

Ipsos MORI



# Public Attitude Survey 2009

Research report prepared for  
COI/Northern Ireland Assembly

March 2010





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# 1. Executive summary

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## 1.1. Background and methodology

The Northern Ireland Assembly was established under the Belfast/Good Friday Agreement. Following a number of periods of suspension, devolution was restored to the Assembly in May 2007.

The Engagement Directorate was established in July 2008 with the responsibility for ensuring the general public in Northern Ireland is informed about the work of the Assembly. In 2008, the Directorate created a strategic plan to engage the Northern Ireland public.

Research was commissioned in 2009 to understand public attitudes towards the work of the Northern Ireland Assembly and to measure the level of public engagement with the Assembly on an on-going basis. The objectives of the research are to provide measurements of:

- General political awareness, such as levels of interest in politics, numbers of visits to the Assembly, voting patterns and intention to vote.
- Perceptions of the work of the Assembly, including levels and accuracy of perceived and actual knowledge of the same.
- Sources of political information and frequency of use.
- Views on the system of governance of Northern Ireland

To establish the baseline measures of public engagement with the Assembly, Omnibus research was conducted in December 2009 and early January 2010 with 1,025 adults aged 16 plus.

## 1.2. Key findings and implications

It is clear from the survey findings that a large proportion of the general public in Northern Ireland do not feel engaged with the current system of governance. Only a minority feel that they have a say in how Northern Ireland (NI) is run, three quarters feel that the present system needs improvement and more are dissatisfied than satisfied with the Northern Ireland Assembly and the Executive. It will be challenging to increase the Assembly's engagement with the public; however, there is an appetite for greater involvement which could be capitalised on with the appropriate actions and communications.

Current interest in, and knowledge of, the Assembly among people in NI is low. Two in five say they are interested and only a quarter feel that they have some knowledge of the Assembly. There is, however, significantly more interest in local issues and people also feel considerably more knowledgeable about these issues. Topics which are commonly discussed with family and friends include those that concern the work of the Assembly, for example, crime, education, healthcare and the economy. Demonstrating the link between the work of the Assembly and its committees, and these local issues could prove useful in helping to increase general public engagement.

One of the key challenges will be to engage 16-34 years olds, people in social classes C2DE and women, who have lower levels of knowledge and interest not just in the Assembly, but in current affairs generally.

Information about the Assembly is most frequently received through television, newspapers (local and national) and radio. There is less use of direct Assembly resources. Only one in eight have ever visited the NI Assembly website. Three in ten have visited Parliament Buildings, but only 4% have done so in the last year. Knowledge of, and attendance at, Assembly Roadshows is also very low.

There is some evidence to suggest that there is some confusion between the roles of the Assembly and the Executive. While the majority agree that Members of the Legislative Assembly (MLAs) are responsible for representing the interests of their constituency residents, three quarters incorrectly believe that MLAs are also responsible for making decisions on how Northern Ireland is governed. If the public is unsure about the difference between the roles of the two bodies and their expectations of the Assembly are not being met as a result of this, it could lead to the development of apathy towards the Assembly. Emphasising the difference between the two may be a good starting point in the communications process to increase engagement with the Assembly.

In terms of overall satisfaction, individual MLAs do fare a little better than the Assembly as a whole. Knowledge of MLAs is also higher, with six in ten being able to correctly name one of their local MLAs. Satisfaction with MLAs and the Assembly increases among those who are able to name one of their MLAs and further still among those who have had contact with their MLAs. There may be scope to make more of the 'faces of the Assembly' given the slightly more positive image they have. Half of the general public would like to see MLAs representing the views of local people more or dealing with the issues of local constituents. Increasing the visibility of existing work by MLAs in these areas could potentially result in higher levels of satisfaction.

## 2. Background and objectives

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### 2.1. Background

The Northern Ireland Assembly was established under the Belfast/Good Friday Agreement. Following a number of periods of suspension, devolution was restored to the Assembly in May 2007. The Assembly has 108 Members who are supported in their plenary and committee work by the Assembly Secretariat.

Following a review of the Assembly Secretariat in October 2007, it was recommended that a new Engagement Directorate should be established. This Directorate has overall responsibility for ensuring the general public in Northern Ireland is informed about the work of the Assembly. In 2008, the Directorate created a strategic plan to engage the Northern Ireland public and is based around four principles: engaging MLAs; engaging committees; engaging channels of influence; and engaging the public.

### 2.2. Research objectives

In 2009, the Northern Ireland Assembly commissioned research in order to better understand public attitudes towards the work of the Northern Ireland Assembly and measure the level of public engagement with the Assembly on an on-going basis.

The specific objectives of the research have been defined as follows. To provide measurements of:

- General political awareness, such as levels of interest in politics, numbers of visits to the Assembly, voting patterns and intention to vote.
- Public perceptions of the work of the Assembly, including levels and accuracy of perceived and actual knowledge of the same.
- Sources of political information and the frequency of their use.
- Views on the system of governance of Northern Ireland.

The findings from this research also provide a baseline which can be used to compare with any future research on public attitudes towards the Assembly.



# 3. Methodology

### 3. Methodology

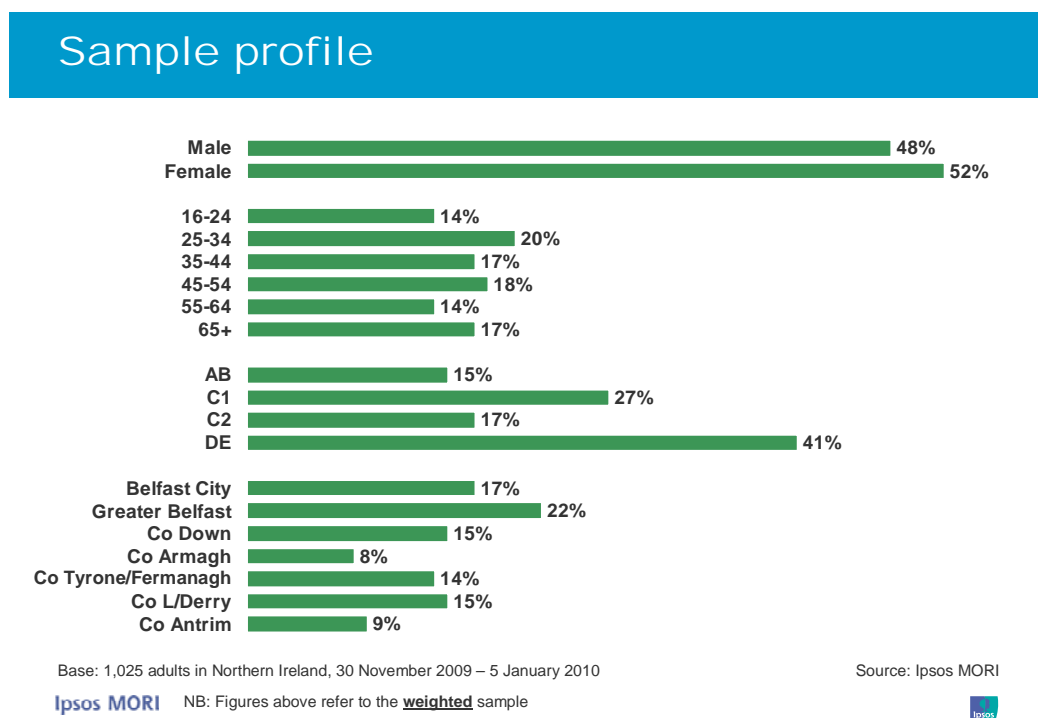
Ipsos MORI drafted a questionnaire in conjunction with COI and the Northern Ireland Assembly. In some cases, existing questions that Ipsos MORI has used elsewhere in the past were replicated or amended to suit Northern Ireland. For these questions comparative data is provided. The questionnaire has been appended in Section 8 of this report.

In advance of fieldwork, a pilot of twenty interviews was conducted with members of the general public to test that the questionnaire wording was understood by a range of different people. The pilot was conducted on the 21 and 22 November 2009.

Data was collected via the Ipsos MORI Northern Ireland Omnibus. Interviews were conducted on a face to face basis at 50 sampling points across Northern Ireland. 1,025 adults in Northern Ireland aged 16 plus were interviewed using Computer Assisted Personal Interviewing (CAPI). Fieldwork was completed from 30 November 2009 to 5 January 2010.

Quotas were placed on age, gender, social class and region, and data was weighted to reflect the population profile. The profile of the weighted sample was as follows:

**Chart 1a**

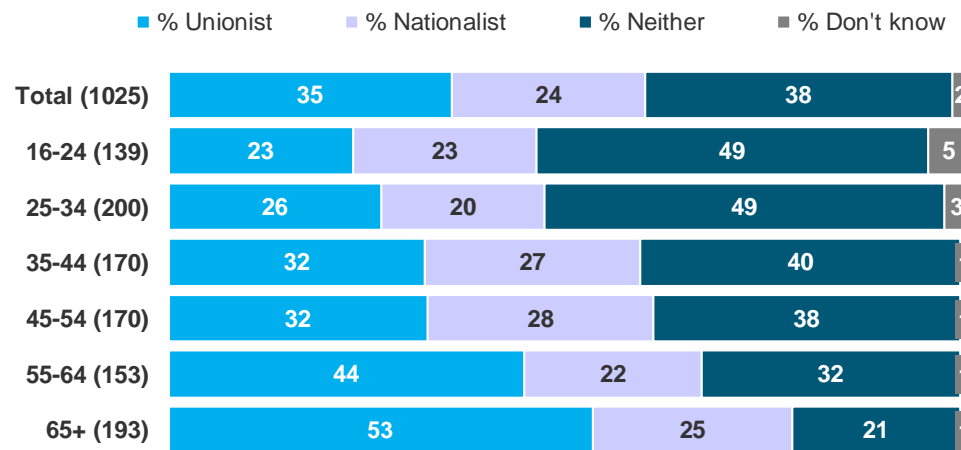


Respondents were asked about their political persuasion in the questionnaire, and this data is found in chart 1b overleaf. Four in ten (38%) adults in Northern Ireland do not identify themselves as either Unionist or Nationalist, and this decreases with age. One third (35%) classify themselves as Unionist and this increases with age. One quarter (24%) claim to be Nationalist, with no major differences by age.

Chart 1b

## Political persuasion by age

Q36. Which of the following best describes you?



Base: 1,025 adults in Northern Ireland, 30 November 2009 – 5 January 2010

Source: Ipsos MORI

Ipsos MORI



### Notes for interpretation

- (I) All differences specified in the report are statistically significant at the 95% level. Please refer to appendix 8.2 for an explanation of statistical reliability.
- (II) Throughout the report, comparisons are made to questions that Ipsos MORI has asked in the Audit of Political Engagement surveys. The two main surveys referenced are:
  - Audit of Political Engagement 4 (APE4), conducted in November 2006 with 1,490 adults aged 18+ in the UK. Topline results are located here: <http://www.ipsos-mori.com/Assets/Docs/Polls/APE4%20topline.pdf>.
  - Audit of Political Engagement 6 (APE6) 2008, conducted in December 2008 with 1,051 adults aged 18+ in Great Britain. Topline results can be found here: <http://www.ipsos-mori.com/Assets/Docs/Polls/APE6%20Topline%202008%20FINAL%20130109.pdf>.
- (III) References are made to 'activists' and 'non-activists' throughout the report. In the Audit of Political Engagement surveys, a political activist is defined as any one who engages in *at least three* of the following activities in the last two or three years:
  - Signed a petition
  - Urged someone to get in touch with a local councillor or MP or MLA
  - Presented their views to a local councillor or MP or MLA

- Boycotted certain products for political, ethical or environmental reasons
- Taken part in a demonstration, picket or march
- Been to any political meeting
- Taken an active part in a political campaign
- Donated money or paid membership fee to a political party

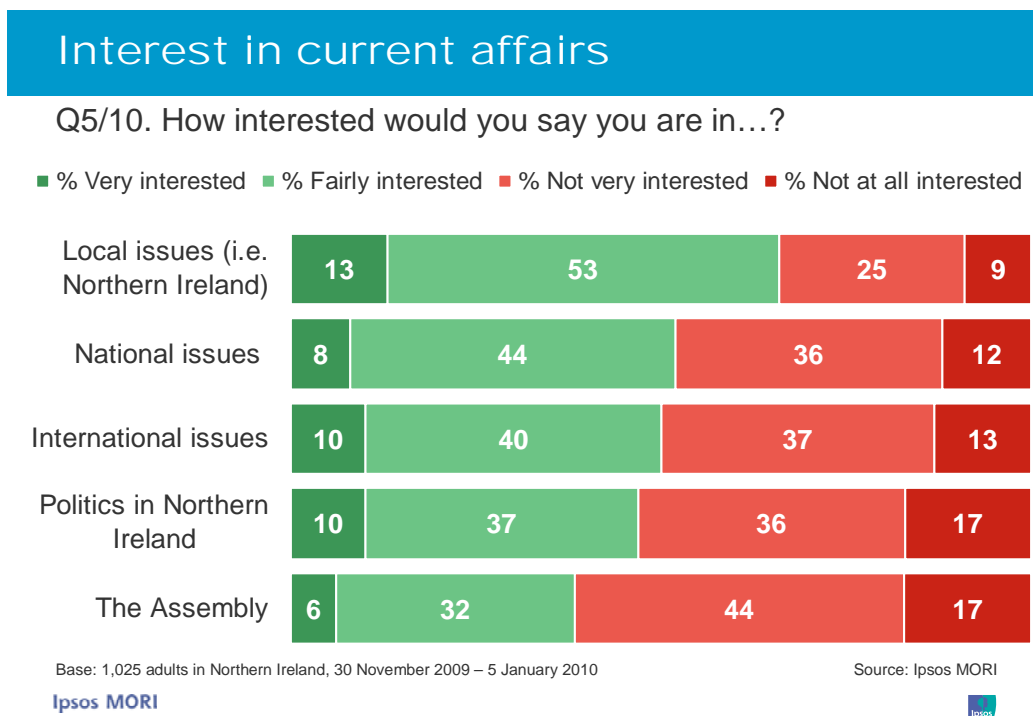
## 4. Interest and knowledge

## 4. Interest and knowledge

### 4.1. Interest in the Assembly

There is some interest in the work of the Assembly among people in Northern Ireland, with two in five (39%) saying they are either fairly or very interested in the Assembly's work. This is, however, lower than the proportion of people who express interest in local issues (66%), national issues (52%), international issues (50%) and politics in Northern Ireland (47%).

**Chart 2**

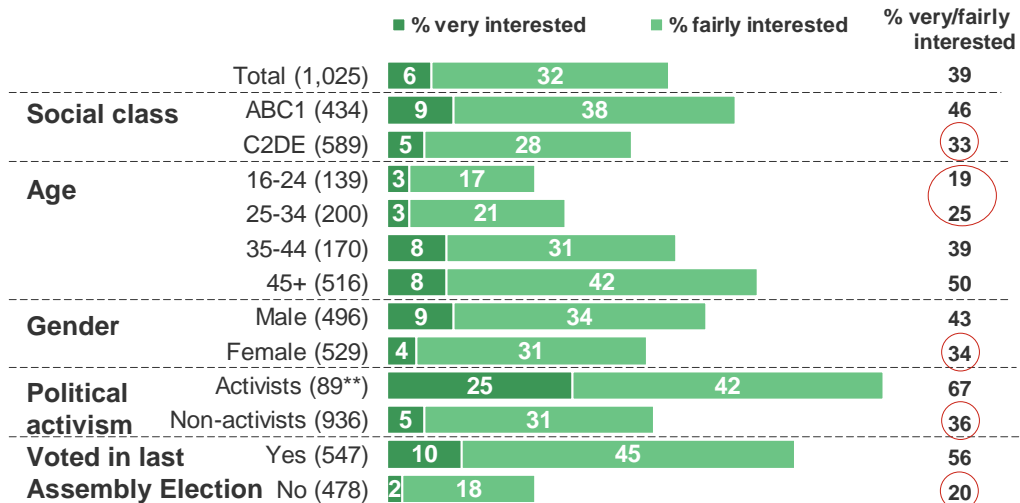


As illustrated in chart 3 overleaf, those who voted in the previous Assembly election (56%) and who are likely to vote in an upcoming election (57%) are more likely than average (39%) to have an interest in the work of the Assembly. Interest in the Assembly is, however, lower among 16-34 year olds (23% compared with 47% of over 35s), C2DEs (33% compared with 46% of ABC1s) and women (34% compared with 43% of men).

Chart 3

## Interest in the Assembly – demographic differences

Q10. How interested would you say you are in The Assembly?



Base in brackets, 30 November 2009 – 5 January 2010

Source: Ipsos MORI

Ipsos MORI \* Caution: small base



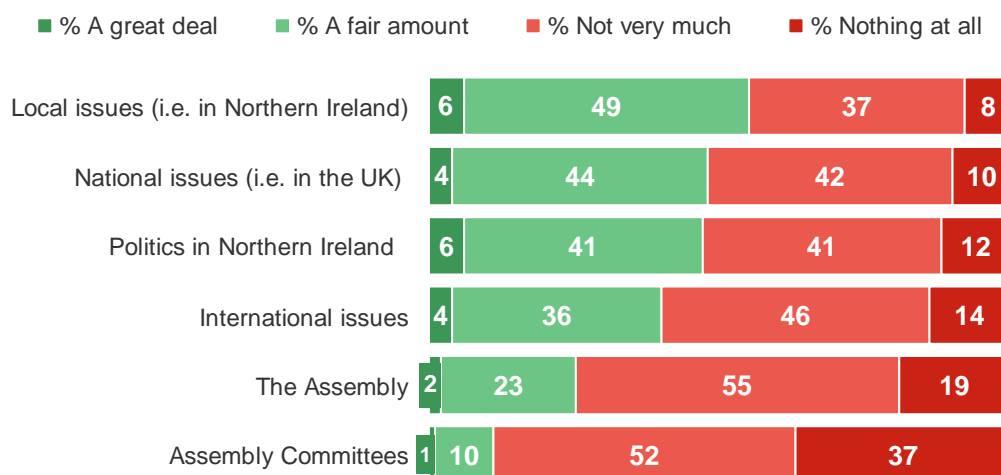
## 4.2. Familiarity with current affairs, politics and the Assembly

To assess levels of familiarity with current affairs and politics in general and also the Assembly and its Committees, respondents were asked how much they feel they know about each.

Chart 4

## Familiarity with current affairs

Q4/9/11. How much, if anything, do you feel you know about...?



Base: 1,025 adults in Northern Ireland, 30 November 2009 – 5 January 2010

Source: Ipsos MORI

Ipsos MORI

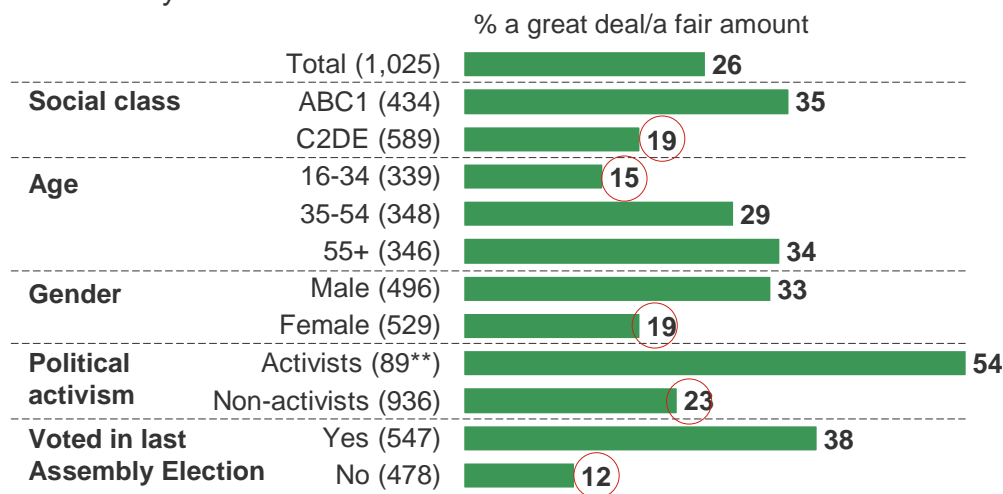


People in Northern Ireland admit that their familiarity with the Assembly is low. One quarter (26%) say that they know either a great deal or a fair amount about the Assembly, with only 2% stating they know a great deal. Familiarity with the Assembly Committees is lower still, with one in ten (11%) saying they know a great deal or a fair amount. This is fewer than the proportion who claim this level of familiarity with local issues (55%), national issues (48%), politics in Northern Ireland (47%) and international issues (40%).

### Chart 5

#### Familiarity with the Assembly – demographic differences

Q9. How much, if anything, do you feel you know about the Assembly?



Base in brackets, 30 November 2009 – 5 January 2010

Source: Ipsos MORI

Ipsos MORI \* Caution: small base



As with levels of interest, familiarity with the Assembly and Assembly Committees is lower than average among 16-34 year olds (15% and 4% for the Assembly and Assembly Committees respectively), women (19% and 8% respectively) and C2DEs (19% and 7% respectively). Nevertheless, the same groups of people are also less likely than average to be familiar with politics in Northern Ireland or local, national and international issues. This indicates that lack of familiarity with the Assembly is likely to be related to a general lack of interest in current affairs amongst these groups rather than a specific failing of the Assembly to engage with these groups of people.



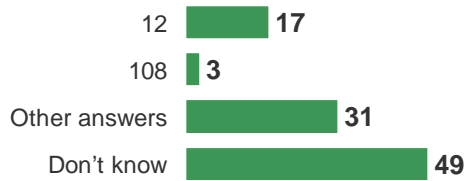
### 4.3. Knowledge of the Assembly

When asked factual questions about the workings of the Assembly, it becomes clear that real knowledge is even lower than perceived levels of knowledge, as discussed in Section 4.2.

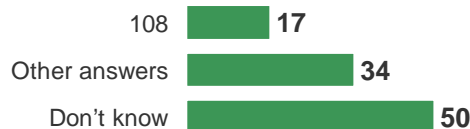
**Chart 6**

#### Knowledge of members of NI Assembly and Executive

Q6. How many Ministers do you think there are in the Northern Ireland Executive?



Q7. How many members do you think there are in the Northern Ireland Assembly?



Knowledge of members of NI Assembly

	108	Other	Don't know
12	10%	5%	3%
Other	5%	24%	5%
Don't know	2%	5%	42%

Knowledge of members of NI Executive

Base: 1,025 adults in Northern Ireland, 30 November 2009 – 5 January 2010

Source: Ipsos MORI

Ipsos MORI



Just one in six (17%) know that there are 108 members of the Assembly and a similar proportion (17%) are aware that there are 12 Ministers in the Executive. Men (22%) and over 35s (19%) are more likely to know there are 108 MLAs.

Half say they do not know how many members comprise both the Executive (49%) and the Assembly (50%). This increases among DEs (59% for both), under 35s (56% and 59% respectively) and women (57% and 58% respectively). These are the same groups that have lower levels of interest and perceived knowledge of the Assembly.

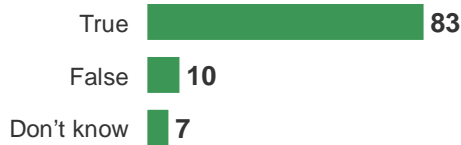
Overall, only one in ten (10%) know how many members there are in both the Assembly and the Executive, while two in five (42%) say that they do not know how many members there are in either the Assembly or the Executive.

## Chart 7

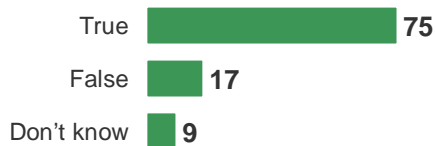
## Knowledge of MLAs' responsibilities

Q8. Please could you tell me whether you think the following statements are true or false...

b. MLAs are responsible for representing the interests of the residents of their constituency?



c. MLAs are responsible for making decisions on how Northern Ireland is governed?



Base: 1,025 adults in Northern Ireland, 30 November 2009 – 5 January 2010

Ipsos MORI

MLAs are responsible for...

*Making decisions on how Northern Ireland is governed*

	True	False	Don't know
True	68%	12%	3%
False	5%	4%	*
Don't know	2%	*	6%

\* Greater than 0% but less than 0.5%

Source: Ipsos MORI



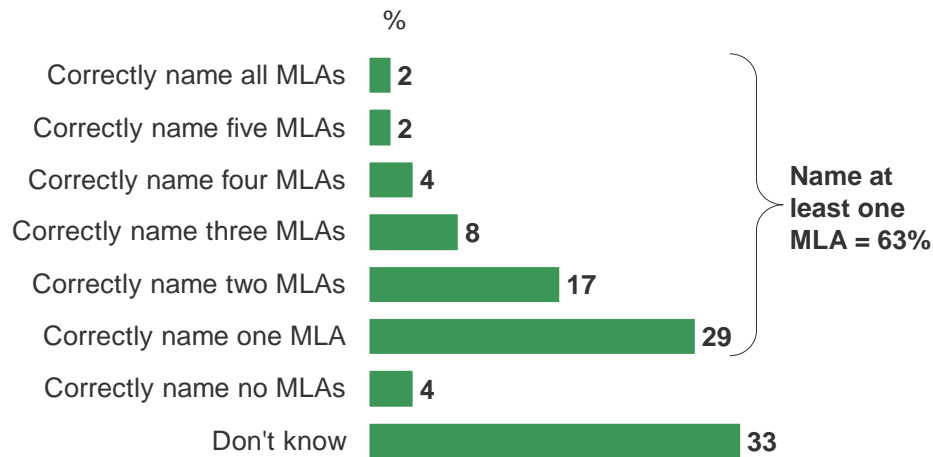
The public is a little confused when it comes to defining the roles of MLAs and Ministers. While four in five (83%) say that MLAs are responsible for representing the interests of residents of their constituency, three quarters (75%) incorrectly think that MLAs are responsible for making decisions on how Northern Ireland is governed. Interestingly, those who claim to have some knowledge and interest in the Assembly are more likely to believe that MLAs are responsible for making decisions about how Northern Ireland is governed. This indicates that even among those who are interested and informed, the duties of an MLA are not clear.

As only one in ten (12%) correctly answered both questions it is important that the Assembly clearly distinguishes between MLAs and Ministers in the Executive when communicating with the public. It is possible that the public may feel disenchanted with the Assembly as they are expecting MLAs to carry out tasks, such as making decisions on how Northern Ireland is governed, that are beyond their remit.

## Chart 8

## Knowledge of MLAs

Q28. What are the names of your local MLAs?



Base: 1,025 adults in Northern Ireland, 30 November 2009 – 5 January 2010

Source: Ipsos MORI

Ipsos MORI

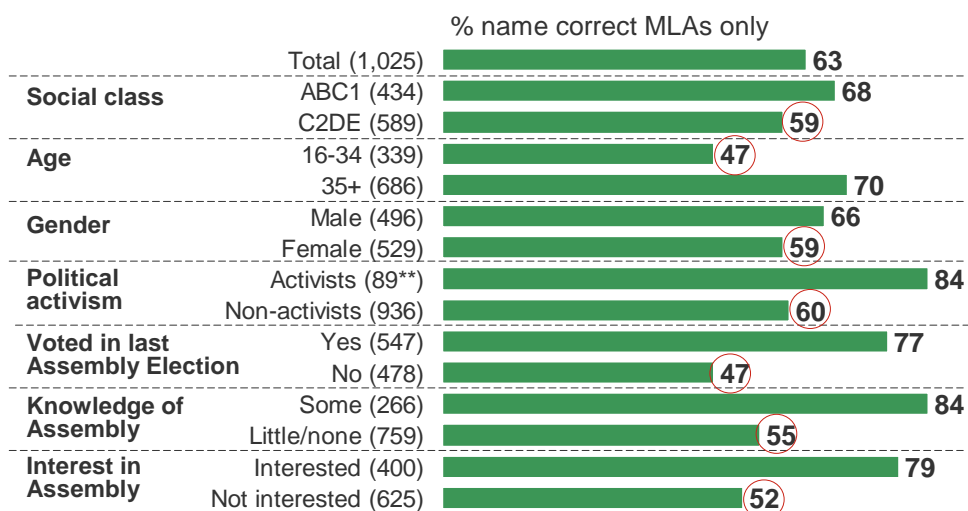


While people's knowledge of the Assembly and the Executive may be low, the public has much greater knowledge of the 'faces of the Assembly'. More than six in ten (63%) are able to correctly name at least one of their MLAs. This rises to 77% of those who voted in the last Assembly Election and 77% of those who would vote in an immediate Assembly Election.

## Chart 9

## Knowledge of MLAs – demographic differences

Q28. What are the names of your local MLAs?



Base in brackets, 30 November 2009 – 5 January 2010

Source: Ipsos MORI

Ipsos MORI \* Caution: small base

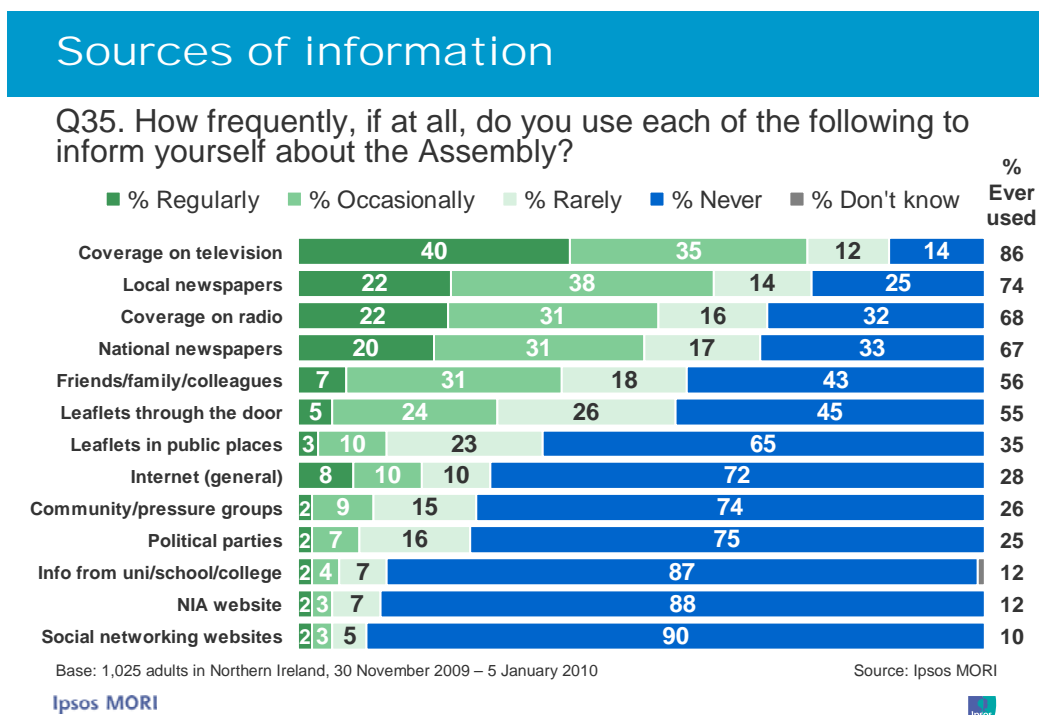


Of those who did not give a correct answer, one third (33%) said they did not know who their local MLAs are while just one in twenty (4%) gave an incorrect answer. This suggests the issue is one of lack of awareness rather than due to being misinformed. Lack of awareness of MLAs is highest among 16-24 year olds (58% compared with 37% on average).

#### 4.4. Sources of information

As illustrated in chart 10 below, coverage on television is the main way in which people inform themselves about the Assembly (86%), with two in five (40%) regularly picking up information about the Assembly through this medium.

Chart 10



Local newspapers, coverage on the radio and national newspapers are also frequently used; about seven in ten have ever used each of these sources and two in ten regularly use each of them. Just over half (56%) obtain information about the Assembly through discussions with family and friends and a similar proportion (55%) from leaflets through the door.

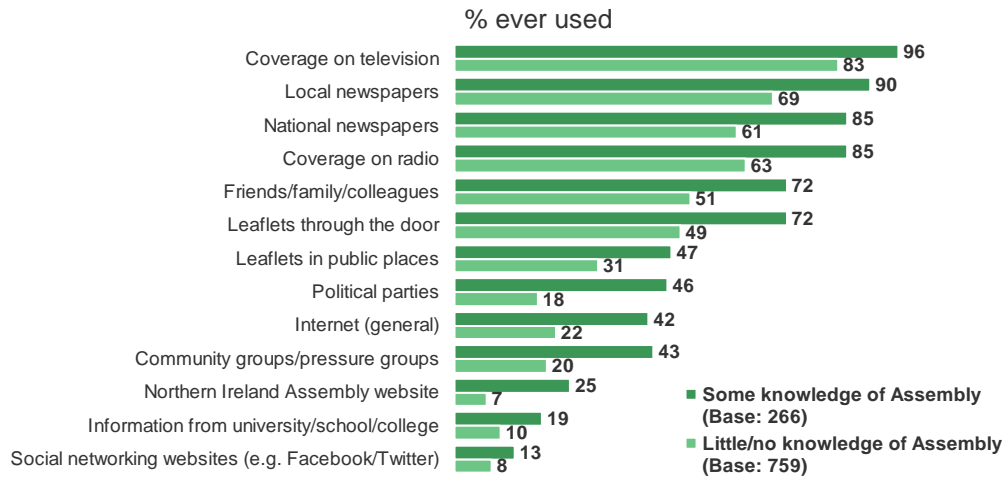
Among people aged 16-24 the use of local and national newspapers is lower (58% and 53% respectively). This is also the case in relation to discussion with friends and family (47%) and information from leaflets through the door (42%). This age group is, however, more likely to obtain information on the Assembly from school/university/college (29% compared to 12% overall) and social networking sites (14% compared to 10% overall).

More Nationalists than Unionists obtain information about the Assembly from political parties (32% compared to 24%) and from school/university/college (15% compared to 9%).

Chart 11

## Sources of information

Q35. How frequently, if at all, do you use each of the following to inform yourself about the Assembly?



Base: 1,025 adults in Northern Ireland, 30 November 2009 – 5 January 2010

Source: Ipsos MORI

Ipsos MORI



Among those who claim to have little knowledge of the Assembly, eight in ten (83%) still use television coverage to inform themselves about the Assembly, seven in ten (69%) use local newspapers and six in ten use national newspapers (61%) or radio (63%). Chart 11 above also shows that those most knowledgeable about the Assembly are likely to seek out information about it via all means available to them, while those with lower levels of knowledge are relying primarily media such as TV and radio. Communication needs to work harder to engage with these audiences via these media.

## 5. Action and participation

## 5. Action and participation

### 5.1. Discussing current affairs

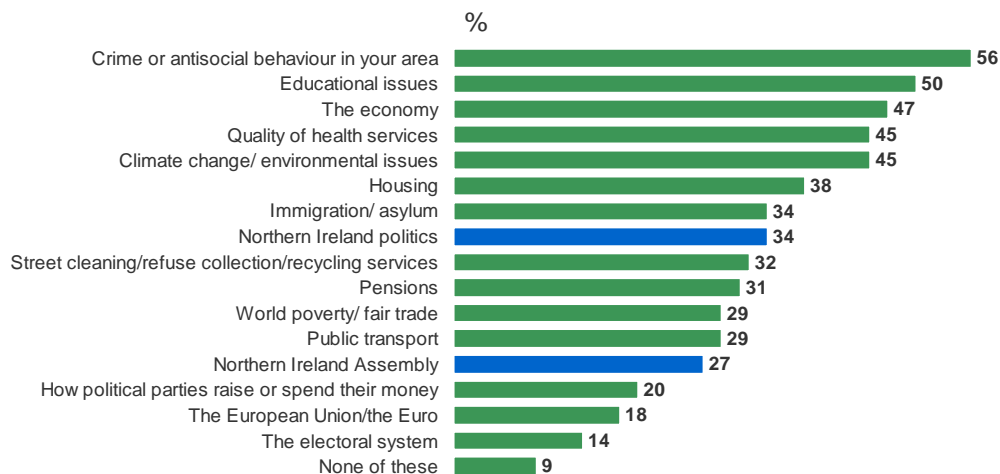
One in four (27%) have discussed the Northern Ireland Assembly and one in three (34%) have discussed Northern Ireland politics with family and friends in the last year. Discussion of both of these topics is much lower among the groups previously identified to have lower levels of engagement with the Assembly: 16-34 year olds (16% and 25% respectively), C2DEs (19% and 24%) and women (21% and 27%) are all less likely than average to have discussed these issues with family and friends (27% and 34%).

Catholics are also less likely than Protestants to discuss Northern Ireland politics with friends and family (29% compared with 37%).

**Chart 12**

### Discussing current affairs issues

Q3. Which of these local, national and international issues, if any, have you discussed with your family or friends in the last year or so?



Base: 1,025 adults in Northern Ireland, 30 November 2009 – 5 January 2010

Source: Ipsos MORI

Ipsos MORI

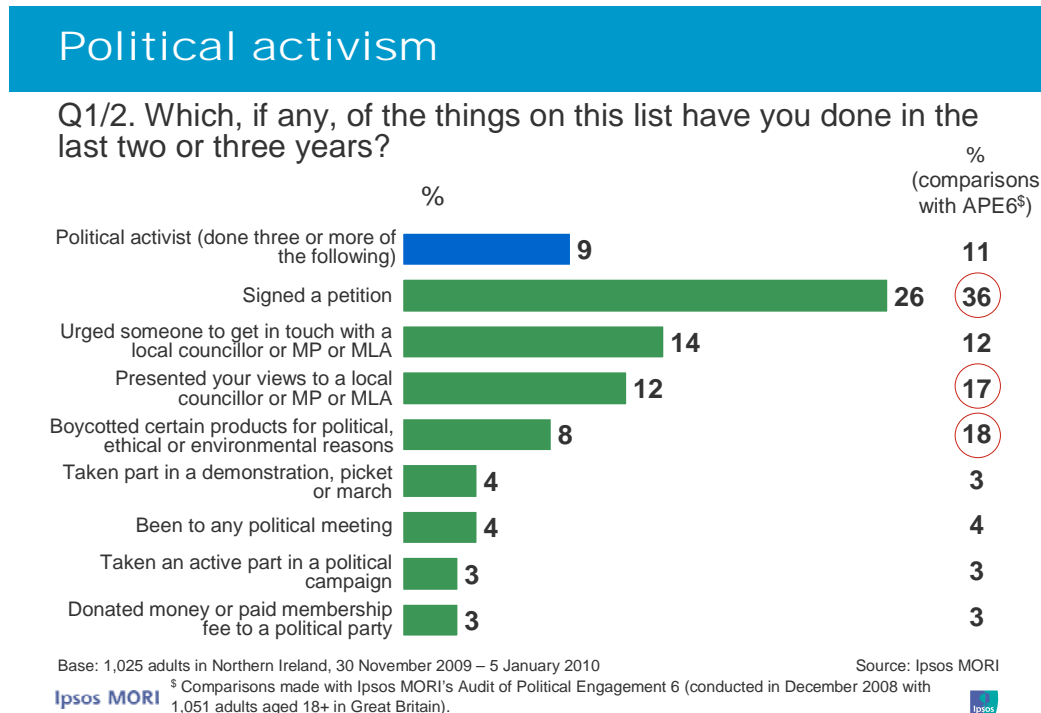


It is useful to compare talkability of NI politics and the Assembly with other local, national and international issues. Half of respondents said they had discussed crime (56%), educational issues (50%) and the economy (47%) and four in ten have talked about health services (45%), environmental issues (45%) and housing (38%). Given that these are also issues that are regularly raised in the Assembly, informing the public of Assembly's work in these policy areas may be a useful way to strengthen engagement with the institution itself and make its work seem more relevant to issues that concern them.

## 5.2. Political activism

The survey measured political activism in terms of participation in a range of eight activities. People who have taken part in three or more activities listed in the chart below are considered to be 'activists'.

**Chart 13**



In Northern Ireland, 9% of the population are activists compared to 11% in Great Britain<sup>1</sup>. Political activism is higher among ABC1s (14%) and men (11%).

While overall political activity is not significantly different between Northern Ireland and Great Britain, there are aspects of political activity that adults in Northern Ireland are less likely to be involved in, including signing a petition (26% versus 36%), presenting their views to a local councillor or MLA/MP (12% versus 17%) and boycotting products for political, ethical or environmental reasons (18% versus 8%).

<sup>1</sup> Comparisons made with Ipsos MORI's Audit of Political Engagement 6 (conducted in December 2008 with 1,051 adults aged 18+ in Great Britain).



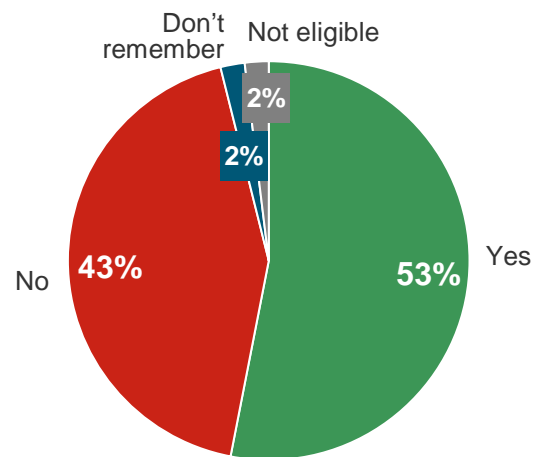
### 5.3. Voting behaviour

Half of adults in Northern Ireland say that they voted in the 2007 Assembly Election. A similar number would be likely to vote in an immediate Assembly Election.

**Chart 14**

#### Voting in 2007 Assembly Election

Q21. Did you vote in the most recent Northern Ireland Assembly election in 2007?



Base: 1,025 adults in Northern Ireland, 30 November 2009 – 5 January 2010

Source: Ipsos MORI

Ipsos MORI



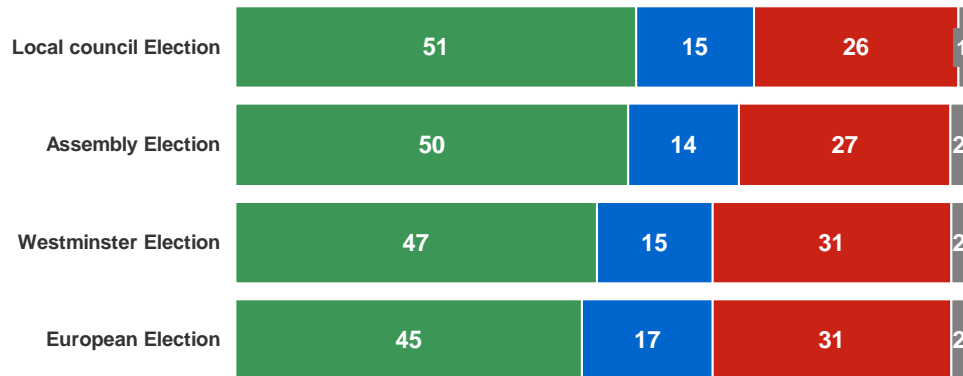
This is no different than the percentage claiming that they would be likely to vote in an immediate Local Council (51%) or Westminster Election (47%) but greater than the proportion that would expect to vote in an immediate European Election (45%), as depicted in chart 15 overleaf.

Chart 15

## Voting likelihood

Q22. How likely are you to vote in an immediate election on a scale of 1 to 10, where 10 means you are absolutely certain you will vote and 1 means you are absolutely certain you will not vote?

■ % Very likely (8-10) ■ % Neutral (4-7) ■ % Very unlikely (1-3) ■ % Don't know



Base: 1,025 adults in Northern Ireland, 30 November 2009 – 5 January 2010

Source: Ipsos MORI

Ipsos MORI



A greater percentage of people aged over 45, ABs and those who identify themselves as either Nationalist or Unionist voted in the last Assembly Election (72%, 64%, 66% and 66% respectively) and would expect to vote in an immediate Assembly Election (65%, 64%, 63% and 60% respectively).

Of those who voted in the last Assembly Election, 80% say that they would be likely to vote in an immediate Assembly Election. Half of those who didn't vote in the previous Assembly Election would be unlikely to vote in an upcoming Assembly Election.

## 6. Efficacy and satisfaction

## 6. Efficacy and satisfaction

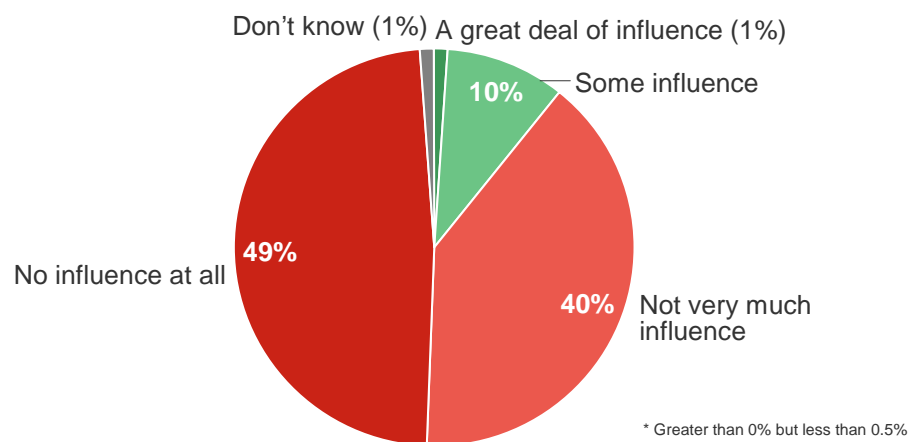
### 6.1. Influence in Northern Ireland politics

As depicted in chart 16 below, the general public feels its influence on decision making in Northern Ireland is minimal.

**Chart 16**

#### Influence over decision-making in Northern Ireland

Q23. How much influence do you feel you have over decision-making in Northern Ireland?



Base: 1,025 adults in Northern Ireland, 30 November 2009 – 5 January 2010

Source: Ipsos MORI

Ipsos MORI



Half (49%) believe that they have no influence at all and a further 40% say they do not have very much influence. Unsurprisingly, perceived levels of influence on decision-making are highest among political activists (19% compared with 10% of non-activists).

### 6.2. Involvement in Northern Ireland politics

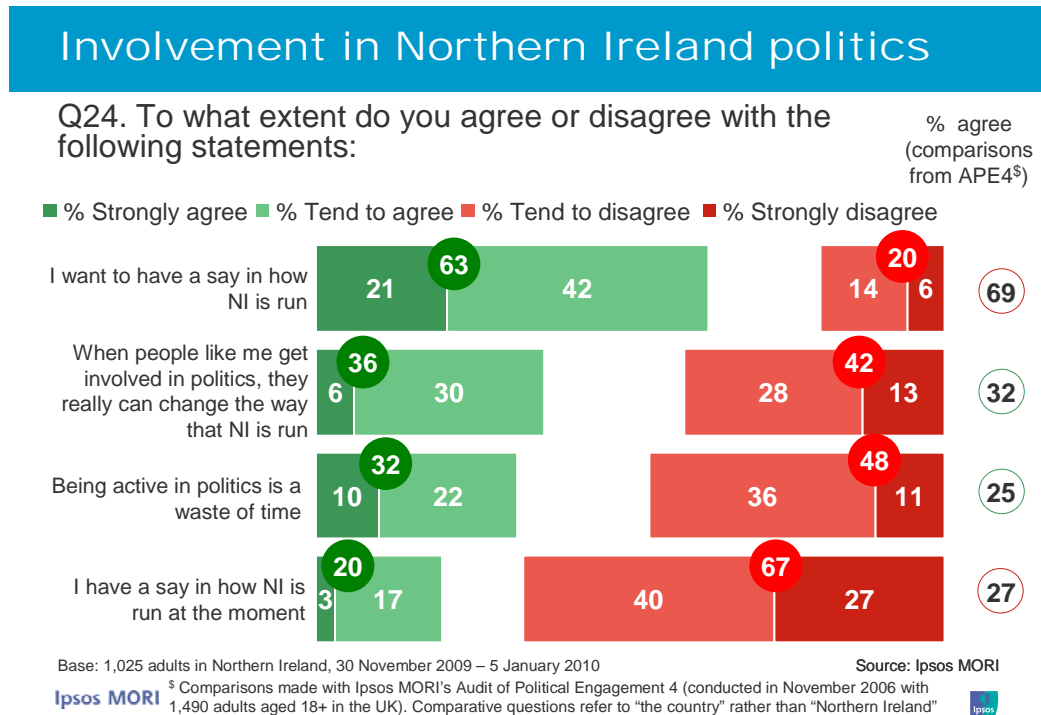
Only one in five (20%) feel as though they have a say in how Northern Ireland is run. Even though this increases to 26% of those who voted in the last Assembly Election and 28% of those who are likely to vote in an immediate election, this is still quite low. Indeed, people in Northern Ireland are less likely (20%) to think that they have a say in how the region is run compared to the UK as a whole (27%)<sup>2</sup>.

There is, however, a desire amongst the public to have more active involvement; three in five want to have a say in how Northern Ireland is run (63%) and half disagree that being active in politics is a waste of time (48%). These views are stronger among political activists,

<sup>2</sup> Comparisons made with Ipsos MORI's Audit of Political Engagement 4 (conducted in November 2006 with 1,490 adults aged 18+ in the UK). Comparative questions refer to "the country" rather than "Northern Ireland"

ABC1s and those who have an interest in the Assembly. However, Interest in a more active involvement in politics in Northern Ireland is also lower than the UK as a whole<sup>3</sup>. In 2008, 69% said they want to have a say in how the country is run in the UK (compared to 63% in NI); 25% believe that being active in politics is a waste of time in the UK (compared to 32% in NI).

Chart 17



Only a third (36%) feel that they can change the way Northern Ireland is run if they got involved in politics, rising to 43% of Nationalists who agree with this statement. A greater proportion of people in Northern Ireland say that they could change the way in which the country is run compared to the UK<sup>4</sup>.

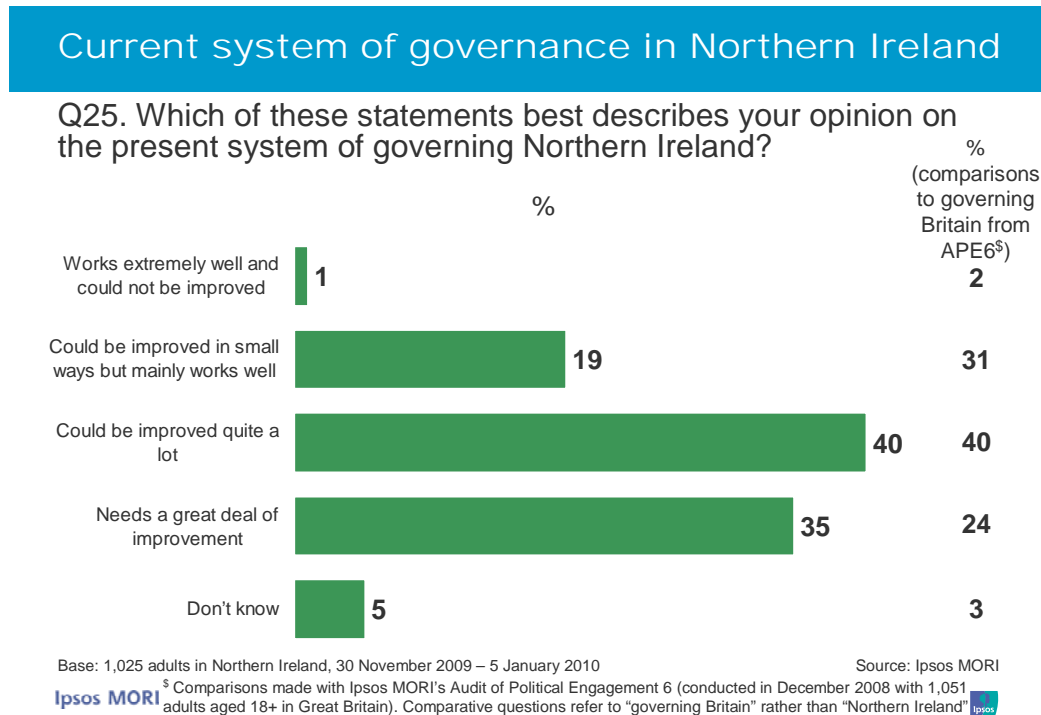
<sup>3</sup> Comparisons made with Ipsos MORI's Audit of Political Engagement 4 (conducted in November 2006 with 1,490 adults aged 18+ in the UK). Comparative questions refer to "the country" rather than "Northern Ireland"

<sup>4</sup> Comparisons made with Ipsos MORI's Audit of Political Engagement 4 (conducted in November 2006 with 1,490 adults aged 18+ in the UK). Comparative questions refer to "the country" rather than "Northern Ireland"

### 6.3. Current system of governance

People in Northern Ireland are quite negative about the way in which Northern Ireland is presently run. Three quarters feel that improvements should be made including 35% who think the current system of governance in Northern Ireland needs a great deal of improvement and 40% who say that it could be improved quite a lot. Over 45s (40% think it needs a great deal of improvement) and Nationalists (40%) are the most ardent critics of the way Northern Ireland is presently governed.

**Chart 18**



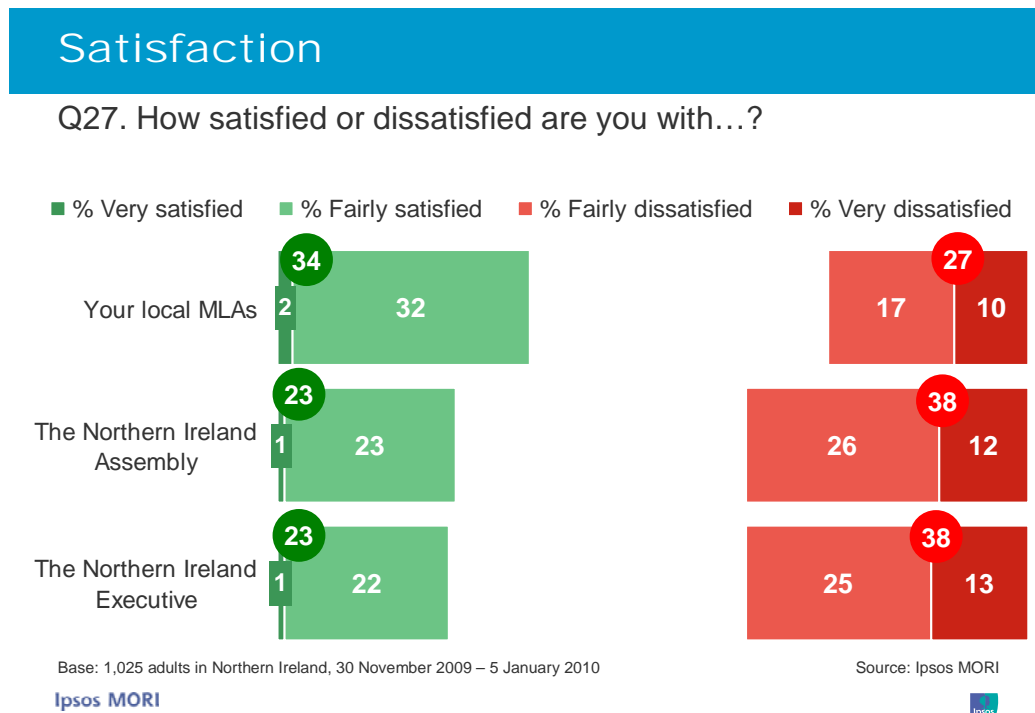
Compared to the equivalent figures from the Audit of Political Engagement 6, the public in Great Britain has a higher level of satisfaction with how the country is run compared to those in Northern Ireland (33% who feel it works well compared with 20% in Northern Ireland)<sup>5</sup>.

<sup>5</sup> Comparisons made with Ipsos MORI's Audit of Political Engagement 6 (conducted in December 2008 with 1,051 adults aged 18+ in Great Britain). Comparative questions refer to "governing Britain" rather than "Northern Ireland"

## 6.4. Satisfaction with governance in Northern Ireland

Dissatisfaction with the Assembly outweighs satisfaction; just a quarter (23%) is satisfied with the Northern Ireland Assembly and 38% are dissatisfied. The same percentages are satisfied and dissatisfied with the Northern Ireland Executive (23%). This perhaps indicates that the public view the Assembly and the Executive as interchangeable entities, or that the Assembly has not distinguished itself from the Executive.

**Chart 19**



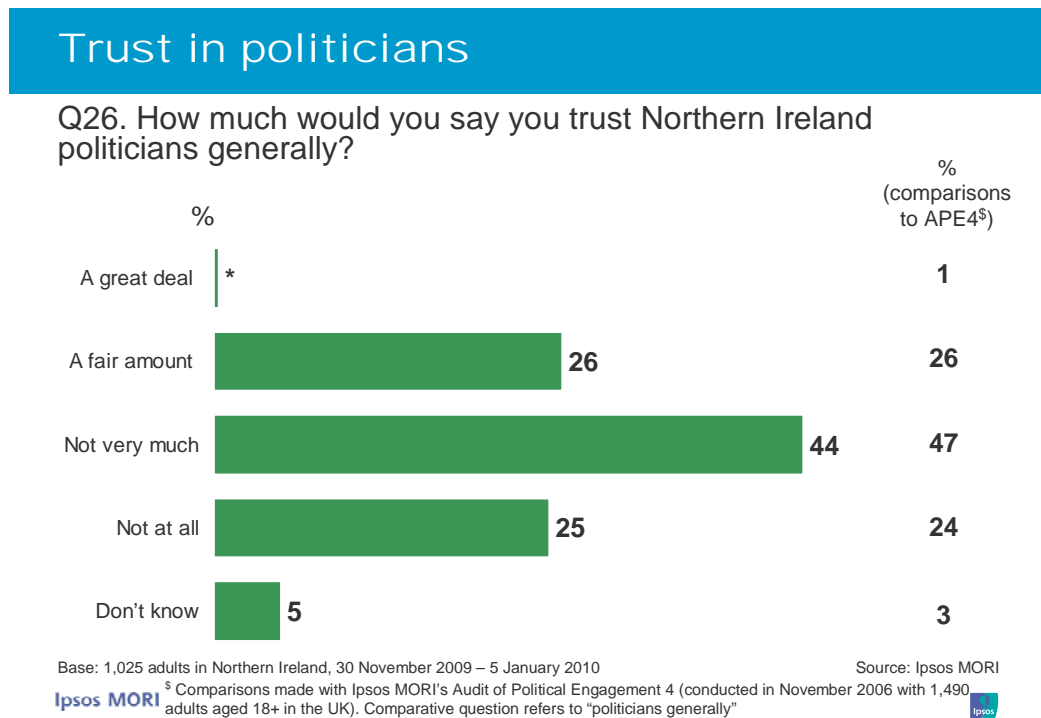
Among those who have an interest in the Assembly and who know about the Assembly, satisfaction increases to 30% for both. This would suggest the greater knowledge that people have; the more likely they are to be favourable about the Assembly. However, while this is higher than the overall figure, satisfaction with the Assembly among these groups still remains low.

Satisfaction with MLAs is higher than for both the Assembly and Executive, with 34% satisfied and 27% dissatisfied. Those who have contacted one of their MLAs are more likely to be satisfied (53%) with their local MLAs. As satisfaction is greater among those who have dealt with MLAs, contact with them could play an important role in enhancing public engagement with the Assembly.

## 6.5. Trust

Trust in Northern Ireland politicians is low with seven in ten (69%) having little or no trust. This reflects the percentage of adults in the UK (71%) who do not trust politicians<sup>6</sup>.

**Chart 20**



<sup>6</sup> Comparisons made with Ipsos MORI's Audit of Political Engagement 4 (conducted in November 2006 with 1,490 adults aged 18+ in the UK). Comparative question refers to "politicians generally".



# 7. Engagement with the Assembly

## 7. Engagement with the Assembly

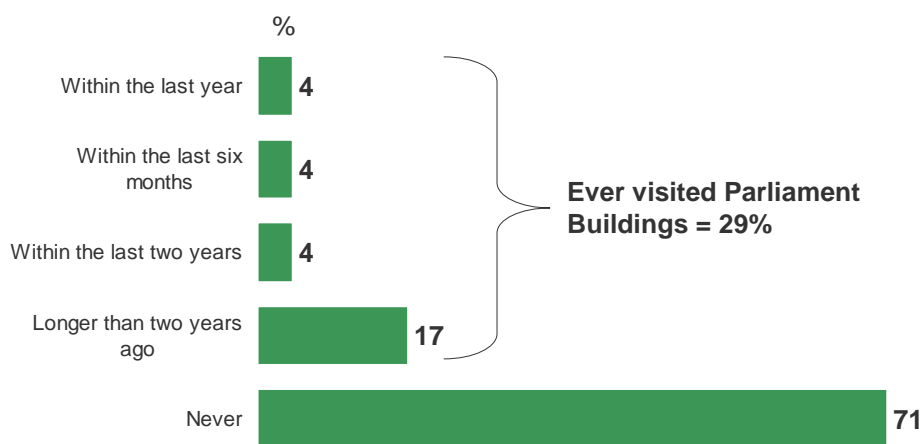
### 7.1. Visiting the Assembly

#### 7.1.1. Visiting Parliament Buildings

**Chart 21**

### Visiting Parliament Buildings

Q12. Have you ever visited Parliament Buildings where the Assembly sits? When did you visit?



Base: 1,025 adults in Northern Ireland, 30 November 2009 – 5 January 2010

Source: Ipsos MORI

Ipsos MORI



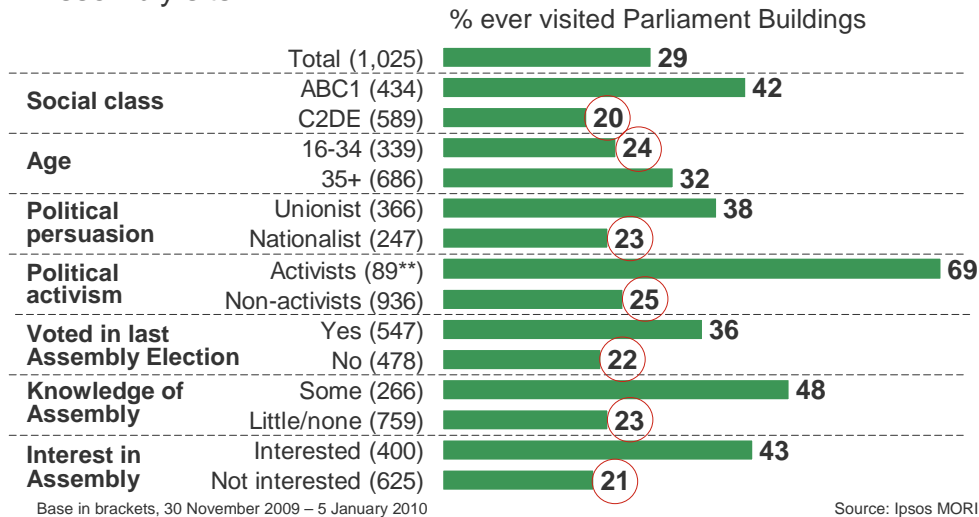
Three in ten (29%) have visited Parliament Buildings at Stormont, although less than a third of these people visited within the last year (8%). Activists are most likely to have visited with a quarter of this group visiting in the last year (28%).

Significantly fewer C2DEs (20% compared with 42% of ABC1s) and Nationalists (23% compared with 38% of Unionists) have ever visited the Assembly. Geographical location is a factor; 21% of those living in County Down and 10% of those in Counties Tyrone and Fermanagh have ever visited Parliament Buildings. This compares to 39% of people from Greater Belfast having ever visited.

Chart 22

## Visiting Parliament Buildings

Q12. Have you ever visited Parliament Buildings where the Assembly sits?

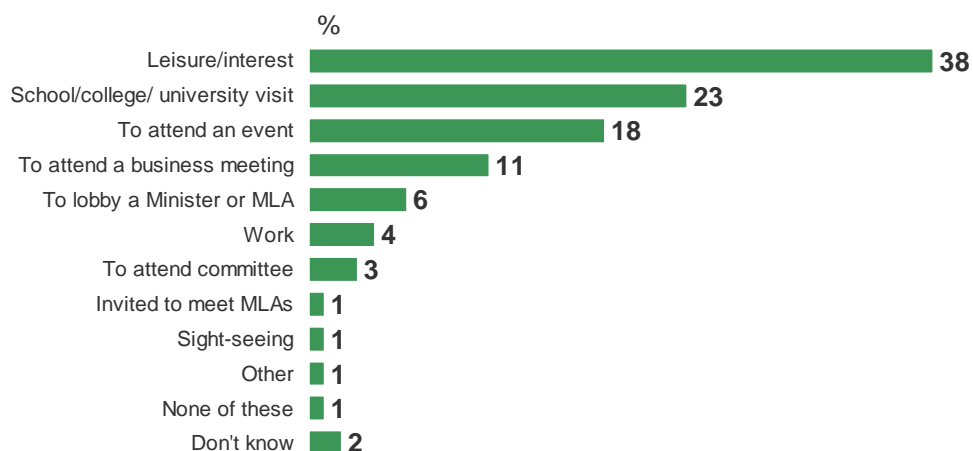


### 7.1.2. Reasons for visiting Parliament Buildings

Chart 23

## Reasons for visiting Parliament Buildings

Q13. For what reason or reasons did you visit Parliament Buildings where the Assembly sits?



Base: All who have visited the Assembly (301), 30 November 2009 – 5 January 2010

Source: Ipsos MORI

Ipsos MORI



Leisure or interest and school/college visits are the most commonly cited reasons for visiting the Assembly (38% and 23% respectively). Women are more likely than men to have visited Parliament Buildings for leisure (43% compared with 31%) or as part of an educational visit (28% compared with 17%), while men are more likely than women to have visited to attend an event (25% compared with 12%) or for work (6% compared with 2%). Those who have lower levels of interest (30% compared to 17% of those interested) and knowledge of the Assembly (28% compared with 15% of those with some knowledge) are more likely to visit the Parliament Buildings as part of a school or university visit than those who are more interested and knowledgeable.

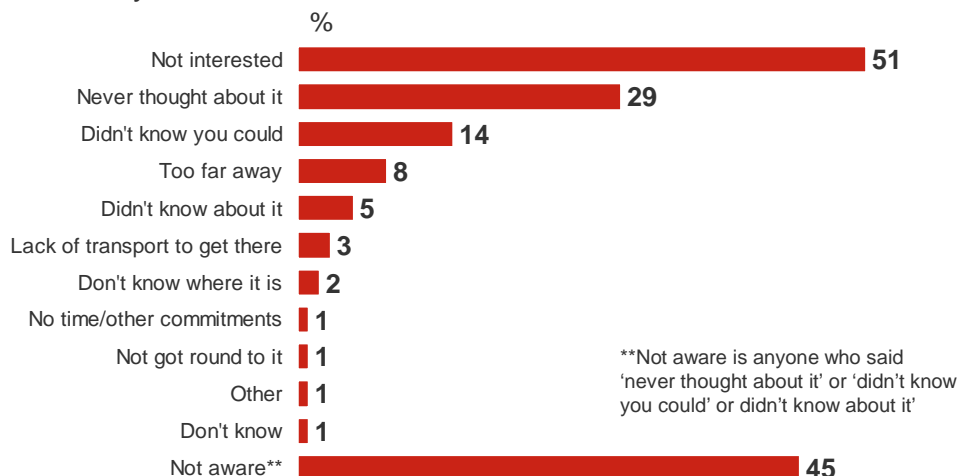
### 7.1.3. Barriers to visiting the Assembly

The main reasons for not visiting Parliament Buildings include lack of interest (51%) and never having previously thought about it (29%). 14% say they were unaware that they could visit. Lack of interest is greater among 16-24 year olds (64%), Catholics (56%) and those in social classes DE (55%).

**Chart 24**

#### Reasons for not visiting Parliament Buildings (spontaneous mentions)

Q14. Why have you not visited Parliament Buildings where the Assembly sits?



Base: All who have not visited the Assembly (724), 30 November 2009 – 5 January 2010

Source: Ipsos MORI

Ipsos MORI



Distance is a barrier to visiting Parliament Buildings for 8% of the population overall but is a greater barrier for those from outside Greater Belfast (10% compared to 5%).

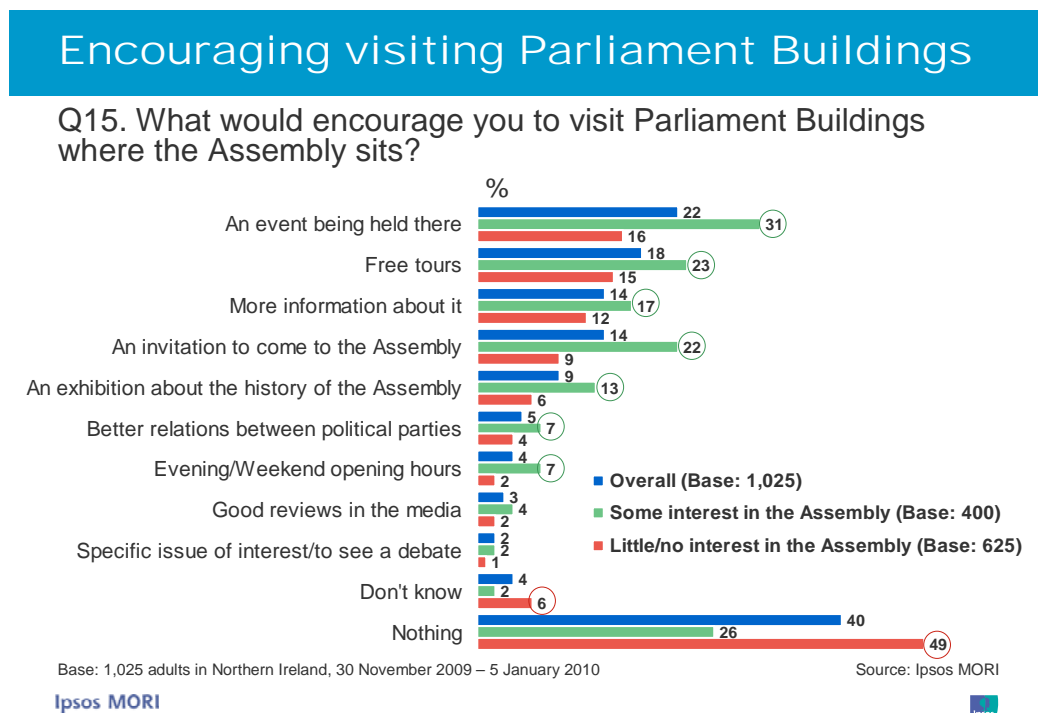
A greater proportion of those who have an interest in the Assembly (35%) than those with little interest (27%) have never thought about visiting. This suggests that there could be greater promotion of the opportunity to visit the Assembly to attract those who are interested in its work.

### 7.1.4. Encouraging visiting the Assembly

Four in ten (40%) adults state that nothing would encourage them to visit Parliament Buildings.

An event at Parliament Buildings would encourage 22% to visit and a free tour would encourage a visit by 18%. These hooks are even more appealing to those who have visited in the past, rising to 33% and 23% respectively. Around one in seven (14%) would be encouraged to visit if they had more information or had an invitation to come to the Assembly.

**Chart 25**



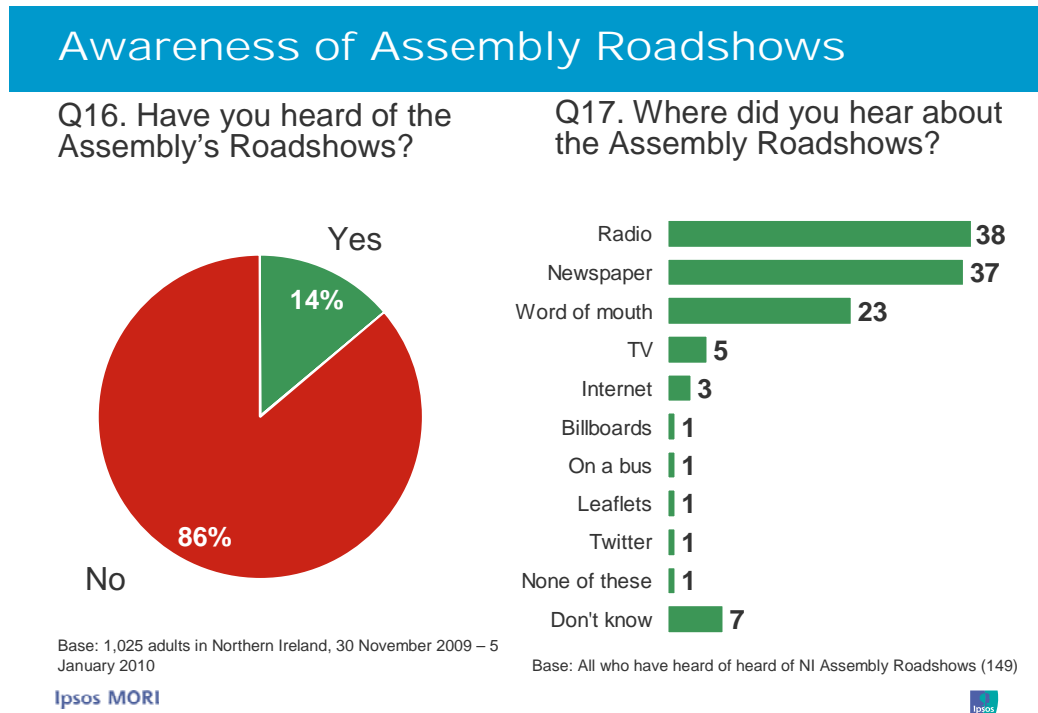
Those with some interest in the Assembly are more likely to be encouraged by each of the top seven factors in chart 25 above compared to those with little or no interest. A greater proportion of those with little interest say that nothing would encourage them (49% compared with 26% of those with some interest).

Better relations between political parties would encourage more Nationalists (8%) than Unionists (3%) to visit the Assembly.

## 7.2. Assembly Roadshows

One in seven (14%) are familiar with the Assembly Roadshows. As with knowledge of the Assembly generally, 16-34 year olds (7%), C2DEs (9%) and women (11%) are all less likely to be familiar with the Roadshows.

**Chart 26**

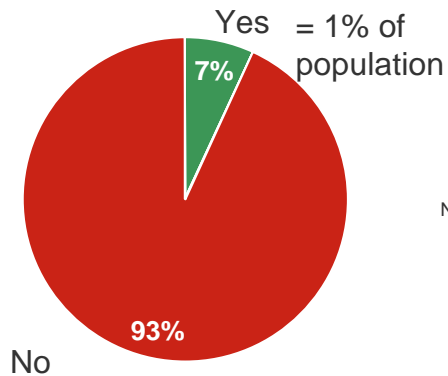


However, even among the 39% of the public who are interested in the Assembly, only one quarter (26%) are aware of the Roadshows. Radio (38%), newspapers (37%) and word of mouth (23%) are the main ways about which people heard about them.

Chart 27

## Attending Assembly Roadshows

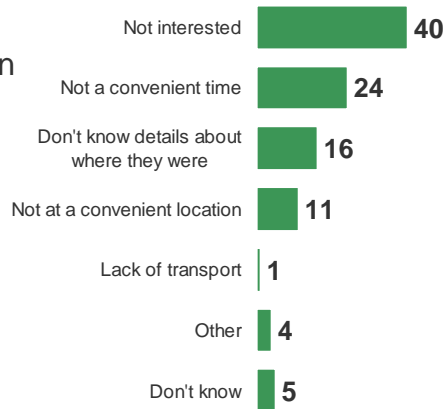
Q18. Did you attend an NI Assembly Roadshow?



Base: Base: All who have heard of NI Assembly Roadshows (149), 30 November 2009 – 5 January 2010

Ipsos MORI

Q19. Why did you not attend a Roadshow?



Base: All who have heard of but not attended a roadshow (139)



Only 7% of those who had heard of the roadshows attended them. Lack of interest is the main reason spontaneously given for not attending (40%), followed by the roadshows not being at a convenient time (24%), not knowing where they were (16%) and not being at a convenient location (11%).

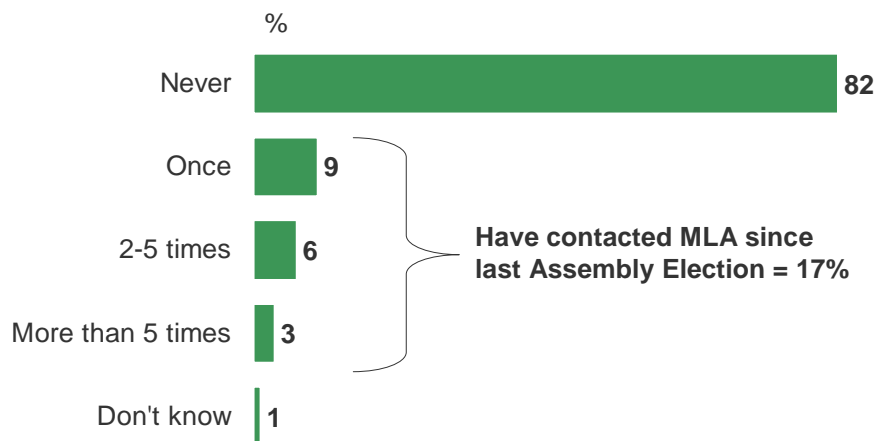
## 7.3. Contact with MLAs

### 7.3.1. Frequency of contact

**Chart 28**

#### Contacting MLAs

Q29. How often, if ever, have you contacted one of your local MLAs since the last Assembly Election in 2007?



Base: 1,025 adults in Northern Ireland, 30 November 2009 – 5 January 2010

Source: Ipsos MORI

Ipsos MORI



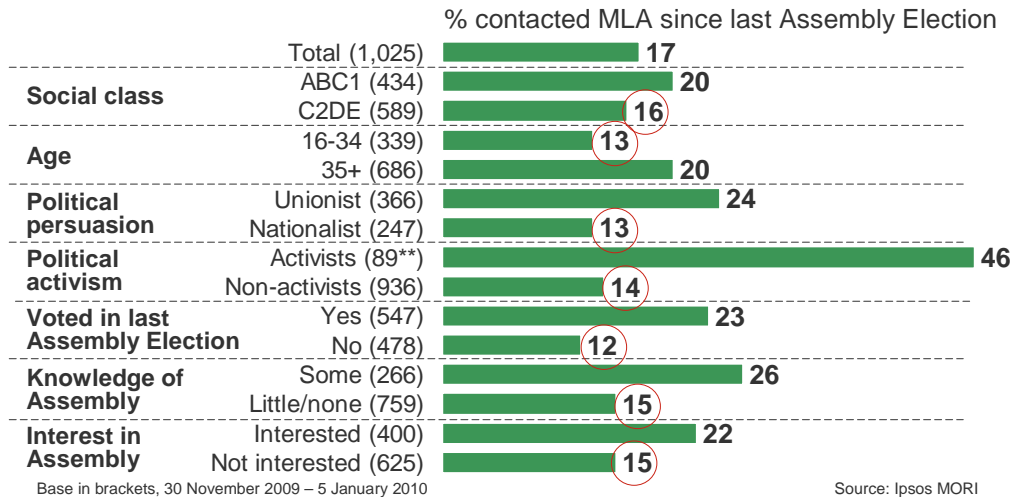
One in five people (17%) have contacted one of their local MLAs since the last Assembly Election in 2007. Contact was greater amongst those who had voted in the last Assembly Election (23% compared with 12% of those who didn't) and amongst Unionists (24% compared with 13% of Nationalists). 16-24 year olds are the least likely of all age groups to have contacted a local MLA (6%).



Chart 29

## Contacting MLAs

Q29. How often, if ever, have you contacted one of your local MLAs since the last Assembly Election in 2007?

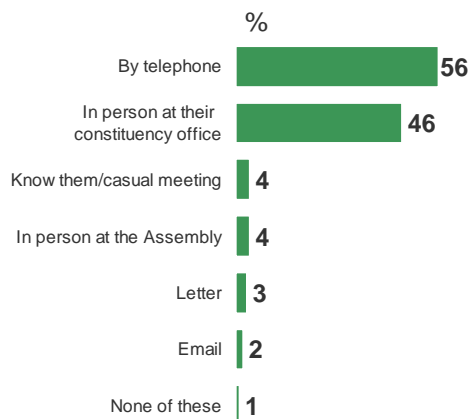


### 7.3.2. Contact with MLAs

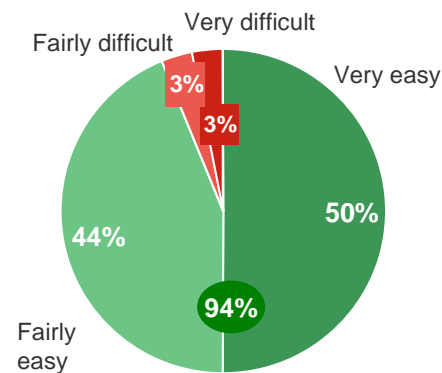
Chart 30

## Contacting MLAs

Q31. Where or how did you contact your MLA(s)?



Q30. How easy or difficult did you find it to contact your local MLA(s)?



Base: All who have contacted their MLA since the last Assembly Election (179), 30 November 2009 – 5 January 2010

Ipsos MORI

The most popular channels used to contact MLAs were telephone (56%) and visiting MLAs in person at their constituency office (46%). Those who are more knowledgeable about the

Assembly are more likely to meet MLAs at Stormont (10%) whereas constituents with less knowledge of the Assembly are more likely to meet them in a casual setting (7%).

Of those who have contacted a local MLA, the vast majority found it easy to do so (94%), although this was lower among 16-34 year olds (80%).

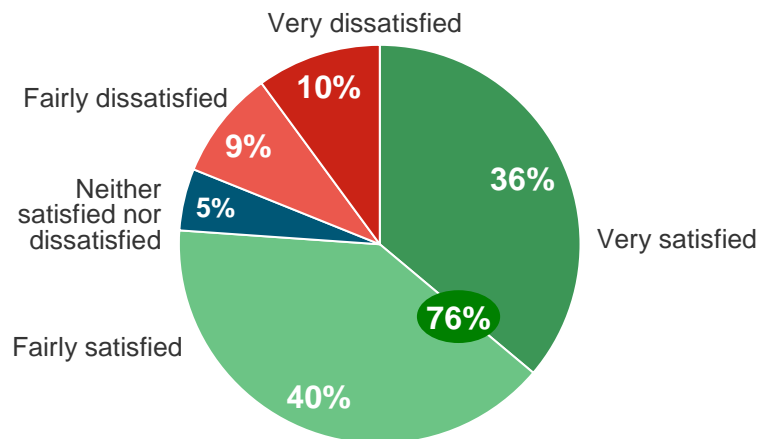
### 7.3.3. Satisfaction with the outcome of contact with MLAs

Satisfaction with such contact is high amongst those who attempted it, with three quarters (76%) satisfied with the outcome of their contact with their MLA.

**Chart 31**

#### Satisfaction with outcome of MLA contact

Q32. Thinking about the time you most recently contacted your MLA(s), how satisfied or dissatisfied are you with the outcome of your contact?



Base: All who have contacted their MLA since the last Assembly Election (179), 30 November 2009 – 5 January 2010

Ipsos MORI

Source: Ipsos MORI



### 7.3.4. MLA roles and responsibilities

While views of MLAs are generally positive, when prompted there is more that the Northern Ireland public would like to see MLAs do. As illustrated in chart 32 overleaf, half would like to see MLAs doing more to represent the views of local people at the Assembly (48%) and the same number would like to see MLAs deal with problems of individual constituents (48%). Some of the Northern Ireland public would like to see MLAs hold the Executive to account more (38%), debate important issues in the Assembly more (34%) and participate in local public meetings and events (32%).

Those who have contacted their local MLAs in the past are more likely to want MLAs to conduct more of all of these activities. Even though satisfaction with MLAs is currently high, doing more, or even simply promoting their work in these areas, may increase satisfaction further.

Just under one in five (18%) would like to see MLAs making and passing laws. This figure increases to 23% among Nationalists. This perhaps supports earlier conclusions that there

is a role in educating the public about the specific remit of the Assembly and MLAs compared to the role of the Executive.

**Chart 32**

## MLAs roles and responsibilities

Q33. Which if any of the following would you like to see your MLAs doing more?



Base: 1,025 adults in Northern Ireland, 30 November 2009 – 5 January 2010

Source: Ipsos MORI

Ipsos MORI



# Appendices

## 8. Appendices

### 8.1. Questionnaire

I would like to ask you some questions about issues affecting Northern Ireland?

\*Q1. SHOWCARD 1 Which, if any, of the things on this list have you done in the last two or three years? MULTICODE OK

A	Voted in the last general election	1
B	Helped on fund raising drives	2
C	Presented your views to a local councillor or MP or MLA	3
D	Urged someone to get in touch with a local councillor or MP or MLA	4
E	Urged someone outside my family to vote	5
F	Made a speech before an organised group	6
G	Been an officer of an organisation or club	7
H	Written a letter to a newspaper editor	8
I	Taken an active part in a political campaign	9
J	Stood for public office	10
	None of these	11

( )

\*Q2. SHOWCARD 2 And which of these, if any, have you done in the last two or three years? MULTICODE OK

A	Voted in the last European election	1
B	Discussed politics or political news with someone else	2
C	Donated money or paid membership fee to a charity or campaigning organisation	3
D	Signed a petition	4
E	Done voluntary work	5
F	Boycotted certain products for political, ethical or environmental reasons	6
G	Expressed my political opinions online	7
H	Been to any political meeting	8
I	Donated money or paid membership fee to a political party	9
J	Taken part in a demonstration, picket or march	10
	None of these	11

( )

\*Q3. SHOWCARD 3 **Which of these local, national and international issues, if any, have you discussed with your family or friends in the last year or so? Just read out the letters that apply MULTICODE OK**

A	Climate change/environmental issues	1
B	Crime or anti-social behaviour in your area	2
C	Educational issues	3
D	How political parties raise or spend their money	4
E	Immigration/asylum	5
F	Northern Ireland Assembly	6
G	Northern Ireland politics	7
H	Pensions	8
I	Public transport	9
J	Quality of health services	10
K	Street cleaning, refuse collection or recycling services	11
L	Housing	12
M	The economy	13
N	The electoral system	14
O	The European Union/the Euro	15
P	World poverty/fair trade	16
	None of these	17
	Don't know	18
		19

( )

\*Q4. SHOWCARD 4 **How much, if anything, do you feel you know about...? READ OUT A-D ROTATE ORDER. SINGLE CODE ONLY FOR EACH**

	A great deal	A fair amount	Not very much	Nothing at all	Don't know
A <b>Politics in Northern Ireland</b>	1	2	3	4	5
B <b>Local issues (i.e. in Northern Ireland)</b>	1	2	3	4	5
C <b>National issues (i.e. in the UK)</b>	1	2	3	4	5
D <b>International issues</b>	1	2	3	4	5

\*Q5. SHOWCARD 5 **How interested would you say you are in ...? READ OUT A-D ROTATE ORDER. SINGLE CODE ONLY FOR EACH**

	Very interested	Fairly interested	Not very interested	Not at all interested	Don't know
A <b>Politics in Northern Ireland</b>	1	2	3	4	5
B <b>Local issues (i.e. in Northern Ireland)</b>	1	2	3	4	5
C <b>National issues (i.e. in the UK)</b>	1	2	3	4	5
D <b>International issues</b>	1	2	3	4	5

Q6 **How many Ministers do you think there are in the Northern Ireland Executive?** DO NOT PROMPT

12	1
108	2
Other answers	3
Don't know	4

( )

Q7 **How many members do you think there are in the Northern Ireland Assembly?** DO NOT PROMPT

108	1
Other answers	2
Don't know	3

( )

Q8 **Please could you tell me whether you think the following statements are true or false? If you don't know, just say so and we will move on to the next question.** READ OUT STATEMENTS A TO C. ROTATE ORDER. SINGLE CODE FOR EACH.

		True	False
A	The minimum age for voting at a elections is 16	1	2
B	MLAs are responsible for representing the interests of the residents of their constituency	1	2
C	MLAs are responsible for making decisions on how Northern Ireland is governed	1	2

READ OUT AND ON SHOWCARD 9 **The Assembly is the devolved Government of Northern Ireland. It has the power to make laws in a wide range of areas, including housing, employment, education, health, agriculture and the environment. It meets at Parliament Buildings, Belfast. Members of the Legislative Assembly (MLAs) are elected by the people of Northern Ireland. The MLAs' role includes passing laws and examining the work of Ministers and their Government departments.**

Q9 SHOWCARD 9 **How much, if anything, do you feel you know about the Assembly?** SINGLE CODE ONLY

A great deal	1
A fair amount	2
Not very much	3
Nothing at all	4
Don't know	5

( )

Q10 SHOWCARD 10 **How interested would you say you are in the work of the Assembly?** SINGLE CODE ONLY

Very interested	1
Fairly interested	2
Not very interested	3
Not at all interested	4
Don't know	5

( )

READ OUT AND ON SHOWCARD 11 **Assembly committees are working groups of 11 MLAs. Each committee specialises in a particular area of work. They scrutinise proposed new laws, review the work of Ministers and their departments and examine issues relating to the work of the Assembly.**

Q11 SHOWCARD 11 **How much, if anything, do you feel you know about Assembly Committees?** SINGLE CODE ONLY

A great deal	1
A fair amount	2
Not very much	3
Nothing at all	4
Don't know	5

( )

Q12 SHOWCARD 12 **Have you ever visited Parliament Buildings where the Assembly sits?** IF YES ASK; **When did you visit?** SINGLE CODE

Yes - Within the last six months	1
Yes - Within the last year	2
Yes - Within the last two years	3
Yes - Longer than two years ago	4
No	5

( )

ASK ALL WHO HAVE VISITED THE ASSEMBLY CODE 1-4 AT Q12

Q13 SHOWCARD 13 **And for what reason or reasons did you visit Parliament Buildings where the Assembly sits?** MULTICODE OK

Leisure/interest	1
As part of a school/college/ university visit	2
To lobby a Minister or MLA	3
To attend an event	4
To attend committee	5
To attend a business meeting	6
Other (PLEASE WRITE IN AND CODE '7')	7
None of these	8
Don't know	9

( )

ASK ALL WHO HAVE NOT VISITED THE ASSEMBLY CODE 5 AT Q12

Q14 SHOWCARD 14 **Why have you not visited Parliament Buildings where the Assembly sits?** PROBE TO PRECODES, MULTICODE OK

Not interested	1
Didn't know about it	2
Too far away	3
Don't know where it is	4
Lack of transport to get there	5
Never thought about it	6
Didn't know you could	7
Other (PLEASE WRITE IN AND CODE '8')	8
Don't know	9

( )



ASK ALL

Q15 **What would encourage you to visit Parliament Buildings where the Assembly sits?**

MULTICODE OK

	( )	
An event being held there	1	
Free tours	2	
Evening/Weekend opening hours	3	
More information about it	4	
An exhibition about the history of the Assembly	5	
Better relations between political parties	6	
- An invitation to come to the Assembly	7	
- Good reviews in the media	8	
Other (WRITE IN & CODE '9')	9	
Nothing	10	( )
Don't know	11	

Q16 **Have you heard of the Assembly's Roadshows?**

Yes	1	GO TO Q17	
No	2	GO TO Q20	( )

ASK ALL WHO HAVE HEARD OF NI ASSEMBLY ROADSHOWS (CODE 1 AT Q16)

Q17 **Where did you hear about the Assembly Roadshows?** MULTICODE OK

	( )	
Radio	1	
Newspaper	2	
Word of mouth	3	
Internet	4	
Twitter	5	
Facebook	6	
Other (WRITE IN & CODE '7')	7	
None of these	8	( )
Don't know	9	

ASK ALL WHO HAVE HEARD OF NI ASSEMBLY ROADSHOWS (CODE 1 AT Q16)

Q18 **Did you attend an NI Assembly Roadshow?**

Yes	1	GO TO Q20	
No	2	GO TO Q19	( )

ASK ALL WHO DIDN'T ATTEND A ROADSHOW (CODE 2 AT Q18)

Q19 **SHOWCARD 19 Why did you not attend a Roadshow?** PROBE TO PRECODES.

MULTICODE OK

Not interested	1	
Lack of transport	2	
Not a convenient time	3	
Not at a convenient location	4	
Don't know details about where they were/what day/time etc	5	
Other (WRITE IN & CODE '6')	6	
Don't know	7	( )

ASK ALL

Q20 PICTURE SHOWCARD Do you recognise this notice which has recently been in local newspapers?

Yes	1
No	2
Don't know	3

Q21 Did you vote in the most recent Northern Ireland Assembly election in 2007?

Yes	1
No	2
Don't remember	3
Was not eligible	4
Refused	5

( )

Q22 How likely are you to vote in an immediate <READ OUT A-D> on a scale of 1 to 10, where 10 means you are absolutely certain you will vote and 1 means you are absolutely certain you will not vote? ROTATE AND TICK START SINGLE CODE ONLY

	A) An immediate Assembly Election	B) An immediate Westminster election	C) An immediate Local council Election	D) An immediate European Election
10 – Absolutely certain to vote	10	10	10	10
9	9	9	9	9
8	8	8	8	8
7	7	7	7	7
6	6	6	6	6
5	5	5	5	5
4	4	4	4	4
3	3	3	3	3
2	2	2	2	2
1 – Absolutely certain not to vote	1	1	1	1
Don't know	11	11	11	11
Refused	12	12	12	12

( )

\*Q23 SHOWCARD 23 How much influence do you feel you have over decision-making in Northern Ireland? SINGLE CODE ONLY

A great deal influence	1
Some influence	2
Not very much influence	3
No influence at all	4
Don't know	5

( )

\*Q24 SHOWCARD 24 **To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements:**  
ROTATE ORDER. SINGLE CODE ONLY

		Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
A	When people like me get involved in politics, they really can change the way that Northern Ireland is run	1	2	3	4	5	6
B	Being active in politics is a waste of time	1	2	3	4	5	6
C	I want to have a say in how Northern Ireland is run	1	2	3	4	5	6
D	I have a say in how Northern Ireland is run at the moment	1	2	3	4	5	6

\*Q25 SHOWCARD 25 **Which of these statements best describes your opinion on the present system of governing Northern Ireland?** SINGLE CODE ONLY

Works extremely well and could not be improved	1	( )
Could be improved in small ways but mainly works well	2	
Could be improved quite a lot	3	
Needs a great deal of improvement	4	
Don't know	5	( )

\*Q26 SHOWCARD 26 **How much would you say you trust Northern Ireland politicians generally?** SINGLE CODE ONLY

A great deal	1	( )
A fair amount	2	
Not very much	3	
Not at all	4	
Don't know	5	( )

\*Q27 SHOWCARD 27 **How satisfied or dissatisfied are you with...?** READ OUT A-C ROTATE ORDER. SINGLE CODE ONLY FOR EACH

		Very satisfied	Fairly satisfied	Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied	Fairly dissatisfied	Very dissatisfied	Don't know
A	The Northern Ireland Assembly	1	2	3	4	5	6
B	The Northern Ireland Executive	1	2	3	4	5	6
C	Your local MLAs	1	2	3	4	5	6

Q28 **What are the names of your local MLAs?**

[Names of MLAs in constituency] – DO NOT PROMPT	1	( )
Name given but not same as above	2	
Don't know	3	( )

Q29 SHOWCARD 29 **How often, if ever, have you contacted one of your local MLAs since the last Assembly Election in 2007?**

Never	1	GO TO Q33
Once	2	
2-5 times	3	ASK Q30
More than 5 times	4	
Don't know	5	GOTO Q33

( )

ASK ALL WHO HAVE CONTACTED THEIR LOCAL MLAS (CODES 2-4 AT Q29)

Q30 SHOWCARD 30 **How easy of difficult did you find it to contact your local MLA(s)?**  
SINGLE CODE ONLY

	Very easy ( )	Fairly easy ( )	Neither ( )	Fairly difficult ( )	Very difficult ( )	Don't know ( )
	1	2	3	4	5	6

Q31 **Where or how did you contact your MLA(s)** MULTICODE OK

	( )
By telephone	1
In person at their constituency office	2
In person at the Assembly	3
Other (WRITE IN & CODE '4')	4
None of these	5
Don't know	6

( )

Q32 SHOWCARD 32 **Thinking about the time you most recently contacted your MLA(s), how satisfied or dissatisfied are you with the outcome of your contact**

Very satisfied	1
Fairly satisfied	2
Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied	3
Fairly dissatisfied	4
Very dissatisfied	5
Don't know	6

ASK ALL

Q33 SHOWCARD 33 Which if any of the following would you like to see your MLAs doing more?  
MULTICODE OK

		( )
A	Debating important issues in the Assembly	1
B	Representing the views of their political party	2
C	Presenting their views through the media	3
D	Dealing with the problems of individual constituents	4
E	Representing the views of local people in the Assembly	5
F	Holding the government to account	6
G	Participating in local public meetings and events	7
H	Representing the UK's national interests- use the media	8
I	Holding constituency surgeries	9
J	Go on fact-finding trips	10
K	Communicating with constituents on the doorstep or by telephone	11
L	Making/passing laws	12
M	Furthering personal and career interests	13
N	Other (WRITE IN & CODE '14')	14
	None of these	15
	Don't know	16

Q35 SHOWCARD 35 How frequently, if at all, do you use each of the following to inform yourself about the Assembly? READ OUT A-N ROTATE ORDER. SINGLE CODE ONLY FOR EACH

		Regularly	Occasionally	Rarely	Never	Don't know		
A	Local newspapers	1	2	3	4	5		
B	National newspapers	1	2	3	4	5		
C	Coverage on television	1	2	3	4	5		
D	Coverage on radio	1	2	3	4	5		
E	Leaflets through the door	1	2	3	4	5		
F	Leaflets in public places e.g. supermarkets, local shops, pubs, betting shops	1	2	3	4	5		
G	Internet (general)	1	2	3	4	5		
H	Northern Ireland Assembly website	1	2	3	4	5		
I	Social networking websites (e.g. Facebook/Twitter)	1	2	3	4	5		
J	Information from university/school/college	1	2	3	4	5		
K	Friends/family/colleagues	1	2	3	4	5		
L	Community groups/pressure groups	1	2	3	4	5		
N	Political parties	1	2	3	4	5		

Q36 SHOWCARD 36 **Which of the following best describes you? Please read out the appropriate letter. SINGLE CODE ONLY**

R	Nationalist	1
S	Unionist	2
A	Neither	3
	Don't know	4
	Refused	5

( )

## 8.2. Statistical reliability

The respondents to the questionnaire are only samples of the total "population" of Northern Ireland, so we cannot be certain that the figures obtained are exactly those we would have if everybody in Northern Ireland had been interviewed (the "true" values). However, the variation between the sample results and the "true" values can be predicted from the knowledge of the size of the samples on which the results are based and the number of times that a particular answer is given. The confidence with which this prediction can be made is usually chosen to be 95% - that is, the chances are 95 in 100 that the "true" value will fall within a specified range.

The table below illustrates the approximate ranges for different sample sizes and percentage results at the "95% confidence interval".

Size of sample on which survey result is based	Approximate sampling tolerances applicable to percentages at or near these levels		
	10% or 90%	30% or 70%	50%
	±	±	±
100 interviews	6	9	10
500 interviews	3	4	4
1,000 interviews	2	3	3

For example, with the full sample size of 1,025 where 50% give a particular answer, the chances are 19 in 20 that the "true" value (which would have been obtained if the whole population had been interviewed) will fall within the range of  $\pm 3$  percentage points from the sample result (i.e. between 47% and 53%).

**Strictly speaking the tolerances shown here apply only to random samples; in practice good quality quota sampling has been found to be as accurate.**

When results are compared between separate groups within a sample, different results may be obtained. The difference may be "real", or it may occur by chance (because not everyone in the population has been interviewed). To test if the difference is a real one - i.e. if it is "statistically significant", we again have to know the size of the samples, the percentage giving a certain answer and the degree of confidence chosen. If we assume "95% confidence interval", the differences between the results of two separate groups must be greater than the values given in the table below. We have listed in common subgroup differences referred to through the report.

Size of samples compared	Differences required for significance at or near these percentage levels		
	10% or 90%	30% or 70%	50%
	±	±	±
494 (men) and 531 (women)	4	6	6
380 (16-34s) and 645 (over 35s)	4	6	6
89 (activists) and 936 (non-activists)	7	10	11
1,025 (NI) and 1,051 (GB comparisons)	3	4	4

### 8.3. Guide to social grade definitions social grade definitions

Listed below is a summary of the social grade definitions on all surveys carried out by Ipsos MORI. These are based on classifications used by the Institute of Practitioners in Advertising.

**A** Professionals such as doctors, surgeons, solicitors or dentists; chartered people like architects; fully qualified people with a large degree of responsibility such as senior editors, senior civil servants, town clerks, senior business executives and managers, and high ranking grades of the Services.

**B** People with very responsible jobs such as university lecturers, hospital matrons, heads of local government departments, middle management in business, qualified scientists, bank managers, police inspectors, and upper grades of the Services.

**C1** All others doing non-manual jobs; nurses, technicians, pharmacists, salesmen, publicans, people in clerical positions, police sergeants/constables, and middle ranks of the Services.

**C2** Skilled manual workers/craftsmen who have served apprenticeships; foremen, manual workers with special qualifications such as long distance lorry drivers, security officers, and lower grades of Services.

**D** Semi-skilled and unskilled manual workers, including labourers and mates of occupations in the C2 grade and people serving apprenticeships; machine minders, farm labourers, bus and railway conductors, laboratory assistants, postmen, door-to-door and van salesmen.

**E** Those on lowest levels of subsistence including pensioners, casual workers, and others with minimum levels of income