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FROM: EDGAR F JARDINE
cc: Mr Haire
Chief Executive

Mr Stewart
Dr Mulligan

14 MAY 2002

MRS BUNTING

SECTARIANISM: PRESENTATION TO SECRETARY OF STATE

1. I attach a copy of the briefing material used with the SoS at Hillsborough last week. Dr Reid was accompanied by Chris Maccabe, Peter Waterworth, Mary Madden and Duncan Gilchrist. The briefing went on for 1½ hours.
2. There were no major issues arising. The SoS was clearly interested in the patterns emerging and remarked in particular on an apparent dip in optimism in recent years for both communities in terms of community relations. He also commented on the practice of ascribing a community background to people who do not state a religious affiliation. You will recall from FEC/EC days that community background was the key unit of analysis for labour availability purposes. The SoS however believes it is objectionable to attribute a community background to people who do not claim a religious affiliation.
3. I understand that a meeting of the Agreement Implementation Group is planned in the near future. The SoS may introduce some of the material from the presentation featured in the discussions – in particular the points noted in para 2.
4. Finally, in preparing the material I used a chart which Tony Dignan provided from the recent publication on Poverty Indicators – see 4(b). The chart shows the different patterns of deprivation in Protestant and Catholic communities and illustrates that Catholic disadvantage tends to be more concentrated in the most deprived wards. The implications for New TSN are that geographical targeting is a more efficient means of targeting Catholic than Protestant disadvantage. Following the publication of the Poverty Indicators Report and a difficult session at the DSD Committee on Noble last week I suspect this issue may soon be raised by MLAs in AQs etc.

[signed]

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Demography and

SECTARIANISM IN NORTHERN IRELAND

AN OVERVIEW OF THE RESEARCH EVIDENCE

Table 1 The NI Population (Best Estimates)

	P (%)	C (%)
The principal sources of data used to inform this Overview are the successive Censuses of Population and a range of household surveys. Both types of source have their strengths and limitations. While the Census provides comprehensive demographic data for Northern Ireland, the most recent information comes from the 1991 Census and as such is somewhat dated. Results from the 2001 Census will become available later this year.		

Attitudinal data have been collected extensively both by Government and by independent researchers over the past 12 years and have been used to track dimensions of community relations, attitudes to law and order issues and the constitutional preferences of the Northern Ireland population.

Finally, some of the data used in the Overview were derived from administrative sources including from the PSNI, NIHE and the Department of Education.

Demography and demographic change

Table 1 The NI Population (Best Estimates)

	P (%)	C (%)
1991 Census	58	42
Current Survey Estimates*	54% - 56%	44% - 46%

* Continuous Household Survey 1998-1999 – 2000-2001

- From the 1991 Census it has been estimated that the community background of the population was 58% Protestant and 42% Catholic. The figures are derived by ascribing “community background” to the 11% of the population who either stated “none” or did not state a religion.
- Current survey estimates put the Protestant population at between 54% and 56% and the Catholic population at between 44% and 46%.
- Firmer estimates will be provided by the results of the 2001 Census, which will be available by early December.

Table 2 The NI School Population

2(a) Religion of pupils in Year 1 and Year 12 and all pupils, 2000-01

Form	RC (%)	P (%)	Other / No / NS (%)	Pupils (thousands)
Year 1	49.3	41.2	9.5	23
Year 12	51.7	43.4	4.9	26
Years1-12 (all)	50.4	43.0	6.6	305162

2(b) Controlled/Maintained Breakdown of Primary Schools, 2000-01

Primary *	P	C	Other / None / NS	All Backgrounds
Controlled	69,207	3,229	10, 678	83,114
Maintained	720	80,412	295	81,427

* Excludes integrated schools and preparatory Departments of grammar schools

2(c) Estimated Composition (Primary School Population)

P (%)	C (%)	Non Christian (%)
48.2	51.4	0.3

- The school age population is currently estimated to be around 50% Roman Catholic, 43% Protestant and 7% 'Other/None/Not Stated'.
- Estimation of the changing religious composition of the school population is confounded by the increasing percentage of pupils for whom a religious affiliation is not stated.

- Table 2(b) shows that, in relation to the primary school population, Catholic children make up about 4% of the population of 'controlled' schools while, in contrast, Protestant pupils account for less than 1% of the population of maintained schools.
- Almost all pupils who do not state a religious affiliation are in the controlled sector.
- Finally, Table 2(c) which attempts to adjust the figures to account for the assumed community background of the 'Other/None/Not Stated' shows that the Primary sector is estimated, at a minimum, to have a narrow majority of pupils from a Catholic background. However, depending on the assumptions made about the composition of the 'Others', ie the proportion from a Catholic or mixed community background, the gap may be wider.

Integrated Education

- In 2000-01 there were 14,000 pupils in integrated education (4% of total enrolments). There has been a steep upward trend in number of pupils attending integrated schools. The 2000-01 enrolment is double the 1996-97 enrolment.
- 60% of these pupils were at secondary level, representing 5.5% of the numbers in secondary level education.

**Table 3 Changes in the religious composition of the Belfast North
Parliamentary and Assembly Constituency (approx) 1971-1991**

	1971	1991
Roman Catholic	25%	38%
Protestant & Other	64%	49%
None or Not Stated	11%	13%
Population	135,000	90,000

- There has been substantial population change and movement in a number of areas of NI over the past 30 years.
- The table demonstrates the changing religious in balance in the Belfast North Parliamentary constituency (although the estimates are affected by the proportions not declaring a religious affiliation in the Census).
- The table shows both a significant absolute decline of about one third in the population over the 20 year period and a significant change in the religious balance with an increase in the proportion which is Catholic and a corresponding decline in the Protestant and other group.

Table 4(a) Socio-Economic Circumstances of Catholics and Protestants

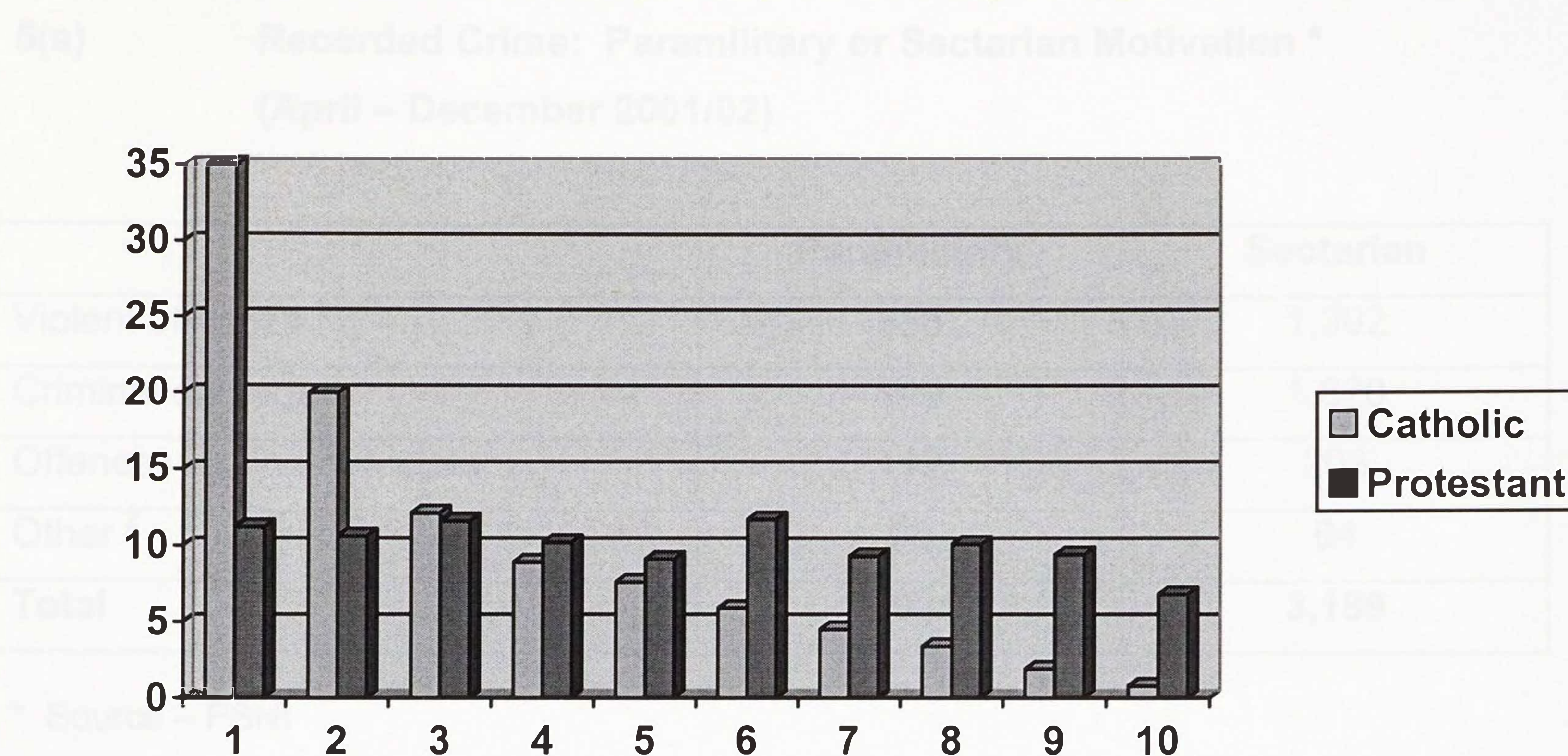
	Catholic	Protestant
	%	%
Demographic context		
Children as percent of total population (1991)	31	22
Retirement age people as percent of total population	13	21
Income		
Families on income support (%) (1998/99 – 2000/01)	30	19
Primary pupils who are entitled to free school meals (%) (2001-02)	29	17
Unemployment and employability		
Economic inactivity rate (2000)	33	25
Employment rate (% of working-age population) (2000)	61	71
Unemployment rate (% of labour force) – all 16+ (2000)	9	5
School-leavers with 5+ A*-C GCSEs or above (1999/00)	56	57
Adult Literacy - % at Level 1 on prose literacy scale (1998)	29	21
Other needs and inequalities		
<i>Health</i>		
Long-term limiting illness – all aged 16+ (2001)	27	27
<i>Housing</i>		
Percentage of population living in overcrowded* accommodation	18	10
Percentage of population in housing which is “unfit”, ‘in substantial disrepair’ or requiring essential modernisation (NIHE 1996)	11	13

* Below bedroom standard.

Table 4(a) illustrates:

- The contrasting demographic profiles in the 2 communities with an ageing Protestant population and a noticeably younger Catholic population.
- Higher dependency on social security among Catholic households and a higher proportion of Catholic primary school pupils entitled to Free School meals.
- Catholics have higher levels of economic inactivity, lower employment rates, higher unemployment and lower literacy skills among adults. Literacy skills are strongly associated with educational attainments (own and parents), occupation and income and current school leaver qualifications show little difference between the 2 communities.
- No significant differences in the proportion of respondents reporting a limiting long-standing illness.
- Catholics are more likely to live in overcrowded accommodation.
- A slightly higher proportion of the Protestant community live in poor housing.

Figure 1 The geographical distribution of individuals in receipt of means tested benefits analysed by community background



- The graph shows the distribution of families in receipt of means tested benefits in each decile of income-deprivation.
- Around 35% of all Catholics in receipt of these benefits live in the most deprived income 10% of wards.
- By contrast, just over 11% of all Protestants in receipt of such benefits live in the most deprived 10% of wards.
- The pattern of Protestant deprivation contrasts with Catholic deprivation in that the former is much more evenly spread across all wards while the latter is heavily concentrated in those wards which are most deprived.
- Hence spatial targeting will more effectively target disadvantaged Catholics than disadvantaged Protestants.

Table 5 Crime and Policing

5(a) Recorded Crime: Paramilitary or Sectarian Motivation *
(April – December 2001/02)

	Paramilitary	Sectarian
Violent offences ¹	658	1,302
Criminal damage	149	1,620
Offences against the state	119	203
Other ²	95	64
Total	1,021	3,189

* Source – PSNI

¹ Includes offences against the person (eg assault, intimidation), sexual offences and robbery.

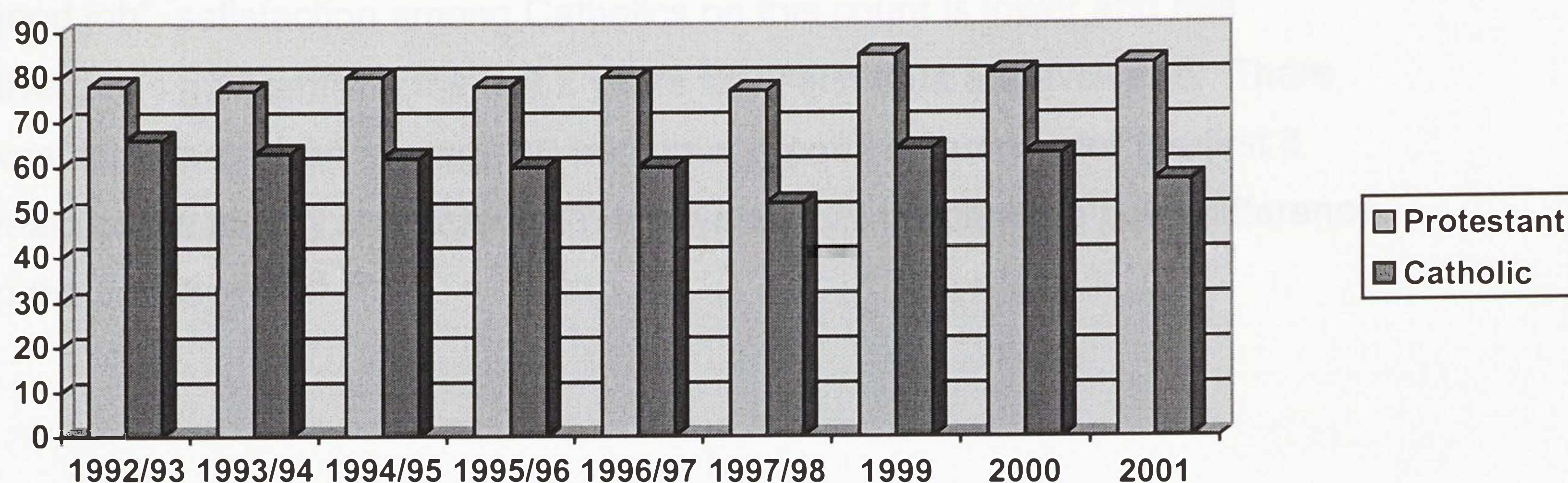
² Includes burglary, theft, fraud and forgery and 'other notifiable offences'.

NB: All data are provisional at this stage.

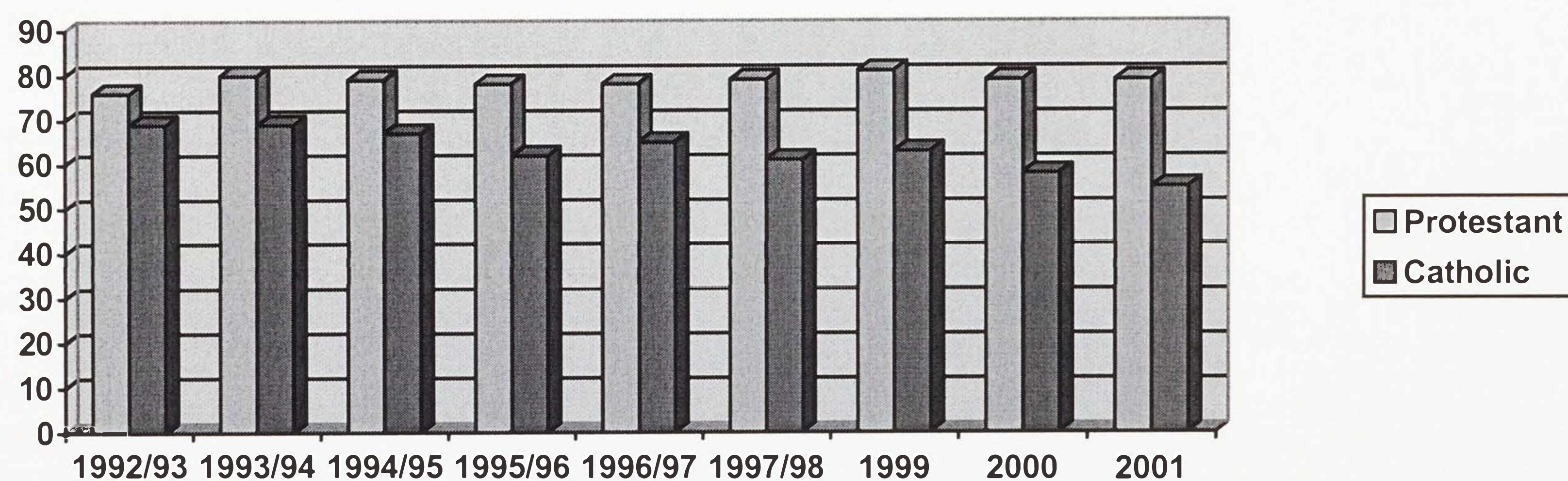
- Of the around 3,200 sectarian-related offences recorded during the 9 months to December 2001, almost two-thirds were recorded in the PSNI Urban Region.
- The number of such offences recorded in Belfast North DCU is currently almost 4 times higher than the combined total for the other 3 Belfast DCUs, and well in excess of the total for the combined North and South regions.
- The number of offences which are recorded as having a paramilitary motivation in the Belfast North DCU is similar to the total for Belfast South, West and East combined.

Figure 2 Attitudes to the Police by Community Background 1992/93 – 2001*
(%)

Police treat everyone fairly:



Police do a good job:



* Community Attitudes Survey

- Survey data on a representative sample of the NI population, on a range of law and order issues, have been collected annually since 1992/93, including on the attitudes of the 2 communities to aspects of policing.
- The attitudes of the Protestant community towards the Police have been typically more consistent and more favourable than those of the Catholic community.

- While around 4 in 5 Protestants believe that the police treat everyone “fairly”, the corresponding figure for Catholics fluctuates around 3 in 5 and the gap has tended to be wider in recent years.

Figure 3 Mixing at work, neighbourhood and school

- Similarly, while 4 in 5 Protestants are prepared to agree that the “police do a good job”, satisfaction among Catholics on this count is lower and has diverged significantly in the last 2 years for which data are available. There was, for example an average 10 percentage point difference for the first 3 years of the survey compared with an average 21 percentage point difference in the final 3 years.



Figure 3(b) % saying they would prefer to live in a mixed neighbourhood



Attitudinal Data

Figure 3 Mixing at work, neighbourhood and school

Figure 3(a) % saying they would prefer to work in a mixed workplace

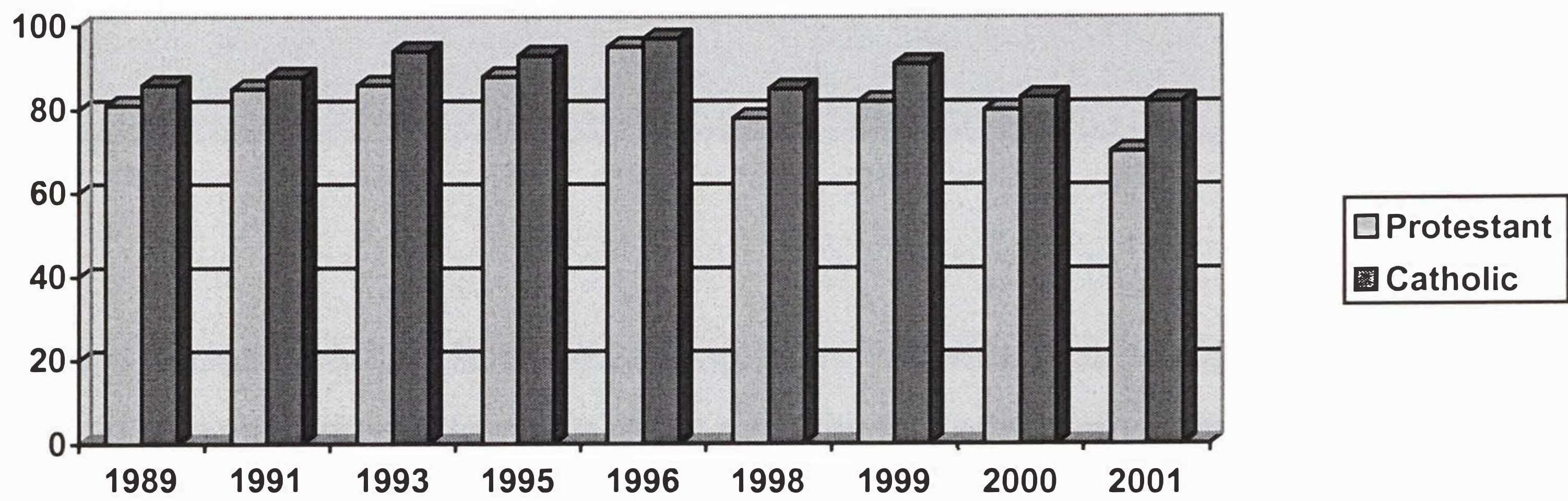


Figure 3(b) % saying they would prefer to live in a mixed neighbourhood

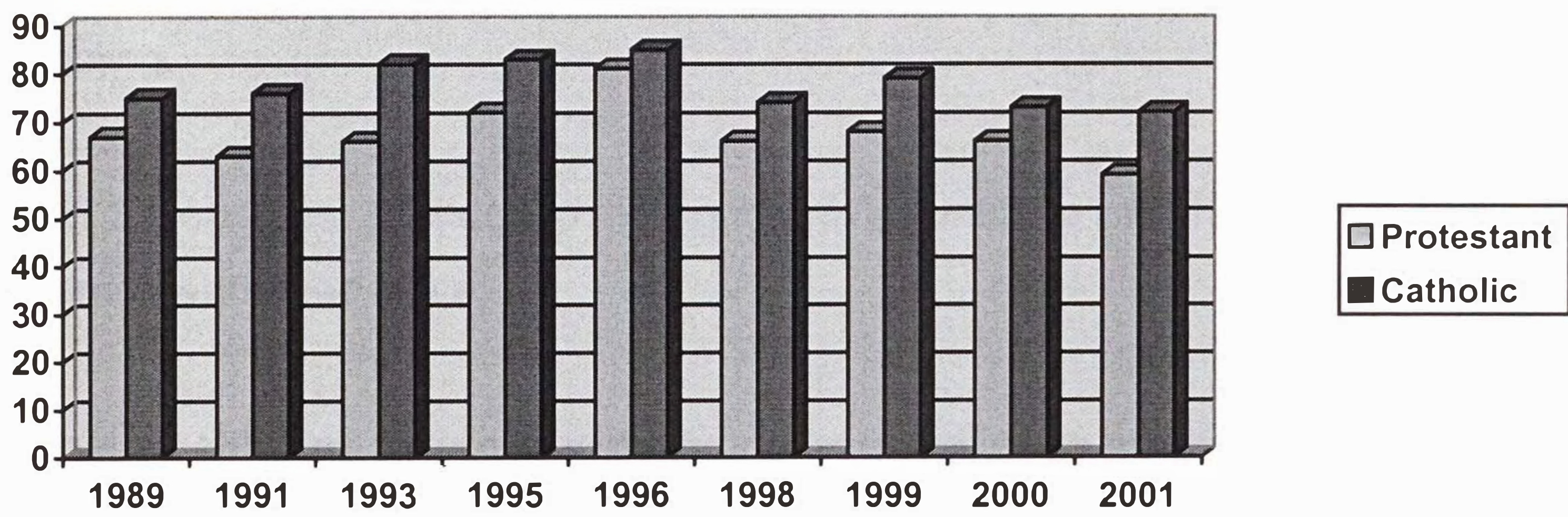
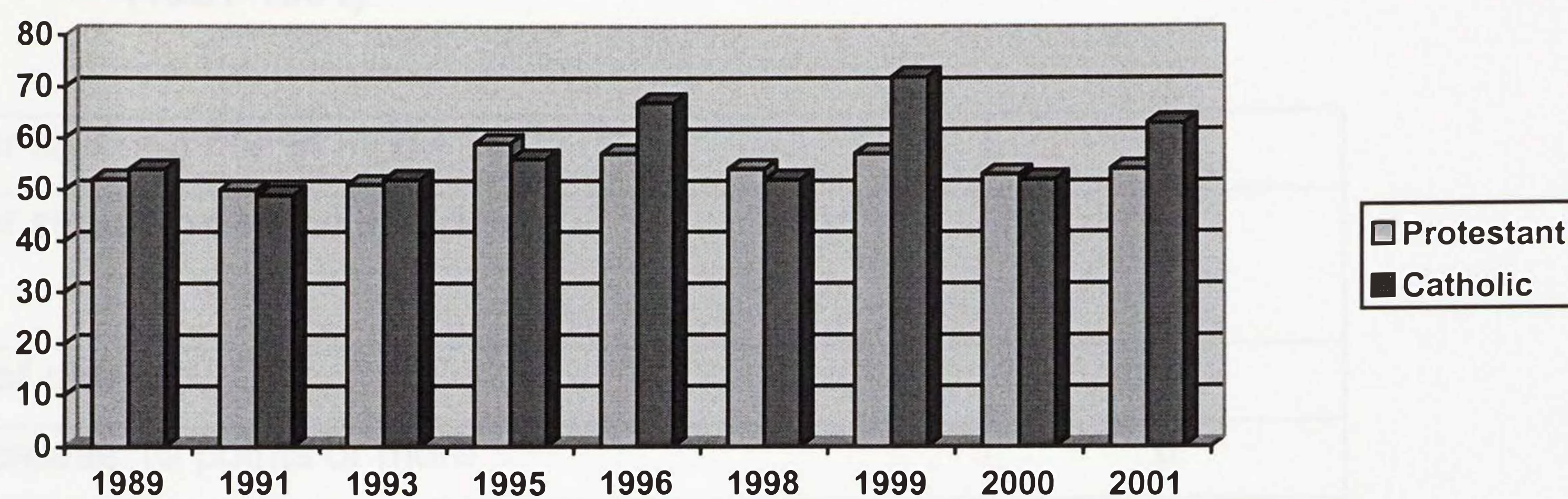


Figure 3(c) % saying they would prefer to send their children to a mixed religion school



- There is widespread preference among both Protestants and Catholics for working in a mixed workforce; a clear majority in both communities express a preference to live in mixed neighbourhoods while attitudes to mixed schooling are more ambivalent.
- Catholics typically express more favourable attitudes to mixing at work and in the neighbourhood but tend to be less consistent in their attitudes to mixed schooling.
- On all 3 measures, attitudes to mixing improved until the mid-1990s but have generally worsened since.
- Protestant attitudes to mixing in the workplace and in the neighbourhood in particular became less positive between 2000 and 2001.

Evidence of changing patterns of residential segregation

Table 6 Changes in “Dissimilarity Index” * in NI’s 39 largest towns (1981-1991) **

Number showing rise in Index	25
Number showing decline in Index	14
Scale of change	
(i) Increase 10 points or more	6
(ii) Increase 5-9 points	5
(iii) Shift of less than 5 points	26
(iv) Decline 5-9 points	2
(v) Decline in 10 points or more	0

* The “Dissimilarity Index” was designed to assess how much population movement would be necessary to achieve a community balanced in terms of religious composition.

** Personal Communication – Dr M Poole, University of Ulster.

- 26 out of the 39 towns had a shift of less than 5 points.
- For 11 of the 13 which changed by more than 5 points, the shift was towards greater segregation.
- All 6 which moved by more than 10 points, moved towards greater segregation.
- The most notable shift was in Cookstown (from 17.9 in 1981 to 49.2 in 1991).
- Figures may conceal changes in segregation within towns, ie particular wards may become more polarised, and even where there is no evidence numerically of segregation, it does not necessarily follow that the communities are socially integrated.

- The overall conclusion is that, while in the majority of large towns, segregation levels remained fairly consistent between 1981 and 1991, where change occurred it tended to be in the direction of greater segregation.



Figure 4(b) % saying relations between Protestants and Catholics will be better in the future



Figure 4 Community Relations

Figure 4(a) % saying relations between Protestants and Catholics are better than they were 5 years ago

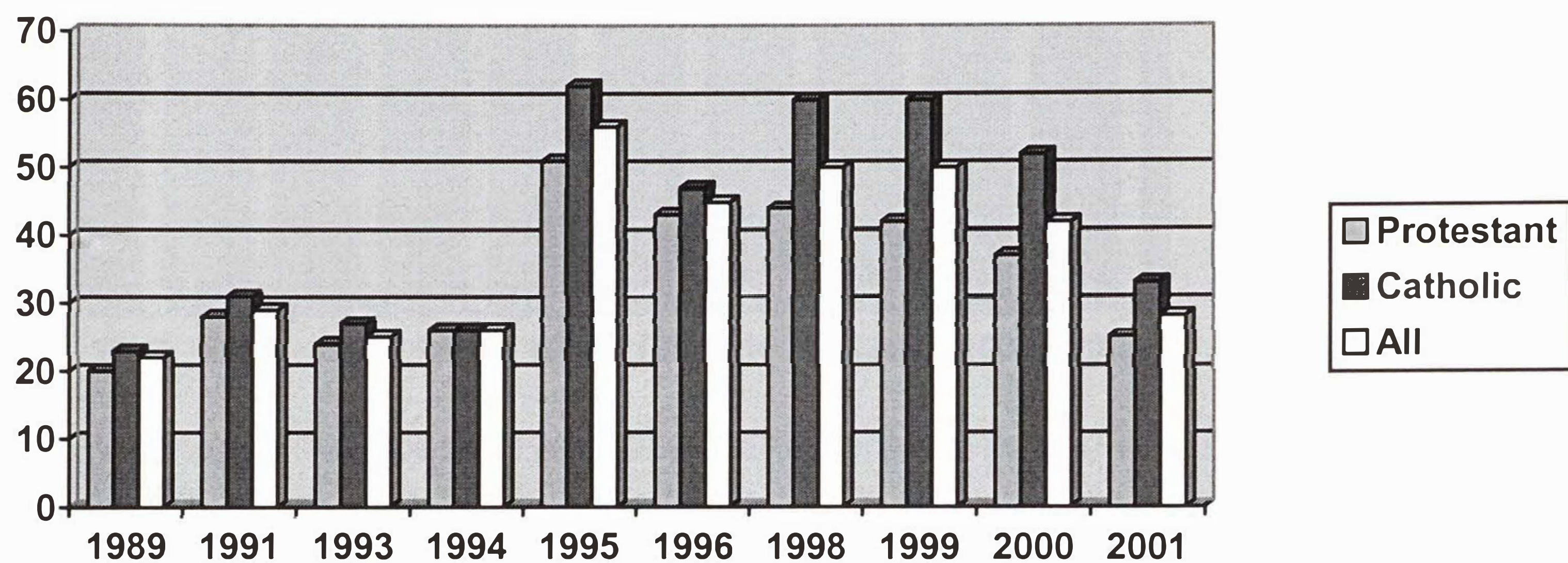


Figure 4(b) % saying relations between Protestants and Catholics will be better in the future

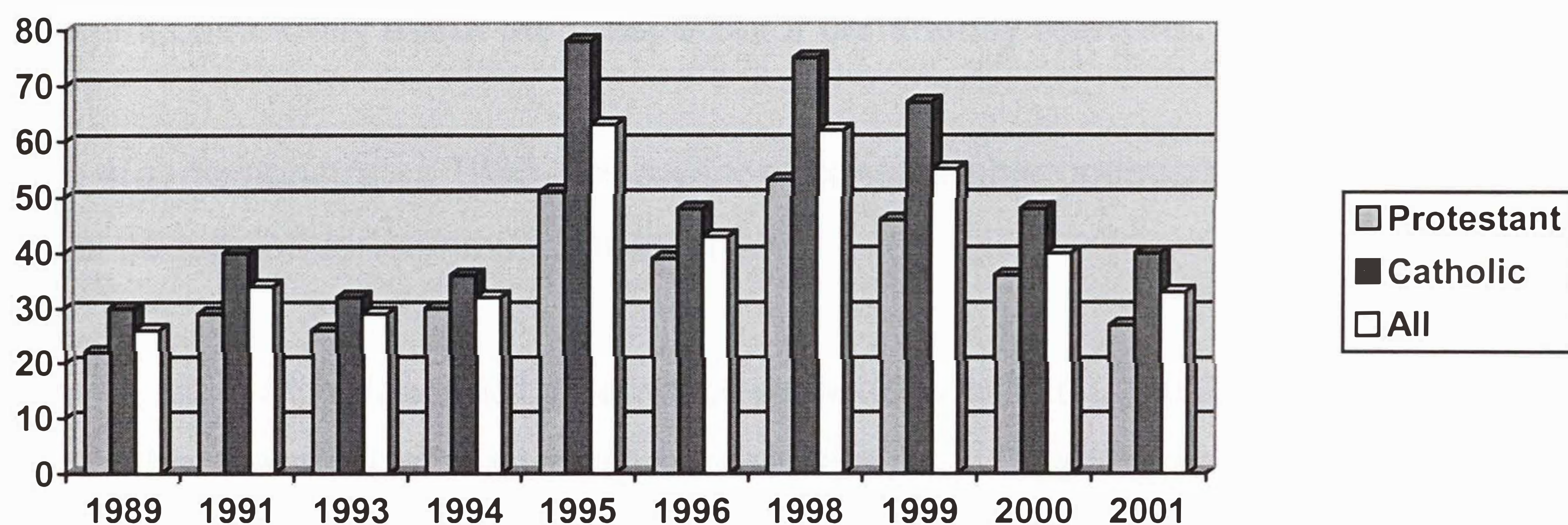
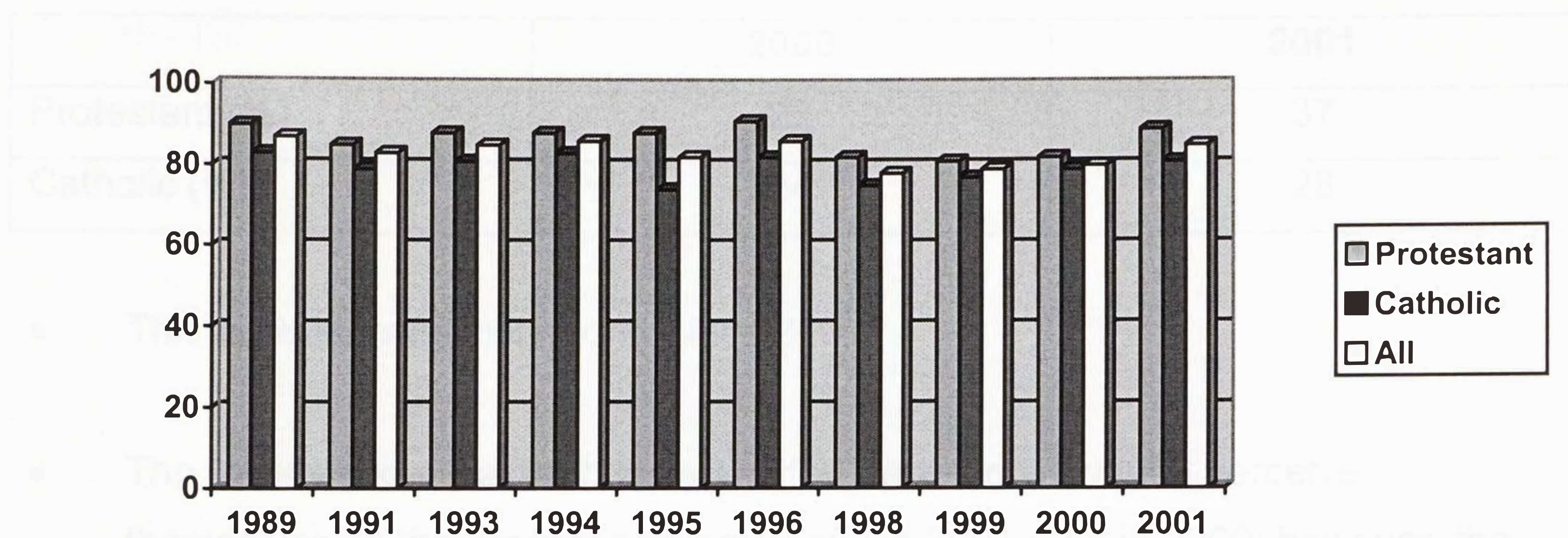


Figure 4(c) % saying religion will always make a difference in Northern Ireland



Northern Ireland Social Attitudes Survey 1989-1998; Northern Ireland Life and Times Survey thereafter.

These 3 graphs present consistent if somewhat negative messages.

- The Catholic community tends to be consistently more positive than the Protestant community about the prospects for community relations.
- Figure 4(a) demonstrates 1995 was a year of considerable optimism among the general population for community relations.
- However, while attitudes among Catholics remained positive up to 2000, Protestant optimism was less robust and the data for 2001 show a dramatic drop for both groups to pre ceasefire levels.
- The surveys do clearly demonstrate the influence of external events on public attitudes and show that people can be open to entertaining more generous attitudes about the future when circumstances change.
- There has been much less variation in views as to whether "religion will always make a difference in Northern Ireland." Around 8 in 10 Catholics and even more Protestants believe it will.

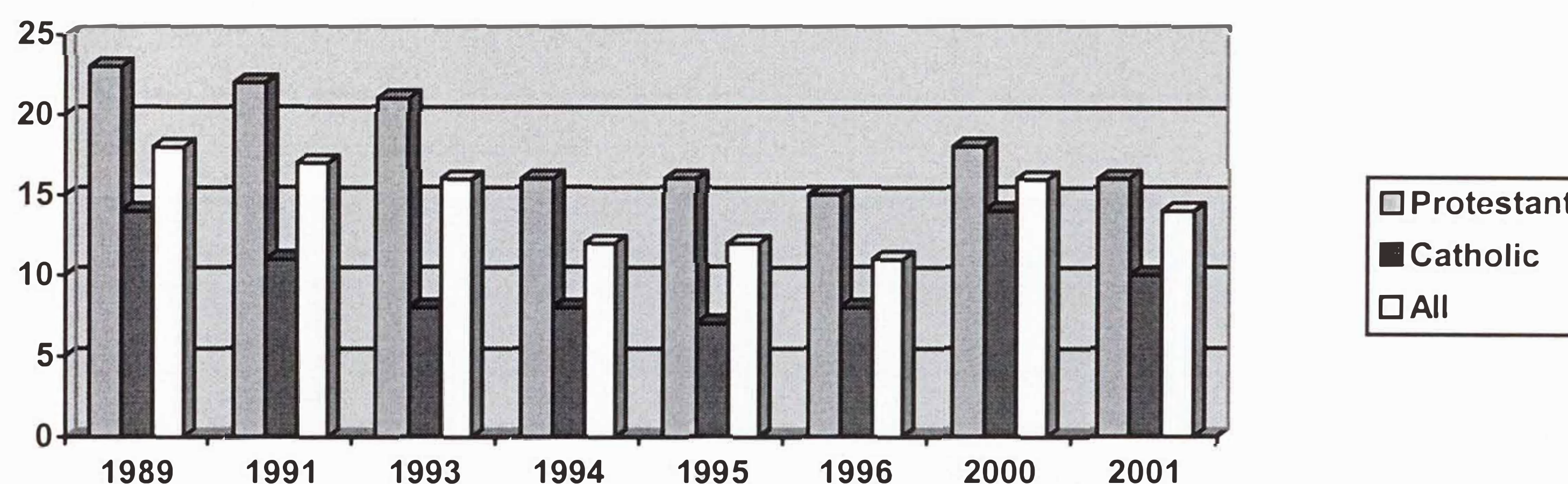
Table 7 Community perceiving themselves as the “underdog” community

	2000	2001
Protestant (%)	22	37
Catholic (%)	24	28

- This question was asked only since 2000.
- The results show that both communities were more likely to perceive themselves as the “underdog” community in 2001 than in 2000; however, the increase in the proportion of the Protestant community so perceiving their community was striking.

Figure 5 Self-Prejudice

% perceiving themselves as ‘very’ or ‘a little’ prejudiced against other people



- Protestants tend to admit to higher levels of self-prejudice than Catholics.
- There is some evidence of a decline in the proportion of people perceiving themselves as prejudiced since the early 1990s although the position is less encouraging in recent years.
- Further analysis shows that self-prejudice figures are highest among the under 40s and that this is where most changes occurred up to 1996.

Figure 6 Constitutional Preferences

Figure 6(a) % saying that the long-term policy for Northern Ireland should be for it to remain part of the United Kingdom

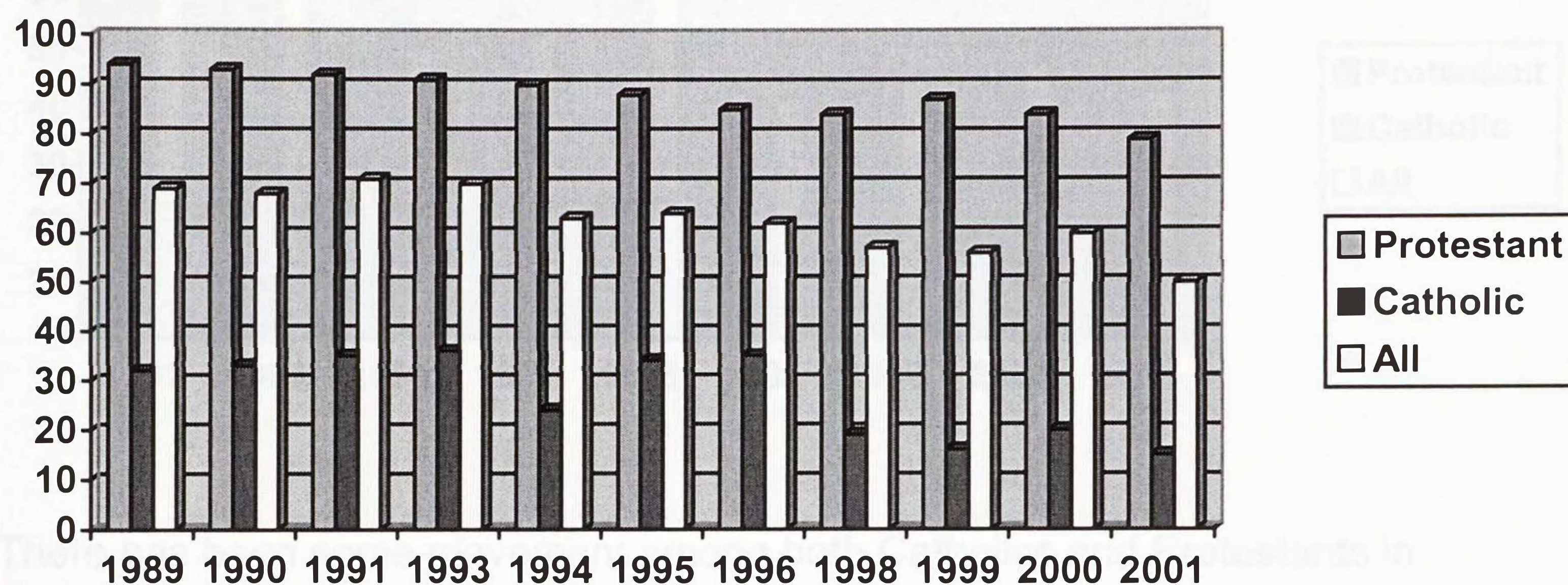


Figure 6(b) % saying that the long-term policy for Northern Ireland should be for it to reunify with the rest of Ireland

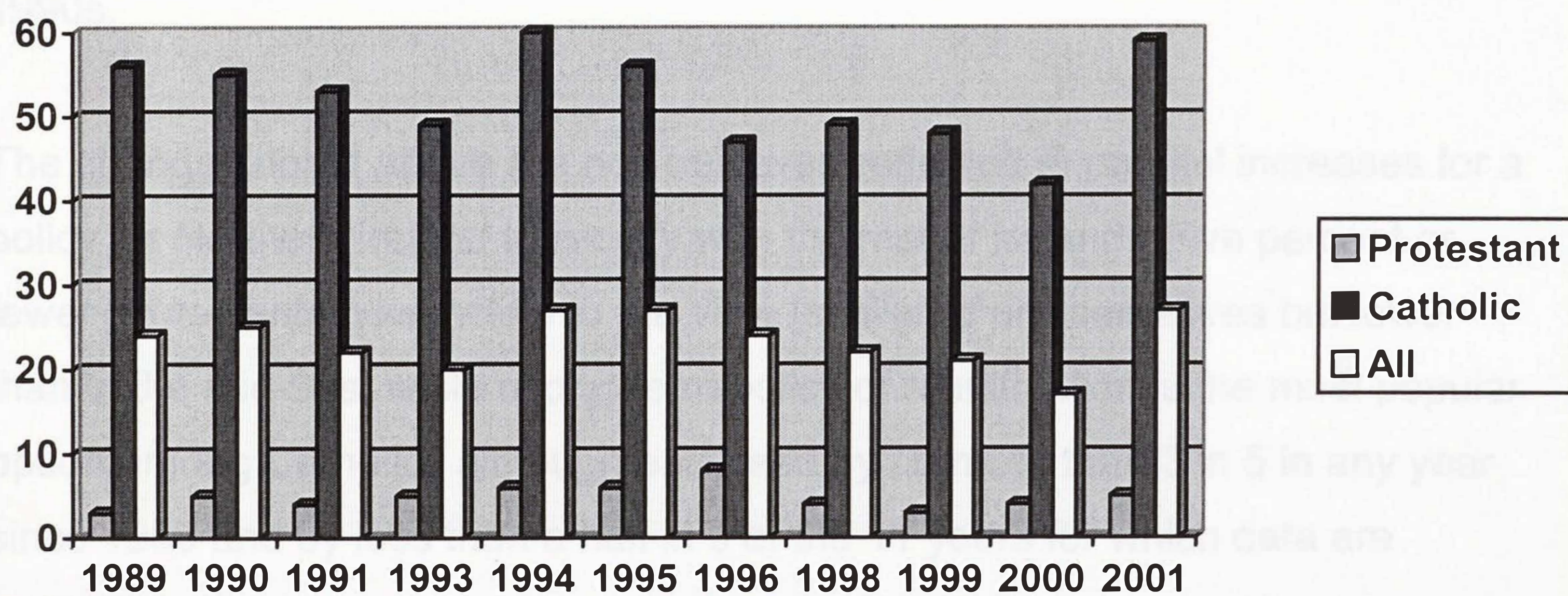
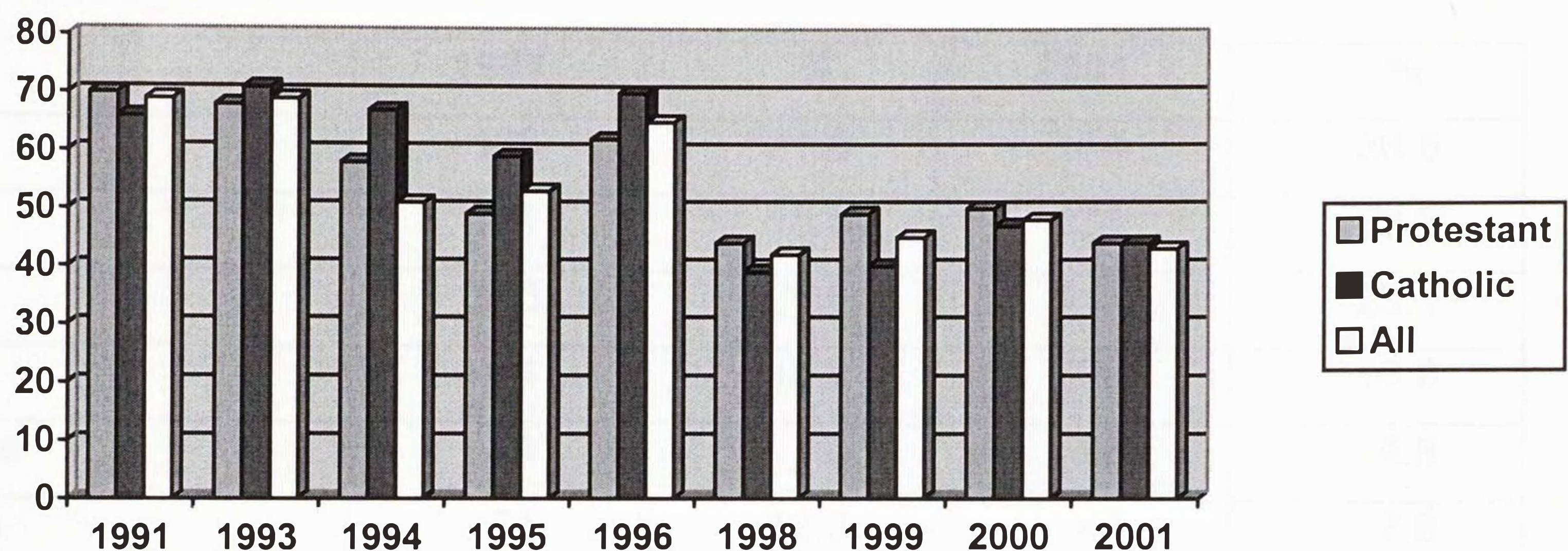


Figure 6(c) % saying that a united Ireland in the next 20 years is 'very' or 'fairly' unlikely



- There has been some movement among both Catholics and Protestants in terms of whether, in their view, “long-term policy for Northern Ireland should be for it to remain within the United Kingdom.” Over the 12 year period 1989 to 2001 the proportion of the Protestant community holding this view has declined from more than 9 out of 10 to closer to 8 out of 10. However, the change in attitudes among Catholics has been much more marked with only 15% expressing this view in 2001 compared to around 1 in 3 as recently as the mid-1990s.
- The changes noted above are not, however, reflected in parallel increases for a policy for Northern Ireland to reunify with the rest of Ireland. Five percent or fewer Protestants now incline to the view (similar to pre-ceasefires but lower than in the mid-90s) while a long-term policy of reunification is the most popular option among Catholics although endorsed by no more than 3 in 5 in any year since 1989 and by less than a half in 5 of the 11 years for which data are available.
- Nevertheless, Figure 6(c) shows a similar, significant decline in both communities in those saying that “a united Ireland in the next 20 years is ‘very’ or ‘fairly’ unlikely.

Table 8 Voting at Local Government District Elections

Seats Won

	1997	%	2001	%
UUP	185	31.8	154	26.5
DUP	91	15.6	131	22.5
SDLP	120	20.6	117	20.1
SF	74	12.7	108	18.6
Alliance	41	7.0	28	4.8
Others	71	12.2	44	7.6
	582		582	

A number of patterns emerge from these data:

- While the share of the combined UUP/DUP seats increased by 1.6 percentage points between 1997 and 2001, the corresponding increase for the SDLP/SF was 5.4 percentage points.
- These increases were at the expense of the Alliance and Others whose share of LG seats declined by 6.8 percentage points.
- Within the 2 main blocks, the UUP as a proportion of UUP/DUP seats declined from 67% in 1997 to 54% in 2001 while SDLP seats as a proportion of SDLP/SF declined from 62% to 52% over the same period.
- Set in a longer time frame, the 1973 local election outcome was Unionist/Loyalists 58%, Nationalists 20%, Alliance 12% and Others 10%.

Summary

1. Continuing convergence in terms of population balance due to higher rate of natural increase in the Catholic population.
2. While there has also been convergence on a range of socio-economic indicators, Catholic rates of economic activity remain significantly lower than those of Protestants and, with higher unemployment rates, dependence on social security benefits is much higher.
3. Attitudes among the population seem to be hardening on a range of issues following considerable evidence of more optimism around the mid-1990s. In particular:
 - Views about the fairness and effectiveness of the police among Catholics have become more negative in recent years.
 - People in both communities are less likely now to say that they would prefer to work in a mixed workforce or live in a mixed neighbourhood than 5 years ago.
 - There is some evidence in Northern Ireland's largest towns of communities becoming more segregated although in most cases the change is not significant.
 - Fewer people think that community relations are better than 5 years ago or believe that they will be better in 5 years time – particular drop 2000-2001 subtle changes are occurring in the constitutional preferences of the 2 communities although difficult to interpret.
 - Finally, changes in voting behaviour as reflected in the 2001 Local Government elections show that the combined SDLP/SF vote increased by more than 5 percentage points between 1997 and 2001 compared to an increase of 1.6 percentage points in the combined UU/DUP vote.

Within the main Nationalist and Unionist blocks, SF and DUP shares of the seats increased at the expense of the SDLP and UUP respectively.