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## Knowledge Exchange Seminar Series (KESS)

*Negativity toward immigrant out-groups among Northern Ireland's Youth – are younger cohorts becoming more tolerant?*

Dr Stefanie Doebler (University of Liverpool),

Dr Ruth McAreavey (Queen's University Belfast),

Prof Sally Shortall (University of Newcastle),

Dr Ian Shuttleworth (Queen's University Belfast)

### **Introduction**

Negativity toward immigrants is a known problem in Northern Ireland. Media reports of racist hate crimes have been so frequent that the region was dubbed the 'race hate capital of Europe' (Knox 2011; Lentin and McVeigh 2006). There exists a growing literature (JARMAN 2003; Knox 2011; Lentin and McVeigh 2006; Hayes and Dowds 2006; McKee 2015). Several studies found negativity towards racial and ethnic out-groups and immigrants to be related to low education, unemployment, and deprivation (Hayes and Dowds 2006; McVeigh and Rolston 2007; Borgonovi 2012). Others found that sectarian attitudes are strongly linked to racism especially in the context of Northern Ireland (Brewer 1992; Knox 2011; Pehrson, Gheorghiu, and Ireland 2012). A large literature across different national context found that having contact to minority members helps facilitate tolerance towards them (Quillian 1995; Hayes and Dowds 2006; McKee 2015; Frølund Thomsen 2012).

There are still large knowledge gaps. Attitudes of young people are understudied and there is a lack of cohort comparisons and a lack of contextualization. In this briefing paper, we first take a look at a time-series of area-level racist hate-crimes (2004 to 2015) that were recorded by the Northern Ireland Police. Hate-crimes tend to disproportionately affect younger people, both as victims and as perpetrators (Bleich 2007; Knox 2011).

Secondly, on the individual level, we compare attitudes towards immigrants and ethnic minorities in Northern Ireland over time (2004 to 2014) and between age cohorts. In particular, we compare young people aged 16 and 18 to 24 years to older cohorts.

Thirdly, we use multivariate regression to analyse, how negativity toward immigrants and ethnic out-groups differs across population strata, e.g. by education, socio-economic status, whether someone attended a religiously mixed or segregated school, the extent of religious segregation of the neighbourhood, and how much contact someone has to members of ethnic minorities. We also examine whether people who endorse a sectarian attitude (“I would prefer to live in a neighbourhood with people of only my own religion”) are more likely than others to also have intolerant attitudes towards racial and ethnic out-groups and immigrants.

### **Data**

We employ two data-sources. On the area-level, we map racist hate crimes that were recorded by the Northern Ireland Police (PSNI) (Police Service Northern Ireland 2016) to electoral Wards and compare patterns of occurrences of racist hate crimes with Ward-level settlement patterns of (non-UK, non-Irish) immigrants to detect possible overlaps. On the level of individuals, we use data from the Young Life and Times Survey (YLT) and Northern Ireland Life and Times Survey (NILT) for the years 2004 to 2014. Table 1 shows the dependent variables measuring negativity towards racial and ethnic out-groups and immigrants and a sectarian attitude that we examine using multivariate regression models.



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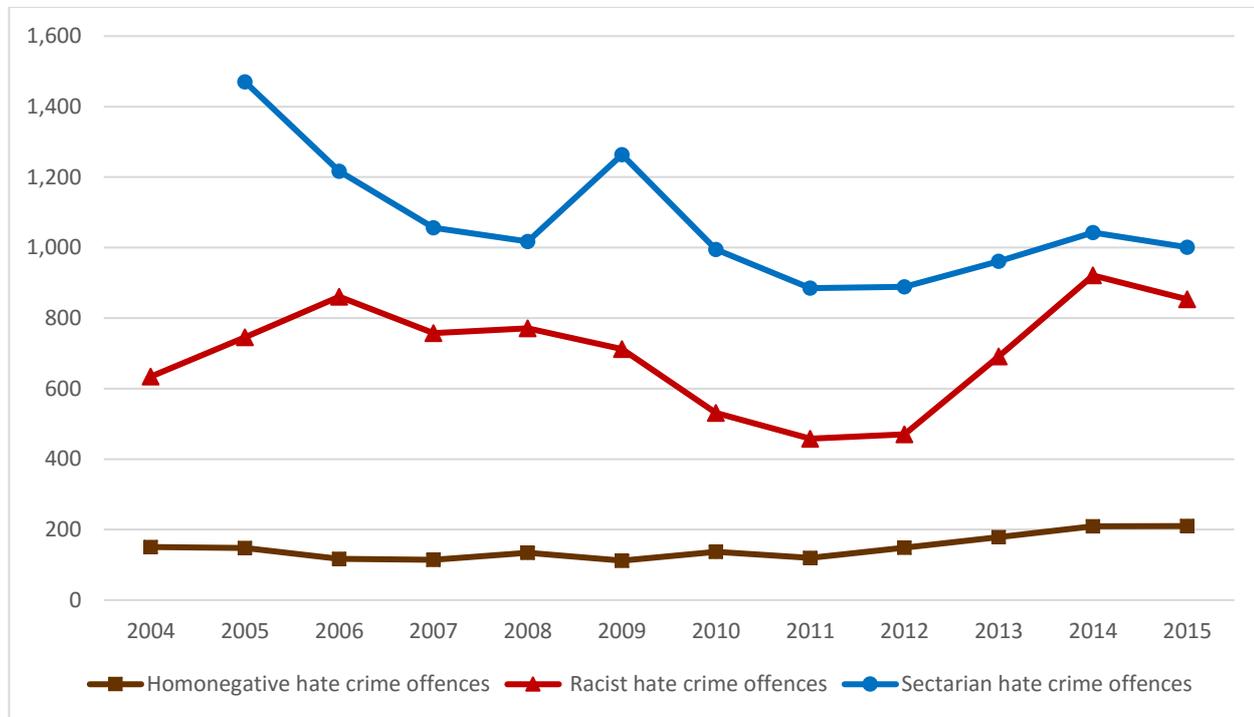
**Table 1: Survey Questions in the NILT and YLT and Concepts Measured**

Question text:	Concept measured:	NILT	YLT
“In relation to color and ethnicity, I prefer to stick with people of my own kind”	Negativity towards racial and ethnic out-groups	x	x
“Would [not] accept an Eastern European as a close friend”	Negativity towards Eastern Europeans	x	
“Would [not] accept a Muslim as a close friend”	Negativity towards Muslims	x	
“I would prefer a neighborhood with people of only my own religion”	Sectarian attitude	x	x

**Findings**

Figure 1 shows at the macro-level a worrying increase in reported racist hate-crimes between 2011 and 2014, the most recent data available at the time of writing. Racist hate crimes in Northern Ireland have doubled in only three years from 456 to 921, while sectarian hate crimes increased by 15% during the same time-span. Interestingly, both sectarian and racist hate crimes follow the same pattern of increase, while reporting of homonegative hate crimes (targeted at homosexuals) has not increased.

**Figure 1: Time-series of hate-crime offences with sectarian, racial, homonegative motivation as reported by the Northern Ireland Police**

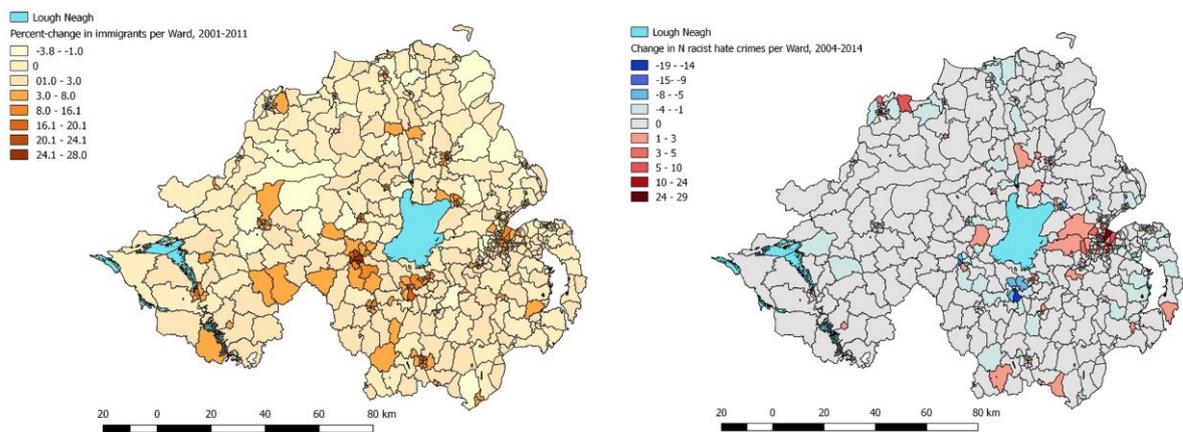


**Note: N is the total number of reported hate crimes for Northern Ireland.**

Figure 2 shows the percent-change in the numbers of immigrants per electoral Ward (left hand map) between the two censuses 2001 and 2011, and the change in the number of racist hate crimes per Ward from 2004 to 2014. On the level of electoral Wards we see from the maps in Figure 2 that patterns of racist hate crimes overlap with patterns of immigrant settlement. Hate crimes have increased particularly in inner-city areas of Belfast and Derry and they seem to happen, where immigrants live and where their numbers have increased. However, the picture is more complicated than this. Area-level aggregate data can only ever be correlational. They do not allow for direct causal interpretations. It would be tempting, based on the findings regarding inner-city areas, to assume a causal relationship between a growth in migrant numbers and a rise in hate crimes. However, the urban areas of immigrant settlement are also largely deprived inner-city areas of Belfast and Derry, which tend to have high levels of income deprivation and unemployment and they exhibit higher

levels of general crime (not just hate crime). Deprivation is well known to be related to increased out-group negativity (Jetten, Mols, and Postmes 2015; McLaren 2003; Quillian 1995).

**Figure 2: Number of racist hate crimes and Percentage of non-UK, non-Irish Immigrants per Ward**



**Source:** Hate crime data supplied by PSNI, Numbers of Immigrants: Census NI 2011.

We see from Figure 2 that some areas, e.g. those surrounding the meat processing industry sites near Cookstown and Craigavon, but also areas around Coleraine and Derrylin experienced a marked growth in immigrant numbers, but no increase in racist hate crimes. Cookstown and the Craigavon area even show a marked decrease in racist hate crimes. Clady and Glenavy around outer Belfast and Silverbridge and Postrevon, on the other hand, which did not see an increase in immigration, did experience significant increases in racist hate crimes.

We now move on to individual-level findings. We examined the percentages of respondents to the Young Life and Times Survey (YLT) and the Northern Ireland Life and Times Survey (NILT) who expressed

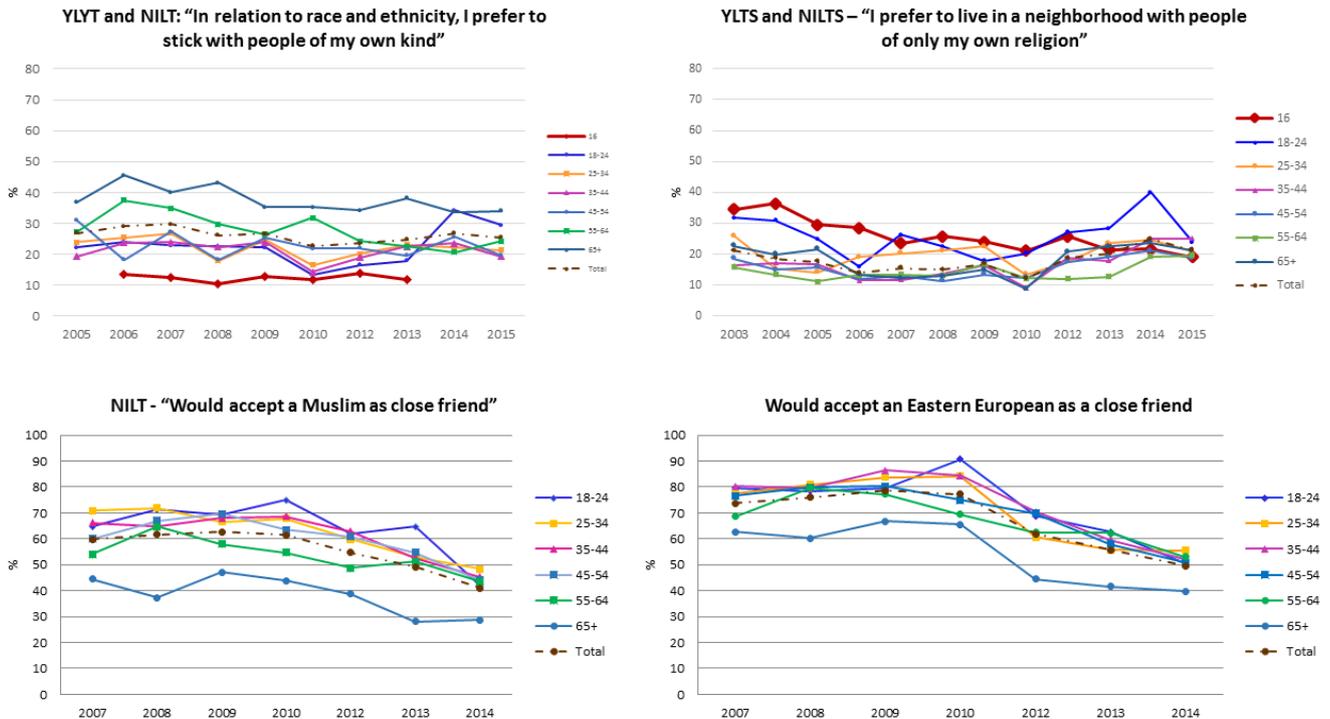
negative attitudes towards racial and ethnic out-groups for every year from 2004 to 2014 (Figure 3). For negativity towards Muslims and Eastern Europeans we only have data from the NILT until 2014, but these questions were not asked in the YLT. Note, that the findings we present are not based on a panel study, but on cross-sectional time-series; the samples of the two surveys consist of different respondents in each year. This is an important caveat when interpreting the findings.

Figure 3 (especially the line-chart in the upper left) shows that negativity towards racial and ethnic out-groups has increased between 2011 and 2014 across the majority of age cohorts. Particularly strong increases were found for the 18 to 25 year olds, although older cohorts are more intolerant on average. Most older cohorts show the same trend of increase over time, but at a much lower rate. Exceptions are the two oldest cohorts aged 55 to 64 and 65plus, and the youngest cohort of 16 year olds from the YLT. The two oldest cohorts are consistently more intolerant than younger ones, however, both also showed a consistent trend of slow decrease in negativity towards racial and ethnic out-groups, with some small fluctuations.

The two youngest cohorts show some striking patterns. While the 18 to 25 year olds exhibit by far the strongest increase in negativity towards racial and ethnic out-groups between 2010 and 2014, they show an almost threefold increase from 13 per cent in 2010 to 34 per cent in 2014 in endorsement of the racist attitude “in relation to colour and ethnicity, I prefer to stick with people of my own kind”.

The time-series of the youngest cohort of 16 year olds remains relatively stable over time and at a (relatively) low level, fluctuating between 10 and 15 % endorsing this attitude. The longitudinal line chart shows clearly that the youngest is by far and consistently the least intolerant cohort. The finding is difficult to interpret, as the vast majority of individuals in this cohort still live in the parental household. Their attitudes are likely to be influenced by both their families and their school environment and peers. Multivariate regression will tease out in the next step, whether the school-type and neighbourhood have an impact on the attitudes of this cohort. Unfortunately, we do not have data on the 16-year cohort for the years after 2013 for the “acceptance of racial and ethnic minorities” question and no data on negativity towards Muslims and Eastern Europeans.

**Figure 3: Time-series of Negativity towards Racial and Ethnic Minorities and Religious Sectarianism in Northern Ireland**



Data: NILT and YLT.

Looking at negative attitudes towards Muslims and Eastern Europeans we see the same cross-cohort pattern as for the more general negative attitude towards racial and ethnic out-groups. Acceptance of both Muslims and Eastern Europeans strongly decreased across all cohorts between 2009 and 2014, but again, younger cohorts are consistently more tolerant than older cohorts. As with the prior attitude, the 18 to 25 year olds show a steeper decline of acceptance of Muslims and Eastern Europeans than other cohorts.

The sectarian attitude follows largely the same longitudinal cohort pattern as negativity towards racial and ethnic out-groups. This reflects the strong correlation other studies (Brewer 1992; Knox 2011; Pehrson, Gheorghiu, and Ireland 2012) found between sectarianism and racism. Interestingly, the youngest cohort of 16 year olds again deviates from the other cohorts: From 2003 until 2009 endorsement of this attitude is strongest among the 16 year olds compared to other cohorts, but the 16 year olds are also the cohort which

shows the strongest and most consistent pattern of decrease in the sectarian attitude from 2009 until 2014. In summary, the 16 year olds are the most tolerant age group in comparison. The most worrying pattern of increase was found for the 18 to 25 year olds. Negativity towards ethnic out-groups in this cohort has increased steadily and sharply between 2010 and 2014, however, the latest available data for the year 2015 shows a marked decrease of racial and ethnic negativity in this cohort, albeit it is still above the Northern Ireland average. Reasons for this marked increase in recent years could be higher levels of youth unemployment, and increases in socio-economic deprivation in the aftermath of the 2008 recession, perhaps hitting this cohort (which only just starts on the labour market) harder than other cohorts. At the same time, we observe growing immigration of EU citizens into Northern Ireland. Some might argue that this could be a reason for increased out-group negativity among the young, who are just entering the labour market and who might respond to growing immigration with fear of foreign competition for jobs and housing. On the other hand, the numbers of EU immigrants are much lower in Northern Ireland than in other parts of the UK and the Republic of Ireland. Also, when thinking about the recent refugee crisis in Europe, here again the numbers of refugees coming to Northern Ireland are tiny compared with the rest of the UK and the Republic of Ireland, let alone other countries. Nonetheless, the increase especially among the young is striking and is likely a response to both, real and perceived crisis in labour market and housing, and a drastic increase in negative press coverage of immigration in the popular press across the UK. The noticeable decline in negativity towards ethnic out-groups between 2014 and 2015 allows for some cautious optimism, but we have to wait for the 2016-wave to see if the pattern persists.

We move on to our multivariate findings. Our regression models tested, whether the type of school someone attended (religiously mixed or segregated), the level of segregation of the neighbourhood (living close to a peace-line, perceived levels of segregation), sectarian attitudes and socio-economic factors mattered for the extent to which respondents endorsed negative attitudes towards racial and ethnic out-groups and immigrants. Our first set of models used the YLT data (the respondents were 16 years old).

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We ran three models: In model 1 we included the school type by religion (having attended a Protestant school or a religiously mixed school, versus a Catholic school, the latter was left out as the control category). The second model operationalised school type differently: this time we looked at grammar schools versus integrated schools, and in the third model we looked at whether being Protestant, as opposed to being Catholic or non-religious makes a difference to young people's attitudes towards ethnic out-groups.

With regard to school type we found that it makes no difference, whether the student attends a religiously mixed school, a Protestant or a Catholic school. What does make a difference is the quality of the school: Students attending grammar schools are significantly less likely to express a negative attitude towards ethnic minorities than students of other schools. This does not vary by religion. Integrated schooling also makes no difference. Students of integrated schools are no more and no less intolerant than students at other schools. Having a negative attitude towards integrated schooling, however, *is* positively related to negativity towards ethnic minorities. Our models also revealed that living in segregated (Protestant or Catholic) areas, and living close to a peace-line makes no difference to young people's probability of expressing intolerant attitude towards ethnic minorities. But having no sense of neighbourhood belonging *is* related to being more intolerant towards ethnic out-groups. Youths who have regular contact (at least once a week) with ethnic minority members are less likely than those with fewer contacts to be intolerant towards them. Overall, Protestant male youths of lower education are more likely to express a negative attitude towards ethnic minorities than others. Interestingly, self-perceived economic poverty (difficulty getting by) of young people was unrelated to intolerance.

The regression analysis for the adult sample was carried out using the NILT 2014. The dependent variable is the same question as in the youth sample. Some variables (e.g. living close to a peace-line) were not available for the adult NILT sample.

The findings for the adult sample from the NILT are mostly consistent with the youth sample, but differ with regards to school-type. For the adult sample, having attended an integrated religiously mixed school *is* statistically significantly positively related with being more tolerant (and less intolerant) towards ethnic

minorities. The finding is difficult to interpret: it is possible (and likely) that integrated, religiously mixed schooling *does* have a positive impact on out-group tolerance, but its benefits might work longitudinally and thus be picked up later in life, rather than immediately. This interpretation is supported by the fact that inter-group contact *is strongly related* to being more tolerant. Thus, a lot speaks for the assumption that religious and inter-cultural mixing has positive effects on tolerance. However, it is possible that there has been a cohort change in the effect of integrated schooling and that it matters less today than it did a few years ago. Later waves of the YLT data will be able to give us a clearer picture.

Our findings with regard to the effects of education, religion and sectarianism are fully consistent with the youth sample: higher education and being employed are negatively, and sectarianist attitudes positively related to negativity towards ethnic minorities, Protestants are more likely to endorse these attitudes than Catholics and the non-religious.

### **Summary and Conclusion**

To summarize, on the macro-level we find that racist hate crimes have increased between 2009 and 2014 and they cluster in areas where immigrants live and where immigrant numbers have grown, but more so in areas that experienced socio-economic deprivation and high levels of unemployment. The good news is that from 2014 to 2015 hate-crimes decreased by seven percent. Future years will tell if this trend continues.

On the individual level we found that younger cohorts are consistently more tolerant towards racial and ethnic minorities and immigrants than older ones. Although we found a worrying increase in negative attitudes towards racial and ethnic minorities among young adults aged 18 to 25, between 2010 and 2014, the youngest cohort of 16 year olds does not exhibit this trend and is also consistently more tolerant towards racial and ethnic out-groups than all older cohorts.

For both the youth and the adult sample we find that the quality of schooling and having higher education matter greatly for people's tolerance towards racial and ethnic out-groups. For the adult sample, integrated, religiously mixed schooling was strongly related to being more tolerant towards ethnic minorities.

Increased contact with ethnic minority members and feeling a positive sense of belonging with the local neighbourhood are also positively related to more tolerance to racial and ethnic out-groups.

Policies that strengthen the supply of a high quality education, the inclusion of ethnic minority members in local communities and that facilitate positive contacts are likely to help reducing negativity towards racial and ethnic out-groups. At the same time, policies should aim at reducing poverty and unemployment across Northern Ireland and counteract the concentration of poverty and deprivation in specific neighbourhoods, not just for socio-economic reasons, but also as a measure to reduce out-group negativity.

**Table 2: Negative Feelings towards Ethnic Minorities among 16 Year Olds**

DV: Respondent feels unfavorably toward ethnic minorities	Model 1		Model 2		Model 3	
	Coef.	SE	Coef.	SE	Coef.	SE
Not well off financially	0.011	0.060	-0.010	0.060	-0.007	0.060
Lives with lone parent	-0.003	0.051	-0.018	0.051	-0.013	0.051
Sex (female)	-0.191***	0.041	-0.189***	0.041	-0.191***	0.041
Large city	-0.100	0.061	-0.095	0.061	-0.087	0.061
Small-town	-0.064	0.046	-0.065	0.046	-0.061	0.046
Contact: Socializes with ethnic minority members	-0.160***	0.021	-0.151***	0.021	-0.151***	0.021
Protestant school	0.040	0.044				
Attends Religiously mixed school (Protestant /Catholic)	0.057	0.061				
Negative attitude toward integration-schooling	0.135**	0.045	0.150***	0.045	0.144**	0.045
Lives close to a peace-line	0.015	0.054	0.000	0.054	0.004	0.054
No sense of neighborhood belonging	0.109*	0.052	0.131*	0.052	0.137**	0.052
Grammar school			-0.136**	0.043	-0.135**	0.043
Integrated school			-0.114	0.085	-0.108	0.085
Protestant area			0.027	0.043		
Protestant					0.095*	0.043
Constant	2.823***	0.074	2.894***	0.075	2.869***	0.075
-2-Log-Likelihood	-2119.677		-2115.148		-2112.926	
AIC	4263.354		4256.295		4251.852	
BIC	4328.796		4327.192		4322.748	
N	1726		1726		1726	

Note: The questionnaire text of the dependent variable is “How favourable or unfavourable do you feel about people from minority ethnic communities?” (5-point scale, recoded into 1= very favourably, 5= very unfavourably)

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**Table 3: NILTS – Adult Population: Negative Attitude toward Members of Ethnic Minorities**

DV: Negative Feelings toward ethnic minority members	M1		M2		M3		M4	
	Coef.	SE	Coef.	SE	Coef.	SE	Coef.	SE
18-24	0.251*	0.126	0.334*	0.161	0.446**	0.161	0.114	0.159
25-34 (refcat)	0.000	.	0.000	.	0.000	.	0.000	.
35-44	0.088	0.105	0.114	0.119	0.100	0.117	-0.011	0.110
45-54	0.020	0.105	-0.015	0.119	-0.032	0.118	0.043	0.111
55-64	0.030	0.107	0.035	0.124	-0.019	0.122	-0.002	0.112
64plus	0.044	0.100	0.093	0.120	0.024	0.119	0.003	0.106
Education: degree	-0.392***	0.081	-0.378***	0.102	-0.357***	0.101	-0.258**	0.094
Education: A-level	-0.312**	0.097	-0.288*	0.118	-0.288*	0.117	-0.217*	0.110
Education: GCSE_low	0.078	0.117	0.000	0.135	0.033	0.133	-0.006	0.119
Education: other qualification	-0.393	0.226	-0.592*	0.247	-0.590*	0.244	-0.399	0.235
No qualification	0.027	0.089	0.091	0.107	0.065	0.106	-0.020	0.096
Household income			-0.002	0.005	-0.000	0.005	-0.004	0.004
Unemployed			0.303*	0.123	0.280*	0.121	-0.065	0.122
Large city			0.223*	0.087	0.211*	0.087	-0.188*	0.090
Small-town			-0.050	0.086	-0.038	0.085	-0.074	0.077
Protestant			0.426***	0.075	0.415***	0.074	0.360***	0.063
No religion			0.287**	0.103	0.310**	0.102	0.000	.
Has ethnic minority friends					-0.095**	0.031	-0.066*	0.030
Attended a mixed school (Prot Cat)					-0.375***	0.104	-0.207*	0.099
Negative feelings toward religious others (Prot-Cath) <sup>a</sup>							0.707***	0.045
Prefers neighborhood of own religion only <sup>b</sup>							(0.565***)	(0.095)
Religious area-Segregation							0.014	0.025
Constant	2.354***	0.090	2.025***	0.164	2.215***	0.168	1.105***	0.172
ICC								
-2-Log-Likelihood	-1526.564		-1029.496		-1017.058		-724.402	
AIC	3075.127		2092.992		2072.117		1490.804	
BIC	3130.201		2171.892		2160.299		1584.363	
N	1104.000		766.000		766.000		636.000	

<sup>a</sup> Negative feelings toward religious others (Prot-Cath) was only included, when b (Prefers neighborhood of own religion only) was not included and vice versa. B Preference for a monoreligious neighborhood was included in a separate models that included all variables from model M4 except 'negative feelings toward religious others (Prot-Cath)'. This was done to avoid collinearity.

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