners are kept segregated. Intense disputes have broken out between the prison authorities and dissident republican prisoners, including one which led to a hunger strike in 2010. The number of paramilitary prisoners is small (averaging 50 in total in recent years) but the costs associated with their supervision are high.

4.3 The Office of the Police Ombudsman

In May 2011 the Office of the Police Ombudsman in Northern Ireland published an independent survey of public attitudes which showed support had gone up from 61% in February 2002 to 85% in 2011, an all-time high.

Chart 60: Public attitudes to the Police Ombudsman's Office 2011

Source: OPONI Annual Statistical Bulletin 2010/11

Public attitude	% of those who were aware of Police Ombudsman for Northern Ireland
Think that the Police Ombudsman for NI will help the police do a good job	85
Aware that the Police Ombudsman is independent of the police	83
Confident the Police ombudsman deals with complaints in an impartial way	80

Shortly after this report was published the credibility of OPONI was seriously damaged. Three damaging reports had been issued. The first, in June 2011 by the Committee for the Administration of Justice, queried the independence of the office and alleged political interference. The second report was commissioned by Justice Minister David Ford reported in July and found the Office to be dysfunctional in its operations and criticised the 'weak' leadership. Most damagingly, a report by the Criminal Justice Inspectorate in September said the office's operational independence had been lowered, and that the Ombudsman, Al Hutchinson, had lost the trust of senior colleagues. Mr Hutchinson was forced to announce a resignation date of January 2012. The OPONI has been an essential part of the new policing arrangement and essential also to the hope of uncovering truth about the past. The damage it has suffered represents a serious setback in both these areas.

5. Safety In The Public Space

5.1 Perceptions of safety

The annual Northern Ireland Life and Times Survey (NILT), sponsored jointly by the University of Ulster and Queen's University Belfast, tests *inter alia* attitudes to safety in neighbourhoods and town centres. The latest (2011) findings were as follows:

Chart 61a Percentage who see town centres as safe and welcoming places for people from all walks of life (1=definitely not achieved, 10 = definitely achieved)

2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010
31% scored this 6 or more	35% scored this 6 or more	44% scored this 6 or more	41% scored this 6 or more	42% scored this 6 or more	46% scored this 6 or more

Chart 61b: Do you see the neighbourhood where you live as a neutral space? (Always or most of the time)

2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010
71%	65%	66%	66%	63%	64%

Chart 61c: Do you feel your neighbourhood is somewhere you can be open about your own cultural identity? (Yes definitely, and yes probably)

2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010
-	90%	92%	92%	91%	90%

Chart 61d: Do you see your local shops as a neutral space? (Always or most of the time)

2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010
77%	83%	81%	78%	75%	78%

Source: Charts 61a,b,c,d, OFMDFM Good Relations Indicators and NI Life and Times (2010) Survey.

As will be seen from Chart 60a (above) the perception that town centres are safe showed a build-up from 31% (responding at 6 or above to a 1-10 scale) in 2005 to 46% in 2010, although only 5% feel that the target of making these places safe and welcoming for people from all walks of life has been 'definitely achieved'. Safety is a concept that still attaches most strongly to the respondent's own neighbourhood: approximately 90% express the view consistently that their neighbourhood is a place where they can be open about their cultural identity. That confidence extends into a more generalised belief that their neighbourhood is a neutral space (64% in 2010) and that their shops are too (78% in 2010). This perception does not tally with the analysis of the Northern Ireland Housing Executive (NIHE), which said in January 2011 that 'approximately 90% of social housing in Northern Ireland is still segregated into single identity

communities'. The NILT survey is of course representative of the population as a whole and not just those in public housing, but some respondents may be interpreting 'neutral' simply to mean non-threatening.

Security in the workplace

The wariness that attaches to mixed spaces in town centres is not so evident in attitudes to the workplace: the vast majority from both communities have consistently shown a marked preference for a mixed workplace and the vast majority of those in work have consistently expressed the belief that their workplace is a neutral space (results hover around 85-90%). The preference for mixed workplaces does not necessarily extend into an identity-blind willingness to work in areas seen to 'belong' to the other community: a sturdy minority would avoid applying for jobs in such areas. This reluctance shows signs of erosion, particularly in the percentage of Catholics who would avoid applying for jobs in Protestant areas, which fell from 37 in 2005 to 24 in 2010. The rate of erosion is slower amongst Protestants who would not apply for work in Catholic areas, but that too has fallen – from 36% in 2005 to 27% in 2010. Those who self-classify as of no religion are more reluctant to work in Catholic areas than Protestant – 13% as opposed to 10% – but again the trend is an increase in confidence.

Chart 62a Percentage of people who prefer to work in a mixed workplace

2006	2007	2008	2009	2010
90	93	92	92	94

Chart 62b Those who think their workplace is neutral (Always or most of the time)

2006	2007	2008	2009	2010
91	86	88	89	86

Chart 62c Percentage of those who would avoid applying for jobs in Catholic areas

	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010
Protestants	33	29	32	27	27
No religion	18	19	16	16	13

Chart 62d Percentage of those who would avoid applying for jobs in Protestant areas

	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010
Catholics	37	36	34	35	28	24
No religion	10	16	9	12	12	6

Source for charts 61 a,b,c,d: NI Life and Times (2010) Survey

5.2 Fear of crime

Each year the Northern Ireland Crime Survey (NICS) and the British Crime Survey (BCS) test perceptions of personal safety by asking respondents about their worry about crime, their fear of victimisation, and the effect of

Chart 63a: Worry about crime in Northern Ireland and England and Wales

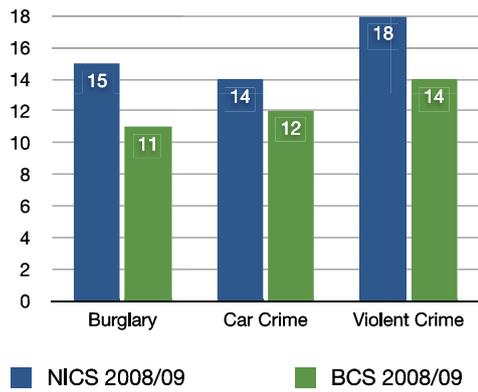
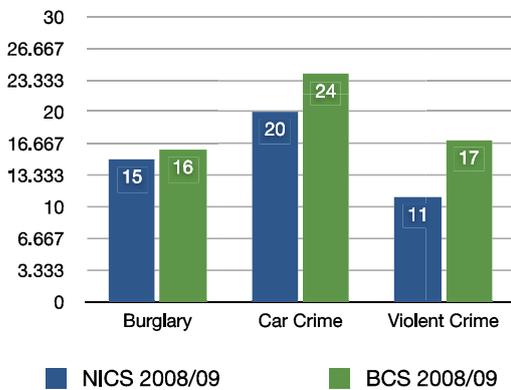


Chart 63b: Perceptions of the risk of victimisation



Source for Charts 63a, 63b: Department of Justice Digest of Information on the NI Criminal Justice System 2010

fear of crime on their quality of life. Despite lower crime in Northern Ireland, a slightly higher proportion of respondents to the NICS than to its British counterpart expressed themselves 'very worried' about crime overall (8% v 7%) in the 2008-09 survey. The difference was most marked on violent crime: 20% of respondents in Northern Ireland expressed concern, as opposed to 13% in England and Wales.

When the likelihood of becoming a victim was probed, however, this differential was reversed: Northern Ireland respondents are less worried about the risk of victimisation (see Chart 63b). Two-thirds (66%) felt that fear of crime had a minimal impact on their quality of life, while a further 29% said it had a moderate effect; 5% did however say that fear of crime had a 'great effect' on them.

A survey on organised crime published in January 2011, using the rolling Northern Ireland Omnibus Survey, showed that the vast majority (97%) thought there was a problem with organised crime in Northern Ireland and that 42% considered it very serious. Of those sampled, 71% thought paramilitaries were responsible. In the NICS, however, the more general concern was with anti-social behaviour. While the overall proportion in Northern Ireland who perceived it to be high in 2009-10 was similar to that in England and Wales (13% v 14%) there was a marked communal difference: Catholic respondents (18%) were twice as likely as Protestants (9%) to perceive such behaviour to be high in their area. And 31% of people living in the 20% most deprived areas (as measured by the Northern Ireland Multiple Deprivation Measure) were likely to view it as a problem, compared with 6% of those in the least deprived areas.

Drugs, alcohol, and lack of discipline from parents (70%, 67% and 62% respectively) were the three factors most commonly identified as major causes of crime. Only 35% included sectarianism as one of the major causes, and only 7% listed it as the main cause.

5.3 External perceptions of safety

The treatment of Northern Ireland in the international media continues to focus on the conflict. The coverage given to the riots in north Belfast in mid-2010 resulted in the governments of Australia and New Zealand warning their citizens about the dangers of visiting during the summer; a similar caution was issued by the US Bureau of Cultural Affairs. A year later, in the summer of 2011, the successes of three Northern Ireland golfers – Rory McIlroy, Graeme McDowell, and Darren Clarke – brought the international media back into Northern Ireland, but their attention was caught by riots in east Belfast and once again the society was associated with violent street disorder. The sense of potential danger has meant that the Northern Ireland tourist industry has never fulfilled the promise that came with the peace accord. While there was significant growth (65%) in the ten years from 1997 to 2007, this was built on a very low base and at its peak in 2007 the industry still lagged behind its competitors in the UK and the Republic of Ireland. The global recession has become a more significant factor than political instability but even in the boom years when air carriers were opening up new routes, the increased flights at Belfast's two airports were more to do with NI residents flying out to take their holidays abroad than they were with incoming traffic (Northern Ireland Tourism Strategy - Supporting Evidence, 2010). In Jan-Sept 2011 there was an overall increase of 6% in the previous year for visitors to Northern Ireland. The increase however came mainly from business

visit. The numbers visiting for holiday reasons dropped by 12% (DETI Tourism Statistics, 2012).

Two other indicators suggest external perceptions may not accurately reflect the successes of the peace process or relatively low crime. First, only 3% of GB-domiciled students were enrolled as full-time students in Northern Ireland universities in 2010-11, while 35% of NI-domiciled students were in GB institutions: England 17%, Scotland 17%, and Wales 1%. (DEL Statistical Bulletin 4/2/11). This even though as school-leavers they would have been making their choices in 2009, 15 years after the paramilitary ceasefires of 1994. Secondly, in October 2011 Invest NI, the body which promotes inward investment, had to return £17.5 million to the Department of Finance and Personnel as it could not find sufficient clients to accept the subsidies on offer (BBC, 5/10/11). This was followed three months later by an even larger slice of funds, £21.6m, being returned as takers could not be found.

The move towards a vibrant and peaceful society is assisted by tourists, university students and business personnel, and the comparatively low traffic preserves the sense of Northern Ireland as 'a place apart'.

5.4 Flags and emblems

The display of flags and emblems has been monitored over the past five years by the Institute of Irish Studies. There has been no significant change in the number on display or its duration (Bryan et al, 2011: 6). Public responses to their annual proliferation have been monitored meanwhile by the NILT survey. The 2010 iteration showed that while flags and emblems were intimidating, the level of intimidation experienced fell. Majorities in both communities believe that paramilitaries are responsible for street displays: 57% think union flags are put up by paramilitaries and 56% believe the same to be true of tricolours.

Chart 65: Paramilitary symbols displayed in September 2006-10 Source: Institute of Irish Studies, 2011

	2006 No.	%	2007 No.	%	2008 No.	%	2009 No.	%	2010 No.	%
IRA	9	4.6%	18	15%	12	10.35	10	11.1%	15	15%
Red Hand Commando	8	4.1%	6	5%	1	0.9%	2	2.2%	3	3%
Starry Plough	18	9.2%	21	17.5%	28	24.1%	4	4.4%	4	4%
UDA	21	10.7%	11	9.2%	12	10.3%	5	5.6%	10	10%
UFF	43	22.1%	13	10.8%	10	8.6%	9	10%	3	3%
UYM	2	1.0%	1	0.8%	-	-	-	-	0	-
UVF	54	22.7%	32	26.7%	28	24.1%	41	45.6%	47	47%
UVF Somme	8	4.1%	0	-	1	0.9%	0	-	0	-
YCV	29	14.8%	14	11.7%	21	18.1%	15	16.7%	16	16%
LVF	1	0.5%	3	2.5%	0	-	0	-	0	-
IRSP/INLA	-	-	-	-	3	2.6%	3	3.3%	1	1%
Sunburst	2	1.0%	1	0.8%	-	-	1	1.1%	1	1%
Total	195	100%	120	100%	116	100%	90	100%	100	100%

Chart 64a: Percentage of people who feel annoyed by flags and emblems

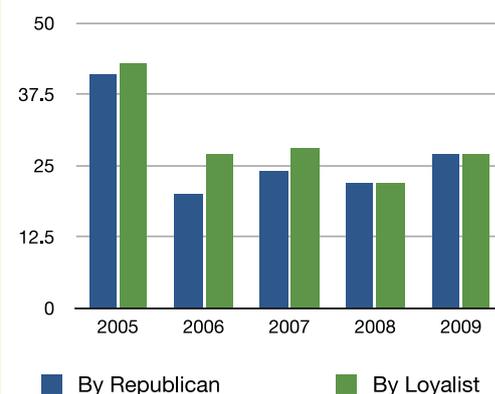
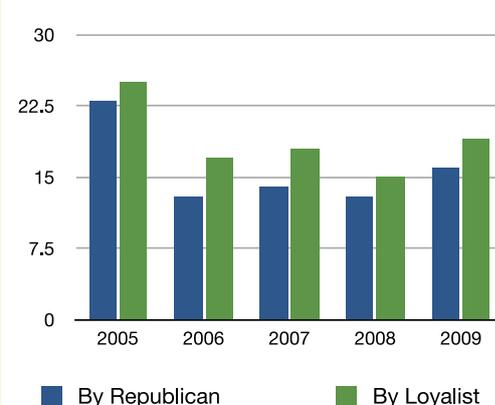


Chart 64b: Percentage of people who feel intimidated by flags and emblems



The audit by the Institute of Irish Studies shows that about 85% of flags and emblems each year are loyalist. The authors suggest that the annual displays are much more to do with rivalries *within* communities than hostilities between them. The long-running dispute between the UDA and the UVF is given public form by the way flags are used to mark out territory, often lamppost by lamppost, without active endorsement by host communities.

Regulating flags and emblems

The display of flags and emblems is subject to the Joint Protocol in Relation to the Display of Flags in Public Areas, the signatories to which are the PSNI, the OFMDFM, the NIHE and three government departments: Environment, Regional Development, and Social Development. Introduced in 2005, this was intended to guide public bodies trying to steer a course between respect for cultural identity and the non-acceptability of paramilitary or over-aggressive displays.

While providing a clear message about the unacceptability of some flags, the protocol leaves open how much stick and how much carrot should be applied to deal with contested displays, and how the collective responsibility of the public bodies is to be discharged. The Institute of Irish Studies suggested in 2010 that 'the working of the Protocol can best be described as patchy', and in 2011 that its aims 'have not been achieved' (Institute of Irish Studies, 2010, 2011). Within a month of the publication of the latter report the weakness of the voluntary arrangement was made clear through a dispute in Ballyclare. The PSNI had removed a union flag outside a Catholic church but when rioting ensued the police issued an apology and the flag went back up. Catholics in the area were incensed but the PSNI lacked any legal basis for the removal of the national flag of the UK. The protocol proved inadequate to this concrete challenge, and a new legislative framework is necessary to contain communal customs which show no sign of dying away.

5.5 Peace walls

The number of peace walls is regularly cited as evidence of the persistence of sectarian division. They present a hugely symbolic image of Protestant/Catholic antagonism, are easily photographed and, since the number keeps changing, they allow for a quantitative measure of how the conflict is developing over time. It is unsurprising therefore that they are used as an indicator of the state of the peace process, and for those who see the Belfast Agreement as flawed, they are sometimes used as the only indicator. It is possible however to place too much interpretative weight upon them. They are first of all, in the main, a Belfast phenomenon and Belfast cannot be taken as a microcosm of Northern Ireland as a whole. The rural situation requires a different understanding: there the absence of peace walls does not necessarily betoken a united community. It is simply the case that physical separation takes other forms, as it does in Derry/Londonderry where the River Foyle is the dividing line between the nationalist and unionist communities. The most important division of all, the Irish border, has no visible markings of any kind.

A simple count of peace walls therefore will not of itself act as a read-out of the level of sectarianism at any one time. None the less, even allowing for these reservations, they do command attention as one important indicator of division. Sixteen years after the first ceasefires the architecture

of the conflict – the army watchtowers, the city centre security barriers, the fortified border posts – have gradually disappeared. The interface walls, by contrast, have increased. In 1994 in the count made by the NI Housing Executive there were 22, but the number has now increased, with varying figures offered for the total. The Good Relations Indicators 2010 issued by the OFMDFM draw upon the statistics issued by the Department of Justice which are as follows:

Chart 66: Peacelines in Belfast Source: OFMDFM Good Relations Indicators 2010, Department of Justice

Peacelines	2005/06	2006/07	2007/08	2008/09	2009/10
	37	47	48	48	48

An altogether different estimate was included in the calculation made by the Institute for Conflict Research in a report commissioned by the Community Relations Council, *Towards Sustainable Security: Interface Barriers and the Legacy of Segregation in Belfast* (2008). The number of interfaces here was given as 88, and that is the figure most frequently quoted. The difference in the counts is largely due to a difference in the definition. The Department of Justice only counts physical security measures erected by the NIO, and by this definition the number has remained stable for the past three years. Those who work in Interface organisations however use a broader definition, seeing an interface as any 'boundary line between a predominantly Protestant/Unionist area and a predominantly Catholic area' (O'Halloran et al, 2004). This does not limit the designation to the actual walls built specifically for the purpose of keeping communities apart, but could include waste ground, open spaces and even road junctions. Once the focus shifts to rural areas, there are no peace walls as such, but as further piece of work conducted by Institute of Conflict Research for the CRC in 2010 used the term 'contested spaces' to denote the ways in which Protestant and Catholic communities mark out patterns of residential segregation. The typology included in the report *Beyond Belfast: Contested Spaces in Urban, Rural and Cross Border Settings* does not lend itself to the easy quantification of the different forms of separation, but the authors have compiled a table showing using a set of indicators to show the degree of contestation over territory in all the district council areas outside Belfast (see Chart 67 overleaf).

One significant development took place in September 2011 with the first determined attempt to deconstruct a peace wall. A gate was opened in the wall at Alexandra Park in North Belfast and will remain open from 9.00am to 3.00pm each day for a trial period. A motion from the Alliance Party at Belfast City Council called for all walls to be dismantled by 2019, the 50th anniversary of the first wall going up. The choice of Alexandra Park as a first experiment was a symbolic one. This is the only wall in Europe to cut through a public park. It also went up on 1 September 1994, the first day of the IRA ceasefire.

Chart 67: Indicators of contested space in district council areas outside Belfast
Source: Institute of Conflict Research report 'Beyond Belfast', 2010.

Council Area	Sectarian incidents 2005-2009	Attacks on symbolic properties 2008/09	Contentious Parades 2005-2008	Bonfire Sites (Yearly average) ¹	Flags of both communities 2006-2007 ²
Antrim	206	n/a	-	14	-
Ards	60	n/a	-	27-28	-
Armagh	104	9	24	10	3
Ballymena	397	4	56	15	1
Ballymoney	139	7	55	19-21	-
Banbridge	64	1	-	3-4	-
Carrickfergus	33	n/a	-	10-12	-
Castlereagh	67	n/a	-	18-21	-
Coleraine	272	13	17	15	-
Cookstown	83	14	-	20-25	1
Craigavon	158	12	269 ³	15-19	-
Derry City	452	2	12	19-23	-
Down	78	n/a	18	36	1
Dungannon & South Tyrone	79	10	-	10	4
Fermanagh	222	6	25	8-9	5
Larne	101	3	-	10	-
Limavady	88	1	4	14	-
Lisburn	145	n/a	14	21	-
Magherafelt	194	1	67	10	2
Moyle	37	1	-	9	1
Newry & Mourne	91	3	40	25	1
Newtownabbey	284	n/a	5	19	-
North Down	38	n/a	-	12	-
Omagh	60	1	4	15	1
Strabane	70	1	85	8	-

Note: not all the figures are for the same year. Sectarian incidents are the aggregate for 2005-09, while contentious parades are for the 2005-08 period, and the other columns likewise are for different periods.

1 These are approximate figures provided by local councils and include aggregated numbers for Eleventh of July, August and Halloween bonfires.

2 The figure relate to the number of locations in close proximity in each council area with flags of the two main communities, and not the number of flags on display.

3 The majority of these relate to requests to parade along Garvaghy Road in Portadown.

5.6 The marching season

Violence was more intense in the summer of 2011 than in prior years. And it began earlier than usual, at the end of June, when the east Belfast UVF led an attack on the Short Strand. The heightened temperature continued into July with a more widespread outbreak of disorder than in 2010, when the rioting was concentrated mainly in the north Belfast area of Ardoyne. The spread of the disturbances was as follows:

Chart 68: The distribution of street disorder in the summer of 2011 Source: Derived from PSNI statistics to the NI Policing Board

Dates	Location	Arrests	Charged	*AEP rounds	AEPs Hits	W'Cannon Used
20th June - 1 July	East Belfast/ Short Strand	29	23	143	113	Y
9th/10th July	Ballyclare/ East Antrim	8	4	39	29	Y
11th/12th July	Ardoyne	34	34	62	36	Y
11th /12th July	Belfast (excl. Ardoyne)	30	16	73	55	Y
11th-19th July	Portadown	9	7	21	17	N
11th-13th July	L'Derry	15	5	-	-	N
13th August	L'Derry	9	4	-	-	N
Totals		134	93	338	250	

The overall comparisons with 2010 are as follows:

Chart 69: Comparative figures for the marching season, 2010 and 2011. Source: Derived from PSNI briefing papers to the NI Policing Board, 2010 and 14/10/11.

	2010	2011
PSNI injured	83	55
Arrests	66	134
*AEP rounds fired	143	338
Petrol bombs	125	N/A
Total policing bill	£3,679,000	£6,036,000

By way of comparison, policing costs in London for the August 2011 riots were put at £74 million by the Metropolitan Police (Guardian, 25/10/11), significantly less per head of the population than the £6 million for Northern Ireland.

**Note: An AEP is an Attenuating Energy Projectile, a kinetic weapon brought in to replace the plastic bullet.*

Note: The figures presented to the Policing Board in October 2011 were only for costs directly associated with marches and these were put at £5.7 million for the year. The costs of the disorder in Short Strand / east Belfast in June and the disturbances in Ballyclare / east Antrim were not included in this total as the disturbances did not arise from marches. In response to a Freedom of Information request (F-2011-0202) the PSNI estimated the costs of policing the east Belfast disturbances at £336,231. This has been added to the total of £5.7 million to give the total of £6,036,000. The costs of the Ballyclare / east Antrim disturbances are not known.

6. Building Confidence In The Public Space

6.1 Softening sectarianism

Public bodies have attempted to drain the toxicity out of popular communal traditions, such as bonfires and mural paintings, by engaging with communities and encouraging less sectarian expressions of these same cultural forms. Two projects to attempt this approach are:

Taming the bonfires

The bonfires lit on the night of 11th July are in fact illegal, but district councils in Northern Ireland have been offering sponsorship for a modified and less sectarian version of what is a deeply embedded tradition in the Protestant community. The first 'bonfire management programme' was initiated by Belfast City Council (BCC) in 2005, with Antrim and Ards among others following suit. Large, out-of-control bonfires had created disquiet in Protestant areas, particularly when associated with fly-tipping and the burning of tyres. Focusing first on these concerns, councils have linked reviews of bonfires to 'good relations' policies, and have offered cash incentives for well-managed and less aggressive events. To receive the funding bonfire groups must, for example, commit to abandoning the tradition of burning the Irish tricolour at midnight. An amount (set at £100) is forfeited if any flags or emblems are burned. Participation in the Belfast programme has been as follows:

Chart 70a: Participation in the Belfast City Council Managing Bonfires Programme
Source: Minutes of BCC Good Relations Partnership 12/9/11

Year	No. of Bonfires	No. of participating groups	As a % of total
2005	108	8	7%
2009	84	33	39%
2010	77	42	55%
2011	73	38	52

The summer of 2011 proved testing. As the minutes of the BCC Good Relations Partnership record, progress had been halted because 'of a general rise in tension in the city, generated largely by the political unrest in East Belfast; this resulted in a proliferation in flag flying in general and election posters in particular became symbolic targets on bonfires'. The council's records show the following:

Chart 70b: Number of bonfires in Belfast not burning flags/ emblems Source:
Source: Minutes of BCC Good Relations Partnership 12/9/11

Year	No. of groups on programme	No. of groups not burning flags/symbols	As a % of the total
2005	8	0	0%
2009	33	6	18%
2010	42	14	33%
2011	38	14	37%

An independent review by the Institute for Conflict Research for BCC concluded that the bonfire management programme had had a positive impact on participating communities, agencies and the city as whole (Byrne, 2010). Statutory agencies spent approximately £103,077 less on call-outs and clean-ups to bonfires within the programme than to those sites which were not part of it.

Bonfires are not part of nationalist culture and some tentative efforts to fund 9th August bonfires (the date on which the anniversary of internment has traditionally been marked) met stiff resistance from political and community leaders in Catholic areas. Instead, funding is provided for 'diversionary activity' on this date.

Re-imaging communities

The Arts Council of Northern Ireland has been the lead partner in a consortium called Re-imaging Communities, which aims to replace paramilitary murals and insignia with less threatening expressions of identity. A study in 2009 estimated there were more than 2,000 murals in Northern Ireland (Independent Research Solutions, 2009: 45), and the project assists artists to work with the community to bring these more into line with a post-conflict society. Typically, a community association will be funded to replace imagery of armed and masked paramilitaries with something which may still reflect communal identity but show a more positive face – for example, a UVF mural in Inverary was replaced by an image of George Best. The process had begun in Catholic areas without state support following the Good Friday Agreement, when images of 'armed struggle' gave way to other forms of nationalist iconography: the Famine, Celtic mythology, and other issues reflecting the Sinn Fein agenda, in particular equality and anti-racism.

The partnership supporting the Arts Council in this endeavour includes the Department for Social Development (DSD), the International Fund for Ireland (IFI), the Northern Ireland Housing Executive (NIHE), the Community Relations Council (CRC), the Police Service of Northern Ireland (PSNI), and the Society of Local Authority Chief Executives and Senior Managers (SOLACE). Perhaps more important than the management structures are the partnerships on the ground, which involve councils or community groups working with individual artists and community arts organisations, with ideas emerging from lengthy consultation and the final art piece often the result of participative workshops with young people.

As of October 2011 a total of 155 artworks had been created. But in May that year new murals depicting balaclava-wearing UVF men had gone up

on the walls of east Belfast – an assertion by the paramilitary group in that area that it was still in business.

6.2 Anticipating and preventing sectarianism and racism

a) Anticipating hate crime – the Tension Monitoring Group

On 18 October 2010 the Justice Bill was introduced to the Assembly. This provided for merger of the district council-led Community Safety Partnerships and the District Policing Partnerships. In launching a consultation paper on community safety, *Building Safer, Shared and Confident Communities*, the following January, the Justice Minister, David Ford, said that he would be looking not just at top-down models but at grassroots initiatives. He also indicated that hate crime, and its prevention, would be one of his priorities.

Belfast City Council has made tackling hate crime one of its four priorities and has appointed a Hate Crime Officer. To provide information on potential problems it has set up a Tension Monitoring Group. The model here comes from England. The Metropolitan Police in London commissioned the Institute for Community Cohesion (ICOCO) to assist it develop a methodology, and ICOCO has been instrumental in providing a similar methodological framework for the Belfast Tension Monitoring Group. A range of stakeholders are invited to work together, pooling information and arriving at collective assessments of the level of threat. Tension is graded according to a system which distinguishes between incidents that have been experienced, those for which there is evidence of crime, and situations which have the potential for violence. A metric allows ratings to be produced and monitored for each part of the city.

b) Community Prioritisation Index

The PSNI has also been creating its own tension mapping, though not just for hate crime. A Community Prioritisation Index (CPI) was devised in 2010 to identify and prioritise areas 'based on the experience of community harm and the potential for risk and disengagement'. Again, the inspiration came from England. Following the riots in Bradford, Burnley, and Oldham in 2001, and subsequent government reviews, the Jill Dando Police Institute developed a methodology to construct a Vulnerable Neighbourhood Index (VLI), which has been adopted by each police district in England. The VLI is a predictive tool which utilises statistics on crime, deprivation, and educational attainment, together with demographic data and qualitative reports which might act as indicators of 'vulnerability'. The CPI draws upon this model but with an awareness of what it describes as the 'unique' features of Northern Ireland. The aim is stated as:

... engaging with disenfranchised groups who have few (or no) relations with the police and other social partners in order to promote community cohesion. It would therefore be active in communities that have experienced segregation, sectarianism, racism, the legacy of the troubles, and which are not engaged with police or other partners.

The unit of analysis is the super-output area of the census, and all 890 census areas have been ranked. Of the top 20 most vulnerable areas 19 are in Belfast. The only exception, at number 17, is in Strabane.

7. Key Points

Key Points

1. The campaign of the dissident republicans is set to continue. The dissident groups have not allowed themselves any possibility of a political exit, and will continue therefore in their attempts to destabilise the political arrangements. Their efforts as 'spoilers' have to date resulted in an outcome opposite to that intended: instead of disrupting the political accord, the violence has served to consolidate the understanding between the parties.
2. The operational capacity of the dissidents remains far below that of the Provisional IRA at its height, and the 2010/11 year was the lowest for security-related deaths and injuries since 2007/08.
3. While the political establishment is relatively unaffected by the dissident campaign, the attacks on Catholic members of the PSNI are making it harder for those resident in Catholic areas to join or remain within the force. While the Patten target of 30% has been reached for police officers, only 27.3% of the total PSNI personnel are Catholic, as against an estimated 44% of the overall population. The stability of the accord still requires a representative police force and these figures are vulnerable to a war of attrition by dissidents.
4. Survey evidence shows that while levels of confidence in the police lags behind the level to be found in other parts of the UK, it has gone from 73% in 2003/04 to stabilise at approximately 80% over the last three years. Catholics have marginally less confidence in receiving equal treatment than Protestants (79% v 81%) but have more confidence in other parts of the criminal justice system such as the Policing Board.
5. The Office of the Police Ombudsman is a key part of the criminal justice system, and a survey published in May 2011 showed a record number of respondents (85%) agreeing that it does a very good job. The weakening of confidence in the Ombudsman following a series of damaging reports issued between June and September threatens to affect not just this institution but to weaken confidence in the criminal justice system as a whole.
6. Sectarian and racist violence have both declined in the past year. Racist attacks peaked in 2009 with attacks on Polish and Roma families, but despite some serious incidents there has been a drop-off in the level of attacks on immigrant communities.
7. There was a resurgence of loyalist street violence in 2011, mainly organised by the UVF. Loyalism has failed to negotiate any political route for its members, and the loose command structures of the two main organisations, the UDA and the UVF, have allowed for local units to extend into criminality and, on occasion, into racist attacks within their own communities.

8. The continuation of paramilitary violence in the post-accord period cannot be seen as the expression of an underlying culture of violence or crime. Northern Ireland has relatively low rates of crime in relation to England Wales, and this is true also of domestic abuse which, in other conflict situations correlated with high levels of political violence.
9. Areas of high social disadvantage record low levels of confidence in the police to guarantee safety and there is evidence that paramilitary groups are opportunistically using neighbourhood discontent about anti-social behaviour to establish themselves as an alternative policing system.
10. The marching season was exploited by the paramilitaries to assert their presence, and disturbances were more widespread and geographically dispersed than last year. The total policing bill increased from £3.7m to over £6m. The Flags Protocol proved itself inadequate to the challenges presented during the year.
11. There were improvements in the numbers showing confidence in town centres as safe and welcoming spaces, and in the numbers prepared to work in areas where those of the other religion are in the majority. The overall results from the most recent Life and Times Survey show a more relaxed attitude towards difference.
12. There have been continuing attempts to remove sectarian murals and to promote a more neutral and unthreatening public culture. Public bodies have united with non-governmental bodies to anticipate and prevent sectarian and racist behaviour.

DIMENSION 2

Equality

The Troubles began with civil rights marches against inequality. The subsequent radicalisation of the Catholic population was accompanied by a belief held by some that equality could only be obtained in a united Ireland. The 1998 settlement accepted that this could not be achieved without the consent of a majority within Northern Ireland, but offered instead a commitment to equality within the state. This was given legislative form in the Northern Ireland Act (1998), which placed a statutory obligation on all public authorities to monitor equality and to act to ensure that all sections of the community were free from discrimination. The Agreement also laid an emphasis on social inclusion and anti-poverty measures, but in the years since it was signed inequality has increased in most European countries. A report issued by the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development in December 2011 warned that 'the gap between rich and poor in OECD countries has reached its highest level for over 30 years'.

- Is this also the case in Northern Ireland, and if so, what are its special features?
- Is the gap between Protestants and Catholics widening or closing in the labour market?
- Is education reducing inequality between social groups or accentuating the problem?
- What impact has the recession had on different social groups, and can it be measured – by gender, by religious background, and by ethnicity?
- What do health statistics tell us about structural inequalities and poverty?

The threshold for low income is 60% or less of average (median) household income in that year.

1. MEASURING SOCIAL INEQUALITIES IN NORTHERN IRELAND

1.1 Wealth, Poverty and Inequality

The nature, extent, and durability of poverty in Northern Ireland attract considerable scrutiny; the same degree of attention is not paid to wealth, and there is no comprehensive data set on inequality. The Poverty Site (www.poverty.org.uk) uses a range of indicators to measure inequality in the UK and in its 2010 analysis said all the evidence indicated income inequalities were increasing, at both ends of the spectrum. Northern Ireland fits this trend but is not an extreme case.

Chart 71: Income inequality in Northern Ireland and other UK regions 2010 (as measured by the income of employees at the 90th percentile as a multiple of the income of those at the 10th percentile). Source: The Poverty Site / Annual Survey of Hours and Earnings

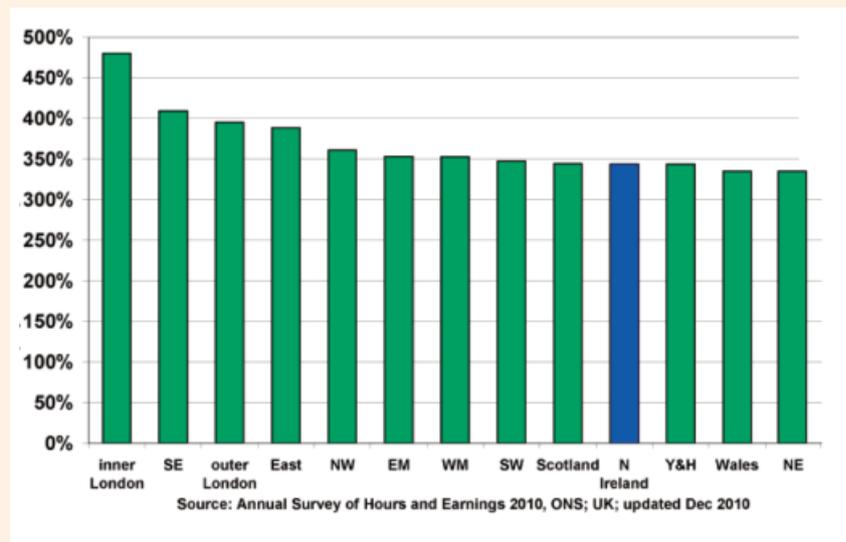


Chart 72 focuses on the median income for each region, the proportion earning above a cut-off line of £50,000, and the proportion of households receiving income-related benefits. Only 6.7% of employees in Northern Ireland earn more than £50,000, compared with 25.2% in London and 13.9% in the South-East of England. This does not place it at the bottom, Wales (3.05%) have fewer. On benefits Northern Ireland ties with Scotland (both 26%); the North-West(31%) and the North-East (31%) show higher proportions of recipients.

Only 6.7% of employees in Northern Ireland earn more than £50,000, compared with 25.2% in London and 13.9% in the south-east of England. This places Northern Ireland third lowest: the North-East (6.5%) and Wales (5.5%) have fewer.

Chart 72: Indicators of income inequalities in Northern Ireland Sources: Annual Survey of Hours and Earnings, 2011 / Figures for low income households from The Poverty Site 2011 *Note: The definition of low income is 60% or less of median household income in that year. The figures used by the Poverty Site derive from the Households Below Average Income survey (DWP) and are the averages for the years 2005-06 to 2008-09.*

UK Region	Median Income	% earning over £50,000	% of households receiving income related benefits
North East England	£27,890	6.5%	24%
North West England	£28,725	8.4%	24%
Yorkshire	£28,348	7.2%	22%
East Midlands	£28,740	7.8%	22%
West Midlands	£28,770	7.9%	24%
East of England	£30,881	10.1%	19%
London	£50,058	25.2%	27%
South East England	£26,328	13.9%	19%
South West England	£29,007	8.2%	20%
Wales	£26,850	5.5%	24%
Scotland	£30,162	9.0%	19%
Northern Ireland	£27,253	6.7%	20%

Wages and salaries provide only one indicator of wealth: a more complete picture of household income comes from the DWP Family Resources Survey (see Chart 72). The Northern Ireland population derives little of its resource from investments (1%) – only the north-east takes as little from this source. By contrast, Northern Ireland is over-represented in the resource streams that indicate poverty: tax credits (8%), disability benefits (3%), and other social security benefits (8%).

Chart 73: Sources Of Total Weekly Income By Region/Country
Source: DWP Family Resources Survey

Region/Country	Sources of income									
	Wages & salaries	Self employed	Investments	Tax Credits Pension plus any IS/PC	State Retirement	Other pensions	Social Security disability benefits	Other Social Security benefits	Other sources	Sample size (=100%)
North East	62	4	1	2	9	8	2	8	3	992
North West	62	6	2	3	8	8	2	7	2	2,606
Yorkshire and the Humber	64	6	2	3	8	6	2	7	3	1,957
East Midlands	61	9	2	2	8	7	2	5	3	1,660
West Midlands	60	8	2	3	9	8	2	7	3	1,993
East	59	14	3	1	6	8	1	4	3	2,119
London	70	11	2	1	4	4	1	5	3	2,159
Inner London	70	12	1	1	2	2	1	6	4	765
Outer London	69	10	2	1	5	5	1	5	2	1,394
South East	65	9	3	1	6	9	1	4	2	2,786
South West	61	8	3	2	8	10	1	6	2	1,662
England	64	9	2	2	7	7	1	5	3	17,934
Wales	56	12	2	2	9	8	2	7	2	1,140
Scotland	63	9	2	2	7	7	2	6	2	4,090
Northern Ireland	60	9	1	3	7	7	3	8	2	2,041
United Kingdom	63	9	2	2	7	7	1	6	3	25,205

Extreme wealth

There are few sources that provide indicators of asset wealth in Northern Ireland. The Sunday Times Rich List for 2011 included three people from Northern Ireland in its count of the 100 wealthiest people in the UK – exactly in line with the population ratio (2.9%). But an estimate of the number of millionaires in the UK by the Centre for Economics and Business Research in 2004 suggested that the Northern Ireland ratio was much lower, at 0.9%. This survey was published at the early period of the property boom, and the list of the top 10 most wealthy in 2010 as compiled by the Belfast Telegraph showed that seven of the 10 were property magnates. The collapse of the property market is likely to have reduced significantly the

proportion of the extremely wealthy. The 2011 issue of the Barclays Wealth Map of the UK had no entries relating to Northern Ireland.

Poverty

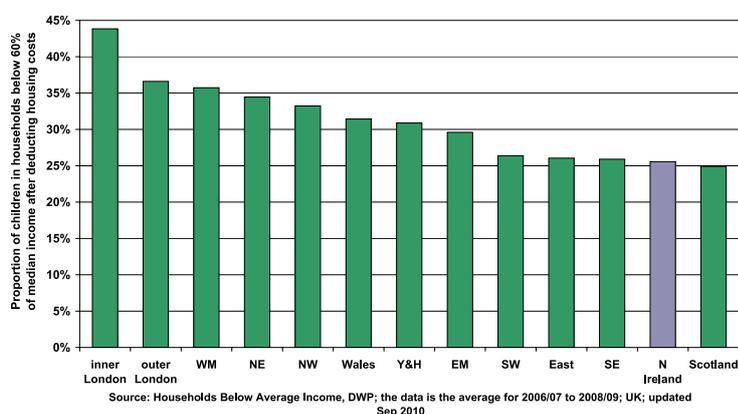
The Northern Ireland anti-poverty strategy, *Lifetimes Opportunities*, issued under direct rule in 2006, focuses on three stages in the lifecycle: child poverty, working-age adults, and pensioners. This framework will be followed to describe poverty in Northern Ireland.

1.2 Child poverty

Although child poverty decreased between 1999 and 2005, the decline has since stalled. Over the period 2006-07 to 2008-09, 26% of children - approximately 100,000 - were living in low-income households. A briefing paper for the Assembly by Research and Information Services at Stormont following the May 2011 election estimated that 25% of children were living in relative income poverty, where the household in which they lived had less than 60% of median household income..

The 25% rate is lower than the 31% average for Great Britain, and lower than for Wales or any of the English regions (see Chart 74). An analysis by The Poverty Site shows an even split between the 100,000 children in relative poverty: half live in lone-parent families and half live with two parents.

Chart 74: Proportion of children in low income households, NI and Great Britain
Source: Households Below Average Income, DWP. The data is the average for 2006-07 to 2008-09, updated by The Poverty Site Sept 2010.



A more recent analysis performed by the **End Child Poverty** campaign group (January 2012) shows that the number of children in workless households in Northern Ireland has increased more rapidly in recent years than in any other region: from 13% in 2008 to 17% in 2011. This places Northern Ireland between the rates for Scotland (16%) and Wales (18%). The same report lists the top 20 parliamentary constituencies for child poverty, and Northern Ireland features twice: Belfast West is ranked as number 4, and Belfast North is at number 15.

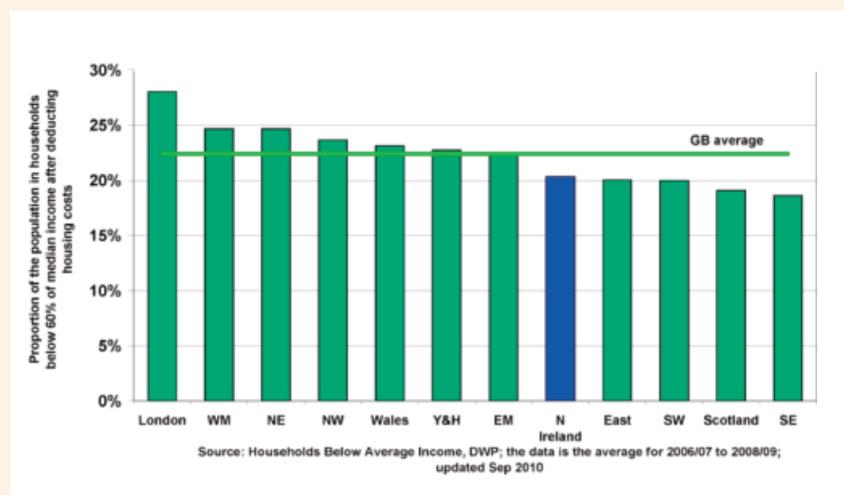
1.3 Working-age adults and poverty

Two main factors determine poverty levels for working-age adults in Northern Ireland: low incomes and economic inactivity. While part-time wages are approximately the same as in the UK generally, Northern Ireland has always trailed behind in full-time pay. The proportion has remained steady for the last decade: in 2000 it was 89.9% of the UK average and in 2011 it was 89.8%. The number of economically inactive people of working age was calculated in December 2011 as equivalent to 26.9% of the workforce, a significantly higher percentage than the UK average (23.2%), and the highest of the 12 UK regions.

Assessments of poverty have to take account of more than just income: expenditure patterns are also important. The Joseph Rowntree Foundation publishes a 'minimum income standard' (MIS) for the UK, taking account of costs that vary across regions, like local taxation, domestic fuel, telephone charges, transport, personal goods and services, and social and cultural participation. For single working-age adults and pensioners, the overall minimum budgets for Northern Ireland were within 2% of those for Britain, and for all households they were within 5%.

Another set of comparisons has been conducted by the poverty research group at The Poverty Site. These comparisons took into account the cost of housing, and considered the fact that in London each household sacrifices much more of its income to housing costs, as rent or mortgage payment, than in any of the other regions. Comparisons between regions also show considerable variation. Once the costs of housing are factored in, Northern Ireland ranks eighth in the table of 12 regions for low income.

Chart 75: Comparisons of NI and Great Britain regions household income (net) housing costs are included. Source: Households Below Average Income, DWP; the data is the average for 2006/07 to 2008/09, updated by The Poverty Site, Aug 2010.



1.4 Old age poverty

The number of adults aged 65-84 in Northern Ireland is projected to increase by 12% from 220,800 in 2008 to 247,000 in 2013 (NISRA Population Projections). The most elderly population of Northern Ireland is projected to increase by 23% from 28,000 in 2008 to 34,600 in 2013. Further projections suggest that the overall proportion of older people will rise to 17.4% in 2020 and 21.3% in 2030. This represents an increase of 68% on the proportion at the time of the 2001 census (12.7%). In Northern Ireland an estimated 57,000 older people, approximately 21% of the total, fall below the 60% of median income that represents the poverty line.

Data produced by the Institute for Fiscal Studies and published by the Joseph Rowntree Foundation in May 2011 showed Northern Ireland to have the highest rate of pensioner poverty in the UK – 26.8% against a UK average of 21.8%. This was calculated before housing costs, but does take account of other price differences.

Chart 76: Relative pensioner poverty across the UK using regional prices. Source: Institute of Fiscal Studies / Joseph Rowntree Foundation, 2011

Region	Average poverty rate 1996-97 to 1998-99	Average poverty rate 2006-2007 to 2008-09	% Change
North East	20.6%	17.0%	-3.6%
North West	24.4%	20.6%	-3.8%
Yorkshire	24.2%	21.0%	-3.2%
East Midlands	27.9%	25.7%	-2.1%
West Midlands	26.2%	20.8%	-5.4%
East of England	26.7%	22.5%	-4.2%
London	27.9%	27.4%	-0.5%
South East	25.6%	21.7%	-3.9%
South West	27.6%	22.8%	-4.8%
Wales	21.5%	20.5%	-1.0%
Scotland	20.8%	15.5%	-5.3%
Northern Ireland	-	26.8%	n/a
Total	25.2%	21.8%	-3.5%

Note: Northern Ireland was not included in the Family Resources Survey until 2002-03.

Fuel poverty

Pensioner households spend a higher percentage of their income on necessities than any other type of household, and fuel poverty is a particularly acute problem for pensioners in Northern Ireland. Older people are particularly vulnerable to fuel poverty: around 76% of households headed by an older person are in fuel poverty and amongst lone older person households the percentage rises to 83% (Research and Information Services, NI Assembly, 2011).

Chart 77: Fuel poverty / energy costs in the UK Source: Derived from Research and Information Services, NI Assembly 'Fuel Poverty', Sept 2011.

	% of households in fuel poverty	Weekly expenditure on energy
England	21%	£18.70
Scotland	33%	£20.00
Wales	26%	£20.40
Northern Ireland	44%	£27.50

PARTICULAR FEATURES OF POVERTY IN NORTHERN IRELAND

- The employment rate for those of working age (16-64) was calculated in the Labour Market Statistics Bulletin, November 2011, as 67.5% – significantly lower than the UK average of 70.2%. Northern Ireland was the joint second lowest of the 12 UK regions.
- Northern Ireland employees' median gross weekly earnings at November 2011 were £450.6, which was approximately 90% of the figure in the UK (£500.7) (Annual Survey of Hours and Earnings, November 2011).
- Northern Ireland has the highest percentage of benefit units receiving both Disability Living Allowance (11%) and Mobility (11%) compared to other regions of the UK. The UK average for each is 6%.
- The claimant count in Northern Ireland is 6.9%, as against a UK average of 5.0%. Northern Ireland is the second highest among the 12 UK regions (Labour Market Statistics Bulletin, Nov 2011)
- The economically inactive rate for those aged 16-64 is estimated to be 27.1%, the highest of the 12 UK regions. The UK average is 23.3% (Labour Market Statistics Bulletin, Nov 2011).
- 6% of households in NI have no savings or bank account, compared with a UK average of 3%. This is the second highest level in the UK, after the East Midlands (9%).
- On the indices of deprivation for the most recent year, 2008-09, the percentage of Catholics for each indicator was higher than the percentage of Protestants. Of those behind with one or more household bill, 66% were from a Catholic household. The comparative figure for Protestants was 27% (Family Resources Survey, 2010).
- Northern Ireland has a lower proportion of working-age individuals (40.5%) and children (44.25) living in working households compared with the UK as a whole (51.9% and 51.5% respectively).
- 18,000 children live in households which have been in receipt of income support for 10 years or more – quite possibly growing up in homes where no adult is working.
- Northern Ireland has persistently had the highest proportion of adults aged 20 to retirement age with no educational qualifications. In 2010, 20% of adults in Northern Ireland had no qualifications, compared with 10% in the UK as a whole (Department of Trade and Industry/Poverty Site).

1.5 Composite table of poverty indicators

Chart 78: Composite table of comparative poverty in Northern Ireland, the Republic of Ireland, the UK and the European Union. Sources: Households Below Average Income (NI) DSD, Households Below Average Income (UK), DWP, Eurostat, OFMDFM.

Chart 78: Northern Ireland relative poverty rates (UK median) by lifecycle
Source: Households below average income (DSD, December 2011)

	2002/03	2003/04	2004/05	2005/06	2006/07	2007/08	2008/09	2009/10
All individuals	20	20	21	21	19	20	21	23
Children	25	26	25	25	22	24	25	28
Working age	17	17	17	17	16	17	17	21
Pensioners	24	25	27	28	28	27	31	26

Chart 79b: Long-term trends in poverty, UK

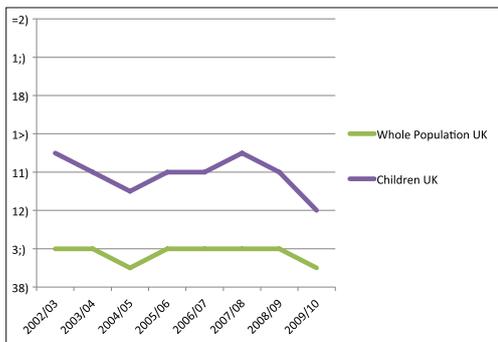


Chart 79a: Long-term trends in poverty, NI and the UK

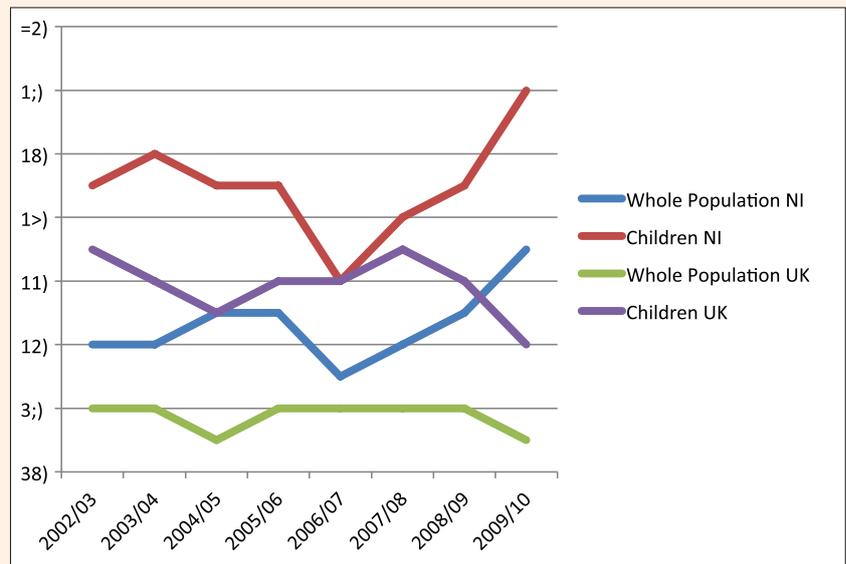
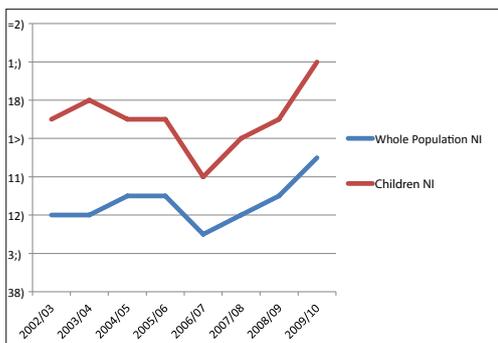


Chart 79c: Long-term trends in poverty, NI



This graph has been created by Poverty and Social Exclusion UK project, coordinated by the University of Bristol, with input from Queen’s University Belfast. The data sources include the Households Below Average Income (HBAI) report and the Family Resources Survey(FRS), both published annually by the Department of Social Development. The HBAI series has been running in Britain since the early 1990s but FRS data for NI has only become available since 2002/03.

The picture of poverty in Northern Ireland in that time is a clear one. The proportions of those in poverty were dropping significantly until 2007 when the recession began to take effect. Since that time poverty levels have risen sharply, and in contrast to what is happening in the rest of the UK.

1.6 Poverty and religious denomination

Chart 79 shows the proportion of people who are in low-income households is much higher among Catholics (26%) than among Protestants (16%). Chart 80 shows comparisons across a range of deprivation indicators drawn from the Family Resources Survey. On every indicator the percentage of Catholics is higher than the percentage of Protestants.

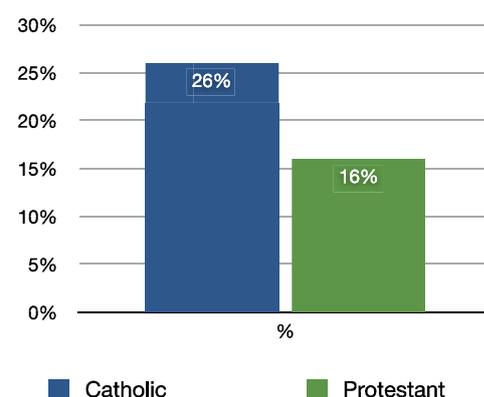
Chart 80: Deprivation indicators for Protestants and Catholic benefit units 2008/09 Source: derived from the Family Resources Survey, 2010.

Deprivation measure	Protestant	Catholic	Other
Not enough money to keep home in decent decor	33	59	8
Unable to develop hobby or leisure activity	30	59	11
Unable to afford hols away from home (not staying with relatives)	38	50	12
Does not have household contents insurance	36	51	13
Unable to have family/friends round for drink/meal once a month	38	52	10
Unable to save £10+ a month	36	55	9
Unable to replace worn-out furniture	39	53	8
Unable to replace/repair broken electrical goods	37	51	11
Does not have money to spend on self each week (as opposed to family)	33	58	8
Unable to able to heat home	31	62	7
Behind in one or more household bill	27	66	7

1.7 Has the Assembly been successful in combating poverty?

In March 1999 Tony Blair announced a commitment to 'eradicate' child poverty in the United Kingdom by 2020. The Child Poverty Act 2010 requires the UK Government to publish a regular UK child poverty

Chart 81: Proportion of households below 60% of median income after deducting housing costs Source: The Poverty Site, 2010



strategy, and further requires the Scottish and Northern Irish Ministers to publish child poverty strategies. On foot of this, in March 2011 the Northern Ireland Assembly enacted Improving Children’s Life Chances: the Anti-Poverty Strategy. Using a traffic light system for scoring performance, the OFMDFM Performance Delivery Unit gave a red (meaning no progress) for the pledge ‘to eliminate child poverty by 2012’, and an amber for the more modest ambition of ‘working toward the elimination of child poverty’. A red was also given for performance on the social inclusion strategy.

Comparisons with other devolved jurisdictions

A report in January 2010 by the Joseph Rowntree Foundation (JRF), Devolution’s Impact on Low-income People and Places, provides an opportunity to compare poverty levels in Northern Ireland with those in Scotland and Wales and with the English regions. The study selected 16 indicators, including child and pensioner poverty, early mortality, and proportions of working-age people with no qualifications. The South-East scored best on 11 of the indicators and worst on none. Northern Ireland scored best on two indicators but worst on five, giving it a net balance of minus three.

Chart 82a: The best and worst outcomes for countries and regions on poverty and exclusion indicators (2008) Source: Joseph Rowntree Foundation

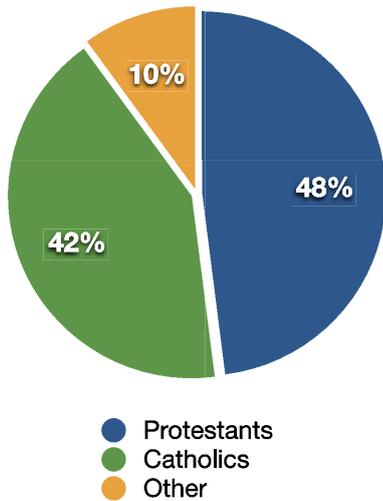
Country/region	Best	Worst	Net
South East	11	0	+11
East of England	4	0	+4
Scotland	3	1	+2
South West	1	0	+1
East Midlands	0	1	-1
Wales	0	2	-2
West Midlands	0	2	-2
Northern Ireland	2	5	-3
North East	0	5	-5
London	1	7	-6

Further calculations were performed to measure the relative performance of each region in moving beyond its baseline position. These are set out in Chart 82b and show a different set of relativities. In this analysis Northern Ireland is squarely in the middle with a zero score, not falling behind like the West Midlands or the South East but, despite its additional resources, not making the same progress as Scotland or the North East, which top the table for improvements beyond the baseline.

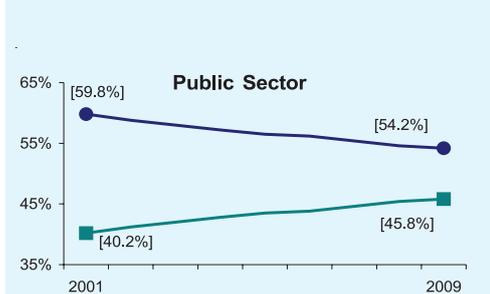
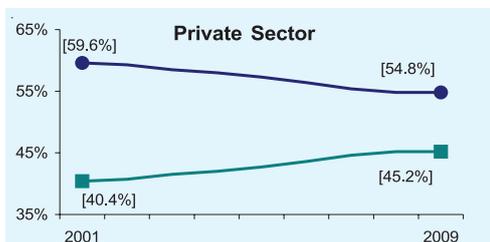
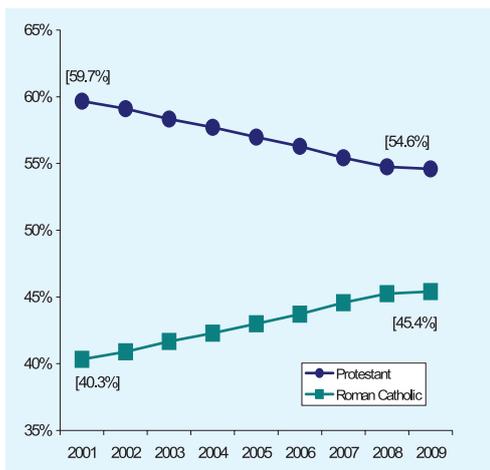
Chart 82b: Progress on poverty and social exclusion indicators: the most and least improved countries and regions (1998-2008) Source: Joseph Rowntree Foundation

Country/region	Most improved	Least improved	Net
Scotland	6	0	+6
North East	5	0	+5
Wales	1	1	0
Northern Ireland	2	2	0
London	2	2	0
East Midlands	0	4	-4
East of England	0	4	-4
West Midlands	0	5	-5
South East	0	5	-5

Chart 83 Composition of the NI Workforce by community composition, 2010
 Source: Labour Force Survey Religion Report (Dec.2011)



Charts 84a,b and c: Composition of the NI Workforce by Community Background, 2001-2009



2. Equality And Inequality In The Labour Market

2.1 How the recession affects Protestants and Catholics

In the Introduction attention was drawn to a key demographic fact: above the age of 35 the majority population is Protestant; below that age the majority population is Catholic. More than any other factor this explains the trend displayed consistently across Charts 84a, 84b, and 84c.

Ten years ago Protestants made up 60% of the workforce and Catholics 40%. The latest figures provided by the Fair Employment Monitoring Report for December 2010 show that when 'others' are excluded the differential has narrowed to 54.6% for Protestants and 45.4% for Catholics – broadly in line with current population estimates. What is more, these ratios remain consistent across the sectors: in the private sector it is 54.2% Protestant and 45.2% Catholic, and in the public sector the respective figures are 54.2% and 45.8%. The new ratios reflect the changing demographics: between 1990 and 2009 there was an increase in the working age of 114,000 Catholics (30%) as against an increase of 18,000 Protestants (4%) (LFS, Religion Report, Nov. 2010).

In 2004 in the publication commissioned by the Equality Commission, *Fair Employment in Northern Ireland: A Generation On*, a group of economists and social scientists concluded that while historical imbalances remained, discriminatory practices had largely been eliminated and a level playing field created. A subsequent report commissioned by The Equality Commission from Professor Ronald McQuaid in 2009 concluded that the relative seniority of position held by Protestants was subject to change as younger Catholics made their way up the ranks. According to a report on Northern Ireland Civil Service religious composition issued by NISRA in July 2011, over the past ten years the NICS has seen Catholic representation rise, and Protestant representation fall, by 6.2 percentage points. The largest changes have occurred in the higher management grades – 17.3 percentage points at Grades 6/7 and 10.5 percentage points at Grade 5 and above.

The temporary NICS embargo on recruitment and promotion within the General Service grades (AA to Grade 6), introduced in 2009 as part of government cutbacks, has significantly reduced recruitment to and promotion within the NICS. This can be seen as a more general phenomenon in Charts 84a, 84b and 84c, where the trend line up to 2007 suggested that the Catholic share of the workforce might overtake the Protestant share has not been fulfilled. Instead the downturn has resulted in a leveling off.

The Fair Employment Monitoring Report of 2010 showed the early effects of the recession hitting Protestants and Catholics alike. Between 2007 and 2009 Protestant employment fell by 3.5% and Catholic employment by 3.2%. The ratios may be subject to further change because the higher

proportion of Catholics in the younger age groups is likely to make them correspondingly disadvantaged in a recession that is pushing up youth unemployment. The negative effects will not just be felt by those with low educational attainment: given the relative success of young Catholics in the schooling system and in higher education, there will be those with significant qualifications who will not be able to secure a place in the job market.

2.2 Gender differentials

The recession has particularly affected men, and those hardest hit have been men in full-time employment. In 2009 the net fall in male full-time employment was almost eight times greater than the drop in the female count: 8,900 as against 1,200 (Fair Employment Monitoring Report, December 2010). This is not surprising given that the industry hardest hit has been construction, with the loss of 10,000 jobs in 2008-10. Men predominate in other areas made vulnerable by the recession: 93% of employees in skilled trades are male, as are 90% of process, plant and machine operatives. The private sector generally, which accounts for nearly two-thirds of the monitored workforce (63%), experienced a loss of almost 12,000 employees in 2009; men accounted for 70%. The public sector, by contrast, which accounts for nearly 37% of all monitored employees, contracted by a lesser amount – 0.4%, as against the 3.5% drop in the private sector. This helped to protect women, who make up 61.3% of full-time and 75.5% of part-time public-sector employees.

Summarising the longer-term trend, the Equality Commission (2010) comments:

In broad terms, the overall composition of the monitored workforce continues to become more female and more Roman Catholic over time.

The female percentage of the workforce increased from 50.4% in 2001 to 52.4% in 2010. Over this period Catholic female full-time employment increased by a quarter (25.3% or 19,099 employees), compared with a rise of only 4.0% (4,079) for Protestant women.

According to a 2011 study for the Equality and Human Rights Commission (Perfect, EHRC, 2011), 'The full time gender pay gap has been narrower in Northern Ireland than in the other three nations of the UK since 2002.' The Office of National Statistics (ONS) suggests that three measures are needed for a full set of comparisons: median hourly pay of all employees, median hourly pay of full-time employees, and median hourly pay of part-time employees. The relevant figures for 2011 are below. The overall gender pay gap is 91.9%, significantly less than the UK rate of 80.5%. The curiosity of Chart 85 is that while the female full-time median earnings and female part-time earnings are both above male median earnings, the overall ratio still places women earning less than men. This is because the overwhelming majority of male employees are in full-time employment where the pay rates are higher.

In broad terms, the overall composition of the monitored workforce continues to become more female and more Roman Catholic over time.

Chart 85: Male and female hourly earnings (excluding overtime) 2011
 Source: NI Annual Survey of Hours and Earnings, 2011

Earnings	Male	Female	% of female to male
Median hourly pay of all employees	£10.34	£9.51	91.9%
Median hourly pay of full-time employees	£11.02	£11.24	102.0%
Median hourly pay of part-time employees	£7.50	£7.86	104.8%

A report issued by OFMDFM in 2010 put the relatively low gender pay gap in Northern Ireland down to 'the public sector premium, and perhaps, to a lesser degree, to a slightly more even income distribution and lower female employment than in Britain' (McDowell, OFMDFM, 2010).

The effect on Northern Ireland of the coalition government's new regime of benefit reforms has been analysed by the Institute of Fiscal Studies, and there are particular implications for women. While households in Northern Ireland will be no more affected than any other region by tax and benefit changes to be introduced between 2010-11 and 2012-13, the authors say that when they extend their analysis to include measures to be introduced in 2013-14 or 2014-15 'we find that Northern Ireland has the second highest loss as a percentage of incomes within the regions and constituent nations of the UK'. This is in part to do with the relatively high proportion of households with children, a section of the society which the IFS says will suffer particular losses, the burden of which will be carried by women.

2.3 Youth unemployment

In the three months to September 2011 there were 1.02 million 16-24 year old unemployed across the UK, 21.9% of the economically active population for that age group. Northern Ireland had a lower percentage than average at 19.1%, though this was a considerable increase on its 2008 total of 12.8% (see Chart 86). But it remained at the lower end of the UK regions: Chart 88, which shows regional comparisons for March 2011, places it just below Scotland and considerably below London, which has the highest proportion of unemployed young people.

Chart 86: Youth unemployment in Northern Ireland 2008-2011.

Source: Labour Market Report, November 2011.

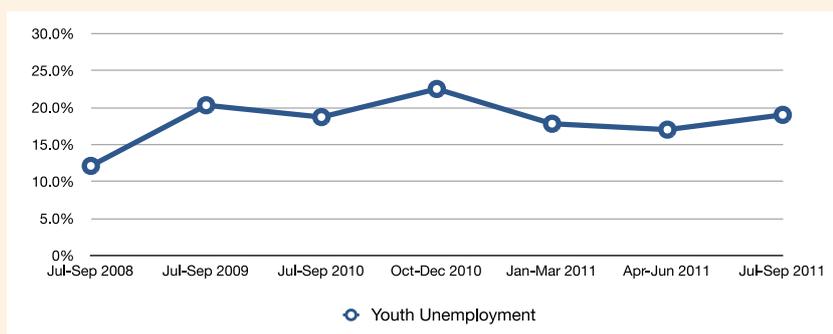


Chart 87: Youth unemployment across Europe, Q2 2011. Source: Eurostat

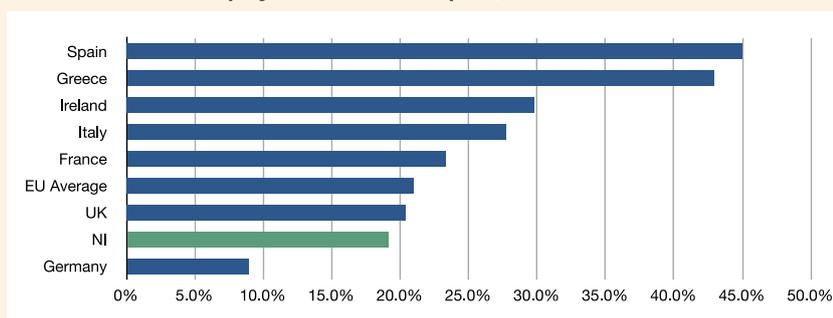


Chart 86 shows the profile of those not in employment, or training (NEETs) in Northern Ireland from 2000 to 2010. Chart 88 shows the numbers in the 16-24 cohort with UK comparisons. Chart 90 shows the numbers in the 16-19 cohort, again with UK comparisons. Whichever way the numbers are counted, Northern Ireland is not at either extreme. A study by the Assembly’s Research and Information Services (*Scoping Study on NEETS, 2010*) concluded that when it came to NEETs, the region was no better or worse than elsewhere in the UK.

In June 2011 a new £2.4 million employability programme for NEETS, Step Up to Sustainable Employment (SUSE), was launched by the Department of Employment and Learning. Between a quarter and a third of the NEET population have no qualifications.

Chart 88: Percentage of 16-24 year olds in NEET category. Source DEL Scoping Study of NEETS, 2010

16-24	NI	England	Wales	Scotland	UK
Oct-Dec 2008	19	17	17	14	17
Jan-March 2009	17	18	18	15	18
Apr-Jun 2009	20	19	19	19	19
Jul-Sep 2009	23	21	22	21	21
Oct-Dec 2009	15	18	23	18	18
Jan-Mar 2010	18	18	24	19	19

Between a quarter and a third of the NEET population have no qualifications.

Chart 89: Youth unemployment: Northern Ireland and the UK regions Source: Labour Force Survey / The Poverty Site, updated March 2011.

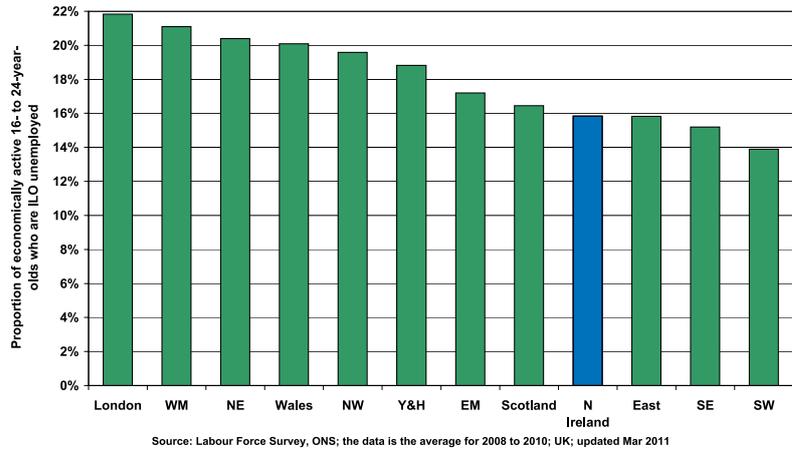
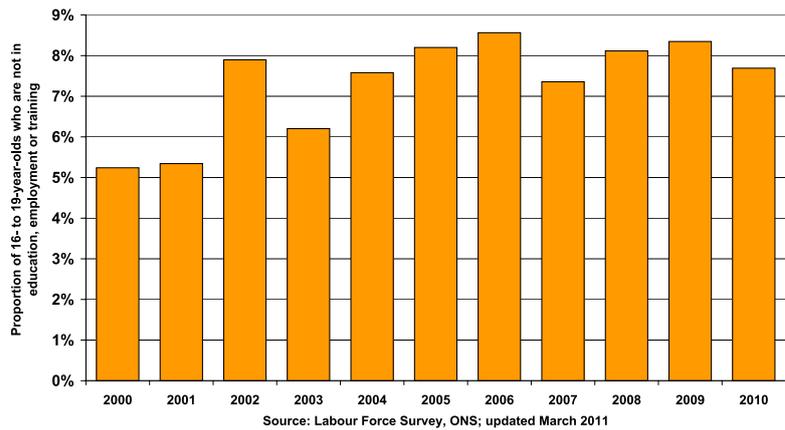


Chart 90: NEETS (16-19 years) in Northern Ireland, 2000 -2010. Source: Labour Force Survey / The Poverty Site



2.4 Immigrant communities in the recession

The situation in relation to immigrant workers resembles more closely that of the migrant communities in the Republic of Ireland than in the rest of the UK. The Dublin-based Centre on Integration said in its Monitoring Report on Integration 2010: 'Overall immigrants have been harder hit by the current recession than Irish nationals – with more job losses and a higher unemployment rate.' But employment rates were similar among Irish and non-Irish nationals, as immigrants have higher labour-market activity rates than the Irish population (because of the smaller share of inactive groups such as students, retired people or people with home duties). The overall comparisons are as follows:

Chart 91: Employment and unemployment of Irish and non-Irish in the Republic of Ireland 2010 Source: The Centre for Integration, Dublin

Employment, Working Age (2010)	Irish	Non-Irish
Employment rate	60.1%	61.0%
Unemployment rate	12.7%	16.1%
Activity rate	68.8%	72.7%

A study by Kring et al in 2009, *Migration and Recession: Polish Migrants in Post-Celtic Ireland*, found that although the large in-flows to Ireland had ceased it did not follow that there was a large out-flow, given lack of work in countries of birth, social welfare available to the unemployed, and networks of support and family ties established. The same would appear to be the case in Northern Ireland. A report by Oxford Economics in 2009, *The Economic, Labour Market and Skills Impacts of Migrant Workers in Northern Ireland*, suggested that there would be no 'mass exodus' of migrants, for much the same reasons.

McQuaid et al, in their 2010 study, *Employment Inequalities in an Economic Downturn*, found insufficient evidence from official statistics to draw firm conclusions but from interviews with stakeholders they formed the view that the recession was having a disproportionate impact on migrants. Many workers were on temporary or casual contracts, which make them more vulnerable to redundancy or dismissal, and it was reported that in some instances migrant workers were being dismissed first to keep the rest of the workforce happy and because they were thought less likely to resort to legal action. A study of Polish workers in the recession, *Za Chlebem: The Impact of the Economic Downturn on the Polish Community In Northern Ireland* (McVeigh and McAfee, 2009), underlined the vulnerability of migrants when there are redundancies: the report said that almost 20% of Polish workers were unemployed in April-June 2009, when the overall rate for Northern Ireland was 6.7%.

A study of the Filipino community published by the NI Council for Ethnic Minorities, *Bayamihan!* (2012), shows how other aspects of the economic downturn impact upon ethnic minorities. Most Filipinos in Northern Ireland send money home, but a drastic drop in the exchange rate has resulted in a higher proportion of earnings being sent home. This has in turn resulted in Filipinos living in increased poverty - more than 60% now live in the most deprived or second most deprived quartile.

The Oxford Economics report distinguishes the 'old' migrant communities and those who arrived after 2004, mainly from the A8 countries. As Chart 92 shows, the former have a presence in health and social work, while the latter were recruited into lower-wage employment, such as food-processing.

Chart 92: Employment sectors for migrants Sources: Oxford Economics, Labour Force Survey, McClure Watters

Pre-2004 Migrant		Post- 2004 Migrant	
Sector	% employment (average 2006-08)	Sector	% employment (average 2006-08)
Hotels & restaurants	7%	Manufacture of food & beverages	18%
Computer & related activities	6%	Manufacture of furniture	7%
Manufacture of furniture	5%	Hotels & restaurants	7%
Manufacture of food and beverages	5%	Manufacture of machinery and equipment	5%
Health & social work	4%	Computer & related activities	3%

The absence of any means of monitoring ethnic minorities in out-migration statistics makes it hard to know what proportion has departed. Two pieces of evidence, however, suggest that, as in the Republic, most have decided to stay. One is the number of mothers from outside Northern Ireland giving birth, as alluded to in Section 3.2. In 2010, 2,473 births out of 23,515 (10.5% of the total) were to mothers born outside the UK or the Republic of Ireland. The other piece of evidence, also detailed in Section 3.2 concerns the number of ethnic-minority children in Northern Ireland schools: approximately 2% at post-primary, 3% at primary and 4% in nursery schools.

3. Health Inequalities

3.1 Life expectancy

Following a steady trend, life expectancy is increasing in Northern Ireland but still lags behind the UK average. In 2007-09 male life expectancy reached 77.7 years (against 78.0 in the UK) and female life expectancy increased to 81.9 (against 82.1 in the UK). The larger differentials were those within Northern Ireland, as can be seen in Charts 93a and 93b.

Chart 93a: Life expectancy at birth – female Source: Registrar General Office / Project Support Analysis Branch

	2001 -03	2002 -04	2003 -05	2004 -06	2005 -07	2006 -08
Deprived	77.8	78.1	78.6	78.4	78.7	78.7
Northern Ireland Average	80.5	80.6	80.9	81.0	81.3	81.3

Chart 93b: Life expectancy at birth – male Source: Registrar General Office / Project Support Analysis Branch

	2001 -03	2002 -04	2003 -05	2004 -06	2005 -07	2006 -08
Deprived	71.4	71.9	72.6	72.3	72.1	72.0
Northern Ireland Average	75.6	75.9	76.1	76.2	76.3	76.4

The DHSSPS's Health and Social Care Inequalities Monitoring System uses as a graphic aid the differences in life expectancy on the Metro Number 8 bus route out of Belfast city centre to the leafy suburbs of Finaghy. Each stop listed is matched with the multiple-deprivation ranking for that area:

Chart 94: Life expectancy at selected points along a Belfast Metro line (2008)
Source: Health and Social Care Inequalities Monitoring System, Feb 2011

	Bus Stops			
	Donegal Square	Queen's Uni	Upper Malone	Finaghy Rd Sth
Male Life expectancy	71 years	74 years	79 years	80 years
Female life expectancy	77 years	81 years	82 years	83 years
NIMDM ward rank	22	237	328	550

3.2 Substance abuse: smoking, drink, and drugs

Smoking

Decline has been observed for both males, from 39% in 1983 to 24% in 2010, and females, from 29% in 1983 to 24% in 2010. But this masks big differences: the proportion of individuals who self-classify as smokers jumps from 13% in the least deprived areas up to an alarming 41% in the most deprived.

Chart 95: Percentage of self-classified smokers Source: Continuous Household Survey 2010

Least deprived area:	13%
Most deprived area:	41%

Alcohol

Alcohol abuse is a major problem in Northern Ireland, as illustrated by the following figures:

- 1 Number of deaths in 2010: **284**
- 2 Estimated social cost: **£679.8 million**
- 3 Estimated cost per head: **£378**
- 4 Proportion of arrests in which alcohol was a factor: **44%**

Sources: (1) Registrar General Report; (2) and (3) Social Costs of Alcohol Misuse Report 2009; (4) Information supplied to NI assembly by Minister for Justice 7/11/11.

Alcohol misuse is on the rise, with related deaths increasing by nearly half, from 190 in 2000 to 284 in 2010. People who live in the most deprived communities are around four times as likely to die from alcohol-related mortality as those who live in the least deprived areas.

Chart 96: Alcohol-related death rate per 100,000 by deprivation quintile, 2003-2009 Source: NISRA (Registrar General Report).

	Least Deprived				Most Deprived
Alcohol related deaths	173	206	278	428	720

Drugs

In 2010 there were 92 drug-related deaths in Northern Ireland, a marked increase from 10 years previously when 53 were recorded.

Chart 97: Drug-related deaths per 100,000 of the population Source: Registrar General Office / Project Support Analysis Branch

	2001-05	2002-06	2003-07	2005-09
Deprived	6.9	8.0	8.3	9.6
Northern Ireland	3.3	3.9	4.1	4.5

3.3 Mental health, trauma, and suicide

Some health problems which are seen to be related to the Troubles, have prevalence rates that are markedly more severe than other parts of the UK, or those of other comparator countries, and where the differences cannot be explained by socio-economic factors. For example:

- A report issued by the Royal College of Psychiatrists in June 2010 showed that the annual bill for anti-depressants in Northern Ireland was £18 million – more than twice the per capita spend in England.
- In 2008 the Northern Ireland Study of Health and Stress found that the 12 month and lifetime prevalence of post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) was 4.7% and 8.5% respectively: these figures are at the top end of the range of estimates from other epidemiological studies and, significantly, far in advance of other conflict societies like Israel and South Africa (see Chart 98). This was updated in 2011 with an estimate for the economic costs of PTSD as £175 million per year (Ferry et al, 2011). The claim that Northern Ireland has the ‘world’s highest recorded rate of PTSD’ is an extraordinary one, and has to be read alongside a previous study by Muldoon and Downes (2007) which simply described the prevalence of PTSD in Northern Ireland as being ‘similar’ to that in other conflict regions.

It is much more difficult to establish a correlation between suicide and the conflict in Northern Ireland. As Chart 99 shows the suicide rate began to grow in 1999 and while the figure for 2010 of 313 suicides was the highest on record it only brought Northern Ireland to the level Scotland had experienced from 2003. What can be seen from the statistics issued by the Registrar General’s Office is that suicide rates have been climbing more steeply in areas of deprivation (see Chart 100). The figures for PTSD show a similar bias: those who experienced a traumatic event were more likely to be female and to have low educational attainment and income.

Chart 99: Average Annual Rate of Suicides and Undetermined Deaths per 100,000, 1999-2008 Source: Samaritans

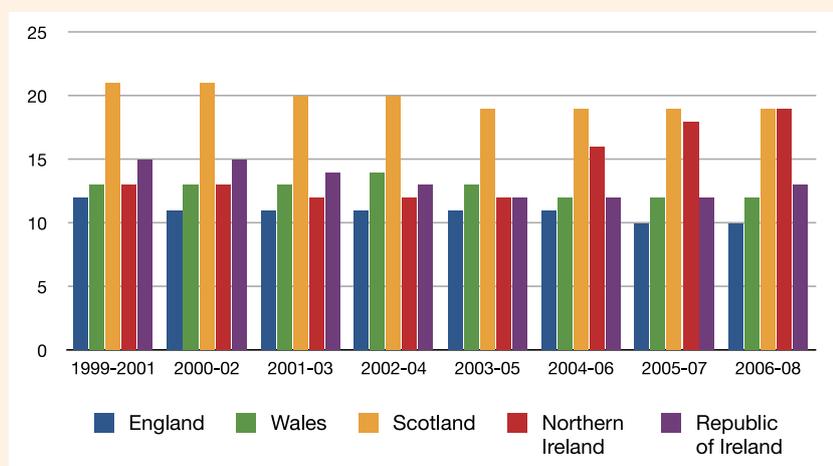


Chart 98: Comparison of 12 month prevalence of PTSD in Northern Ireland with other countries
Source: The Northern Ireland Centre for Trauma and Transformation and the Psychology Research Institute, University of Ulster

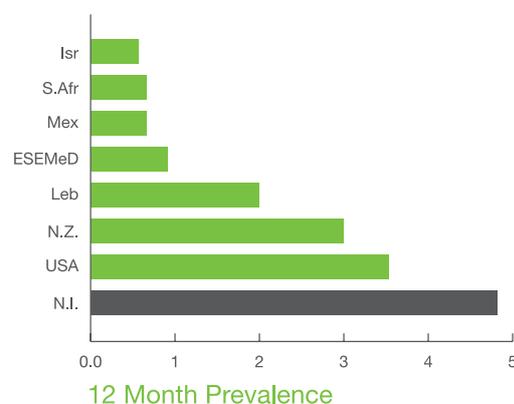
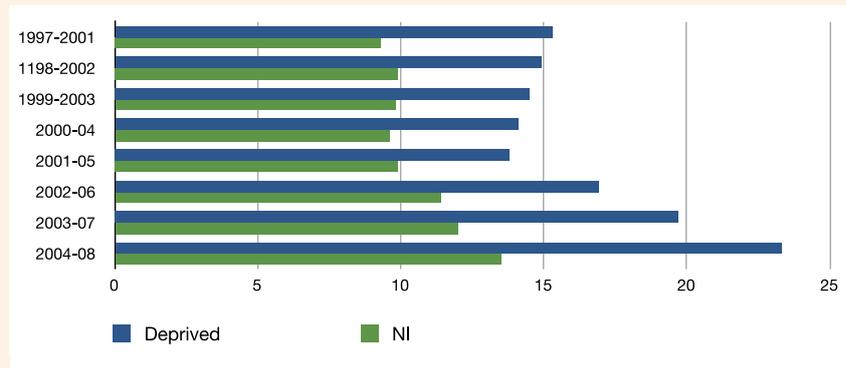
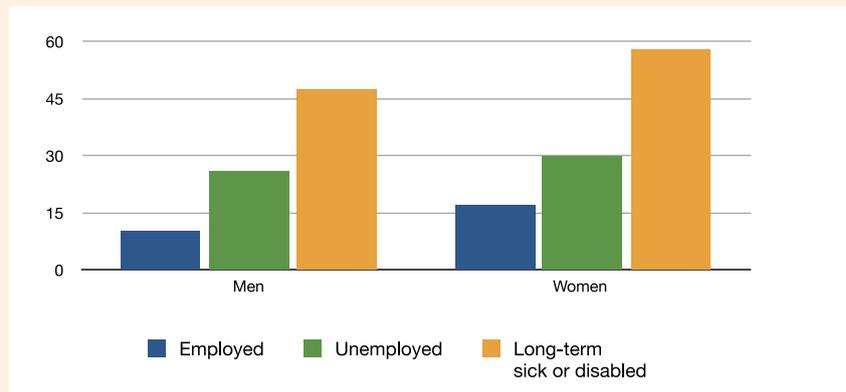


Chart 100: Suicides per 100,000 population
 Source: General Register Office/Project Support Analysis Branch



Disability Living Allowances for mental health reasons accounted for 22.5% of the total Disability Living Allowances for 2010, and Disability Living Awards for mental health reasons accounted for 24% of the total Disability Living Awards. Those in employment are at a much lower risk of mental illness than those who are unemployed or long-term sick or disabled.

Chart 101: Percentage of the working-age population assessed as being at risk of mental illness
 Source: The Poverty Site, July 2010



4. Education inequalities

4.1 Overall attainment

Sir Robert Salisbury's report for the Northern Ireland Literacy and Numeracy Taskforce, issued in November 2011, delivered sharp criticisms of 'serious failings' in the education system. He drew attention to the fact that most assertions about the quality of Northern Ireland schools did not take account of external evaluations. The most significant is the OECD Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA). The survey involves 34 OECD countries and 41 partner countries, and is used by governments, corporations and international bodies as a guide to general literacy and numeracy. Northern Ireland used to perform above the average, but the most recent figures from a survey conducted in November 2009 show slippage:

Chart 102: Northern Ireland in PISA scores, 2009 Source: OECD, 2010

	N.Ireland	PISA average
Reading	499	493
Maths	492	496
Science	511	501

The successes of the school system are to be found in the percentage of pupils achieving high grades at GCSE and A-level. The 2011 GCSE results show that while the figures are identical for overall attainment across the A*-G grades, Northern Ireland pupils score much higher in the top grades, with 8.9% securing A*, against 7.5% for England, Wales and Northern Ireland combined.

Chart 103a: GCSE results for 2011 in comparative perspective Note: the figures for 2010 are given in brackets

2010 GCSE results	Overall Northern Ireland	Overall England, Wales and Northern Ireland
Entries	183,899 (184,748)	5,374,490 (5,469,260)
%A*	8.5 (8.9)	7.8 (7.5)
%A*-A	27.6 (27.5)	23.2 (22.6)
%A*-C	74.8 (75.3)	69.8 (69.0)
%A*-G	98.7 (98.7)	98.8 (98.7)

The same is true at A-level, where on average Northern Ireland pupils significantly outperform their comparators in Britain. Northern Ireland remains ahead of England, Wales and Northern Ireland collectively, by 7.5% at grades A*-A, 8% at grades A*-C and 0.3% at grades A*-E..

Chart 103b: A-level results for 2011 in comparative perspective. Note: the figures for 2010 are given in brackets.

2011 A-level results	Northern Ireland	Overall England, Wales and Northern Ireland
Entries	32,582 (31,741)	867,317 (853,933)
%A*	8.6 (9.5)	8.2 (8.1)
%A*-A	34.5 (35.9)	27.0 (27.0)
%A*-C	84.2 (84.5)	76.2 (75.4)
%A*-E	98.1 (98.1)	97.8 (97.6)

While the GCSE and A-level scores show Northern Ireland to be outpacing its UK comparators, the PISA scores show it to be performing significantly less well on key international indicators – below both England and the Republic of Ireland on the scales for mathematics and reading. How is this discrepancy to be explained? The answer lies in the skewing that allows the attainment levels to be weighted heavily at the bottom as well as the top of most tables. The benchmark for success across the UK is to have 35% of pupils achieve 5 or more 'good' GCSEs at grades A*-C (including English and Maths). In Northern Ireland and England the proportion of pupils achieving this level in 2010/11 is virtually the same – 59% and 58.2% respectively. The difference lies in the distribution of scores. An analysis by online magazine The Detail (7/2/12) shows that with a mixed intake only 3.2% of English schools fall below the benchmark, while in Northern Ireland the figure is 36% - 77 schools out of 213 post-primary. All of the 77 are non-grammar. The separation at age eleven can be seen to have massive impact upon the inequality figures in the school system.

Chart 104a Number of Year 12 pupils eligible for GCSE exams Source: DENI Statistics and Research

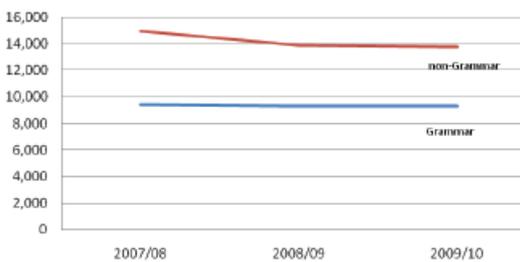
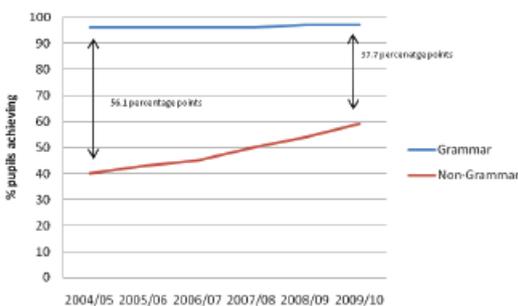


Chart 104b: Number of Year 12 pupils achieving % or more GCSEs at grades A*- C by school type



4.2 The inequality gaps

While most pupils eligible for examinations attend non-grammar schools (see Chart 104a) the majority of examination successes belong to the grammar schools (see Chart 104b).

The performance gap between grammar and non-grammar pupils widens when we consider achievement in seven or more GCSEs (or equivalents) at grades A*-C. The gap at five or more GCSEs (or equivalent) is 37.7 percentage points, but at seven or more GCSEs the gap widens to 51.8 percentage points, with 92.4% of grammar pupils achieving this standard, compared with 40.6% of non-grammar pupils.

Gender

A further layering of inequality is added by gender differentials. At Year 12, when GCSEs are taken, the ratios of eligible pupils are very close: 49.8% male and 50.2% female. Girls however perform better, as they do in every other part of the UK. The performance gap is evident at every level.

4.3 Higher education

The relative success of females throughout schooling works through to university entry, where female enrolments in Northern Ireland's universities are consistently higher:

Chart 107: Gender breakdown of entrants to higher education institutions in NI.
Source: DEL Statistics and Research

Gender	2004/05	2005/06	2006/07	2007/08	2008/09	2009/10	2010/11
Male	20,475	20,635	19,390	19,160	19,315	20,850	21,475
Female	32,455	32,210	29,465	29,040	28,925	30,140	30,525
Total	52,930	52,845	48,650	48,200	48,250	50,950	52,000

Communal differences

In 2001 research commissioned by the OFMDFM concluded that 'the educational non-progressor was likely to be a Protestant working-class male'. Subsequent reports confirmed the finding, and, ten years after the OFMDFM report drew attention to the problem, a report prepared for the East Belfast MLA Dawn Purvis by a team of social scientists, *Educational Underachievement and the Protestant Working Class: A Summary of Research for Consultation*, concluded:

A socially disadvantaged pupil in a Catholic Maintained school will have a 1 in 5 chance of going to university, compared to a similar pupil in a Protestant (Controlled) school who has a 1 in 10 chance.

Among other findings are the following:

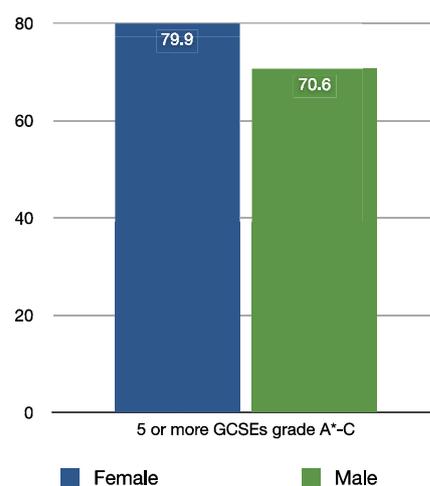
- At Key Stage 2 in English and maths, 11% of (mainly Protestant) controlled schools were designated Lower than expected (LTE) as against 3% of Catholic maintained schools.
- At GCSE English and maths, 14% of (mainly Protestant) controlled schools are underperforming as against 4% of Catholic maintained schools.
- In Catholic maintained non-grammar schools 37.7% of pupils achieve five or more GCSEs, as against 28.4% in controlled schools.

Yet while the Salisbury report shows that proportionately more Protestant than Catholic males leave school without five good GCSEs (49% versus 46%), because of the larger number of Catholics in this age cohort, there are in absolute terms slightly more Catholic than Protestant males under-achieving at this level (2,608 versus 2,363).

Why is there Protestant under-achievement?

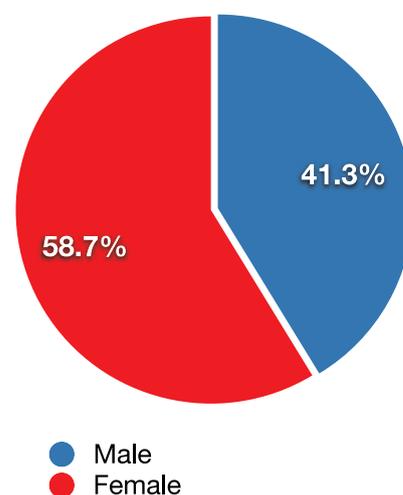
The concern with working-class under-achievement in the Protestant community invites a correlation between social deprivation and low educational attainment that is entirely customary in the sociology of education. Free school meals entitlement (FSME) is a standard proxy for social disadvantage, and the extent of the performance gap between FSME pupils and non-FSME pupils can be seen quite clearly in Chart 108. The

Chart 105:



In the year 2010/11 79.9% of female pupils in Year 12 achieved 5 or more GCSEs (including equivalents) at grades A*-C, compared to 70.6% of males, a gap of 9.3 percentage points.

Chart 106: Male and female entrants to higher education institutions in Northern Ireland, 2010/11



dynamic driving the grammar lobby in the Protestant community would appear to be a fear that a non-selective system would force a mixing with under-achieving FSME children. When gender and communal background are added to the mix, however, the situation becomes more complicated.

In the PISA reading assessment, girls outperform boys in every participating country, by an average of 39 PISA points – equivalent to a whole year of schooling. This means that on occasion gender can be a more important determinant than socio-economic status: in Chart 108 it can be seen that rural Catholic girls in the FSME category out-perform in A-level attainment rural Protestant boys who are not (45.4% versus 41.1%). When all the advantages of gender, religious background and socio-economic status are combined there is an accelerator effect: a

Charts 108 Multiple Factors in Educational Attainment
Source: OFMDFM Audit of Inequalities, School Leavers Survey, DE Statistics Branch october 2010
Data excludes special and independent schools
Urban/Rural Classification based on Postcode

Not FSME	Urban						Rural					
	Boys			Girls			Boys			Girls		
	Protestant	Catholic	Other									
2+ A Levels (inc equivalent)	41.6	54.2	50.2	56.4	66.2	56.0	41.1	48.7	53.1	60.8	74.2	58.
5+ A*-C GCSE or higher (inc equivalent)	63.9	71.8	70.4	74.5	81.0	73.9	71.9	70.5	77.1	84.0	87.9	81.5
5+ A*-G GCSE or higher (inc equivalent)	90.3	90.5	91.4	94.4	94.8	92.6	93.1	94.3	93.4	96.4	97.8	93.
No GCSE's	3.7	3.3	3.3	2.3	2.2	2.4	1.7	1.8	1.7	0.9	0.8	
Institutions of Higher Education	35.3	46.7	41.6	46.3	54.6	46.0	35.7	44.5	45.8	52.5	66.0	49.
Institutions of Further Education	32.6	28.1	32.4	34.2	27.7	35.4	38.6	27.8	33.0	36.2	23.1	34.

FSME	Urban						Rural					
	Boys			Girls			Boys			Girls		
	Protestant	Catholic	Other									
2+ A Levels (inc equivalent)	11.6	22.2	12.8	18.5	34.5	8.6	15.5	26.4	*	27.6	45.4	29.
5+ A*-C GCSE or higher (inc equivalent)	25.8	40.6	29.5	38.4	51.4	31.4	36.1	44.1	30.0	41.4	63.6	35.
5+ A*-G GCSE or higher (inc equivalent)	68.4	73.2	69.2	77.1	86.2	70.0	79.4	82.3	66.7	80.2	90.7	76.5
No GCSE's	9.5	7.8	7.7	6.2	4.7	8.6	5.2	3.6	*	*	2.5	
Institutions of Higher Education	8.4	18.0	12.8	14.1	23.3	*	12.3	22.5	*	19.0	36.1	
Institutions of Further Education	37.4	34.9	42.3	43.4	42.9	52.9	48.4	31.8	56.7	42.2	37.3	58.

*Fewer than five cases

Catholic girl, not on free school meal entitlement, and attending a school in a rural area has a 74.2% chance of attaining two or more A-levels. By contrast, a Protestant working-class boy who has the FSM entitlement and is attending an urban school has only an 11.6% chance of obtaining the same results.

Further and higher education

Catholics take the larger share of higher education places, and Protestants the higher share of further education places. In Northern Ireland's institutions of higher education Catholics have, for the last five years, taken approximately 60% of places that can be assigned to the two communities:

Chart 109: Enrolments at higher education institutions in NI by religion 2004-05 – 2008-09 Source: DEL

Religion	2004/05	2005/06	2006/07	2007/08	2008/09	2009/10	2010/11
Protestant	15,090	16,305	14,590	14,200	13,570	14,415	14,740
Catholic	19,850	21,475	20,055	19,820	19,380	20,995	21,380
Other	1,410	1,315	1,020	1,345	1,395	2,270	2,765
Not known	9,840	7,245	7,335	6,720	7,355	5,990	5,070
Non-NI domiciles	6,745	6,505	5,860	6,110	6,450	7,320	8,040
Total	52,930	52,845	48,860	48,200	48,240	50,990	52,000

The attainment gap between Catholics and Protestants is widening, as is that between females and males. As university education is the gateway to the professions and to higher paid management and administration posts, access to higher status jobs is likely to tilt towards Catholics and females.

Chart 110: Enrolments in NI higher education institutions by background 2010/11

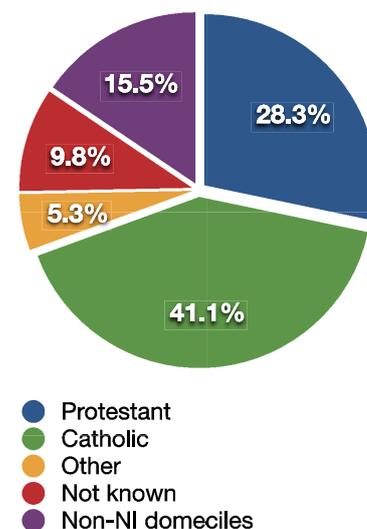


Chart 111: Ratios of Protestants and Catholics (excluding other categories) in HE institutions in NI, 2010/11

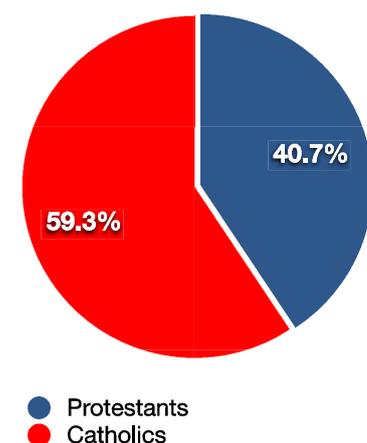
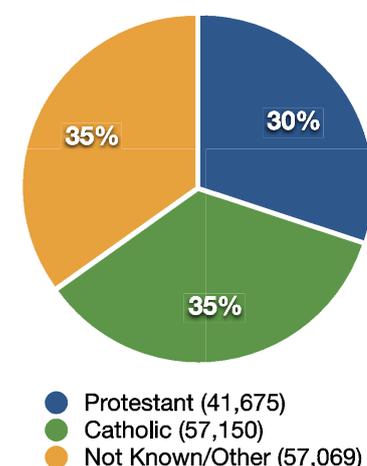


Chart 112: Further Education 2009/10 Source: DEL FE Statistics



4.5 Adult literacy

The official statistics on adult literacy and numeracy are frequently quoted as evidence of educational under-attainment in Northern Ireland: **24%** of the population lack functional literacy and a further **30%** can only deal with simple material. The position of Northern Ireland relative to a selected range of countries can be seen in this chart:

Chart 113: Prose literacy bands in Second International Adult Literacy Survey, 1998 Source: OECD

Country	Band 1 (%)	Band 2 (%)	Band 3 (%)	Band 4/5 (%)
Northern Ireland	24	30	31	15
Great Britain	22	30	31	17
Ireland	23	30	34	14
USA	21	26	32	21
Poland	43	35	20	3
Sweden	8	20	40	32

Key to skill bands

Band 1: people with very poor literacy skills

Band 2: people who can deal only with simple material;

Band 3: people with roughly the skill level required for successful secondary school completion and college entry; and

Bands 4/5: people who demonstrate command of "higher order information processing skills".

The Northern Ireland results are broadly in line with Great Britain and the Republic of Ireland, though with a slightly higher percentage in the lowest band. All the English-speaking countries, including the United States, cluster in the middle of the international tables; far above them are the Scandinavian countries (see Sweden above) and below them a range of poorer countries, including those from eastern Europe (see Poland above). Broadly speaking, the IALS survey found a high correlation between socio-economic factors and proficiency in literacy and numeracy, and Northern Ireland was no exception: 44% of the economically inactive, for example, were in the Band 1 category for literacy.

In 2010 the Department for Employment and Learning commissioned a report from Oxford Economics. The main findings were:

- There has been an overall improvement in NI 'literacy' standards between 1996 and 2009, with the proportion aged 16-65 in bands 4/5 rising by 4% and the share in band 1 falling by 3%.
- The improvements are in advance of those in other UK jurisdictions.

The overall pace of improvement is slow and internationally Northern Ireland is still lagging behind.

4.6 Is there a Protestant brain drain?

One reason sometimes given for the under-representation of Protestants in Northern Ireland universities is that more Protestant school-leavers choose to study in British universities. The 2009-10 figures however show that the gap is now quite narrow and recent research suggests that while it is true that more Protestants than Catholics choose to study outside Northern Ireland, their reasons for doing so are more complex than has been speculated and less connected to political animosities.

Chart 114: NI students attending HE institutions in Great Britain, 2009-10 Source: Department of Education School-leavers Survey 2010

	Numbers	Percentage
Protestant	1,238	45%
Catholic	1,146	41%
Other	380	14%

A study, *Educational Migration and Non-Return in Northern Ireland*, was commissioned by the Equality Commission and produced by Ronald McQuaid and Emma Holywood from the Employment Research Institute, Napier University Edinburgh, in May 2008. McQuaid and Holywood say that middle-class Protestants are more likely to migrate but confess that it is very difficult to assess how many return. Higher Education Statistics Agency (HESA) data indicate that of the 29% NI-domiciled graduates who studied in Great Britain, a net 10% had returned to Northern Ireland within six months of graduation. As the authors note, 'further research is needed to determine the community background of these graduates and the relative rates of return migration for each community'.

A second report issued in 2008, *After School: Attitudes and Perceptions of Northern Ireland School-leavers towards Higher and Further Education* (Osborne, Smith and Gallagher), surveyed year 14 (A-level), year 12, and further education students to establish what influences their choices. The most common reason (80.7%) for a preferred institution outside Northern Ireland is that it is 'the best place for my course' or 'it has a good reputation' or students 'like the institution'. In making their UCAS choices, though, students in Catholic schools record nearly three quarters (73.9%) of their combined firm and 'insurance' choices for Northern Ireland institutions, while for Protestants the proportion is close to half (53.5%). The introduction of £9,000 tuition fees in Great Britain and the decision of the Assembly to freeze tuition fees (bar inflation) at just over £3,000 is likely to introduce a new dynamic to higher education choices.

5. Protestant and Catholic Differentials ~ the Equality Dashboard

Labour Market

Chart 115: Numbers in employment by religion 1992-2010

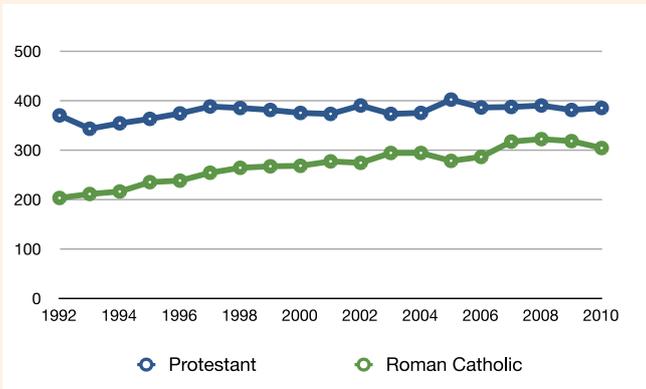


Chart 116: Economic activity rate by religion 1992-2010

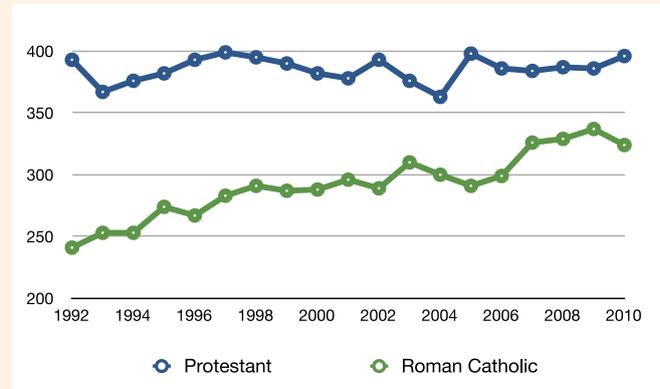


Chart 117: Proportion of economically active Protestants in employment and unemployment 1992-2010

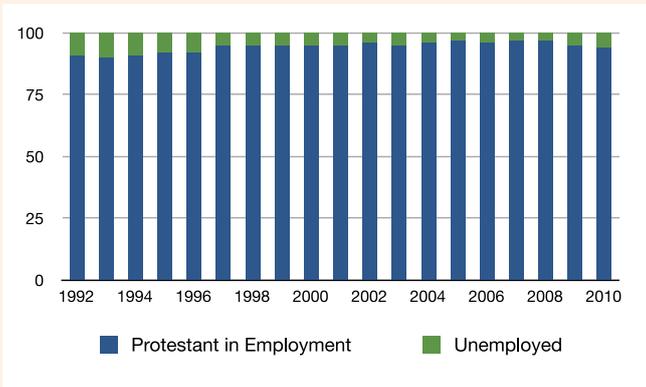


Chart 118: Proportion of economically active Roman Catholics in employment and unemployment 1992-2010

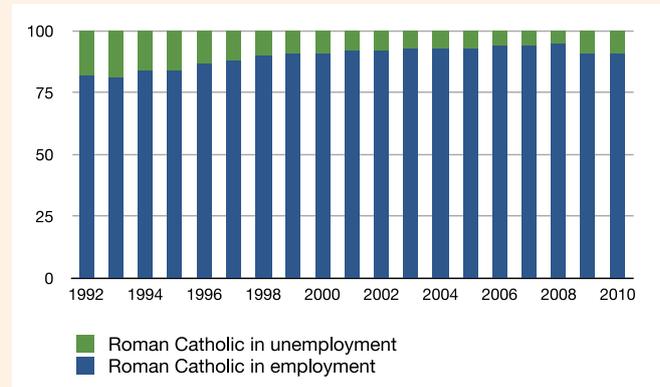


Chart 119: Religious composition by occupational group, 2010

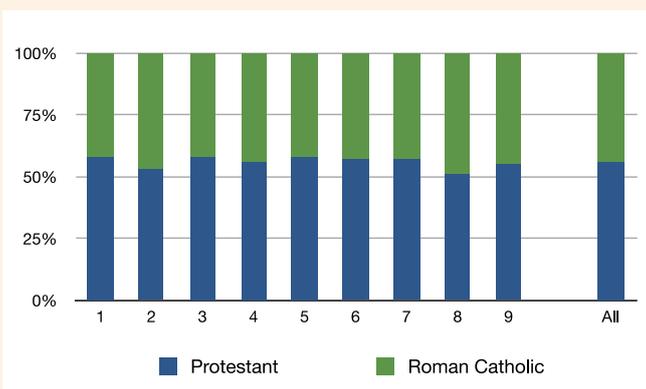
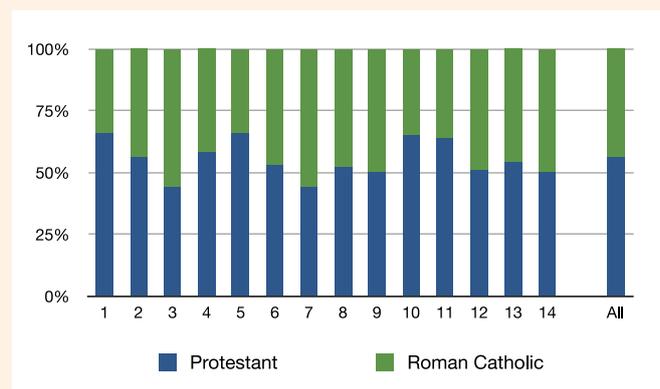


Chart 120: Religious composition by the major industrial sectors, 2010



Occupational Group (SOC)

- | | |
|--|---|
| 1 Managers and senior officials | 8 Process, plant and machine operatives |
| 2 Professional occupations | 9 Elementary occupations |
| 3 Associate professional and technical occupations | |
| 4 Administrative and secretarial occupations | |
| 5 Skilled trade occupations | |
| 6 Personal service occupations | |
| 7 Sales and customer service | |

- | | |
|--|---|
| 1 Agriculture, forestry and fishing | 8 Finance and insurance activities |
| 2 Manufacturing | 9 Professional, scientific and technical activities |
| 3 Construction | 10 Admin and support service |
| 4 Wholesale, retail trade and repair of vehicles | 11 Public admin and defence |
| 5 Transport and storage | 12 Education |
| 6 Accommodation and food services | 13 Health and social work |
| 7 Information and communication | 14 Other service areas |

Demography

Chart 121: 2001 Census (NISRA)

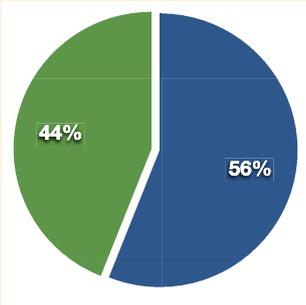


Chart 122: 2010 Workforce (LFS Estimate)

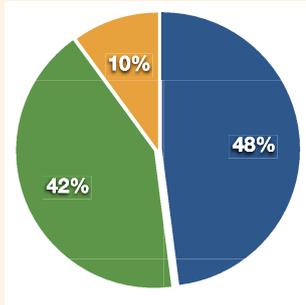


Chart 123: 2010 School Census (DENI)

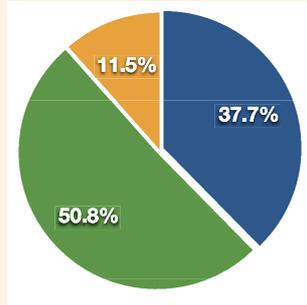
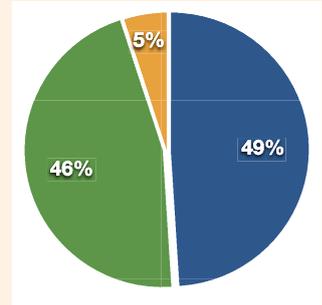


Chart 124: 2011 Population (Peace Monitoring Estimate)



Security

Chart 125: PSNI total workforce (PSNI Human resources)

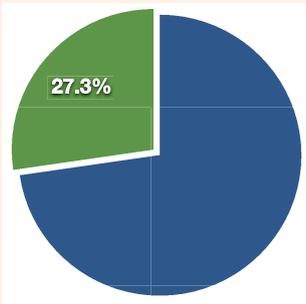


Chart 126: Prison population Review of the NIPS 2011

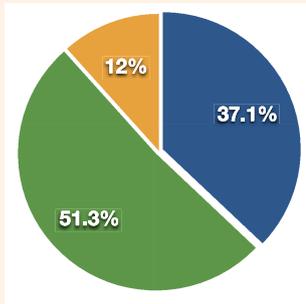
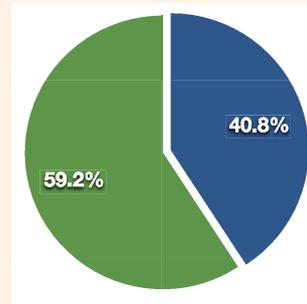


Chart 127: Higher Education



- Protestant/Other
- Catholic
- Other

Unemployment and Deprivation

Chart 128: Economic inactivity rates by religion

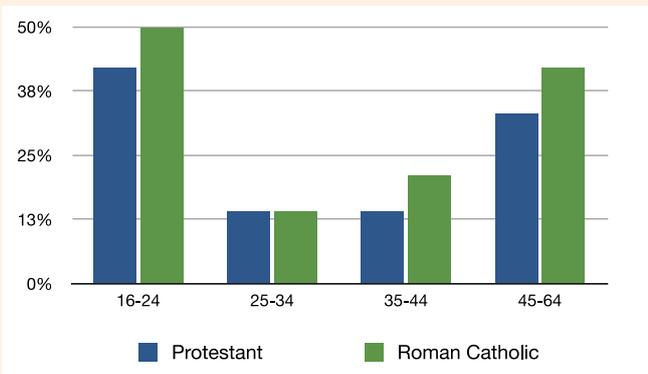


Chart 129: Economic inactivity rates by religion

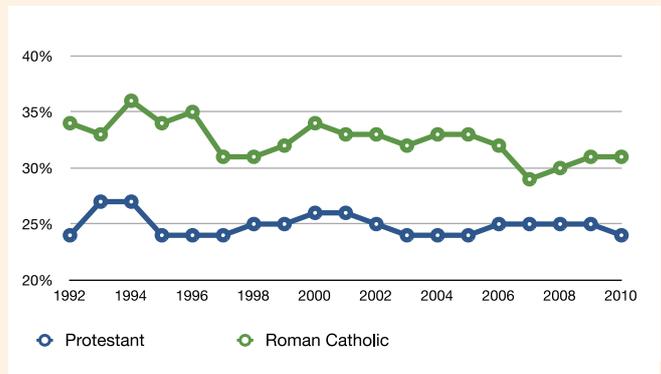


Chart 130: Percentage behind with one or more household bill (Family Resources Survey)

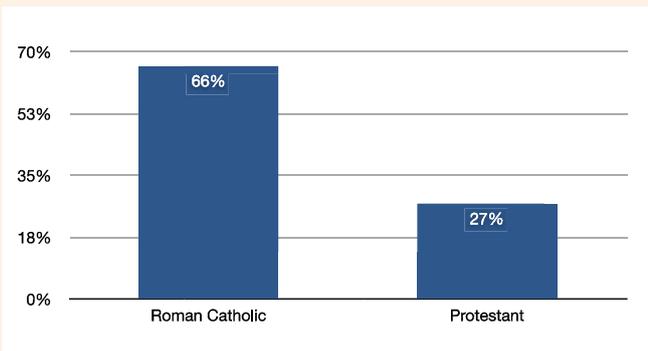
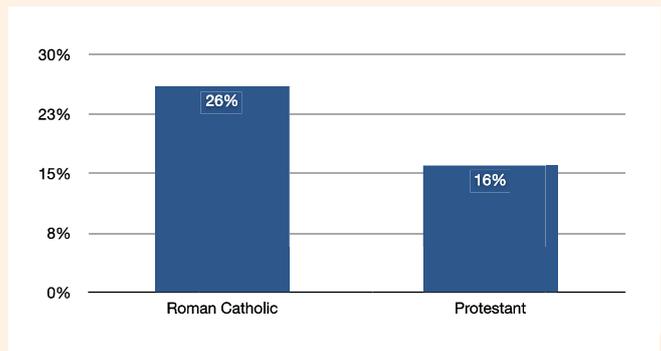


Chart 131: Proportion of people who are in low income households, 2010 (The Poverty Site)



6. Key Points

1. The Northern Ireland experience of social inequality is broadly in line with that of other UK regions, though with some distinct features, such as the degree of old age poverty and, linked to this, fuel poverty. Health inequalities also show some features that relate to the conflict: higher rates of mental health problems and a very high incidence of post-traumatic stress disorder.

2. On every indicator of deprivation the proportion of Catholics affected is higher than the proportion of Protestants. The share of Catholics in low income households is 26% while that of Protestants is 16%. The proportion of Catholics behind in more than one household bill is 66% while that of Protestants is 27%.

3. The educational attainment of Catholics is in advance of that of Protestants, and the attainment of girls is ahead of that of boys. The attainment gap is apparent not just in schooling but in entry to higher education. The compound effect is to advantage Catholic girls and, conversely, to disadvantage Protestant boys in the higher skills end of the labour market.

4. The demographic drive is another factor restructuring the labour market. With Catholics out-numbering Protestants in all age cohorts below 35, the proportion of Catholics in the workforce had been showing a steady annual increase until the recession began to limit entry to the labour market in 2008. Those Catholics who entered employment before this date will continue to move up the promotion ladder, replacing older Protestants and correcting previous imbalances.

5. The restricted entry to the labour market that has resulted from the recession will hit both young Catholics and young Protestants. While the proportion of those with low educational attainment is higher amongst Protestant school-leavers, the greater number of Catholics in this age cohort means that in absolute terms more young Catholics are leaving school with low attainment. Between a third and a half of all those in the Not in Education Employment or Training (NEET) category have no educational qualifications.

6. While adult literacy rates are broadly in line with UK trends, Northern Ireland has consistently had the highest proportion of adults aged 18-64 with no educational qualifications. In 2011, 20% of adults in Northern Ireland had none, compared with 10% in the UK as a whole.

7. To date the recession has particularly affected men, and those hardest hit have been men in full-time jobs. In 2009 the net fall in male full-time employment was eight times the drop in the female count. This has been because of the concentration of men in private-sector jobs vulnerable to the recession, particularly construction. The public sector, which has a majority female workforce, has been relatively sheltered so far, but cutbacks in public expenditure could affect female employment in the next period. Women are also being disproportionately affected by the welfare reforms introduced by the coalition government.

8. In areas of social disadvantage there have been steep increases in drug and alcohol abuse and in suicide rates. Suicide increased by 64% between 1998-00 and 2006-08. The largest ever number of suicides, 313, was recorded in 2010. This goes against the trend in Great Britain and the Republic of Ireland, where suicide has been decreasing.

9. There is insufficient evidence to draw any firm conclusion about how new immigrant communities have been affected by the recession. While there are reports that point to disproportionate impact in the labour market, the figures from the school census and maternity units suggest that the new communities are establishing roots in Northern Ireland.

10. Anti-poverty measures introduced by the Assembly have to date proved inadequate. Northern Ireland has not fallen behind like the West Midlands or the North-East, but despite having a 'peace dividend' it has not been as effective in tackling poverty as Scotland or the South-East.

DIMENSION 3

Political Progress

The 1998 Agreement followed the template of previous attempts to find a solution to the conflict by building on what had been called the 'three strand' approach. The three stands are: power-sharing government within Northern Ireland, institutional links on a north-south basis between the Northern Ireland Assembly and Dail Eireann; and east-west institutional links between the British and the Irish.

These are all now in place but how well do they work? The Northern Ireland Assembly was suspended four times in its first ten years – can it be said to be functioning now? Can the rivalries between nationalists and unionists allow it to perform as a legislature in the same way as other devolved parliaments? Other key questions are:

- Who are the winners and the losers in the electoral battles? The peace settlement was originally thought to favour the moderate parties, and in the first Assembly the posts of First Minister and Deputy First Minister went to David Trimble of the Ulster Unionist Party and Seamus Mallon of the SDLP. Those parties have been eclipsed and the new axis of power is between the former parties of the extreme, Sinn Fein and the DUP. Is this now a settled pattern and can it provide stability?
- Are the north-south and east-west bodies tokenistic or do they perform real functions? What importance can be given to symbolic acts of reconciliation at the level of sovereign government, as with the Queen's visit to Ireland in May 2011?
- The peace process in Northern Ireland was given assistance through 'third party interventions' by the United States, the European Union and international commissions like the De Chastelain Commission on the decommissioning of weapons. Will the departure of some of these third parties weaken it?
- Do the developments involving political elites affect the way people experience their national, cultural and political identities. Do the attitude surveys show evidence of any real change?

1. The Functioning of the Power-Sharing Assembly: Progress and Logjams

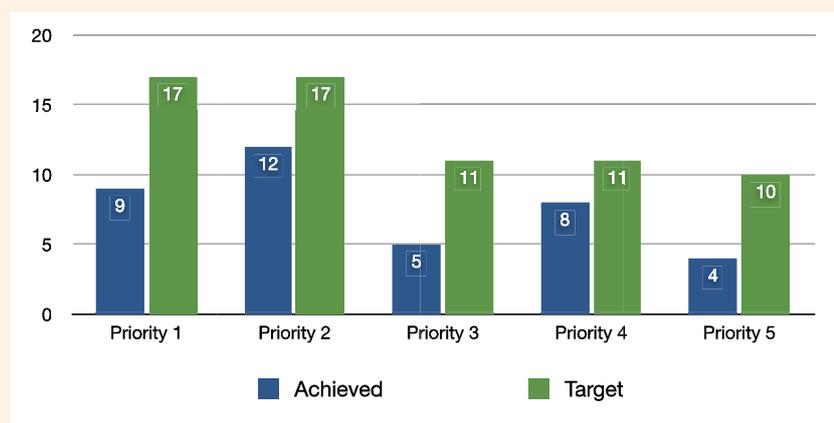
When the Northern Ireland Assembly dissolved itself at the close of its mandate on 25 March 2011 it became the first parliament in over four decades to stay the course. It was in February 1969 that the last Stormont government completed its term of office. Whether the Assembly of 2007-11 performed well or badly, the simple fact that it survived earned it a place in the history books. It was launched in a blaze of publicity: news editors throughout the world could not resist the image of the IRA leader Martin McGuinness and the hellfire Protestant preacher Ian Paisley not only sitting but laughing together – such an extravagant image of reconciliation was truly astonishing. The partnership between the two – quickly nicknamed the Chuckle Brothers – soon had to move from the photo-shoot to the committee room, and to be tested against the quotidian realities of decision-making.

1.1 The Programme for Government

In 2008 the Programme for Government, initiated by the Northern Ireland Executive, was approved by the Assembly, the first since 2002. It was a much slimmer document than its predecessor, some 18 pages in length, and with the over-arching aim 'to build a peaceful, fair and prosperous society in Northern Ireland, with respect for the rule of law and where everyone can enjoy a better quality of life now and in years to come'. Delivery on its more detailed objectives was evaluated in 2010 by PricewaterhouseCoopers in a report titled '*Northern Ireland: Whatever Happened to the Programme for Government?*'. The five priorities were assessed as follows:

- 'Growing a dynamic, innovative economy' – nine out of 17 (53%) goals were said to be on track.
- 'Promoting tolerance, inclusion and health and wellbeing' – 12 out of 17 (71%) were said to be on target.
- 'Protect and enhance our environment and natural resources' – five of the 11 (45%) goals were accomplished.
- 'Invest to build our infrastructure' – eight of the 11 (73%) of the goals were achieved.
- 'Deliver modern high quality and efficient public services' – only four of the 10 (40%) objectives were on target.

Chart 132: Derived from PWC evaluation 'Whatever Happened to the Programme for Government?' (2010)



When the Executive returned to the task of creating a budget in 2010 it recognised that some of its more ambitious plans had not taken account of budget cuts. In the wake of the 2010 general election, the coalition government announced plans to make cuts of £17 billion by 2014-2015 – this in addition to the £6.2 billion cut by the previous Labour government. The Northern Ireland share was £127.9 million. Some of the failures of 2007-11 can be explained by the failure to anticipate the cutbacks, but the Northern Ireland Executive was not the only government to fail to anticipate the global financial crisis. Other problems were caused by its own inexperience and, critically, by the way the compulsory coalition was unable to overcome entrenched sectarian attitudes and behaviours.

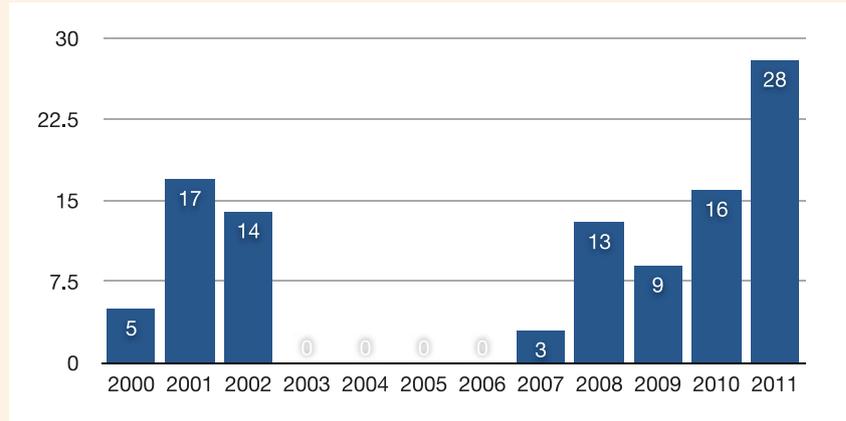
1.2 Progress 2007-2011

In the 12 years from 1999 to March 2011, 105 Assembly bills received royal assent. After a slow start the tempo of legislation began to pick up but from 2003-06, when the Assembly was in limbo, no bills were passed. In 2009 the total was only 10. But following the Hillsborough Agreement of February 2010 16 bills went through that year and in the first three months of 2011, before the end of the Assembly term, 28 more were approved.

The Hillsborough Agreement does not provide the only explanation for the increased output. The Assembly and the civil service had to accustom themselves once more to legislative processes and exhaustive consultations. The legislation passed in 2010 featured two bills introduced in 2007, whereas only one had been introduced during that year (the Debt Relief Bill 2010, deemed to warrant urgency). And of the bills passed in the first three months of 2011, one had been introduced in 2007 and 20 in 2009-10.

Much of the legislation that passes through the Assembly, moreover, is no more than an adaptation of Westminster legislation for regional purposes, as under direct rule. But there have also been private members' bills, including on caravans, autism, cyclist' helmets and taxing plastic bags.

Chart 130: Bills Introduced in the Assembly: 1999 – 2011



In none of these cases has the Assembly engaged with how low-cost or free measures are to be financed. The refusal by all parties, bar Alliance, to countenance water charges has an obvious consequence, which manifested itself during the freezing temperatures of December 2010 when water supplies were cut off for almost two weeks to households across Northern Ireland. The lack of any tax revenue to support a water service may be a vote-winner but the Assembly cannot indefinitely postpone how the service is to be recapitalised and made fit for purpose. Similarly, the reluctance to countenance an increase in university tuition fees now requires an additional £20 million per year to be found elsewhere from the DEL budget. In the past recourse has been made to the Treasury, on the basis that Northern Ireland is a special case, but on his visit to the Assembly in June 2011 David Cameron made it clear that those days are over. The 2011-15 Assembly is going to have to face tough decisions that, up to now, Northern Ireland politicians have been able to avoid. In the absence of any magic wand Assembly politicians have turned increasingly to the idea of reducing corporation tax from the current UK rate of 28% to match the Republic's 12.5% rate. The financial prospectus for this idea has had to be rewritten, since Treasury figures released in July 2011 showed that estimates of the annual income gap to be made up in consequence had risen from £300 million to £400 million.

1.3 Logjams 2007-11

The mandatory coalition put in place by the Belfast Agreement allows each communal bloc the safeguard of a veto; in certain contexts that becomes disabling. Normally, in situations where governments fail to function, the opposition presents its claim to take over the reins. In 2007-11 Northern Ireland experienced a series of impasses seized up the machinery of government, but it was never possible for an opposition to emerge to present an alternative. The main logjams were:

Policing and Justice The Good Friday Agreement promised devolution of policing and justice, and as devolution took shape these were to be the 'last pieces of the jigsaw'. For Sinn Fein this was of fundamental importance: the party had dropped its longstanding opposition to the police on the understanding that policing powers would be devolved. But for the DUP the prospect of a Sinn Fein Minister of Justice seemed more than its electorate would bear, and the business of the Assembly slowly ground to a halt. It took 130 hours of talks at Hillsborough Castle to break the logjam, with the British Prime Minister, Gordon Brown, and the Irish Taoiseach, Brian Cowen, constantly on hand to encourage a deal. The former US President George Bush even made a phone call and on 5th February 2011 the deal was finally done. The Hillsborough Agreement saw the Alliance leader, David Ford, join the Executive as Justice Minister – ironically depriving the Assembly of an unofficial opposition, as Alliance had been the only one of the five big parties not to be seated at the Executive table.

Irish Language Act Support for the Irish language was written into the Belfast Agreement and in 2006 the British government, as part of the St Andrews Agreement, pledged to 'introduce an Irish Language Act reflecting on the experience of Wales and Ireland and work with the incoming Executive to enhance and protect the development of the Irish Language'. The government was not only responding to pressure from nationalists, as under the European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages it is under a duty to make such legal provision. Under devolved government however this duty falls to the Assembly and in 2008 the DUP Minister for Culture Arts and Leisure, Edwin Poots, said he would not introduce such a bill. To the fury of Irish language supporters this block was an unmoveable fact of political life. Sinn Fein's response was to ensure it got the DCAL brief after the 2011 elections.

Academic selection As his final act as Minister of Education in 2002, Martin McGuinness decided that the '11+' transfer test should be abolished. This was in line with mainstream nationalist sentiment, but academic selection is supported by the main unionist parties. In the St Andrews negotiations they won the concession that grammar schools would be maintained. The Education Order (NI) 1997 states, however, that 'the Department may issue and revise guidance as it thinks appropriate for admission of pupils to grant-aided schools' and on January 21st 2008 the then Education Minister, Caitríona Ruane (also representing Sinn Fein), introduced new guidelines on post-primary progression as regulation

rather than legislation, bypassing the need for agreement in the Assembly. A war of attrition ensued, with grammar schools ignoring the guidelines and introducing their own selection processes – so that there is now effectively a Catholic and a Protestant '11+'.

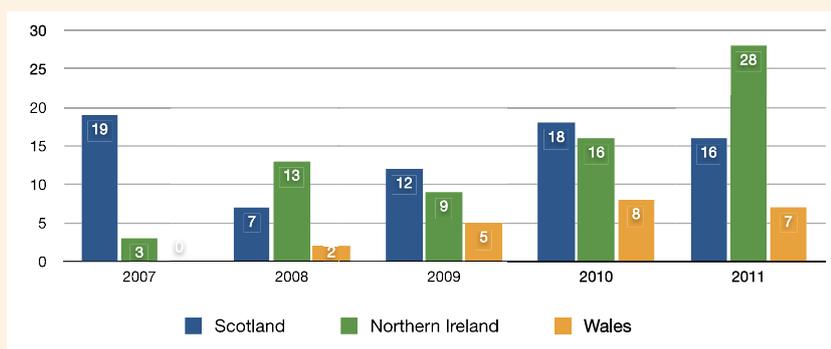
Community Relations Strategy As detailed in Section 4, neither the DUP nor Sinn Fein wished to endorse the *A Shared Future* policy document introduced by the last direct-rule administration. In a telling demonstration of the problem they were trying to solve, each party prepared its own document and each rejected the other's. In 2010 a compromise draft was put out for consultation under the name *Cohesion, Sharing and Integration*, but this was largely rejected by the community relations field. A key symbolic project, to turn the old Maze prison site into a multi-code regional sports stadium, fell victim to the clash of perspectives – despite support from the Irish Football Association, the Gaelic Athletic Association and the Irish Rugby Football Union – with the DUP baulking at Sinn Fein's link between the stadium plan and a 'centre for conflict transformation' which it claimed would become a 'shrine to terrorism'. The Executive decided to spend more than £100 million instead on separate upgrades of the existing stadia at Windsor Park, Casement Park and Ravenhill respectively.

1.4 How does the Assembly compare with other devolved parliaments?

While Northern Ireland has had to operate with a mandatory coalition the other devolved territories have had to work for most of the time with coalition arrangements that have arisen from election stalemates between Labour and nationalist parties. If the ability to enact legislation is a measure then Northern Ireland fares well by comparison with Wales and Scotland. The Welsh Assembly established in 1999 had no powers to initiate primary legislation until limited law-making powers were gained through the Government of Wales Act 2006. Its primary law-making powers were enhanced following a Yes vote in the referendum on 3 March 2011, making it possible to enact legislation without first seeking the approval of the UK parliament. Up until this point it was only empowered to introduce 'Assembly Measures', a lower form of primary legislation. It is difficult therefore to make comparisons, but as a measure of productivity it is interesting to see how many of these 'measures' successfully went through the Welsh Assembly, as a preamble to full legislation granted by Westminster.

The Scottish Parliament has enjoyed legislative functions since 1999 and as a result its legislative output is higher. As Chart 134 shows, however, the increased confidence of the Northern Ireland Assembly in 2010-11 shows it comparing favourably with Scotland, and increasingly in advance of Wales.

Chart 134: Bills/Measures Passed by the Assemblies in Scotland Northern Ireland and Wales since 2007



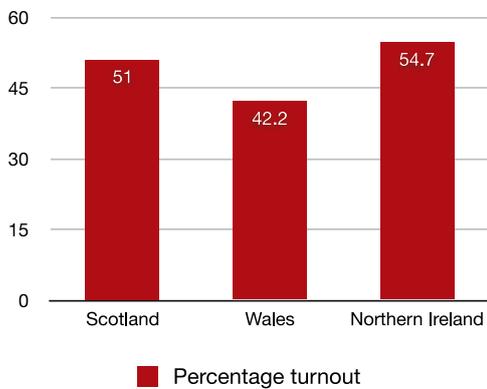
A quantitative measure, though, does not yield a proper sense of the quality of parliamentary democracy on display in the three jurisdictions. Here the comparisons do not flatter Northern Ireland, as the evidence of the ten-year devolution-monitoring project co-ordinated by the Constitution Unit at University of London demonstrates. A key figure in that project, Alan Trench of Edinburgh University, said in October 2011:

Northern Ireland is a policy-light zone, almost a policy-free zone. One of the problems with Northern Ireland politics is there is very, very little debate even now – and it's better now than it was 10 years ago – about what you'd call ordinary public policy. It's because the inter-communal divide and constitutional issues take up so much precedence and all the policy issues are seen through the prism of the position of the respective communities.

Ian Paisley Junior, who left the Assembly to concentrate his energy in the Westminster parliament, put it even more bluntly, saying the Assembly was 'more like a grand county council than a regional parliament' (News Letter, 16/5/11). The absence of debate on the larger issues is not simply due to sectarian squabbling but the lack of any nuanced political difference on the broader issues that face all the devolved regions. All parties wish to hold on to universal service provision in areas like tuition fees, concessionary travel, water charges and medical prescriptions, and vote together on these issues without addressing the revenue side of the account or considering the distributional consequences. By contrast, Audit Scotland has estimated the cost of universal services at £900 million for 2010-11 and the budget, including the balancing of universal provision against means-tested benefits, is the stuff of debate in the Parliament. The Assembly cannot be said yet to have developed that political maturity.

2. Electoral politics

Chart 135: Voter Turnout In The May 2011 Elections



Plus ça change?

Party with highest share of first preference votes, 2007 and 2011

Chart 136a: NI local government Election results 2007

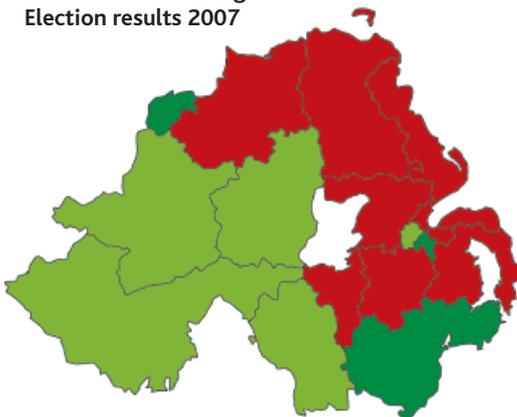
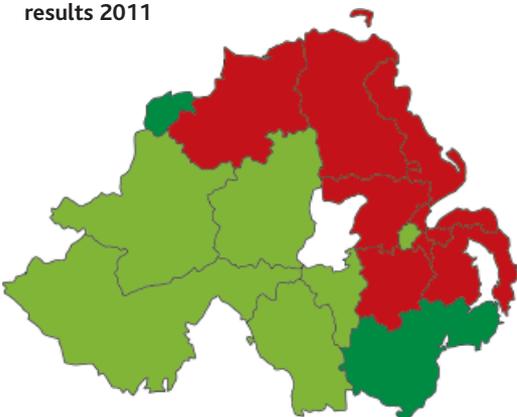


Chart 136b: NI local government Election results 2011



Majority 1st Preference vote
 ■ DUP ■ Sinn Fein ■ SDLP

Source: NI Assembly Research and Information Service, Paper 55/11, May 2011.

2.1 The Elections of May 2011

On May 5th 2011 Northern Ireland voters were given the opportunity to participate in three different elections: the Assembly election (contemporaneous with those in Scotland and Wales), local-government elections, and a UK-wide referendum on the Alternative Vote (AV). The council elections had been scheduled to take place in 2009 but in 2008 the Minister for the Environment, Arlene Foster, requested that they be postponed until 2011 to allow for a reform of public administration that would see the number of district councils reduced from 26 to 11. This proposed reform was shelved in 2010 and the 2011 elections took place under the 26-council arrangement.

Voter turnout

Despite the menu of electoral options there were fears voter turnout would be low. Following a period of relative stability, only 42% had participated in the 2009 European elections and 57.9% in the 2010 Westminster election – lower than the UK average of 65.1%. This slackening of interest in politics was interpreted by some as reflecting disillusionment with the sterility of Northern Ireland political debate but by others as indicative of 'normalisation'. The turnout across the three elections averaged 55.6% and, as Chart 135 shows, turnout was higher for the Assembly election than for the devolved institutions in Scotland and Wales. Voting was as usual higher in the mainly Catholic / rural west of the region than in the mainly Protestant / urban east, with Assembly election turnouts in Fermanagh and South Tyrone (69%), Mid-Ulster (65.4%) and West Tyrone (64.0%) contrasting with those in North Down (45.9%) East Antrim (47.8%), and Strangford (48.6%). The same pattern was evident in the local-government elections.

Northern Ireland Assembly elections

The Assembly election was remarkable for being unremarkable: for the first time in decades, voters went to the polls confident they were voting for a regional government that would in all likelihood stay the course. With no immediate sense of crisis this was billed as the 'bread and butter' election, meaning that attention would shift from constitutional issues to the stuff of politics elsewhere: education, health, and the economy. While all of these received more attention than usual in a Northern Ireland election, with particularly sharp debates on water rates and university tuition fees, this did not result in any shift in voting patterns, as Charts 136a and 136b show. The two big parties, the DUP and Sinn Fein, consolidated their dominance: the DUP took 30.1% of all first-preference votes and Sinn Fein took 26.9%. This earned the DUP 38 seats in the new chamber and Sinn Fein 29 – between them 67 of the 108 seats, more than sufficient to carry the vote on issues where they can find agreement. The dominance of the two large parties was itself an issue during the campaign, with the Ulster Unionists and the SDLP uniting to attack what they saw as the crowding out of political space and the absence of real debate on the floor of the Assembly because of the power of the large parties in the Executive.

Whatever merit attaches to that argument, both parties suffered further losses, in ways that suggest a tipping point has been passed. For the UUP and the SDLP the slide towards secondary status has come to seem – at least in the short term – irreversible.

2.2 The unionist parties

The DUP did not increase its share of first preferences but still emerged the largest of all the parties with 30.0%, fractionally down on its 30.1% share in 2007. The party did however increase its seats by two to 38, its best ever result. By contrast, the UUP had its worst ever performance: its share of first-preference votes fell from 14.9% in 2007 to 13.2%, with seats falling too from 18 to 16. The party suffered first from a fraying at the edges, with some high-profile former members standing as independents. Some of this was fall-out from the ill-starred link-up with the British Conservative Party, abandoned after the 'Ulster Conservative and Unionist New Force' (UCUNF) brand was rejected by voters at the 2010 Westminster election. While the party reverted to the Ulster Unionist label, its recent connection to the Conservatives was unhelpful when all other parties were united in condemnation of the cuts announced by the coalition government. Worryingly for the UUP, there are no longer any areas that can be described as strongholds: only three candidates were elected on the first count, and even the Health Minister, Michael McGimpsey, struggled to get elected, getting in only after the fifth round of transfers in South Belfast.

In the city it used to dominate, the party was left with only two seats, with long-term stalwarts like the chief whip and former mayor, Fred Cobain, failing to get elected. The current party leader, Tom Elliott, has brought the concerns of his rural base in the west into the party, but the geographical differences within unionism reflect contrasting political dispositions and unresolved tensions. What the political scientist Professor Henry Patterson calls 'border unionism', the ethnic-Protestant identification that is the legacy of traditionalists like the former leader Harry West, does not sit easily with the liberal, civic unionism that finds expression in Belfast and North Down. The gap between the two wings was exposed when Elliott was heckled at his count and launched a tirade against 'Sinn Fein scum' in the hall. While he later apologised to the 'good nationalists, republicans and even Sinn Fein voters who felt offended', the liberal wing of the party led by Basil McCrea and Trevor Ringland made it plain that they regarded this as the politics of the past. The incident also cost UUP politically. Under the d'Hondt formula an extra ministerial seat would have been available if the former member David McClarty, who had stood as an independent, had been persuaded to bury his differences with his constituency party and resume the whip. Elliott's outburst sealed his refusal to return to the fold, and Alliance thus secured a second seat at the Executive table.

The success of the DUP was all the more marked because of the crisis it had gone through in the previous year. In the 2010 Westminster election, Peter Robinson had lost his seat to Naomi Long of Alliance, a humiliating defeat for the party leader in his home territory. That followed revelations

Chart 137: Unionist first preference vote

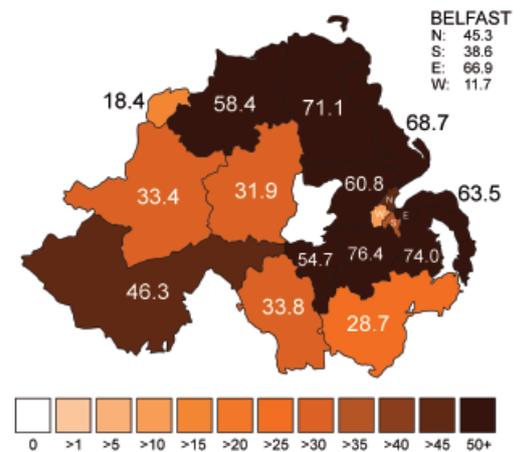


Chart 138: DUP first preference vote

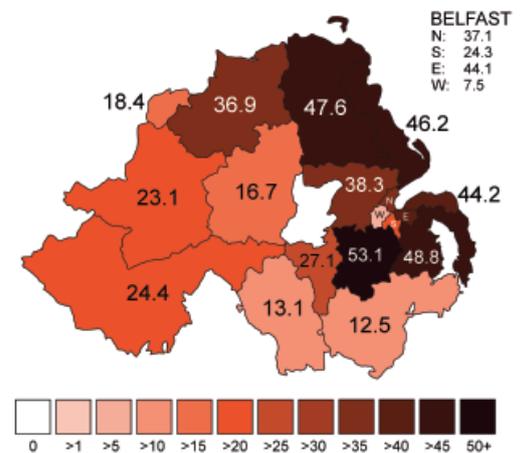
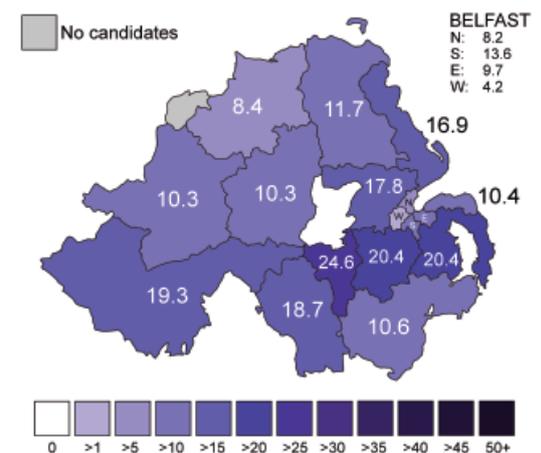


Chart 139: UUP first preference vote

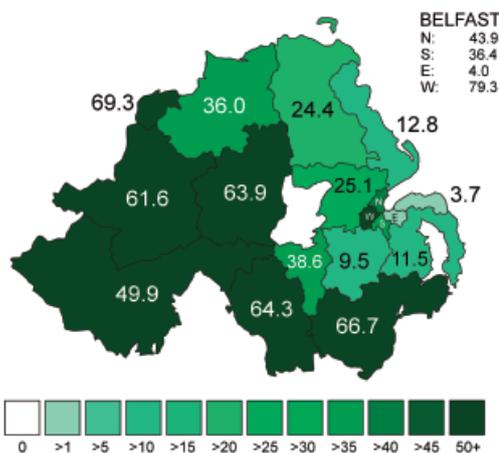


about an affair between his wife and fellow MP, Iris, and a 19 year-old, and the way they employed their children and farmed expenses at Westminster, for which they earn the mocking headline 'The Swish Family Robinson'. If such hubris lay behind the DUP's loss of favour, Robinson's fortitude in the face of personal crisis and the statesman-like qualities he showed following the dissidents' murder of the PSNI officer Ronan Kerr shortly before the election served to re-establish his authority. The Assembly election sealed his reputation for political mastery: the DUP now enjoys the 'big tent' popularity once the preserve of the old Unionist party, cutting across class and geographical distinctions.

As if to demonstrate his willingness to defy the laws of political gravity, Robinson announced that the DUP would in future seek Catholic votes. He wrote in the Belfast Telegraph (24/6/11): 'My task is to make voting DUP as comfortable a choice for a Catholic as anyone else'. This followed publication of the 2010 results of the NILT survey, in which 52% of Catholics expressed themselves content to remain within the union. But in the Assembly election only 2% of DUP transfers came from Catholic voters. A much more achievable ambition is to reposition the party closer to the (Protestant) political centre. With the UUP occasionally lurching back towards more 'traditional' attitudes, it is hard to maintain the distinction that placed the UUP at the moderate end of the unionist spectrum and the DUP at the extreme. The DUP is increasingly presenting the modernising face that has allowed it to capture moderate Protestant votes. Robinson explained his party's electoral success in thus: 'It can only be down to one factor and that is that people like the direction we are travelling in and like the politics that we are putting forward. I think people want to see a united community and shared community and shared society and that's where we've been moving.' The success of the strategy can be seen not only in the way the party has succeeded in relation to the UUP, but also in the collapse in support for the hard-line Traditional Unionist Voice and the UVF-linked Progressive Unionist Party.

2.3 The nationalist parties

Chart 140: Nationalist first preference vote



Sinn Fein increased its vote share by a small margin, 0.8%, in May 2011. This added one seat, bringing 29. The SDLP's share, meanwhile, fell 1% and the party lost two seats, leaving it with only 14. This has led to the jibe that the letters SDLP now stand for South Down and Londonderry Party. The reality is less extreme: the party still has three MPs at Westminster and solid rural support in Newry and Armagh. But the failure to stem the flow of votes to Sinn Fein led to renewed speculation about the effectiveness of Margaret Ritchie's leadership. Tensions between the rural and urban wings of the party – dividing Fianna Fail-style nationalists and more liberal social democrats wing in Belfast – were not helped by Ritchie's insistence on re-appointing the Belfast-based Alex Attwood to the Executive as Environment Minister. To her discomfort, leaked memos on Wikileaks revealed that the US Consul General in Belfast had briefed that Ritchie was 'wooden' and 'stilted' and doubted whether she had 'innovative ideas to revive the SDLP.'

Ritchie saw the writing on the wall and stepped down, to be replaced by her deputy and rival, Alasdair McDonnell, in November 2011. But in the longer view would the decline of the SDLP vote cannot be attributed to its leadership alone: by helping republicanism to come into the constitutional fold in the 1990s it helped create a competitor which quickly overtook it. In 1996, two years after the first IRA ceasefire, Sinn Fein won 42% of the combined vote for the nationalist parties. The following year the figure climbed to 46%, and by 2001 it overtook the SDLP in Westminster and local-government elections. In 2011 it achieved more than twice as many seats.

There were other reasons for Sinn Fein to feel satisfied with the result. Despite the departure of its leader, Gerry Adams, to southern politics the party managed, through some skilful vote management, to return five candidates in West Belfast. It could also take some satisfaction from its vote in Derry where it secured 34.0% of the votes to the SDLP's 35.3%, an outcome that suggests the possibility of the SDLP being eclipsed in Foyle in the near future. Martina Anderson from Sinn Fein easily outpaced Mark H Durkan from the SDLP (6,950 votes to 4,970) and this result, together with the profile she will achieve from her appointment as Junior Minister, leaves her a likely candidate for a future Westminster seat.

Northern Ireland's most respected psephologist, Nicholas Whyte, has pointed to a paradox. Demographic patterns (see Section 1) suggest that the Catholic electorate may have grown by up to 2% since the 2001 census, but the combined nationalist vote has slipped by a similar amount – from 42.7% in the 2001 Westminster election to 41.1% in the 2011 Assembly election. Some votes may have leaked to Alliance, or perhaps a 'culture of contentment' affects Catholics as much as Protestants in the east and they too are turning away from electoral politics. It may be that a bulging Catholic youth cohort reflect the lower propensity of young people to vote, or disaffected republicans may be rejecting Sinn Fein's electoral drive in favour of abstention rather than the oppositional republican groupuscules – or, most plausibly, a combination of these (and possibly other) factors is in play.

2.4 The Alliance Party

The Alliance Party did well in the Assembly election, increasing its vote share by 2.5% and its seats from eight to nine. Although this was half the UUP total of 16, the fact that Ford, the party leader, had been given the Justice seat by an inter-party deal, and the workings of the D'Hondt system combined to give Alliance two seats at the Executive, while the UUP had to content itself with one. In South Belfast Anna Lo, the only Chinese politician in any parliament in Europe, topped the poll for Alliance, increasing her first preference votes by more than 2,500. This impressive result, successes in the local-government elections (see below), Naomi Long's election to Westminster in 2010, and the high profile of Ford as Justice Minister represent something of a renaissance for the party,

Alliance has profited from the UUP's discomfiture. Its support remains firmly within the Belfast travel-to-work area, and the three constituencies

Chart 141: Sinn Fein first preference vote

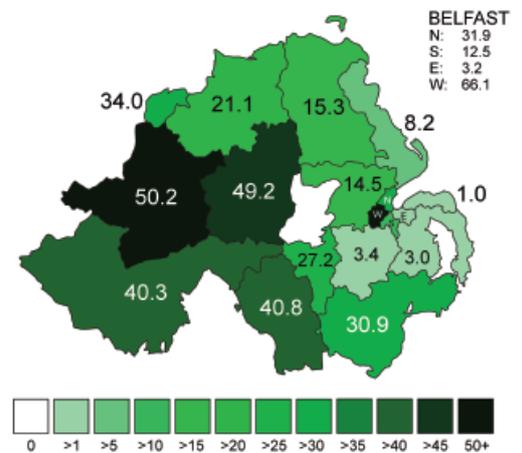


Chart 142: SDLP first preference vote

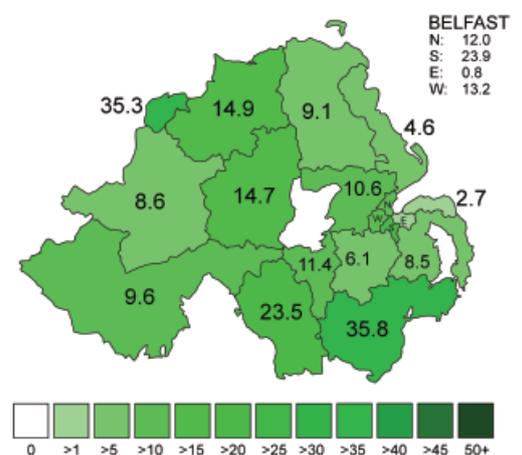


Chart 143: Alliance first preference vote

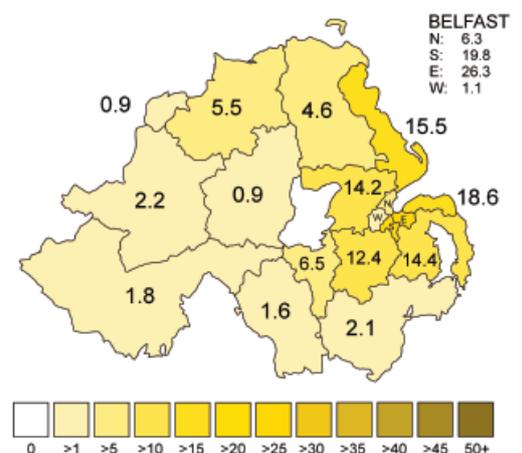
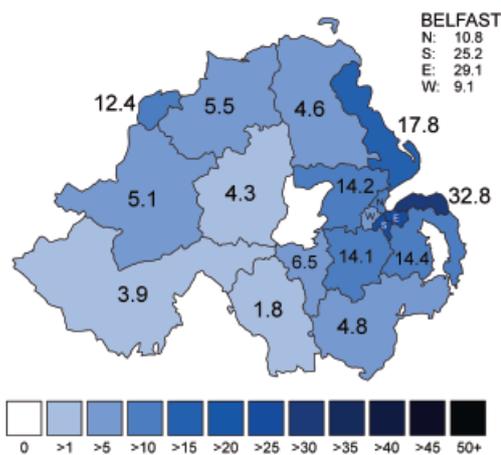


Chart 144: Other Parties first preference vote



where its vote rose by more than six percentage points in the Assembly election were South Belfast, East Belfast and North Down – all former UUP strongholds. And if Alliance was traditionally the party that Catholic voters plumped for in hard-line unionist constituencies where no nationalist victory was possible, it may now be accruing more genuine Catholic support for its centrist policies. If it wishes to re-gain the 10% vote share it last enjoyed in the 1987 Westminster election, however, Alliance would need to expand its appeal beyond greater Belfast and North Down.

Local government elections

In the elections to the 26 district councils, Alliance emerged again as a big winner, increasing its number of seats by 14. The SDLP and the UUP were once more the big losers, dropping 16 and 14 seats respectively. The DUP and Sinn Fein remained dominant, taking 53% of the vote between them – significantly less than their 62% combined share vote in the Assembly election. While the DUP and the UUP display a bitter rivalry at Stormont, the local-government elections immediately threw up a very different pattern as the unionist contenders united to consolidate power. Having lost overall control in its former stronghold of Castlereagh, the DUP immediately formed a coalition with the UUP that will see the two parties sitting together and accepting a common whip. The move was strongly resisted by the Alliance Party which saw its gains blocked by what it described as a 'tribal pact'.

The same process was at work in Belfast City Council where the tally had left a delicate balance between the parties: 24 nationalist seats, 21 unionist seats, and six Alliance. The decline of the overall unionist vote in Belfast is part of the wider phenomenon of falling Protestant electoral participation in the east. But this marked a particular defeat for the UUP, which saw its share drop from the seven seats it held in 2005 to only three. It quickly moved to create a bloc with the DUP to claim the top positions for unionists. A special meeting of the council, however, agreed that in line with changes introduced to the Assembly following the St Andrews Agreement the mayoral position would go to the largest party. It was claimed by Sinn Fein, which appointed the 25-year-old Niall O'Donnghaile.

2.5 Overall assessment: the impact on peace-building

The May elections were fought almost exclusively between political parties which accept the terms of the peace deal: the 'consent principle' in relation to Northern Ireland's constitutional status, a commitment to equality, a regional power-sharing parliament, north-south and east-west governance arrangements, and all of this overseen by the governments of Britain and Ireland operating within an international agreement. Although the emphasis on each part of this package varies, the five big parties who between them took 89% of the vote in the Assembly election all work within this broad consensus. Moreover, if the votes for small parties like the Greens (who have no objection to the existing arrangement) are included, then the overwhelming majority of Northern Ireland's citizens

can be said – at minimum – to be prepared to work within the terms first presented in the Good Friday Agreement of 1998, amended through the St Andrews Agreement of 2006 and the Hillsborough Agreement of 2010. The retrenchment of the main duopoly of Sinn Fein and the DUP cannot therefore be presented as a victory for 'extremism' of the old sort, as each of these two parties has moved from the rejectionist attitudes that in the past would have refused the current terms of trade.

To put this in perspective - in the 1998 referendum on the Agreement, 28.9% voted No. In the 1999 European election the DUP, campaigning on an anti-Agreement platform, secured 28.4% of the vote and, when other 'no' unionist candidates are added, one in three voters supported those who opposed the terms of the peace deal. In the 2011 Assembly election, the only party on the unionist side to stand outside the consensus, the Traditional Unionist Voice led by Jim Allister, secured only 2.5% of the vote – a precipitate drop from Allister's 13.7% in the 2009 European election. For the UVF-linked PUP, which had maintained an ambivalent attitude to paramilitary activity, there was also a clear message from the Protestant working class it purports to represent in the 0.2% vote it secured in the Assembly poll. The party leader, Brian Irvine, became its latest incumbent to resign.

On the republican side, opposition to the peace arrangement is harder to test, since those most resistant, like Real IRA, the Continuity IRA, and Óglaigh na hÉireann, tend not to put themselves before the electorate. But only one republican rejectionist joined the the 581 other councillors elected across Northern Ireland in the 2011 local-government elections.

Yet support for governmental structures cannot be interpreted as reflecting more accommodating attitudes to communal divides. An analysis of transferred votes (excluding within-party transfers) in the May 2011 Assembly election shows that the 87% of unionist transfers came from unionist parties, while the 89% of nationalist transfers had nationalist origins. Alliance received the lowest number of transfers from other parties and only half of those came from nationalist or unionist sources. The DUP and Sinn Fein, meanwhile, each received only around 2% of the transfers from the other communal political bloc. While elections elsewhere may be determined by floating voters Northern Ireland has 'anchored' voters, and these elections did not show them drifting very far into shared waters.

Moreover, a study commissioned by the Community Relations Council of the Assembly manifestos showed that while the election literature of the five main parties was studded with references to a shared future and the need to build peace, each party addressed itself to its own constituency in ways that suggested the group, and not the individual citizen, was assumed to be the main electoral audience (Wilson, 2011). The orange and green coloration was not only in the overt content of the manifestos – support for parades in the DUP document and for a united Ireland in Sinn Fein's – but in the manner in which the audience was addressed. Thus, while the SDLP manifesto signalled a clear commitment to social democratic principles that ought to be of interest to Protestants and Catholics alike, the fact that the text was peppered with Irish indicated that it was

pitching to a nationalist sensibility. Likewise, the UUP manifesto, while liberal on some issues, chose to highlight particular concerns like the fate of the Presbyterian Mutual Society, which by definition was of interest to only one section of the community.

The elections therefore presented no evidence of the parties seeking new, cross-community electoral pacts to reconstitute the centre ground, and no evidence of political leaders reaching out to voters beyond their tightly defined communal boundaries. Nor was there any strong evidence of voters attempting to subvert the sectarian divide by using their first preferences or, especially, their transfers to endorse candidates from the other side. Allowing for these cautions, it can still be said that the electorate overwhelmingly backed parties prepared to work the peace settlement, marginalised those that do not, and gave the largest share of votes to a duopoly that had shown it could achieve a form of political equilibrium.

Achieving a politics not based on communal identities is a different matter.

Chart 145: Northern Ireland Elections 1998 -2011 Parties' Share Of The Vote

YEAR	ELECTION	UUP	DUP	SDLP	SF	ALL	PUP	TUV	NIWC	UKUP	OTHER
1982	Assembly	29.7	23.0	18.8	10.1	9.3	-	-	-	-	-
1983	Westminster	34.0	20.0	18.0	13.4	8.0	-	-	-	-	-
1984	European	21.5	33.6	22.1	13.3	5.0	-	-	-	-	-
1985	Local govt.	29.5	24.3	17.8	11.8	7.1	-	-	-	-	-
1987	Westminster	37.8	11.7	21.1	11.4	10.0	0.9	-	-	-	-
1989	Local govt.	31.3	17.7	21.0	11.2	6.9	-	-	-	-	-
1989	European	22.2	30.0	25.5	9.2	5.2	-	-	-	-	-
1992	Westminster	34.5	13.1	23.5	10.0	8.7	-	-	-	-	-
1993	Local govt.	29.4	17.3	22.0	12.4	7.6	-	-	-	-	-
1994	European	23.8	29.2	28.9	9.9	4.1	-	-	-	-	-
1996	NI Forum	24.2	18.8	21.4	15.5	6.5	3.5	-	1.0	3.6	5.5
1997	Westminster	32.7	13.6	24.1	16.1	8.0	1.4	-	0.4	1.6	2.1
1997	Local govt.	27.9	15.6	20.6	16.9	6.6	2.2	-	0.5	0.5	9.2
1998	Assembly	21.3	18.1	22.0	17.6	6.5	2.6	-	1.6	4.5	5.8
1999	European	17.6	28.4	28.1	17.3	2.1	3.3	-	-	3.0	0.2
2001	Westminster	26.8	22.5	21.0	21.7	3.6	0.6	-	0.4	1.7	1.7
2001	Local govt.	22.9	21.4	19.4	20.6	5.1	1.6	-	0.4	0.6	8.0
2003	Assembly	22.7	25.7	17.0	23.5	3.7	1.2	-	0.8	0.8	4.6
2005	Westminster	17.8	33.7	17.5	24.3	3.9	-	-	-	-	2.8
2005	Local govt.	18.0	29.6	17.4	23.3	5.0	0.7	-	0.1	0.1	5.8
2007	Assembly	15.0	30.1	15.2	26.2	5.2	0.6	-	-	1.5	6.2
2009	European	17.1	18.2	16.2	26.0	5.5	-	13.7	-	-	17.0
2010	Westminster	15.2	25.0	16.5	25.5	6.3	-	3.9	-	-	11.5
2011	Assembly	13.2	30.0	14.2	26.9	7.7	0.2	2.5	-	-	4.4
2011	Local govt.	15.2	27.2	15.0	24.8	7.4	0.6	2.0	-	-	9.8

3. North-South: the workings of the North-South Ministerial Council

One of the ironies of the peace process has been the success of the North-South Ministerial Council (NSMC). During the negotiations leading up to the Good Friday Agreement the north-south axis, or strand two as it was called, was thought to be one of the main barriers to a settlement. The power-sharing settlement had broken down in 1974 because the north-south mechanism it had involved, the Council of Ireland, had proved a bridge too far for unionists. During the 1998 negotiations the UUP had demanded a high price for countenancing any new such body, with the Republic sacrificing its claim to the whole 'national territory' of Ireland by amending Articles 2 and 3 of its constitution – a demand the Republic had refused to meet at Sunningdale. The arrangements that have followed under the management of the NSMC have proved quite untroubling to unionism. The plenary meetings that took place in January (Armagh), June (Dublin) and November (Armagh) had almost full attendance from the front bench teams on both sides, and the routine agendas of trade, tourism and transport were despatched in a confident and business-like mood as tourism, trade, and transport were routinely discussed. The balance of the arrangements, with a joint secretariat and political representation tied to the administration of prescribed policy portfolios, has ensured that the focus of the NSMC is on practical matters of mutual benefit. The council came into existence, moreover, in a climate fundamentally different from that which prevailed when the Council of Ireland was attempted in the early 1970s, when the two states in Ireland were only beginning to emerge from a 'prolonged cold war' (Coakley and O'Dowd, 2005: 9).

The NSMC came into existence, fittingly, in December 1999, just as the old century was closing. The thaw in the cold war was well underway. The EU had been instrumental in the reconfiguration of the border area through major funding programmes like INTERREG and PEACE 1 (including the common north-south chapter). The 'Euregio' model, first attempted on the Dutch-German border and then adapted across Europe, provided a lens through which cross-border activity could be seen as no more than normal trading arrangements between neighbouring states. And a range of third-sector bodies, like the Irish Association and Co-operation North, had grown up to develop mutual understanding between the two jurisdictions, their benign intentions clearly distinguishable from any irredentist territorial claim. One of these bodies, the Centre for Cross Border Studies, put together a database showing 5,000 organisations actively pursuing cross-border activities.

The dependence of the northern economy on the south as an export market was always well understood, but the global financial crisis and the collapse of the Irish banking sector have now exposed the networks of interdependence connecting finance capital across the island. When it was revealed that the National Assets Management Agency (NAMA) held £3.5 billion of loans relating to property in the north, the DUP Finance minister, Sammy Wilson, said Northern Ireland should have 'direct representation on the NAMA board' (Irish Times, 8/8/11) There has also been a commitment

by the Republic in recent years to support costly infrastructure projects in Northern Ireland. In more prosperous times the Irish government had offered to help upgrade two major routes: the A8 (Belfast to Larne) and the A5 (the North-West gateway). The austerity budget introduced by the Fine Gael-Labour coalition elected in February 2011 meant cuts were made to many prized projects, however, and the £400 million on the table for the A5 was slashed to £42 million.

4. East-West links

4.1 *The symbolic realm: the Queen's visit*

Queen Elizabeth II's visit to Ireland between 17th and 20th May 2011 was of huge symbolic significance in the history of relations between Britain and Ireland. Fully 1,200 journalists and 120 photographers had been accredited to cover the visit. Towards the end of the tour, the Irish government was asking historians to bring the additional depth of perspective the occasion seemed to demand. At first, the significance of the visit was very much tied up with the timing in relation to events in Northern Ireland. While the Irish President, Mary McAleese, had made it an objective of her presidency to host such a visit, it had always been seen as the possible culmination of a successful peace process. And it was not until the devolution of policing and justice to Stormont, following the February 2010 Hillsborough Agreement, that a royal visit could be seen to fulfil its symbolic importance. It was, in effect, presented as the ceremonial full stop to the peace process. By the end of the week, that sense of symbolic importance enlarged to mark the end of 800 years of troubled relations between Britain and Ireland. A piece by the widely-respected Irish Times columnist Fintan O'Toole in the paper on 21st May carried the heading 'The week that Anglophobia died'. The coverage from the English media was no less exultant. The BBC's royal correspondent, Nicholas Witchell, said on 20th May: 'This visit will stand alongside any that the Queen has made during her reign in terms of its significance.'

In one way the most remarkable aspect of the episode was that it hadn't take place previously. The last visit by a British monarch was the 1911 tour by Queen Elizabeth's grandfather, King George V. Five years later an Irish republic was declared by the rebels in the General Post Office, and the animosities that led to the rebellion had never fully been laid to rest – at least not symbolically – until this visit. The contested identity of the six counties in the north, so long the cause of division between the two sovereign states, has since the early 1990s framed a working relationship that has seen the governments working almost with one mind towards a long-term settlement. The Queen's visit was a celebration of the success that has grown out of that accord. In her speech in Dublin Castle on 18th May she spoke of how the Northern Ireland peace process was symbolic of the reconciliation between Britain and Ireland and an example to the rest of the world, describing it as a 'knot of history that was painstakingly loosened by the British and Irish governments together with the strength, vision and determination of the political parties in Northern Ireland'.

It was, in effect, presented as the ceremonial full stop to the peace process.

4.2 Economic ties

At the special dinner in Dublin Castle on 18th May to honour the Queen, it was observed that, out of sight of the TV cameras, David Cameron allowed a tear to run down his cheek when President McAleese spoke about the history of relations between the two islands. It was his first ever official visit to Ireland and his itinerary was not all ceremonial: earlier in the day he had visited Government Buildings for the decidedly unsentimental task of reviewing economic developments. In what some had seen as a humiliating development, the economic collapse in 2010 had forced Ireland to accept a British loan as part of the international bail-out negotiated with the EU and the IMF. The complexly packaged loan, widely described as 'over £7 billion', amounted – as several British newspapers pointed out – to more than the per annum UK public expenditure cuts announced by the coalition government. But as the Bank of England Governor, Mervyn King, pointed out, the UK banking system had been left very exposed to the Irish financial crisis. Lloyds and the Royal Bank of Scotland – both effectively nationalised as part of the UK's own banking crisis – had suffered heavily. According to an analysis by the Irish Times (27/5/11) their respective Irish subsidiaries, Bank of Scotland (Ireland) and Ulster Bank, ended up writing off respectively 32% and 14% of their loans.

The interpenetration of the banking systems is not the only way in which the two countries' economies are held together. Ireland accounts for 6% of the UK export market – more than Brazil, Russia, India and China combined. For Ireland the relationship is even more significant: according to the Central Statistics Office, in January-April 2011, 12.9% of total exports went to Great Britain, with a further 1.4% to Northern Ireland, making a total of 14.3% to the UK market. Imports in the same period were on a still larger scale: 28.8% came from Great Britain with a further 1.9% from Northern Ireland, bringing the total from the UK to 30.7%. The crisis demonstrated that, however relations are managed, the two economies are now interdependent, and the political class in each state is compelled to act in pursuit of the same goals.

4.3 Governmental structures: the British-Irish Council

To balance the north-south connection the Belfast Agreement created a structure that would give expression to unionism's affinity with other parts of the UK and foster co-operation between Northern Ireland and its various regions and islands. The purpose of the British-Irish Council (BIC), as explained in its foundational document, is 'to promote the harmonious and mutually beneficial development of the totality of relationships among the peoples of these islands'. Decisions are normally taken by consensus and governments can choose to opt out of policies. This means it is much more of a talking shop than the NSMC and attracts only weak commitment from the sponsoring governments. An answer to a parliamentary question from the TUV MLA, Jim Allister, revealed the comparative expenditures to be as follows in 2010: the running costs of the NSMC (shared between the two governments) were £2,509,457 and those of the BIC just £170,000.

The council's eight member governments represent:

- two states (UK, Republic of Ireland);
- the UK's three devolved regions/nations (Scotland, Wales, Northern Ireland);
- the three crown dependencies (Jersey, Guernsey, Isle of Man).

In 2010 the BIC decided to create a permanent secretariat in Edinburgh, and this may produce a stronger sense of purpose. The agenda-setting will continue to be a shared responsibility. At present different members each take responsibility for a particular policy area – for example, Scotland has taken responsibility for demography, the Isle of Man for e-health, and Wales minority languages. The June 2011 meeting, held on the Isle of Man, focused on wind energy and the possibility of energy transfers between the member governments. This is of great interest to the Green Party, but otherwise the agenda of the British-Irish Council is of peripheral interest to the main parties – including unionists.

5. Third Party Interventions – The Stabilisers Come Off

5.1 The international commissions

Two international commissions set up to facilitate the transition from paramilitarism to peaceful politics filed their final reports in July 2011. The Independent International Commission on Decommissioning was set up by the British and Irish governments in August 1997. Better known as the De Chastelain Commission after the Canadian general who chaired it, the membership of this body was heavyweight by any standards, including Marti Ahtisaari (winner of the 2008 Nobel Peace Prize) and Cyril Ramaphosa, a key figure in the democratic transition in South Africa. During its existence it verified the decommissioning of weapons by all the main paramilitary organisations but it did not witness the end of political violence. In the week when it published its last report there was rioting in east Belfast, during which a photographer was shot by dissident republicans. A second body, the Independent Monitoring Commission, was set up by agreement between the British and Irish governments in November 2003. Its task was to test the bona fides of paramilitary-linked organizations involved in the peace process. Its insistence on zero tolerance for violence was challenging not just to the paramilitaries but to the governments' own tolerance, in certain situations, of what was called (by a former secretary of state, referring to an IRA murder in 1999) 'internal housekeeping'. In its 26th and final report in July 2011 it provided its own self-assessment of its efforts in 'promoting the transition to a peaceful society and stable and inclusive devolved government in Northern Ireland' (article 3 in the Joint Declaration establishing the IMC).

5.2 The United States

On 23rd May 2011, just three days after Queen Elizabeth's plane left Dublin, the US President, Barack Obama, touched down in Ireland for a brief one-day visit. His speech in Dublin lavished praise on the politicians who had led the peace process and he promised: 'America will always stand by you in your pursuit of peace.' That same month the US Special Envoy for Economic Affairs in Northern Ireland, Declan Kelly, resigned his post. The reasons for his resignation were personal but his post, first filled by George Mitchell, was not refilled. Before leaving, Kelly made a speech to the Northern Ireland Chamber of Commerce on the theme of 'trade not aid'. In a leaked Wikileaks cable he conveyed the message even more bluntly, claiming the region's business community and political leaders had become too reliant on 'Santa sacks'. As further expression of this mood, the International Fund for Ireland found itself battling for the US contribution to its budget. Hillary Clinton maintains a personal interest in Northern Ireland, requesting an immediate briefing on the Massereene Barracks shooting in March 2009 (Wikileaks, 2011), but a cost-cutting House of Representatives is unlikely to continue indefinitely any form of support that has a price tag.

5.3 The European Union

On 25th June 2011 European Commissioner for Regional Policy, Johannes Hahn, opened the EU-funded 'Peace Bridge' in Derry-Londonderry, linking the 'city side' with the Waterside, or those who say Derry with those who say Londonderry. There to celebrate the occasion were the Taoiseach, Enda Kenny; the First Minister, Peter Robinson; the Deputy First Minister, Martin McGuinness; and the Social Development Minister, Nelson McCausland. This third bridge across the Foyle was awarded £14.7 million from the PEACE III programme. Welcoming its completion, the President of the European Commission, José Manuel Barroso, said:

The European Union's structural funds have actively provided support to the region over the past 16 years, through the PEACE Programme. This financial assistance has helped drive forward thousands of projects and initiatives in support of the peace process. The Peace Bridge is one of the most significant of these projects and symbolises our shared hope for continued peace and prosperity for the citizens of Derry-Londonderry.

The grant represented only a fraction of the 333 million euro devoted to Peace III, with 225 million coming directly from Brussels and 108 million from the British and Irish governments. And that in turn was dwarfed by the two previous iterations of the programme, going back to 1995. When it ends in 2013, close to 2 billion euro will have been spent.

The EU has thus been the largest supporter of peace-building in Northern Ireland, by a very big margin. The spend on Peace III in 2010 was 65.5 million euro, which by one calculation (CRC, 2010) approximates to 54% of all funding on peace, overwhelming the contribution of other major donors like the IFI (26%), OFMDFM (12%), Atlantic Philanthropies (3%) and the Irish Department of Foreign Affairs (4%) (see Chart 181). Its full title is the Special Support Programme for Peace and Reconciliation in

The EU has thus been the largest supporter of peace-building in Northern Ireland, by a very big margin.

Northern Ireland and the Border Region of Ireland and so takes in counties Cavan, Donegal, Leitrim, Louth, Monaghan, and Sligo. Additional funding for this enlarged, cross-border, 12-county zone comes through the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) which, through its Territorial Cooperation Fund, finances Interreg IVA. This is worth 256 million euro (192 million from the EU with further national contributions of 66 million euro). While previous Interreg programmes were designed to link Northern Ireland and the six border counties, the 2007-2013 programme brings in an additional partner in the form of the west of Scotland. As before, the overall programme mandate is to address the economic and social problems which result from the existence of borders.

This mission is consistent with the origin of the EU as a post-war project to create a united Europe, and in the Northern Ireland peace process the EU can trace its own history, in particular by showing how economic co-operation can pave the way for improved relations between cultures. As Barroso explains it (Report of the Task Force, 2008), the Northern Ireland story fits within a larger narrative about Europe:

Northern Ireland has now emerged as an example to the world on how to succeed in promoting peace and reconciliation in a deeply divided community. Its political leaders have recognised the importance of economic success in this process, and the role of the European Union in the drive for growth and jobs. Just like the emerging European Community of 50 years ago, the story of Northern Ireland shows that people from different communities, sometimes with fundamentally different opinions, can overcome the divisions, work together and share a common future.

In other EU documents Northern Ireland is now routinely held up as a 'beacon for progress' and as a model for how divided societies can overcome their differences. At its 448th plenary session in October 2008, the European Economic and Social Committee received a report on the EU contribution to the peace process and voted through conclusions that included the following:

The EU has made no obvious attempt to stake a claim for the success of the peace process. Yet it would be a failing if history did not place on record the value and the importance of the EU role. This is not only because EU support for reconciliation in particular should continue for years to come but also because the lessons learned from the EU PEACE Programmes could contribute to efforts to promote peace and reconciliation in other parts of the world. The EU will never have all the answers but, as proved in Northern Ireland, it does have the means and a track record to help others find them.

It is less clear what these lessons are. As we enter the final phase of peace funding, however, increased attention is being paid to evaluation, partly because of strict EU audit requirements and partly because the scale of the investment requires that the benefits be distributed elsewhere – hence the emphasis on Northern Ireland as a model of conflict resolution. In 2007 PricewaterhouseCoopers delivered a document, Monitoring and Evaluation Framework for Peacebuilding, but any final evaluation of impact will have to wait until after the last funded project has completed its work in 2013.

Chart 146: Are relations between Protestants and Catholics better now than five years ago?
Source: NILT 2010

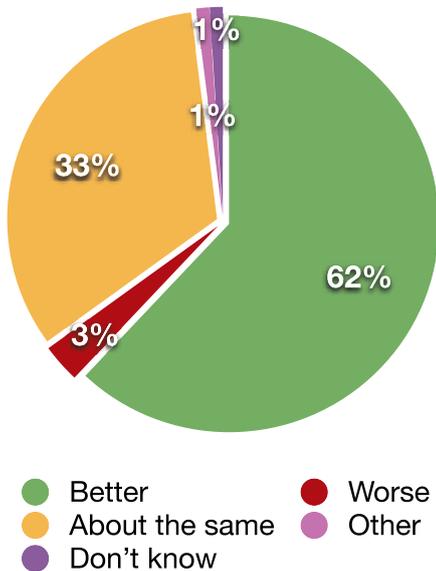
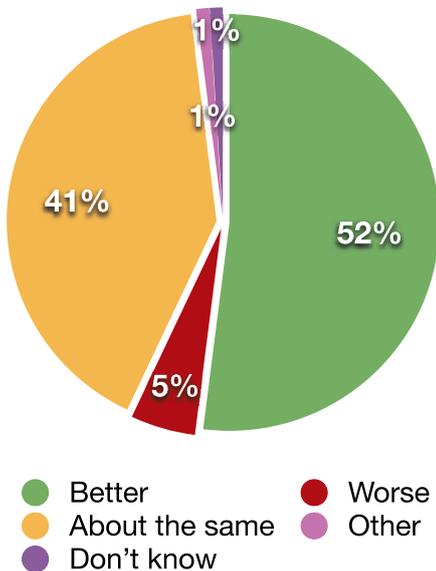


Chart 147: Will relations between Protestants and Catholics be better in five years time?
Source: NILT 2010.



A consistent trend throughout the surveys has been that Catholics have been more hopeful about the future than Protestants

6. Changing attitudes

6.1 Evidence from the Northern Ireland Life and Times Survey

The main data source on issues relating to community relations, communal identity, and political attitudes is the Northern Ireland Life and Times Survey (NILT). Set up by Queen's University Belfast and the University of Ulster in 1998 and run every year since. In Britain the most substantial annual survey is the British Social Attitudes Survey, but since devolution the NILT has been paralleled by the Welsh Life and Times Survey (WLT) and the Scottish Social Attitudes Survey (SSAS). The existence of the four allows for meaningful comparisons across the four territories.

Community relations

In 2010 on the very general question of 'Are relations between Protestants and Catholics better now than 5 years ago?' 62% of respondents saw relations as being 'better' with 33% feeling they were 'about the same'. Only 3% felt they were 'worse'.

The survey also tests respondents' attitudes to the future by asking the question 'Will relations between Protestants and Catholics be better in five years time?' In 2010 the answers were as follows:

More than nine out of 10 believe that community relations will either be the same or will have improved in five years time, with only 5% expecting that they will be worse. Chart 148 places the 2010 results in the context of trends since the survey began.

A consistent picture emerges. The peak periods for positive responses on community relations in each chart are in 1998, the time of the Good Friday Agreement and again in 2007, the period immediately after the restoration of devolution (see Chart 148). The Assembly was suspended twice in 2001, the year that also saw a deepening of the stalemate over decommissioning, the replacement of the RUC by the PSNI, increased street disorder, and the bitter dispute over the Holy Cross school. In this period the number saying they believed relations were 'worse' peaked at over 20%, and the number saying 'better' dropped to below 30%, less than half the number achieved from 2007 to 2010. The peak of optimism about the future came in 2007 with a 64% 'better' response following the restoration of devolution. This has since declined to the 52% figure in the 2010 survey, but an increase in the 'same' response to 41% in the same period gives a total of 93% who feel relations will stay the same or be better.

Optimism is not equally shared between members of the two communities. A consistent trend throughout the surveys has been that Catholics have been more hopeful about the future than Protestants. The differential was at its widest in 1998, when there was a difference of 22 percentage points between the perspectives of Protestants and Catholics about community relations in five years time. In 2009 this gap had

narrowed to 12 percentage points, but the 2010 survey showed it climbing once more to 17 percentage points: 61% of Catholics believed relations would be better in five years time, a belief shared by only 44% of Protestants.

Chart 148: Trends in responses to the question 'Are relations between Protestants and Catholics better now than 5 years ago?' Source: Derived from NILT 1998-2010

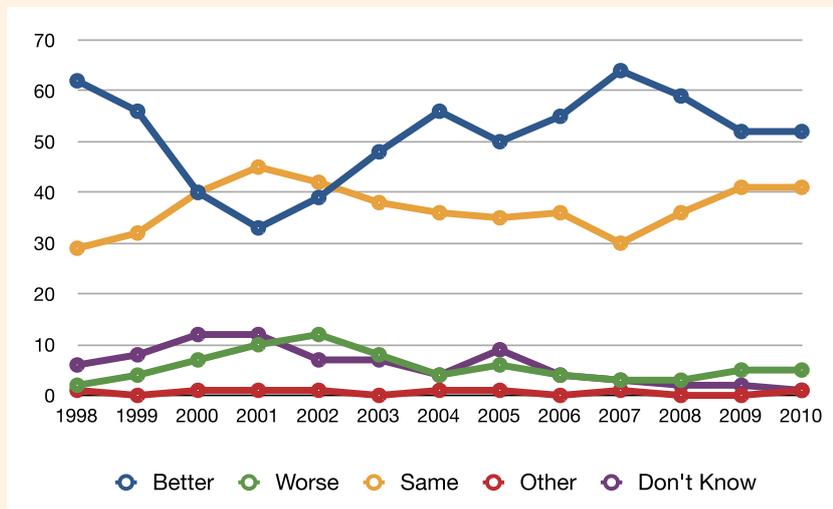
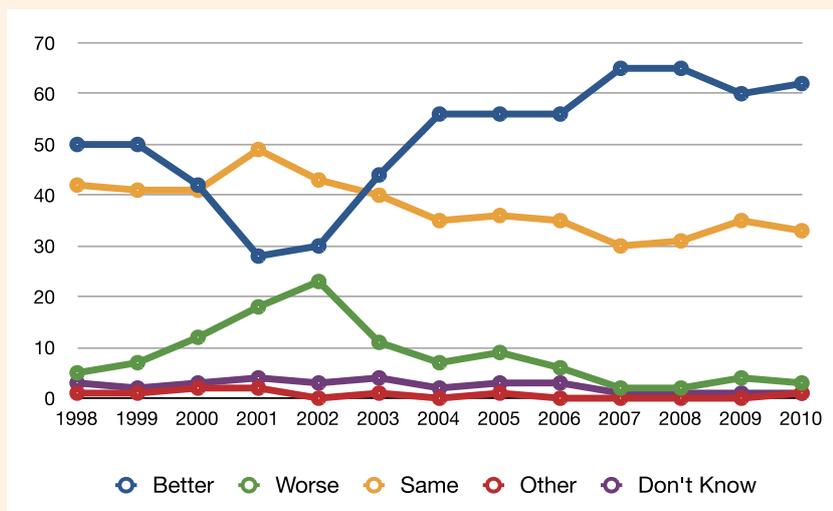


Chart 149: Trends in answers to question 'Will relations between Protestants and Catholics be better in 5 years time?' Source: Derived from NILT 1998-2010



6.2 Political identities and preferences

The Good Friday Agreement provides unionists with the guarantee that there can be no change in the constitutional status of Northern Ireland without a voting majority (on both sides of the border) prepared to support such a measure. On the evidence of the 2010 NILT survey, that is an even more distant prospect than when the Agreement emerged. A large majority, 73%, favoured direct rule or devolved government within the UK. In response to the question 'Do you think the long-term policy for Northern Ireland should be ...?' the results were:

Chart 150: Do you think the long-term policy for Northern Ireland should be ...?
Source: NILT 2011

to remain part of the United Kingdom with direct rule	15%
to remain part of the United Kingdom with devolved government	58%
or, to reunify with the rest of Ireland?	16%
Independent state	3%
Other answer	3%
Don't know	6%

The survey shows respondents moving away from the dichotomised British/Irish options as devolution becomes a more stable reality: the wish to remain part of the UK with direct rule was in 2010 the lowest since the survey began, at 15%; similarly, the aspiration to reunify with the rest of Ireland was recorded at its lowest, at 16%. Support for devolved government within the UK was at its highest since introduced into the survey in 2007 and enjoyed the greatest cross-community support, being preferred by 46% of Catholics, 69% of Protestants and 47% of those with no religion.

Chart 151: Responses to NILT surveys on preferred constitutional options

	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010
To remain part of the United Kingdom with direct rule	56	60	50	55	55	59	58	54	11	17	18	15
To remain part of the United Kingdom with devolved government	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	55	53	51	58
To reunify with the rest of Ireland?	21	17	28	22	24	22	23	30	23	18	21	16
Independent state	11	9	6	7	7	11	7	3	5	3	4	3
Other answer	3	3	2	3	2	2	2	1	1	3	3	3
Don't know	9	11	14	14	12	7	11	12	5	6	3	6

With a functioning Assembly, asked to identify from a list 'the most important thing for the government in Northern Ireland to be getting on with at the moment', only 4% of 2010 NILT respondents felt that the priority should be 'working for a united Ireland'. By contrast, 31% chose 'improving cross-community relations in Northern Ireland' and a further 26% 'tackling the level of unemployment'.

Chart 152: 'What is the most important thing for government to be getting on with right now?'

Strengthening the union with Great Britain	9%
Working for a united Ireland	4%
Improving cross-community relations in Northern Ireland	31%
Sorting out the 11+ deadlock	10%
Making our society greener	2%
Tackling poverty	9%
Tackling the level of unemployment	26%
Something else	2%
Can't choose	7%

Are all Protestants British and all Catholics Irish?

The NILT surveys tend to undercut the notion that Protestant and Catholic identities are coterminous with the political designations unionist and nationalist. There are overlaps but they are less than complete: 58% of Catholics self-designate as Irish and 66% of Protestants self-designate as either British (61%) or Ulster (5%). The proportion who designate themselves as Northern Irish is 28% – up from the 25% who chose this designation in 2007. Outside the traditional demarcations of Irish/Catholic and Protestant/British are the following:

Charts 153a and 153b

Percentage of Catholics who choose:	
British:	8%
Ulster:	1%
Other:	8%
Northern Irish:	25%
Total:	42%

Percentage of Protestants who chose:	
Irish:	4%
Other:	2%
Ulster:	5%
Northern Irish:	28%
Total:	39%

6.3 Identities: other means of surveying

The NILT survey operates a ‘forced choice’ question: candidates are given a list of possible national identities and asked which best suits them. In recognition of the concentric identities possible in a devolved UK, where sub-state nationalisms exist within a UK framework, alternative forms of surveying have been developed to allow respondents to express more than one identity. In other words, respondents can lay claim to feeling both Scottish and British, or Welsh and British. The Good Friday Agreement placed this form of dual identity at the centre of its citizenship, allowing Northern Ireland residents to hold both British and Irish passports and to participate fully in Irish cultural and sporting life while living within a UK framework. A multiple choice survey allows this duality to be expressed, and Bond and Rossie (2010) have tabulated results from the four time series surveys to show the interplay between national identities. Using more recent data to show a multiple choice approach allows the balance of emphasis to be displayed. Note that in all countries excluding Northern Ireland the columns add to more than 100% as the surveys allow for the expression of dual or multiple identities.

Chart 154: Dual and multiple identities Source: Derived from Bond and Ross (2010), British Social Attitudes (BSA) Scottish Social Attitudes (SSA), Welsh Life and Times (WLT) and NILT

%	England	Scotland	Wales	N.Ireland
British	60	43	58	33
English	44	4	11	-
Scottish	2	84	2	-
Welsh	1	-	67	-
Irish	2	1	1	25
N. Irish	-	1	-	28
Source	BSA08	SSA 08	WLT07	NILT 11
Sample size	3666	1594	884	1205

The advantage of this kind of survey is that it allows for the expression of multiple identities, and to allow for an assessment of their relative weighting. Chart 154 for example shows that 84% of respondents in Scotland viewed themselves as Scottish and only 43% classified themselves as British. In Wales, another ‘stateless nation’, the percentage identifying by the national category, Welsh, is lower at 67% and the British label is accepted by 58%.

A more nuanced method of determining the hierarchy of national identities is the Moreno question (this was named after the Spaniard, Luis Moreno, who devised it to tease out the importance given to state and sub-state identities in Spain). It was used to test the degree to which Catalans, for example, would have overlapping Catalan and Spanish identities, for which they could assign relative weighting. This form of

survey is illuminating when applied to the combinations of identity within Northern Ireland, but has only been used once by NILT, in 2007. In an analysis by Muldoon et al (2008) the results were as follows:

Chart 155: Identity combinations in NILT 2007 Source: Muldoon et al (2008)

Identity	British Prot	Irish Cath	British Cath	Irish Prot	N Irish Prot	N Irish Cath
Irish not British	0	64	2	10	0	14
More Irish than British	1	30	12	30	8	54
Equally Irish and British	9	5	40	50	36	32
More British than Irish	46	1	35	10	39	1
British not Irish	43	0	12	0	18	0

When Irish and British are allowed to function not as oppositional categories but as compatible identities, approximately one third of Northern Irish Protestants and Catholics choose this designation: 36% of NI Protestants and 32% of NI Catholics choose to describe themselves as 'equally British and Irish'. The majority of respondents, 59%, still chose to define themselves unambiguously as Irish Catholics or British Protestants, and religion and nationality can be seen to have a mutually reinforcing effect at either end of the spectrum: 43% of British Protestants chose the single, excluding category of British not Irish, and 64% of Irish Catholics chose the equally excluding category of Irish not British. The Good Friday Agreement's promise of dual identity however had been adopted by a sizeable proportion of respondents in the 2007 survey, and the increasing number choosing the Northern Ireland identity in the 2010 survey suggests that this constituency has increased. A further run of a Moreno-style survey would help to establish if this continues to be the case.

6.4 Identities, votes and surveys

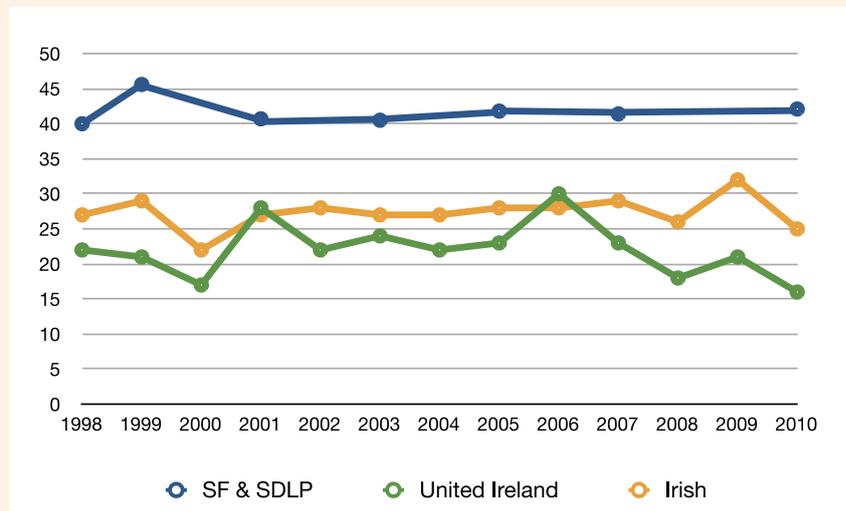
In the May 2011 Assembly election Sinn Fein, a party whose *raison d'être* is the securing of a united Ireland, won 26.9% of the vote. A month later, in June 2011, the NILT survey for 2010 was published, showing a united Ireland was the preference of only 16% of the population. Since the votes had been verified in the election count, and the NILT was reporting only on a sample survey, Sinn Fein spokespersons and other nationalist commentators were quick to dismiss it. As with any survey there is room for sampling error but not on this scale. Indeed, while the drive for a united Ireland was not presented as central in SDLP's manifesto, the party is routinely described as nationalist, and if its 15% share is added to that for Sinn Fein then almost 42% of votes went to parties pledged to bring about a united Ireland.

One familiar criticism of attitude surveys is that they routinely present more moderate opinion than that expressed in the ballot box, because people do not wish to admit to pollsters views that might appear shocking or extreme.

Against that, the election process is by its nature adversarial and drives people to positions that are perhaps more extreme than they would hold in less heated times. Neither of these explanations however is sufficient to explain the gulf. Fieldwork was conducted between 1st October and 18th December 2010, when the republic experienced the most profound shock since its foundation. The collapse of the banking system led to the loss of economic sovereignty and, with that, an existential crisis for a society already struggling to come to terms with the trauma of clerical sex abuse. The admitted inability of the state to protect its own citizens from the austerity package demanded by the IMF/EU package was not encouraging of the idea of a united Ireland and the NILT survey also showed a sharp dip in the proportion of people from Northern Ireland wanting to claim an Irish identity. Such concerns however did not trigger any similar reduction in support for nationalist parties.

Coakley (2007) argues that while the British/unionist/Protestant package is tightly bound together, the Irish/nationalist/Catholic package is more loose. Taken together, the results of the 2011 elections and the NILT survey would support the idea that the Catholic vote is no longer so tied to a strong national project. Chart 156 takes the unorthodox step of putting votes and attitude surveys on the same graph to illustrate how the nationalist vote, the sense of being Irish, and the desire for a united Ireland can be seen to relate to each other. As the graph shows, the three exist in a set of mobile relationships with each other, but while in the present period there is a strong degree of congruence between the size of the Catholic electorate (approximately 44%) and the percentage of votes going to nationalist parties (42%), it can no longer be assumed that these are expressions of support for the unity project.

Chart 156: Composite table of Irish/nationalist votes and NILT survey results



This phenomenon is not so surprising when seen in the context of devolved politics. The Scottish Nationalist Party, for example, which is pledged to Scottish independence, secured 53.4% of the vote in the May 2011 elections, while a YouGov poll in 2010 put support for the key policy of Scottish independence at only 34%. The explanation for this (longstanding) disparity given by John Curtice could be taken *mutatis mutandis* to apply to Northern Ireland:

The SNP's victory... was a success for the party rather than the cause of independence it espouses. It had a popular leader and tapped a feeling that Holyrood should put Scotland, rather than partnership with London first.

Sinn Fein, in other words, has the support of a sizeable section of the Catholic population because it appears purposeful, has strong leadership, and is thought to be able to fight the corner for Catholics. The survey evidence shows that the electoral support it has won in this way does not translate automatically into support for its ambition for constitutional change. On the contrary, support for that ideal is on the wane. While it used to be said that Sinn Fein had to face the challenge of persuading a million Protestants to accept a united Ireland, it also has the more immediate challenge of persuading three-quarters of a million Catholics – some of them its own voters.

Further evidence for this can be found in the responses to the question about the long-term future for Northern Ireland. Among Catholics the most popular constitutional option has become devolved government within a UK framework – the preference of 46%, with another 6% selecting direct rule from Westminster. For the first time a majority of Catholic respondents – albeit a narrow majority – has selected UK constitutional frameworks for the long-term future of the north of Ireland.

Chart 157: Preferences for the long-term future of Northern Ireland
Source: NILT 2011

%	Catholic	Protestant	No religion
To remain part of the United Kingdom with direct rule	6	21	14
To remain part of the United Kingdom with devolved government	46	69	47
Or, to reunify with the rest of Ireland?	33	4	17
Independent state	4	1	4
Other answer	4	1	7
Don't know	8	3	10

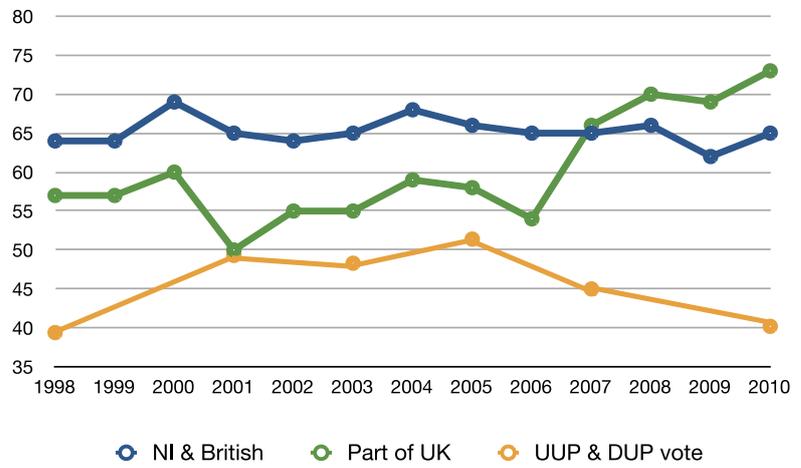
This crossover of support means a consequential loosening of the British/unionist/Protestant package. Since 2007, when devolution was restored, the numbers selecting the UK options (devolved government or direct rule) have for the first time run ahead of the combined number of those self-designating their national identity as Northern Ireland or British. Chart 158 (again combining electoral data with survey results) shows that since 2007 the UK political options have claimed support exceeding the numbers claiming a Northern Ireland or British identity, and are finding new levels of support far beyond the combined DUP and UUP vote.

For the first time a majority of Catholic respondents – albeit a narrow majority – has selected UK constitutional frameworks for the long-term future of the north of Ireland.

Devolved government, the preferred first choice of 58% of respondents, is leading to a quite radical shift in the ways religious, national, and political identities are aligned.

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Chart 158: Composite table of UK/British/unionist votes and NILT survey results



7. Key Points

1. All five political parties are now prepared to work within an agreed political framework. The main features are: an Assembly where power is shared through an all-party coalition, an Irish dimension with functioning institutions, acceptance of the consent principle, adherence to equality and human rights, and an underwriting of the whole package by the British and Irish governments. Each party places its emphasis differently in its acceptance of the package, but none of the five seeks to dismantle the accord. This is by contrast with the lack of consensus at the time of the 1998 referendum, often presented as the high point of the peace process. At that time 29% of the population voted against the accord. Protestant opinion was only marginally in favour with 57% voting Yes. Two years later a PricewaterhouseCoopers poll showed Protestant support had dropped to 41%. It has taken a long time to secure unionist confidence, but the existing arrangements now enjoy the support of all the mainstream parties, unionist and nationalist.
2. When the Assembly dissolved itself in March 2011, a Northern Ireland devolved government completed its term of office for the first time in four decades. Since then there had been eight different attempts to establish a power-sharing government. That this one survived its full-term marked a significant staging post in the peace process. The Executive which gathered after the May election was already a functioning partnership, its composition largely the same as that of the 2007-11 Executive, and with two additional Alliance members committed to 'making it work' there is every confidence that it will stay the course.
3. The visit by the Queen provided an unexpected feel-good factor, as did the subsequent visit by President Obama. The ceremonial events brought leaders from both traditions together in situations where they could take pride in what they had accomplished.
4. The May elections were devoid of the rancour that used to characterise Northern Ireland politics. When one politician called his opponents 'scum' there was an immediate reaction. An apology was thought necessary, even by members of his own party. In previous times, such name-calling was accepted as the currency of politics.
5. The Assembly has begun to function as a proper legislative body, even if most of the bills are simply adjusting UK legislation to conform with regional circumstances. The wheels of government have been oiled by the legislative exercises conducted in the 2010-11 period, and the Assembly now seems capable of employing these powers in pursuit of more substantial goals.
6. The North-South Ministerial Council, once thought to be a block to any peace deal because of unionist opposition, is now working successfully with unionist members appreciative of the mechanism it provides to regulate routine arrangements between the two states.

7. At no point was the stability of the Assembly threatened by the activities of dissident republicans who wish to use violence to overturn the settlement. In fact, the opposite was the case: the attacks on the PSNI – and the killing of the officer Ronan Kerr in particular – served to increase solidarity and cohesion within the leadership of the political parties, the security forces and civil society.
8. All these developments, from those at the highest symbolic level to those in the Assembly and local government, through to local grassroots activity, have their effect on how people feel about the peace process. The positive nature of developments following the Hillsborough Agreement can be seen in the Northern Ireland Life and Times survey conducted between October and December 2010. The proportion of those who feel relations between Protestants and Catholics are better now than five years ago is 62%, with only 3% thinking they are worse. Looking to the future, 93% feel they will either be better or remain about the same, and only 5% expect things to be worse.
9. The sense of improved community relations links with an increased contentment with devolved government. The number of respondents in the NILT survey who feel that the long-term policy for Northern Ireland should be the existing constitutional arrangement has risen to 58%. While evidence from the attitude survey points to a lack of satisfaction with the performance of the Assembly, there is less contestation about the constitutional issue. The existing arrangement is the preference of the majority, not just as a temporary solution but as a long-term policy.

DIMENSION 4

Cohesion and Sharing

One of the more remarkable features of the peace process has been the fact that the Northern Ireland Assembly has never adopted a policy to address relations between the Catholic and Protestant communities. While the Assembly was suspended a direct rule minister introduced a policy called *A Shared Future* but once the regional politicians resumed their positions this framework was set aside. A consultative document entitled *Cohesion, Sharing and Integration* was issued in 2010 but this was widely seen as a dilution of the 'sharing' emphasis of the previous document. In the absence of a policy framework, what degree of cohesion and sharing has been achieved? More particularly:

- What degree of sharing and what degree of separation can be seen in housing?
- What degree of sharing and separation can be seen in education?
- Is there a new neutral public space opening up associated with consumer identities, free from sectarian tensions?
- Are the arts, sports, and culture helping to build a sense of shared identities or do they serve to emphasise difference?
- Is civic life still dominated by the traditional white, male representatives or is there an increased diversity and opening up to new influences?
- How much do voluntary bodies and peace-building organisations contribute?
- What importance can be attached to symbolic acts of reconciliation or sharing?

1. The Policy Context

During the negotiations that led to the Hillsborough Agreement in February 2010 the Alliance Party leader, David Ford, made his party's support conditional on the introduction of a policy framework for community relations. The previous policy document, *A Shared Future: Policy and Strategic Framework for Good Relations in Northern Ireland*, had been issued by the Labour direct-rule administration in 2005, following lengthy consultation. It had not been embraced by the Northern Ireland Executive and Sinn Fein and the DUP were each to produce their own draft policy to replace it. In a demonstration of the problem they were trying to solve, they could not find agreement, and to satisfy the terms agreed with Alliance a consultation paper, *Cohesion, Sharing and Integration*, was issued in July 2010.

The paper met widespread hostility from those active in the field. An open letter signed by more than 150 reconciliation practitioners, victims campaigners, ethnic-minority representatives, academics and sportspeople bemoaned its 'poverty of vision' (Belfast Telegraph, 29 October 2010). A total of 288 written responses were submitted during the consultation, and an analysis by Wallace Consulting (2011) showed the document had been universally rejected. The central criticism was expressed by the CBI (emphasis in original):

*There is a strong view that the draft programme does not contain the right ingredients to bring the necessary transformation required, and in its current form may even harden attitudes, behaviours and boundaries associated with our troubled past. Mutual accommodation of our divided community is not acceptable – we need to learn, live, work and play together – **that is what the vast majority of the people want.***

The Programme for Government 2011-15, published in November 2011, included a commitment to bring forward a revised version of Cohesion, Sharing and Integration in 2012-13 and the language of the relevant section, 'Building a strong and shared community', appears to recognise the criticisms made in the consultation. At the same time, the OFMDFM made a strong statement of priorities when it launched its Social Investment Fund in March 2011. The focus for this fund will be poverty and unemployment, and the size of the programme, £80 million over four years, dwarfs the annual spend to date on anti-sectarian programmes. Sectarianism is not mentioned once in the paper outlining its purpose.

2. Sharing and Separation in Housing

2.1 The degree of segregation

The residential separation of the two main communities is a central fact of life in Northern Ireland. Particular areas are routinely referred to in everyday conversation as Catholic or Protestant – or, in official reports, as 'mainly Catholic' or 'mainly Protestant'. And yet is difficult to establish hard facts about religion and housing patterns. The most commonly quoted figure – and one used in material produced by the Northern Ireland Housing Executive (NIHE) – is that '90% of our estates are single identity.' (NIHE Annual Report 2011). Figures on religion in owner occupier or rented accommodation are much more difficult to establish. The most concrete facts about housing patterns date back to the 2001 census, and until the results of housing modules in the 2011 census become available they are likely to remain the main source for analysis. The *Independent Commission on Housing*, published in 2010 did not have new data on religion and housing and so relied on the 2001 census figures and updates from academic papers.

What do these tell us? The picture in 2001 was one where 37% of output areas displayed separation to the extent of comprising 90% or more from one community. Further, 44% of Catholics lived in areas where 90% of the population was Catholic and the corresponding figure for Protestants was 30%. More refined work has since been undertaken on the data base by academics using new methods of analysis. Shirlow and Murtagh estimate was that the majority of the population lives in areas that are, at minimum, 80% either Catholic or Protestant. Breaking it down further, they say that just over two-thirds of Catholics (67.3%) and 73% of Protestants live in such areas (Shirlow and Murtagh, 2006: 59-61). Subsequent analyses conducted by Shuttleworth and Lloyd for the NIHE (2007 and 2009) made use of the Grid Square Product to estimate 91% of estates in Belfast fall into the 'very polarised' category, which they define as having 80% or more single identity. Outside of Belfast the situation is less extreme – using the same benchmark Shuttleworth and Lloyd estimate between a third and a half of the population fall into the 'highly polarised' category. There are many distinctions to be made below this generalisation, as the authors point out. A study by Murtagh (2008), shows evidence of increased fluidity and spatial mobility, particularly in Belfast, where a graduate professional Catholic middle-class has moved into areas previously seen as exclusively Protestant preserves. This move towards increased mixing has run alongside sharper demarcations of territory in working-class areas: 'Thus, new interface separation barriers have been built in the past ten years at the same time as new mixed housing spaces have developed in the high value end of the housing market'.

Two facts have to be kept in mind when considering the figures for public housing. One is that public housing at present only constitutes 16% of all

housing and the 90% figure cannot be extrapolated and generalised to all housing. The second is that the term 'segregation' is too loosely applied: the choice is not a top-down imposition by the housing authorities, but a self-selection process by the tenants. Perhaps unsurprisingly, people tend to choose places where they feel safest. This used to describe simply a process that related simply to Protestants and Catholics, but increasingly it applies to new immigrant communities. The extent of the new clustering will be a matter of interest when the census figures on housing are released in 2013.

2.2 Homelessness and intimidation

The proportion of households accepted as homeless in Northern Ireland in 2010/11 was 1.5%, lower than in Scotland (2.7%) but significantly greater than England (0.2%) and Wales (0.3%). One aspect particular to Northern Ireland is intimidation. Since 2000 there has been an overall reduction in NIHE clients presenting as homeless due to intimidation but in 2009-10 the figure increased by a third to 774.

Chart 159: NIHE clients presenting as homeless due to intimidation
Source: Northern Ireland Housing Executive Draft Homelessness Strategy 2010

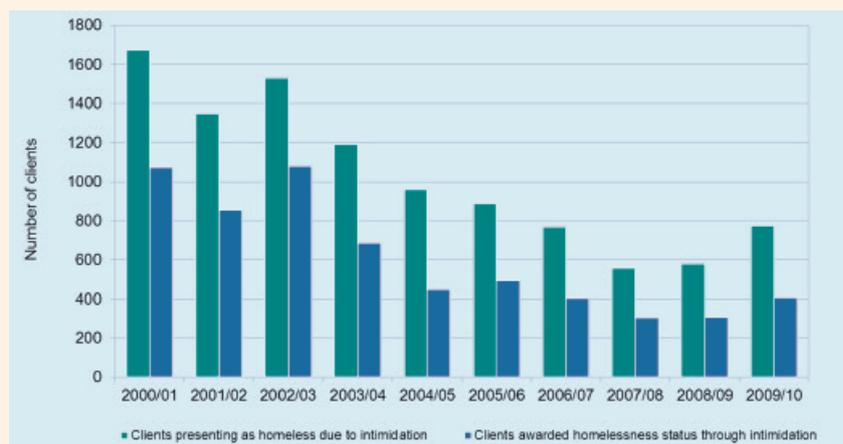
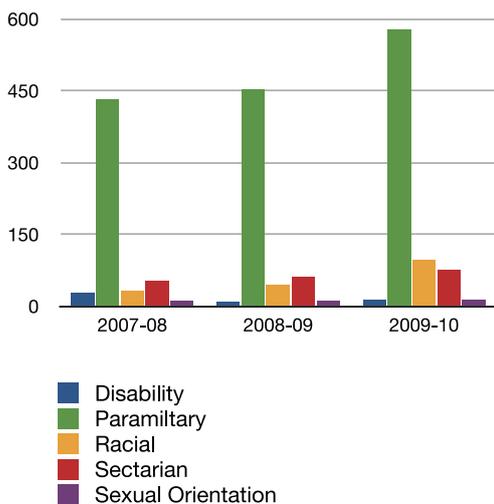


Chart 158: Motivation behind intimidation
Source: Northern Ireland Housing Executive



Of those claiming intimidation as the reason for their homelessness, paramilitary intimidation was the most common source (75%). But the number citing racial intimidation more than doubled from 2008-09 to 2009-10, comprising a further 12% of cases.

The need for mixed tenure

Along with religious segregation, there remains a lack of integration between people living in different housing tenures and on different incomes. Mixed-tenure schemes can reduce income-based segregation and the associated stigma (Monitoring Poverty and Social Exclusion in Northern Ireland, 2009) but while these have increasingly become the norm in Great Britain this has not been the case in Northern Ireland. The Report of the Independent Commission on the Future for Housing in Northern Ireland (2010) strongly recommended tenure mixing, not only to stem the risks of concentrated poverty for educational and labour-market success but also to help breakdown sectarian barriers.

The creation of separate and parallel communities comes at a heavy price.

The maintenance of separate communities comes at a heavy price. Research conducted by Deloitte, commissioned by OFMDFM, estimated that expenditure on social housing was inflated by £24 million a year as a result, mainly because of the need to build anew even while properties lay vacant elsewhere (Deloitte, 2006).

2.3 Demand for Integration

In the NILT surveys, the overwhelming majority of respondents (consistently over 80%) have consistently affirmed a preference to live in a mixed-religion neighbourhood. In the 2010 survey there were equal proportions of Catholics and Protestants (82%) in favour of this option, and 88% of those with no religion. As to where people actually lived, 48% wanted much more mixing, 50% wanted a bit more mixing, and 11% wanted to keep things as they were (NILTS, 2011).

When asked if government was actively encouraging shared communities on a scale from 1 (definitely not achieved) to 10 (definitely achieved), 55% scored this at 6 or more, suggesting a slight margin prepared to accept that government was acting in good faith.

The desire for more integrated neighbourhoods consistently expressed in attitude surveys does not align with the percentage of the Northern Ireland population who live in segregated communities. It may be a classic case of 'response bias', i.e. respondents providing the answers they know enjoy favour, or, alternatively, it may be that very real practical problems come between people and their preferences.

Attempts at integration

The policy imperative of the NIHE is that housing should be allocated by need, and that individuals should be given a free choice about living in single identity or mixed communities. *A Shared Future* (2005) reinforced the importance of mixed residence. The NIHE provides shared housing via a twin-track approach – new shared-housing builds and integration of existing estates through the Shared Neighbourhood Programme.

New build: The NIHE Community Cohesion Unit assesses each new-build scheme in terms of its 'shared future' potential. Up to 2008-09 the programme had delivered four, in Enniskillen, Lisburn, Sion Mills, and Banbridge. In 2009-10 four more schemes were deemed to have met the criteria: two in Enniskillen, one in Lisburn, and one in South Belfast.

Shared Neighbourhood Programme: Launched in August 2008 as a three-year pilot, the Shared Neighbourhood Programme aims to support and encourage 30 shared neighbourhoods across Northern Ireland. Grants are provided to neighbourhood organisations to enhance cultural awareness and training and run events and consultations, and to design a Neighbourhood Charter and deliver their own 'good relations' programme.

Building Relationships in Communities (BRIC): This initiative, which the NIHE has undertaken with the Rural Development Council and Tides Training, is about changing the culture of the Housing Executive so that

Chart 161: Waiting Lists

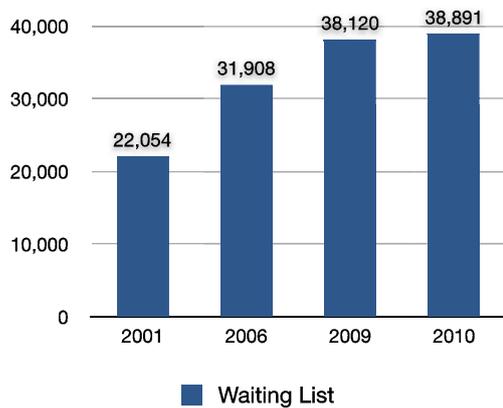


Chart 162: Housing Stress

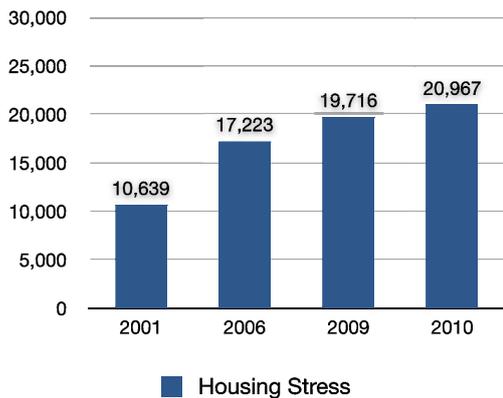
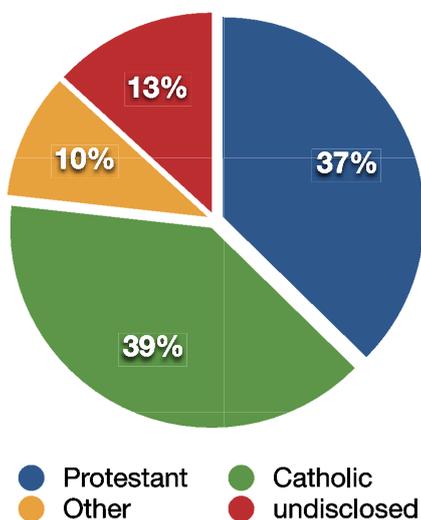


Chart 163: Religion of those on the waiting list for social housing, June 2011



staff become more attuned to community-relations imperatives. On its website it explains: 'Throughout the years of conflict in Northern Ireland there was a tendency for organisations to adapt to the divided society and serve both communities separately. The BRIC programme aims to change that culture and promote good relations throughout the Housing Executive by going over and above current equality legislation.'

2.4 Challenges – housing shortages and housing stress

Attempts to create new integrated estates have to contend with the primary reality of a shortage of housing stock. From 2001 to 2009 the Housing Executive's share showed a marked decline (from 17.9% to 11.6%). At the same time, private renting showed a marked increase (7.6% to 16.8%). In Belfast letting agents report growing demand for privately rented properties due to problems of affordability for first-time buyers and access to social housing in preferred locations (District Housing Plan & Local Housing Strategy 2010-2011 Belfast).

The excess of demand over supply in social housing requires the NIHE to build 2,500 new houses each year. As of March 2011 there were 39,891 applicants on the waiting list, with 20,967 deemed to be in housing stress – increases on the previous year of 4.6% and 6.4% respectively. During the year the number presenting as homeless increased from 18,644 to 20,158, or by 8.1%.

Chart 163 shows the religious breakdown for the numbers on the waiting list in June 2011. The percentages are broadly in line with demographic trends. There are however clear differences in geographical choices – in Belfast the symbolic heartlands of the Shankill and West Belfast are magnets for Protestants and Catholics respectively. Although the city has an overall shortage of social housing, the March 2011 figures show 303 vacant properties. In many of the interface areas there has been a marked decline in the Protestant population resulting in vacant housing.

The NIHE waiting list in Belfast shows clear differences with regard to Protestants' and Catholics' geographical choices, with Catholics predominating in north and west (58% and 93% respectively) and Protestants in east and the Shankill area. Although there is an overall shortage, as of March 2011 there were 937 vacant properties in Northern Ireland, 303 of them in Belfast. In many interface areas there has been a marked decline within the Protestant population, resulting in vacant housing. An objective analysis argues in favour of these being made available on basis of need, including to Catholics, but political figures in Protestant communities represent such a move as destabilising.

The most contentious instance in the past year has been the Girdwood Barracks site in north Belfast. Amid a patchwork of working-class Catholic and Protestant neighbourhoods the site provides space for approximately 200 houses. The waiting list for the area in 2011 it was over 2,400 (BBC, 29/7/11). In March 2011 the SDLP Environment Minister, Alex Attwood, announced plans for a £20 million development at Girdwood, alongside regeneration of the (Protestant) lower Shankill and lower Oldpark area, and

appealed to members of both communities to think of a shared future. Following the May election, however, Atwood was succeeded by Nelson McCausland, a North Belfast DUP MLA. One of the new minister's first acts was to veto the Girdwood development.

3. Sharing and Separation in Education

In October 2010 the First Minister, Peter Robinson, called for an end to segregated education. These liberal sentiments were not accepted by all as having a liberal motivation. The Sinn Fein Minister for Education, John O'Dowd, said of the speech in an Assembly debate (Assembly Hansard, 23/11/11): 'It may be more open, honest and fair to say that it was more about closing down Catholic education than it was about integrated education.'

Hitherto, the educational options were three: Catholic, Controlled (de facto Protestant) or Integrated. An experiment begun by the School of Education at Queen's University, known as the Sharing Education Programme, has offered a further twist whereby existing schools can cooperate much more fully to minimise division between types.

3.1 The management of schooling

Northern Ireland's schools are grouped by management type. State schools, otherwise known as Controlled Schools, are *de facto* Protestant schools. They are managed by the Education and Library Boards through Boards of Governors which include representatives from the Protestant churches. Although in Chart 164 the division of the school estate appears to be almost equally divided into Protestant and Catholic sectors (with a smaller number in the integrated sector), the reality is more complex. The demographics show a higher percentage of Catholics than Protestants in the school population, and not all Catholics attend Catholic schools. In 2010/11, for example, 10.8% of all Catholics attending a grammar school were doing so in the controlled sector. Although the percentage of Protestants attending Catholic schools is lower, there are some signal cases – the Catholic school St Columbanus in Bangor had fifty per cent Protestant enrolments in 2010/11. Altogether 3,400 (2.5%) Protestant children were enrolled in Catholic schools – double the amount a decade ago.

Chart 164: Breakdown by school management type, 2010/11:

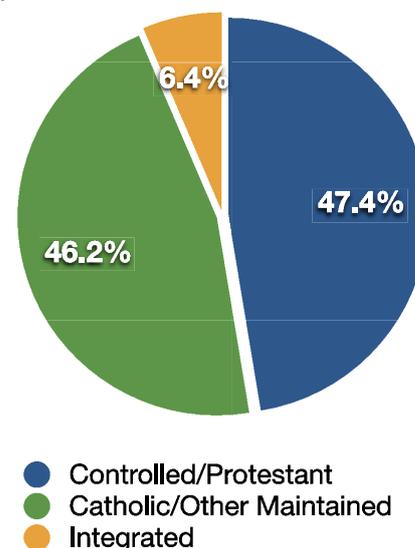


Chart 165: Breakdown by religion of pupils in schools 2010/11:

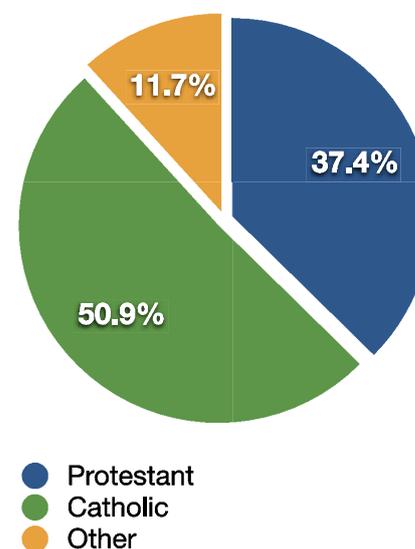


Chart 166: Enrolments by religion, 2010/11 Source: Derived from DENI statistics
 Note: Enrolments in Irish Medium schools comprise approximately 2,500 pupils. They are grouped in Department of Education statistics with 'Other Maintained'.

School Management Type	Religion of Pupils			Total
	Protestants	Catholics	Other	
NURSERY SCHOOLS				
Controlled/Protestant	2,169	1,089	620	4,101
Catholic/maintained	62	1,614	121	1,805
Nursery classes/Reception	164	220	98	482
Controlled	2,396	492	1,496	4,384
Catholic/Other Maintained	88	3,843	168	4,099
PRIMARY				
Controlled Protestant	51,630	3,733	15,245	70,608
Catholic	782	71,169	1,372	73,323
Integrated	3,277	3,101	2,024	8,402
PREPARATORY DEPARTMENTS				
Protestant Controlled/Other Management	1,110	221	788	2,119
Catholic	-	-	-	-
SECONDARY (NON-GRAMMAR)				
Controlled/Protestant	25,947	633	4,824	31,404
Catholic/ Other Maintained	2,087	41,969	879	44,935
Integrated	5,766	4,463	1,904	12,133
GRAMMAR SCHOOLS				
Controlled (Protestant and Grant Maintained)	24,752	3,217	7,121	35,090
Catholic	254	26,518	271	27,043
SPECIAL SCHOOLS				
Protestant Controlled/Other Maintained	1,719	1,862	877	4,458
Catholic	-	-	-	-
ALL NUSERY, PRIMARY, POST-PRIMARY AND SPECIAL SCHOOLS	120,415	163,693	37,609	321,717

Integrated education

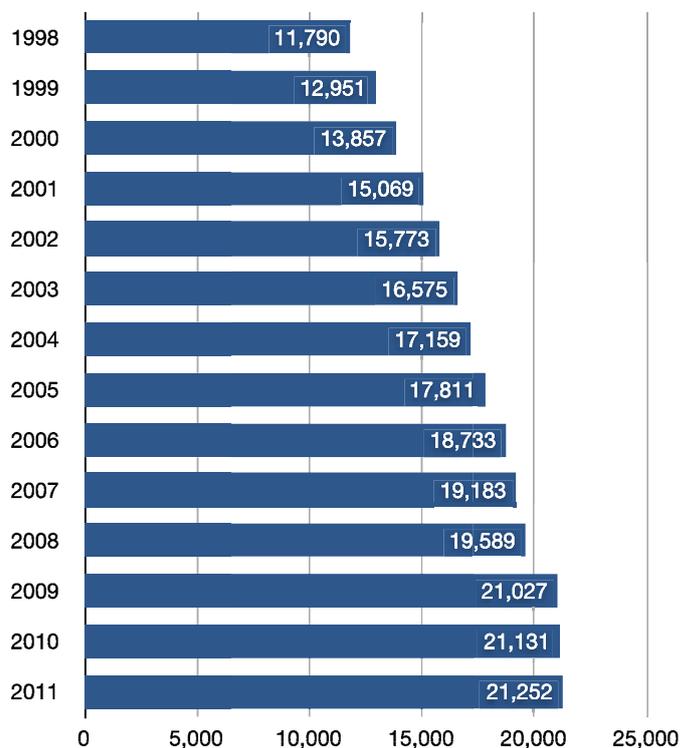
In 2010-11 there were 61 integrated schools in Northern Ireland, comprising 20 second-level colleges and 41 primary schools. There are also over 19 integrated nursery schools, most of which are linked to primary schools. According to the Northern Ireland Council for Integrated Education (NICIE), more than 500 children are turned away every year from integrated schools.

Integrated schools recorded their highest ever enrolments in 2010-11:

Primary:	8,402
Post-Primary:	12,133
Total:	20,535
As a percentage of total enrolments:	6.5%

Note: there is a variation between the total enrolments shown here for 2010/11 and those for 2011 in Chart 167. One figure is for the academic year, the other is for the calendar year.

Chart 167: Long-term growth in integrated school enrolments Source: NI Council for Integrated Education



The integrated schools movement has been bolstered by recent developments. An Ipsos MORI poll in March 2011, commissioned by the Integrated Education Fund, found that almost nine in ten people surveyed were in favour of integrated education. On 23rd November 2010 Alliance proposed a motion in the Assembly urging greater support for 'integrated and shared education', advocating a target of 20% of children in integrated schools by 2020. The debate followed a report by Oxford Economics, *Developing the Case for Shared Education* (see below). An SDLP amendment argued for co-operation rather than integration, upholding 'the principle of parental choice' and recognising 'the contribution made by the various sectors'. The amendment was supported by Sinn Fein and the Ulster Unionist Party but Alliance was supported by the DUP and the vote was won.

The One School of Thought campaign is a new lobby for integrated education. It launched in September 2011 with an open letter signed by celebrities like Joanna Lumley, Eamon Holmes and Denis Taylor.

3.2 The dynamic for change

The slow movement for change began with *A Shared Future* (2005). Momentum can be traced through key educational initiatives:

The Independent Strategic Review of Education (2006) chaired by Sir George Bain and commissioned to address the problem of too few pupils and too many schools. Bain's recommendation was not just for more integrated education but for radical new forms of co-operation to deliver the curriculum and share the school estate on an area basis.

The Education Order (2006) which introduced the idea of an Entitlement Framework (EF). Post-primary schools would be required to offer a wide range of courses: 24 at Key Stage 4 and 27 at post-16. This incentivised collaboration between schools to allow them to meet curriculum requirements.

A Consultation on the Schools for the Future (2007) This document issued by the Department of Education continued to work from the precepts of *A Shared Future*, arguing that schools should play a 'powerful and positive role in normalising society, helping to make it sustainable and vibrant, with greater sharing among communities'.

Sustainable Schools Policy (2009) In this document the department was less concerned with the moral arguments and more with the costs of uneconomic provision. By its estimates 326 primary schools (out of 879) had 100 pupils or fewer, with annual costs per pupil £604 above the average, while there were 107 (out of 228) post-primaries smaller than 600 enrolments where each pupil cost £124 a year more than the average. Options put forward by the department included amalgamation, federation, confederation, co-location and shared use of the estate.

Ensuring Good Relations Work in Schools (2010) This document, issued by the Good Relations Forum, made the case that schools have a duty to develop citizenship programmes that will build social cohesion.

Developing the Case for Shared Education (2010) This economic analysis was commissioned by the Integrated Education Fund and marshals the financial case for cross-community and cross-sectoral co-operation. Projecting 25% cuts in the education budget in 2010-14, and estimating the surplus capacity of schools at a time of falling rolls, the core argument was for efficiencies through increased sharing.

Obstacles to sharing

The absence of will by politicians to operationalise the *A Shared Future* agenda has been evident across most forms of provision but particularly marked in education. In June 2010, shortly before the *Cohesion, Sharing and Integration* consultation document was issued, the Minister for Education, Caitriona Ruane, announced a 70% cut in her department's budget for community relations. In a longer-term development, resistance within the Catholic community to integrated education has been bolstered by the way management of cultural diversity has come to be interpreted in Northern Ireland. The Council for Catholic Maintained Schools has challenged the use of the word 'segregation' to characterise what it represents as parents' voluntary support for Catholic education. When integration was debated in the Assembly the SDLP, UUP and Sinn Fein all expressed a commitment to 'diversity' and 'pluralism' – in effect, to maintaining the existing split provision. Such an understanding of pluralism is out of sync with wider European understandings – for example, the standard-setting Council of Europe *White Paper on Intercultural Dialogue* (2008) places the emphasis on giving children the opportunity to mix with children from diverse backgrounds. And, while it may not be an obstacle to sharing as such, it is an obstacle to integration.

3.3 The Queen's University Belfast Sharing Education Programme

- An experiment to explore what might be achieved through sharing resources and assets, supported by the International Fund for Ireland (IFI) and Atlantic Philanthropies to the tune of some £7 million, was launched by the School of Education at Queen's University in June 2007. At a review conference in Belfast in September 2011, the programme was said to have involved 48 partnerships among 150 schools engaging 10,000 pupils.
- A report, *Sharing Education Programme: Views from the White Board*, by Professor Colin Knox was prepared for the project in May 2010. The main lesson was very positive:

Teachers, through their experience of delivering SEP, are convinced that it is having a significant impact upon children. The curricular based approach which focused on educational outcomes renders denominational school boundaries porous and achieves positive reconciliation effects. The model of change which underpins Sharing Education is therefore seen as an effective intervention.

The SEP's own self-reflection on phase one records progress as disappointing: 'The official reaction has varied, but has generally been lukewarm'. This was written before the Assembly Education Committee attended the SEP conference in September 2011 as a group, their interest piqued by the underlying economic necessity of reducing the school estate. Speaking in the Assembly on 30th August, the Education Minister, John O'Dowd, said:

I am tasked as an elected representative to deliver education across the board and protect the public purse. So no institution – I am talking about this in the broader sense – will be able to in the future simply look at the needs of their sector ...

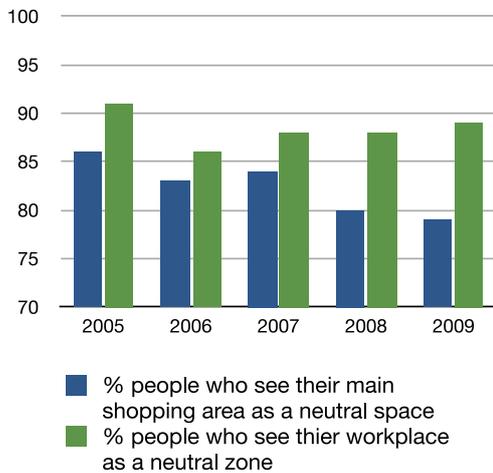
While the main focus of SEP has been on enhancing cross-community contact, Knox's report highlighted broader issues of social cohesion. For some children growing up after the Belfast Agreement social class has more salience than religion. A Vice-Principal of a non-grammar school was quoted as saying:

School children can handle cross-community education. Okay, some will do a double take at statues in the corridor or Protestant paraphernalia but the more difficult thing for me is to persuade lads to attend a grammar school because their perception, in some cases, is that this is a school which rejected them at age 11 and therefore appears elitist, despite the best efforts of teachers in that school. Now they are sharing A-level classes with them!

3.4 Shared education on the political agenda

The year 2011 was a breakthrough one for the idea of shared education. While the Queen's programme received no funding from the Department of Education, there is an emerging consensus behind the prototype. Economic forces and moral principles have been aligned. The Programme for Government 2011-15 included provision for a working group to investigate how to develop inter-school partnerships on a shared education model.

Chart 168: Perceptions of neutral spaces
Source: Northern Ireland Life and Times Survey 2009



4. Sharing the Public Space

4.1 The new cosmopolitan Northern Ireland?

In 2011 the National Geographic Traveller magazine listed Belfast as one of the world's top tourism destinations and according to the international travel guide Frommer's it is the only UK destination in the top 12. The city hosted the MTV awards in November 2011, an event watched by 500 million viewers worldwide. This version of Belfast as a cosmopolitan city, playing host to stars like Rihanna and Lady Gaga, has become quite common, and in some guidebooks even the visible signs of sectarianism are presented as part of its unique charm. The 2007 Rough Guide to Britain suggested that seeing the paramilitary murals was one of the 25 must-see experiences in these islands, along with climbing Snowdonia and visiting the Notting Hill carnival. Despite the publicity, however, tourist figures are declining. In 2008 there were approximately 2 million visitors; in 2010 there were 1.7 million, a fall of 14%. The Jan-Sept figures for 2011 show a further decline of 12% of those coming for holiday/leisure purposes.

None the less, even if it is only for local consumption, there is a 'cappuccino culture' that would have seemed unimaginable 20 years ago. A study published by the Institute for Conflict Research (ICR) in 2008 of the experience of shared and segregated space showed respondents acknowledging that there had been an increase in the number and variety of mixed or neutral spaces – outlets such as bars and leisure facilities not identified as orange or green (Jarman, Bell and Hanson, 2008). This finding is consistent with the NILT survey, which shows that town centres are increasingly seen as safe and welcoming: in 2005 only 31% scored this at 6 or more on a scale of achievement from 1 to 10 but by the 2010 survey this had risen to 47%. Confidence is, however, differentiated by class. Respondents to the ICR study in working-class areas like Castlederg or north Belfast described lifestyles that were heavily segregated, whereas respondents living in a middle-class neighbourhood like Stranmillis in south Belfast reported a high degree of mixing and positive relations with little recognition of communal identity.

4.2 Belfast and Derry – a tale of two regenerated cities

Belfast

Belfast has seen numerous areas of the city revitalised, and has opened itself up as a venue for international events. Examples include:

- refurbishment of the Ulster Hall (cost £8.5 million), Belfast City Hall (£11 million), and the Ulster Museum (£17 million);
- four new hotels opened in Belfast and a £16 million expansion of the five-star Merchant Hotel;
- opening of the rebuilt the Lyric Theatre (£18 million) on the banks of the Lagan;
- A £97 million regeneration of Titanic Quarter;
- infrastructural improvement at the Port of Belfast with an investment of £630 million over 18 years;
- the £17.8 million, 6-storey Metropolitan Arts Centre in the Cathedral Quarter, opening in February 2012.
- The hosting of the 2011 MTV European Music Awards in November; and
- large-scale events planned for Titanic Quarter in 2012 to mark the centenary of the sinking and the launch of the £97 million Titanic 'signature building'.

In addition to all of these Belfast City Council is to embark on a £233 million investment programme for the city which will include:

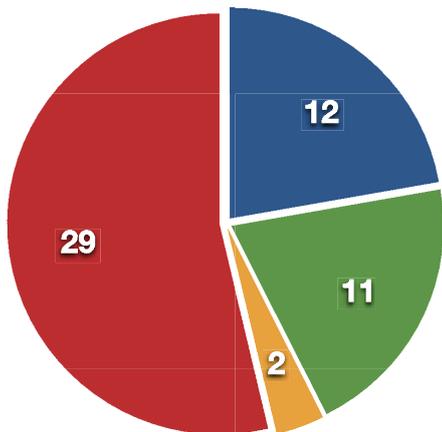
- £20 million to re-fit the Waterfront Hall as an international conference centre.
- £75 million on other physical regeneration projects.

Derry-Londonderry: City of Culture

In July 2010 Derry-Londonderry won its bid to be the 2013 UK City of Culture. The cultural programme is estimated to cost £20 million, with money coming from government agencies, the private sector, trusts, foundations, and ticket sales. The city plans to invest more than £200 million in its infrastructure to create a national cultural treasure at Ebrington and to pursue world heritage status for the city walls. Other events have been planned to establish the city's standing in the international art world:

- The Cultural Olympiad will see major events staged in the months preceding the Olympic and Paralympic Games. On 21st June 2012 Derry-Londonderry will host Peace One Day, the launch event for the UK-wide festival of the arts in the build-up to the Olympics.
- It will be the official host port in July 2012 for the Clipper Round the World Yacht Race.
- The Turner Prize will be announced there in 2013- an event which, when held in Liverpool in 2007, brought in an estimated 71,000 visitors.

Chart 169: Belfast Festivals and Events 2010
Source: Data derived from Belfast Festival Forum 2010



- Single Identity Festival/Event
- International Festival/Event
- LGBT Festival/Event
- No specific group focus (eg music, art, literature)

4.3 Festivals – celebrating together or separately?

Northern Ireland has a culture of festivals – some are communal, some are shared, some are international and some reflect its wider ethnic diversity. Belfast has promoted itself as a city that is a ‘festival of festivals’ and the Festival Forum lists 53 different events which occurred in Belfast in 2010. A rough categorisation of these festivals (with the addition of some not listed) shows most are not geared towards one community:

- **12 single-identity:** those, such as Feile an Phobail or Orangefest, where the event may be open to all but still bears the stamp of one community;
- **11 intercultural:** various events during the year which celebrate Northern Ireland’s multi-ethnic character, such as the Mela, Diwali, and Samhain festivals and the Chinese New Year festivities;
- **2 LGBT:** the Belfast Pride march has been joined by the Derry Pride event; and
- **29 non-specific:** the largest and most heterogeneous category, including the Belfast Festival at Queen’s, the Cathedral Quarter Festival, the Belfast City Blues Festival, the International Festival of Chamber Music, and the Cinemagic children’s film festival.

Source: Data derived from Belfast Festival Forum 2010

5. Arts, Sports, and Culture

5.1 Arts

The Arts Council of Northern Ireland (ACNI) seeks to employ a very wide definition of the arts and to link its programmes with social cohesion strategies. Its policy framework, *Creative Connections 2007-12*, addresses the contribution the arts make in contentious areas, including racism and sectarianism. Attendance at arts events is sharply differentiated by class: a 2009 survey found 45.1% of those from an unskilled manual background had attended an arts event in the previous year, while this had been true of 89.5% of professionals (ACNI, General Population Survey, 2009). The Continuous Household Survey (2010/11) adds that fewer Catholics (29%) than Protestants (34%) participated in arts activities in the past year.

While survey evidence shows similar patronage of events to England, Scotland and Wales, though lower than that in the Republic of Ireland, financial support from government is much lower for Northern Ireland. The Assembly’s Committee for Culture Arts and Leisure took evidence in November 2009, and per capita annual expenditure was put at £7.58, as against £8.47 in England, £10.10 in Wales, £14.04 in Scotland and 17.92 euro in the Republic.

In Northern Ireland there are forms of popular culture which resist the liberal embrace, such as paramilitary murals. The Re-imaging Communities programme, involving the ACNI and partners, has been described earlier (see p. 75). Perhaps more controversially, the Council has also funded marching bands, to which it provided £878,949 in 2005-09 (figure derived from ACNI annual reports) As the Confederation of Marching Bands makes clear, these are promoted as not only a musical activity but also a cultural opposite to nationalism:

Throughout Loyalist Ulster, the bands bind their local communities through a common cultural focus while instilling discipline, teamwork and the skill in their young recruits. Just like the GAA clubs, the life of the Blood and Thunder marching band revolves around proclaiming local identity and pride and proving it in competition.

Thus the arts at times provide the demarcation lines between communities, particularly in folk and 'community' arts.

Chart 170: Denominational breakdown of parading bands in Northern Ireland

Band Type	Protestant	Catholic	None	TOTAL
Flute	327	20	0	347
Pipe	144	9	3	156
Accordion	117	22	0	139
Silver/Brass	45	3	10	58
Total	633	54	13	700

Source: Witherow, J. 'Marching Bands in Northern Ireland' Department of Culture, Arts and Leisure, 2011

5.2 Sports

Public support for inclusion and cohesion in sports

According to a special NILT report on sport using survey data from 2009, 69% of respondents felt that sports brought different people in Northern Ireland closer together (NILT, October 2010). Half of respondents agreed or strongly agreed that government should spend more on sports. And in the 2010 survey, 88% said they were in favour of more or much more mixing in leisure and sporting activities (NILT,2010).

Between 2003 and 2010, Sport NI invested in excess of £8 million (of revenue funding) in community sport. Between 2005 and 2010 this stimulated over 153,000 regular participants in sport and physical activity. Of the £8 million invested in community sport projects, £1.2 million went to three strategic enabling agencies – Disability Sports Northern Ireland, PlayBoard Northern Ireland, and Age Concern/Help the Aged Northern Ireland– but more differentiated participation data are not available.

Supporting a team, not an identity

In a divided society, sport has the potential to enforce or blur group boundaries. The Gaelic Athletic Association in Ulster (nine counties) provides over a third of the GAA's overall membership, in the form of county committees, 580 clubs, and over 250,000 volunteers – approximately 120,000 of whom are active game participants. Overall, managed GAA events are believed to attract annual live attendances of 250,000 with approximately 22,025 games recorded in 2010 – a reported increase of 10% from 2009.

In 2010 Ulster Rugby had a total of 38,493 participants at school and club levels, approximately 25% of the participants across the island and faring better than Munster (36,442) and Connacht (16,378). Ulster Rugby appears to show even stronger numbers within school rugby, accounting for nearly 40% of total secondary-school participants in Ireland.

The Ulster GAA Strategic Plan has set the goal by 2015 of nine cross-community initiatives and increased awareness and understanding of the GAA in the Protestant community. A survey conducted at the Ulster GAA Conference in November 2010 found almost unanimous support for the GAA's outreach, with most delegates deeming it 'very important'.

Since 2000 the Irish Football Association (IFA) has run a Football for All campaign to combat intolerance in the sport in Northern Ireland. The longstanding divide between the Irish Football Association in the north and the southern-based Football Association of Ireland had served to align soccer allegiances with national identities. To counter the perception that it served one community more than the other, the IFA set up a community relations department which works to promote 'football for all' in Northern Ireland. In 2005 a first evaluation of the Football for All campaign (Wilson, 2005) found that its reach was considerable: community relations modules were delivered through training programmes with 600 coaches (out of the total of 900 on the IFA books). There had been considerable growth of participation in women's football and football for people with disabilities. Critically, the evaluation showed that the partnership between the IFA and the Amalgamation of Official Northern Ireland Supporters Clubs (AONISC) at the heart of Football for All had been key to transforming the atmosphere of home internationals at Windsor Park, previously the location of ugly sectarian incidents.

The report recommended that the campaign be cascaded down from international level to the Irish League. And subsequent evaluations, linked to tighter club-licensing requirements – in 2011-12 all senior clubs were required to audit community-relations issues in their areas and develop a consequent policy – demonstrated that there had been genuine permeation to the grassroots, albeit unevenness remained, notably in the IFA's reach in Derry and the west.

This work has secured European recognition, with the ANIOSC winning the Brussels International Supporters Award in 2006. Funding has come from UEFA and the EU Peace programme and in 2010 the European

Commissioner for Regional Policy, Johannes Hahn, described Football for All as 'a model which other countries around Europe can learn from and aspire to' (IFA Community Relations Department Round-up, 2010).

There has been mounting frustration within the IFA about players who have played at junior level for Northern Ireland being persuaded by the FAI to play for the Republic of Ireland at senior level. They are entitled to do so under the rules laid down by the sport's international governing body, FIFA, which allow players to change nationality if they were 'born on the territory of the relevant association'. The Good Friday Agreement allows Northern Ireland residents to claim both British and Irish citizenship, but in an open letter to Irish newspapers in May 2011 the ANIOSC said it was 'sadly ironic' that an attempt to promote reconciliation had 'driven a wedge' between Protestant and Catholic football supporters.

Soccer and sectarianism – the Scottish echo

In Scotland the Celtic-Rangers rivalry has historically provided the focus for sectarian antagonisms. Over the past year that link has been reinforced by the hostilities directed against the Celtic manager Neil Lennon. Lennon, a Catholic from Lurgan, was capped 40 times by Northern Ireland and captained the team. He was regularly subjected to sectarian harassment at Windsor Park and following death threats in 2002 – allegedly because he expressed a wish to play for the Republic – he announced his departure from Northern Ireland. He became captain of Celtic in 2005 and manager in 2010, but his public profile continued to attract sectarian attack, now from within Scotland. In March 2011 he received mail bombs in the post and in May 2011, during a match in Edinburgh against Hearts, a supporter ran into the technical area and assaulted the Celtic manager. The charge that the attack was 'aggravated by religious prejudice' was found to be not proven.

Sectarian chanting

In April 2011 Glasgow Rangers was fined £35,650 by Uefa's control and regulatory body for sectarian chanting during Europa League games. In November 2010 an attempt to ban sectarian chanting at soccer matches in Northern Ireland, as part of the package of the Justice Bill, failed in the Assembly. The UUP MLA David McNarry said that the subtext of the bill was that it discriminated against the Protestant working class. At a second attempt, in August 2011 legislation was passed to outlaw sectarian chanting inside stadia at major matches.

Crossing the divide

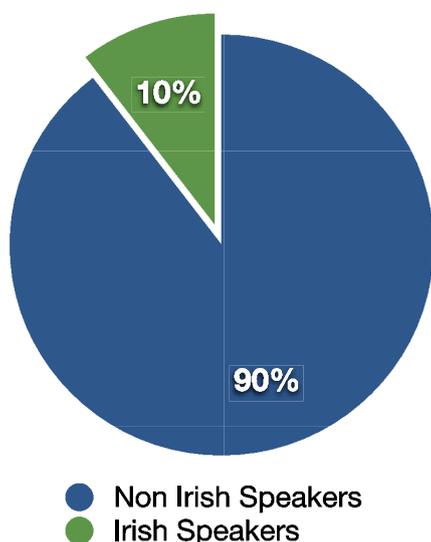
As part of its Cross-Community Initiative, the GAA brings together young people from a range of backgrounds that have little or no experience of participation in Gaelic games. An example is the United Against Hate Cuchulainn Cup, a cross-community tournament comprised of teams made up of players from schools within both the controlled and maintained sectors. In its fourth year of competition the event brought in more than 150 players representing 20 schools across Ulster.

With Peace Players International, Ulster Rugby, the IFA and the Ulster GAA worked together to organise a cross-community event to offer children from both sides of the community the chance to experience games to which they may not otherwise have been exposed. The event, the Game of Three Halves, was reported in its first year to have brought in more than 180 children. The Ulster GAA included the initiative into its Strategic Plan to 2015, setting the target to establish a Game of Three Halves summer camp in each large urban area.

The successes of the Irish rugby team have led to a huge interest in the sport in the Republic, shifting it out of its niche as a middle-class sport to one which enjoys the support of the whole population. The IRFU has attempted to ensure that its support is not defined by political allegiance: its most significant gesture, in 1995, was to complement the Irish national anthem, The Soldier's Song, with a specially composed neutral anthem, Ireland's Call.

Golf has also thrown up successes which confound the stereotypes. The successes of three Northern Ireland golfers, Graeme McDowell, Rory McIlroy, and Darren Clarke prompted puzzlement as to whether they were Catholics or Protestants. The particular biographies of the three individuals made that a difficult question to answer but the friendship between them made it irrelevant. Their achievements put Northern Ireland in the international headlines for positive reasons, and provided evidence of sport transcending old divides.

Chart 171: Irish Speakers 2011
Source: 2001 Census



5.3 Language and Culture

The 'parity of esteem' principle underpinning the Good Friday Agreement resulted in commitments from the two governments to support the Irish language and 'Ulster-Scots' – commitments given legislative force in the British-Irish Agreement Act 1999, Annex 1, Part 5 which established the North/South Language Body. Although it is a single body it is made up of two separate and largely autonomous agencies: Foras na Gaelige and the Ulster-Scots Agency (Tha Boord O Ulster Scotch). Both Irish and Ulster-Scots are minority languages in Northern Ireland, but one minority is much smaller than the other.

According to the 2001 census, 167,487 people (10.4% of the population) had 'some knowledge' of Irish, of whom 92.3% were Catholic and 6.6% were Protestants and 'other Christians'. The highest concentrations of Irish speakers were found in Belfast, Derry, Newry / south Armagh, central Tyrone and southern Co Derry.

In comparison, approximately 2% of the population in the 2001 census claimed to speak Ulster-Scots, though a negligible proportion claimed it as the language spoken in their home. The Ulster-Scots Agency, in collaboration with the Department of Culture, Arts and Leisure, surveyed attitudes towards Ulster-Scots and participation in related events via the April 2010 Omnibus Survey.

Overall, 55% of Protestant and 31% of Catholic respondents agreed with the statement 'Ulster-Scots is a valuable part of the culture of Northern Ireland'. A further 58% of Protestants and 35% of Catholics agreed that 'learning about Ulster-Scots traditions in the school curriculum has educational benefits for children in Northern Ireland'. But less than 18% of respondents perceived themselves to be an Ulster-Scot (31% Protestants, 3% Catholics) and only 14% had attended an event within the Ulster-Scots culture in the previous 12 months (22% Protestants, 5% Catholics). And 36% of Protestants and 45% of Catholics said the reason they had not attended more events was they were not really interested.

In the negotiations leading up to the St Andrews Agreement Sinn Fein pushed successfully for a commitment to an Irish Language Act but since under devolved government this requires action by the Assembly it has remained stalled. As DUP Minister for Culture Arts and Leisure, Nelson McCausland opposed any move that would not at the same time lend support to Ulster-Scots. This led the then chief commissioner of the NIHRC, Prof Monica McWilliams, to write to the DCAL to protest that it was in breach of its obligations under the Council of Europe Charter for Regional and Minority Languages. Strong criticism also came in July 2010 from the Committee of Experts, an official body of linguist reporting to the Council of Europe. The Committee was meanwhile sceptical of the claims of the Ulster-Scots lobby, saying that the language was 'almost invisible in daily life'.

Chart 172: The funding of language bodies Source: NI Assembly Research and information Service Background Briefing: North/South Language Bodies, 3 June 2011

Foras na Gaeilge	2007/08	2008/09	2009/10	2010/11
DCAL budget	4,016,055	3,928,857	3,577,092	3,781,000
Dept of Community Equality and Gaeltacht Affairs (RoI)	12,950,004	16,216,579	16,850,812	
Ulster Scots Agency	2007/08	2008/09	2009/10	2010/11
DCAL budget	1,946,069	2,481,932	2,384,123	2,966,000
Dept of Community Equality and Gaeltacht Affairs (RoI)	627,548	846,112	793,152	
Other sources	46,143	165,406	2,244	

Chart 173: Female representation in UK and Irish parliaments. Source: Burness, C. (2011) and Dail Eireann

Parliament	Female percentage
House of Commons	22.0%
Scottish Assembly	33.6%
Welsh Assembly	39.6%
NI Assembly	18.5%
Dail Eireann	15.0%

6. Participation in Public and Civic Life

6.1 Women's representation

The Northern Ireland Assembly has the lowest proportion of female representation of any of the four parliaments in the UK. The Republic of Ireland is lower still (15%), and considerably lower than the worldwide average, which the Inter-Parliamentary Union puts at 20%.

Chart 174: Women's representation in the NI Assembly, 1998-2011 Source: Burness, C. 'Women and Parliaments in the UK' 2011

Party	1998 No. of women	1998 % of women	2003 No. of women	2003 % of women	2007 No. of women	2007 % of women	2011 No. of women	2011 % of women
Alliance	1 (of 6)	16.7%	2 (of 6)	33.3%	2 (of 7)	28.6%	2 (of 8)	25%
DUP	1 (of 20)	5.0%	3 (of 30)	10%	3 (of 36)	8.3%	5 (of 38)	13.2%
Green Party	0 (of 0)	0%	0 (of 0)	0%	0 (of 1)	0%	0 (of 1)	0%
Independent	1 (of 1)	100%	1 (of 1)	100%	0 (of 1)	0%	0 (of 1)	0%
Ind. Unionist	1 (of 2)	50%	0 (of 0)	0%	0 (of 0)	0%	0 (of 1)	0%
NI Women's Coalition	2 (of 2)	100%	0 (of 0)	0%	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Progressive Unionist Party	0 (of 2)	0%	0 (of 1)	0%	1 (of 1)	100%	0 (of 0)	0%
Sinn Fein	5 (of 18)	27.8%	6 (of 24)	25%	8 (of 28)	28.6%	8 (of 29)	27.6%
SDLP	3 (of 24)	12.5%	5 (of 18)	27.7%	4 of 16	25%	3 (of 14)	21.4%
Traditional Unionist Voice	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	0(of1)	0%
UK Unionist	0 (of 5)	0%	0 (of 1)	0%	0 (of 1)	0%	n/a	n/a
Ulster Unionist Party	1(of 28)	3.6%	1 of 27	3.7%	0(of 18)	0%	2 (of 16)	12.5%
Total (of 108 MLAS)	15	13.9%	18	16.7%	18	16.7%	20	18.5%

In the public realm beyond politics, 34% of public appointments in Northern Ireland are held by women, a substantial increase from 15% in 1985 and 23% in 1990 but only a modest step since 1995 (32%). Of the 116 publicly appointed bodies in Northern Ireland, only 21 Chair and eight Deputy Chair posts are held by women. In business, in 2009 2.4% of women were entrepreneurs, compared with 8% of men (Invest NI). Northern Ireland ranked bottom of the 12 UK regions that year in early-stage entrepreneurial activity among women.

6.2 Representation of members of minority-ethnic communities

In 2007, Anna Lo (Alliance, South Belfast) made history as the first person born in east Asia to be elected to a UK parliamentary body and, while progress has been slow, in the 2011 Assembly and local-government elections there were eight candidates from minority communities. Only Lo was elected, however.

Public attitudes to minority representation are mixed. Half (51%) of respondents to the NILT survey found in 2010 felt members of minority ethnic communities were less respected than they once were, and each year about three in ten self-report as having prejudice against ethnic minorities. But the overwhelming majority would accept minority-ethnic individuals (save for Irish Travellers) as co-residents and colleagues. And more than two thirds (69%) believe organisations and leaders in public life should encourage members of minority communities to participate.

People from ethnic minorities are heavily involved in volunteer activities: 79% of all volunteering with ethnic minorities is done by people from those communities, according to a study commissioned by the Volunteer Development Association (Leong, 2000). On the other hand, the study suggests, the proportion of volunteering undertaken by people from ethnic minorities with external communities is tiny – ranging from 0% to 0.3%.

6.3 The LGBT presence

In August 2011 Prof Michael O’Flaherty was appointed chief commissioner of the NIHRC. In reporting this, the News Letter informed its readers that O’Flaherty had once been a Catholic priest and was gay. This made him the first holder of a significant public position in Northern Ireland to be an out gay. The break in the silence on the subject came in 2010 when Andrew Muir of Alliance was co-opted on to North Down District Council, and announced himself as the first gay political representative in Northern Ireland.

Outside the political arena the LGBT community has become more visible and active in the past decade. The 2011 Pride parade in Belfast marked the 21st anniversary of the event, now described by its organisers as the largest in Ireland and one of the top ten in the UK. It is also sometimes described as the most genuinely cross-community annual event in Northern Ireland. In 2010 Derry, which had developed a reputation for homophobic attacks, held its first Pride parade with encouragement and praise from local politicians – including the Mayor, Colum Eastwood, who joined the march.

The parades are not without their counter-demonstrations. In 2008 the Sandown Free Presbyterian Church took out a full-page advertisement in the News Letter describing ‘sodomy’ as an abomination and urging individuals to counter the Belfast parade. The Advertising Standards Authority endorsed complaints about the ad but its ruling was overturned in the Belfast High Court on grounds of free speech.

In 2010 the Rainbow Project, at the behest of the Department for Social Development, conducted research (a survey, focus groups, and interviews) on the experiences and perceptions of lesbian, gay and bisexual individuals, with respect to equality and diversity in the workplace in Northern Ireland. The online survey (752 respondents) suggested that about one in four concealed their sexual orientation there, with older respondents more likely to do so. A significant minority believed their orientation would affect their chances of progressing at work.

In many small ways the gay community in Northern Ireland is gaining the confidence to become more visible, amid more relaxed attitudes. There are now three gay bars in Belfast and others, mainly around the Cathedral Quarter, thought to be gay-friendly. And there are a number of associational activities for gays: a choir (Quire), a rugby team (Titans), a running club (Front Runners), a cycling club (Light Runners), and a lesbian soccer team (Belfast Braves).

7. Cohesion and civil society

7.1 The voluntary/community sector

Following the influential work of Robert Putnam (1993, 2000), the number of voluntary organisations is sometimes used as an indicator of 'social capital' in any society. There are no up-to-date figures for volunteering in Northern Ireland but the size and scope of the third sector can be estimated from a number of sources.

The Northern Ireland Council for Voluntary Action publishes an occasional report called *State of the Sector*. The most recent (2008) puts the number of voluntary and community organisations at 4,700 (up from 4,500 in 2005). Only 15.4% are controlled from outside Northern Ireland, indicating a strong indigenous sector. The number of volunteers is put at 87,723.

In a 2007 report, *It's All About Time*, the Volunteer Development Agency estimated that (in that year) there were 282,067 formal and 470,111 informal volunteers in Northern Ireland. This represented a substantial fall on previous estimates:- in 2001 the total of informal volunteers was given as 759,000.

A survey entitled *Mapping Volunteer Involving Organisations* (2010) found 1,433 organisations engaging 96,464 volunteers. Their distribution was heavily skewed towards organisations with an annual income of over £1 million.

Chart 175: Estimates of Total Number of Volunteers (1995 to 2007)

	Formal Volunteers Population Estimate	Informal Volunteers Population Estimate
2007	282,067	470,111
2001	358,493	759,000
1995	200,000	600,000

Source: Volunteer Development Agency, 2007

The 2009 Young Life and Times Survey indicated that 54% of 16 year-olds had volunteered in the past 12 months – 30% formally through an organisation, 17% informally, and 7% both.

Young people from poorer backgrounds were much less likely to volunteer than the better off. But they were also much more likely to say that volunteering increased their contact with people from different community or religious backgrounds and were the most likely to say they had spent more than 10 hours volunteering in the previous four weeks.

Over half of the respondents indicated that volunteering had increased their network of friends and over four in ten said they had increased their contact with people from different community or religious backgrounds.

7.2 Social capital and community relations

While the voluntary sector has sometimes presented itself as having an innocent relationship to sectarianism, Acheson and Williamson (2007) found that only 26.1% of the 535 organisations they surveyed saw themselves as having a 'mixed' membership; the other 73.9% saw themselves as 'mainly' or 'wholly' of one side or the other. While the nature of their work brought organisations into contact with each other, opportunities for more meaningful cross-community exchanges were not taken, with many organisations trying to 'ignore the issue of communal difference' (Acheson and Williamson, 2007: 33). A much higher proportion of all-Catholic organisations were willing to discuss working together in general and to address equality of access to services. Only a quarter of Protestant organisations indicated a willingness to work with Catholic groups, and only half were willing to address equality of access.

In the language of social capital theory, voluntary organisations in Northern Ireland are effective in the creation of *bonding* social capital – the forms of trust that bind their own community together. They are less good at *bridging* social capital, developing reciprocity with communities outside their own. Having said that, the evidence on volunteering showed that in a minority of cases it provides opportunities for working-class young people to increase their contact with people from different backgrounds.

Chart 176: Contact with people from a different community or religious background by family financial background
Source: Young Life and Times Survey 2009

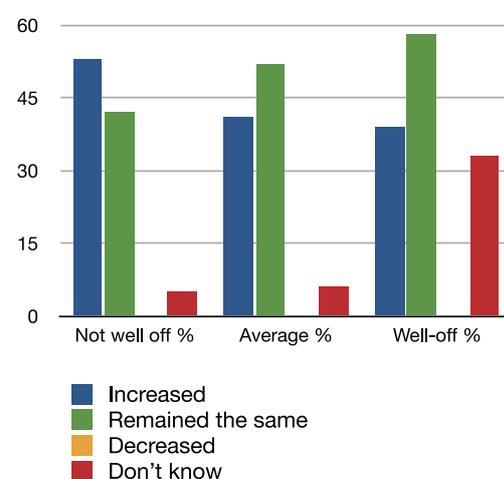


Chart 177a: Community background of members of voluntary management committees Source: Acheson and Williamson, 2007

Community background of members of voluntary management committees	Numbers	Percent
Wholly Catholic	40	13.1%
Mainly Catholic	69	22.5%
Mixed	80	26.1%
Mainly Protestant	75	24.5%
Wholly Protestant	42	13.7%
Total respondents	306	100%

Chart 177b: Proportion of organisations willing to engage together Source: Acheson and Williamson, 2007

	Catholics and Protestants working together % saying yes	Equal access to services for Catholics and Protestants % saying yes
All Catholic organisations	41.5	71.4
All Protestant organisations	25.4	49.1
All organisations	33.2	60.0

Chart 178: Contact with people from a different community or religious background by family financial background. Source: Young Life and Times, 2009

	Numbers	Percent
Opportunities to do things together	325	96.2
Opportunities to co-operate on common tasks	304	93
Encouragement to work on cross-community issues	202	65

7.3 Civil society as a force for political change

Civil society did not have any part in the negotiations that led to the Belfast Agreement, as these were talks conducted exclusively by political leaders, but it does have a claim to have helped create the conditions on the ground that made it possible for an accord to be accepted (and in helping to sell the Agreement in the subsequent referendum). The strength of that claim is disputed by some, accepted by others, but the recent expansion of the sector owes more to the faith placed in it by the EU, the International Fund for Ireland, and other external funders than the regional politicians who made the deal.

The Civic Forum

Strand One (para 34) of the Belfast Agreement provided for a Civic Forum, comprising representatives of the business, trade union and voluntary sectors, to be consulted on social, economic and cultural issues. When the Assembly was suspended in 2002 the Civic Forum was suspended along with it, but the restoration of the Assembly in 2007 did not lead, despite a review commissioned by the OFMDFM, to the restoration of the Forum. There were few protests: it had failed to establish its place in public life. Its return was not demanded by any of the political parties in the manifestos for the May 2011 election, and its brief career has come to an end.

7.4 Civil and uncivil society

Analytical studies of civil society in Northern Ireland are rare and the data deployed mostly out of date. The most systematic survey is the Civil Society Index produced jointly by the Northern Ireland Council for Voluntary Action and Civicus in 2006. Civicus, a project of the World Alliance for Citizenship Partnership, combined information sourced through NICVA with international data sets that allow for European comparisons. The report could not find evidence of any significant political orientation in civil society (Civicus/NICVA 2006:8):

It is perhaps inevitable in Northern Ireland, despite the significant political achievements of the last decade, that the view of civil society and its role very much reflects the fragmented nature of society as a whole. There is no clear, unifying agenda that underlines what civil society can hope to achieve ...

A more recent study by Belloni (2010: 127) concludes that there is no longer a strong overlap between civil society and peace-building:

Although the level of civil society remains high, the reduction in political urgency following the signing of the Good Friday Agreement, as well as a decline in violence and a booming economy, contributed to political disengagement.

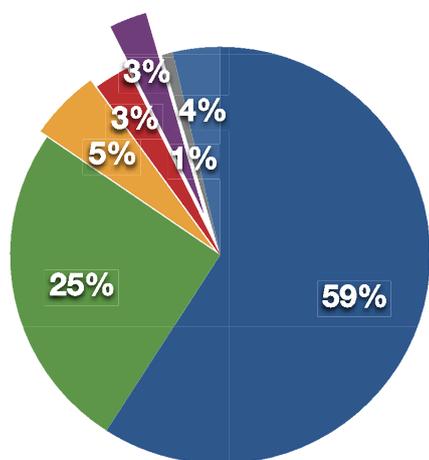
Belloni notes that important functions played by civil society before the Agreement, like the promotion of human rights or the monitoring of paramilitary violence, have been 'agentised' and turned into part of the settlement. The franchise for human-rights monitoring passed to the

Northern Ireland Human Rights Commission, the Equality Commission monitors the promotion of equality and good relations by public bodies, and the monitoring of paramilitary activity became the responsibility of the now-defunct Independent International Commission on Decommissioning. The formal voluntary sector, now regulated by a Charity Commission, has established successively a 'compact' (1998) and a 'concordat' (2011) with government, negotiated respectively by NICVA and the Voluntary and Community Unit in the Department for Social Development for the delivery of public services.

Parallel with this has been the development of a 'peace-building' sector defined not so much by activities or agreed objectives as by an external funding regime which has placed a premium on inclusiveness. And funding goes – using Belloni's terms – not just to 'civil' but also 'uncivil' organisations with sectarian identities and, in some cases, a past or present association with violence (Belloni, 2010: 111). This is defended as 'conflict transformation'—leaving the battle lines as before but with a move out of violence into other forms of ethnic affirmation. This 'single-identity work' has often been presented as a precedent to cross-community reconciliation but it has tended to postpone that goal to focus on programmes that stay within one community: an early survey concluded that many viewed such work 'as an acceptable alternative to community relations, not as a progression towards it' (Church and Visser, 2001: 12). More than 80% of the voluntary organisations surveyed by Acheson *et al* (2007) reported no pressure to work in a cross-community way.

7.5 Who funds peace-building?

Since 1987, Northern Ireland and the six border counties of the Republic have been the beneficiaries of an extraordinary and unprecedented funding package, which has amounted in total to almost £2.5 billion – on average, almost £100 million a year. Nowhere in the world has enjoyed such largesse in relation to population size. The details of the major donors and their contributions are as follows:



- EU PEACE Programmes
- International Fund for Ireland
- CCRU/CRU OFMDFM
- Dept of Education NI
- NIO/OFMDFM Victims
- Irish Government
- Atlantic Philanthropies

Chart 179: Donors and their contributions Source: Morrow (2011)

Programme	Total	Annual average	Duration
EU PEACE Programmes	£1455.5m	£76.6m	1995-2013
International Fund for Ireland	£628m	£27.3m	1987-2010
CCRU/CRU/OFMDFM	£134m	£5.6m	1987-2011
Dept of Education NI	£66m	£2.9m	1987-2010
NIO/OFMDFM Victims	£70m	£5m	1998-2011
Irish Government	£20m	£1m	1987-2010
Atlantic Philanthropies	£90m	£4.5m	1990-2010
TOTAL	£2463.5m	£94.75m	1987-2013

And these are only the major donors. There has been additional funding from various charities, including the Joseph Rowntree Charitable Trust and the Esmee Fairburn Foundation which have had a sustained engagement with peace-building in Northern Ireland. Other government departments and agencies have made very significant interventions – for example, the Arts Council of Northern Ireland’s investment in the Re-Imaging Project (described on p. 75) or the Department for Regional Development’s support for rural peace-building.

There are definitional problems to do with how peace-building is to be understood, and how it overlaps with other funded activity such as economic development, human rights, social inclusion and gendered initiatives. In Chart 180, assembled by Morrow (2011), the definition is left to the funder, but the overall picture of donor programmes provides a sense of where the emphasis has fallen.

Chart 180: Interventions for Reconciliation Source: Morrow, 2011

	Reconciliation as an explicit objective	Geographical eligibility	Inter-community contact	Economic Development	Social Inclusion	Int. links	Victims	Human Rights
CCRU-OFMDFM	yes	NI	yes	no	yes	no	no	no
DE	yes	NI	yes	no	no	no	no	No/CRED
Victims-OFMDFM	no	NI	no	no	yes	no	yes	no
IFI pre 2006	yes	Ireland	yes	yes	yes	yes	no	no
IFI post 2006	Yes	Ireland	yes	no	yes	yes	no	no
EU PEACE I	yes	NI and 6 border cos	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	no
EU PEACE II	yes	NI and 6 border cos	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	no
EU PEACE III	yes	NI and 6 border cos	yes	no	yes	yes	yes	no
Irish Government	yes	Ireland, focus on NI & cross-border	yes	no	yes	no	no	no
Atlantic Philanthropies	Yes	2 separate programmes for NI & Rol	yes	no	no	no	no	yes

8. Ability to deal with the past

8.1 Dealing with the past- the debate

The newspaper headlines and news reports in 2011 were full of shootings and bombings, ambushes and atrocities. These were not events that happened during the year; rather they were eruptions from the past into the present, with controversies often triggered by the publication of an inquiry report – or, on occasion, by the refusal to commission an inquiry. Former Chief Constable Sir Hugh Orde used to routinely complain that when he took up post in 2003 there were 1,800 unsolved murders on the books. In his view, it was impossible to pursue normal policing while simultaneously trying to deal with this backlog, and he urged politicians to come up with some way of dealing with the past. Police Ombudsman Al Hutchinson made the same complaint. In an interview with online magazine *The Detail* (14/8/11) he said that even though the OPONI budget for the investigation of complaints against the police on historic issues had been doubled to £4.8 million per annum, his office only has capacity to deal with two cases each year. With 120 cases pending he estimated that it would be over 50 years before these would be cleared. Not long after giving this interview it was Hutchinson's own office which found itself the focus of complaints for its handling of historic cases. The results of inquiries conducted into the 1971 bombing of McGurk's bar and the 1999 murder of Catholic solicitor Rosemary Nelson were thought by the families concerned to be too soft on the police, and a report by the Criminal Justice Inspectorate in 2011 also suggested that the independence bar had been lowered and the OPONI was too influenced by its police links. The problem is that beyond the operation of the OPONI and the Historical Inquiries Team within the PSNI, there is no other body equipped to deal with justice issues from the past, and certainly none that can involve the whole society in a broader reconciliation process.

In 2007 in an effort to scope the possibilities for a governmental initiative, the then Secretary of State Peter Hain established a special working group. Two years later, **The Report of the Consultative Group on the Past** (2009), otherwise known as the Eames-Bradley report, was issued. The Group made a series of detailed recommendations but public attention focused on one, the recommendation that the families of all those who died during the Troubles should be given a once-off payment of £12,000. In not distinguishing between victims and perpetrators the authors believed they were staying faithful to the principle of 'no hierarchy of victims' but the idea that paramilitary killers should be given equivalence with their victims outraged a considerable section of the Northern Ireland public.

In 2010 the Commission for Victims and Survivors issued **Dealing With The Past**. The report offers advice to government, not just from a victims' perspective but drawing on the lessons of past reports and the responses to them. The authors seek to maintain a balance between the demands of justice and the need for reconciliation, and is a judicious blend of the idealistic and the practical. The problem at this stage is that very few people are listening. The report avoided creating the sort of storm that accompanied the Eames-Bradley report, but suffered from the opposite problem, passing into the public realm with little or no comment of any kind.

8.2 Governmental Responses

Following the 1998 Agreement the two governments worked closely in their responses to demands for tribunals and investigations of the past. During the Weston Park negotiations in 2001 they jointly agreed to commission a judge of international standing to look at a package of grievances about the past. The retired Canadian Judge Cory was appointed in May 2002 and asked to make recommendations on the cases of the deaths of Robert Hamill, Rosemary Nelson, Billy Wright, and Patrick Finucane. He was also asked to look at the possibility of collusion by the Garda Síochána in two double murders in the Republic: that of Justice Maurice Gibson and his wife Lady Cecily Gibson, and that of RUC Chief Superintendents Harry Breen and Robert Buchanan. Cory reported he could find no evidence of collusion in the Gibson murders, but recommended public inquiries in all the other cases. Inquiries were duly conducted into three cases: Hamill (still not complete), Nelson (cost £46.5M) and Wright (cost £30m). Prolonged negotiations took place with the family of Patrick Finucane about the form an inquiry might take. The Finucane family was unhappy with the Inquiries Act (2005), as the accountability is to the minister rather than to parliament. Called to a meeting with David Cameron in November 2011 the family was informed that there would not be a public inquiry; instead the government had appointed a lawyer, Sir Desmond de Silva QC, to review the case. The family expressed outrage and Taoiseach Enda Kenny protested the decision.

The Finucane case was one more example during the year of how difficult it is to achieve any consensus on how to deal with past injustices, but it also served to illustrate that one route that now seems to be blocked off is the large-scale public inquiry. David Cameron was emphatic about this when he spoke on the findings of the Saville Inquiry. While commending the work done by Lord Saville and his team he said the government would not countenance any more 'costly open-ended inquiries'. The Irish government has likewise lost the appetite for long and costly processes of this sort, having played host itself to numerous public inquiries, and having many other pressing issues on its political agenda. How else might the issue be addressed? Formal responsibility on the British side lies with Secretary of State Owen Patterson. Musing on the problem in a public lecture in November 2010 Patterson said that 'historians rather than lawyers' might provide the right direction (BBC, 17/11/10). He explained he was thinking of the Spanish model of the Historical Documentation Centre in Salamanca which was set up as an archive for all documentation relating to the Franco era.

An option of this sort would require complex legal safeguards to be put in place. An attempt by Boston College to create a Northern Ireland Troubles archive ran into legal difficulties in 2011 when it was forced to hand over to the PSNI tapes in which IRA man Brendan Hughes alleges Gerry Adams had ordered the murder of mother-of-ten Jean McConville in 1971. The Boston College archive was created after an approach by journalist Ed Moloney and Lord Bew, Professor of Politics at Queen's University. Those interviewed were promised their recordings would be protected by academic confidentiality, an idea which is turning out to have a shaky legal basis. The possibility of an Adams prosecution – however unlikely – is a clear demonstration of just how radioactive events from forty years ago can prove to be.

There are three other scenarios which present themselves. One is that the Conflict Resolution Centre to be built on the site of the old Maze prison could become a sort of museum of the Troubles and act as a form of historical documentation centre on the Salamanca model. A second approach is to eschew the 'big bang' single initiative and to accept that the past will be processed in many different ways by many different people and organisations. The third possibility is a less benign version of this, in which the past is constantly excavated for partisan purposes by a diverse range of nationalist and unionist groups wishing to develop their sense of victimhood and expose the iniquities of the other side. This process could eventually merge with the commemoration of other key historical events as Northern Ireland moves towards what is already being called the 'decade of commemorations'. This begins with the anniversary of the Ulster Covenant in 1912, continues with the plantation of Ulster in 1613, the Somme and the Easter Rising in 1916 and so on until the anniversary of the 1922 partition of the country and the creation of the Northern Ireland state.

9. One Northern Ireland?

There is no occasion in Northern Ireland when people stand together, to salute one flag or sing one national song, to experience the sense of being one people with a single, shared identity. There have however been a number of occasions when gestures, both large and small, have served to betoken the creation of new relationships. Perhaps the most striking illustration of the new accommodation in Northern Ireland politics came with the photograph of Ian Paisley and Martin McGuinness sharing a joke with the restoration of devolution in 2007. Such images not only reflect changes in relationships; they help to create them. There is no reliable method for weighing the significance of gestural politics, but the manner and frequency of their occurrence can be monitored. The year 2011 yielded a particularly heavy crop of positive images. These included Queen Elizabeth bowing her head at the Garden of Remembrance during her visit to Dublin in May. In so doing she recognised the validity of the Irish republican tradition, and her subsequent use of an Irish-language greeting prompted a wave of goodwill from the population of Ireland. Equally potent was the visible display of shoulder-to-shoulder solidarity between the GAA and the PSNI at the funeral of Ronan Kerr, a member of both organisations. The entire political, security and clerical establishments united for the funeral ceremony, and Peter Robinson set a lead by using this occasion to fulfil his promise to be the first DUP politician to attend a Catholic mass. There were many other richly symbolic moments of people crossing a line: the Protestant minister Rev David Latimer addressing a Sinn Fein Ard Fheis, the joint celebrations when Derry-Londonderry won the City of Culture bid, or the compassion shown by many unionists when the GAA manager Mickey Harte's daughter Michaela was murdered on her honeymoon.

There were also gestures that showed not everything has changed. For whatever reason, some GAA clubs from north of the border were not present when Queen Elisabeth paid a visit to Croke Park. The UUP leader Tom Elliott attended the funeral of Ronan Kerr but was brought before a disciplinary hearing of the Orange Order for having done so. The Sinn Fein Mayor of Belfast, Niall O'Donnghaile, refused to present a Duke of Edinburgh award to an army cadet, then subsequently apologised, but in the controversy surrounding the event it emerged that his DUP deputy has consistently refused to shake his hand. Small gestures of this sort have a large significance in Northern Ireland. The news media this year however had sufficient positive stories of gestural politics, both large and small, to outweigh the negative.

10. Key Points

1. Northern Ireland is still a very divided society but government now seems less determined to address the roots of division than before renewed devolution. The policy framework *A Shared Future* (2005) made it clear that sharing would always be favoured over separation and that 'benign apartheid' was not an option. The consultation paper *Cohesion, Sharing and Integration* showed less sense of urgency or priority.
2. There have been experiments in shared housing through new build and the Shared Neighbourhood Programme. The Community Cohesion Unit of the NIHE has been active in promoting these but the scale and speed of developments is much less than what had been envisaged in the Good Friday Agreement.
3. Integrated education continues to grow. Over 20 years the number of integrated schools has climbed to the point where 6.5% of children are educated together but on the current trajectory a 10% target is still far off. A new dynamic is being created, however, by the combination of falling school rolls and education cutbacks. There is an economic imperative to make efficiencies and this inevitably means a sharing of resources.
4. Communal division continues to affect participation in art, sport, and cultural activities. The Arts Council and other bodies have sought engagement with cultural forms that have hitherto been imbued with sectarianism. There have also been anti-sectarian and anti-racist initiatives within the main sporting organisations but, while these show evidence of success, members of the two communities still largely inhabit different sporting cultures. At grassroots level, cultural events are still bound closely to communal identities and these may have deepened.
5. For young people especially, new cultural identities appear to be constructed around consumption and leisure. A cosmopolitan culture has grown up post-Agreement and is relatively facilitative of new identity formation that transcends sectarian division, but neutral and shared spaces are primarily the preserve of those with disposable income. For those who feel cut off from such developments they represent another form of social exclusion.
6. Participation in public affairs is still predominantly male and white. There are some changes with more ethnic-minority candidates going forward for election, possibly inspired by the success of Anna Lo in South Belfast. All the ethnic candidates in the May 2011 elections stood for Northern Ireland parties rather than representing any sectional or ethnic interest. A more relaxed gay culture has developed though in Belfast and Derry, both now hosting large-scale Pride events, and there is public acceptance of gay bars, and social and sporting clubs. This wider acceptance does not mitigate the importance of homophobic crime (reported in the sense of safety dimension), but relationships between the PSNI and the gay community have improved.
7. In 2011 there were a number of symbolic events which allowed the people of Northern Ireland to experience themselves as one community.

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Glossary of Main Acronyms

ACNI	Arts Council of Northern Ireland
ACPO	Association of Chief Police Officers
ASHE	Annual Survey of Hours and Earnings
BCC	Belfast City Council
CIRA	Continuity IRA
CJI	Criminal Justice Inspection Northern Ireland
CPI	Community Prioritisation Index
DENI	Department of Education Northern Ireland
DETI	Department of Trade and Enterprise
DEL	Department of Employment and Learning
DHSSPS	Department of Health Social Services and Public Safety
DoJ	Department of Justice
ECNI	Equality Commission of Northern Ireland
FRS	Family Resources Survey
FSME	Free School Meals Entitlement
HBAI	Houses Below Average Income
ICR	Institute of Conflict Research
IICD	Independent International Commission on Decommissioning
IIS	Institute of Irish Studies
IMC	Independent Monitoring Commission
JRF	Joseph Rowntree Foundation
LGBT	Lesbian Gay and Transgender
LVF	Loyalist Volunteer Force

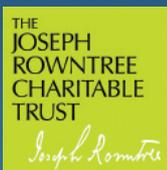
MLA	Member of the Legislative Assembly
NEET	Not in Employment, Education or Training
NICEM	Northern Ireland Council for Ethnic Minorities
NICS	Northern Ireland Crime Survey
NICTS	Northern Ireland Courts and Tribunals Service
NIHE	Northern Ireland Housing Executive
NILTS	Northern Ireland Life and Times Survey
NIPB	Northern Ireland Policing Board
NIPS	Northern Ireland Prison Service
NIO	Northern Ireland Office
NISRA	Northern Ireland Statistics and Research Agency
OFMDFM	Office of the First Minister and Deputy First Minister
OPONI	Office of the Police Ombudsman Northern Ireland
ONH	Oglaigh naEireann
ONS	Office of National Statistics
PSNI	Police Service of Northern Ireland
PPS	Public Prosecution Service
PWC	PricewaterhouseCoopers
RIRA	Real IRA
UDA	Ulster Defence Association
UFF	Ulster Freedom Fighters
UVF	Ulster Volunteer Force



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