

package is important

| Table 3 | Protestant | Catholic | UUP | PUP | Sinn Fein |
|---|------------|----------|----------|----------|-----------|
| Percentage of people who voted no | | | | | |
| Percentage of people who voted yes | | | | | |
| Option one - The Executive of the new Northern Ireland Assembly should be established, including Sinn Fein, without any preconditions and without further delay. | | | | | |
| Option two - The Executive of the new Northern Ireland Assembly should be established, including Sinn Fein, and the problem of establishing a credible decommissioning process should be dealt with by the International Commission. | 34 66 | 1 99 | 31 69 | 43 57 | 2 98 |
| Option three - The Executive of the new Northern Ireland Assembly should be established, including Sinn Fein, but they should not be allowed to stay in government if the IRA do not decommission in the two years allowed for in the Belfast Agreement. | 22 77 | 22 72 | 19 81 | 32 68 | 52 48 |
| Option four - Republicans should co-operate with the RUC with a view to bringing to an end all paramilitary beatings and violence. | 3 97 | 19 81 | 3 97 | 3 97 | 47 53 |
| Option five - Loyalists should co-operate with the RUC with a view to bringing to an end all paramilitary beatings and violence. | 3 97 | 10 90 | 3 97 | 4 96 | 29 71 |
| Option six - Everyone should co-operate with a new agreed police service with a view to bringing to an end all paramilitary beatings and violence. | 9 91 | 3 97 | 10 90 | 5 95 | 9 91 |
| Option seven - The Belfast Agreement signed and accepted by the two governments, parties at the Stormont talks and people of Ireland North and South should be fully implemented without any further delay. | 30 70 | 0 100 | 25 75 | 63 37 | 2 98 |
| Option eight - Contrary to the terms of the Belfast agreement - which does not link decommissioning to the early release of prisoners - no more prisoners should be released until their organisations have made a start on decommissioning. | 7 93 | 33 67 | 5 95 | 25 75 | 59 41 |

| Table 4 | Protestant | Catholic | UUP | PUP | Sinn Fein |
|--|------------|----------|----------|----------|-----------|
| Percentage of people who voted no | | | | | |
| Percentage of people who voted yes | | | | | |
| Step 1 - Loyalist paramilitary organisations should repeat their apology for the past harms they have done to the Catholic community. | 22 78 | 13 87 | 27 73 | 76 24 | 13 87 |
| Step 2 - Mr Trimble, for the unionists should apologise to the Catholic community for the past discriminations they have been subjected to. | 43 57 | 15 85 | 41 59 | 78 22 | 14 86 |
| Step 3 - The IRA should apologise for the past harms they have done to the Protestant community. | 10 90 | 15 85 | 18 82 | 4 96 | 13 87 |
| Step 4 - The British Prime Minister should apologise to the Irish people for the tragedies of British involvement in Irish affairs. | 48 52 | 14 86 | 44 56 | 83 17 | 15 85 |
| Step 5 - The Taoiseach should apologise for the past religious intolerance permitted by the Irish state towards their Protestant community. | 27 73 | 23 77 | 23 77 | 12 88 | 28 72 |
| Step 6 - The UVF should repeat their promise never to use their weapons in a 'first strike.' | 4 96 | 5 95 | 2 98 | 29 71 | 10 90 |
| Step 7 - Mr Trimble, for the unionists, should promise to work all the new institutions of government in good faith with Sinn Fein. | 22 78 | 5 95 | 16 84 | 43 57 | 3 97 |
| Step 8 - The IRA should promise never to use their weapons in a 'first strike'. | 1 99 | 2 98 | 1 99 | 2 98 | 4 96 |
| Step 9 - All new institutions of government should be established, including Sinn Fein. | 27 73 | 3 97 | 22 78 | 48 52 | 2 98 |
| Step 10 - The UVF should make a start on decommissioning. | 2 98 | 3 97 | 1 99 | 49 51 | 9 91 |
| Step 11 - The IRA should make a start on decommissioning. | 1 99 | 6 94 | 1 99 | 1 99 | 16 84 |

ABOUT THE POLL
The research was undertaken by Dr Colin Irwin of the Institute of Irish Studies at Queen's University, Belfast, in collaboration with representatives of the Progressive Unionist Party and Sinn Fein. The project was independently funded by the Joseph Rowntree Charitable Trust.
The public opinion survey work was conducted by Market Research Northern Ireland between February 12-19 to produce 1000 'face to face' interviews that represented a cross section of the adult population of Northern Ireland in terms of age, gender, social class, religious affiliation and geographical area.
In all respects the poll was undertaken within the guidelines set out by the Market Research Society (UK) and in accordance with their code of conduct.

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Implementation of the Belfast Agreement

Towards the end of the interview people were asked to consider various options for making progress with the implementation of the Belfast Agreement by indicating which ones they considered to be **Essential, Desirable, Acceptable, Tolerable or Unacceptable** as part of a successful peace process.

It is not possible to publish all the results here (they will be sent to all the political parties in the new Assembly). But if Unacceptable is considered to be a strong No and Essential, Desirable, Acceptable or Tolerable to be a strong Yes then it won't be too difficult to find a way through these statistics.

See Table 3

Option 1 - Allowing Sinn Fein into the Executive without any preconditions should be acceptable under a strict reading of the Belfast Agreement. But 54% of Protestants are strongly opposed to this option rising to 58% for the UUP and 62% for the PUP. Although 95% of Catholics support this option it seems to be politically problematic by itself. Something more is needed.

Option 2 - The foundation for a successful solution to the decommissioning problem may well be this option and have General de Chastelain establish a credible decommissioning process. Only

31% of Ulster Unionists oppose this option which is acceptable to 98% of Sinn Fein supporters.

Option 3 - A proposal to have Sinn Fein removed from the Executive if they do not decommission within two years is even more acceptable to Ulster Unionists. Only 19% said No. But this time 52% of Sinn Fein supporters also said No so this option, which some would argue is in breach of the Belfast Agreement, would create political problems for them. If Sinn Fein can handle this difficulty, all well and good, if not it might be possible to bring some other options into play.

Options 4, 5 and 6 - With regards to policing, republicans clearly have a problem co-operating with the RUC, 47% said No. Loyalists do not seem to share this difficulty but a significant majority from all political groups are willing to have everyone co-operate with "a new agreed police service". This option is undoubtedly a critical part of the peace process but its value is more long term and must be seen that way.

Option 7 - All Catholics want full implementation of the Belfast Agreement now but 30% of Protestants are more reticent. Perhaps other steps can be taken to help change their minds.

Option 8 - Finally, 93% of Protestants and 67% of

Catholics would like prisoner releases stopped until a start is made on decommissioning. Twenty five per cent of Progressive Unionists and 59% of Sinn Fein supporters are opposed to this option which is a clear breach of the Belfast Agreement.

Building Trust and Confidence
Failure to implement the Belfast Agreement is in large part due to a lack of trust and confidence between unionists, loyalists, nationalists and republicans.

In an effort to overcome this problem the parties who signed the Belfast Agreement could take a number of different actions or 'steps'. Again people were asked to indicate which ones they considered to be **Essential, Desirable, Acceptable, Tolerable or Unacceptable** and the results have similarly been recorded here in terms of Yes and No responses.

See Table 4

Step 1 - Everyone, except the Progressive Unionists, thought it would be a good idea for loyalist paramilitaries to repeat their apology - 76% of them said No.

Step 2 - Only 41% of Ulster Unionists objected to Mr Trimble apologising for past discriminations against Catholics. Eighty five per cent of Catholics thought this was a good idea.

Step 3 - Everyone wanted the IRA to make their

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