

**RESULTS OF THE 2003 EQUALITY IMPACT
ASSESSMENT SURVEY**

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Summary

This report presents the results of the 2003 equality impact assessment survey of employees of the Police Ombudsman for Northern Ireland. The Research Branch collected the data between 21 and 31 October 2003 (inclusive).

- The average age of respondents was 37.
- Fifty-nine percent of respondents were male, 39% female.
- Over half (53%) of respondents are married, 27% single.
- Five percent of respondents consider that they have a disability under the Disability Discrimination Act 1995.
- Twenty-seven respondents (42%) indicated that they have primary responsibility for a dependent(s). Of these, 85% have primary concern for the care of a child/children.
- Over half (55%) of respondents had no political opinion.
- Forty-two percent of respondents are Protestant, 34% Catholic.
- Three percent of respondent indicated a race other than white.
- The majority of respondents (95%) are heterosexual.
- Ninety percent of respondents believe that the existing policies and procedures within OPONI do not adversely affect any persons within the nine categories.
- Ninety-one percent of respondents believe that they have on no occasion been treated less favourably by any member of staff because of their status within one of the nine categories.
- The majority (88%) of respondents believe that they are adequately aware of equality of opportunity within the office.

1. Introduction

1.1 The Office of the Police Ombudsman for Northern Ireland

1.1.1 The Office of the Police Ombudsman for Northern Ireland was set up by the Police (Northern Ireland) Act 1998 to provide an impartial and independent system for investigating complaints against the police in Northern Ireland. The Office is committed to carrying out research and consultation in order to improve the quality and effectiveness of the police complaints system and to inform the public about its powers of independent investigations.

1.2 Background to the research

1.2.1 Section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act places significant duties on public authorities regarding how they carry out their functions. These duties relate to the promotion of equality of opportunity on grounds of age, marital status, disability, political opinion, race, religious belief, sex, sexual orientation and whether or not people have dependants; and promoting good relations between people of different racial groups, religious belief or political opinion. These duties on public authorities include the production and review of Equality Schemes, conducting Equality Impact Assessments and including consultation as an integral part of the policy making process.

1.2.2 As part of the Office's commitment to carrying out Equality Impact Assessments on our policies it was decided that staff should be given the opportunity to complete a questionnaire. The data collected will provide the Office with comprehensive monitoring among staff under Section 75 of the Northern Ireland act.

1.3 Aims of the research

1.3.1 The research sought to provide information on:

- Demographics (age, sex, marital status, disability, sexual orientation, political opinion, race, religious belief, and whether or not people has dependents) of the employees of the Police Ombudsman for Northern Ireland.
- The level of existing policies and procedures within the Police Ombudsman for Northern Ireland that employees feel may adversely affect any persons within the nine categories (age, sex, marital status, disability, sexual orientation, political opinion, race, religious belief, and whether or not people has dependants).
- The level that employees feel than on any occasion any member of staff within the organisation has treated them less favourably because of their status within one of the nine specified groups (age, sex, marital status, disability, sexual orientation, political opinion, race, religious belief, and whether or not people has dependents)

- The level that employees feel that they are adequately aware of equality of opportunity within the office.

1.3.2 The following sections of this report describe the survey methodology and results.

2 Survey methodology

2.1 Participants

2.1.1 All employees were asked to participate in this study. As at 31 October 2003 the Police Ombudsman for Northern Ireland had 123 employees in post. During the time of the survey four members of staff were not in the office either due to illness or work commitments.

2.2 Questionnaire design

2.2.1 The Research Branch of the Police Ombudsman's Office designed a survey questionnaire after consultation with the Equality Working Group. The questionnaire consisted of thirteen questions and included both closed and open-ended questions to allow for a full breadth of answers.

2.2.2 To facilitate anonymity the questionnaire was not numbered or marketed and avoided questions that would identify the respondent, such as asking for their name and address. To further anonymity all employees were sent a memorandum through the internal E-mail system to inform them of the survey and instructing them to post their completed questionnaire in a box provided in the reception area of the New Cathedral Buildings, location of the Police Ombudsman for Northern Ireland. The research branch collected the completed questionnaires.

2.2 Procedure

2.2.1 The data were collected by the Research Branch of the Police Ombudsman's Office between 21 and 31 October (inclusive) 2003.

2.2.2 The questionnaires were hand-delivered to all employees of the Police Ombudsman for Northern Ireland by the Research Branch. Details and the purpose of the survey were outlined on the first page of the questionnaire.

2.2.3 To encourage the percentage of returns and thereby improving the validity of the survey a second memorandum was sent through the internal E-mail system to all staff on 28 October 2003. The memorandum served as a reminder to employees that had not returned their questionnaire and thanked those employees that had completed and returned their questionnaire. The memorandum also informed employees that if they had any reservations or they believed a question(s) might inadvertently identify them then this question(s) could be left incomplete and the partially completed questionnaire returned.

2.2.4 A copy of the questionnaire is available in Appendix 1.

2.3 Analysis

2.3.1 The data from the questionnaire were held and analysed using SPSS Version 11 for Windows.

3. Survey Results

3.1 Response rates

3.1.1 Of the 123 employees who were contacted 64 (52%) responded (see Table 1). This is a high response to a postal survey.

Response	Frequency	%
Full response	64	52%
Non-contact	4	3%
No response	55	45%
Total	123	100%

Table 1: Response Rate

3.2 Profile of respondents

3.2.1 The age of respondents was normally distributed with an average age of 37, Standard deviation 9.523. (See Figure 1). Two respondents declined to provide their age.

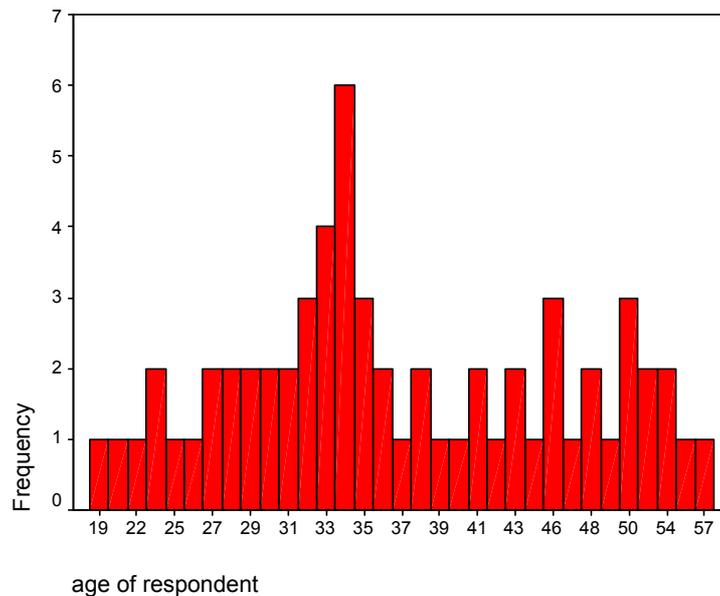


Figure 1: Age of respondents

3.2.2 Under two-thirds (59%) of respondents were male, with 39% female respondents, 2% of respondents declined to answer the question. The sex breakdown of males and females for all 123 employees of OPONI is 60% male and 40% female¹. The sex breakdown for the population of Northern Ireland is 51% female and 49% male². Fifty-one percent of the working population of Northern Ireland is female, a figure influenced by the large number of women working part-time.³

¹ Information attained from the Corporate Services department of OPONI.

² Northern Ireland Census 2001 Population Report and Mid-Year Estimates, NISRA

³ Monitoring Report No. 13 A Profile of the Northern Ireland Workforce, Equality Commission for Northern Ireland

3.2.3 Figure two shows that over half (53%) of respondents who provided details of their marital status are married, 27% are single, 11% are co-habiting, and 10% are divorced or separated. The marital status breakdown for the population of Northern Ireland is 48% married, 33% single, 8% widowed, 8% divorced or separated and 3% re-married⁴.

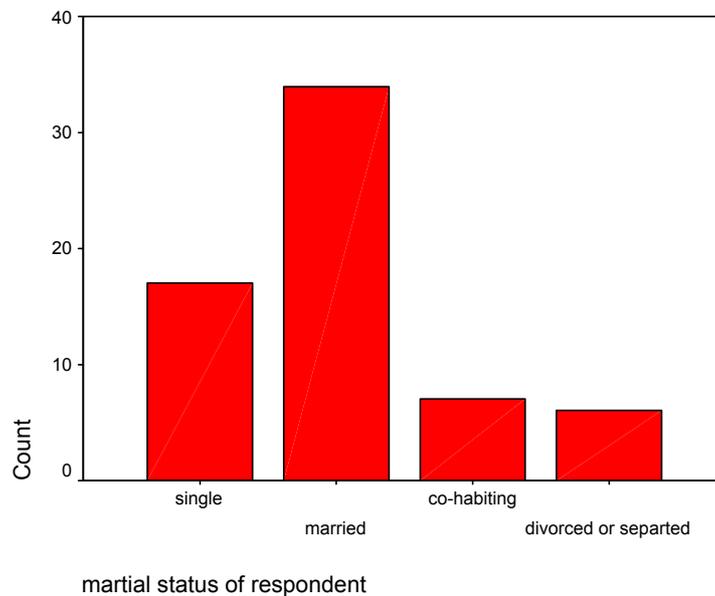


Figure 2: Marital Status of respondents

3.2.4 The majority (94%) of respondents do not consider that they have a disability as specified under the Disability Discrimination Act 1995. However, 5% of respondents did consider that they have a disability while 2% of respondents declined to answer the question. For all 123 employees of OPONI only 1 employee is recorded as having a disability⁵.

3.2.5 Twenty-seven respondents (42%) indicated that they have primary responsibility for a dependent(s). Of these 27 respondents, 85% have primary concern for the care of a child/children, 11% for the care of a dependent elderly person(s) while 3% have primary responsibility for the care of a person(s) with a disability.

3.2.6 Further, of the 27 respondents, two respondents indicated that they have additional primary responsibility for a dependent(s). One respondent has the additional primary concern for the care of a person with a disability while the other respondent has primary responsibility for the care of a dependent elderly person(s).

3.2.7 Over half (55%) of respondents indicated that they had no political opinion, 23% indicated they were Unionist, 14% Nationalist and 8% had other political opinion (see Figure 3).

⁴ Northern Ireland Census 2001 Population Report and Mid-Year Estimates, NISRA

⁵ Information attained from the Corporate Services department of OPONI.

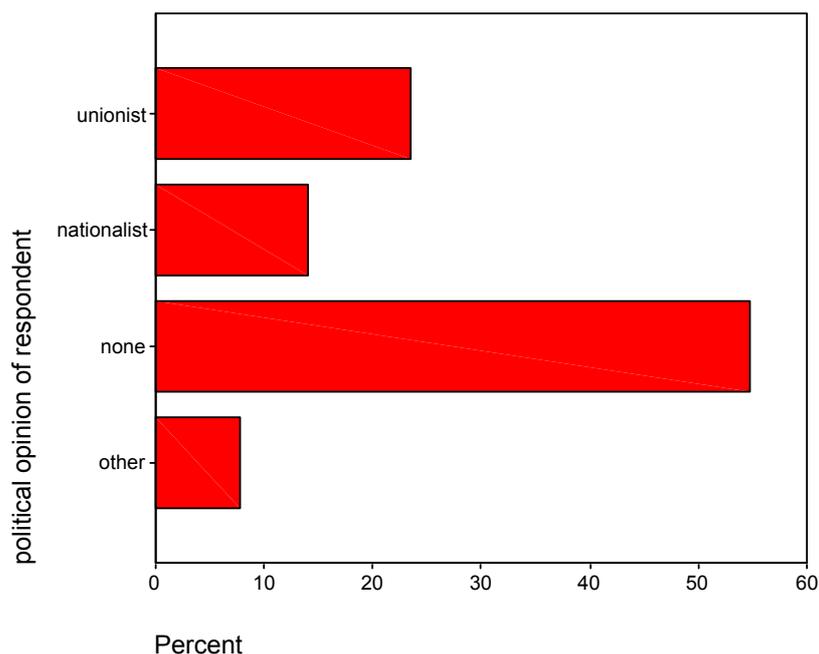


Figure 3: Political opinion of respondents

- 3.2.8 The majority of respondents (97%) indicated they were white, only 3% of respondents were not white. The race breakdown for the population of Northern Ireland is 99% white and 1% other⁶.
- 3.2.9 Figure 4 shows that 42% of respondents are Protestant, 34% Catholic, 16% have no religion, 8% have other religions. The religion breakdown of all 123 employees of OPONI is 47% Protestant, 37% Catholic and 16% are neither Protestant nor Catholic⁷. The religion breakdown for the population of Northern Ireland is 40% Catholic, 40% protestant (Presbyterian, Church of Ireland and Methodist), 14% no religion and 6% have other religion⁵. The composition of the working population for Northern Ireland for whom community could be determined was 59% Protestant, 41% Roman Catholic.⁸

⁶ Northern Ireland Census 2001 Population Report and Mid-Year Estimates, NISRA

⁷ Information attained from the Corporate Services department of OPONI.

⁸ Monitoring Report No. 13 A Profile of the Northern Ireland Workforce, Equality Commission for Northern Ireland

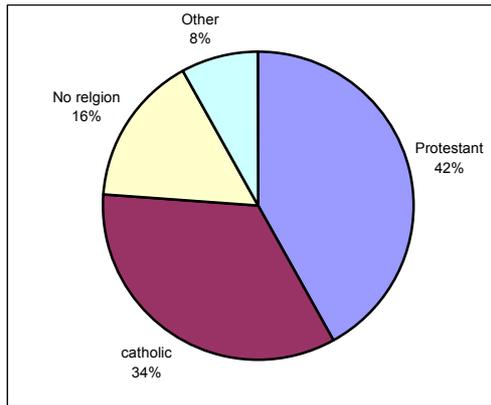


Figure 4: Religion of respondents

3.2.10 The majority of respondents (95%) are heterosexual, 5% of respondents are homosexual, lesbian or other.

3.3 Existing policies and procedures

3.3.1 Respondents were asked if they felt that any of the existing policies and procedures within the Police Ombudsman for Northern Ireland may adversely affect any persons within the nine categories (age, sex, marital status, disability, sexual orientation, political opinion, race, religious belief, and whether or not people has dependents). Ninety percent of respondents said 'no', 6% declined to answer the question while 3% said 'yes'.

3.4 Ever treated less favourably

3.4.1 Respondents were asked if they felt that on any occasion any member of staff within the organisation had treated them less favourably because of their status within one of the nine specified groups (age, sex, marital status, disability, sexual orientation, political opinion, race, religious belief, and whether or not people has dependents). Ninety-one percent of respondents said 'no', 6% said 'yes' and 3% declined to answer the question.

3.5 Adequately aware

3.5.1 Respondents were asked if they felt that they are adequately aware of equality of opportunity within the office. Eighty-eight percent of respondents said 'yes', 9% said 'no' and 3% declined to answer the question.

3.5.2 Supplementary statistical tables are available in Appendix 2.

3.6 Cross tabulations

3.6.1 Forty-five percent of male respondents are protestant compared to 36% of female respondents. Conversely, 40% of females are Catholic compared to 32% of males. Eighteen percent of males indicated that they had no religion compared to 12% of females. Twelve percent of females had other religions compared to 5% of males (see table 2). The sex and religion breakdown of all 123 employees of OPONI is: Males: 42% Protestant, 36% Catholic and 22% are neither Protestant nor Catholic; Females: 53% Protestant, 39% Catholic and 8% are neither Protestant nor Catholic.

Religion	Male	Female
Protestant	45%	36%
Catholic	32%	40%
No religion	18%	12%
Other religions	5%	12%
Total	100%	100%

Table 2: Sex and Religious Belief

3.6.2 For the purposes of the cross tabulation age was separated into five equal categories.

3.6.3 Figure 5 shows that the majority (89%) of respondents between the ages of 18 to 27 are female, with 11% male respondents. Fifty-six percent of respondents between the ages of 28 and 37 are male compared to 44% of female respondents. Over three-quarters (79%) of respondents between the ages of 38 to 47 are male compared to 21% females. For respondents between the ages of 48 to 57, 91% are male compared to 9% of female respondents. The sex and age breakdown for the population of Northern Ireland for 18 to 27 year olds is 50% male and 50% female ⁹.

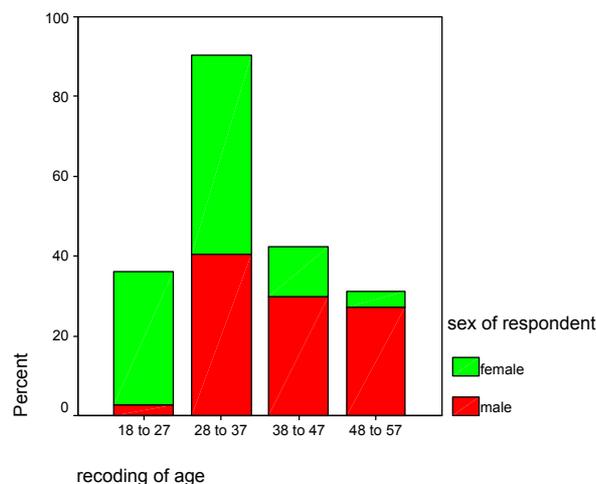


Figure 5: Sex and Age

⁹ Northern Ireland Census 2001 Population Report and Mid-Year Estimates, NISRA

4. Conclusion

4.1 Examination of the survey data

- 4.1.1 An examination of the survey data within this report indicates that the respondents of the survey are representative of all 123 employees of the Police Ombudsman for Northern Ireland. Comparing the survey data to the population of Northern Ireland indicates that the marital status, race and religion of respondents are generally reflective of the population. However, in comparing the sex of respondents to the population of Northern Ireland it is evident that the Police Ombudsman employees more males than females.
- 4.1.2 For the three additional equality questions the majority of respondents believe that the existing policies and procedures within OPONI do not adversely affect any persons within the nine categories. Respondents also believe that they have on no occasion been treated less favourably by any member of staff because of their status within one of the nine categories. Finally, the majority of respondents believe that they are adequately aware of equality of opportunity within the office. However, some respondents did provide comments for all three equality questions that managers will consider appropriately.
- 4.1.3 The last question that asked for additional comments, and three respondents replied. One responded provided a positive comment for equality within OPONI while the remaining respondents both commented on the lack of advancement opportunities within the Office. The alleged lack of advancement within the organisation, although not specifically an equality issue, is a concern for both employees and managers.
- 4.1.4 It is evident from the cross tabulations that there are a higher proportion of male respondents who are Protestant, while a higher proportion of female respondents are Catholic. Further, a higher proportion of female respondents are between the ages of 18 to 27 compared to the older ages of 48 to 57 where males are dominant. This may be indicative of the increase of women in the workplace over the last years. Nevertheless, the cross-tabulations have indicated a gender inequality that should be considered for future staff recruitment.

5. Recommendations

5.1 The following recommendations have been made

- 5.1.1 This report will be submitted to the Equality Commission as relevant information on the fairness and impact of the Recruitment and Selection policies within the Office of the Police Ombudsman.
- 5.1.2 Managers should continue to work to promote equality, fairness and good relations within the Office of the Police Ombudsman for Northern Ireland.

Appendix 1: Questionnaire

EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT QUESTIONNAIRE

Section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act places significant duties on public authorities regarding how they carry out their functions. These duties relate to the promotion of equality of opportunity on grounds of age, marital status, disability, political opinion, race, religious belief, sex, sexual orientation and whether or not people have dependants; and promoting good relations between people of different racial groups, religious belief or political opinion. These duties on public authorities include the production and review of Equality Schemes, conducting Equality Impact Assessments and including consultation as an integral part of the policy making process.

As part of the Office's commitment to carrying out Equality Impact Assessments on our policies it has been decided that staff should be given the opportunity to complete a questionnaire. The data collected will provide us with comprehensive monitoring among staff under section 75 of the Northern Ireland act. It would be very much appreciated if you could provide as much information as possible in relation to the questions below. Categories are in line with guidance issued.

It should be emphasised that the completion of this questionnaire is entirely voluntary and that the data is collected anonymously. A box will be available at reception for the return of completed questionnaires. Please ensure that completed forms are returned no later than Friday 31 October 2003.

AGE

How old are you?

SEX

Please tick the appropriate box.

Male <input type="checkbox"/>	Female <input type="checkbox"/>
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MARITAL STATUS

Please tick the appropriate box.

Single <input type="checkbox"/>	Married <input type="checkbox"/>
Co-habiting (living together) <input type="checkbox"/>	Separated <input type="checkbox"/>
Divorced <input type="checkbox"/>	Widowed <input type="checkbox"/>

DISABILITY

Under the Disability Discrimination Act (1995) a person is considered to have a disability if he/she has a physical or mental impairment which has substantial and long term adverse effect on his/her ability to carry out normal day to day activities.

Do you consider that you meet this definition of disability?

Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>
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PLEASE TURN OVER

DEPENDENTS

Please indicate whether you have primary responsibility

For the care of a child/children	<input type="checkbox"/>	For the care of a person(s) with a disability	<input type="checkbox"/>
For the care of a dependant elderly person(s)	<input type="checkbox"/>	Other (Please specify)	<input type="text"/>

POLITICAL OPINION

How best would you describe your political opinion?

Unionist	<input type="checkbox"/>	Nationalist	<input type="checkbox"/>
None	<input type="checkbox"/>	Other (Please specify)	<input type="text"/>

RACE

Please describe your ethnic origin by ticking the appropriate box below:

White	<input type="checkbox"/>	Irish Traveller	<input type="checkbox"/>
Black-Caribbean	<input type="checkbox"/>	Black-African	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="text"/>		Indian	<input type="checkbox"/>
Pakistani	<input type="checkbox"/>	Bangladeshi	<input type="checkbox"/>
Chinese	<input type="checkbox"/>	Other (Please specify)	<input type="text"/>

RELIGIOUS BELIEF

Please indicate your religion or the religion to which you would be perceived to belong to by ticking the appropriate box

Protestant	<input type="checkbox"/>	Catholic	<input type="checkbox"/>
Hindu	<input type="checkbox"/>	Jewish	<input type="checkbox"/>
Muslim	<input type="checkbox"/>	Sikh	<input type="checkbox"/>
Buddhist	<input type="checkbox"/>	No religion	<input type="checkbox"/>
Other (Please specify)	<input type="text"/>		

SEXUAL ORIENTATION

Please indicate which of the following best describes your sexual orientation?

I am homosexual	<input type="checkbox"/>	I am heterosexual (straight)	<input type="checkbox"/>
I am lesbian	<input type="checkbox"/>	I am bi-sexual	<input type="checkbox"/>
I Other (Please specify)	<input type="text"/>		

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Please provide further information in relation to the following questions:

Do you feel that any of the existing policies and procedures within the Police Ombudsman for Northern Ireland may adversely affect any persons falling within the 9 categories (age, marital status, disability, political opinion, race, religious belief, sex, sexual orientation and whether or not people have dependents)?

Yes

No

If yes please comment:

Do you feel that on any occasion any member of staff within the organisation has ever treated you less favourably because of your status within one of the 9 specified groups (age, marital status, disability, political opinion, race, religious belief, sex, sexual orientation and whether or not people have dependents)?

Yes

No

If yes please comment:

Do you feel that there is adequate awareness of equality of opportunity within the office?

Yes

No

If no please comment:

ANY OTHER COMMENTS

**PLEASE ENSURE THAT COMPLETED FORMS ARE RETURNED NO LATER THAN
FRIDAY 31 OCTOBER 2003**

THANK YOU FOR YOUR TIME AND ASSISTANCE IN COMPLETING THIS REVIEW

Appendix 2: Supplementary statistical tables

Sex	Frequency	%
Male	38	59
Female	25	39
Declined to answer the question	1	2
Total	64	100

Table 1: Sex of respondent

Marital status	Frequency	%
Married	34	53
Single	17	27
Co-habiting	7	11
Divorced or separated	6	9
Total	64	100

Table 2: Marital Status of respondents

Do you have a disability...?	Frequency	%
No	60	94
Yes	3	5
Declined to answer the question	1	2
Total	64	100

Table 3: Disability of respondents

Primary care for....	Frequency	%
The care of a child/children	23	36
The care of a person(s) with a disability	1	2
The care of a dependent elderly person(s)	3	5
Not Applicable	37	58
Total	64	100

Table 4: Dependents

Primary care for....	Frequency	%
The care of a person(s) with a disability	1	2
The care of a dependent elderly person(s)	1	2
Not Applicable	62	97
Total	64	100

Table 5: Dependents (continued)

Political Opinion	Frequency	%
None	35	55
Unionist	15	23
Nationalist	9	14
Other	5	8
Total	64	100

Table 6: Political opinion of respondents

Race	Frequency	%
White	62	97
Other	2	3
Total	64	100

Table 7: Race of respondent

Religion	Frequency	%
Protestant	27	42
Catholic	22	34
No religion	10	16
Other	5	8
Total	64	100

Table 8: Religion of respondent

Sexual Orientation	Frequency	%
Heterosexual	61	95
Homosexual, Lesbian or other	3	5
Total	64	100

Table 9: sexual Orientation of respondent