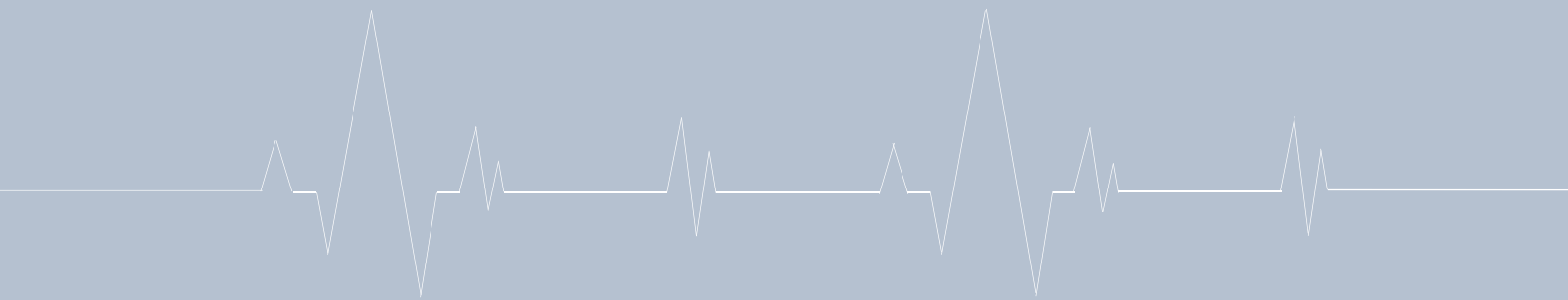


The Good, The Bad and The Troubles

*The role of segregation in Northern Ireland and its
impact on intergroup relations*



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Prepared for peace, ready for war.

Preface

Dear reader,

Before you lies my master thesis on the role of segregation in Northern Ireland and its impact on intergroup relations. I could use this preface to tell my story of this thesis, but I prefer to tell those of others. Do not get me wrong, this thesis was a ride and I am beyond thankful for my thesis supervisor dr. Haley Swedlund. Your advice and support meant a lot. Moreover, I am grateful to my parents for giving me the opportunities to pursue what I love. Thank you both.

As a kid of peace, comprehending or even grasping the consequences of war is hard. During my bachelor, I quickly found my interest in conflict (especially in relation to the history of the United Kingdom), which led me to the work of Lyra McKee. McKee was a journalist who wrote several publications on the consequences of the Troubles. She was a kid of war, even though she was too young to remember the worst of the terror. In her article 'Suicide of the Ceasefire Babies', she highlighted the ways the Troubles affected the Ceasefire Babies. With elevated suicide rates among youngsters, inter-generational trauma had seeped its way into the Northern Irish population. She decided to dedicate her life to this generation by documenting those who were supposed to reap the benefits of a peaceful Northern Ireland.

'Derry tonight. Absolute madness.' were the last words she tweeted. On 18 April 2019, twenty-one years after the Good Friday Agreement, she was shot dead while observing riots in Derry. Ironically enough, she died while raising awareness for her main interest: the heritage of the Troubles that continues to claim lives. It was her death that led to unrest throughout the UK. One side painted 'Unfinished Revolution' on several walls in Northern Ireland, while the other removed the letters 'un' from the same slogan. The latter was done in remembrance of McKee. It is, however, her own work that gave her a legacy. A legacy that helps others to soldier on.

I would like this thesis to fill scientific gaps, which are needed to give the Northern Irish population the ability to live together instead of living next to each other. I am proud of this work, and hope that the insights of this thesis are of the societal and scientific value needed to attain durable peace in Northern Ireland. As McKee dedicated her life to her beliefs, I'd like to dedicate this thesis to her. To her bravery. To her faith that *it won't always be like this – that it's going to get better*.

To Lyra McKee (1990 – 2019).

I hope you enjoy reading.

Simone Kuipers

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List of Abbreviations

DUP	Democratic Unionist Party
ERDF	European Regional Development Fund
EU	European Union
GB	Great Britain
GFA	Good Friday Agreement
NI	Northern Ireland
NIFH	The Northern Ireland Federation of Housing Associations
NILT	Northern Ireland Life and Times Survey
SEUPB	Special European Programmes Body
SIT	Social Identity Theory
UK	United Kingdom

Executive Summary

The objective of this research is to grant a critical analysis of the impact of segregation on the Northern Irish society. By studying the relationship between segregation and favourability towards the outgroup, this thesis analyses the impact of division and the potential of space-sharing. In doing so, it aims to provide more information to the existing debate between integrationists and segregationists, as well as gain insights into the reasons behind unfavourability between both communities. Such insights are relevant as new policy is dependent on an extensive foundation of information. As mentioned, there is little consensus about the impact of segregation on intergroup relations. Partitionists, on one hand, have concluded that 'desegregation enhances tension and thus holds a negative impact on intergroup relations' (Schmid et. al., 2008). Dividing conflicting groups into distinctive sovereign states is their approach on managing ethnic dispute. Consociationalists take a different segregation approach: they avoid partition through a high-regulated system of shared power. Integrationists, on the other hand, favour desegregation. They argue that 'desegregation affords the opportunity for engaging in contact with other groups which, can have positive consequences for intergroup relations' (Schmid et. al., 2008, p. 58). I argue that these distinct viewpoints fall short in researching beyond their own perspective. To research this debate, extensive quantitative research has been set up, which will answer the following research question: *'What is the impact of segregation on the intergroup attitudes between the Protestant and Catholic communities in Northern Ireland?'*. The NILT-survey (1998-2021) was used to gain insight into the drafted research question. Firstly, descriptive statistics determined the level of segregation in Northern Ireland. On an educational level, the answer was evident: less than 25 per cent of the Northern Irish population had attended a mixed school. On the residential level, the answer was less clear: the NILT-survey did not explicitly ask respondents the extent of diversity of their neighbourhood's population. It did, however, ask whether areas in their neighbourhood (such as parks, leisure and shopping centres) are shared and open. The short answer to this question was: yes, the grant majority of the Northern Irish population considers these areas to be shared and open. As people were not asked whether the majority of their neighbourhood's population is confirm one's own religion, this study recommends NILT to include those questions in further research.

After further analyses (regression analysis), a thorough answer to the research question was formulated. In summary, it can be concluded that segregation, for both the Protestant and Catholic community in Northern Ireland, has a negative impact on the attitudes towards the outgroup. This research has solely found support for the integrationist point of view. The effect of neighbourhood segregation (through shared services and facilities) on intergroup attitudes is prominent, as well as the negative effect of attending a single-religion school on intergroup favourability. Besides that, this study has found that cross-community projects contribute to a positive intergroup attitude.

Besides the negative impact of segregation on attitudes towards the outgroup, this study also tried to determine the extent of the preference to segregate. Firstly, this study defined that the majority of the Northern Irish population does not prefer to segregate. Secondly, a regression analysis revealed that a

feeling of unsafety is a cause for those who still prefer to segregate. Based on these findings, this thesis moved on to its final step: aligning the found results with the EU PEACE programme. Northern Ireland has been receiving financial support from the EU (known as the EU Programme for Peace and Reconciliation, or EU PEACE programme) aiming to strengthen cohesion between Catholic and Protestant communities (European Parliament, 2021). It funds a large proportion of peace-building work by supporting cross-community and cross-border projects. The shared education programmes of the EU PEACE programme – whether through formal integrated schools or inclusivity projects between single-religion schools – likely tackle a couple of this thesis' raised issues. Additionally, funding cross-community projects in neighbourhoods are a helpful policy initiative. Especially now that Brexit caused additional turmoil, and intergroup unfavourability has reached a low point, an explicit approach is needed to tackle negative intergroup attitudes. This study has, therefore, recommended several policy plans which can be added to the existing EU PEACE programme: Firstly, as shared facilities have less potential if people remain to live segregated, it is important to pay more attention to residential segregation. Fund social housing projects that tackle the barriers that prevent individuals from opting to live in a shared area. Secondly, the existing cross-community projects in school will likely only work for children whose parents are already open to their children meeting the 'other'. It is, therefore, also necessary to create teaching curricula which focus on the benefits of the plurality of the Northern Irish society. By making such curricula mandatory in every (mixed or single-identity) school every child is brought up with knowledge about both communities in Northern Ireland.

1. INTRODUCTION

‘The Ceasefire Babies was what they called us. Those too young to remember the worst of the terror [...]. We were the Good Friday Agreement generation, destined to never witness the horrors of the war but to reap the spoils of peace. The spoils just never seemed to reach us’

[Lyra McKee, 2016]

In societies emerging from conflict, space-sharing represents a challenge to successful conflict transformation (McDowell, Braniff & Murphy, 2017). Creating such ‘shared’ space in divided societies is often incredibly important and inherently connected to peacebuilding. Not only does the development of space-sharing underpin political transition, but it also aids the ability to resolve intergroup divisions (Schmid et. al., 2008). Hence, many scholars argue that space-sharing contributes to the sustainability of peace (Hughes et. al., 2007; Schmid et. al., 2008; Hayes & McAllister, 2012). Northern Ireland is one of these post-conflict societies characterised by a lack of space-sharing. Many people live in homogenous, segregated communities, which they share with solely or primarily members of their own identity group. As of 2021, approximately 60 per cent of the people in Northern Ireland live in these predominantly segregated communities. Other types of segregation also exist including, for example, in education. In 2017, 93 per cent of the children in Northern Ireland attended segregated schools (McGibbon, 2019). A combination of factors has led to these segregation rates. Among these factors are for example the aversion of both unionists and nationalists to live and work together. For many unionists, sharing space means an intrusion of an expanding Catholic population. For many nationalists, it means that their right to decide where to live is determined by a peace agreement that did not cover all their basic needs (Herrault & Murtagh, 2019). Besides the reluctance to share space, another reason for a high degree of segregation is the zero-sum nature of Northern Irish politics (McDowell, Braniff & Murphy, 2017). In the last decades, the Democratic Unionist Party (DUP) and Sinn Féin (Republican Party) have both strengthened their positions around, respectively, loyalty toward Britain and a unification with the Republic of Ireland (Herrault & Murtagh, 2019). Segregation is perceived as an easy method to comply with their respective loyalties and is, therefore, a valuable asset for votes. Segregation is, thus, also a structural issue in which politicians have a stake in its continuation (Herrault & Murtagh, 2019). According to Herrault and Murtagh (2019), the enduring character of segregation signifies the incomplete nature of conflict transformation in Northern Ireland.

Since Northern Ireland is undisputedly a segregated society, literature has an apparent focus on desegregation. For some scholars, the question arose whether increased desegregation is indeed a necessary asset and inextricably linked to successful conflict transformation. Studying the answers to

this question leads to an interesting debate between those who defend the need for desegregation as a method of successful peacebuilding and those who question the welfare of such policy attempts. The latter argue that a focus on desegregation impedes the ability to partition (Fontana, 2016). Partition is characterised by the separation of two groups into distinctive sovereign states (Sambanis, 2000). Partitionists assume that enmity will not cease until both groups are separated. Hence, they favour partition as a way of managing dispute (Dixon, 2005). Consociationalists have also questioned the need for desegregation. They, however, take a different approach to partitionists. Consociationalists favour a high-regulated system of shared power, and, thereby, avoid partition. Consociationalism is characterised by internal power-sharing arrangements among political elites and is considered to be one of the most valuable assets to settle intergroup rivalry in post-conflict societies (Hayes & McAllister, 2012). Integrationists, on the other hand, favour desegregation because they believe that contact between competing communities can lead to the formation of an identity distinction that is less hostile. They fear that a system based on segregation will strengthen the antagonistic intergroup relation, and thus will stir up the threat of a violent conflict.

The desegregation debate has been included in the Northern Irish peace process. After years of negotiations, the Good Friday Agreement (GFA) was signed on the 10th of April 1998. It established consociational power-sharing between Irish nationalists and British nationalists in Northern Ireland. Within the GFA, Catholic and Protestant communities can be segregated into distinctive areas on which this elite settlement can share power (Dixon, 2005). The peace lines, a term given to a series of separation barriers in Northern Ireland, are according to consociational presumption an example that 'high fences make good neighbours' (Harris, 2010). Integrationists, contrarily, disagree with the segregation aspects of the GFA and favour desegregation between communities because it can lead to the construction of a communal Northern Irish identity. They have argued that contact between hostile communities is an effective method to regain trust and reduce prejudice. On the other hand, this claim is disputed by segregationists who claim that hostile communities will have negative intergroup contact that will merely enhance the perception of threat.

1.1 RESEARCH QUESTION

The objective of this research is to grant a critical analysis of the impact of segregation on the Northern Irish society. By studying the relationship between (the independent variable) segregation and (the dependent variable) favourability towards the outgroup, this thesis analyses the extent of the impact of division and the potential of space-sharing. By defining the factors that have a negative impact on attitudes towards the outgroup, this thesis provides more insight into the formation of unfavourable relationships. This gained knowledge is needed to provide policymakers with the necessary information on (de)segregation which is to date limited and limiting (Herrault & Murtagh, 2019). Hence, this study will outline the extent to which the EU PEACE programme has aligned its projects with the found results of this study. Gaining insight into these three subjects is especially relevant as the UK's exit from the European Union contributed to renewed tensions between the Catholic and Protestant communities in

Northern Ireland (Fleming, 2021). New policy is dependent on an extensive foundation of information, which this thesis will play a part in.

This leads to the following research question:

What is the impact of segregation on the intergroup attitudes between the Protestant and Catholic communities in Northern Ireland?

1.1.1 SUB QUESTIONS

The relationship between national identity and segregation has long been a matter of interest to scholars. In Northern Ireland, too, segregation is linked to the maintenance of strong national identities. It has been argued that segregation lends a hand in maintaining strong national identities which consequently causes unfavourable intergroup relations (Gallagher & Cairns, 2011). Several scholars have established a strong correlation between segregation and identity formation (Gallagher & Cairns, 2011; McKeown, 2013; McAlister, Scroton & Haydon, 2014). Besides this correlation, national identity has often been claimed to be at the heart of conflict. People consider their affiliation with one of the opposing communities as the most vital aspect of their identity. A survey from 2003 even showed that 60 per cent of the 16-year-olds in Northern Ireland took great importance in their national identity, in comparison to 15 per cent who perceived it as unimportant (Devine & Schubotz, 2003). In addition to the relationship that scholars have established between segregation and national identity, greatly important is according to McAlister, Scroton & Haydon (2014, p. 299) 'the relationships between the strength of national identity and outgroup attitudes in a society in transition from conflict'. They claim that a stronger sense of identity could lead to a negative outgroup attitude. However, in this debate, too, there is not solely unanimity. For some scholars, the question arose whether strong national identity, emerging from being brought up in segregation, has indeed a negative impact on intergroup relations. According to Roche (2008), young people in Northern Ireland were so 'cocooned' from the other community that they were so unaffected by sectarianism that the other community had no relevance to them. For them, living separately 'keeps the peace'.

As there is little consensus on the exact impact of segregation on strength of national identity (and subsequently on intergroup relations), multiple viewpoints prevail. This study will derive several hypotheses based on these viewpoints, to subsequently test them on validity. To achieve that objective, the following sub-question has been formulated:

SQ 1: To what extent does strength of national identity mediate the relationship between segregation and the intergroup attitudes between Protestant and Catholic communities in Northern Ireland?

This thesis aims to provide policymakers with the necessary information on (de)segregation. For future policy, it is, next to the causes and consequences of segregation, vital to study the reasons why people prefer to segregate. Based on existing theories and previous studies, the main force driving self-segregation has been allocated to a feeling of unsafety. Neighbourhoods have been pointed the role of being a safe haven. A lack of such safe haven is considered to be an underlying motivation for self-segregation (Bouma-Doff, 2007). Once people have experienced or perceived hostility from the outgroup, people feel more unsafe, which strengthens the preference for coethnic neighbours. Especially in post-conflict societies, a sense of safety plays a role in segregation preferences. As Shelling (1971) has shown that even weak segregation preferences can result in high levels of actual segregation, it is important to study the impact of feeling unsafe in the context of Northern Ireland. Hence, the second sub-question has been formulated:

SQ 2: Does perceived intergroup unsafety increase preferences to segregate in Northern Ireland?

As mentioned in paragraph 1.1, this study aims to provide policymakers with the necessary information on (de)segregation. The largest funder of desegregation projects in Northern Ireland is the EU Programme for Peace and Reconciliation (EU PEACE programme, PEACE I to IV). In response to the start of the peace process in 1994, Northern Ireland has been receiving this financial support to strengthen cohesion between Catholic and Protestant communities (European Parliament, 2021). It funds a large proportion of peace-building work by supporting cross-community and cross-border projects. Its focus on the structural and social dimensions of conflict, primarily at the grassroots levels, aligns with integrationist theorists such as Lederach and Saunders, who argue that peace is solely durable if ordinary citizens are integrated into the reconciliation process (Racioppi & O'Sullivan See, 2007).

As the final chapter of this thesis analyses the policy approach of the EU PEACE programme, it is important to study the impact of cross-community projects on intergroup attitudes. Cross-community projects have been a known method to enhance intergroup favourability. Yet, there are also concerns about the nature of these projects – also within the EU PEACE programme. Opinions differ sharply about the value of cross-community projects and the lack of single identity projects funded by the EU PEACE programme. A qualitative research from 2009 (Byrne et. al.) discovered that interviewees perceived single identity projects as a necessary asset to build 'a community up to a point where it was reasonably able to develop cross-community ties' (Byrne et. al., 2009, p. 648). Knox & Hughes (1997) have also claimed that within single identity projects people can face fears and prejudices in a safe environment prior to cross-community contact. Since the EU PEACE programme often skips the step of single-community projects, scholars have wondered whether the cross-community projects are able to reap their maximum benefits. This study will, therefore, study the direct impact of cross-community projects on intergroup relations in Northern Ireland. This will allow for and contribute to a constructive evaluation

of the EU PEACE programme in the final chapter. The third, and last, sub-question has, therefore, been formulated as such:

SQ 3: To what extent do cross-community projects have an impact on intergroup favourability in Northern Ireland?

To guide the reader through this thesis, I will present the structure of this research. In chapter 2, I will expand on the relevant state-of-the-art literature. Besides that, key debates and concepts will be discussed. In chapter 3, the methodology of this thesis is operationalised. All the data and variables used in this thesis will be presented in that chapter. Chapter 4 will focus on the found results of the descriptive and regression analyses. Chapter 5 will provide an answer to sub-questions 1 to 3, as well as make an overall conclusion. In the last chapter, the found results will be linked to the EU-PEACE programme.

1.2 HISTORY OF NORTHERN IRELAND

In order to understand the current situation, it is relevant to explain the start of the conflict which dates back to the 12th century: the Normans invaded England and seized the throne, after which they decided to invade Ireland. In 1171, king Henry II of England took power over large parts of the island: the Lordship of Ireland was established, meaning that the King of England would also become the Lord of Ireland. De jure, this meant that the monarch of England ruled over the entire island of Ireland, but de facto, he had fewer regions under his control (see image 1). In the 14th and 15th centuries, English settlements were receded to the Dublin area which they referred to as 'The Pale' (see image 2) (Llaveró, 2015).

In the 16th century, the Protestant Reformation started, and King Henry VIII broke away from the Catholic Church establishing the protestant Church of England. During his reign, the Plantation of Ulster – an organised colonisation expropriating land from the Native Irish by English and Scottish settlers – was used to maintain hegemony on the Catholic island of Ireland (Llaveró, 2015). Within a few decades, the Protestant population in Ulster flourished, while the rest of the island remained Catholic.

It was not until a century later that king James II, a Catholic, took rule of the country. The majority of the English and Scottish population were, at this time, Protestant and felt threatened by the Catholic rule. This dispute led to the Glorious Revolution in which the protestant William of Orange invaded England and ascended the throne. On the other side of the Irish Sea, the new Protestant king was not welcomed. It sparked the Williamite war between the island of Ireland and the island of Great Britain, resulting in a victory for King William. For the next century, the Irish Parliament came to be under Protestant rule (Llaveró, 2015), which fostered a feeling among the Native Irish that Ireland needed more independence. This uprising made it clear that Ireland was a problem for the stability of Britain, which resulted in the union of the Irish and British Parliaments in 1800, and the formation of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland.

In 1916, Irish Republicans started a rebellion, called the Easter Rising attempting to end British rule. Even though the British Army managed to quell this revolt (Perry, 2010), its terrible bloodshed became a seed for future nationalist organisations (LLavero, 2015). It became reasoning for terrorist groups, such as the IRA, to justify violence because:

'We may make mistakes in the beginning and shoot the wrong people; but bloodshed is a cleansing and sanctifying thing, and the nation which regards it as the final horror has lost its manhood. There are many things more horrible than bloodshed; and slavery is one of them.' (Pearse, 1913)

In 1918, Sinn Féin, an Irish political party in favour of Irish independence, won 73 out of 105 Irish seats at the UK General Election (picture 3). They, however, opted not to take their seats at the British Parliament, and instead decided to form a breakaway government. The newly formed Irish government claimed independence of the whole island of Ireland, but met discontent in Ulster, as four out of nine counties there had a Unionist majority. A civil war was ineluctable. The British responded to this war of independence with the Government of Ireland Act of 1920, which made it possible for Northern Ireland and Southern Ireland to part (Perry, 2010). It was an attempt to meet the demands of both sides of the conflict, yet only Northern Ireland managed to establish an effective government. The war continued, resulting in the Anglo-Irish Treaty. The Treaty recognised an Irish Free State, under the rule of the British Commonwealth. There was, however, a substantial amount of people not pleased with the treaty, refusing to recognise the compromised Irish Free State and certainly refusing to recognise a British Northern Ireland. This resulted in a ten-month war between the pro-Treaty Government and the anti-treaty Irish Republican Army. The Civil War was won by the pro-Treaty forces, who benefited from support from the British Government.

The creation of Northern Ireland did not bring security to the Protestant community. Besides the suspiciousness towards the half-million Catholics who lived in the same country, they also feared that the British parliament might move to support a united Ireland (McKittrick; McVea, 2001). The Catholic community, on the other hand, found themselves trapped in the Union that denied their Irish identity. For decades, the Catholic minority in Northern Ireland was at a greater economic and political disadvantage than the Protestant community. Tensions spilt over during the late 1960s, cumulating in The Troubles. What followed was a three-decade conflict between nationalists and unionists. Despite the ongoing violence, by the early 90s negotiations had begun between both parties leading to the Good Friday Agreements in 1998.

As of now, Northern Ireland is part of the UK, while the Republic of Ireland is still part of the European Union. Leaving the European Union, initially, meant there had to be a customs border between the two countries. It was, however, decided a hard border on the island was unworkable, so the British government agreed to a deal with the EU known as the Northern Ireland Protocol, and put a border in the Irish sea. The introduction of the sea border led to people feeling cut off from the rest of the United Kingdom. Tensions flared up again that most thought had been consigned to the past. The Brexit deal continues to be devised in Northern Ireland, with protests in unionist communities, who see the Northern Ireland Protocol as undermining their British identity, as well as protests in nationalist communities, who consider Brexit to have widened the gap with the Republic of Ireland.

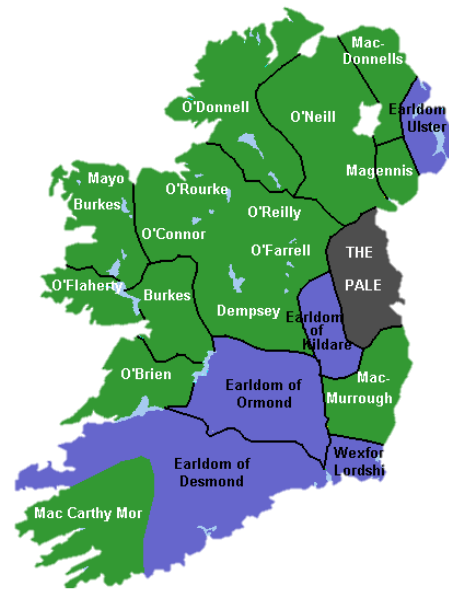


Image 1. The Pale

1.3 SOCIETAL RELEVANCE

“For a child in Belfast to have a friend from the other side of the wall is still shockingly rare”

[Naomi Burns, 2016, BBC]

More than 20 years after the Good Friday Agreement, the legacy of the Northern Irish conflict is still evident in several key public services. A Protestant community that desires to maintain its link with Great Britain on one hand, and a Catholic community that aspires a united Ireland, on the other hand, has formed a tension field in which identity is ‘vested in traditional principles of ethnonationalism that locate cultural belonging and citizenship in a ‘living space’ defined by clearly demarcated boundaries and a zero-sum model of space and place’ (Graham & Nash, 2006, p. 278; Harris, 2010). Space is regarded as a crucial factor of identity and is, therefore, a symbol of political domination (Harris, 2010). The fact that identities are still constructed around territory resembles the presence of nationalist ideologies. De facto, this zero-sum model of space and place leads to several types of segregation that strengthen various societal issues.

Residential segregation

As mentioned in the introduction, approximately 60 per cent of the Northern Irish people live in predominantly segregated communities. This number, however, is an average taken from various studies that report distinctive numbers (Hughes et. al., 2007; Harris, 2010; Easton, 2021). Even though the exact numbers of residential segregation are not known, the social housing rates portray a clearer image. As of 2016, more than 90 per cent of social housing in Northern Ireland was divided along religious lines (Morris, 2016). According to these numbers, residential segregation is more apparent in

social housing and thus working-class areas. High levels of segregation are, therefore, predominantly a working-class phenomenon (Harris, 2010).

Educational segregation

The school system in Northern Ireland is disaggregated according to three school types: controlled (de facto Protestant) schools; Catholic maintained schools; and integrated schools comprising Catholic and Protestant children (Borooah & Knox, 2017). Although both maintained and controlled schools will argue that they are open to all pupils, pupil attendance rates indicate a system based on religious segregation. According to a study by Easton (2021), 93 per cent of the Northern Irish children attend segregated schools.

Intermarriage

Intermarriage in Northern Ireland is uncommon. During the Troubles, only 5 per cent of the marriages were between people of a different religion (Moxon-Browne, 1991). This figure has risen to approximately 10 per cent in the years after the Good Friday Agreement. While mixed marriage has become more acceptable in Northern Ireland, religion still plays a pivotal role in choosing personal relationships (McAloney, 2014)

As a consequence of these segregation rates, Northern Ireland suffers from various societal issues. As already pointed out, there is no consensus about the exact influence of segregation on intergroup relations. Integrationists such as McKeown and Psaltis (2017) argue that intergroup contact is necessary not only to prevent future violence but also in helping build trust. According to Schubotz and Devine (2010), segregated areas lack such an opportunity to meet and have meaningful contact with the outgroup. The study of Hayes, McAllister and Dowds (2007) revealed that both Protestants and Catholics who attended integrated education were notably more likely to abandon traditional established intergroup views in favour of a more neutral position. Yet, as mentioned before, some studies give different meanings to the impact of segregation. Scholars (Stephan et. al., 1999) have assumed that desegregation between opposing groups leads to greater conflict. 'Voluntary apartheid' is, therefore, a preferred solution to reduce intergroup friction (Dixon, 2018). This assumption of 'voluntary apartheid' also raises the question of the extent to which segregation in Northern Ireland is indeed voluntary. It would, after all, be unjust to assume that segregation is solely the result of individual choices. Building on the article of Morris (2016), it is established that residential segregation in Northern Ireland is predominantly not voluntary. Approximately 80 per cent of the Northern Irish people would live in shared areas if circumstances were right. Broaah & Knox (2017) also assume that the free choice of choosing which school to attend is constrained by social pressure to conform. Because the exact societal consequences of segregation are unknown, studying them is relevant to future policy tackling societal issues.

The impact of Brexit

In the context of this thesis, the Northern Ireland conflict is considered to be predominantly non-violent. Peace, however, is not merely the absence of war. The murder of journalist Lyra McKee in 2019 makes

us realise that the Troubles are not a thing of the past. One of the reasons why the Good Friday agreement was so effective was because it largely eliminated the border between Northern Ireland and the Republic of Ireland. After 1998, the hard and militarised border became a soft border which meant that everybody could travel freely to and from the Republic and vice versa. One of the key reasons why Brexit was so problematic was because once the United Kingdom left the European Union, the border between Northern Ireland and the Republic of Ireland became an external EU border and should therefore be closed. This, however, would be a direct contradiction of the Good Friday Agreements and thus many feared that hostilities would flare up because the border would be a conflict zone again. As a hard border on the island was unworkable, a border was put in the Irish sea. This sea border led, however, to discontent in unionist communities as they felt cut off from the rest of the United Kingdom. So even though Northern Ireland is a post-conflict society nowadays. It is still very precarious and Brexit has a major impact on that. Peace in Northern Ireland is fragile and it is for this reason that research into solutions such as integration remains necessary.

In order to tackle the societal issues that arise from segregation and, perhaps, are exacerbated by Brexit, it is vital to include longitudinal data in this thesis. The Northern Irish Life and Times-survey (NILT) has data from the end of the Troubles (1998) until last year (2021). Hence why this dataset will be used to do the descriptive analyses of this thesis.

1.4 SCIENTIFIC RELEVANCE

The first relationship this study will research is between segregation and attitudes towards the outgroup in the Northern Irish society. Researching the impact of segregation on the Northern Irish society is not completely new. In order to provide new empirical insights, this thesis moves away from either choosing an integrational viewpoint or a segregation viewpoint and instead researches both viewpoints. Segregationists, on one hand, have concluded that 'de facto separation is a better solution to nationalist wars as it increases prospects for post-conflict peace and democracy' (Chapman & Roeder, 2007, p. 689). Integrationists, on the other hand, argue that 'desegregation affords the opportunity for engaging in contact with other groups which, can have positive consequences for intergroup relations' (Schmid et. al., 2008, p. 58). Although these are both accurate conclusions from accurate literature, I argue that these distinct viewpoints fall short in researching beyond their own perspective. As will be furtherly explained in the theory chapter, both viewpoints use the contact theory (Allport, 1954) to explain their position. Whereas integrationists use positive contact to explain their stance, segregationists warn against the impact of negative contact. This research will, therefore, take both viewpoints and their respective train of thought into consideration and will add theoretical and empirical relevance by not merely focusing on either viewpoint. A thorough overview of the state-of-the-art literature is included that shines light upon both viewpoints and covers both sides of the debate. In doing so, this research will firstly move away from the distinct integrationist or segregationists viewpoint.

The second dependent variable of this study is 'preference to segregate'. This study will research the impact of a feeling of unsafety on someone's preference to segregate. This relationship has not yet been

researched in the context of Northern Ireland, which makes the study of this relationship scientifically relevant.

This study will use the NILT-survey for its analyses. The longitudinal data, which expands from 1998-2021, ensures a complete overview of the intergroup relations since the Good Friday Agreements and detects shifts in attitudes since then. As discussed in the societal relevance, Brexit has had implications on the relationship between Northern Ireland and the Republic of Ireland, and between NI and Great Britain. Former research has provided relevant insights into shifts in attitudes since the GFA. However, the primary focus has never been on the Brexit referendum and the actual departure of the UK out of the European Union. By having a distinct focus on the impact of Brexit and by using longitudinal data to detect shifts since Brexit, this thesis fills a scientific gap. For policymakers, such analyses must be made, because they contribute to the integrity of the formulated policy. This thesis, therefore, tries to distinguish itself by directly linking the found results to policy (the EU PEACE programme). By linking directly to the EU PEACE programme, this thesis continues where research generally stops and, in doing so, policymakers can take the results with them to adjust and improve their policy.

The usage of multiple methods of analysis is the second way in which this thesis is empirically relevant. The descriptive analyses uncover how several bivariate descriptive variables correlate together. However, concluding descriptive analyses alone would have resulted in inadequate assumptions as mediating and moderating effects are not included. Hence why multiple regression analyses have been reproduced. In the social sciences, regression analysis is a globally known method to analyse the relationship between multiple variables (Ajibade, Ademola & Otitolaiye, 2021). A key strength of regression analysis is identifying the 'magnitude and extent of the impact of variables on another' (Ajibade, Ademola & Otitolaiye, 2021, p. 1) and, in doing so, this thesis is able to establish a relationship between variables with more certainty than literature that solely uses theories can.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW & CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

This chapter will discuss relevant concepts and contemporary debates regarding the research question and sub-questions. After each paragraph, a hypothesis will be drawn up, which will be tested in chapter 4.

2.1 (DE)SEGREGATION

In the decades after the Good Friday Agreement, a debate as to whether religious (de)segregation has positive or negative implications for intergroup relations in Northern Ireland was initiated. There have been several attempts at defining the impact of segregation on intergroup relations. Consequently, distinctive concepts on the impact of segregation prevail in academic literature, many of which follow the assumptions of either of the two main competing assumptions. One of these assumptions argues that desegregation brings up necessary opportunities for positive intergroup contact and thus weakens intergroup friction, while the other assumes that desegregation enhances tension and thus holds a negative impact on intergroup relations (Schmid et. al., 2008). The first of these theoretical assumptions seeks explanations in the *integrational* and *contact theory*. In sharp contrast to these two theories, the latter theoretical assumption follows the lines of *segregation* and the negative sides of *contact*. Both theoretical viewpoints will be explained thoroughly in the following paragraphs.

2.1.1 INTEGRATIONAL VIEWPOINT

It is claimed that the integrational approach asserts that intergroup contact is central to conflict management (Dixon, 2005). Integrationists favour desegregation because they believe that contact between competing communities can lead to the formation of an identity distinction that is less hostile. They fear that a system based on segregation will strengthen the antagonistic intergroup relation, and thus will stir up the threat of a violent conflict. Schmid et. al. (2008) have argued that desegregation enables the opportunity of engaging in meaningful contact with the opposing group, all of which can have a positive impact on intergroup relations. Much of this argument is rooted in the *contact theory* by Allport (1954), which stipulates that interaction between actors of opposing groups can reduce prejudice and thus weaken the – often negative – image created about the other. The reduction of intergroup prejudice is most likely if four conditions are met.

- (1) Equal status between opposing groups
- (2) Cooperative pursuance of common goals
- (3) Contact should be supported institutionally
- (4) Personal interactions should lead to a better perception of common interests

The first condition is based on equality. In order to reduce antagonistic behaviour towards one another, contact between groups should be equal in power (McKay, 2018). If members of one group are inferior, the likelihood of a reinforcement of contact based on prejudice enhances. Besides an equal status between opposing groups, contact should also pursue common goals. Research has shown that contact based on competition can lead to hostility and therefore limits its value (Schofield, 1995). As a third

condition, Allport (1954) argues that contact should be supported institutionally. He suggests that changing intergroup attitudes relies on the support of authority. In the light of this condition, Pettigrew (1998) noted that contact will have a greater positive impact if it is institutionally supported. The last condition is based on personal interaction, which should aim to create a perception of similarity between the two groups.

In the last few decades, the literature has reached conflicting conclusions regarding the positive effect of intergroup contact. Several studies demonstrate that contact can reduce negative outgroup perceptions (Schmid et. al., 2008; Pettigrew, 1998). However, other studies reached more mixed conclusions. Many of them acknowledged that prejudice has the potential to be lessened by intergroup contact, yet the conditions to live up to this potential differ. According to Pettigrew et. al. (2011), Allport's original conditions for optimal contact do facilitate this effect but are not mandatory conditions. In his understanding, the positive outcome of contact is reliant on other assets such as the intimacy of contact. Pettigrew et. al. (2011) mention, for example, the particular importance of intergroup friendship in obtaining positive intergroup contact. Friendship invokes many of the original conditions of Allport such as equality and common goals. Additionally, it does also facilitate trust. Research conducted in conflict societies found that intergroup friendship stimulated intergroup trust and is, therefore, a valuable asset in the process of forgiveness (Hewstone, 2006). Therefore, Hewstone (2006) and Pettigrew et. al. (2011) argue that the intimacy of contact plays a role in reducing prejudice, especially in (post-)conflict societies. I follow Pettigrew and Hewstone in arguing that the intimacy of contact could be considered to be the fifth condition of the contact theory.

Previous research has shown that the opportunity for contact is a strong predictor of actual contact (Wagner, Hewstone & Machleit, 1989). As segregation reduces the opportunity for engaging in contact with other groups, it limits the positive consequences of intergroup contact. As these positive consequences are not exploited, the chances of improving intergroup relations are also diminished. This leads to the following hypothesis:

Hypothesis 1a: Segregation has a negative effect on attitudes towards the outgroup.

2.1.2 SEGREGATION VIEWPOINT

In sharp contrast to the integrational viewpoint, it has been argued that rather than reducing prejudice, desegregation poses threat which harms intergroup relations (Schmid et. al., 2011). Observing the literature regarding this train of thought leads to an interesting debate as they are divided between those who propagate the separation of disputing communities into two sovereign states and those who question such an attempt. The latter have pointed out how high-regulated systems of shared power form an answer to disputing groups. Even though both viewpoints have fundamental differences, they are both a segregation-oriented theoretical disposition (Dixon, 2007). This paragraph will delve into the origin of both viewpoints as well as their link to the conflict in Northern Ireland.

Political segregation

The debate over segregation has brought two distinctive concepts to light: *partition* and *consociationalism*. Scholars such as Posen (1993) and Chapman & Roeder (2007) have delved into the concept of *partition*. In their articles, they elaborated on the efficacy of partition (the separation into distinctive sovereign states) as a solution to intergroup conflicts. According to Posen (1993), the security dilemma lies at the core of the partition theory. The security dilemma occurs when a community is faced with a distrustful other and the measures taken to enhance its own security are seen as a threat to the security of others, thereby heightening tension. To end intergroup conflicts 'all members of a group must be mobilised because other ethnic groups will inevitably recognise them as enemies' (Sambanis, 2000, p. 438). The enmity will not cease until both groups are separated, as - only then - war is no longer necessary. Chapman & Roeder (2007, p. 679) add the aspect of incompatible national identities to this theory. They claim that incompatible identities arise when (1) members of a specific group (often the minority) relate to an identity that separates them from the identity of the common-state leaders. And that either (2a) the common-state leaders hold an identity that embraces the disputed population or (2b) the common-state leaders reject the disputed population. Such identity incompatibilities 'are more likely to fade under partition than under alternative institutional arrangements' (Chapman & Roeder, 2007, p. 680). Kaufmann's (1998, p. 122) argument is even stronger: "Solutions that aim both to restore multi-ethnic civil politics and to avoid population transfers, such as institution building, power sharing, and identity reconstruction, cannot work during or after an ethnic civil war because they do not resolve the security dilemma created by mixed demography.' According to Kaufmann (1998), it is self-defence that underlies the reason for partition. Partition is the sole plausible solution when a state is unable to prevent civil strife between hostile communities.

In the current state-of-the-art literature, an alternative concept regarding segregation has risen: *consociationalism*. Consociationalists avoid partition through a high-regulated system of shared power. It is a concept which argues that contact between opposing groups leads to greater conflict. They seek to avoid conflict between members of opposing groups by reducing contact. Hence, their preference for segregation. The political scientist Lijphart is the most notable advocate of the consociational viewpoint. He disagreed with political theorists claiming that cultural heterogeneity correlates with instability. A cultural heterogeneous society can be stabilised if leaders of distinctive cultural groups share power in a joined government (Lijphart, 1975). In his work of 1971, he argues that segregation may actually have a positive outcome on peaceful relations, rather than hindering them.

"Good social fences may make good political neighbours, a kind of voluntary apartheid policy may be the most appropriate solution for a divided society. Political autonomy for the different subcultures is a crucially important element of a consociational system, because it reduces contacts, and hence strain and hostility, among the subcultures at the mass level" (Lijphart, 1971, p. 11)

The consociational system is characterised by a belief that divided territories with historically antagonistic divided members should be kept segregated into distinctive 'ethnic' pillars. These 'ethnic'

pillars should be governed according to power-sharing arrangements among political elites (McGarry & O'Leary, 2006; Hayes & McAllister, 2012). The segregation-oriented system follows four prescriptions:

- (1) *Executive power-sharing*. They should be a consensual share of power consisting of all the political parties of significant communities.
- (2) *Proportional representation*. Each is proportionally represented in key institutions. Moreover, both communities should be equally beneficiary of public funds and expenses.
- (3) *Mutual veto-power*. Each is able to prevent changes through a mutual veto that they believe threatens their interests.
- (4) *Autonomy*. Each enjoys a degree of autonomy, especially self-government in issues concerning cultural importance.

Thus, instead of aiming to share space at microlevel, governance under consociational conditions focuses on power-sharing at macrolevel within a segregated society. This results in, according to consociational belief, a system in which dispute is managed.

Social Segregation

Whereas the framework of political segregation (on partition and consociationalism) is a policy concept on macrolevel, the framework of social segregation is relevant on microlevel. Much of this framework is based on Lijphart's concepts of cleavages. Lijphart (1975) argues that there are two sets of relationships between social cleavages. The first is *reinforcing cleavages*, which are cleavages that overlap with each other. If, for example, members of an ethnic group tend to also have a lower economic status, then these cleavages reinforce division and dispute. When a society is divided by such sharp cleavages the pressure toward moderate attitudes is absent, which decreases the chance of a stable society. On the other hand, there are sets of cleavages, which Lijphart refers to as *cross-cutting cleavages*, that divide society into groups that might conflict on one issue and cooperate on another. Since cross-cutting cleavages make more people have something in common, they tend to stabilise a country and moderate attitudes (Lijphart, 2020). In a society, consisting of multiple reinforcing cleavages, varying socioeconomic groups have little opportunity to be exposed to different socioeconomic groups, which will enhance the chance of social segregation.

There are also scholars who favour social partition. They base their argument on the *power-threat theory* of Blalock (1967). He points out that an influx of an ethnic outgroup could lead to an increased perception of threat within the ingroup, which can enhance competition and undermine cohesion (Stevenson et. al., 2019). The sole presence of a distinct ethnic group within the social environment of a majority group threatens the majority group's position. Drawing on the *realistic group conflict theory* (Sherif, 1966), this perceived threat – regardless of whether the threat is realistic – can lead to enhanced prejudice. 'The greater the threat that the outgroup is perceived to pose to the ingroup, the more negative the attitudes towards the outgroup will be' (Stephan et. al., 1999, p. 2222). As the enhanced perception of threat leads to a negative attitude towards the outgroup, the chance of positive social intergroup contact is decreasing. Pettigrew (1998) has pointed out the importance of positive

intergroup contact in his additional condition to the contact theory (see paragraph 2.3.1). He argues that intimacy and thereby the positive foundation of contact is essential if you want to reap the benefits from intergroup contact. In short: an influx of an outgroup, for example through desegregation, will lead to a greater perception of threat. This will, according to realistic group conflict theory (Sherif, 1966), lead to negative attitudes towards each other, which will in turn lead to a smaller chance of positive intergroup contact. This while, according to Pettigrew (1998), the positive basis of contact is essential to reduce mutual resentment. Negative contact can even increase this resentment, as scholars claim that 'negative contact predicts increased prejudice more than positive contact predicts reduces prejudice' (Barlow et. al., 2012, p. 1629).

Partition and consociationalism are segregation-oriented theoretical dispositions. They differ in their plan of action, yet agree on the fact desegregation enhances tension and thus holds a negative impact on intergroup relations. Similarly, theories of social segregation view desegregation as a problem rather than a solution. They argue that desegregation is followed by an influx of the outgroup, which is followed by an enlarged perception of threat. This will enhance the chance of negative intergroup contact, which will increase negative intergroup attitudes. This leads to the following hypothesis:

Hypothesis 1b: *Segregation has a positive effect on attitudes towards the outgroup.*

2.1.3 SEGREGATION: THE NORTHERN IRISH CONTEXT

This paragraph will focus on applying the integration/partition debate to the Northern Irish context. First, it will be applied to the political context (and thus: macrolevel). After which, the theorised concepts will be linked to the social context (and thus have a focus on micro/metalevel).

Political context

Of all three political structures mentioned in the previous paragraphs (integration, partition and consociationalism), the structure of the GFA mainly focuses on consociational power-sharing between Irish nationalists and British unionists. This leads to criticisms from both other camps. Whereas partitionists criticise the GFA for not going for full partition, integrationists criticise the GFA precisely for their focus on segregation. Intergrationalists raised issues surrounding the question of whether Good Friday Agreement established durable peace. Hall (2018) argues that the Good Friday Agreement failed to establish a decent quality of peace. Her arguments facilitate the debate on the fundamental shortcomings of the consociational system. The consociational aspects of the Good Friday Agreement did, according to Hall, reinforce social division in Northern Ireland (Hall, 2018), precisely what internationalists feared. Hall (2018), therefore, claims that the political legacy of the Good Friday Agreement is one of negative peace¹.

'The Good Friday Agreement succeeded in bringing people together in a power-sharing governmental structure but failed to achieve its objectives of stability and endurance. [...] By reinforcing historical patterns of division in

¹ Negative peace refers to the absent of violence, whereas positive peace is understood as the attitudes and structures that create and sustain peaceful societies (Martinez Guzman, 2006)

Northern Ireland through political structures, the Good Friday agreement ensured its legacy would remain one of peace marred by social cleavage.’ (Hall, 2018, p. 10, 11)

While the Good Friday Agreement ensured both Nationalists and Unionists the ability to protect their autonomy in an official government, it did little to bridge the societal issues concerning intergroup relations (Hall, 2018). The Agreement succeeded in bringing negative peace – the violence has after all been largely absent. Yet, it did not spread to a point of intergroup inclusion. Consociationalists will, however, argue that intergroup inclusion is unnecessary – and, above all, unfeasible. Northern Ireland’s apartheid has established an absence of violence, and greater inclusion will merely lead to greater hostility.

Partitionanists, on the other side of the spectrum, have argued that the half-measures regarding segregation in the GFA caused little peace and democracy. According to them, Northern Ireland should be divided into two distinctive sovereign states. Chapman & Roeder (2007), for example, have claimed that the solution of autonomy within the GFA did not resolve all issues and is, therefore, not favourable over partition.

‘Autonomy arrangements have just the opposite effect from partition, increasing the likelihood of recurring violence and failure to democratise.’ (Chapman & Roeder, 2007, p. 677)

The enmity between disputing groups will after all not cease until both groups are separated, as - only then - war is no longer necessary. The extent to which partition is feasible in Northern Ireland is, however, questionable, as Protestant and Catholic areas in Northern Ireland are scattered. According to Lijphart (1975), the most feasible form of partition would out the Catholics to join the Republic, and leave the Protestants in Northern Ireland. ‘The human and material costs of partition should however not be underestimated’ (Lijphart, 1975, p. 105).

Lijphart also found great value in systematically applying the consociational model to the Northern Irish conflict, and especially the GFA. He first applied consociational theory to Northern Ireland in the *British Journal of Political Science* in 1975. He pointed out that consociational principles had already been evident in the Northern Irish society since the Sunningdale Agreement of 1973, which introduced power-sharing and proportional representation in Northern Ireland. However, due to the collapse of the agreement in May 1974, the fragile consociational democracy did not gain a foothold. Lijphart argued that one vital element was missing for consociationalism to work in the Northern Irish society: support for a power-sharing arrangement by both parties. He claimed that Northern Ireland is characterised by an imbalance of power, causing a minority-majority ratio in which one community is capable of exercising hegemony. This imbalance makes leaders tend to pursue exclusive domination. Hence, they are not willing to share power (Lijphart, 1975). Lijphart concludes by mentioning his pessimism about the prospects of consociational democracy in Northern Ireland (McGarry & O’Leary, 2006). In 1990, McGarry & O’Leary (p. 55) argue that ‘the essential conditions for consociational democracy are not yet present in Northern Ireland’.

The 1994 ceasefire and the following Good Friday Agreement caused an influx of appraisal for consociationalism. The Good Friday Agreement was after all a settlement with several consociational components, that won endorsement of both eight political parties and several public referenda (McGarry & O'Leary, 2006). Key critics, such as Dixon (2005), have, however, criticised several aspects of the Good Friday Agreement because the settlement includes initiatives that are not compatible with orthodox consociationalism. He argues that the Good Friday Agreement does not fulfil the prescriptions of consociationalism set by Lijphart:

- (1) *Executive power-sharing*. Although all parties are represented in the Northern Ireland Executive, it is not consensual. The Democratic Unionist Party (DUP) did not support the Agreement, because nationalists' and unionists' paramilitary weapons had not been neutralised.
- (2) *Proportional representation*. The Northern Irish elections for the Assembly use a proportional representation system. However, consociationalists tend to give more power to elites, while the GFA prefers STV (single transferable votes).
- (3) *Mutual veto-power*. Only the British government has an external veto and has averted devolution on various occasions.
- (4) *Autonomy*. The GFA does recognise the two (Protestant and Catholic) communities and their separate autonomy. However, the GFA offers much support for integrational initiatives such as integrated education (Gardner, 2016).

Social context

During the Troubles, Lijphart (1975) became a prominent scholar in applying his theory to the conflict. He pointed out that what appears to be a sectarian conflict, is indeed a class conflict. He derives this argument from his cross-cutting cleavages hypothesis, in which he argues that distinctive cleavages within the same group coincide and consequently reinforce each other. This in fact happens in Northern Ireland: religious background often overlaps with class. 'Protestants belong to the middle and upper class, and Catholics to the lower class' (Lijphart, 1975, p. 92). It is the class system, in which the Catholics are less fortunate than the Protestants, that is regularly cited as a reason for this conflict. In this same period, Budge and O'Leary (1972) subjected the cross-cutting theory to a comparative analysis between the stable city of Glasgow and the unstable city of Belfast. As expected, they found a deeper cumulative cleavage between party and religion in Belfast than in Glasgow, which 'offers support to cross-cutting explanations of Belfast instability' (Budge & O'Leary, 1972, p. 365). Also in more recent times, the cross-cutting theory continues to be applied to the context of Northern Ireland. Szczecińska-Musielak (2016) argued that ethnicity is the basic dimension of the conflict, but that the social aspects of power and status continue to underpin differences and consequently the dispute.

The contact theory by Allport (1954), and its additional assumption by Pettigrew (1998), have also been applied to the social context of Northern Ireland. A study in 2015 at Northern Irish schools (Hughes, Blaylock, Donnelly, 2015) gave support for this theory by claiming that pupils who experienced positive intergroup contact fared better on a range of outcome measures, such as outgroup prejudice, than

pupils who experienced no contact or negative intergroup contact. It follows then by arguing that negative intergroup interaction is more plausible to occur in deprived communities, due to their enhanced sense of threat. Agreeing with the additional assumption of Pettigrew (1998), Hughes (2013) continues to argue that, because of their higher chance of no or negative intergroup contact, pupils from areas in Northern Ireland characterised by segregation experience difficulty in reconciling schools that valorise peacebuilding. These areas, after all, have community norms that are structured by fear and a sense of threat. The aforementioned debate is relevant to the field of the Northern Irish peace process. The purpose of this thesis is to use empirical data to explore whether the partition or integrational viewpoint is more convincing in following to reach positive intergroup relations.

2.2 IDENTITY

The second concept that will be delved into is 'identity'. Firstly, this paragraph will explore several theories relating to the concept of 'social identity'. Subsequently, the concept of 'spatial identity' will be studied. Lastly, both concepts will be applied to the Northern Irish context.

2.2.1 SOCIAL IDENTITY

The relationship between identity and conflict has long been a matter of interest to scholars. Since identity and its impact on attitudes towards the outgroup are a key concept of this study, it is important to outline its relevant elements. Theoretical explanations for conflict between different identities are predominantly underpinned by the *Social Identity Theory* (Tajfel & Turner, 1979). Tajfel (1969) asserted that intergroup hostility often derives from people understanding situations in terms of identity.

"The best way to predict whether a man will harbour hostile attitudes towards a particular group and what will be the content of these attitudes is to find how he understands the content of the intergroup situation." (p. 81)

According to Tajfel & Turner (1979) identity is a primary element to understand the nature of intergroup relations (McKeown, Haji & Ferguson, 2016). The central tenet of the social identity theory is that people strive to have a so-called positive and distinctive identity. Subsequently, people tend to address their ingroup in a positive matter. People who do not belong to the ingroup – the so-called outgroup – are valued as negative and even unreliable. According to this theory, identity emanates from an awareness of belonging to a social group, in combination with a subjective validation and signification of said group (Furey et. al., 2017). Furey et. al. (2017) argue that the process of identification encompasses three distinct dimensions. The first dimension is the so-called process of self-categorisation to a certain social group. Self-categorisation to a group does, however, not inherently develop a social identity. A social identity is assessed by the degree to which the ingroup has been integrated into the sense of self (Furey et. al., 2017). The second dimension covers the attached value one has to the specific group membership. One assumption of the Social Identity Theory is that individuals engage in biased intergroup comparisons in order to be able to address their ingroup positively. The third dimension refers to the level of emotional attachment one has to the ingroup. Individuals have a different extent of attachment to group membership. Therefore, the level of commitment to a social group is relevant, not

only to foresee the degree to which group members will act on behalf of their group but also determine the capability of a group to influence individuals (Furey et. al., 2017).

As the Social Identity Theory states that people with a strong sense of national identity value the outgroup as negative, this thesis argues that the stronger the sense of national identity, the more negative the attitudes towards the outgroup are. All in all, this leads to the following hypothesis:

Hypothesis 2a: The stronger the sense of national identity, the more negative the attitudes towards the outgroup are.

2.2.2 SPATIAL IDENTITY

Geographers have sought to understand the role of space within group boundaries and identities. Much of this recent literature has been characterised by the 'us' vs. 'them' concept. Researchers have been concerned with how distinctions between 'us' and 'them' are crucial in developing an identity. Space, separation and boundaries have an impact on this concept. Besides the role your ascribed identity plays on this 'us' vs. 'them' concept, as explained in the previous paragraph, space, separation and boundaries also play a part.

In the last decades, a move towards a different viewpoint of boundaries and space has emerged. The concept of a boundary does not limit solely itself to a state border but is also used as a social and cultural construct (Newman & Paasi, 1998). These social and cultural boundaries are more generally described as instruments through which social distinction develops. Newman & Paasi (1998, p. 191) interpret it as such:

'Boundaries constitute lines of separation of contact. This may occur in real or virtual space, horizontally between territories, or vertically between groups and/or individuals. The point of separation usually creates an 'us' and an 'other' identity.'

According to Newman & Paasi (1998), groups use both state and social boundaries to maintain their ethnic homogeneity. Consistent with the second dimension of the Social Identity Theory (Tajfel & Turner, 1979; Furey et. al., 2017), boundaries are used to construct intergroup bias and protect the ingroup favourability. Accompanied by a threat felt towards the 'other', communities use boundaries to purify their own ingroups' space. According to Paasi (1998), a boundary has a two-fold role: not only is it restricted to being a border, it broadens itself to enhance 'us' versus 'them' beliefs. Separation creates an 'us' and an 'other' identity, and, consequently, reproduces the idea of 'othering' (Paasi, 1996). Boundaries not only separate communities from each other, they, thus, also interfere with identity forming (Newman & Paasi, 1998). Especially in societies wherein identity is birth-related and boundaries are impermeable, such as in Northern Ireland, the process of 'othering' is more common and relevant (Furey et. al., 2017). As 'there are a number of structural barriers that inhibit direct contact between the two communities in Northern Ireland', identity is less malleable (Lynch & Joyce, 2018, p. 191). Segregation, therefore, leads to strong national identities which subsequently cause negative attitudes towards the outgroup.

This leads to the following hypothesis:

Hypothesis 2b: The relationship between segregation and attitudes towards the outgroup, is mediated by one's strength of identity.

2.2.3 IDENTITY: NORTHERN IRISH CONTEXT

Northern Ireland is frequently considered to be a bicultural society: Catholics vs. Protestants, Republicans vs. Unionists, or Irish vs. British. Although this is a rather simplistic view of the Northern Irish society, it does contain a grain of truth (Craith, 2003). Issues of identity are regularly raised, and even though religion is generally treated as the cause of the conflict, the Troubles were never a holy war. Mitchell (2013) argues that religion is much more of social significance. Religion is an indicator of identity and plays a major role in the identification process (Mitchell, 2013). People in Northern Ireland have a clear and bordered sense of belonging. Whereas identity in Northern Ireland is more complex than the sole comparison of Unionists and Republicans; research does show that Northern Irish people categorise themselves easily as either Protestant/Unionist or Catholic/Republican (Furguson & McKeown, 2016). According to Niens & Cairns (2001) the vast majority of the Northern Irish people will state whether their group membership is Catholic or Protestant, regardless of whether they attend church. The religious faith into which one is born is, thus, an indicator of identity and generally leads to a specific and impermeable set of attitudes (Hargie et. al., 2008). These divisions are constructed from an early age, being maintained through separate education systems and segregation (Hargie et. al., 2008). Literature shows that social, and in certain parts of Northern Ireland also physical, borders perpetuate the 'us' vs. 'them' mindset (Harris, 2010). The saliency of group identity makes ascribed identity in Northern Ireland hard to change. In line with the Social Identity theory, these impermeable group boundaries enhance intergroup competition and conflict (Hargie et. al., 2008).

2.3 PREFERRING SEGREGATION

A frequently heard argument in the self-segregation debate is that ethnic groups prefer living in a neighbourhood consisting of mainly ingroup members (Bouma-Doff, 2007) – the so-called 'birds of a feather flock together' hypothesis. Such a hypothesis, however, merely confirms the existence of segregation preferences and does not explain the motivations behind such a form of self-segregation. Concluding that the sole reason for segregation is that ethnic groups 'just want to stick together' is, therefore, too short-sighted. Bouma-Doff (2007) has established a mechanism driving self-segregation. Based on the "safe haven" hypothesis, she concludes that people choose to live in a segregated neighbourhood to avoid hostility and a feeling of unsafety. Neighbourhoods have been pointed the role of being a safe haven. Hostility, regardless of whether this is perceived or experienced, produces a feeling of unsafety. Such a feeling of unsafety undermines the existence of a safe haven. A lack of such safe haven is, subsequently, considered to be an underlying motivation for self-segregation. Once people have experienced or perceived hostility of the outgroup, the preference for coethnic neighbours strengthens. This leads to the following hypothesis:

Hypothesis 3: The higher the experienced sense of unsafety, the greater the preference for segregation.

2.3.1 PREFERRING SEGREGATION: NORTHERN IRISH CONTEXT

Segregation in Northern Ireland is not coercive. The Northern Irish school system is, for example, *de jure* open to all pupils. *De facto* you, however, have three school types: controlled (Protestant) schools; Catholic maintained schools; and integrated schools comprising Catholic and Protestant children (Borooah & Knox, 2017). The social housing system is – *de jure* – not divided between Catholic and Protestant associations either. Approximately 70% of dwellings in the social sector are maintained and managed by the Northern Ireland Housing Executive and the remaining 30% by housing associations, neither of which are affiliated with either religion. Here too, however, reality shows that the great majority of social housing remains segregated. The question then remains whether the *de facto* segregation levels are all a consequence of voluntary segregation. Morris (2016) has stated that it is too easy to assume that segregation is solely the result of individual choices. He claims that residential segregation, for example, in Northern Ireland is predominantly not voluntary. Approximately 80 per cent of the Northern Irish people would live in shared areas if circumstances were right. In line with the ‘safe haven’-theory, fearing intergroup hostility is seen as a factor of why it has not been ‘right’ so far. Brooah & Knox (2017) also assume that the free choice of choosing which school to attend is constrained by social pressure to conform. In order to gain more insight into the exact motivation behind segregation in Northern Ireland, Chapter 4 will take a closer look at the voluntariness of the Northern Irish segregation levels, as well as research the exact impact of intergroup hostility on having a preference for segregation

2.4 CROSS-COMMUNITY PROJECTS

The theoretical foundation of the impact of cross-community projects on intergroup relations is based on the *contact theory* by Allport (1954), which stipulates that interaction between actors of opposing groups can reduce prejudice and thus weaken the – often negative – image created about the other (see paragraph 2.1.1). Cross-community contact assists in developing the understanding and acceptance between opposing ethnic groups. Cross-community contact could, therefore, be a remedy for intergroup prejudice caused by ignorance of the other community. Weakened intergroup prejudice, subsequently, enhances positive intergroup relations (Allport, 1954).

Besides the positive effect cross-community projects can have on intergroup relations, they also help in weakening segregation preferences. A strong relationship between interethnic contact and de-isolation has been established by several scholars (Ihlanfeldt & Scafidi, 2004; Bouma-Doff, 2007). It is interpreted that “encouraging greater interpersonal contact is the most promising avenue towards breaking down racial prejudice and thereby increasing integration” (Ihlanfeldt & Scafidi, 2004, p. 355). This increased willingness to integrate, caused by the cross-community projects, contributes to a weakened segregation preference. This leads to the following hypotheses:

Hypothesis 4a: Cross-community projects enhance the positive attitudes towards the outgroup.

Hypothesis 4b: Cross-community projects weaken the segregation preference.

2.4.1 CROSS-COMMUNITY PROJECTS: NORTHERN IRISH CONTEXT

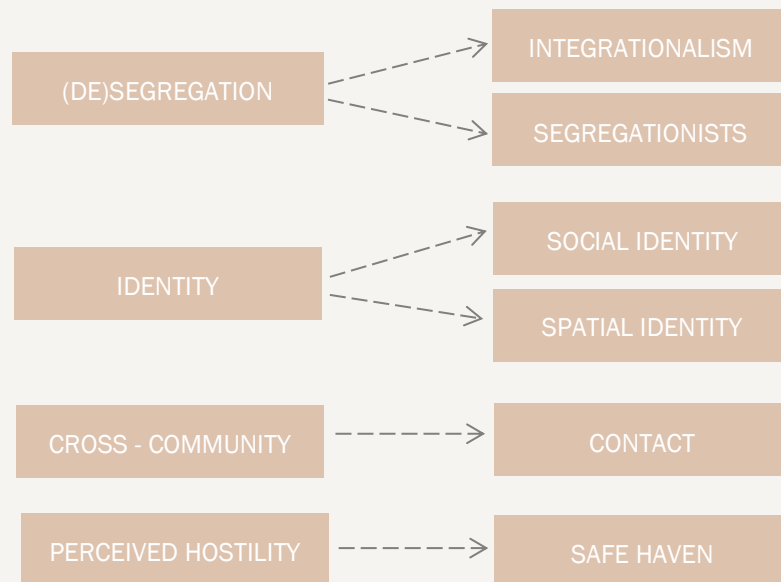
Since 1994, Northern Ireland has been receiving financial support from the EU, via the EU PEACE programme, aiming to strengthen cohesion between Catholic and Protestant communities (European Parliament, 2021). It funds a large proportion of peace-building work by supporting cross-community and cross-border projects. These cross-community projects aim at, as hypothesis 4a states, enhancing intergroup relations. Chapter 5 will entirely focus on the cross-community projects in Northern Ireland.

2.5 CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

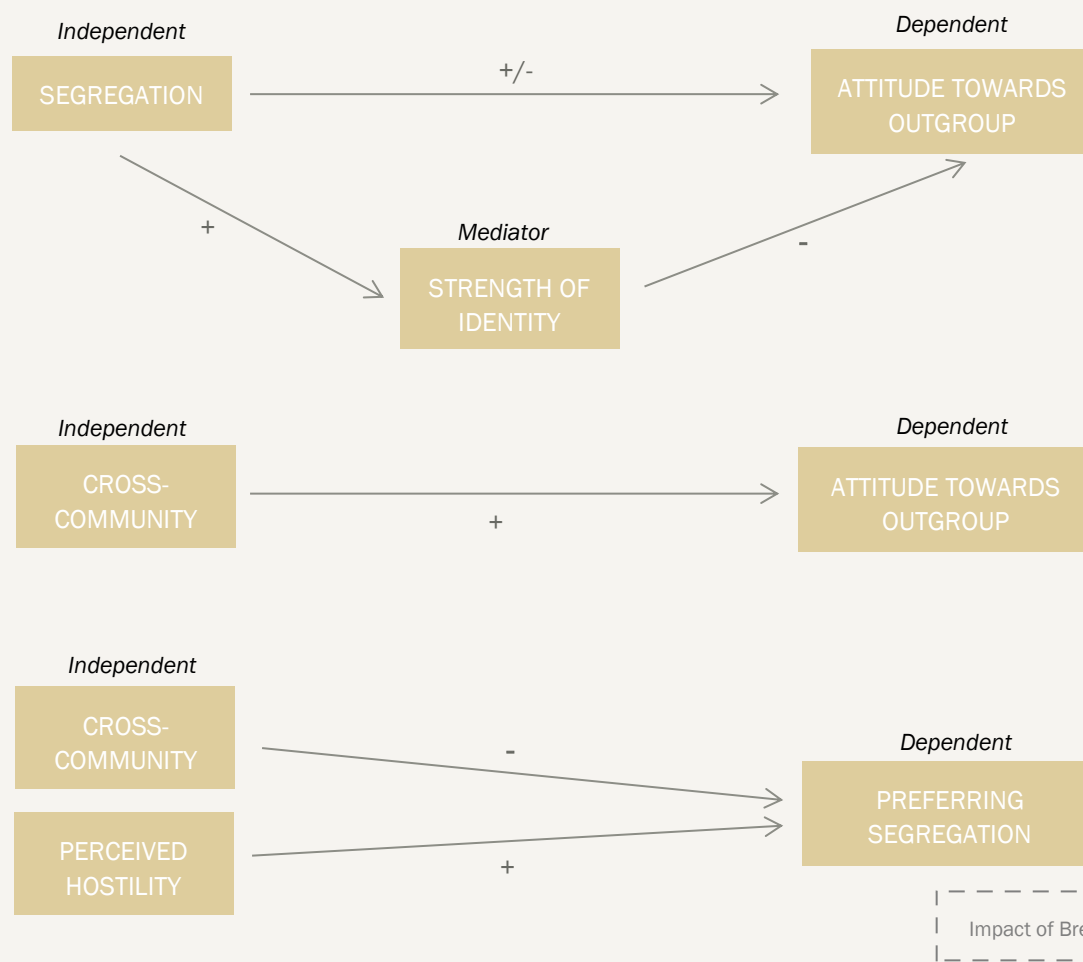
Examining the state-of-the-art literature concerning key theories has shown how this thesis is positioned within contemporary debates. In Figure 1, the three-step method used to answer the research and sub-questions is visualised in the conceptual framework. As discussed in this chapter, multiple theoretical concepts have been used to provide insight into the current debate surrounding this thesis (step 1). This thesis starts from the ideas emerging from these theoretical concepts, which have been visualised under step 2. The main debate regarding segregation is focused on integrationists and partitionists. Concerning the integrationists within this debate, segregation harms the attitude towards the outgroup. Partitionists, however, favour partition to reduce negative attitudes towards the outgroup. Therefore, it will be measured whether segregation has a direct effect on the attitudes towards the outgroup. Based on the Spatial Identity Theory, (Newman & Paasi, 1998), it is expected that segregation contributes to one's strength of identity. Regarding the Social Identity Theory, (Tajfel & Turner, 1979) the expectation arises that the stronger someone identifies with a certain group, the more unfavourable the attitude towards the outgroup is. Hence why 'strength of identity' is portrayed as a mediator in the conceptual framework. Following the *contact theory* by Allport (1954), it is expected that cross-community contact contributes to both outgroup attitudes as well a weakened preference to segregate. Lastly, the *safe haven theory* (Bouma-Doff, 2007) leads to the assumption that perceived or experienced hostility contributes to a preference for segregation. The final step (step 3) of this thesis is to research whether the EU PEACE programme projects align with the theorised concepts and found results.

Lastly is it important to take into account that all the independent and two dependent variables, as well as one mediator, are included in step 2 of this framework. This has been done to provide the reader with the clearest overview of what this study has planned to research.

1. THEORY



2. RESEARCH DESIGN



3. POLICY IMPLICATIONS



Figure 1. Conceptual framework

3. METHODS AND METHODOLOGY

In the previous chapter, the theoretical framework provided us with an extensive overview of existing contemporary theories and literature. The objective of this chapter is to outline choices regarding the methodology used to answer the research question '*What is the impact of segregation on the intergroup attitudes between the Protestant and Catholic communities in Northern Ireland?*'. In the first section of this chapter, the research design will be discussed. Section 3.2 will outline how the data was collected, and section 3.3 will focus on the analysis techniques. Lastly, section 3.4 will outline which variables will be used to conduct this research.

3.1 RESEARCH DESIGN

This paragraph discusses the chosen research design for this research. By using a dataset, this research will follow a quantitative cross-sectional research design. A quantitative research design is often used to establish a statistically significant conclusion about a population (Lowhorn, 2007). If chosen properly, the sample used to study a population is statistically similar to said population and can thus be inferred to the population. According to Yilmaz (2013, p. 311), quantitative research can be defined as 'a type of empirical research into a social phenomenon or human problem, testing a theory consisting of variables which are measured with numbers and analysed with statistics'. In the case of this study, the impact of the societal problem 'segregation' will be tested through several variables. In the descriptive data, a longitudinal research design will be used to make year-by-year analyses.

One of the key advantages of a quantitative research design is the number of respondents used, its ability to determine correlation and its repeatable character. All of which make this design suitable for this study. Firstly, because this study used a large representative sample, the found results can be applied to the whole Northern Irish population. Secondly, the research question focuses on verifying links between segregation and the relationship between Catholic and Protestant communities in Northern Ireland. Establishing a correlation is essential in this regard. Lastly, because this thesis aims to study the impact of segregation after the Good Friday Agreements, data that is replicable is desired. A quantitative research design offers the possibility to make year-by-year comparisons, which enables the possibility to identify changes over the years. Especially in times of Brexit, and the corresponding tumult, year-by-year comparisons can study the impact of Brexit.

Although a quantitative research design is the best objective for this thesis, it does come with several limitations. Queirós, Faria & Almeida (2017) argue that a possible restraint of quantitative research is the lack of concern for an in-depth understanding of a given problem, leading to a unidimensional analysis of the problem. However, since a great amount of background literature is used to draft the first two chapters, this thesis has included an in-depth understanding of the researched situation. Additionally, to put this study into practice, and to ensure the multidimensional nature, the quantitative research method is linked to existing policy in chapter six of this study. This restraint is, therefore, not a reason to discharge the quantitative research design. The travel restrictions during the COVID-19 pandemic were also taken into account when opting for a quantitative research design.

3.2 DATA COLLECTION

To be able to answer the first part of the main research question, I will conduct a quantitative study based on the Northern Ireland Life & Times survey (henceforth respectively called NILT-survey). The NILT-survey focuses on adults aged 18 and over.

The NILT-survey was launched in October 1998 to put on record the attitudes, values and beliefs of the people living across Northern Ireland on a wide range of social policy issues. It is run jointly by Queen's University Belfast and Ulster University. By running annually, the survey provides a time series of attitudinal and behavioural change. The survey aims to provide an independent evidence base to inform policymakers, as well as a source to test theoretical and academic debates (NILT, 2021). Both of these points apply to the subject of this thesis. Hence, its suitability for this study.

NILT is a cross-sectional survey meaning that every year they aim at a different group of people taking part. To reach respondents, a two-stage sampling process is used to recruit participants. Firstly, a random sample of households is selected using the postcode address file (PAF). Private business addresses were removed from the database prior to sample selection. Secondly, one adult – aged 18 years or over – is randomly selected to take part in the interview using the 'next birthday' rule. The person with the next birthday, at the time of the call, was the person with whom the interview was to be conducted. Once someone agrees to take part, the interview is carried out using computer-assisted personal interviewing (CAPI). The COVID-19 pandemic has, however, meant a change in this process: the 2021 NILT-survey uses a mixed-mode approach, whereby respondents can complete the survey online, by phone or by video call.

The NILT-survey covers a wide range of topics such as 'education', 'politics' and 'good relations'. An extensive background section records key demographic variables, allowing NILT to undertake analysis by distinctive social groups as well as ensuring the representativity of the sample (NILT, 2002)

3.2.1 NILT-SURVEY 1998-2020

The used NILT-survey aims to reach adults aged 18 years and over living in Northern Ireland. From 1998 to 2004, around 2800 addresses were selected for interview. With a response rate of around 65 per cent (see Figure 2), this meant an annually total number of participants of 1800 (see Figure 3). The only exception to this period is 1999, in which 3000 addresses were selected ensuring a larger number of participants. As of 2005, around 2100 addresses are selected for interview. With a response rate of around 60 per cent, the total number of participants is around 1200. Unfortunately, the NILT-survey did not run in 2011 due to a lack of funding. Please note that it was impossible to determine the response rate for the years 2020 and 2021, as due to the COVID-19 pandemic these datasets were (partly) filled in via a published link.

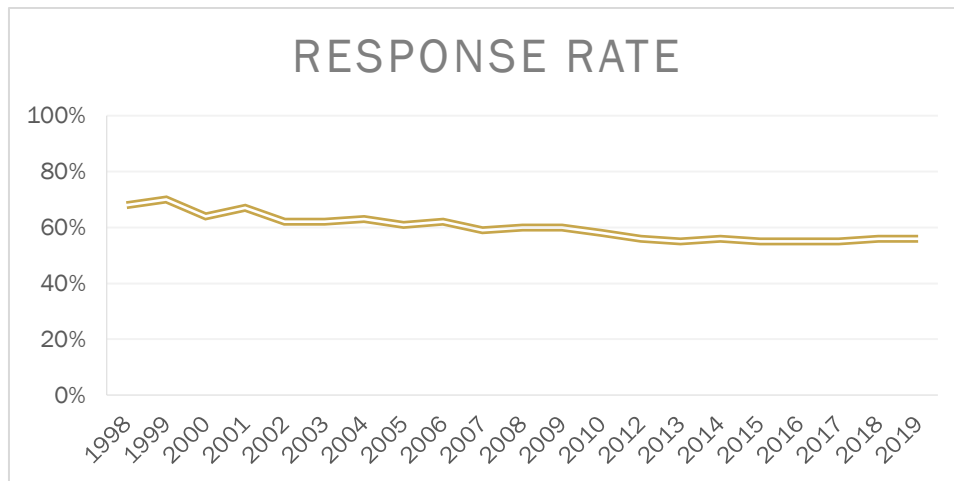


Figure 2. Response rate NILT-survey

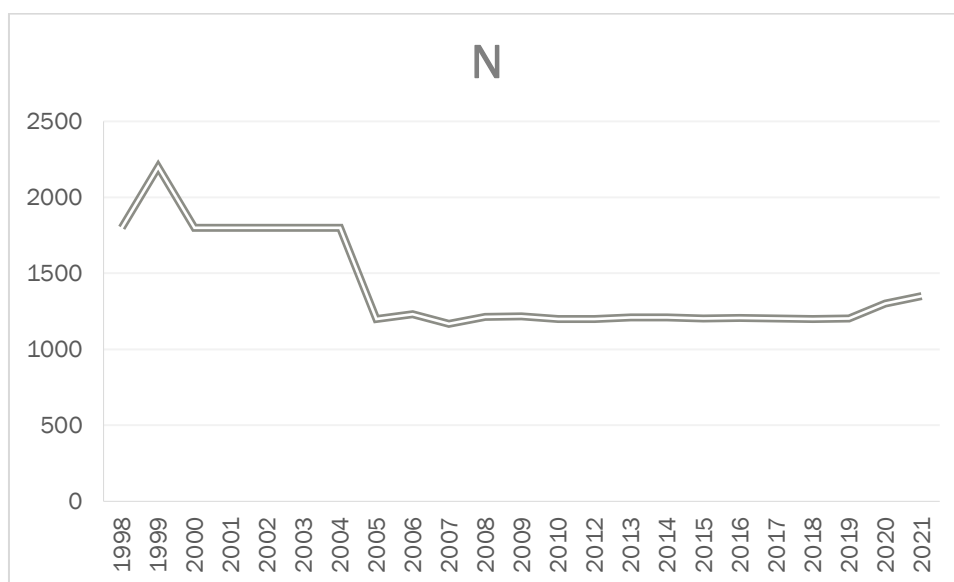


Figure 3. N-rate of NILT-survey

3.3 DESCRIPTIVE AND REGRESSION ANALYSIS

Building on the research design and the data collection, this paragraph will outline the used method of analysis. The quantitative data analysis is based on the methods of descriptive and regression analysis. Several descriptive analyses will be conducted to describe and summarise the used variables constructively. It helps us describe the basic features of the data in a study, as well as provide a summary and year-by-year analysis of the dataset. Consequently, a regression analysis will be conducted. Regression analysis is a statistical tool for the investigation of relationships between variables. Since this thesis seeks to ascertain a correlation between segregation and attitudes towards the outgroup, regression analysis is the suitable research design to use. Regression techniques have long been central in several domains of the social and economic sciences, such as sociology and econometrics (Sykes, 1993). Two main forms of regression can be distinguished: simple and multiple regression. Regression analysis with a single explanatory variable is termed 'simple regression', while the use of multiple explanatory variables is termed 'multiple regression'.

In the case of this thesis, a variety of factors are used. Hence, the usage of a multiple regression analyses. Besides the distinction between 'simple' and 'multiple' regression, two other types of regression can be distinguished: linear and logistic regression. Linear and logistic regression simply differ in the type of outcome variable: to be suitable for logistic regression, the outcome variable must be a 'dichotomous' variable. To be suitable for linear regression, the outcome variable must be of interval level. Since the outcome variable is of interval level, this study will use linear regression. Linear regression is the most common type of regression analysis, and it assumes that a linear relationship exists between the independent and dependent variables (Worster et. al., 2008). According to Worster et. al. (2008 p. 113), regression analysis is 'a powerful statistic method to determine which variables are predictors of an outcome and the magnitude of that relation'. Taking into account that this study explores the impact of several variables on the attitudes of people in Northern Ireland towards their outgroup, it is evident that multiple linear regression analyses offer the best method of analysis for this study.

3.4 VARIABLES

This section discusses which variables will be used for the analysis. This paragraph will also outline missing values, and how they were dealt with during this study. It is important to take into account that this paragraph will solely focus on discussing the coding of variables from the latest dataset (being 2021). The coding of variables in previous years (1998-2020) are, after all, the same. In 2021, 1397 people took part in the survey. Due to the fact that some respondents had to be removed from the dataset, the final N is 1169.

3.4.1 IDENTITY

Before the process of coding all the variables are elucidated, it is good to take into account that for every examined relationship two separate regression analyses will be conducted: in one all the people from the Catholic community are selected and in the other one all the people from the Protestant community are selected. This separation is needed because the outgroup, and thus the dependent variable, differs per community. To be able to study the extent to which the Protestant community has a negative attitude towards the outgroup, a different dependent variable (being 'favourability towards Catholics', see paragraph 3.4.2) is needed than for the Catholic community.

To establish these two separate analyses, one must know which respondent belongs to which category. This is however not as simple as it seems. Even though Northern Ireland is considered to be a bicultural society, several distinctive terms are used to describe this bicultural society: Catholics and Protestants, Republicans and Unionists, or Irish and British. The NILT-dataset uses four different questions to determine the community someone belongs to. The reason for these multiple questions is that some people do not consider themselves to be Catholic, but they – for example – do consider themselves to be a nationalist.

To maximise the number of respondents included in the regression analysis, it was decided to subdivide the answers-possibilities of all four questions into two categories: (a) belonging to the Catholic community, and (b) belonging to the Protestant community. It is important to mention that belonging to the Catholic/Protestant community does not inherently mean that the respondent is religious. The term 'Catholic' and 'Protestant' community is merely a way to subdivide the respondents. These are the four questions used to determine to which community someone belongs.

- 1. *Which of these best describes the way you think of yourself?*
(1) British, (2) Irish, (3) Ulster, (4) Northern Irish
- 2. *Generally speaking, do you think of yourself as a unionist, a nationalist or neither?*
(1) Unionist, (2) Nationalist, (3) Neither
- 3. *What is your religion?*
(1) Catholic, (2) Protestant, (3) No religion
- 4. *Do you feel part of Protestant or Catholic community?*
(1) Protestant community, (2) Catholic community, (3) Neither

As mentioned before, a new variable was made to include every respondent in either the 'Catholic' or 'Protestant' community. In Table 1, all four questions and the division of the answer categories into either 'belonging to the Protestant community' or 'belonging to the Catholic community' is shown. Respondents had to answer one of the four questions corresponding to either belonging to the Protestant or Catholic community (see this division in Table 1) in order to be included in the new variable. For example: if a respondent filled in 'British' for the first question, and gave a neutral answer for the other three questions (e.g. 'No religion'), the respondent would fall into the category 'belonging to the Protestant community' purely based on their answer to the first question. This way, the number of respondents belonging to either category remained as high as possible. Respondents who gave a neutral answer to all four questions could unfortunately not be included. Anyone who did not give an unambiguous answer to the four questions above had to be removed from the dataset as well. It is, after all, impossible to determine to which community one belongs if they e.g. fill in 'British' for the one question and 'Catholic' for another.

	New variable: belonging to the Protestant community	New variable: belonging to the Catholic community
1. Which of these best describes the way you think of yourself?	(1) British	(2) Irish
2. Generally speaking, do you think of yourself as a unionist, a nationalist or neither?	(1) Unionist	(2) Nationalist
3. What is your religion?	(2) Protestant	(1) Catholic
4. Do you feel part of Protestant or Catholic community?	(1) Protestant community	(2) Catholic community

Table 1: categorisation of four questions into new variables

Statistically, it is not possible to combine four questions into one new variable unless a KMO-test, principal factor analysis (PFA) and a Cronbach's Alpha-test are performed. A KMO-test is a statistical measure to determine which items are suitable for a factor analysis. The KMO-test gave a score of 0.814, which is well above the guideline of 0.5. Subsequently, a principal factor analysis (PFA) could be conducted. Only one underlying factor had an eigenvalue higher than 1.000 (i.e. 3.952), indicating that we can speak of one dimension. The confirmation that all four items consist of one dimension implies that the answers of all four items are similar enough to be combined into one variable.

As mentioned, one dimension emerged from the PFA, meaning one variable can be constructed out of all four items. As a last check, the Cronbach's alpha of the four items was retrieved. A Cronbach's alpha measures internal consistency, thus, how closely the items are related to each other. The four items had a Cronbach's alpha $\alpha = .996$, which is well above the guideline of 0.6 of De Heus (1995).

After these three tests, the new variable 'identity' could be conducted. This new variable consists of two groups: (0) 'belonging to the Protestant community' and (1) 'belonging to the Catholic community'. 668 belong to the Protestant community and 501 to the Catholic community.

3.4.2 DEPENDENT: FAVOURABILITY TOWARDS OUTGROUP

The first dependent variable of this study is 'favourability towards the outgroup'. In order to measure the attitudes towards (a) the Catholic outgroup and (b) the Protestant outgroup, two distinctive variables will be used:

- *How favourable or unfavourable do you feel about people from the Catholic community?*
- *How favourable or unfavourable do you feel about people from the Protestant community?*

Both questions had the following answer categories: (1) 'very favourable', (2) 'favourable', (3) 'neither favourable nor unfavourable', (4) 'unfavourable', (5) 'very unfavourable'. Respondents were also able to refuse to answer the question or fill in 'I don't know', both of which resulted in a missing value. To create an ascending scale, in which having a favourable attitude equals a higher number, all variables were recoded. This ensured that (0) means that someone is very unfavourable, and (4) means that someone is favourable to the outgroup. Since 'favourability towards Catholic community' and 'favourability towards Protestant community' are the dependent variables, all respondents with a missing value must be removed from the dataset (Beale & Little, 1975). This resulted in the total number of respondents to go from 1292 to 1278. In the end, 'favourability towards the Catholic community' turned out to have a mean of 3.064 (range 0-4). 'Favourability towards the Protestant community' turned out to have a mean of 3.007 (range 0-4). The respective standard deviations are 0.85 and 0.84.

3.4.3 DEPENDENT: PREFERRING SEGREGATION

The second dependent variable of this study 'preferring segregation' was constructed out of three other variables:

- *Do you prefer to live in own religion or mixed-religion neighbourhood?*
- *Do you prefer own religion or mixed-religion workplace?*
- *Do you prefer to send children to own religion or mixed-religion school?*

All three questions had the following answer categories: (0) 'mixed religion', (1) 'own religion only'. Respondents were also able to refuse to answer the question or fill in 'I don't know', both of which resulted in a missing value. As 'preferring segregation' is a dependent variable, the three items had to be combined into one variable. Before constructing a combined variable, all three items were subjected to a KMO test (.655). The principal factor analysis was conducted afterwards, revealing one dimension (eigenvalue = 1.932), allowing all three items to be included in one new variable. Successively, the Cronbach's alpha appeared to be of sufficient height ($\alpha = .703$). Afterwards, the new variable was constructed in which at least two out of three items had to be answered validly to be included in the newly-formed item. 'Preferring segregation' turned out to have a mean of 0.258 (range 0-1, '1' being preferring segregation), and a standard deviation of 0.351. For all missing values, the respective mean was filled in.

3.4.4 INDEPENDENT: SEGREGATION NEIGHBOURHOOD

Four questions were used to construct variable 'segregation neighbourhood'.

- *Do you think - Leisure centres - are shared and open in this area?*
- *Do you think - Parks - are shared and open in this area?*
- *Do you think - Libraries - are shared and open in this area?*
- *Do you think - Shopping centres - are shared and open in this area?*

All four of these questions had the following answer categories: (0) 'yes, definitely', (1) 'yes, probably', (2) 'probably not', (3) 'definitely not'. Respondents were also able to fill in 'none in this area' or 'I don't know', both of which resulted in a missing value. In order to construct a scale, all four items were subjected to a KMO test. The KMO test showed a score of 0.839, which is well above the guideline of 0.5. The PFA was conducted afterwards, and revealed only one dimension (eigenvalues = 3.146), allowing all four items to be put into one scale. Subsequently, the Cronbach's alpha appeared to be of sufficient height ($\alpha = .903$). By means of average, one scale was formed named 'segregation neighbourhood'. At least two out of four items had to be answered validly for the respondent to be included in the variable 'segregation neighbourhood'. 'Segregation neighbourhood' turned out to have a mean of 0.363, with a standard deviation of 0.548. For all missing values, the mean was filled in.

3.4.5 INDEPENDENT: SEGREGATION SCHOOL

All respondents were asked whether they ever attended a mixed or integrated school in Northern Ireland, to which they could answer (0) 'no' and (1) 'yes'. This item shows that nearly 25 per cent of the adults attended a mixed or integrated school.

3.4.6 INDEPENDENT: INTERMARRIAGE

All respondents were asked which religion their partner was brought up in. To which respondents could answer (1) 'Catholic', (2) 'Protestant', and (3) 'No/other Religion'. To be able to include a categorical variable in a regression analysis, three dummy variables had to be computed. One being 'I married someone from the same religion', another being 'I married someone from the other religion', and the third being 'I married someone with no religion'. To be able to include dummy variables in a regression model, one dummy variable must be excluded, which in this study is 'I married someone from the same religion'.

3.4.7 MEDIATOR: STRENGTH OF IDENTITY

To find out the strength of one's identity all respondents were asked whether they would call themselves (3) *a very strong*, (2) *fairly strong*, (1) *or not very strong* unionist/nationalist. 'Strength of unionism' turned out to have a mean of 1.132. For all missing values, their respective mean was filled in.

3.4.8 INDEPENDENT: CROSS-COMMUNITY PROJECTS

All respondents were asked the following question: 'Have you yourself been aware of any cross-community schemes or projects like these operating in Northern Ireland in the last 5 years?' This

question had the following answer categories: (1) 'yes', (2) 'no', which I computed into (0) 'no', (1) 'yes'. All missing values were given the respective mean.

3.4.9 INDEPENDENT: UNSAFETY

To measure the respondents level of safety, they were asked whether they feel safe going to:

- *A GAA club*
- *An Orange hall*
- *A Catholic secondary school*
- *A Protestant secondary school*

All four questions had the following answer categories: (0) 'very safe', (1) 'quite safe', (2) 'neither safe nor unsafe', (3) 'quite unsafe', (4) 'very unsafe'. All other answers were marked as non-valid, and therefore as a missing value (given their respective mean). Out of these four questions, two separate variables were constructed: 'feeling unsafe in Catholic areas' and 'feeling unsafe in Protestant areas'. Since only two items are used per variable, one cannot form a scale. It is, therefore, unnecessary to carry out a KMO test or PFA. The Cronbach's Alpha showed a sufficient height, indicating that the four questions can be constructed into two distinctive variables.

3.4.10 CONTROL VARIABLES

To ensure the measured effect is not affected by external factors, several variables must be held constant. In this thesis, three controlled variables will be used: gender, age and place. These variables were chosen because they are not of interest in either of this study's hypotheses. The variable 'gender' can be divided into two categories: (0) 'male', (1) 'female'. The variable 'age' has six categories: (1) '18-24 year old', (2) '25-34 year old', (3) '35-44 year old', (4) '45-54 year old', (5) '55-64 year old', (6) '65+ year old'. The last controlled variable is 'place', for which the question 'would you describe the place where you live as...' (1) 'a big city', (2) 'the suburbs or outskirts of a big city', (3) 'a small city or town', (4) 'a country village', (5) 'a farm or home in the country'.

3.4.11 OTHER VARIABLES

Two variables do not correspond to either of the hypotheses, and therefore will not be used in the regression analysis, yet do provide important insight in the descriptive analyses. The first of these is the variable 'relations future/past'. All respondents were asked to fill in whether the relation between Catholics and Protestants – compared to 5 years ago as well as in 5 years' time – changed. The answering possibilities were: (0) 'worse', (1) 'about the same', (2) 'better'. All respondents were also asked about the likability of a United Ireland in the next 20 years, to which they could answer: (0) 'very unlikely', (1) 'quite unlikely', (2) 'even chance', (3) 'quite likely', (4) 'very likely'.



Figure 4. Variables used in the regression analyses

4. DATA ANALYSIS

This chapter discusses and analyses the results obtained from the NILT datasets as described in chapter three. Firstly, this chapter will present the uni- and bivariate descriptive statistics that emerged from the NILT datasets 1998-2021. A t-test or ANOVA-test has been executed to provide significance to the bivariate statistics. The second part of this chapter focuses on the multivariate statistics, operated in the regression analyses. The regression analyses are based on the most recent NILT dataset from 2021. After the first part, a (sub-)conclusion is written, which will help to answer sub-question 1 to 3 in the last paragraph of this chapter.

RQ: What is the impact of segregation on the intergroup attitudes between the Protestant and Catholic communities in Northern Ireland?

Sub-questions:

- 1. To what extent does strength of national identity mediate the relationship between segregation and the relation between Protestant and Catholic communities in Northern Ireland?*
- 2. Does perceived intergroup unsafety increase preferences to segregate in Northern Ireland?*
- 3. To what extent do cross-community projects have an impact on intergroup favourability in Northern Ireland?*

Table 2. Research questions and sub-questions, as formulated in chapter 1.

4.1 DESCRIPTIVE ANALYSIS

The descriptive analyses are guided by three main topics which are linked to the items included in the regression variables. Firstly, we will delve into the relationship between Protestants and Catholics. These statistics provide the information on the dependent variable 'attitude towards outgroup'. The second section focuses on the uni- and bivariate statistics concerning segregation, which provides insight into the independent variable 'segregation'. After that, the descriptives concerning the dependent variables 'preference to segregate' and its independent variable 'hostility' will be inserted. Lastly, we will take a look at the impact of cross-community projects (which are funded by the EU PEACE programme). As data is reviewed over the years, the impact of Brexit can also be properly determined. It is, however, important to note that the impact of Brexit is never explicitly questioned. The answer to the sub-question regarding Brexit, therefore, derives from questions that indirectly measure this effect.

4.1.1 ATTITUDES TOWARDS THE OUTGROUP

The first variable used to determine the relationship between Protestants and Catholics is 'favourability towards outgroup'. Before delving into the descriptive statistics, it is vital to mention that uni- and bivariate statistics do not measure a level of significance. Therefore, significant differences between groups are established by a t-test. The first finding that emerged from the data is that females have a

slightly more favourable view of the outgroup than males (see Figure 5). However, the t-test I ran showed no significance for either community (Catholic community: $p = 0.0716$, Protestant community: $p = 0.560$). Another – perhaps unexpected – finding that can be observed, is that older adults have a more favourable view of the outgroup than younger adults (see Figure 6). Especially within the Catholic community. The ANOVA test I ran also showed that this effect is solely significant for the Catholic community ($p = 0.000$). Lastly, looking at the annual differences one can detect a clear decline in favourability after the Brexit referendum of 2016 (see Figure 7). The level of favourability towards the outgroup within the Catholic community in 2020 has even dropped to the lowest level ever measured.

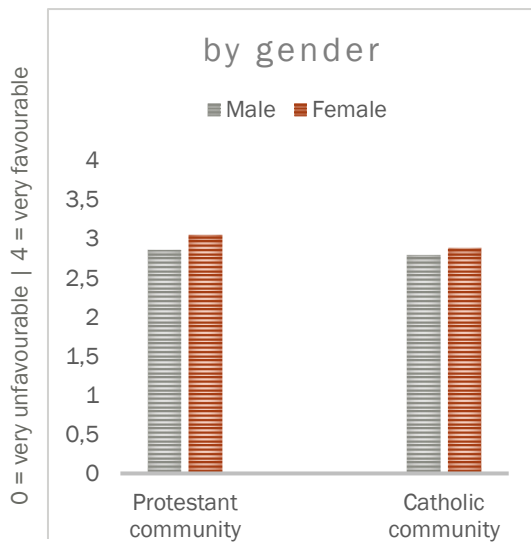


Figure 5. How favourable or unfavourable do you feel about people from the other community? (2021) (Protestant community, $n = 668$) (Catholic community, $n = 501$)

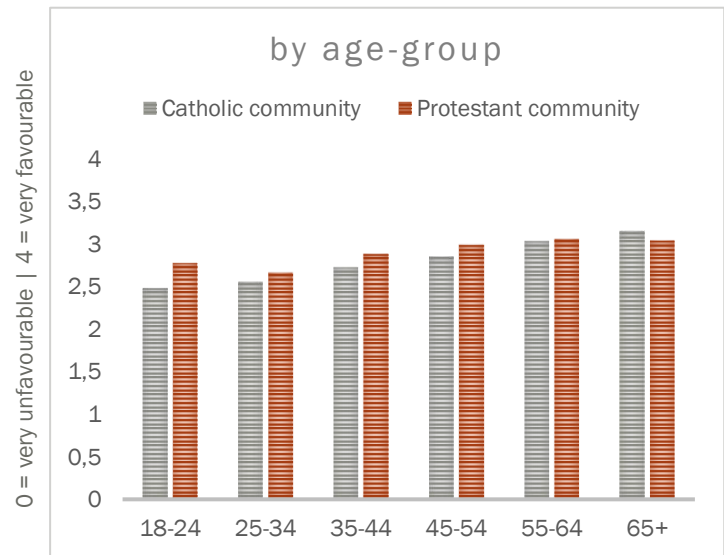


Figure 6. How favourable or unfavourable do you feel about people from the other community? (2021) (Protestant community, $n = 668$) (Catholic community, $n = 501$)

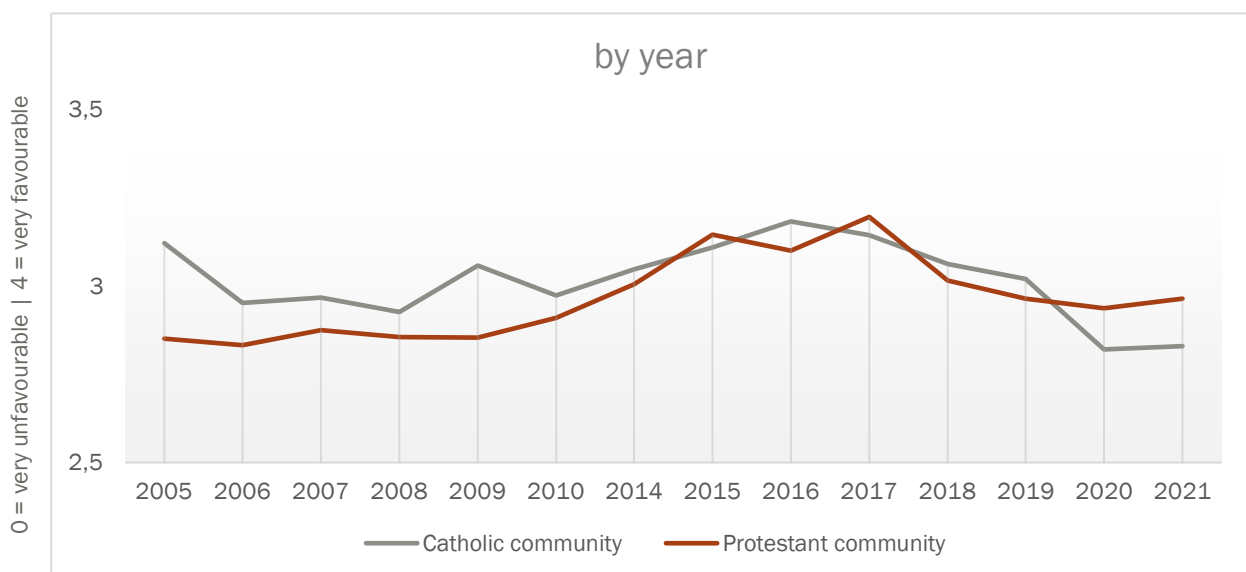


Figure 7. Zoomed in: how favourable or unfavourable do you feel about people from the other community? ($n =$ see figure 3)

The impact of Brexit on the relationship between Protestants and Catholics is also observed in the variable ‘relations between Catholics and Protestants compared to 5 years ago’ (see Figure 8). In order to measure this effect properly, five datasets² from the year of the Brexit referendum to the aftermath of the referendum and the lead-up to the actual Brexit are compared. In the year of the Brexit referendum,³ only 5 per cent considered the relationship between Catholics and Protestants to be worse compared to five years ago. This percentage has risen to nearly 20 per cent in 2019 and 2021. This increase is due solely to a decline in people considering the relationship to be ‘better’. This percentage has, after all, decreased from approximately 60 per cent in 2016 to less than 40 per cent in 2021. Even though the relationship between Catholics and Protestants has deteriorated, in all five years under review more people consider the relationship to have improved than worsened. Lastly, another finding that emerged from the data is that the likelihood of a United Ireland has increased since the United Kingdom voted to opt-out of the European Union. As can be observed in Figure 9⁴, the likelihood of a United Ireland is considered to be a greater possibility after the Brexit Referendum than before. The fact that a majority of the Northern Irish population voted to remain part of the European Union, especially among the Catholic community, might have contributed to this increase.

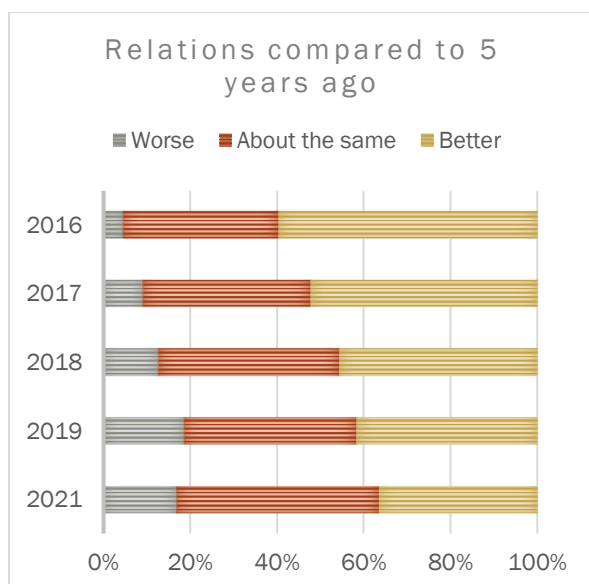


Figure 8. Would you say relations between Protestants and Catholics have improved or worsened? (*n* = see figure 3)

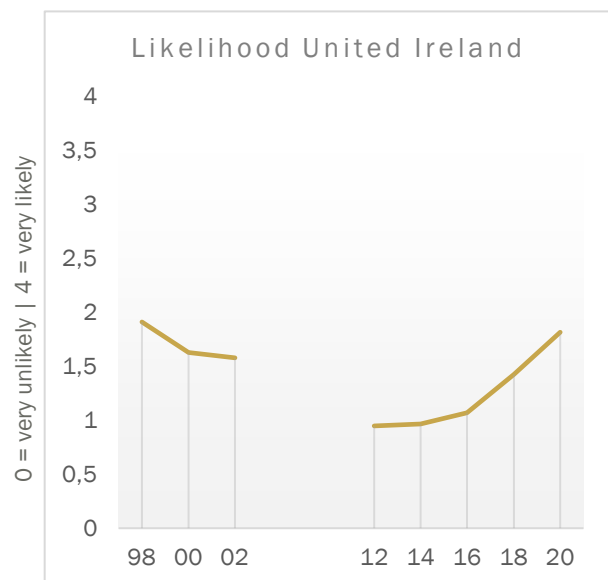


Figure 9. At any time in the next 20 years, do you think it is likely or unlikely that there will be a United Ireland? (*n* = see figure 3)

4.1.2 (VOLUNTARY) SEGREGATION

This thesis' focus on the relationship between the Catholic and Protestant community is intertwined with the impact of segregation. To answer this research question it is first and foremost important to study the extent to which Northern Ireland is considered to be a segregated society. This section will cover this question as well as its level of voluntariness. Figures 10 and 11 show a varied image of the level of

² In the year 2020, this question was not asked

³ Please note that this dataset was completed before the actual Brexit referendum

⁴ This question was not asked between 2003 and 2011

segregation in Northern Ireland. All areas questioned in Figure 11 are considered to be shared and open to both communities. Figure 10, however, shows a different image: less than 30 per cent of the Northern Irish population has attended a (fairly) mixed school. Figure 12 shows that more than 70 per cent of the married Northern Irish population have married someone from the same religion. A difference is observed between areas in which (close) contact between communities is not a necessity (such as leisure centres, parks, libraries and shopping centres) and areas in which close contact is expected (such as schools and marriage). Places, where close contact is not necessary, are considered to be shared and open, while places, where close contact is expected, remain segregated. Unfortunately, respondents were not asked about segregation in other close contact areas such as your work or neighbours. In order to obtain a more exhaustive image of the disparity in the level of segregation between areas with and without close contact, the variable 'hostility' is included. Theory, after all, underpins that a feeling of unsafety leads to disfavoured desegregation (Pettigrew, 1998). Perhaps the disparity in segregation between areas with and without close contact can be clarified by a feeling of unsafety which causes people not to mind sharing areas as long as close contact can be avoided. Figure 13 shows that people consider places where close contact with the other community is expected to be rather unsafe. Nearly 30 per cent of the Protestant respondents feel unsafe visiting a GAA club. This figure rises to 40 per cent of the Catholic respondents feeling unsafe going to an Orange hall. Additionally, (less than) 80 per cent feel safe going to a school of the opposite community. These numbers connect Figures 10, 11, and 12, and might explain the difference in the level of segregation between areas with and without close contact: areas in which close contact can be avoided are considered to be shared and open, but – possibly due to a sense of unsafety – actually attending places where close contact is expected is too big of a move.

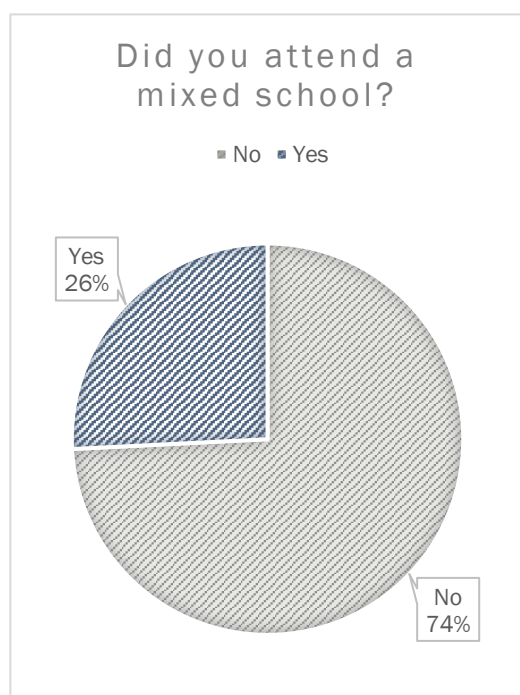


Figure 10. Did you ever attend a mixed or integrated school in Northern Ireland? (2021) ($n = 1169$)

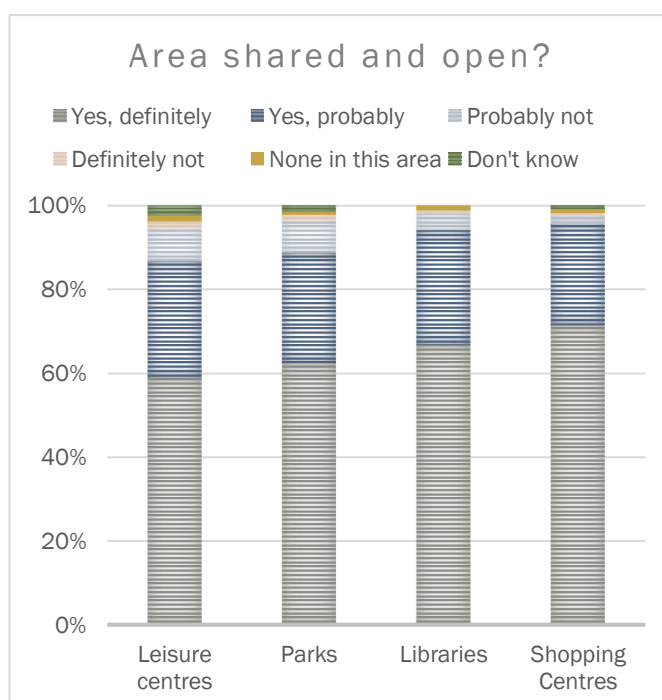


Figure 11. Looking at the following facilities, to what extent do you think that these are 'shared and open' to both Protestants and Catholics? (2021) ($n = 1169$)

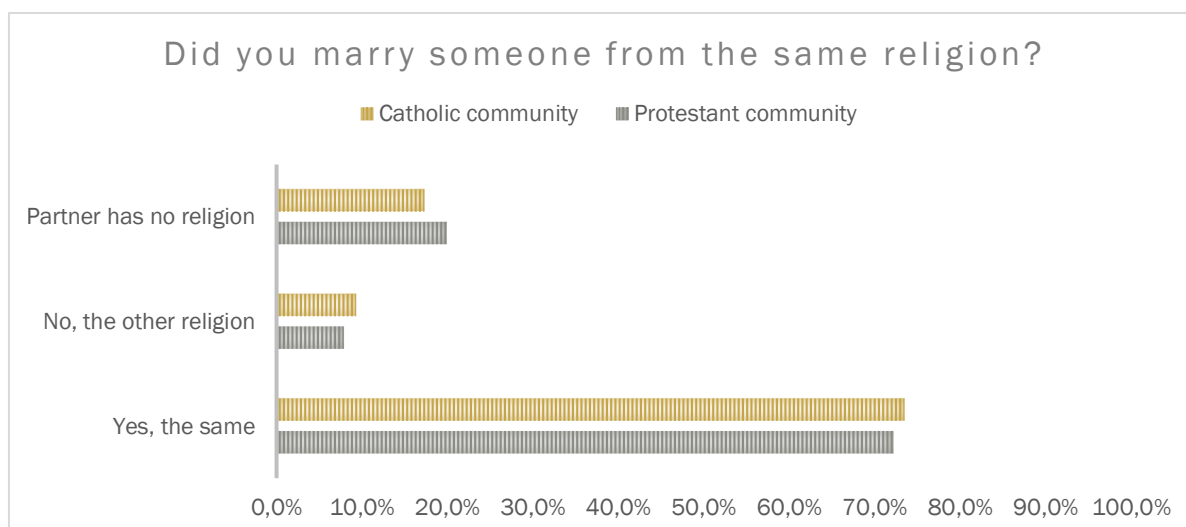


Figure 12. Does your spouse or partner regard themselves as belonging to the same religion as you? (2021) (*n* = 731)

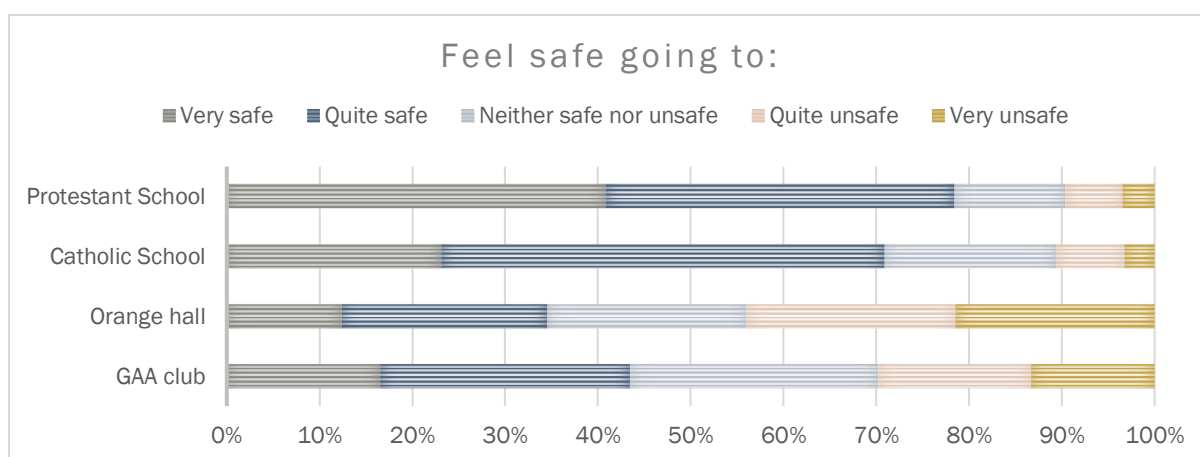


Figure 13. How safe do you think you would feel going if it was to be held in these premises? (2021) (*n* = 1169)

This preliminary rationale does, however, not fully correlate with the statistics from Figures 14 and 15, which show that even in areas of close contact (such as your neighbourhood, work and school) segregation is not preferred. Approximately 85 per cent prefer to live in a mixed neighbourhood, and nearly 95 per cent prefer to have a mixed workplace. Even 75 per cent of the respondents would prefer to send their children to a mixed school. The percentage of people preferring to send their children to a mixed school has always been much higher than the people who actually attended a mixed school. Why is there such a large difference between wanting a place of close contact to be mixed, and actually attending a place where religion is mixed? Broaah & Knox (2017) assume that the free choice of choosing which school to attend is constrained by a social pressure to conform. A total of 65 officially grant-aided integrated schools in Northern Ireland perhaps also contribute to the fact that attending a mixed school is sometimes not even a choice. The true answer to the raised question cannot yet be fully answered, however, the numbers in Figures 14 and 15 do question the true voluntariness of Northern Irish segregation.

Lastly, two other vital pieces of information has come up during the descriptive analyses. First of all, the attendance of a mixed school by age (see Figure 16) shows that there has been an increase in people attending a mixed school. Whereas approximately 18 per cent of the people of 65 years old and older have attended a mixed school, it is nearly 40 per cent in the youngest age group. An ANOVA-test showed that the intergroup difference is indeed significant ($p = 0.000$).

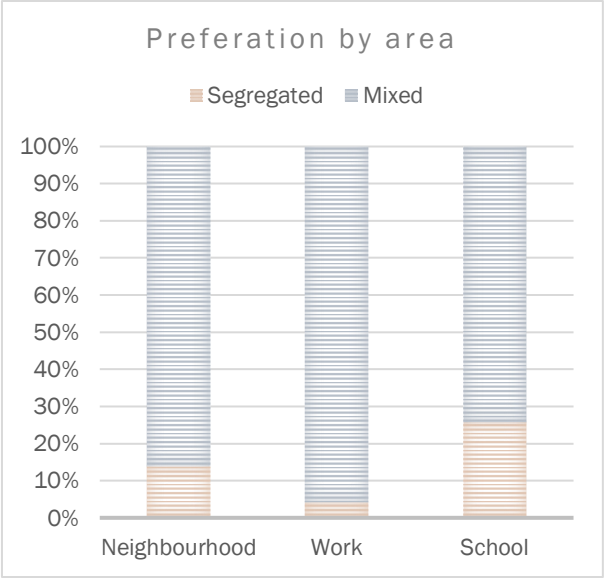


Figure 14. If you had a choice, would you prefer these areas to be with people of only your own religion or mixed? (2021) ($n = 1169$)

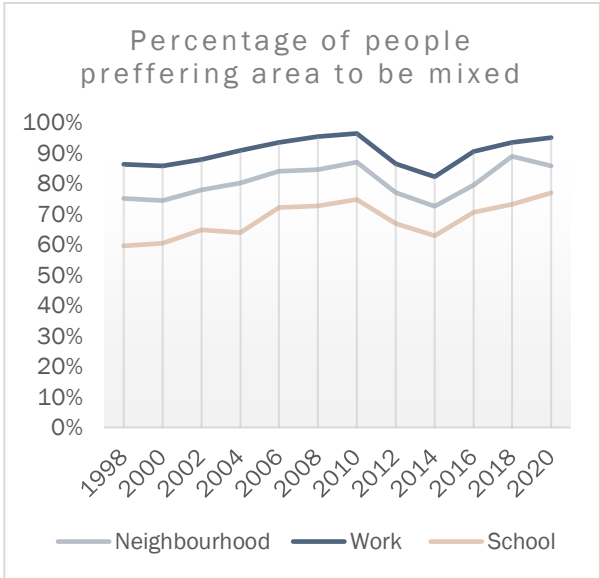


Figure 15. Percentage of people preferring area to be mixed by year. ($n =$ see figure 3)

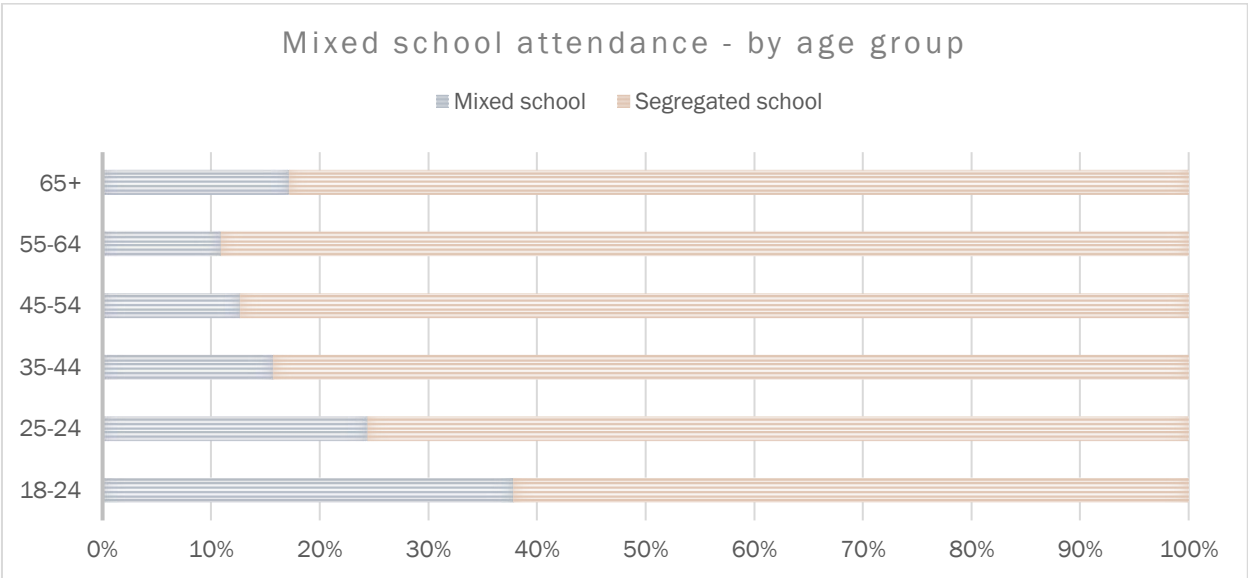


Figure 14. Did you ever attend a mixed or integrated school in Northern Ireland? By age group. (2021) ($n = 1169$)

4.1.3 CROSS-COMMUNITY PROJECTS

This thesis researches the impact of the EU PEACE programme on desegregation in Northern Ireland. The latest PEACE IV Programme represents an investment of 270 million euros to dozens of projects aiming to strengthen cohesion between Catholic and Protestant communities, some of which can be categorised within the cross-community projects. Since the NILT-survey did not ask respondents their opinion on these cross-community projects, the statistical analysis will merely focus on whether awareness of cross-community projects has an impact on intergroup relations and a preference to segregate. The univariate statistics in Figure 18 show that just over 50 per cent of the Northern Irish population is aware of cross-community projects in their neighbourhood. Figure 17 shows that the area in which you live does not have an impact on the awareness of cross-community projects in your area. This has also established by an ANOVA test ($p = 0.554$).

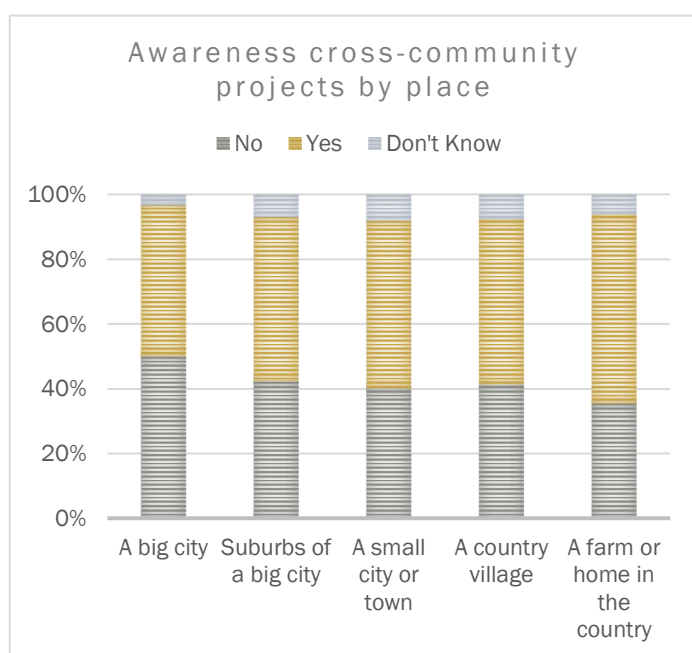


Figure 17. Have you yourself been aware of any cross-community schemes or projects like these operating in the last 5 years? By place. (2021) ($n = 1169$)

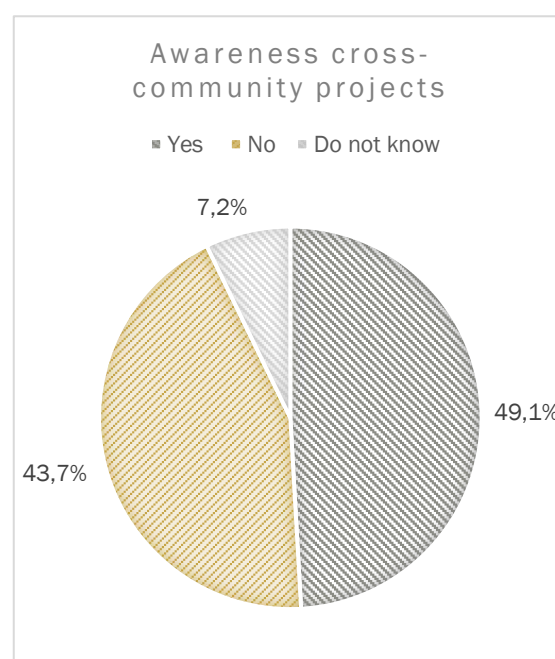


Figure 18. Have you yourself been aware of any cross-community schemes or projects like these in the last 5 years? (2021) ($n = 1169$)

4.2 REGRESSION ANALYSIS

In this paragraph, the results of the regression analyses that emerged from the data are discussed. Whereas the data presented in paragraph 4.1 solely answered part of sub-questions 1 to 3, this paragraph will contribute to a more conclusive answer. As already pointed out above, several regression analyses will be conducted to answer sub-question 1 to 3. They are guided by three frameworks shown in Figures 19, 20 and 21. First, it is important to mention that these frameworks are derived from the hypotheses formulated in chapter two. Hypothesis 1 and 2 – all of which stem from the dependent variable ‘attitude towards the outgroup’ – are included in framework 1. Hypotheses 1a and b are based on the debate surrounding *partition* and *integration*. As thoroughly expounded in chapter two, this debate revolves around the question of whether or not intergroup contact has a positive effect on intergroup relations. Both claim that segregation has an opposite effect on attitude towards the outgroup. The mediation in framework 1 is based on hypotheses 2a and b. Hypothesis 2a stems from the *spatial identity theory* (Newman & Paasi, 1998), which claims that living in a segregated environment strengthens one’s national identity. Hypothesis 2b is based on the *social identity theory* (Tajfel & Turner, 1979), in which is assumed that the stronger one’s identity is, the less one favours the outgroup. Hypothesis 4a is incorporated into framework 2: cross-community projects have a positive impact on favourability towards the outgroup. Hypothesis 3 and 4b – all of which stem from the dependent variable ‘preferring segregation’ – are included in framework 3. The *save haven theory* states that people choose to live in a segregated neighbourhood to avoid hostility. On this theory, hypothesis 3 is based. Additionally, hypothesis 4b is included in framework 3: cross-community projects reduce the willingness to segregate.

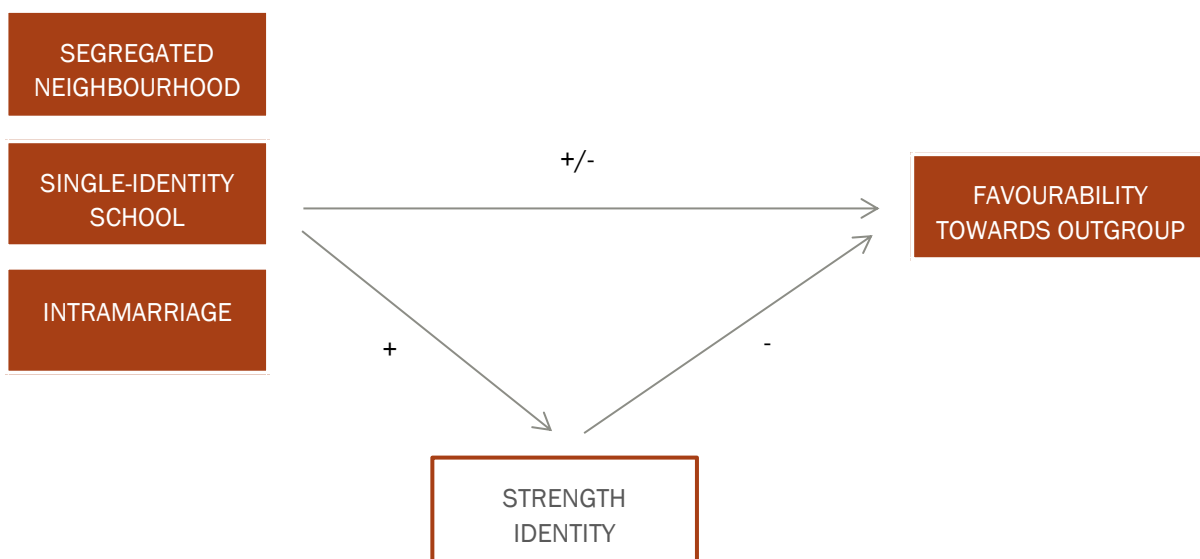


Figure 19. Regression framework 1 – hypothesis 1 and 2.

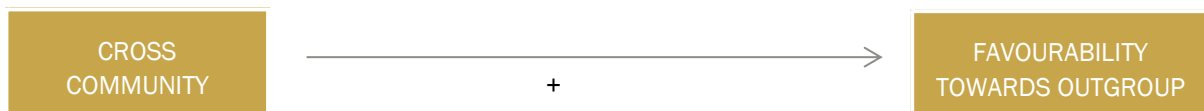


Figure 20. Regression framework 2 – hypothesis 4a.

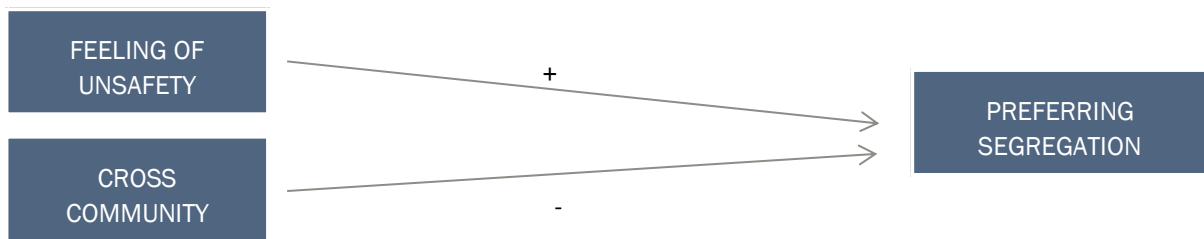


Figure 20. Regression framework 3 – hypothesis 3 and 4b

4.2.1 REGRESSION: FRAMEWORK 1 AND 2

Table 3: Protestant community:

	<i>Model I</i>		<i>Model II</i>		
	B		bèta	B	bèta
Constant	2.664 ***			2.892 ***	
Segregation neighbourhood	-0.289 ***		-0.190	-0.272 *	-0.178
Mixed school	0.148 *		0.073	0.122 *	0.060
Intermarriage					
<i>married different religion</i>	0.321		0.082	0.204	0.052
<i>rest category</i>	-0.147 *		-0.089	-0.208	-0.127
Cross-community projects	0.143 *		0.087	0.153 **	0.093
Strength identity				-0.173 ***	-0.223
Gender (<i>male = ref.</i>)	0.232 ***		0.141	0.159 *	0.096
Age	0.061 **		0.1107	0.072 **	0.126
Place	0.000		0.000	-0.001	-0.001
R²	0.095			0.138	

*= p<0,05 ; **= p<0,01 ; ***= p<0,001

Source: Northern Ireland Life and Times 2019 N: 668

Dependent variable: Favourability towards outgroup

Table 4: Catholic community:

	<i>Model I</i>		<i>Model II</i>		
	B		bèta	B	bèta
Constant	2.400 ***			2.432 ***	
Segregation neighbourhood	-0.240 ***		-0.167	-0.238 ***	-0.166
Mixed school	0.241 *		-0.085	0.245 *	0.087
Intermarriage					0.081
<i>married different religion</i>	0.312		0.084	0.301	-0.134
<i>rest category</i>	-0.226 **		-0.131	-0.233 **	0.086
Cross-community projects	0.155 *		0.089	0.149 *	-0.033
Strength identity				-0.027	-0.033
Gender (<i>male = ref.</i>)	0.144		0.082	0.129	0.074
Age	0.090 ***		0.156	0.092 **	0.158
Place	0.072 *		0.100	0.075 *	0.105
R²	0.118			0.118	

p<0,05 ; **= p<0,01 ; ***= p<0,001

Source: Northern Ireland Life and Times 2019 N: 501

Dependent variable: Favourability towards outgroup

4.2.2 RESULTS: FRAMEWORK 1 AND 2

The regression models, in which the effects depicted in Framework 1 and 2 will be discussed, are shown in Tables 3 and 4. Model I will test the effect of (a) segregation and (b) cross-community projects on the dependent variable 'attitudes towards the outgroup'. Model II will test the extent to which 'strength of identity' mediates the relation between segregation and 'attitudes towards the outgroup'. As the outgroup, and thus the dependent variable differs for the Protestant and Catholic community, two distinctive regression analyses had to be conducted: one solely including the Protestant respondents (results in Table 3), and another solely including the Catholic respondents (results in Table 3). The tables report constants, unstandardised and standardised coefficients, as well as their respective level of significance.

Model I of both Table 3 and 4 shows that the independent variable 'segregation' has a significant impact on one's attitude towards the outgroup. This implies that, for both the Protestant and Catholic community, people living in a segregated area have a less favourable view of the outgroup. Additionally, Tables 3 and 4 show that people who have attended a mixed school have a somewhat more favourable view of the outgroup. Then, the intermarriage effect: intermarriage does not affect intergroup relations. It has to be mentioned that the absolute number of people marrying someone from the 'other' religion is for both communities small (<20). The results in this regression analysis regarding intermarriage must, thus, be interpreted with care. To combine these results, it is clear that hypothesis 1b can be rejected. All three segregation variables do not have a positive effect on intergroup relations. On the other hand, hypothesis 1a is supported by evidence considered here. Segregation has in all cases a negative effect on intergroup favourability. All but one show significance. Turning to the variable 'cross-community projects', a significant association with 'attitude towards the outgroup' was once more found, implying that people who are aware of cross-community projects in their neighbourhood have a more favourable view of the outgroup. This indicates that hypothesis 4a is supported by the data. The results concerning this hypothesis must however be taken into account with care, as the variable 'cross-community projects' merely focuses on awareness and not on participating in said projects.

Model II of Tables 3 and 4 will be used to examine the extent to which the mediation variable holds effect. It can be stated that people living in a segregated area have a less favourable view of the outgroup, due to their stronger sense of identity. Additionally, people who have attended a mixed school have a weaker strength of identity, and therefore a more favourable view of the outgroup. No mediating effect for intermarriage exists. The reason behind this conclusion is as follows: the variable 'strength of identity' is only for the Protestant community significant, which means that we can speak of a mediating effect within this group if the direct effect is weakened by at least 10% after the inclusion of the mediation variable. Looking at the main correlation of 'segregation' in Table 3, it can be seen that after the inclusion of the mediating variable the direct effect has weakened by 0.185 (from -0.289 to -0.104 respectively). This is a reduction of 35.9%, which indicates that the strength of the direct correlation between 'neighbourhood segregation' and 'attitudes towards the outgroup' is weakened after the inclusion of 'strength of identity'. This indicates that the direct correlation is (partly) explained by one's

strength of identity. The same measurements have been done for all significant independent variables in Table 3 (see Table 5). It can be concluded that all but one independent variable are mediated by 'strength of identity'.

Concerning hypotheses 2a and b, the results are ambiguous. Hypothesis 2a assumed that a stronger sense of national identity leads to negative attitudes towards the outgroup. The results show that merely for the Protestant community this hypothesis can be supported. Due to these results, mediation hypothesis 2b can solely be supported for the Protestant Community.

Lastly, however not corresponding to a hypothesis, this regressions analysis determined that age is also significantly associated with 'attitude towards the outgroup', meaning that both Protestant and Catholic men report less favourable views on the respective outgroup than women. Place is also significant for both communities, implying that the more rural you live the less favourable your attitudes towards the outgroup are.

<i>Protestant Community:</i>	<i>Mediating effect</i>
Neighbourhood segregation	From -0.289 to -0.104. Weakened by 35.9% .
Mixed school	From 0.148 to 0.122. Weakened by 17.6%
Intermarriage	No significance.

Table 5. Mediating effects framework 1

4.2.3 REGRESSION: FRAMEWORK 3

Table 6: Protestant community

<i>Model I</i>		
	B	bèta
Constant	0.156 *	
Unsafety	0.069 ***	0.283
Cross-community projects	-0.012	-0.025
Gender (male = ref.)	-0.026	-0.052
Age	-0.016	-0.092
Place	-0.015	-0.067
R²	0.098	

*= p<0,05 ; **= p<0,01 ; ***= p<0,001

Source: Northern Ireland Life and Times 2019 N: 668

Dependent variable: Preferring segregation

Table 7: Catholic community:

<i>Model I</i>		
	B	bèta
Constant	0.128 **	
Unsafety	0.060 ***	0.253
Cross-community projects	-0.010	-0.019
Gender (male = ref.)	0.016	0.032
Age	-0.008	-0.045
Place	-0.017	-0.084
R²	0.079	

*= p<0,05 ; **= p<0,01 ; ***= p<0,001

Source: Northern Ireland Life and Times 2019 N: 501

Dependent variable: Preferring segregation

4.2.4 RESULTS: FRAMEWORK 2

The regression analyses shown in Tables 6 and 7 are conducted to test the third and last framework. Model I will test whether the independent variables (a) unsafety and (b) cross-community projects have an impact on the dependent variable 'preferring segregation'. Both tables show evidence of an overall stronger sense of unsafety leading to a segregation preference. People who experience unsafety have a greater segregation preference. Support for hypothesis 3 was therefore founded. Finally, the effect of being aware of cross-community projects on preferring segregation was studied. Tables 6 and 7 indicate that being aware of cross-community projects in their respective neighbourhoods does not affect a preference for segregation. As the variable 'cross-community projects' merely focused on an awareness of cross-community projects and not participating in cross-community projects, Hypothesis 4b was not directly tested. However, these results do indicate a rejection of the hypothesis.

<i>Hypotheses:</i>	<i>Supported or rejected?</i>
<i><u>1a.</u> Segregation has a negative effect on attitudes towards the outgroup.</i>	Supported
<i><u>1b.</u> Segregation has a positive effect on attitudes towards the outgroup.</i>	Rejected
<i><u>2a.</u> The stronger the sense of national identity, the more the attitudes towards the outgroup are.</i>	Supported for the Protestant community Rejected for the Catholic community
<i><u>2b.</u> The relationship between segregation and attitudes towards the outgroup, is explained by one's strength of identity.</i>	Supported for the Protestant community Rejected for the Catholic community
<i><u>3.</u> The higher the experienced sense of safety, the greater the preference for segregation.</i>	Supported
<i><u>4a.</u> Participating in cross-community projects has a positive effect on intergroup relations.</i>	Indication: supported
<i><u>4b.</u> Participating in cross-community projects weakens the segregation preference</i>	Indication: rejection

Table 8. Overview hypotheses

5. CONCLUSION

The previous paragraphs in this chapter discussed the most noticeable findings that emerged from the regression analyses. Before moving on to Chapter 5, in which the concepts and results will be aligned with the EU PEACE programme, I will formulate a conclusion to the results found in both data analyses. This section serves as a conclusion of sub-questions 1 to 3, as well as offer an answer to the research question.

5.1 CONCLUSION: SUB QUESTION 1

In this section, I will formulate an answer to sub-question 1: *'To what extent does strength of national identity mediate the relationship between segregation and the intergroup attitudes between Protestant and Catholic communities in Northern Ireland?'* As I have addressed in the previous chapter, the results regarding this sub-question are ambiguous. While the strength of national identity does strengthen unfavourable attitudes towards the outgroup for the Protestant community, it does not for the Catholic community. On a theoretical level, the effect for the Protestant community can be interpreted as a consequence of the social identity theory. The central tenet of the social identity theory is that people strive to have a so-called positive and distinctive identity. Subsequently, people tend to address their ingroup in a positive matter. People who do not belong to the ingroup – the so-called outgroup – are valued as negative.

Two out of three segregation factors mediate the relationship between segregation and intergroup favourability (bear in mind: only for the Protestant Community). Both neighbourhood segregation and attending a segregated school lead to a stronger sense of identity, which subsequently causes unfavourable intergroup behaviour. These results support the spatial identity theory, which stated that segregation creates an 'us' and an 'other' identity, and, consequently, reproduces the idea that the outgroup is unreliable. Inter-marriage, however, seems to form the exception. Diagnosing why leads to the expectation that identity formation happens at an earlier age than the age of marriage. People have already formed their identity before marriage and hence are not impacted by their choice of partner. In fact, it can even be reasoned that a strong sense of national identity leads to choosing a partner with the same religious beliefs. Where you go to school and live, on the other hand, tends to be a choice made before identity formation, and can thus impact ingroup favouritism.

5.2 CONCLUSION: SUB QUESTION 2

When it comes to sub-question 2 *'Does perceived intergroup unsafety contribute to a preference to segregate in Northern Ireland?'*, the conclusion is twofold. One notable conclusion is that merely a little percentage of the Northern Ireland society actually prefers segregation over desegregation. The great majority of the Northern Irish population do not prefer their neighbourhoods, work, and school to be segregated. On the other hand would it, however, be misguided to conclude that the level of Northern Irish is coercive. The Northern Irish school system is, for example, de jure open to all pupils. However, pupil attendance rates indicate a system based on religious segregation. These segregation levels can,

however, be related to neighbourhood segregation. The question, therefore, remains: do children attend schools which are nearby, and because of neighbourhood segregation, leading to educational segregation? The social housing system is – de jure – not divided between Catholic and Protestant associations either. Approximately 70% of dwellings in the social sector are maintained and managed by the Northern Ireland Housing Executive and the remaining 30% by housing associations, neither of which are affiliated to either religion. Here too, however, reality shows that the great majority of social housing remains segregated. The question, therefore, remains as to why data shows that the Northern Irish population is willing to desegregate, but that this desire is not translated into reality. Lijphart's concept of cleavages provides a (possible) answer to this question. As Northern Ireland is a society consisting of multiple reinforcing cleavages, varying socioeconomic groups have little opportunity to be exposed to other socioeconomic groups, regardless of their willingness. In terms of class, Catholics are often less fortunate than Protestants, which enforces the chances of division.

By looking at the data it has become clear that the great majority of the Northern Irish population does not prefer a segregated life. In this light, it is also important to determine which factors contribute to the willingness to (de)segregate. Following the safe haven theory, this thesis showed evidence of an overall stronger sense of unsafety leading to a preference for segregation. It is with this in mind that I believe that a fear of feeling unsafe, in which it is irrelevant to what extent this fear is probable, leads to people choosing the 'safe' option. For example, parents rather choose the 'safest' option for their children – which is making their child attend a school with children from their own religion – than take a risk of them feeling unsafe.

5.3 CONCLUSION: SUB QUESTION 3

When it comes to sub-question 3 *'To what extent do cross-community projects have an impact on intergroup relations in Northern Ireland?'*, there are several factors worth mentioning. First, it is important to keep in mind that respondents were merely asked whether they are aware of cross-community projects in their neighbourhood. The regression analysis is solely based on this question, and conclusions on participating in cross-community projects cannot be made. Regarding the regression analysis, this thesis has shown that being aware of cross-community projects in their respective neighbourhoods weakens outgroup unfavourability. A very notable conclusion is, therefore, that being aware of cross-community projects already has a positive impact on intergroup relations. Following the contact theory, it is estimated that actually participating in such cross-community projects has an even greater impact. These findings show evidence of the impact of cross-community projects in desegregation efforts. As mentioned before, the EU PEACE programme funds large proportions of these cross-community projects. More attention will therefore be paid to this programme and its policy implications in the next chapter.

5.4 GENERAL CONCLUSION

The previous paragraphs have answered sub-question 1 to 4. In this paragraph, I formulate an answer to the research question: *'What is the impact of segregation on the relation between the Protestant and*

Catholic communities in Northern Ireland?'. Taking all of the findings of Chapter 4 into consideration, some general conclusions can be drawn. Especially the descriptive statistics offered insight into the extent of segregation in Northern Ireland. On an educational level, the answer is evident: less than 30 per cent of the Northern Irish population has attended a mixed school. This percentage drops to less than 5 per cent if the respondent is asked whether their school was a formally integrated school. Inter-marriage in Northern Ireland has also been uncommon. This research shows that less than 10 per cent of the married population have married someone from the other religion. On the residential level, the answer is less clear: the NILT-dataset does not explicitly ask respondents the extent of diversity of their neighbourhood's population. It does, however, ask whether areas in their neighbourhood (such as parks, leisure and shopping centres) are shared and open. The short answer to this question is: yes, the great majority of the Northern Irish population considers these areas to be shared and open. Deriving a conclusion from this sole question would, however, be inaccurate, as I have up to this point merely outlined one factor of residential segregation. There are, however, several other points that should be taken into consideration before formulating an exclusive conclusion, such as the religion of one's neighbours. A downfall of this survey is, regrettably, that people were not asked whether the majority of their neighbourhood's population is of one's own religion. Data from The Northern Ireland Federation of Housing Associations (NIFHA) has, however, indicated that social housing is overwhelmingly segregated between the two communities. As of 2017, 90 per cent of social housing estates are single-identity. This thesis has found a clear distinction between close contact and non-contact segregation: areas in which close contact can be avoided are considered to be open and shared, whereas areas in which close contact is obvious (in schools and within marriage) remain fairly segregated. Invisible walls continue to exist and lead to separate lifestyles in which both communities have few opportunities to meet. It are the close-contact areas, such as schools, housing and marriage, which reproduce the most (invisible) walls.

Regarding outgroup favourability, the descriptive statistics offered insight into the impact of Brexit. An important finding is the clear impact of Brexit in nearly all year-over-year results. The shift (2005-2015) towards a more favourable view of the outgroup was interrupted by Brexit and has reached, for both communities, a low point. This effect is more noticeable for the Catholic community, as their attitude towards the outgroup has reached an all-time low. This might be due to the fact that it is particularly the Catholic community that would have preferred to remain part of the European Union because of their strong ties with the, EU-member, Republic of Ireland. This may also explain the sharp increase in the likelihood of a United Ireland. As the tension and discontent mounted, with the turmoil surrounding Brexit, so did the call for a United Ireland.

Then onto the research question. As I have discussed several times throughout this thesis, the debate regarding segregation is twofold. Both on a political as on a social level, there are proponents and opponents of segregation. While scholars such as Lijphart and Chapman & Roeder have argued that desegregation poses threat to intergroup relations, scholars such as Allport have stipulated that interaction between actors of opposing groups can reduce prejudice and thus weaken the negative

image created about the other. The NILT-survey was able to provide answers to this debate on an individual level. It is, therefore, important to acknowledge that the conclusions drawn below should merely be interpreted on a societal level. On a societal level, this research has solely found support for the integrationist point of view. The effect of neighbourhood segregation (through shared services and facilities) on intergroup attitudes is prominent, yet is thought to be more pernicious than identified in this analysis as the effect of residential segregation has not been assessed. The analysis also revealed that respondents who attended a mixed school, are more supportive of the outgroup. On a theoretic level, these findings can be interpreted as a consequence of a lack of intergroup contact. This study can, therefore, be seen as evidence for what Allport calls the contact theory. The finding that neighbourhood segregation and attending a single-identity school are related to negative intergroup attitudes strengthens the view that a lack of intergroup contact is a suitable vehicle to explain negative intergroup attitudes.

On a descriptive level, it was established that the vast majority of the Northern Irish population does not prefer to live, work or go to school with mere people of their own community. This is in sharp contrast to the reality, in which the majority lives segregated and go to a single-identity school. Lijphart's concept of cleavages has provided an answer to this contrast. Northern Ireland is a society consisting of multiple reinforcing cleavages. In such societies, varying socioeconomic groups have little opportunity to be exposed to different socioeconomic groups, regardless of their willingness to desegregate. This study has, also, researched other aspects that lead to a segregation preference. Findings show that a feeling of unsafety is one of the strongest predictions of segregation preferences among the Northern Irish population, regardless of whether this feeling is objective. In other words, the more unsafe people feel, the more likely they are to prefer to live, work and go to school with people of their own kind. Turning now to cross-community projects, this research suggests that a greater awareness of these projects leads to positive intergroup attitudes. These projects seem capable to reduce hostile sentiments. One could, therefore, argue that it is greatly important to enhance these cross-community projects in order to reap their benefits.

Reflection

It is important to acknowledge the relevant shortcomings of the study. First of all, I would like to point out that regression analysis is merely able to test for correlation. I realise that results regarding the causal relationship must be interpreted with some caution. As mentioned briefly before, the NILT-survey was only able to provide answers to this debate on an individual level. For future research is it, therefore, interesting to delve into the impact of consociationalism and partition on a political level. Additionally, I would advise the NILT dataset to add questions regarding the religion of friends and neighbours. This way, future research can explore the impact of friends and residential segregation on intergroup relations. Nevertheless, the NILT dataset consisted of a very detailed questionnaire. The survey, therefore, shows its strength through a large number of respondents and the many questions related to segregation and intergroup attitudes.

Moreover, this study could not answer all the questions that emerged. For example, the NILT questionnaire did not question whether people have ever participated in cross-community projects. It would have been helpful if this was asked, in order to answer sub-question 3 more thoroughly. I would, therefore, advise NILT to include said question in further questionnaires.

Unfortunately, as is the case with most quantitative data, some questions are vulnerable to socially desirable answers. This is also the case with the variables used in this thesis. To name an example: people may find it uncomfortable to accept their negative attitudes towards the outgroup, and, therefore, choose to give a socially acceptable answer. Socially desirable answers can therefore create a more positive image than is the case.

Future research

This research has provided new insights but some questions remain unanswered. Therefore, this thesis proposes some ideas for future research. This study was unable to answer why the strength of identity did not impact intergroup attitudes for the Catholic community, yet did for the Protestant community. Further research could delve into this question, by exploring theory impacting both communities differently. It might also be interesting to apply the same conceptual framework to younger age groups such as teenagers. Northern Ireland records the attitudes and opinions of 16-year-olds via the Young Life and Times Survey. This survey can be used to test the impact of segregation on intergroup attitudes for this age group. This is of important value as this age group is the future.

If data can be collected on the extent of intergroup contact in Northern Ireland, it is of great value to study the direct impact of contact on intergroup relations. As mentioned before, the NILT survey currently does not question this. I would, however, advise future research to delve into this theoretical concept. It would, for example, be interesting to study whether having friends 'from the other side' influences intergroup attitudes.

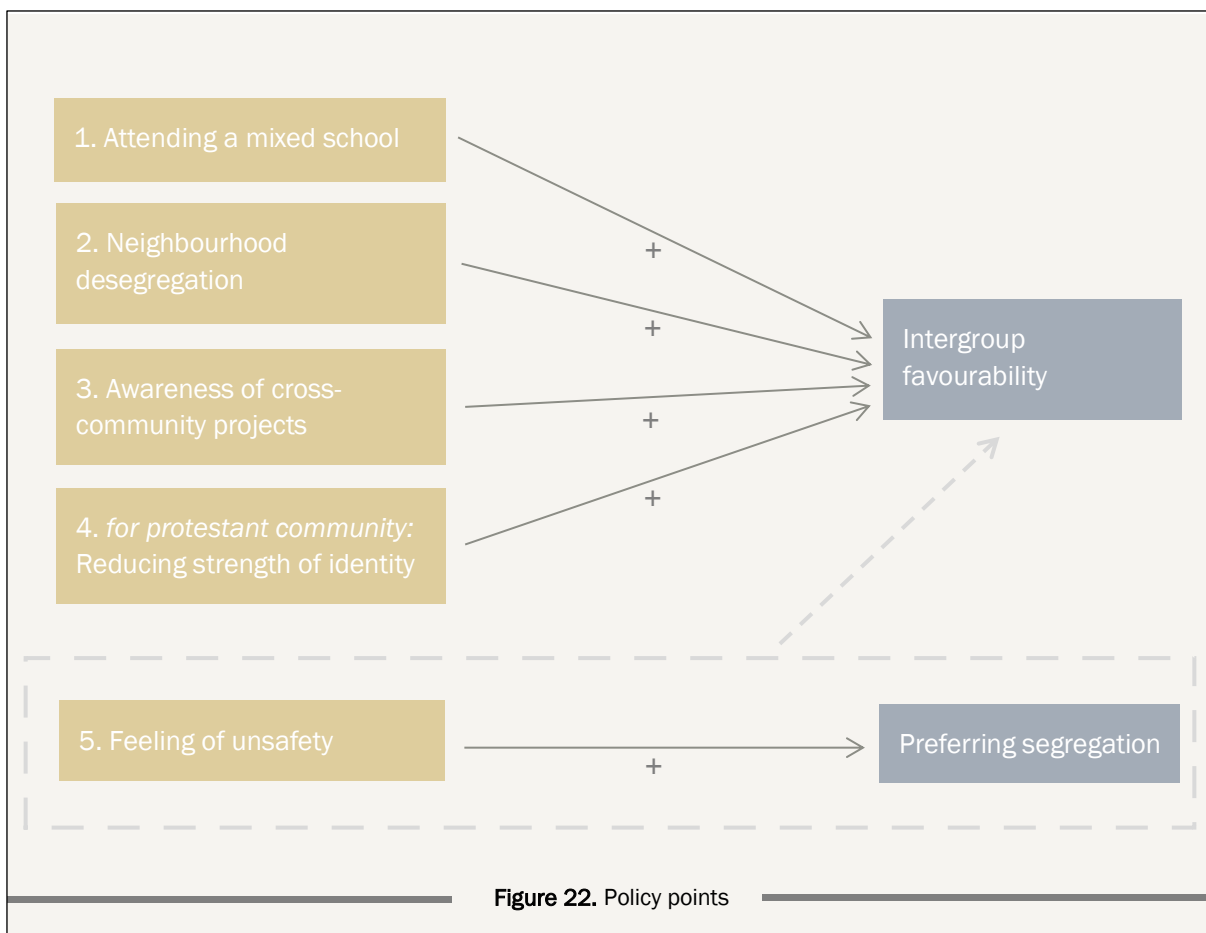
Lastly, another suggestion for further research is a distinct focus on qualitative data. A disadvantage of quantitative research is its difficulty to do in-depth research. Quantitative research cannot measure how people for example interpret their actions or that of others. I would be interested to do in-depth research on those on both sides of the spectrum. For example: interviewing people who grow up in segregated areas as well as interviewing people who attend an integrated school. This can provide the scientific world with in-depth information on the causes and consequences of (de)segregation.

6. POLICY IMPLICATIONS: EU PEACE PROGRAMME

This chapter will expound on the EU PEACE programmes I to IV. It provides an overview of PEACE I, II, III and IV as well as a look into the current PEACE PLUS programme. Afterwards, an evaluation will be included that focuses on the alignment of the EU PEACE programmes with this thesis' theorised concepts and found results.

6.1 FOUND RESULTS: POLICY POINTS

This chapter aims to align the EU PEACE programme with this study's found results. In this paragraph, these found results will be summarised and categorised. Afterwards, they will be linked to the EU PEACE programme's efforts. As tensions have mounted since Brexit, intergroup favourability has reached a low point. Policy programmes, such as the EU PEACE programme, could, therefore, emphasise on enhancing intergroup favourability. This thesis has found three direct contributing aspects which boost intergroup relations: (1) **attending a mixed school**, (2) **neighbourhood desegregation**, (3) **awareness of cross-community projects**. Moreover, this study has found one aspect that contributes to better intergroup relations only for the Protestant community: (4) **reducing strength of identity**. Additionally, this thesis has put a distinct focus on theories concerning partition and intergrationalism. As three out of four contributing aspects are related to desegregation, it is safe to conclude that policy should aim at intergrationalism. Hence why factors contributing to preferring segregation should also be included in future policy. One finding of this thesis is that (subjective) unsafety leads to a preference to segregate. Therefore, I argue that, besides the four contributing factors of favourability, it is also the lack of feeling save that feeds unfavourable intergroup behaviour. Hence why policymakers should aim on reducing the (5) **feeling of unsafety**. These five factors are the five policy points (see Figure 22) that will be linked to the EU PEACE programme's efforts in the next paragraph.



6.2 PREVIOUS: PEACE PROGRAMMES

Before this chapter delves into the alignment of the EU PEACE programme with this thesis' policy points (see Figure 22), it will first provide an overview of the previous – as well as current – EU PEACE programmes. The EU Programme for Peace and Reconciliation in Northern Ireland and the Border Region of Ireland (hereafter EU PEACE programme) is a programme of the European Union Structural Funds aiming at 'reinforcing progress towards a peaceful and stable society and promoting reconciliation' (SEUPB, 2007). It will assist Northern Ireland and its border region (see image 2) in reconciling communities by funding projects that promote cohesion.

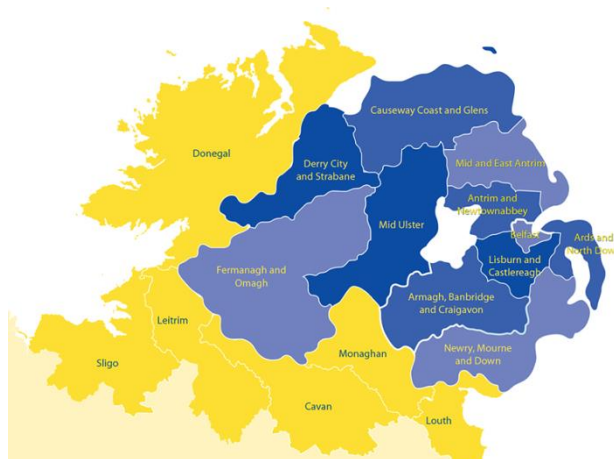


Image 2. Northern Ireland and its border region.

The first EU PEACE programme was a response to the developments of the ceasefire of the main loyalist and unionist paramilitary organisations in 1994. PEACE I provided a fund of €667m (€500m of which from the EU's European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) and a further €167m from the British and Irish governments). Its stated aim was:

"to reinforce progress towards a peaceful and stable society and to promote reconciliation by increasing economic development and employment, promoting urban and rural regeneration, developing cross-border co-operation and extending social inclusion." (SEUPB, 2014)

Throughout the next decades, the European Union provided their support to reinforce peace and stability in Northern Ireland through further programmes: PEACE I (1995-1999), PEACE II (2000-2006), PEACE III (2007-2013), and PEACE IV (2014-2020) had a combined funding of €2265m (approximately €1500 million from the European Commission and €700 million from the British and Irish Governments).

EU PEACE programme	Year
PEACE I	1995-1999
PEACE II	2000-2006
PEACE III	2007-2013
PEACE IV	2014-2020
PEACE PLUS	2021-2027

6.3 CURRENT: PEACE PROGRAMME

Currently, the EU PEACE programme is transitioning from PEACE IV to PEACE PLUS. Whereas the official funding of PEACE IV has ended in 2020, projects are still eligible until December 2023. Despite Brexit, the UK, Ireland and the European Commission have all committed to pursuing the PEACE programme. The new PEACE PLUS programme's objective is to 'build Peace and Prosperity and ensure that this Programme will leave a lasting and tangible legacy across Northern Ireland and the border counties of Ireland' (SEUPB, 2021, p. 2). In addition to the 'peace & reconciliation'-focus of the former Peace I to IV programmes, this programme will have a distinct focus on economic & environmental development. The PEACE PLUS Programme has six thematic areas, all subdivided into several investment areas.

1. Building Peaceful and Thriving communities

As peace building is often thought of in a negative sense, i.e. the absence of fighting, this thematic area will focus on the positive aspects of peace. It will aim to build positive relations between people and help communities thrive in a post-conflict society. Additionally, this area will develop new and transform existing spaces into shared spaces and environments.

1.1 Local Community Peace Action Plans

To enable and empower local community partnerships, led by the local authorities, to select and deliver priority projects on a cross-community basis, which will result in shared and inclusive local services, facilities and spaces and will make a significant and lasting contribution to peace and reconciliation.

1.2 Empowering Communities

To empower community, voluntary and statutory organisations at all levels across the Programme Area to contribute to the creation of a more peaceful, prosperous and safe society.

1.3 Building Positive Relations

To promote positive relations characterised by respect, where cultural diversity is celebrated and people can live, learn and socialise together, free from prejudice, hate and intolerance.

1.4 Re-imagining Communities

To create a more cohesive society through an increased provision of transformative shared space and services, which will support and embed peace and reconciliation.

Source: SEUPB, 2021, p. 4 - 12

2. Delivering Economic Regeneration and Transformation

A stable and rising economic can help foster and embed peace. In order to strengthen peace and reconciliation economic development in post conflict societies is necessary.

2.1 Development and Transition

To enhance sustainable growth and competitiveness of SMEs, including by productive investments.

2.2 Innovation Challenge Fund

To develop and enhance research and innovation capacities and the uptake of advanced technologies in a manner which delivers maximum economic regeneration and transformation.

2.3 Programme Area Skills Development

To develop skills for smart specialisation, industrial transition and entrepreneurship..

2.4 Smart Towns and Villages

To reap the benefits of digitisation for citizens, companies, research organisation and public authorities.

Source: SEUPB, 2021, p. 13 -21

3. Empowering and Investing in Our Young People

Even though the youngest generation has not experienced direct conflict, the legacy of the conflict still lives to date. This has an impact on previous generations but also on the current generation. The objective of this theme is to give youngsters the opportunity to develop relationships with those from different backgrounds.

3.1 Shared Learning Together Programme

To provide direct, sustained contact between children from all backgrounds through collaboration between early childhood settings, schools and youth organisations, to promote good relations and enhance children's skills to contribute to a cohesive society.

3.2 PEACE PLUS Youth Programme

To enhance the capacity of children and young people to form positive and effective relationships with others of a different background, develop their confidence and future potential and contribute towards the creation of a more cohesive society.

3.3 Youth Mental Health and Wellbeing

To enhance the capacity of children and young people to form positive and effective relationships with others of a different background and make a positive contribution to building a cohesive society.

Source: SEUPB, 2021, p. 22 - 29

4. Healthy and Inclusive Communities

The objective of this thematic area is to deliver adequate levels of inclusive health and social care. COVID-19 has provided a spotlight on the unequal health outcomes for different social groups. This thematic area has a special focus on rural communities as they face considerable challenges when it comes to access to healthcare.

4.1 Collaborative Health and Social Care

To ensure equal access to health care and fostering resilience of health systems, including primary care and promoting the transition from institutional to family and community-based care.

4.2 Rural Regeneration and Social Inclusion

To create a more cohesive society through an increased provision of community spaces, key services and supports in rural areas.

4.3 Victims and Survivors

To create a more cohesive society through an increased provision of services.

Source: SEUPB, 2021, p. 30 - 37

5. Supporting a Sustainable and Better Connected Future

In comparison to the former PEACE I to IV programmes, this programme has a distinct focus on environmental development. The objective of this theme is to form a green and accessible environment to ensure that people can live a healthy future.

5.1 Biodiversity, Nature recovery and Resilience

To enhance protection and preservation of nature, biodiversity and green infrastructure, including in urban areas, and reducing all forms of pollution.

5.2 Marine and Coastal Management

To promote climate change adaptation and disaster risk prevention and resilience, taking into account ecosystem-based approaches.

5.3 Water Quality

To promote access to water and sustainable water management.

5.4 Geothermal Energy Demonstration Programme

To promote energy efficiency and reduce greenhouse gas emissions.

5.5 Enhanced Sustainable Travel Connectivity

Developing and enhancing sustainable, climate resilient, intelligent and intermodal national, regional and local mobility, including improved access to TEN-T and cross-border mobility.

Source: SEUPB, 2021, p. 38 - 51

6. Supporting a Sustainable and Better Connected Future

Cross-border challenges still persist and some have even risen in the last couple of years. The last objective of the PEACE PLUS programme focuses collaborative and embedding partnership on either side of the border.

6.1 Strategic Planning and Engagement

To support a better co-operation governance.

6.2 Maintaining and Forging Relationships between Citizens

Building up mutual trust, in particular by encouraging people to people actions.

Source: SEUPB, 2021, p. 52 - 55

6.4 LINKING RESULTS WITH PEACE PROGRAMME

In paragraph 6.1, five policy points were drafted (See Figure 22). In the previous paragraph the six thematic areas of the PEACE PLUS programme, and the respective investment areas, were discussed. The investment areas which correlate to one of the drafted policy points in Figure 22 have been highlighted. In the following paragraph, the five policy points will be discussed as well as their (potential) link to the investment areas of the EU PEACE programme. To guide the discussion, the categorisation of investment areas by policy points is presented in Table 9a and 9b.

Mixed School

This thesis has pointed out that enhancing the attendance of a mixed school is needed to reduce intergroup unfavorability. The EU PEACE PLUS programme has an independent thematic area which invests in the youth of Northern Ireland and its border region (investment area: 3.1, 3.2, and 3.3). All of these areas stimulate contact between children from all backgrounds to enhance their skills to contribute to a cohesive society. The fact that the EU PEACE programme focuses on building positive and sustainable relationships between children from different communities fulfils the integrationist point of view. Additionally, the Shared Learning Together Programme (investment area 3.1) has a distinct programme to 'raise awareness and outline the benefits of shared and integrated education' (SEUPD, 2021, p.25). It is initiatives like these that will allow pupils to benefit from intergroup experiences and outcomes that mixed education brings. As has become clear, these intergroup experiences are pivotal to enhancing intergroup favourability, and such fulfils this policy point.

Recommendation:

- **Keep funding the Shared Learning Together Programme**, as it promotes the benefits of shared and integrated education which can raise the mixed school attendance.

Neighbourhood desegregation

In order to implement the above-mentioned policy point, it is needed that the EU PEACE programme includes initiatives that reduce neighbourhood segregation. The EU PEACE PLUS programme has multiple investment areas that focus on creating shared spaces and services. It explicitly states that it will select its projects on a cross-community basis, and thus will compute shared services and facilities (investment area 1.1). The EU PEACE PLUS programme highlights how shared facilities are dependent on inclusive projects, therefore they invest in projects that celebrate diversity (investment area 1.2) and promote a cohesive society (investment areas 1.3 and 4.2). As these initiatives have a sole focus on creating shared facilities, it is important to mention that initiatives focusing on reducing residential segregation are absent. The initiatives in the EU PEACE programme can therefore be seen as a more indirect attempt to reduce neighbourhood segregation. I, however, wonder what the impact is of sharing facilities if people remain to live segregated. This thesis has, after all, determined that facilities are often already considered to be shared and open. The largest issue concerning neighbourhood segregation is the fact that people remain to live segregated. As people often visit facilities that are local and nearby, reducing residential segregation is crucial to give people the chance to meet people from other communities in these (shared) facilities. Only when this step is implemented, shared facilities can start to reap their benefits.

Recommendation:

- **Keep funding initiatives that contribute to creating shared services and facilities**, as they do contribute to the desegregation of a neighbourhood. These initiatives will flourish better if the following is implemented:
- **Pay more attention to residential segregation**, as shared facilities have less potential if people remain to live segregated. Do, therefore, not only pay attention to increasing shared services and facilities but also explicitly form policy that reduces residential segregation. This requires:
- **A housing system that tackles the barriers that prevent individuals from opting to live in a shared area.** This can include the delivery of shared social housing units, which the EU PEACE programme can fund.

Awareness of cross-community projects

No specific interventions have been implemented to enhance the visibility of cross-community projects. As of the NILT-dataset 2020, approximately 50 per cent of the Northern Irish population are aware of cross-community projects in their neighbourhood. This means that another 50 per cent are unaware of these projects. Further research is necessary to determine who they are and where they live. An evaluation for the PEACE IV Programme, which was drawn up following Articles 56 and 114 of the Common Provisions Regulation (EU) 1303/2013, sought to 'test the effectiveness and impact of the programme' (SEUPB, 2016, p. 2). Yet, it did not incorporate a demographic overview of the implemented projects. This thesis recommends the inclusion of such demographic overviews in future evaluations, to be able to distinguish which social groups and areas the EU PEACE programme does not yet reach.

Recommendation:

- **Further research into the demographic overviews of the implemented EU PEACE programme interventions.** Additionally, it is vital that these overviews are included in any future evaluation. Subsequently:
- **There should be a distinct focus on the areas and social groups that the EU PEACE programme does not yet reach.** It is, however, therefore, firstly important to conduct research to where these areas are.

Strength of identity

No specific interventions have been implemented in the EU PEACE PLUS programme to reduce one's strength of identity. It has, however, become clear that policies regarding reducing one's strength of identity can develop intergroup favourability. Identity formation mainly takes place at a young age, which is why future policies should aim at this age group. Both parents and school have a great influence on this identity formation, making the recommendations of this thesis twofold. For parents who are open to having their child participate in shared projects or mixed schooling, the interventions under thematic areas 1 and 3 are relevant. Through projects like these, children will meet children from the other community and create (positive) contact that prevents developing a strong national identity. Children of parents who are not open to having their child participate in shared programmes or schooling should be taught about the other community at schools. School education programmes, even if they are implemented in single-identity schools, can shape a child's identity. Another recommendation for the EU PEACE programme is, therefore, to fund teaching curricula that contribute to children's knowledge of a plural society.

Recommendation:

- **Fund projects that aim at shared education or stimulate contact between children from different communities.** Projects like these will likely only work if parents are already open to their children meeting the 'other'. It is, therefore, also necessary to:
- **Fund curricula which teach about a plural society mandatory in every (mixed or single-identity) school.** This way every child is taught about both communities in Northern Ireland.

Feeling of unsafety

This thesis shows that a feeling of unsafety leads to a preference to segregate, irrelevant to which extent this feeling of unsafety is objective. I, therefore, argue that decreasing this (subjective) feeling of unsafety is necessary to reduce people's segregation preference. The EU PEACE PLUS programme has one specific investment area (1.2) that focuses on safety. Within the investment area 1.2, the PEACE PLUS programme supports interventions that contribute to increased levels of peace and reconciliation. Additionally, a specific focus on community safety is added to these interventions. Investment area 6.2

indirectly aims to meet this policy point. By promoting North-South and protestant/catholic joint events and activities trust will strengthen and eventually a feeling of safety will increase.

Recommendations:

- **Actively support interventions that increase the feeling of (subjective) safety.** Such as the current investment area 1.2 of the EU PEACE PLUS.

6.5 POLICY SUMMARY

The EU PEACE programme efforts do align with the theorised concepts and found results. It has become clear that the thematic areas of the EU PEACE programme are similar to the integrationist viewpoint. They have a distinct focus on the positive effects of intergroup contact, and therefore correspond with the contact theory of Allport. Since support for this integrationist viewpoint was also found in the analysis of this research, the EU PEACE programme efforts also (largely) correspond to the found results. No deviations from the found results were found in the policy initiatives. A few results are, however, not (yet) incorporated into the programme's policy design. This thesis has, therefore, made some recommendations which can be added to the existing policy design of the EU PEACE PLUS programme. The EU PEACE programme pays a lot of attention to shared education and cohesion projects. Little attention is paid to the target groups that are not reached by the programme. It is unclear which groups these are and why they are not (yet) participating. It could be either they (a) want to participate but are simply not reached or (b) are unwilling to participate in intergroup contact projects. This thesis has, therefore, recommended carrying out further research into this question. This way, there can be a distinct focus on the areas and social groups that the EU PEACE programme does not yet reach. Moreover, the EU PEACE programme focuses on cross-community meeting projects. To be able to reach those unwilling to meet people from the other community, this thesis recommends using education. Curricula which teach about the plurality of the Northern Irish society should be mandatory at every (mixed or single-identity) school. Additionally, the EU PEACE programme does not yet focus on residential desegregation, which is why it is recommended to fund a housing system that tackles the barriers that prevent individuals from opting to live in a shared area. What remains is gaining insight into the reach of these cross-community projects, as well as forming policy concepts that even reach those with the strongest national identity (e.g. by making cross-community curricula mandatory in every single-religion school). Especially now that Brexit caused additional turmoil, and intergroup favourability has reached a low point, an explicit approach is needed to tackle negative intergroup attitudes. Only then, the negative impact of Brexit can be mitigated and Northern Ireland can reap the spoils of peace.

"It won't always be like this.

It's going to get better."

[Lyra McKee, 2014]

<i>Attending a Mixed School</i>	<i>Neighbourhood desegregation</i>	<i>Awareness of cross- community projects</i>	<i>Strength of Identity</i>	<i>Feeling of unsafety</i>
3.1 Shared Learning Together Programme To provide direct, sustained contact between children from all backgrounds through collaboration between early childhood settings, schools and youth organisations, to promote good relations and enhance children's skills to contribute to a cohesive society.	1.1 Local Community Peace Action Plans To enable and empower local community partnerships, led by the local authorities, to select and deliver priority projects on a cross-community basis, which will result in shared and inclusive local services, facilities and spaces and will make a significant and lasting contribution to peace and reconciliation.			1.2 Empowering Communities To empower community, voluntary and statutory organisations at all levels across the Programme Area to contribute to the creation of a more peaceful, prosperous and safe society.
3.2 PEACE PLUS Youth Programme To enhance the capacity of children and young people to form positive and effective relationships with others of a different background, develop their confidence and future potential and contribute towards the creation of a more cohesive society.	1.3 Building Positive Relations To promote positive relations characterised by respect, where cultural diversity is celebrated and people can live, learn and socialise together, free from prejudice, hate and intolerance			6.2 Maintaining and Forging Relationships between Citizens Building up mutual trust, in particular by encouraging people to people actions.

Table 9a. PEACE PLUS efforts categorised by drafted policy points

<p>3.3 Youth Mental Health and Wellbeing</p> <p>To enhance the capacity of children and young people to form positive and effective relationships with others of a different background and make a positive contribution to building a cohesive society</p>	<p>1.4 Re-imagining Communities</p> <p>To create a more cohesive society through an increased provision of transformative shared space and services, which will support and embed peace and reconciliation</p>			
	<p>4.1 Rural Regeneration and Social Inclusion</p> <p>To create a more cohesive society through an increased provision of community spaces, key services and supports in rural areas</p>			

Table 9b. PEACE PLUS efforts categorised by drafted policy points

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