



Module 4:

Democracy in Action: Elections in Northern Ireland

Schedule for the Unit



Learning Outcomes

This module complies with the following specifications of the **Local and Global Citizenship Module in the **Key Stage 3** subject **Learning for Life and Work**:**

Students should have the opportunity to:

- “Key features of modern democratic societies;
- Recognise the role of human rights standards in promoting and maintaining democratic societies;
- Explore ways of influencing political decision making;
- Demonstrate an awareness of the main structures of government in Northern Ireland since the Belfast Agreement;
- Explore relationships between Northern Ireland, Great Britain, the Republic of Ireland and the European Union;
- Explore the role of the UN and the Council of Europe”.

(Source of specifications: CCEA 2003)

Introduction

This unit focuses on elections, one of the key features of modern democratic societies. During the activities, pupils find out:

- About the meaning of key terms used in relation to elections;
- How and when elections are held in Northern Ireland;
- What different voting systems are being practised in Northern Ireland and how they impact on the election results;
- How gerrymandering can influence election results;
- How the absence of locally elected representatives has affected Northern Ireland.

In this unit pupils also discuss means that have been put in place to achieve and protect human rights, equality and equal opportunities in Northern Ireland.



The unit includes opportunities for class discussion and debate and an activity in which students design a democratic school council.

Activity 1: About elections terms and election systems

This is a research-based activity. Students try to define the meaning of a number of key terms involved in Elections. They also find out when elections take place in Northern Ireland and what different voting systems are being used. This could be either homework or the first task in the unit where small groups or pairs of students find out about election terms and frequency of elections in Northern Ireland. In the second part of this activity students investigate recent Northern Ireland election results and discuss if the different voting systems had an impact on the results.

Activity 2: What do people think and know about politics and politicians in Northern Ireland?

This is a research-based activity. Students explore attitudes to and knowledge about politics and elections in Northern Ireland. Do the parties really represent the interests of the majority of people in Northern Ireland? How much interest in politics do 16-year olds have in Northern Ireland? What are the political areas they are most interested in?

Activity 3: Alternative means of decision making

In this activity students explore other means of influencing decision making in democracies. Are there alternatives to elections? How democratic are these alternatives?

Activity 4: Debate: Should the age of voting be reduced to 14 or 16 years?

Debate in the class the advantages and disadvantages of reducing the age of eligibility to vote to 14 or 16 years. Hold an opinion poll at the end of the debate. What proportion of pupils thinks it should be reduced to 14 (or below), to 16, and how many people think it should stay 18? What are the arguments for and against this?

Activity 5: Special project:

Option A: Creating a School Council

In this project, pupils have the opportunity to design a school council. They apply their knowledge about voting systems and create a model of representation that would suit their school's needs. How can all interest groups be represented fairly? What role could a school council play in relation to the school's Board of Governors, parental



council or the management board of a school? What other means are there to represent pupils' interests?

Option B: Special Project on Gerrymandering

Gerrymandering is the term used to describe the manipulation of electoral boundaries to give undue and discriminatory influence to some party or class. In this special project, students should discuss the question of gerrymandering in Northern Ireland. They also explore the role of the boundary commission to find out what mechanisms were put in place to prevent gerrymandering from happening in the future.



Module 4:**Democracy in Action – Elections
in Northern Ireland****Factsheet 1**

Elections are one of the key features of democratic decision making in modern societies. In Northern Ireland, elections take place:

1. On local government level (every four years), PR (Proportional Representation) using the STV system (Single Transferable Vote);
2. For the NI assembly (nominally every four years), PR using STV;
3. For the Westminster parliament (every 4-5 years), using the FPTP system (First Past The Post);
4. For the European parliament (every 5 years), PR using STV.

By-elections where only selected seats are contested have to take place if seats become vacant for particular reasons (e.g. death or resignation of an elected representative)

Currently, Northern Ireland has:

1. 3 MEP's (Members of the European Parliament);
2. 18 MP's (Members of the Westminster Parliament);
3. 108 MLA's (Members of the Legislative Assembly, i.e. the currently suspended Stormont Assembly);
4. 582 local councillors.

Other means of decision-making in democratic societies involving the public are:

1. Referenda;
2. Public hearings, enquiries and consultations;
3. Citizen initiatives;
4. Round table talks;
5. Commissions.

Examples for this are for example:

1. The referendum on the Good Friday/Belfast Agreement;
2. The referendum on the Nice Treaty in the Republic of Ireland and the planned UK referendum on the European constitution;
3. The consultation for Opsahl Report in 1992;
4. The consultation for the post-primary school review in 2002;



5. The appointment of lay commissioners in the Equality Commission.

The following organisations provide information on elections in Northern Ireland.

The Electoral Commission	www.electoralcommission.org.uk/
Northern Ireland Assembly	www.ni-assembly.gov.uk/
The Boundary Commission	www.boundarycommission.org.uk/
ARK elections sites	www.ark.ac.uk/elections http://cain.ulst.ac.uk/issues/politics/politics.htm
The ACE Project	www.aceproject.org/

The *Administration and Cost of Elections* (ACE) Electronic Publication – is an attempt to provide a globally accessible information resource on elections. It provides information on options, detailed procedures, alternative solutions and the administrative and cost implications associated with organising elections.

A comprehensive explanation of the electoral system in Northern Ireland can be found at: <http://www.cain.ulst.ac.uk/issues/politics/election/electoralsystem.htm>

Parties in Northern Ireland also maintain their own websites, e.g.:

Alliance Party:	www.allianceparty.org/
Democratic Unionist Party:	www.dup.org.uk/
Green Party in Northern Ireland	www.greens-in.org/
Northern Ireland Women's Coalition	www.niwc.org/
Progressive Unionist Party:	www.pup-ni.org.uk/
Sinn Féin:	www.sinnfein.ie/
The Social Democratic and Labour Party:	www.sdip.ie/
Ulster Unionist Party:	www.uup.org/

The following organisations provide information on equality issues and human rights:

Northern Ireland Human Rights Commission:	www.nihrc.org/
Equality Commission	www.equalityni.org/
NI Commissioner for Children and Young People:	www.nickey.org/
Disability Rights Commission	www.drc-gb.org/
NISRA Equality Information Website:	www.equality.nisra.gov.uk/
European Court of Human Rights:	www.echr.coe.int



Module 4:

Democracy in Action - Elections in Northern Ireland

Factsheet 2



Below is a summary of the meanings of some election terminology for **Activity 1**.

ABSENTEE VOTING: a process by which electors who are unable to go in person to the polling station at which their name appears on the voters list can still cast their vote at another location.

BOUNDARY DELIMITATION (ALSO DISTRICTING): the process for determining the way in which constituency or electoral area boundaries are drawn; it deals with the division of the country into constituencies, districts or wards.

BY-ELECTION: an election to fill a vacant seat and held at any time other than during a general election.

CANDIDATE: an individual who has been nominated in accordance with the process rules and regulations in order to seek office. A contender to an elected public office.

COALITION: the alliance of the forces of two or more groups or political parties to form the government.

CONSTITUENCY (OR ELECTORAL WARD/DISTRICT): the electoral unit of conversion of votes into seats, normally on a territorial basis.

ELECTORAL QUOTA: the number of votes or the proportion of the votes required to win a seat in a proportional representation system.

ELECTORATE: the entire population of a country who is eligible to vote to elect candidates and political parties to represent them in a legislative assembly.

FIRST PAST THE POST (FPTP): an electoral system in which the winning candidate is the person who wins the most vote.

GERRYMANDERING: manipulating the electoral boundaries so as to give undue influence to some party or class; districting or redistricting in a discriminatory manner.

POLLING STATION: a physical installation where the electors of a polling division can cast their vote.

PROPORTIONAL REPRESENTATION: representation proportionate to the overall share of the national vote in order of the winning candidates' position on the lists.

SINGLE TRANSFERABLE VOTE (STV): uses multi-member districts, with voters ranking candidates in order of preference on the ballot paper in the same manner as the Alternative Vote. Preference marking is optional and voters are not required to rank-order all candidates. If they wish they can mark only one. After the



total number of first preferential votes are counted the count begins by establishing the quota.

SPOILED BALLOT: a ballot which cannot be used because the choice of the voter is not clear.

(Source: www.aceproject.org)



Module 4:

Democracy in Action – Elections in Northern Ireland

How to?



This sheet provides hands-on guidance on how the information for the Elections Module can be accessed:

Activity 1

In this activity, students are asked to define terminologies linked to elections. This information can be found from a variety of sources. However, the ACE website (www.aceproject.org) provides young people-friendly definitions of the most common terms.

- In the second part of the activity students find out about the latest election results in Northern Ireland. To access the results, open your web browser and type in: www.ark.ac.uk/elections. Election Results are listed by type of election under Elections in the menu bar.

For the local government election results, pupils are requested to find out the results only of either their local constituency or the constituency, in which their school is situated. This can be done by clicking on the relevant area on the map of Northern Ireland which automatically opens when local government election results are requested by clicking on **Elections → District elections → by District** in the menu bar of the Elections website.

Activity 2

In this activity, pupils research attitudes to parties and elections. To find out about the attitudes of 16-year olds to politics, visit the web site of the Northern Ireland Young Life and Times (YLT) survey:

Open your web browser and type in the following address: www.ark.ac.uk/ylt.

On the homepage of the YLT site:

1. Click on **Results** on the menu bar.
2. Then go to Results for 2004.

In the index of results click on: **Politics** and view the results of the following questions:

How much interest do you generally have what is going on in politics?



How much do you feel you know about politics in Northern Ireland?

Being active in politics is a waste of time.

I want to have a say in how the country is run.

No politicians or parties represent my views.

I find the language politicians use easy to understand.

Which of these statements best reflects how you think about voting at elections:

To compare the attitudes of 16-year olds with those of the adult population, visit the web site of the Northern Ireland Life and Times Survey (NILT).

1. Type in the following address in your web browser: www.ark.ac.uk/nilt

2. In the menu bar click on **Results**. Choose **List of modules** in the next window that opens and then choose **Political attitudes** from the list of modules.

POLITICS: *How much interest do you generally have in what is going on in politics?* [1998](#)

TRUSTPOL: *Which Northern Ireland politicians would you generally trust to act in the best interests of all the people in Northern Ireland?* [1998](#)

LOSETCH: *Do those we elect lose touch with the people pretty quickly?* [2003](#)

VOTEONLY: *Is voting the only way people can have any say about how the government runs things?* [2003](#)

YOUKNOW: *Do you understand how Assembly and other bodies work?* [1999](#)

DFWNNIA: *What difference does it make who does best in Assembly elections?* [2001](#)

DFWNGNI: *What difference does it make who wins a general election?* [2001](#)

Finally, visit www.wimps.org.uk for a Northern Ireland website on politics designed for young people.



Activity 3: Alternative means of decision making

First, brainstorm with the students if there are other means through which people can influence decision-making in a democratic society (see **Factsheet 1** for this unit).

Then, ask students to visit the following websites and find out:

- What is the role of the organisations?
- What is their structural set-up?
- How can the public influence what these organisations do?

Northern Ireland Human Rights Commission: www.nihrc.org/

Equality Commission www.equalityni.org/

NI Commissioner for Children and Young People: www.niccy.org/

Disability Rights Commission www.drc-gb.org/

NISRA Equality Information Website: www.equality.nisra.gov.uk/

European Court of Human Rights www.echr.coe.int



**Module 4:****Democracy in Action – Elections
in Northern Ireland****Worksheet 1**Activity 1: Elections; Terms and Election systems

1. During elections and election campaigns a number of certain terms are being used. In this activity you attempt to define each of the terms. This will either be done individually, in pairs or in small groups. Write the meaning beside the terms in the table below. You can use the website of the electoral commission (www.electoralcommission.org.uk for assistance, if needed.

Absentee voting	
Ballot/spoiled ballot	
Boundary delimitation	
By-election	
Candidate	
Coalition	
Constituency/Electoral Ward	
Electoral Quota	
Electorate	
First past the post (FPTP)	
Gerrymandering	
Polling Station	
Proportional Representation (PR)	
Single Transferable Vote (STV)	



1. Now find out about elections in Northern Ireland. Complete the four tables below. You find the necessary information at www.ark.ac.uk/elections.

Table 1: The last 3 European elections held in Northern Ireland:

Year	Voting system used	Names of candidates elected, party affiliation and share of votes achieved (in %)

Table 2: The last 3 general elections (Westminster)

Year	Voting system used	What were your local candidate elected, their party affiliation and the share of votes they achieved (in %) ?

**Table 3: The last 2 Northern Ireland Assembly elections**

Year	Voting system used	What were the names of the <u>three candidates</u> in the constituency you live in, who achieved the <u>highest proportion of votes</u>? What is their party affiliation

Table 4: The last 3 local government elections

Year	Voting system used	What were the names of <u>three candidates</u> in the constituency you live in? Who achieved the <u>highest proportion of votes</u>? What is their party affiliation?



Activity 2: What do people think of and know about politics and politicians in Northern Ireland?

In this activity you find out what people in Northern Ireland think about politics.

First, you visit the website of the Northern Ireland Young Life and Times (YLT) survey to learn about the attitudes of 16-year olds to politics and elections. Then you compare these findings with the results of a similar survey among adults in Northern Ireland.

1. The findings of the YLT survey can be found at: www.ark.ac.uk/ylt

Look for the results of the 2004 survey and answer the following questions:

What is the proportion of 16-year olds who said they had a great deal of interest or quite a lot of interest in politics?

How much do you feel you know about politics in Northern Ireland?

Thinking about **social and political** issues in the news, which **three** issues interest you **most**?

How much do you agree or disagree that:

Being active in politics is a waste of time.

I want to have a say in how the country is run.

No politicians or parties represent my views.

I find the language politicians use easy to understand.

Which of these statements best reflects how you think about voting at elections:

- | | |
|--|-------------------------------------|
| It's not really worth voting. | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| People should only vote if they care who wins. | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| It's everyone's duty to vote. | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Don't know | <input type="checkbox"/> |

Finally visit: www.wimps.org.uk to see a Northern Ireland based website on elections designed by young people.



Activity 3: Other means of democratic decision-making

2. Elections are one way of influencing decision-making in a democratic society. However, there are other ways as well. Discuss in your class what other ways you can think of? How effective are they compared to elections?
3. Visit the websites of the organisations below and answer the following questions:
 - What do these organisations do?
 - How are they organised?
 - How do they represent the interests of the public?

List of organisations:

Northern Ireland Human Rights Commission:	www.nihrc.org/
Equality Commission	www.equalityni.org/
NI Commissioner for children and young people:	www.nickey.org/
Disability Rights Commission	www.drc-gb.org/
NISRA Equality Information Website:	www.equality.nisra.gov.uk/
European Court of Human Rights	www.echr.coe.int



Activity 4: Debate: Reducing the voting age to 16 or 14?

In April 2004 the Electoral Commission recommended that the minimum age for all levels of voting at UK public elections should remain at 18 years, but that the minimum candidacy age should be reduced from 21 to 18. This is despite a survey among young people in which the majority said that they would support the voting age lowered to 16.

Debate in the class whether or not the voting age and candidacy age should be lowered. Regard the following statements to support your arguments for or against a lowering of voting age:

Pro:

1. In most countries the voting age and candidacy age is 18 years.
2. By age 16 most people are expected to make a decision about their future life (job, study, etc.). They are also well enough equipped to vote for political parties
3. The political establishment is reluctant to lower the voting and candidacy age because they are too afraid to lose their jobs.

Contra:

4. 16-year olds may not be mature enough to make responsible decisions at age 16.
5. If 16 year olds were allowed to vote they would just vote for the same parties as their parents and not make up their own minds.
6. Most 16-year olds lack the social and political knowledge and sense of responsibility to make informed choices about who should govern the country.

Also consider:

Will compulsory citizenship education equip young people better in political and social knowledge needed to vote and stand as candidates?

Should voluntary registration for 16 and 17 year olds be introduced, so that only those who really do want to vote will be included on the electoral list?

**Module 4:****Democracy in Action – Elections
in Northern Ireland****Worksheet 2**Special projects:

This worksheet provides information on special projects. You can choose between two projects.

Project A: Creating a School Council

In this project, you write a proposal to set up a school council. Use the information you have received in this module on different voting systems and on equality legislation to decide how the representatives on the school council should be chosen and elected? Consider that there are different interest groups in your school (teachers, other school staff, parents, governors, pupils) and that every party should be involved in the council to some degree and have some say. How many people should be represented on the council? How often should the council meet? Should the meetings be public? How often should members be elected, who should they be accountable to and how often should the council be re-elected? Who should be able to nominate candidates? How can you ensure that the process will be fair?

Draw a schedule of the council election with all information required to put this into practice.

Option B: Special Project on Gerrymandering

Gerrymandering is the term used to describe the manipulation of electoral boundaries to give undue and discriminatory influence to some party or class. In this project, you discuss the question of gerrymandering in Northern Ireland. Explore to what extent gerrymandering has taken place in Northern Ireland's past. What were the effects and what groups were disadvantaged? A good starting point for your research is the following website:

www.ark.ac.uk/elections/ggerrymandering.htm

In this respect, explore the role of the Boundary Commission:

www.boundarycommission.org.uk



**Module 4:****Democracy in Action – Elections in Northern Ireland?****Handout 1****Young Life and Times Survey 2004****How much interest do you generally have in what is going on in politics?**

	%
A great deal	5
Quite a lot	10
Some	20
Not very much	26
None at all	38
Don't know	1
Not answered	1

Results for men and women

	%	
	Male	Female
A great deal	7	4
Quite a lot	12	8
Some	24	17
Not very much	23	29
None at all	35	40
Don't know	0	1
Not answered	0	1



Results for people of different religions

	%		
	Catholic	Protestant	No religion
A great deal	7	5	3
Quite a lot	10	12	6
Some	20	22	17
Not very much	25	26	30
None at all	38	35	42
Don't know	0	0	2
Not answered	1	1	0

Northern Ireland Life and Times Survey 1998

How much interest do you generally have in what is going on in politics?

	%
A great deal	11
Quite a lot	23
Some	34
Not very much	24
Or none at all	8
Don't know	0

Results for men and women

	%	
	Male	Female
A great deal	16	7
Quite a lot	27	18
Some	33	36
Not very much	17	29
Or none at all	7	10
Don't know	0	0

**Results for people of different ages**

	%					
	18-24	25-34	35-44	45-54	55-64	65+
A great deal	8	8	10	14	19	9
Quite a lot	15	24	25	25	20	24
Some	37	35	37	35	32	29
Not very much	26	25	22	20	23	25
Or none at all	14	8	6	6	7	12
Don't know	0	0	0	0	0	0

Results for people of different religions

	%		
	Catholic	Protestant	No religion
A great deal	12	10	15
Quite a lot	24	23	19
Some	34	35	33
Not very much	23	24	22
Or none at all	8	7	11
Dont know	0	0	1



**Module 4:****Democracy in Action – Elections in Northern Ireland?****Handout 2****Young Life and Times Survey 2004****How much do you feel you know about politics in Northern Ireland?**

	%
A great deal	3
Quite a lot	13
Some	27
Not very much	35
None at all	21
Don't know	0
Not answered	1

Results for men and women

	%	
	Male	Female
A great deal	4	3
Quite a lot	15	11
Some	31	23
Not very much	31	39
None at all	17	23
Don't know	1	0
Not answered	1	1



Results for people of different religions

	%		
	Catholic	Protestant	No religion
A great deal	4	4	2
Quite a lot	15	14	7
Some	28	28	19
Not very much	34	33	41
None at all	19	20	29
Don't know	0	0	2
Not answered	1	1	0

Thinking about social and political issues in the news, which three issues interest you most?

	% of responses
Issues related to the Peace Process in Northern Ireland	28
Paramilitaries and sectarianism in Northern Ireland	10
Other local Northern Ireland news	4
Education	6
Environment	3
Wards, including Iraq war	9
Health issues including drugs, smoking and alcohol	6
Other current affairs	10
Other international affairs	11
Legal issues, crime, equality issues	4
Other issues	10



Results for men and women

	% of responses	
	Male	Female
Issues related to the Peace Process in Northern Ireland	32	25
Paramilitaries and sectarianism in Northern Ireland	13	9
Other local Northern Ireland news	4	3
Education	5	7
Environment	1	5
Wards, including Iraq war	8	10
Health issues including drugs, smoking and alcohol	4	7
Other current affairs	9	11
Other international affairs	11	11
Legal issues, crime, equality issues	3	5
Other issues	12	8

Results for people of different religions

	%		
	Catholic	Protestant	No religion
Issues related to the Peace Process in Northern Ireland	34	23	18
Paramilitaries and sectarianism in Northern Ireland	10	11	9
Other local Northern Ireland news	3	4	5
Education	5	7	8
Environment	4	2	2
Wards, including Iraq war	6	10	13
Health issues including drugs, smoking and alcohol	5	6	8
Other current affairs	9	12	9
Other international affairs	11	11	13
Legal issues, crime, equality issues	3	6	6
Other issues	11	9	8



**Module 4:****Democracy in Action – Elections in Northern Ireland?****Handout 3****Young Life and Times Survey 2004****1. Being active in politics is a waste of time.**

	%					
	Male	Female	Catholic	Protestant	Neither	All
Strongly agree	8	6	6	6	10	7
Agree	13	9	11	10	14	11
Neither agree nor disagree	36	39	38	38	36	38
Disagree	26	28	26	31	23	27
Strongly disagree	13	13	15	12	10	13
Don't know	3	5	4	3	7	4
Not answered	1	0	0	1	0	1

2. I want to have a say in how the country is run.

	%					
	Male	Female	Catholic	Protestant	Neither	All
Strongly agree	22	17	18	19	19	19
Agree	36	37	37	36	36	36
Neither agree nor disagree	39	30	29	29	31	30
Disagree	7	10	9	9	7	8
Strongly disagree	3	3	2	3	2	4
Don't know	3	4	4	3	5	3
Not answered	1	1	1	1	0	1

**3. No politicians or parties represent my views.**

	%					
	Male	Female	Catholic	Protestant	Neither	All
Strongly agree	10	10	9	9	15	10
Agree	15	16	15	15	17	15
Neither agree nor disagree	34	32	32	34	35	33
Disagree	18	13	18	14	11	15
Strongly disagree	8	4	7	6	2	6
Don't know	14	24	19	22	19	20
Not answered	2	1	1	1	1	2

4. I find the language politicians use easy to understand.

	%					
	Male	Female	Catholic	Protestant	Neither	All
Strongly agree	2	2	2	2	2	2
Agree	26	13	17	18	22	18
Neither agree nor disagree	23	25	25	28	16	24
Disagree	24	36	31	32	29	31
Strongly disagree	12	15	13	13	18	13
Don't know	10	8	9	7	13	9
Not answered	3	2	2	2	2	2

Statements that best reflect how respondents think about voting at elections:

	%					
	Male	Female	Catholic	Protestant	Neither	All
It's not really worth voting	15	9	10	11	16	12
People should only vote if they care who wins	45	46	45	42	55	45
It's everyone's duty to vote	32	38	37	41	22	35
Don't know	5	6	6	4	6	6
Not answered	3	1	1	2	2	2

**Module 4:****Democracy in Action – Elections in Northern Ireland****Handout 4****Northern Ireland Life and Times Survey:**

Generally speaking those we elect lose touch with people pretty quickly.

	%
Agree strongly	29
Agree	46
Neither agree nor disagree	13
Disagree	8
Disagree strongly	1
(don't know)	3

Results for men and women

	%	
	Male	Female
Agree strongly	28	30
Agree	47	46
Neither agree nor disagree	14	12
Disagree	8	8
Disagree strongly	2	1
(don't know)	2	4

**Results for people of different ages**

	%					
	18-24	25-34	35-44	45-54	55-64	65+
Agree strongly	16	28	29	33	29	32
Agree	46	43	46	45	49	48
Neither agree nor disagree	23	13	12	12	12	9
Disagree	8	10	10	6	8	7
Disagree strongly	3	1	1	1	1	1
(don't know)	5	4	2	3	1	3

Results for people of different religions

	%		
	Catholic	Protestant	No religion
Agree strongly	26	30	30
Agree	48	45	45
Neither agree nor disagree	12	14	9
Disagree	8	8	9
Disagree strongly	3	0	1
(don't know)	3	3	6

**Module 4:****Democracy in Action – Elections in Northern Ireland****Handout 5****Northern Ireland Life and Times Survey 2003**

Voting is the only way people like me can have any say about how the government runs things.

	%
Strongly agree	17
Agree	47
Neither agree nor disagree	16
Disagree	11
Strongly disagree	4
Can't choose	4
Missing	2

Results for men and women

	%	
	Male	Female
Strongly agree	16	18
Agree	47	47
Neither agree nor disagree	15	17
Disagree	14	8
Strongly disagree	3	4
Can't choose	4	3
Missing	2	2

**Results for people of different ages**

	%					
	18-24	25-34	35-44	45-54	55-64	65+
Strongly agree	15	17	14	18	15	23
Agree	45	43	43	46	51	54
Neither agree nor disagree	14	19	22	15	16	10
Disagree	10	13	13	12	10	7
Strongly disagree	4	3	5	4	3	2
Can't choose	10	5	3	2	1	3
Missing	1	1	1	4	3	2

Results for people of different religions

	%		
	Catholic	Protestant	No religion
Strongly agree	16	18	17
Agree	49	49	31
Neither agree nor disagree	15	16	20
Disagree	11	10	17
Strongly disagree	4	2	11
Can't choose	4	3	2
Missing	3	2	1



Northern Ireland Life and Times Survey 2001

Some people say that it makes no difference which party wins in elections, things go on much the same. Using this card please say how much of a difference you think it makes who does best in elections to the Northern Ireland Assembly?

	%
A great deal	22
Quite a lot	27
Some	18
Not very much	18
None at all	8
(Don't know)	7

Results for men and women

	%	
	Male	Female
A great deal	25	20
Quite a lot	28	26
Some	17	19
Not very much	17	19
None at all	7	8
(Don't know)	6	8

**Results for people of different ages**

	%					
	18-24	25-34	35-44	45-54	55-64	65+
A great deal	15	21	22	26	25	23
Quite a lot	23	26	28	27	29	27
Some	28	17	18	16	16	19
Not very much	17	22	18	17	19	17
None at all	9	6	10	9	7	6
(Don't know)	9	9	6	5	4	8

Results for people of different religions

	%		
	Catholic	Protestant	No religion
A great deal	20	25	16
Quite a lot	32	24	24
Some	17	19	15
Not very much	21	16	20
None at all	5	9	13
(Don't know)	5	7	12



Northern Ireland Life and Times Survey 2001

And how much of a difference do you think it makes who wins in general elections to the UK House of Commons?

	%
A great deal	21
Quite a lot	24
Some	17
Not very much	22
None at all	9
(Don't know)	7

Results for men and women

	%	
	Male	Female
A great deal	22	20
Quite a lot	24	25
Some	16	18
Not very much	25	20
None at all	9	9
(Don't know)	4	9

Results for people of different ages

	%					
	18-24	25-34	35-44	45-54	55-64	65+
A great deal	14	19	18	26	21	23
Quite a lot	23	25	23	23	29	23
Some	23	18	18	16	10	17
Not very much	20	24	23	20	24	23
None at all	10	6	12	10	9	8
(Don't know)	11	9	7	5	7	5

**Results for people of different religions**

	%		
	Catholic	Protestant	No religion
A great deal	19	23	15
Quite a lot	29	21	20
Some	17	17	17
Not very much	23	23	22
None at all	7	10	14
(Don't know)	5	7	13

**Northern Ireland Life and Times Survey**

Northern Ireland has the following elected representatives: 3 MEPS, 18 MPS, 108 Assembly Members and 582 local councillors. Do you have ...

	%
Too many elected representatives	46
Too few elected representatives	2
About the right number	20
Can't choose	30
Missing	2

Results for men and women

	%	
	Male	Female
Too many elected representatives	51	42
Too few elected representatives	2	3
About the right number	22	19
Can't choose	24	34
Missing	2	2

**Results for people of different ages**

	%					
	18-24	25-34	35-44	45-54	55-64	65+
Too many elected representatives	28	39	46	48	52	59
Too few elected representatives	4	3	2	3	3	0
About the right number	23	20	17	25	20	17
Can't choose	46	38	34	22	22	22
Missing	0	2	1	4	3	2

Results for people of different religions

	%		
	Catholic	Protestant	No religion
Too many elected representatives	40	51	42
Too few elected representatives	2	3	2
About the right number	25	16	22
Can't choose	31	28	33
Missing	2	2	1