

Young people's attitudes and perceptions to community relations and education

IEF Conference, February 2019

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ARK & Life and Times Surveys



ARK

- NI Social Policy Hub – joint between UU and QUB

Face-to-face

- 18+
- Since 1998

Postal

- 16-year olds
- Since 2003

Online

- P7 children
- Since 2008

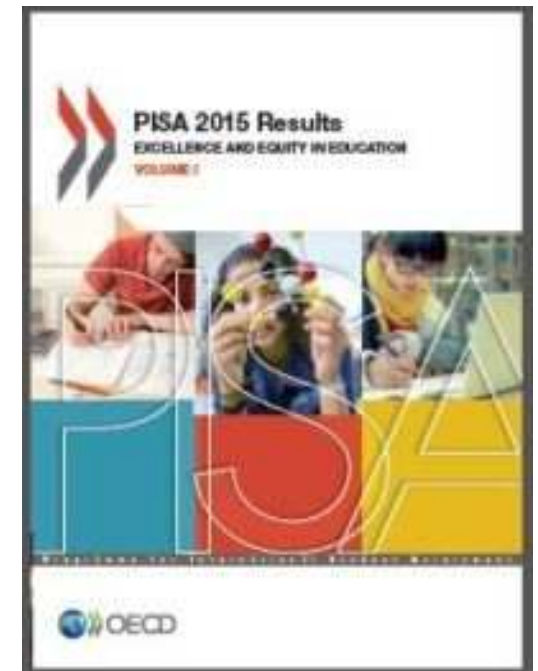
- *Earlier public attitudes collected in NI Social Attitudes (NISA) survey, 1989-1996*

The Issue

- Current NI school system is unequal and divided
 - Segregation by ability and religion & sometimes gender
 - Only 7% of pupils attend formally integrated schools
 - NI conflict reinforced educational division
 - Transfer tests and religious segregation adverse to children and children's rights
 - UN Commission on the Rights of the Child repeatedly raises concerns and demands that selection and segregation should be stopped

National and International Comparisons

- England, Scotland and Republic of Ireland (and increasingly Wales) outperform NI in international comparison studies, such as PISA (**P**rogramme for **I**nternational **S**tudent **A**ssessment)
- Countries with less selective school and more comprehensive school systems tend to do better in PISA study

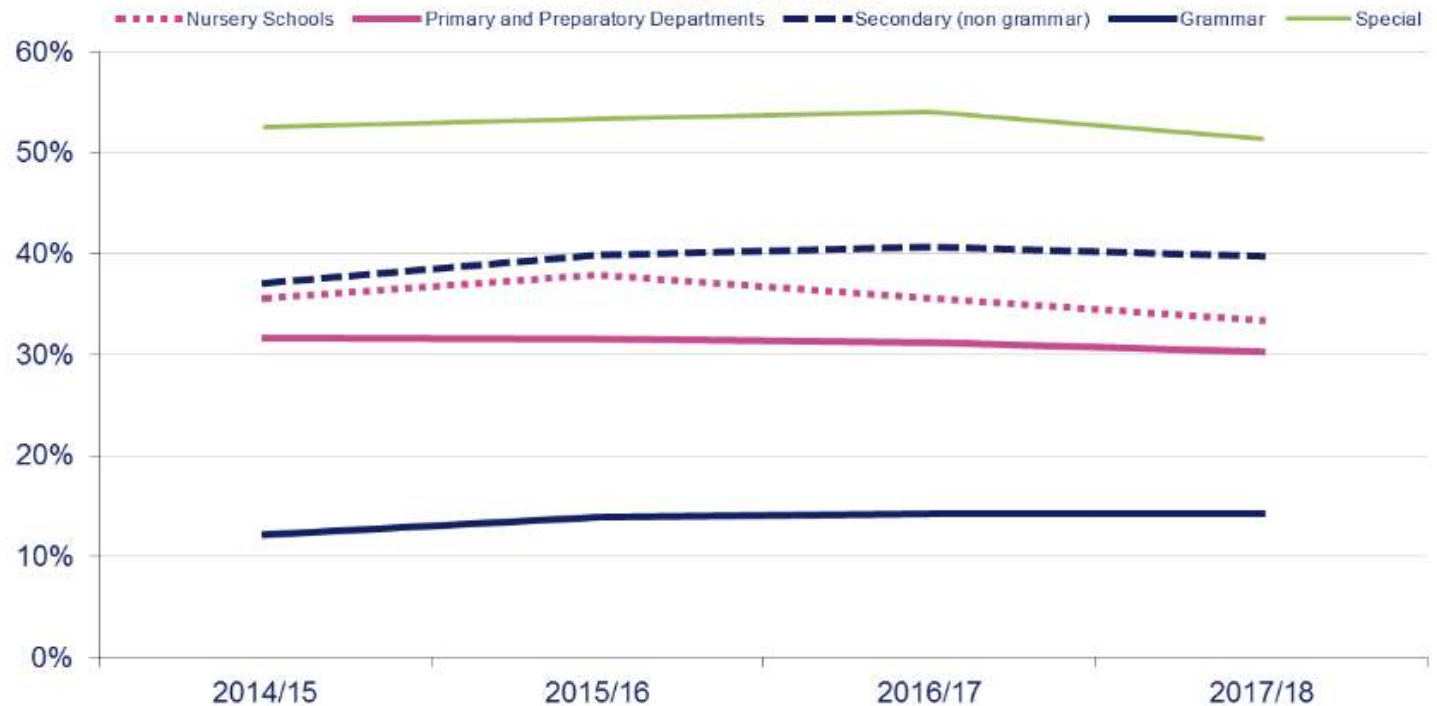


Segregation: Free School Meals (DE, 2018)



In 2017/18, about one in three pupils (29.9%) across all school types in NI entitled to free school meals, but...

Figure 2: Percentage of pupils entitled to free school meals, by school type: 2014/15 - 2017/18



Type of school attended by family financial background (% , YLT, 2015)

	Not well-off	Average	Well-off
Planned Integrated	11	10	6
Grammar	38	48	70
Secondary	45	36	22

Proportion of 16 year olds planning to be in full-time education at age 18/19:

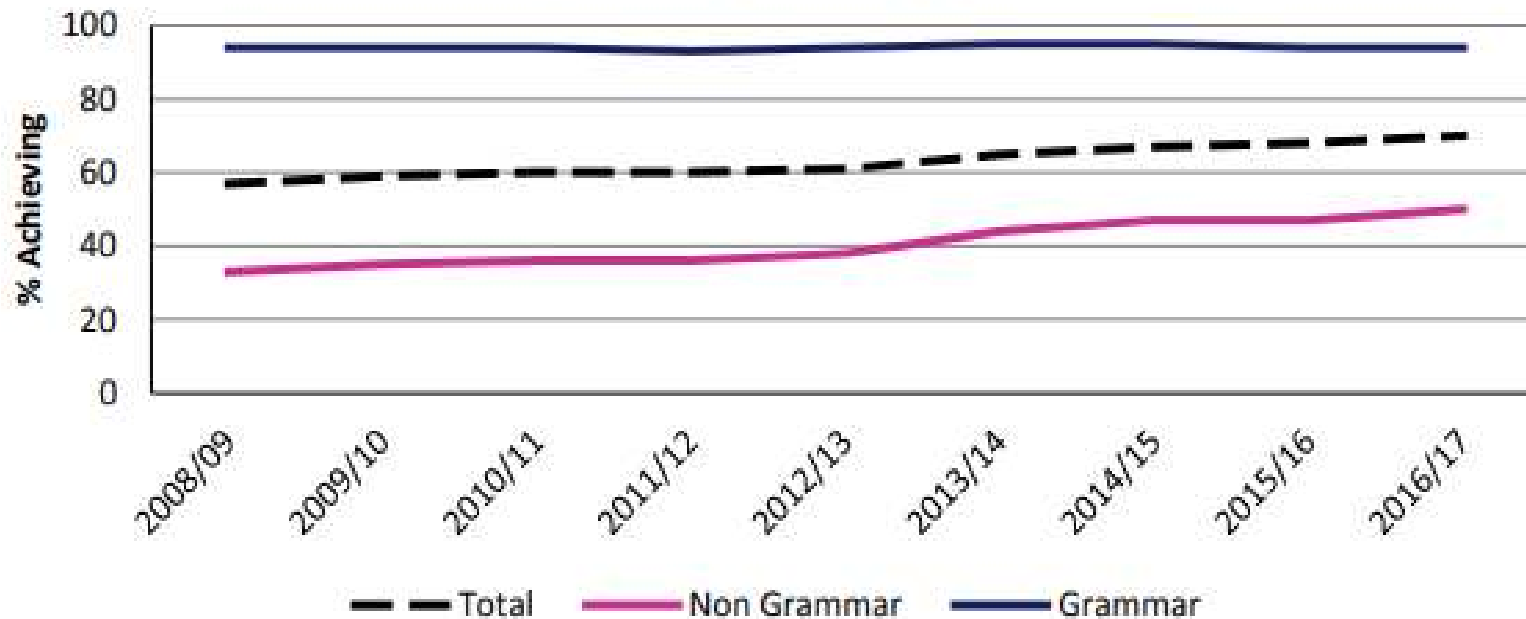
Not well-off: 48

Average: 52

Well-off: 63

Segregation: School Performance in Year 12 (DE, 2018)

Figure 4: Percentage of Year 12 Pupils achieving 5 or more GCSEs (including equivalents) including GCSE English and GCSE maths at grades A*-C, 2008/09 - 2016/17



What should the government think about when reforming schools... (YLT 2012 & 2015)

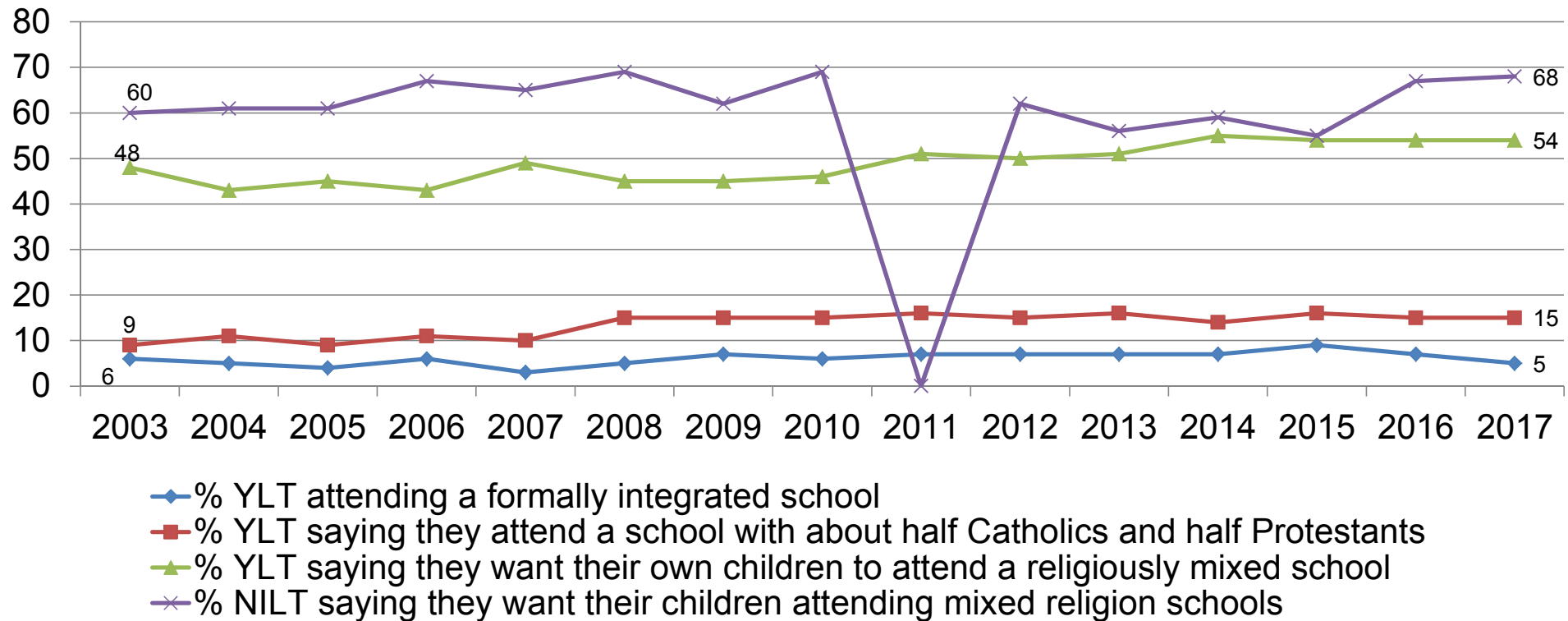
	%	
	2012	2015
Saving money	27	22
Making sure pupils can study any subjects they want to, no matter what school they go to	78	84
Not having separate schools for Catholic and Protestant pupils	36	35
Keeping separate schools, but giving more opportunities for Catholic and Protestant pupils to get to know each other and do things together in school	29	35
Making all post-primary schools 'all-ability' schools, so there are no grammar schools and no transfer tests	24	30
Keeping the transfer tests and grammar schools	38	38
Making sure pupils don't have to travel too far to get to school	30	36
Other	6	4



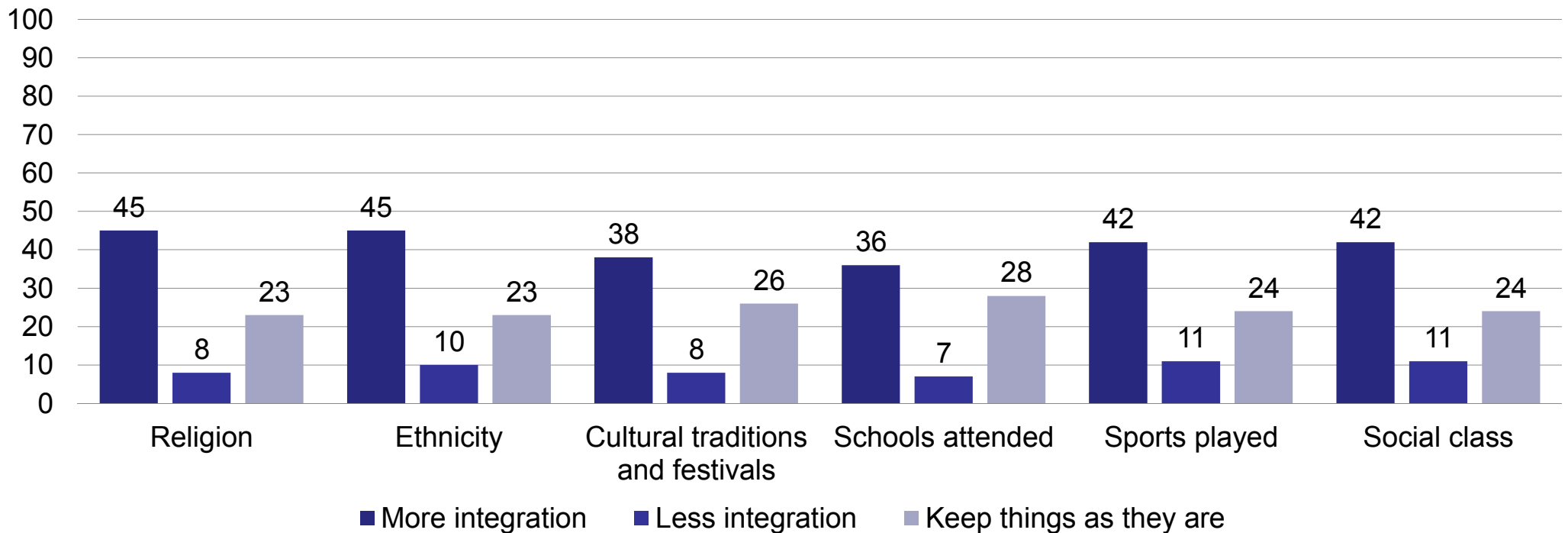
Planned Integrated Education

- Started in 1981 with 28 pupils in Lagan College
- After 37 years, ca. 24,000 pupils overall in 65 integrated schools
- **Only** 7% of NI school population.
- Apparent lack of political consensus to reinforce integrated, non-selective school structure NI-wide
- Does DE fail in its duty to encourage and facilitate integrated education?

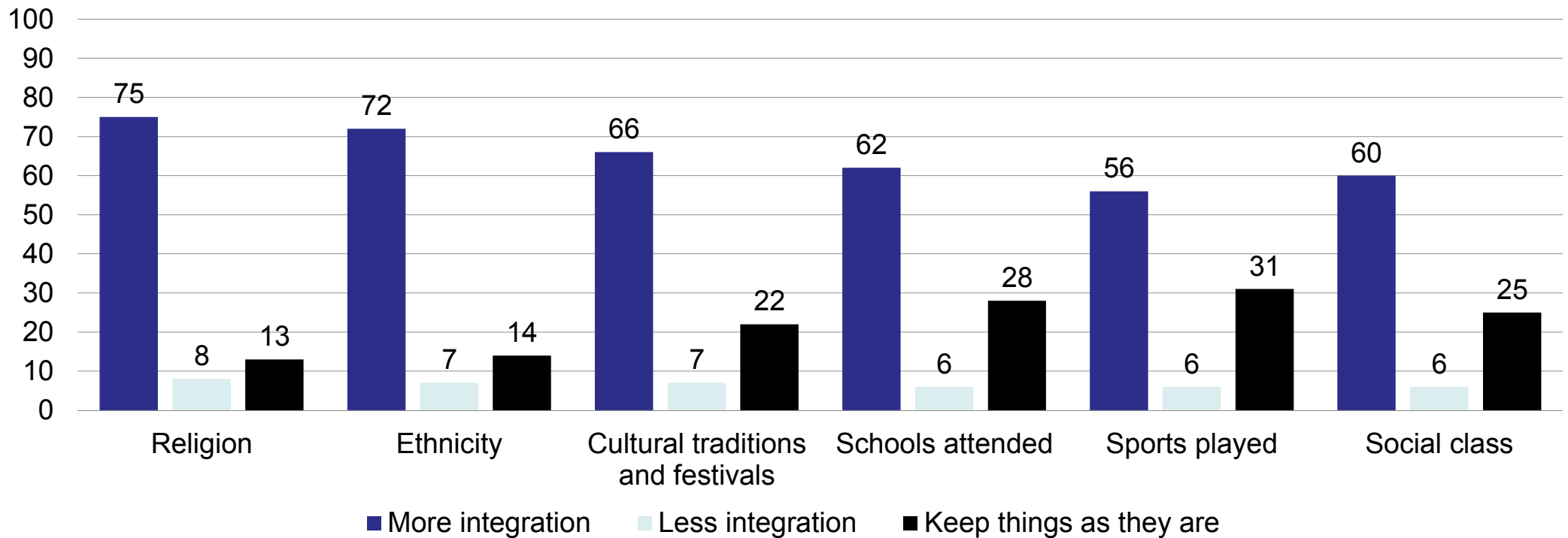
Experience of, and preference for, integrated and religiously mixed schools (NILT and YLT) (%)



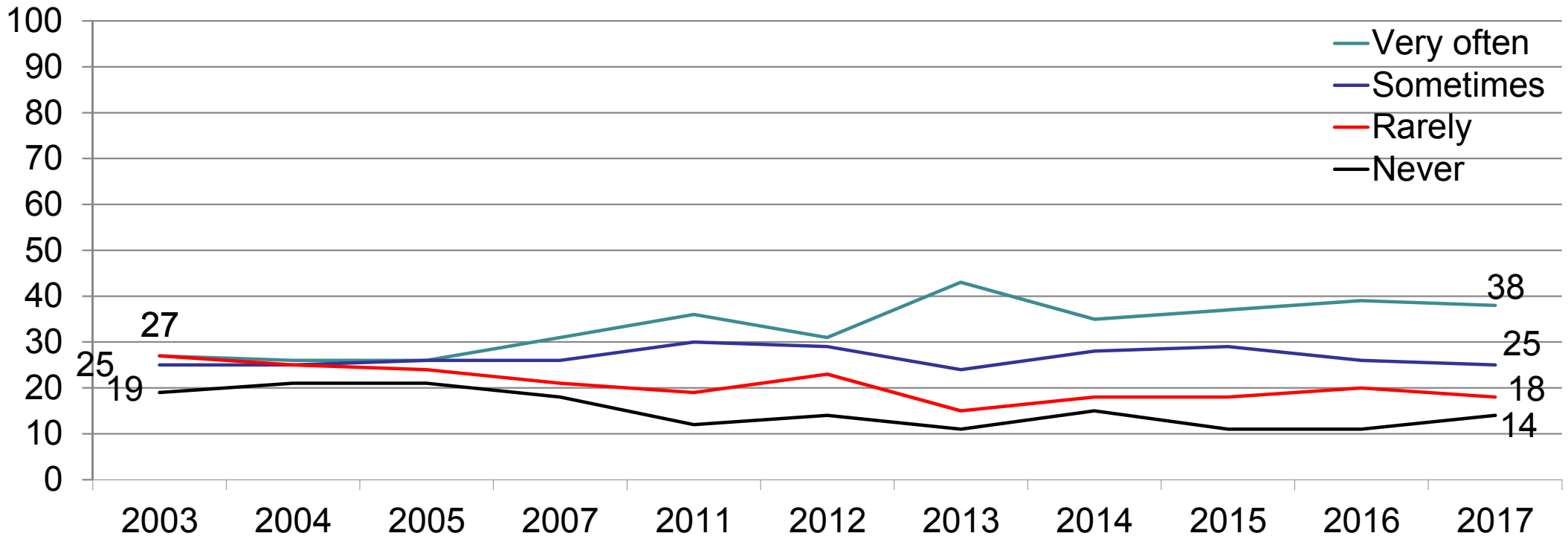
How much more integration should there be in NI schools in terms of... (KLT, %)



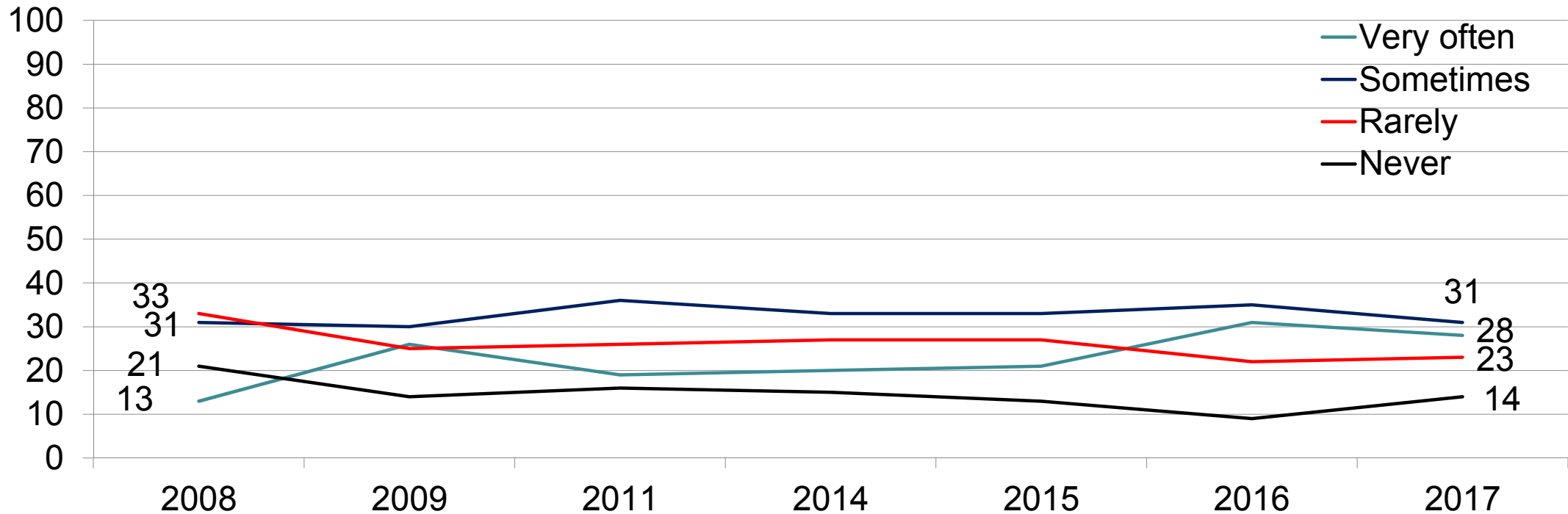
How much more integration should there be in NI schools in terms of... (YLT, %)



How often do you socialise and play sport with people from a different religious background to yourself? (%)



How often do you socialise and play sport with people from a different ethnic background to yourself? (%)



Alternative Policy Mechanism: 'Shared Education'

Research Update

Shared Education: Views of Children and Young People

Katrina Lloyd

Introduction

Shared education refers to schools collaborating across sectors to ensure that all pupils have opportunities to learn together regardless of their religion, ability or socio-economic background. However, achieving this for all pupils will require fundamental changes to how the education system in Northern Ireland is organised and the way schools operate. Beyond this, the support of teachers, parents and learners is crucial if the Commission is to meet its target outlined in the Ministerial Advisory Group report for the education of shared education – namely that all children have the opportunity to participate in shared education programmes, and that there is a substantial increase in the number of schools sharing facilities by 2015 (S24, 2012).

General population surveys of adults and parents in Northern Ireland have shown that there is growing support for shared education, or learning with teachers and peer-primary pupils taking part in activities such as the Sharing Education Programme (SEP). However, little is known about the attitudes of the more general population of children and young people in Northern Ireland towards shared education. The Research Institute for Education and Society carried out by ARK in 2012 – Young Life and Times (YLT) and Fair Life and Times (FLT) – to explore the views of children and young people on this important issue. YLT is an annual panel survey of 16 year olds and in 2012, 1200 young people participated. FLT is an annual online survey of Primary 7 (P7) children carried out in school sets in 2012.

Experience of shared education



1200 P7 children participated. A number of questions were asked in both surveys which provided an opportunity to compare the attitudes to shared education of primary school pupils and their post-primary school counterparts.

Table 2: Did you enjoy the following...

	%	%
Projects with pupils from other schools	91	99
Classes with pupils from other schools	87	96

Attitudes to sharing

All the respondents, regardless of whether they had been involved in shared education activities or not, were asked whether they thought sharing facilities, classes or projects was a good idea or a bad idea. Overall, the children and young people were more enthusiastic about doing projects with

Shared Education

The Views of Children and Young People 2013

2013
The Views of Children and Young People
Shared Education

Advancing Shared Education

March 2013



Report of the
Ministerial Advisory Group
Professor Paul Connolly, Dawn Purvis and PJ O'Grady

‘Parents and children have the right to their religious, cultural and philosophical beliefs being respected. The vision of the Ministerial Advisory Group, as set out above, is therefore predicated on parental choice. Where there is sufficient parental demand, the system should actively encourage the development of a range of schools with differing types of religious, philosophical and/or cultural ethos.’
(*Summary report, p. 14*)

‘Shared Education’?

- Meets the needs of, and provides for the **education together** of, learners from all **Section 75** categories and **socio-economic status**;
- Involves schools and other education providers;
- Delivers educational benefits to learners, promotes the **efficient and effective use of resources**, and promotes **equality of opportunity, good relations, equality of identity, respect for diversity and community cohesion**. (DENI, 2012)

Integrated Education

- Always one school building
- All ability, mixed religion at all times
- Integrated in relation to pupils, teachers, support staff and school governance
- One school identity (e.g. uniform)

Shared Education

- May or may not have one shared campus
- Mixing is temporary
- Sharing can take various forms, including sharing of equipment
- Schools retain their separate identities

Have you done any of the following things?

	YLT	KLT
Projects with pupils from other schools	55	87
Had classes with pupils from other schools	46	78
Used or shared sports facilities or equipment, like computers	25	78

Source: YLT and KLT surveys (2012)

Is sharing a good idea? By Experience of Shared Education

	%			
	YLT		KLT	
	Has shared	Has not shared	Has shared	Has not shared
Projects with pupils from other schools	89	77	80	63
Used or shared sports facilities or equipment, like computers	83	76	64	52
Had classes with pupils from other schools	76	57	66	48

Source: YLT and KLT surveys (2012)

Experience of Shared Education

Have you done any of the following things?

	YLT	KLT
Projects with pupils from other schools	70	50
Had classes with pupils from other schools	60	41
Used or shared sports facilities or equipment, like computers	48	33
Something else	4	24
Nothing like this	28	31

Source: YLT and KLT surveys (2017)

16 year's olds attitudes to Shared Education

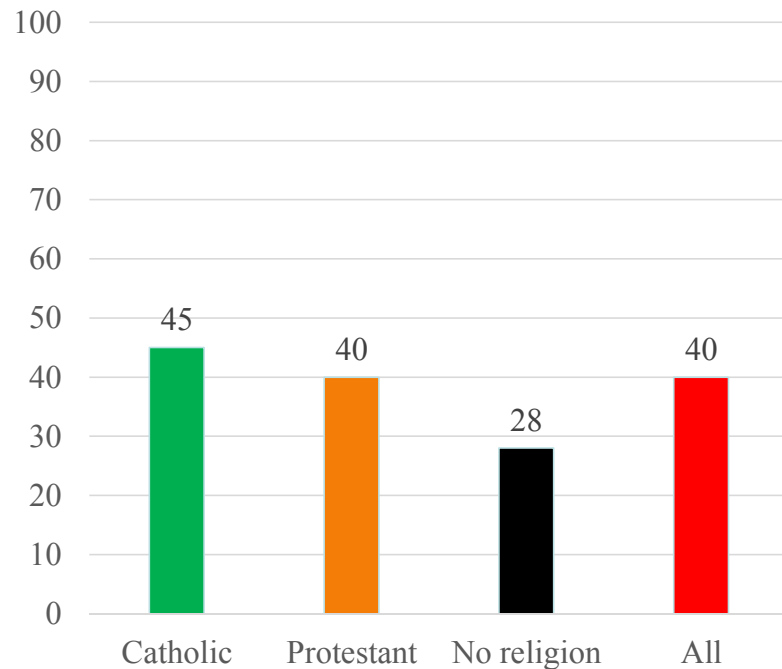
	% saying would mind a lot or a little doing project with school type...							
	All boys	All girls	Primary	Grammar	Non-grammar	Integrated	Special needs	Different religion
Gender								
Males	14	7	35	12	12	12	17	19
Females	9	9	21	10	8	8	12	11
School type								
Grammar	8	5	28	3	11	8	15	12
Secondary	15	12	28	22	8	12	12	18
Planned Integrated	13	10	26	15	10	9	16	12

Source: 2017 YLT survey

Attitudes to a Shared Campus

	Would like a lot (%)	Would like a little (%)	Would not like at all (%)	Don't know (%)
School management type (2017 KLT)				
Catholic Maintained	19	40	16	25
Controlled	15	40	18	26
Integrated	18	43	16	24
School type (2017 YLT)				
Grammar	26	35	14	25
Secondary	30	39	8	23
Formally Integrated	35	38	9	19

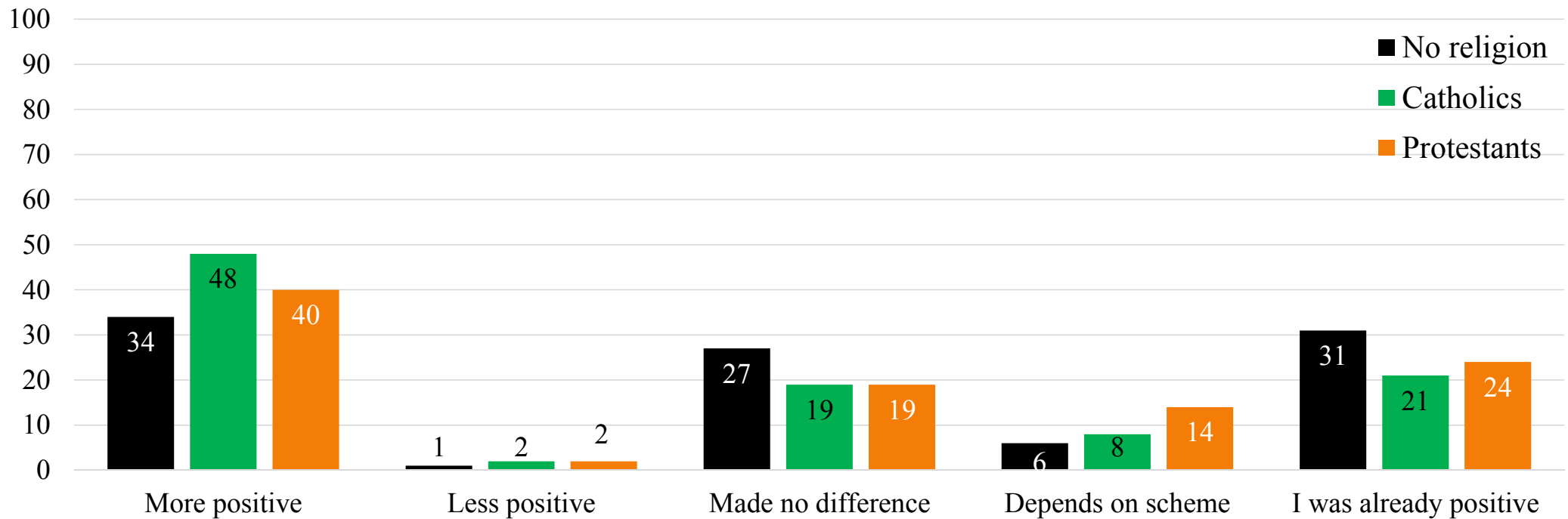
Respondents saying they attended a cross-community project outside school



Participation in cross-community schemes was related to:

- More positive attitudes to members of the ‘other’ **religious community**
- More friends from minority ethnic communities and more positive attitudes to members of **minority ethnic communities**
- More positive views of **community relations**
- More positive attitudes towards **mixed religious environments**

2017 YLT: Difference being involved in cross-community schemes had on respondents' attitudes to other communities: By religion (%)



2017 YLT respondents' attitudes to the following groups as a result of doing CRED (%)

	Favourable		Unfavourable	
	More favourable	No change – as favourable as I was	No change – as unfavourable as I was	More unfavourable
People with different political opinions	20	71	7	0
People with different religious beliefs	25	69	5	0
People from different ethnic groups	26	70	4	1

Favourable Conditions for Policy Change

- Policy makers/practitioners understand/believe in the evidence presented
- Users are partners in evidence generation
- Research complements existing evidence
- Results support existing ideologies and are convenient for policy makers
- Outputs reach the right people/decision makers
- Great degree of certainty

(Becker and Bryman, 2002)

For discussion

1. Is ‘Shared Education’ the best policy measure to address segregation and division? What is the best and **most feasible approach** in the current context in NI?
2. Will ‘Shared Education’ long-term lead to improved relations, and will Shared Education Campuses eventually result in school mergers with greater equality as a result?
3. How do we deal with the ambiguous issue of **parental school choice**?