**Good Relations**

The Northern Ireland Life and Times Survey (NILT)[[1]](#footnote-1) deals with the attitudes, values and beliefs of the people in Northern Ireland on a wide range of issues, including relations between Protestant and Catholics.

The NILT survey asks respondents:

* What about relations between Protestants and Catholics? Would you say they are better than they were 5 years ago, worse, or about the same now as then?
* And what about in 5 years time? Do you think relations between Protestants and Catholics will be better than now, worse than now, or about the same as now?

For the combined years of 2020, 2021 and 2022, almost 87% of respondents in Armagh City, Banbridge and Craigavon Borough believe that relations between Protestants and Catholics are better (44.5%) or about the same (42.5%) as they were 5 years ago. Less than 9% of respondents believed that relations were worse now than they were 5 years ago. This is an improvement on the previous results for the combined years 2019-21 when more than 12% of respondents believed that relations were worse now than they were 5 years ago. In Northern Ireland overall, almost 38% of respondents believe that relations between Protestants and Catholics are better now than they were 5 years ago which is 6.6 percentage points lower than Armagh City, Banbridge and Craigavon Borough. More than 46% of respondents in Northern Ireland overall believe relations are about the same as 5 years ago while 11.2% believe relations are worse now than 5 years ago.

For the combined years of 2020, 2021 and 2022, 36.6% of respondents in Armagh City, Banbridge and Craigavon Borough believe that relations between Protestants and Catholics will be better in 5 years time. Almost 43% of respondents in the borough believe relations will be about the same as they are now while 11.6% believe that relations will be worse in 5 years time. Just over 7% of respondents in the borough responded don’t know to this question. In Northern Ireland overall 32.7% of respondents believe relations between Protestants and Catholics will be better in 5 years time, slightly less than the borough. A higher proportion of respondents in Northern Ireland (45%) than the borough believe relations will be about the same 5 years from now while 13.3% believe relations will be worse. Just 7% of Northern Ireland respondents answered don’t know.

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| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | **Relations between Protestants and Catholics** | | | |
|  | **5 years ago** | | **In 5 years time** | |
| **ABC** | **NI** | **ABC** | **NI** |
| **Better** | 44.5% | 37.9% | 36.6% | 32.7% |
| **Worse** | 8.9% | 11.2% | 11.6% | 13.3% |
| **About the same** | 42.5% | 46.4% | 42.7% | 45.0% |
| **Other** | 0.4% | 1.0% | 1.7% | 2.1% |
| **Don’t know** | 3.8% | 3.5% | 7.4% | 7.0% |

*Table 1: Percentage of people who think relations between Protestants and Catholics are better, worse, or about the same as 5 years ago and 5 years from now in Armagh City, Banbridge and Craigavon Borough and Northern Ireland 2020 - 2022. Source: Northern Ireland Life and Times Survey (ARK).*

*Figure 1: Percentage of people who think relations between Protestants and Catholics are better, worse, or about the same as 5 years ago and 5 years from now in Armagh City, Banbridge and Craigavon Borough and Northern Ireland 2020 - 2022. Source: Northern Ireland Life and Times Survey (ARK).*

The NILT survey also asks:

* In some areas the communities are divided and Protestant and Catholics tend to go to different local shops or use different GP surgeries and other services. Thinking about this area, would you say this happens a lot, a little or not at all?

Respondents to the survey in the combined years of 2020, 2021 and 2022 in Armagh City, Banbridge and Craigavon Borough believe that Protestants and Catholics tend to go to different local shops, GP surgeries and other services a lot (28.9%) or a little (35.7%) while 21.4% do not think this happens at all. Just over 13% of respondents in the borough answered don’t know. In Northern Ireland overall, a higher proportion of respondents stated that that this doesn’t happen at all (27.8%) while a lower proportion stated that it happens a lot (23.2%). Compared to the results for the previous combined period 2019-21, more people in the borough and Northern Ireland overall now believe that that Protestants and Catholics tend to go to different local shops, GP surgeries and other services.

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
|  | **Armagh, Banbridge and Craigavon** | **Northern Ireland** |
| **A lot** | 28.9% | 23.2% |
| **A little** | 35.7% | 35.6% |
| **Not at all** | 21.4% | 27.8% |
| **Don't know** | 13.4% | 13.2% |
| **Prefer not to say** | 0.5% | 0.2% |
|  | **100.0%** | **100.0%** |

*Table 2: Percentage of people who think Protestants and Catholics use different local shops, GP surgeries and other services in Armagh City, Banbridge and Craigavon Borough and Northern Ireland 2020-2022. Source: Northern Ireland Life and Times Survey (ARK).*

*Figure 2: Percentage of people who think Protestants and Catholics use different local shops, GP surgeries and other services in Armagh City, Banbridge and Craigavon Borough and Northern Ireland 2020-2022. Source: Northern Ireland Life and Times Survey (ARK).*

The NILT survey further asks:

* Do you think leisure centres in this area are ‘shared and open’ to both Protestants and Catholics?
* Do you think that parks in this area are ‘shared and open’ to both Protestants and Catholics?
* Do you think that libraries in this area are ‘shared and open’ to both Protestants and Catholics?
* Do you think that shopping centres in this area are ‘shared and open’ to both Protestants and Catholics?

In Armagh City, Banbridge and Craigavon Borough 75.8% of respondents to the combined years of the 2020, 2021 and 2022 survey think that leisure centres are definitely ‘shared and open’ while 18.1% think they are probably ‘shared and open’. This compared to 62.2% of respondents in Northern Ireland overall answering that leisure centres are definitely ‘shared and open’ while 25.9% think they are probably ‘shared and open’.

When respondents in the borough were asked about parks, 71.9% answered that they are definitely and 19.6% probably ‘shared and open’. Comparing these to Northern Ireland overall responses were 63.8% and 24.9% respectively.

Agreement that libraries are definitely and probably ‘shared and open’ to both Protestants and Catholics was slightly higher in Armagh City, Banbridge and Craigavon Borough than Northern Ireland.

Shopping centres are thought to be ‘shared and open’ by 96.8% of respondents in Armagh City, Banbridge and Craigavon Borough (80.8% yes definitely, 15.9% yes probably). This is slightly higher than the responses from Northern Ireland overall (94.2%).

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | ….. In this area are 'shared and open' to both Protestants and Catholics | | | | | | | |
|  | **Leisure Centres** | | **Parks** | | **Libraries** | | **Shopping Centres** | |
|  | **ABC** | **NI** | **ABC** | **NI** | **ABC** | **NI** | **ABC** | **NI** |
| Yes, definitely | 75.8% | 62.2% | 71.9% | 63.8% | 79.2% | 68.3% | 80.8% | 72.8% |
| Yes, probably | 18.1% | 25.9% | 19.6% | 24.9% | 16.2% | 24.4% | 15.9% | 21.4% |
| No Probably not | 1.6% | 6.0% | 5.3% | 6.8% | 2.3% | 3.0% | 1.1% | 2.7% |
| No Definitely not | 1.2% | 1.7% | 1.2% | 1.7% | 0.2% | 0.7% | 0.2% | 0.5% |
| None in this area | 0.6% | 1.3% | 0.1% | 0.7% | 0.1% | 0.9% | 0.5% | 1.0% |
| Don't know | 2.7% | 2.9% | 1.9% | 2.1% | 2.0% | 2.6% | 1.4% | 1.6% |

*Table 3: Percentage of people who think, in their area, leisure centres, parks, libraries and shopping centres are ‘shared and open’ to both Protestants and Catholics in Armagh City, Banbridge and Craigavon Borough and Northern Ireland 2020 - 2022. Source: Northern Ireland Life and Times Survey (ARK).*

*Figure 3: Percentage of people who think, in their area, leisure centres, parks, libraries and shopping centres are ‘shared and open’ to both Protestant and Catholics in Armagh City, Banbridge and Craigavon Borough and Northern Ireland 2020-22. Source: Northern Ireland Life and Times Survey (ARK).*

Further information can be found via the following links:

<https://www.ark.ac.uk/nilt/>

<https://www.ninis2.nisra.gov.uk/public/Home.aspx> and type Northern Ireland Life and Times into the search bar.

1. Northern Ireland Life and Times Survey (ARK) - <https://www.ark.ac.uk/nilt/> [↑](#footnote-ref-1)