

# Who took part in the 2018 YLT survey?

All young people living in Northern Ireland (N.I.) who celebrated their 16th birthday in January, February and March 2018 were invited to take part in the survey.

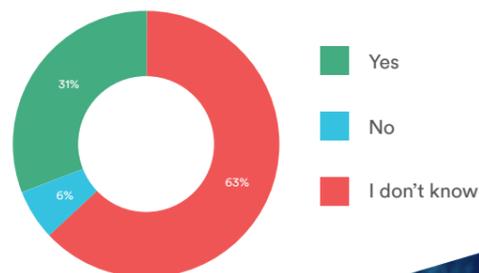
Of the 1,152 respondents:

- 65% completed a paper survey and 35% completed online.
- 59% were female, 41% were male and 1% had another gender identity.
- 13% of males and 20% of females had been sexually attracted to a person of the same sex at least once.
- 21% said they lived in a big city or its outskirts, 39% in a small city or town and 39% in a village or in the countryside.
- 52% attended a grammar school, 29% a secondary school, 6% a formally integrated school, 10% a Regional College and 2% another type of school.
- 75% lived with both parents, 18% lived only with their mother, 2% lived only with their father and 3% lived with their mother some time and father some of the time.
- 16% of respondents said they had a long-standing physical or mental health condition.
- 66% regarded themselves as belonging to a particular religion - 40% were Catholic, 25% Protestant, while 1% belonged to another religion. 34% of respondents indicated that they belonged to no religion.
- 31% said their families were financially either very well-off or well-off, 17% said their families were not at all well-off or not well-off, most (48%) described their family's financial situation as average.

**Table 1: Do you think the voting age should be lowered to 16 years? By gender (%)**

	♂	♀
Yes	49	62
No	37	28
Don't know	14	10

**Figure 1: Do you think the Good Friday Agreement has made Northern Ireland a better place to live? (%)**



## Community Relations

Almost three quarters (73%) of 16 year olds said they had a sense of belonging to the neighbourhood in which they lived, and 69% of 16 year olds expressed a sense of belonging to Northern Ireland.

However, only 11% of 16 year olds felt they had any influence when decisions were being made in the local areas in which they lived, and only 6% felt they had any say in decisions about Northern Ireland.

21% of 16 year olds agreed that Northern Ireland is a place where people respect each other, but 39% disagreed. 37% neither agreed nor disagreed.

**Table 2: 16 year olds saying that they would feel very safe or quite safe in the following premises (%)**

	Protestant	Catholic	No religion
GAA Club	30	92	60
Orange Hall	77	20	46
Catholic School	48	97	74
Protestant School	91	56	73

56% of respondents felt their national identity was important to them. National identity was more important to Catholic (73%) than Protestant 16 year olds (61%). 37% of those aligned with no religion felt national identity was important.

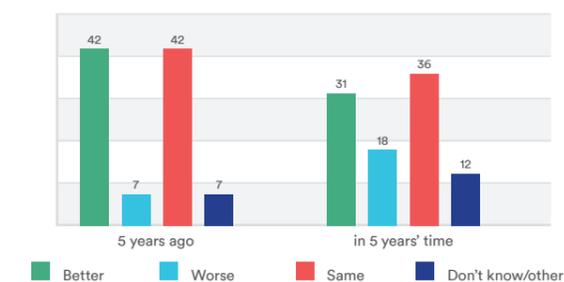
Respondents completing one version of the survey were given the option to identify with one national identity, whilst respondents in the other survey version could choose more than one identity. This made a difference to how young people identified (see Table 3).

**Table 3: Respondents describing their national identity (%)**

	One option	Multiple options
British	20	26
Irish	39	49
Ulster	1	9
Northern Irish	34	43
Other	5	4

78% of respondents felt that religion would always make a difference to how people in Northern Ireland feel about each other. Four in ten (42%) felt that relations between the two communities are better now than 5 years ago, but less than one third (31%) felt that they would be better in 5 years' time, with 18% saying that they would be worse.

**Figure 2: Perceptions of community relations over time (%)**



75% of respondents felt they were not prejudiced at all against people from minority ethnic communities. 14% described themselves as a little or very prejudiced. 54% agreed that people from Syria should be allowed to come to Northern Ireland, considering the current situation in their country.

**Table 4: Respondents agreeing or strongly agreeing... (%)**

	Protestant	Catholic	No religion
Ni is a society that welcomes refugees escaping persecution	20	31	22
It is our duty to provide protection to refugees who are escaping persecution	43	66	57

# Summary of Results 2018

## Background of the YLT Survey

All too often the opinions of young people are ignored when decisions are made about many of the issues involving them.

Every year, the Young Life and Times (YLT) survey invites 16 year olds from all parts of Northern Ireland to tell us about their experiences of school, and their views on politics, community relations and other social issues. 1,152 young people responded to the 2018 YLT survey.

This leaflet provides a summary of some key findings from the 2018 YLT survey. For YLT 2018 two questionnaires were produced. While the majority of questions were the same in both questionnaires, only half of respondents were asked questions on citizenship education whilst the other half were asked about Shared Education and CRED.

More detailed results on specific issues, as well as Research Updates, are freely available on the YLT website at [www.ark.ac.uk/ylt](http://www.ark.ac.uk/ylt).

Many of the participants of the survey suggested a range of subjects that could be asked in future and questions on some of these will be included in the 2019 YLT survey.

Comments on the YLT survey are welcome at any time and can be submitted via the YLT website.

ARK is a joint resource between Queen's University Belfast and Ulster University.

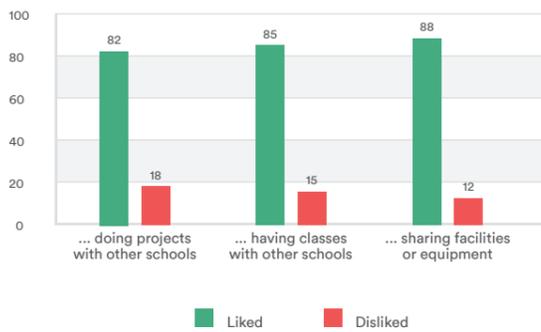
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The 2018 YLT survey was part-funded by the Executive Office, the Department of Education, the Department of Justice, and the UNESCO Centre at Ulster University in Coleraine.

## Shared Education

40% of respondents said they had taken part in Shared Education. Half of these respondents had had classes with pupils from other schools, 67% had done Shared Education projects and 40% had shared facilities or equipment.

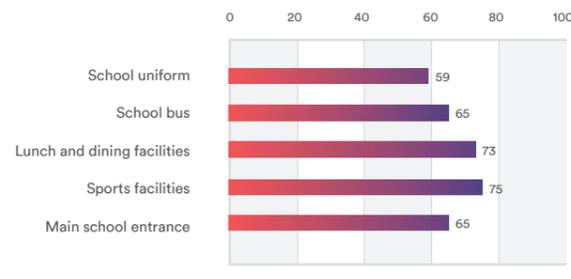
**Figure 3: Respondents saying they liked or disliked... (%)**



Making friends and being with young people with a different ethnic background to themselves were the two aspects respondents like most about Shared Education (93%), whilst being taught by different teachers (73%) and travelling to different schools (70%) were the least favourite aspects of Shared Education.

Respondents were asked for their opinions on Shared Education campuses. 38% of respondents said they would like their school to be part of a Shared Education campus.

**Figure 4: 16 year olds saying the following should be shared in a Shared Education campus (%)**



## Safety in the Community

About half of YLT respondents (47%) said that they felt very safe in the community they lived in, and a further 44% said they felt fairly safe. Those who lived in areas that they described as 'neither Loyalist nor Republican' were much more likely to feel 'very safe'.

**Table 6: Agreement with statements about area safety (%)**

	Agree	Neither	Disagree
People in this area do not feel confident reporting crime and anti-social behaviour to the PSNI	25	23	43
The PSNI keep this area safe	48	31	16
People in this area generally abide by the law	67	15	14
People in this area feel that they are protected by the law and the justice system.	49	30	13

## Citizenship

Respondents were asked if they had had classes, assemblies, discussions or done projects on eleven local and global citizenship issues. Around three quarters of respondents had done so in relation to abortion; human rights and freedom of expression; global poverty; and the conflict in Northern Ireland; the topic least likely to have been addressed in school was modern-day slavery.

Only 18% of respondents agreed that taking part in political activities is a waste of time. 44% disagreed whilst around one-third neither agreed nor disagreed.

The most likely political activities that respondents had taken part in during the previous 12 months were campaigning or raising funds for a charity or group (34%) or signing a petition (33%). Fewer than 2% of respondents had joined a political party or a party's youth wing, and 40% said they had not been involved in any political activities.

One quarter of respondents said a particular political party in Northern Ireland represented their political opinions, 29% said that none did, whilst 46% said they were not sure.

67% of respondents said they had been taught about the Good Friday Agreement (GFA) in school. Respondents who had attended formally integrated schools (85%) were much more likely to have been taught about the GFA than those who attended grammar schools (65%) and secondary schools (68%).

Family and friends were the most trusted sources of information in relation to current affairs.

## Brexit

62% of respondents said they were opposed to the UK leaving the EU when the referendum was held in 2016. Only 11% said they were in favour. 24% of Protestant respondents were in favour compared with 5% of Catholics and 9% of respondents with no religious background. Those from well-off families were most likely to be opposed to the UK leaving the EU (70%).

56% of respondents felt 16-year olds should have been able to vote in the BREXIT referendum. 28% felt 16-year olds should have had some say, but no vote. Only 7% felt that 16-year olds should have had no say at all.

If the BREXIT referendum was held again and 16-year olds were entitled to vote, only 11% said they would vote to leave the EU. 72% said they would vote to remain, whilst 10% said they did not know how they would vote. Only 4% said they would not vote. 5% of Catholics said they would vote 'Leave' compared to 25% of Protestants.

Figure 6 shows that around two thirds of respondents think that they will be worse-off if the UK leaves the EU. This figure was very similar for young people from different family-financial backgrounds.

**Figure 6: Respondents saying they will be better or worse off after BREXIT. By family financial wellbeing (%)**



## Wellbeing

A number of questions were asked on different aspects of emotional and social wellbeing. Aggregated responses to some of these questions are detailed below.

**Figure 5: Respondents saying they agreed a little or a lot that they generally ... (%)**



Overall responses to the three questions grouped under feelings of sadness/upset indicated that 41% of respondents felt this; with 26% of respondents agreeing a little or a lot that they felt unhappy a lot of the time. In relation to the questions on worry, 58% agreed a little or a lot that they worried that other people/young people might not like them, and 38% that they worried about being teased.

A number of questions were asked on different aspects of wellbeing in relation to school, namely school climate (care and respect among teachers and pupils), a sense of belonging, and academic self-esteem (how well respondents felt they could cope with lessons). Around two-thirds of respondents felt positively in terms of school belonging and climate, while 89% of respondents had a high sense of academic self-esteem.

Young people living in areas that they felt were neither Loyalist nor Republican were significantly more likely to say that people in their areas did abide by the law, felt protected by the law and had confidence in the PSNI.

56% of 16 year olds agreed that there was low levels of crime and antisocial behaviour in the area where they lived, but 31% agreed that there is a lot of crime, drugs and antisocial behaviour among young people where they lived.

15% of respondents agreed that paramilitaries had a controlling influence in their area, and 11% agreed that young people were influenced too much by paramilitaries.

6% agreed that paramilitaries kept the area where they lived safe, however 17% felt that paramilitaries created fear and intimidation, and 20% agreed that paramilitary groups contributed to crime, drug-dealing and anti-social behaviour in their area.