

Northern Ireland Life and Times Survey 2016

Technical Notes

Contact:

Paula Devine

School of Social Sciences, Education and Social Work

Queen's University Belfast

+44 (0)28 9097 3034

Email: P.Devine@qub.ac.uk

www.ark.ac.uk/nilt

Contents

| | Page |
|---|------------|
| What is the Northern Ireland Life and Times Survey? | i |
| Links with other surveys | i |
| Ethical approval | i |
| Technical details of the 2016 survey | ii |
| The overall design | ii |
| Survey content | ii |
| Pilot and mainstage fieldwork | iii |
| Advance mailshot | iii |
| Sampling design | iii |
| Response rate | iv |
| Sampling errors and confidence intervals | iv |
| Data preparation | v |
| Deriving social class variables | v |
| Getting the data | v |
| Using the data | |
| Notes and errata | vi |
| Comparison with other surveys | vii - viii |
| Finding a module in the questionnaires | ix |
| Contact information | ix |
| Other variables on the dataset | x |
| The questionnaires | M1 |
| Main questionnaire | M2 |
| Self-completion | SC1 |

What is the Northern Ireland Life and Times Survey?

The Northern Ireland Life and Times (NILT) Survey was launched in the autumn of 1998. Its mission is to monitor the attitudes and behaviour of people in Northern Ireland annually to provide a time-series and a public record of how our attitudes and behaviour develop on a wide range of social policy issues. The survey is run on a modular format and while some modules are repeated every year (for example, *Political Attitudes* and *Community Relations*) the rest of the survey varies annually, with all the modules designed to be repeated in years to come.

The survey aims to provide:

- A local resource for use by the general public, and
- A data source for a more theoretical academic debate.

We would like to thank the funders for the 2016 survey who have been most supportive of the overall aims of the project, in particular The Executive Office, and the Economic and Social Research Council. We would also like to thank all the respondents to the survey.

Links with other surveys

The Northern Ireland Life and Times Survey is a direct descendent of the Northern Ireland Social Attitudes Survey (NISA) which ran from 1989 to 1996. NISA was a sister survey to the British Social Attitudes Survey (BSA), and, by running the same modules as BSA, it provided a time-series of social attitudes allowing comparisons with Britain. Against the background of the new political arrangements in Northern Ireland it was agreed that the new Northern Ireland Life and Times Survey would be better served by cutting its links with its British counterpart. NILT now carries on the tradition of a time-series of attitudes but has shifted the focus away from comparisons with Britain. It is largely Northern Ireland focused, it is social policy focused, and it is designed to be used by the wider public in Northern Ireland. Nonetheless, every year includes a substantial component which either continues an old NISA time-series, or replicates a BSA module.

Ethical approval

The 2016 Northern Ireland Life and Times Survey received ethical approval from the Ethics Committee in the School of Social Sciences, Education and Social Work, Queen's University Belfast, where the survey coordinator is based.

Technical details of the 2016 survey

The overall design

The 2016 Northern Ireland Life and Times Survey involved 1208 face-to-face interviews with adults aged 18 years or over. The main interview was carried out using computer assisted personal interviewing (CAPI), and the respondent was then asked to complete a self-completion questionnaire.

The self-completion questionnaire was completed using the following three methods:

- CASI method – the respondent completed the self-completion on the iPad.
- CAPI method – the interviewer completed the self-completion on the iPad.
- Traditional pen and paper method – the respondent completed the self-completion on paper booklet.

In 1998, 1999 and 2000, the Young Life and Times Survey ran alongside the adult survey and interviewed young people aged 12 to 17. However, this methodology was reviewed in 2001. Leading on from this, the Young Life and Times restarted in 2003, but with a different methodology from before, and not linked to the adult survey. (Full details on the Young Life and Times Survey can be found at www.ark.ac.uk/ylt)

Survey content

The survey consists of a number of different modules, each based on a specific topic. The modules included in the 2016 survey are:

Introductory questions

Respect

Minority ethnic groups

Abortion

Good relations

Political attitudes

Background

Pilot and mainstage fieldwork

All interviews were conducted by Perceptive Insight interviewers in the respondents' homes. Pilot interviews with 34 respondents were carried out during 18th– 25th August 2016. The main stage of the fieldwork was undertaken during the period 12th September 2016 to 22nd December 2016. Respondents were asked to complete a CASI (Computer Assisted Self-Interviewing) questionnaire. On agreeing to complete the CASI questionnaire, the respondent was shown how to use the interviewer's iPad to enter answers by completing some example questions. If a respondent did not wish to complete the self-completion questionnaire on the iPad, they were given the option to complete a paper version. The paper self-completion questionnaire was completed and handed back to the interviewer at the time of the main interview. If a respondent could not complete the self-completion questionnaire on the iPad or by paper, due to literacy or health issues, the interviewer completed the self-completion questionnaire on the iPad where consent was granted by the respondent.

Advance Letter

An advance letter was issued by Perceptive Insight to all sampled addresses prior to the interviewer calling at each address. The letter explained the purpose and rationale for the survey as well as contact details for the Perceptive Insight staff managing the project.

Sampling design

The sample for the 2016 survey consisted of a systematic random sample of addresses selected from the Postcode Address File (PAF) database of addresses. This is the most up-to-date and complete listing of addresses. Private business addresses were removed from the database prior to sample selection. A total of 2350 addresses were selected for interview.

The Postcode Address File (PAF) provides a good sampling frame of addresses, but contains no information about the number of people living at an address. Further selection stages were therefore required to convert the listing of addresses to a listing of individuals from which one person (the 'selected respondent') is chosen to complete the questionnaire.

The person to be interviewed was randomly selected using the 'next birthday' rule. The interviewer asked the householder to list the birthdays of all members of the household eligible for inclusion in the sample: that is, all persons aged 18 or over living at the address. The person with the next birthday, at the time of the call, was the person with whom the interview was to be conducted. Where the selected respondent was not available, an appointment was made to call back to interview them at a more suitable time.

Response rate

Table 1.1 shows the status of addresses, and the number of addresses in scope.

Table 1.2 shows the breakdown of response

Table 1.3 shows the response rate for the self-completion questionnaires.

| Table 1.1 Status of addresses | | |
|--------------------------------------|---|----------------|
| Total addresses issued | Ineligible (eg vacant/derelict/commercial) | Total in scope |
| 2350 | 140 | 2210 |

| Table 1.2 Breakdown of response | | |
|--|--------|---------|
| | Number | Percent |
| Total co-operating | 1208 | 55 |
| Fully co-operating | 1208 | 55 |
| Partially co-operating | 0 | 0 |
| Refusal to co-operate | 595 | 27 |
| Non-contact | 407 | 18 |
| Total | 2210 | |

| Table 1.3 Completed self-completion questionnaires | |
|---|------|
| Number of main stage interviews | 1208 |
| Number of self-completion achieved | 1208 |
| % of self-completion achieved | 100 |

Sampling errors and confidence intervals

Table 1.4 sets out sampling errors and confidence intervals at the 95% confidence level relating to a Systematic Random Sample design as used in the survey. Note that the margin of error for all sample estimates is within the parameters of $\pm 2.8\%$.

| Table 1.4 Sampling errors and confidence intervals for key variables (unweighted data) | | | | |
|---|---------------------------|------|-----------------|-----------------------|
| | | % | Margin of Error | 95% Confidence Limits |
| Age | 18 – 24 | 9.3 | 1.64 | 7.7-10.9 |
| | 25 – 34 | 16.7 | 2.10 | 14.6-18.8 |
| | 35 – 44 | 15.0 | 2.01 | 13.0-17.0 |
| | 45 – 54 | 15.4 | 2.03 | 13.4-17.4 |
| | 55 – 64 | 14.7 | 1.99 | 12.7-16.7 |
| | 65 and over | 28.6 | 2.54 | 26.1-31.1 |
| Sex | Male | 43.4 | 2.79 | 40.6-46.2 |
| | Female | 56.6 | 2.79 | 53.8-59.4 |
| Marital Status | Single | 32.6 | 2.74 | 29.9-35.3 |
| | Married/Civil Partnership | 41.3 | 2.77 | 38.5-44.1 |
| | Separated | 4.6 | 1.18 | 3.4-5.8 |
| | Divorced | 8.3 | 1.55 | 6.8-9.9 |
| | Widowed | 12.9 | 1.89 | 11.0-14.8 |
| | | | | |
| Religion | Catholic | 38.8 | 2.74 | 36.1-41.5 |
| | Protestant | 37.6 | 2.73 | 34.9-40.3 |
| | None | 20.2 | 2.26 | 17.9-22.5 |
| | Other | 1.3 | 0.64 | 0.7-1.9 |
| | Refused/Don't know | 2.1 | 0.81 | 1.3-2.9 |

Data preparation

Main survey data was collected via a computer aided interviewing software package. This was converted to SPSS format prior to analysis. All paper based data (self-completion modules) were also entered via the snap package and again converted to SPSS. All data were subject to an extensive range of inter and intra variable logic checks.

Deriving social class variables

Occupational information was derived using the Standard Occupational Classification (SOC) 2010. The SOC2010 information was also used to derive the National Statistics Socio-Economic (NS SEC), which is contained in this dataset.

Getting the data

Survey results are put on the Internet six months after the end of fieldwork (<http://www.ark.ac.uk/nilt>), with frequencies for every question and a breakdown by age, gender and religion on offer.

A 'query' service or helpline is run for those who need additional tables or have any query about the survey. Users can contact the Life and Times team directly (see Contact Information on page ix). The funders of the survey receive the dataset somewhat earlier than the public (three months after the end of fieldwork). Nonetheless, one of the guiding principles of the survey is that the information is made available to all and that no one person or organisation has ownership of the results. The website also allows users to download the data in order to carry out their own particular statistical analyses.

Using the data

The documentation provided here is not a traditional 'technical report' and is designed to be easy to use rather than technically exhaustive. Users who intend to carry out sophisticated statistical analyses or to manipulate the data to investigate particular features may well want to come back to us for more precise details on the survey set-up.

The data have been tested extensively, but if you do find anything that looks like a mistake, please let us know as soon as you can.

Please note that all analyses of the adult data should be weighted in order to allow for disproportionate household size. The weighting variable is called *WTFCTOR*. The only exceptions are the few household variables (for example, tenure and household income), which do not need to be weighted.

Notes and Errata

Categorisation of Religion

At the back of this documentation is a list of other variables on the dataset. This includes the variable RELIGCAT, which categorises the variable RELIGION into 3 groups: Catholic, Protestant and No religion. The original RELIGION variable has been removed from the dataset in order to protect anonymity of respondents.

The Protestant category within the RELIGCAT variable was created by grouping together the following denominations:

- Church of Ireland/Anglican/Episcopal
- Baptist
- Methodist
- Presbyterian
- Free Presbyterian
- Brethren
- United Reform Church (URC)/Congregational
- Pentecostal
- Church of Scotland
- Elim Pentecostal
- Reformed Presbyterian
- Non-subscribing Presbyterian
- Salvation Army
- Church of Nazarene
- Jehovah's Witness
- Church of Jesus Christ of the Latter Day Saints (Mormon)
- Other Protestant
- Other Christian
- Protestant – no denomination
- Christian – no denomination

Since 2008, the demographic and socio-economic questions asked in the NILT survey have been harmonised to match those used in large-scale government surveys. Thus, some of these will be different to those asked in previous years of NILT. However, this harmonisation will increase comparability between NILT and other surveys.

Confidentiality

In order to maintain confidentiality, demographic variables relating to other people in the household are excluded from the dataset, as is the RACE2 variable. Variables relating to religion are also excluded, and are replaced by the following recoded versions of these variables:

| Variable | Recoded version |
|----------|-----------------|
| RELIGION | RELIGCAT |
| FAMRELIG | FAMRCODE |
| PRTNRRLG | PRTRCODE |

However, tables of results for these variables can be found on the NILT website (www.ark.ac.uk/nilt/2016)

Comparison of household characteristics

| | | NILT 2016* | CHS 2015/16 | Northern Ireland Census 2011 |
|--|----------------------------------|------------|----------------|------------------------------|
| <i>Characteristics of sampled households</i> | | | All households | |
| <i>Tenure</i> | Owned outright | 39 | 37 | 32 |
| | Owned with mortgage/co-ownership | 23 | 28 | 35 |
| | Rented Local Authority | - | 13 | 12 |
| | Rented other*** | 34 | 21 | 18 |
| | Rent free | 2 | 1 | 3 |
| | Refused | 1 | - | - |
| Base=100% | | 1,208 | 2,494 | 703,275 |

* Household characteristics are based on unweighted data from the NILT survey

*** 'Rented' includes rented from a housing association, local authority and rented privately

Comparison of individual characteristics (weighted data)

| | | NILT 2016 | CHS 2015/16 | Northern Ireland Census 2011 |
|-----------------------------------|-----------------------|-----------|-------------|------------------------------|
| | | | % | |
| <i>Individual characteristics</i> | | | 18+ | |
| <i>Sex</i> | Male | 44 | 47 | 49 |
| | Female | 56 | 53 | 51 |
| <i>Age</i> | 18-24 | 14 | 11 | 13 |
| | 25-34 | 17 | 16 | 18 |
| | 35-44 | 15 | 17 | 18 |
| | 45-54 | 17 | 20 | 18 |
| | 55-64 | 15 | 16 | 14 |
| | 65 and over | 24 | 21 | 19 |
| Base=100% | n | 12,08 | 4,603 | 1,380,100* |
| | | | 18+ | |
| <i>Marital Status</i> | Single | 33 | 31 | 36 |
| | Married/Civil Partner | 50 | 54 | 48 |
| | Widowed | 8 | 7 | 7 |
| | Divorced/Separated | 9 | 8 | 9 |
| | Refused/ Don't know | - | - | - |
| Base=100% | n | 1,208 | 4,603 | 1,431,540* |

* The bases for Census data vary according to characteristic: age and sex include people aged 18 or over, whilst marital status includes those aged 16 and over.

Individual characteristics – NILT 2016 (weighted data)

| | 18-24 | 25-34 | 35-44 | 45-64 | 65 and over | All |
|--------------------------------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------------|------|
| | % | | | | | |
| Single | 96 | 60 | 28 | 15 | 6 | 33 |
| Married/Civil Partner | 4 | 37 | 64 | 64 | 59 | 50 |
| Divorced/separated/ widowed | - | 4 | 8 | 21 | 35 | 17 |
| Base=100% | 162 | 200 | 178 | 376 | 287 | 1208 |

Individual characteristics – CHS 2015/16

| | 18-24 | 25-34 | 35-44 | 45-64 | 65 and over | All |
|--------------------------------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------------|-------|
| | % | | | | | |
| Single | 98 | 62 | 27 | 12 | 8 | 31 |
| Married/Civil Partner | 2 | 36 | 64 | 72 | 59 | 54 |
| Divorced/separated/ widowed | - | 2 | 9 | 16 | 33 | 14 |
| Base=100% | 527 | 719 | 765 | 1,639 | 953 | 4,603 |

Stated religious denomination

| | NILT 2016 (weighted) | CHS 2015/16** | Northern Ireland Census 2011 |
|-----------------------|-------------------------|---------------|---------------------------------|
| | % | | |
| Protestant | 38 | 46 | 48 |
| Catholic | 40 | 44 | 45 |
| Other or no religion* | 20 | 10 | 6 |
| Missing/refused | 2 | - | 1 |
| Base=100% | 1,208 | 6,094 | 1,108,630 |

* Include 'no religion' and religion not stated

** Supplemented from household membership

Finding a module in the questionnaires

| | Main Questionnaire | Self-completion questionnaire |
|------------------------|--------------------|-------------------------------|
| Introduction | M2-M4 | |
| Respect | M5-M6 | |
| Minority Ethnic Groups | M7-M12 | SC3-SC4 |
| Abortion | M13-M18 | |
| Good Relations | M19-M27 | SC2 |
| Political attitudes | M28-M31 | SC4-SC5 |
| Background | M32-M44 | SC5 |

Contact information

Paula Devine

School of Social Sciences, Education and Social Work
 Queen's University Belfast
 Belfast BT7 1NN
 Tel: +44 (0)28 9097 3034
 Email: p.devine@qub.ac.uk

URL: www.ark.ac.uk/nilt

Other variables on the dataset

| | |
|---|--|
| <i>WTFACTOR</i> | Weighting variable for number of adults in the household |
| <i>ADULT</i> | Number of adults in the household |
| <i>HOUSEHLD</i> | Number in each household |
| <i>RAGECAT</i> | Age of respondent (categorised) 1 18-24 2 25-34 3 35-44 4 45-54 5 55-64 6 65+ |
| <i>RELIGCAT</i> | Religion of respondent (categorised) 1 Catholic 2 Protestant 3 No religion |
| <i>NSSECRESPO8</i> (Respondent) <i>NSSECPART08</i> (Partner) <i>NSSECHHLD08</i> (Household) | National Statistics Socio Economic Classification (NS SEC) 1.1 Large employers and higher managerial occupations 1.2 Higher professional occupations 2 Lower managerial and professional occupations 3 Intermediate occupations 4 Small employers and own account workers 5 Lower supervisory and technical occupations 6 Semi-routine occupations 7 Routine occupations 8 Never worked and long-term unemployed 9 Not classified |
| <i>URBRUR</i> | Whether the respondent lives in an urban or rural area (based on look-up table available from Northern Ireland Neighbourhood Information Services (NINIS) http://www.ninis2.nisra.gov.uk) |